

## 2.1 Historical Development of The East Annex

*Raised on the crest of a hill overlooking the bay, Yorkville is a healthy as well as an economical location; its quiet streets and well-shaded avenues afford a pleasant relief after the heat and dust of the city streets in summer.*

C. Pelham Mulvany, 1884<sup>6</sup>

### Introduction

In the study area there are six parallel east-west streets: Prince Arthur, Lowther, Elgin, Boswell, Tranby, and Bernard. Four of these are just one block long, but three—Prince Arthur, Lowther, and Bernard—continue westward across Bedford. These streets were laid out on the westernmost fringes of the Village of Yorkville, and were sufficiently separated from the village proper by Avenue Road to be considered 'West Yorkville.' West Yorkville extended further to the north than the present study area. The area later became associated by proximity with a real estate promotion project of lands from Bedford to Huron that was annexed to Toronto in 1883, and has been known as The Annex ever since. An official planning district called the Annex emerged in 1956.<sup>7</sup> The study area therefore comprises a section of the area called West Yorkville, and Bedford Road, which is the most easterly street in the Annex subdivision. The area is now frequently called the East Annex.

### The Initial York Surveys

The survey of the Toronto area, begun in 1793 by surveyors Alexander Aitkin and Augustus Jones, centred on Yonge Street as the east-west divider, and measured concessions 'from the bay.' The town proper was laid out along the waterfront in five blocks two blocks deep near the mouth of the Don River, with City boundaries extending to Queen Street. From Queen, or Lot as it was called, to the line that is now Bloor Street, 32 narrow 'Park Lots' of 100 acres, 20 chains wide by 100 chains deep, were laid out running north-south, providing the 'city liberties' for future expansion. Referring to these park lots, it was quipped

<sup>6</sup> C. Pelham Mulvany, Toronto: Past and Present until 1882 Ontario Reprint Press. (1884, reprint 1970).

<sup>7</sup> Stuart Schoenfeld, "Formation of a Neighbourhood: The Definition of the Annex and its Boundaries," I.4, pp. 5, 10 in Lydia Burton and David Morley, The Annex Book (Toronto, 1978, unpublished MS at Municipal Reference Library.) The boundaries of the Annex had been determined by the Annex Resident's Association in 1928 as Bloor, Howland, Dupont and Avenue Road.

that Simcoe chose the site for Toronto because of the abundance of land all around that he could give out to his friends as 'douceurs' in compensation for being posted here.<sup>8</sup> The occupation and subdivision of these blocks critically affected the development of downtown Toronto, and how transportation routes and neighbourhoods would emerge. The dominant pattern was one of independent, uncoordinated development.

North of Bloor began the rural concessions of York township. Farm lots of 200 acres were laid out in a north-south pattern west of Yonge, and running east-west east of Yonge. In all cases, land subdivision tended to ignore the natural features of the land and to follow the orientation of the earliest lot survey, which is generally discernible beneath the present-day street patterns of the city. Significant topographical features, such as the Davenport Hill, are outside of the study area, and only at the south-west corner of the area was there a minor incursion of Taddle Creek. Taddle Creek did not affect the extension of the grid in the study area, but its being put underground has affected structures on Prince Arthur and has caused concern during the construction and placement of foundations for larger buildings in the surrounding area, including the Park Plaza Hotel when it was begun in the 1920s.

The prevalence of the grid is particularly apparent in the study area although occasional variations occur, such as streets like Bernard or Bedford which bend to connect separate plans of subdivision. Exceptions to the grid are exceedingly rare. A prominent exception to the grid is the wandering diagonal of Davenport, which originated as an aboriginal trail along the base of the escarpment. This trail has been identified as the most important east-west one known in the City of Toronto. It was a prehistoric route for many of the Iroquoian inhabitants from the villages in the Black Creek area to the resources of the harbour. It extended from the Don River and at its western terminus near Old Weston Road, it split south, by present-day Indian Road, and north to Black Creek. Numerous north-south trails led off Davenport. A number of associated archaeological sites have been identified including the Sandhill burial site (west end of the Rosedale Valley, now developed), the St. Clair-Dufferin - Bull Estate (now developed) and prehistoric ossuary burials north of Poplar Plains and at Jackes-Eglinton<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup>Eric Arthur, *Toronto: No Mean City* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 14.

<sup>9</sup>Mima Kapches, *Back to the Beaten Paths* (Archaeological Newsletter - ROM Series II No. 47, January 1992) p. 3.

### *The Village of Yorkville*

Settlement in Yorkville began as a crossroads community around the Red Lion Inn, a tavern constructed ca. 1808 on the east side of Yonge Street above Bloor (demolished 1888). The establishment of a toll booth at Yonge and Bloor in the 1830s further enhanced the strategic location of the inn just outside its jurisdiction.<sup>10</sup> The availability of water power, clay deposits, and fertile ground close to the City attracted brick yards, Joseph Bloor's brewery, farmers and market gardeners, but the community moved toward attaining an identity when Bloor and Sheriff William B. Jarvis commenced speculative land sales in 1836. The settlement did not have the obvious prominence it now would appear to have, however, because Yonge Street was not used between Queen and Bloor until mid-century; the main street into the city was Parliament.

Another obstruction to growth was the York General Burial Ground, or Potter's Field, which was laid out at citizen instigation in 1825, and incorporated January 1826. Stretching north of Bloor from Yonge nearly to Avenue Road, it inhibited development of the land around it until it was closed after 1854.<sup>11</sup>

Early Yorkville first concentrated east of Yonge, then centred around Yonge Street between Bloor and Davenport. Two very long streets, Sydenham (the present Cumberland) and William (now Yorkville), stretched without significant interruption from Yonge to the Anglican Glebe lot which occupied the present study area. The creation of Bay Street directly demolished a good part of central Yorkville and resulted in major changes to the area. Today only some streets like Hazelton, and those in the study area, retain some of the original scale and texture of the streets which once existed in the Village of Yorkville.

Yorkville incorporated as a village in 1853. A map of survey drawn up that year by G. P. Liddy shows that the study area was not built upon, but was cleared and under cultivation. It was on the fringes of Yorkville.

### *Subdivision of West Yorkville*

The portion of the study area which was formerly part of Yorkville was originally owned as an Anglican Glebe lot, and formed the western part of lot 22. This lot included most of the study area but stopped approximately 157 feet east of the Bedford Road right-of-way.

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<sup>10</sup> Stephanie Hutcheson, *Yorkville in Pictures 1853 to 1883* (Toronto: Metropolitan Toronto Library, 1978), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Hutcheson, *Yorkville*, p. 2. Citizens petitioned for closure 1854, but it took about 25 years for all the bodies to be removed; other reports indicate that perhaps only a sixth of the 6,000 interments were actually moved.

It was first subdivided in 1868 by Registered Plan 289, which laid Avenue Road through from Bloor to St. Clair with ten ten-acre lots on each side. Those lots were rented from the Rector of St. James by a variety of tradesmen, including seven gardeners, a seedsman, a botanist, three butchers, labourers, a glue factory, a brickmaker, and so on.<sup>12</sup> It was in effect a suburb of Yorkville. The subdivision corresponded to the beginning of a boom coincident with population increases and economic activity that peaked in 1874.<sup>13</sup>

In 1870 James Metcalfe filed the plan that put in Prince Arthur Avenue with smaller lots fronting Avenue Road and three frontages on Bloor (Registered Plan 301), beginning the phase of suburban village subdivision.

Metcalfe's lead was quickly followed by local tradesmen who acquired part of a Glebe farm lot and registered plans with standard lot widths adjusted to maximize profit and regularity. No street was built exactly as it was drawn in plan; on Elgin, for example, not one lot corresponded to the registered plan. Although lots were usually laid out at 50', the size of holding quickly diminished to a half or a third of that. Original lot frontages survive at 55 Boswell, which is an interesting house from about 1876, much altered by the builder Charles Teagle, whose family lived here for over seventy years; at 16, 26 and 36 Lowther, the latter an exceptional 61' wide; at 14, 16, and 19 Bernard; on Elgin at 14, 16, 20, 21 and 25; and on Prince Arthur at 10, 15, 17, and 23 (the last two both double lots).

Following Metcalfe's example, Elgin, Lowther, Boswell (originally Victoria), and Bernard (originally Dufferin) were all registered in 1874, but construction starts were sporadic as the economy declined.

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<sup>12</sup> Yorkville Assessment Role, 1862.

<sup>13</sup> Ganton, "Land Subdivision in Toronto," p. 213. In her landmark article, Karen Buckley cautioned that there was no direct relation between population growth and building cycles. K. A. H. Buckley, "Urban Building and Real Estate Fluctuations in Canada," The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science vol.. XVIII no. 1 (February 1952), p. 48.

Tranby was the last street to be developed, but also one of the fastest to be filled-in. Registered Plan 742 of 1887 squeezed twenty-eight lots onto less than 200' of fenced farmland remaining between Bernard and Boswell, resulting in an avenue width of just 48' (the norm on Prince Arthur is 66'). Originally the backyards on the north side of Boswell measured 93' deep, and were separated from the Tranby yards by a swath of land about 40' across that ran the length of the block. The lot sizes of 8-20 Boswell more closely approximate the original dimensions. Over the years the back land was reached by lanes from both ends of the streets, and in the mid-1880s a pair of Second Empire cottages were occupied as residences. These residences, at 38a and 38b Boswell Avenue, are the only nineteenth-century examples in the study area of dwellings being built within the interior of the block. Lot boundaries throughout the area have been adjusted for various purposes over the past century, but nowhere else are the idiosyncrasies of nineteenth-century development quite so eloquently visible as in the middle of this block.

Subdivisions were registered by individuals acting singly or in partnership, and speculative building was confined to relatively small projects. The largest single building project noted in the area prior to 1900 was the construction of five pairs of semidetached houses at 33-53 Tranby by local resident builder James Crang in 1889; a further subdivision developing four semidetached houses occurred on Elgin in 1902.<sup>14</sup> In addition, many of the developers and builders lived in Yorkville or in the study area. Charles Parker and William Booth were two busy builders who moved around the area; David McMurrin, James Crang, and William Stollery all lived and built in the district.<sup>15</sup>

These patterns characterized most of the subdivision activity in Toronto in the period.<sup>16</sup> The subdivision of a park or farm lot by its owner usually provided the street pattern, and the additional intervention of individuals speculating with smaller parcels was omitted, but in the East Annex, the development of the lot pattern required three stages: the corporate land owner, the private speculator, and the individual. In the Annex, where a development company worked on a relatively large scale, it needed only two stages for the lot pattern to fully appear.

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<sup>14</sup> Building permit 59, 12 March 1889 to James Crang. Total cost of buildings, \$18,000. The Elgin properties were filed on Plan 627 by the Bacon Estate on permit 588 of 4 June, 1902. Chadwick and Beckett were architects, with Davidge and Turner builders; permit estimate, \$24,000.

<sup>15</sup> Parker lived at 17 and 37 Boswell; Booth lived at 115 and 122 Bedford.

<sup>16</sup> Ganton, "Land Subdivision in Toronto," p. 227.

In many instances, the first buildings were replaced around 1900 by more substantial structures, reflecting changes in architectural fashion and in the tenor of the area. On Boswell, for example, 32-32A-34 (1908) and 40-42-44 (1907) replaced a pair of roughcast cottages on each lot that dated from the 1870s; and the houses at 9 and 11 Prince Arthur replaced one substantial roughcast house, also of the mid-1870s.

Those changes can be related to the transition from West Yorkville origins, to the later assumption of the East Annex identity. With the exception of Prince Arthur Avenue, the study area was first occupied mainly by tradesmen and labourers. Boswell in particular was largely occupied by workers in the building trades in 1884: plumber, builder, contractor, carpenter, and several stonecutters. Its modest socio-economic profile in the early years is attributable to its inconvenient situation midway between Bloor, Davenport, or the Yorkville connector cross-streets. By the early 1890s, trade and craftsmen were being displaced by white-collar workers: agents, clerks, travellers, accountants, a number of lawyers, and many men working in family companies. By 1890, the trip to work for the majority of residents involved commuting downtown to Toronto Street, Wellington, King, or lower Yonge, at the heart of the commercial and financial districts.

*Subdivision of Bedford and the Annex*

The western limit of the Village of Yorkville was approximately 157 feet east of the Bedford Road right-of-way. The land upon which Bedford Road is built was part of a 100 acre estate owned by Robert Baldwin, who built a house there prior to 1884 (presently 50 Lowther, much altered). The contrast between the edge of the village, and the rural estate land of the Baldwins, was striking.

In 1883 Simeon Henan Janes, who called himself a land and loan broker, acquired several parcels of Baldwin property for redevelopment, and led the successful petition for the annexation of the district to Toronto. Yorkville joined Toronto in 1884, with the rest of the Annex following in 1887. His 'Toronto Annexed' was heavily promoted in 1886 as a desirable subdivision, conveniently located near cultural amenities and important churches.

The lots on Bedford measured 157' 6" deep and they were originally shown running right through what are now road allowances for the east-west streets. No doubt Janes initially hoped to wring out a return from every foot of salable land, but eventually the Yorkville streets were continued right through to Bedford. Instead of readjusting the lot sizes, the affected lots were offered as slivers of whatever land remained after the road went through. The land south of Lowther was not part of Janes' development, and the junction of the two subdivisions explains the bend in Bedford at that intersection.

Janes' subdivision substantially altered the nature and appearance of the earlier streets. Tranby was created by subdivision shortly after the annexation. Most importantly, prior to the construction of Bedford the east-west streets dead-ended against the Village of Yorkville boundary. Shortly after the introduction of the subdivision, the east-west streets were connected to Bedford and the back yards of the lots on the east side of Bedford were cut down to sizes ranging from 106' to 127' in order to gain two to four additional frontages on the cross streets. On Tranby, for example, an additional pair of semidetached houses was built on each side of the street near Bedford, while on Prince Arthur, four buildings were built at the expense of the Bedford frontage. Even better, Bedford represented a new neighbourhood that aspired to elegance. With St. George as its principal avenue and the attractions of Queen's Park nearby, the Annex attracted an 'upper class' that was beginning a slow northwestern migration across the city.

Accordingly, the whole of Tranby Avenue and the west ends of the other east-west streets of the study area developed under the influence of the newly created Annex. Vacant lots, market gardens, and rough shacks were replaced by substantial, ambitious houses. One of the earliest to bridge the divide was strategically located near the areas of greatest prestige and earliest development, at 36 Prince Arthur, of 1891. On Boswell, the divide was literally spanned by 54-62, partly in West Yorkville and partly on Lot 23. This set of five semidetached houses commenced construction in 1889 but they were not occupied until 1892.

Development on Bedford occurred through the slow years of the 1890s, when construction starts in the city declined from the highs of the late 1880s, and built in the early 1900s towards the high of 1905. Building permit records are sporadic for most of the early development of the study area, but they indicate considerable activity in this period on Prince Arthur, Lowther, and Bernard west of Bedford, with many houses by Chadwick and Beckett, F. H. Herbert, and builder C. R. Dinnick.

The types of development that occurred in the first two thirds of the century were a direct consequence of the socio-economic composition of the area. The study area was not representative of the central Annex, and its northern streets were quite anomalous.

Streets of the study area sifted out in a social hierarchy after 1900 that made Bernard respectable, dipped somewhat through Tranby and Boswell, and peaked in terms of cachet along Prince Arthur. Status was partly reflected in the tax assessments, which in 1910 were highest on Prince Arthur, Lowther, and the west side of Bedford, of streets in the study area. Families who considered themselves aristocratic or otherwise notable ensured their listing in the Toronto Blue Books.

It has been calculated that as 3% of the population, Annex residents represented between 19 -25% of the Blue Book addresses between 1900 and 1924.<sup>17</sup> Among their number over half were professional and managerial workers; but in the study area this held true only on Prince Arthur. Manual occupations predominated on Boswell and the south side of Lowther in 1923. Clerical occupations employed most householders on the north side of Bernard, the south side of Elgin, and the entire west side of Bedford. By comparison, in 1923 St. George was inhabited wholly by managerial, proprietorial, or professional classes. The short streets of the East Annex were comparable to Brunswick, Howland, and Albany in terms of occupational structure and assessed values, but had a higher tenancy rate.<sup>18</sup>

Social status was jealously guarded and relied on the respective hostilities and resentments of different groups. The old-money 'Establishment' society apparently "accepted" Jewish neighbours (who constituted less than 1% of the local populace) but not Catholics (in the range of 5%); the newly affluent who had earned their money, the 'Industrial Elite,' are said to have had different intolerances.<sup>19</sup> These prejudices would percolate through in development decisions that were affected by Annex residents, and underlie some of the hidden factors involving change in the area.

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<sup>17</sup> Jim Lemon and Stephen Speisman, "Annegonians, 1910 and 1923," The Annex Book 1.6, p. 4, and figure 1.6.6.

<sup>18</sup> Lemon and Speisman, "Annegonians," figure 1.6.3.

<sup>19</sup> C. A. Russell, "The Establishment and the Industrial Elite," The Annex Book 1.5, p. 5; and Lemon and Speisman, "Annegonians," p. 3.



The role of transportation between Yorkville and Toronto in determining growth has not been fully assessed, but elsewhere in Toronto a neutral relationship has been observed.<sup>20</sup> Generally transportation in Toronto followed the development of subdivisions, rather than preceded it. After the establishment of a transit authority in 1892, new residential areas emerged just beyond existing transit lines; areas without service languished.<sup>21</sup> The opening in 1849 of a horse-drawn omnibus line from the Red Lion to the market enabled junior professionals, clerks, and so on, to commute to the City while enjoying the lower taxes of Yorkville.<sup>22</sup> In 1861 the horse-drawn street railway was laid down Yonge Street, first between Yorkville and King Street, then extended the following year to the Yorkville toll gate at Davenport, but other northerly routes—the fashionable districts of Jarvis and Sherbourne—were not served until the late 1870s. The Spadina street railway only ran north of College after 1883; a Bloor line was added in 1889, and the street railway was laid on Avenue Road in 1895.<sup>23</sup> Although it did not lead development, transit accessibility coincided with the commercialization of the perimeter streets in the area.

Street quality was another factor in development although not necessarily a determinant. Downtown streets were macadamized in the 1840s, and Yonge Street was improved by paving with cedar blocks as far as Bloor in 1881. Creosoted cedar paving was usually the first technique used to ameliorate muddy conditions, and it was carried out on the streets in the study area after their annexation to Toronto. Avenue Road, Prince Arthur and Lowther were paved in 1885; Elgin and Boswell in 1887; Bloor, Tranby, and Bernard in 1889; and Bedford in 1890. By 1900 red brick pavements began to replace

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<sup>20</sup> Isobel K. Ganton, "Land Subdivision in Toronto, 1851-1883," Gilbert Stelter and Alan F. J. Artibise, Shaping the Urban Landscape: Aspects of the Canadian City-Building Process (Ottawa, 1982), p. 215.

<sup>21</sup> Michael J. Doucet, "Politics, Space, and Trolleys: Mass Transit in Early Twentieth-Century Toronto," Shaping the Urban Landscape, p. 366; Toronto Transit Commission, Wheels of Progress (Toronto 1953), p. 15.

<sup>22</sup> Wheels of Progress, p. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ganton, "Land Subdivision in Toronto," p. 219; Peter W. Moore, "Public Services and Residential Development in a Toronto Neighbourhood, 1880-1915," Journal of Urban History, vol. 9 no. 4 (August 1983), p. 459.

the cedar, as on Prince Arthur, for example, and a broad programme of improvements between 1899 and 1911 introduced macadam or early asphalt.<sup>24</sup> Sidewalks were still plank in 1900; concrete sidewalks were introduced at the same time as asphalt, so that by 1930 91% of roads were asphalt, and about as many sidewalks were concrete. Another modernisation was the replacement of gas by electric lamps, which was completed by 1911.<sup>25</sup>

Nor was municipal servicing particularly important to inducing settlement. On Elgin, for example, up to 40% of houses preceded servicing, and negligible increases in construction are noted in the area after the provision of water and sewer mains, with the exception of Tranby Avenue: and even there, servicing is not the only factor to be considered.<sup>26</sup>

The Ontario & Quebec Railway line ran across the northern edge of the district in 1882, but a strong direct impact on settlement or development in the area cannot be detected. An attempt was made to limit the functions attracted by railway sidings in 1907, when residents at the north end of Admiral Avenue petitioned to protect their investments by prohibiting factories, lumber yards, and warehouses from being built nearby.<sup>27</sup>

Finally, the car arrived in Toronto in 1902, changing everyone's experience of the street. Speeding was a hazard that necessitated the formation of a control squad in 1912. The chief police constable complained in 1919 that downtown streets were becoming 'an open air garage,'<sup>28</sup> and permits to construct automobile garages in the Annex had been issued as early as 1904.<sup>29</sup> Efforts to accommodate the automobile have caused some of the more dramatic changes in the study area, with street widenings, the introduction of garage buildings, meters, front parking pads, and the removal of trees and boulevards.

<sup>24</sup> Moore, "Public Services and Residential Development," p. 461; reminiscences of Prince Arthur by Norman A. Keys, QC in The Annex Book, 3.1.b; and Peter W. Moore, "Local Improvements, Developments, and Annexation 1884-1912," The Annex Book 1.3, p. 49.

<sup>25</sup> Roger E. Riendeau, "Servicing the Modern City 1900-30," Victor Russell, ed., Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto (Toronto: U of T Press 1984), pp. 159-60.

<sup>26</sup> Peter W. Moore, "Public Services and Residential Development," p. 459.

<sup>27</sup> Peter W. Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change in the Annex 1900-1970," Ph.D. diss. Geography, University of Toronto, 1979, p. 464.

<sup>28</sup> Riendeau, "Servicing the Modern City," p. 163.

<sup>29</sup> Building Permit 269 of 19 April 1904 was issued to H. McGee to build a \$300. one-storey automobile shed of sheeting and galvanized corrugated iron at 108 Lowther near Huron, which is outside the study district. The next recorded auto shed was for the Gooderham house at 8 Bedford, a house by David Roberts which has been demolished (permit 3624, 28 April 1906). Not surprisingly, the first in the study district, and one that

The Yorkville settlement was the first in the line of northwesterly growth that characterized expansion around Toronto,<sup>30</sup> although other villages were occurring concurrently west of the City along Queen, Dundas, and Bloor streets. Yorkville incorporated as a village in 1853, with a population of 5400; the development of the study area peaked around 1888; and the Annex developed principally after 1900. Geographically and temporally, the study area falls between larger areas of Yorkville and the Annex. Although the area shares qualities with Yorkville and the Annex, it is somewhat closer in its historical impetus and architectural character to the developments of other areas of Toronto such as Beverley Street or Parkdale.

Like Prince Arthur, Beverley evolved in the 1870s as an outlying street for the suburban villas of an affluent clientele, drawn partly by the prestige of the Grange and its park. The dominant buildings were merchant George Beardmore's splendid Second Empire mansion Chudleigh; John Cawthra's house in the same style; and Globe publisher George Brown's highly personal Lambton Lodge, all of the 1872-75 period. As on Prince Arthur, the early villa pattern was augmented by semi-detached houses and later changes.

Parkdale was a streetcar suburb west of Toronto that developed first as a commutable summer resort. It was annexed to the city in 1889 and flourished as a suburb attracting middle- and upper-class professionals through the 1890s and early twentieth century, exhibiting a pattern of socio-economic migration similar to the Annex.

*Historical Planning Issues*

Early Annex residents were anxious to protect the quality of their area, and exploited whatever means were available to do so. Planning controls developed relatively slowly in Canada, with the first official zoning by-law in Toronto being adopted in 1952. As a conservative force, zoning only benefited the early residents as long as the founding interest dominated and controlled change. As those owner-occupants representing the founding interests declined in numbers, they were replaced by more commercial interests, and zoning responded to those changes.<sup>31</sup>

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survives, was at 2 Elgin, which cost an extraordinary \$1200: 1 1/2 storey brick by architect E. MacDougal, builder T. Lewis, for A. J. Jackson (permit 7981, 3 June 1907).

<sup>30</sup> Donald Kerr and Jacob Spelt, The Changing Face of Toronto—a study in urban geography (Ottawa: Energy, Mines & Resources, 1966), p. 97.

<sup>31</sup> Peter W. Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change: The Annex in Toronto, 1900-1970," Canadian Geographer XXVI no. 1 (1982), *passim*.

Ontario municipalities were granted the power by the Legislature to engage in 'districting,' a rudimentary form of land use control, in 1904.<sup>32</sup> Toronto exercised these new powers that same year, and Annex residents were quick to solicit protection of the residential character. Commercial uses had scarcely infiltrated the area, emerging gradually and tentatively as corner groceries and drug stores on corner lots along Avenue Road in the 1890s, where the changes over time were striking. The first non-residential uses had been on Avenue Road: a grocery store at 146 near Davenport in 1890; a drug store in 94 Avenue Road at the corner of Boswell in 1894 (which became a laundry in 1905); and a grocery store at 92<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in 1910. The ordinance prohibited such uses from streets inside the area. Dental and medical offices increased north of Boswell after 1910 at 100, 102, 108, 110, and 112; and a funeral parlour (the Bates Burial Company) eventually took over two houses at 122 and 124 between 1915 and 1925. As well, the Rotherwood Apartments were built at 72-76 north of Lowther before 1915 (demolished for 66). The uses on Avenue Road provided amenities without altering the residential character of the inner streets, and were more compatible with residential than were the more noisome activities in the industrial parts of Dupont, for example, but the trend was clear. The construction of the British American Oil Company station at Lowther in 1928 caused rather more opposition, but stronger municipal interests prevailed over resident protests. By 1914, fewer than half the sites on the perimeter roads were occupied by the owners.<sup>33</sup>

In 1912 municipal control extended to regulate the 'location and erection of apartment houses and garages,' the latter for hire or gain. At that time, apartments were still regarded as slightly scandalous, or at least improper places to live; for the ordinance, they were defined as comprising three or more units. The Annex was part of a large area from which apartments were excluded.<sup>34</sup> Nevertheless, multiple occupancy began around 1910, and was quite prevalent by 1915. Several houses on Tranby were 'duplexed' before 1910; the house at 68 Tranby was home to five women in 1915, and continued in multiple use through

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<sup>32</sup> Peter W. Moore, "Zoning and planning: the Toronto experience, 1904-1970", A. Artibise and G. Stelter, eds., The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City (Toronto: MacMillan and Co., 1979), p. 317.

<sup>33</sup> Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change," Canadian Geographer, n. 19.

<sup>34</sup> Peter W. Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change: the Annex in Toronto, 1900-1970," Canadian Geographer XXVI I, 1982, n. p.; and Moore, "Zoning and planning: the Toronto experience, 1904-1970," The Usable Urban Past, p. 322.

after 1940. In 1921, bylaws permitting only single-family residential use were applied on a street-by-street basis. The conversion of seven buildings to multi-family use on Bernard around 1920 had resulted in the extension of restrictions from Prince Arthur, Bedford and Lowther, and their eventual application by 1929 to most of the Annex, but the distinction of West Yorkville continued: the original survey sections of Tranby, Boswell, and Elgin were excluded from the area of restrictions, as were the peripheral frontages on Bloor Street, Avenue Road, and Davenport.<sup>35</sup>

The exclusivity of residential use was challenged by the attempt of the Separate School Board to build a new school for St. Basil's at 14-18 Prince Arthur, which had been purchased for that use in 1921. Street residents convinced City Council to reject the project, and after their action was overturned by the Supreme Court of Canada, the City finally secured the approval of the Privy Council in England to uphold their by-law. The School Board found a site on Hazelton and built without objection. The battle was fought on the basis of building type rather than use; the Women's Art Association had been ensconced at 21 Prince Arthur since around 1920, and were later joined by the Lyceum Club. The residents opposed an orthopaedic hospital on the same site just as vehemently, finally organizing the Annex Residents' Association in 1928 to prepare themselves to protect their neighbourhood. The ARA was not interested in defending the whole of the Annex, however; the influential directors were concerned with the Prince Arthur axis and the central area between Bedford and Walmer.<sup>36</sup>

Neighbourly opposition escalated as the established residents resisted the widespread social changes following the war. Housing shortages, urban employment, female emancipation, and altered economic circumstances made the conversions of large houses or operating boarding houses feasible and respectable, especially after the federal government ordered a temporary lifting of municipal by-laws as one response to the housing crisis. Not in the Annex, though, where the ARA even hired a Pinkerton detective in 1931 to report on the status of a house at 97 Bedford, reported by neighbours to be a boarding house that sold meals to outsiders. In that case, however, the City refused to prosecute.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change," *Canadian Geographer*, Figure 1.

<sup>36</sup> James Lemon, "The Annex: A Brief Historical Geography," (Toronto: September, 1986, typescript; courtesy CHP), p. 16.

<sup>37</sup> Bev Stager, "The Founding of an Association: The Early Annex Ratepayers 1928-1940," *The Annex Book*, 2.1, p. 9.

The interests of the founding group of resident owners predominated until 1930, although owner occupancy had been declining since 1924. Commercial interests acquired buildings in a general shift from prestige residential to rooming district during the 1930s; in the 1940s many houses were converted to multiple-family occupancy, and many of those households were headed by women.

Despite widespread multiplexing and the appearance of apartment houses, the accommodation situation in the city did not improve enough. In 1942, the Annex was specifically singled out by the Rental Administrator and Property Committee of Toronto for rooming house use. If the Medical Officer of Health agreed, houses could be converted to two, three, or more self-contained apartments; and any house in Toronto was permitted to shelter two or three roomers. The only provision in the Annex was that external signs and front yard parking be prohibited. To ameliorate conditions after the war, the city even leased 'emergency' houses; one of them was 108 Lowther.<sup>38</sup>

The conflict between old residents and new uses continued, but waned as a wider spectrum of owners, with diverse interests, moved in. Through the 1930s and 1940s, the ARA redefined its area of concern to accept multiplexing in order to deter institutional and large scale apartment uses, and no longer opposed amendment applications for house conversions, but the stronger demands of the commercial interests forced increasingly wider acceptance of change. Institutional and, after 1949, even office uses were not opposed by the ARA.

Following the adoption of Toronto's first Official City Plan in 1950, comprehensive zoning to consolidate the hundreds of residential restrictions was implemented in 1954. A district plan for the area was developed by the city in 1958, accompanied in 1960 by new zoning regulations which recognized the non-residential character of the southern end of the Annex, and incorporated provisions for high rise apartment zones. In that year, 1960, for the first time the Annex Residents' Association accepted tenants in their membership, and the independent East and West Annex associations amalgamated.<sup>39</sup> Between 1954 and 1969, twenty-nine apartment buildings supplying 2558 units were built in the Annex, all but two in the approved areas of St. George, Spadina, and south of Lowther.<sup>40</sup>

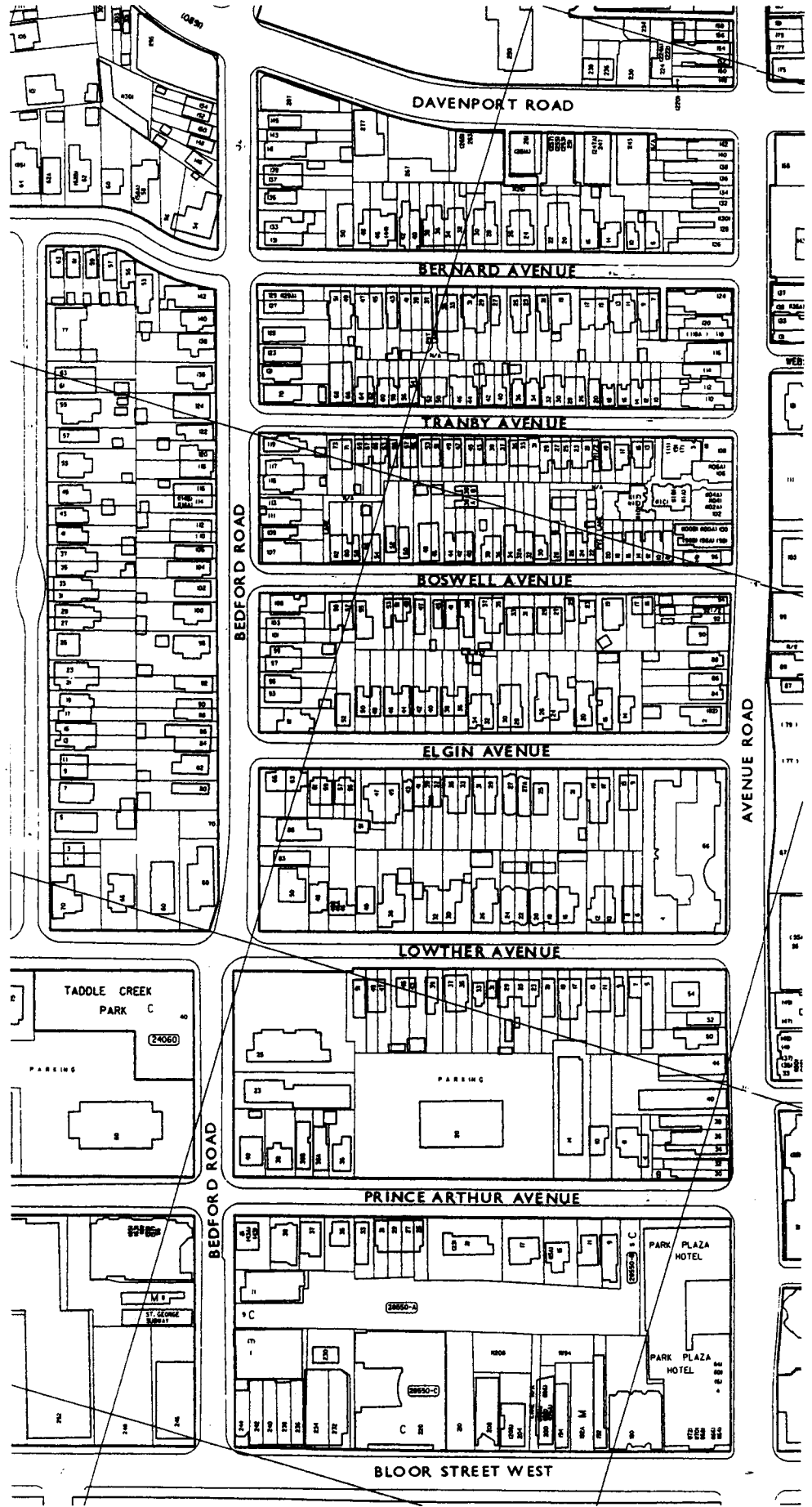
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<sup>38</sup> R. I. K. Davidson, "The War Years," The Annex Book 2.3, pp. 3-4.

<sup>39</sup> C. A. Russell, "Annex Resident Associations in the 1960s," The Annex Book 2.8, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup> Moore, "Zoning and Neighbourhood Change," Canadian Geographer, n.p.

# PROPERTY DATA



*This property data map illustrates the street patterns, property lot lines and location of buildings in the study area.*

## 2.2 Defining the East Annex Conservation District Boundary

*The lesson we can learn from the Victorians as we could from the Georgians is the success with which they created an atmosphere of urban amenity through repetition, a sense of space through enclosure, and a human scale.*

*Eric Arthur, 1974*<sup>41</sup>

### 2.2.1 The Pattern of Blocks and Streets of the Study Area

*It is recommended that the sub-areas, or precincts, within the study area with the most intact nineteenth-century urban form and with the most significant groupings of heritage buildings be included in the proposed East Annex Heritage Conservation District.*

They are the following:

the properties facing onto Bernard, Tranby, Boswell, Elgin, Lowther and Prince Arthur between Avenue Road and Bedford, (with the exclusion of the apartment tower at 20 Prince Arthur),

the properties facing onto Bedford Road between Davenport and Lowther and 15 Bedford at Prince Arthur; and the properties on the west side of Avenue Road from Davenport to Elgin.

*It is recommended that the precincts in the study area in which little of heritage value remains be excluded from the proposed East Annex Heritage Conservation District.*

They are the following:

the properties on Avenue Road south of Elgin,

on Bedford south of Lowther, with the exception of 15 Bedford (43 Prince Arthur),

on Prince Arthur west of Bedford, and

the properties facing onto Davenport.

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<sup>41</sup> Eric Arthur, Toronto: No Mean City (Toronto, U of T Press, ed. 1974).



The East Annex study area constitutes a unique portion of the City's history, demonstrating the final development of the Village of Yorkville and the commencement of the Annex. This development of the area has led to a configuration of short east-west streets separating blocks of varying depth. While these streets are somewhat comparable in origin to east-west streets like Scollard or Berryman they now form a distinct community detached from the earlier section of Yorkville. The East Annex developed as an area showing transition, and the transitional nature can be partly interpreted from the slight skewing of the streets such as Bedford and Bernard, where different plans of subdivision intersected.

The piecemeal speculative nature of these subdivided blocks can be seen in the lack of an integrated lane system and in the lack of provision for planned communal open space. The lack of lane space could also be attributed historically to the use of livery stables within Yorkville rather than individual stables or coachhouses planned for each property.

The two largest blocks at the south end of the study area are a remnant of Metcalfe's generous subdivision of the land, which had been intended for villa lots. The northern blocks are tighter and have varying but much smaller lot divisions, indicating the slightly later, market-sensitive period of speculative development.

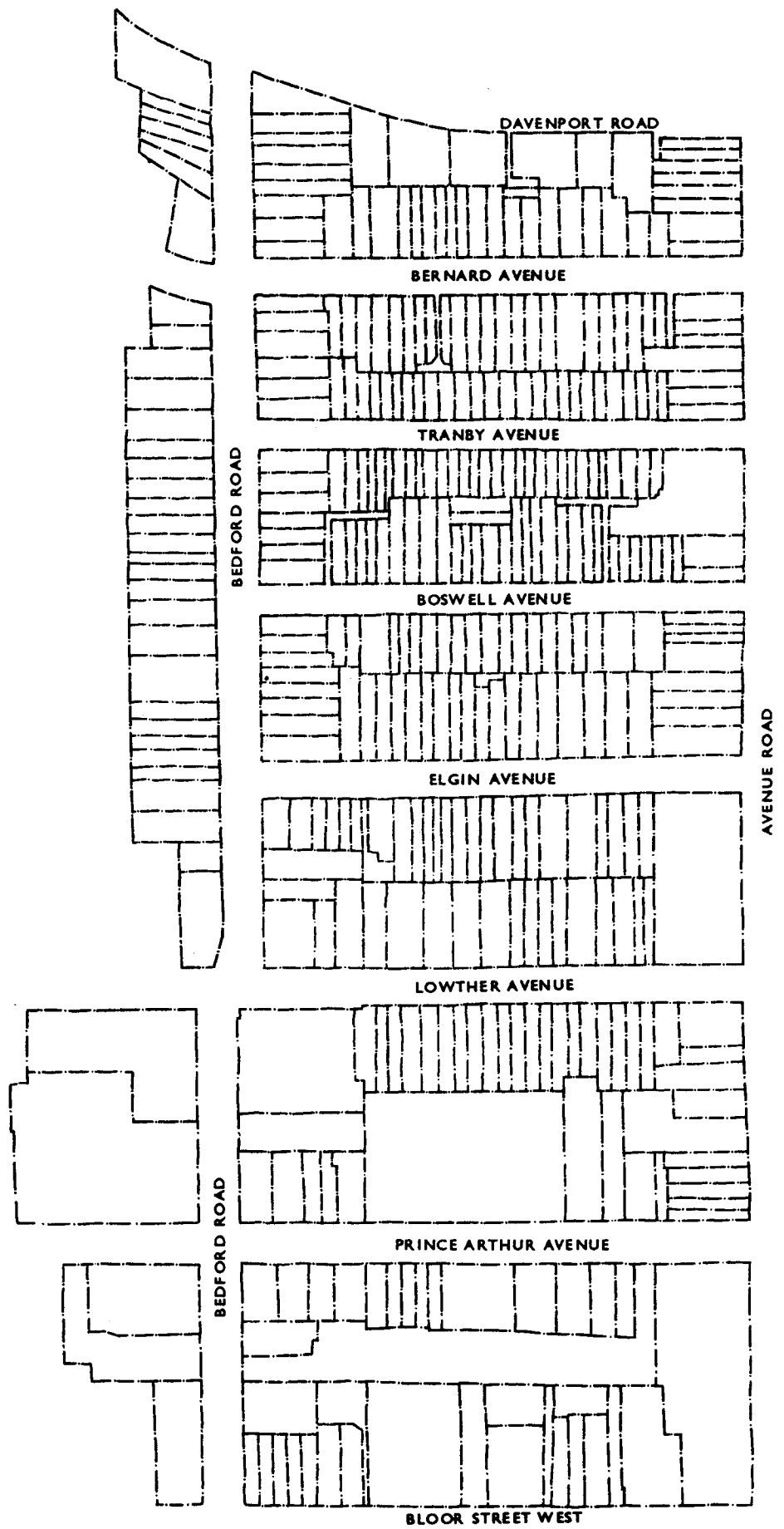
With the exception of Davenport Road, which existed as an early road prior to the subdivision of the area, all of the designations of 'road' and 'avenue' are intended to connote a prestigious residential suburb, with gracious homes on treed streets.

At the present time the definition of blocks within the northern portion of the study area remains clear and intact. At the southern end of the study area this definition is less clear, partly because of larger assemblies of land with towers and open green space (20 and 50 Prince Arthur). The same lack of definition is created by Taddle Creek Park, which replaced a group of significant early 20th century Annex houses.

The perimeter of the study area has somewhat larger lots with a denser concentration of building footprints, primarily commercial. Some of these properties, such as those on Avenue Road north of Elgin, still conform to the dimensions of the earlier residential lot divisions. These earlier lot divisions and the buildings related to them have been assembled into large parcels on southern sections of Avenue Road and have disappeared entirely for the properties on Davenport Road.

The fine grained character of both lot division and built form can be seen to be significantly different on each of the streets within the study area, and the final delineation of the boundaries for the proposed heritage district can only be confirmed by a careful examination at this finer scale. Section 3 of this study examines each of the avenues as a precinct within the study area to determine their individual value for inclusion in the designation.

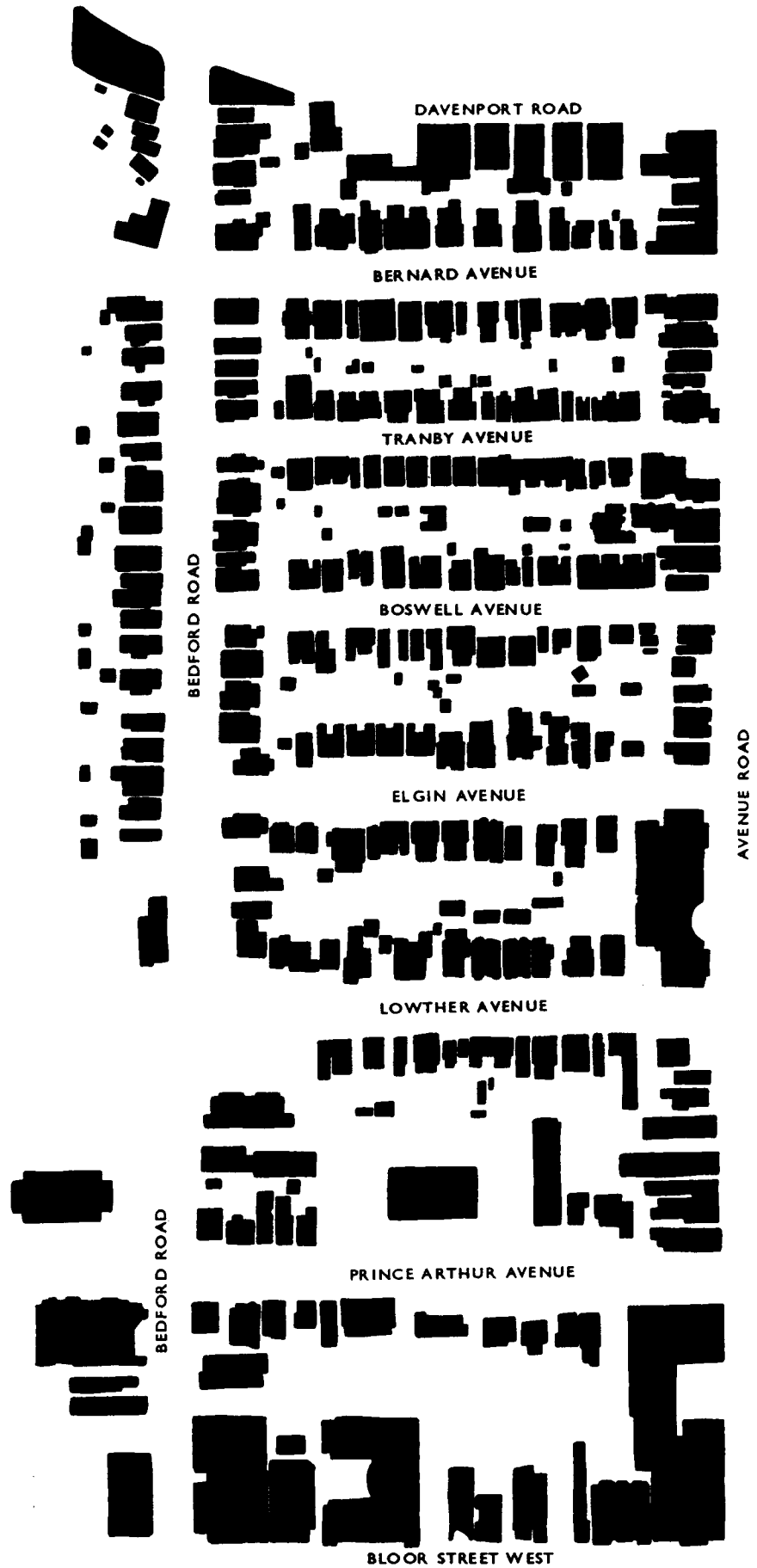
# LOT DIVISIONS



*This plan shows the existing lot patterns in the study area. The medium-sized lots on Prince Arthur indicate the earliest development of the area. The smaller lots to the north indicate the later nineteenth-century development. The largest lots, particularly on Davenport, on the lower part of Bedford and on sections Avenue Road illustrate more recent development.*



**FIGURE /  
GROUND  
BUILT FORM  
PATTERN**



*This plan shows the buildings as black solids. Note that the nineteenth century houses, like those on Tranby, link together to make a block, but some buildings such as the apartment tower in the mid-block of Prince Arthur stands alone and does not contribute to the formation of a block.*



### 2.2.2 The Architectural Character of the Study Area

The nineteenth-century buildings in the study area include residential buildings influenced by both the development of the Village of Yorkville and the creation of the Annex. They also include dwellings which reflect the unique character of the area as a transitional suburban development of the 1870s, sharing an affinity with other neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto such as Parkdale.

The detached house, which ranged from the roughcast cottage to the brick villa, and the semidetached house, also in roughcast and brick variants, formed the basis for construction in the study area until urban intensification and commercial development began to affect structures on Davenport and Avenue Road. The semidetached house is a remarkably prevalent building type for late nineteenth-century suburban residential development in the City of Toronto, and now forms the characteristic building type for much of Toronto's older neighbourhoods.

A limited number of residential building types recur throughout the area, representing a number of shifts in architectural style for the residential buildings constructed prior to 1920. These residences reflect three specific periods of development:

*Pre-Annexation Structures*

1. Dwellings which predate the annexation and were part of the Village of Yorkville were constructed in a variety of styles with Italianate, late Gothic Revival or Georgian 'Survival' elements for the roughcast cottages and the notable polychromatic brick buildings at 19 Bernard and 90 Avenue Road. A variation for this period, and one which also has later examples, is the Second Empire style with its characteristic mansard roof, occurring in one and two storey buildings, most flamboyantly in a coordinated trio of semidetached houses built in 1879 at 20/22, 24/26, 28/30 Bernard;

*This house at 19 Bernard was built circa 1875 for Noah Piper. Interior renovations have indicated that the house may be of earlier construction and was originally only one storey in height. The polychromatic or two-toned brickwork was typical of Yorkville buildings.*



*Annexation Structures*

2. Dwellings which were constructed during the period of the annexations or shortly after, and often built in multiples, are frequently like the tall brick Romanesque/Gothic Revival semidetached houses that typify Tranby, or the larger houses on Bedford, with prominent gables, round arches, canted corners, ornamental moulded brick and terra cotta, pierced and panelled bargeboards, and frequent use of sandstone trim;

*These houses at 44-46 Tranby were constructed as speculative developments in 1890 and are representative of the houses from this period. The first residents were Andrew McKay, a teacher, and Archibald McCallum, a professor at University College.*



*Post-Annexation Structures*

3. Dwellings built shortly after annexation, and later into the twentieth century, tend to be a softer, wider variant of the Queen Anne in a brown or orangey brick, often semidetached, pairing two houses under a wide centre gable and enlivening the surfaces with shingles, multiple small window panes, towers, and calling on Dutch, English, and classical sources for detailing. Excellent examples are 49-51 Bernard of 1901, by the architect A. M. Rice; and 52 Elgin of 1897, by F. H. Herbert.

*This house at 52 Elgin was built in 1898 for A. H. Sydene, a clerk at the Legislative Assembly and is a fine example of the structures added to the area after annexation.*





Within these broad categories there occur interesting variations and themes, which give the area much of its character and cohesion.

On Davenport and Avenue Road more dense building types were constructed, replacing earlier structures, starting with the construction of buildings such as the block of commercial buildings at 132 - 138 Avenue Road in the late 1920s. At the same time the remaining residential buildings on Avenue Road were being converted to commercial uses. On Davenport Road all of the earlier structures were replaced in the late 1930s.

The greatest impact of twentieth century construction has come from changes in scale. The assembly of six lots to build the apartment tower at 20 Prince Arthur in 1967 introduced significant changes to its surroundings. In terms of visibility, height, overlook, and definition of the block, lot and street, the tower creates a character unlike the historical pattern of the earlier residential buildings.

At the perimeter of the study area, eight lots on Avenue Road were assembled to build the condominium at 66 Avenue Road between Elgin and Lowther; another assembly of lots has been made for a development on Avenue Road between Prince Arthur and Lowther. Again, while the height of the building at 66 Avenue Road is decreased at its north end in recognition of the existing residential buildings, these projects are unlike the historical pattern which evolved in the area and are not recommended for inclusion in the proposed District.

Infill and new construction within the area has been varied in approach and, from Tranby Terrace, an infill project at the corner of Tranby and Avenue Road, to the moving of a building on Elgin to create a building lot, most of the projects have shown an ability to adapt to site-specific design constraints.

The recent construction in the area is less easily characterized by specific elements, but tends to a straightforwardness in material, form, placement of openings, and a simplicity of detailing. Many of the most recent buildings introduce a variety of more modern architectural concerns, including recreations of historic prototypes. An example of this can be seen at 17a Elgin, which copies the brickwork and detailing of its neighbours.

As part of this study the buildings in the East Annex have been evaluated on an individual basis using the Toronto Historical Board's Criteria for Heritage Properties. This evaluation has confirmed that the area does contain a significant number of buildings of heritage interest. The results of this evaluation are included in the mapping of the sub-areas later in this report.

Of the properties in the study area 34% (130 of the approximately 376 properties) are already included on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties.

The Toronto Historical Board's Criteria for Heritage Properties<sup>42</sup> gives three categories of significance. They are:

"A": - properties which are individually outstanding and have national or provincial significance.

There are no examples of properties which have been evaluated as being of national or provincial significance within the study area, but the York Club, the former Gooderham residence at St. George and Bloor, may be seen as a nearby example;

"B": - properties which are noteworthy for their overall quality and have city-wide importance.

Within the study area properties which have city-wide importance or interest, for either architectural or historical reasons, include prominently located buildings such as 2 Elgin, at the corner of Elgin and Avenue Road, or 36 or 50 Lowther Avenue, former residences of the Baldwin family;

"C": - properties which retain much of their original character and are vital reminders of a community's past.

Within the study area many of the nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings contribute with their scale, materials, detail, massing and architectural style to the unique character of the area. The majority of the buildings on Tranby are excellent examples of heritage buildings creating a unique neighbourhood context.

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<sup>42</sup> The Toronto Historical Board is currently reviewing these criteria. The ratings included in this study were undertaken by the study team to assess the character of the area. The ratings were not individually reviewed by the Toronto Historical Board.

Properties which do not meet the Toronto Historical Board's criteria are rated in this study as having little heritage value and are given an "X". This evaluation may imply either that the building is at present so altered from its original appearance that its character is substantially diminished, or that the building is too recent to be given any accurate heritage evaluation. An "X" evaluation, therefore, states only that the building is not of heritage significance at this time.

Properties which are in the "A" or "B" categories are landmarks of significant merit and they stand on their own, but the evaluation of the "C" category is more related to the context of a neighbourhood.

Examined on an individual basis, or in an isolated context, it is difficult to attribute a "C" category status, but within an area of heritage significance a "C" property is a property which contributes to the overall heritage character of the neighbourhood, district or area, and which merits conservation because of its contribution to and support of the neighbourhood character.

Within the study area our evaluation has recommended that there are the following numbers for each category:

In the total study area:

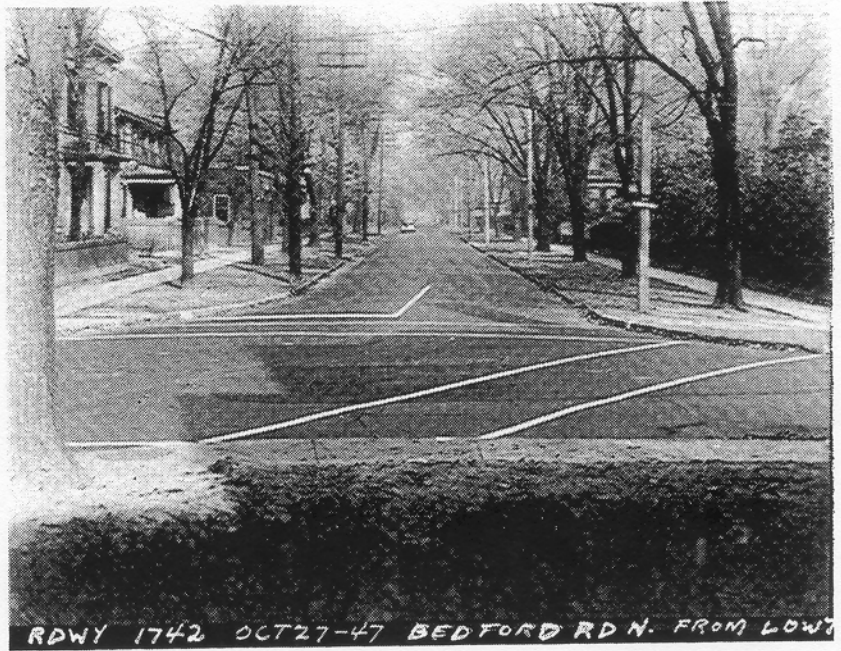
A Category:	none
B Category:	35 (9 %)
C Category:	269 (72 %)
X Category:	<u>72 (19 %)</u>
	376 properties

In the area recommended for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act:

A Category:	none
B Category:	35 (10 %)
C Category:	264 (75 %)
X Category:	<u>51 (15 %)</u>
	350 properties

The concentration of buildings of heritage significance supports the proposed designation.

### 2.2.3 Streetscape Character



Bedford Road North of Lowther, before the widening of the road, 1947  
(City of Toronto Archives - DPW - 58-1742)

#### *General Street Character*

Several elements within a street combine to give an overall streetscape character: the width of the road, the proximity of the buildings to the street, the location of the sidewalk in relation to the buildings and the street, the location and visibility of parked cars, the type of street lighting and visibility of service utilities, the quantity and character of the street trees and, in residential areas, the quantity and quality of front yard gardens. All these elements act in unison to create an image for both the resident and visitor alike.

A key determining element in defining the different streetscape characters in the East Annex is the location of sidewalks, which leads to the positioning of other streetscape elements.

There are generally two types of streetscape environments in the area: the boulevard type street where the sidewalk is separated from the curb by a landscaped strip or boulevard, and the non-boulevard type where the sidewalk is directly adjacent to the road curb. The boulevard type gives a very special, distinctive and imageable character to the area, especially when combined with large mature trees. Elgin, Bedford and Prince Arthur are boulevard streets. These streets not only have generally wider street allowances than the non-boulevard streets but the building lines are set back farther back from the road and are more irregular. All these elements create a generous pedestrian environment that is removed from the road traffic and provides an additional layer of separation between the private residences and the public road.

Bernard, Tranby, and Boswell Avenues are non-boulevard streets with a sidewalk at the curb. These streets have smaller street allowances with building set back and building to building distances that are reduced as well. These generally present a very urban street condition with the front entrances in close proximity to the sidewalk. Front yard gardens are also smaller. On these streets the consistency of the building line and the roof line is more evident, providing continuous enclosure to the street. The impact of all types of parking is more evident on these streets due to the compressed width of the streetscape. Both Davenport and Avenue Road have very restricted sidewalks with very little landscape character.

#### *Street Trees*

The quality and character of street trees is probably the most important component affecting the quality of the street environment. With time they become the largest element on the street, providing both an aesthetic and environmental benefit to the neighbourhood. They make a street less stark and more livable. They keep homes cool in the summer while allowing sun to reach the street in the winter, when it is needed. Trees produce oxygen and absorb carbon dioxide. As they mature, trees increase the value of a property. The value of a mature oak, for example, could be valued at as much as \$20,000.

The streets of the East Annex area were distinguished in part for their trees. After the turn of the century, the streets were lined with shade or canopy trees, nearly one tree to every property. Although there are no formal records of the original street trees planted in this area, judging from the photographs it appears that tree species planted were fairly typical for the turn of the century. The species most likely planted included American (or White) Elm, Silver Maple and Horse Chestnut. As can be seen from a 1906 photograph, Boswell was lined with Horse Chestnuts.

Very few of these original street trees remain. The large trees in the area, in the 30 inch (75cm) and greater trunk diameter range, could be remnants of the original street tree planting. The Urban Forestry Section of the Department of Parks and Recreation do core testing, if requested. This test determines the age of the tree by measuring its inner rings, without harming the tree in any way. There are 15 trees within the area that have a trunk diameter greater than 30 inches and would be worth considering for this testing.

Of these trees, 8 are Silver Maple that are very fast growers, reaching mature size relatively quickly, so it is questionable whether these are original street trees. These majestic Silver Maple trees are located in front of 103 and 105 Bedford, 7 Bernard, 60 Boswell, 52 Elgin, 35 Lowther and 17 and 37 Prince Arthur.

In addition there are 7 other trees of this size that are moderate growers and could very well be original trees. There are Horse Chestnuts located in front of 9 and 26 Lowther, 26 Elgin and 55 Boswell. There are two White Elm at 13 and 15 Elgin as well as a 30 inch trunk Norway Maple at 41 Boswell.

This tree heritage has succumbed to road widening, parking, disease and the extra stress of urban conditions. The increase in paving around trees greatly reduces the amount of water able to get to the roots. Additional parking and paving around trees increases soil compaction and reduces the amount of oxygen available to the roots. Increased air pollution and the use of road salt are hazardous to the health of most trees. Most of the old tree species are no longer planted by the City as they are very intolerable to those stresses and have succumbed to diseases. They have been replaced by improved species or cultivars that are resistant to urban conditions.

Regardless, the streets of the East Annex still have sections that are well endowed with street trees. Bedford Road, between Lowther and Davenport, has the greatest quantity of trees of all the streets in the area, having nearly one tree for every lot. However, the majority of these were recently planted and are of a smaller size. Boswell Avenue has the fewest trees of the residential streets, with only about one tree to every three properties. Very few trees on that street are of a mature size. The west side of Avenue Road has the fewest overall with only 8 trees. The remainder of the streets average about 30 trees each with the potential to accommodate at least 50 street trees.

Over the years the City's Urban Forestry Section of the Department of Parks and Recreation has undertaken street planting programs for this area. Each year, the Urban Forestry Section hires a Forestry Student to survey the city for potential tree planting locations fronting residential properties. Each summer, approximately one fifth of the city is covered and about 4 thousand locations are found. Property owners are left with a leaflet explaining how they can have the city plant a free tree fronting their property. Approximately 7 to 10 percent of the property owners respond. The East Annex was surveyed in 1990.

Their current program relies on an Arborist Inspectors and the residents requesting that the City plant a tree on the street allowance in front of properties. The Arborist will inspect the area to determine if it is feasible to plant, taking overhead and underground services into consideration. For residents on corner lots, the City will plant trees on both frontages and at a minimum spacing of about 20 feet (6 metres). The homeowner in consultation with the Arborist Inspector selects the tree species from a list of available trees prepared by Urban Forestry. The City plants bare root, 40 cm caliper specimens, in the spring and fall. Larger specimens are available and can be planted provided that the cost difference is paid for by the homeowner.

*For the East Annex District, it is recommended that a more active approach be taken to the planting of street trees, and that this tree planting program be undertaken as a co-operative effort between the Toronto Historical Board, the homeowners, the area residents' associations and the Urban Forestry Section. Some locations will require more diligence in implementing a street tree planting program to the extent that makes a significant impact. For example, some locations on Boswell and Lowther will require the opening of a tree-well within a paved front yard in order to plant a tree. The exact location of trees may have to be modified to accommodate the existing utilities.*

In addition, individual homeowners, as well as the City, have to be active in order to ensure the continued survival of the remaining trees. It will require an effort to reduce the amount of paving, the quantity of parked cars and the use of road salt in the vicinity of the street trees, so that they will continue to thrive and be a legacy for the next generation.

Much of the original type of garden landscape was Victorian in character with flowering trees, hedges, flowering shrubs, low picket fences, rose arbours and flower gardens. Today the basic pattern for front yard landscape is evergreen foundation planting with lawn grass extending to the sidewalk. The East Annex has examples of all types of landscape treatments in the front yards. For the purposes of influencing the streetscape character however, the most important aspect of the front yard is that there be a garden. The type of planting, its arrangement or style is not as important, as long as the front yard reads predominantly as a garden.

Within the residential streets, the majority of lots have front yard gardens. However, nearly half of some streets now have paving that covers more than three quarters of the front yard. Many of these are entirely paved. While this does reduce maintenance in most cases, several paved front yards in a row drastically changes the character of a street. Beside placing extra stress on the trees, this added paving increases the harshness of the street environment.

In order to have the front yard read as a garden, there should be a minimum of half the area of the yard planted. This planting can be composed of grass, ground covers, shrubs, trees, perennials, wildflowers or vines, planted alone or in any combination. Trees on private property are as equally important as the street trees, and contribute much to the visual character of the street and the urban forest. On the narrower streets, plants climbing or supported on the building play an important role in creating a garden character and could in some situations substitute for an entirely in-ground garden. Attention should be given to the use of species of climbers which do not damage masonry or mortars. In some areas of the East Annex, there is a consistent pattern of hedges and/or picket fences developing that should be encouraged as an extended pattern on the street. With the private landscape, being sympathetic to the architecture and your neighbours is an objective, but variety and individual expression is equally important.



## Parking

After mature trees, the requirements for cars and parking have probably have the biggest impact on the quality and character of the streetscape. This area at the turn of the century was well endowed with a rich landscape. Each street was lined with large canopy trees that gave the area a majestic, rich character, through all seasons, that was comparable to the quality of the architecture. Often, when a modification was made to allow for greater use and flexibility for cars, a portion of the rich landscape heritage was lost in the process. Bedford and Avenue Roads both suffered through widening. This eliminated all the original street trees that lined Avenue Road. Bedford Road was more fortunate. The majority of trees were spared and the quality of the road framed by trees was left fairly intact in the section north of Lowther Avenue. However, Boswell Avenue's streetscape quality has not fared as well over the years. At the turn of the century, virtually every property had a street tree and together they provided a uniform frame to the street. Today, the street has only 16 trees and many of the front yards have been turned over to parking.

During the course of this study the Planning Department conducted a survey which showed that of 294 lots in the area, the predominant types of parking included rear-yard parking (107), no on-site parking (78), and front-yard parking (56). Their survey noted 10 basement garages. Parking has frequently been identified as a concern or problem by the community. With front yard parking it affects the landscape and street trees which are characteristic of the area. The parking meters found on some streets appear unattractive and out-of-keeping with a residential neighbourhood. No easy solutions can be found however. *This study does recommend that additional front yard ramps to basement garages be avoided and front yard parking generally be avoided "unless there is no other means for parking, including on-street parking". In addition the study recommends that the definition of landscaping used by Public Works in the case of front yard parking be modified, so that the required 50% landscaped area is defined as planting (trees, shrubs, grass, ground covers) and not simply an extension of the hard paved parking surface, and that additional landscaped screening be required for such parking spaces.*

There are several problems with front yard parking from a visual, streetscape and landscape perspective. Front yard parking effectively extends the domain of the car from the street to the front door or porch, where originally there was a landscaped separation between the two. Parking and paving place extra stress on trees. The added weight of both the paving and the vehicle results in compaction of the soil which decreases the amount of oxygen and water supplied to the roots. Installation of parking pads often destroy tree root systems.

Furthermore, the extra amount of paving decreases the planting that may take place. While paving on a few sporadic or isolated properties may not be a problem, taken several in a row, and repeated a few times over the street, the character of the street is dramatically altered. This is particularly acute on the narrower streets with smaller frontages. It interrupts the continuity of a predominantly green framework to the street environment.

Part of the solution to these concerns would begin with the existing parking by-law. The City by-law for front yard parking (which the vehicle is partly on City property) requires that the vehicle(s) not cover more than half the frontage of the residence. This would mean that for the vast majority of the properties, only one car could be parked. In reality, more than one car is being parked on many properties. This requirement should be enforced more stringently. This 50% coverage requirement for front parking was intended to leave the other half of the property open for landscaping. However the current definition of landscaping does not distinguish between hard and soft surfaces, so that an entirely paved front yard including the City owned section is within the definition of landscape.

*It is recommended that this definition of landscaping be changed to include only soft materials - trees, shrubs, ground covers, grass - and not paving.* This would also be supportive of the City's greening initiatives.

In addition , the current by-law requires that no City owned tree be removed for a parking space and that the parked vehicle be a minimum of 1.22 meters or four feet from a City tree. While this distance is adequate for a small or newly planted tree, as the tree matures the area of feeder roots expands to a diameter equivalent to or greater than the crown of the tree. With currently mature trees within the district, the four foot minimum is not adequate. This minimum distance should be altered to reflect the size of the specific tree and the Urban Forestry Section is currently attempting to do this. This would control the amount of paving around the tree trunk and help ensure their long term survival.

A few of the residences that presently have front yard parking have hedges planted along both the property lines perpendicular to the street. These do much to visually screen and soften the impact of the parked cars along the length of the streets. Other permit holders should be encouraged to plant in similar fashion with hedges growing up to four feet in height.

The goal should be to generally restrict additional front yard parking spaces, unless there are no other means for parking within the street. Any application to the City for this permit requires approval of at least half the neighbours on both sides of the street within a 150 foot distance.

Equally disruptive to the character of the streetscape is the conversion of a basement to a parking garage and the installation of a ramp to access it. This is particularly a problem on the narrower streets and properties, where a steep ramp must be installed and tends to occupy almost the entire lot frontage. There is currently very little restriction to this type of parking. There are controls for the maximum degree of slope (15%) if a new curb cut is required from Public Works. There are also minimum width dimensions for a ramp and the City will not allow a vehicle to be parked in the driveway if it is on City property. The installation of this type of parking currently does not require the approval of the neighbourhood. In the future, it is generally recommended that no new ramps to below grade parking be permitted within the proposed East Annex District.

It is preferable to keep cars on the street. One way to more equitably distribute the impact of street parking would be to alternate the side of street where parking would be allowed each month. This would also discourage new front yard parking since a permit for this privilege is granted only if an on-street parking space is not removed. A disadvantage would be that the parking meters would have to be removed or additional ones be placed on the opposite side of the street. Unfortunately, the cost of the removal or installation of the meters would have to be borne by the affected residents. If all the meters were removed, one option to control parking on the street would be to extend the street permit time from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm, to allow only area residents to park on the street.

*Public Works Projects in the East Annex*

All streets within the East Annex area have overhead utility wiring on at least one side of the street. Bedford Road, Lowther Avenue and Avenue Road have utility wiring and light standards on both sides of the street. The lighting fixture used on these streets is the City standard concrete pole which is about 12 metres tall with a cantilevered pendent light. Hydro lines servicing these light poles are above ground.

Street lighting fixtures and overhead service wiring are two elements that if upgraded from the City standard would provide a beneficial impact to the quality of the streetscape, but it should be noted that this upgrading is not essential to maintaining the heritage character of the East Annex. In particular, street lighting fixtures which are distinctive from the norm within the City would in fact contradict historic precedent for the area. Upgrading with replica 'historic' street lighting fixtures should be discouraged.

Toronto Hydro has been placing their primary service lines (main power service) underground throughout the City. Most of the study area is scheduled to have this work done in 1993. At that time residents have the opportunity to have the secondary lines - the lines that service the individual properties and streetlights - placed underground as well.

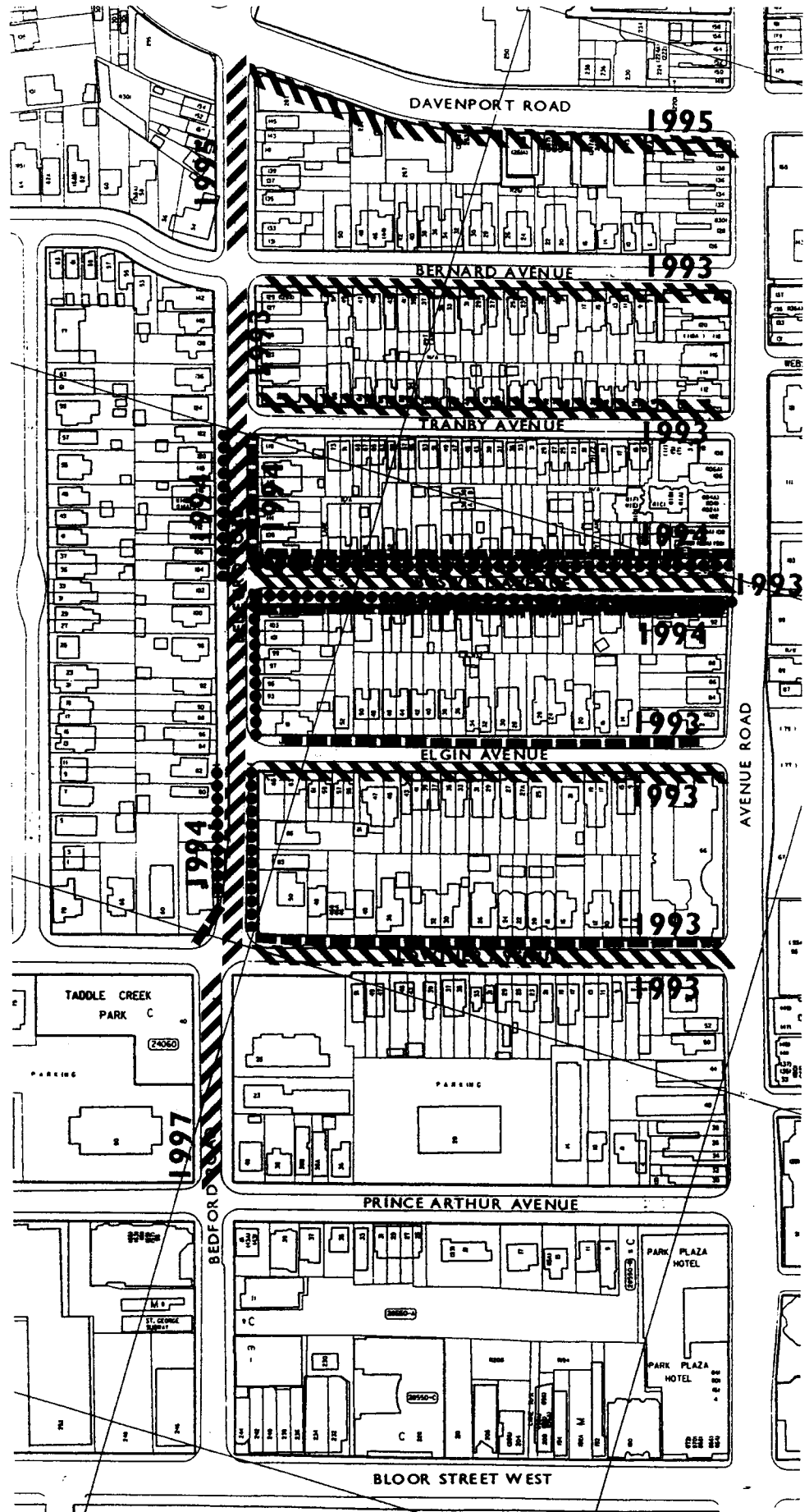
When this Hydro program was initiated, the affected neighbourhood was polled by the City for interest in having the secondary lines placed underground. However, the response was so poor, with very few requesting this work, that the polls are no longer started by the City and the onus to initiate this work is on the residents of the particular street affected. Residents must approach the Department of Public Works and the Environment to initiate a poll of the street to see if a 75% majority are in favour of this upgrading. The Department then prepares a cost estimate for the work after which the residents are then polled again for approval. Placing all the hydro wires underground will improve the appearance of the streetscape and may eliminate the later pruning of trees as they mature.

# PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

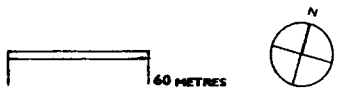
■■■■■■■■■■  
NEW SIDEWALKS

●●●●●●●●●●  
NEW CURBS

//////  
TORONTO HYDRO  
PRIMARY LINES  
UNDERGROUND



*Note: This information has been revised during the preparation of the report and now most work has been rescheduled.*



While there is an aesthetic benefit to this work, the difference in cost between the basic City standard and the upgrade is paid for by the residents of the street affected. The expense of this work depends on the number of residents affected and the length of the individual frontage. The cost for placing the secondary wiring underground is charged back to the residents, payable with their tax bill as either one lump sum or in installments over a period up to 15 years, at the choice of the resident. Another drawback is that the existing residential landscape is temporarily disrupted and may require repair after installation.

At the same time that the hydro lines are being placed underground there is an opportunity to change the existing street light fixtures. Again, the onus is on the residents to request that the City undertake a poll of the street residents in order to determine how many are in favour of such an upgrade. The difference in cost between the standard City fixtures and a more decorative fixture is paid for by the residents affected. The City usually covers the cost of demolition and removal of the existing fixtures. Special lighting fixtures can do much to improve the ambiance and character of the streetscape. The height of the fixture is lower and scaled to the pedestrian. The quality of light is also less harsh. One only has to think of Palmerston Boulevard to realize the impact that low level and decorative lighting fixtures has on the character of the street.

It is possible that the present commercial character of Prince Arthur Avenue may warrant consideration of the replacement of the current street lighting fixtures with the lamp standards used within the commercial area of Yorkville.

Boswell Avenue is scheduled to have sidewalk and curb improvements undertaken on both sides of the street in 1994. The north sides only of Elgin and Lowther Avenues are scheduled to have their sidewalks replaced in 1993. Again the residents have the opportunity to have the paving material upgraded from the standard concrete. As with the placement of the hydro wires underground, the onus for initiating this work is usually on the area residents and the cost differential between the standard and upgrade is backcharged to the residents as described.

The existing standard concrete paving material, although ubiquitous, is acceptable. Toronto has no historical tradition of stone or other paving material on public sidewalks; concrete is historically appropriate as well. Changing the material will not substantially alter the overall character of the streetscape. It will not compare to the impact to changing the lighting and above ground wiring. Therefore changing the paving material is not recommended.

## 2.2.4 Current Planning Control and Incentives

The Official Plan for the City of Toronto includes policies which state the City's interest in both heritage preservation generally and in the recognition of heritage within the East Annex. Section 1.1g of the Official Plan states the general policy that "advantage be taken of buildings and sites of historical and architectural merit in implementing the policies" of the Official Plan and a further section (Section 1.1h) provides a framework for establishing Heritage Conservation Districts.

The East Annex specifically is identified as part of the Annex planning area<sup>43</sup>. There has been a serious attempt to recognize and protect the unique character of the area under the Official Plan, and this can be seen in a number of the general policy statements included in the Plan.

2.1 (a) The Annex is a *Central Area* neighbourhood of historic and architectural significance. It is the policy of Council to conserve this character and to improve the environment of the Annex through the enhancement of particular streetscapes and building types, the provision of new open space, recreation space and suitable neighbourhood services and the protection of the neighbourhood from the negative effects of through traffic.

and;

2.4 In employing its available powers of regulation, and in the review and approval of applications for development pursuant to the Planning Act, Council shall have regard for:

(a) the character of the streetscape, and in particular the presence of mature trees and grassed boulevards, the spacing, setback and arrangement of buildings and the location of parking areas and access driveways;

(b) the character of any existing buildings, and in particular the stone, brick and wood detailing of facades, if such is the case, the fenestration, and the roof line pitch; and

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<sup>43</sup> City of Toronto By-Law No. 421-83, *To adopt an amendment to the Official Plan for the City of Toronto respecting the area known as the Annex.* (May 30, 1983, amended by By-Laws 610-84, and 369-86 ).

(c) the compatibility of any proposed development with the existing character of the Annex and, in Areas of Special Identity, the maintenance and enhancement of the particular architectural and streetscape features of such Areas.

Within the Official Plan two parts of the study area are defined as Areas of Special Identity. The intent of defining Areas of Special Identity within the Plan was to provide a guide to planning decisions reflecting the unique character of specific areas within the City, but the definition of the Areas has in fact not played a significant role in actively mitigating or directing development or in strengthening the recognized special identity.

The "Old Village of Yorkville" Area of Special Identity includes most of the study area and consists of the properties defined as Low Density Residential on Bernard, Tranby, Boswell, Elgin, and Lowther with the adjacent properties on Bedford. The policy statement for the Old Village of Yorkville is the following:

It is the policy of Council to employ its available powers to enact regulations, review plans and drawings and make requirements so as to help ensure that any development or redevelopment is consistent with the special architectural and streetscape characteristics therein

The properties on Prince Arthur, with the exclusion of 20 Prince Arthur and including 15 and 23 Bedford Road, form part of a smaller Area of Special Identity within the Special Commerce Area. The policy statement for the Prince Arthur Area of Special Identity is the following:

The area is distinctive to pedestrians and tourists because of the selection of art galleries and restaurants, open spaces, mature trees and diversity of built form. Council will employ its available powers to enhance the particular characteristics of the streetscape and to ensure an ease of pedestrian movement.

These general policies and the definitions of Areas of Special Identity are not strongly enforceable statements and 'the character of an area', its 'streetscape', and issues of architectural design and specific building materials are difficult to control given the conditions required for approval under the Planning Act. *For this reason it is recommended that the significant heritage precincts of the study area be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act to assist in the implementation of these Planning statements.*



Specific reference to the heritage significance of Prince Arthur is not given in the Area of Special Identity description, and the architectural and streetscape quality of the Village of Yorkville is left undefined.

*It is recommended that more detailed descriptions of the heritage character of the neighbourhood be considered for inclusion into the Official Plan as amended descriptions for the Areas of Special Identity, and that a previous recommendation of the Toronto Historical Board<sup>44</sup>, that Areas of Heritage Identity be established, be pursued.* At the present time the nature of Areas of Heritage Identity as they may be developed in Toronto are not known, but current planning models exist in the City of Ottawa, which has created special heritage zoning categories within its Official Plan.

*Current Zoning in the Study Area*

The Official Plan considers the study area under a number of different area designations. They are the following:

Low Density Residence (R2 Z1.0 - 1 x coverage) for the properties in the study area on Bedford Road north of Lowther, and on Bernard, Tranby (except Tranby Terraces), Boswell, Elgin, and Lowther;

Medium Density Residence - Area A (R2 Z2.0) for properties at 20, 50 Prince Arthur, and 23 Bedford Road;

Low Density Mixed Commercial - Residential (CR L1. U100 - 1.5 x coverage as a constant) for properties on Avenue Road north of Elgin, including Tranby Terrace; and (CR L2. U150) for properties on Davenport Road;

Medium Density Mixed Commercial - Residential (CR L1. U350) for the high-rise building at 55 Prince Arthur Avenue;

(High Density Mixed Commercial - Residential (CR L4.5 U350) is identified in the entire Annex area only for the Park Plaza Hotel, including its north wing abutting Prince Arthur);

Special Commerce Area (CR L2. U100 - 2 x coverage as a constant) for the properties on Prince Arthur, excluding 4 Prince Arthur, and including 8, 9, 11, 15 and 23 Bedford Road, with the properties on Prince Arthur and 23 Bedford Road forming the Prince Arthur Area of Special Identity;

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<sup>44</sup> Toronto Historical Board report prepared by Robert Truman and Associates (October 31, 1990 - *Review of Issues - Wychwood Park Heritage Conservation District*)

Special Mixed Use Area (C1A L3 Z2.0) for 4 Prince Arthur and (C1A L3 Z2.0) for the properties on Avenue Road from Prince Arthur to Elgin Avenue.

Taddle Creek Park is designated as a Local Area Park.

The implications of these planning areas on the definition of the boundaries for the proposed District, and the relation of permissible built form to existing heritage buildings is discussed on a street by street basis in this study.<sup>45</sup> Generally, where higher densities have been permitted it has allowed for the demolition of earlier structures and construction of higher density development. As a result these areas of higher density have fewer heritage buildings and are not being considered for inclusion within the proposed district.

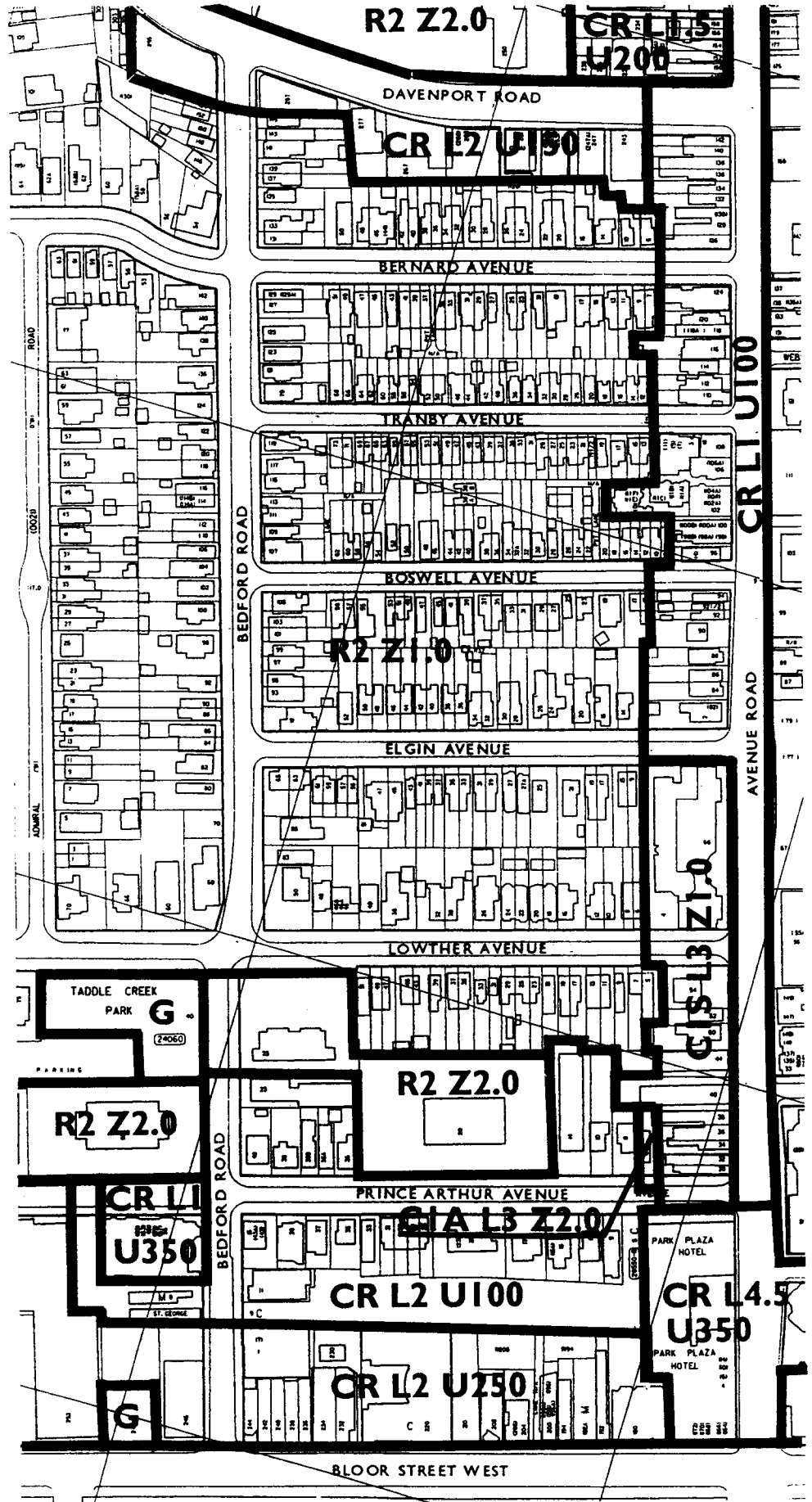
On a number of the streets the permissible built form is substantially higher than the density represented by the existing buildings. This discrepancy has led to a number of demolitions and replacement buildings within the residential section of the study area. The Annex Residents' Association has directly responded to this issue by requesting the Commissioner of Planning and Development to bring the permitted heights and densities into closer conformity with existing developed heights and densities within the area, on a street by street basis.<sup>46</sup> The permissible built form could be reduced to more accurately reflect the average of the existing built form on each street, thereby encouraging the retention of the existing historic buildings. This is particularly the case with the residential streets. On the commercial streets, and in particular Prince Arthur Avenue, the existing densities are quite varied and achieving a lower 'average' density would create a substantial discrepancy between properties which have already developed and properties which have not.

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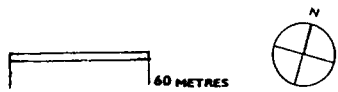
<sup>45</sup> Information regarding existing densities used in this report was obtained from the Land Use File database of the City of Toronto Planning and Development Department.

<sup>46</sup> Correspondance from the ARA Sept. 15th, 1991.

# ZONING



*This map indicates the present zoning of the area. Note that in general, the proposed District is either R2 Z1.0 or CR L2 U100.*



*Exemptions of Density (IA.42)  
and Cityplan '91*

In other municipalities<sup>47</sup>, for designated historic districts, the permissible height and density are related directly to the existing built form. This is the most effective means of encouraging heritage preservation, but it has not been attempted in the City of Toronto. *This study reiterates the previous request of the Annex Residents Association and recommends that the Department of Planning and Development report on changes which could bring a closer conformity between the existing built form and the built form which is permissible in the zoning by-law.*

Under the Official Plan<sup>48</sup> one of the methods the City of Toronto uses to encourage the preservation of historic buildings within the Central Area is an exemption of density. An 'exemption of density' means that the density of all or a portion of a designated historic building is exempted from the permissible density on the property, thereby giving a property owner an incentive to maintain and preserve that building.

Exemptions of density would not be recommended by the Toronto Historical Board when that very exemption would permit the construction of an incompatible addition or alteration to the property.

The exemption is stated in the Official Plan as follows:

*in Residence Areas, the gross floor area excluded does not exceed 25 percent of the maximum residential gross floor area permitted ... and*

*in Mixed Commercial - Residential Areas, the gross floor area excluded does not exceed the amount specified below for the Area in which the lot is located:*

*- 0.5 times the area of the lot in Low and Medium Density Mixed Commercial-Residential Areas, (or)*

*- 1.125 times the area of the lot in High Density Mixed Commercial-Residential Areas.*

It is required that a heritage easement agreement be secured upon the granting of an exemption of density which is given for the preservation of a heritage building

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<sup>47</sup> Official Plan for the City of Ottawa, 1991

<sup>48</sup> Official Plan for the City of Toronto - !A Central Area - Buildings of architectural or historical merit (IA.42).

In the Proposals for Cityplan '91 an amendment to this policy was recommended, specifically excluding the allowance of the exemption for Residence Areas, while retaining it for Mixed Commercial - Residential Areas and within the Financial District.

With the East Annex the existing policy would encourage an increase in densities within the R2 Z1.0 area which may affect the balance and character of the neighbourhood, particularly promoting rear yard additions. *For that reason the amendment proposed by Cityplan '91 to not provide the density exemption in residential areas is recommended.* The exemption would still be considered for properties included within the district which are in Mixed Commercial - Residential properties (Avenue Road north of Elgin, and Prince Arthur, including 15 Bedford, but excluding 4 Prince Arthur).

Concern should be raised about providing density exemptions for the properties in the proposed district on Avenue Road because of the potential impact on the neighbouring residential buildings, and other incentives such as parking exemptions should be considered.

Applications which require exemptions of density in the District would be reviewed on an individual basis by the Toronto Historical Board to ensure that the exemption of density, which was developed as a policy to encourage heritage preservation, is fulfilling that objective, both for the property in question and for the other neighbouring properties within the District.

*Other Cityplan'91 Initiatives*

There are a number of initiatives proposed under Cityplan '91 which relate to the proposals of this study but at this time it is not certain which of those initiatives will be pursued. For this study it can only be stated that Cityplan '91 proposed a number of important policies which are germane to this study, and which would assist in its implementation, including:

creating a City-wide Heritage Conservation Plan (recommended policy 5.2);

increasing Public Awareness of Heritage Conservation Programs (recommended policy 5.3);

strengthening Heritage Designation and Conservation District Policies (recommended policies 5.4 and 5.5);

conserving Natural and Built Landscapes of Heritage Significance (recommended policies 5.8).

Under further action Cityplan '91 also recognized improving controls for designated heritage properties including recommending that:

“the Commissioner of Planning and Development, in consultation with the Toronto Historical Board, should review how restrictive zoning-by-laws can be implemented to protect architecturally and historically significant buildings and districts. The review would evaluate which areas of the City would benefit from such protection, whether zoning by-laws should be enacted in conjunction with Heritage Conservation District Designations, and how this zoning designation would be integrated into the existing Zoning By-law.”<sup>49</sup>

These proposals, along with other Cityplan '91 proposals, such as the potential for tax incentives for preservation of historic buildings, form part of an integrated approach to heritage preservation in the City of Toronto. These proposals should be encouraged.

### **2.2.5 Current Local Planning Concerns**

The current planning issues are related primarily to increases in density. Within the different avenues of the study area intensification takes different forms. A number of recent projects are examples of development trends towards intensification.

Intensification on Avenue Road includes the recent development of 66 Avenue Road, between Elgin and Lowther, and the proposed development of the lands between Lowther and Prince Arthur. The level of intensification is sufficient to change the character of this section of Avenue Road substantially, making it comparable to other areas to the east and south, rather than to the rest of the study area. North of Elgin on Avenue Road there have been fewer proposed density increases primarily because of the existing zoning controls.

There are numerous examples in which the density and activity of the properties on Avenue Road would spread onto the east-west streets. These projects include the development between Prince Arthur Avenue and Lowther Avenue (known as the Matthews property), and its use of 4 Prince Arthur and 5, 7 Lowther; the recent infill proposal for the rear yard of 2 Elgin; and the side yard use of Avenue Road properties abutting Bernard.

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<sup>49</sup> City of Toronto Planning and Development Department, Cityplan '91 Proposals Report, June 1991.

Replacement residences are occurring in the area, primarily on Lowther and Boswell. Community concern is noted in the appearance of these new residences, their permissible density and their possible impact on neighbouring buildings. A similar concern is voiced regarding the effect of additions to buildings, particularly their height and depth within rear yards. Many of these replacement structures and additions are possible through the available density under the present zoning and can have substantial effect on the character of the neighbourhood.

Another concern has been the threat of demolition to buildings which are of potential heritage importance. Although approximately a third of the buildings in the area are listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties, a number of 'unlisted' buildings have been brought forward for consideration as heritage properties only during the development process. Recently these properties include 10 Prince Arthur, 4 Prince Arthur, 5 and 7 Lowther, and 45 Lowther. That so many buildings contribute to the area and add to its unique heritage character, whether they are currently 'listed' or not, is a strong argument for the creation of a heritage district.

The proposed District will strengthen the existing fabric of the neighbourhood by providing guidelines for appropriate change and by providing a stronger recognition of the need to retain buildings of contextual value.