

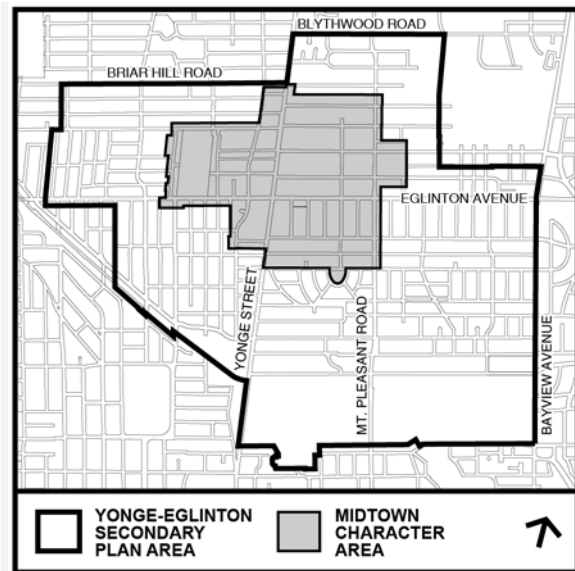
**Midtown in Focus – Official Plan Amendment – Final Report**

<b>Date:</b>	April 17, 2015
<b>To:</b>	Planning and Growth Management Committee
<b>From:</b>	Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 16 - Eglinton Lawrence Ward 22 - St. Paul's Ward 25 - Don Valley West
<b>Reference Number:</b>	P:\2015\Cluster B\PLN\PGMC\PG15063

**SUMMARY**

At its August 2014 meeting, City Council adopted the Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Plan for the Yonge-Eglinton area (Midtown in Focus Plan) and supported the strategies and initiatives identified in the Plan to inform the priorities for local capital investment, assist in obtaining and directing Section 37 funds for community improvements, identify a parkland acquisition strategy and guide the review of development applications. To advance implementation of the Plan, City Council requested that the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, prepare draft amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan to implement the Midtown in Focus Plan and its objectives.

This report summarizes the proposed amendments to the Secondary Plan (refer to Attachment 1). The proposed amendments integrate the Council-adopted Midtown in Focus Plan into the existing planning framework of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan. An enhanced policy framework is necessary to secure the Midtown in Focus vision of more liveable,



walkable and memorable public spaces across the Yonge-Eglinton area.

This report also outlines the scope of work for an additional phase of planning activity to be initiated in 2015 and reported out in 2016 that will further enhance the existing planning framework for the Yonge-Eglinton area.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

---

**The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council amend the Official Plan, substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached to this report as Attachment No. 1.
2. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment as may be required.
3. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the General Managers of Transportation Services, Toronto Water, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Economic Development and Culture and Children's Services, as well as other applicable divisions and agencies, to undertake further review of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan in accordance with the planning priorities identified in this report, use the robust and high standard of public consultation used throughout the Midtown in Focus process and bring forward a Proposals Report in early 2016 to the Planning and Growth Management Committee on the emerging directions.
4. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the General Managers of Transportation Services, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Toronto Water, Real Estate Services, Engineering and Construction Services, Finance and Economic Development and Culture, as well as other applicable divisions and agencies, to bring forward a report in early 2016 to the Planning and Growth Management Committee outlining the proposed Implementation Strategy for the Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Plan, specifically as it relates to 'quick hit' projects that are able to be implemented in the near term and potential funding sources.

### **Financial Impact**

There are no immediate financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report and amendment of the Official Plan.

It is recognized, however, that many of the elements of the Midtown in Focus Plan will involve significant capital costs and ongoing operating budget implications. Preparation of an Implementation Strategy, to be initiated in 2015, will include the development of order-of-magnitude capital cost estimates of these civic improvements.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

On July 21, 2012, City Council established the Midtown Planning Group to create a proactive, holistic and comprehensive strategy for planning initiatives in the Yonge-Eglinton area. The Midtown Planning Group consists of the three local councillors for Wards 16, 22 and 25, representatives of local residents associations, local citizens, BIA members and City staff from North York and Toronto and East York Districts. The Midtown Planning Group is chaired by Councillor Matlow.

The motion establishing the Midtown Planning Group is available on the City's website at: <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2012.PG16.17>

The Midtown Planning Group first met in October 2012 to discuss issues within the Yonge-Eglinton area and to identify the planning priorities. A significant issue identified by the Midtown Planning Group was the need for public realm improvements in the area, particularly in the Yonge-Eglinton Centre which is experiencing high levels of growth through redevelopment. In November 2012, the Midtown Planning Group confirmed that a public realm improvement plan should be prepared to guide future redevelopment and civic/capital improvements.

At its meeting of August 27, 2014 City Council adopted the report of July 8, 2014 from the Chief Planner & Executive Director, City Planning Division, entitled Midtown in Focus – Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Plan for the Yonge-Eglinton Area (<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2014.PG35.21>).

The Council decision requested, among other matters, that the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning prepare draft amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan to implement the Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Plan which support the Midtown in Focus Plan objectives and include:

- a. a new public realm structure plan identifying the Five Place-Making Moves;
- b. clarification of policies related to the impacts of private developments on the public realm;
- c. an enhanced parkland acquisition strategy; and
- d. Section 37 implementation priorities.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

### **Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans**

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), 2014 provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. These policies support the goal of enhancing the quality of life for all Ontarians. Key policy objectives include: building strong healthy communities; wise use and management of resources and protecting public health and safety.

The PPS promotes healthy, active communities. Key policy direction applicable to the Midtown in Focus Plan includes facilitating active transportation and planning public streets to be safe and meet the needs of all transportation modes including walking. The PPS also recognizes the need to provide a full range of recreational opportunities for communities including parklands, public spaces and open space areas. City Council's planning decisions are required to be consistent with the PPS

The *Places to Grow Act*, 2005, and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006, provides a framework for managing growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe including: directions for where and how to grow; the provision of infrastructure to support growth; and protecting natural systems and cultivating a culture of conservation.

The Yonge-Eglinton Centre is one of the five Urban Growth Centres in Toronto, identified in the Growth Plan, where intensification is directed and encouraged. The Growth Plan directs that intensification be undertaken in a sustainable way to accommodate the population growth projections of the City's Official Plan and the *Places to Grow Act*. Intensification areas, such as Urban Growth Centres, will be planned and designed to provide high quality public open spaces with site design and urban design standards that create attractive and vibrant places.

City Council's planning decisions are required to conform, or not conflict, with the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

## **Official Plan**

The Official Plan is a long-term vision for how the city should grow and the most important vehicle for implementing the Provincial Policy Statement and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. An key principle of the Official Plan is its emphasis on the strategic need to enhance the amenity and liveability of the City's growth areas.

Section 3.1.1 of the Official Plan – The Public Realm – recognizes the importance of a well-designed, high quality, connected network of public spaces as an essential part of city-building. The Official Plan identifies attractive, tree-lined streets designed for walking, green spaces of all sizes and public squares that bring people together as fundamental assets of a great city.

To this end, sidewalks and boulevards are to be well-designed with coordinated tree planting and landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting and quality street furnishings and decorative paving as part of street improvements. New parks and open spaces are to connect and extend existing parks, natural areas and open spaces such as school yards and provide settings for community events and individual use.

Section 3.2.3 of the Official Plan – Parks and Open Spaces – recognizes the importance of Toronto's system of parks and open spaces in contributing and being an integral component to quality of life and social well-being. The Plan's policies speak to:

- adding new parks and amenities, particularly in growth areas;

- maintaining, enhancing and expanding existing parks;
- protecting access to publicly accessible open spaces and expanding the system of open spaces; and
- promoting and using private open space to supplement city-owned parks, facilities and amenities.

The Official Plan identifies four areas where growth is appropriate and directs growth to the *Downtown, Avenues, Employment Districts* and *Centres*, including the Yonge-Eglinton Centre.

The Official Plan identifies specific directions for the City's *Centres*, including direction supporting improvements to the quality of the pedestrian realm and the creation of new parks and open spaces. In the *Centres*, building a high-quality public realm featuring public squares and parks, privately owned publicly-accessible spaces, community gardens, public art and a comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists is considered essential for attracting the desired concentration of businesses, workers, residents and shoppers.

The Official Plan identifies that the *Yonge-Eglinton Centre* is strategically located in midtown Toronto with short subway connections to both *Downtown* and *North York Centre*. The Official Plan recognizes the importance and city-wide benefits of ensuring the area continues to develop as both an office centre and a desirable living area. Improving the pedestrian realm and creating new parks and open spaces through the development process is a key objective.

The Official Plan requires the preparation of a Secondary Plan for each *Centre* that includes, among other provisions, strategies for acquiring new parkland and enhancing existing parkland, strong pedestrian and cycling connections to transit stations and identification of future public investments in streets, parks and local amenities to support population and employment growth.

The study area for Midtown in Focus included areas outside the *Yonge-Eglinton Centre* in recognition of the contribution to adjacent neighbourhoods and amenities to the overall public realm of the area. As such, the study area also included lands identified as *Avenues* in the Official Plan and designated as *Apartment Neighbourhoods, Neighbourhoods* and *Parks and Open Space Areas*. Development on the reurbanizing *Avenues* should contribute to the creation of an attractive, safe and comfortable pedestrian environment that encourages walking and local retailing.

In 2014, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendments as part of the *Feeling Congested?* initiative to enhance the City's transportation policies covering the following areas:

- Integration with Land Use;
- Streets and 'Complete Streets';
- Active Transportation;

- Auto, Travel Demand Management and Parking; and
- Goods Movement.

## **Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan**

Secondary Plans are part of the City’s Official Plan and are intended to establish more detailed, locally-specific policies to guide growth and change in a Secondary Plan area.

The Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan generally applies to lands bounded by Blythwood Road in the north, Chaplin Crescent in the west, Mount Pleasant Cemetery to the south and Bayview Avenue in the east. Among other policy direction, the Secondary Plan encourages improvements to the public realm throughout the Secondary Plan area, including enhancements to streetscapes and existing open spaces and ensuring wider sidewalks in key areas. The Secondary Plan also encourages the provision of mid-block pedestrian connections in new developments where large blocks exist, particularly between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road.

In addition to pursuing the acquisition of land for new local parks, Secondary Plan policies relating to *Parks and Open Spaces Areas* encourage the development of street parks through the provision of trees, benches, planters and other appropriate street furniture and the connection of Secondary Plan area parkland and open spaces with similar resources in adjacent areas through the use of trails, bikeways and pedestrian-friendly streetscape environments. The Secondary Plan also encourages partnerships and agreements that supplement the supply of city-owned parkland by allowing public access to schoolyards and other types of open spaces.

## **Midtown in Focus Plan**

The Midtown in Focus Plan, adopted by City Council in August 2014, supports and builds upon the Official Plan and Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan policies. The process to develop the Plan included area analysis and significant public input, resulting in a vision for the Yonge-Eglinton public realm and the identification of a series of priority projects.

The Midtown in Focus study area is located within the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan area, centred on the intersection of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue. The study area boundaries include all lands within the Yonge-Eglinton Centre as well as adjacent lands between Eglinton Park to the west, Northern District Secondary School to the east, Keewatin Avenue to the north and the Church of the Transfiguration to the south.

The Midtown in Focus study was undertaken to ensure that as growth proceeds, the network of parks, open space and streets within the area are improved to both address existing deficiencies and to ensure that improvements are undertaken in tandem with future growth.

The Midtown in Focus Plan recognized that the study area has a distinct quality and character, consisting of a vibrant mixed use community with an open and green

landscaped character. Focusing on the public realm as a fundamental contributor to quality of life in Midtown, the Plan provides a vision for the maintenance and enhancement of this character and identifies strategic improvements to achieve a high-quality, comfortable, connective and usable network of parks, open spaces and streetscapes.

The Plan identifies a number of goals, strategies and initiatives to achieve these objectives. The Plan also outlines five Place-Making Moves that, together with other streetscape improvements and the enhancement and expansion of parkland in the area, will form a thriving system of parks, open spaces and streets. The five Place-Making Moves include:

1. Eglinton Greenline – envisioned as an iconic linear space on the north side of Eglinton Avenue designed to be a publicly-accessible open space programmed for social gathering and cultural and retail activities.
2. Yonge Street and its Squares – a sequence of complementary urban squares located at key intersections along Yonge Street.
3. Park Street Loop – a 3 km long multi-use promenade connecting Eglinton Park to adjacent neighbourhoods.
4. Midtown Greenways – local streets that enhance the generous landscaping prevalent within the *Yonge-Eglinton Apartment Neighbourhoods*.
5. Redpath Revisited – improvement of a key north-south community axis bookended by expanded public parks.

The Midtown in Focus Plan applied the 'Complete Streets' design philosophy to consider the needs of all users and uses of streets and laneways and prioritized safety, universal accessibility, public access and active transportation.

The Plan is intended to be used to inform priorities for capital investments in the area, assist in obtaining and directing funds secured through Section 37 of the *Planning Act* for community improvements, identify a parkland acquisition strategy, and guide the review of development applications and potential impacts on the creation and use of the public realm.

In February 2015, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects awarded the Midtown in Focus Plan its highest award, the National Honours Award, Planning and Analysis. This Award of Excellence recognizes the consultant team led by Public Work for outstanding achievement in the profession of Landscape Architecture for their work on the Midtown in Focus Study.

## **Community Consultation**

Consultation with the public was an important part of the development of the Midtown in Focus Plan. The following methods of consultation and engagement were used to solicit meaningful input in the preparation of the Plan presented to City Council in 2014:

- A project website ([www.midtown.com](http://www.midtown.com)) that included a study description, contact information, upcoming consultation events, consultation summaries and opportunities for study input;
- On-line public consultation platforms;
- Four meetings with the Midtown Planning Group;
- Two public consultation information centres and workshop meetings;
- Three community walking tours and one walking tour with the students of Northern District Secondary School;
- A meeting with members of BILD to review the draft plan; and
- Numerous meetings with individual stakeholders and stakeholder groups.

Subsequent to the adoption of the Midtown in Focus Plan, city staff organized two consultation meetings related specifically to the presentation, review and discussion of draft amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan:

- A meeting of the Midtown Planning Group on March 5, 2015; and
- A broader public meeting on March 23, 2015.

The City retained a facilitation consultant who documented the consultation meetings and prepared summaries of feedback received both at the meeting and following the meetings.

Meeting participants emphasised the importance of moving ahead with implementation activities in a timely fashion while also making the most of opportunities to improve conditions in the immediate term and address the impacts of construction. Attendees requested greater detail regarding the function of proposed and modified public spaces, including the Redpath Avenue shared street, Yonge Street Squares and Cowbell Lane, and suggested clarifications to improve the proposed amendments.

City staff distributed discussion guides documenting the proposed amendments in detail at both meetings. The presentation materials, discussion guides and meeting summaries were made available on the City's website:  
<http://www.toronto.ca/planning/midtowninfocus>.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Midtown in Focus Secondary Plan Amendments**

The proposed amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan presented in this report support and are consistent with the objectives of the adopted Midtown in Focus Plan. The proposed amendments address the four areas requested in the Council decision of the Midtown in Focus Plan:

- a. a new public realm structure plan identifying the Five Place-Making Moves;



- b. clarification of polices related to the impacts of private developments on the public realm;
- c. an enhanced parkland acquisition strategy; and
- d. Section 37 implementation priorities.

Although the Midtown in Focus Plan was adopted by City Council to inform current and future development applications and civic improvements, the proposed amendments to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan provide clear policy direction for realizing the improvements to the public realm identified in the Plan.

### **Public Realm Structure Plan and the Five Place-Making Moves**

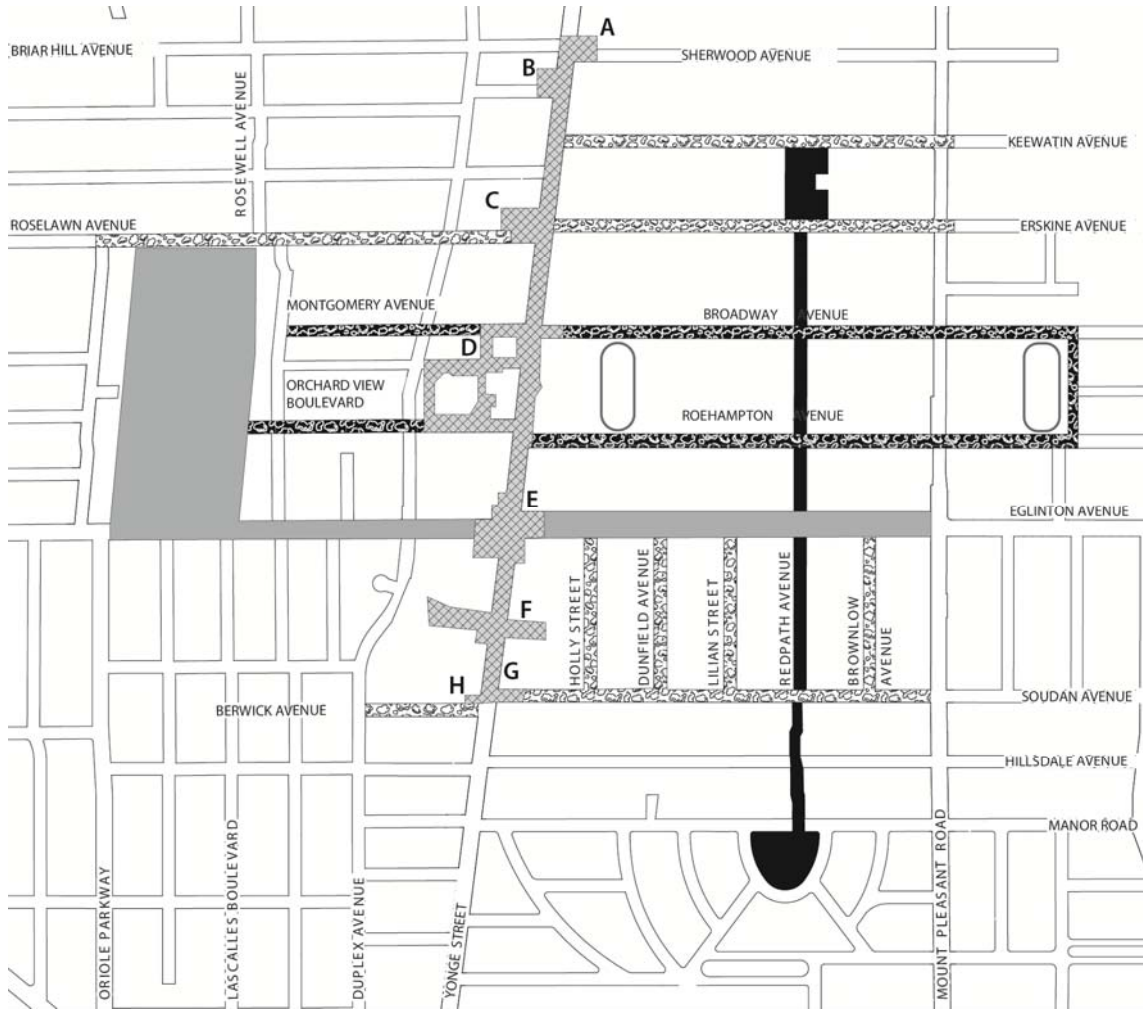
The proposed amendments include a new policy section in the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan (Section 6) introducing a Midtown Character Area, an area consistent with the Midtown in Focus study area, and policies that apply therein.






Section 6 outlines the vision for the public realm in the Midtown Character Area as well as specific objectives to guide City-initiated improvements and development in accordance with this vision.

Specific policies are proposed for each of the Five Place-Making Moves (see the figure on the next page) that identify the vision for these future public spaces and provide direction for their realization.

These policies include:

- Minimum at-grade and above-grade setbacks on the Eglinton Green Line, Park Street Loop, Yonge Street and Midtown Greenways to create landscaped open spaces in keeping with the prevalent character of the neighbourhood, maintain healthy tree canopies and improve pedestrian environments across the area;
- A requirement for underground parking facilities on properties adjacent to the Eglinton Green Line, Park Street Loop and Midtown Greenways to be located and designed in a manner that does not compromise the ability to establish a permanent, high-branching tree canopy;
- Direction for the development of a series of landscaped squares on Yonge Street to be secured through development, street and intersection realignments and City-initiated civic improvements;
- Direction for the use of consistent lighting, paving and street furniture at all squares on Yonge Street to enhance pedestrian amenity and reinforce the interconnected character of the squares; and
- Direction for the improvement of Redpath Avenue as a neighbourhood street linking expanded parks and open space and potentially incorporating shared street elements between Eglinton and Roehampton Avenues.



	Eglinton Green Line	<b>Yonge Street Squares</b>	
	Yonge Street Squares	<b>A</b> Sherwood Square	<b>E</b> Yonge-Eglinton Crossroads
	Park Street Loop	<b>B</b> St. Clemens Square	<b>F</b> Quantum Square
	Greenways	<b>C</b> Erskine Square	<b>G</b> Soudan Square
	Redpath Revisited	<b>D</b> Montgomery Square	<b>H</b> Berczy Square

Following the adoption of the Midtown in Focus Plan, and in the drafting of the proposed amendments, City staff completed additional review of the Plan's recommended setbacks to confirm that the recommended minimum setbacks would maintain viable development opportunities, given lot dimensions at both corner and mid-block locations with or without lot consolidation. The proposed landscaped open space setbacks and other recommended policies to implement the Five Place-Making Moves are consistent with the general intent of the Midtown in Focus Plan and Official Plan policies, and will assist in ensuring future public and private investment contributes to the area's overall parks and open space system.



























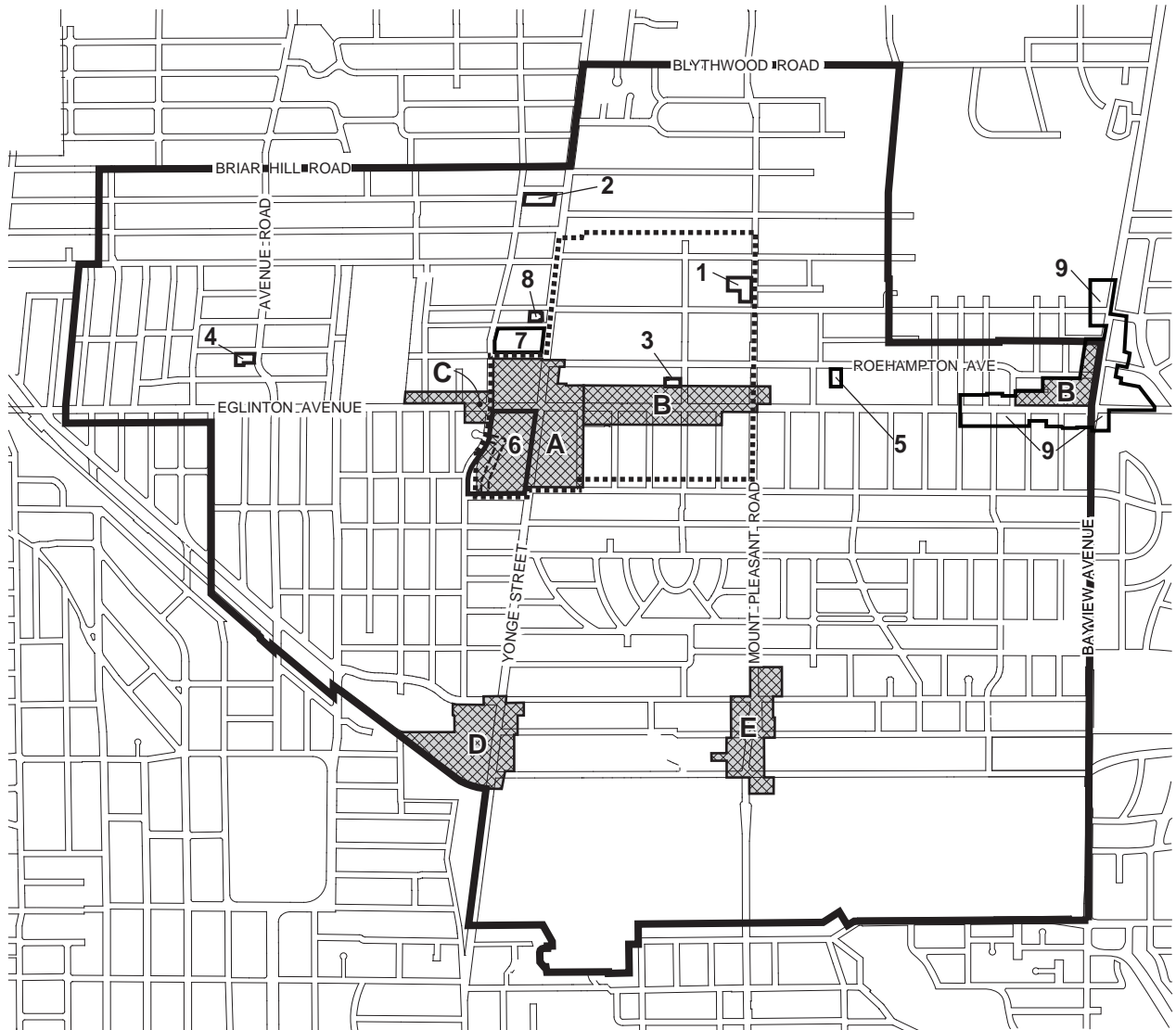

















Not to Scale 



# Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan

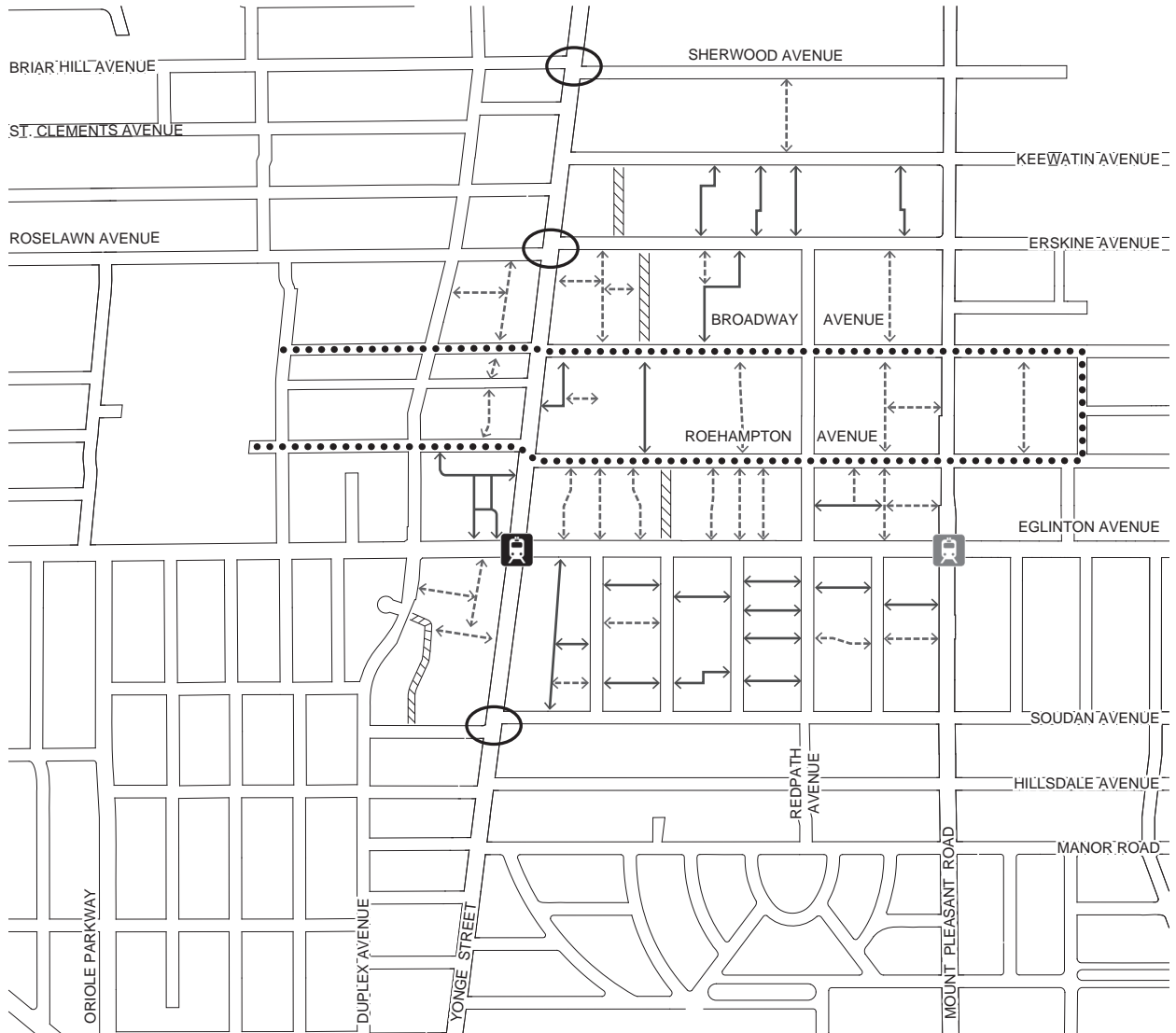
MAP 21-1 Land Use Plan

-  Secondary Plan Boundary
-  Yonge-Eglinton Centre
-  Mixed Use Areas
-  Site and Area Specific Policies
-  Proposed Road












Not to Scale 

## Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan

MAP 21-5 Pedestrian Network Plan for the Midtown Character Area

- Park Street Loop
- Proposed Street Realignment
- ←→ Existing Mid Block Connections
- ←- - - -> Conceptual Future Mid Block Connections
- ////// Conceptual New Street
-  Existing Subway & Future Eglinton Crosstown Station
-  Future Eglinton Crosstown Station
-  Existing Street