

# Profile

SHOWCASING CANADA'S INDUSTRY LEADERS



Toronto



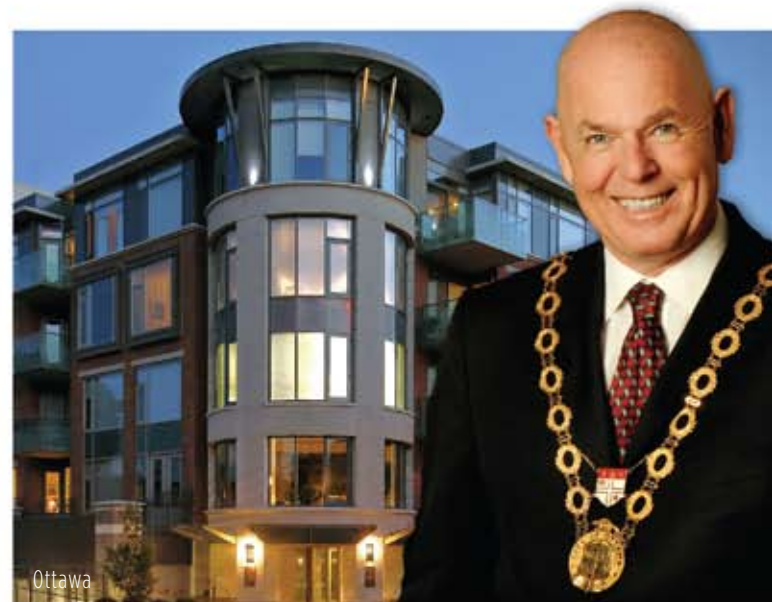
Mississauga

## URBAN DESIGN AWARDS

2 0 0 9



Hamilton



Ottawa

# Artscape Wychwood Barns

## HONOURABLE MENTION

Building in Context | Public

601 Christie Street

Joe Lobko Architect Inc. /  
du Toit Architects Limited

The architects' vision for Artscape Wychwood Barns involved bringing together a number of elements to foster a greater sense of community, including arts and culture, environmental leadership, heritage preservation, urban agriculture and affordable housing. Artscape Wychwood Barns is home to artists with families, individual artists, and several non-profit arts and environmental organizations.

"The key goal was to provide an affordable space for community-based arts, environmental, educational and recreational groups and services," said Joe Lobko, Architect and Partner, du Toit Architects Ltd. "We also wanted to preserve an important part of our building heritage and demonstrate best practices in sustainability design."

Artscape Wychwood Barns, located at 601 Christie Street in Toronto, officially opened on November 20, 2008. The redesigned facility is a 60,000 square foot multi-purpose community centre. It is surrounded by a new city park, which includes a children's play area, open sports field, natural ice rink, off-leash dog area, beach volleyball court and picnic tables.

The Wychwood barns were built from 1913 to 1921, and consisted of five attached brick buildings that ranged from 198 to 326 feet long and 38 to 44 feet wide. They originally served as the hub of the Toronto Civic Railway. From 1921 to 1979, the TTC used the barns as streetcar houses. During their peak, the barns serviced 10 routes and 167 streetcars. In the 1980s, they



were used as a testing and development facility for new streetcars and retrofitted Scarborough rapid transit trains.

In 2001, after the barns sat unused for decades, Artscape began working with the City of Toronto and The Stop Community Food Centre to redesign and repurpose the buildings as part of a community development project. Following a feasibility study, the City of Toronto chose Artscape as the preferred proponent for the site's redevelopment. Construction began in March 2007 and was completed in October 2008.

The Toronto Urban Design Awards jury commended the successful transformation of Artscape Wychwood Barns into a "veritable community centre that is vibrant, inviting and accessible." The jury appreciated the designers' adherence to the site's industrial heritage, its approach to adaptive reuse of the buildings, and the appropriate use of spare and raw materials in strategic locations. The Barns are considered to be an integral part of Toronto's transit history and the surrounding neighbourhood.

"One of the largest challenges was the heritage restoration of the existing structures," said Mike Pharant, Project Manager, The Dalton

Company Ltd. "The existing roof provided the greatest challenge. To overcome this, we worked closely with the project team to find cost-effective solutions that stayed within boundaries of the heritage requirements."

Environmental sustainability was a key feature in the redesign of the Artscape Wychwood Barns. It is the first designated heritage site in Canada to seek LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification. Some of the environmentally friendly features include geothermal heating, ventilation and air conditioning; storm water harvesting and reuse system; potable water use reduction systems; a white roof for reducing the heat island effect; energy efficient lighting and appliances; and 100% recycled plastic siding panels.

"We went in with the objective of LEED Gold certification," said Lobko. "Besides the geothermal system, we installed a water harvesting system that allows us to use roof water to flush toilets and irrigate. Reusing, instead of demolishing, a wonderful old building helped, as did materials specifications emphasizing high recycled content. With no parking on site, there will also be a reliance on public transportation for access." **P**

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The Dalton Company Ltd. has been providing professional building services for 70 years.

The Urban Design Award for Artscape Wychwood Barns is a success Dalton proudly shares with Joe Lobko and du Toit Architects Ltd.

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## Spadina Wavedeck

### AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

#### Building in Context | Small Open Space

Spadina Avenue and Queen's Quay  
West 8 / DTAH

It is no small feat to design an aesthetically pleasing structure that works within the highly visible Toronto waterfront district. The Spadina WaveDeck, located at Spadina Avenue and Queen's Quay in Toronto, is part of the master plan to revitalize the city's central waterfront area.

"The wavedecks provide an opportunity to extend the public realm at formerly cramped heads of slips by creating a unique family of timber structures that celebrate the north-south street termini along Queens Quay," said Adam Nicklin, Principal, du Toit Allsopp Hillier (DTAH). "In addition to stitching together the major public spaces along the waterfront, these uniquely Canadian structures create continuity along the waterfront through their instantly recognizable form and materiality."

The Spadina WaveDeck, completed in September 2008, is the first in a series of similar construction ventures along the central Toronto waterfront. The 630 square meter wooden wavedeck replaces a narrow sidewalk and provides a new waterside gathering place, offering public access to the lake.

"The form of the wavedecks derives its inspiration from the contours of the shorelines of the Canadian Lakefront, realized in a robust timber



approach," said Nicklin. "The final geometry for the wavedeck integrates a curving step / ramp structure that proves that innovative design and accessibility can co-exist harmoniously."

The Toronto Urban Design Awards jury was impressed with the design and execution of the Spadina WaveDeck. The design was inventive, appropriate for the area, and beautifully executed.

Other issues to overcome designing the wavedeck were, structures built on or near the lake have to withstand constant environmental wear and tear from the water spray, waves, wind, and winter freezes. As such, all elements of the wavedeck were constructed to last at least 50 years in a harsh environment.

"The WaveDeck is engineered to be supported by the dock walls themselves, which in turn were reinforced to take their shelf life beyond that of the deck itself – a truly robust structure," explained Nicklin. "Further, the aquatic habitat below the deck is integrated into the ecology of the adjacent Spadina wetlands, a fish spawning habitat." **P**