

## Statement of Significance

### 12125 Yonge Street – St. John the Baptist Anglican Church and Cemetery

St. John the Baptist Anglican Church and Cemetery at 12125 Yonge Street is recommended for designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* as a property of cultural heritage value or interest, as described in the following Statement of Significance. The subject property has been found to meet Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, and 9.

### Description of Property

St. John the Baptist Church and Cemetery at 12125 Yonge Street is located on the east side of Yonge Street at Jefferson Side Road. The property contains a church building, comprised of a historical 19<sup>th</sup>-century Main Church and a 1950s North Wing addition, as well as a historical cemetery located directly east of the church. Only the historical Main Church and cemetery are considered to possess cultural heritage value.

### Design and Physical Value

The 19<sup>th</sup>-century Main Church portion of St. John the Baptist Anglican Church at 12125 Yonge Street (consisting of the 1849 chapel, and 19<sup>th</sup>-century entrance vestibule, chancel, and vestry) has physical value as a representative example of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century “country church” typology. Architectural features that contribute to the building’s 19<sup>th</sup>-century “country church” typology include, but are not limited to, its rectangular plan with complex gabled roof, belfry, west entry vestibule, rear chancel and vestry, lancet-arched and roundel windows, stained glass window units, decorative brick elements including buttresses and sawtooth banding, and the chapel’s simple and symmetrical west and south elevations.

Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 1: The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method.

St. John the Baptist Anglican Church at 12125 Yonge Street also has design and physical value for the high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit displayed in the Main Church’s stained-glass windows and reredos. The church’s stained-glass windows were installed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries to commemorate key figures in the St. John’s community, such as the first churchwardens, Captain MacLeod and Giles Kerswill. Additionally, the church’s canvas reredos, which were permanently affixed to the east interior wall of the chancel in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, show a high degree of artistic merit for their intricate hand-painted designs. The reredos at St. John’s are believed to be one of only two of their kind, with a matching set located at Christ Church in Port Sydney, Ontario.

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Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 2: The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.

### Historical and Associative Value

St. John the Baptist Anglican Church and Cemetery at 12125 Yonge Street has historical and associative value for its association with the Anglican Church. St. John's Anglican is a long-standing congregation who worshipped at the local schoolhouse in Jefferson prior to the construction of the subject church in 1849. At the time of its establishment in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, the church was the only place of worship located in the former hamlet of Jefferson in Markham Township. Typical of rural churches throughout 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ontario, St. John's has historically been the religious and social centre of the surrounding community, hosting organized social and religious groups such as the Sunday school, Women's Auxiliary, and Young People's Organization. The Anglican Church has been housed in the subject building since its construction in 1849.

Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 4: The property has historical value or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.

St. John the Baptist Anglican Church at 12125 Yonge Street also has historical and associative value because the Main Church demonstrates the work of Robert McCausland Ltd., a highly prominent stained-glass producer that has been producing and restoring glass windows for over 170 years. Established in Toronto in the 1850s as Joseph McCausland and Sons, the company has produced stained glass windows that can be found on numerous historic and landmark structures throughout Canada, including Old City Hall (Toronto), the Bank of Montreal building (now the Hockey Hall of Fame, Toronto), and countless churches. With McCausland windows present in historic and contemporary churches across Canada, the firm's work is significant to Protestant and Catholic communities. Windows in the St. John's Main Church produced by Robert McCausland Ltd. include the 1934 "Good Shepherd", the 1936 "Light of the World," "Virgin and Child" and "Resurrection Angel", and the 1940s "Ruth" and "Timothy."

Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 6: The property has historical value or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.

### Contextual Value

St. John the Baptist Church and Cemetery at 12125 Yonge Street has contextual value because the property retains strong functional, visual, and historical links between the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Main Church and the historical cemetery to the east. The cemetery, which is located immediately adjacent to the church, was established alongside the church in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and remains active to this day. Both the cemetery and the church have historically functioned together on the property to meet the religious needs of the

local Anglican community. Today, persisting functional, visual, and historical links between the church and the cemetery contribute to the property's significance and legibility as a place of religious gathering and ceremony.

Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 8: The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings.

St. John the Baptist Church and Cemetery at 12125 Yonge Street also has contextual value as a local landmark on Yonge Street within the former hamlet of Jefferson. The Main Church is situated at a prominent location atop a hill on the east side of Yonge Street, where it has served as a nucleus and marker for the local community since 1849. The Main Church is regarded as a local landmark due to its distinct historical character, prominent location, and longstanding role as a religious and community gathering space.

Therefore, the subject property meets O. Reg. 9/06 Criterion 9: The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.

## Heritage Attributes

### Design and Physical Value

Heritage attributes contributing to the value of the Main Church as a 19<sup>th</sup>-century "country church" building typology are:

#### Exterior Attributes

- The scale, form and massing of the one-storey building with a generally rectangular plan;
- The steeply-pitched complex gabled roof with bracketed eaves, comprised of a taller western front-gabled component and a shorter eastern cross-gabled component;
- The red brick cladding;
- The stone foundation;
- The red brick and stone detailing, including:
  - The brick buttresses with stone copings;
  - The sawtooth banding;
  - The decorative arched brick banding;
- The windows and doors, including:
  - The assortment of lancet-arched and roundel window openings;
  - The brick voussoirs and stone sills;
  - The leaded stained-glass window units;

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- The two round-arched door openings with brick voussoirs on the entry vestibule's south elevation and the vestry's east elevation;
  - The round-arched transom above the doorway on the entry vestibule's south elevation;
- The gable-roofed projecting entrance vestibule on the front (west) elevation of the chapel;
- The chancel and vestry projecting from the rear (east) elevation of the chapel;
- The symmetrical organization of bays on the chapel's front (west) and south (side) elevations;
- The belfry located at the peak of the chapel roof, including:
  - The gable roof;
  - The clapboard siding;
  - The lancet-arched openings;
  - The cruciform finial;
  - The bell; and
- The two brick chimneys located on the roof of the vestry and on the north elevation of the chapel.

### Interior Attributes

- The nave and chancel, including:
  - The vaulted ceiling with wooden ribs;
  - The lancet-arched chancel; and
  - The four hand-painted canvas reredos mounted on carved wooden panels on the east wall of the chancel.

Heritage attributes contributing to the Main Church's value for its high degree of craftsmanship and artistic merit are:

- The stained glass window units; and
- The four hand-painted canvas reredos mounted on carved wooden panels on the east wall of the chancel.

### Historical and Associative Value

Heritage attributes contributing to the value of the property for its associations with the Anglican Church are:

- The Main Church's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street, at Jefferson Side Road;
- The Main Church's 19<sup>th</sup>-century "country church" typology;

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- The stained-glass window units;
- The four hand-painted canvas reredos within the church's chancel; and
- The cemetery grounds, located east of the Main Church, including:
  - The presence, location, and orientation of the grave markers organized into rows; and
  - The grave markers laying on a gravel bed in the northwest corner of the cemetery (\*note that the location/position of these grave markers is not original and is not considered a heritage attribute).

### Contextual Value

Heritage attributes contributing to the contextual value of the property for functional, visual, and historical links to its surroundings, and for being a landmark are:

- The Main Church's scale, siting, and orientation on the east side of Yonge Street, at Jefferson Side Road;
- The Main Church's 19<sup>th</sup>-century "country church" building typology;
- The cemetery grounds, located east of the Main Church, including:
  - The presence, location, and orientation of the grave markers organized into rows;
  - The grave markers laying on a gravel bed in the northwest corner of the cemetery (\*note that the location/position of these grave markers is not original and is not considered a heritage attribute); and
- The visual links between the church and the cemetery.

Note that the church's 1950s North Wing addition is not considered to possess heritage attributes.