

**Perpetuating Spadina Avenue:  
Conceptualizing the Creative Milieu**

by  
Jessica Wing-Sze Cheung

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**AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis begins with Toronto's Spadina Avenue. Admiration for its social and cultural past and present contrasts with its seemingly inevitable future; ethnically charged sections of the avenue will succumb to real estate pressures and be lost to new market-driven development. Focusing on the section of Spadina Avenue bound by College Street to the north and Queen Street West to the south, its central location and surrounding diversity; partially deteriorating urban fabric; history of immigrants and the working class; and demographic transitions are conditions that inform the framework for the generation of a "creative milieu" as means of perpetuating the inherent spirit of Spadina Avenue.

Charles Landry defines the "creative milieu" as a place – either a cluster of buildings, a part of a city, a city as a whole or region – that contains the necessary preconditions in terms of "hard" and "soft" infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions. To understand its greater context, this thesis examines the merits of the original "creative city" concept developed by Landry along with the implications of globalization and gentrification which affirms the vital role of the working class and their communities in the city.

The "creative milieu" can form the genesis for the "creative city", acting as catalytic sites where creativity and culture can be expressed, explored and nurtured. This thesis presents a catalogue of proposed typologies for Spadina Avenue that consider four characteristics of a "creative milieu" – diversity, interactivity, locality, capacity – and range in scale from small to large interventions.



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**DEDICATION**

For my family.





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1 TRENDS</b>	<b>15</b>
1-1 Migration, Immigration	
1-2 Industrial, Post-Industrial	
<b>2 CONCEPTS</b>	<b>25</b>
2-1 “Creative City”	
2-2 Inherent Quality of Place	
2-3 Toronto	
<b>3 SPADINA</b>	<b>39</b>
3-1 Pre-Spadina	
3-2 Mapping	
3-3 Axonometrics	
3-4 Elevations	
3-5 Typology	
3-6 Street Sections	
3-7 Sidewalk Appropriation	
<b>4 DESIGN FRAMEWORK</b>	<b>81</b>
4-1 “Creative Milieu”	
4-2 Case Studies	
<b>5 DESIGN APPLICATION</b>	<b>103</b>
5-1 Strategies, Opportunities	
5-2 Components	
5-3 Vignettes	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>139</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>145</b>

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS (Illustrations and photographs by author unless otherwise noted)

PAGE	FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION
2	01 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Queen Street West, looking north (ca. 1924) City of Toronto Archives
8	02 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Cecil Street looking north, Knox College beyond (2008)
9	03 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Dundas Street West looking south, City Place beyond (2008)
40	04 “Plan of York” Surveyed and drawn by Lieut. Phillpotts, Royal Engineers (1823) City of Toronto Archives
45	05 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1880) City of Toronto Archives
47	06 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1903) City of Toronto Archives
49	07 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1924) University of Toronto
51	08 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1943) University of Toronto
53	09 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1964) University of Toronto
55	10 Plan of Spadina Avenue present depicting incremental the urban fabric of the area
56	11 Plan indicating landmarks between Wilcocks Street and Dundas Street West
57	12 Plan indicating landmarks Between Dundas Street West and Front Street
58	13 Plan indicating height of buildings along Spadina Avenue
59	14 Graphing street frontage composition along Spadina Avenue
59	15 Plan indicating zoning restrictions along Spadina Avenue City of Toronto Zoning By-Law
60	16 Plan indicating use along and around Spadina Avenue
62	17 Axonometric view of Spadina Avenue area, between College Street and Queen Street West, west elevations
63	18 Axonometric view of Spadina Avenue area, between College Street and Queen Street West, east elevations
65	19 Street elevations, 381-429 Spadina Avenue
65	20 Street elevations, 315-337 Spadina Avenue

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION</b>
66	21 Street elevations, northeast section at Dundas Street West, 311-287 Spadina Avenue
66	22 Street elevations, southwest section at Dundas Street West, 260-280 Spadina Avenue
67	23 Street elevations, southeast section at Dundas Street West, 285-253 Spadina Avenue
67	24 Street elevations, northwest section at Dundas Street West, 292-328 Spadina Avenue
69	25 Diagrams of typical warehouse, The Robertson Building
70	26 Diagrams of existing retail typologies and configurations
71	27 Diagrams of existing residential mixed use, Dragon City Centre
73	28 Street sections, “1891-1948” and “1997-Present”
74	29 Photograph, Hua Long Supermarket, 253 Spadina Avenue, looking south
74	30 Typical street section showing lay-by and street parking
75	31 Photograph, Chinatown Centre, 222 Spadina Avenue, looking north
75	32 Typical street section showing passenger pick-up / drop-off for coach bus tours
76	33 Photographs, 298-300 Spadina Avenue
78	34 Photographs, 310 Spadina Avenue
89	35 Drawing, “Welcome to Cocker Alley” Brochure for Melbourne Laneway Commissions 08
89	36 Photograph, gold leafed pipes at Cocker Alley <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/pure_gin/2827686778/sizes/o/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/pure_gin/2827686778/sizes/o/</a>
89	37 Photograph, Centre Place, Melbourne, laneway <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/rob_birze/3042553325/sizes/o/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/rob_birze/3042553325/sizes/o/</a>
91	38 Photograph, Pottinger Street, vendor
91	39 Photograph, Pottinger Street, tailor
91	40 Photograph, Pottinger Street, closed unit <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/ms_cwang/605667624/sizes/l/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/ms_cwang/605667624/sizes/l/</a>
92	41 Axonometric, Centre for Social Innovation, first and fourth floor of The Robertson Building (215 Spadina Avenue)
93	42 Photograph, Centre for Social Innovation, private desks <a href="http://www.flickr.com/photos/centreforsocialinnovation/1990695467/in/set-72157603149978502/">http://www.flickr.com/photos/centreforsocialinnovation/1990695467/in/set-72157603149978502/</a>
93	43 Photograph, Centre for Social Innovation, common “hot desk” area

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION</b>
95	44 Drawing, Théâtre de la Gaîté by architect Alphonse Cusin (1872) <a href="http://hehe.org.free.fr/hehe/texte/gaite/index.html">http://hehe.org.free.fr/hehe/texte/gaite/index.html</a>
95	45 La Gaîté-Lyrique, proposed mobile modules <a href="http://manuelle-gautrand.p8.siteinternet.com/">http://manuelle-gautrand.p8.siteinternet.com/</a>
95	46 La Gaîté-Lyrique, proposed flexible theatre space <a href="http://manuelle-gautrand.p8.siteinternet.com/">http://manuelle-gautrand.p8.siteinternet.com/</a>
96	47 Photograph, Wychwood Barns <a href="http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos">http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos</a>
96	48 Photograph, Wychwood Barns, The Stop Community Food Centre's Green Barn <a href="http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos">http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos</a>
96	49 Photograph, Wychwood Barns, The Covered Street Barn <a href="http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos">http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns/barns-photos</a>
97	50 Photograph, Queen Theatre (1926) <a href="http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf">http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf</a>
97	51 Photograph, Lerner Shops (1956) <a href="http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf">http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf</a>
97	52 Drawing, proposed Arthouse at the Jones Centre <a href="http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf">http://www.arthousetexas.org/pdfs/arthouse_renovation2.pdf</a>
98	53 Photograph, original building (1910) <a href="http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum">http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum</a>
98	54 Photograph, Wing Luke Asian Museum, present <a href="http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum">http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum</a>
98	55 Photograph, Wing Luke Asian Museum, gallery <a href="http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum">http://www.oskaarchitects.com/Projects/171/Wing-Luke-Asian-Museum</a>
99	56 Photograph, Livraria da Vila, main entry, closed <a href="http://www.isayweinfeld.com/">http://www.isayweinfeld.com/</a>
99	57 Photograph, Livraria da Vila, main entry, open <a href="http://www.isayweinfeld.com/">http://www.isayweinfeld.com/</a>

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION</b>
100	58 Photograph, Theodore Cafe Bistro, diversity of seating area <a href="http://www.soarch.co.il/">http://www.soarch.co.il/</a>
100	59 Photograph, Theodore Cafe Bistro, open kitchen and bar <a href="http://www.soarch.co.il/">http://www.soarch.co.il/</a>
100	60 Axonometric diagram of elements <a href="http://www.soarch.co.il/">http://www.soarch.co.il/</a>
108	61 Vignette at Glen Baillie Place, small shops with market beyond
109	62 Vignette of Grange Avenue, landscaped thoroughfare from Alexandra Park to Grange Park
110	63 Vignette of Spadina Avenue at D'Arcy Street, redevelopment of low rise buildings
111	64 Key plan of Spadina Avenue identifying buildings two storeys or lower
111	65 Plan of Spadina Avenue, potential sites for development
112	66 Plan of Spadina Avenue, proposed components
113	67 Photograph, laneway behind Spadina Avenue
113	69 Diagram, resurfacing the laneway concept
113	68 Photograph, parking behind Spadina Avenue
113	70 Diagram, inhabiting space concept
114	71 Small shops with varying dimensions and function, closed and open states
115	72 Axonometric, live-work modules and various configurations
116	73 Main street building typologies, 1880s, late 19th century, 1960s Housing on Toronto's Main Streets
117	74 Main street building floor plans, 1880s, late 19th century, 1960s Housing on Toronto's Main Streets
117	75 Plan of lots and buildings on Spadina Avenue, existing
118	76 Potential residential development, various lots, options, configurations and capacity
119	77 Plan of Spadina Avenue, identifying and consolidating lots for potential development
120	78 Axonometric, residential type 1 on 18x30 metre lot
120	79 Axonometric, alternate configuration with underground parking
121	80 Two bedroom unit, roommate typology

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION</b>
121	81 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway
121	82 Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types
122	83 Axonometric, residential type 2 on 18x40 metre lot
122	84 Axonometric, alternate configuration with underground parking
123	85 Three bedroom unit, roommate or single parent typology
123	86 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway
123	87 Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types
124	88 Axonometric, residential type 3 on 18x65 metre lot
125	89 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway
125	90 Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types
125	91 Axonometric, alternate configuration with underground parking
127	92 Plan of lots and buildings on Spadina Avenue, potential for office development
128	93 Axonometric, office type on 18x40 metre lot
128	94 Axonometric, alternate configuration with underground parking
129	95 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway
129	96 Massing and corresponding floor plans
130	97 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre (1968) City of Toronto Archives
130	98 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre interior, John MacGregor artist studio <a href="http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&amp;link_id=913&amp;artist=John+MacGregor">http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&amp;link_id=913&amp;artist=John+MacGregor</a>
130	99 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre interior, John MacGregor artist studio <a href="http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&amp;link_id=913&amp;artist=John+MacGregor">http://www.ccca.ca/artists/artist_info.html?languagePref=en&amp;link_id=913&amp;artist=John+MacGregor</a>
131	100 Photograph, Labour Lyceum (1957) Rosemary Donegan, <i>Spadina Avenue</i>
131	101 Photograph, Grossman's Cafeteria (1953) Rosemary Donegan, <i>Spadina Avenue</i>
132	102 Photograph, area west of Spadina Avenue between Dundas and St. Andrew Street
132	103 Photograph, area west of Spadina Avenue, between Oxford and College Street

<b>PAGE</b>	<b>FIGURE AND DESCRIPTION</b>
135	104 Grossman's Tavern, cultural-creative centre redevelopment (371-379 Spadina Avenue)
137	105 Live-work modules, laneway programming and artist installation

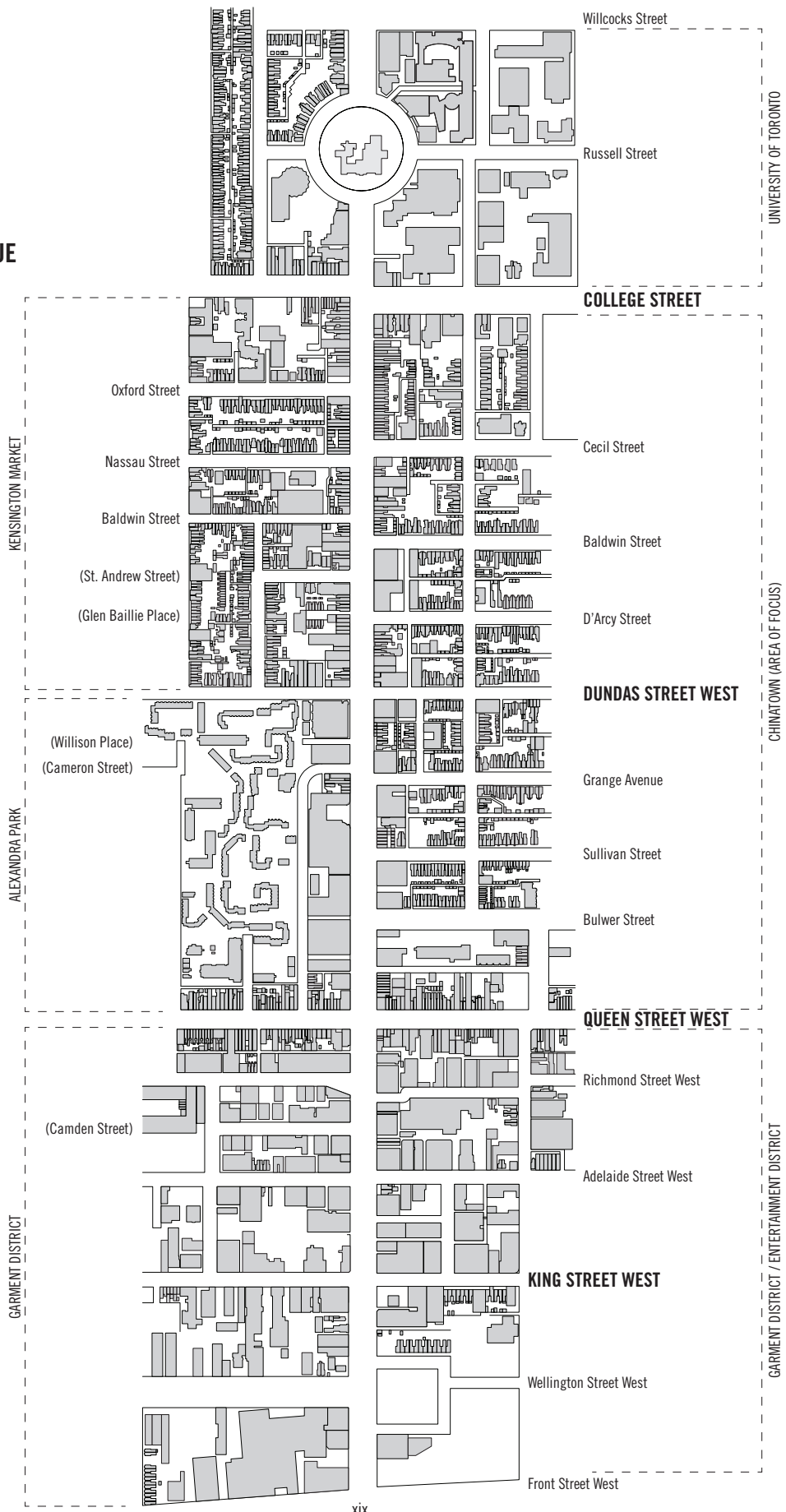
# TORONTO





# SPADINA AVENUE

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## **INTRODUCTION**



01 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Queen Street West, looking north (ca. 1924)

## **INTRODUCTION**

This thesis began with a personal curiosity with Spadina Avenue. For the year leading up to the start of this thesis, a regular encounter with this unique Toronto street developed quickly into a simple admiration for all it had to offer. With the intentions of understanding what makes the avenue great, reasons to be concerned about its future surfaced. In the past ten years, Spadina Avenue has undergone significant changes. In the 1990s, the redevelopment of the rail yards at Front Street and the renewal of the industrial core at King Street were both put into motion in response to a changing economy and a changing demographic, reflecting the changing role of the city in the world. It seems evident and inevitable that these developments will continue pressing northwards along Spadina Avenue.

### **CONTEXT**

The year 2008 marked a defining moment in the evolution of human society. For the first time in history, more than half of the world's 6.6 billion inhabitants were living in cities rather than rural areas.<sup>1</sup> This milestone reflects some of the significant transitions being experienced around the world. These transitions differ in kind and degree, from region to region. For developing countries rapid urban growth reflects three factors: migration to cities from rural areas; natural population increase among city residents; and reclassification of previously rural areas as urban, as they become built up.<sup>2</sup> For developed countries, urban growth is an indication of new interest in cities. Cities are being recognized as the drivers of regional and national economic performance and have become the centres of knowledge and innovation, and the places where people, businesses and services are concentrated in close proximity.<sup>3</sup>

The economy of developed cities, especially in North America, is shifting from manufacturing to knowledge-based; from physical inputs of raw materials and labour to harnessing human intelligence and innovation. This is an opportunity and condition made possible through technology as well as evolved economic and social systems. This shift follows accordingly the transition

from the agricultural age to the industrial age where natural resources and physical labour gave rise to the manufacturing industries. This process is the incremental and evolutionary nature of cities and their communities. With a growing creative economy and decreasing manufacturing industry in urban areas these conditions begin to reshape cities from an industrial based economy to post-industrial one. For Canada, this shift in the nature of the urban economy is apparent. Fifty years ago, the majority of Canadians made their living from manufacturing and two-thirds of the people lived in cities; currently, more than 80% of the people live in cities and the majority of new jobs are in science, technology, design, culture and financial and professional services.<sup>4</sup>

A new demographic composition is also characterizing these cities. In the past generation, there has been “increased propensity to remain single, the rise of cohabitation, the much later age at first marriage for those who do marry, the smaller size of families for those who have children, and, at the other end, the rapidly growing number of healthy and active adults in their sixties, seventies, and eighties”.<sup>5</sup>

This thesis examines the transitions that North American cities are currently facing: migration of population from rural areas and the suburbs to urban centres; the shift from the manufacturing era to a knowledge-based era; and changes in demographic composition of cities. Within this context, the thesis focuses on the concept of the “creative city” originally developed by Charles Landry and later modified by Richard Florida.

### **“CREATIVE CITY”**

The original “creative city” concept was developed by cultural planning consultant Charles Landry in the late 1980s. It was introduced in response to the various aspects of the world that are in transition, especially the transition from a manufacturing-industrial era to a knowledge based-creative era. In his book *The Creative City* (2000) he states that 21<sup>st</sup> century problems cannot

be solved with 19<sup>th</sup> century mindsets: “the dynamics of cities and the world urban system have changed too dramatically.”<sup>6</sup> In response to this, new and innovative thinking is required. Although the creative economy is commonly composed of artists and others, Landry asserts that creativity can also come from any source including anyone who addresses issues in an inventive way.<sup>7</sup> The “creative city” and the “creative milieu” can identify, nurture, attract and sustain talent in a way that mobilizes ideas and innovative organizations. The built environment becomes critical for establishing this milieu. “It provides the physical preconditions or platform upon which the activities or atmosphere of a city can develop.”<sup>8</sup> Landry’s overview of the “creative milieu” is to inspire new way of thinking and approach to urban issues rather than prescribe a universal solution.

Since Landry, two more figures are widely known for their “creative city” research: John Howkins and Richard Florida. Their first publications on the subject, Howkins’ *The Creative Economy* (2001) and Florida’s *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) have resonated with cities worldwide as their works make clear the connections between creativity and the economic success of cities. In Howkins’ work, he explores the economy of creativity; “creativity is not new and neither is economics, but what is new is the nature and extent of the relationship between them, and how they combine to create extraordinary value and wealth.”<sup>9</sup> Florida’s work also focuses on the economy of creativity. He is known particularly for developing “creative class” concept which refers to a selective group of people who, Florida claims, forms the basis for this economy. “Because creativity is the driving force of economic growth, in terms of influence the creative class has become the dominant class in society.”<sup>10</sup>

Landry’s work presents a positive, all-encompassing concept with the underlying assumption that “ordinary people can make the extraordinary happen if given the chance.”<sup>11</sup> In contrast, Howkins and Florida, in their specificity begin to classify and divide people who are relevant and irrelevant to the “creative city”

concept. Florida, more widely published in recent years, has received mixed reviews; some cities are eagerly willing to apply his thinking while others believe his work to be elitist and divisive.

Toronto is one example of a city who embraces his thinking. Following the release of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, two major reports were commissioned by the City of Toronto: *Culture Plan for the Creative City* in 2003 and *Imagine a Toronto ...Strategies for a Creative City* in 2006. In 2007, Richard Florida relocates to Toronto as the director of the Martin Prosperity Institute at the University of Toronto. Meanwhile, in 2005, Jamie Peck, a Canadian geographer, published the article “Struggling with the Creative Class” in the *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*:

“Having lauded the creative overclass for its achievements, having accounted for its privileged position as the consequence of intrinsic talent, and having made the case for increased public subsidy for this elite group, Florida’s own arguments reduce the uncreative two-thirds to an afterthought, defined largely in terms of its creative deficits.”<sup>12</sup>

According to sociologist Saskia Sassen, globalization and its implications on economic geography are already divisive as new political systems and rhetorics represent and valorize corporate actors as participants, in this regard a politics of exclusion.<sup>13</sup> In the essays that formulate *Globalization and Its Discontents*, Sassen posits that place matters in today’s global economy echoing Landry, Howkins and Florida’s focus and emphasis on the importance of cities. The value of human capital needed to maintain the infrastructure of globalization must be recognized wholly, not only the constituents of the corporate world or “creative class” as identified by Florida but also “those who lack power but have presence” in the city.<sup>14</sup> Where cities are the places in which people from different countries are most likely to meet and come together, immigrants and cultural environments play an important role in the characterization of these



urban realms.

With cities readily adopting the “creative city” concept without understanding its full effects, the term is in danger of losing its meaning and in the process, endangering a city’s authentic parts. Cities tend to restrict the meaning of creativity to arts and activities within the creative economy professions, calling any cultural plan a “creative city” plan when this is only an aspect of a community’s creativity.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile Florida’s advocating of bohemian neighbourhoods raises issues of gentrification. Neil Smith, geographer and anthropologist, defines gentrification as “the process by which poor and working-class neighborhoods in the inner city are refurbished via an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renters – neighborhoods that had previously experienced disinvestment and a middle-class exodus.”<sup>16</sup> When wealthier, “creative class” types are attracted to such neighbourhoods, housing values increase making them unaffordable to those who made such a place attractive in the first place.

This thesis will examine the merits of the original “creative city” concept as developed by Charles Landry while evaluating the limits of Richard Florida’s adaptation of Landry’s work. Implications of globalization and gentrification as identified by Saskia Sassen and Neil Smith will further support Landry’s concept of the “creative city”, justifying the vital role of the working class and its communities in cities excluded by Florida and his work. Through this critical dialogue, the concept of a “creative milieu” can be properly defined. An architectural and spatial framework for its development is proposed for a specific section of Spadina Avenue. Given its central location and surrounding diversity; deteriorating urban fabric in parts; demographic change and the exchange of population groups between suburbs and the downtown; its history as a place for immigrants and the working class; these conditions begin to frame Spadina Avenue as a “creative milieu”.

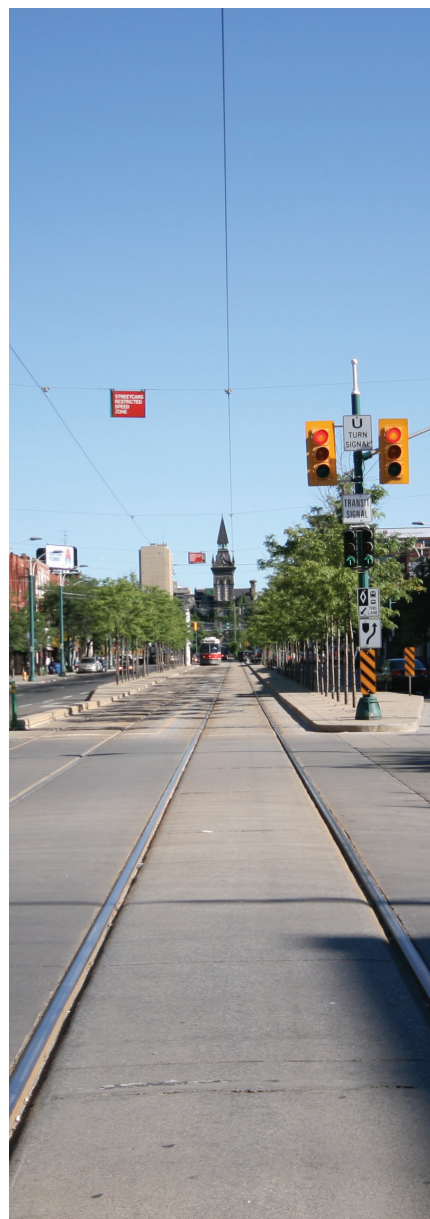
## SPADINA AVENUE

Spadina Avenue is an anomaly in Toronto. Two points of distinction begin to set it apart from other streets in this city: its width and its name.

At 40 metres (132 feet) wide, it is twice the width of a typical downtown street. This physical attribute has lent itself well for various functions since its inception. Presently, the proportional breakdown of the street's width offers a generous sidewalk which acts as a public extension of shops. Lay-bys dotted along this avenue allows for both passenger and merchandise pick-up and drop-off. The width also accommodates for streetcar right-of-ways from Bloor Street to the waterfront; this particular route runs at all hours, connects Spadina Avenue to the rest of the city and transforms it into a 24-hour accessible street.

The origin of the name Spadina is derived from an Indian term *Ishapadenah* for a hill or sudden rise in the land.<sup>17</sup> As one of the few street names in Toronto that recalls the area's original inhabitants, the name becomes a leveller marking everyone's status as a newcomer; it seems fitting that the area has continually attracted waves of immigrants for over a century.

Spadina Avenue was laid out in the late 1820s. In the early 1900s, a wave of independent clothing manufacturers established themselves in the area. "These were located in old houses and mansions along Adelaide, Richmond and Queen, on either side of Spadina; their original [British] owners had left and moved north while immigrants – Germans and then Jews – came into the area."<sup>18</sup> The garment district flourished along with the development of the Jewish community along Spadina Avenue. The Spadina Avenue/Kensington Market area remained the heartland of the Toronto Jewry until the mid-1950s with the movement to the Forest Hill neighbourhood, north of Bloor Street. By 1965, with the development of Toronto City Hall, many Chinese immigrants were displaced from their original area of settlement and were forced west along Dundas Street to Spadina Avenue. Changes to Canadian immigration policy in



02 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Cecil Street looking north, Knox College beyond (2008)



03 Photograph, Spadina Avenue at Dundas Street West looking south, City Place beyond (2008)

the 1970s and 1980s further increased the population of Chinese immigrants in Canada especially attracting wealthy business people from Hong Kong to invest and further develop the area.

The proposal of the Spadina Expressway in the mid-1960s and the resistance it met by immediate residents and those beyond the Spadina community marked a fundamental point in the history of Spadina Avenue. “The Spadina Expressway proposed to cut through neighbourhoods to the north and west of the University of Toronto, winding south from Highway 401 through ravines and residential areas, finally ending on Spadina Avenue.”<sup>19</sup> A project based on the priorities of the suburbs and the automobile, “it was the antithesis of Spadina with its streetcar tracks, busses and all those people in the street.”<sup>20</sup> A coalition called Stop Spadina Save Our City Co-ordinating Committee (SSSOCCC) was formed by university students under the leadership of professors. Jane Jacobs, the urban sociologist, having moved to Toronto in 1968 only a few years after stopping the Lower Manhattan Expressway, led the group along with urban activists David and Nadine Nowlan. City residents argued for their communities in which they live, work and play. The resistance unified the community and those who joined the SSSOCCC varied from the poor to the cultural and financial elite of the city. Newly elected city councillors William Kilbourn, Karl Jaffary, Ying Hope and John Sewell also fought against the Spadina Expressway in City and Metro councils. Finally, in June 1971, after four years of almost nonstop demonstrations and strategy sessions, the anti-expressway forces triumphed demonstrating the resiliency of the Spadina Avenue residents and community, making aware values that can overcome misguided proposals and plans for development.

In the 1960s, Canadian National Railway (CN) shifted much of their rail yard functions away from the city and these lands surrounding Spadina Avenue, south of Front Street to the waterfront became available for redevelopment.<sup>21</sup> Plans were proposed but none were ever completely carried out resulting in a prolonged process of reassessment and partial implementation. The first plan

in the early 1970s only resulted in the construction of the CN Tower while most of the rail yards and associated warehouse districts remained vacant; a second plan in the 1980s resulted in the construction of the Skydome (presently Rogers Centre), Railway Lands Park and Bremner Boulevard; a third plan completed in the early 1990s was an extension of the second plan although no part was ever developed or constructed. It was not until 1998 that a new plan was finally approved following negotiations between the City and the developer. “A pattern of streets, blocks, and parks, framed by street-related buildings, generally four to six storeys in height, punctuated in appropriate locations by residential point-towers” describes the rail lands that currently surround Spadina Avenue.<sup>22</sup>

One of Toronto’s historic manufacturing and industrial areas is located north of the rail lands at King Street. Due to changes in manufacturing processes, increasing liberalization of global markets and associated competitive pressures on local manufacturing firms, most companies have shifted operations offshore or to new suburban facilities, following the same trend as the relocation of rail yards by CN.<sup>23</sup> Presently, the area is no longer a viable manufacturing district but the area has largely been redeveloped; this includes retrofitting and reprogramming of existing industrial buildings and new construction of condo developments. This redevelopment was made possible due to new land use planning policies enacted by City Council in 1996 which provided minimal restrictions on use and increased flexibility for redevelopment.<sup>24</sup> Incremental increase in height for the area is noticeable among the new construction within the past five-ten years. As lots and building stock for redevelopment or restoration decreases, there will be increased desire to develop Spadina Avenue north of Queen Street West. When considering development in these lower parts of Spadina Avenue, it seems probable that these trends will continue north given the time and opportunity.

Currently Spadina Avenue, north of Queen Street West is a successful Chinatown with sidewalks full of markets, vendors and shoppers regardless of time,

weather or season. However, ethnic suburbs with greater populations and communities are attracting immigrant groups away from the downtown. Real estate pressures may override this neighbourhood resulting in the erasure of history, inherent values and culture of the area. Given this area's proximity to the downtown core, with the University of Toronto developing Spadina Avenue at the north end and completion of development in the south, the section bound by College and Queen streets is prime real estate for the market driven development.

#### **FRAMEWORK FOR "CREATIVE MILIEU"**

This thesis examines the merits of the original "creative city" concept as developed by Charles Landry. Implications of globalization and gentrification as identified by Saskia Sassen and Neil Smith will further support Landry's concept and the vital role of the working class and its communities in cities. Within the scope of the "creative city" concept an architectural and spatial framework for Spadina Avenue as a "creative milieu" is synthesized.

Defined by Charles Landry, "a creative milieu is a place – either a cluster of buildings, a part of a city, a city as a whole or region – that contains the necessary preconditions in terms of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions."<sup>25</sup> Collectively it can form the basis for a "creative city", acting as catalytic sites within which creativity and culture are expressed and nurtured. Four characteristics of a "creative milieu" are diversity, interactivity, locality and capacity. These characteristics are applicable to an area but can also resonate among small to large scale interventions as a mutually reinforcing system. A collection of specific case studies of varying scales precedes a catalogue of proposed typological designs for Spadina Avenue ranging from the least amount of intervention to new construction; all of these demonstrate the architectural and spatial framework for a "creative milieu".

Considering the section of Spadina Avenue bound by College Street to the

north and Queen Street West to the south; its central location and surrounding diversity; deteriorating urban fabric in parts; demographic change and the exchange of population groups between suburbs and the downtown; its history as a place for immigrants and the working class; these conditions begin to inform the development of the “creative milieu” as means of perpetuating the inherent spirit of Spadina Avenue.

## NOTES

- 1 United Nations Population Fund, <http://www.unfpa.org> (accessed March 26, 2009).
- 2 People and the Planet, <http://www.peopleandplanet.net> (accessed April 22, 2009).
- 3 Anne Golden, Foreword in John Lorinc, *The New City* (Toronto: Penguin Group, 2006), xi.
- 4 Glen Murray, "Our ideas of cities needs a rethink," *The Toronto Star*, January 6, 2008.
- 5 Alan Ehrenhalt, "Trading Places," *The New Republic*, August 13, 2008. "Demographic inversion", a term from Alan Ehrenhalt's article "Trading Places," refers to the shift in preference from suburbs to city, particularly for young adults expressing different values, habits, and living preferences than that of their parents.
- 6 Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*, (London: Earthscan Publications, 2000) xii.
- 7 Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators, 2nd ed.*, (London: Earthscan Publications, 2008) xxi.
- 8 *Ibid.*, xxvii.
- 9 John Howkins, *The Creative Economy* (New York: Penguin Press, 2001), viii.
- 10 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, xxvii.
- 11 Landry, *The Creative City, 2nd ed.*, xxi.
- 12 Jamie Peck, "Struggling with the Creative Class," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, December 2005, 758.
- 13 Saskia Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: New Press, 1998), xx.
- 14 *Ibid.*, xxi.
- 15 Landry, *The Creative City, 2nd ed.*, xlix.
- 16 Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 32.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 81.
- 18 Rick Salutin, Introduction to Rosemary Donegan, *Spadina Avenue* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985), 15. Author's addition in square brackets.
- 19 John Sewell, *The Shape of the City* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 178.
- 20 Salutin, *Spadina Avenue*, 30.
- 21 Robert Glover, "The Railway Lands," *East/West: A Guide to Where People Live in Downtown Toronto*, ed. Nancy Byrtus, Mark Fram and Michael McClelland (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2000), 137.
- 22 *Ibid.* Redevelopment of these lands immediately around Spadina is presently nearing completion known as 'CityPlace': retail, commercial and residential mixed-use community; visually it can be distinctively recognized in Toronto's skyline marked by the cluster of fifteen condo towers between 25-50 storeys in height.
- 23 The Planning Partnership, *King-Spadina Secondary Plan Review* (Toronto: City of Toronto, 2006), 1.
- 24 *Ibid.*
- 25 Landry, *The Creative City*, 133.





## 1 TRENDS



## 1.1 MIGRATION, IMMIGRATION

People are choosing to move back to the city and people are choosing to stay in the city. Where previous statistics show the movement of people away from the city centre to the suburbs, presently the reverse of this is becoming more and more likely.

Manufacturing industries, their noise and pollutants, have mostly disappeared from city centers. With deterrent aspects of urban living diminishing, positive qualities are able to attract a wide variety of people to the downtown core. The convenience of accessible public transit decreases car-dependency in a more environmentally conscious society; higher densities operate more efficiently putting residents closer to where they work and play; stronger diversity within an area contributes to a greater mixing of ideas between classes, cultures, and industries, resulting in increased creative and innovative output.<sup>1</sup>

This movement from suburb to city is noticeable in major cities across the United States and Canada. As more people live in the suburbs, traffic and commute times increase. Suburbs are continuing to grow, appealing to a certain demographic, but for others the rising cost of gasoline along with increased commute times will lead some to refuse this lifestyle, moving to the city. Urban appeal also exists as a result of demographic inversion: those who express different values, habits and living preferences, particularly between young adults and their parents.<sup>2</sup> For young adults, the city provides greater social and professional opportunities.

In an age of mass migration and global trade, cities are being rapidly reshaped by international commerce and immigrants with new cultural tastes and commercial connections.<sup>3</sup> Saskia Sassen points out that global cities function as strategic command centers presiding over the operations of decentralized manufacturing operations.<sup>4</sup>

These trends are noticeable in Toronto. The population of the Greater Toronto

Area, inclusive of suburban neighbourhoods, is growing twice the rate of the city, but nonetheless the downtown centre continues to grow as well. Toronto's growth is attributed to natural population growth and immigration, but also takes into account the migration of population from suburbs to the city. In census years of 1996, 2001 and 2006, more people were moving to the city than those leaving it. Respectively, the net increase of the city's population due to this migration is 1.1%, 2.4% and 2.3% with the city's future projected to follow a similar trend.<sup>5</sup> The fixed boundaries of cities containing this population growth reflect an increase in density.

With Toronto, one factor against this migration lies with the cultural communities. Cities, with the necessary infrastructure and social services, have always been an entry point for immigration where newcomers could find work and support. Cultural neighbourhoods in the downtown emerged as a result, allowing immigrants to ease into a foreign place. Over the years, suburban developments have gained popularity with the immigrant population. Suburbs, aside from its affordability, have the capacity to accommodate the growing population of immigrants and provide a broad range of every day cultural support and needs. As a result, communities have migrated outwards from the city in the pursuit of developing these areas. Many new immigrants today skip the traditional route of renting in downtown enclaves, instead buying homes in growing ethnocentric suburban enclaves.<sup>6</sup> An example of a cultural suburb would be Markham, a predominantly Chinese community located just north of Toronto. With the emergence of cultural suburbs creates the situation where downtown cultural neighbourhoods become slowly depleted of culture and investment, straining its development. Currently, Toronto's Chinatown is affected by this as it experiences a decreasing influx of Chinese immigrants to the area.<sup>7</sup>

The Chinatown area along Spadina Avenue, located between College Street and Queen Street West, becomes an area of concern. The area has always

been rooted in history of immigration and settlement. Europeans first settled here and when they moved out of their enclave, the area was replaced with a new immigrant class from Asia. With the development of cultural suburbs, it questions whether today's immigrant communities, predominantly from Asia, will eventually follow in the steps of earlier European immigrants.

Neil Smith uses the term "the suburbanization of the city" to describe the situation of downtowns becoming homogenized and themed, where "a centre is increasingly recolonized by the money and mores of the suburban classes whose parents abandoned the postwar city and by wealthy professional migrants attracted by the center's verve."<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that cities were once the entry point for immigrants because living downtown was affordable and offered supporting amenities, current redevelopment and increased real estate market values make it difficult for existing ethnic groups to sustain their way of living downtown. This also deters new immigrants from establishing themselves in the city when the suburbs are becoming the more socially and financially accessible alternative. These market driven trends are causing these traditionally urban cultural neighbourhoods to become unaffordable to the ethnic, working class and first generation immigrant populations that once brought their character and diversity to the city.

## 1.2 INDUSTRIAL, POST-INDUSTRIAL

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, cities are shifting from the industrial age further into the post-industrial one; from physical inputs of raw materials and labour to harnessing human knowledge and intelligence; an opportunity and condition made possible through technology as well as evolved economic and social systems.<sup>9</sup> Today, cities are no longer producer of goods but now consumer of goods. Such process reflects the incremental and evolutionary nature of cities and their communities.

In the age of industrialization, most employment took form as manual labour running and facilitating factories, mills and assembly plants. These industries were initially located in cities in close proximity to rail yards and ports necessary for transportation; importing raw materials and exporting products. This process of natural resources as inputs to factories had resulting outputs of products but also pollution. In the nineteenth century, North American cities were only beginning to develop waste and water management systems.<sup>10</sup> With the addition of industrial effluents to existing sewage and domestic waste problems, suburbs became the refuge from the city.<sup>11</sup>

The advancement of technology has since resulted in reduction of manufacturing jobs as production becomes more automated. Globalization has shifted work overseas to areas where manual labour is inexpensive. In the present, most industries have since moved outside of cities where land is available and affordable to accommodate expansion. While suburbs continue to attract people for living and working, cities have become equally desirable places for living and working now that the once-deterrent factors such as industrial pollution have been diminished or eliminated.

With old industries disappearing, the value added in cities is created less through what is manufactured and more through intellectual capital applied to products, processes and services.<sup>12</sup> The current era refers to an economy that is information based or knowledge based.<sup>13</sup> Work and workplace are changing as

mental labour become the force of production.

The shift from an industrial to a knowledge-based economy affects profoundly the way people work, live and learn. In Kimberly Seltzer and Tom Bentley's *The Creative Age*, four key trends that drive this shift are identified:

- 1 The weightless economy: intangible resources such as information, organisational networks and human capital have become the primary sources of productivity and competitiveness.
- 2 Weightless work: the number of part-time, temporary, fixed contract and self employed workers has also risen steadily in the last half-century. Workers must increasingly manage themselves in a more fluid and unstable organisational environment.
- 3 The networked economy: digital technology, organisational restructuring and higher volumes of information are generating a shift from vertical to horizontal relationships within and between organisations. Networks are becoming a basic organisational form.
- 4 Knowledge and skill exclusion: the increasing premium on new skills and qualifications is creating new patterns of marginalisation among those who lack the means or motivation to acquire marketable knowledge. Developing new kinds of skills are central to their future prospects.<sup>14</sup>

Cities are forced to compete through the quality of their amenities, services, public realm and entertainment. This is necessary in order to attract people to work and live in a particular city in a world where people and skills are extremely mobile. Knowledge companies and their employees require a significant urban transformation in response to this change. "In the industrial age there was

a need to separate dirty industry from work, home and leisure. But knowledge industries require urban settings that project space, openness and social interchange.”<sup>15</sup>

Social interchange becomes particularly important in a mobile society. Where information technology is an impermanent entity rather than a fixed one, increased mobility are resulting in a diminished sense of locality, shared space and identity.<sup>16</sup> Community is increasingly defined by interests rather than geography therefore any places of social interchange that can facilitate and accommodate these interests are critical to the urban environment. These will nurture a sense of anchoring in an age where homogeneity, immobility and the need to cooperate no longer exist.<sup>17</sup>



## NOTES

- 1 Charles Landry writes that increased vitality, raising levels of use, participation, transaction and interaction allow activity to take off, where as by contrast, cities with single, homogenous populations often find it more difficult to be widely creative. He believes that diversity is necessary for innovation.
- 2 Ehrenhalt, "Trading Places."
- 3 John Lorinc, *Cities* (Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2008), 7-8.
- 4 Saskia Sassen, "Cities in a World Economy" (1994) in *The Global Cities Reader*, 70-74.
- 5 Urban Development Services, *Flashforward: Projecting Population and Employment to 2031 in a Mature Urban Area* (Toronto: City of Toronto, 2002), 43.
- 6 Nicholas Keung, "Boom time for GTA's ethnic enclaves," *The Toronto Star*, May 18, 2009.
- 7 Statistics Canada 2006, "Kensington-Chinatown: Social Profile #2 – Neighbourhoods Language & Ethnicity" (Toronto: City of Toronto, 2008), 4. Between census years 2006 and 2001, statistics show a decrease of visible Chinese minorities.
- 8 Neil Smith and Deborah Cowen, "Suburban Manhattan," *The Suburbanization of New York*, ed. Jerilou Hammett and Kingsley Hammett (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2007), 33.
- 9 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, xiii.
- 10 Lorinc, *Cities*, 131.
- 11 *Ibid.*, 21.
- 12 Landry, *The Creative City*, xiii.
- 13 *Ibid.*, 31-32.
- 14 Kimberly Seltzer and Tom Bentley, *The Creative Age* (London: Demos, 1999), 1-2.
- 15 Landry, *The Creative City*, 35.
- 16 *Ibid.*, 36.
- 17 *Ibid.*



## **2 CONCEPTS**



## 2.1 “CREATIVE CITY”

The “creative city” concept was originally developed by Charles Landry. This concept was later adapted and modified by Richard Florida contributing to the concept his idea of the “creative class”. Both have written a number of books in this field, founding their work on the fundamental idea that creativity plays a crucial role in cities and their future; creativity is a valuable urban resource. Where Landry and Florida differ is in their focus; Landry believes that new, cultural thinking and the use of creativity is necessary to solve urban issues whereas Florida stresses the economic value of human creativity. Where Florida’s work focuses on how cities can compete to be the most “creative” city in the world, Landry’s work emphasizes how cities can be creative for the world.<sup>1</sup>

The term “creative city” was first coined by Charles Landry in the late 1980s. His first book *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (2000) focuses on the creative use of culture for urban revitalization. He encourages open-mindedness and imagination by everyone: “Every crevice in the city has a hidden story or undiscovered potential that could be re-used for a positive urban purpose” but often it is the culture of a city, its traditions and policies that can restrict creative thinking and discovery of the potential.<sup>2</sup>

Landry introduces the concept of a “creative milieu” and its importance as a place that fosters creativity. He posits that conditions need to be created for people to think, plan and act with imagination in order to harness opportunities and address seemingly intractable urban problems.<sup>3</sup> His perspective on the “creative city” is focused on the urban realm, understanding the relationship between its inhabitants and the greater city’s economy but emphasizing the existing cultural environment and its inherent potential.

The “creative city” concept did not gain significant popularity and momentum until Richard Florida’s *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), a national bestseller. His interpretation of Landry’s concept brought the “creative city” term to the forefront with his addition of the “creative class” concept and

ranking systems for cities such as “Bohemian Index”, “Gay Index”, and “Creativity Index”. His work proved to be more accessible and persuasive, arguing that creativity and creative people would be the basis for civic prosperity in the new century.<sup>4</sup> His emphasis on the economic value of creativity has captured the interest of city governments by presenting links between attributes of cities, certain demographic groups, and economic development. This has caused many cities to develop strategic programmes and policies to boast “creativity” in pursuit of economic growth. There is the tendency for city government to promote the concept without understanding the social and cultural implications. Often the concept is misunderstood, term misunderstood, that any cultural plan is a “creative city” plan.<sup>5</sup> Restricting its meaning to arts and associative activities is only one aspect of urban creativity.

The arts and creative industries can be the catalytic force to drive innovation in cities, fostering a culture to becoming more open-minded, unleashing the potential, resources and assets of a city but “creativity is more than the arts, it includes administrative creativity, social creativity, and the like.”<sup>6</sup> According to Landry, in a truly creative city, everything is a potential resource and everyone has the capacity to be creative.

The major difference that clearly separates the work of Florida from Landry is Florida’s concept of the “creative class”; these are the people who are considered the primary resource towards a city’s regeneration and long-term prosperity. Richard Florida’s concept of the “creative class” identifies specific types of people who will add economic value through their creativity. He divides this into two components: the “super-creative core” and “creative professionals”. The “super-creative core” includes “scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers and architects...nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts and other opinion-makers”.<sup>7</sup> Florida defines “creative professionals” as those who “engage in creative problem solving, drawing on

complex bodies of knowledge to solve specific problems...typically requires a high degree of formal education and thus a high level of human capital” such as physicians, lawyers and managers.<sup>8</sup>

Florida’s concept is exclusive where Landry’s concept is inclusive. Landry does not classify occupations or identify groups who may be more or less creative than others. Instead, he posits that everyone is creative. “Creativity thrives in every area, in every discipline.”<sup>9</sup> With Florida’s specificity, he excludes a significant group of people who do not fall under his classifications. Given the principle that everyone is creative, this exclusion is detrimental to the development of creative cities.

Small independent business owners and entrepreneurs are essential to a city’s diversity and culture. Spadina Avenue demonstrates this. Florida’s “creative city” concept supports and encourages small businesses and entrepreneurialism as a form of innovative output. Organizations of all sizes and types have distinct roles to play in a creative economy but according to Florida only those founded by his “creative class” are of value.<sup>10</sup> Jamie Peck, a geographer, wrote the article “Struggling with the Creative Class”. He states that “Florida’s script and the nascent practices of urban creativity are especially suited to an entrepreneurialized urban landscape” but Peck also points out this landscape caters only to Florida’s defined “creative class”; “a class of gentrifiers who lack of commitment to place with weak community ties.”<sup>11</sup> According to Landry, a “creative city” requires land and buildings at affordable prices especially for younger businesses or social entrepreneurs; spaces that can be innovatively adapted to reduce financial risk and encourage experiment, even at the most banal level of opening a new type of restaurant or shop.<sup>12</sup> At no point does Landry qualify occupation or education. Space and affordability, two aspects noted by Landry, demonstrates a more sensitive approach that offers the working class and locals the possibility for business exploration. Applying these concepts, Landry would consider the existing small businesses

on Spadina Avenue to be a critical part of a “creative city” while Florida would consider them replaceable of little value.

Florida bases his “creative city” concept on the emergence of the “creative class” positing that the urban realm and its economy must attract and sustain this particular group of people. The three T’s: technology, talent and tolerance are advocated by Florida as the strategy for a successful “creative city”.<sup>13</sup> Technology and talent refers to the information society and the knowledge worker respectively. Tolerance becomes another description of the “creative class”, implying that this group desires a specific lifestyle, values diversity and tolerance in the places they live. The three T’s are identifiers that city government can embrace but are essentially aspects that are independent of cities promoted to attract and achieve the targeted “creative class”.

Richard Florida and Charles Landry approach the concept of “creative city” from two very different perspectives: Florida’s introduction of the “creative class” is exclusive and divisive while Landry’s concept is all encompassing making no distinctions of class or place. Florida focuses on the economic success of creative cities while Landry focuses on the use of culture and creativity to regenerate cities in decline.<sup>14</sup> Florida relies exclusively on specific class of individuals and wholly on economic return as a measure of success. Landry’s original concept of the “creative city” is rooted in a city’s past and present and recognizes these as resources to inform its potential and its future. Where Florida’s adaptation of the “creative city” concept fails in its prescription and limiting specificity of class and place, Landry’s concept of the “creative city” succeeds in its ability to draw inspiration from all individuals and environments.



## 2.2 INHERENT QUALITY OF PLACE

Aldo Rossi in *The Architecture in the City* defines *locus* as the relationship between a certain specific location and the buildings that are in it. It is at once singular and universal; *genius loci* is the spirit of place, presiding over all that was to unfold in it.<sup>15</sup> *Genius loci* promotes the idea of an inherent quality of place that cannot be generated or duplicated elsewhere. Giorgio Grassi develops Rossi's concept further. For Grassi there is no such thing as new architecture or old architecture, in so far as there is no historical contrast between living and building in the present and what they meant in the past.<sup>16</sup> In this sense, the spirit of place is inherent and perpetual. This idea is evident with Spadina Avenue.

Spadina Avenue, bound between Queen Street West and College Street, has a history of immigration settlement, supporting the working class, small businesses and entrepreneurship. It has proven its resiliency against undesired development such as the Spadina Expressway, unifying local residents, other city communities, city council members, students and professors. It has almost wholly resisted the influx of retail chains and franchises. The Kensington Market neighbourhood, bordering just west of Spadina Avenue, has also defended its independent shops and grocers. For the most part, the inherent quality of Spadina Avenue is its history of developing on its own terms.<sup>17</sup> Spadina Avenue is unique; it is unlike any other street in Toronto.

According to Saskia Sassen, place needs to be considered in the analyses of the global economy. It reveals the multiplicity of economies and work cultures in which the global information economy is embedded; the concrete, localized processes through which globalization exists and to argue that much of the multiculturalism in large cities is as much a part of globalization as is international finance.<sup>18</sup>

Sassen identifies that the working class is undervalued despite their necessary role as part of globalization. Service workers, often overlooked and undervalued as being part of the globalization process, play an important role in the

production of the goods and services that fuel the global economy.<sup>19</sup> Meanwhile, immigration and its associated multiplicity of cultural environments act as urban representations of globality. Immigration and ethnicity are “a set of processes whereby global elements are localized, international labor markets are constituted, and cultures from all over the world are de- and reterritorialized” and their role is central “along with the internationalization of capital as a fundamental aspect of globalization.”<sup>20</sup>

Where globalization commonly valorizes its international and corporate businesses, ethnic and immigrant communities are devalored and undervalued, causing them to become vulnerable to reassessment and redevelopment. These cultural communities were once sited at the periphery of town, where location was less desirable and therefore affordable for the working class and immigrants. As cities grow and these communities find themselves in the heart of the city, with rising land values and pressures for redevelopment. Unless these communities are recognized, valued and supported by the city as well as its residents, gentrification becomes a threat to these areas. A classic definition of gentrification is by sociologist Ruth Glass:

“One by one, many of the working-class quarters of London have been invaded by the middle classes – upper and lower. Shabby, modest mews and cottages, two rooms up and two down – have been taken over, when their leases have expired, and have become elegant, expensive residences. Larger Victorian houses, downgraded in an earlier or recent period – which were used as lodging houses or were otherwise in multiple occupation – have been upgraded once again. . . . Once this process of ‘gentrification’ starts in a district it goes on rapidly until all or most of the original working-class occupiers are displaced and the whole social character of the district is changed.”<sup>21</sup>

Where the social character of a district is one of the most important aspects a cultural community brings to a city. These communities connect individuals from similar ethnic backgrounds while offering others the opportunity to experience a new culture. Little Italy and Greektown are two examples of cultural communities located in downtown Toronto. When the social character of an area is changed, it cannot be recreated. Influx of more affluent individuals into a lower-class area shifts the demographic and in area and changes the social character of a place. It becomes a theoretical and ideological battleground between those stressing culture and individual choice, consumption and consumer demand on the one side and other emphasizing the importance of capital, class and the impetus shifts in the structure of social production.<sup>22</sup>

Psychologist James Hillman states in *City and Soul* “the *polis* as plural, and as a mix of differences, bears upon one of the more pressing concerns of city life today: immigration.”<sup>23</sup> He furthers the concept of immigration with the soul of the city:

“A city of soul will be invitational, curious, and appreciatively receptive to what moves at the margins, in the marginalized, whether in the *barrios* or *favelas*, or among groups of unclaimed artists, or activist protestors with radical agendas. The city of soul will allow, maybe even find ways to provide for, the spontaneous uprising of the unfitting. The immigrant is not a barbarian because he speaks a foreign language; rather he and she are importing another culture into a preestablished harmony that harbors tendencies of totalitarian intolerance.”<sup>24</sup>

Immigrants and their communities are major actors in modern North American cities. It can destabilize communities and raise ethnic tensions as immigrants bring in habits, attitudes and skills alien to a host country. It can also enrich

and stimulate possibilities by creating hybrids, crossovers and boundary blurring.<sup>25</sup> In the case of Spadina Avenue, its inherent quality of place as a host community for immigrants is a critical part of the city; diversity and culture, independent businesses and entrepreneurialism bring life to the city.

## 2.3 TORONTO

“While the creative economy is defined in different ways, even when it is restricted to the pure creative arts (musicians and actors, artists and artisans, writers and editors, architects and designers), it comprises over 60,000 creative jobs in Toronto, one of the highest concentrations in North America. Throwing supporting functions like publishers, agents and tech-support staff into the mix, and adding related professions that require the same skills, such as advertising and the media, expands the sector into one of Toronto’s major industries. The reports estimate that the sector as a whole accounts for 133,000 to 190,000 jobs and \$9 billion economic activity every year, totals that are comparable to much-hyped sectors such as high-tech or biomedicine. Moreover, the city has the largest concentration of these culture industries in Canada, making them one of Toronto’s specializations.”<sup>26</sup>

Dylan Reid, “The challenges of the creative city”

In 2003, the City of Toronto commissioned the report: “Culture Plan for the Creative City”. Like many cities across North America, it wanted to adopt the “creative city” plan. It proposes strategies that focus on traditional cultural institutions rather than on grassroots activities; suggestions include a new museum for Toronto and the designation of University Avenue as an “Avenue of the Arts” despite the glaring contradiction that University Avenue is lined with hospitals, embassies and government buildings.

In 2006, the City of Toronto commissioned a second report: “Imagine a Toronto... Strategies for a Creative City”. This report shows a deeper understanding of the “creative city” concept and identifies the importance of cultural grassroots activity as well as small, independent businesses and entrepreneurs. The report also identifies a matter of concern: the gentrification process that occurs in

key city neighbourhoods particularly areas that have been traditional breaking grounds for grassroots activity. When a vibrant art scene attracts people and businesses to the neighbourhood, particularly wealthier people, real estate values increase resulting in a gentrification process that moves artists out of the area. Queen Street West is an example of this. The report proposes measures to reserve affordable live-work spaces for artists in these areas, such as support for the purchase of buildings by and for artists through a dedicated mortgage investment fund.

The reports commissioned by the City of Toronto, present several initiatives attempting to develop the “creative city”: including more funding for art education, social networking and affordable live-work spaces for artists.

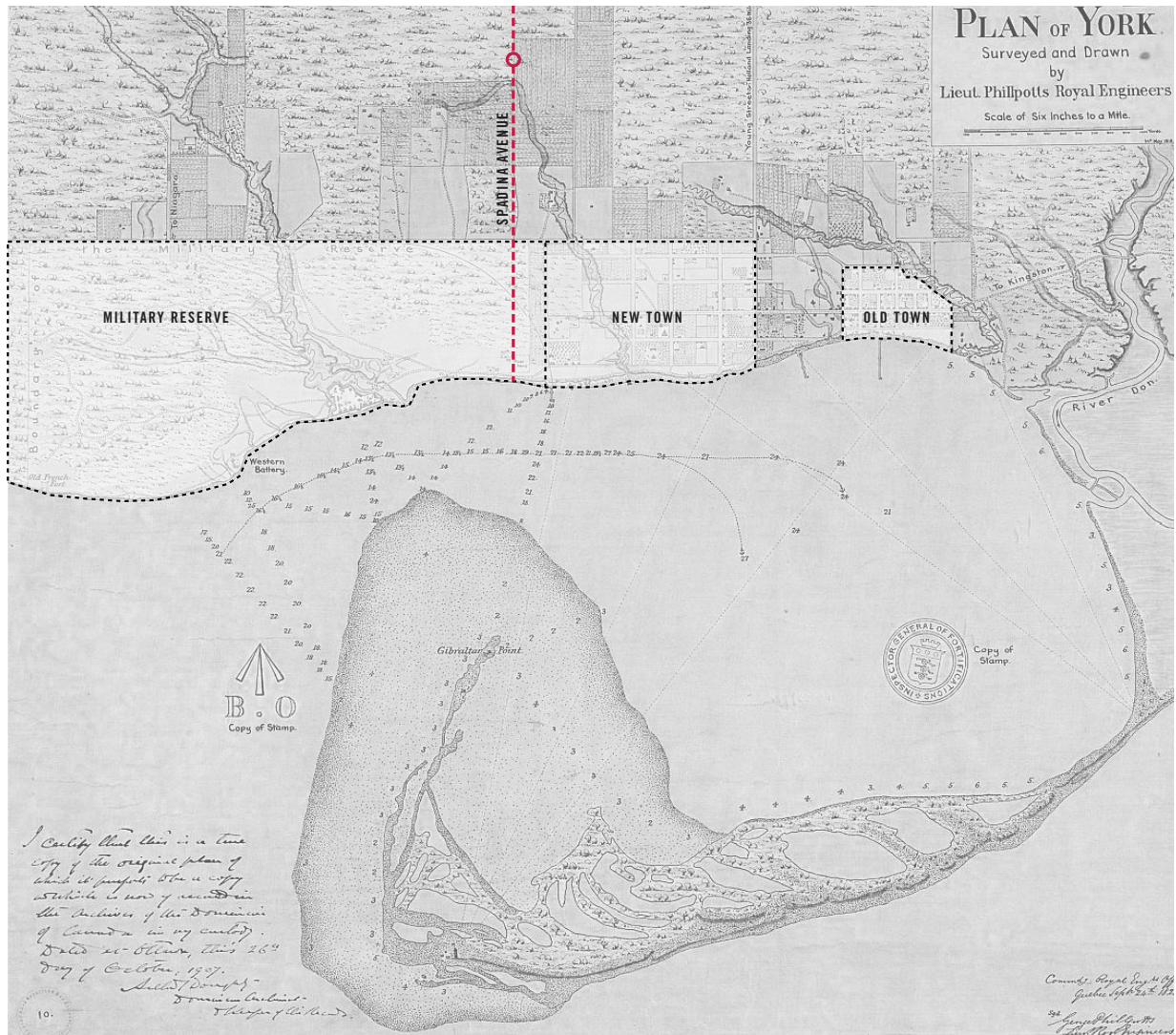
## NOTES

- 1 Landry, *The Creative City, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, xxvii.
- 2 Landry, *The Creative City*, 7.
- 3 Landry, *The Creative City, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, xxi.
- 4 Dylan Reid, "The challenges of the creative city," *The State of the Arts: Living With Culture in Toronto*, ed. Alana Wilcox, Christina Palassio and Jonny Dovercourt (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2006), 50.
- 5 Landry, *The Creative City, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, xlix.
- 6 "Charles Landry and The Art of City Making," <http://www.livewithculture.ca/content/view/full/16570>.
- 7 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 69.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Landry, *The Creative City*, 76.
- 10 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 27.
- 11 Peck, "Struggling with the Creative Class," 764.
- 12 Landry, *The Creative City*, 123.
- 13 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 249.
- 14 Rowland Atkinson and Hazel Easthope, "The Consequences of Creative Class," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 33, 1 (March 2009), 64-79.
- 15 Aldo Rossi, *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1982), 103.
- 16 Giorgio Grassi, *Architecture, Dead Language* (Hamburg: Gingko Press, 1988), 8.
- 17 Donegan, *Spadina Avenue*, 6.
- 18 Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, xix-xx.
- 19 Ibid., 142.
- 20 Ibid., xxxi.
- 21 Ruth Glass, *London: Aspects of Change* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1964), xviii.
- 22 Chris Hamnett, "The blind men and the elephant: the explanation of gentrification," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, 2 (1991), 173-174.
- 23 James Hillman, *City and Soul* (Dallas: Spring Publications, 2006), 399.
- 24 Ibid., 400.
- 25 Landry, *The Creative City*, 264.
- 26 Reid, "The challenges of the creative city," 50.





### **3 SPADINA**



04 "Plan of York" Surveyed and drawn by Lieut. Phillpotts, Royal Engineers (1823)

### 3.1 PRE-SPADINA

The late eighteenth-century marked the beginning of Toronto. The present day site of Toronto was not initially considered for the capital of Upper Canada but was located here after military assessment. The site was safely behind the wider water reach of Lake Ontario, further buffered by the harbour that can be guarded by the garrison. “In 1787 the Toronto Purchase was effected, whereby for some £1,700 in cash and goods the Mississauga [Indians] conveyed title to a fourteen-mile stretch along the lakefront, from present-day Scarborough westward past the Humber to the Etobicoke, and inland reaching back some twenty-eight miles: truly a bargain-basement deal.”<sup>1</sup> The area purchased was a total of 250,880 acres.

Within a year, Captain Gother Mann, commanding the Royal Engineers in Upper Canada, drew up one of the first plans of Toronto. The plan shows a one-mile square of city lots, adjacent to the harbour entry, containing military and government buildings. The square is surrounded by a common, which is enclosed by a residential area to the west, north and east. Dated 1788, “Plan of Toronto” is typical of gridiron settlements suitable for a flat terrain and did not consider the topographic features of Toronto. The idea of public buildings “in a neat British square separated from the residential area by a green common with shade trees and sheep quietly grazing is quite delightful, but fantastic and unrealistic when one considers the rising terrain and the deeply penetrating ravines.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1793, John Simcoe arrived at the site of Toronto. Garrison Fort York was situated that same year and built at the entrance to the harbour. Toronto was called York at the time and the name was kept until 1834. Alexander Aitkin was commissioned to survey the site and drafted the Plan of York Harbour as a result. Again, the surveyors’ gridiron appears on the plan, lacking any relationship to the surrounding context. Here, ten square blocks are drawn, bounded by George (west), Berkeley (east), Duke (Adelaide, north) and Palace (Front Street, south), with the areas from Parliament to the Don and from Peter

to the Humber set aside for government and military purposes. North of the future Queen Street, Simcoe laid out a “range of 100 acre lots which were to be ‘douceurs’ to the officials as compensation for having to come to York.”<sup>3</sup>

The Plan of York, surveyed and drawn by Lieutenant George Phillpotts of the Royal Engineers, depicts the growth of city by 1823. In the east, the “Old Town” centre was bound by Berkeley, New (Jarvis), Palace (Front), and Duchess. Yonge Street is depicted in this plan cutting through the forested north. The “New Town” was developing west of Yonge. Shown are the street boundaries of Lot Street to the north (Queen) and Peter Street in the west.

In the same year, Spadina Avenue was being laid by Dr. William Warren Baldwin between Lot 15 and Lot 16, extending north from Queen Street. Though not visible on the plan, it would be located only 500 feet (200 metres) west of Peter Street. Due to financial reasons the army sold most of the eastern end of the military reserve, opening up the area south of Queen Street, between Peter and Bathurst streets for development.<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, Spadina Avenue was able to extend south of Queen Street to the waterfront. This section was known as Brock Street until 1838.

It is interesting to note here that Spadina Avenue is unlike Queen Street or Berkeley or Jarvis or Yonge; streets that were all laid out accordingly to proper planning and envisioned by surveyors, planners, captains, lieutenants and governors. Spadina Avenue was likely one of the first Toronto main streets that was envisioned and laid out by someone outside of planning, military and government. These form the foundation that already distinguishes Spadina Avenue from all other main streets of Toronto.

## 3.2 MAPPING

### EVOLUTION

Dr. William Warren Baldwin was an Irish immigrant who settled in York, in 1799.<sup>5</sup> A doctor and a lawyer, he began laying out Spadina Avenue in the late 1820s on the land acquired from his wife and sister-in-law.<sup>6</sup> The width was set at 40 metres (132 feet) wide.<sup>7</sup> This made it over twice the width of streets like Yonge, Bloor and Lot (later Queen). From his house, located on the hill of the Lake Iroquois shoreline, he had an unobstructed, grand view to Lake Ontario. There are a number of speculative reasons behind the unconventional width of the street. One theory is the intention of enhancing property values which was soon followed by the construction of a number of fine homes along this avenue.<sup>8</sup> When considering who would have used the street aside from its residents, perhaps the width was to accommodate the industry, moving goods between warehouses and shipping ports.

The proportions of Spadina Avenue give a strong emphasis to the street when compared to the proportions of a typical downtown main street. Traditional streets reflect a sense of enclosure provided by the accustomed scale of three to four storey buildings, of retail at grade and apartments above, with typical street widths of 20 metres (60-70 feet). Narrow streets limit the opportunities to dwell on the street as the function of thoroughfare takes priority. In comparison, doubling the width of a typical street but maintaining the same three to four storey fabric lining Spadina Avenue, creates a condition of exposure. It may seem that dimensions alone offer an alienating and vehicular oriented condition undesirable for pedestrians but this is hardly the case here. The width of the Spadina Avenue has allowed for wider sidewalks that can accommodate not only a higher volume of pedestrians but an assortment of sidewalk appropriation and activity from retailers extending their commercial floor space out onto the sidewalk, to vendors that appear during the day and disappear by night. Two lanes of traffic are now dedicated right of ways for the streetcar, not only making Spadina Avenue vastly more accessible through public transit but also creates an intermediate buffer for pedestrians when crossing the road.

## 1880

This serves as the backdrop against which Spadina Avenue will develop within the next century. The grain of the urban fabric is still fine and fairly loose at the end of the 19th century. A fair amount of neighbourhoods in and around the area has been developed at this point. Queen Street is almost fully as the commercial concentration sprawls from the downtown core.

Some of landmarks from this period still exist today, including Knox College (1 Spadina Crescent) and a fair amount of retail typology between Dundas (then known as St. Patrick) and Oxford Street.

Somewhat miraculously, some residential houses south of College Street still stand. Faintly disguised behind a front addition and interior conversion, is now Grossman's (377-379). Pushed back behind the present day building line, the Murray House (235) is still intact. It was briefly a funeral home in the 1910s. The house has undergone various owners and uses, including apartments, offices, the scene of artists' gatherings as well as home to Graham Coughtry (painter) and Irving Grossman (architect). Presently it is in relatively poor condition; the house is hidden behind various signages of small offices and retail that now occupy the home.

LEGEND Existing



0 40 80 160



05 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1880)



### **1903**

The retail typology extends itself to College Street, completing full blocks on both east and west sides of Spadina Avenue. This is noticed along Dundas Street and Queen Street as well. As the city continues to develop, the main arterials, as prime locations for development and investment, become more densely commercial.

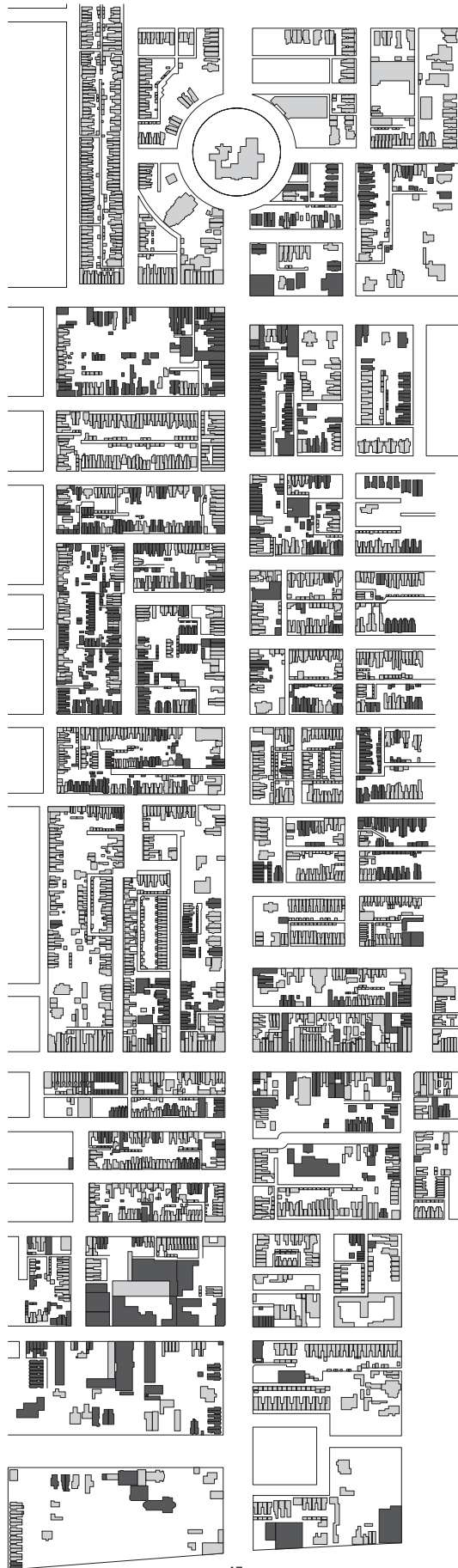
Neighbourhoods are expanding also where vacant lots develop and the overall fabric becomes more dense. Lansdowne School at the southwest quadrant of Spadina Crescent has already built an addition having only been open for a decade. This reflects the growing population of the city. The Kensington neighbourhood (bound by Dundas and Oxford west of Spadina) reflects an obvious growth while the neighbourhood south of Dundas shows little to no development as one of the slums in the Toronto area.

There is some construction activity south of Queen Street in response to a growing industry. These are mostly additions to existing buildings.



**LEGEND** Existing   
 New 

0 40 80 160  



06 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1903)


## 1924

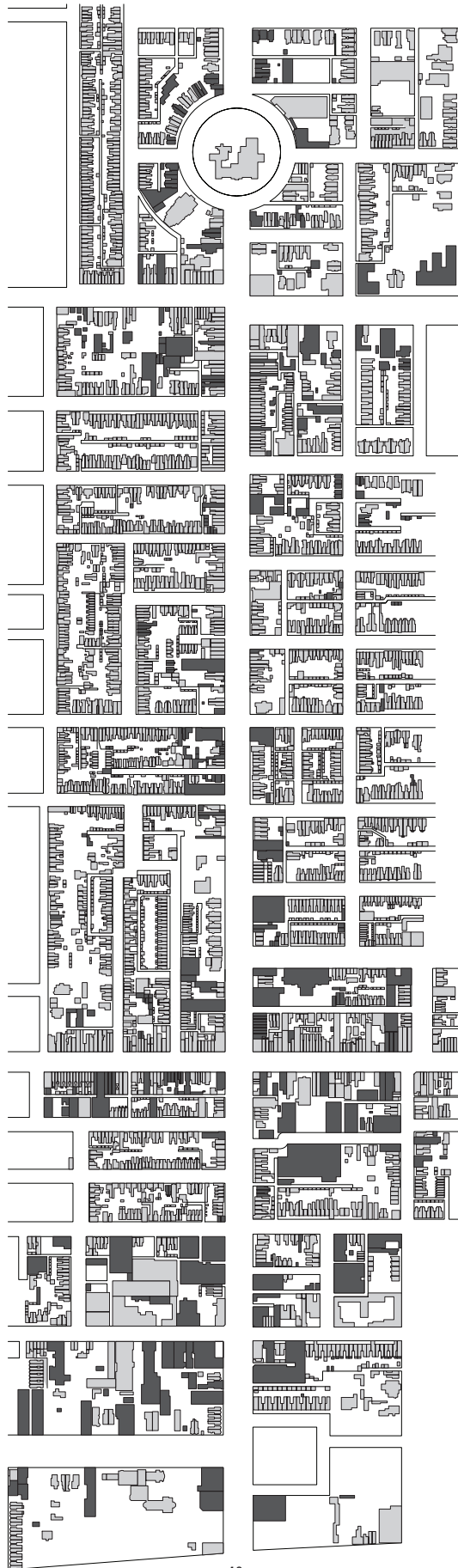
The period surrounding World War I, reflects a slowing in overall development. Knox College is temporarily converted to a military hospital. Neighbourhoods now lack vacant lots for development and are at full capacity with its existing residential fabric. Most of the new construction and additions are taking place in the industrial area just north of Front Street and the railway lands. These are mostly warehouses, factories and large scale industrial buildings additions as well as new construction.

The Darling Building (96) was constructed in 1909 at the southwest corner of Spadina and Adelaide. This was the first of a series of mid-rise factories built in the Garment District. The Consolidated Plate and Glass Building (239-241) was erected in 1910. Keen's Building (185) was built around the same time. The Robertson Building (215) was built in 1911-1913. All of these exist presently and have since been renovated and converted to prime office and commercial space.

Around this time, the Jewish Market located just west of Spadina Avenue between College Street and St. Patrick Street (presently Dundas Street) is thriving with a significant population of Jews living in and around this area. The Jewish Market is presently known as Kensington Market and still remains a popular market in Toronto.

**LEGEND** Existing   
 New 

0 40 80 160  






07 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1924)

### **1943**

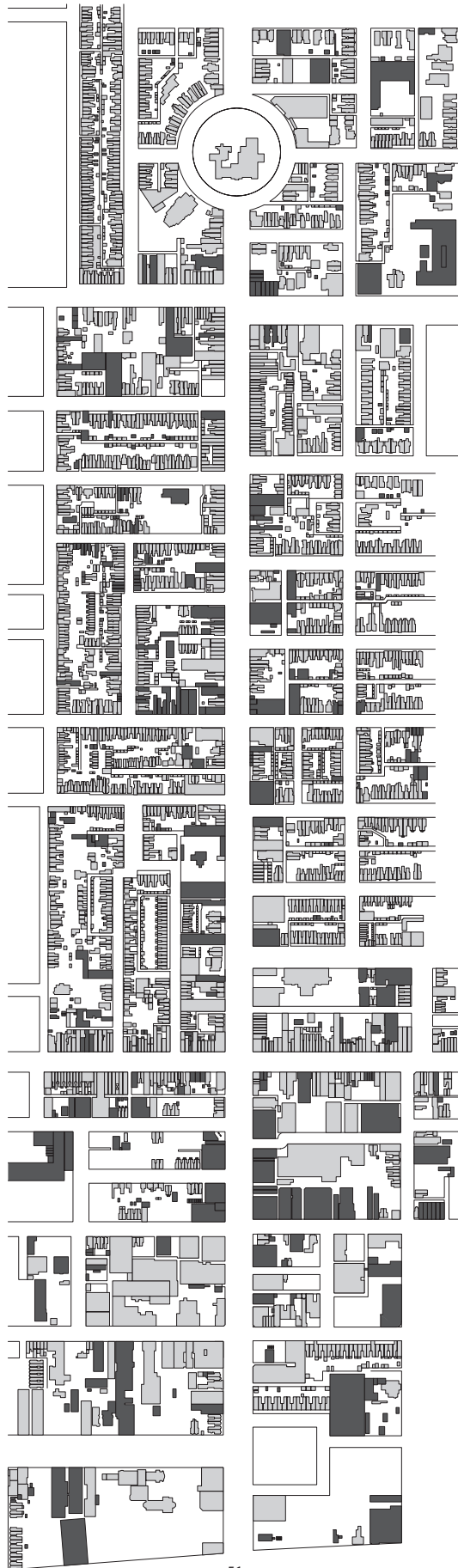
In the years between World War I and World War II, the Garment District continues to grow. South of Queen Street, small individual lots give way to warehouses and factories, especially at and along Adelaide Street. Fashion Building (130) and Tower Building (106-110) were both constructed in 1927. Balfour Building (119) came a few years later at the northeast corner of Spadina and Adelaide.

The estate of Dr. Cook (208-210) was sold to General Motors in the 1920s to be developed as a sales and service centre.

By the early 1930s, the Jewish population became the largest ethnic group in the area. Jewish establishments such as Stitsky's Imports (354-358), Rotman's (350), United Bakers (338) all started up around this time. The Labour Lyceum (346) at the southwest corner of Spadina and St. Andrew became the centre of labour activity between unions, workers and employers. The Standard Theatre (287) opened in 1921, at the northeast corner of Spadina and Dundas.

**LEGEND** Existing   
New 

0 40 80 160  

08 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1943)



## 1964

Jewish Spadina continues to develop though a wave of Chinese is starting to come through the area. This is due in part to immigration but primarily as a result of the new Toronto City Hall that is moving the Chinese from its original Elizabeth and Dundas Street location westward to Spadina.

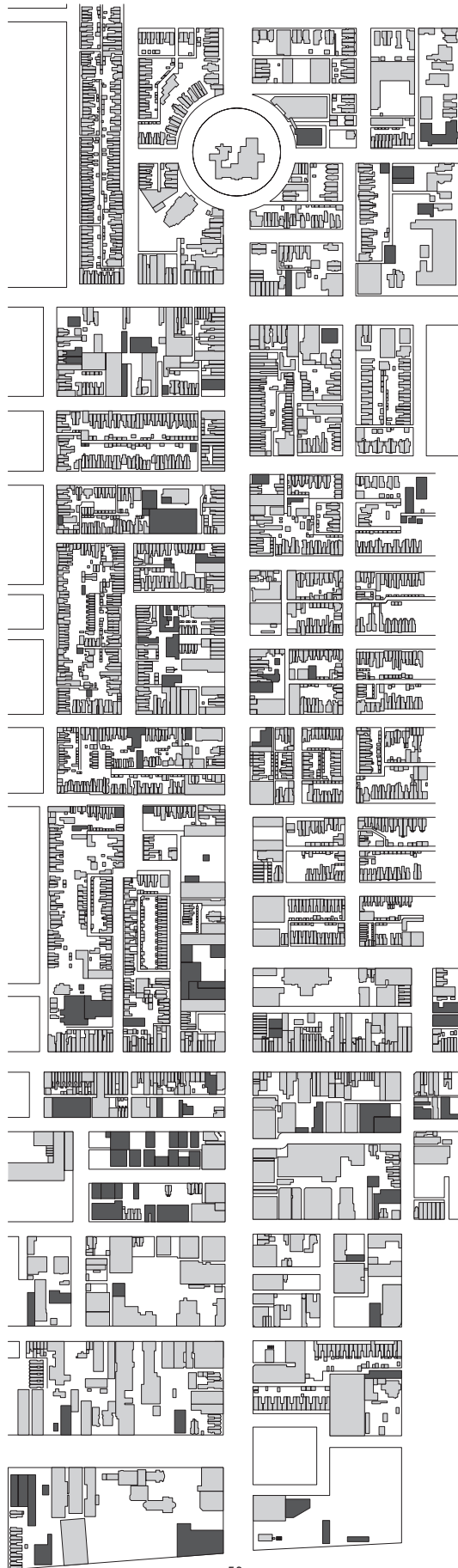
Grossman's Cafeteria (377) was established in the 1950s. Shopsowitz Delicatessen and Catering (295) also dates back to this time.

After the war, The Strand Theatre was renamed The Victory and reopened as a burlesque house.

General Motors would soon close its operation in the late 1970s and the site would be redeveloped as the China Court Shopping Centre (208-210), with an exterior Chinese garden of bridges, ponds and ceremonial arches. Most of Spadina at this time was still predominantly Jewish owned but wealthier individuals were already starting to move north and away from the downtown area.<sup>9</sup>

**LEGEND** Existing   
 New 

0 40 80 160  

09 Plan of Spadina Avenue generated from Charles E. Goad Fire Insurance Plans (1964)

## **PRESENT**

Three main areas took on major development in the past 30 years. The University of Toronto acquired property and buildings northwest of Spadina and College. The Chinatown community had spread north and south along Spadina from Dundas Street.


The neighbourhood southwest of Spadina and Dundas has been completely redeveloped into a low-income housing project called Alexandra Park, completed in 1969.

King's Court (188) built in 1985, Dragon City Centre (southwest corner of Spadina and Dundas) built in 1990, and Chinatown Centre (208-210) built in the mid 1990s would be the three major construction projects on Spadina since the industrial era with the developments of mid-rise warehouses and factories. These three projects are similarly configured with a shopping centre component at grade with mid-rise residential component above.

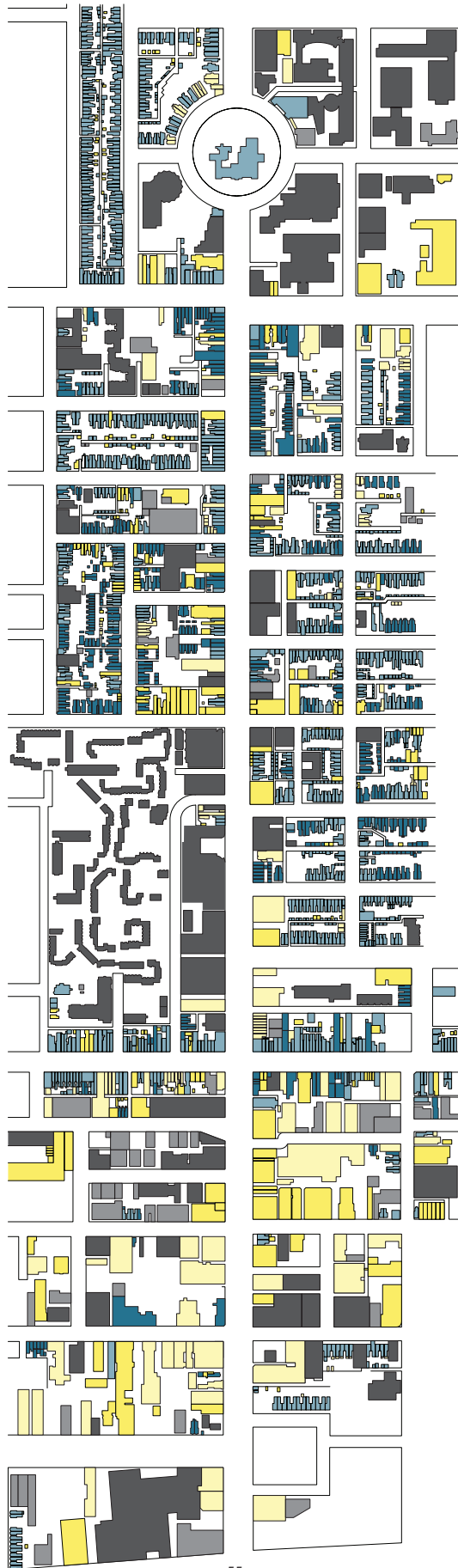
High-rise condos have also developed south of Queen Street in the Garment District from 1995 to present as this area was declared a "Reinvestment Area" by the City of Toronto.<sup>10</sup> These are a mix of warehouse and factory conversion as well as new construction.



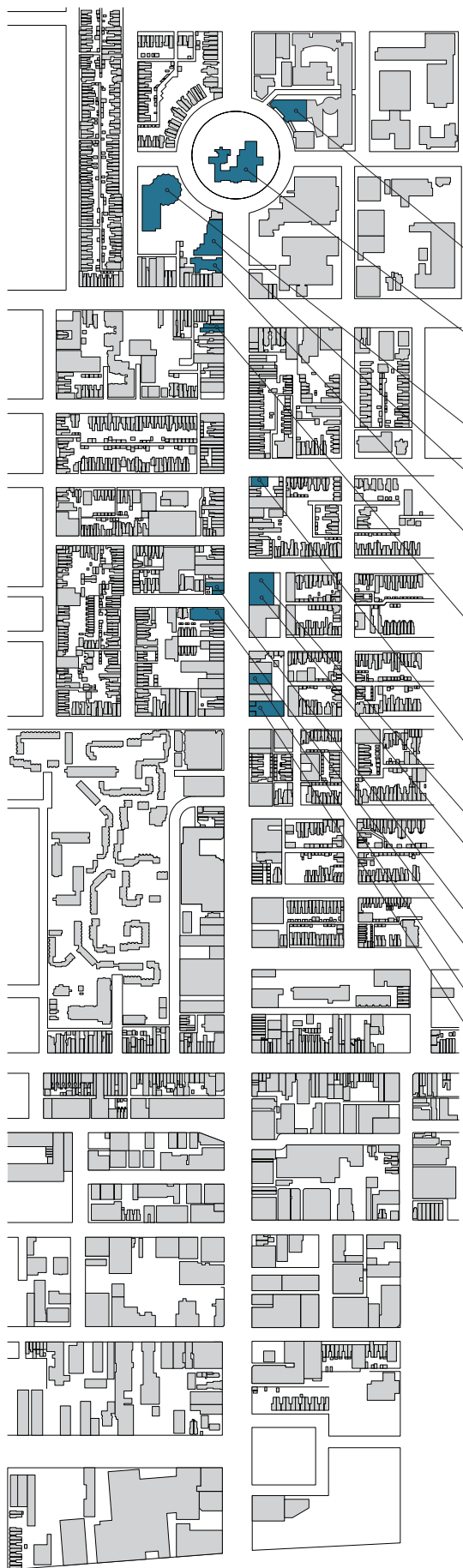
**LEGEND**

1880	
1903	
1924	
1943	
1964	
Present	

0 40 80 160

10 Plan of Spadina Avenue present depicting incremental the urban fabric of the area



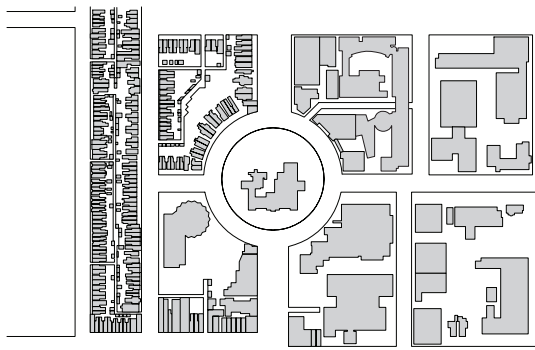
**LANDMARKS**  
(Between Wilcocks Street and Dundas Street West)

563 Spadina Cres	City Dairy Borden's Dairy University of Toronto	1900 1929 1950s
1 Spadina Cres	Crescent Gardens Knox College (Presbyterian College) Military hospital University of Toronto	1838 1875 1916 1943
33 Robert St	Lansdowne School Lord Lansdowne School	1888 1961*
502-504	'Christian Synagogue' Scott Institute Scott Mission	1912 1921 1948 (1960*)
484	Robert Milligan's market garden YMCA Waverly Hotel Silver Dollar Bar	1860s 1880* 1900* 1958
462-464	Dry-goods store Barber shop Sub post office Hunt's Confectionery Brown's Grill El Mocambo	1880s 1900s 1948
377-379	Two homes Grossman's Cafeteria	1880s 1950s
337	Paramount	1960s
327-329	Spadina Congregational Church Hebrew Men of England Synagogue New Paramount Hotel	1875 1922 1963*
350-358	Stitsky's and Rotman's	1920s
346	Labour Lyceum Asian restaurants	1913 1972
295	Shopsowitz Delicatessen and Catering	1950s
287	Methodish New Connection Church House (Dr. H.H. Moorehead) The Standard The Strand Victory Golden Harvest Theatre	1871 1876 1921* 1935 1945 1975

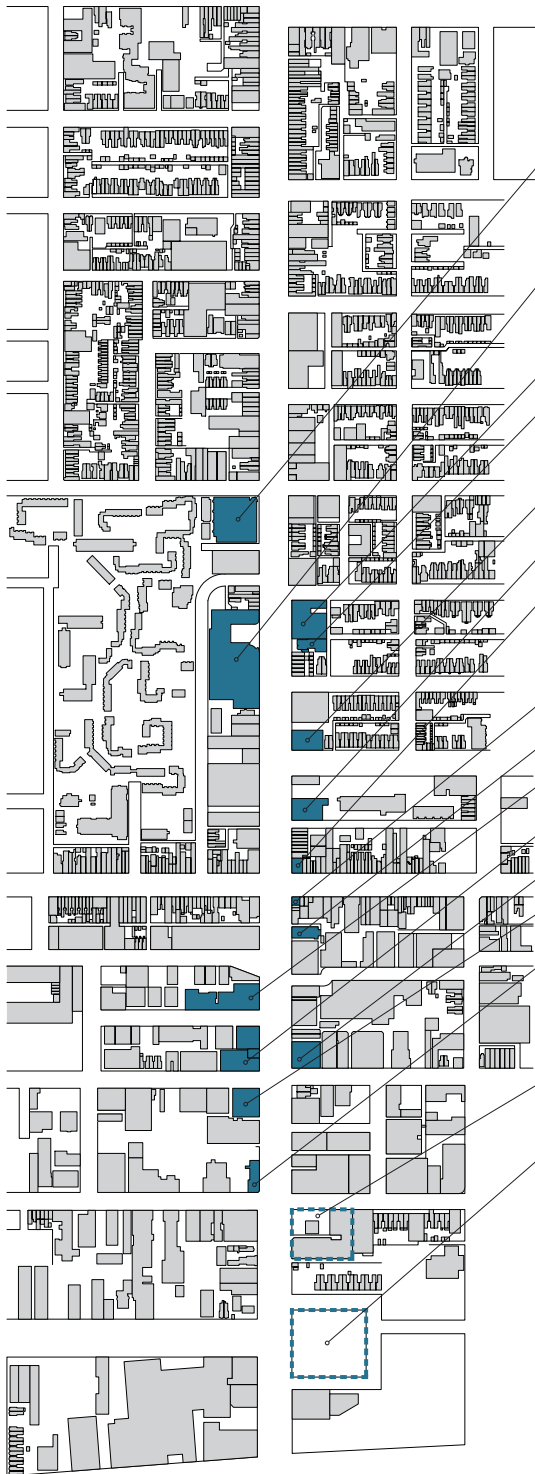
\* denotes new construction



11 Plan indicating landmarks between Wilcocks Street and Dundas Street West



(Between Dundas Street West and Front Street)

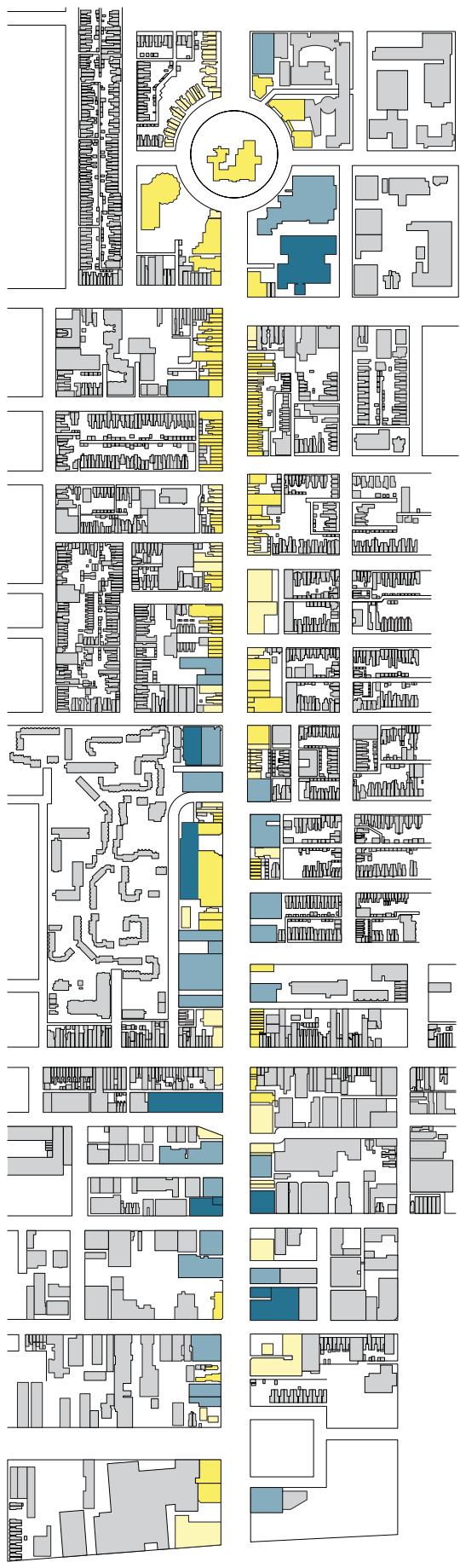


- |                  |  |                                      |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 282              | Anglican Church<br>St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church<br>Canadian Hungarian Federation<br>Dragon City       | 1884<br>1943<br>1956<br>1990*        |
| 208-210          | Mansion, formal garden (Dr. Cook)<br>General Motors sales and service<br>China Court<br>Chinatown Centre | 1880s<br>1920s*<br>1970s*<br>1990s*  |
| 239-241          | Consolidated Glass Building  | 1910                                 |
| 233-235          | House (Mr. Huson Murray)<br>Funeral Home<br>Apartment and offices  | 1880s                                |
| 197              | Empire Clothing Building   | 1923                                 |
| 185              | Keen's Building  | 1910s                                |
| 165              | Brown's Hotel<br>Brewer's Hotel<br>The Avenue<br>Bank of Hamilton<br>Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce  | 1880s<br>1902*                       |
| 441 Queen St W   | Old Fellows Hall   | 1888                                 |
| 161-163          | St. Margaret's Church  | 1920                                 |
| 130              | Fashion Building   | 1927                                 |
| 106-110          | Tower Building   | 1927                                 |
| 119              | Balfour Building   | 1930                                 |
| 104              | Darling Building   | 1909                                 |
| 460 King St W    | Richardson House<br>Hotel Falconer<br>Ziegler's Hotel<br>Spadina Hotel<br>Global Village Backpackers     | 1875<br>1906<br>1910<br>1917<br>1997 |
| 57-59            | Warwick Bros. & Rutter Ltd.  | 1906                                 |
| Clarence Sq Park |  |                                      |

\* denotes new construction



12 Plan indicating landmarks Between Dundas Street West and Front Street



**DENSITY**

Between Front Street and College Street, there is progression of density relative to the various districts along Spadina Avenue. South of Front Street (not located on plan) is the City Place condos ranging from 25-50 storeys in height.

The heart of the Garment District, centralized at King Street, contains a mix of mid to high rise buildings. The tallest building in the area is located at the northeast corner of King and Spadina at 21 storeys.

From Queen to Dundas Street, low to mid rise buildings are found. Heights of about six storeys are set by historic warehouse and factories. The most recent constructions in this stretch are Dragon City in 1990 and Chinatown Centre in the mid 1990s. These are mixed use residential complex that maintains the three-storey height directly on Spadina Avenue with residential towers set back from the street. The residential complex at 188 Spadina Avenue was built in 1985 with 10 residential storeys (equivalent to about six warehouse storeys, matching its neighbouring buildings).

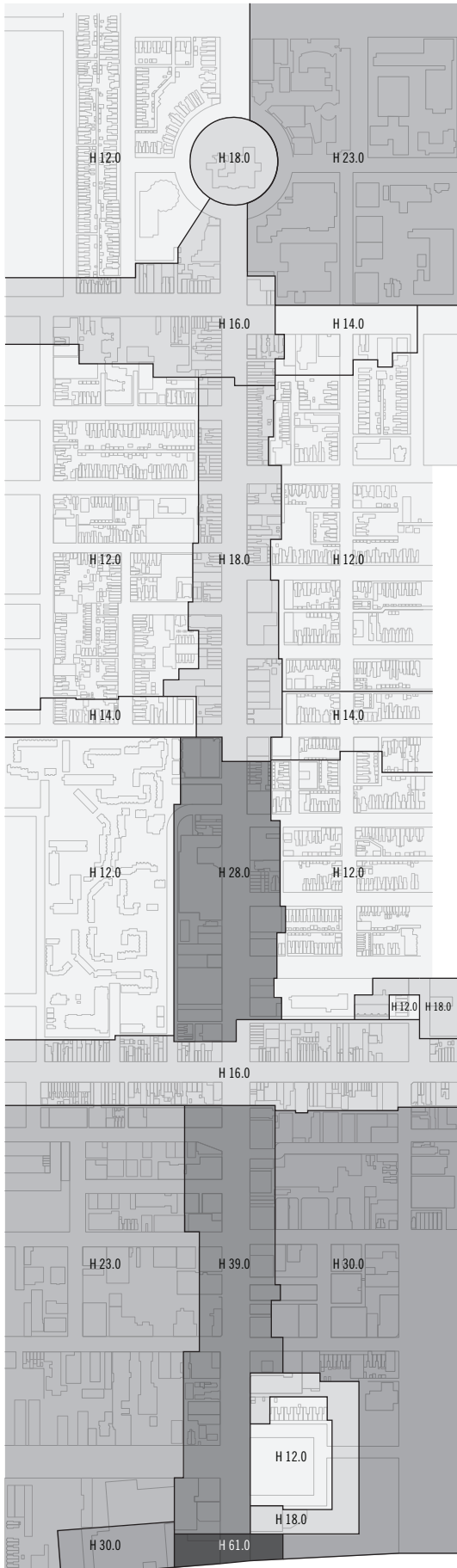
From Dundas Street to College Street, density decreases as most of the buildings that line the Spadina Avenue and surrounding areas are three storeys or less.

**LEGEND**

- 10+ Storeys
- 5 - 9
- 3 - 4
- 1 - 2
- N/A

0 40 80 160

*13 Plan indicating height of buildings along Spadina Avenue*



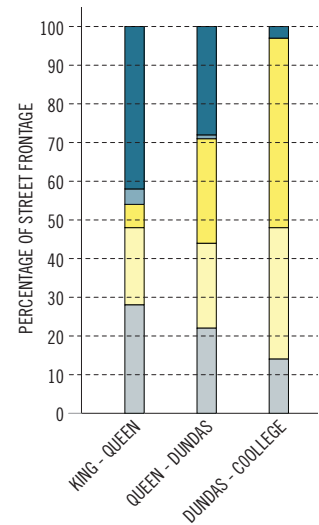
**ZONING**

City zoning for building heights in the area indicates existing conditions but also are in place to preserve scale in a neighbourhood. Generally this is a good strategy for deterring inappropriate development. It can also be considered restrictive, prohibiting development where it is necessary. Therefore, zoning, especially along main streets, must be revisited by city planners on a regular basis.

Building height decreases northwards along Spadina Avenue. This indicates the limited development. Along Spadina Avenue, building heights are not to exceed 39 metres between Front and Queen; 28 metres between Queen and Dundas; and 18 metres between Dundas and College. It is interesting to note that the section between Dundas and College is underdeveloped at three storeys. Given 18 metres, this easily translates to four to five storeys (with 3 metre residential floors and 4 metre retail at grade).

**GRAPH LEGEND**

- 5 Storeys or higher
- 4 Storeys
- 3 Storeys
- 2 Storeys or lower
- Undeveloped property



14 Graphing street frontage composition along Spadina Avenue

15 Plan indicating zoning restrictions along Spadina Avenue



**USE**

A diversity of communities and neighbourhoods border on Spadina Avenue. The heart of Garment district is located at King and Spadina Avenue. The district itself as well as availability of renovated factories and warehouses into offices has attracted a growing industry of designers to the area. This continues just north of Queen Street West until Sullivan Street.

Chinatown continues from Sullivan until College Street. This is marked by restaurants, shops and grocers. Most of the original Chinese immigrants to the area reside in homes just east of Spadina Avenue.

On the west side of Spadina Avenue, south of Dundas is Alexandra Park; a community housing neighbourhood. North of Dundas is Kensington Market; a long established neighbourhood with authentic and local shops.

At the northwest corner of Spadina and College is the edge of the University of Toronto campus.

**LEGEND**

- Institution
- Commercial/Residential
- Commercial
- Residential



*16 Plan indicating use along and around Spadina Avenue*

### 3.3 AXONOMETRICS



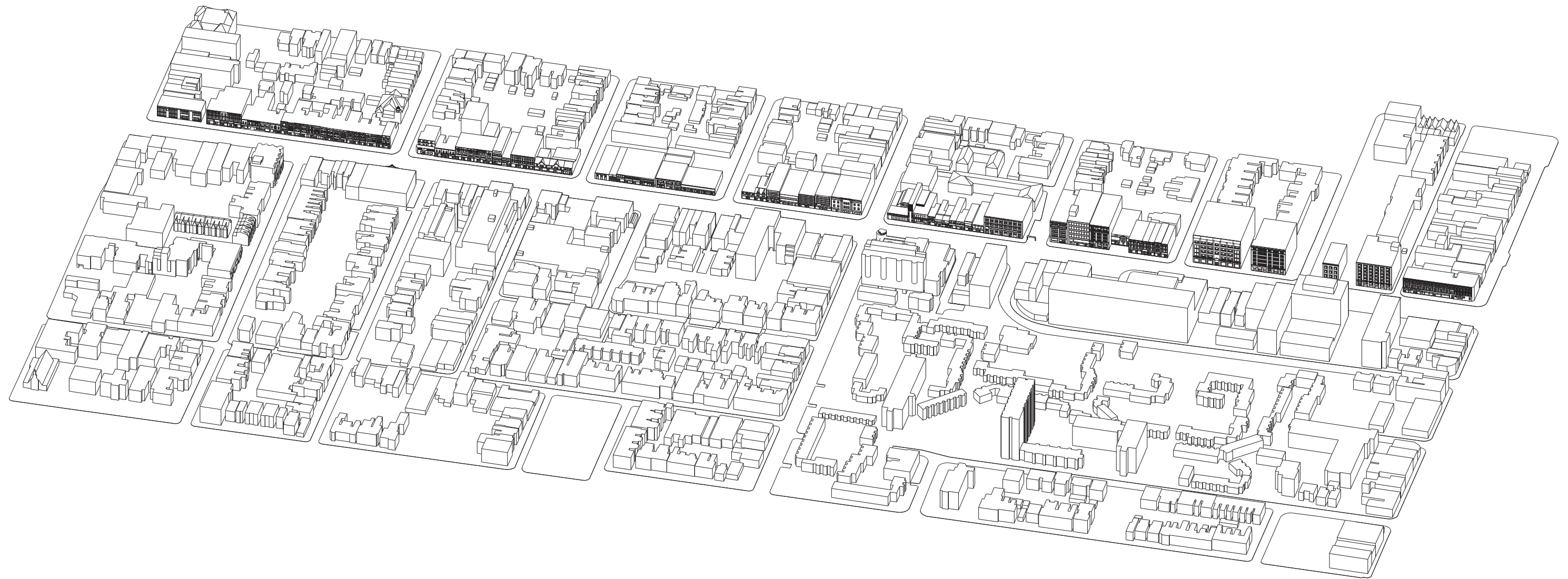
**AXONOMETRICS WEST ELEVATIONS**



*17 Axonometric view of Spadina Avenue area, between College Street and Queen Street West, west elevations*



**AXONOMETRICS EAST ELEVATIONS**



18 Axonometric view of Spadina Avenue area, between College Street and Queen Street West, east elevations

### **3.4 ELEVATIONS**

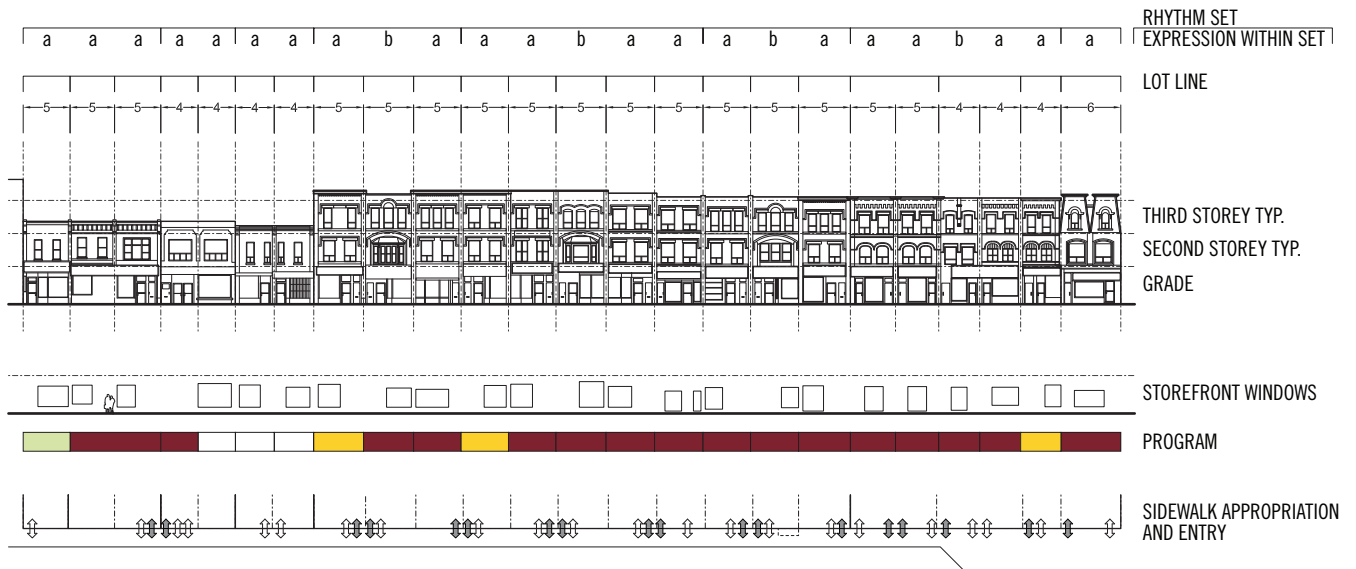
Six samples of street elevations along Spadina Avenue (between College and Dundas) provide strategies for elevation design. Two conditions were chosen strategically to demonstrate anomalies. Four additional conditions analyze the street elevations directly north and south of Dundas Street West for both west and east sides of Spadina Avenue.

#### **381-429**

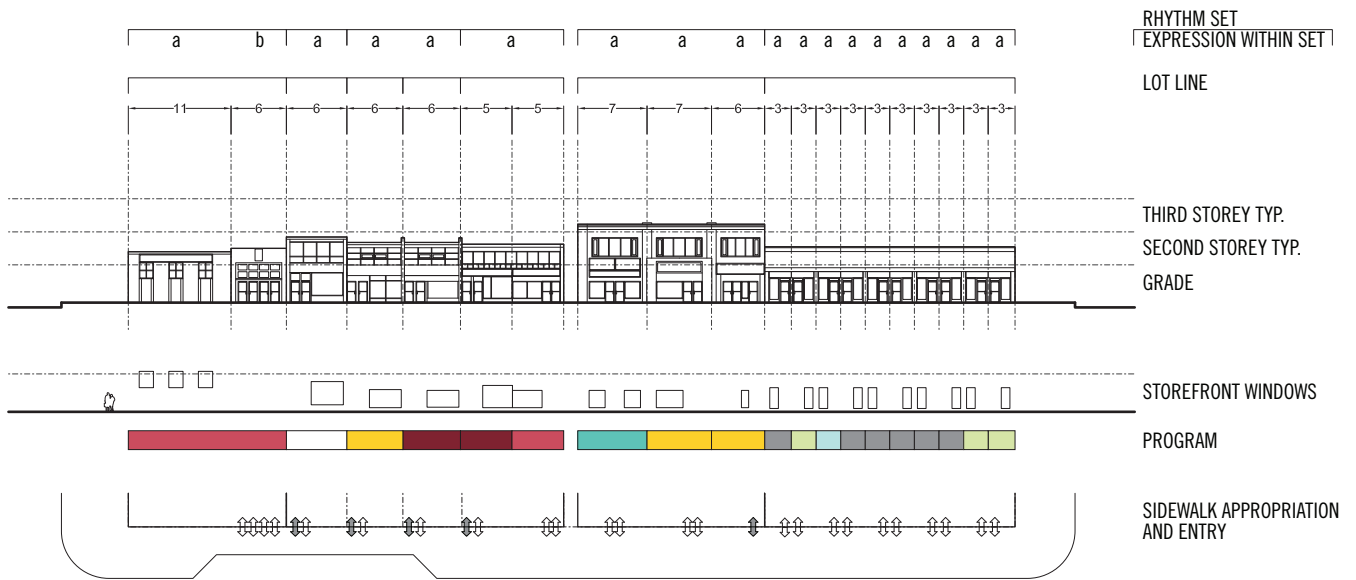
This section is the most inactive section of Spadina Avenue. The long length of this block does not provide enough pedestrian traffic to support interest and use. Short blocks are valuable because of the fabric of intricate cross-use that they permit among the users of a city neighborhood.<sup>11</sup> Wholesalers reflect and make worse this inactive condition. Each lot is four to five metres wide. Despite the relentless row of main street buildings, the long block is subtly divided into four developments; each 'b' module (module with centre bay window) anchoring its respective set. It is clear that each module was not built individually but built in sets. Despite this, the typical bay is still expressed (four to five metre intervals) regardless of the entire lot development width at the time.

#### **315-337**

This section presents a low-rise block along Spadina Avenue. Lack of storefront windows at eye level is not normally desirable for retail use, particularly for a corner lot (337). However, operating as an LCBO and as one of the only locations in the area, it is successful. Lack of windows instead serves as a comfortable backdrop for street performers and the homeless. At the south end of the block (315) is a split level configuration, subdividing retail space more frequently than anywhere else along Spadina Avenue. This reduces storefront exposure making them less successful retail spaces. The setting back of storefronts is also unwelcoming. The use of these spaces as doctor's office and electronic stores reflect the design's limitations for other retail use.

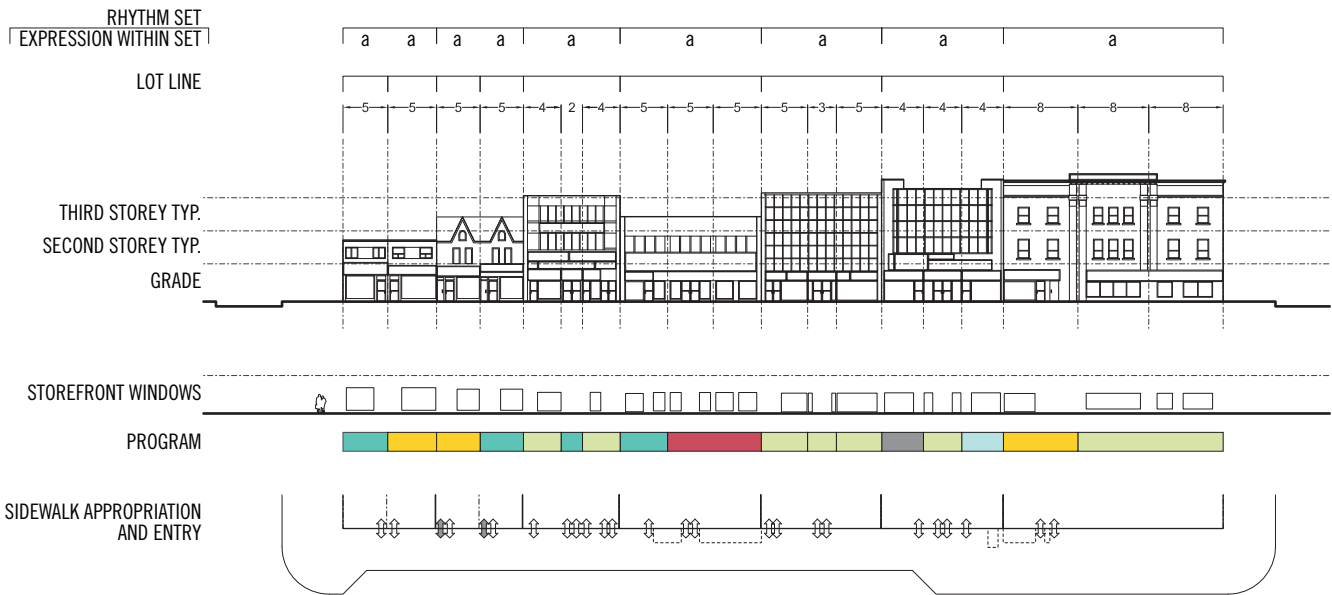


19 Street elevations, 381-429 Spadina Avenue

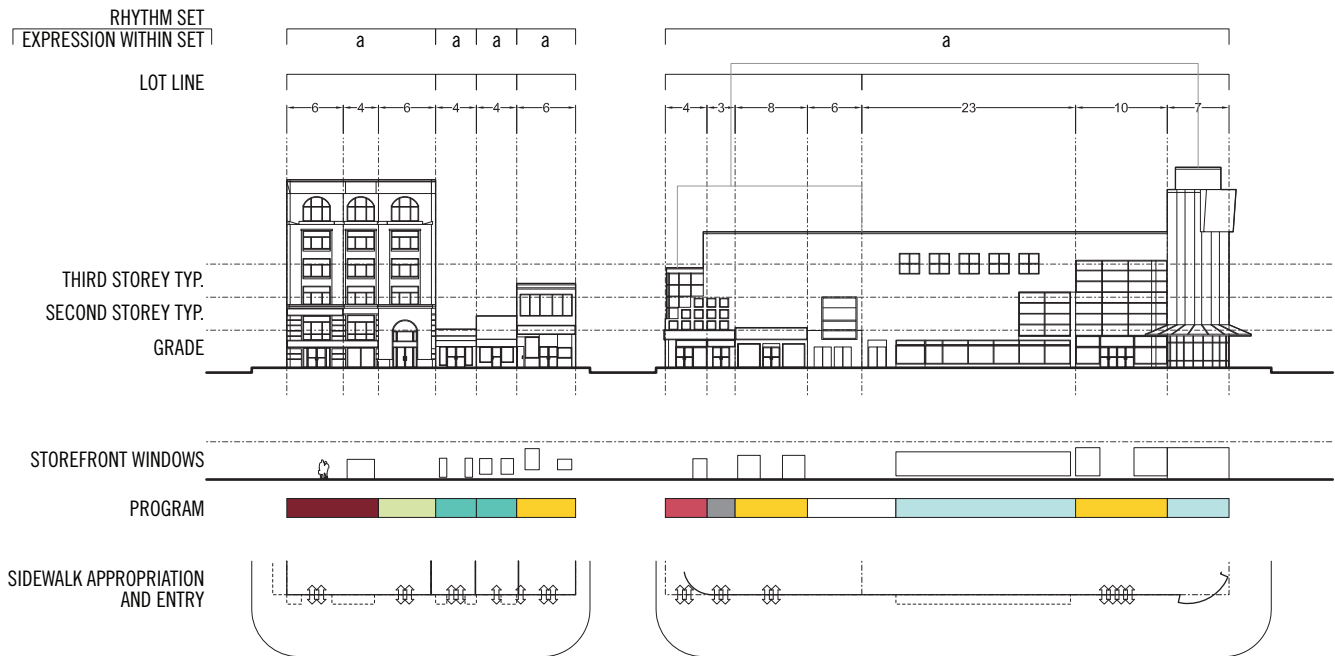


20 Street elevations, 315-337 Spadina Avenue

- |   |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> RESTAURANT | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightblue; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GIFT SHOP | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GROCER        | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: grey; border: 1px solid black;"></span> ELECTRONICS | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 10px solid black;"></span> RESIDENTIAL |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> OFFICE | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: teal; border: 1px solid black;"></span> APPAREL        | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: darkred; border: 1px solid black;"></span> WHOLESALE | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: white; border: 1px solid black;"></span> VACANT     | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 10px solid black;"></span> COMMERCIAL  |

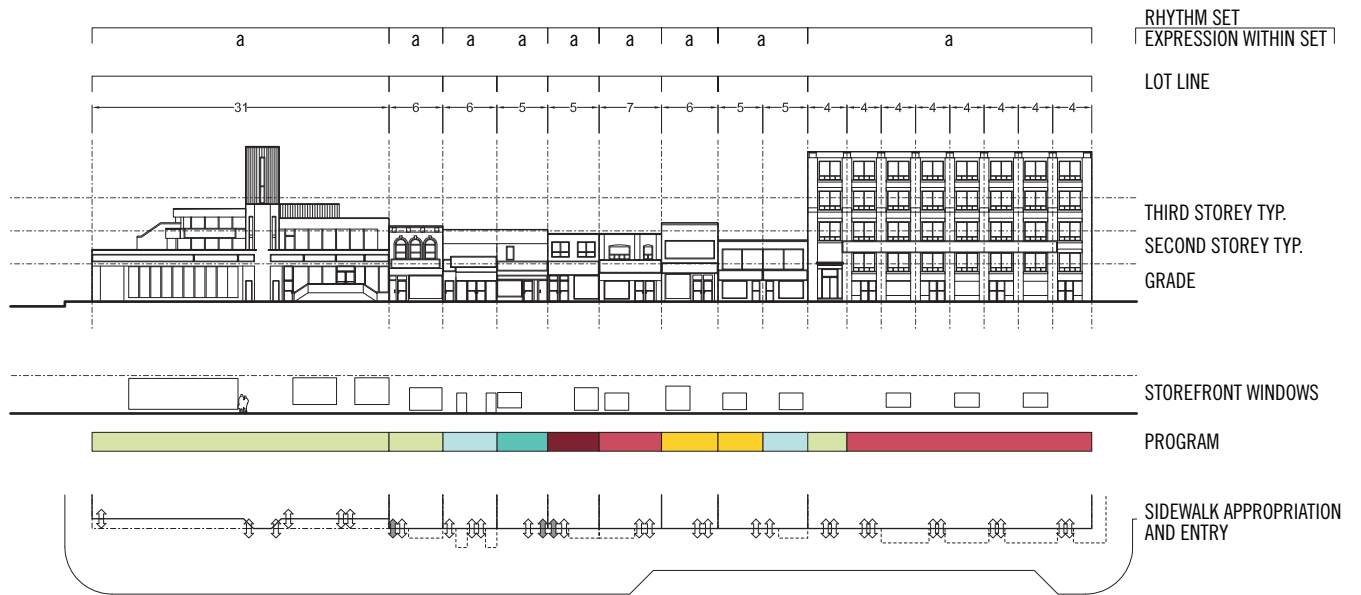


21 Street elevations, northeast section at Dundas Street West, 311-287 Spadina Avenue

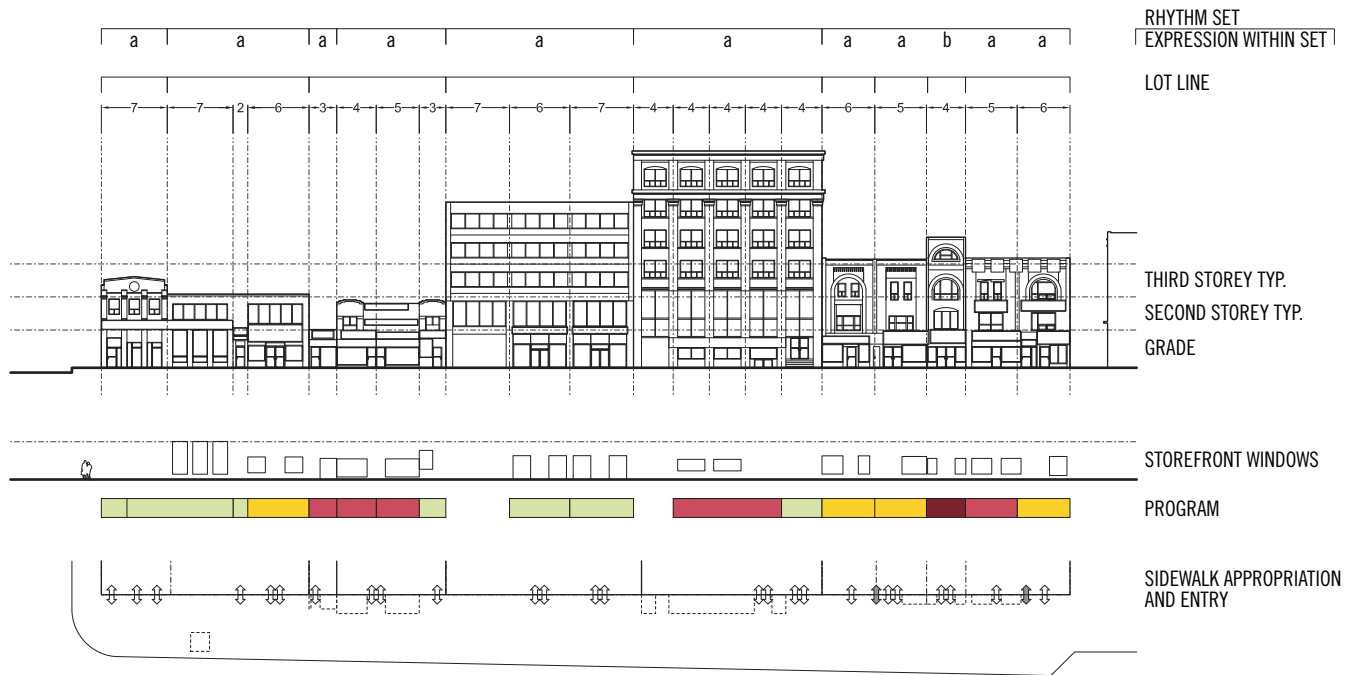


22 Street elevations, southwest section at Dundas Street West, 260-280 Spadina Avenue





23 Street elevations, southeast section at Dundas Street West, 285-253 Spadina Avenue



24 Street elevations, northwest section at Dundas Street West, 292-328 Spadina Avenue

- |   |  |   |  |  |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black;"></span> RESTAURANT | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: cyan; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GIFT SHOP | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: red; border: 1px solid black;"></span> GROCER        | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: gray; border: 1px solid black;"></span> ELECTRONICS | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 8px solid black;"></span> RESIDENTIAL |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: lightgreen; border: 1px solid black;"></span> OFFICE | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: teal; border: 1px solid black;"></span> APPAREL   | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: darkred; border: 1px solid black;"></span> WHOLESALE | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: white; border: 1px solid black;"></span> VACANT     | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 0; height: 0; border-left: 5px solid transparent; border-right: 5px solid transparent; border-bottom: 8px dashed black;"></span> COMMERCIAL |

**311-287**

This northeast section contains a diversity of buildings. The two storey buildings (311-305) at the north end of the block dates back at to the 1880s. These are the most basic forms of retail typology at grade and apartment above. At the south end is the historic Standard Theatre (287) at three storeys high. Other buildings are strictly commercial and were constructed within the past 30 years.

**208-282**

This southwest section is one of the most atypical sections along Spadina Avenue. The Dragon City Centre (282) is a full block, mixed-use development. As a mall, stores were designed for internal access only. There are display windows along the street but the lack of direct access allows vendors to operate along an inanimate, 23-metre stretch of this centre.

**283-253**

This southeast section contains one of the older warehouses along Spadina Avenue. A typical warehouse is located at the south end of the site. Individual bays articulate storefronts at grade. Here, the storefronts have been consolidated as one large space for a grocery store. At the north end of the section is a low-rise commercial building constructed within the past 30 years. The middle buildings are much older, retaining original lot and storefront divisions at five to seven metres wide.

**292-328**

This northwest section contains a good building stock exemplary of Spadina Avenue. At the north end of the site (318-328) is the Charles Powell Building, a heritage property. Immediately south (310) is northern most warehouse building along Spadina Avenue at six storeys. Throughout this section, continuous and consistent storefronts contribute to one of the most animate sections along Spadina Avenue.

### 3.5 TYPOLOGIES

#### WAREHOUSE

Given the change in technology and the movement of industry away from the downtown core, many warehouse and factory buildings have since been converted into loft-style apartments or prime commercial offices given the quality of the spaces within these buildings (high ceilings, hardwood floors and exposed structure, historical context).

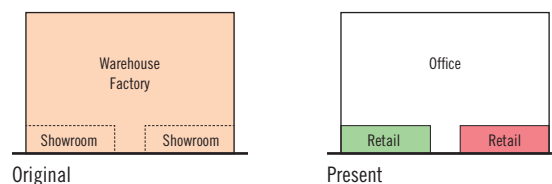
Some of these buildings do retain its original function as a place of manufacturing, but these are mostly located in the upper floors and are hidden, only noticed when garment workers arrive and leave through inconspicuous doors.

The ground floor has all been adapted for retail use. Due to the large footprint of these building, grocers have found these locations to be particularly ideal, especially utilizing basement space since little to no direct light is required for this program.

Other buildings have taken on a more complete restoration aside from changing its programmatic configuration. An example is the Robertson Building (215) and it offers a higher quality retail space that becomes suitable as a furniture showroom and as an art gallery. Green technology has also been implemented such as the green wall and a green roof for energy efficiency and sustainability.



215 Spadina Avenue: The Robertson Building



25 *Diagrams of typical warehouse, The Robertson Building*

## RETAIL

The typical typology on Spadina Avenue, of retail at grade with two storeys of apartment and living space above, was not established until the late 19th century. Until then, retailers often converted the main floor of homes into retail space and lived in the second and third floors above.

The typical typology is about 5 metres wide and ranged in depth depending on the lot size. The main street facade was allowed for a display window and two entries, one for the shop and one to access the apartments above. The typology became a module that was quickly adapted and duplicated with variances introduced only through ornamentation and placement of openings, but even still, these variances often repeated, creating a distinct pattern in the streetscape.

In the present condition, the programmatic organization remains generally the same. Retail is located and restricted mostly at grade. The use of the upper storeys varies as apartments, storage space, offices or general vacancy due to limited public access and view. Very rarely is retail located above grade for the same reasons. The aesthetics of the modern retail building lacks care and attention to detail. It diminishes the clarity of function in the upper floors, only demarcating the ground floor and the area above.

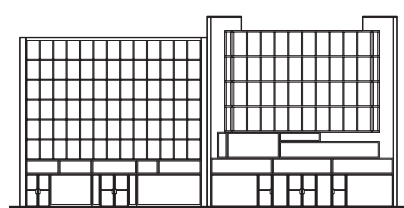
### 26 Diagrams of existing retail typologies and configurations



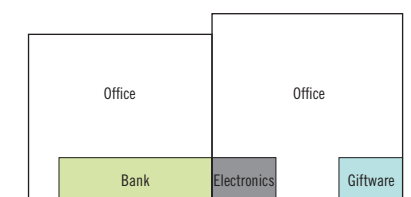
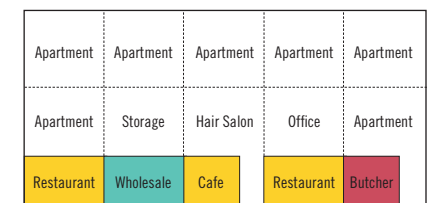
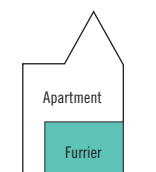
202 Spadina Avenue (1860)



318-328 Spadina Avenue (1890)



289-291 Spadina Avenue (1980)





## RESIDENTIAL MIXED USE

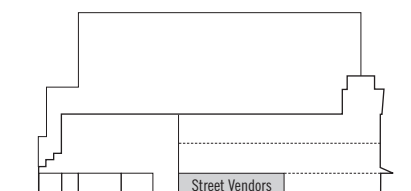
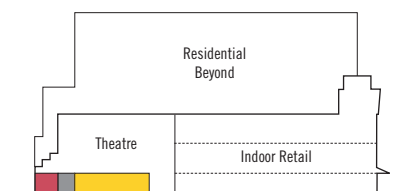
Three examples of residential mixed use are prominent along Spadina Avenue, particularly in the main Chinatown area between Queen and College. These are the Chinatown Centre (222), the Dragon City Centre (280) and King's Court (186).

All built in the 1980s, they are designed as interior shopping malls with a residential tower above and set back from the street front, with the exception of King's Court which is a typical apartment block. All contain movie theatres. The theatre at Dragon City Centre had been converted into a nightclub but is presently closed. The theatres at Chinatown Centre and King's Court are closed as well.

Although the Dragon City Centre is highly internalized, this condition has created an interesting opportunity on the street. Storefront windows occupy a fair amount of the Spadina facade however the lack of access from the street has rendered these windows much like a brick wall, allowing for vendors to use the complex as a backdrop for their business.



270-280 Spadina Avenue (1980)



27 Diagrams of existing residential mixed use, Dragon City Centre

### 3.6 STREET SECTIONS

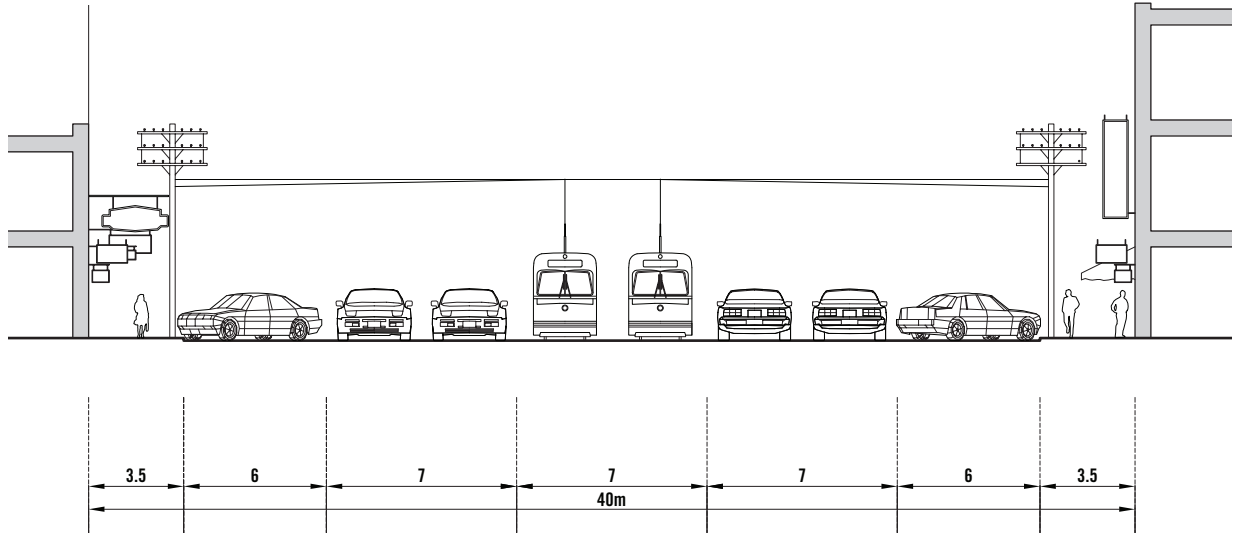
Spadina Avenue, twice the width of typical downtown streets in Toronto, can be configured to accommodate different use. Throughout the years, these proportions changed to serve various functions.

The Toronto Railway Company began operations in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and Spadina Avenue received its first streetcar route. In 1891 Spadina and Sherbourne were combined to form the Belt Line Streetcar, operating both ways in a circle along King, Spadina, Bloor and Sherbourne Streets.<sup>12</sup>

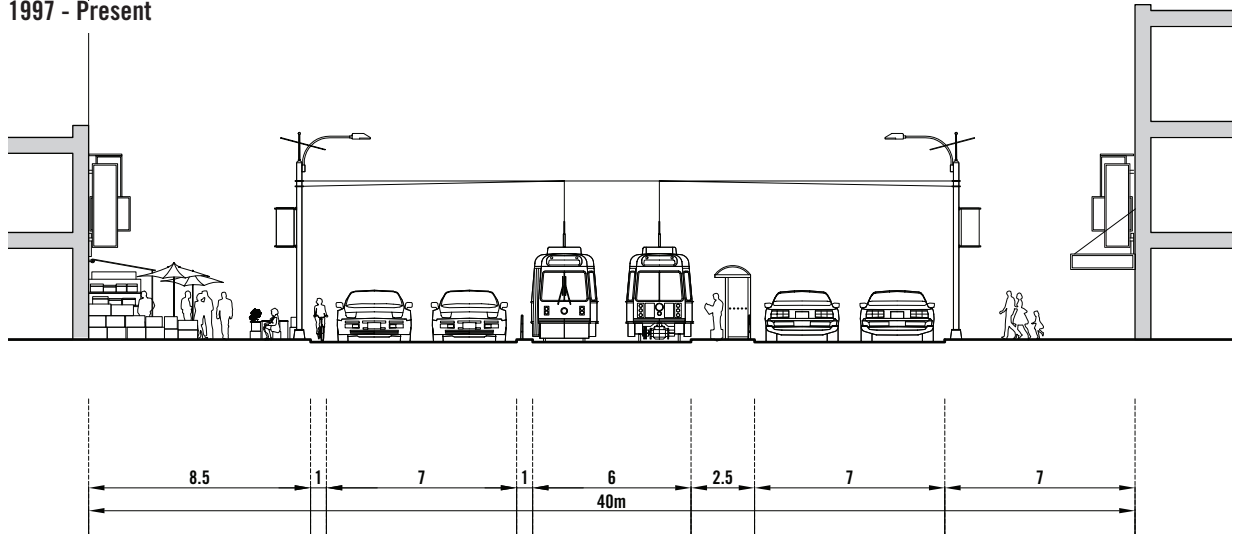
By 1927, the Toronto Transportation Commission (TTC), in place of the Toronto Railways Company, established the first dedicated Spadina streetcar line with private right-of-way operating between Bloor Street to Lakeshore Boulevard.<sup>13</sup> The private right-of-way was zoned but not physically separated from the rest of the street. Streetcars were double-ended as there were no loops at either end of the route. At this time the street was also configured for diagonal street parking easily accommodated by the street's width.

The streetcar service ended in 1948 when it was replaced by the Spadina bus as a post-war effort to conserve the use of electricity. In 1973, the City of Toronto and the TTC agreed that Spadina Avenue should reinstate its streetcar route. It would take another 24 years of planning and negotiation for the streetcar to return. In 1992, the Spadina Streetcar proposal received final approval and operations resumed in 1997. The proposal included extension of the line to Harbourfront, the underground loop at Spadina Station addressed noise concerns from Annex residents and low medians that created safe loading and unloading areas for passengers separate from the main traffic thoroughfare. Designated bicycle lanes have been implemented also. Replacement of diagonal parking with parallel parking gave way for a wider sidewalk. These are now essential to the life of the street; retailers extend their stores out onto the sidewalk, vendors can set up here and pedestrians meander through various appropriations of the sidewalk and are immersed in a rich spatial experience.

1891 - 1948



1997 - Present



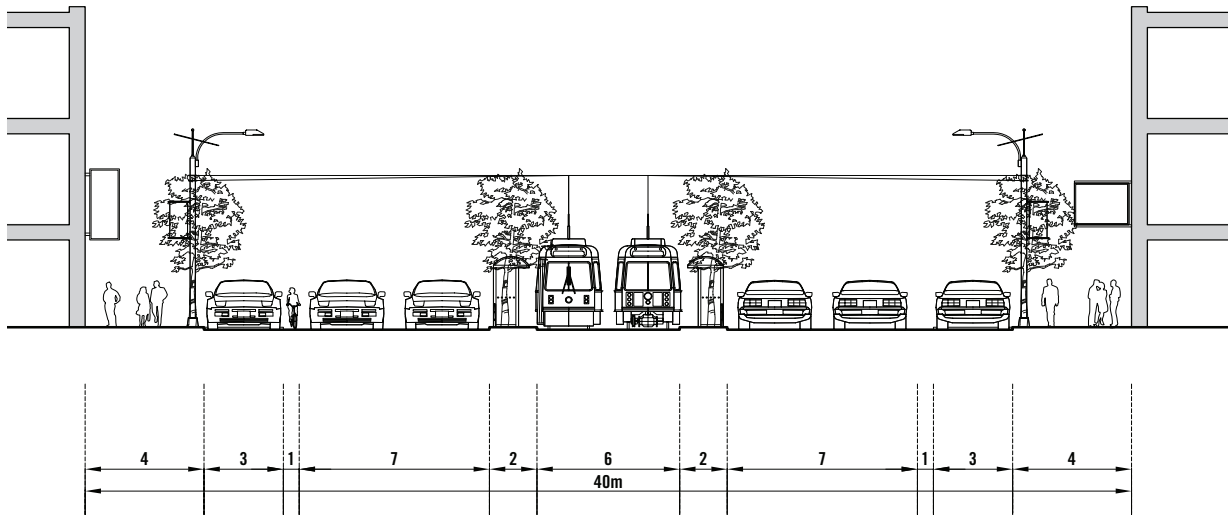
28 Street sections, "1891-1948" and "1997-Present"

**Typical Lay-By / Parking Section**



29 Photograph, Hua Long Supermarket, 253 Spadina Avenue, looking south (8:24am Monday, September 15, 2008)

30 Typical street section showing lay-by and street parking

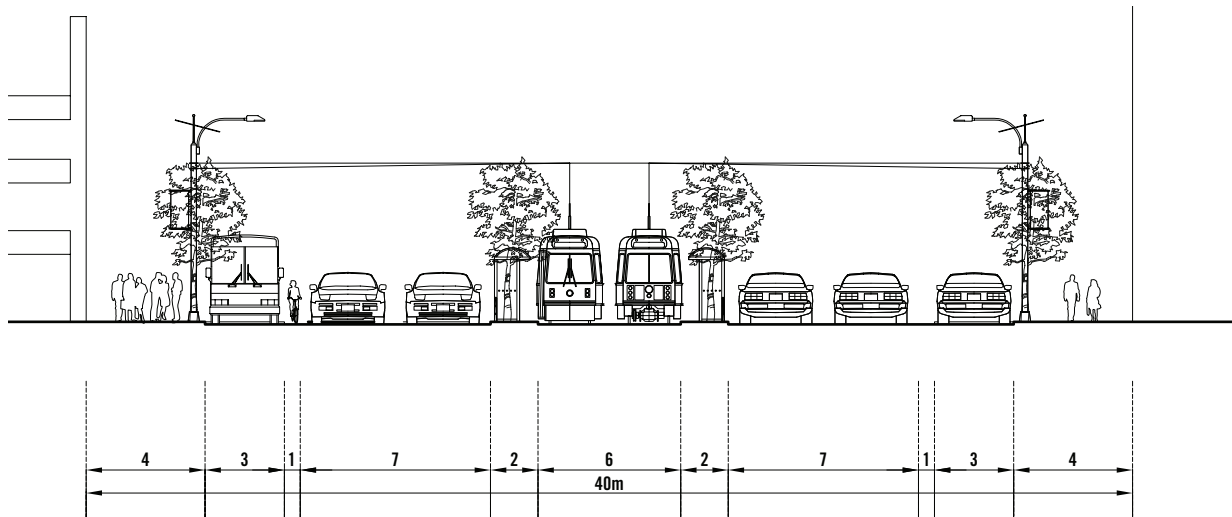


**Section at Chinatown Centre, Passenger Pick-Up / Drop-Off**



31 Photograph, Chinatown Centre, 222 Spadina Avenue, looking north (3:26pm Saturday, September 13, 2008)

32 Typical street section showing passenger pick-up / drop-off for coach bus tours





### 3.7 SIDEWALK APPROPRIATION

298-300 Spadina Avenue



15:52





08:10



09:00



09:02



09:03



09:04



09:05



09:06



09:06



09:07



09:08



09:09



09:17



310 Spadina Avenue



15:53





08:12



08:13



08:48



08:48



08:49



08:50



08:50



09:05



09:09



09:20



09:22



09:28

## NOTES

- 1 Jacob Spelt, *Toronto* (Toronto: Collier-MacMillan, 1973), 17.
- 2 Eric Arthur, *No Mean City* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 11.
- 3 Edith G. Firth, *Town of York* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), xxxvi.
- 4 City of Toronto, <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/bylaws/1999/law0188.htm> (accessed July 17, 2008).
- 5 Edith G. Firth, Preface to Austin Seton Thompson, *Spadina: A Story of Old Toronto* (Toronto: Pagurian Press, 1976), vii.
- 6 Marsha Kelmans, "Spadina Avenue residential/commercial blocks," *East/West: A Guide to Where People Live in Downtown Toronto*, ed. Nancy Byrtus, Mark Fram and Michael McClelland (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2000), 117. Also Austin Seton Thompson, *Spadina*, 44.
- 7 Austin Seton Thompson, *Spadina*, 80.
- 8 Donegan, *Spadina Avenue*, 9.
- 9 Rick Salutin, Introduction to Rosemary Donegan, *Spadina Avenue* (Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985), 20.
- 10 Kenneth Hayes, "District lofts," *East/West: A Guide to Where People Live in Downtown Toronto*, ed. Nancy Byrtus, Mark Fram and Michael McClelland (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2000), 134.
- 11 Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, (New York: Random House, 1961), 186.
- 12 James Bow, "Route 510 – The Spadina Streetcar," *Transit Toronto*, November 10, 2006, <http://transit.toronto.on.ca/streetcar/4108.shtml> (accessed July 17, 2009).
- 13 Ibid.

## **4 DESIGN FRAMEWORK**



## 4.1 “CREATIVE MILIEU”

“A creative milieu is a place – either a cluster of buildings, a part of a city, a city as a whole or region – that contains the necessary preconditions in terms of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ infrastructure to generate a flow of ideas and inventions.”<sup>1</sup> The concept of the “creative milieu” can be situated at the scale of the individual focusing on the direct relationships between inhabitants and their environment. It can form the genesis for the “creative city”, acting as catalytic sites where creativity and culture can be expressed, explored and nurtured.

“Hard” infrastructure refers to the network of buildings and institutions of a “creative milieu”.<sup>2</sup> “Soft” infrastructure is the system of associative structures and social networks, connections and human interactions that underpins and encourages the flow of ideas between individuals and institutions.<sup>3</sup> Reinforcing Landry’s “creative city” concept, these infrastructures forming the “creative milieu” would support diversity, provide places of interaction, address existing locality and have the capacity to accommodate change in use and occupancy.

### DIVERSITY

Social and physical aspects of diversity exist in a “creative milieu”. Social diversity refers to the people in an area; the greater the diversity of people who live and work in an area, the greater the pool of resources available for generating new ideas. A diverse community, through its inclusivity, promotes a sense of welcoming to outsiders; this can result in an amplifying effect where diversity attracts more diversity.<sup>4</sup>

The physical component of diversity refers to workplace opportunities for businesses at various scales. These may include street vendors to shop owners to small companies. The physical and built opportunities can attract more users to an area and further amplify the effects of social diversity.

Diversity is a crucial component of the “creative milieu”. People from different backgrounds bring different experiences and perspectives. An example of this

is immigrants bringing with them to the host country a set of skills, practices and traditions. When given the opportunity to express their culture, this new experience in an area can lead to and generate new ideas. These may stem from financial need as outlets through which immigrants can make a living and settle in a foreign country. In the urban realm, their practices invigorate its immediate community and its city, culturally and intellectually.

### **INTERACTION**

A “creative milieu” can be the physical setting where a critical mass of diverse people (diverse in occupation, status, age, ethnic background, occupation) can operate in an open-minded, urban context where face to face interaction creates new ideas, artefacts, products, services and institutions.<sup>5</sup>

This component refers to the necessity of networking opportunities in non-work settings and between different areas of work. Opportunities include chance meeting in a café, a concert, a health club, a library or other places for collective learning. Generating a “creative milieu” involves deciphering how urban environments can encourage interaction.

Ray Oldenburg’s *The Great Good Place* identifies non-work settings as the “third place”. Oldenburg defines “third place” as “a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.”<sup>6</sup> The first place is the home and the second place is the place of work.

In a society where information technology is an impermanent entity rather than a fixed one, where increased mobility is resulting in a diminished sense of locality, the “third place” becomes critical as anchoring points for individuals to connect with people and place.

## **LOCALITY**

Locality refers to businesses and cultures specific to an area that can be a source of inspiration and innovation. Traditional businesses may inspire new or similar operations. Opportunities for communication and entrepreneurial activity becomes an important part of the “creative milieu” allowing exchange of different knowledge sets between those who are experienced, those willing to learn and those willing to test new ideas. Locality can also refer to the cultural communities that offer customs and traditions of the immigrant population. This can be a source of inspiration as they bring with them to the host country a different way of thinking and living.

The dialogue between old and new can perpetuate the character of a place; this refers back to the term *genius loci*, the inherent spirit of place. This dialogue of old and new can manifest through architecture, the preservation and restoration of historical institutions; through businesses, reinforcing and furthering local skills and operations; and through culture, integrating traditional practices into new environments and daily life.

## **CAPACITY**

Capacity can be classified as temporary or permanent. The temporary capacity describes a space where various activities may take place at different times of day, week, month or year. The sidewalk is an example of this. Vendors and shop owners may appropriate sections of the sidewalk during the day. Extensions of restaurants and cafes may occupy sidewalk space at night. A festival may occupy a section of a street for a weekend. An art installation in a laneway may be commissioned and displayed for a year.

The permanent capacity refers to buildings designed to accommodate various use and configurations. Offices are generally designed in this fashion; a structural grid system provides a loose floor plan that can operate as an open studio or be divided into private offices. Residences are more challenging to

design in the same way given the number of required components within a residential unit. Capacity in this case is often expressed in offering a variety of size and options.

Capacity is a critical aspect of the “creative milieu”. Where traditionally, buildings and spaces were designed for specific programs and occupants, capacity describes the ability of buildings and spaces to accommodate change in an age characterized by mobility and impermanence.



## 4.2 CASE STUDIES

A “creative milieu” contains the necessary preconditions to generate a flow of ideas and inventions. Collectively it can form as the basis for a “creative city”, acting as catalytic sites within which creativity and culture are expressed and nurtured. The four characteristics of a “creative milieu” – diversity, interactivity, locality, capacity – are applicable to a general area but can also resonate among small to large scale interventions as a mutually reinforcing system.

A collection of specific case studies of varying scales demonstrate these characteristics. These will be presented in order from least amount of intervention. In addition case studies exploring concepts of “old-new”, “threshold” and “niche” begin to identify strategies for reinforcing the “creative milieu”.

## **LANEWAYS**

At the smallest scale, the amount of intervention is least intrusive compared to other scales. The appeal of these interventions is the minimal amount of building necessary for integrating change into an area. It may be a regular occurrence or a one-time event. Although minimal, projects at this scale can be integrated quickly by individuals.

Art installations in laneways are an example of this.

Artwork whether illicit graffiti or a permitted set of installations for a designated period of time, allow for interactivity to happen. This interactivity can be physical; a direct contact with the work, or internal; an experience that changes the preconceptions of a place.

Laneways can reveal a specific locality of a place. Often these spaces are more authentic and telling of urban history than the experiences on the main street. Functional and often neglected, little has changed in the laneways despite changes that may have occurred on the main streets. Artwork can draw upon local artists to express their vision for an otherwise normative space. Legal and illegal, it also engages locals who encounter these transformations.

The temporal nature and the minimal often reflect the flexibility of a space; a laneway can serve its original function as a service route but can be a pleasant pedestrian experience also. This sets the stage for greater use beyond a service route and art installations; these places can be inhabited and programmed.



## THE LANEWAY COMMISSIONS

Melbourne, Australia

“The Laneway Commissions were conceived as an opportunity for artists to explore the creative capacity of urban spaces, and to articulate their ideas in a captivating way.”<sup>7</sup>

There are laneways in Melbourne that are programmed and pedestrian. Restaurants, bars, shops and cafes creating an intimate environment that contrast the wide main streets and regular grid pattern in the city. Other laneways in Melbourne have retained its sole purpose as a service way. During certain times of the year, some of these service ways are chosen by artists and transformed.



One of the main aims of the Laneway Commissions is to introduce audiences to contemporary art, encouraging people to think about their own experience of the urban environment and to contemplate how they would like the city to develop.

One particular installation from the 2008 Laneway Commissions, entitled “Welcome to Cocker Alley”, embellishes a set of service pipes with gold leaf that run alongside of a building. The gold is meant to instil a sense of value as well as reflect the history of the building; its construction funded by the Gold Rush. Over time, the gold will weather away. It is expected to completely dissolve in one year’s time.



Art installations in laneways offer an interactive yet flexible component to an area. Laneways, normally conceived as a service route, are transformed into an urban gallery, displaying individuals’ interpretation of these spaces and allowing others to view these spaces in new light.

35 Drawing, “Welcome to Cocker Alley”

36 Photograph, gold leafed pipes at Cocker Alley

37 Photograph, Centre Place, Melbourne, laneway

## **VENDORS**

Interventions at this scale require more physical space and built work. At this scale, the amount of intervention is least intrusive compared to other scales. The appeal of these interventions is the minimal amount of infrastructure/material/building necessary for integrating change into an area. It may be a regular occurrence or a one-time event. Although minimal, projects at this scale can be integrated quickly by individuals.

Examples of interventions at this scale include street vendors, small shops and other programs that extend themselves into the public realm.

Diversity is introduced when small vendors and small shops offer a range of goods and services. Small, they are opportunities for those who seek to test a new business; incubators for entrepreneurs. Small shops can be modular and mass produced however they can lead to new ideas and innovation as individuals modify and personalize to suit their business' needs.

Extensions of shops into the street directly engage passer-bys and provoke them to stop and look. This blurs the line between public and private. By minimizing the clear boundaries, interactivity can take place, allowing people to flow in and out of shops and properties.

The street becomes a flexible realm as both a path of travel and a place of exchange. Street vendors and small shops when closed, do not interfere with the normal function of the street but their versatility when open, provide various organizations to display merchandise. They have the capacity to occupy as much as and little area as possible.



## POTTINGER STREET

Hong Kong, China

Pottinger Street is also known as “stone slabs street” by the locals that describes the granite stone steps that mediate the otherwise steep slope.

The vendors and small shops that line this street are seemingly modular; metal boxes painted in green open and fold out during the day and close as completely self contained units at night. When open, metal panels open outwards and function as surface area from which merchandise can be hung and displayed. Awnings other than to shelter from sun and rain, also function as another means of display.



Seemingly modular, these units are personalized, not aesthetically, but for functional purposes to suit the range of businesses that operate out of these green boxes. The aesthetic uniformity allows for a unifying reading that characterizes the whole area. The various services and businesses attract a range of people to the area. Businesses include Christmas ornaments, costumes, fabrics, ribbons and threads, and tailoring services.



38 *Photograph, Pottinger Street, vendor*

39 *Photograph, Pottinger Street, tailor*

40 *Photograph, Pottinger Street, closed unit*

## RESIDENTIAL, OFFICE

The office building is typically subdivided into various suites and units. Often, these suites and units are subdivided in such a way that little to no interaction is possible between different businesses. Privacy is absolutely maintained through opaque doors and walls.

The proposal here is to program offices in such a way that can offer maximum diversity and interaction. Offices can be subdivided but amenities can be a shared resource allowing employees of different offices to interact. Examples of amenities that can be shared are kitchens, eating areas and meeting rooms. To introduce a greater diversity, a greater range of offices spaces can be made available: temporary and permanent, single desk spaces to full office suites.

The residential building can follow similar a strategy. Diversity is introduced in the range of units: bachelor, single bedroom, two-bedroom, three-bedroom. Interaction can be implemented through the use of shared amenities. Depending on the configuration, a more private building may only have shared amenities such as a party room that can be booked for special events. Buildings can share more basic amenities such as kitchens and alternate living spaces, promoting a residence that functions as a co-operative.

Ray Oldenburg's "third place" become an important aspect for both office and residential.<sup>8</sup> Located ideally on the ground floor, it is the convenient place where people can leave their homes or desks for without leaving the building itself. The third place not only serves as a third place for the building itself, but for the neighbourhood. This forms an important network for encounter and exchange.



41 Axonometric, Centre for Social Innovation, first and fourth floor of The Robertson Building (215 Spadina Avenue)





## CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Toronto, ON, Canada

“A social innovation is a new idea that has been put into practice for the public good.”<sup>9</sup>

The Centre for Social Innovation provides an office environment to a community of businesses. Located in a restored warehouse, the building itself lends well to the spatial layout of shared amenities, private offices, private desks, temporary desks for visitors as well as regular users who only need a certain amount of hours of desk time per month. Because amenities are shared and the size of office is accommodating to an individual or a small business of several employees, businesses can operate with minimal overhead costs and find a space that suits individual business needs. The high floor to ceiling heights, timber structure allows for an open office with good light penetration. Offices and meeting rooms are divided by partitions with clerestory windows or half glazed partitions, allowing natural light into private spaces.

The centre is home to more than 100 organizations, projects and individuals. These include non-profit, charities, for-profits, entrepreneurs and activists working within a common purpose of social innovation, ranging from health and education to arts and environment. In addition to lounge/eating areas, kitchens and meeting rooms that allow for interaction between members at the centre, voluntary interest programs from yoga to political debate, offer yet another realm to connect different individuals under different premises.



42 *Photograph, Centre for Social Innovation, private desks*

43 *Photograph, Centre for Social Innovation, common “hot desk” area*

## **CULTURAL-CREATIVE**

The largest scale involves mixed-used, creative-cultural centres and areas requiring the greatest amount of intervention and reconfiguration. They are significant as anchors that support learning, education and innovation in the community.

Cultural centres are institutions that complement the activities that exist on all other scales. Cultural centres will need to shift from traditional programs, functioning solely as museums, theatres or galleries. Programs will need to be mixed, flexible and serve a diversity of people. All characteristics that define a “creative milieu” should define a cultural centre also.

For example, a cultural centre in a “creative milieu” would be similar to a library or a community centre. Where these programs are often found located within close proximity to one other, a full integration of both under a single roof, will create a small hub for surrounding communities. Amenities from dance studios to meeting rooms to small theatre spaces will provide grounds on which residents can teach or learn.

Similar to a cultural centre is the concept of a cultural area. This may reflect a community of buildings and services closely linked through specific programs and intentions. Examples include a greenhouse facility paired with an outdoor market; an outdoor arena for concerts or shows paired with music venues; an artist community with supporting offices, studios and galleries.





## OLD-NEW: LA GAÎTÉ-LYRIQUE, CENTRE D'ART ET MUSIQUE

Manuelle Gautrand

Paris, France

Originally a historic theatre, it was transformed into a contemporary centre for digital art and music. The project was structure into two types of spaces. The first is the great hall, theatre and media room. The second involves flexible spaces that accommodate creation, exhibition, library, cafes and public reception; called “breathing space”.<sup>10</sup>



Breathing spaces in this project are completely flexible. The library can be separated from the exhibition space or the two can mix. The flexibility of these spaces are designed to accommodate artistic development or accordingly to various events.

To complement breathing spaces is the design of small modules that are seven to eight square metres. These modules are mobile and flexible, again, to accommodate various needs. They may serve as dressing rooms, offices, places of assembly, and resting spaces for artists. A module may stand independently on its own or be combined with other modules as necessary.



44 Drawing, Théâtre de la Gaîté by architect Alphonse Cusin (1872)

45 La Gaîté-Lyrique, proposed mobile modules

46 La Gaîté-Lyrique, proposed flexible theatre space

## OLD-NEW: WYCHWOOD BARN

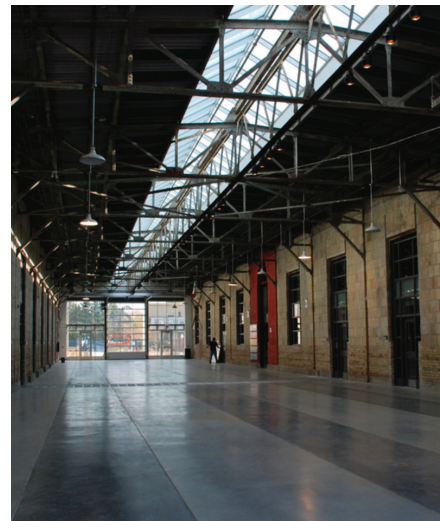
du Toit Architects

Toronto, ON, Canada

Originally a streetcar repair barn, it is now “a 60,000 sq. ft. multifaceted community centre where arts and culture, environmental leadership, heritage preservation, urban agriculture and affordable housing are brought together to foster a strong sense of community.”<sup>11</sup> Artscape, a not-for-profit urban development organization, worked in partnership with the City of Toronto and The Stop Community Food Centre in establishing this community.

Wychwood Barns is comprised of four programmed components: the Studio Barn, the Covered Street Barn, the Community Barn and The Stop Community Food Centre’s Green Barn.

The Studio Barn provides 26 live/work studios and 15 work-only studios. The community gallery component features the work of artists living and working on site as well as from the local community and international artists. The Covered Street Barn provides spaces for community use such as events, exhibitions and festivals. It also functions as an area for vendors. Artist studios adjacent to this space also have their entrances opening onto this ‘street’. The Community Barn provides programming rehearsal, office and meeting space for not-for-profit community arts and environmental organizations. The Stop Community Food Centre’s Green Barn houses a year-round temperate greenhouse. It functions also a sustainable food education centre, sheltered garden, outdoor bake oven and compost demonstration area.



47 Photograph, Wychwood Barns

48 Photograph, Wychwood Barns, The Stop Community Food Centre’s Green Barn

49 Photograph, Wychwood Barns, The Covered Street Barn



**OLD-NEW: ARTHOUSE AT THE JONES CENTRE**

Lewis Tsurumaki Lewis  
Austin, TX, USA

The project is a renovation and expansion of an existing contemporary art space.

The design draws from previous use, first a theatre in the 1920s and then a department store in the 1950s. The design proposal combines both past programs: a theatre on the west end of the site with storefront oriented to the street on the east end. Other elements echo these past programs: exposing 1920s trusses, concrete frame and ornamental painting while 1950s awning storefront and upper-level display window is retained.



The proposed program offers the element of interaction between the building and the street and surrounding area. Behind the upper-level display window is the screening room. During screenings, a film is projected onto the display window which can be viewed by the public also. Also at night, video can be projected directly on to the street.



The roof deck is designed for a 33' x 17' movie screen and banquet seating for 290 people. This becomes an outdoor space ideal for art, film and private special events.

50 Photograph, Queen Theatre (1926)

51 Photograph, Lerner Shops (1956)

52 Drawing, proposed Arthouse at the Jones Centre

**OLD-NEW: WING LUKE ASIAN MUSEUM**

Olson Sundberg Kundig Allen Architects  
Seattle, WA, USA

The Wing Luke Asian Museum is located in Seattle's Chinatown International District. The building dates back to 1910, a multi-storey building that served as a social centre and living quarters for Chinese, Japanese and Filipino immigrants.

The present configuration and program preserves the history of the building both physically and programmatically. Presently it is a museum as well as a public space for the neighbourhood, with theatre space for performances and presentations, exhibit spaces for community art and emerging Asian pacific American artists, family-centered learning environments and leadership development for neighbourhood youth.



53 *Photograph, original building (1910)*

54 *Photograph, Wing Luke Asian Museum, present*

55 *Photograph, Wing Luke Asian Museum, gallery*





## THRESHOLD: LIVRARIA DA VILA

Isay Weinfeld  
Sao Paulo, Brazil

The Livraria da Vila is a book store in a refurbished two-storey house.

When in operation, the transition from exterior to interior is seamless, allowing customers to flow in and out of the space. Reducing the barriers from public to private creates a more welcoming condition. To minimize the threshold, doors are replaced by floor to ceiling bookshelves that pivot. When the store is closed, the bookshelves rotate to form a continuous wall of books on display. The forecourt in front of the store conveys a feeling of an urban living room. When the store is open, the doors pivot and entrances become short aisles between bookshelves inviting people into the space.

In addition to its retail function, a small auditorium is located in the basement adjacent to the children's section. The auditorium serves as a space to hold courses, lectures and other community events.



- 56 *Photograph, Livraria da Vila, main entry, closed*  
57 *Photograph, Livraria da Vila, main entry, open*

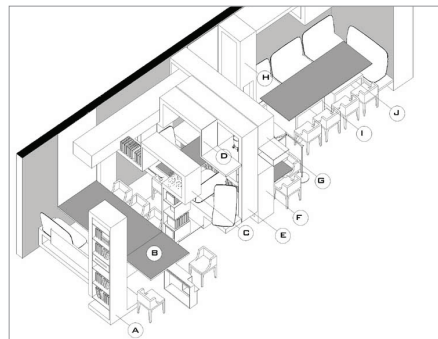
## NICHE: THEODORE CAFÉ BISTRO

SO Architecture

Israel

The Theodore Café Bistro is a café restaurant and an exhibition of literature, song, art and architecture.

The interior space is broken up into a series of different spaces and experiences; the spatial formation is conceived as an intensive sequence of changing sections. The diversity of spaces provokes different social responses: casual versus formal, open versus closed. Some areas are arranged for formal dining. Other spaces are informally arranged giving a similar experience of being in one's living room setting and kitchen. The range of spaces appeals to different people and users.



58 Photograph, Theodore Cafe Bistro, diversity of seating area

59 Photograph, Theodore Cafe Bistro, open kitchen and bar

60 Axonometric diagram of elements

## NOTES

- 1 Landry, *The Creative City*, 133.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 227.
- 5 Landry, *The Creative City*, 133.
- 6 Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place* (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1989), 16.
- 7 City of Melbourne, *Laneway Commissions 2008*,  
[http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/rsrc/PDFs/ArtsAndCulture/Laneway\\_Commissions\\_2008\\_brochure\\_final.PDF](http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/rsrc/PDFs/ArtsAndCulture/Laneway_Commissions_2008_brochure_final.PDF)
- 8 Ray Oldenburg, urban sociologist, wrote the book *The Great Good Place*. He argues that bars, coffee shops, general stores and other “third places” are central to local democracy and community vitality. By exploring how these places work and what roles they serve, third places can act as a place making tool for individuals and communities.
- 9 Centre for Social Innovation, <http://socialinnovation.ca/about>
- 10 “Manuelle Gautrand: la Gaité lyrique doit redevenir un lieu vivant,” CyberArchi, February 25, 2004.  
<http://www.cyberarchi.com/actus&dossiers/batiments-publics/culture/index.php?dossier=99&article=2598>
- 11 Artscape Wychwood Barns, <http://www.torontoartscape.on.ca/places-spaces/artscape-wychwood-barns>





## **5 DESIGN APPLICATION**



## 5.1 STRATEGIES, OPPORTUNITIES

This section will identify the opportunities along and around Spadina Avenue between College Street and Queen Street West.

Properties along Spadina is assessed through various criteria including height of buildings, vacant properties, quality of structures, building use that contributes or deters activity on the street, and inventory of lots for consolidation and development. Areas behind Spadina are assessed as well for development potential. These include laneways and residual and undeveloped lots that are used for surface parking.

This thesis presents a catalogue of designed typologies for Spadina Avenue ranging in scale from small to large interventions to generate the “creative milieu”. Collectively, these typologies form the design framework to perpetuate the inherent spirit of Spadina Avenue; one critical aspect to emphasize is the vital role of the street in the city.

Spadina Avenue is a unique street. The success of this street and its immediate areas are largely a result of the atypical street width. The present street section is proportioned to offer generous sidewalks for various appropriations and shop extensions; lay-bys and street parking for merchandise and passenger pick-up and drop-off; and streetcar right-of-way with low medians that operate as a safe pedestrian area separate from vehicular traffic. These are all aspects that contribute to the overall richness of the street.

Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* examines the role of streets and sidewalks in creating successful city neighbourhoods. Beyond the inherent character of Spadina Avenue where the history and culture of the area contributes to the image of the city, the basic function as a street also affects the image of the city. “Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs...if a city's streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.”<sup>1</sup>

Spadina Avenue as “a well-used city street is apt to be a safe street.”<sup>2</sup> The streetcar and some shops operate 24 hours a day. A good percentage of restaurants in the Chinatown area operate until the early hours of the morning. Apartments above retail shops and other residential buildings place “eyes upon the street”.<sup>3</sup> These factors promote safety along the street.

Ray Oldenburg’s *The Great Good Place* identifies non-work settings as the “third place”. Oldenburg defines “third place” as “a generic designation for a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work.”<sup>4</sup> The first place is the home and the second place is the place of work. The concept of the “third place” reinforces community and street. In a society where information technology is an impermanent entity rather than a fixed one, where increased mobility is resulting in a diminished sense of locality, the “third place” becomes critical as anchoring points for individuals to connect with people and place.

The integration of the “third place” can be found within the designs of larger proposed interventions. New residential, commercial and cultural-creative developments can program and design “third places” to connect individuals. These can be designed to allow free movement of people between the street and these places achieved by minimizing or eliminating barriers through the use of garage doors for example. These spaces can also span the full length of building, acting as connective spaces between Spadina Avenue and the areas behind the street.

Henri Lefebvre summarizes the value of the streets in *The Urban Revolution*:

“[The street] serves as a meeting place (topos), for without it no other designated encounters are possible (cafés, theatres, halls). These

places animate the street and are served by its animation, or they cease to exist. In the street, a form of spontaneous theatre, I become spectacle and spectator, and sometimes an actor. The street is where movement takes place, the interaction without which urban life would not exist, leaving only a separation, a forced and fixed segregation... The street is a place to play and learn. The street is disorder. All the elements of urban life, which are fixed and redundant elsewhere, are free to fill the streets and through the streets flow to the centers, where they meet and interact, torn from their fixed abode. This disorder is alive. It informs. It surprises.”<sup>5</sup>

To perpetuate the inherent character of Spadina Avenue, the focus of the design framework ultimately returns to the vital role of the street; proposed interventions reinforce this unique street which is further supported by the aspects of connectivity, intensification and scale.

Increasing connectivity between various programs and areas encourages more opportunities for mixing different users and for interaction. New connections can be introduced as necessary while existing connections are strengthened.

Intensification refers to a greater diversity of users and programs as well as increasing density in the area. Building heights will be re-evaluated accordingly, proportionate to the width of Spadina Avenue.

Finally, scale introduces the range and diversity of programs that contribute to the overall “creative milieu”. This will also be the organizing principle for interventions on and around Spadina Avenue.

## SCALE

The range of scale accommodates various activities, businesses and users; from minimal intervention to new construction. The smallest scale suggests strategies that are more temporal in nature, requiring the least amount of permanent infrastructure and support. This scale explores the laneways.

The next scale involves small shops, vendors and other services that extend their use onto the sidewalk, or solely rely on the sidewalk. Some physical and permanent infrastructure is necessary to support this scale.

Residential and commercial components provide consistent support to an area. Third places connect these with the community and neighbourhood.

The largest scale encompasses cultural institutions and cultural areas that function as community nodes. They are places of teaching, learning and interaction.



61 Vignette at Glen Baillie Place, small shops with market beyond

## CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity can be broken down as the internal and the external. Together they form a networking system that promotes movement through the area; formal and informal, as well promote better connections to areas beyond the immediate field bringing people to and from the “creative milieu”.

Internal connections are links between the main street (Spadina Avenue) to the areas behind (laneways and residual spaces). These are less formal and more exploratory allowing an entrance into proposed pedestrian laneways lined with small shops, restaurants and cafes.

External connections are links that connect to other destinations outside of the immediate “creative milieu”. These connections can be strengthened visually and physically. Consistent landscaping gives visual and physical connections that draw people from one end to the other.



62 *Vignette of Grange Avenue, landscaped thoroughfare from Alexandra Park to Grange Park*

## **INTENSIFICATION**

Intensification introduces more programs and use to the area. These can serve immediate communities and residents or attract others to the area.

As a “creative milieu”, program and use should be designed to enforce the concept of a 24 hour street. Variety of use during the day and night will constantly active the area and appeal to various users.

Intensification does not equate to densification although increase density may be a necessary support to constantly feed businesses and services in the area. Given the width of Spadina Avenue, being twice as wide as a typical downtown main street, the building height that corresponds proportionately to this width is six to eight storeys.



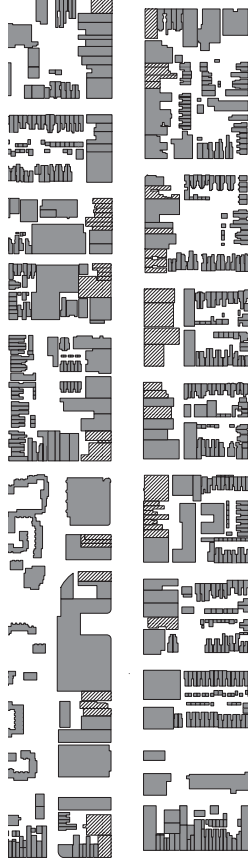
63 *Vignette of Spadina Avenue at D'Arcy Street, redevelopment of low rise buildings*



**LEGEND**

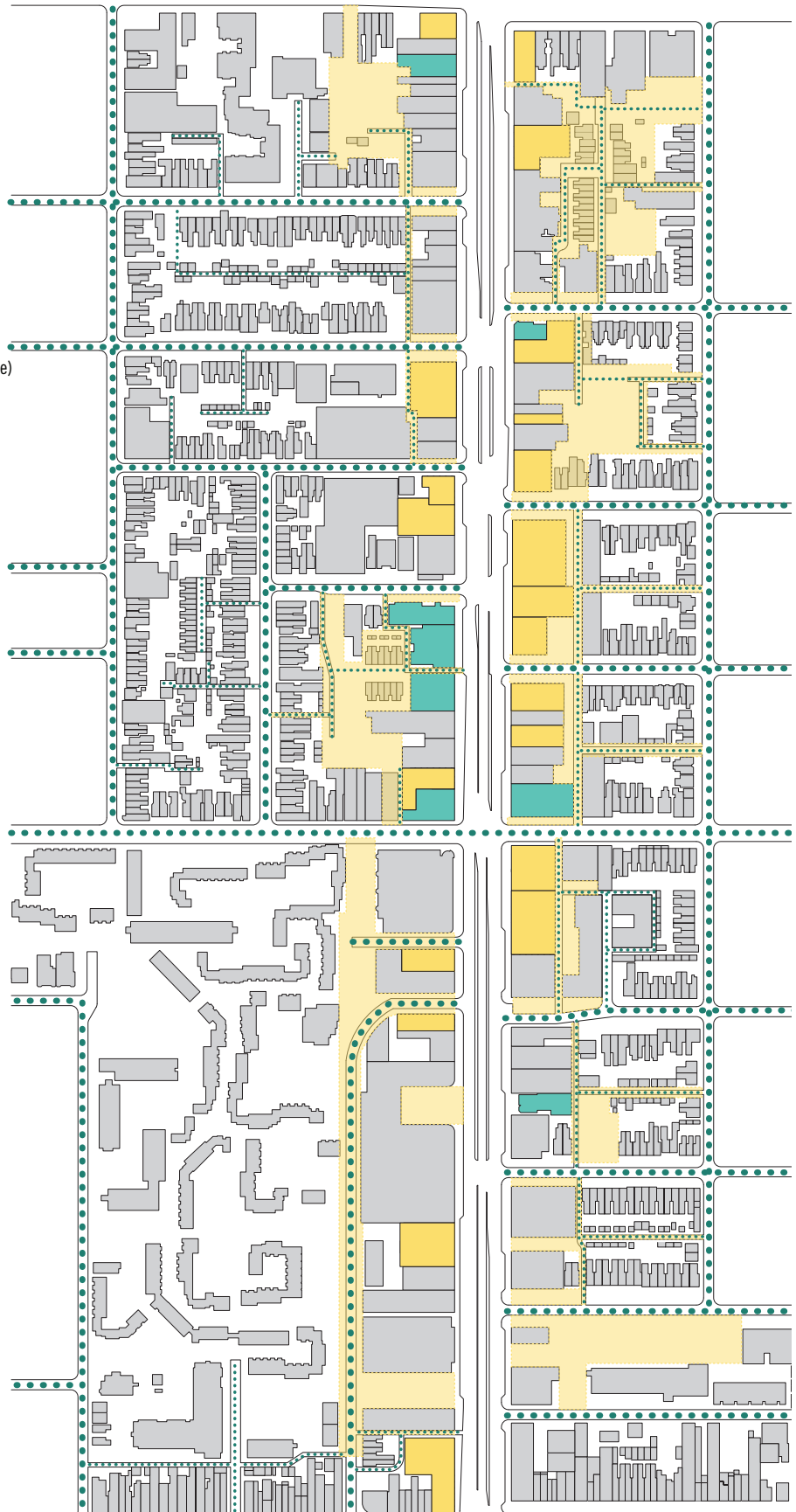
- Historical
  - Potential Sites for Development
  - Areas for Programming
  - Two Storeys or Less
  - Laneways (Potential Secondary Route)
  - Primary Routes
- 0 20 40 80

0 40 80 160










64 Key plan of Spadina Avenue identifying buildings two storeys or lower

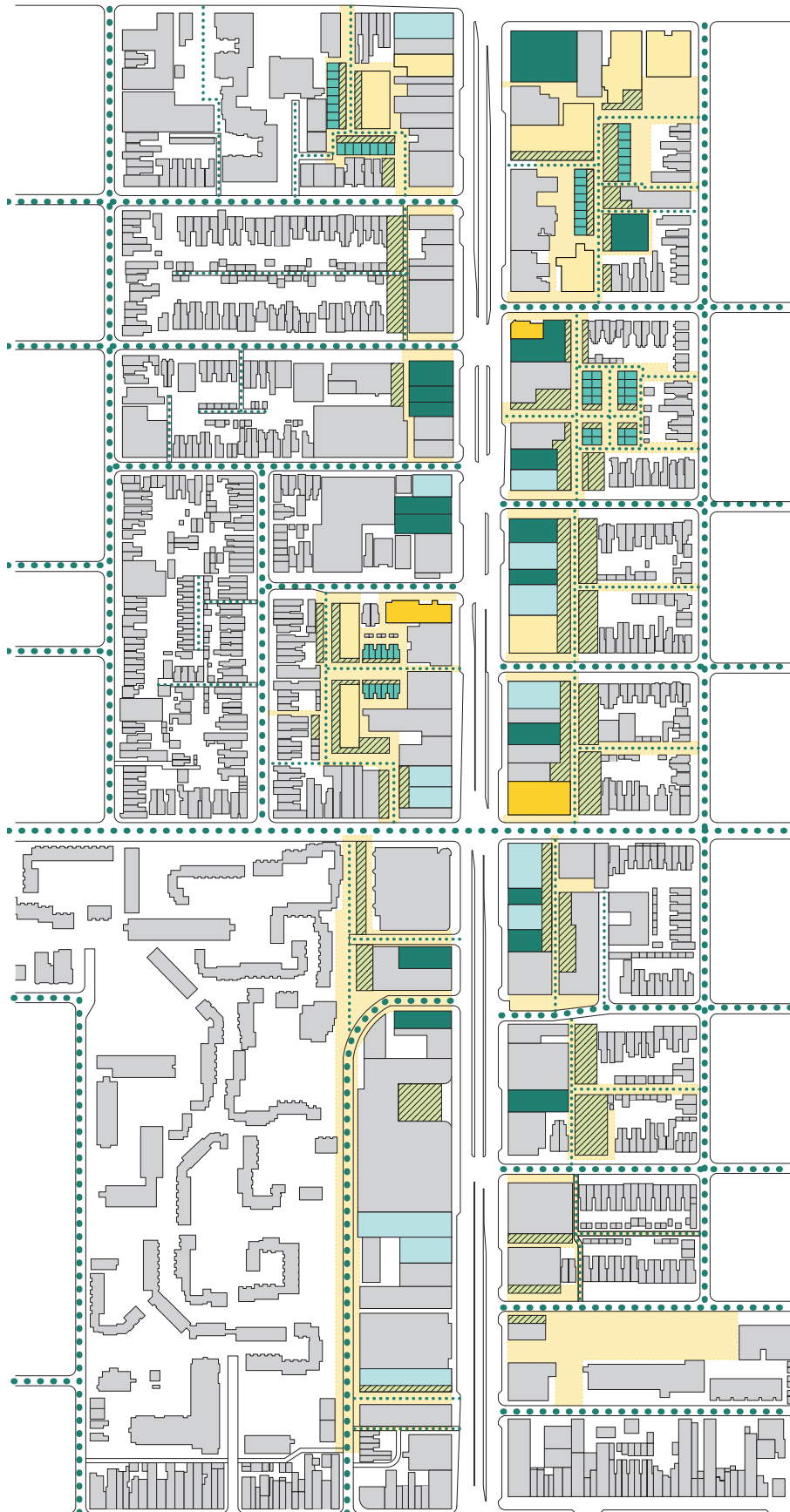
65 Plan of Spadina Avenue, potential sites for development



## 5.2 COMPONENTS

### LEGEND

- Laneways
-  Vendor/Shops
-  Live/Work
-  Office
-  Residential
-  Centre Sites Identified
-  Other Potential Sites
-  Areas for Programming



66 Plan of Spadina Avenue, proposed components

## LANEWAYS

The laneways that run parallel to Spadina can be made more amenable to pedestrian use. Surfaces of laneways indicate to pedestrians whether these areas are service only or are inviting for other use. Re-surfacing laneways with bluestone, for example can attract more pedestrian and bicycle use, facilitate cleaning and encourage better treatment by shops who utilize the laneways for service access. Proper garbage areas can be implemented and sectioned off from laneways enhancing the quality of these spaces. Deliveries and services hours can be scheduled for off-hours while pedestrian only access is permitted during the day. These strategies provide better environments that encourage new thinking about these spaces, priming it for further development.



67 Photograph, laneway behind Spadina Avenue



68 Photograph, parking behind Spadina Avenue



69 Diagram, resurfacing the laneway concept

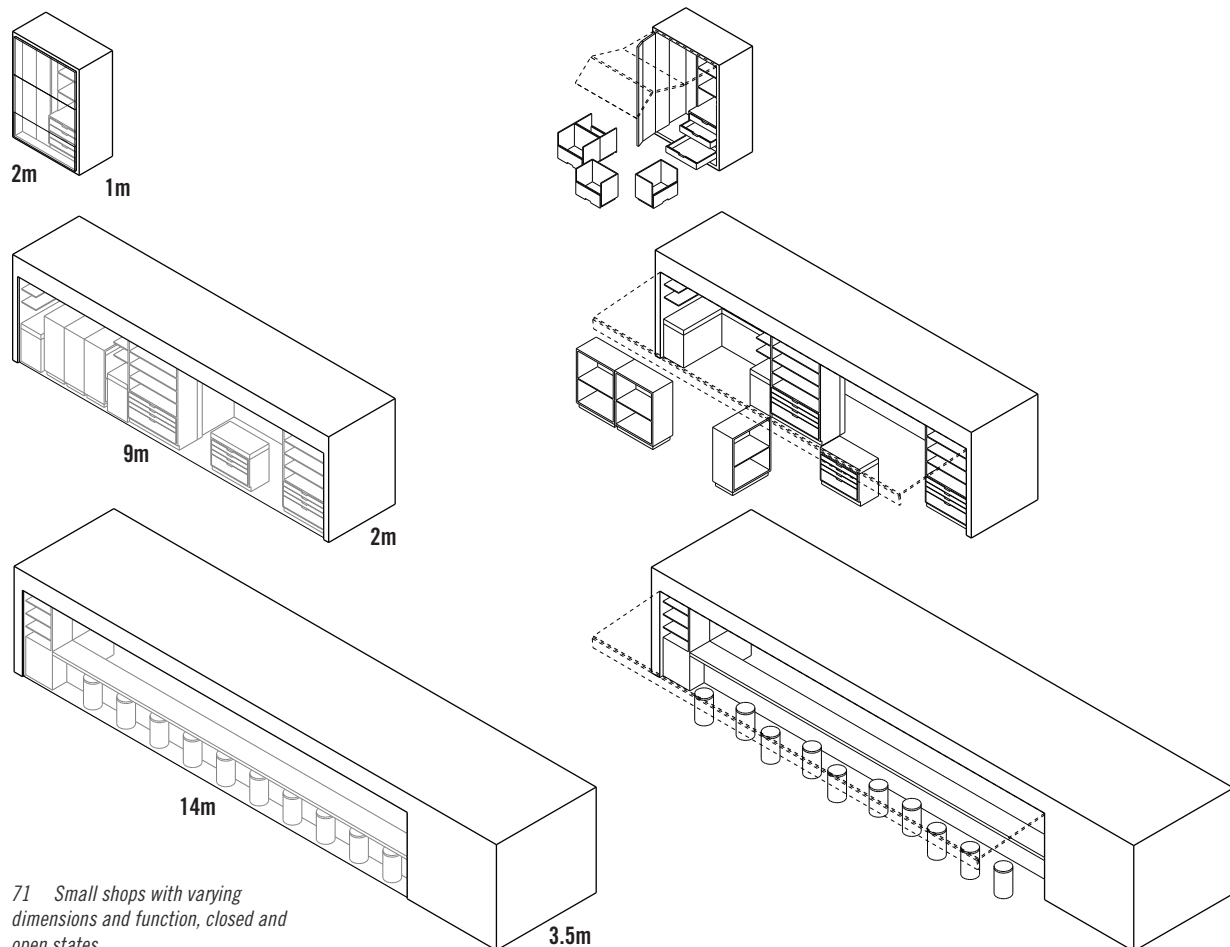


70 Diagram, inhabiting space concept

## VENDORS

Small shops and vendors can be inserted into the urban landscape. Individual vendors can operate within a self-contained module (2x1m). The city can provide these as a form of rentable urban furniture. The concept is inspired from the Asian community in the area and their cultures. Traditionally the construction of small shops are modest; simple sheet metal construction. A designed version of this would need to be weatherproof and tamperproof.

Larger shops are permanent, configured to fit within specific width and depth parameters; inserted into a niche or added to existing structures. Two examples (9x2m, 14x3.5m) demonstrate other functions such as a clothing shop and a food kiosk. Both utilize sidewalk appropriation as an extension of their shop.



71 Small shops with varying dimensions and function, closed and open states

## LIVE-WORK MODULE

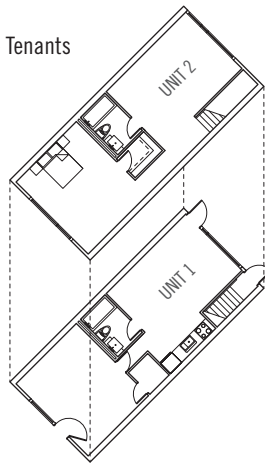
Live-work modules can be configured to suit different tenants and needs. A typical example can accommodate two tenants where each tenant can both occupy half the module with a live-work space. The other configuration for two tenants offers one unit as a work studio only with the second unit as a more generous live-work arrangement.

Other configurations include a full module to accommodate a family as well as a full unit to accommodate up to three separate tenants. For a family, the module is configured as a two bedroom unit, living space with work studio directly accessible from the living area. For three tenants, two units occupy the ground floor with a separate unit above.

CONFIGURATION 1 : Two Tenants

65sm (700sf)  
Live/Work Studio

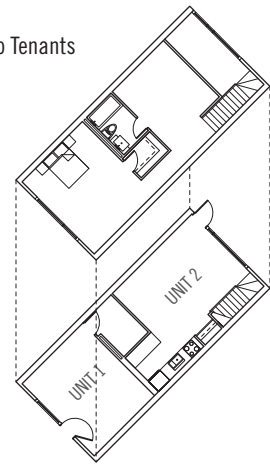
68sm (730sf)  
Bedroom  
Loft



CONFIGURATION 2 : Two Tenants

32sm (345sf)  
Work Studio

92sm (990sf)  
Live Work Studio  
Loft  
Bedroom

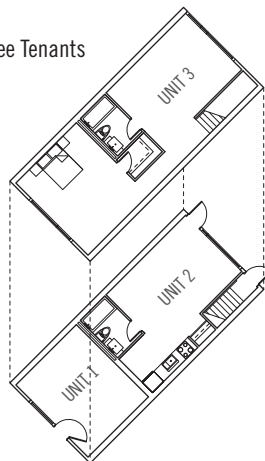


CONFIGURATION 3 : Three Tenants

24sm (262sf)  
Work Studio

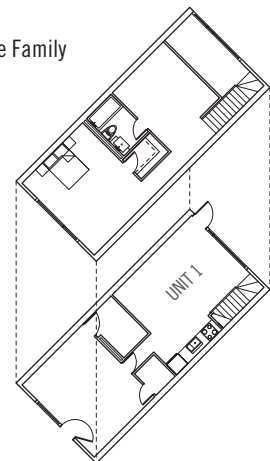
40sm (430sf)  
Live Work Studio  
Loft  
Bedroom

68sm (730sf)  
Bedroom  
Loft



CONFIGURATION 4 : One Family

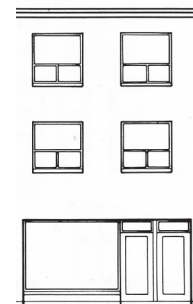
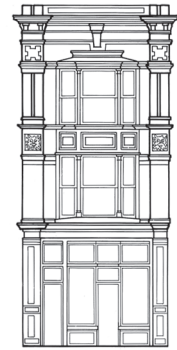
125sm (1345sf)  
Living Space  
Work Studio  
2 Bedrooms



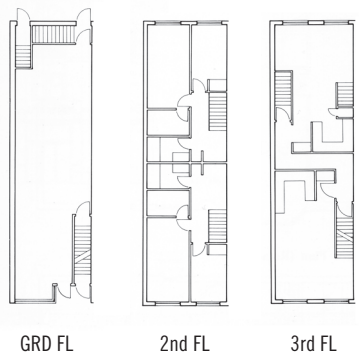
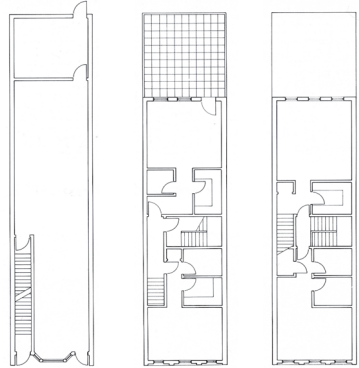
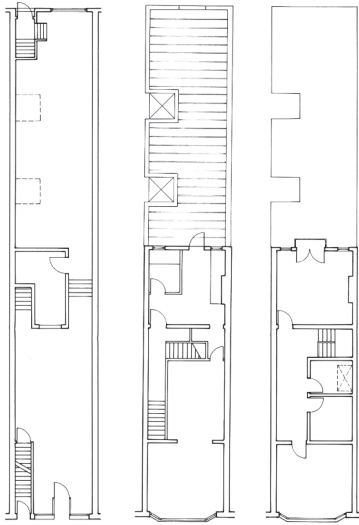
## RESIDENTIAL

Typical main street buildings range from two to three storeys. Units above storefronts are designed for residential occupancy. Some of these units along Spadina Avenue have been serving as additional storage spaces for retailers below. Based on building layouts, a typical 1880's building is configured into 2 one-bedroom units per three-storey bay. This is assumed to have maximum capacity 4 people total: 2 people (a couple) per one bedroom unit. Late 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings are typically configured into four separate bachelor units. Assumed maximum capacity is 4 people per three-storey bay: one person per bachelor unit. A typical 1960's building is subdivided into two units per bay, double storeys in height, with a two bedroom configuration. The assumed maximum capacity is 8 people per bay: 4 people per unit (typical family: parents plus two children sharing a room). Assuming full capacity, where all apartments above retail storefronts and residential complexes are occupied, a calculated estimate of 2200 people can live directly on Spadina Avenue.

Proposed is one strategy for increasing the residential population directly on Spadina Avenue. The replacement of one and two-storey buildings with six to eight-storey buildings can provide a potential population increase of 130%. According to typical city planning strategies the proportionate and maximum height for buildings along Spadina Avenue would be 11 storeys but due to lot size, core placement and transition requirements from street to neighbourhood, actual height is often restricted to six to eight storeys.<sup>6</sup> Lots of existing one and two-storey properties can be consolidated to form 12, 15 and 18 metre wide lots with depth variations of 30 or 40 metres (typical lot depths set by original lot divisions and laneway systems). New lot widths are proposed to maintain variation and rhythm along Spadina Avenue against single building, full block developments. Residential units will accommodate atypical family types such as roommates and single parents; this involves two or more bedroom units designed without bedroom hierarchy and shared amenities. This strategy addresses new family types and offers more affordable living arrangements.



73 Main street building typologies, 1880s, late 19th century, 1960s

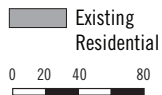


GRD FL

2nd FL

3rd FL

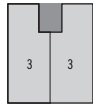
74 Main street building floor plans,  
1880s, late 19th century, 1960s  
75 Plan of lots and buildings on  
Spadina Avenue, existing



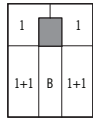


Lot sizes, options and configurations for calculating potential population increase along Spadina Avenue.

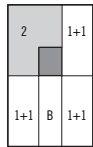
**18x30 LOT**  
8 storeys  
capacity 52



1 floor:  
demographic (max)  
2 - three bedroom (12)  
total: (12)\*1 = 12pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
4 - one bedroom (8)  
total: (9)\*2 = 18pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
3 - one bedroom (6)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
total: (11)\*2 = 22pp

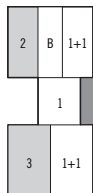
**18x40 LOT**  
8 storeys  
capacity 96



2 floor:  
demographic (max)  
2 - one bedroom (4)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (10)\*2 = 20pp

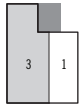


3 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
2 - three bedroom (12)  
total: (14)\*3 = 42pp

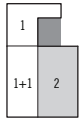


2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
3 - one bedroom (6)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (17)\*2 = 34pp

**15x30 LOT**  
6 storeys  
capacity 44



1 floor:  
demographic (max)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
1 - three bedroom (4)  
total: (8)\*1 = 8pp

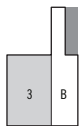


2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
2 - one bedroom (4)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
total: (8)\*2 = 16pp

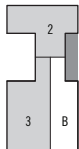


2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
2 - two bedroom (8)  
total: (10)\*2 = 20pp

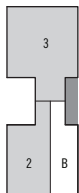
**15x40 LOT**  
8 storeys  
capacity 69



2 floor:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (7)\*2 = 14pp



3 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
2 - three bedroom (12)  
total: (11)\*3 = 33pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (11)\*2 = 22pp

**12x30 LOT**  
6 storeys  
capacity 30



1 floor:  
demographic (max)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (6)\*1 = 6pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
2 - one bedroom (4)  
total: (5)\*2 = 10pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
total: (7)\*2 = 14pp

**12x40 LOT**  
8 storeys  
capacity 48



2 floor:  
demographic (max)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (6)\*2 = 12pp

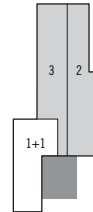


3 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
total: (6)\*3 = 18pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (9)\*2 = 18pp

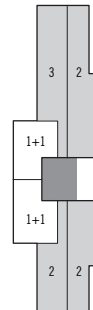
**18x65 LOT**  
8 storeys  
capacity 144



3 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - one bedroom (2)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (12)\*3 = 36pp



4 floors:  
demographic (max)  
3 - one bedroom (6)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (16)\*4 = 64pp



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
2 - one bedroom (4)  
3 - two bedroom (12)  
1 - three bedroom (6)  
total: (22)\*2 = 44pp

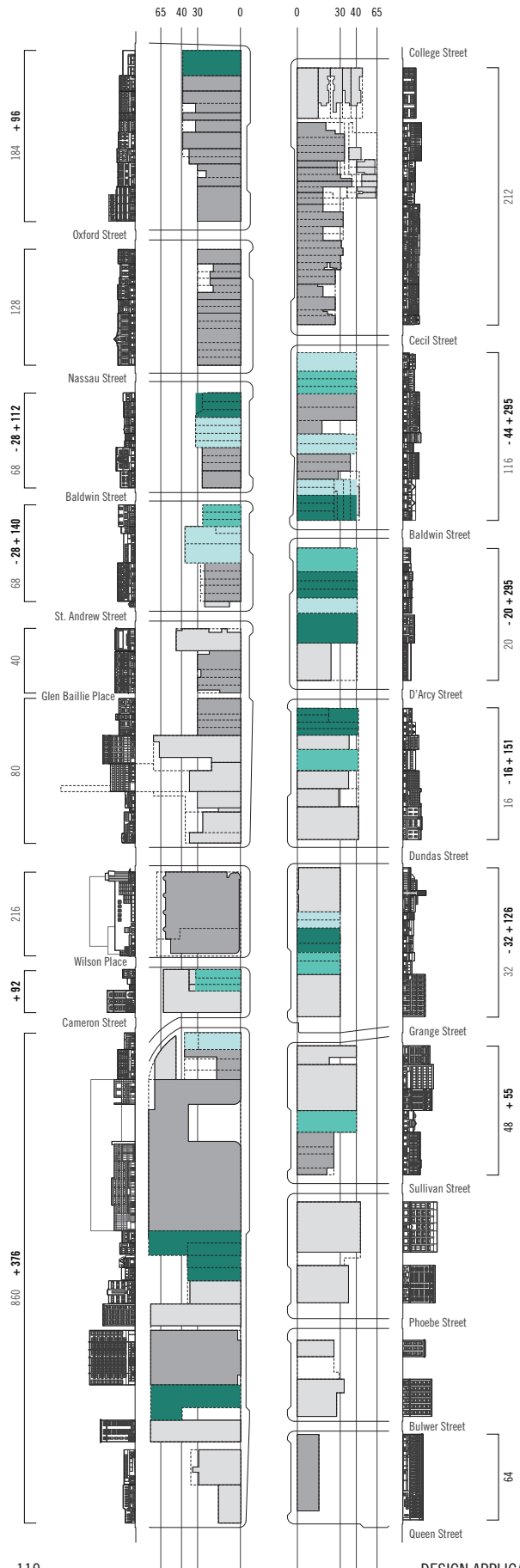
76 Potential residential development, various lots, options, configurations and capacity

Roommate / Atypical Family Typology  
Core



**LEGEND**

- 12m Wide Lot
- 15m Wide Lot
- 18m Wide Lot
  
- Existing Residential



77 Plan of Spadina Avenue, identifying and consolidating lots for potential development

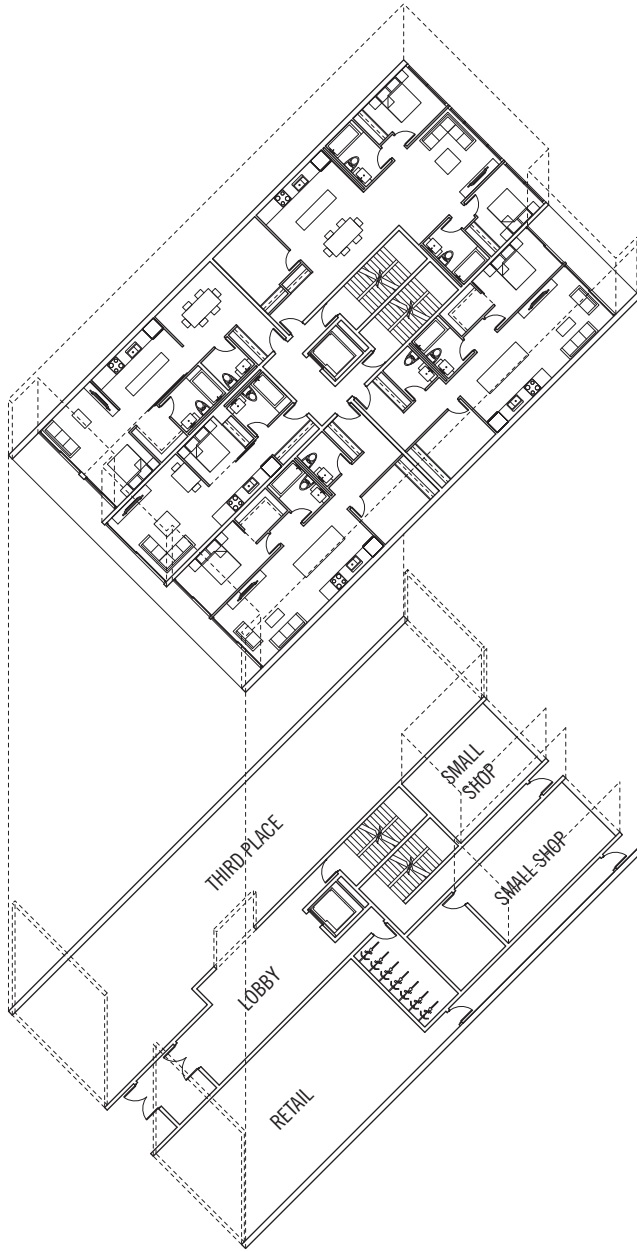
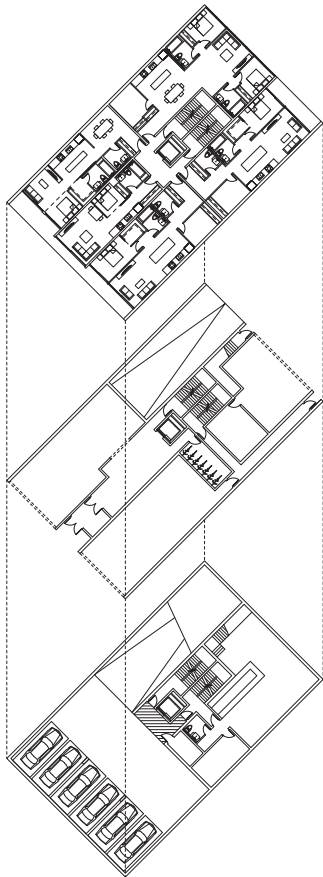
**RESIDENTIAL TYPE 1**  
**18 metres x 30 metres**

**TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL, 5 UNITS:**

- 2 Bedroom
- 1 Bedroom + Den (2)
- Bachelor (2)

**GRADE:**

- Spadina/Laneway Access Retail (1)
- Spadina Access Retail (1)
- Laneway Access Vendor (1)
- Laneways Access Retail with Kitchen (1)

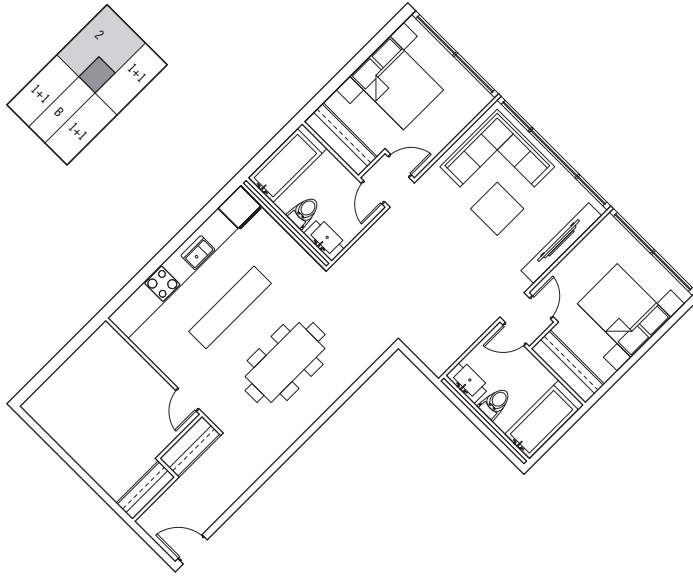


**Alternate Configuration with  
 Underground Parking:**

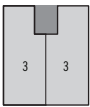
- Parking Spaces (6)
- Spadina Access Retail (2)
- Laneway Access Retail (1)
- Laneway Access Retail  
 Underground (1)

78 Axonometric, residential type 1 on  
 18x30 metre lot  
 79 Axonometric, alternate  
 configuration with underground parking

80 Two bedroom unit, roommate typology

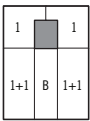


RESIDENTIAL FLOOR A



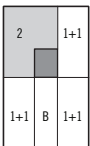
1 floor:  
demographic (max)  
2 - three bedroom (12)  
total: (12)\*1 = 12pp

RESIDENTIAL FLOOR B



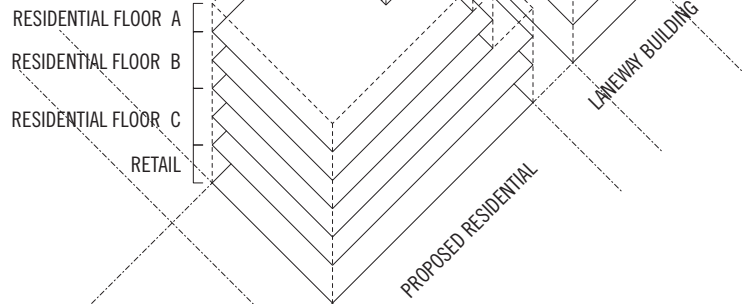
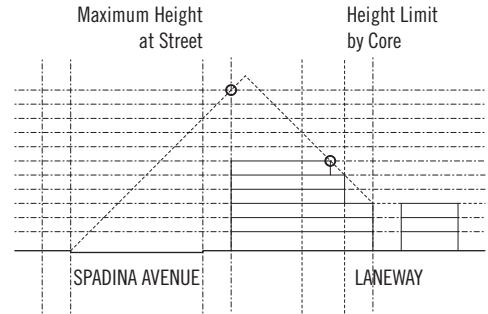
2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
4 - one bedroom (8)  
total: (9)\*2 = 18pp

RESIDENTIAL FLOOR C



2 floors:  
demographic (max)  
1 - bachelor (1)  
3 - one bedroom (6)  
1 - two bedroom (4)  
total: (11)\*2 = 22pp

81 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway



82 Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types

**RESIDENTIAL TYPE 2**  
**18 metres x 40 metres**

**TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL, 6 UNITS:**

- 3 Bedroom
- 2 Bedroom
- 1 Bedroom + Den (2)
- 1 Bedroom
- Bachelor

**GRADE:**

- Spadina/Laneway Access Retail (1)
- Spadina Access Retail with Kitchen (1)
- Laneway Access Retail (1)

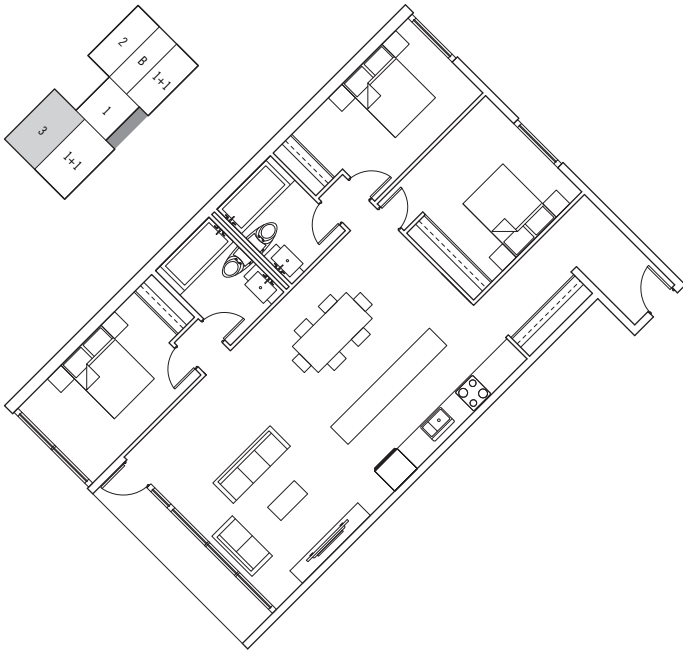


**Alternate Configuration with  
 Underground Parking:**

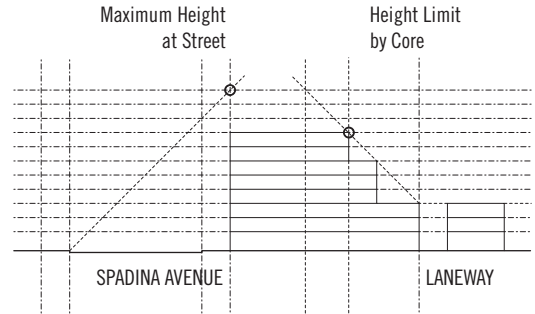
- Parking Space (12)
- Laneway Access Retail / Vendor (1)
- Spadina Access Retail (1)
- Spadina Access Retail with Kitchen (1)

83 Axonometric, residential type 2 on  
 18x40 metre lot  
 84 Axonometric, alternate  
 configuration with underground parking

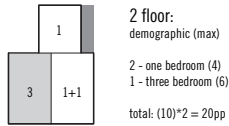
85 Three bedroom unit, roommate or single parent typology



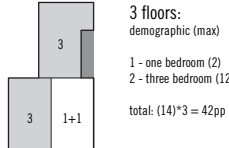
86 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway



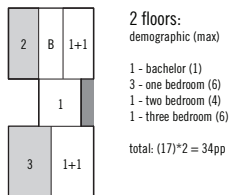
RESIDENTIAL FLOOR A



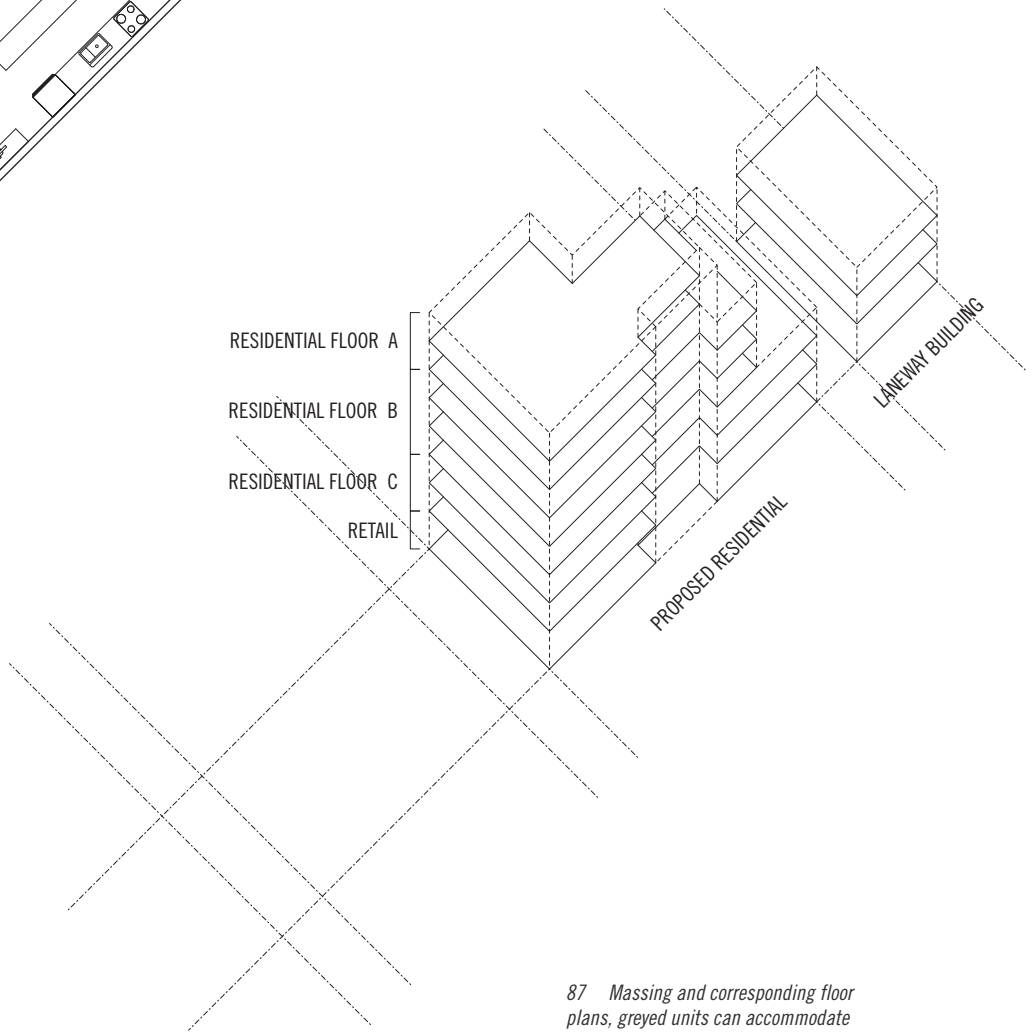
RESIDENTIAL FLOOR B



RESIDENTIAL FLOOR C



RESIDENTIAL FLOOR A  
RESIDENTIAL FLOOR B  
RESIDENTIAL FLOOR C  
RETAIL



87 Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types

**RESIDENTIAL TYPE 3**  
**18 metres x 65 metres**

**TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL, 6 UNITS:**

- 3 Bedroom
- 2 Bedroom + Den
- 2 Bedroom (2)
- Bachelor + Den (2)

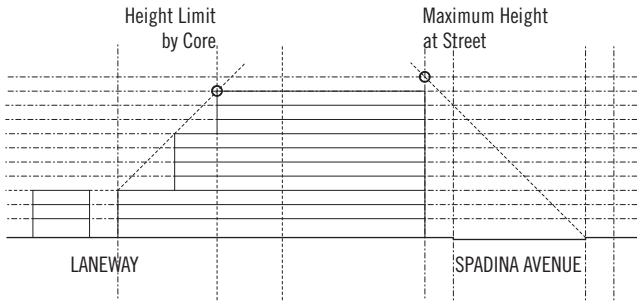
**GRADE:**

- Adjacent Access Vendors (7)
- Corner Vendor/Retail (2)
- Laneway Access Retail (1)
- Spadina Access Retail (1)

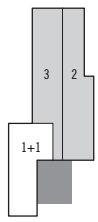


88 Axonometric, residential type 3 on 18x65 metre lot

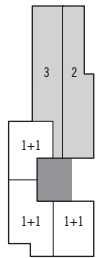
89 *Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway*



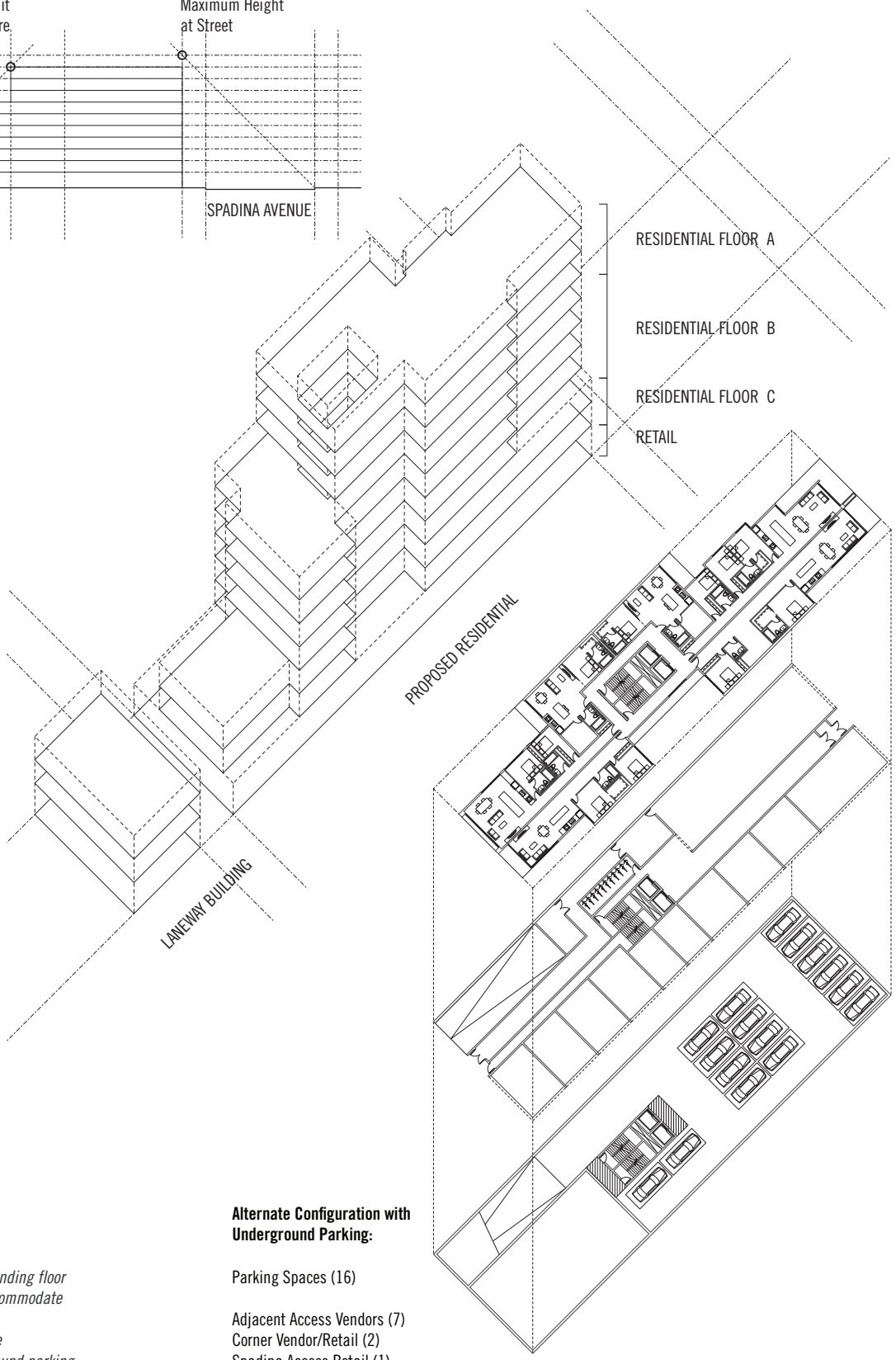
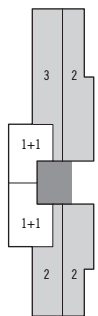
RESIDENTIAL FLOOR A



RESIDENTIAL FLOOR B



RESIDENTIAL FLOOR C



**Alternate Configuration with Underground Parking:**

Parking Spaces (16)

Adjacent Access Vendors (7)

Corner Vendor/Retail (2)

Spadina Access Retail (1)

90 *Massing and corresponding floor plans, greyed units can accommodate atypical family types*

91 *Axonometric, alternate configuration with underground parking*

## **OFFICE**

Offices along Spadina Avenue are centrally located in the Garment District, south of Queen Street West. Warehouse and factories characterize the area. Most of these have been renovated and converted into prime office spaces sought after for their functional flexibility and generous floor to ceiling heights. The few warehouse and factories located north of Queen Street West have followed the same trend, renovated and converted into offices as well.

Few new buildings in the area have been built for solely for office use. Some are found just north of Dundas Street West. Other offices are located in mixed-use complexes such as the Chinatown Centre and Dragon City. For the most part offices are nonexistent north of Dundas Street West. The program there is strictly retail, wholesale and residential. Main street building typologies in the area does not lend well to the office program. Offices seem to show the desire to be among other offices.

The proposed office model takes after 215 Spadina Avenue, particularly the Centre for Social Innovation located on the ground and 4<sup>th</sup> floors of this building. The idea of office hotelling or “hot desking” combined with permanent desks and private offices create a diverse community of small business and encourage interactivity through the sharing of common amenities.

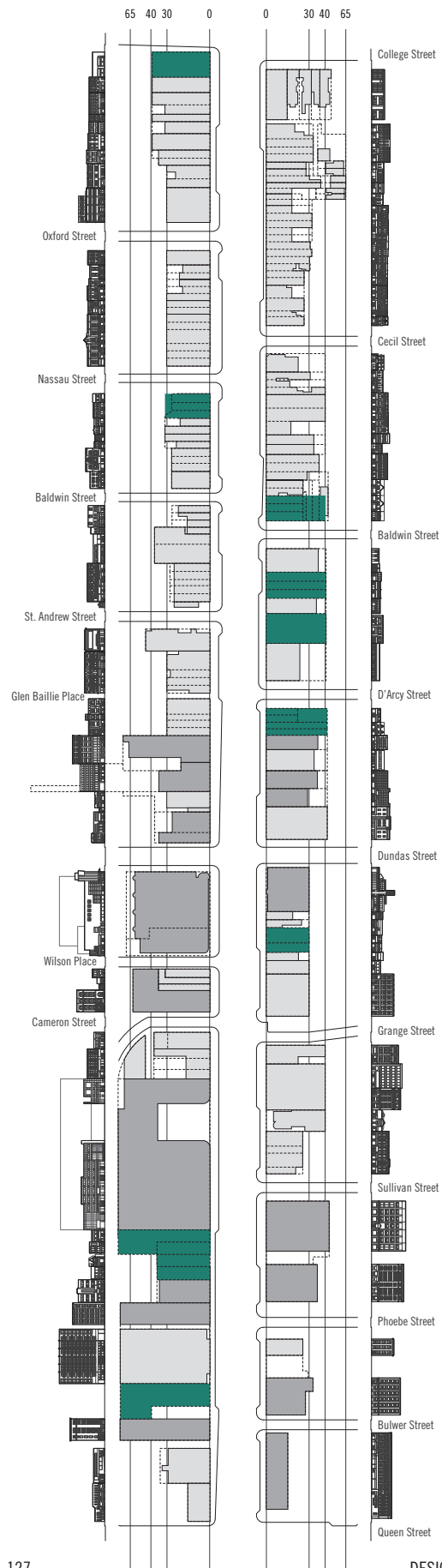
The proposed office building is configured for the 18 metre wide lot similar to the lot strategy for the residential component. Lots that are more narrow reduces the variety of office use and spaces per floor, while wider lots result in bigger buildings that does not relate to the existing surrounding fabric.



**LEGEND**

18m Wide Lot / Potential Office Sites

Existing Office



92 Plan of lots and buildings on Spadina Avenue, potential for office development

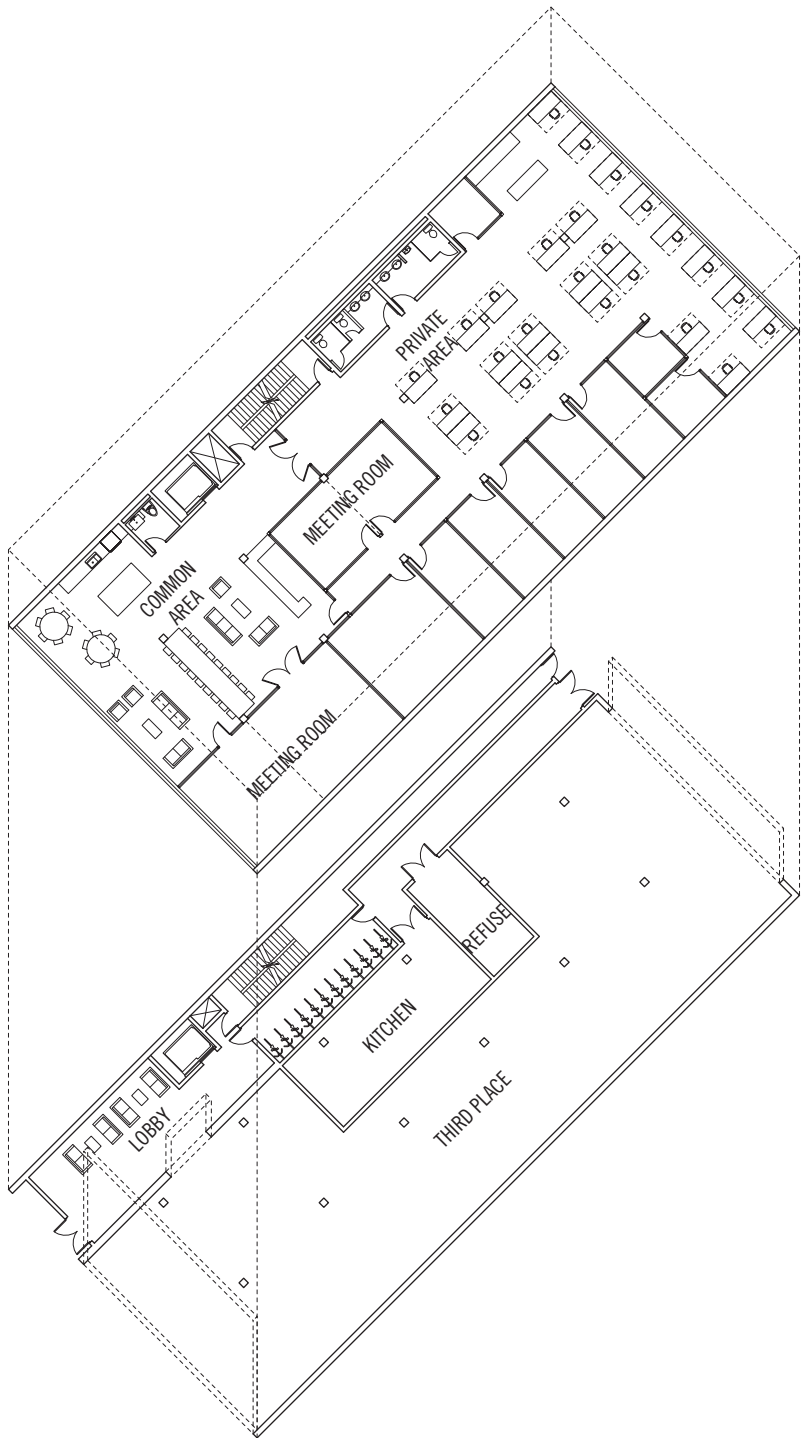
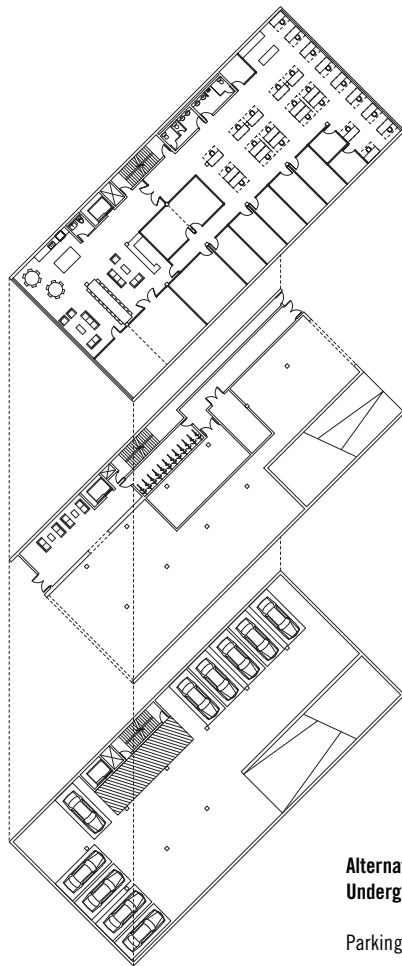
**OFFICE**  
**18 metres x 40 metres**

**TYPICAL LAYOUT, MAX. CAPACITY 110:**

- Private Office (8)
- Permanent Desk (25)
- Temporary Desk (18)
- Meeting Room (5)

**GRADE:**

- Spadina / Laneway Access
- Retail with Kitchen (1)



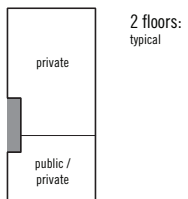
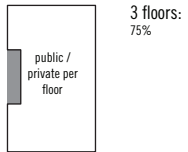
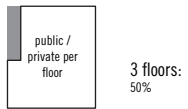
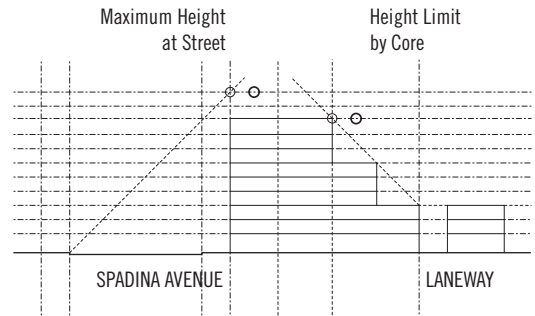
**Alternate Configuration with  
 Underground Parking:**

- Parking Space (10)
- Laneway Access Retail / Vendor (1)
- Spadina Access Retail with Kitchen (1)

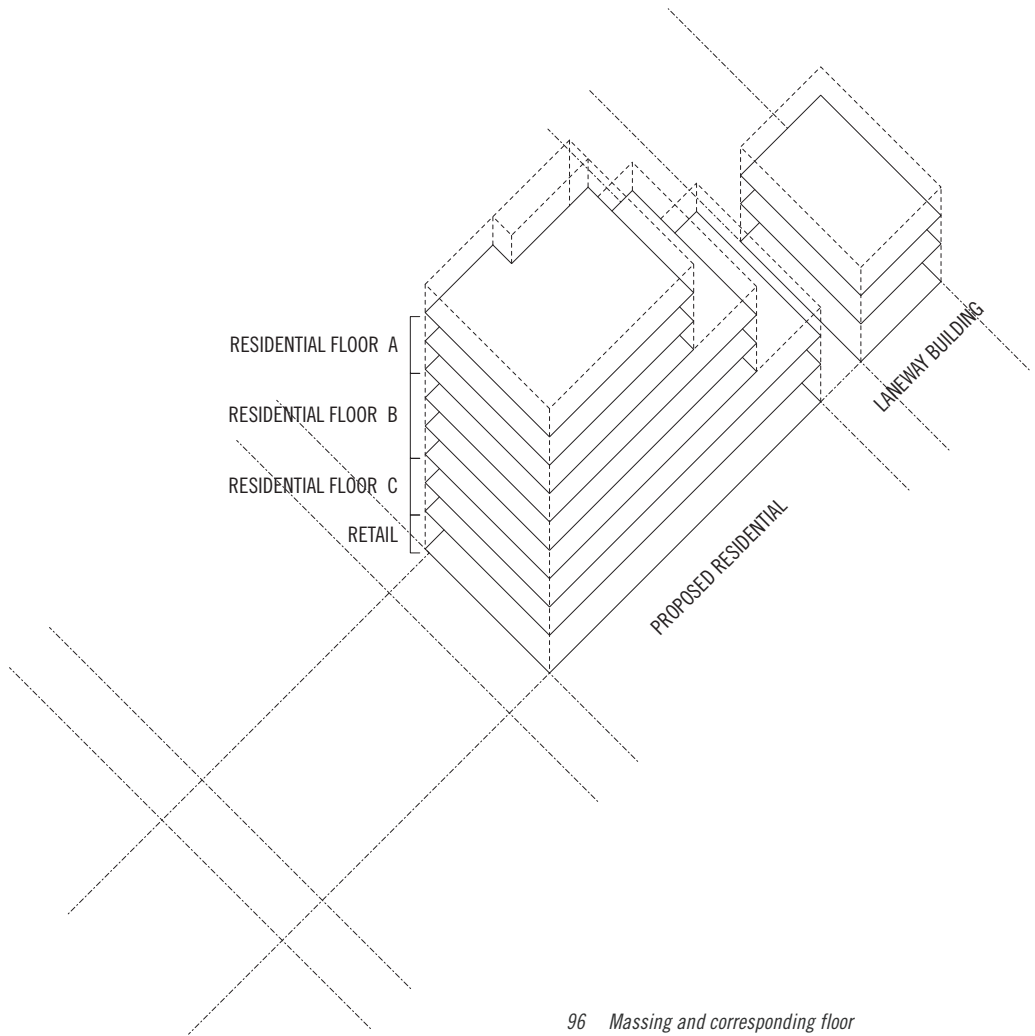
93 Axonometric, office type on 18x40  
 metre lot

94 Axonometric, alternate  
 configuration with underground parking

95 Proportionate height diagram at Spadina Avenue and laneway



18x40 LOT



96 Massing and corresponding floor plans

## CULTURAL-CREATIVE CENTRES AND AREAS

This component consists of the cultural-creative centres and areas. Cultural-creative centres are a single building containing a mixture of programs and use. Cultural-creative areas may consist of more than one building that serves different use but are programmatic compliments. These areas also integrate outdoor areas with temporal functions.

Potential sites for cultural-creative centres take root in historical significance. Potential cultural-creative areas program underutilized and residual properties behind Spadina Avenue.

### 287 STANDARD THEATRE

Located at the northeast corner of Dundas and Spadina, the Standard Theatre opened in 1921. A Yiddish theatre, it also was the scene of many lectures and meetings. In 1935 the theatre changed its name to the Strand and re-opened as a movie house although it continued to have theatrical performances and lectures on Sundays. In celebration of the end of the War, it was renamed the Victory and became a burlesque house. It was a hang-out for university students and artists who often used it as subject for paintings and photography. In 1975 the theatre was sold to Hang Hing Investments; the entrance was redesigned and a dining room was added in the basement. It reopened as the Golden Harvest Theatre but has been closed since 1990. The basement is now a dollar store and a bank occupies most of the ground floor retail.

A cultural-creative-centre could re-establish its original function as a theatre with additional support program such as studios, gallery and exhibition space. Given its prominent location and its historical significant, the site has the potential to animate this intersection with events, gatherings and performances.



97 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre (1968)

98 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre interior, John MacGregor artist studio

99 Photograph, Victory Burlesque Theatre interior, John MacGregor artist studio



### 346 LABOUR LYCEUM

The Labour Lyceum was incorporated in 1913 as a non-profit corporation that sought to promote trade unionism. A trade union centre began as the purchase two houses at the southwest corner of Spadina and St. Andrew's. In 1929 a new front and meeting rooms were added. The facility was used frequently for concerts, lectures, dances and performances. In the 1950s the exterior was refinished and a second-floor hall added. By 1972, the trade unions moved to 23-25 Cecil Street and the building was sold. It presently functions as a small mall: a Chinese restaurant occupies the hall. Interior shops are vacant. A couple of small shops operate at grade that has direct access from the street.

This site is located at one of the main entrances to Kensington Market. Given the building's history rooted in social program and its prominent location, a creative-cultural centre for this site may bring back past programs for the community, providing spaces for concerts, lectures, dances and performances. Other suggestions include a career support centre (tying back to trades and unions), cultural museum that showcases the history and industries over the years along Spadina Avenue.



### 377 GROSSMAN'S

At the southeast corner of Cecil and Spadina are two large houses developed in the late 1880's. In the early 1950s, these houses were converted into Grossman's Cafeteria; a kosher-style restaurant that seated two hundred and was run by the Grossman family. It was one of the first taverns in Toronto to obtain a liquor licence in 1957. It first served the Jewish and Hungarian community, followed professors, teachers, artists and musicians. The Grossman family sold the bar in 1975 but it continues to operate under the original name.

100 Photograph, Labour Lyceum (1957)

101 Photograph, Grossman's Cafeteria (1953)



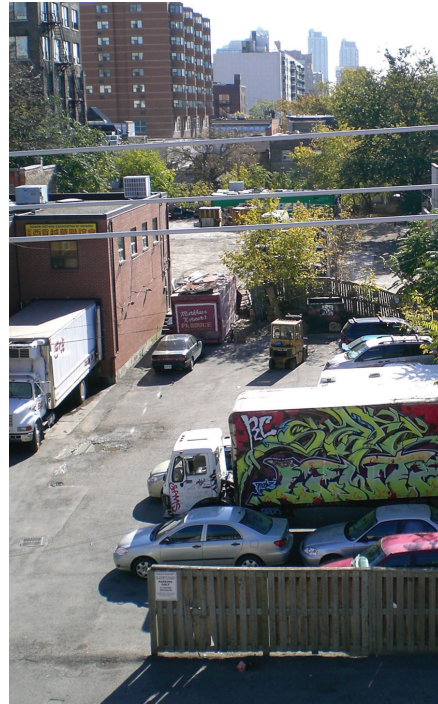
With adjacent two-storey properties and its location on the east side of Spadina opposite of Kensington Market, mixed use developments around the property can emphasize Grossman's and its historical presence on the street. As an existing "third place", a cultural-creative centre can compliment this venue including music and artist residence, flexible exhibition and performance spaces.

#### **WEST OF SPADINA, BETWEEN DUNDAS AND ST. ANDREW'S**

With Kensington Market acting as the west and north boundaries of the site, Spadina Avenue in the east, Dundas Street and Alexandra Park in the south, this is a key location for attracting and mixing various users through appropriate programming of the site. One strategy is to further enhance Kensington Market, identifying the area as a potential site for additional facilities for The Stop Community Food Centre. Programs include community gardens, cooking, bake ovens and open market area. Glen Baillie Place provides direct access from Spadina Avenue. The site opens to St. Andrew's Street in the north. Laneway access is available from Dundas Street and Kensington Avenue.

#### **WEST OF SPADINA, BETWEEN OXFORD AND COLLEGE**

This site may be programmed as an extension of El Mocambo. El Mocambo, a major establishment in the area, has brought a vibrant and consistent music scene to Spadina Avenue since it's opening in 1972. It is a venue for local, national and international artists. In addition to being a tavern, it also offers spaces for film production as well as studios for recording, dance and photography. This site behind can be developed to incorporate temporary studios and rehearsal space for travelling artists as well as outdoor venue for performances. The site can also be considered for pre and post performance gatherings as places for drinking and eating.



102 Photograph, area west of Spadina Avenue between Dundas and St. Andrew Street

103 Photograph, area west of Spadina Avenue, between Oxford and College Street

**5.3 VIGNETTES**







104 Grossman's Tavern,  
cultural-creative centre  
redevelopment (371-379  
Spadina Avenue)







105 Live-work modules,  
laneway programming and  
artist installation

## NOTES

- 1 Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 29.
- 2 Ibid., 34.
- 3 Ibid., 35.
- 4 Ray Oldenburg, *The Great Good Place* (New York: Marlowe & Company, 1989), 16.
- 5 Henri Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 18-19.
- 6 Height of base building on a main street is set by a 45 degree angular plane taken from the curb on the opposite side of the street. An angular plane of 45 degrees from the closest property line of sites with lower scaled buildings determines transitioning height to adjacent neighbourhoods. *Design Criteria for Review of Tall Building Proposals* (Toronto: City of Toronto, 2006), 15, 33.

## **CONCLUSION**



## CONCLUSION

“The creative city retaliates against the brute strategies of globalization, by ensuring that the ethic of governance highlights a code of common humanity. It designs streets and buildings that inspire encounter. It lets go of unreasonable circumspections in its services and enforcements. It replaces an ethic of boundary and protocol with an ethic of welcome and response. The style of municipal action itself must imitate the dynamic of creativity, – benevolent intelligence with a regard for allowance and response. In such a way, the city is not propelled merely by market agendas. It creates an ambience in which productivity amounts to volunteerism of civic invention. This civic invention is allowed by a code of allowance and response.

The ethic of welcome and response must be the tacit ethic of any metropolis that would see its economy prosper by creativity; and the strategies for disseminating such a creative ethic does not begin with the arts. They begin with a campaign of encouragement from citizens themselves, aided by the marketing, communications and example of the municipality that implicitly assumes and explicitly proclaims the ethic of welcome and response.”

Pier Giorgio Di Cicco, Toronto’s Poet Laureate  
*Municipal Mind: Manifestos for the Creative City*

The “creative milieu” can form the genesis for a “creative city” acting as catalytic sites where creativity and culture can be expressed, explored and nurtured. Understood within the context of Charles Landry’s “creative city” concept, the “creative milieu” is a means of perpetuating the *genius loci*, the inherent spirit of place; it recognizes the value of the past and present as resources that can help prefigure, inspire and offer confidence to the future.

For Spadina Avenue, a unique Toronto street, it is necessary to perpetuate the inherent quality of its street and neighbourhoods. This is critical not only for its immediate communities but especially for the city. Where the image of the city can be reflected through its streets and neighbourhoods, Spadina Avenue has always been an area of culture and diversity contributing to the character of downtown Toronto.

The focus of the design framework reemphasizes the street. New residential, office and cultural-creative developments as well as additional programming of underutilized areas such as laneways and vacant lots reinforce the street through increased density of population and activity in the area. Proposed typologies are specifically designed to offer appropriate residential types for new demographics and family configurations; to provide “third places” for gathering and anchoring in an age where increased mobility is resulting in a diminished sense of locality, shared space and identity; to address the current post-industrial, knowledge-based society with the capacity to accommodate change; and to support wider range of learning and education in the community. New developments provide connections between areas along and behind Spadina Avenue increasing the permeability between street and its surrounding areas.

All proposed interventions would require a reconsideration of current city policies. Rules and regulations such as planning permissions, licences, by-laws and restrictions have long been established to regulate the many aspects of a city. Where rules are essentially about preservation, they can also prohibit positive developments. The possibility of failure is an inherent part of exploring the potentials of a place. The process may require risk taking by policy makers and institutions but results, whether deemed successful or failure, are learning devices that can be informative. In an ever changing society, established rules will require reassessment and modification. This can be a great challenge for modern cities.



Landry's concepts of the "creative city" and the "creative milieu" are based on the fundamental belief that everyone is creative. Making no distinctions of class or place the vital role of immigrants and the working class in the city can be recognized. This is the demographic that has shaped Spadina Avenue for over a century.

The design framework preserves the social character of Spadina Avenue offering opportunities and generating conditions to express and explore residents' inherent cultures. A flourishing community sustains and attracts immigrants to the area; their practices enrich the community and the city both culturally and intellectually.

Inspired by Spadina Avenue's physical, social and cultural history, proposed interventions are designed to support a specific type of city life. These interventions are a form of seeding; they are catalytic prototypes for exploring what could emerge. This thesis does not impose a master plan upon the area but presents a design framework for a "creative milieu" that identifies opportunities and situations where specifically designed typologies can be applied. Typologies can be adopted by other streets and neighbourhoods with similar conditions; they generate new conditions that allow an area to continue developing on its own terms.

The "creative milieu" is a strategy that embraces the rich history of Spadina Avenue and all the aspects that distinguishes this main street from all other Toronto main streets. As a place that has witnessed the many generations of immigrations, culture, diversity and innovation, this should remain as one place in the city that will continue to accommodate change and transition – the inherent spirit of Spadina Avenue.



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