

South Yonge Street Corridor

Streetscape Master Plan Study

Draft Final Report

Phase 3: Streetscape Master Plan and Pre-Subway Plan

May 2011

Prepared by:



In Partnership with:



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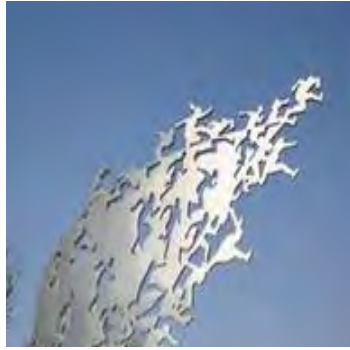
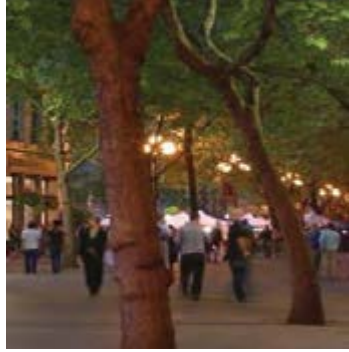
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Introduction

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1.1 Purpose of the Master Plan

The need for a detailed streetscape plan for the Yonge Street corridor north of Steeles Avenue has been identified by York Region and is supported by the local municipalities including the City of Vaughan, the Town of Markham and the Town of Richmond Hill.

Each local municipality's Council passed resolutions requesting that York Region commit funding to undertake a comprehensive and detailed streetscape study including an implementation and funding strategy for the Yonge Street corridor to ensure its completion and implementation in coordination with the construction of proposed subway related works.

The preparation of a consolidated streetscape master plan for the southern segment of Yonge Street within York Region, from Steeles Avenue to Scott Drive / Bantroy Avenue was the basis of Phase Three. The master plan is intended to guide streetscape design in a coordinated manner that enhances this significant Regional Corridor. As well, the master plan will embody the highest order of streetscape treatment in accordance with the Region's Streetscape Policy and support local municipal design visions and character along its length.

While a number of excellent higher level planning policy, urban design studies and specialized transit studies have been undertaken for areas adjacent to and along Yonge Street, the focus of this study is to coordinate and integrate these various visions into a cohesive and unified streetscape design strategy for Yonge Street itself.

1.2 Vision and Goals

In Phase Two of the work program a vision statement and goals were developed for South Yonge Street, as well as principles and objectives for a number of elements imperative to the overall success of the streetscape; these include access and wayfinding, architectural built form, place making and public art, fundamentals of street design, green streets and sustainable design, and implementation strategy and maintenance.

The vision statement developed for South Yonge Street is:

“The South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan will result in a main street for York Region that is Bold and Vibrant; Green and Sustainable; Practical and Achievable.”

Goals of the Streetscape Master Plan:

BOLD - The Master Plan will establish a new standard in streetscape design that others will regard as “an urban design masterpiece”.

SUSTAINABLE - Yonge Street Corridor will showcase sustainable design innovation and green infrastructure making it a “people place” that supports community identity, human health, human comfort and social interaction.

ACHIEVABLE - The Master Plan establishes an urban design implementation strategy focused on achieving the long term design intent for the streetscape and the adjacent development sites, encouraging participation from local municipalities and other stakeholders.

1.3 Preliminary Master Plan Process

Following Phase One: Research, Inventory and Analysis and Phase Two: Vision Statement, Principles and Objectives, Phase Three of the South Yonge Street Corridor Study delineates the Preliminary Streetscape Master Plan, which is comprised of functional street design considerations, built form and place making strategies, streetscape features and elements, as well as the corresponding implementation and servicing implications. Also included in Phase Three is a Pre-Subway Streetscape Design Plan to identify elements of the design that can be implemented in the 10-15 year time horizon, before full build-out and expected implementation of the Yonge Street Subway Extension.

A Stakeholder Charrette was held in November 2010, the results of which were further refined into three conceptual alternatives (Section 1.4 provides an overview of the design charrette and outcomes). These three alternatives were then evaluated by the Project Core Team and two concepts were developed (see Section 2.0). These concepts, **Concept A:** Linear and **Concept B:** Linked Districts, were presented to the Project Core Team and the preferred concept was developed. This preferred concept is strongly rooted in Concept B: Linked Districts.

The draft Streetscape Master Plan presented here, and subsequent Phase 4: Detailed Design Guidelines and Standards, will ultimately facilitate the implementation of the South Yonge Street Corridor and vision from present day to the full build-out. This will provide direction and guidance to Regional and municipal staff, landowners and developers as they collectively move through the site plan approval and development process to achieve a bold and sustainable Yonge Street within York Region.

1. Introduction

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1.4 Design Charrette Overview

A stakeholder design charrette was held on November 5th, 2010 with approximately fifty people in attendance, including representatives from York Region, Town of Richmond Hill, Town of Markham, City of Vaughan, City of Toronto, MTO / 407 ETR, and PowerStream.

This opportunity provided internal stakeholders, divided into six groups, to 'roll-up their sleeves' and develop their own overall and detailed plan for the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape. A number of common elements were seen throughout the six stakeholder generated streetscape plans, including:

- Celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of Yonge Street;
- Create streetscape for priority modes of transportation – transit, pedestrians and cyclists;
- Highlight areas such as CN Rail bridge, Thornhill Farmers Market, Don Valley Bridge and 407 Concourse;
- Place making around subway stations / entrances, i.e., urban plazas, gathering spaces;
- Provision of private / public accessible courts / squares;
- Create wider “public sidewalk space” through development incentives – blur the line between public and private areas along street;
- Pedestrian permeability – increased linkages to surrounding community and across Yonge Street;
- Parking solution (on-street or side street / laneway parking) to encourage pedestrian activity on street;
- Greening of Yonge Street – urban forest.

These common elements will be integrated into the preliminary streetscape master plan. The outcomes of the stakeholder charrette resulted in the development of a list of functional and qualitative ‘must-haves’ or imperative elements for the ultimate situation of implementation of Yonge Street Subway Extension. These include the following streetscape elements:

Functional Elements

- Underground subway and 4 basic traveled lanes plus median, where necessary
- On-street parking in lay-bys with retail access
- Burying hydro [subject to cost]
- Universal accessibility
- Continuous public sidewalk at metropolitan scale
- Limit Yonge Street widening / narrowing in some areas
- Integrated buffered bike lanes
- Connect north and south ends of corridor – one street
- Snow storage – stormwater friendly
- Public / private integration
- Revisit standards (i.e., dark sky friendly lighting)

Qualitative Elements

- New public squares and parks – place making
- Attracting dynamic demographic – public art and diversity
- Year-round vibrancy
- Sustainable irrigation system
- Big street, big trees
- Natural heritage system gains - habitat and bird friendly
- Defined and agreed upon gateway
- Acknowledge natural and cultural heritage
- Permeability to adjacent communities

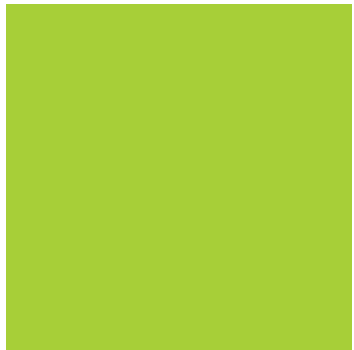
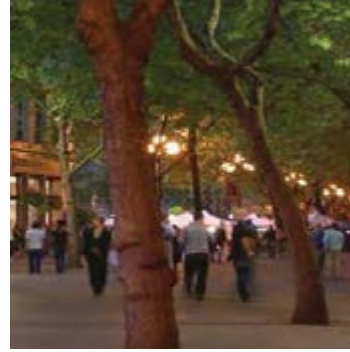
1.5 Partnerships and Review Process

The Streetscape Master Plan for South Yonge Street as presented in this document is the result of a positive partnership between York Region and the local municipalities of Vaughan, Markham and Richmond Hill. The draft master plan has been presented to the various Councils for review and comments:

- York Region Transportation Committee of Council – March 2, 2011
- Town of Richmond Hill Council Committee of the Whole – March 21, 2011
- Town of Markham Council Development Services Committee – March 22, 2011
- City of Vaughan Council Committee of the Whole / Working Committee – March 29, 2011

In addition, a series of information meetings with other stakeholders have also been completed with Regional and Municipal operations staff, Highway 407-ETR / MTO, Powerstream and City of Toronto.

These coordination and review meetings have laid the ground work for completion of detailed work and documentation of the master plan to proceed.



Conceptual Streetscape Options

2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.1 Philosophy and Approach

2.1.1 Process of Building the Designs

The philosophy for the Conceptual Streetscape Options emerged through Phases One and Two as well as the outcomes of the stakeholder design charrette. The process for developing the draft Streetscape Master Plan was as follows:

1. Build on the vision and “must have” items

Further build upon the vision and list of “must have” items developed through the stakeholder engagement process, in order to lay the groundwork for the South Yonge Street Streetscape Master Plan.

2. Identify functional features of the street

A number of functional features for Yonge Street were identified after the vision was established. These include:

- No central left turn lanes (except at Steeles Avenue and Highway 407)
- Minimal right turn lanes
- Lane width of 3.3 m
- Designated bicycle lanes
- Lay-by parking
- Pedestrian areas

3. Identify three concept alternatives

Three conceptual alternatives were identified - linear, nodal and linked district concept. Each alternative was examined and evaluated, while keeping the “must have” items and functional features in mind.

4. Short-list two concepts for more detail

Two concepts were short-listed from the three concept alternatives for further detail and examination.

5. Develop overall options

The linear and the linked district concepts were developed into detailed, fully rendered concept options for Yonge Street.

6. Choose a preferred option

The linked district concept was chosen as the preferred option to be added to, improved upon and further developed into the draft Streetscape Master Plan.

7. Articulate the details

The draft Streetscape Master Plan was further revised and refined. Details of the draft plan are articulated within Section 3.0 of this report.

As the plan evolved, it became clear that the Master Plan would not be implemented for several years due to the timing and funding requirements relative to the proposed Yonge Street Subway extension construction. The need was identified for a “Pre-Subway Plan” to articulate transit and traffic management requirements as well as areas where elements of the Streetscape Master Plan could be implemented.

A Pre-Subway Plan was then developed to guide streetscape development within a 10 - 15 year time frame, leading up to the implementation of the proposed Yonge Subway extension.

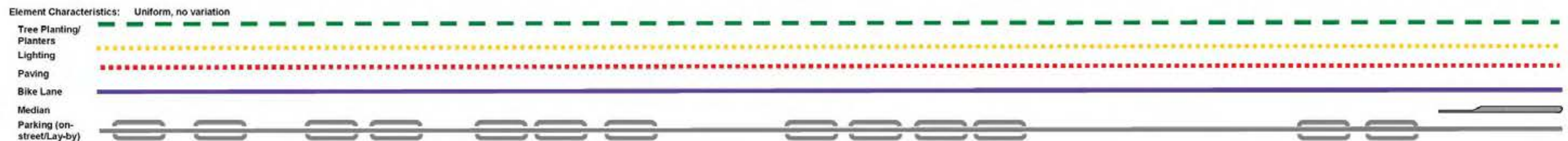
2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.2 Conceptual Approaches

2.2.1 Concept A - Linear Approach

Concept A - Linear Approach emphasizes a *one street* approach. This concept reflects and accentuates the linear function of the street, emphasizing gateways, length of the street, and pedestrian sidewalks. Uniformity and consistency in all streetscape elements along the entire length of the study corridor are the key distinctions associated with the Linear Approach.

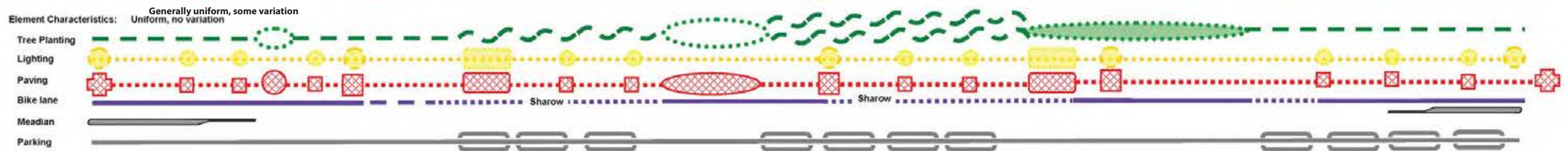
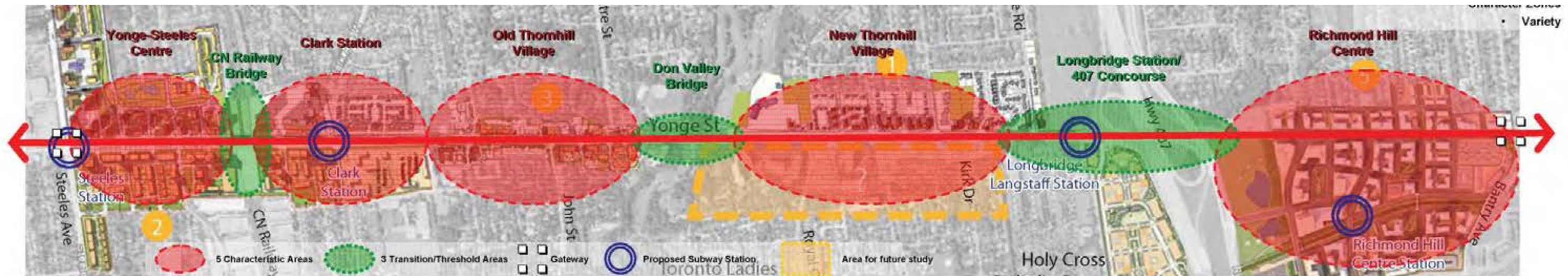


2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.2.2 Concept B - Linked Districts Approach

Concept B - Linked District Approach is combines the strengths of each of the linear and nodal concepts and is centred on one strong street that also recognizes local character and features. The districts or character areas are linked with threshold zones that will provide the appropriate transition between each area. Streetscape elements are generally consistent throughout the study corridor, however variations in some elements may occur where special conditions are present, such as street tree planting, median location and parking.

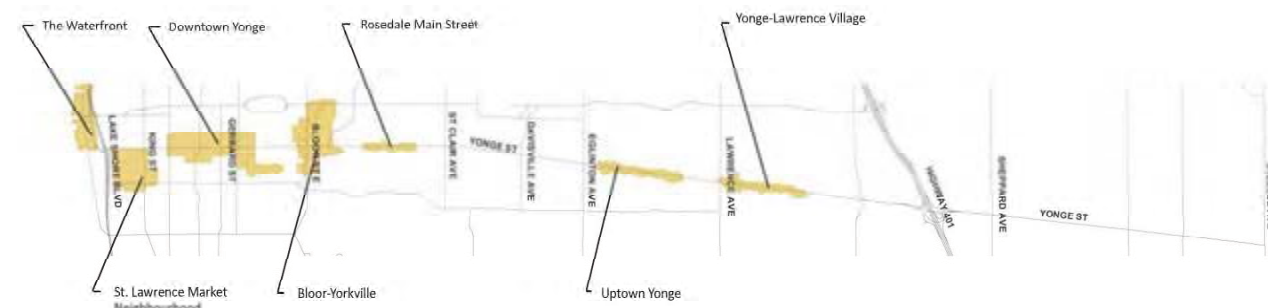


2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.2.3 Concept C - Nodal Approach

Concept C - Nodal Approach has a strong focus on the individual districts and character areas along the Yonge Street study corridor. These nodes or districts will have distinct identities and unique streetscape treatments that support pedestrian activity. This approach is similar to the existing Business Improvement Area (BIA) streetscape treatments along Yonge Street within the City of Toronto.



2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.3 Evaluation

Evaluation of the three conceptual alternatives developed and presented above, was based on the “must have” criteria generated at the stakeholder design charrette.

The Linear Concept has a strong overall identity and expresses the idea of “one street” the best. However, this concept lacks local character area identity that is so important for this stretch of Yonge Street, and therefore, natural and cultural heritage recognition is also lacking within the right-of-way. Special features, such as the CN Rail Bridge, the Don River Valley and Highway 407/ETR are not treated as major focal points within this concept.

The Nodal Concept strongly recognizes local character areas and has moderate recognition of natural and cultural heritage. However, it lacks an overall cohesive identity and the feeling of “one street”. It also has weak linkages and does not highlight the special features found between the nodes. This concept recognizes cultural heritage within the nodes, however does not recognize the natural heritage found mostly outside of the nodes.

Finally, the Linked District Concept is comprised of strong, cohesive linkages and an overall identity. It also has distinctive character area recognition, recognition of natural and cultural heritage features, highlights special features along the street and strongly supports the overall vision and goals for South Yonge Street Corridor. This concept also contributes to the greening of Yonge Street in that street trees and plantings are abundant in many areas along the street.

Once this evaluation was complete it became clear that two alternatives would move forward into development of the concept options. The Linked District Concept provided for the strongest expression of elements and has both overall street, and character area identity. The Linear Concept has many of the desired elements but has weak expression of some of the unique and special areas along Yonge Street. While the nodal concept is the least desirable, taking into consideration the “must have” elements, lacking strong expression.

The evaluation table below summarizes the level of expression / support of each concept alternative relative to the goals and objectives of the Streetscape Master Plan.

Elements	Linear Concept	Nodal Concept	Linked District Concept
Overall Identity	● ● ●	●	● ●
“One Street”	● ● ●	●	● ●
Character Area Identity	●	● ● ●	● ●
Strong Linkages	● ●	●	● ● ●
Greening of Yonge Street	● ●	●	● ● ●
Natural / Cultural Heritage Recognition	●	● ●	● ● ●
Highlight Special Features	● ●	●	● ● ●

● ● ● Strong Expression
 ● ● Moderate Expression
 ● Weak Expression

2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.4 Concept Options

2.4.1 Concept A: Linear

This option reflects the *one street* idea best with a powerful and consistent expression of streetscape elements and features and a strong linear street design. A consistent streetscape “kit of parts” is repeated throughout, while local character is reflected outside of the right-of-way.

This option provides repetition of linking streetscape features with strong design identity throughout. It has a focus on the street – ensuring multi-functional street requirements with facilities for transit, pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

This linear option meets existing Regional standards while being able to accommodate future development along Yonge Street.

A number of constant features, rules and special considerations for this option are provided below:

- Meets 4 lanes plus subway requirements
- Continuous bike lanes
- Incorporates on-street parking
- Overhead wires
- Consistent street trees
- Consistent sidewalk materials, pattern and colour
- Consistent intersection treatment
- Consistent lighting system – meets existing standards
- Consistent street furnishings throughout
- Allows for adjacent context



2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.4.2 Concept B: Linked Districts

This option emphasizes **one street** with a strong streetscape identity throughout, as well as expression of the unique character within each district. A consistent streetscape “family of parts” is defined with some variation of elements where necessary. The local character is reflected within the right-of-way. This option embraces innovation and “pushes the limits” of current streetscape standards. It accommodates multi-functional street requirements, going beyond existing standards.

The Linked Districts Concept establishes a strong and unique identity throughout, reflects the existing context of Yonge Street, and embraces and informs future development along Yonge with value added.

A number of constants, rules and special considerations for this option are provided below:

- Meets 4 lanes plus subway requirements
- Continuous, protected bike lanes
- On-street parking, where appropriate
- Overhead wires are buried
- Major street tree structure with variation by context
- Consistent sidewalk palette with variation by context
- Hierarchy of intersection treatments – primary, secondary, tertiary
- Lighting system provides a uniform and constant level of light and highlights pedestrian crossing at intersections
- Family of street furnishings responds to variations in streetscape functions and fabric
- Interpretive and educational story lines, potential themes include Yonge Street transportation history, Old Thornhill, urban environment, energy conservation, stormwater management, Don River
- Establishes criteria and informs future special features and development



2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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“EXPRESSION AND DIVERSITY”



ROYAL ORCHARD BLVD.

LANGSTAFF RD.

HIGHWAY 407/ETR

HIGH TECH RD.

BANTRY AVE.

2. Conceptual Streetscape Options

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2.4.3 Evaluation and Preferred Concept

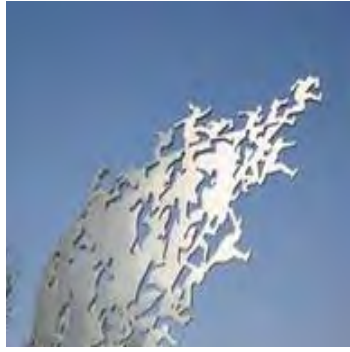
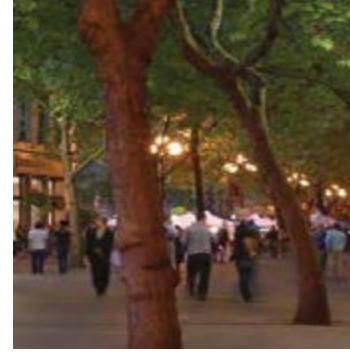
The two concepts were further developed – Concept A: Linear Concept and Concept B: Linked Districts Concept for detailed examination and evaluation. It should be noted that the two conceptual options are not mutually exclusive – there is opportunity to utilize elements from both concepts to create the most appropriate and responsive ultimate streetscape plan for Yonge Street. These concepts were then presented to the Project Core Team in December 2010. The preferred concept, as selected by the Project Core Team, will build upon the design of Option 2: Linked Districts Concept as the basis for the development of the Streetscape Master Plan. This concept provides more opportunities for an active and animated streetscape and associated community development with the potential to be more sustainable and renewable into the future. As well, with this concept Old Thornhill can maintain and preserve its heritage character as other areas change over time.

Other important points regarding Option 2 that factored significantly in the evaluation process include the following aspects:

- A phased approach to hydro pole / line burial should be considered – however, if they are to remain, make them a part of the streetscape and if they can be buried in the future, allow for pre-planning of conduit with other underground infrastructure as the subway is planned and developed.
- The bridge over the Don River offers a significant opportunity for the collaboration of various disciplines (architects, engineers, landscape architects, ecologists, artists, etc.) to develop a point of synthesis for design along the streetscape. A design competition could be held for this component.

The preferred concept is further developed into the draft Streetscape Master Plan, as described in Section 3.0 of this report. The adjacent chart summarizes and describes the components of the two detailed concepts.

Category	Concept A - 'Linear/ One Street' <i>Meets high quality standards</i>		Concept B – 'Linked Districts' <i>Pushes the limits with innovation</i>
ROADWAY	Pre-Subway	6 Lanes (as now) + Bikes	6 Lanes (as now)
	Long Term	4 Lanes plus median, where necessary	4 Lanes plus median, where necessary
ON-STREET PARKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yonge Steeles • Old Thornhill • New Thornhill • Richmond Hill Centre 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Thornhill • New Thornhill • Richmond Hill Centre
BIKE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated • Continuous 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated / Protected • Continuous • Location varies
MEDIAN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No median 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Median (selected locations) • North end - BRT • South end - bracket
BLVD. PAVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous material, colour and pattern throughout 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common family of materials • Urban brail system • Express districts with variation of colour, scale + pattern
OVERHEAD WIRES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain / Relocate / Integrate 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buried
LIGHTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single solution throughout (meets standards) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common theme • Variation at districts + thresholds
STREET TREES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single solution throughout with/ species, planters location 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent locations • Variation at districts + thresholds
STREET FURNITURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single / Standard solution throughout that integrates with existing system • Consistent with York Region system 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent family that integrates with existing system • Distinctive Yonge Street signature • Variation at districts + thresholds
SIGNAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single solution throughout that integrates with existing package 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent family that integrates with existing package • Distinctive Yonge Street signature • Variation at districts and thresholds
PUBLIC ART	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet current standards at project scale 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major 'consolidated' funding approach • Maximize impact at selected locations
PLACE MAKING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Places outside ROW 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Places within and outside ROW



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3.1 Functional Street Design Considerations

3.1.1 Philosophy and Approach

The street design for the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan will become a place that people will “travel to” rather than “travel through” as the implementation of the subway becomes a reality. It will combine the functional requirements of street design in an urban setting with the qualitative elements that ensure the street is accessible, becomes a destination both day and night and creates vibrant social spaces that define community focus. The function and nature of Yonge Street will change substantially once the proposed subway is completed. York Region’s “Transit FIRST” philosophy that the automobile is secondary is emphasized here.

The nature of Yonge Street will be extremely different in the future. Traffic volumes will remain stable over time with increased population density off-set by the implementation of the subway and changing traffic type (less buses and automobiles resulting from the implementation of the subway, as well as an increase of pedestrians and cyclists).

KEY OBJECTIVES

- Maintain Bold, Sustainable, Achievable Vision Principles
- Facilitate Yonge Street becoming a “place”
- Increase “universal accessibility” of Yonge Street corridor
- Increase “connectivity” along and across Yonge Street at pedestrian, bicycling, and vehicular scales
- Balance functional needs of corridor, including:
 - o Movement of people, vehicles, and goods
 - o Development opportunities
 - o Neighbourhood accessibility/mobility
 - o Business and historic characters

KEY CHALLENGES

- Provide basic 4 lane regional road corridor
- Provide a continuous protected bicycling facility from Richmond Hill Centre to Toronto generally along Yonge Street
- Provide quality pedestrian realm along entire length of study area
- Increase East-West linkages between Vaughan and Markham sides of Yonge Corridor
- “Urbanize” Yonge Street within the study area through strategically located on-street parking and reduced dimensions of right-of-way elements (lanes, daylighting triangles, corner radii, etc.).

KEY PRINCIPLES

- Basic 4 lanes of vehicular traffic regional road corridor
- Protected (i.e., buffered) bicycle lanes on Yonge Street
- On-street parking within ‘bays’ in strategic locations
- Minimize pedestrian crossing distances at signalized junctions
- Increase Signalized junctions/pedestrian crossing opportunities – consider adopting City of Toronto minimum spacing criteria of 215 metres (similar to some existing conditions along corridor)
- Adopt reduced lane dimensions (3.3 metres), daylighting provisions (5 to 10 metres triangles or radii), corner radii (7.5 metre radii or less)
- Eliminate Centre Left Turn lane along corridor, where appropriate - maintain left turn lanes at signalized intersections
- Adopt Transition Period plans for 6 Lane and 4 Lane sections (for “without Subway” to “with Subway” conditions)

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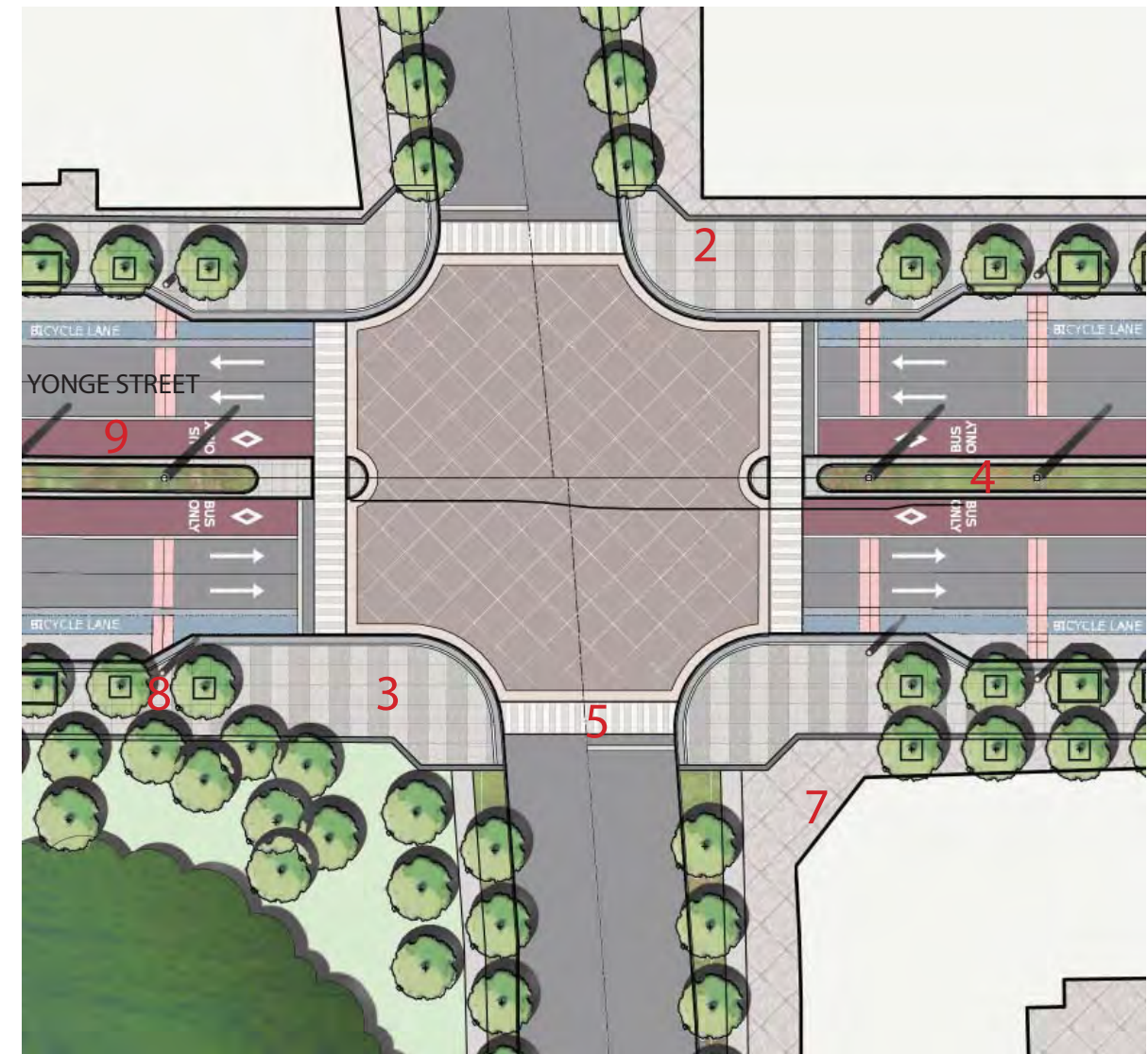
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3.1.2 Typical Intersections

- 1. Private Realm Landscape Area
- 2. Minimum Sight Triangles Protected
- 3. Specialty Paving
- 4. Landscaped Median
- 5. Pedestrian Crosswalks
- 6. Bus Stop Location
- 7. Pedestrian Access to Ground Level Retail, Colonnades, etc.
- 8. Street Furniture - benches, trash receptacles, lighting
- 9. BRT Lanes



Typical Intersection



Typical Intersection with Bus Rapid Transit Lanes (BRT)

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3.1.3 Subway Stations

Subway stations are key nodes in the urban fabric where way-finding devices, transitional spaces, and public meeting places coexist. They are key points of entering or exiting a neighbourhood and therefore have a major stake in how that neighbourhood's identity is represented. As such, the quality and design of their facilities and public open spaces should be informed by their immediate context so that they can act as concentrated portals to the character and identity of a particular area. In highly urban settings with fairly tight and consistent street walls (i.e., Yonge and Steeles), the incorporation of subway facilities into private building development sites is recommended. This would encourage the casual and transit related pedestrian activity to interact with the street edge and animate the ground floor. On dedicated sites in which standalone above ground buildings are possible (i.e. Clark Station) the design of these pavilions will be of utmost importance for the reasons stated above. Integration of these subway stations into the streetscape vernacular is paramount in order to create consistency.

In addition to these considerations, particular attention in all cases must be paid to the building's connection to the street. Buildings should be easily accessible as well as extremely visible to both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. A small public square connecting each station with the boulevard is encouraged. This would create a visual break in the street wall that can focus attention towards the building itself, giving it a prominent address as well as providing a public meeting place that is supported by bicycle parking and street furniture.

3.1.4 Bus Stops

Bus stops are minor nodes in the urban fabric that are also public meeting places, however on a smaller scale than subway stations. Bus stops along Yonge Street will utilize Viva / YRT standards to ensure consistency with the Viva / YRT identity. Bus stops shall be implemented on the far side of an intersection in proximity to the present bus stop locations. This will help facilitate the continuous flow of traffic by enabling more vehicular right turn movements at signalized intersections on red lights.

3.1.5 Vehicular Traffic

With the implementation of the proposed Yonge Street Subway Extension in the long term, Yonge Street will become a multi-functional urban street shifting the emphasis from a primarily vehicular traffic corridor to create a corridor with a streetscape that places a greater emphasis on community social spaces that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly.

Geometric design standards will be reduced (including lane widths, corner radii, intersections and daylighting triangles) while meeting York Region's minimum standards, to accommodate anticipated traffic. A more urban speed limit is recommended (50 kilometres per hour versus the current 60 kilometres per hour). This speed limit reduction will help reduce speed differential between vehicles and bicycles. This will ultimately create a balance between vehicles, transit, cyclists and pedestrians. A reduced speed limit will also impact the location of utility poles, allowing them to be located closer to the street, creating a wider pedestrian boulevard.

3.1.6 Vehicular Access

Vehicular access to and from Yonge Street will be limited. It is strongly recommended that access to corner lots be from the side streets. While mid-block driveways should be consolidated where applicable to increase traffic flow. Rear lanes should also be explored in appropriate locations for greater permeability into the community and access points off of Yonge Street.



Public plaza and meeting place outside subway station entrance is recommended

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3.1.7 Pedestrian Boulevard

The Streetscape Master Plan is designed to accommodate for reduced traffic speeds, safe driveway crossings and a safe buffer area between the vehicular and pedestrian zones to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists are prominent users of the street, along with automobiles. This will promote York Region's "Transit First" initiative for Yonge Street.

The pedestrian boulevard is recommended to be generally 5 metres; this may vary depending on lay-by parking facilities; the boulevard would be between 3 - 5.5 metres. The location of lay-by parking needs to be weighed against boulevard space and private setback will also need to be taken into consideration when contemplating the implementation of lay-by parking in any particular location along Yonge Street.

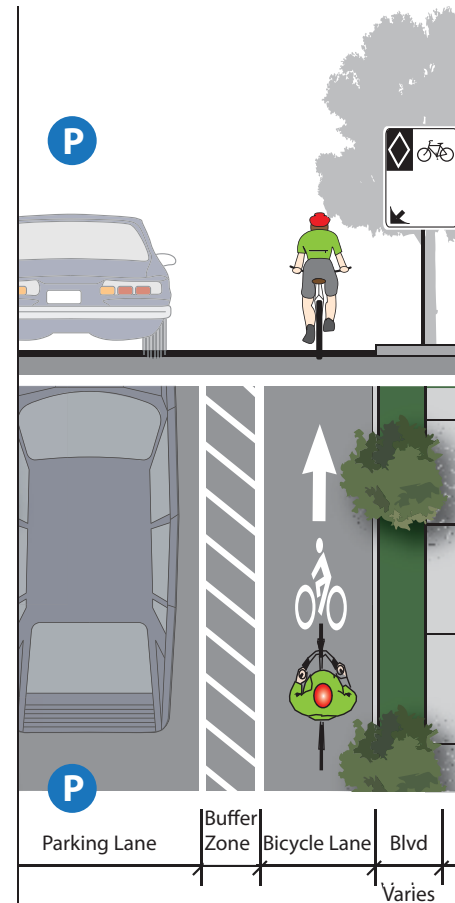
In Old Thornhill, it should be noted that the pedestrian boulevard cross-section will not be extruded along due to the presence of existing trees. Trees of good condition will kept in place and the boulevard will have variations to acknowledge this local character.

3.1.8 Cycling Facilities

Appropriate dimensions for cycling facilities along Yonge Street are recommended to be 1.75 metres wide with 0.75 metre buffer zone between bicycle lane and the vehicular travel lane. The recommended configuration of cycling facilities is a buffered bicycle lane, consistent along the length of the corridor. Two bicycle lane options are contemplated. The preferred option (Option 2) included placing a buffered bicycle lane between the curb and the right travelled lane - as is illustrated below.

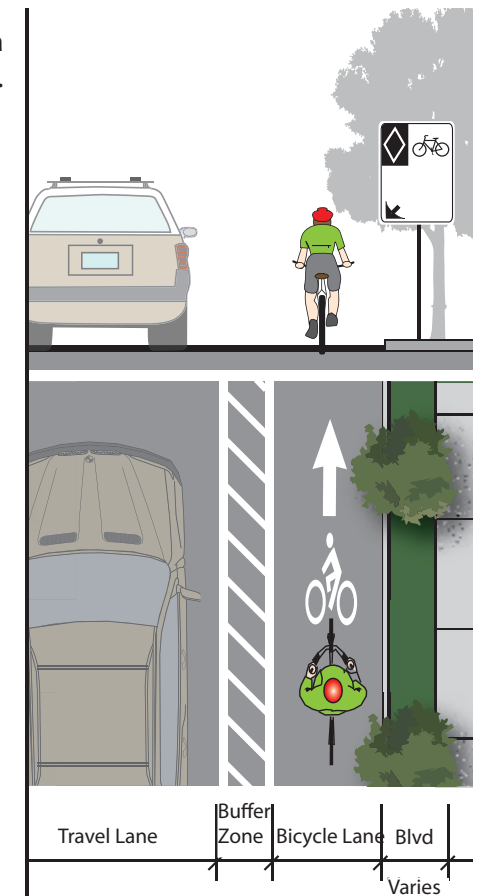
Option 1

Bicycle lane protected by a row of parked cars and a buffer zone from the travel lane.



Option 2

Bicycle lane protected by a buffer zone from the travel lane.



(Diagrams from MMM Group draft report, Dec. 2010)

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3.2 Overall Concept Description

Yonge Street is the social, cultural and economic Main Street of York Region – it is the binding element that stitches the three municipalities, their various communities and neighbourhoods along its length into a continuous and harmonious corridor. As such, it is envisioned that the development of an integrated streetscape plan that is bold, sustainable and achievable will enhance the overall quality of life in York Region. The concept is based on the understanding that a subway will be constructed throughout the study area from Finch Station to Richmond Hill Centre.

The Master Plan concept is based on the “Linked Districts” concept option. The concept creates a vision for the South Yonge Street corridor that:

- Reinforces and strengthens the notion of a continuous unified street
- Recognizes the diversity and individual character area expression along the corridor
- Embraces multi-functional street requirements that integrates public transit, enhanced pedestrian and cycling systems
- Supports flexibility relative to traffic management
- Establishes a consistent, unified design vocabulary for streetscape components including paving materials, street lights, tree planting, furniture and wayfinding systems
- Distinguishes local district heritage and connects with adjacent communities
- Promotes innovation in green infrastructure, sustainability and technology
- Informs future development to create vibrant and active streetscape edges
- Creates value in the public realm that supports and encourages private development
- Establishes and supports new cutting-edge standards in operations and maintenance

3.3 Streetscape Features and Experience

3.3.1 Approach

Streetscapes are experienced in several ways and relate to how and at what speed the user moves along the corridor. For example, the streetscape is sometimes experienced as one small local area at a time, where the user moves from home to the subway station, does some local shopping on the way home in the evening or on weekends within one of the local districts. At other times, the streetscape is experienced as a series of “episodes” or “events” as one moves along the street whether as a pedestrian on the sidewalk, as a cyclist in the protected cycling lane, as a motorist in a car, as a passenger waiting for or riding on a bus. All these modes offer a variety of ways to experience the street and all offer different experiences of the same spaces.

The streetscape concept for Yonge Street creates a cohesive, yet diverse streetscape experience for all users. This is achieved through the use of consistent streetscape elements and components that articulate continuity together with the unique features of each of the character districts that punctuate and define the “episodes” along the street.

Cohesiveness is achieved through the identification of a strong streetscape design framework that is articulated through a series of consistent streetscape features and design elements including:

- Generous pedestrian sidewalks with consistent surface materials
- Protected bicycle lanes that are delineated with a separate lane and surface treatment
- Street lighting that creates a strong design statement both in form and in lighting effect
- Street tree planting that provides shelter from the street and shaded sidewalks for a comfortable pedestrian experience
- Street furniture and signage that creates a distinctive design statement in terms of colour, form and location

Diversity is achieved through the recognition of the unique character districts with appropriate design expression for each. Given that the character areas are unique, different design strategies are required for each:

- Vibrant heritage areas, such as Old Thornhill, are to be protected and enhanced through recognition of the village character and scale.
- Urban redevelopment areas, such as the Yonge Steeles Centre and the Richmond Hill Centre are to be articulated through development of higher density urban streetscape and place making strategies.
- Infrastructure components, such as the CN bridge, the Don Valley bridge and the 407 Interchange, will clearly express their function and contribute to the Yonge Street experience.

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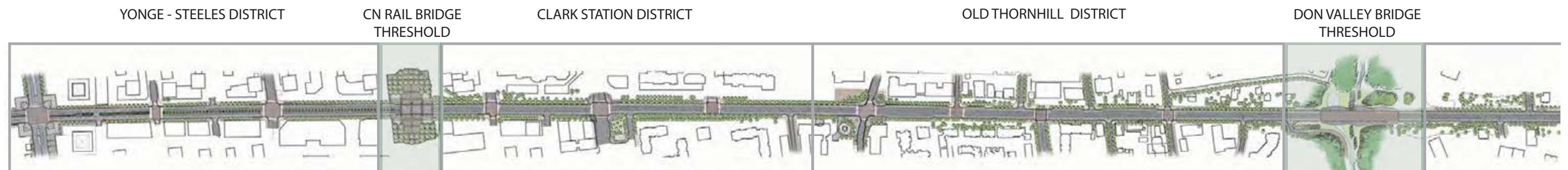
3.3.2 Links and Districts Structure

The structuring elements of the concept include links, thresholds and districts. The links represent the continuous features of the streetscape – those features that are consistent throughout the study area from Steeles Avenue to Bantry Avenue such as street lights, protected cycle lanes, broad sidewalks and street furniture.

The thresholds represent the major infrastructure components that act in many cases as the transitional features between districts – the CN bridge, Don Valley bridge and the 407 / Hydro corridor. These major infrastructure pieces are opportunities to create special “episodes” or experiences along Yonge Street as part of the public realm. It is recognized that these features are created for other functional purposes, but offer interesting possibilities to carefully integrate them with the streetscape design in unique ways that may include special lighting, pedestrian viewing, interpretation and public art.

The districts are the core communities along Yonge Street – both those areas that are existing and to be protected and those that are proposed for redevelopment.

Districts Structure Plan



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3.3.3 Distinct Character Areas Philosophy

Three strategies are required to create distinct identity for the character areas and thresholds along Yonge Street – one that builds on existing character in some districts, one that creates appropriate new character in other districts and one that leverages the opportunities inherent in the infrastructure thresholds.

Strategy 1 - Protect and Enhance Existing Character

Further developing the existing character areas such as the Clark Station district, Old Thornhill and New Thornhill districts to enhance their distinct characters will advance the overall streetscape identity and provide variation and along the corridor.

Strategy 2 - Create New Character

Developing urban character treatments for places along Yonge Street that are currently slated for major re-development including the Steeles to CN Rail Bridge district, the Longbridge/Langstaff district and the Richmond Hill Centre will also be important to the overall continuity and success of the streetscape plan. Utilizing a range of consistent strategies and techniques for these challenging areas will help to unify Yonge Street throughout the study area.

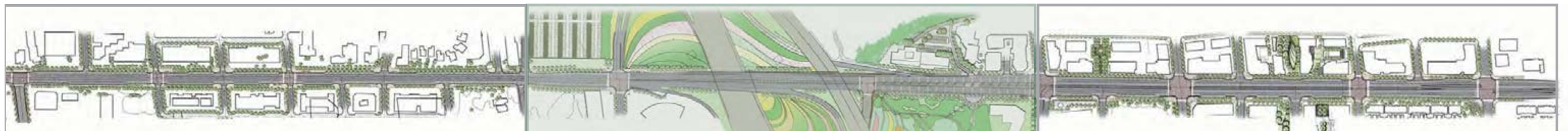
Strategy 3 - Leverage Infrastructure

In addition, the ability to “leverage the opportunities” related to the major infrastructure threshold components represents the other important strategy. The CN bridge offers the possibility of creating a much needed public space along Yonge Street. The Don River bridge provides excellent viewing into the natural areas of the valley as well as opportunities for pedestrian access to the valley. The Highway 407/Hydro corridor presents the chance to create a large scale, bold landscape expression.

NEW THORNHILL VILLAGE DISTRICT

HIGHWAY 407 / HYDRO LANDS THRESHOLD

RICHMOND HILL CENTRE DISTRICT



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3.3.4 Distinct Character Areas

3.3.4.1 Yonge - Steeles District

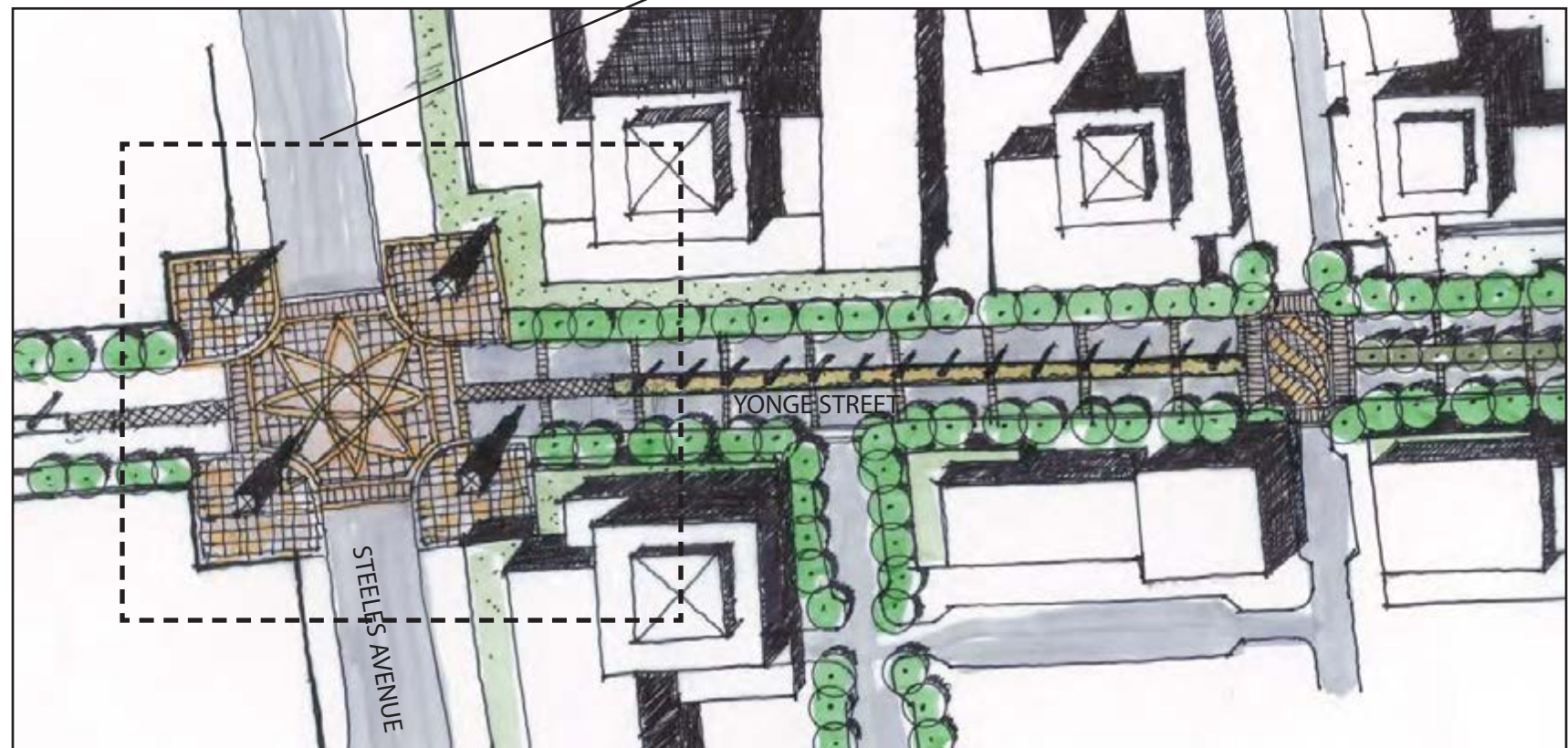
The Yonge-Steeles District represents a highly urban streetscape condition – one that is consistent with the proposed high density mixed use development on both sides of Yonge Street and a major underground transit node.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- A four-corners gateway expression with enhanced and generous at-grade urban pedestrian spaces flanking Yonge Street;
- Access to below-grade transit station and subway is integrated into proposed new development;
- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Left turn lane at Steeles Avenue with a special urban quality paved surface treatment;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions;
- Raised centre median that contains locations for a series of iconic vertical features and planting;
- Wide pedestrian sidewalks that provide a continuous urban quality paved surface compatible with at grade retail and building entrances;
- Large metropolitan-scale street trees planted flush to grade and in raised planters with generous subsurface growing medium zones, drainage and irrigation;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- No on-street parking on Yonge Street close to Steeles intersection;
- On-street parking is located on side streets;
- Off-street, structured parking is provided as part of new development;
- Access to new development sites is via side streets only.

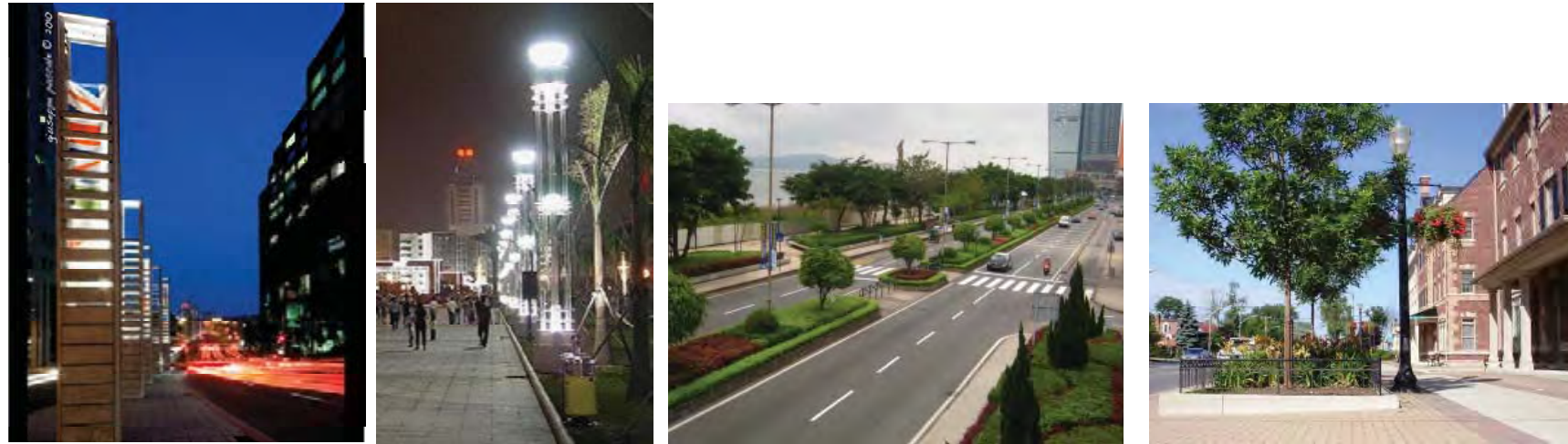
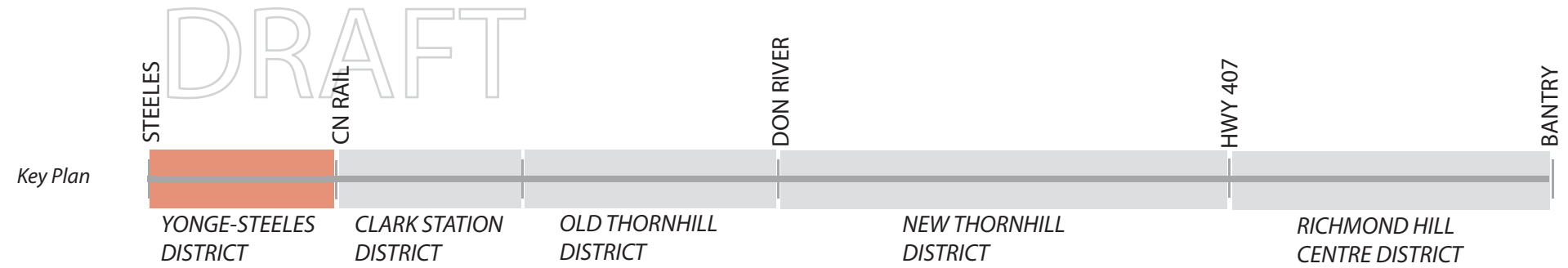


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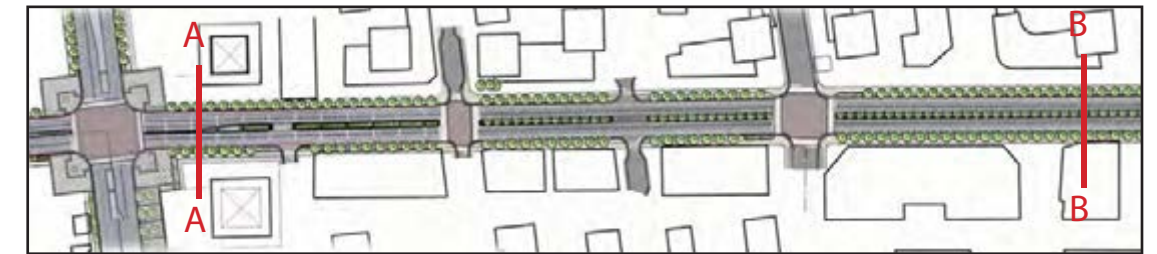


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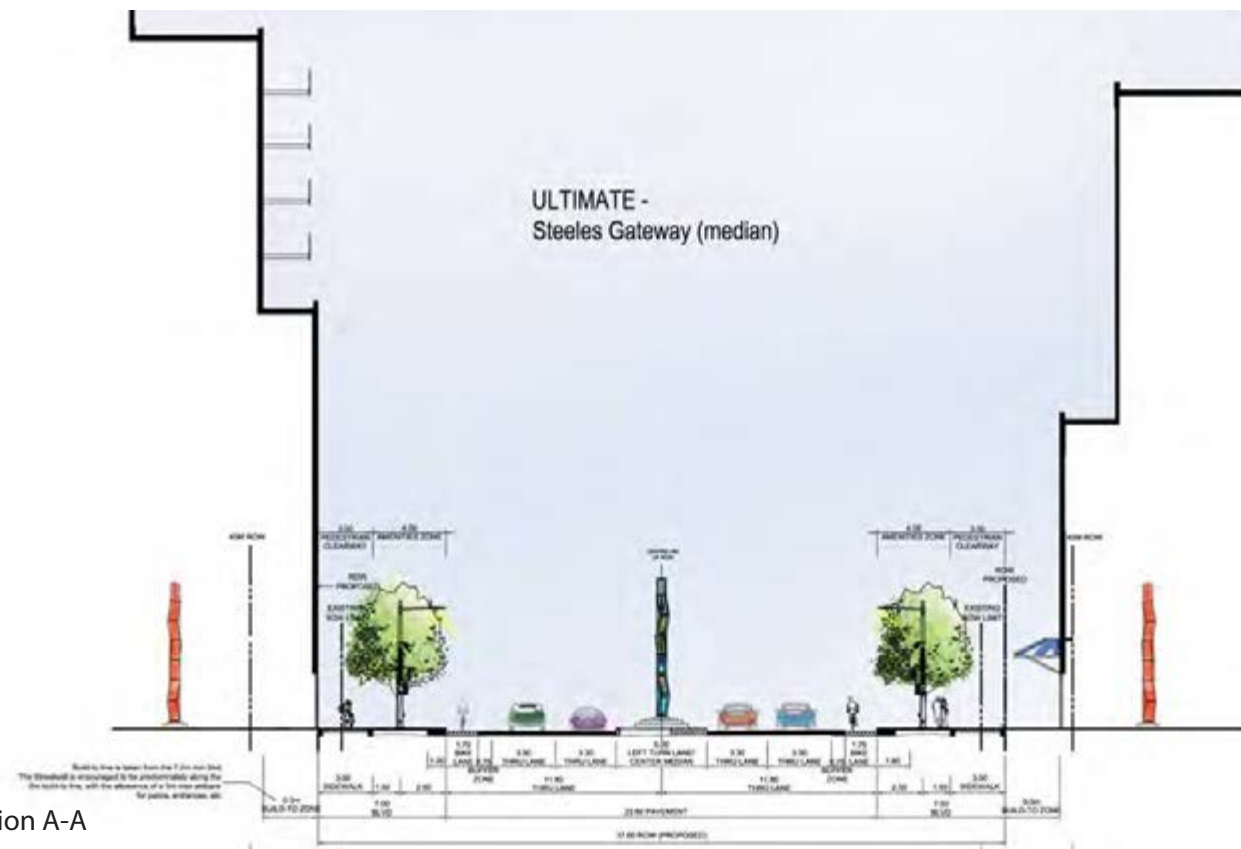
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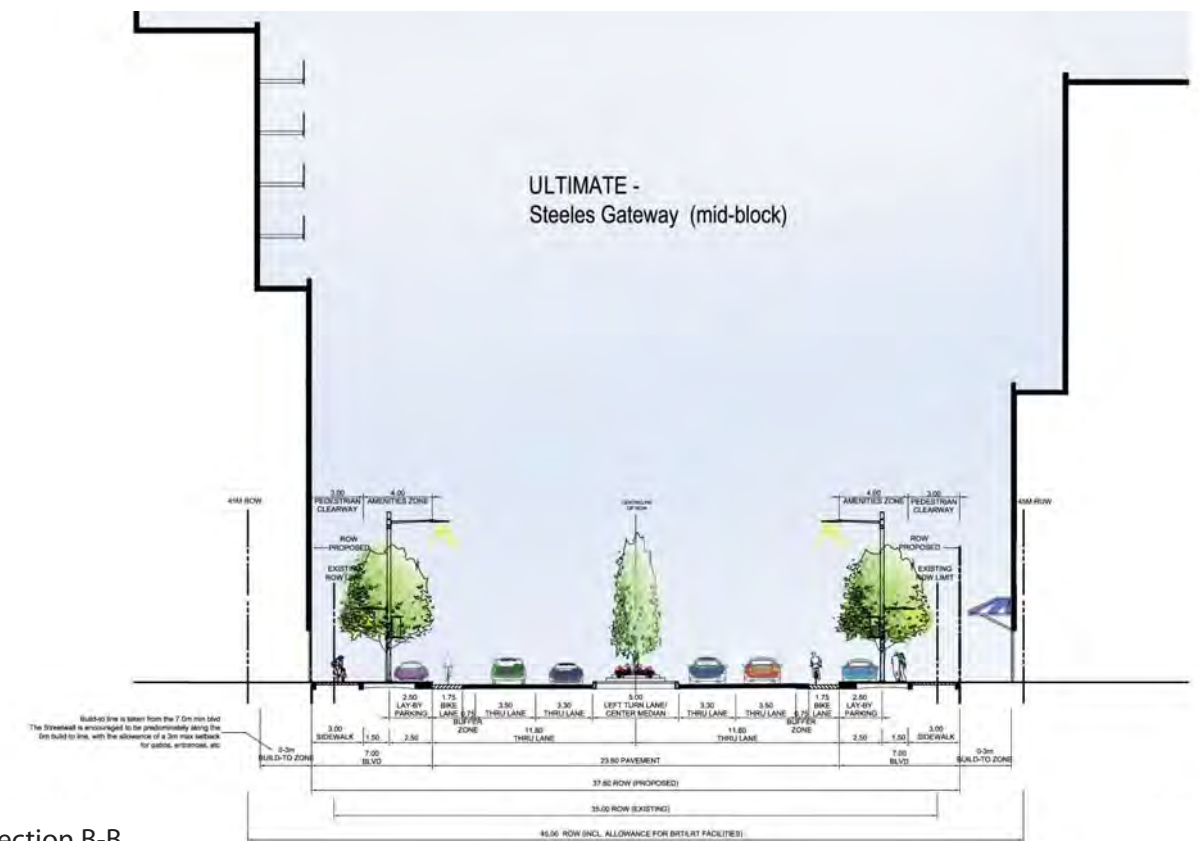
Precedent Images



Key Plan - Sections



Section A-A



Section B-B

3. Draft Master Plan

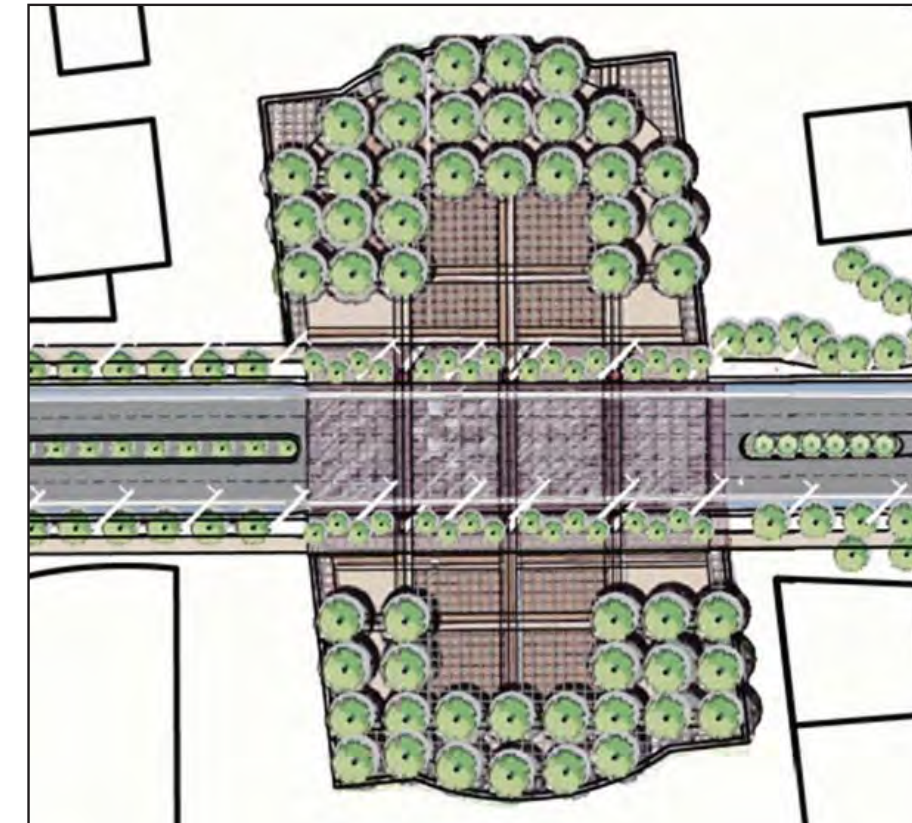
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3.3.4.2 CN Rail Bridge Threshold

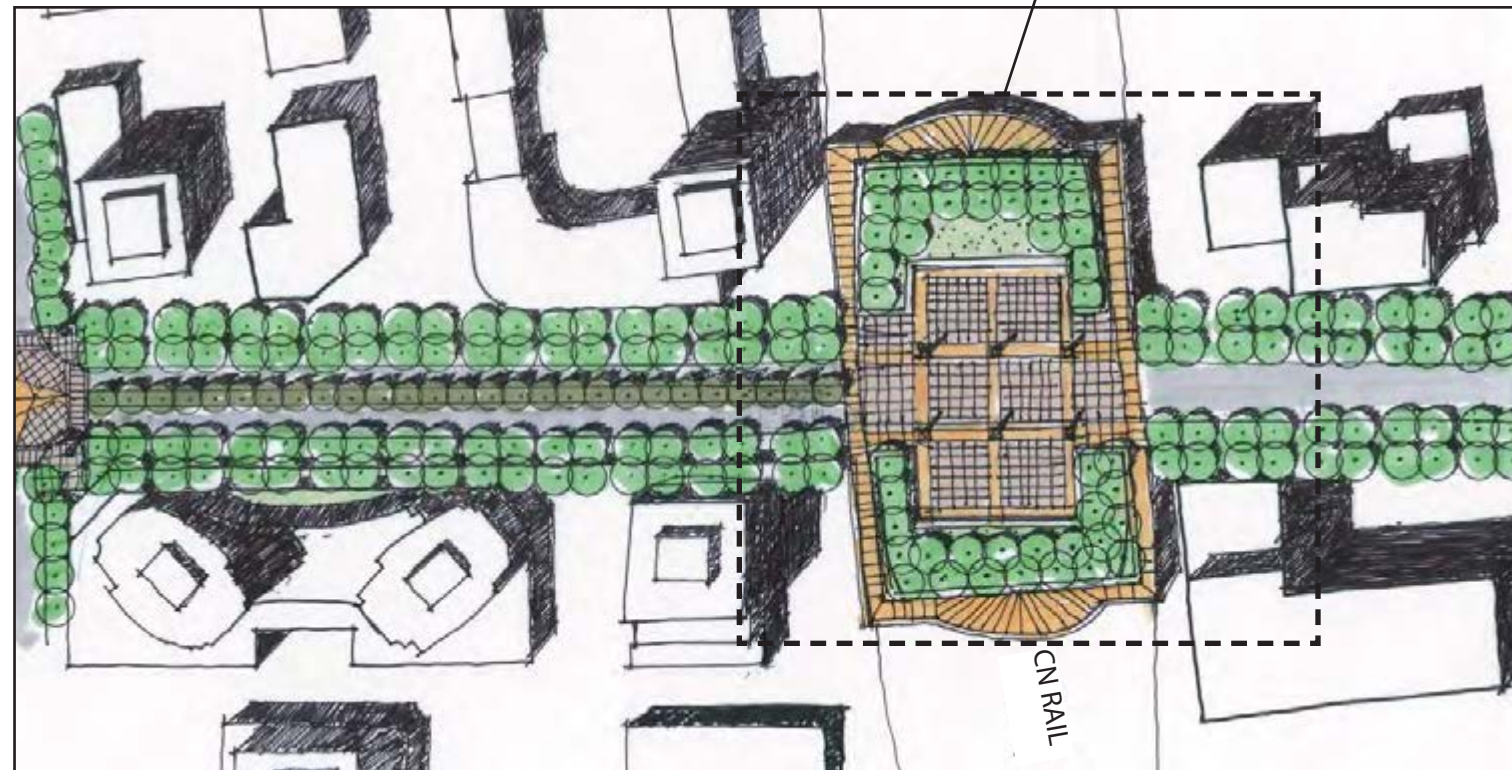
The CN Rail bridge is located close to the highest point of land near the south end of the study area. It crosses a deep cut with a single railway track below. The streetscape scheme in this area of Yonge Street envisions a major expansion of the pedestrian space immediately adjacent to Yonge Street on a decked area over the railway cut on both sides. The addition of a publicly accessible multi-use and programmable space in this zone represents a significant opportunity for much needed urban open space along the corridor.

Key features include:

- Continuity of the buffered bicycle lane and broad pedestrian sidewalks on both sides;
- Generous multi-use paved surfaces on both sides with appropriate street furniture;
- Raised “green-roof” planting demonstration areas with indigenous tree and shrub planting;
- Look out spaces and interpretive plaques.

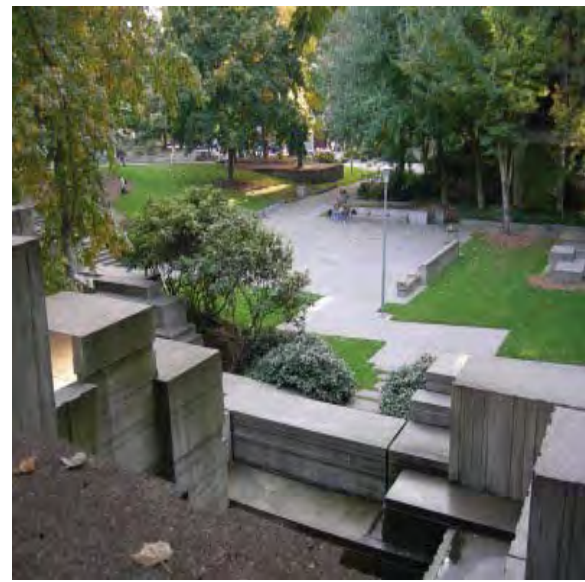
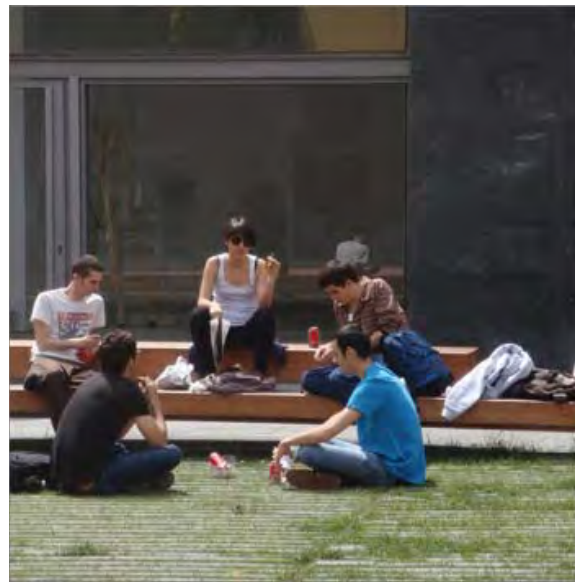
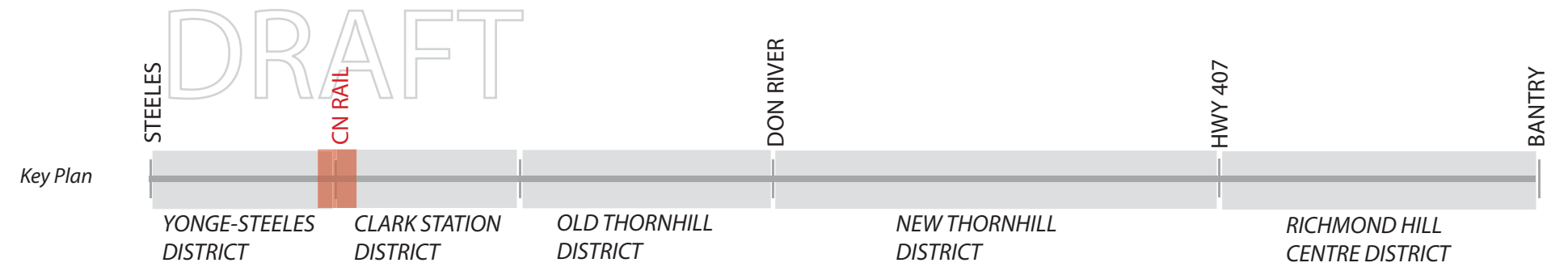


Detail Area



Context Sketch

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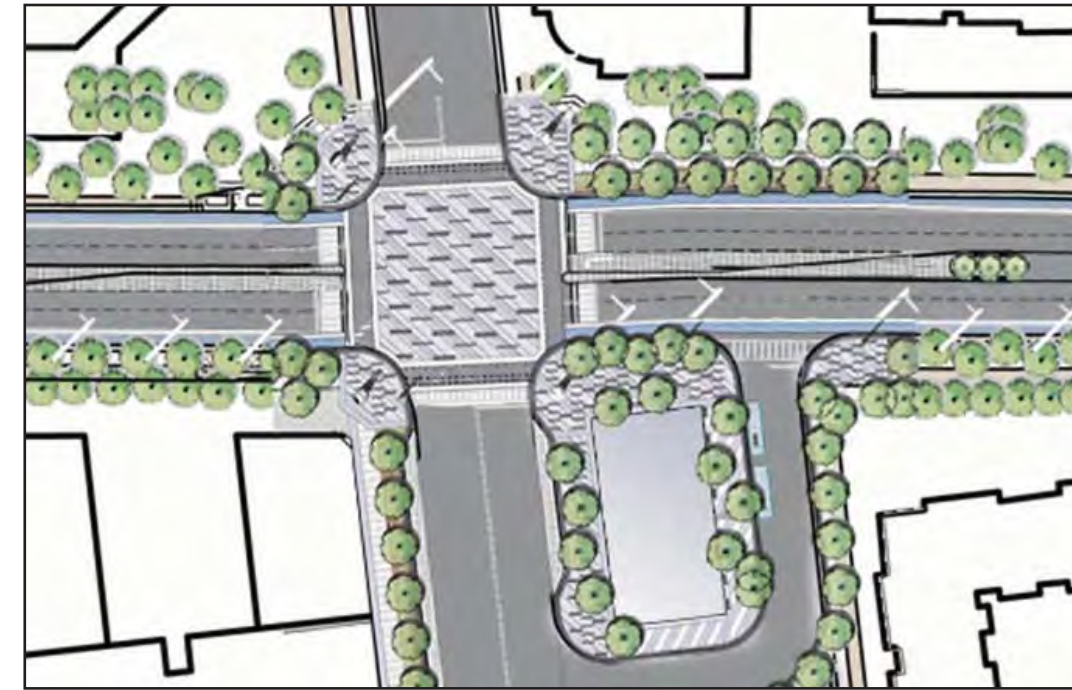
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3.3.4.3 Clark Station District

The streetscape concept for the Clark Station District of Yonge Street builds on the existing qualities of the medium to high density mixed use development with generous green setbacks from the street edge. Some new development is proposed in specific areas with tighter setbacks.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Access to the subway station at Clark is as a stand-alone building;
- Generous urban space adjacent to street at the Clark Subway Station;
- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions;
- Continuous pedestrian sidewalks separated from the traffic by generous green planting zones;
- Double rows of large and smaller scale street trees in at-grade and raised planters with generous subsurface growing medium zones, drainage and irrigation;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- No on-street parking on Yonge Street;
- On-street parking is located on side streets;
- Off-street, structured parking is provided as part of new development;
- Access to existing development is via Yonge Street;
- Access to new development sites is via side streets only.



Detail Area



Context Sketch

3. Draft Master Plan

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3.3.4.4 Old Thornhill District

The streetscape of the Old Thornhill District of Yonge Street builds on the heritage village character of the area, respecting existing scale and setbacks and supports the opportunity for social interaction within the community. The opportunity to create a public-private gateway expression that combines public open space and community activities at the public school / market area is contemplated in the concept.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions;
- Protection and accommodation of existing, mature street trees;
- Continuous pedestrian sidewalks separated from the on-street parking areas by street trees and planting areas;
- Single row of large and smaller scale street trees in at-grade and raised planters with generous subsurface growing medium zones, drainage and irrigation;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- On-street parking is accommodated in lay-by areas on both sides;
- Off-street surface parking is provided as part of a rear-lane access / parking configuration;
- Access to existing development is encouraged to move to the rear-lane configuration;
- Access to new development is encouraged via side streets only.

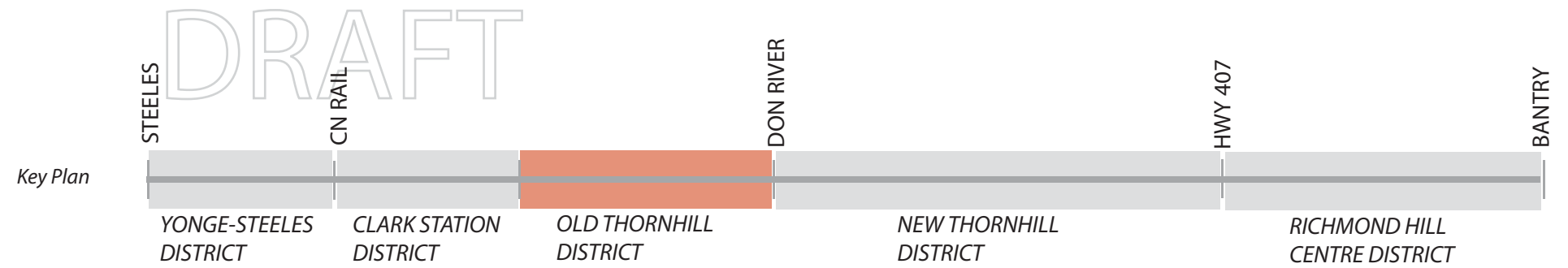


Detail Area



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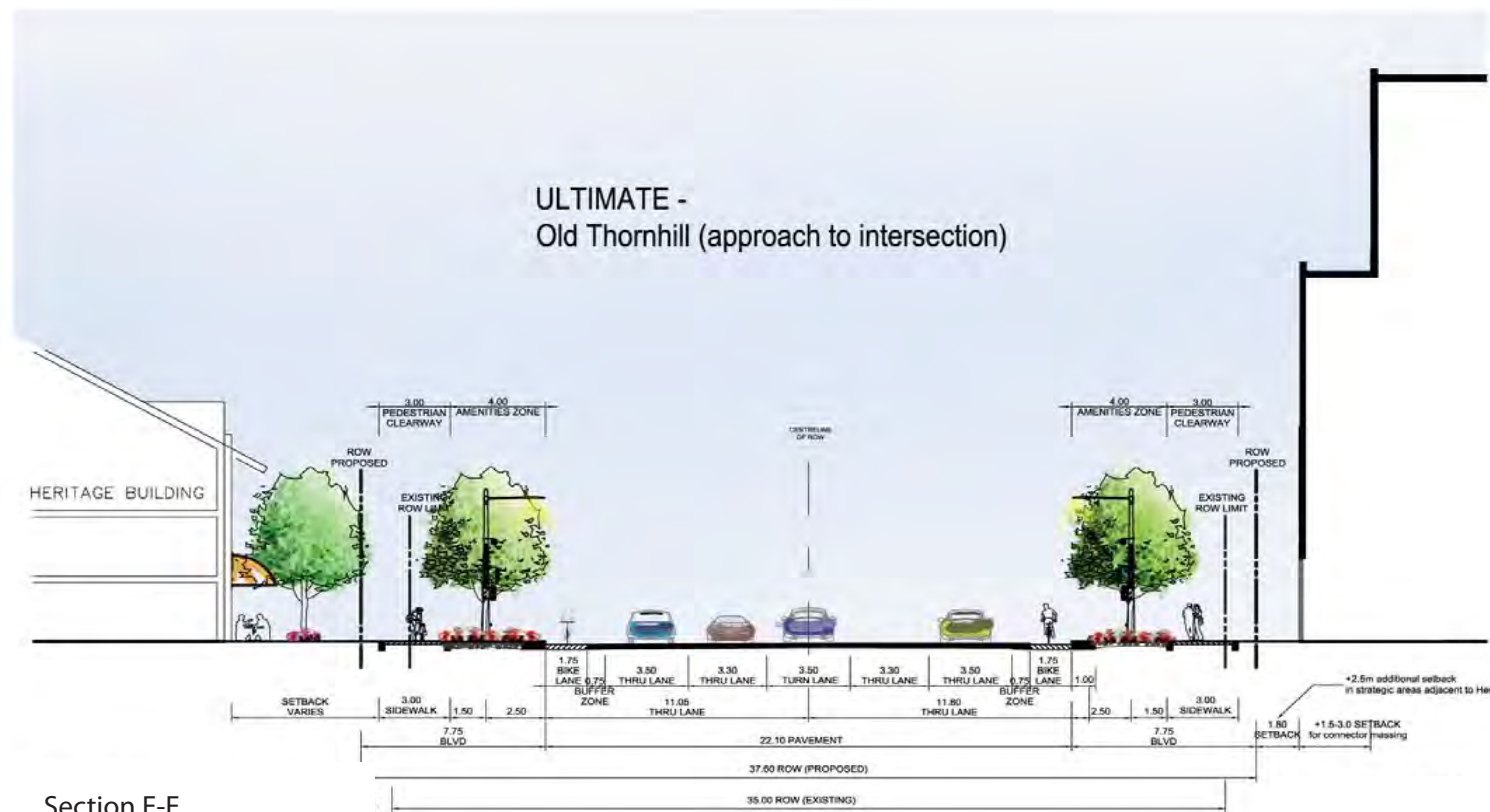
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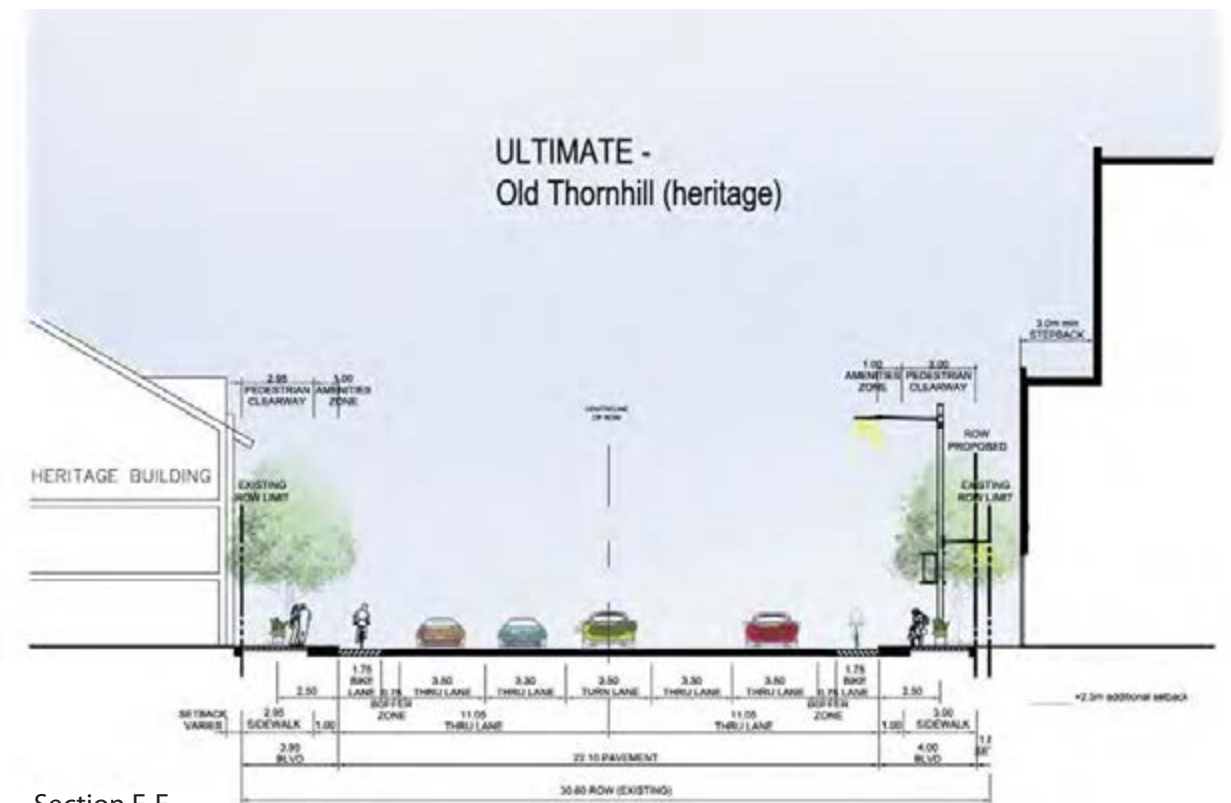
Precedent Images



Key Plan - Sections



Section E-E



Section F-F

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3.3.4.5 Don River Bridge Threshold - The Valley as Interpretive Gateway

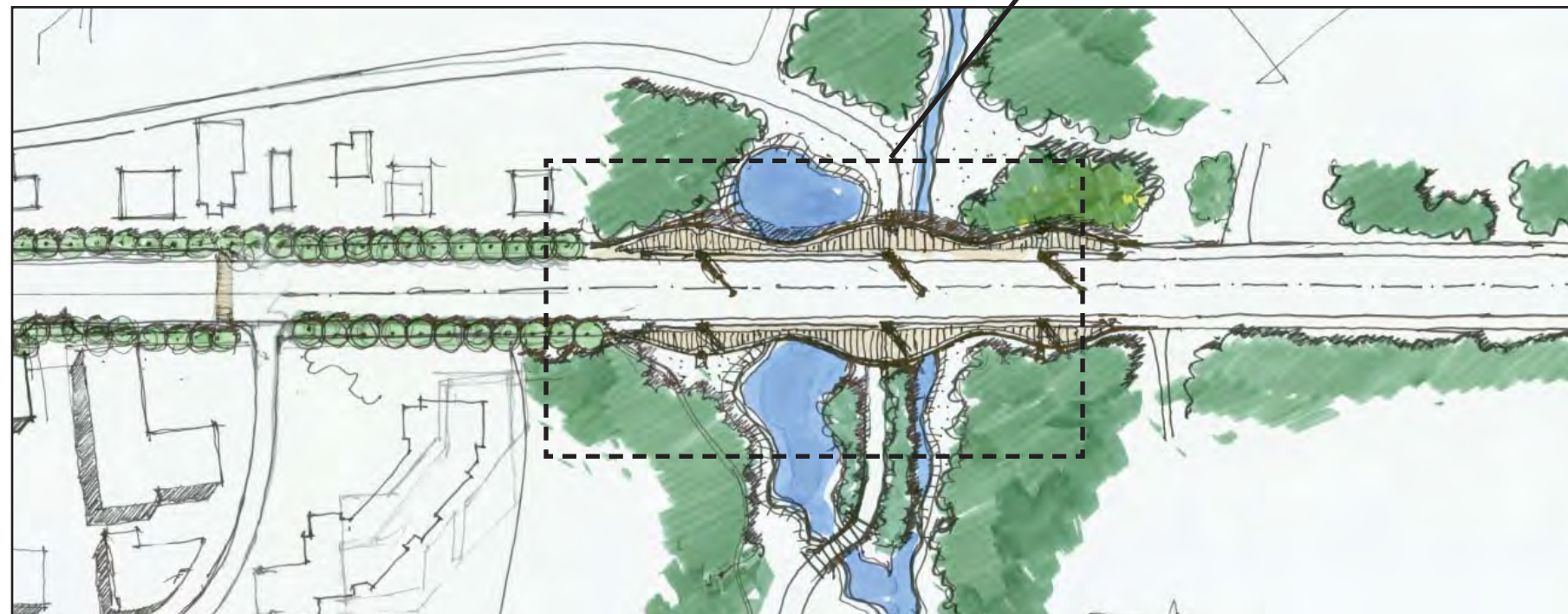
The Don River Bridge conveys Yonge Street across the Don River valley above the proposed subway line providing the opportunity for an expanded pedestrian surface deck flanking the roadway with overviews to the valley below, as well as exciting design expression for the bridge itself. As the streetscape transitions from Old Thornhill to New Thornhill the design themes for the bridge and valley edges represent opportunities to extend the natural forest qualities into these adjacent streetscape edges.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions - Optional physical separation may be preferred to conserve width across structure;
- Continuous pedestrian sidewalks separated from the street by the buffered bicycle lanes;
- Raised "green-roof" planting demonstration areas with indigenous tree and shrub planting;
- Demonstration of stormwater management strategies (lowest elevation along Yonge Street);
- Interpretation of ecological, historical and related story lines;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- No on-street parking is provided;
- Extension of the valley forests planting themes to connect with the streetscapes of Old and New Thornhill;
- Pedestrian access to valley lands.

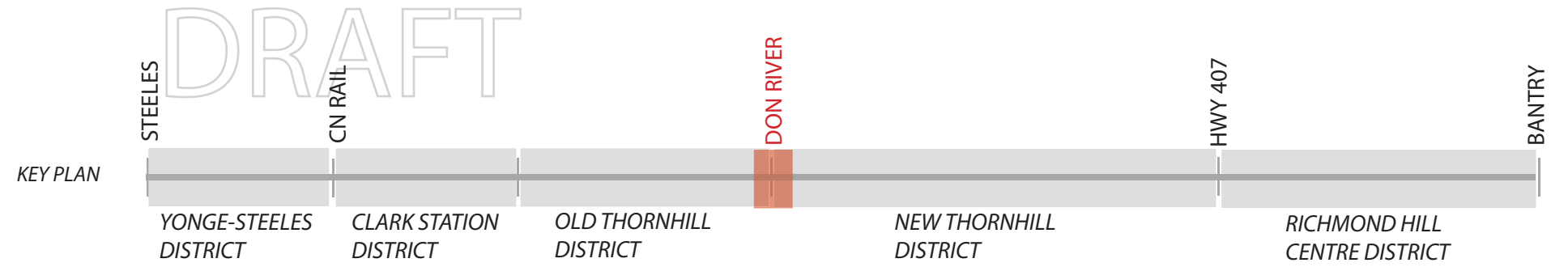


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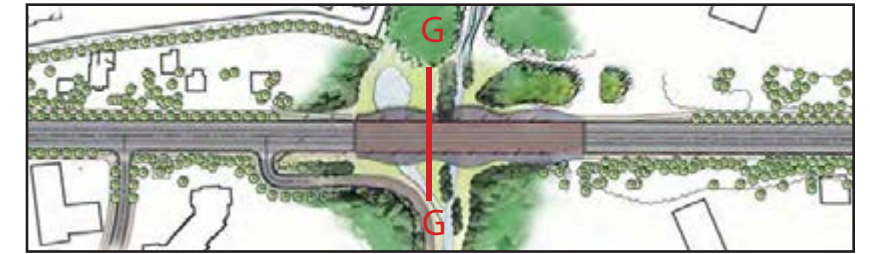


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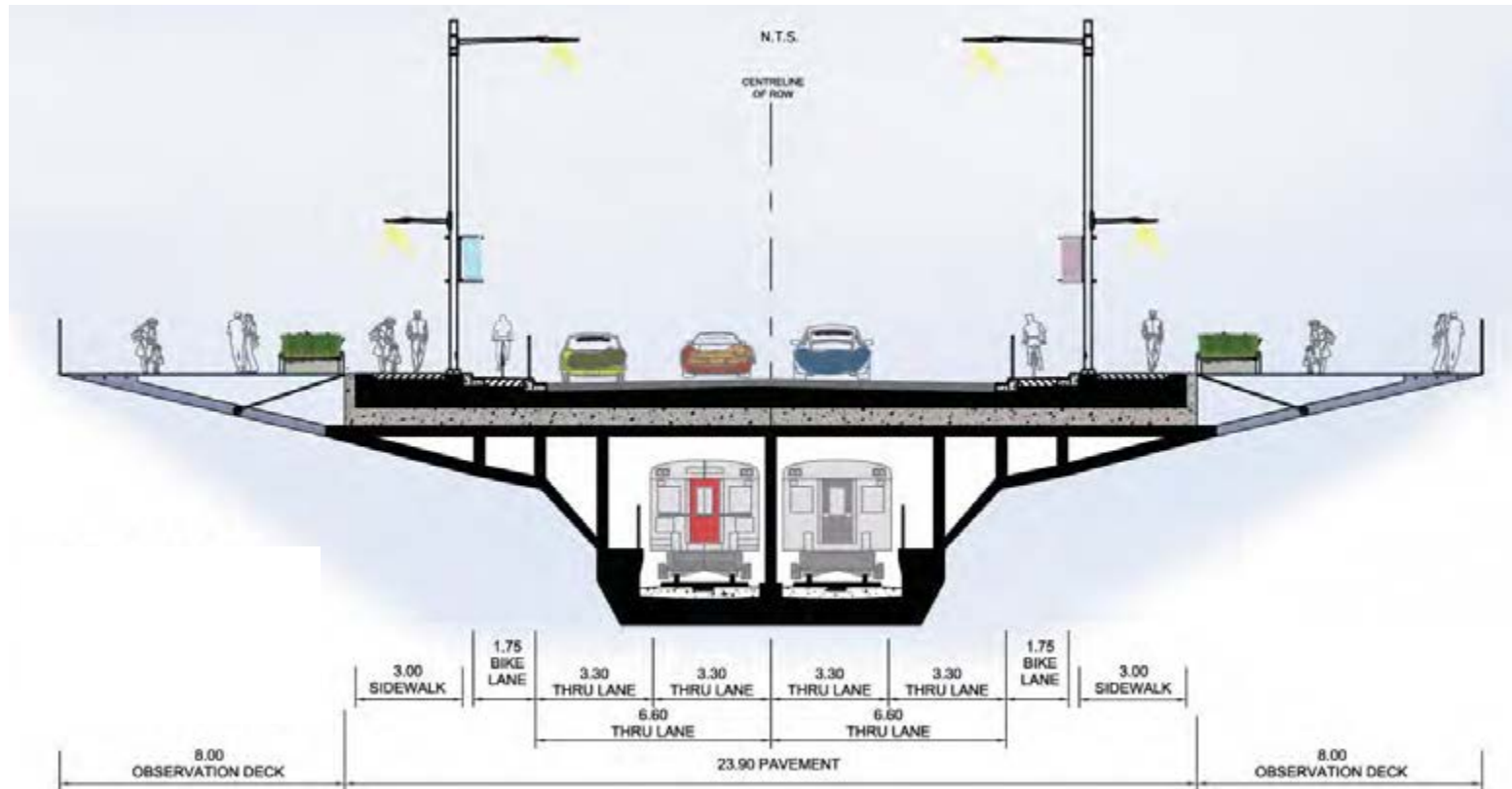
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Precedent Images



Key Plan - Sections



Section G-G

3. Draft Master Plan

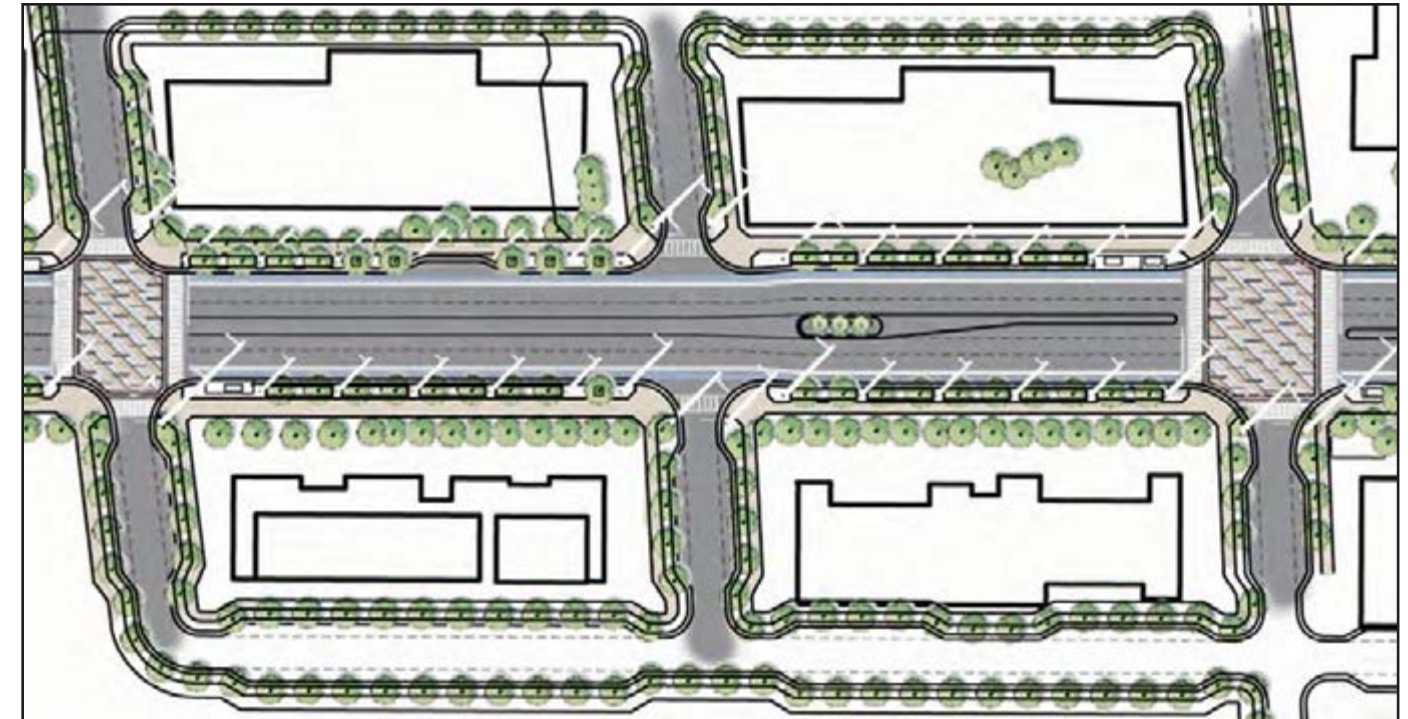
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3.3.4.6 New Thornhill Village District

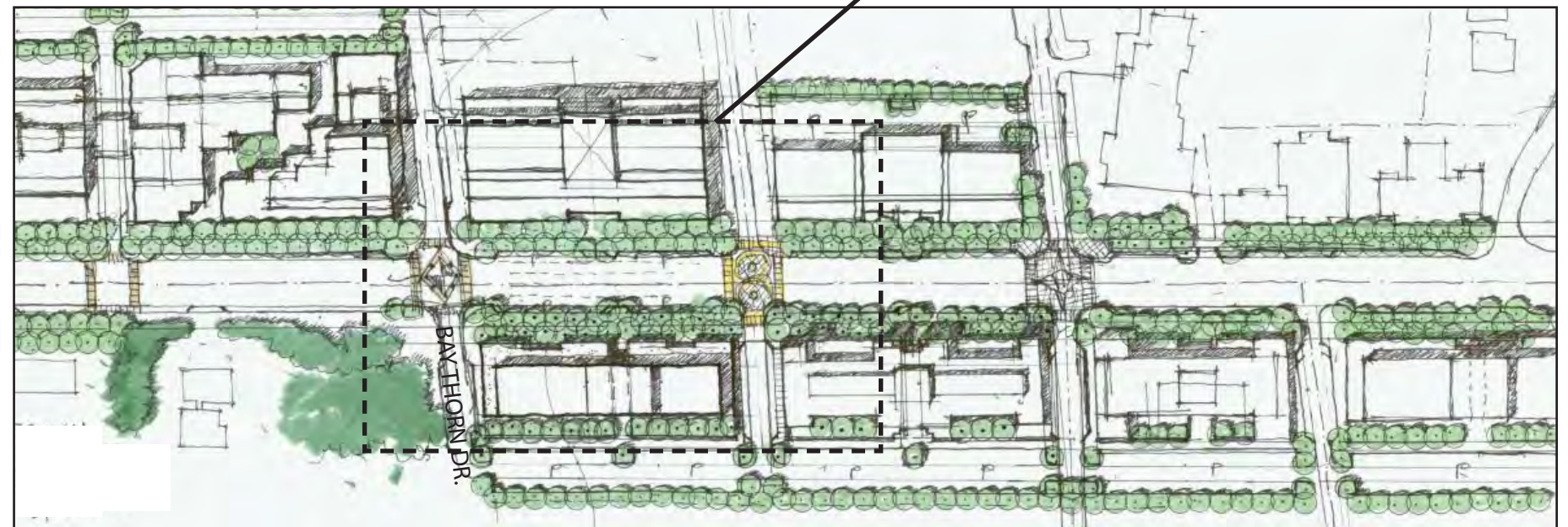
The streetscape for the New Thornhill Village District respects the existing valley edge community character and accommodates redevelopment opportunities that include street-oriented, medium density, mixed use development within a “green” framework.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions;
- Protection and accommodation of existing, mature street trees;
- Continuous pedestrian sidewalks separated from the on-street parking areas by street trees;
- Double rows of large and smaller scale street trees in at-grade and raised planters with generous subsurface growing medium zones, drainage and irrigation;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- On-street parking is accommodated in lay-by areas on both sides adjacent to retail areas;
- Off-street surface parking is provided as part of a rear-lane access / parking strategy;
- Access to existing development is encouraged to move to the rear-lane configuration;
- Access to new development is encouraged via side streets only.

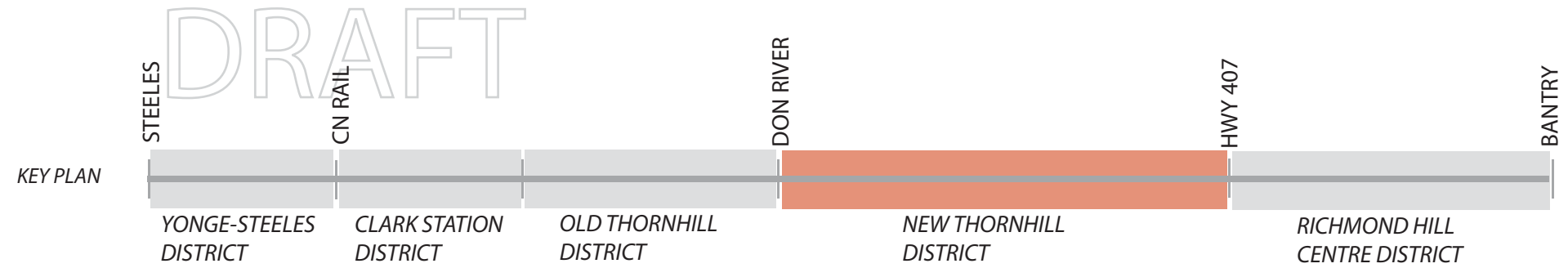


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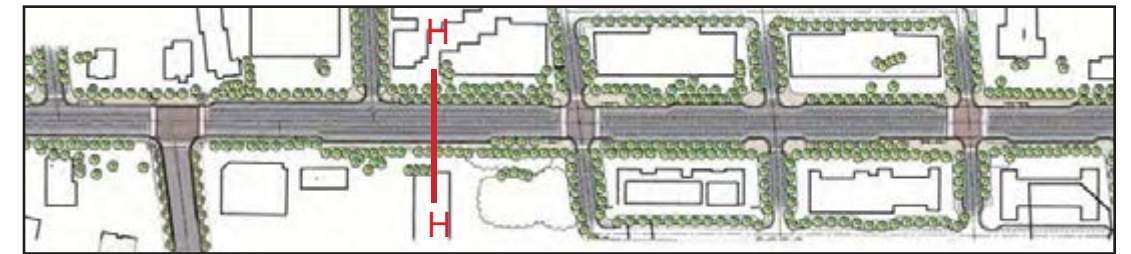


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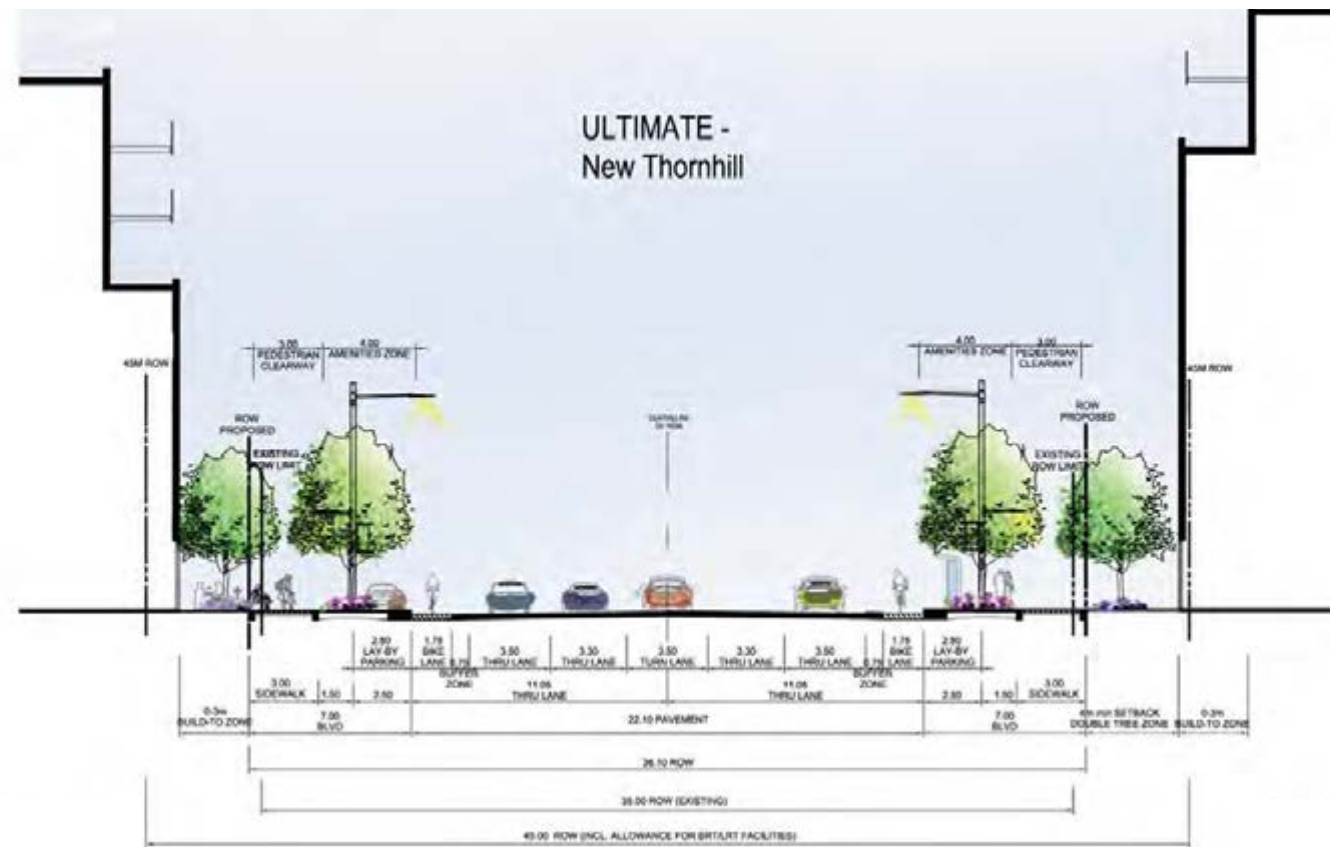
3. Draft Master Plan



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Key Plan - Sections



Section H-H

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3.3.4.7 Highway 407 / Hydro Lands Threshold

The streetscape of Yonge Street through the Highway 407 / Hydro Lands Threshold responds to the freeway scale and character of these large open landscape spaces. The roadway design adapts to the interchange geometry and access requirements while the continuous Yonge Street streetscape concourse treatments provide added safety and environmental enhancements for pedestrians and cyclists as well as opportunities for significant environmental public art installations.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Lane configuration is as existing for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways in both directions separated from traffic lanes;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces with special treatments under the overpass;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- No on-street parking is provided;
- Off-street commuter surface parking lot (1200-1500 cars) utilizing green strategies for stormwater management is provided within the Hydro lands on the west side of Yonge Street;
- Access to new development at the Langstaff Centre community is via Langstaff Road;
- Subway station at Langstaff is connected to the west side commuter parking lot via an underground pedestrian tunnel;
- Significant opportunities for large scale public art installations that are compatible with the regulatory requirements for Hydro transmission corridors and limited access highways;
- Large scale landscape development conveying the gateway expression to York Region.

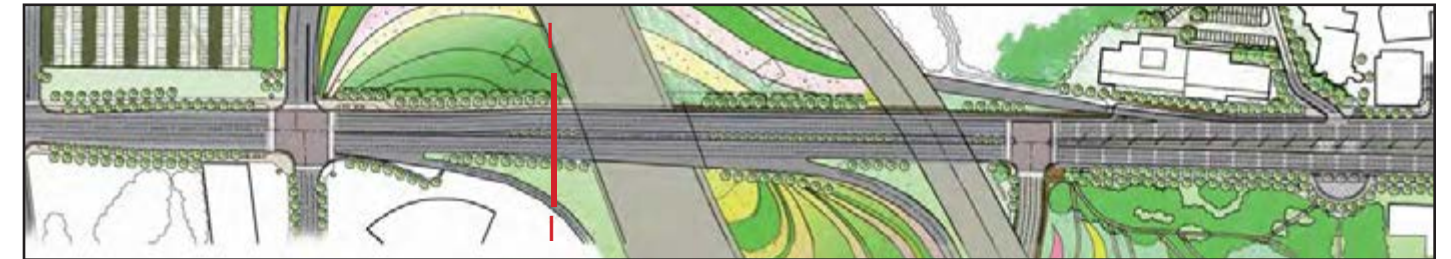
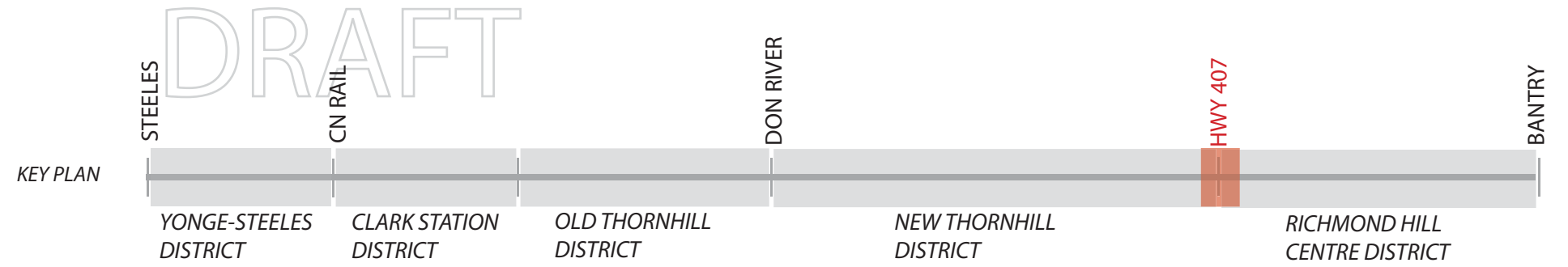


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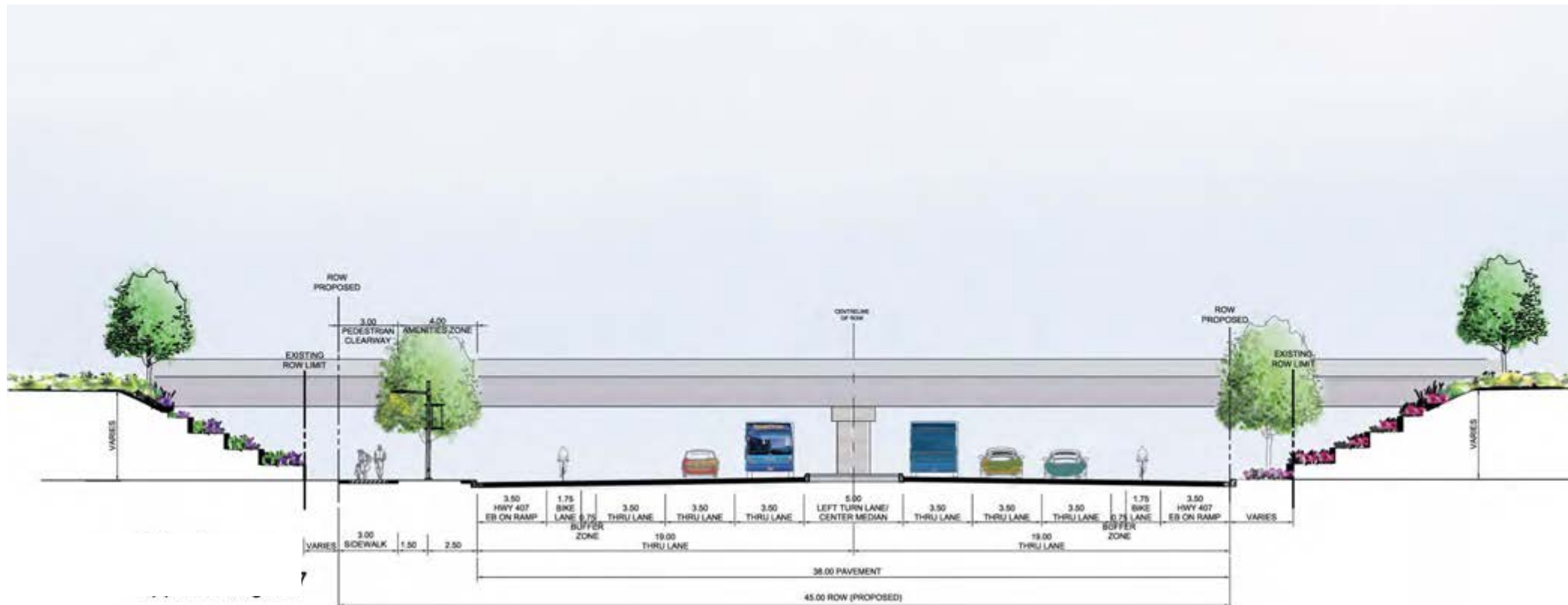
Context Sketch

3. Draft Master Plan



Precedent Images

Key Plan - Sections



Section I-I

3. Draft Master Plan

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3.3.4.8 Richmond Hill Centre District

The Richmond Hill Centre District represents a highly urban streetscape condition – one that is consistent with high density mixed use development and integration of a major Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system within the Yonge Street corridor and recognition as a major regional transit hub.

Key features of the streetscape design in this district include:

- Centrally located two-way BRT system within the Yonge Street corridor;
- Two northbound and two southbound lanes for vehicular traffic;
- Continuous buffered bicycle lanes in both directions;
- Raised centre median that contains locations for a series of iconic vertical features and planting;
- Wide pedestrian sidewalks that provide a continuous urban quality paved surface compatible with at-grade retail and building entrances;
- Large metropolitan-scale street trees planted flush to grade and in raised planters with generous subsurface growing medium zones, drainage and irrigation;
- Single source street lights that continuously serve both vehicular and pedestrian spaces;
- Street lighting at intersections with pedestrian crossings provide enhanced light levels;
- Compatible with overhead electrical lines and poles (if required);
- No on-street parking on Yonge Street close to Highway 7 access intersection;
- On-street parking is located on Yonge Street as well as side streets;
- Off-street, structured parking is provided as part of new development;
- Access to new development sites is via side streets only.

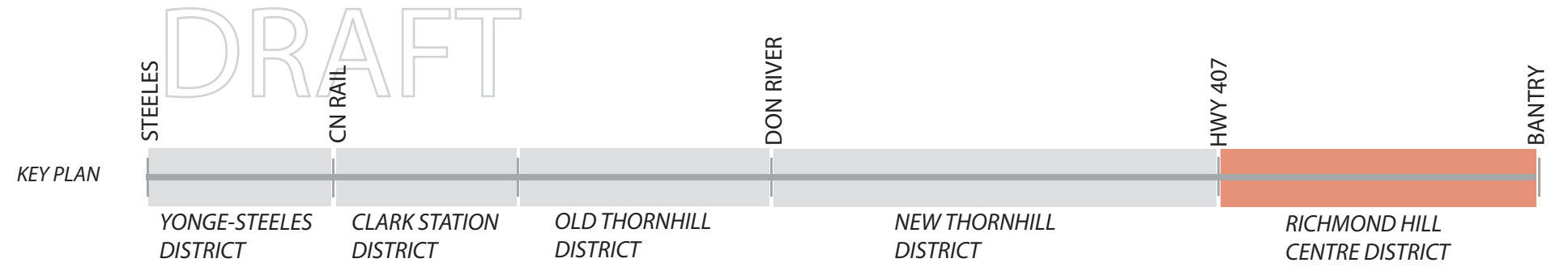


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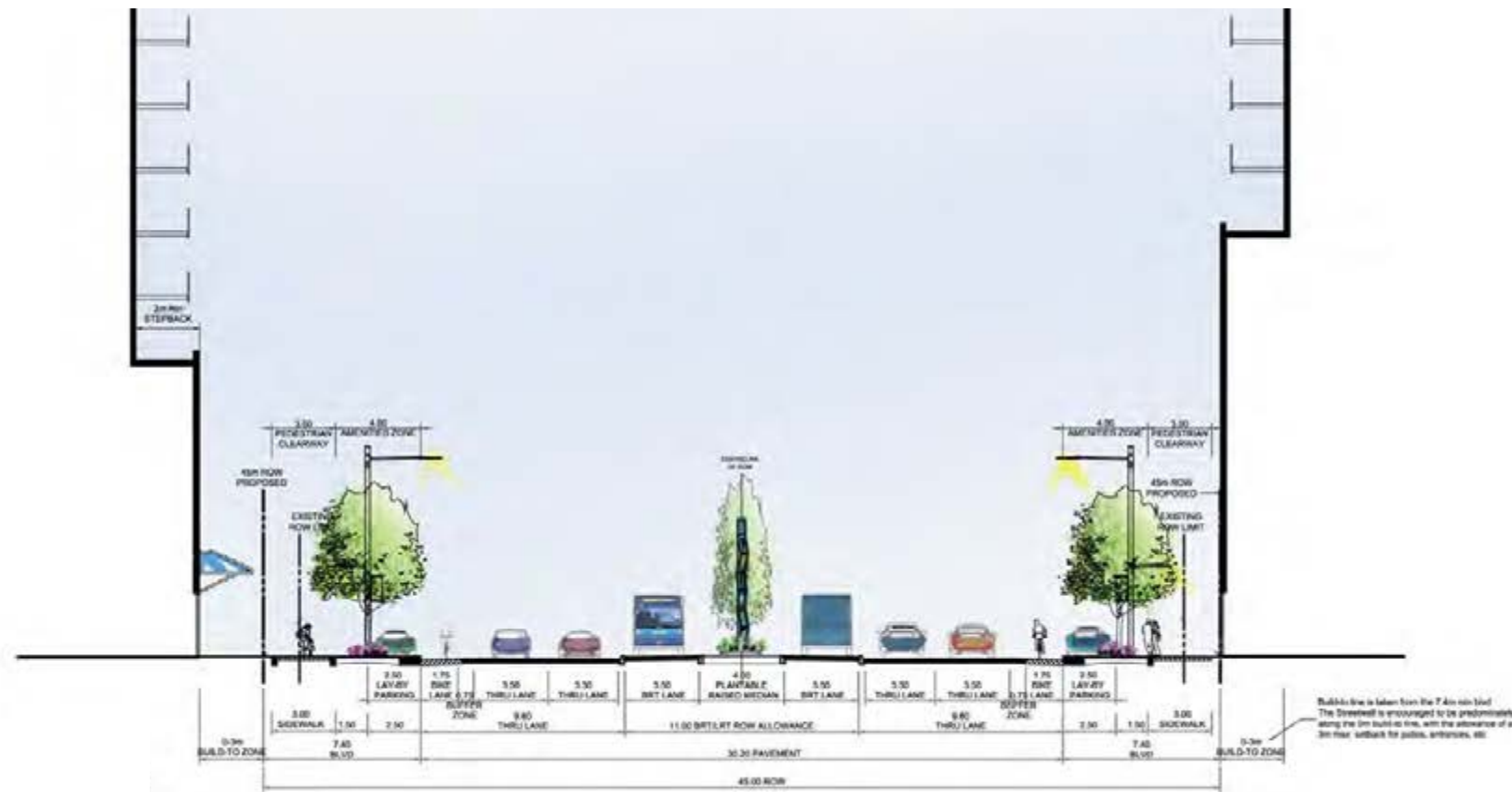
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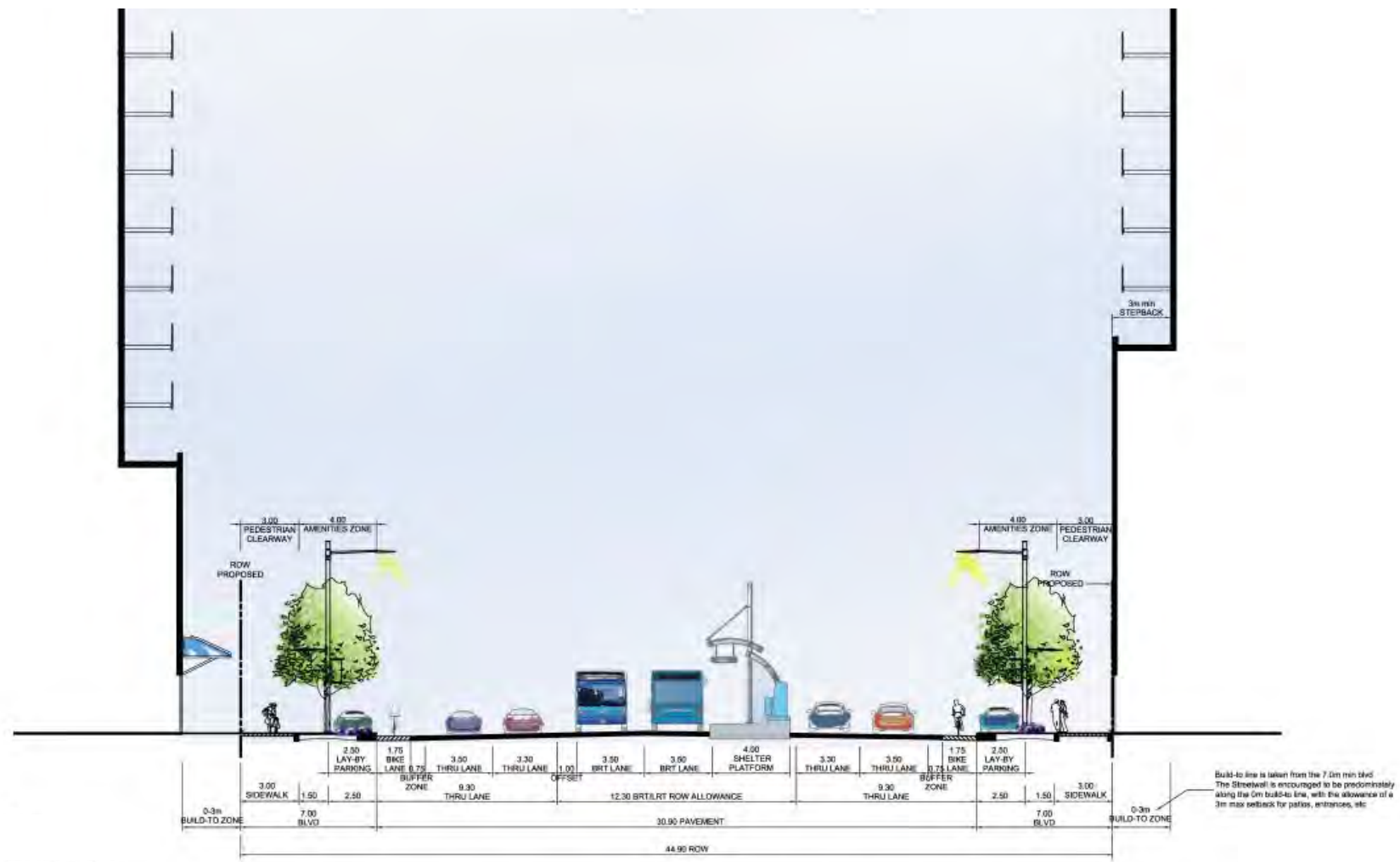
Key Plan - Sections



Section J-J

3. Draft Master Plan

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Section K-K



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3.4 Built Form and Place Making

3.4.1 Philosophy and Approach

The “Place-Making” philosophy for the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan will focus on establishing a strong and cohesive streetscape that supports a “hybrid” urban experience that authentically “samples” the series of existing and anticipated character areas along Yonge Street. These include the primary intensification centres at the Yonge-Steeles Centre and the Richmond Hill-Langstaff Centre, the historic Thornhill local centre intensification area and the Yonge Street primary intensification corridor segments that link the primary and local centres.

The identity of Yonge Street is linked to how its strong and cohesive streetscape subtly and proactively shifts its form as it moves through various areas in order to enhance and enable their contextual characteristics to be expressed in the public realm. This is achieved by responding to existing and future conditions of topography, density, scale and permeability of built form, as well as the uses that line Yonge Street in each area. By identifying key opportunities within these areas for public place making directly related to Yonge Street, the potential for “episodes” are created. These can be either existent in the built form, proposed developments or natural features, but all are selected because of their potential to become both identifiers for each area while setting up concentrated moments of interface with the built form along Yonge Street. Ultimately, by stitching these “episodes” together with the proposed cohesive streetscape, a dynamic and continuous public realm is encouraged that invites both active and passive activities of differing intensities, ranging from participation in retail transactions, to social gathering, to commuting and even to intimate moments of pause.



Dynamic publicly accessible spaces



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3.4.2 Street Edge

The edges of a street can be thought of as ‘walls’ that define the ‘room’ that is the street. The type of street edge contributes to the street’s character which can be developed by varying the width of its boulevards, the uses that line its perimeter, how far the building faces are setback, as well as the permeability and accessibility of this edge to built form, open space, or natural features.

The street edge along Yonge Street should be continuous to provide a defined edge and identity to the street, but will undergo shifts in setback and permeability according to the general contextual character of the specific areas as it moves through them. Bringing active uses at grade into an intimate relationship with the pedestrian realm will be of utmost importance to the promotion of a vibrant pedestrian street life. This interaction between ground floor uses and the public sidewalk can be encouraged through the following suggested variations to the street edge:

- Widening the boulevards to allow for a generous promenade and space for lingering, sidewalk merchandising and restaurant patios.
- Where possible and appropriate, encourage grade related retail along Yonge Street to promote a continuous active street edge.
- Encourage all primary entrances for retail as well as residential developments and underground parking facilities to be accessed off of Yonge Street to both enliven and strengthen the activity along the street edge. All entrances must be incorporated into the Yonge Street elevation to ensure a cohesive retail environment at grade at strategic locations.
- Mandatory build-to lines will be recommended in certain areas to strengthen a sense of place and vitality for the pedestrian realm.

- Encourage publicly accessible parkettes, courts and squares, on both public and privately owned land to expand the active use of the street into concentrated settings for public social life and activity. The adjacent relationship of these open spaces to the ground floor uses that line their perimeter encourages pedestrians to linger, lengthening the amount of time they are exposed to shop fronts, while increasing foot traffic.
- The family of street furniture (lighting, benches, planters, bicycle parking, transit shelters, etc.), which is proposed to be consistent in type and aesthetic along the length of Yonge Street, must be strategically placed to reinforce the type of street edge desired. Its placement must both support and help define the specific context of the street environment as it changes. For example, this may entail increasing the number of benches when the street edge opens up to a square, using planters to define the edges of private space, or increasing from one to two rows of trees in order to achieve a green atmosphere in one area over another.



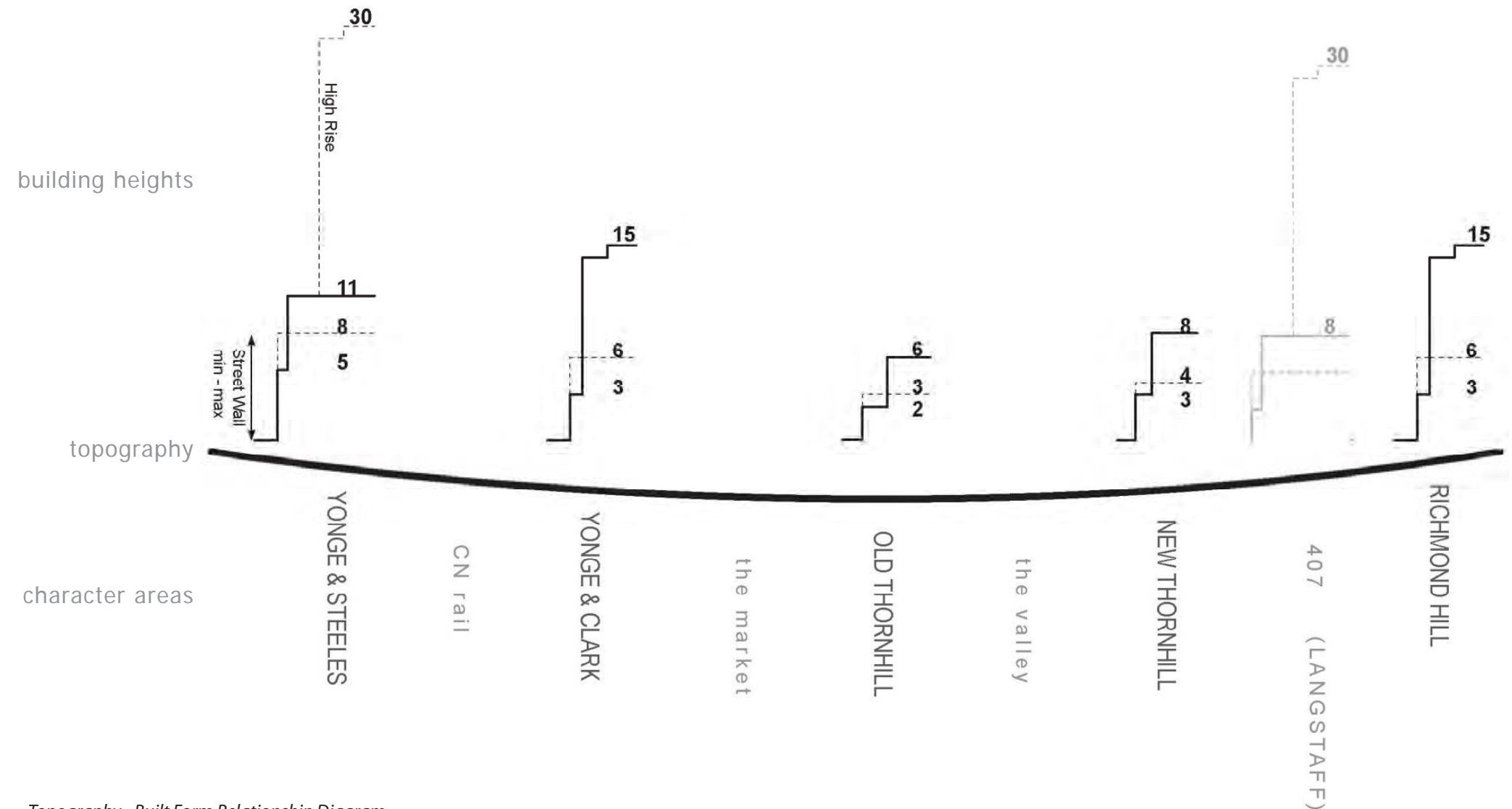
Strong street edges with publicly accessible spaces are encouraged

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3.4.3 Built Form and Massing

The topography of the study area has a curious and somewhat reciprocal relationship with its built form. The street itself is elevated at its two ends (Steeles Avenue and in Richmond Hill), creating a valley condition between these two points at the Don River. Reciprocally, the built form along this corridor has similar tendencies, being both taller and denser at its high points and much lower and more permeable at its center point. Since the epicenter of this valley (Old Thornhill) is characterized by several historic low-rise buildings, the future development of the built form along this portion of the street is not projected to increase in height, as its aim will be to respect the historic context. With this in mind, it is suggested that a consistent approach to developing the built form and massing along Yonge Street would be to reinforce this tendency to mimic the topography by coaxing the built form to respond to the gradual decent and ascent from its high points. This approach calls attention to both Steeles Avenue and Richmond Hill as concentrated urban gateways while accentuating the change in topography as one travels the length of the street.

This move will also emphasize the strong, linear character of Yonge Street as it bridges this topography. In fact, the infrastructure that becomes necessary for the street to move through this topography can be construed as opportunities to celebrate - for these are points at which Yonge Street interacts with the site's natural characteristics. The bridge over the CN Rail, the bridge over the Don River, as well as the concourse under Highway 407/ETR are opportunities in the built fabric that open up vistas - that create natural transition zones between neighbourhoods. With strategic, quality design these infrastructures can become strong identifiers and even destinations for this portion of Yonge Street.



Topography - Built Form Relationship Diagram

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3.4.4 Places and Spaces

3.4.4.1 Yonge - Steeles District

Massing

The massing along this district of Yonge Street is the highest along the corridor. Podiums with active uses are encouraged, with a setback required for all high rise portions above.

Street Edge

The street wall should be consistent, with a zero build-to line as well as ground floor retail. This creates a strong, sharply defined, active street edge.

Urban Gateway

The intersection of Yonge and Steeles forms the boundary between Toronto, Markham and Vaughan, as such the buildings on these four corners are encouraged to be maximized in height while exhibiting exceptional architectural design to give spatial definition to this gateway condition.

Major Transportation Link and Urban Square

There is an opportunity here for the public realm of the street to expand into a square facing the major intersection, providing a significant address to a major subway entrance. This new urban space can act as a meeting place for commuters as well as a place for highly public events. The life of the square is strengthened by its connection to the subway, which should be incorporated into the building adjacent to the square. This will encourage the interaction of pedestrians with the built form along this edge.

Pocket Park

By encouraging a strong street wall in this character area, any intermittent setbacks or pockets within it will become intimate, quiet and contemplative public spaces. The pocket park typology could be employed at strategic mid-block locations to allow for small scale moments of pause. One such opportunity would be at one of the secondary entrances / exits to Steeles Subway Station, creating protected meeting point which could be associated with outdoor café seating or some other active amenity.

The Median

A median is introduced along this section as a device to provide a more pedestrian scale to the streetscape amongst such intensified massing. It also provides for an opportunity to contribute to the special identity of this area, supporting the idea of Steeles Avenue as a major urban transportation gateway, since both cars and pedestrian traveling the length of this stretch will be exposed to its significant visual impact. The inclusion of sculptural features within the median could be considered as a means of further developing its special character along this part of Yonge Street.



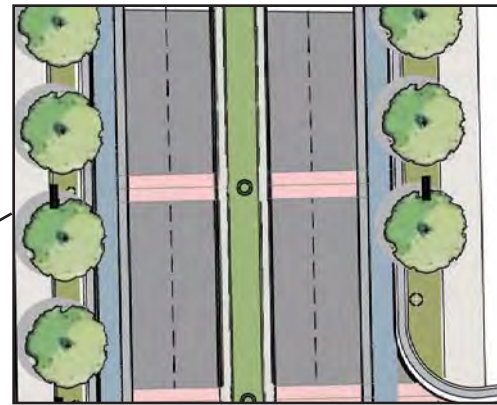
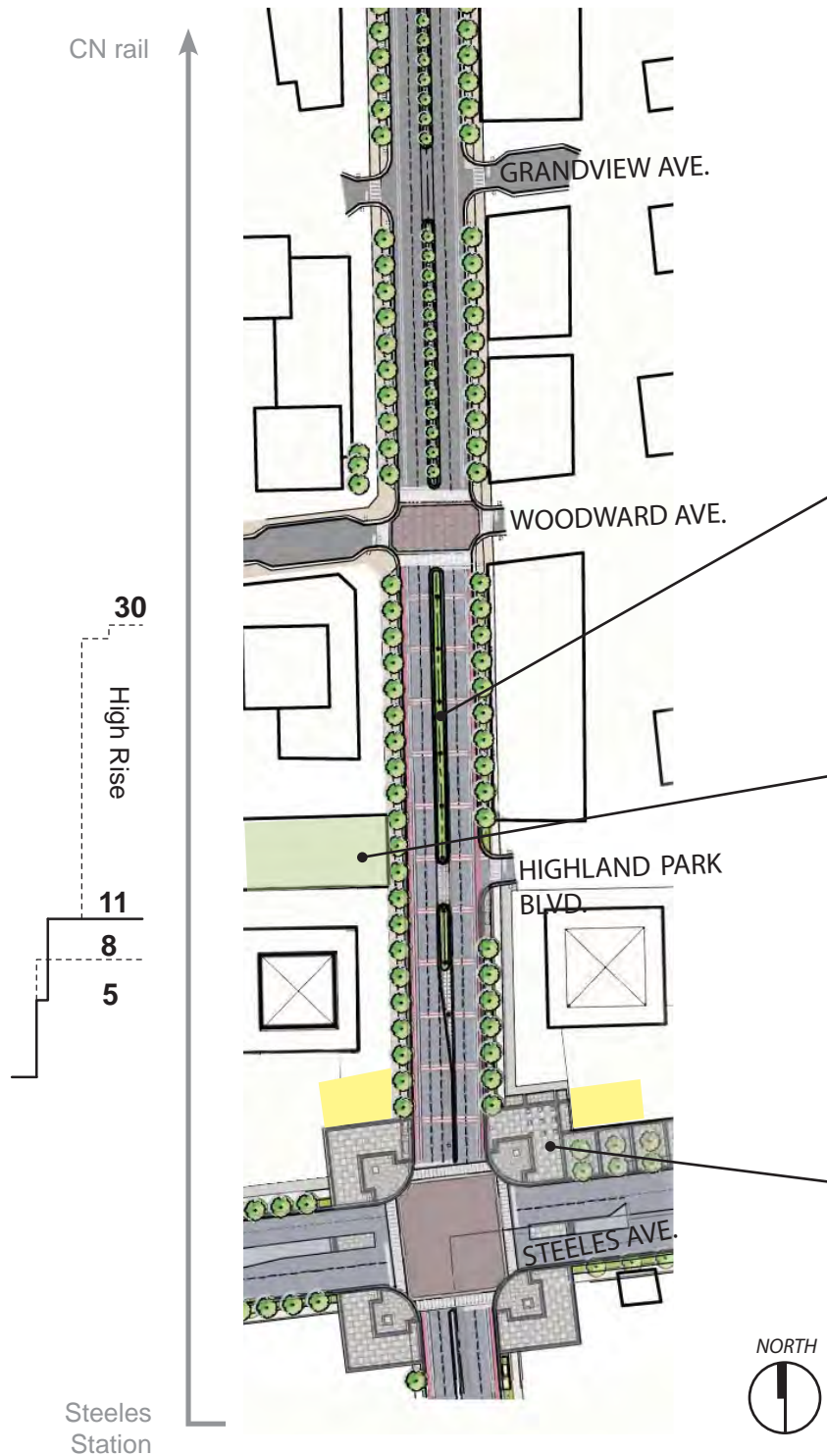
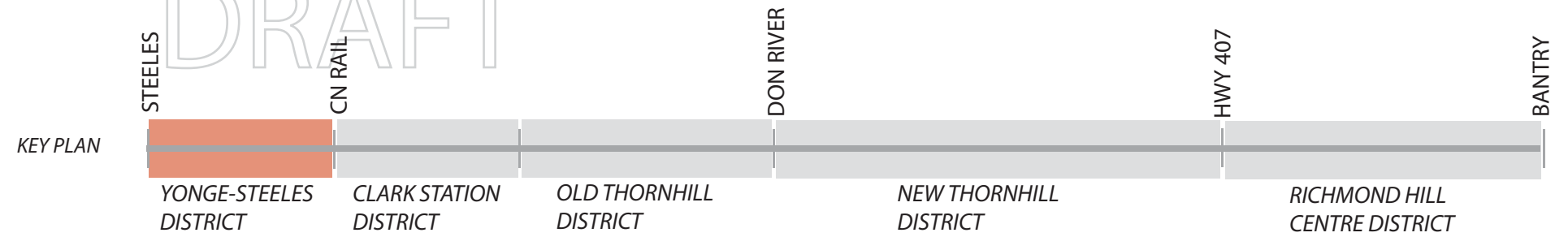
Architectural design can provide definition to the urban gateway



Podiums with high rise portions setback are encouraged

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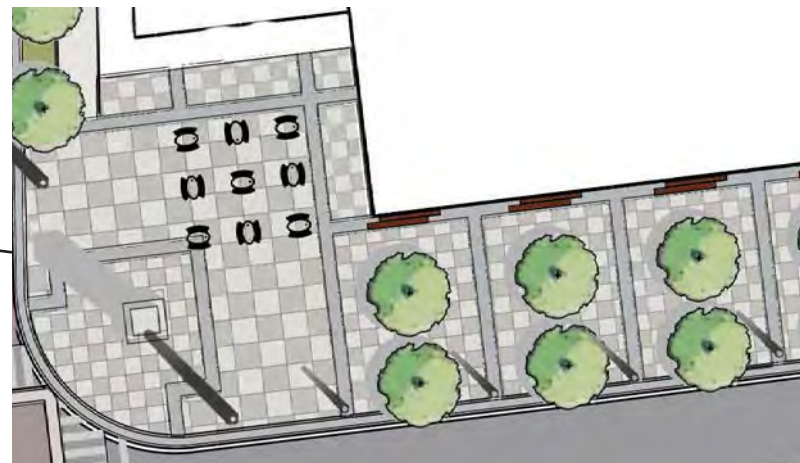
The Median

- Provides pedestrian scale to street
- Transportation gateway identity feature



Pocket Park

- Protected meeting point and gathering space
- Small scale intimate events



Urban Square @ Steeles Station

- Exposed major transit meet point
- Space for temporary structure
- Adjacent building addresses and incorporates subway station entrance / exit



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3.4.4.2 CN Rail Bridge Threshold

Massing

South of the CN Rail Bridge the massing along Yonge Street begins to decrease in height. The high-rise form is left behind at Steeles Avenue, whereas here dense mid-rise blocks are encouraged.

Street Edge

A zero build-to line is encouraged for the street wall, although the percentage required to be along this line will decrease so that more variation can occur. Active uses at grade are encouraged, though less retail is envisioned for this area.

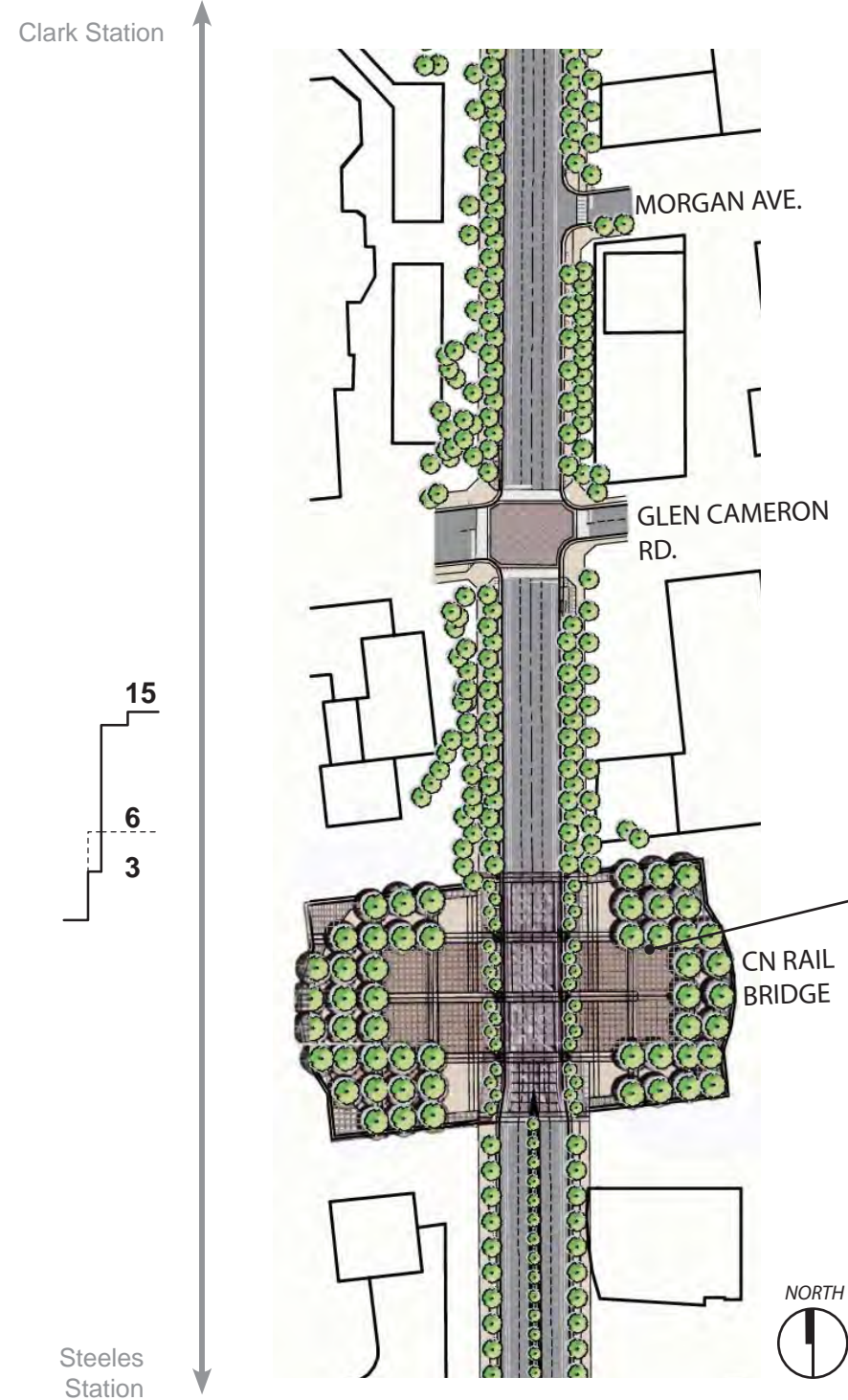
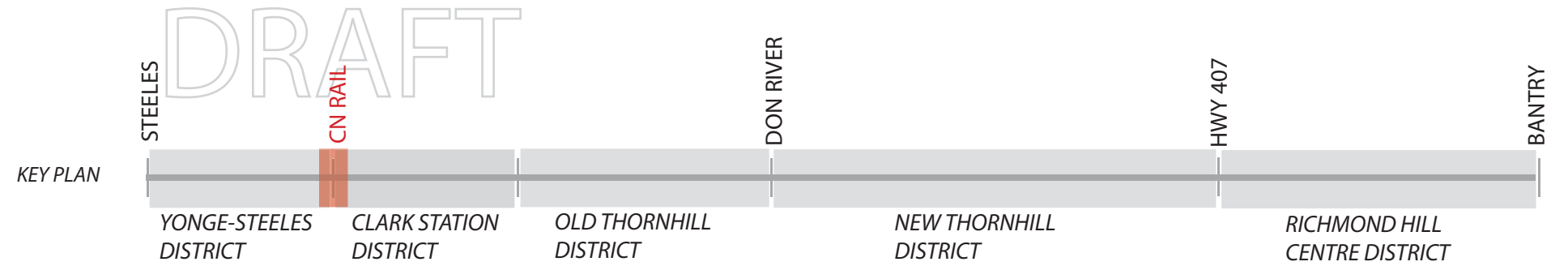
CN Rail

The bridge over the CN Rail is a man-made feature that acts as a break in the density of built form between the highly-urban Steeles area and a massing that begins to decrease in height south of the bridge. This piece of infrastructure presents the opportunity to characterize this area through innovative and engaging design while taking advantage of the opening up of view corridors to the east and west. A deck of substantial size could be built in conjunction with the bridge to create an elevated park that would give space and definition to moments of pause and enjoyment of an impressive landscape. This 'episode' has the potential to become an exciting destination, therefore particular attention will have to be given to lighting and security to ensure that the public realm feels secure and welcoming.



Dense mid-rise buildings are encouraged

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The Platform

- Expansive views over impressive rail corridor allowing for large scale urban event space



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3.4.4.3 Clark Station District

Massing

South of the CN Rail overpass the massing along Yonge Street begins to decrease in height. The high-rise form is left behind at Steeles Avenue, whereas in the Clark Station District dense mid-rise blocks are encouraged.

Street Edge

A zero build-to line is encouraged for the street wall, although the percentage required to be along this line will decrease so that more variation can occur. Active uses at grade are encouraged, though less retail is envisioned for this area.

Clark Station

As a stand-alone transit building, Clark Station has the potential to act as an orientating beacon for this neighbourhood. By strategically framing it with an open public plaza, it can be given a significant presence that will have a visual impact on both pedestrians and vehicular traffic. It will be important to ensure its permeability and transparency to the street to ensure that its impact and address is both obvious and inviting.

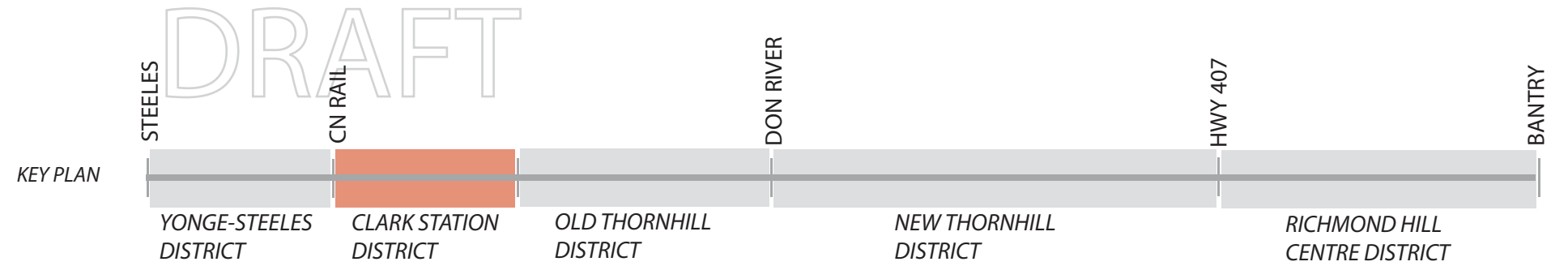
This pavilion building and its public plaza will be mutually supportive, creating an amenable meeting and gathering space that provides open and protected seating areas as well as storage for bicycles. The design of the plaza should be informed by its urban context amongst dense mid-rise blocks; interest in its corner siting could be generated by a bold manipulation of the plaza surfaces, using lighting and a differentiation in materials to highlight the various surfaces of the plaza that are amenable to seating, gathering and meeting.



Dense mid-rise buildings are encouraged

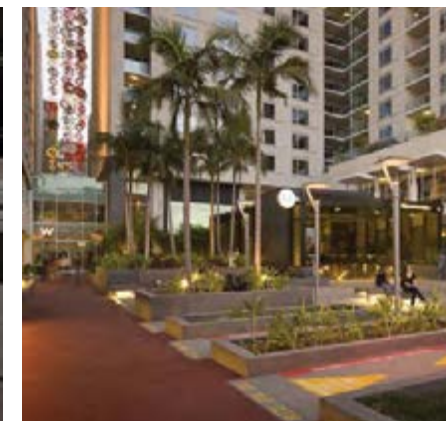


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Clark Station

- Transit meeting point
- Open plaza looking towards CN Rail Platform



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3.4.4.4 Old Thornhill District

Massing

The Old Thornhill District has a substantial number of historically significant low-rise buildings. New development in this area will be focused on repairing the existing fabric by contextual infill projects that respect and compliment both the massing and the setback of the historic buildings adjacent. At grade retail is encouraged on a small scale to reinforce the village feel.

Street Edge

The built form of the historic buildings allows for a much more porous street edge that opens up to the neighbourhoods to the east and west of Yonge Street. On the east side, just south of John Street, is a significant stretch of single family housing that backs onto Yonge Street. This is one of the few places in which frontage onto Yonge Street does not occur, creating a significant stretch of street edge that is not active. The street edge here will need to be developed so as to enhance the pedestrian realm while respecting the privacy of the backyard conditions of these houses.

Linear Park

It is suggested that the relationship between the east portion of Yonge Street, just south of John Street, be developed to create a complimentary space with the pedestrian realm across the street. The street edge of the west side will be characterized by low-rise buildings and infill developments in which ground floor retail uses will be highly encouraged. With this in mind, it is suggested that the wide boulevard along the east side of Yonge Street be programmed as a linear park so that two parallel spaces could complement each other in supporting a leisurely village environment.

The strategic placement of street furniture, trees, and hard / soft landscaping will be key components of this linear park. Its defining characteristic will be informed by how the edge of the boulevard is delineated and separated from the rear properties of the abutting single family housing. In fact, this abutment condition presents an exciting opportunity to create a dynamic and sculptural dividing “wall” between the linear park and the properties that will have a significant visual and affective impact on the pedestrian realm of the street.

The Market and Market Square

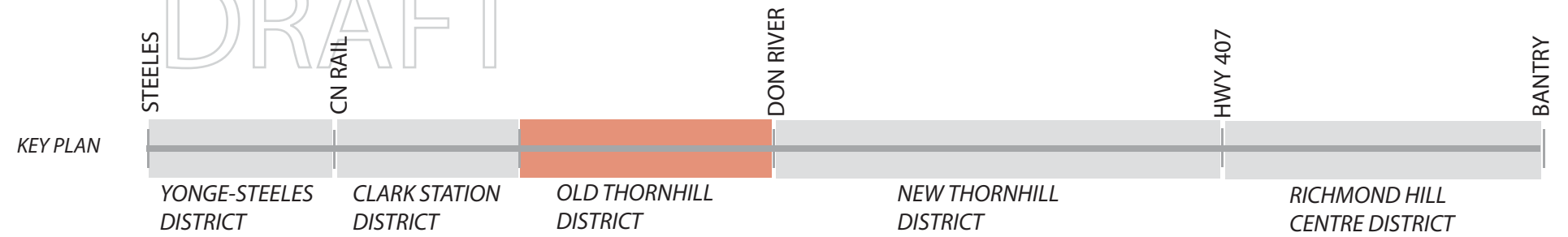
The market is an already established building type in this neighbourhood; however the potential it has to support both an indoor and outdoor retail and programmed event space has not yet been established. Its position between two subway stations makes it a potent and appropriate location for a “public destination” and a moment of pause. It is recommended that the further development of this building type would entail ensuring that this animated public space be a well considered portion of the design. Creating a small square addressing both the intersection and the main entrance to the market building would take advantage of the corner condition to focus attention on the active square as well as generate interest in a visible outdoor link to a larger, more protected square behind the market building. Using the market building to define the edges of this larger square creates a more intimate and protected public space away from the traffic on Yonge Street. This is an ‘episode’ that encourages the pedestrian realm to penetrate the built form through the arrangement of open spaces.



Small scale mixed use buildings

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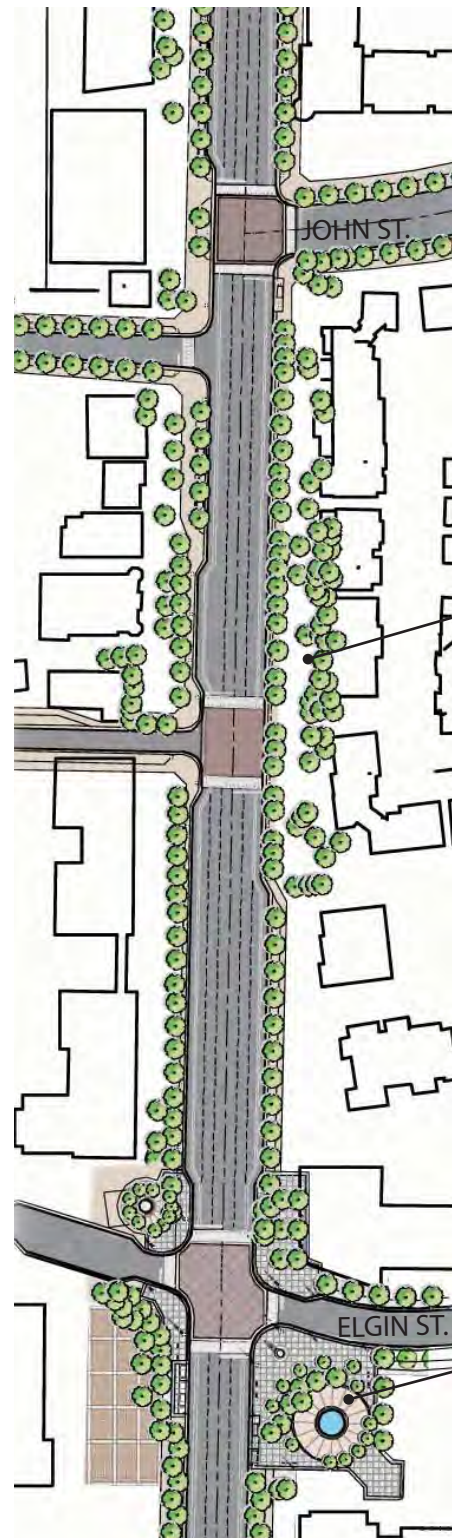
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The Valley

6
3
2

Arnold Ave



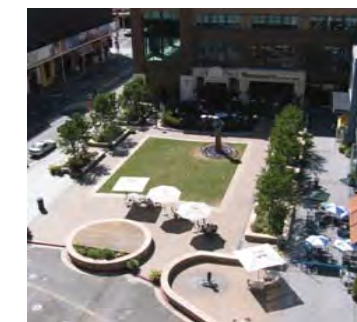
Linear Park

- Link to ValleyWalk
- Creates intimate setting with retail across the street



The Market and Market Square

- Exposed and protected
- Social retail space
- Small event space



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3.4.4.5 Don River Bridge Threshold

Massing

The bridge over the Don River at Cricklewood Park and the Toronto Ladies' Golf Course acts as another break in the built urban form where vistas to the east and west open up to a natural and green valley. The portion of Yonge Street directly to the north and south of the bridge is fairly undefined owing to the gradual tapering off of the low-rise form of Old Thornhill District in conjunction with the expanse of the adjacent golf course and natural environment to the north.

Street Edge

Because of the natural features and topography in this area, the street edge as it exists to the north and south of the bridge forms a soft transition that would benefit from some definition. This lack of definition is a welcome shift in scale to the street and an opportunity for environmental art installations.

The Valley

The valley's topography in conjunction with the low and loose urban form at its edges, opens up vistas that reach from the historic context of Old Thornhill into a beautiful and maintained natural feature (the valley and golf course). The development and 'programming' of a leisure promenade along this stretch of Yonge Street could act as a key method of achieving the definition the street edge along this portion could benefit from. Given the strong historic and natural context of the area, the incorporation of interpretive elements into the streetscape could be a guiding theme by which this is implemented.

Landscaped Link to the North and South

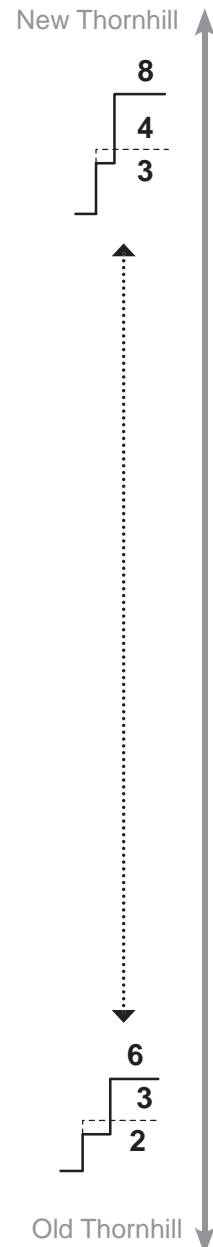
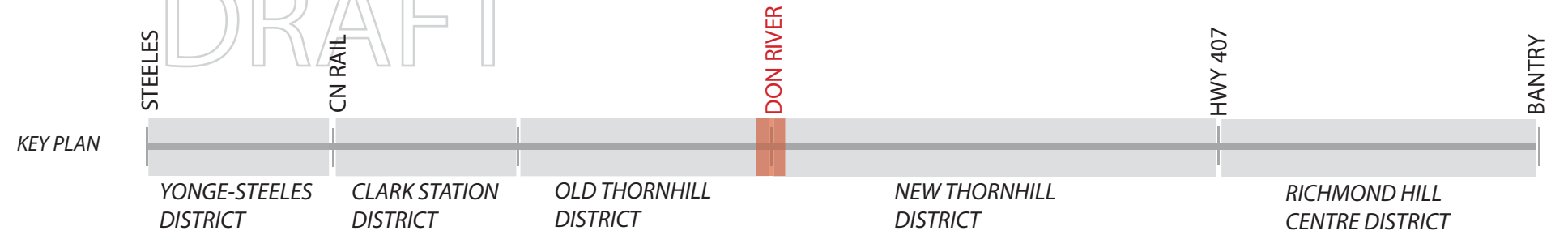
Given the historic and natural context of Yonge Street in this particular area, a unified promenade to the north and south of the bridge could act as a joint historically and naturally themed interpretive walk that would connect the character areas of Old and New Thornhill. Of utmost importance will be how the interpretive elements are incorporated into the streetscape. Highly creative means of achieving this will be encouraged over the traditional use of plaques, such as the incorporation of elements into the sidewalk material itself. In light of the absence of any street wall in this area, the strategic placement of street furniture, trees, planters and lighting will notably define its edges and must support the content and leisurely pace of such a promenade. Additional lighting beyond the standard lights that will be installed consistently along Yonge Street may be necessary for security and can be used to give a different character to this walk while highlighting particular areas of interest.

Feature Bridge

The bridge over this valley has the potential to be an iconic piece of designed infrastructure. Using the form of the bridge to bring the pedestrian level down to the natural environment below would be a bold move that reinforces the leisurely pace of this part of Yonge Street while creating a space for pedestrians, removed from the vehicular traffic, to pause and appreciate the environment and pastoral views.

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Landscape Link

- Green interpretive walk



Feature Bridge

- Pedestrian link to valley below



Landscape Link

- Historic interpretive walk

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3.4.4.6 New Thornhill Village District

Massing

Being a relatively 'new' area, a consistent typology is encouraged along this stretch to help encourage a unified identity for both sides of Yonge Street. The massing of new developments within this character area is suggested to be of a mid-block typology with off street parking to the rear accessed by open mid-block links in the developments' massing. A mix of at grade active uses are encouraged.

Street Edge

Seeing as the street edge of New Thornhill Village District begins to slowly define itself as it emerges from the green and natural valley to the south, an opportunity arises in which this 'blending' of the natural edge into the urban street wall can be developed into a defining characteristic for this area.

The Double Row

One method of defining the street edge while transitioning from the natural condition to the south, to the street wall that begins to emerge, is to use the widened boulevard to accommodate a double row of trees. This move brings the natural green environment from the valley to the street, generating a distinct and softer green character for this area.

Mid-block Link

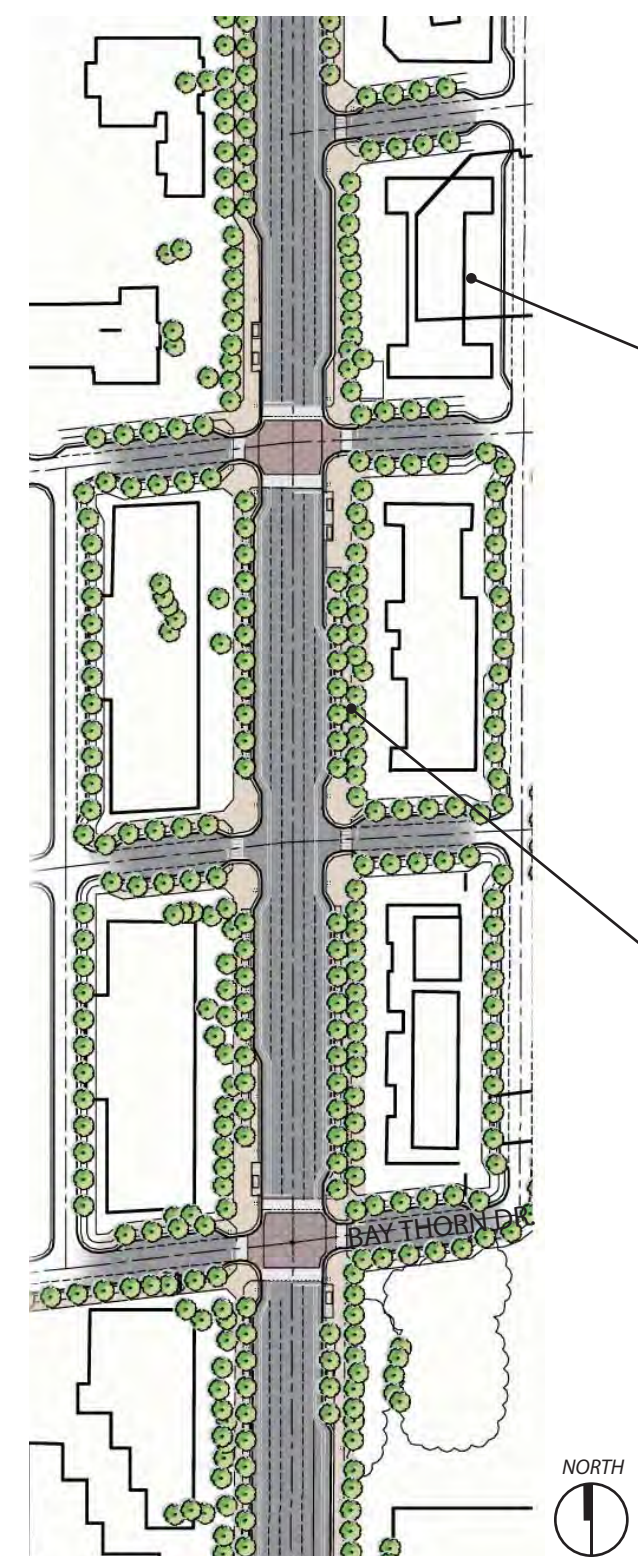
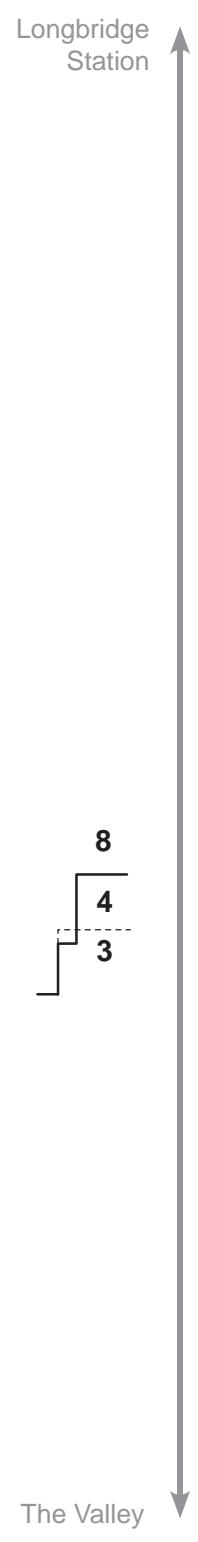
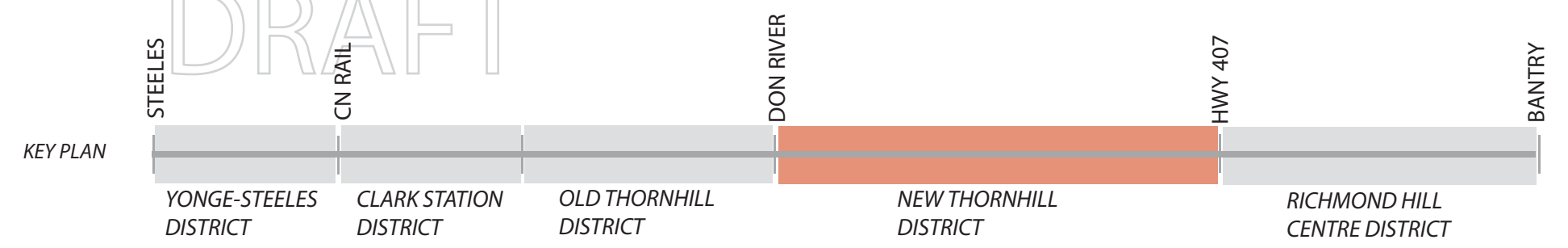
By encouraging new developments in New Thornhill Village District to embrace the mid-block link as a method of dealing with access to back-lot parking areas, a network of mid-block spaces is created that begin to both define the area, as well as provide an amenity to both the developments and the street. These mid-block spaces would be most successful if they were not solely for the purpose of accessing parking. Lining their edges with active uses would animate them further, and with strategic landscape design could be exciting shared amenity spaces for both the pedestrians on the boulevard and the users of the buildings themselves.



Building typology with mid-block links is encouraged

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Mid-block Link

- Network of landscaped public mid-block links to back lot parking areas
- Can act as open amenity space for residential or office



The Double Row

- Creates distinct character for area with generous public boulevard

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3.4.4.7 Highway 407 / Hydro Lands Threshold

Massing

The infrastructure of Highway 407 / ETR on and off ramps create a transitional gap in the built form along Yonge Street. Much like the bridges over the CN Rail and the Don River, the concourse under the 407 could be an opportunity to create an episode of visual interest.

Street Edge

Because of the large scale infrastructure and sweeping topography in this area, the street edge as it exists to the north and south of the concourse is unclear and would benefit from some definition.

Longbridge Station

Unlike Clark Station, Longbridge will directly engage the vehicular traffic of Yonge Street with a planned commuter parking lot across the street (west side) from the station building itself. The creative landscape design and layout of the parking lot will be a key method by which this surface lot typology can be made into an enjoyable part of the everyday experience of commuting. An underground connection across the street will be the most pedestrian friendly option for the crossing of Yonge Street and presents an opportunity to create a designed pavilion as a portal to the underpass that is both highly visible and well incorporated into the landscape design of the parking lot. The station building itself should also be highly visible and have a complimentary design to the landscaped parking lot across the street to visually reinforce the connection. The building should be positioned so as not to be completely cut off from the pedestrian boulevard on Yonge Street by any vehicular pick up and drop off requirements (in fact it is suggested that if possible, any pickup and drop off areas be incorporated into the landscaped parking lot).

The 407 and the Underpass

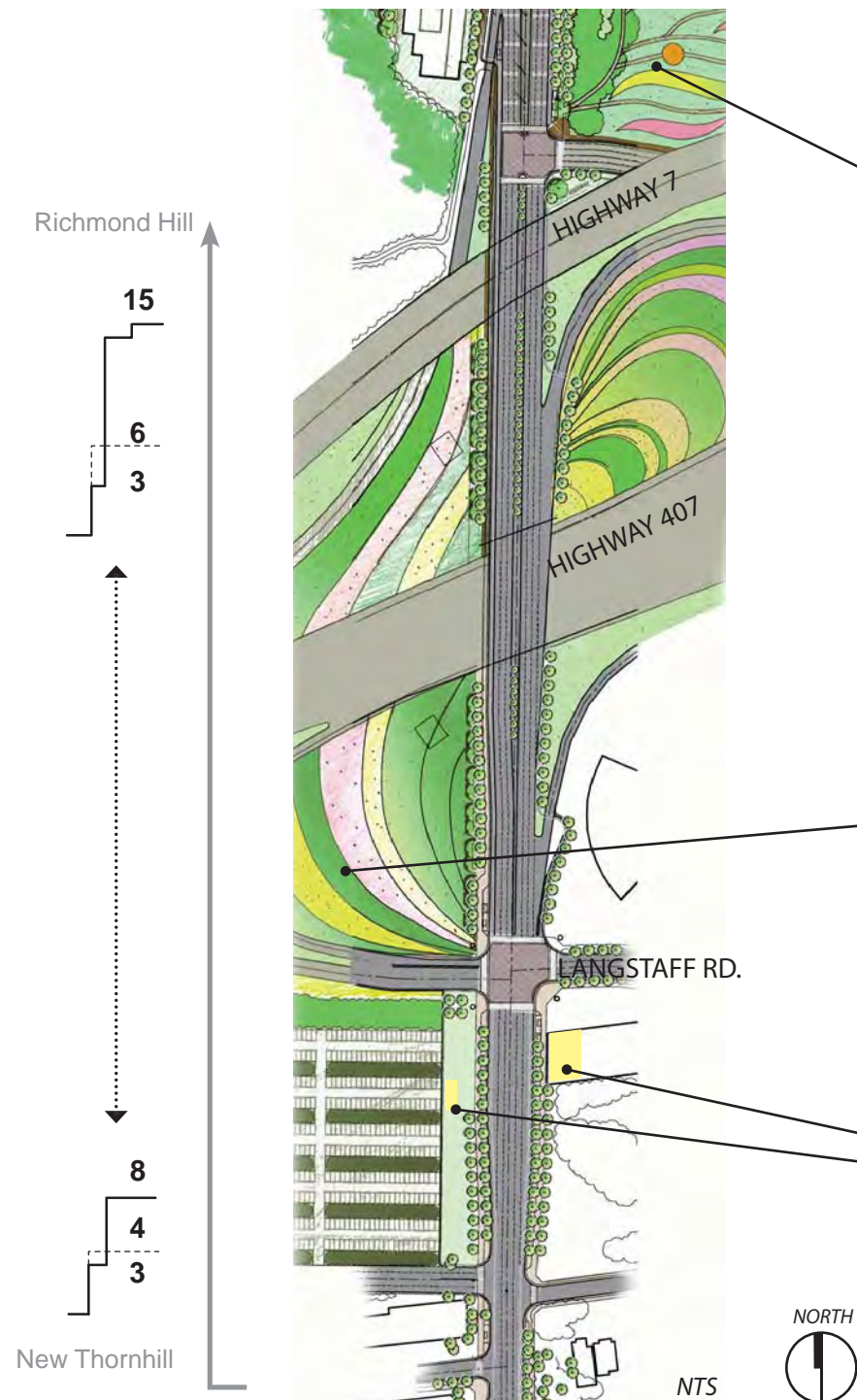
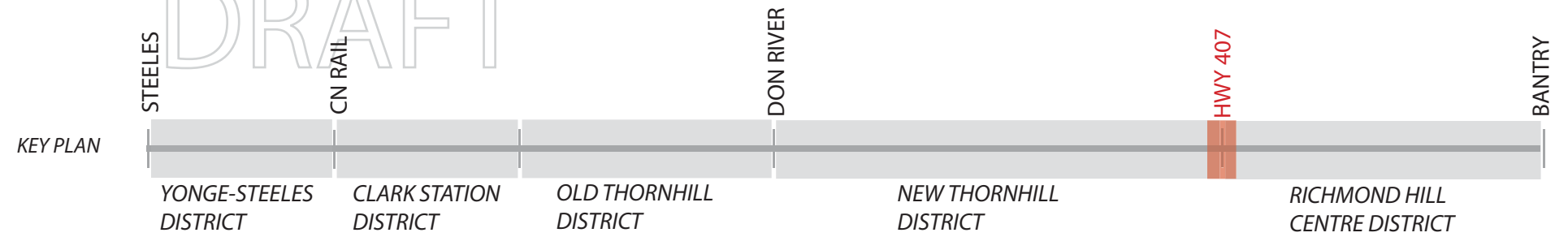
Unlike the bridges over the CN Rail and Don River, the concourse under the 407 is a less likely candidate for an 'iconic redesign' of the structure itself, however the vast amount of green space within the on and off ramp circles could host creative and visually interesting installations of landscape design. Encouraging a visually arresting backdrop for this vast stretch of streetscape will be key in making both pedestrian and vehicular movement in this area both interesting and welcoming. Other key methods by which this can be achieved, while encouraging safety, will rely on creative landscaping of the edges of the boulevard leading up to the bridge to the north and south in addition to lighting and material choices for the boulevard edges and retaining walls.

ArtPark

Directly to the north of the 407 concourse on the east side of Yonge Street, the street edge expands visually into a very large scale open green space in which a stormwater management pond is situated. The development of an interpretive centre related to the stormwater pond within this green space would encourage social and community involvement in green issues as well as provide a facilities building to support larger scale social and public events that could take place in this green space. There is also an opportunity here to further define the identity and aesthetic of this potential park by encouraging the pairing of creative landscape design with outdoor art installations. Such an approach has the potential to solidify this episode as a significant destination for the public and pedestrian realm along Yonge Street.

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ArtPark

- Very large scale open space for events as well as art park
- Interpretive centre for storm water management



The Planting

- Creates visual interest to pedestrian link under Highway 407



Longbridge Station

- Meeting point
- Pedestrian link to landscaped parking

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3.4.4.8 Richmond Hill Centre District

Massing

At this high point in Yonge Street's topography, the massing builds itself up to be very similar to that at Steeles Avenue, where a high rise and podium approach is suggested (though not quite as tall). Podiums with active uses are encouraged, with a setback required for all high rise portions above.

Street Edge

The street wall should be consistent, with a zero build-to line and ground floor retail. This creates a strong, sharply defined, active street edge.

The Median

Seeing as the density and massing of Richmond Hill is built up to the intensity closer to that of Yonge and Steeles intersection, the median that appears at Yonge and Steeles is reintroduced. Here, it is similarly used as a device to provide a more pedestrian scale to the streetscape while accommodating the future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), as well as supporting the idea of Richmond Hill as another major urban intensified transportation gateway. The inclusion of sculptural features within the median, as at Yonge and Steeles, could be considered as a means of further developing these features, but do not have to be identical, in fact a variation on the theme could positively differentiate Richmond Hill's identity and act as a passive means of wayfinding.

Linear Park + Major Link

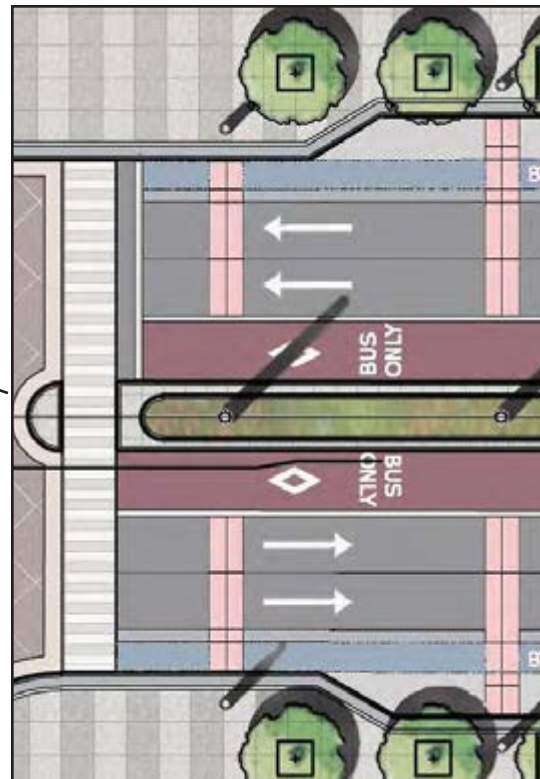
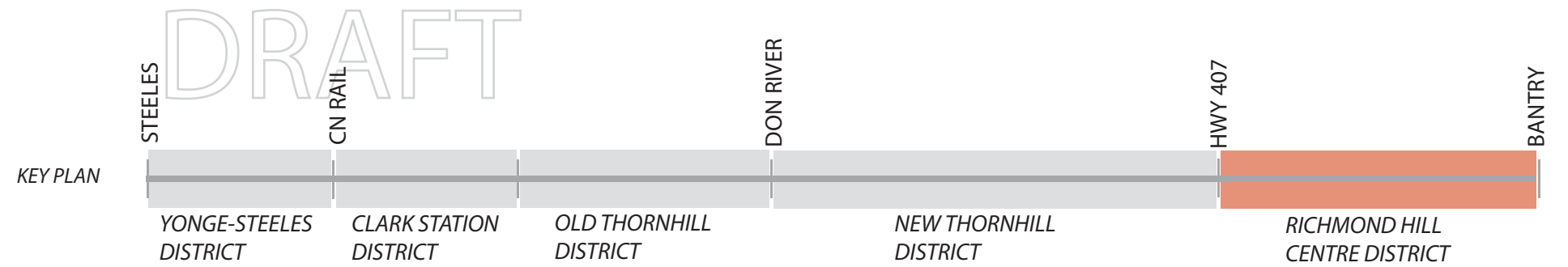
Richmond Hill Centre is a major urban intensified node located just to the east of Yonge Street in Richmond Hill. This presents the opportunity to create a significant connection from Yonge Street to Richmond Hill Centre and its Viva/YRT Station in the form of a linear park perpendicular to Yonge Street. This significant green space will open up views through the built form to the east and west, creating an essential and very public address for the station that reaches beyond its immediate context to the arterial roads that run parallel to it. Encouraging the frontage of new development along the linear park to address it in a well considered manner (by having their ground floors access the park directly) will pull the edges of active frontage from Yonge Street along the park's perimeter. This will encourage and support a public space directly off Yonge Street that can become a destination for outdoor leisure activities, as well as an amenable view corridor through the urban fabric.



Ground floor retail is encouraged to create an active street edge



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The Median

- Provides pedestrian scale to street
- Accommodates BRT



Linear Park

- Meeting point and event space
- dynamic link to BRT entrance / exit

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3.5 Streetscape Elements

3.5.1 Philosophy and Approach

The philosophy for streetscape elements for the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan will focus on a coordinated system to convey the identity of Yonge Street while reinforcing the unique character areas and ensuring the safety, accessibility and comfort of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. Streetscape elements incorporated into the South Yonge Street Corridor include lighting and street furnishings which are generally to be located within the public realm of the street right-of-way. The general design of streetscape elements should complement one another as much as possible and be consistent with the overall design vision for South Yonge Street.

The streetscape consists of the zone from the building face to the curb and will be designed with equal consideration given for the elements within the right-of-way and the built form uses in the adjacent property.

3.5.2 Lighting

The design of lighting must consider functional safety, visual comfort and sustainability with sensitivity to the visual excellence of the total night streetscape. It must create a special sense of place and embrace the spatial composition as far as the eye can see.

The lighting of Yonge Street must meet regional and Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guide for the Design of Roadway Lighting standards for public safety and to contribute to the quality of the surrounding night environment, whether it is on roads, walkways, buildings or in open spaces. Lighting is not required everywhere; but where it is required it must be done well.

Light for Livability

At night the Yonge Street should become “The Living Room of the community”. Like the interior of a home, exterior rooms surrounded by lit walls of adjacent buildings and landscape can become a vibrant and relaxed realm for public activity. People will feel comfortable to stop, talk and visit in a setting that enjoys attractive light that is not overwhelming or harsh. A thoughtful and experienced lighting design process will aim for comfort and vitality.

Light must be carefully controlled so that excessive brightness does not trespass on to adjacent spaces and properties. Light must especially not be wasted into the sky adding to light pollution.

Night light should render colors naturally with a warm glow. Comparing skin color is a good subjective test of light colour. Objective metrics are: 3000 to 3500 Kelvin, 80 plus Colour Rendering Index (CRI). Good colour can be achieved with energy saving ceramic metal halide, fluorescent or LED. Low colour rendering lights such as High Pressure Sodium should not be used and preferably phased out wherever possible.

Special events and seasonal change often require additional light or changes to the existing hardware. Lights in or near the ground must weather snow, ice and ploughing.



Parliament Hill Stairs: Very low quantities of light from historical pedestrian fixtures invite visitors up the stairs. Soft vertical light on the buildings gives a feeling of comfort and good visibility. Maximum illumination is 10 lux with minimums under 1 lux.



Stanley Park, Hong Kong

3. Draft Master Plan

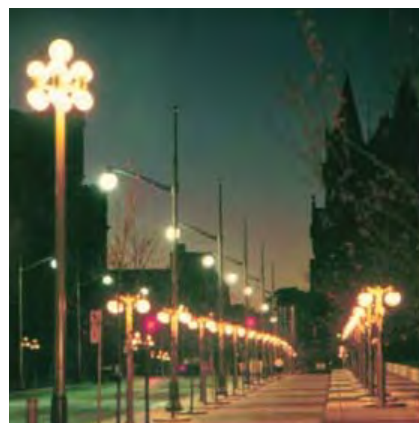
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Light for Visual Excellence

New lighting on Yonge Street needs to respond to its surroundings and bring out the history and topography. Placement of lights can clarify and strengthen the interrelationships of different parts of the street and add to the feeling of a single place. Spatial composition can be enhanced at night. Exterior spaces and facades can be lit to establish a hierarchy - a hierarchy of lighting impact relative to a hierarchy of neighboring spaces. Visual focal points can define entrances and connect centers of activity. By varying intensities or numbers of lights, emphasis can be placed on appropriate areas.

As buildings define the enclosure of spaces they form a backdrop or silhouetting trees and people. Three types of light should be considered: entry lights; ambient light from streets and surroundings; and supplementary flood lighting. Judicious use of interior lights can be balanced with the exterior lighting.

Clear open spaces, parks, plazas and lawns, often do not require horizontal illumination when surrounding vertical surfaces are properly illuminated. The lower pruning of soft landscape and trees must be considered to allow for lower horizontal views. In a larger composition, special landscape elements, trees or edges of plantings may benefit from special lighting. In most cases, trees and shrubs are best unlit.



Confederation Boulevard: Mackenzie Street – Low clusters of balls create a special promenade while tall light poles define the street zone. Buildings and parks become the streetscape edge.

Light for Safety & Security

Night light must provide a level of visibility which encourages pedestrians, accommodates cyclists and deters crime. Full colour, glare free light is required for movement in otherwise dark environments. People need to see in all directions, to sense danger and to have a feeling of security. The psychological perception of safety* may be as important as actual protection from danger (although a false sense of security is dangerous, for example in an isolated parking lot). Dark areas - "black holes" – must be minimized or avoided. Motion provides another dimension to the perception of light as people move and objects are silhouetted against lit surfaces.

It is essential to understand how the eye perceives the effect of light at night. People do not see horizontal illumination (measured in lux). They see the brightness of light reflected from a surface. It is the impact of the relative brightness and relative colour that gives visual recognition. Lighting design is the management of the relative brightness not the quantities of illumination.

Excessive relative brightness becomes glare and affects ones ability to see. Glare is to be avoided. As people move from one space to another, adaptation time is required for the eye to adjust to changes in light quantity.



West Block, Parliament Hill: Glare vs. Visibility - Before lighting improvements, roof mounted security lights caused glare that was so bright in contrast to their surroundings that vision was obscured, blocking the view of the building and making it generally more difficult to see.



After implementation of the lighting strategy, the West Block softly glows as a background feature. This allowed good visibility and resulted in a clear emphasis on the entrance and architecture. Light is provided at the entrance, on the lower façade from pedestrian scale lights and above from lights hidden on adjacent rooftops.

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Light for Access and Mobility

One of the most obvious functions of night lighting is to show the way along the street. The Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) Guide for the Design of Roadway Lighting is the guide, especially regarding cut-off lighting and glare control. As a Major Street, the recommended light quantity standard for horizontal illumination is an average of 17 lux with a minimum of 6 lux.

One of the keys to seeing well is the relative brightness of the light. Vertical luminance and luminaire brightness are often more important than horizontal illumination and must be carefully managed. It is good practice to mark intersections of circulation with light, particularly between where there are mixed uses of vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.

A high degree of coordination is required between lighting and signage. Together they provide points of reference at night. In addition to lighting signs, light fixture placement can support wayfinding needs by creating lines and hierarchies. The location of traffic signals becomes part of the night light composition.



Cork Town Pedestrian Bridge: Soft light floods the bridge floor from glare free LED lighting in the handrail, allowing comfortable recognition of surfaces and spectacular views down the Rideau Canal.



Rideau Canal: Low intensity globes on pedestrian scale lights outline the canal as they give excellent light to the pathway. Low pole acorn lights define the road with minimal illumination. Silhouette reveals soft landscape and highlights make the bridges stand out as orientation points.

Light for Sustainability and Cost-Effectiveness

For public areas to be used effectively, lighting must be sustainable, in terms of how much energy is consumed. Product manufacturing, maintenance and disposal must also be considered.

To save energy through lighting design, the most successful designs use light only where needed for the task for the periods of time required and use it as little as possible. It is essential to specify the correct efficient light source that will meet all the visual requirements, helping people to see and feel comfortable without using more light than is absolutely necessary. Since night is not black and white, the color of the light must be sensitive to the human night vision ability*. If the light does not meet these needs it does not save energy or money.

Generally, lighting fixtures should be chosen for cost effectiveness and for ease of maintenance. When new designs or specifications are demanded due to the uniqueness of the application, experienced evaluation is needed. Each time a new component is introduced, new warranties, maintenance skill sets, parts and labor, not to mention approvals, are required. The availability of a product over a long time period must also be considered.

In addition to capital costs, the life cycle costs must be considered. These include the costs of the energy, the lamp replacement and the maintenance over a period time. Two ways to reduce maintenance are to use long life lamps and have easy access when changing them.

Excellent lighting design considers future needs and growth in terms of space and product application. "Lighting is an art supported by science". The final evaluation for greatest value is the amount of active public participation on Yonge Street at night.

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Energy efficient and dark sky friendly lighting is preferred for the entire streetscape to reduce glare to adjacent properties or open space areas and promote Yonge Street as a green and sustainable street. Utilizing street lighting that produces white light (LED / metal halide) rather than yellow-orange street lighting (high pressure sodium) is also recommended. This type of street lighting produces a more natural colour rendition.

Feature lighting, such as artistic, sculptural and accent lighting, should be used to highlight key buildings, landscape features, and nodes along the corridor. The lighting of these key areas will add to the old and exciting atmosphere along Yonge Street, providing variation and ensuring the corridor is pedestrian-friendly at night. This feature lighting will add to the lighting levels of the street lighting and therefore, less street lighting may be adequate.

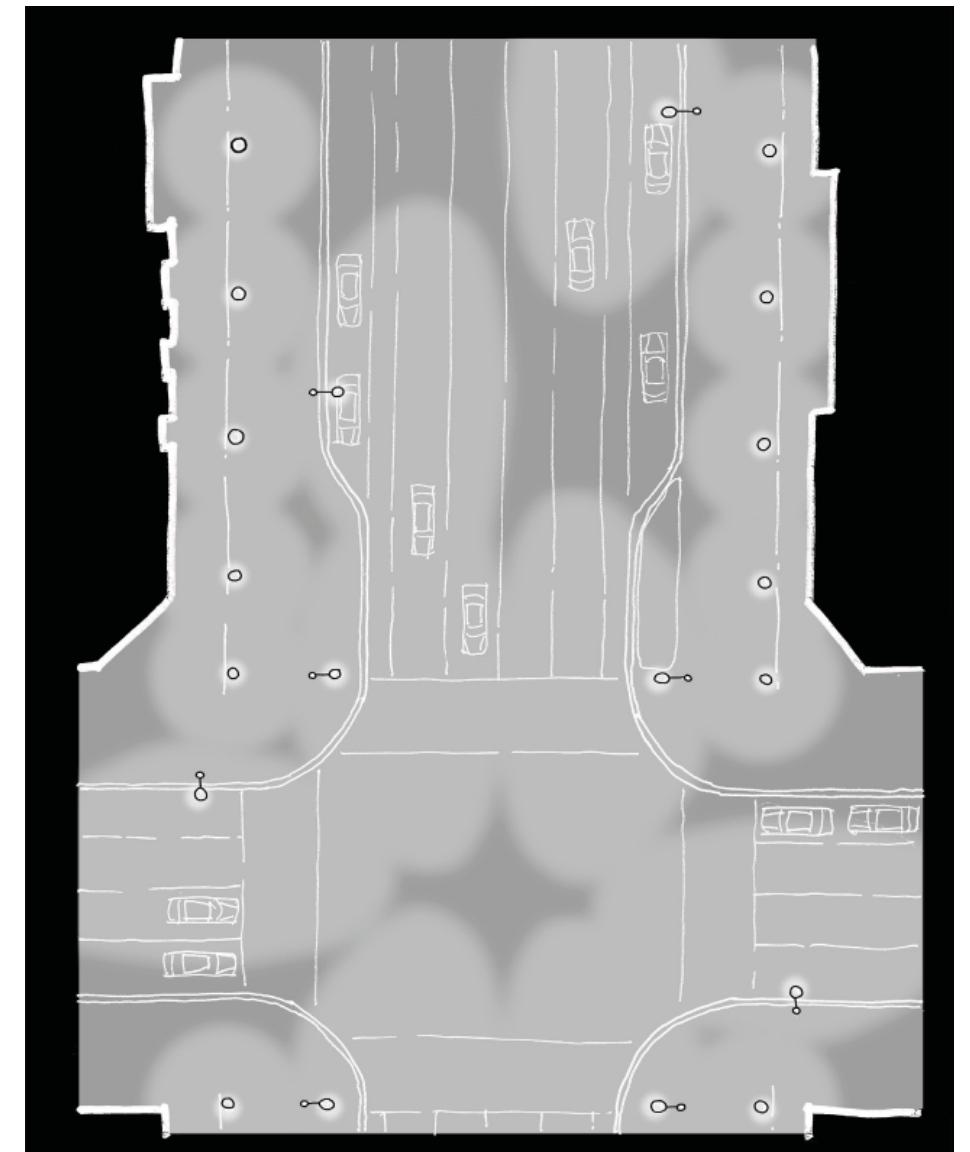
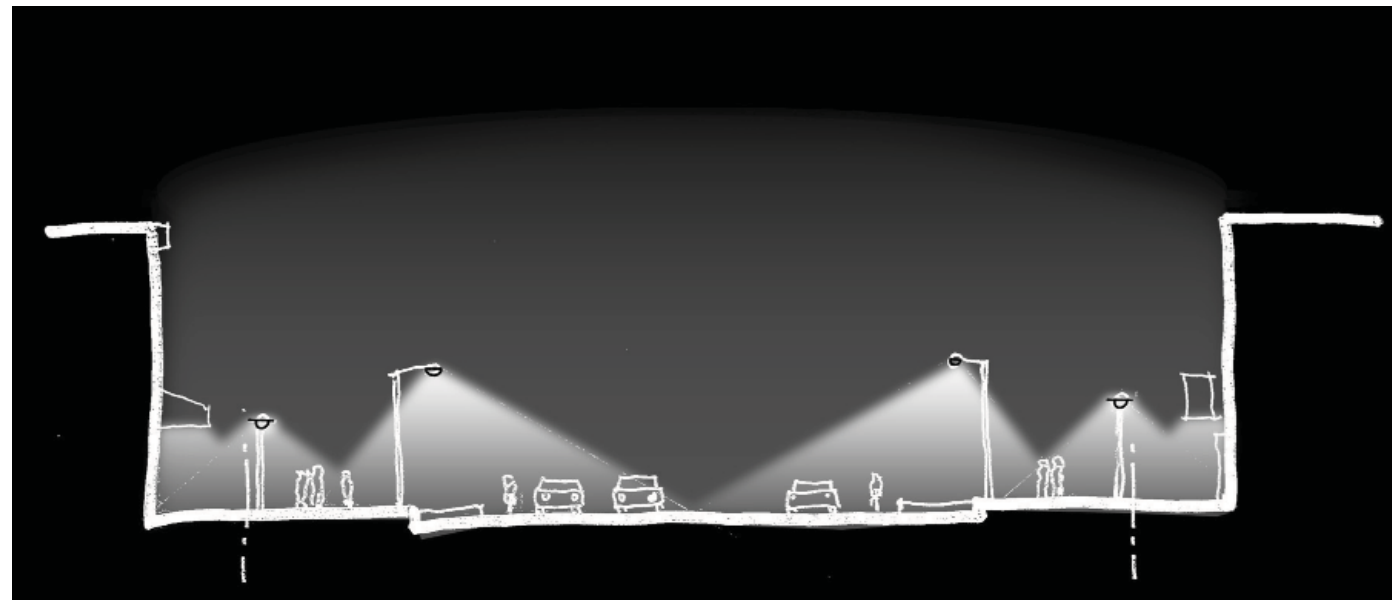
3.5.2.1 Lighting Scheme One

Pedestrian Lights

- Along edge of right-of-way
- 4 - 5 metres high, 10 - 14 metres on centre
- Semi-cutoff with apparent night presence

Street Lights

- Standard locations and height
- 6-7 metres high, 25 - 35 metres on centre
- Semi-cutoff with apparent night presence



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3.5.2.2 Lighting Scheme Two

Pedestrian Lights

- Along street edge
- 4 - 5 metres high, 10 - 14 metres on centre
- Semi-cutoff with apparent night presence

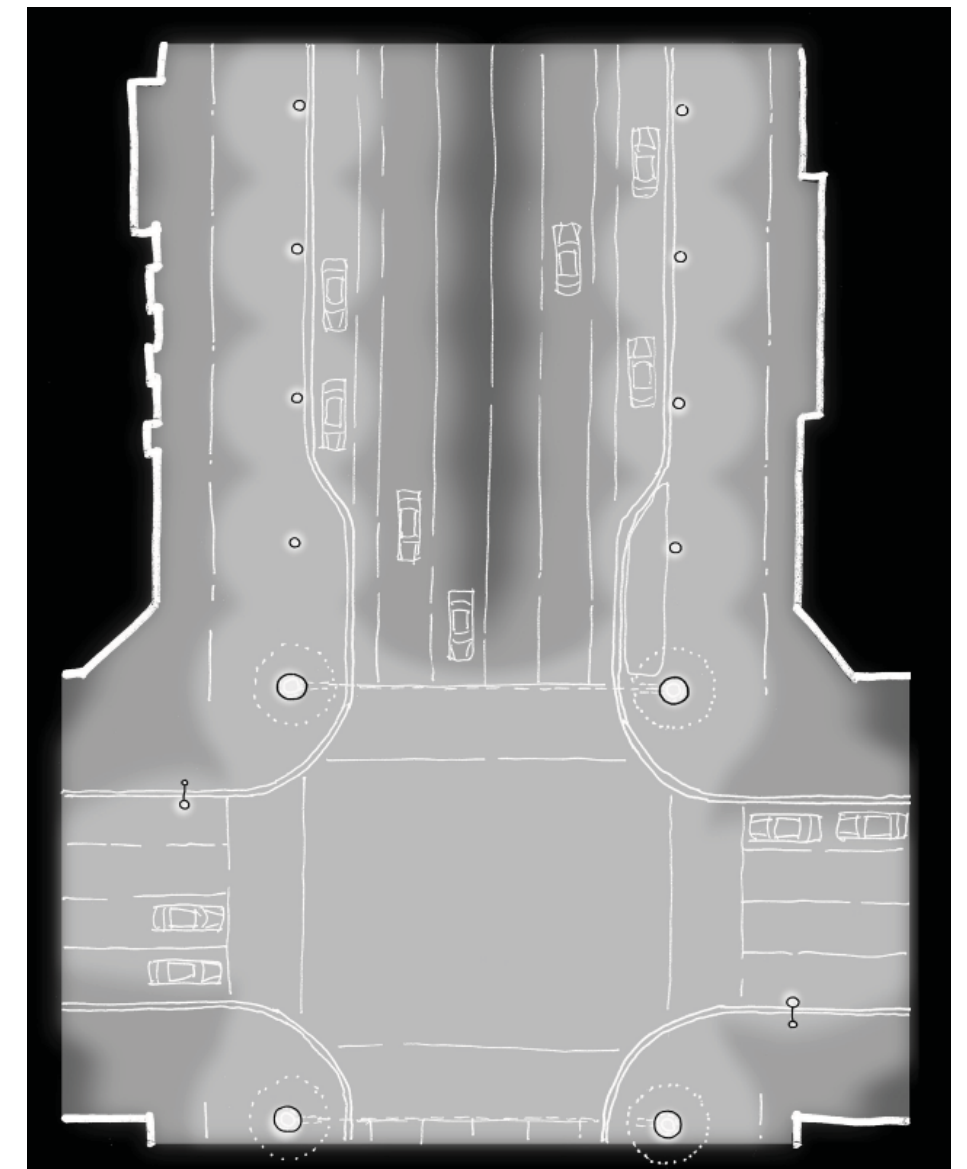
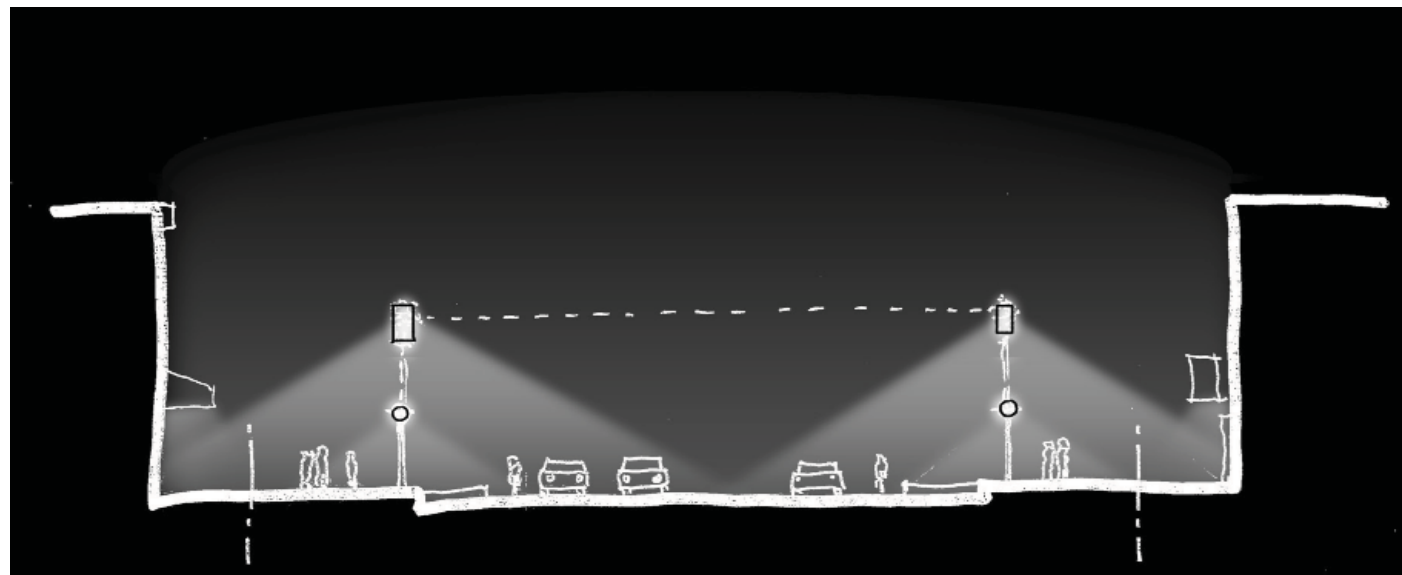
Feature Lights

- Aligned at crossings
- 8 - 10 metres high, at signalized traffic crossings
- Special design
- Strong night presence

This option emphasizes a strong discipline, organization and structure of lighting, with minimal exceptions to the rule while still allowing for variation in design and location within the pedestrian realm. This flexibility of lighting will be reinforced with accent lighting that can occur in addition to the lighting along the street to emphasize special areas, plazas, elements or features along the street.

Lighting Scheme 2 also reduces urban visual clutter by locating one light pole instead of two at intervals along the length of the streetscape. Where two types of lighting are to occur, at signalized traffic intersections, the feature lighting will be incorporated with the pedestrian lighting at these intersections.

Lighting Scheme 2 has been identified as the preferred option; however, pedestrian lighting shall be spaced at 7 - 10 metres on centre, and may vary according to the context. The lighting scheme shall provide lighting levels appropriate for each area along Yonge Street, and support pole lines to ensure the effective use of space.



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3.5.3 Street Furniture

Street furniture shall be consistent and coordinated in design throughout the public areas of the South Yonge Street Corridor. Materials, colours and styles shall be complementary to the architectural style characterizing Yonge Street as a whole. The placement and design of the elements should be coordinated to avoid visual clutter.

Street furniture consists of such elements as transit shelters, benches, litter receptacles, newspaper boxes, information kiosks, and bike racks.

Additional 'design link' concepts were developed that coordinate with furniture. These elements include tree grates, tree guards and railings.



Railing



Canopy Shelter



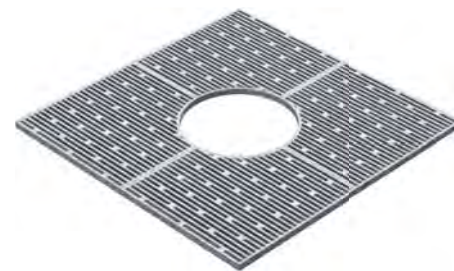
Multi-Publication Unit



Newspaper Box Organizer



Tree Guard



Tree Grate



Benches



Bicycle Rack



Basic Transit Shelter



Waste / Recycling Receptacle

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3.5.4 Access, Signage and Wayfinding

The access and wayfinding philosophy for the South Yonge Street Corridor Streetscape Master Plan emphasizes the need to balance the role of Yonge Street as a regional street with increased neighbourhood level access through the provision of generous pedestrian spaces and great service to all users – those who live, work, play and visit the Yonge Street corridor.

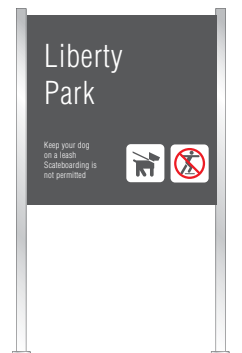
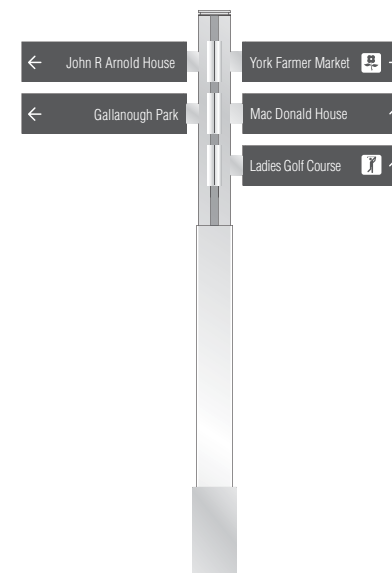
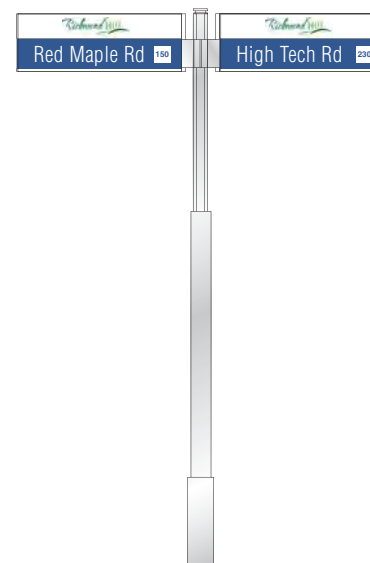
A coordinated wayfinding system was developed to direct and inform vehicular and pedestrian traffic on Yonge Street. This family of signage elements provides a clear communication hierarchy and utilizes form, graphics and typography to achieve a uniquely York Region experience.

Signage elements will reinforce place making and identity features of the Streetscape Master Plan; while the branding of Yonge Street is recommended as a further study to be undertaken. Signage and wayfinding elements could utilize a graphic tactile surfacing based on graphic motifs to further delineate the streetscape character zones.

Types of signage and wayfinding elements included in the Streetscape Master Plan include:

- Primary intersection and mid-block Street Identification Signs
- Gateway branding beacons
- Regulatory Signs
- Pedestrian finger blade Signs
- Pedestrian Map Orientation Graphics
- Vehicular Directional Sign
- Interpretive Signs

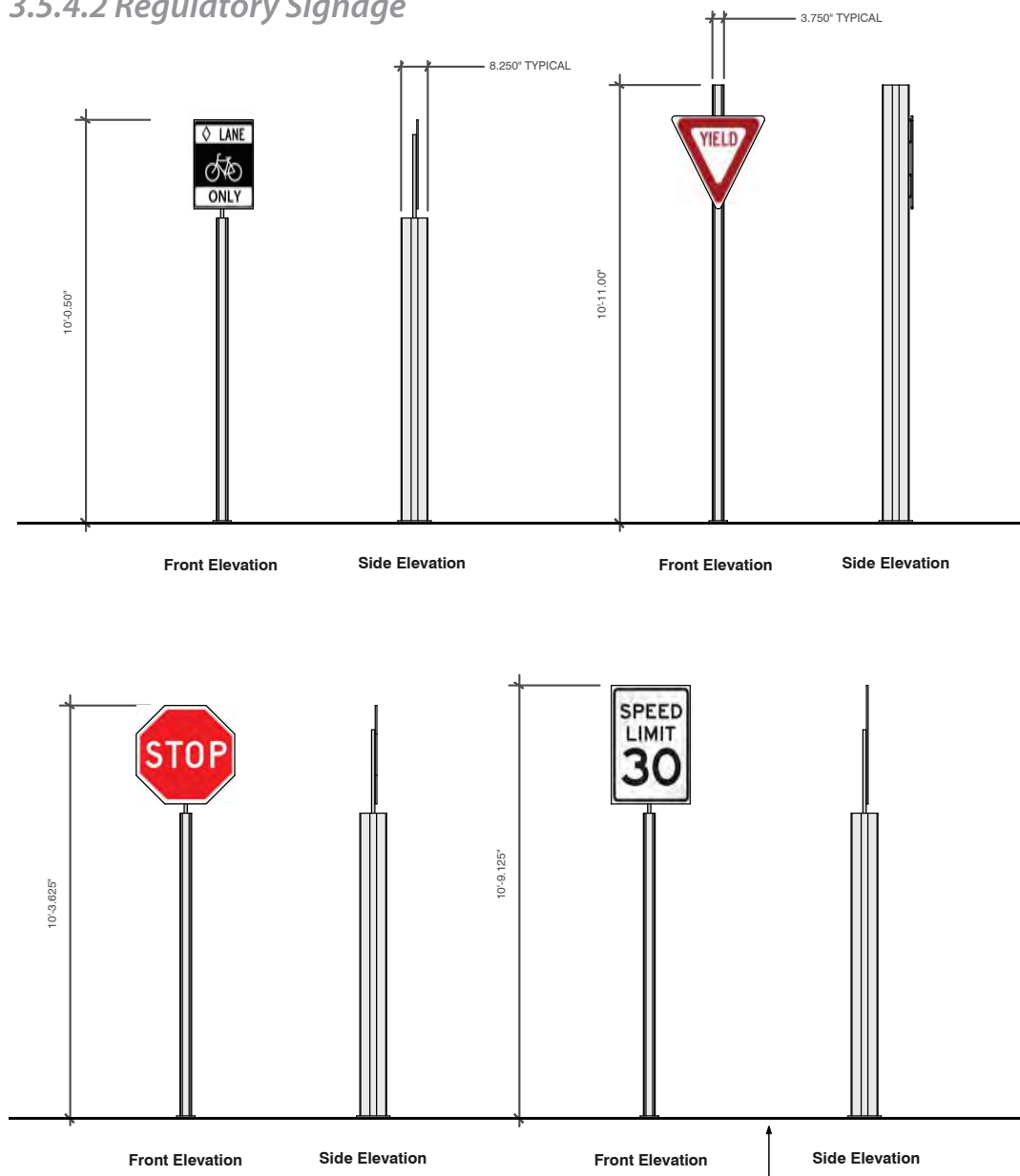
3.5.4.1 Wayfinding Elements



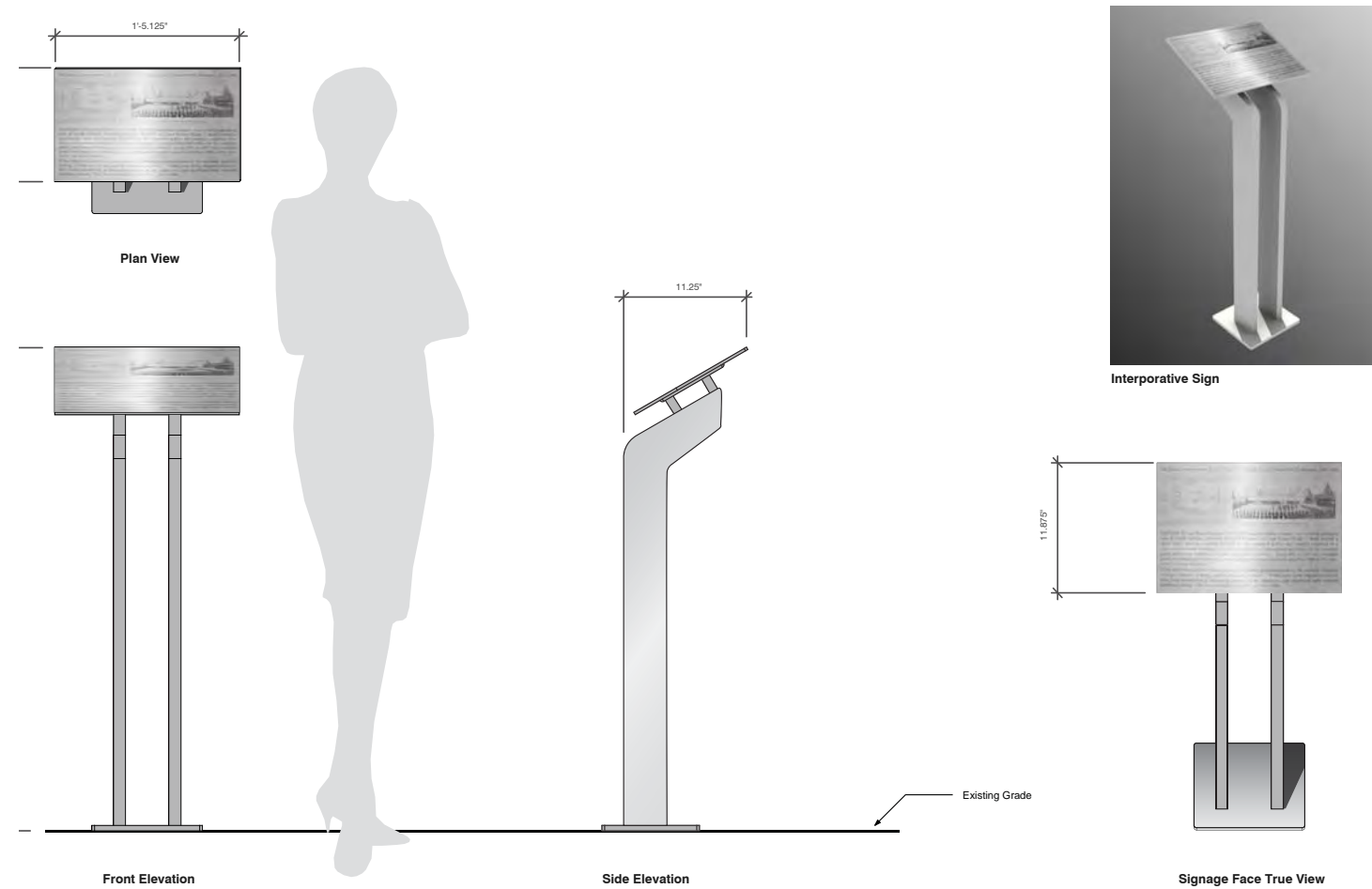
3. Draft Master Plan

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3.5.4.2 Regulatory Signage



3.5.4.3 Interpretive Signage



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3.6 Public Art

3.6.1 Philosophy and Approach

Promoting public art, and creating distinct outdoor features, infrastructure and rooms will encourage the use of public spaces, especially at those sites identified as catalysts for future development and will enhance the attractiveness of the public realm.

The Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) has a policy regarding the inclusion of public art in secondary plans for Regional Centres and Corridors. Under the objective of: *“To achieve an urban, integrated and connected system of Regional Centres and Corridors.”*, it is the policy of Council: *(6) That comprehensive secondary plans for Regional Centres and key development areas along Regional Corridors be prepared by local municipalities and implemented in co-operation with the Region and related agencies. These secondary plans shall include: ... (k.) policies that encourage the inclusion of public art in all significant private sector developments and that require the dedication of 1% of the capital budget of all major Regional and local municipalities to public art”.*

Recommendations for both private and public sector participation in public art along Yonge Street have been identified and are discussed below.

3.6.1.1 Private Sector Participation

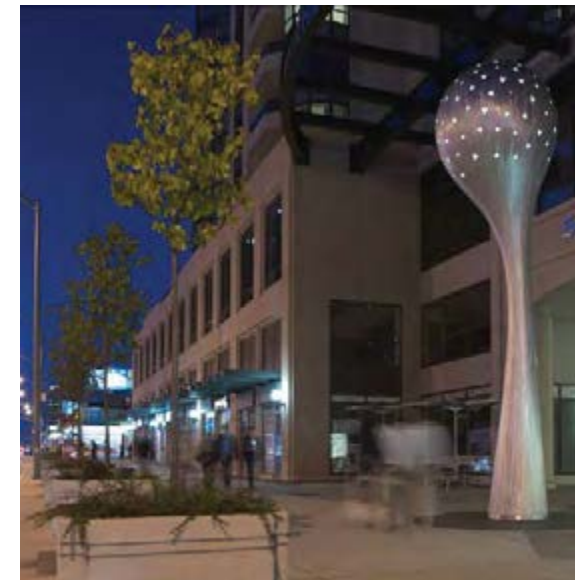
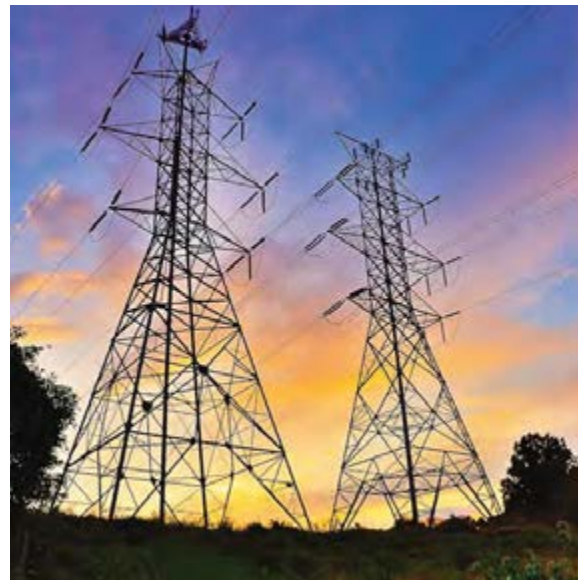
- Adoption of a percent for art programme through Section 37 or equivalent Planning Act mechanism. Artworks should be located in the most publicly accessible locations as possible. The City of Toronto has an existing policy that can act as a foundation for this programme.
- All or part of private sector contributions may be transferred off site. Off site locations should be selected through an overview analysis of appropriate locations. A stakeholder committee representing local interests as well as expertise in art, architecture and urban design should be formed to select these sites.
- Where possible, as determined through the site selection process described above, opportunities for the provision of privately owned, publicly accessible space, adjacent to public boulevards should be encouraged. These spaces are excellent opportunities for the incorporation of public artwork, either as stand-alone works or as integrated artworks, in collaboration with landscape and architectural disciplines.
- Existing sites identified during the course of this study as suitable for off site transfer include:
 - **Powerline Park:** Located south of the 407 and west of Yonge Street, the hydro-electric transmission corridor provides an excellent opportunity for the creation of a park-like space that capitalizes on the massive scale and specific use of this corridor.
 - **Valley Crossing Bridge:** Spanning the valley that is currently occupied by two golf courses, this bridge provides an opportunity for the incorporation of public art into an element of urban infrastructure. A collaboration with the bridge design team is recommended.
 - **CN Bridge:** Spanning the CN right of way, renovations to, or reconstruction of this bridge will provide an opportunity for public art vision in the design of improved public space.

3.6.1.2 Public Sector Participation

- Artworks should be incorporated as part of public agency capital expenditure policy. One percent of capital projects should be allocated to the provision of public artwork. The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) operates a percent for art programme; funds from this programme should be considered as a component of the funding base for the provision of public art.
- Existing public sites, identified during the course of this study as suitable for public funding include:
 - **TTC stations:** As a component of the TTC’s proposed Yonge Subway extension, public artworks should be included within the stations and in the public areas around the stations.
 - **CN Bridge:** As noted in the section on private sector funding opportunities, this bridge provides the opportunity for both private sector funding as well as funding from CN. Matched funding: one dollar from CN matched to every dollar from the private sector should be a reasonable request.
 - **407 ETR:** This privately operated express toll road should be a partner in funding artworks near the roadway. Developing a relationship with this entity and encouraging their participation in public space improvement, including public art, is encouraged.

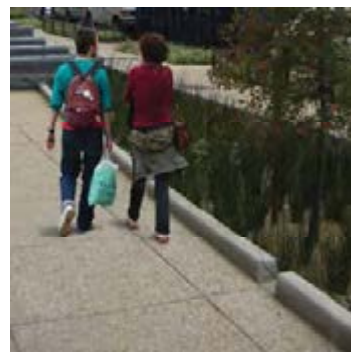
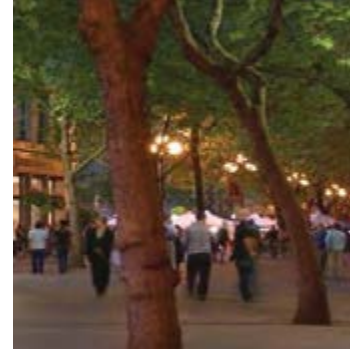
3. Draft Master Plan

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Publicly accessible art

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Pre-Subway Plan

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4.1 Introduction

This section of the report deals with the Pre-Subway Plan – a plan that identifies areas where the Streetscape Master Plan design could potentially be built prior to construction of the subway and retained as part of the ultimate plan.

The Pre-Subway Plan is prepared in response to the reality that no final decision on the timing and funding of the subway is imminent. In the absence of a decision and accompanying funding for the subway, Yonge Street must continue to function as a major commuter route accommodating increasing traffic flow and functions for the foreseeable future. The prime assumption upon which the Pre-Subway Plan is built is that it will continue to use existing roadway infrastructure including pavement width and curb lines. The Plan identifies areas of boulevard where implementation of the Streetscape Master Plan could potentially take place without compromising the roadway and traffic functions or that would require re-construction when the subway is built. The Pre-Subway Plan represents the “early wins” in building the Streetscape Master Plan.

4.1.1 General Criteria

The criteria used to determine eligibility for certain blocks or sections of Yonge Street to undergo streetscaping in the Pre-Subway period includes the following:

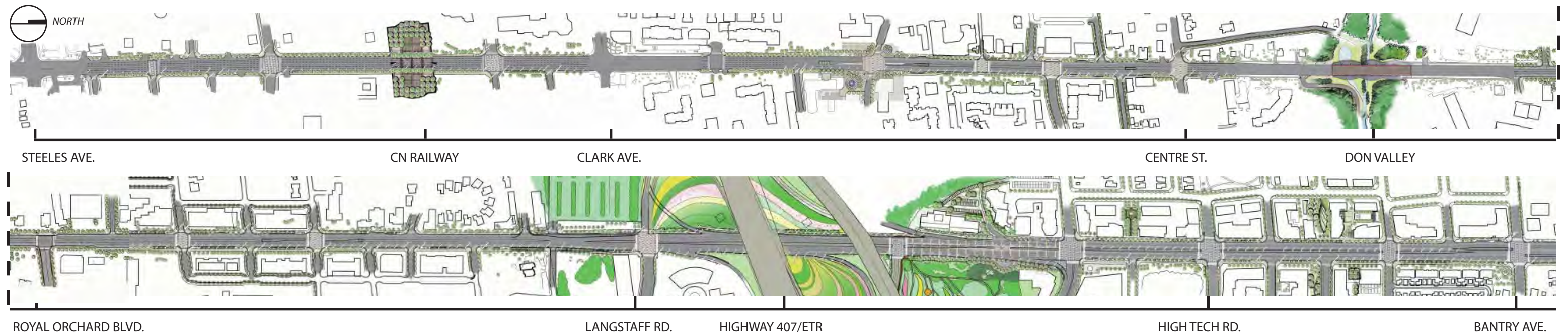
- 1. Maximize use of capital investment.** York Region desires to show commitment to the transformation of Yonge Street; however, it does not want to undertake work that will be disturbed during subway construction or when the ultimate road configurations are implemented.
- 2. Maintain roadway capacity while improving conditions for bicycles and transit.** See Section 4.1.2 below for a discussion of Transportation System Management strategies to be pursued.
- 3. Construction feasibility and efficiency.** If a section exceeding one block in length can be developed on both sides, development should be considered. Work could continue into the next block even if the new streetscape cannot be implemented all the way to the next intersection because of existing additional turn lanes. However, given that the Pre-Subway Plan calls for the elimination of

right turn lanes, the curbs may in fact be moved (to ultimate placement) in the Pre-Subway period to allow for completion of entire block.

Bus lay-bys are also rendered unnecessary by the designated High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in Pre-Subway Plan, so those curbs could also be “straightened” out and the ‘pork chops’ at the proposed gateway to Old Thornhill Village may be eliminated in the Pre-Subway period.

In all cases where development is possible, either the existing curbs will remain in the ultimate scenario or the ultimate curbs can be constructed now. No rebuilding or piece-meal construction will be necessary.

4. Minimize deviations from the Master Plan design. While some adaptations will need to be made in the areas to be developed using existing curb widths, the general philosophy, design intent and principles of the Master Plan guided the development of the Pre-Subway Plan and therefore, the Master Plan design guidelines shall apply.



4. Pre-Subway Plan

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4.1.2 Road Capacity and Function

During Pre-Subway conditions, minimizing the cost of changes to the streetscape is a key goal. To this end, elements of Transportation System Management (TSM) have been recommended to maintain existing corridor operating conditions while improving the streetscape of the corridor. This includes:

- Narrowing basic lane widths;
- Reallocating existing pavement dimensions and improving conditions for bicycles;
- Maintaining key functional elements of existing lane configurations (centre left turn lane) to maximize corridor accessibility and minimize impact upon through capacity;
- Adopting access management strategies to improve private driveway design, location, and operation relative to corridor operating conditions (from general vehicular, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and urban design perspectives) (such strategies include back lanes, side street and off-street parking and servicing);
- Addressing intersection capacity through signal timing / phasing efficiencies and progression considerations;
- Placing an emphasis upon improving transit service between Richmond Hill Centre (the southern limit of the approved section of York Region's Yonge Street BRT / LRT) and the Finch Subway Station through transit priority measures such as HOV lanes (e.g., peak period and / or peak direction), potential queue jump lane opportunities (through strategic use of the centre left turn lane in sections), elimination of right turn lanes and implementing far-side transit stops, etc.

4.1.3 General Principles for Lane Deployment

Lane Widths

In the south portion of Yonge Street within York Region, between Steeles Avenue and Clark Avenue, there will be a 3.5 metre wide centre left turn lane, four (4) through lanes of 3.25 metres in width, and two (2) HOV lanes that are also meant to accommodate bicycles.

Between Clark Avenue and Langstaff Road there will be a 3.5 metre wide centre left turn lane; two (2) traffic lanes of 3.3 metres in width and two (2) sharrow lanes at 4.25 metres wide. There may also be opportunities for lay-by parking.

In the vicinity of the 407 ETR structure, there will be a 5 metre centre median; four (4) through lanes at 3.25 metres wide; two (2) sharrows at 4 metres wide and off ramps and on ramps at 3.5 metres wide where necessary.

Bicycle Facilities

South of the Highway 7 connecting link, bicycling facilities are configured within sharrows where on-street signage and accompanying pole mounted boulevard signage will indicate the presence of cyclists within what would be both general purpose and HOV lanes (depending upon the location within the corridor). The Pre-Subway lane configuration fits within the existing curbs along the length of Yonge Street, even at the narrowest points. In some areas the existing roadway is wider than the Pre-Subway lane configuration; in these cases more space should be added to the HOV lanes near the curb to make it safer for cyclists.

Medians

Under Pre-Subway conditions, the centre left turn lane medians are maintained throughout the corridor for traffic operations and land access reasons. However, it is envisioned that future development, through a corridor access management approach, would minimize direct access to Yonge Street and optimize access from side streets and consolidated private driveways along Yonge Street. This would permit the implementation of a raised planters where centre left turn lane provisions are not functionally required in the long term. For the Pre-Subway period, all left turn lanes are likely to be flush with the pavement.

4.1.4 Cross Sections

Street cross-sections have been prepared to reflect typical sections of Yonge Street as they relate to how pavement width is deployed. The basic sections of Yonge Street as they relate to pavement width are:

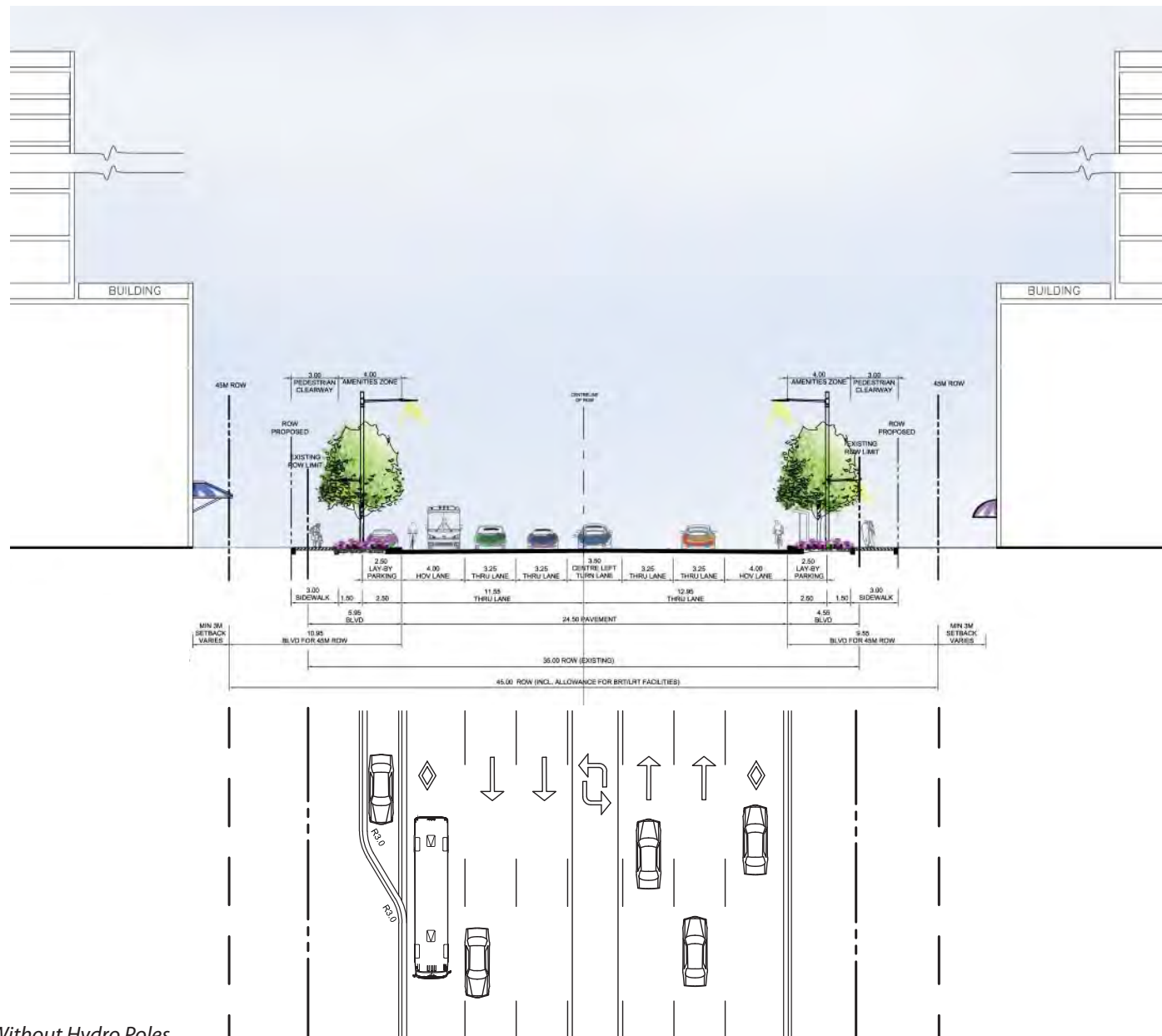
- From Steeles Avenue to just north of Clark Avenue – 7 lane cross-section;
- From just north of Clark Avenue to approximately Langstaff Road – 5 lane cross-section;
- From Langstaff Road north, under Highway 407 ETR corridor, to the Highway 7 connecting link – 7 lane cross-section plus on- and off-ramp lanes; and,
- North of the Highway 7 connecting link to Scott Drive / Bantry Road – 5 lane cross-section with BRT / LRT ROW.

Each section is illustrated under Pre-Subway conditions as follows.

4. Pre-Subway Plan

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4.1.4.1 Steeles Avenue Mid-Block Cross Sections



Without Hydro Poles

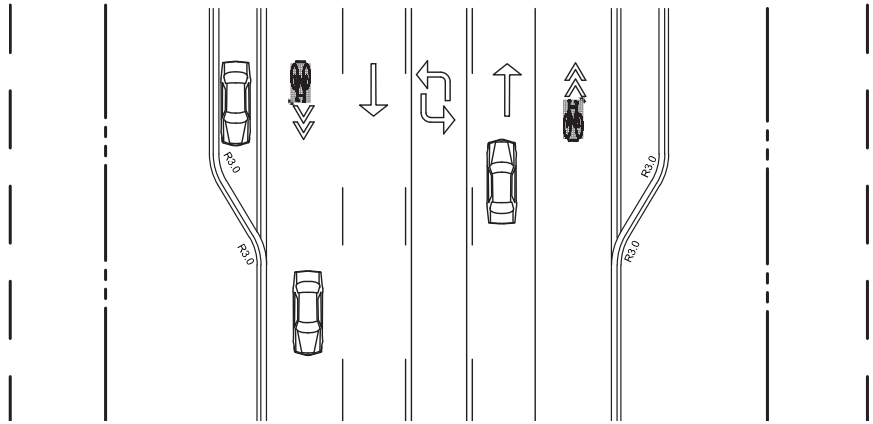
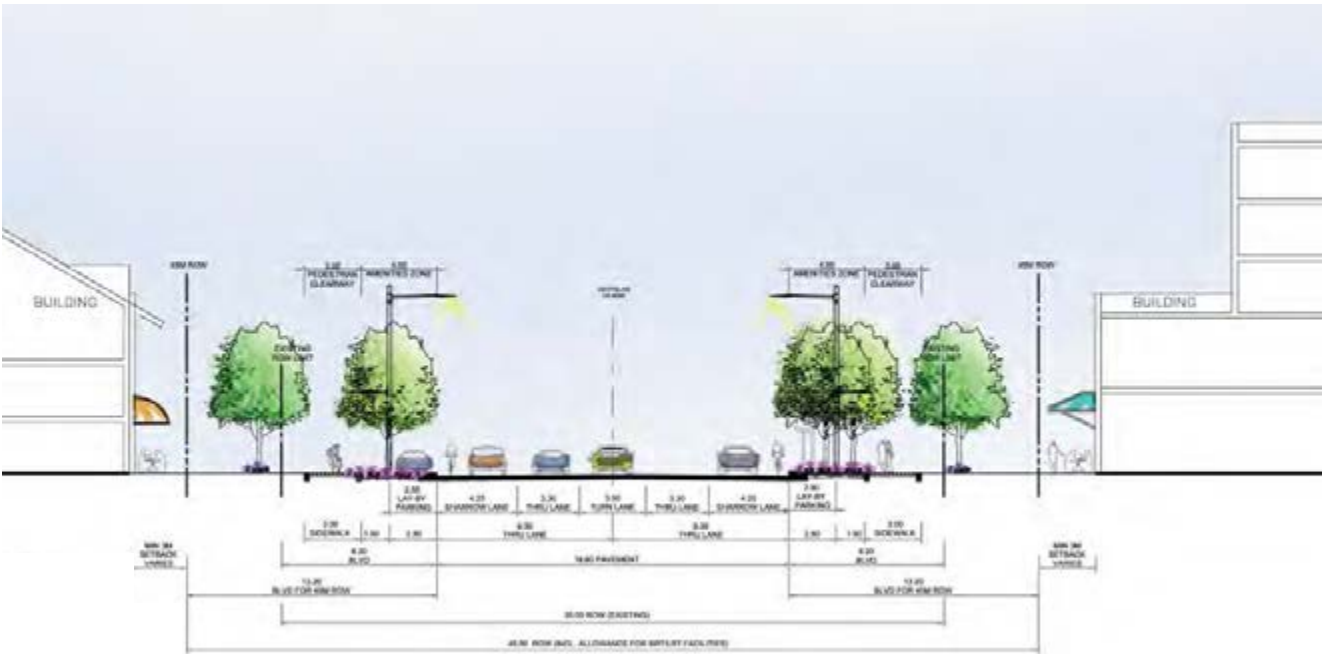


With Hydro Poles

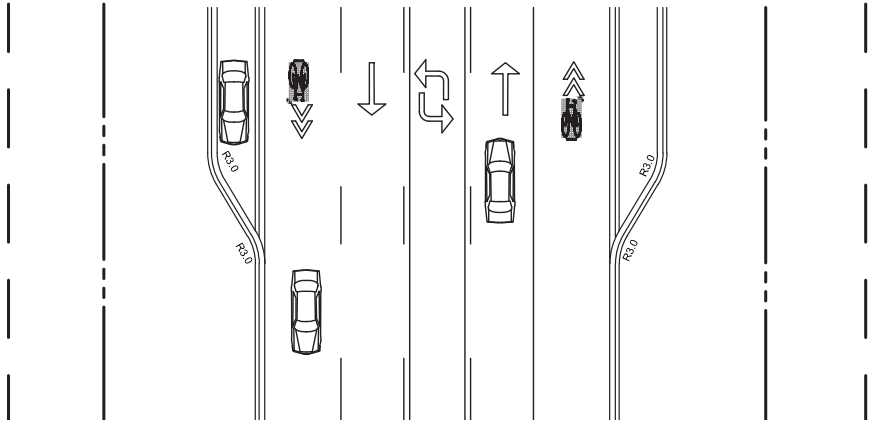
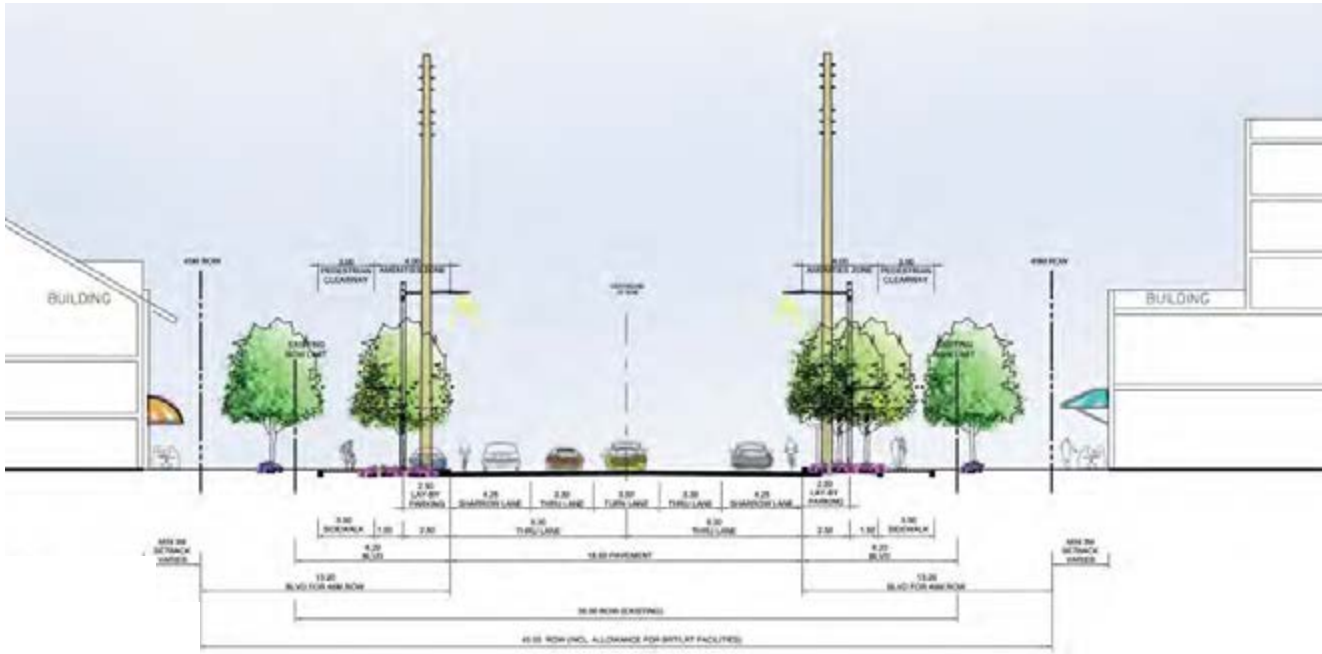
4. Pre-Subway Plan

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4.1.4.2 North of Clark to Langstaff Mid-Block Cross Sections



Without Hydro Poles



With Hydro Poles

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4.2 Opportunities for Construction

This section identifies the various conditions that may allow for opportunities for construction of the streetscape along Yonge Street to occur during the Pre-Subway period.

Areas where open-cut construction will be required during the subway tunnel construction (Condition A) will only undergo necessary repairs and maintenance – no extensive upgrades shall occur until after the subway is implemented. Areas where either the ultimate Master Plan or the Pre-Subway Plan can be built during the Pre-Subway period (Condition B and C) will be upgraded when possible – considering the need for extensive road or boulevard repairs, scheduled utility work, new development, financial partnership agreements, etc.

For the purpose of this study, the study area is classified into four categories:

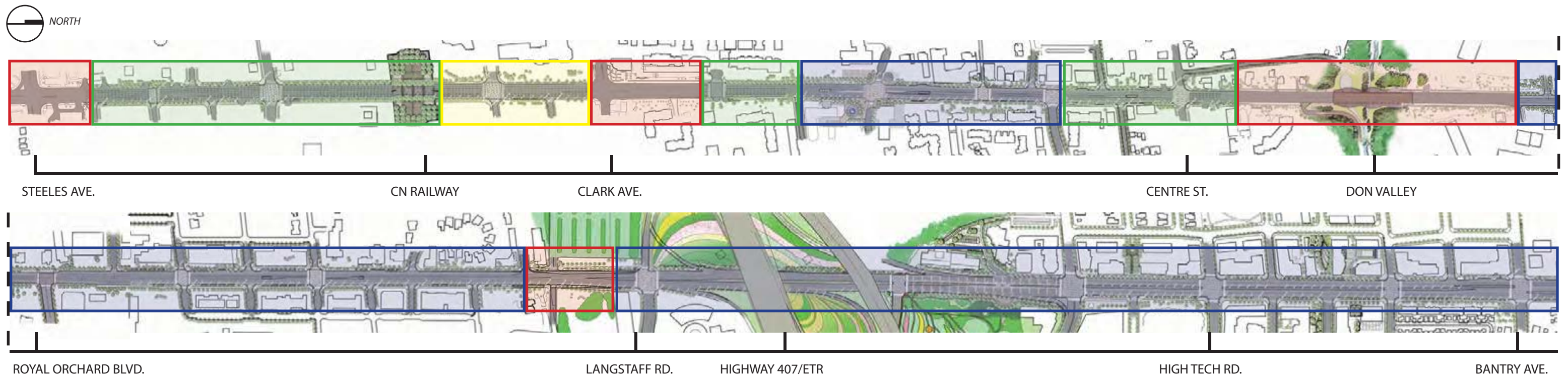
- *Condition A:* Open-cut areas that cannot be developed until subway construction is complete (Ultimate Plan).
- *Condition B:* Areas where the Master Plan can be slightly modified using existing curbs (Pre-Subway Plan).
- *Condition C:* Areas where roadway widths are narrower than the proposed design and can be expanded with no loss of transportation function (Pre-Subway Plan).
- *Condition D:* Areas where the current roadway is wider than the proposed allocation and it would be preferable to wait until the road is narrowed to achieve a more spacious pedestrian zone (Ultimate Plan).

During the detail design and construction drawing phases of the South Yonge Street Corridor streetscaping project different conditions may apply; trees will need to be assessed and alternative design solutions may be discovered.

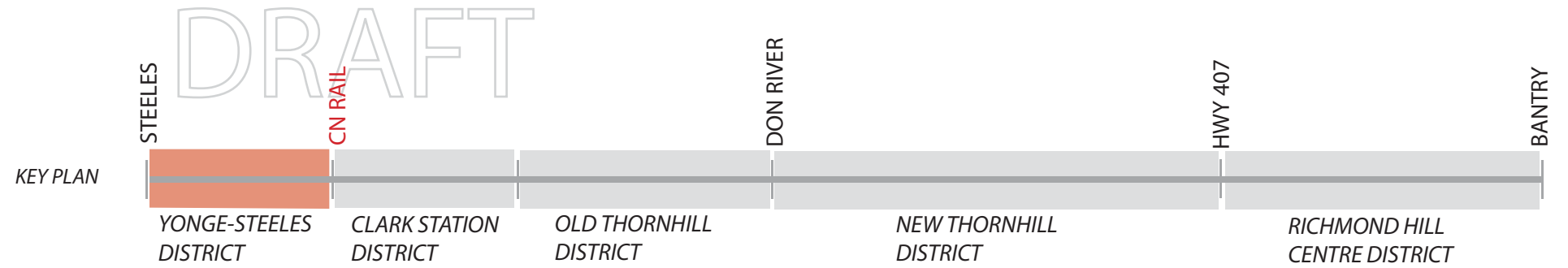
4.2.1 Condition A - Subway Construction Zones

There are a number of areas along Yonge Street where open-cut construction will occur with the implementation of the proposed Yonge Subway extension. These areas are identified in the Yonge Subway Extension: Environmental Project Report - Finch Avenue to Highway 407 report (2009). It is assumed that the streetscape Master Plan will not be implemented in these areas during the Pre-Subway period as it would be a throw-away cost.

Section	Approximate Distance of Open-Cut
Steeles Station	150 metres
Clark Station	210 metres
Don Valley section (to be regraded)	575 metres
Longbridge Station	175 metres



4. Pre-Subway Plan



4.2.2 Condition B - Use Existing Curbs

Using existing curbs is proposed in locations where the roadway is slightly wider than the proposed ultimate cross-section. Once the subway is built and the ultimate lane deployment can be implemented, the excess roadway width can be allotted to any of the street functions, but most likely to either the bicycle lanes or to a planted median.

Adapting the ideal boulevard layout to existing conditions in order to create a Pre-Subway Plan results in a significant deviation from the ultimate plan in some areas, insofar as existing trees often dictates the placement of sidewalks. This results in the pedestrian clearway zone being nearest the road and the furniture and planting zone being farther from the road; this is an ideal situation for trees, but not as comfortable for pedestrians. Existing driveways also impact the placement of trees if implemented during the Pre-Subway period; whereas for the ultimate Master Plan it is envisioned that most driveways are relocated off of Yonge Street to a rear lane or side street.

4.2.2.1 North of Steeles Station (proposed) to south of Clark Avenue

In this area the current roadway is wider by 1.5 to 2.5 metres than the ultimate Master Plan. The ultimate roadway configuration will have to change to utilize the excess 1.5 to 2.5 metres – this could be used to widen the medians or the bike lanes.

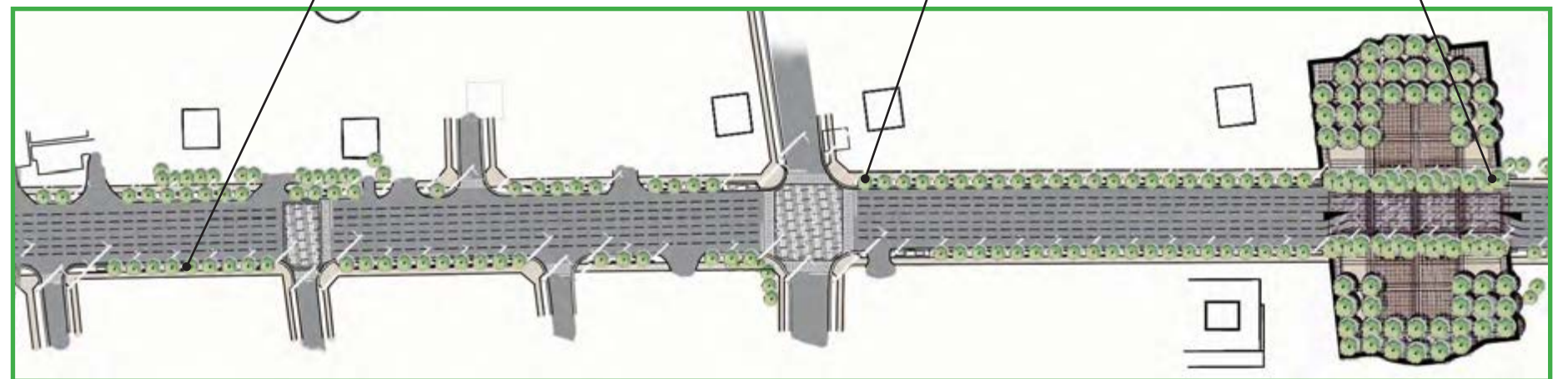
In the block between Highland Park Boulevard and Woodward Avenue, on the east side, the sidewalks and tree trenches will have to be narrower (2.5 metres each) due to existing buildings. Alternatively, it is possible to wait until the road can be narrowed and shift the centre line towards the east (Condition D).

On the west side of Yonge Street the curbs are closely enough matched to implement the ultimate Master Plan in the Pre-Subway period (Condition C).

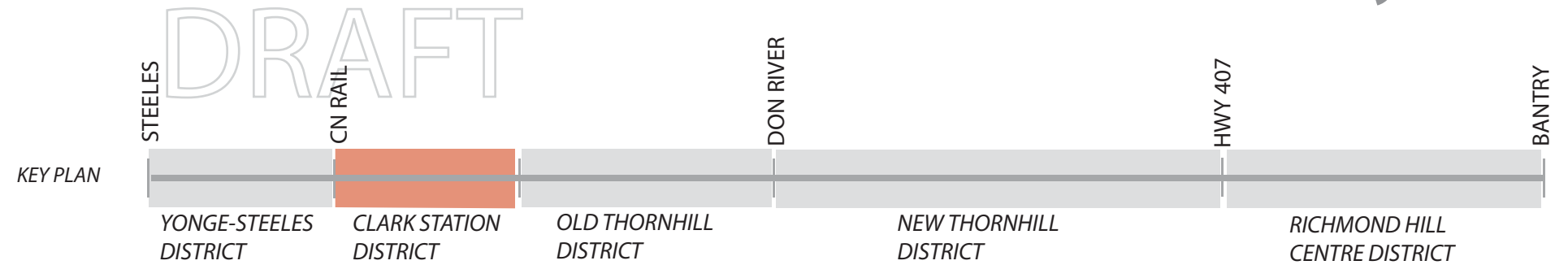
CN Rail Bridge
The road is 2 metres wider than the ultimate plan calls for. If it is built in the interim period the 2-metre excess will need to be reapportioned to the medians or to bike lanes.



Atypical Detail Plan: North of Steeles Station - Asymmetrical boulevards, sidewalks flank road on both sides.



4. Pre-Subway Plan



4.2.2.2 North of Clark Station (proposed)

In the south portion of this section (up to Lampe Towers), the existing road is 1.8 metres wider than the proposed configuration.

- Symmetrical boulevards will not be possible under the Pre-Subway or the ultimate scenarios because of existing trees.
- The Pre-Subway Plan could be built and the excess roadway width reapportioned to bike lanes or median under the ultimate scenario.

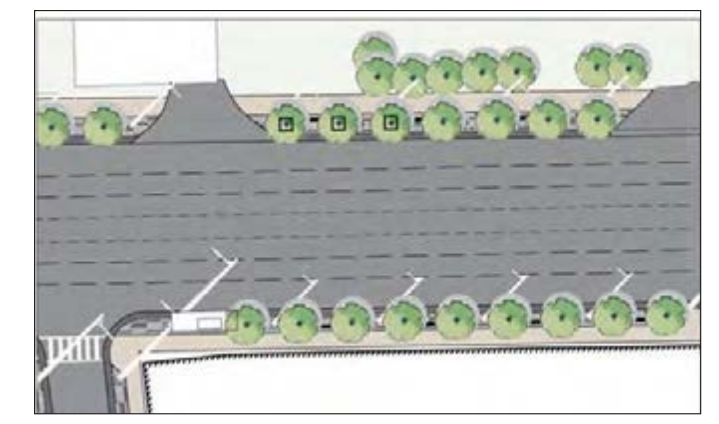
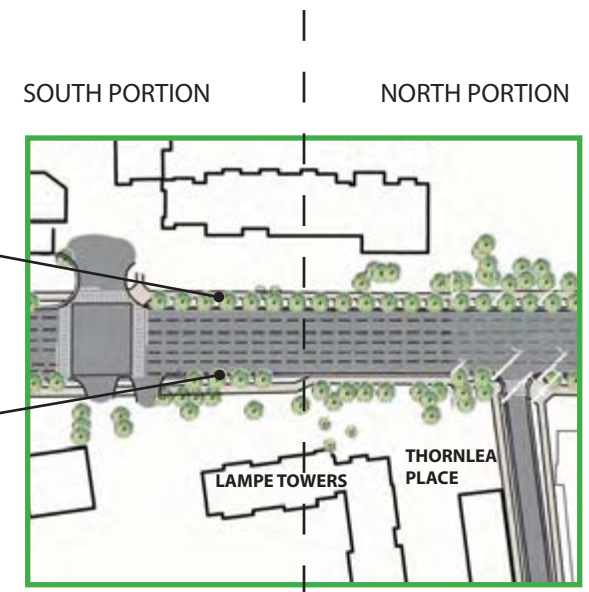
In the north portion of this section on the east side of the street (in front of Thornlea Place Condominium Residences):

- Existing trees force the sidewalk to be placed alongside the road if using existing curbs.
- In the ultimate plan, there is room for a narrow tree trench (2 metres) between the road and the sidewalk (which is also reduced to 2 metres) (Condition D). However, the sidewalk would be within 1.5 metres of existing trees.

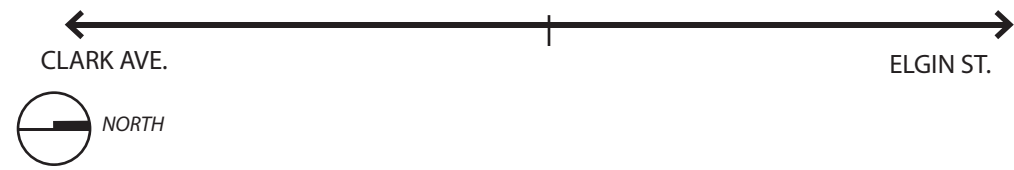
The west side treatment is constant from Clark Station.

On the west side, the sidewalk should be only 2.5 metres wide so as to minimize interference with existing trees; the ideal tree trench can be accommodated; this holds true for both Pre-Subway and ultimate scenarios.

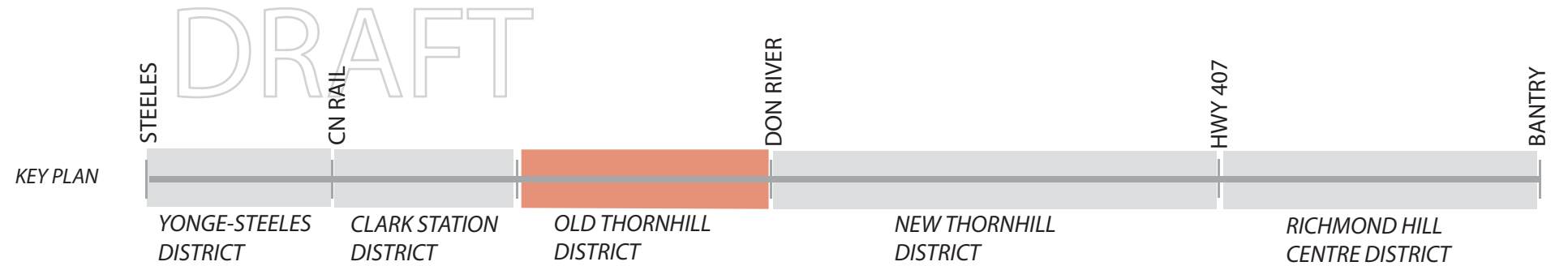
On the east side, the boulevard zone should be restricted to 5.5 metres in total to avoid harming existing trees.



Atypical Detail Plan: North of Clark Station - Sharrows are wider than typical section due to wider existing roadway. Excess is allotted to bicycle lanes.

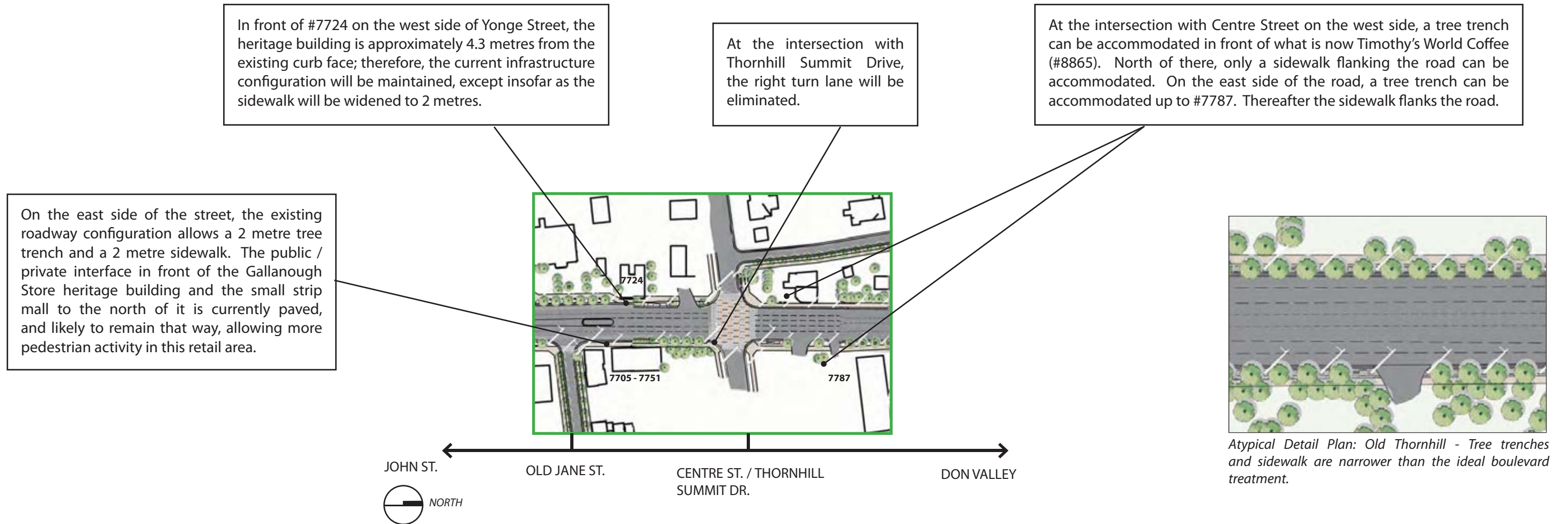


4. Pre-Subway Plan

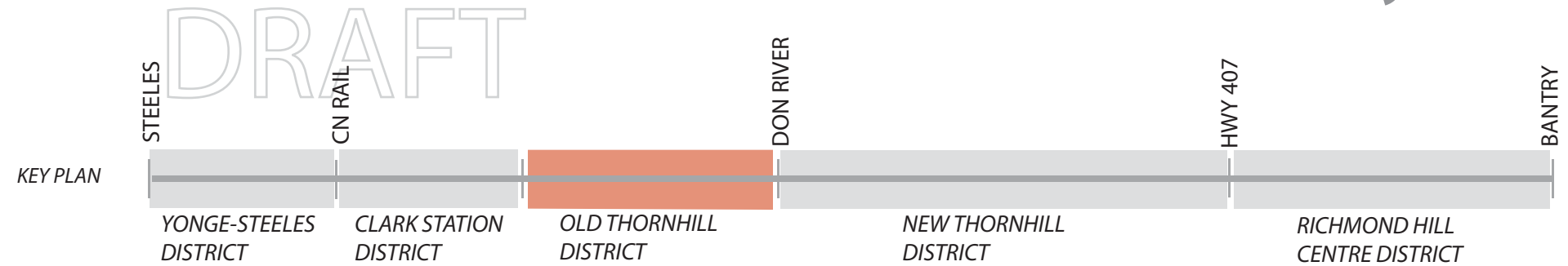


4.2.2.3 Between John Street and Don Valley Construction Zone

The Pre-Subway Plan will serve as the final plan in some sections of Old Thornhill Village north of Centre Street. Only the Pre-Subway Plan – with sharrows – can be implemented if existing trees and heritage properties are not to be disturbed. The sharrows can be expanded to the existing curbs – gaining approximately 1 metre on each side.



4. Pre-Subway Plan



4.2.3 Condition C – Implement Ultimate Plan in the Pre-Subway Period

If the ultimate plan is implemented in the areas discussed as follows during the Pre-Subway period, detailed design will need to take into account existing driveways and property layouts that do not conform to the desired urban configuration represented in the Master Plan. The roadway redeployment of through lanes, curb lanes and bicycle lanes may not be possible at this point but existing levels and patterns of traffic can be sustained insofar as the roadway widths are WIDER under the Ultimate condition than under the current conditions. Raised centre medians may not be possible during the Pre-Subway period. Consult the Phase 5 Report for discussion of pre-planning steps necessary to realize the Pre-Subway and ultimate plans (including utilities coordination and financing).

4.2.3.1 Farmer's Market to Old Jane Street

North of Elgin Street

- The existing road is narrower than the proposed ultimate plan configuration; therefore, the ultimate plan could be implemented with no loss of function; however, new curbs would be required.
- The ultimate plan can accommodate a tree trench up to #7575, Green Hill Market, on the east side of the street. At that point, existing trees require that the sidewalk run adjacent to the road, which can be 3 metres and have a 1 metre continuity strip.

North of John Street

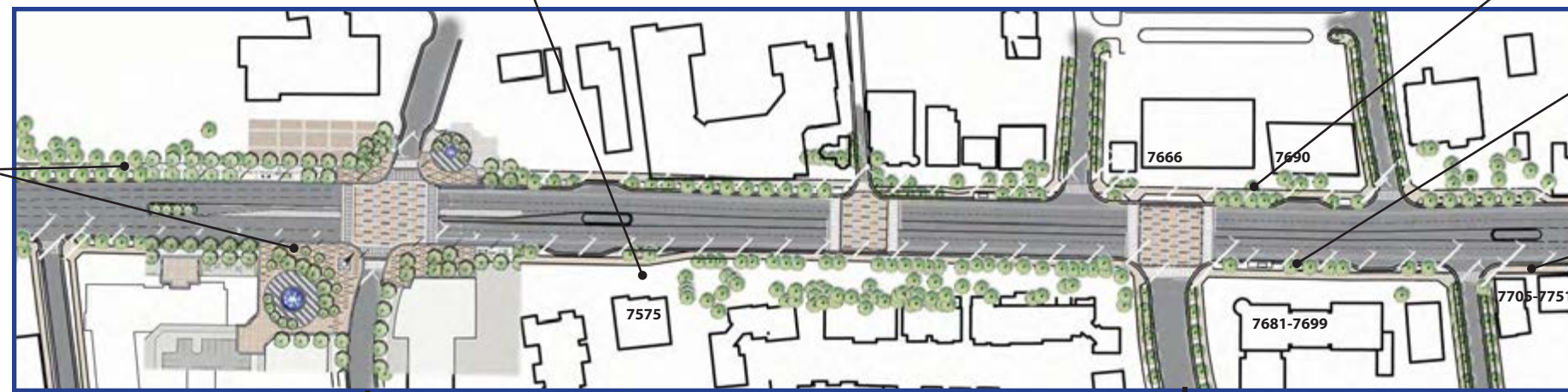
- Existing trees flank the road on both sides of the street – plans need to be modified to avoid disturbing them any more than necessary.
- On the west side of the street existing and proposed curbs align; therefore the ultimate plan can be implemented.

In front of #7666 and #7690, a 2.5 metre sidewalk could be built in the same location as the existing sidewalk to protect the larger existing trees on the building side of the existing sidewalk. A 2-metre tree trench on the roadside of the sidewalk would also be feasible.

In front of #7681 and #7699 the ideal 3-metre sidewalk and 3-metre tree trench can be accommodated, but would require removal of existing trees in wooden planters.

Between #7705 and #7751 on the east side of the street a 3-metre sidewalk and no tree trench are proposed under the ultimate plan. Some accommodation should be made for existing trees in front of #7751, the Post Office Building (i.e., sidewalk further narrowed to 2.5 or 2 metres).

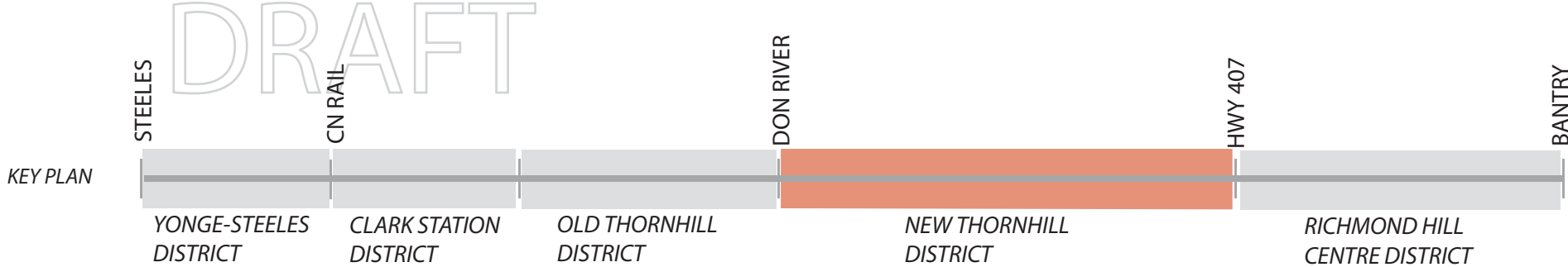
In the **Farmer's Market District** on the west side of the street (in front of and north of the Central Park on Yonge Building) where the roadway narrows, the ultimate plan could be built now, as widening the road to ultimate width accommodates current traffic volume. While the road would be wider, there would be no dedicated right turn lane at Elgin Street.



CLARK AVE. ELGIN ST. JOHN ST. OLD THORNHILL VILLAGE



4. Pre-Subway Plan

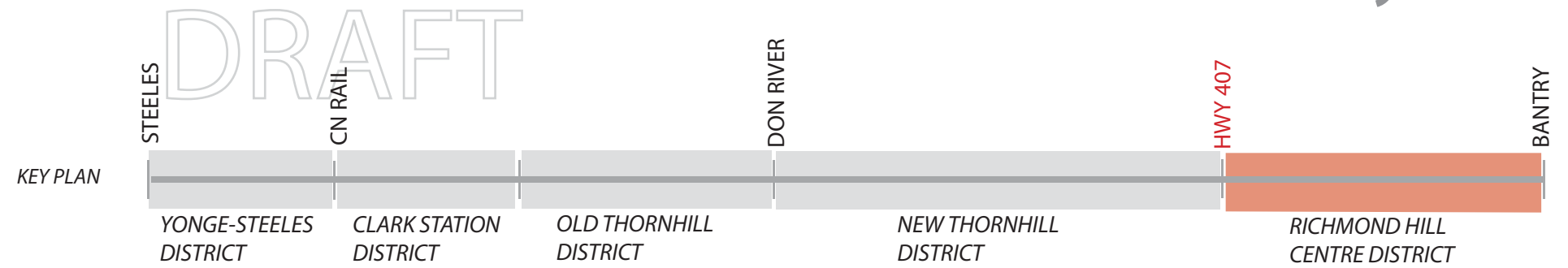


4.2.3.2 New Thornhill District

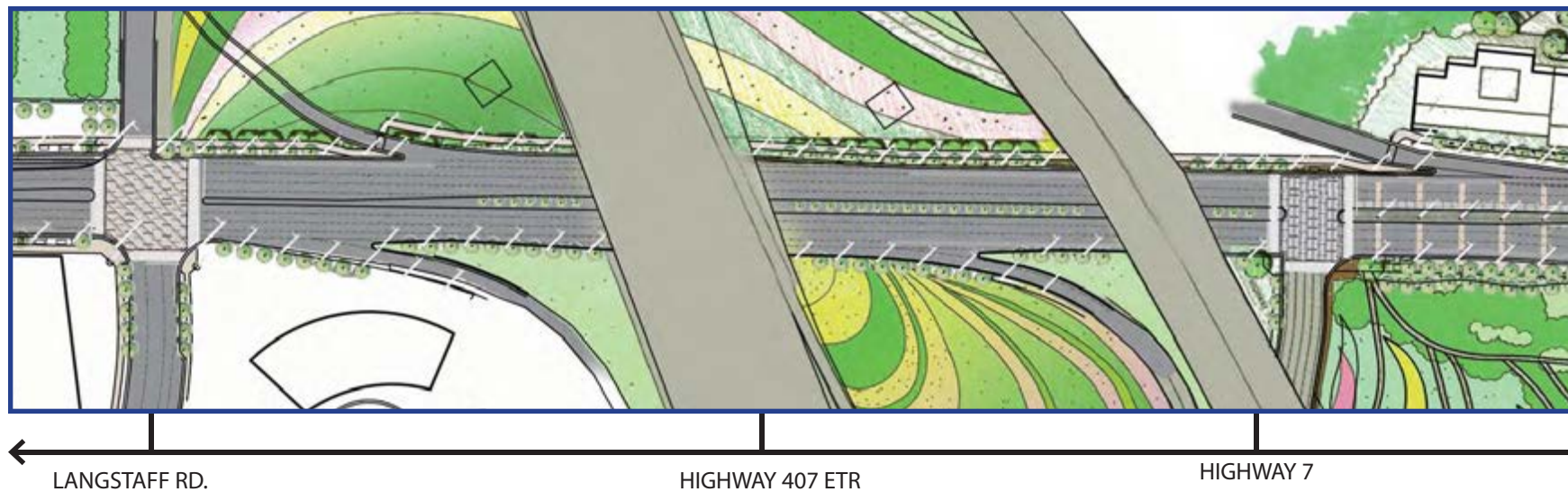
Between the Don Valley and the proposed Longbridge Station construction zones the ultimate plan may be implemented immediately as the current roadway is narrower than the ultimate – widening the road would not impede the current flow of traffic. Right turn lanes would be eliminated. The curb lane is 3.5 m wide to accommodate buses.



4. Pre-Subway Plan



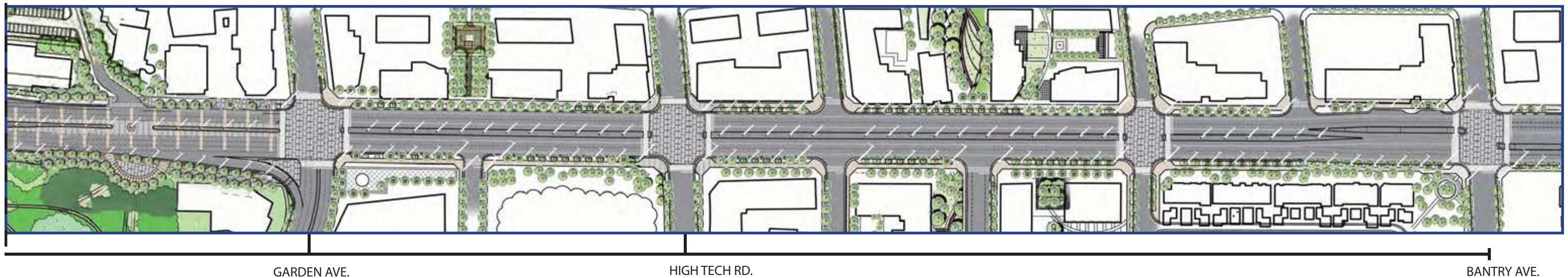
4.2.3.3 Highway 407 ETR and Richmond Hill Centre



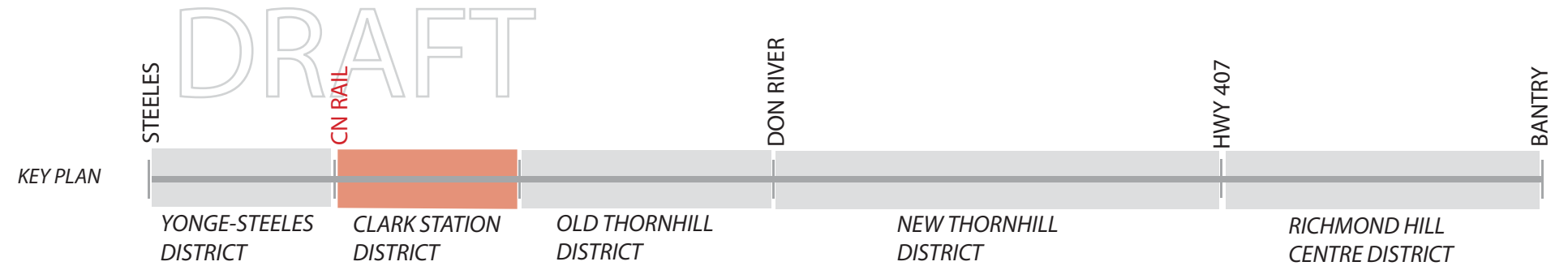
407 ETR / Hwy 7 Interchange Area
 The ultimate plan calls for an expanded roadway to accommodate bike lanes; therefore it is inadvisable to work on this section until the curbs can be moved.



In **Richmond Hill Centre**, where the BRT will be built, construction of the streetscape ultimate plan will be implemented along with road widening for the BRT.



4. Pre-Subway Plan



4.2.4 Condition D - Wait Until Road Narrowing is Possible

In this area the current roadway is wider by 1.5 to 2.5 metres than the ultimate Master Plan. The ultimate roadway configuration will have to change to utilize the excess 1.5 to 2.5 metres – this could be used to widen the medians or the bike lanes.

Between the CN rail line and Glen Cameron existing trees will limit the size and placement of sidewalks in both the interim and proposed plans; there are few physical constraints on the east side. Options and considerations are discussed below.

- If the existing curbs are kept, the sidewalk on the west side will flank the road and fluctuate from 3 metres to 5 metres in width.
- If the proposed curb is used and the centre line remains centred between the proposed 35 metre ROW, the sidewalk would be one metre narrower on the west side.
- If the centre line is shifted towards the east by one metre, 3 - 5 metres can again be allocated for the boulevard on the west.
- If the centre line is shifted 3 metres to the east a narrower ideal boulevard can be laid out on the west side (2.5 metres for sidewalk, 2.5 metres for tree trench and 1 metre continuity strip). This would balance the two sides. Under this scenario the ideal of a constant, straight road alignment is sacrificed.
- The east side of the road can have the ideal organization of boulevard zones under either scenario.
- Land acquisition under the Pre-Subway Plan requires acquiring a 2 metre strip for the sidewalk on the east side. The same amount would be necessary if the Master Plan is shifted 3 metres to the east (less if only shifted 1 metre).
- The design decision then entails whether both sides of the street have symmetrical layouts, or one has the sidewalk on road side and the other has the sidewalk after trees.
 - The two sides could be balanced by locating the sidewalk near the road on the east side as well as on the west side; in this case sacrificing pedestrian comfort.

Between Glen Cameron and Morgan Avenue

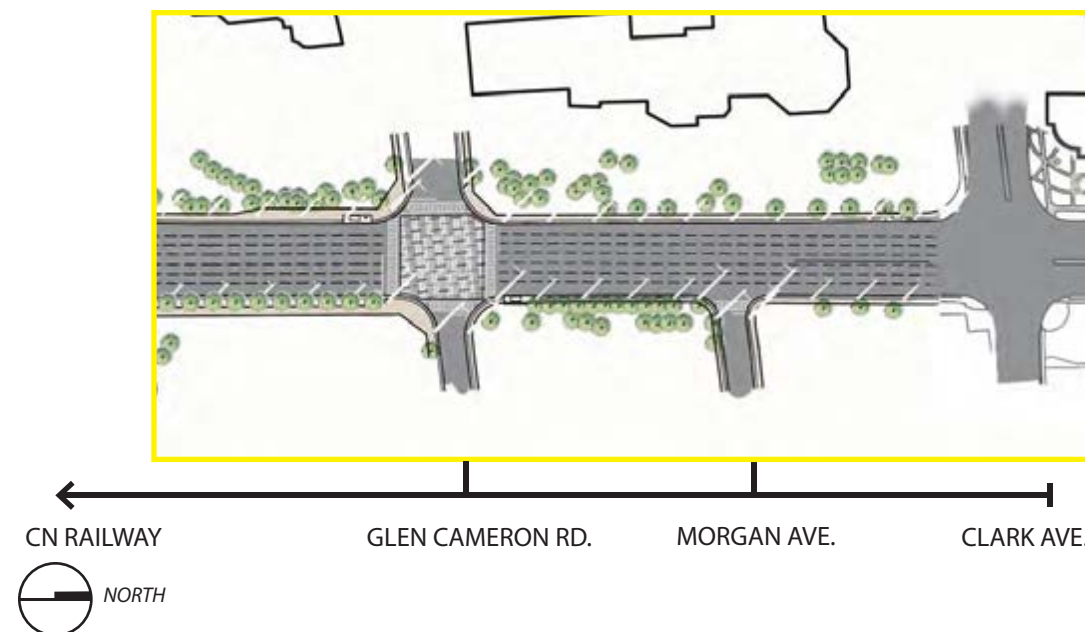
The Pre-Subway Plan, using existing curbs, proposes a 3-metre sidewalk (including continuity strip) next to the roadway on the west side of the street (to avoid existing trees) and a 2.5 -metre sidewalk along the roadway for the east– this placement is within 1 metre of some existing trees (not ideal).

In the ultimate plan the 3-metre sidewalk again abuts the roadway on the east side but is over 2.5 metres from the existing trees. On the west side, the sidewalk would narrow to 2.5 metres including continuity strip. Alternatively, the centre line could again shift. If shifted 3 metres, there will be more interference with existing trees on the east and a narrow boulevard area could be accommodated on the west side (approximately 5.5 metres for both sidewalk and tree trench including continuity strip).

Between Morgan Avenue and Clark Avenue

In the Pre-Subway Plan a 3-metre sidewalk abuts the road on the west and east sides with existing trees on the property side.

The ultimate plan for the east side accommodates a slightly narrower than ideal boulevard area with existing trees forming the double row of trees. On the west side a 2.5-metre sidewalk flanks the road with existing trees lining the sidewalk on the property side. Shifting the centre line 3 metres to the east results in the same scenario as the Pre-Subway Plan on the east side and does not allow a proper boulevard on the west side.



DRAFT

4.3 Land Acquisition

The figures below are only an approximation insofar as they take into account proposed new roads or boulevard treatments on the side streets only up to 30 metres back from the road centerline. The ROW was measured at the outside edge of the sidewalk – the Region may wish to purchase an additional 1 metre beyond that. These figures only include property to be obtained south of the Highway 407 interchange.

Proposed ROW

Under Pre-Subway and Ultimate Conditions – The calculation for land acquisition necessary to implement the ultimate plan includes some areas (approximately 2500 square metres) that were also calculated for the interim solution because the two plans offer different design solutions.

Ultimate	8200 square metres
Pre-Subway	2800 square metres

Protected ROW

York Region is currently protecting for up to a 45 metre ROW to keep the option of transit alternatives open. The amount of land acquisition necessary allows for the bare minimum boulevard allotment as proposed by YRT / Viva in an earlier study, in which the boulevard is a maximum of 4.5 metres. This report recommends that space for implementation of the ideal boulevard (at least 7 metres) and bike lanes (2.5 metres) should be protected wherever possible.

Viva Proposal	11,000 square metres
Desired Boulevard	25,000 additional square metres (maximum possible not considering existing land uses)

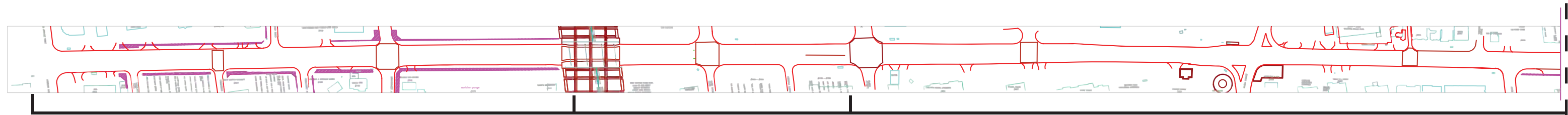
Concern is that the wider ROW will indicate a status quo (or suburban model) of development with wide building setbacks and subdued / non-intensive street life taking place in a much larger space than is needed.



Ultimate Plan to be implemented (Green Areas)

4. Pre-Subway Plan

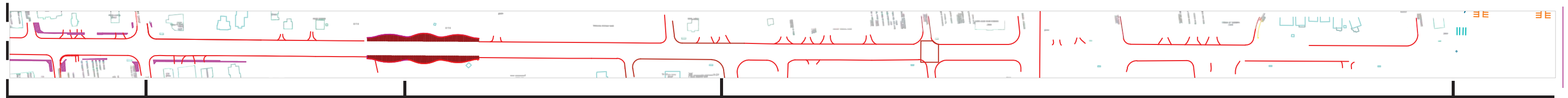
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STEELES AVE.

CN RAILWAY

CLARK AVE.



CENTRE ST.

DON VALLEY

ROYAL ORCHARD BLVD.

LANGSTAFF RD.

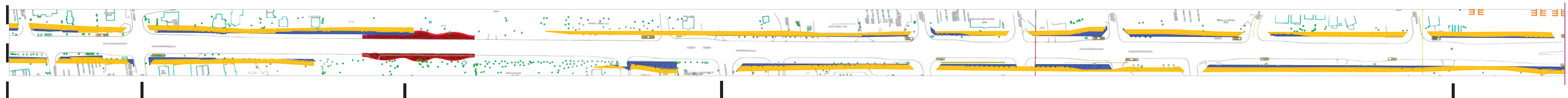
Interim Plan to be Implemented (Magenta Areas)



STEELES AVE.

CN RAILWAY

CLARK AVE.



CENTRE ST.

DON VALLEY

ROYAL ORCHARD BLVD.

LANGSTAFF RD.

VivaNEXT Proposal with Minimal Pedestrian Facilities - (Blue Areas)

Viva NEXT Proposals plus Boulevard and Bicycle Lanes (Orange Areas)

