



Thinking Planning and Urbanism



BETH MOORE MILROY

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The true story lies
among the other stories ...

MARGARET ATWOOD,
"TRUE STORIES"



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Abbreviations

BIA	business improvement area
BID	business improvement district
CCTV	closed circuit television
CIP	community improvement project
DYBIA	Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Area
DTYS	Downtown Yonge Street
GDRA	Garden District Residents Association
OMB	Ontario Municipal Board
OPA	official plan amendment
PPP	public-private partnership
RFP	request for proposals
RFQ	request for qualifications
TEDNA	Toronto East Downtown Neighbourhood Association; Toronto East Downtown Neighbourhood Alliance
TEDRA	Toronto East Downtown Residents Association
TTC	Toronto Transit Commission
UDC	urban development corporation
UDP	urban development project
UEC	urban entertainment centre
YSBRA	Yonge Street Business and Residents Association
YSM	Yonge Street Mission





Thinking Planning and Urbanism



CHAPTER 1

Opening

On one level, this book is about how planners and others puzzled over what to do with a small downtown area in Toronto and the eventual outcome, a redevelopment intended to mimic New York's Times Square and London's Leicester Square. It is a story of planners at work on a difficult issue in perplexing times, and it is described in detail from conceptualization to implementation to show precisely how planning was practised. On another level, this case is paradigmatic of planning problems encountered in a broad spectrum of urban areas where pressures of contemporary urbanism are felt. These pressures include the problem of how to pump new value into small areas when conventional assumptions about the relationship between an urban core and its periphery no longer obtain. For example, one outdated assumption is that the core provides essential services for its periphery; another is that "urbanness" is measured by population density rather than electronic and other exchanges. At this second level, the book grapples with the adequacy of the theories planners use to inform their work on a planned intervention such as this.

The powers and forces configuring urban areas today are considerably different from those associated with the industrial revolution of the mid-nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries. Many attribute current changes primarily to globalizing economies and concomitant social conditions. While these forces are undoubtedly major contributors, the context in which this case study unfolds points at least as much to technology as a driver of contemporary urban form. The urban and regional planning field has tended to be less cognizant of technology's significance to the evolution of urban form, except as a derivative of economic and social revolutions.¹ Transportation and communications technology in particular add specific capacities to urban development, such as being able to spread out over enormous areas while still enabling people

to be connected at any time to anywhere else. How to deal with the diffuse settlement patterns made possible by the combination of technological, social, and economic changes is a major question. A complementary question is how to treat the holes that are left, or made, in contemporary urban space by expansive development. Together, these questions call for a new form of urbanity, of conviviality, and for a reciprocal readjustment between the form of the urban tissue and the forms of engaging with each other.²

The story is about a specific type of small core area space and the arguments for conceptualizing the space in particular ways. Throughout city history, such debates have been common. In this instance, there is an unusual opportunity to examine the discussions in detail because the city's planning department put forward two proposed solutions concerning the same site, each of which was dominated by a dramatically different conceptualization of space. In the first proposal, the aesthetics of space, such as perspective and proportionality, and its technical features, such as sunlight and relative location of things, carried considerable weight. In the second proposal, space was conceptualized as nothing in and of itself but instead as what can be created out of it by people who seek to use the space to advance their goals, be they economic, social, or political. That is, the dominant conceptualization of the second proposal is that space is produced through social relations. Seeing the two proposals side by side sharpens the distinction between technical-aesthetic and socioeconomic conceptions of space and prompts questions about how the two inform theories and practices of planning.

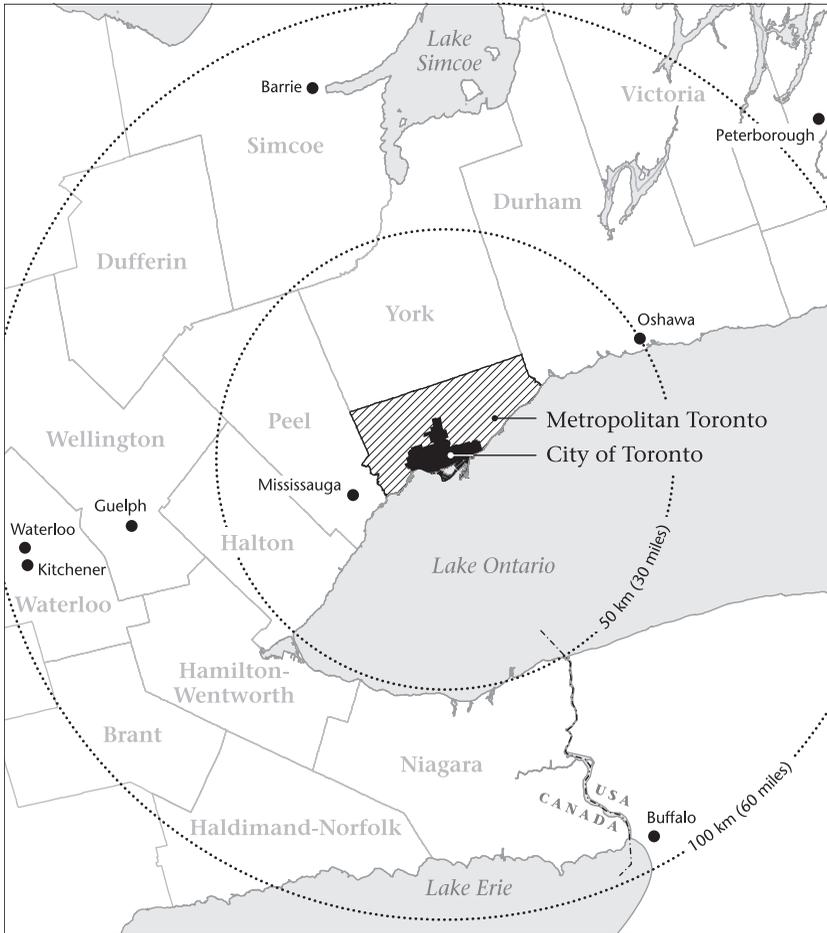
As a point of departure, I accept that both the technical-aesthetic and socioeconomic conceptualizations of space are properly part of urbanism and urban planning. This study explores a case in which the tension between the two understandings of space was lost. When the second proposal was implemented, a model from elsewhere that was expected to solve social and economic problems was set down in the city core in a location defined as a suitable receptacle for the proposed treatment. Scholars have analyzed comparable projects, using social science-based urban theories to uncover how and why such projects were developed. While recognizing their insights, I have approached this case differently, immersing myself in its dense detail to see what questions it raised about planning and urbanism. The manner of conceptualizing space emerged as a central issue. It shaped the proposals of planning practitioners, and it either opened up or closed down the potential for innovation. The proposals are classic illustrations of how to treat space, each with centuries of urbanistic practice behind them. I consider the implications of these conceptualizations of urban space for theorizing planning.



1.1 Toronto in its North American context. | Adapted from Toronto (1992, 113).

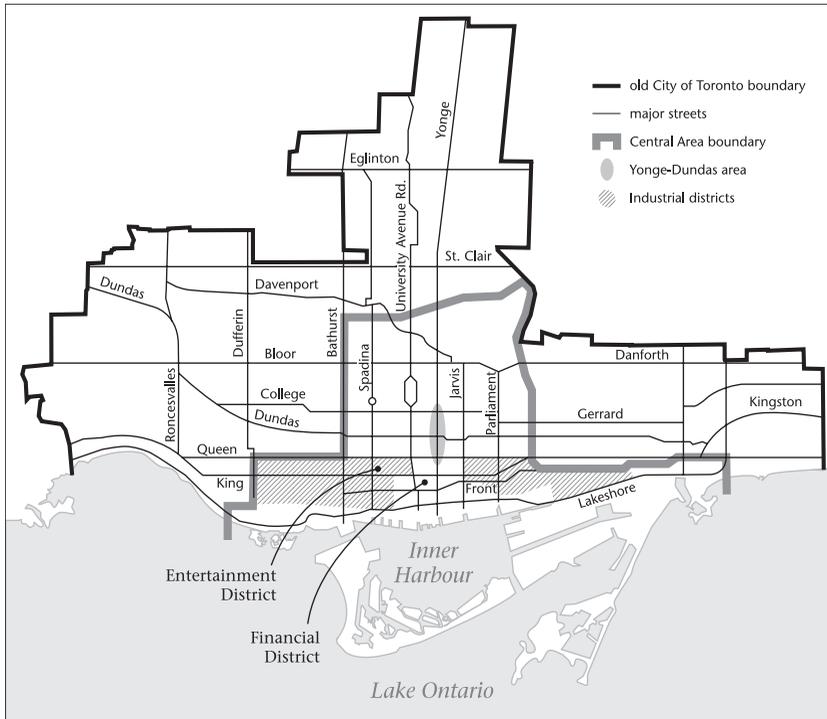
The Story in a Nutshell

The area in question is in the vicinity of the intersection of Yonge and Dundas streets in downtown Toronto. (See Figures 1.1 and 1.2 to locate Toronto in its North American and regional contexts and Figure 1.3 for selected sub-areas of the city's core, which is where the case takes place. See Appendix 3 for a written description of the area.) For years people had noted the absence of redevelopment money going into the ten or so blocks in the vicinity of the intersection. Some said redevelopment was not happening because the area



1.2 Toronto in its regional context. Aside from the City of Toronto, only upper-tier municipal boundaries – counties and regional municipalities prior to amalgamation – are shown. | Adapted from Toronto (1992, 113).

was so down-at-the-heel; others argued the reverse – that it was down-at-the-heel because the land use restrictions in the city’s official plan discouraged redevelopment. Whatever the cause, the area was in poorer condition than civic authorities and a wide range of other people thought appropriate. After all, this was reputedly the busiest corner in the country and the location of the main door of the Eaton Centre shopping mall, which is said to have the highest turnover retail sales space in Canada. It was widely agreed that a planned solution was needed. Efforts made to fix up the area over more than two decades were judged to have had little effect.



1.3 Selected subareas of the City of Toronto's core. | Adapted from Toronto (1990b, 16) and Toronto (1994c, Map M.2)

For decades there has been hand wringing over the Yonge Street Strip. Older adults have worried about its influence on their children at least since hippie youths hung out there in the 1970s, followed by punk youths in the 1980s and hip-hop youths in the 1990s, always with a certain amount of drug use and trade happening. From the early '90s, the picture also included increased numbers of students at Ryerson University a block away; two youth shelters and a shelter for homeless men within two blocks of the intersection; increased numbers of psychiatrically disturbed people wandering around because de-institutionalization policies were not matched by community care; more homeless people because senior government funding for all social housing programs had been stopped; and more panhandling and loitering than had likely been seen in Toronto since the 1930s because welfare provisions had been cut by more than 20 percent on top of a deep five-year recession, which brought high unemployment rates, particularly for young people. By the mid-1990s Yonge-Dundas looked very stressed, certainly to middle-class eyes. (See Figures 1.4 to 1.8 for before and after views of the Yonge-Dundas area.)



1.4 The World's Biggest Jean Store on the southeast corner of Yonge and Dundas, 1998. | Author's collection.



1.5 Stores on the northeast corner of Yonge and Dundas, 1998. | Author's collection.



1.6 Looking southeast down Yonge Street, 1998. Dundas Square Street is to the left; Eaton Centre is on the extreme right. | Author's collection.



1.7 Yonge and Dundas' new image, 2007. Dundas Square, looking west from the bandstand to Eaton Centre with its media tower. | Author's collection.



1.8 Looking south over Dundas Square, formally named Toronto Life Square, on a sunny Sunday afternoon in May 2008. Hard Rock Cafe is just off the square on the right. Financial district towers are in the background. | Courtesy of Sherrill Rand Harrison.

In 1996 two solutions were proposed: a gentle regeneration-style solution was approved but was superseded nine months later by a dramatic expropriate-and-redevelop proposal. The latter has been in the process of implementation ever since and is the proposal that receives all of the attention. No one seems to remember the regeneration plan. Politics had a great deal to do with the switch from one plan to the other. Because there were two plans from the same planning department and from some of the same planners for the same geographic space in overlapping time periods, their foci and rationales can be compared. In the transition from one to the other, we see the position in which the planning department (the Planning and Development Department, which was renamed Urban Development Services in September 1996) found itself after having been politically forced to reassess its first, gentler strategy. The routes open to the planning department seemed to be as follows: (1) to refuse the new, more aggressive model and be sidelined while the planning framework was operated without the planning department; (2) to strongly make a case for why the new approach was wrong and then, if the city



council still insisted on going ahead, to do the best planning job possible by trying to avoid the worst outcomes; or (3) to be persuaded to go ahead with it, either because the department saw no alternative or because the second proposal was the better strategy. Regardless of whether it was in its better judgment, the planning department took the third route, at least publicly. Because it chose the third alternative, the planning department had to formally defend it when an appeal was launched.

Planning was central in this case and, indeed, a battleground for political struggles. In one struggle, planners were pitted against planners: the city used in-house and contract planners and a coalition of area business interests to oppose another set of business interests equipped with its own contract planners, economists, and land evaluation experts. In another struggle, certain interests were trying to shift the role of planning in Toronto. The justifications the city gave for its change from regeneration to redevelopment, and for its preference for its own plans over those proposed by opponents, provide some evidence for the hypothesis that planning in Toronto was being nudged toward an entrepreneurial approach, that is, to inviting the private sector to lead redevelopment initiatives and reap the rewards of property value increases.³ This contrasted sharply with conventional planning approaches in Toronto, including the predecessor plan for Yonge-Dundas. Using Brindley, Rydin, and Stoker's (1989, 11) terms of analysis, the regeneration plan could be described as a mix of regulative and trend approaches, that is, managing urban development in the public interest while using a few tools to entice the market to deliver what it was more or less ready to offer anyway. As for the redevelopment approach, the term "entrepreneurial" does indeed describe it. The project site was turned over to private-sector redevelopment interests to make Toronto more competitive in comparison to other cities; processes were largely kept away from public scrutiny, and the so-called public square ended up promoting private consumption. A decade later we can see that entrepreneurial planning like this has not taken over in Toronto but, like elsewhere, has become one style among several that a city may employ. As an approach, entrepreneurial planning is likely to produce repetitious rather than distinctive environments (see Hall 2002, chap. 11; Loukaitou-Sideris and Banerjee 1998, 292) and, thus, less competitiveness (Hanna and Walton-Roberts 2004). However, beyond the matter of planning styles, there is now an overall greater propensity than there was in the mid-1990s to use more entrepreneurial attitudes, actions, and language (Courchene and Telmer 1998; Laxer 1995); to seek to criminalize or ostracize poverty (Gordon 2004; Kipfer and Keil 2002); and to use mixed public-private ventures to carry out a variety of municipal activities by various means, as has been seen in many other

cities (e.g., DeFilippis 1997; Eisinger 2000; Gómez 1998; Gómez and González 2001; Hagen Hodgson 1997; Hoyt 2003; McGuirk and MacLaran 2001; Plaza 1999, 2008; Waitt 1999; Williams 2003; Winter and Brooke 1993).

What kind of reasoning went into justifying the second project? Some of it was sound and appropriate, but much was fallacious (appeals to emotion were used, symptoms and root problems were elided, solutions used elsewhere were parroted), and much was post hoc rationalizing with a view to obtaining approval for a project that proponents wanted, regardless of whether there was evidence to support it. As was the case in Bent Flyvbjerg's (1998) Danish example, rationality took the form of *Realrationalität*, that is, rationality practised in the face of power.

One of the fallouts from this entrepreneurial example concerned the commons, which shrank because public space was turned over for private interests to shape. The use of the term "public space" assumes that it is useful to define space along a public-private axis, even though meanings will be specific to cultures and historical periods (Lofland 1998, 8). Not all public spaces have the same level of publicness. The most public of spaces are owned by governments and are expected to remain open for public discussion and political expression; traditionally, these are streets, sidewalks, parks, and squares. Other forums, such as community centres, libraries, universities, subways, and airports, may have constraints on their use that do not apply to traditional public spaces. Dina Graser's (2000, 70) assessment of a government's relationship to public space in the Canadian legal framework is that it is quasi-fiduciary, which means that governments "have a responsibility not to unduly restrict freedom of speech in public spaces" and "a corresponding obligation ... to ensure a right of access for this purpose as an essential part of a functioning democracy." In this view, traditional public spaces are places where political activity may be expected, not places to be protected from politics (Deutsche 1996, 283). They are places where those people whose behaviour – sleeping on the street or panhandling – may disrupt a notion of urban order have a rightful place, along with anyone else who may, when encountering them on the street, be reminded of the political fact that their government appears to be failing some of its citizens.⁴ In the Yonge-Dundas area, some of the merchants set up a so-called public-private partnership with the city to mastermind redevelopment of the street. Subsequently, the city created a board dominated by active proponents of the redevelopment to run the square, and a new privately managed Business Improvement Area was established in accordance with provincial regulations to look after the surroundings. It treats the street rather like a mall, so the street's character changed from political to economic (Graser 2000, 68-69). The actual street, not simply

its uses, was commercialized with the assistance of the city and the province. The conventional idea of a street was challenged, as was the idea of the city square. Private security services were procured for the square, and the new board sought to sell the “public” square to paying users. The administrative set-up of the square is, therefore, contrary to the grounds upon which the city approved the development and defended it in a legal wrangle. The degree to which this development increased cynicism about the commons cannot be gauged.

The unstated goal of the Yonge-Dundas redevelopment was to increase consumer spending in the area. All imagery was directed to that aim via spectacularization – passive watching and being in the presence of spectacles. Huge lighted screens hang on almost every surface around the square, advertising products, services, and lifestyles. Spectacular events periodically fill the square to boost consumption: Sir Richard Branson sliding down a wire from the Olympic Torch into the square to launch his newest Virgin product; the World’s Biggest Stir Fry to promote Arctic Gardens food products; a world-record-seeking, chocolate-milk-chugging contest to advertise Grab, Gulp, and Go from Nestlé.⁵ Consumption is an individualized activity for the consumer and a privatized activity for the provider. When streets and squares are designed to serve individual and private activities, the conventional assumptions of the public-private axis are completely altered. Part of the unwritten social contract has been revised – without taking a vote. This is why it is important to pay attention to the transformation that occurred with the help of the planning framework.⁶ Civic place making, as Peter Rowe (1997) describes it, requires both publicness for democratic reasons and aesthetic appeal for a wide range of people. Together, the socioeconomic and technical-aesthetic can make a civic place. Torontonians learned not to take for granted that their civic government would use its property to make a civic place.

A stated goal of the redevelopment phase was to increase the variety of people using the area; however, the mix was already astonishing. In fact, the project was designed to flatten the mix to a particular consumer stratum. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the stated goal was code for increasing the number of people with disposable incomes and discouraging the presence of loiterers, indigents, and those working in the underground economy.⁷ Since no survey was done of who was using the area, the outcome of this large intervention can never be evaluated from the point of view of its often-stated goal. Indeed, despite all the money spent on costly contract planners, expropriation lawyers, land economists, disturbance damage experts, quantity surveyors, tax experts, signage rights specialists, and square naming experts, no one asked what that goal meant and whether physical redevelopment

would achieve it, let alone whether it was the best way to achieve it. The opponents' counsel in a quasi-judicial hearing into the need for expropriations to accommodate this project was the only person who tried to show why that goal was not achievable via the chosen means.

It is unclear how success should be measured in this case. Were planners guided by public or private interests? When it comes to planning actions on the ground, is the putative division of public and private interests even useful? If the area attracts new international chain retail outlets as was expressly desired by the project planners, along with family shoppers whom the ward councillor wanted to see there, and tourists who were the hope of businesses in the area, then some will take those results as signs that the redevelopment worked. And if the dollar stores, drugs, and homeless people move elsewhere in the downtown area, by what measure would these city-owned issues have been solved? Has the public interest been served?²⁸ Or, how does one measure Torontonians' sense of having been duped when it is found that the public square is managed first and foremost for commercial interests? How can this venture be evaluated when the cost to the city can never be known, at least from outside the bureaucracy? Many of the documents necessary to make that assessment were purged from public files on the ground of confidentiality. The idea of planning as an activity that serves the public interest is severely tested in this case. To what extent was society improved by these activities?

In my view, this case is not unusual. This is a study of decision making and action as planners often experience them – as struggles over who controls decisions, investment opportunities, and symbols in a city's core. Planners were working on a difficult problem and, in this instance, in a very difficult context. The planning of Yonge-Dundas took place at a time when the city was emerging from a deep recession that had lasted five years, from 1989 to the end of 1994. In mid-1995 a newly elected provincial government came to power on a platform – the common sense revolution – that had all the earmarks of neoconservatism. It promised to fix Ontario's economy via huge tax cuts, the reduction of social programs, and the introduction of workfare and law-and-order measures. In the course of this "revolution," the new government sought to reduce the number of local governments and their range of activities, including subsidized housing and libraries (Courchene and Telmer 1998; Ibbitson 1997). By the end of 1996, the city of Toronto was trying to stave off legislation to force its own amalgamation with five adjacent cities and the eradication of the metropolitan level of government, which had been in place for forty-five years and was a model of success. The metropolitan government had been credited with contributing to the Toronto region's incorporation of rapid population growth while maintaining a healthy city

core, unlike many US cities (Frisken 2008, chap. 1; Lemon 1996, chap. 7; Sharpe 1996). For a few months in 1997, during the later planning period for Yonge-Dundas, the attention of city officials and Torontonians was on trying to convince the provincial government to reverse its amalgamation plans and a confusing series of moves designed to alter the financial responsibilities of the municipalities and the province. Once the Toronto amalgamation was certain to go ahead, politicians and bureaucrats began to position themselves as best they could, because it was obvious many would lose their jobs by the end of the year in the next civic election, when the number of elected officials would be cut in half.

It was in the midst of unprecedented pressure by the province to amalgamate voluntarily or be forcibly amalgamated, and the subsequent reorganization of local government departments, that those involved in the Yonge-Dundas project laboured (Frisken 2008, chap. 6; Sancton 2000). Although it was a busy time and, consequently, there may have been some inattention, the area around this intersection was not so different that the lessons of the case are inapplicable to other times and places. Local government is more often than not a tremendously busy arena, and many who, in the best of all possible worlds, would want to give individual issues more attention are actually too busy to do so.

Situating Contemporary Urbanized Space

In order to situate contemporary urbanized space, a quick trip through time is necessary. Simplifying excessively, Western city formation can be envisaged as having taken three forms, albeit with many variations, since antiquity. The first phase is represented by the classic city, in which a person's place of residence and citizenship were closely correlated so that a citizen belonged to a place. City spaces were distinguishable from rural spaces, and activities in the two were mainly complementary. The building of cities was planned and managed through various means, including civic governments of administrators and councils. From at least Roman times, dense population and diverse activities have been defining features of cities.

The second phase is represented by the city of the Industrial Revolution, which emerged with massive migrations of people from the countryside as well as from one country to another. Out of that period of urbanization came the new word "urbanism," which refers to reflections on and the shaping and managing of densely populated and dynamic urban areas. Urbanism is one name for practices that today include urban and regional planning. The complementarity of urban and rural ways of life changed gradually as "work" came to be identified with employment in the cities of the new industrial capitalism. The identification of work with the city reinforced a core-periphery

relationship in which the city centre was the service site for its hinterland. Built-form changes included trying to bring, for health and safety reasons, the country into the city via gardens and open spaces and the city to the country via low-density new towns. Although explanations for the rise of industrial cities tend to focus on the economic and social revolutions of the time, the argument can be made that an ongoing technological revolution in transportation, communications, electrification, and building techniques was just as responsible for making the industrial city possible (Ascher 2001; Choay 1994, 27-28).

The third phase – which was also spurred by the ongoing technological revolution, especially in communications, and associated with new possibilities for economic production and management, and for urban form – was felt by the 1960s. Dispersion was added to urban sprawl. As in the previous phase, settlement continued in suburbs, but it expanded well beyond them into hinterlands that were not contiguous with urban regions. For example, in Canada from the early 1990s a growing number of “amenity movers” chose places that offered pleasure over economic opportunities – perhaps a slower pace of life, ski hills, hiking trails, beaches, sailing, splendid views, or clean air – even when these were in isolated locations (Chipeniuk 2005). The city centre no longer provided essential services for those in the vast periphery. The complementarity of urban and rural ways of life ceased to be the norm. The correlation between place of residence, work, and citizenship weakened so much that a person might live in one location, work in another, and be a citizen elsewhere. In this “hyperurbanité,” the density of movement is more significant than population density (Bordreuil 2000, 169). If footloose industries showed a marked increase in the earlier decades of this phase, footloose workers – people who can choose where they work and live – have become more common in its later decades.

There is no consensus on what to call the contemporary phase of urbanization, which affects people on five continents, or the type of urban form that is being generated. The phase and the form are not separable. Regardless of whether people live in villages or large cities, their experiences are increasingly shaped by “the urban,” a kind of generalized, global urbanness. Louis Wirth’s phrase “urbanism as a way of life” seems apt, even if his analysis does not apply today ([1938] 1969). Names for the phase include the information age, the network society (Castells 1996), *l’urbain, l’ère de l’aménagement reticulée* (the era of networked land-use planning) (Choay 1994, 1999), and *société hypertexte* (Ascher 2001). On the unanswered question of what to call the urban areas that are situated within the broader urbanness that shapes our way of life, KENZA BENALI (2006) gives a helpful overview of the issues. One issue is that the larger urban areas are less reliant on the state than had

been typical in the industrializing period, and they function increasingly as cities linked together in defined ways. Eclipsing conventional metropolitan and regional forms, terms such as *système métapolis* (Ascher 2001), “city-region,” “super-region” (Courchene and Telmer 1998; Jonas and Ward 2007; Scott and Storper 2003), “polycentric metropolis,” “mega-city region,” “polyopolis” (Hall and Pain 2006), or “network” refer to urbanized areas that are not necessarily contiguous and may even cross national boundaries but link up to create a competitive edge for some product or service. Sometimes “postindustrial city” is used, but the term has drawbacks. First, it implies a counteraction to the industrial city. It draws attention to economic activity rather than to the opportunities that these areas generate to innovatively combine a range of activities across various spaces, and it hides new technological evolution. Second, the term retains the word “city,” which is a problem given that the complementarity of city-not city has been severed, as has the connection between territory and citizenship that was a hallmark of the classic city. “Urban” is more dynamic, less bounded than “city.” To be sure, “city” will continue to be used, but its users are on notice that the term can obscure as much as it reveals. In effect, the meaning of centrality as it concerns urban space is being redefined (Sassen 2001).

Analyses of contemporary urban areas show that the geographic expansiveness made possible by technological innovations and the ability to plug in more or less anywhere and anytime have had disparate effects on core areas. Some urban areas – the larger, more globally connected – thrive more than ever but with disparities in income and opportunities that are alarming in some cases, less so in others (Fainstein 2001b). Middle-scale cities (population about 100,000 to 500,000) struggle against the odds to keep a vibrant core (Filion et al. 2004), while the cores of smaller cities may be emptied of retail and other economic activities that disappear or relocate to the outskirts, where taxes are lower and access by private vehicles is simpler. All of these developments require finding ways to reuse city cores because the newly emerging urbanity brings different conditions but does not annihilate all physical signs of previous ones. The centres of older cities, some of which predate the Industrial Revolution, concretely propose forms for living and working in close proximity. There are lessons to be learned about built form in those spaces. What techniques can be used to adapt these spaces while opening the city to innovative activities? What techniques can be applied to ensure the pleasure of face-to-face communication and built form that respects the physical features of proportionality, patterns, coherence, and so on, continues? How can one best use existing patterns, generate extensions, fill holes, or bridge the space between A and B? Retrofitting is essential because the use of the core must change when a centre is no longer the service centre to its

periphery. Ongoing innovation and ingenuity are demanded in the practices of urbanism.

This description of contemporary urban form connects to the book's case study in the next chapter, which describes the development of the core during the industrializing period and the onset of uncertainty when the effects of rapid suburbanization begin to alter the core in the late 1950s. Later chapters describe the two proposed treatments that were developed in the mid-1990s. By that decade, the proposals represented different responses to how Toronto's core had gradually changed in relationship to the rest of the region and, more immediately, was changing under the pressure of economic recession and increased social problems. These changes were associated with broader international conditions affecting Canada's economy that had specific effects in downtown Toronto via national, provincial, regional, and metropolitan policies, as would be the case in any location (see Donald 2002a, 2002b; Gertler 2001; Gertler et al. 2000).

Structure of Planning: Activities, Planners, and Frameworks

Planning is often called an art, a science, or a discipline. In my view, planning is a field of practice in which people reflect on and suggest how to shape and manage an area that is jurisdictionally defined. Urban areas are prime examples. A field of practice brings knowledge and skills together with ideas about better and worse ways to act, given the conditions the practitioner faces. Planning is but one of the fields of practice engaged in urbanism. A field of practice differs from a "discipline," which is a term applied mainly by people in educational circles to the sciences (social, physical, and biological) and humanities. A discipline is an area of investigation, the purpose of which is to better understand the subject matter, not to try to treat it. For instance, geomorphology is a discipline devoted to studying the earth's surface. The discipline's scholars seek to better understand the origins and transformations of the surface of the earth to better predict outcomes or explain effects, not to change the earth's surface.

Brendan Gleeson's (2003, 765) straightforward view of public planning activity is that it takes three forms:

- 1 development control centring on the regulation of land uses and built environments at the local scale;
- 2 assessment of environmental and social impacts of proposed development activity at the local and regional scales;
- 3 strategic planning involving the coordination of public and private investment and of government regulation within particular spatial frames.

Strategic planning includes generating planning policies that may appear in various forms such as in official, strategic, and subarea plans. These policies are future-oriented, spelling out actions needed in the short to medium term to serve needs but simultaneously safeguarding opportunities for the long term. Planning is more than land use regulation: it is more akin to intentional interventions to influence land and building development (see, e.g., Brindley, Rydin, and Stoker 1989; Tiesdell and Allmendinger 2005). These planning activities are carried out by conducting studies and having discussions with those concerned about matters relevant to land and building development.

To put some boundaries around planning, it is useful to note that not all urban development outcomes are the results of formal planning. In some cases planners recommend X, but Y is done; in others, no recommendation is made using the accoutrements of planning – action comes out of someone's, or some group's, sheer power to act.

The people I call planners fit either or both of the following criteria: (1) they use the legal and other instruments of planning and are trained as planners or work in municipal or regional departments or private firms charged with doing urban planning or (2) they are members of a professional planning body that accredits planners. These people accept the role and therefore the responsibility for carrying out planning activities and contributing to the planning framework. They are the ones whose conduct professional planning institutes seek to hold accountable by various means, including registration, licensing, codes of ethics, refresher course requirements, and so on. My definition excludes people who simply comment on planning from the sidelines, even though their often-critical assessments are welcome and vital to the well-being of the field. Many people who speak from that position have catalyzed changes to theory and practice (cf. Myers and Banerjee 2005).

I also distinguish the planning framework from planners and planning activities. "The planning framework" is a collective term that refers to the plethora of legislation, tools, and policies that inform land use practices in a jurisdiction.⁹ Built up in response to the problems presented by rapid urbanization and industrialization, the planning framework, with a century of usage under its belt, is deeply embedded in the administration of local and regional governments. Its elements have been altered over time; however, because the changes have been piecemeal, the framework that applies (at least in the case at hand) continues to reflect its origins in the industrializing period and planning styles developed since the late nineteenth century (Wolfe 1989; Healey 1983, 263). Changes around the framework's edges have included the formal planning framework's adaptation to legislated measures

to promote sustainable environments, to restore brownfields, to protect heritage, and so on.

It is essential to separate the framework from specific planning activities because the framework forms the ground rules that everybody uses in a jurisdiction, whereas planning activities can vary, provided they satisfy the formal constraints of the framework. The planning framework can be and is used not only by people designated as planners but also by politicians and the whole development industry, including lawyers, architects, builders, and others. A distinguishing feature of this case study is its illustration of how the planning framework was used by the many people involved. This is rarely elucidated by researchers who investigate planning practice. In this case the planning framework's importance to the outcome is inescapable. A society is likely to be more invested in its planning framework than in its planners. Indeed, planners do not have roles mandated for them in the framework, although by convention their training and experience have come to accord them opportunities to work with it on behalf of their employers and clients. But if there were no planners at all, there would still be a land use planning framework. The framework incorporates the basic or default planning process and can serve as a stand-in when local processes are not in place. Appendix 1 offers a brief description of some features of the planning framework that were relevant in this case.

The framework includes a set of legally binding requirements that govern land development and to which all who participate in development must adhere. These are not ethical standards. Ethical standards are the responsibility of the professional organizations of the various users of the planning framework, whether they are planners, lawyers, or members of provincial oversight bodies. The ground for judging a person's legal right to act in a proposed manner is one's individual property rights interpreted in conjunction with land use legislation that may constrain them.¹⁰ The arbiter in challenged disputes among private owners and government bodies is most often a court or tribunal with a mandate to serve the public interest. Tribunal decisions are thus presumed to reflect the public interest, despite how hard a concept that is to define or defend. The public interest is not a fixed concept. Because elected city councils and appointed tribunals are the primary custodians of the concept for municipal purposes, the public interest can shift as their memberships change. The planning framework can be used to support a wide range of projects because members of councils and tribunals can articulate their ideological proclivities through its generalities.

The public interest is also tied to the concept of good planning, and for the tribunal involved in this case, the two appear to be equivalent (Chipman 2002, 111). According to John Chipman's (2002, 106) analysis of the Ontario

Municipal Board, before which the Yonge-Dundas case was heard, good planning falls under three broad themes: “conformity with approved planning policies, impact and compatibility [of a development], and adequacy of process.”

Planning and Urbanism

The relationship between planning and urbanism is hard to sort out for many reasons, and this is particularly the case in Canada. In Canada, in French, a planner is an *urbaniste* or, occasionally, a *planificateur*, and planning may be *urbanisme*, *planification urbaine*, *planification rurale*, or, in some circumstances, *aménagement*.¹¹ In this book “planning” and “urbanism” are not used synonymously. Using Giorgio Piccinato’s analysis (1987), Michael Hebbert (2006) illustrates how planning in the British-American tradition differs from urbanism in the Latin tradition. Canadian practices have roots in both Anglo and Latin traditions, so both planning and urbanism are used. Despite the difficulties that are raised by distinguishing them, the choice respects, first, the origins of the term “urbanism” in the late nineteenth-century upheavals of rapid urbanization and, second, its interpretation in an important land use dictionary, *Dictionnaire de l’urbanisme et de l’aménagement* (Merlin and Choay 2000). Here, “urbanism” is used to refer to reflection on and practices directed to shaping and managing urban space using some combination of normative ideas, data, and practicable actions. Over the years, different types of practitioners – surveyors, engineers, architects, planners, and designers – have dominated urbanism, and some have tried to carve off a chunk and treat the part metonymically, as if it was the whole. To add to the confusion, the tasks of various professionals have been inconsistent over time and across jurisdictions.

Planners bring one bundle of knowledge and practices to urbanism. Their tasks, as conventionally understood, were outlined earlier and mainly deal with policy for overall urban development, research and evaluation, and regulation. One can use planning to contribute to reflections on “the urban” and to effect change, but one can also use urban design, engineering, and financial savvy for the same purposes. Urbanism is a crowded field, but planning activities are expected to result in policies on land and built form and in practices that lead to implementation. Once formal planning policies are approved through the political process and carry the weight of statutory law, other fields are expected to respect them. The scope of planning activities can differ substantially from one jurisdiction to another.

To further complicate matters, “urbanism” as a term is used much less among English speakers than among speakers of Latin-based languages, which is a development that may have discouraged the formation of a broadly shared understanding of the word.¹² Despite the terminological difficulties, what other

word so aptly conjoins and contextualizes the work planners and others do in contemporary urban areas?

Questions to Answer

I use the case study details to address two questions about planning practice and one question about theories. My first concern was to learn how Toronto ended up with a core area redevelopment scheme that sought to emulate the new high-energy, razzle-dazzle “shoppertainment” venues that were being built as urban development projects in the United States and Europe. I wanted Torontonians to know how that had happened, especially given that one of the project’s newer elements is the controversial, not-quite-public public square. Thus, the first question is: How was urban planning practised in this Toronto case? I wanted to see planning as it was, not as it should have been. I answer the question by taking the long way around, by going through as many byways as possible to show in detail what the planners actually did and what tools, ideas, images, and arguments they used to arrive at and present their views. I am referring here to planners who were either public-sector employees working for the city, development consultants working on behalf of the business lobby in the immediate area, or private-sector planners making arguments for or against options.

As for the second question about practice, the deeper I found myself in the project, the more it seemed to me that the project presented a complex and not uncommon planning problem – that is, what to do with several blocks of a declining street dominated by an enormous shopping centre in the middle of an urban area. The story shows how planners approached the problem and worked through it within a specific political context, with economic conditions constantly changing, and while retailing was in a period of massive reconfiguration. As mentioned, I discovered that there were two fully developed plans: a street regeneration plan and a more aggressive redevelopment project. I wanted people who are interested in urban planning and related fields to see how the plans to fix this piece of a city changed and how the arguments for the two different solutions were made so plausible that both could be adopted. Given that the formalities of the planning framework did not change in any way that affected this project between the regeneration and redevelopment plans, the second question is: How did planners and others reason their way to two different recommendations for the same geographic space? How were the justifications and rationalizations structured and conveyed, quite literally, at the level of language? It seems to me that answering this question would help make the planning function and what planners do more understandable.¹³

The chapters in which these two questions are answered are somewhat like a planning manual because so many facets of planning in contemporary space are touched upon: the use of various tools; the interconnections among planners, politicians, municipal lawyers, and developers; the problems of citizen participation in planning; and the eternal matter of poverty and how plans affect the life chances of the least capable. These chapters pose a number of questions: How long is an economic cycle? What is a planning department's role with regard to supporting economic activity? Are reinvestment incentives enough to kick-start regeneration? What is a planner to do with too little data and too little time? Under what circumstances would another city's answer to a problem be a good answer for a problem in your city? When does the law trump ethics? What is the range of options for a planner with a strong sense of public duty? The Yonge-Dundas case provides an example of planners trying to figure out which way to move.

The third question mainly concerns theories: How does a planned intervention such as the one examined here correspond to planners' theories about their work? How did this planned outcome come about? What theory – or combination of theories, procedural or substantive, explanatory or prescriptive – helps us interpret this outcome? The case does not fit so-called procedural theories or what by convention are called simply “planning theories.” Those are normative theories of process that describe what planners ought to do to plan well. Indeed, the actions of the city's planners during the redevelopment phase would be found wanting against any normative theory. On the other hand, the plan was approved and even praised by the city council and the adjudicating tribunal, both of which formally represented the public interest. How are we to square that fact with the injunctions of normative planning theory? Were the planners' actions right or wrong? The case is no better explained by substantive theories about urban phenomena, the so-called urban theories.¹⁴

Planners and Their Theories

Planning involves not only practice but also theorizing. One stands back from practice and asks questions about it. Those who do this and write up their findings are mainly in academia or are independent writers interested in urban matters, although practising planners occasionally write from a theoretical perspective too. Matters that tend to be investigated include how planners practise today compared to the past; why they practise as they do; the relationship between practice and outcomes; and how practice connects to theories and evidence about urban phenomena such as demographic changes, economic growth and decline, and much more. The reasons for those kinds

of research are to provide observations on the role that planning practice plays in the development of human settlements and to improve planning's rate of success, however success is defined (see, e.g., Campbell and Fainstein 2003, 2-4; Nigel Taylor 1998, 167-68). To do this kind of theorizing, researchers typically use a range of mainly social science methods such as interviews, surveys, on-site observation, extrapolation from practice, and document analysis. Two or more methods may be used jointly.

Research studies about how planners practise are different from those that seek to show how planners ought to practise. While the two research approaches are not cleanly separable – for both can invoke images of normatively desirable means and ends – the basic purposes behind them differ. The first type of study mainly tries to show or explain actions that evidence confirms were taken, while the second seeks to illustrate the ethical correctness, or lack thereof, of particular actions that may empirically have been taken or may in theory be taken in the future. The research for this book was of the first type and, broadly speaking, took the following route: examined practice as actually carried out; noted the praise for it; and wondered why it was praised, given that the practice departed from theories. The route for the second approach, the road not taken here, would be something like this: start with a normative theory of how practice should be done; check practice as actually carried out; define the gap between theory and practice; and suggest how to fix theory and practice so the two better coincide.

The Relationship between Planning and Urban Social Science: Has the Analogue between Them Been Overextended?

Cases like Yonge-Dundas have mainly been interpreted by using theories from outside the planning field itself. Most often this has been via theories of urban political economy. Urban development projects (UDPs), of which this was an example, and urban development corporations (UDCs) were strategies governments frequently used from the 1970s to reposition cities in the so-called new economy (see, e.g., Bartley and Treadwell Shine 2002; Courcier 2005; Deas, Robson, and Bradford 2000; Fainstein 2001a; Gordon 1997; Moulaert, Rodriguez, and Swyngedouw 2002; Reichl 1999; Sagalyn 2001). Common characteristics of UDPs include taking a parcel of land with investment potential out of the usual regulatory regime (which might mean reducing development controls and permitting actions to be taken without public consultation) and allowing a wide range of options to be used to generate action, often with the help of specific financial incentives to make it more interesting for land developers to take up the challenge (including temporarily reduced or waived property taxes). This is usually called property-led development (Healey et al. 1992).

Although examining projects using political economy theories and concepts can provide many insights, it would not show, at least in this case, the contributions made by planners, planning activities, or the planning framework. Political economy theories swamp the actual practices of planners. They are not substitutes for theories of planning. The cases cited above, for instance, describe how politics and economics are articulated through UDPs, not how the planning function is executed and what its effect is on the outcome. Even regime theory, one of the most commonly espoused theories, would not explain this case. An urban regime is defined by its originator as “the informal arrangements by which public bodies and private interests function together in order to be able to make and carry out governing decisions” (Stone 1989, 6). Stone (1993, 2) says regime theory “holds that public policies are shaped by three factors: (1) composition of a community’s governing coalition, (2) the nature of the relationships among members of the governing coalition, and (3) the resources that the members bring to the governing coalition.” A regime is place-specific, and uncovering the structure of a regime in a given place should explain what occurs better than other explanations. For instance, one might expect to find a significant amount of informal cooperation among coalition members. In the Yonge-Dundas case this type of cooperation did not materialize. Those who wanted to put up office buildings took up a position in opposition to important retail property owners. (It is not unusual for landowners with different capital investment interests to argue over development.) Not only that, the two groups argued formally (not informally) over the interpretation and use of the *formal* framework (e.g., the provisions of the official plan and the community improvement plan).

Thus, the first issue this case raises has to do with the relationship of planning to the social sciences. Have planners overextended the analogue between their field of practice and the social sciences? The most obvious reason why urban social science theories cannot account for the role that planning, as a field of practice, plays in urban development is that planning is not a social science. This is widely acknowledged. But while theorists can momentarily forget, practitioners caught in the fray never can. As a field of practice, planning deals with urbanism, the dynamics of urban life and space. Its job is to find options for development that are plausible enough to be implemented. Even the language used can be a problem: the social science theories that planners use are sometimes collected under the single rubric “urban theory,” which effectively reduces “urban” to those things that are amenable to investigation using the social sciences.

The social science theories most often used in conjunction with planning describe space as being socially constructed through a variety of complex and reciprocal relations and exchanges that involve money, power, gender,

ethnicity, and so on. That assumption has been very fruitful in social science theorizing since the 1960s. However, its power also inhibits the contemplation of space in any other manner, such as in terms of proportion, pattern, extension, or the spaces between things – in effect, principles that can be used to generate spatial arrangements. Social science approaches to planning subordinate principles of spatial organization rather than allowing that they could also generate good planned milieus.

Planning theories are at risk of being taken over – one might even say colonized – by social science perspectives in which the activity of planning is conceptualized predominantly in terms of social science knowledge. When the space that planners deal with is conceptualized as a matter of social production with pre-established ends (making money, increasing social justice, etc.), the concomitant metaphor or image at work is one of purposiveness, of a design in which all the elements are to be brought under control of a central body. The case described in this book illustrates how the overextension of the social science analogue inhibits the theorization of planners' practices in other ways. Françoise Choay's thesis on the enduring figures in urban discourses, which I describe later, helps explain the significance of this tendency to accept a kind of colonization of the field's theories.

Relationship of Process to Substance: Are They Divorced?

The second issue for theory that this case highlights is related to the point just made: the perennially unresolved matter of how the process of planning is linked to the substance of planning activities. The turn to urban social science theories to bolster planning theory coincided with a period in the 1960s when planning theorists decided to give precedence to the process of planning rather than its substance. This remains the principal orientation among theoreticians of the field today.¹⁵ For many, planning theory has moved beyond divorcing process from content. However, I agree with Nigel Taylor (1998, 152) who says that the distinction between procedural and substantive planning knowledge, which was made by Andreas Faludi in 1973, lives on and indeed represents a kind of “continuity in the development of planning theory.”

My interpretation of the status of the planning theory divide is that the two types of knowledge, procedural and substantive, that planners identified in their work evolved into a binary and hierarchical relationship between those two main terms. The dominant term is “procedure”: it gathers under its umbrella knowledge about how planners should plan normatively, work with data and other concerned people, and find opportunities and identify constraints.¹⁶ The subordinate term is “substance,” the repository of substantive knowledge and theories about the things that planners plan – for example,

cities, regions, neighbourhoods, waterfronts, housing complexes, streets, and so on. Today, “planning theory” refers by convention to procedural theory, to just one part of the binary, however weakly or strongly procedural theory is attached to substantive issues.

Procedural theories flow along two main channels, each of which has several streams that are epistemologically and procedurally distinctive.¹⁷ Theories in the channel that was developed first rest on concepts of rationality and betterment. One expects the latter to be achieved by applying the former. For planners, as for others, the terms “rationality” and “rational” raise endless problems concerning what they mean in specific contexts and how they can be used. For example, does “rational” describe decision-making processes in which each step of the way is based on careful reflection rather than guesswork, and for which the reasoning is made explicit so that it can be questioned (Nigel Taylor 1998, 70) – in other words, instrumental rationality? Or should the term be used to describe both the process of arriving at a decision and the goal – so-called substantive rationality? Or is it something else altogether?¹⁸

Despite the fact that rational planning includes theoretical conundrums and practices that cannot meet ideals, it has lived on. While it can take many forms, it tends to refer to planning in which means and ends are logically and justifiably connected and processes are reasonably transparent and consultative. It is associated with a series of steps to work from goals to options for implementation. Rational planning, then, addresses some of the problems manifested in urban and regional space by using knowledge generated rigorously in fields such as economics, geography, demography, and sociology, which its practitioners often combine with their own expertise in assessing and solving urban problems. Rational planning is also known as rational comprehensive, synoptic, managerial, deliberative, regulatory, or synthesizing planning. Who carries out the steps may vary, but public planners are centrally involved, as are people who are concerned about a given problem – residents, corporations, social groups with minority interests to protect, associations of homebuilders or environmentalists, or government agencies. The planner’s expertise lies in bringing together knowledge from a number of relevant areas and from people with interests in the matter at hand and using the planning framework and practices imaginatively and appropriately to arrive at recommendations.

A second major type of procedural planning theory emerged in the 1980s to oppose rational planning. It challenged the epistemology and efficacy of science- and expert-based approaches. Its various formulations incorporate ways to question how a recommendation is being developed, who is involved, whose interests are served and not served, and what knowledge is being used. The planner establishes a process for communicating with those concerned

about a given issue. Within that process, a degree of mutual understanding is sought about the issues and relevant knowledge to be used to solve the problem. Johan Woltjer (2000, 25-26) identifies consensus-oriented planning processes as being of three main types, although they can and do overlap: collaboration and learning, bargaining and negotiation, and persuasion and will shaping. In consensual theory, the planner is a centre person, negotiator, or facilitator with the task of developing a consensual outcome. The planner's expertise in procedure is crucial. The outcome is intended to incorporate the local or specialist knowledge of participants affected by the plan and to generate their goodwill and cooperation in the final decision making and implementation. Like rational planning, this type of theory also has many names. This highly simplified synopsis of what I collectively call consensual planning disregards a host of epistemological differences among proponents of approaches such as communicative, collaborative, and consensus planning, as well as equity, advocacy, and institutionalist planning.¹⁹ Theorists debate whether it is sensible to pit rational theories against consensual theories as if it was a matter of one or the other. Both rationality and consensus are (normatively) desirable in a planning exercise; one should not be excluded in favour of the other. Ernest Alexander (1998) makes this point in theory. Woltjer (2000) tested it against six Dutch cases of infrastructure planning and concluded that the combination is needed and, at least in his cases, was used in practice.

Having long ago focused on process, planning theorists have continued to debate how best to connect the substance of planning to the process of planning. The two lines of theorizing, rational and consensual, are basic replies to that question. The first one uses reason to bring knowledge developed by planners, who often lean on the work and experience of others, to bear on a problem to reach the best option under the circumstances; the second one uses theories and techniques of communication to work toward an option on which people can agree. However, complaints have been raised about both lines of theorizing; critics say that they have led to theory emptied of content, which is the substance of what planning is all about – that is, city-regions and the lives of people in them.

Three broad responses to the so-called emptiness of both lines of theorizing can be discerned. The first seeks to incorporate substantive matters by tying planning theory to urban social science theories. Robert Beauregard (1990, 211) is one for whom the “drift away from the physical city” is a deep concern. He wants to return to the kind of city-centred planning theory that “was about cities in a substantive sense ... inseparable from social reform” (ibid., 210). The city-building process is planning's theoretical object, he says, and planning theory needs to be attached to it because it must be able to

show the benefits of a better city obtained through its practice. His city-building process is described in social science terms – that is, a city is a phenomenon amenable to analysis regarding progress using the social sciences. Within Beauregard's strategy, planning theory would be normative and planners would admit to a political function and forget any claims to objectivity. His brief article was part of a point-counterpoint symposium and his fellow planner-respondents did not agree with his strategy because they saw it as politically naive (Foglesong 1990, 215; Bassin 1990, 217; Brooks 1990, 219). Fifteen years later, Fainstein (2005) reasserted Beauregard's point that city planning does not make its objective clear. She goes further, however, because she wants the purpose of city planning to be singular: "to create the just city" (ibid., 121) that would recognize "the historical roots and justification for planning" (ibid., 122). She too worries about the procedural-substantive split in theories used by planners. She calls the first "planning theory" and the second "urban theory." She wants planning theory to be tied to urban theory; otherwise, the objective of consciously creating a just city is unattainable because effective planning depends on its context (ibid.). When she writes about theory, Fainstein derives context from urban social science.

Another effort to fix the problem of "substantively vacuous" planning theories seeks to embed procedural theory within urban social science theories. Lauria and Whelan (1995, 8) describe planning theorists as having made a full circle from the empty rational comprehensive theory of the 1950s to empty communicative-style theories of the 1990s. For them, content in the form of a theory about the socio-economic-political workings of cities is essential. In their view, this might be achieved by embedding procedural theory in regime theory. However, as I have already suggested above, the result smothers the actual practice of planning beneath the weight of abstract political economy concepts. Allmendinger discusses the approaches proposed by those who see the merit of a political economy orientation to address the "contentlessness" of procedural theory. He concludes (2002, 66) by raising serious doubt about "whether a more critically aware planning could do without a methodology for making and implementing decisions." Despite all the insight that political economy approaches can provide, we still would not understand planning if we had not studied actual planning practices. Actual planning actions must be seen to be theorized inductively, not only situated within political economy frameworks to be explained deductively.

Finally, others imply that the claim that procedure is divided from substance is itself empty because the problem has been resolved by the newer planning processes based on consensus, negotiation, and paying attention to institutional relations. These processes are designed to recognize divergent views about substantive issues and to propose a process that involves representatives

of differing views. If the process is competently and fairly conducted, then the result will be a solution to disagreements on substance. Thus, it is claimed, a good process is the best route to a good outcome. Quality of process leads to quality of place (Healey 2007, 1, 2). However, the assumption that the problem has been resolved through a new type of process does not satisfy all those who are concerned with this substance-process matter. Woltjer's (2000, 214-15) analysis of several Dutch cases that used consensual planning shows that these processes did not necessarily produce "a society and environment with a 'better quality' than would be the case with a rational planning approach": the selective participation of participants may be less ethical, and these processes may yield "inadequate results in terms of sustainability, consistency and cohesion." Another example is Fainstein, who, as we have just seen, claims that only by joining procedure and substance within a normative position on social justice can one figure out the desired outcome of planning and whether one's efforts are bearing fruit. To Woltjer's and Fainstein's concerns I would add two more. First, a public planner has a professional view about substance, and that view needs to be expressed at least as strongly as any other view in a process. This cannot happen if the planner is a fair – that is, neutral – process facilitator. Second, public planners are institutionally situated in such a way that, if they manage a process in which development stakes are substantial, there is always the prospect that a political solution will be invoked by elected officials who come in over their heads. When that happens, a planner's credibility as a facilitator is put into question, while his or her knowledge about substance has not been a vital part of the process. That is a lose-lose result. There is no doubt that planners need to frequently participate in consensual processes; but the reason for being present should be to bring planning's contribution to urbanism to the table.

My view, which is corroborated by the case study, is that the problem of putting process and substance together has not been solved, nor has it disappeared. The substantive-procedural binary, with its hierarchical form in which process ranks higher than substance, still exists, and theories continue to be built on the binary, even though it is not acknowledged. In fact, I do not believe there is a solution to the problem of putting substance and process together. Rather, it is a tension that will always be present. The tension should be recognized explicitly in planning theories. On the other hand, the hierarchical placement of process over substance can be corrected, not by inversion but by formally recognizing the value of both process and substance and consciously deciding how to balance them on a case-by-case basis. In this book, inspection of the planning practice in the selected case confirms the potential for taking this approach. Going further still, the case supports a reconceptualization of what counts as substance within urban planning.

Planner- and Planning-Centred Theories

The brief comments that describe rational and consensus styles of planning theories indicate that, despite their different orientations, they share three defining features:

- 1 They are first and foremost about planning and its processes; that is, they are not about urbanism and regionalism, cities and regions, or environments and rural areas, which are secondary or implicit.
- 2 Planning is led and executed by public-sector planners. The public-sector planner is at the centre of the action, including consensus-based approaches, where planners take charge of setting up the process and often run or mediate it.
- 3 A planner is expected to be able to choose the planning process that will be used.

In the redevelopment phase of the Yonge-Dundas project none of these defining theoretical features were obtained, while in the regeneration phase only item 2 applied: planning was led and executed by public-sector planners. This leaves a large gap between theory and practice. In this case, actions were not as planning-centred or planner-centred as theory suggests.

The data of this case show that economic and political arguments were filtered through a discourse on urbanism, not planning. This applied to all arguments, not simply those made by planners. Arguments may have stemmed from economic, political, social, or planning interests, but their proponents framed them within theories about cities that were implied rather than named or defined. Thus, those with money or political power used urbanism as a framing device to argue in favour of doing things one way rather than another. Money and power holders did not successfully argue for an approach just because they had the wherewithal to do so. Potentially self-serving demands of the moneyed and the powerful were passed through a framework in which urbanistic decisions were made, imperfect as the framework and those decisions were. Even the Eaton Centre's problem of a down-at-the-heels street outside the door of its expensive property could not be addressed until the Centre's owners were prepared to enter into a discourse on urban space. However, my claim about the use of urbanistic discourse is not naive. I am not in any way discounting the fact that statements made in these circumstances can be posturing, or even untrue, and made to bluff or wheedle things out of others. I recognize that such statements by everyone concerned will most often be deeply informed by self-interest. People's motives are always complex. My claim is that political and economic influences do not transcend all others. The data illustrated to me that planning as a field of practice had a

specific role in the Yonge-Dundas case, a role that was governed neither by capitalists' nor politicians' interests. The impact of planning came largely from the skilful use of the planning framework by everyone, including planners. In other words, with few exceptions, everyone had to don the discourse of urbanism to some extent to have their interests in built space served. In the Yonge-Dundas case, the planning framework, with all its accoutrements, including the Ontario Municipal Board, which hears disputes about municipal land, was used as the locus of debates about urbanism.

As a framing device, urbanism is represented in the policies and procedures of the planning framework and consequently influences how planning is actually done in practice. Urbanism has been and continues to have a disciplining influence on who does what and where they can do it. On the one hand, innovation, by definition, is tamped down by disciplinarity. On the other hand, if planners seek to innovate despite the disciplining frame, they will want to know where openings are possible and how innovation is blocked.

On the first point, the growth of an urbanistic discourse based on attitudes specific to the nineteenth century and later is widely recognized in a general way. It relates to more ordered, built environments and the realization that these bring advantages and drawbacks. Urbanistic discourse has become public rather than confined to elites, as it was in previous centuries. Consider the following contemporary statements on cities and urbanism.

Capitalism these last 200 years has produced, through its dominant form of urbanization ... an urbanized human nature, endowed with a very specific sense of time, space and money as sources of social power and with sophisticated abilities and strategies to win back from one corner of urban life what may be lost in another. And while it may be true that some are losers everywhere, the vast majority find at least minor compensations somewhere while the rest find solace and hope in the intricacy of the game. Every political movement against the domination of capital must, at some point, confront such confusions. (Harvey 1989b, 199)

Good environment, as the economists would say, is an income-elastic good: as people, and societies generally, get richer, they demand proportionately more of it. And, apart from building private estates with walls around them, the only way they are going to get it is through public action. (Hall 2002, 402)

Raphaël Fischler (1998, especially 395-403) describes the proliferation of new norms and ideas of normality that have emerged over the last century or so, especially the standards of need associated with the industrial and welfare state. These needs brought about the creation of norms that underlie

the concept of “standard of living.” Yes, Fischler argues, the apparatuses that were created and became part of the welfare state were flawed, but they carried with them “a hope, an illusion perhaps, of basic universality and of rudimentary equality” (ibid., 404). He asks: What exactly are we losing?

Paul Rabinow examined the role of norms and special terms in building an urbanistic idea of society. For him, the process involved a piecemeal stripping away by experts of “architectural, historical and social references in the name of efficiency, science, progress, and welfare” (1989, 322). He calls the gradual normalizing of activities in cities “middling modernism,” which names practices that lie between high culture (philosophy, architecture, art, science, and politics) and the quotidian and engages people who might be called “technicians of general ideas,” people like urban planners who invented and used “the practices, discourses, and symbols of ‘social modernity’” (ibid., 9).

Those four statements capture the duality of urbanism, the tension within which planners and others engaged in urbanism work. One outcome of increased regulation has been the erection of a framework that is supported by laws passed by governments made up of elected representatives and appointed arbitrators. Egregious harm is mitigated; some discipline is demanded; but many choices can still be made. The recognition of openings is essential.

That leads to the second point, innovation, and its tie-in with planning. For help, I turn to Françoise Choay’s ([1980] 1997) thesis on the origin of urbanism as a discourse and theory. In her detailed study, Choay traced the emergence of an autonomous discourse on the organization of city space back to the early Renaissance. Discourse about city space became autonomous in the sense that, for the first time, it was independent of religious, cosmological, military, or family structures. It was the beginning of a discourse on city space per se. (Choay is careful to note that her analysis is specifically Western in orientation.) She describes two fundamentally different ways to build cities that emerged in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. One was via rules used to generate solutions in space; the other was via models to be applied as solutions. She shows that the first arose in an architectural treatise, a study of urban spatial configurations that meet natural laws, human needs, and aesthetics.²⁰ The second emerged in the utopian form of writing, which presents criticism of an existing situation counterpoised by its solution in the form of a model of its opposite. Compared to the rules approach, the model approach entails mirroring and correction; the generation of something altogether new “is always secondary, [because] it always proceeds from preliminary work on and against a given reality whose values are to be inverted” (ibid., 150).²¹ The rules and model approaches have both been in continuous use since their creation. Then, around the 1860s, those two approaches started to be combined with science, and this combination

was put to use to defend urbanistic actions. This amalgam is a third approach, and Choay argues that it is in the theory of urbanism that the organization of space comes to be defined in terms of scientific discourse (ibid., 233-34). It was a distinctly new approach because instead of merely using technical and later scientific data to inform city making or urbanism, this approach took its form from scientific discourse. Choay details when each of the three approaches started, traces their continuation, and identifies their unique combination of characteristics.

Before the third approach took form, there was a period, which Choay calls pre-urbanism, during which disciplinarity began to be manifested in urbanistic practices, attitudes, norms, and terminology. The medicalization of society has been traced from the eighteenth century onward, and “the birth of the clinic” approach, so fully illustrated in the work of Michel Foucault, has contributed to an increasingly therapeutic attitude to urban matters. The effects of medicalization were epistemological in the sense that the social sciences began to “bear the imprint of the medical approach,” to adopt concepts of normal and pathological, and to apply them to the social body, and they were spatial in the sense that urban space was “subjected to the clinician’s eye” (Choay [1980] 1997, 224, 225). Urban space became an object to medicalize. Once design fell into the hands of scientists, buildings were cut off from the aesthetic dimension, “whether it be realized through the organic unity of parts, the axiom of concinnitas, or ornamentation” (ibid., 225).²² Through this analysis, Choay shows that neither disciplinarity nor medicalization, both of which were shaping urbanism then and which continue to do so now, was the result of economic imperatives alone. Urbanism has its own distinct trajectory.

By the later nineteenth century, the theory of urbanism amalgam began to appear in urbanistic writings. It sometimes comprised a hyperspatialized, utopian critique and solution, together with pretensions to scientificity that were used to show that the critique leads to the solution or the reverse – that the solution will solve the problem identified in the critique.²³ The result was a scientific theory of urbanism. While both the critique and the solution may be well devised, one leads to the other only through political and ethical choice, not through science. Choay cites a series of texts in which this pattern is found and begins with the text that she analyzed in the most detail and considers the very first text that employed the theory of urbanism – Ildefonso Cerdá’s *Teoría general de la urbanización*, the title of which inspired Choay’s name for this third figure.²⁴ Cerdá’s text has qualities similar to other works, including Camillo Sitte’s *Der Städtebau*, Arturo Soria y Mata’s *La ciudad lineal*, Ebenezer Howard’s *Tomorrow*, Tony Garnier’s *Une cité industrielle*, Le Corbusier’s *La ville radiieuse*, Frank Lloyd Wright’s *The living city*, Paolo Soleri’s

Archology, and Christopher Alexander's *Notes on the synthesis of form*. To this list could be added Kevin Lynch's *Good city form*, one of the most appreciated books in planning schools. Its first two parts, "Values and cities" and "A theory of good city form," are important in their own right; however, one does not depend on the other for its logic. In these books we find elements of both the "rule" and "model" figures, combined with variably-sized dollops of science, social science, and scientism (excessive belief in or the misplaced application of the scientific method), which are introduced to try to solve urban problems. Because the built-form solutions are sometimes claimed to be normatively in the best interests of the society, as supported by scientific evidence, the choice is rendered normatively scientific, which is a contradiction in terms.

If Choay's argument that these figures have endured is correct, we could expect to find signs of them in the mundane outputs of practice, such as reports and presentations, bylaws, legislation, and so on. I explore this hypothesis further in the final chapter, where I discuss two completely different orientations to urban space in the case study. The first, which occurred in the regeneration phase and hinged on the question, What is this place? tends toward the use of some generative rules and principles. By contrast, the second, which occurred in the redevelopment phase, responded to the issue by providing a model, which, although developed elsewhere, was supposed to be capable of delivering in this new location the mirror opposite of existing conditions. This second orientation effectively closed down innovation in that space.

We usually read that contemporary urban planning was prompted into existence by a number of social and pathological conditions associated with nineteenth-century cities. The descriptions rarely connect that newly growing planning enterprise to earlier discourses on space. Consequently, the extent to which the nineteenth-century ideas from which planning emerged were a transgressive and disruptive force in an already existing discourse on building urban space is missed (Choay [1980] 1997, 3). The idea that planning was only or could only ever be therapeutic, utopian, or a force for doing good emerges from this truncated perspective on the history of urbanism. We disregard or have forgotten other ways. One significant aspect of Choay's contribution to understanding planning is its reminder of the dangers of carelessly reproducing utopian models, a specialty of industrialism, because they displace spatial principles that have potential for innovation.

We end up face to face again with the problem of how to glue process and substance together in planning, but we now have new insight into the origins of the problem and ways to address it. Françoise Choay shows modern urbanism (including planning) disrupting a discourse on space, not starting one. A

framework for interpreting planning qua planning can be glimpsed, one that gives room to its spatial concerns, its utopian analyses, and its pretensions to social science validity – but with a reminder to be wary of how they are combined.

To What Does “Planning” Refer?

The term “planning” aggregates distinctive elements, including planning activities, planners who work in both the public and private sectors, and the planning framework. Leaving these elements aggregated muddles attempts to understand theories that have been developed about planning activity, planners, and urban development. Because the parts can function independently of one another, to some extent, it is important to pay attention to which part is in play. Analyses can be plain wrong if the distinctive elements subsumed under the term are treated together. For instance, in this case, planning is done without planners, although the term normally implies that planning is carried out by planners; planning’s legal and administrative framework is used by everyone, not only planners, because it establishes the rules of engagement for all planning matters, not only for planners; and planning activities are carried out by planners and by others. Planners can influence the framework and actions but not control them.

A second problem is that when planning is treated as a bundle of undifferentiated elements, distinctions between public-sector and private-sector planners, as well as between planning for public-sector interests versus planning for private-sector interests, are obscured. The common element is the planning framework. Private- and public-sector planners with training and expertise have the right to present positions to councils and adjudicating bodies. However, the notion of public interest is usually more constrained for private-sector planners: their employers’ actions concern a site, not the larger urban tissue, and a shorter rather than longer time frame. Consequently, their interpretations of the public interest will often diverge. The best reason to have a strong official plan (or comparable policy document) that clearly states the direction in which the municipality wishes to head is so that a defensible policy framework exists against which to assess individual options, applications, and recommendations. It probably would not hold up to every challenge, but without it the chance of planners being able to justify an opinion on a development is much reduced.

Finally, when planning is treated in the aggregate, planners can become scapegoats for what people do not like about land development. In the Yonge-Dundas case, planners and planning activities were the butts of hostility expressed by various people toward constraints on actions. If private-sector interests or the ward councillor wanted to do something that was out of

bounds, planners were often said to be the ones laying on the restrictions or snuffing out initiative and innovation. In reality, restrictions are not applied by planners; they emerge from the application of the planning framework that, as discussed, is developed and maintained collectively and is not controlled exclusively by planners. We tend to forget that planning activities are governed largely by legislation, influenced by elected representatives, and tested at law, and that planners try to find plausible options within that scope, often amid a pandemonium of interests. Furthermore, planners recommend. Politicians decide. However, if planners' proposals lack imagination and innovation, it is a genuine problem for which they are responsible and that they need to tackle.

Each of these four issues – overextension of the social science analogue, the process-substance relationship, planner- and planning-centredness, and imprecision about planning referents – raises a different question about how adequately a case such as this can be described or explained using existing procedural and substantive theories.

Investigative Approach

There is considerable debate about how to connect procedural theory, which is conceptualized as planning theory, to substantive theory, which is presented as urban theory. My aim in this research was to describe planning, as practised in the vicinity of Yonge and Dundas, in a way that could shed light on this debate. I did not want to marshal facts and fit them into existing theories, because I was interested in both process and substance, which at this time are split into different theoretical realms. The best way to loosen the grip of conventional interpretations while maintaining the ability to ask new questions and find new insights is deep immersion in the details. That is the route I have taken here, and I expressly disregarded, as much as I could, all of the planning theories and structured social science-based urban theories about what was going on during the immersion. I do not say this naively, assuming I have no biases, but rather to emphasize that I did not start with any of the conventional structural theories to explain what I found. I readily declare my bias toward democratic, open, and fair processes, toward urban form that is carefully scaled and contextualized and aesthetically interesting, and toward urban form that facilitates the pursuit of people's hopes and dreams.

To describe this poststructural approach, it may be helpful to compare it to more readily recognized structural approaches. Structuralism takes as a given the “thereness” of structure. The structuralist's task is to identify structures and show how they are constructed, whether by type (e.g., economic, social, political, or philosophical), by characteristics (e.g., strength and how parts interconnect), or by effects (e.g., rules, decisions, influence, and the

capacity to command). Structuralists posit the existence of a structure that in principle is knowable. A structure provides constraints and possibilities for thought and action. It provides the range of logic within which actors act. But a structure is created reciprocally so that it places ranges on people's actions, and those actions, in turn, affect the structure's features. Structural approaches include social constructionism, structure-agency, institutional analysis, contemporary capitalist economy structural theories, and earlier approaches such as structural functionalism, Marxist and neo-Marxist analyses, and classical and neoclassical economics. Regime theory, referred to above, is a structural theory.

Structuralism claims to provide ways to objectively analyze sociocultural phenomena, without recourse to transcendental elements – that is, phenomena beyond the material universe – to explain them. It has gradually supplanted conventional science as the principal approach to studying on-the-ground social practices. Its approaches are not objective in the way that the scientific method is said to deliver replicable findings relatively untainted by observational bias; rather, they are systematic in that a researcher can reliably identify phenomena and validly assess their meanings because, in principle, other students of a given structure could repeat a study and arrive at similar conclusions. Producing relatively objective analyses of structures in this way has become widely accepted in the academy.

It is precisely on the structuralist claim that a structure can provide relatively objective truth that poststructuralists bring their challenge. The latter contend that structuralists, by seeking meaning via the concept of structure, have exchanged the anchor of truth – called God in earlier times, and science more recently – for the anchor of structure. Poststructuralists say that anyone who tries to illustrate this objectivity will find himself or herself enmeshed in metaphors and contingent meanings, never arriving at objectivity but remaining situated in a cultural soup of meanings. Poststructuralists do not try to rise above structure (as the “post” might suggest) but to think through it, primarily by not giving it life as a centre, or as a presence, which proposes the existence of something else that is absent. “Post” in “poststructuralism” does not imply a subsequent time period, either. It signifies an approach that does not assume that structure is a thing with a form evidenced by the obvious pronouncements of central figures through their practices and texts. The poststructuralist seeks to critically reflect on the dynamics of structuring, such as by asking how this field of practice or argument is being structured. Like structuralism, poststructuralism is loosely associated with various ways of reading human activities to make them more open to reflection. Some examples are genealogy, as developed by Michel Foucault; deconstruction, as developed by Jacques Derrida; and mimesis, as developed by Luce Irigaray.

In contrast with structuralism, poststructuralism has not been well received in the academy except in very weak forms. The strong forms severely challenge the objectivity of structure building among structuralists. Certainly, planning has very few examples. In poststructural approaches the focus is as much on what is absent as on what is present, on “not” as much as “is.” There is no fundamental order, logic, or truth; rather, the assumption is made that people organize knowledge into structures at various times and for various purposes, including to convey order, logic, and truth. Each structure has flaws, the main flaw in every case being that a feature essential to the coherence of the structure will, on examination of the structure, be found to have been ignored or treated as if it was inconsequential. Thus, the coherence of the structure is called into question. For example, public-sector planners build the structure of their field on the claim that it serves the public interest. However, at the heart of the practice of planning are private interests that need to be recognized, tamed, encouraged, and so on. After all, cities are built largely from private capital and interests. The task of planners is not only to make plans on paper but also to make plans that generate and guide implementation. A plan without reasonable potential for follow-through is not much of a plan. This was one of John Friedmann’s (1969) early contributions: that planning is not simply about decisions but also about action. However we look at that task (aside from a Marxist perspective), planners are hooked in some fashion to the market and its private interests because that is where most development comes from. Based on the kind of actions it must engage in to do its work, the structure of planning cannot be as coherent as some claim it to be if private interests are not recognized as part of its structure (Milroy 1989).

Poststructuralists try to understand how and why a particular truth, logic, or order is promoted and to inquire into what it leaves out and why. A new, also flawed, logic ensues, but it is one that better accounts for how power works in a given circumstance. We do not solve the problem of power; we keep reworking it. It is a hard approach to sell because people generally do not like the feeling of eternal openness. However, insights gained from working with the approach can be profound and can be used in various ways. In this case the question that emerged from attempts to interpret the data is, why are principles of spatial organization left out of theorizing planning?

Complaints are repeatedly levelled against poststructural approaches to dismiss them as irrelevant. One concern is that economics and politics should be the important factors in the pursuit of justice and equitable cities. Economics and politics are “real” and, thus, where the focus for researchers should lie. They are serious, politically engaged, and where the work happens. By contrast, poststructural approaches are often inaccurately reduced to discourse

analysis, which is represented as frivolous, peripheral, and unable to lead to action. Most damning of all, poststructural approaches are called apolitical.²⁵ On the contrary, poststructural analyses can be deeply political, for they can question even what passes for political.²⁶

Another complaint is that poststructural approaches are nihilistic because there is no conclusion from the findings. It is true that there is no conclusion. But this does not lead to nihilism. The findings undoubtedly demonstrate that we are always in a soup of meanings, habits of thought, and regulatory devices – we do not escape them. But we can make them more obvious to ourselves so as not to be taken in by them. This is where poststructuralism excels. What is done to change habits, and so on, becomes everyone's responsibility.

Both structural and poststructural approaches are useful for those who want not only to understand but also to change the status quo. One might hazard to say that structuralists believe they can find the levers that, if adjusted, would increase social justice – for example, finding the right way to connect the planning process to substance. Poststructuralists believe that exposing how levers come into effect and are valued provides people with the kind of knowledge they need to expose injustice that parades as justice – for example, revealing the origin and evolution of the utopian model in planning that when reproduced obviates hard analysis and innovation. Those who work in a poststructuralist vein, more so than structuralists, leave no doubt that thinking subjects must do the hard work to change practices. The choice I made to use a poststructuralist approach in this instance does not deny the potential value of a structuralist one to investigate other facets of the same case.

Methods and Sources

My research began in 1999. The primary method used for the case study was document analysis. Because the development was challenged by owners of some of the properties to be expropriated, there was a lengthy quasi-judicial hearing at which evidence was presented and arguments were made. That public hearing left extensive records of the formal planning of and legal arguments for and against the Yonge-Dundas development. Technically, the hearing was before a Joint Board because both planning and expropriation matters were being contested. However, in this case, both of the hearing officers were from the Ontario Municipal Board roster. I read the hearing documents at the offices of the Ontario Municipal Board over two separate periods between June 1999 and August 2001. Nik Luka, in his capacity as a postgraduate research assistant, helped me with that task. I also read newspaper reports on the project. I examined planning legislation, official plans, and economic studies of Toronto; attended selected meetings of the downtown

community council of the new post-amalgamation Toronto; and reviewed the literature on contemporary core-area redevelopment that emphasized the experiences of cities that used similar combinations of public space, shopping, and entertainment as were being proposed for Yonge-Dundas. In addition, I reread a great deal of the literature on planning theories and planning practice to ponder them in the specific context of this case. Nik Luka also searched local histories to determine where Toronto's "heart" was in different periods and by whose definition, and he found records of earlier attempts to fix up this section of Yonge Street. Using that information, he wrote the first version of Chapter 2, "History," which I have altered considerably.

After reading and analyzing the information and writing the first draft of the study, I tested, corrected, and extended my information by conducting interviews with twelve people who were centrally involved in the case. With the exception of the ward councillor, who holds public office, these interviews, which were conducted and tape-recorded between June 2003 and June 2005, were done on the basis of confidentiality and the nonattribution of quotes. I was greatly helped by the insights of these people, and I have tried to capture them in the text. However, their voices are buried so that statements cannot be identified with individuals. I am very grateful to the interviewees for the generous amount of time they gave me and for their spirit of candidness, especially given that they could not know how I would interpret their views and actions. My hope is that I have been both accurate and fair.

In my discussion of planning tasks and planners, I have often used a position title or general role instead of the person's name. The decision to use a name has been based on whether it was possible to adequately indicate the source of a point of view, data, analysis, proposal, and so on. However, the names of journalists, companies, and organizations are generally used if they are the authors of documents. The rationale for my overall approach is that the study is not about specific people but about planning as a function, with its tasks, tools, structures, and specialists, all of which are embedded in the larger context of urbanism.

I offer this case as an instance of planners tackling an urban problem in a specific historical and spatial context. Critical analyses of it will lead to different judgments about the quality of the planners' contributions. The case is offered for just that purpose, so we can learn and better bridge theory and history by knowing the actions of planners (Fischler 1995).

Chapter by Chapter

Chapter 2 concerns the history of the study area. It focuses on five events between 1950 and 1990, each of which altered how Yonge Street was able to function in the context of the city as a whole. It sets the stage for the next

five chapters, which begin in 1994 with the regeneration ideas that would subsequently be transformed en route to implementation. We see the problems the city was up against, and there is little doubt that this was a difficult area to treat. Chapter 2 also illustrates how rhetoric was used in this case. Rhetoric is an important tool in the promotion of redevelopment projects. The geographical location in question was identified as the heart of Toronto. The heart was said to be in disgraceful condition. If the heart was failing, then the city was inevitably on its way downhill. Indeed the predicted fate would spread through the whole region because was not Toronto, in turn, the heart of the region? Surely such a dire analysis calls for immediate, decisive action. Whether Yonge-Dundas was ever really the heart of Toronto is disputable. However, it was on the edge of the heart in the city's early days, and it was one of several hearts more recently. Facts did stop heart imagery, which began to appear around 1996, from being used, nor have they since – which is the very point of rhetoric. That is, whether Yonge-Dundas was ever the heart of Toronto does not really matter. What matters is whether that rhetorical flourish could serve the purpose of persuasion.

Chapter 3, “Regenerating,” describes the city's plan, which began in 1994, to regenerate the few blocks in question with a range of relatively modest initiatives. This multifaceted approach went through standard planning processes that began with involving affected businesses, citizens, and many others. Reports about the steps that were being taken went through the well-established committee and council approval stages. The chapter lays out the reasoning for this strategy and what it entailed, details the main points of the studies and reports, and identifies significant players who were involved in reaching decisions about actions for this area.

Chapter 4, “Redeveloping,” discusses the parallel planning process that came from the private sector and was championed by the ward councillor. The city was persuaded to join its efforts to the private one in a loosely devised public-private partnership. Initiatives from this new planning arrangement overtook the regeneration project and converted it into a large-scale redevelopment. This project was developed in secret. It involved taking a dozen private properties, selling six of them at cost to a private developer to build a specific structure, and using four for a city-constructed public square (two properties were intended for other related purposes). The chapter describes the characteristics of the land parcels, how development options were generated and costed, the planning issues that were under review during the approval process, and other technical matters that related to requests for proposals, revisions to the official plan, the zoning bylaw, and the use of sections of the provincial *Planning Act*.

Because this redevelopment project was challenged, and because property expropriation was involved, a quasi-judicial hearing was required to settle the dispute as to whether the project should proceed. The hearing produced extensive written records that detailed how proponents conceptualized and defended the project and how opponents argued that it contravened good planning practice, if not the law. Thus, Chapter 5, "Defending," offers a detailed description of the planning and legal arguments that were put forward in support of or against the redevelopment. It provides an excellent occasion to see the connections among planning actions, planning legislation, and various actors.

Once the project received all formal clearances in the latter part of 1998, implementation began and has been underway since. Chapter 6, "Implementing," describes the development taking shape in ways that were not always expected, given the arguments made in the course of promoting it. The chapter discusses the new public square, the redevelopment around the square and in the improvement area as a whole, the institution of the new Business Improvement Area organization and how it expresses its interests in the square and surrounding area, and where the problems that were not solved went to.

The last chapter, "Closing," is situated within the crucible of evolving contemporary urban form (as described in the first chapter), in which a combination of technological, economic, and social changes are at work, and in which the issue of the relationship between expansive urban development and small spaces needs renewed attention from urbanists. I address questions about the correspondence, or lack of it, between the practice described in the case and current theorizing about planning practice by referring to four issues: (1) the overextension of the social science analogue, (2) the process-substance relationship, (3) planner- and planning-centredness, and (4) imprecision about planning referents. The conclusion put forward is that the decision made by planning theorists to accentuate process over substance has kept eyes focused on planning per se and away from the larger question of urbanism, and this choice has exacerbated the tendency to focus on space only as a product of social relations. In the face of major urban reconstruction challenges beginning in the 1980s, the connection of procedural theories to urbanism was fraught with difficulties. Those actors who were prepared to fix tattered urban spaces could step over planners and their traditional approaches to use the elaborate planning frameworks that had been put together over many decades of the twentieth century. Many planning practitioners have since been drawn into the new work of urbanism. Practices changed. Theory has not caught up.

CHAPTER 2

History

With Nik Luka

Predicting a city's imminent heart failure is a common strategy when a group wants support for an action. We saw it in Berlin during the rebuilding of Potsdamer Platz (Sewing 2000) and in New York during the Times Square redevelopment (Reichl 1999, especially chap. 3). Speaking generally, using the theme of rise and decline to appeal to emotions is prevalent in city development literature (Beauregard 1993; Ward 1997b). The emotional impact is achieved with considerable effect through the use of metaphor, a semantic structure that is used widely to interpret something unknown in terms of something known. The use of an image like impending heart failure – even though it is blatantly metaphorical and therefore readily seen as somewhat exaggerated and not quite correct – can nonetheless become compelling enough to spur action aimed at diverting that danger, even in what is technically not a heart at all.

Toronto's case falls into this type of experience. The intersection of Yonge and Dundas was described both as the heart of Toronto and as a rotting core. Even if both claims were exaggerated, the imagery had an effect on the redevelopment process. Yonge Street as a whole is central to life in Toronto, but this particular intersection with Dundas Street was not important until the Eaton Centre opened in the late 1970s. Even that event spread no prestige to Dundas, east or west of Yonge, or to Yonge Street itself. In this chapter we review the evolution of these streets in the context of the heart and rot metaphors since these are the images used by the project's proponents.¹

The corner of Yonge and Dundas was described as the heart of the city in at least three respects. Each description is a little bit accurate, but only a little bit. First, the corner was said to have been the historical core of shopping and entertainment in Toronto. The members of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), hearing the case for expropriation, accepted the idea that Yonge-Dundas had once been a shopping and entertainment mecca for Torontonians.

In its decision to allow expropriation to proceed, it said: “During the 1950s and 1960s, Yonge and Dundas was ‘the’ retail shopping strip, the people place, where the sidewalks were full of people, the retail stores, restaurants and movie theatres vibrant and successful” (Joint Board 1998k, 3). A newspaper journalist who specializes in Toronto issues expressed the same view when writing about the Dundas Square project: “With luck, the project will turn back the clock to the days when people came to Yonge and Dundas to find the latest fashions or to catch a show” (Immen 1998a). It continues to form part of the story as it is described on the Square’s website. This image was not quite accurate.

Second, Yonge and Dundas was described as a symbol of the well-being of the entire city and even the region. At the 1998 public hearing into expropriations for the redevelopment, a prominent private-sector planner in Toronto said that “the low-rise retail strip in the area of Yonge/Dundas is the most important in the region, and its location by the Eaton Centre makes the strip functionally and symbolically important in the region” (Joint Board 1998h, 14). The City of Toronto’s planner for the area used more subtle phrasing without emphasizing the specific intersection, saying, “There is a fundamental incongruity between the street’s overall diminished role and appearance and the notion that Yonge Street is viewed as Toronto’s main street and the ‘front door’ to visitors to the City” (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 69, 7). Another frequently used idea or phrase, which was first expressed in 1996, was that Yonge Street’s condition was central to the city’s “health, image and sustainability” (see, e.g., *ibid.*, 23). The well-being of the city, if not the region, was said to depend on the successful redevelopment of this small area.

Third, Yonge-Dundas was called a focal point for public life and major celebrations and was acclaimed as such by “the people.” The area planner argued at the public hearing that this intersection was “the location of City celebrations, protests and gatherings and has national and historic importance as a visual symbol of downtown Toronto” (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 69, 9). But there was a bit of slippage regarding the location. Throughout the city’s history, celebrations, parades, and events have indeed taken place on different parts of Yonge Street. As early as 1837, a stretch well north of the intersection was the scene of a brief but legendary armed rebellion led by William Lyon Mackenzie, a newspaper editor and Toronto’s first mayor. But in the 1850s, ’60s, and ’70s, King Street, which runs perpendicular to Yonge and lies about one kilometre south of Dundas, usurped Yonge’s place as the street for public demonstrations, including those that marked Queen Victoria’s birthday in 1854 and Canadian Confederation in 1867, the funeral cortège for the Compact sympathizer Bishop John Strachan in 1867, and the mobbing of a Fenian by Orangemen in 1878 (Fleming 1996). The intersection of King and

Yonge streets then became the focal point for celebrations – Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897, British success in the Boer War in 1902, and the armistice of the First World War in 1918. At that time Dundas did not even intersect with Yonge.

Large stretches of Yonge Street served as parade routes throughout the twentieth century, for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth in 1939, for circuses, Santa Claus, anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, and so on. The massive Pride Parade annually takes over Yonge Street from Bloor Street south to Gerrard. Spontaneous celebrations are also associated with Yonge. A respected observer of the city and its places noted: “There is a venerable Toronto tradition of crowds taking over Yonge Street for a night of merry wildness on special occasions, usually victories in sport” (Mays 1994, 198). In the early 1990s, crowds marked the victory of the city’s Major League Baseball team, the Toronto Blue Jays, in the World Series by filling large stretches of Yonge all the way north past Lawrence Avenue. James Lemon (1985, 151) noted that hundreds of central city residents came to Yonge Street in 1971 to celebrate the provincial government’s decision to halt the construction of the Spadina Expressway, which would have required the demolition of hundreds of houses and the destruction of stable inner-city neighbourhoods. Finally, crowd hooliganism has also been associated with Yonge, notably against Greek restaurateurs in 1918 (Gallant 2004) and, reportedly, in response to the Rodney King incident in Los Angeles in 1992. In the latter case, a number of white police officers in Los Angeles had been videotaped apparently beating a black motorist. When charges against the officers were dismissed, there were riots in central Los Angeles and outbursts of anger elsewhere, including in Toronto.

These types of events took place, and continue to take place, over different stretches of Yonge Street. Yet the heart of the city was claimed by project proponents to be, quite precisely, at Yonge and Dundas. As a final point, it is worthwhile to note that celebration, organized or spontaneous, has been associated with movement through space, not with a fixed place. Peter Goheen has argued that for nineteenth-century Torontonians the street, not the square, was the focal point for demonstrations, regardless of whether they were formal, informal, or mob-like. However, other public spaces could be used as adjunct spaces. Adjunct spaces “served both for public assembly and speeches associated with parades and occasionally as turf for riots. All were centrally located public open spaces, and hence governed by many of the same protocols of access and control” (Goheen 1993, 142).

The observations that were made in association with the redevelopment plans established a picture of a rotting heart that could be, and indeed had to be, repaired to keep the city from collapse, from presenting a poor image

to the world, and from unsustainability. The rotting heart became a metaphor for the perceived deterioration of Toronto, which had been walloped by the deep recession and economic restructuring that took place between 1989 and 1994. The redevelopment was held up as a harbinger of whether Toronto would be world-class or ordinary.

The following discussion explores the history of lower Yonge Street and the Yonge-Dundas intersection to give a sense of their importance, or lack thereof, over the years. The street-related enterprises in the area in question gradually changed from sober butchers, haberdashers, milliners, and house painters to clothing retailers, taverns, tea rooms, restaurants, and cinemas to fast-food outlets, game arcades, massage parlours, electronics retailers, and souvenir stores. Much of what was happening to the retail and commercial segment of the street was tied to the large-scale influences that came with post-Second World War growth: the city's form shifted from being mono-centric (centralized transit and pedestrian shopping) to being polycentric (decentralized, car-oriented shopping). This change was happening all over Canada and the United States.

However, the case study was also distinguished by a specific condition. The T. Eaton Company, which had been a major employer in the city in the first half of the twentieth century, owned a large proportion of the land in the subject area on the west side of Yonge between Queen and Dundas and at Yonge and College. It was a family-owned business that originated in Toronto but eventually established itself Canada-wide. Its Toronto activities were primarily department store retail, catalogue sales, and product manufacturing (mainly clothes). Family members were wealthy and carried on in a semi-regal fashion. In its later years, Eaton's had weak leadership and shoddy vision, which hobbled the company and prevented others from being able to reorganize Yonge Street's activities in the face of large-scale changes to this industrial-era city.

Toronto's city government had a mixed relationship with this powerful company. On the one hand, it was well aware of Eaton's importance as an employer and taxpayer; on the other, city government had to struggle to deal with its power. It had a strong tendency to side with Eaton's, but, as we will see as the story progresses, citizen actions derailed some of Eaton's worst plans. In the end, the fifth generation of the family brought the company crashing into bankruptcy. This occurred in 1997-98, just when the redevelopment project was receiving final approval.

Yonge Street

Yonge Street as a whole is important because its history is closely linked to that of the city itself. Indeed, "anywhere in Canada, the name 'Yonge Street'

is instantly recognized as a Toronto place name” (Kluckner 1988, 70). It may be the longest street anywhere. In 1793, when the governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, selected the “Toronto carrying place” as the capital of the new province of Upper Canada, he laid out a military road to allow for, in times of war, the quick movement of troops from the original fort and harbour northward, from Lake Ontario to Lake Simcoe (ibid.). Simcoe named the road for Sir George Yonge, the British home secretary at the time. From then onward, the street served as a reference point in several ways. For example, it became the literal and figurative dividing line of the city as streets were laid out and numbered from zero, starting at Yonge. Many Torontonians think of themselves as coming from either the east or west end, because families traditionally settled in one or the other, and they rarely crossed Yonge when moving house. Consider the following excerpt from a feature article in Toronto’s major newspaper on Yonge Street’s “dividing line” effect: “It’s an age-old bias in the former City of Toronto: you’re a loyal east-ender or west-ender and never the twain shall meet. The other side is, well, foreign” (White 1999).

Early Growth

As the small town (originally called York) grew during the nineteenth century, the most important cross street (east-west) was King Street, seven blocks south of where Dundas is today. Dundas did not exist at that time in the area near Yonge. In 1873 the Yonge and King intersection was identified as the “heart of the town” by one of Toronto’s first historians, Henry Scadding ([1873] 1966, 276). The city’s most prestigious businesses established themselves on King, and toward the end of the century the first fashionable shops also opened up along it. Scadding wondered, however, whether “the needs of the population and the exigencies of business” would draw the heart northwest, following the direction it had taken over its 100-year history, to what is now Spadina and Queen (ibid.).

By the early twentieth century, this “heart” had shifted a short distance straight northward to the intersection of Yonge and Queen streets. Queen Street, like Yonge, was laid out by Simcoe as a key military road, and it was considered the principal east-west axis of the city until the 1960s. It was originally called Lot Street, because it was lined by “a range of 100-acre lots which were granted as *douceurs* to the officials as compensation for having to come to York” (Arthur 1978, 14). These estates ran north to Bloor Street. At the intersection of Yonge and Queen, Toronto’s two major retailers, the Robert Simpson Company and the T. Eaton Company, faced each other across Queen Street. Each catered to a particular clientele: “Eaton’s for the masses, Simpson’s for the classes,” a local saying went (McQueen 1999, 18). In an era when most

Torontonians travelled by streetcar, the meeting of the city's principal cross-town Queen route and the north-south Yonge route (the spine of the system) made this crossroads extremely important. The Yonge-Queen intersection had thus become the undisputed shopping hub of the city; in fact, there was a special car stop on Queen adjacent to the main entrances of the two department stores. South of Queen, Yonge Street was lined with shops and boutiques. The principal retail product in the area was clothing. Kluckner (1988, 22) notes that at the turn of the century the garment manufacturing industry employed more people than any other sector in the city. In fact, the ongoing importance of this junction was demonstrated by the City of Toronto's (1963) *Plan for downtown Toronto*, which suggested marking Yonge and Queen with a dramatic structure over the intersection.

One consequence of growth and change was a concerted effort, which began in the 1890s, to transform Yonge Street into a formal avenue with an almost European character. Its role as Toronto's main thoroughfare was to have been affirmed by an elegant and continuous street wall of "majesty and controlled uniformity" (Lyon 1978, n.p.). During this period a number of fine buildings were erected along Yonge Street, such as the Board of Trade building at the corner of Front and Yonge streets, the Fairweather and Robert Simpson stores farther north, and the Ryrie Building at Shuter Street (one block south of the Dundas Square site). Perhaps for economic reasons, or perhaps because the focus of the city's property market had already begun to shift, the street wall was never completed (*ibid.*). Nonetheless, at the turn of the century, Yonge Street, between King and Queen streets, was the main street of Toronto. Period images of this area depict a bustling street, packed with people going about their daily business.

The 1920s to the 1940s

The intersection at Yonge and Queen was an important node, but Toronto retailing continued to change and grow. By the 1920s luxury clothing shops had opened along Bloor Street (Lemon 1985, 41), and more followed. Bloor Street runs from east to west about eighteen blocks north of and parallel to Queen Street. City officials acknowledged in *Plan for downtown Toronto* (Toronto 1963) that Bloor-Yonge was the focus for high-end retail, although they still considered Yonge and Queen the main shopping district. The differences between the two districts continued. Specialty shopping leapfrogged northward toward the Yonge-Bloor area throughout the 1960s, eventually spilling westward into the village of Yorkville, which in the 1960s had become the focus of Toronto's hippie counterculture. In the 1970s substantial private-sector redevelopment occurred, resulting in tony shopping complexes being introduced, especially Hazelton Lanes and the Holt Renfrew Centre. Both



2.1 The Toronto Plant of the T. Eaton Co., c. 1919. *Foreground*, store building; *left centre*, home furnishings store and its annex; *right centre*, three mail-order buildings; *background*, two factory buildings; *rear left*, Old City Hall. | Illustration courtesy of Archives of Ontario; Ditchett (1923, 11).



2.2 Looking north on Yonge Street, c. 2008. The street has been widened and turned into a boulevard in front of what was Eaton's College Street store, seen on the left. | Courtesy of Sherrill Rand Harrison.

complexes reinforced the current role of the Yonge-Bloor area as the provider of high-end retail in Toronto.

The most notable event of the period was the effort on the part of Eaton's to try to impose its designs on others. It wanted to shift shopping north by abandoning Queen Street, leapfrogging over Dundas Street, and re-establishing the shopping district at College Street. From the time it was founded in 1869, Eaton's had grown enormously from a small shop on Yonge Street to a major department store located at Yonge and Queen. It occupied what had become a disjointed collection of buildings that covered much of the area from Queen north to Dundas. The Eaton's buildings that were located in the quadrant defined by Dundas, Yonge, Queen, and Bay streets are illustrated in Figure 2.1. However, Eaton's wanted to consolidate its retail in a massive purpose-built complex (Dendy 1986, 291). To this end, it began to secretly buy up College Street properties near Yonge Street in the 1910s. The family hoped to transform College Street into Toronto's fashionable shopping street (McQueen 1999, 65). It was a bold move because Yonge Street was not fashionable in this stretch. In fact, anywhere north of Queen seems to have been considered undesirable. And its desired location ignored the fact that Bloor was already becoming the city's fashionable street (George Hume 1999; Lemon 1985, 41). In the 1920s Eaton's tried to persuade the Robert Simpson Company, its across-the-street competitor at Queen, to go north too and even offered it some of Eaton's landholdings along College Street (McQueen 1999, 65). But Simpson's wisely declined. The whole concept was ill-devised.

Notwithstanding cautionary signs, in 1928 Eaton's began constructing a shopping and entertainment complex that became known as Eaton's College Street and is currently known as College Park. The new edifice was art deco styled, complete with an upscale restaurant and one of the finest auditoriums in the city. The T. Eaton Company also deeded a strip of its land along the Yonge Street facade to the City of Toronto so that its new store could be offset by an appropriately handsome boulevard. This accounts for the unexpected widening of Yonge Street from Gerrard Street north to College Street, which is shown in Figure 2.2.

As is noted by Rod McQueen (1999, 67), the move to College Street was unsuccessful for several reasons. The building, in fact, became known as a white elephant because of its white limestone cladding. The Great Depression had set in, shattering consumer confidence, not to mention disposable incomes. Eaton's had to delay indefinitely the construction of the other phases of the development, including an office tower. The Depression notwithstanding, Eaton's failure was also a case of poor decision making. McQueen (*ibid.*, 68) argued that the Eaton's College Street store was too upscale for its customers, who were predominantly working- and middle-class, not the



wealthy elite of Toronto. With Simpson's still located at the shopping hub of Yonge and Queen, there simply was not enough pedestrian movement up Yonge Street to the College Street location – which was in the middle of a very long stretch of Yonge – neither at Queen nor at Bloor. Shoppers were not lured north in large part because of the very subject of this discussion: the Yonge-Dundas area. The original plan to close the Queen Street store was never realized, and for forty years two Eaton stores, just six blocks apart, operated on Yonge.

Eaton's, a major employer and an important property tax contributor, was very successful in the early decades at building and running a vertically integrated corporation that covered manufacturing, retail sales, mail order sales, and shipping. It was much less successful at understanding how a city functions, which is to say that it had a poor grasp on how its business operations fit into a larger physical and social context. Ironically, the view of one of the developers involved in one of Eaton's many schemes, William Zeckendorf of Webb & Knapp, was that Eaton's itself was the “biggest stumbling block in this city.” He argued that its extensive properties were the source of lower Yonge Street's misery because the greater part of the company's land “lies idle, either as parking lots or as dusty, truck-choked warehousing. Sprawled out like a great patch of crabgrass on a lawn, the Eaton holdings effectively choke any new growth trying to get underway alongside” (cited in McQueen 1999, 164).

First Intervention: The Yonge Street Subway

Until the middle of the twentieth century, Toronto was a relatively dense, compact city that had businesses and shops in the centre and residential areas that spanned outward. Most residents walked or used streetcars. The first streetcar line in Canada was installed in 1861 on Yonge Street between King Street and Yorkville's town hall. Initially horse drawn, the lines were later electrified. Speeds and service increased, but Yonge, being the central north-south artery, was often congested. A proposal to build an underground streetcar line had been put before Torontonians as early as 1910, but it was defeated in a referendum (Toronto 1987, 10). By the late 1940s, when packed streetcars were running in two-vehicle trains along Yonge Street at headways of less than one minute (Lowry 1996, 65), the pressure to build an underground line surged. However, Yonge Street merchants dreaded trading surface streetcars, from which passengers could easily see their shops, for underground rail, with its more widely spaced stops. A popular line was, “A carstop is never too far from any store” (Ted Wickson, cited in Filey 1986, n.p.).

Despite the merchants' concerns, construction of the subway line from Front Street northward to Eglinton Avenue began in 1949 (Toronto 1987, 11). Yonge

Street thus experienced its first major trauma, because access was severely limited over the next five years. For months at a time, entire blocks were closed to vehicular traffic and the streetcars were rerouted on parallel streets while the trenches that would form the train tunnels were dug and the streets were rebuilt over them (Greenberg 1991, 196). Although pedestrians always had access to the shops and restaurants along Yonge, the curtailment of vehicular access in a rapidly motorizing city was the first of several blows to street-oriented retail.

The first phase of the subway, from Union Station to Eglinton, opened in March 1954. It was immediately successful as a mode of transportation, carrying 2 million riders in the first week of operation. The subway affirmed Yonge Street's role as the spine of the city and served to reinforce the stability of the downtown core (Lowry 1996, 64-65). In fact, by 1962 property values had skyrocketed, by as much as four times the city average, along the subway corridor (Toronto 1987, 33).

At the same time, however, the subway line had a significant effect on street-oriented retail activities along Yonge. When the subway opened, the streetcars were removed from Yonge. In 1973 the trolley buses were removed. It did not take long before the traditional strip retail gave way to concentrated development around the subway stations (Greenberg 1991). In fact, as early as the 1960s, some stretches of lower Yonge Street showed signs of decline associated with the subway. The merchants' fears had been well founded. Herbert Lowe, who owned a shoe store on lower Yonge Street, commented in response to a 1963 draft version of the *Plan for downtown Toronto*: "For small independent retailers, the downtown area has become a 'decaying heart of the city' ... It is not a matter of earning a living or making a profit, but rather a question of who can afford to lose money and hang on the longest" (cited in City People Community Planning and Research 1974, 20). Lowe believed that this was due to the subway exits that carried people directly into the Eaton's or Simpson's department stores. But other factors were at work, too. Lowe identified inadequate car parking and the rise of suburban shopping centres as issues.

The 1960s and the Rise of the Yonge Street Strip

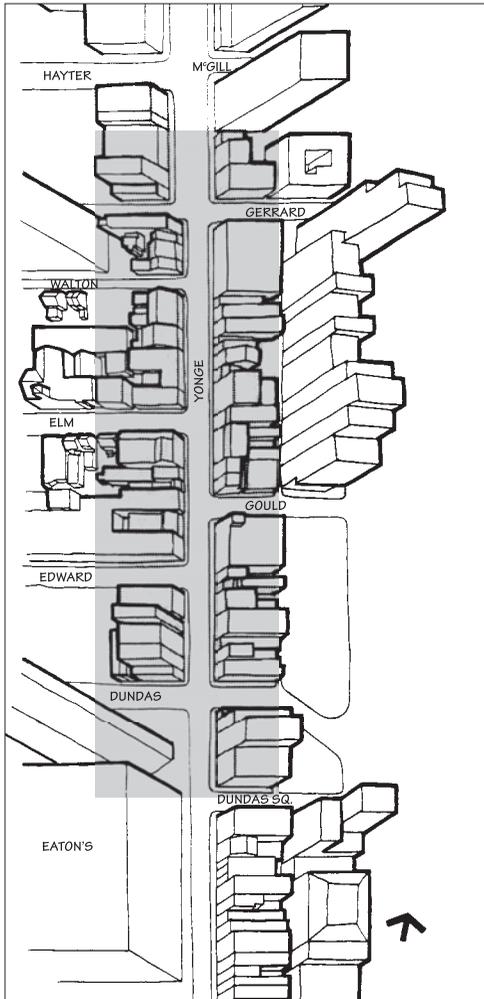
Yonge Street changed throughout the 1960s and 1970s. The section from College to Queen Street began to offer more contemporary leisure and entertainment services rather than live theatre and classical music, which had been offered until the late 1920s. Entertainment had by and large shifted to movie theatres; Maple Leaf Gardens, the hockey arena, at College Street (opened in 1931); and taverns, bars, and restaurants, including two especially well-known restaurants, the Silver Rail and the Brown Derby.

When it prepared its 1963 official plan, the City of Toronto acknowledged the existing entertainment focus of Yonge and wanted to see it, together with shopping, emphasized and encouraged: “The east side of the street, from Gerrard to Richmond, has already taken on the distinctive character of an entertainment strip and this should expand as the population grows ... Any rebuilding should concentrate on shopping on the west side and entertainment on the east side, especially north of Queen, since these are important functions of the street” (Toronto 1963, 29-30).

The rate at which replacement activities moved into the area may have helped mask the fact that Yonge Street was no longer the shopping destination of choice for Torontonians. For decades shops had been moving away from the hub of Yonge and Queen. As already mentioned, fashionable boutiques had shifted to Bloor Street West and farther north on the Yonge subway line at St. Clair Avenue, which was closer to the affluent neighbourhoods of Rosedale, Moore Park, and Forest Hill. In the 1960s the Canadian department store chain Hudson’s Bay Company opened a large store at Yonge and Bloor, at the intersection of the newly opened Bloor subway line and the Yonge line. This created a secondary core in an interceptor location and strong competition for consumer traffic on Yonge Street (see Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 207A, 5). Shopping centres were opening in the growing suburbs and offering a wide range of goods and services in climate-controlled environments, which was a significant consideration in a region with cold, windy winters and hot, humid summers. As well, stores in this section of Yonge had gathered in the underground pathways that linked subway stations and major buildings.

But other activities were moving elsewhere, too. The Yonge Street area may once have served as a crucible of sorts for Toronto’s budding music and arts scene, but by the 1970s this scene was relocating southwest to Queen and King streets. For example, the restoration of the Royal Alexandra Theatre in 1963 and the opening of several restaurants along King Street West in the 1970s were followed by the Toronto Symphony Orchestra moving to Roy Thomson Hall in the King West area in 1982. The symphony’s departure from its long-time home at Massey Hall left the 1894 concert hall at Shuter and Victoria without a resident ensemble. And then, too, Yonge-Dundas was left without one of its anchoring entertainment functions.

It was not long before retail businesses along Yonge Street came to be dominated by record stores, novelty shops, and discount outlets, and by the early 1970s the sex trade was well established. The blocks between Dundas Square and Gerrard Street were host to a particularly raunchy range of taverns, exotic dance halls, body-rub parlours, and bookstores that allegedly sold pornography and the like, and they soon came to be known as the “Yonge



2.3 The built form of the Yonge Street Strip, as it was in 1975. | Adapted from Toronto (1975, 50).

Street Strip,” the area shown in Figure 2.3. Myers (1977, 122) notes that there were about thirty body-rub parlours in the area in 1973 and about one hundred in 1975. Despite a clampdown on the sex trade, including the licensing of massage parlours, Yonge Street had clearly found a new niche in the retail market as the city’s one and only strip. In fact, the redevelopment scheme tried to hold onto part of the strip’s reputation – its flashing lights, noise, action, and intensity – but tried to attach it to uncontroversial retail aimed at higher-income users and families. The plan was to attract retailers who would not sell sex per se but who would doubtless use sexualized images to stimulate sales.



2.4 A section of Yonge Street temporarily converted into a pedestrian mall, c. 1974. | Courtesy of Archives of Ontario, RG 65-35-2-68.

Second Intervention: The Yonge Street Mall

In response to the shifts of activity that gave lower Yonge Street a somewhat tawdry image, beginning in the early 1970s a series of concerted efforts were made to reverse the decline. The central problem was defined as getting more shoppers into the area. An early effort focused on making the public space in the area more agreeable. A pedestrian mall was proposed. Pedestrian malls were popular in North American cities at the time. To test its feasibility in Toronto, Yonge Street was closed to traffic for six days in early June 1971. Benches, planters, fountains, and outdoor cafés were set up along the sidewalks and in the roadway. There were handicraft vendors, and the City of Toronto organized daily entertainments at noon and in the early evening. Torontonians seemed to find it “a smashing success that first year” (Myers 1977, 126). The following summer, the project was increased in size and duration. But the 1973 scheme was the most elaborate of all. Lasting for eleven weeks, it extended over two kilometres of Yonge Street, from Gerrard Street to King Street, with fountains, garden installations, information kiosks, and plenty of



street furniture (ibid.; Kilbourn 1984, 22). Figure 2.4 shows the mall in operation. But the following year, the mall was closed down early, after being only six weeks in operation. Several reasons were given: the disruption in traffic was not justifiable, the mall became a gathering place for “degenerates,” the experiment failed to increase sales for merchants, and there was an increase in nuisance crimes associated with crowd control (Myers 1977, 126-27). The reasons for closing it down were questioned by a local journalist who grew up on Yonge Street and who at the time was a newly graduated city planner. He and several planning school colleagues formed a cooperative that was hired in 1974 to study the mall. He said they surveyed every single merchant on the street where the pedestrian mall operated and “found that a majority of the merchants supported the mall. But the big department stores were against it. They didn’t want people outside listening to speakers and street musicians. They wanted them inside shopping” (Stein 1996).

Another study of the mall was commissioned by Toronto City Council, which asked whether the mall should be made permanent. The study recommended that Yonge Street be closed to vehicular circulation from Queen Street south to Wellington Street and that the sidewalks from Dundas Street to College Street be widened. It is interesting to note that, according to this study, the portion of Yonge most suitable for a full-fledged mall was south of Queen Street, which suggests that the greatest concentration of activity was in that area and not near Dundas Street. Pedestrian counts taken in 1969-70 lend weight to this hypothesis. For example, over the course of the eight-hour day during which observations were made, the total number of pedestrians at the Yonge-Queen intersection was about 43,000, while the total number of pedestrians at Yonge-Dundas was about 30,900, or about 25 percent less. In addition, although the number of pedestrians at Yonge-Dundas was relatively steady throughout the day, foot traffic at Yonge-Queen more than doubled in the afternoon, suggesting that this area was a popular destination for leisure activities in the afternoon and evening. By contrast, the number of cars passing through the Yonge-Dundas intersection was considerably greater (Harrold et al. 1971).

That was not the end of the studies. A subsequent consultants’ report recommended the opposite, that Yonge Street be kept open in its usual fashion because “the absence of vehicles and surface transit systems created a somewhat artificial atmosphere – an atmosphere which was sometimes exploited by hawkers and propagandists” (*Globe and Mail* 1974).

Ultimately, the pedestrian mall was rejected. It seemed to cause more problems than it solved. In Kenneth Greenberg’s view, it “amplified the problems of prostitution, panhandling, and drugs, and created an atmosphere that was

perceived to be unpleasant and out of control” (1991, 196). As constructed, the mall did not address the underlying socioeconomic or investment problems that, by that time, were clearly manifesting themselves along the street.

Third Intervention: The Construction of the Eaton Centre

The Yonge and Queen intersection was still the focal point of downtown shopping in 1963, when the City of Toronto was preparing its self-study prior to writing its official plan. However, there were early signs that the clientele of core-area retailers was changing. Their traditional clientele base had been shoppers from all over the city. Shoppers were now increasingly downtown workers. The general population was making more and more of its purchases outside of the core (Toronto 1963, 29). In response, the city looked to Eaton’s to lead the way in reinforcing the vitality of the downtown shopping district. The official plan noted that “perhaps the best opportunity lies in any redevelopment of the extensive T. Eaton Co. Ltd. properties between Yonge and Bay, north of Queen. As a well-designed project this could have the great merit of building onto what is already the great downtown shopping centre” (ibid.).

By the late 1960s, Eaton’s had acquired most of the land that extended from Yonge Street west to Bay Street and from Queen Street north to Dundas Street. Its retail operations were still spread throughout a disjointed collection of buildings that made up the flagship store at Yonge and Queen and the store at College Street, while manufacturing, catalogue sales, and warehousing were located in the area south of Dundas Street between Yonge and Bay. It was time to consolidate. Eaton’s wanted to demolish the whole Queen-Dundas-Yonge-Bay area and build a new complex that would include office towers, a new flagship store, and an indoor shopping concourse. Discussions about a series of plans went on for more than fifteen years. Designs by I.M. Pei were supplanted by those of E.L. Hankinson; James A. Murray and Victor Gruen; and Haldenby and Mathers, in conjunction with Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, LLP, respectively (McQueen 1999, 163). By this time it was becoming clear that redevelopment plans included tearing down the Old City Hall, a classic late nineteenth-century sandstone building with a clock tower that stood at Queen and Bay, as well as the Church of the Holy Trinity near Dundas, which dated from 1847. In addition to the church’s historical and architectural merits, it had social significance. It was the first Anglican church in Toronto in which “the working class residents of what was then the outskirts of Toronto could worship for free” (ibid., 164). In other churches, pews were rented.

Arguments over the sweeping plans to destroy these two landmarks continued in 1967, when a plan was rejected thanks to the work of an organization

called Friends of Old City Hall, and in 1972, when another scheme bit the dust, rejected by Toronto City Council. That scheme was typical for the era: it called for a fortress-like megastructure that turned its back on the surrounding streets. The proposal was a dramatic change from the existing store, which was known for its elaborate window displays that drew enormous crowds at Christmas (Toronto 1990a). Under the new scheme, there would be no more traditional window displays because there would be no windows: “The basic principle behind the planning of the Centre was that all shoppers, and even casual pedestrians, would be drawn inside, leaving the city’s streets and sidewalk-oriented businesses behind” (Dendy 1986, 291).

The plan also called for the demolition of the Church of the Holy Trinity and the Old City Hall. This sparked another uproar. Torontonians, having already lost many historic buildings, had become sensitized to their dwindling built heritage, and the proposal for an Eaton Centre was rejected by Toronto City Council in 1972. New discussions led Eaton’s to hire the Toronto architect Eberhard Zeidler to develop a proposal that would better integrate the structure within the surrounding urban fabric. His design consisted of a huge galleria, which was modelled loosely on the Galleria Victor Emmanuel in Milan (which dated from 1867); office towers; and a new nine-storey flagship store for Eaton’s, which was to be built with its main entrance at Yonge and Dundas (Toronto 1990a, 24; McQueen 1999). The galleria linked the new Eaton’s with Simpson’s department store, still at Queen Street. The two department stores were to be the anchors for smaller shops and restaurants located on several levels in the galleria. This scheme was thought to be much better: like Milan’s Galleria, Zeidler’s initial scheme called for a mixture of uses, including housing, a library, and genuine indoor public space (Dendy 1986, 291). But the developers were not keen on a mixed-use development, and the concept was dropped. Like earlier plans, Zeidler’s also turned inward from Yonge Street.²

Construction of the Eaton Centre started in 1973 and took five years to complete. Once again, access to Yonge Street was made difficult in that area, just as it had been when the subway was being built (Lemon 1985, 160). However, although street-level merchants did suffer during the construction period, the popularity of the Eaton Centre, once completed, brought new life to a part of the city that had been stagnating, if not declining. When it opened in 1977, it was an instant success: the number of people entering the mall averaged 500,000 a week and increased to 750,000 a week during the Christmas season, and Eaton’s total sales increased by 38 percent in the first eight months of operation (McQueen 1999, 207).³ The number of people entering the Eaton Centre annually now runs to the tens of millions. Figure 2.5 shows



2.5 Toronto Eaton Centre interior, looking north, 2008. The photograph shows activity on several levels, the glass arcade effect, and the Canada geese sculptures. | Courtesy of Sherrill Rand Harrison.

the Eaton Centre's interior. According to one commentator, the redevelopment process gave Torontonians new confidence that city government could have a positive and formative role in guiding development (Dendy 1986, 293).

Fourth Intervention: Downzoning and the 1978 Yonge Street Revitalization Project

The Eaton Centre was an anomaly on the Yonge Street Strip: it could command much higher rents from retailers than other properties, and it attracted higher-income shoppers. A 1975 plan for the Central Area reduced the floor space index from 12 to 2 for the east side of the street (Toronto 1975).⁴ This is how an economic researcher described that action: "The restrictive planning policies developed [after the Eaton Centre was underway] assured that the hugely successful experience could not be repeated on the east side of Yonge Street as the market would otherwise have encouraged" (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 207A, 17). The siting of the Eaton Centre right at the Yonge Street sidewalk, and its almost entirely closed facade, brought two-sided retail to a dead stop along the full length of Yonge Street, from Dundas to Queen.

Amid these circumstances, a consulting firm was hired in 1978 to develop a strategy to make the street healthy and vibrant (Lyon 1978). It recommended creating a European-style pedestrian shopping street.⁵ The long-term vision for the Central Area included a pedestrianized downtown area (defined by Yonge, Bay, King, and Queen streets), a ring road system (consisting of University Avenue, College/Carlton streets, Jarvis Street, and Front Street), and extensive parking facilities at the periphery of the pedestrian precinct. Because traffic impact studies had not been done to establish the wisdom of making such dramatic changes, an interim plan proposed widening the sidewalks by reducing the number of vehicle lanes from four to two to discourage through traffic. A high-quality pedestrian realm would be created, with appropriate surface treatments; weather protection in the form of arcades, awnings, and glass canopies; plantings; seating; outdoor patios for restaurants and cafés; public toilets at street level; and enhanced entrances to the subway stations (Greenberg 1991, 196).

The 1978 revitalization proposal was nonetheless rejected. Yonge Street was not controlled by the city but by the Metropolitan Toronto government, which designated Yonge Street an important regional traffic artery. It refused to allow the number of lanes on lower Yonge Street to be reduced, in spite of the fact that it carried many more people on foot than by car.⁶ Some attributed this refusal to the fact that the Metropolitan Toronto Council had more suburban than urban councillors – the former could not grasp the urbanity issue that was being presented to them.

Derailed but not defeated, the City of Toronto shifted its attention to enhancing the streets that intersected with Yonge and over which it had control. Changes by the city included widening the Gould Street sidewalk on the north side and installing permanent, canopied vendors' spaces and several chess tables and seats. These changes were very successful at the time.

In 1982 another move by city council was to designate the Theatre Block (bounded by Queen, Yonge, Shuter, and Victoria streets) as a redevelopment area. The block contains several listed or designated heritage structures, including the Elgin and Winter Garden theatres located at 189 Yonge Street, the concert facilities of Massey Hall at 15 Shuter Street, three historical bank buildings (at 173, 197, and 205 Yonge Street), and the former Heintzman building at 193 Yonge Street.⁷ Between two of the banks was the Colonial Tavern, which was listed by the Toronto Historical Board solely to protect the facades of the banks it abutted. This is not to say that the Colonial Tavern had not had its own moments of significance. Members of Jazz Watch and the Jazz Action Society came to council to attest that "international musicians such as Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Oscar Peterson, Miles Davis, Dizzy Gillespie, Sarah Vaughan, and Buck Clayton found Toronto and the Colonial one of their favourite places to perform" (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 96). However, the Colonial Tavern had fallen on hard times and, by then, belonged to the city.

A revitalization concept for part of the block began to take shape when the provincial and federal governments announced they would contribute to restoring the Elgin and Winter Garden theatres, which were then owned by the province's Ministry of Citizenship and Culture and the Ontario Heritage Foundation. The councillor who headed the task force on the Theatre Block likened the initiative to "a cross between a miniature Lincoln Centre and Times Square, if all its theatres were to be cleaned up" (cited in Godfrey 1983). The idea was to demolish the Colonial Tavern, which was dilapidated, and create a landscaped passage between the two rather beautiful old banks from Yonge through to Victoria Street. The Colonial Tavern's golden age of jazz would be recalled through the design of the passage and by naming it "Jazz Place."

Meanwhile, the Pantages Theatre on Victoria Street was undergoing changes. The theatre has a fascinating history. With 3,373 seats, it was the largest and most elegant Canadian theatre that served both vaudeville and motion picture audiences (Mirvish Productions; for a different, colourful account, see Drabinsky 1995, chap. 14). It was designed by Thomas Lamb, built in 1920 by the Canadian motion picture distributor Nathan L. Nathanson, owned by Pericles Alexander Pantages until he was jailed in 1929, sold to RKO Pictures, which became Famous Players, and renamed the Imperial in 1930. The theatre was later divided into a six-plex cinema in 1973; half of it was seized by

Cineplex Odeon in 1986 through an administrative oversight by Famous Players. It was soon transferred to Garth Drabinsky's Livent, rebuilt for live theatre again under the name the Pantages, and reopened in 1989, only to be lost in bankruptcy proceedings to SFX/Clear Channel Entertainment. The theatre, having been renamed the Canon Theatre in 2001 in recognition of financial support from Canon Canada, is currently managed and programmed by Mirvish Productions. It is oddly configured in that it has a fancy, if small, entrance on Yonge Street, while the bulk of the building is on Victoria Street, where the box office is located.

The Elgin and Winter Garden theatres were built together as a unit in 1913. Like the Pantages, they were designed by Thomas Lamb and have spotty histories. The Winter Garden, fitted out like a botanical fantasy, was closed in 1928, while the Elgin continued as a movie theatre. The Ontario Heritage Foundation bought both buildings in 1981, renovated them at a cost of \$30 million, and reopened them – the Elgin in 1985 and the Winter Garden in 1989 – as live performance theatres (see also Ontario Heritage Foundation).

The city was thus moving along with initiatives when it could see an opening. But private investment in the street's properties was not forthcoming, which meant public investments had modest effect. Within a couple of years, the city was gripped in a serious economic recession, as were other levels of government and the private sector. This would all but halt investments for about five years.

Fifth Intervention: Cityplan '91 and the Retailing Problem

The fifth intervention played out in 1994. Eaton's threatened to challenge the city's newly created official plan at the Ontario Municipal Board because, in the company's view, the plan did not adequately champion retailing in the core. The negotiations between the city and the company that ensued were directly connected to plans for redeveloping the Yonge-Dundas area, which is the subject of this book, so discussion of this intervention is postponed until the next chapter.

In concluding this look at the evolution of lower Yonge Street, it is obvious that its character, including the location and nature of shopping and entertainment over the stretch between King and College/Carlton streets, has been anything but constant. For a period in the first half of the twentieth century, portions of the street served as the city's shopping district of choice, but this changed after the Second World War. Major public-sector interventions have had mixed effects. To successfully change the pattern of use on Yonge Street is undoubtedly complicated. The city has been careful over the decades not to leap too quickly.

Before investigating the most recent proposals and actions, which are discussed in the next chapter, we turn our attention to the history of the Yonge-Dundas intersection. In arguments about fixing the area, the intersection was referred to as the “Main and Main” of the city and also as its heart (Joint Board 1998k, 3).

Yonge and Dundas

Although Yonge Street as a whole is clearly of great importance to Toronto, the idea that Yonge-Dundas has traditionally been a major urban hub is erroneous. Dundas has been relatively insignificant as an east-west axis. In the nineteenth century there was a Dundas Street that began far to the west of the city centre at what is now the intersection of Ossington Avenue and Queen Street. It meandered westward toward the town of Dundas, near the city of Hamilton (Careless 1984, 25; Armstrong 1988, 44), just as Kingston Road in the eastern suburbs led to the city of Kingston. The current incarnation of Dundas Street is the result of a civic improvement project of the early part of the twentieth century, the goal of which was to create a new east-west traffic link to improve the efficiency of the city’s circulation networks (Careless 1984, 193). Starting in 1916, a series of east-west streets that ran a suitable distance north of Queen were joined together and renamed Dundas Street (Filey 1986).⁸ The new crosstown route linked the west end road known originally as Dundas with neighbourhoods to the east, beyond the Don Valley.⁹ This improvised street wanders across Toronto’s orthogonal grid with a great many jogs and several unusual intersections.

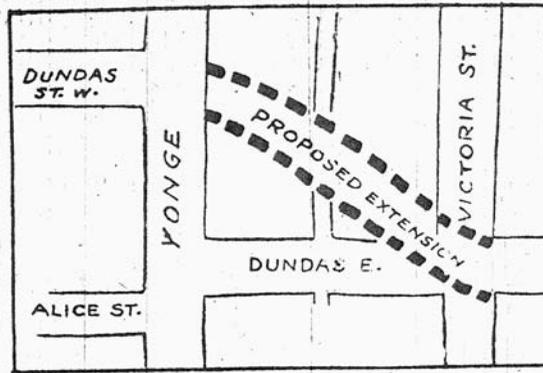
At what is now Yonge and Dundas, creating the intersection involved forcing Wilton Street (on the east of Yonge) and Agnes Street (on the west of Yonge) to meet. At Yonge Street, these two streets were out of alignment by about seventy metres. Figure 2.6 shows the proposed route of the alignment. Several properties on Yonge Street and Victoria Street (to the east) had to be demolished so that the continuation of Dundas was straight enough to support a streetcar line.¹⁰ This left a parcel of land that was called Old Wilton Square and later renamed Dundas Square (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 162, 7).

Throughout the nineteenth century, the streets around Dundas and Yonge were local in nature and largely residential in use. The housing was built and poorly serviced, and it was overcrowded. To the west of what is now Yonge and Dundas was one of Toronto’s lowest-income neighbourhoods, a settlement area for successive waves of impoverished immigrants – Irish, eastern Europeans, Italians, and Chinese (Careless 1984, 157; Kluckner 1988, 135–42). The streets also housed Eaton’s back offices, which supported the company’s sprawling store to the south and its national retail activities. The company’s

DAILY STAR

OCTOBER 8, 1921. 6 O'CLOCK EDITION

ANOTHER WIN TO



PLAN FOR CROSS-TOWN CAR LINE.

This is the plan most favored for the extension of Dundas street west to Victoria street, so that a through street car service may be established on Dundas street in accordance with the wishes of the upper Yonge street merchants. Running an oblique line to Dundas street, also straight through to the rear lots on Victoria and Yonge, and then striking south and rounding the corners of Dundas street east and west are also suggested, but as the connection is required from a transportation standpoint the gentlest curve must be laid down and the foregoing treatment is regarded as the best that can be applied under the circumstances.

2.6 Plan to connect Dundas Street West and East. | *Daily Star* 1921.

central mail-order warehouse was located there, as was a multistorey manufacturing complex in which much of the clothing Eaton's distributed to its stores across Canada was made (Dendy 1986, 291; Lemon 1985, 39). Residents of the area provided cheap labour for these clothing manufacturers: "Sharing the blocks with the little houses and shops were factories of every size and description ... there was scarcely a block that did not have some sort of tailoring enterprise, ranging from well-organized factories in lofts to the meanest, most pitiful sweatshops in grubby lean-tos in the back alleyways" (Kluckner 1988, 135).

The 1934 Bruce Report on housing conditions in Toronto showed that dwellings with below-standard amenities began to be concentrated west of

Yonge, from about Dundas to near College, and increased in density as one moved farther west to Spadina and Bathurst (Toronto 1934, 16-17).

Still on the west side of Yonge, the city's poorhouse (known as the House of Industry) occupied almost an entire block on Elm Street, just a stone's throw from the Dundas Square site. Slightly west of that, on Centre Avenue, was the city's equivalent of a red-light district (Kluckner 1988, 135). Consequently, in the Toronto of old, steeped as it was in Victorian notions of morality, this area was often perceived as being marked by immorality and crime.

The character of the land use was no more polished on the east side of Yonge than on the west. There was likewise a mix of residential, commercial, and retail property or land, but there was only one major industrial use – brewing. According to an environmental assessment of the area prepared for the city by consultants, “the only industrial development in the area was the O’Keefe Brewing Co. Ltd. which was located on the east and west side of Victoria Street, between Gould Street and Dundas Street East. The O’Keefe Brewing Co. Ltd. discontinued operations at the site in the mid-1960s. The buildings were vacated and remained unused until demolition. The property was subsequently purchased by Ryerson Polytechnical Institute” (Joint Board 1998b, Exhibit 162, 6). Just to the northeast of the brewery was St. James Square, one of Toronto’s few planned open spaces (Dendy 1993, 150). It was surrounded by three elegant buildings that housed the Normal School, the Model School, and the Department of Education. These buildings later became the home of what is now Ryerson University. When Ryerson was founded on the site in 1949, it was sitting in the midst of what Ron Stagg (1998) has described as “one of the less desirable areas of Toronto.”

From 1899 the Society for Working Boys operated a home for disadvantaged youth on Gould Street, a block north of Dundas. In 1958 that building became the Ryerson Student Union building. Just a couple of blocks away, on the east side of Yonge between Gould and Gerrard (at no. 381), was the Yonge Street Mission. It has continuously operated at that location since 1904, serving various publics, most recently youth. It was named Evergreen in 1979 (Mathers and Mohamed 2004, 1-2).

The uses that have occupied the four corners of Yonge and Dundas over the years have not convinced us that the area has been the heart of the city, the main and main. The city's 1959 interim plan predicted that the area would consist of higher-density housing, with *local* shopping along Yonge Street north of Dundas (Toronto 1959). In the 1960s the City of Toronto (Toronto 1963, 40) noted that, aside from limited warehousing and manufacturing uses, and some wholesale or retail activity along Victoria Street, the area was primarily residential. The city's own interpretation of the area on the east side

of Yonge at Dundas was as follows: “In all, this part of downtown is occupied by a number of distinct elements and several very mixed pockets. It is not a cohesive unit, but rather a backwater between more important, recognizable areas ... The area has no special advantage for office or retail business which would change its character” (ibid., 40-41).

A few years later, in 1971, the director of the City of Toronto Planning Board, on the subject of Dundas’ role as an east-west axis, said that “any concept of Dundas Street as a cross-City connector seems questionable” (Toronto 1971, 2).

Although Dundas Street does have a role as a local shopping street in certain sections (e.g., in Kensington Market, west of Spadina), for the most part it is not distinctive. In fact, to the east of the Don Valley, Dundas is primarily a residential street. Clearly, Dundas, unlike Queen to the south or Bloor to the north, never did develop as an important east-west axis of any sort.

Taking the background of Yonge and Dundas into account, it is odd that this intersection should be described as the “main and main” of Toronto. If it *is* the heart, it has come by this distinction because of the Eaton Centre entrance, not because the intersection was especially distinctive otherwise. As we will see, that distinctive entrance was removed in the course of redevelopment because it was a magnet for people who liked to hang around, to proselytize, and to ply the informal economy.

Conclusion

The Yonge-Dundas area has been constantly busy over the years with retail or commercial and residential uses, as well as brewing, warehousing, and garment manufacturing. Whatever stylishness one could attribute to the area tended to be found closer to Queen than to Dundas. More raunchy activities had asserted their presence on Yonge north of Shuter and mainly north of Dundas by around the early 1970s.

The claim made by proponents of this project that Yonge-Dundas was once the flourishing and vibrant heart of the downtown is not corroborated by historical evidence. Nor is there substance to the claim that it was a fashionable part of the city that had fallen on hard times. In 1963 the City of Toronto described Yonge-Dundas as the “backwater between more important, recognizable areas.” It has been given a nostalgic past that is more correctly attributed to other nodes on Yonge.

These facts did not stop the fall-and-redemption and rotting heart imagery from being used with considerable effect in efforts to generate support for redevelopment plans. The use of this type of blatant imagery is common in the business of selling cities and development. It is unlikely to work on its

own, but as part of building up meaning through images, and as a form of rhetoric used in the course of trying to persuade, it is often part of a purposeful strategy for gaining attention. Indeed, speakers often use metaphors without being aware of doing so or of how inaccurate the imagery is, which is probably the case here.

On the one hand, we have no choice but to use metaphors. On the other, we should not be taken in by our own metaphors. Use of metaphor is built deep into Western ways of thinking, speaking, and writing. Consequently, we should be urged to ask in any given instance, what metaphor is at work? It should be opened up to critical analysis.

If the use of imagery in urban redevelopment is common, why do we need yet another story to illustrate it? The answer is because we still have not incorporated imagery and its effects into a theory of how planning works. Imagery is still treated as if it were an aberration rather than part of how planning functions. Certainly, metaphors should not stand unquestioned as the basis for a redevelopment project.¹¹ This is a central message of this book.

This chapter has also illustrated how the core of the city altered, over a century or so, in concert with changes occurring to its surrounding urban region. What was left was a small space that no longer provided the essential goods and services of daily life to the growing population on its ever expanding periphery.