

AUGUST 2011

SITELINES

Landscape Architecture in British Columbia



PLACE-MAKING IN THE SOUTHERN INTERIOR

| Wide Open Places | Two Campuses, One Heart | Rain Follows the “Lawn Mower”
| Kelowna City Park | In Search of a Sense of Place | Stuart Park Phase 1

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The purpose of Sitelines is to provide an open forum for the exchange of ideas and information pertaining to the profession of landscape architecture. Individual opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily of those of the BCSLA.

FOREWORD

By Raymond Visser, MBCSLA
Interior Chapter Chair

When I moved to Kamloops nearly 30 years ago, I remember being mesmerized by the striking beauty of sagebrush and pine covered hillsides in the Thompson Nicola region. I watched storm clouds gather over Lac du Bois grasslands and marveled at the dramatic contrast in water colour at the confluence of the North and South Thompson Rivers. I gazed at the vastness of Nicola Lake, curving gently for over 20 kilometres through the parched, semi-arid valley and sustaining local agriculture via massive irrigation projects. For a prairie lad, the natural beauty of the BC Interior was awe inspiring and for a young landscape architect, the design challenges that awaited me were on par with the area's natural beauty.



In those early years, one-industry towns were typical in the Interior. Waterfront parks were often the industrial variety and sports fields were neglected bits of farmland with a gnarly, page wire fence added as a baseball backstop. Thankfully, waterfront industrial parks slowly gave way to waterfront people parks and new recreation facilities would spring to life in various venues just in time to host a Canada Summer Games. Presently, major Interior cities such as Kelowna, Kamloops, and Prince George are unique, multi-faceted communities boasting generous parks and urban plazas, progressive art galleries and theatres, world class universities, and professional quality recreation facilities. Many major projects in these communities were designed or influenced by landscape architects. The Rivers' Trail, Albert McGowan Park, and Kenna Cartwright Nature Park are all excellent examples in Kamloops that saw involvement by landscape architects. Waterfront Park, Stuart Park, and Mission Creek Greenway are some of Kelowna's prestigious community landmarks and in Prince George, Civic Centre Plaza and Nechako Park showcase "BC's Northern Capital". Cities in the Kootenays have also seen the benefits of having landscape architects involved both in large scale resort developments or major community projects such as Red Mountain Resort in Rossland, Grizzly Plaza in downtown Revelstoke, Davies Street Park in Nelson, and Spirit Square in Castlegar.

Place-making by landscape architects has altered the physical shape and illuminated the philosophical course for many Interior communities. Arguably, keystone developments completed in the Interior may be proportional in scale to mega-projects commonly found in the Lower Mainland because Interior projects frequently involve and impact the majority of local residents. Major Interior projects often become milestones in the progress of a community but their significance in influencing people's perception of the Interior could be the greatest achievement of landscape architects. Creating enduring spaces and livable places is what we do; that's our legacy.

I'm pleased that the BCSLA has chosen to highlight Interior projects in this edition of SITELINES and I hope you enjoy reading about these fine examples of place-making from an Interior perspective. **SL**



Cover Image: Gerstmar Park, Kelowna, BC. Credit: Fred Schaad.

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WIDE OPEN Places

By Chris Larouche, BCSLA Associate
With Contributions from Tony Bradwell, MBCSLA



Tobiano – Panorama of the site with Kamloops Lake and the plateau beyond. Credit: Cory Honeyman.

While backpacking my way across Europe years ago I marveled at how people were drawn to the market squares and piazzas of the old cities and towns I visited. The squares were massive, surrounded by hand-cut stone buildings dating back to 1500s. However, gone were the central markets, and in lieu, a focal point of some sort, usually a fountain or extraordinarily large statue of someone historically significant.

There were typically no other amenities within the square yet it often teemed with people. Locals and tourists alike, drawn in like bees to a hive except that the hive didn't have any honey. People wandering into and around the square with seemingly no other purpose than to be surrounded by and/or to watch other people.

I didn't realize it at the time, but this was place-making in its simplest form. Invite enough people into a space and it becomes a vibrant and self sufficient entity. Without the people the plaza is insignificant. It is no longer a place but becomes a space once again.

So what do you do when you have a surplus of honey in the hive but not a lot of bees?

The challenge to place-making outside a large metropolitan area such as the Central Interior of BC, is that a dense population base can't be solely relied on to fill a space and create a place. The biggest assets we have however, are an abundant source of recreational opportunities and seemingly endless beautiful scenery. In fact, we often take the natural setting and the wide open spaces surrounding us for granted. Successful place-making projects in less urban locales exude a strong identity, bringing people together purposely within a context that provides both visual and physical ties to the natural landscape.

Tobiano is an excellent example of this. The site of this development is the panorama that once graced the back of the Canadian one-hundred dollar bill. Located 20 minutes from the population base of Kamloops, it is set against a backdrop of sagebrush desert on a bench of land overlooking Kamloops Lake. The views are amazing. The natural landscape and a golf course, tied very well to the landscape, are the essence of the development plan. The design philosophy dictated that, from as many aspects as possible within the development, a visual connection to the championship golf course and the expansive "borrowed" landscape was to be emphasized. Although some views remain more visually stunning than others, there is not a drab view from anywhere throughout Tobiano.

The Rayleigh Slo-Pitch Park came about through a desire to create a quality park and tournament venue for residents and visitors to the City of Kamloops. Without a suitably sized parcel of land in the central areas of the community, the City purchased a tract of Crown land 12 kilometres north of the city center. The partial brownfield parcel is situated adjacent to the North Thompson River and nestled within an area of farm and ranching lands and presents expansive views along the valley. Rather than creating something out of context with the setting, the City embraced a theme that celebrated the agricultural heritage and the natural grassland landscape in the design concept and vocabulary. When open for play in the near future, the park is anticipated to provide users with an experience of high-quality facilities in a spectacular context-sensitive setting that invites them to keep coming back.

Tobiano and the Rayleigh Slo-Pitch Park are but two examples of many in the less populated areas of the province that successfully demonstrate a sense of place through an emphasis on the locale in which they are situated. [SL](#)

Chris Larouche, BCSLA Associate, is a Senior Landscape Technologist and Northern Alberta Institute of Technology graduate. He works for Urban Systems Ltd. in Kamloops and was a member of the design team for the Tobiano and Rayleigh projects.



Tobiano – Naturalized landscape around the clubhouse. Credit: Tony Bradwell, MBCSLA.

Two Campuses, ONE HEART

*Creating one place
for two spaces.*

By Donald Ferguson, BCSLA Intern
With Contributions from Philippe Rinn, MBCSLA and David James, MBCSLA

Place-making, as the creation of places for people, is intimately tied to the landscape. Public places are social spaces. While place-making is not solely in the realm of influence of landscape architecture, much of our time and energy is devoted to the pursuit of creating meaningful places.

The Okanagan College campus master plans and open spaces followed the modernist approaches of the day; public spaces as settings for the buildings with little response to a regional context, climate conditions, or the fundamentals of good place-making. Recognizing the failures as well as the potential for their campuses, Okanagan College (OC) has taken on the challenge of creating better buildings and smarter campuses throughout the Okanagan.

MMM Group Ltd. (formerly Site360 Consulting) has been fortunate to be involved with the OC in the creation of two campus social gathering spaces: the renovation of the Central Commons at the Kelowna campus; and the newly created quadrangle space and landscape for the Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Building Technologies located at the Penticton campus.

In comparing and contrasting the two, they show how technology and changing attitudes toward the environment can influence place-making in the Okanagan.

Kelowna Campus

The decision to pursue LEED® Gold certification for the new Centre for Learning and Library Expansion provided the motivation to rejuvenate the Central Commons into a green space and create the first portion of a new tree-lined central pedestrian spine through ▶



the campus. Formerly a large reflecting pool, the old Central Commons was a large unusable space immediately outside the Student Union Building. Successful only in reflecting Kelowna's grey fall and winter skies, the leaky pond was often drained for maintenance and repairs. The pool forced students to circumnavigate the water body to get anywhere else on campus and offered little in the form of shade relief and student gathering space. The loss of water through leaks and evaporation also brought into question the appropriateness of this space within a region that receives limited rainfall and places a high value on water as a resource.

Working closely with staff and the student body, MMM Group created a concept that retained the existing stepped concrete pool edge. Proposing to infill the pool area with a mix of sand and topsoil, a new year-round common space would be created to accommodate local concerts and annual commencement ceremonies. Recognizing the opportunity to bring shade and structure to the space, two tiers of autumn blaze maple trees (red being a strong thematic identifier

for the College) were placed in large planting areas created by saw-cutting and removing portions of existing concrete paving and backfilling with well-draining organic soils. The resulting Central Commons became an immediate success with students, providing opportunities for lounging, studying, and socializing within the context of a traditional campus setting.

Penticton Campus

While the Kelowna campus was a renovation of older style public space that did not respond to the needs and changing attitudes of the times, the Penticton campus presented an opportunity to create a new space altogether, incorporating some of the most innovative green technologies available to achieve LEED® Platinum and one of the highest recognitions of sustainability in North America today: the Living Building Challenge (LBC).

As part of a major campus expansion, an Integrated Design Process (IDP) involving all project stakeholders, consultants, and the construction management team started with

a three-day design charrette, aimed at determining program requirements and reinforcing collaboration throughout the design and construction process.

Building form and siting played a vital role in terms of building energy performance, daylighting, and natural ventilation. The building orientation in turn defined the outdoor spaces adjacent to the building and the surrounding campus. The staggered linear layout of the building allows for natural light to penetrate, and creates small, intimate outdoor courtyards. Surrounded by seating walls, shade trees, and drought-tolerant plantings, these spaces will be used as outdoor classrooms and meeting areas. Warm hues in the paving and rammed earth seat walls help to reflect the Okanagan vernacular while creating unique spaces for learning and lounging.

Previously a parking lot, the "Campus Green", connects the new building with the surrounding existing campus. The tree-lined Campus Promenade acts as the main outdoor circulation route through the site and a bridge between the new and old buildings on campus. The building has provided ▶

◀ Conceptual landscape plan.
Credit: Robert Evans, MBCSLA,
Donald Ferguson, BCSLA Intern.

Conceptual master plan – result of
a three-day charrette.
Credit: Robert Evans, MBCSLA.

◀ Before and after concept.
Credit: Donald Ferguson, BCSLA
Intern.



year-round rooftop access to students and guests via the viewing deck. This unique opportunity provides close up views of the solar and daylighting technology as well as the five intensive green roofs, while also making the visual connection to the greater campus and the surrounding Penticton hillsides.

The LBC and LEED® process drove the initiation of many sustainable principles and technologies to the site during design and construction that were also relevant and appropriate for the Okanagan landscape.

The exclusive use of native plants on the green roofs assists in habitat creation for local and migratory bird and insect species, including the Sandhill Skipper Butterfly, which is currently a “Red-Listed” species. Integration of the building’s green roof, with the parking lot’s planted bio-filtration swales and sub-surface drywells, created a stormwater system capable of storing and infiltrating a 100 year storm event. In addition, the Net Zero Water strategy necessitated the use of recycled (non-potable) water in the high-efficiency, drip manifold irrigation system.

The process relied significantly on research into materials and product sourcing to: maximize recycled content, minimize shipping distances, ensure the use of local contractors, re-use and amendment of existing fill and topsoil, and avoid the use of “Red-Listed” materials.

Completed in the spring of 2011, the Centre of Excellence is proving to be a success both locally and globally. Students have already begun classes in the building while the entire project is being recognized worldwide for its sustainable achievements. The challenges that were met have created a healthier, smarter building and campus that provides sustainable growth and educational advancement while minimizing its ecological footprint.

The creation of these two spaces involved not only an application of traditional design principles, but also an understanding of the many regional influences that impact the orientation and programming of a site. The new sustainable initiatives surrounding LEED® and LBC are reintroducing designers to these classical approaches and have coupled them with new technologies and methods of accountability. This updated approach to design is redefining place-making in a more relevant and locally appropriate method of defining the spaces around us. [SL](#)

Don Ferguson, BCSLA Intern graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Landscape Architecture from UBC in 1998. He has worked in both the United States and Canada and with MMM Group Ltd. in Kelowna (formally Site360 Consulting) for the past 7 years. Don enjoys working in the Okanagan and has contributed to many great public and private projects, applying his artistic talents and creative design capabilities throughout. He also enjoys working with smaller municipalities and on projects with challenging site conditions. Don has made the Kelowna lifestyle part of his life and looks forward to helping define the future look and feel of the Okanagan landscape.



Centre of Excellence – Campus Promenade. Credit: Keith Nyhof, MBCSLA.



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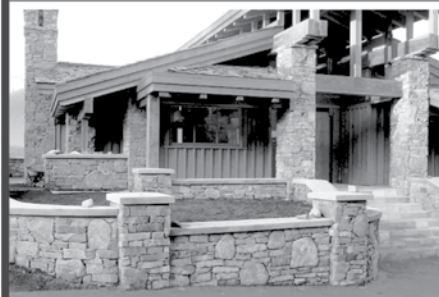


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Rain Follows

By Steve Petryshyn,
BCSLA Associate



the “LAWN MOWER”

Cawston Avenue Multi-Use Corridor, Kelowna, BC. Credit: Fred Schaad.

The title of this article makes light of a 19th Century theory that, “rain follows the plow”. The theory promoted Westward development, under the belief that increased human settlement and cultivation of soil encouraged rainfall. As long as people plowed fields, they believed water would come. It’s a foolish idea, right? But, how far have we really deviated from this way of thinking?

In one of Canada’s hottest and driest climatic regions, community growth and development in British Columbia’s Southern Interior continues despite limited and drawn out sources of water. This presents many unique design challenges to landscape professionals.

One of our biggest challenges is, has been, and always will be water conservation. If you asked British Columbians, most would say that water is our most precious resource and yet we are embarrassingly one of the world’s largest per-capita users of domestic water. Not surprisingly, within our province, Kelowna is one of the largest users at an ►

average daily water use of 460 litres per person. To put it in perspective, the average water use of just one Kelowna resident in a week could fill an Olympic-size swimming pool! Approximately 60 to 80% of our water use in the summer months is a result of landscape watering. With these statistics in mind, it's easy to see that landscape professionals in the Interior are tasked with the design challenge of creating meaningful open spaces, with the added responsibility of creating sustainable spaces that consider the sensitive conservation of our water resources.

To simplify, there are three landscape components requiring special consideration when attempting to meet water conservation goals.

- **PLANT SELECTION.** The types of plants chosen for a site directly impacts the amount of water required to maintain the proposed landscape. In the Southern Interior, a shift is occurring away from the use of climatically inappropriate, high water use planting. Instead, we are seeing more drought tolerant and native alternatives such as sedums, native roses, and ornamental grasses.
- **SOIL.** Growing medium quality and depth is very important to the success of a water conscious landscape. It can reduce runoff, retain large amounts of water, and store moisture for drought periods. The use of mycorrhizae in the soil can even further improve water retention.
- **IRRIGATION DESIGN.** Often considered an afterthought, landscape irrigation design should not be ignored. Even with the use of drought tolerant planting and excellent growing mediums, an inefficient irrigation system can erase efforts to conserve water. The Irrigation Industry Association of British Columbia, along with its members, is continually making strides to improve the industry and encourage education and development of new technologies to increase irrigation efficiency.

Many developers, municipalities, and institutions seeking to lessen their environmental impact and help preserve our delicate water

systems have turned to landscape architectural firms, including OutLand Design Landscape Architecture to come up with innovative designs and practical detailing to achieve their landscape and irrigation goals.

Recently, the Regional District of Central Okanagan Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the City of Kelowna Design and Construction Services Division, tasked OutLand Design to prepare concept design options for Gerstmar Park, a 1.3 hectare park property located adjacent to the Mission Creek Greenway. Continuing on with detailed design, new initiatives developed by the City of Kelowna Water Smart program were implemented, including the preparation of irrigation hydrozone plans and water conservation calculations to ensure the park design was meeting targets to reduce water use by 15 to 30%. These targets were easily met due to creative design and use of native dryland grasses, low water use planting, adequate growing medium, and high efficiency irrigation products.

Using these same principles, the City of Kelowna and OutLand Design set out to develop a highly aesthetic, but functional landscape and irrigation design for a multi-use corridor located on Cawston Avenue. This multi-use corridor connects the downtown area to an existing city wide network; in 2010 alone, the City of Kelowna added 11 kilometres of off-road, alternative transportation corridors to this network. Similar to many other landscaped boulevards, turf was chosen for the majority of the site in order to alleviate maintenance concerns. However, with water conservation in mind, a subsurface drip irrigation system was designed for approximately 1 kilometre of turf boulevard to minimize water loss from runoff, overspray, and evaporation. This subsurface drip irrigation system has an application efficiency of 95% compared to only 70% with the more common spray system, saving an estimated 700,000 litres of water per year.

At the University of British Columbia's Okanagan Campus, detailed design for the new LEED® Gold targeted Health Sciences Centre has been completed and construction is under way. Water conscious landscape

design elements include a custom extensive green roof system, drought tolerant vegetation chosen for year-round interest, and dryland grass areas to blend into the surrounding Okanagan landscape.

Located at the southernmost end of the Okanagan Valley, the Town of Oliver has a long history of water conservation efforts dating back to its agricultural heritage. The renovation project for the South Okanagan Secondary School gave an opportunity for School District #53, in consultation with OutLand Design, to bolster its rich history. Site planning of the school incorporated landscape design elements such as a water rill, which mimics the many kilometres of canals built in and around Oliver in the early 1900s to bring irrigation water for fruit production. While these elements were planned purely for aesthetic purposes, a resourceful use of reclaimed water was planned to lower the potable water requirements for the school. Since the 1980s, Oliver has treated their sewage and used it for irrigation in their cemetery, airport, golf courses, and parks. The South Okanagan Secondary School will be the first school in Oliver to utilize this irrigation source. As the community grows, more water will become available for irrigation purposes.

In summary, it's now the 21st Century, and we know that water won't always be there when we need it; we have to be creative and find practical approaches to either minimize our water requirements or find alternative sources to make up for our deficits. The Southern Interior, along with the rest of British Columbia, is facing an ongoing challenge to protect and maintain our waterways while continuing to expand and develop our communities. With imaginative ideas and thoughtful design, landscape professionals can provide the pivotal steps necessary to accomplish objectives for landscape design and water conservation. **SL**

Steve Petryshyn, BCSLA Associate and Senior Landscape Technologist with Outland Design Landscape Architecture, is a graduate of Northern Alberta Institute of Technology's Landscape Architectural Technology Program and is Certified Irrigation Designer.

KELOWNA CITY PARK

By Frank Pohland, BES, Designer

City Park is Kelowna's oldest park. It is a special place in the downtown with a picturesque waterfront setting, a heritage landscape character, a rich history of community events, and a broad user appeal for both local residents and tourists.



CTQ Consultants Ltd. was commissioned by the City of Kelowna in 2007 to prepare a Master Plan for City Park which identified numerous improvements within the park primarily associated with the perimeter and the waterfront areas. A significant public process culminated in a Concept Plan which honours and respects the past, capturing elements of the aquatic events that once dominated the water's edge while also creating an ambitious vision for future improvements and additions to the park experience.

The improvements proposed for City Park, as part of the Concept Plan, focus on the park's waterfront edge between the walkway and the waterline, and in special instances, into and over Okanagan Lake. These improvements include:

- A wider, special paving, multi-use promenade along the lake side of the park. Introducing more opportunities for formal and informal seating areas and creating a further expansion of the cenotaph area.
- Development of a new aquatics venue at the site of the historic pavilion, including a swimming area, diving platform, swim dock, and a tiered lawn viewing and observation area. (The Kelowna Aquatic Centre had burned to the ground in June 1969.)
- A public gathering place and panoramic viewpoint where Hot Sands Beach and Cold Sands Beach meet. A cable suspension boardwalk is envisioned, eliminating the need for post supports into the lake and creating a unique landmark feature for this prominent area of the park.
- Replacement of the existing playground with a single, large, multi-age playground including play equipment and activities within the greenspace, on the beach and into the lake.
- A family picnic area located between the proposed playground and the existing water park.
- Improvements to the fisheries habitat along Cold Sands Beach.
- Redevelopment of the existing washrooms/change room facility at Hot Sands Beach. ▶



Top Image: Kelowna Aquatic Centre in the 1950s. Photo courtesy of Kelowna Public Archives #1010.

Bottom Image: Courtesy of Frank Pohland.



In 2008, construction began on the first phase of the City Park Concept Plan. This project was initiated to address the impacts to the park of the realignment of Highway 97 through the south end of the park, to accommodate the vehicular approaches to the new William R. Bennett Bridge. The existing sports field, track oval, and numerous trees would be compromised with this new road alignment.

The project included the relocation and reconstruction of the sports field, construction of new parking area, access road, and, small watercraft drop-off area. A new outdoor basketball court, additional beach volleyball courts, site furniture, lighting, and significant landscape improvements were also part of the construction project.

The new sports field parking area was an ideal opportunity to construct the parking stalls using permeable AquaPave®, the first application of its kind in a park within the City of Kelowna. The use of these pervious pavers eliminated the need for a conventional piped storm drainage system for the parking and access road area of the park.

Phase 1 of the City Park improvements includes a 4 metre wide multi-use concrete walkway connecting the tunnel under the William R. Bennett Bridge approach with the existing park concession building.

In addition to providing a scenic lakeside promenade for pedestrians, cyclists, and special user groups, the walkway portrays the dynamic nature of the shorezone.

The patterns represent the curvilinear ripples formed in beach sand by wind and wave action, coupled with the radiating ripple effects formed when a raindrop strikes the surface of the lake.

This graceful flowing pattern is contrasted by another section of the walkway illustrating a rigidly linear pattern. This portion of the walkway is a schematic representation of the adjacent cottonwoods, captured as shadows on the walkway surface.

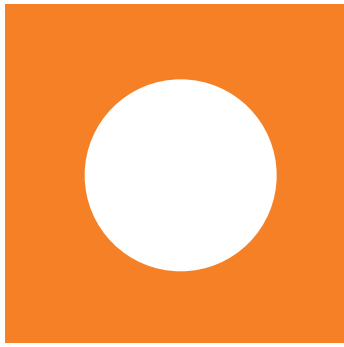
The unique walkway patterning results is a lively interaction of shapes and colors reflecting the active nature of this area of City Park, the energy of the adjacent sport venues, the playful popularity of the Hot



Top Image: Kelowna Aquatic Centre in 1938. Photo courtesy of Kelowna Public Archives #659.

Bottom Image: Courtesy of Frank Pohland.

Sands Beach, with the curving form of the William R. Bennett Bridge serving as a backdrop. [SL](#)



KE- LOW- NA:

IN SEARCH OF A SENSE OF PLACE

By Gabe Ross, BCSLA Intern

From what I have read, in the “good old days” Kelowna was a small utilitarian agricultural town that had the fortune of being located in a spectacular setting with a relatively friendly climate. From the comfort of modern day life it sounds like a ridiculously romantic setting: pristine beaches, the vibrant green of orchards on the valley flats set amongst the tans and greens of Ponderosa and grassland covered hills, stern wheel paddle steamers linking small communities up and down the lake. By virtue of the Valley’s isolation, the communities within had to be largely self sufficient.

This image, while likely highly idealized, gives us cues for building a strong identity and theme on which Kelowna and the wider communities of Okanagan Lake could build upon.

Following World War II and the opening up of new transportation corridors to the west and east along with a bridge linking across Lake Okanagan, Kelowna experienced significant growth and over the past 20 years has evolved into a popular holiday and retirement destination—a, “playground for the people of the prairies.”

While orcharding and more recently viticulture continue to play a highly visible and highly marketable role in the Okanagan economy, tourism and the “farming of people” has become in many ways a more dominant force shaping the landscape. Residential developments continue to march up the hills on all sides while downtown, the cluster of high-rise condos around the North end of Downtown continues to grow. This highly seasonal change in population is reflected in the few apartments with lights on outside of the summer

months and presents a challenge in building a strong, diverse and engaged community.

The downtown, while anchored as always by the picturesque Lake Okanagan, is a little worse for wear. Many businesses struggle to compete with the convenience of the malls and combat perceived issues such as lack of parking and safety concerns associated with transients and drug use. Notwithstanding this there are a variety of locally owned and operated stores that offer an alternate to the strip malls which, in combination with attractions such as the Rotary Marshlands, the Cultural Precinct, and the various waterfront parks offer the bones of a vibrant downtown.

Back to the Future

One great opportunity for Kelowna lies in building and to an extent recreating connections between not just terrestrial amenities and attractions within city limits but also reaching back to the historic vernacular of a working waterfront and an interconnected Okanagan Valley. The Lake can be recast as not just pretty scenery or somewhere to spend the day waterskiing or fishing, but a viable transportation option. A place where residents and visitors can take their boat or a water taxi and cruise to a variety of destinations around the lake where day moorage gives access to waterfront development nodes with restaurants, cafes, and other recreational amenities but also launch points for people to ride, walk, or catch public transit to other inland destinations.

Imagine staying in a B&B in Peachland and catching a water taxi to West Kelowna to visit a farmers market and a winery for brunch before skipping across to Downtown

Kelowna for some shopping and a concert. Combining the collective amenities of the Lake’s various communities would have an impact much greater than the sum of the individual components.

Complementing the concept of a network of waterfront destinations is the interconnection of the existing land based assets and amenities. Exciting progress to this end has already begun with the City of Kelowna recently adopting a progressive OCP that amongst many positive goals and policies fosters multi-modal and active transportation options. Under this framework, the federal grants of the last two years instigated several off-road multiuse pathway projects that have recently been completed. These have been eagerly adopted by cyclists, joggers, and rollerbladers, and personally, make the bike ride to work and downtown much safer and enjoyable.

Growth nodes such as the Pandosy Village are developing into vibrant walkable urban precincts with easy access to the waterfront and downtown. Pandosy is increasingly becoming a desirable location for both business and residents evidenced by the continuing construction of innovative mixed use developments such as Sopa Square despite the economic slowdown. Accompanying this seems to be a growing sense of community and an increasing level of civic involvement and activism. This is evidenced by standing-room-only public hearings for new development and park proposals and open house attendees of all ages who are both familiar and enthusiastic about concepts of urban design and sustainability—and not just there for the free food! ▶



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I recently had the privilege of assisting an Urban Forum Associates lead team facilitate a charrette event as part of a new Downtown Plan for Kelowna. The stakeholder and community representatives were again highly motivated and engaged and established a degree of consensus even on very polarising topics such as building heights and density. The process was very well received by the community and the Council and will form the basis for staff to formulate the new downtown plan over the coming months.

I am under no illusions that in order to realize some of the goals I describe here, Kelowna still faces a great number of challenges moving forward. However, given a positive political climate, the creative talents of both our design professionals and an engaged community, it feels like we are moving in the right direction of (re)building and capitalizing on its unique environmental and cultural heritage character to create a truly distinctive sense of place. **SL**

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STUART PARK Phase 1

Kelowna, BC

PROJECT OWNER City of Kelowna

PROJECT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT Stantec Consulting Ltd.



Foreshore restoration. Terry Klassen, MBCSLA.

Designed as a proud BC Spirit Square, Stuart Park, Phase 1, is an all-season civic centerpiece on Kelowna's waterfront, showcasing the city's natural beauty.

The City's aim was to implement their vision for an urban waterfront park that could bring new life to the heart of Kelowna's shoreline, and connect existing pedestrian routes along the waterfront.

Once a prominent brownfield site, this is a park redevelopment that achieves ecological net gain through enhanced foreshore habitat. Providing spaces for community activities and cultural events, featuring

public art, and celebrating local history, were also key goals of this redevelopment.

Directly across the street from Kelowna City Hall, Stuart Park provides public space for community gatherings, civic functions, and performance events. The design creates axial visual connections to and from City Hall and to the Law Courts. The "Kelowna Bear" sculpture completes these sight lines, encompassing the Ice Plaza and Civic Awards Plaza. ▶

The park offers opportunities for year-round activity and visual interest, reflecting the natural and cultural landscapes of the community. The public event space responds to the tourism mandate of the park. This is a place to celebrate local heritage and culture, and an area is specially designated to recognize community investment, volunteerism, and civic service. City of Kelowna corporate branding is reflected in civic award plaques, banners, and heritage-themed graphics throughout the park.

A waterfront promenade connects adjoining urban parks, establishing a sensitive interface with riparian and aquatic environments. Places to touch and connect with the waters of Lake Okanagan are integrated. An expanded free-water environmental zone within the Kelowna Yacht Club boat basin was created by moving one of the existing docks to deeper water.

An all-season feature of the park is a refrigerated surface for ice skating in winter which also acts as the civic plaza throughout the rest of the year. A dual-use, off-site refrigeration chiller facility located across the street, serves a cooling function at City Hall during the summer and powers the ice plaza during winter. The park also offers amenities including public washrooms, utility, storage, and a green-room for performers.

The design of Stuart Park is capable of expansion and addressing future demands

without diminishing its design integrity. As a highly functional and aesthetically sophisticated urban park, it aims to act as a catalyst for future waterfront investment and downtown development.

Stuart Park has been recognized this year by the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA) with a Regional Award of Honour for design.

Stantec's landscape architects, working with the City of Kelowna, managed the full design process, facilitated regulatory approvals, and coordinated the work of the project team

from concept through design development and detailed design, tendering, and construction services.

The Stuart Park project was a collaborative effort with the City of Kelowna and the many consultants and contractors involved leading up to the project and through to completion, including Durante Kreuk Ltd., MMM Group Ltd. (formerly Site360 Consulting), Bevanda Architecture Inc., Ecoscapes Environmental, Mid-Ocean Studios, Custom Ice Inc., Beacon Geotechnical, DnA Irrigation Design, PCL Westcoast Inc., and West-Wind Nurseries & Landscape Ltd. **SL**

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