

May 2018

# MIDTOWN PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM PLAN 2018



City of Toronto  
Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan

---

# Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Executive Summary                                      | 2         |
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>                                    | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 STUDY AREA   | 7         |
| 1.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT                                  | 9         |
| 1.3 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE                                 | 12        |
| <b>PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM</b>                          | <b>15</b> |
| 2.1 MIDTOWN PUBLIC PARK TYPOLOGIES                     | 16        |
| <b>GUIDING POLICY AND ALIGNED INITIATIVES</b>          | <b>21</b> |
| 3.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY                                  | 21        |
| 3.2 TORONTO'S OFFICIAL PLAN                            | 22        |
| 3.3 2014 PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND STREETScape MASTER PLAN | 22        |
| 3.4 CITY-WIDE PARKLAND STRATEGY                        | 23        |
| 3.5 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN        | 23        |
| <b>MIDTOWN'S PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM</b>                | <b>25</b> |
| 4.1 EVOLUTION OF MIDTOWN                               | 25        |
| 4.2 MIDTOWN'S PUBLIC PARKS                             | 33        |
| 4.3 MIDTOWN'S RAVINES                                  | 37        |
| 4.4 MIDTOWN'S OTHER OPEN SPACES                        | 39        |
| 4.5 MIDTOWN'S STREETS AND CONNECTIONS                  | 43        |
| 4.6 MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS                              | 48        |
| 4.7 CYCLING CONNECTIONS                                | 48        |
| <b>CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES</b>                    | <b>51</b> |
| 5.1 GROWTH IN MIDTOWN                                  | 52        |
| 5.2 GAPS IN THE NETWORK                                | 60        |
| 5.3 RECREATIONAL NEEDS                                 | 63        |
| 5.4 A COMPLEX, MATURE URBAN ENVIRONMENT                | 63        |
| 5.5 A CHANGING CLIMATE                                 | 67        |

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| MIDTOWN'S NEXT EVOLUTION                                 | 69  |
| 6.1 THE ASPIRATIONS                                      | 71  |
| PUBLIC REALM MOVES                                       | 73  |
| 7.1 2014 MIDTOWN PUBLIC REALM MOVES                      | 73  |
| 7.2 DAVISVILLE PUBLIC REALM MOVES                        | 90  |
| A CONNECTED AND VERSATILE NETWORK OF PUBLIC PARKS        | 103 |
| 8.1 PROPOSED PUBLIC PARKS                                | 105 |
| 8.2 MAKING BETTER USE OF MIDTOWN'S EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS | 109 |
| 8.3 CAPITALIZING ON OTHER OPPORTUNITIES                  | 110 |
| MAXIMIZING THE USE OF OTHER OPEN SPACES                  | 113 |
| 9.1 CEMETERIES   | 114 |
| 9.2 PLACES OF WORSHIP                                    | 114 |
| 9.3 SCHOOLS  | 114 |
| 9.4 DEVELOPMENT-RELATED                                  | 115 |
| PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER                                  | 121 |
| MOVING FROM PLAN TO ACTION - IMPLEMENTATION TOOLBOX      | 125 |
| 11.1 PRIORITIZING INITIATIVES                            | 126 |
| 11.2 REALIGNING TOOLS TO MEET TODAY'S REALITIES          | 128 |
| 11.3 GETTING IT DONE                                     | 130 |
| 11.4 MEASURING SUCCESS                                   | 131 |
| Appendices   | 133 |
| APPENDIX 1   | 134 |
| APPENDIX 2   | 136 |



# Executive Summary

The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan sets out a comprehensive vision for parks and the public realm in Midtown and establishes a path to achieving an expanded, connected and improved parks and public realm system within Midtown's mature urban fabric. It presents a shared vision to significantly improve the quality of urban living over the coming decades and ensure that the dual qualities of Midtown – lush and green, and dense and urban – remain central character-defining elements as the area continues to evolve as a thriving, metropolitan district in the heart of Toronto.

The Plan has been developed to support the development and implementation of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan. As part of Toronto's Official Plan, the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan provides a blueprint for growth and infrastructure over the next 25 years. It establishes expectations related to the intensity of development, permitted building types and heights and will set the direction for Midtown as a vibrant and prosperous urban district defined by its collection of diverse neighbourhoods.

Midtown is one of the fastest growing area in the city and has one of the lowest parkland provision rates per capita in Toronto. A key challenge in the area is how to accommodate growth while at the same time proportionally providing a diverse range of high-quality and highly accessible public parks and open spaces. As Midtown continues to intensify, improved and expanded parks and open spaces must be provided to address the needs of an increasing intensity of residents, workers and visitors and ensure that development does not erode Midtown's characteristic green landscaped character.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan examines the need for parkland within the context of Midtown, having consideration for the range of parks and publicly accessible open spaces that exist within the boundaries of the area, estimated population growth, built form directions and the need to expand the public realm. It integrates key provincial policy directions related to achieving complete communities including convenient and equitable access to an appropriate supply of new and expanded parks and open spaces.

The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan serves as the 'Parks Plan' for Midtown, providing a framework to inform decisions about the acquisition of new parks, parks expansions, increased accessibility and improvements to existing parks, the reclamation of city streets as a series of community spaces and creatively capitalizing on the variety of other open spaces scattered throughout Midtown.

The Plan and vision are rooted in Three Core Elements to support Midtown's continued evolution:

- A series of **Public Realm Moves** that create the framework for a transformed public realm;
- A **Connected and Versatile Network of Public Parks** to provide a variety of places for people to play, be active, rest and relax and contribute to an enhanced environment; and
- **Maximizing the use of Other Open Spaces** to supplement Midtown's public parks and reinforce Midtown's open space character.

Priorities and delivery mechanisms for the Plan are outlined in Chapter 11: Moving from Plan to Action. This chapter outlines the various tools the City will need to utilize to realize the vision and elements of this Plan, and the role of private development in delivering specific elements of the Plan.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan has been developed in collaboration with staff in City Planning, Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Transportation Services. It is based on careful examination of the best available information about Midtown's current conditions and trends. The Plan is also informed by extensive consultation with residents and stakeholders who shared their ideas and aspirations for the future of Midtown's parks and the public realm. A comprehensive parkland provision assessment informed the Plan with an analysis of existing and future parkland need based on estimates of population and employment growth.

# CHAPTER

# 1



# INTRODUCTION

---

Toronto's streets, parks and publicly accessible open spaces are among the city's greatest assets and are essential to the quality of life that Torontonians enjoy. Expanding, maintaining and improving these assets must be prioritized for the city to maintain and enhance its character and liveability as Toronto's built environment continues to intensify and as more and more people live, work and visit the city.

In Midtown, existing parks and open spaces are exceptional and beloved spaces, from its historic, picturesque cemeteries to its well-used larger parks and recreation grounds dating from the early and mid- 20th Century that draw people from across the city. These spaces bring people together, create social bonds and set the stage for civic life. The activities that occur in these spaces are fundamental to the identity and liveability of Midtown. They provide places for celebration, recreation, relaxation, mobility and experiencing nature in the city. There are, however, many parks, streets and open spaces in the area that are also in need of attention. As Midtown continues to evolve, there is an opportunity for these spaces to be rethought, reimagined and redesigned to better serve this fast-growing city district, while at the same time better contributing to placemaking in Midtown.

Toronto's Official Plan identifies that the parks and open space system will need to expand as the city grows and changes. It highlights that ongoing reinvestment in Toronto's parks and open space system is also required to support a high quality of life in Toronto. Midtown's population has grown by over 17 per cent over the last 20 plus years, while the city as a whole has only grown by 9 per cent. Midtown's population boom has been accommodated primarily in the form of intense high-rise tower development and infill activity. If left unchecked, this form of development will erode Midtown's characteristic lush and green character. This growth is also generating unanticipated demand for new

parkland that the City has not been able to meet. As Midtown continues to intensify, improved and expanded parks and other open spaces must be provided to address the needs of an increasing intensity of residents, workers and visitors.

A key challenge in Midtown is how to accommodate the anticipated growth while at the same time proportionally providing a diverse range of high-quality and highly accessible public parks and other open spaces. The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan examines the need for parkland within the context of Midtown, having consideration for the range of parks and public open spaces that exist within the boundaries of the area, estimated population growth, built form directions, expansion of the public realm, specific facility and programming needs and the geographic distribution of park space. It outlines the value of parks and the public realm, examines existing conditions, and addresses future challenges and opportunities. The Parks and Public Realm Plan sets out a comprehensive vision for parks and the public realm in Midtown and establishes a path to achieving an expanded, connected and improved parks and public realm system within Midtown's mature urban fabric to significantly improve the quality of urban living over the coming decades.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan emphasizes the need for new and expanded public parks, increased accessibility and improvements to existing parks, the reclamation of city streets as a series of great urban and community spaces and creatively capitalizing on the variety of other open spaces scattered throughout Midtown. It sets out locations for expansion and improvements to Midtown's public parks, both big and small, and addresses the need to better utilize existing parks and open spaces. It provides a tailored vision

for Midtown premised on achieving Three Core Elements:

- A Series of Public Realm Moves;
- A Connected and Versatile Network of Public Parks; and
- Maximising the Use of Other Open Spaces.

Toronto has, and is advancing, a number of city-wide strategies related to parkland and recreational facilities, most notably the city-wide Parkland Strategy which is currently under development, and the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (FMP), which was approved by City Council in the fall of 2017. The vision and elements identified in the Parks and Public Realm Plan are aligned with the key objectives emerging through the city-wide Parkland Strategy. Further, the recreational needs identified in the FMP have been accounted for and built upon. The Parks and Public Realm Plan recognizes that there are both local and city-wide recreational facilities that will need to be located in Midtown. Some of these facilities may be located within existing parks or capitalize on recreational facilities owned and operated by the local school boards. Others will require the acquisition of new parkland and expanding existing parkland.

The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan has been developed to support the development and implementation of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan. The Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan, as part of Toronto's Official Plan, will provide a blueprint for growth and infrastructure in Midtown over the next 25 years. It will be a comprehensive Plan designed to ensure that Midtown, at its foundation, is a complete community. The Secondary Plan will address, among others, Midtown's urban structure

and set out expectations related to the intensity of development, permitted building types and heights. It will set the direction for Midtown as a vibrant and prosperous urban district defined by its collection of diverse neighbourhoods.

The development of the Parks and Public Realm Plan has also considered provincial policy directions related to achieving complete communities. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) includes parks as among the elements of achieving complete communities. The Provincial Policy Statement (2014) (PPS) requires planning for public streets and spaces to meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity. The PPS calls on municipalities to plan for a full range and equitable distribution of built and natural settings for recreation. This includes public parkland, public spaces, open space areas and trails and linkages, all of which are addressed in this Plan.

The implementation of this Plan will involve broadening traditional approaches to providing new and improved parks and open spaces. Partnerships with a range of stakeholders within the City, other orders of government, public agencies and the private sector will be needed. Additionally, implementation of the Parks and Public Realm Plan requires recalibrating and refreshing the City's planning and financial toolkit. Key tools that will be used to implement the Plan include:

- Parkland dedication as a condition of development approvals;
- Development Charges;
- Securing community benefits in exchange for increases in height and density under Section 37 of the *Planning Act*;

- Site Plan Control;
- Parkland acquisitions; and
- Partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders.

The Plan will be used to:

- Provide an overarching framework to inform and guide decision-making and investment decisions related to acquiring, enhancing and expanding parks in Midtown, and improving connections to these spaces by re-imagining the role and function of some of Midtown's streets;
- Identify the toolbox, priorities and actions needed to make this Plan happen;
- Inform the policy directions of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan, specifically related to priorities for an inter-connected network of public parks, open spaces, streets, pedestrian connections, trails and other recreational facilities and how this network will be achieved; and
- Guide the implementation of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan and inform the review of development applications in the area.

Staff in Parks, Forestry and Recreation, Transportation Services and City Planning were involved in the development of this Plan. In accordance with the Ontario *Planning Act*, the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board were consulted on the Plan.

## 1.1 STUDY AREA

---

Midtown is located in the heart of Toronto at the crossroads of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue – two significant streets that bisect the city north-

south and east-west, respectively. It is a complex, built-up environment that has undergone waves of generational development. It has stable, low-rise residential areas, historic main streets, apartment neighbourhoods, and office/institutional nodes that were developed in the 1960s and 80s. The area has been experiencing considerable intensification over the last 10 to 15 years.

The study area used for the development of this Plan consists of the existing Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan area. The Secondary Plan area is a 600 hectare area and one of the largest Secondary Plan areas in the city. The Secondary Plan area is generally bounded by Briar Hill Avenue and Blythwood Road to the north, Mount Pleasant Cemetery to the south, Bayview Avenue to the

east, and Chaplin Crescent and Latimer Avenue to the west (Figure 1). In addition, parks and open spaces adjacent, or in close proximity, to the existing Secondary Plan area have also been considered.

The Yonge-Eglinton Centre, one of five Urban Growth Centres identified in the City of Toronto's Official Plan and an Urban Growth Centre in the Province of Ontario's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, is located at the centre of the Secondary Plan area. The Yonge-Eglinton Centre is generally bounded by Erskine Avenue to the north, Soudan Avenue to the south, Mount Pleasant Road to the east and Duplex Avenue and Yonge Street to the west.

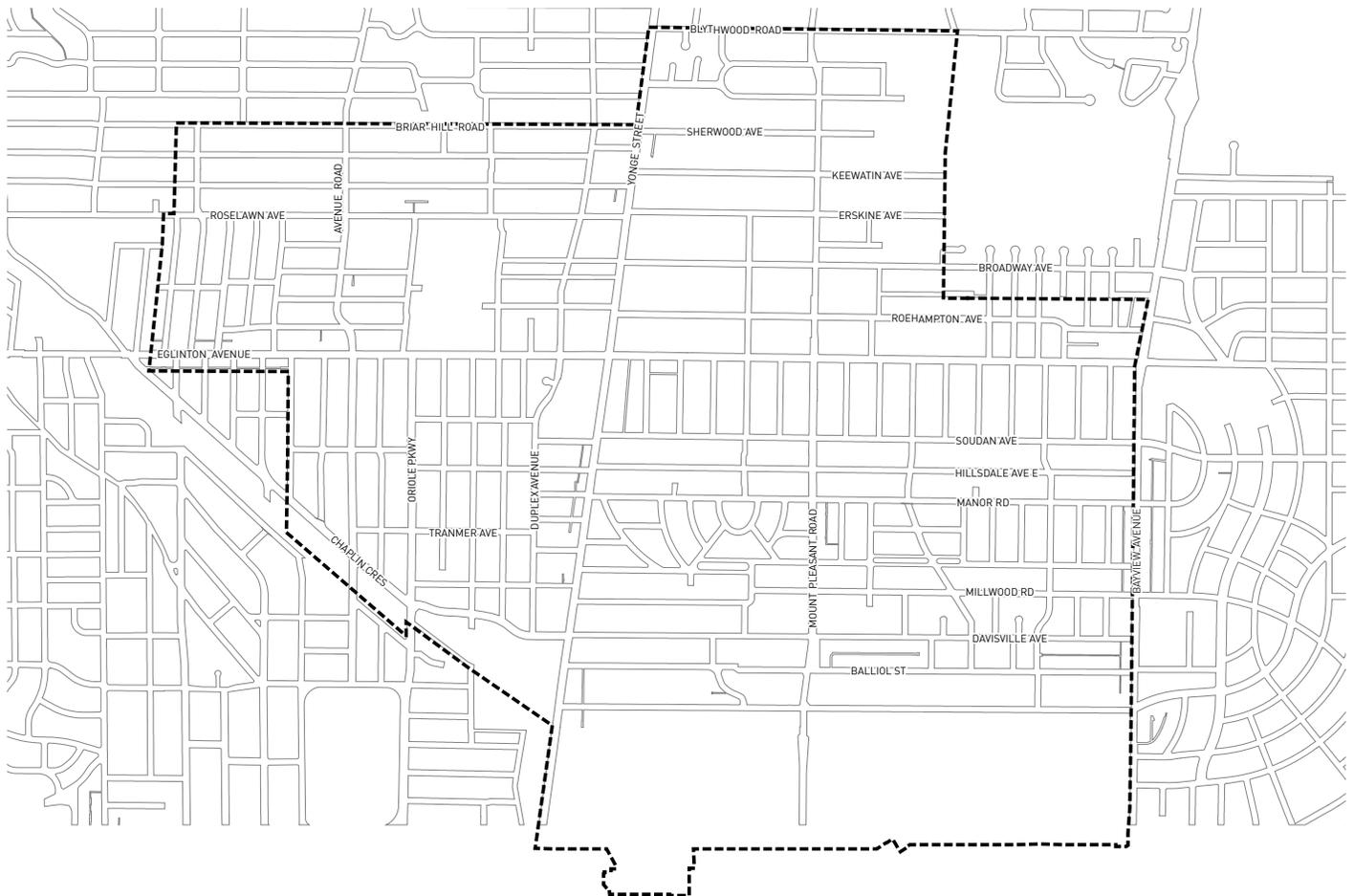


Figure 1: Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan Area

## 1.2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

---

Public engagement on parks and the public realm in Midtown has been ongoing for several years, beginning in 2012 with the development of the Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan (2014). A variety of consultation activities have provided opportunities for people to provide feedback and input into the development of this Plan.

The Council-adopted Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan included extensive public engagement including community walks, public meetings, stakeholder meetings and digital media outreach. In November 2016, following interest from the community to examine parks and public realm improvements in the Davisville area, City staff hosted a public workshop and walking tours of the area – or Walkshop – for residents to identify key assets and areas for improvement. 10,000 postcards were distributed to area residents and property owners in the area advertising the Walkshop. Approximately 75 people attended the event, including the Toronto District School Board, with the ideas generated laying the ground work for the development of a public realm vision for the Davisville area.

Additional public consultation activities hosted as part of the Midtown in Focus: Growth, Built Form and Infrastructure Review (2015-2018) have included three public open houses, nine Planners in Public Spaces (PiPS) events, eight Midtown Planning Group meetings, an online interactive mapping tool for residents to identify their local priorities and an online survey to gather public feedback on the proposed Secondary Plan. While these public engagement activities addressed a wide range of matters related to the review of the Yonge-Eglinton

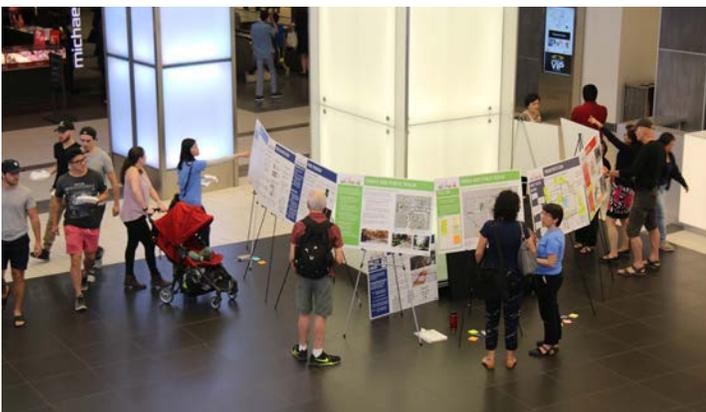
Secondary Plan, parks and the public realm were the focus of a number of the community meetings and workshops.

The draft Parks and Public Realm Plan and policy directions for parks and the public realm were presented for feedback in January 2018 to the Midtown Planning Group. These were also presented at the February 10, 2018 Open House, that included two parks and public realm-specific workshops. City staff also met with the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic School Board on March 29, 2018.

The feedback received from various public engagement events and consultation with the local school boards has informed and shaped the development of the Parks and Public Realm Plan. Key themes that emerged through these public engagement activities included:

- The Tower in the Park landscapes are a key defining feature of the area and provide important landscaped open space, which needs to be protected;
- The tree canopy has eroded over time. New shade trees need to be planted to bring balance to the dense urban environment;
- With the existing deficiency of park space, new and expanded parks are needed to keep pace with development and population growth;
- New parks that are being secured are often very small and have limited functionality. There needs to be new larger parks that serve multiple functions over time;
- A number of existing parks need improvements and additional amenities to better serve the community;

- Eglinton Park needs to be reviewed to ensure that permitting of the sports fields does not limit local community access to important greenspace;
- Open spaces other than public parks (e.g., school yards and playfields, religious institutions) should be examined for partnership opportunities to serve the community;
- There is a need for another dog off-leash area in the Secondary Plan area;
- Many streets in the area provide little pedestrian amenity. Sidewalks are often narrow and are becoming more constrained given the increasing volume of pedestrians;
- Narrow sidewalks and crossing designs at some of the main intersections are inadequate and dangerous from a pedestrian perspective (e.g., Yonge Street and Davisville Avenue, Mount Pleasant Road and Merton Street);
- Streets need to be destinations in addition to moving people. Public realm improvements and amenities (benches, pedestrian scale lighting, street trees) are needed to create a connected green network of parks and open spaces;
- Many streets, like Davisville Avenue are designed to move vehicles. Wide travel lanes and narrow sidewalks create a hostile condition. These streets need to be reconsidered in regards to how they can be designed to safely accommodate multiple modes, particularly streets that connect community destinations like parks, schools, and transit;
- There is a need for more safe pedestrian crossings, especially near schools;
- Blocks in much of the Secondary Plan area are large. They limit connectivity within and between neighbourhoods and reduce the number of safe and direct routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Parks and other local destinations are often located within the large blocks which limits their accessibility;
- Existing midblock connections and laneways are well-used but some need improvements (i.e., better lighting). Additional midblock connections are needed to encourage people to use active modes for local trips and will provide additional opportunities to expand the green network;
- Aside from parks, there are few other public spaces, like squares, in which to gather - for exchange, for respite, for local commerce and people watching;
- New Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces (POPS) need to be secured through redevelopment to expand the public realm. Existing POPS need to be improved to clearly identify them as publicly accessible;
- There are no direct, safe and separated cycling facilities in Midtown. There are only signed routes which do little to encourage people to cycle;
- Cycling facilities are needed to connect people to Downtown;
- Connections to the ravine system are important to maintain access to naturalized areas and to provide connections to other areas of the city;
- The Beltline Trail is a special place and green connector in the area. Additional and improved access from Merton Street would be welcome;
- Mount Pleasant Parkette is not well-designed for public use (i.e., no curb cuts, limited seating and amenities). The space needs to be rethought so it is not just a median, as it is now;



Photos from Public Consultation Events (2012-2018)

- June Rowlands Park is a much-loved space in the Davisville area offering a variety of uses (permitted and informal) and facilities and has a good balance of natural and built/programmed spaces;
- The sculpture garden on Balliol Street is a great example of a landscaped courtyard space for seating;
- Decking over the subway tracks to provide additional space for a park, public realm improvements, and off-street bike lanes has mixed support from the community. Cost and feasibility are noted as the important factors to consider and some wonder if funds are better spent elsewhere;
- Additional/expanded park land acquisition tools are of interest. Changes to the parkland dedication rate to address parkland deficiencies are welcome; and
- Midtown needs a destination and signature park space.

Highlights of the feedback received from the Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board included:

- All of the schools in Midtown are over capacity and many school yards in the area lack adequate green space, particularly considering the limited capacity and continued growth in the area;
- Neither School Board has surplus land in Midtown that may be considered for park uses;
- Public access to school yards after hours is determined by each school. Many playfields are permitted out to sports organizations;

- The School Boards support working in partnership with the City to ensure the provision of recreational and landscaped open space on existing, reconfigured or redeveloped School Properties including through development of shared-use open spaces and recreation facilities; and
- Where school yards are located adjacent to proposed parks in the Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan, the School Boards are supportive of taking a collaborative approach with the City to planning new or expanded schools, school yards and new City parks.

## 1.3 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan is organized as follows:

**Section 2: Parks and Public Realm** outlines the role and importance of public parks and the public realm. This section also summarizes guiding policy directions and aligned initiatives that have informed the development of this Plan.

**Section 3: Guiding Policy and Aligned Initiatives** summarizes provincial and municipal policy documents and other City initiatives that have been taken into consideration during the development of this Plan.

**Section 4: Midtown's Parks and Public Realm** summarizes the existing parks and open space system in Midtown. It looks at the historical development of parks and public realm in this

area of the city, and the resultant parks and open spaces that people living and working in Midtown have access to today.

**Section 5: Challenges and Opportunities** examines the opportunities and challenges facing Midtown that provide starting points to guide Midtown's next evolution. It examines the need for public parkland, using an updated method for measuring parkland provision.

**Section 6: Midtown's Next Evolution** presents the vision and aspirations for parks and the public realm in Midtown.

**Section 7: Public Realm Moves** presents and summarizes the original five Public Realm Moves from the 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan and the new moves identified for the Yonge-Davisville area.

**Section 8: A Connected and Versatile Network of Public Parks** identifies the optimal locations for future park acquisitions, expansions and improvements. It presents locations where the public park system can be complemented by access to other publicly managed lands and where public realm connections should be provided to improve pedestrian access to parks in Midtown.

**Section 9: Maximizing the Use of Other Open Spaces** identifies the role of other open spaces in Midtown in recognition of the important contributions these spaces make in supplementing public parkland.

**Section 10: Pulling It All Together** summarizes the Three Core Elements of this Plan – the Parks and Open Space Network Plan, the Public Realm Moves and Maximizing the Use of Other Open Spaces. An overall illustrative plan summarizes key recommendations from Sections 5 to 7.

**Section 11: Moving from Plan to Action – Implementation Toolbox** outlines the various tools the City will need to utilize to realize the vision and elements of this Plan, and the role of private development in delivering specific elements of the Parks and Public Realm Plan.

# CHAPTER

# 2



# PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM

---

In the most memorable neighbourhoods and cities, the quality and experience of a place is directly tied to its identity. Cities are expanding their focus beyond the design of buildings in recognition of this. There is now much more emphasis being placed on the space between buildings – the public realm – and how buildings frame this space. Toronto has many exceptional qualities and continues to be identified as one of the most liveable cities in the world. Toronto’s public realm, consisting of all areas to which the public has access such as its streets, laneways, public parks and other open spaces, plays a pivotal role in contributing to this liveability. Our streets and public parks are our largest civic assets and define the image of our city.

## Public Parks

Public parks are publicly owned land that is set aside for the enjoyment and use by people who live, work and visit a city. They have multiple roles, and are more than just green spaces between a city’s hard concrete edges and its buildings. They are treasured parts of our city’s heritage. They have had intrinsic value in shaping the urban landscape, and will continue to do so well into the future.

Public parks are an extension of the home, which is increasingly important in dense, urban settings like Midtown. They come in all shapes and sizes, from large, signature open spaces to small pocket parks, squares, hardscaped plazas, gardens and promenades. People gather, socialize, celebrate and play in parks. They are used for cultural and community events that bring life and enjoyment to the city. In recent years, public parks have also increasingly become a magnet for families and pet owners, providing space for children and our four-legged animal companions to run and play. Parks also boost tourism by acting as destinations that attract visitors. They have a positive impact on the perception of a city to the outside world, and contribute to our economic competitiveness.

Public parks have been linked to positive mental health outcomes including stress reduction. They improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages by providing space for people to rest, relax, contemplate life and be active. They offer a diversity of recreational programming, from passive activities to sports and other types of physical recreation. They also offer a respite and reprieve from the hustle and bustle of city living, and allow people to have contact with nature and with one another.

Public parks also beautify the urban landscape and strengthen the environment. They support biodiversity by providing habitat and food for wildlife, and are a key component of a city's green infrastructure. They contribute to a healthy and robust tree canopy, absorb stormwater, clean the air and reduce the urban heat island effect.

## Streets

Streets traditionally functioned as meeting place, marketplace and movement space. The functions of streets dramatically changed in mid 1900s, when streets were largely given over to the personal automobile. Recently, there has been a paradigm shift and resurgence about the role that streets play in cities. They are once again being recognized as important civic spaces that can offer placemaking with high-quality design and provide multiple options for citizens to move around the city.

Streets throughout the world are being redesigned with emphasis being placed on walking, cycling and public transit. Streets that balance competing interests and improve accessibility to destinations work to create a cohesive, connected parks and open space system. The historic nature of Toronto's street grid and the built-up environment of

Midtown restricts the availability of space needed to accommodate all these activities. Creativity is needed in rethinking and rebalancing streets such that they move people, not just cars, and ensuring they provide welcoming and safe connections to and from our public parks and other open spaces.

## Other Open Spaces

A city's park system is bolstered by the other open spaces that dot the urban landscape – both public and privately-owned. These spaces do not replace the need for public parks. They complement and supplement a city's system of public parks, providing additional recreational opportunities where public use of these spaces is permitted. There is untapped potential in Midtown's churchyards, school yards, cemeteries, privately-owned open spaces and other overlooked places that can be harnessed to contribute to a vibrant public realm.

# 2.1 MIDTOWN PUBLIC PARK TYPOLOGIES

---

## 2.1.1 FUNCTION AND CHARACTER

Toronto's system of public parks offers a diverse range of experiences and opportunities for people across the city. While each park's function and character may be different, collectively they support the needs of Torontonians and are synonymous with Toronto's identity as a green, liveable and lively city.



Nature Park



Destination Park



Active Park



Local Park



Square/Plaza



Linear Park

## Nature Parks

Nature parks are natural or re-naturalized spaces that balance significant area preservation and enhancement with low-impact public access and use, such as walking trails, relaxing and unwinding, bird-watching and wildlife viewing.

## Destination Parks

Destination parks are significant visitor and tourist attractions either because of their historical context or the high standard of design and activity available in the park. They draw people from across the city and beyond. They contribute to a city's specific brand and can help to shape a city's international image.

## Active Parks

Active parks are parks that primarily host sports and recreation facilities, such as baseball diamonds, soccer fields or cricket pitches. They may also include indoor recreational uses like skating rinks, running tracks and swimming pools. These parks provide opportunities for organized sports to occur, as well as informal play when not actively used for sporting activities.

## Local Parks

Local parks are focal points within a community and provide dedicated spaces for people to relax, socialise and play. They offer locally-oriented active and passive recreational opportunities within close walking distance to where people live and work.

## Squares and Plazas

Squares and plazas are largely hardscaped gathering places. They are places which help to establish connections and linkages, where people can move through, visit and congregate. They also provide great canvasses for public art, further

helping to shape the identity and character of a place. Large squares and plazas, such as Nathan Philips Square, provide important spaces for events and festivals. Small squares and plazas, like the recently reimagined Berczy Park, provide places to sit in the sun, pass through and gather in small numbers.

## Linear Parks

Linear parks are typically narrow, vegetated green corridors that feature trails, floral displays or naturalized vegetation and connect a series of places and destinations. They may be located in association with key streets, such as University Avenue's centre median, or along former and active utility corridors such as Kay Gardner Belt Line Park.

### 2.1.2 Size

The size of a park matters and contributes to defining its role and purpose within an area or a city's overall system of public parks, and can influence how people access parks (Table 1). Within Toronto, there is a spectrum of park sizes from the smallest parks, our parkettes, to our largest, legacy parks that are a product of historical acquisitions or donations, or the city's natural heritage and topography.

Parkettes (less than 0.5 hectares) have limited opportunities for a range of parks programming. They are often only capable of accommodating one feature or amenity and a limited amount of passive space for use by nearby residents and workers. Nonetheless, they are important components of the overall network of parks and open spaces. They can provide momentary reprieves from dense, urban living, space for landscaping and trees and contribute to the character of an area.

Small parks are parks that range in size from 0.5 to 1.5 hectares. Parks of this size, shaped to maximize utility, will become increasingly important as the city continues to mature and intensify. They are versatile and are capable of providing a range of parks programming. They can provide places to sit and relax, small playgrounds, multi-purpose space for being active with one another or hosting community events, and can also offer more distinct parks programming. They are also more easily achievable than larger parks in a built-up environment like Toronto where land availability is scarce.

Medium-sized parks (1.5 to 3.0 hectares) can offer even more park programming with the ability to serve multiple neighbourhoods. They are capable of supporting both a wide range of parks and indoor and outdoor recreational programming, but also recreational uses that are land intensive, such as regulation-sized sports fields that can be permitted out for league play.

Large parks (3.0 to 12.0 hectares) or our city’s legacy parks (greater than 12.0 hectares) can be a world unto themselves given their sheer size and scale. People can get away or escape from the city in these parks without actually having to leave the city. By virtue of their size, they are capable of being high-performing, multi-functional parks, accommodating the most programming or providing the most environmental benefit to a city. High Park, for example, is by and large a natural park and an integral link in the city’s natural heritage system, given its historical design and location at the mouth of the Humber River. However, because of its sheer size at over 160 hectares it is also capable of hosting a diverse array of parks programming from playgrounds to sports fields.

Table One: Park Size and Distance to Travel

|          | Size (ha)          | Catchment Area (Distance to Travel)         |
|----------|--------------------|---|
| Parkette | Less than 0.5      | 0.5 km (less than a 10 min walk)            |
| Small    | Between 0.5 to 1.5 | 0.8 km (10-15 min walk)                     |
| Medium   | Between 1.5 to 3   | 1.5 km (20-30 min walk)                     |
| Large    | Between 3 to 12    | 3 km (45 min walk or accessible by transit) |
| Legacy   | Greater than 12    | Varies                                      |

# CHAPTER

# 3



# GUIDING POLICY AND ALIGNED INITIATIVES

---

The development of the Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan has been informed by provincial and local policy, and a number of aligned corporate initiatives.

## 3.1 PROVINCIAL POLICY

---

The Province sets out the overarching policy direction to guide land use planning decisions through the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017). These documents recognize the importance of planning for public parks and the public realm. They set the expectation that municipalities will align planning for new parkland with the approval of new development. They explicitly recognize that providing convenient access to an appropriate supply of new and expanded parks and open spaces will support the achievement of complete communities. The policy documents note that:

- Parks and the public realm are integral elements of an active transportation network and, the provision of green infrastructure;
- A full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation is needed; and
- The provision of parks and public realm contribute to energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## 3.2 TORONTO'S OFFICIAL PLAN

---

Official Plans are long-term visions for how a city should grow and are the most important vehicles for implementing provincial policies and plans. The City's Official Plan recognizes that Toronto's waterfront, ravines, watercourses, parks and other open spaces connect to form an extensive network of green space across the City, and that our parks and open space system will need to be protected, renewed and expanded as the city grows and changes. It highlights that, much like Toronto's streets and sewers, ongoing reinvestment in Toronto's parks and open space system is as important to city-building as creating new parks and open spaces. It directs that:

- New parks and amenities, particularly in growth areas, will be added, in addition to improving and expanding existing parks;
- Parks need to be designed to be of a high quality and provide a variety of amenities to promote user comfort, safety, accessibility and year-round use and to enhance the experience of "place";
- Access to existing publicly accessible open spaces will be protected and expanded; and
- The use of private open space and recreation facilities, including areas suitable for community or allotment gardening, to supplement the City's parks, facilities and amenities be promoted.

The Official Plan also recognizes that the public realm is a defining component of great cities, and the characteristics and qualities that makes cities great places to visit, also makes them great places to live.

## 3.3 2014 PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND STREETScape MASTER PLAN

---

In late 2012, City staff, in consultation with Midtown Planning Group, initiated a public realm plan for areas around the Yonge-Eglinton Centre that were experiencing high levels of growth. The purpose was to guide future redevelopment and civic/capital improvements and provide an overall vision for the public realm in the area.

The process included research, analysis and extensive public consultation, and resulted in the Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan. The Master Plan, adopted by Council in 2014, recognized Midtown's distinct identity as a vibrant community with an open and green landscaped character and focused on the public realm as a fundamental contributor to quality of life in Midtown. It identified a number of goals, strategies and initiatives as well as Five Public Realm Moves that formed a framework for creating an integrated network of parks, open spaces and streetscapes within the Yonge-Eglinton area.

As part of the implementation of the Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan, City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 289 in 2015 which amended the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan to include an enhanced policy framework for parks and the public realm in and around Yonge-Eglinton Centre.

## 3.4 CITY-WIDE PARKLAND STRATEGY

In 2017, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation division launched the city-wide Parkland Strategy. The Strategy will be a 20-year plan that will guide planning of the city's park system – including new parks, expansions, improvements and enhanced access to existing parks. It will support decision-making and prioritization of investment in parkland across Toronto. This Plan is building on four emerging principles developed through this Strategy. They include:

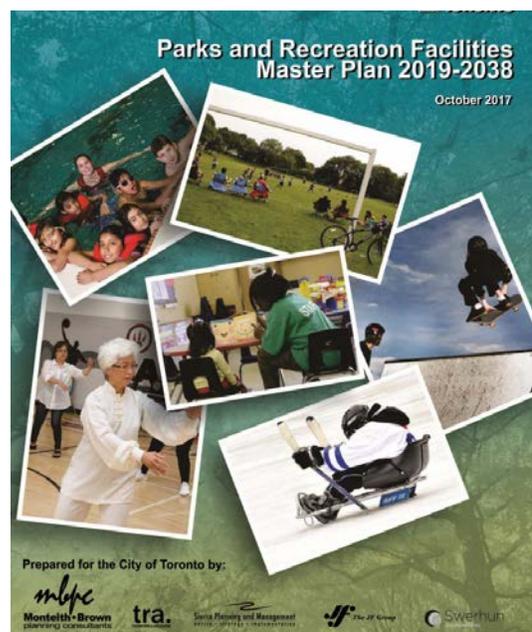
- **Expand** new parkland to support growth and address gaps to create a flexible, adaptable parkland system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city;
- **Improve** access and function of the existing parkland system to promote health and wellbeing through active living, access to nature and the provision of appropriate spaces for rest, relaxation and leisure;
- **Connect** parks and open spaces, physically and visually so that people, communities and wildlife can navigate throughout the parkland system; and
- **Share** the parkland system by removing barriers so that parks and open spaces are inclusive and equitably accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities and income levels.

In addition to the four principles identified above, an updated methodology for assessing the provision of parkland in the city has been developed through the Parkland Strategy. This methodology is based on the total park area

accessible within a 500 metre walking distance, and reflects the intensity of the residential user population using these parks within that catchment area. This methodology has been used in Midtown to assess and analyze parkland provision.

## 3.5 PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation finalized the 20-year Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in 2017. This Plan will guide investment in parks and recreation facilities such as community recreation centres, ice rinks, and sports fields. In developing the Plan, consideration was given to demographics, the use and conditions of current facilities, recreation and leisure trends, facility best practices, and legislative changes together with public, stakeholder and staff input. It considered population growth in Midtown and the rest of the city based on the projected development pipeline available at the time of developing the Master Plan.



# CHAPTER

# 4



# MIDTOWN'S PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM

---

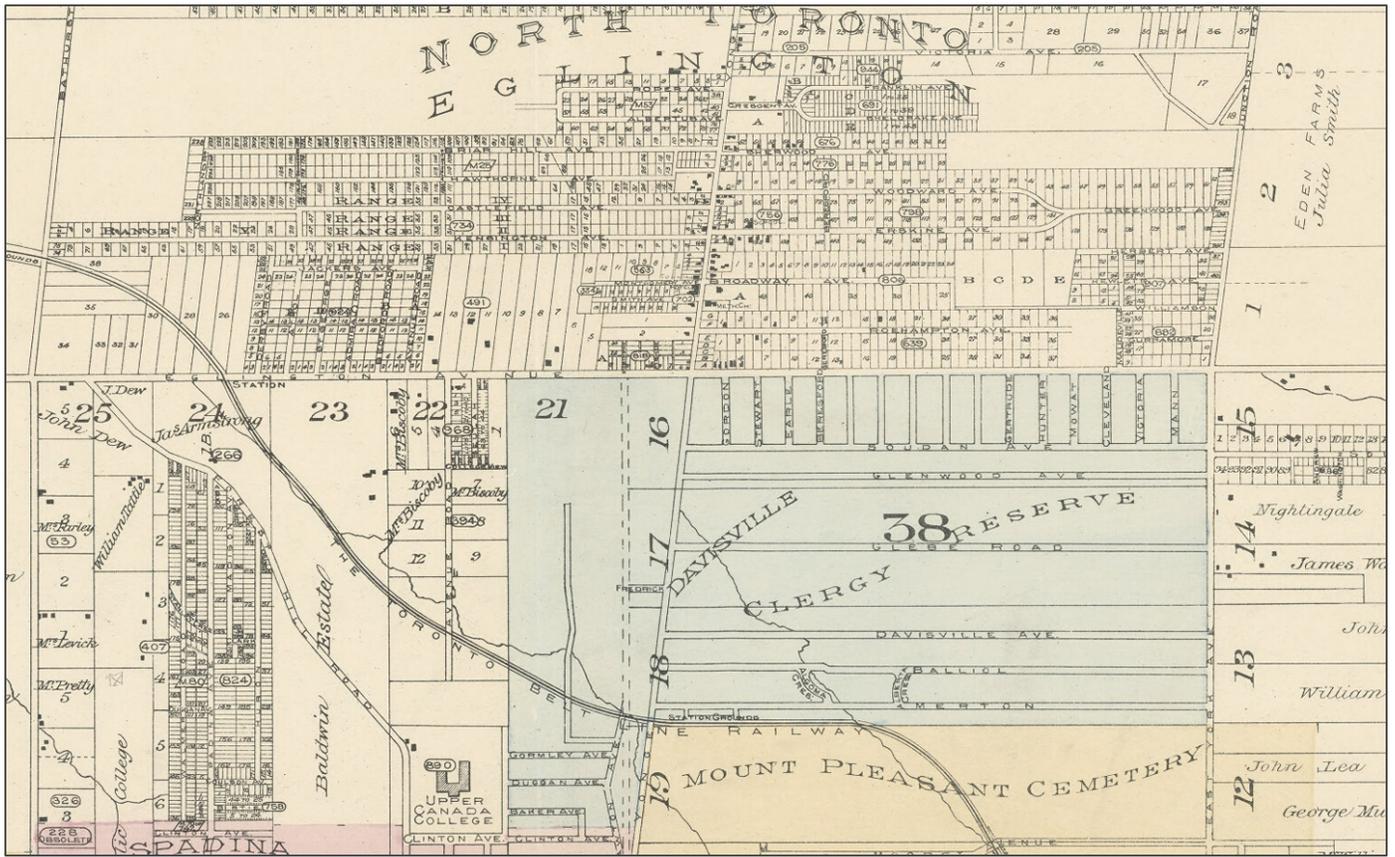
The development of existing parkland in Midtown has been informed by different eras of planning and a variety of approaches for acquiring and providing parkland. Historically, parkland in the area was often acquired, developed and expanded over time. While many of Midtown's parks emerged through the redevelopment of greenfield or brownfield lands, Midtown is now a complex, built-up urban environment with unique challenges for acquiring and expanding parkland. New approaches to acquire, expand and connect parkland in the area are needed to ensure the area remains a complete, liveable community.

## 4.1 EVOLUTION OF MIDTOWN

---

### Pre-1900s

During the 19th century, Midtown was comprised of two early settlements, Davisville and Eglinton, and largely had a rural and agricultural character. The two settlements were separated by an 80 hectare Clergy Reserve held by the Anglican Church. The first north-south concession road in the area was Yonge Street, which was laid out and constructed earlier in 1794 to connect Toronto's harbour to Newmarket and Georgian Bay. In the Yonge-Eglinton area, five rectangular farm lots were laid out in an east-west orientation between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue and between St Clair Avenue and Eglinton Avenue.



Map showing settlements of Davisville and Eglinton, 1890



Photo of Mount Pleasant Cemetery, 1900

The farm lot belonging to Mary Ann White was purchased in 1873 by the Toronto Cemetery Trustees to become Mount Pleasant Cemetery, which would serve all citizens regardless of denomination. The cemetery was laid out in 1874 by H. Engelhardt, a notable landscape architect, in a picturesque manner with gently curving carriage roads and plantings of native trees and exotic specimens. The curved roads followed the area's topography and included ponds and streams.

In 1860, John Davis, the first postmaster of the Village of Davisville and a pottery maker, donated land for a local school east of Yonge Street on what would become Davisville Avenue. Initially a two room school house, the Davisville School and school site expanded over the next 50 years with the addition of 10 classrooms and a kindergarten. The school remained on this site until it was demolished and replaced in 1962.

The first new streets and development lots in the Davisville area emerged in the 1870s, starting with Davisville Avenue between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. Merton Street and Balliol Street soon followed after 1880. All three were laid out as 1.5 kilometre long streets. Only a small north south street near the current Pailton Crescent linked Balliol Street and Merton Street. These blocks were subsequently divided for market garden lots and large suburban houses.

North Toronto Town Hall was built in 1884 at the north-west corner of Yonge Street and Montgomery Avenue. Much of the area's development and population was located along Yonge Street and the surrounding cross-streets. In addition to being a local destination, Yonge Street was already a key connection to downtown Toronto for the greater area, including settlements to the north. Congestion

on Yonge Street necessitated the development of parallel streets - including Duplex Avenue and Oriole Road (now Oriole Parkway) - as alternatives for moving people. In 1889, the Village of North Toronto was incorporated by merging Davisville and Eglinton.

The Beltline Rail was established in 1892, stretching west from the Don Valley and crossing the eastern half of Mount Pleasant Cemetery. It was laid out north of Mount Pleasant Cemetery on 20 metres of land taken from properties on the south side of Merton Street. It crossed over Yonge Street on a large truss bridge at the northern edge of Mount Pleasant Cemetery and continued northwest. Though unsuccessful as commuter rail, it remained open for cargo until the 1950s. This new access to rail shipment changed the character of Merton Street, in particular the south side of the street which shifted from residential to industrial and commercial uses, including pottery manufacturing, warehouses, coal storage and lumber yards.

### 1900-1920s

In 1912, the Village of North Toronto was annexed by the City of Toronto, bringing a number of infrastructure improvements to the area, including paved roads. The infrastructure improvements in the area led to the development of a number of planned subdivisions.

The Town of Leaside was laid out as a planned community in 1912 by the landscape architect Frederick Gage Todd who had been hired by the York Land Company, the development arm of Canadian Northern Railway. Todd's plan included a few very small parks but over time they were eliminated. The Town subsequently purchased lots over time to create parks in the area.

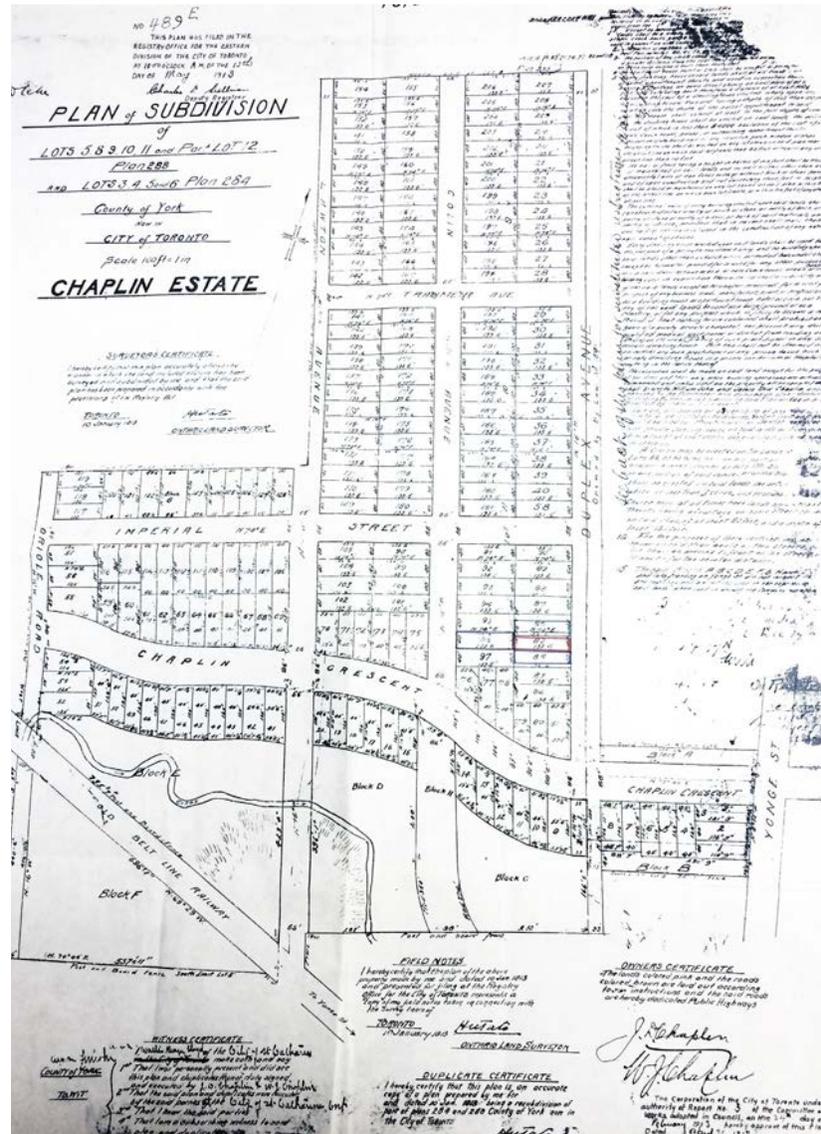


**Davisville Post Office, 1909**

Around 1913, both the Glebe Manor Estates and Chaplin Estates had formal plans in place. The Glebe Manor Estates Plan featured three linear boulevard parks laid out along Belsize Avenue, meant to provide a spacious and green quality to the neighbourhood. The original plan of subdivision for Chaplin Estates included a number of large blocks located along the southern edge of the plan. Though not designated for parks, they would eventually be combined to create Oriole Park. Construction of the Glebe Manor Estates and expansion of transit service into Midtown spurred additional growth east of Yonge Street through the 1920s.

The major street network, as it exists today, was largely established by this time. The most significant addition to the street network at this time was Mount Pleasant Road. Built in 1910, it was a streetcar extension of the St. Clair Avenue line north to Eglinton Avenue. After the street was extended to Jarvis Street south of Bloor Street, it became one of four significant streets connecting North Toronto to downtown.

Annexation also eliminated the need for North Toronto Town Hall and the building was eventually demolished. Between 1910 and 1912, it was the location of North Toronto Collegiate. In 1912, a new five-room school, called North Toronto Collegiate Institute, and a large playfield was



Top: Chaplin Estate Plan of Subdivision, 1913  
Bottom: Glebe Manor Estate Plan, 1910

**"GLEBE MANOR" ESTATE**  
 "A PROFITABLE INVESTMENT"  
 Situated on Yonge Street South of Eglinton Ave. With All Improvements  
**ALL WITHIN THE CITY LIMITS**

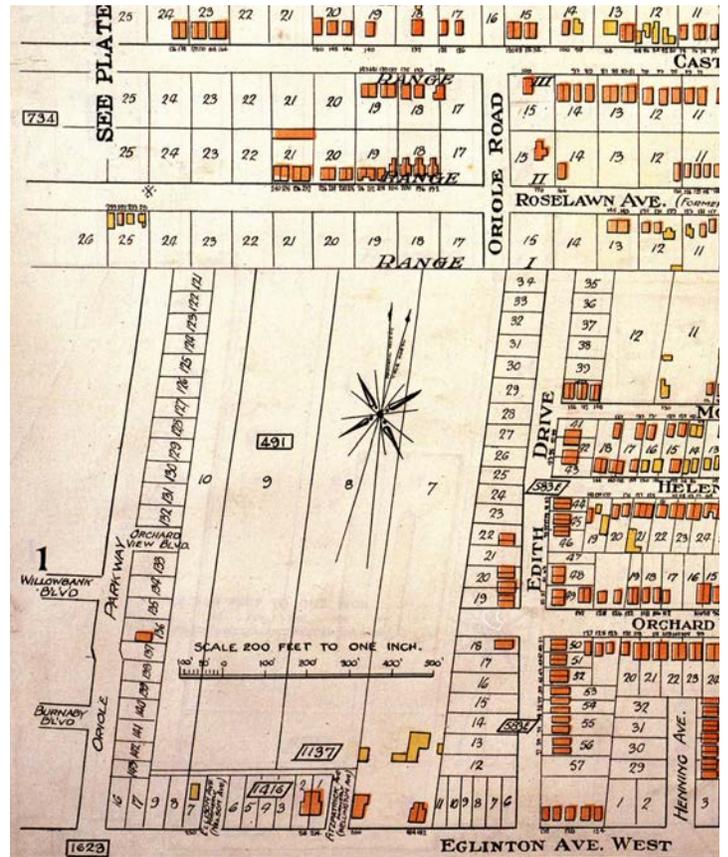
**DOVERCOURT LAND BUILDING & SAVINGS COMPANY LIMITED**  
 W. S. Dinnick President 82-88 King St. East. 30 Years in Business  
 LARGEST OWNERS & DEVELOPERS OF REAL ESTATE IN CANADA

Section One Section Two Section Three

Special Prices to Builders  
 Builders' Terms

built on Broadway Avenue east of Yonge Street on what was previously farmland. Over time the school expanded with additional storeys, building additions and a new entrance on Roehampton Avenue. Eglinton Junior Public School also opened in 1912 at the corner of Eglinton Avenue and Mount Pleasant Road. The school expanded over the next 10 years. Hodgson Middle School (originally Davisville East School) opened in 1915 on Davisville Avenue east of Mount Pleasant Road. Originally built as three portable units, a permanent school was built over time.

In 1923, Eglinton Park, formerly the Davisville and Carlton Brick Company, was acquired by the City of Toronto through expropriation for the purpose of developing an athletic field. It was named Eglinton Park in 1929, and a field house was constructed in 1930. In 1930, Northern Secondary School (then Northern Vocational School) and school yards were built on Mount Pleasant Road between Roehampton Avenue and Broadway Avenue.



Goad's Atlas (1924) showing the future location of Eglinton Park



Eglinton Park Field House, 1930

## 1930-50s

Low-rise commercial and apartment buildings were constructed along Eglinton Avenue West in the 1930s and residential development west of Yonge Street grew with the construction of the Chaplin Estates. From 1944 to 1952, a series of publicly and privately owned blocks and lots along the southern edge of the Chaplin Estates were assembled to create Oriole Park as it exists today. The full footprint of Eglinton Park was also realized during this time.

June Rowlands Park (then called Davisville Park), which originally consisted of a number of individual lots, started to take shape and grew through the gradual acquisition of adjacent lots. In 1948, Charlotte Maher Park (originally Roehampton Park) was identified in a registered plan of subdivision northwest of Eglinton Avenue and Bayview Avenue, with the owner dedicating the land as a public park. The land that was dedicated was low-lying and covered by a pond of stagnate water. In 1950, the City installed a drain, filled the land and sodded it for use as a public park.

Howard Talbot Park was also built in the late 1940s on lots that were purchased for the development of the park. The land was comprised of swampy lowlands with high banks to the south and a creek running through it from west to east. Drainage had to be installed and the land was graded with the addition of ball fields in 1950 and the bowling green in 1951.



Southwest corner of Yonge St and Eglinton Ave, 1930s



Northeast corner of Yonge-Eglinton intersection, 1930s

Memorial Park was created after the Second World War on ravine land located between the Belt Line Railway and a cemetery running along Roselawn Avenue. Originally industrial supply yards used to store construction materials, the land was identified for the creation of a park in a 1931 proposed plan for the northern part of the Village of Forest Hill. The park was developed in the late 1940s and was named in tribute to Forest Hill citizens who were killed in action during the war.

The completion of the Yonge subway line in 1954 brought transformative growth and change to Midtown, shifting the area from a largely low-rise neighbourhood to a dense urban area with apartment tower developments. In the late 1950s, both sides of the Eglinton Avenue from Duplex Avenue to Mount Pleasant Road were rezoned to allow more intense commercial uses. The first new office buildings along Eglinton Avenue began to appear shortly afterwards. At this time, the deep lots north and south of Eglinton Avenue between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road attracted the development of apartment blocks, with associated land assembly and rezoning to allow for high-density residential development.

### 1960s-80s

Construction of major office buildings in the area continued from the 1960s through to the 1980s. Following the rezoning and development of high-rise apartment buildings north and south of Eglinton Avenue, in the early 1960s the residential areas between Eglinton Avenue, Keewatin Avenue, Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road were up-zoned to allow for additional high-density residential development.

South of Eglinton Avenue, Greenwin developed a master plan for the lands between Davisville

Avenue and Balliol Street and the south side of Balliol Street between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road in 1967. The plan, consisting of large slab apartment towers in an open, landscaped setting, or "Towers in the Park", played a significant role in shaping the Yonge-Davisville area. As part of this development, the City approved an increase in density on one lot in exchange for the creation of a private parkette to which the public has access along Balliol Street. This site, now known as Balliol Parkette, remains today. It is an early example of Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces in the area and continues to be designated as Parks and Open Space Areas in the City's Official Plan.

Although the Tower in the Park developments in both the Yonge-Eglinton and Yonge-Davisville area included generous open landscapes, few new parks were introduced to the area during this time. New parks established in these areas included:

- Redpath Parkette as part of the redevelopment of the block between Keewatin Avenue and Erskine Avenue;
- The final expansion of June Rowlands Park which reached its current size by 1967; and
- The acquisition of the right-of-way of the former Beltline Railroad by the City of Toronto in 1988 for use as a linear park.

### 1990s-2010s

As Toronto continued to evolve through the turn of the century, Midtown remained a desirable area to live given the variety of housing types, transit connections to Downtown and elsewhere and access to a full range of local services and amenities. In the early 2000s, a new era of intense residential development began with an increasing



Top: Aerial photo of Yonge-Eglinton intersection, 1951  
Bottom: Aerial photo of Yonge-Eglinton intersection, 1969

number of high-rise condominiums constructed on lands in and adjacent to Yonge-Eglinton Centre. This wave of development introduced new building types into Midtown neighbourhoods, including residential and mixed-use tall buildings where office and retail uses had previously predominated on Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue East and tower-and-podium tall buildings in the Apartment Neighbourhoods. This era of intensification led to a doubling of Yonge-Eglinton Centre's population between the 1990s and 2010s with development pressures further accelerating in 2016-2018 in parallel with the Midtown in Focus study.

Several recent developments have contributed to a limited amount of new parkland in Midtown. The new parkland primarily consists of small parkettes including those located at 35 Dunfield Avenue, 54 Berwick Avenue and 79 Keewatin Avenue. New and redesigned parkland and open spaces have also been created along Yonge Street, from Montgomery Square in the north through new squares at the Yonge-Eglinton intersection to publicly-accessible open space at Quantum Square and an expanded Hillsdale Parkette.

## 4.2 MIDTOWN'S PUBLIC PARKS

Midtown did not benefit from a pre-determined master plan for the provision of its parks and open spaces. While some areas of the city have master plans for their park and open space resources, others have evolved organically and incrementally as growth and change have occurred. Midtown's urban fabric is largely the product of waves of

development and redevelopment, with each development era providing different kinds and amounts of parks and taking varying approaches to the provision of parkland.

Midtown includes 16 public parks totaling 26.2 hectares (Figure 2). Appendix 1 provides a more detailed summary of each park in the area, the programming they offer and any improvements undertaken in recent years or planned to be undertaken.

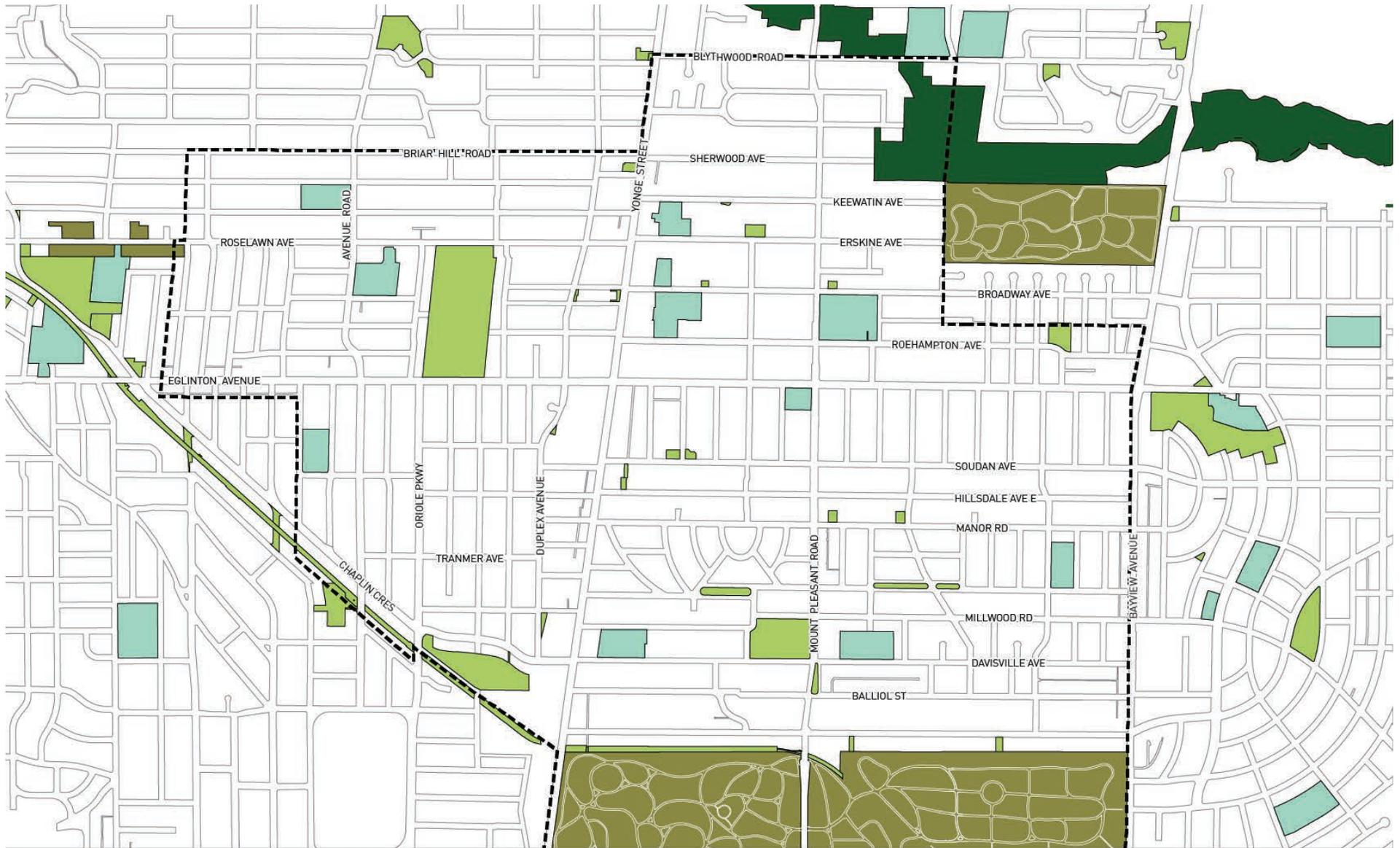
### Parkettes

Parkettes under 0.5 hectares make up 56 per cent of all parks in the area. There are 9 parkettes in total. Parks of this size offer limited opportunity for providing programming and recreational use. While a number of these parks, such as Dunfield Park (0.1 hectares) and Redpath Avenue Parkette (0.28 hectares) contain playgrounds, half of them, including Fiona Nelson Parkette (0.09 hectares) and Mount Pleasant Parkette (0.16 hectares), have few amenities other than benches.



**Dunfield Parkette**

Figure 2: Existing Parks and Open Spaces



- Existing Secondary Plan Area
- Existing/Approved Public Parks
- Ravines/Natural Areas
- School Properties
- Cemeteries

Not to Scale 

## Small Parks

Two parks in the area are considered small parks at between 0.5 and 1.5 hectares in size. Charlotte Maher Parkette at 0.61 hectares includes both a playground and additional passive open space, but has opportunity for additional parks programming and could be further improved through expansion.

Glebe Manor Square at 0.87 hectares is a long, narrow boulevard park dotted with benches. The linear nature of the park and its location between two streets makes the addition of new programming challenging. However, there may be opportunities to provide low intensity recreational uses, or to rethink adjacent streets to provide additional space to expand this park.

## Medium-sized Parks

There are two medium sized parks in Midtown between 1.5 and 3.0 hectares in size – Oriole Park and June Rowlands Park. Each of these parks provides a range of parks programming and facilities, and significant passive open space. Oriole Park at 2.91 hectares includes a number of recreational and play spaces including a playground, wading pool and splash pad, as well as two tennis courts and a ball diamond. June Rowlands Park at 2.65 hectares is a key community destination in the Davisville area with six tennis courts, a baseball diamond, playground and splash pad. The local farmers market operates in the

park during the summer and fall, and it is a major attractor for communal gatherings.

## Large Parks

Sherwood Park is a 6.78 hectare park located at the northern extent of the existing Secondary Plan area and connects with the city’s ravine system to the north and east. The park is largely a nature park with significant natural heritage features. A large portion of the park was designated in the City’s Official Plan as an Environmentally Significant Area in 2015. It mostly offers passive parks programming with walking and running trails and picnic sites. The park does, however, also include a playground, wading pool, baseball diamond and the area’s only dog off-leash area. Though the park is a significant asset for the area, most of the park is ravine land and comprised of trails. Additionally, the park frontage, visibility and accessibility is limited.

The largest park in the area is Eglinton Park at 9.09 hectares. Because of its size and central location on Eglinton Avenue, there are many demands placed on Eglinton Park. It provides active, recreational uses and a passive green refuge for Midtown and the broader city. It has five multi-purpose sports fields, two baseball diamonds and two outdoor tennis courts. It also has a playground, wading pool and picnic sites. The North Toronto Memorial Community Centre and Arena, and associated surface parking area, are also located within the



park's footprint. It is heavily used by a diverse range of sports clubs in all seasons.

At present, sports fields, which comprise the majority of the park, are not accessible to the local community during warmer months due to the permitting schedule for sports leagues. After accounting for the athletic fields, the remaining park area is equivalent to the size of a small park, and the park's topography and steep hill along its western edge limit the locally-oriented activities that can take place. Nonetheless, Eglinton Park has the potential to be an excellent open space resource for people living and working in Midtown.

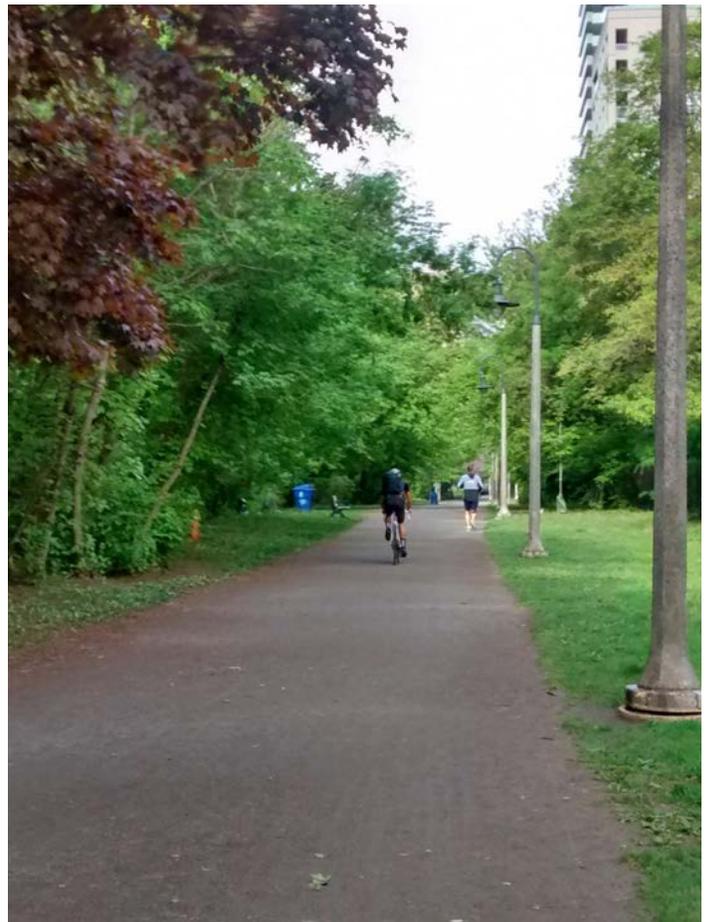
There is currently a Master Planning process underway for Eglinton Park to better address the needs of the community, and to guide the renewal of the multi-functional park's design and programming. Access to the park on both its eastern and western edges can be improved, and its Eglinton Avenue frontage can be designed to be more prominent and inviting.

### Linear Parks

The Kay Gardner Beltline Park is a 2.29 hectare linear park that extends from Mount Pleasant Road to Allen Road. A portion of the linear park runs along the southern boundary of the Secondary Plan area and connects into the Mount Pleasant Cemetery trail system eventually linking to other



Beltline Trail bridge



Beltline Trail, a linear park in Midtown

recreational trails that connect with Downtown Toronto. It is a significant recreation trail running through the study area that supports both passive and active uses – walking, running, cycling and benches for sitting. It currently lacks washroom facilities or an adequate number of drinking fountains.

### Adjacent Parks

There are seven parks located immediately outside the Secondary Plan area, including Howard Talbot Park (4.9 hectares) to the east, Chaplin Parkette (0.14 hectares) and Memorial Park (5.4 hectares) to the west, Snyder Parkette (0.18 hectares) to the north and Forest Hill Road Park (1.08 hectares), Robert Bateman Parkette (0.13 hectares) and Laratt Parkette (0.11 hectares) to the south.

Howard Talbot Park, at 4.9 hectares in size, is a large park. It provides important open space amenity for the adjacent high school and most of the area is dedicated to baseball diamonds, tennis courts, lawn bowling fields, and a sports field and track. While there is a splash pad and playground located in the park, there is little space dedicated for passive uses. Additionally, the park is lined with residential homes to the south, limiting access to the park to a few narrow entrance points along that edge. Its main access points are from Eglinton Avenue and Parklea Drive.

Memorial Park is another large park (5.4 hectares) located just outside the Secondary Plan area. The park is located next to the Larry Grossman Forest Hill Memorial Arena and includes a multipurpose field, outdoor track, two baseball diamonds as well as a horticultural display and pathways. The park also provides open space amenity for an adjacent junior school, daycare and nursery.

### Approved Parks

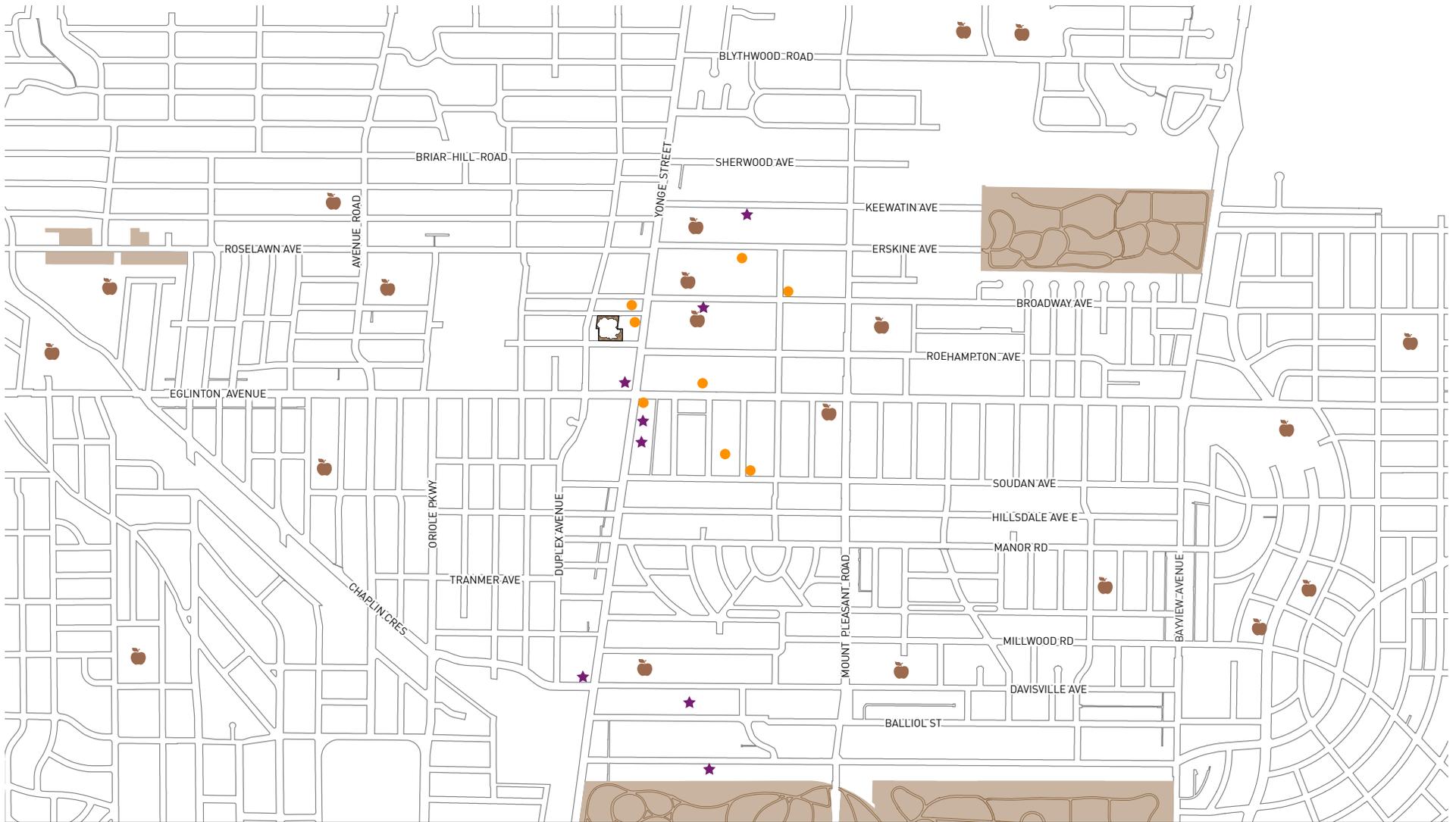
Nine new parkettes (all under 0.15 hectares) have been recently acquired in Midtown. Three are under construction but most have not been built or programmed. Seven were acquired as parkland dedication associated with development approvals and two were land acquisitions led by the City. The small size of these new acquisitions is, in part, due to the ineffectiveness of the City's current tools to acquire larger parks. However, securing these parkettes may offer opportunities for future expansion to create larger parks.

## 4.3 MIDTOWN'S RAVINES

---

Ravines are a key component of the City's open space network. They provide linear connections between neighbourhoods and link many of the city's parks and open spaces. Ravines also perform important ecological functions, provide recreational opportunities and create opportunities for quiet reflection and connection with nature. To the south of the study area, Mount Pleasant Cemetery connects to the Don Valley via the Vale of Avoca Park Ravine and the Kay Gardner Beltline connects to the Don Valley via the Moore Park Ravine. To the north of the study area, the Blythwood-Sherwood Ravine has trail connections to the Don Valley via Sunnybrook Park and northwest to Lawrence Park Ravine and the Chatsworth Ravine.

Figure 3: Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Open Spaces and Other Open Spaces in Midtown



- Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces
- ★ Existing
- Approved
- 🍏 School Properties
- ▣ Library Open Space
- ▣ Other Major Open Space

Not to Scale

## 4.4 MIDTOWN'S OTHER OPEN SPACES

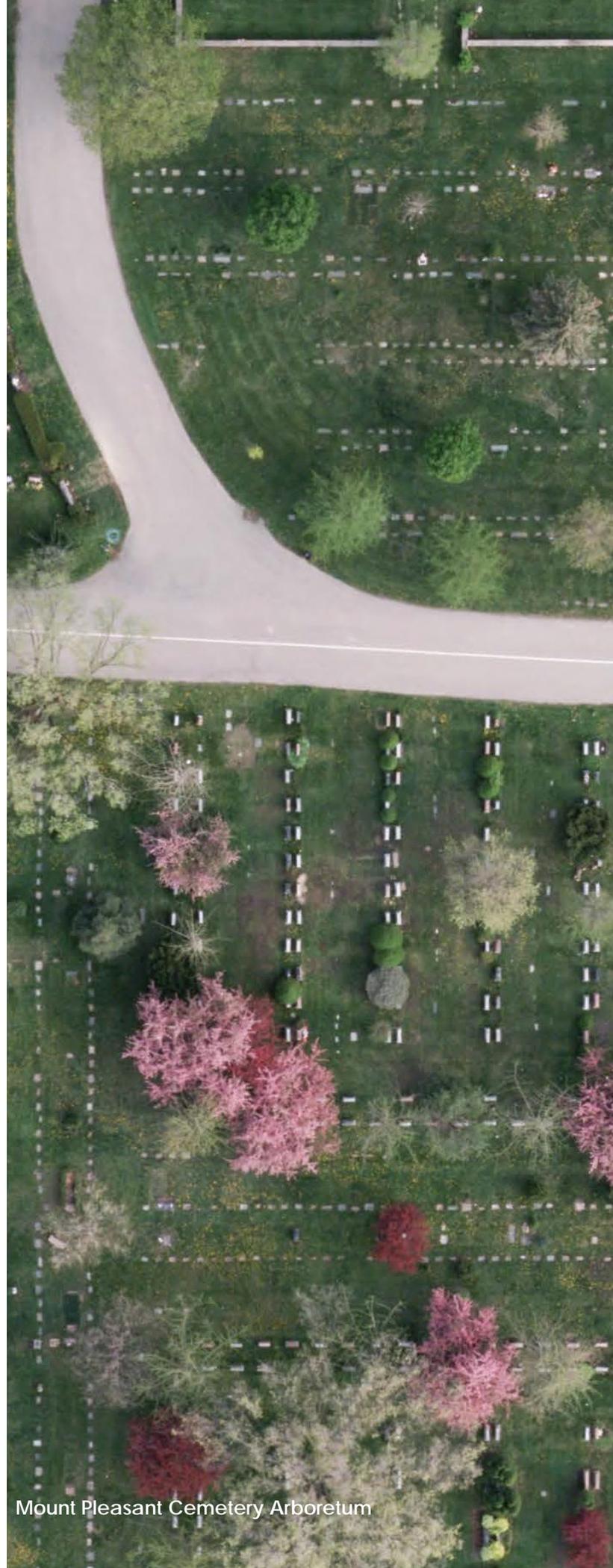
There are a number of important open spaces owned by other public agencies and institutions (e.g. School Boards) and private landowners in the area. Similar to parks, they are key components of the network of green, open spaces that offer contrast and respite from the dense built environment and provide a variety of opportunities for active and passive recreation. While they do not replace the need for new and enhanced parkland, they are still important to Midtown and critical to preserve and expand.

### Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces

In order to provide additional open space within dense urban neighbourhoods, the City regularly negotiates and secures Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces through new development. POPS are an important element within the city's public realm network, complementing existing and planned parks, open spaces and natural areas. There are currently half a dozen POPS built or secured in Midtown, ranging from public walkways and mid-block connections, to small plazas, forecourts and courtyards and deep setbacks adjacent to planned public realm and streetscape projects. Figure 3 shows the current and secured POPS in Midtown.

### Places of Worship

There are 15 Places of Worship in the Secondary Plan area. However, most have limited green space. The Church of the Transfiguration, located at Manor Road and Redpath Avenue, has the



Mount Pleasant Cemetery Arboretum

largest green space in the area. The open space onsite, at approximately 0.6 hectares, is equivalent to a small park. The site is elevated and surrounded on all sides by public streets, and currently provides an important passive green space for residents and play structures for a local nursery school. If leased or acquired by the City, a number of passive recreational uses could be accommodated. The 2014 Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan recognized the potential of this space.

A few other local churches, including St. Clement's Church at Duplex Avenue and St. Clements Avenue, Glebe Road United Church at Glebe Road East and Tullis Drive, St. Peter's Estonian Lutheran Church at Mount Pleasant Road and Roehampton Avenue and St. Cuthbert's Church on Bayview Avenue and St. Cuthberts Road have landscaped yards, open space amenities and church steps that also provide important passive space for the community and a visual respite from the surrounding built up areas.

## Cemeteries

There are two large cemeteries located in the vicinity of Midtown which are important open space assets. Both provide a recreation function for the area with walking and running paths and quiet shaded spaces. Mount Pleasant Cemetery, at approximately 80 hectares, runs along the southern boundary of the existing Secondary Plan area from Yonge Street to Bayview Avenue. It was established in 1874 with numerous walking circuits, ornate monuments, mausoleums and flower gardens that continue to draw visitors from across the city. The cemetery also includes an extensive local and exotic tree collection, making it a significant arboretum in the city. Mount Hope Cemetery is

approximately 20 hectares and is located north east of the study area, adjacent to Sherwood Park. It is a Catholic cemetery established in 1898. Walking paths and unique monuments make it a local destination.

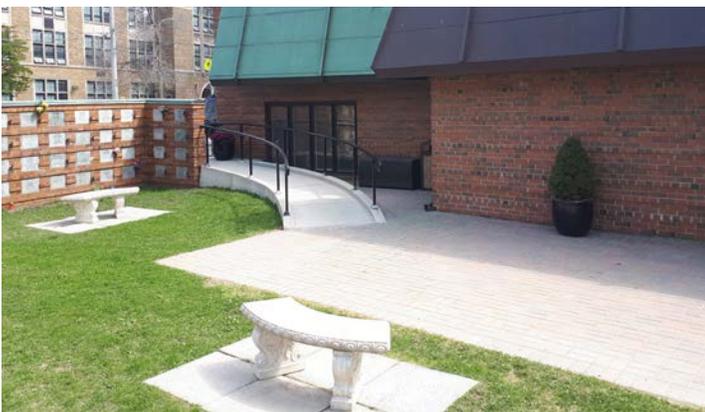
## School Yards

School yards are an important community asset and valued component of the parks and open space network, providing active recreational space for children and landscaped open space in built-up neighbourhoods. Greater public access to these spaces would provide much needed open space. There are 12 publicly-funded schools within Midtown, including nine elementary schools and three secondary schools. Most of the school yards have sports fields and play structures; however, a few schools only have paved school yards with play structures. In the last ten years, the City has secured over \$1.5 million in Section 37 funds to support improvements to school grounds including playgrounds and playfields in the area.

The Toronto District School Board's guiding principles for community use of their facilities acknowledges that neighbourhood schools are hubs of the community and that use of these facilities should be maximized to further both educational and community objectives. However, public access to school yards during non-school hours is inconsistent and determined by each facility.

## Libraries

Northern District Library branch, located on Orchard View Boulevard, is a community destination in the area. A master plan developed for the branch outlines numerous improvements for the exterior of the building including the creation



Photos of Midtown Open Spaces  
Top row: North Toronto Collegiate Institute playfield, Northern District Library forecourt  
Middle row: Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces in Midtown  
Bottom row: St. Peters Church open space and Mount Pleasant Cemetery

of more publicly accessible open space. In the last few years, a new forecourt and landscaped access ramp with seating and lighting has been completed. Additional planned improvements include redeveloping the Helendale Avenue frontage as a publicly accessible space at grade and raising the depressed plaza space on Orchard View Boulevard to create more open space at grade. These improvements will continue as funding becomes available. The open spaces surrounding the library and the planned improvements are a component of the Public Realm Moves identified in the 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan.

### Towers in the Park

Midtown includes a collection of large slab style apartment buildings, most of which are located on large lots. Many include significant open spaces around the buildings, which largely give these areas a green and open character, commonly referred to as Tower in the Park landscapes. These buildings contribute to the open space network in the area. This character is being threatened by continued infill and intensification pressures. In some cases, the open areas associated with the Tower in the Park developments have been dedicated to surface parking or have been paved over the years. Many of them now resemble "Tower in the Parking Lot", rather than the initial intent associated with these types of buildings. Providing incentives, such as enabling modest infill development on these sites, will enable improvements to open spaces and pedestrian access and ensure they regain their Tower in the Park qualities.



Examples of Tower in the Park Open Spaces

## 4.5 MIDTOWN'S STREETS AND CONNECTIONS

### 4.5.1 STREETS

Street networks play a key mobility function in neighbourhoods – moving people into and through an area – but as part of the public realm and having a placemaking role, they can also create connections to community destinations including parks. Depending on their design, they can also be vital open spaces themselves. Streets in Midtown serve a mobility function primarily for vehicles, while their civic role as a place for people to occupy and the role they play in the area's active transportation network is currently limited.

### Yonge Street

Yonge Street is the most historic and important major street in the area. It is the world's longest street and bisects the city. It has been identified as a Great Street in the Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan. Much of Yonge Street in Midtown is lined with traditional two and three story main street buildings with narrow frontage street level retail. Around the Yonge-Eglinton and Yonge-Davisville intersections, the character of the street changes with large residential and office towers dominating the street. There are a few parkettes and plazas located along Yonge Street including St. Clements Parkette at the northern edge of the study area, an open plaza at the northwest corner of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue, and a plaza in front of the TTC headquarters at Davisville Avenue. New plaza spaces are under construction or approved at the northeast and southeast corners of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue.



Rendering of Eglinton Avenue as a Complete Street

As the central spine connecting north and south Toronto, Yonge Street is a busy arterial that accommodates a subway, bus routes and on-street parking. Sidewalks along Yonge Street are modest for the level of foot traffic in the area, particularly near the subway station entrances where sidewalk crowding is common.

### Eglinton Avenue

Eglinton Avenue is a major arterial street that runs east-west through Midtown. It is a busy corridor that currently has two lanes of traffic in each direction. Multiple bus routes currently operate along the street. The street also runs along the southern edge of Eglinton Park, a key park destination in the area. The street was comprehensively planned from Jane Street to Kennedy Road in association with the Eglinton Crosstown. The approved design between Avenue Road to Mount Pleasant Road consists of a multimodal street with two lanes of traffic, a centre turn lane, lay-by parking, dedicated and separated bike facilities, wider sidewalks and additional street greening. Between Mount Pleasant Road and Bayview Avenue the design consists of four lanes of traffic, dedicated and separated bike facilities, on-street off-peak parking and additional street greening. A portion of the street from Avenue Road to Mount Pleasant Road will be reconstructed as part of the Eglinton Crosstown project. The balance

of the street will be constructed over time and as funding is available.

### Mount Pleasant Road

Mount Pleasant Road is a major arterial street and one of four significant streets connecting north Toronto neighbourhoods to downtown. Between Soudan Avenue and Millwood Road, the street has a consistent main street building fabric while, to the south, the main street retail fabric ends and is replaced by a mix of building types. The street provides a connection to a number of area schools as well as June Rowlands Park. A small triangular parkette is also located on the east side of Mount Pleasant Road between Davisville Avenue and Balliol Street.

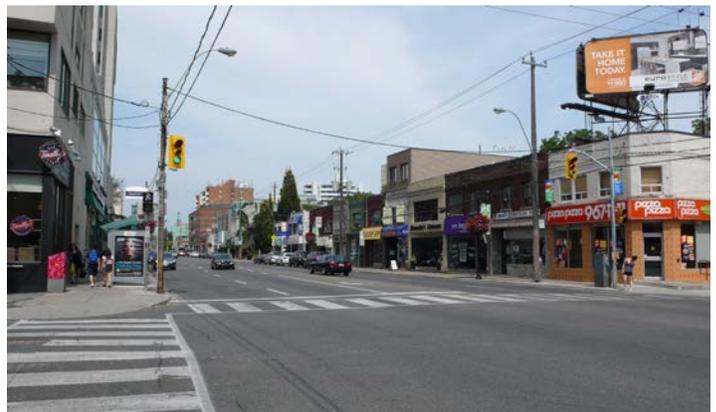
The street design is largely car-oriented with two lanes of through traffic in each direction. The street also accommodates two bus routes (including one express route) and on-street parking in some areas. Sidewalks are narrow with few street trees and amenities along the corridor.

### Bayview Avenue

Bayview Avenue is a major arterial street running north-south through the study area. Much of the street between Soudan Avenue and Davisville Avenue has a two to three storey retail main street



Yonge Street



Mount Pleasant Road

character. South of Davisville Avenue, the street has a mix of low- and mid-rise residential buildings. North of Eglinton Avenue, the building heights increase and building types are residential and retail. The street has four traffic lanes, off-peak parking and accommodates one bus route. South of Soudan Avenue, the street has wider setbacks and sidewalks which provide a more comfortable pedestrian condition.

### Duplex Avenue

Duplex Avenue is a collector street that extends north of Chaplin Crescent to Lawrence Avenue. The street provides one lane of traffic in each direction. South of Eglinton Avenue, the street is lined with largely low-rise single detached dwellings. Driveway access for these buildings creates regular curb cuts that break up the modest sidewalks. Sidewalks are missing from the east side of the street between Lola Street and Manor Road.

North of Eglinton Avenue, high-rise residential buildings are mixed among the low-rise homes within the residential neighbourhood. Since Duplex Avenue runs parallel to Yonge Street, it handles vehicle traffic and has been acting as an alternative to Yonge Street. However, this increase in vehicle traffic causes the street to function as a minor arterial instead of a traditional collector. The

street is identified as a signed route on the City's cycling network; however, given the high traffic volumes, the lack of a dedicated cycling facility is a concern.

### Broadway Avenue

Broadway Avenue is a collector street starting at Yonge Street and extending east of Bayview Avenue. The street has one lane of traffic in each direction and on-street parking on the north side of the street. Mid- and high-rise residential buildings, many of which have generous landscaped setbacks, line the street between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road with low-rise residential buildings found east of Mount Pleasant Road. The street provides a connection to both North Toronto Collegiate Institute and Northern Secondary School and Eglinton Park via Montgomery Avenue west of Yonge Street. Vehicle and pedestrian capacity on the street is increasingly constrained due to the number of large developments along Broadway Avenue and on adjacent streets. The street is identified as a signed route on the City's cycling network; however, high traffic volumes along the street highlights the need for a dedicated cycling facility.



Duplex Avenue



Broadway Avenue

## Davisville Avenue

Davisville Avenue is an extension of Chaplin Crescent between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. It is a minor arterial running east-west through the Davisville area that connects two parks (June Rowlands and Oriole), two junior public schools, a future community hub and Davisville subway station. The busy corridor also accommodates two bus routes and increasing traffic and pedestrian volumes related to residential growth in the area. Between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, the narrow right-of-way is largely dedicated to vehicles with one lane of traffic and one lane of parking in each direction. The narrow sidewalks on both sides of the street are further constrained with light poles, signage, bus stops and other street elements.

## Redpath Avenue

Redpath Avenue is a short collector street that extends between Manor Road and Erskine Avenue. It is the only street in the area that provides a north-south connection across Eglinton Avenue between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road. South of Soudan Avenue, the street is lined with residential sideyards and garages with sidewalks missing from the west side of the street between Manor Road and Soudan Avenue.

North of Soudan Avenue, the condition changes to mid- and high-rise multi-unit residential buildings with their primary addresses on Redpath Avenue and a small vibrant commercial hub just north of Eglinton Avenue. Driveways and building drop-off locations along the Avenue break up the sidewalk creating a narrow and inconsistent pedestrian condition.

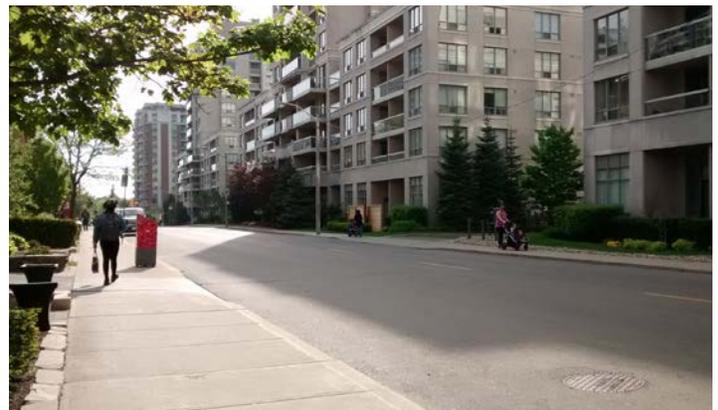
Redpath Avenue is bookended by open spaces - Redpath Parkette in the north and the Church of the Transfiguration in the south. The street is currently heavily used by both vehicles and pedestrians moving through the neighbourhood and connecting to major streets. Development in the area and along the street itself has progressively created more foot traffic and vehicle congestion.

## Merton Street

Merton Street is a collector street in Davisville that extends between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. West of Mount Pleasant Road, the street is lined with mid- and high-rise buildings and a unique mix of residential, institutional and commercial uses, including a small commercial hub at Pailton Crescent. Additionally, there are several access points to the Beltline Trail along Merton Street. East of Mount Pleasant Road, Merton Street becomes a quieter residential street with two parkettes and



Davisville Avenue



Merton Street

speed tables on the road. The street has one lane of traffic in each direction and on-street parking on the south side of the street.

### Balliol Street

Balliol Street is a local street in Davisville that stretches between Yonge Street and Bayview Avenue. West of Mount Pleasant Road, the street includes a mix of Tower in the Park apartment buildings, townhouses and mid-rise apartment blocks. East of Mount Pleasant Road, low-rise homes and apartment buildings line the street. The street has one lane of traffic in each direction and on-street parking on the north side of the street. The sidewalk on the south side of the street west of Pailton Crescent has bollards along the curb to prevent parking from encroaching on the sidewalk. East of Mount Pleasant Road, curb extensions at intersections, chicanes and special pavement treatments slow vehicle traffic.

### Pailton Crescent

Pailton Crescent is a short local street in the Davisville area oriented north-south that connects Davisville Avenue and Merton Street. High-rise apartment buildings line the street with a private tennis club located on the southwest corner of Balliol Street and a vibrant commercial/retail hub located at Merton Street. The street has one lane of traffic in each direction and on-street parking on the east side of the street between Davisville Avenue and Balliol Street. Wide corner radii at the southwest corner of Pailton Street and Balliol Street, as well as a missing sidewalk segment and commercial boulevard parking south of Balliol Street impact pedestrian comfort and safety.



Balliol Street

## 4.6 MID-BLOCK CONNECTIONS

---

Historic patterns of development in the area have resulted in large development blocks that make it difficult to create a dense pedestrian network that would support walkability. To address this, over time, numerous mid-block connections have been secured, largely through the Tower in the Park neighbourhoods to improve the permeability of the large blocks. However, the design and condition of these connections varies greatly with some mid-block connections narrow with poor sightlines, poor lighting and few amenities. There are opportunities to further increase pedestrian and cycling permeability and connectivity in the area to augment the existing mid-block connections.

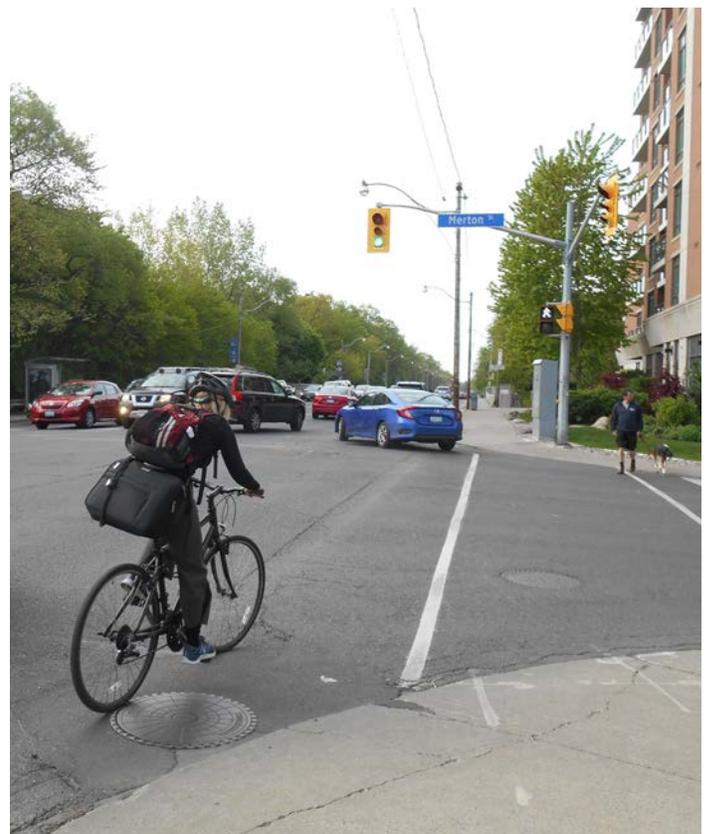
## 4.7 CYCLING CONNECTIONS

---

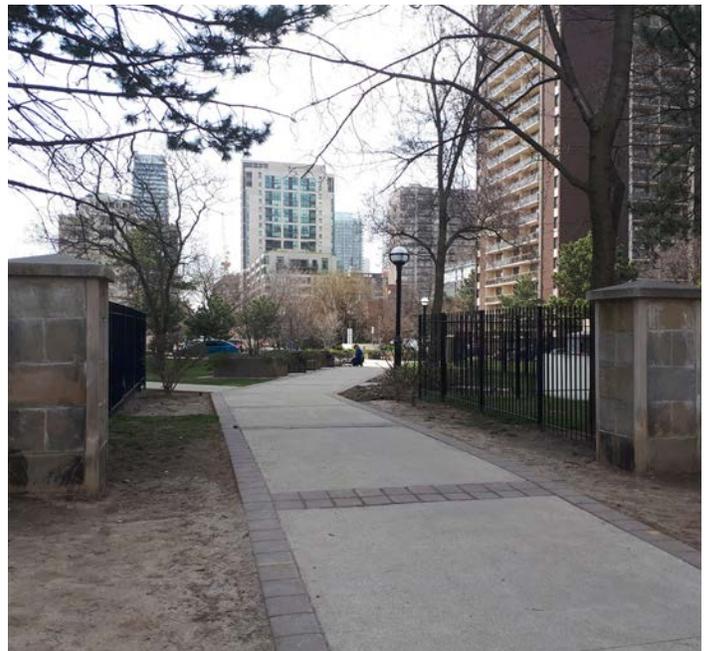
There are currently very few cycling facilities located in the Secondary Plan area. The Beltline Trail is a multi-use trail running along the southern edge of the Secondary Plan area. In addition to this single dedicated facility, there are three quiet/signed routes, one along Duplex Avenue, one along Lascelles Avenue/Edith Drive/Rosewell Avenue and one along Roselawn Avenue/Broadway Avenue. The quiet/signed on-street routes do not include pavement markings to denote space for cyclists.

The City's Ten Year Cycling Network Plan (2016-2025) identifies on-street facilities (painted bike lanes, separated cycling facilities) on Eglinton Avenue as part of Eglinton Connects, Chaplin Crescent/Davisville Avenue from Duplex Avenue to Acacia Road, and Mount Pleasant south of Merton Street. A corridor study along Yonge Street is also identified in the Ten Year Cycling Network Plan. A number of quiet streets and signed routes are also identified in the area. Additional routes and extensions of planned routes are currently being considered through the City's two year review of the cycling network.

Safe and direct cycling routes will be provided to create more connections to parks and open spaces in the area. By redesigning street rights-of-way to provide dedicated cycling facilities, additional safety and public realm improvements can be secured.



Cycling in Midtown



Examples of Mid-block Connections in Midtown

# CHAPTER

# 5



# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

---

The city-wide Parkland Strategy's updated methodology for assessing the provision of parkland in the city has been used to evaluate the state of parkland provision in Midtown, now and into the future. The methodology makes use of census and development pipeline data at the census dissemination block level (the smallest unit available) and Geographic Information System (GIS) software to accurately measure the distance to parkland from each dissemination block based on Midtown's actual walkable street network. The assessment methodology consists of three primary measures that collectively assess parkland provision:

- 1. Park Catchment:** a 500 metre walking distance (or five to ten-minute walk) along sidewalks and local streets to a park.
- 2. Park User Population:** the total number of people a park serves within the 500 metre catchment.
- 3. Park Supply:** the total amount of parkland accessible to residents and the park supply per person by census dissemination block.

Importantly, the assessment methodology includes all City-owned parks and open spaces, inclusive of natural features and ravine lands. While natural features and ravine lands contribute to our overall system of parks and open spaces in the city, they provide limited opportunities for accommodating a full range of parks programming. Nonetheless, the assessment methodology provides valuable insights into the state of parkland provision in Midtown.

The city-wide Parkland Strategy demonstrates that parkland provision per capita has not kept pace with growth. With the significant growth in population and employment in recent years, there has not been a commensurate increase in parkland provision through dedication or acquisition. This is in part attributable to the limited toolbox at the City's disposal for acquiring new parkland, but also reflects that these tools are not calibrated for dense, vertical communities.

City-wide, the average park area per person is 28 square metres. By comparison, the average park provision in Midtown is 9.9 square metres, which is 65 per cent below the city-wide average.

## 5.1 GROWTH IN MIDTOWN

Midtown is one of the fastest growing areas in the city. Some parts of Midtown are experiencing more significant growth and change, in particular lands within and adjacent to Yonge-Eglinton Centre. The level of development and population growth has exceeded the City's projections made in the previous decade.

In 1991, approximately 11,000 people lived and 17,000 people worked in Yonge-Eglinton Centre. Today, the Centre accommodates over 19,000 people and 18,000 workers. The population across the existing Secondary Plan area has grown by 33 per cent during this same period, while employment growth has remained relatively flat in comparison to the population boom.

The development over the last 10 plus years has introduced new building forms, new building height peaks and new levels of intensity into the area. Within Yonge-Eglinton Centre, the average units per hectare by project have increased by more than 150 per cent when applications in 2017 are compared with 2005. During the same period, by comparison, less than one hectare of new parkland has been acquired by the City. This has driven the amount of parkland per person in the Centre to one of the lowest rates in the city, and created further pressure on the balance of parkland in the area.

Development pressures in Midtown have accelerated in the past three years. There are currently 25 Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment applications under review by the City. Cumulatively, approved and proposed applications would have the potential to add an additional 20,000 to 25,000 people living and working in the Centre. This concentration of residents and workers far exceeds the Growth Plan's minimum growth targets for the area.

Midtown is already one of the densest communities in Canada. Overall, the number of residents and workers in the broader Secondary Plan area could



View looking east on Eglinton Avenue

be expected to grow from over 61,000 people to 97,000 people based on the applications currently under review by the City.

The updated Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan will establish a framework to better manage development and ensure that it positively contributes to Midtown's sense of place. The overall plan for the area will ensure that new buildings are sited, massed and designed in a responsive way, while still enabling significant growth and change over the coming decades subject to the provision of adequate infrastructure. It identifies areas where new tall buildings are appropriate, and areas reserved for low- and mid-rise development.

Based on the land use and built form direction being set out, the area is expected to be home to approximately 125,000 people and provide 45,000 jobs. If no new public parkland is delivered to accommodate this growth, by 2032, the average amount of parkland per person within Midtown would fall to 7.5 square metres per person (residential population), and 5.2 square metres per person (combined residential and employment population). The growth would also have an impact on parkland provision in areas adjacent to Midtown, some of which also have parkland provision below the city-wide average. By 2051, parkland provision for the residential population would drop to 4.7 square metres per person.

Figures 4 to 9 show parkland provision across Midtown based on the residential population. These figures show the following:

- Figure 4: park area per person in 2016;
- Figure 5: park area per person in 2016 (excluding ravines and linear parks included);

- Figure 6: park area per person based on the estimated population growth to 2032 from City Planning's Development Pipeline;
- Figure 7: park area per person based on the estimated population growth to 2032 from City Planning's Development Pipeline (excluding ravines and linear parks);
- Figure 8: park area per person based on the growth estimates to 2041+; and
- Figure 9: park area per person based on the growth estimates to 2041+ (excluding ravines and linear parks).

Each figure illustrates the square metres of parkland available to the population, by census dissemination block. Figures 4, 6 and 8 include ravine lands and linear parks in provision calculations. While these forms of parkland are integral to the city-wide parks network, they do not replace the need for area-serving local parks. Linear parks, such as the Kay Gardiner Beltline Trail and ravine parks, such as Sherwood Park are limited in their ability to be programmed for recreational use, due to topography and configuration. Further, these parks have a larger catchment, based on the number of census dissemination blocks they intersect meaning that there is measurable pressure on these parks exerted from outside the study area.

The provision of local-serving parks is illustrated through Figures 5, 7 and 9. These figures show the amount of parkland per person when ravine lands and linear parks are excluded from the provision measurement and show the impact of the scarcity of local parks in Midtown. Provision rates are particularly low in the northern part of the study area and along Eglinton Avenue East.

Figure 4: Park area per person (2016)

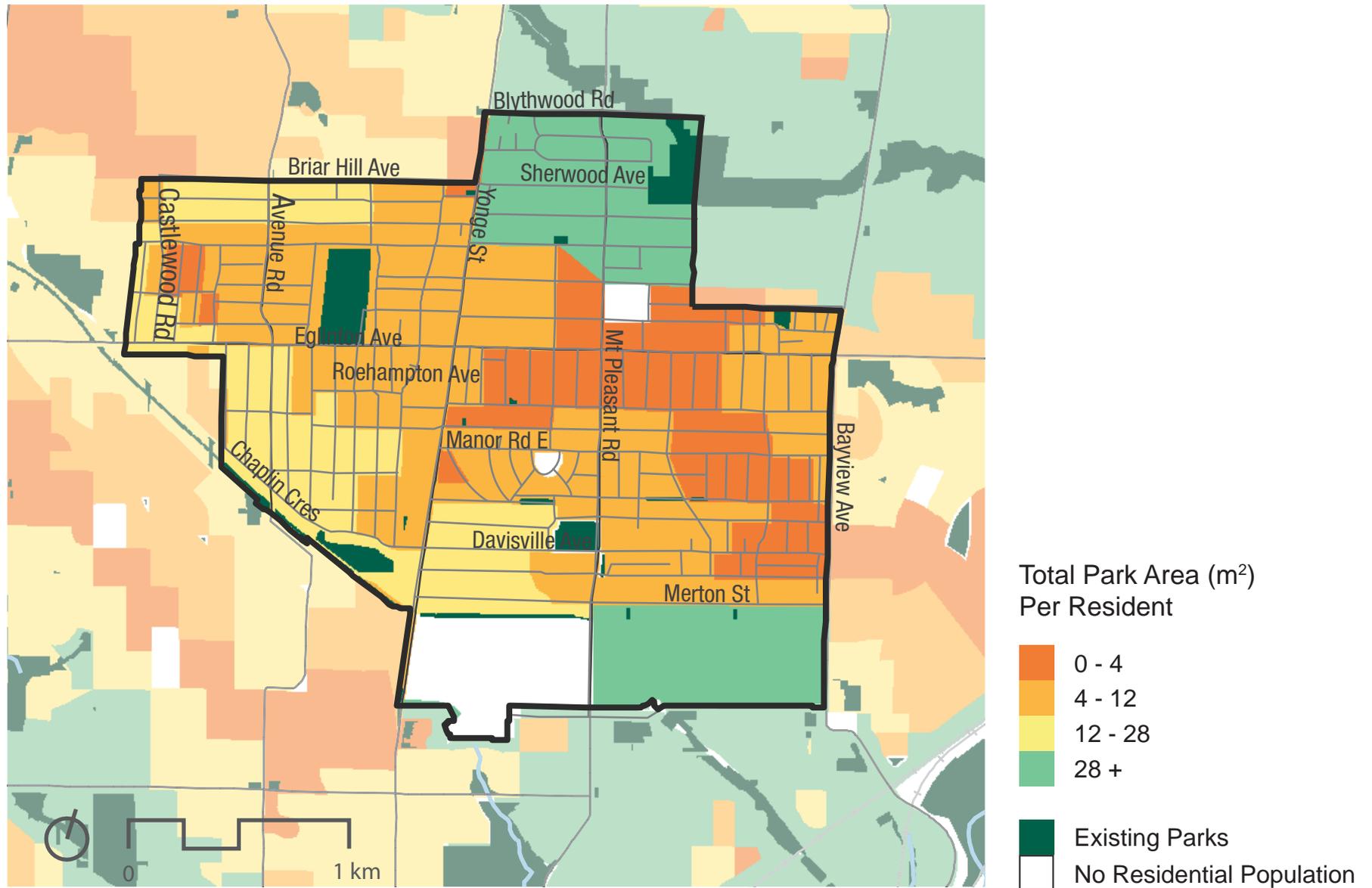


Figure 5: Park area per person (2016), excluding ravines and linear parks

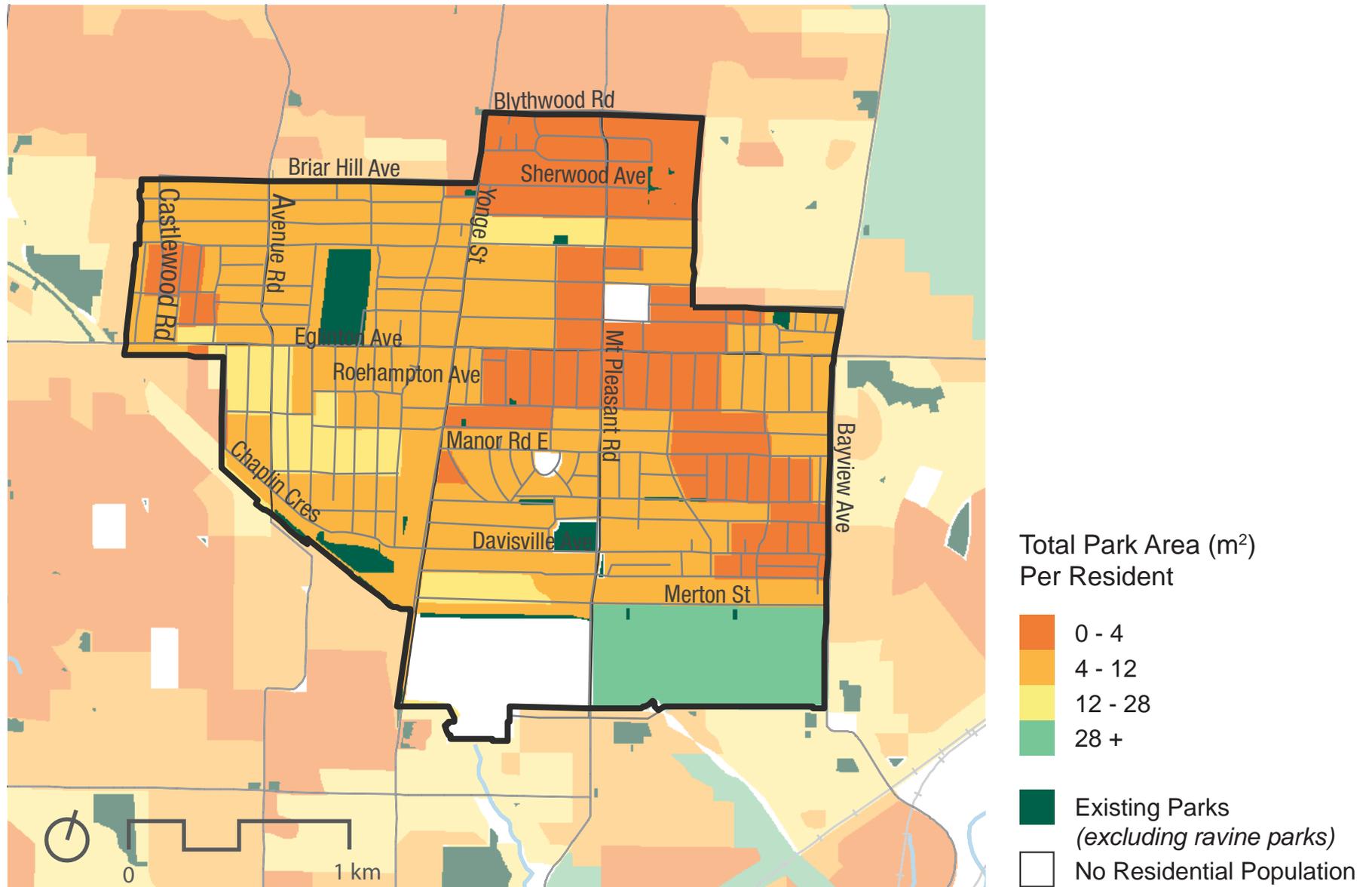


Figure 6: Park area per person (2032)

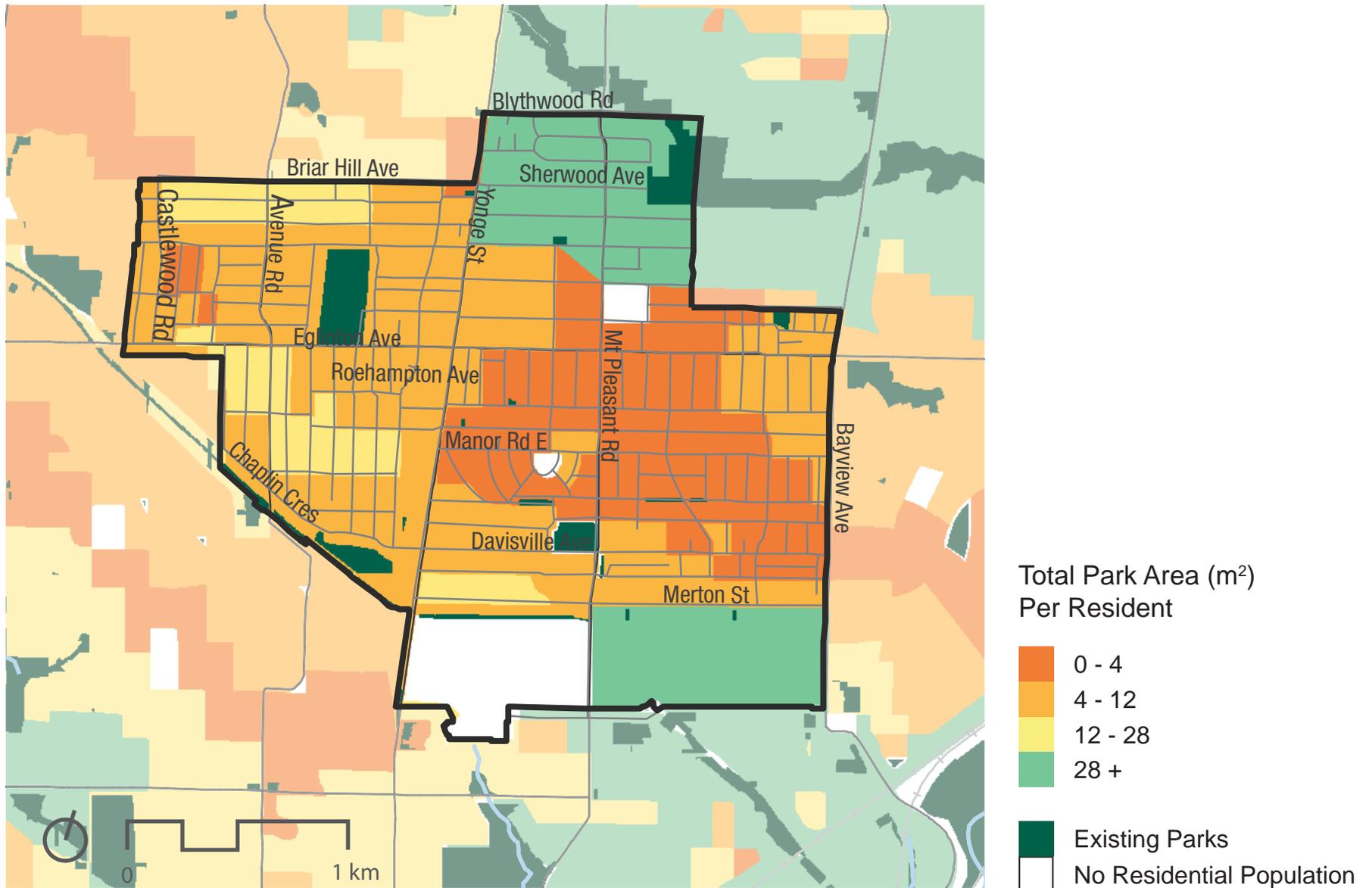


Figure 7: Park area per person (2032), excluding ravines and linear parks

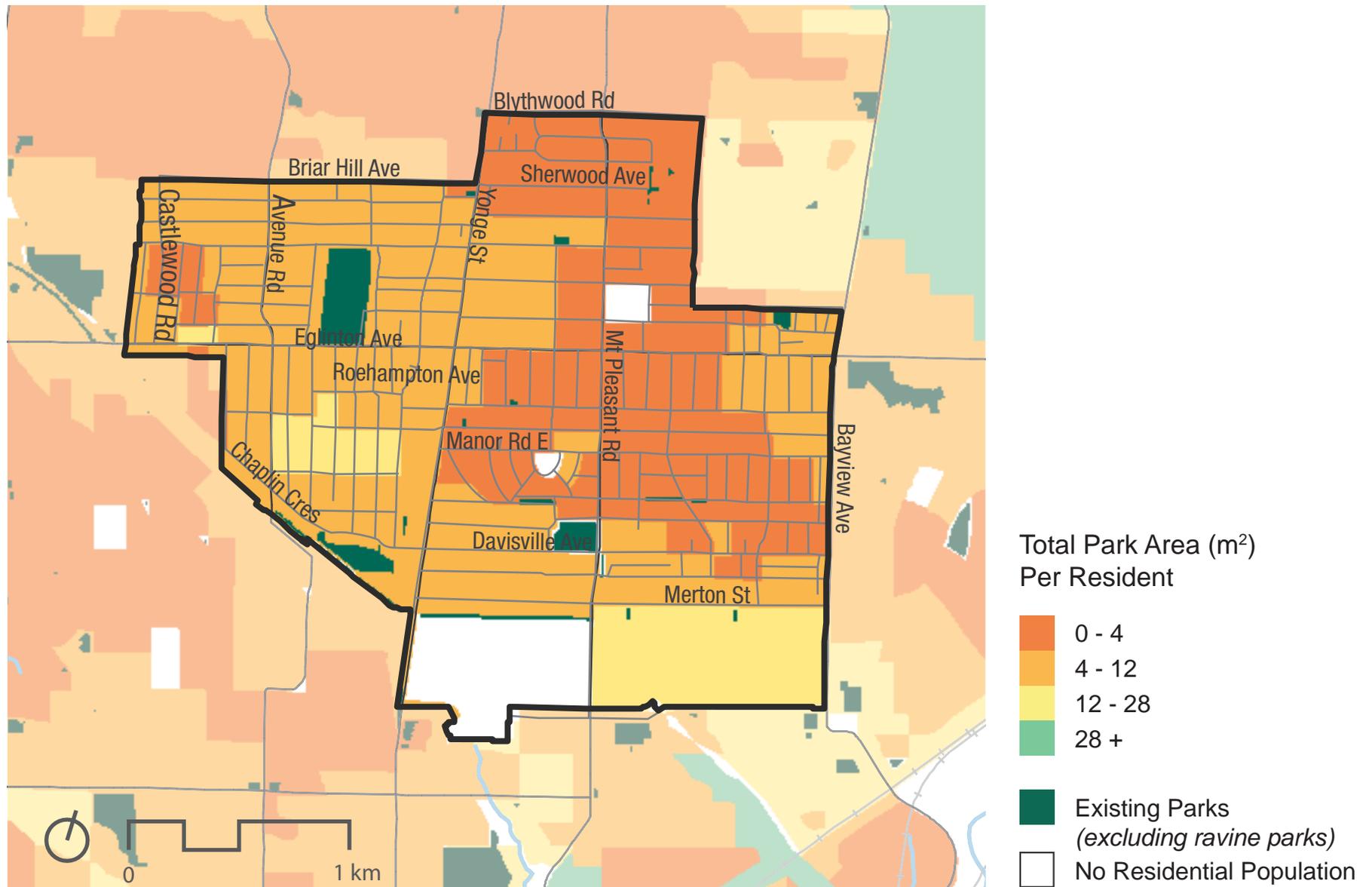
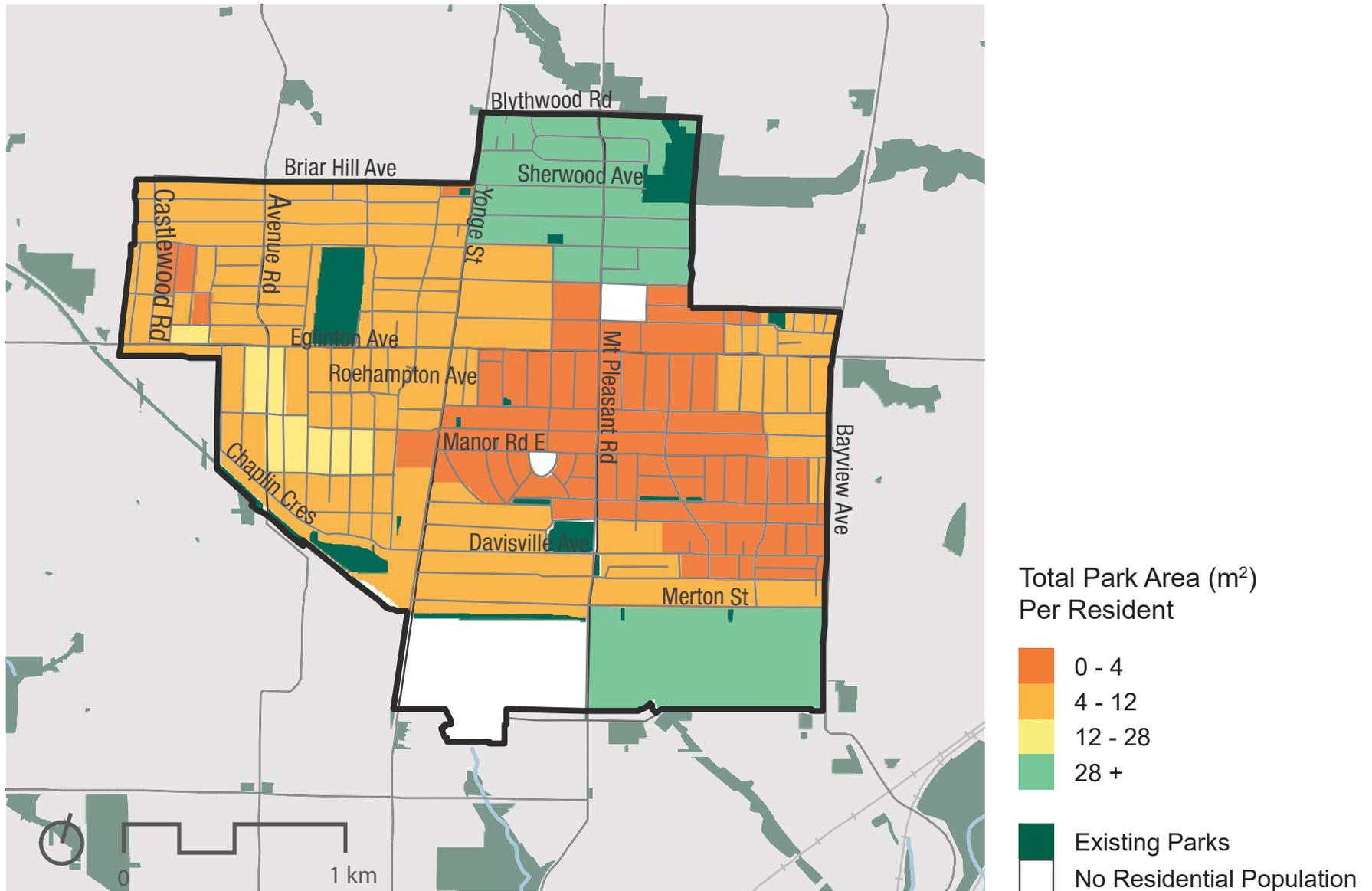
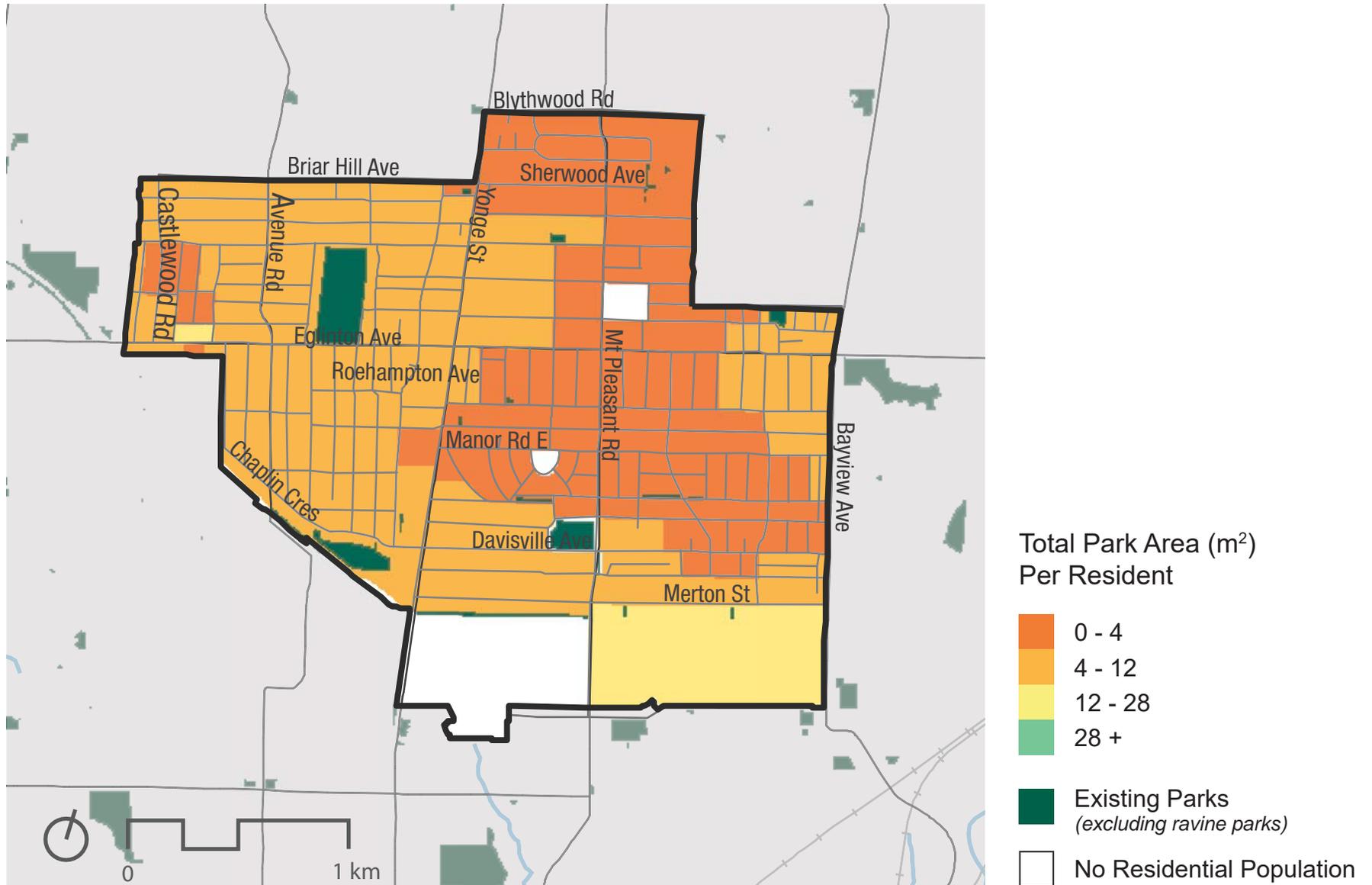


Figure 8: Park area per person (2041+)



*Projected pipeline population data is not available for areas outside the Yonge Eglinton study area*

Figure 9: Park area per person (2041+), excluding ravines and linear parks



*Projected pipeline population data is not available for areas outside the Yonge Eglinton study area*

Key observations include:

- There are no dissemination blocks within the study area that have a parkland provision at or above the city-wide average, when provision is calculated on area-serving local parks. This illustrates the significance of the deficit of local parkland; and
- Growth will have an impact on provision rates across the study area. Figures 5, 7, and 9 illustrate a marked decline in parkland provision in areas south of Eglinton Avenue. East of Yonge Street the greatest change is south of Manor Road where many of census dissemination blocks drop to between 0-4 square metres per person and west of Yonge Street, areas that were closer to the 2016 city-wide average (between 12-28 square metres per person) fall to within the range of 4-12 square metres per person.



View looking north on Yonge Street

## 5.2 GAPS IN THE NETWORK

In a master planned context, a full range of parks and open spaces would be delivered that cater to the needs of people and offer a breadth of park experiences. There would be a series of large multi-functional, signature parks and open spaces, natural areas and a range of community-oriented parks that vary in size and programming, with gaps in the urban landscape filled in with small parkettes, plazas, squares and other open spaces. The varied types of parks and open spaces would be well-connected by linear open spaces that expand the parks system to create an interconnected open space network.

As described in Section 2.2, the most common public parks within Midtown are very small parks, which offer limited land for programming and recreational park use. Currently, 60 per cent of parks in Midtown are less than 0.2 hectares in size. This is due, in part, because most were obtained as parkland dedications through the development approvals process. Most of these parks include a playground, but are not able to accommodate the range of facilities needed to meet the diverse needs of the population.

Figure 10 shows the total amount of parkland that is currently accessible to residents within 500 metres by size of park. This measurement shows the supply, location and accessibility of parkland in Midtown. It shows that there are areas within the Midtown, most notably east of Yonge, both north and south of Eglinton Avenue, where residents have access to less than 0.5 hectares of parkland within 500 metres. In these areas, residents and employees have the narrowest range of park sizes available to them. Areas west of Yonge Street, nearer Eglinton Park

and Oriole Park have accessibility to the highest amount of parkland within 500 metres. The area is also served by four parks outside of the study area which range in size from 0.13 hectares to over 5 hectares; however, these parks are only accessible within 500 metres to the population at the periphery of the study area.

South of Eglinton Avenue, the areas with the lowest accessibility to parkland are generally bounded by Eglinton Avenue East, Yonge Street, Soudan Avenue, Forman Avenue, Balliol Street, and Bayview Avenue. Only the blocks bounded by Eglinton Avenue East, Cleveland Street, Soudan and Bayview avenues have a high availability of parkland due to proximity to Howard Talbot Park on the east side of Bayview Avenue.

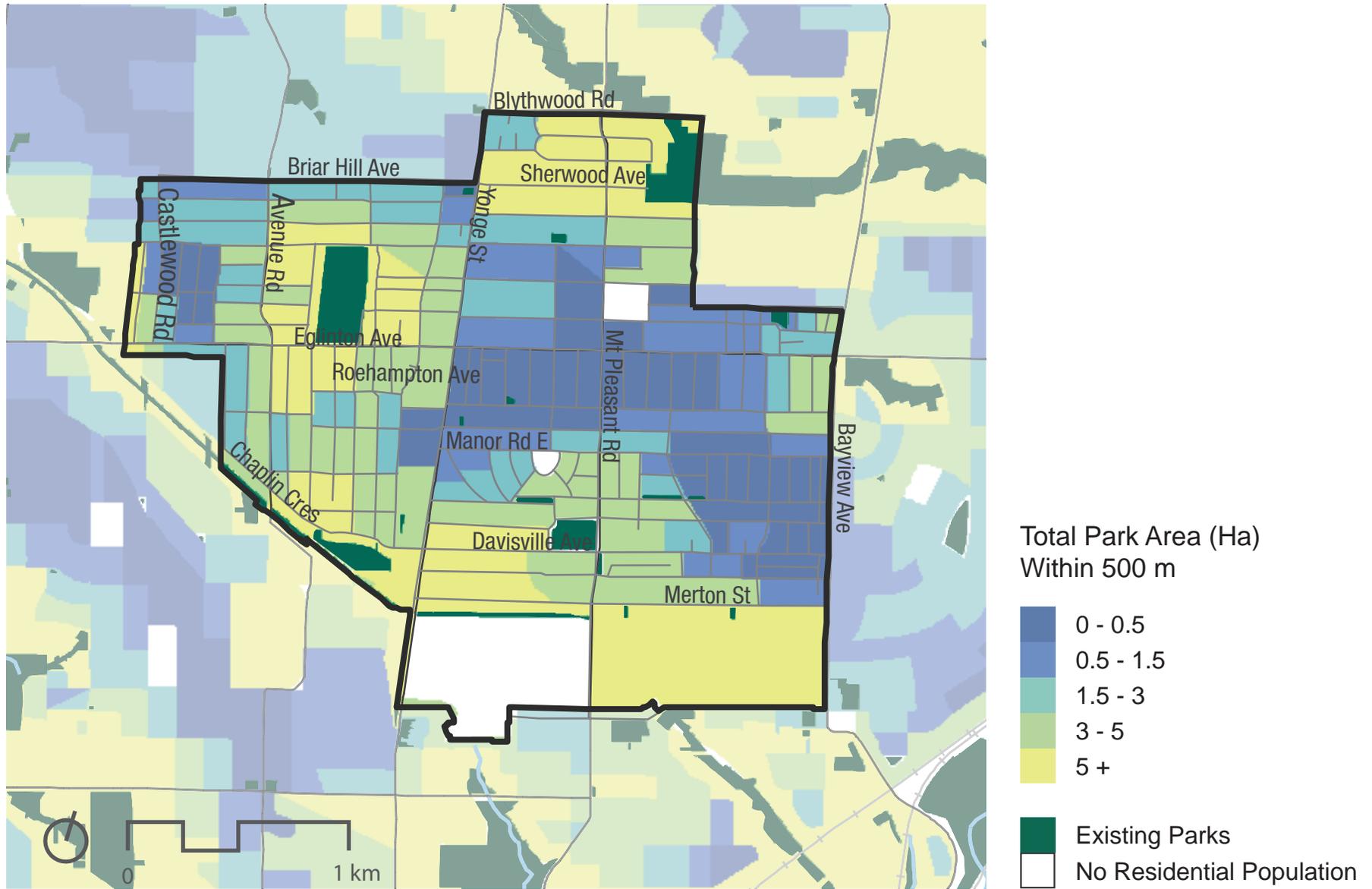
There are areas north of Eglinton Avenue East which currently have low accessibility to public parks. The area bounded by Yonge Street, Eglinton Avenue East, Keewatin Road and Mount Pleasant Road has parkland provision between 0-3 hectares of accessible parkland by census dissemination block. Between Yonge and Mount Pleasant Road, the blocks bounded by Erskine and Broadway Avenues on the north and south, and Roehampton Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East on the north and south have access to between 0.5-1.5 hectares of parkland. The blocks with the least amount of accessible parkland (between 0-0.5 hectares) are generally bounded by Eglinton Avenue East, Redpath Avenue, Erksine Avenue and Mount Pleasant Road, which also represents the highest growth area. Generally, the west side of Yonge Street has a higher amount of accessible parkland. The exception to this are blocks between Duplex Avenue and Yonge Street between Berwick Avenue and Lola Road.

Figure 10 demonstrates that there is the need for strategic acquisition and investment for all types of parks in Midtown. For instance, the blocks north of Eglinton Avenue East, between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, is the area of most concentrated growth in Midtown, and most of this area has access to between 0-1.5 hectares of parkland within 500 metres. This underscores the need for park expansion and new public parks in this area.

Other insights from Figure 10 relate to the area bounded by Yonge Street, Merton Street, Bayview Avenue and Eglinton Avenue East, where the historic lot pattern did not include public parks aside from the signature boulevard parks located on Belsize Drive. This area presents several opportunities for park expansions and acquisitions to enhance the parks system in Midtown based on the block fabric, number of City-owned sites, and school sites where acquisitions adjacent to school yards may have the impact of increasing overall useable space for recreation programming.

Figure 10 also illustrates where there are opportunities to improve connectivity to, and expand existing parks to increase accessibility to parks within a 500 metre catchment. It highlights the potential benefits of increasing the street frontage of Eglinton Park and Oriole Park to improve their visibility and access and increase the amount of parkland accessible to residents in areas with lower parkland provision, as well as improve locally-oriented park programming.

Figure 10: Park area accessible to residents within 500 metres



## 5.3 RECREATIONAL NEEDS

---

Parkland need is further driven by the land requirements for new facilities identified in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (FMP). An inventory of the existing recreation facilities in Midtown is provided in Appendix 2. Recreation facility needs related to growth and state of good repair within the Midtown will be met by facilities within the boundaries of the Secondary Plan, and in other areas that are accessible to and serve the Midtown population. The FMP identifies a number of new facilities in the area based on the development pipeline. Additional facilities are also anticipated to be needed based on the long-term population and employment estimates for Midtown. The facilities that will be needed to maintain service standards include:

- 1 mid-sized community recreation centre
- 2 splash pads
- 4 multi-use fields
- 3 basketball courts

The Facilities Master Plan assumes that some of the facilities listed above will be built on existing City parkland. However, additional land is required to meet these needs. It is estimated that an additional 4.7 hectares of land is required to serve the facility needs of Midtown.

## 5.4 A COMPLEX, MATURE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

---

Midtown Toronto is a complex, built-up environment. This presents a particularly acute challenge for providing new public parks. Properties that may be considered stable in other parts of the city are prime redevelopment sites in Midtown. This intense market pressure limits the availability of land and creates challenges for the City to provide additional public parks concurrent with development. New tools and approaches are needed to secure new public parks and support and enhance the green, open character of the neighbourhood as it evolves.

### 5.4.1 Market Pressures and Limited Availability of Land in High-Growth Areas

The pace and degree of intensification in Midtown has an impact on the City's ability to add to the parks system. The City's preference is to require on-site land dedications to satisfy parkland requirements. However, in high-growth areas with a small lot fabric this would result in parks of insignificant or very small size, resulting in parks with limited functionality and utility.

Of the City's high-growth areas, Midtown has some of the larger parcel sizes, averaging approximately 0.6 hectares per project between 2006-2016; however, under the current city-wide alternative parkland dedication rate, this would only yield a parkland dedication requirement of 0.06 hectares. Accommodating most types of active recreation programming in this size of park is not possible, given that even the smallest elements, such as

splash pads and basketball courts, require more area than 0.06 hectares.

To further compound challenges, in today's land market increases in land values are outpacing the ability of the City to make effective use of the money it receives through cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication. The degree of development activity has had an impact on land values, which increased by \$18 million per hectare to \$92 million between 2014 and 2016. This increase is related to the strong per square foot sale prices for residential units, and continued high rates of market absorption for new residential product. Further, land assembly for development purposes is active in Midtown, indicating sustained development interest in this area.

The City's current practice is to purchase parkland parcels outright, using cash-in-lieu payments for funding, rather than as a financing tool. This distinguishes the City from others in the market, such as members of the development industry, where it is common to finance land purchases. Waiting to collect cash-in-lieu payments to cover the cost and value of land parcels places the City at a disadvantage with respect to strategic land purchases. The relative value of the cash-in-lieu secured through development also decreases as land values increase.

Using cash-in-lieu is also the City's most expensive option for acquiring and developing parkland as the City bears the full cost of developing parkland when using cash-in-lieu accounts whereas land dedications typically require the dedication of clean land, provided at base park condition. The City assumes the risk and may have to cover costs beyond land acquisition, real estate fees and park design and construction costs, such as demolition and environmental remediation.

## 5.4.2 Limited Availability of City-owned Sites

There are a number of sites, owned by the City, that have the potential to contribute to the parks and open space network in Midtown. These include rights-of-way, Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) parking lots, a handful of City-owned properties and land related to the Davisville Yard and subway trench.

### *Rights-of-way*

City-owned rights-of-way opportunities in the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan area include:

- An extension of Lascelles Boulevard south of Chaplin Avenue into Oriole Park;
- An extension of Orchard View Boulevard into Eglinton Park;
- An extension of Harwood Road linking to Hodgson Middle Public School;
- A small lot on the south side of Belsize Drive where Cuthbert Crescent and Wilfrid Avenue meet;
- A section of Tranmer Avenue between Oriole Parkway and Lascelles Boulevard; and
- A section of Mount Pleasant Road located east of Mount Pleasant Parkette.

These rights-of-ways would allow for additional improved pedestrian connections to Oriole Park from Chaplin Crescent and Eglinton Park from Edith Avenue. The other opportunities could be used as starting points to create new and improved parks in the area.

### *Toronto Parking Authority (TPA)*

There are two TPA lots located in the Secondary Plan area. One is located at 83-97 Burnaby Boulevard. The other is located at 20 Castlefield Avenue. The former is approximately 0.42 hectares and could provide a parkette to the west of Eglinton Park with an additional opportunity for a 0.1 hectare expansion to the west. The latter is approximately 0.4 hectares.

### *Davisville Yard*

The Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) Davisville Yard is used to store, service and maintain subway cars that run on Line 1 (Yonge-University) and Line 4 (Sheppard). It is a critical operation facility for the subway system and city as a whole. It also has a long history of redevelopment studies and scenarios. The site was rezoned in 1978 to allow for a mix of uses over a decked yard. The yards are currently designated as *Mixed Use Areas*. This presents an opportunity to maximize the use of the site to not only continue to provide the city serving uses, but also meet several employment and community needs in Midtown.

### *TTC Subway Trench*

The TTC subway trench west of Yonge Street extends from Chaplin Crescent to Berwick Street, approximately 0.6 kilometres. Given the location and configuration between existing buildings, there are limited uses for this land. However, decking over the trench to build a linear park would increase park space in Midtown and provide a new active transportation connection between Davisville and Yonge-Eglinton Centre. The need to study this opportunity further has been identified.

### *Other City-owned land*

While the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan area includes a variety of City-owned opportunity sites, not all can be utilized for parks and open spaces. There are a number of other city-building objectives that these sites may be better suited to achieve, including providing additional community infrastructure space, harnessing investment opportunities and supporting affordable housing and office growth in the area.

The Canada Square lands are located at the south west corner of Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue. The site is the current location of TTC bus barns as well as several banks, Canadian Tire's head office, and a residential development. The property is large (3.85 hectares) and capable of accommodating an on-site parkland dedication of at least 0.6 hectares in size based on the current parkland dedication rates. A small parkette is located adjacent to the Canada Square lands, providing the opportunity to expand the park to provide greater utility.

Toronto Water operates a City-owned building at 275 Merton Street, near Mount Pleasant Road. Located on the south side of the street, the 0.22 hectare property provides an opportunity to improve connectivity to the Beltline Trail if the site ever redevelops to achieve other city building objectives.

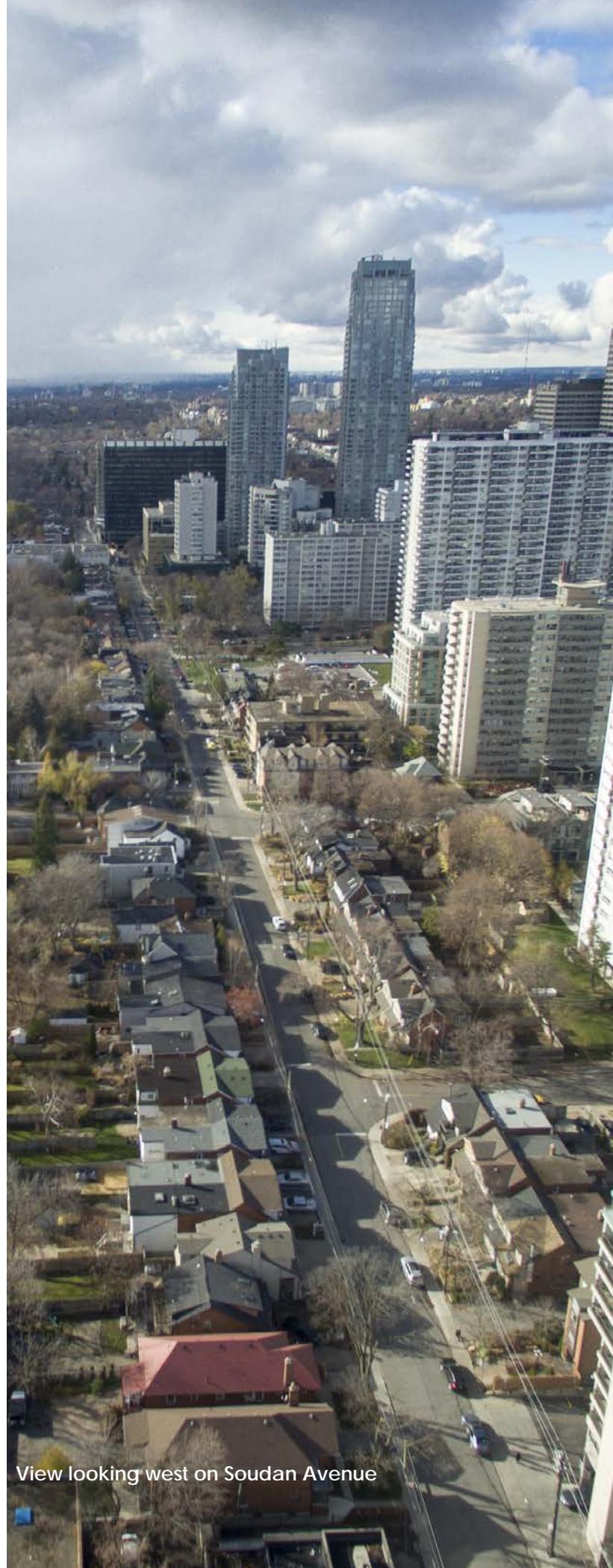
140 Merton Street is a City-owned site anticipated to undergo redevelopment. The property contains a Heritage Designated structure and is leased by SPRINT Senior Care, an important non-profit service provider in the area. The property is 0.34 hectares in size. Redevelopment of the site may include new residential development (both market rate and affordable housing) with community uses that

incorporates the historically significant building elements. The provision of some parkland space and/or a high-quality midblock connection is being considered for this site.

### 5.4.3 Midtown's Urban Fabric

The Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan area stands out for its mix of building forms, including high-rise offices and apartments, mid-rise apartments and office buildings, narrow frontage retail main streets and low-rise residential neighbourhoods. In addition to the variety of building typologies, the development history of the area has also resulted in a number of distinct architectural and block patterns, streetscapes and open spaces.

While the concentration of activity, investment and intensification in parts of Midtown presents challenges, if planned for appropriately and supported by appropriate hard and soft infrastructure, it can also sustain the quality of life in Midtown. The unique urban fabric of Midtown provides some opportunity to secure new and expanded public parks despite the area being an established, built-out community. The small lots associated with existing low-rise areas provide an opportunity to expand the network of parks and open spaces in the area incrementally over time. By identifying priority areas for parkland expansion and acquisition, the network of parks and open spaces has additional ability to capitalize on these existing low-rise areas to grow Midtown's parks system in lock-step with a growing population.



View looking west on Soudan Avenue

## 5.5 A CHANGING CLIMATE

---

Toronto's parks and open spaces provide important environmental benefits for the city. They will have an increasingly important role to play as a result of our changing climate. Carbon dioxide generated through the use of fossil fuels is recognised as a leading contributor to greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions and global warming. The City has advanced an ambitious goal to reduce GHG emissions by 80 per cent by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. Achieving this ambitious goal will require advancing a number of progressive city-building approaches, such as the City's new Zero Emissions Buildings Framework.

Leveraging existing green spaces and creating new green spaces to perform enhanced environmental functions will not only help to beautify Midtown, but in turn will have significant environmental benefits and assist the City in reducing its GHG emissions. The vegetation in parks actively takes in carbon dioxide and stores it. Air pollution is mitigated in urban areas by green spaces with key pollutants filtered by tree leaves.

Flooding is also a problem that the city experiences on a regular basis during high rainfall periods. More severe weather is anticipated as our climate continues to change. Impermeable surfaces associated with urban areas direct added rainwater to the sewer systems, rather than allowing for natural processes, such as infiltration and bioretention, to manage stormwater. Parks will increasingly have an important role to play in managing stormwater by not only providing permeable surfaces, but also by providing space to incorporate innovative, low-impact stormwater management techniques and facilities.

# CHAPTER

# 6



# MIDTOWN'S NEXT EVOLUTION

---

A comprehensive, aspirational vision for Midtown has been developed over the course of the Midtown in Focus study. It is based on the feedback provided by the hundreds of dedicated people living, working and shaping Midtown who attended consultation events held over both the course of the current study and the 2014 Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan.

Wonderful public spaces and streets are at the core of the world's most liveable cities. A city's system of parks, streets and open spaces provides a choice of experiences, activities and journeys for all people at various times of the day and night and throughout the seasons. This system of parks needs to be connected by a seamless network of welcoming streets and other connections that are conceived as complementary open space amenities, and further supplemented by a range of other open spaces, both public and private, that when taken as a whole form our everyday experience of the public realm.

Planning for Midtown's growth presents the opportunity to create new parks and open spaces and provide a full range of parks, while reimagining and reshaping Midtown's existing parks and public realm. The vision and placemaking ideas build on Midtown's assets and work to establish a clear vision for Midtown's next incarnation as a thriving, metropolitan district in the heart of Toronto. The vision is about ensuring that the dual qualities of Midtown – lush and green, and dense and urban – remain central character-defining elements as the area continues to evolve. As the number of people living, working and visiting Midtown continues to grow, so must the quantity, quality and accessibility of parks and open spaces.

The ambitious vision for Midtown's expanded, improved and connected network of parks, streets and open spaces places emphasis on creating new public parks, increasing accessibility to and improving existing parks, reclaiming city streets as a series of civic and community spaces, and creatively capitalizing on the variety of other open spaces scattered throughout Midtown. It sets out locations for expansion and improvements to Midtown's public parks, both big and small, and addresses the need to better utilize existing parks and open spaces. It provides a tailored vision for Midtown premised on achieving Three Core Elements:

- A Series of Public Realm Moves that create the framework for a transformed public realm in Midtown;
- A Connected and Versatile Network of Public Parks to provide a variety of places for people to play, be active, rest and relax and contribute to an enhanced environment; and
- Maximizing the Use of Other Open Spaces to supplement Midtown's public parks and reinforce Midtown's open space character.



Rendering of Park Street Loop

## 6.1 THE ASPIRATIONS

---

The vision set out in this Plan is guided by four aspirational objectives that build on the emerging objectives in the city-wide Parkland Strategy. They are:

### Create New and Expanded Parks and Open Spaces

Midtown has one of the lowest parkland provision rates per capita in Toronto. As Midtown's population continues to grow, creating new parkland and making existing parks bigger, where possible, is required. Acquisitions and expansions will be undertaken to address the notable gaps in the inventory of types of parks in Midtown. In particular, this will include new consolidated park spaces that are large enough to accommodate a range of programming and functionality, which is critical infrastructure needed to support Midtown's continued growth and evolution.

### Treasure and Enhance our Parks and Open Spaces

Improvements to existing parks have transformative potential. Investing in our existing parks can provide invaluable contributions to meeting parkland needs to support growth. Existing parks can be repurposed to increase their utility, effectively enabling these spaces to serve a wider range of parks users and to improve their appearance and image, making a positive contribution to Midtown's evolving identity.

### Share our Parks and Open Spaces

Midtown has high quality and signature open space assets owned and operated by other public agencies and private landowners. Its cemeteries, existing and improved school yards and privately-owned publicly accessible open spaces provide places for people to relax, walk, cycle and be active. These open space assets do not replace the need for new and enhanced parkland, but supplement and further contribute to the character of the area. Collaboration and partnerships are needed to ensure the existing and future population has access to these spaces. Securing new POPs through development, for example, will contribute to expansion of the public realm.

### Connect our Parks and Open Spaces

A well-connected system of parks and open spaces increases and improves access to these valuable assets. The Plan recognizes that the existing street grid presents the opportunity to establish a network of active transportation routes and pedestrian connections. It also uncovers other opportunities to provide better access to existing parks and open spaces to expand the park experience beyond the park boundary itself, thereby creating a cohesive green network to support community life.

# CHAPTER

# 7



# PUBLIC REALM MOVES

---

A series of Public Realm Moves create the framework of a transformed public realm in Midtown. The Moves are large scale public space proposals that bring together changes in the design of public streets and parks with privately-owned open spaces. The eleven Public Realm Moves in this Plan include those initially developed for the 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan as well as additional Moves developed to improve the public realm in the Davisville area.

## 7.1 2014 MIDTOWN PUBLIC REALM MOVES

---

In 2014, the Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan was adopted by Council. The Plan recognized Midtown's distinct quality and character as a vibrant mixed use community within an expansive, green landscaped setting. Focusing on the public realm as a fundamental contributor to quality of life in Midtown, the 2014 Plan provided a vision and framework for improvements to the network of parks, open spaces, streets and public buildings in the Yonge-Eglinton Centre area to create an attractive, safe, and comfortable network of public spaces. The Plan included five Public Realm Moves that, together with other streetscape improvements and the enhancement and expansion of parkland in the area, will give shape to a richly layered system of parks, open spaces and streets.



Fig. 3.6a Plan of the Yonge Street Squares

- 

Sherwood Sun Terrace  
New square that forms an animated gateway, giving public life a visible platform
- 

St. Clements City Garden  
Improved parkette for gathering and temporary events space
- 

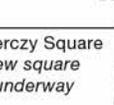
Yonge Steetscape  
Enhanced public realm that ties together the sequence of squares
- 

Roselawn Sun terrace  
New square that promotes high quality retail and cafe spill out
- 

Erskine City Garden  
New square with playground that celebrates active play in an urban environment
- 

Montgomery Square  
Community heart expands to fill consolidated block, a great civic space that celebrates the community's heritage and anchors neighbourhood programming
- 

Y&E Crossroads Squares  
Dynamic gathering place at the concentrated hub of mobility and commercial intensity
- 

Quantum Square  
An improved square that fosters intimate, human scale interactions
- 

Berczy Square  
New square - underway
- 

Soudan Sun Terrace  
New gateway square, a programmable anchor

Key components and features of the Yonge Street Squares

### 7.1.1 Yonge Street Squares

*The re-imagining of Midtown's Yonge Street as a vibrant streetscape connecting a series of public squares reinforces it as a destination and a place for social gathering, shopping and lively public life beyond its role as an important transportation and transit corridor. Unlike other Centres, which have a single large public square as a focus for civic life and community activities, Yonge Street features a collection of smaller, more intimately-scaled connected public spaces.*

Yonge Street is the main north-south commercial and civic street in Midtown. Midtown Yonge Street's built form character is uniquely balanced with large scale commercial outlets clustered at the Yonge-Eglinton intersection and quaint, main street retail shops to the north and south, which are supported and enhanced by strategic public realm improvements.

Each of the new and enhanced public squares along Yonge Street has a distinct design, program and features that respond to its particular location, adjacent land uses and the role each space plays within the community. The public squares are tied together by an enhanced Yonge Street streetscape including widened sidewalks and realigned east-west streets that create safe and direct pedestrian connections across Yonge Street. Structured tree plantings, public art, seating areas and other landscape elements give each public square a memorable image and civic identity. The revitalized Yonge Street creates a meaningful public realm experience that promotes community gathering, an active street life and local commerce.

The four squares framing the Yonge-Eglinton Crossroads reinforce this intersection as a place of civic importance, a dynamic setting for mobility

and the commercial core of Midtown. As the largest of the Yonge Street Squares, its high quality and memorable urban landscape will be designed to be highly visible, generously scaled to support a high volume of pedestrian use and outfitted with unique pavement, lighting and street furniture to establish it as a landmark and recognizable Midtown destination.

To the north, Montgomery Square is the civic heart of the community and home to a National Historic Site, the site of the Montgomery Tavern. It is a place for neighbourhood programming that encourages residents to gather together and celebrate local seasonal events. The square includes several open space components including the Helendale Avenue shared street, Montgomery Square Parkette and the open spaces surrounding the Northern District Library. A cohesive identity for these related but separate spaces is strengthened through an urban design strategy based upon distinctive paving and design treatment.

A series of smaller scaled squares along Yonge Street complement the program and design of these two prominent squares. Together, new 'Sun Terrace Squares' and 'City Gardens' create a sequence of varied open space experiences along Yonge Street. The south-facing 'Sun Terraces', located at Sherwood Avenue, Roselawn Avenue, and Soudan Avenue, are sunny gathering places with active frontages that encourage grade-related retail uses to spill into these spaces. In contrast, the north-facing 'City Gardens', located at Sherwood Avenue, St. Clements Avenue and Erskine Avenue, provide a more intimate, shady place for people to enjoy. The two types of squares are often designed in tandem around intersections to create an attractive, cohesive public realm offering a variety of experiences.

### 7.1.2 Eglinton Green Line

*The Eglinton Green Line is an iconic new open space that expands the presence of parks and open spaces in Midtown. It will rejuvenate Midtown's image with a generous linear open space that addresses the community's scarcity of parks and open space, draws attention to Midtown along the Eglinton LRT line and activates culture and retail in the area.*

The Eglinton Green Line is a bold and spacious 8-block promenade consisting of a series of animated and landscaped outdoor spaces on the north side of the street. Connecting Eglinton Park in the west with the Mount Pleasant Transit Station in the east, the large-scale open space elevates Midtown's image of urban vitality and lush green landscapes. The Green Line is a destination that operates beyond the scale of the neighbourhood, creating an attractive setting for new signature office developments and cultural institutions with active building frontages and outdoor spill out uses that include cafes, seating areas, patios and performance space.

The Green Line is composed of building setbacks and publicly accessible open spaces which together form a clear and identifiable landmark space. The layered high-quality public realm design provides diverse amenities set within a mature urban tree canopy. A sequence of forecourts, multifunctional lawns, plazas and gardens provide a vibrant setting for adjacent community and cultural amenities, public art and retail venues to spill into the space. At the west end of the Green Line, enhanced setbacks and streetscape plantings link Eglinton Park to the Green Line promenade.

The construction of the Eglinton Crosstown LRT is a catalyst for reimagining Eglinton Avenue and will support its evolution over time. The corridor connecting with the Green Line is streamlined into three vehicle lanes with additional space for sidewalks, improved tree planting and protected bike-lanes.



Lonsdale Street, Dandenong



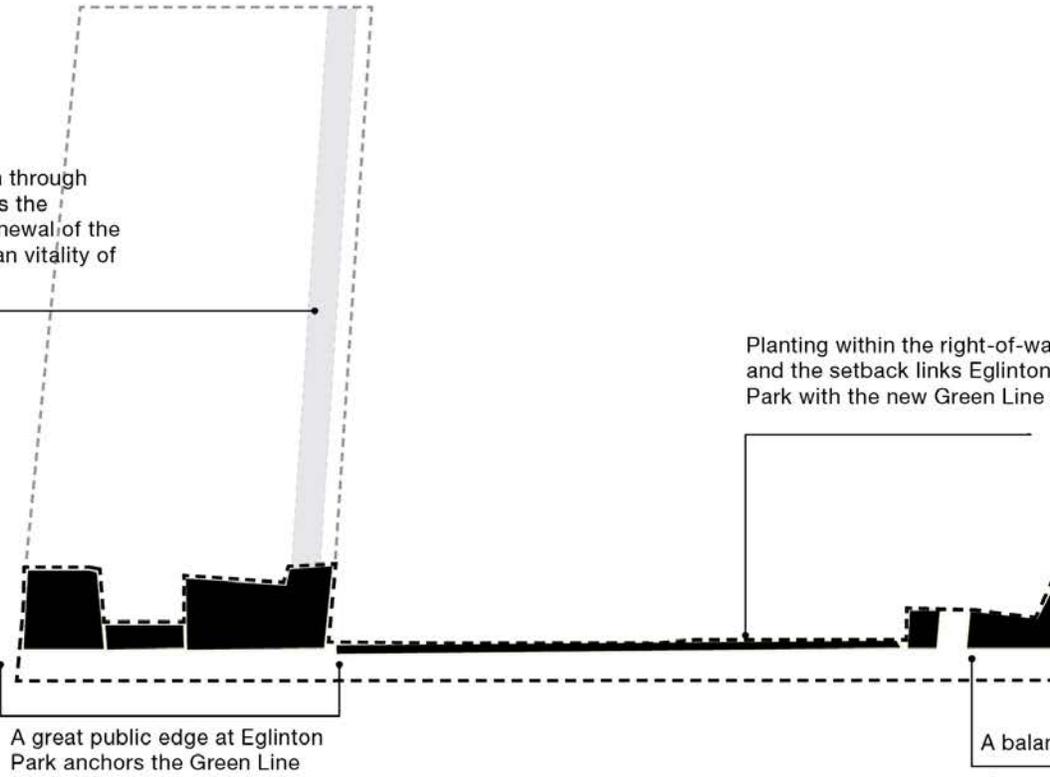
Passeig de Sant Joan, Barcelona



Rendering of Eglinton Green Line

Active connection through Eglinton Park links the multifunctional renewal of the park with the urban vitality of the Green Line

Planting within the right-of-way and the setback links Eglinton Park with the new Green Line



A great public edge at Eglinton Park anchors the Green Line

A balance

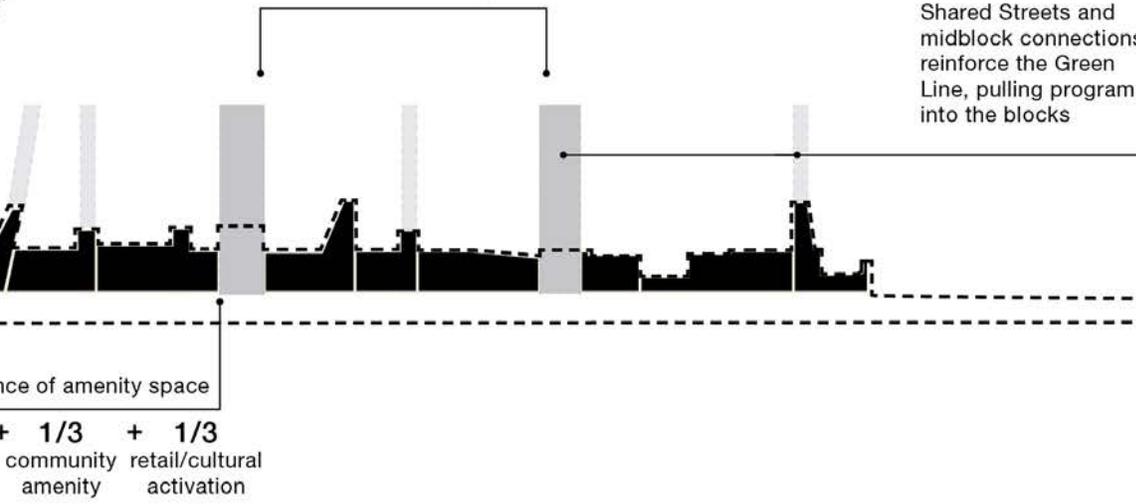
1/3  
passive  
green



Key components and features of the Eglinton Green Line

The Green Line provides spaces for new community amenities and retail venues set within a green setting. The block composition suggests an ideal program breakdown that balances passive green space, community services and retail and cultural hotspots

Shared Streets and midblock connections reinforce the Green Line, pulling program into the blocks



### 7.1.3 Park Street Loop

*A coveted new park address is created with the transformation of Broadway Avenue and Roehampton Avenue into a vibrant green promenade to serve the heart of Midtown. The Park Street Loop is formed by the synergistic relationship between streetscape improvements and publicly-accessible amenities. Diverse programs, activities and landscape types along the street create a unique community open space.*

The Park Street Loop is a generous landscaped promenade anchored by Eglinton Park in the west and extending through the Yonge-Eglinton Centre. By re-imagining and retrofitting Broadway Avenue and Roehampton Avenue as 'park streets', the green and open experience of Eglinton Park is felt beyond its boundaries. In addition to connecting existing neighbourhood recreation and community amenities, a series of parks and publicly-accessible open spaces located along the Loop provide space for new block-scale amenities to take shape. Nestled at the foot of mid- and high-rise buildings, new play structures, community gardens and shaded, green seating areas become local destinations and promote the civic life of the area.

The mix of active and passive uses ensure that the Park Street Loop is a welcoming destination for residents of all ages.

East of Yonge Street the Park Street Loop consists of wide pedestrian clearways, cycling facilities and landscaping to reinforce the area's existing character and further the open, park-like feel of the promenade. High-branching deciduous trees create a continuous shady canopy along the street and, combined with ample benches and street furniture, reinforce the 'park' nature of the loop. Colourful and ornamental low-branching trees and shrubs create a dramatic seasonal effect along the corridor and provide a unique setting to showcase the new community amenities. Mid-block connections through large blocks provide pedestrian and cycling access to the Loop, creating a hub for the broader community.

West of Yonge Street, the streetscape changes to complement the low-rise neighbourhood character of Montgomery Avenue and Orchard View Boulevard and connect to Eglinton Park. While the sidewalk widths are more modest, consistent landscaping and tree plantings provide continuity with the Loop east of Yonge.



Multi-use promenade in Malmo, Sweden

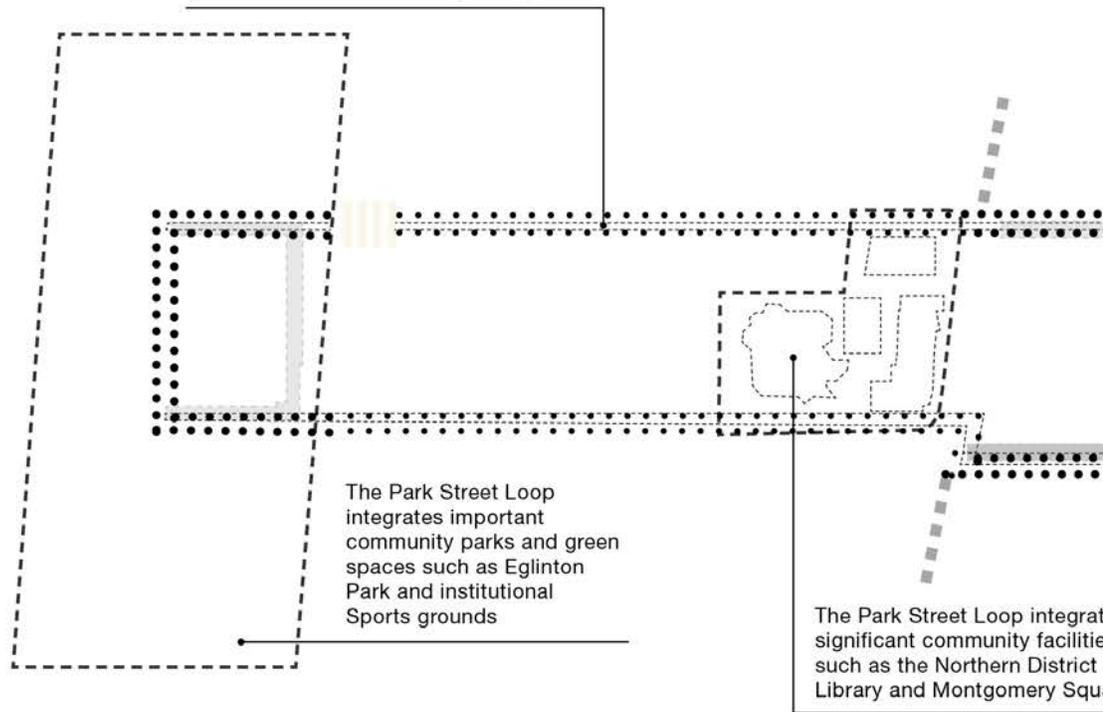


Flexible space for pedestrians and cyclists in Groningen, the Netherlands



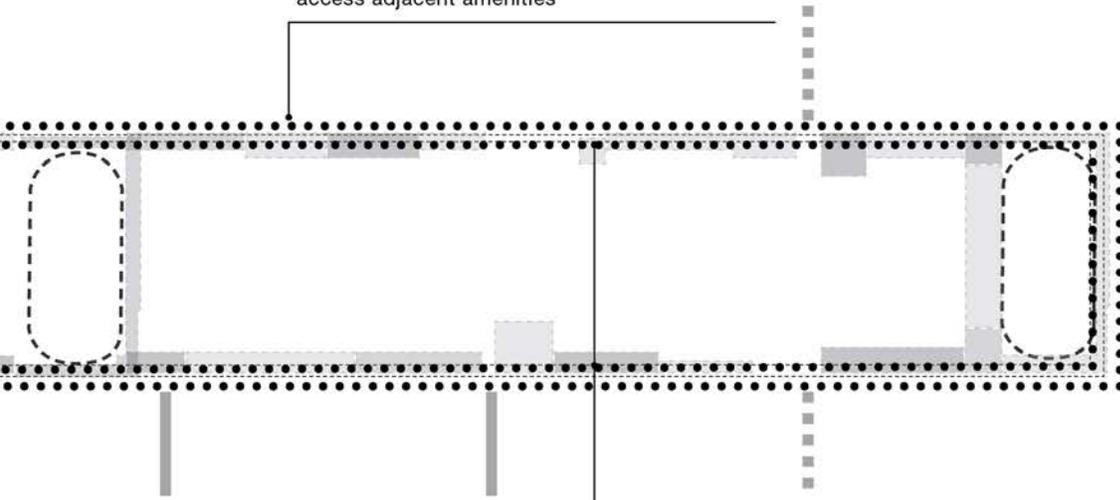
Rendering of the Park Street Loop

The spirit of the Park Street Loop continues west of Yonge Street in a modified form with reduced dimensions, but which maintains predominant materials and planting



Key components and features of the Park Street Loop

The multiuse promenade provides a generous, continuous surface to accommodate users of all ages and abilities to move through the neighbourhood and access adjacent amenities



Publicly accessible park-like amenity on private property adjacent to the multiuse promenade. A diversity of programs and landscape types is encouraged

es  
s  
are

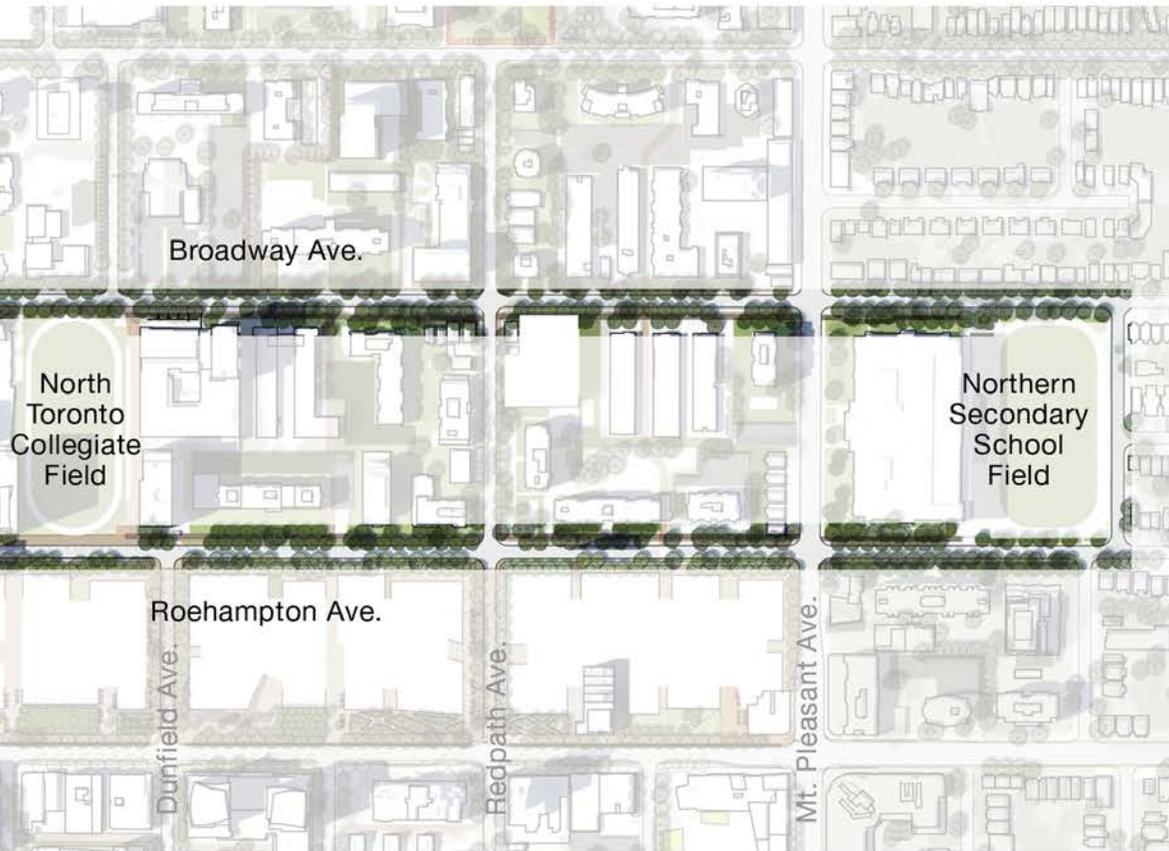
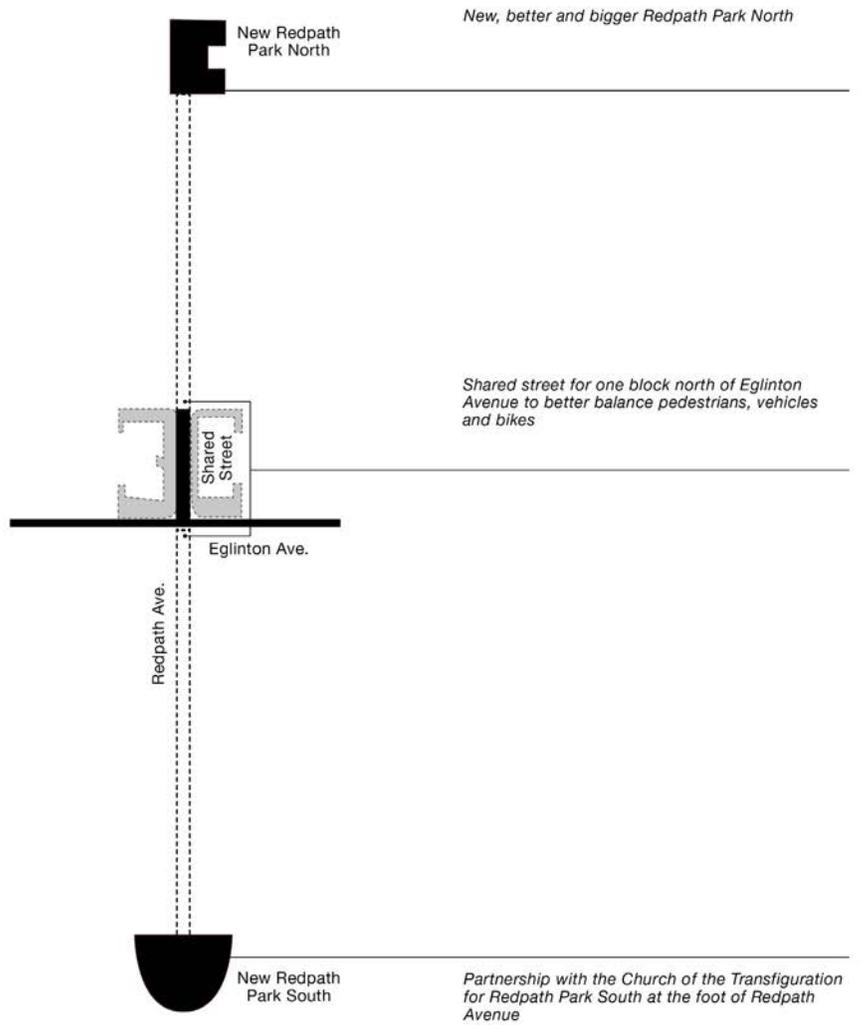




Fig. 3.9a Plan of Redpath Revisited



### Key components and features of Redpath Revisited

### 7.1.4 Redpath Revisited

*The re-imagining of Redpath Avenue as a street bookended by two great neighbourhood parks includes a shared street between Eglinton Avenue and Roehampton Avenue. Redpath becomes an important local meeting place within Midtown to serve the everyday needs of a diverse and growing community.*

Redpath Avenue is an important north-south route in Midtown. It is the only north-south street that crosses Eglinton Avenue between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, providing a key pedestrian connection for the area. Since it is not a major arterial, Redpath Avenue operates at a different scale and pace and is a unique meeting place for the community. South of Eglinton Avenue, Redpath is a Greenway street with wider sidewalks and an expanded tree canopy.

The streetscape changes on the first block north of Eglinton Avenue where Redpath Avenue becomes a shared street with an expanded public realm and streetscape treatments that improve road safety. A distinct and cohesive pavement treatment extending across the boulevard and street signals

to all users that the function of the street has changed while special curb details promote traffic calming to increase safety. Few traditional street elements remain, minimizing the clear division between vehicle space and pedestrian space. The shared function and design of the street creates a heightened awareness that supports a safe flow of vehicle traffic during peak hours and promotes pedestrian and cycling movement.

Active, intimately-scaled retail frontages create a bustling destination block, with seating, lighting and strategic tree plantings that create well-appointed places for people to gather and spill out into the shared space. Smaller in scale than Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, the scale and activity of the ground floor retail maintains and enhances the existing local neighbourhood quality.

At the north end of Redpath Avenue, an expanded Redpath Park North creates a shaded green respite among the residential apartment towers in the area and at the south end, the green space surrounding the Church of the Transfiguration becomes Redpath Park South - a valued local green space anchored by a historic place of worship.



Redpath Parkette



Park similar in scale to the proposed expanded Redpath Park North

### 7.1.5 Midtown Greenways

*A collection of the area's most established apartment-lined residential streets are new green conduits for community life and movement – elevating their status to key components of the public realm network. The nine Midtown Greenways enhance the landscaped character of the streets while making them more conducive to pedestrian and cyclist movement.*

The Midtown Greenways are a network of residential streets that provide pedestrian and active transportation connections through Yonge-Eglinton Centre. With minor changes to the public right-of-way including widened sidewalks, tree plantings and improved landscaped setbacks, the Greenways build upon the attractive and spacious quality of the Tower in the Park open landscapes characteristic to the area. To improve mobility, Greenway streets consolidate building access and driveway entrances to minimize disruptions in the sidewalk, provide dedicated building drop-off areas and introduce cycling facilities on key streets to create local connections.

Generous building setbacks preserve the existing front yard landscape space allowing for the creation of publicly accessible open spaces in the form of forecourts, community gardens and play areas to serve the local community. Widened sidewalks set within landscaped boulevards and framed by a high-branching tree canopy establish the Greenways as comfortable attractive and active places. New street elements including landscaped bulb-outs at park frontages and mid-block walkways, and stormwater features such as rain gardens and bioswales, further extend the landscape to the street edge, shorten pedestrian crossing distances and contribute to traffic calming.

Keewatin and Soudan Avenues are the northern and southern most Greenway streets, respectively. They share a unique built form character with Tower in the Park mid- and high-rise apartment buildings across the street from low-rise residential houses. To provide balance and transition, plantings on new bulb-outs are located on the high-rise side of the street and cycling lanes provide modal balance to the right-of-way while providing direct east-west connections.

Erskine Avenue, a main east-west street located in the northeast quadrant of Yonge-Eglinton Centre, is lined with Tower in the Park high-rises. New on-street vehicle drop-off points eliminate the need for expansive on-site driveway loops, providing more space for wide sidewalks, landscaping and pedestrian amenities.

Roselawn Avenue has a distinct low-rise residential character with houses set back from the street and mature front yard gardens and trees. Widened sidewalks and modest expansions to the tree canopy provide continuity with the Greenways east of Yonge Street, enhance the quiet, landscaped quality of the neighbourhood and provide a direction connection to Eglinton Park.

The five Greenways running north-south between Eglinton Avenue and Soudan Avenues are key connectors for the large apartment blocks. Strategic improvements to these streets - widening sidewalks and increasing the tree canopy - enhance the landscaped quality of the area and provide welcoming direct pedestrian routes to the new Eglinton Crosstown LRT.



Examples of Greenway Street elements including curb extensions, bioswales and high-branching tree canopies

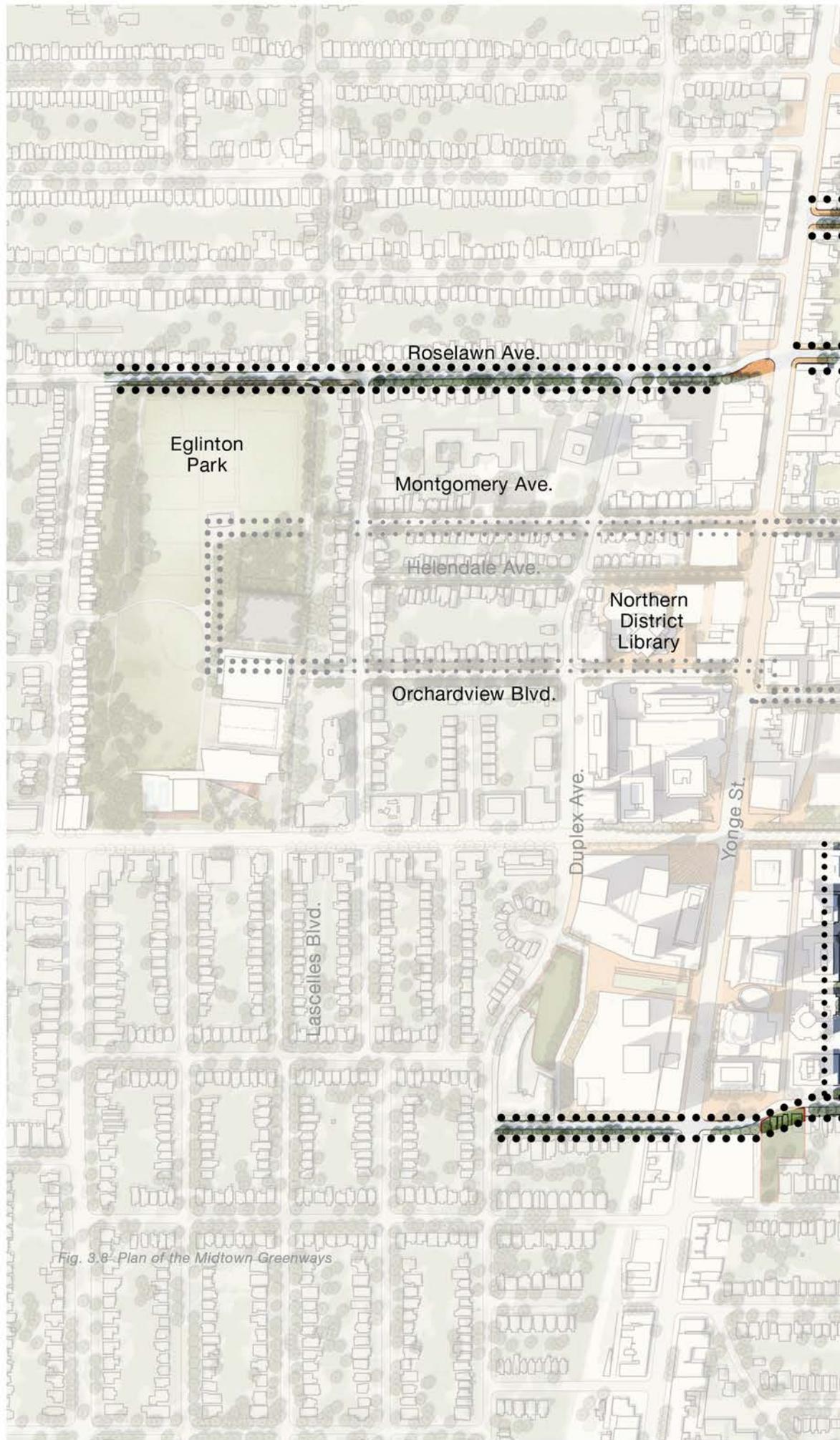


Fig. 3.8 - Plan of the Midtown Greenways



Keewatin Ave.

Erskine Ave.

Broadway Ave.

Roehampton Ave.

Eglinton Ave.

Mt. Pleasant Ave.

Holly St.

Dunfield Ave.

Lilian St.

Redpath Ave.

Brownlow Ave.

Soudan Ave.

## 7.2 DAVISVILLE PUBLIC REALM MOVES

---

The need to extend public realm improvements to the Davisville area was identified through the course of the Midtown in Focus: Growth, Built Form and Infrastructure Review (2015-2018).

A workshop with residents and stakeholders in 2016 helped to identify public realm assets and valued neighbourhood conditions that should be protected and enhanced, as well as areas that needed improvement. Walking tours and table discussions were instrumental in identifying the Public Realm Moves that support a vision for the public spaces in Davisville and build on the 2014 Midtown in Focus Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan.

Staff workshops and consultation with the community in 2017-18 resulted in further direction to improve Davisville's public realm. The Davisville Public Realm Moves focus on improving the public realm network and enhancing the character of streets and open spaces in Davisville. The strategies direct the rebalancing of streets, improving safety and accessibility for users of all ages, abilities and modes and providing additional space for landscaping. Together with the 2014 Public Realm Moves, they create a cohesive public realm network for Midtown.



Boylston Street, Boston



Rendering of Yonge Street Squares Extension

## 7.2.1 Yonge Street Squares Extension

*The extension of the Yonge Street Squares along Yonge Street reinforces its role as a vibrant destination and a primary retail main street for the city. Enhanced streetscaping with wider sidewalks improve walkability while new plazas improve local liveability through placemaking. Squares associated with new pedestrian streets on Glebe Road and Manor Road west of Yonge Street create quiet open spaces along the busy corridor while those on the east side support cafes and outdoor uses associated with the bustling retail environment.*

The episodic sequence of squares in Yonge-Eglinton Centre are extended north and south along Yonge Street building a single continuous public realm experience. Widened sidewalks and additional street trees create comfortable, attractive pedestrian spaces that complement the low- and mid-rise retail shops along the street. Adjacent retail storefronts are an active complement to the squares which provide space for respite and pause as well as outdoor recreation and ancillary retail opportunities. The squares provide space for the high-volume of pedestrian activity that spills into the community and a vibrant new destination for meeting and socializing.

New squares and forecourts mark Yonge Street's intersection with Blythwood Road, Manor Road East, Glebe Road East and Davisville Avenue. Additionally, new landscaped streets and plazas are created on the stub streets west of Yonge Street at Glebe Road West and Manor Road West. Unique pavement treatments, seating, plantings and public art shape create space for gathering and small neighbourhood events. Limited vehicle access ensures the adjacent residential and retail uses are supported while prioritizing safe pedestrian movements.

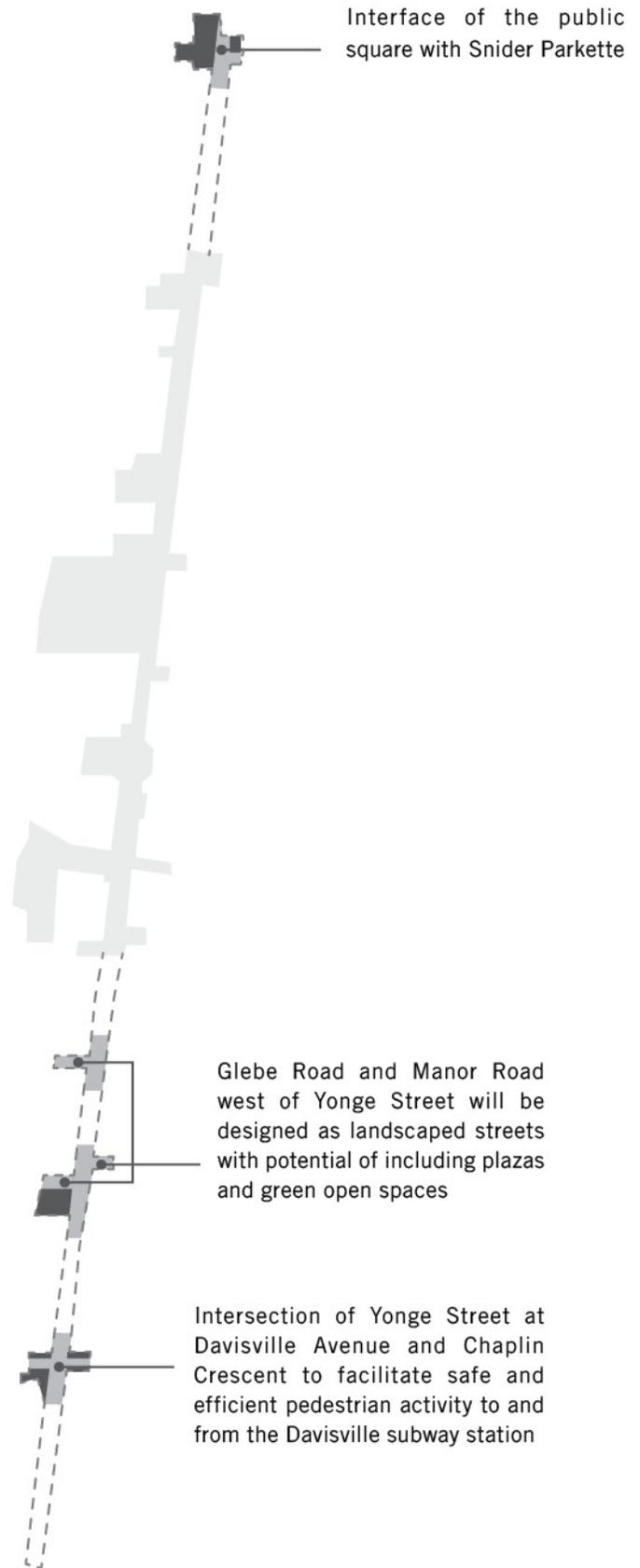
Squares framing the Yonge-Davisville intersection are urban landscaped areas with seating, lighting and bike parking and provide space for local civic life to spill into the shared space. They also create a welcoming threshold that connects Yonge Street to the Davisville Community Street which in turn links with local parks and schools. On the west side of Yonge Street, the square is a gateway to an emerging park and open space network that includes the Kay Gardner Beltline Trail and a proposed signature park located over the Davisville Yard.



Pitt Street Mall, Sydney



Zuccotti Park, New York City



Key components and features of Yonge Street Squares Extension



Rendering of Davisville Community Street

## 7.2.2 Davisville Community Street

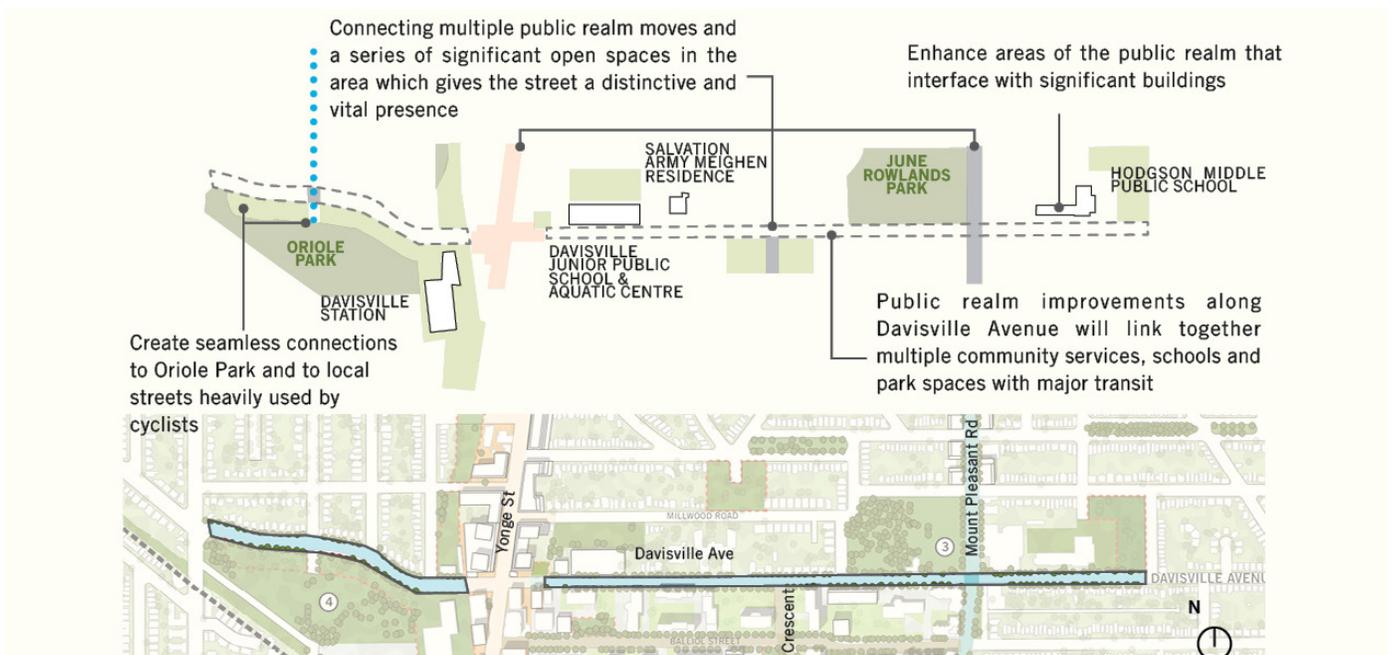
*Davisville Community Street, a civic street and the east-west spine of the neighbourhood, is a multi-purpose promenade that links parks, schools, and a future community hub. The street right-of-way is rebalanced to support active transportation and additional landscaping and amenities to enrich the vibrant community life of the neighbourhood.*

A quintessential Complete Street, Davisville Avenue is a multi-modal corridor with wide sidewalks, separated cycling lanes, and transit access connecting residents to Davisville Subway station. Two public schools, a series of neighbourhood parks and a future community hub are linked along Davisville Avenue, cementing its role as a local civic street. New cycling lanes and improved pedestrian amenity along the corridor create safe connections for children and families accessing these important cornerstones of daily life.

High-branching deciduous trees line the corridor, providing a natural landscaped edge that frames and encloses the street. Additional landscaping and the introduction of stormwater features in the

public boulevard further soften the street edge and create a unique character and identity for the Davisville community. Landscaped forecourts and generous setbacks reinforce the open space character of the neighbourhood and provide opportunities for people to gather and connect.

Davisville Avenue provides one of the few continuous east-west connections through Midtown, stretching from Bayview Avenue in the east and becoming Chaplin Avenue which connects to Eglinton Avenue in the west. Davisville's intersections with Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road – the sites of other public realm moves - create important entrances and places of connection to the Community Street. June Rowlands Park and the Mount Pleasant Arboretum create a soft landscaped green transition to Davisville Avenue in the east. This is countered by the built up, vibrant urban squares at the corners of Davisville Avenue and Yonge Street in the west. Beyond these intersections, Oriole Park in the west and a new park adjacent to Hodgson School in the east provide transition from the high-rise character and community activity along Davisville Avenue to the surrounding low-rise neighbourhoods.



Key components and features of Davisville Community Street

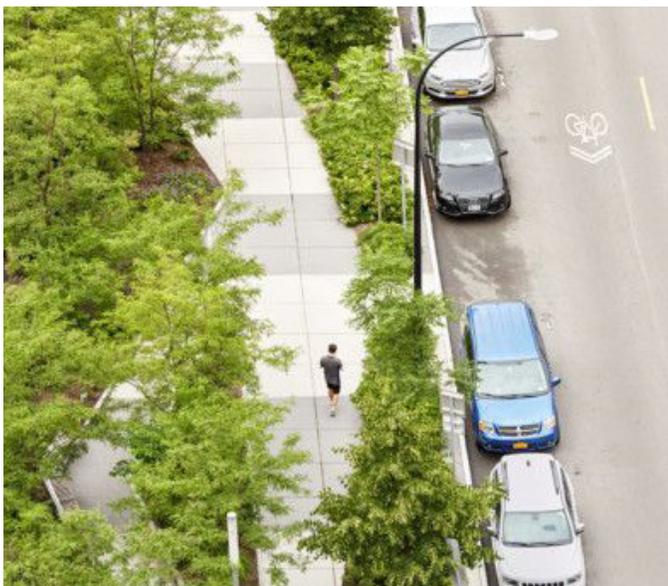
### 7.2.3 Mount Pleasant Road Arboretum

*The cherished arboretum of Mount Pleasant Cemetery extends north along Mount Pleasant Road through Mount Pleasant Village, connecting with the iconic Eglinton Green Line. Mount Pleasant's landscaped promenade, complemented by improved park edges at June Rowlands Park and Mount Pleasant Parkette, creates a leafy outdoor living room along the busy corridor.*

Mount Pleasant Road is redesigned to balance the mobility function of the street within a strengthened public realm. Narrowed travel lanes provide space within the right-of-way for landscaped bulb-outs, parking lay-bys and improved pedestrian spaces that serve local community destinations and support the thriving retail village south of Eglinton Avenue. New separated cycling facilities provide active transportation connections linking with the Eglinton Green Line, Mount Pleasant Transit Station and the Bellline Trail, and start to establish an essential direct cycling connection to the downtown.

An allée of mixed high-branching deciduous trees lays the foundation for a coherent identity along this portion of Mount Pleasant Road, tying together the varied built forms and uses that line the street. The reintroduction of lush greenery to Mount Pleasant Road anchors the street to its local context by providing a seamless landscaped connection between the low-rise homes and gardens to the east, the Tower in the Park landscapes to the west and local parks and Mount Pleasant Cemetery to the south.

Park amenities and activity from June Rowlands Park extend onto the sidewalks along Mount Pleasant Road with an enhanced park edge that provides transition to the public boulevard. At Mount Pleasant Road and Davisville Avenue, June Rowlands Park includes a green gateway to Davisville Community Street and a place for active community life to thrive. Additional landscaping and amenities improve the civic image and recreational utility for Mount Pleasant Parkette as a small, green space for pause along the street.



Buffalo, New York



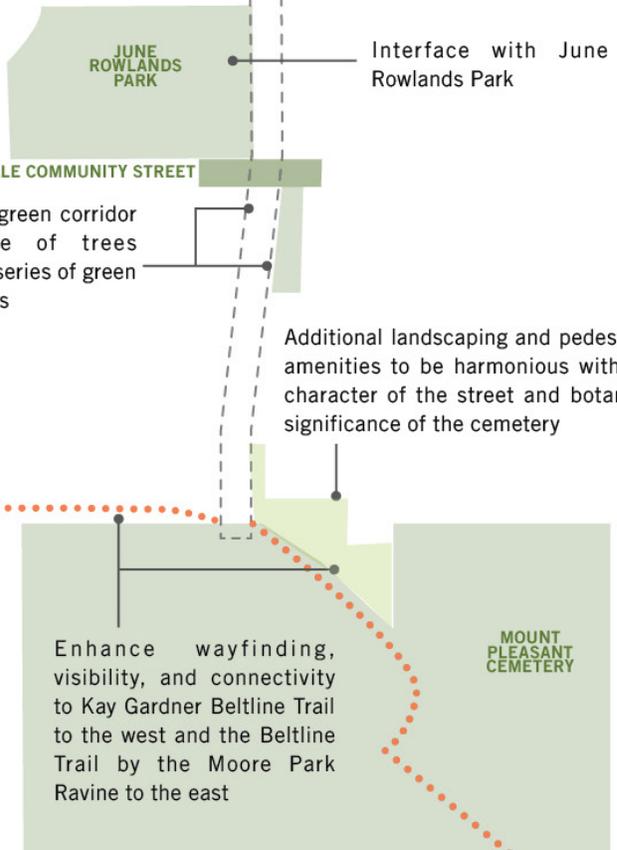
Vancouver, British Columbia



**EGLINTON GREENLINE**

Direct connection to the Eglinton Greenline contributes to having a continuous cycling network across Eglinton Ave. and Mount Pleasant Rd.

Enhanced public realm through street trees and new protected dedicated bike lanes, to frame Mount Pleasant as a north-south link to the Downtown core



Creating a green corridor with allee of trees between a series of green open spaces

Additional landscaping and pedestrian amenities to be harmonious with the character of the street and botanical significance of the cemetery

Enhance wayfinding, visibility, and connectivity to Kay Gardner Beltline Trail to the west and the Beltline Trail by the Moore Park Ravine to the east

Key components and features of the Mount Pleasant Road Arboretum

## 7.2.4 Davisville's Landscaped Streets – Merton Street Promenade, Balliol Green Street, Pailton Crescent Connector

*Davisville's streets framed by multi-unit buildings of varied typologies and heights are transformed into active green corridors by rejuvenating the much valued green and open neighbourhood character. Rebalancing the pedestrian and automobile environment improves the civic life of the streets and neighbourhood vitality with improved landscaping and pedestrian amenities as well as connections to local employment and retail hubs.*

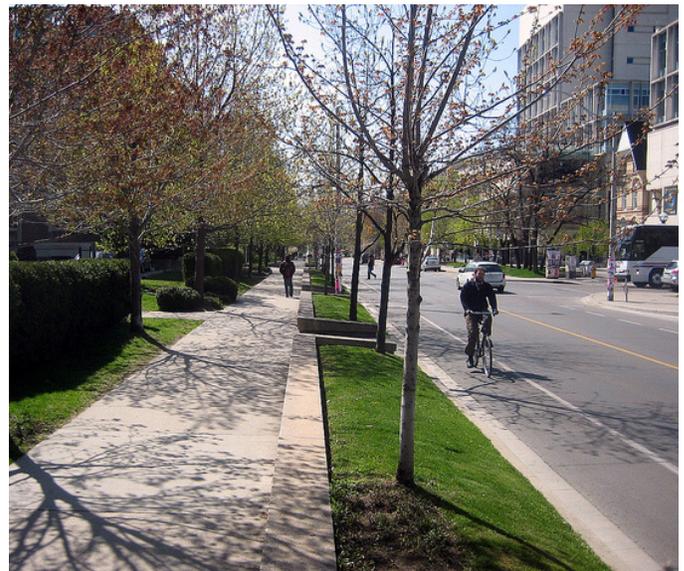
Three streets on the southern edge of Davisville provide key connections between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, high-volume arterials that serve Midtown and beyond. Expanded sidewalks and additional tree plantings rebalance the mobility function of these local streets, providing pedestrians with an enhanced public realm that promotes walkability. Generous front yard setbacks with enhanced landscaping along building frontages and open spaces reinforce the verdant landscape and green character of the neighbourhood. Together, the improvements provide spaces and amenities that support community life by setting the stage for local residents to interact.

Narrowed travel lanes on Merton Street provide space for wider sidewalks and landscaped boulevards to create a well-appointed pedestrian environment reflective of its role as an eclectic hub of office, non-profit, and residential activity.

It connects to Pailton Crescent's retail cluster, a well-established local destination and lively gathering space for residents. A series of enhanced north-south walkways connect Merton Street to the Beltline Trail and Mount Pleasant Cemetery providing active transportation links between Davisville and the broader city.

The landscaped setbacks along Balliol Street are enhanced and expanded, making the Tower in the Park open landscapes along its length more prominent. Additional trees and understory plantings frame the widened sidewalks along the corridor providing a leafy setting for new patios, residential forecourts and publicly-accessible open spaces that support the social life of the area.

Pailton Crescent, the only local north-south street in the area, is bookended by Davisville Avenue to the north and Merton Street to the south. Expanded sidewalks and intersection improvements make it a comfortable pedestrian corridor that includes a block-level destination, a new park at Balliol Street. Patios, seating areas and high-quality landscaping give new life to the commercial/retail/social hub at Merton Street, a local anchor for the community.



Landscaped setbacks and boulevards



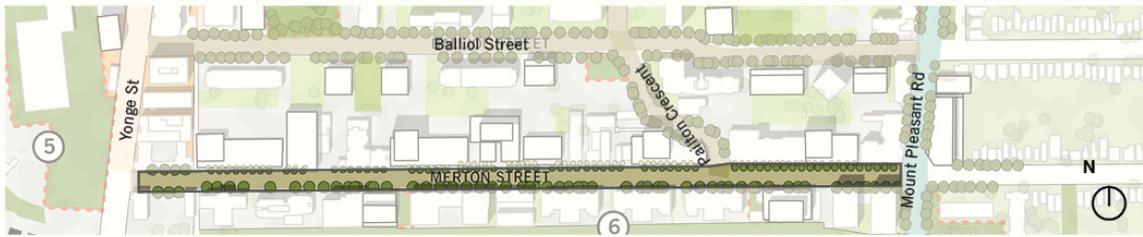
Rendering of Balliol Green Street

Direct connection to the new proposed park over the Davisville Yard

Improved landscaping will provide a balance between green space/pedestrian amenity and vehicular traffic

Enhance connection to the cemetery and trail

Creating a series of pocket parks



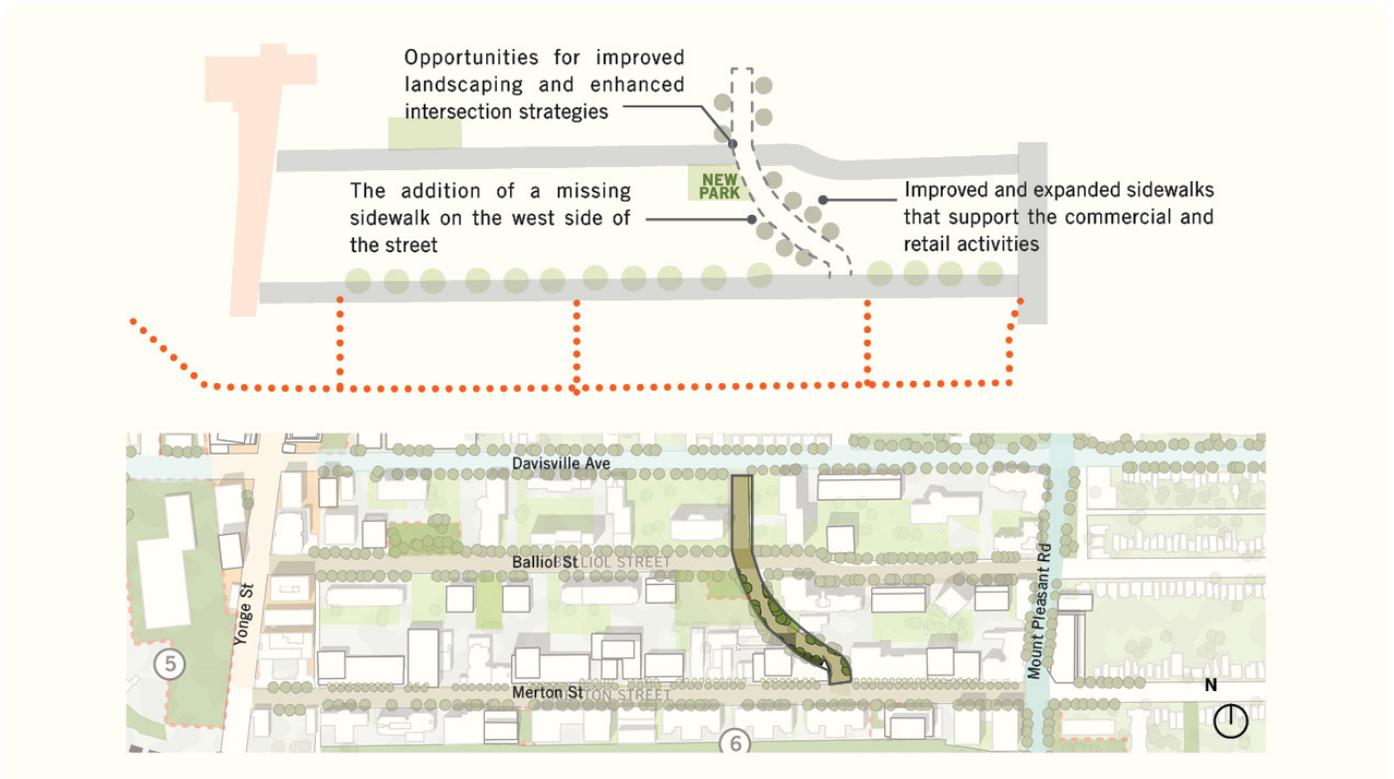
Key components and features of Merton Street Promenade

Enhancing and connecting the open spaces around the Tower in the Park developments

New landscape improvements incorporating storm water management strategies to enhance pedestrian experience



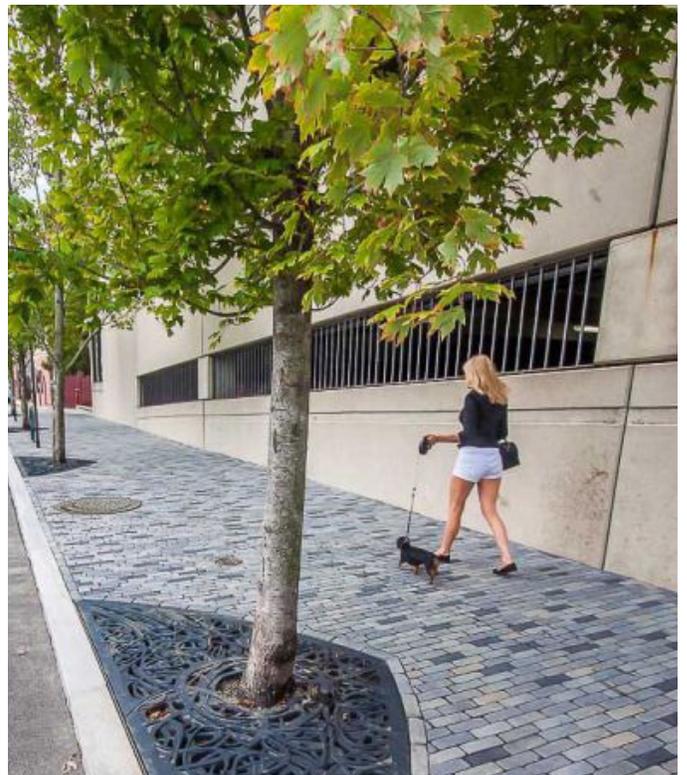
Key components and features of Balliol Green Street



Key components and features of Pailton Crescent Connector



Landscaped setbacks and pedestrian scale lighting



Decorative tree grates and paving

# CHAPTER

# 8



# A CONNECTED AND VERSATILE NETWORK OF PUBLIC PARKS

---

The parkland analysis and public feedback received have been synthesized with new park spaces previously identified as part of the 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan to create a connected and versatile network of public parks for Midtown (Figure 11). The network capitalizes on the area's existing park assets with an eye to expanding these parks and making better use of these spaces to support local needs. It also identifies a series of proposed public parks of all shapes and sizes throughout the area.

In some instances, the identification of proposed parks is opportunistic to complement and further strengthen the Public Realm Moves or to recognize the transformative potential associated with the existing subway trench and Davisville Yard. In other instances, a practical approach has been taken to provide new park spaces capable of accommodating a range of locally-oriented passive and active activities throughout the area that will not only provide new park spaces, but also fill in missing gaps. Taken as a whole, the network of public parks that will be created responds to the challenges and opportunities facing Midtown both now and into the future. It has the potential to add at least 17 hectares of new parkland to Midtown's existing 26.2 hectares of parkland.

Figure 11: Parks and Open Space Network Plan



- Existing/Approved Public Parks
- Ravines/Natural Areas
- Priority Park Area
- City-Owned Opportunity Sites
- Proposed Public Parks
- Park Expansion Areas
- Decking - Further Study Required

Not to Scale

## 8.1 PROPOSED PUBLIC PARKS

The proposed public parks in this plan will create a series of well placed, meaningful, suitably-sized parks capable of accommodating a diverse range of programming in Midtown. The parks will assist in further shaping and solidifying Midtown's lush and green qualities and support Midtown's growing population and peoples' needs over the coming decades.

The proposed parks will create yet another layer of diversity and activity in Midtown and will add to the area's existing complement of active, nature and linear parks. There will be new signature parks, urban parks, such as plazas and squares, green spaces, and other local spaces for people to be active, play and socialize.

Principles used in developing the proposed Parks Plan included the following:

- Continue to recognize potential park partnerships;
- Support, strengthen and build on the Public Realm Moves;
- Create places where people want to be and which will serve as civic focal points in Midtown;
- Strategically locate parks in underserved areas to both reduce pressure on other parks and enhance access for residents;
- Consolidate parkland to improve the quantity, quality and distribution of parks;

- Ensure park spaces can be multifunctional, flexible and multi-seasonal;
- Create parks that are sunny, visible and accessible from adjacent public streets;
- Secure land on larger sites to create new park spaces as development proceeds; and
- Get the most out of scarce resources and consider the cost of acquiring new lands.

### 8.1.1 Park Partnerships

There are a number of sites in Midtown that are currently privately-owned but look and act like public parks. The City can partner with these landowners, either by leasing the lands or through other arrangements, to secure the use of these open spaces as public parks for the enjoyment and benefit of people living and working in Midtown. The 2014 Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan identified two open spaces in particular – an open space to the north of the existing Redpath Parkette and the Church of the Transfiguration. The existing Balliol Parkette in the Yonge-Davisville area, in conjunction with the Sculpture Garden to the east, is also a park partnership opportunity. Additionally, new opportunities to partner with the local School Boards and create new local park spaces that are functional in their own right, but part of a bigger park and open space system will be pursued.

#### Redpath Parkette Expansion

The northeast quadrant of the study area has the highest population density in Midtown, but lacks a large, programmable park to support its growing population. The 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan identified lands to the north of the existing Redpath Parkette

as a priority park area. The new, better and bigger Redpath Parkette should be reexamined and redesigned with an emphasis on creating flexible open space.

### **Church of the Transfiguration**

The expansion of Redpath Parkette was part of the Redpath Revisited Public Realm Move which also sought to take advantage of the open space and remarkable city views at the Church of the Transfiguration site at Redpath Avenue's southern terminus. The City should partner with the Church to absorb this open space into the park network, providing community access to this unique site located on a drumlin with its topographic vantage point and anchored by the historic place of worship.

### **Balliol Parkette**

The City previously leased the Balliol Parkette site in the Yonge-Davisville area. This green space is nestled along Balliol Street, beside the Al Green Sculpture Garden associated with 77 Davisville Avenue. The City should explore options for potential continued public use of this site as the area continues to intensify, providing an area



**Balliol Parkette**

of green respite in the heart of the Davisville Apartment Neighbourhood.

### **Hodgson and Maurice Cody Public Schools**

Two new public park spaces are also proposed in association with existing schools in the area. These park spaces are large enough to accommodate a range of programmable spaces. Working in partnership with the local School Boards and optimizing the design of the both the parks and school properties can have synergistic benefits and create expanded open spaces for use by students at the schools and people living and working in Midtown.

## **8.1.2 Civic Focal Points**

Feedback heard throughout the consultations on parks and public realm was that Midtown lacked certain types of public spaces, like squares, where people could gather, people watch or offer respite from dense urban living. The 2014 Midtown in Focus: Parks, Open Space and Streetscape Master Plan began to address this identified deficiency with the Yonge Street Squares Public Realm Move, but other opportunities can be capitalized on to create a series of new urban squares and plazas in Midtown.

### **Montgomery Square**

A new park space is proposed in association with Montgomery Square, reinforcing the role of this area as the civic heart of Midtown with its district servicing community facilities and rich history. The new park will provide space large enough to not only accommodate seasonal events and markets that could spill out onto the adjacent streets, but also to allow for other park programs and features

fitting for the calibre of this important civic focal point. The new park space would be located, configured, coordinated and designed with the other open spaces that have and will be secured as part of redevelopment in the area, such as in front of Postal Station K, and improvements to the open spaces surrounding the Northern District Library. A unified design and material palette for the new park, the adjacent streets and other open spaces will work to create a distinct civic destination in an area of Midtown with the highest level of activity and intensification.

### Soudan Priority Park Area

The Soudan Apartment Neighbourhood is undergoing a dynamic period of development. Close to the crossroads of the Yonge-Eglinton intersection, the transformation of the blocks along Soudan Avenue continues to offer the opportunity to enlarge existing and approved parks in this area and create a series of park spaces along the corridor. The expanded Dunfield Park will provide the neighbourhood with a sizeable, programmable

community destination. Its location north of low-rise neighbourhoods provides these areas with ideal sunlight access. The park spaces will link the apartment blocks to the north with the low-rise residential neighbourhood to the south, providing a sunny place for the community to gather.

### Pailton Square

Building on the Pailton Crescent Connector Public Realm Move, the new open space associated with reclaiming space from the existing street can be expanded with any redevelopment of the existing private tennis club to create a new square along the Davisville Apartment Neighbourhood's only north-south street. The square would be part of the sequence of public realm interventions designed as a cohesive whole along both Davisville Avenue and Pailton Crescent and linked to the existing commercial hub at Merton Street. Combined, these places will create a cohesive network of community spaces and a new civic focal point in the Yonge-Davisville area.



Illustration of redevelopment at Montgomery Square including Postal Station K

## Davisville Civic Precinct

The Davisville Apartment Neighbourhood, and Midtown as a whole, is benefitting from a newly proposed aquatic centre and new Davisville Public School. New park spaces are proposed to be secured in and around these new facilities to expand and enlarge open spaces associated with these community facilities to create a new civic precinct along with the Davisville Community Street Public Realm Move. A new park space specifically proposed adjacent to the future aquatic centre will provide a contiguous open space and allow for both indoor and outdoor recreational programming. Other opportunities to acquire adjacent buildings to further expand this precinct and provide additional school and neighbourhood recreational programming may also emerge to the east of Davisville Public School.

### 8.1.3 Local Park Spaces

Midtown lacks parks in the 0.5 to 1.5 hectare range. As noted earlier in this Plan, parks this size can offer a variety of locally-oriented parks programming and provide a crucial role in supporting the needs of area residents. A series of new local parks in this size range are proposed in close proximity to areas experiencing or anticipated to experience the most growth, while also benefitting Midtown's stable residential neighbourhoods. The local parks will be of a sufficient size and suitably configured to accommodate a variety of neighbourhood-oriented active and passive amenities such as small or mid-sized sports fields, play spaces, community gardens and multi-use spaces. Additional parkland may be required depending on the number of residents the park would serve.

In conceptually locating these new local park spaces, consideration was given to the distribution

of park spaces across Midtown and to capitalizing on locations adjacent to any existing City-owned assets or other community focal points like schools. The proposed local park spaces consist of:

- The Chaplin Estates Local Park – oriented along the existing Tranmer Avenue right-of-way and situated between Eglinton Park and Oriole Park. The park has been conceived as a series of park spaces that could host a range of park programming, from basketball courts to playgrounds much like David Crombie Park in the heart of the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood. Further review of Tranmer Avenue will be needed as the Plan progresses into more detailed assessment;
- The Redpath Revisited Local Park further supports the Redpath Revisited Public Realm Move. The new park is intended to provide an unencumbered park space to the north of the existing open spaces and improve local connectivity;
- The Hillsdale Local Park which will create a greatly expanded park space in close proximity to Midtown's high growth areas and adjacent to the existing linear, connector park space between Soudan Avenue and Hillsdale Avenue;
- The Broadway Park located across from the Northern Secondary School, builds on recent acquisitions for new park space related to redevelopments in the Apartment Neighbourhood to the west; and
- The Davisville Local Park located mid-way between Yonge Street and Mount Pleasant Road, capitalizes on a small treed and sodded City-owned piece of land.

### 8.1.4 A New Neighbourhood Hub

The original subdivisions associated with the Glebe Manor Estates included very little parkland for residents. The only park spaces consisted of the signature boulevard parks located on Belsize Drive. Land acquisition over time also resulted in the development of June Rowlands Park in this area by 1967. The southeast quadrant of the Midtown area, in particular, lacks public parks, but has potential to accommodate a new, centrally-located medium-sized local park that could not only provide much needed park space for this quadrant, but also for all of Midtown. A park space in the range of 1.5 to 3.0 hectares could accommodate a new community facility in the long-term, contributing to creating a new neighbourhood hub in each of Midtown's districts and quadrants.

### 8.1.5 Large Sites

Midtown's diverse lot fabric, while challenging to plan, presents opportunities to secure new, functional park spaces on larger sites. The exact shape and location of these park spaces will be determined either through a special study for Canada Square, or through the development approvals process. Potential large sites for park opportunities include:

- The Canada Square Park initially conceived as part of the 2010 Yonge-Eglinton Focused Review
- A new park Commons at the existing Metro grocery store site, at the northwest corner of Bayview Avenue and Eglinton Avenue West;
- A new square at the corner of Roselawn Avenue and Yonge Street where the beaux-arts Bank of Montreal building once stood; and

- A series of new parks in association with the Park Street Loop and Davisville Community Street Public Realm Moves, given the large lot fabric in these areas and opportunity to further improve the utility of the Loop and Community Street as community spaces.

Other large sites may also emerge in the future as ownership of properties continues to change in Midtown. A small site today could be assembled into a larger site providing opportunities to secure park spaces on sites that are approximately 500 square metres or bigger.

## 8.2 MAKING BETTER USE OF MIDTOWN'S EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS

Many of Midtown's existing public parks have significant potential to be reconfigured and reimagined to respond to 21st Century needs and a growing population. As funding becomes available, the City can invest in these existing parks and expand them to maintain their inherent character and qualities, while providing enhanced locally-oriented programming. By expanding existing parks incrementally, they can also be designed to respond to changing demographics and new generations of users and uses, while at the same time recognizing that space constraints demand more out of each square metre of park to provide the greatest benefit to a growing and diverse population. Additionally, targetting park expansions to maximize the perimeter street frontage of existing parks can improve their prominence, visibility and accessibility.

There are opportunities for all of Midtown's existing parks to provide enhanced programming, but the most opportunity is afforded by the area's existing larger parks. A master planning exercise is currently underway for Eglinton Park. As the area continues to evolve, master planning exercises should be undertaken for the balance of Midtown's larger park spaces with the objective of improving and enhancing their utility, including installing new and renewed recreation facilities, developing new pathways and walking loops, providing additional seating and accommodating community events. Properties adjacent to existing large park spaces can also be acquired over time to provide additional parkland associated with these existing parks. Other identified park expansion opportunities will contribute to improving access to the Kay Gardner Beltline Trail, such as sites south of Merton Street and on either side of Oriole Parkway.

## 8.3 CAPITALIZING ON OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Midtown has a number of City-owned properties that can be considered to provide additional parkland and contribute to placemaking in Midtown. There are two Toronto Parking Authority parking lots, as well as the existing open cut subway trench located between Duplex Avenue and Berwick Avenue.

### 8.3.1 The Yard

The Davisville Yard presents an incredible opportunity to not only grow employment opportunities in Midtown, but also to create a new, signature park space that connects with an improved Oriole Park. The vision for the Yard is to

transform the space above the active subway maintenance yard into a new mixed-use office district alongside a new, signature public park to create a major destination for people from across the city that will also serve people living and working in its immediate vicinity. However, more detailed study is needed to realize this vision. A feasibility study is recommended to be undertaken to understand what would be required functionally, technically and structurally to enable decking of the Yard. The study will need to ensure that:

- Existing essential operations that need to remain on the site will receive the first priority, as well as potentially allowing for future flexibility for modifications and improvements;
- Any decking potential will prioritize office development and the creation of the new, signature public park that provides active and passive recreation activities, natural areas, and civic and cultural spaces;
- Any park provided on the Yard is physically integrated with Oriole Park to expand this existing park asset and contribute to creating a large, multi-function park space;
- A proposed approach to phasing is developed and includes a review of how the project would be sequenced, constructed and aligned with other planned capital projects; and
- The development of a business plan is included as a key consideration in the study that will include a review of potential revenue generated by the introduction of new uses and other tools that may be needed to finance decking over the Yard.

### 8.3.2 The Trench

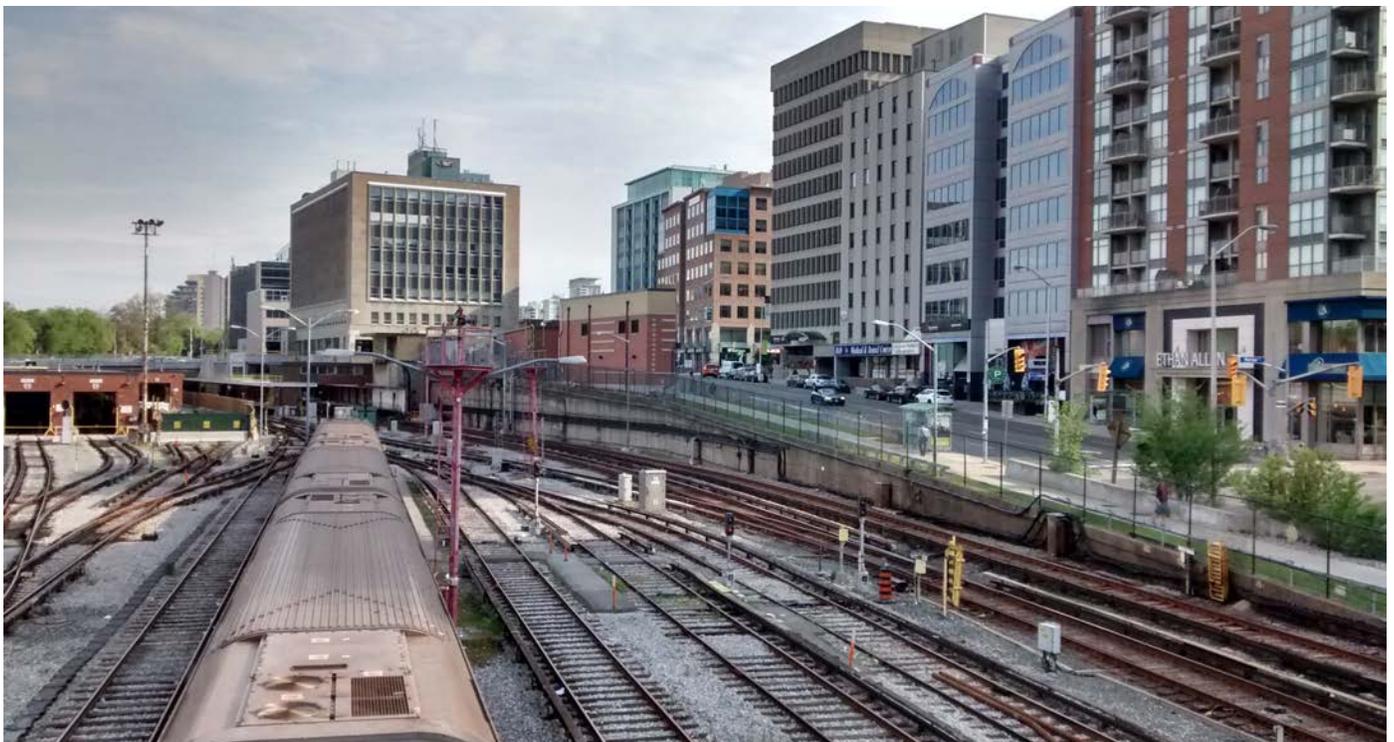
Equally as exciting as the prospect of decking over the Yard is the 0.6 kilometre section of the subway system between Chaplin Crescent and Berwick Avenue and its transformative potential as a new, two hectare signature linear park spine that would connect Midtown north and south. Much like with the Yard, more detailed study is needed to realize this new park space. The study would include undertaking an engineering feasibility review of decking over the Trench with the development of cost estimates and funding options.

While more study is needed, the future of the Trench Park should nonetheless be secured by designating these lands as Parks and Open Spaces Areas in the City's Official Plan. The lands are currently designated a combination of *Mixed Use Areas* and *Neighbourhoods*. By redesignating the lands, it sets clear expectations that any decking of the subway needs to be for park purposes, with the continued subway functions accommodated and permitted.

### 8.3.3 The Lots

The two lots owned by the Toronto Parking Authority provide different opportunities to support increased access to parkland in Midtown. The lot at 20 Castlefield Avenue may be able to achieve a number of local priorities, including a new park space and other city-building priorities such as new affordable housing in a low-rise form.

The lot at 83-97 Burnaby Boulevard presents an opportunity to provide a new local park midway between Eglinton Park and Memorial Park to serve the neighbourhood and the anticipated mid-rise intensification along Eglinton Avenue. The lot will be redesignated to parkland to secure this location for a future park. Parking spaces on this site could be replaced in one or more mixed-use developments in the area.



Davisville subway yards

# CHAPTER

# 9



# MAXIMIZING THE USE OF OTHER OPEN SPACES

---

Midtown's parks and open space network includes parks of various sizes and functions, ravines that connect Midtown to the broader city, mid-block connections through large landscaped sites, and open spaces on privately-owned land. Privately-owned open spaces play an essential role in Midtown's open space network: small POPS break up the dense built form along the street edges and create local spaces for pause; the landscaped Tower in the Park sites create an expansive green condition that provides much needed contrast to the high-rise buildings; and large open spaces like the cemeteries create additional areas for passive recreation and contemplation.

As infill and intensification occurs in Midtown, there is pressure to reduce existing open spaces to accommodate new buildings and additions. The intention for growth needs to be balanced with the preservation of the landscaped spaciousness that is so characteristic of Midtown. A proper balance between intensification and green space will be achieved, in no small part, by creating new open spaces and improving existing open spaces on private lands. By making the most of open spaces beyond Midtown's parks, open spaces and streets, Midtown's identity will be further strengthened while enabling growth and intensification.

## 9.1 CEMETERIES

---

The two cemeteries in Midtown provide important spaces for passive recreation and reflection as well as connections to the city's ravine network. Improving existing entrances and creating new points of access is important to ensure these spaces are accessible to the public. Development adjacent to the cemeteries should provide new mid-block walkways that offer safe and accessible connections for pedestrians and cyclists. Improved connections through Mount Pleasant Cemetery connecting with the Vale of Avoca and Moore Park Ravine will also help to connect the city's active transportation networks and provide additional opportunities for recreation.

## 9.2 PLACES OF WORSHIP

---

The open space surrounding the Church of the Transfiguration has been identified as an opportunity to create a new small park through a lease or acquisition by the City (Redpath Revisited Public Realm Move). For other churches in the area that have landscaped yards, including St. Clement's Church, Glebe Road United Church, St. Peter's Estonian Lutheran Church and St. Cuthbert's Church, preserving and enhancing their existing open space amenity is important for local passive use as well as their role in the larger parks and open space network.

## 9.3 SCHOOLS

---

School yards scattered throughout the study area provide important local green spaces and recreational uses. Public access to these spaces will continue to be important as the area grows. The local School Boards and the City have agreed that, working in partnership, they will ensure provision of recreational and landscaped open spaces on school properties. Together, the City and local Schools Boards will also pursue greater utilization of school properties for community access through shared-use open spaces and recreation facilities. Through the development of the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan and Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan, the City has identified a number of proposed public parks located adjacent to school properties. These sites offer the opportunity to optimize the utility of both the public park and school property for public and educational use. The City and local School Boards have agreed that as adjacent lands are acquired by the City, or if the identified school sites redevelop, the City and local School Boards will collaborate on the site design of the properties to provide the greatest utility for both sites.



**Nursery playground at the Church of the Transfiguration**

## 9.4 DEVELOPMENT-RELATED

---

Infill development and redevelopment can, both directly and indirectly, contribute to creating new publicly-accessible open spaces, and preserve and enhance existing open space areas. For instance, new buildings and building additions can be located, configured and massed to preserve and improve at-grade open space and tree canopy conditions, while also preserving skyview from these spaces and ensuring good sunlight on them. Buildings can also be massed and designed to frame open spaces with good proportion and animate them with complementary indoor and outdoor uses, entrances and clear views into and out of buildings. Casual overlook from adjacent buildings can be used to promote safety.

All infill development and redevelopment will support Midtown's public realm with new or improved open spaces that rejuvenate, expand and enhance the existing network of streets, parks and open spaces. Open spaces will be located and configured to support the Public Realm Moves with landscaped setbacks and physical and visual connections, as appropriate. These open spaces will connect to and be integrated with existing open space assets such as parks, cemeteries and school yards. Soft landscaping should predominate providing opportunities for tree planting on private lands to increase and improve the urban forest tree canopy. The open space will be programmed with amenities and uses that are complementary to park and public space uses contributing to a holistic network of facilities.

Regardless of ownership, a common design language of hard and soft landscaping features and strategies will tie public and private lands together, as appropriate, to give Midtown a coherent identity. Grading at the interface of public and privately owned publicly-accessible lands should be subtle to promote universal accessibility and should not involve abrupt grade changes or extensive retaining walls. Well-maintained outdoor spaces with clear definition of private and public space will contribute to a safe and accessible environment.

Whether publicly accessible or not, these other open spaces contribute to the urban environment by providing generous building spatial separation and space for trees and landscaping. The planting, in turn, has the potential to provide local shade and cooling, mediate wind impacts, provide wildlife habitat and other ecological benefits. In support, underground parking slabs will provide sufficient depth and amount of planting medium to support a permanent canopy of high branching deciduous trees especially in front yard areas. These spaces can also support stormwater management features such as bioswales or rain gardens, reduce solar reflection and heat island effects, support wildlife habitat and corridors and increase biomass, urban forest, tree canopy and diversity.

These additional open spaces will provide places for the community to come together strengthening the local social fabric, and reinventing degraded and underused open spaces to not only provide amenity for the residents of a building, but to also contribute to environmental sustainability and neighbourhood identity. The scale, location and configuration of these open spaces will support flexible programming that can change over time —

responsive to evolving trends and outdoor interests. For example, outdoor swimming pools and tennis courts may become space for future community gardens and orchards, children's play areas, stormwater management facilities, landscaped courtyards or formal gardens.

### 9.4.1 Tower in the Park Open Space

The Tower in the Park built form and open space typology associated with a significant wave of intensification in the 1960s is important to Midtown's character. Tower in the Park open space is also one of the most significant sources of private open space in Midtown. Despite being park deficient, Midtown maintains the appearance of a green and lush landscape due, to a great extent, to the continued existence of these spaces, whether they are in pristine condition or have degraded over time. These open spaces are valued and make important contributions to the park and open space network in Midtown.

Some of the original landscaped amenity areas of the tower buildings in Midtown may have been converted to other uses over time including parking lots or service areas. These areas need to be re-landscaped to re-establish the park-like setting that



AI Green Sculpture Garden

was part of the original Midtown character. Further, re-designing elaborate drop-off courts and sterile front entrance landscapes to incorporate areas for seating, gathering and playing can add interest and make these areas more public and responsive to community needs.

As potential cultural heritage landscapes, the Tower in the Park open spaces may be conserved and restored by maintaining generous setbacks from streets, parks and mid-block connections in order to improve spatial relationships and existing trees, improving pedestrian conditions and access, minimizing hardscaped areas and supporting a range of recreational amenities. Landscape features such as pools and fountains, low decorative walls, retaining walls, garden structures and walkway alignments that define gardens or amenity areas may also be preserved, restored, enhanced and integrated with new development. New development will need to be responsive to the existing landscape forms, elements, and relationships in a way that will reflect and support the attributes of the Tower in the Park neighbourhoods.

Some of the landscaped green spaces have been neglected and have degraded over time resulting in the loss of once high quality and valued recreational features such as pools, tennis courts, playgrounds, gardens, feature walls, trellises and other garden structures. The result is that the remnant landscape is no longer valued and defaults to being seen as a vacant underutilized site to be redeveloped. In Midtown, where public park space is in short supply, open space is valued and the "park" portion of a Tower in the Park site should, instead, be rejuvenated to regain its value as useful and beautiful open space that can serve the needs of residents and visitors.

## 9.4.2 Landscaped Entries and Forecourts

Large scale entry areas for private buildings are another important feature of Tower in the Park landscapes, Eglinton Avenue East's mid-century mid-rise pavilion style buildings, as well as many of Midtown's low-rise walk-up apartment buildings. The Tower in the Park sites consist of generously scaled front yard setbacks that typically include vehicular drop off areas, architectural entry features, and sometimes fountains and pools. Entrance landscaped areas are provided on a smaller scale for many buildings in Midtown in the form of landscaped forecourts featuring decorative paving, planting, seating, lighting and sometimes public art or other architectural or landscape features.

New development will create landscaped entries and forecourts, as well as ensure that main entrance doors and interior lobby and amenity areas face the entry courts with extensive glazing and uses that complement the entry function. Large scale weather protection elements should extend into the forecourt/entry areas and provide places for people to sit with hard and soft landscaping, lighting and other landscape



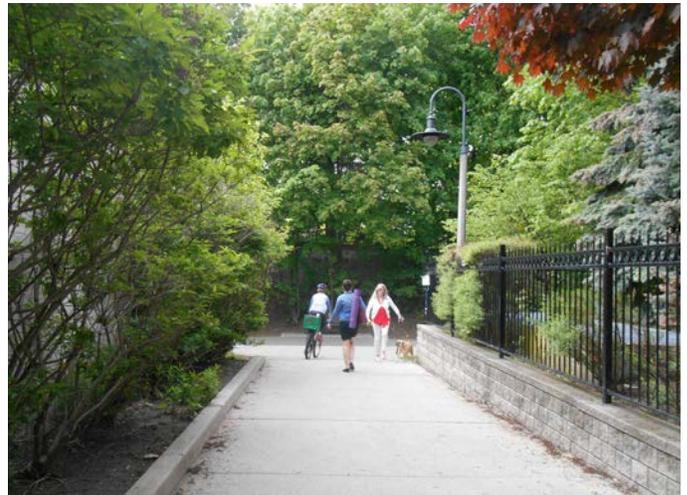
Landscaped forecourt

features. Wherever possible, driveways and service areas will be minimized or consolidated to create more space for soft landscaping and outdoor people places.

## 9.4.3 Mid-block Pedestrian Connections

Mid-block connections are secured public access routes. Existing, legacy connections in Midtown are often informal and have no legal status for public access. Generally, they provide north-south connections through Midtown's large blocks, providing active transportation routes and physical breaks. Mid-block connections are part of the overall transportation network that includes public sidewalks, park walkways and other mid-block walkways that connect to local and city-wide destinations. Mid-block connections incorporate landscaped amenities such as trees, landscaping, lighting and seating areas.

New development will contribute to the network of mid-block connections, providing multiple connections or alternate mid-block routes through blocks where possible. Where mid-block connections meet streets they will have a welcoming design that is legible as a public place.



Mid-block connection to the Beltline Trail

Adjacent development will be organized and adjacent buildings will be massed, designed and programmed with entrances, glazing and active indoor and outdoor uses to promote safety, support the public realm and active mobility functions of the space and provide address along the mid-block connection.

#### 9.4.4 Communal Amenity Space

Generally, communal amenity space for residential buildings in Midtown is located in the middle of the block either behind or beside existing buildings. These areas are not publicly accessible but contribute a significant amount of open space and are a valued part of the open space network. They provide outdoor amenity area for residents and contribute open space, sky view and building separation. Providing space for on-site trees and other planting also contributes biomass, shade, water balance and solar protection. Where communal amenity areas border the public realm, such as mid-block connections or parks, they will be defined by transparent or partially transparent fencing or other permeable boundary markers that support safety by providing overlook. The visual connection between communal open space and the public realm creates a more spacious ensemble of open spaces.

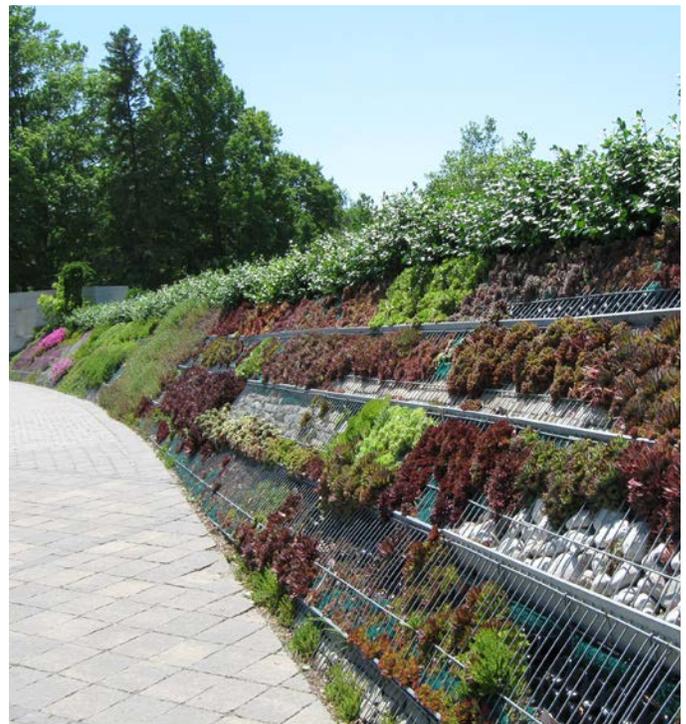
#### 9.4.5 Private Amenity Space

Typically, private amenity space is located at grade as patio areas or front entry gardens or porches; above grade private amenity spaces include terraces and balconies. Generally, these are small scale spaces. As with communal open space, where they border public or publicly accessible open spaces, these spaces will be designed with defined boundaries rather than screening to encourage overlook and promote a safe environment. The permeable edges allow for

a visual connection between private and publicly accessible space that can be borrowed to make each space appear larger and more spacious.

#### 9.4.6 Landscape Buffers

Landscape buffers are often located between public and or private lands or between different uses. They are linear landscaped features that support fencing, screening and /or trees and other planting. Often these areas are designed with practical considerations including snow storage, visual screening between different uses and storm water management purposes. They can also support tree planting, adding shade, biomass, wildlife habitat and amenity. Considerations for creating planted networks through Midtown's large blocks with native plant materials to provide wildlife corridors, habitat and food will support the local ecology. By ensuring that these areas are large enough to support trees and other plantings, they can contribute a treed backdrop to development.



Example of landscaped buffer

### 9.4.7 Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Open Space (POPS)

Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Open Spaces (POPS) are private landscaped open space areas that are secured through development for the purposes of ensuring public access. Midtown POPS are located in highly visible areas of sites often adjacent to and connecting to parks, mid-block connections, public sidewalks, squares and, where possible, in direct relation to the Public Realm Moves. The Eglinton Green Line, Park Street Loop and Yonge Street Squares make use of POPS to the greatest extent possible to strengthen the impact of these Public Realm Moves. The City provides open space, design and built from guidance for POPS through its policies and the draft Urban Design Guidelines for Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces.

Through development, POPS are sited and configured to support the public realm by contributing additional green space, a variety of recreational facilities and amenities, trees and other landscaping, pedestrian and cycling amenities and sites for public art or other landmark features. POPS will also support green technologies and sustainable design features and support the natural environment. Midtown POPS will predominately comprise soft green landscaping, generously scaled to support the landscaped spaciousness characteristic of Midtown.

Buildings bordering POPS will have direct access to indoor and outdoor public uses at grade such as cafés or storefronts. The buildings will frame POPS with well-articulated building walls with a significant amount of glazing, direct access to active interior spaces and lighting. Where appropriate, private amenity areas, cafes, restaurant patios and other private spaces bordering POPS will have a well-

defined edge that is visually permeable and attractive, such as a low decorative fence or hedge, to differentiate between public and private space.

### 9.4.8 Rooftop Terraces and Green Roofs

Buildings may provide open space on rooftop terraces as communal amenity areas, private amenity areas and commercial areas such as outdoor restaurant patios. These spaces are designed to take advantage of their relationship to the public realm through their use and their design, particularly in ways that support the Public Realm Moves. Green roofs, though not publicly accessible, are valued not only for their role in sustainability, but also for their contributions to reinforcing Midtown's green character when viewed from above.

Rooftop terraces can support the open space network by creating physical and visual connections to adjacent at-grade public open space and, in return, they benefit from having a strong visual connection to Midtown's well defined public realm.

Locating rooftop terraces and green roofs along the Public Realm Moves and overlooking public parks or POPS will support the public realm by providing a visually prominent green edge with trees and other landscaping and avoiding solid high screening parapets that visually increase the base building height. Transparent edge barriers on rooftops that allow users at-grade and on rooftops visual access and interaction is encouraged. By using a similar design language at grade and along rooftops, Midtown's strong public realm image will be expanded to additional levels. Where the rooftop terraces are publicly accessible, very strong design cues for vertical connection and for identification of their public accessibility are essential to their success as public places.

# CHAPTER

# 10



# PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

---

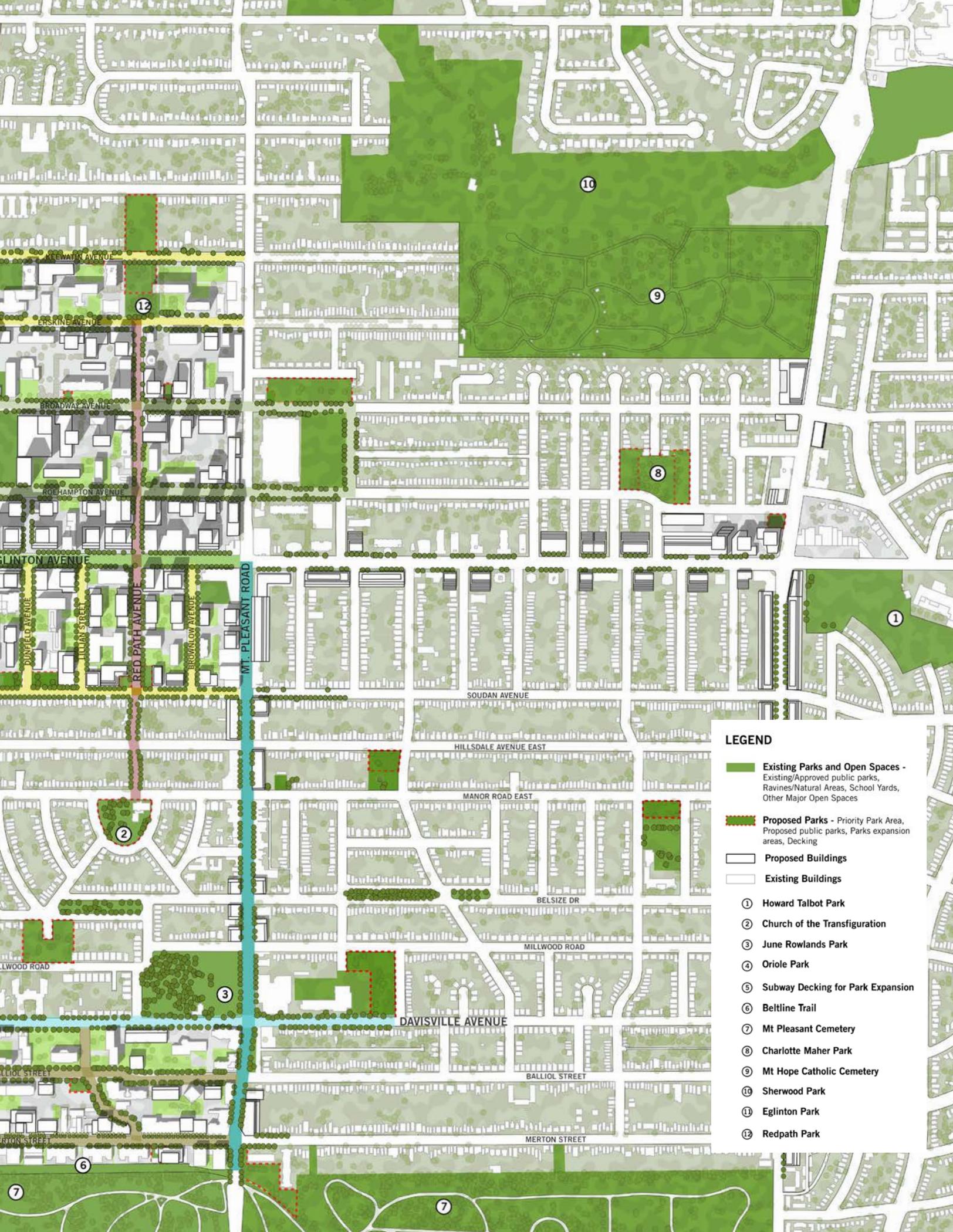
The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan sets out a 25 year vision as an expanded, connected and improved network of parks, streets and open spaces. The Plan brings together Three Core Elements of the public realm in Midtown:

- A Series of Public Realm Moves that create the framework for a transformed public realm;
- A Connected and Versatile Network of Public Parks to provide a variety of places for people to play, be active, rest and relax and contribute to an enhanced environment; and
- Maximizing the Use of Other Open Spaces to supplement Midtown's public parks and reinforce Midtown's open space character.

The Core Elements create impact at different scales to fulfill the aspirations of the Plan. New and expanded parks create a foundation of community level destinations and provide essential recreation and green spaces within the growing district. Improvements to existing parks provide localized benefits to residents while also creating a large collective impact by enhancing the network of public parks. Access to privately-owned open spaces provides unique experiences for residents and contributes to the green character of the area. And finally, the Public Realm Moves, while becoming new destinations themselves, link together the parks and open spaces in Midtown extending the park-like experience along the street network and providing improved active transportation routes and pedestrian connections. The integration of these elements will strengthen Midtown's identity as a thriving metropolitan district that is dense and urban while still being spacious and green. The Three Core Elements are presented together in the illustrative framework plan demonstrating how to bring together community-level and signature park destinations, important private green spaces and the Public Realm Moves to create a cohesive vision for Midtown.



Midtown Parks and Public Realm Illustrative Framework Plan



**LEGEND**

- Existing Parks and Open Spaces - Existing/Approved public parks, Ravines/Natural Areas, School Yards, Other Major Open Spaces
- Proposed Parks - Priority Park Area, Proposed public parks, Parks expansion areas, Decking
- Proposed Buildings
- Existing Buildings
- ① Howard Talbot Park
- ② Church of the Transfiguration
- ③ June Rowlands Park
- ④ Oriole Park
- ⑤ Subway Decking for Park Expansion
- ⑥ Beltline Trail
- ⑦ Mt Pleasant Cemetery
- ⑧ Charlotte Maher Park
- ⑨ Mt Hope Catholic Cemetery
- ⑩ Sherwood Park
- ⑪ Eglinton Park
- ⑫ Redpath Park

# CHAPTER

# 11



# MOVING FROM PLAN TO ACTION - IMPLEMENTATION TOOLBOX

---

The existing parks in Midtown are increasingly under pressure from the growth the area has been experiencing. This Plan lays out a comprehensive parks and public realm vision rooted in its Three Core Elements to support Midtown's continued evolution. However, the delivery of the Three Core Elements will not be instantaneous. Significant investment is required over the coming decades to make it happen. The degree to which the City can respond to continued growth pressures and to create new and improved parks and open spaces can, in part, be better addressed by adjusting and making better use of the tools the City has at its disposal.

The implementation of some of the spaces and places identified in this Plan will occur incrementally and be secured through individual development applications, while others, such as decking of the subway trench and Davisville Yard, will require additional study. Implementation should focus on delivering the Core Elements with the greatest possible outcomes, both big and small, and assuring that they are cost-effective for Torontonians while ensuring orderly development. Critical to the success of this Plan's implementation is developing a more detailed Implementation Strategy that will outline near, medium and long-term actions needed to realize the vision, and identify the funding to support these actions. On-going monitoring will be an important aspect of this Plan's implementation, recognizing that new and exciting opportunities may emerge as Midtown continues to grow and evolve.

# 11.1 PRIORITIZING INITIATIVES

---

This Plan provides a framework for informing decisions about the acquisition of new parks, and clarity around lands that will be set aside for park purposes as part of the development approval process. It also identifies key parks requiring improvements, and direction for transforming Midtown's streets into more than just movement corridors. The number of projects and initiatives is impressive and exceeds the City's current capacity, and that of specific Divisions (e.g. City Planning, Parks Forestry & Recreation and Transportation Services), to undertake all the projects in the short-term. Accordingly, the Implementation Strategy will prioritize the projects and initiatives using a strategic lens and based on a set of refined criteria.

The criteria will provide a rationale for advancing different initiatives at different points over the lifecycle of the Plan. When an initiative aligns with one or more of these criteria, it will provide a clear rationale for the project or initiative to be prioritized and presents greater opportunity for implementation. The initial set of criteria to be further refined as part of the development of the Implementation Strategy consists of:

- Addressing Park Need and Population Growth;
- Eligibility for Capital Funding; and
- Coordinated Infrastructure Investments through:
  - A. Synchronized City Infrastructure Projects
  - B. Partnerships with Third Parties; and
  - C. Emergent Opportunities/Quick-wins.

## 11.1.1 Addressing Park Need and Population Growth

The Parkland Supply Map (2016) shows areas of Midtown that have very low parkland supply per person. New parks that would support the areas with the lowest provision of parkland per person will be prioritized for park acquisition and expansion. In other areas where growth is occurring and resultant parkland need increases, the City will use the appropriate planning tools to secure parkland and public realm improvements through the development approvals process to assist in meeting demand. The City will also monitor the effectiveness of any new parks that are delivered by periodically updating the Parkland Supply Map to reflect Midtown's growing population, as the area continues to develop.

## 11.1.2 Eligibility for Capital Funding

The City's capital program covers the City's \$76 billion in physical assets. Identifying new capital projects is a complex process but, in general, a project may be eligible for capital funding if it meets one of the following criteria:

- investing in new infrastructure; and
- maintaining existing assets.

The Implementation Strategy will review projects and initiatives identified in the Three Core Elements and identify which of those projects are aligned with other projects and initiatives already included in the 10-year capital plan. Where there is identified need for new park or public realm infrastructure, but no capital plan alignments exist, recommendations can be made for initiatives to be added to the 10-year capital plan. Where new projects are identified, the costs will be outlined, sources of funding will be determined and the

appropriate City Division will make a submission for approval through the City's capital budget process.

### 11.1.3 Coordinated Infrastructure Investments

#### *Synchronized City infrastructure projects*

Effective implementation of this Plan will ensure that City Divisions leading infrastructure projects, such as Toronto Water, engage with City Planning, Parks Forestry and Recreation and Transportation Services when working within Midtown. This can be facilitated by the Municipal Capital Infrastructure Coordination office within the City. When an initiative of this Plan is aligned with planned below-grade work, the City should make every attempt to advance the public realm improvements as part of project completion. An example of this would be the various watermain replacements and stormwater infrastructure upgrades needed throughout the area. The Implementation Strategy will outline specific projects that can be synchronized with other initiatives. It will detail a process for ensuring coordination among City Divisions and with other organizations that develop and operate utilities and infrastructure.

#### *Partnerships with Third Parties*

Infrastructure investment can come from other levels of government or government agencies, boards and commissions. The City of Toronto works in partnership with these organizations to leverage investment and participation in priority projects. Examples of these partnerships include transit planning and infrastructure with Metrolinx or the shared use agreements with the School Boards. Elements of the Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan that align with existing initiatives underway

by third parties should be prioritized to seize the opportunity to integrate expansion of the parks and public realm system within existing projects. An example of this is the construction of the Eglinton Crosstown Stations where portions of Eglinton Park will be restored and Eglinton Avenue will be improved as part of the construction.

### 11.1.4 New Opportunities

There are concepts in the Plan that may not meet all or some of the above criteria, but should be prioritized based on an emergent opportunity or possibility of a quick-win. For example, the City could advance the public realm improvements along the Park Street Loop in consideration of the number of development projects located along the length of the street. Section 37 funding has also been secured that could be utilized to support comprehensive improvements along the street and be front-ended by development proponents. Quick-wins may also arise through the development approvals process when a land dedication to base-park condition can be enhanced to above base park condition to improve the functionality of the space.

## 11.2 REALIGNING TOOLS TO MEET TODAY'S REALITIES

The degree to which the City's parks system keeps pace with residential and employment growth can be improved by adjusting and making better use of the tools the City has at its disposal. As a starting point, the Three Core Elements of this Plan are being integrated into Official Plan policy as part of the comprehensive update to the Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan.

Bringing this Plan to fruition will involve using a number of different tools. A primary instrument for the acquisition of parkland and improvements to existing parks stems from the legislative authority of the *Planning Act*. The City can also leverage existing real estate assets to contribute to the vision of this Parks and Public Realm Plan. Other tools at the City's disposal for improving parks and streets include Development Charges and the tax base. Open spaces can be secured on development sites during rezoning processes and during detailed site design.

### 11.2.1 Parkland Dedication

As enabled through Section 42 of the *Planning Act*, Toronto's primary planning instrument for acquiring new parkland is through land dedications or cash-in-lieu of parkland as a condition of development or redevelopment. Section 42 of the *Planning Act* sets out a standard rate for parkland dedication of two per cent of the land area for commercial or industrial development and five per cent of the land area for residential development.

The Act also permits municipalities to set their own alternative parkland dedication rates (within limits set by the *Planning Act*) by by-law to enable the City to require parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu as a condition of development and redevelopment over and above the *Planning Act* minimums. Prior to passing a new by-law that includes an alternative rate, an official plan is required to be in effect that contains specific policies dealing with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternative requirement. A parks plan is also required to be made publicly available prior to the adoption of Official Plan policy. The parks plan must examine the need for parkland in a city or specific geography. The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan meets the criteria under the *Planning Act*, to be the Parks Plan to support the Yonge-Eglinton Official Plan Amendment.

Importantly, any alternative rate established by the City only reflects the expectation of the amount of parkland, or cash-in-lieu of parkland, that development is expected to contribute; it is not necessarily representative of the total amount of land that would be required to meet the City's need for new parkland.

New developments will be expected to contribute parkland commensurate with growth. A new alternative rate will be established for Midtown that is based on intensity of development, rather than the current static requirement of a percentage of the site area. The rate will account for the range of development intensity Midtown is experiencing. This new rate will be established by by-law, and brought forward with the Implementation Strategy, in 2019. The key principle that will be applied is that the more intense the development, the greater the parkland dedication requirement.

### 11.2.2 On-site Parkland Dedications

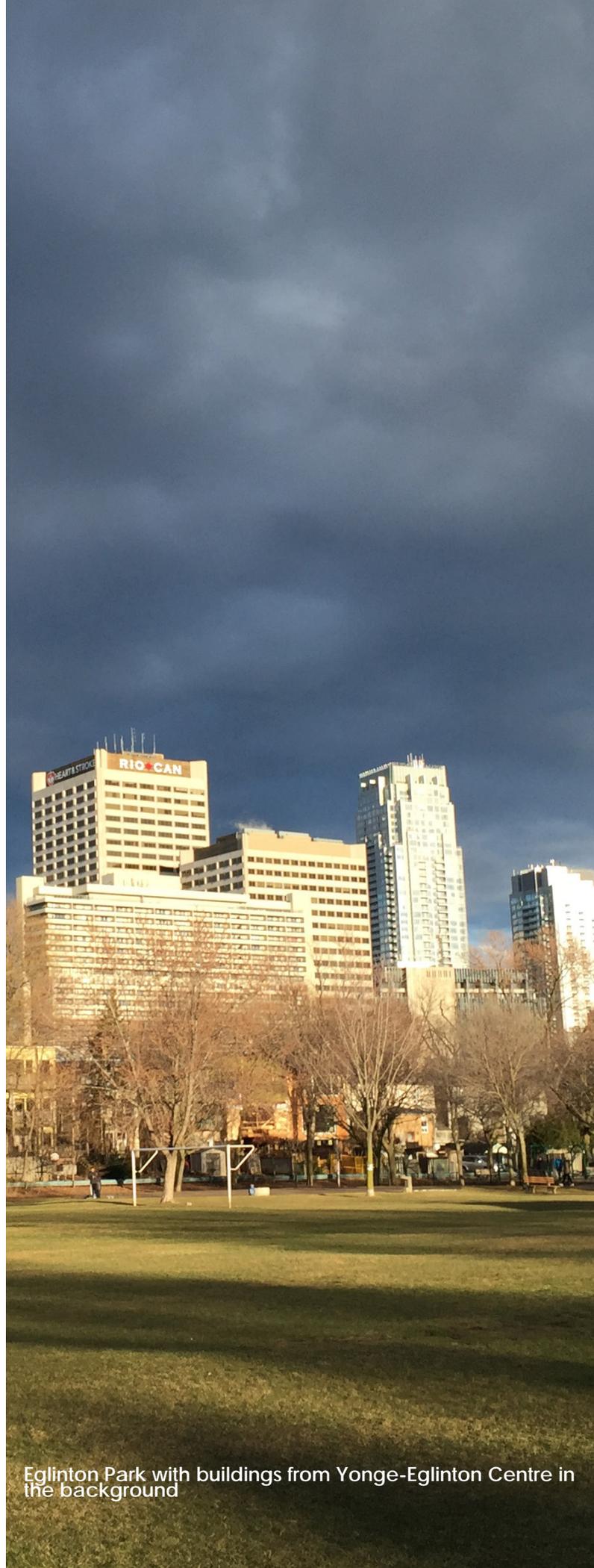
This Plan identifies optimal locations for new parkland throughout Midtown. Where sites are large enough to accommodate new parkland, on-site land dedications will be prioritized. The City also has the ability to request that development provide its dedication outside of the property itself, referred to as an “off-site” contribution. Off-site land dedications will be pursued to ensure the provision of parkland is concurrent with growth and in areas that enhance and increase accessibility of the existing parks system in accordance with the public parks proposed in Section 6.

### 11.2.3 Cash-in-lieu of parkland

Where the City exercises its right to accept cash-in-lieu of parkland, the alternative rate provision will be used to implement parkland acquisition and improvements serving Midtown. This may include parkland and improvements to parks outside the Secondary Plan area that serve the area.

### 11.2.4 Development Charges

The *Development Charges (DC) Act* enables municipalities to collect fees from developers at the time a building permit is issued to help fund essential growth-related infrastructure. Under the City's proposed 2018 DC By-law, parks and recreation accounts for 12 per cent of residential development charges and two per cent of non-residential development charge allocations. The *Development Charges Act* precludes cities from using DC funding for parkland acquisition; however, costs associated with parks development and improvements in Midtown may be eligible for DC funding.



Eglinton Park with buildings from Yonge-Eglinton Centre in the background

### 11.2.5 Section 37

Section 37 of the *Planning Act* enables a municipality to secure community benefits in exchange for increased height and density of development otherwise permitted by a Zoning By-law. The Yonge-Eglinton Secondary Plan identifies that Section 37 will be used to secure public realm and streetscape improvements, including those associated with the Public Realm Moves. As such, this tool will continue to provide important contributions for achieving the Public Realm Moves articulated in this Plan.

### 11.2.6 Site Plan Control

Development proposals on individual sites will be subject to Site Plan Approval under Section 114 of the *City of Toronto Act*. Site Plans reflect the detailed design and technical aspects of a proposed development, including the design of open space on a site. The Site Plan Control process will be an important tool for achieving the public realm vision for Midtown associated with private property, such as POPS, landscaping within the minimum required setbacks, low-impact, naturalized stormwater management approaches, species selection, as well as a range of other matters.

### 11.2.7 Agreements to enable public access

There are many spaces in Midtown that contribute to the public realm and that will be important elements of the overall parks and open space network. They include the portions of the Public Realm Moves located on private property, POPS, church yards, cemeteries, squares and schoolyards. These are, and will continue to be, important public space assets in Midtown. Some of these spaces are

located in areas experiencing the lowest levels of parkland provision. Shared use agreements and other partnerships will be needed to allow these spaces to remain or become publicly-accessible. Additionally, public easements will be utilized to secure public access to the variety of open spaces that will be created in Midtown.

## 11.3 GETTING IT DONE

The Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plan represents a clear vision; however it can be added to and enriched over time. It is a shared, practical, action-oriented framework to be used not only to inform investments by the City, but also the wide range of parties, including institutions, businesses, and community organizations, that will all contribute to shaping Midtown's evolution. It calls for sustained leadership, support and engagement of all parties to foster the long-term vision.



Playground in June Rowlands Park

Partnerships within the City and with outside stakeholders will be the key to the successful implementation of this Plan. Some of Toronto's most successful public realm projects are those that have been implemented through partnerships. Examples of successful partnerships in Midtown and other parts of the city include:

- Oriole Park/Neshama Playground – philanthropy, community organizing, City of Toronto
- Bloor Street Revitalization – Bloor-Yorkville BIA and City of Toronto
- Scarborough Centre Civic Green – Toronto District School Board, Toronto Public Library, City of Toronto
- Dundas Street West Parkettes - DUWest BIA, City of Toronto
- Grange Park – AGO, Grange Community Group, philanthropy, City of Toronto
- The Bentway – philanthropy, Waterfront Toronto, City of Toronto
- Roncesvalles Renewed – Roncesvalles Village BIA, Residents Association, City of Toronto



Farmers' Market in June Rowlands Park

## 11.4 MEASURING SUCCESS

The full realization of this Plan's Core Elements is a long-term prospect. This Plan will need to be reviewed over the course of its implementation, and at a minimum coinciding with Official Plan review periods specified in the *Planning Act*. This will enable the City and its partners to reflect on the successes and achievements reached, but also consider areas that would benefit from additional direction. These reviews will include, at minimum, the following analysis:

- an update to the park provision assessment, including parkland need and future need based on ongoing development pressures and data from City Planning's Development Pipeline;
- an assessment of where growth has occurred during the review period and how parks and the public realm have been expanded, improved and connected commensurate with that growth;
- a review and update of the priority projects and associated actions for the next five years and beyond; and
- an inventory of uninitiated projects and priorities, and a review of their relevance when the impact of other opportunities and investments have been factored into the provision assessment and implementation strategy.



# Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Inventory of Parks in Midtown

Inventory of Recreation Facilities in Midtown

# Appendix 1

## INVENTORY OF PARKS IN MIDTOWN

| Existing Parks            | Area (ha) | Assets  | Improvements identified in 2018-2027 Capital Plan  |
|---------------------------|-----------|---|--|
| Eglinton Park             | 9.09      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North Toronto Memorial Community Centre</li> <li>• North Toronto Memorial Arena</li> <li>• 1 Fieldhouse</li> <li>• 1 Kitchen</li> <li>• 5 Multipurpose Fields</li> <li>• 2 Baseball Diamonds</li> <li>• 2 Outdoor Tennis Courts</li> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Wading Pool</li> <li>• 1 Picnic Site</li> <li>• 2 Parking Lots</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Centre improvements (2018)</li> <li>• Arena rehabilitation (2021-22)</li> <li>• Tennis court rehabilitation (2026)</li> <li>• WC building repairs (2027)</li> <li>• Currently undergoing a Master Planning process which will identify more items for future Capital Plans</li> </ul> |
| Sherwood Park             | 6.78      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Ball Diamond</li> <li>• 1 Dog Off-leash Area</li> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Wading Pool</li> <li>• 1 Picnic Shelter</li> <li>• 2 Picnic Sites</li> <li>• 1 Parking Lot</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pathway and fountain repairs (2022)</li> </ul>  |
| Oriole Park               | 2.91      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Ball diamond</li> <li>• 2 Outdoor Tennis Courts</li> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Splash Pad</li> <li>• 1 Wading Pool</li> <li>• 1 Picnic Site</li> <li>• 1 Washroom Facility</li> <li>• 2 Drinking Fountains</li> </ul>  |  |
| June Rowlands Park        | 2.65      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Ball Diamond</li> <li>• 6 Outdoor Tennis Courts</li> <li>• 1 Ping Pong Table</li> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Splash Pad</li> <li>• 1 Picnic Site</li> <li>• 1 Washroom Facility</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubhouse/Washroom (2024)</li> <li>• Tennis court rehabilitation (2027)</li> </ul>  |
| Kay Gardner Beltline Park | 2.29      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike Trail</li> <li>• 1 Drinking Fountain</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beltline Trail Stations (2018-19)</li> <li>• Beltline Trail repairs (2020-22, 2026)</li> </ul>  |
| Glebe Manor Square        | 0.87      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |  |
| Charlotte Maher Parkette  | 0.61      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Drinking Fountain</li> </ul>   |  |

| Existing Parks                | Area (ha) | Assets  | Improvements identified in 2018-2027 Capital Plan                                 |
|-------------------------------|-----------|---|---|
| Redpath Avenue Parkette       | 0.28      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Drinking Fountain</li> </ul>                         |   |
| Mount Pleasant Parkette       | 0.16      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |   |
| St. Clements - Yonge Parkette | 0.15      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Drinking Fountain</li> </ul>   |   |
| Pottery Playground            | 0.11      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Splash Pad</li> <li>• 1 Drinking Fountain</li> </ul> |   |
| Dunfield Park                 | 0.1       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Playground</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playground Enhancement (2018)</li> </ul> |
| Fiona Nelson Parkette         | 0.09      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |   |
| The Mission Ground Parkette   | 0.08      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |   |
| 54 Berwick Avenue             | 0.03      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |   |
| 79 Keewatin Avenue            | 0.022     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No amenities</li> </ul>  |   |

| Secured Parks                          | Area (ha) | Assets   |
|--|-----------|--|
| 86-88 Soudan Avenue                    | 0.142     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| Cudmore Creek Park (250 Manor Road)    | 0.119     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Playground</li> <li>• 1 Chess Table</li> </ul>                                |
| Manor Community Green (190 Manor Road) | 0.114     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Bocce Court</li> <li>• 1 Ping Pong Table</li> <li>• 2 Chess Tables</li> </ul> |
| 2388 Yonge Street                      | 0.083     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| 174-180 Broadway Avenue                | 0.075     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| Hillsdale Avenue Parkette              | 0.07      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| 66 Broadway Avenue                     | 0.05      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| 29-31 Soudan Avenue/2131 Yonge Street  | 0.018     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |
| 61 Montgomery Avenue                   | 0.018     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be programmed</li> </ul>   |

# Appendix 2

## INVENTORY OF RECREATION FACILITIES IN MIDTOWN

| Facility Name  | Area (square metres)         | Key Assets   |
|--|------------------------------|--|
| Hodgson Public School  | N/A                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 Outdoor Artificial Ice Rinks</li> </ul>   |
| Maurice Cody Community Centre  | 836                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Recreation Centre</li> <li>• Gymnasium</li> <li>• Multipurpose Room</li> </ul>  |
| North Toronto Memorial Arena   | 2,676                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arena</li> <li>• 2 Outdoor Artificial Ice Rinks</li> </ul>  |
| North Toronto Memorial Community Centre  | 6,921                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Recreation Centre</li> <li>• Indoor Pool</li> <li>• Outdoor Pool</li> <li>• Multipurpose Rooms</li> </ul>                         |
| Davisville Community Recreation Centre and Pool (approved for capital funding) | 2,787 *based on concept plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Recreation Centre</li> <li>• Indoor Pool</li> <li>• Gymnasium (co-located with reconstructed Davisville Public School)</li> </ul> |



 @CityplanTO

 [toronto.ca/planning](https://toronto.ca/planning)