



Left: 1892 Map of Toronto & Suburbs with the Yonge & Eglinton intersection identified, Davisville Avenue to the south, Avenue Road to the west and the alignment of Mount Pleasant Road further east (<http://oldtorontomaps.blogspot.ca/2013/01/1892Map-of-Toronto-Showing-BeltLine-Route.html>); right: Yonge & Eglinton intersection, looking north, 1954 (Toronto Public Library, Item 3898).

Historical Overview of the Yonge-Eglinton Area

The properties identified for inclusion on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register in the Midtown in Focus Report - Phase 1: Main Street Properties are located on Yonge Street, Eglinton Avenue East and West, Mount Pleasant Road and Bayview Avenue in North Toronto.¹ After the founding of the Town of York (Toronto) in the late 18th century, the area between present-day Bloor Street and Steeles Avenue was divided into 200-acre farm lots that were organized between concession lines (north/south) and side roads (east/west). The allotments bounded Yonge Street, which was surveyed in 1794 and opened as the main road between York and the northern hinterland, with settlements developing along its route. Davisville (at Yonge and present-day Glebe Road) originated as a small industrial centre with its famed pottery while, further north the hamlet of Eglinton was noted for Montgomery's Tavern, a community gathering place that placed a pivotal role in the Rebellion of 1837. Davisville and Eglinton were separated by the Clergy Reserve (granted to the Church of England) occupying Lot 17 on the east side of Yonge Street. However, the opening of the area to residential development was encouraged by the extension of the street railway on Yonge Street and the merging of Davisville and Eglinton as the Village of North Toronto in 1889. The next year, when North Toronto was incorporated as a Town (with the addition of Bedford Park), its municipal boundaries were extended west to Avenue Road, south to Merton Street, and east to Bayview Avenue. North Toronto was annexed by the City of Toronto in 1912, the same year that the Clergy Reserve between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue was subdivided as the Glebe Manor Estates and Mount Pleasant Road opened. With the emergence of Yonge Street, Eglinton Avenue, Mount Pleasant

¹ The properties on the east side of Bayview Avenue are part of Leaside, the unique planned community that developed in the early 20th century east of North Toronto. However, since Bayview Avenue between Davisville and Eglinton avenues forms the "Main Street" for the neighbouring communities to the west (North Toronto) and east (Leaside), properties on both sides of the thoroughfare are included in this report

Road, and Bayview Avenue as important “Main Streets” in North Toronto, in 1954 the cross-roads of Yonge and Eglinton became the northern terminus of the Yonge Street Subway. The extensions of Eglinton Avenue East and Mount Pleasant Road provided additional connections between the Yonge and Eglinton area and the rest of the city in the 1950s, leading to the development of high-rise buildings for both office and residential uses. Today, the area adjoining Yonge and Eglinton remains a popular mixed-use neighbourhood in Toronto with an extensive collection of heritage properties.

“Main Street” Building Types in the Yonge-Eglinton Area

The buildings identified for inclusion on the Heritage Register in the Midtown in Focus Report – Phase 1: Main Street Properties were assessed according to the typologies identified in the Yonge-Eglinton Cultural Heritage Resource Assessment (1916). They are represented on Yonge Street, Eglinton Avenue East and West, Mount Pleasant Road and Yonge Street, all of which are important "Main Streets" in North Toronto.

Many of the commercial buildings conform to the “Main Street Row” type dating to the period between the First and Second World Wars. Described as two-storey structures with glazed commercial ground floors and residential or commercial uses above, these buildings were often designed in groups and, with their neighbours, form a contiguous streetscape with shared setbacks. With some exceptions, their designs do not reflect traditional architectural styles, but are distinguished by their consistent decorative brickwork or stone accents. Later examples of "Main Street Rows" are linked to the Modern Movement in architecture with clean lines and an absence of decoration.

The “Main Street Block” type is also represented in this Phase 1 report and references more substantial and taller commercial buildings with apartments above, which feature detailing from one of the popular Period Revival and Classical Revival styles of the interwar period. Both building types also appear as corner buildings that provide a transition from commercial thoroughfares to residential side streets, with architectural detailing on both street elevations and, in some cases, chamfered corners where entrances are placed.



Typical "Main Street Row" on both sides of Mount Pleasant Road (left), and typical "Main Street Block" on Yonge Street (right) (City of Toronto Archives, Series 372, Item 2174, 1951, and Heritage Preservation Services, 2017)