

## A look to the future

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### *City finally reveals what it hopes the Yonge-Eglinton area will become*

By [Brian Baker](#)

It's been a long and tortuous exercise to create a development plan for Yonge and Eglinton, said Councillor Michael Walker, and it's still not over.

Residents, ratepayer groups and city staff went over the Yonge-Eglinton Centre Focused Review Planning Study at a public meeting on Jan. 22.

With his ward directly affected by any new development, Walker chaired the meeting, with Joe Nanos, the city's senior planner, explaining the proposal to rein in unruly development.

Walker is optimistic the review will ensure there is control over what is built at the busy intersection, and that all infrastructure needs are met. He added the city has an advantage, as they own a fair portion of the land, including the empty TTC yard on the southwest corner.

"(There are) concerns about unbridled development, and by having this plan in place brings that in, because the developer does not have that free range," he told the Town Crier. "There are clear-cut rules laid out."

Residents in Ward 26 are worried another large-scale development like the two Minto towers will be built again, Walker said. However, the new plan will give the city control designing their own vision through more eco-friendly buildings, open spaces, a new Yonge-Eglinton station for the planned LRT and a new north south road running from Duplex to Berwick Aves.

"It's going to ensure that takes place in a managed fashion because there is a comprehensive document," Walker said. "That isn't what takes place now, it's ad hoc."

"Every application comes in and you deal with it on its own, not how it fits into the total picture," he added. "It will be a more livable and more eco-friendly development than it is right now."

But not everybody is as enthusiastic.

During the question and answer period, Ron Lupard, a resident of Duplex Ave., expressed his frustration with current conditions on his street.

"The street's not big enough for all this to fit," he told the crowd of about 80 people. "When the snow obstructs the streets and police cars are parked on the side of the bank, we have one lane going north and one lane going south."

"And I don't think there's a single person in North America who has more bus traffic outside their house than me."

Lupard told the Town Crier his concerns have never been addressed and after 35 years of living in the area, he can't shovel snow dumped on his property by both the TTC and contractors who plow 53 Division



MAKING HER POINT: Resident Kathy David expresses her thoughts on the long-awaited planning study for the Yonge-Eglinton area.

because he is physically disabled.

Other current issues raised by residents were road traffic, the lack of amenities, crowding on the TTC and infrastructure being left in disrepair for more than a year.

But city staff assured all expectations would be met.

“In light of the site-specific applications we have had in the past like Minto that created a lot of controversy in the area, we wanted to look at things comprehensively,” Nanos said. “At the end of the day, what we’re presenting is a policy framework so we can guide future development as it comes in.”

Ward 26 councillor Cliff Jenkins said he has no immediate objections to the revised development plan. With the review widening to include large portions of his ward, as well as Wards 16 and 25, public consultations need to be conducted to ensure single-family homes and townhouses would not be left in the shadows of large office towers.

“The issues will be different than the issues right down at the intersection of Yonge and Eglinton,” he said. “Down there, it’s right on a transit node and that’s probably where we’re going to see the largest densities.

“What I believe my residents would be looking for and what I would be looking for are differing provisions as we enlarge the areas to protect the single-family homes.”

Jenkins pointed to Keewatin Ave. as an example. The street has single-family homes on one side.

“You wouldn’t really want to have very high commercial towers on the opposite side of the street,” he said. “What would make sense is a scaling down of heights and densities the closer you get to residential areas.”

The report will be considered at the Planning and Growth Management Committee on Feb. 4 and will then move on to city council for final approval Feb. 23.

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