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## Past and Present: A qualitative Study of Nathan Phillips Square

“Ignoring the landscape is denying the role that history has played in our story.”  
(Lintern, 2019) On September 13, 1965

Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square was officially opened to the general public. In the 54 years that followed, the space would be known as the forecourt to Toronto City Hall and an urban plaza of civic recreation in the metropolis. Nathan Phillips Square is unique in the fact that it is not only arguably the only major public square in downtown Toronto, but also serves as the largest civic square in Canada. Given its uniquely enormous size and ideal location, the square serves as a major gathering spot and plays host to countless events happening in Toronto, namely a weekly farmer's market, a Christmas market, New Year's celebrations, and much more. As a result, Nathan Phillips Square now acts as one of Toronto's most-recognized icons, serves as one of Toronto's major tourist destinations, and is arguably the most-photographed place in the city, only behind the CN Tower. The defining characteristic of the space, however, lies in the history of the area prior to 1965. While the Square may be seen as a major public centre and gathering spot in an ideal location, the area also boasts a rich, but often-forgotten history of a time when the space was home to an entire neighbourhood that served as an immigrant enclave before it was razed to be replaced by Nathan Phillips Square and New City Hall.

The aim of this study is to use a three-part methodology to determine the City's motivations behind demolishing The Ward. This essay will trace the history of the area from 1847 to 2019 and argue that (a) Nathan Phillips Square was an urban renewal project to supposedly “optimize” and “make better use” of the land that was occupied by the ‘immigrant’ Ward area which was seen as a blight and inefficient use of land, and (b) the demolishing of the Ward was motivated by the construction of Nathan Phillips Square as a public space for civic recreation yet there is no awareness of its symbolic, historical importance by the public.

## Literature Review

Given the historical nature of our subject matter and the intertwining of aspects of urban planning behind our research question, we focused on exploring the history of the Ward and the historical context behind the demolition of the neighbourhood. Unfortunately, given that the rediscovery of the Ward is a recent phenomenon, very few have written on the topic. We seek to fill this gap in the existing literature by

analyzing literature on slum clearance cases in other American cities and comparing them with the history of the Ward.

Lorinc et. al's (2015) book on the Ward was undoubtedly the most comprehensive and insightful source on the Ward. Starting with a search to find remnants of the Ward in contemporary Toronto (p. 27), the book interprets the Ward as a lost part of Toronto's history and delves into the day-to-day lives of the various immigrant communities that resided in Toronto's first immigrant enclave, giving an omniverse-esque presentation of countless stories within the neighbourhood from a historical perspective. While the book laid out a short, strictly factual summary of the timeline leading to the death of the Ward and identified urban renewal as a key reason behind the City's decision to demolish the neighbourhood (p.282-289), the level of detail was severely lacking, especially when compared to the compilation of stories spanning across the Ward's lifespan. Nonetheless, Lorinc et al.'s work served as an excellent starting point towards helping us understand the significance of the Ward to its residents and how the conversion of the Ward from a residential neighbourhood to a civic centre unfolded.

Other than Lorinc et al. (2015), scholarly literature using the Ward as a case study had varying degrees of relevant information on the neighbourhood. Dennis's (1995) analysis on property statistics in the Ward did not explicitly outline the main reason behind the Ward's demise but rejected claims that the Ward was demolished due to disinvestment. Noting how districts surrounding the Ward were already undergoing intense development amidst a sharp rise in property prices (p.23-24) and how demand for rental housing in the neighbourhood remained consistently high throughout the Ward's lifespan (p.28), Dennis argues that contrary to popular opinion, the Ward was not a neighbourhood in need of urban renewal due to disinvestment in inner-city neighbourhoods, and instead suggests it was inevitability due to ever-rising land prices and other external factors. Meanwhile, George's (2011) introspective into the politics of Toronto's slums talked about the Ward in much lesser detail, the only notable point coming from a public health survey that painted the neighbourhood as unsanitary and in severe need of improvement in public health infrastructure (p.102).

Other literary works used included Wolf and Lebeaux's (1967) comparison between Boston's West End and Detroit Census Tract #515 to find contrasts between "old-style ethnic" areas and low-income neighbourhoods, which later uses its findings to justify the slum clearance of low-income neighbourhoods like the one in Detroit for sake of providing better housing conditions or rapidly modify the character of an area housing key social institutions (p.7-8). While we disagreed with the argument supporting slum clearance of any neighbourhood for the supposed greater good of its residents and/or the city and found the Ward to align more closely with "old-style ethnic" neighbourhoods that bore positive social attachment by its residents (p.6), the

authors' reasonings helped us recognize how Toronto justified the destruction of the Ward as a righteous call.

### Three-Phase Chronological Methodology

In following a research style inspired by Patillo (2007), this study uses ethnographic data to examine five key stakeholders: (1) patrons of Nathan Phillips Square, (2) the Ward community, (3) community businesses, (4) community organizations, and (5) government officials. The research follows a three-part chronological analysis beginning with a participant observation, followed by a content analysis including cartographic and visual, and lastly a two-part interview procedure.

In terms of data collected, we gathered multiple pages worth of field notes, observing actors from the first category, across randomized days, during randomized times and during varying weather conditions. Given the historical nature of the research, we also obtained over fifty photographs of the Ward from the City of Toronto Archives, which we narrowed down to six and to run a cross comparison analysis with photos from the present day to examine the Ward community. Using a current version of a map of Nathan Phillips Square with an overlay of a map of the Ward, we created an original map; in using the City of Toronto's historic fire insurance plans, as well as material found through an extensive archival dig, we highlight key immigrant neighbourhoods, businesses, streets and landmarks that no longer exist in order to compare and contrast the past to the present. Lastly, to ground this research in urban politics and planning more broadly, we conducted seven interviews, including patrons of Nathan Phillips Square, founders of community organizations, and government officials.

This multi-pronged analysis is common in ethnography and lengthy time-series analyses. In her own analysis of a "slum and blighted area," Patillo (2007) successfully uses this type of methodology to address the long and storied history of urban renewal. In an effort to contribute to this typology of literature, this study will seek to build on Patillo's method to examine "acts of aggression" in the name of urban renewal.

#### (1) Participant Observation

Firstly, we conducted a participant observation that allowed for a preliminary understanding of Nathan Phillips Square as a site of civic recreation. Three observations were conducted in Nathan Phillips Square on randomized days and at randomized times for a 30-minute period (See Appendix A). This first phase of analysis allowed for the development of our preliminary research questions by giving us insight into the people and processes of the Square. As visual ethnographers, we observed

participants to identify common areas of interest and explore narrative potentials (O'Brien et. al, 2014). At this point in the analysis, there was no encounter between researchers and participants, yet the ongoing collaborative engagement between multiple observers provided many opportunities for data collection and multiple avenues to explore how the topic may be represented. Using participant observations as a data collection method provided us as researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, understand the atmosphere of the Square, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how patrons communicate with each other, and check for how much time is spent, if at all, in the Square. This stage helped move the project from original ideas to concurrent review and analysis emerging from researchers and their observations (O'Brien et. al, 2014).

## (2) Content Analysis

The second phase of analysis included the most historical-intensive component to this study. Given the historical nature of this topic, this section is critical. The content analysis aims to understand what constituted the Ward community (Patillo, 2007).

### (a) Cartographic Interpretation

Our cartographic interpretation of Nathan Phillips Square was heavily based on the history of the land it was built on. The key question we asked ourselves while creating our original map was “why did the Ward get demolished?.” We used a current version of a map of Nathan Phillips Square with an overlay of a map of the Ward to demonstrate the role of land use and its relation to urban renewal. To make sense of the area, we highlighted key immigrant neighbourhoods, businesses, streets, and landmarks that no longer exist in an effort to compare to what exists now (See Appendix B). This cartographic representation seeks to demonstrate that the Ward was demolished under the guise of urban renewal to intentionally erase a “dark spot” of the metropolitan area’s history as a slum and immigrant enclave. Our ‘observations’ of the (now demolished) Ward were done through an archival analysis of various fire insurance plans from the City of Toronto, the city directories, as well as through short-essays and newspaper articles written about the Ward, its businesses, culture, and history.

### (b) Visual Analysis

For the archival/visual analysis we revisited Nathan Phillips Square with a camera instead of a notebook. Like maps, photographs give the illusion of unbiased representations of the tangible world, while they are selective framings of more complex social realities. In using photography of Nathan Phillips Square and the Ward,

we took the next step in critically interpreting what we saw through multiple perspectives while also questioning what biases and frameworks we may unintentionally be using in how we view our research site. We aimed to tell through the photos the non-dominant narratives of the city and the site and to think more philosophically about what that means. In scrutinizing the area visually and through time, this phase of the analysis returns the historic photos of the Ward to the public eye but this time, sets them in the context of the struggle for critical recognition. This style of analysis mimics Spirn's (2008) work on Dorothea Lange's photographs of the Great Depression.

Given the historical nature of our topic of interest, that of which is to learn more about the history behind the demolition of the Ward and the creation of Nathan Phillips Square, exploring narratives by solely relying on our own photos was a near-impossible task as photographs by nature only capture a singular point in time. Given that nearly all evidence of the Ward was systematically erased from the area's streetscape and the ensuing dramatic character change of the neighbourhood, using only present-day photos would have failed to reveal any historical narratives as we envisioned. As such, we opted to compare our photos with historic pictures of not only what used to exist in the Square's place, but also the surrounding area to highlight the changes that 'urban renewal' has brought to the neighbourhood and display stark contrasts between then and now. Since we decided to make direct comparisons of the same locations over time, ensuring our photos were taken in the same location was critical. To achieve this, we first found historical photos of the Ward with addresses attached to them, then went to the location where the photo was taken and took our pictures based on the same angle used by our reference photos (See Appendix C). While some of the photo pairings rely entirely on past pictures and do not have matching locations, we thought that they were still important to display because despite the shorter timespan between the two images, they still display a great degree of contrast consistent to the narratives we discovered from our own photos.

### (3) Interviews

The final phase of analysis included two sets of interviews to collect information from three key stakeholders: patrons of Nathan Phillips Square, community organizations, and government officials (See Appendix D). We conducted two sets of interviews to account for the historical and modern aspects of our research project to gain access to others' observations (Weiss, 1995). Firstly, we interviewed one individual from a community organization, Ellen Schienberg, author of *The Ward: The Life and Loss of Toronto's First Immigrant Neighbourhood* and founder of Heritage Professionals, and secondly, we interviewed a government official, Gregg Lintern, Chief City Planner and Executive Director City Planning, City of Toronto. This first

component allowed us to take a deeper look at policy development in land use, community development and urban design. It led us to understand the transformation of this area of the downtown core. Secondly, we interviewed five patrons in the Square. This section of the analysis specifically tackled documenting the experiences of ordinary people, their relationship with Nathan Phillips Square and helped us learn about the quality of the neighbourhood (Weiss, 1995). We gathered information on patrons' understandings of this space, how they use it, how they perceive it, and their knowledge of what it once was. In combining these two components, we were looking to analyze the larger issue at stake: the symbolic importance of the square today and the contradiction of the removal of the immigrant Ward and Toronto as a contemporary immigrant City.

### Reflection on Methods

An advantage of using a cross-sectional methodology is that it allowed us as researchers to understand Nathan Phillips Square's historical timeline of development and how it has come to be known as the urban revitalized, recreational space that it is today. Our relationship with Nathan Phillips Square went further than one of research; there was a deeper relationship among researchers because we have all worked or are currently working at Toronto's City Hall. This has allowed us to see the space in a multitude of fashions including a commuting destination, a place of governmental business, protests, as well as during various hours, different festivals, events and under different decor. To successfully gather data from our five key stakeholders: (1) patrons of Nathan Phillips Square, (2) the Ward community, (3) community businesses, (4) community organizations, and (5) government officials, understanding our positionality was imperative. We consistently presented ourselves as research students from the University of Toronto whose role was to collect data from (a) patrons regarding their relationship to Nathan Phillips Square or (b) from individuals regarding urban renewal and land use in Toronto. This helped to maximize knowledge and skill sharing in both directions. There was also a recognition of privilege throughout the entire process; not only the privilege we had to be conducting the study, but also the privilege that this society grants to academics/students and denies to certain marginalized communities, such as the one that existed in the Ward. As students, we were able to quickly build rapport with interviewees and generate more insightful answers from them. It is fair to say that our identity as students has informed our work and has influenced our area of study insofar that we were able to gain access to interview certain individuals as well as access certain archives in the University of Toronto libraries that we would not have been able to without that piece of "identity."

Reflecting on the process, we believe that our method was highly effective at gathering crucial information from two key 'actors' in our study: the government and the public. The main limitations that we came across were present in our final interview stage where we learned that interviewing patrons in a public space can result in a much smaller sample size than intended since many patrons were not willing to participate. Based on what we learned from this, for further research, we would try to produce questions that allow participants in the Square to feel more comfortable sharing more information or digressing from the questions asked. This could mean skipping the personal demographic questions, that we realize now were not as important, and asking more general questions about their relationship with Toronto and its civic spaces.

Furthermore, we recognize that there are limitations regarding the knowledge that we produced because of this research. Firstly, it was difficult to provide unique observational data for our participant observations, as we were limited in time and resources. The weather was also a factor that may have skewed these results. Secondly, to fully explore the potential of cartographic and visual analysis, more research is needed to unpack the histories of various communities, businesses and people who lived in the Ward. Lastly, in researching the population's relationship with Nathan Phillips Square, the population relevant to our study is around 2.7 million people. Given the lack of patrons willing to participate, we conducted 5 interviews of patrons in the Square. This number does not account for the entire population and the project, and this topic in general, requires more research. Being said, the data is still representative of the population and speaks directly to the research questions.

## Results & Data

### (1) Phase One: Participant Observations

Even though Nathan Phillips Square was first built as a space of urban renewal, upon observation, it is not being used as a social space other than minimal use of the skating rink. This was made obvious by the lack of verbal and/or non-verbal communication between participants, the infrequency of interactions and the lack of lingering in the space. The following excerpts from the field notes provide examples:

The vast majority of actors are alone and walk with purpose - making me think of NPS as a commuting space more than anything. (Ladha, 12:20 p.m. 01/24/2019)  
Most of the time the Square will have at least 5-8 pedestrians walking. (Hwang, 1:15 p.m. 01/23/2019)  
No conversation is occurring in the square. Everyone is walking in solidarity...  
From a distance - I notice queen St. it is exceptionally busy. (Dinucci, 9:13 a.m. 01/25/2019)

The space, which was initially intended as a place of assemblage, is hardly that. This led us to conclude that it could be due to the weather, the lack of seating, the inaccessible architecture, or a combination of such things.

## (2) Phase Two: Content Analysis

### (a) Cartographic Analysis

A key finding from this phase of the analysis was that the Ward was comprised of a series of culturally distinct, yet relatively impoverished neighbourhoods. Certain scholars attribute this to the fact that the Ward's Church of the Holy Trinity (built in 1847) was an institution whose mission was to serve Toronto's poorest and therefore, the population that built up around it became home to a complex urban, largely immigrant population (Lorinc, 2015). As the map demonstrates, the Ward came to be known for its thriving immigrant enclaves, including Irish and African American and later, Italian, Chinese and Jewish. While delving into the rich settlement narratives of various individuals from the Ward is outside the scope of this paper, it is evident from the map (See Appendix B) that there existed a complex, urban neighbourhood, characterized by its diversity of culture, religion, cuisine, sexuality, business, race, heritage and poverty as well as the presence of well-intentioned outside institutions such as the Church of the Holy Trinity that claimed to act in the interests of the locals. The role of the land has immense meaning for modern Toronto. Within the Ward were Toronto's first 'gay bars,' Chinese restaurants, and laundries, the first immigrant clusters and the beginnings of a legacy of multiculturalism that defines Toronto.

The reasoning behind the erasure of an entire neighbourhood was supposedly urban renewal and prioritizing land uses, but the racist undertones and the sinister intentions to deliberately erase all traces of what once used to be Toronto's most diverse neighbourhood through redevelopment behind each major project is hard to ignore. An observation of the map reveals just how outlandishly large these projects were compared to the area's streetscape -- was the death of the Ward necessary for sake of Toronto's greater good, or were these projects located there for the explicit purpose of erasing what used to be there? One can only wonder whether these urban renewal projects were really needed to beautify the city.

### (b) Visual Analysis

In observing the photos, one quick look is enough for anyone to recognize how drastically urban renewal impacted what used to be Toronto's most diverse neighbourhood. Entire blocks of slums, stores, and streets were ripped out in their entirety and replaced with a civic square to match Toronto's rising reputation as a world city. Row-houses that once occupied the site were razed, converted into a parking lot for Eaton's, then replaced by the Square as we know it today. The organic



presence and activity of a community vanished as the land that once used to house an entire neighbourhood was replaced by what is an empty square devoid of any purpose or use.

Alone, the present-day photos do not reveal anything noteworthy, however, when contrasted with the past, they reveal one of the most unknown histories of Toronto's past. Through photography, we were able to display this truth in such a raw manner, one that no other kind of research tool could have accomplished. That said, it is important to note that these images, both past and present, were taken during a single point in time. What we mean by this is that without a "timeline" analysis, they must not be taken entirely for face value for the quite simple reason that they can only display a fleeting moment in history. Relying on images as a source of data adds validity to any research project, however, does not foster generalizability.

### (3) Phase Three: Interviews

In analyzing the first set of interviews of two key stakeholders in this study: community organization (Schienberg, Founder of Heritage Professionals) and government official (Lintern, Chief City Planner), it has been found that the central themes in their observations of land use in urban industrial society are that: (a) Nathan Phillips Square is a functional civic centre, (b) there is a centralization of immigrant needs in planning today, (c) revitalization is common, (d) urban renewal is seen as multidimensional, (e) there is an emphasis of building with the landscape, and (f) redevelopment is seen as meeting people's needs (See Table 1). These codes speak directly to our research question of "what are the City's motivations for redevelopment?"

Table 1: Land Use in Urban Industrial Society – First Set of Interviews

Codes	Definition	Example
Nathan Phillips Square is a functional civic centre	The space is thought of as a place of civic recreation for the urban population and a space that frames the new City Hall.	"Functionally, it is a place where people come together and celebrate, it is a public place that is emblematic of democracy and civic values. Nathan Phillips Square has functional symbolic importance and deeply meaningful significance as well because we live in a democracy it is a place

		where people can express themselves openly.” (Lintern, 2019)
Centralization of Immigrant needs in planning today	City planning today keeps immigration central when discussing revitalization, redevelopment, and changes to land use in the city.	<p>“Depicting immigrants as active agents and not as victims” (Scheinberg, 2019)</p> <p>“We fine tune consultations to engage and reach people. We look at the socio-economic profiles of neighbourhoods to understand who we are working with and the needs of those people. We look at vulnerability factors, transportation needs, and many considerations. The Ward was done with a sort of blunt urban renewal lens (post war era), slum clearance, fits more into that milieu, Sheraton centre was also acquired by the city. Understanding the whole context of the area before Ladha, Hwang, &amp; Dinucci   15 clearing it of what some perceive as whatever in the guise of urban renewal.” (Lintern, 2019)</p>
Revitalization	Revitalization is often thought of as one in the same with gentrification.	“One person’s revitalization is another’s gentrification.” (Lintern, 2019)
Urban Renewal as Multidimensional	Urban renewal today is multifaceted and	“Sometimes change has an impact on those who are

	considers a variety of factors unlike in the 60s.	living in the area and forces them to move out because their needs are not taken into consideration, and they are not viewed as an asset to the city. I think today, we be looking at it through a much more multidimensional lens.” (Lintern, 2019)
Building with the Landscape	Acknowledging the current landscape and working with not against it.	“Importance of leveraging heritage” (Scheinberg, 2019) “The city is built on layers and history. Because we want to tell our story and understand where we come from. You are missing something if you do not build with it. The landscape gives clues about who was here before us, even looking before colonial settlement. Ignoring the landscape is denying the role that history has played in our story.” (Lintern, 2019)
Redevelopment as meeting people’s needs	Redevelopment is about limiting mobility demands, building mixed use neighbourhoods (live, work, play) and understanding and meeting the needs of the area's residents.	“City-led redevelopment is putting in a new park, down on the waterfront. New public infrastructure, transit, revitalization, TCH revitalization. Not going into areas like we did with city hall to blow out a slum.” (Lintern, 2019)

Through analysis of the second set of interviews, it has been found that (a) Nathan Phillips Square is viewed as a space of civic recreation, (b) patrons have little

to no awareness of the history of this area of Toronto, (c) patrons are very aware of the immigrant communities in Toronto, (d) Nathan Phillips Square is used as a means to get to a destination (See Table 2). These codes help us understand the city of Toronto's relationship with Nathan Phillips Square

Table 2: Public Perceptions of Nathan Phillips Square - Patron Interviews

Codes	Definition	Example
Viewed as a space of civic recreation	Nathan Phillips Square is seen largely as a place where people come together and socialize in various ways.	"All seasons and year, there are particular time, like there are many indigenous history and black history month events that take place in the square and protests. But in general, it is always a place where people can come out too." (See Appendix B, Interview 4)
Patrons have little to no awareness of the history of this area of Toronto	There is a lack of awareness in almost any capacity of what existed in the area that is Nathan Phillips Square prior to it becoming Nathan Phillips Square. There is essentially no knowledge of what the Ward is.	"I don't know much about this place even though I've lived here my whole life." (See Appendix B, Interview 3)
Patrons are very aware of the immigrant communities in Toronto	There is a strong awareness of immigrant communities and their locations within Toronto.	"Oh yes! There are many - Jesus! I live in Scarborough and notice many in my neighborhood such as Bangladeshi, Persian, Arab, south Asian, Korean, blacks, Chinese." (See Appendix B, Interview 4)
Used to get to a destination	Nathan Phillips Square is often visited by people	"[I visit Nathan Phillips Square] Monday - Friday

	who are commuting to work or by people who are trying to get to another destination.	as part of my commute” (See Appendix B, Interview 3)
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## Analysis

Looking back at our research question of “What were the City’s motivations behind demolishing the Ward?,” we found that the city wanted to “optimize” and “make better use” of a vital part of downtown Toronto through urban renewal projects including Nathan Phillips Square. Historical analysis also revealed that the city was fueled by anti-immigrant rhetoric and intended to remove all traces of the starting point of Toronto’s history of immigration while creating a large-scale civic landmark befitting of a growing city at the same time. The Ward was demolished with a sort of blunt urban renewal lens in a time of rapid urbanization where ‘slum’ clearance was occurring around the world with the goal of placing these cities on ‘the map.’ As expected, the removal of entire streetscapes with large-scale developments helped the city successfully achieve its intentions of erasing traces of a supposedly blighted part of its history, which was further proven by the public’s lack of awareness of the Ward in our patron interviews. In contrast, the city only somewhat managed to succeed in creating a key civic landmark, as while Nathan Phillips Square was universally recognized as an important civic space among Torontonians, the Square failed to fulfill its intended functions, and is therefore only important as a symbol, not a square.

The biggest surprise to us from the findings was that despite Nathan Phillips Square remaining disused most of the time, the Square was nonetheless perceived as a civic landmark. It seemed contradictory to us that the Square was still universally recognized as a place of civic recreation from the patron interviews when previous observations revealed the Square was in general disuse. The consistent lack of notable public activity and the sheer amount of dead space present in the area led us to argue that Nathan Phillips Square fails to properly function as a public space adored by Torontonians. Yet despite many interviewees conceding that they do not take full advantage of the square and only use it as a commuting path, all respondents believed the square serves as a place of civic recreation, with one respondent listing the number of events, protests, and other activities happening year-round in the square to highlight the square’s functions (See Appendix B, Interview 4). The obvious divide between the first phase of analysis of the square and the final phase may be due to the timing of our visits and interviews; because we visited the square during winter months after the Holidays on weekdays, public activity was minimal, which brought us to our conclusion. Meanwhile, interviews with patrons took place during March Break,

when students in elementary and high schools were out for the week and the square saw noticeably more public activity than normal. Considering this, the high public presence in the square at the time of our interviews had a significant amount of influence in encouraging respondents to see Nathan Phillips Square as a place of civic recreation. Additionally, Nathan Phillips Square is one of few, if not the only, available open public spaces in downtown Toronto, and a well-recognized local landmark; the square may have been regarded by us as a failed public space due to the public not using it to its full intended potential, but the scarcity of such places in the City almost certainly influenced interviewees into believing the square was a place of civic recreation. Overall, Nathan Phillips Square may fail to properly function as a space of civic recreation, but it is still nearly-universally recognized as one, nonetheless.

Another interesting discovery for us was the contradiction of the removal of the Ward and the diversity of contemporary Toronto. As identified in our cartographic and visual analysis, the Ward was the starting point of Toronto's history as an immigrant city and a global village of numerous immigrant communities. One of the main motivators behind the City's decision to demolish the Ward was the anti-immigrant rhetoric, and by extension, removal of the area's immigrant identity through the dispersion of immigrant communities. Yet ironically enough, the death of the Ward birthed the ethnically diverse Toronto through a combination of ethnic enclaves spreading themselves across the city and being bolstered with increased immigration to Toronto. Considering how Toronto was identified as a diverse city with many immigrant communities by the public in patron interviews, the Ward, and its eventual demise, although unintentional, clearly was the catalyst behind Toronto's identity as an immigrant city.

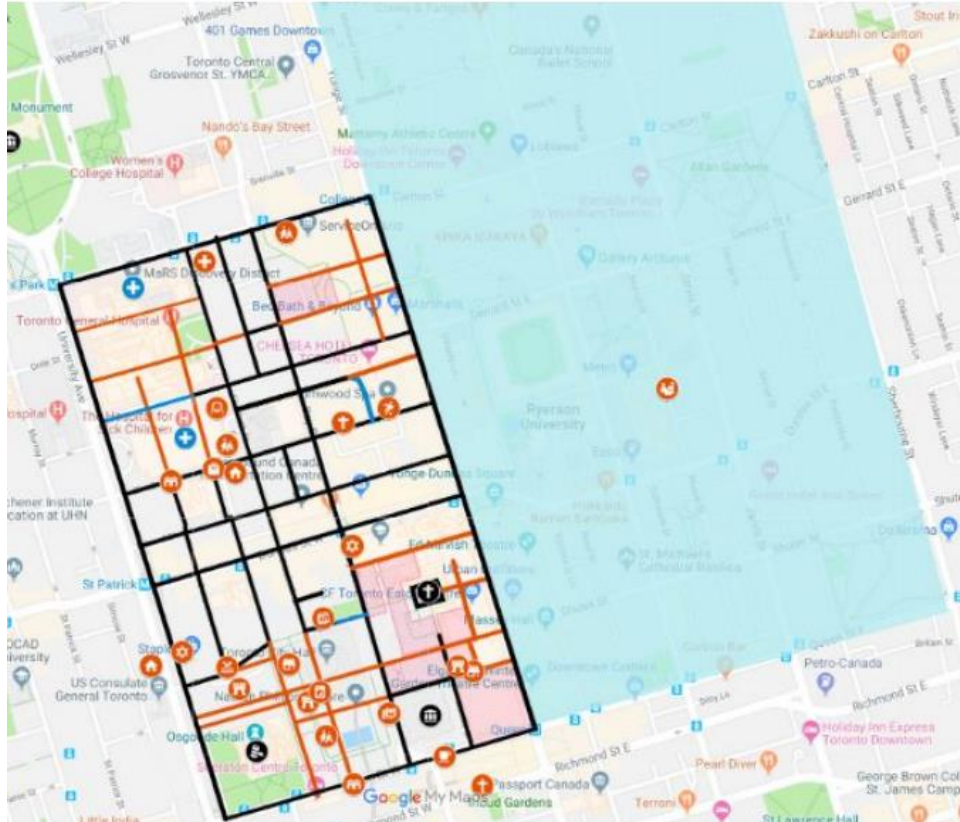
## Conclusion

Despite nearly fading away of the collective memory of Toronto, the Ward has left a significant footprint and legacy to the city. The death of the Ward, alongside a variety of external factors, provided a much-needed public space in the heart of the city, changed the City's approach to urban renewal and immigrant communities, and even arguably transformed Toronto's character and makeup. Overall, the Ward was an important part of Toronto's history that was unjustly forgotten.

Unfortunately, too much time has passed since the Ward was erased from the City's streetscape, and any efforts to bring back the Ward is no longer possible. However, the city can still work to recognize and reintroduce the neighbourhood back into the City's history and memory in a celebration of Toronto's diversity. Since the demolition of the Ward, the City has acknowledged their mistakes and worked towards reconciliation with Toronto's immigrant communities through changes in the City's planning approaches and continued recognition of Toronto's diversity. Moving forward,

there is a need for remembering the Ward, its legacy for the city, and its impact on urban renewal strategy in Toronto.

### Cartographic Interpretation



The map that accompanies this assignment is interactive. Please follow the link below to access the map.

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=43.65255936192926%2C-79.38423536895408&mid=1xI2sjiHj7\\_fKYOMLVHoJ\\_hcdA9atMG-c&z=14](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?ll=43.65255936192926%2C-79.38423536895408&mid=1xI2sjiHj7_fKYOMLVHoJ_hcdA9atMG-c&z=14)

Photographs of the Ward and Nathan Phillips Square  
Image 1 (A)



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 10073

The Ward Back Yards, seen from above - 1910

Source: <https://www.tvos.org/article/current-affairs/how-a-forgotten-toronto-neighbourhood-is-finding-its-place-in-history>

Image 1 (B)





City of Toronto Archives, Series 1476, Item 36, November 7, 1961

On a chilly day in late 1961, Metro Chairperson Frederick Gardiner addressed dignitaries and guests on the site of the new civic square. With this ceremony, work began on the construction of New City Hall.

Image 2 (A)



City of Toronto. City Hall Archives.

Note is how the grey rectangle completely covers all development beneath it.

Image 2 (B)



Taken at the 9th floor of West Tower, Toronto City Hall  
Bird's eye view of Nathan Phillips Square with the surrounding cityscape.

Image 3 (A)



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, ss0032\_it0319

The picture shows a slum housing unit in 1913 which housed several immigrant families. It stands in the shadow of the mighty Old City Hall building across the street and just over 50 years later, this derelict wood framed, stucco row-house became the site of the skating rink which stands today at Nathan Phillips Square.

Source: <http://www.historytothepeople.ca/remembering-st-johns-ward-the-images-of-toronto-city-photographer-arthur-s-goss/>

Image 3 (B)



Nathan Phillips Square Skating Rink - located parallel to Queen St. W - 2019  
The very area where once a dense immigrant community once lived.



Image 4 (A)



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 341  
Corner of Elizabeth Street and Foster Place - 1913  
Source: <http://www.wardmuseum.ca/picturingtheward/theward/>

Image 4 (B)



Corner of Elizabeth Street and Forester Place - 2019.

Image 5 (A)



City of Toronto Archives, Series 372 s0372\_ssit0172

60-70 Elizabeth Street - 1937

Source: <http://www.wardmuseum.ca/picturingtheward/theward/>

Image 5 (B)



Taken at City Hall North Entrance, Elizabeth Street - 2019

Image 6 (A)



City of Toronto Archives, Fonds 1244, Item 1002

Taken in 1918 by Arthur Goss. The location may be Eaton's parking lot. The team of horses may be clearing the site for a new building. Site of Urban Renewal.

Source: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/a-little-girl-in-toronto-lost-to-history-and-now-found/article38198028/>

Image 6 (B)



City of Toronto. City Hall Archives.  
Toronto City Hall and Nathan Phillips Square - 1961

## References

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