

Down- town Parks and Public Realm Plan

Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge that the City of Toronto is located on the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat Confederacy, the Haudenasaunee Confederacy, the Mississaugas of New Credit First Nation, and the Métis people, and is home to many diverse Indigenous peoples. We acknowledge them and others who care for the land as its past, present and future stewards.

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What Kind of City Were We?

In the first half of the 20th century, an expanding industrial city meant that railway lands divided the Downtown from a waterfront devoted to port uses. The arrival of the automobile and, by mid-century, the building of expressways propelled an era of suburbanization. A flight to the suburbs saw many Torontonians seeking quality of life away from the Central Business District, in their own front and back yards and in low-density neighbourhood parks.

By the mid-1970s, City Council had adopted the Central Area Plan. One of its key ideas was the encouragement of residential uses alongside commerce in the Downtown, a first in North America. This led to a reversal of Downtown population decline and helped Toronto avoid the inner-city deterioration experienced in many other cities across the continent. Strong planning policies together with public and private investments set the stage for the expansion of housing, the growth of the Financial District, rapid transit expansion and waterfront regeneration.



Toronto, 1976, Year of the Central Area Plan





What Kind of City Do We Want to Be?

With today's success comes tomorrow's dilemma: How can we preserve our quality of life amid the Downtown's current explosion of growth? Toronto's Downtown in the early 21st century is increasingly defined by the vertical nature of development, its evolving skyline and its establishment as an international hub of arts, culture and creativity. Now comes the opportunity to re-imagine and re-discover the form and identity of our public realm and ultimately, the city itself. Rather than start from scratch, we look within, engaging in articulating the ever-evolving interplay between city and landscape that has shaped Toronto's history.

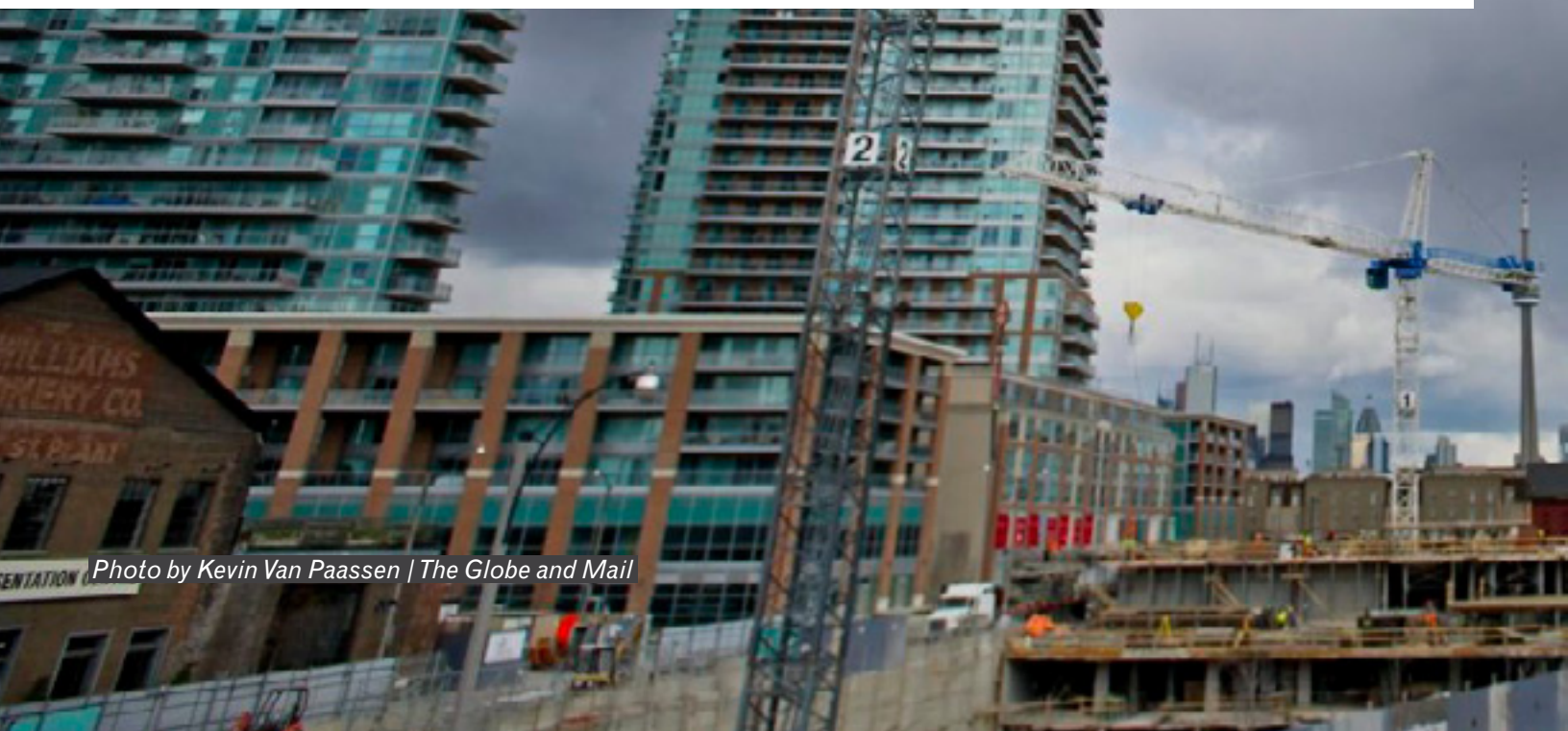


Photo by Kevin Van Paassen | The Globe and Mail





Our Civic Identity

Our distinctive skyline, our celebrated human diversity and our inclusive social aspirations; all these unique characteristics contribute to shaping Toronto's contemporary civic identity. How can we now expand this identity to include the lens of our common ground – the public realm? This plan leverages the co-existence and interplay of Toronto's urban and landscape morphology – the colonial grid of streets and historic urban fabric, and our spectacular natural setting of ravines, islands and bluffs – to bring about new connections and a significant transformation of the Downtown's parks and open spaces.







Public Spaces to Support the Heart of the City

Planning for the Downtown's future must consider the unique and diverse roles it plays for the whole of the city: the largest employment centre in the region, a cluster of world-renowned institutions, a thriving shopping and entertainment scene, a hub for arts and culture and a tourist destination. Although the Downtown only accounts for 3 percent of Toronto's land area, it is a place where 1 out of every 10 Torontonians calls home, and which contributes 25 percent of the city's overall tax base.

Downtown is Toronto's gathering place. It is imperative that the quantity, quality and variety of parks and public realm address the needs of a growing number of residents, workers and visitors. The Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan will guide the development of an expanded, improved, connected and accessible network of high-quality parks, streets and open spaces, and will promote healthier, diverse natural systems.





An aerial photograph of Toronto, Canada, showing the city skyline across Lake Ontario. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The city is densely packed with buildings, and the water is a deep blue. In the foreground, there's a sandy beach and some greenery.

Five Transformative Ideas

The Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan addresses one of the most pressing questions facing Toronto: how can we use public space to enhance quality of life within a rapidly growing urban core? It is organized into Five Transformative Ideas to re-imagine, grow and connect public spaces within Downtown Toronto. It has been developed to support the implementation of the Downtown Plan which, as part of the Toronto Official Plan, provides a blueprint for growth and infrastructure over the next 25 years. The Downtown Plan sets the direction for the city centre as the cultural, civic, retail and economic heart of Toronto, and as a great place to live for our current and future generations.



Contents

1. Background Analysis and Approach

The basis for the vision

4	Blueprint for Downtown's Parks and Public Realm
6	Engagement Process
8	From Vision to Implementation
10	How to Use the Plan
12	Downtown's Parks and Public Realm in Context
14	The Need for Parks
18	The Value of Parks and the Public Realm
20	Evolution of Downtown's Parks and Public Realm

2. The Parks and Public Realm Plan

Five Transformative Ideas to re-balance the public realm

30	The Core Circle <ul style="list-style-type: none">- North: Davenport Road Bluff- East: Don River Valley and Rosedale Valley Ravine- South: Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay- West: Garrison Creek Corridor
70	Great Streets <ul style="list-style-type: none">- University Avenue- King Street- Jarvis Street Garden Street- Parliament Street- College-Carleton-Gerrard Corridor- Bloor Street- Bayview Avenue- Spadina Avenue- Yonge Street Cultural Corridor- Queen Street- Front Street- Queens Quay
126	Shoreline Stitch <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Rail Deck Park- The Bentway- North-South Connections- East-West Connections- Exhibition Place / Ontario Place- Fort York / Garrison Common- Roundhouse Park- Union Hub- Station Mixed-use Shared Street- The Esplanade / David Crombie Park- West Don Lands / Corktown Common- Cloverleaf Park

3. Toward Implementation

Priorities and delivery mechanisms

246 Toward Implementation

4. Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

Addressing park provision and need in the Downtown

262 Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

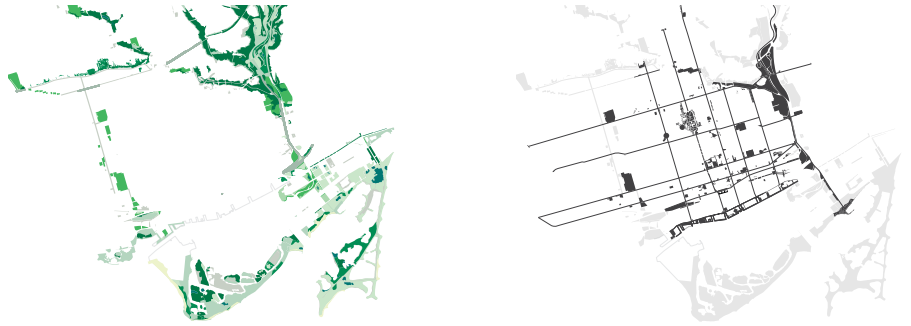
148 Park Districts

- The Civic Precinct
- The Queen's Park Precinct
- The Garden District
- St. James Town
- Cabbagetown-Riverdale
- The Grange / John Street / Roundhouse Park
- Ryerson University
- Bay Cloverhill Loop
- 'The Pits' (Christie-Bickford)
- Ramsden Park-Yorkville
- The Annex
- Kensington Market-Alexandra Park
- The Garrison Parks-Fort York
- Bathurst Quay-Coronation Park-Ontario Place
- West Rail District
- Old Town-St. Lawrence-Distillery
- University of Toronto
- Regent Park
- Corktown Parks
- West Don Lands
- Lower Don Lands
- Lower Yonge-East Bayfront
- Central Waterfront

206 Local Places

- Parkettes
- Laneways
- Schoolyards
- Churchyards
- Cemeteries
- POPS
- Overlooked Places

Executive Summary



The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* (the Plan) establishes a vision and framework designed to achieve an expanded, improved and connected parks and public realm network within Downtown Toronto's mature urban fabric to support future growth. It presents a shared vision to achieve a more desirable and sustainable parks and open space system, an essential component to making Downtown Toronto an attractive place to live, work and visit.

The Plan has been developed to support the implementation of the Downtown Plan (Official Plan Amendment or OPA) which, as part of Toronto's Official Plan, provides a blueprint for growth and infrastructure over the next 25 years. The Downtown Plan (OPA) sets the direction for the city centre as the cultural, civic, retail and economic heart of Toronto, and as a great place to live.

To safeguard liveability, infrastructure must keep pace with growth. Parks and other open spaces are central pieces of infrastructure and a key component of complete communities. Equitable access to parkland is crucial to support urban life, particularly in high-growth, high-density areas like the Downtown. The Plan examines the need for parkland within the context of the Downtown, having consideration for the range of parks and publicly accessible open spaces that exist within the boundaries of the area, projected population growth,

built form directions and needed expansion of the public realm. It integrates key provincial policy directions related to achieving complete communities, and specifically expanded access to an appropriate supply of safe, publicly-accessible open spaces, parks and trails.

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* serves as the 'Parks Plan' for the core of the city, providing a roadmap for acquisition, expansion and improvements to parkland to address population and employment growth over the next 25 years. It is a framework that sets out a new way of thinking about the design of parks, streets and other publicly accessible open spaces in an intensifying Downtown, to achieve a bold and lasting legacy for future generations.

The Plan is based on Five Transformative Ideas, a set of integrated spatial transformations that build on the assets of all areas in and adjacent to the core to guide how the parks and public realm network will be expanded, improved and connected.

The Five Transformative Ideas include:

- **The Core Circle:** Re-imagine the valleys, bluffs and islands encircling the Downtown as a fully interconnected landscape system and immersive experience.



- **Great Streets:** Enhance the unique characteristics of Downtown's most emblematic streets and make them outstanding civic places and connectors.
- **Shoreline Stitch:** Re-connect the Downtown to the waterfront and link the east and west Core Circle landscapes.
- **Park Districts:** Re-imagine Downtown's distinct districts with parks at their hearts by expanding, improving and connecting neighbourhood parks and public spaces to create a focus for everyday community life.
- **Local Places:** Re-imagine local public spaces to better support public life and expand the utility of our parks and public realm system.

The transformative ideas are presented in the form of an illustrative framework plan, and formalized as a set of initiatives, goals and actions. Together, the ideas establish a clear vision for the Downtown's future urban landscape and approach for moving from ideas to implementation.

Priorities, actions and delivery mechanisms for the Plan are outlined in Chapter 3: Toward Implementation. This chapter is intended to aid in assessing and where feasible implementing the ideas over time. It offers a

pragmatic and adaptable guide that can remain flexible to leverage future opportunities as they arise.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan is based on the work of a diverse collaboration and careful examination of the best available information about the Downtown's current conditions and trends. The recommendations and approaches proposed in the Plan are informed by the 'on-the-ground' experience of residents and stakeholders who shared their ideas and aspirations for the future. A comprehensive parkland provision assessment informed the Plan with an analysis of existing and future parkland need based on estimates of population and employment growth. And a Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Survey, the first of its kind in Toronto, established a baseline of how public space is being used in the Downtown and infuses the Plan with knowledge of how to better design a city for people.

1. Background Analysis and Approach

The basis for the vision

Blueprint for Downtown’s Parks and Public Realm

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* establishes a vision and blueprint for parkland and public realm improvements to support anticipated population and employment growth in Downtown Toronto. It is organized into Five Transformative Ideas, a set of integrated spatial transformations designed to guide how the parks and public realm network will be expanded, improved and connected within the Downtown's mature urban fabric. The ideas build on the assets of all areas in and adjacent to the core to establish a set of goals and actions to assess and where feasible achieve the Plan’s vision.

The Plan works at three scales: regional, district and local*. The regional scale addresses the overall structure of the Downtown's public realm. The **Core Circle** and the **Great Streets** operate at this scale, exploring the co-existence and interplay of Toronto's landscape features, the ravines, islands and bluffs, and the urban structure of the colonial grid of streets. The **Shoreline Stitch**, with its goal to overcome barriers associated with transportation corridors to better connect the Downtown with the water's edge and link the east and west Core Circle landscapes, is also within this scale.

FIVE TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

THE CORE CIRCLE

Re-imagine the valleys, bluffs and islands encircling the Downtown as a fully interconnected 900-hectare immersive landscape system.

- STRATEGIES
- INITIATIVES
- ACTIONS

GREAT STREETS

Enhance the unique characteristics of Downtown's most emblematic streets and make them outstanding civic places and connectors.

- STRATEGIES
- INITIATIVES
- ACTIONS

The district scale consists of parks, squares, streets and other public spaces that are integral to quality of life and community building in Downtown neighbourhoods. Ideas at this scale, captured in the **Park Districts**, focus on expanding and improving neighbourhood parks and public spaces, and making connections that link them into the broader parks and open space network to extend their 'reach' and create a focus for everyday community life.

The local scale is the smallest and focuses on under-utilized and sometimes overlooked spaces that

are embedded within the fabric of neighbourhoods. It includes the parkettes, laneways, schoolyards, churchyards and other spaces that we experience on a daily or weekly basis. This scale explores opportunities to re-imagine and re-design these **Local Places** to better support local public life and expand the utility of our parks and public realm network.

Together, the Five Transformative Ideas operate across the three scales to establish a fulsome approach to expanding, enhancing and connecting the Downtown's parks and public realm.

**The scales provide a conceptual framework that is distinct and complementary to the Toronto Parks Plan park classification system, which is used to guide planning and decision-making across the city-wide system of parks and trails.*

SHORELINE STITCH

Re-connect the city to the waterfront and link the east and west Core Circle landscapes.

- STRATEGIES
- INITIATIVES
- ACTIONS

PARK DISTRICTS

Re-imagine Downtown's distinct districts with parks at their hearts.

- STRATEGIES
- INITIATIVES
- ACTIONS

LOCAL PLACES

Re-imagine local public spaces to better support community life and expand the utility of our parks and public realm system.

- STRATEGIES
- INITIATIVES
- ACTIONS

Engagement Process

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* is based on the work of a diverse collaboration and careful examination of the best available information about the Downtown's current conditions and trends. The recommendations and approaches proposed in the Plan are informed by the 'on-the-ground' experience of residents and stakeholders who shared their ideas and aspirations for the future.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan public and stakeholder engagement process followed a three-phase process:

1. **Phase One:** Understanding Issues;
2. **Phase Two:** Testing Ideas; and
3. **Phase Three:** Confirming Directions.

Phase One focused on helping the team develop an understanding of issues and opportunities the Parks and Public Realm Plan could explore. It also helped identify the locations and evaluation criteria for the Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Survey.

In **Phase Two**, the team sought feedback on ideas, including Draft Policies and the emerging Plan and transformative ideas, which were developed, in part, with the feedback heard in Phase One. The team also

used the locations and evaluation criteria identified in Phase One to undertake the Public Space Public Life Survey in the summer and winter of 2016.

In **Phase Three**, the team sought feedback on a draft Parks and Public Realm Plan. The public consultation program was multi-faceted and focused on:

- a. Raising awareness that the City was developing the Plan;
- b. Soliciting general public feedback to inform the Plan; and
- c. Soliciting feedback from specific audiences with a keen interest in the Downtown's parks and public realm.

The team shared material and sought feedback through a range of tools, including:

- The project website (www.toronto.ca/tocore), which: describes TOcore generally and the Parks and Public Realm Plan specifically; hosts presentations, videos, and documentation of feedback shared by participants.
- An interactive map, hosted on the project website, which asked people to identify their favourite

places and places they felt had 'great potential' in the Downtown. The map received over 600 place-specific comments.

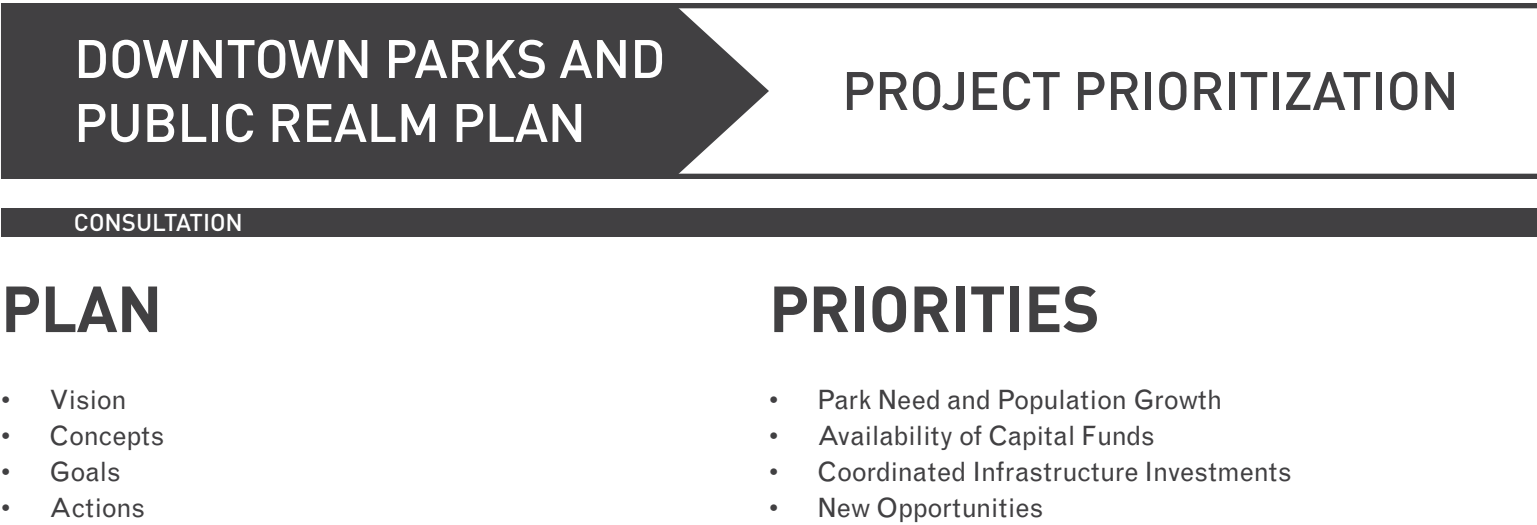
- Favourite places 'pop-ups' and intercept surveys, where dozens of participants shared their favourite places and described what drew them to those places in the Downtown.
- Lecture series, which featured guest speakers such as Jan Gehl, 'pecha kucha' style presentations and long-form presentations, and attracted 150 – 300 participants each.
- Broad public meetings, including a TOcore Expo in June 2016, a TOcore Public Event in March 2017 and a TOcore Open House in December 2018, all of which attracted hundreds of participants.
- Stakeholder focus groups and workshops, which sought feedback from: active transportation and water users, Business Improvement Areas (BIAs), environmental and park stewardship advocates, 'friends of' groups, institutions, resident associations (RAs), and schools and sports representatives.

Reports summarizing the TOcore public and stakeholder engagement process and feedback, including the

Parks and Public Realm Plan 'Highlights Booklet', are available on the project website, at this link: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/planning-studies-initiatives/tocore-planning-torontos-downtown/tocore-studies-reports/engagement-reports/>

From Vision to Implementation

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* provides a framework that will guide future change and investment in parks and the public realm to support growth in Downtown Toronto. The Five Transformative Ideas present a series of concepts that provide examples of the types of change or opportunities that could be explored further through a detailed planning, design and implementation process. Moving from the vision and concepts illustrated in the Parks and Public Realm Plan to the reality of implementation will happen through a number of steps, as illustrated in the graphic below.





AND FEASIBILITY

**DESIGN AND
IMPLEMENTATION**

FEASIBILITY

- Assess Feasibility
- Technical Review
- Financial Review
- Pilot Projects
- Concept Refinements
- Preferred Option

DESIGN AND BUILD

- Fund Design Process
- Procurement
- Construction and Phasing
- Ongoing Maintenance
- Monitoring

How to Use the Plan

The following is a guide to using the *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan*. It is organized into the following sections:

Chapter 1. Background Analysis and Approach establishes the basis for the Parks and Public Realm Plan vision. It describes how the plan is organized, summarizes the public and stakeholder engagement process that informed the vision, provides an overview of the process of moving from vision to implementation and offers a guide to using the Plan. This chapter also describes the Plan's purpose and intent. It provides an overview of the need for parkland in the Downtown, describes the role and importance of both parks and the public realm to the liveable city and presents an historical context.

Chapter 2. The Parks and Public Realm Plan is organized into Five Transformative Ideas. The ideas are presented in the form of an illustrative framework plan, and formalized as a set of initiatives, goals and actions supported by maps, renderings, precedent images and other graphic materials.

The components of the transformative ideas sections include:

- **Concept Plan:** A demonstration of the proposed spatial transformations that support the ideas'

vision. The illustrations are intended to offer recommendations and approaches that through further study and review can be adapted to the changing realities in the Downtown. They are conceptual in nature.

- **Vision:** A presentation of the outcome the ideas aim to achieve.
- **Strategies:** Outline general principles and design directions to guide a series of initiatives.
- **Initiatives:** Propose focused, site-specific interventions that support the strategic aims of the vision.
- **Goals:** Outline the goals of what the plan aims to achieve and design directions to guide future planning.
- **Actions:** Provide the next steps and recommendations to advance implementation.

Chapter 3. Toward Implementation sets out the opportunities and priorities for investment over time and identifies what planning tools the City will use to implement the Parks and Public Realm Plan. This chapter is intended to frame how implementation of the Plan will be undertaken, ranging from quick starts to

longer-term assessment and review of the more complex initiatives. It is a guide that can remain flexible to leverage future opportunities as they arise.

Chapter 4. Park Provision and Need in the Downtown provides an in-depth examination of the need for parkland in the Downtown. It sets out Ontario's legislative context for planning for parkland and summarizes relevant Official Plan policies, and then profiles the parks and open spaces that residents and employees have access to today. It employs the City's updated methodology for measuring park provision to establish the existing provision rate, and the anticipated change to provision based on growth pressures. It discusses the importance of providing a full range of parks within the system and the role that park improvements can play in increasing the functionality and utility of existing parkland.

The Parks and Public Realm Plan is a shared framework, intended to serve as a conceptual blueprint and practical, action-oriented manual to guide decision-making among individuals, institutions, businesses, organizations, neighbourhoods, and a wide range of parties participating in shaping the future of the Downtown. It calls for the sustained leadership, support and engagement of all parties to shepherd and foster the long-term vision.

A companion document, the **Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan: Public Space Public Life Survey** provides an overview of the Public Space Public Life Survey in Toronto's Downtown, including key findings and trends for the whole of the core, as well as site-specific highlights and recommendations for the 16 survey zones, which encompassed 50 survey streets and spaces in the Downtown.

Downtown's Parks and Public Realm in Context

Toronto's parks, streets and publicly accessible open spaces are among the city's greatest assets and are essential to the quality of life that Torontonians enjoy. Expanding, maintaining and improving these assets must be prioritized for the city to enhance its character and liveability as Toronto's built environment continues to intensify and as more and more people live, work and visit the Downtown.

Downtown's parks, streets and open spaces are some of the most iconic, beloved and heavily used destinations in the city. The variety of parks and open spaces offer unique experiences and a range of necessary functions that are fundamental to the city's identity and to the liveability of the Downtown. These spaces bring people together, create social bonds and set the stage for civic life. They provide places for celebration, recreation, relaxation, mobility and experiencing nature in the city. Easy and equitable access to high quality public spaces promotes mental and physical health and contributes to social cohesion in our city.

A key challenge in the Downtown is how to accommodate anticipated growth while proportionally providing a diverse range of high quality and accessible parks and other open spaces. The Parks and Public Realm Plan examines the need for parkland and seeks to ensure its provision is commensurate with growth. It establishes a vision and path to achieving an expanded,

improved and connected parks and public realm system within Downtown Toronto's mature urban fabric to significantly improve the quality of urban living, in the near term and for future generations.

The Plan emphasizes the need to create new parks, increase accessibility and improve existing parks, reclaim city streets as a series of great urban spaces and connectors and creatively capitalize on the variety of other local public spaces that are scattered throughout the Downtown. It illustrates opportunities for expansion and improvements to the parks system, both big and small, and addresses the need to better connect large-scale natural features with the Downtown's parks, streets and open space network.

Toronto has city-wide strategies related to parkland and recreational facilities: The City-wide Parkland Strategy currently in process and the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (FMP), approved by City Council in 2017.

The vision and actions identified in this Plan are aligned with the key principles emerging through the City-wide Parkland Strategy. These principles are:

- **Acquire and Expand:** Undertaking acquisitions and expansions to provide parkland concurrent with growth and address gaps in the inventory of types of parks in the Downtown;

- **Improve:** Transforming existing parks through improvements that will increase their utility and contribute to a wide range of parks users;
- **Share:** Collaborating and partnering with owners of other open spaces, such as schools and cemeteries, to ensure they contribute to the public realm and so that the existing and future population have access to these spaces; and
- **Connect:** Re-balancing and re-thinking streets, and introducing new connections, to provide better access to existing parks and open spaces, create a cohesive green network, expand the park experience and support community life.

Accommodating recreational facilities creates additional need for parkland. The Facilities Master Plan recognizes that there are both local and city-wide needs for new recreational facilities that will be located within the boundaries of the Downtown. Some of these facilities will be located within existing parks, and some may require acquisition and / or expansion of parkland.

Purpose of the Parks and Public Realm Plan

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* examines the need for parkland within the context of the Downtown, having consideration for the range of parks and public open spaces that exist within the boundaries of the Downtown area, projected population and employment growth, built form directions and needed expansion of the public realm.

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* will be used to:

- Support the policy directions of the Downtown Plan (OPA) related to creating an interconnected system of parks, open space, streets, trails and other recreational facilities and how this system will be achieved;
- Provide an overarching framework to inform and guide decision-making and investment decisions related to acquiring, enhancing and expanding parks in the Downtown and improving connections to these parks by re-imagining the role and function of some of the Downtown's streets; and
- Set out priorities and actions needed to advance the implementation of the various initiatives outlined in this Plan.

The Need for Parks

Planning Context

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* has been developed to support the development and implementation of the Downtown Plan. The Downtown Plan, as part of Toronto's Official Plan, provides a blueprint for growth and infrastructure over the next 25 years.

Toronto's Official Plan identifies that our parks and open space system will need to expand as the city grows and changes. It highlights that ongoing reinvestment in Toronto's parks and open space system is also required to support a high quality of life in Toronto. Downtown's population has grown by 64 percent between 1996 and 2016, while the city as a whole has only grown by 15 percent. This Downtown population boom has been accommodated primarily in the form of intense vertical development, generating unanticipated demand for new parkland that the City has not been able to match. As the Downtown continues to intensify, improved and expanded parks and other open spaces must be provided to address the needs of an increasing intensity of residents, workers, students and visitors.

The development of the Parks and Public Realm Plan has also considered key provincial policy directions related to achieving complete communities. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017) includes parks among the elements of achieving complete communities. The Provincial Policy Statement (2014)

(PPS) requires planning for public spaces and streets to meet the needs of pedestrians, foster social interaction and facilitate active transportation and community connectivity. The Provincial Policy Statement calls on municipalities to plan for a full range and equitable distribution of built and natural settings for recreation. This includes parkland, public spaces, open space areas, trails and linkages, and water-based resources, all which are addressed in this Plan.

The implementation of the Plan will involve broadening traditional approaches to providing new and improved parks. Partnerships with a range of stakeholders within and outside the City, other orders of government, public agencies and the private sector will be needed. Additionally, this Plan's implementation requires recalibrating and refreshing the City's planning and financial toolbox. Key tools that will be used to realize this Plan include:

- Parkland dedication as a condition of development approvals;
- Development Charges;
- Securing community benefits in exchange for increases in height and density under Section 37 of the Planning Act;
- Site Plan Control;
- Other legal instruments; and
- Partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders.

In the Downtown, there are 9.4m² of parkland per person, which is 67 percent lower than the city-wide average of 28m² of parkland per person.

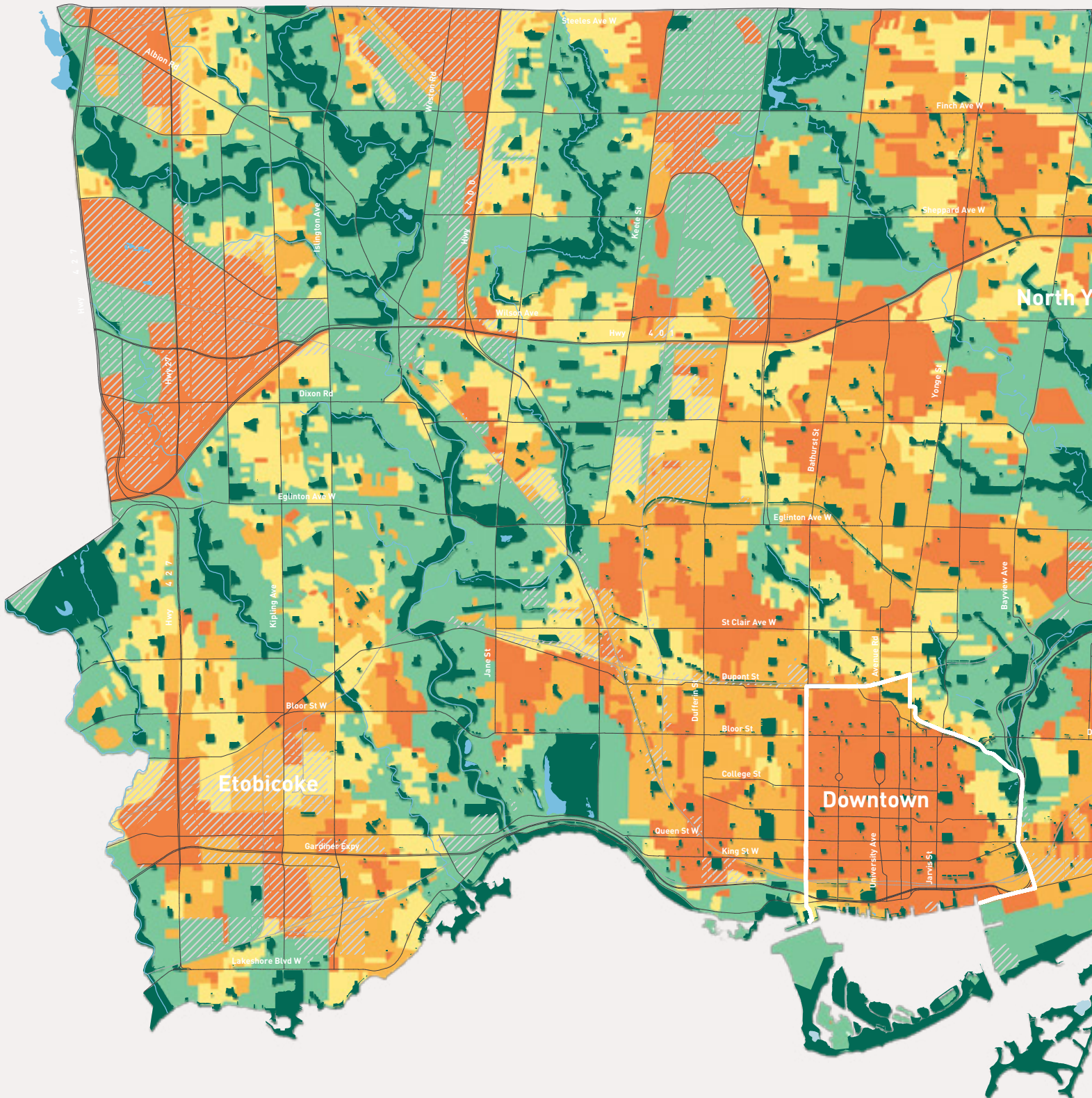
Keeping Pace with Growth in the Downtown

Toronto's quality of life and economic opportunities have made it one of the fastest growing cities in North America. Downtown accounts for approximately 3 percent of Toronto's land area, yet it makes up roughly 40 percent of the non-residential gross floor area and 38 percent of the residential units proposed in the city. It is Canada's largest employment cluster with over 500,000 jobs within the Downtown boundary area (this does not include the adjacent areas of South of Eastern and Liberty Village, referred to as 'shoulder areas'). Close to 250,000 people live Downtown, with more than 7,500 residents added annually over the past 5 years. By 2041, Downtown, in combination with its adjacent shoulder areas and work at home employment and individuals with no fixed place of employment, has the potential to reach between 850,000 to 915,000 jobs, and as many as 475,000 residents.

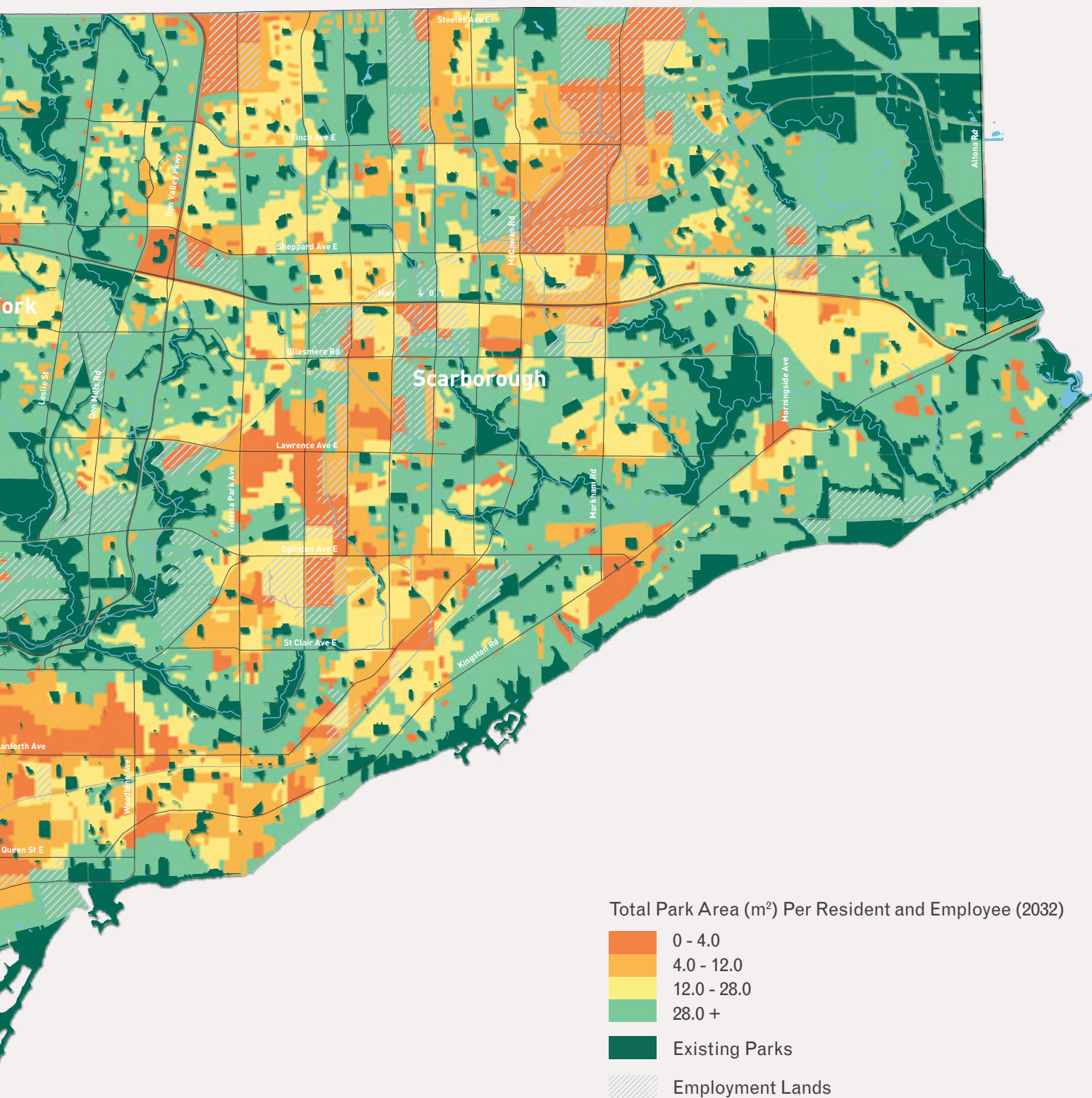
Within the Downtown and Central Waterfront the average units per hectare by project have grown steadily to an almost 100 percent increase since 2005, the year that the City's alternative parkland dedication rate was approved by the Ontario Municipal Board. During that same period, by comparison, only 19.63 hectares of parkland has been secured by the City. The impact of this pace of acquisition has resulted in a parkland provision of 9.4m² per person in Downtown, which is 67 percent lower than the city's average area of parkland per person.

The map, *City-wide Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2032 (next spread)* presents the anticipated parkland provision based on the estimated residential and employment population using the Development Pipeline. This forecasted population growth will result in an increased use and demand on existing parks and publicly-accessible open space. This will result in the need to provide additional parks and open spaces in all areas of the Downtown, including areas that are not necessarily going to experience the same levels of growth and intensification.

Maintaining provision levels is challenging in urban environments where the intensity and rate of vertical growth generates parkland demand in areas where it is difficult to acquire new parkland. The response, in a complex built-up environment like the Downtown, requires creative approaches to maintaining an adequate supply of parkland that provides the full range of park experiences enjoyed elsewhere in Toronto. The Parks and Public Realm Plan proposes measures to address the provision of parks for the current and future population within the Downtown, to provide additional parkland for existing residents and minimize the widening gap between parkland provision and our growing population. It examines the need for parkland to inform public and private investments in parks and presents a range of implementation tools that will be used to realize this Plan's vision.



City-wide Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2032 (map by O2 Planning + Design)



For an in-depth examination of the need for parkland in the Downtown, refer to Chapter 4: Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

The Value of Parks and the Public Realm

In the most memorable neighbourhoods and cities, the quality and experience of a place is directly tied to its identity. Cities are expanding their focus beyond the design of buildings in recognition of this. Toronto has many exceptional qualities and continues to be identified as one of the most liveable cities in the world. Toronto's public realm, consisting of all areas to which the public has access such as parks, streets, laneways and other open spaces, plays a pivotal role in contributing to this liveability. Together, our parks, streets and open spaces are our largest civic assets and define the image of our city.

Parks

Parks are publicly-owned land that is set aside for the enjoyment and use by people who live, work and visit our city. They have multiple roles, and are more than just green spaces between the city's hard concrete edges and its buildings. They are treasured parts of our city's heritage. They have intrinsic value in shaping the urban landscape, and will continue to do so well into the future.

Parks are an extension of the home, which is increasingly important in dense, urban settings like Toronto's Downtown. They come in all shapes and sizes, from large, signature open spaces to small parkettes, squares, hardscaped plazas, gardens and promenades. People gather, socialize, celebrate and play in parks. They are used for cultural and community events that

bring life and enjoyment to the city. In recent years, parks have also increasingly become a magnet for pet owners, providing space for our four-legged animal companions to run and play, and owners to socialize. The community building impacts of these uses are crucial to the local functions of parks. Parks also boost tourism by acting as destinations and 'people-draws'. They have a positive impact on the perception of our city to the outside world, and contribute to our economic competitiveness.

Parks have been linked to positive mental health outcomes including stress reduction. They improve the health and wellbeing of people of all ages by providing space to rest, relax and be active. They offer a diversity of recreational programming, from passive activities to sports and other types of physical recreation. They also offer a respite and reprieve from the hustle and bustle of city living, and allow people to have contact with nature and with one another.

Parks also beautify the urban landscape and strengthen the natural environment. They support biodiversity by providing habitat and food for wildlife, and are a key component of our city's green and blue infrastructure. They contribute to a healthy and robust tree canopy, filter and absorb stormwater, clean the air and reduce the urban heat island effect.

Streets

Streets traditionally functioned as meeting places, marketplaces and movement corridors. The functions of streets dramatically changed in mid 1900s, when they were largely given over to the personal automobile. Recently, there has been a paradigm shift and resurgence about the role that streets play in cities. They are once again being recognized as important civic spaces that can offer high-quality design and inviting options to move around the city or stay and linger.

Streets throughout the world are being rebalanced to align with Complete Streets objectives. There has been a shift of emphasis toward supporting pedestrians, cyclists and transit users, and for streets to be designed for users of all ages and abilities. Streets that balance competing interests and improve accessibility to destinations work to create a cohesive, connected parks and open space system.

Other Open Spaces

Downtown Toronto's parks and public realm system is supported by other open spaces that are both publicly- and privately-owned. These spaces do not replace the need for parks. They complement and supplement the city's system of parks, providing additional open space and recreational opportunities where public use of these spaces is permitted. There is untapped potential in the Downtown's laneways, schoolyards, churchyards,

cemeteries, privately-owned publicly accessible spaces (POPS) and other under-utilized local places that can be harnessed to contribute to a vibrant public realm for our current and future generations.

Evolution of Downtown's Parks and Public Realm

Since the retreat of the Wisconsin glacialiation, the landscape of Toronto has been significantly shaped by human forces. This transformation was set in motion at least 12,000 years ago by Indigenous peoples who established villages in river valleys and along the shores of large meltwater lakes, including the ancient proglacial Lake Iroquois and later, Lake Ontario (*Map 1*). Indigenous peoples also carved out travelling routes following the variations of the natural landscape. One such pre-settlement route connected the Humber River to the Don River along the Lake Iroquois shoreline, known as the Davenport Trail. These earliest villages and travelling routes speak to Toronto's strategic location in the Great Lakes region and set in motion its growth over two centuries.

Colonial surveyors continued to transform Toronto's landscape by laying out the framework of the grid in the late 18th century. In 1791, Toronto's first concession was laid along Queen Street, then Lot Street. In 1793, John

G. Simcoe established Fort York and, with the survey of Alexander Aiken, laid out the town of ten small blocks at the eastern end of the harbour. The town was connected to Fort York by Front Street, which ran along the northern shore of the harbour. The area of land between the first concession and the waterfront was set aside as Crown Reserve land, to protect it from development. North of the first concession, a park lot grid reached north to the second concession, Bloor Street (*Map 2*). While it is now a defining feature of the city, the grid paid little attention to the topographic, natural or Indigenous cultural features of the landscape, many of which have been lost as a result.

During the 19th century, Toronto's public realm evolved based on the subdivision of the grid. This period saw the evolution of major public landscapes in Toronto, including Allan Gardens, St James Cemetery, Normal School (St James Square), the Grange, Osgoode Hall, University Avenue and Queen's Park. In the same



1. Toronto Quaternary Geology, 11,700 BP



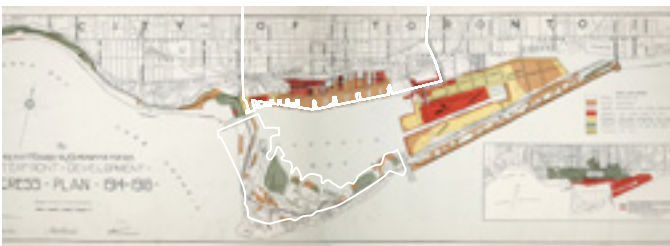
2. Plan of York Harbour, by A. Aitken, 1793

period, Toronto's streetcar network expanded, turning a fragmented network of east-west streets into main streets such as Dundas Street, College Street and Carleton Street. John G. Simcoe's vision to preserve the waterfront as a place for the enjoyment of nature and collective gathering, known as the 'Walks and Gardens' plan, was eclipsed by the railway in 1853. By the early 20th century, rapid growth and extensive lake-filling operations further transformed Toronto's waterfront into a centre of industrial progress (*Map 3*). Meanwhile, the focus of Toronto's public realm moved away from natural landscapes toward recreation and the provision of facilities. By 1950, the population of Toronto reached approximately 1.2 million people, propelling an era of suburbanization, with a decline in the number of people living in the core.

In the mid-1970s, Council's adoption of the Central Area Plan introduced the idea that the Downtown should include a mix of residential and commercial uses. For

the first time, policies and zoning were designed to encourage housing in the core. This was accompanied by an investment in social service infrastructure: parks, schools, community centres and other facilities were constructed to support life in the Downtown. The dynamic growth being experienced in the Downtown today continues a transformation set in motion by the Central Area Plan (*Map 4*).

On the waterfront and along the Don River, Toronto has made great strides toward expanding and improving its parks and open space system. But the transformation of the Downtown's parks and public realm cannot rely on these large site opportunities alone. As Downtown Toronto continues to develop and intensify, the Parks and Public Realm Plan proposes a framework and plan to re-imagine Toronto's public realm, to ensure our quality of life keeps pace with our rapidly intensifying urban core.



3. The Toronto Harbour Commissioners Waterfront Development Progress Plan, 1914-1918



4. Downtown Toronto, 2018

2. The Parks and Public Realm Plan

Five Transformative Ideas to re-balance the public realm



North: Davenport Road Bluff

East: Don River Valley and Rosedale Valley Ravine

West: Garrison Creek Corridor

South: Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay

Toronto's Landscape Morphology: The Core Circle

From Toronto's unique landscape features, a new figure emerges that is set within some of our city's largest open space assets. The Core Circle offers a ring of diverse open spaces encircling the Downtown and a coherent network of amenities rooted in the pre-settlement landscapes of our city. The Core Circle landscapes include the Don River Valley and Rosedale

Valley Ravine, the Lower Don Lands, the Leslie Street Spit (a constructed naturalized landscape), the Toronto Islands, the Garrison Creek corridor, and the Davenport Road bluff, former shoreline of the ancient proglacial Lake Iroquois. This extensive green system is 100 percent Toronto, and a beloved resource for many Torontonians.



Toronto's Urban Morphology: Great Streets

From our colonial grid, the pattern of streets and blocks provides the urban framework for re-conceptualizing emblematic civic streets as central public spaces, active transportation corridors and places supporting public life. Certain streets have emerged as important civic corridors, lined with public buildings and significant parks and open spaces, which connect into and beyond

the Core Circle. Together, the Core Circle and Great Streets exist as complementary layers. This large-scale contribution to the parks and public realm framework re-imagines the city's fundamental landscapes and major streets to reshape the setting of the Downtown and its largest open spaces.

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* is based on Five Transformative Ideas, a set of integrated spatial transformations that build on assets to guide how the parks and public realm network will be expanded, improved and connected.

The first two transformative ideas, the Core Circle and the Great Streets, explore the co-existence and interplay of Toronto's landscape and urban structures: the unique landscape features of the ravines, islands and bluffs and the grid of streets laid over the landscape in the late 18th century, today lined with landmark buildings, historic fabric and major public spaces. Together, the Core Circle and the Great Streets exist as complementary layers, leveraging the relationship between landscape and city to offer a new lens for imagining our civic identity, through our common ground – the public realm. This large-scale contribution re-discovers our landscapes and civic streets to bring about a significant transformation of the Downtown's parks and public realm.

The map (*right*) illustrates the relationship between Toronto's fundamental landscape features, the creeks, ravines, bluffs and shorelines that preceded the city, and the colonial grid of streets. The Core Circle and the Great Streets leverage the layering of these landscape and urban features that are 100 percent Toronto to reveal and celebrate the unique setting that defines Downtown Toronto and its largest open spaces.



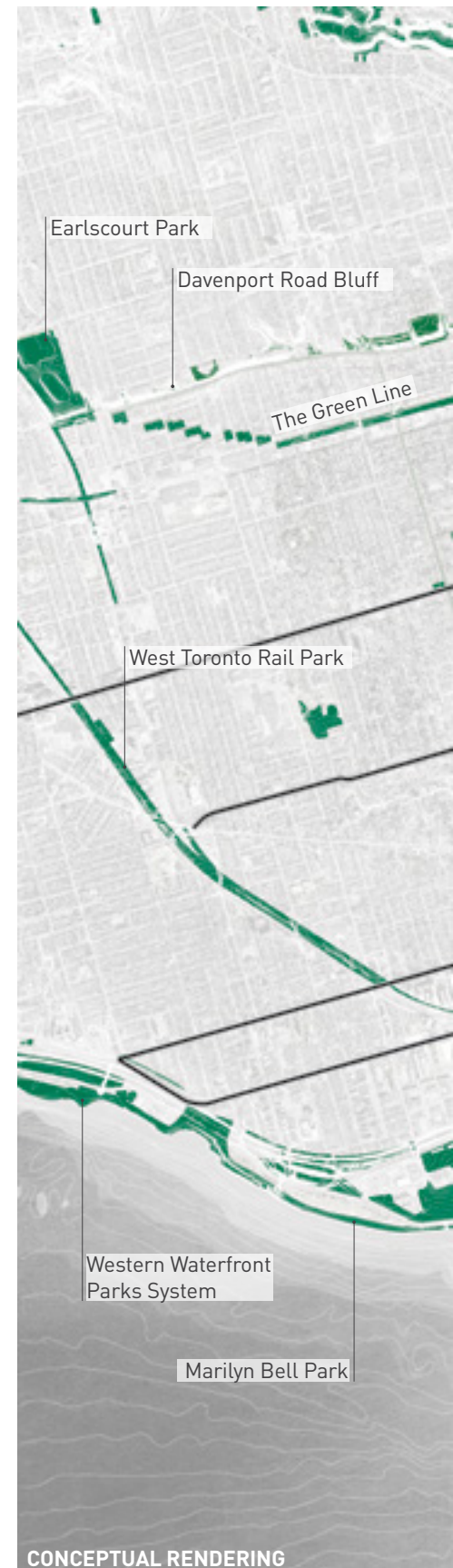


Map showing the contemporary city grid overlaid on Toronto's pre-settlement landscapes – creeks, ravines, bluffs and shorelines – circa 1790, Toronto, Canada

The Five Transformative Ideas build on the assets of all areas in and adjacent to the core to guide how the Downtown's parks and public realm network will be expanded, improved and connected.

For planning purposes, Downtown Toronto is bounded by Bathurst Street to the west, the midtown rail corridor and Rosedale Valley Road to the north, the Don River Valley to the east and the Lake Ontario shoreline to the south. The Parks and Public Realm Plan recognizes that our experience of the Downtown parks and public realm system extends beyond these boundaries, both for users who live and work in and adjacent to the core. It considers our parks and open spaces as a network that provides a diverse and complementary range of experiences, within and beyond the boundaries of the Downtown.

Some of the ideas presented in the Plan are situated outside of the Downtown boundary, such as the Davenport Road bluff to the north, and the Garrison Creek corridor to the west. These landscapes are fundamental assets and present key opportunities to connect the Downtown's parks, open spaces and active mobility networks to the broader city-wide system. The map (*right*) illustrates the Core Circle and Great Streets within the broader framework of parks, streets and other open spaces that surround the Downtown. These unique landscapes, streets and infrastructure corridors – including hydro and rail corridors – can act as critical connectors between our largest parks and open space assets.





Map showing the Core Circle and Great Streets within the broader network of parks, streets and open spaces, Toronto, Canada

Re-imagine the valleys, bluffs and islands encircling the Downtown as a fully interconnected 900-hectare immersive landscape system

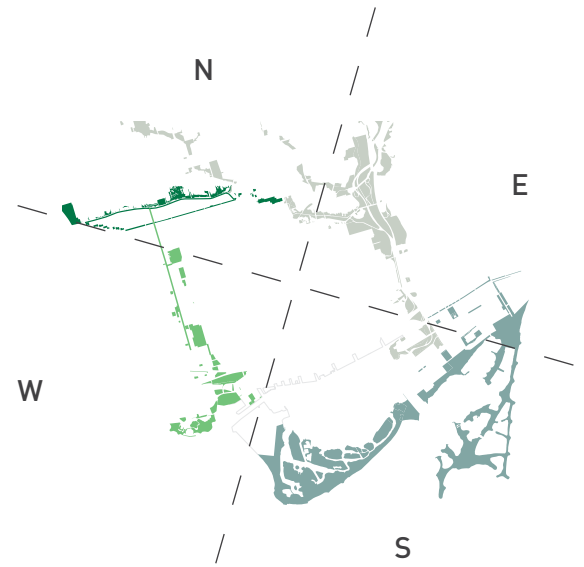
THE CORE

CIRLE

The Core Circle re-imagines the valleys, bluffs and islands encircling the Downtown as a fully connected 900-hectare immersive landscape system

The Core Circle seeks to improve and offer opportunities to reconnect the urban fabric of the Downtown to its surrounding natural features using the streets, parks and open spaces found around the natural setting of Downtown Toronto including the Don River Valley and ravines, Lake Ontario, the Toronto Islands, Garrison Creek and the Lake Iroquois shoreline. Connecting these large landscape features will create a continuous circular network of open spaces surrounding the Downtown, accessible from both the core and the broader city. The Core Circle re-imagines the Downtown's framework of valleys, bluffs and islands as a connected 900-hectare landscape system and immersive experience, building on Toronto's strong identity as a 'city within a park' and providing opportunities to acknowledge our natural setting and connect to the history of our natural landscapes.

Historically, the natural landscape features that form the Core Circle were used by Indigenous peoples as village sites, travelling routes and hunting and gathering lands. They are regarded as sacred landscapes and places for spiritual renewal. The Core Circle seeks to re-establish our connection to these landscapes. Taking an ecological approach, the Core Circle challenges us to push boundaries and explore the types of landscapes we can achieve in a 21st century city, including landscapes that enhance the resilience of our city, and those that contribute to reconciliation with Indigenous communities. It offers opportunities to create landscapes that can provide absorptive, productive, and other infrastructural and ecological functions, and provides space for restoring Indigenous identity, social structure and kinship with the land.



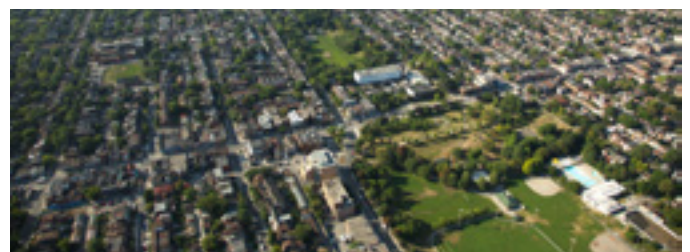
North: Davenport Road Bluff, Toronto, Canada



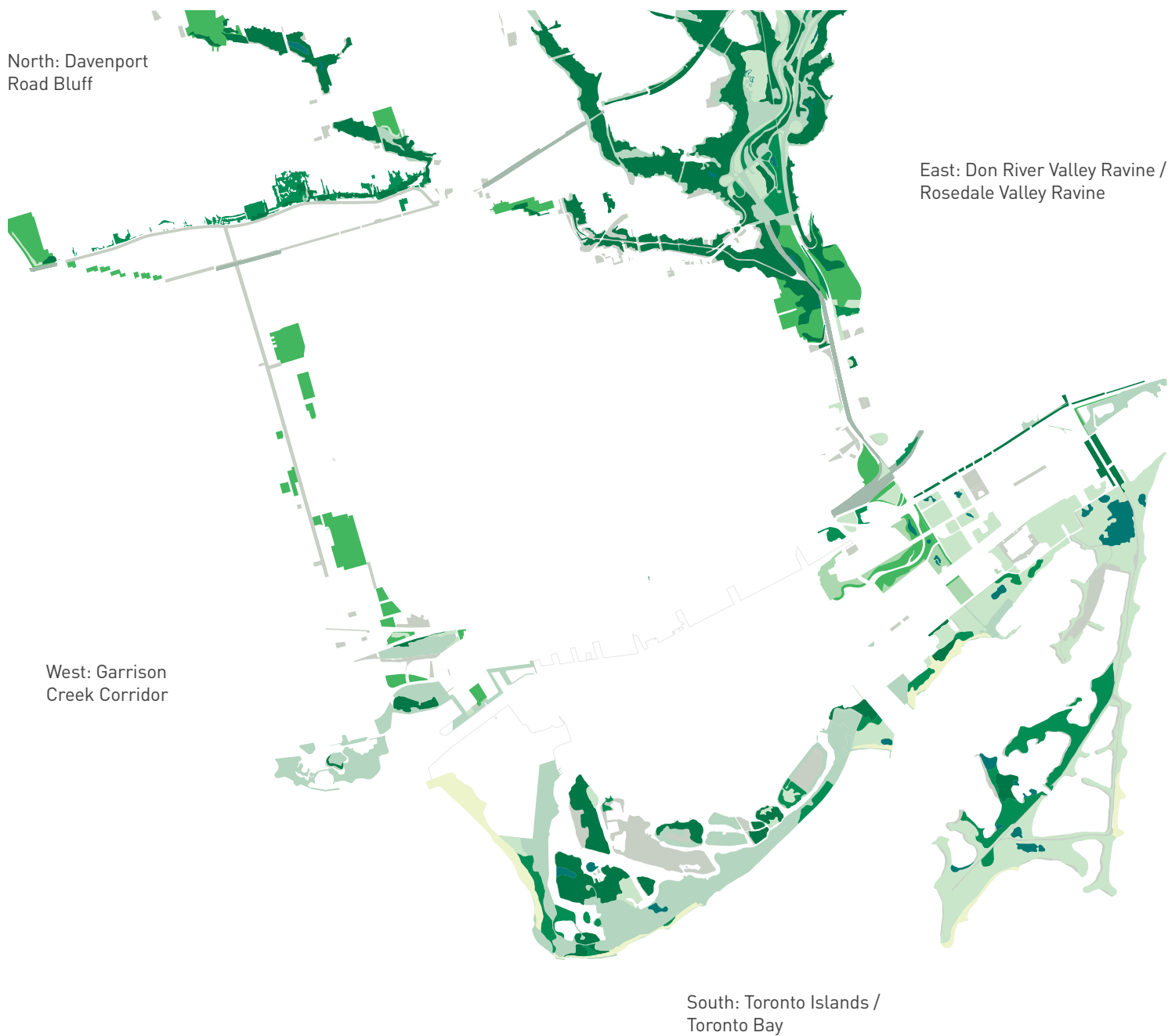
East: Don River Valley Ravine and Rosedale Valley Ravine, Toronto, Canada



South: Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay, Toronto, Canada



West: Garrison Creek Corridor, Toronto, Canada

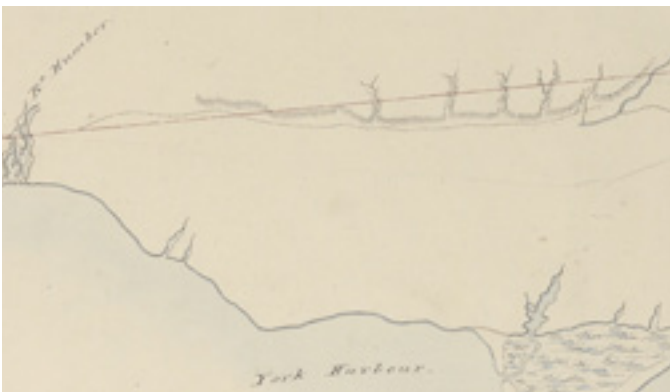


Diagrammatic representation of the diversity of species and vegetation communities including forests, wetlands and meadows that comprise the Core Circle landscapes, Toronto, Canada

- 1 North: Davenport Road Bluff
- 2 East: Don River Valley Ravine and Rosedale Valley Ravine
- 3 South: Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay
- 4 West: Garrison Creek Corridor

Sixteen strategies outline general principles and design directions to guide a series of initiatives that reinforce the Core Circle vision through focused interventions.

REVEAL THE LANDSCAPES THAT PRECEDED THE CITY AND CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS CULTURES AND HISTORIES



The Davenport Trail winds along the foot of the ancient Lake Iroquois escarpment, from Plan of Dundas Street, 1795

Establish partnerships with Indigenous communities to advance initiatives that celebrate the landscape and Indigenous cultures and histories. Reveal layers of natural and Indigenous cultural heritage by restoring, connecting and improving the natural environment of the ravines, bluffs and islands. Leverage the dramatic topography for creative placemaking and interpretation, restore lost waterways, and protect and grow this beloved resource.

What we heard:

- Honour Indigenous histories and cultures and engage Indigenous communities in placemaking.
- Provide resources and spaces for Indigenous peoples to restore their kinship with the land and social structure (e.g. places to gather around fire).

ENHANCE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AS A COUNTERPOINT TO URBAN LIVING



Qunli Stormwater Wetland Park cleanses and stores water and provides recreational use and aesthetic experience within a dense urban environment, Haerbin City, China

Create and offer an experience that is an escape from the city. Connect natural landscapes to provide a sense of being close to nature. Make places that provide access to natural sunlight, sky views and the night sky. Experiment with the types of landscapes that are possible and necessary in a 21st century city, such as absorptive, floodable parks and habitats and productive landscape such as hatcheries and carbon forests.

What we heard:

- Protect and restore our landscapes, habitats and ecologies; enhance biodiversity.
- Enhance and maintain the urban forest.
- Consider climate change and create resilient landscapes.

CONNECT THE CORE CIRCLE WITH A CONTINUOUS PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING ROUTE



The BeltLine, 33 miles of multi-use trails, and 1,300 acres of parks in a path encircling the city, Atlanta, United States

There is power in the continuity of the loop. Improve connections and provide Torontonians with an opportunity to move through nature in different ways, including walking, cycling, jogging and canoeing. Create an unique draw for Toronto on an international level to support larger events such as a 'Core Circle Marathon'. Plan to accommodate activities and events that preserve the integrity of the landscape, draw attention to Toronto's natural legacy and celebrate our diverse culture while leveraging the large scale of the Core Circle.

What we heard:

- Better connect existing natural features and open spaces.
- Encourage active transportation connections and linkages.

CONNECT THE CORE CIRCLE WITH THE BROADER CITYWIDE PARKS AND PUBLIC REALM SYSTEM



Boisé de Tequenonday opens a gradual portal for the public to enjoy convenient access to nature, Quebec City, Canada

Improve and promote access into the Core Circle through parks, streets and open spaces and connect the Core Circle with the broader citywide parks and public realm system, such as West Toronto Rail Path, the Green Line, the Kay Gardiner Beltline Trail, and other nearby parts of the system. Create gathering places and gateways where streets and neighbourhoods connect to the Core Circle. Re-think existing infrastructure such as rail tracks, bridges and roads to perform beyond their current function, for example, as access points into the ravine, not just routes over it.

What we heard:

- Improve access to immersive places like Lake Ontario, the Toronto Islands and the ravines.
- Enhance access to ravines with improved and new access points and connections.

ENCOURAGE LOCAL ACCESS AND 'SHORT TRIPS'
TO MAKE THE CIRCLE A DAY TO DAY RESOURCE



Corktown Common invites easy access into the Core Circle and offers a glimpse of the broader ravine landscape beyond, Toronto, Canada

Encourage local access and 'short trips' that promote walking and cycling and provide access to programs and experiences within the Core Circle. Not all users will experience the full extent of the Core Circle system, but may instead experience it in smaller pieces. Create multiple new points of entry and consider how day to day activities can expand into the Core Circle, making meaningful connections through neighbourhoods, parks and streets. Imagine the experience of the Core Circle as a gradual 'reveal', unfolding one visit at a time, with meaningful short trips that can provide a glimpse of the expansive landscapes beyond.

What we heard:

- Encourage active transportation connections and linkages.

FOSTER THE LEGIBILITY AND NAVIGABILITY OF
THE CORE CIRCLE



Governor's Island signage and landscape markers, New York City, United States

Create opportunities for storytelling and improve the legibility and navigability of our natural and cultural landscapes. Target communications that increase awareness of the Core Circle such as wayfinding, mapping and on-line tools, in collaboration with partners. Consider the Core Circle as a national park.

What we heard:

- Make access points and connections easier to navigate.
- Improve wayfinding.
- Increase snow clearing of trails in the winter.

RE-IMAGINE OR RETROFIT INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDORS AND REMNANT SITES FROM PREVIOUS LAND USES



Schöneberger Südgelände Nature Park, a former rail yard, retains rail tracks and a water tower, Berlin, Germany

Re-imagine or retrofit infrastructure corridors and remnant sites to complete cycling and pedestrian networks, while enhancing nature and respecting industrial heritage. Ecological landscapes such as meadows, forests and other landscapes develop and evolve gradually over time and cost little to create and maintain. In the past 50 years, the Leslie Street Spit has evolved into a diverse, species-rich natural oasis in the heart of Toronto. Such landscapes can be allowed to develop on their own, or be guided to create different types of desirable landscapes, such as absorptive parks that filter and store stormwater.

What we heard:

- Make use of what we already have (e.g. rail and hydro corridors).
- Loosen restrictions and / or enable these spaces to be used as multi-functional public spaces.

ENGAGE COMMUNITIES IN THE DESIGN AND CREATION OF THE CORE CIRCLE



The Weston Family Parks Challenge demonstrates a collaborative approach to growing food, restoring habitat, and integrating arts programming in parks, Toronto, Canada

Enable policy or organizational shifts and creative collaborations to unlock our urban wilderness. Empower communities by building new partnership models that enable new opportunities for programming, funding, decision-making and stewardship. Establish partnerships with Indigenous communities to realize the Core Circle.

What we heard:

- Encourage youth to learn and apply skills in the landscape.
- Enhance community stewardship without downloading the responsibility for maintenance onto volunteers.

USE PARKS AS PORTALS TO UNLOCK THE CORE CIRCLE



Riverdale Park, ravine portal to the Don River Valley and broader ravine landscape, Toronto, Canada

Create Portal Parks. At the interface of neighbourhoods and the broader urban wilds, re-imagine and expand existing parks, or create new ones to act as portals to the larger Core Circle landscape. Look for strategic points of access all around the Core Circle, where neighbourhoods can benefit from increased access to the ravine system, bluffs and islands.

What we heard:

- The Downtown pedestrian and cycling network should connect to the ravines and broader network beyond the Downtown.

IMPROVE THE VISUAL AND PHYSICAL ACCESS OF THE CORE CIRCLE



Alexandra Arch and Forest Walk introduces lookouts and a gradual passage from the city to the wilderness, Telok Blangah Hill Park, Singapore

Use parks as portals to improve the visual and physical access of the Core Circle. Take advantage of topography and views to design features that celebrate the specific opportunities of fronting onto ravines, bluffs and islands. Consider the process of departure and arrival between the urban grid and the urban wilds, and celebrate it. Make strategic links from the city into the landscape and consider new vantage points and overlooks to highlight the most dramatic landscapes of the Core Circle.

What we heard:

- Make access points and connections visible and easy to navigate.
- Consider new access passageways into the Don River Valley at east-west streets / bridges.

PRIORITIZE UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBILITY TO AND WITHIN THE CORE CIRCLE



Twisted Valley, provides universal accessibility and multiplies the public use of the landscape's steep slopes, Allicante, Spain

Use Portal Parks to enhance universal accessibility to ravines, bluffs and islands. Make use of space at these arrival nodes to bring people easily and safely between higher and lower elevations. Make the routes places in their own right, building in opportunities to sit, gather and view the expansive landscape.

What we heard:

- Safety and accessibility of all users should be a priority in the development and improvement of parks and public spaces.

UNEARTH LOST LAYERS OF NATURAL, INDIGENOUS, CULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE



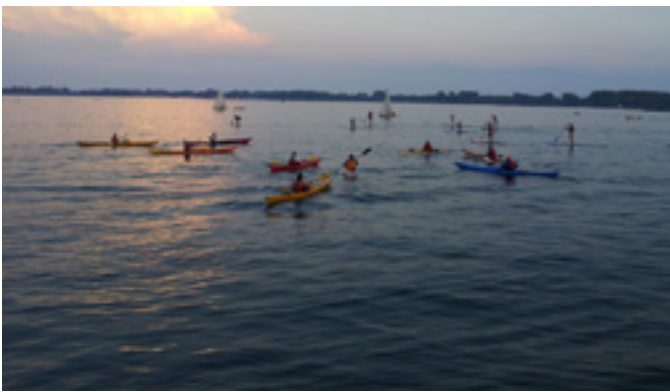
Revealing layers of the buried Garrison Creek landscape, Mouth of the Creek Park, Toronto, Canada

Imagine Portal Parks as offering opportunities to unearth lost layers of natural, Indigenous, cultural and industrial heritage. Portal Parks are an ideal opportunity to reflect the landscapes and waterways that were lost as the city expanded. Consider their design as an opportunity for contemporary interpretation of these features, making multiple layers of heritage and ecology apparent. Above all, make a great park, one that delivers neighbourhood amenities, while reflecting rich histories and ecologies.

What we heard:

- Honour Indigenous histories and cultures within parks and public spaces, including near Lake Ontario, the Toronto Islands, the Don River and Garrison Creek.
- Re-surface or re-interpret lost waterways.

A 'BLUE PARK' FOR THE CITY



Inner Harbour 'Blue Park', Toronto, Canada

Building on the Central Waterfront Revitalization, recognize the Inner Harbour as a civic space and encircle the Toronto Bay with a diverse and connected network of places. Promote water-based recreation on Toronto Bay, and improve access to the water's edge and around the Inner Harbour for pedestrians and cyclists. Implement bridges (e.g. the CWF Master Plan bridges over the heads of slips), peninsulas and water transport connections to bring Torontonians to and out on the lake. Consider new floating programs, strategically expanding park real estate by creating new types of water-based park experiences.

What we heard:

- Improve access to immersive places like Lake Ontario and the Toronto Islands.
- It should be easier for people to get to, on and around the water.

PROMOTE THE EXPERIENCE OF THE TWO SHORELINES



(left) View of the Toronto skyline from the Islands; (center) View of the Islands from the water's edge promenade; (right) View of Lake Ontario from Centre Island, Toronto, Canada

Promote the experience of the two shorelines: one characterized by the urban fabric of the Downtown to the north, with its hard and linear constructed dock walls, and the other characterized by the natural shorelines and beaches of the Toronto Islands and the Leslie Street Spit. Once connected, these two complimentary yet diverse experiences can open up three distinct skyline views: the view looking north to the city skyline; the view from the city looking south to the Islands and Inner Harbour ring; and, the expansive view from the Islands' outer shoreline to Lake Ontario.

What we heard:

- Leverage Toronto's unique position as a waterfront city.
- Lake Ontario should be more visible and legible to Torontonians.

“My grandfather couldn’t afford the ferry ticket to the Islands, so he would swim.”

– TOcore Consultation

LEVERAGE THE TORONTO ISLAND PARK SYSTEM, WHILE PRESERVING ITS UNIQUE CULTURE AND ECOLOGY



The Toronto Island Park System, Toronto, Canada

Leverage the Toronto Island Park System’s 230 hectares of public parkland and the Inner Harbour’s 540 hectares of water, while at the same time preserving and enhancing the unique cultural heritage landscapes and ecologies that define and elevate the experience of the Toronto Bay for residents, workers and visitors. Carefully address improving public access, dealing with climate change and enhancing resiliency, and fostering public understanding of ecological processes.

What we heard:

- Concerns about “over use” of the Toronto Islands; concerns about impacts on the natural environment and the lives of Island residents.
- The Islands should be protected and enhanced.

HARMONIZE RECREATION AND ACTIVE INDUSTRY



Sugar Beach and the Redpath Sugar Refinery, Toronto, Canada

Carefully integrate recreational uses to ensure the continued viability of active industry. The revitalization of the Central Waterfront, the Port Lands, the Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay should infuse new uses and activity, while respecting industrial uses and the working harbour.

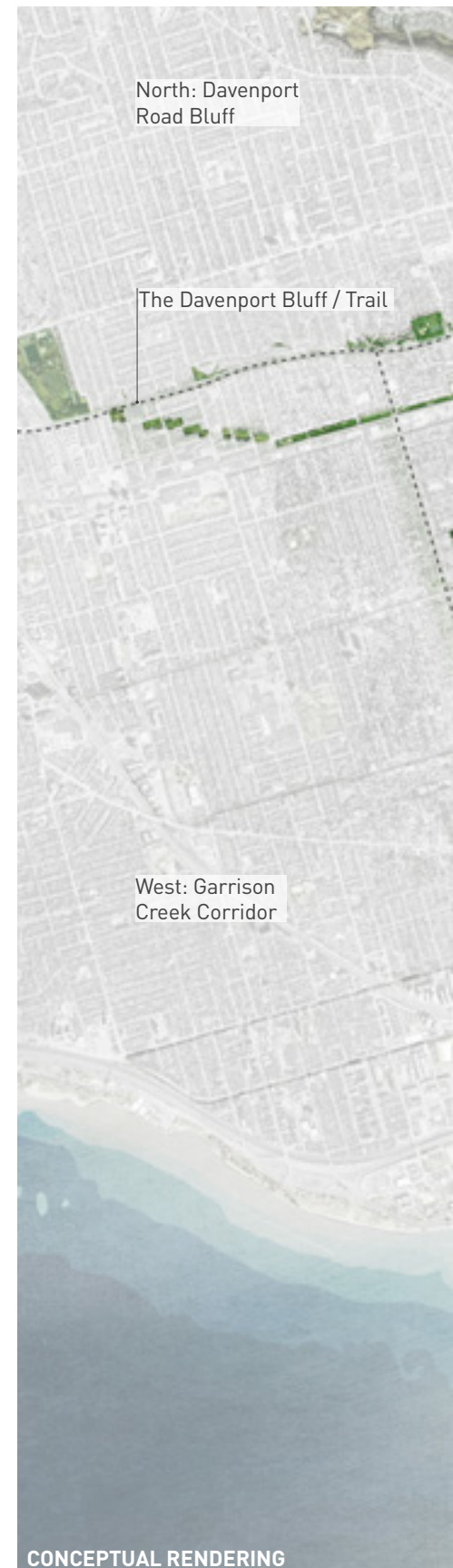
What we heard:

- Importance of maintaining Toronto’s rich heritage of active industry on the waterfront.

Re-imagine the framework of valleys, bluffs and islands encircling the Downtown as a fully connected 900-hectare immersive landscape system.

INITIATIVES

- 1 *North: Davenport Road Bluff*
 - Restore and Enhance The Davenport Bluff / Trail
 - Prioritize Spadina Park for Indigenous Placemaking
 - Create The Green Line
 - Connect from The Green Line to Ramsden Park
 - Expand and Continue to Revitalize Ramsden Park
 - Connect from Ramsden Park to the Rosedale Valley
- 2 *East: Don River Valley Ravine / Rosedale Valley Ravine*
 - Create Don River Valley Park
 - Improve Access to the Future Don River Valley Park
 - Improve and Connect the Don River Trail
 - Create a Linear Riverside Park along Bayview Ave
 - Improve Access and Trail on Rosedale Valley Rd
 - Improve Access and Connections to Riverdale Park
 - Connect the Core Circle through Corktown Common
 - Realize the Lower Don Lands River Estuary
- 3 *South: Toronto Islands / Toronto Bay*
 - Implement the Central Waterfront Master Plan
 - Implement Slip Bridges, Wave decks, Boat Launches, and Habitat Nodes
 - Create Harbour Landing
 - Revitalize Centre Island
 - Enhance Shoreline Ecologies / Aquatic Habitat
 - Improve the Toronto Islands Circulation Network and Viewpoints to the Inner Harbour and Lake Ontario
 - Experiment with Flexible, Water-based or Seasonal Island Access at the Eastern and Western Gap
 - Create New Water Transport Connections
 - Enhance Water-based Programming and Occupation
 - Create a Water-based Recreation Pier
- 4 *West: Garrison Creek Corridor*
 - Revitalize Ontario Place
 - Revitalize Coronation Park
 - Realize Fort York and Garrison Common Parks System
 - Revitalize Stanley Park and Create the Extension
 - Create the Shaw Street Greenway
 - Revitalize Trinity Bellwoods Park
 - Revitalize Christie Pits Park







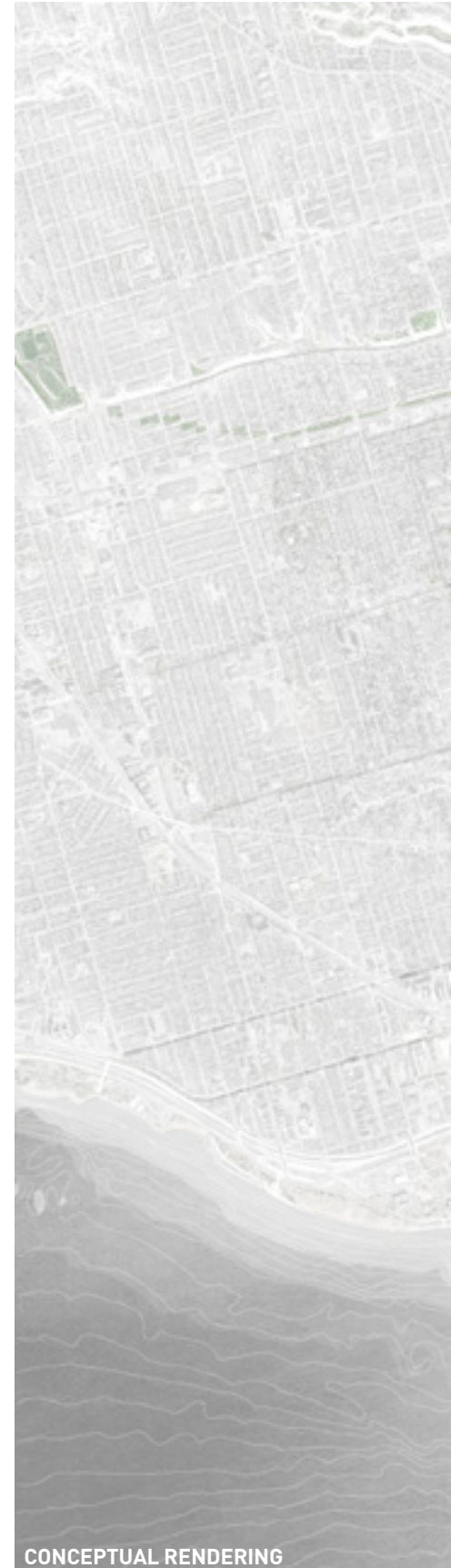
Map showing proposed initiatives for the Core Circle, Toronto, Canada

As part of the larger Great Lakes system, Toronto's watersheds are subject to water level fluctuations that are complex and unpredictable. Climate change may result in less ice cover, less precipitation and increased temperatures, leading to lower water levels, but it is also recognized that future climate conditions are uncertain, and more extreme water levels may be reached and these extremes may occur more often (International Joint Commission).

The map (*right*) indicates flood vulnerability in Toronto's Don River Watershed and Lake Ontario Waterfront Watershed. In the Don River Watershed, the map illustrates the existing Don River Regulatory Flood Plain (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority). In the Lake Ontario Waterfront Watershed, the map illustrates elevations below 76.0m, the highest recorded lake level in the Toronto harbour in May 2017 (US Army Corps of Engineers).

-  Existing Don River Regulatory Flood Plain (Toronto and Region Conservation Authority - TRCA)
-  Elevations Below 76.0m*

* 75.931m was the highest recorded lake level in the Toronto harbour in May 2017 (US Army Corps of Engineers)





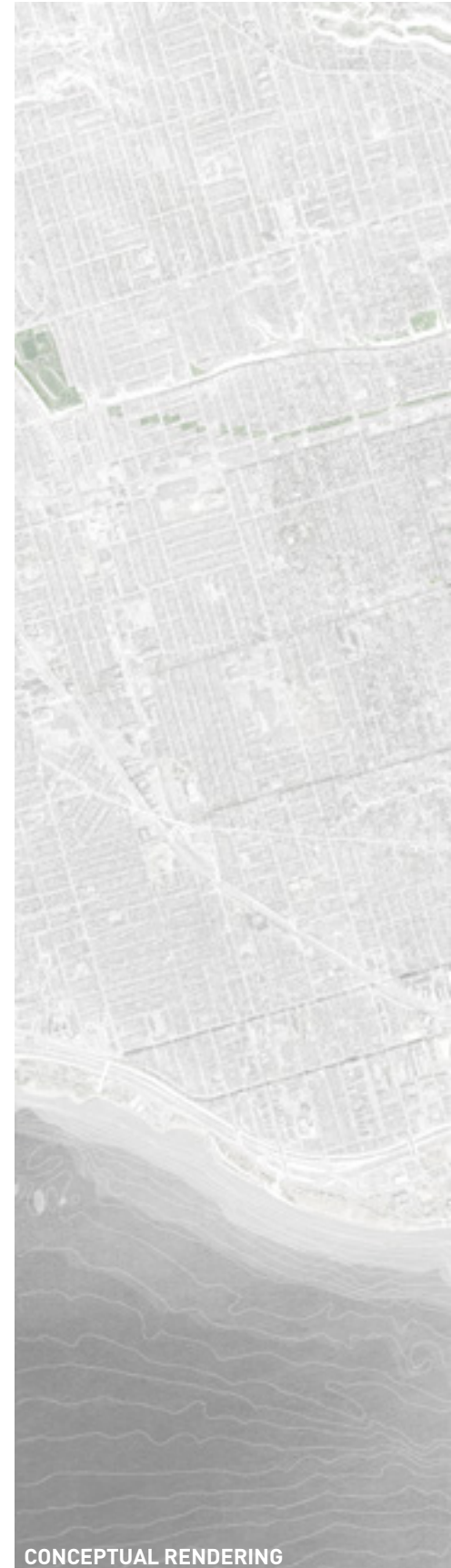
Map showing existing flood vulnerability in the Don River Watershed and Lake Ontario Waterfront Watershed, Toronto, Canada

The map (*right*) indicates flood vulnerability in Toronto's Don River Watershed and Lake Ontario Waterfront Watershed. In the Don River Watershed, the map illustrates the projected future Don River Regulatory Flood Plain with the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project (Waterfront Toronto). The projected impact of naturalizing the mouth of the Don River for flood protection is an example of the capacity of landscapes as urban infrastructure to deal with water, including future water level fluctuations, and to address a range of future climate conditions, such as the urban heat island effect.

It is proposed that landscapes around the Core Circle be prioritized as absorptive landscapes. Absorptive landscapes are adapted to serve blue (water-based) and green (urban forest, greenway, pedestrian and cycling priority) infrastructure systems, to enhance the resilience of the Downtown in the 21st century.

-  Projected Future Don River Regulatory Flood Plain with the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure (Waterfront Toronto)
-  Elevations Below 76.0m*

* 75.931m was the highest recorded lake level in the Toronto harbour in May 2017 (US Army Corps of Engineers)





Map showing projected future flood vulnerability in the Don River Watershed and Lake Ontario Waterfront Watershed, Toronto, Canada

Implement varying degrees of absorptive landscapes around the Core Circle, ranging from always wet, to occasionally wet, to rarely wet. Prioritize flood risk areas and other parks and open spaces that offer the potential to enhance the resilience of the Core Circle and surrounding neighbourhoods.

PROPOSED ABSORPTIVE LANDSCAPES

- 1 *Ramsden Park*
- 2 *Don River Valley Park*
- 3 *Riverdale Park*
- 4 *Corktown Common | Flood Protection Landform*
- 5 *Lower Don Lands River Estuary*
- 6 *Cherry Beach*
- 7 *Leslie Street Spit*
- 8 *Toronto Islands*
- 9 *Ontario Place and Coronation Park at Water's Edge*
- 10 *Mouth of the Creek Park*
- 11 *Stanley Park and Stanley Park Extension*
- 12 *Trinity Bellwoods Park*
- 13 *Christie Pits Park and Bickford Park*



Valleys, ponds and large sunken surfaces collect and treat rainwater, run off and floodwater from the Seine River, Saint Ouen, France



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Map showing proposed locations for investment in absorptive landscape infrastructure, Toronto, Canada

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 1. THE CORE CIRCLE

Examples of absorptive landscapes, adapted to serve blue and green infrastructure systems toward a more resilient future city.



The Francois Mitterrand Strip, at confluence of the Ille and Vilaine Rivers, is designed to absorb and celebrate the influence of water and has triggered a major urban transformation of the adjacent part of the city, Rennes, France



Nansen Park is designed to receive surface water from adjacent housing areas and roads with open green swales to carry water to the nearby lake, and biological sand filters, mechanical filters and pumps to clean and aerate the water, Oslo, Norway

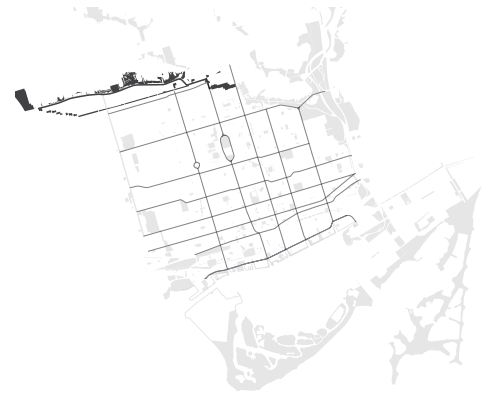


Billancourt Park re-links the city to the Seine River with a floodable landscape, gravel beds, islands and marshes that anchor the site to the riverside landscapes of the Seine, Boulogne-Billancourt, France



Cheonggyecheon River, previously an elevated freeway and concrete paved waterway, was transformed into a lush, 5.8 km long 'day-lit' stream corridor, now attracting over 60,000 visitors daily, Seoul, Korea

North: Davenport Road Bluff



The Davenport Road Bluff, ancient Lake Iroquois shoreline, Toronto, Canada

The Davenport Trail – ‘Gete-Onigaming’ (Ge-de-oh-ni-guh-ming) in Anishinaabemowin, meaning “at the old portage” – is an Indigenous travelling route that preceded the framework of the grid laid out by the colonial surveyors in the late 18th century. Following

the topographic variations of the natural landscape, the trail connects from the Humber River in the west to the Don River in the east along the base of the ancient Lake Iroquois escarpment. Re-discovering the Davenport Trail provides an opportunity to leverage the dramatic

(near right) 'The Bluff' cultural heritage trail and look-outs, Ypres, Belgium
 (far right) 'Shorelines', reflections on North American topography, by Michael Belmore, Ojibwe artist, 2006



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



The Davenport Road Trail – 'Gete-Onigaming' (Ge-de-oh-ni-guh-ming) in Anishinaabemowin, meaning "at the old portage", looking east from the base of Spadina Park, Proposed Concept

topography of the escarpment, remnant bluff ecologies and surrounding parkscapes, such as Spadina Park, to re-discover and celebrate the natural and Indigenous cultural heritage landscapes that preceded the city. By restoring, connecting and improving this ancient bluff-

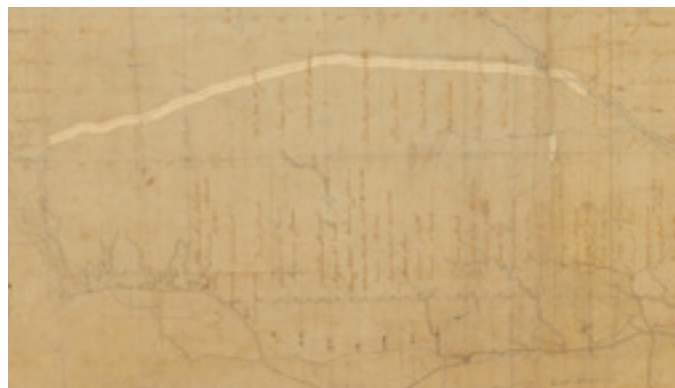
trail system, we can protect and grow this significant lost resource for all Torontonians.

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 1. THE CORE CIRCLE



North Core Circle: Davenport Road Bluff and the Green Line, Proposed Concept Plan

(right) *The Davenport Trail, from Survey of the Township of York, by A. Aitken, 1793*



Goals

- Enhance the natural environment as a counterpoint to urban living.
- Establish partnerships with Indigenous communities to advance initiatives that celebrate the landscape and Indigenous cultures and histories.
- Improve and promote access into the Core Circle through parks, streets and open spaces.
- Connect the Core Circle with the broader citywide parks and public realm system.
- Use parks as portals to improve the visual and physical access of the Core Circle.
- Imagine portal parks as offering opportunities to unearth lost layers of natural, Indigenous, cultural and industrial heritage.
- Create local access and 'short trips' that promote walking and cycling and provide access to programs and experiences within the Core Circle.
- Connect the Core Circle with a continuous pedestrian and cycling route.
- Re-imagine or retrofit infrastructure corridors and remnant sites to complete cycling and pedestrian networks, while enhancing nature and respecting industrial heritage.
- Foster the legibility and navigability of the Core Circle.
- Engage communities in the design and creation of the Core Circle.
- Prioritize universal accessibility to and within the Core Circle.

Actions

- Study the ecological characteristics, history and health of the forest along the Davenport Bluff, and develop recommendations for ecological restoration on public and private lands.
- Study the potential for a continuous pedestrian and cycling connection(s) from Poplar Plains / Nordhiemer Ravine to Rosedale Valley.
- Improve public access to existing open spaces including Spadina Park and Casa Loma Gardens.
- Improve north-south pedestrian and cycling connections across Davenport Road.
- Align Core Circle implementation with the ongoing Green Line initiative.
- Integrate hydrologic heritage into the design of open spaces making the source of the creeks legible.

East: Don River Valley Ravine



Don River Valley Ravine and Rosedale Valley Ravine, Proposed Concept

Toronto's unique ravine landscape was carved into the land more than 12,000 years ago by the retreat of the Wisconsin glacialiation. On the edge of the Downtown, with dramatic topography and a rich and layered physical, natural and cultural heritage landscape history,

Toronto's ravine landscape has been neglected and abused for the past century. Now is the time to restore and re-harmonize the ravine landscape, to leverage the dramatic topography and Indigenous cultural heritage landscape for creative placemaking and interpretation.

(right) Evergreen Brickworks is a model of collaborative, sustainable practices for the future Don River Valley Park, Toronto, Canada



Bayview Avenue, looking north to Evergreen Brickworks, showing potential improved edge condition and access to the future Don River Valley Park with re-purposed space on Bayview Avenue and a re-aligned or elevated rail corridor, Proposed Concept

Explore opportunities to design new gateways, re-invent bridges as access points and consider new vantage points and overlooks to highlight the unique ravine landscape. Aim to establish a 'Made in Toronto' approach to improving the health, legibility and

navigability of our ravines through wayfinding, mapping, communications, programming and events that increase awareness, helping us re-connect with, restore and re-harmonize this significant landscape for current and future generations.

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 1. THE CORE CIRCLE



East Core Circle: Don River Valley Ravine and Rosedale Valley Ravine, Proposed Concept Plan

(right) Prince Arthur's Landing promotes connections to Lake Superior, aboriginal culture and the city's shipping and rail history; showing Gathering Circle, a collaboration between Brook McIlroy and Aboriginal designer Ryan Gorrie, Thunder Bay, Canada



Goals

- Enhance the natural environment as a counterpoint to urban living.
- Establish partnerships with Indigenous communities to advance initiatives that celebrate the landscape and Indigenous cultures and histories.
- Improve and promote access into the Core Circle through parks, streets and open spaces.
- Connect the Core Circle with the broader citywide parks and public realm system.
- Use parks as portals to improve the visual and physical access of the Core Circle.
- Imagine portal parks as offering opportunities to unearth lost layers of natural, Indigenous, cultural and industrial heritage.
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- Connect the Core Circle with a continuous pedestrian and cycling route.
- Re-imagine or retrofit infrastructure corridors and remnant sites to complete cycling and pedestrian networks, while enhancing nature and respecting industrial heritage.
- Foster the legibility and navigability of the Core Circle.
- Engage communities in the design and creation of the Core Circle.
- Prioritize universal accessibility to and within the Core Circle.

Actions

- Work with Evergreen, the TRCA and others to advance improvements related to accessibility, amenity and resilience of the Don Valley.
- Improve access to the valley and its pedestrian and cycling networks while maintaining ecological integrity: explore connections from Necropolis Cemetery; Bloor Street between Sherbourne and Parliament; Rosedale Valley Ravine / Yonge Street / Ramsden Park.
- Pursue an Indigenous placemaking pilot project in 'Snow Drop Park' or another location.
- Promote water-based recreation on the Don River.

South: Toronto Islands / Toronto Bay



1. Proposed zones for new submergent, surface floating and emergent macrophyte ecologies to strategically thicken the 'green ring' around Toronto Bay



2. Showing location of the Toronto Island Airport Marine Exclusion Zone (MEZ) and runway flight paths



3. Modified zones for new ecologies to avoid interference with the operations of the Toronto Island Airport



4. Proposed new ecologies and connectivity around the Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay landscape

The South Core Circle will serve as Toronto's parks and public realm connector with Lake Ontario. It is the portal to the connected network of parks, streets and open spaces around Toronto Bay including the Toronto Island Park System, the Central Waterfront and new parks and

open spaces in the Port Lands. The South Core Circle is perfectly positioned to provide an escape from the city, providing a complement and counterpoint to urban life with access to natural sunlight, sky views and the night sky. Restore and enhance the South Core Circle by



(right) Waterfront Development Plan, by the Toronto Harbour Commissioner's Engineering Department, with Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., 1912, Toronto, Canada



Ecological palette for thickening the 'green ring' around the Toronto Bay – creating aquatic habitat that will not interfere with the operations of the Toronto Island Airport; showing the marsh boardwalk at Point Pelee National Park, Canada

strategically thickening the 'green ring' around Toronto Bay, improving access and connectivity, and enhancing water-based programming and occupation. Experiment with dynamic landscapes such as absorptive parks and habitats, and productive landscapes such as hatcheries.

In coordination with the TRCA's Toronto Waterfront Aquatic Habitat Restoration Strategy, consider new submergent, surface floating and emergent macrophyte ecologies out in the lake, strategically expanding the 'green ring' around the Toronto Bay landscape.

Recognize the Inner Harbour as a civic space that builds on the Central Waterfront Revitalization, connecting a diverse network of places that encircle the Toronto Bay.



Proposed new ecologies and connections around the Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay landscape, view looking east, Toronto, Canada

Implement the Central Waterfront Master Plan bridges and remaining wavedecks, incorporating new boat launch and habitat nodes. Revitalize Centre Island and improve the Toronto Islands Circulation Network, with enhanced views to the Inner Harbour and Lake Ontario.

Create new water transport connections between the Port Lands, the Toronto Islands and Ontario Place. Consider improved access options for pedestrians and cyclists across the eastern and western gaps, via new water transport connections or flexible, seasonal links.

(right) *The Floating Piers*, a temporary installation by Christo and Jeanne-Claude, created a modular floating walkway between islands at Lake Iseo, near Brescia, Italy



Sorenga Seawater Pool, Oslo, Norway



Proposed Surf Park for Melbourne's Docklands | Damian Rogers, Melbourne, Australia



Copenhagen Harbour Bath, Copenhagen, Denmark



Hasle Harbour Bath, Bornholm, Denmark

Enhance water-based programming and occupation, extending the experience of the Central Waterfront into the Inner Harbour. The vision for a water recreation pier responds to the need for more deep-water boat dock walls, provides an opportunity for water-based recreation, and

creates a clear incentive to keep our harbour clean. It is also an opportunity to provide small boat dock and launch nodes, new aquatic habitat, and a wide promenade on the pier's periphery, offering unique views of the Inner Harbour, the Islands and the Downtown skyline.



South Core Circle: Toronto Islands and Toronto Bay, Proposed Concept Plan

(right) An absorptive landscape model for the Toronto Islands, St Patrick's Island absorbs seasonal floodwater and opens new ecologies to human exploration, Calgary, Canada



Goals

The South Core Circle will serve as Toronto's parks and public realm connector with Lake Ontario. The South Core Circle is the portal to the connected network of streets, parks and open spaces around Toronto Bay including the Toronto Island Park System, the Central Waterfront and new parks and open spaces in the Port Lands.

- Promote the experience of the two shorelines: one characterized by the urban fabric of the Downtown to the north, with its hard and linear constructed dock walls, and the other characterized by the natural shorelines and beaches of the islands.
- To preserve and enhance the unique culture and ecologies that define and elevate the experience of the Toronto Bay for residents, workers and visitors.
- Leverage the Toronto Islands park system while preserving its unique culture and ecology.
- Improve access to the water's edge and around the inner harbor for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Promote water-based recreation on Toronto Bay.

Actions

- Explore access options to the Toronto Islands for pedestrians and cyclists across the eastern and western gaps, prioritizing the eastern gap.
- Study and improve all aspects of water transportation and recreational connections, between Downtown, the Port Lands and the Toronto Islands.
- Undertake a Toronto Islands Management Plan that addresses improving public access, offering a variety of experiences, climate change and resiliency, and fostering public understanding of ecological processes.
- Implement circulation improvements on the Toronto Islands.
- Consider establishment of a pier (as per the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan) or alternatively a floating dock to support water recreation activities such as swimming and water sports.
- Implement bridges over the heads of slips (as illustrated in the Central Waterfront Master Plan).

West: Garrison Creek Corridor



Re-interpreting Garrison Creek in a connected Garrison Creek Parks System, Toronto, Canada

The West Core Circle provides an opportunity to explore the interpretation of Garrison Creek within the series of parks, open spaces and schoolyards along its path. Re-surfacing Garrison Creek offers a chance to rediscover a landscape of significant scale and create a

connected Garrison Creek Parks System. The system of parks provides opportunities to reveal the lost waterway, connect and improve the natural environment and active transportation network, and support Indigenous placemaking and interpretation.

(right) Hassett Park, an urban stream daylights and treats stormwater, creating an educative overlay that reconnects people to natural systems in the city, Canberra, Australia



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

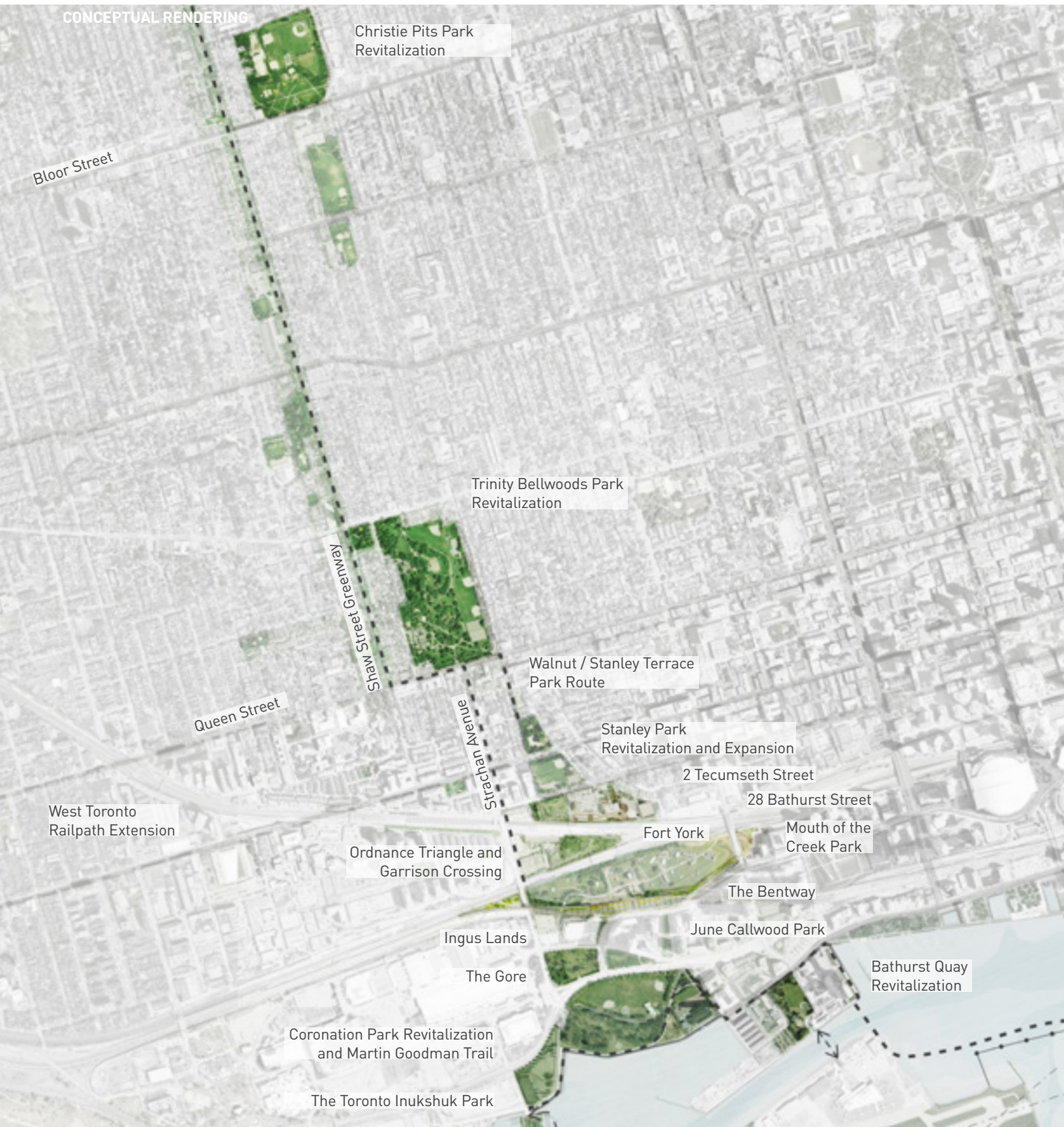


Enhance Shaw Street's 'Green Street' identity with absorptive paving, bio-retention planting beds and tree planting technology; showing the Shaw Street Greenway between Queen Street and Dundas Street, Proposed Concept

Prioritize opportunities to enhance park edges and surrounding streetscapes to extend the Garrison Creek Parks System experience deeper into the surrounding neighbourhoods. Explore opportunities for Green Street design with a focus on Shaw Street. Enhancements

should focus on tree planting infrastructure and bio-retention planting beds with an enhanced maintenance program, as well as wide pedestrian clearways and cycling facilities to realize a cohesive, connected active transportation corridor.

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 1. THE CORE CIRCLE



West Core Circle: The Garrison Parks System, Proposed Concept Plan

(right) The Park of the Docks welcomes the public into a landscape of meadows, ponds and sunken surfaces that collect and treat stormwater while providing park facilities such as playgrounds, allotment gardens and a skate park, Saint Ouen, France



Goals

- Enhance the natural environment as a counterpoint to urban living.
- Establish partnerships with Indigenous communities to advance initiatives that celebrate the landscape and Indigenous cultures and histories.
- Improve and promote access into the Core Circle through parks, streets and open spaces.
- Connect the Core Circle with the broader citywide parks and public realm system.
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- Connect the Core Circle with a continuous pedestrian and cycling route.
- Re-imagine or retrofit infrastructure corridors and remnant sites to complete cycling and pedestrian networks, while enhancing nature and respecting industrial heritage.
- Foster the legibility and navigability of the Core Circle.
- Engage communities in the design and creation of the Core Circle.
- Prioritize universal accessibility to and within the Core Circle.

Actions

- Undertake a Lower Garrison Parks and Public Realm Precinct Plan.
- Improve interpretation of Garrison Creek within the series of parks, streets, open spaces and school yards along the creek.
- Implement park design and infrastructure that responds to water fluctuation, such as absorptive and marsh landscapes.
- Study opportunities to apply 'Green Street' design principles, with a focus on Shaw Street.

Enhance the unique characteristics of Downtown's most emblematic streets and make them outstanding civic places and connectors

GREAT STREET

SETS

Great Streets enhance the unique characteristics of Downtown's most emblematic streets and make them outstanding civic places and connectors

All streets Downtown are important and are expected to be beautiful, comfortable, safe and accessible. Downtown's Great Streets are primarily civic streets and have a diverse character that conveys Toronto's public image to the world, setting the stage for festivals, parades and civic life. These streets hold cultural and historical significance and provide connections to the Core Circle and beyond. They are destinations in themselves, lined with landmark buildings and institutions, historic fabric and public spaces. Downtown's Great Streets play an important role supporting economic activity and fostering public life. A network of 12 Great Streets having cultural, historical and civic importance will be prioritized for public realm improvements. These streets connect to the Core Circle and are defined by their location, scale and historic role in the city, existing civic significance and their potential contribution to the public realm network.

Public realm improvements on the Great Streets will:

- Reinforce the identity and distinct characteristics of each segment of each street, including specific cultural heritage value and heritage attributes;
- Improve the scale of clearways, transit stops, and space for public gathering;
- Be required to implement and maintain a high standard of design and materials;
- Prioritize tree planting and investment in green infrastructure to support the growth of a healthy tree canopy, wherever feasible;
- Be informed by Complete Streets principles; and
- Include green infrastructure, where feasible.

Great Streets form connectors between significant

parks and open spaces. To enhance their role as a connectors, these streets should be designed to:

- Improve space for pedestrians and landscape and be designed in a unified manner to improve the role of the street as a connection between parks; and
- Improve the landscape and pedestrian space and amenity on the street edges of the significant parks and open spaces.

Intersections where two Great Streets meet are significant public spaces and will be designed to:

- Respect the character of both Great Streets; and
- Address the additional requirements necessary to support high pedestrian volumes and public life.

The locations where Great Streets meet the waterfront and the Core Circle are significant public spaces and will be designed to:

- Improve visual and physical connections; and
- Address the additional requirements necessary to support public life.

Through the development review process development along edges of Great streets will:

- Explore opportunities for adequate set-backs to widen the streetscape, provide additional room for pedestrian clearways, café patios and / or marketing displays, landscapes and where appropriate pedestrian weather protection without encroachment; and
- Explore opportunities for other open spaces along the street to complement the streetscape and provide additional space for pedestrians, landscape and amenity appropriate to the ground-floor uses.



- 1 *University Avenue*
- 2 *King Street*
- 3 *Jarvis Street Garden Street*
- 4 *Parliament Street*
- 5 *College-Carlton-Gerrard Corridor*
- 6 *Bloor Street*
- 7 *Bayview Avenue*
- 8 *Front Street*
- 9 *Spadina Avenue*
- 10 *Yonge Street Cultural Corridor*
- 11 *Queen Street*
- 12 *Queens Quay*

“Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If a city’s streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull.”

– Jane Jacobs

Four strategies outline general principles and design directions to guide a series of initiatives that reinforce the Great Streets vision through focused interventions.

RE-DISCOVER AND ENHANCE THE IDENTITY OF OUR GREATEST CIVIC STREETS



University Avenue was planted with 500 horse-chestnut trees in 1829 by landscape gardener André Parmentier, shown above in 1867, Toronto, Canada

Re-discover the original identities that make the Great Streets distinct and unique and imagine the potential of those that have been overlooked. The Great Streets are individual in character and quality, and the bones of their original form remains. Understand the story, context and historic use of each street, the distinct neighbourhood character, and build-upon, strengthen heritage attributes and / or re-balance and re-configure them as identifiable civic places and connectors. Consider the unique qualities of north-south and east-west streets, including access to sunlight and relationship to the Core Circle landscapes and the waterfront.

What we heard:

- Understand our history and the unique qualities of our different streets and neighbourhoods.

LEVERAGE THE BEST OF TORONTO'S GRID AS CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PARKS AND PUBLIC SPACES



Queens Quay, the central spine of a connected network of transformed public spaces along the Central Waterfront, Toronto, Canada

Create connections that can link and extend the reach of public realm components, creating a network of parks and public spaces. Make the experience of streets worth the journey along them, prioritizing continuity, wayfinding, legibility and navigability for pedestrians. Leverage parks and the public realm to create a better cycling network and experience. Promote a finer grain of public space on streets by providing mid-block connections and utilizing street-side open spaces, sidewalks and laneways to provide gathering places to linger and take in the city.

What we heard:

- Encourage active transportation and public transit connections between parks and public spaces.
- Increase protected cycling infrastructure routes.
- Promote midblock and laneway connections.

MAKE STREETS 'PLACES'



Broadway Boulevard and E 17th Street: Project for Public Spaces, New York City, United States

Re-balance streets to better accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and transit, with a focus on civic life. Consider programs and pilots as a catalyst for new uses, and utilize transit infrastructure (stations, shelters and stops) to create new social gathering spaces. Plan for sidewalks to have sunshine when and where it is needed and broaden public park edges to capture adjacent streetscapes.

What we heard:

- Prioritize pedestrians, cyclists and public transit.
- Improve the pedestrian experience on our streets, create more space for walking and gathering.
- Broaden park edges to spill out into streetscapes.

STRATEGICALLY IDENTIFY AND REALIZE 'GREAT TREE STREETS'



Commonwealth Avenue Mall, leading to Boston Public Garden and Boston Common as part of the Emerald Necklace, Boston, United States

Enhance the urban forest experience by strategically identifying wider streets for investment in tree planting infrastructure and an enhanced maintenance program. Prioritize potential tree size and combined canopy coverage over the number of individual trees. Imagine parks and streets as connected systems where large, mature trees can be experienced in the urban environment. Integrate stormwater management, and proactively plan for underground utility lines. Realize University Avenue, Jarvis Street, Parliament Street, the College-Carleton-Gerrard Corridor, Bloor Street, Bayview Avenue, Spadina Avenue, Front Street and Queens Quay as 'Great Tree Streets'.

What we heard:

- Enhance and maintain the urban forest.
- Improve growing conditions for street trees and increase native tree planting.
- Consider climate change and create resilient landscapes.

Re-discover the Downtown's most emblematic streets, enhance their unique characteristics and make them outstanding civic places and connectors.

INITIATIVES

- 1 *University Avenue*
Create Linear Park and Gardens
- 2 *King Street*
Implement Pilot to Enhance 'Transit First' Street
- 3 *Jarvis Street Garden Street*
Revitalize Jarvis Street as a Garden Street
- 4 *Parliament Street*
Create North 'Ravine Portal' Greenway
Create Centre 'Local Street' with Lane Reductions
Create South 'Waterfront Portal' Parkland
- 5 *College-Carleton-Gerrard Corridor*
Implement Cycling and 'Green Street' Improvements
- 6 *Bloor Street*
Revitalize Bloor West, Centre and East Segments
- 7 *Bayview Avenue*
Improve and Connect Active Transportation Modes
Create a Linear Riverside Park Along Bayview Ave
- 8 *Front Street*
Implement Union Station Pedestrian Improvements
Create East and West 'Park Bookends'
- 9 *Spadina Avenue*
Implement North and South Pedestrian Improvements
- 10 *Yonge Street Cultural Corridor*
Revitalize Yonge Street as a Pedestrian Priority Street
- 11 *Queen Street*
Revitalize Queen Street in the Civic Precinct
Investigate Future Pilot Opportunities
- 12 *Queens Quay*
Extend Revitalization to Eastern Waterfront





Map showing proposed initiatives for the Great Streets, Toronto, Canada

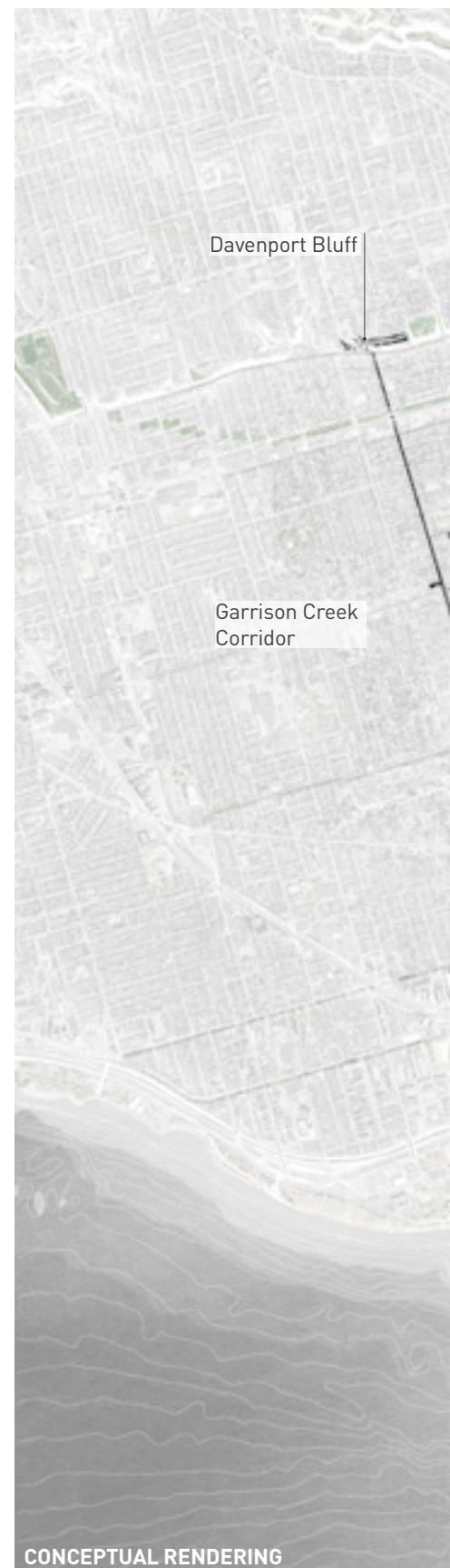
Implement absorptive landscape infrastructure corridors. Absorptive corridors adapt existing streetscapes and adjacent parks and open spaces to serve blue and green infrastructure systems, to enhance the resilience of the Downtown in the 21st century.

PROPOSED ABSORPTIVE LANDSCAPE CORRIDORS

- 1 *Shaw Street*
Shaw Street Greenway
Christie Pits Park and Bickford Park
Trinity Bellwoods Park
Stanley Park and Stanley Park Extension
- 2 *University Avenue*
University of Toronto and Queen's Park Precinct
University Avenue Linear Park and Gardens
University Avenue at Front Street Traffic Island
Conversion to Parkland
York Quay and Central Waterfront
- 3 *Parliament Street*
North 'Ravine Portal' Greenway
Centre 'Local Street' with Lane Reductions
South 'Waterfront Portal' Parkland at First
Parliament Site and Eastern Waterfront
- 4 *Bayview Avenue*
Don River Valley Park
Riverdale Park
Don River Trail
Corktown Common / Flood Protection Landform
Lower Don Lands and Bayview South Greenway
Cherry Beach



Rue Casimir Périer collects and infiltrates stormwater, utilizing water as a framework for a new type of street, Lyon, France





Map showing proposed corridors for investment in absorptive landscape infrastructure, Toronto, Canada

University Avenue



University Avenue is one of Toronto's most iconic 'designed' landscapes, yet one which is considerably underperforming as a successful public space.

University Avenue is a primary civic spine in Toronto, first designed in 1829 as a tree-lined promenade by landscape gardener André Parmentier, who planted 500 horse-chestnut trees along the Avenue. By 1947, increasing volumes of automobile traffic led to the consolidation of University Avenue and what was then Park Lane into one broad street. This resulted in a significant re-alignment of the median (and civic artworks and memorials) between the two original streets, resulting in a shift of the central axis off the centreline of the Legislative Assembly, and the removal of the original trees.

In the early 1960s, when the construction of the subway was complete, the landscape architecture firm Dunington-Grubb & Stensson was commissioned

to design the central medians of University Avenue. The design has been described as one of the most significant – and overlooked – modernist works of civic landscape architecture in Toronto. Yet as architect and urbanist Jan Gehl notes, modernist landscapes are often designed as forms first, then as spaces for humans to occupy second. Today, University Avenue's iconic yet isolated garden islands attract remarkably few visitors in the heart of a densifying Downtown.

As the Downtown evolves in the 21st century, how can the iconic landscape of University Avenue be respectfully honoured, adapted and re-invigorated as an outstanding civic place and connector?

(opposite) Elegant, yet isolated: Today, University Avenue survives as a classic piece of modern landscape design, yet attracts remarkably few visitors into the heart of its garden rooms, Toronto, Canada



Looking north along University Avenue and Park Lane, from the Canada Life Building, 1930, Toronto, Canada



Sketch of the proposed design for University Avenue, by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, 1949, Toronto, Canada



University Avenue's iconic boulevard offers a unique opportunity to re-imagine and enhance both the civic function of the street as well as its value for daily use as a park and public open space.



University Avenue, Proposed Re-configuration at Queen Street

University Avenue is the Downtown's most significant ceremonial street linking the Ontario Legislature located in the Queen's Park Precinct to Lake Ontario. It is lined with many of Toronto's most important institutions including the cluster of hospitals in the Health Sciences

District and Osgoode Hall and the new Court House in the Civic Precinct. Its iconic boulevard offers a unique opportunity to re-imagine and enhance both the civic function of the street as well as its value for daily use as a park and public space. Re-imagine University Avenue



Water Mirror by Michel Corajoud, a model for the fog-water feature at University Avenue and Queen Street, Bordeaux, France



Place de la République's re-design creates an open space with multiple uses; the elimination of the traffic circle frees the site from the constraint of motor vehicles, Paris, France



to transform the 3.0-acre landscaped traffic median into an 8.9-acre fully accessible linear park that connects the Civic Precinct with the Queen's Park Precinct. The vision honours and adapts the 1960s modernist gardens by Dunington-Grubb & Stensson, re-interpreting their

forms and maintaining the diversity of tree species. The Queen Street entrance is imagined as a garden gateway to the Avenue with a re-designed fog-water feature, creating a civic destination and gathering space to anchor the Civic District.

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

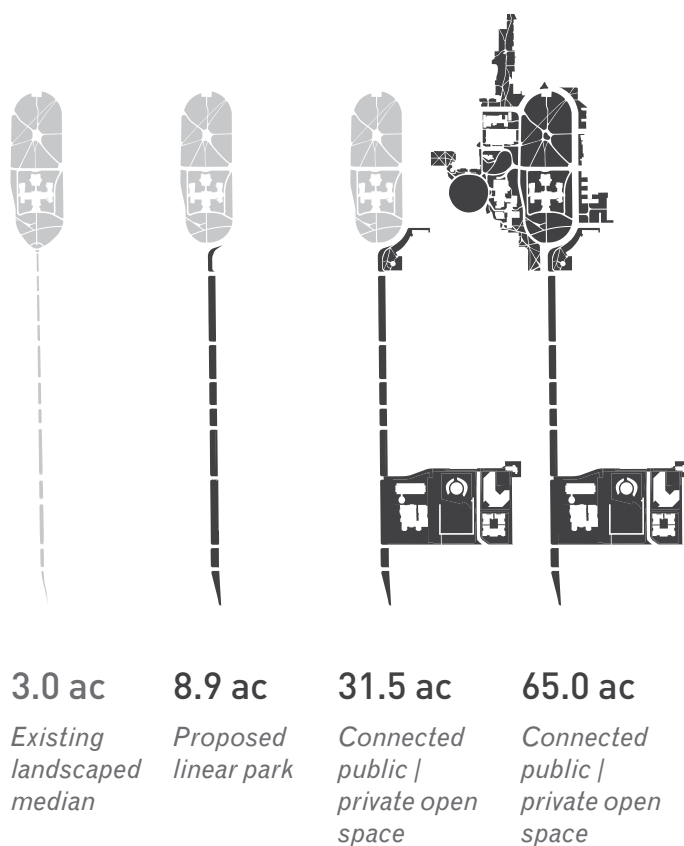


University Avenue, Proposed Re-configuration at Orde Street

A counterpart to the Queen Street garden entrance, University Avenue’s northern gateway is also re-imagined as an interactive public garden that expands the urban forest experience of Queen’s Park into the Avenue. On the western edge, the vision maintains

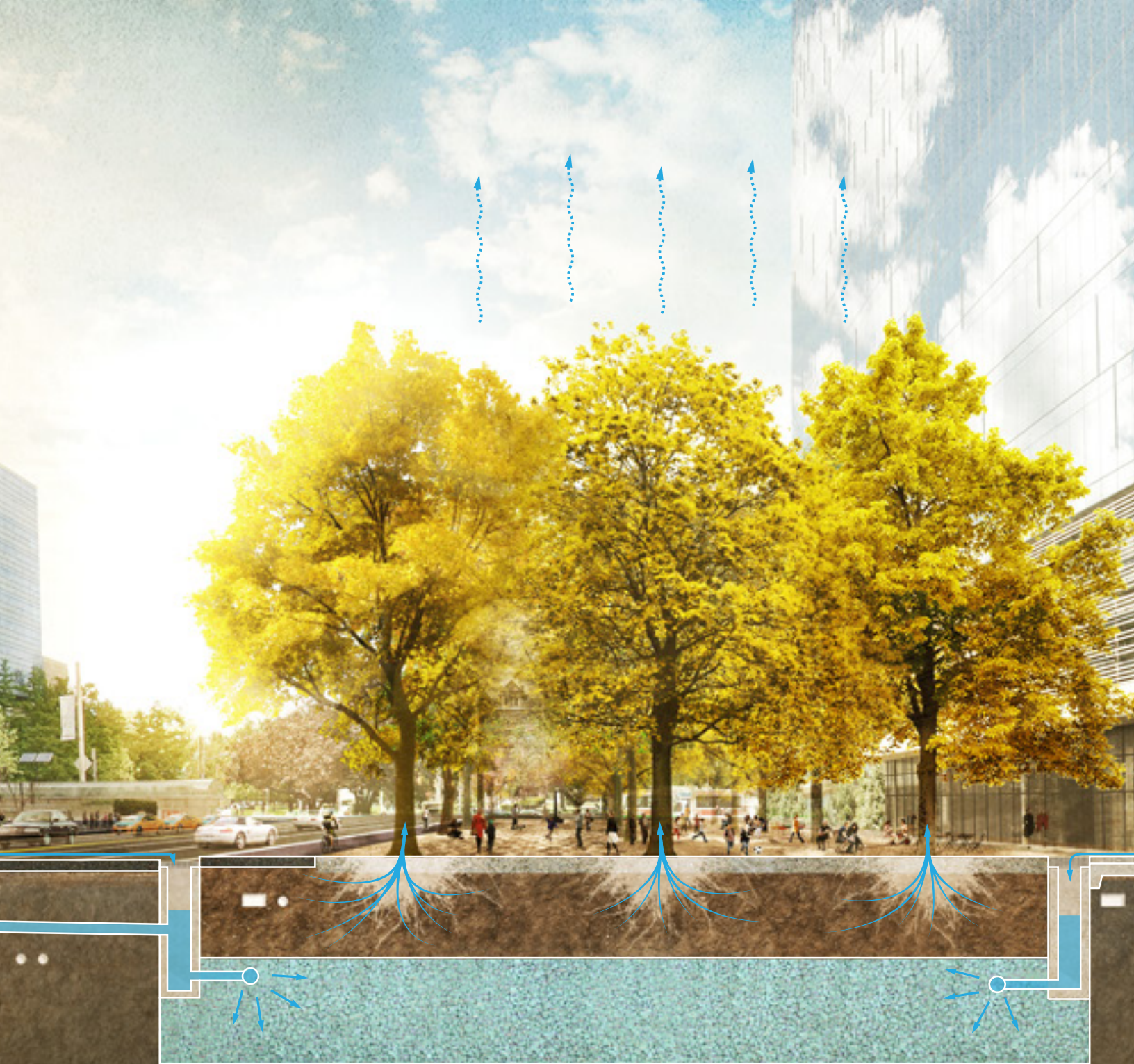
the towering maple trees from Dunington-Grubb & Stensson’s northern gardens, and add new tree rows on the eastern edge. On the eastern edge, the new linear park is integrated with existing civic spaces and the forecourts of institutions to maximize public space

(right) Jardin du Luxembourg is a model for University Avenue, providing a large-scale landscape experience and urban resource, available and adaptable for multiple urban uses, Paris, France



and provide a generous pedestrian realm. Within this public realm is the opportunity to re-locate the existing memorials, improving their access and prominence. Between the Avenue's north and south garden gateways, a vast treed grove provides an immense open

space with multiple urban uses and introduces a cycling facility linking the Civic Precinct with the Queen's Park Precinct. Imagine University Avenue as a civic place and connector, providing a setting for civic events as well as a place for day to day uses for residents and workers.



University Avenue – Absorptive Landscape Infrastructure Corridor

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

(right) Jardin des Tuileries is a landmark and epicentre for French culture, connecting from the Louvre in the east to the Champs-Élysées in the west; Parisians of all classes and cultures use the garden as a place to meet, eat lunch, and socialize, Paris, France



Goals

University Avenue's iconic boulevard offers a unique opportunity to re-imagine and enhance both the civic function of the street as well as its value for daily use as a park and public open space.

- Utilize the scale of University Avenue to optimize and enhance the park, open space, pedestrian and cycling potential.
- Enhance and expand the pedestrian realm within a park setting.
- Connect the Civic Precinct and Queen's Park Precinct with a linear park.
- Create north-south garden areas on the Avenue at College Street and Adelaide Street.
- Integrate open spaces adjacent to the street, including the existing civic spaces and forecourts of institutions.
- Provide a setting for civic events including parades, festivals and protests as well as create places for day to day use for residents and workers.
- Provide a dedicated cycling facility and provide bicycle parking where appropriate.
- Improve access to and prominence of memorials.
- Honour and adapt the heritage landscapes of landscape architects Dunnington-Grubb & Stenson and landscape gardener André Parmentier.
- Use trees and plantings to enhance the identity of the street in all seasons.
- Create conditions that will support the growth of large growing shade trees and support a healthy tree canopy.

Actions

- Phase 1: Feasibility Analysis
 - Undertake a preliminary engineering and costing study to determine the feasibility of the project including the consideration of options.
 - Update cultural and heritage assessments.
 - Conduct technical feasibility review in partnership with the TTC and other agencies.
 - Undertake stakeholder and public consultation.
 - Report to Council.
- Phase 2: Environmental Assessment
 - Undertake an Environmental Assessment (EA).

King Street

Re-imagine King Street and enhance its economic vitality by improving the efficiency and reliability of streetcar service and enhancing the public realm to create a significant pedestrian destination.



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Conceptual Rendering of King Street Pilot Public Realm Transformation

The King Street pilot re-balances the street to better accommodate pedestrians, cyclists and transit users, with a focus on public life. The pilot is a catalyst for a permanent transformation of the street into an identifiable civic place and connector. At the

commencement of the pilot, the 504 King Street streetcar had the highest streetcar ridership numbers in the city, upwards of 65,000 riders per day. With this volume of riders comes a need to expand and improve the public realm. The King Street vision re-imagines transit stops

(right) The transformation of Broadway Boulevard re-balanced the street to create more space for pedestrian plazas and on-street furniture, New York City, United States



Swanston Street offers a vibrant, safe, transit-, cycling-, pedestrian- and business-friendly street, fully integrated with adjacent parks and open spaces, Melbourne, Australia

and improves the streetscape by creating more space for walking, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping. It creates a unified streetscape that responds to King Street's distinct neighbourhood characters, improving the pedestrian realm and cycling

experience of the corridor. It activates the already rich, existing network of intimate, mid-block laneways and courtyard spaces, and leverages street-side open spaces and sidewalks to provide places for people to gather and linger along this highly-used street.



Swanston Street's transformation blends seamlessly with adjacent parks and open spaces; showing the public lawn at the State Library of Victoria, Swanston Street, Melbourne, Australia

The St James Park segment of King Street, between Church Street and Jarvis Street, offers the opportunity to create a park-like experience on King Street itself. This segment can provide an exceptional public life experience, since there are few vehicular access points

on this block. This opens up the potential to provide great transit, plus broaden the edges of St James Park to extend the public life experience of the park into the curbside lanes of King Street to connect via Market Lane Park to St Lawrence Market.

(right) Extend the park experience of St James Park into King Street by integrating park features into the curbside lanes of the street, showing Hammock Grove, Governor's Island, New York, United States



Goals

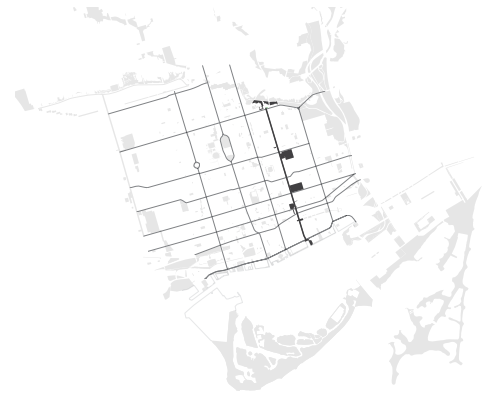
Re-imagine King Street and enhance its economic vitality by improving the efficiency and reliability of streetcar service and enhancing the public realm to create a significant pedestrian destination.

- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Create a unified streetscape that responds to and enhances King Street's distinct neighbourhood character.
- Expand the pedestrian realm and create a seamless connection between the major parks and open spaces along the corridor.
- Improve the cycling experience and provide additional bicycle parking.

Actions

- Phase 1: Pilot Project (underway)
 - Continue to monitor the King Street pilot (transit efficiency, pedestrian and cycling counts and economic point-of-sale data).
 - Fine tune as appropriate the design of the King Street pilot.
 - Initiate a design competition to re-imagine public spaces along the corridor.
 - Partner with communities, stakeholders and the design industry to activate and transform the King Street public realm.
- Phase 2: Permanent Design
 - Implement a permanent design for King Street, responding to the lessons from the pilot, its monitoring, the goals for the street and ongoing public outreach.

Jarvis Street Garden Street



Once a grand and elegant tree-lined promenade, Jarvis Street today is a wide, multi-laned arterial roadway, widened in 1947 in response to increasing volumes of automobile traffic. Many of the original trees were removed at this time.

Despite its re-configuration, Jarvis Street remains an important civic spine in Toronto. It has been recognized as a 'Cultural Corridor' for the city (Toronto's Urban Waterfront: Waterfront Culture and Heritage Infrastructure Plan, 2001) – a major north-south street that connects the city's cultural resources to the waterfront. It connects a string of significant heritage structures and public places, including Allan Gardens, Moss Park, St James Park, St Lawrence Hall and Market, and the Redpath Sugar Refinery and Sugar Beach. Many of the original, stone-walled garden setbacks remain, and host remnant heritage trees that hint at what the street used to be. The 2001 report, "Market Research / Financial Viability Study for Allan Gardens,"

recommended that "the evolution of Jarvis Street into a 'Grand Allee' should be recognized." This notion was reinforced in the 2017 report, "Allan Gardens Refresh," produced by the Friends of Allan Gardens (FOAG).

As Downtown Toronto evolves in the 21st century, Jarvis Street will come under increasing pressure as a central spine for some of Toronto's fastest growing neighbourhoods, including the Yonge-Church corridor, Moss Park, Corktown and St Lawrence. How can Jarvis Street's heritage and context be honoured and re-invigorated to position the street as an identifiable civic place and connector for the city?

(opposite) Today, Jarvis Street connects a string of significant heritage structures and public places; yet offers a poor experience for pedestrians and cyclists, Toronto, Canada



Jarvis Street, 1903



Jarvis Street, 1960



THANK YOU FOR
GIVING COMPASSION
A NEW HOME

Jarvis

Re-establish Jarvis Street as a grand tree-lined promenade that supports civic life, celebrate its significant heritage structures and connect its significant public parks.



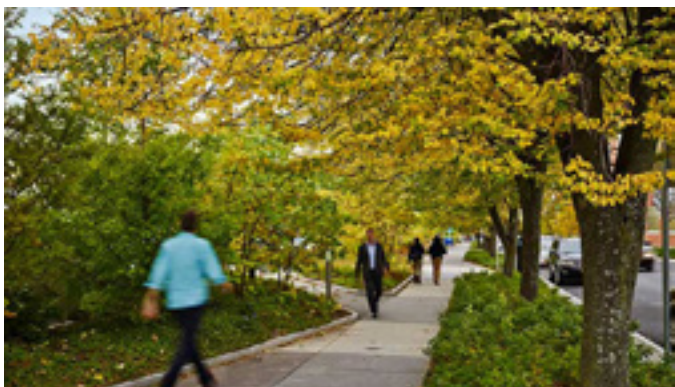
Jarvis Street Garden Street, showing lane reduction on Jarvis Street – from five lanes to four lanes – to increase space for pedestrians, including minimum 2.1m pedestrian clearways, Proposed Concept

Enhance Jarvis Street’s ‘Garden Street’ character by implementing a minimum 6.0-metre green setback on the street’s east and west edges, creating a green spine for the Garden District from the Rosedale Valley Ravine to Toronto Bay. By leveraging Jarvis Street’s heritage

and enhancing its role as a Cultural Corridor, the street is re-balanced as an identifiable civic place and connector. Blend the edges of the street with adjacent parks and open spaces, such as Jarvis Terrace at Allan Gardens, to assemble and connect the public realm.

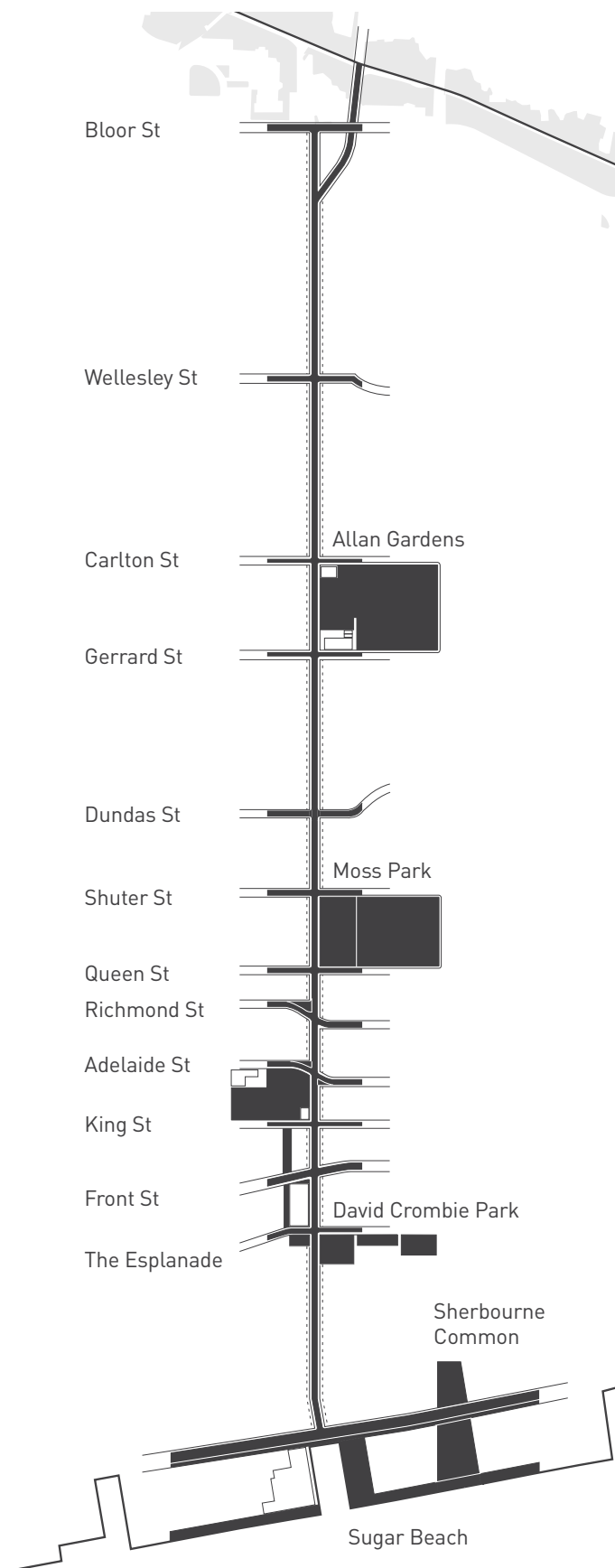


A model for Jarvis Street, Karl Johans Gate's expanded streetside pedestrian areas, gardens and large-canopy tree rows create a strong lush green facade for the street, Oslo, Norway



BNMC-Ellicott Park, a streetscape designed to achieve an immersive horticultural experience, Buffalo, United States

Create conditions that will support the growth of large-growing shade trees and support a healthy tree canopy on both sides of the street, including investing in tree planting infrastructure, bio-retention planting beds and an enhanced maintenance program.

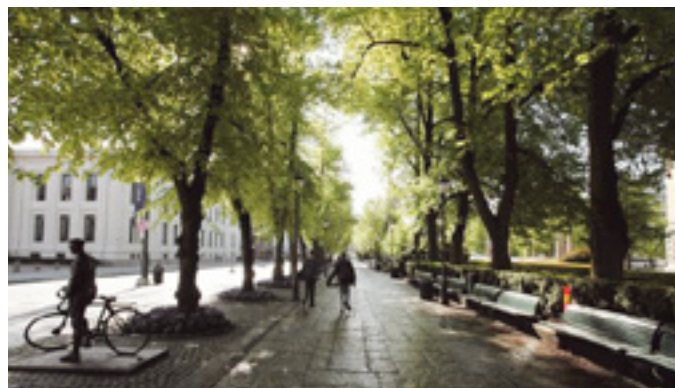


Jarvis Street Garden Street, Framework Plan



Jarvis Street Garden Street, Proposed Concept

(right) A model for Jarvis Street, Karl Johans Gate's expanded streetside pedestrian areas, gardens and large-canopy tree rows create a strong lush green facade for the street, Oslo, Norway



Goals

Re-establish Jarvis Street as a grand tree-lined promenade that supports civic life, celebrate its significant heritage structures and connect its significant public parks.

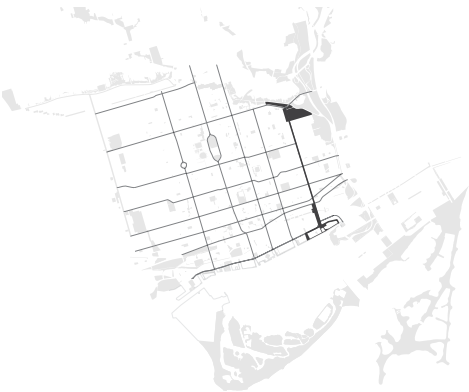
- Enhance its role as a Cultural Corridor by improving the setting for existing and future cultural resources and enhancing connections between them.
- Improve connections for pedestrians between the Rosedale Valley Ravine and Toronto Bay.
- Improve connections between streets and the edges of the significant parks and open spaces along the street including Allan Gardens, Moss Park and St. James Park.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Create conditions that will support the growth of large-growing shade trees and support a healthy tree canopy on both sides of the street.

Actions

- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, explore opportunities to redesign and widen the pedestrian realm and to provide space and conditions that can support the growth of healthy shade trees on both sides of the street.
- Establish tree planting with a consistent form, structure and scale and maintenance program to ensure ongoing health and vitality.
- Represent a variety of tree species through carefully curated planting design.
- Investigate moving utilities underground.

Parliament Street

Revitalize Parliament Street to enhance its civic role connecting the diverse neighbourhoods along Parliament Street with both the Rosedale Valley Ravine and Toronto Bay.



Parliament Street – North – ‘Ravine Portal’, Proposed Concept

In this vision, three distinct character segments are highlighted and leveraged: a ravine portal in the north, a local street in the centre, and a waterfront portal in the south. Re-balancing and re-configuring the street provides an improved pedestrian realm and offers the

opportunity to create social gathering spaces and grow a healthy street tree canopy. Aligned with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, this vision explores an enhanced north-south surface transit connection that potentially re-establishes streetcar service on Parliament Street.



Rosedale Valley Ravine's immersive tree canopy offers inspiration for Parliament Street North's 'ravine portal' greenway, Toronto, Canada

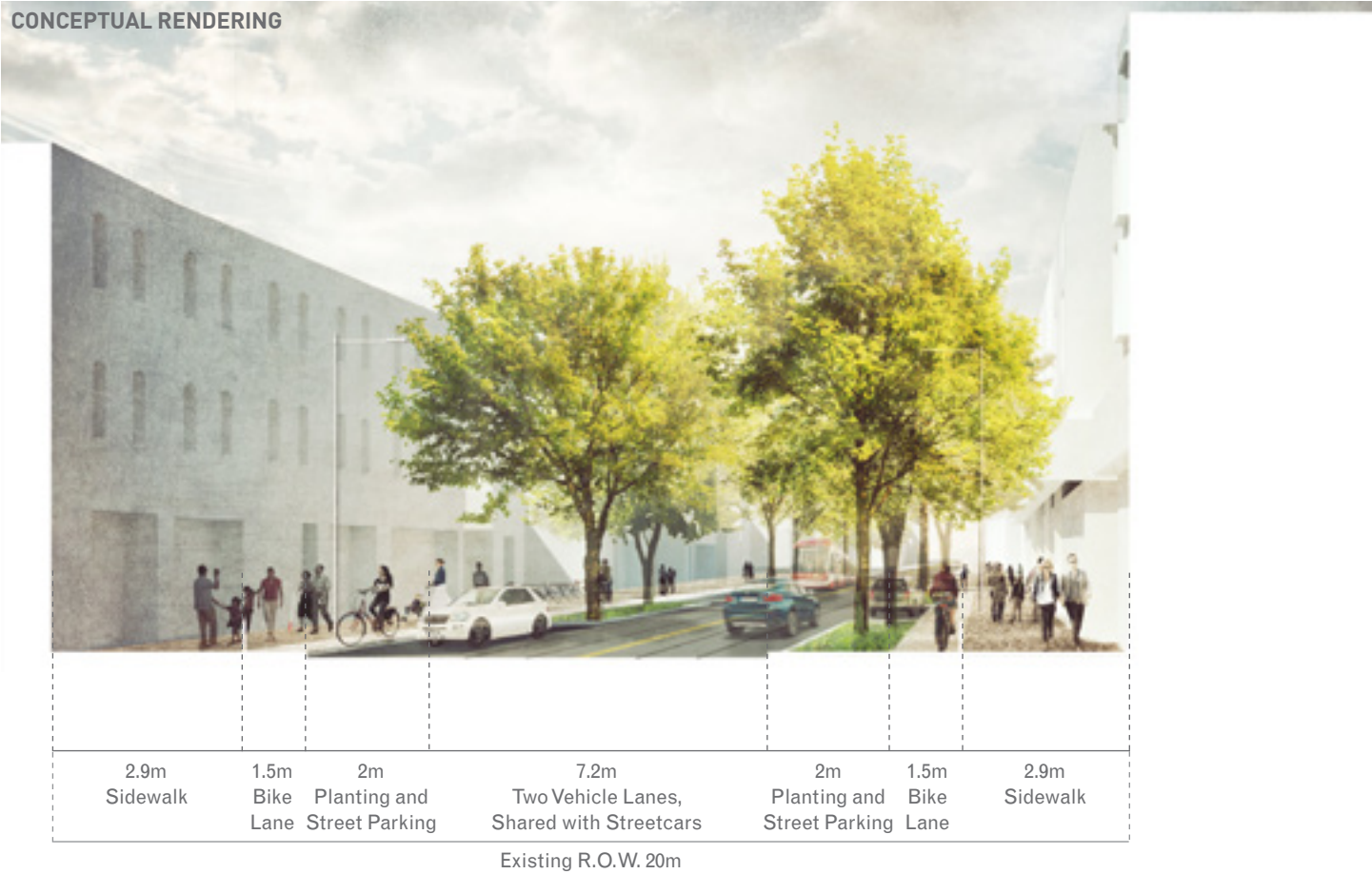


Commonwealth Avenue Mall, a model for Parliament Street North's 'ravine portal' greenway, Boston, United States

Parliament Street North, the ravine portal, utilizes existing building setbacks to create a 7.0-metre wide greenway on Parliament Street's western edge, with wide pedestrian clearways and a new cycling facility connecting Wellesley Street to Bloor Street.



Parliament Street, Framework Plan



Parliament Street – Centre – ‘Local Street’, Proposed Concept

Between Wellesley and Front Street, Parliament Street becomes a street with a residential and retail-based character. The vision for Parliament Street Centre recognizes it as a Priority Retail Street with high pedestrian volumes and enhances the existing ‘local

street’ configuration. Improvements should focus on expanding sidewalks, planting large-canopy street trees, and providing cycling facilities that link Parliament Street North to the Richmond-Adelaide cycle tracks and, via Cherry Street or Sherbourne Street, to the waterfront.



(right) A model for Parliament Street South, the design of Place D'Youville uses lush greenery and historic materials and textures to create a restive atmosphere and civic corridor leading to the waterfront, Montreal, Canada



Parliament Street – South – 'Waterfront Portal', looking south from the First Parliament site*, Proposed Concept

Parliament Street South is re-imagined as a green 'waterfront portal' – the counterpart to Parliament Street North's ravine portal. Recognize Parliament Street South as a connector from the original shoreline of Lake Ontario at Front Street to the contemporary waterfront,

integrating the First Parliament site, Parliament Square Park and David Crombie Park into a cohesive public realm system and creating a clear connection to the eastern waterfront for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Design of the Toronto Public Library, interpretive centre, and public park at the First Parliament site to be determined through a Master Plan exercise*



Parliament Street – Absorptive Landscape Infrastructure Corridor

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

(right) Rue Casimir Périer collects and infiltrates stormwater and creates a green connection to the Saone River parks and open space system, Lyon, France



Goals

- Recognize and enhance the distinct character of north, central and south sections of Parliament.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, explore enhanced north-south surface transit with the potential to re-establish streetcar service on Parliament Street.
- At the north section (Bloor to Wellesley):
 - Improve connection of Parliament Street to the Rosedale Valley ravine, creating a greenway and ravine portal;
 - Provide a safe cycling route from Bloor to Wellesley; and
 - Use existing building setbacks on west side for generous tree planting, minimum pedestrian clearways for universal accessibility and an enhanced pedestrian realm.
- At the central and south section (Wellesley to Queens Quay):
 - Recognize the retail character and high pedestrian volumes of the street by widening sidewalks.
- At the south section (Front to waterfront):
 - Recognize the role Parliament Street plays in connecting the First Parliament site, Parliament Square Park / David Crombie Park, the Distillery District and the waterfront and design the street to complement and enhance the park experience for pedestrians and cyclists.

Actions

- Secure identified setbacks to realize minimum pedestrian clearways and enhanced planting, including the west-side greenway on Parliament North (Bloor to Wellesley).
- Secure identified parkland on Parliament Street south (Front to waterfront).
- In coordination with Mobility Strategy, explore opportunity for re-balancing the Parliament right-of-way to maximize pedestrian space and improve public transit.
- In coordination with the actions for Bloor Street, undertake a feasibility study for ravine portal / lookout and the creation of a significant public space adjacent to the Bloor-Parliament intersection.
- In coordination with actions for the Shoreline Stitch, improve the pedestrian experience from First Parliament site to the waterfront and create a significant public space where Parliament Street meets the shoreline.

College-Carlton-Gerrard Corridor



Gerrard Street East at Regent Park offers the opportunity to realize a protected cycle facility on the south side, connecting future Parliament Street bike lanes to the Don River Trail via a new accessible connection on River Street, Proposed Concept

Recreate Carlton-College Street as a significant east-west corridor supporting economic vitality through improved streetcar service and public realm improvements. Create a variety of streetscapes that are destinations and that respond to the distinct

neighbourhood characters while unifying the street. Where streets frame significant parks and open spaces including Queen’s Park, Allan Gardens and Riverdale Park, explore opportunities to enhance park edges, park entrances and surrounding streetscapes.

Passeig De St Joan Boulevard maintains heritage trees and adds new tree rows, widens pedestrian promenades and gathering spaces, and provides separated bicycle lanes; a 'Green Street' model for the College-Carlton-Gerrard Corridor, Barcelona, Spain



Goals

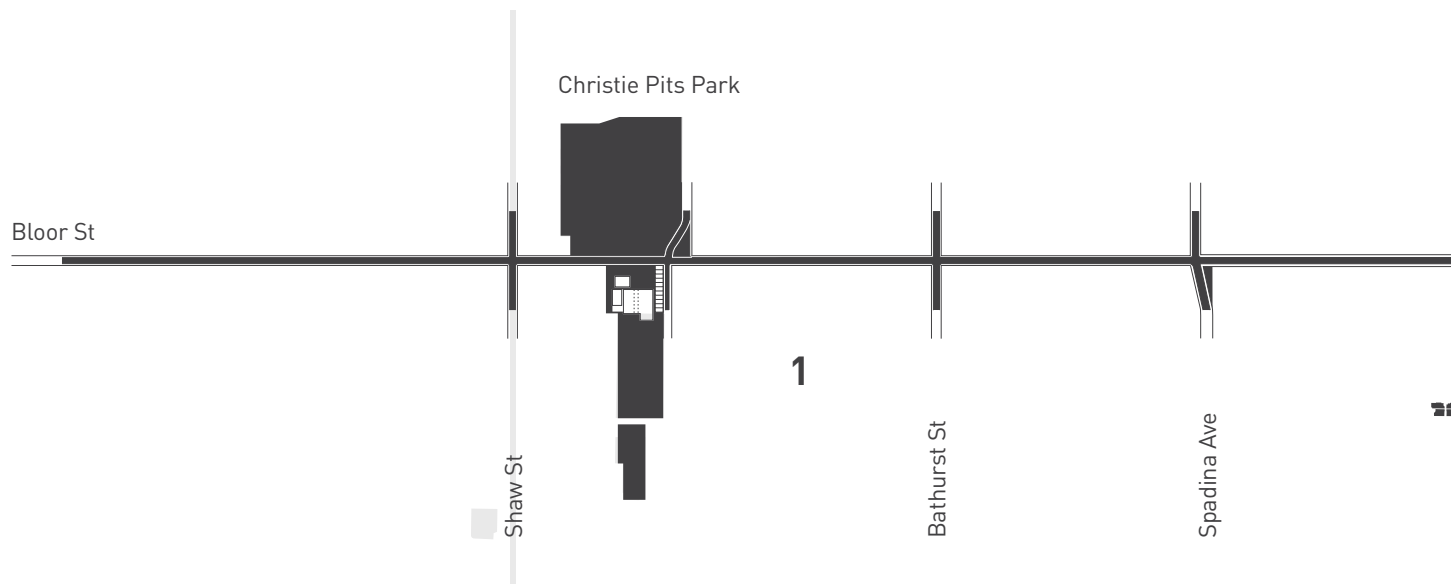
Recreate Carlton-College Street as a significant east-west corridor supporting economic vitality through improved streetcar service and public realm improvements.

- Increase and enhance the public realm to create a significant pedestrian destination for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Create streetscapes that respond to College-Carlton Street's distinct neighbourhood characters while acknowledging the role of streetscape design to unify the corridor and create identifiable neighbourhoods.
- Re-establish College Street between Spadina and Elizabeth Street at the south end of University of Toronto and Queen's Park as a grand promenade that supports civic life and celebrates the significant heritage structures, institutions and public spaces.
- Expand the space where feasible for healthy tree growth.
- Improve the cycling experience and provide bicycle parking.
- Improve connections between street edges and significant parks and open spaces along the corridor including Queen's Park, Allan Gardens, Riverdale Park and the Don Valley.
- Enhance entrances to Allan Gardens.

Actions

- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, explore opportunity for re-balancing the Carleton-College right-of-way to increase pedestrian space, improve cycling facilities and improve public transit and transit stops.
- Enhance park edges and surrounding streetscapes by investing in tree planting infrastructure and an enhanced maintenance program.

Bloor Street



Recognize the significant public realm improvements along Bloor Street and extend and enhance the streetscape to highlight Bloor Street as north Downtown's most significant east-west street, connecting the University of Toronto to Rosedale Ravine, and the Don River Valley at Castle Frank.

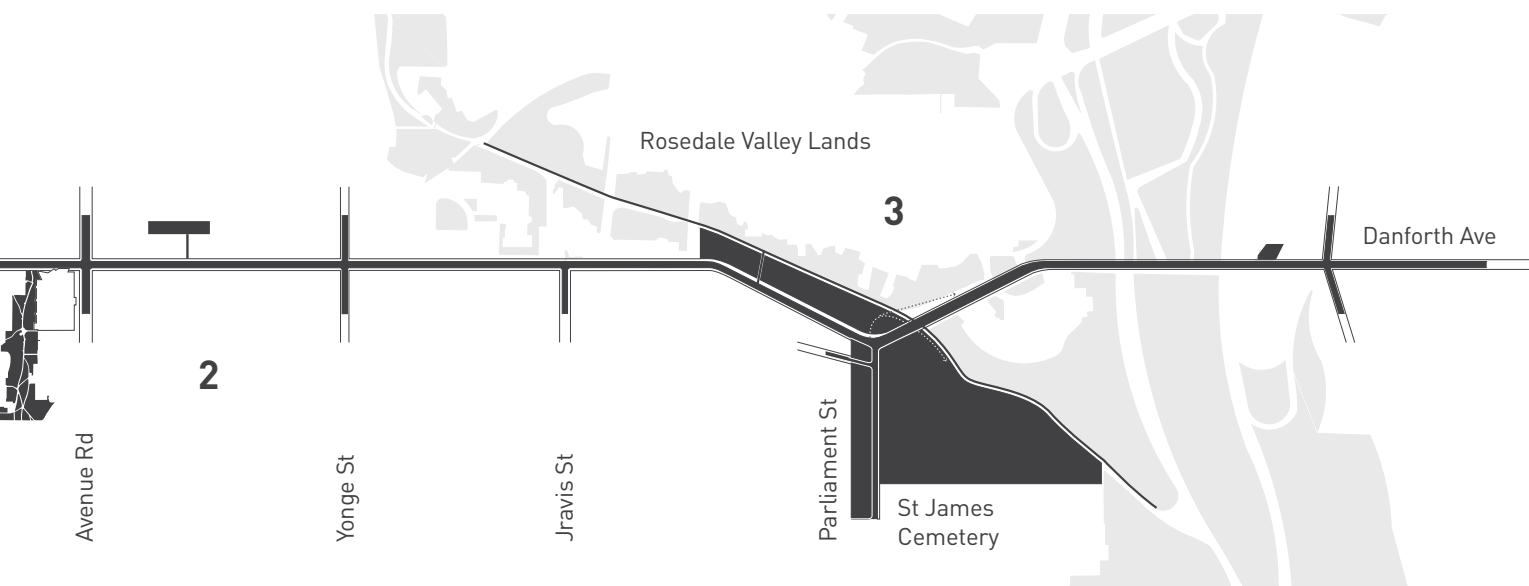
The vision for Bloor Street recognizes the three established character districts of Bloor Street West, Central and East as the organizing structure of this primary civic spine.



1. Bloor Street West – Permanent Protected Cycling and Enhanced Public Realm

In the west, improve the now-permanent cycling infrastructure, and provide an enhanced pedestrian realm with amenities such as seating and large-canopy street tree planting where feasible.

(right) A model for the Bloor Street East 'ravine portal' overlook and access passage, Alexandra Arch and Forest Walk introduces lookouts and a gradual passage from the city to the wilderness, Telok Blangah Hill Park, Singapore



2. Bloor Street Centre – Streetscape Revitalization

In the centre, explore adding protected cycling facilities to the granite streetscape, and provide a generous and enhanced pedestrian realm that reflects the institutional and residential characters with street tree planting and landscaping in open planters where feasible.



3. Bloor Street East – Potential 'Ravine Portal' Overlook and Access Passage at Parliament Street

At the ravine, celebrate and amplify the ravine with an overlook and access passage into the Rosedale Valley. Provide an enhanced pedestrian realm and intensive landscaping that responds to adjacent parks and open spaces.



Bloor Street East – Potential 'Ravine Portal' Overlook and Access Passage to the Rosedale Valley and Don River Valley Ravine, Toronto, Canada

(right) A model for the Bloor Street East 'ravine portal' overlook and access passage, Boisé de Tequenonday opens a gradual portal for the public to enjoy convenient access to nature, Quebec City, Canada



Goals

Recognize the significant public realm improvements along Bloor Street and extend and enhance the streetscape to highlight Bloor Street as north Downtown's most significant east west street connecting the University of Toronto to Rosedale Ravine, and the Don Valley at Castle Frank.

- Create a unified streetscape while recognizing and enhancing the distinct character areas along Bloor Street.
- Create a continuous protected cycling experience.
- Support economic vitality of the Retail Street.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Improve connections to the Rosedale Valley Ravine and the Don Valley at Castle Frank.
- At the west section (Bathurst to Spadina), provide an enhanced pedestrian realm with amenities such as seating and street tree planting where feasible.
- At the central section (Spadina to Church), provide where feasible a generous and enhanced pedestrian realm that reflects the institutional and residential characters and street tree planting design that is consistent with the current character.
- At the east section (Sherbourne to Castle Frank), provide an enhanced pedestrian realm and a seamless connection through landscaping that responds to adjacent parks, ravines and open spaces such as church yards, forecourts and the Rosedale Valley Ravine and Don Valley.

Actions

- Implement a permanent design for the Bike Pilot on Bloor Street West.
- Assess opportunities to potentially extend cycling infrastructure east and west of the Bloor Street Bike Pilot area.
- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, investigate options for cycling facilities on Bloor Street between Avenue Road and Sherbourne Street.
- Investigate a ravine 'overlook' and access passage to Rosedale Valley Ravine from Bloor Street East.

Bayview Avenue



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Bayview Avenue, looking north to Evergreen Brickworks, showing potential improved edge condition and access to the future Don River Valley Park with re-purposed space on Bayview Avenue and a re-aligned or elevated rail corridor, Proposed Concept

Recreate Bayview Avenue to enhance its Scenic Street character, reinforcing its riverside location and the spacious nature of the Don Valley and enhancing the experience of the surrounding natural environment and ravine landscape for all modes of travel including

where feasible pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles. Re-harmonize Bayview Avenue's relationship to the ravine landscape by prioritizing the health of the ravine's ecological systems and providing protected active transportation infrastructure along the corridor.

(right) Stanley Park Drive is a model for a scenic landscape experience along a roadway that provides safe, separated travel space for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, Vancouver, Canada



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Don River Valley Park

When track rehabilitation occurs, work with Metrolinx to consolidate parkland and maximize the opportunity to create more space for pedestrians and cyclists and improve access to the future Don River Valley Park. Explore opportunities to create a linear riverside park

and promenade along the length of Bayview Avenue. Between Bloor Street East and Eastern Avenue, consider opportunities to leverage bridges as access points and expand the ravine experience with strategic connections between the city and the river valley.



Bayview Avenue, looking north to Evergreen Brickworks, showing potential improved edge condition and access to the future Don River Valley Park with re-purposed space on Bayview Avenue and a re-aligned or elevated rail corridor, Proposed Concept

(right) Allegheny Riverfront Park seeks every opportunity to create an experientially rich pathway from an urban upper level down to a lower level park at the river's edge, Pittsburgh, United States



Goals

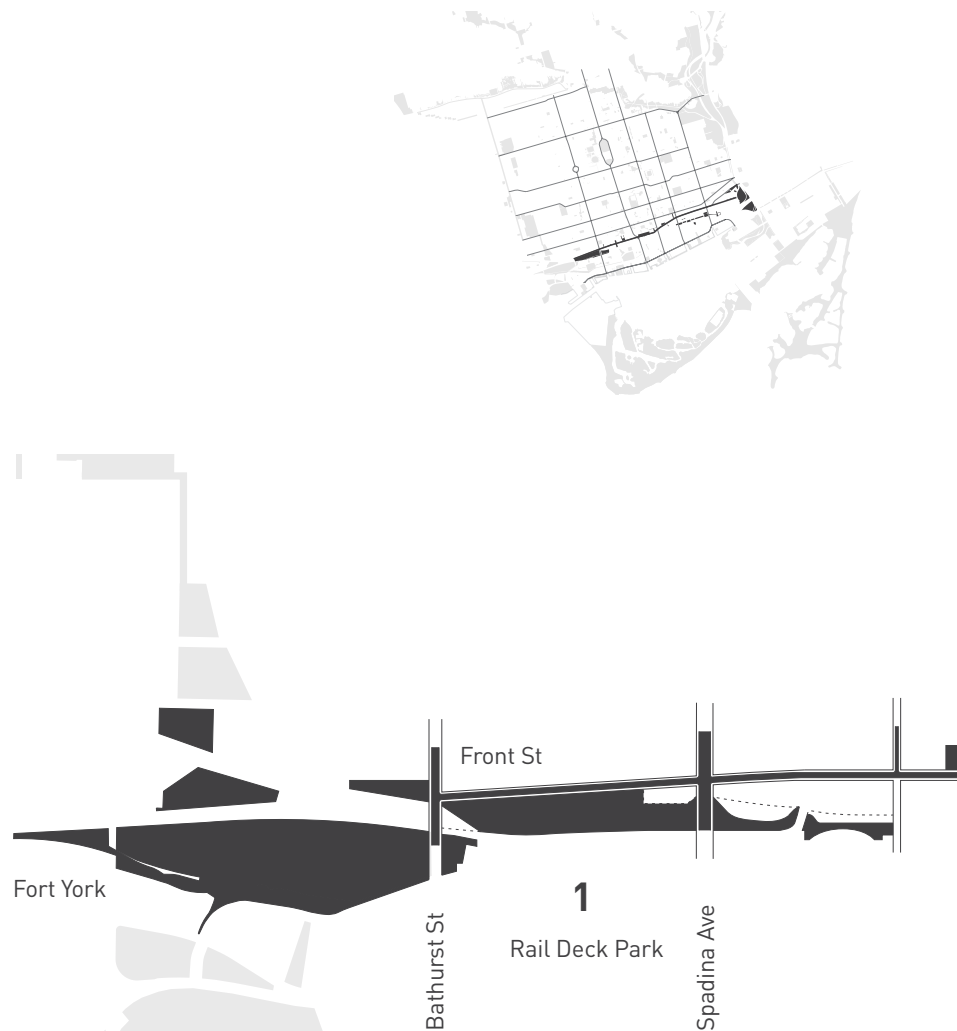
Recreate Bayview Avenue to enhance its Scenic Street character, reinforcing its riverside location and the spacious nature of the Don Valley and enhancing the experience of the surrounding natural environment and ravine landscape for all modes of travel including where feasible pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles.

- Improve conditions and connections for pedestrians and cyclists with improved and/or protected infrastructure where appropriate.
- Explore opportunities to maximize the park experience and to transform Bayview Avenue into a Scenic Street.
- Improve access to Bayview Avenue from ravines, portal parks and other open spaces including Riverdale Park, St. James Cemetery, the historic Winchester Street right-of-way, Castle Frank, the Vale of Avoca and Moore Park Ravine.
- Preserve, protect and enhance scenic views and vistas.
- Design in a resilient manner to respond to fluctuations in the water level in the Don Valley.

Actions

- Undertake a Functional Design Study for Bayview Avenue with an emphasis on pedestrian safety and connectivity.
- Improve Bayview Avenue's relationship with adjacent connecting streets including Front Street, River Street, Bloor Street through the ramps, Rosedale Valley Road and Pottery Road.
- Explore opportunities to develop connections from bridges at Gerrard and Dundas Street.
- North of Gerrard Street, study enhanced sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure.
- Remove fences along Bayview Avenue where not necessary for safety at Riverdale Park and Castle Frank School playing field.
- Explore pedestrian and cycling connections between Rosedale Valley Road and Riverdale Park.
- Celebrate the bridges at Bloor, Gerrard, Dundas and Queen Street and other industrial infrastructure and integrate into the streetscape of Bayview Avenue.
- Enhance planting along Bayview Avenue in consultation with Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division and TRCA.
- Work with Metrolinx to align any future investments in the resiliency of rail corridors within the Don Valley to maximize the opportunity to consolidate parkland and/or to create a linear riverside park along Bayview Avenue.

Front Street



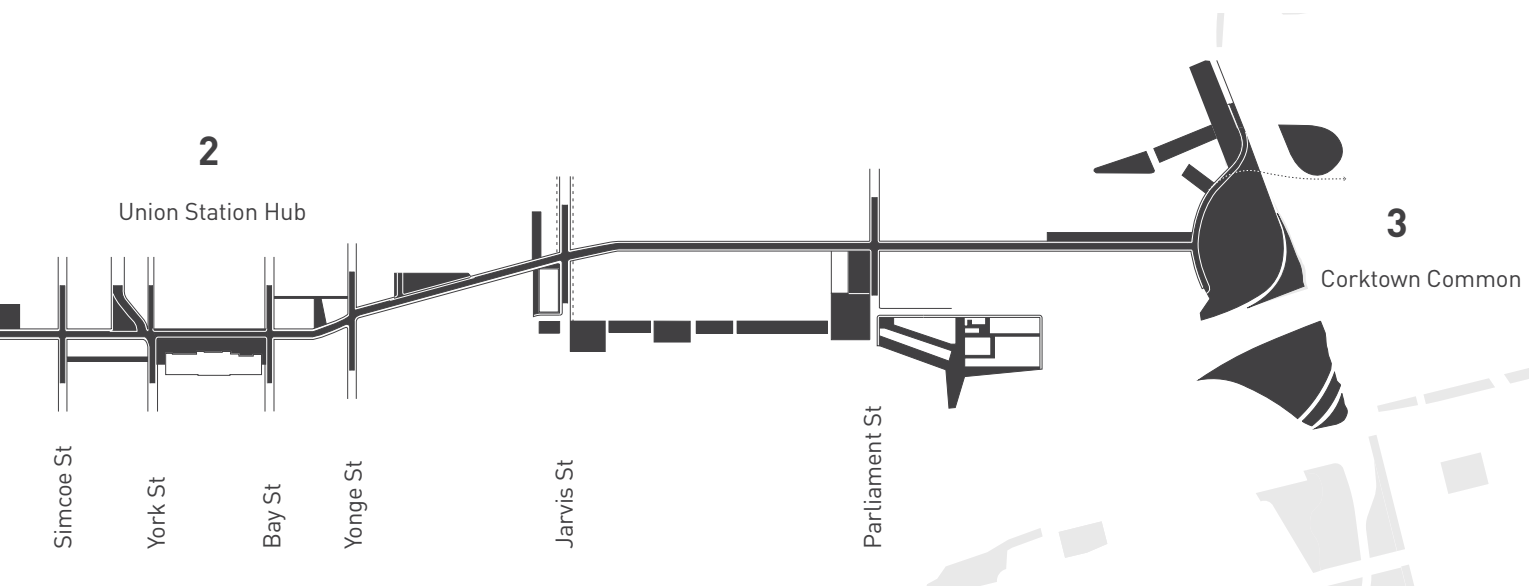
Recognize Front Street as Toronto's first east-west street and enhance its civic role in the Downtown by connecting and creating a setting for significant public parks, public buildings and open spaces including the future Rail Deck Park, Union Station, Old Town of York, St Lawrence Market, the Front Street Promenade in the West Don Lands and Corktown Common. The public realm vision for the original shoreline of Lake Ontario, now Front Street, began in 1793 with John G. Simcoe's vision to preserve the waterfront as a place for the enjoyment of nature and collective gathering, known as the 'Walks and Gardens' plan. Though the plan was eclipsed by the railway in 1853, Front Street today offers the opportunity to restore the vision for a civic spine and connected system of parks and public spaces in the heart of Downtown Toronto.



1. 'West Park Bookend' – Rail Deck Park

Recognize the importance of meeting Front Street with parkland at its eastern and western bookends. Rail Deck Park offers the opportunity to create a signature 'West Park Bookend' for Front Street.

(right) Part of York the capital of Upper Canada on the Bay of Toronto, looking east along the original shoreline of Lake Ontario, now Front Street, by Elizabeth Hale, 1804



2. Centre – Proposed sidewalk widening in the lead up to the Union Station Hub

At the Union Station Hub, prioritize sidewalk widening on Front Street and a shared street on Station Street to improve access to the established series of parks and public spaces in the Union Station district.



3. 'East Park Bookend' – Corktown Common

At the Don River Valley, Front Street is met by a linear park edge in the West Don Lands, leading to its 'East Park Bookend' at Corktown Common.



Front Street 'Walks and Gardens' at Rail Deck Park, Proposed Concept

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

(right) The Front Street 'Walks and Gardens' edge at the future Rail Deck Park should immerse passersby in an abundant garden setting; showing the Monroe Street edge at Lurie Garden, Millennium Park, Chicago, United States



Goals

Recognize Front Street as Toronto's first east-west street and enhance its civic role in the Downtown, by connecting and creating a setting for significant public parks, public buildings and open spaces including future Rail Deck Park, Union Station, Old Town of York, St Lawrence Market, the Front Street Promenade in the West Don Lands and Corktown Common.

- Create a unified streetscape while recognizing and enhancing the distinct character areas along Front Street.
- Recognize Front Street's role as a park connector in its future design and enhancements. From the east (Corktown Common) to the west (Rail Deck Park, Garrison Common and the future park at 28 Bathurst Street).
- Celebrate the existing heritage structures such as Union Station, Royal York Hotel and St Lawrence Market.
- Design where appropriate a seamlessness in the public realm between Front Street and adjacent parks and heritage structures.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Continue to monitor and respond to pedestrian capacity and circulation around Union Station.
- Promote public understanding of the history, evolving nature and character of this significant public street.

Actions

- Continue advancing planning for Rail Deck Park and the new park at 28 Bathurst Street.
- Implement design solutions to enhance the connection between the termini of Front Street and adjacent parks.
- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, explore opportunities to rebalance the Front Street right-of-way to increase pedestrian space, particularly surrounding Union Station.
- Establish a heritage walking route along Front Street.

Spadina Avenue



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

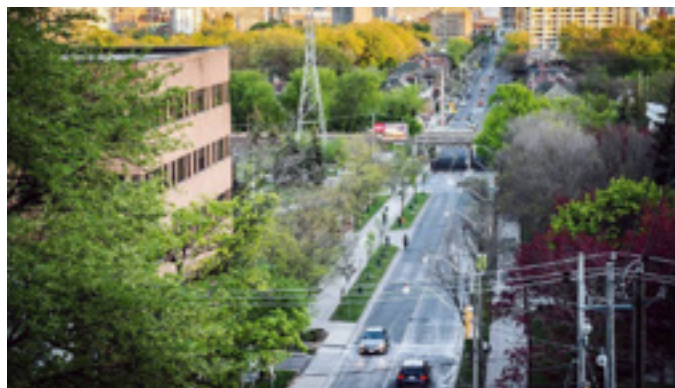


Spadina Terrace: With the new Metrolinx station at the future Rail Deck Park, create a civic gateway at Spadina Avenue and Front Street, complementing Spadina's north anchor at the Baldwin Steps, and central anchor at the Spadina Circle, to create a third signature anchor and gateway at Spadina Avenue South, leading to the waterfront, Toronto, Canada

Recognize the significant investment in transit and public realm on Spadina Avenue. Continue to monitor and improve the pedestrian realm, with a focus on the section of Spadina north of Bloor Street and south of King Street. Explore options to improve pedestrian

crossings and connections on Spadina Avenue South, leading to the waterfront, and in the east-west direction. North of Bloor Street, explore options for re-balancing the right-of-way to increase space for pedestrians and cyclists.

(right) View of Spadina Road / Avenue from the Baldwin Steps at Spadina Park on the Davenport Road Bluff, Toronto, Canada



Goals

Recognize the significant investment in transit and public realm on Spadina Avenue. Continue to monitor and improve the pedestrian realm, with a focus on the section of Spadina north of Bloor Street and south of King Street.

- Support the diversity of the places and neighbourhoods along Spadina Avenue and reflect that diversity in the future improvements to its public realm.
- Improve the east-west pedestrian connections across Spadina Avenue to enhance its granularity.
- Complete the Great Street by improving the pedestrian realm on Spadina Road, north of Bloor and south of King Street West.

Actions

- Explore options to improve pedestrian crossings and connections on Spadina Avenue South, leading to the waterfront and pedestrian crossings in the east-west direction.
- In coordination with Mobility Strategy, explore opportunity for re-balancing Spadina Avenue North and Spadina Road right-of-ways to increase space for pedestrians and cyclists:
 - Monitor all modes of mobility on Spadina.
 - Improve the cycling experience.
- Explore opportunities to improve public space where Spadina Road meets the Lake Iroquois shoreline.

Yonge Street Cultural Corridor



Celebrate Yonge, Toronto, Canada

Re-imagine Yonge Street, Toronto's first north-south street, as a significant civic corridor and retail street joining the Downtown to the Core Circle at Ramsden Park and the Toronto Bay. Yonge Street is Toronto's 'main street' – celebrate the cultural aspects of the

corridor and enhance it as a place for regional festivals and parades as well as a place for day to day use by residents, visitors and workers.

(right) The transformation of Broadway Boulevard re-balanced the street to create more space for pedestrian plazas and on-street furniture, New York City, United States



Goals

Re-imagine Yonge Street, Toronto's first north-south street, as a significant civic corridor and retail street joining Downtown to the Core Circle at Ramsden Park and to Toronto Bay.

- Create a significant pedestrian destination supporting public life and retail vitality.
- Celebrate the cultural aspects of Yonge Street and enhance it as a place for regional festivals and parades as well as a place for day to day use by residents, visitors and workers.
- Design a unified streetscape that responds to the various neighbourhood character areas.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.
- Improve the cycling experience.
- Create a significant public space where Yonge Street meets the shoreline.

Actions

- Advance the Yonge Street Planning Framework and Environmental Assessment (EA) process to implement the future vision for Yonge Street.

Queen Street



A model for Queen Street at Osgoode Hall, the public lawn at the State Library of Victoria provides a place to relax and take in the city along the busy Swanston Street corridor, Melbourne, Australia

Enhance the civic, retail and overall economic role of Queen Street by supporting its retail function and enhancing the public realm. Improve Queen Street's role as a gathering place and connector between important parks and open spaces including Trinity Bellwoods

Park, the civic buildings between Simcoe and Yonge Street, Moss Park and the Don River Valley. In the Civic Precinct, leverage existing open space assets to create a continuous green frontage on Queen Street's north edge, from Campbell House to Old City Hall.

(right) In the Civic Precinct, food trucks, tour buses and a parking garage entrance block Queen Street from adjacent sidewalks and open spaces – shaded areas indicate potential public space expansions, Toronto, Canada



Goals

Enhance the civic, retail and overall economic role of Queen Street by supporting its retail function and enhancing the public realm.

- Create a unified streetscape that acknowledges unique neighbourhood characteristics and heritage resources.
- Improve its role as a connector between important parks and open spaces including Trinity Bellwoods, the Civic Precinct, Moss Park and the Don Valley.
- Enhance the public realm between Simcoe and Albert Street as the address and setting for significant public buildings with City Hall, Old City Hall and Nathan Phillips Square as the focal point.
- Improve the streetscape and integrate it into the larger Civic Precinct landscape as a setting for significant festivals, parades, protests and day-to-day life for workers, visitors and residents.
- Improve the streetscape for walking, retail, transit stops, social gathering, public outdoor seating, café seating and landscaping.

Actions

- In coordination with the Downtown Mobility Strategy, explore opportunities for re-balancing the Queen Street right-of-way to increase pedestrian space.
- Leverage Queen Street's existing assets to create a continuous green frontage on Queen Street's north edge, from Campbell House to Old City Hall.
- Activate the public realm with a focus on public life and creating a vibrant retail street.

Queens Quay



Queens Quay, a model for the Great Streets, the revitalization of Queens Quay goes beyond standards to transform a street into a truly outstanding civic place and connector, Toronto, Canada

Queens Quay is the Downtown's waterfront street and the spine for both the existing and emerging waterfront neighbourhoods. Future improvements must embrace this role by ensuring a seamless design of the parks and public realm, creating a high quality experience

for active transportation such as walking and cycling, integrating improved surface transit and incorporating green infrastructure in unique ways.

(right) Queens Quay is the central spine connecting a rich assembly of parks and public spaces along the waterfront, Toronto, Canada



Goals

Embrace Queens Quay's role as the Downtown's waterfront street and the spine for both the existing and emerging waterfront neighbourhoods by ensuring a seamless design of the parks and public realm, creating a high quality experience for active transportation such as walking and cycling, integrating improved surface transit and incorporating green infrastructure in unique ways.

- Extend improvements along Queens Quay from Bay to Parliament, aligned with development and investment in transit and other infrastructure.
- Balance the street's role as an east-west movement corridor and as a connector and place adjacent to water slips and public parks.
- Strengthen visual and physical connection to waterfront, including at intersections where other Great Streets meet the shoreline.

Actions

- Continue to monitor and improve as appropriate the design of Queens Quay.
- Extend the Central Waterfront Master Plan for Queens Quay eastward to the East Bayfront and Lower Don Lands communities.
- Conduct Environmental Assessment (EA) to extend the enhanced public realm west of its current termini between Lower Spadina Avenue and Yo-Yo Ma Lane.

Re-connect the city to the waterfront and link the east and west
Core Circle landscapes

SHORELINE STITCH

ELINE

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Shoreline Stitch connects the city to the waterfront and links the east and west Core Circle landscapes

Shoreline Stitch will serve to fully and seamlessly connect, enhance, invent and share the network of streets, parks and open spaces between the Downtown and the waterfront and from its western Garrison Creek edge to the eastern Don River Valley ravine, providing opportunities for civic life and recreation and promoting a corridor to significantly improve movement for cyclists and pedestrians.

From the time of industrialization, Downtown Toronto has been separated from Lake Ontario by a wide swath of rail lines, the Gardiner Expressway and Lake Shore Boulevard. Shoreline Stitch includes a series of interventions. Some are ambitious and long-term, such as the decking the rail corridor and others are more modest but highly impactful, such as improving pedestrian crossings on Lake Shore Boulevard.

Shoreline Stitch will connect surrounding communities to their parks and public realm assets. It will connect the Downtown and the waterfront and western and eastern sections of the Core Circle, from Fort York and the future Rail Deck Park in the west to Corktown Common and the Don River Valley in the east. Shoreline Stitch will continue to reinvent under-utilized and forgotten places across the Downtown to support a seamlessly connected parks and public realm system to serve the growing Downtown.



Looking west from Corktown Common, Toronto, Canada



Fork York and Garrison Common, Toronto, Canada



Looking east from Exhibition Place, Toronto, Canada



- 1 *Rail Deck Park*
- 2 *The Bentway*
- 3 *North-South Connections*
- 4 *East-West Connections*
- 5 *Exhibition Place | Ontario Place*
- 6 *Fort York | Garrison Common*
- 7 *Roundhouse Park*
- 8 *Union Station Hub*
- 9 *Station Shared Street*
- 10 *The Esplanade | David Crombie Park | Distillery District*
- 11 *West Don Lands | Corktown Common*
- 12 *Cloverleaf Park*

Three strategies outline general principles and design directions to guide a series of initiatives that reinforce the Shoreline Stitch vision through focused interventions.

STITCH THE WATERFRONT TO THE CITY



The Bentway, Toronto, Canada

Bridge the gaps that have historically isolated Toronto's waterfront by reinforcing north-south connections between the Downtown and the waterfront. Improve north-south connections for pedestrians and cyclists from neighbourhoods north of the rail corridor and Gardiner-Lake Shore corridor by implementing pedestrian priority policies at intersections. Create safe and comfortable pedestrian and cyclist environments through the rail corridor, under the Gardiner Expressway and across Lake Shore Boulevard.

What we heard:

- Improve pedestrian and cycling routes to provide better north-south connections.

CONNECT THE WESTERN AND EASTERN SECTIONS OF THE CORE CIRCLE



Looking west from Corktown Common, Toronto, Canada

Establish a series of connected parks and public spaces anchored to both sides of the Core Circle, from Fort York and the future Rail Deck Park in the west to the revitalized Union Station in the centre to Corktown Common and the Don River Valley in the east. Imagine the Shoreline Stitch as a Park District that will span the entire core, a series of connected parks and public spaces that draw people to explore the extents of the Downtown, through some of Toronto's best-known civic destinations.

What we heard:

- Better connect existing parks and public spaces.
- Encourage active transportation connections and linkages between parks and public spaces.
- Improve connections from the city into the ravines.

**ACT NOW, WHILE KEEPING BIGGER
OPPORTUNITIES FIRMLY IN SIGHT**



(left) Rail Deck Park, as proposed; (right) Front Street, proposed sidewalk widening, Toronto, Canada

“If the Gardiner Expressway is going to stay,
Lake Shore Boulevard needs to be
re-imagined as a city street.”

– TOcore Consultation

Continue to reinvent under-utilized and forgotten places within the Shoreline Stitch to support a seamlessly connected parks and public realm space to serve the growing Downtown. Prioritize small but impactful interventions that support pedestrians and cyclists, such as sidewalk expansions on Front Street, the northern trail at Fort York and the Mixed-use Shared Street conversion of Station Street. At the same time, continue advancing major transformations, such as the Bentway and Rail Deck Park. Such projects can address Toronto's park needs, accommodate large civic events and celebrations and elevate the quality of public space design in the Downtown.

What we heard:

- Improve the pedestrian experience on our streets (e.g. by widening sidewalks and creating pedestrian-priority or shared streets).
- Support for decking the rail corridor to create a new large park.

Shoreline Stitch is the opportunity to connect the east and west Core Circle, and the Downtown with the waterfront.

INITIATIVES

- 1 *Rail Deck Park*
Advance Rail Deck Park – Bathurst St to John St
Assess the Feasibility of Rail Deck Park – Future Phases
- 2 *The Bentway*
Advance Future Phases – Manitoba Dr to Spadina Ave
- 3 *North-South Connections*
Improve North-South Great Street Connections
Improve Smaller Connections
- 4 *East-West Connections*
Create a Continuous Trail along the Rail Corridor and Northern Linear Park, and under the Gardiner and at Southern Linear Park
Implement Lake Shore Blvd Pedestrian Improvements
- 5 *Exhibition Place / Ontario Place*
Advance All Season Public Space Design and Programming
- 6 *Fort York / Garrison Common*
Implement Parks and Open Space Design
- 7 *Roundhouse Park*
Implement Capital Projects
- 8 *Union Station Hub*
Implement Front St Pedestrian Improvements
- 9 *Station Shared Street*
Assess Potential for Mixed-use Shared Street Conversion
- 10 *The Esplanade / David Crombie Park / Distillery District*
Advance Capital Projects and Expansion
Implement Mill Street Pedestrian Improvements
- 11 *West Don Lands / Corktown Parks*
Advance Corktown Parks Re-development
Create Eastern Avenue Bridge Connection
- 12 *Cloverleaf Park*
Create Future Parkland / Absorptive Landscape





Map showing proposed initiatives for the Shoreline Stitch, Toronto, Canada

200 Years in the Making

The vision for a connected system of parks and open spaces along the original shoreline of Lake Ontario is as old as the city itself. When John G. Simcoe, with the survey of Alexander Aiken, laid out the town of ten small blocks at the eastern end of the harbour in 1793, he declared that any new development must preserve the waterfront as a place for the enjoyment of nature and collective gathering. The vision for a public waterfront began by preserving two green ‘bookends’ – the Garrison reserve to the west and the King’s Park (between Berkeley Street and the Don River) to the east. In 1818, the 30-acre strip of land connecting these spaces, from Front Street south to the lake, was made into a public trust to protect it from development. The strip of land became known as the ‘Walks and Gardens.’

From their establishment, the ‘Walk and Gardens’ lands were vulnerable to encroachment. In 1852, following substantial reductions to the Garrison Reserve and King’s Park, John G. Howard’s sketch (*right*) still

imagined a series of parks and public spaces from Bathurst Street to York Street, but back from the water behind a new esplanade to which the railways would have direct access. Just one year later, the plan for the route of the proposed railway engulfed the lands entirely.

Today, on the footprint of the ‘Walks and Gardens’ lands, the Shoreline Stitch offers the opportunity to restore this vision and create a new civic spine and connected system of parks and open spaces in the heart of Downtown Toronto.

Here is the opportunity to fully and seamlessly connect, enhance, invent and share the network of streets, parks and open spaces between the Downtown and the waterfront and the west and east Core Circle, providing opportunities for civic life and recreation and promoting a corridor to significantly improve movement for cycling and pedestrians.



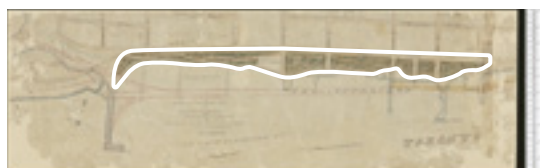
Part of York the capital of Upper Canada on the Bay of Toronto in Lake Ontario, by Elizabeth Hale, 1804



Lurie Garden, a contemporary model for the proposed Front Street ‘Walks and Gardens’, Millennium Park, Chicago, United States



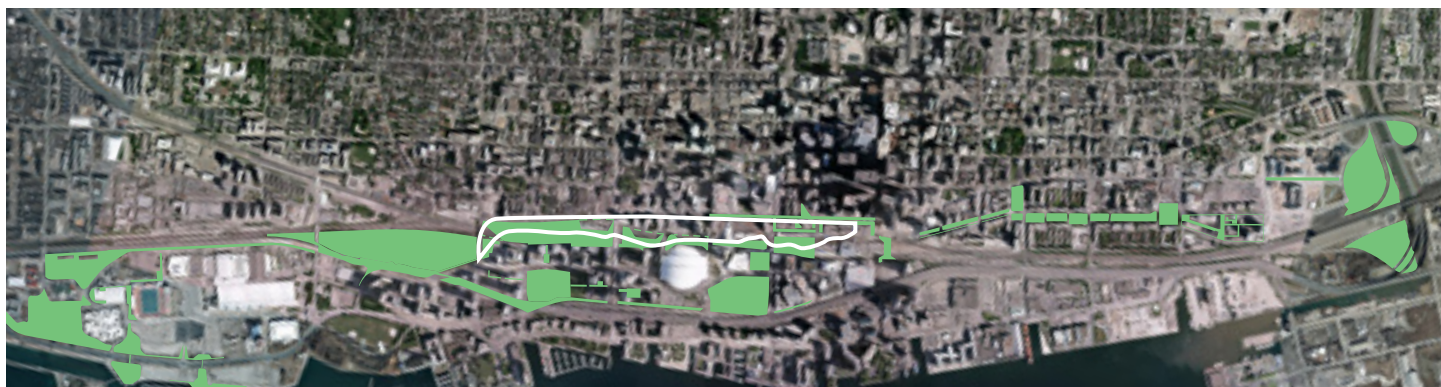
Plan of York, by Lieut. Phillpotts, 1818



Sketch for North Shore of Toronto Harbour, 'Pleasure Drive Walks and Shrubbery for the recreation of the Citizens', by J. Howard, 1852



Proposal for the Grand Trunk Railway and Lands Surrounding, 1853



Location of the 'Walks and Gardens' within the contemporary Downtown, 2018

Rail Deck Park

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Rail Deck Park, Proposed Concept

In Fall 2016, the City of Toronto initiated planning for a new major park in Downtown Toronto, to be built over the rail corridor west of Union Station. Known as Rail Deck Park, the project represents a generational opportunity to create a large park in the heart of Downtown, and

realize provincial and municipal growth planning and city-building objectives. Rail Deck Park is a bold and creative solution to the challenges of city-building and is the first of its kind in the city and the country. An innovative deck structure – essentially a giant bridge



(right) A model for Rail Deck Park, Millennium Park, 24 acres in size, is decked over rail lines, two parking garages and a busway, Chicago, United States

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



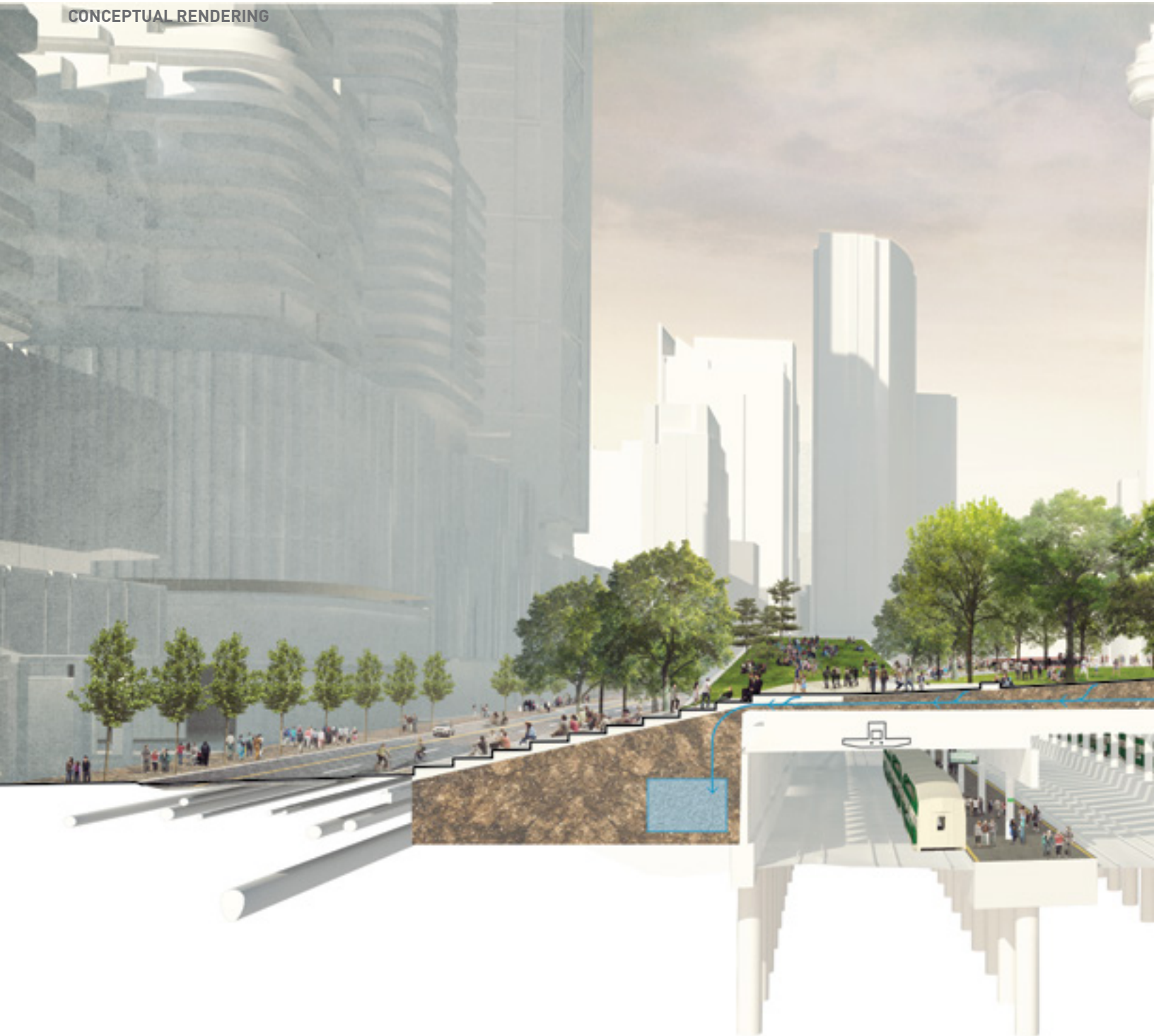
Spadina Terrace at Rail Deck Park, Proposed Concept

across the rail corridor – will provide the foundation and be designed to minimize impacts on train operations below. It will be engineered to support all the elements of a vibrant and dynamic urban park: lawns, gathering and play spaces, shade trees, water features, public

art and more. It will be seamless and serve as a major connector between the Downtown and waterfront. Rail Deck Park is an opportunity to create the city's next great civic space, where all Torontonians can come to play, relax, connect and celebrate.

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 3. SHORELINE STITCH

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Rail Deck Park – Decking Structure Representation





Front Street 'Walks and Gardens' at Rail Deck Park, Proposed Concept



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

The Bentway



The Bentway, Master Plan

The area surrounding the Bentway is rich with a layered history. The site follows the original shoreline of Lake Ontario and was an important junction for trade, and a hunting and a gathering place for First Nations peoples including the Haundenosaunee and the Anishinaabe, the

Huron-Wendat and the Petun people, and most recently the Mississaugas of the New Credit. The Bentway is a unique public space that will transform more than four hectares of vacant and forgotten land underneath Toronto's Gardiner Expressway into a new gathering



(right) *The Bentway, winter skating trail, Toronto, Canada*



place for our city's growing population. Stretching from Strachan Avenue to Spadina Avenue, the continuous multi-use trail and series of public spaces will knit together neighbourhoods and become a gateway to the waterfront. The dynamic new corridor will activate the

area with access to year-round activities and events, including gardens, a skating trail, recreational amenities, public markets, public art, special exhibitions, festivals, theatre and musical performances and more.



Strachan Gate at The Bentway



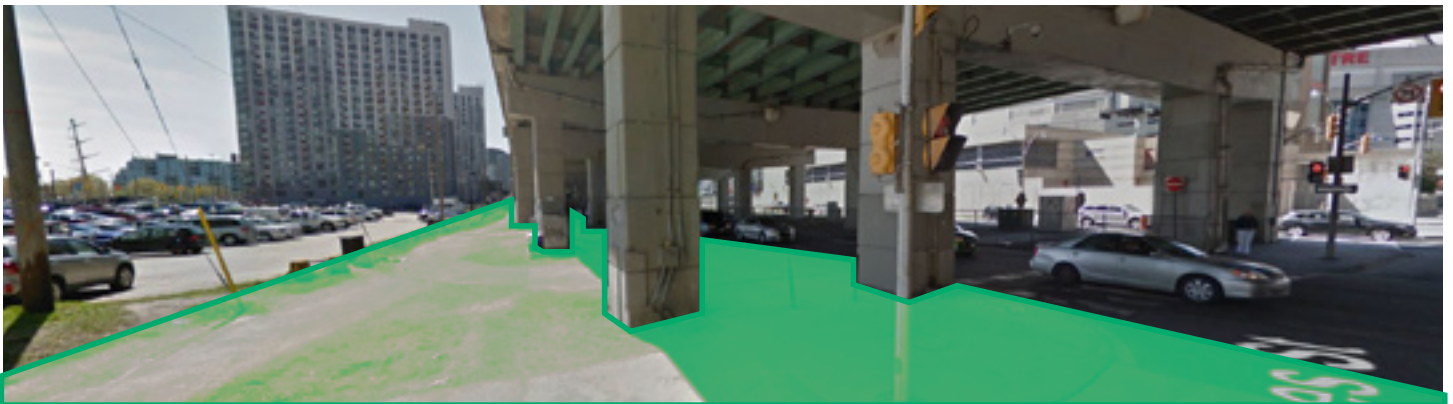
We're glad
you made it.
Welcome to
The Bentway!

On the north side
are hints of what
Toronto from the
shoreline. Nearly a
dozen from Toronto's
one branch like tower.

North-South and East-West Connections



Lake Shore Boulevard at Rees Street, proposed area for improvements to pedestrian crossings across Lake Shore Boulevard to better connect the city and the waterfront, Toronto, Canada



Lake Shore Boulevard at Rees Street, looking west, proposed area for improvements to east-west pedestrian and cycling connections along Lake Shore Boulevard, Toronto, Canada

Bridge the gaps that have historically isolated Toronto's waterfront by enhancing north-south connections between the Downtown and the waterfront neighbourhoods. Improve north-south and east-west connections for pedestrians and cyclists through the rail corridor and

under the Gardiner Expressway, and improve the safety and comfort of the pedestrian experience on Lake Shore Boulevard. By improving connections, the Shoreline Stitch will better connect the Downtown with the waterfront, and the west end with the east end.

(right) Madrid RIO combines 47 subprojects including squares, boulevards, parks, and improved connections between the urban districts along the river, Madrid, Spain



Goals

Shoreline Stitch will serve to fully and seamlessly connect, enhance, invent and share the network of streets, parks and open spaces between the Downtown and the waterfront and from its western edge to the eastern Don River Valley Ravine, providing opportunities for civic life and recreation and promoting a corridor to significantly improve movement for cycling and pedestrians.

- Connect the Downtown and the waterfront and the western and eastern sections of the Core Circle.
- Implement Rail Deck Park from Union Station westward to Fort York and beyond.
- Continue to reinvent the underused and forgotten places within the Shoreline Stitch to support a seamless connected parks and public realm space to serve the growing Downtown.

Actions

- Advance planning and design for Rail Deck Park.
- Prioritize pedestrian comfort on streets and at crossings and identify small but impactful interventions that support pedestrians and cyclists.
- Explore opportunities to advance future phases of The Bentway: west of Strachan; main trail extension to Spadina Avenue; Skating Trail east extension to Mouth-of-Creek Park; and pedestrian and cycling elevated bridge crossing.
- Improve the north-south connections between the Downtown and the waterfront neighbourhoods, prioritizing the north-south Great Streets, but also considering smaller streets such as the crossings at Rees Street.
- Improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and comfort on Lake Shore Boulevard.
- Improve pedestrian realm on Front Street.
- Consider Station Street as a shared street that supports pedestrian activity near Union Station (UPX station).
- Advance implementation of Council-approved Pedestrian Promenade Plans.

Re-imagine Downtown's distinct districts with parks at their hearts

PARK DISTRICTS

ICTS

Park Districts re-imagine Downtown's distinct districts with parks at their hearts

A Park District is a cohesive local network of parks, streets and other open spaces centered on one or more significant community parks that serve surrounding neighbourhoods. Each Park District will have a unique identity with a focus on supporting community life.

Neighbourhood parks and accessible open spaces have a rich and varied history in the Downtown. Over time, they have evolved into discrete and distinct places, each with their own form and character that together contribute to the unique identity of their surrounding neighbourhood, or district. Today, many of these places are small or isolated and cannot offer all the programs and functions that residents, visitors and workers look for in their public realm.

A Park District provides an opportunity to create an expanded and improved ensemble of neighbourhood parks, streets and other open spaces. Park Districts will be designed as a cohesive whole, with the goal of supporting community life by providing a range of connected and accessible experiences and programs within easy walking distance of all residents and workers. A great variety of existing legacy parks exist in the Downtown. These parks can act as anchors within each Park District and have the potential to expand and connect to adjacent streets and other open spaces to create a more vibrant, legible and expansive parks and public realm network for all Downtown districts.



Kensington Market-Alexandra Park, Toronto, Canada



Cabbagetown-Riverdale, Toronto, Canada



The Queen's Park Precinct, looking south along University Avenue to the Civic Precinct, Toronto, Canada



- 1 *The Civic Precinct*
- 2 *The Queen's Park Precinct*
- 3 *The Garden District*
- 4 *St. James Town*
- 5 *Cabbagetown-Riverdale*
- 6 *The Grange | John Street | Roundhouse Park*
- 7 *Ryerson University*
- 8 *Bay Cloverhill Loop*
- 9 *'The Pits' (Christie-Bickford)*
- 10 *Ramsden Park-Yorkville*
- 11 *The Annex*
- 12 *Kensington Market-Alexandra Park*

- 13 *The Garrison Parks-Fort York*
- 14 *Bathurst Quay-Coronation Park-Ontario Place*
- 15 *West Rail District*
- 16 *Old Town-St Lawrence-Distillery*
- 17 *University of Toronto**
- 18 *Regent Park**
- 19 *Corktown Parks**
- 20 *West Don Lands**
- 21 *Lower Don Lands**
- 22 *Lower Yonge-East Bayfront**
- 23 *Central Waterfront**

** Park Districts 17-23 have been developed through other planning documents*

Six strategies outline general principles and design directions to guide a series of initiatives that reinforce the Park Districts vision through focused interventions.

RE-IMAGINE TORONTO'S DISTRICTS WITH PARKS AT THEIR HEART



Trinity Bellwoods Park, Queen West's "backyard", Toronto, Canada

Park Districts group together parks and open spaces with connecting streets that together form the heart of the various neighbourhoods in the Downtown. They provide an opportunity to establish legacy neighbourhood parks as the focal point of Downtown districts. Park Districts are both a neighbourhood resource and a city-wide attraction. This approach offers a chance to put parks front and central in the planning and evolution of our districts, responding proactively to the needs of our growing city.

What we heard:

- Focus on quality in the design and maintenance of our neighbourhood parks and public spaces.
- Enhance finer grain connectivity between parks and public spaces.

EXTEND THE REACH AND CONNECTIVITY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS



Wellington Place, plans from 1837 reveal a unique dumbbell pattern of park squares, connected by a green boulevard, Toronto, Canada

Provide a broad range of experiences and programs in a number of smaller parks with high-quality connections. Great connections can make the park experience more accessible to the surrounding neighbourhood and beyond. This may include transforming neighbourhood streets and laneway connections to expand pedestrian and cycling facilities where feasible, and extending a park's experience beyond its boundaries through the extension of park design details and materials into surrounding streetscapes.

What we heard:

- Encourage active transportation and mid-block / laneway connections between public spaces.
- Extend park edges to spill out into surrounding streets.

IMPROVE AND EXPAND PARKS WHERE POSSIBLE AND CREATE NEW ONES



Moss Park and the Armoury, Toronto, Canada

Explore park acquisition opportunities to expand public space within the Park Districts. Strategically acquire new parkland and improve and expand existing parks. If land is not available directly adjacent to existing parks, look to acquire park parcels that are strategically located within the broader park and street network to establish a coherent neighbourhood open space system. Prioritize securing land that has prominent public street frontages and that contributes to broader strategies of connectivity and use.

What we heard:

- Acquire more parkland; identify locations based on a 5-10 minute walk for all residents.
- Make better use of what we have by improving and expanding existing parks.

RECONFIGURE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS TO RESPOND TO 21ST CENTURY NEEDS



Refresh: A Vision Document for Allan Gardens, prioritizes adapting the park to meet 21st century needs, including more diverse and intensive levels of use, 2017

As funding becomes available, invest in Park Districts, recognizing their potential as a city-wide resource. Re-design should maintain inherent character and qualities while expanding the flexibility of use, ensuring design and form can respond to changing demographics and new generations of users and uses. Prioritize flexible uses, recognizing that space constraints demand more out of each square metre of park to enhance its benefit to a growing and diverse population. Develop partnerships with Indigenous communities to ensure meaningful, appropriate placemaking.

What we heard:

- Support for multi-seasonal, multi-functional parks.
- Consider changing and diverse demographics; diversity needs to be at the forefront in the design and programming of our public spaces.

**PRIORITIZE BLUE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
IN THE DESIGN OF OUR PARKS AND STREETS**



Tåsinge Plads, a climate-adapted urban green space that absorbs rainwater and creates a place for people to experience and interact with water, Copenhagen, Denmark

Prioritize blue (water-based) and green (urban forest, greenway, pedestrian and cycling priority) infrastructure in the retrofit or design of our parks and streets. Experiment with the variety of landscapes that are possible and necessary in a 21st century city, including absorptive landscapes that manage stormwater and reveal and celebrate our unique position as a waterfront city. Make water a key driver in the design of our parks, streets and other open spaces, such as laneways and schoolyards. Exceed standards to establish the next generation of best practices for a 21st century resilient city.

What we heard:

- Consider climate change and create resilient landscapes.
- Support for green and blue infrastructure and enhanced biodiversity.

**CREATE NEW AND PROTECT EXISTING 'SUN
RESERVOIRS'**



Sunlight in Corktown Common, Toronto, Canada

Design the edges of parks and buildings around Park Districts to recognize significant city parks as 'Sun Reservoirs'. These prominent parks can become destinations where Torontonians can head to enjoy great access to natural sunlight.

What we heard:

- Support for protecting access to sunlight in Downtown parks, streets, neighbourhoods, squares, schoolyards, playgrounds, and the waterfront.
- Balance sun protection with the need for growth.

“Make sure the streets have lots of sunlight,
trees, greenery and quiet so we can actually
enjoy them and use as a respite from the
hustle and bustle of life.”

– TOcore Consultation



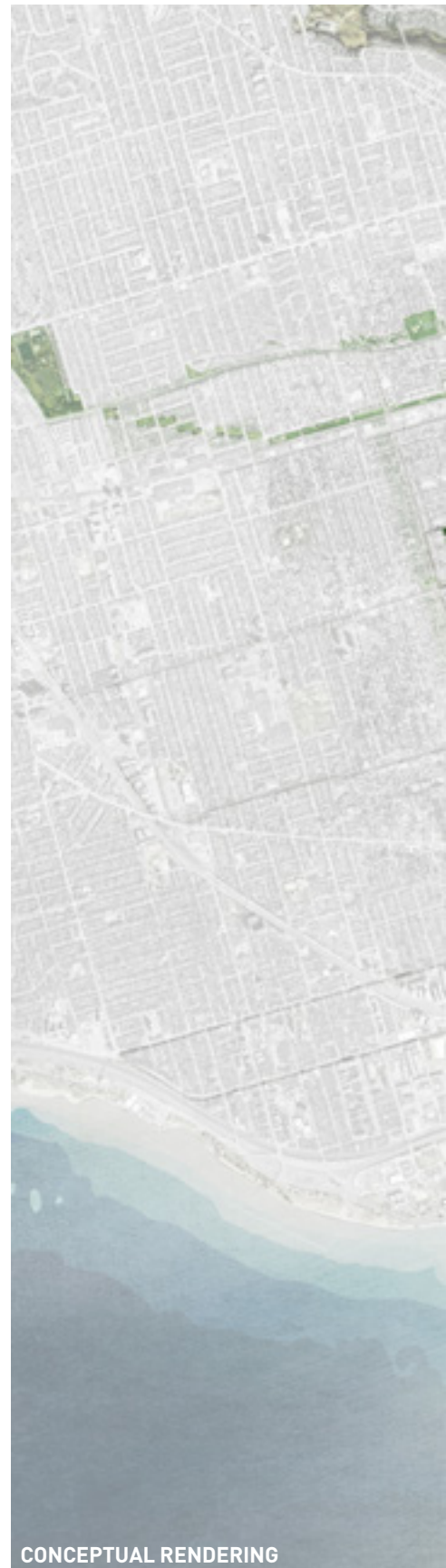
Sunlight in the revitalized Grange Park, Toronto, Canada

Park Districts are the opportunity to put the park front and central in the planning and evolution of our districts, responding proactively to the needs of our growing city.

PARK DISTRICTS

- 1 *The Civic Precinct*
- 2 *The Queen's Park Precinct*
- 3 *The Garden District*
- 4 *St. James Town*
- 5 *Cabbagetown-Riverdale*
- 6 *The Grange | John Street | Roundhouse Park*
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* Park Districts 17-23 have been developed through other planning documents



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



Map showing proposed Park Districts, Toronto, Canada

The Civic Precinct

Celebrate Toronto's civic buildings with a cohesive, connected and pedestrian-oriented public realm.



University Avenue offers the opportunity to connect the Civic Precinct with the Queen's Park Precinct and become a major promenade and park focus for the Civic Precinct, Toronto, Canada

As a Great Street, the vision for University Avenue re-configures the roadway to create a grand bosque park on the Avenue's eastern edge, integrated with existing parks, landscaped setbacks and other open spaces. The proposed linear park connects two significant Park

Districts together and establishes a major promenade and park focus for the core, including a new garden gateway to the Civic Precinct at University Avenue and Queen Street. Building on this transformation, the Civic Precinct vision celebrates and connects our civic



(right) Place de la République's re-design creates a cohesive, inviting pedestrian plaza, including a new cafe pavilion, water features and over 150 trees, Paris, France

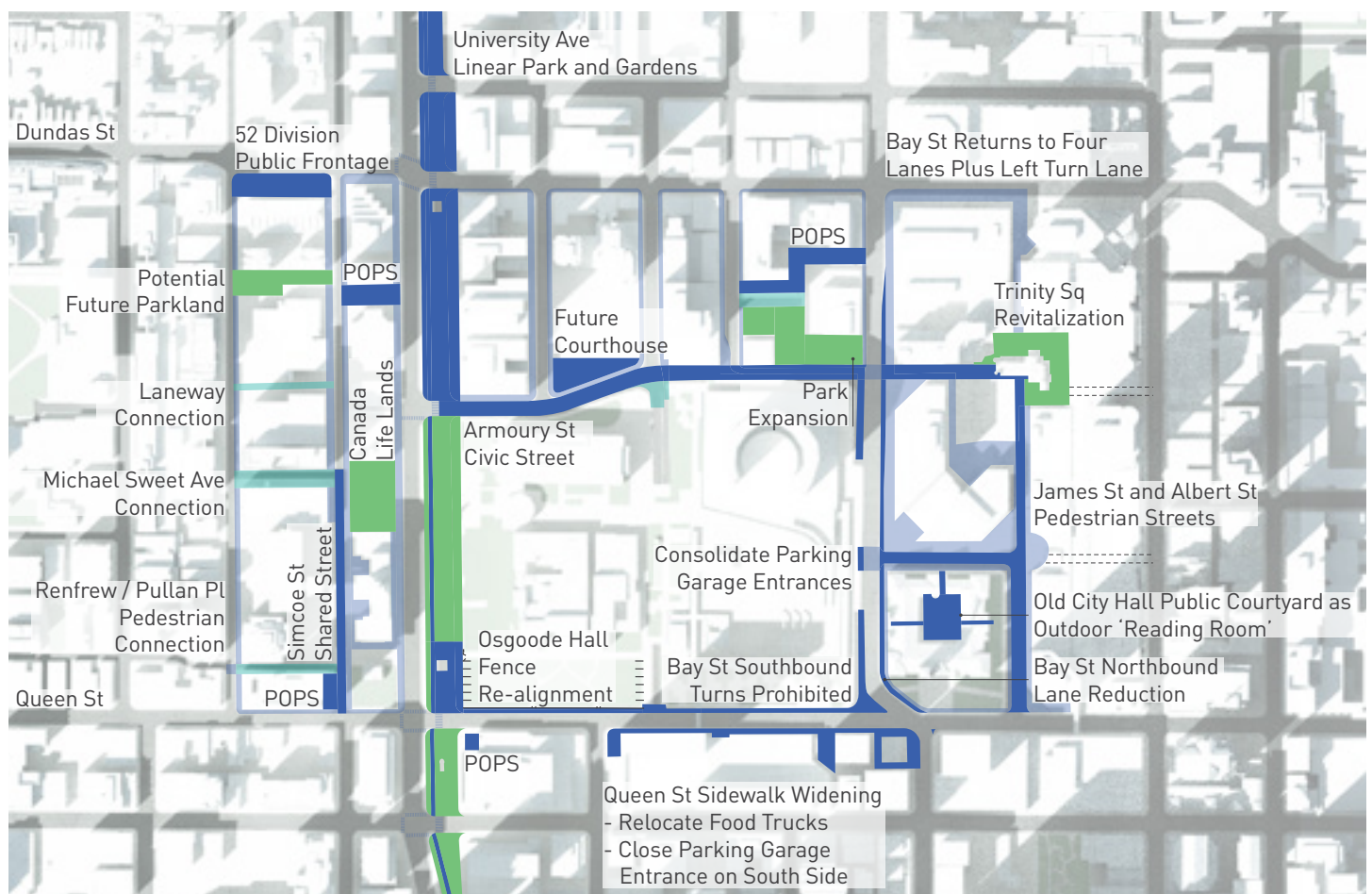
CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



The Civic Precinct, Proposed Concept

buildings from Campbell House to Old City Hall with a cohesive, connected green frontage, inviting public life into their open spaces. Design the district with a strong focus on the pedestrian realm and safe cycling by linking disconnected open space elements, creating

shared and / or pedestrianized streets (where feasible) and establishing new mid-block connections. Consider consolidating parking garage entrances to open up the west side of Bay Street and south side of Queen Street, creating more space for public life to unfold.



The Civic Precinct, Proposed Concept Plan

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access

(right) A model for the Civic Precinct, Karl Johans Gate's expanded streetside pedestrian areas, gardens and large-canopy tree rows create a strong lush green facade for the district, Oslo, Norway



Goals

Celebrate Toronto's civic buildings with a cohesive, connected and pedestrian-oriented public realm centred on Nathan Phillips Square. Strengthen the identity of the precinct as Toronto's premier civic destination drawing tourists and supporting public gatherings through events such as cultural celebrations and assemblies.

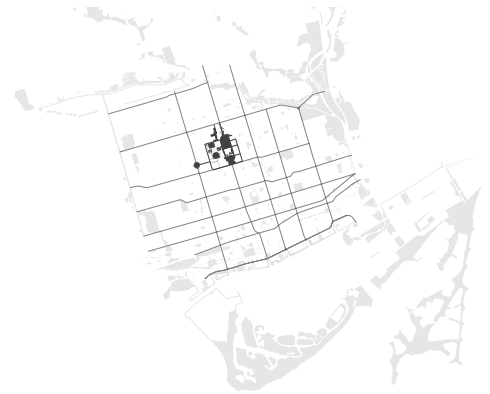
- Create a new public place within Nathan Phillips Square that contributes to the restoration of Indigenous identity.
- Create an improved frontage along Queen Street (both sides of the street) from Campbell House to Old City Hall that connects and emphasizes heritage features of the precinct.
- Design the district with a strong focus on the pedestrian realm by linking disconnected open space elements, creating shared and/or pedestrianized streets (where feasible) and establishing new mid-block connections.
- Rethink Bay Street from Hagerman Street to Queen Street to allow it to look and function as a part of Civic Precinct.
- Integrate Old City Hall, Trinity Square, the new courthouse, Campbell House, the Canada Life building and 52 Division into the precinct.
- Create inviting gateways through intersection improvements at Queen and University, Queen and Bay, and University and Armoury Street
- Connect the Civic Precinct to the Queen's Park Precinct through a University Avenue linear park (see Great Streets – University Avenue).

Actions

- Undertake a Civic Precinct Public Realm and Public Art Master Plan with city-wide public engagement.
- Collaborate with Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and other Indigenous organizations to locate the Restoration of Identity sculpture in Nathan Phillips Square and undertake associated Indigenous place-making.
- Explore opportunities for shared-use agreements with Canada Life, the Law Society of Upper Canada and the Toronto Police Service for improved public access to their open space assets within the precinct.
- Study the feasibility of closing the City Hall parkade entrance on the south side of Queen Street and undertaking associated streetscape improvements.
- Coordinate public realm improvements with investments in Old City Hall's transformation.

The Queen's Park Precinct

Celebrate Ontario's Legislature Building and surrounding heritage structures and landscapes with a cohesive, connected and pedestrian-oriented public realm.



The Broad Walk in Regents Park, a model for a pedestrian and cycling park route in a restored and connected Queen's Park, London, England

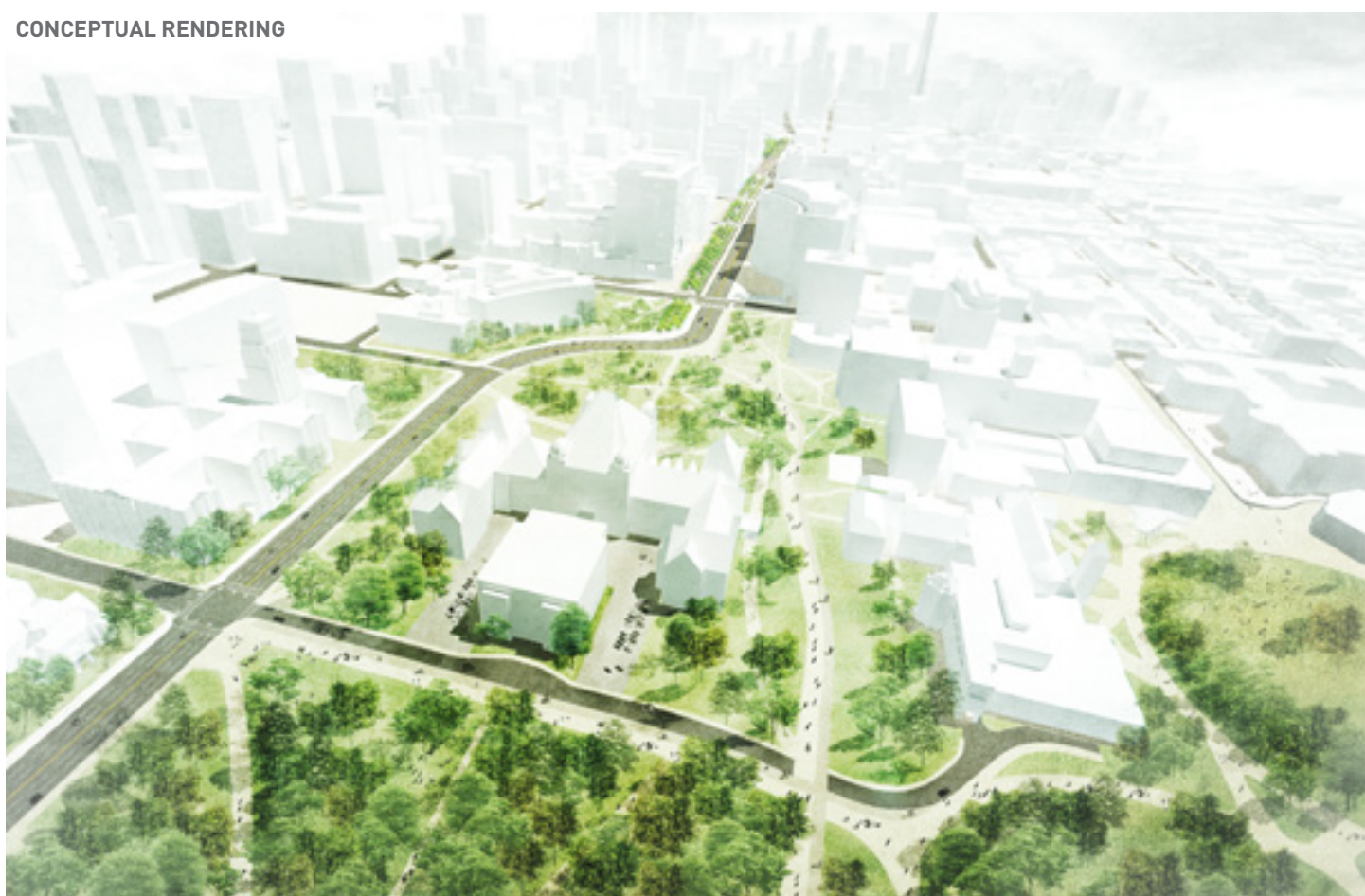
Connect the Queen's Park Precinct to the Civic Precinct and University of Toronto by extending the University Avenue linear park into Queen's Park as a park route for pedestrians and cyclists. The proposed park route concept restores and enhances the 'park' in Queen's

Park and its relationship to Ontario's Legislature building, while re-connecting these to surrounding significant parks and open spaces. The proposed concept connects future cycling facilities on University Avenue to the Hoskin-Wellesley and Bloor Street

(right) The Royal Parks provide 'green' routes in London, taking pedestrians and cyclists away from traffic and through some of the most attractive areas of the city, Hyde Park, London, England



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING

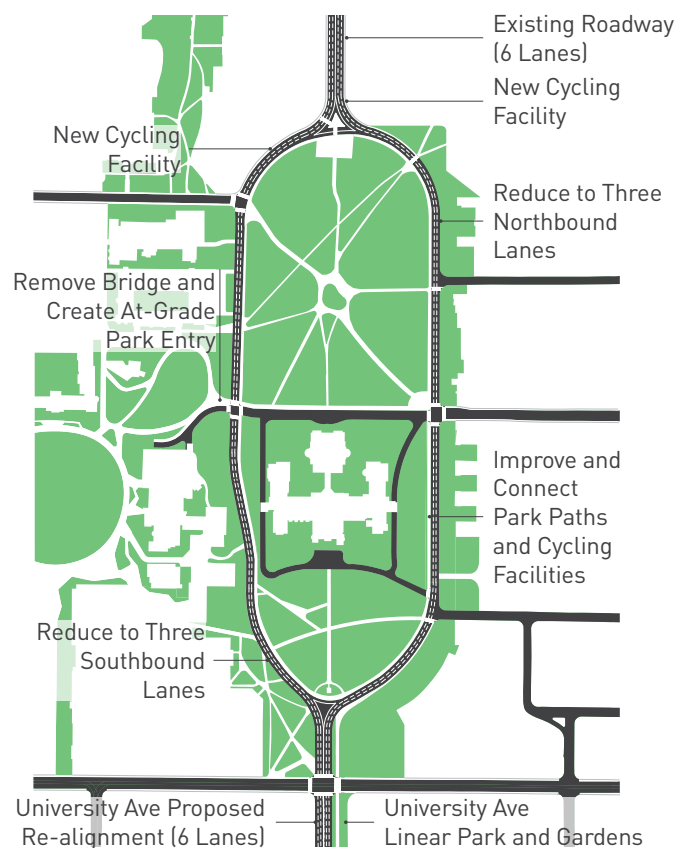
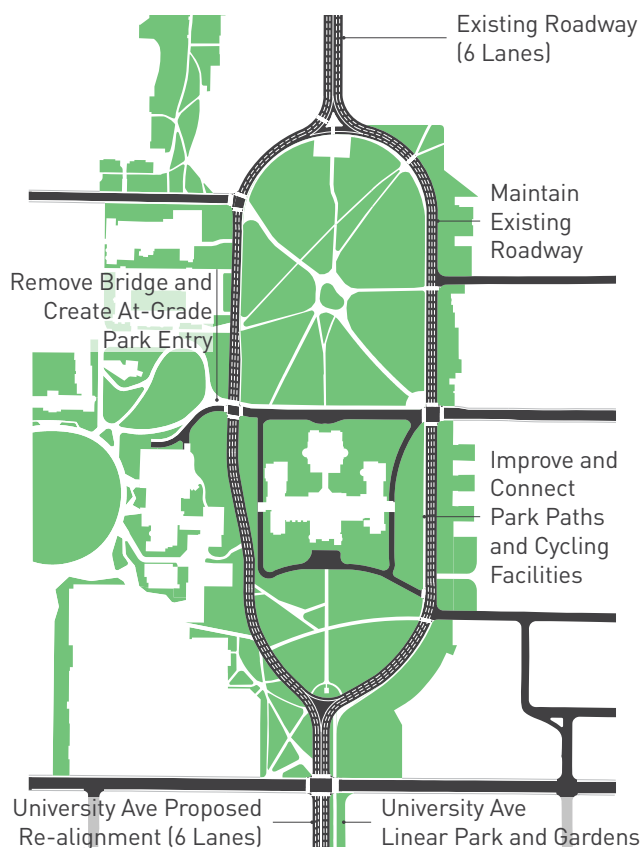


The Queen's Park Precinct, Proposed Concept

bike routes. Consolidating vehicular movement and creating an at-grade park entry at Hart House Circle and Wellesley Street improves safety and connectivity, while maintaining road capacity and servicing access to all buildings and landscapes. Imagine a connected civic

ensemble of public spaces from the Civic Precinct along University Avenue to the Queen's Park Precinct, with a restored and connected Queen's Park as the heart of the Queen's Park Precinct – the northern bookend of a truly transformative public realm experience.

(below) Proposed options for the Queen's Park Precinct



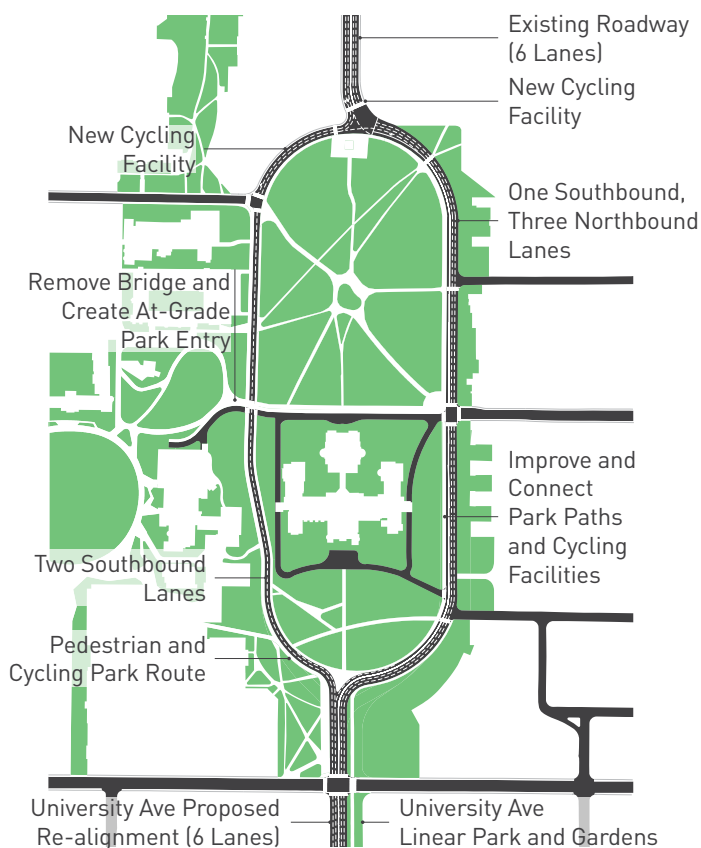
Proposed Option A: Maintain existing roadway; improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists

- Maintain the existing roadway – four northbound and four southbound lanes on Queen's Park Cres.
- Remove bridge and create at-grade west park entry at Hart House Circle and Wellesley St to enhance safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improve and connect park paths and cycling facilities where feasible.

Proposed Option B: Reduce number of lanes; improve connections for pedestrians and cyclists

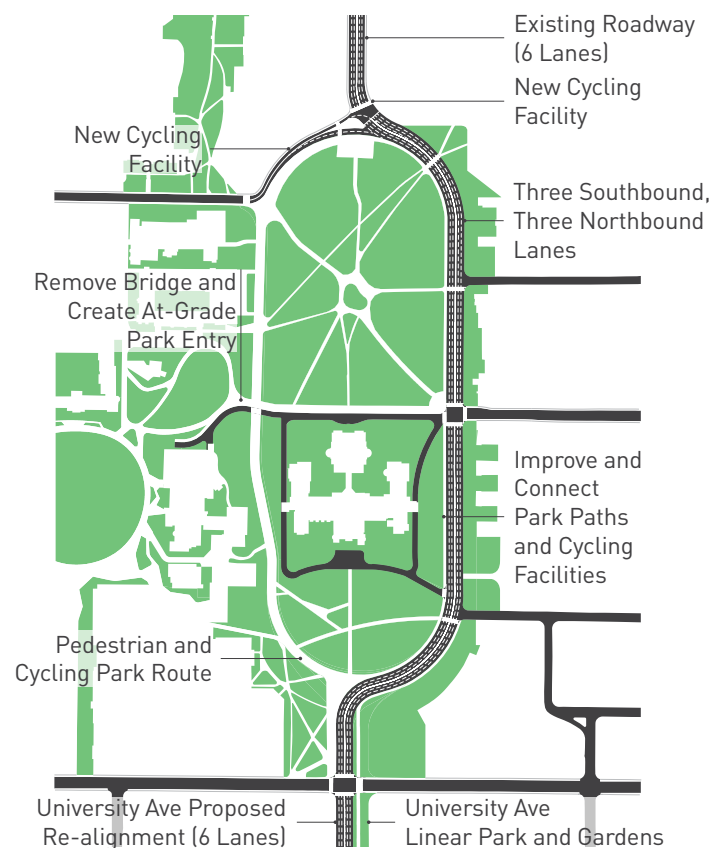
- Reduce number of lanes to three northbound lanes and three southbound lanes, consistent with the vision for six lanes on University Ave to the south and the existing six lanes to the north.
- Remove bridge and create at-grade west park entry.
- Use space gained in the right-of-way to improve and connect park paths and cycling facilities.

(right) Bird's Eye View of Queen's Park, 1876, showing Taddle Creek and a continuous park connection between Queen's Park and the University of Toronto campus on the park's west edge, Toronto, Canada



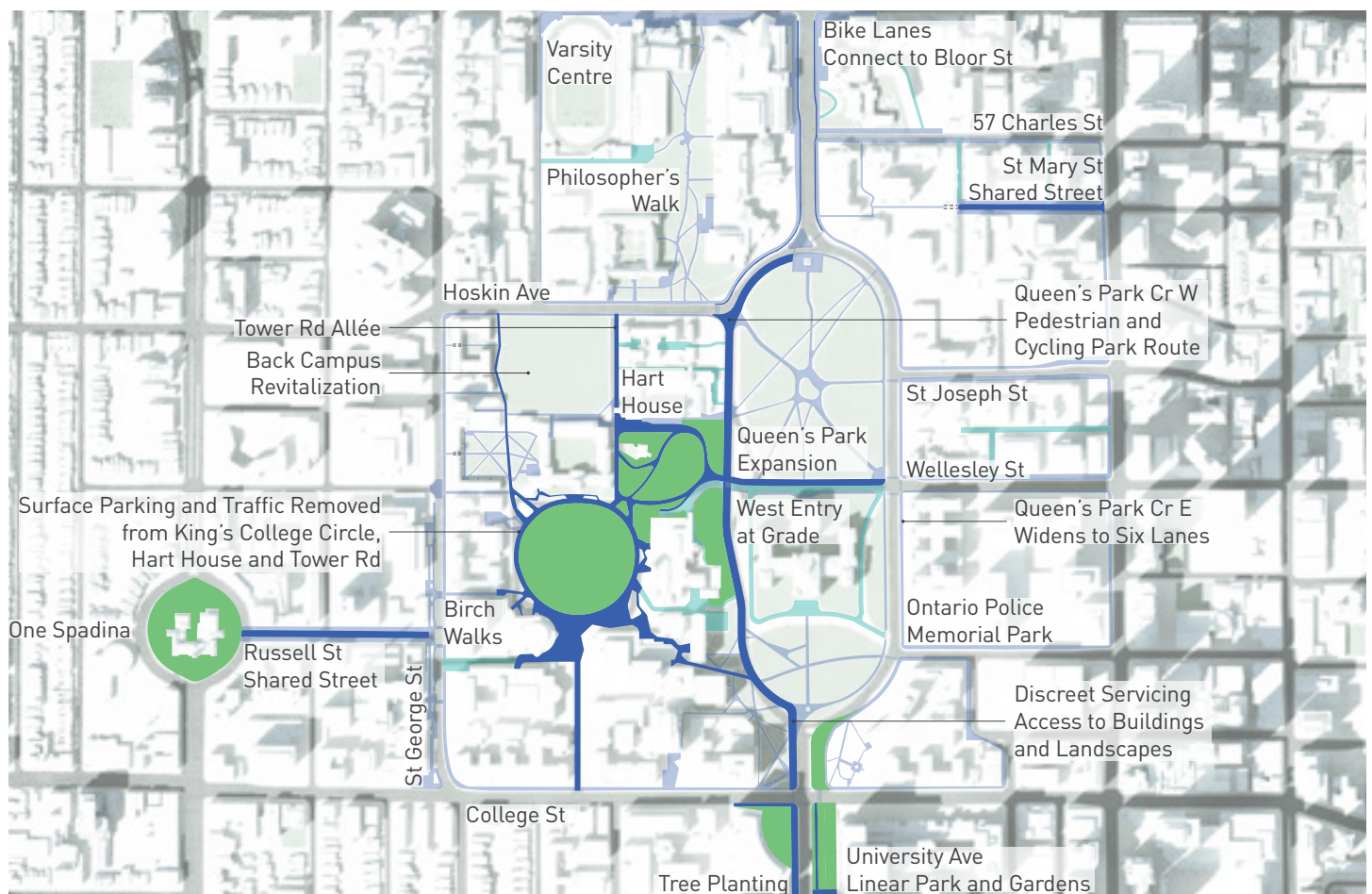
Proposed Option C: Re-balance north and southbound lanes; create a park route on Queen's Park Cres West

- Re-balance Queen's Park Cres with two southbound lanes on the west side, and one southbound and three northbound lanes on the east side.
- Create a pedestrian and cycling park route on the west side and provide servicing access.
- Remove bridge and create at-grade west park entry.



Proposed Option D: Consolidate north and southbound lanes; create a park route on Queen's Park Cres West

- Consolidate three northbound and three southbound lanes on Queen's Park Cres East.
- Create a pedestrian and cycling park route on the west side and provide servicing access, creating a continuous park experience between Queen's Park and the University of Toronto campus.
- Remove bridge and create at-grade west park entry.



The Queen's Park Precinct, Proposed Concept Plan

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access

(right) The Central Park Mall, a North American model for the pedestrian and cycling park route, New York, United States



Goals

Celebrate Ontario's Legislature Building and surrounding heritage structures and landscapes with a cohesive, connected and pedestrian-oriented public realm. Strengthen the identity of the precinct as a setting for the Provincial Government, and to support tourism and public assemblies.

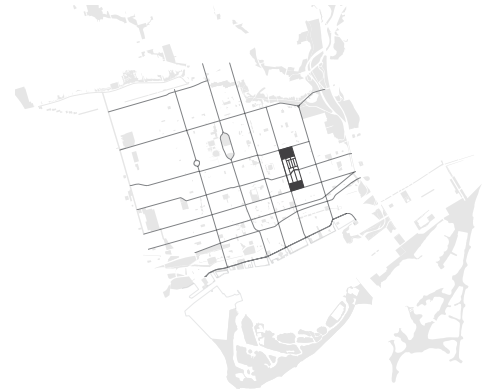
- Integrate into a cohesive whole the major open spaces within the Precinct, including the forecourt south of the Legislative building, the side yards, and the open spaces around Queen's Park.
- Re-imagine the west crescent as a Park Street that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists, improves safety and enhances connectivity to the University of Toronto open space network.
- Create inviting gateways to the precinct through intersection improvements at College and University, Queen's Park Crescent where it meets Wellesley, Hoskin and Queen's Park North, and at Bloor and Avenue Road.
- Connect the Queen's Park Precinct to the Civic Precinct through a University Avenue linear park (see Great Streets – University Avenue).
- Limit surface parking and the impact of vehicles in the Precinct.

Actions

- Undertake a Queen's Park South Public Realm Plan and Technical Feasibility Assessment, including advancing the preliminary engineering and cost of potential options for improvements to the public realm in collaboration with the Legislature and the University of Toronto, with city-wide engagement.
- Undertake a technical study to design options for the Queen's Park Crescent West and Wellesley / Hoskin intersections.
- Coordinate public realm visions and both the short and longer term improvements being considered through the Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan with the Queen's Park North Management Plan and the University of Toronto Secondary Plan processes.

The Garden District

Revitalize the Garden District Park District by connecting the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces into a coherent whole including integrating and celebrating the area's heritage character and promoting community life.



CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



The Garden District, Proposed Concept

Imagine the Garden District's streets and surrounding parks and open spaces as a connected system where large, mature trees and immersive gardens can be experienced in the urban setting. Connect and green the district by blending streets with parks and

public spaces (e.g. Jarvis Terrace at Allan Gardens). Implement a minimum 6.0-metre green setback on Jarvis Street's east and west edges, creating a green spine for the district. Create green street, laneway and mid-block connections. Remove commercial boulevard

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access

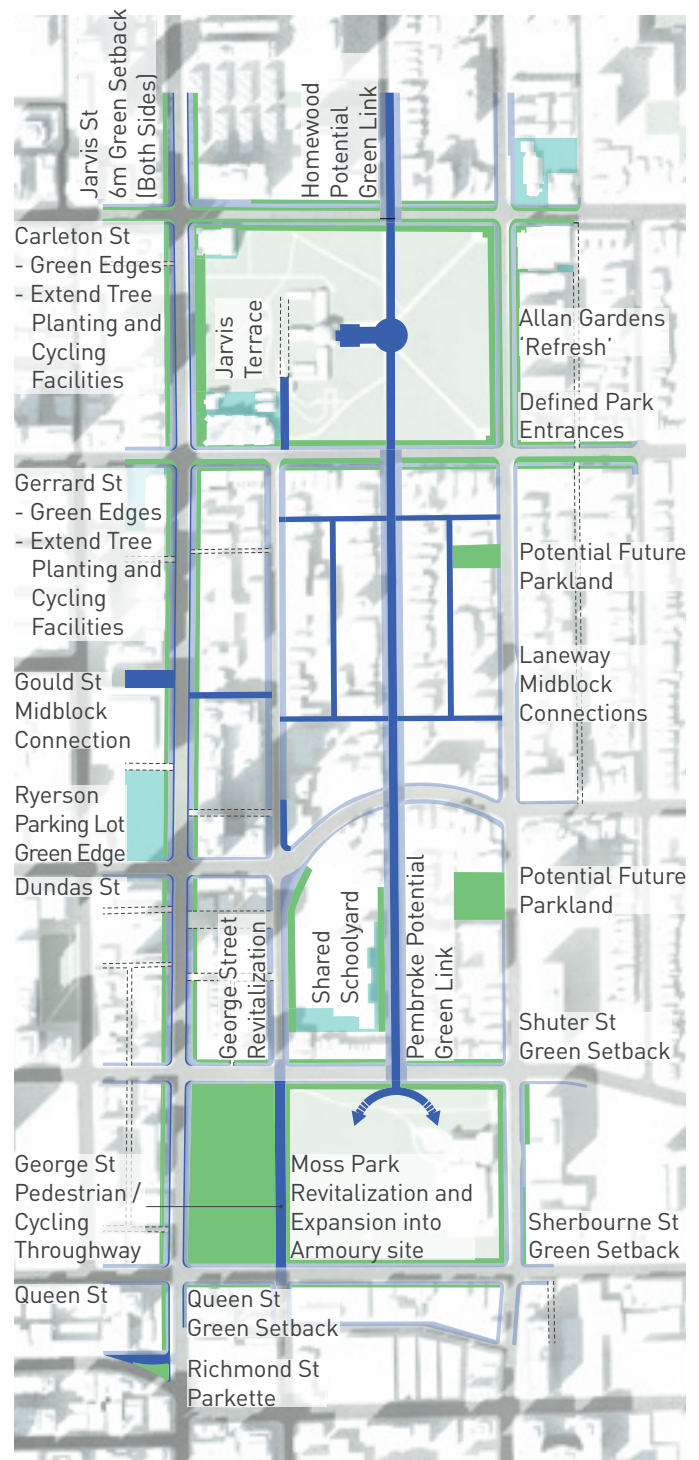


Lonsdale Street's transformation reflects the distinctive qualities of its setting, creating clear connections to each of the area's key public assets, a model for Jarvis Street in the Garden District, Dandenong, Australia



Kensington Shared Street, a model for Pembroke Street and Homewood Avenue as 'Green Links', Sydney, Australia

parking and limit street parking to reduce auto-related pavement and create green street edges. Improve the relationship between the pedestrian realm along park edges, providing an expanded pedestrian space, sense of relief and feeling of a 'street within a park'. Re-



The Garden District, Proposed Concept Plan

think the relationship of park edges at Allan Gardens and Moss Park, broadening the park program into the street. Create safe pedestrian crossings and defined park entrances for the terminating streets at Pembroke Street, Homewood Avenue and George Street.

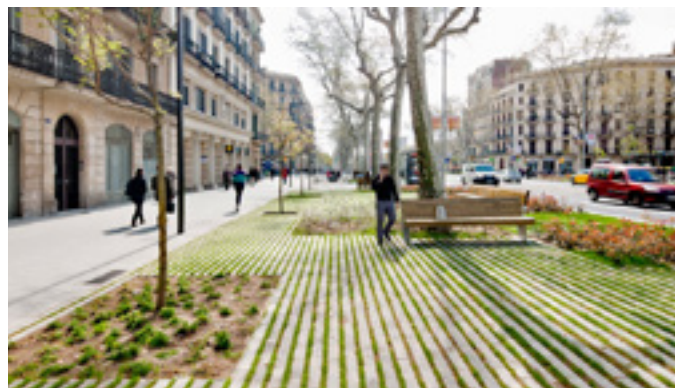


Pembroke Residential Green Link, Proposed Concept

Re-imagine Pembroke Street and Homewood Avenue as garden-like 'Green Link' streets, creating a safe neighbourhood link for pedestrians and cyclists between the district's two signature parks. Create wide, signaled pedestrian crossings and defined park

entrances at Allan Gardens and Moss Park. Provide opportunities for Indigenous placemaking at the Allan Gardens park gateways.

(right) A model for the Garden District, Passeig De St Joan Boulevard maintains heritage trees and adds new tree rows, promotes drainage, widens pedestrian promenades and gathering spaces, and provides physically separated bicycle lanes, Barcelona, Spain



Goals

Revitalize the Garden District Park District by connecting the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces into a coherent whole including integrating and celebrating the area's heritage character and promoting community life.

- Study park acquisition and partnership opportunities, with a focus on the Moss Park Armoury site.
- Improve Pembroke Street to provide a park-like street connection between Moss Park and Allan Gardens. Extend the Pembroke street character into both Moss Park and Allan Gardens.
- Improve relationship between pedestrian realm along park edges providing an increased pedestrian space, sense of relief, and a feeling of 'street within a park'.

Actions

- Support Council approved improvement plans for park revitalization initiatives.
- Enhance street edges of Allan Gardens and Moss Park in coordination with park revitalization projects.
- Undertake Streetscape Plan for Pembroke Street.
- Look for opportunities to harmonize street furniture, paving, and lighting to unify the district.
- Explore opportunities to expand the pedestrian realm, and prioritize cycling amenities along Carlton at Homewood Avenue.
- Work with community to encourage tree planting on private properties, with a focus on front yards.

St James Town

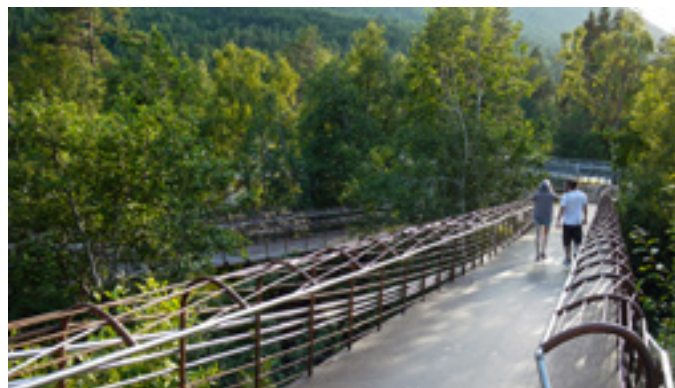


Beautification project in St James Town: A collaboration among the St James Town Community Corner, the City of Toronto, Tourism Cares and Stop Gap Foundation, Toronto, Canada

St JamesTown Park District is an integrated network of parks and public realm that connects, enhances, shares and expands the parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the area. The design of the parks and public realm responds to the unique modern character

of the buildings and the community's identity and needs. Establish Ontario Lane as a central civic spine for the neighbourhood, connected to its east-west counterpart – Howard Street – to provide an organizing framework for the district's parks and open spaces.

(right) A model for the St James Town 'ravine portal' overlook and access passage, the Gudbrandsjuvet walkway opens a gradual portal for the public to enjoy convenient access to nature, Gudbrandsjuvet, Norway



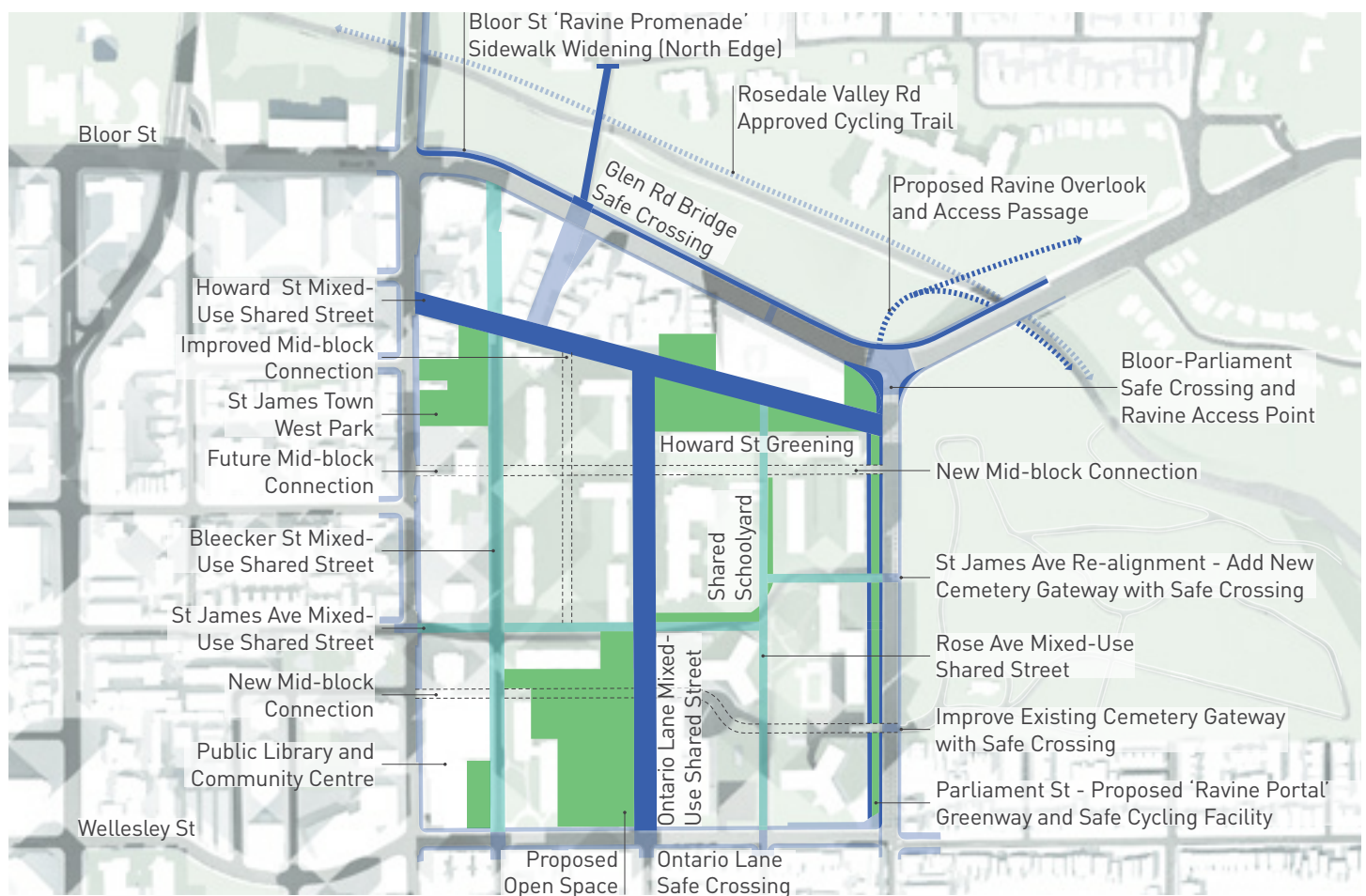
CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



St James Town, Proposed Concept

Expand, improve and connect the district's parks and public realm, incorporating active programming, fine grain frontages and 'eyes on the street' to help bring the neighbourhood's interior spaces to life. Imagine St James Town as a portal to the Rosedale Valley and Don

River Valley with a new access passage to the Rosedale Valley Lands at the intersection of Parliament Street and Bloor Street East, and consider realigning Bloor Street East to create space for a wide northern edge 'ravine promenade' for the neighbourhood.



St James Town, Proposed Concept Plan

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access
- Proposed trail connection
- Existing trail connection



(right) Bell Park Shared Street, a model for Ontario Lane in St James Town, Seattle, United States

Goals

St James Town Park District is an integrated network of parks and public realm that connects, enhances, shares and expands the parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the area. The design of the parks and public realm responds to the unique modern character of the buildings, and the community identity and needs.

- Improve pedestrian and cycling permeability of the neighbourhood (from Sherbourne to Parliament, from Wellesley to Bloor).
- Rationalize movement patterns and create a hierarchy of streets.
- Provide clarity of use of open space.
- Promote active edges along open spaces with clear sight lines to pedestrian destinations.
- Improve growing conditions for existing trees and encourage tree planting on private properties.
- Create a green connection to a new northern portal into Rosedale Ravine.

Actions

- Undertake a feasibility study for the ravine 'overlook' and access passage to Rosedale Valley Ravine.
- Support implementation of the St. James Town Public Realm Plan.
- Explore opportunities to revitalize the design of a central open space and its edges.
- Develop a partnership model with TCHC to revitalize and maintain open space to the west of Ontario Lane.
- Secure midblock connections as identified in the St James Town Public Realm Plan.
- Monitor public life through a future Public Space Public Life study on Ontario Street.

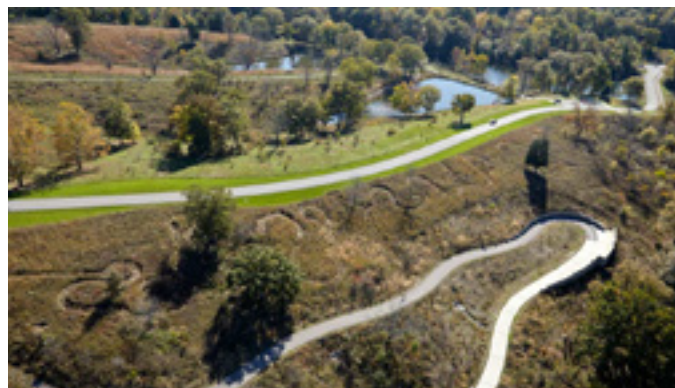
Cabbagetown-Riverdale



Cabbagetown-Riverdale, Toronto, Canada

Connect, enhance and improve Cabbagetown-Riverdale by responding to its unique location overlooking the Don River Valley, respecting its heritage character and integrating the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces to support and improve community

life. Cabbagetown-Riverdale offers the opportunity to provide new and better pedestrian and cycling connections into the Rosedale Valley and Don River Valley and to large existing park assets in Riverdale Park. Create new accessible connections into the Don



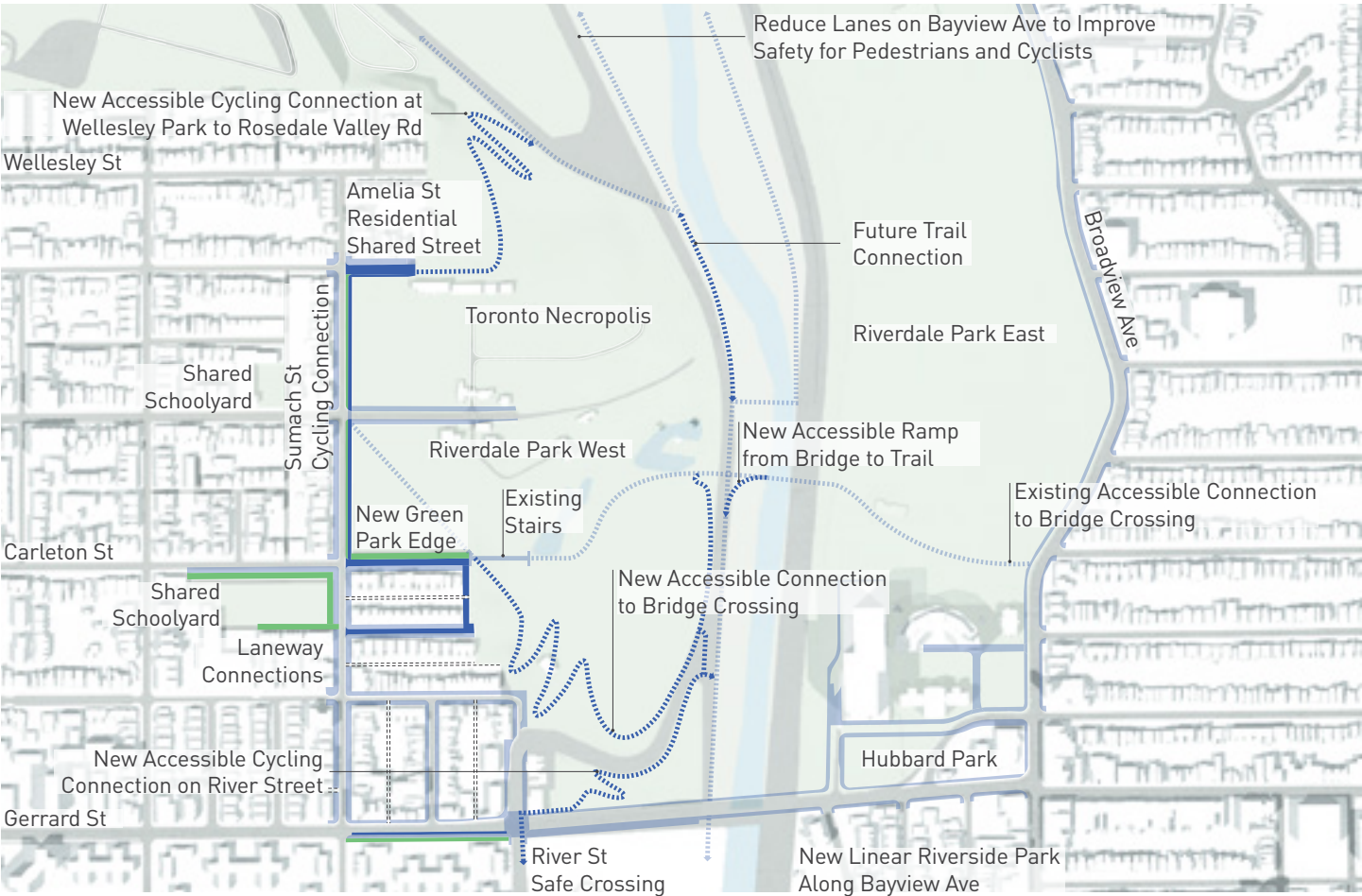
(right) The Parklands of Floyds Fork are linked by park roads, bridges and a regional multi-use trail system, all tracing the creek in an immersive natural experience, Louisville, United States



View to the Don River Valley and Downtown skyline from Riverdale Park East (photo by Brendan Stewart), Toronto, Canada

RiverTrail system from surrounding neighbourhoods. Re-imagine parks on the table land – such as Wellesley Park and Riverdale Farm – as gateways that invite residents, commuters and visitors to explore the Don River Valley landscape. Prioritize views, vantage points

and enhanced universal access to the unique wilderness experience of the Don River Valley.



Cabbagetown-Riverdale, Proposed Concept Plan

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access
- Proposed trail connection
- Existing trail connection

(right) The BeltLine stitches surrounding neighbourhoods to 1,300 acres of parks and 33 miles of multi-use trails to create a regenerated regional landscape, Atlanta, United States



Goals

Connect, enhance and improve the Cabbagetown-Riverdale by responding to its unique location overlooking the Don Valley, respecting its heritage character and integrating the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces to create a Park District to support and improve community life.

- Improve pedestrian and cycling connections into the Rosedale Valley Lands and Don River Valley Ravine.
- Celebrate Indigenous cultures and histories of the Don Valley with a focus on creative place making and interpretation.
- Create a universally accessible multi-use trail system that connects Cabbagetown and Riverdale to the ravine.
- Re-imagine the Riverdale Park as a well-designed district park supporting community uses and recreation, as well as acting as a gateway to the ravine through improved physical and visual access.

Actions

- Undertake a Functional Design Study for Bayview Avenue with an emphasis on pedestrian safety and connectivity.
- Explore opportunities to improve pedestrian and cycling connections into Rosedale Valley at Wellesley Park and along River Street to Bayview Avenue up to Rosedale Valley Road.
- Improve new green park edges, internal circulation, access points and universally accessible trails at Riverdale Park West.
- Regenerate the park and street urban forest canopy.

The Grange / John Street / Roundhouse Park



Revitalized Grange Park, Toronto, Canada

Create a clear, expanded, improved and connected public realm focused on John Street from Grange Park to Queens Quay, integrating Roundhouse Park and the future Rail Deck Park. Create a significant pedestrian destination which responds to and enhances the civic,

cultural and entertainment significance of the area. At the north end of the corridor, extend the 'reach' of John Street by improving and expanding St Patrick's Square and integrating surrounding streets and open spaces with the revitalized Grange Park. At the south

- Hardscape public realm project
- Green public realm project
- Sidewalks and safe crossings
- Servicing and vehicular access

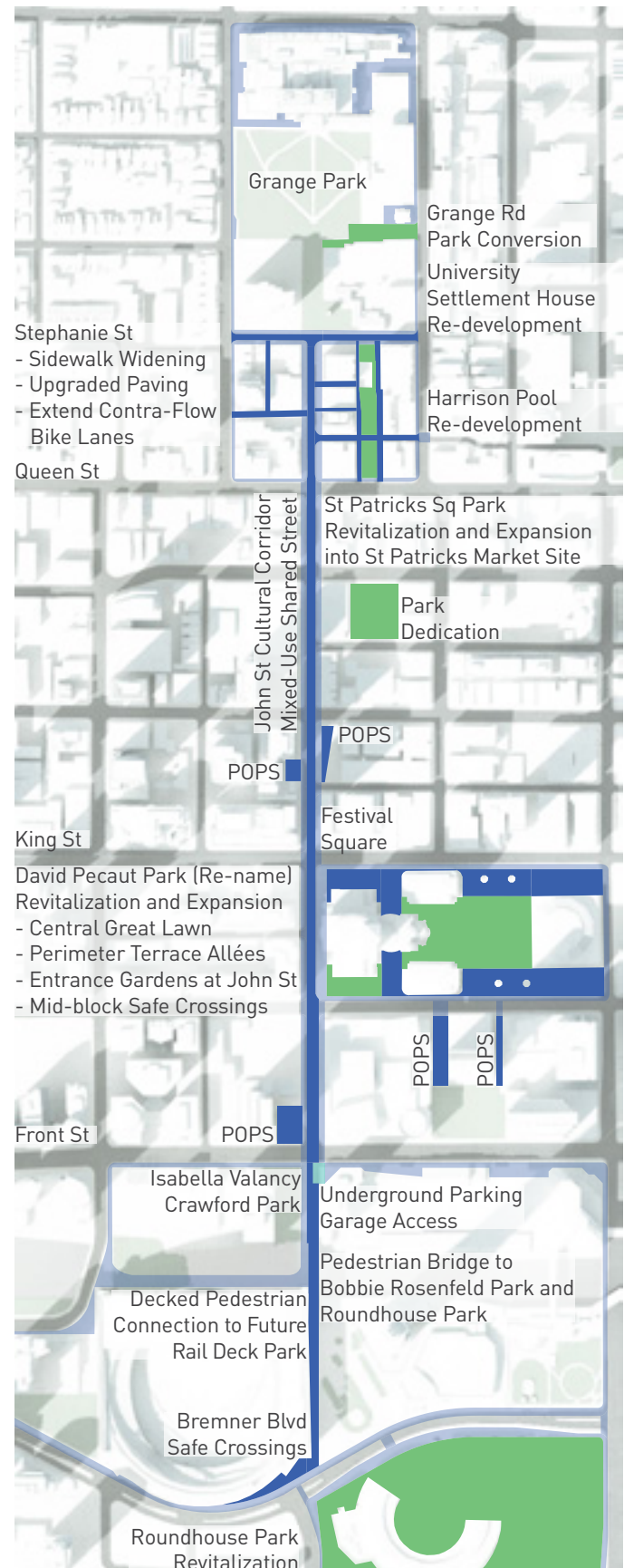


Improve connectivity to St Patrick's Square – in the short term by leveraging the laneways to draw people into the park, and in the long term by expanding the park south to front onto Queen Street, Toronto, Canada

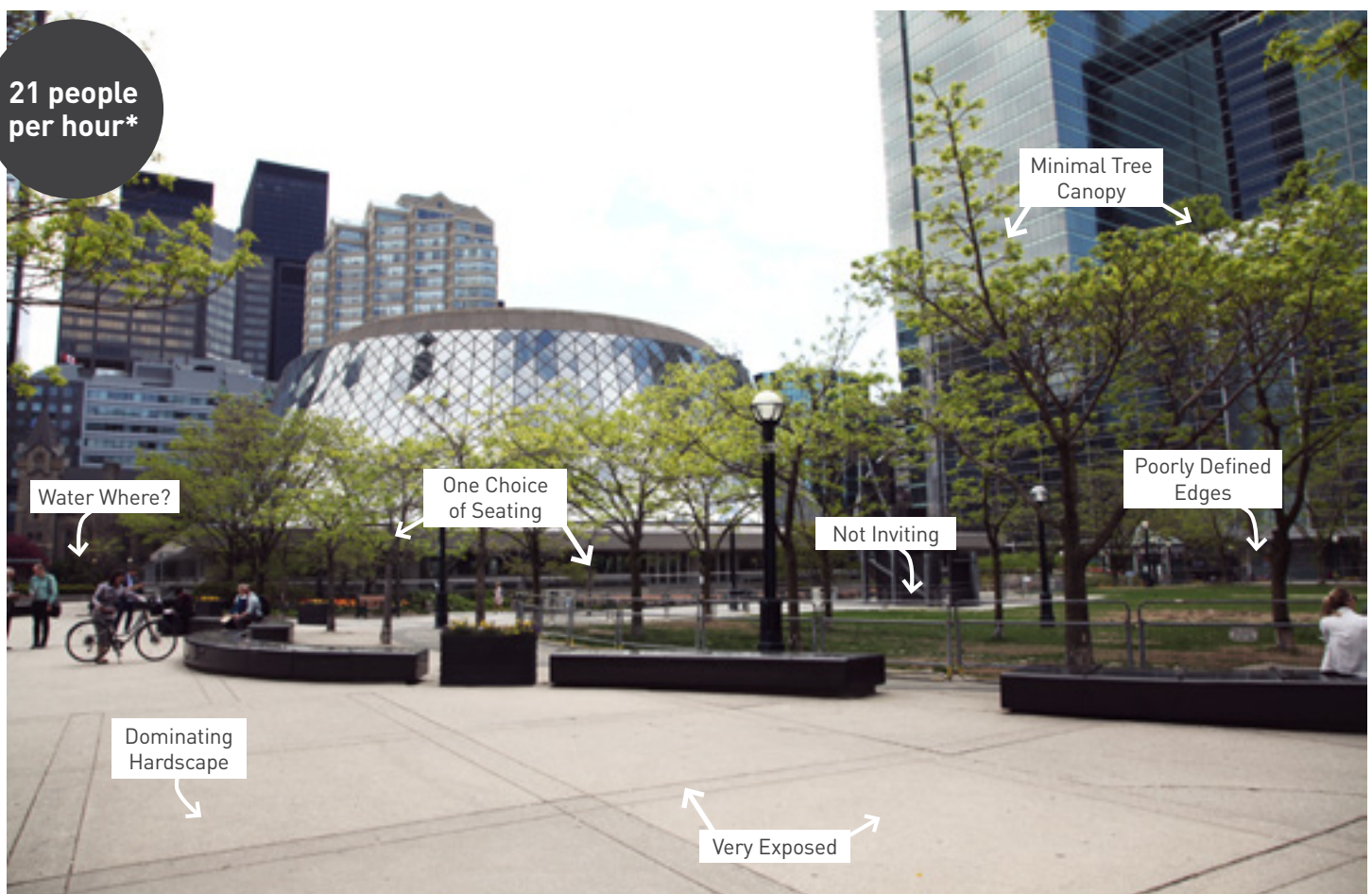


Design for the John Street Cultural Corridor, Toronto, Canada

end of the corridor, enhance north-south and east-west connections by integrating Roundhouse Park and the future Rail Deck Park, creating a cohesive, connected and pedestrian-oriented public realm for the district.



The Grange | John Street | Roundhouse Park, Proposed Concept Plan

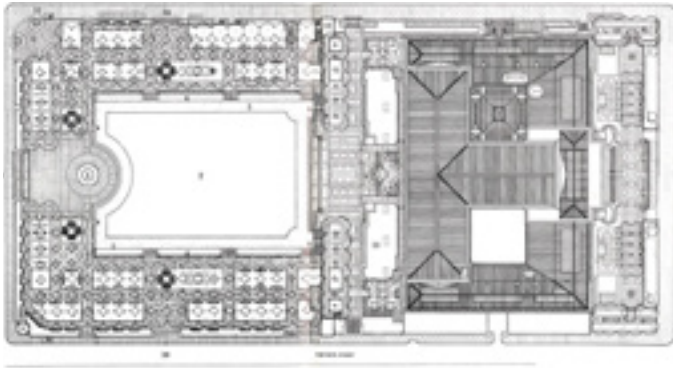


David Pecaut Square, a significant civic space in the core, currently attracts limited users during 'off-peak' (non-lunch-hour, non-event) hours, Toronto, Canada

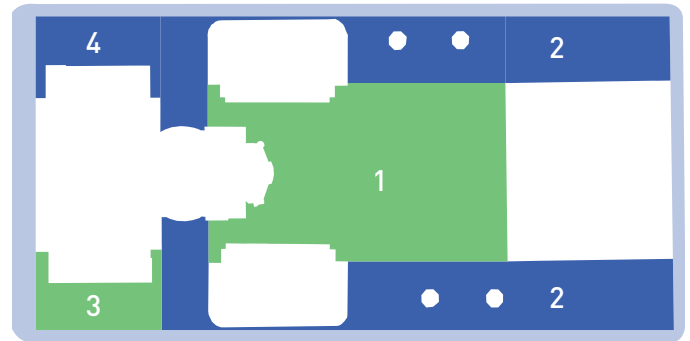
Create a civic destination elevating David Pecaut Square as a public space renowned on a national scale for its design, programming and civic life. David Pecaut Square is currently underperforming and presents a significant opportunity to create 'Toronto's Bryant

Park'. The park should be a signature destination in the Downtown, offering an inviting landscape experience and urban resource, available and adaptable for multiple urban uses. Consider public realm improvements that focus on expanding and revitalizing the park to include

**Based on the PSPL Survey, on average, 21 people per hour spend time in David Pecaut Square, compared to 86 people per hour in Yorkville Park*



Plan of Bryant Park, the protected great lawn is a useful model for David Pecaut Square, which lacks defined edges and inviting interior spaces, New York City, United States



Proposed concept plan of David Pecaut Park, featuring a central enclosed lawn (1), perimeter terrace allées (2), entrance gardens (3), and Festival Square (4)



A model for David Pecaut Park, Bryant Park's grounds include formal gardens, graceful allées, three terraces, and Midtown's widest stretch of lawn, providing an enclosed and intimate setting for public life to unfold, New York City, United States

an entrance plaza and gardens, lush perimeter terrace tree planting, a central enclosed great lawn, public art elements and a revitalized water feature. Consider re-naming the square 'David Pecaut Park' to convey its transformation as an inviting green oasis in the

heart of the Downtown. David Pecaut Park should be renowned on a national – even international – scale as an exceptional civic destination and gathering space for residents, workers, and visitors, at all hours of the day, during all four seasons.

(right) A model for the John Street Cultural Corridor, from Grange Park to Queens Quay, New Road, Brighton, England



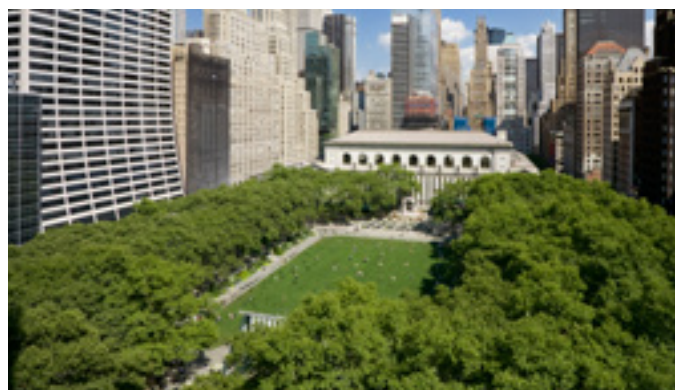
Goals for Grange Park / John Street / Roundhouse

Create a clear, expanded, improved and connected public realm focused on John Street from Grange Park to Queens Quay, integrating Roundhouse Park and the future Rail Deck Park, creating a significant pedestrian destination which responds to and enhances the civic, cultural and entertainment significance of the area.

- Improve John street as a setting for the significant cultural assets along the street – AGO, OCAD, NFB, CBC, Bell Media-CTV, TIFF, Rogers Centre, Convention Centre, CN Tower and Ripley's Aquarium – and as a place for public events, parades and street festivals related to these as well as day-to-day activities.
- Improve the role of John Street as a connector and promenade for pedestrians between the significant parks and open spaces at the two ends of the street and along the street including Grange Park, McCaul Park, Butterfield Park, David Pecaut Square, Round House Park, Isabella Valancy Crawford Park and Bobbie Rosenfeld Park.
- Integrate and improve access to the city-owned facilities and open spaces adjacent to Grange Park – Harrison Pool, St. Patrick Square, St. Patrick Market and University Settlement House – into the park district.
- Re-think Grange Road to expand the character and pedestrian amenity of Grange Park and improve its connections to McCaul Street and Butterfield Park.

Actions

- Implement the John Street Revitalization initiative.
- Pilot public realm improvements to the surrounding laneways.
- Explore opportunity to increase the sidewalk width on Stephanie Street, and extend the cycling contra-flow lands from John to McCaul.
- Explore the opportunity to expand and improve the pedestrian character around St. Patrick Square and the laneways, and to better connect the series of public spaces from Queen Street through St. Patrick Market to St. Patrick Square.
- Extend the proposed John Street streetscape details south of Front Street.
- Prioritize improvements to Festival Square (south-east corner of the King-John intersection).



(right) Aerial view of Bryant Park, a green oasis in the heart of Manhattan, New York City, United States

Goals for David Pecaut Square

Create a civic destination elevating David Pecaut Square as a public space renowned on a national scale for its design, programming and civic life.

- Integrate the central open space of David Pecaut Square with other public spaces on the block and create a cohesive public realm that has legible connections and circulation with the PATH and spaces associated with the heritage building of Roy Thompson Hall.
- Modify where appropriate the building edges to provide ground floor uses, doors and clear glazing which will promote the use of the Square and other open spaces on the block.
- Reinforce and support the square and the Duncan Street corridor from King Street to Wellington Street with active ground floor uses.
- Provide clarity of shape of the square through design, programming and improvements to the built edges of the space to promote its use while not compromising its scale and functionality.
- Balance active programming with designs and amenity which promotes day-to-day passive use by the local community (residents and workers).
- Modify the square to allow it to support, in a resilient manner, the volume of users during programmed events.
- Provide the appropriate level of maintenance that reflects the ambitious programming.
- Improve relationship with surrounding streets.
- Explore formalising mid-block pedestrian crossings on King and Wellington to improve connections to and from the surrounding area.

Actions

- Undertake a feasibility study and develop a master plan for David Pecaut Square to determine how it should be programmed, operated and funded to meet civic and local needs and consider initiating a design competition.
- Explore programming that celebrates the cultural corridor and relationship to John Street.
- Align improvements with repairs / upgrades to underground parking garage structure to the building footprint, ground floor uses to promote use.
- Design with appropriate materials that can withstand the intensity of programming.
- Expand and improve the central great lawn (making it great) as a setting for public gathering.
- Define the space with lush perimeter terrace allées.
- Create intimate gardens in areas not required for circulation and the main gathering space.
- Integrate public art and consider a civic water feature.
- Add mid-block pedestrian crossings on King Street and Wellington Street at access points into David Pecaut Square.
- Revisit the Duncan Street Corridor as a significant street which connects Queen Street to Front Street, and explore ways to make this corridor more clear and celebrate it as a quiet north-south pedestrian connector and important spine of the expanding OCAD University campus.

Ryerson University



Ryerson Campus Public Realm Plan, Toronto, Canada

Work with Ryerson to inform and advance the Ryerson Campus Public Realm Plan to create an identifiable, connected, cohesive, welcoming and inspiring public realm that serves the needs of the Ryerson University student body, faculty members, visitors and the

surrounding community. Prioritize the seamless integration of campus spaces with surrounding streets and open spaces, including Yonge Street, Bond Street, Yonge-Dundas Square and the Garden District.



(right) Gould Street, Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada

Goals

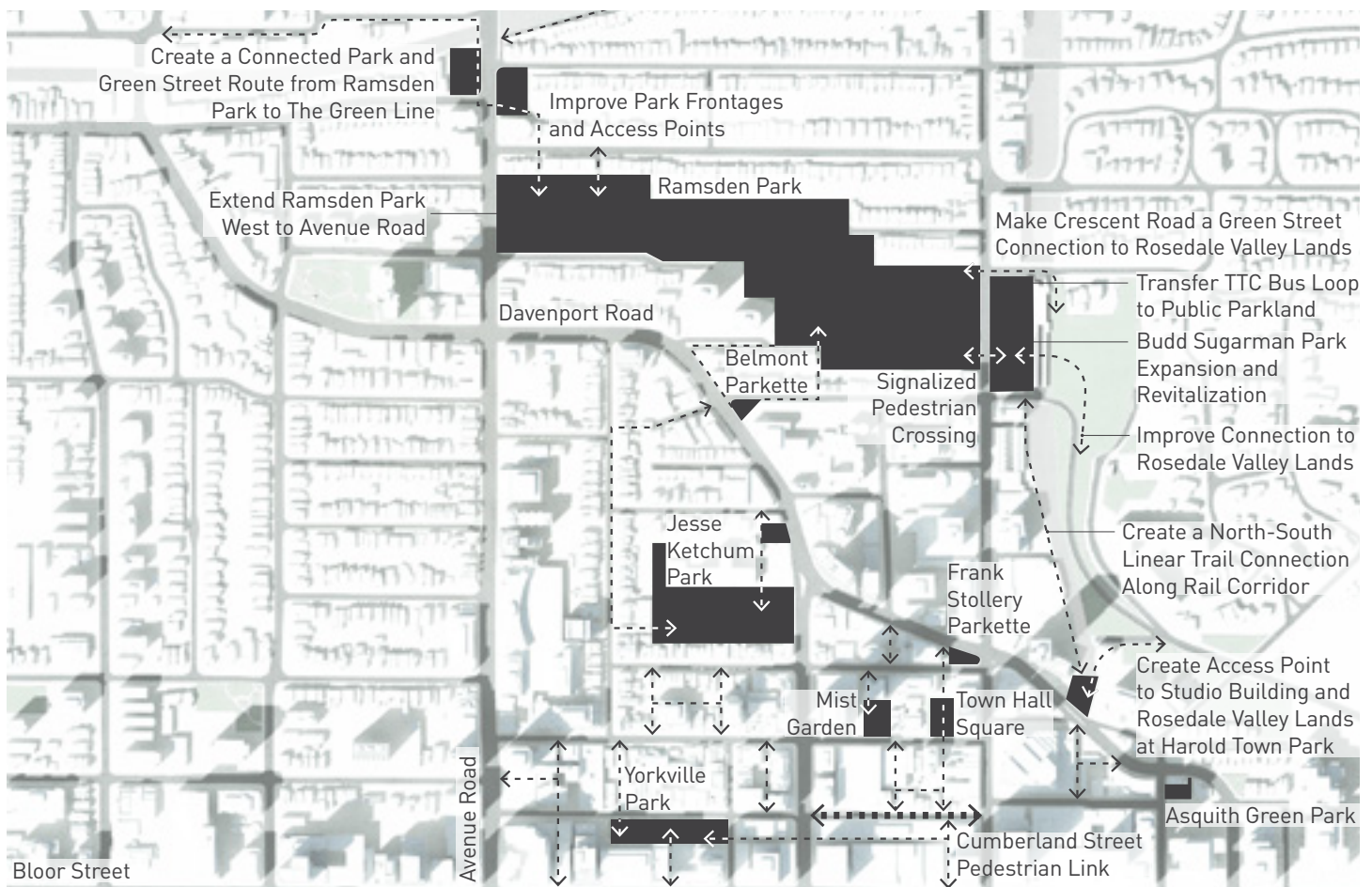
Create an identifiable, connected, cohesive, welcoming and inspiring public realm that serves the needs of the Ryerson University student body, faculty members, visitors and the surrounding community.

- Prioritize the seamless integration of the Ryerson Campus with the surrounding streets and open spaces.
- Revisit Bond Street as a street with a cluster of significant heritage assets for renewal in a manner that provides a setting for heritage assets and integrates into the campus master plan.

Actions

- Continue to monitor and work with Ryerson to inform and advance their Campus Public Realm Plan.
- Assess the need to improve streets and parks in the campus area to support student life.

Ramsden Park-Yorkville

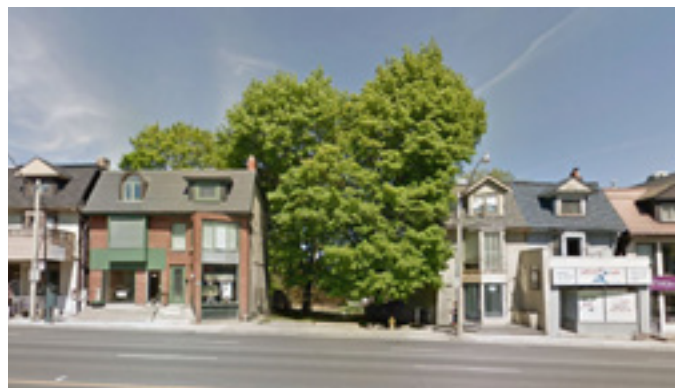


Ramsden Park-Yorkville, Toronto, Canada

Enhance and improve the connections between Yorkville and Ramsden Park to integrate the two areas into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole, responding to the unique character and identity of each area and the various communities that they serve. Connect the

northern portion of the Core Circle from the Green Line to Ramsden Park to the Rosedale Valley. Improve park access points and enhance park edge conditions and frontages on adjacent streets.

(right) Ramsden Park at Avenue Road – explore options to extend the park west to create a prominent park frontage on Avenue Road, Toronto, Canada



Goals

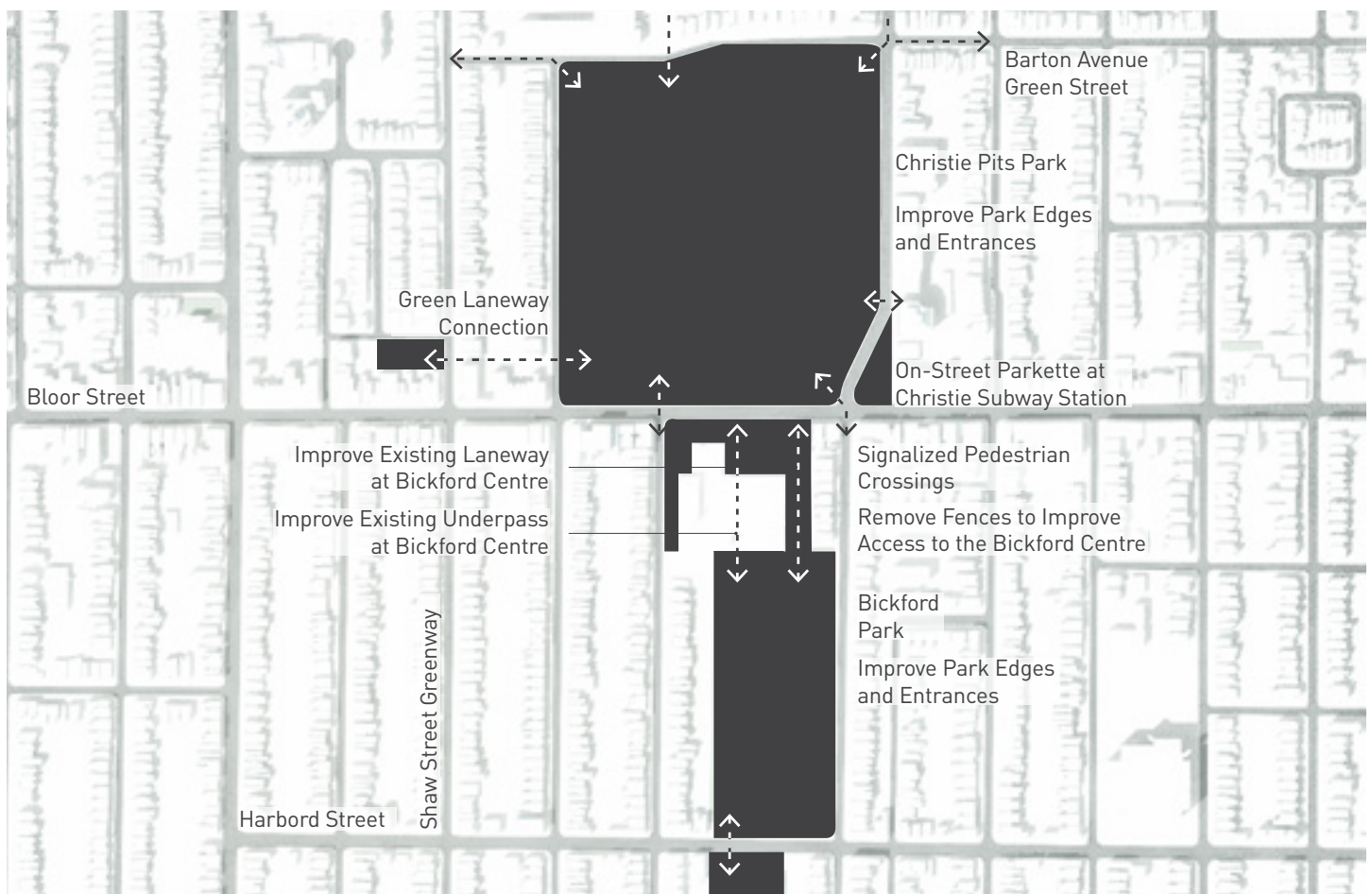
Enhance and improve the connections between Yorkville and Ramsden Park to integrate the two areas into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole, responding to the unique character and identity of each area and the various communities that they serve.

- Incorporate Ramsden Park into the northern section of the Core Circle, creating better connections to the west and expanding the park system to the east toward Rosedale Station.
- Improve the parks and public realm connections between Ramsden Park and Yorkville, forming an easily accessible and legible system.

Actions

- Revitalize Budd Sugarman Park and explore opportunities to improve the park relationship with the subway station frontage.
- Study the potential for a clear connection into the Core Circle at the Rosedale Subway Station.
- Revitalize Harold Town Square to celebrate its relationship with 'The Studio Building' (the former Group of Seven studio) and Rosedale Valley, creating a physical and visual connection to both assets.
- Explore the creation of a green street route to the Green Line.
- Consider improving Crescent Road as a green street connection.

'The Pits' (Christie-Bickford)



Christie Pits and Bickford Park, Toronto, Canada

Integrate, expand and improve the public spaces within the Park District: Christie Pits, Bickford Park and Art Eggleton Park as well as the Bickford Centre and Montrose yards. Create a cohesive and connected district that responds to the unique topographic

character, identity and community needs. Connect Christie Pits and Bickford Park to Bloor Street and to the broader parks system along the Garrison Creek alignment, forming the west portion of the Core Circle.

(right) Hafenpark's atmospheric juxtaposition of vibrant sports and recreation activity spaces and calm, quiet areas for the contemplation of nature embodies "the public park of the 21st century", Frankfurt, Germany



Goals

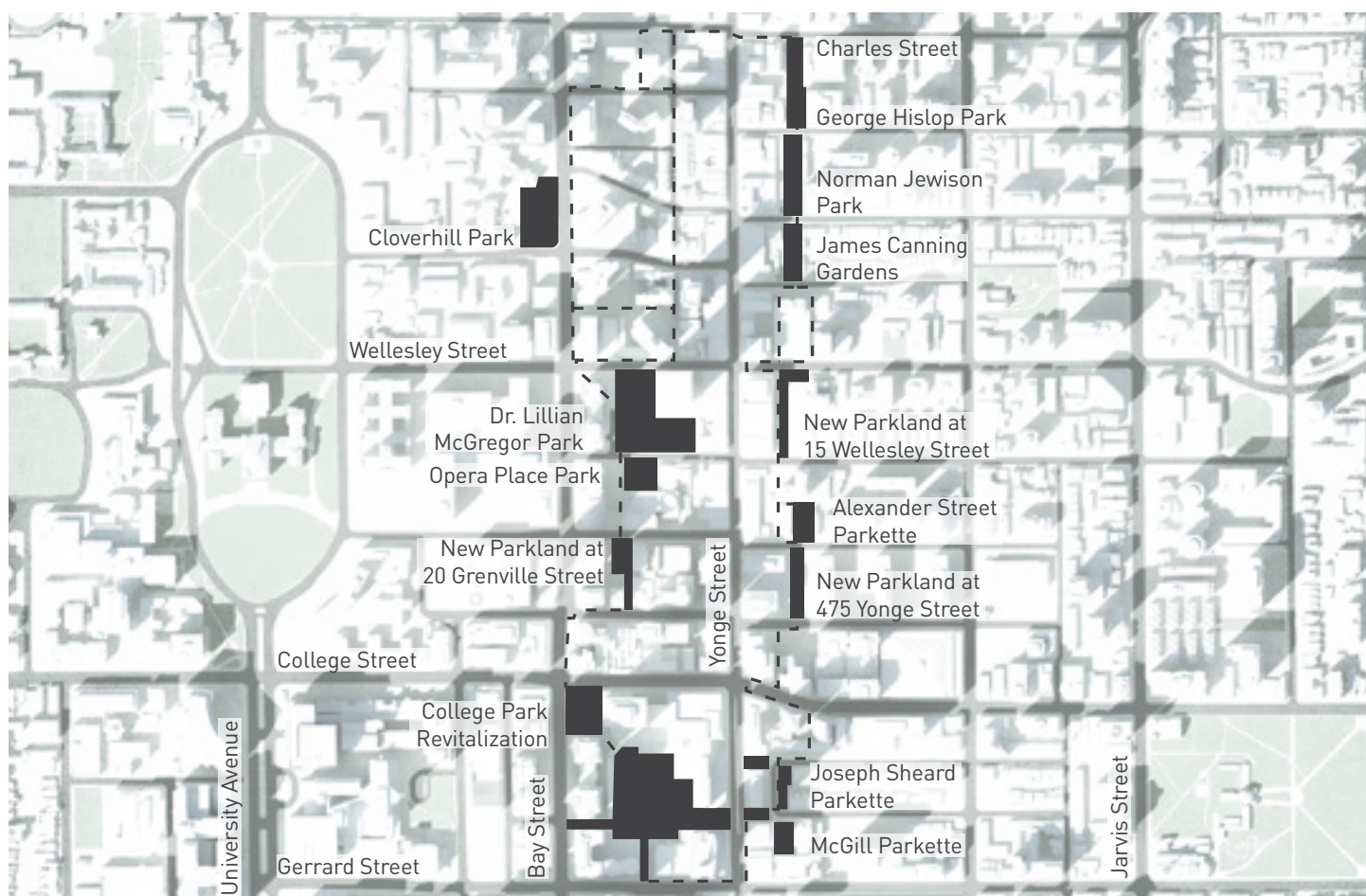
Integrate, expand and improve the public spaces within the park district: Christie Pits, Bickford Park and Art Eggleton Park as well as the Bickford Centre and Montrose yards. Create a cohesive and connected district that responds to the unique topographic character, identity and community needs.

- Undertake a program and design review of Christie Pits, Bickford Park, Art Eggleton Park and Bickford Centre as a single park with a broad range of programs, designs and experiences.
- Integrate the unique topographic memory of Garrison Creek and its valley.
- Connect the Christie Pits to the cycling network along Bloor Street to the south and residential neighbourhoods to the east, west and north.
- Improve the park edge conditions and access points on Christie Street, Grace Street, Barton Avenue, Harbord Street and Crawford Street.
- Assess the pedestrian crossings in the Park District to support and improve its integration including between Bloor Street and the Bickford Centre.

Actions

- Explore opportunities to create a stronger relationship between Christie Pits and Christie Street, Bickford Park and Grace Street, with a focus on creating a park-like experience for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists.
- Improve access into the park with a focus on the east and north edges.
- Explore opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience along Barton Avenue (north edge of Christie Pits), with generous sidewalks that support pedestrian activity.
- Improve circulation within the park to promote active movement with a park circuit using the three connected parks.
- Undertake a Public Life Study to better understand how Christie Pits, The Bickford Centre open space, and Bickford Park are used as a system. Use this to inform a Master Plan for the consolidated parks and schoolyard.
- Explore the feasibility of integrating the Park District into the Core Circle with pedestrian and cycling networks at the north and south, in particular along Christie Street and Grace Street south to Montrose Avenue.

Bay Cloverhill Loop



Bay Cloverhill Loop, Toronto, Canada

Create a Bay Cloverhill Park District Loop by connecting the existing system of parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the area, to form a complete pedestrian realm. The improvements will reflect the unique character of the district. The Bay Cloverhill Loop Park District

includes new parkland, street and lane bricking, sidewalk widenings, improved crossings, pedestrian lighting, public art and other public realm improvements to create a legible, cohesive and connected public realm.

(right) Sky Gilbert Lane connects Alexander Street Parkette to Maitland Terrace as part of the Bay Cloverhill Loop, Toronto, Canada



Goals

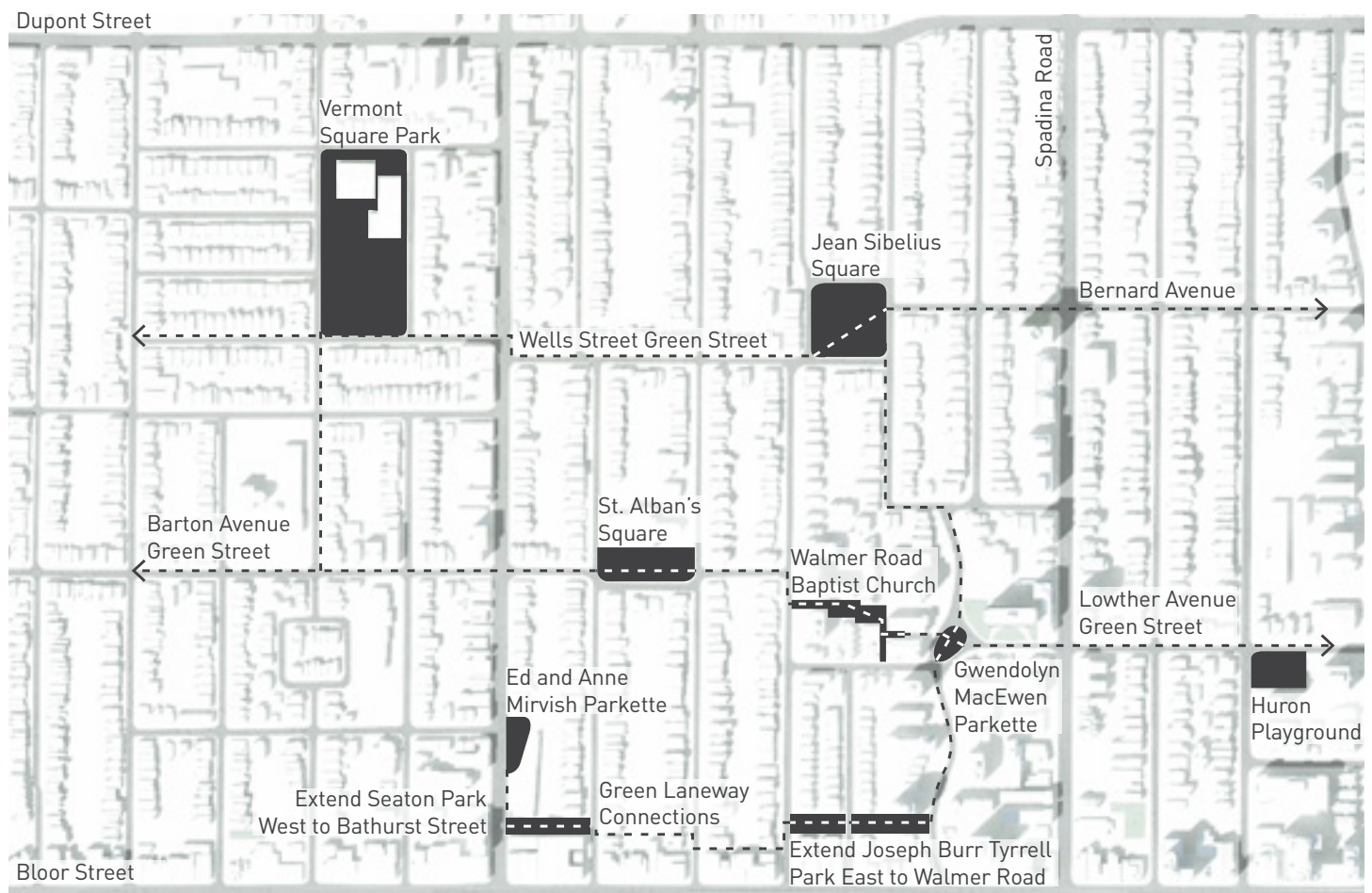
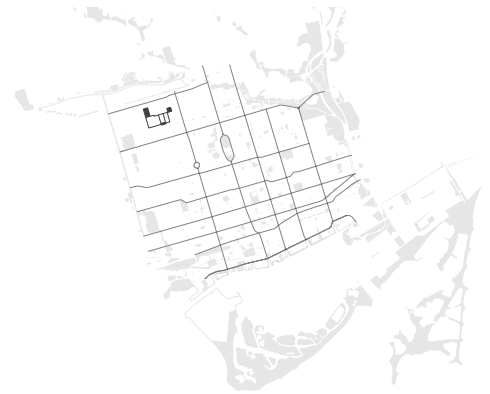
Create a Bay Cloverhill Park District Loop by connecting the existing system of parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the area, to form a complete loop. The loop will reflect the unique character of the district.

- Complete the Bay Cloverhill Loop as a coherent network of parks and open spaces providing a range of programs and experiences responding to local need and local character.
- Expand the parks and open space sequence with investment in strategic new open spaces to provide a legible, cohesive and connected public realm.
- Improve the park edge conditions on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.

Actions

- Support the Bay Cloverhill Loop, as detailed in the North Downtown Yonge Park and Pedestrian Promenade Loop: 20 Year Plan (Bay Cloverhill Community Association, 2016).

The Annex



The Annex, Toronto, Canada

Extend the public life of neighbourhood parks into surrounding streets and open spaces to establish new park, green street and laneway connections. Reinforce pedestrian and cycling network connections. Pursue partnerships with the University of Toronto and Toronto

District School Board (TDSB) to share space.



(right) St. Alban's Square, Toronto, Canada

Goals

- Extend the public life of parks into surrounding streets, open spaces and laneways.
- Reinforce pedestrian and cycling network connections.
- Connect the park system with green streets.
- Seek opportunities to improve for pedestrian use and share open space with School Boards.
- Improve the park edge conditions on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.

Actions

- Realize new park connections between existing parks with streetscape enhancements.
- Identify laneway improvements to the lanes directly north of Bloor Street along the subway corridor to promote safe use by pedestrians without comprising service function.
- Continue to support Toronto Parking Authority and community partnerships to share public parking for public life and programmed events such as the Farmer's Market.
- Regenerate the park and street urban forest canopy, exploring opportunities to promote tree planting on private properties.

Kensington Market-Alexandra Park



Alexandra Park and Scadding Court, Toronto, Canada

Enhance and improve the connections between Kensington Market, Alexandra Park and Scadding Court to integrate the areas into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole, responding to the unique character and identity of each area and the various communities

that they serve. Explore opportunities to make better use of small under-utilized parks and public spaces in the district. In Kensington Market, maintain fine grain frontages and prioritize high volumes of pedestrians in the design of streets.

(right) *Pedestrian Sunday in Kensington Market, Toronto, Canada*



Goals

Enhance and improve the connections between Kensington Market, Alexandra Park and Scadding Court to integrate the areas into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole, responding to the unique character and identity of each area and the various communities that they serve.

- Support the vibrant and engaged community through a revitalization of Alexandra Park and Scadding Court.
- Continue to create a clear, cohesive and connected public realm in Scadding Court and Alexandra Park.
- Support the already established night-market at Scadding Court and other programming.
- In Kensington Market, prioritize pedestrians in the design of streets.
- When opportunities arise, extend dead-end streets to through-streets with street extensions, midblock walkways or new parks to improve permeability and safety of neighbourhood.
- Make better use of small underutilized public spaces in the district.
- Seek opportunities to improve for pedestrian use and share open space with School Boards.
- Encourage public buildings including Toronto Western Hospital and schoolyards to provide landscaped edges to their sites and landscaped open space and public circulation that integrates into the larger pattern. Minimize surface parking lots for these uses.

Actions

- Improve the street edge of Alexandra Park to Bathurst Street.
- Undertake a Scadding Court and Alexandra Park Master Plan that creates a clear vision for this community hub, with consideration of the following:
 - Connecting, expanding, and improving the public realm between Scadding Court and Alexandra Park;
 - Improving the street edge of Alexandra Park along Bathurst Street and Dundas Street integrating the streetscape into the larger park design;
 - Creating a Dundas Street frontage for Alexandra Park; and
 - Promoting active movement by developing a park circuit in Alexander Park.
- Undertake a Park District Plan for Alexandra Park.
- Experiment with pilot projects and public space activations.
- Continue to monitor public life in Kensington Market and Alexandra Park.
- Revitalize parkettes in the Kensington Market neighbourhood.

The Garrison Parks-Fort York



The Fort York and Garrison Parks System, Toronto, Canada

Create a connected, cohesive and legible parks and public realm network that forms the civic focus for the south-west portion of the Core Circle. Realize the Lower Garrison Parks Network. Revitalize Trinity Bellwoods and Stanley Park, and explore opportunities to interpret

and recognize the natural heritage and significance of Garrison Creek in Stanley Park and the Stanley Park Expansion.



(right) Mouth of the Creek Park, Toronto, Canada

Goals

Create a connected, cohesive and legible parks and public realm network that forms the civic focus for the south-west portion of the Core Circle.

- Integrate Trinity Bellwoods Park and Stanley Park into the west side of the Core Circle with improved pedestrian and cycling networks linked to the continuous core circle route.
- Advance the implementation of the Lower Garrison Parks Network.
- Revitalize Trinity Bellwoods Park and Stanley Park.
- Explore opportunities to interpret and recognize the natural heritage and significance of Garrison Creek in Stanley Park and Stanley Park Expansion.
- Improve the park edge conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.

Actions

- Undertake a Park District study to create a clear and compelling Lower Garrison Parks Network.
- Undertake a revitalization study and develop a management plan to address the significant intensity of use of Trinity Bellwoods Park.
- Explore opportunities to interpret and recognize the natural heritage and significance of Garrison Creek in Stanley Park and its future potential expansion.
- Improve the park edge conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.
- Monitor and update the Fort York Public Realm master plan and integrate with the Park District study for Lower Garrison Parks Network
- Improve the missing pedestrian and cyclist connections from the rail corridor bridge to Trinity Bellwoods Park.

Bathurst Quay-Coronation Park-Ontario Place



Bathurst Quay, Coronation Park and Ontario Place, Toronto, Canada

Create a Western Waterfront Park District that integrates parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the Bathurst Quay, Coronation Park and Ontario Place areas into a cohesive and connected park system that recognizes and responds to the unique character, role

and use for each area. Revitalize district parks and open spaces and connect Queens Quay to the parks west of Bathurst Street (such as Little Norway Park and Coronation Park) with an equivalent elevated quality of design, materials and execution.

(right) Vision for a cohesive and connected Western Waterfront promenade and parks system, Toronto, Canada



Goals

Create a Western Waterfront Park District that integrates parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the Bathurst Quay, Coronation Park, and Ontario Place areas into a cohesive and connected park system that recognizes and responds to the unique character, role and use for each area.

- Revitalize Bathurst Quay, rationalizing the use of public space and built heritage assets, while balancing the transportation needs of local residents and waterfront visitors with the island airport activities
- Enhance connections between Queens Quay and the Martin Goodman Trail to the parks west of Bathurst Street (such as Little Norway Park, Stadium Road Park and Coronation Park) with an equivalent elevated quality of design, materials and execution.
- Improve the visual and physical relationship of the Park District to the water's edge.

Actions

- Revitalize Little Norway Park and Stadium Road Park (North and South), and integrate with Coronation Park, to provide a broad range of experiences and programs.
- Undertake a master plan and develop a management plan for Coronation Park.
- Explore partnership opportunities with the local School Boards and community centre to improve and share public outdoor space.
- Identify cultural and community-focused programming opportunities for planned new public open spaces on the Canada Malting Property.
- Continue dockwall rehabilitation efforts along the full length of the water's edge.
- Per Parks & Recreation Facilities Master Plan, commence detailed investigation of possible location for Waterfront West indoor pool facility.
- Explore public realm and open space improvements to the under-utilized Marina Quay, including possible Portland Slip pedestrian link between Marina Quay and Eireann Quay.

West Rail District



West Rail District, Toronto, Canada

Integrate into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the West Rail District, responding to the unique character, identity and community needs. Support the revitalization of Wellington Place as a Green Street and realize other

park, green street and laneway connections between the triangle of heritage parks in King Street West: Clarence Square, Victoria Memorial Square Park and St Andrew's Playground.

(right) Hackescher Hof, a model for King Street West's latent network of laneways and courtyards and their potential to invite intimate midblock discovery, Berlin, Germany



Goals

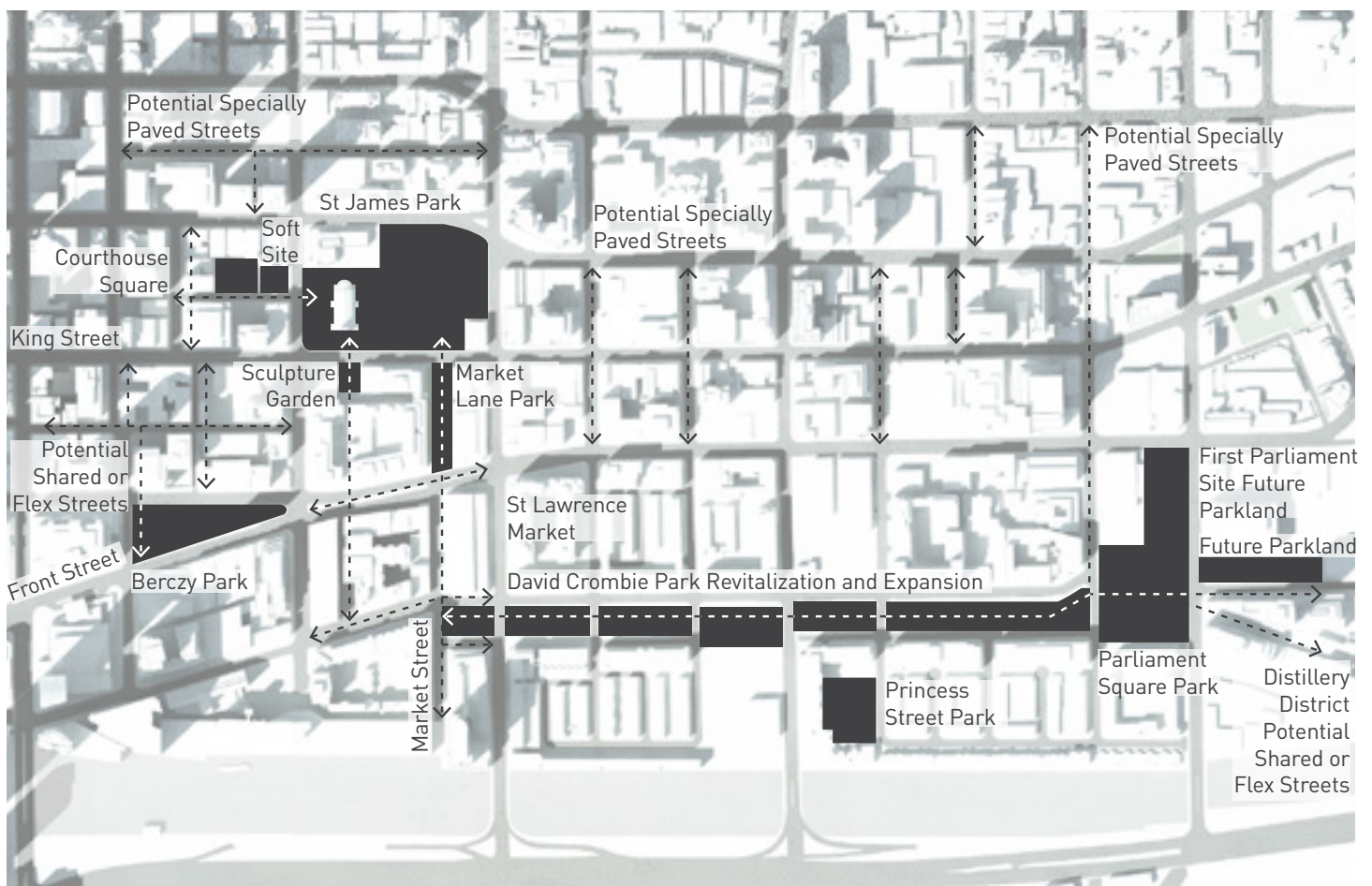
Integrate into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the West Rail District, responding to the unique character, identity and community needs.

- Support the revitalization of Wellington Place and realize other park, green street and laneway connections between the triangle of heritage parks in King Street West: Clarence Square, Victoria Memorial Square Park and St Andrew's Playground.

Actions

- Revitalize park, green street and laneway connections between existing parks along King Street.
- Prioritize Brant Street from Wellington Place to St Andrew's Playground as a prime park connector.
- Improve the park edge conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.

Old Town-St Lawrence-Distillery



St Lawrence Market Neighbourhood, Toronto, Canada

Integrate into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the Old Town St Lawrence-Distillery areas, responding to the unique character, identity, role and community needs. Expand David Crombie Park and integrate

adjacent streets, schoolyards and open spaces into a cohesive green link from Market Street to Parliament Street and the Distillery District, building on the unique character of the district.



(right) Revitalized Berczy Park, Toronto, Canada

Goals

Integrate into a coherent, cohesive and connected whole the discrete parks, streetscapes and open spaces in the Old Town St Lawrence-Distillery areas, responding to the unique character, identity, role and community needs.

- Realize the ideas proposed in the St. Lawrence Market BIA Master Plan, exploring opportunities for special, shared or flex streets and an enhanced public realm in the Heritage Conservation District.
- Expand and improve David Crombie Park and adjacent streets, school yards and open spaces into a cohesive and connected green link from Market Street in the west to the First Parliament Site and the Distillery District in the east.
- Improve the park edge conditions for pedestrians on adjacent streets.
- Improve park access points to create strong identity and social places.

Actions

- Undertake a master plan for David Crombie Park.
- Prepare Park District Plan for the Old St Lawrence and Distillery District area.
- Secure a new public park at First Parliament Site.
- Support the St. Lawrence Market BIA Master Plan.

Re-imagine local public spaces to better support community life and expand the utility of our parks and public realm system

LOCAL PLACE

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Local Places re-imagine local public spaces to better support community life and expand the utility of our parks and public realm system

Thinking creatively about local places is critical to capitalizing on our current land resources, shifting the balance toward a liveable city.

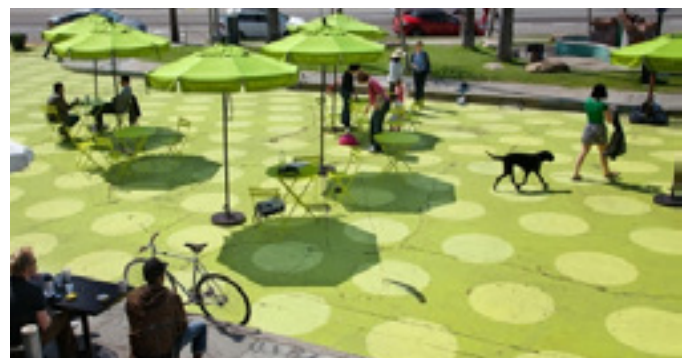
Local places provide an opportunity to re-imagine the physical design – and policy framework – of the constellation of small spaces that form our everyday experience of the public realm. Where we lack larger parks to gather, or where they are simply too far away to experience on a day to day basis, we must look to the places in between to support Toronto's public realm transformation.

In recent years, a new generation of parks and open spaces have sprung up in places that we had previously forgotten. These include playgrounds and skate parks beneath overpasses, urban beaches opposite industrial port facilities and linear parks alongside, underneath and even overtop of infrastructure corridors. There is untapped potential in the city's vacant lots, rail and hydro corridors, remnant infrastructure, spaces underneath overpasses, waterfront slips, Toronto Parking Authority lands, schoolyards, church yards and cemeteries. We must transform these spaces to better address the needs of a growing Downtown population.

Here is the opportunity to re-imagine the local places that form our everyday experience of the city that are not being used to their full potential. Through design, programming, and policy, these spaces can contribute to a more vibrant public realm at the local scale.



Park am Gleisdreieck, Berlin, Germany



LA DOT People St, Los Angeles, United States



Corporate Forecourt as Playground, Hamburg, Germany



- 1 *Parkettes*
- 2 *Laneways*
- 3 *Schoolyards*
- 4 *Churchyards*
- 5 *Cemeteries*
- 6 *POPS*
- 7 *Overlooked Places*

Torontonians appreciate fine grain, small urban spaces. Because of their small scale, these spaces can be responsive to local needs. This flexibility makes them a huge asset to the core’s neighbourhoods, which will continue to change as the population grows. Laneways, parkettes, and schoolyards are found in all Downtown neighbourhoods and hold immense untapped potential. These spaces are uniquely positioned to provide the urban qualities Torontonians value and to address some of the key public life challenges and opportunities that emerged from the Public Space Public Life Survey (*refer to companion document, Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan: Public Space Public Life Survey*). These local places can serve as the Downtown’s ‘test spaces’ for public life.



Over half of Toronto’s Quality Criteria uniquely relate to local places (Toronto Favourite Places Survey, 2016)

Parkettes



Sculpture Garden, Toronto, Canada

Programs to reclaim under-utilized spaces can give communities the tools to shape their neighbourhood and leverage existing open spaces. Local groups and collaborators can support parkettes to improve greenery and programming, and create safer spaces for all to use.

Churchyards / Cemeteries



Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, Canada

Churchyards and cemeteries can be stronger community assets by welcoming the public into their open spaces to host community events, serve as educational facilities, or become quiet leisure spaces that still respect and preserve heritage elements and the sanctity of the space.

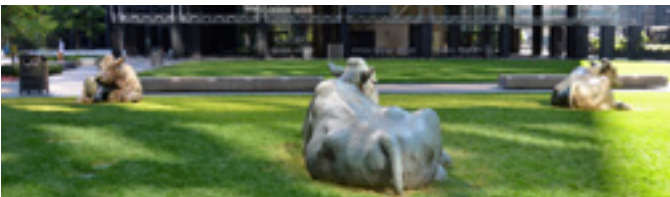
Laneways



Graffiti Alley, 'Love Your Laneway' event, by the Laneway Project, Toronto, Canada

Partnerships with local businesses and artists can transform these arteries into a secondary fine grain pedestrian network, providing new and exciting forms of public life.

POPS



The Pasture (POPS) at TD Centre, Toronto, Canada

POPS can offer accessible and inviting urban pockets in which to sit, relax and enjoy the urban landscape. When properly designed and implemented, POPS can enrich public life as a complement to publicly-owned space.

Schoolyards



Ogden Junior Public School, Toronto, Canada

Explore partnerships to improve existing infrastructure and policies to utilize schoolyards as public spaces during non-school hours. Such partnerships can make play space accessible to more families in the core, and enhance sustainability with environmentally innovative designs.

Overlooked Places



Underpass Park, Toronto, Canada

Overlooked places such as infrastructure corridors and spaces underneath overpasses provide opportunities to better connect parks and improve the public realm.

Parkettes

Parkettes are small spaces – less than 0.5 hectares. While they are well distributed throughout Downtown neighbourhoods, they are generally under-utilized. When understood as part of a larger parks system, parkettes represent an opportunity to improve and enhance the utility of the public realm network at the local scale.

In Downtown Toronto, parkettes that are well-programmed see excellent use. They demonstrate the latent potential of parkettes as important neighbourhood assets. Because of their small scale, parkettes can be nimble and adaptable to support local public life in ways that larger parks and natural features cannot. There is potential to re-imagine these spaces, improve their design, and bolster stewardship. Tapping this potential, however, demands a different process of design and operation, based on highly local needs. For example, a process that partners local groups and collaborators with a program facilitator and a young designer could foster specific, intentional designs for our parkettes, and

cultivate young design talent for our future city.

Many existing models can inform this type of process. In Toronto, the Public Space Incubator, administered by Park People, is providing access to funding and professional networks to support tangible pilots that test new ways to bring under-utilized public spaces to life. In New York City, the Plaza Program and GreenThumb Program re-imagine under-utilized spaces and work to ensure meaningful stewardship. These programs only provide capital funds to projects that have identified a local merchant, business or resident association to manage, maintain and program the space. The city provides material support and training, and local groups carry out the maintenance and programming. In San Francisco, the Pavement to Parks Program has formalized ways for the city to work with local communities to test new ideas in the public realm by testing design interventions before funding permanent improvements.

Incentivize local champions to manage and program parkettes with capital design support from the city.



Sculpture Garden, Toronto, Canada



(right) Margaret Fairley Parkette, Toronto, Canada



Showing parkettes in Downtown Toronto, Canada

Opportunity 1: Parkettes as places of discovery



Parkettes that spark neighbourhood curiosity and discovery through compelling installations, events, workshops and guest speakers.

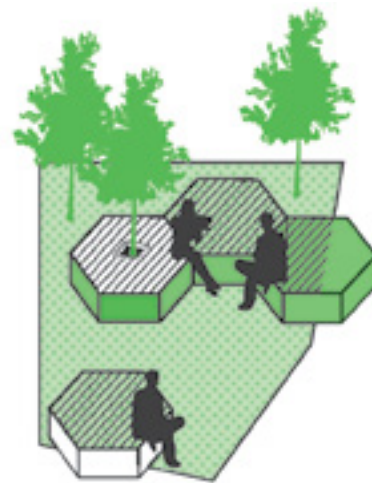
Getting It Done

Partner with nearby creative stakeholders, such as universities, museums, young designers or residents and park users. The key is to make the space feel renewed, compelling and accessible to all by rotating installations and communicating what is coming next.

Physical: Provide spaces for curated installations. Ensure that the edges of the parkette are welcoming in order to draw people in. Provide consistent and eye-catching communication design and signage.

Policy: Create incentives (e.g. adopt a parkette programs) and make it easier for cultural institutions to test programs and initiatives in these locations, either alone or in partnership with community groups.

Opportunity 2: Parkettes as 'green oases'



Parkettes that use lush greenery and horticulture to offer a rich, calm sensory experience in a small space can provide relaxed, contemplative spaces and act as places of respite.

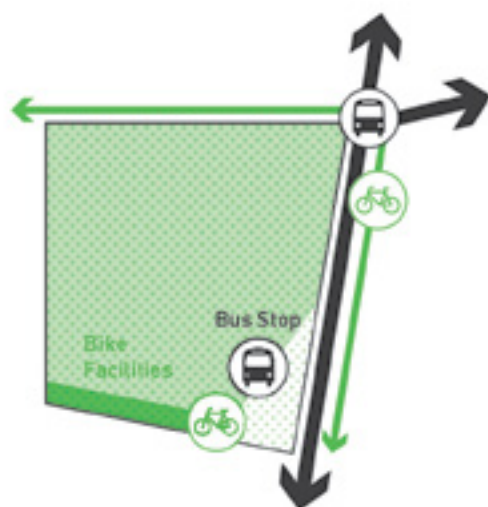
Getting It Done

Focus on creating lush, high quality spaces that are not overbuilt with hard surfaces. Maintain good sight-lines to ensure people feel comfortable enough to relax. Provide seating and furniture to encourage an inviting, accessible environment where people will want to linger.

Physical: Create a comfortable micro-climate with trees, canopies and awnings. Offer a variety of permanent and moveable seating (e.g. lounge seating, porch swings,). Ensure visibility with an at-grade perimeter and lighting.

Policy: Incentivize local stewardship, including programs where communities apply for 'green oases' elements. These elements can be provided by the City and programmed and maintained by residents.

Opportunity 3: Parkettes as 'waiting for transit' hubs



Parkettes that are nearby to transit stops and bike infrastructure can provide a better 'waiting for transit' experience for commuters.

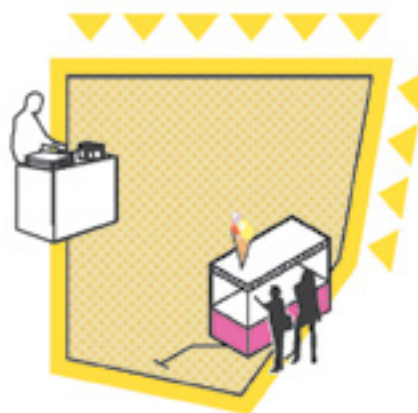
Getting It Done

Ensure that these parkettes are directly adjacent to transit stops to maximize comfort and convenience for commuters.

Physical: Provide clear signage. Create a comfortable micro-climate with canopies and awnings. Offer comfortable seating and services suitable for commuters (e.g. charging stations).

Policy: Coordinate investment, maintenance and oversight between the City Divisions and the Toronto Transit Commission.

Opportunity 4: Parkettes as evening destinations



Parkettes that provide space for a night out, filling the gap in public life Downtown after 6:00 p.m. by offering a communal space to spend time after school or work.

Getting It Done

Identify parkettes near hotspots (e.g. ice cream shops, restaurants). Install great lighting and provide programming for all ages. Be considerate of neighbours by having a 'lights out' time.

Physical: Develop a program of evening activities (e.g. movies in the park, ice cream kiosk, concert series). Provide creative and pedestrian-scaled lighting, and seating that promotes social interaction.

Policy: Create mechanisms to document and act on community interest and demand for programming. Streamline permits for users or establish a City-led program to activate parkettes at night based on community interest and demand.

NYC Plaza Program – New York City

To ensure that all New Yorkers live within a 10-minute walk of quality public open space, the Department of Transportation (DOT) created the Plaza Program to transform underused streets into active public spaces. DOT works with selected organizations to create neighbourhood plazas that are vibrant, social public spaces. Today, there are 61 plazas in all five boroughs.



Gansvoort Plaza – New York City, United States

GreenThumb – New York City

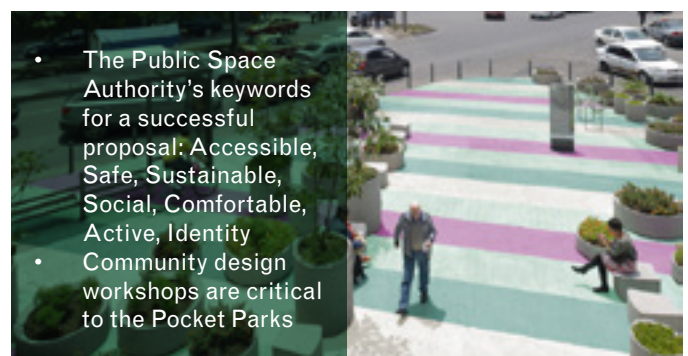
GreenThumb was launched in the 1970s in response to New York's financial crisis. The crisis left the city with abandoned public and private lots. Under GreenThumb, volunteers transformed these vacant lots into community gardens. The gardens are managed by community members and act as an important shared resource in dense neighbourhoods.



The Creative Little Garden – New York City, United States

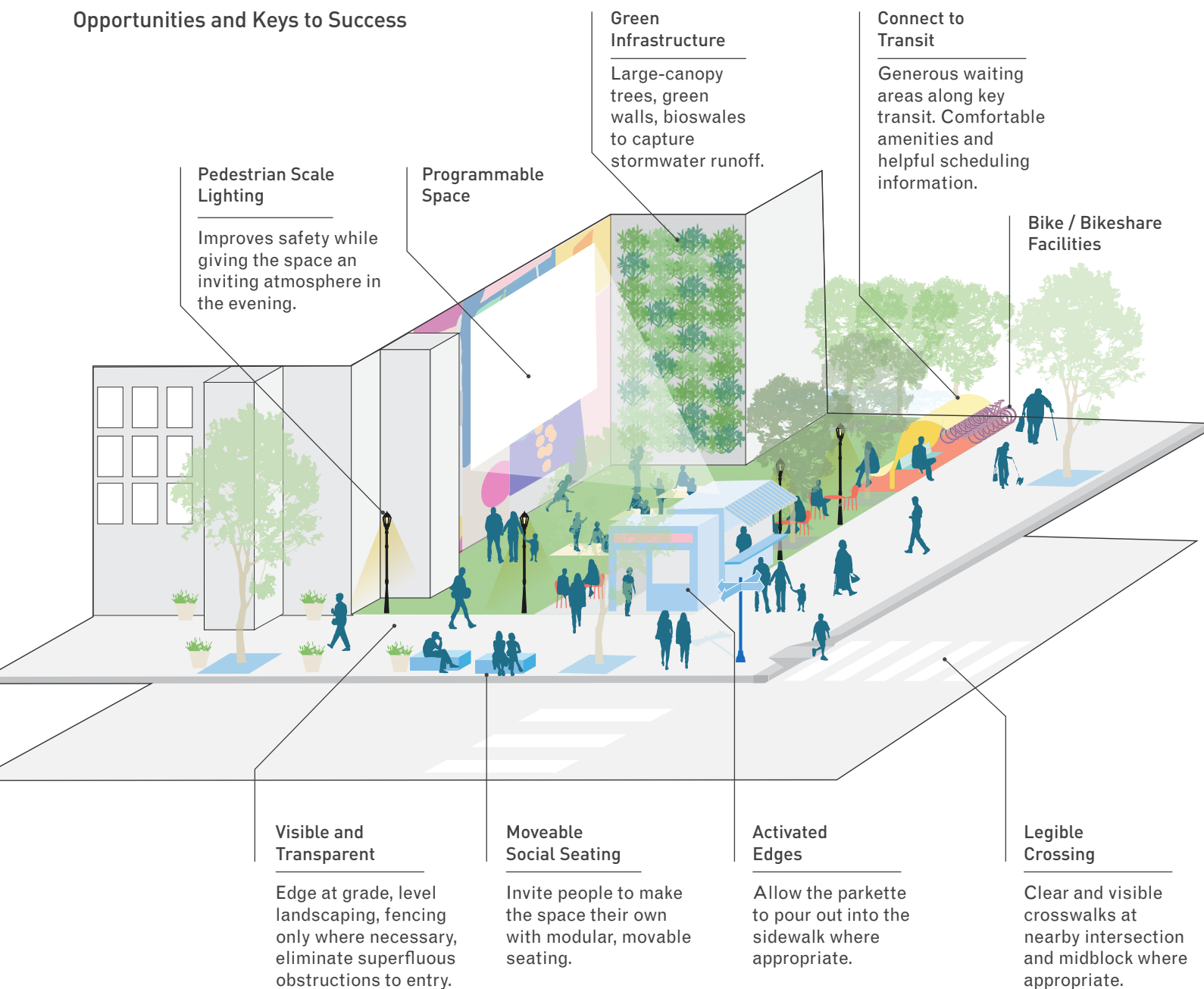
Pocket Parks – Mexico City

The Pocket Park Program was created to address the need for more public spaces. It incentivizes the creation of new parks by recovering under-utilized urban spaces, transforming them into areas of enjoyment for the community. Partnerships between the city, non-profit sponsors, and the community are created to ensure the success and maintenance of the Pocket Parks.



Parques de Bolsillo – Mexico City, Mexico

Opportunities and Keys to Success



Parkettes: Opportunities and keys to success, Toronto, Canada

Laneways

There are two types of laneways in Downtown Toronto, mixed-use laneways, and residential laneways. The form, character, and public realm potential of each type reflects its unique urban context.

Toronto's mixed-use laneways include service laneways that support high density areas of the Downtown, such as the Financial District, and access laneways, which offer an opportunity to contribute to the Downtown's urban fabric as mid-block connections. These types of laneways can provide unique urban experiences, encouraging tourists and locals to discover the city in a new way. Mixed-use laneways can provide a finer grain pedestrian network to move around the city, offering a relief valve for highly-used streets. They can also be transformed into great places to stay and spend time. Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) in the Downtown have created public realm master plans that include ideas to re-imagine mixed-use laneways along Yonge Street and King Street West. Proposals aim to create

more pedestrian-friendly spaces with improvements that include cafe seating, greenery, and public art.

Toronto's residential laneways represent one of the greatest untapped resources in the city. A network of green laneways that link to the broader parks and public realm system could provide key connections for pedestrians and cyclists, while offering new green space and environmental infrastructure. Cities such as Montreal and Chicago have been successful in activating their residential laneways to create additional public realm and green space.

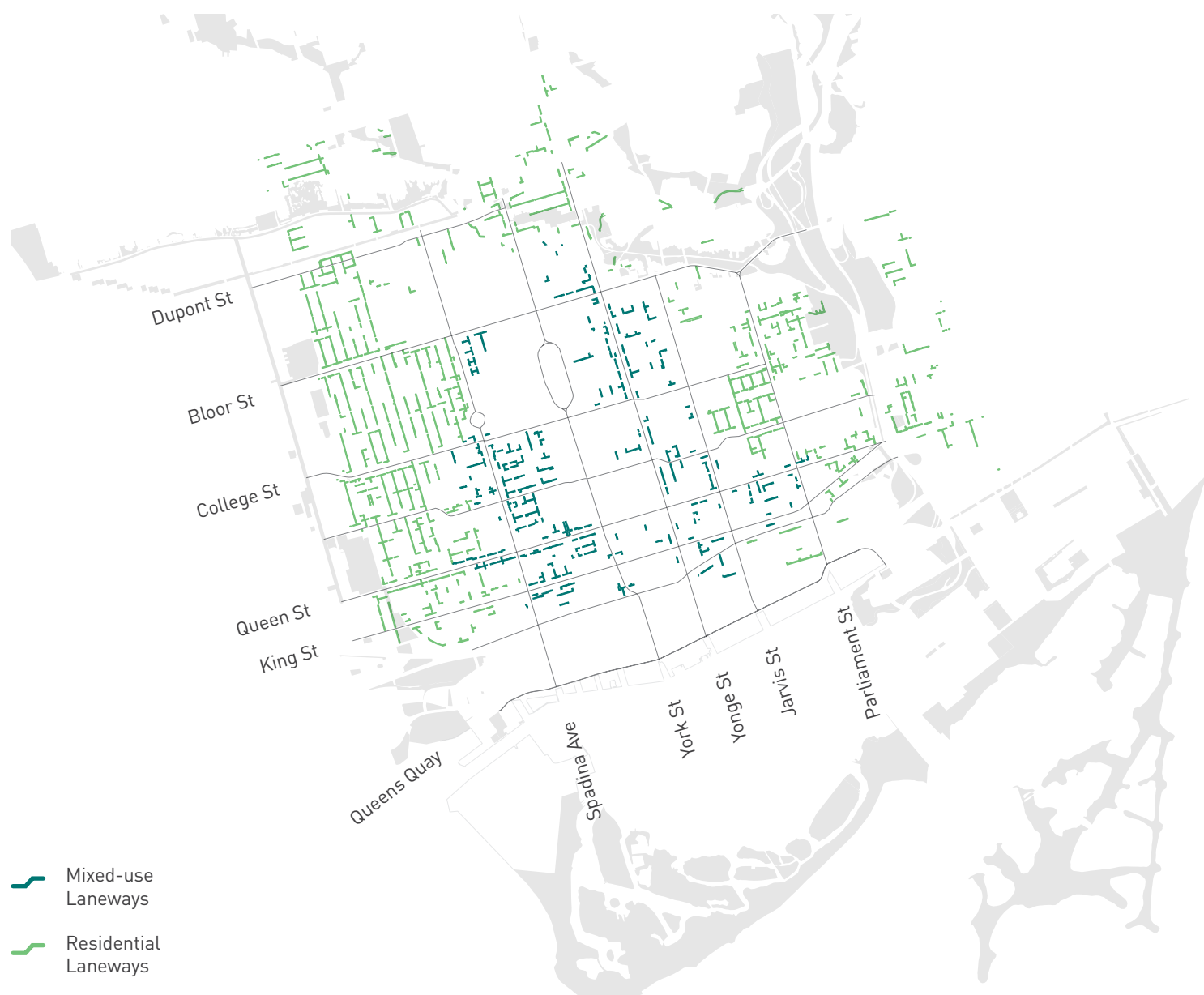
From a straight line to happy wandering:
nurturing a fine grain pedestrian network in
the core.



Residential laneway, Toronto, Canada



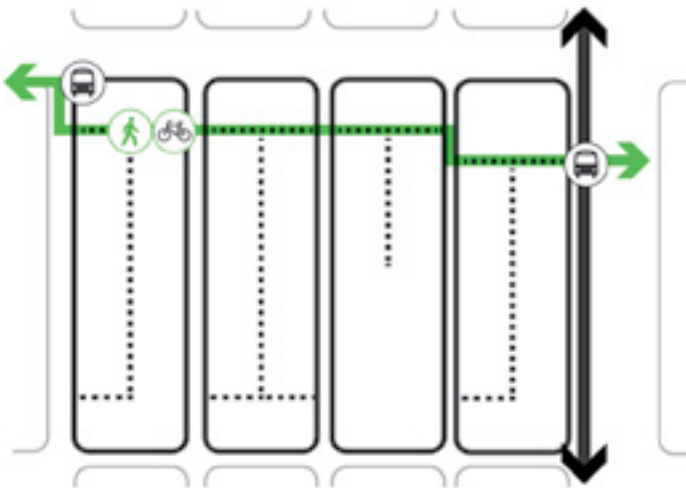
(right) Graffiti Alley, 'Love Your Laneway' event, by the Laneway Project, Toronto, Canada



Showing two laneway typologies in Toronto – the character of each type reflects it's unique urban context, Toronto, Canada

Residential Laneways

Opportunity 1: Laneways linking mobility networks



Laneways used by pedestrians and cyclists for commuting, connecting to transit, and creating more neighbourhood, age-and ability- friendly active transportation options.

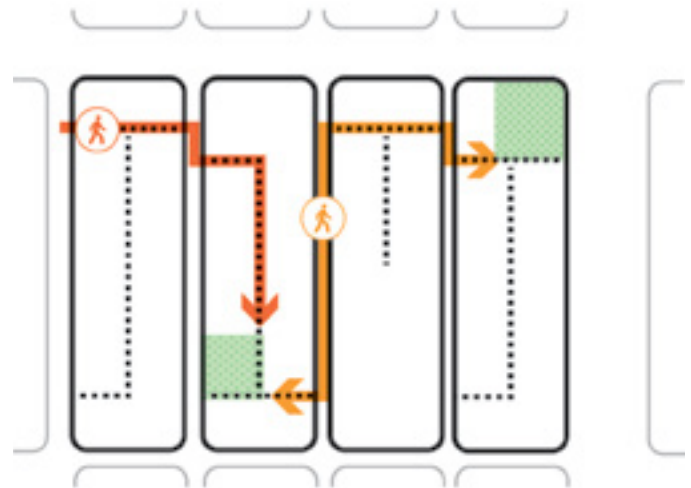
Getting It Done

Create an inviting reason for people to use laneways. Leverage the slower, quieter pace of laneways to invite people in.

Physical: Provide clear signage and messaging. Minimize vehicle through traffic and design for slower speeds. Encourage implementation of green infrastructure where appropriate.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility area. Establish a hierarchy of streets to differentiate between those designed for faster traffic and neighbourhood streets designed for slower speeds.

Opportunity 2: Laneways connecting neighbourhood assets



Laneways that connect to existing small public spaces and increase accessibility to existing park amenities.

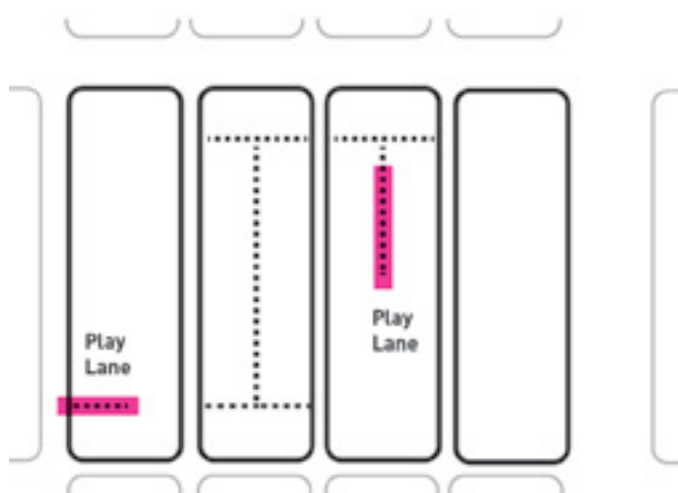
Getting It Done

Partner with private land-owners to make the best use of extra space. Focus on connecting desire lines.

Physical: Provide indicators such as lighting or murals that welcome users into the laneways. Remove barriers to connectivity including fences and overgrowth. Encourage the implementation of green infrastructure.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Partner with private land-owners as needed to connect desire lines.

Opportunity 3: Laneways as destinations



Laneways that fill the gaps in neighbourhoods that are underserved by open spaces to create new destinations.

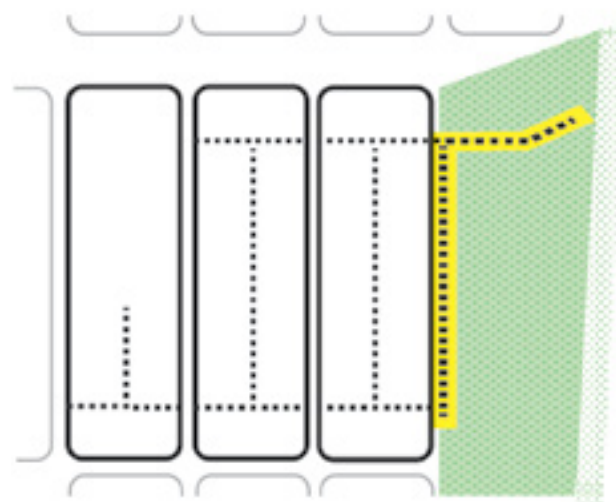
Getting It Done

Foster stewardship to ensure these spaces feel welcoming and inviting to everyone in the neighborhood.

Physical: Support placemaking by removing fences and providing lighting, signage, planting and high quality paving.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Provide opportunities for play and lingering. Consider different programs, such as economic development or community foundation grants, to engage community partners to play a role in animating, beautifying or cleaning up laneways as destinations.

Opportunity 4: Laneways with park frontage



Laneways that support larger parks and green spaces.

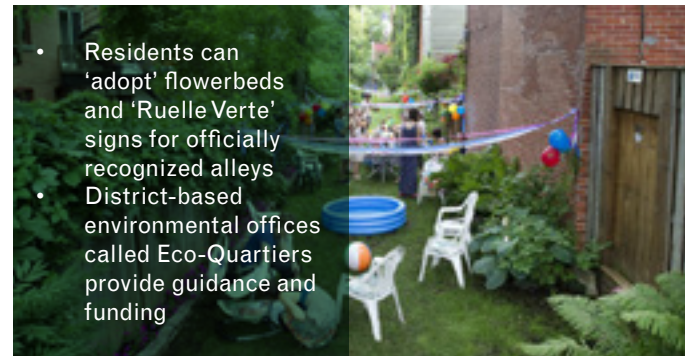
Getting It Done

Physical: Encourage the use of green infrastructure, stormwater management infrastructure, bio-swales and bio-retention planting beds.

Policy: Provide opportunities for uses that support micro-retail.

Ruelles Vertes / Green Alley Program – Montreal

Ruelles Vertes aims to turn residential laneways into greener, friendlier spaces by replacing asphalt with porous pavers or planting, and introducing measures to calm or restrict traffic. 'Ruelles Vertes' signs are placed on officially recognized alleys. District offices provide guidance and funding, while residents are responsible for forming a committee and maintaining the laneways after the changes are made.



- Residents can 'adopt' flowerbeds and 'Ruelle Verte' signs for officially recognized alleys
- District-based environmental offices called Eco-Quartiers provide guidance and funding

Ruelles Vertes / Green Alley Program – Montreal, Canada

Alley Improvements – Los Angeles

Since the early 2000s, a range of alley improvements have been underway in Los Angeles, in both commercial and residential alleys. While funding, collaborators, approaches, and aims vary from project to project, many strive to address problems of stormwater management, trash dumping, and shortage of park space, especially in lower-income neighbourhoods.



- Connection of environmental development and liveability
- Goal of increasing stormwater capture to 50 billion gallons by 2035
- Partnership with Trust for Public Land

Alley Improvements – Los Angeles, United States

Green Alley Program – Chicago

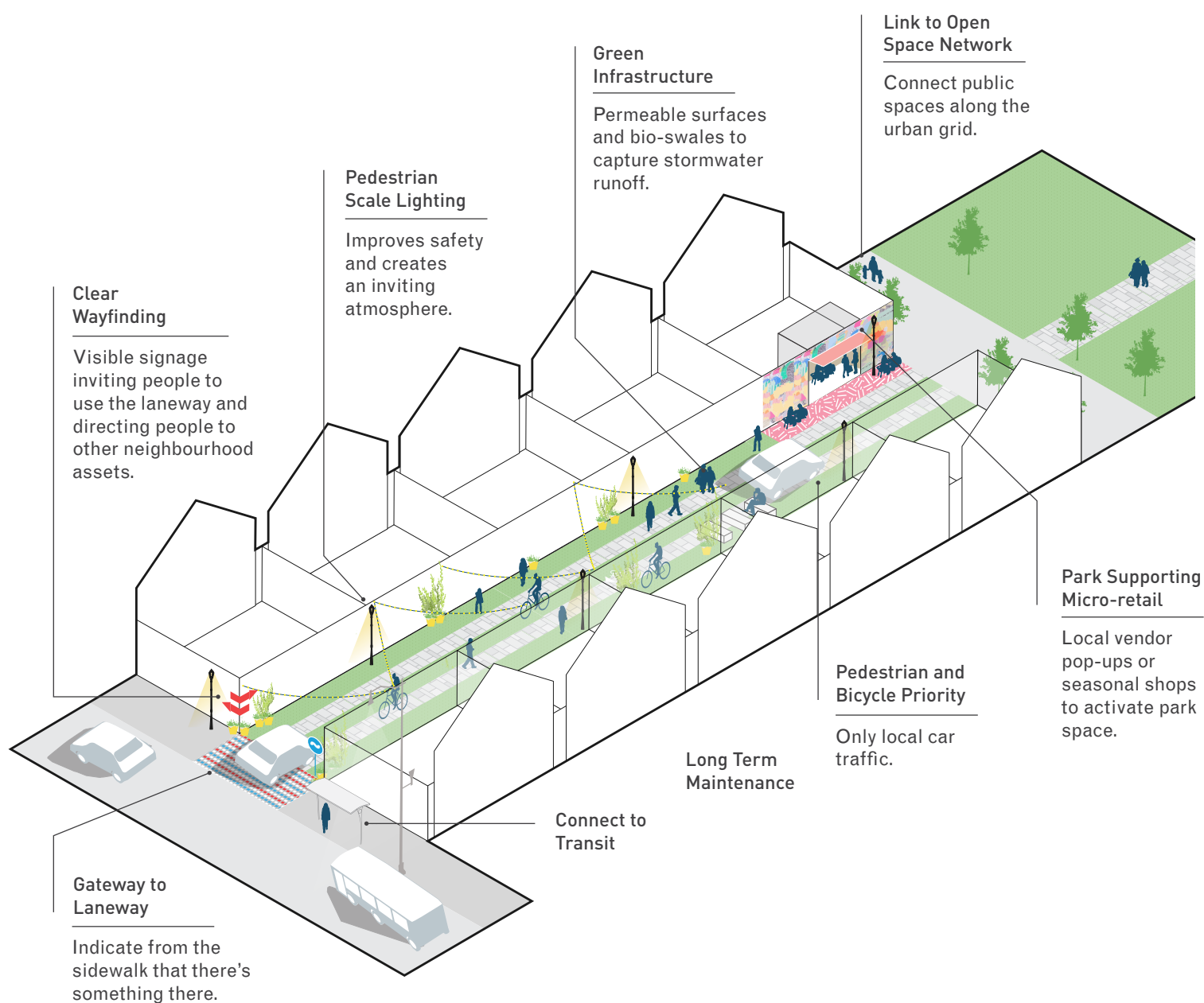
Chicago is committed to transforming its extensive network of alleyways into greener, more sustainable environments by renovating key infrastructure with leading stormwater management solutions. With over 100 green alleys installed, what began as a pilot project in 2006 has blossomed into one of the most extensive green alley initiatives in the world.



- City-funded program
- Residents encouraged to follow stormwater best practices
- Permeable surfaces and proper pitching helps capture rainwater
- Material recycling to reduce waste

Green Alley Program – Chicago, United States

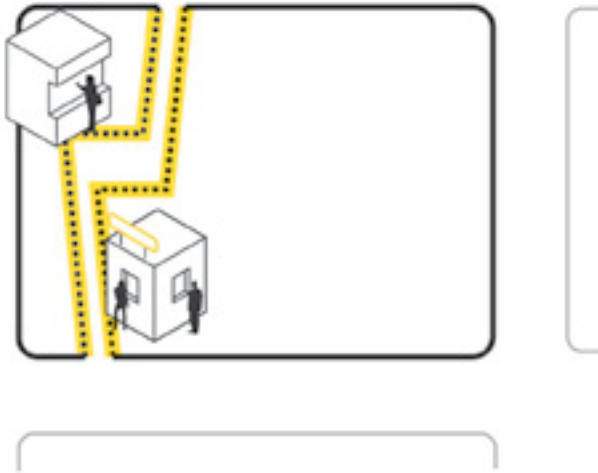
Opportunities and Keys to Success



Residential laneways: Opportunities and keys to success, Toronto, Canada

Mixed-Use Laneways

Opportunity 1: Laneways as micro-retail corridors



Laneways that act as small-scale main streets with active frontages to support micro-retail including food and beverage vendors.

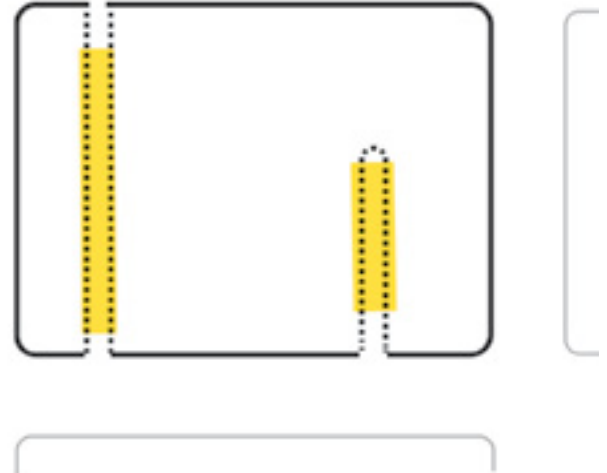
Getting It Done

Coordinate street cleaning, waste collection and loading and drop-off times to maximize public safety, access and enjoyment.

Physical: Encourage the use of pods, pop-up carts and container retail in the near term. Provide laneway-facing retail spaces in the long term. Support placemaking by providing lighting and signage.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Coordinate load and drop-off times in off-peak hours. Partner or coordinate with businesses to open the backs of businesses onto the lane.

Opportunity 2: Laneways for creative / interactive hoarding



Laneways that are wrapped with murals or include interactive elements.

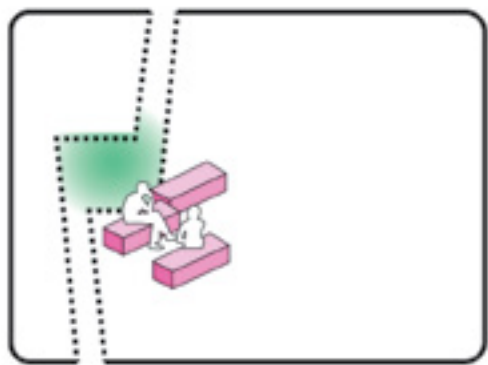
Getting It Done

Identify narrow, straight lanes that can support interactive elements. These lanes requires less space to stay and linger.

Physical: Install interactive elements such as a boulder wall, digital art, murals, exhibition space; or lighting.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Minimize through traffic and coordinate loading and drop-off times in off-peak hours.

Opportunity 3: Laneways as places of respite and refuge



Laneways that provide interactive elements, such as murals, to inspire moments of quiet reflection.

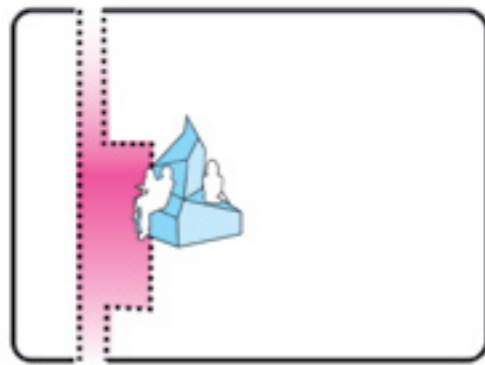
Getting It Done

Identify lanes that have small nooks and very little through traffic. Where the Downtown is loudest and busiest, laneways can offer a breath of fresh air, leveraging their naturally cooler, micro-climate.

Physical: Install interactive elements such as a boulder wall, digital art, murals, exhibition space, or lighting.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Minimize through traffic and coordinate loading and drop-off times in off-peak hours.

Opportunity 4: Laneways as event spaces



Laneways that support regular programmed markets, one-off events and intimate gatherings.

Getting It Done

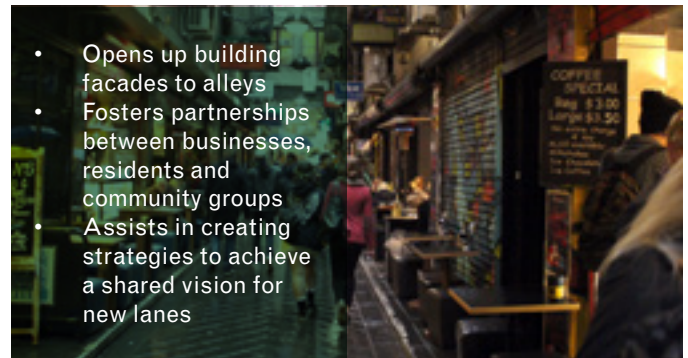
Choose lanes that can support regular programming. Holding regular events in laneways can establish street life in otherwise blank spaces, changing perceptions of what is possible in laneways. The key is to create a quiet and predictable traffic pattern during events.

Physical: Provide lighting and access to power.

Policy: Identify laneways as shared mobility areas. Enable online event booking to encourage regular programming. Provide access to power. Minimize through traffic and coordinate loading and drop-off times in off-peak hours.

Mixed-Use Laneway Program – Melbourne

The Melbourne Laneway Program transformed former mixed-use alleys into lively hubs of activity for small scale businesses and social interaction. The initiative originally helped revive an otherwise dying Downtown area. The plan was built on continuing to upgrade and maintain the physical form and condition of laneways, aligned with an economic development strategy for the creative industries contained within them.



- Opens up building facades to alleys
- Fosters partnerships between businesses, residents and community groups
- Assists in creating strategies to achieve a shared vision for new lanes

Mixed-Use Laneways – Melbourne, Australia

Passageways – Chattanooga

'Passageways' is a public exhibit that intends to change the way people think about forgotten urban spaces, and to show the potential benefits these spaces have for contributing to healthy urban environments. It is an investigation into the importance and the potential of auxiliary pedestrian spaces, and the creation of space within an existing connected alleyway network.

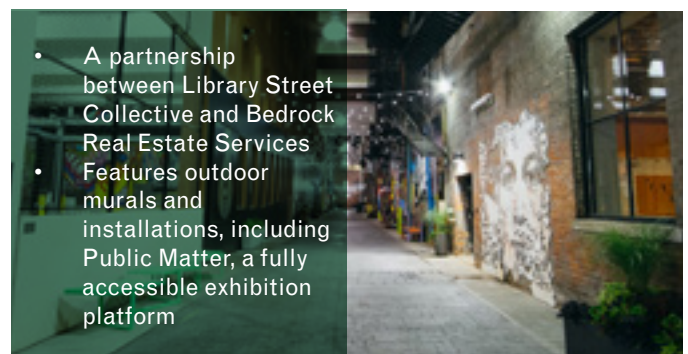


- Projects chosen by public competitions that are open and free for anyone to enter
- Installations are short term, but can be left standing for up to a year; however, some will be removed after the opening event

Passageways – Chattanooga, United States

The BELT – Detroit

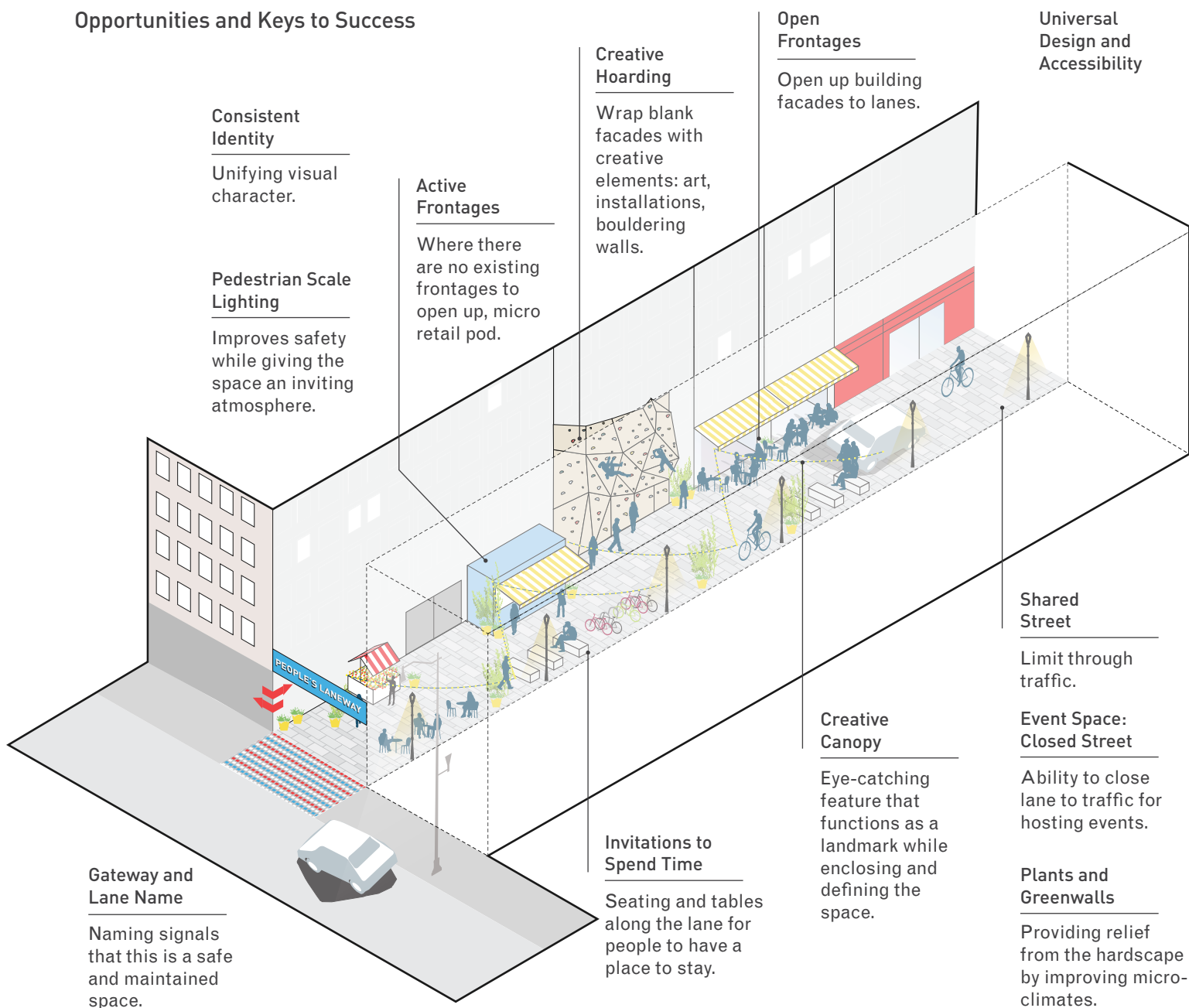
The BELT is a redefined alley in the heart of downtown Detroit. The activation of the alley is a partnership between Library Street Collective and Bedrock Real Estate Services. Public Art is the driving force behind The BELT. The space is home to murals and installations that ensure local and international artists have a space to create and engage with the public in Detroit.



- A partnership between Library Street Collective and Bedrock Real Estate Services
- Features outdoor murals and installations, including Public Matter, a fully accessible exhibition platform

The BELT – Detroit, United States

Opportunities and Keys to Success



Mixed-use laneways: Opportunities and keys to success, Toronto, Canada

Schoolyards

Like parkettes, schoolyards represent an open space in the community that could be better leveraged. These spaces have already or could have the potential to become true neighbourhood assets, providing safe and accessible spaces for families outside of school hours throughout the week.

Creating partnerships with local schools to improve and share schoolyards beyond school hours will benefit the school and the community by providing improved and expanded open spaces for students and nearby families. Re-imagined schoolyards can invite play, gardening and hands-on learning experiences into the daily lives of students and local residents.

Where possible, access to parks and / or open spaces through shared use agreements may be explored in cases where public schools are situated on highly constrained urban sites or part of mixed-use developments and where access to green space or hard

surface play areas is insufficient.

In New York City, schoolyards have been transformed into playgrounds, weaving youthful and active hubs into the city's fabric. In Berkeley, schoolyards act as community gardens that provide students and neighbours with a connection to the natural environment and opportunities for learning.

Partnerships with school boards can transform schoolyards in the Downtown into public spaces outside of school hours, with school activities being one of a number of programs during the week. Putting schoolyards on people's mental map as an accessible open space is the key to success in transforming these spaces into assets for the broader community.

Opening schoolyards to the public during off hours – on weekends and after school – can create new neighbourhood nodes for play, learning and community.



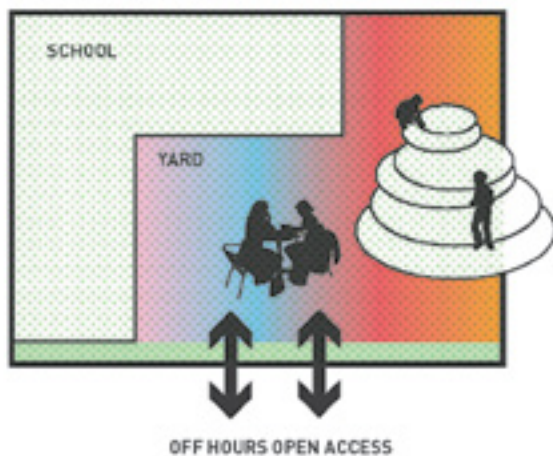
The Shared Schoolyard Project, San Francisco, United States

(right) NYC Schoolyards to Playgrounds, New York City, United States



Showing schoolyards in Downtown Toronto, Canada

Opportunity 1: Schoolyards as shared play spaces



Schoolyards that are open and visibly public play spaces after school hours and that provide a variety of leisure options for all age groups.

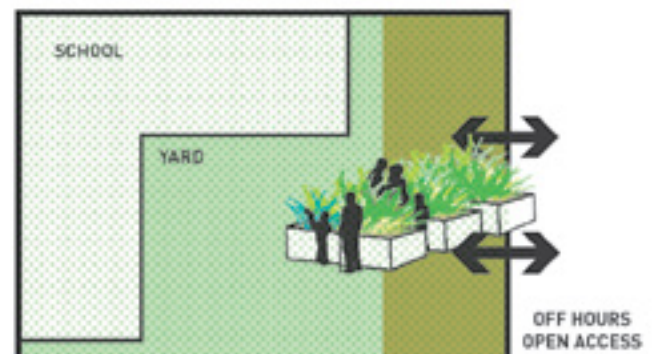
Getting It Done

Target schoolyards in areas that lack family-friendly hubs. Imagine creative approaches to fencing or add gate openings to create more than one access point. Consider the design of fencing as a public art feature. Create multi-purpose spaces to appeal to more users.

Physical: Identify creative approaches to fencing (e.g. clear fencing), the design of hard surfaces (e.g. multi-purpose court striping) and creating a comfortable micro-climate (e.g. canopies, awnings).

Policy: Identify a new approach to opening schoolyards to the community, encouraging seamless connections to the neighbourhood. Establish a schedule that shows when schoolyards are open to the public.

Opportunity 2: Schoolyards as neighbourhood gardens and food hubs



Schoolyards that host community gardens, providing school-aged children and the surrounding community with the opportunity to learn about and grow food.

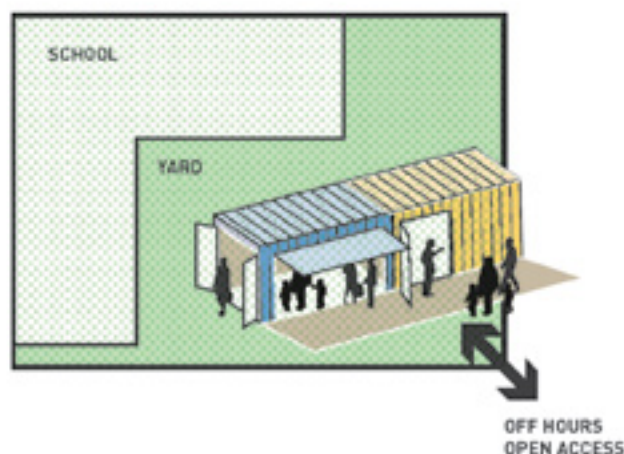
Getting It Done

Focus on schools in 'food deserts' or that are part of the edible schools program. Open gardens up to the public after school hours to expand gardens beyond student education into public assets.

Physical: Establish a hierarchy of use where shared facilities like gardens are closer to streets, making them easily accessible to both school kids and the neighbouring community.

Policy: Identify a new approach to opening schoolyards to the community, encouraging seamless connections to the neighbourhood. Link into Toronto's community garden program.

Opportunity 3: Schoolyards as learning labs



Schoolyards that provide an ongoing calendar of activities to support, educate and inspire makers, innovators, creators, and educators to share and learn in the space.

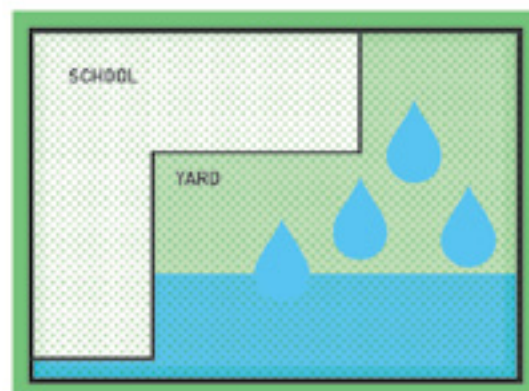
Getting It Done

Broaden the idea of schools as Centres for Learning for all ages by creating places for the community to learn about a variety of topics such as cooking, biology, robotics and life sciences. Link student curriculum with the public learning lab.

Physical: Create 'outdoor classroom' spaces that are designed in collaboration with students, school faculty and neighbourhood stakeholders. Consider a variety of design elements including seating, stages and shelter.

Policy: Introduce school programs where learning is outside. Conversely, create school spaces that are open and available to neighbours during certain times. Ensure the availability of these spaces is well-advertised.

Opportunity 4: Schoolyards as environmental leaders / canvases



Schoolyards that play a proactive role in managing stormwater and the urban heat island effect.

Getting It Done

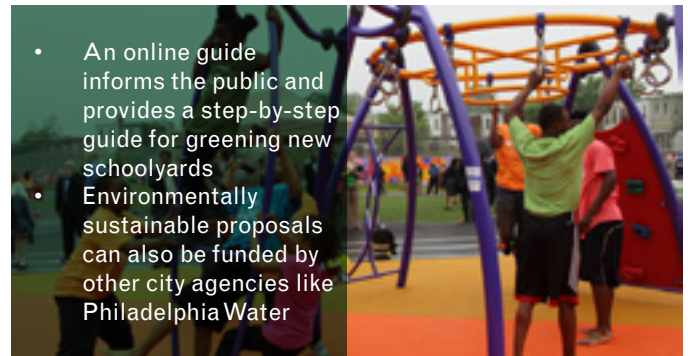
Position schoolyards as places to actively improve the city's environmental performance. Remove all or some hard space to increase green space, plant trees, combat the urban heat island effect and mitigate stormwater runoff.

Physical: Install porous, recycled surfaces, green infrastructure, bio-swales and bio-retention planting.

Policy: Link into the City's Green Streets Guidelines, Urban Forestry's policies and Toronto Green Standards.

Transforming Schoolyards – Philadelphia

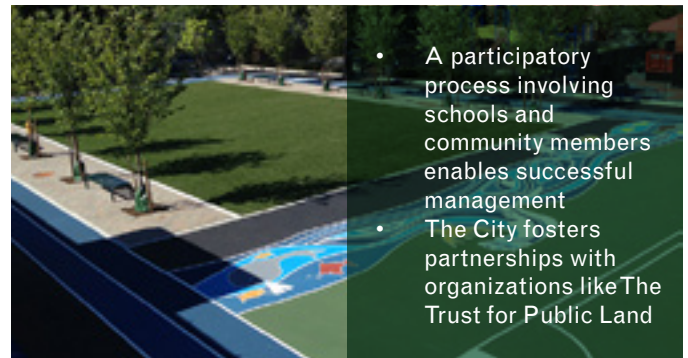
As part of Philadelphia's Green 2015 Initiative, the city is transforming schoolyards into greener, more sustainable public open spaces that can be used throughout the week. The redeveloped schoolyards provide experiential learning opportunities for students and the community outside of school hours.



William Dick Elementary Schoolyard – Philadelphia, United States

NYC Schoolyards to Playgrounds – New York City

Schoolyards are transformed into vibrant playgrounds and opened to the public during non-school hours as part of the initiative to provide open public space within a 10-minute walk to every New Yorker.



Boerum Hill PS241 – New York City, United States

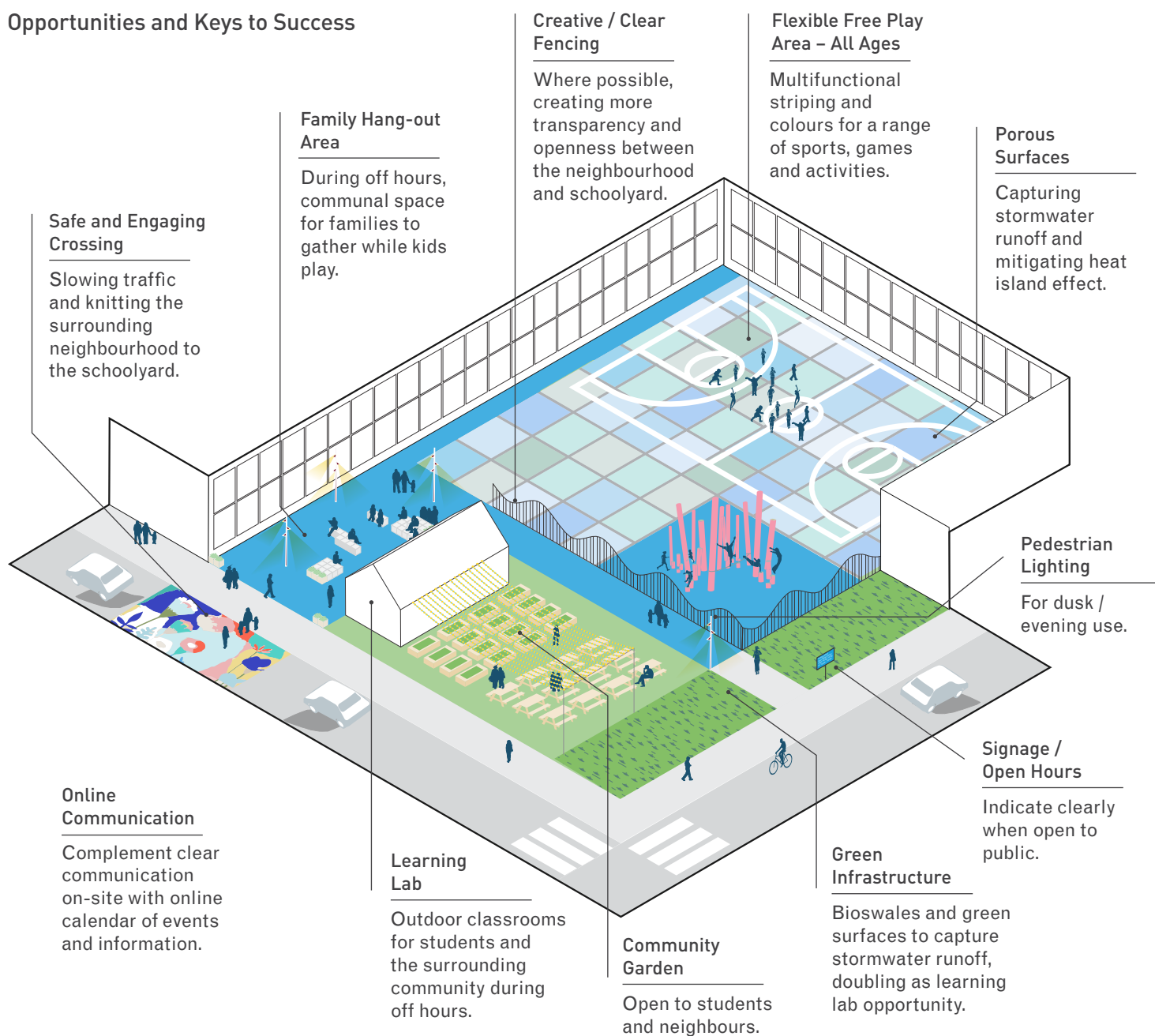
Edible Schoolyards – Berkeley

Edible Schoolyards began in the 1990s when a community member inspired a school to transform their neglected schoolyard into a learning garden. Edible Schoolyards has grown from this single project into a connected network of schools and community programs that use schoolyards to support food-awareness, environmental connection, and community relationships.



East Harlem Edible Schoolyard – New York City, United States

Opportunities and Keys to Success



Schoolyards: Opportunities and keys to success, Toronto, Canada

Churchyards / Cemeteries

Churchyards and cemeteries can be re-imagined as neighbourhood assets through creative programming and design. These re-imagined spaces can be welcoming open spaces for a variety of uses while respecting the sanctity of the spaces, which might include community events, educational facilities, or provide opportunities for leisure and play or quiet respite away from busy parks.

Historically, churchyards and cemeteries have offered a valuable public space asset in the Downtown and some may feel more welcoming than others. Churchyards are distributed in neighbourhoods throughout the Downtown, offering easily accessible 'day to day' open spaces for residents, workers and visitors. Cemeteries are among the best places to experience the urban forest in the city – making them an important piece of the parks and public realm system.

Innovative programming, as seen in Atlanta's Oakland

Cemetery with their 'Run like Hell' 5 km race, builds interest around visiting these spaces and works to shift perceptions about how cemeteries are used.

Active design can inspire visitors to engage with these spaces that are often underused. The engaging revitalization of St. Mary's Churchyard in London, or the popular use of the Assistens Cemetery in Copenhagen, illustrate the possibility of transforming these spaces into valuable public realm assets.

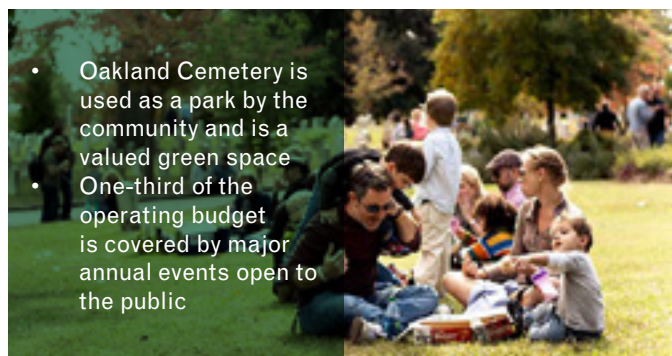
Creative programming and redesigns that preserve cultural landscape heritage elements can transform churchyards and cemeteries into new neighbourhood assets.



Assistens Cemetery – the largest green space in a densely populated neighbourhood – is a prime location for picnics and other social meet-ups, Copenhagen, Denmark

Oakland Cemetery Park – Atlanta

Oakland Cemetery is one of the largest green spaces in Atlanta, Georgia. Creative programming, such as the 'Run Like Hell' 5 km run or the 'Tunes for Tombs' concert series have brought thousands of visitors to the space, establishing it as a valuable asset to the community. The cemetery features winding paths, large shade trees, flowers, shrubs, and appealing vistas.

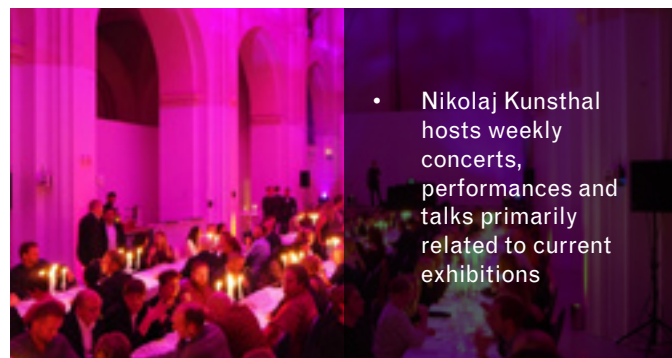


- Oakland Cemetery is used as a park by the community and is a valued green space
- One-third of the operating budget is covered by major annual events open to the public

Oakland Cemetery Park – Atlanta, United States

St. Nikolaj Church – Copenhagen

Nikolaj Church is located at the center of the city, next to the main pedestrian shopping street. It has been converted into an art museum and event space, recognizing its importance as a community meeting point beyond religious activities.

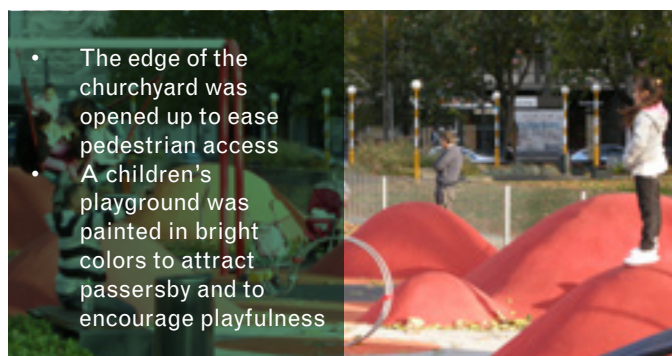


- Nikolaj Kunsthall hosts weekly concerts, performances and talks primarily related to current exhibitions

St. Nikolaj Church – Copenhagen, Denmark

St. Mary's Churchyard – London

The redesign of St. Mary's Churchyard has been an important phase in the regeneration of an entire London neighbourhood.



- The edge of the churchyard was opened up to ease pedestrian access
- A children's playground was painted in bright colors to attract passersby and to encourage playfulness

St. Mary's Churchyard – London, England

Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS)

In order to provide this much needed open space within Toronto's dense urban landscape, the City often negotiates with private developers to include Privately Owned Publicly-Accessible Spaces, or 'POPS' for short, as part of the development application and review process. POPS are a specific type of open space which the public is welcome to enjoy, but remain privately owned and maintained. They are a key part of the city's public realm network, providing open space in much needed locations across the city and complementing existing and planned publicly owned parks, open spaces and natural areas.

POPS are intended to complement the City's public parks, open space and natural areas, not replace them. While POPS can offer accessible and inviting pockets to sit, relax, and enjoy the urban landscape, the public benefits are often not fully realized. Predominantly nestled in the shadows of tall buildings and sometimes surrounded by inactive frontages, POPS need to

focus on mitigating harsh micro-climates (e.g. shade, exposure, wind), and incorporating human-scaled urban design elements. POPS have the potential to become destinations for cultural events, outdoor work areas, and high quality spaces to stay and enjoy the urban setting.

Important yet often under-utilized, POPS should work harder to supplement our parks and open space network. Through partnerships with local stewards, Downtown neighbourhoods can be empowered to engage with these local assets and ultimately create a more connected, layered and dynamic public realm.

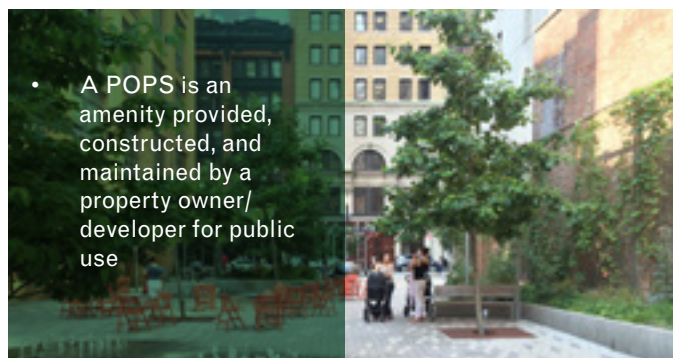
POPS are not the answer to the Downtown's park deficit, but they can supplement the parks system by providing high quality open spaces in the core.



The Pasture (POPS) at TD Centre, Toronto, Canada

Beekman Plaza – New York City

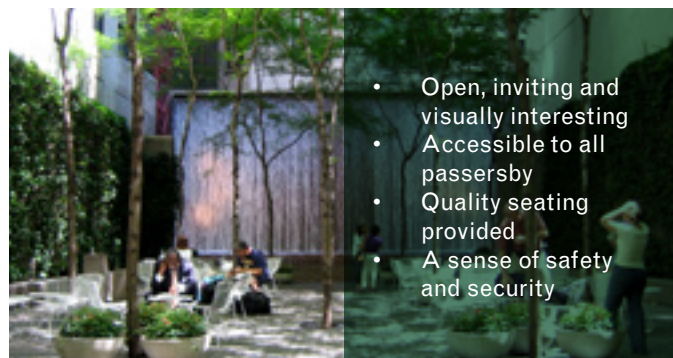
Beekman Plaza is located in downtown New York City, at the foot of a large residential tower. It is situated above a parking garage and accessible on either side. Minimum tree quantities established by the NYC zoning code required 23 plaza trees and six sidewalk trees.



Beekman Plaza – New York City, United States

Paley Park – New York City

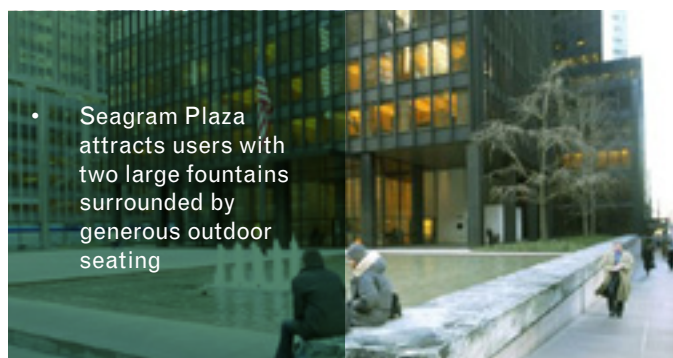
Paley Plaza was created on the former site of the Stork Club. It offers a strong sense of place, human-scaled urban design elements, and a focal point in the form of a waterfall. It is a quiet oasis in the midst of bustling Midtown Manhattan. The plaza opened in 1967.



Paley Park – New York City, United States

Seagram Plaza – New York City

New York's largest and most successful POPS, the Seagram Plaza, takes up 75 percent of the site's Park Avenue footprint. The Seagram Building is set back 100 feet from the street edge, which creates a highly active and accessible open plaza.



Seagram Plaza – New York City, United States

Overlooked Places

In recent years, a whole new generation of parks and open spaces have sprung up in places that we had previously forgotten. Playgrounds and skate parks beneath underpasses, urban beaches opposite industrial port facilities, linear parks alongside – even overtop of – infrastructure corridors. Vacant lots, rail and hydro corridors, remnant infrastructure, underneath overpasses, waterfront slips, Toronto Parking Authority lands, school yards, church yards, cemeteries – there is untapped potential that we must increasingly lean on to address our core's population increase.

Overlooked places, such as streets, infrastructure corridors, and underneath overpasses can be repurposed into unexpected public assets. From Underpass Park to Sugar Beach to the Green Line to the Bentway to Rail Deck Park, Toronto is en route to become a leader in re-imagining its urban infrastructure into inspiring public spaces.

Retrofit or re-imagine overlooked and unexpected places such as streets, infrastructure corridors and underneath overpasses.

Overlooked places also present an opportunity to let residents and volunteers test and prototype ideas in space. In Portland, a renowned skatepark – Burnside Skatepark – was originally built ad-hoc by a group of local skaters. It was soon incorporated into the city's official network of parks.

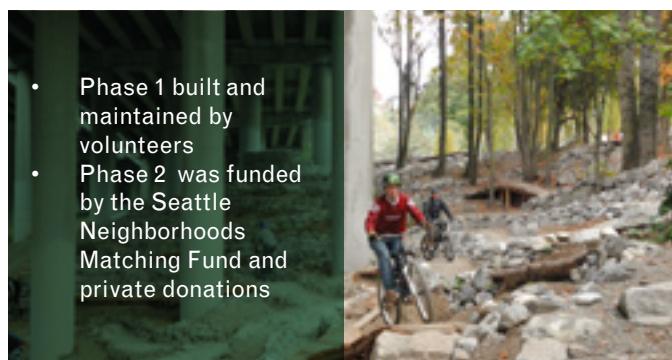
Capitalize on overlooked and under-utilized places to meet public realm needs and better connect the parks and public realm sequence. Empower community partnerships to unlock the potential of these spaces.



Underpass Park, Toronto, Canada

I-5 Colonnade Mountain Bike Park – Seattle

Beneath an interstate in Seattle, volunteers built a mountain biking park that connects to a larger 3 hectare park. More than a mile of ramps and wooden bike paths were built in partnership with the Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance and the City of Seattle. The park is officially park of the larger Seattle Parks and Recreation system.



I-5 Colonnade Mountain Bike Park – Seattle, United States

Burnside Skatepark – Portland

In Portland, a group of skateboarders constructed this under-the-freeway park. Over the years, as the construction grew and popularity increased, the park won the city's vote and it became officially sanctioned as a park.



Burnside Skatepark – Portland, United States

Jim Deva Plaza – Vancouver

The plaza, commissioned by the City of Vancouver, is a street conversion that connects the commercial activity of Davie Street to the residential stretch of Bute Street. The space was created by redesigning the block into a single continuous surface that invites people to sit and spend time relaxing in a busy urban centre. The plaza is home to a mix of activities and local events.



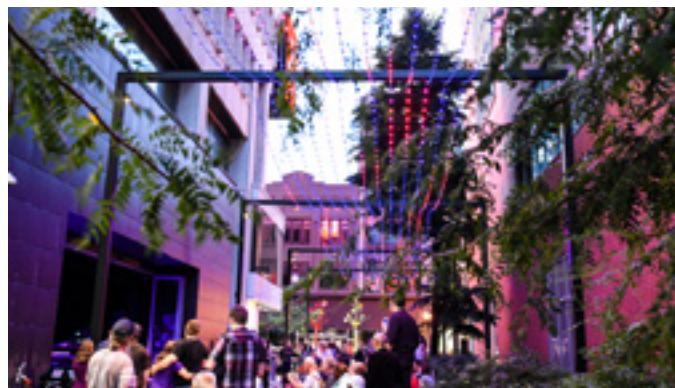
Jim Deva Plaza – Vancouver, Canada

An Example of a Process to Activate Local Places

There is untapped potential in Downtown Toronto, in the parkettes, laneways, schoolyards, churchyards and cemeteries, vacant lots, rail and hydro corridors, remnant infrastructure, waterfront slips, streets and parking lots. Here is an opportunity to re-imagine these spaces, improve their design, and bolster stewardship by implementing a unique process of design and operation, based on highly local needs.

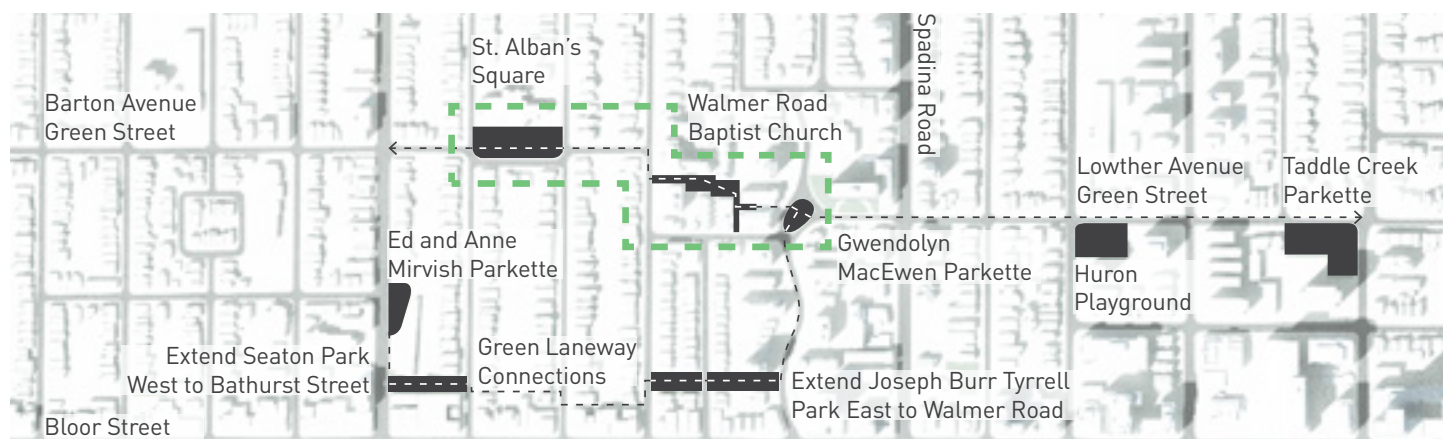
Many existing models can inform this type of process, such as the Public Space Incubator in Toronto, the Plaza Program and GreenThumb Program in New York City, and the Pavement to Parks Program in San Francisco. These programs are designed to test new, innovative ways to bring under-utilized public spaces to life. In order to unlock the potential of Downtown Toronto's under-utilized local places, the following key components should be considered to ensure impact, neighbourhood relevance, and long-term viability.

- **Governance:** Empower a cross-agency team to ensure a coordinated approach to local places and their multifaceted needs, finding synergies and opportunities.
- **Operator Selection:** Local places require local stewards, makers and doers to keep them fresh and relevant. Operators are the stewards of the space, responsible for maintenance and programming.
- **Hard Infrastructure:** Local places come alive with a combination of 'hard' and 'soft' infrastructure. Hard infrastructure are the physical components, often built into and around the space by the city (e.g. roadway improvements, pedestrian lighting).
- **Soft Infrastructure:** Soft infrastructure offers opportunities to test ideas and includes often temporary components that change and adapt to new opportunities and changing neighbourhood demographics (e.g. events, arts, cultural uses).
- **Opportunities to Collaborate:** Partnerships with local groups, artists, designers, collectives, non-profits, institutions, businesses, and registered charities help to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and inclusive approach.



(right) The revitalized Market Lane is a narrow but critical linkage in the urban fabric of downtown London, Ontario, connecting Covent Garden with Dundas Street, London, Canada

Connecting Local Places: On the Ground Example



Showing potential for a connected network of local places in The Annex, Toronto, Canada

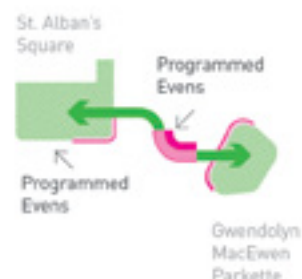
Site Selection:



Hard Infrastructure:



Soft Infrastructure:



Partnerships:



Demonstration of the key components that should be considered to unlock the potential of under-utilized local public spaces, Toronto, Canada

TRANSFORMATIVE IDEA 5. LOCAL PLACES



Aldo van Eyck and the City as Playground, beginning in 1947, more than 700 public playgrounds were created in parks, squares, and derelict sites throughout the city, "a spatial experiment that has (positively) marked the childhood of an entire generation" (Merijn Oudenampsen), Amsterdam, Netherlands

(right) Beuningenplein Playground, constructed on top of a new parking garage in 2011, Amsterdam, Netherlands



Goals

Re-imagine local public spaces to better support community life and meaningfully contribute to the expansion of our parks and public realm system.

- Re-imagine local public spaces, improve their design, and bolster stewardship by implementing a unique process of design and operation, based on local needs.
- Support new, innovative ways to bring under-utilized public spaces to life.
- Partner with local groups and collaborators to ensure a sustainable and inclusive approach.
- Support flexible design and programming that can change and adapt to new opportunities and changing neighbourhood demographics.
- Leverage additional financial and in-kind contributions from local philanthropists, institutions, businesses, or others.
- Partner with school boards to transform schoolyards into public spaces outside of school hours.
- Preserve and enhance natural and cultural landscape heritage elements in local public spaces.

Actions

- Implement a unique process of design and operation for local public spaces.
- Partner with local groups and collaborators to ensure a sustainable, accessible, and inclusive approach.
- Support new, innovative pilot projects and public space activations.
- Ensure flexible design and programming that can be refined and enriched over time.
- Preserve schoolyards and partner with School Boards to enhance community access through shared-use agreements.
- Continue to monitor public life in the Downtown's local places.
- Continue to upgrade the physical form and condition of local public spaces.
- Empower a cross-agency team to ensure a coordinated approach to local places, finding synergies and opportunities.

3. Toward Implementation

Priorities and delivery mechanisms

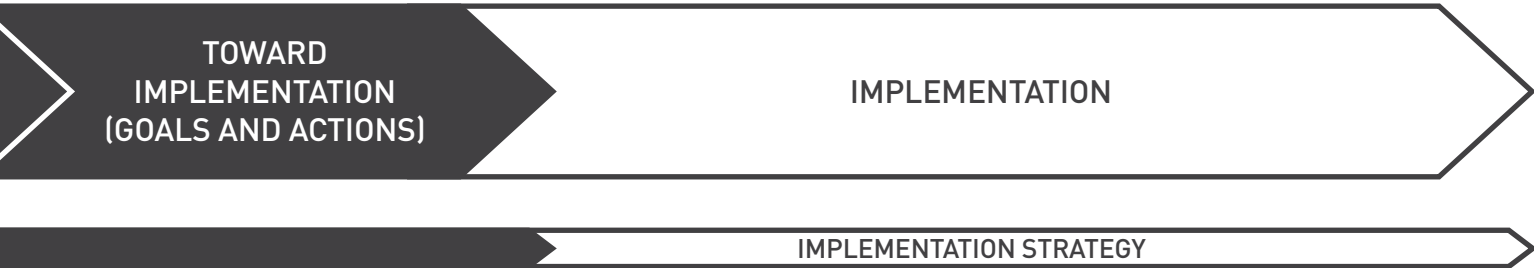
Toward Implementation

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* is a 25-year integrated plan for parks, streets and other open spaces. It provides a vision for what we can achieve, a goal for future parks and public spaces and a way of addressing public space deficiencies. The Parks and Public Realm Plan contains Five Transformative Ideas that support the City-wide Parkland Strategy's principles of: *Expand and Acquire, Improve, Share and Connect*. This chapter includes the following:

- An outline of the categories of projects presented in the Plan;
- Preliminary approaches for prioritizing the range of parks and public realm initiatives presented in the Plan;
- An outline of legislative tools the City will employ to acquire and improve parkland, enhance the public realm and finance new investments;
- A call to action for the City, institutions, businesses, organizations and neighbourhoods to cooperate and shape the Downtown's future parks and public realm in accordance with this Plan's vision; and
- A proposed method for measuring success of the Plan's implementation.



A detailed Implementation Strategy will be developed as the next phase of study. It will identify specific targets, priority projects and will establish a framework to guide implementation for the Plan's initiatives over the next 25 years.



Project Scales and Implementation Categories

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* is structured at three scales: regional, district and local.

The regional scale is the largest scale of Toronto's parks and public realm and includes the transformative ideas of the Core Circle, Great Streets and Shoreline Stitch. The district scale is intermediate in size and consists of parks, squares, streets and other public spaces that are integral to quality of life in Toronto's neighbourhoods. The district scale is captured in the Park Districts. The smallest scale is captured in Local Places and includes the parks and public spaces that are embedded within

communities, including parkettes, laneways, POPS, schoolyards, cemeteries and churchyards as well as other under-utilized institutional spaces. Moving forward, strategies for the timing and delivery of a project will vary based on its scale, its implementation category and its place as a priority project.

The ideas presented in the Plan range from ambitious and highly complex, to straight-forward and small-scale. The initiatives related to the more ambitious ideas may take considerable time to bring to fruition, whereas many of the smaller initiatives could be implemented



within a 5-year time frame or less. Many of the complex initiatives are made up of a series of smaller projects, making a long-term strategy to sustain momentum a critical requirement for the full realization of the vision.

The initiatives identified in the Plan include a range of improvements to existing parks (such as revitalizations and re-designs), re-designing and re-thinking the use of streets, and acquiring new land for parks. Some initiatives involve a neighbourhood-wide perspective focused on the network of parks and open space; these projects can be supported by small, local improvements

that collectively can be highly impactful.

The Implementation Strategy will organize projects into categories based on the Transformative Ideas. All ideas, whether short- or long-term, have short-term actions that will mark a path to completion. For example, re-imagining University Avenue may be considered a long-term goal of the Plan, but to achieve it, planning needs to begin immediately (such as undertaking a preliminary engineering and costing study).



- Assess Feasibility
- Finalize Scope
- Establish Milestones

- Council Approval
- Budget Allocation

Preliminary Set of Project Categories

“Stage-Gate” Projects

Complex projects with longer implementation periods will be advanced incrementally via a series of approval stages. This “Stage-Gate” process provides Council, as the decision-making body, with specific points at which to approve a project as the scope, timelines and costs are finalized. “Stage-Gate” planning ensures that various technical, financial and real estate matters are addressed prior to undertaking an Environmental Assessment and advancing to a more detailed level of design. This approach is appropriate for complex, large-scale initiatives such as Rail Deck Park and re-imagining University and Bayview Avenues.

Park District Studies

The Plan defines and identifies several Park Districts. Some will require further study, such as a district-wide landscape Master Plan, to inform an implementation approach and to realize the districts’ full potential. This is already a standard process of due diligence for master planned communities. Expected outcomes of a Park District Study would be to identify priority park improvements, park acquisition opportunities, street network analysis, and opportunities to establish shared space agreements.

Streetscape Studies

Studying and understanding user needs and physical constraints and opportunities are key components to

streetscape studies. They will include Environmental Assessments when required, and ongoing consultation with the community. Streetscape Studies will be an appropriate process for several of the Great Streets and streets within Park Districts.

Local Places Strategy

This process will establish a clear approach to implement improvements to Local Places. With a focus on parkettes and laneways, the implementation strategy will recommend a “system” approach for improving local places, rather than a “one-off” approach. For example, it may explore the possibility of setting a 5-year goal to improve an established number of parkettes and will identify a strategy for how to achieve it.

Alignments

Implementation of the Plan will be aligned, where possible, with other projects that have a public realm component. This approach to implementation offers an economy of planning exercises in that objectives of both the subject project and this Plan can be met through a single process. Examples of such alignments are the future use of Old City Hall and the renewal of the Civic Precinct, delivering the Great Streets re-design and reconstruction with the planned upsizing of water mains along street segments throughout the Downtown and considering how the Moss Park Revitalization could capture the landscape potential of the Garden District.

“We need to make this city pedestrian- and cycle-friendly. Not only do we need trails and parks, we need seating and gathering places.”

– TOcore Consultation



University Avenue, Toronto, Canada

Prioritizing Initiatives

The Five Transformative Ideas will inform decisions about parkland dedication and acquisition, park improvement, programming and design of new and renewed streets, and budget allocation. The magnitude of the number of projects that will be generated by the transformative ideas exceeds the capacity of the participating City Divisions (City Planning, Parks Forestry & Recreation and Transportation Services, and others) to undertake all projects simultaneously. Accordingly, the Implementation Strategy will develop a set of criteria to prioritize projects. These criteria will apply a strategic lens and provide a rationale for advancing different initiatives at different points over the 25-year lifecycle of the Plan.

When an initiative aligns with one or more of these criteria, it will provide a clear rationale to be prioritized and presents greater opportunity for implementation.

The draft set of criteria are as follows:

- Addressing Park Need and Population Growth;
- Eligibility for Capital Funding;
- Coordinated Infrastructure Investments through:
 - Synchronized City Infrastructure Projects;
 - Partnerships with Third Parties; and
- Emergent Opportunity / Quick-win.

1. Addressing Park Need and Population Growth

In Chapter 4: Park Provision and Need in the Downtown, the map, *Park Area Within 500 metres, 2016* shows areas of the Downtown that have very low parkland supply per person using a Park Catchment Tool (total park user population compared to total park area within a 500 metre catchment). This methodology also uses City Planning's Development Pipeline to measure where parkland need will intensify based on new development. This enables the City to prioritize areas for parkland expansion and improvement based on geography. Where there are existing areas of low provision, the City will consider opportunity sites for park acquisition and expansion. In areas where growth is occurring and the parkland need is intensifying, the City will use the appropriate planning tools to secure parkland and public realm improvements through the Development Approvals Process. These tools are detailed further in the next section.

2. Eligibility for Capital Funding

The City's capital program covers the City's \$76 billion in physical assets. Identifying new capital projects is a complex process, but in general, a project may be eligible for capital funding if it meets one of the following criteria: investing in new infrastructure, and maintaining existing assets.

The Implementation Strategy will prioritize projects based on the outcomes of the Park Provision Assessment and review if those projects are aligned with items approved for the 10-year capital plan. Where there is identified need for new park or public realm infrastructure, but no capital plan alignments exist, recommendations can be made for initiatives to be included in the 10-year capital plan. Where new projects are identified, the costs will be outlined, sources of funding will be determined and the appropriate City Division will make a submission for approval through the City's capital budget process.

3. Coordinated Infrastructure Investments

3a. Synchronized City Infrastructure Projects

Effective implementation of the Plan will ensure that City Divisions leading infrastructure projects engage with City Planning, Parks Forestry and Recreation and Transportation Services when working within the TOcore boundary. This can be facilitated by the Municipal Capital Infrastructure Coordination office within the City. When an initiative of this Plan is aligned with planned below-grade work, the City should make every attempt to advance the public realm improvements as part of project completion. An example of this would be the alignment of the planned water main replacement on many Downtown streets (as outlined in the Water Strategy) with the Great Streets identified in this Plan.

The Implementation Strategy will outline specific projects that can be synchronized. It will detail a process for ensuring that coordination and communication among City divisions and with other organizations that develop and operate utilities and infrastructure occurs.

3b. Partnerships with Third-Parties

Infrastructure investment can come from other levels of government or government agencies, boards and commissions. The City of Toronto works in partnership with these organizations to leverage investment and participation in priority projects. Examples of these partnerships include transit planning and infrastructure with Metrolinx, school boards, and institutions. Elements of this Plan that align with existing initiatives underway by third parties should be prioritized to seize the opportunity to integrate expansion of the parks and public realm system within existing projects. An example of this is the proposed decking structure for Rail Deck Park which has been envisaged to enhance the planned Metrolinx Front / Spadina Regional Express Rail station.

4. New Opportunities

There are concepts in the Plan that may not meet all or some of the above criteria, but should be prioritized based on an emergent opportunity or possibility of a quick-win to showcase an element(s) of the Plan.

For example, the City could advance the public realm improvements to Pembroke Street in line with the Master Plan exercises already underway for Allan Gardens and Moss Park. Pembroke Street is not in the area of highest parkland need; however, completing the connection between the two large parks at each end of the street would demonstrate the place-making potential of a Park District. Quick-wins may also arise through the development approvals process when a land dedication to base-park condition can be enhanced to improve the functionality of the space.

The Five Transformative Ideas presented in this Plan are a blueprint for the Downtown's parks and public realm that builds on the assets of all areas in and adjacent to the core to establish a clear vision and approach for Downtown's future. The Implementation Strategy will be designed to be nimble enough to enable the City to capture opportunities that were not explicitly contemplated by this Plan, but that align with its overall vision and the Five Transformative Ideas.

Realigning Tools to Meet Today's Realities

Downtown's parks today are challenged to meet the range of needs and land area required to serve residents, employees, students, and tourists. Parks in Downtown must serve local populations, and by virtue of their location within the core, near attractions and employment centres, many parks draw visitors from elsewhere in the city and beyond. This places increased pressure on these spaces to provide amenities to support the park needs of local populations and itinerant users. The degree to which the City's parks system keeps pace with residential and employment growth can be improved by adjusting and making better use of the tools the City has at its disposal.

Bringing the *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* to fruition will involve using a number of different tools. A primary tool for the acquisition of parkland and improvements to existing parks stems from the legislative authority of the Planning Act. The City can also leverage existing real estate assets to contribute to the vision of this Parks and Public Realm Plan. Other tools at the City's disposal for improving parks and streets include Development Charges and the tax base. Open space secured on development sites can be secured both through the planning approval process and during detailed site design.

Some implementation will be incremental through individual development applications (such as acquiring

new parkland in the Park Districts) and others may be through larger exercises that will require further study.

1. Parkland Dedication as a Condition of Development Approval

As enabled through Section 42 of the Planning Act, Toronto's primary planning instrument for acquiring new parkland is through land dedications or cash-in-lieu of parkland as a condition of development or redevelopment. Section 42 of the Planning Act sets out a standard rate for parkland dedication of 2 percent of the land area for commercial or industrial development and 5 percent of the land area for residential development.

The Planning Act also permits municipalities to set their own alternative parkland dedication rates (within limits set by the Planning Act) by by-law to enable the City to require parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu as a condition of development and redevelopment over and above the Planning Act minimums. Prior to passing a new by-law that includes an alternative rate, an Official Plan is required to be in effect that contains specific policies dealing with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternative requirement. A Parks Plan is also required to be made publicly available prior to the adoption of Official Plan policy. The Parks Plan must examine the need for parkland in a city or specific geography.

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* meets the criteria under the Planning Act, to be the Parks Plan for the Downtown.

Importantly, any alternative rate established by the City only reflects the expectation of the amount of parkland, or cash-in-lieu of parkland, that development is expected to contribute; it is not necessarily representative of the total amount of land that would be required to meet the City's need for new parkland.

New developments will be expected to contribute parkland commensurate with growth. A new alternative rate will be established for the Downtown that is based on intensity of development, rather than the current static requirement of a percentage of the size of a site that does not account for the range of development intensity the Downtown is experiencing. This new rate will be established by by-law, and brought forward with the Implementation Strategy, in 2019. The key principle that will be applied is that the more intense the development, the more parkland that will be required to be provided.

1a. Land Dedications

Where sites are large enough to accommodate new parkland, on-site land dedications will be prioritized. The City also has the ability to request that development provide its dedication outside of the property itself,

referred to as an “off-site” contribution. Given the size and location of development sites in the Downtown, off-site land dedications will be pursued to ensure the provision of parkland is concurrent with growth and in areas that enhance and increase accessibility of the existing parks system in accordance with this Plan.

1b. Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland

Where the City exercises its right to accept cash-in-lieu of parkland, the alternative rate provision will be used to implement parkland acquisition and improvements serving the Downtown. This may include parkland and improvements outside the Secondary Plan area that serve the area.

2. Development Charges

The Development Charges (DC) Act enables municipalities to collect fees from developers at the time of building permit to help fund essential growth-related infrastructure. Under the City’s proposed 2018 Development Charges By-law, parks and recreation accounts for 12 percent of residential development charges and 2 percent of non-residential development charge allocations. The Development Charges Act precludes cities from using DC funding for parkland acquisition; however, costs associated with parks development and improvements in the Downtown may be eligible for DC funding.

3. Section 37

Section 37 of the Planning Act enables a municipality to secure community benefits in exchange for increased height and density of development otherwise permitted by a Zoning By-law. This tool will continue to provide important contributions for achieving the Five Transformative Ideas identified in this Plan.

4. Site Plan Control

Development proposals on individual sites will be subject to Site Plan Approval under Section 114 of the City of Toronto Act. Site Plans reflect the detailed design and technical aspects of a proposed development, including open space associated with the development. The Site Plan Control process will be an important tool to implementing the Downtown’s public realm elements that will be located on private property, such as POPS, generous setbacks, and stormwater retention, species selection, and other matters.

5. Agreements to Enable Public Access

There are many spaces in the Downtown that improve the public realm and may supplement the parks system. These spaces are listed in Transformative Idea 5: Local Places. They include POPS, laneways, church yards / cemeteries, overlooked spaces, university grounds and

schoolyards. These are important public space assets in the Downtown. Some of these spaces are located in the areas of lowest parkland provision. Shared use agreements and other partnerships will be needed to allow these spaces to remain or become publicly-accessible.

Getting it Done

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* represents a vision that can be refined and enriched over time. It is a shared framework and a practical, action-oriented manual to guide decision-making among individuals, institutions, businesses, organizations, neighbourhoods, and a wide range of parties participating in shaping the future of the Downtown. It calls for the sustained leadership, support and engagement of all parties to foster the long-term vision. Partnerships within the City and with outside stakeholders will be key to the successful implementation of this Plan. Some of Toronto's most successful public realm projects are those that have been implemented through partnerships. Examples of successful partnerships in the Downtown and other parts of the city include:

- Bloor Street Revitalization – Bloor-Yorkville BIA and City of Toronto
- Scarborough Centre Civic Green – TDSB, Toronto Public Library and City of Toronto
- Dundas Street West Parkettes - DUWest BIA and City of Toronto
- Roncesvalles Renewed – Roncesvalles Village BIA, Residents Association and City of Toronto
- Grange Park – AGO, Grange Community Association, Philanthropy and City of Toronto
- The Bentway – Philanthropy, Waterfront Toronto and City of Toronto

Measuring Success

The Parks and Public Realm Plan was launched with a Public Space Public Life (PSPL) Survey (*refer to companion document, Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan: Public Space Public Life Survey*). This form of research provided a clearer picture of how public space is being used in the Downtown and by whom. The data gathered through the study established a baseline against which future parks and public realm investments, acquisitions and improvements can be assessed. Continuing to gather Public Space Public Life data at regular intervals will provide the City with insights into how the implementation of this Plan has improved the experience of the public realm in the Downtown.

The Implementation Strategy will recommend periodic reviews of the Plan. These reviews will include, at minimum, the following analysis:

- An update to the park provision assessment, including parkland need and future need based on City Planning's Development Pipeline;
- An assessment of where growth has occurred during the review period and how parks and the public realm have been expanded, improved and connected commensurate with that growth;
- Updates on the Public Space Public Life Surveys that have been undertaken during the review period;
- A review and update of the priority projects and associated actions for the next 5 years and beyond; and
- An inventory of uninitiated projects and priorities, and a review of their relevance when the impact of other opportunities and investments have been factored into the park provision assessment, Implementation Strategy and Public Space Public Life data.

“Make sure that the public realm is inviting and liveable, with high-quality public spaces.”

– TOcore Consultation



Water feature in the revitalized Grange Park, Toronto, Canada

4.

Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

Addressing park provision and need in the Downtown

Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

Guiding Policy and Aligned Initiatives

The development of this *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan* has been informed by provincial and local policy, and a number of aligned initiatives.

Provincial Policy

The Province sets out the overarching policy direction to guide land use planning decisions in the Provincial Policy Statement (2014) and Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2017). These documents recognize the importance of planning for parks and the public realm. They set the expectation that municipalities will align planning for new parkland when approving new development and explicitly recognize providing expanded and convenient access to an appropriate supply of parks and open spaces will support the achievement of complete communities. The policy documents signal that:

- Parks and the public realm are integral elements of an active transportation network and the provision of green infrastructure;
- A full range and equitable distribution of publicly-accessible built and natural settings for recreation is needed; and
- The provision of parks and public realm contribute to energy conservation and efficiency, improved air quality, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Toronto's Official Plan

Official Plans are long-term visions for how a city should grow and are the most important vehicles for implementing provincial policies and plans.

The City's Official Plan recognizes that Toronto's waterfront, ravines, watercourses, parks and other open spaces connect to form an extensive web of green spaces across the city, and that our parks and open space system will need to expand as the city grows and changes. It highlights that ongoing reinvestment in Toronto's parks and open space system is as important to city-building as creating new parks and open spaces. It directs that:

- New parks and amenities, particularly in growth areas, will be added, in addition to improving and expanding existing parks;
- Parks need to be designed to be of a high quality and provide a variety of amenities to promote user comfort, safety, accessibility and year-round use and to enhance the experience of "place";
- Access to existing publicly accessible open spaces will be protected and expanded; and
- The use of private open space and recreation facilities is promoted, including areas suitable for community or allotment gardening, to supplement the City's parks, facilities and amenities.

The Official Plan also recognizes that the public realm is a defining component of great cities, and the characteristics and qualities that makes cities great places to visit, also makes them great places to live.

City-wide Parkland Strategy

In 2017, the Parks, Forestry and Recreation division launched the City-wide Parkland Strategy. The Strategy is a 20-year plan that will guide the planning of the park system – including new parks, expansions, improvements and enhanced access to existing parks. It will support decision-making and prioritization of investment in parkland across Toronto.

The *Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan*'s vision and Five Transformative Ideas are supported by four principles of the City-wide Parkland Strategy:

- **Acquire and Expand:** Downtown has a parkland provision 67 percent below the city-wide average. As the Downtown population continues to grow, creating new parkland and making existing parks bigger, where possible, is required. Acquisitions and expansions will be undertaken to address the notable gaps in the inventory of types of parks in the Downtown. In particular, this will include park spaces that are large enough to accommodate a range of programming and functionality, which is critical infrastructure needed to support
- Downtown's continued evolution and growth;
- **Improve:** Improvements to parks can be transformative; existing parks can serve a wider range of park users when investments to the infrastructure within the park are made to increase their utility and potential to meet local needs. Investing in parks can contribute to meeting parkland needs to support growth;
- **Share:** Downtown has high quality and signature open space assets owned and operated by other public agencies (such as the Universities) and private landowners. Its cemeteries, existing and improved schoolyards and privately-owned publicly accessible open spaces (POPS) contribute to Downtown's public realm, but do not replace the need for new and enhanced parkland. Collaboration and partnerships are needed to ensure the existing and future population have access to these spaces. Securing new POPS through development, for example, will contribute to expansion of the public realm; and
- **Connect:** A well-connected system of parks and open spaces increases access to these valuable assets. The Plan recognizes that the existing street grid presents the opportunity to establish a network of active transportation routes and pedestrian

connections. It uncovers opportunities to provide better access to existing parks and open spaces and to expand the park experience beyond the park boundary itself thereby creating a cohesive green network and support community life.

The Parkland Strategy has developed an updated methodology for measuring and assessing the provision of parkland in the city based on the amount of parkland per person, where it is located and its degree of accessibility to the population. This methodology has been used in the Downtown to assess and analyze parkland provision, and is addressed in more detail, below, under *Park Provision and Need*.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation finalized the 20-year Facilities Master Plan (FMP) in 2017. This Facilities Master Plan will guide investment in parks and recreation facilities such as community recreation centres, ice rinks, and sports fields. In developing the Facilities Master Plan, consideration was given to demographics, the use and conditions of current facilities, recreation and leisure trends, facility best practices, and legislative changes together with public, stakeholder and staff input. It considered population growth in the Downtown and the rest of the city based on the projected Development Pipeline.

Mobility Strategy and Parks and Public Realm Plan: Working Together

Like the Parks and Public Realm Plan, the Mobility Strategy is one of the Infrastructure Strategies that helps support the implementation of the Downtown Secondary Plan to provide a blueprint for aligning growth and infrastructure in the Downtown over the next 25 years.

The Mobility Strategy outlines a vision and framework to enable the growing numbers of residents, workers, students and visitors in the Downtown to travel safely, efficiently, and more sustainably, while also strengthening the city's economic competitiveness and environmental resiliency. It is primarily about addressing transportation needs within a growing Downtown, but it also supports and complements rapid transit network infrastructure planning initiatives at the city-wide and regional scale.

The Mobility Strategy is organized around the following five transportation themes:

1. Complete Streets
2. Walking
3. Cycling
4. Transit
5. Motor Vehicles

The Mobility Strategy works together with all the Infrastructure Strategies, but works most closely with the Parks and Public Realm Plan, primarily on the subject of Downtown streets. Streets are some of the most important public spaces in the Downtown, and increasingly function as public gathering spaces. They form a fundamental part of the transportation system, enabling people and goods to move and circulate efficiently. Making Downtown streets more complete involves striving to achieve both mobility and placemaking objectives outlined in the Mobility Strategy and the Parks and Public Realm Plan.

It is important that the Mobility Strategy and the Parks and Public Realm Plan be read together, as they fundamentally work together in planning for a more desirable and sustainable Downtown for current and future generations.

Parks in the Downtown

The Downtown has 121 parks and 97 hectares of parkland. A map of the parkland in Downtown is shown in the map, *Existing Parkland (right)*.

The majority of parks in the Downtown are very small; 70 percent being **less than 0.5** hectares in size. While these parks are distributed throughout the Downtown, their small size restricts the range of recreation, sports and community programming that can be found in larger parks. Some of these parks have been designed to a high standard and are in prominent civic locations such as Berczy Park (0.36 hectares), while others are located within neighbourhoods and have few features other than the basic elements of benches and drinking fountains.

There are 22 parks in the Downtown between **0.5 - 1.5** hectares. These parks have greater opportunity to provide space for a wider range of uses. Parks in this size range can be designed to support more than one park element. For example, parks in this size range could include a playground *and* enclosed dog park *and* open space. Some examples of these parks include Bathurst Quay (0.58 hectares), College Park (0.95 hectares), David Crombie Park (1.34 hectares) and Regent Park South (1.49 hectares).

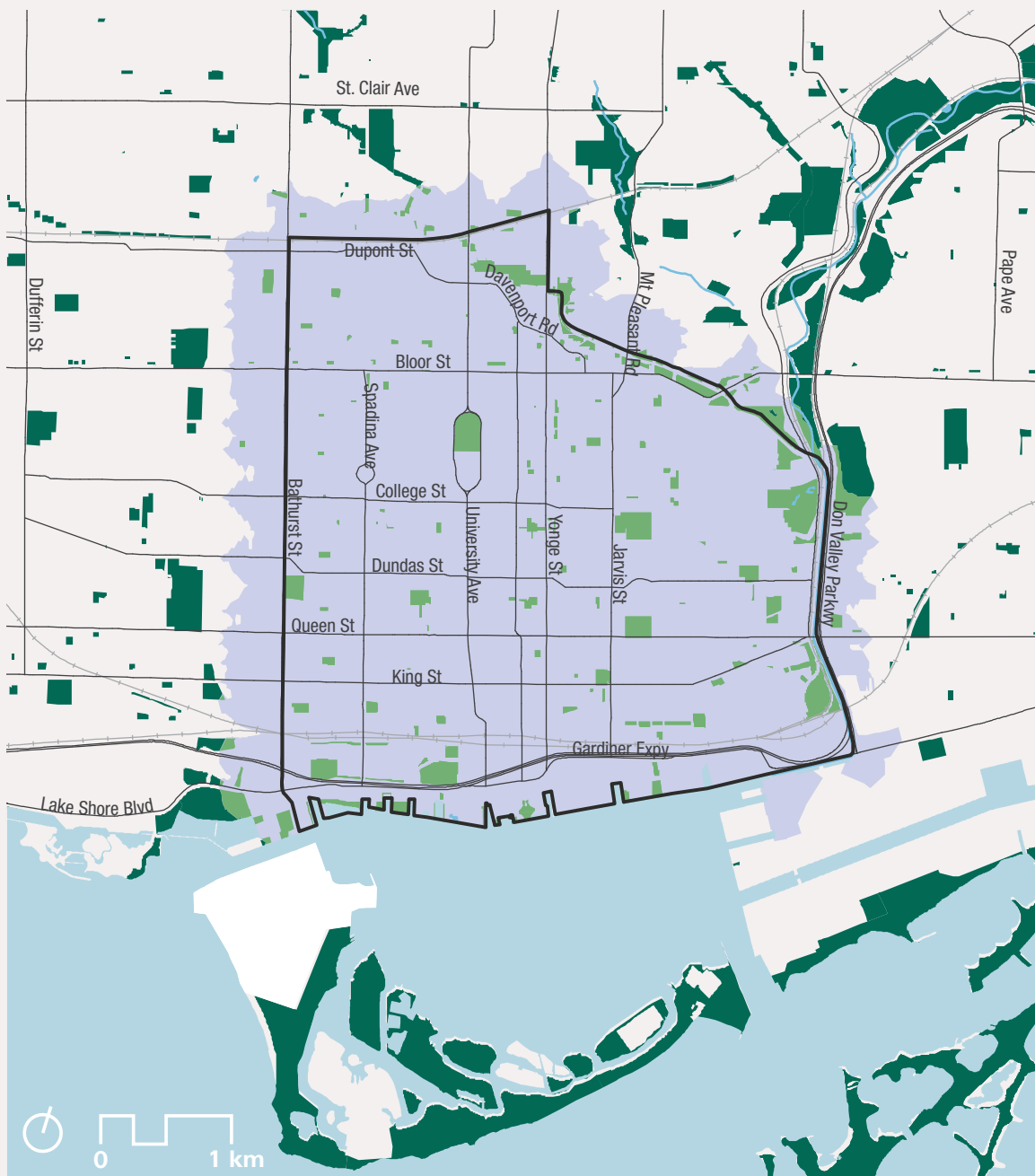
There are five parks in the Downtown between **1.5 - 3.0** hectares. These parks are Regent Park (1.75 hectares), Grange Park (1.83 hectares), Harbour Square Park (1.90

hectares), Wellesley Park (2.28 hectares) and Alexandra Park (2.64 hectares). Each of these parks are large enough to provide areas for programming, facilities and significant passive space.

There are three parks in the Downtown that are between **3.0 - 5.0** hectares in size. Parks of this size can contain multiple recreational facilities, playgrounds and passive space. The parks of this size in the Downtown are Canoe Landing (3.21 hectares), Moss Park (3.46 hectares) and Roundhouse Park (4.76 hectares). Canoe Landing includes two multi-purpose sports fields and walking paths and will support a new community recreation centre, two elementary schools and a child care centre that are currently under construction. Moss Park is undergoing a significant master planning exercise that will include a new community centre and redesigned park; it currently contains a baseball diamond, tennis courts, basketball courts, playground, a community centre and an arena. Roundhouse Park has a unique profile in that it is the location of the restored heritage locomotive turntable and other pieces of railway heritage.

There are six parks in the Downtown **greater than 5.0 hectares** in size. These parks are Queen's Park (5.13 hectares), Allan Gardens (5.36 hectares), Rosedale Ravine Lands (5.51 hectares) Ramsden Park (5.54 hectares), Corktown Common (7.16 hectares) and

- Parks Within TOcore Catchment
- Parks Beyond TOcore Catchment
- TOcore 500m Park Catchments
- TOcore Boundary



Existing Parkland (map by O2 Planning + Design)

Riverdale Park West (11.05 hectares). Queen's Park is in a prominent location adjacent to the Legislature which currently has significant tree canopy and commemorative function. Allan Gardens is the location of the historic Allan Gardens Conservatory, and a number of other uses. Ramsden Park includes many recreational facilities and play spaces and is an important connection between Yonge Street and Avenue Road. Corktown Common is the centrepiece of the West Don Lands revitalization including marshland, lawns, playground areas and communal features, such as a barbeque, large picnic tables and fireplace. Riverdale Park West includes ravine lands and trails as well as large playing fields.

The Toronto Islands are an iconic feature of the city's park system and are an important city-wide park resource. However, because of the cost and obstacles associated with accessing the Islands, they have been excluded from the Downtown parkland provision analysis.

Trends in parkland acquisition

The City continues to acquire new parkland in the Downtown. This is achieved by transfers from other public agencies, land dedication from new development or acquisition by the City. Of the 18 parks that have been added to the City's inventory of parkland since 2005, eight are less than 0.5 hectares, six are between 0.5 - 1.5

hectares, two are between 1.5 - 3.0 hectares, and two are 3.0 hectares or greater in size.

The majority of new parks in the Downtown have been associated with the revitalization of the Waterfront and Railway Lands. The larger parks (Canoe Landing, Corktown Common and Regent Park) have all been developed as a result of master planning exercises where the City was able to allocate parkland through the Plan of Subdivision process to set aside large park blocks to serve a new community.

The challenge for the City is to continue to add new parkland to the parks system to keep pace with the rapid growth of the residential and employment populations in absence of the large-scale regeneration of under-utilized former industrial lands. Addressing this challenge is a core objective of this Plan.

Parkland Provision and Need

The City-wide Parkland Strategy's updated methodology for measuring the provision of parkland in the city has been used to inform the state of parkland provision in the Downtown, now and into the future. The methodology makes use of census and Development Pipeline data at the census dissemination block level (the smallest unit available) and Geographic Information System (GIS) software to accurately measure the distance to parkland from each dissemination block based

on the Downtown's actual walkable street network. This approach was presented in a Preliminary Report which was brought to the City's Executive Committee in November, 2017. The updated methodology consists of a Park Catchment Tool that measures the amount of parkland per person and is reported by Statistics Canada's dissemination blocks. The Tool is based on the following process:

1. **Park Catchment:** A park catchment is determined by calculating the 500 metre distance (or 5 minute walk) to parks using the local road, sidewalk and pathway network.
2. **Park User Population:** The number of people living within the park catchment.
3. **Park Supply:** Park supply is the total amount of parkland accessible to the park user population.

Importantly, the assessment methodology includes all City-owned parks and open spaces, inclusive of natural features and ravine lands with slopes less than 45 percent. While these contribute to our overall system of parks and open spaces in the city, they provide limited opportunities for accommodating a full range of parks programming. Nonetheless, the assessment methodology provides valuable insights into the state of parkland provision in the Downtown. Further, the Toronto Islands, while an iconic feature of the City's park and open space system, have been excluded from the

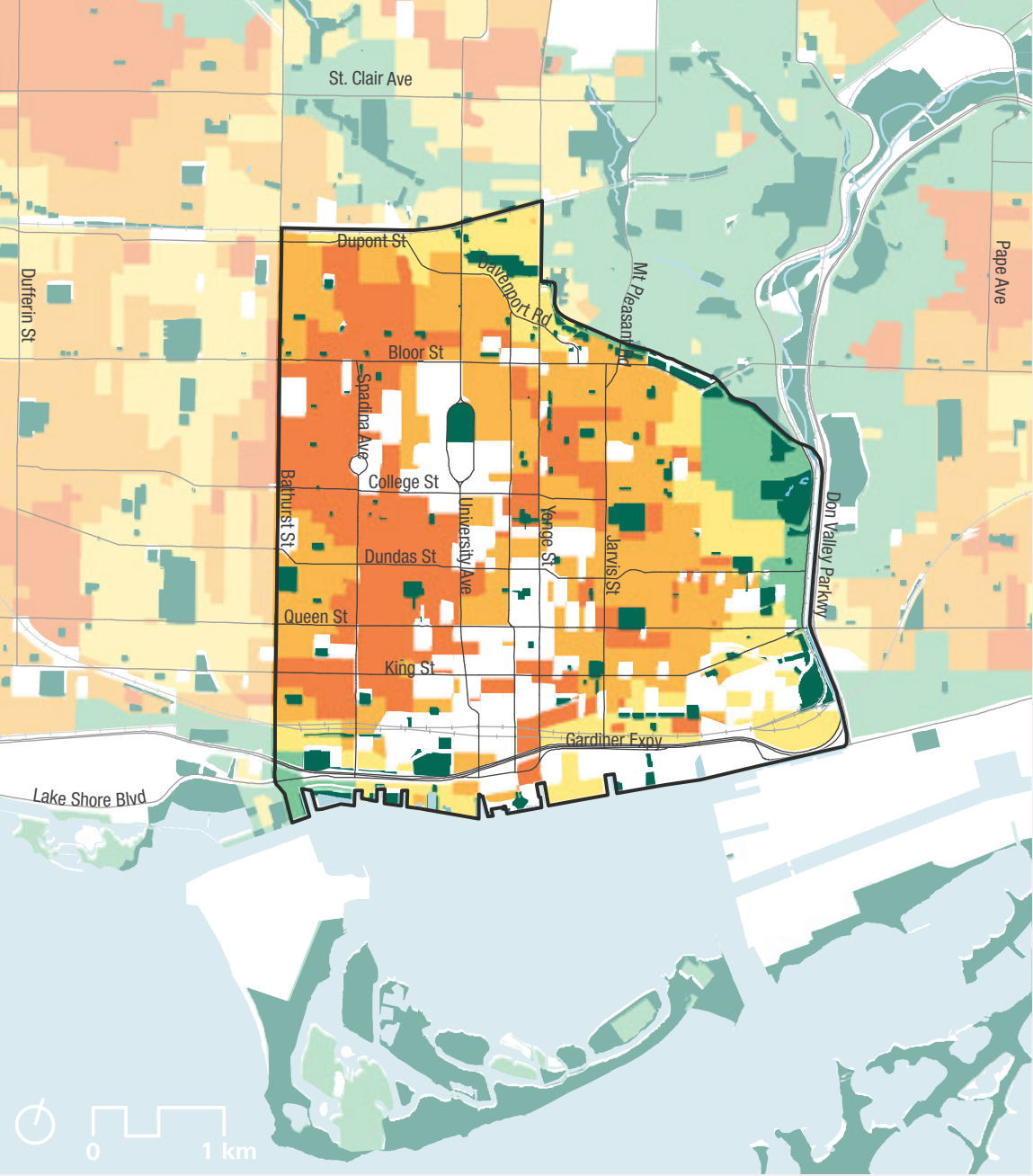
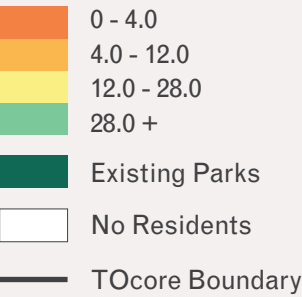
analysis due to the cost and obstacles associated with accessing the Islands.

The application of the updated methodology has shown that in the Downtown, there is 9.4m² of parkland per resident. Compared to the city-wide average of 28m² per resident, the residents in Downtown have 67 percent less parkland than the average Torontonians.

Parkland Supply Per Resident, 2016 (next spread) shows the parkland provision per person (residential population) in the Downtown (2016). The overwhelming majority of the Downtown currently has a very low parkland provision per person. Within the study area, only the areas adjacent to the Don River Valley parks system and near Bathurst Quay have a provision equivalent to the city-wide average.

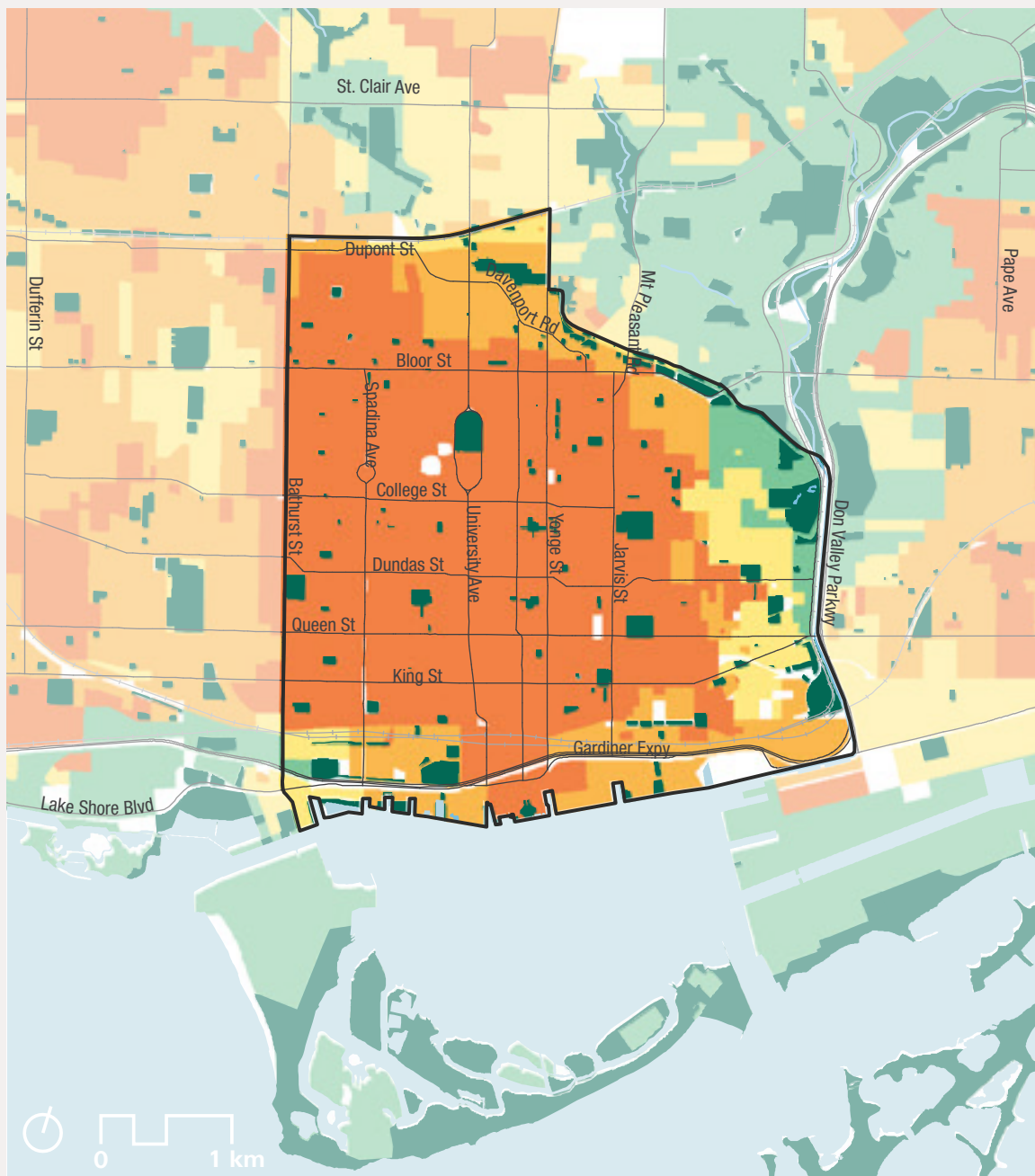
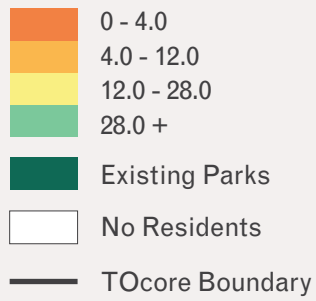
Parkland Supply Per Resident, 2016 also shows that most of the Downtown's low-rise neighbourhoods have very low parkland provision, between 0 - 4.0m² per person. This is due, in part, to the historic development patterns of the original subdivisions and the fact that many of the parks located within low-rise neighbourhoods are also within 500 metre of growth areas. This suggests that without new parkland to support population growth, the parks within these neighbourhoods will become increasingly overburdened.

Total Park Area (m²) Per Resident (2016)



Parkland Supply Per Resident, 2016 (map by O2 Planning + Design)

Total Park Area (m²) Per Resident and Employee (2016)



Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2016 (map by O2 Planning + Design)

In the Downtown, which has the highest concentrations of employees in the city, employment populations are likewise considered when measuring parkland provision. Additional employment population adds pressure to existing parkland and impacts parkland provision, which is an important factor in the overall analysis.

Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2016 (previous spread) shows the parkland provision per person (residential and employment population) in the Downtown (2016). Taking employees into consideration, the parkland provision in the Downtown drops to 3.0m² per resident / employee. These figures do not include visitor or student populations, which likewise contribute to parkland demand in the Downtown.

Parkland Supply Per Resident, 2032 (next spread) presents the change to parkland provision based on estimated population using the Development Pipeline. The Pipeline represents all projects with any development activity between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2016. The horizon of the Development Pipeline is about 15 years, which is the approximate build-out of the projects included in this data set if they are all completed. The map shows that the rate of parkland provision declines to 6.0m² per resident if parks are not acquired to meet estimated population growth.

Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2032 (next

spread) presents the change to parkland provision based on estimated residential and employment population using the Development Pipeline. Similarly, if no new parkland is added in the Downtown within the next 15 years, the rate of parkland provision declines to 2.3m² per resident and employee.

A summary table of provision rates in the Downtown compared to city-wide:

Area	2016 (in m ²)	2032 (in m ²)
City-wide residents	28	23.5
City-wide residents and employees	18	15
Downtown residents	9.4	6.0
Downtown residents and employees	3.0	2.3

If no new parkland is added in the Downtown within the next 15 years, the growth-driven parkland need intensifies considerably. Within the Downtown, there are 137,000 residential units and 3.8 million square metres of non-residential development in the Pipeline. Based on the estimated residential population, the City would need to acquire over 165 hectares of additional

parkland in the next 15 years within the Downtown boundaries to maintain the current rate of parkland provision of 9.4m² per person.

Parkland need is further driven by the land requirements for new facilities identified in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. Recreation facility needs related to growth within the Downtown will be met by facilities within the boundaries of the Downtown, and in other areas that are accessible to and serve the Downtown population. The Facilities Master Plan forecasts that the Downtown will need to be served by the following additional facilities by 2038 to maintain provision levels:

- 4 mid-sized community recreation centres;
- 1 replacement community recreation centre (John Innes);
- 2 indoor pool additions;
- 1 replacement indoor pool;
- 4 splash pads;
- 10 multi-use fields;
- 1 cricket pitch;
- 1 tennis court complex; and
- 8 basketball courts.

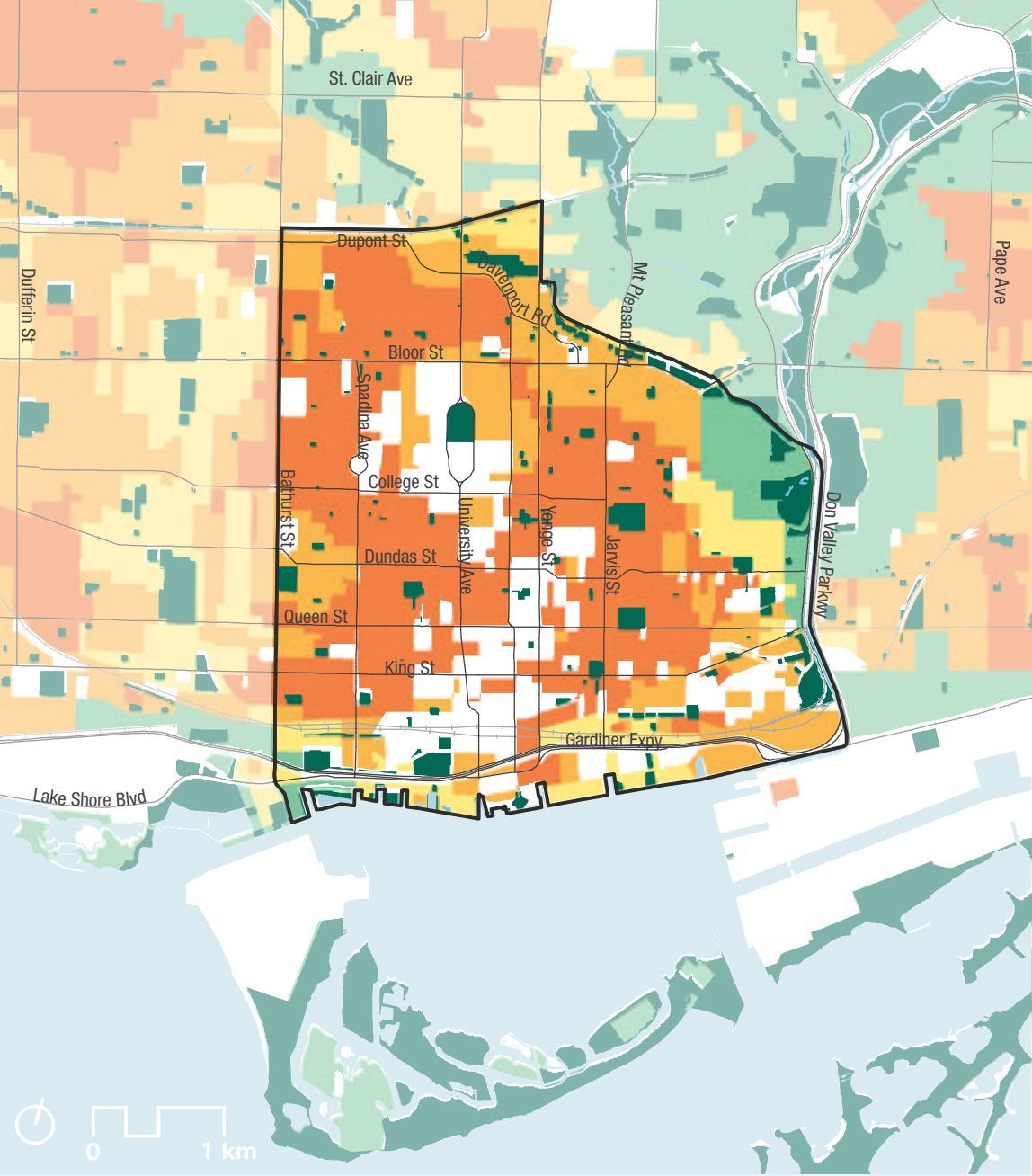
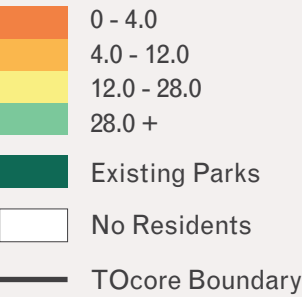
Although some facilities will be built on existing City parkland, additional land is required. It is estimated that an additional 15 hectares of land will be required to serve the facility needs of the Downtown.

Addressing Park Provision and Need in the Downtown

The availability of sites in the Downtown limits how much parkland the City can acquire. The small parcel fabric would require complex land assemblies throughout the Downtown to achieve larger park blocks, which would still not generate close to 165 hectares of new parkland. As such, every available opportunity for providing new parkland, from small to large, is increasingly important. All opportunities available to the City need to be capitalized on to meet future demand. This also emphasizes the need for increased accessibility to existing parks to improve their function and utility.

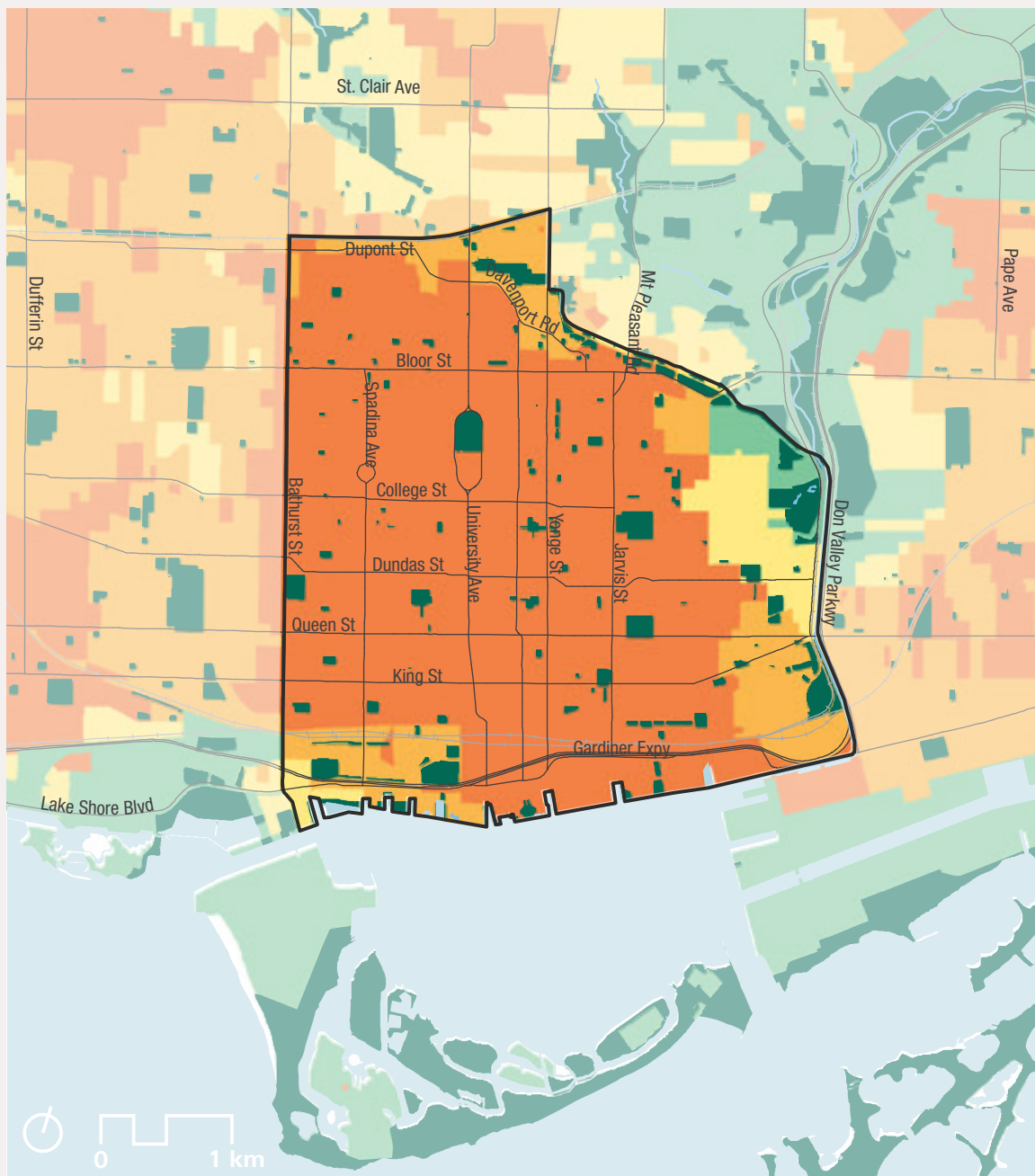
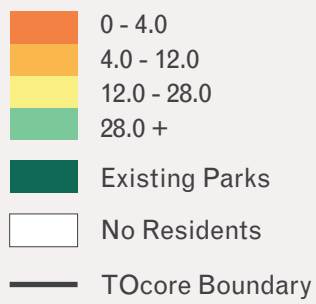
The Planning Act enables the City to require parkland dedication as a condition of development or redevelopment of land. Despite this legislative authority, the City is challenged to acquire enough parkland to meet demand based on the intensity of the vertical development experienced in the Downtown. The City's current policy for parkland dedication ties the amount of parkland required to the size of the development site. It was implemented at a time when the City was experiencing modest growth. The impact of increases in development intensity is a widening gap between development-driven parkland need and the amount of parkland that is required as a condition of approval. The implementation measures proposed in this Plan will seek to address the widening gap.

Total Park Area (m²) Per Resident (2032)



Parkland Supply Per Resident, 2032 (map by O2 Planning + Design)

Total Park Area (m²) Per Resident and Employee (2032)



Parkland Supply Per Resident and Employee, 2032 (map by O2 Planning + Design)

A Full Range of Parks

Toronto did not benefit from a pre-determined master plan for the provision of its parks and open spaces. The city has grown and evolved organically, with each development era providing different kinds of parks and approaches to the provision of parkland. The Downtown's urban fabric is also the product of waves of development and redevelopment.

In a master planned context, a full range of parks and open spaces would be delivered that caters to the needs of people and affords a breadth of park experiences. There would be a series of large multi-functional, signature parks and open spaces, natural areas, a range of community-oriented parks that vary in size and programming, with gaps in the urban landscape filled in with small parkettes, plazas, squares and other open spaces. This range of parks and open spaces would be well-connected by linear open spaces that expand the parks system to create an interconnected open space system.

Park Area Within 500 metres, 2016 (next spread) shows the total amount of parkland that is accessible to residents within 500 metres by size of park. This measurement shows only the supply of parkland available, and does not factor in the demand that population places on Downtown parks, as shown in the previous maps. It shows that there are districts within the Downtown,

most notably west of Yonge Street, where residents have access to less than 1.5 hectares of parkland within 500 metres. In these areas, residents and employees have the narrowest range of park sizes available to them. Conversely, areas east of Parliament Street nearer the parks that are connected to the Don River have access to the broadest range of park categories within 500 metres.

This demonstrates that there is the need for strategic acquisition and investment strategies for all types of parks in the Downtown. For instance, the area to the north of the Union Station rail corridor and to the west of Spadina Avenue (the King-Spadina neighbourhood) has access to an average of 0.5 - 3.0 hectares of parkland, but has one of the most rapid rates of population growth in the city. This underscores the need for a large park in this area, which the City is currently advancing through the plan for Rail Deck Park.

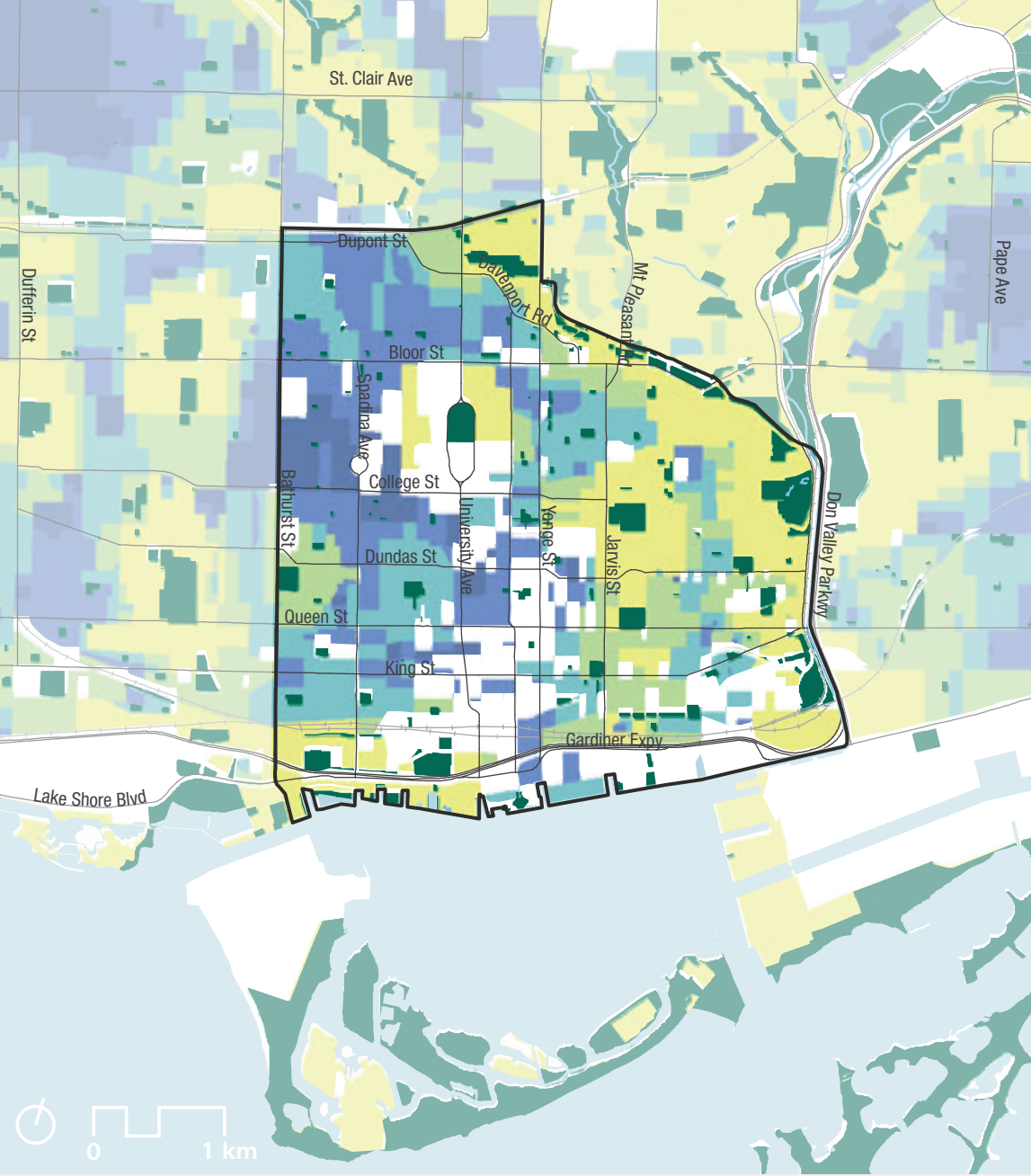
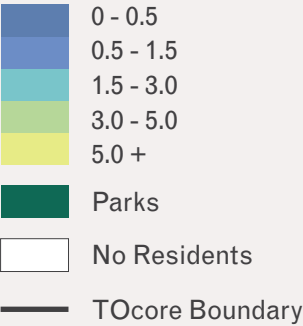
Other insights from *Park Area Within 500 metres, 2016* relate to the area bounded by Bathurst Street, Bloor Street West, Spadina Avenue and College Street. This area has the lowest amount of parkland in the Downtown. It is mostly comprised of stable, low-rise neighbourhoods. However, given the rate of growth in surrounding areas, an expansion and improvement of neighbourhood parks in this area will not only address the historic low rates of park provision in this area, but

support growth elsewhere in the Downtown.

Park Area Within 500 metres, 2016 also illustrates where there are opportunities to improve connectivity to, and expand existing parks to increase accessibility to parks within a 500 metre catchment. It highlights the opportunity to reinforce connections between the core and waterfront areas of the Downtown by creating a series of connected parks and other public spaces.

Some areas of the Downtown have benefitted from master planning exercises, such as Regent Park and Alexandra Park. They demonstrate the importance of improving connections in and through an area by re-introducing historic street grids that were disrupted through 20th century social housing developments. The success of these revitalization efforts are apparent: Regent Park has become an area with one of the highest rates of accessibility to parkland. As revitalization efforts continue to unfold in Alexandra Park, improved connections with new streets will increase the access to parks for all residents within the 500 metre catchment area.

Total Park Area (Ha) within 500m (2016)



Park Area Within 500 metres, 2016 (map by O2 Planning + Design)

In the Downtown, there are 9.4m² of parkland per person, which is 67 percent lower than the city-wide average of 28m² of parkland per person.

CONCEPTUAL RENDERING



The King-Spadina neighbourhood has an average of 0.5 - 3.0 hectares of parkland accessible to residents within 500 metres, but has one of the most rapid rates of population growth in the city; showing Rail Deck Park, Proposed Concept

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