



CONSIDERING THE TOWN SQUARE

What makes a community flourish? Throughout history, cities and towns have provided communal space for people to interact and provide for themselves and one another. Such places have a role in fostering a sense of belonging, socializing and connecting with the natural environment. Often these places are taken for granted and allowed to shrink or decay. This series re-imagines what could be.

SEPT 09, 2021 TOWN SQUARE 2.0: RE-IMAGINING OUR CIVIC COMMONS

Marina Queirolo & Sue Lantz

Historically, the municipal town square's role was to provide a public space where residents gathered, did commerce, and engaged in the city's political life. Fast forward to 2021, the COVID pandemic has demonstrated the importance of public space, including natural environments, and presents an opportunity to re-imagine our civic commons. By showcasing global and local examples, we hope to inspire action and demonstrate the potential of participatory placemaking processes that enable residents to co-create inclusive public spaces that foster beneficial social connections in our everyday lives.

SEPT 16, 2021 plazaPOPS: TACTICAL URBANISM IN STRIP MALL PARKING LOT

Brendan Stewart & Daniel Rotsztain

plazaPOPS is a design research initiative that proposes a new type of community gathering space within the privately owned parking lots of commercial strip-malls in Toronto's inner suburbs. The talk will give an overview of ideas that motivate the project, describe lessons learned from the six-week pilot project installed during the summer of 2019, and outline next steps.

SEPT 23, 2021 CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH PLACE

Jane Welsh

Why is Toronto North America's fastest growing city? One of the key reasons is livability and sense of community – much of which can be attributed to a strong legacy of forward-thinking public policy. This has resulted in quality public spaces that foster connections between people and opportunities for community building. Learn about the past, present and emerging approaches the City is taking to provide for and protect these important spaces.

SEPT 30, 2021 COMMEMORATIVE AND HEALING SPACES

Paul Brydges

To create a functional public space, we should not only be looking at the user: but also creating an opportunity to create or enhance community interaction / engagement with existing facilities. Parks that work in collaboration with existing facilities can double as green space for the facility and tend to see more use based on societal needs. I will look at many small parks and public spaces in Hanover, ON and surrounding area to give some background on this discussion.

OCT 07, 2021 THOSE PEOPLE

Francesca Dobbyn

Community spaces are for everyone, or are they? Conflict of purpose can arise when different groups perceive a different purpose for a community space. Who are the people in your neighbourhood? What happens when you create the most amazing public space, a civic commons...but people show up and start using it? And then a Pandemic hits and all the understood rules change. Explore the impact of the public in public spaces. How do we create common spaces that everyone can feel comfortable using? Who are those people? Why are they there? Take a peek beyond the drive-thru and get to know your neighbours.

OCT 14, 2021 CIVIC COMMONS: BYZANTIUM TO ISTANBUL... BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO PROMOTE MULTICULTURALISM.

Mert Tanner (Zooming from Turkey)

Turkey is a country that has brought together a diverse ethnic, religious and cultural population. Geographically, Turkey spans the continents of Europe and Asia and shares a border with Syria, Iraq, Iran, Armenia, Georgia, Greece and Bulgaria. Constantinople, now known as Istanbul, has been the epicenter of the Christian faith, later Islam and is not a secular country. The history of Turkey runs deep with national, religious and ethnic clashes. But how did Turkey achieve this diversity without fracturing their country. What part does the Civic Commons play in bringing people together as a nation to an accepted harmony?