

Waterfront Toronto Making More of the Water's Edge Accessible

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[Waterfront Toronto](#) continues to revitalize Toronto's Lake Ontario shoreline, making the city's southern edge more enjoyable, accessible, and beautiful. The organization is driving one of the largest infrastructure upgrades in North America, with many projects underway from Dowling Avenue in the west to Coxwell Avenue in the east. Amongst the projects currently in construction are two pieces of Water's Edge Promenade that will help knit more of the emerging pedestrian and recreational path network together.



Waterfront Toronto Plan, West Bayfront Area

The Portland Slip project will bring a new tree-lined promenade adjacent to the Canada Malting Silos at the west end of the harbour, while to the east, construction of new sidewalks and bike lanes will link Queens Quay with Sugar Beach.

Portland Slip Project



Portland Slip Project Construction, image by drum118



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Sitting at the base of Bathurst Street lies the Canada Malting Silos, one of two remaining grain silos on Toronto's waterfront. These concrete structures were once used to store malt for the Canadian Malting Company. When built in 1928, the silos were considered an innovation, as the use of concrete instead of wood was a new concept. 50 years later, the silos were abandoned, and have since been threatened by demolition as they deteriorate. As the City of Toronto realized the structures are considered an endangered architectural species, the industrial ruin was officially designated a Toronto Heritage Site. Fast forward to the present, and the silos have been temporarily patched up while to the water side, the [Portland Slip Project](#) is soon to bring new life to this strip of waterfront. The goal is to create a new public space while preserving the port's industrial history.



Portland Slip Project Construction, image by drum118



Portland Slip Water's Edge Promenade, image courtesy of Waterfront Toronto

Phase One of the Portland Slip Project was carried out earlier in 2010, as the access to the nearby Ireland Park was improved by demolition of germination & kiln buildings onsite. Phase Two is bringing a 9.7-metre wide granite paver promenade 130 metres along the west side of the Portland Slip, lined with twenty-five mature maple trees. Designed by [West 8](#) and [DTAH](#), the walkway's pavers will feature the same red and grey maple leaf mosaic pattern found at Sugar Beach to the east side of the harbour. The trees will be planted into silva cells, a system which allows roots to spread under the walkway and which has similarly been very successful at promoting healthy growth for the trees at Sugar Beach.

After construction of the promenade is complete, the City of Toronto will develop a master plan to sell a portion of the adjacent silo site to private developers. The site was planned as a Canadian Music Industry entertainment centre for several years, but that plan stumbled and currently no final usage of the historic silos has been determined.

Central Waterfront Promenade



Martin Goodman Trail connection along Queens Quay, image courtesy of Waterfront Toronto

To the east side of the central waterfront is Sugar Beach, an new urban paradise that has gained quickly in popularity as an alternative destination for sand and sun. One major problem with this area however has been its accessibility from the downtown core and the west waterfront. Sidewalks south of Queens Quay were non-existent where old rail spurs and gravel predominated instead. Now Waterfront Toronto is building linking infrastructure here too as a component of the [Central Waterfront](#) plan. Along the south side of Queens Quay, running for about half a kilometre between Yonge Street and Lower Jarvis, a new stretch of the Martin Goodman trail will improve biking and walking along this stretch. To the east of Jarvis, on-street bike lanes will be upgraded as far as Parliament Street.



Central Waterfront Promenade Construction against Queens Quay, image by canadain

Also currently between the landmarks of Sugar Beach and the Redpath Sugar Factory, a 7.4m wide piece of the Water's Edge Promenade is being laid. Prior to this construction, the Jarvis Slip Dockwall was bolstered and restored by replacing all of the dockwall's deteriorated tie-rods. In addition, crews have removed conflicts from the dockwall's structure that will impact future utilities for transit for the area. Construction of the new dockwall and sidewalks is expected to be complete by the end of Spring 2013.

Want to know more about what's going on down here? More can be found in our dataBase page for the project, linked below. Feel free to leave a comment in the space provided!



TAGS: [city of toronto](#), [dtah architects](#), [infrastructure ontario](#), [waterfront](#), [waterfront toronto](#), [west 8](#)