Strolling down the Avenue

Experience the neighbourhood character of Yonge Street between Glengrove and Roselawn Avenues.
Strolling down the Avenue

Experience the neighbourhood character of Yonge Street between Glengrove and Roselawn Avenues.

While our stroll south of Lawrence Avenue is relatively short, it is replicated above Lawrence as far north as Deloraine Avenue should you wish to explore for yourself.

The character of these neighbourhoods is two-fold, and is book-ended by mid-town intensified centers at both Sheppard and Eglinton (orange) where large building footprints and massing are signature built-features. Here, city street plantings and small parks or plaza’s provide open space amenities and mitigating vegetation.

Between these two centres, Yonge Street is diagonally crossed by two important ravines (red): The West Don and Burke Brook. These form the backbone of how the neighbourhood character came to be. Both ravines house relatively large apartments/condos and public buildings that fill the hollows and crawl up the ravine slopes. For the most part these are offset by the expansive open spaces of the under-developed side of Yonge - the ravines.

Toronto’s ravines created special conditions affecting development – the preferred grid of streets was thwarted. Few bridges were built to cross these abysses. Where the ravines cross the grid, adjacent side-streets converted to winding crescents and dead-ends. Ways to get in and out of these neighbourhoods is limited.
So, what characterizes the plateau areas between the ravines and mid-town centres?

This neighbourhood began when a military road was built for strategic purposes – as straight a road as feasible. Large land grants were given on either side (Yonge to Bayview; Yonge to Bathurst). These were subdivided into smaller farms and later into narrow commercial and residential properties.

Secondary to the ravine impact was the irreversible decision to construct a residential neighbourhood that abutted the "military road" with T-junction side-roads.

And that is what our stroll is about.

We will walk down and up Yonge Street pausing at the T-junctions. We will see how important it is that the development along Yonge Street (wide building set-backs at T-junctions, step-down development along the residential streets and commercial landscaping that wraps around into the residential streets are key to the neighbourhood’s character.

Marjorie Clark, MLA
November, 2013
Strolling down the Avenue

Experience the neighbourhood character of Yonge Street between Glengrove and Roselawn Avenues.

The Stroll begins at Glengrove Avenue.

Side streets are T-junctions so that those on the east have a different name to those on the west.

We will look at the east side first; turn around at Erskine Avenue and view the west side beginning at Roselawn. Heading north, we end our stroll at Glengrove Avenue.

Photos are marked to show the wide side street set backs that allow for landscaping and eateries to turn the corner, enhancing both the neighbourhood and the “Avenue.”

The stylised insets draw attention to the importance of the neighbourhood’s mature canopy which enhances the stroll down the “Avenue,” frames Yonge Street buildings and shows how Yonge Street and the community are intimately connected.
T-Junctions (East side Yonge)

Glengrove Avenue East

Buildings have deep set backs on both Yonge and Glengrove.

Both corner buildings have grassy boulevards on Yonge and Glengrove, with additional plantings.

Glengrove East is a very short street that dead-ends at Burke Brook ravine. City, private and ravine canopy dominate the residential neighbourhood.
Strathgowan Avenue

Low commercial nursery provides park-like ambiance to the neighbourhood with private back-yard trees dominating the landscape.

Neighbourhood houses have shallower setbacks than on other streets. Strathgowan is one and a half blocks long, ending at Burke Brook ravine.
Blythwood Road

Yonge Street parking and angled Sporting Life corner, accentuate the sweeping view of this heritage-designated neighbourhood.
T-Junctions (East side Yonge)

Sheldrake Boulevard

Timothy’s outdoor eating area turns the corner taking advantage of the proximity of neighbourhood landscaping.

Lower building profiles are enhanced by mature canopy from neighbouring yards.
T-Junctions (East side Yonge)

Sherwood Avenue

Many of the Yonge frontage buildings are 2- and 3-storeys tall; with the result that mature neighbourhood trees frame buildings at many points along a stroll down Yonge.
Keewatin Avenue

High rise apartments replace private homes as we move closer to the Yonge-Eglinton hub.

T-Junctions (East side Yonge)
Erskine Avenue

We are at the edge of the Yonge-Eglinton skyline, this being an established apartment area.

Most of the visible trees are street trees or those in the deep-set apartment front yards.
Roselawn Avenue

We see the beginning of the Yonge-Eglinton skyline to the south. Still, city and private trees are visible above the lower Yonge Street buildings’ parapets.

Deep side-street set backs provide parking and landscaped areas.
T-Junctions (West side Yonge)

Castlefield Avenue

Wide side street set back give a clear view of the neighbourhood – and large parking lot behind the building on the right.

Both commercial/apartment buildings have angled front entrances which help “open up” the abutting neighbourhood.

Marjorie Clark, MLA
November, 2013
T-Junctions (West side Yonge)

St. Clements Avenue

The heritage building (under restoration) and others in the area contribute to the small-scale community feel of Yonge Street. This effective corner is enhanced by St. Clements -Yonge Parkette.

Variable set backs give articulation and extra interest to the side street.
T-Junctions (West side Yonge)

Briar Hill Avenue

As for all of the photographs taken during this stroll, this photo was not taken from the middle of a cross street. Instead, stopping to admire residential features can be done safely. Cafes, restaurants and fast food outlets along Yonge, both indoor and outdoor, have opportunities for “borrowing” the green landscapes of their neighbours.
T-Junctions (West side Yonge)

Albertus Avenue

This corner illustrates how two corner buildings have stepped down along Albertus. Both buildings house food services with potential for outdoor dining.

Marjorie Clark, MLA
November, 2013
**T-Junctions (West side Yonge)**

**Craighurst Boulevard**

Wide side street set backs permit an outdoor eating area and parking.

Even at a 3-storey height, city and private mature trees can reach above them. This creates a very different street character than that found in the intensified centres at Sheppard and at Eglinton.
**T-Junctions** (West side Yonge)

**Lytton Boulevard**

The TTC building (almost invisible) is incorporated into Snider Parkette.

An added feature is a stone wall that becomes a much used seating area.
Alexandra Boulevard

This newer condo has step-downs from Yonge Street and multiple step-downs to the neighbourhood beyond.

A grassy boulevard enhances the set back and aligns with those of private residences.

Paired gates invite pedestrians into the neighbourhood.
Glencairn Avenue

The low profile rental car lot allows backyard canopy to be a major feature along with mature street trees.

The rental apartment block maintains a lawn along Glencairn, contributing to the sense of a lush landscape as we come closer to the ravine.
**T-Junctions (West side Yonge)**

**Glengrove Avenue West**

Major transition from the ravine which is one block away. Note the impact of city and private trees.

A commercial enterprise on the right is housed in two homes – making a suitable transition for this mixed-use site.
Corner Landscaping Along Side Street Set Backs

Landscaping behind Timothy’s outdoor patio.

Owners and merchants have capitalized on the proximity of the residential properties, especially at the T-junction intersections. Here are some of my favourites.

Gateway to Alexandra Boulevard
Corner Landscaping Along Side Street Set Backs

Owners and merchants have capitalized on the proximity of the residential properties, especially at the T-junction intersections. Here are a few examples.

The deep set-back allows for a residential Landscaping treatment on Alexandra Blvd.

A wrought iron fence on this corner building aligns with similar residential, iron fences.
Corner Landscaping Along Side Street Set Backs

Enjoy the neighbourhood ambiance from an outdoor patio, or during winter, from a window seat.

Owners and merchants have capitalized on the proximity of the residential properties, especially at the T-junction intersections. Here are a few examples.

Notice a different feeling at the edge of the Eglinton hub.
Peeks through the Yonge Street Facade

Though not at T-junctions, these windows to the residential neighbourhood enhance the stroll.

Snider Parkette behind the TTC building

Sporting Life Parking Lot
Peeks through the Yonge Street Facade

Though not at T-junctions, these windows to the residential neighbourhood enhance the stroll

Main entrance to William Clarkin Mews apartments

Entrances to parking lots off Yonge Street
While this stroll primarily focussed on the fundamental influence of the ravines and T-junctions on the character of our neighbourhoods, there have been other neighbourhood “friendly” decisions made along the way.

As this image shows, the marriage of the residential and mixed-used “avenue” has been supported by:

• Maintenance of heritage buildings and districts which are relatively small-scale.

• A predominance of buildings which are low-rise along with medium rise.

• Parking off Yonge, such as at Sporting Life.

• Step-down designs when abutting residences and other design features such as angled corners and sloping roofs.

• Deeper set-backs off Yonge such as the William Clarkin Mews apartments or with openings to the neighbourhood in the back.