

DEVELOPING A VISION FOR THE



**A REPORT ON THE
PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS**

NOVEMBER 2002

**Lura Consulting
du Toit Allsopp Hillier**

In Association With Jeff Evenson and Paul Young

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One: Executive Summary

Background

Toronto's Harbourfront comprises 100 acres of prime land and water in the city's Central Waterfront area. It is bounded on the north by Lakeshore Boulevard, on the west by Stadium Road, on the east by York Street, and on the south by the tips of the piers that jut out from Queen's Quay. In 1991, as part of the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-Law for Harbourfront, 40 acres of these lands were designated as parklands and Water's Edge Promenade.

While some of the Harbourfront parks – the Music Garden and the Spadina Quay Wetland, for example – are complete, others remain to be developed and are currently being used for parking and other interim uses. The funding to develop these parcels as parks has recently become available and with it, the opportunity to complete the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System.

Public and stakeholder consultation is a critical element in the development of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. This report presents the results of the comprehensive public consultation process that was designed to foster dialogue on and create a shared vision for the Harbourfront Parks. It provides an overview of how the consultation was carried out and details the key outcomes of the consultation, including the vision that was developed, design principles and suggestions for site details.

Consultation Process

The consultation process to develop a vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System included three key elements: a stakeholder scan, consultation with community groups and stakeholders, and a Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group.

The **stakeholder scan** was carried out in March 2002. Representatives of twenty-one organizations were interviewed to gain their insight on key issues and opportunities associated with the Harbourfront parks, and their suggestions on how the consultation process should unfold. Those interviewed represented a broad range of waterfront-related community groups, businesses, organizations, services and cultural institutions.

Following completion of the Stakeholder Scan, the study team and City staff **consulted with a wide range of community groups** – 16 in all – to understand their visions for the new parks and any concerns they might have. This phase of



consultation which took place in April and May 2002 included speaking engagements, neighbourhood and community meetings, and special meetings with recreational and other business interests. In addition, the study team held two public meetings. The first public meeting began with an orientation to the project and then continued with a guided walking tour of the parks sites that involved members of the public, stakeholders, staff and City Councillors. The second public meeting focused on reviewing the Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group's vision, five key themes, and proposed design principles.



The **Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group** (or HPAG) was the key third element of the public consultation strategy. HPAG was designed to build consensus, or a shared vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. The group included representation from the following interest sectors:

- neighbourhood associations and residents;
- recreational users;
- the arts and culture community;
- conservation and natural environment groups; and
- tourism and local businesses.

HPAG held five meetings between May and September 2002. At these meetings, the group heard presentations from experts in the fields of parks design, culture and heritage, and natural environment, each of whom shared advice and information on directions and design precedents, both international and local. This information assisted HPAG as it developed a shared vision of excellence for the parks system.

The group was also guided by the historical context of Toronto's harbour. City staff provided information on the area's historical base as a shipbuilding and small industrial centre and the more recent development history of the Harbourfront community, dating back to its inception in the 1970s. City staff also provided the group with crucial information on the present day context. HPAG reviewed



possible connections, synergies and opportunities provided by recent reports, including *Making Waves*, the Central Waterfront Part II Plan, and the City's Waterfront Culture and Heritage Infrastructure Plan.

Together, the HPAG members developed a shared vision statement for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. They also developed design principles to guide implementation and generated “big picture” ideas for individual sites along the waterfront.

A Vision for the New Harbourfront Parks

The vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System developed by HPAG is built on five key themes which are elaborated more fully within this report. The parks system should:

- reflect excellence in design;
- be a distinct cultural destination;
- protect and enhance the natural environment;
- add to neighbourhood quality of life; and
- connect people to water.

Design Principles

Six design principles were developed by HPAG to provide direction in the design and implementation stages of the new Harbourfront parks. The new Harbourfront parks should:

- be a shared place for both residents and visitors;
- be a place for everyone (i.e., be accessible to all and serve the needs of a variety of users);
- offer physical connectivity and continuity along the north shore of the harbour and to the rest of the city;
- accommodate and enhance existing uses, especially tourism, Harbourfront Centre and the tour boat industry;
- link to the City;
- build on partnerships with residents, user groups and institutions; and
- emphasize the rich culture and heritage of the area.



Site Themes and Details

A number of potential area-wide themes were suggested as ways of providing an overall identity for the parks system. These include: “cultural gardens”, sustainability in design, and a heritage waterfront trail. With input from the public, HPAG generated “big picture” ideas for individual park areas.

- For the **Bathurst Quay Area**, community uses should predominate, with design, programming and designated uses oriented towards neighbourhood residents.
- Major new attractions could be sited in the **West Activity Area**. Suggestions included new restaurants, large craft and marine centre, and docking for “tall ships” & tour boats. Because of its proximity to Garrison Common and Fort York, this area should have a strong heritage focus.
- In the **Central Area**, environmental and conservation goals should dominate. Uses should include improved fish habitat, environmental interpretation along the water’s edge, and areas for active recreation north of Queen’s Quay.
- The **Harbourfront Centre Area** should be dominated by cultural and nautically-themed attractions. As a major tourist attraction, this area is supported by active programming at the Harbourfront Centre. Access to the water should be improved through wide boardwalks and better access to the piers.

Next Steps

The City’s seven-month public consultation process led to the development of a shared vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. It also began a dialogue about central waterfront parks among residents, stakeholder groups, local businesses, Toronto’s design community, cultural and heritage organizations, environmental interests and the City. Over 200 individuals were engaged in the public consultation process for the Harbourfront parks, and the process benefited greatly from their insights, ideas and opinions. For many of these people, the culmination of this process – the completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System – represents the fulfillment of a long awaited promise.



This report will provide the basis of the Terms of Reference that will be developed by the Harbourfront Parks Steering Committee to guide the eventual design of the remaining parklands, as well as any other desired improvements to existing parks. The Steering Committee will be forwarding its recommendations for the eventual design and development of the Harbourfront parks to the Economic Development and Parks Committee and then to City Council for approval and implementation.



Two: Introduction

Parks and the waterfront are both priorities for the City of Toronto and its residents. This project – consultation on the completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System – brings both of these important priorities together.

Toronto's Harbourfront comprises 100 acres of prime land and water in the Central Waterfront area. The Harbourfront area is bounded by Lakeshore Boulevard to the north, Stadium Road to the west and York Street to the east. It runs south to the ends of the piers that jut into the Bay from Queen's Quay. Within this area are a number of parcels of land (40 acres in total) that were designated parkland in 1991. The designated parkland includes a seven-metre strip of land – the Water's Edge Promenade – that follows the water's edge between Stadium Road and York Street.

There have been a number of parkland development initiatives in the area in recent years and as a result, some of the Harbourfront parks are now complete. The Music Garden and the Spadina Quay Wetland are noteworthy examples, with the former being a formal "urban" park inspired by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach, and the latter being a natural park and the first wetland on the north shore of the harbour in 90 years. However, other parcels of land that are slated to be parks remain undeveloped and are currently being used for parking or other interim uses. The capital funding to develop these into parks has recently become available and with it, the City has the opportunity to build these new parks and complete the entire Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System.

The planning for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System is being carried out by the City of Toronto's Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Department. Planning for the future of the Harbourfront parklands is to be informed by the community's vision for Harbourfront Parks.

In order to develop a shared vision for the Harbourfront parklands, a comprehensive public consultation process was carried out with residents and stakeholders. The consultation was designed to answer questions such as:

- What should the Harbourfront parks be like?
- What activities should take place there?
- What principles should we use to make planning decisions on the parks?
- What are the key issues associated with the parks?



This report presents the results of the public consultation process that was designed to foster dialogue on and create a community vision for the Harbourfront Parks. The report provides an overview of how the consultation was carried out and the key outcomes of the consultation, including the shared vision that was developed, design principles and suggestions for site and area-wide themes for the parks.



Three: Planning Context

The entire Harbourfront area was created by lakefilling in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Used initially for shipping and industrial activities, the area began to transform with the creation by the federal government of Harbourfront in the 1970s. Since that time, the area has seen profound changes, with industrial buildings, warehouses and dock facilities giving way to a vibrant mix of residential buildings, recreational amenities, tourism draws and cultural facilities. The completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System will add immensely to the area, providing improved access to the water's edge, new parks and open spaces, and linkages along the north shore of the harbour.

The designation of 40 of Harbourfront's 100 acres as parkland took place in 1991, when City Council approved a revised Official Plan and Zoning By-Law for the area. This parkland designation also included a Water's Edge Promenade and a parcel on Bathurst Quay for the Harbourfront School and Community Centre. Later that year, City Council adopted Harbourfront Design Guidelines that provide guidance on issues such as open spaces, view corridors, building scale and streetscapes. In 1992, the City signed an Implementation Agreement with Harbourfront Corporation to complete infrastructure and park improvements in the area. With the sale and/or development of the final parcels of land at Harbourfront, capital funds are now available for parkland development and the completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System.

In 2001, the City released its Central Waterfront Part II Plan, *Making Waves*. It contains four guiding principles:

- remove barriers and make connections;
- build a network of spectacular waterfront parks and open spaces;
- promote a clean and green environment; and
- create dynamic and diverse new communities.

The first three of these principles are applicable to the Harbourfront parks. The principles recognize the significance of the public realm in transforming the Central Waterfront into a destination for tourists, city residents, and those who live and work here. The Central Waterfront Plan promotes the remaking of the Central Waterfront as a special place, with spectacular waterfront parks and plazas and inviting natural settings that please the eye, make connections to other parts of the city, and improve environmental health.

An important issue to track throughout the development of the Harbourfront parks system will be the future of the Toronto City Centre Airport. While it is clear that



expansion or closure of the Toronto City Centre Airport will impact the park system, it is important to continue to move ahead with developing the system, including going forward with the next steps in the design process. The completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System will be a key step in Toronto's waterfront revitalization.

Where are the Parks?

The Harbourfront Park Parcels are scattered throughout the area (see Figure 1). From west to east, the major parcels include:

- Bathurst Quay (BQ5, BQ11, BQ12 and BQ15);
- Spadina Quay (SQ1 Music Garden, SQ4 Spadina Quay Wetland, SQ11);
- Maple Leaf Quay (MLQ1, MLQ2 and MLQ6);
- John Quay (JQ5 and JQ7); and
- York Quay (YQ1, YQ2, YQ3, YQ10, YQ11 and YQ12).

As noted above, these parcels are in various states. Most of the York Quay sites are developed as part of the open space at Harbourfront Centre. Sites such as BQ5, MLQ6 and MLQ2 are currently being used as parking lots. Site BQ12 contains the Canada Malting silos SQ1 and SQ4 have been completed as the Music Garden and the Spadina Quay Wetland.

Figure 1: Harbourfront Base Map Indicating Park Areas



Linkages

Moving westward from the Harbourfront Parks system, there are open space connections that link Harbourfront to Coronation Park, historic Fort York, the Garrison Creek ravine system, Exhibition Place, Ontario Place and the western beaches.

There are connections to the east, through the existing Harbour Square Park to the future parklands in the East Bayfront and the Port Lands, to Clarke (Cherry) Beach and north along the Don River Valley.

There are many north-south links that connect Harbourfront and its open space system to downtown, the Roundhouse Park and the future parklands planned as part of the railway lands development. These include York Street, Rees Street, the John Street corridor, Spadina Avenue and Bathurst Street.

The Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System and its links to the city will be enriched by the opportunities identified for cultural and heritage development in the City's Waterfront Culture and Heritage Infrastructure Plan, released in 2001. The Plan identifies a number of opportunities to celebrate the city's rich culture and heritage across the waterfront and north through the Garrison Creek, John Street, Front Street and Yonge Street corridors.

The completion of the Harbourfront park system represents one of the first steps on the road to waterfront revitalization. With it comes the opportunity to demonstrate Toronto's commitment to the creation of a comprehensive park system, integrating excellence in landscape architecture, architecture, urban design, community development, environmental awareness, technology, culture and the arts.



Four: Consultation Approach

The consultation process to develop a vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System included three key elements: a stakeholder scan, consultation with community groups, and the creation of a Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group.

Stakeholder Scan

The stakeholder scan was carried out in March 2002. Representatives of twenty-one organizations were interviewed to gain their insight on key issues and opportunities associated with the Harbourfront parks, and their suggestions on how the consultation process should unfold. Those interviewed represented a broad range of waterfront-related community groups, businesses, organizations, services and cultural institutions. The major results of the scan are listed below.

- Almost all those interviewed believe that the completion of Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System is a significant opportunity for the city. The benefits are seen to include more greenspace, better access to the water, and more people attracted to the area.
- People felt that the Harbourfront Parks need to be dynamic, exciting and give people a reason to come back.
- On land, people should be able to walk, look, sit quietly and eat.
- On the water, people should be able to paddle canoes or kayaks, sail and dock boats.
- People should be able to stroll, in-line skate, run and cycle through the area.
- Natural areas and beautiful vistas were identified as a priority.
- Parking is considered by many to be a major challenge.



What People Said in the Scan...

“People come to the waterfront to be close to the water and to do things related to the water. Whatever we do with the parks has to be related to the water.”

“Successful waterfronts are accessible to the public. They are created for a variety of uses and should offer opportunities for leisure and recreation for visitors and residents alike.”

“I personally don’t think you can have enough green space – it’s good for the soul.”

“The City is lacking something dynamic on the water. We want this project to create something dynamic that has a mystique that draws people to the area.”

“We are interested in developing the last pieces of our community in a way that merges the needs of residents and visitors, while improving water quality, access, and natural habitat.”

“I would like to see untraditional parks that are designed to incorporate views and vistas of the harbour and enhance nearby uses.”

“We are in favour of a mix of vibrant, active spaces with more contemplative ones.”

“People need to have a place to pause, a place to look at the water, and a place to look back at the excitement and vitality of the City.”

“It is important to make the water accessible. Right now the old commercial dock walls are so high that they prevent use by small boats.”

“People love to dock beside the Music Garden because it is so attractive, but there also needs to be areas for people to sit without a large craft in front of them.”

“It would be fantastic if you could somehow complete the water’s edge walkway.”

“One thing that is unique about this area are the ‘interruptions’ between park parcels. We can turn this into an asset, with each area becoming ‘something to be discovered.’”



Consultation with Community Groups

Following completion of the Stakeholder Scan, the study team and the Parks Department staff met with a wide range of community groups – 16 in all – to understand their visions for the new parks and any concerns they might have. This phase of consultation took place in April and May 2002 and included speaking engagements, neighbourhood and community meetings, and special meetings with recreational and other business interests.

In addition, the study team held two public meetings. The first of these was designed to orient people to the study and provide background for the parks development. It finished with a guided walking tour of the parks sites that included members of the public, stakeholders, staff and City Councillors. The second formal public meeting focused on reviewing vision, five key themes, and proposed design principles that had been developed by the Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group.

Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group

The Harbourfront Parks Advisory Group (or HPAG) was the key third element of the public consultation strategy. HPAG was designed to build a shared vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. The group included representation from the following interest sectors:

- neighbourhood associations and residents;
- recreational users;
- the arts and culture community;
- conservation and natural environment groups; and
- tourism and local businesses.

In total, HPAG held five meetings between May and September 2002. At these meetings, the group heard presentations from experts in the fields of parks design, culture and heritage, and natural environment, each of whom shared information on directions, design precedents – both international and local – and advice.



HPAG Membership

Michele Baptiste*	Native Canadian Centre
Nova Bhattacharya*	Resident
William Boyle	Harbourfront Centre
Cathy Connally	550 Queen's Quay West
Dave Corrigan	Harbourfront Canoe and Kayak Centre
Paul Federico	Toronto Historical Association
Gino Giancola	Tourism Toronto
Larry Field	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Barbara Hall	Harbourfront Centre Board of Directors
Fred Hess	King's Landing
Donna Hinde*	Ontario Association of Landscape Architects
Ed Horner	Mountain Equipment Co-op
Bob Howald*	Canada Lands Corporation
Brian Knoll	Council of Commodores
David Leinster	Toronto Parks and Trees Foundation
Michael McClelland	Toronto Association of Architects
John Montezano*	Telelatino
Max Moore	Harbourfront Community Association
Sylvia Pellman	Bathurst Quay Neighbourhood Association
Karen Pitre	Toronto Sport Council
Leona Rodall	Harbourfront Community Centre
Marilyn Roy	Harbourfront Community Centre/Toronto Bay Initiative
Laura Stephenson	Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
Terry Tenberg	Harbourfront Community Association
Roger White*	Radisson Plaza Hotel Admiral

* Invited but did not attend meetings

The group also received information on the historical context of Toronto's harbour. City staff briefed the group on the area's history as a centre for shipbuilding, shipping and industry and the more recent development in the 1970s of the Harbourfront community. Information on the planning context allowed the group to look at possible connections, synergies and opportunities provided by the Central Waterfront Part II Plan, the City's Waterfront Culture and Heritage Infrastructure Plan and other planning documents and processes.

Together, the HPAG members developed a shared vision statement for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. They also developed design principles to guide implementation and generated "big picture" ideas and themes for individual sites along the waterfront. These are presented in the next sections of this report.



Five: A Vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System

The vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System developed by HPAG is built on five key themes which are elaborated below. The parks system should:

- reflect excellence in design;
- be a cultural and heritage destination;
- protect and enhance the natural environment;
- add to neighbourhood quality of life; and
- connect people to water.

Harbourfront Parks should reflect excellence in design

Many of those consulted felt strongly about the need for excellence in parks design, and the notion became one of HPAG's bedrock principles. Elements of excellence in design were defined to include:

- Family-scaled fixtures and areas, such as water features where children can play and cool down without parents worrying about their safety, and where parents can sit and watch.
- Resting places, including benches, quiet shaded areas and steps where people can stop to catch the view, or their breath.
- Designing for a diversity of uses so that there is a mix of vibrant, active places that are “good for the body” and quiet contemplative ones, that are “good for the soul.”
- Design that reflects and supports the area's unique cultural activities such as Harbourfront Centre, which is a vital component of Toronto's artistic and cultural scene. There is potential in the parks system to add significant support to the Harbourfront Centre, for example with complementary parks and Harbourfront Centre programming.
- Helping people move through Harbourfront Parks. Many participants in the public meetings thought that the area was too crowded and difficult to move through. This can be addressed by creating wider sidewalks along Queens Quay Boulevard, separating different modes of traffic (cars and buses, bicycles, in-line skaters and pedestrians) and creating a continuous boardwalk along the water's edge.



These ideas reflect the types of constructive and creative suggestions that participants feel will lead to design excellence in the Parks. Other suggestions ranged from creating “puddle jumpers” (or water taxis) that would take passengers by water to the various parks sites, to building pedestrian bridges over the Quays, to implementing the Toronto Cycling Master Plan.

Harbourfront Parks should be a distinct cultural destination

Many people commented on the unique attributes of the Harbourfront area and emphasized that the development of parks in the area should reflect this uniqueness. It was pointed out repeatedly that 3 million people a year visit Harbourfront for its lively mix of music, dance, art, theatre, crafts and special events. The Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System should:

- Support existing and future cultural events, activities and institutions.
- Support local tourism operators, recreational organizations and other small businesses, such as the Antique Marketplace, sailing and canoeing programs and facilities, tall ship programs and summer day camps for children.
- Strive to extend the use of the parks year-round. Many people see that winter use is an opportunity that could be exploited through such things as snug waterside cafes, winter wine gardens and winter sports.

Harbourfront Parks should protect and enhance the natural environment

The proximity of the harbour is both a draw – there is an almost universal delight in being at the water’s edge – and a barrier, because it is one of the Great Lakes “Areas of Concern”, so designated because of poor water quality and degraded habitats. HPAG and many member of the public felt that the completion of the Harbourfront Parks System presents an opportunity for Toronto and its citizens to both enhance the natural environment and learn more about it.

The Harbourfront area is already home to the Spadina Quay Wetland, once a dusty parking lot, now a diverse and rich environment that provides habitat for birds, butterflies, other invertebrates and fish. There are resident conservation experts, including habitat restoration specialists from the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, native plant experts from the Environment and Horticulture Division of



Parks and Recreation, and community stewards with the volunteer-based Toronto Bay Initiative.

To many participants in our HPAG and at our public meetings, protecting and enhancing the natural environment through the parks design means:

- **Improving water quality by planting terrestrial and aquatic plants.** These retain and treat stormwater, one of the major sources of pollution to the Toronto waterfront.
- **Designing new and special habitats.** With the exception of the Spadina Quay Wetland, the Harbourfront area is bereft of high quality habitat. There is potential to create aquatic habitats along the north shore of the harbour, and the Peter Street Slip has been identified as a prime place for this to take place, because it is the only slip along the north shore that has neither a stormwater outfall or a combined sewer overflow. Dense terrestrial plantings can also provide valuable habitat (food and shelter) for wildlife including migrating birds and butterflies.
- **Increasing the tree canopy.** Canopy coverage in the central waterfront area is only 3%, as compared to 30% across the city as a whole. Planting shade trees will help improve aesthetics, provide residents and visitors with shade on hot summer days, provide protection from wind, improve micro-climate, produce oxygen, remove carbon dioxide from the air and provide habitat for many species.
- **Providing nature education and hands-on learning opportunities.** The Harbourfront Parks provide an opportunity for educating the citizens of Toronto about nature in the city and an opportunity for them to act as stewards of the parks.



The Spadina Quay Wetland

The development of the Spadina Quay Wetland, a collaboration between the City's Parks Department and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA), was triggered by reports of anglers catching three foot long pike near the marina at the foot of Spadina Avenue. Subsequent monitoring by the TRCA confirmed that there were indeed large numbers of pike in the area, despite the poor habitat, which is limited by degraded water quality, vertical walls, and a paucity of aquatic vegetation. One of the aims of the project was to create places for pike to spawn along the north shore of the harbour.

In 1998, the City reclaimed a parking lot and set about building the 0.86 acre wetland. The site was contoured to different depths, to provide deep pools and shallow areas that are wet year round, seasonally flooded sections, and higher, drier areas. The seawalls were breached in two places to allow water to flow through the site, and the site was then planted with over 100 species of plants. These include dry upland species, soft grasses and rushes that like the water's edge, and emergent species such as arrowhead that grow in water. Since its completion, the wetland has become home to over nine species of benthic (bottom-dwelling) invertebrates and five species of fish and is frequented by snapping turtles, beavers, muskrats, butterflies and many varieties of songbirds. It has also become a favourite place for people to view nature, sit and contemplate or walk through.

In 2002, the Spadina Quay Wetland Stewardship Project was initiated. This is a two-year project involving the Parks Department, TRCA and the Toronto Bay Initiative. The project uses volunteers for planting and maintenance of the wetland, and it serves as a good example of community and government partnership in stewardship activities.



Harbourfront Parks should add to neighbourhood quality of life

Harbourfront residents and business owners were actively involved in the development of the vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. Over 100 residents contributed their ideas through the stakeholder scan, personal interviews, residents associations' meetings or at the public meetings. There is a tremendous understanding of the potential for the Harbourfront Parks to add to the neighbourhood's quality of life, an eagerness to "get on with it" and a willingness to help make it happen. The neighbourhood quality of life can be improved through:

- providing increased recreational opportunities for families;
- improving aesthetics through tree planting and excellence in parks design;
- reducing surface traffic and idling, by reclaiming parking lots and moving idling tour buses out of the Harbourfront area;
- providing increased opportunities for residents, community organizations, and cultural and business interests to work together on projects to maintain the parks, once they are completed.

Harbourfront Parks should connect people to the water

There is a strong feeling that the Harbourfront Parks should connect residents, workers and visitors to the waters of Toronto Bay. People want to be able to meander along the shoreline, take a boat tour around the harbour, sit and watch sailboats, and tour a tall ship. Some want access to public docks, so that they can tie up a small motor boat or launch a canoe into the Bay.

The waterfront theme of the vision reflects growing community interest and involvement in the civic process of waterfront revitalization. To the consultation participants, connecting people to Toronto's waterfront through the Harbourfront Parks System means:

- physically improving the dock walls in the area;
- reconfiguring the docking of large boats, so that the area becomes more accessible to owners of small pleasure boats, but without blocking vistas or sightlines from the parks;
- supporting community youth programs, such as the Toronto Brigantine tall ship training program, Queen's Quay Yachting, and the Harbourfront Canoe and Kayak Centre;



- developing partnerships with local canoe clubs and businesses such as Mountain Equipment Co-op so that members can have access to the Bay;
- developing water-related parks programming including providing areas for angling; and
- promoting water-related recreational and tourism opportunities more aggressively.



The Toronto Music Garden

The unique Toronto Music Garden is situated on 2 acres of land at the western end of Spadina Quay. The park sits on land that was formerly used for a range of industrial uses, including machine shops, warehouses and ship building. Since its completion in 1999, the park's curving paths, dense plantings, sculpture and weekend concerts of classical music have made it a favourite waterfront stop for lovers of gardens and music.

The Music Garden was inspired by Johann Sebastian Bach's First Suite for Unaccompanied Cello. Renowned cellist, Yo-Yo Ma worked with landscape designer Julie Moir Messervey to interpret Bach's music in nature. The resulting garden is divided into six parts that correspond to the six movements in the suite:

- Prelude, an undulating riverscape with curves and bends;
- Allemande, a forest grove of wandering trails;
- Courante, a swirling path through a wildflower meadow;
- Sarabande: a conifer grove in the shape of an arc;
- Minuet, a formal flower parterre; and
- Gigue, giant grass steps that terrace down to the outside world.

Public/private partnerships were a key factor in the development of the Music Garden. When initial plans to create the park in Boston fell through, Toronto Parks and Recreation embraced the project. Local resident, Jim Fleck co-ordinated a private fundraising initiative to supplement the City's capital dollars. It was this initiative that allowed the magic of the Music Garden to be realized in Toronto.



Six: Design Principles

Six design principles were developed by HPAG to provide direction in the design and implementation stages of the new Harbourfront parks. The new Harbourfront parks should:

- be a shared place for both residents and visitors;
- be a place for everyone (i.e., be accessible to all and serve the needs of a variety of users);
- offer physical connectivity and continuity along the north shore of the harbour and to the rest of the city;
- accommodate and enhance existing uses, especially tourism, Harbourfront Centre and the tour boat industry;
- link to other parts of the city;
- build on partnerships with residents, user groups and institutions; and
- emphasize the rich cultural heritage of the area.

A shared place for both residents and visitors

The thriving Harbourfront community is home to about 4700 people, and is growing rapidly. The area is also one of Toronto's biggest tourist draws, netting about 3 million visitors a year. Design of the parks system needs to acknowledge the needs of and provide for both constituencies through a balanced approach.

A place for everyone

The Harbourfront parks should be designed in such a way as to be accessible to all and to accommodate people of all ages and physical abilities. This includes providing amenities such as playgrounds for the very young and sitting benches for the elderly. Public washrooms, restaurants and cafes were noted as needed amenities.

HPAG members felt that no exclusive active use should dominate the parks design, though many community and HPAG members supported setting aside a special area on Maple Leaf Quay, on the north side of Queen's Quay, for more active recreation such as soccer or skateboarding.



Physical connectivity and continuity

The parks' location and configuration – with many of the park parcels next to the water's edge, but separated by distance, boat slips and non-park uses – present interesting design challenges. The park design should establish strong connectivity and continuity throughout the park system. This can be accomplished by building connecting paths, creating pedestrian bridges across the boat slips, using the water's edge where possible, and even by moving people along the water itself. The use of plantings, even small "islands" of green in the various park parcels will improve connectivity for wildlife.

Accommodate and enhance existing uses

The design of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System should acknowledge, accommodate and enhance existing cultural, recreational and tourism uses. This includes Harbourfront Centre, the non-profit organization that provides world-renowned programming in the arts, education and recreation at its distinctive ten-acre site.

The design principle was also considered important to providers of emergency services, as well as those groups that have thriving businesses in the Harbourfront area. This includes the tour boat community who see the parks as a vital drop off area for their customer base and a valuable attractor to draw new business.

Link to other parts of the city

Design of the park system should consider linkages for parks users in all four directions on the compass. This includes links west to the Fort York/Exhibition Place/Garrison Creek areas, east to the East Bayfront, the Portlands and the Don River, north to downtown and the Railway Lands, and south to the Toronto Islands.

These links may be physical, but can also include shared cultural event programming, by linking the Parks system to the city's key cultural corridors, linking through heritage signage, and linking the Harbourfront Parks development process to that for the overall Waterfront Plan.

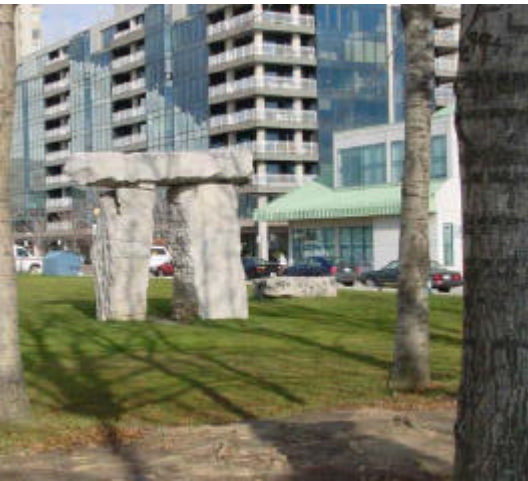
Build on partnerships

The Harbourfront Parks should be developed with ongoing partnership opportunities in mind. The members of HPAG envision stewardship partnerships with local environmental and conservation organizations, shared projects with residents' associations and local businesses, and ongoing programming support for the Harbourfront Centre and the Harbourfront Community Centre and the Waterfront Public School.



Emphasize the rich culture and heritage of the area

The Harbourfront area has a rich heritage that includes First Nations' presence in the area, early trading with Europeans, military history, industrial history, waves of immigration and the history of the profound physical changes that have taken place along the waterfront in the last 200 years. Overlain on this history is the present mix of art, theatre, design, music and festivals that is found in the area. There is a great opportunity to celebrate the area culture and history, in design, signage, art and programming of the Harbourfront parks and this opportunity should be grasped.



Seven: Site Themes and Details

Site Themes

A number of potential area-wide themes were suggested as ways of providing an overall identity for the parks system. These suggestions form a starting point only, in a process of generating ideas. These include: “cultured gardens”, public art, sustainability in design, and a heritage waterfront trail. With input from the public, and the design assistance of du Toit Allsopp Hillier and Associates, a Landscape Architecture, Planning and Urban Design firm, the HPAG generated “big picture” ideas for individual park areas. These are illustrated in Figure 2, described generally below, and detailed in the following tables.

- For the **Bathurst Quay Area**, community uses should predominate, with design, programming and designated uses oriented towards neighbourhood residents. The future development of the Canada Malting Silo site (BQ12) presents a number of opportunities for future use, as does the development of the remaining open spaces, especially BQ5, which is contiguous to Little Norway Park. A linear open space connection is recommended along the Western Gap to capitalize on the magnificent vistas.
- Major new attractions could be sited in the **West Activity Area**. Suggestions included new restaurants, large craft and marine centre, and docking for “tall ships” and tour boats. Because of its proximity to the Garrison Common and Fort York, this area should have a strong heritage focus.
- In the **Central Area**, environmental and conservation goals should dominate park design. Uses should include improved fish habitat, environmental interpretation along the water’s edge, and areas for active recreation north of Queen’s Quay.
- The **Harbourfront Centre Area** should be dominated by cultural and nautically-themed attractions. As a major tourist attraction, this area is supported by active programming at the Harbourfront Centre. Access to the water should be improved through wide boardwalks and better access to the piers.



BIG PICTURE IDEAS FOR THE BATHURST QUAY AREA				
Area	Activities and Features	Access/Parking/ Circulation	Environmental Land and Aquatic	Marine/Dockwall
Tip Top Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • West View/Gateway • Community Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Boat Launch • Link to Coronation Park 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Water Access
Western Gap and Bathurst Quay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tranquility • Water Frontage to Walk • Interactive Public Art • Relocated Lighthouse • Fitness Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long Promenade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Canopy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Water Access
Little Norway Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playground Improvement • Active/Passive Recreation • Public Access to Island 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Tree Canopy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Water Relationship
Intersection of Bathurst and Lakeshore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway to Harbourfront • Connection to Fort York • Heritage Walk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce Streetscape Link to City 		
Canada Malting Silos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Metronome or Similar Destination • Heritage Features 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground Parking 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Water Access



BIG PICTURE IDEAS FOR WEST ACTIVITY AREA

Area	Activities and Features	Access/Parking/ Circulation	Environmental Land and Aquatic	Marine/Dockwall
Portland Street Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Water Fountains • Connection to Fort York • Link Amusement Activities on Either Side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline Ferry • Proximity to Parking • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay • Mid-Slip Bridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garrison Creek Outfall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transient Dock Space • Tall Ship Centre?
Spadina Quay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Attraction • Amusement Pier • Aquarium • Public Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Safety of Underground Parking • Cantilevered Boardwalks 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marina Facility
Spadina Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Corridor • Public Facilities • Public Art 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape Link to City 		



BIG PICTURE IDEAS FOR CENTRAL AREA				
Area	Activities and Features	Access/Parking/ Circulation	Environmental Land and Aquatic	Marine/Dockwall
Spadina Avenue Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat • Interpretation • Spadina View Termination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline Ferry • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Water Access (Edge)
Maple Leaf Quay West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Open Space • Flexible for Programs • Deep Water for Visiting Ships on Southern Edge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Boardwalk • Parking in Radisson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Hard and Green Space • Grass and Trees 	
Peter Street Slip and Basin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fountain in Basin* • Aquatic Habitat Interpretation • Assist Commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Water • Aquatic Habitat in Basin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep Water Access for Large Transient Boats • Small Boats in Basin

* Low Priority



BIG PICTURE IDEAS FOR HARBOURFRONT CENTRE AREA

Area	Activities and Features	Access/Parking/ Circulation	Environmental Land and Aquatic	Marine/Dockwall
Maple Leaf Quay East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Open Space • Flexible for Programs • Fire Museum • Heritage Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Boardwalk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Habitat off End of Quay 	
Maple Leaf Quay North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Recreation • Skateboard Park • Underground Parking • All Season Use • Extend Cultural Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape to Water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treed Promenade • Urban Forest • Stormwater Filtration Demonstration 	
Rees Street Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Access to Boats • Nautical Programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay • Utilize Boardwalk 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Existing Uses
John Quay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nautical Programming 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay • Utilize Boardwalk 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance Existing Uses • Perpendicular Docks • Pier
Simcoe Street Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Water Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian Space at Queen's Quay 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transient Dock Space
John Quay North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity • Roundhouse Park Link • Public Art • Skateboard Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Martin Goodman Trail 		
York Quay and Harbourfront Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Attraction • Improve Microclimate • Underground Parking • Winter Activity • Day Camps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Access • Floating Boardwalks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller Spaces • Gardens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perpendicular Docks • Pier
York Street Slip	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • York Street Cultural Corridor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shoreline Ferry 		



Next Steps

The City's seven-month public consultation process led to the development of a shared vision for the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System. It also began a dialogue about central waterfront parks among residents, stakeholder groups, local businesses, Toronto's design community, cultural and heritage organizations, environmental interests and the City. Over 200 individuals were engaged in the public consultation process for the Harbourfront parks, and the process benefited greatly from their insights, ideas and opinions. For many of these people, the culmination of this process – the completion of the Harbourfront Parks and Open Space System – represents the fulfillment of a long awaited promise.

This report will form the basis of the Terms of Reference that will be developed by the Harbourfront Parks Steering Committee to guide the eventual design of the remaining parklands, as well as any other desired improvements to existing parks. The Steering Committee will be forwarding its recommendations for the design and development of the Harbourfront parks to the Economic Development and Parks Committee and then to City Council for approval and implementation.

