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Christopher Hume

When it opens later this year, Sherbourne Park can be expected to become a favorite hangout that will draw people from the neighbourhood and beyond.

With its special features - fountains, water channel, reflecting pool, trees and green spaces - it will be a new hybrid space the likes of which Torontonians have never seen. But at the same time, Sherbourne Park will also be the storm water treatment facility for the community now taking shape on the waterfront.

This idea of piggybacking public amenities on infrastructure projects that would normally be off the beaten track if not invisible is a new one. Indeed, in that respect this project is unique in Canada. Landscape architects, artists and engineers sat down together to design something that can perform double duty; it will be utilitarian but beautiful, not qualities we normally find on the same site.

The park will also serve as the centre of a new neighbourhood now taking shape at the foot of Sherbourne St, north and south of Queen's Quay W.

This wasn't a part of town that attracted much attention before the waterfront revitalization process was launched a decade ago. Torontonians may be skeptical about what's happening in this long neglected area, but big changes are underway.

This will be busiest year so far for the waterfront. In addition to the park, Waterfront Toronto will also unveil Sugar Beach just slightly to the west.

More on that next week.



This artist's rendering shows a waterfall planned for Sherbourne Park.

WATERFRONT TORONTO HANDOUT PHOTO