This document describes the wealth of cartographic resources in the York University Map Library and beyond that will be useful for urban research. These examples cover the Toronto and some parts of Southern Ontario. Included are resources available at other libraries and websites. At the Map Library, the staff can help you find the maps, airphotos, and other map resources for your project. The Map Library is open: Monday to Friday 10 am to 5 pm. If you require additional help in finding “hard to find” map resources, you can book and appointment (email gislib@yorku.ca) or come by our reference hours.

Scanning and Digitizing Maps for your Project – Public Domain and Copyrighted Maps

Copyright does not last forever. The main purpose of copyright law is to allow creators of works to be reasonably rewarded for their creative efforts. To that end, there are statutory rules to determine when copyright protection of a work comes to an end. In Canada copyright lasts for the life of the author, the remainder of the calendar year in which the author dies, plus 50 years following the end of that calendar year – the “life plus 50 rule”. When the term of copyright expires, the work is said to come into the public domain and is then available for anyone to use and copy without seeking permission from the copyright owner. The author retains no rights in the work. Corporate, Government of Canada and most Canadian Provincial government record (including maps) and photographs that have been published for more than 50 years are considered to be in Public Domain. For more information about Copyright at York, Go to: http://copyright.info.yorku.ca/public-domain-open-access-and-creative-commons-material/

If the map is in copyright (government/corporate maps published after December 31st 1968 OR maps that follow the “life plus 50 year rule”) you may copy up to (10) percent of the copyrighted protected map; or you can copy an entire map from a copyright protected work contain other maps. Source: Before you Copy. The Map Library is equipped with a public scanner.

If you want to scan a large sheet map (larger than 12 x 18 inches) from our collection AND it is in public domain (government/corporate maps published before December 31st 1968), you can request to have the map scanned on our large format scanner. Please consult the instructions on your course moodle site how to order a scan. When you place a request via GAIA, the scan of the item will be delivered to you electronically after 2 pm the next business day. In addition, if the map is not in public domain, our staff will not scan the map.

What is Toronto?

The boundaries of Toronto haven’t always been the same. This is important to keep in mind when you are finding books, maps, government information, and other documents about Toronto. The City of Toronto was created out of the County of York and what is formerly called the York Township. From 1783 until 1967, the city of Toronto annexed many outlining villages, towns, and unincorporated areas. An annexation map for the City of Toronto is available at http://jpeg2000.eloquent-systems.com/toronto.html?image=s0727\s0727_fl0009_it0001.jp2. It is also important to note that the other municipalities in the area also annexed small villages and towns, for example the town of Weston was annexed into the City of York in 1967. The Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Metro Toronto) was a senior level of municipal government that existed from 1954 to 1998. It comprised of all of the municipalities (boroughs): City of Toronto, East York, Etobicoke, North York, Scarborough, and York. In 1998, Metro Toronto was dissolved and the five municipalities/boroughs were amalgamated to form the current city of Toronto. A map of the former boroughs – municipalities is located at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amalgamation_of_Toronto#media/File:Toronto_map.png. For a comprehensive list of mergers, amalgamations, and annexations, go to: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amalgamation_of_Toronto
Print Maps & Atlases about Toronto, Metropolitan Toronto and the former boroughs/towns

The York University Map Library has a collection of print maps and atlases about Toronto, Metropolitan Toronto, and the five former boroughs/municipalities. Use the white binders in the front of the library to locate your maps or search for them in the catalogue.

Below is a list of relevant call numbers and locations.

- Metropolitan Toronto / Current City of Toronto, Cabinets 31-33, Call Numbers G3524 T61
- City of Toronto until 1783-1998, Cabinet 34, Call Numbers G3524 T62
- East York, Cabinet 34, Call Numbers G3524 T65; Etobicoke, Cabinet 34-35, Call Numbers G3524 T66
- North York, Cabinet 35, Call Numbers G3524 T67; Scarborough, Cabinet 35, Call Numbers G3524 T68
- City/Town of York, Cabinet 35, Call Numbers G3524 T69
- Illustrated historical atlas of York County, 1878, Scott Map Oversize G1148 Y6 M5 1878B
- Durham Region, Cabinet 26, Call Number, G3523 D98; Peel Region, Cabinet 27 Call Number G3523 P4; York Region, Cabinet 26, Call Numbers G3523 Y6 to G3523 Y68.
- If your city (outside of Toronto), use the code G3524 followed by the first letter of the town/city.

Some of our municipal maps have been scanned. To view these maps go to the York University Digital Library https://digital.library.yorku.ca/yul-1120416/map-library

Property Data Maps

Property Data Maps depict buildings, railway lines, major watercourses, curbs, catch basins, hydrants, streetlights/poles, street names, park names, property lines, street lines and right of way boundaries.

City of Toronto & Metropolitan Toronto


Airphotos, Orthophotos, and Photomaps

York University Library Collection

York University Libraries has a collection of print airphotos of Toronto and region for 1954, 1971, 1978, 1982, 1986; and a collection of photo maps of Toronto and Southern Ontario for 1954, 1974, 1980-1998. To find out if we have photos of your area of interest go to: http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/airphotos/. Please note that these airphotos and photo maps are in print format. They are available to view at the Map Library.

The Map Library also has digital orthophotos (geo-corrected aerial photographs in digital format), of Southern Ontario and the Greater Toronto area. For information on how to view and download this imagery go to: http://www.library.yorku.ca/web/map/collections/orthophotos/

Other Collections

The City of Toronto Archives has made available their aerial photograph series from 1947 to 1992. For more information visit this [website](http://www.toronto.ca/archives/).

Fire Insurance Plans

A fire insurance plan is a large scale urban map or set of maps of a community. These plans show in detail by means of colour or symbols: the character of the outside and inside construction of buildings; building heights; occupancy or use of individual or groups of buildings; street widths; street numbers; property lines; water pipes or mains, fire hydrants and fire alarm boxes.

At York University

York University has a small collection of fire insurance plans at the Map Library and Archives and Special Collections. To find out more, please consult our guide: [http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/fips/](http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/fips/)

Toronto Archives & Toronto Public Libraries

The City of Toronto Archives has many of their fire insurance plans available online (1880 to 1924). [http://www.toronto.ca/archives/](http://www.toronto.ca/archives/). Direct link to their Fire Insurance Plan webpage.


Fire Insurance Plans – University of Toronto Collection. These plans are available in JPG format. [https://mdl.library.utoronto.ca/collections/maps-atlases/fire-insurance-plans](https://mdl.library.utoronto.ca/collections/maps-atlases/fire-insurance-plans)

At Other Libraries in Toronto

For a listing of Toronto fire insurance plans located in other institutions in the City of Toronto check: Catalogue of Canadian Fire Insurance Plans 1875-1975 Z 6026 17 D82 2002 (Map Library Service Desk)

Maps with Socio Economic Data about Toronto

- [Simply Analytics](http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/content.php?pid=227895&sid=1894196). Interactive census mapping at the census tract level for the 2006 and 2011 census.
- [Census Atlases](http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/content.php?pid=227895&sid=1894196) (in Print) format from the Map Library and Scott Library
- City of Toronto Demographic Maps (Data from the 1971 Census). Map Library Maps G3524 T62 E1 75 1972-73. Map cabinet 34.

For detailed census data for specific census tracts, please consult the Canadian Census Data guide for more information: [http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/content.php?pid=227895&sid=1894196](http://researchguides.library.yorku.ca/content.php?pid=227895&sid=1894196)
### City Directories

City directories contain information about specific street addresses, as well as listings of businesses and individuals. York University Libraries' has a small collection located on the 3rd Floor of Scott Library, located at call number FC 3097.18.

The Toronto Public Library has a much larger and comprehensive collection, located at the Toronto Reference Library. For a complete list of the print version of Toronto City Directories, go to [http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/history-genealogy/lh-print-city-directories.jsp](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/history-genealogy/lh-print-city-directories.jsp). For a list of the digital versions of the Toronto City Directories from 1833-1922, go to: [http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/history-genealogy/lh-digital-city-directories.jsp](http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/history-genealogy/lh-digital-city-directories.jsp). Please note, that due to copyright restrictions directories published after 1922 are not available in digital format.

### Additional Resources about Toronto

- [Scholars Geoportal](http://torontopubliclibrary.typepad.com/trl/2015/09/research-guide-to-toronto-maps-online.html). Geospatial data search, discovery and analysis tools to make the data readily available to Ontario researchers. Resources include data licensed by Ontario academic libraries, such as land-based vector data (water, cultural features, etc.), census geography, and orthophotography.

### Google Earth and GIS Software

Google Earth Pro can be used to do the following:

- View and interact with high resolution imagery of your study area
- Create and annotate map of your study area
- Overlay scanned maps of your study area to better the changes that have occurred in the area

**Accessing & Learning Google Earth Pro**

[Google Earth Pro](https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en) is a free downloadable software. It can be installed on computers using Mac operating systems and on a Windows operating systems. The software and installation software is available on this website: [https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en](https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en). Google Earth Pro is also available on the workstations at the Map Library. This is a list of tools you can use to learn and navigate the software:

- [Create and share maps](https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en)
- [Import and customize map data](https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en)
- [Using Google Earth Pro Tutorial](https://support.google.com/earth/answer/21955?hl=en) (University of Toronto Mississauga)