

1/ Managing Growth

Optimize existing assets and invest in efficient, adaptable new development aligned with institutional priorities.

1.1. Design Excellence & Academic Identity

- Champion innovative, sustainable, high-quality design in renewal & new-built projects.

1.2. Data-informed planning

- Use faculty and facilities master plans, feasibility studies and audits to guide decision-making.
- Use enrolment projections, forecasted shifts in demographics and academic trends to inform anticipated priorities and space requirements.
- Maintain a clear understanding of evolving infrastructure and departmental demands to ensure resource optimization.

1.3. Spaces & System Optimization

- Make the best use of existing facilities to inform requirements for new development.
- Identify underutilized and outdated spaces that can be adapted or reconfigured for contemporary needs.
- Enhance operational efficiency through targeted renovations, system modernization and flexible layout improvements.
- Encourage adaptive reuse to extend the lifespan of existing buildings and reduce environmental impact.

1.4. Programs & Operational Synergies

- Foster collaboration and resource efficiency by co-locating complementary programs and functions across academic and administrative units.
- Bundle related capital projects to align investments with academic mission and enhance cross-departmental synergies.
- Reduce reliance on leased, off-campus facilities by consolidating operations on campus, strengthening community presence and realizing long-term financial and spatial benefits.
- Leverage our unique downtown location to foster potential synergies and meaningful partnerships with civic, institutional and cultural entities.
- Align space program with City innovation and enterprise ecosystems where possible to promote shared resources, research collaboration and experiential learning opportunities that amplify institutional impact.



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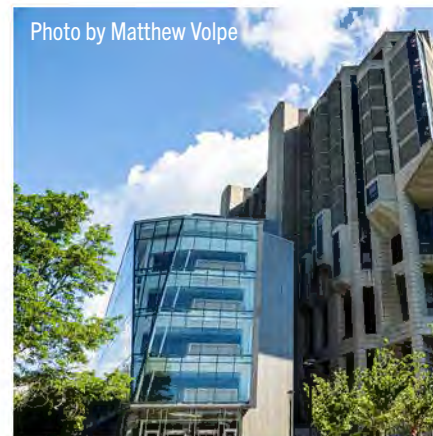


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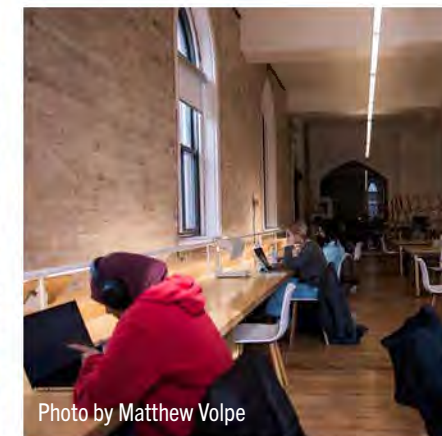


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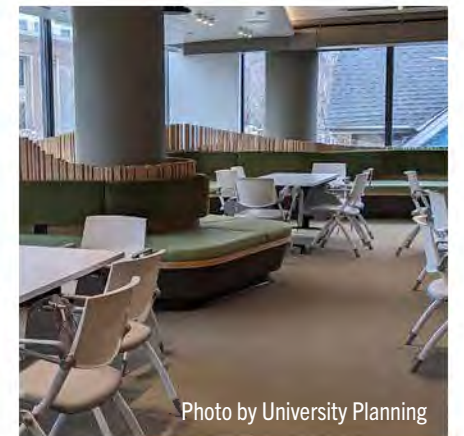


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Stewart L. Blusson Visualization Facility. Photo by Daria Perevezentsev.



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Photo by Diana Tyszko

2 / Education, Experimentation, Research & Innovation

*Reinforce our Leadership in Education:
Advance the University’s core functions through spaces that inspire discovery,
support dynamic pedagogy and strengthen interdisciplinary innovation.*

2.1. Pedagogical Evolution & Technological Advancements

- Design spaces and systems that evolve with emerging pedagogical, research and operational needs.
- To best support research, plan for cutting-edge infrastructure and lab space.
- Balance specialized spaces fit for specific functions with flexible and adaptable environments that anticipate changing needs.
- Embed flexibility into campus infrastructure to accommodate future academic transformation.
- Modernize existing buildings to better suit contemporary teaching, learning and research (i.e. immersive, experiential, augmented/virtual hybrid and active learning environments and more).
- Support the Campus as a Living Lab through spaces that enable experimentation, research and real-time demonstration.

2.2. Interdisciplinary Engagement

- Strengthen collaboration across disciplines through networks of shared, multi-use and social learning spaces.
- Design environments that encourage informal interaction and foster an intellectual community.

2.3. Visibility of Academic & Creative Functions

- Showcase innovative research and teaching through transparent and outward facing environments, such as visible labs, studios and collaboration spaces.
- Activate ground floors and public interfaces with displays, exhibitions and student work to inspire and stimulate engagement with the campus and the broader community.

3 / Built Heritage

Celebrate and sustain the University’s architectural legacy and stewardship of our heritage assets through conservation, adaptive reuse and design excellence within the context of our evolving campus.

3.1. Stewardship, Conservation & Renewal

- Conserve and adapt heritage buildings as active, meaningful contributors to the evolving campus environment.
- Adapt heritage buildings to extend their relevance and attributes while supporting contemporary academic and community needs.
- Combine conservation with sustainable and innovative design strategies to maximize functional life and long-term value.

3.2. Integrating Past & Future

- Integrate modern requirements – learning, sustainability, accessibility, inclusivity – within heritage fabric.
- Promote high-quality, contextually responsive design that honours the past while enabling forward-looking change.

3.3. Contextual Development

- Ensure new development aligns with the scale and character of heritage settings to enhance the University’s architectural legacy.
- Consider built-form transitions that respect the legibility and integrity of historic structures.

3.4. Inclusive, Accessible & Welcoming Spaces

- Recognize non-inclusive histories through meaningful improvements showcasing the University’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- Retrofit heritage buildings where possible to achieve universal accessibility and barrier-free participation.
- Enhance ground floor interfaces to strengthen connections between heritage assets and campus life.



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4 / Sustainability In Building Design & Systems

Demonstrate environmental leadership by integrating sustainability, resilience and innovation into every building and building system.

4.1. Climate Action & Performance

- Reduce environmental impact through deep energy retrofits, relying on renewable energy generation and incorporating low-carbon, durable materials.
- Enhance building performance through data-driven planning, system evaluations and lifecycle management.
- Leverage cutting-edge climate-responsive design to improve adaptation to evolving performance standards.
- Incorporate climate risk mitigation strategies in anticipation of more frequent extreme weather conditions to maintain occupant comfort and continuity of operations.
- Incorporate lifecycle maintenance and renewal into planning decisions.

4.2. Asset Stewardship & Land Efficiency

- Align facility upgrades with both deferred maintenance and evolving space requirements to maximize capital investments.
- Treat land as a limited, shared resource - planning for efficient use that meets present goals while protecting long-term flexibility.

4.3. Sustainability Leadership & Education

- Pursue architectural solutions that implement best practices in sustainable design, minimize impact on the environment, prioritize energy efficiency and the reduction of embodied carbon, use sustainable materials and ensure longevity.
- Leverage the campus as a learning platform for sustainability through visible systems, interpretive signage and environmental storytelling to engage the community to strive for continued innovation in the field of sustainability.



Photo by Salima Kassam



Photo by Lisa Lightbourn



Rendering by Mecanoo

5 / Enhanced Connectivity

Enhance campus cohesion and pedestrian mobility by connecting buildings and the public realm through unified, engaging and accessible elements.

5.1. One Ground Plane

- Improve campus walkability by enhancing building permeability and creating a continuous pedestrian ground plane that links seamlessly with the surrounding public realm.
- Incorporate mid-block connections, well-positioned entrances and intuitive wayfinding to support seamless movement across campus.
- Conceive new interior pathways as integral parts of the pedestrian network to enhance overall mobility and accessibility.
- Plan for both building occupant circulation and larger campus movement patterns to ensure a connected and inclusive environment.
- Integrate building amenities and facilities to encourage active modes of transportation and commute to campus (i.e. intuitive and safe bicycle storage, etc.).

5.2. Animation & Activation

- Strengthen street-level vitality with transparency and visible activity in façades and interiors, showcasing learning, research and campus life.
- Design ground floors and adjacent levels above and below as active interfaces with the public realm.
- Program active frontages and interior pathways that attract use throughout the day, evening and seasons.
- Strategically locate amenities (i.e. study areas, seating, food services, open collaboration zones, etc.) to create destinations and enrich the everyday campus experience.

5.3. Collision Spaces & Campus Life: Academic & Social Connectivity

- Encourage spontaneous social and academic interaction, informal learning and cross-disciplinary exchange through “collision spaces” that blend research, teaching and community life in shared spaces for informal gathering.
- Ensure that vibrant academic hubs and social destinations are located throughout campus to increase opportunities for the campus community to mix and connect.



Photo by University Planning



Photo by David Lee



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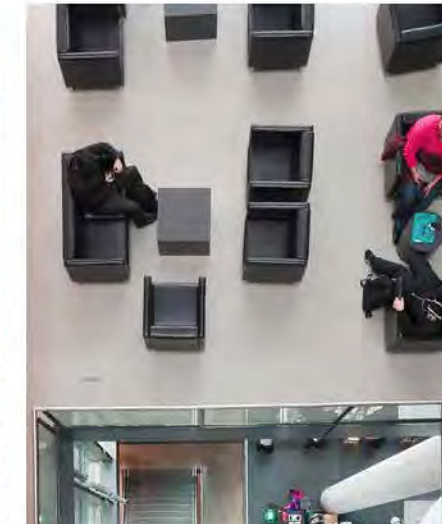


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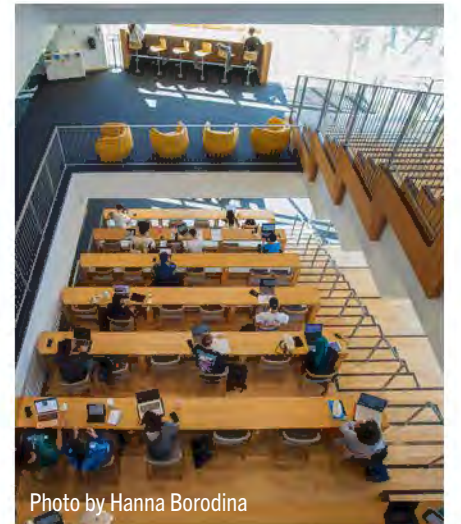


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Photo by Nicholas Iwanysyn



Photo by Aaron Mason



Photo by Matthew Volpe

6 / Sense of Belonging, Indigeneity & Well-being

Promote inclusive and accessible spaces that foster community connection, celebrate Indigeneity, diversity and support well-being.

6.1. Indigeneity & Indigenous Engagement, Participation, Co-Creation

- As Indigenous spaces are central to Indigenous experience at the University, built form has a role in enhancing the visibility of Indigenous peoples in the campus community.
- Consider ways in which space enhancements, renovations or new development can appropriately contribute to celebrating Indigeneity on campus with intention to advance the journey towards reconciliation at the University of Toronto.
- On any such initiative Indigenous engagement and participation from conception to implementation is essential. Support co-creation processes where Indigenous voices inform design, implementation and evaluation.

6.1.1. Sense of Belonging & Welcoming

- Incorporate cultural symbols, design elements and programming that promote belonging in both existing spaces Indigenous community members currently access and in new developments.
- Consider that Indigenous ceremonial practices (i.e. smudging, ceremonial fires, etc.) are welcome across the campus and are not limited to specially designed spaces.

- Ensure wayfinding, spatial design, and campus experiences reinforce comfort, recognition and inclusion.

6.1.2. Cultural Integration, Knowledge Sharing, Historical Acknowledgement, Storytelling

- Embed Indigenous teachings, values and knowledge systems throughout the campus rather than limiting to designated “Indigenous spaces”.
- Use interpretive features (e.g. plaques, art, digital lighting, installations) to convey stories that educate and honour the land’s history.
- Consider opportunities for naming spaces and buildings.

6.1.3. Connection to Land, Nature & Place within Built Form

- Create spaces that encourage rest, reflection and connection, including welcoming rooftop activation and green courtyards.

6.2. Accessible & Safe Campus Environments

- Ensure all new academic spaces are universally accessible, barrier free and supportive of well-being and equitable participation.
- Upgrade existing facilities to remove physical and perceptual barriers.
- Strengthen safety, comfort and accessibility through active ground level design, programming and seamless integration with the public realm.
- Design for openness and transparency while maintaining community and building occupants security and safety.

6.3. Inclusive & Diverse Campus Community Spaces

- Provide diverse environments from dynamic social areas to quiet contemplative settings that reflect the range of student and community needs.
- Consider integrating inclusive amenities (i.e. prayer, reflection and meditation spaces, family-friendly amenity spaces such as infant feeding rooms and child-friendly student-parent study areas and all gender washrooms) that cater to the needs of our diverse campus community.

6.4. Health & Well-being

- Promote healthy indoor environments by prioritizing air quality, daylight, outdoor views, ventilation, comfort and well-being.
- Incorporate architectural elements that provide protection and shelter from the elements (i.e. canopies, outdoor covered areas) for increased pedestrian comfort and extended outdoor seasonal use.

6.5. Public Art

- Identify opportunities for public art in accessible and inclusive projects to be experienced by the community, contributing to higher education engagement and research, demonstrating the University’s values and enhancing the campus experience.
- High prominence outdoor public art locations to be reserved for distinguished works from the University Art Collection with community and civic significance.
- Prioritize the inclusion of Indigenous public art commemorating and creating spaces, developed in close consultation with local Indigenous communities.
- Plan for the ongoing and clearly defined stewardship and maintenance of artworks, as required by the University’s Art Collection Policy.
- Involve relevant bodies overseeing the implementation of the University of Toronto Art Collection Policy from the outset, to provide curatorial expertise, make siting recommendations, ensure appropriate engagement with prospective artists and donors, discuss potential funding strategies and assist with managing the art acquisition processes (see Resources in Part 1).



Photo by Alice Xue



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Photo by Moussa Faddoul

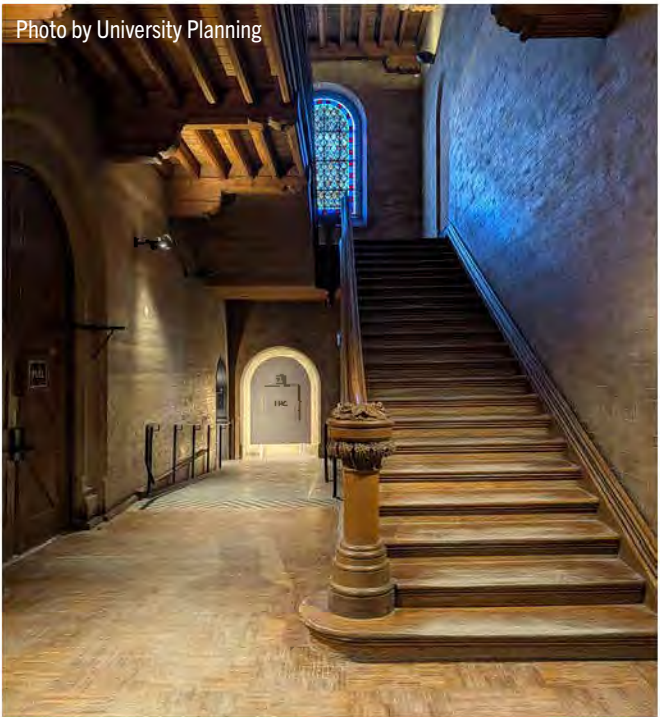


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Photo by Stephen Dagg



Photo by Nicholas Iwanyshyn

7 / Living & Staying on Campus

Support campus vitality and student success by creating connected, diverse and high-quality living and social environments for those who live on and those who commute to campus.

7.1. Vibrant, Connected & Amenity-Rich Environments

- Strengthen daily campus life with well-distributed academic, social and wellness destinations.
- Support the needs of both the commuter population and on-campus cohorts through ground level amenities and active shared spaces that promote continuous activity throughout the day and seasons.
- Provide social, study, wellness and outdoor gathering spaces that contribute to an engaging and supportive campus experience.

7.2. Strategic Housing

- Integrate housing on and around campus to enhance accessibility, activity and community connection.
- Prioritize walkable, transit-supportive locations that reduce commuting and strengthen campus connectivity.

7.3. Diverse, Inclusive & Lively Campus Neighbourhoods

- Design housing options for students, faculty and staff to support recruitment, retention and well-being.
- Provide a range of housing types that are attainable, and address varied household structures and lifestyle needs.
- Foster inclusive, livable neighbourhoods.

7.4. High-Quality & Lasting Design

- Provide well-planned units and shared amenities that enhance livability and community life.
- Renew aging facilities to improve comfortability, equity, safety and overall housing quality.
- Specify durable materials and interior finishes to withstand high-traffic use over time.

8 / Campus Edges & Corners

Consider urban threshold conditions where the campus interfaces with the City.

8.1. Identity, Character & Integration

- Enhance major edges with institutional buildings and promote a welcoming campus presence, encouraging porosity and connections into the campus.
- Celebrate institutional character through buildings and open space that both complement the surroundings and express academic distinction.

8.2. Gateways & Landmarks

- Define key corners and major intersections with iconic and inviting buildings with elevated roles to well-transition and welcome our University and broader community into campus.

8.3. Active & Connected Edges

- Cultivate a vibrant and urban campus–city interface and position the campus as an anchor for innovation and culture through establishing active, connected inviting edges, hosting shared activity through strategic partnerships.
- Prioritize pedestrian-friendly, transparent ground floors with visible programs and active uses for vibrant street-level experiences.

8.4. Contextual Built Form

- Design buildings that respond to surrounding context.
- Consider setbacks, stepbacks and façade articulation to enhance pedestrian scale and pedestrian experience.



Photo by Jason Krygier-Baum



Photo by Jason Krygier-Baum



Photo by University of Toronto Communications



Photo by Johnny Guatto



Photo by Johnny Guatto

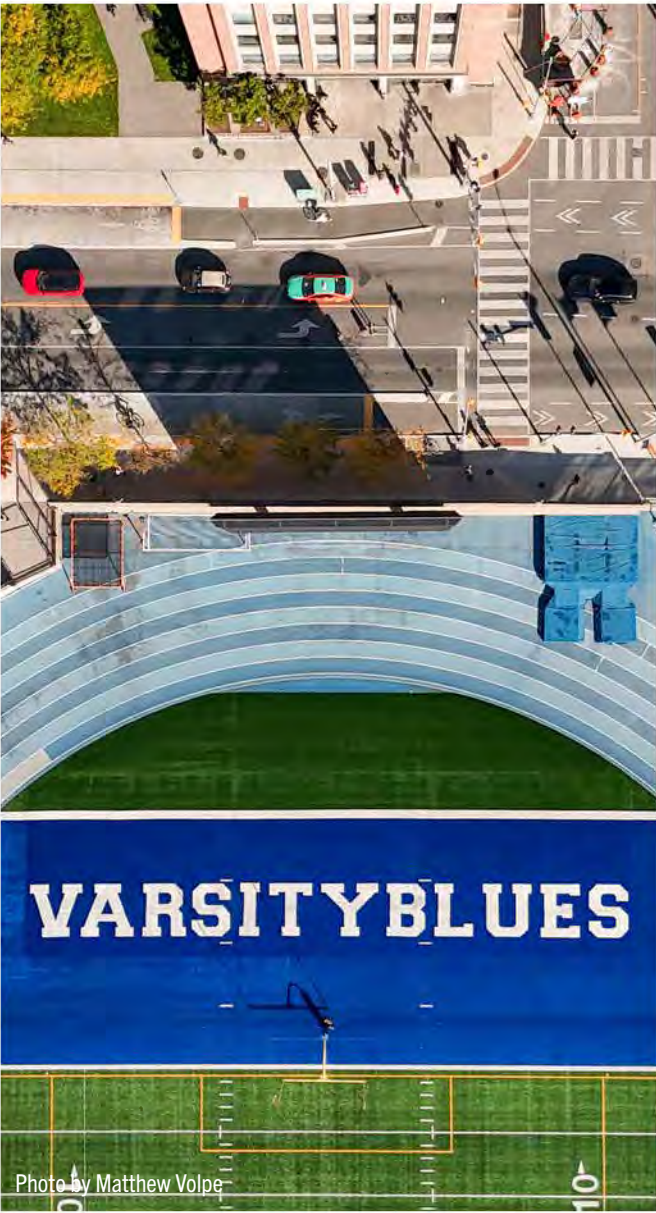


Photo by Matthew Volpe

3/ AREA-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS



IMAGE
Construction of Daniels Building (Photo by Peter MacCallum)

The area-specific built form considerations build upon the Structure Plan framework and its defined areas – largely aligned with the St. George Campus Secondary Plan Character Areas – and their interrelationships.

This section articulates, for each Structure Plan area, the area vision, existing context, and transformational projects since 2011. It identifies key elements that knit the campus’s distinct character areas and establishes considerations to guide future development and capital projects. In coordination with the campus-wide built form considerations, these aim to guide any new development to consider opportunities to contribute to the campus vision towards to a legible, cohesive and integrated environment.

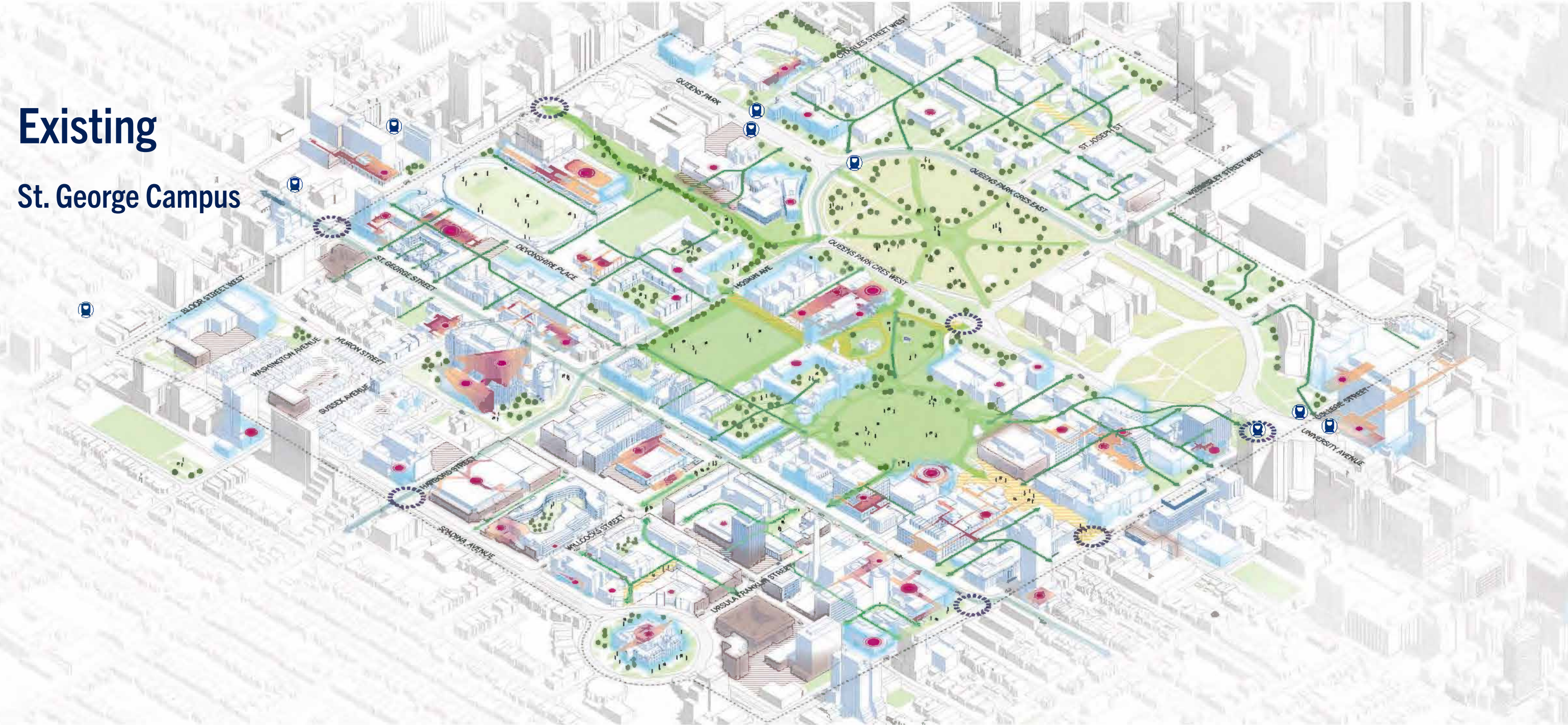
Structure Plan

- 1 Central Campus Core**
Extending the historic core from College to Bloor
- 2 Green Corridor**
Reconnecting to the land in the heart of the City
- 3 Northeast Connection**
Enhancing campus pedestrian pathways
- 4 West Campus Activation**
Unifying and improving the campus experience in the southwest quadrant
- 5 Ishpadinaa Placemaking**
Creating meaningful connections at the west campus edge
- 6 Neighbourhood Gateway**
Providing institutional housing for the campus community
- 7 Civic Corridor**
Engaging a dynamic urban experience
- 8 Innovation Corridor**
Expanding the presence and visibility of research and innovation on campus



Existing

St. George Campus



LEGEND Built Form Elements

- UofT Buildings
- Non-UofT Buildings
- Animated / Activated Building Frontage
- Building Frontage Opportunity
- Poor Public Realm – Built Form Interface

Public Realm Elements

- Major Interior Circulation Artery / Atrium
- Major Interior Hub of Activity
- Potential Taller Element Zone
- Potential Development Opportunity Site
- Potential Infill Development Opportunity Area
- Open Space (OS) (Institutional Major OS, Parks and Legislative Grounds, Key OS, and Other OS)
- Tree Canopy (Illustrative)
- Future New Institutional Open Space
- Future Potential Key Open Space
- Campus Gateway
- Main Internal Street
- Mid-Block Connection
- Shared Street
- Urban Destination Street
- St. George Campus Secondary Plan Area Boundary

Activity Icons

- Classroom / Event
- Student Amenity / Study
- Urban Agriculture / Greenhouse / Beekeeping
- Central Utilities / Geoexchange Field
- Research & Innovation (UofT Academic)
- Innovation (UofT & Partner)
- Cultural Space / Gallery / Theatre / Museum
- Space / Garden of Indigenous Significance
- Food (Café / Restaurant / Cafeteria / Food-truck)
- University Housing
- Recreation / Athletic Facilities / Playground
- Retail
- Hospital
- TTC Subway Station
- Parking (Surface Lot)
- Parking (Enclosed Garage)

Note: City-owned streets, including identified future potential shared and urban destination streets, require further engagement between University and City to confirm envisionsary concepts.

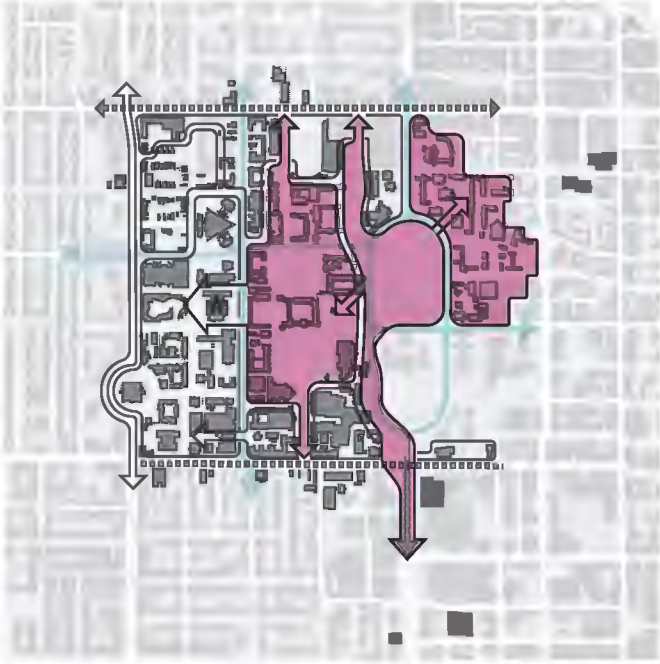
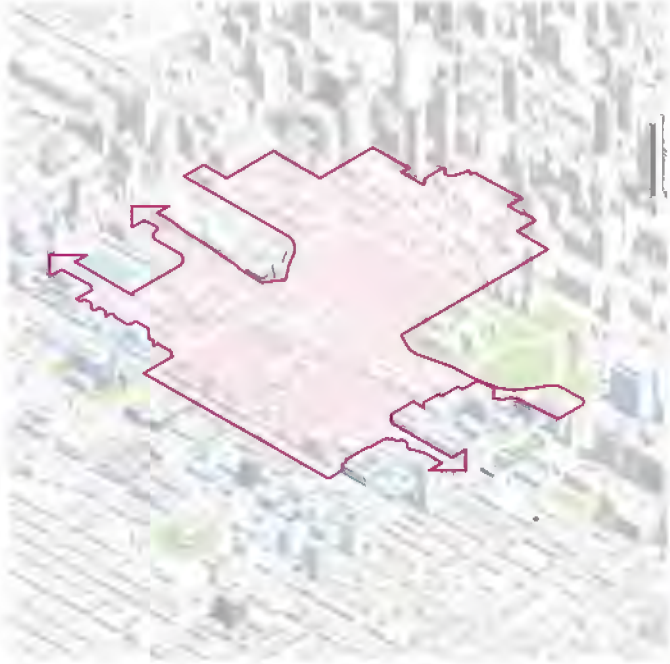
Legend applies to all axonometric illustrations in this section of Part 2. The illustrations highlight key campus considerations, and are not exhaustive representations of all conditions and instances of activity.

Central Campus Core, Green Corridor & Northeast Connection

Strengthening east–west and north–south connections to create a cohesive, legible and pedestrian-focused campus network throughout the historic core that enhances and reinforces links between campus and city.

IMAGE

Landscape of Landmark Quality - Elevated view of lawn and pavilion with Ontario Legislature and tall buildings in the distance. Photo by Salina Kassam.



Existing Context

Located within the northeast and southeast campus quadrants, these areas largely align with the Central Campus, Queen’s Park and East Campus Secondary Plan Character Areas and represent the historic core of the St. George Campus.

- Defined by historical, architectural and cultural significance, this area contains the highest concentration of built heritage assets on campus.
- The principal gateway to the St. George Campus at King’s College Road and College Street reinforces the axial view towards University College.
- The central location of University College relative to the other architecturally significant heritage buildings surrounding King’s College Circle creates a gallery of architectural styles representing the institutional growth and ongoing evolution of the University of Toronto.
- Development patterns are characterized by predominantly low-scale institutional buildings along key campus and city corridors – such as St. George Street and Queen’s Park Crescent - integrated within a network of major institutional open spaces, including Front Campus, Back Campus, Sir Daniel Wilson Quad, University College Quad, Hart House Circle and Philosopher’s Walk, as well as interconnected quads and lawns.
- A prevailing low-rise, pedestrian-oriented character reinforces openness, preserves sky views and maintains long vistas across campus toward the City.
- The Northeast Campus – home to Victoria University and St. Michael’s College and the University of Toronto – is physically separated from the broader St. George Campus by streets bounding Queen’s Park North.
- East–west connectivity within the public realm remains fragmented, posing challenges for campus cohesion, pedestrian movement and cycling.
- Aging buildings and deferred maintenance present operational and infrastructure challenges in certain facilities.
- Building servicing along major rights-of-way competes with opportunities for public realm improvements and stronger campus connections.

Existing

Central Campus Core, Green Corridor & Northeast Connection

The wide vehicular road and narrow sidewalks at Devonshire Place create a poor pedestrian experience.

The area contains the highest concentration of built heritage assets on campus, many of which exemplify building frontages that positively engage with the pedestrian campus experience.

The Landmark Project redefined the historic campus core. It demonstrates how built form, public realm and infrastructure initiatives can be combined for successful transformation.

Queen's Park North is an important east-west connector for students, faculty and staff moving through campus.

Minimal sidewalks and perceived prioritization of vehicular traffic along Queen's Park Crescent, including at pedestrian crossings such as near Hart House, create impediments to pedestrian comfort.

Hilly topography and underpass at Queen's Park Crescent West create an east-west barrier and an uninviting gateway to the Front Campus.

While landscape investment has lessened the prominence of the recycling facility from the street, its location is not ideal for long-term back of house functions.

Transformational Projects

Recent projects have advanced the vision for these areas within the Structure Plan, reinforcing the University’s commitment to design excellence, heritage stewardship, and sustainability. Collectively, these initiatives have:

- Renewed and modernized heritage buildings
- Improved accessibility
- Expanded student housing and learning and community spaces
- Integrated sustainability and resilience into buildings, prioritizing energy efficiency and minimizing impact on the environment

Notable Projects include:

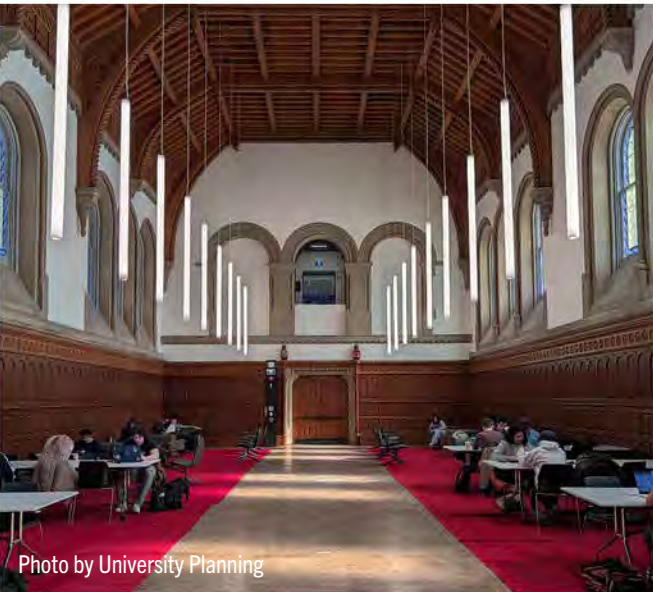


Photo by University Planning

University College Revitalization (2021)

University College is the central architectural landmark and symbolic heart of the St. George Campus, constructed in 1856-1859. A comprehensive renewal has repositioned University College as an accessible, inclusive and vibrant academic hub for future generations. The project modernized building systems, significantly improved accessibility and restored key heritage spaces – including East and West Halls and Croft Chapter House – while upgrading classrooms and infrastructure. It demonstrates how a landmark heritage building can be sensitively adapted to meet evolving academic needs.



Rendering by Mecanoo Architecten

Lawson Centre for Sustainability at Trinity College (Under Construction)

The Centre addresses the need for additional student housing, teaching space and community gathering areas while advancing sustainability leadership. The project integrates high-performance building systems, mass timber construction, rooftop agriculture, greenhouses for year-round growing and shared community spaces. It is envisioned as both a living lab and a hub for education and research in sustainability.



Photo by Diana Tyszko

Hart House Infrastructure Renewal (In Progress)

For over a century, Hart House has served as a focal point of campus life. A phased infrastructure renewal will upgrade aging mechanical and electrical systems to ensure the building’s continued vitality. This investment supports its diverse program – including an athletic centre, a theatre, art gallery, library and community gathering – while securing its role for future generations to support and enhance the student experience.

Future Evolution

Future planning and development in these areas envision strengthening connections within the campus and to the City, enhancing the pedestrian experience and reinforcing the University’s leadership in heritage stewardship and sustainability.

- Within the central campus core, limited opportunities for new development are anticipated, generally low scale.
- Renewal of aging facilities and heritage stewardship is anticipated to continue to require a careful balance of conservation, adaptive reuse, accessibility improvements, infrastructure upgrades and resilient, sustainable design to support long-term institutional evolution.
- Redevelopment of 90 Wellesley Street, at the eastern campus gateway, is anticipated to support the academic mission through future site intensification and enhanced street-level presence.
- Future revitalization adjacent to Queen’s Park Crescent West envisions potential improvements to back of house relationships through built form and/or public realm enhancements, while ensuring access and servicing requirements continue to be met.
- Opportunity identified to reinforce the campus gateway at Devonshire Place and Bloor Street, to better signal a north-south route through to the historic core and the Front Campus to King’s College Road and the College Street gates.
- An enhanced public realm network and east-west connectivity may benefit from built form modifications to better connect passages and signal mid-block connections to foster a more cohesive, accessible and welcoming campus.



IMAGE
Students on the first day of school at the recently renovated library at University College. Photo by Johnny Guatto.

Vision

Central Campus Core, Green Corridor & Northeast Connection

Future east–west connection enhancements will be considered to strengthen link between Devonshire Place and Philosopher’s Walk, via the pathway between Varsity Centre and Trinity College.

The revitalization of Queen’s Park North will open up potential opportunities for University educational programming activities.

Future gateway development opportunity at the eastern edge of campus, supported by public realm enhancements.

Pedestrian-oriented gathering opportunities at Devonshire Place are envisioned to enhance collegial and athletic activities along this identified potential shared street.

East-west pedestrian flow and campus connectivity would be strengthened by eliminating physical barriers to create a more cohesive and intuitive campus network.

Opportunities for further improvements to back of house relationships through built form and/or public realm enhancements.

Future revitalization conceived to elevate and enliven the heart of campus, creating a new major hub of research and learning facilities, at-grade event and gathering spaces, and further improve connections through campus. The site would also house a new district energy nodal plant to supply the development and surrounding buildings, improving energy performance and contributing to the University’s sustainability goals.

West Campus Activation & Ishpadinaa Placemaking

Shaping a dynamic pedestrian-focused urban academic precinct that supports future growth while strengthening campus connections, anchored by a new Campus Hub and a cohesive, integrated public realm.



IMAGE

Aerial view looking south at the west campus academic buildings, Sidney Smith Hall and Lash Miller Laboratories. Photo by David Lee.



Photo by Johnny Guatto



Photo by Diana Tyszko



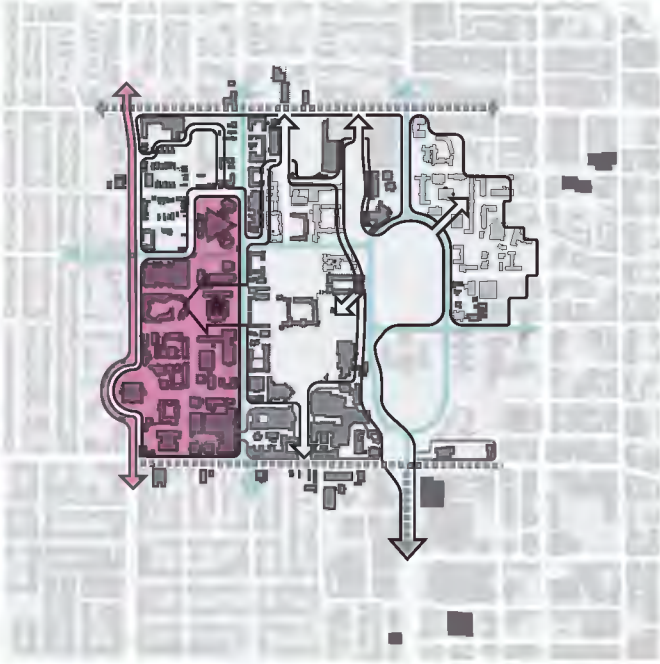
Photo by Diana Tyszko



Photo by University Planning



Photo by Chris Thomaidis



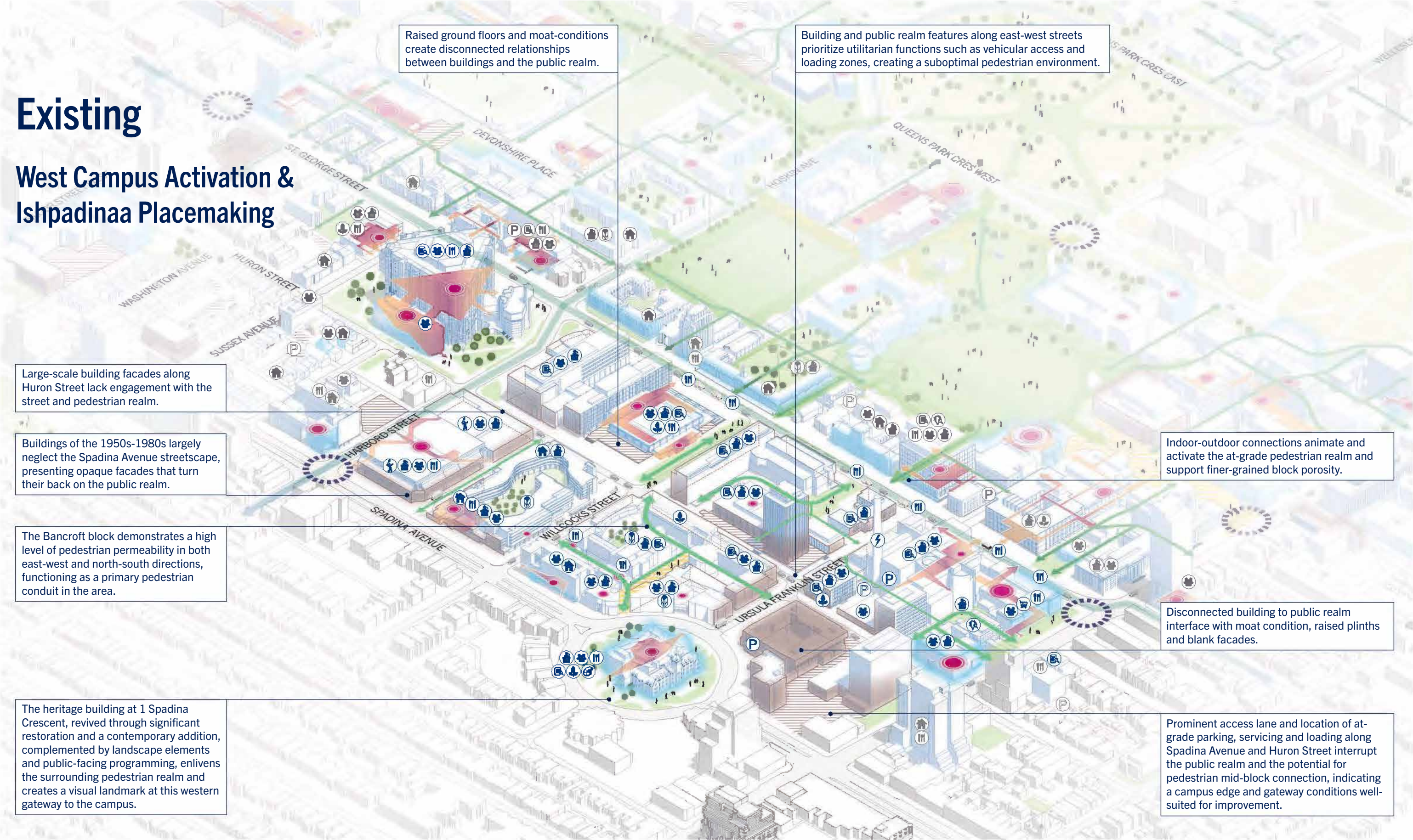
Existing Context

The West Campus area is located within the southwest quadrant encompassing several Secondary Plan Character Areas, including West Campus, St. George Street and College Street, and functions as a key interface between the University and surrounding neighbourhoods.

- Characterized by post-war expansion, large block-sized developments, and modern building typologies, lacking fine-grained block porosity, access to open space and clear wayfinding.
- Certain blocks in the area demonstrate strong internal connectivity and fine-grain porosity, including the Bancroft shared street and courtyard system, the Koffler Centre courtyard connections and the active frontage of the Bahen Centre along St. George Street.
- A significant portion of the campus community studies, lives and uses facilities in this area, generating high levels of activity and foot traffic.
- Street-oriented blank facades along Spadina Avenue and Harbord Street, in response to an unrealized 1950's expressway, are areas of improvement towards a welcoming campus.
- Building servicing and back-of-house functions compete with the pedestrian environment, particularly on Ursula Franklin Street.
- Inactive ground planes, a lack of building entrances and transparency diminish potential for an activated streetscape.
- Interrupted public realm with raised plinths and moat conditions, in particular along Huron Street, contribute to a disconnected building to public realm interface.
- Limited façade articulation and visual monotony is common within the area's building fabric.
- Lack of uninterrupted sight lines and pedestrian permeability from the street into mid-block and interior passages is prevalent.

Existing

West Campus Activation & Ishpadinaa Placemaking



Raised ground floors and moat-conditions create disconnected relationships between buildings and the public realm.

Building and public realm features along east-west streets prioritize utilitarian functions such as vehicular access and loading zones, creating a suboptimal pedestrian environment.

Large-scale building facades along Huron Street lack engagement with the street and pedestrian realm.

Buildings of the 1950s-1980s largely neglect the Spadina Avenue streetscape, presenting opaque facades that turn their back on the public realm.

The Bancroft block demonstrates a high level of pedestrian permeability in both east-west and north-south directions, functioning as a primary pedestrian conduit in the area.

Indoor-outdoor connections animate and activate the at-grade pedestrian realm and support finer-grained block porosity.

Disconnected building to public realm interface with moat condition, raised plinths and blank facades.

The heritage building at 1 Spadina Crescent, revived through significant restoration and a contemporary addition, complemented by landscape elements and public-facing programming, enlivens the surrounding pedestrian realm and creates a visual landmark at this western gateway to the campus.

Prominent access lane and location of at-grade parking, servicing and loading along Spadina Avenue and Huron Street interrupt the public realm and the potential for pedestrian mid-block connection, indicating a campus edge and gateway conditions well-suited for improvement.

Transformational Projects

Several projects since adoption of the 2011 St. George Campus Plan have advanced the vision of this area demonstrating the University’s commitment to design excellence and campus development that reinforces the long-term vision of the area and embodies the Plan’s driving values. Collectively, these projects have:

- Activated prominent, yet underutilized sites
- Demonstrated excellence in heritage stewardship
- Strengthened campus gateways and edges
- Enhanced public realm and public life

Notable Projects include:



Photo by Daria Perevezentsev

Myhal Centre for Engineering Innovation & Entrepreneurship (2018)

Located on the east side of St. George Street across from the West Campus, Myhal Centre plays a pivotal role in shaping the area. This contemporary landmark contributes to the St. George Campus skyline and serves as a hub for innovation, featuring prototyping facilities, multidisciplinary research hubs, design studios and technology-enhanced learning spaces. A social and academic incubator, Myhal Centre animates St. George Street through a highly transparent active ground floor and two-storey atrium, extending activity along all frontages, providing welcoming spaces for gathering, study and cross-disciplinary collaboration.

John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape & Design (2018)

Prominently located along Spadina Avenue on a site of civic significance, One Spadina establishes a distinctive gateway and focal point, anchoring the western edge of the University to the City. The project combines restoration of the historic Knox College building with a contemporary addition, revitalizing a highly visible site at the intersection of major city corridors. By foregrounding creativity and design excellence, it strengthens the University’s urban presence and reinforces its role in shaping the public realm.



Photo by David Lee



Photo by University Planning

Student Commons (2021)

Located on College Street, the Student Commons serves as a centralized hub for student services. The renovation of 230 College Street transformed a 1909 building into a 24-hour destination for community and collaboration. The project consolidates previously dispersed programs and amenities, providing multi-purpose spaces, study and commuter lounges, student organization offices, meeting rooms and accessible food options.



Photo by Matthew Volpe

Robarts Common (2022)

Robarts Common reimagines a former service and loading area along Huron Street as a vibrant student hub and campus destination. The contemporary expansion delivers much-needed study space while enhancing transparency and visual connectivity, animating the street frontage and strengthening the relationship between building and public realm.



Rendering by Mikkelsen Arkitekter AS & Cumulus Architects.

Lash Miller Building Expansion (Under Construction)

The three-storey expansion atop the existing one-storey northeast corner volume at St. George Street and Willcocks will activate a key intersection, enhance the presence for the Department of Chemistry and showcase the innovative and visionary research taking place within. The project introduces specialized research laboratories, reconfigures ground and basement levels to accommodate accessible classrooms and strengthens connections to Willcocks Commons. By transforming formerly opaque façades into transparent and engaged frontages, the expansion enhances the building’s relationship to the public realm and supports a more active campus life.

Future Evolution

Future planning and development priorities for the West Campus envision reinforcing its role as a vibrant, urban academic precinct while advancing contemporary, flexible and sustainable development.

- Anticipated as fulfilling a critical role in accommodating future academic growth, the area seeks to maintain a mix of low- and mid-scale institutional buildings, punctuated by taller elements, in particular along Huron Street, and at key gateways.
- The public realm envisions transformation of the existing street grid into a network of shared streets that blur the boundary between buildings and landscape.
- Repositioning Huron Street as a West Campus academic main street creates a lively, pedestrian-priority spine animated by active ground floors, transparent façades, high-quality public realm improvements and strengthened east-west connections.
- Connectivity and relationships to surrounding campus areas will support coordinated redevelopment, infill and public realm improvements, to unify the campus experience.
- Mid-block connections, through buildings and courtyards, help to break down the larger blocks creating a more human scale and enjoyable experience.
- Scale, massing and transitions along Spadina Avenue and College Street will contribute reinforcing their roles as important campus edges and city streets, supporting integration with surrounding neighbourhoods and a welcoming campus presence.
- Gateway sites are important to well-consider and establish clear, legible entry points into the West Campus, through architectural articulation, landscape design and the potential for outdoor art at key intersections.
- The Spadina Avenue and College Street corner is envisioned as a primary campus gateway, accommodating mixed institutional uses, active ground floors and a new major open space.
- Creation of a New Campus Hub at the Sidney Smith Hall site, supported by new development, including a taller element and a new major open space, provides the opportunity for a key gathering place for the west side of campus, complementing and balancing the Central Campus historic core to the east.



IMAGE
New College Courtyard in Fall. Photo by Diana Tysko.

Vision

West Campus Activation & Ishpadinaa Placemaking

The new Campus Hub presents an opportunity for development with a variety of academic uses and modern student amenities to meet future space needs, supported by a new major university open space. It is envisioned to anchor the surrounding precinct as a dynamic and lively major indoor and outdoor campus destination.

Potential new shared streets in the West Campus area would support and enhance pedestrian mobility and campus connectivity.

Potential for active frontages and transparent facades along Spadina Avenue in future renovations and development initiatives.

Enhance campus gateways to define the interface between the University and the city and signal a welcoming arrival.

Placemaking opportunities introduced along Spadina Avenue are envisioned to enhance the public realm and establish a more legible and inviting campus edge.

Opportunities to integrate public realm enhancements and active ground floors strengthening indoor-outdoor connections.

The Spadina Avenue – College Street block presents a key opportunity to interface with the City and create a welcoming primary gateway to the campus. The block is envisioned to incorporate new development with taller elements, a major open space and mix of institutional uses.

Neighbourhood Gateway & Ishpadinaa Placemaking

Currently serving a key role in providing institutional housing within the campus, the area presents opportunities to introduce new institutional housing along with a mix of small scale cultural, institutional and commercial uses that serve the local neighbourhood and broader campus.



IMAGE

Sussex Court in the Huron-Sussex Neighbourhood. Photo by University Planning.

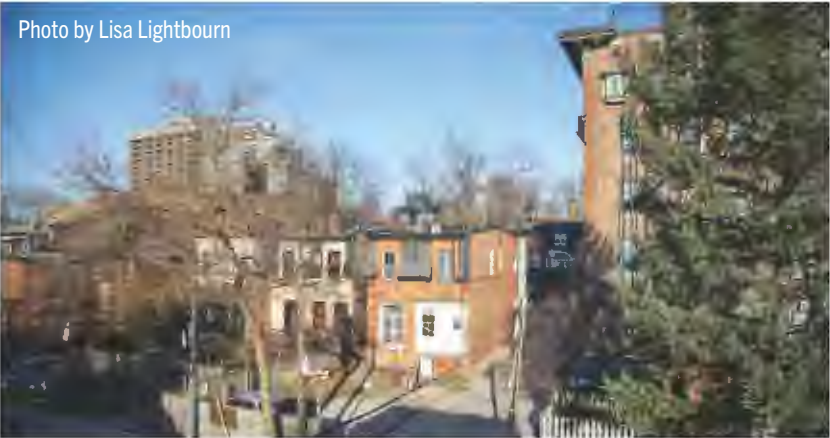


Photo by Lisa Lightbourn



Photo by Polina Teif



Photo by University Planning



Photo by Eugen Sakhnenko



Photo by University Planning



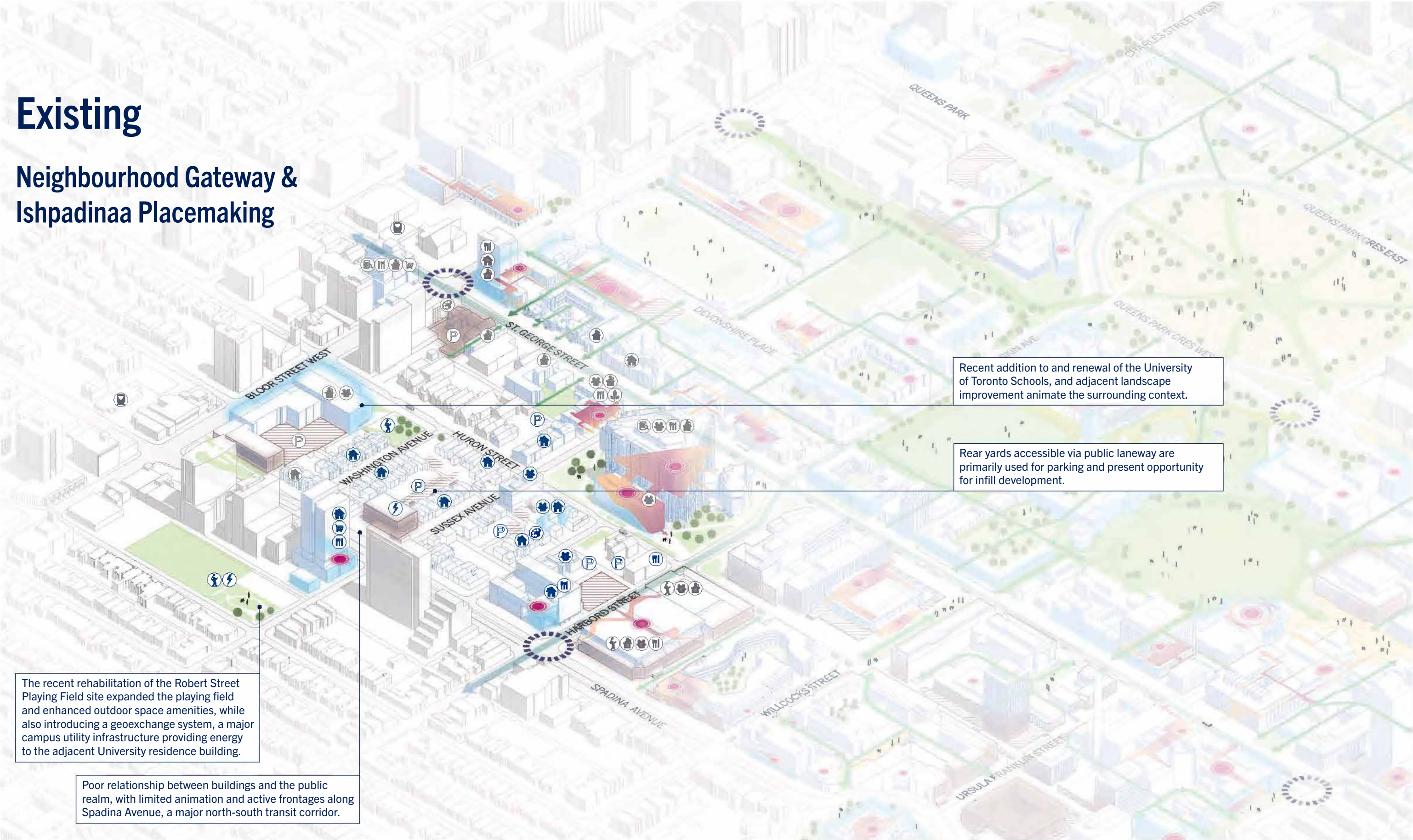
Existing Context

Located within the northwest quadrant, the Neighbourhood Gateway area aligns with the Huron Sussex Secondary Plan Character Area, supporting University housing needs and contributing to campus life.

- The area is distinguished from the rest of the campus by its collection of houseform buildings and residential streetscapes.
- Well-served by transit, with access to the Spadina and St. George subway stations and streetcar service along Spadina Avenue, the area is in walking distance to the academic core of the campus and well-linked to the City at Bloor Street and Spadina Avenue, making it ideal for a concentration of housing options.
- Open spaces and community amenities, including the Huron Washington Parkette, contribute to the area’s character and support both campus and local community use.
- Underutilized sites along Spadina Avenue present opportunities for intensification, for example, the Chiller Plant located between Washington Street and Sussex Avenue.
- Underutilized sites along Harbord Street present opportunities for intensification, for example, east of Graduate House.
- Within the core of the neighbourhood, parking pads, backyard sheds, and other sites present opportunities for infill development to support additional housing in the neighbourhood.
- Laneways and mid-block connections play an important role in access and servicing, as the area presents opportunities for infill development.

Existing

Neighbourhood Gateway & Ishpadinaa Placemaking



Recent addition to and renewal of the University of Toronto Schools, and adjacent landscape improvement animate the surrounding context.

Rear yards accessible via public laneway are primarily used for parking and present opportunity for infill development.

The recent rehabilitation of the Robert Street Playing Field site expanded the playing field and enhanced outdoor space amenities, while also introducing a geoechange system, a major campus utility infrastructure providing energy to the adjacent University residence building.

Poor relationship between buildings and the public realm, with limited animation and active frontages along Spadina Avenue, a major north-south transit corridor.

Transformational Projects

A number of projects since adoption of the 2011 St. George Campus Plan have advanced the vision for this area, reinforcing the University’s commitment to design excellence and campus development while supporting the long-term vision of the area and the Plan’s driving values. Collectively, these projects have:

- Delivered new housing responding to institutional needs
- Supported the University’s Sustainability goals and Climate Positive commitments
- Revitalized community areas

Notable Projects include:



Single Family Dwelling & Laneway Infill Housing (2020)

Guided by the Huron Sussex Neighbourhood Planning Study and informed by extensive community consultation, this project serves as a case study for laneway and infill housing in a primarily residential neighbourhood at the northwest corner of the campus. Designed using Passive House principles to achieve net-zero performance, the laneway homes share a backyard with the street facing dwelling and are accessed from an envisioned pedestrian-priority ‘living lane’. The project demonstrates how low-rise, sustainable infill can sensitively address the range of university housing needs while supporting balanced intensification within an urban neighbourhood.



Oak House (2025)

The first student residence constructed at UTSG in over a decade, this 23-storey tower and townhome complex provides more than 500 beds in 230 student units, along with student amenity space, ground floor retail, and 10 townhouse units. Oak House demonstrates an ambitious model for university development by integrating environmental sustainability and through connection to the geo-exchange system beneath the nearby Robert Street Playing Field, contributing to the University’s Climate Positive campus goals.



Robert Street Playing Field & Community Area (2021)

The renewal of the Robert Street Playing Field transformed an underutilized site into a vibrant recreational and community space. The project introduced a new playing field supported by a geo-exchange system serving Oak House, along with enhanced landscaping, seating areas and playground equipment. These improvements expand neighbourhood and student access to open space and create flexible environments for recreation and gathering, strengthening connections between campus life and the surrounding community, while advancing the University’s sustainability objectives.

Future Evolution

Future planning and development priorities for the Neighbourhood Gateway envision reinforcing the area’s character while providing for institutional housing needs.

- Clustered institutional housing is envisioned to support the St. George Campus community and address housing needs for student families, workforce and faculty housing.
- Future evolution will direct mid-scale development to Harbord Street and Spadina Avenue with lower-scale infill development contemplated within the core of the neighbourhood.
- Shared common yards are envisioned, with at-grade animation along the north-south revitalized ‘Living Lane’ as the spine that connects Harbord Street to the Huron-Washington Parkette.
- Placemaking opportunities along Spadina Avenue serve to enhance the public realm, creating a welcoming presence at the campus edge.
- Improvements to laneways and pedestrian routes through the neighbourhood benefit campus connection and community.

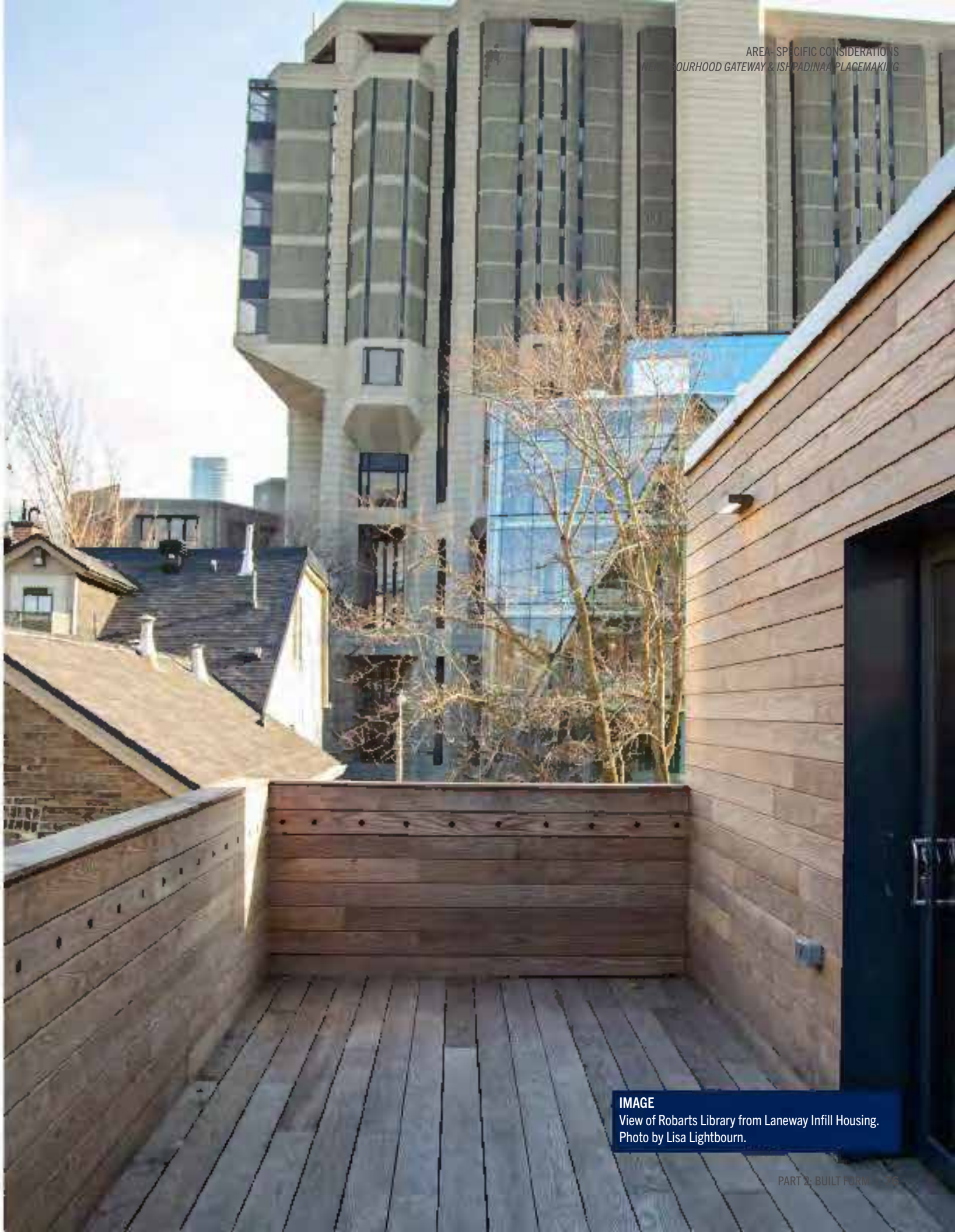


IMAGE
View of Roberts Library from Laneway Infill Housing.
Photo by Lisa Lightbourn.

Vision

Neighbourhood Gateway & Ishpadinaa Placemaking

New gateway development at the intersection of Bloor and Spadina will transition appropriately to its diverse context on all sides including the Huron Sussex neighbourhood to the south.

Potential opportunities for laneway enhancements, including at bpNichol Lane, may include landscaping to accommodate servicing while introducing greening and permeable surfaces, and activation through built form renovations and infill developments with laneway-facing frontages.

Future initiatives will consider removing some parking area to enable new infill residential opportunities within the neighbourhood.

Living Lane is envisioned as a landscaped space through the Huron-Sussex neighbourhood, to create an enhanced pedestrian experience.

Placemaking and revitalization opportunities introduced along Spadina Avenue are envisioned to enhance the public realm and establish a more legible and inviting campus edge.

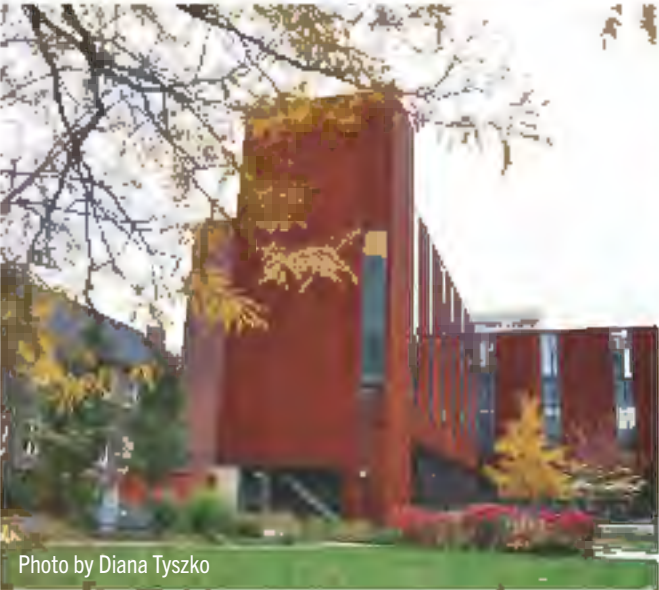
Mid-scale redevelopment along major city arterials such as Spadina Avenue enables opportunities to enhance the streetscape and built form – public realm relationship.

Civic Corridor

Framing Bloor Street West, Spadina Avenue and Queen's Park as vibrant civic corridors, future university development in this area seeks to support and strengthen its existing dynamic cultural and institutional urban context.

IMAGE

The Jackman Humanities Building as seen from the intersection of St. George and Bloor Streets. Photo by Chris Thomaidis.



Existing Context

Located within the northwest and northeast quadrants, this area aligns with Bloor Street West, portions of St. George Street and Queen’s Park Secondary Plan Character Areas, and functions as a transition between adjacent areas to the west and north of campus.

- Anchored by Bloor Street, this area introduces a variety of activities and an urban character to the public realm that connects institutions and contributes to a vibrant streetscape.
- The area is characterized by a mix of cultural, academic and athletic uses within free-standing buildings and landscaped lots, expressed through a range of building forms and architectural styles.
- Numerous University buildings contribute positively to Bloor Street including Woodsworth Student Residence, heritage-designated Jackman Humanities Building with active retail and heritage-designated Munk School with the award-winning and active Goldring Centre for High Performance Sport which draws in the University and broader community.
- University presence along the corridor is uneven, with potential for buildings and open spaces, such as Varsity Centre, Varsity Arena and OISE having more grade-related presence along Bloor Street and connection with Philosopher’s Walk.
- The area supports St. George Street north of Harbord, characterized by former mansions and landscaped front yards, courtyards, quadrangles and forecourts that further contribute to the infill quality of the area, which accomodates large volumes of pedestrians and cyclists moving north-south and east-west.
- The recent University of Toronto Schools Renewal project at Huron Street and Bloor Street West, reinforces the significant opportunity for revitalization of the northwest corner of the University at 371 Bloor Street West, within a major transit corridor, currently underutilized with surface parking predominating the site.

Existing Civic Corridor

Existing mid-block connections between St. George Street and Devonshire Place support pedestrian movement and connectivity across the area.

Disconnected building to public realm interface with at-grade blank façade, moat-condition and raised building entrance.

East-west visual connections and wayfinding features to Philosopher's Walk could be enhanced to improve pedestrian experience.

Existing north-south service lane behind academic buildings provides mid-block pedestrian connection but remains utilitarian in nature.

Recent renewal and expansion of the University of Toronto Schools, complemented by landscape improvements, enhance architectural presence along Bloor Street and enliven the surrounding area.

Transformational Projects

Recent projects have advanced the vision for this area within the Structure Plan, reinforcing the University’s commitment to design excellence, heritage stewardship and sustainability. Collectively, these initiatives have:

- Strengthened the campus-city interface
- Demonstrated the University’s commitment to high-quality architecture, heritage renewal, and innovation in climate-positive design
- Enhanced the public realm and streetscape experience

Notable Projects include:



Photo by Michael Baker

Goldring Centre for High Performance Sport (2014)

Prominently situated at the intersection of Bloor Street and Devonshire Place, the Goldring Centre reinforces an athletic precinct along the northern edge of campus. Conceived as a hub integrating sports science research, medicine and education, the facility consolidates specialized athletic programs while providing students, varsity athletes and the broader community with access to world-class training facilities and support services. The transparent façade at upper levels engages views to and from activities programmed at the adjacent Varsity Centre.

University of Toronto Schools Renewal (2022)

The renewal, restoration and expansion has catalyzed the revitalization of the northwest corner of campus. The project renovates the east portion of 371 Bloor Street West heritage building while introducing a contemporary expansion that provides new learning spaces, a large auditorium and below grade gymnasium. The addition overlooks the adjacent parkette and sheltered accessible entrance.



Photo by University Planning



Rendering by Montgomery Sisam Architects

Innis College Renewal & Expansion (Under Construction)

Through sensitive infill, this project expands student services and programs while revitalizing the surrounding public realm in keeping with the low-rise residential context. The expansion introduces flexible and inviting spaces, including new study areas, a student learning centre, commuter lounge and an expanded multipurpose café opening onto the courtyard. The project also reinvigorates the Sussex Avenue frontage, reinforces connections to the courtyard and improves the College’s amenity space and accessibility.



Rendering by MJMA & Patkau Architects

Academic Wood Tower (Under Construction)

A second phase to the Goldring Centre, the Academic Wood Tower will provide new academic and administrative space for multiple faculties and University departments with synergies in the area. The project demonstrates the University’s leadership in sustainability through the use of mass timber construction, serving as a highly visible example of innovative tall wood building technology. Positioned along the northern edge of campus, the tower will reinforce the gateway connection to the campus along Devonshire Place to the historic core.



Rendering by Kongats Architects

New Academic Building at Woodsworth College (Under Construction)

This project renovates existing spaces and introduces a six-storey infill development, reinforcing Woodsworth College as a hub for academic and community life. The expansion will improve accessibility and provide classrooms, seminar rooms, a learning commons, study spaces, offices and new common and event spaces that support the College’s mission of fostering a collaborative and inclusive student community.

Future Evolution

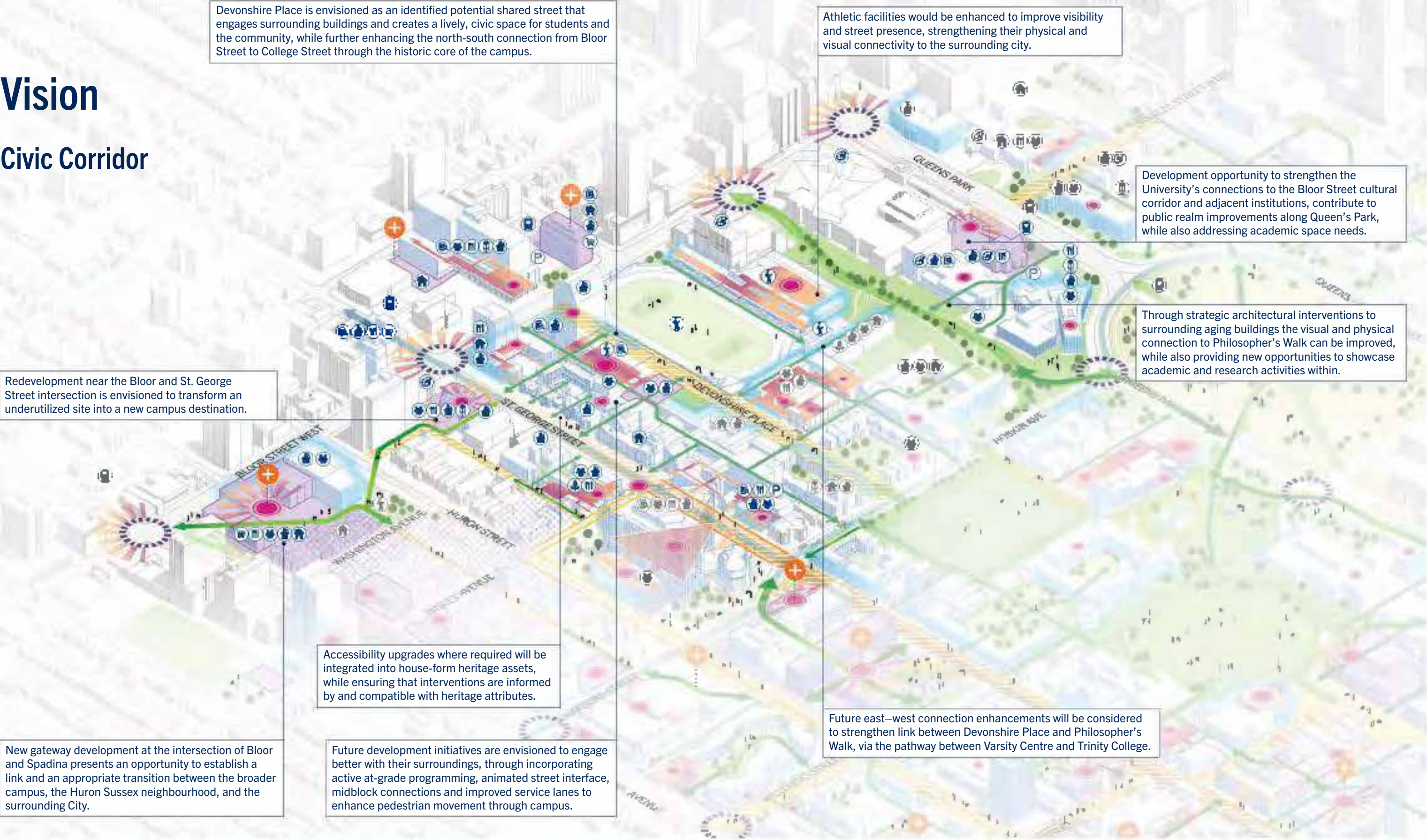
Future planning and development in this area would benefit from prioritizing connection to the City to support a vibrant public realm and complement the corridor’s institutional and cultural character, while reinforcing the University’s welcoming presence along Bloor Street.

- Evolution of the Civic Corridor envisions strengthening the campus–city interface by fostering active ground floor uses, engaging landscaped streetscapes and buildings that contribute to an improved animated pedestrian experience through architectural interest and diversity.
- Potential enhancements to address accessibility, the pedestrian experience and built-form relationships with adjacent open spaces, including enhanced north–south connections through Philosopher’s Walk — an important green connection between Bloor Street West and the Central Campus Character Area — as well as east–west connections linking Philosopher’s Walk with Devonshire Place, which is identified as a future potential shared street.
- The area anticipates maintaining a mix of low- and mid-scale buildings, punctuated by taller elements along Bloor Street.
- Gateway sites are important to well-consider and establish clear, legible entry points into the campus, through architectural articulation, landscape design and the potential for outdoor art at key intersections.
- 90 Queen’s Park provides an opportunity to enhance the public realm along Queen’s Park, foster civic engagement and strengthen the University’s presence and connection to the Bloor Street cultural corridor and neighbouring institutions.
- Future enhancements to the area through new development, infill and building renewal opportunities will incrementally provide additional space to meet the University’s academic mission as well as improve street presence and connections through campus.
- The Bloor Street West and Spadina Avenue corner is envisioned as a significant opportunity to create a primary campus gateway. Intensification of the site envisions the provision of much-needed university housing along with a mix of academic, institutional and retail uses with low- to mid-scale buildings punctuated by taller elements. This would also create a sense of arrival, welcome, permeability and connectivity within the block between campus and city.



Vision

Civic Corridor



Innovation Corridor

Advancing a visible and connected research precinct along College Street, the Innovation Corridor strives to strengthen the University’s connection with the Health Sciences District while fostering a more integrated, dynamic urban environment and innovation community.

IMAGE
CCRM’s Centre for Cell and Vector Production, a partnership with University Health Network at MaRS Centre, West Tower. Photo by Johnny Guatto.



Existing Context

Located within the southeast and southwest quadrants, this area aligns with the College Street Secondary Plan Character Area and serves as a transition between the University’s campus presence along College Street to the City.

- The area is characterized by a strong University presence in research, particularly in the fields of engineering, medical and health sciences.
- The University’s participation in the MaRS Discovery District and development of the Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus at this significant southern campus gateway anchor and support UofT’s role in innovation within the Health Sciences District that serves the Downtown innovation community and the cluster of hospitals and biomedical research institutions.
- Moving west from University Avenue, recognizing College Street as the historic southern boundary of the campus, the north side of College Street is defined by a strong campus edge and streetwall of generally low and mid-scale institutional buildings, punctuated by taller elements.
- Buildings along the north side of College Street typically have large footprints, monumental scale and are set back from the right-of-way creating a generous public realm with formal entrances oriented toward the street.
- Mid-block connections to the rear of buildings provide east–west pedestrian routes complemented by more formal north–south connections to the Central Core.
- Along the south side of College Street, University presence transitions to adjacent neighbourhoods, with built form characterized by a mix of low-scale, mid-scale institutional uses and tall buildings.
- Several buildings present raised entrances, inactive ground floors and poor retail conditions limiting street-level vibrancy and an active public realm.
- Aging buildings and deferred maintenance present both challenges and opportunities for renewal, heritage conservation and redevelopment for institutional purposes.



Existing Innovation Corridor

Large and aging building complexes present high deferred maintenance, navigational challenges characterized by fragmented circulation, insufficient wayfinding and limited accessibility. Many of these sites are further hindered by building envelopes that limit access to daylight, and do not engage the public realm, effectively concealing the vibrant academic and research life thriving within.

Poorly defined boundaries between essential servicing and loading as well as mid-block connection shared between multiple buildings compromise pedestrian access and circulation at Discovery Lane.

Mid-block open areas and utilitarian service lanes present prime opportunities for further intensification of existing blocks.

South of College Street, the University's street level frontage lacks active ground-floor uses and at-grade access and activation.

A network of enhanced pedestrian pathways and mid-block connections guide high volumes of foot-traffic from College Street-University Avenue intersection and transit node toward the Campus Core.

The Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus and the MaRS Centre serve as the University's primary southeastern gateway anchors both contributing to a prominent innovation, entrepreneurship and health sciences presence along the Discovery District and University Avenue corridor.

Transformational Projects

Recent projects have advanced the vision for this area within the Structure Plan by improving connections to open spaces, the public realm and the City while fostering engagement across the campus and broader community. Collectively, these initiatives have:

- Reinforced campus gateways and the University’s welcoming presence at our southern campus edge
- Activated ground floors, enhancing the public realm
- Provided essential new space to support UofT’s academic mission
- Supported a more connected, visible and dynamic area as the University and City connect

Notable Projects include:



Photo by Johnny Guatto

Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West (2023)

The Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West is the first phase of a broader development that establishes the country’s largest university-based innovation hub. Located at the southeast corner of the campus, the project strengthens the University’s leadership in research and innovation by creating space for industry partnerships, entrepreneurship and interdisciplinary collaboration. The building features a light-filled, versatile lobby with informal seating, a café and market and flexible pre-function, conference and multipurpose spaces. It anchors a key campus gateway while connecting with the community through a bold architectural presence, transparent façades and public realm improvements, that activate the ground plane and support innovation within Toronto’s Discovery District.

FitzGerald Building Revitalization (2024)

A prominent heritage structure along College Street has been carefully restored and revitalized to better serve the University community. The project consolidates administrative functions previously dispersed across campus while introducing shared workspaces, conference and meeting rooms and a central atrium that encourages collaboration. Enhancements to the building’s interface with the street and its relationship to the public realm reinforce the campus edge along College Street.



Photo by University Planning



Photo by Eugen Sakhnenko

Health & Wellness Centre at Koffler Student Services Centre (Under Renovation)

Responding to recommendations from the University of Toronto’s Presidential and Provostial Task Force on Student Mental Health (2020), this renovation provides ‘one door’ access to student support and care on campus by integrating Mental Health, Primary Care and Health Promotion Programs to model an interdisciplinary shared care approach to services. The project reinforces the University’s commitment to student well-being while anchoring the gateway at College and St. George Streets. Improvements include enhanced accessibility, clearer circulation and wayfinding, and an improved St. George Street entrance to support barrier-free access.



Photo by Salima Kassam

Temerty Building (In Progress)

Located at the southeast corner of King’s College Circle, directly across from Convocation Hall, the Temerty Building will support a welcoming gateway for the life sciences community and reinforce the King’s College Road promenade. Designed in dialogue with the Central Campus Character Area and the revitalized landscape of the Landmark Project, the building will feature an open, porous ground level that engages the public realm and supports all University convocations. State-of-the-art facilities will bolster research and learning, interdisciplinary collaboration and ties with affiliated hospitals.

Future Evolution

Future planning and development in this area seeks to promote the University’s presence along the Innovation Corridor while improving connectivity and engagement with the City to support an integrated and dynamic research and innovation hub.

- Future development north of College Street is anticipated to introduce mid-scale and taller institutional buildings while maintaining generous landscaped setbacks and reinforcing its institutional campus character.
- Opportunities to showcase research, teaching, innovation and campus life through more visible, engaging and inspiring building frontages and landscaped streetscapes are encouraged.
- Future new development envisions interdisciplinary collaboration and partnerships, while enhancing key gateways, activating mid-block connections and improving street frontages along College Street.
- Building on the momentum of Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West, the next development phase aspires to strengthen the ecosystem in which AI and bio-medical innovations increasingly converge which will advance UofT as a global leader through its support of student entrepreneurs, faculty and founders in their innovative research and entrepreneurial endeavors.
- Additional university housing along College Street, such as Campus One at 253 Beverley Street, presents an opportunity to help to address student housing demand at the St. George Campus.
- The Spadina Avenue and College Street corner, a significant opportunity to anchor a new campus gateway and destination, envisions future revitalization of the block that supports a variety of institutional needs, including academic space, university housing and innovation space encouraging partnerships, multi-disciplinary collaboration and new open space to contribute to public life where campus meets city.



IMAGE
UofT Entrepreneurship (UTE) held the inaugural AcceleratorFest at the Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus. Photo by Alyssa K Faoro.

Vision

Innovation Corridor

The Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus East development has the potential to further scale the University’s research and innovation ecosystem, strengthening the presence currently anchored by Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West and the MaRS Centre.

Future revitalization is envisioned to create a new hub of cutting-edge research laboratories, classrooms, at-grade event and gathering spaces for both informal daily use and larger institutional events extending activity from King’s College Circle into the building interior, improve visual and physical connections through the area, and further elevate and enliven the heart of campus through an iconic development.

Strategic intensification presents opportunities to integrate taller elements for institutional uses where appropriate, balancing increased density with sensitive built-form relationships, while reinforcing the University’s engagement with the City along College Street.

Development and infill projects along College Street and at key University gateways have the potential to capitalize on opportunities to showcase academic and partner innovation and research.

4/ CONCLUSION



Photo by Eugen Sakhnenko

As part of the three-part UTSG Campus Plan compendium, Part 2: Built Form, establishes a framework for the physical evolution of the St. George Campus, working in concert with Parts 1 and 3.

Grounded in the vision, guiding priorities, driving values and Structure Plan set out in Part 1, it advances a cohesive approach to campus development — one that supports a connected, inclusive and resilient academic environment while accommodating growth and change. Together, the three parts provide a coordinated foundation for decision-making, ensuring that future development, public realm improvements and infrastructure investments are aligned and mutually reinforcing.

Completed Capital Projects

This framework builds upon the University’s legacy in city building, heritage stewardship and design excellence.

Projects delivered since 2011 highlighted how recent investments have transformed sites across campus into vibrant and high-performing spaces and facilities.

Capital Projects Completed Since 2011 Campus Plan

1

Lassonde Mining Innovation Suite | 2011

2

Rotman School of Management Expansion| 2012

3

Munk School of Global Affairs | 2012

4

Goldring Centre for High Performance Sport | 2014

5

Jackman Law Building | 2016

6

Myhal Centre for Engineering Innovation & Entrepreneurship | 2018

7

Jackman Institute of Child Study | 2018

8

John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape & Design | 2018

9

Single Family Dwelling & Laneway Infill Housing | 2020

10

Student Commons | 2021

11

University College Revitalization | 2021

12

Robarts Common | 2022

13

University of Toronto Schools Renewal | 2022

14

Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West | 2023

15

Experiential Learning Commons | 2023

16

FitzGerald Building Revitalization | 2024

17

Landmark Project | 2024

18

Ziibiing Indigenous Landscape | 2024

19

Oak House | 2025

Capital Projects Under Construction, As of 2026

C1

New Academic Building at Woodsworth College

C2

Health & Wellness Centre at Koffler Student Services Centre

C3

OISE 5th Floor Terrace

C4

Academic Wood Tower

C5

Innis College Renewal & Expansion

C6

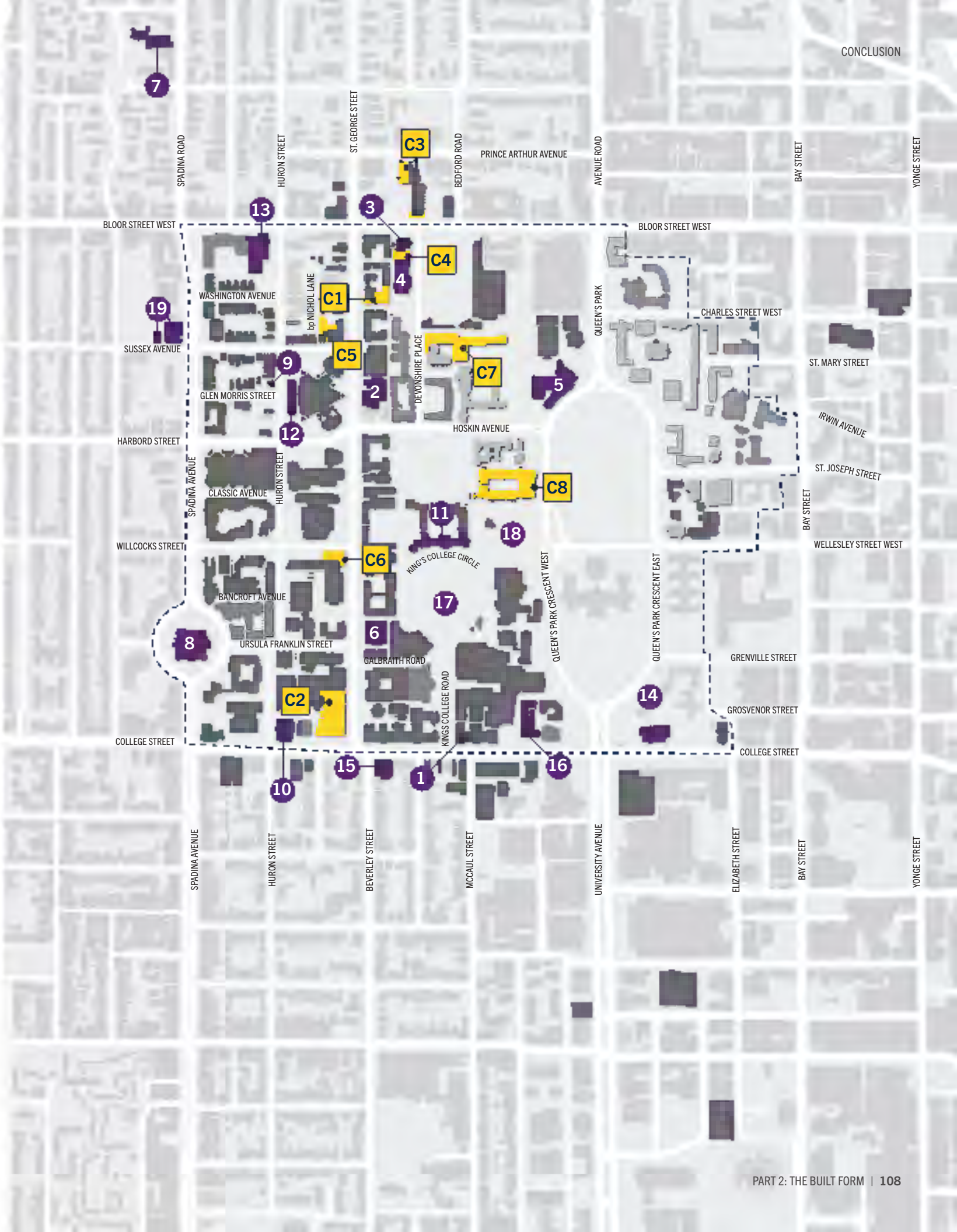
Lash Miller Building Expansion

C7

Lawson Centre for Sustainability at Trinity College

C8

Hart House Infrastructure Renewal - Phase 1



Selected Awards

These projects affirm the University’s leadership in shaping an award-winning and architecturally significant campus environment, while continuing its legacy of design excellence and city building as we approach our **Bicentennial in 2027**.

Lassonde Mining Innovation Suite (Completed 2011)

2013 | Heritage Toronto - Heritage Toronto Awards: William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship Nominee

2015 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award

Rotman School of Management Expansion (Completed 2012)

2012 | Ontario Concrete Awards - Architectural Merit

2013 | Pug Awards - Honorable Mention, 3rd Place in Commercial & Institutional

2014 | Architectural Record - Good Design is Good Business Award

2014 | Azure Magazine - Award of Merit

2014 | Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design - International Architecture Award

2014 | Royal Architectural Institute of Canada - Governor General’s Medals in Architecture, Medalist

Munk School of Global Affairs at the Observatory (Completed 2012)

2015 | Heritage Toronto - Heritage Toronto Awards: William Greer Architectural Conservation and Craftsmanship, Award of Merit

Golding Centre for High Performance Sport (Completed 2014)

2015 | City of Toronto - Urban Design Awards: Award of Excellence

2015 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award

Jackman Law Building (Completed 2016)

2013 | Canadian Architect - Award of Excellence

Myhal Centre for Engineering & Entrepreneurship (Completed 2018)

2019 | City of Toronto - Urban Design Awards: Award of Merit, Public Buildings in Context

John H. Daniels Faculty of Architecture Landscape & Design (Completed 2018)

2013 | Boston Society of Architects - Unbuilt Architecture Award

2015 | Association of Consulting Engineering Companies - Canadian Consulting Engineering Awards: Award of Excellence

2015 | Society of American Registered Architects -Silver Award of Honor

2017 | CISC Ontario Steel Design - Award of Excellence

2017 | Interior Design Magazine - Best of Year Awards: Higher Education Category

2017 | The Plan Awards - Honorable Mention

2018 | AIA New York - Architecture Honor

2018 | Fast Company Innovation by Design - Space, Places, and Cities - Finalist

2018 | The Architect’s Newspaper - 2018 AN Best of Design Awards - Building of the Year - Finalist

2018 | The Architect’s Newspaper - 2018 AN Best of Design Awards - Education - Winner

2019 | AIA’s Committee on the Environment - COTE Top Ten Awards

2019 | Architectural Conservancy Ontario - Paul Oberman Award for Adaptive Re-use (corporate)

2019 | Canadian Society of Landscape Architects - 2019 National Award: Small-Scale Public Landscapes Designed by a Landscape Architect

2019 | City of Toronto - Urban Design Awards: Award of Excellence, Public Buildings in Context

2019 | Heritage Toronto - Heritage Toronto Awards: Built Heritage

2019 | Ontario Heritage Trust - Lieutenant Governor’s Ontario Heritage Award for Excellence in Conservation

Single Family Dwelling & Laneway Infill Housing (Completed 2020)

2021 | Sustainable Architecture & Building Magazine (SAB) - Canadian Green Building Awards: Residential (Small) Award

2023 | Ontario Wood WORKS! 2023 Wood Design Award

University College Revitalization (Completed 2021)

2021 | Canadian Interiors Magazine - Best of Canada Award

2021 | Architectural Conservancy of Ontario - Peter Stokes Restoration Award: Large-Scale/Team/Corporate

2021 | Ontario Library Association - Library Architectural and Design Transformation Award

2022 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award

Robarts Common (Completed 2022)

2022 | Canadian Institute of Steel Construction Ontario Steel Awards for Excellence in Steel Construction – Renovation and Retrofit Projects

Schwartz Reisman Innovation Campus West (Completed 2023)

2022 | Ontario Concrete Awards - Architectural Merit

2023 | PCI (Precast/Prestressed Concrete Institute) Design Awards: Best Higher Education / University Building

2023 | Urban Toronto - Best of 2023: Winners of the 10th Annual Urban Toronto Year-End Poll: 20-24 Storeys

2024 | Society of American Registered Architects, New York - 2024 SARANY Awards – Design Award of Honor

2024 | 2024 AIA Tri-State Conference Design Awards: Excellence Award

2025 | AIA New York - Design Awards: Educational - Merit

2025 | Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design - American Architecture Award: Schools and Universities & International Architecture Award: Schools and Universities

2025 | Society of American Registered Architects - National Professional Design Awards: Award of Merit

2025 | The Plan Awards - The Plan Awards: Education, Shortlist

2026 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award

FitzGerald Building Revitalization (Completed 2024)

2025 | Heritage Toronto - Heritage Renewal for Academic Innovation

Landmark Project (Completed 2024)

2023 | Canadian Architect - Photo Award of Excellence

2025 | City of Toronto - Urban Design Awards: Award of Merit, Large Places and/or Neighbourhood Designs

2025 | METROPOLIS Planet Positive Awards - Winner: Landscape

2025 | The Architect’s Newspaper - 2025 Best of Design Awards: Higher Education—Recreation & Leisure

2026 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award Finalist

Ziibiing Indigenous Landscape (Completed 2024)

2024 | AIA Canada Society - 2024 Design Awards: Award of Merit - Community-Engaged Category

2025 | City of Toronto - Urban Design Awards: Award of Excellence, Small Open Spaces

2026 | Ontario Association of Architects - Design Excellence Award Finalist

Lawson Centre for Sustainability, Trinity College (Under construction)

2025 | Holcim Awards - Holcim Foundation Awards 2025: Best Practice in Sustainability Design: Regional Winner North America

Academic Wood Tower (Under construction)

2019 | Canadian Architect - Award of Excellence

New Academic Building at Woodsworth College (Under construction)

2021 | Canadian Architect - 2021 Award of Merit

Potential Development Site Opportunities

Looking ahead, the identification of potential future development sites signals a commitment to ongoing strategic renewal, balanced intensification, and an adaptive and evolving campus while recognizing the potential emergence of new priorities and development sites, academic needs, partnerships and opportunities over time within a responsive planning context.

Potential Development Site Opportunities (2026)

NORTHWEST QUADRANT

NW-1

371 Bloor Street West

NW-2

Spadina-Sussex Block

NW-3

160-162 St. George Street

NW-4

44-56 Harbord Street

NW-5

Spadina-Glen Morris Block

NW-6

Sussex Mews

NW-7

Huron Sussex Infill Housing

NORTHEAST QUADRANT

NE-1

90 Wellesley Street West

NE-2

84 - 90 Queen's Park Crescent

NE-3

90 Devonshire Place

NE-4

65 Prince Arthur

NE-5

246 Bloor Street West

NE-6

35 Charles Street West

NE-7

730 Yonge Street

SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

SW-1

487, 563 Spadina Avenue

SW-2

215 Huron Street,
19 Ursula Franklin Street

SW-3

25 Harbord Street

SW-4

100 St. George Street

SW-5

50 St. George Street

SW-6

College-Spadina Block

SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

SE-1

88-100 College Street

SE-2

200 College Street

SE-3

5 King's College Road

SE-4

12 Queen's Park Crescent West

SE-5

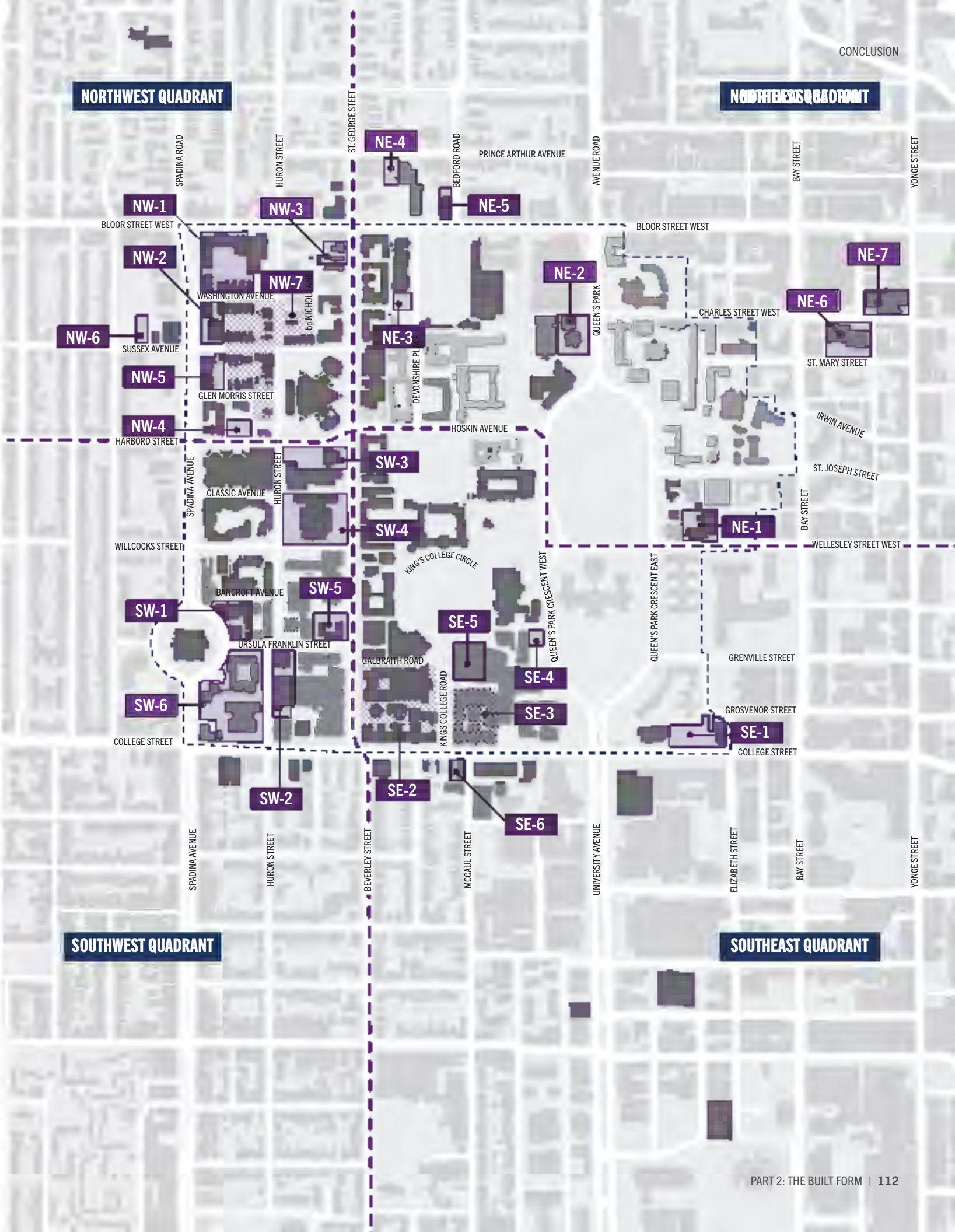
1 King's College Circle

SE-6

167-171 College Street

Potential Infill Development Opportunity Area (2026)

Ultimately, Part 2 provides a framework that balances continuity and change, enabling innovation and transformation and supporting the evolution of a more cohesive and legible campus fabric, one that enhances campus life and fosters academic excellence.



The St. George Campus is envisioned...



...to evolve into a connected and cohesive environment within the City.



Inside Roberts Library. Photo by Johnny Guatto.



UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO

University Planning

University Planning, Design & Construction

ST. GEORGE 2040

University of Toronto St. George Campus Plan
Part 2: Built Form

Summer 2026 | updc.utoronto.ca

COVER IMAGE:

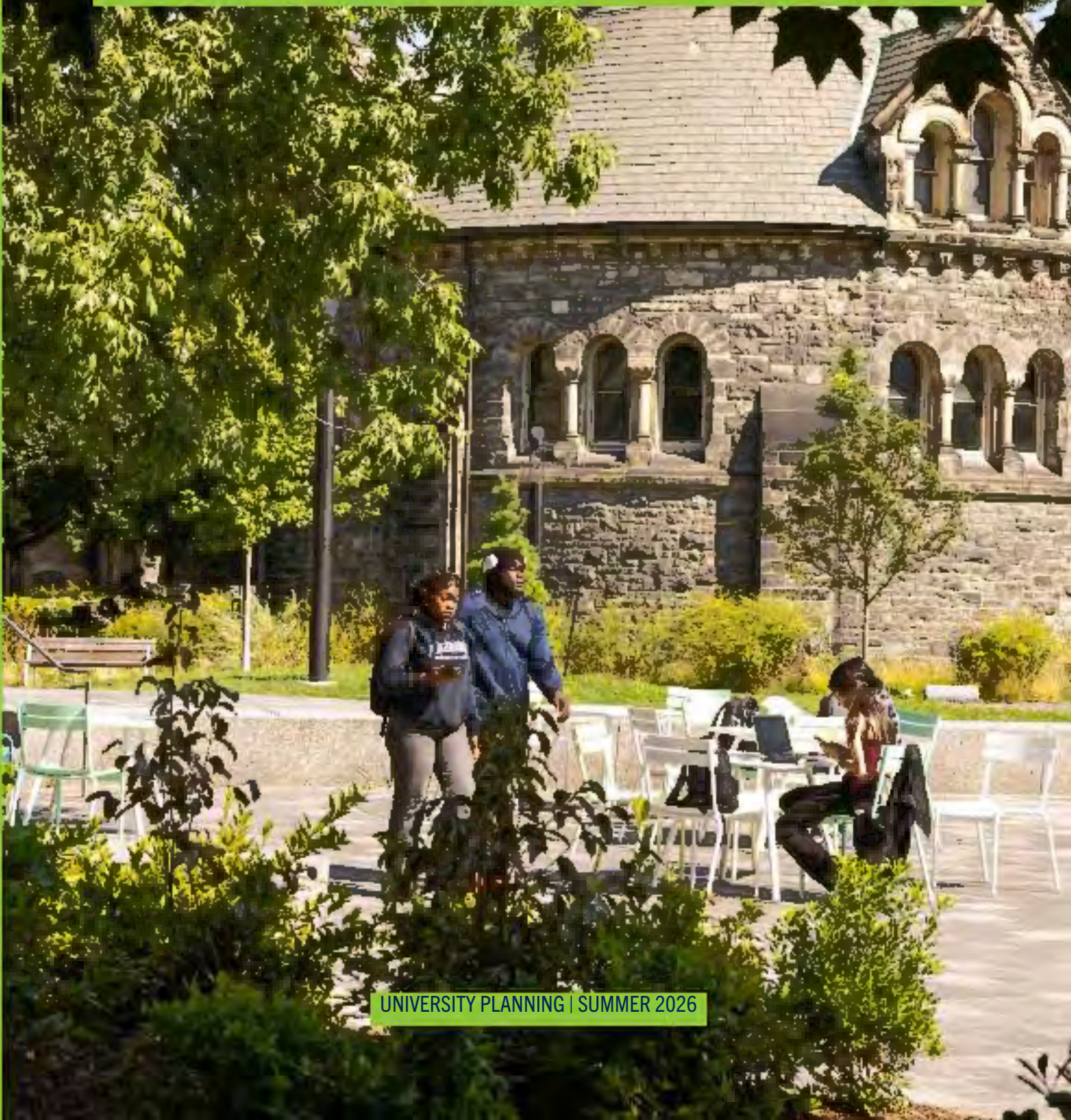
Interior photo of the Daniels Building at One Spadina Crescent. Photo by Daniels Faculty of Architecture, Landscape & Design.

ST. GEORGE 2040

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ST. GEORGE CAMPUS PLAN

PART 3

PUBLIC REALM

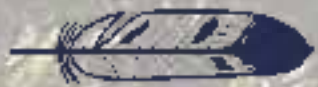


UNIVERSITY PLANNING | SUMMER 2026

Public Realm Team

WEST8

ERA



level

ARUP

ST. GEORGE 2040

PART 3: PUBLIC REALM

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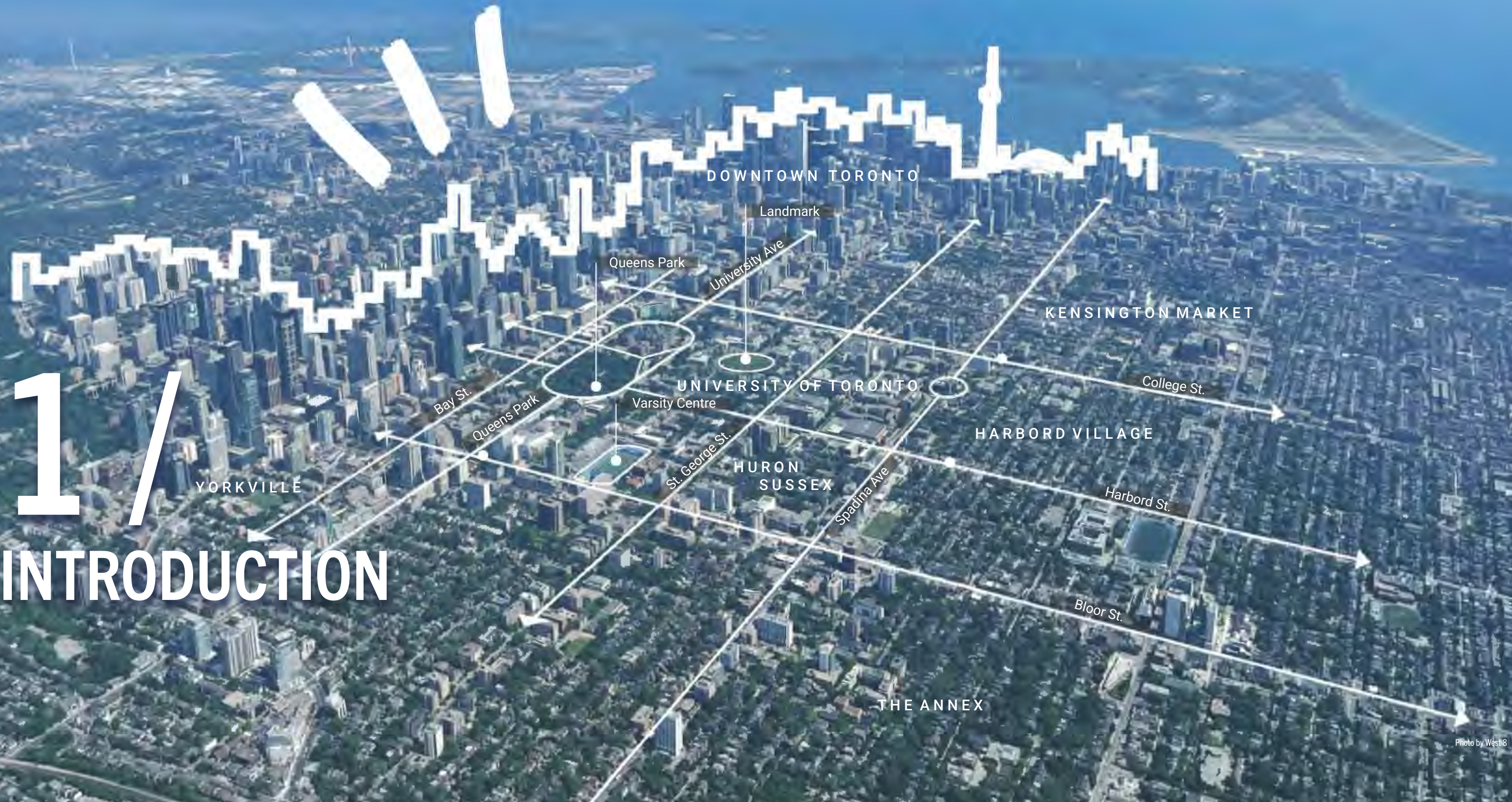
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Parts 2 and 3 are grounded in the framework established in Part 1 – articulated through the Campus Plan Vision, Guiding Priorities, Driving Values, and the Structure Plan – to advance University priorities through a cohesive approach to future campus evolution.



IMAGE
St. George Street in autumn foliage. Photo by Daria Perevezentsev.

1/ INTRODUCTION





The Context

Past & Present

Rooted in its ravine-and-ridge landscape and embedded in downtown Toronto's urban core, the University aims to unify its campus into a world-class, cohesive public realm.

Overview

The University of Toronto St. George Campus' urbanity and unique mix of landscape qualities are the source of its strength and identity, and starting point for the public realm vision for the campus.

This region has been inhabited and visited by Indigenous Peoples for thousands of years before European colonial settlement due to fertile soils, productive vegetation and wetlands, and favourable position at the crux of important waterways and portage routes. It has rich Indigenous histories woven on the land as well as through cultural practices, philosophies and oral language traditions.

The UTSG campus is situated on two unique topographic histories: the *Ishpadinaa* ridge which represents a high point with a view to the Lake, and the former Taddle Creek, both part of Toronto's larger defining landscape identity as a woodland and ravine city on the lakefront.

The campus also encompasses a moderate portion of downtown Toronto, strongly bounded by the

primary grid network of Spadina-Bloor-College on three sides, and the significantly higher density to the east at Yonge Street. Urbanism is in U of T's blood, and all the major faculties at the St. George Campus benefit from the University's top location and proximity to partnership organizations which also serve to attract top talent from around the world.

Originally conceived of as a green, landscaped sanctuary within the City, the campus is home to a large number of existing, high quality, cherished open spaces. However, as the campus expanded through waves of development, road widening, and tree disease, the pedestrian connectivity and overall cohesiveness of the campus as a whole has been slowly eroded over time.

This 2040 campus public realm vision is born from the campus' site-specific histories and qualities. It takes a design-based approach to specific sites to demonstrate a cohesive response to how the campus public realm can be unified and elevated into one of world-class quality.



IMAGE ABOVE
The original 1828 King's College Park boundary (green area) was a strong and visible pedestrian campus identity that contrasted with the growing city surrounding even up until the 1930's.

The Historic Picturesque Landscape

While Toronto developed as a largely unplanned city during the 19th century, the emerging University of Toronto campus was an exception. Stately tree-lined boulevards, a picturesque park-like setting shaped by the meandering course of *Ziibiing*, and a fine-grain pedestrian network established it as a place of civic gathering and respite.

As the University grew, successive master plans reinterpreted this character. William

Mundie's campus-in-the-park vision positioned University buildings as focal points within a picturesque landscape, while Bryant Fleming's Beaux-Arts scheme introduced formal tree-lined avenues that brought visual order and prominence to key structures.

This character continued during the early 20th-century expansion eastward with the affiliation with the Federated Colleges. Development over time removed parts of the street grid and created walkways and courtyards that complemented Victorian and Edwardian architecture and reinforced continuity with the original campus.





IMAGE ABOVE
St. George Street
(1969). Photo from
University of Toronto
Archives.

The Legacy of Modernism

The post-war planning period in Toronto brought a number of car-centric developments to the entire city, and the campus was no exception. The mid-century expressway era planned for a number of extreme car dominated environments as a reflection of efficiency and progress. The Spadina Expressway - although never built, thanks to activism from the local community including urbanist Jane Jacobs - left a lasting impact on the campus in the row of buildings with their backs turned to Spadina Avenue. The resulting extremely wide and simply landscaped

‘aprons’ anticipated the harshness of a future expressway. Street widenings took place along Harbord and St. George Street, furthering segmenting the newly acquired western half of the campus from the picturesque historic and eastern cores. These cores themselves were also bisected by new wide roads along Queen’s Park Crescent and Wellesley Street.

Although visions to transform the western campus into a number of buildings connected by a field - the original Latin root of the word ‘campus itself’ - the car-oriented city grid was never transformed and comprises much of the public space fabric still visible on the campus today.



“... The principle of interconnected spaces providing a totally pedestrian campus has been lost by the crossing of St. George and must be re-established...”
- St. George Campus Master Plan - 1965





IMAGE ABOVE
Eric Trussler, Cutting down of old Elm tree near University College, June 26-27, 1961. Photo from University of Toronto Archives.

The Birth of Urban Forestry and Urban Ecology

While streets were being radically widened to make way for cars that demanded more asphalt over green space and trees, a wave of climate induced sickness further decimated the mature tree canopy that had long defined the campus public realm. In the 1960's, Dutch Elm Disease, a deadly fungus spread by beetles, swept through both the city and the University, which had been known for its distinguished collection of Elms. Almost all were lost, and many remaining trees were treated with technologies such as DDT, later understood to cause long term ecological harm.

The loss of the Elms, growing awareness of the cascading effects of pesticides, and a new systems based approach to understanding the campus landscape helped spur the emergence of a new discipline on U of T soil: Urban Forestry, coined by Forestry professor Erik Jorgensen. At the same time, Michael Hough—founder of the University's Landscape Architecture program—was pioneering a model of urban landscape design rooted not only in aesthetics but in urban ecology, biological processes, and long term planning. 'Urban Forestry,' as an oxymoronic term has had a lasting impact on contemporary design and tree management in cities worldwide.



University of Toronto Archives
Eric Trussler, Spraying trees outside University College | April 11, 1961

“I believe in the necessity of cities as sentinels of global-regional change, and the need to characterize them as urban landscapes. Ecology is urbanization and urbanization is ecology.”

- Michael Hough



University of Toronto Archives
Eric Trussler, Cutting down of old Elm tree near University College | June 26-27, 1961



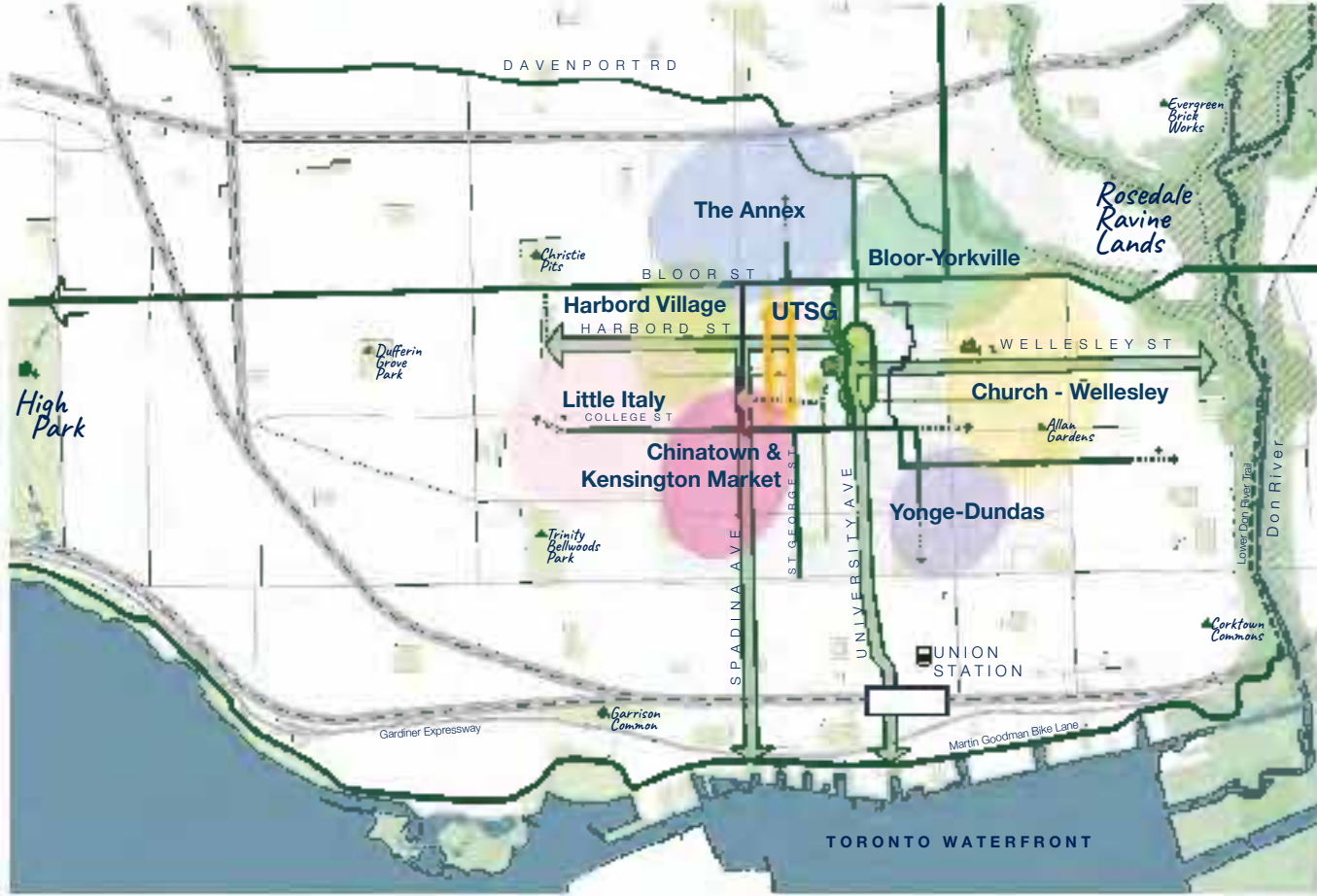
University of Toronto Planning Office
Draft Master Plan, St. George Campus | 1965

“If we plan intelligently, someday, we city people may live and work in a park setting with woodlands for recreation easily accessible to all. That's the promise of urban forestry.”

- Erik Jorgensen



Toronto Daily Star, October 16, 1971
‘The Man who wants to turn Toronto into a Forest’ | 1971



City within a City

Toronto is often characterized as a ‘city’ of neighbourhoods, each with their own distinct multi-cultural composition and eclectic mix of architecture, food, and 24/7, 365 culture. To attend UTSG is to be part of the City of Toronto and all it has to offer.

Campus-goers speak fondly of the campus’s proximity to the bustling Chinatown, Kensington Market, and Baldwin Street to the south and west; the charm of the Annex, Koreatown, and Little Italy to the north and west; and, along Bloor Street, iconic cultural institutions such as Koerner Hall, the Royal Ontario Museum, and the Gardiner Museum leading into the chic Bloor–Yorkville district to

the north and east. They also value the vibrant Church–Wellesley neighbourhood to the east, as well as the Yonge Street corridor and health-science districts to the south and east. Served by both Line 1 and 2 of the TTC and the College and Spadina streetcar lines, it is also extremely accessible by transit.

As one of the largest land owners in the downtown core, the neighbourhood ‘University of Toronto St. George Campus’ is home to a diverse population of students, faculty, and staff, that thrives throughout both the academic year and the summer months. One goal of the public realm vision is to distinguish what makes the campus itself a distinct and special destination neighbourhood, both for the academic community and for Torontonians and visitors at large.

IMAGE
UTSG is a primary neighbourhood flanked by iconic destinations in Toronto’s downtown core.

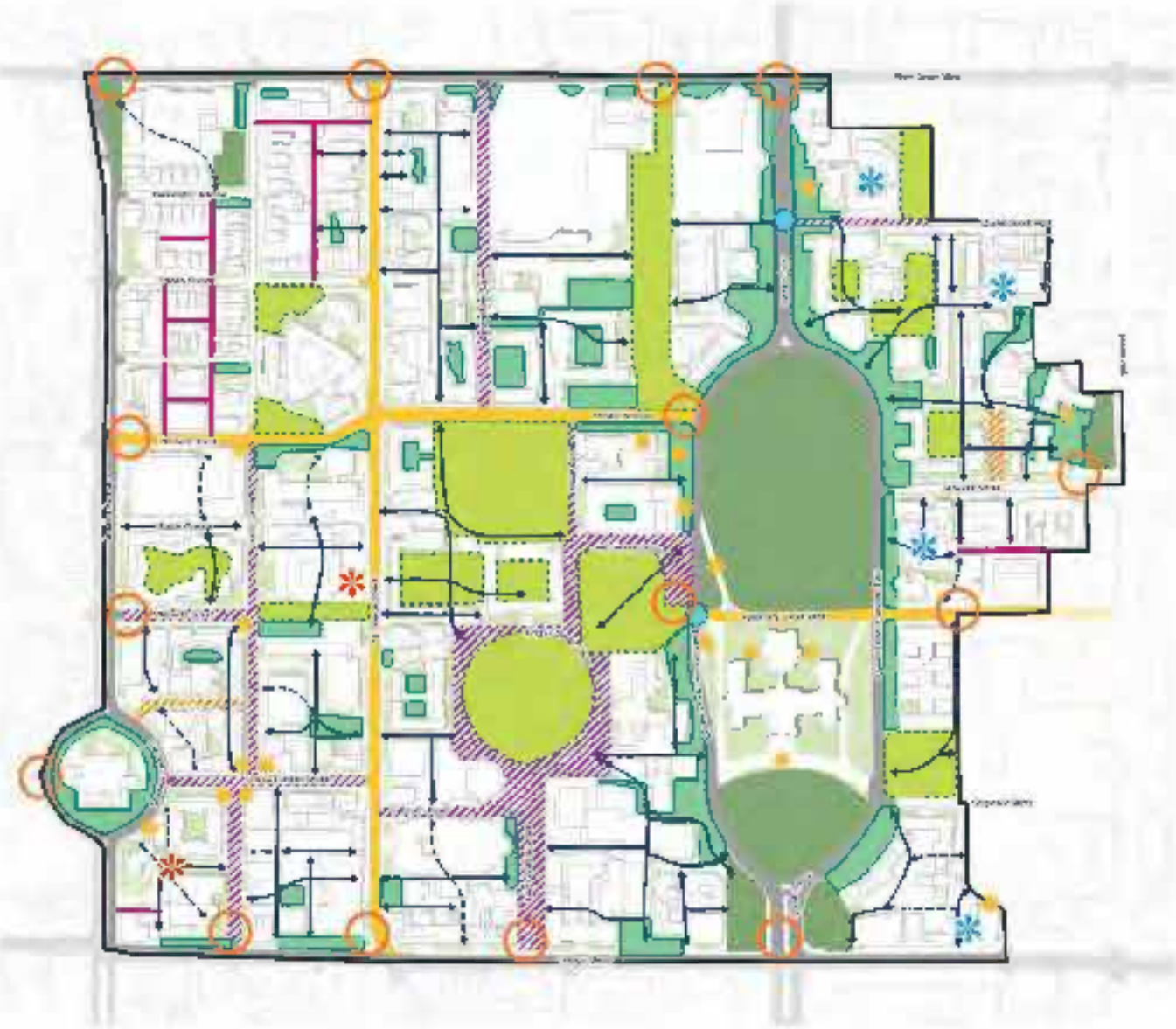


IMAGE ABOVE
The public realm components from the University of Toronto St. George Campus

Building on the Secondary Plan: Greening the Campus Grid

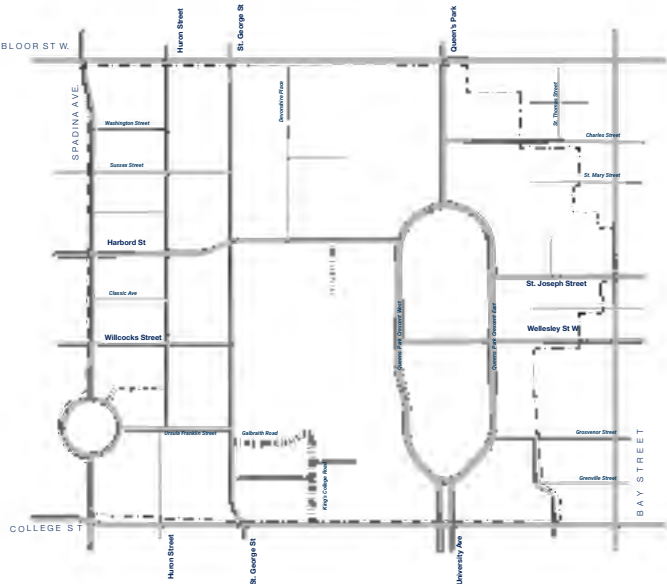
The public realm components mapped in the St. George Campus Secondary Plan present a comprehensive re-classification of the types of existing and proposed open spaces for the campus.

The public realm vision contained within builds on the classifications within this plan using a design-based approach to illustrate and materialize a vision for the public realm that is suitable to guide the development of outdoor spaces on campus for the next 15 years and beyond.

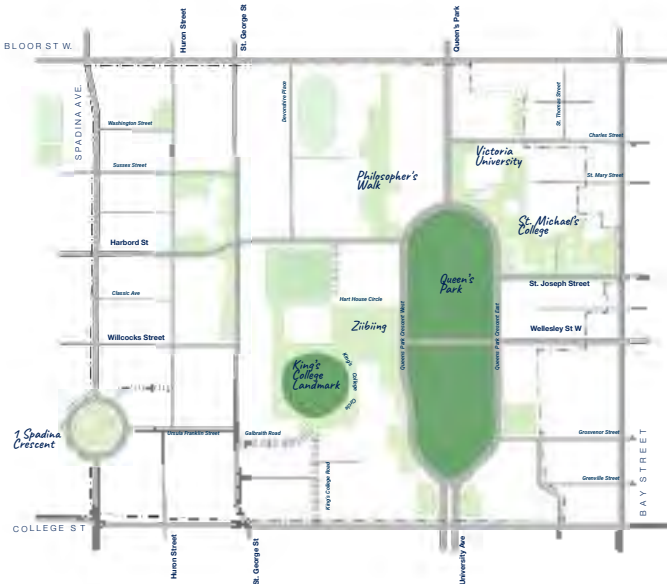
One key aspect is the transformation of the grid of vehicular-dominated streets into green, pedestrian friendly shared street spaces to better knit together the West Campus. This approach builds on the success of the recently completed transformation of King’s College Circle Landscape of Landmark Quality and *Ziibiing*. A further emphasis on the fine-grain connectivity of pedestrian oriented spaces between, and within buildings is also a distinct characteristic that will contribute to the success of the future campus feel and experience.



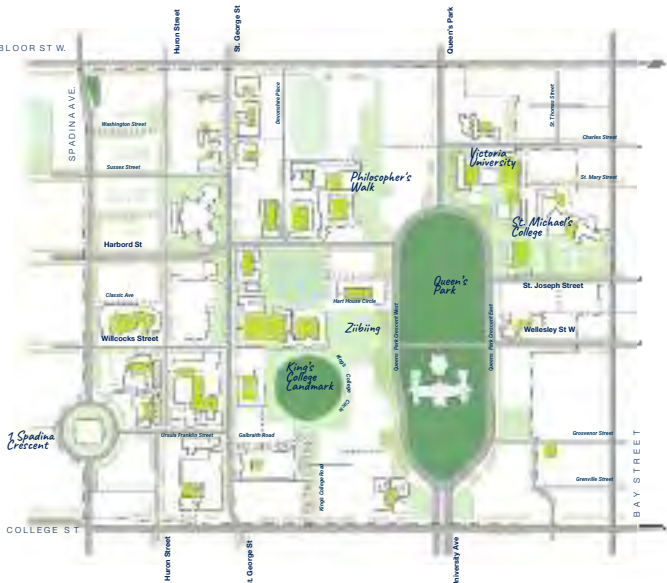
Photo by David Lee



Urban Grid



Open Space Green Patchwork



Campus Quads & Passages



Urban Forest

Campus Qualities

Today's Landscape Character

Building on the existing site-specific qualities of the St. George Campus to create a strong public realm presence and elevate the campus experience year-round.

Overview

The existing landscape typologies, character, and morphology form the foundation on which the 2040 public realm vision builds. These four interwoven layers encapsulate the qualities of the existing campus that are the best of both worlds: urban and green.

Urban Grid - the strong, bounding street network of Toronto is essential for underground utilities, servicing, and mobility around the campus where it meets the city. Namely, the West Campus is structured around a prominent street grid as backbone.

Open Space Green Patchwork - high quality and iconic open spaces that are mainly concentrated in the central and eastern parts of campus. King's College Circle, *Ziibiing*, Queen's Park, Philosopher's Walk, the athletic fields, and One Spadina Crescent. The West Campus is characterised by landscaped

'aprons' or street setbacks, that function primarily as decorative rather than inhabitable or performing landscapes and often underperform even in that role.

Quads and Passages - nestled in the heart of courtyard buildings and inner blocks, the campus is home to a number of beloved quads and passages of a smaller scale that are places of respite, contemplation, and community. Removed from the main streets, one discovers these green oases hidden behind facades or between buildings which create a calmer microclimate and fine grain pedestrian tissue.

Urban Forest - home to a collection of more than 3,000 trees, the campus' urban forest is a living system that operates in four dimensions, including time and seasons. The canopy signifies the role of the campus as a climate-resilient cooling-island and central park for downtown Toronto.





IMAGES ABOVE
Successional forest
planting at Governor's
Island, New York.
Photo by Timothy
Schenck Photography.

UoT's Campus as
a Living Lab (CLL)
ongoing initiative to
advance sustainability
on campus.

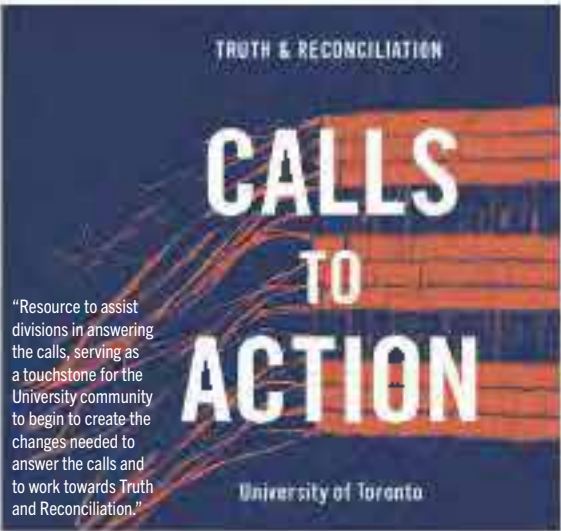
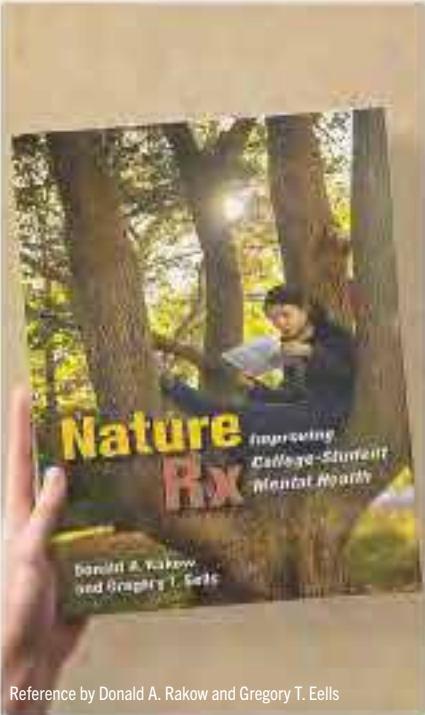
**Nurturing a Landscape for
Long-term Success: Ecological,
Cultural, Social Wellbeing**

In the 21st century, urban areas are facing more frequent seasonal pressures of climate change. Extreme weather events are becoming more common in Toronto, including drier, hotter summers and more extreme wind and rain events. A greener, more climate-adaptive public realm will be paramount to the campus' success, to ensure comfortable outdoor environments through all seasons.

Improved soil quality, more biodiversity and life, more green stormwater management, and nurturing of a successional urban forest all take a land-based approach to education and stewardship that align with Truth & Reconciliation Calls to Action - healing and learning through the land. An environment where people feel connected to nature and seasons contributes directly to the health and wellbeing of the staff, faculty, students, and the broader campus community on campus. Future generations will in turn carry these environmental values with them into their roles as the leaders and researchers of tomorrow.



Community-based tree inventory, monitoring and stewardship planning program. Developed by UoT faculty



Where Public Life + Meets Urban Ecology

IMAGE

The Public Realm Plan blends both animated public life and passive, ecological landscapes. Photo by Johnny Guatto (left) and West 8 (right).

Public Realm Vision Seven Generations Urban Forest

A seven generations approach is rooted in a place's unique history, acknowledges the challenges and demands of the present, and considers future generations in plans for the future.

Overview

The overarching public realm vision is rooted in a seven generations approach (an Indigenous way of thinking), that acknowledges the role of the urban forest on campus as the catalyst for public space improvements and change.

The University of Toronto's Latin motto is *velut arbor ævo* - 'may it grow as a tree through the ages.' Applied to the public realm of the uniquely urban and green St. George Campus, the motto inspires how the campus may grow as an urban forest through multiple generations. Campuses, like cities and forests, are places of exchange as an outcome of proximity and containment. They are well-connected and cohesive systems that are based

on an exchange of ideas, sharing of resources, and cross-pollination. They are complex ecosystems home to a diversity of life and activity - with an understory rich with food, life, and social well-being.

The 2040 Public Realm Plan envisions long-term transformation of the campus public realm where the legacy of urban forestry is cherished and made visible. Through planning, investment, and stewardship, each public realm improvement on campus should add value by improving the soil and water, increasing sustainability and ecological performance, and encouraging engagement with nature and with each other. Public realm projects should be looked at holistically and not as stand-alone, disconnected open spaces.

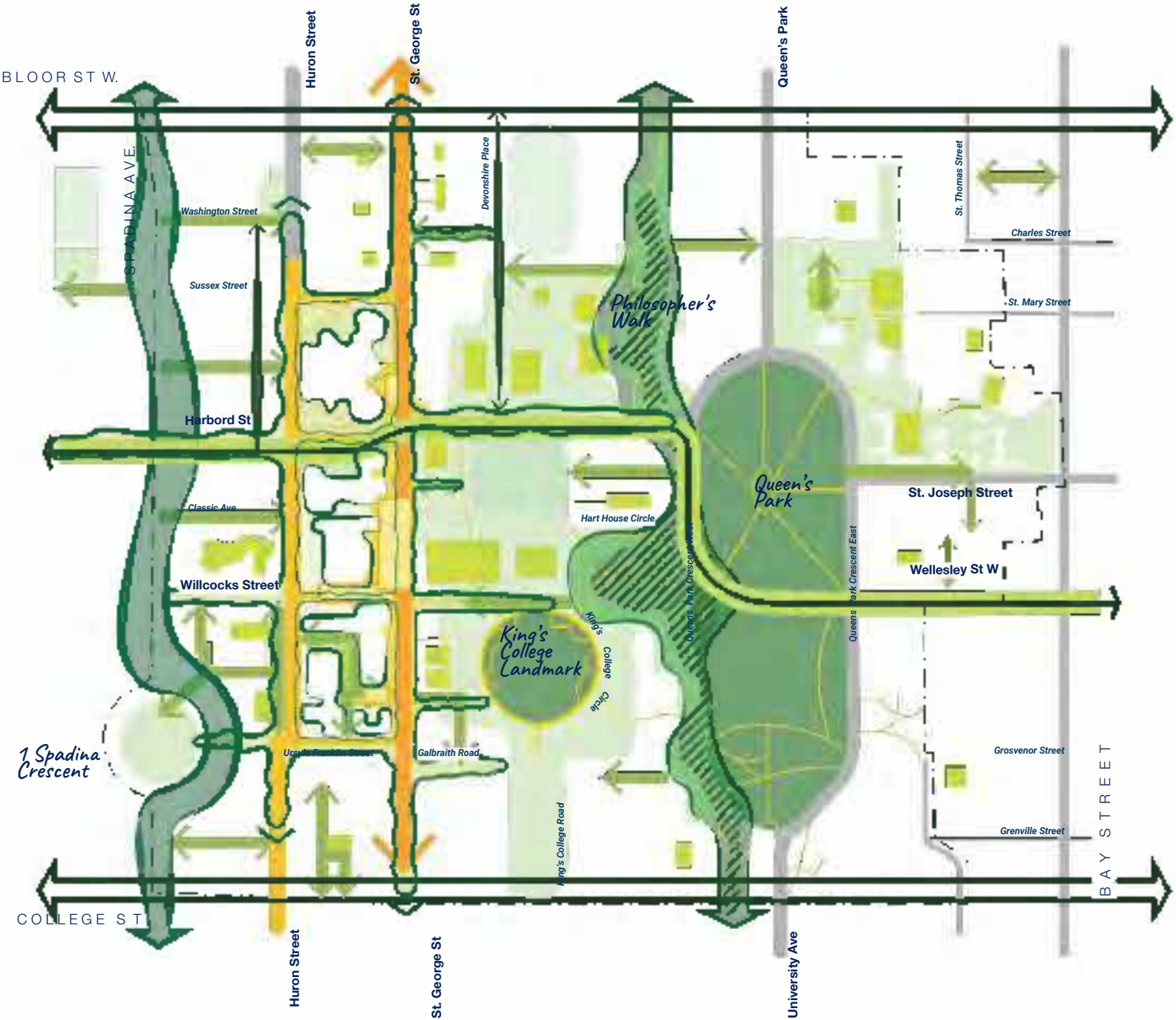


IMAGE ABOVE
All Public Realm Gesture Diagrams illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

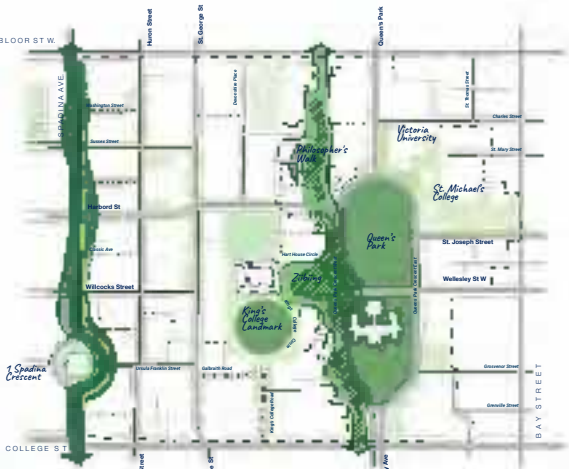
The Public Realm Gestures

The design vision of the Seven Generations Urban Forest is translated into three large-scale gestures - Land Rejuvenation, Fine-grain Connectivity, and a Flexible Forum - that guide the conceptual designs for the St. George campus public realm. These gestures translate the open space typology diagram from the Secondary Plan into legible spatial concepts that operate on a campus-wide scale.

Layered together they provide a comprehensive design-based framework illustrating the intended look, feel, and landscape character of the campus.

Just like ongoing campus development, landscapes are naturally dynamic and evolving. The framework offers an indicative simulation, where not all open spaces depicted are expected to remain unchanged in the future.

The 3 Bold Public Realm Gestures



01/
Land Rejuvenations



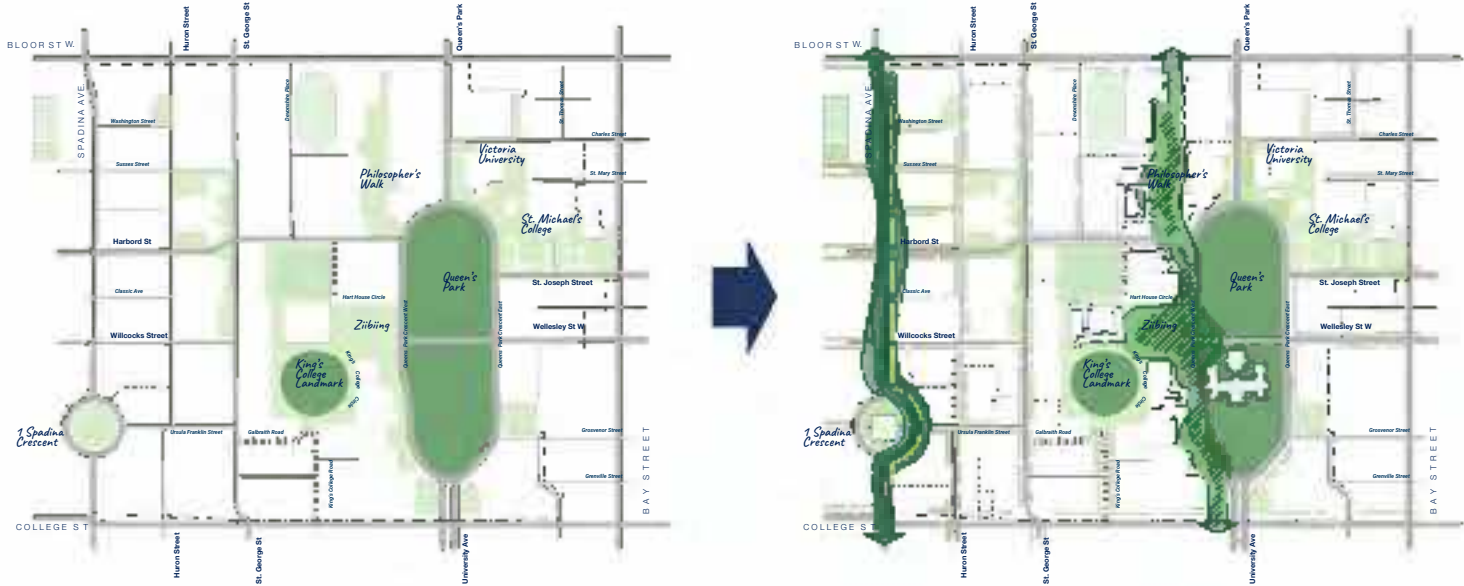
02/
Fine-grain Connectivity



03/
Flexible Forum



Photo by Ken Jones



From green patchwork

To N-S corridors that stitch together the legacies of ravine, ridge, & forest

IMAGES ABOVE
All Public Realm
Gesture Diagrams
illustrate the potential
of the public realm
and are not intended
to represent final
or literal design
proposals.

01 | Land Rejuvenation

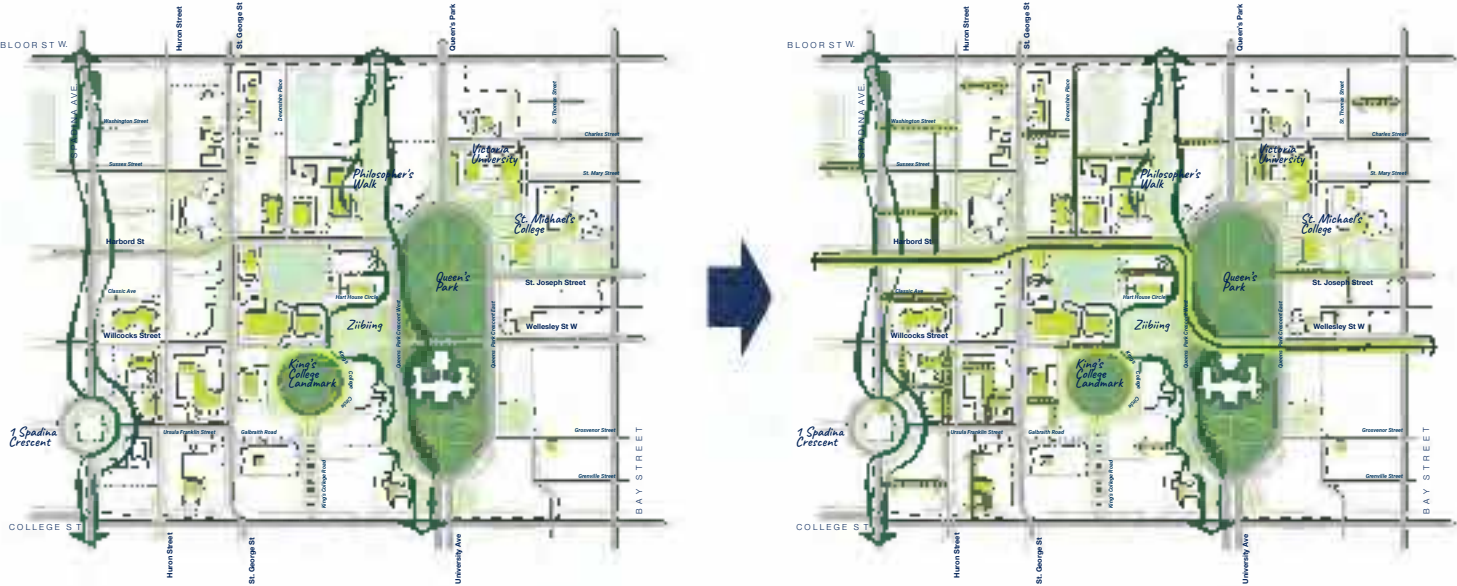
The first public realm gesture comprises two large scale green corridors that together acknowledge the historic topographic features of the campus. They aim to address the disconnect created by Modernist road-widening, introducing bold north–south green corridors that provide barrier-free pedestrian connection and ecologically-functional, re-naturalized landscapes.

Along Spadina Avenue, the *Ishpadinaa* (Ojibwe) corridor envisions an upgrade of the

landscaped ‘aprons’ to create an immersive landscape experience with shade, comfortable microclimate, and integrated Indigenous knowledge and art as the ‘western welcome’ to the campus.

The University Park project envisions a stitching together of Philosopher’s Walk, Queen’s Park and the Queen’s Park North Revitalization, *Ziibiing*, and Landmark, together into a continuous, ecological corridor characterised by integrated stormwater management, habitat creation, and educational opportunities - fostering connectivity for both people and wildlife.





From isolated campus quads To a connected, inclusive network

IMAGES ABOVE
All Public Realm
Gesture Diagrams
illustrate the potential
of the public realm
and are not intended
to represent final
or literal design
proposals.

02 | Fine-grain Connectivity

The second public realm gesture aims to introduce a high quality, fine-grain pedestrian network that celebrates and connects the existing campus quads, predominantly in the east-west direction.

By enhancing the quality of public realm between buildings, mid-block passages connecting different campus blocks become beautiful places to walk between classes or meet. These landscaped passages connect intuitively to the permeable and public

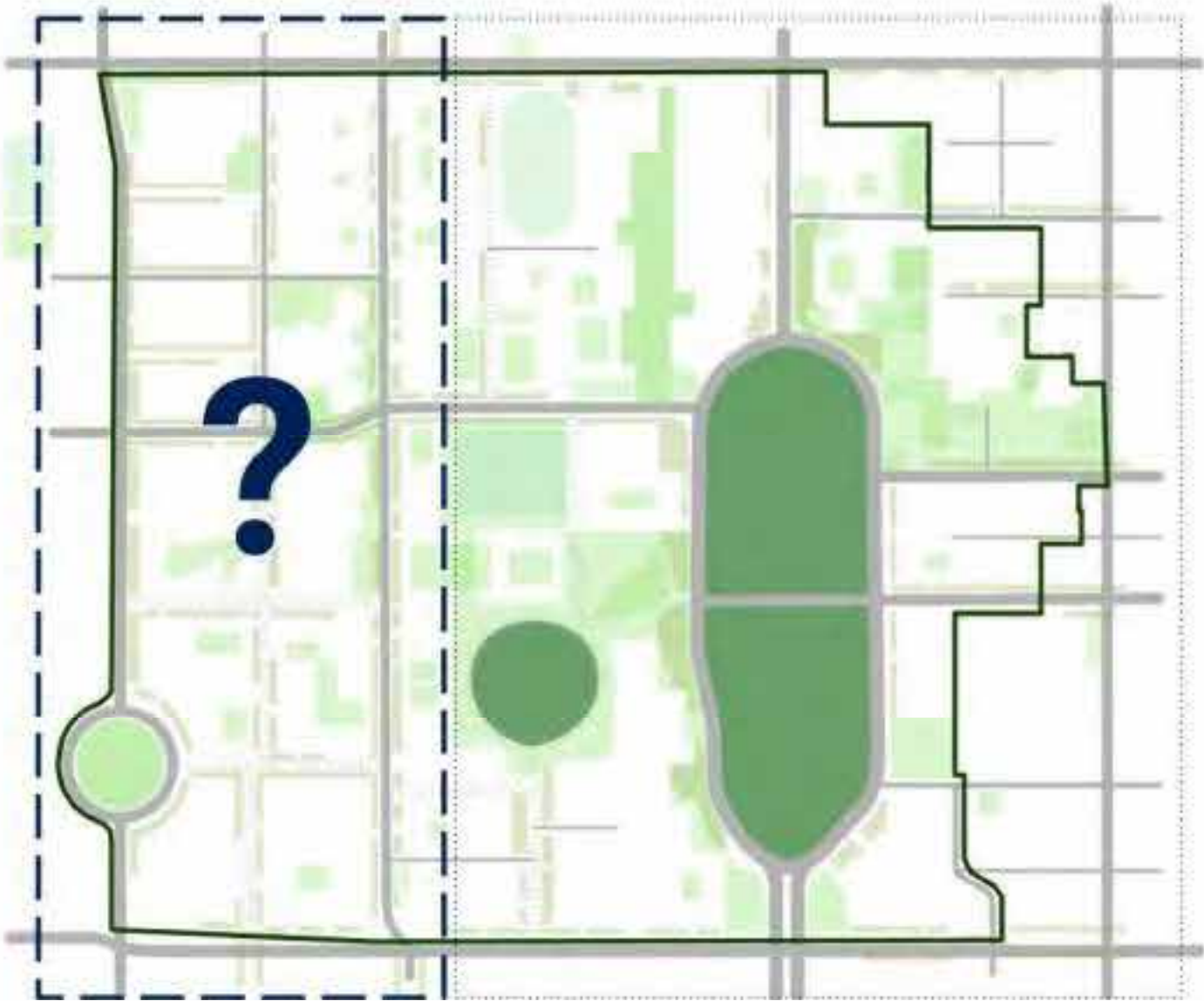
ground floors of adjacent buildings to create a seamless and logical network of indoor-outdoor routes across campus which provide sheltered routes in the winter. Upgrades to existing quads and ground floors of adjacent buildings (such as connecting the cafeteria of a residence to the outdoor space) will also increase indoor-outdoor connection and sense of social life.

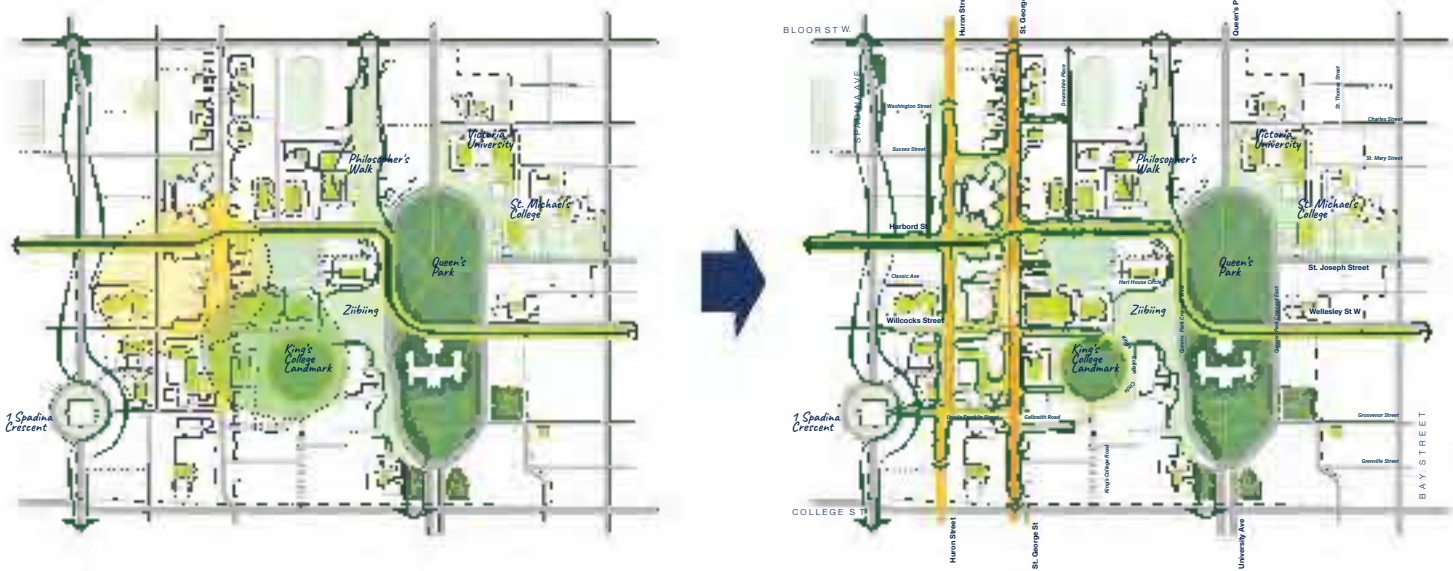
Enhancements to the main east-west cycling corridor of Harbord Street / Hoskin Avenue prioritize cycling as a welcome mode of transportation and getting from one side of campus to another.



Cloister, Knox College, Toronto.
Photo permission granted by Knox College - UoT Photo by Trinity College - UoT

The New Cohesive & Recognizable Identity for the West Campus and its Edges





The unique opportunity for a complimentary campus duality

To an interwoven network of vibrant, flexible public spaces

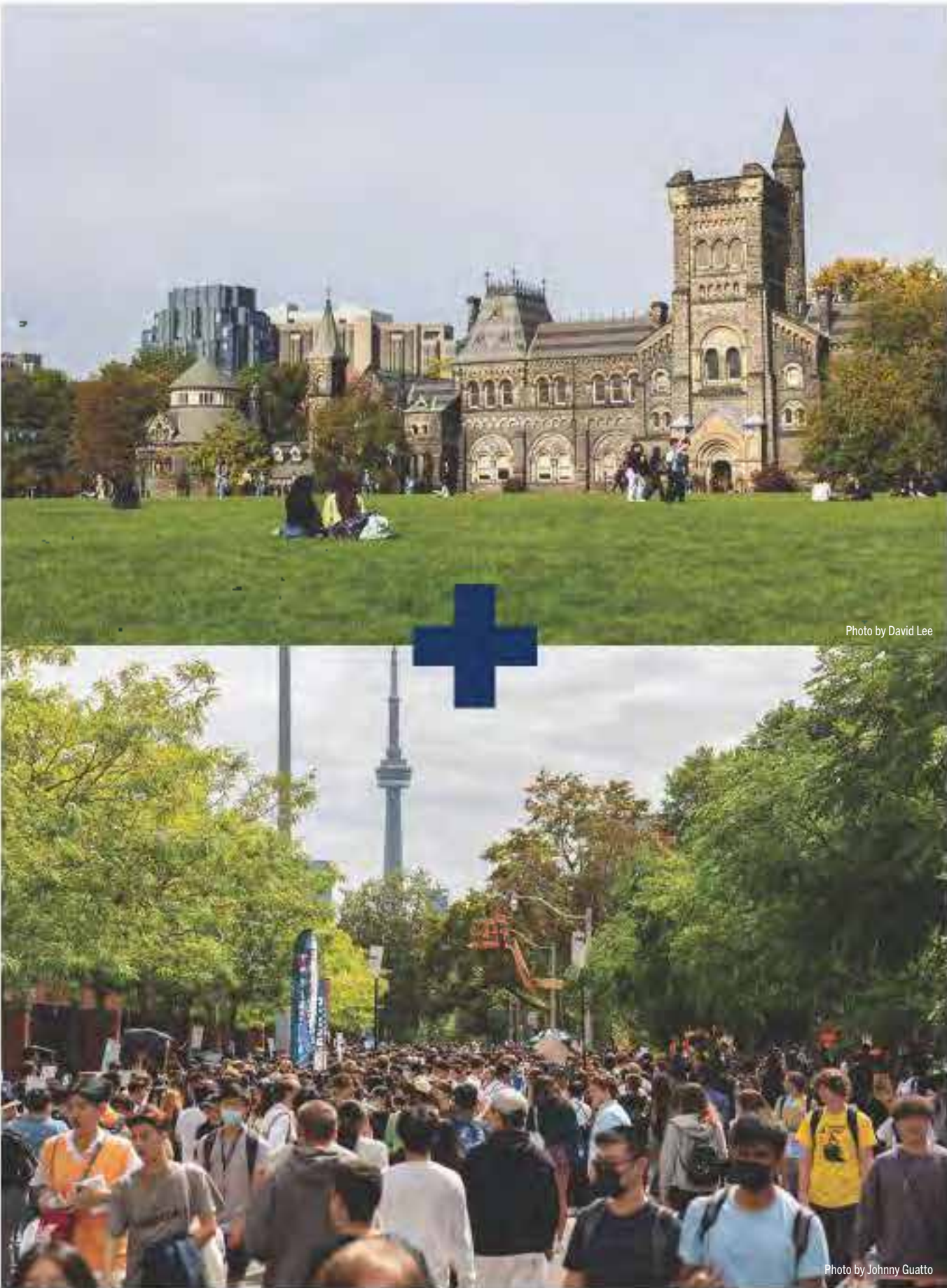
IMAGES ABOVE
All Public Realm
Gesture Diagrams
illustrate the potential
of the public realm
and are not intended
to represent final
or literal design
proposals.

03 | A Flexible Forum

The third public realm gesture envisions a new identity for the public realm in the West Campus that is based on the transformation of the existing car-dominated street grid into a green, shared-street environment where pedestrians and cyclists are prioritized. From building facade to building facade, the transformed St. George Street, Huron Street, and Willcocks Street form the backbone of an active, urban campus core. These people-first streets will be characterized by high quality

material and planting palette, and more balanced street profiles.

Together, the transformed streets and public spaces around the Campus Hub and Robarts will form an interwoven urban district whose epicenter is a predominantly hardscaped plaza coupled with a revitalized Campus Hub. The Flexible Forum (plaza + shared streets) is a place where debate, expression, food, and public programming activate the public realm year-round. This complements and contrasts the more passive, ceremonial green heart of King's College Circle.



Showcasing Toronto as a Four-season City.



IMAGE ABOVE
All artist impressions illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

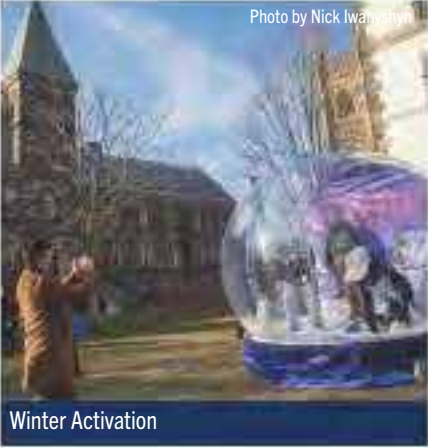
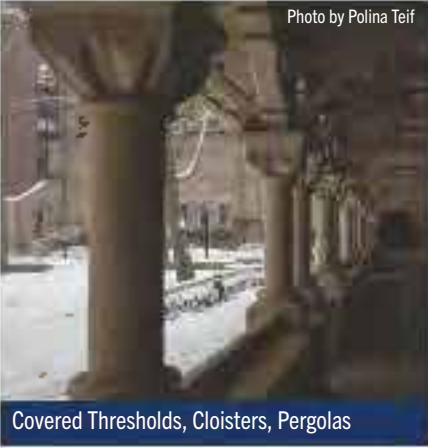
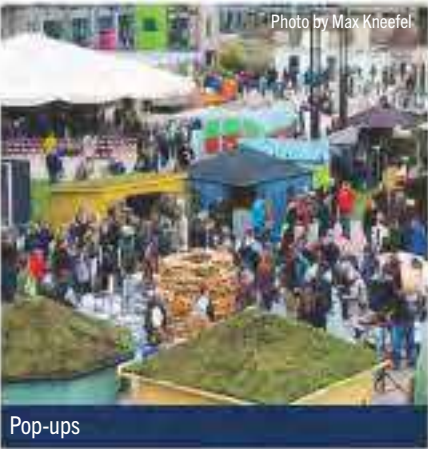
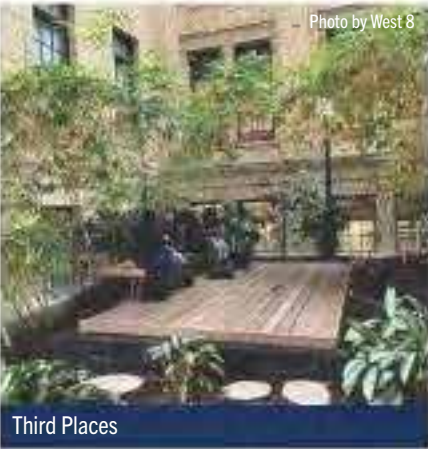
The Campus Hub in winter activation.

All-season Campus

Toronto is a four-season city, and the academic year on campus takes place primarily in the fall, winter, and spring. Thoughtful seasonal design can enhance the campus’s appeal while supporting mental, physical, social, and overall health benefits for the university community, as well as for visitors and users throughout the summer. As such, public realm designs should reflect year-round use, with special attention to the shoulder seasons and winter, considering the following key principles:

- Provide a variety of areas to sit and gather, ranging from direct sun exposure to dappled shade to full shade. Position a mix of deciduous and coniferous trees to help buffer winter winds, allow sunlight to reach the ground in shoulder seasons, and provide shade in summer.
- Offer a variety of seating materials that provide different tactile experiences throughout the seasons. For example, dark stone warms quickly in the shoulder seasons but can become too hot in direct sun, while wooden slats are suited to sunnier areas where they will not remain wet.

- Create mixed planting palettes with noticeable seasonal interest in at least three seasons. Consider winter interest in maintenance regimes by leaving seed heads or dried flowers unpruned until spring.
- Integrate snow storage areas adjacent to pathways, such as within furnishings zones or on top of planting beds that are not used during winter months.
- Choose raised planter edges and durable furnishings that can withstand winter snow maintenance. Robust edges also reduce erosion onto pathways and lower long-term maintenance.
- Install temporary warming huts and engaging light art in select locations to activate the public realm during the darkest months of the year.
- Recognize that winter movement across campus often involves a combination of indoor and outdoor routes through the ground floors of neighboring buildings. Design sites in this broader context so that primary winter routes are fully accessible, intuitive, and seamless.
- Accommodate winter pop-up activations in key locations, such as the Campus Hub (e.g., winter market) and Devonshire Place (e.g., temporary curling rink in the outdoor sports area).
- Integrate canopies, arcades, and covered porticos at main building entrances to provide outdoor transitional spaces for gathering and shelter.



*Opportunity of an All-season Public Realm:
Seasonal Programming for St. George*



Ice Sculpture

*Holiday
Market Stalls*

Festive Lights

*Food Truck
Vendors*

*Seating
Area*

Music Booth



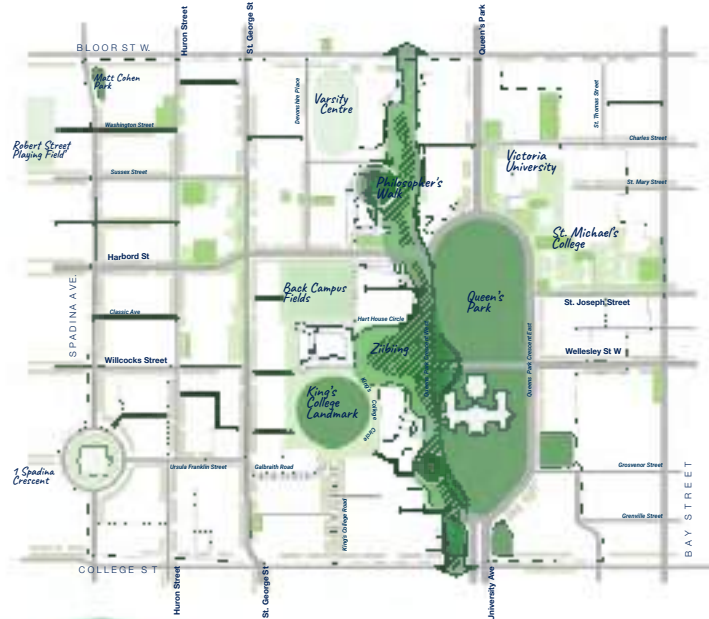
2/ PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK & DEMONSTRATION SITES

Envisioning the Public Realm Opportunities:
Campus as a Seven Generations Urban Forest

The Public Realm Opportunity Plan diagrams and corresponding Demonstration Sites are intended to illustrate the long-term potential of the campus public realm as it evolves over the coming decades, anchoring its transformation in the University's 21st-century values. They present an aspirational framework to guide future development, rather than prescribing specific or literal design solutions.



1 /
Living Lab Testing Grounds



2 /
Large-scale Green Corridor



3 /
Connected Network of Quads



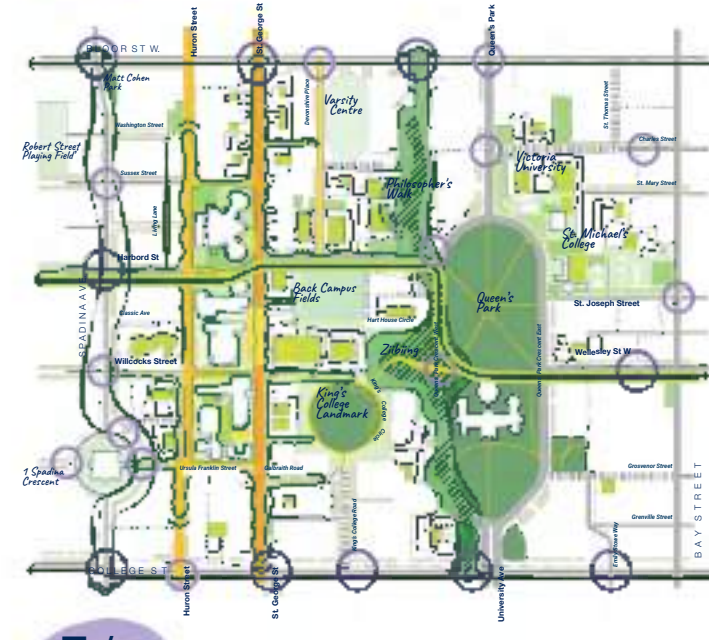
4 /
Animated Campus Core



5 /
Public Life Metabolism



6 /
Indigenous Teaching



7 /
Welcoming & Inclusive Thresholds

Demonstrating the Public Realm Potential:
Demonstration Sites tied to Public Realm Gestures



Campus Address / Urban Destination Street | St. George Street



Ecologically-focused Shared Street | Huron



Campus Hub | Willcocks Commons + Sid Smith Plaza



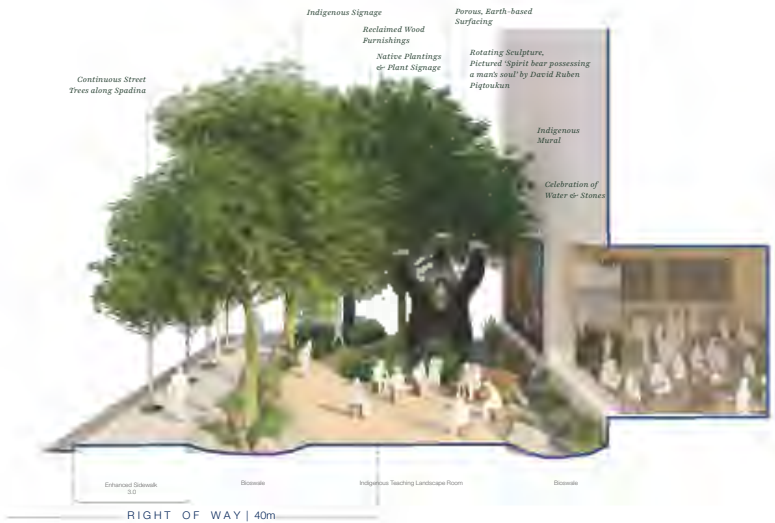
Active Promenade | North Devonshire Place



Passive Promenade | South Devonshire Place



Choreographed Passages | Midblock Breaks



Ishpadinaa Teachings | Spadina Avenue



Welcoming Thresholds | College Street

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

1 / Living Lab Testing Grounds Public Realm Opportunity

Advancing the University of Toronto's Living Lab Initiative by integrating expanded environmental research strategies into the public realm, campus-wide.

Overview

The University of Toronto's Living Lab Initiative is a sustainability-focused experiential learning and research program that turns the University's physical campus into real-world laboratories for innovation and problem-solving.

The initiative engages students, faculty, staff and external partners to co-create, test and implement solutions to pressing environmental and social challenges by leveraging existing campus infrastructure, data and operations as research and demonstration spaces. Deliverables from these projects — from reports to implemented recommendations — contribute to ongoing campus planning and sustainability efforts and help build a knowledge base for future research and action.

Building on this approach, the Public Realm Plan aims to make Living Lab Initiatives more visible

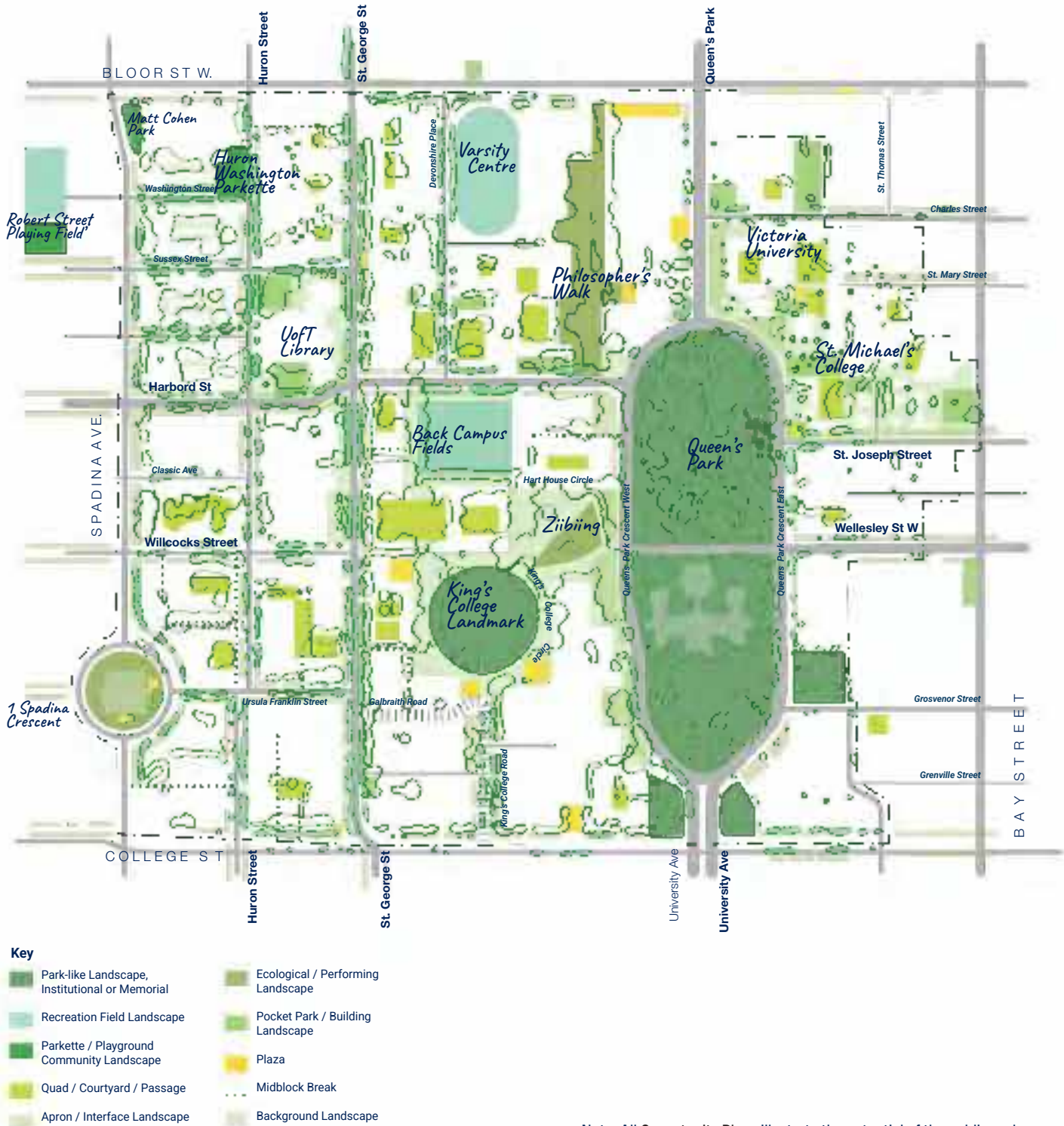
and integrated within the campus's open spaces. By showcasing environmental strategies and research projects directly in public areas, the plan seeks to put the work of students and faculty front and center, turning everyday campus spaces into living examples of innovation and environmental stewardship. This approach not only highlights the University's commitment to research-driven sustainability but also encourages engagement, learning, and collaboration across the broader campus community.

Advancing this vision will require intentional and curated University stewardship. Campus lands are not open or available for any and all activities; rather, they must be strategically managed to ensure alignment with institutional priorities, spatial coherence, and long-term performance of the public realm.

IMAGE

Community harvesting the land together at Maximapark, The Netherlands. Photo by West 8.

Living Lab Testing Grounds



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.





IMAGE ABOVE
Flat landscape 'aprons' under mature tree canopy offer canvases for testing grounds. Photo by Diana Tyszko.

Testing Grounds within an Urban Forest

The Public Realm Plan identifies both physical potential sites for testing and conceptual topics for future implementation. Building on this, the Living Lab has two complementary components:

Campus-wide, long-term, University-led environmental strategies, including vegetation tagging and monitoring as well as climate data collection, to establish ongoing datasets that

support long-term ecological success.

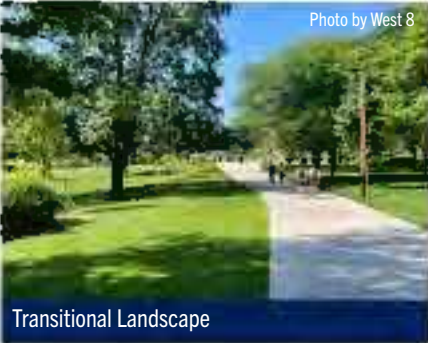
Specific 'test sites' across campus designed for temporal projects or in conjunction with individual research initiatives. These projects support individual research that advances the University's mission and vision, with basic infrastructure such as water, electricity, and security provided to enable effective research. In addition, some test sites may evolve into long-term, campus-wide public realm initiatives or inform future development sites over time.

Living Lab Strategies & Recommendations

Consider the following guiding principles to inform Living Lab Initiatives:

- **Assessment & Monitoring**
Prioritize environmental assessment and monitoring, such as tree and understory inventories, tagging, long-term ecological monitoring, and weather and climate data collection across the campus. Create reliable shared knowledge bases of existing plants and animals on campus to inform landscape management and plans for the future.
- **Education & Signage**
Cultivate interpretive environmental tour circuits that share land-based stories, Indigenous teachings, and water and tree narratives, developed in collaboration with University groups and classes. Promote educational signage highlighting innovative environmental practices deployed throughout the public realm.
- **Indigenous Research**
Prioritize campus-wide Indigenous research, incorporating culturally significant plantings, foods, and practices.
- **Environmental Stewardship**
Promote environmental stewardship through engagement, such as a 'Friends of the Campus' program, environmental tours, and trained landscape maintenance volunteer groups.
- **Soils**
Prioritize soils research and improvement through pilot projects conducted on-site, at sister campuses, or in partnership with other sites.
- **Environmental Research**
Curate environmental research to be tangible and year-around at the ground plane, such as accessible greenhouse programs and seasonal installations.

IMAGE BELOW
Existing public realm sites identified for potential Living Lab implementation.



Transitional Landscape



Midblock Green Passage



Landscape 'Apron'



Grove



Ecological Landscape



Quad

Showcasing the campus’s public realm
Living Lab opportunities.



Tree Tagging / Monitoring



Rain Collection / Recycling



Social Sustainability



Research Garden & Soils Pilots



Weather Monitoring



Environmental Learning & Tours



Research Greenhouse



Stormwater Demonstration & Monitoring

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

2 / Large-scale Green Corridor Public Realm Opportunity

Rejuvenating the land and expanding the legacy of Taddle Creek by breaking down infrastructural barriers and restoring pedestrian connectivity to Queen's Park and beyond.

Overview

Taddle Creek once ran through the center of UTSG's campus, long before the surrounding city was fully urbanized. Originating from a natural spring located along the ancient Lake Iroquois shoreline, the creek flowed southward to Lake Ontario, carving shallow ravines and sustaining wetlands that shaped the early topography of the area. In the nineteenth century, as Toronto expanded, the waterway was gradually channelized and buried to make way for roads and development, becoming part of the city's storm sewer system. Yet, its imprint remains legible in the contours of the land.

Today, Philosopher's Walk and the recently realized *Ziibiing* Project celebrate Taddle Creek's legacy by revealing its former topography and expressing the

presence of water in the landscape.

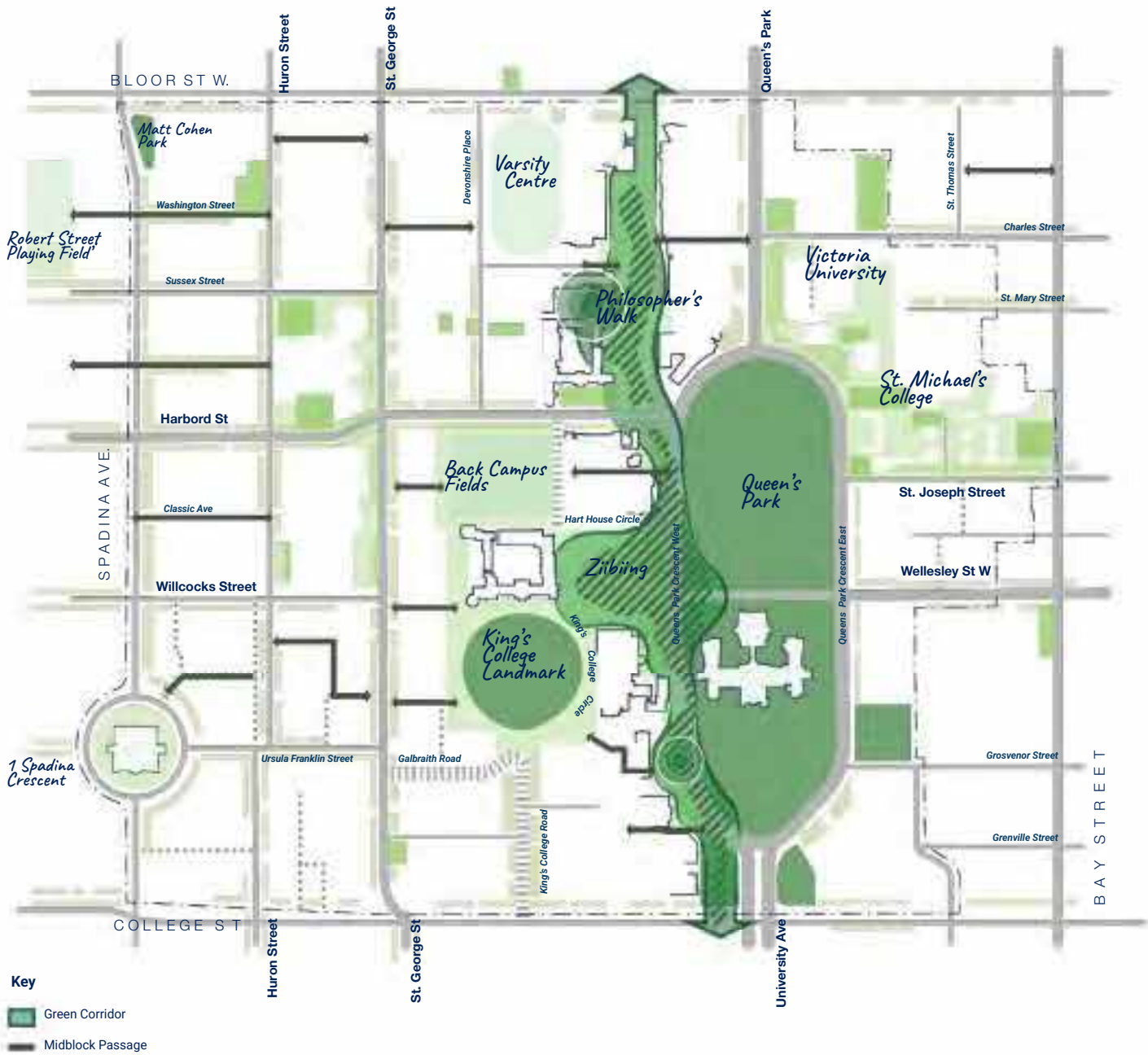
Building on this vision, the Public Realm Plan reinforces the University Park Project's ambition to restore the legacy landscape by returning Queen's Park Crescent West to people and habitat rather than prioritizing cars. By extending the landscape qualities of Philosopher's Walk south to College Street, Queen's Park and the East Campus will be reconnected to the Central Campus core through a safer, more comfortable, and continuous pedestrian experience.

This large-scale green corridor represents an important gesture not only for connectivity and breaking down hard infrastructural barriers, but also for creating habitat—fostering native biodiversity and supporting wildlife, such as birds and pollinators, within the downtown core.

IMAGE

The undulating landscape of Philosopher's Walk.
Photo by West 8.

Large-scale Green Corridor



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Transforming from car-dominated to people-focused, ecologically-renewed landscape.



3 / Connected Network of Quads & Passages Public Realm Opportunity

Strengthening the campus's fine-grain tissue through clear connections and accessible thresholds, creating a stitched network of human-scaled, inclusive open spaces.

Overview

The University of Toronto features a sublime patchwork of historic quads—primarily located in the Central and East Campuses—characterised by human scale, contemplative qualities, and a sanctuary-like landscape atmosphere. Despite their significance, these spaces are not easily perceived by the general public; they are often discovered only by those familiar with the campus.

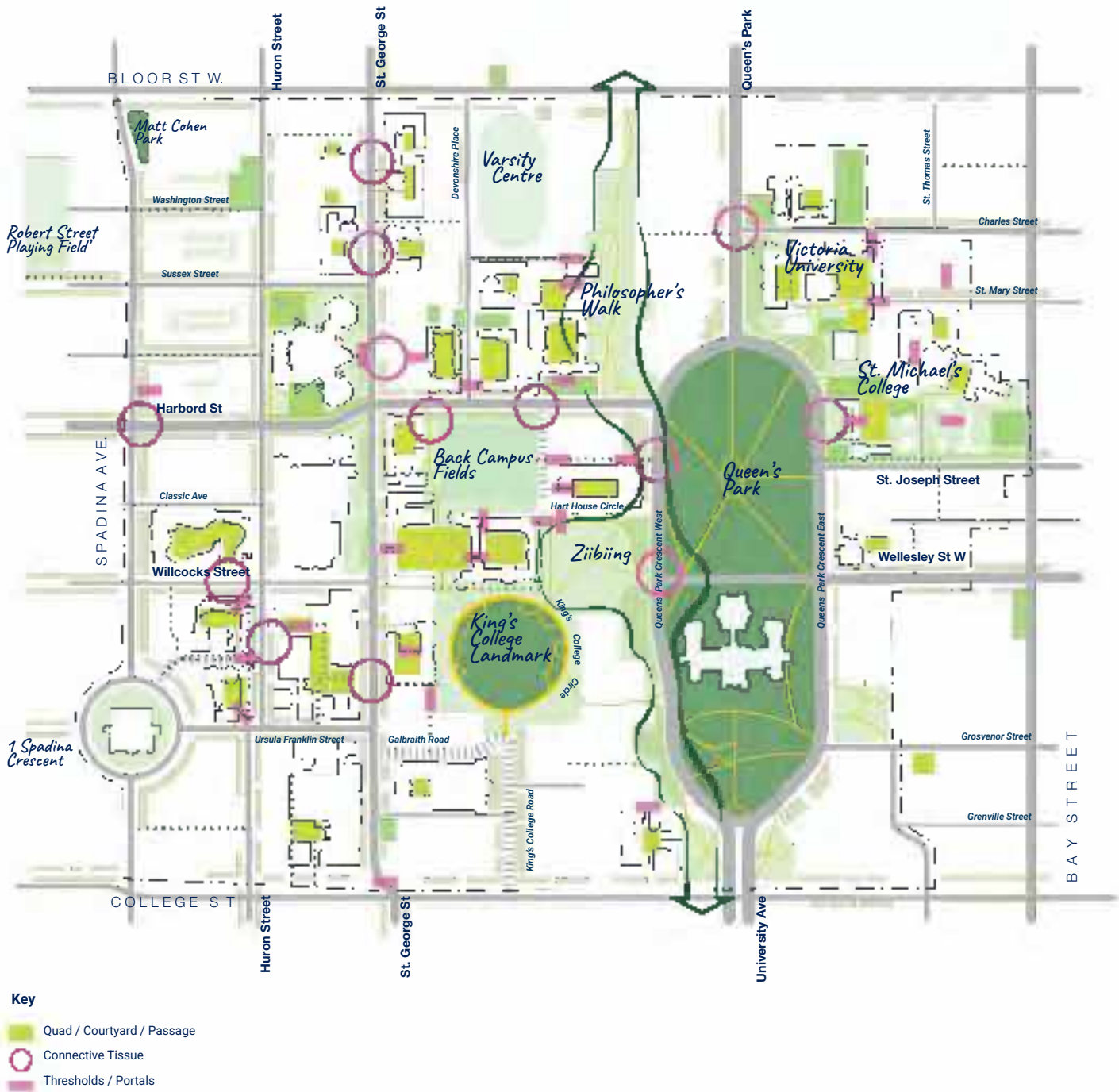
As some of the most beautifully open spaces on campus, the historic quads require only minimal physical intervention. Proposed updates will focus on aligning them with the University's 21st-century values, including accessibility, a sense of belonging, health and well-being, and the meaningful recognition of Indigenous presence.

As the campus expanded westward, its Modernist built form introduced midblock passages and courtyards, extending the network of interstitial, fine-grain connections. These spaces present the greatest opportunity for transformation. Here, targeted interventions can strengthen meaningful connections, improve human comfort, and introduce resilient greening strategies—repositioning these spaces as vital, high-performing components of the campus public realm network.

The Public Realm Plan seeks to make the campus's quads and passages more legible and welcoming, allowing for that sense of discovery in a more inclusive way—through enhanced thresholds, a stronger sense of arrival, and improved connections across this fine-grain network.

IMAGE
Students in Trinity College Quad. Photo by
Trinity College - UoT.

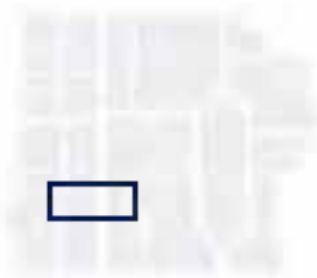
Connected Network of Quads & Passages



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



Revealing the West Campus’s fine-grain tissue by strengthening connections, visibility, and inclusivity.



KEY PLAN



Existing Condition Axonometric

Passage Scenography

On the West Campus, midblock passages such as the Lash Miller Davenport Courtyard and the Nona Macdonald Walkway provide important E/W pedestrian connections. The Public Realm Plan seeks to enhance the transitions between these spaces, creating a more cohesive and connected network of green corridors that support movement, ecological performance, and a legible campus experience.



KEY PLAN

Lash Miller Chemical Laboratories



McLennan Physical Laboratories

HURON STREET

Existing Condition Axonometric

IMAGE ABOVE
All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Lash Miller Davenport Courtyard

The Lash Miller Davenport Courtyard is a prominent midblock passage on the West Campus, distinguished by its varied characters—from groves and open lawns to a water feature and hardscape areas. The water feature is a special discovery on campus, adding a sense of delight and contemplation.

Today, the Courtyard faces acoustic challenges due to surrounding built-form infrastructure. The Public Realm Plan proposes targeted improvements to portions of the Courtyard while preserving its intimate, reflective atmosphere. In addition, the Plan proposes

greening and material strategies to mitigate acoustic impacts, allowing the space to function both as a circulation route and as areas for rest, study, and small gatherings.

Improvements to this site must account for existing infrastructure and programmed spaces beneath the Courtyard, as it is constructed on structure.

In this context, the courtyard serves as a prototype for future development, demonstrating how thoughtful design can successfully integrate greening strategies, enhance user comfort, and support passive programming within human-scaled outdoor spaces built over structured conditions.

Lash Miller Chemical Laboratories



McLennan Physical Laboratories

HURON STREET

Proposed Simulation Axonometric



IMAGE ABOVE
Artist impression of a re-envisioned Lash Miller Davenport Courtyard entry. All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Midblock Green Passages

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

- Welcoming, Intuitive, Accessible**
Establish welcoming, legible thresholds that create a clear sense of arrival and equitable access to building entrances. Support intuitive, human-centered wayfinding that is easy to navigate for all users.
- Greening & Habitat Connectivity**
Prioritize the greening of passages to support habitat connectivity and advance broader sustainability goals, emphasizing biodiverse landscape zones while accommodating circulation, maintenance, and operational needs. Respond to infrastructural conditions, including raised planters on structure and flush planting where on terra firma.
- Learning & Engagement**
While Green Passages are primarily used as circulation, design spaces to also support learning, community, and environmental education through passive study areas, outdoor classrooms where appropriate, living lab plots, research gardens, and campus community information displays.
- Microclimate & Comfort**
Mitigate noise impacts through coordinated built-form strategies and landscape-based buffering where feasible, including maximized vegetation, vertical planting, sound-absorptive planters, and acoustically responsive surface materials such as resin-bound gravel or decomposed granite. Employ shade structures, umbrellas, and expanded tree canopy in sun-exposed areas. Incorporate wind-blocking elements to reduce wind tunnel effects and promote comfortable, people-friendly conditions.



Nature-based Materials



Multi-layered Understory



Tree Canopy Connectivity



Outdoor Learning Spaces



Raised Planters



Seating Pockets





IMAGE ABOVE
New College Quad as an intimate courtyard for student life. Photo by Diana Tyszko.

Existing Campus Quads

Campus-wide, historic quads form the DNA of the University of Toronto, providing spaces that inspire exploration and discovery.

The Public Realm Plan recommends identifying strategic, minor improvements to help foster belonging for all users, reflecting the University’s 21st-century values of inclusion, sustainability, and social wellbeing.

Design interventions for improved connectivity and access could include improved signage, open-door policies, integrated and obvious

AODA access, and surface treatments that guide users to quad entries that will enhance legibility and create a stronger sense of welcome.

Importantly, interventions are intended to enhance clarity and accessibility without overwhelming or overcrowding the quads. The goal is to maintain their intimate, contemplative qualities while making them more legible, welcoming, and inclusive.

While a few quads are highlighted here, the campus contains a much broader network of these fine-grained, intimate open spaces.

Strategies & Recommendations

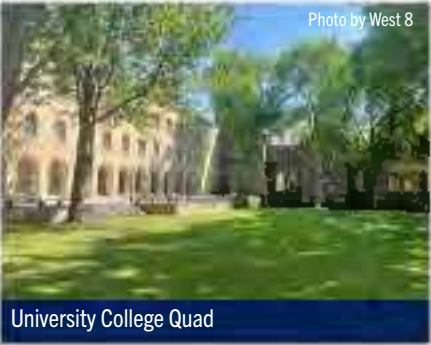
Consider the following guiding principles to inform improvements to existing conditions:

- **Intuitive & Inclusive Entrances**
Design entrances to be clear, welcoming, and legible, using signage, surface treatments, and gateways that signal access for all users. While some quads remain publicly accessible at all times, some have designated hours or restricted access for student safety.
- **Groundfloor Activation & Porosity**
Promote integration of ‘third places’ that support shelter, thermal comfort, and seamless indoor–outdoor interaction.
- **Indigenous Integration**
Incorporate Indigenous knowledge, art, and storytelling to honor local First Nations histories and relationships with the land. Reflect Indigenous presence in design features, materials, and programming.
- **Social Sustainability**
Create spaces that foster interaction, community, and well-being for all users. Use greening and sound calming strategies to enhance mental wellbeing.
- **Native Understory**
Prioritize native plants to support biodiversity, pollinators, and layered ecological richness.
- **Seasonal Interest**
Select plants and design elements that provide visual and experiential interest throughout the year. In residence-linked quads, prioritize evergreen plantings to support mental wellbeing.
- **Accessible Circulation**
Ensure all paths, ramps, and surfaces meet AODA standards and support mobility for all users. Integrate clear wayfinding, surface differentiation, and accessible connections.
- **Cohesive Furnishings & Elements**
Establish durable and flexible furnishings as a baseline to unify campus spaces, while allowing site-specific opportunities for unique elements giving individual areas distinct identity. Harmonize elements in design language, quality, and experience, supporting comfort, usability, and a variety of activities.

IMAGES BELOW
Matrix of some existing quads, campus-wide.



Trinity College Quad



University College Quad



Massey College Quad



Knox College Quad



Hart House Quad



Sir Daniel Wilson Residence Quad

Modifying the Quads to spark connection, champion inclusion, and embody the University’s 21st-century values.



Intuitive & Inclusive Entries



Groundfloor Activation & Porosity



Native Understory



Seasonal Interest



Indigenous Integration



Social Sustainability



Accessible Circulation



Cohesive Furnishings & Elements

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

4 /

Animated Campus Core Public Realm Opportunity

Activating the West Campus through human-centric street design—creating a welcoming, comfortable public realm that fosters campus life, connection, and accessibility.

Overview

The West Campus is strongly shaped by its surrounding streets, particularly Huron Street and St. George Street, which together unlock the potential of an animated campus core. Rather than being experienced as linear, vehicle-focused corridors, the Public Realm Plan envisions these streets transforming into a flexible form—an interconnected, intertwined network of public spaces where everyday life, gatherings, festivals, exhibitions, markets, freshly cooked food, music, and cultural displays can thrive.

All the public spaces from building front to building front become a vibrant stage for urban campus life: a place to meet, celebrate, and exchange ideas.

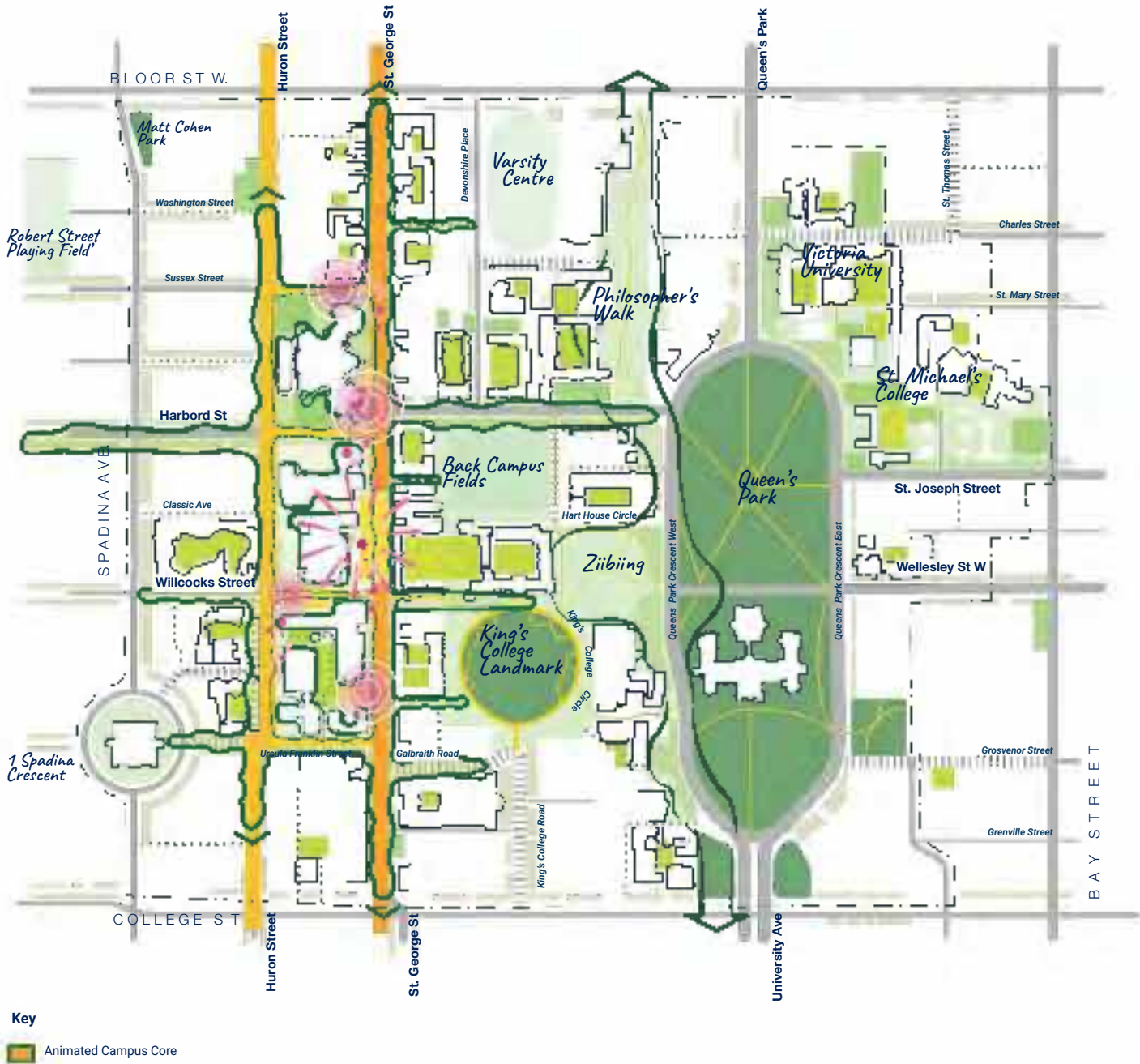
The built form should respond to this vision with porous, active groundfloor uses and thermal ‘third places’ that support comfort and lingerability in Toronto winters.

This dynamic and active public realm balances and complements the more passive and ceremonial green spaces of the recently completed Landmark Project in the Central Campus, creating a rich and harmonious tapestry of campus experience where movement, social life, and ecological design coexist.

IMAGE

Future transformation of Sid Smith as a new, animated Campus Hub. Photo by Lisa Lightbourn, David Lee.

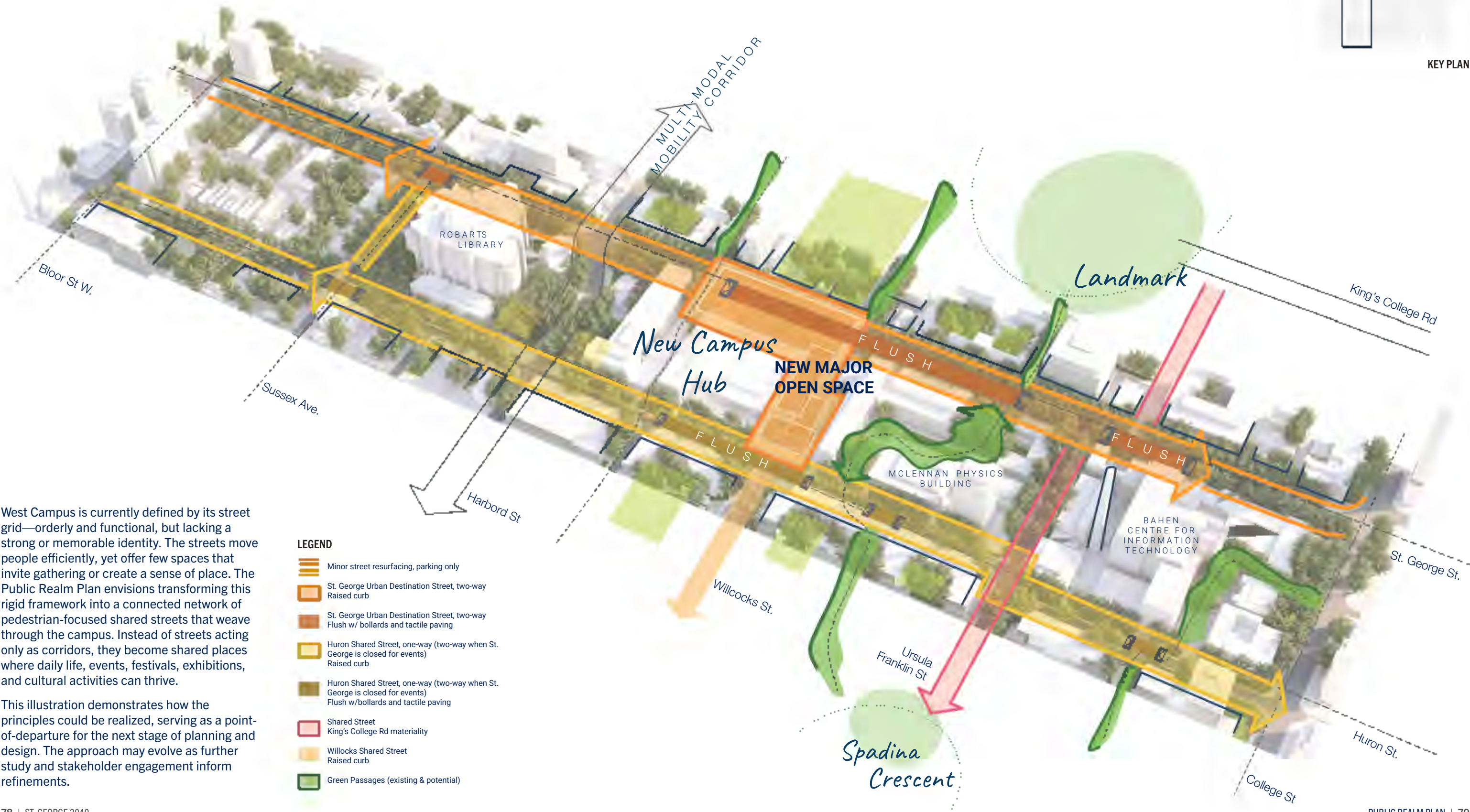
Animated Campus Core: The Flexible Forum



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



Transforming West Campus's Streets into Pedestrian-prioritized Network:
Huron Street + St. George Street work together



West Campus is currently defined by its street grid—orderly and functional, but lacking a strong or memorable identity. The streets move people efficiently, yet offer few spaces that invite gathering or create a sense of place. The Public Realm Plan envisions transforming this rigid framework into a connected network of pedestrian-focused shared streets that weave through the campus. Instead of streets acting only as corridors, they become shared places where daily life, events, festivals, exhibitions, and cultural activities can thrive.

This illustration demonstrates how the principles could be realized, serving as a point-of-departure for the next stage of planning and design. The approach may evolve as further study and stakeholder engagement inform refinements.

Urban Ecology-Focused
Huron Street



People-focused
St. George Street



IMAGE ABOVE
The duality of the two shared streets: ecologically-focused vs people-focused.

A Shared Street Network

Huron and St. George evolve together as a unified shared street network—each with a distinct yet complementary identity. St. George becomes the vibrant, people-first spine of campus life, designed to elevate the daily pedestrian experience and support the dynamic flow of students between major academic destinations. Huron, in turn, embraces a greener, more ecological character, reinforcing the network’s resilience and environmental performance while continuing to support essential access and operations.

Together, they prioritize walking and cycling, calm vehicular movement, and enable flexible use—from everyday circulation to campus events. Through thoughtful design interventions—such as reduced roadway widths, adaptable street profiles, and high-quality surface treatments—the streets transform into safer, more animated public spaces.

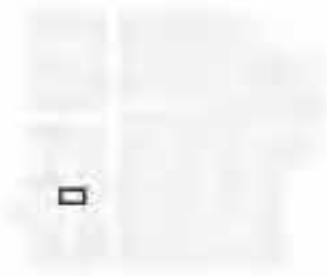
This coordinated approach creates a flexible, future-ready framework: one that strengthens campus connectivity, supports evolving operational needs, and reimagines the public realm as an active, inclusive, and responsive environment.



Proposed Illustrative Simulation Plan

Note: All Simulation Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

PUBLIC REALM PLAN | 81



KEY PLAN



Existing Condition Axonometric

IMAGE ABOVE
All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Huron Street

Huron Street, long perceived as a back-of-house service corridor, is envisioned to transform into a welcoming front-of-house address. Through the activation of building interfaces, new development, the introduction of prominent front doors, and a reimagined public realm, the street will shift from a space of passage to a place of presence. The existing ‘moat effect’—where buildings feel set apart from the street—will be resolved by introducing more at-grade, porous connections that strengthen relationships between indoor and outdoor spaces and encourage everyday interaction.

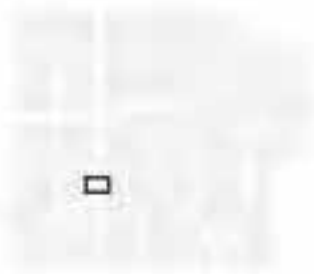
The renewed public realm prioritizes urban ecology and long-term sustainability. A road diet approach—removing on-street parking and reallocating space to people and planting—creates room for expanded pedestrian zones, integration of food kiosks, outdoor living room ‘aprons,’ and high-quality surface treatments. Increased native vegetation, layered understory planting, and a strengthened tree canopy will establish a greener, more resilient corridor. Together, these strategies reposition Huron as an ecologically-expressive shared street.



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

Note: On Huron, a 5m roadway profile is recommended for consideration. For fire department access, the Ontario requirement states that roadways have a clear width not less than 6m, unless it can be shown that lesser widths are satisfactory. Several approaches are proposed to maintain functionality while responding to the local context, including removal of the parking lane, use of the flex lane for all drop-off and shuttle bus activity, and local increases to roadway width into the flex lane where necessary.

Source:
The Ontario Building Code | Access Route Design 3.2.5.6. Access Route Design



KEY PLAN



Existing Condition Axonometric

IMAGE ABOVE
All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

St. George Street

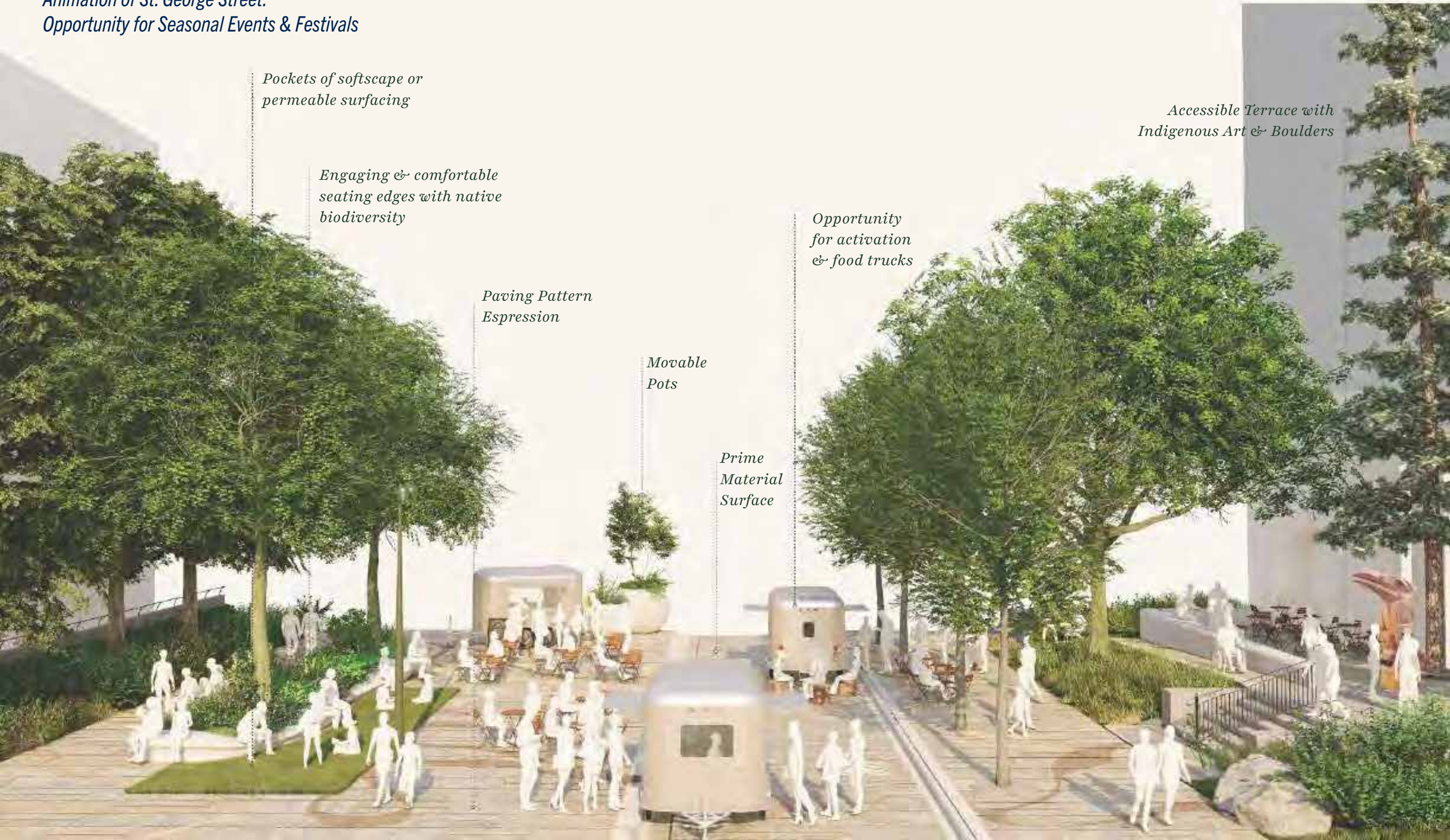
St. George Street is not only the corridor with the highest pedestrian volumes—it is the campus address and primary pedestrian promenade. The Public Realm Plan reinforces this identity by transforming it into an urban destination through a road diet approach that prioritizes north–south pedestrian movement while strengthening east–west connections across key green passages. A special paving treatment will establish a cohesive campus promenade effect, visually signaling pedestrian priority and elevating the street’s civic presence.

High-quality materials, softened edges, and an animated public realm—featuring food kiosks, seating, public art, and planters—will bring everyday vibrancy and comfort to the corridor. Building frontages will be enhanced to foster a stronger sense of belonging and improved accessibility to ensure inclusivity for all users. Designed with flexibility in mind, St. George can also accommodate temporary closures for campus events and festivals, transforming seamlessly into a dynamic setting for collective campus life.



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

*Animation of St. George Street:
Opportunity for Seasonal Events & Festivals*



Pockets of softscape or permeable surfacing

Engaging & comfortable seating edges with native biodiversity

Paving Pattern Expression

Movable Pots

Prime Material Surface

Opportunity for activation & food trucks

Accessible Terrace with Indigenous Art & Boulders

5 /

Public Life Metabolism

Public Realm Opportunity

Energizing the campus public realm to spark cross-over, connection and collaboration among students, faculty, and the community at-large.

Overview

The public realm is where public life is catalyzed—a place that brings people together, sparks ideas, and allows the meeting of minds. At a university that hosts some of the most innovative and influential thinkers in North America, these spaces are essential for collaboration, creativity, and the exchange of knowledge. Here, students, faculty, staff and the wider community can sit, gather, eat, and study, but more importantly, they can connect across disciplines and perspectives.

Today, facilities, classrooms, and social spaces often operate independently, limiting opportunities for spontaneous encounters and interdisciplinary exchange. The Public Realm Plan aims to change

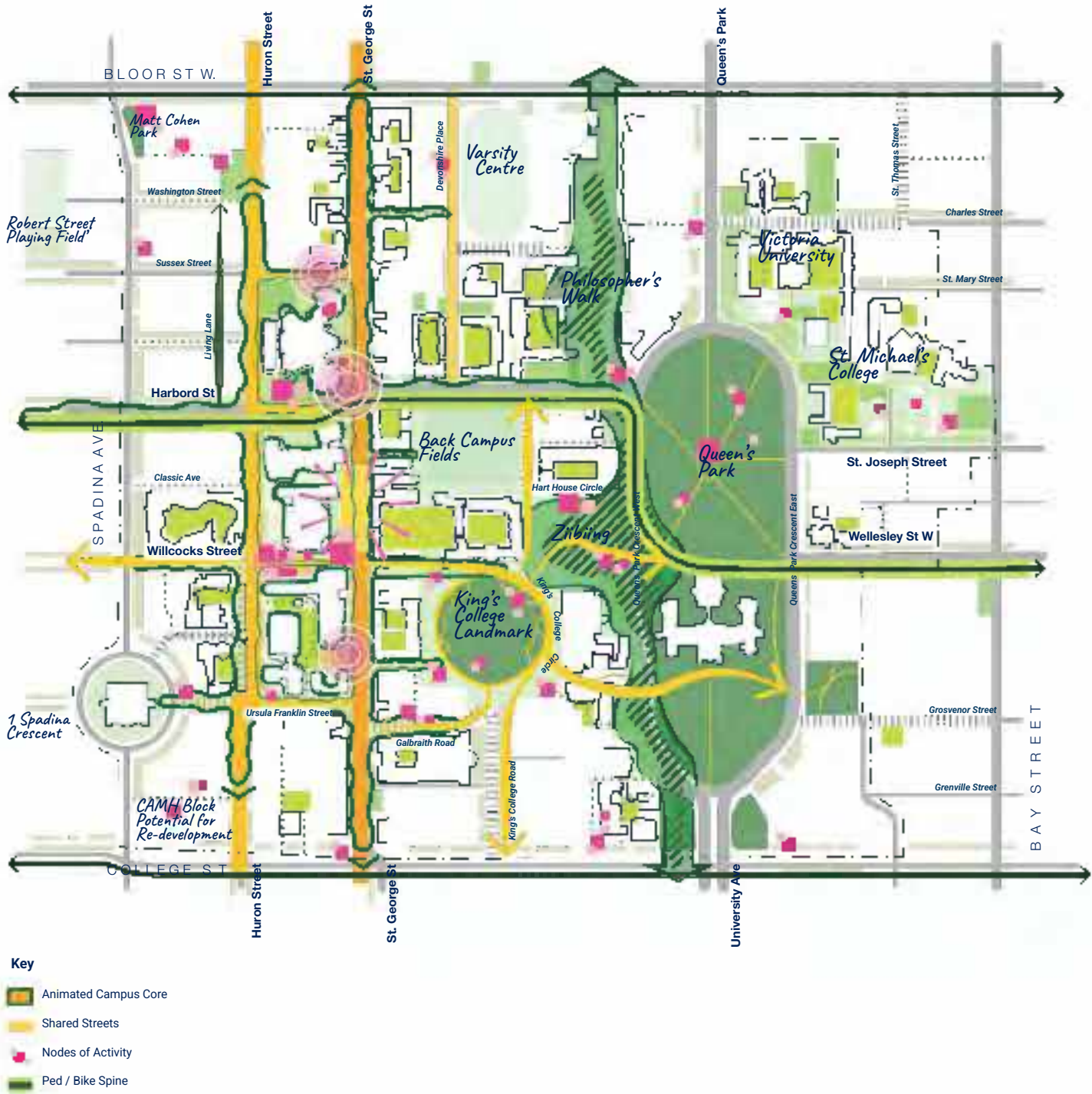
that by creating environments that encourage cross-over and interaction at the heart of the campus, making the act of gathering itself an intellectual catalyst.

The Plan envisions the public realm as extending beyond outdoor plazas and lawns. Areas of metabolism—where the energy of campus life is most concentrated—exist both within these exterior public spaces and inside ‘third places.’ These semi-public, ground-floor interiors serve as an extension of the public realm, offering comfortable, year-round environments where people can meet, work, and linger. Together, these spaces form a network of social and intellectual infrastructure, turning the campus into a living laboratory of ideas, dialogue, and community.

IMAGE

Activating the public realm through community programming and campus events. Photo by Matthias Desmet / Stad Brugge.

Public Life Metabolism



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



Imagining a New Campus Hub:
Willcocks / Sid Smith

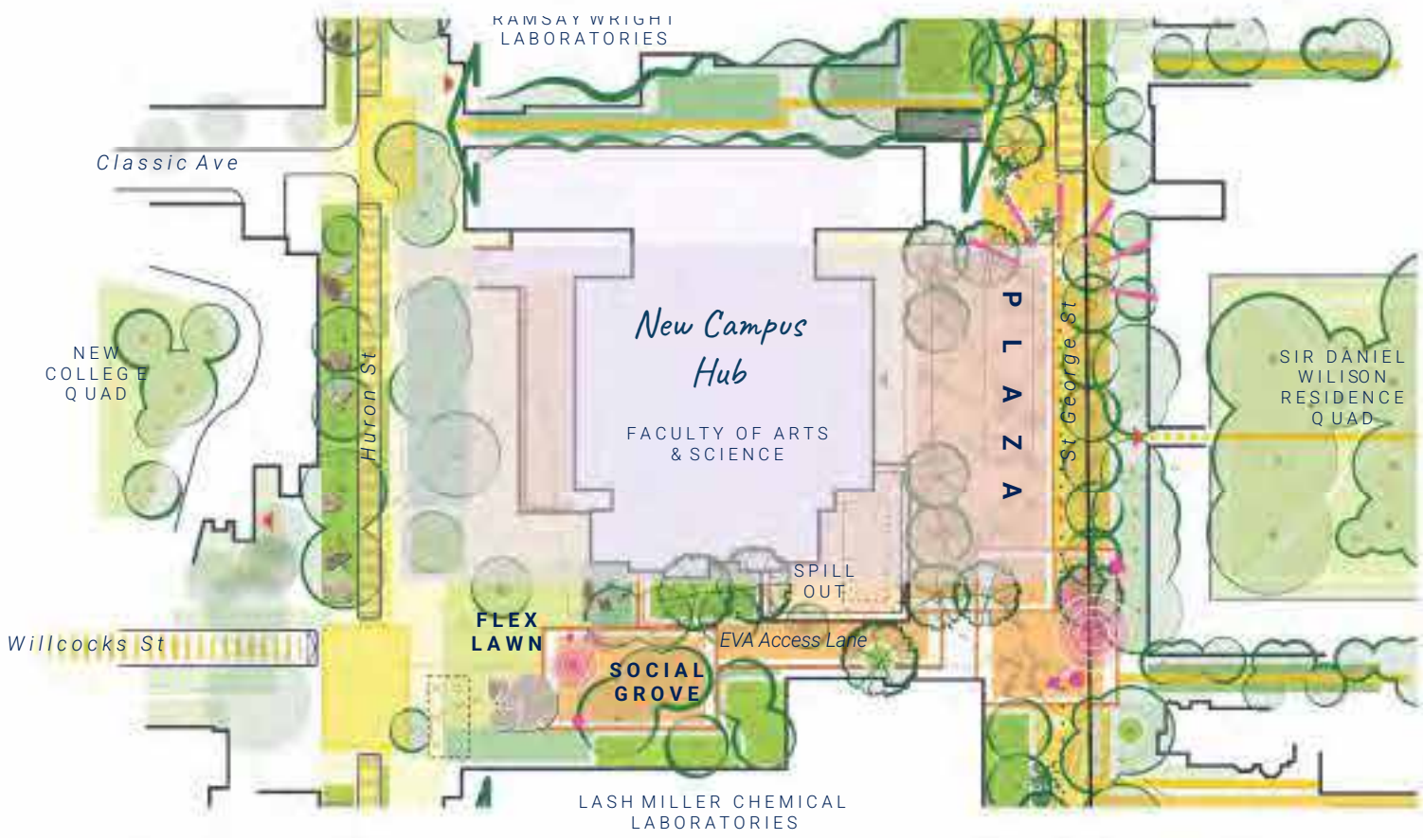
The existing Sid Smith Plaza and adjacent Willcocks Commons present a significant opportunity to be reimagined as a cohesive institutional open space—serving as the ‘L shaped’ welcoming forecourt to a new campus hub. Reframed as a generous and animated civic threshold, this area can evolve into a defining public space that anchors activity, strengthens identity, and signals arrival at the heart of West Campus.



Existing Aerial Map



KEY PLAN



Proposed Illustrative Simulation Plan

Key
Future Development Site

Note: All Simulation Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



IMAGE BELOW
Character vision at Sid Smith as a signature institutional open space—designed to host major campus events and gatherings. Photo by Matthias Desmet / Stad Brugge.

Sid Smith / St. George Street

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

- Accessibility & Inclusivity**
Create a flush street condition with plaza intersection, prioritizing accessibility and intuitive connections between Sid Smith and adjacent buildings, including Sir Daniel Wilson Residence and Lash Miller Chemical Laboratories. Emphasize at-grade ground-floor connections and universal wayfinding.
- Groundfloor Activation**
Promote groundfloor activation, spill-out, and transparent facades to showcase learning and collaboration.
- Flexibility, Seasonality, Events**
Maintain a flat and flexible hardscaped plaza with direct and level access to the Campus Hub for campus events and tented scenarios. Curate movable furnishings and planters to maintain flexibility. Integrate tent infrastructure and event power requirements.
- High-quality, Nature-based Materials**
Emphasize the public realm hierarchy as a primary space by investing in high-quality, durable materials that reinforce character—such as natural stone, special paving patterns, and framing bands.
- High-quality Planting**
Where possible, demarcate the edges of the plaza with high-quality, sizable trees, considering potential underground infrastructural constraints.

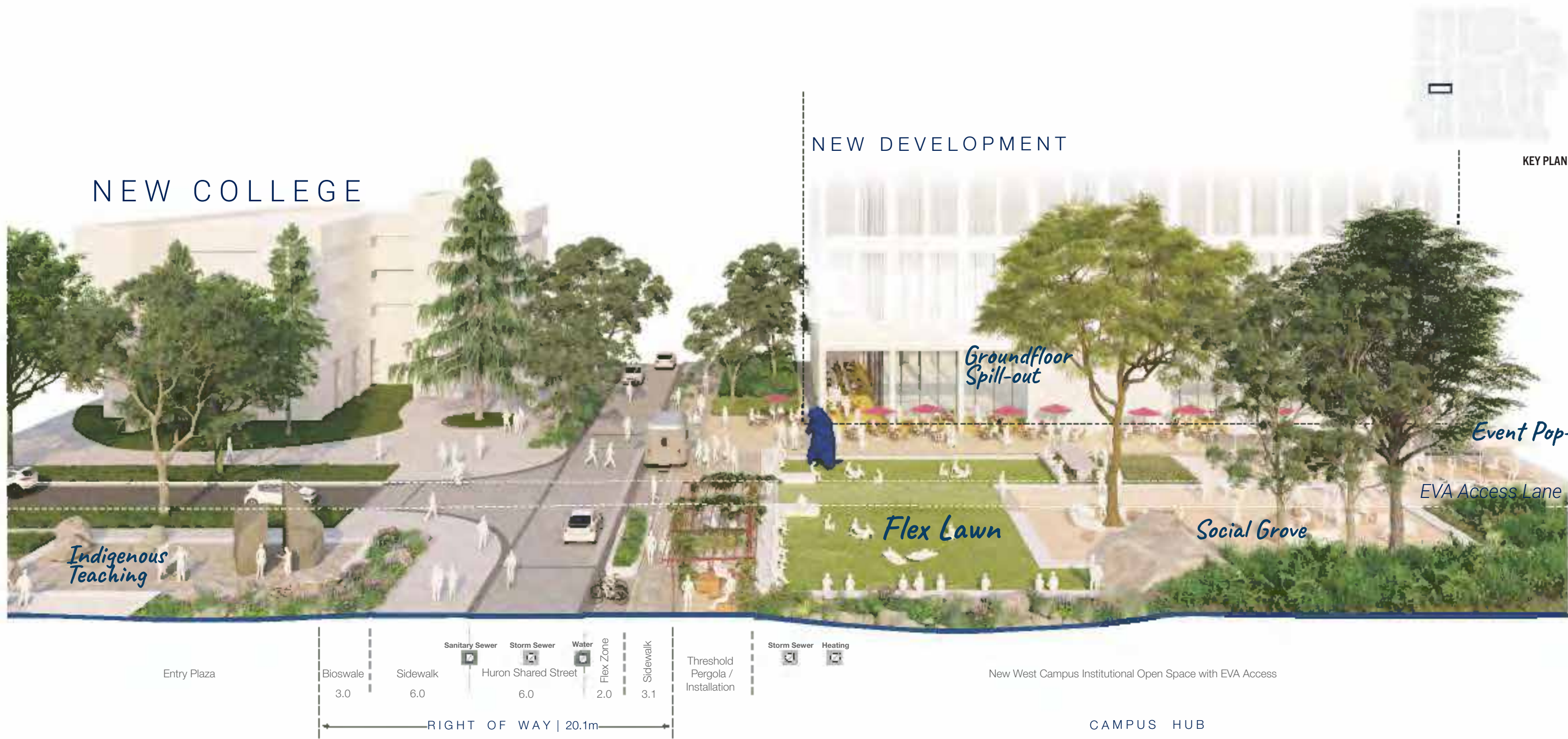
Willcocks Commons

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

- From Street to Open Space, UoT-City Pilot as Permanent Enhancement**
Transform the space from a conventional road into open space by creating a series of activated outdoor living rooms—social groves and flexible lawns—enhanced with movable furnishings. Ensure accessible routes and at-grade groundfloor connections.
- Emergency Vehicle Access**
Maintain clear emergency vehicle access using innovative hardscape and softscape strategies, such as interlocking cells or structural soil.
- Native Biodiversity**
Prioritize the preservation of healthy, mature existing trees. Conduct succession planning to replace existing horse chestnut trees with non-fruiting large shade trees. Improve soils and increase understory native biodiversity.
- Indigeneity**
Incorporate Indigenous practices—such as grandfather rocks and rotating sculptures—and prioritize the use of culturally significant plant species to reinforce the character and significance of this major open space.
- Pervious Paving**
Balance hardscape and softscape zones. Prioritize passive stormwater management strategies, especially adjacent Huron. Promote porous paving, such as resin-bound gravel or decomposed granite, in outdoor living rooms.

IMAGES BELOW
Character vision for Willcocks Commons as an intimate parkette composed of a series of outdoor living rooms.





Campus Hub

The bold vision for Willcocks Commons is to transform the conventional street-like environment into a series of inviting outdoor living rooms—flexible, human-scaled spaces that encourage everyday gathering, study, and informal exchange. This approach balances the expansive, hardscaped character of Sid Smith Plaza with softer landscaping, creating more intimate, approachable spaces that reconnect the campus with the community.

Proposed Simulation Axonometric

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



IMAGE ABOVE
All artist impressions illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Campus Hub activated by seasonal pop-ups, rotating art, and groundfloor spill-out.

Canvas for Public Art & Events

Public art is a powerful way to enhance the public realm, engage people in discussion and reflection, and provide informal wayfinding and identity for specific buildings or open spaces on campus. It can be permanent, temporary, rotate with the seasons, or be integrated into site furnishings. The University of Toronto Art Collection comprises over 5,000 works of art, with approximately 1,100 pieces installed across UTSG’s campus—indoors or outdoors—at any given time through the Art on Campus program.

Demonstration sites, particularly the new Campus Hub public realm, offer a unique canvas for seasonal events and activations that serve both the University and the broader community. These spaces can showcase public art in ways that respond to changing seasons, support temporary installations or performances, and reinforce the campus as a vibrant, year-round destination. By combining thoughtful seasonal design with public art programming, these demonstration sites can foster engagement, create memorable experiences, and strengthen the campus’s identity and sense of place.

Inclusion of Public Art should be considered for each of the key demonstration sites in the Public Realm Plan, with an eye to curate or commission pieces that are suited to and respond to the specific character of each site. Specifically, building entrances, gateway moments at the edges of campus, the *Ishpadinaa* corridor, the Campus Hub, and the Green Corridor lend themselves to integration of public art as they are high-traffic and high-visibility locations on campus.

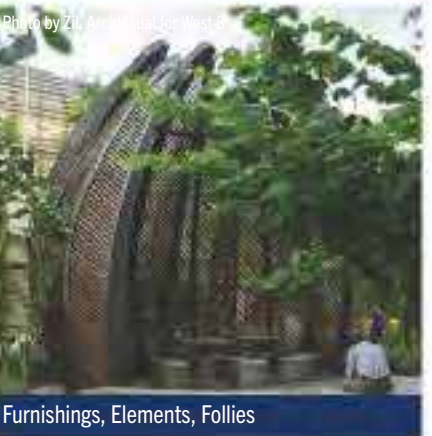
A Public Art Strategy that guides the site selection, criteria, placement, and funding opportunities and could be developed in tandem with the Art Museum at the University of Toronto and faculty of Visual Studies. Collaborations with cultural institutions on campus such as the ROM, Bata Shoe Museum, and Gardiner Museum present further opportunities.



Art & Sculpture



Rotating Installations & Events



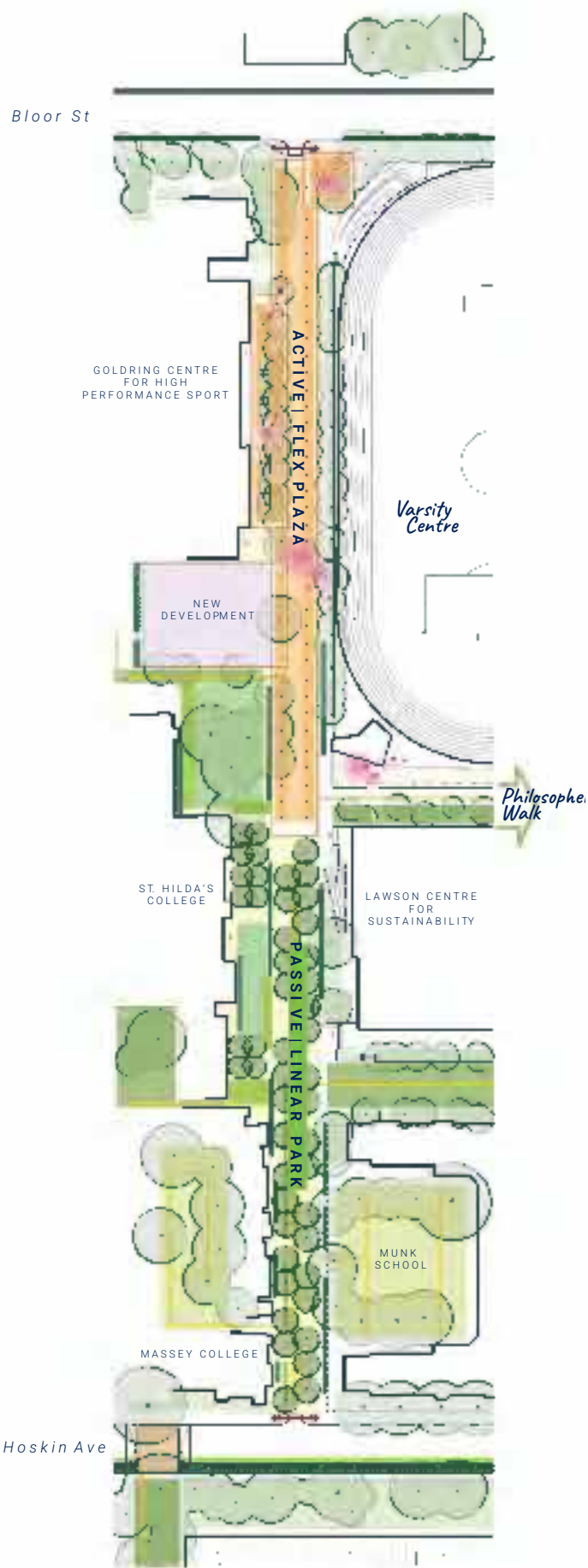
Furnishings, Elements, Follies

Untapping a Promenade Potential:
Devonshire Place

Devonshire Place has significant potential to evolve from a local traffic street into a shared, pedestrian-focused corridor—serving as a key artery connecting the Landmark Project to Bloor Street. The street accommodates two complementary energies: a lively, active zone to the north adjacent to the Varsity Centre, and a quieter, more passive character to the south alongside the residences, creating a dynamic yet balanced public realm.



Existing Aerial Map



Proposed Illustrative Simulation Plan



KEY PLAN

Key
Future Development Site

Note: All Simulation Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

Devonshire Place

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

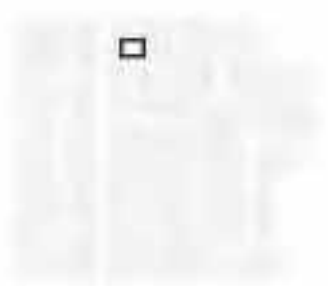
- Shared Street**
Transform the space from a conventional road into a vibrant shared street or promenade that prioritizes pedestrians, cyclists, and public life while maintaining essential vehicle access. Eliminate on-street parking to achieve a road-diet effect. Limit through traffic while maintaining controlled access for emergency vehicles, service vehicles, and sport buses. Ensure adequate turning radii and maneuvering space for permitted vehicles.
- Nature-based Materials**
Utilize quality, durable materials like granite pavers and decomposed granite to unify the corridor while softening the street character.
 - Native Planting**
In northern portion, use planters and integrated greenery to provide vegetation where infrastructure and access constraints limit tree planting, maintaining visual and ecological continuity along the corridor. In southern portion, prioritize continuous tree canopy and layered, native understory planting to create a lush, contemplative environment, while carefully avoiding conflicts with existing and future utilities.
- Active + Passive**
Design the street into complementary zones: a northern active shared street with lively public spaces and a southern passive promenade with outdoor living rooms, shaded seating, and gentle recreation.

IMAGE BELOW
As a flexible promenade, Devonshire Place can accommodate various events, pop-ups, festivals in all seasons. Photo by Harrison Haines - Pexels.





Photo by Google Street View



KEY PLAN



Existing Condition Axonometric



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

IMAGE ABOVE
All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

North Devonshire Place

The northern portion is envisioned as a flush shared street, seamlessly blending pedestrian, cycling, and limited vehicle movement. Bollards and subtle surface treatments define the space, ensuring safety while allowing emergency, service, and sport bus access. To disguise the traditional street atmosphere, high-quality nature-based materials such as granite pavers and framing bands are used throughout, creating a more human-scaled, welcoming environment.

The street is animated with active frontages, including retail, cafés, and student-focused facilities that spill into the public realm. Furnishings, lighting, and street elements—benches, planters, and public art—further enrich the experience, fostering vibrant spaces that reflect the energy and dynamism of the Varsity Centre and Goldring Centre. This area is designed to be alive with interaction, social gatherings, and spontaneous activity, acting as a true catalyst for campus life while seamlessly integrating with the campus identity.



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

IMAGE ABOVE
All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

South Devonshire Place

The southern portion transitions into a more contemplative, linear promenade. Here, the design prioritizes passive programming and quiet reflection, supporting the adjacent residential character of the campus. Outdoor living rooms, seating nooks, and shaded pathways provide spaces for reading, studying, or casual conversation. These areas can also accommodate passive recreation such as yoga, bocce, and outdoor fitness equipment, encouraging gentle activity without disrupting the tranquil atmosphere. Plantings enhance

the sense of calm, inviting lingering and relaxation. Together, these elements create a serene counterpoint to the northern section, promoting slower movement, contemplative engagement, and a restful public realm experience.

Together, the North and South sections form a continuous public realm corridor that balances activity and reflection. The design encourages a natural flow from high-energy social spaces to peaceful, contemplative zones, supporting diverse forms of interaction while accommodating essential service and emergency access.



Photo by ImagenSubliminal (Miguel de Guzman + Rocio Romero)

6 /

Indigenous Teaching Public Realm Opportunity

In the Ojibwe language, Ishpadinaa refers to a high place along a Gete Onigaming [ancient portage route] where people would gather to stop in ceremony.

Overview

Increasing restful landing places along the modern Ishpadinaa corridor and across campus for people to stop, gather, and recharge can support physical, mental and spiritual well-being. In response to Indigenous and campus-wide community feedback, campus plans can strengthen landscape sustainability and ecological design, create Indigenous gathering spaces, and infuse Indigenous culture and design details across the public realm.

Opportunities abound to weave Indigenous placekeeping throughout campus. The St. George campus area had historic trails, geology, vegetation, and water features that are being brought forward again as leading focal points for land-based Indigenous cultural connections. With bold new Indigenous-led projects like *Ziibiing*, teaching

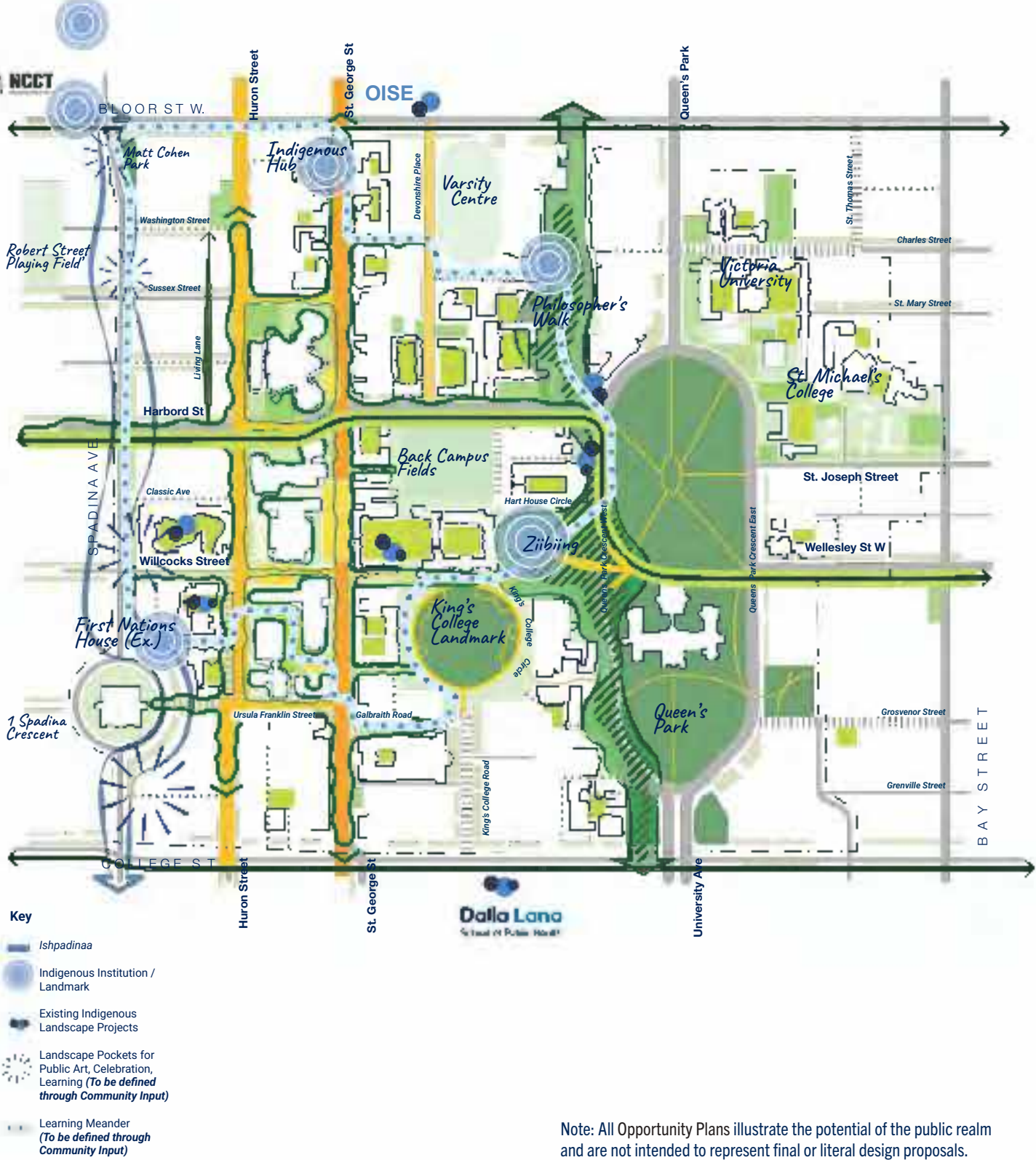
lodges, and the planned Indigenous Hub uniting First Nations House Indigenous Student Services, the Centre for Indigenous Studies and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives, there are calls to spread Indigenous narratives and design using designated trail and corridors, as well as through stronger design elements and placekeeping initiatives across campus.

The development of dedicated spaces for campus Indigenous community members to gather, learn and hold ceremony is an important response to the University's Calls to Action. Broader recognition and celebration of Indigeneity across campus has been requested by members of the community. The campus is large and some areas remain divided by gridded urban forms: creation of additional spaces, even small pockets, that are appropriate for Indigenous learning and gathering can help improve access to vital teaching opportunities.

IMAGE

Members of the university community participate in the Tipi and Lodge Raising, presented by UTM Indigenous Centre, along Principal's Road on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. Photo by Nick Iwanyshyn.

Indigenous Teaching



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



Revealing Indigenous teachings along Ishpadinaa: Spadina Avenue

The *Ishpadinaa* (Spadina) corridor, the backbone and gateway to the West Campus, carries the history of Anishinaabe placenaming traditions and also remains an important area for local Indigenous organizations including the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT), Wigwamen Terrace Seniors Centre, Toronto Public Library’s largest specialized native peoples’ collection *Mahsinahkehahnika* (“the place of the book”), and transit hubs near Bloor and Spadina, the current campus First Nations House, and linkages to College Street, Kensington Market, and Lake Ontario to the south.

Indigenous People have been settling, and moving along *Ishpadinaa* recently, as well as in the past, as it was historically known as a lookout and a sacred place for Indigenous People. NCCT was the first Native Canadian friendship centre in Toronto, and several Indigenous organizations and centres have expanded from there throughout the area. Additional gathering spaces and outdoor cultural connection opportunities are needed along Spadina and in this area in order to link the campus and broader Indigenous communities.



Existing Condition Axonometric



Typical Existing Condition



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



KEY PLAN



IMAGE ABOVE
October 04, 2023
- Participants make moccasins with Naomi Smith. Smith is a citizen of Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. Photo by David Lee.

Spadina Avenue ‘Aprons’

The *Ishpadinaa* corridor holds opportunities to increase pedestrian mobility, accessibility of green spaces, and to celebrate water, soil and plants. Appropriate, native urban plantings at different elevations and stone/soil features that highlight renewal and groundwater recharge have been suggested through community engagement discussions. Plant and runoff challenges at the street level plane can be addressed with either raised or sunken planting areas. Sunken planting beds with salt-tolerant vegetation can act as rain gardens and pathway drainage systems. Raised

planting beds and features can be accessible for people of all abilities to connect with plants and natural materials and help protect gardens from de-icing salts, ground-level animals, and foot traffic.

Wayfinding can be directional in nature using four directional colour symbolism, and might highlight Indigenous trails and/or hubs on Campus and in the area. It has been suggested that significant paths and street entryways onto campus could highlight local Indigenous teachings, clans, plants, geology, seasons, and history through story poles, gateways, and cultural markers.

Strategies & Recommendations

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

- **Indigenous Teaching & Gathering**
Reimagine landscape ‘aprons’ along Spadina Avenue as flexible outdoor spaces that promote informal gathering and foster Indigenous teachings, storytelling, ceremony, land-based learning, and cultural programming. Design spaces to feel welcoming and human-scaled, encouraging pause and reflection. Allow these spaces to act as cultural markers along *Ishpadinaa*. As the campus evolves, not all existing landscape setbacks will remain open space. Some areas may be repurposed for future development while still providing opportunities to support Indigenous teaching, cultural practices, and gathering.
- **Nature-Based & Soft Material Palette**
Prioritize permeable, low-impact materials such as stabilized decomposed granite and resin-bound gravel. Emphasize tactile, warm, and natural materials that reflect land-based values.
- **Seating & Elements**
Integrate timber seating elements such as fixed benches and loose seating for flexibility and social clustering. Incorporate grandfather rocks and stones for seating, wayfinding, orientation markers, thresholds.
- **Water as Celebration**
Increase site permeability across all interventions. Integrate sunken bioswales as visible and celebrated landscape features.
- **Celebration of the Tree Canopy**
Prioritize the preservation of the healthy, majestic existing tree canopy at key nodes along the corridor, framing gathering spaces beneath mature trees to create shaded, comfortable environments for everyday gathering and seasonal programming. Where future development priorities overlap with canopy areas, incorporate new tree planting to enhance Spadina as a tree-lined street, supporting a comfortable and inviting public realm.
- **Culturally-significant Planting**
Enhance native planting with a layered understory strategy. Prioritize species that promote habitat creation, seasonality, and cultural relevance.
- **Indigenous Art & Cultural Visibility**
Integrate rotating Indigenous art installations such as sculpture and murals. Allow art to begin along Spadina (*Ishpadinaa*) and extend in the four directions across campus.

IMAGE BELOW
Murals featuring Indigenous storytelling at Robert Street Park. Photo by West 8.

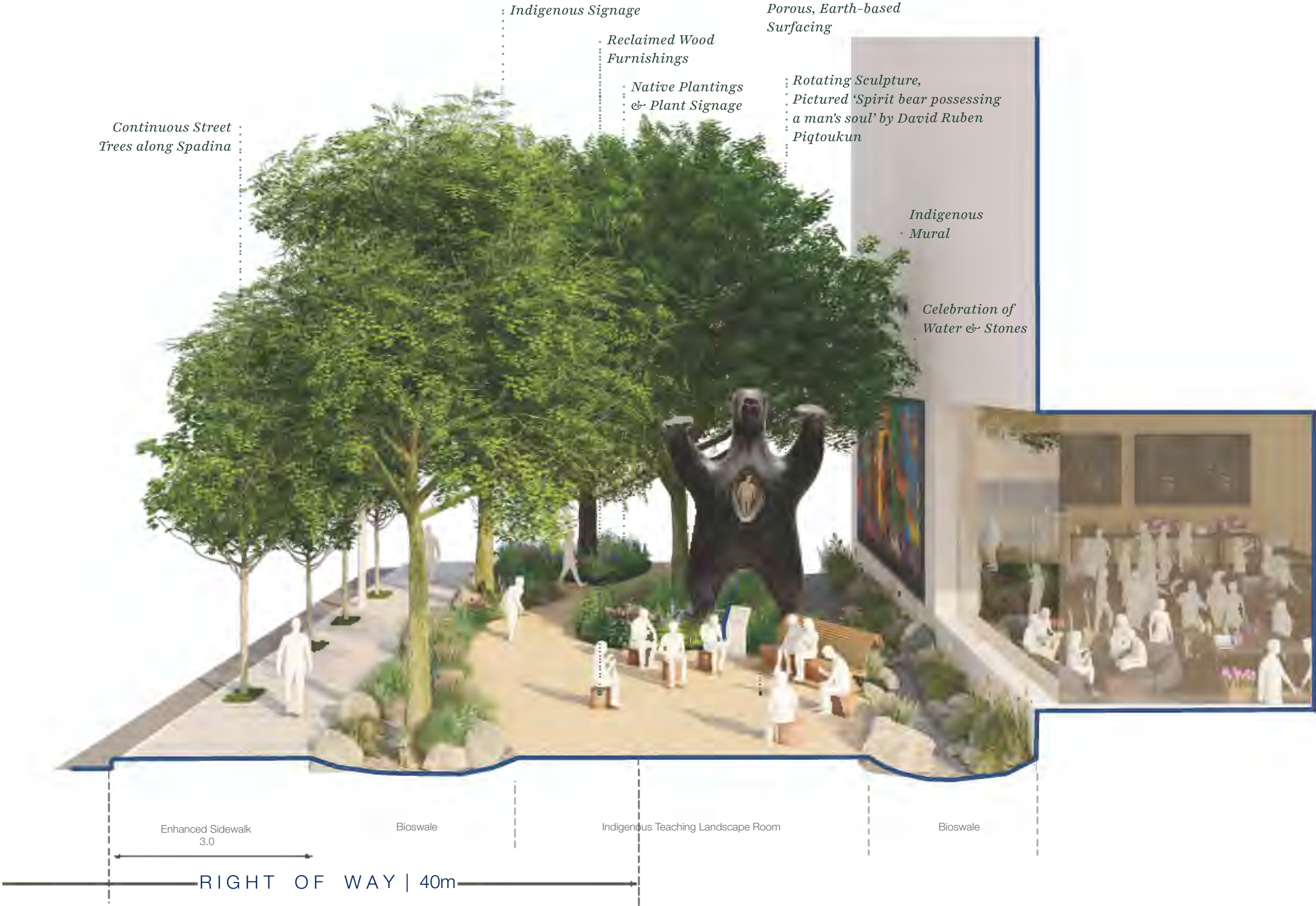


Ishpadinaa Placekeeping

Prioritize native trees and plants where possible and activate connections to plants, soil, and stones to increase teaching opportunities and access to beautiful garden zones.

As a busy transit corridor, provide landing moments, at various scales, along Spadina that invite resting, consideration, gratitude, quiet study, and gathering to help slow the pace of movement. Explore opportunities to buffer the sounds of a busy city and busy roadway with vegetation and features that help absorb traffic noise.

Increase beverage and healthy food access by offering seasonal Indigenous and local foods, and look to support Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses. Pop ups and temporary carts can help enliven the corridor, including activations in colder seasons, but creating permanent destination cafes and dining opportunities is also recommended.



Proposed Simulation Axonometric

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

7 / Welcoming & Inclusive Thresholds

Public Realm Opportunity

Showcasing the University's values at the campus edges by creating welcoming, transparent thresholds that reflect its commitment to learning, inclusion, and community.

Overview

Today, the campus edges—generally defined by College Street, Bloor Street, and Spadina Avenue—do not yet fully express the vitality and identity of the University nor offer a sense of welcome. While these boundaries serve important functional roles, they present a significant opportunity to become more friendly, legible, and better integrated with the surrounding city. The Public Realm Plan seeks to transform these edges into vibrant, engaging front doors that blur the line between campus and city.

Recognizing that each street possesses its own

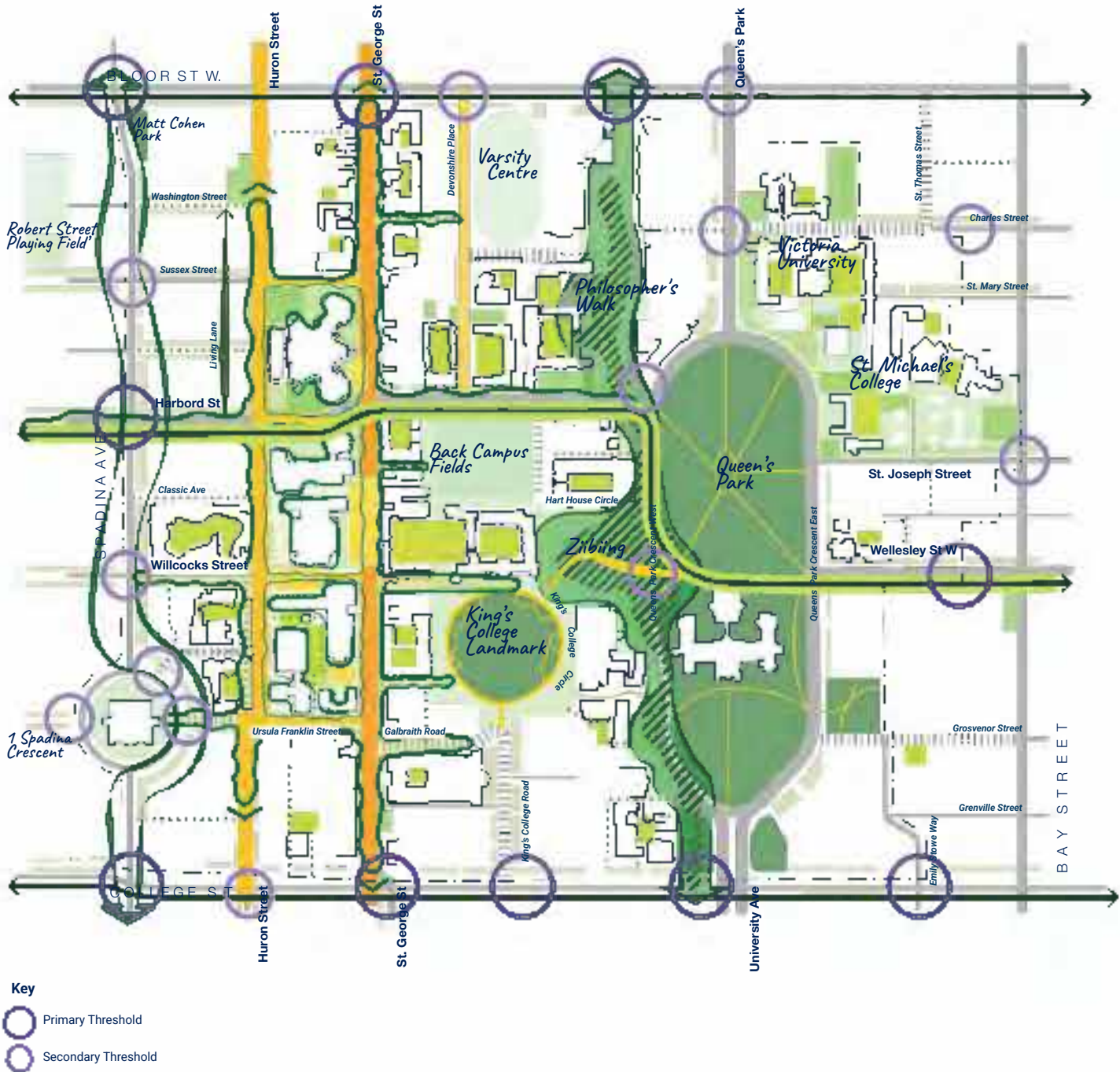
character, scale, and constraints, the Plan proposes tailored strategies for enhancement along each edge. Welcoming thresholds can be established through special gateway moments—such as public art, architectural follies, enhanced signage, distinctive paving or demarcation tactics, and greening elements—that create a clear and friendly sense of arrival.

Together, these interventions elevate the campus perimeter from a boundary to an invitation, expressing the University's 21st-century values of innovation, sustainability, learning, and wellbeing while strengthening its relationship with the city.

IMAGE

Green thresholds at Soundscape Park define a friendly sense of arrival. Photo by Robin Hill.

Welcoming & Inclusive Thresholds



Note: All Opportunity Plans illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.



Revealing a Living Corridor of Innovation:
College Avenue

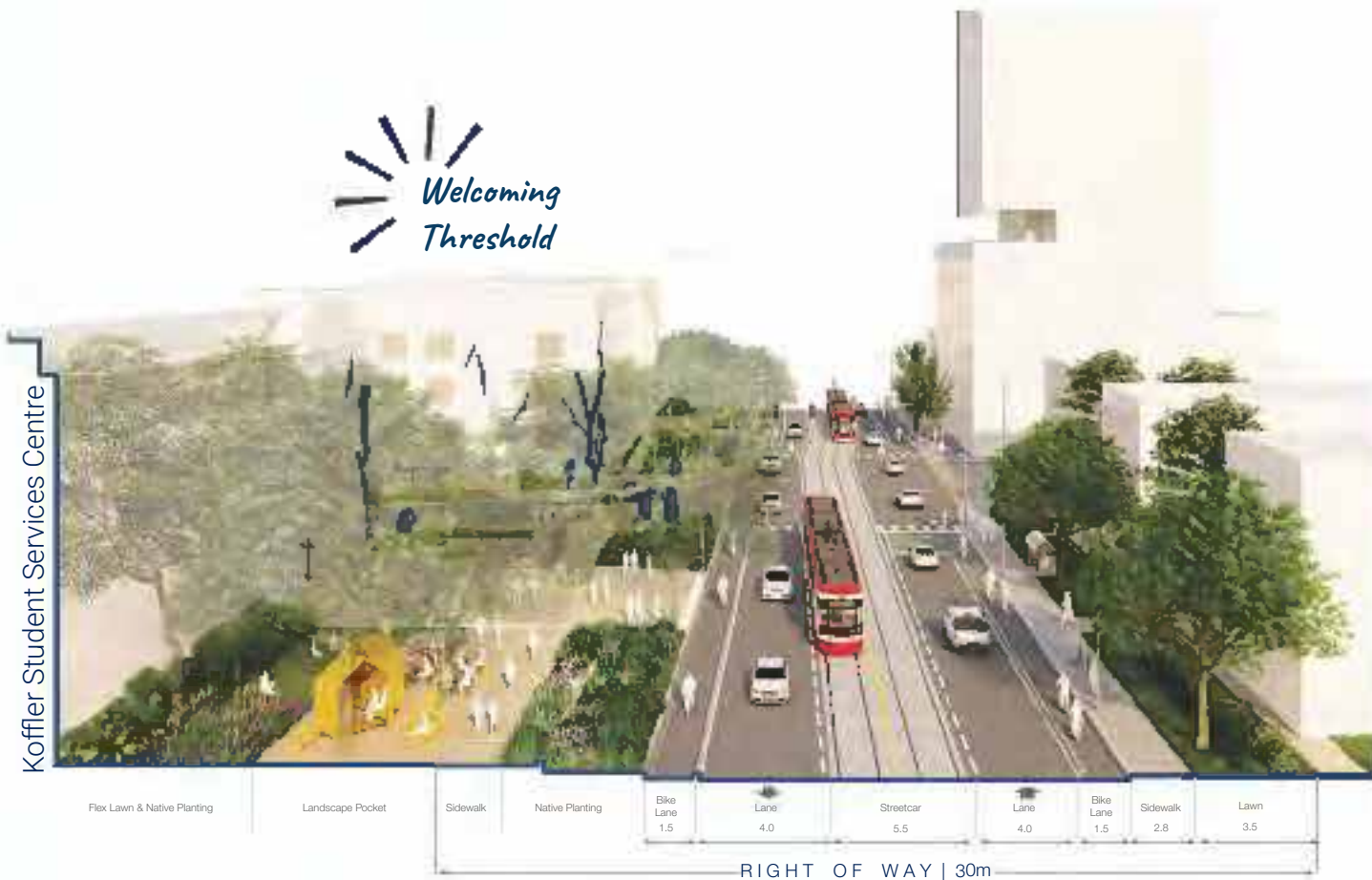
By activating the landscape buffers of lawns and majestic mature trees, public realm spaces can be thoughtfully carved out to create welcoming, flexible “rooms” that serve the community. These spaces can host rotational exhibits, pop-ups, innovation and prototyping activities, and community displays, while also functioning as natural cross-over zones for people entering and exiting campus thresholds.



Existing Condition Axonometric



KEY PLAN

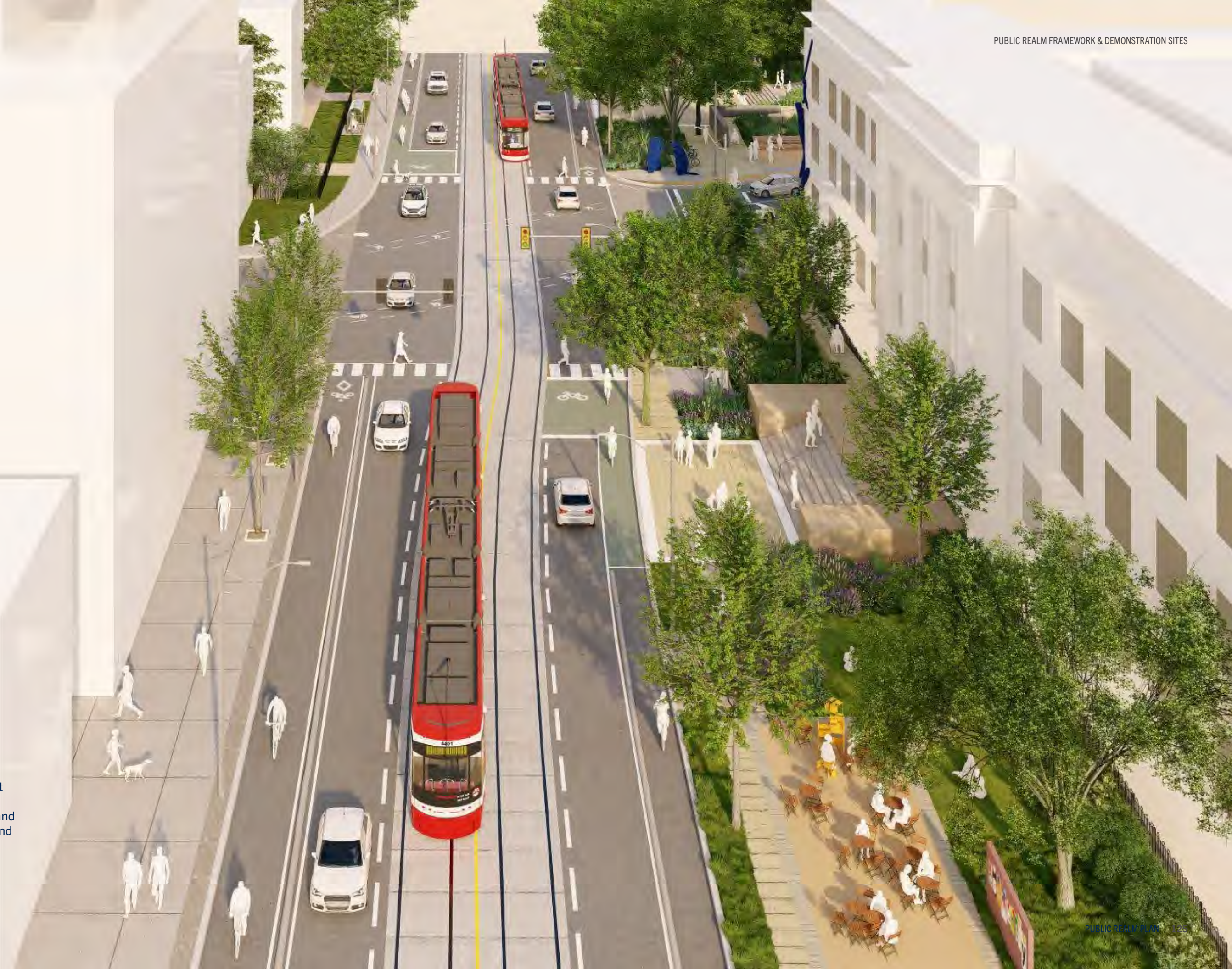


Proposed Simulation Axonometric

Note: All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.

College Street

College Street lies within the campus’s ‘Innovation Corridor.’ Enhancements to the public realm on the north side highlight the University’s institutional presence, demonstrate its transformative potential, and can act as a catalyst for a more cohesive and vibrant streetscape.

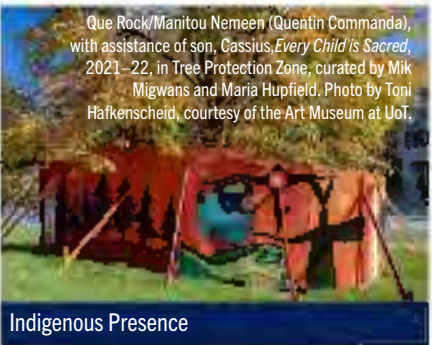


College Street

Consider the following guiding principles to inform future public realm planning and design:

- **Sense of Arrival**
Create a clear and memorable arrival experience through sculptural elements, integrated signage, and distinctive materials that express campus identity and openness.
 - **Emphasis of the Innovation Corridor**
Transform landscape ‘aprons’ into outdoor living rooms that serve as welcome mats—supporting informal gathering and small events while visibly expressing the Innovation Corridor in action. Design spaces to put education, research, and cross-disciplinary exchange on display, turning the campus edge into a transparent interface where learning and collaboration are both accessible and celebrated.
 - **Celebration of Existing Trees**
Preserve and highlight majestic existing trees within setbacks as defining features of the campus edge.
- **Passive Stormwater Management**
Increase ecological performance by integrating bioswale planters along the street edge to soften the urban interface.
 - **Native, Layered Planting**
Replace large expanses of lawn with diverse, layered native understory plantings to enhance biodiversity, seasonal interest, and climate resilience. This approach enriches the landscape character, reduces maintenance demands, and supports long-term sustainability goals.
 - **Balance of Hardscape and Softscape**
Calibrate paved and planted areas to support usability and ecological performance. Prioritize porous materials, such as resin-bound gravel or stabilized decomposed granite, in outdoor spaces.

IMAGE BELOW
Artist impression highlighting the public realm potential of vibrant, welcoming thresholds, with a focus on the St. George Street arrival experience. All Demonstration Sites illustrate the potential of the public realm and are not intended to represent final or literal design proposals.





3 / CAMPUS-WIDE STRATEGIES

*Stewarding a Seven Generations Urban Forest:
Acknowledging the Past, Present & Shaping the Future*



Continuity

Design landscapes that are continuous and lasting enough to endure over multiple generations.

- Prioritize continuous, intact ecological patches over small, isolated interventions.
- Design robust and high-quality landscapes that stand the test of time.
- Connect tree canopy, habitats, green corridors, species movement routes, drainage strategies, and soils across site specific boundaries to form continuous networks.
- Align the chosen materials with the level of permanence of the project. Favour materials that can be maintained, repaired, reused, or returned to the land over time.



Stewardship

Design landscapes of high ecological quality that are rooted in care and regeneration. Stewardship means leaving land and materials better than they were received.

- Use native, climate-adapted species and nature-based materials that support biodiversity and are ecologically functional. Go beyond the strictly ornamental.
- Introduce more structural diversity appropriate to function in areas currently defined by monoculture, including adding understory, midstory, and canopy.
- Restore degraded and compacted soils to improve ecological performance and long-term health.
- Design for ongoing maintenance and adaptive management, not one-time installation. Monitor and adapt over time.
- Work together with adjacent property owners and maintenance teams to share knowledge and resources.



Resilience

Design landscape networks with enough size, diversity, and groundedness to withstand change. Resilience comes from living systems that remain connected to the earth.

- Increase the overall amount of functioning green infrastructure across campus to reduce surface flooding and dependence on storm sewers during storm events.
- Distribute landscape types rather than concentrating ecological function in a few locations.
- Choose larger and connected patches of landscape to prevent ecological fragmentation.
- Increase biodiversity, habitat variety, and material diversity to support adaptive capacity to extreme climate events and changing climate.



Living Knowledge

Design landscapes that strengthen relationship, learning, and responsibility to land. Land teaches through direct experience, care, and shared knowledge.

- Design places where people can physically connect to the Earth - touch soil, move through vegetation, and experience natural processes.
- Use materials, textures, and forms that express natural origin and grow richer with time. Choose materials that come from close-by to create a unique story of local place.
- Use interpretation, naming, and storytelling to communicate ecological, cultural, and material meaning.
- Support community participation in stewardship, monitoring, and care.
- Foster long-term attachment to place that encourages responsibility across generations.

Ecology & Sustainability

Campus-wide Strategies

Strengthening the University as a global sustainability leader by activating the public realm as a catalyst for ecological innovation.

Overview

The University is recognized globally as a leader in sustainability, and its public realm carries a critical responsibility in advancing campus-wide goals and targets. Located in the heart of downtown Toronto, the campus functions as an urban forest, with the aspiration to further strengthen its role as a highly ecological, climate-responsive landscape. Today, a wide range of practices are already in place—such as Living Lab initiatives—that support this vision; the Plan aims to build on this strong foundation by strengthening and deepening ecologically sustainable practices across the campus. Key takeaways guiding this approach include:

- **Create and enhance ecological linkages.** Establish and strengthen natural habitat nodes, with a focus on birds and pollinators.
- **Improve vegetation cover and connectivity.** Establish existing coverage baselines. Manage invasive species. Support low-impact restoration beneath tree canopies.
- **Strengthen understory and soils.** Increase

diversity through native vegetation. Rehabilitate and enrich soils.

- **Integrate sustainable materials.** Advance climate positive design through increased carbon sequestration and low carbon materials.
- **Improve thermal comfort.** Enhance campus experience through thermal comfort strategies.
- **Increase resilience through stormwater management.** Implement permeable paving and continuous bioswale planters.
- **Improve waste management practices.** Divert construction waste and promote material reuse. Support operational waste diversion through sorting and maintenance strategies.
- **Minimize resource consumption.** Reduce energy use and conserve water.
- **Continue learning through Living Labs.** Create opportunities for monitoring, data collection, and applied research that support academic leadership and innovation.

IMAGE

Multi-layered, native vegetation at Maximapark, The Netherlands. Photo by Jeroen Musch.



IMAGE ABOVE
Continuous, tree-lined pathways strengthen ecological connections. Photo by Jeroen Musch.

Connection and Habitat Creation

Larger open spaces within the campus public realm —such as Queen’s Park, Philosopher’s Walk, and Ziibiing— offer habitat that supports biodiversity. Although these areas are generally more groomed and disconnected from the Natural Heritage System—and therefore provide comparatively lower ecological function—they still contribute through their plant communities and occasional water features.

In contrast, the West Campus is made up of smaller-scale open spaces, including

landscape ‘aprons,’ rear yards, green roofs, and streetscape planters. While these nodes are often isolated and bordered by development, they function as pockets for habitat, supporting plant and animal life, particularly birds and insects.

The key opportunity is to better connect these smaller spaces, amongst themselves and to larger open spaces. Strengthening linkages between them can create a more continuous habitat network, amplifying their collective impact and positioning the University as a key contributor to regional biodiversity and long-term ecological resilience.



Photo by James Wheeler - Pexels



Photo by Diana Tyszk



Photo by David Lee



Photo by Diana Tyszk - Uof



Photo by MinoKamik



Photo by MinoKamik



Trees, Understory, and Soils

IMAGE ABOVE
Multi-layered
ecosystems
foster long-term
environmental
longevity. Photo by
Jeroen Musch.

Nativity, Seasonality, & Long-term Success

These recommendations aim to increase biodiversity, prioritize locally native plants, reduce harmful invasive species, and enhance campus aesthetics, while acknowledging that changing climates and urban conditions may require functional non- or near-native species to build resilience. Healthy soils underpin successful plantings, which should draw on natural vegetation patterns by selecting site appropriate species, vertically layering them, and creating clear, compelling compositions. The indicator species, listed in the Design

Guidelines, are not exhaustive; the emphasis is on how to plant—using diversity, adaptability, soil health, and ecological function to create resilient, visually rich plantings suited to challenging or compact sites. Designers should understand site conditions, prioritize species adapted to those factors, and choose compatible companions that support both aesthetic and functional goals. Although designed for low maintenance, these plantings still require goal driven management—especially early weeding and occasional irrigation—to maintain structure, resilience, and coherence.



Photo by Kreg Holt



Photo by Jeroen Musch



Photo by Jeroen Musch



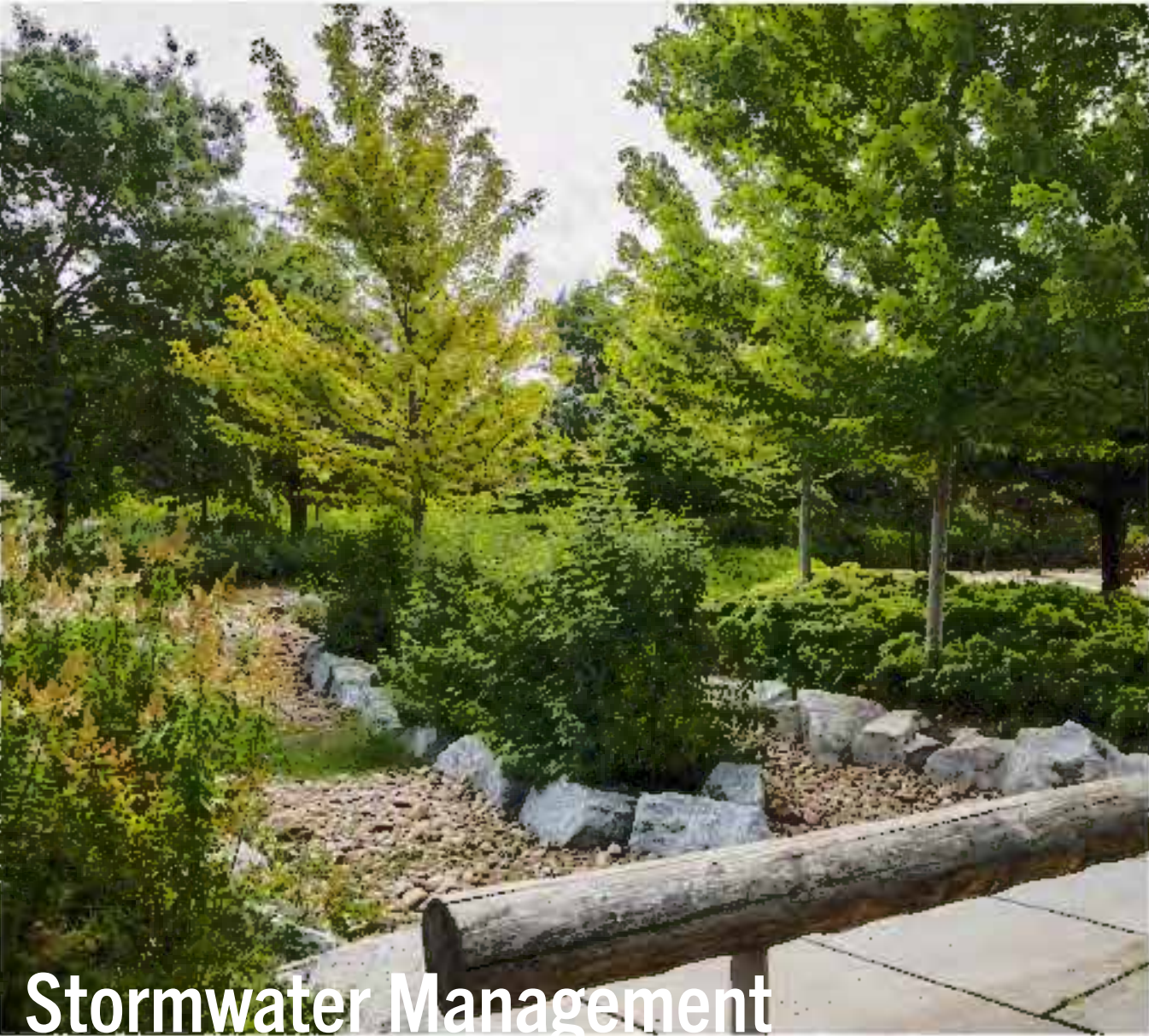
Photo by West 8



Installation view: *Tree Protection Zone*,
curated by Mik Migwans and Maria
Hupfield, September 8, 2021–August
12, 2022, Photo by Toni Hafkenscheid,
courtesy of the Art Museum at UoT.



Photo by ZIL ArchVisual



Stormwater Management

IMAGE ABOVE
Celebration of the
passive conveyance
of stormwater. Photo
by ImagenSubliminal
(Miguel de Guzman +
Rocio Romero).

Public Realm as a Sponge

As climate change continues to increase severe storm frequency and intensify peak rainfall rates, the public realm presents a key opportunity to improve stormwater performance through integrated, nature-based strategies. By rethinking the public realm as a sponge, stormwater management can be improved through landscape design. Key Guiding Principles Include:

- **Permeability**
Prioritize permeable surfaces and landscape systems that increase infiltration and reduce surface runoff.
- **Low-Impact Development**
Integrate decentralized stormwater features that capture, infiltrate and treat runoff as close to the source.
- **Clearances**
Maintain required access and utility clearances while enabling future green infrastructure.
- **Resilience**
Design for more intense rainfall and extreme events.
- **Retention and Quantity Control**
Maximize on-site storage, reuse, and controlled release to reduce pressure on municipal systems.



Thermal Comfort

IMAGE ABOVE
Shade structure
demarcating the
arrival at New College
Quad. Photo by Diana
Tyszk.

Micro-climate & Seasonal Protection

Thermal comfort across the campus is an essential consideration, as students, staff, faculty, and visitors move through outdoor spaces in all seasons. Thoughtful design can support comfortable travel and encourage people to spend more time outdoors. During the hotter months, incorporating vegetated shading through extensive tree canopies, vegetated pergolas for walkways or built shade structures (potentially combined with

solar energy generation) can significantly reduce the urban heat island effect and create safer and healthier outdoor spaces during extreme temperatures. Pairing these shaded areas with spots for rest or social interaction is recommended to help create a more welcoming, comfortable and usable campus environment.

In colder seasons, campus design should focus on minimizing discomfort from wind and low temperatures. Strategic placement of buildings, landscaping, and windbreaks can help avoid the formation of wind tunnels along key travel routes.



Waste Management

IMAGE ABOVE
Composters and wood chippers at Governors Island that promote circular waste. Photo by West 8.

Material Reuse & Recycling

Today, the University supports waste reduction through diversion programs, recycling and composting systems, and operational initiatives that promote responsible material use.

The public realm can build on this foundation by further reducing landfill waste and advancing circular practices. Materials sent to landfill can persist for decades, contributing to soil contamination and greenhouse gas emissions—making diversion and reuse critical to minimizing long-term environmental

impacts.

A sustainable approach follows the waste hierarchy: prioritize prevention, reuse, and repair, then recycling and recovery before disposal. In practice, this can include setting clear waste diversion targets for both construction and operations, identifying opportunities for material salvage and reuse in campus projects, and transforming reclaimed materials into functional elements—such as seating and tables. Together, these strategies reduce waste, conserve resources, and reinforce campus identity while supporting long-term environmental stewardship.



Resource Consumption

IMAGE ABOVE
Utilization of roof design and water recycling cisterns in the public realm. Hitchcock Center for the Environment. Photo by Ggreen55-wikimedia commons.

Minimization Approach

Today, the University has a strong foundation for minimizing resource consumption, largely focused on the built form—through energy efficiency retrofits, high-performance building standards, water conservation strategies, and Living Lab initiatives.

The public realm offers an opportunity to extend and deepen these efforts across the campus landscape. By prioritizing energy efficiency and water conservation outdoors, the

campus can further reduce carbon emissions, lessen reliance on centralized systems, and support more resilient, drought-tolerant environments.

Energy strategies should first reduce demand through efficient lighting, smart controls, and site planning that maximizes natural daylight, then incorporate cleaner solutions such as solar-powered lighting and off-grid systems. Similarly, water strategies should emphasize drought-tolerant planting, efficient irrigation, and stormwater reuse to reduce reliance on potable water and strengthen overall resilience.

Materiality

Campus-wide Strategies

Softening the campus to support the University's sustainability goals, while creating a unified, high-quality groundplane experience.

Overview

Situated within Toronto's hardscaped downtown, the University has an unique opportunity to soften the urban edge through depaving strategies. By replacing impervious surfaces with permeable, nature-based materials, the public realm can actively support the University's sustainability goals.

Materials become both a climate strategy and a cultural one, advancing sustainability while weaving cohesion across campus and guiding movement through an intuitive, welcoming public realm. Key guiding principles include:

- **Contextual Integration**
Select materials that complement the character and architectural language of adjacent buildings, creating harmony with landscape.
- **Campus Cohesion**
Choose materials that reinforce a unified campus identity while respecting the distinct character of each area.
- **Visual and Tactile Quality**
Select durable, high-quality materials with refined texture that enhance comfort and provide slip resistance suitable for Toronto's climate.
- **Durability and Performance**
Prioritize materials that withstand Toronto's climate, heavy pedestrian use, and long-term maintenance. Periodically review available products to remain aligned with emerging material innovation and best practices.
- **Sustainability**
Incorporate environmentally responsible materials, considering life cycle impacts, recyclability, and local sourcing.
- **Accessibility and Safety**
Ensure material choices meet accessibility standards and provide safe, comfortable surfaces for all users in all seasons.

IMAGE

Existing materiality at King's College Road as inspiration for future shared streets. Photo by West 8.



Sustainable, Nature-based Materials

IMAGE ABOVE
Nature-based materials as visual public realm identity in Madrid Rio. Photo by ImagenSubliminal (Miguel de Guzman + Rocio Romero).

Campus Naturalization & Depaving

Large portions of the campus groundplane consists of hardscape, including public rights-of-way, pedestrian pathways, and plazas. Concrete and asphalt are the primary materials defining circulation patterns and visual character. This condition presents a significant opportunity to reduce both embodied and operational carbon through strategic material selection and reuse.

By prioritizing salvaged, low-carbon, locally sourced, and nature-based materials and coordinating their use with ongoing and future development projects, the campus groundplane can measurably reduce global warming potential, support long-term greenhouse gas sequestration, and advance climate-positive performance.

As material innovation continues to evolve, it is recommended that the University periodically and holistically review available material products to remain aligned with emerging best practices and the most innovative solutions on the market.



Photo by West 8



Photo by West 8



Photo by Maarten Buijs



Photo by MinoKamik



Photo by West 8



Photo by West 8

Indigeneity

Campus-wide Integration

Incorporating Indigeneity throughout campus, fostering teachings and meaningful collaboration, strengthening relationships, deepening connection to the land.

Overview

Infusing Indigenous culture and approaches across the St. George campus requires acknowledging the historical past, present and the future. As the University of Toronto developed over the last two centuries, so has the understanding that our communities must work together to respect Indigenous Knowledge as integral to urban ecology and a healthy campus. There are tremendous opportunities to demonstrate leadership in Indigenous community partnerships and to celebrate Indigenous culture(s), languages, and worldviews in the campus public realm.

Furthering community recommendations to Wecheehetowin, UofT's 2020 Calls to Action in response to Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission report, these strategies are in development through ongoing campus-wide engagement.

A Campus for Land-based Education

Indigenous education opportunities are inherently connected to place and land-based teachings of history, languages, and local and regional Indigenous world views. Indigenous design and maintenance principles highlight sustainability and ecology, and prioritize environmental considerations.

Fostering safe and accessible Indigenous spaces on campus continues to be of utmost importance in building healthy relationships and connections across the University and beyond. The recent creation of Indigenous spaces, such as Ziibiing and campus teaching lodges, and plans for a new Indigenous Hub, starts to address the call for sites that support Indigenous ways of learning, epistemologies and decolonization. Indigenous placemaking opportunities and the support for campus-wide cultural reflection and celebration expands beyond just a few dedicated spaces. Indigenous placemaking can include a wide range of inclusive public and private spaces and educational initiatives.

IMAGE

Portrait of Lua Mondor. Participant in the Honouring Students Powwow 2022: Virtual hosted by the Indigenous Studies Students' Union at the University of Toronto. Photo by Johnny Guatto .



LEFT IMAGE
June 19, 2021 - U of T's Varsity Stadium hosted a pow wow vaccine clinic on Saturday that included Indigenous dancing, singing, drumming and a teepee in the hopes of creating a culturally safe space for Indigenous people to get vaccinated. Waakebiness-Bryce Institute for Indigenous Health and Auduzhe Mino NeseWINong, an Indigenous COVID-19 testing site, organized the clinic, with help from staff and volunteers across many departments and units. Pictured: Deanne Hupfield. Photo by Johnny Guatto.

Continue building relationships across campus, actively engaging with Indigenous communities, in collaboration with Office of Indigenous Initiatives.

Relationship building is vital to continue to address disparities in Indigenous cultural sensitivity and community inclusion.

University of Toronto hosts innovative globally recognized academic programs and is located in the largest city in Canada; the St. George campus has an opportunity to centre itself as a gateway for Indigenous knowledge and authentic cultural celebration.

Incorporating Indigenous knowledge and worldviews into St. George campus design must continue with inclusion of Indigenous collaborators in design and planning discussion through active engagement with the University's Office of Indigenous Initiatives, advisory committees,

local Elders and Knowledge Holders, and students.

While the creation and maintenance of dedicated Indigenous spaces across campus is encouraged, best practice further embeds Indigenous values, knowledge systems and design throughout the public realm. Opportunities include Indigenous placemapping and placemaking, teaching trails, and through integration of Indigenous history, knowledge and vision into overall campus design standards. These inclusive approaches have been suggested to support campus Indigenous community members, but also support knowledge sharing and reciprocity with the broader academic community and the public. Incorporation of subject-specific teachings is also encouraged to reflect local Traditional Knowledge

within university units/faculties.

The University is located at the gateway to the Great Lakes waterways in a location rich with ecological abundance. This region has been the hub of an important gathering and traveling network for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. The ongoing economic growth and wealth of this region and its institutions are built upon the foundation of Indigenous stewardship and respectful relationships with this environment. Building lasting local intercultural and intergenerational relationships with participants from local First Nation and Indigenous communities must be built on mutual respect and stewardship of the environment in the spirit of reconciliation.



ABOVE IMAGE
Grand opening event for the Ziibiing Indigenous Landscape. Photo by Polina Teif.



LEFT IMAGE
Indigenous high school students take part in *Nikibii Dawadinnna Giigwag*, a summer program that connects Indigenous youth to traditional teachings, jobs and experiential learning in landscape architecture, conservation and urban design. Photo by Sean Liliani.



IMAGE
Various yet cohesive furnishings promote sense of public realm grounding and comfort. Photo by West 8.

Furnishings & Elements

Campus-wide Strategies

Establishing a unified family of furnishings that reinforces campus identity, advances the University’s sustainability goals, and harmonizes with the existing material palette.

Overview

Today, the campus features a wide range of furnishing typologies, with each project expressing its own distinct palette. The Public Realm Plan envisions a more cohesive family of furnishings and site elements—one that brings visual continuity across projects while still allowing for contextual expression. These furnishings are intended not only to support functionality, but also to foster cross-disciplinary connection, promote education and social sustainability, and cultivate inclusivity and a strong sense of belonging throughout the campus community. Key guiding principles include:

- **Campus Cohesion**
Choose furnishings and elements that reinforce a unified campus identity while respecting the distinct character of each area.
- **University’s Values**
Curate furnishings and elements that actively reflect and advance the University’s values—promoting learning, health and wellbeing, and

meaningfully integrating Indigeneity and cultural expression throughout the campus.

- **Play, Surprise, Stay**
Encourage lingering and social interaction, using playful or unexpected elements to create surprise, engagement, and memories
- **Durability and Performance**
Prioritize furnishings and elements that withstand Toronto’s climate and long-term maintenance.
- **Sustainable, Nature-based, Salvaged Materials**
Prioritize furnishings and elements crafted from nature-based materials, incorporating salvaged materials whenever feasible. Emphasize environmentally responsible selections that consider full life-cycle impacts, recyclability, and opportunities for local sourcing.
- **Ergonomics & Accessibility**
Ensure furnishings are ergonomically comfortable. Prioritize accessibility standards, providing equitable experiences for all users.

Mobility

Campus-wide Strategies

Transforming the West Campus through the introduction of shared streets and a connected, pedestrian-prioritized network—advancing the broader campus strategy of creating a more cohesive, people-centered public realm.

Overview

Situated at the edge of Toronto’s downtown core, the campus is embedded within a larger urban grid, where streets shape movement, frame views, and define the experience. In the West Campus, the street grid shapes not only physical circulation but dominates one’s perception of place.

The Secondary Plan has unlocked the potential of shared streets, prioritizing pedestrians over vehicles. Building on this, the Public Realm Plan envisions a seamless, human-scaled mobility network—enhancing safety, accessibility, and connectivity for both pedestrians and cyclists. Central to this vision is stitching together the fine-grained, east-west tissue, that emerges from the existing green passages. Key guiding principles include:

- **Connection**
Improve links between and around academic buildings, to transit stops, and visibility into quads and laneways.
- **Downtown**
Welcome students to a vibrant downtown lifestyle, supporting campus wellness through engaging, year-round street experiences.
- **All-season**
Focus strategies on comfort through the academic year, with fixtures that encourage winter events, and planting that maintains wind-protection.
- **Multi-modal**
Balance the needs of those walking, cycling, wheeling, loading, dropping-off, serving construction, emergency, shuttle/tour bus, and food service roles.
- **Flexible**
Support outdoor learning, eating, rest, and events. A soft interplay of movement and place while maintaining safety and accessibility.

IMAGE

The recently-transformed King’s College Circle to a pedestrian-first shared street. Photo by David Lee.

Lighting

Campus-wide Strategies

Improving public realm lighting to enhance comfort and safety, strengthen campus cohesion, and harmonize historic and contemporary identities.

Overview

Today, the campus public realm includes a wide range of lighting types—City-standard street poles, multiple campus styles, bollards, wall-mounted fixtures, and in-ground lighting—resulting in varied materials and aesthetics. The Public Realm Plan proposes a cohesive family of fixtures to strengthen campus cohesion and align with the University’s sustainability goals, including dark-sky principles. Overall, the approach is intentionally minimal, prioritizing safety and comfort while limiting environmental impact and ensuring a clear, consistent nighttime identity. Key guiding principles include:

- **Campus Cohesion**

A coordinated palette of fixtures and light qualities creates a unified nighttime identity, reinforcing campus continuity across diverse landscapes and architecture.

- **Pedestrian-oriented**

Lighting is scaled, placed, and distributed to support clear circulation and social activity, prioritizing pedestrian routes and spaces.

- **Reassurance**

Consistent, well-controlled illumination enhances visibility and predictability, helping campus users feel safe and confident without excessive brightness or visual clutter.

- **Comfort**

Balanced light levels, warm tones, and glare control support extended outdoor use while respecting environmental conditions and residential contexts.

- **Wayfinding**

Subtle variations in lighting hierarchy and rhythm distinguish paths and destinations, enabling intuitive navigation and reinforcing campus legibility after dark.

IMAGE

A network of soft, continuous lighting creates a safe and welcoming campus experience. Photo by ZiL Visual for West 8.

Accessibility & Inclusivity

Campus-wide Strategies

Creating a public realm that fosters sense of belonging and delivers an inclusive, accessible experience for all users—across abilities, backgrounds, and seasons.

Overview

Accessibility can be integrated into the public realm in many ways, including circulation, wayfinding, lighting, furnishings, noise management, landscaping, and material choices. While much of the historic campus was not originally designed with accessibility in mind, the University has made significant progress in updating infrastructure to reflect 21st-century values of inclusion. The Public Realm Plan, particularly for West Campus, seeks not only to identify areas for improvement but also to envision a transformed public realm where accessibility is central to design and experience. Key guiding principles include:

- **Equitable Access**
Ensure accessible paths and softscapes to all building entrances and outdoor amenities.
- **Intuitive Wayfinding**
Provide consistent campus signage reinforced by architectural and environmental cues.
- **Inclusion**
Provide accessible, inclusive furniture and site elements that allow easy transfer and supports participation for all campus visitors.
- **Safety**
Design streets for safe coexistence of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, with consistent lighting and fully accessible, zero-threshold paths.
- **Comfort**
Design the public realm to include both active and passive spaces, providing opportunities for people of all cognitive backgrounds to engage and enjoy. Clearly distinguish circulation areas from activity zones to ensure safe and comfortable movement throughout the campus.

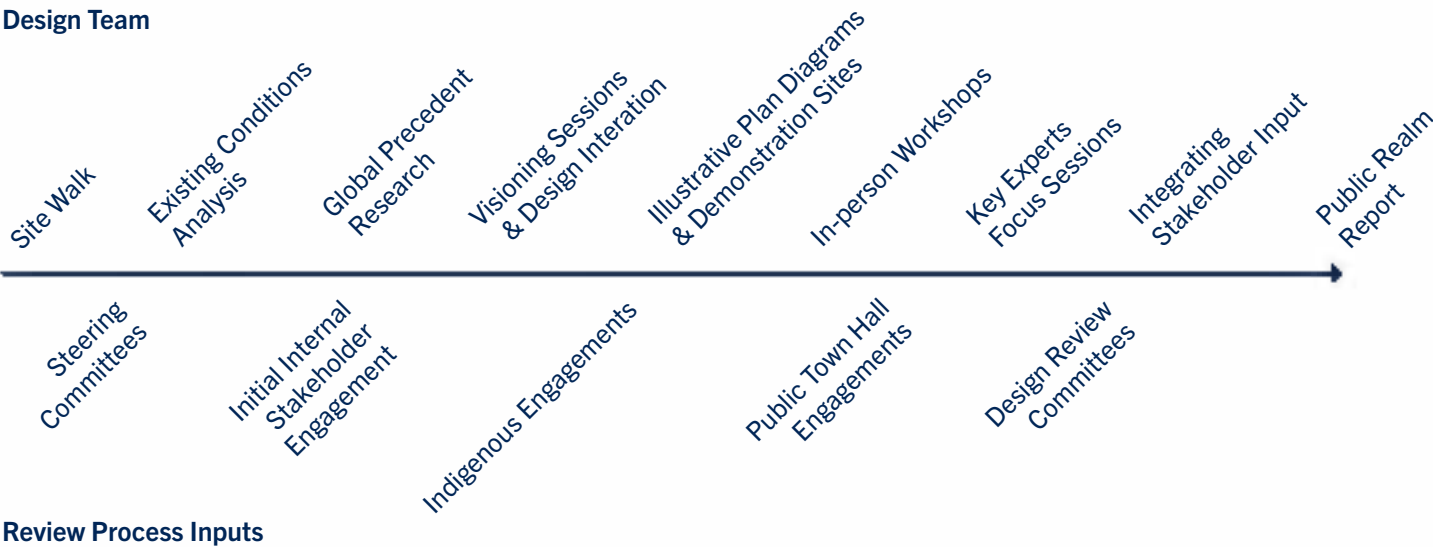
IMAGE

An inclusive arrival experience at One Manhattan Place, combining stairs and an accessible ramp. Photo by Jonathan Morefield / Field Condition.



4 / CONCLUSION

The Public Realm Visioing Process:



Recommended Next Steps

The Public Realm Plan is an important step in visualizing and articulating the UTSG’s vision. Realizing and achieving the vision will require collaboration with diverse internal stakeholder groups and key external stakeholders.

Looking beyond the summer of 2026, the momentum built by the Public Realm Plan can

be deepened through additional engagement and animating the campus through early activation and pilot projects.

Implementation can happen both short and long-term, and at a variety of scales. The following page explores different categories of projects named within the Public Realm Plan in order to frame an approach for how the University can strategically move towards realizing a cohesive public realm.



Building momentum and relationships to realize the public realm vision:
An approach to scale & implementation of public realm projects

Scale	UoT Capital Building Projects	UoT Public Realm Initiatives	UoT + External Partners
L large	Component of a Large Capital Project <i>e.g. 1 Spadina Crescent</i>	Stand-alone Public Realm Transformations <i>e.g. Landmark Project</i>	Stand-alone Public Realm Transformations - St. George Street - Huron Street - Devonshire Place - University Park - Queen’s Park North Revitalization
M medium	Component of a Capital Project <i>e.g. Indigenous Hub</i>	Stand-alone Public Realm Transformations <i>e.g. Ziibiing</i> - University-planned infrastructure upgrades as chances to couple with public realm enhancement - Green Passages & Courtyards	Planned utility upgrades as chances to couple with public realm enhancement
S small	Component of a Capital Project <i>e.g. Accessibility Improvement Program</i>	Stand-alone Public Realm Initiatives - Green Passages & Landscape Aprons - Living Lab Projects <i>e.g. Indigenous Garden at Dalla Lana</i>	Living Lab Projects <i>e.g. Willcocks Pilot</i>
	Temporary Early Activations & Pilot Projects Temporary street closures for special events, pop-ups, outdoor activations (eg. movies, music, yoga) including traffic monitoring	Temporary Early Activations & Pilot Projects <i>e.g. Galbraith Road Pilot</i> <i>e.g. Convocation Plaza Street Painting Pilot</i> <i>e.g. Clara Benson Outdoor Fitness</i>	Temporary Early Activations & Pilot Projects Community-focused initiatives <i>e.g. Laneway Mural Project</i>

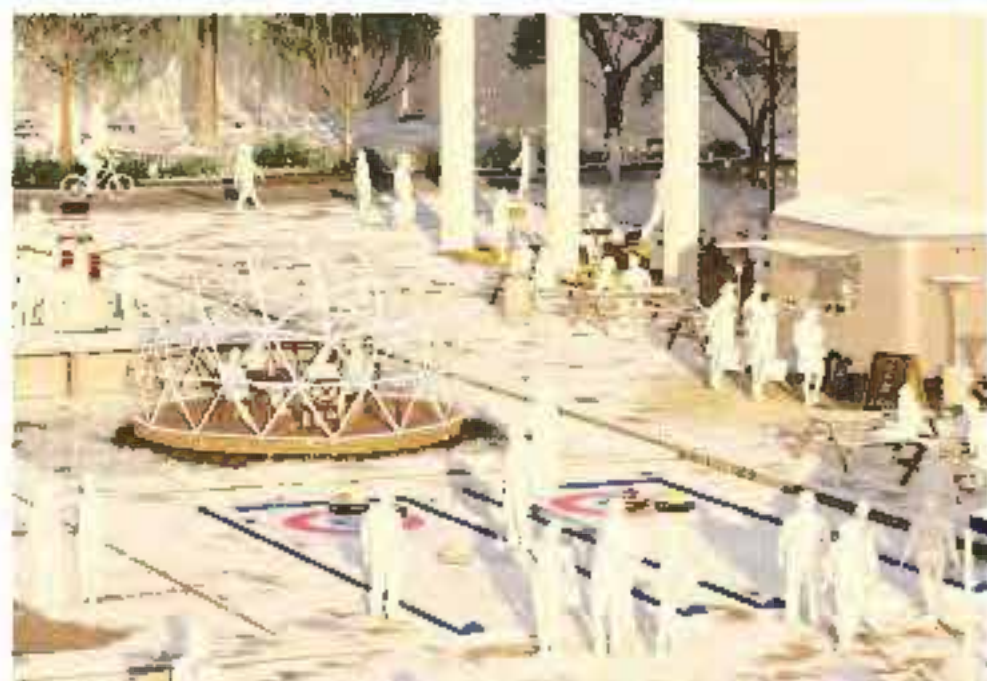


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Photo by David Lee





University Planning

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ST. GEORGE 2040

The University of Toronto St. George Campus Plan
Part 3: Public Realm