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Some Great Idea: Good Neighbourhoods, Crazy Politics and the Invention of Toronto

Edward Keenan

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Since 2010, Toronto's headlines have been consumed by the outrageous personal foibles and government-slashing, anti-urbanist policies of Mayor Rob Ford. But the heated debate at City Hall has obscured a bigger, decade-long narrative of Toronto's ascendance as a mature global city. *Some Great Idea* traces how post-amalgamation, and under three very different mayors, Toronto managed to so quickly oscillate from one extreme to another, and how the city might proceed from here. *Some Great Idea* includes behind-the-scenes tales from the Miller and Ford campaigns, and explores recent turning points like the city's core service review and the mayor’s conflict-of-interest trial. Through personal history, keen reportage and revelatory analysis, it shows how the fundamental principles of diversity and democracy that have made Toronto such a vibrant, dynamic 21st-century city can produce an unlikely politician like Ford. And how those same principles have vividly and repeatedly insisted that such politicians are only part of a larger, messier and more productive urban politics.

This is a story about both Toronto's past and present, how the city has relentlessly and collaboratively reinvented itself. But it's also a story about Toronto's future, and what that future might mean for all global cities. This is a story that says you can fight city hall.

Edward Keenan serves as senior editor and lead columnist at *The Grid* magazine in Toronto, Ontario. An eight-time finalist at the National Magazine Awards, he has written for and edited at *Eye Weekly*, *Spacing* magazine, and *The Walrus*.

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