

MIDTOWN IN FOCUS

STARTING POINTS

A PARTICULAR  
POSITION IN THE  
CROSS-SECTION  
OF THE CITY

## **This is what makes it Midtown.**

As one of the growth hubs identified in the City of Toronto, the Yonge-Eglinton Area requires a vision able to articulate a clear point of view about its role in the city and how to ensure the continued vitality and quality of life for its residents. Midtown isn't downtown; it isn't uptown. Yet it somehow combines the qualities and attributes of each. Conceptually and practically, this hybrid of seemingly opposing qualities - dense, urban with open, green - can be the foundation for an ideal form of neighbourhood in the city.

RAVINES

## **The role of Toronto's ravine landscape in the face of the city's growth and development is critical.**

Just beyond the study area, Midtown is encircled by a system of natural ravines and open spaces. Today, the points of contact with this system are not explicitly linked to Yonge-Eglinton. However, this natural asset can be woven into the network of streets to establish a more fluid connection between the neighbourhood and this remarkable green resource. The ravines offer contact with another scale of nature close to Midtown.

MIDTOWN = HILLTOWN

**Topography profoundly shapes the perception of Midtown and stages its spatial experience in the public realm.** The form of the natural topography at Yonge-Eglinton produce various spatial effects: a container, a panorama, and a ridge. The high point at the crest of Yonge sets spatial frames and establishes broader relationships across the area, while containing spaller spaces and offering sightlines. Topography naturally links to the heritage of the area - one can trace the alignment of the former creek in the lowland area and understand the location of the gathering for the rebellion, a natural lookout at Yonge's highpoint.

A PARK ON EGLINTON?



**Eglinton Park sits on Eglinton Avenue but without an address.** Never has such an important city park had such a weak, introverted relationship to its primary frontage. Yonge-Eglinton's only great park must re-assert itself as the heart of the district by opening itself up to the community with careful attention to potential new eastward connections and directly engaging Eglinton Avenue. A strategy of 'pulling the park' outwards from its core can expand its presence to function as both a local green resource and citywide destination.

VERTICAL BUILDINGS

THAT LAND

IN A SEA OF GREEN

## **The green canopy serves as a crucial counterpoint to the verticality of towers.**

This is perhaps the most notable characteristic of Midtown's atmosphere and a quality that has attracted many residents to the area. To build upon this character, Midtown must cultivate and enhance the urban tree canopy while developing ways to activate a vital public realm at groundlevel. A green surface is simply not enough. In Midtown, green means a canopy able to provide a spatial frame with a mature, shady verdant zone.

# THE QUADRANTS

**The intersection of Yonge-Eglinton marks out distinct character areas.** Each with their own particular atmosphere and urban mix, these quadrants are defined by differences in architectural style, scale and character creating distinct quadrants within Midtown. Despite their distinct qualities, each quadrant refers back to the central intersection as the point of focus for the area.

FIVE

UNFORGETTABLE

EAST-WEST

GREENWAYS

**The East-West avenues of Keewatin, Erskine, Broadway, Roehampton, and Soudan can become a series of five fantastically lush greenways.** Building upon their already green character, the frontages and streetscapes can be coordinated as memorable greenways which stitch together the park, schools, and cemetery. The tower-in-the-park dream relies on the enhancement of the green canopy at groundlevel; these five streets will become its emblems while supporting expanded recreation opportunities.

# A SERIES OF SQUARES



**The potential to establish a series of squares fronting on Yonge Street and stitching east to west is significant.** Today Yonge-Eglinton conspicuously lacks a great urban square. There is no Rockefeller Square in this Midtown; however, Montgomery Square promises to be the climax of a new series of squares, starting at Minto, then Yonge-Eglinton, each working to form a seam between the east and west sides of Yonge Street. Located at the topographic highpoint of Yonge, Montgomery will provide the anchor for urban gathering at Midtown.

MONTGOMERY  
SQUARE

**Located at the topographic highpoint of Yonge, Montgomery Square will provide an anchor for urban gathering at Midtown.** As the climax of Midtown's series of 3 squares, it will form a seam between the east and west sides of Yonge Street where Broadway meets Montgomery and articulate the most human-scaled public space in Midtown. As the site of the former Montgomery's Tavern, an important cultural heritage dimension is added to this public space.

NEIGHBOURHOOD  
STREETS

**The potential of Yonge-Eglinton's network of streets to perform as public destinations is significant.** The area's streets can be re-cast as the public armature to host Midtown life - a distinct alternative to traditional urban squares or plazas. Midtown streets can become destinations in themselves with recalibrated streetscape design types able to provides the infrastructure to support diverse activities and life in the public realm.

# REDPATH REVISITED

**Redpath is positioned to provide an entirely new form of streetscape for Midtown to serve multiple needs.**

A more balanced idea of street design which harmonizes cars, people, neighbourhood activities, and environmental goals. Redpath could function as a test-site for an innovative model of community street that can yield benefits for the area beyond simply mobility.

THE  
NORTH WALL



## **The north side of Eglinton is fortified.**

A seemingly impenetrable northern streetwall along Eglinton in the block between Yonge and Redpath has emerged from a string of buildings built to zero lot line. There is potential to create new pedestrian passages which break through this built-crust and increase the permeability of the long block. The exciting distinction between the experience of Eglinton vs. the experience of the northern blocks can be accentuated and dramatized.

DEVELOP NEW  
CONNECTIONS

**Future development parcels appear to align in an almost-axis which could enable the provision of desperately-needed pedestrian connections.** This is the next step in creating a more porous and connected Midtown. The coordinated participation of private developers can produce a finer grain of connectivity, particularly in the northeast quadrant.

EMERGING  
RETAIL VITALITY

**Here is the opportunity to translate the area's intensification into a more thriving business and retail environment which works to animate and sustain life in the public realm.** The increasing population in the area can yield a more vibrant public realm, fuelled by groundfloor activity with positive relationships to the street. Active frontages from thriving businesses and retail will reinforce a safer and more animated streetscape experience for Midtown.