



Backgrounder

Innovative Design Competition for Toronto's Central Waterfront

The Toronto Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (TWRC), in partnership with the Government of Canada, Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto held a six-week Innovative Design Competition to bring a fresh, new perspective to Toronto's 3.5 kilometre central waterfront, one of the most heavily used parts of the shoreline and the one closest to the city's downtown.

The design competition included the area from Bathurst Street in the west to the Parliament Street in the east. The objective of the competition was to connect and build on existing successful spaces like the Music Garden, the York and John Quay promenades and HtO Park, and to provide a distinct and recognizable identity for Toronto's revitalized waterfront.

Key components that the jury looked for in the winning design included:

- Continuous public promenade from the Western Gap to the Parliament Street Slip
- Completion of Martin Goodman Trail in this area
- Creation of major points of arrival where the heads of slips meet Queens Quay
- Improved Queens Quay Boulevard
- Consistent standards for finishes, furniture, pavers, boardwalks and railings
- Sustainable approach that includes habitat and water quality improvements

Competition Process:

- February 2006 TWRC issues international request for qualifications. Thirty-eight design teams from 15 countries on four continents submitted respond to the RFQ.
- March 2006 TWRC short lists five firms and officially launches competition with an all day orientation session where the teams toured the site and met with TWRC, government officials, and key stakeholders and advocacy groups
- Mid-April, mid-term review sessions
- May 11 designs submitted to TWRC
- May 15 to May 26 public exhibitions at BCE Place, Harbourfront Centre, Eaton Centre, Sherway Gardens, Scarborough Town Centre and Fairview Mall
- June 2 TWRC announces that West 8 is the winner of the competition

Competing Teams:

- Foster and Partners, London UK and Atelier Dreiseitl, Uberlingen Germany
- Snøhetta, Norway, Sasaki Associates, New York, nARCHITECTS, New York, Weisz + Yoes Architecture, New York, H3, New York, Balmori Associates, New York and Halcrow Yolles HPA, New York
- Stan Allen Architects, Princeton and Sarah Whiting and Ron Witte Architects, Princeton
- Tod Williams Billie Tsien Architects, New York and Martínez Lapena-Torres Architects, Barcelona
- West 8, Rotterdam and du Toit Allsopp Hillier, Toronto

Implementation

Queens Quay West

Queens Quay West includes the area from Bathurst Street to Bay Street. The West 8 design will be implemented in phases over several years. The first phase will be the transformation of Queens Quay West between Spadina and York Street including the completion of the Martin Goodman Trail. Funding for the first phase of construction is included in the 10-year waterfront funding plan approved by the three levels of government in the fall of 2005.

TWRC will work with the three governments to determine phasing and funding for the water's edge in the Queens Quay West section.

Lower Yonge Street

The timing for implementation in the Lower Yonge area will depend on the development of MT 27 which is currently largely owned by the private sector.

East Bayfront

The water's edge promenade and Queens Quay Boulevard from Jarvis Street to Parliament Street will be built out in conjunction with the development of the East Bayfront which will start in 2008.

Summer 2006

While construction on Queens Quay West is not slated to start until later in the year, TWRC is looking into the feasibility of closing the south side of Queens Quay to traffic for a period of time so that people can experience the benefits of the new promenade and trail this summer. Details about timing and programming will be announced later in June.

For more information, please visit our website at www.towaterfront.ca or contact TWRC at central@towaterfront.ca or 416-214-1344.