



What's Out There[®]

Toronto



The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)

TCLF provides the tools to see, understand and value landscape architecture and its practitioners in the way many people have learned to do with buildings and their designers. Through its Web site, lectures, outreach and publishing, TCLF broadens the support and understanding for cultural landscapes to help safeguard our priceless heritage for future generations.

learn more at tclf.org

Welcome to *What's Out There Toronto*, organized by The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) with invaluable support and guidance provided by numerous local partners.

This guidebook provides fascinating details about the history and design of just a sampling of Toronto's unique ensemble of vernacular and designed landscapes, historic sites, ravines, and waterfront spaces. The essays and photographs within these pages emerged from TCLF's 2014 partnership with Professor Nina-Marie Lister at Ryerson University, whose eighteen urban planning students spent a semester compiling a list of Toronto's significant landscapes and developing research about a diversity of sites, designers, and local themes. The printing of this guidebook coincided with *What's Out There Weekend Toronto*, which took place in May 2015 and provided two days of free, expert-led tours of all of the sites described herein. These tours were complemented by TCLF's *Second Wave of Modernism III: Leading with Landscape* conference, which invited a panel of international and local experts to discuss Toronto's innovative planning and design strategy and reflect upon its worldwide implications.

Occupied for centuries by indigenous people, the area known as Toronto was established as the Town of York in 1793 by British Lieutenant Governor John Graves Simcoe and renamed in 1834 for an Iroquois word meaning "place where trees stand in water." Its location on a wooded, curving plateau embracing Lake Ontario led to the establishment of an active port and, by the mid-1850s, the emergence of a vibrant, multi-ethnic community. Coincident with the City Beautiful movement at the turn of the century, the Toronto Guild of Civic Art—comprising elite businessmen, artists, and architects—was established to guide city planning and promote the conservation of natural surroundings. A boom in housing and business followed World War II and, in 1957, the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority was formed to manage watersheds and to create recreational opportunities in an area of more

than 16,000 hectares. In the 1970s with urban renewal, the waterfront began to transition from an industrial landscape to one with parks, retail, and housing—a transformation that is ongoing. Today, alluding to its more than 1,400 parks and extensive system of ravines, Toronto is appropriately dubbed the "City within a Park." The diversity of public landscapes ranges from Picturesque and Victorian Gardenesque to Beaux Arts, Modernist, and even Postmodernist.

This guidebook is a complement to TCLF's much more comprehensive *What's Out There Toronto Guide*, an interactive online platform that includes all of the enclosed essays plus many others—as well overarching narratives, maps, and historic photographs— that elucidate the history of design of the city's extensive network of parks, open spaces, and designed public landscapes. That *Guide*, viewable at tclf.org/torontoguide, is one of a number of online compendia of urban landscapes, dovetailing with TCLF's Web-based *What's Out There* database, which currently features more than 1,700 sites, 10,000 images, and 900 designer profiles. Significantly, the addition of sites in the Toronto region expands the *What's Out There* database beyond the United States and inaugurates our coverage of the cultural landscape legacy of Canada. *What's Out There*, optimized for iPhones and similar handheld devices, includes *What's Nearby*, a GPS-enabled function that locates all landscapes in the database within a 40-kilometer radius of any given location.

On behalf of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, I appreciate your interest in *What's Out There Toronto* and I hope you will enjoy discovering Toronto's unparalleled landscape legacy.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION

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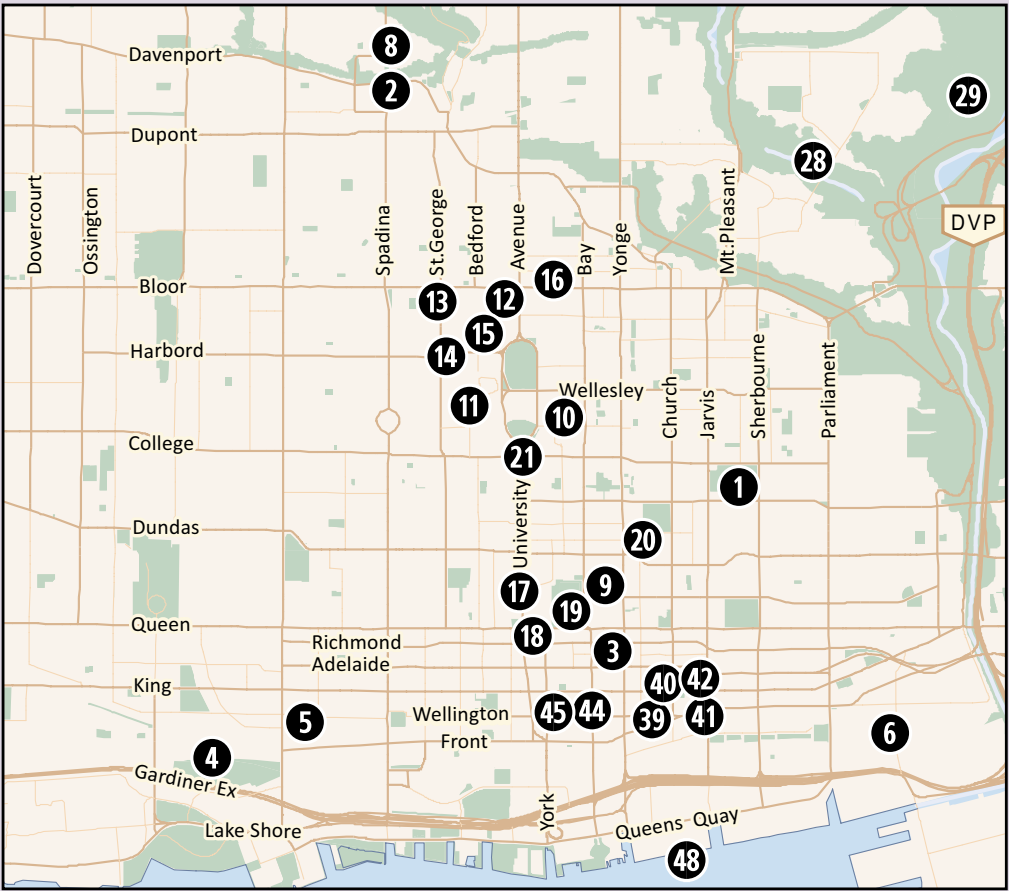
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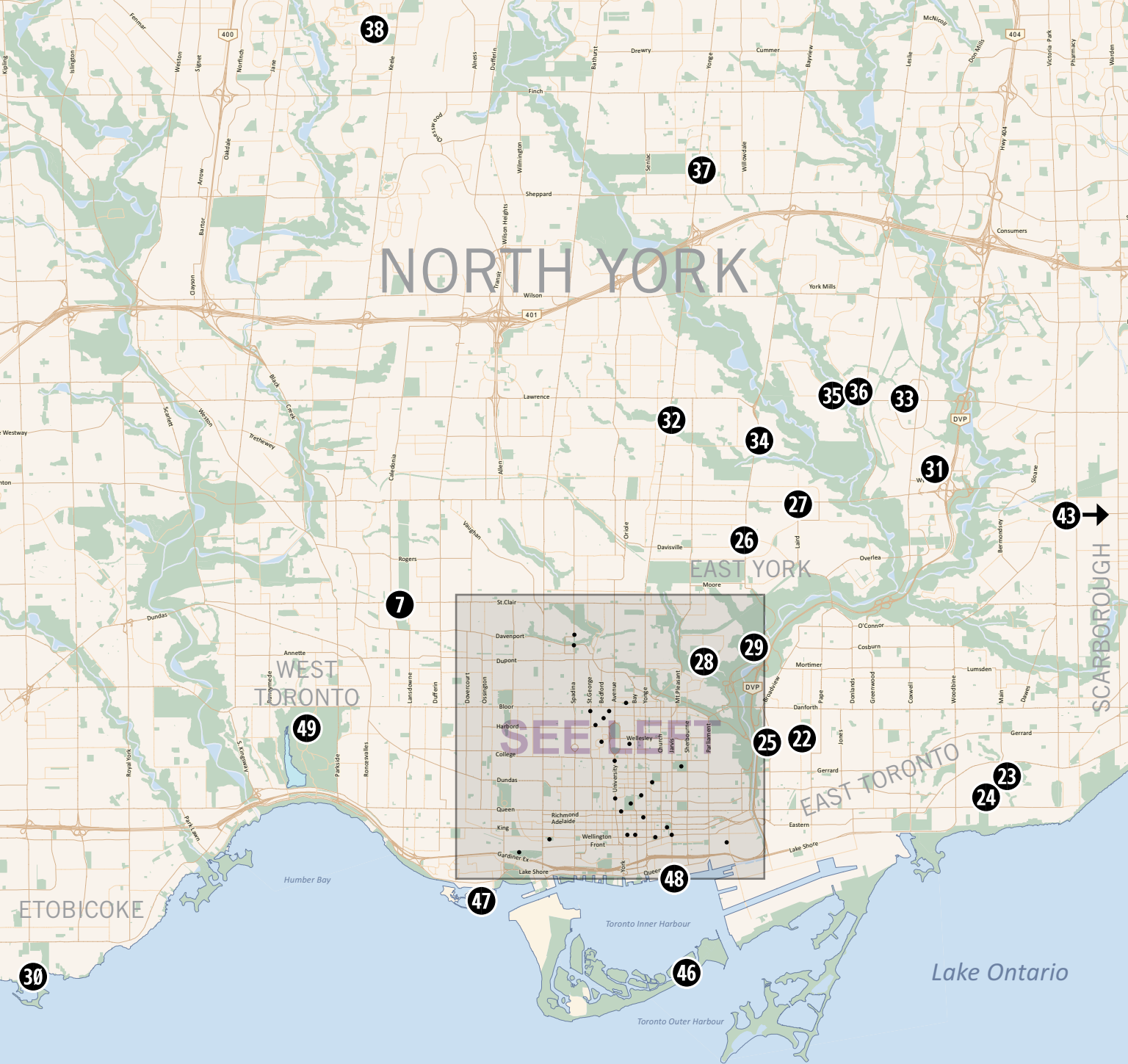
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Allan Gardens

Among the oldest in the city, this park is home to the Allan Gardens Conservatory, a series of six interconnected greenhouses enclosing taxonomically organized botanical collections. The five-hectare parcel is segmented into smaller spaces by numerous linear paths running with and diagonal to the surrounding urban grid. Planted with more than 300 trees, the collection includes black cherry, American beech, sassafras, sugar maple, and red oak.

The park originated with a gift of two hectares to the Toronto Horticultural Society in 1858 by Toronto mayor George William Allan. The first gardens opened two years later flanked by a rustic pavilion designed by William Hay within picturesque grounds organized from a central plan, laid out by landscape gardener Edwin Taylor, a pupil of Sir Joseph Paxton. Two additional hectares were purchased from Allan in 1864, and an iron-and-glass horticultural pavilion and conservatory opened in 1879. A large, ornate fountain and iron fence were also constructed. Fire destroyed the horticultural pavilion and parts of the conservatory in 1902, which occasioned the building of the Victorian glass-domed Palm House, designed by Robert McCallum and opened in 1910. Land was added to the park's western section in the late 1950s, and J. Austin Floyd redesigned the landscape, adding a row of circular fountains east of the Palm House. The fountains were replaced in 1995 with a pergola designed by landscape architect Robert Duguid. In 1986 Allan Gardens was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act. Formed in 2002, the non-profit Friends of Allan Gardens aspires to revitalize the park.

Landscape Style:
Victorian Gardenesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Edwin Taylor
J. Austin Floyd



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Baldwin Steps

Designed By:
Urban Design Department,
City of Toronto

These monumental steps, named to honor the locally significant Baldwin family, who once owned and developed the land on which they are situated, now constitute a public right-of-way that ascends the steepest section of an escarpment running through much of the City of Toronto. In the early nineteenth century Dr. William Baldwin laid out the straight, north-south Spadina Road, which passed through the city but was diverted at this location due to the steep slope of the escarpment. To accommodate this diversion, wooden steps were built to extend the road's trajectory between Davenport Road at the bottom of the cliff and Austin Terrace at the top. A more permanent staircase was in place by 1913. The Province of Ontario expropriated the land surrounding the steps in the 1960s for the construction of a freeway, never built. In 1984 the Province leased the steps to the City of Toronto, which rebuilt them three years later with railings and larger landings.

From their base at the intersection of Spadina and Davenport Roads, the concrete steps rise to a semi-circular landing flanked by pillars and partially encircled by an arcing amphitheater. The landing is shaded by mature trees and surrounded by planting beds bordered by a low stone wall. The stairs, 134 in all, switchback across the steep escarpment through natural understory plantings to a circular viewing platform at its mid-way point, while a third landing at the top, surrounded by a metal railing, duplicates the form of that occurring at the bottom of the steps.



Photo via Flickr



Photo by Isabelle Adam



Photo by Isabelle Adam

Cloud Gardens

Located in Toronto's financial district, this small (0.2 hectares) site was set aside for use as a park in 1989 as an amenity of the nearby Bay-Adelaide office development. Designed by Baird Sampson Neuert Architects, Milus Bollenberghe Topps Watchorn, Landscape Architects, and artist Margaret Priest in 1990, the park sits atop a subterranean parking garage and comprises several distinct spaces and elements. Framing the southeast edge is Priest's sculptural homage to construction workers, a six-meter-high wall of iron girders forming one-meter-square sections containing a colorful, quilt-like arrangement of construction materials, from copper shingles to etched glass. The wall is fronted by a series of ramps and terraces, whose ascent is marked by horizontal courses of exposed limestone emulating stratified rock. Farther along the eastern perimeter is a waterfall, where 1,800 gallons of water per minute spill down three deep, concrete channels to a series of cascades and pools before flowing south in a runnel to a copper dam. At the northeast corner, over the entrance to the parking garage, is a glass-enclosed conservatory, where ferns, palms, and other tropical plants are bathed in mist (suggesting their native mountainous habitat) and can be observed via catwalks. The sharp angularity and industrial materials on the eastern half of the park are balanced by curving footpaths and planting beds on the west, where native hemlock, oaks, ash, and maples form a dense canopy over perennials. The park won a Regional Merit Award from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects in 1995.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park
Roof Garden

Designed By:
Baird Sampson Neuert Architects
Milus Bollenberghe Topps Watchorn,
Landscape Architects
Margaret Priest



Photo by Diedre Tomlinson



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins

Fort York National Historic Site

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Commemorative Landscape

In 1793 Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe constructed log buildings to house a garrison of British soldiers on the shore of Lake Ontario, simultaneously founding the Town of York and its earliest defenses. Having deteriorated, the buildings were replaced by others, which were destroyed by an American attack during the Battle of York in 1813. By 1815 the fort was rebuilt in its present configuration, and in 1909 the property passed to the City of Toronto, which undertook historic preservation work from 1932 to 1934, and again in 1949. A visitor's center with galleries and spaces dedicated to public education opened in 2014.

Today, hemmed in by roads and rail lines and crossed by an elevated expressway, the fort lies 500 meters from the shoreline due to two centuries of in-filling. Connected by footpaths, its seven original buildings—officers' and soldiers' barracks, blockhouses, and magazines—occupy a sunken lawn bisected by an east-west road and enclosed by a (partially reconstructed) stone-lined earthen embankment with bastions. The embankment encloses nearly three hectares of land, and is pierced by batteries, the southernmost extending prominently in a semi-circle and housing two cannons. West of the embankment and adjacent to the fort is Garrison Common, a 3.3-hectare park with open fields and groves of mature trees, which was an open "mustering ground" where the battle raged. Farther west is the Strachan Avenue Military Cemetery, which operated from 1860 to 1911, and whose few remaining headstones are embedded in a brick wall, which fronts a semi-circular apron enclosed by a hedge. Fort York was designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1923.



Photo courtesy Fort York



Photo courtesy Fort York



Photo by Samson Ahensan

Victoria Memorial Square

This 0.81-hectare park contains a rectangular burial ground (38 by 91 meters) active from 1794 to 1863 established by Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe for the garrison at nearby Fort York. Simcoe's infant daughter Katherine was the first interment. In 1837 an encroaching street grid enclosed the cemetery within a 2.4-hectare parcel named Victoria Square, which was connected to Clarence Square to the east by a wide, tree-lined boulevard known as Wellington Place. Much reduced in size, the square was converted to a park in the 1880s, its gravesites leveled, paths established, and the surviving headstones gathered along its western edge. Having fallen to neglect, in the late 2000s the park was significantly altered, with a fenced playground added at its northwest corner.

Two arcing pathways originating at the park's corners cross the length of the flat, grassy parcel and converge at the middle, while a narrow cobblestone walk outlines the historic cemetery. The seventeen surviving headstones are attached to upright granite slabs along the northeastern edge of the burial ground. At the center of the park, enclosed by a wrought iron fence anchored by bollards, the War of 1812 Monument comprises a stone pedestal by architect Frank Darling, surmounted by a bronze sculpture completed in 1907 by Walter Allward. Elsewhere two stone chairs, designed by Montse Periel and Màrius Quintana, memorialize a letter of support for the park from author and activist Jane Jacobs, written in 2002. The park, redesigned in 2012 by The Planning Partnership and ERA Architects, is a component of the Fort York National Historic Site, designated in 2003.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Greens/Commons/Square
Commemorative Landscape

Designed By:
The Planning Partnership
ERA Architects



Photo courtesy ERA Architects



Photo courtesy ERA Architects



Photo courtesy ERA Architects

Gooderham and Worts Distillery Complex

Designed By:
ERA Architects
The Planning Partnership

This 5.25-hectare parcel of industrial buildings was home to the Gooderham and Worts Distillery, which operated from 1837 to 1990. James Worts purchased the site in 1832 as the location for a gristmill; his partner and brother-in-law William Gooderham converted it to a whiskey distillery after Worts' death. Between 1859 and 1895, architects David Roberts, Sr. and David Roberts, Jr. designed and constructed an industrial campus, beginning with the limestone gristmill and distillery. The growth of the industrial campus resulted in the extension of the shoreline southward some 500 meters as new wharves were added. The distillery closed in 1990 and was purchased in 2001 by the development corporation Cityscape, which initiated the large-scale, adaptive re-use of the site, coordinated by ERA Architects and The Planning Partnership.

Today, more than 40 buildings from the nineteenth century complex remain intact. The stone distillery, rack houses, and other buildings now accommodate office, retail, and residential spaces connected by courtyards and pedestrian avenues lined by trees, planting beds, contemporary backless benches and Victorian-inspired lampposts. Several open plazas punctuated with large-scale sculptures lie at the junction of major streets, flanked by commercial development. Continuous structural façades and the use of brick and limestone create a unified and coherent design aesthetic. Traces of the original windmill, demolished in the early 1860s when steam replaced wind power, have been discovered through archaeological investigations. The distillery complex was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act in 1976, and a National Historic Site of Canada in 1988.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Prospect Cemetery

Seeking to create a non-sectarian cemetery for the growing communities west of the city, in 1887 the Trustees of the Toronto Burying Ground purchased 42 hectares of farmland. Two years later, landscape engineer Joseph Earnshaw was commissioned to design the cemetery on the narrow, undulating parcel, which was crossed by a ravine and a stream, and dotted with maples, white elms, and burr oaks. Embracing the site's natural topography, Earnshaw cut a winding, looping road from the entrance on St. Clair Avenue through the full length of the parcel, with several other roads emanating from it throughout the sylvan setting. His plan included a lake near the middle of the parcel, and his division of the burial plots left the southernmost eight hectares free of monuments. The cemetery opened in 1890, with some 500 trees planted in the first year.

In the 1920s Rogers Road and Kitchener Avenue trisected the plot, each with gated, vehicular entrances to the cemetery. The area of the lake was subsequently in-filled, and in the 1990s some of the original roads were altered to accommodate more burials, with new monuments added in older sections. Four mausolea were eventually built on the site: A small one lying on the eastern edge of the property's middle section, and three others in the southern portion, two of which were designed in the Modernist style by Baird Sampson Neuert, Architects. The property is fenced on all sides with various materials—wrought iron, chain-link, wood, and masonry—and a small, wooden gatehouse covers a pedestrian entrance on its northern edge.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Cemetery
Rural Cemetery

Designed By:
Joseph Earnshaw
Baird Sampson Neuert, Architects



Photo courtesy Prospect Cemetery

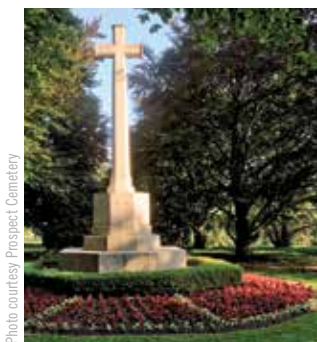


Photo courtesy Prospect Cemetery



Photo courtesy Prospect Cemetery

Spadina Museum

Landscape Style:
Victorian Gardenesque

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate
Institutional Grounds
Cultural Institution

Designed By:
Lord & Burnham
Garden Club of Toronto

Built in 1866 by James and Susan Austin, this Second Empire style mansion and English style landscape occupy some 2.4 hectares atop Davenport Hill, derived from the 32-hectare estate of Dr. William Baldwin, who built his home there in 1818. The property was purchased by Austin and in the 1890s passed to his son Albert who carried out renovations and additions to the house and grounds, including the construction of a greenhouse designed by Lord & Burnham in 1913. Utilized for farming, the land was subdivided over the years and in 1978 the City of Toronto and the Ontario Heritage Trust acquired the mansion and the surrounding 2.4 hectares. In the early 1980s the Garden Club of Toronto returned the grounds to their early twentieth century state.

Entering from the west through a gate in the surrounding fieldstone wall—embellished by arched niches—a carriage drive encircles planting beds and passes beneath the glass and wrought iron porte-cochère. A path across the lawn below the southern terrace traces the original carriageway, while farther south lays the battery. North of the mansion are the greenhouse, garage, gardener’s cottage, and historic grape arbor extending into the apple orchard. To its east is a large parterre garden, planted with vegetables and herbs surrounded by perennials and annuals, while squash and other crops grow behind a cedar hedge. In 1976 Spadina House was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act. Owned jointly by the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto, it has been operated as a museum by the City since 1984, and City staff maintains the buildings and gardens.



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Photo courtesy City of Toronto



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi

Photo courtesy City of Toronto



Trinity Square

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park
Plaza

Designed By:
Moorhead Fleming Corban McCarthy
Landscape Architects
Ronald Thom
The Thom Partnership

Occupying a dense urban area, this site was originally a farm on Taddle Creek bordered by a forested swamp on the outskirts of town when it was secured in 1845 for the construction of the Church of the Holy Trinity. Architect Henry Lane was commissioned to design a cruciform Gothic structure with two towering turrets. Twenty years later, Timothy Eaton established a dry-goods store nearby, one that, by 1919, had expanded to occupy 24 hectares comprising warehouses and factories. By the mid 1960s Eaton's industry was failing and the owners began to transform the area into a commercial and office complex.

In 1981 Moorhead Fleming Corban McCarthy Landscape Architects and the Thom Partnership were commissioned by the City to design Trinity Square. The small (110 x 90 meter) park between the church and the newly built Eaton Centre shopping complex comprises three distinct yet connected spaces: Sited on a geometrically paved plaza and surrounded by high rise buildings, the church is the terminating point on the axis from Bay Street accessed via a linear pedestrian route defined by an allée, shallow pool, and fountain. Adjacent, a terraced, rectilinear lawn bordered by a double allée of lindens was sunken below grade to create a secluded respite from the urban surroundings. Fronting the Centre, a triangular plaza provides the setting for *Communications*, a sculpture by Haydn Llewellyn Davies. In 1986 Trinity Square received the National Award of Excellence from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects. In 2005 the Labyrinth Community Network installed a labyrinth modeled on one in Chartres.



Photo courtesy City of Toronto



Photo by Ian Munro



Photo by Dominik DeBryer

Queen's Park Complex

Built in the 1960s as an annex to the Provincial Legislature, this office complex included several designs articulated in a master plan by Sasaki, Strong and Associates. On the northwest, the Whitney Block dates to the 1920s while the Macdonald Block, comprising a courtyard and four towers, occupies the eastern side of the full city block.

Threading through the entire complex, much of the landscape—with shaped mounds and mature trees—was built atop a parking garage. An exception is the northeast plaza, where Sasaki's landscape (augmented with a technical design by Masao Kinoshita) rests upon raised pedestals. Here an illuminated, jetted fountain with Gerald Gladstone's sculpture, *Three Graces*, anchors the plaza's elevated pool, bordered by planting beds and enlivened by upended cobbles that create ripples in the flowing water. A row of trees screens the Macdonald Block façade while others (including Japanese flowering crabapples, Russian olives, and European white birch) are found within and bordering the plaza, which is edged by a limestone wall incorporating a seating ledge. To the north, closely spaced lindens form a dense screen, and public sculpture is sited between the two building blocks, as well as within the interior courtyard. South of the Whitney Block, the design of the park-like plaza reflects the influence of Richard Strong and the original project manager, Gerry Englar. Prompted by the Province of Ontario (which owns the complex), an assessment of the landscape's significance was undertaken in 2002, establishing guidelines for the subsequent restoration of the northeast plaza by ENVision-The Hough Group.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds
Governmental Institution
Roof Garden
Courtyard
Plaza

Designed By:
Sasaki, Strong and Associates
Hideo Sasaki
Masao Kinoshita
Richard Strong
Gerry Englar
ENVision-The Hough Group



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

University of Toronto – St. George Campus

Located north of the financial district in downtown Toronto, the oldest of the University of Toronto's three campuses occupies some 67 hectares and is bounded roughly by College Street, Bay Street, Spadina Avenue, and Bloor Street West. Its origin lies in the University of King's College at York (the predecessor of the University of Toronto), which was established by Royal Charter in 1827, and one year later granted three adjacent, so-called, Park Lots, portions of which were soon transformed into Queen's Park. The grounds were reached from the south by a carriageway that would eventually become the broad, ceremonial boulevard known as University Avenue.

Throughout the nineteenth century, the campus expanded to include a series of federated and affiliated colleges (on the British model) set amid still largely forested parkland. But in the latter half of the twentieth century, denser construction, particularly west of St. George Street, altered the semi-rural character of the campus, and widened traffic arteries, such as those encircling Queen's Park, encroached upon and isolated the interconnected open spaces. The heart of campus today is University College, flanked on the south by the large, oval lawn of King's College Circle, and on the north by the common green known as the "Back Campus." The cloistered courtyards of Knox College and Hart House are also nearby, while Trinity College, constructed around a quadrangle, lies to the north. Adjacent to it is Philosopher's Walk, whose paved footpath undulates beside banks and hollows, marking the former course of Taddle Creek, which ran through the original Park Lots where King's College was founded.

Landscape Style:

Picturesque
Modernist

Landscape Type:

Campus
Quadrangle Plan

Related Landscapes:

Massey College
Philosopher's Walk
Trinity College
St. George Street



Photo by Arianna Reuda



Photo by Arianna Reuda



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Brendan Stewart

Philosopher's Walk

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Designed By:
Michael Hough

Related Landscapes:
University of Toronto —
St George Campus

This paved walkway on the University of Toronto's St. George Campus traces the winding course of Taddle Creek, which once flowed through the area. In 1859 the creek was dammed to create McCaul's Pond and a botanical garden, before being buried in 1884 to serve as a sewer. Along Bloor Street, the Queen Alexandra Gateway frames the north entrance of the path. Its stone pillars, with serpent-headed lampposts, were erected in 1906 at the corner of Bloor Street and Queen's Park, but relocated to their current position, between the Royal Conservancy of Music and the Royal Ontario Museum, in 1962. Around that time, landscape architect Michael Hough re-designed the walk's surroundings, recalling the historic character of the former Taddle Creek.

From the northern gateway, a ramp descends from a semi-circular apron to a wide cobblestone path, lined with lampposts and occasional recessed benches. Bordered by grassy banks and deep hollows planted with trees, the path undulates south past many academic buildings, including Trinity College, to which it gives access. Along the way, it is joined obliquely by other walkways from the east and west, and can thus be accessed from Queen's Park Crescent. Midway along the route, where several paths converge, a small seating area (the Amphitheatre) faces east, and was built in 2010 using Wiarion limestone. In 1990 fourteen red oaks were planted along the path to memorialize the fourteen women killed in the Montreal Massacre in 1989, and in 2006 the Bennett Gates were erected at the southern terminus of the walk.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Arianna Reuda



Photo by Arianna Reuda

St. George Street

From the nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, St. George Street developed as a prestigious tree-lined avenue flanked by brownstone mansions set uniformly behind lawns, stone walls, and iron fences. In the 1940s grass verges and mature trees were removed and it was widened to four lanes, becoming a major traffic artery. Beginning in the 1960s, the University of Toronto, expanding from the east, acquired and razed several residential properties along the street, between Bloor Street West and College Street, eventually replacing many with institutional buildings. St. George Street thus became the primary north-south vehicular route traversing the university, as well as a physical and symbolic barrier dividing the campus.

In the late 1990s, the architectural firms of Brown + Storey and van Nostrand Hanson Di Castri, and Corban and Goode Landscape Architecture and Urbanism, redesigned its one-kilometer stretch, aiming to unify the bisected campus with a pedestrian-friendly avenue. Vehicular lanes were reduced and bicycle lanes added, as well as grass verges bordered by seating and wide sidewalks. A continuous double allée lines the eastern side of the street, while a single row of trees was planted on the west. Wide bands of square pavers prominently mark several crosswalks, which link to through-routes, courtyards, and popular destinations. Particularly significant was the creation of a large public plaza incorporating a length of the street at Sidney Smith Hall, with seating, light fixtures, and trees placed in alternating squares of tinted concrete adjacent to the street.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Boulevard

Designed By:
Brown + Storey
van Nostrand Hanson Di Castri
Corban and Goode Landscape
Architecture and Urbanism

Related Landscapes:
University of Toronto —
St George Campus



Photo © Brown + Storey Architects



Photo © Brown + Storey Architects



Photo © Brown + Storey Architects

Massey College

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:
Campus
Quadrangle Plan
Courtyard

Designed By:
Ronald Thom

Related Landscapes:
University of Toronto —
St George Campus

Funded by the Massey Foundation, this postgraduate college at the heart of the University of Toronto was designed by Ron Thom and opened in 1963. Although the brick-and-concrete architecture, with its highly articulated and recessed surfaces, is distinctly Modernist in style, the design freely adapts medieval motifs, such as the bell tower in the southwest corner, and the wrought-iron entrance gate fashioned in the manner of those found in ancient Scottish castles. Adhering to the Oxbridge tradition, the inward-facing architectural ensemble is organized around a secluded courtyard.

The central, rectangular quadrangle, accessible only through two gates, is surrounded on three sides by three-story residential wings, with a four-story wing along the south housing dining facilities, offices, and libraries. The southern portion of the courtyard is completely paved with rectilinear courses of rough-cut stone slabs with uneven surfaces and stepped, zigzag patterns where it meets lawn and water features. A narrow, rectangular pool with three low fountain jets stretches along its southern perimeter, beneath a stone pergola, while a second pool with irregular edges extends from the base of the bell tower. To the north the pavers become two footpaths, each lined with benches, and giving way to wide sections of grass, planted with a few mature trees. Influenced by the Arts & Crafts movement, Thom used many of the natural materials found in the courtyard—stone, iron, and wood in his designs for the buildings, which extended to the smallest detail. In 1990 Massey College was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo © Milan Illyckij



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Photo © Milan Illyckij



Trinity College

Founded in 1851 by John Strachan, the first Anglican Bishop of Toronto, and originally located on Queen Street, Trinity College became part of the University of Toronto in 1904. It was re-located to Hoskin Avenue in 1925, with the southern wing of its quadrangle completed by the architectural firm of Darling & Pearson. Lateral additions followed in the 1940s and 1950s, with the north wing completed in 1963.

The southern façade of the college is separated from Hoskin Avenue by a terraced lawn, buffered from the sidewalk by low stone walls, and planted with trees. The central courtyard of the quadrangle, formerly a simple, treed space bisected by a wide walkway leading to a Gothic structure, was redesigned in 2007 by the multidisciplinary firm gh3 led by Diana Gerrard and Pat Hanson. A grid of twenty squares ornamented the courtyard's flat lawn, maintained as flexible space, each inscribed with a stylized chi symbol. The plan preserved the entrances to the quadrangle and its outer plantings; existing trees stand in circles of sod complementing the grid of squares. Along the north, a wide apron with benches announces a central staircase and terrace, which is paved with flagstone and bordered by trees and shrubs. To the west is Devonshire House, whose three buildings, forming an open-ended quadrangle, became part of Trinity College in the 1980s. In the early 2000s Janet Rosenberg Studio redesigned its central courtyard as a *tapis vert* with an axial rectangular pool and circular fountain. In 1988 Trinity College was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Landscape Style:
Postmodernist

Landscape Type:
Campus
Quadrangle Plan
Courtyard

Designed By:
Darling & Pearson
gh3
Diana Gerrard
Pat Hanson
Janet Rosenberg Studio

Related Landscapes:
University of Toronto —
St George Campus



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Anne Winters



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Village of Yorkville Park

Landscape Style:
Postmodernist

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park
Plaza

Designed By:
Oleson Worland Architects
Martha Schwartz
Ken Smith
David Meyer
PWP Landscape Architecture

Constructed between 1992 and 1994 in the formerly bohemian Village of Yorkville, this compact park (30 x 150 meters) is situated between high-rises to its south and upscale boutiques on its north. Victorian row houses formerly occupied the site, and were demolished in the 1950s to accommodate the Bloor subway line. A parking lot was built atop the subway, and in the 1970s the City of Toronto agreed to replace it with a park, sponsoring an international design competition in 1991, won by Oleson Worland Architects in association with Schwartz Smith Meyer Landscape Architects and PWP Landscape Architecture.

The Park has eleven distinct garden plots, whose borders trace the property lines of the demolished row houses, and whose variety—recalling the Victorian propensity for collecting and classifying—echoes the diversity of the Canadian landscape. Beginning at the east, a five-by-five grid of Scots pines, each set within a doughnut-shaped seating circle, is regularly interspersed with slender lampposts doubling as fog emitters. Then follows a succession of plants, surfaces, and materials: Beds of wildflowers; a gravel plot with birches, movable tables and chairs; perennial herbs in natural stone planters; a crabapple orchard; a metal, vine-covered pergola; elevated boardwalks crossing a wetland garden; an alder grove; a water curtain beside a large, granite outcropping (imported from the Canadian Shield and re-assembled), rising from an elevated plaza of cobblestones; a herbaceous border garden; and finally, on the west, a strip of serviceberry trees and the entrance to the subway. In 2012 Village of Yorkville Park won the American Society of Landscape Architects Landmark Award.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Anne Winters



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



McMurtry Gardens of Justice

Landscape Style:

Modernist

Landscape Type:

Pedestrian Mall
Plaza

Designed By:

Michael Hough
Taylor Hazell Architects

Related Landscapes:

Osgoode Hall
Nathan Phillips Square
University Avenue

Extending the length of one city block and serving as the ceremonial pedestrian access from University Avenue to Nathan Phillips Square, this mall comprises a fountain court and sculpture garden between Osgoode Hall and the Toronto Courthouse. Named for R. Roy Mc Murtry, a former chief justice and an attorney general of Ontario, the mall was designed by Michael Hough and opened in 1966, coincident with the completion of the courthouse.

The west extent of the mall is anchored by a wide, multi-level paved plaza, whose elevated sections serve as a forecourt to the courthouse. Bordered by raised planting beds, the northern section—paved with brick and enclosed by limestone benches—is interspersed with a grid of honey locust in cobblestone-lined planting beds; the southern section serves as a podium for *The Pillars of Justice*, a steel sculpture by Edwina Sandys that comprises eleven anthropomorphic figures representing members of a jury. Flanking the plaza and connecting to Nathan Phillips Square, the mall extends through a passageway formed by a dodecagonal wing of the courthouse added in 1985. The western extent is framed by two square, raised pools, each with four fountain jets. The axis of the mall is reinforced intermittently by planting beds and sculptures, three of which were added in 2012: *Freedom of Religion* and *Freedom of Expression* (both by Marlene Hilton Moore) frame the eastern entrance to the passageway, while *Equal Before the Law*, by Eldon Garnet, is at the end, facing Nathan Phillips Square. The mall and Gardens of Justice were refurbished in 2007 by Taylor Hazell Architects.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Osgoode Hall

Occupying a city block and named for William Osgoode, first Chief Justice of Upper Canada, this Palladian style building was completed in 1832 for the Law Society of Upper Canada. Although the initial building, designed by John Ewart and W.W. Baldwin, has seen numerous additions extending its footprint northward, its original façade remains unaltered. At the time of its construction, the 2.4-hectare parcel around it was pasturage; hence the “cow gates” (allowing only twenty inches of clearance) in the Victorian stone-and-iron fence, which was installed in 1867, replacing a picket fence that enclosed the property.

Two manicured lawns buffer the building from Queen Street to the south and University Avenue along the west. Cobblestone paths extend from two entrances along Queen Street and meander among horse chestnuts, lindens, honey locusts, and flowering crabapples before arriving at a wide sett (quarried stone paving) apron, edged by planting beds and boxwood. The sett form an elevated carriageway extending the full length of the southern façade, widening between the projecting wings, and leading to gates at either end. Architect John Howard likely laid out the paths and carriageway circa 1843. The Victorian style lamp standards that line them were installed in the 1950s and once stood in nearby Queen’s Park. On the wide lawn fronting the western façade the trees are sparser and younger, and the fence becomes a mere waist-high encumbrance. In 1990 the east wing of Osgoode Hall was designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act, the building and grounds having been designated a National Historic Site of Canada in 1979.

Landscape Style:

Picturesque

Landscape Type:

Institutional Grounds
Governmental Facility

Designed By:

John Ewart
W.W. Baldwin
John G. Howard

Related Landscapes:

McMurtry Gardens of Justice



Photo courtesy ERA Architects



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins

Nathan Phillips Square



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Named for the mayor who supported its development, this 4.85-hectare civic space creates a forecourt to Toronto City Hall, constructed in an area once known as St. John's Ward, a home to successive waves of immigrants, a Jewish community, and the city's first Chinatown. City Hall and its square, built between 1961 and 1965, were designed by Finnish architect Viljo Revell and landscape architect Richard Strong to replace the Romanesque Revival Old City Hall nearby.

Mature deciduous trees and an elevated walkway outline the southern half of the rectangular parcel. Three "Freedom Arches" cross a reflecting pool, oriented on axis with Old City Hall. Nearby on the plaza are an open-air stage, a grid of water jets, and numerous artworks, including sculptor Henry Moore's *Three-Way Piece No. 2: The Archer*, introduced in 1966. Anchoring the plaza, Revell's City Hall ensemble of curving towers is ensconced within a raised podium. Accessed from the lower plaza by a curving ramp is the podium's green roof, designed by PLANT Architect and Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects as part of the Square's revitalization and opened in 2010. Its terraces, courtyards, and paths are set among bands of grasses and native perennials, marked by differing heights and textures, with seasonal shifts in color. The Peace Garden, installed in 1984 for Toronto's sesquicentennial, was removed from the center of the square for re-installation on its western periphery. A parking garage and a branch of PATH, Toronto's underground network of pedestrian tunnels, are located beneath the square.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza
Rooftop Garden

Designed By:
Viljo Revell
Richard Strong
PLANT Architect
Hoerr Schaudt Landscape Architects



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Devonian Square

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza
Public Park
Vest Pocket Park

Designed By:
Richard Strong - Steven Moorhead Ltd.,
Landscape Architects
Gerard Gladstone

Opened in 1978 on the campus of Ryerson University in downtown Toronto, this small park, measuring about 60 by 80 meters, is bordered on the east and south by academic buildings and by Gould Street to the north and Victoria Street to the west, and is named for Devonian Foundation of Calgary, one of its benefactors. The adjacent sections of both streets are closed to vehicular traffic, with pedestrians passing freely among tables and chairs lining the edges of Gould Street. The square is buffered from the streets by a wide apron of umber cobblestones, crossed occasionally by narrow bands of smaller and lighter stone. Mature honey locusts are planted at irregular intervals within the apron along the north and west. The park's defining feature, a large, oval reflecting pool doubles as an ice rink in winter, occupies nearly the entire parcel. Placed sparingly at points within the pool and strewn along its northern and southern edges are massive Precambrian boulders imported from the Canadian Shield. The two-billion-year-old rocks, each some 40 cubic meters or more, are complemented by backless concrete benches. The open glass lobby of Heaslip House cantilevers over the boulders at the southern end of the pool, its angular piers descending into the water. When the building was extended northward in 2005, a few boulders were removed. Richard Strong - Steven Moorhead Ltd., Landscape Architects, designed the park in consultation with sculptor Gerard Gladstone.



Photo courtesy Ryerson University



Photo courtesy Ryerson University



Photo courtesy Ryerson University

Photo courtesy Ryerson University



University Avenue

Framing views of the Romanesque Revival Ontario Legislative Building, this one-mile-long boulevard stretching between Union Station and the University of Toronto was originally designed as a toll-road adjacent to the Osgoode Hall Law School. Laid out on a rural tract in 1828 by surveyor J.G. Chewett, the fenced, 40-meter-wide avenue comprised a centralized carriageway flanked by boulevards and guarded by a gatehouse. A year later, landscape gardener André Parmentier lined the short avenue with shrubs and more than 500 pink chestnuts imported from his Brooklyn nursery. By the 1920s the roadway had been realigned, converted into a major traffic artery, and extended to connect Queen’s Park on the north to Front Street on the south.

Construction of the rapid transit system in the 1950s and the growth of neighboring academic and governmental institutions spurred the redevelopment of University Avenue. In 1961 Howard Dunington-Grubb and J.V. Stensson submitted a design that included civic squares, lawns, raised garden beds, and fountains. The City rejected the plan but accepted a scaled-back, more unified version a year later. Stretching the length of the avenue, eleven diversely designed, sculpted islands were laid out in the median flanked on either side by four lanes of traffic. Punctuated by five fountains, two pools, and numerous monuments, the central median is united by intricate paving, globe elms, and raised planting beds. Seating elements disguise the ventilation system from the subway below and concrete planters protect plants from winter road salt. The fountains, capped in 2009 to curb leakage, were restored in 2013.

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Boulevard

Designed By:
André Parmentier
Howard Dunington-Grubb
J.V. Stensson



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Bain Co-operative Apartments

Landscape Style:
Arts & Crafts

Landscape Type:
Suburb
Garden City / Garden Suburb

Designed By:
Eden Smith and Sons
F. H. Marani

Begun in 1913 as a response to the city's housing crisis, Riverdale Courts (now Bain Apartments Co-operative) was one of two housing projects built by the Toronto Housing Company, a public-private partnership dedicated to providing comfortable but affordable homes for low-wage earners. Among the first social housing projects in Canada aimed at improving conditions for the working class, Riverdale Courts was constructed east of the Don River on 2.42 hectares while Spruce Court was built west of the Don closer to downtown Toronto. Influenced by the Garden City movement, the buildings were constructed in cross-axial arrangements around open, grass courtyards. The structures comprised several "cottage flats"—one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments, each with a front door and its own private balcony or patio.

The structures lining Bain and Sparkhall Avenues provided direct access to those streets; on the perpendicular axis, buildings were oriented to the courtyards, often planted with mature shade trees and gardens. This configuration provides a shared open space while also creating a sense of enclosure from the streets where residents can congregate. The first 204 such homes were designed in the Arts & Crafts style by the architectural firm Eden Smith and Sons. An additional 52 units, designed by F. H. Marani, were built in 1922 – 1923. The apartments became privately held in the 1930s and changed hands several times until 1977, when the Bain Apartments Co-operative, Inc., one of the first such housing co-operatives in Ontario, took possession of the entire complex.



Photo by Alice Dixon



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Brendan Stewart

Glen Stewart Park

This park in Toronto's Beaches neighborhood is synonymous with the Glen Stewart Ravine, an eleven-hectare, densely forested ecosystem supporting a variety of bird and plant species that thrive among predominately red oaks and red maples, as well as black cherry, hemlock, and yellow birch. The area takes its name from Glen Stewart, the nearby estate built south of Kingston Road by William Stewart Darling, who purchased much of the surrounding land in 1872. The property was later sold to Alfred Ernest Ames, who allowed the public to walk the grounds and trails freely. Although the Provident Investment Company developed much of the area in the early 1920s, the ravine remained unspoiled, and was acquired by the City of Toronto in 1931. In 1982 the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority designated the ravine an Environmentally Significant Area, and in 2011 the park underwent a program of revitalization led by EDA Collaborative.

The ravine can be entered on the north from Kingston Road and Beach Avenue, on the south from Glen Manor Drive (which skirts much of the park's western border), and on the west from Balsam Avenue, where a staircase trimmed in hemlock descends to the forest floor. There, an elevated boardwalk meanders beside the spring-fed Ames Creek, connecting pedestrian walkways that cross wetlands cradled by steep, wooded slopes. Elsewhere a wooden, three-rail-post fence borders the trail, while a pedestrian footbridge spans the ravine at Pine Glen Road, connecting it to Williamson Road. Just south of the bridge, two natural ice rinks are created seasonally for skating and hockey.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Scenic Reservation

Designed By:
EDA Collaborative



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Chris Barker

Kew Gardens

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

This 6.5-hectare park between Queen Street East and the shore of Lake Ontario derives from land purchased in the mid-1860s by Joseph Williams. After clearing a portion of the land along the lakeshore, Williams opened the "Canadian Kew Gardens" in 1879, a seasonal resort offering meals and accommodations to summer boarders and campers. In 1907 the City of Toronto purchased the property for parkland, and a branch of the Toronto Public Library was built at its northeast corner nine years later. On the east perimeter of the park, a house with a distinctive stone façade and groomed flowerbeds built in 1901 by Kew Williams (Joseph's son) served as the residence of head city gardeners from 1907 to 2000. Walking trails gradually descend from surrounding streets to wind through mature oaks and maples, which dot the park's grassy lawn, but concede the center to a lighted baseball diamond and a bandstand. In the northwest are a playground and a wading pool, while a cenotaph, fronting a wide apron on Queen Street, honors Canadian veterans. To the north is a monumental Renaissance style drinking fountain designed by Morris Klein, erected in 1920 to remember Dr. William Young for his pro bono work with local children. On the southern end of the park, recreational facilities include tennis courts, a sport field, and an ice rink. A bicycle path and boardwalk run along the beach, where the Leuty Lifeguard Station, a local landmark built circa 1920, remains in use.



Photo by Pat Anderson



Photo by Alison Hancock



Photo by Pat Anderson

Riverdale Park

Straddling the Don River east of downtown Toronto, this park opened to the public in 1880 on the west side of the river, but expanded across it in 1884 when the City of Toronto annexed the community of Riverdale. Originally some 48 hectares of farmland, the parcel was acquired in 1856 from the estate of John Scadding, for the construction of the Don Jail (opened in 1864), whose prisoners toiled on the farm that covered much of the present parkland east of the river. In 1894 the Riverdale Zoo opened on land west of the river, operating until its closure in 1974, when most of the grounds were leveled. Four years later, Riverdale Farm opened on the site of the zoo, its gardens, buildings, and heritage-breed livestock interpret a nineteenth century Ontario farmstead. Riverdale Park East contains several recreational fields, tennis courts, a track, and a pool, and is traversed by the Don Valley Parkway. Its bowl-shaped topography has long been a natural setting for gatherings and parades. A pedestrian footbridge crosses the Don to Riverdale Park West, with baseball diamonds and an open lawn. The Riverdale Farm section occupies three hectares of scenic walkways, vegetable gardens, ponds, and woodlands. Three structures (the Donnybrook Ruin, the Island House, and the Residence) remain from the zoo, while the Francey Barn, built in Markham in 1858, was reconstructed on-site in 1977, and paired with the Simpson House, modeled after the original Francey farmhouse. Enclosed on all sides by residential neighborhoods, Riverdale Park is transected by a section of the Lower Don River Trail.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Alice Dixon

Garden Court Apartments

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Suburb

Designed By:
Forsey Page & Steele
Howard Burlingham Dunington-Grubb
J.V. Stensson

Built between 1939 and 1941 on a 2.1-hectare parcel in Leaside, the buildings of this apartment complex were designed by architects Forsey Page & Steele, and the grounds by H.B. Dunington-Grubb and J.V. Stensson. The ten apartment buildings, varying between two and three stories in height, are fitted frame-like around two perpendicular axes, one established by an expansive, central courtyard, the other by the east-west path that crosses and extends well beyond it. The complementary scale of trees and buildings, and the balance between openness and enclosure that is achieved by the cross-axes, results in a strong unification of landscape and architecture. The central courtyard is planted with mature, evenly spaced trees—originally ash, linden, and white elms—and its perimeter is defined by asphalt walkways and retaining walls planted with hedges. The cross-axis begins at the main entry on Bayview Avenue, where a wide, flagstone walkway passes beneath a peristyle of brick pilasters, and continues east, stepping down five steps to enter onto a flat lawn. Where the axes converge at the center of the courtyard, an evergreen is placed within a square apron, outlined by a hedge. At the four corners of the complex, the outward-facing, perpendicular façades of buildings form smaller courtyards, originally planned for playgrounds and tennis courts (only one of the latter was built at the northeast, but later removed). Single-story garages line the northern and southern perimeter of the complex, hiding the interior spaces from the streets beyond. Garden Court Apartments is designated a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act.



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum



Photo by Charles A. Birnbaum

Leaside

Designed by landscape architect and town planner Frederick Todd and incorporated in 1913 as the Town of Leaside, this neighborhood was developed by a subsidiary of the Canadian Northern Railway (C.N.R.) to generate real estate revenue. The town derived its name from Leaside Junction, a railway station established there in 1894, named for the nearby octagonal farmhouse called Leaside, built in 1851-1854 by William Lea. The C.N.R. subsequently acquired land north of Leaside Junction for a maintenance facility, and eventually accumulated more than 400 hectares of land (including 121 hectares of the Lea property) between Bayview Avenue and Leslie Street, to build its “model town.”

Todd’s design reserved the southeastern quarter of the site for industrial use, which flourished first, with 52 companies in place by the end of the 1930s. During World War I, an airfield was built there, noteworthy as the site of Canada’s first airmail delivery in 1918. Economic recession slowed residential development, which materialized fully only after World War II, with single-family homes set uniformly along narrow, curvilinear, tree-lined streets (many named for C.N.R. executives) and on cul-de-sacs. The construction of churches and commercial establishments coincided with the development of housing. Todd’s plan indicates six large “gardens,” among the plots, but housing came to occupy most of them. For recreation, most residents relied on the playfields and tennis courts associated with the schools. The Town of Leaside was amalgamated with the Borough of East York in 1967, and passenger rail service to it ended in 1970, when Leaside Junction closed.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Suburb
Picturesque Suburb

Designed By:
Frederick Todd



Photo by Christopher Borgal



Photo by Christopher Borgal



Photo by Christopher Borgal

Park Drive Reservation Lands

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Scenic Reservation

Part of the natural system of stream-cut gorges that empty into the Don River, this ravine near downtown Toronto cleaves the subdivision of Rosedale, and once carried a roadbed that was the primary means to access the Don Valley. In 1881 Edgar Jarvis built the North Iron Bridge across the ravine to connect southern Rosedale to land he owned on the north, which was subsequently developed. With the completion of an extension to Bayview Avenue, and the construction of the Don Valley Parkway in the 1960s, the road that traversed the ravine was unnecessary, and was closed to vehicular traffic in 1973.

The ravine can be entered from Mt. Pleasant Avenue on the northwest, where a one-kilometer-long gravel path descends into the forested chasm of Norway maples, poplars, and elms. On the north side of the trail, past a stand of balsam poplars, is the Yellow Creek Butterfly Meadow, a re-naturalized area planted (circa 2000) with sedges, wildflowers, and shrubs to support pollinators. Farther to the southeast is the outflow of the Spadina Storm Trunk Sewer (constructed in the 1960s), which arrives from the north, carrying the piped overflow from Castle Frank Brook. Farther along to the south is a fork in the trail: The southwesterly path is Milkman's Lane (previously used by dairymen to access the Don Valley and closed to traffic in 1958), which meanders through stands of maple, ash, white birch, beech, oak, and hemlock, to reach Craigleigh Gardens. The trail passing through the Park Drive Reservation Lands is a segment of the Beltline Trail, a nine-kilometer-long rails-to-trails initiative.



Photo © Susan Drysdale



Photo courtesy Stephen Smith

Weston Family Quarry Garden

Situated in the city's most prominent ravine, this 16.5-hectare park was once a deep quarry, which for nearly a century provided material to Don Valley Brick Works, established on the site in 1889. The company closed in 1984 and the quarry was gradually filled with materials excavated during the construction of Scotia Plaza. Appropriated in 1986 by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and designed by The Planning Partnership, the park opened ten years later with financial support from the Weston Foundation.

Ponds and wetlands along the park's western flank provide urban habitat for aquatic plants and animals. The three ponds are also an important regenerative feature of the Don Watershed, filtering the waters of Mud Creek, which are diverted to enter the park from the north and eventually join the Don River just to its south. Between the ponds and the Beltline Trail to the west are woodlands planted with native trees, as well as Carolinian species such as tulip trees, fragrant sumac, and eastern redbuds. Bridging the wetlands with boardwalks, a circuitous four-kilometer-long trail network connects to nearby nature reserves. The Garden Club of Toronto and the Canadian Wildflower Society planted a meadow to the north, preserving views of the quarry's northern face. The former quarry evinces an unusually coherent geological record including two ice ages, and is part of the unique network of ravines that fundamentally shapes Toronto's topography. In the early 2000s the non-profit Evergreen assumed stewardship of sixteen industrial buildings from the original brickyard adjacent to the park, and transformed them into a community and educational center.

Landscape Type:
Public Park

Designed By:
The Planning Partnership
Garden Club of Toronto
Canadian Wildflower Society



Photo by Curtis Shum



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Curtis Shum

Colonel Samuel Smith Park

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park

Designed By:
Samuel Matheson
PMA Landscape Architects

A remnant of the Crown Lands granted in 1793 to Colonel Samuel Smith of the Queen’s Rangers, this 78-hectare park on the shore of Lake Ontario includes part of the grounds of the former Lakeshore Psychiatric Hospital, which operated from 1889 to 1979. Envisioned as a self-sufficient community living in a therapeutic landscape, the patients built Victorian style dormitories, as well as roads, walls, bridges, and a pavilion designed by landscape gardener Samuel Matheson. Additionally, the patients excavated the bed of the creek that flowed on-site and maintained a vegetable garden, an orchard (partly surviving west of Kipling Avenue), and two farms (located north and west of the asylum).

In the 1980s the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority expanded the site into Lake Ontario, creating an artificial harbor (now home to the Lakeshore Yacht Club) skirted by grasslands punctuated by trees, set within the rocky shoreline. The lake-fill area also contains a wetlands habitat with wildlife viewing platforms, while elsewhere among the tree-lined paths and lawns are playgrounds, pavilions, and a sport field. In the 1990s Humber College (now the Humber Institute) leased and occupied the former hospital’s buildings, many of which have since been restored, and continues to use the tunnels that served its various wards. In 2010 an outdoor ice skating trail, designed by PMA Landscape Architects, opened beside the historic power plant, re-purposed as a community center. The park is a designated Toronto Bird Sanctuary, and in 1988 the grounds of the former hospital were designated a heritage property by the Province of Ontario.



Photo by Lynette Browne



Photo by Lynette Browne



Photo by Lynette Browne

Photo courtesy PMA Landscape Architects



Aga Khan Park

Home to the Aga Khan Museum of Islamic art and culture, and the Ismaili Centre, a religious site and venue for promoting the heritage of Ismaili Muslims, this 6.8-hectare site comprises four hectares of public gardens designed by Lebanese landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic with Moriyama & Teshima Planners. The Bata Shoes Headquarters, a Modernist building designed in the mid-1960s by John C. Parkin, previously occupied a portion of the site, and was demolished in 2007.

Two kilometers of pedestrian trails encircle the property, meandering among more than 1,000 shrubs and 500 mature trees, the latter including honey locust, magnolia, and dawn redwood. Situated between the museum and the Ismaili Center is the design's central, unifying feature: A formal geometric garden enclosed within a cedar hedge. The space contains five granite-lined pools in a quincunx pattern, whose mirror-like surfaces reflect its surroundings. Adapted to suit its contemporary context, the design recalls a traditional *charbagh*—a quadripartite Persian water garden divided by axial channels of water or footpaths. Flanking the central pool, serviceberry trees are planted in eight parallel rows, divided by walkways and raised planting beds. The trees' colors modulate seasonally among whites, reds, and purples while their berries attract birds. The campus is located in an area with few pedestrians, and the inclusion of a subterranean parking garage to accommodate 600 cars was critical in dedicating generous space for its park-like grounds.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds
Cultural Institution
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Vladimir Djurovic
Moriyama & Teshima Planners



Photo © Gary Otte



Photo © Tom Arban



Photo © Shai Gil



Photo courtesy Moriyama & Teshima Planners

Alexander Muir Memorial Gardens

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Edwin Kay

Related Landscapes:
Lawrence Park

Designed by landscape architect Edwin Kay in preparation for Toronto’s centennial in 1934, these gardens were initially supported by public subscriptions and named to honor Alexander Muir, who in 1847 composed the patriotic song, “The Maple Leaf Forever.” Using the maple leaf as a theme, the gardens were originally located three kilometers south, near Mount Pleasant Cemetery, where Muir is buried; but in 1951 the construction of the Yonge Street subway impinged on the original site. With funding from the Toronto Transportation Commission, the gardens were then moved—the plantings and walls re-located to replicate Kay’s original design—to their present location in the affluent Garden Suburb of Lawrence Park, and re-dedicated in 1952.

The park is screened from the surrounding streets by perimeter trees. At the main entrance, on Yonge Street, a stone and wrought-iron gateway provides access through a hedge running parallel to the street. A brick path behind the hedge connects entrances at the north and south, while another leads southeastward through mature trees to two axial, terraced lawns. The easternmost lawn is flanked by eight perpendicular, formal garden beds and terminated by a monumental, stone terrace, whose southern façade mediates the descent to an irregular grassy expanse. Paths circulate throughout the park and provide alternate routes around the central gardens, whose formal symmetry is defined by mature trees. The park serves as the western gateway of the Discovery Walk, a network of scenic trails through Toronto’s natural ravines, which leads immediately to Blythwood Ravine Park on its southeastern border.



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi

Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Don Mills

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Suburb
Garden City / Garden Suburb

Designed By:
Macklin Hancock

Amid a post-World War II housing shortage, businessman Edward Plunkett Taylor purchased more than 800 hectares of land twelve kilometers north of downtown Toronto. What had been a rural farming community with a gristmill, woolen mills, and sawmills was, between 1953 and 1965, transformed into one of Canada’s most noteworthy suburban developments. Taylor hired landscape architect and planner Macklin Hancock to design the master plan for the self-contained community, based upon Garden City principles.

The land was divided into four quadrants, each containing a school, a church, and a park, as well as a range of housing types—all conforming to strictly enforced Modernist tenets of style and design. At the center of the quadrants was a regional shopping center, the Don Mills Centre, separated from the residential neighborhoods by a ring road—the “Donway.” Parks and schools were linked by a system of walkways, which also connected them to the central commercial district, and to an outer greenbelt that included land on the banks of the Don River. To mediate traffic, roads in the residential quadrants were graciously curvilinear and often terminated in cul-de-sacs. In the mid-2000s the Don Mills Centre was demolished and replaced by the Shops at Don Mills, a retail and business plaza that includes the open-air Town Centre, designed by Quinn Design Associates. A model for subsequent suburban communities throughout Canada, Don Mills is among the first planned communities funded entirely by the private sector, and in 1997 it was designated a heritage site by the Ontario Heritage Foundation.



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins

Lawrence Park

Conceived by businessman Wilfrid Dinnick, this suburb derives from two farming plots purchased by the Dovercourt Land, Building & Savings Company in 1907 in what was then the municipality of North Toronto (annexed by the City of Toronto in 1912). St. Leonard’s Avenue approximates the border between the two original plots, each comprising 75 hectares. In 1908 Dinnick hired surveyor and engineer Walter Brooke, who laid out the network of streets—most aligned with the surrounding grid, but some arcing and radial—and established lots amidst rolling hills. Comprising the southern and western boundaries, Blythewold Ravine was left for use as parkland.

Terraces, pergolas, footpaths, and fountains were in place even before building lots were sold. Seven houses were built on a speculative basis between 1909 and 1910, and, anticipating the prevalence of the automobile, were furnished with garages instead of stables. Landscape architects Howard and Lorrie Dunington-Grubb were subsequently hired to design plantings for the streets, parks, and many of the residences—and also briefly operated a four-hectare nursery in the area. New construction languished in Lawrence Park during the economic depression that followed World War I, and the parkland encompassing Blythewold Ravine was sold to the city in 1919 to settle tax debts. Spurred by the post-World War II economy, the residential neighborhood of Tudor Revival, Georgian, and English Cottage style single-family homes, with generous setbacks, lining wide, tree-lined streets was fully developed by the 1960s.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Suburb
Garden City / Garden Suburb

Designed By:
Walter Brooke
Howard Burlingham Dunington-Grubb
Lorrie Alfreda Dunington-Grubb

Related Landscapes:
Alexander Muir Memorial Garden



Photo © Canaan Chiu



Photo © Canaan Chiu



Photo © Canaan Chiu

Edwards Gardens

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Rupert Edwards

Related Landscapes:
Toronto Botanical Garden

In 1827 Alexander Milne, a Scottish miller, purchased land along one of Toronto’s ravines, operating a woolen and saw mill along the creek that ran through it (known then as Milne Creek, now as Wilket Creek). Although a dwindling water supply forced the mills eastward to the banks of the Don River in 1832, the property, expanded to some 240 hectares, remained in the Milne family for more than a century. In 1944 Toronto businessman Rupert Edwards purchased the original Milne homestead, an eleven-hectare parcel that had fallen into neglect, and transformed it into an elaborate garden with flowerbeds, ponds, wooden bridges, a private nine-hole golf course, and a rockery comprising 425 tons of stone. On the site of the original Milne mill, Edwards dammed the creek and constructed an electricity-generating waterwheel to irrigate his gardens.

In 1955 Edwards sold the estate to the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto upon condition that it be used as a park, and two years later Edwards Gardens opened to the public. Now owned by the City, the park is composed of perennials, wildflowers, fountains, an arboretum, and an outdoor teaching garden. Adjacent to the creek, which cascades over waterfalls and is crossed by bridges, runs a paved trail—part of a nine-kilometer walk extending beyond the park through the Don River Valley. In the mid-2000s severe flooding significantly impacted much of the landscape along the length of Wilket Creek, and its course within the park was subsequently altered. The park is adjacent to the 1.6-hectare Toronto Botanical Garden, some of whose buildings occupy its grounds.



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo courtesy Ryerson University



Photo by Brendan Stewart

Toronto Botanical Garden

Located on 1.6 hectares of land west of Don Mills, this collection of seventeen themed gardens was established as the Civic Garden Centre in 1958 by the Garden Club of Toronto. The first building opened in 1964, with architectural additions in 1976 and a major expansion in 2005 to include a library, offices, and a green roof. PMA Landscape Architects, Thomas Sparling, and horticulturalist Paul Ehnes redesigned the site in 2006.

In the Entry Garden Walk, Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf created a meadow of perennials and grasses arranged in free-flowing waves. Oudolf collaborated with Toronto-based landscape architect Martin Wade on the Arrival Courtyard, where, evocative of the form of the building just beyond, sculptural hedges are shaped by metal cages, lit from within at night. Re-circulating water features, sculptures, themed carpet beds, and a glass-walled courtyard surrounded by espaliered conifers and crabapples accent the space. At the three-meter-high Spiral Mound (built upon construction debris), a winding ascent through a variety of grasses and willow leads to a platform that affords 360-degree views of the property, including terraced gardens reminiscent of planting in the Mediterranean region, a culturally-themed kitchen garden with seasonal fruits and vegetables, and a knot garden, where a combination of evergreen, broadleaf, and deciduous hedges form abstract patterns. Nearby, a contoured path leads west past greenhouses and into the adjacent, City-owned Edwards Gardens, an eleven-hectare parcel, which includes a paved trail that runs along Wilket Creek and connects to Toronto’s system of ravines.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Botanical Garden

Designed By:
Garden Club of Toronto
PMA Landscape Architects
Thomas Sparling
Paul Ehnes
Piet Oudolf
Martin Wade

Related Landscapes:
Edwards Gardens



Photo courtesy Toronto Botanical Garden



Photo courtesy Ryerson University



Photo © Janet Davis courtesy Toronto Botanical Garden

Mel Lastman Square

Named for longtime mayor of North York and (subsequently) Toronto, and designed by architect J. Michael Kirkland with Floyd and Gerrard Landscape Architects, this public plaza opened in 1989 to provide outdoor civic space for the then-independent City of North York. The plaza serves as the setting for the North York City Hall (now Civic Centre), North York Central Library, and Toronto District School Board.

The 1.3-hectare parcel comprises several discrete areas, marked by significant changes in elevation. In the northeastern quadrant, a terraced runnel originates from a fountain on Yonge Street, bisects narrowing bands of manicured lawn framed by walkways, and cascades into a semi-circular basin located in a sunken plaza. The pool, accessed by monumental stairs and an arced ramp, doubles as an ice rink and is bordered on the north by a copse of honey locusts that soften the transition to the library just beyond. South of the pool, a circular stage meets an amphitheater that seats 600. Bordering the top of the amphitheater on the upper terrace, a grove of maples frames a conical pavilion set in a small formal garden of concentric rings of yew hedges and grass. Connecting the upper terrace to Yonge Street, a wide, paved walkway is lined on both sides by an allée of lindens with interlocking canopies. To its south lies the Garden Court, a flat, expansive lawn bordered by columnar oaks, with formal garden rooms along its eastern edge.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza

Designed By:
J. Michael Kirkland
Floyd and Gerrard Landscape Architects
Diana Gerrard
J. Austin Floyd



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi



Photo by Daniela DeGasperi

York University – Keele Campus

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Campus
Quadrangle Plan

Designed By:
UPACE
Hideo Sasaki
IBI Group
Janet Rosenberg Studio
Montgomery Sisam Architects

Established in 1962 on 191 hectares of farmland in North York (subsequently increased to 242 hectares), this campus developed according to a master plan (approved in 1963) by UPACE (University Planners, Architects and Consulting Engineers) in consultation with landscape architect Hideo Sasaki. Modernist academic buildings, restricted in height because of the nearby Downsview Airport and spaced closely together, were organized in quadrangles around planted or paved courtyards and encircled by a ring road, with vehicular traffic, parking lots, and sports fields kept beyond its limits. A wide boulevard entering from Keele Street (the campus’s eastern boundary) formed an east-west axis, with science buildings to its north, and arts and humanities buildings to the south, all set within a designed landscape of mounds, berms, and rolling topography.

Three natural ridges cross the campus, which slopes to the southwest, where the Black Creek ravine forms a natural border. Remnants of several farmsteads and woodlots are extant, including the Stong farmstead and its farmhouse (circa 1855); Hart House; and the Hoover Farmhouse, overlooking the east bank of Black Creek. Integrating the campus with its surrounding community, in 1988 a master plan by IBI Group was adopted, abandoning the ring road concept and superimposing a grid upon the campus. In 1992 the landscape architecture firm Janet Rosenberg Studio, along with Montgomery Sisam Architects, redesigned the Harry Arthurs Common, where York Boulevard loops around a tree-lined green, with an axial fountain and oval pond on its western end.



Photo courtesy York University



Photo by Daniela DeCasperis



Photo by Daniela DeCasperis

Photo courtesy Janet Rosenberg Studio



Berczy Park

Constructed in 1982 in Toronto's dense urban core, this park is a central amenity of the Saint Lawrence Market neighborhood. In 1966 the City appropriated the parcel, which was officially dedicated for use as a public park in 1973. One year later it was named to honor William Berczy (born Johann Albercht Ulrich Moll), a German-born painter and pioneer who, in 1794, was a co-founder of York (Toronto).

The park occupies most of its triangular block and is bordered on three sides by streets and brick-paved sidewalks. To the east, the Gooderham and Worts Flatiron Building, constructed in 1892, faces the park with a large trompe l'oeil mural painted by Derek Besant in 1980. Lampposts line along the park's northern and southern edges, with deciduous trees planted at intervals between those on the south.

The park has a centralized, circular plaza that connects to a semi-circular plaza to its east by an axial walk, which passes through asymmetrical segments of lawn and groves of trees. Concrete paths from the perimeter on the north, east, and west converge at a circular, raised fountain with jets, around which metal seating springs from brick retaining walls. A bronze sculpture of the Berczy family by Almuth Lutkenhaus has occupied the park's western edge since 1982. The City formed the Berczy Park Revitalization Project in 2013 to address the park's aging infrastructure.

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed by:
Urban Design Department,
City of Toronto



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins

Toronto Sculpture Garden

Opened in 1981, this small park (25 x 30 meters) in downtown Toronto is owned and operated by the City, but its temporary installations of outdoor sculpture are funded by a non-profit foundation created by the Louis L. Odette family. The parcel was once occupied by the architecturally innovative Oak Hall, a clothing store built in 1893 of cast iron, with a glass façade that looked onto the Cathedral Church of Saint James across the street. The building was razed, replaced by a parking lot in 1938, before the Civic Design Group, a division of Toronto's Department of Planning and Development, transformed it into a setting for outdoor sculpture.

The rectangular parcel runs from King Street East on the north to Oak Hall Lane at the south, and is tucked between two Georgian-style buildings (circa 1840s) on its east and west. Axially aligned wrought-iron gates provide access from both streets, and, along with the ornate fences attached to them, were designed by ironsmith Angelo Garro. A wide apron of brick pavers runs between the gates across the full length of the parcel, which is otherwise a manicured lawn screened by trees along the northern and southern perimeter. Metal benches line a low, brick-faced planting bed along the north, while on the east a waterfall cascades over an elevated metal grill. Beyond the waterfall, a curved planting bed runs beneath the ivy-covered wall of the adjacent building. On the opposite (western) side of the parcel, the second-story extension of the neighboring restaurant cantilevers over an outdoor dining terrace.

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Vest Pocket Park
Institutional Grounds
Cultural Institution

Designed by:
Urban Design Department,
City of Toronto



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Aida Habiblahi

St. Lawrence Market

Landscape Type:
Shopping Center

Designed By:
John Siddall

In 1803 a public marketplace was established to serve the Town of York (Toronto), occupying slightly more than two hectares, which today are bounded roughly by King, Jarvis, Front, and Church Streets. The parcel was also the venue for public floggings (with stocks present) and was crossed by a stream, with a public well dug in 1823. The first market building was built of wood in 1820 and faced King Street, but was replaced in 1831 by a brick structure, which enclosed a courtyard and incorporated the town hall on its second story. The market expanded to reach what was then the waterfront, with the u-shaped Market House and City Hall built in 1844, and the St. Lawrence Hall and Market in 1851. In 1899 John Siddall redesigned the St. Lawrence Market complex, which (while preserving St. Lawrence Hall) comprised buildings north and south of Front Street, connected by a glass-and-iron canopy (removed in 1954) spanning the street.

The northern market building was demolished and replaced in 1968, and a design competition in 2010 yielded yet another new building. In 1970 Market Street was closed between Front and King Streets to create Market Lane Park, a tree-lined pedestrian mall, with a centralized raised planting bed, and a sunken fountain near its southern terminus. The City of Toronto manages the market complex, with a weekly farmer's market in the northern building, and shops, bakeries, and butcheries in the southern one. To the far north, St. Lawrence Hall now houses shops and space for social gatherings.



Photo by Aida Habiblahi



Photo by Aida Habiblahi



Photo by Aida Habiblahi

St. James Park

Occupying most of a city block, this 1.5-hectare park is anchored by the Gothic Revival Cathedral Church of St. James, which was built after the Great Fire of 1849 destroyed its predecessor. The land east of the church served as a graveyard until the buried were relocated in 1850 to nearby St. James Cemetery; an estimated 5000 victims of cholera remain interred in unmarked graves in the northeastern section of the parcel. When the City of Toronto acquired the land beside the church circa 1960, it was quadrisected by Commercial and Market Streets, both lined with buildings. By the mid-1970s the streets were closed and the structures demolished, with benches and picnic tables installed on the lawn. In the early 1980s a Victorian-style garden was created within the park, and its design, by Landplan Collaborative, Ltd., received a 1984 National Merit award from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects. In 2005 landscape architect Wendy Shearer redesigned the garden, which is maintained by the Garden Club of Toronto.

Lined with benches and lampposts, walkways originating on the northern and southern perimeters cross among mature maples, intersecting near a bandstand. To the south lies the formal garden, where four flagstone walkways emanate from a circular pool and tiered fountain to partition an octagonal lawn. Here geometric display beds with period plantings are disposed symmetrically and contained within a hedge and iron fence. To its west, a walkway encircles an herb garden with a central sculpture; nearby a bronze bust memorializes nineteenth century reformer Robert Gourlay.

Landscape Style:
Victorian Gardenesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Landplan Collaborative, Ltd.



Photo by Aida Habiblahi



Photo by Aida Habiblahi



Photo by Aida Habiblahi

Guild Park and Gardens

This 36-hectare park is integrated into the natural environment of the Scarborough Bluffs escarpment rising from the shoreline of Lake Ontario. Originally a Crown Grant to William Osterhout in 1805, the property eventually passed to Rosa and Spencer Clark, who established the “Guild of All Arts” in 1932 and built the Guild Inn. In the 1950s the Clarks sold a portion of the land, which became the Guildwood Village subdivision, and in 1978 the Toronto and Regional Conservation Authority purchased the rest for parkland.

The layout of the grounds (although subsequently altered) derives from the Colonel Harold Bickford Estate constructed on the bluff in 1914, and was typical of such early twentieth century waterfront properties: A picturesque, circuitous entry provided glimpses of the main residence, and opened to a breathtaking lake view. Manicured lawns lined the approach to the forecourt of the inn, punctuated with sculpture. From the southern terrace, an axial promenade lined with planting beds and mature trees and intermittently framed by trellises, extends to the bluffs. Here, cross-axial views of ornate architectural ensembles and façades, which the Clarks salvaged and re-erected throughout the property, recollect Toronto’s architectural history. Beyond the formal grounds and accessing the edge of the escarpment, meandering trails circulate throughout wetlands and woodlands, which include mature conifer and deciduous trees as well as four heritage buildings. In 2014 The Planning Partnership and ERA Architects worked with the City to develop a comprehensive management plan for Guild Park and Gardens.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Institutional Grounds
Cultural Institution
Garden and Estate

Designed By:
Colonel Harold Bickford
Rosa and Spencer Clark
The Planning Partnership
ERA Architects

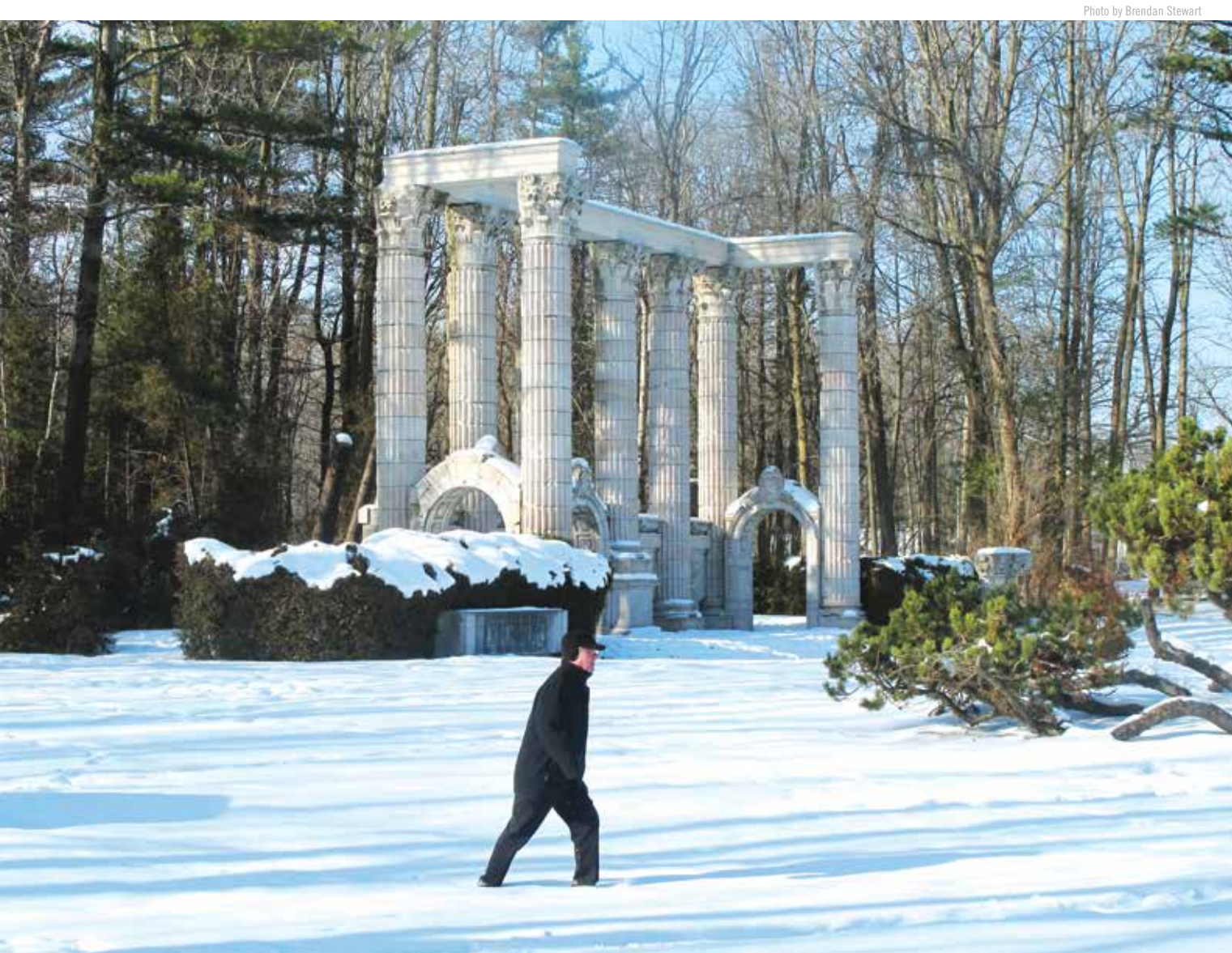


Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Greig Brown



Photo by Brendan Stewart

Commerce Court

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza

Designed By:
Darling & Pearson
I.M. Pei & Associates
Zeidler Partnership Architects

Enclosed on all sides by the Toronto Financial District's most iconic skyscrapers, this 50 x 50 meter plaza was developed in 1972 by I.M. Pei and Associates to serve as the forecourt to the four structures surrounding it, also named Commerce Court. Situated in an area that was originally surrounded by woods and home to one of Toronto's earliest churches and a theater, by the mid-nineteenth century the block-long stretch of King Street West between Bay and Yonge Streets was known as "bankers' row." In 1887 the Canadian Bank of Commerce established their headquarters there and, in 1931, architects Frank Darling and John Pearson completed their 34-story limestone Art Deco tower, the tallest building in the British Commonwealth until 1962.

In 1972 three additional buildings oriented around a fountain court, all designed by I.M. Pei and Associates, complemented Darling and Pearson's structure. At 57 stories, the tallest of the three buildings is supported on pillars, thus connecting it to the plaza, which provides civic space and access to outdoor cafes. The plaza, primarily paved with textured concrete, comprises a 19.5-meter-diameter pool with jetted fountains, curvilinear and rectilinear sets of stepped risers, and backless benches. A few mature honey locusts and planting boxes with annuals contrasts with the otherwise paved plaza. In 1994 Zeidler Partnership Architects provided renovations to the plaza and added glass and steel canopies, providing access to a belowground pedestrian tunnel. In 2005 Derrick Stephan Hudson's bronze sculpture *Tembo, Mother of Elephants*, was installed southwest of the pool.



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Brendan Stewart

Photo by Brendan Stewart



Toronto-Dominion Centre

Encompassing an entire city block in the heart of the Toronto Financial District, this complex represents the last of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's major commissions. Following the 1955 formation of Toronto-Dominion Bank, chairman Allen Lambert coordinated with real estate company Fairview Corporation to acquire the 3.35-hectare site, razing historic structures (save the Art Deco Toronto Stock Exchange building) in the process. Mies van der Rohe was selected for the project and the first tower was completed in 1967 for Canada's Centennial, with two other buildings completed by 1969.

Working with landscape architect Alfred Caldwell, Mies van der Rohe developed his design to expand, in three dimensions, upon 1.5-meter modules. Liberated from the surrounding street grid by the expansive parcel, the three buildings—with the height of each proportional to its width—are sited on a granite plinth atop a parking garage and a retail concourse. The area between the buildings—a rectilinear grid of granite pavers asymmetrically planted with trees and expanses of lawn—creates a horizontal contrast to the verticality of the towers. Comprising nearly half of the site, the public plaza is used for the display of art, including *The Pasture*, seven bronze cows designed by Joseph Fafard and *The Ring* by Al McWilliam, both installed in 1985 (though the latter was removed in 2009). In 2003 Toronto-Dominion Centre was designated under the Ontario Heritage Act and, a year later, the courtyard was renamed Oscar Peterson Square for the Canadian jazz composer. In 2012 Janet Rosenberg Studio revitalized the plaza with new plantings.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza

Designed By:
Ludwig Mies van der Rohe
Alfred Caldwell
Janet Rosenberg Studio



Photo courtesy Janet Rosenberg Studio



Photo by Ian Mutton



Photo courtesy Janet Rosenberg Studio



Photo courtesy Janet Rosenberg Studio

Centre Island

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza

Designed By:
Project Planning Associates

Accessible only by boat, this crescent-shaped island where motorized vehicles are prohibited is the southernmost of fifteen landforms in the Toronto Islands archipelago that rises from Lake Ontario some 1.5 kilometers south of downtown. Already a recreational destination in the 1800s, the landmass formed a peninsula until 1858, when a storm severed the isthmus connecting it to the mainland. Acquired by the City of Toronto in 1867, a period of intense residential development ensued. In 1956 the multi-disciplinary design firm Project Planning Associates initiated a master plan for Centre Island Park, which, calling for the removal of all residential structures, was only partially realized.

Proceeding southward from the Centre Island ferry dock, the Avenue of the Islands meanders through park-like expanses dotted with trees, passes Centreville Amusement Park, crosses Long Pond via Manitou Bridge, and terminates at Centre Island proper. There an octagonal fountain occupies a rectangular plaza at the head of a Modernist pedestrian mall bordered by mature canopy trees. The wide walkway, flanked by rectilinear beds and manicured lawns and hedges, passes between four pools set on a cross axis, before reaching Lakeshore Avenue, the original carriage route from the mainland, which runs parallel to Manitou Beach. To the west, Lakeshore Avenue passes the historic Gibraltar Point Lighthouse before reaching the Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport built in the 1930s at the western end of the island. Also located on Centre Island are the William Meany Maze, originally constructed in 1967 and rebuilt in 2014, and the Franklin Children's Garden.



Photo by Daniel Marchesan



Photo by Daniel Marchesan



Photo by Daniel Marchesan

Photo by Daniel Marchesan



Ontario Place

Constructed on two manmade islands in Lake Ontario, this ensemble of interconnected landscape, architectural, and engineering features was inspired by the 1967 International and Universal Exposition in Montreal. The complex was designed by architect Eberhard Zeidler and landscape architect Michael Hough, opening to the public in 1971. With the importation of construction debris and the use of sunken ships to create an artificial reef, the site eventually consisted of 28 hectares of land shaped to enclose lagoons, a marina, and entertainment venues.

Accessible via bridges, the islands include a core of futuristic architectural features enveloped by naturalistic woods, wetlands, and canals. Five architectural “pods” served as flexible exhibition spaces: Suspended over the water and related to one another by a superstructure, these were also connected to a spherical dome, the Cinesphere, which housed the world’s first IMAX theater. Nearby, the Forum comprised a tented musical venue with a rotating stage (replaced in 1994 by the larger Molson Amphitheatre). The Children’s Village, designed by Eric McMillan provided adventure play areas, complemented by a nearby water park. A circuitous network of meandering paths traverses the islands, providing sequenced views of the island’s architecture and landscape, as well as dramatic views of the Toronto skyline and Lake Ontario. Over the years, visitation waned and maintenance costs increased. In 2012 Ontario Place was closed and plans to revitalize the site were announced. The site was subsequently listed as a heritage property under the Ontario Heritage Act.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds
Cultural Institution
Exposition Grounds
Public Park

Designed By:
Eberhard Zeidler
Michael Hough
Eric McMillan

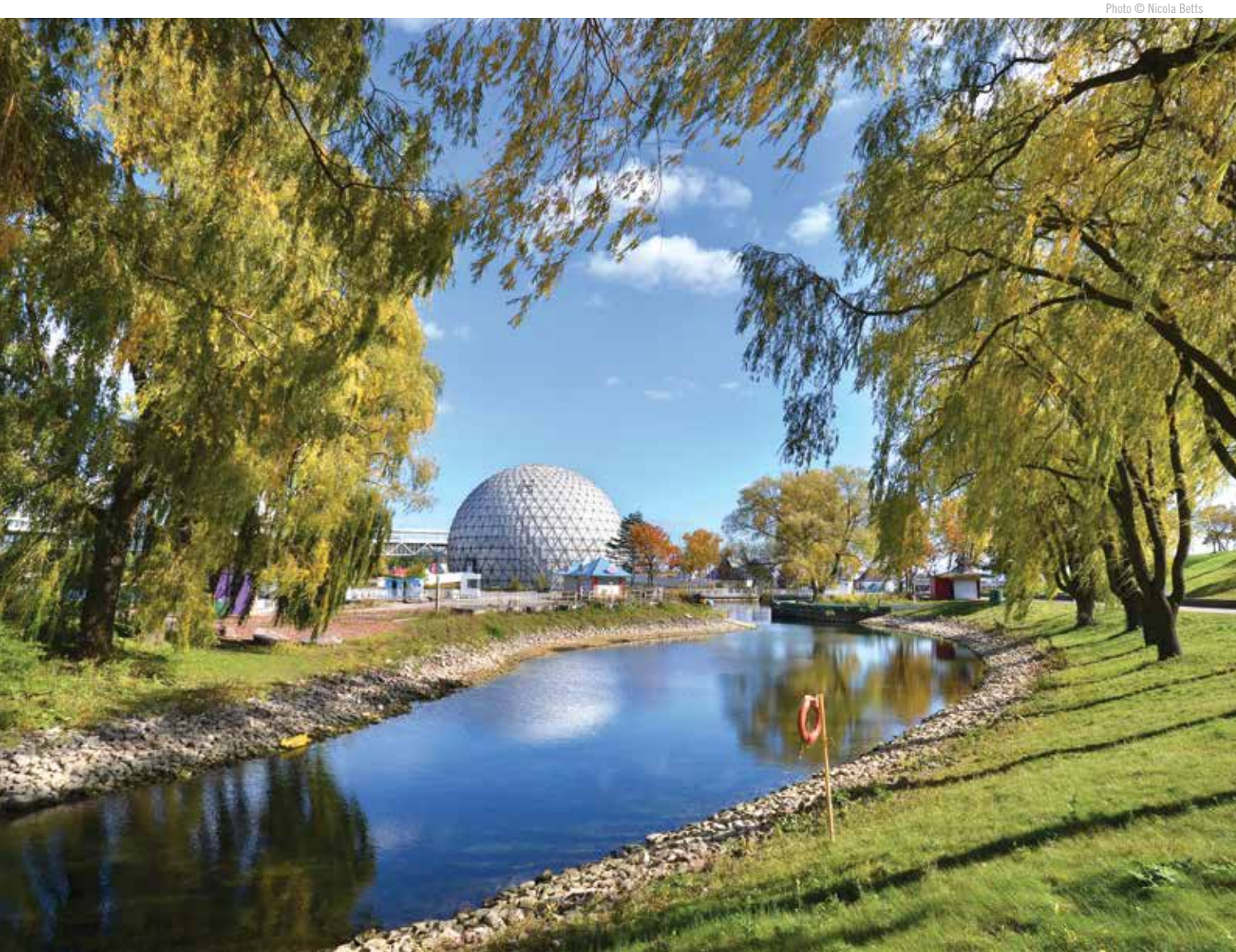


Photo © Nicola Betts



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Toronto Waterfront

Landscape Type:
Waterfront Development

- Representative Landscapes:**
- Ashbridges Bay Park
 - Canada Square
 - Colonel Samuel Smith Park
 - Harbourfront Centre
 - High Park
 - HTO Park
 - Humber Bay Park
 - Music Garden
 - Ontario Square
 - Portland Slip Water's Edge
 - Rees WaveDeck
 - Scarborough Bluffs
 - Sherbourne Common
 - Simcoe WaveDeck
 - Spadina WaveDeck
 - Sugar Beach
 - Water's Edge Promenade

Spanning a length of more than 45 kilometers between the Rouge River on the east and Etobicoke Creek on the west, Toronto's shoreline comprises diverse cultural, natural, and scenic resources that contribute to the city's identity. French explorers constructed a small trading post at the mouth of the Humber River in 1720, though the Toronto Passage had already been in use for decades. With the construction of Fort York in 1793, the Town of York (Toronto) was established. As its economy and population grew, so too did waterborne shipping, giving rise to factories and warehouses. Tracing the route of the Passage, a railway was established by the mid-1850s and a massive reclamation campaign lasting a century led to the in-filling of the shoreline and the construction of land for industrial infrastructure. Accommodating suburban growth, the Gardiner Expressway was completed in 1955 paralleling the railway along the shoreline.

By the 1970s industry began to relocate to less-expensive land outside the city and transformation of the shoreline began with mixed-use retail and residential projects as well as the construction of parks and cultural institutions. In 2001, the municipal, provincial, and federal governments established the Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (now Waterfront Toronto) to implement ongoing economic and programmatic renewal. Today, though some industrial features and uses remain, condominiums and shops are integrated with small neighborhood parks in the central waterfront while larger, more naturalized areas provide wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities along the eastern and western limits.



Photo by Brendan Stewart (Water's Edge Promenade)



Photo by Anne Winters (Sherbourne Commons)



Photo by Nathan Jenkins (Scarborough Bluffs)

Photo by Guillaume Paradis (Sugar Beach)



High Park

Located on undulating land and supporting remnant black oak savanna in the Humber River watershed, this 161-hectare, ecologically diverse park has areas designated for active and passive recreation. Settled in 1836 by architect John Howard and named High Park for its position overlooking Lake Ontario, Howard constructed his Regency-style Colborne Lodge in the southern part of the property and surrounded it with orchards and gardens. In 1873 Howard deeded his 66.4-hectare property to the City under stipulation that it would remain undeveloped and be used as a park. In 1876 the city purchased 70 hectares abutting the east side of the property. Howard lived at Colborne Lodge until his death in 1890 and is buried nearby with his wife in a tomb of granite boulders he designed, enclosed by railing from St. Paul's Cathedral in London. To the west of the park, the 14.2-hectare Grenadier Pond was used for ice harvesting until it, and the surrounding property, was purchased by the City in 1930, increasing the park by 29 hectares. In the 1950s the park's connection to Humber Bay was severed when 7.3 hectares was annexed for construction of the Queensway.

Throughout the twentieth century, the construction of picturesque roads and the planting of non-native trees and groundcover have enhanced the natural landscape. Since the 1950s several ornamental gardens have been introduced, including the Maple Leaf Flower Bed and an allotment garden, where community members may plant vegetables and flowers. Centralized recreational facilities include a zoo, athletic fields, an amphitheater, and an artificial ice rink.

Landscape Style:

Picturesque

Landscape Type:

Public Park

Large Municipal Park

Designed By:

John G. Howard



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Nathan Jenkins



Photo by Brendan Stewart



Photo by Curtis Shum

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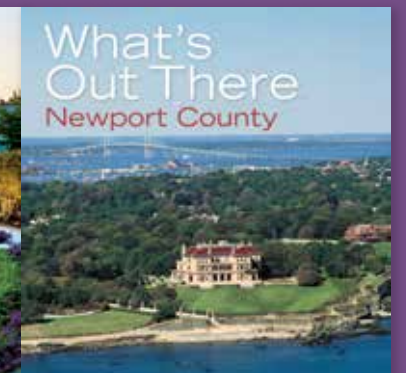
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