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TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING CORPORATION

BLOCKS 32 AND 36 PUBLIC REALM PLAN

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## INTRODUCTION

### An Amendment to the Public Realm Plan

This document presents design guidelines for the public realm on Blocks 32 and 36, amending the Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Master Plan and Architectural Design Guidelines, referred to here as the "Public Realm Plan".

When the Fort York Neighbourhood plan was prepared, the specific development intentions of the City of Toronto for Blocks 32 and 36 were unknown. The ownership of the two blocks has now been transferred to the Toronto Community Housing Corporation. A Development Strategy was completed in January 2006, and an Official Plan Amendment/Rezoning Application was approved by City Council in 2006. The preparation for approval of Amendment to the Public Realm Plan is a necessary next step prior to an application for Site Plan Approval.

### The Public Realm

Simply put, the public realm consists of the spaces between buildings. While architecture can be appreciated from a distance or from within a building, the public realm is experienced primarily close-up, at ground level. It includes streets, building frontages, sidewalks, pathways between buildings, front yard landscaping and plantings, as well as larger open spaces such as parks and publicly accessible courtyards.

The review of any development application should take into consideration the buildings' relationship with and contribution to the public realm. The Public Realm Plan seeks to achieve a high quality, well designed and liveable environment for people living in and passing through the Fort York Neighbourhood.

### Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan

The Public Realm Plan, endorsed by City Council in 2004, establishes a set of guidelines that articulate the principles and overall vision for the emerging neighbourhood. It builds on the approved policies of the Official Plan and the zoning by-laws that set out the location of public spaces, density, height and built form envelopes, and informs the City's review of development applications in the area by setting a benchmark for the best possible design of the streets, parks, pedestrian and cycle connections, and public and private open spaces throughout the neighbourhood. The approval of the Public Realm Plan is a prerequisite of Site Plan approvals in the new neighbourhood.

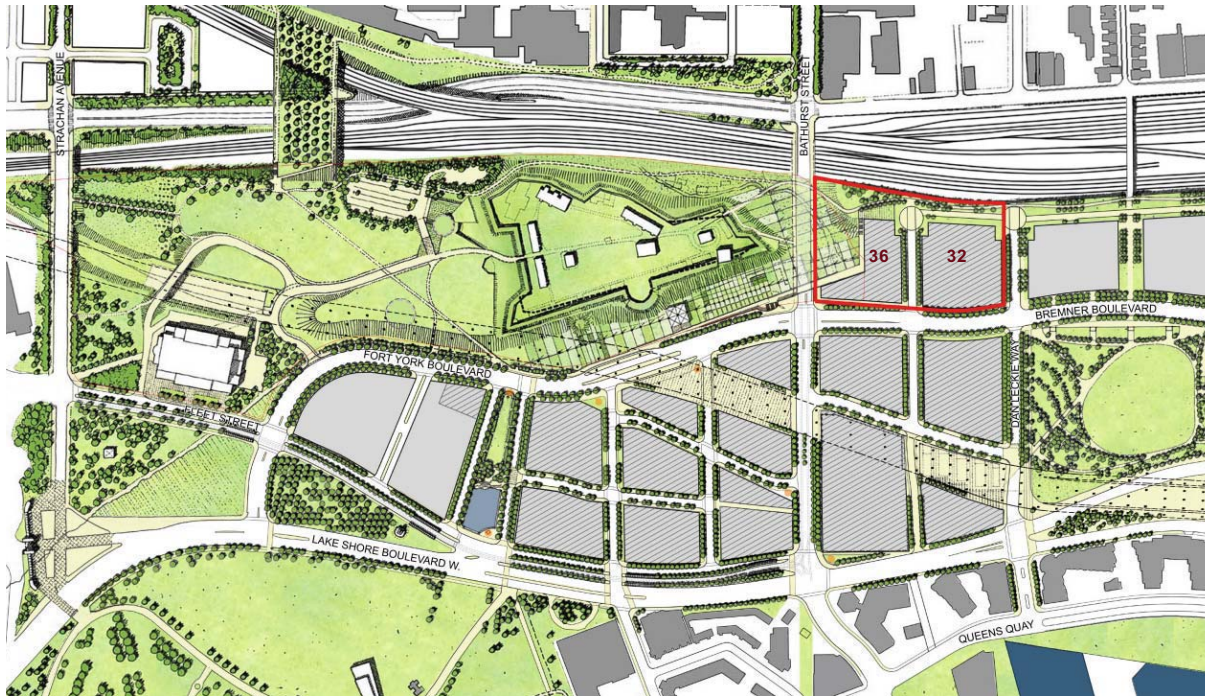
### Role of the Public Realm Plan

The role of the Public Realm Plan, as amended, is to guide the development of the public streets and parks and adjoining private open spaces including the following:

- the relationship to adjacent neighbourhoods and the public space linkages;
- the conceptual streetscape plans for the various types of streets;
- the relationship between public open spaces and private open spaces;
- the application of principles for sustainable design; and
- the conceptual design of the Mouth of the Creek Park, which lies largely within the Fort York Heritage Conservation District, together with illustrated possibilities for adjoining areas of the Fort York grounds and the Northern Linear Park.

The Public Realm Plan also includes architectural design guidelines including the following:

- the location of build-to and setback lines;
- the location of step-backs for taller buildings;
- the relationship of towers to base buildings; and
- the treatment of building projections as they relate to the character and quality of the public streets and open spaces.



Fort York Neighbourhood Public Realm Plan: Demonstration Plan

## Vision for a New Community

The new community at Blocks 32 and 36 is to be affordable, beautiful, sustainable and a place for families. Its location next to Fort York and partially within the Fort's heritage district boundaries, presents tremendous opportunities for revealing, interpreting and protecting this unique and significant part of Toronto's heritage. Symbolically and physically, this development has the opportunity to reinforce existing connections with neighbouring communities, the fort and the waterfront, and to create new ones.

## Families and Affordability

Providing housing for families represents a unique challenge in the City of Toronto given the need for larger units, the high price of land and the demand families have for community services such as day care and schools. Within the city, the market trend for building smaller sized condominium apartment units or larger suites that are beyond an affordable price range has created a gap for families, especially those with small children in need of outdoor play areas.

Families are the glue that knit communities together. Encouraging families to live within the city generates a broad range of both social and economic benefits. To overcome current market constraints, intervention of the public sector is necessary. It was with this understanding that Blocks 32 and 36 were designated for family-oriented development within a high density format.

## Massing / Built Form

The organization of the site establishes a balance between built form and open space that recognizes the heritage and recreational value of the setting as well as neighbourhood-wide circulation requirements. The preferred massing was established after reviewing a number of massing alternatives with community and stakeholder representatives in 3-D visualization workshops.

- Overall massing represents a combination of mid-rise and highrise elements that step down from higher elements in the east towards the open space and the lower scale of the Fort.
- The mid-rise street walls are characterized by multiple at-grade residential entrances on the street frontages and in the courtyards.
- Building massing, and in particular higher tower elements, are configured to minimize shading impacts on courtyards and public open spaces.

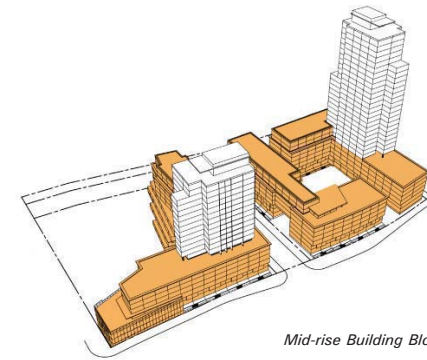
- Higher tower elements are consistent with the scale and character of others in the neighbourhood. Higher elements should be seen as important opportunities for accommodating non-family household types such as singles and seniors, and enable units to take advantage of the views in all directions.
- The Bathurst/Fort York Boulevard corner is marked with a new Public Library adjoining the park. This facility should be treated as an important architectural opportunity.



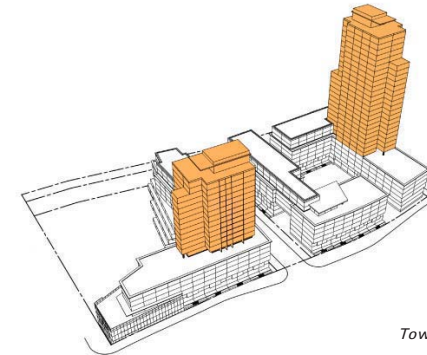
Blocks 32/36 Development Strategy: Demonstration Concept



Blocks 32/36 Development Strategy: Demonstration Site Plan



Mid-rise Building Blocks



Towers



Community and Retail Services

Blocks 32/36 Development Strategy

## URBAN SETTING

### City/Waterfront Connections

***Extend and reinforce the city/waterfront connections through the neighbourhood.***

A key principle for the central waterfront revitalization is the reduction of the barrier effect of the regional transportation corridors which traverse the waterfront. In this neighbourhood the intention is to physically and visually reconnect the north and south sides of the rail corridor as well as linking the east/west parks and street systems.

This objective will be met by reinforcing north/south street corridors, developing additional rail crossings, protecting view corridors and improving intersections for pedestrians and cyclists.

An important change in the planning context for Blocks 32 and 36 is the confirmed location of a proposed cyclist/pedestrian bridge over the railway between Portland Street and Dan Leckie Way. This bridge, landing at the northeast corner of Block 32, will complete an important new north/south route extending from Queen Street West to Queen's Quay and the waterfront. A municipal class Environmental Assessment for this bridge is currently underway.



*Portland Street looking south towards Dan Leckie Way*



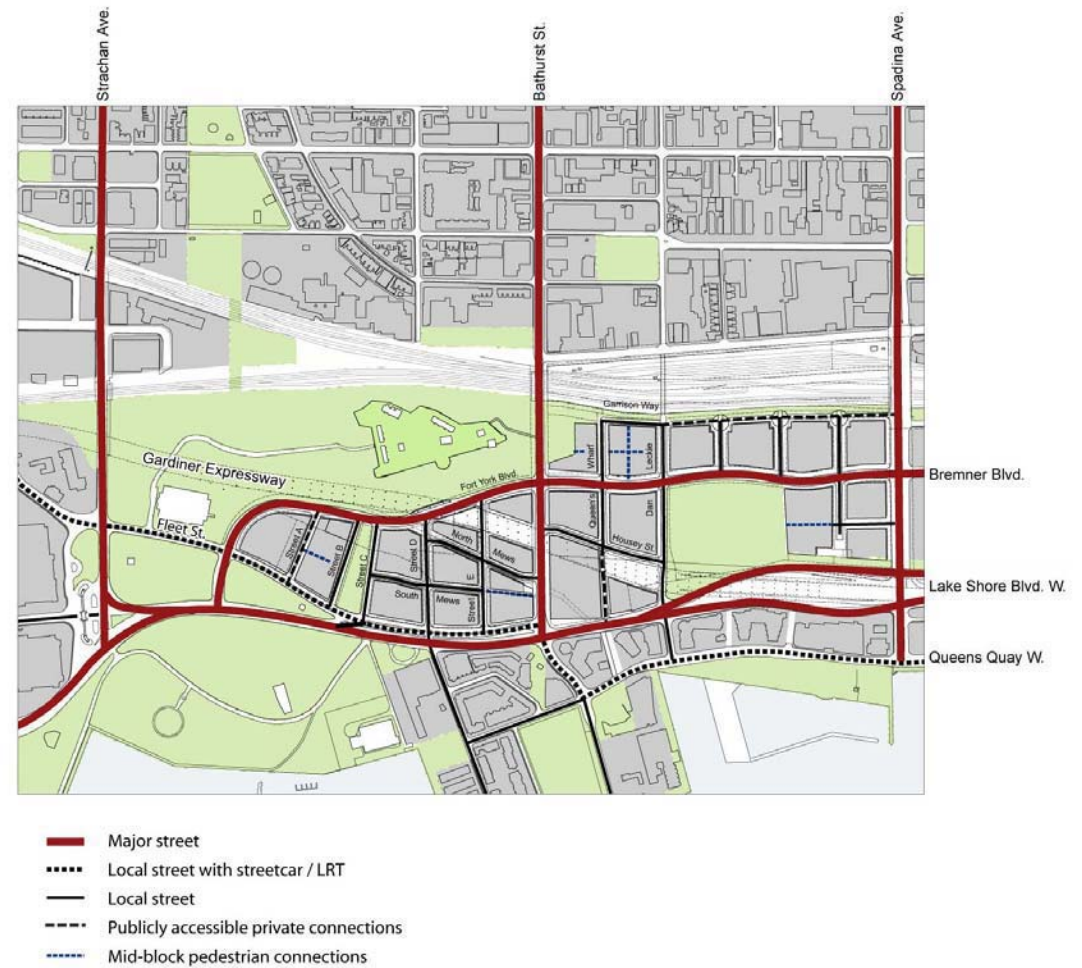
## Streets

*The neighbourhood streets will form a fine-grained, continuous network that is connected with streets in the neighbouring areas, wherever possible.*

A key principle of the plan is to create a network of streets that perform complementary functions and are differentiated in scale and character. The Public Realm Plan describes a network of major and minor public streets, publicly accessible private connections and mid-block pedestrian connections.

Recent changes that affect the planning of Blocks 32 and 36 include:

- **Fort York Boulevard** (previously Bremner Boulevard) is under construction and includes an 8.0 m median reserved for future rapid transit. The median is continuous between signalized intersections and therefore precludes left turns into Queen's Wharf Street (previously Fort Street).
- **Bathurst Street** is proposed to be widened south of the steel truss bridge to allow for an exclusive streetcar right-of-way.
- **Garrison Way**, the route connecting Queen's Wharf Street and Dan Leckie Way along the north edge of Block 32 has been changed from a publicly accessible private connection to a public street.
- **Mid-block pedestrian connections** will be developed in both Blocks 32 and 36.



## Bathurst Bridge

A Municipal Class Environmental Assessment has recently been approved by the Ministry of Environment, which establishes the parameters for the design and construction of a new bridge and intersection on Bathurst Street at Fort York Boulevard. The structure to be replaced includes the three sections south of the historic truss bridge.

Central to the project is the intention to develop exclusive transit rights-of-way on Fort York Boulevard and Bathurst Street as far north as the truss bridge. The design of the new structure includes two primary strategies that will affect the Blocks 32 and 36 public realms:

- **Width** - the new bridge will be considerably wider than the existing one in order to accommodate both the exclusive right-of-way and left turn lanes onto Fort York Boulevard. The new bridge will be widest at Fort York Boulevard, tapering to meet the existing truss bridge.
- **Elevation** - The bridge and intersection will be lowered by approximately 1.0m in order to reduce the north/south gradient across the intersection.

Together, these measures will reduce the clearance under the new bridge while extending the length of passage.

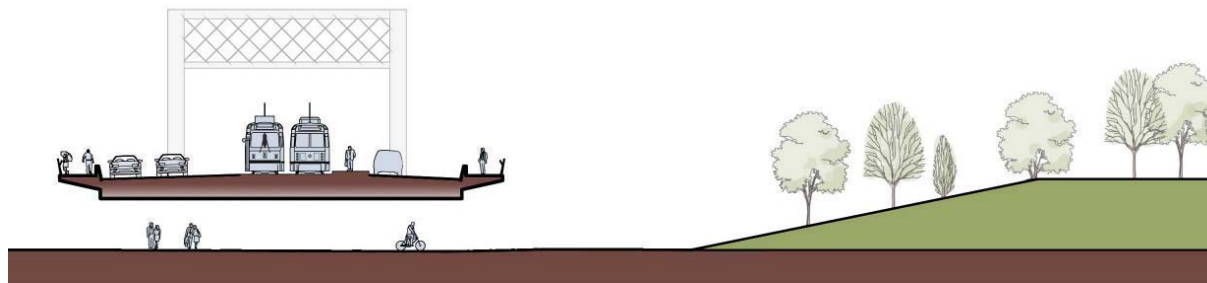
Terms of reference are currently being prepared for the project, with construction expected to begin in the Fall of 2008.



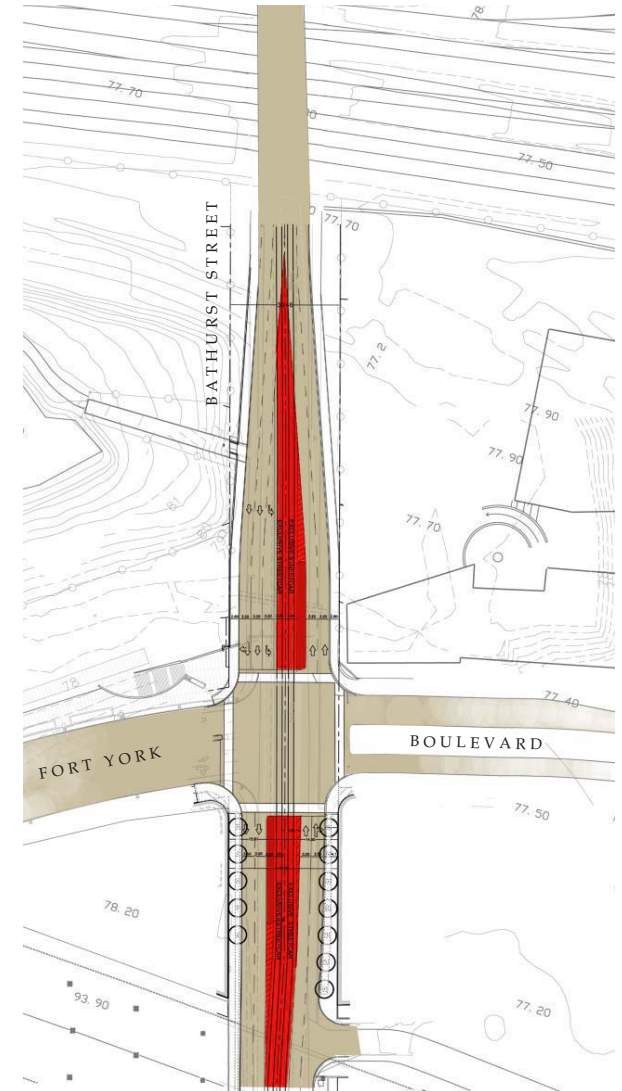
*Bathurst Bridge looking northwest*



*Under the existing Bathurst Bridge*



*Section looking north*



*Proposed Bridge: wider and lower*

## Bicycle Routes and Pathways

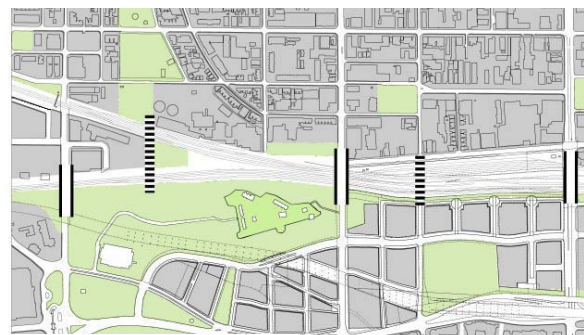
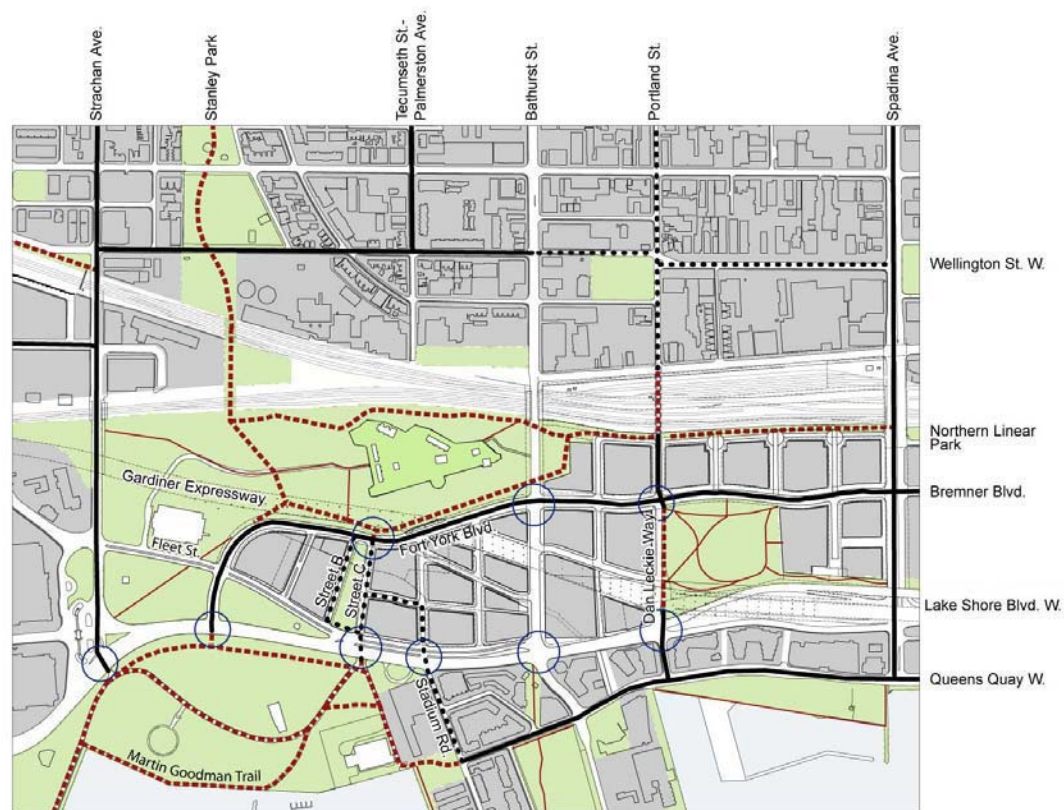
*The Public Realm Plan supports the vision of the Toronto Bike Plan: “to create a safe, comfortable and bicycle friendly environment in Toronto, which encourages people of all ages to use bicycles for everyday transportation and enjoyment.”*

In the Blocks 32 and 36 neighbourhood, the Public Realm Plan contributes to the implementation of this vision by confirming on-street cycle lanes on Fort York Boulevard, dimensioning Dan Leckie Way to accommodate signed cycle lanes, developing the Northern Linear Park and Mouth of the Creek Park to accommodate a multi-use pathway, and allowing for a new pedestrian/cyclist bridge across the rail corridor at Dan Leckie Way.

## Rail Crossings

There are currently three major bridges over the rail corridor in the Fort York and Railway Lands West neighbourhoods: Strachan Avenue to the west, Bathurst Street, and Spadina Avenue to the east.

The Public Realm Plan allows for new connections for cyclists and pedestrians from Stanley Park to Fort York and from Portland Street to Dan Leckie Way.





## An Integrated Park System

*Create parks and public open spaces in the neighbourhood that link to surrounding neighbourhoods and form a connected, multi-purpose park system.*

Blocks 32 and 36 are uniquely situated in the midst of an area with extensive public open space resources - perhaps the best endowed in the city.

- Mouth of the Creek Park, in Block 36, connects directly to Fort York under the Bathurst Bridge.
- The Northern Linear Park, along the north side of the site, connects to Fort York and extends east to Spadina Avenue and beyond.
- The new bridge at Dan Leckie Way will connect to Victoria Memorial Square and on to Queen Street.
- In the other direction, Dan Leckie Way will connect the neighbourhood with Queen's Quay and the lakeshore.
- The future Railway Lands Community Park, kitty-corner to Blocks 32 and 36, will provide a full range of recreational and cultural opportunities.
- Bathurst Street and Fort York Boulevard will serve as major connections in all four cardinal directions.



*Pedestrian and Cyclist Linkages*



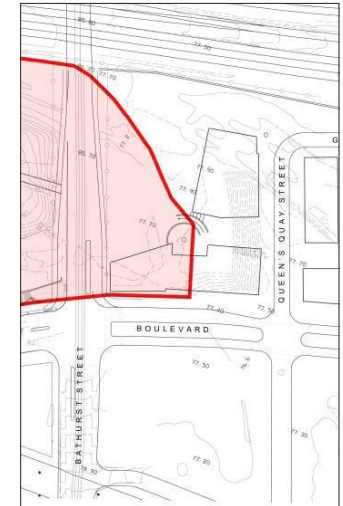
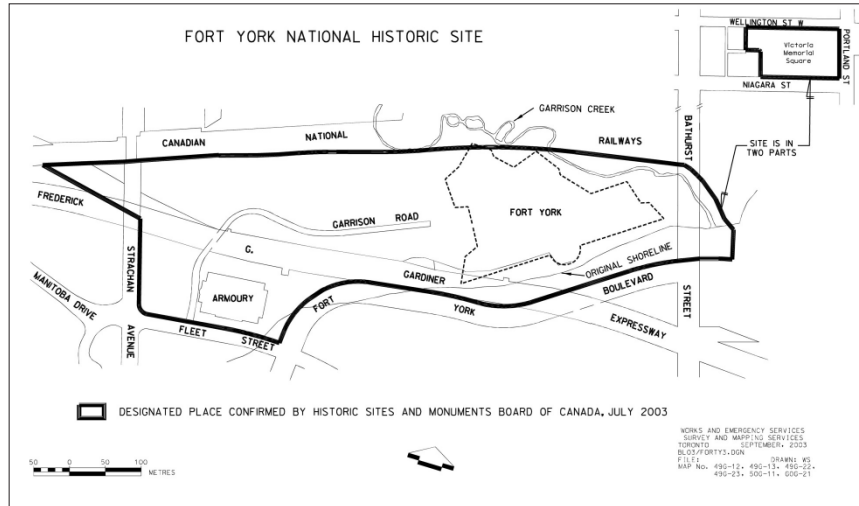
*Integrated Park System*

## Historical Setting

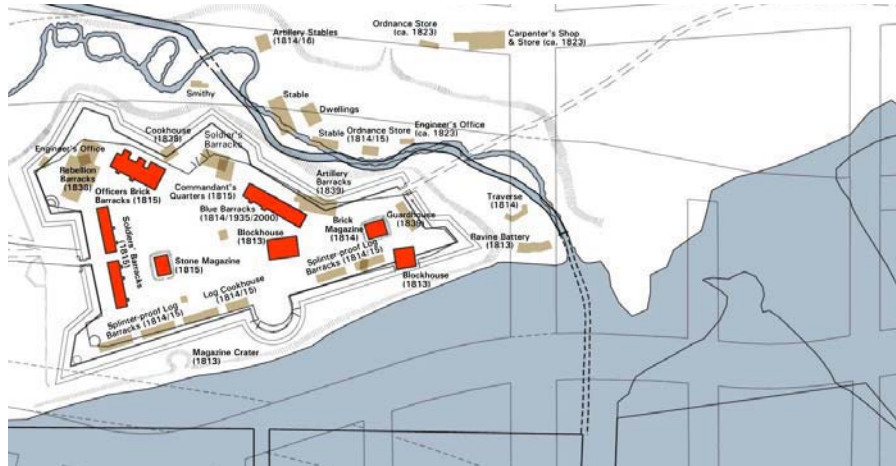
Blocks 32 & 36 lie within an area rich in history. Fort York was established in 1793 and rebuilt in 1816 following the Battle of York. Today the defensive walls of this City-owned and operated museum enclose Canada's largest collection of original War of 1812 buildings. The industrial legacy of the area is equal in importance to the military history. For 150 years, the area was the industrial and transportation heart of the City, and much archaeological evidence of these uses remain.

A significant portion of Block 36 lies within the Fort York Heritage Conservation District. Fort York has been recognized as a site of national significance by the Historic Sites and Monument Board of Canada (HSMBC) since 1923 and was designated as a Heritage Conservation District in 1985. In July 2003, the HSMBC approved expanded boundaries for the National Historic Site and included Victoria Memorial Square as a separate but related part of the site. Toronto City Council, in consideration of the expanded area of the National Historic Site, approved amendments to the boundaries of the Fort York Heritage Conservation District in 2004.

As stipulated by the Ontario Heritage Act, a Heritage Conservation District Plan is currently being prepared. The Plan will consolidate the historical record and set out guidelines for the administration of the Plan and for future development in areas adjacent to the Fort.



Fort York Heritage Conservation District includes part of Block 36



Military History



Industrial History

## Fort York Views

**The Block 32 & 36 built form and public realm will protect views to and from the Fort from vantage points both at plateau level and down in the valley.**

New developments in the area will protect views of and within the Fort District that will reconnect the Fort to the surrounding neighbourhoods and further reveal Fort York's historic fabric.

Primary views in this part of the District include vantage points at two elevations. The *plateau level* includes the main body of the Fort within the walls and the streets within Blocks 32 & 36. This level approximates the elevations of the historic west and east embankments of Garrison Creek. The *valley level* includes vantage points at the approximate elevation of the historic shoreline of Lake Ontario and the mouth of Garrison Creek.

### Plateau Level Views

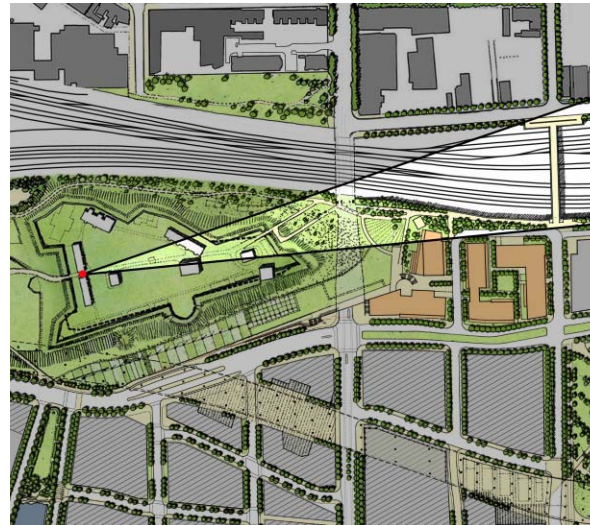
The massing of the Block 32 & 36 development has been organized to protect an important existing view from the West Gate of Fort York. This view offers a spectacular panorama of Fort York with the CN Tower and the downtown skyline well in the background.

The Block 32 & 36 public realm will create two new views to Fort York: looking west along Fort York Boulevard and looking west from the Northern Linear Park. This latter view is of particular importance as it lies near the original approach to Fort York from the Town of York.

### Valley Level Views

The development of the Block 36 open space will open opportunities to reveal the Fort's founding landscapes that included the original shoreline of Lake Ontario and the mouth of Garrison Creek (discussed in detail later in the report). Critical to the understanding of this historic landscape are views at this lower level from the Fort and views back towards the Fort from Block 36.

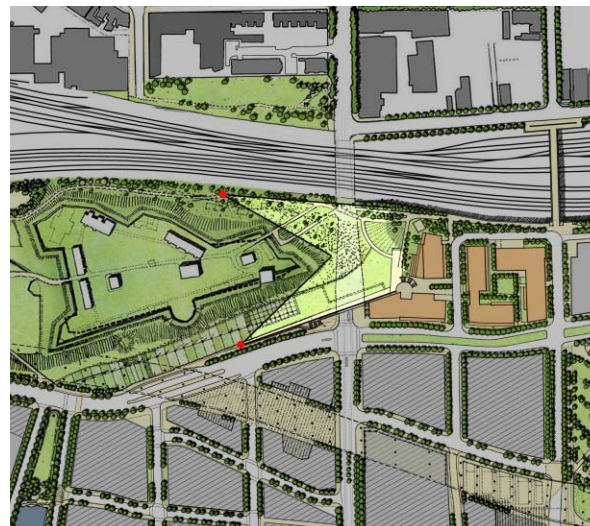
The protection of these lower level views will be a major challenge for the design of the new Bathurst Street bridge, which bisects the site.



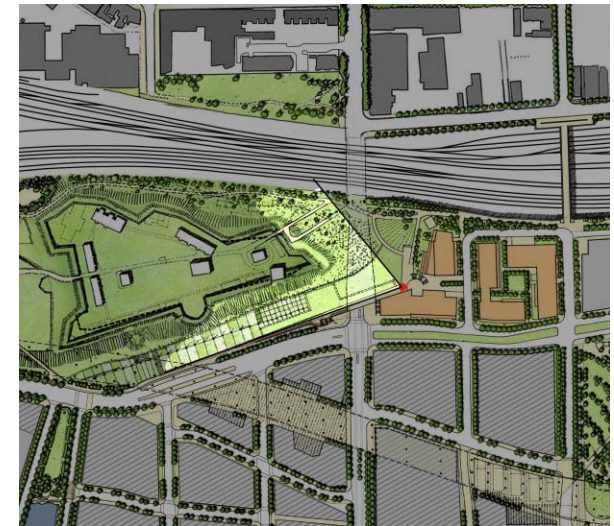
Plateau Level View From the Fort



Plateau Level Views To the Fort



Valley Level Views From the Fort



Valley Level View To the Fort

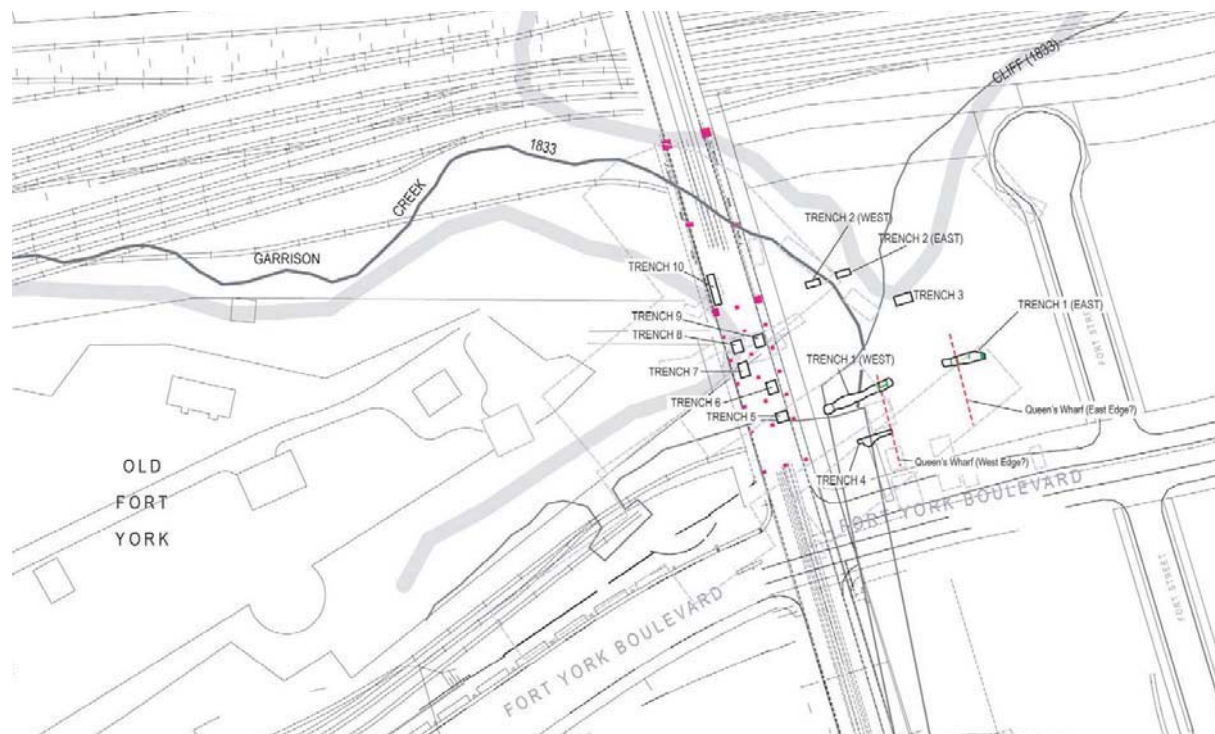
## Archaeological Resources

Archaeological Services Inc. was commissioned in 2005 by TCHC to conduct archaeological studies of Block 32 and 36 and the adjacent portion of the Bathurst Street right-of-way under the bridge. These investigations were required as the site lies within the Fort York National Historic Site and are identified in the City of Toronto's Archaeological Master Plan.

The Stage 1 study reviewed the many previous studies, which had been undertaken on these lands, and the available historical data base. The study concluded, not surprisingly, that the rich military and industrial history of the area justified further examination of Block 36. A Stage 2 archaeological study was undertaken in the Fall of 2006 and revealed the potential for rich deposits of artifacts. The study consisted of a series of pits and trenches on Block 36 and under the Bathurst Street Bridge. Key findings included:

- timber remnants of the Queen's Wharf and possibly of the 1813 ravine battery;
- masonry foundations, most likely from the 1855 Grand Trunk railway (GTR) Engine House;
- deposits of granular material likely to be alluvial material from Garrison Creek;
- a collection of cultural artifacts including pottery shards, bricks and leather goods.

Based on the findings, the Study recommended that a Stage 4 salvage excavation by undertaken in those parts of the site that will experience major disturbance during construction. This new work is now under consideration.



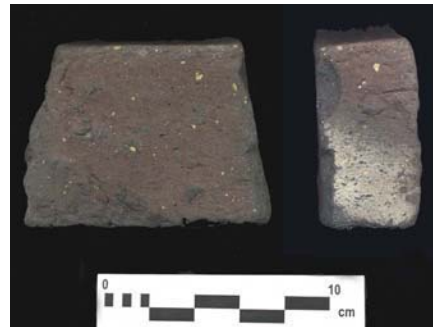
Phase 2 Test Pits (Archaeological Services Inc., 2006)



Mortared Brick and dry-laid Limestone Slab: Trench 1



Beam and dislodged tie-back: Trench 1



Hand-made Brick Fragments: Trench 3



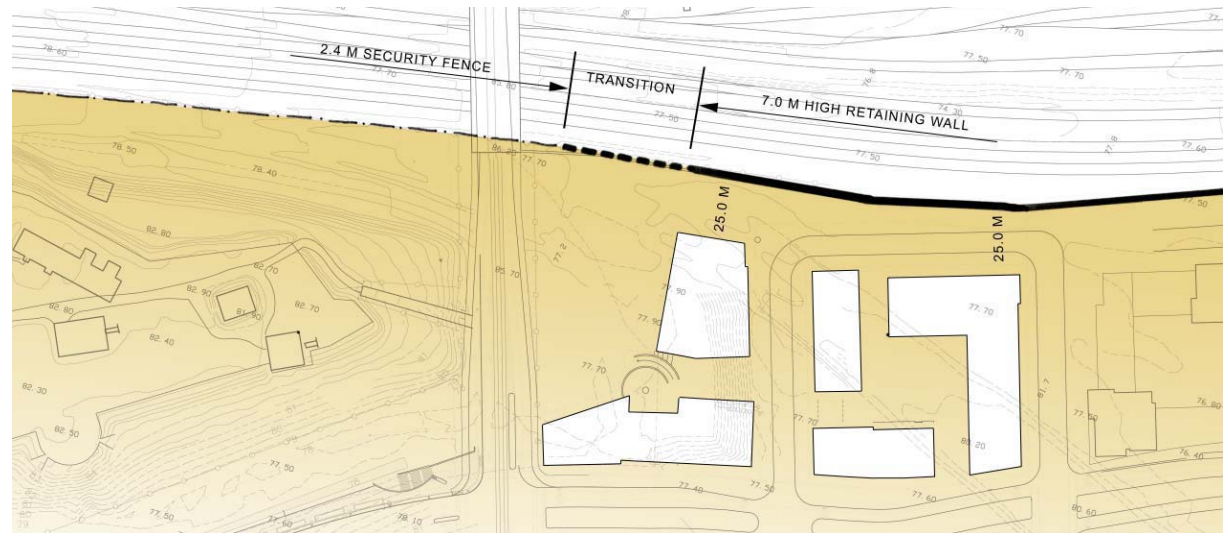
Ceramic artifacts: Trench 3

## Railway Interface

The development sites from Bathurst to east of Spadina north of Fort York Boulevard will be elevated above and separated from the railway corridor by a 7.0 metre high retaining wall. Buildings will also be set back from the wall by a minimum distance of 25.0 metres. The Northern Linear Park will be developed within that zone.

On Blocks 32 and 36, the retaining wall will remain full height for the extent of occupied residential buildings. When it passes that point, the wall will taper down to meet the existing grade under the Bathurst Bridge.

Where it is more than 600 mm high, the wall will require a guard meeting the requirements of the Ontario Building Code. To permit views of the railway corridor and the city beyond, the guard should be visually light and open. Where this elevational difference does not exist, as under the Bathurst Bridge, a 2.4 metre security barrier will be required along the edge of the railway corridor.



Railway interface: retaining wall, guard and security fence



Existing retaining wall, south side at Spadina Avenue



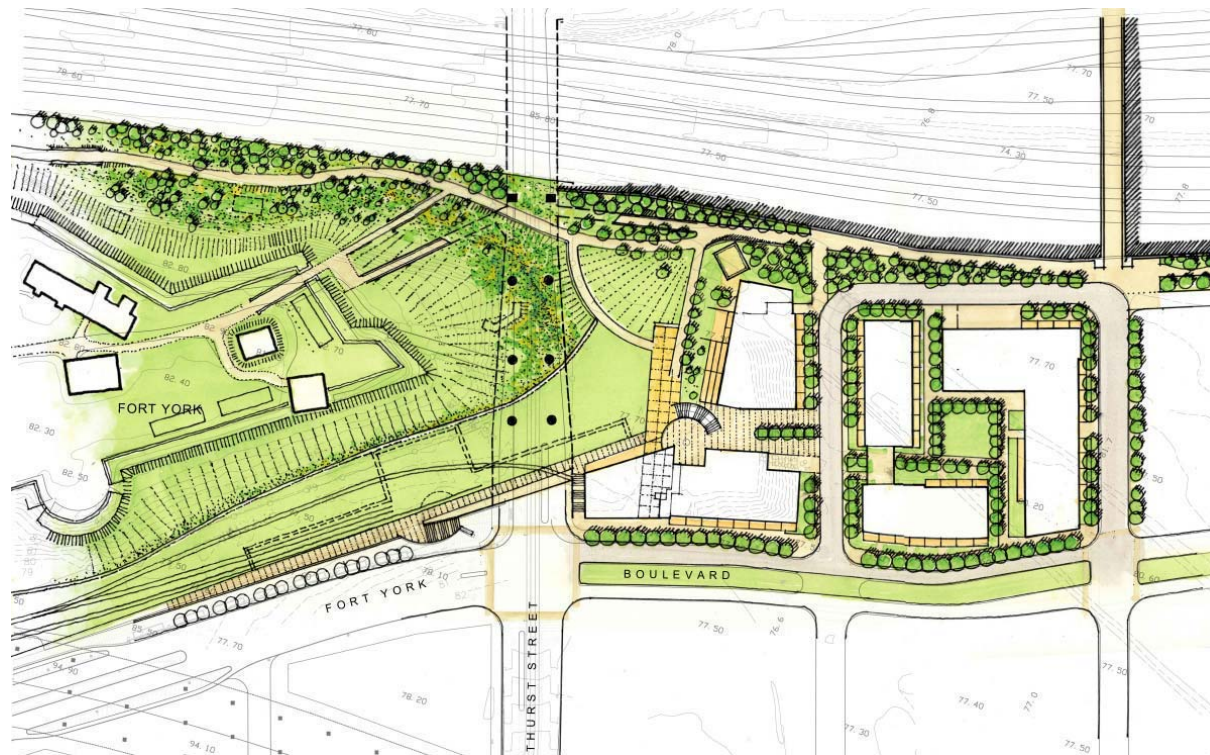
Existing retaining wall, north side at Spadina Avenue

## BLOCKS 32 AND 36 PUBLIC REALM

### Key Components

The Public Realm Plan for the Blocks 32 and 36 incorporates the following principles and components. Those items dealing with built form and density are based on the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Bylaw enacted by City Council in September of 2006.

- Historical Roots - a landscape of public spaces that reflects succeeding generations of military, railway, industrial and post-industrial interventions on the waterfront.
- Fort York - new physical and visual connections with the fort, and an extension of the irreplaceable assets of the neighbourhood's unique historical and cultural centrepiece.
- Public Open Space Connections - facilitating important new connections to Fort York, to the neighbourhoods to the north and east, and to the lakeshore to the south.
- Landscape Continuity - between Block 36 and Fort York. The crucial relationship between the former mouth of Garrison Creek and the fort is expressed through the continuity under the Bathurst bridge of pathways, land forms, structures and materials.
- Environmental Sustainability - landscape and architectural strategies that not only reduce energy and resource consumption, but also educate and increase public awareness.
- Plantings - along streets and throughout open spaces. Hardy trees and shrubs, preferably native species, are liberally planted to provide shade, improve air quality and reflect seasonal variations. Plantings should respect and support the area's historical character.
- New Rail Crossing - the Portland Street pedestrian bridge further connects the city with its waterfront, links a series of important parks and strengthens the city's pedestrian and cycle network.
- Communal Facilities - that support and enhance the social viability of the new community. These include open space amenities, play spaces, meeting places, retail and institutional community facilities.
- Urban Boulevard Frontage - new frontage on Fort York Boulevard, the neighbourhood's major east/west spine, with special emphasis on the Bathurst Street intersection, which defines the "four-corners" of the Fort York Neighbourhood.
- Streets and Blocks - a fine grid of local streets and mid-block connections that enhance connectivity and facilitate social animation. Small development blocks maximize street frontage and support a highly permeable, pedestrian neighbourhood. A new public street between Queen's Wharf Street and Dan Leckie Way provides additional connectivity.
- Street-Related Buildings - buildings line the edges of the streets and public spaces, giving shape to the outdoor "rooms" of the neighbourhood and maximizing the "eyes on the street". Streets lined with the entrances, stoops, front yards and terraces of individual private residences and businesses as well as apartment lobbies which maximize the "feet on the street".
- Public Space Frontages - continuity of building frontages on major and local streets and on all public spaces, with building street walls that are sized to the scale, role and setting of each street.
- Built-Form - mid-rise buildings lining the perimeter of each block and framing the streets, public spaces and private interior courtyards. Point towers set above these base buildings, spaced widely apart to provide sky views, located to reduce visual impacts on Fort York and to mark key places in the neighbourhood.



### The Demonstration Plan

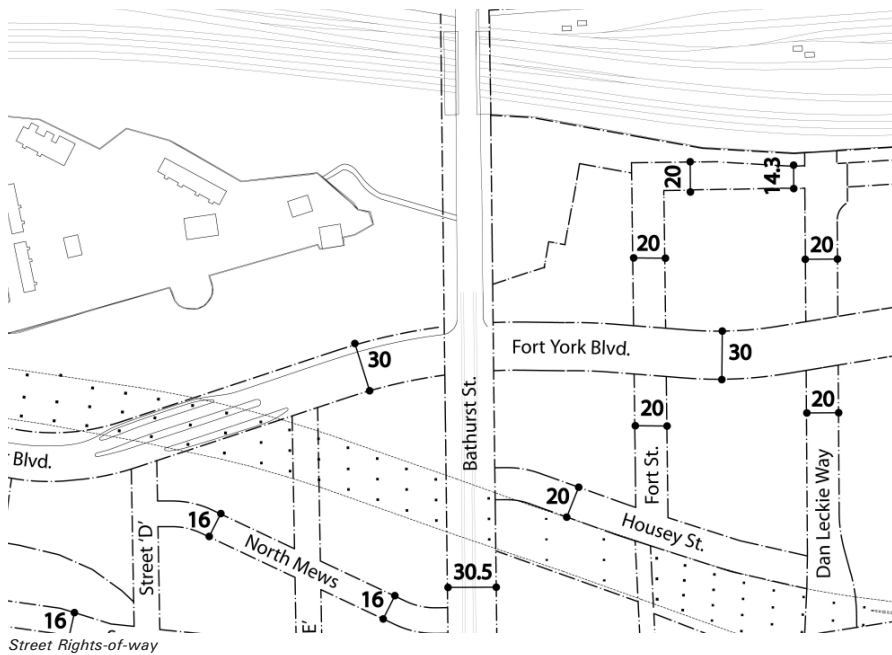
The Demonstration Plan graphically illustrates the application of the concepts, principles and guidelines of the Public Realm Plan for the various components of Blocks 32 and 36, and the possibilities for connection and integration with streets, parks and public spaces of the surrounding areas.

## Street Rights-of-way

The street pattern is a fine grid of local streets north of Fort York Boulevard, a major city street. The north-south streets are generally orthogonal to the Toronto street grid, aligned to improve city, Fort, waterfront connections and views. Development blocks are sized to maximize street frontage and to support a highly permeable, pedestrian neighbourhood.

The local streets have 20.0m rights-of-way (ROWs) to match their residential scale and meet appropriate engineering standards. The east end of Garrison Way is reduced to a 14.3m ROW to maintain the full width of the Northern Linear Park.

Fort York Boulevard remains unchanged with a 30.0m ROW as set out in the Public Realm Plan.



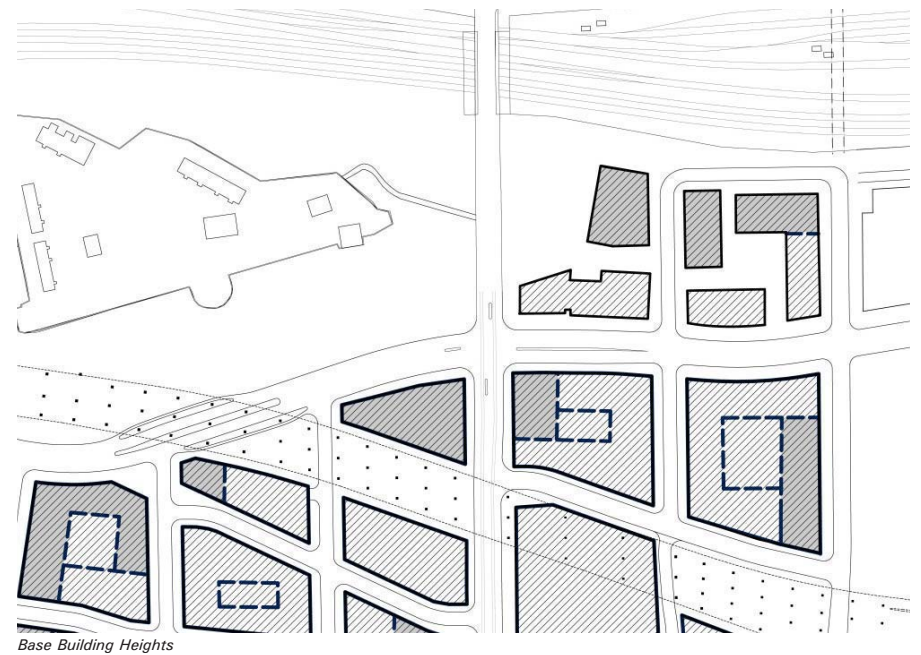
Street Rights-of-way

## Base Building Heights

The base buildings are the mid-rise buildings that define the edges of the streets, the courtyards and Mouth of the Creek Park. Doors and windows along these facades promote social and recreational activities that animate and make safe the public realm. Building heights on these Blocks have been set according to the following principles:

- A series of base buildings line the streets at the perimeter of each block;
- A base height of 6 storeys is maintained along Fort York Boulevard to create a continuous street wall as set out in the Railway Lands West Urban Design Guidelines.
- Higher base buildings are located away from Fort York Boulevard.
- All base buildings have a 1.0m setback above the 6th storey.
- Buildings addressing the park step down with the topography.

- ▨ Low-rise (4-6 storeys)
- Mid-rise (7-15 storeys)



Base Building Heights

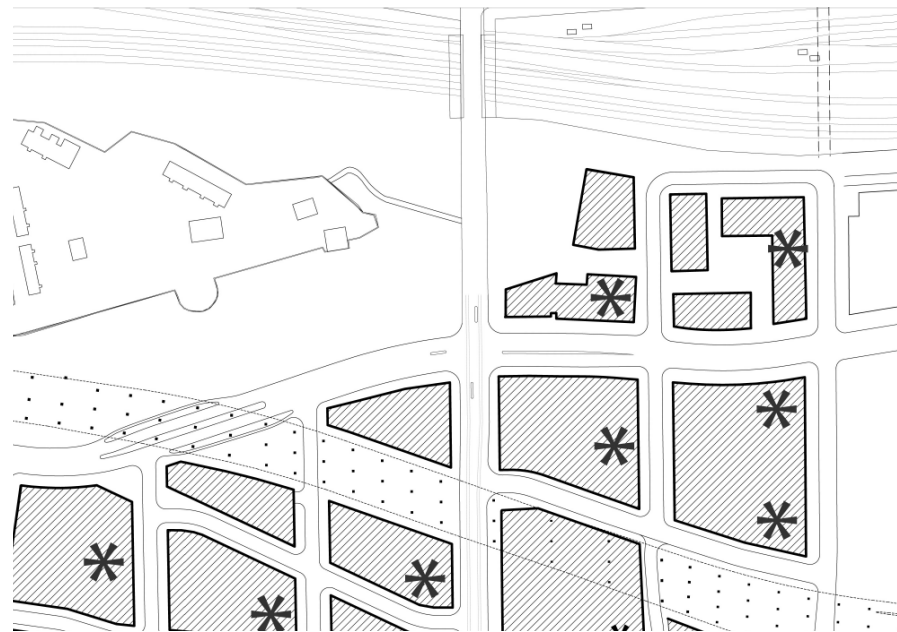
## Point Towers

Point towers on Blocks 32 and 36 are planned to achieve density objectives while promoting the liveability of local streets and open spaces, and without impacting the character of Fort York.

- Towers are located to protect key views of the downtown cityscape from Fort York.
- They are located to optimize solar penetration into major public open spaces.
- The west tower is lower in height in deference to the relatively small scale of Fort York.
- Towers step back from the base buildings in order to minimize their direct presence on the streets and public open spaces.
- Floorplates are set at a maximum of 750 sm to minimize skyline and shading impacts.



Point Towers



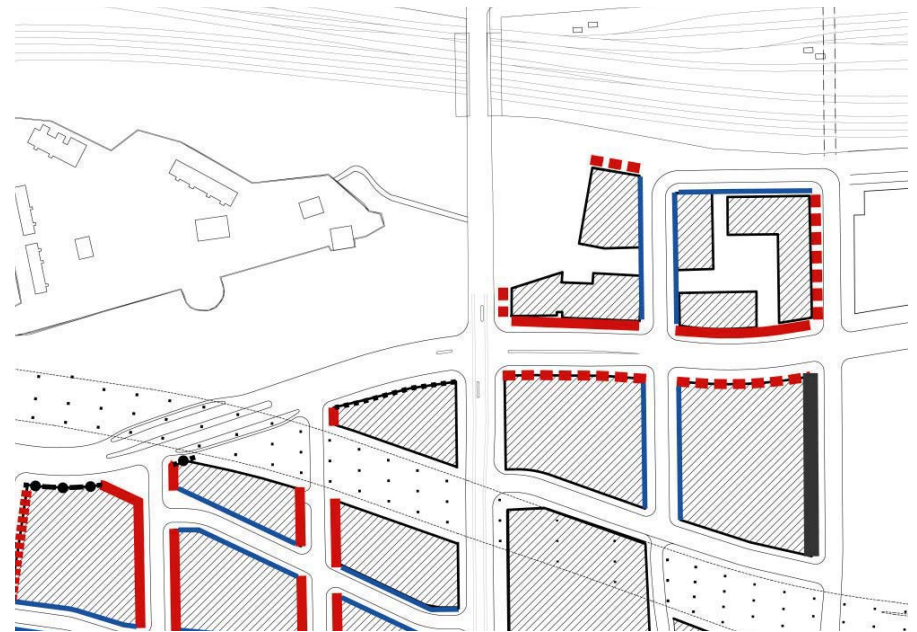
Point Towers

## Building Setbacks

Setbacks have been established for building faces on public streets. The buildings will be built to these setbacks. Setbacks vary according to the character of each street and/or established guidelines.

- Fort York Boulevard - 3.0m to match established setbacks on other sites along the north side of the street.
- Queen's Wharf Street and Garrison Way - 1.0m to promote the intimate, residential character of these streets.
- Bathurst Street - 2.0m
- Dan Leckie Way - 2.0m

— 0.0 m	■ 2.5 m	⋯ varies
— 1.0 m	■ 3.0 m	● 7.5 m from curb
■ 2.0 m	■ 4.0 m	● to building face



Building Setbacks

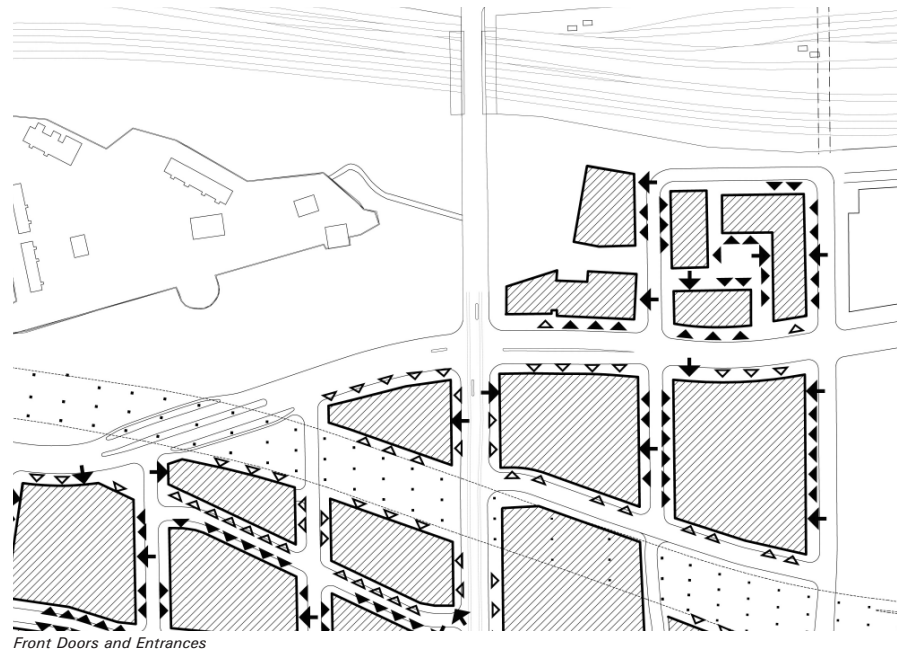


## Front Doors and Entrances

Grade-related entrances to individual residential and community/retail units are provided on street and courtyard frontages.

- Residential Entrances - associated with townhouse forms at the base of buildings. Residential entrances are raised above the sidewalk (4 or 5 steps) to enhance the privacy of these units, and are spaced frequently along the building face. They should be developed with steps, terraces or stoops.
- Residential Lobby Entrances - should take up a limited part of the street frontage, and should be level with the sidewalk or accessed by ramps to meet accessibility requirements. Where applicable, lobby entrances should connect through to the courtyards. Entrances to lobbies will be reviewed as part of Site Plan approval with respect to the safety and operation of roads and intersections.
- Community/Retail Entrances - should be level with the sidewalk to provide full accessibility.

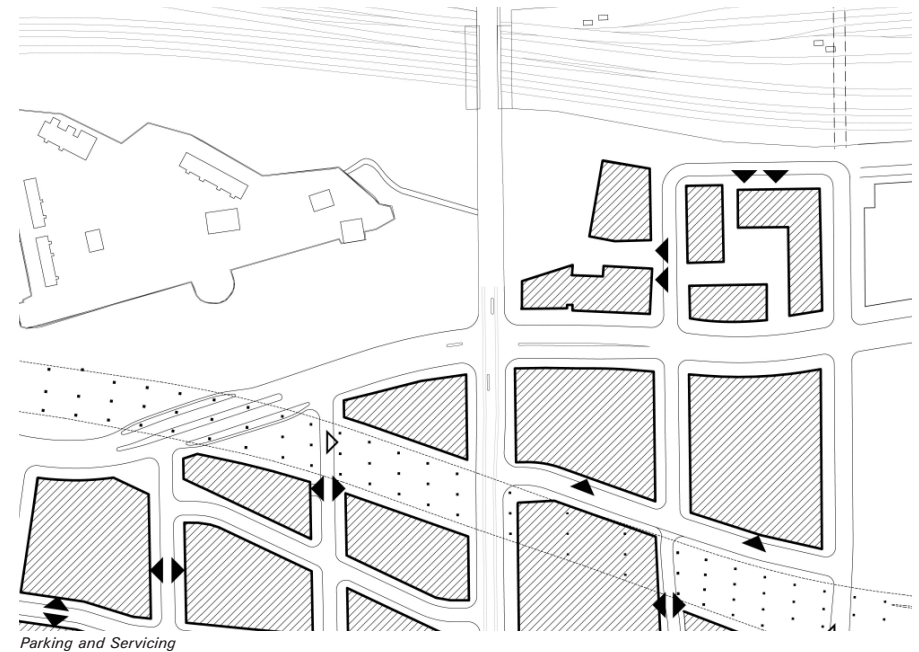
- ▶ Residential
- ▶ Residential Lobby
- ▶ Community / Retail



## Parking and Servicing

Parking and service areas should be in the interior of the blocks and accessed from local streets. The vehicular entrances should be integrated with the design of the buildings' street walls.

- Vehicular entrances should be consolidated to serve multiple buildings within each block in order to minimize the number of interruptions in the street wall and to reduce the number of potential conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.
- Vehicular entrances designed as portals or archways which do not unduly break-up the continuity of the street wall, are encouraged.
- Where parking access and service areas are located in courtyards, the buildings and landscapes should be designed to minimize the visual and noise impacts on the quality of the outdoor space.
- Parking/service access points should not front onto Fort York Boulevard.



## Fort York Boulevard

### Street Design

Extending from Lake Shore Boulevard to the Air Canada Centre, Fort York Boulevard will be the main east-west "spine" of the Fort York and Railway Lands West neighbourhoods. It will be an active pedestrian urban street lined by wide sidewalks, multiple rows of trees, and frequent entrances to buildings. Blocks 32 and 36 front onto Fort York Boulevard.

The general layout of Fort York Boulevard has been established through a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment. It includes one lane of traffic each way, cycle lanes both sides and a broad median reserved for future public transit.

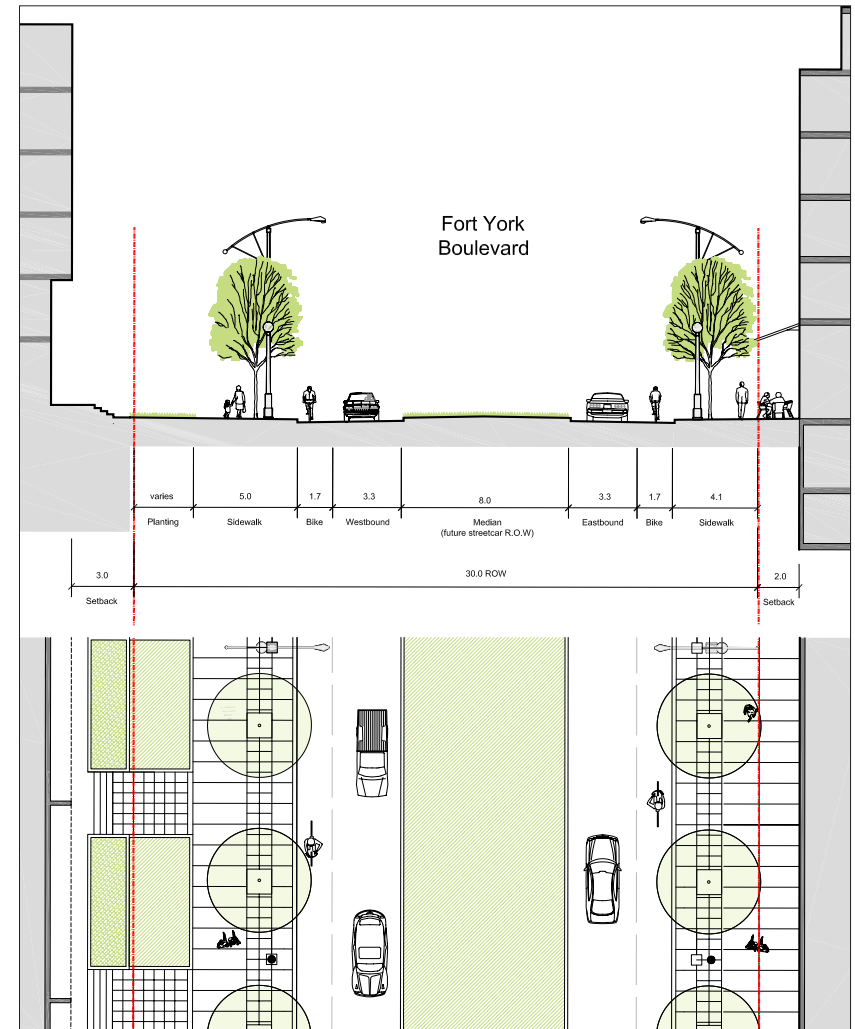
The pavement is offset to provide a wider sidewalk on the north and sunny side of the street. This wider sidewalk is meant to be developed with double rows of trees. However, the north sidewalk is reduced in width near Bathurst Street and near Dan Leckie Way to accommodate turning lanes. There is, consequently, sufficient space for one row of trees only.



Confederation Boulevard, Ottawa



Fort York Boulevard: Demonstration Plan



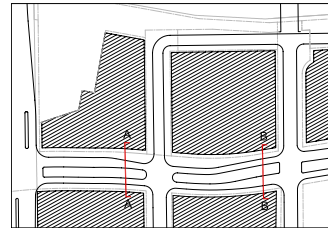
5 = Number of Storeys    Ex L = Expression Line    L gf = Level Ground Floor    PL = Property Line  
 Ca = Cap Articulation    H = Total Height (storeys)    R gf = Raised Ground Floor    St B = Step-back

### Fort York Boulevard: Building Profiles

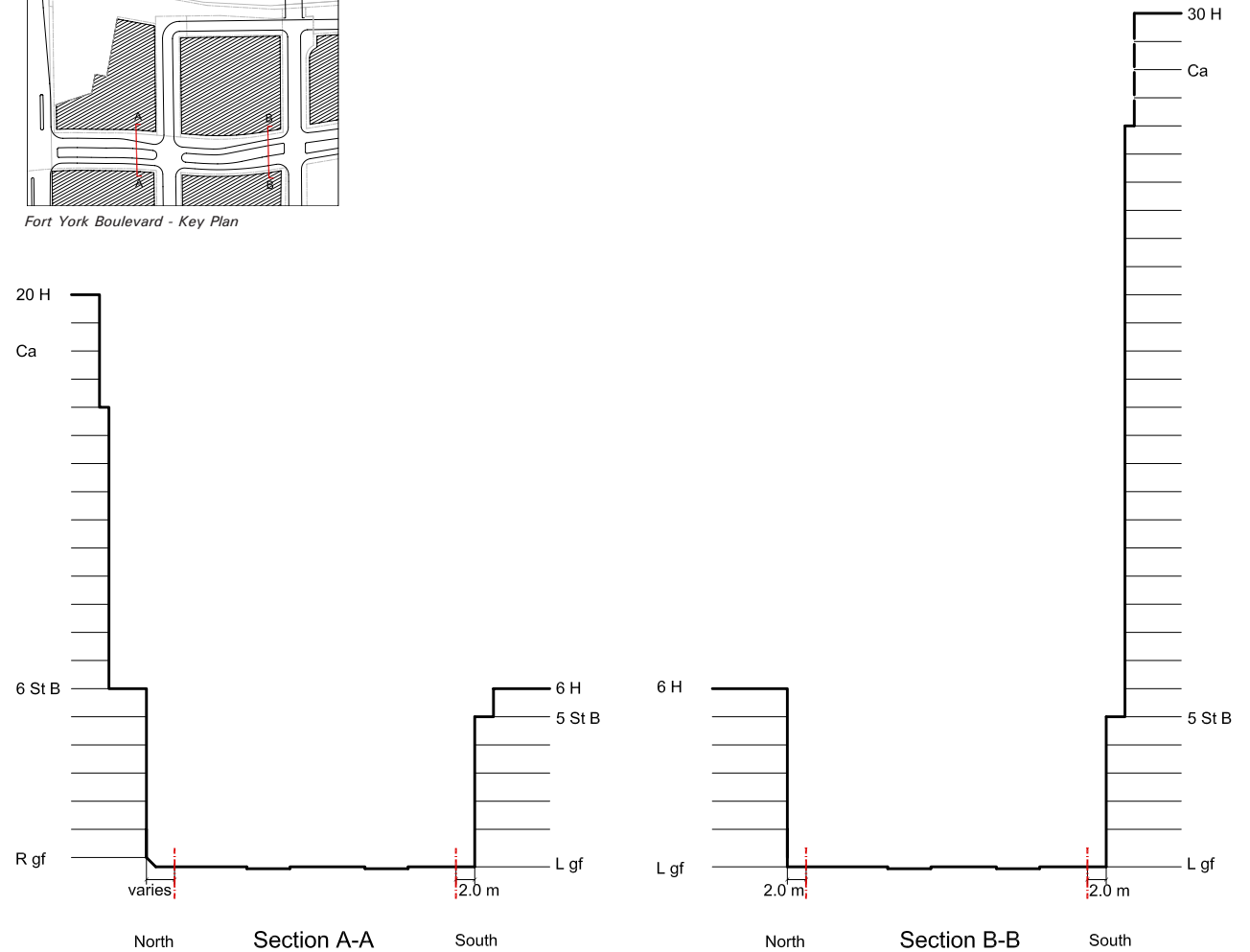
The building profiles on Blocks 32 and 36 support the development of consistent street wall heights and setbacks along Fort York Boulevard between Bathurst and Spadina Streets.

Building profile guidelines for Blocks 32 and 36 include:

- 6-storey street wall built to the setback (2.0 m) line;
- Step-back at 6 storeys at point towers;
- Narrow-fronted townhouses at base of taller buildings, with raised ground floor, street entrances and stoops on north side of street;
- Community/retail with ground floor entrances level with sidewalk grades;
- 2 storey expression line and possible change of material to express building base;
- Canopies for sidewalk shelter at community/retail frontages;
- Cap articulation of upper storeys of point towers.



Fort York Boulevard - Key Plan



5 = Number of Storeys    Ex L = Expression Line    L gf = Level Ground Floor    PL = Property Line  
 Ca = Cap Articulation    H = Total Height (storeys)    R gf = Raised Ground Floor    St B = Step-back

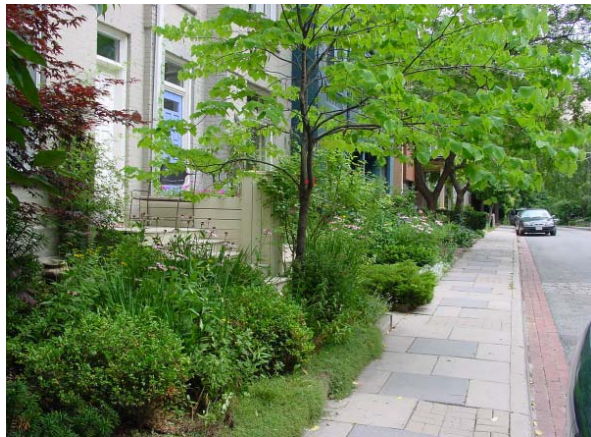
## Dan Leckie Way

### Street Design

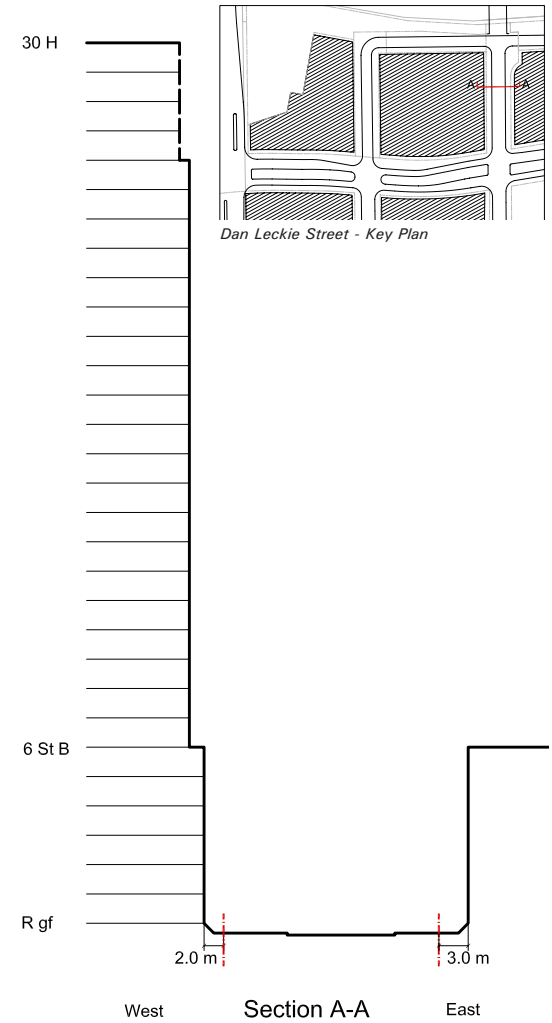
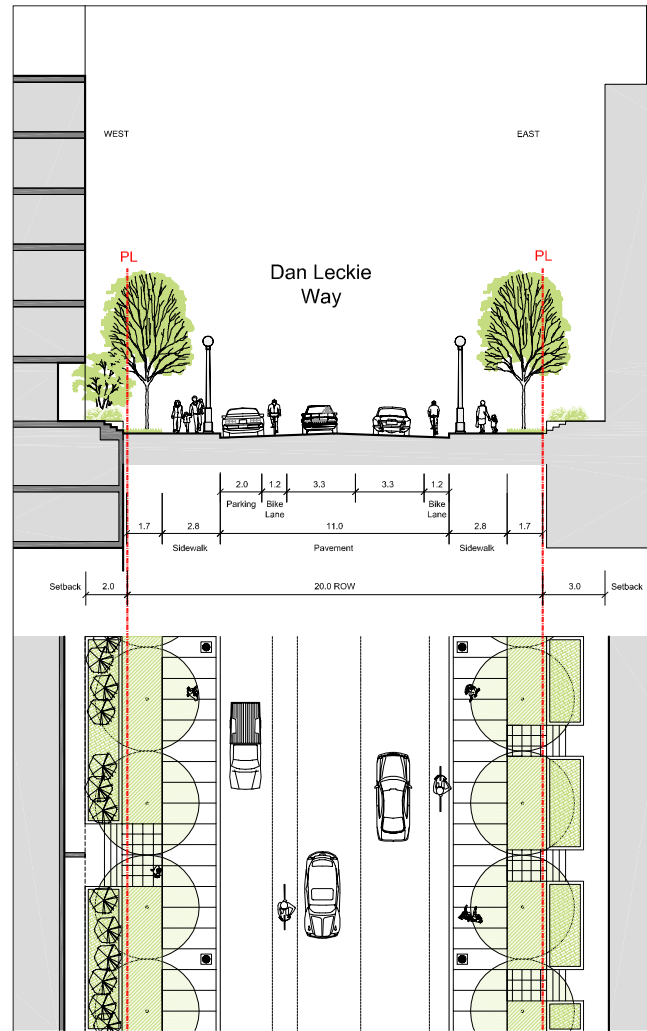
Dan Leckie Way, north of Fort York Boulevard, is a local residential street. The cross-section includes two moving lanes of traffic, one parking lane and on-street cycle lanes both ways. The cycle lanes are necessary on this block to accommodate traffic that will be generated by the new Portland Street pedestrian bridge. Sidewalks are 2.4m wide and trees are set back behind the sidewalks in planted zones. Lights are located in the sidewalk just behind the curb.

### Building Profiles

- 6-storey street wall built to the setback (2.0 m) line;
- Step-back at 6 storeys at point towers;
- Narrow fronted townhouses at building base with raised ground floor, street entrances and stoops/terraces;
- 2-storey expression line and possible change of materials to articulate the building base;
- Cap articulation of upper storeys of point tower.



Collier Street, Toronto



5 = Number of Storeys    Ex L = Expression Line    L gf = Level Ground Floor    PL = Property Line  
 Ca = Cap Articulation    H = Total Height (storeys)    R gf = Raised Ground Floor    St B = Step-back

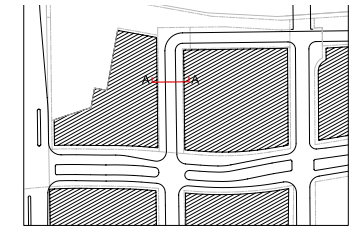
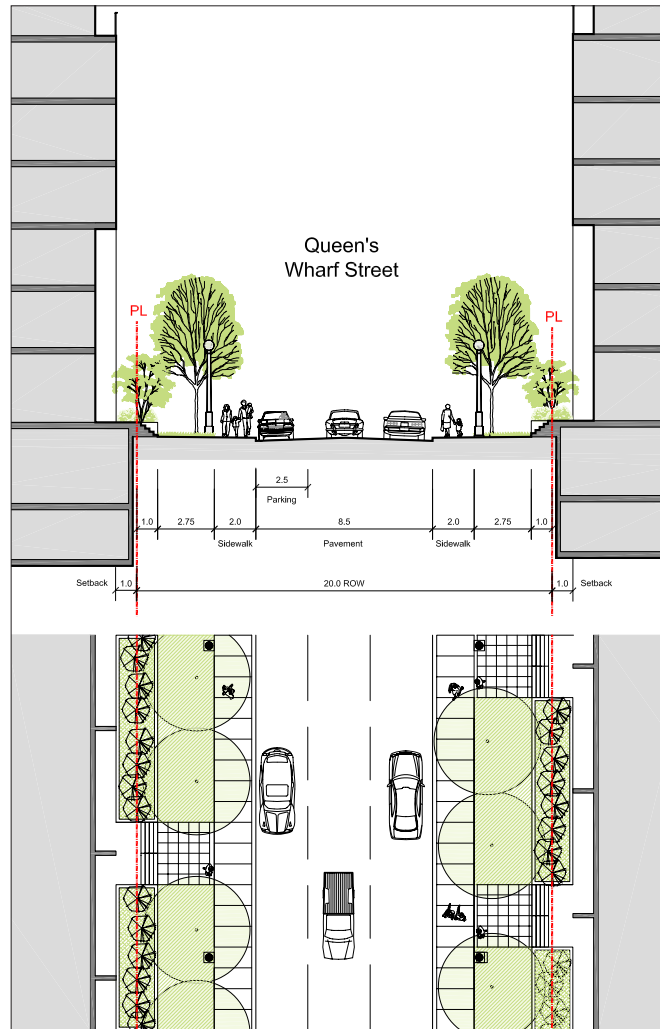
## Queen's Wharf Street

### Street Design

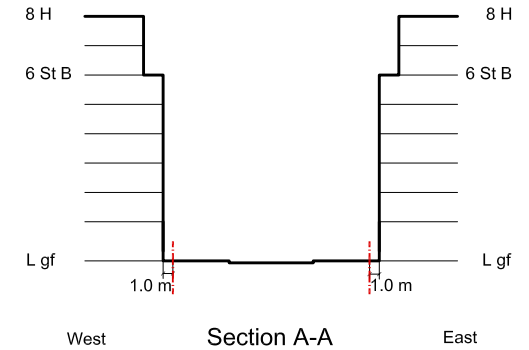
Queen's Wharf Street is designed as a local residential street, reminiscent of traditional downtown Toronto residential streets. The roadway includes two moving lanes and one parking lane. Sidewalks are 2.0m wide, and trees and lights are located behind the sidewalk in planted zones. Stairs, porches and planters extend a maximum of 1.0m into the right-of-way.

### Building Profiles

- 6-storey street wall built to the setback (1.0 m) line;
- Step-back at 6 storeys at taller buildings and point towers;
- Narrow fronted townhouses at building base with raised ground floor, street entrances and stoops/terraces;
- 2-storey expression line and possible change of materials to articulate the building base;
- Point tower lobby entrance defers to the continuity of the street wall.



Queen's Wharf Street, Key Plan



5 = Number of Storeys    Ex L = Expression Line    L gf = Level Ground Floor    PL = Property Line  
 Ca = Cap Articulation    H = Total Height (storeys)    R gf = Raised Ground Floor    St B = Step-back

## Garrison Way

### Street Design

Garrison Way is a single-sided street with residences on one side and the Northern Linear Park on the other. The south side of the street is similar to Dan Leckie Way with 2.0m sidewalks and trees and lights located behind the sidewalk in planted zones. Steps, porches and planters encroach on the right-of-way to a maximum of 1.0m.

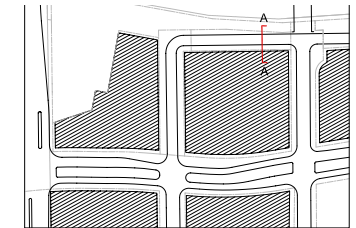
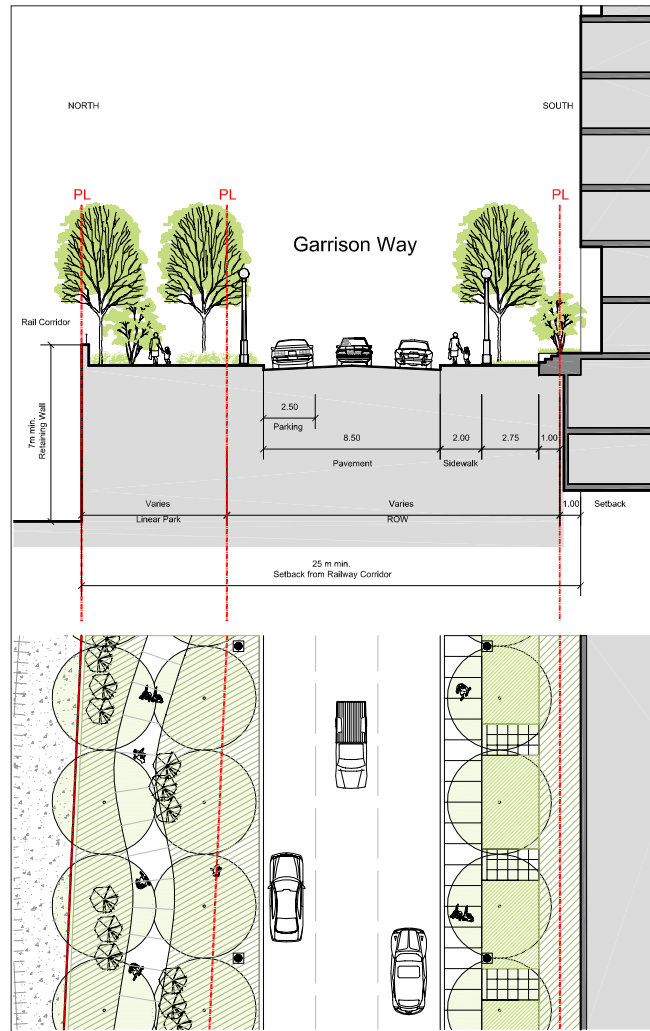
The north side of the street consists of planting right to the curb. The broad, multi-use pathway of the Northern Linear Park will serve pedestrian circulation in this area.

### Building Profiles

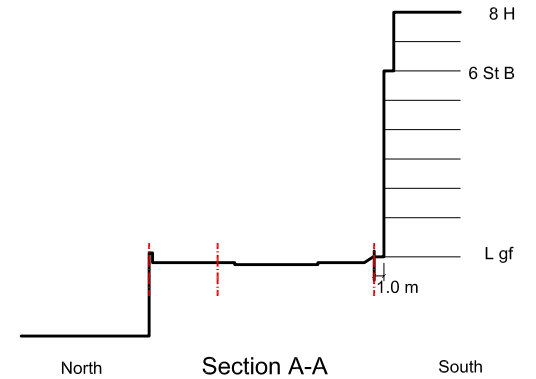
- 6-storey street wall built to the setback (1.0 m) line;
- Step-back at 6 storeys at taller buildings and point towers;
- Narrow fronted townhouses at building base with raised ground floor, street entrances and stoops/terraces;
- 2-storey expression line and possible change of materials to articulate the building base;
- Parking entrance and service bay defer to the continuity of the street wall.



Northern Linear Park at Spadina Avenue



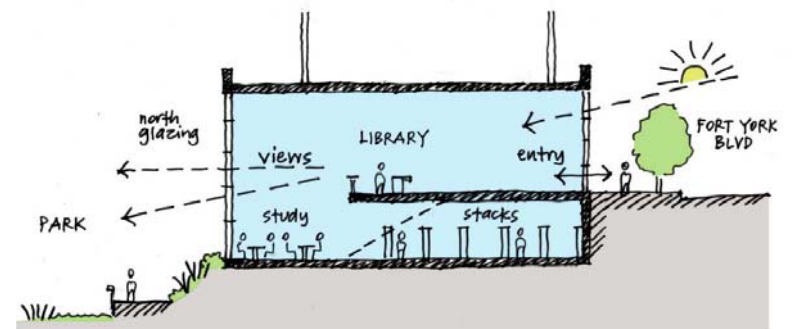
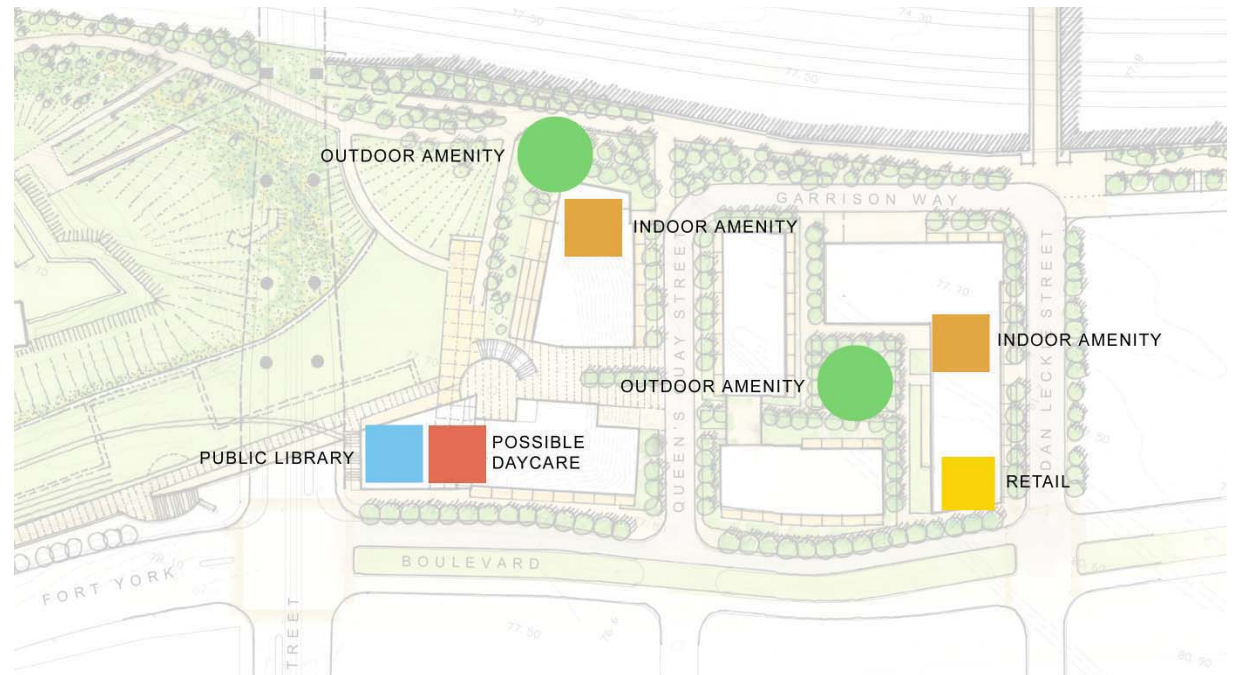
Garrison Way - Key Plan



## Communal Facilities

Blocks 32 and 36 will provide services and amenities that will benefit not only residents, but also the broader community. These include:

- Public Library - A location at the intersection of Bathurst and Fort York Boulevard has been identified as a potential site for a new library branch serving the larger neighbourhood. This site is highly visible, accessible by TTC and it enjoys a very positive relationship with Mouth of the Creek Park.
- Daycare - A 52-child daycare could be located in conjunction with the library at the Bathurst/Fort York Boulevard intersection. One of two such facilities in the Railway Lands West area, it could be located on the second floor above the library with access to rooftop outdoor play space.
- Retail - A 2-storey commercial/retail opportunity has been designated at the intersection of Fort York Boulevard and Dan Leckie Way.
- Indoor Amenity Space - Space for gatherings, parties and other social events has been identified at two locations within the development. These spaces would be available to residents and their friends.
- Outdoor Amenity Space - Although all of the outdoors should be considered as amenity, two specific locations will play a special role. These are both closely associated with indoor amenity spaces, and will serve as a focus for gathering and children's play.



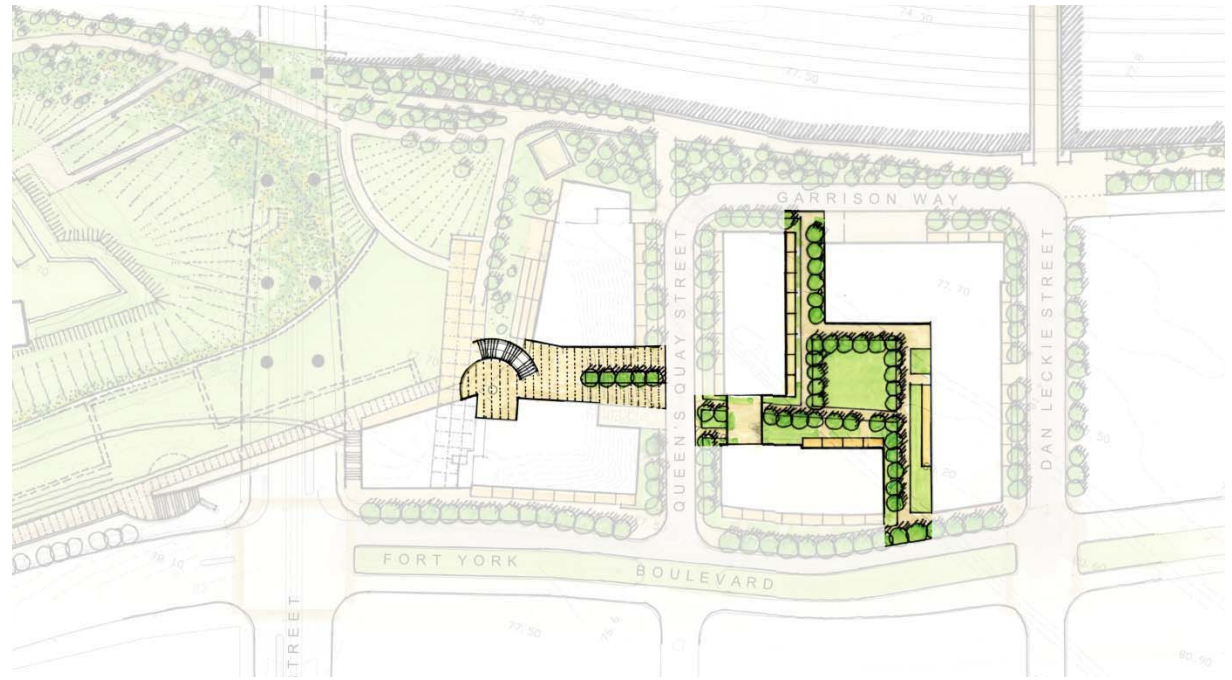
Section through the Library - looking east

## Courtyards

Buildings should define spatially coherent courtyards that are well integrated into the mid-block pedestrian circulation network. The courtyards will become important social and recreational places, at least equal in importance to the local streets, but unique in their character and opportunities.

The courtyards should be designed as safe, active and comfortable places for all people and especially children, and usable year round.

- Building faces defining the courtyards should have frequent front doors and windows to provide surveillance and ensure day-to-day activity.
- High-use components, such as play structures and seating areas, should be located in sunny parts of the courtyard. That being said, protection from the mid-summer sun should be provided.
- The courtyards should be directly accessible from adjacent streets.
- Parking garage slabs should be designed so that adequate soil depth can be provided. Raised planter boxes should be avoided.
- Courtyards should be designed so that any service functions are discreet and camouflaged.
- The Block 36 courtyard should incorporate a lookout overlooking Mouth of the Creek Park and stairs descending to the park.



*Windward Cooperative, Toronto*



*New Hibret Cooperative, Toronto*

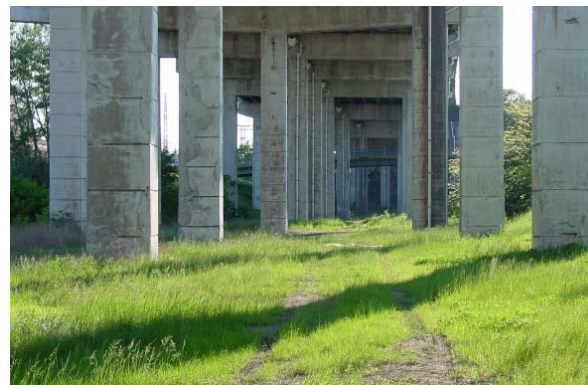
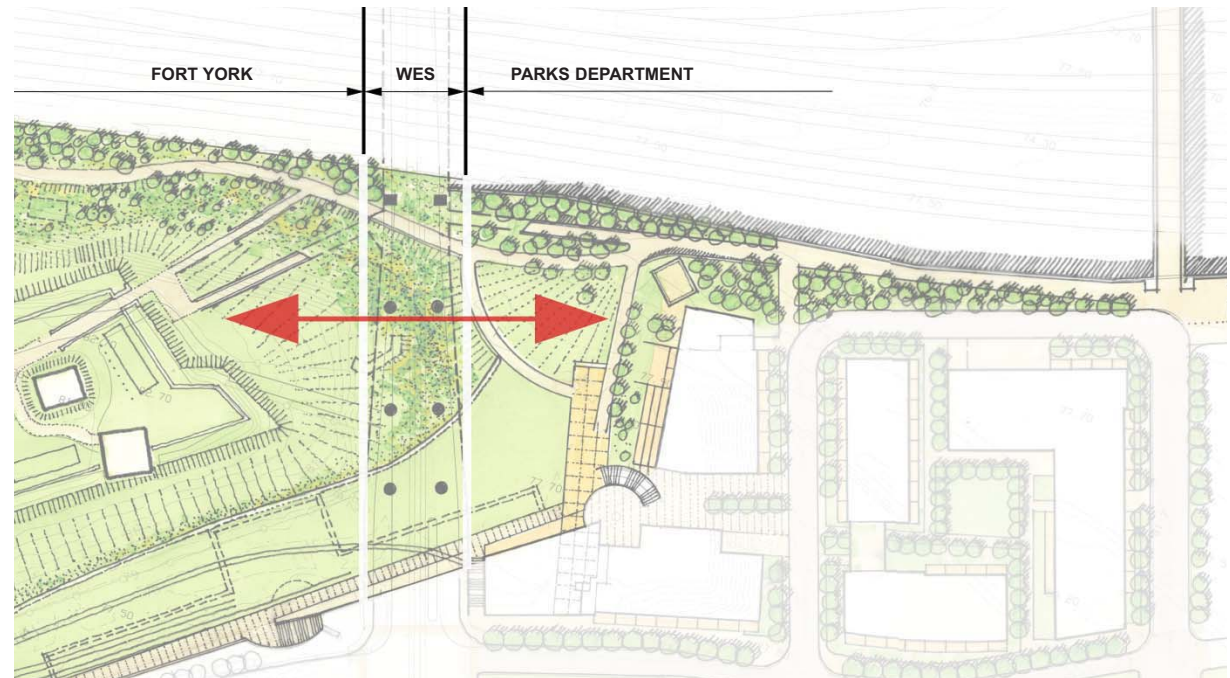


## A Continuous Landscape

The Block 36 / Fort York landscapes should be designed as a single composition flowing under the Bathurst Bridge. This will create a crucial link between the fort and the former mouth of Garrison Creek, reflecting the important role of the creek in the fort's location and development. Links under the bridge will also make viable the important east/west pedestrian links from the Northern Linear park to the neighbourhoods and open spaces to the west.

Challenges exist in developing a continuous landscape across these sites:

- **Jurisdiction** - The land in question is under the jurisdiction of three different municipal agencies: Fort York, Works and Emergency Services, and Parks. Each of these agencies has their own priorities, values and methods. They will have to collaborate not only on design, but also on management and maintenance of the completed landscapes.
- **Phasing** - While highly desirable, it is unlikely that the work will proceed as one unified landscape design and construction project. The development of Block 36 and the reconstruction of the Bathurst Bridge appear at this point in time to be on similar schedules, but many factors could intervene to upset this. Furthermore, the proposed work on Fort York lands is not yet funded and is therefore not imminent. If the work is phased, each portion should be capable of standing as a freestanding and viable landscape.
- **Under the Bridge** - The reduced light and moisture typically found under wide low structures like the proposed bridge will challenge the objective of landscape continuity. Thriving vegetation is usually only found under relatively high structures like the Gardiner Expressway. Under very low structures, at least some hard landscaping may be the best solution. Nevertheless, landscape continuity can be expressed through the use of materials, forms and structures that extend smoothly through the landscape.



*Vegetation under the Gardiner Expressway*



*Hard landscape treatment under the York Street exit ramp*

## Landscape as Heritage Interpretation

Landscape design of the areas west of Block 36 should reveal the natural and cultural history of the site. While nothing should be reconstructed or recreated, the landscape can tell the story of this important location through forms that are at once illustrative and contemporary.

### Topography

The development of Blocks 32 and 36 at an elevation of about 6.0m above the existing grade presents a fine opportunity to create a topographic base recalling the original terrain.

Before the railways levelled the area, Garrison Creek entered Lake Ontario in a ravine between two bluffs. The original fort was built on the east bluff and was replaced by a new fort (the existing) which was built on the west bluff. When the railways were built, the east bluff and beyond was excavated and the "bluff" pushed north to Front Street, where it can be seen today in the form of a retaining wall.

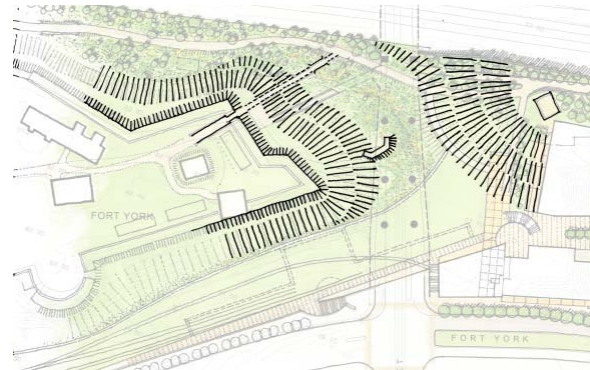
When Block 36 is developed, the new grade change should be reconciled in the landscapes west of the building. The new grade should be brought around the north end of the building so that the new "bluff" is visible from and forms a part of the new park. The slope, or at least parts of it, should be steep to allude to the steep sides typical of ravines.

### Creek

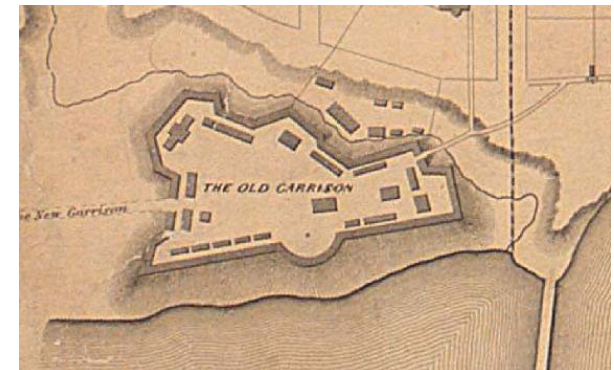
Garrison Creek can be expressed through the use of natural drainage, river stone and appropriate vegetation. Working hand in hand with stormwater management objectives, the former stream bed can be developed as a wetland marsh, or more likely as a wet/dry landscape. Open standing water should be avoided.

### Shoreline

Prior to decades of landfilling, the shoreline of Lake Ontario lay at the base of the Fort York ramparts. This basic geologic fact should be revealed through landscape design. The proposal is to restore the ramparts and excavate down close to the original water level. A retaining wall with a guard would provide an edge that would identify the depth of fill and serve as the fort's perimeter security.



Topography: Recreating the east bluff



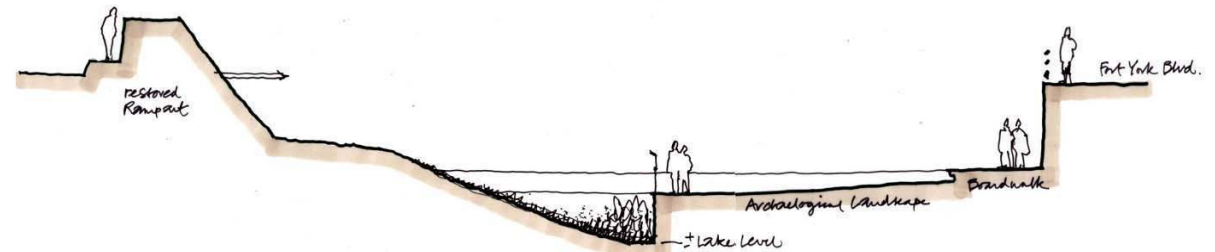
The Garrison Creek Ravine, Cane 1842



Revealing Garrison Creek



Revealing the Former Shoreline of Lake Ontario



Section through the South Rampart looking east

## Archaeological Interpretation

Elements of the known archaeological resource should similarly be interpreted but without copying or attempting full reconstruction. These elements, some of which are identified in the diagram opposite, can be rendered in a contemporary style and can serve useful functions as well. The fragment of the Queen's Wharf, for instance, should be developed as a small plaza where social events, perhaps related to the library, can be held.

Similarly, the 1797 Blockhouse, which was an important building in the original fort, could be recreated in an abstract manner that would also serve as a shelter or other element associated with the Block 36 amenity space.

Other features like the GTR Engine House and the railway tracks could be delineated in the landscape in a simple, purely symbolic fashion.

## Public Art Opportunities

Public art is a very effective way of animating and giving meaning to the public realm. It is also a mandatory requirement in Toronto that developments provide public art in proportion to their size. Although exempt from the normal public art requirement because it is a city agency, TCHC intends to implement a public art program on Blocks 32 and 36. For a good proportion of that program to be focused in Mouth of the Creek Park would reflect the historical and cultural importance of the park.

A public art program in the park should be implemented through a competition process. Not only would it generate considerable public interest in the park and its context, a public art competition program would satisfy the Official Plan objective of opening at least part of the design of new municipal parks to a public competition process.

A public art competition should focus on interpreting the history and culture of Fort York and its setting. It is a rich well of opportunity that could spawn compelling works of art that present the old in new ways with the potential to intrigue, illuminate and delight.



*Interpreting the Heritage Artifacts*



*Historic Building: Franklin Court, Philadelphia*

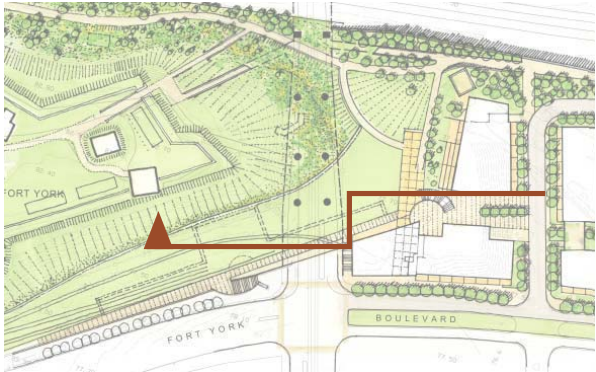


*1797 Blockhouse, Postcard 1804*

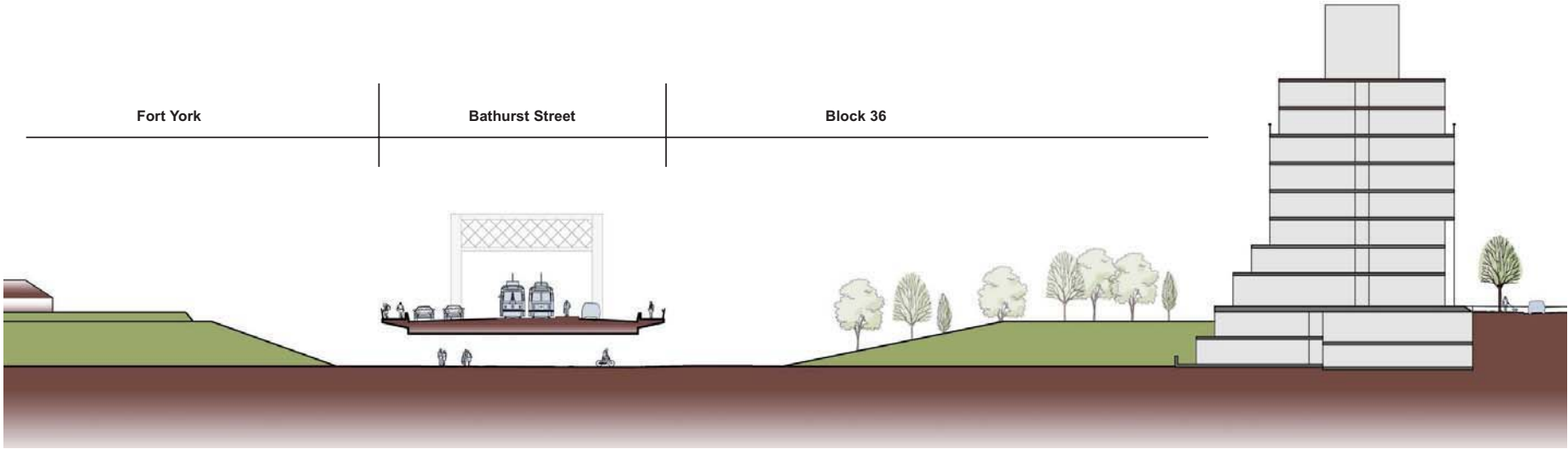
### The Topographic Base

The landscape design builds on the native, historical topography of the site, which is that of a river valley. Fort York, which is elevated above the surrounding terrain, still clearly reflects this reality. The development of Block 36 offers the opportunity to represent the former east embankment of Garrison Creek. Since Queen's Wharf Street is being constructed about 7.0 m above railway level, buildings will terrace down to the lower level and the site will be graded to represent the east embankment itself.

Notwithstanding the need to maintain walking paths at about 5% maximum slope (for universal accessibility), the Fort York embankment and the new Block 36 embankment should be made as steep as possible to capture the impression of a ravine with steep sides.



Key Plan



Section through the site looking north

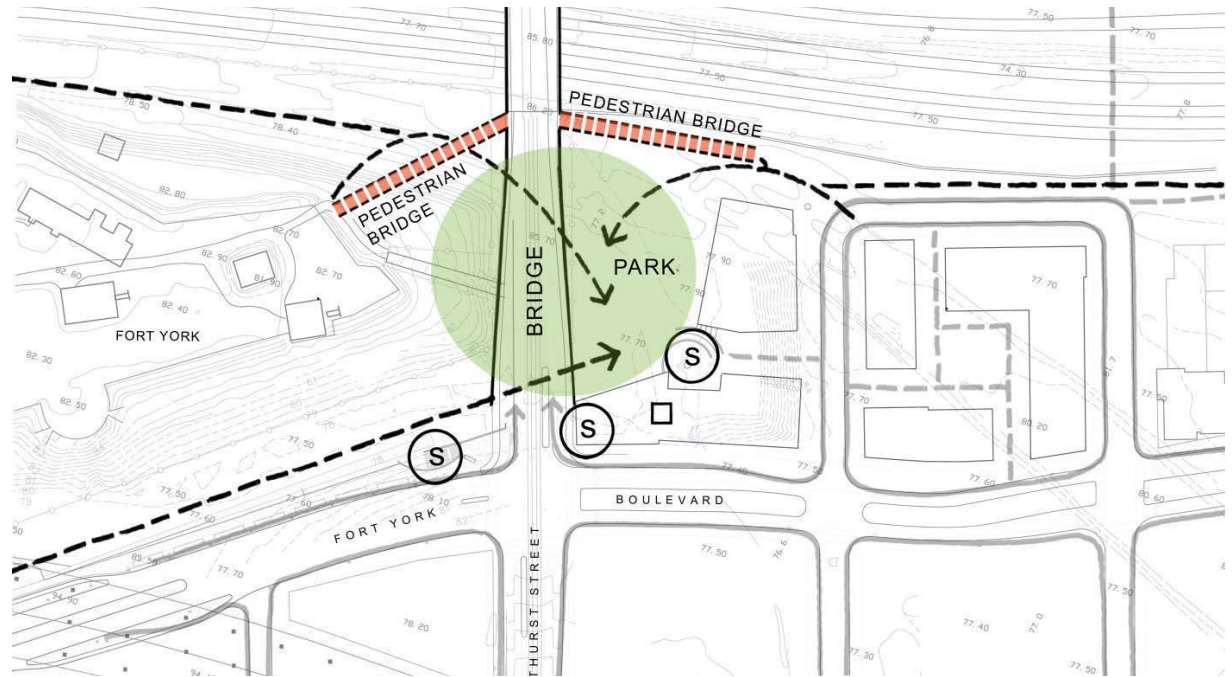
## Access to the Park

Safe and convenient access to and through the park is critical to its success as a public place. If people feel the park is difficult to get to (or difficult to leave if there is a problem), it will be unused and neglected. The park must be knitted into the surrounding fabric so that it becomes a well connected and frequently used part of the neighbourhood.

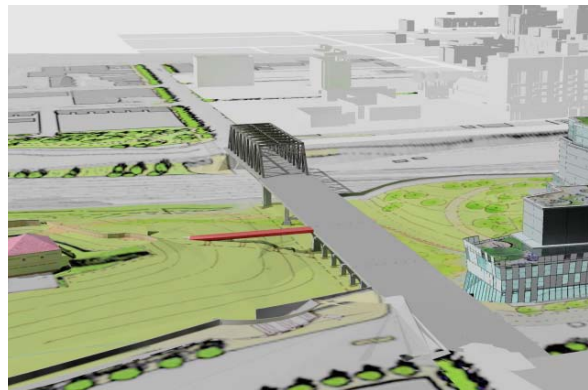
The challenge is the topography. The main body of the park is about 6.0m below the streets and sidewalks where most people spend their time. There has to be a good reason for people to go down into the park, and the way down has to be easy and convenient.

In general, there should be many ways of getting into the park, and it should be accessible from all directions. It should also be accessible by bicycle, wheelchair or stroller. The following concepts apply:

- Pathways - provide access to the park from the east and the west. The existing Fort York Boulevard boardwalk approaches from the west and the Northern Linear Park approaches from the east and from the north end of Queen's Wharf Street.
- Ramp/bridges - provide access from the Bathurst Bridge like the existing Fort York pedestrian bridge, which will be removed when the new bridge is constructed.
- Stairs - should be constructed at the Bathurst/Fort York Boulevard intersection and the Block 36 courtyard. These will supplement the existing stair on Fort York Boulevard west of Bathurst.
- Elevator - access could be provided in association with the new library.



Existing Bathurst Street Pedestrian Bridge



Existing Bathurst Street Pedestrian Bridge



Proposed Pedestrian Bridges

## Circulation Through the Park

Circulation through the park should be continuous, free-flowing and understandable, and should provide convenient access to local destinations.

Key routes include the Northern Linear Park, which splits as it passes through the park to a north leg between the fort and the railway, and a south leg that merges with the Fort York Boulevard sidewalk. An important branch route includes the new pathway to the east entrance of the fort.

Pathways and routes should share the following characteristics:

- Accessibility - All routes through the park should be suitable for all travel modes: walking, wheelchairs, strollers, skaters and bicycles.
- Gradients - To the extent possible, travel routes should not exceed a gradient of 5% (1:20).
- Service vehicles - Routes should be able to accommodate small maintenance vehicles and other equipment. Larger vehicle access to the underside of the Bathurst Bridge is infrequent, and should be accommodated on temporary surfaces as required.

## Safety and Security

The park should provide users with a reasonable level of safety and security, especially at night. To the extent that people feel comfortable in the park, it will be vibrant and active, and will discourage inappropriate behaviour and use.

Features that should be considered in making the park safe include:

- Lighting - Major walkways, features and destinations should be illuminated. Light fixtures should be low-scaled and closely-spaced to provide even lighting. Uplight should be minimized. Particular attention should be paid to the underside of the bridge.
- Visibility - Notwithstanding the need for some spatial articulation, the landscape should open, with dark spots and blind spots minimized especially in more heavily used areas.
- Eyes on the park - The landscape design should ensure that residents in adjacent units can see into the park, and so park users can see that they are being seen.
- Maintenance - The park should be kept in excellent condition at all times. Special attention should be paid to removing garbage and graffiti completely and quickly.



*A Comprehensive Lighting Strategy*

## Environmental Sustainability

The new community on Blocks 32 and 36 is being planned and designed to be sustainable on all levels: cultural, social and environmental.

In terms of big-picture sustainability objectives, the community is transit-friendly, relatively dense, diverse in population, and involves the remediation and re-use of a significant brownfield site in the urban core. The project design also envisions an environment that will promote a community that is socially viable and culturally rich.

The buildings themselves will be designed to meet LEEDS accreditation. Consideration is being given to green roofs, storm water harvesting, grey water treatment strategies, renewable energy options, district energy systems, and a variety of energy-efficient building components and systems.

The landscapes are similarly designed to not only be culturally and environmentally sustainable, but to also educate and demonstrate those principles. Specific strategies include:

- **Heritage Interpretation** - The rich history of the site and its context is revealed through landscape design and through the marking of known heritage artifacts within the landscape.
- **Cultural Expression** - Community values are expressed through public art. On this site, public art will provide a contemporary interpretation of the site's history and heritage.
- **Community Amenities** - A range of amenities is provided that will appeal to all age groups and that will stimulate activity and interaction among residents and visitors.
- **Pedestrian Systems** - The site is designed to encourage walking and cycling. Site pathways are safe and comfortable, and they form part of a larger network that connects many destinations throughout and beyond the neighbourhood.
- **Stormwater Management** - The landscapes are designed to retain all precipitation on-site, and to utilize it in a meaningful and positive manner. As illustrated, stormwater from a relatively large area (up to ---- ha.) will be guided towards a central location that corresponds to the former mouth of Garrison Creek. This area will be contoured and planted to form a wetland that not only reflects the history of the site, but also reveals its function as a storm water management facility.
- **Irrigation** - While landscapes will be designed to minimize dependence upon irrigation, some additional watering may be required in key locations. For this, maximum use will be made of storm water harvested from roof tops and stored in cisterns.

Consideration should also be made for a demonstration grey water treatment facility located within the Block 32 courtyard.

- **Wildlife Habitat** - A range of ecological types on the site will promote a diverse wildlife population. The landscape design should also recognize that the site forms a link in a much larger wildlife corridor.
- **Indigenous Plants** - Where feasible, indigenous plants should be selected to reduce maintenance costs and to reflect the historical character of the site. Where indigenous plants are not suitable, plants should be selected which are hardy and non-invasive.
- **Sustainable Planting Techniques** - Where possible, street trees should be planted in soil or open planters. Where trees must be planted in paved areas, engineered topsoil should be used and continuous soil trenches.



Stormwater Catchment Area



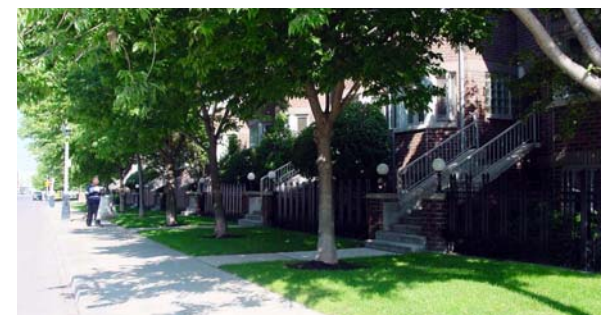
Naturalized Stream Bed



Green Roof, Toronto



Stormwater Management Pond



Street Trees in Open Soil