

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this report, the waterfront open space systems of Mississauga and Etobicoke were analyzed in terms of how well they provide opportunities for public accessibility and recreation. In order to evaluate access to and recreational use of both Mississauga and Etobicoke's waterfronts, the nine principles introduced in *Regeneration* (1992) were reviewed and applied to Mississauga and Etobicoke.

- Clean
- Green
- Connected
- Accessible
- Open
- Useable
- Diverse
- Affordable
- Attractive

The detailed public use evaluation criteria for the analysis of the waterfront open space systems were based on *Regeneration's* (1992) goal of a healthy, diverse and sustainable ecosystem along the waterfront. They were collected from existing research reports and policy documents and were organized to fall under the nine *Regeneration* (1992) principles. Essentially, the 24 public use evaluation criteria were used to gauge how well each of the nine principles were being met in the improvement and development of open spaces on the waterfront in Mississauga and Etobicoke. The criteria were organized as follows:

1. CLEAN

- meets recreational water quality guideline

2. GREEN

- significant area of land in public open space
- significant area of public open space in natural area, or natural habitat

3. CONNECTED

- Waterfront Trail weaves through parks
- Waterfront Trail located close to water's edge
- limited use of an arterial road in Waterfront Trail route
- historic features and buildings maintained and enhanced
- interpretive nature trail(s) present along the waterfront

4. ACCESSIBLE

- minimal walking distance between public transit and waterfront parkland
- comfortable width of two-way multi-use pathways for all users, including the disabled
- positive signs and/or maps at entrances to parks

5. OPEN

- view of lake from north/south streets
- view of lake from northern boundary of parks

6. USEABLE

- provision of a range of activities in parks
- no hidden enclaves or enclosures in parks
- adequate night lighting of the Waterfront Trail
- minimal distance between picnic area(s) and parking area(s)
- public facilities available in parks
- winter maintenance of park pathways

7. DIVERSE

- supportive surrounding land uses around parks
- attractions in parks to draw users

8. AFFORDABLE

- boat-launch ramps and marina slips on the waterfront
- minimal cost to travel to and enter waterfront parks

9. ATTRACTIVE

- mix of landscape types in parks

The 34 waterfront parks from both communities were classified into local, regional, natural and activity centre classifications. Eighteen sample parks were selected to provide adequate coverage across the park classifications for both waterfront areas for the detailed analysis.

The analysis of the two waterfront open space systems brought forth two types of information. The first type includes the relationship between public accessibility and recreational opportunities, and the physical settings found in and around waterfront parks. This information was summarized and mapped, accordingly. The second type includes information about the ability of each waterfront park in the sample to conceivably meet the public use evaluation criteria of waterfront open spaces. In order to analyse this, a matrix was used to rank each of the sample parks in terms of how well each satisfies the public use evaluation criteria.

The data findings for parks on both waterfronts were evaluated in the context of the public use evaluation criteria. Upon the comparison and analysis of the findings, *positive orientation signs/maps*, *historic features* and *minimal cost to travel to and enter waterfront parks* emerged as positive characteristics of the waterfront open space system in Mississauga, while *views from north/south streets*, *locating the Waterfront Trail close to the water* and *minimal cost to travel to enter waterfront parks* emerged as positive characteristics of the waterfront open space system in Etobicoke. In general, it was found that Etobicoke fulfills slightly more of the public use evaluation criteria than Mississauga. Tables I and II provide a visual comparison of how well each of the two waterfront open space systems meet the public use evaluation criteria.

Etobicoke's waterfront open space system may perform better than Mississauga's due to its open grid street network in the neighbourhoods along the waterfront. Lake Promenade Road, located just north of the lake along most of the length of Etobicoke's waterfront, and the numerous north-south streets ending at the lake, provide frequent views of the lake, as well as ample public access to the lake. In contrast, Mississauga's hierarchical curvilinear road pattern limits the City's ability to match Etobicoke's success in views and continuous public access. The performance of both waterfront open space systems was comparable on the majority of the evaluation criteria. Historic features and buildings, interpretive nature trails, ranges of activities and attractions in parks, minimal hidden enclaves, night lighting, public facilities and a mix of landscape types were all found to be adequately provided in both waterfront open space systems. Both waterfront systems fell short in terms of adequate recreational water quality.

Table I: Area-Wide Public Use Evaluation Criteria

		MISSISSAUGA	ETOBICOKE
CLEAN	Water Quality		
GREEN	Waterfront Open Space		
	Waterfront Natural Area		
CONNECTED	Waterfront Trail Near Water		
	WFT* Not Near Arterial Road		
	Waterfront Historic Features		
	Nature Trails Along Waterfront		
OPEN	View From North / South Streets		
AFFORDABLE	Boat Launch Ramps		
	Minimal Cost To Travel and Enter		
ATTRACTIVE	Mix of Landscape Types		

* WFT = Waterfront Trail

-  Significantly Exceeds Criterion
-  Adequately Meets Criterion
-  Scarcely Meets Criterion
-  Does Not Meet Criterion
- N/A Not Applicable

The data that was obtained for this report indicate that there are areas that could be improved so that public access and recreational opportunities on the two waterfront open space systems could improve. The analysis of the data led to the following recommendations for both municipalities:

SHORT-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- In Mississauga, the route of the Waterfront Trail should loop down through Richard's Memorial Park.
- In Mississauga, the serious entrapment area in the southeast corner of Rhododendron Gardens should be 'opened up'.
- In Etobicoke, construction of the Mimico Creek Bridge should continue.
- In Etobicoke, the Waterfront Trail through Amos Waites Park should be reconstructed.
- In Etobicoke, the Waterfront Trail through Colonel Samuel Smith Park should be paved throughout its length, not intermittently.
- The signs posted at many of Etobicoke's waterfront parks should be of a more positive nature.
- In Etobicoke, parks such as Marie Curtis Park, Colonel Samuel Smith Park, and Palace Pier Park should receive winter pathway maintenance.

MEDIUM-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Better storm water management practices should evolve near the waterfront.
- All waterfront parks should be recognized as special places whose development merits particular consideration with respect to form, scale, detail and materials.
- In Etobicoke, a focus should be created for urban waterfront activities in the development of the new Etobicoke Motel Strip Public Amenity Area.
- The Waterfront Trail should be available for use through the new Etobicoke Motel Strip Public Amenity Area, and along the shoreline, before the land has been fully developed.
- Deregulation of public transit service should occur so that a single bus fare will carry passengers between Mississauga and Etobicoke, along Lakeshore Road / Lake Shore Boulevard West.
- Both municipalities should look for more opportunities to incorporate native vegetation and natural landscapes into the waterfront parks.

- An official entrance to Rattray Marsh should be established at Jack Darling Memorial Park, perhaps at the foot of Parkland Avenue.

LONG-TERM RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Public land use acquisitions should continue on the waterfront in both Mississauga and Etobicoke.
- Attractions in local parks in both waterfront communities should be enhanced.
- In Mississauga, any future development of the Texaco South Industrial Property and the St. Lawrence Starch site in Port Credit should include a) connections to the Waterfront Trail along the shoreline and b) the incorporation of a grid road system.
- In Mississauga, any future development of the Texaco South Industrial Property should include land uses supportive to public open spaces.