

SUBMISSIONS | PUBLIC BUILDINGS IN CONTEXT

Project Title

Canadian National Institute for the Blind Centre

Address

1929 Bayview Avenue

Project Team

Sweeny Sterling Finlayson & Co

Joint Venture Architect and Urban Designer

Shore Tilbe Irwin and Partners

Joint Venture Architects

Vertechs Design

Landscape Architect

Owner/Client

Canadian National Institute for the Blind



2009

TORONTO Urban Design Awards

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The CNIB Centre sits atop an impressive embankment overlooking Bayview Avenue. The principle façade's broad horizontal elements echo the scale and speed of the arterial road, a formal nod to the urban context.

The main entrance's generous portico offers a welcoming gesture at the scale of the site and, to the south, the building steps down in response to the residential context. The building is a strong, 21st century symbol of the National Centre's progressive goals. Designed to be a model of universal design, it magnifies use and enjoyment of the beautiful landscape, which was not always easily accessible by the visually impaired and deaf-blind inhabitants. Positioning the building and roadways relative to the new landscaped spaces was critical to making an accessible, safe and enjoyable pedestrian environment on all four sides, each with a unique sensorial experience connected to a public space within the building.

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