

A VISUAL EXPLORATION OF THE TRANSFORMATION OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPES
IN LITTLE JAMAICA, BETWEEN ALLEN ROAD AND OAKWOOD AVENUE, IN THE
PERIODS OF 1969 THROUGH 2021.

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A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF DESIGN

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN DESIGN
YORK UNIVERSITY TORONTO, ONTARIO

April 2022

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Abstract

This research is a visual documentation of changes between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue in Little Jamaica. The study visually maps cultural landscape elements and links cultural markers to groups living in the location from 1969 through 2021. “Cultural marker” is a term I used to describe elements that trigger memories and experiences in addition to being associated with a specific culture. I used a narrative to provide a human component. The images comprise a front elevation of the built form supported by detailed illustrations and photographs of the frontage. The research identifies the significant contributions of Caribbean immigrants to the study area and highlights the loss that occurs when construction erases these elements without documentation. The cultural markers provide a sense of place to specific groups away from home. The research is also a foundation of a visual framework for studying changes in cultural landscapes in urban settings

Acknowledgments

I have been fortunate to have a great committee that guided me from the very beginning. Thanks to Dr. Gabi Schaffzin for meeting and advising me weekly while ensuring I stayed on schedule and being patient with me as I explored the different directions that finally got me here. Thanks to Dr. Shelley Hornstein, who inspired me through her writing and also guided me to the final destination

I would like to thank the MDes faculty for setting the foundation upon which I built this project and for all the advice and guidance provided during the critiques.

Finally, thanks to my family Alecia and Stephen, for putting up with my demanding schedule through the pandemic. I love you and could not have done this without you

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Introduction



Figure 1:

© F. K. Matovu. 1602 Eglinton Avenue West photograph showing business closures due to the Crosstown Light Rail on August 15, 2021.

Background information

This project aims to explore changes in the cultural landscape of Little Jamaica by visually mapping and providing meaning to cultural markers. The term "cultural marker " describes elements in a cultural landscape that create memories and trigger recollections associated with a specific culture or set of values. Dr. Shelley Hornstein's book *Losing Site, Architecture, Memory, and Place*, provides part of the argument for the visual explorations as she discusses how we create memories of architectural space:

I argue that places themselves are capable of generating memories. We may or may not know a site, or an object in a site, but visual images of sites can generate constructed images that, in turn, can create a memory of a place. (Hornstein, p. 32, 2011)

The idea of visual images, generating constructed images of a site (creating memories), is the basis of documenting cultural markers. Dr. Linnea Sando's doctoral dissertation provides the foundation for the cultural perspective.

As part of a study of the legacy of the Basque sheepherders in Elko, Nevada, Sando focused on specific structures like the boarding houses, the Star hotel, public art, and clubhouses (Linnea C. Sando, p.226, 2018). She then identified elements within these entities that associate with Basque cultural identity and those that provided a home away from home to the immigrant herders (Linnea C. Sando, p.233, 2018). Inspired by Sando's approach, this research creates typologies to organize businesses in Little Jamaica, then analyzes each business exterior for elements associated with a specific culture. Exterior details that include art, signage, objects, tools, and even food are cultural markers.

What is the motivation for the project?

The need to understand how cultural landscapes in urban spaces change over time is the driving force behind this project. The Crosstown light rail transit project along Eglinton Avenue is a good example. The project has been causing disruptions for over ten years. Further motivation came from the theory of sequent occupance put forward by geographer Derwent Whittlesey wherein successive generations in an area are linked, and the individuality of each group of residents is through the changing of some elements of natural and cultural characteristics (Mathewson, p.3 2017). Changing the cultural aspects involves modifications to elements like the built form, circulation, or land use. The transformation of natural elements does not apply to Little Jamaica because it is a predominantly built environment. In the context of Little Jamaica, documentation of the mural at 1531 Eglinton Avenue West dedicated to Toronto reggae legends preserves the layers of human characteristics and experiences of the current and previous generations. The documentation of Little Jamaica allows its identity to persist through preserving collective stories, experiences, and memories (Linnea C. Sando, p.7, 2018), which this project sets out to archive through detailed maps supported by narratives. I hope that this research will be a foundation for a visual framework for documenting changes in the cultural landscapes of urban settings and contribute a snapshot of 2021 to the history of the study area.

What makes this project a design project?

William McDonough, the author of *Cradle to Cradle*, defines design as the first signal of human intention (McDonough & Zachariasse, 2017). Like McDonough, architect Amos Rapoport argues that humans' intentional modification of the earth's surface is a design process because communities do not create built environments without a purpose. According to Rapoport, all artificial environments are designed because they are products of human intentions, choices, and decisions (Rapoport, p.66, 1991). Following Rapoport's argument, elements like the streetcar lines, the blue-collar community of Earls court in the 1920s, signage, and the Crosstown project are design outcomes because they serve a purpose. Against this background, I argue that the study of changes in cultural landscapes in Little Jamaica is a problem that design methodologies can address. The analysis of Little Jamaica will be in terms of space, time, meaning, and communication (Rapoport, p.37, 1992), a framework known as "The organization of built environment" developed by Rapoport. This framework is a self-contained system that provides a

conduit between visual documentation and the study of cultural landscapes and cultural markers. Graphic design elements and principles provide a means of presenting the four components of the framework as complementary to each other and as a single unit.



Figure 2:

© F. K. Matovu. Eglinton Avenue West and Oakwood Avenue photograph showing the new Crosstown Oakwood station on August 15, 2021.

How does the project contribute to the design discipline?

The research will provide documentation of the cultural landscapes of Little Jamaica in 2021 for future researchers. For example, designers interested in developing identities for businesses in Little Jamaica can refer to the documentation of the cultural markers for insight into the cultures and values that have transformed the area. The research will provide a foundation for a visual framework to support research in cultural geography and related disciplines. Finally, the study will contribute to our understanding of qualitative data visualization. This research pursued an interpretivism paradigm (O'Gorman & MacIntosh, p.64, 2015), which focused on finding out the meaning of the cultural markers by looking at a section of Little Jamaica. Therefore, the visual explorations of the research are visualizations of the qualitative data.

What sources did the researcher use?

The research examines a wide variety of source materials such as streetscapes along Eglinton Avenue West, historical photographs from both the city of Toronto digital archive and the Toronto Public Library, historical maps and business information from the Toronto Reference Library, archival resources on Canadian immigrant acts and legislation from the Canadian Immigration Museum at Pier 21, *The Toronto Star* newspaper archive, and Journals from York University libraries.

Why choose the area between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue in Little Jamaica for the study?

1531 Eglinton Avenue West is the most significant cultural site in Little Jamaica. The heritage plaque at this site states that more than 100,000 immigrants came from Jamaica between 1970 and 1980, with many of them settling between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue (Spurr, 2018). This information led to the choice of the study area.

Research Question

How has the cultural landscape of Little Jamaica, between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue, transformed from 1969 through 2021?

Literature review

A brief history of Little Jamaica

The history of Blacks in Canada dates back to 1605, although the population dwindled in the early 1900s due to preference policies that favored immigrants from Europe (Milan & Tran, p.3, 2004). In 1967, Many skilled immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa were admitted into Canada when a points-based immigration system replaced the preference policies. The 1966 white paper on immigration commissioned by liberal prime minister Lester B. Pearson prompted the changes (Van Dyk, 2021). Jamaica contributed one-third of all Blacks that came to Canada before 1961, with the Caribbeans contributing 72%. Jamaica continued to be the largest source of Black immigrants throughout the 1970s and 80s, with half of all Blacks in Canada living in Toronto, according to the 2001 census (Milan & Tran, p.5, 2004). The section of Eglinton Avenue between Allen Road and Dufferin Street was one of the areas in which immigrants from the Caribbeans settled.



Figure 3:

© F. K. Matovu. 1531 Eglinton Avenue West photograph showing Toronto's Reggae roots heritage plaque on August 15, 2021.

The section between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue on Eglinton Avenue has the most significant cultural marker in Little Jamaica. The vibrant music scene of the 1970s contributed to calling this area,

featuring several reggae recording studios Little Jamaica. The reggae musicians of the 1970s and 1980s who contributed to Canadian music culture received a heritage plaque at reggae lane in 2015 (Spurr, 2018).



Figure 4:
© F. K. Matovu. 1569 Eglinton Avenue West photograph showing Randy's Take-out (1979-2022) on August 15, 2021.

Cultural landscapes

The term cultural landscape was introduced to the United States by Carl Sauer from German cultural geography. Otto Schluter used it to refer to “human interaction and action on the primeval landscape through time” (Rapoport, p.34, 1992). Sauer supplemented Schluter’s definition by using the term to refer to human interaction with the natural landscape. In the context of Little Jamaica, cultural landscapes provide a tangible and visible entity, such as a streetscape that considers the space's culture and identity. Randy’s takeout in figure 4 contributes to the streetscape by providing a soft edge through the glass windows for pedestrians to stop and linger and using primary signage above the main entrance, both of which are in line with the City of Toronto retail guidelines. The primary signage (a cultural marker) also provides a cultural identity to the space by identifying with people of Jamaican descent through the patties. The historical-cultural geographer Richard H. Schein calls cultural landscapes material

phenomena compared to intangible cultural values (Schein, p.1, 1997). Shein further argues that cultural landscapes are representative and symbolic of the people that create them. Therefore, a study of the cultural landscapes of Little Jamaica reveals hints of values and norms that are important to the residents. Documenting the human activity in the development of Little Jamaica allows us to record the resultant cultural landscapes as organized in terms of space, time, meaning, and communication (Rapoport, p.37, 1992). This four-legged stool holds together all of the elements that make up cultural landscapes in both historical and present conditions. The cultural landscape elements documented in Little Jamaica are land use, circulation, built forms, and cultural markers. The details of the cultural landscape elements are in the Methods section below.



Figure 5:

© F. K. Matovu. 1531 Eglinton Avenue West photograph shows artist Adrian Hayles's mural paying tribute to Jamaican music culture on October 10, 2021.

This project used historical photographs from the City of Toronto's digital archives, the Toronto Public Library, and photographs of the streetscape taken by the author. I only used historical photographs to augment the illustrations of the frontages with cultural markers, given the strong social and cultural contexts. I used a hermeneutic approach to read cultural landscape elements from the photographs, as it emphasized that photographs required both semantic and semiotic interpretation to derive meaning (Pauwels & Mannay, p.766, 2019). The philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce, an early formulator of semiotic theory, identified photographs as signs because they represent something (Lees-Maffei & Maffei,

2019). Therefore, I used semiotics to comprehend the formal aspects of photographs. “Formal” refers to the details implemented by bylaw, code, or community agreement. In Little Jamaica, the “formal aspects” were the cultural landscape elements and cultural markers.

There are two semiotic approaches to analyzing photographs. Structural semiotics assumes signs in the photographs that nearly everyone can read. In contrast, social semiotics argues that different social groups have different understandings of the meaning of photographs (Pauwels & Mannay, p.784, 2019). This research took a structural semiotics approach because the cultural markers studied were read the same way by the intended ordinance and the general public. For example, signage above the shop entrance is understood by all pedestrians the same way. The cultural landscape elements (formal) and their interpretation (semiotics) were set by “*A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports: Contents, process, and Techniques*,” guidelines developed by the US National Park Services. These guidelines were more relevant to the context of this research because they have a category for “Small-scale features,” which includes signage and street furniture, which is a big part of my research.

Memory and space

Hornstein reminds us that we construct three-dimensional representations of events in the process of memory recall. The suggestion that the memories might be a composite of different sources in our mental database is interesting to this research (Hornstein, p.32, 2011). The goal of exploring Hornsteins ideas on memory and space is to capture and preserve a part of Little Jamaica’s history in some medium as the space evolves. No doubt, Little Jamaica is quickly changing in the light of the Crosstown light rail transit project. Documentation of the space is one way of preserving history for those who remember it and future generations. Although Hornstein makes it clear that the mental reconstruction is not a replica of the physical space, she identifies the relationships between these two:

Where is the intersection, I ask, between these sites: the place before our eyes and the one we hold perceptually in the obscene of the physical site? Rather than resorting to scientific elaboration and inquiry (of which I am thoroughly incapable), I am looking at examples of the meeting points of these parallel worlds, where they mingle, signal, underscore and boldly highlight their co-existence since memory is at all times alive and changing always available and present in forms we don’t necessarily recognize (Hornstein, p.35, 2011).

The final artifact will explore this in-between space by capturing entities familiar to both worlds.

Theoretical Framework

I used the “Organization of the Built Environment” framework proposed by Amos Rapoport to document the cultural landscape in Little Jamaica. The framework organizes the cultural landscape elements and the cultural markers in terms of space, time, meaning, and communication which I will refer to as the four-legged stool.



Figure 6:

© F. K. Matovu. 1553 Eglinton Avenue West photograph showing the edge condition of the southside on August 15, 2021.

Along Eglinton Avenue, the study area is between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue, with the soft edge marking the boundaries. I derived meaning from analyzing the cultural landscape elements and cultural markers presented as a narrative supported by sketches, maps, illustrations, and photographs (Page et al., p.64, 1998). Time was used to profile the cultural landscapes at different historical points (1969 to 2021) and provided the historical context for the cultural landscape elements and markers (Page et al., p.56, 1998). These assets provided a visual record of Little Jamaica through time. Communication was through the final artifact, a book, to be described further in this paper.

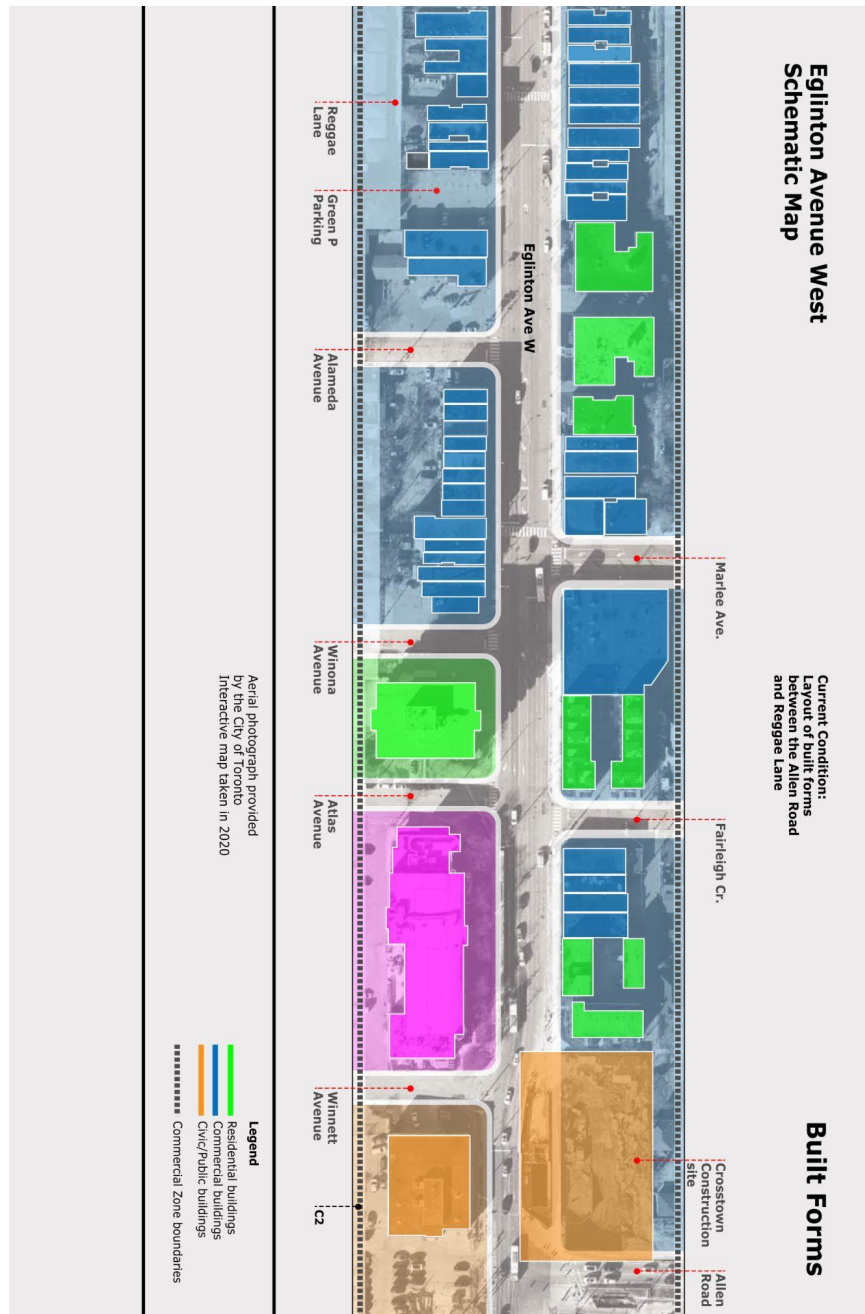


Figure 7:
 © F. K. Matovu. A map of Eglinton Avenue West showing the built forms. The aerial photograph is courtesy of © City of Toronto interactive maps 2020.

Methodology and Methods

Author's positionality

Fredric K. Matovu is an industrial designer and immigrant that resides next door to Little Jamaica. Like most Ugandan immigrants in Toronto, he found a source of familiar products and services in Little Jamaica, like the barbershops and stores selling East African products. He considers himself an outsider to Little Jamaica because, like many shoppers in this neighborhood, he drives in and parks to do his shopping. So parking spots are crucial to the businesses in Little Jamaica. The coming of the Crosstown light rail transit took away most of the parking in Little Jamaica, directly affecting the customers. Fredric now drives by, and if there is no parking, he just goes through. With each ride through, he observes how the shops are quickly disappearing without providing enough time for documentation or even assessment of the impact on the Black community. The hope is that this research plays a small part in preserving in print a piece of the history of a place that has had a profound impact on immigrants of African descent in Toronto.

Methodology

The project takes a hermeneutic approach to gain insight into changes in cultural landscape elements by examining historical and 2021 photographs of Little Jamaica. I analyzed the historical pictures as part of the first phase of the research to identify and describe the historical contexts associated with the cultural landscapes (Page et al., p.41, 1998). Finally, the study was divided into four main phases: Data collection, exploratory phase, design, and statistical analysis phase.

Methods

The research started with a broad perspective. The goal was to understand the human interaction and modification of the cultural landscapes in Oakwood-Vaughan Village, including individual stories and experiences, before focusing on an area of study (Page et al., p.44, 1998). Initially, the three streets selected in Oakwood-Vaughan were Oakwood Avenue chosen because it dates back to 1915, runs right in the middle, and is a mixed-use street. I chose Eglinton Avenue because it is a commercial street with ongoing light rail transit construction, an example of a change in the cultural landscape that has been going on for the last ten years. I chose Rogers Road to provide an example of changes in the residential areas because a substantial part of Oakwood-Vaughan Village is designated as residential by Toronto. These residential areas have public facilities like parks, community centers, and places of worship which sometimes cater to specific groups.

Data collection started with historical photographs of the three selected streets in 1915–1935 and 1955–1975. I then collected historical pictures from the City of Toronto digital archive and the Toronto Public Library digital archives. All photographs used in this research were in the public domain and can be reproduced in electronic or print for personal, educational, or research purposes and in general publications, including books and journals. The historical photographs collected were organized based on street name, licensing, the archive of origin, the photographer, the year the photographer took the picture, access number, collection, and a brief description. Finally, the photographs were downloaded and saved based on the street name see Figures 8 and 9 below.

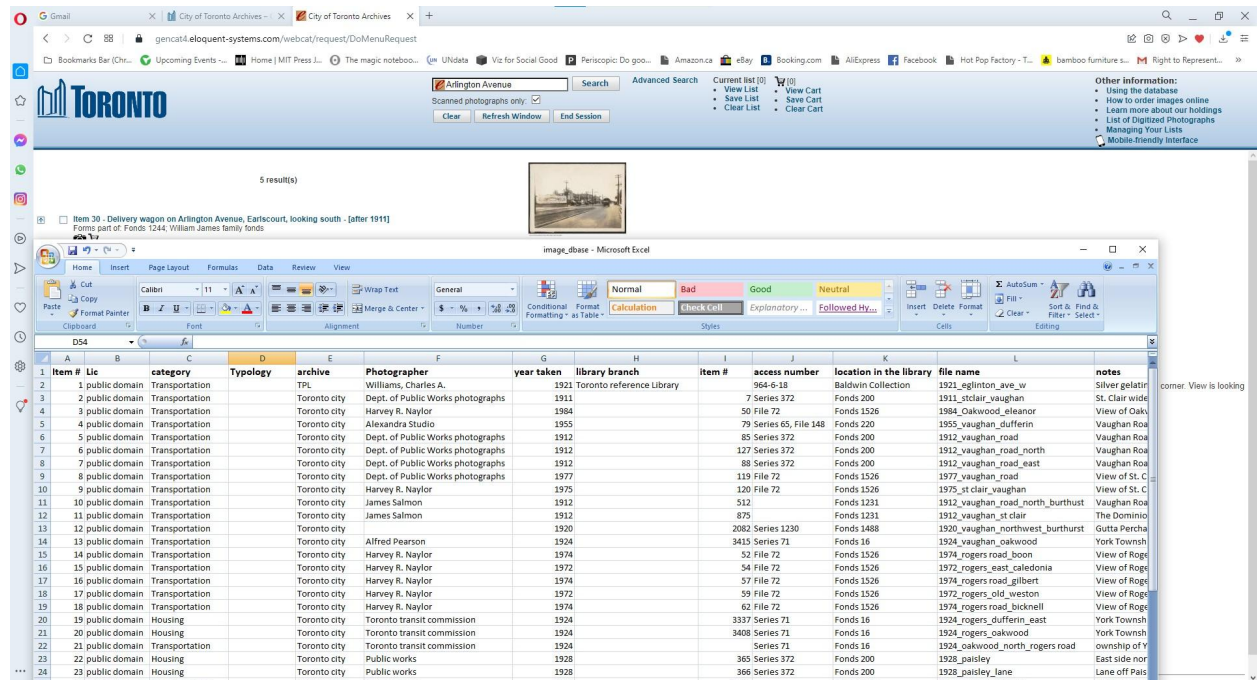


Figure 8:

© F. K. Matovu. The photographs from the online digital archives are organized in a spreadsheet.

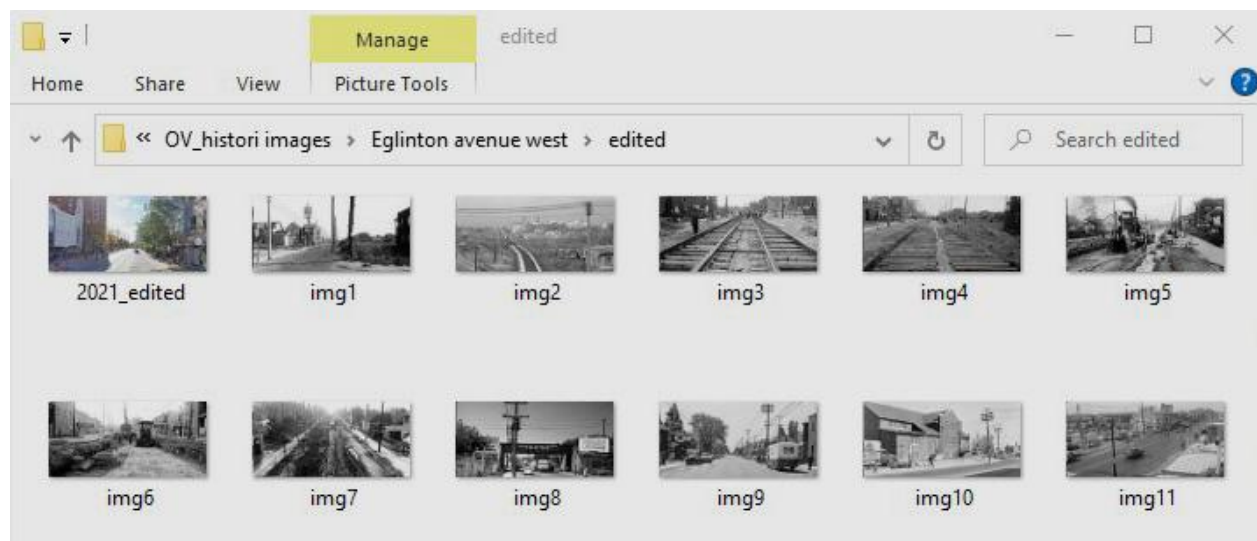


Figure 9:

© F. K. Matovu. One of the folders of historical images was saved under the name Eglinton Avenue West.

After the historical picture search and documentation, the next stage was to use photography to document the three selected streets to provide data for 2021. These photographs of Oakwood-Vaughan Village provide a concise visual record of the cultural landscape elements that might be difficult to describe in the narrative (Page et al., p.67, 1998). I took over 300 photographs documenting Eglinton Avenue West, Oakwood Avenue, and Rogers Road. The photographer considered the location, subject matter, and vantage point when taking the pictures, as recommended by the National Park Service *A Guide to Cultural Landscape Reports*.

In early explorations, I made pen and ink illustrations of the historical photographs in preparation for the comparison of the historical periods to 2021. Historical photographs augmented the details that the drawings could not clearly show. The use of illustrations and pictures allowed the researcher to focus the reader on the cultural landscape elements.

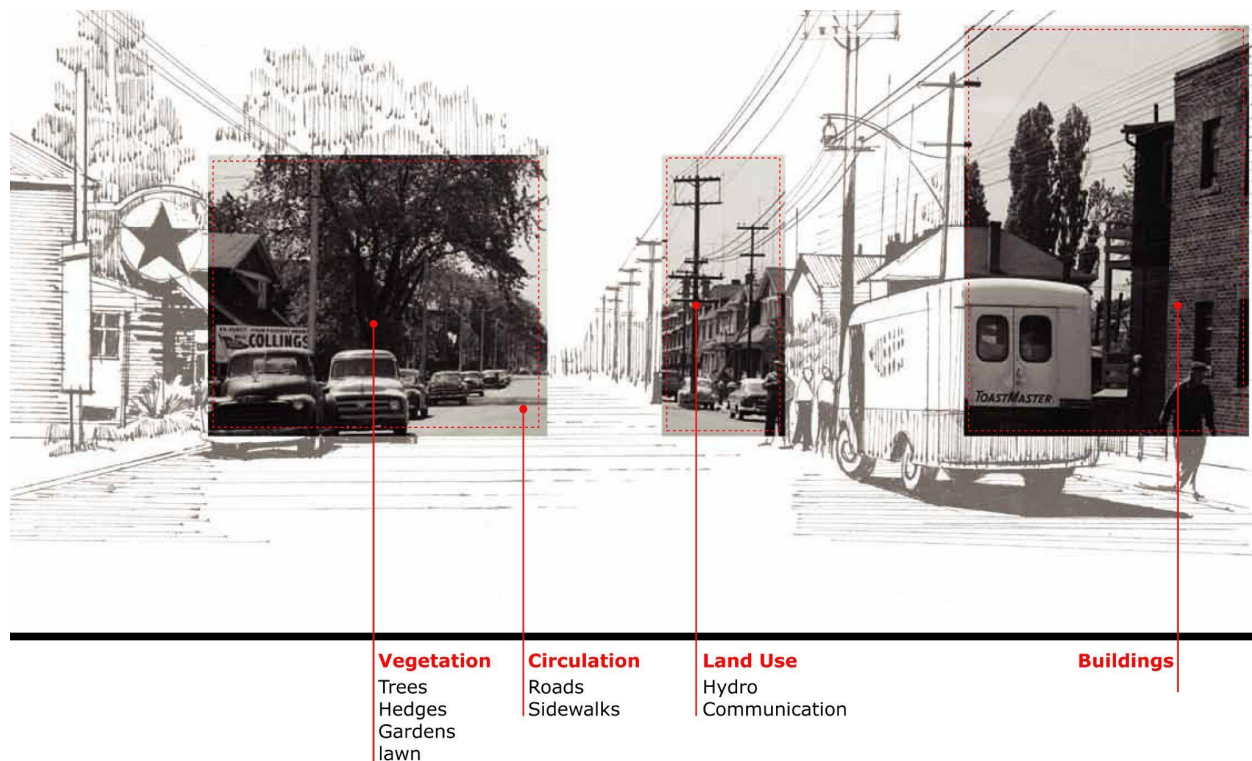


Figure 10:

© F. K. Matovu. Dufferin street looking South at Eglinton in 1924. The historical photograph augmenting the illustration above is courtesy of © City of Toronto Archives, Series 65, File 45, Item 1.

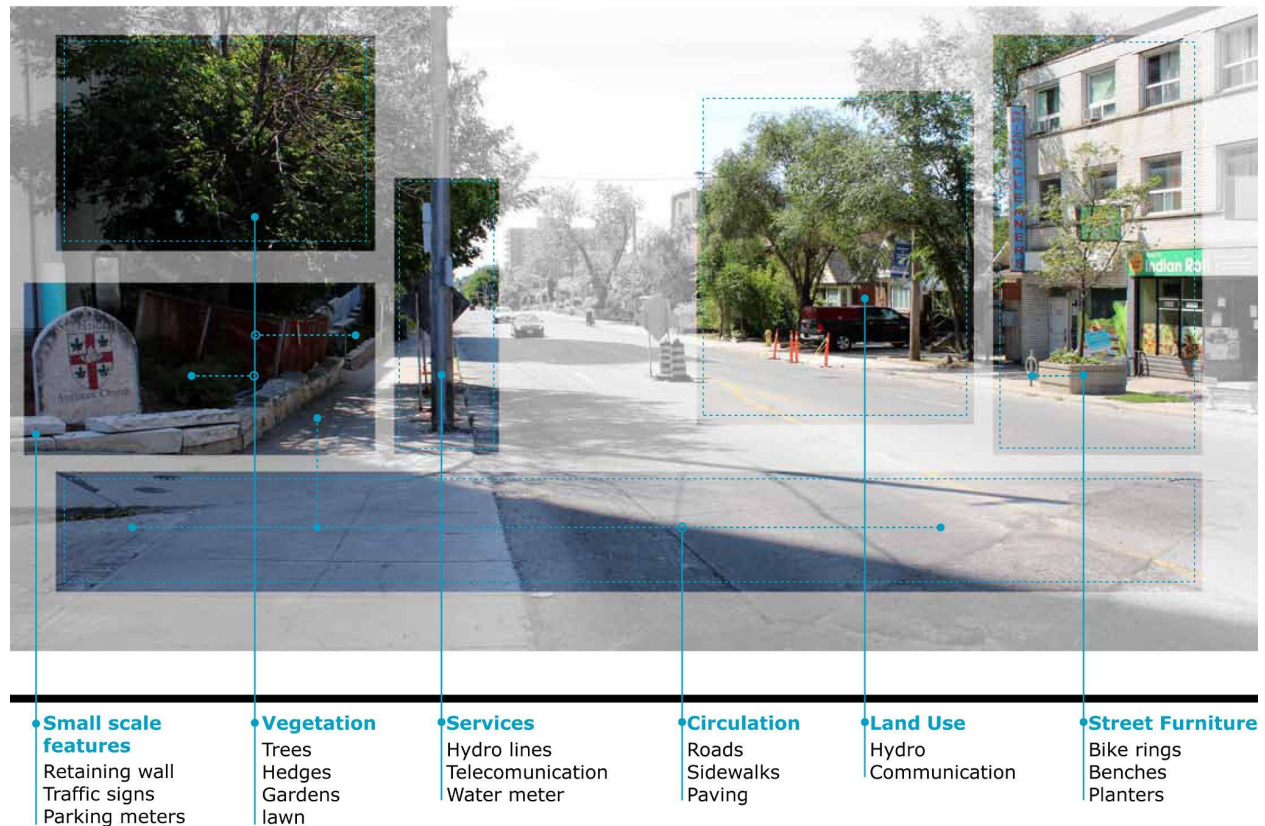


Figure 11:

© F. K. Matovu. Dufferin Street and Eglinton Avenue, as seen when looking south on Dufferin on August 15, 2021.

The first explorations involved identifying cultural landscape elements in the historical illustration as in Figure 10, identifying cultural landscape elements in the current condition as in Figure 11, and comparing the historical images to the current state shown in Figure 12. The goal was to address the research question in a broader context by visually identifying and comparing the changes in the cultural landscape. An important lesson learned from the explorations was that the cultural landscape elements like built form, circulation, and land use provide a visible background and context against which all cultural markers are read and understood. I did fifteen explorations before narrowing down the area to Little Jamaica. Focusing on Little Jamaica set a foundation for the final design using the four-legged stool introduced in the theoretical framework section.



Figure 12:

© F. K. Matovu. Above is a 1924 illustration of Dufferin Street facing south at Eglinton Avenue, with 2021 the photo below. The historical picture augmenting the illustration above is courtesy of © City of Toronto Archives, Series 65, File 45, Item 1.

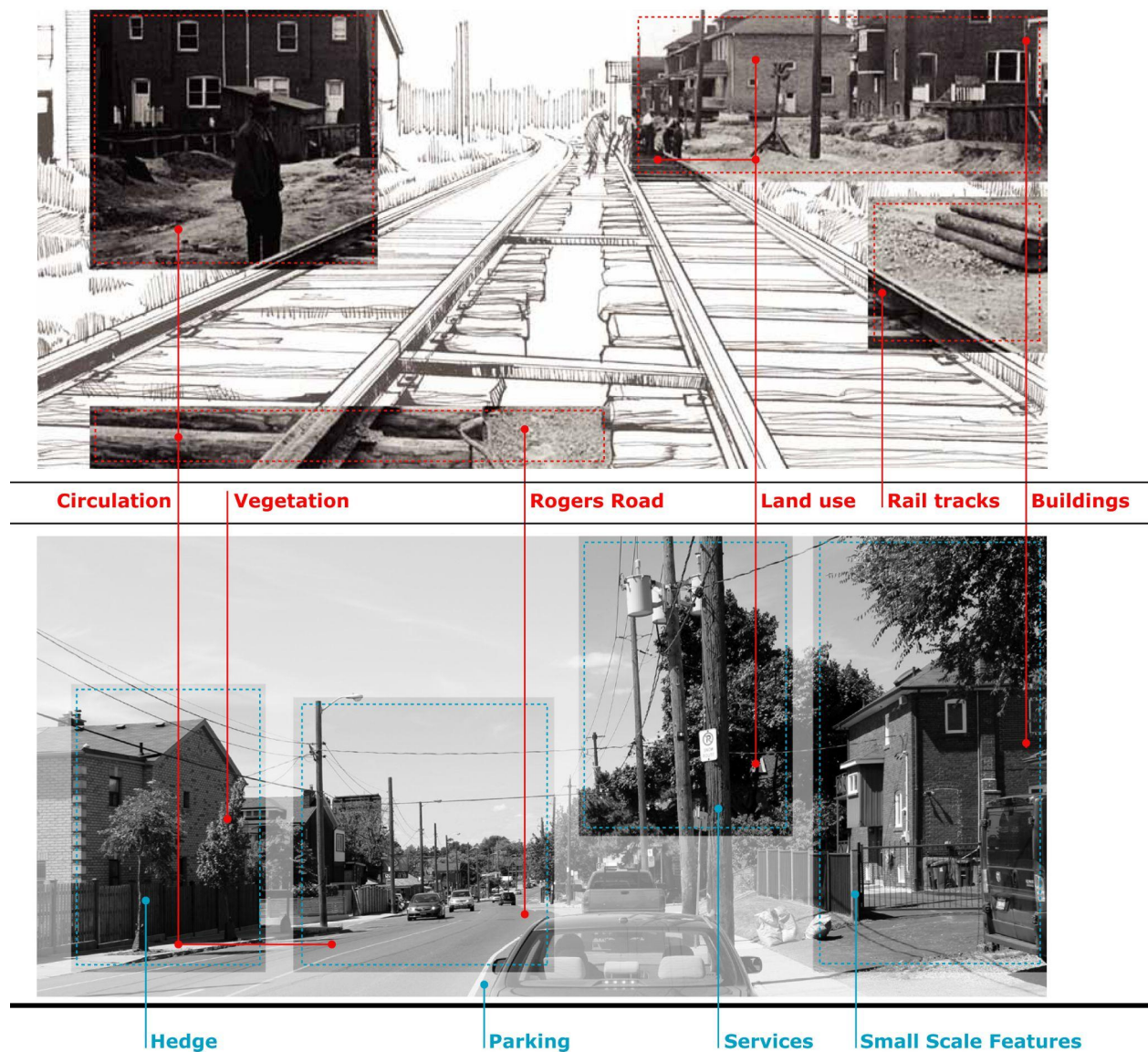


Figure 13:

© F. K. Matovu. The graphic above compares a 1925 photograph of Rogers Road looking West from Dufferin Street (above) to August 15, 2021, below. The historical picture is augmenting the illustration above courtesy of © City of Toronto Archives, Series 71, Series 3929.

Design Work

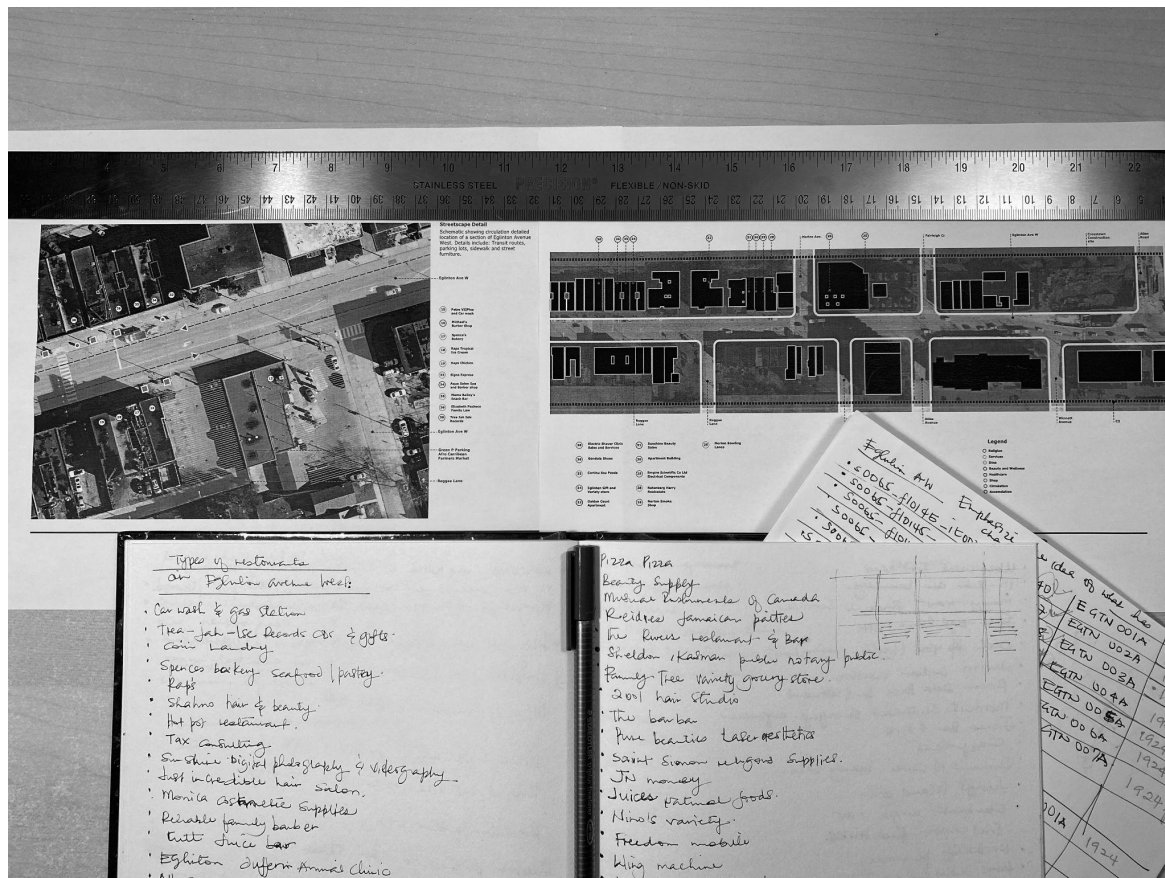


Figure 14:

© F. K. Matovu. Documentation of Little Jamaica: Aerial maps with details of cultural landscape elements

The first step in the design process was to list all the businesses between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue and then capture and save the companies in a spreadsheet. The data captured in the spreadsheet for 1969 and 2021 included street name, address, location (northside or southside), and business typology, including accommodation, cafe, healthcare, shop, services, dining, beauty and wellness, and religion. I created an aerial map of 2021 to lay out cultural landscape elements like built forms, land use, circulation, and small-scale features. The goal was to lay out all the details that provided a visual background against which to read the cultural markers. The aerial maps are not used in the final artifact because the front elevations offer a better alternative.



Figure 15:

© F. K. Matovu, Pen and Ink illustrations of frontages with cultural markers as a first step in creating a scalable digital version for the final artifact.

I systematically identified businesses with cultural markers between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue, and I made sketches of the frontage. The illustrations were then augmented with photographs and a narrative to provide context. The description identified the cultural markers and the cultural landscape elements like the built forms, following the U.S National Park Services guidelines (Page et al., p.78, 1998). I analyzed the built forms based on the City of Toronto retail guidelines that specify features like building massing and geometry, material differentiation, canopies, overhangs, awning, and storefronts (City Planning Core Team, p.14, 2019), see Figure 16. The research Identified five types of cultural markers in Little Jamaica: canopy branding, primary signage branding, window decals, wall decals, and three-dimensional elements like the barrel BBQs. The pen and ink explorations did not scale well when used with different media, so I created digital illustrations that could be scalable when needed. First, however, a medium had to be chosen for the final artifact.

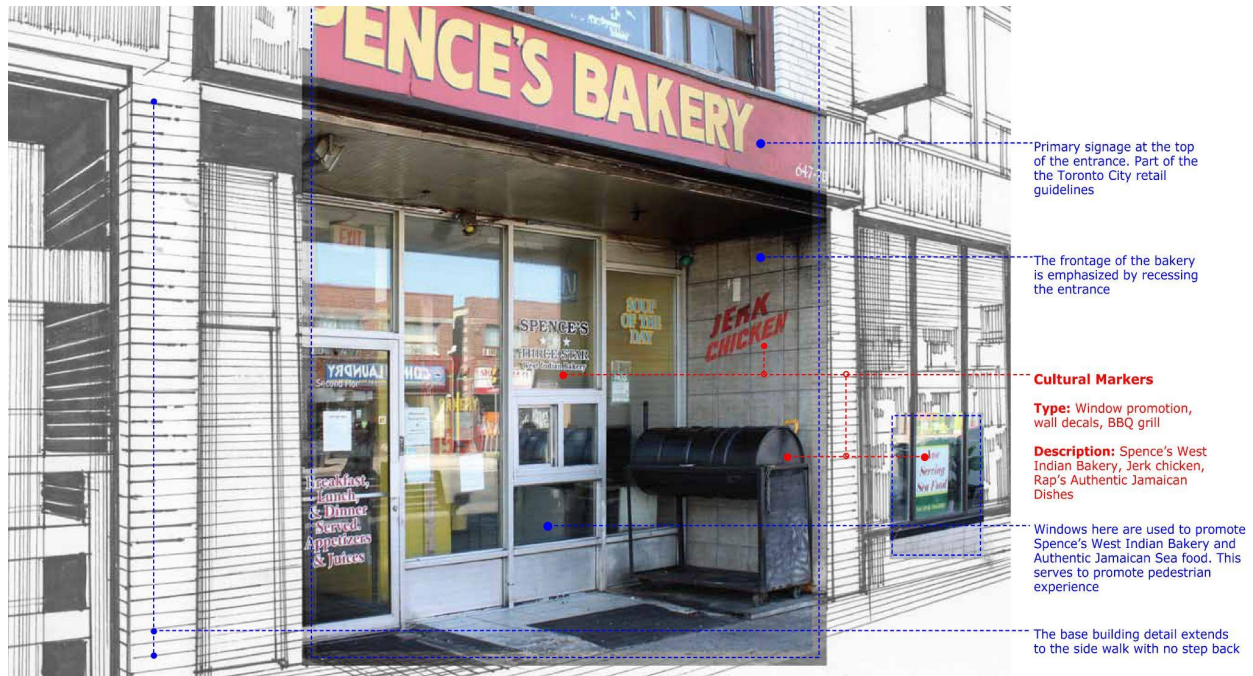


Figure 16:

© F. K. Matovu. The details of the image and narrative show the cultural landscape elements and the cultural markers on the frontage of Spence's bakery on August 15, 2021.

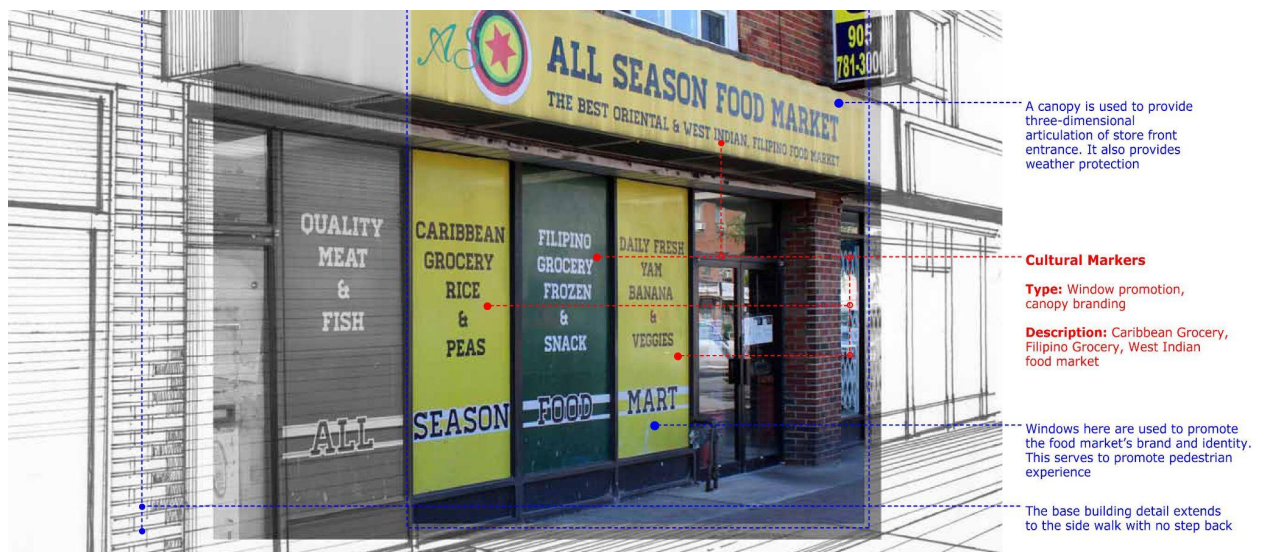


Figure 17:

© F. K. Matovu. The details of the frontage of the All Season Food Market on August 15, 2021.

The choice for a book as the final artifact was due to Jan Tschichold's essay *Graphic Arts and Book Design*. Tschichold states that book design should be loyal to and neither patronizing nor overshadowing content (Tschichold et al., p.8, 1991). The goal was to address the research question in the final artifact. Using front elevations to map the cultural markers follows Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi's visual methodologies in their book "*Learning From Las Vegas*." Front elevations of the entire section of Eglinton Avenue West between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue were mapped out and divided into the north and south sides. I made the maps of 2021 and 1969 simultaneously, with the latter developed based on aerial photographs from Toronto city archives and data from the 1969 business directory available at the Toronto Reference Library. The frontage of 1969 was rendered as a reflection of 2021 to remind the reader that the two contexts are of the same area, see Figure 18.



Figure 18:

© F. K. Matovu. 1471-1475 Eglinton Avenue west frontage. 2021 is shown at the top, with 1969 shown as a reflection.

I made Digital versions of the pen and ink illustrations to provide scalable images in different media types. The goal was to prepare the photographs to be ported to digital platforms like ebooks or interactive applications. No details of cultural landscape markers of 1969 are available because of a lack of documentation of this section of Eglinton Avenue.

I created business typologies to provide a quantifiable entity for statistical computation later. The typologies include accommodation, beauty and wellness, cafe, shop, services, vacant, religion, dining, and healthcare. Only the map of the frontage shows the differences between these two periods (1969 and 2021) regarding cultural landscape elements and cultural markers.



Figure 19:

© F. K. Matovu. The final illustration of Spence's bakery frontage shows the frontage on August 15, 2021.

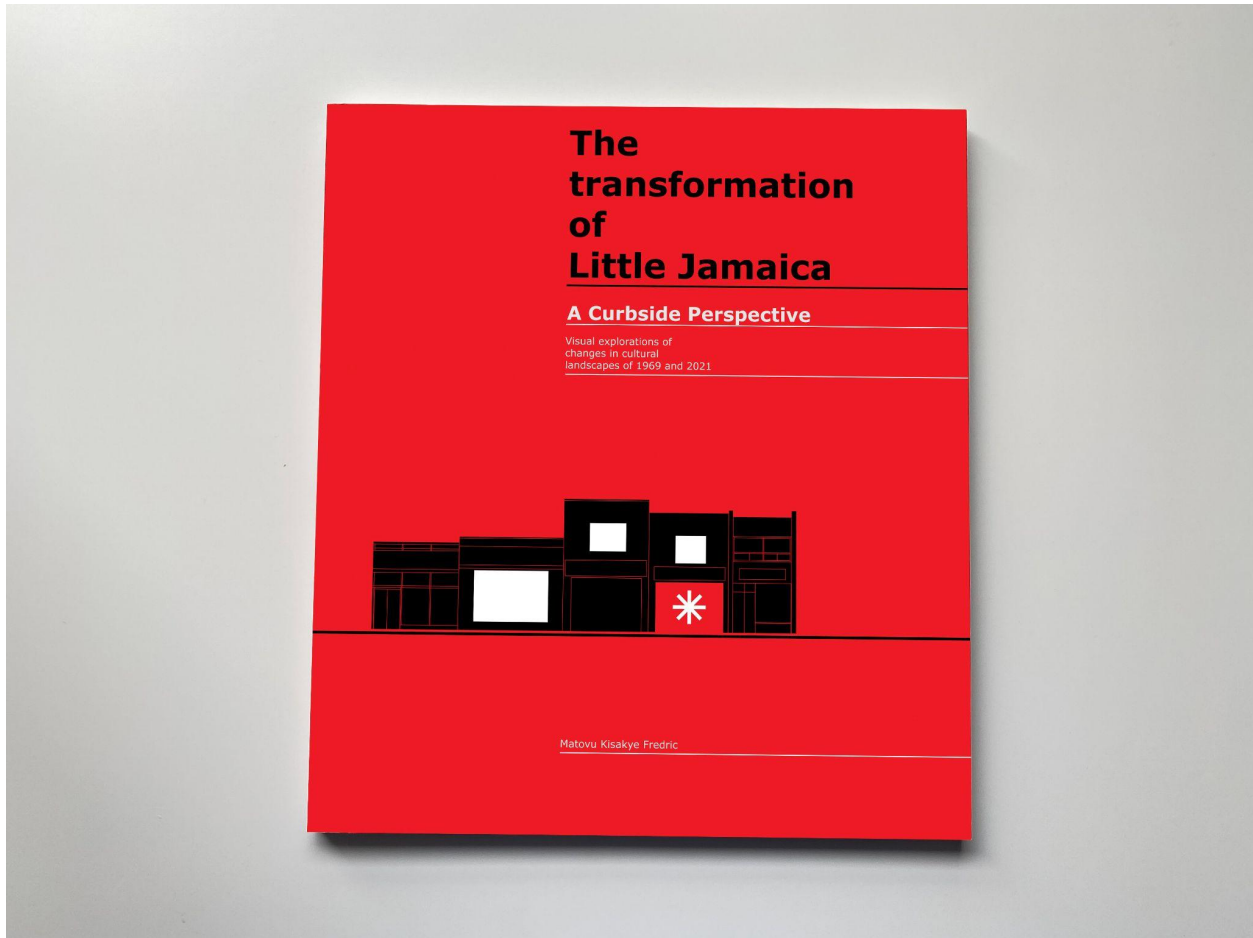


Figure 20:

© F. K. Matovu, the final artifact: A book

The final artifact answers the question, how has the cultural landscape of Little Jamaica, between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue, transformed from 1969 through 2021? The book has four main parts: mapping the frontage, cultural landscape elements, statistics, and photo documentation. Mapping the frontage compared the businesses from 1969 to 2021 at various points. An Asterix identified cultural markers in red.



Figure 21:

© F. K. Matovu, A complete map of the frontage of 1471-1475 Eglinton Avenue, as shown in the book

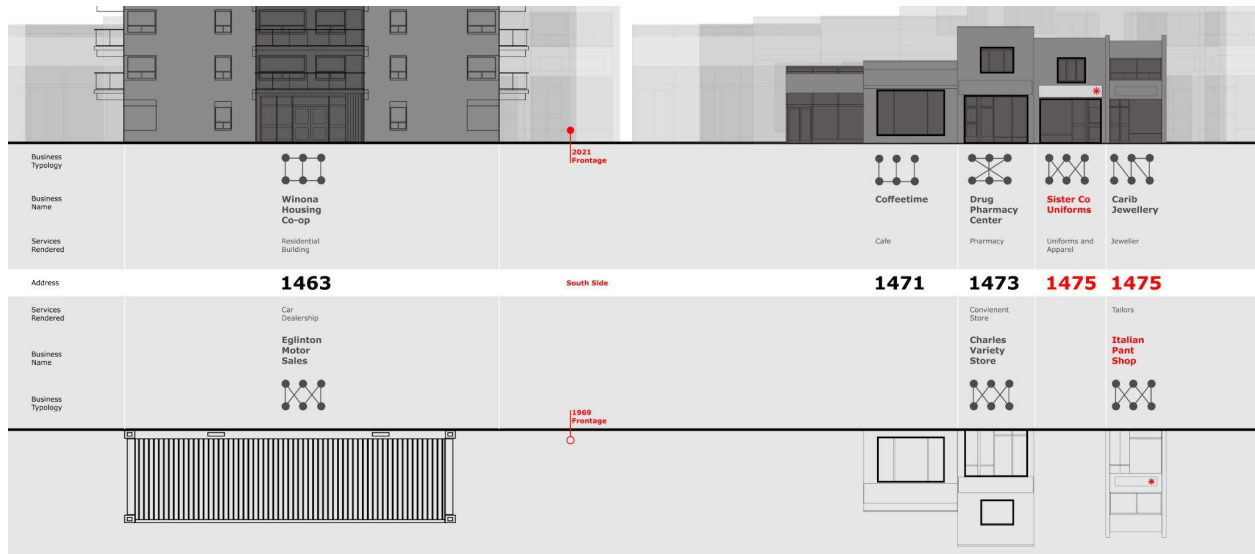


Figure 22: © F. K. Matovu, the layout of the maps showing the Southside of Eglinton Avenue West on facing pages

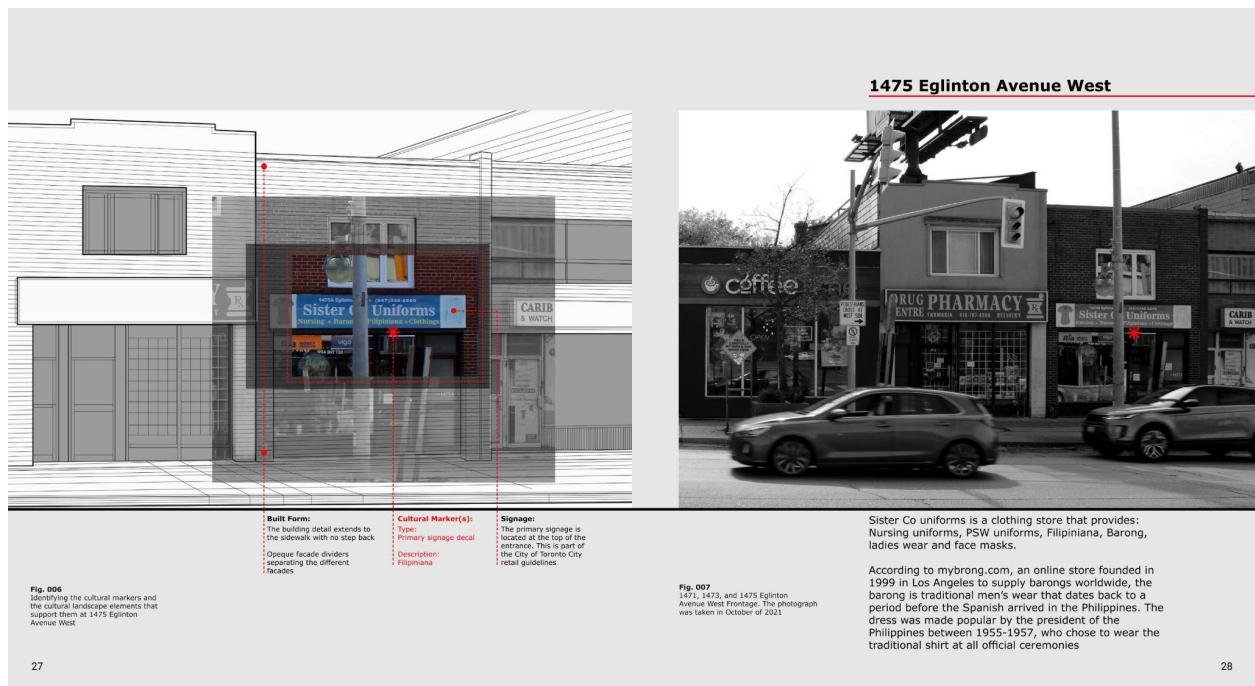


Figure 23: © F. K. Matovu, the layout of the detail of the Sister Co Uniform cultural marker with accompanying narrative and photograph showing the cultural marker in context.

When mapping the frontage, the south side of Eglinton was mapped first from Allen Road to Oakwood Avenue, followed by the north side from Oakwood Avenue to Allen Road. The goal was to mimic walking down Eglinton Avenue West, as seen in the two periods of history.

I assigned detailed illustrations, graphics overlays, photographs, and a brief narrative for each cultural marker (see Figure 23). I used a construction container for buildings with no information. The Green P parking lot was used as a case study, documenting the art and its function as a farmers market in the summer. I recorded details and stories of vendors in the Afro Caribbean Farmer's market to provide a personal context of the cultural markers.



Figure 24: © F. K. Matovu. Vendors of the Farmer's market at 1531 Eglinton Avenue on August 15, 2021.

Finally, I made statistical computations to evaluate the changes in the business typologies. The results confirmed the visible distribution of health and wellness businesses in this section of Little Jamaica. Other significant changes from 1969 to 2021 include doubling the number of accommodation-based companies, adding two cafes where there had previously been none, and introducing religious services (a synagogue and the Canadian Buddhist Association Center) in this section of Little Jamaica.

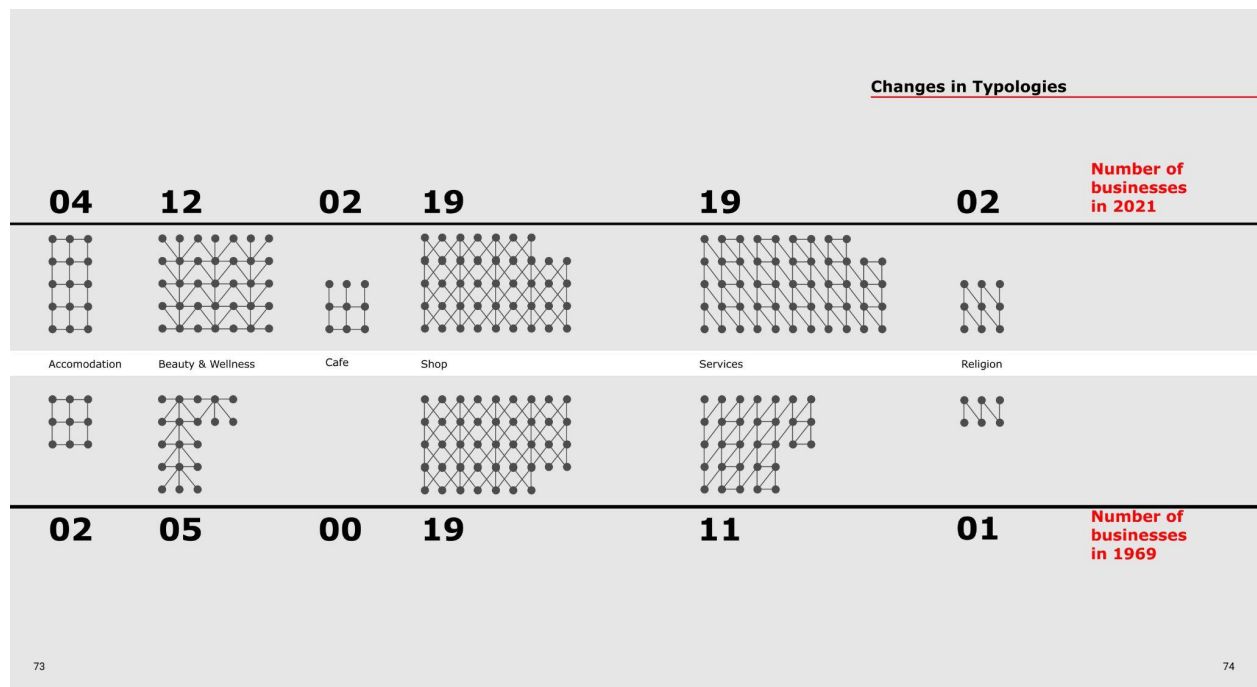


Figure 25: © F. K. Matovu, statistical visualization showing changes in business typologies in 1969 and 2021.

Conclusion

Little Jamaica is an area created out of a need by Caribbean immigrants to carve out a place they could call their own in the early 1970s and 80s. Between Allen Road and Oakwood Avenue, the study area features the Reggae Lane, perhaps the most significant cultural marker of Little Jamaica. The heritage plaque at the site validates the name “Little Jamaica” by confirming that one hundred thousand Jamaican immigrants went through this section. By interrogating the organization of the built environment, we saw the changes to the cultural landscape elements from 1969 through 2021. Nineteen sixty-nine was a significant year because it was the year when the first wave of Caribbean immigrants came to Canada after the government of Canada removed the preference close from the nation’s immigration laws. This study aims to visually identify changes in cultural landscapes by comparing the existing layers of cultural markers to those of 1969. The book “*The Transformation of Little Jamaica. A Curbside Perspective*” highlights the changes from 1969 through 2021 through meticulous documentation using illustrations, photographs, and narrative.

This research highlights two main questions: Why should we care about Little Jamaica? Why should we care about cultural markers? Mapping the cultural markers and landscape elements allowed us to learn about the experiences and character of both the current and previous occupants. The research has also highlighted how ethnic clusters like the Afro Caribbean Farmers market are a means of preserving cultural practice, as stated by Carl Sauer. These clusters are more than just markets; they provide business opportunities catering to specific groups of people. So finding out that the Green P parking lot at 1531 Eglinton Avenue West with a heritage plaque is not part of the city registry was disconcerting because it means that the city can sell the land to a developer who will do whatever they want in the area. Issues like this are part of why this research is essential. In the process of the study, Little Jamaica lost another cultural marker. Randy’s takeout closed its doors after forty years due to issues with the decade-old Crosstown light rail transit construction and COVID-19 lockdowns. The closing of Randy’s raises questions like what can be done to preserve institutions like this? I hope that this research enables us to think deeply about the communities we would like to live in and how we can keep their history in an ever-changing environment.

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