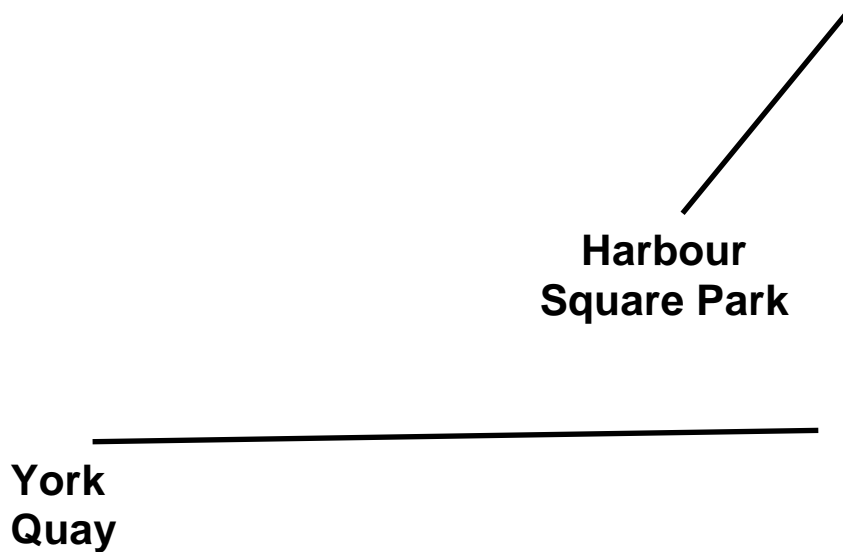


Executive Summary

The objective of this report is to investigate the evolution of use on waterfront public spaces. These case studies are located in close proximity on Toronto's Central Waterfront and are similar in size but reflect radically different planning ideals and design methods.



Harbour Square Park was developed as an afterthought to a public private partnership between the City of Toronto, the Toronto Harbourfront Commission and Campeau Corporation. It is surrounded by high rise, high density buildings that enclose the public realm of Harbour Square Park. The public space has been incrementally upgraded over the years by the City of Toronto. The other study area is York Quay, located between Harbourfront Centre and redeveloped mixed use Queens Quay Terminal. York Quay was originally a parking lot for these two structures and was redeveloped by Waterfront Toronto in 2006 as a public space designed by West 8 and DTAH. The study area is

characterized by the programming and temporary markets provided by the Harbourfront Centre. The contrasting approaches to public space redevelopment is significant to the research study, which was guided by the following research questions:

- How have the techniques, methods and ideologies evolved in waterfront public space design in Toronto?
- What components drive public use in Harbour Square Park and York Quay?
- What design interventions can improve these two waterfront public spaces in the future?

Research Methods and Evaluation Framework

Ten evaluation criteria provided the framework for analyzing the past and present use of Harbour Square Park and York Quay. They were derived from the principles of Urban Strategic *Central Waterfront Public Space Framework (2003)* prepared for Waterfront Toronto. These principles were reinforced through academic and scholarly sources on high quality waterfront public space design. The report evaluates the *Plan for Harbour Square Park (1969)* and the *Harbourfront Development Framework (1979)* through a document analysis. The existing use of each public space is evaluated using direct observation derived from Ewing and Clemente's (2013) research methodology. Through user counts, movement mapping and walkability observations, the uses of Harbour Square Park and York Quay were documented on two fall days and two winter days. Each case was assessed using the evaluation criteria shown in the following table



Results and Conclusions

The previous and existing

clarity and legibility of the site. These principles are evident in the public spaces of York Quay, which weave a wide range of materials and landscapes throughout the area. In light of these findings, this report proposes the following recommendations:

| Harbour Square Park | |
|---|---|
| Recommendation 1: | |
| Prioritize public spaces over parking | Remove the surface parking |
| | Integrate the underground structure better |
| Recommendation 2: | |
| Diversify Harbour Square Park's uses through temporary installations | Allow for vendors on site |
| | Utilize tactical urbanism to diversify land use |
| Recommendation 3: | |
| Explore opportunities for redesigning the public space by utilizing existing site strengths | Improve seating and lighting along the waterfront |
| | Implement the proposed gazebo |
| | Adhere to the principles behind the Central Waterfront Master plan |
| | Create a landscape plan for the central grass area of Harbour Square Park |
| Recommendation 4: | |
| Redesign the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal area to allow pedestrian connections to the east | Explore alternative locations for the fire house structure |
| | Relocate staff parking to adjacent structures |
| | Redesign the service lane to the east of the site as a shared pedestrian vehicle space |
| | Explore alternative fare collection systems to reduce need for a large terminal structure |
| | Remove the fencing surrounding the terminal |

| York Quay | |
|---|--|
| Recommendation 1: | |
| Explore new ideas for programming and temporary events | Monitor public spaces through consultation to generate ideas for programming |
| | Continue to implement pilot projects based on seasonal theme and public demand |
| Recommendation 2: | |
| Improve the integration of public spaces to Queen's Quay Terminal and Harbourfront Centre | Remove or hide waste receptacles and bollards based on need |
| | Continue to encourage street level retail |
| | Create uses that take advantage of the waterfront location |