

ReNew Canada | Public Art Integrated with Water Infrastructure

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Waterfront Toronto and its government partners officially opened the completed Sherbourne Common, a park in Toronto's East Bayfront area that incorporates a neighbourhood-wide stormwater treatment facility.



A water treatment facility, housed in the basement of the park's pavilion on the southern side, cleans collected storm and lake water with ultraviolet light. The treated water is then sent underground to the north side of the park where it is released through three nine-metre-high art sculpture towers. The water flows from the tops of the towers, down metal mesh veils and into a 240-metre long water channel, or urban river, where it then flows out to Lake Ontario.

"Sherbourne Common is a catalyst for the development of the East

Bayfront neighbourhood," said Waterfront Toronto board chair Mark Wilson at the official launch this week. "The park has already helped us attract private and public sector partners who are working with us to transform this former industrial area into a dynamic new community."

George Brown College is building a new waterfront campus on the western edge of the park south of Queens Quay that will open fall 2012. Great Gulf will be building its mixed-use development on the eastern flank of the north portion of the park. Sales of units will launch later this year with occupancy expected by 2015. The \$800-million Bayside development by Hines will be built on the east side of Sherbourne Common south of Queens Quay.

Sherbourne Common was designed by Vancouver-based landscape architectural firm Phillips Farevaag Smallenberg in association with The Planning Partnership. The art sculpture towers, called Light Showers, were designed by Jill Anholt. The water towers are lit at night and as people move over the bridge of the water channel, motion sensors trigger shifting light patterns in the water falling from the sculptures. The mesh veils of art sculptures are designed to capture water in the winter to form unique ice patterns.

The total budget for Sherbourne Common was \$28.7 million plus an additional \$1.9 million for the public art. The federal government provided \$27 million, the provincial government provided \$1 million and the City of Toronto contributed \$2.6 million. The plan is to recover the cost for the art feature through development fees as part of the Waterfront Toronto public art strategy.