

News Release

April 9, 2010

Construction set to start on Nathan Phillips Square revitalization

Today, Mayor David Miller officially launched the construction kickoff to revitalize Toronto's greatest public space, Nathan Phillips Square.

From 2010 to 2012, the City of Toronto will reinvigorate Nathan Phillips Square to restore its beauty and dignity, preserve and enhance its unique heritage qualities, and reintroduce it as a more functional and environmentally sustainable public meeting place.

Nathan Phillips Square is literally the face of Toronto and where we welcome the world," said Mayor David Miller. "I am pleased we are revitalizing Nathan Phillips Square to make it a more vibrant, beautiful and green square for future generations. From ushering in the new year to skating under its Freedom Arches, visiting Nathan Phillips Square has become one of the Toronto things to do. Its exciting to see it get enhanced and beautified with new features that will increase its functionality and improve its environmental sustainability.

Nathan Phillips Squares revitalization will transform it into a more vibrant urban square for the more than 1.5 million people who visit it yearly. Included in the project is a new, state-of-the-art permanent theatre stage for various events, a relocated and enhanced Peace Garden, a new two-level restaurant, a new visitor information kiosk, and a new skate pavilion. The City will also reintroduce the squares overhead walkways with new furniture, landscaping and connections to the second levels of the new restaurant and skate pavilion, which will provide panoramic views of activities on the square.

Also included in the revitalization are plans to transform Nathan Phillips Square into an urban forest in the middle of downtown Toronto, with more trees, landscaped gardens and advanced systems for soil regeneration and stormwater management.

Were literally going to breathe new life into the square, said Scott Mullin, Chair of the Public Advisory Group for the project. Soon, Torontonians will be able to welcome visitors and residents to this revitalized civic square that will inspire through its design and consideration for the environment.

The start of construction comes after the City held an international design competition in 2006-2007 and chose the winning architectural design in 2007. From 48 submissions from around the world, the competition jury selected a forward-thinking, innovative design from the team led by Plant Architect Inc. & Shore Tilbe Irwin & Partners.

In 2009, the City began the implementation of the revitalizations prelude project - the City Hall Podium Green Roof, which will be officially opened at this years Doors Open Toronto as the city's largest publicly accessible green roof.

Since 1965, the Toronto City Hall and Nathan Phillips Square complex has inspired and captivated the world with its unique and modern design. While the square has many successful attributes, the City has long recognized that some of its features have been underdeveloped and poorly used since the square was originally designed by Finnish architect Viljo Revell. Modern-day alterations and upgrades are required to meet the new functional requirements of the square and allow a greater variety of activities and special events.

Every great city has a great public square, said Councillor Kyle Rae (Ward 27 Toronto Centre-Rosedale). Once its done, the revitalized square will become a renewed source of pride as we showcase this important landmark to the world.

More information is available at <http://www.toronto.ca/nps>.

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of about 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. Toronto has won numerous awards for quality, innovation and efficiency in delivering public services. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents. For information about non-emergency City services and programs, Toronto residents, businesses and visitors can dial 311, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

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