



New park transforms shoreline on Toronto's eastern waterfront

Toronto, June 22, 2013 – Waterfront Toronto and its government partners officially opened the second and final phase of Port Union Waterfront Park today, as part of the 2013 Port Union Waterfront Festival.

A unique and accessible urban escape, Port Union Waterfront Park provides 13.5 hectares of shoreline park and nearly four kilometres of new waterfront trail in a stretch of Toronto's eastern waterfront that historically lacked public access. The sprawling park enhances the area and connects the local community to the lake, while helping to establish Port Union as a recreational destination for the entire city to enjoy.

"Revitalizing Toronto's waterfront is important because it not only improves the quality of life for local individuals and families, but it is another great aspect of the city that attracts visitors from around the world," said Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance and Minister Responsible for the GTA. "Toronto is a world class city and with the ongoing support of the Harper Government we are building a world class waterfront."

"Port Union Park is a vibrant addition to the community that will benefit residents and visitors, while supporting the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront," said Tracy MacCharles, MPP for Pickering-Scarborough East. "This park will provide the community with direct access to the lake, and it will be a place where families can spend time together and enjoy recreational activities."

"Waterfront Toronto and TRCA have done outstanding work consulting with the community and my office to make the Port Union Waterfront a wonderful success," said Councillor Ron Moeser, Ward 44, Scarborough East. "We established the festival so the community could come together and celebrate this fabulous space every year. We're now working to extend the trail further to the Guild Inn and Bluffers Park, and hope to connect to the newly established Rouge National Park."

From Highland Creek in the east to the Rouge River in the west, Port Union Waterfront Park provides an east-west connection along the Scarborough waterfront, establishing a new link between existing and emerging waterfront communities and public spaces, including the emerging Rouge National Urban Park. The public can now enjoy recreational activities via the enhanced shoreline and multi-use trail, which offers a beautiful route to walk, cycle or skate through the area.

"Waterfront revitalization is about connecting people to the lake across the entire city," said Waterfront Toronto Chair Mark Wilson. "Delivering a water's edge that is continuous, publicly accessible and beautiful creates lasting economic and social benefits."

Construction of the park's second phase also included the creation of the Western Gateway, a grand new staircase and cantilevered pedestrian bridge linking the Toronto and Pickering waterfront trail systems. The Western Gateway, built in partnership between the City of Pickering, Waterfront Toronto and TRCA, provides a safe and seamless connection between the two waterfront trail systems.

"This park is the realization of many years of planning and construction culminating in a spectacular waterfront park amenity that will be enjoyed for generations by local residents and visitors to our city region," said Brian Denney, CEO, Toronto and Region Conservation. "TRCA is proud to have been a partner with Waterfront Toronto and the local community to make this vision a reality."

Environmental sustainability is at the heart of all the park's features. Designed with the area's ecology in mind, Port Union Waterfront Park was constructed using lake fill material from local construction sites and includes the creation of pockets of wetland habitat and plantings of native trees and shrubs.

Port Union Waterfront Park was developed in partnership between Waterfront Toronto and Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA). It was built in two phases with a total budget of \$24.2 million. The park's first phase opened in 2006 to great acclaim from the local community. With the completion of the second phase in late 2012, the park now offers 3.8 kilometres of continuous waterfront trail and an enhanced shoreline with ten new cobblestone beaches, improved aquatic and terrestrial habitats and wetland features.

Designed and built as part of the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront, ownership of Port Union Waterfront Park has been transferred to the City of Toronto. The park will be operated and maintained by the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Department.

Waterfront Toronto

Since 2005, Waterfront Toronto has opened or improved 20 parks and public spaces. The governments of Canada and Ontario and the City of Toronto created Waterfront Toronto to oversee and lead the renewal of Toronto's waterfront. Public accessibility, design excellence, sustainable development, economic development and fiscal sustainability are the key drivers of waterfront revitalization.

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