

20TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

spacing

#65 / 2023 / SPACING.CA

TORONTO URBANISM UNCOVERED



EMILY
MAY
ROSE



EAST BAYFRONT

YOU PARTIED HERE **IN THE 90s**

The Great Lakes Brewpub opened in 2022 and stands proudly on the grounds where a Toronto-famous nightclub complex once existed. Any Torontonians who partook in music venue culture in the two decades leading up to the turn of the millennium will have fond memories of late night revelry at Kool Haus (formerly The Warehouse), and The Guvernment (formerly RPM).

More than just a place to enjoy quality beer and good eats from a sustainably sourced menu, Great Lakes Brewpub is a community cornerstone in the newly built East Bayfront neighbourhood where residents and visitors alike come together to sample from the 20 taps, snack on some pizza and smash burgers, and to relive the fun and carefree spirit of years past.

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TORONTO



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by **SHAWN MICALLEF**
+ **MELISSA JANE TAYLOR**

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OPENING SALVO

Sneak Peek



After an initial meeting in September 2002 to explore the idea of creating a magazine, it took about 16 months to launch *Spacing*. Our editors spent loads of time conceptualizing the sections, features, and themes that we wanted to cover while also hunting down potential contributors. About a year into the process we had the bones of the magazine ready to share with the public.

In the fall of 2003, at the annual indie-publishing festival Canzine, we handed out a sneak preview of *Spacing* in a lo-fi zine format. Designed in portrait orientation, photocopied in black-and-white, and coming in at only eight pages, it included an introduction from editor Dale Duncan, a synopsis of the anti-postering bylaw being promoted at City Hall (the focus of our cover section), and a few short features on public art, an overlooked cemetery, and city councillors whom we identified as public-space enemies. The free copies allowed editors to engage with new readers about our mandate and goals, while also allowing us to promote the launch coming that December.

Only 100 copies were produced, with only a few remaining in the *Spacing* “legacy box” (actually multiple bankers’ boxes with the word “LEGACY” scrawled on each with a Sharpie). The zine is a reminder of the magazine’s humble beginnings and the independent publishing spirit that continues to power *Spacing*. 🦋



**DYLAN
REID**

Executive Editor

Persistence pays off



Twenty-one years ago, I read an article about the Toronto Public Space Committee in *Eye Weekly*. Intrigued, I visited their website (back in web 1.0 days) and, poking around, came across an obscure page that mentioned starting a magazine. I wrote to the generic email address and suggested I could write about some interesting public space projects in other cities that I'd heard about. Instead, I was invited to an organizing meeting at a picnic bench in Grange Park, and then just kept going to the biweekly evening meetings. Dozens of people floated in and out of those meetings in living rooms of cheap downtown apartments over the next year and a bit. By the end, there were just a few of us left, but we'd produced the first issue of a magazine we dubbed *Spacing*.

A lot has changed over the past 20 years in Toronto. For one thing, there are a lot fewer cheap apartments downtown — I'm not sure it would even be possible to reproduce the circumstances that enabled *Spacing's* long foundation process. But there have also been some improvements — a lot more, and better, bike lanes, for example. If *Spacing* can take direct credit for a few things (see page 28), we also like to think that our existence shifted the urban discussion, getting the public, staff, and politicians to take public space issues seriously.

Our model is possibly unique — there are international print magazines that cover urban issues, city print magazines that cover real estate, politics, and lifestyles, and websites that cover urban issues in particular cities. But there aren't a lot, if any, print magazines that focus on urbanism, and especially public space, in a specific city-region. And that also run a retail store while they're at it.

We usually tell other people's stories, but this anniversary issue is a chance to tell our own story, to look back and celebrate our two decades of existence. It's also a chance to have some fun, as we have in past anniversary issues, with features like imagined covers from a century of *Spacing*. This issue starts introspectively, with the magazine itself — our origins and evolution, and some of the

impact we've had. Then we pull out to get some outside perspectives on *Spacing*. Finally, we look at the broader landscape, taking the opportunity to be positive, such as what has changed in the city for the better, and profiling some of the people we've worked with and admired.

Looking back to our foundation, we were filled with a spirit of optimism, which is recalled and captured in some of the pieces in this issue. Even at our tenth anniversary, in the midst of Rob Ford madness, that positive spirit persisted to some extent. As John Lorinc notes in his column (see page 26), that spirit has sadly been deadened, both by years of a do-little mayor and Council under John Tory, and also by a housing-affordability crisis, a pandemic, a hostile provincial government, and other problems that seem all-encompassing. But we're here, in part, to sustain the optimism we launched with.

Spacing too has had its ups and downs. Ten years ago, our magazines were thick tomes, we'd expanded from a biannual to a quarterly publication that included national issues, and our blog network stretched across Canada. Along with other print media, over the next ten years we had to scale back our size to a more standard number of pages (although we've expanded for this issue!) and pull back on the blogs, while the pandemic put an end to our national issues.

Despite these challenges, as they say, we persist, and are even thriving, thanks to our subscribers, readers, podcast listeners, and customers. Our blogs for Toronto and Vancouver are lively and widely read. We've started publishing a series of beautifully designed and award-winning books. Our podcast series has gone from strength to strength. And the store continues to be the destination for all things Toronto for residents and tourists alike.

Toronto, too, persists. Its problems are, in part, a result of so many people wanting to be here because it is an attractive place to live, work, and play. As with our initial launch in 2003, we are celebrating our 20th anniversary right after the election of a new, progressive mayor who appreciates the importance of public spaces, ending an era of penny-pinching and narrowmindedness. Underneath the big crises, good things have been happening throughout the city (see page 44). Now, as in 2003, Toronto has big problems, but also enormous potential. We plan to continue influencing the discussion and helping to realize that potential. ↑

FEATURED CONTRIBUTORS



Edward Keenan

Ed is a city columnist for the *Toronto Star*, and was the newspaper's *Washington Bureau Chief* from 2019–2022. He's the author of the books *Some Great Idea: Good Neighbourhoods*, *Crazy Politics*, and *The Invention of Toronto*, and *The Art of the Possible: An Everyday Guide to Politics*.

✉ @thekeenanwire



Jeremy Hopkin

Jeremy is a Toronto-based artist and graphic designer, a local history aficionado, and the editor of the *Vintage Toronto* page on Facebook. His portfolio includes historical photo colorization, seen in *Spacing* on page 32.

✉ @jeremy_hopkin



Sakeina Syed

Sakeina is a Scarborough-based writer focusing on public policy and culture. She has written for *The New York Times*, *Toronto Star*, *Maisonneuve*, *Spacing* and others. Sakeina was an editorial fellow at *The Local*, and in 2023 received the *Canadian Association of Journalists (CAJ) Student Award of Excellence*.



Josh Sherman

Since getting his start in journalism as a *Spacing* intern in 2013, Josh's reporting has appeared in print and online in the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Globe & Mail*, *Toronto Life*, *VICE*, and many others. His fiction and poetry have also been published in a variety of journals.

✉ @joshxs Sherman

masthead & contact info on page 71

Dylan Reid is a co-founder of *Spacing*. He has also been its book-series editor, and is the author of the *Toronto Public Etiquette Guide*. He is a corecipient, with other *Spacing* editors, of the 2010 *Jane Jacobs Prize*.

✉ @Dylan_Reid

SPACING RADIO

Podcasts that explore 20 years

Our monthly podcast *Spacing Radio* features interviews with the people who have shaped Toronto's urban landscape for the last 20 years. The Q&A with former mayor David Miller on page 40 can be heard in its full length this fall on the podcast.

WEB: [Spacing.ca/podcast](https://spacing.ca/podcast)

SPACING.CA

Website features looking back

Spacing looks back at the popular blog articles that appeared exclusively on our web site. We explore TTC maps, renaming Metrolinx, where the heart of the city is located, and many other topics from our archive of over 10,000-plus posts.

WEB: [Spacing.ca/Toronto](https://spacing.ca/Toronto)

SPACING STORE

Rebirth of original merchandise

Before we opened a retail store at 401 Richmond selling a range of products from local vendors, we produced a number of our own merchandise items, many of which have been discontinued over the years. We've created new products inspired by our history but have also brought back *Metro Magnets* (magnetic poetry for transit-lovers), *Everyone is a Pedestrian* stickers, and the line of products emblazoned with the tagline *What Would Jane Jacobs Do?*

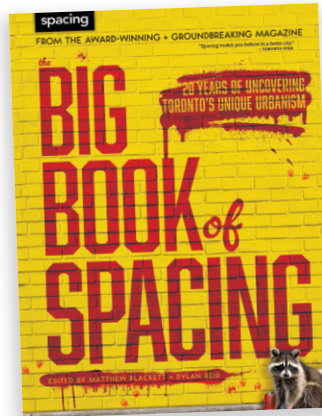
WEB: SpacingStore.ca

SOCIAL MEDIA



Spacing is unavailable on Instagram and Facebook due to the Government of Canada and Meta's dispute

FROM THE PUBLISHER



Our best from first 20 years

One of the things our editors love about producing a magazine is that we get to explore a range of topics four times a year. But some of the features deserve more than a few months of shelf life. Our staff went through over 2,200 magazine articles and 10,000-plus blog posts published over 20 years to find the most compelling stories and writing that best exemplified the magazine's approach to city-building and that demanded another read. *The Big Book of Spacing* — 248 full-colour pages — collects a range of features and photography that examines the story of Toronto and how the local urban landscape has shaped and shifted.

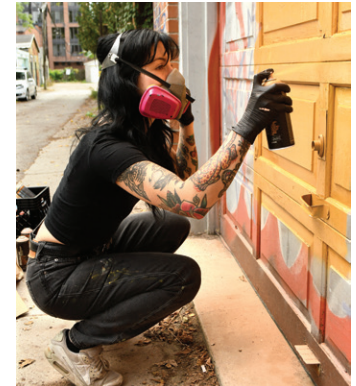
What about the next 20 years?

At some point during the early days of *Spacing*, when we were planning the business side of our operation, a challenge was posed to the editors: how long do you want to do this, and what are your long-term goals? We were only looking an issue or two into the future, forget years. But I remember doing the math in my head — I was 29 when *Spacing* launched, so that would make me 39 at our tenth anniversary, and 49 on our 20th.... That freaked me out. The success rate for magazines lasting beyond three years in Canada was less than 10%.

Yet, here we are and I'm on the verge of 50. But with longevity comes legacy, or a receding hairline and some good stories. As you go through this anniversary edition, you'll find that our long-term goals have not been those of a traditional magazine. We've launched numerous projects over the years that might've seemed out of our scope — like running three-day tours in American cities as we did for our Urbanism Road Trips, or opening a brick-and-mortar retail shop — but we did it because we were interested in exploring unique topics and engaging with the readers of our magazine in new ways while being open-minded about how we could sustain our business.

If the question was posed to our editors again — what are your long-term plans for *Spacing*? — we'd probably be as stumped as we were 20 years ago. Our only aim is to keep being a creative and thoughtful outlet for ideas about urbanism in Toronto and making the city a better place to live.

— Matthew Blackett



THE COVER

Raccoons and Emily May Rose

When planning began for this issue, *Spacing* editors knew the cover demanded something special in order to live up to the City Hall cake on the cover of our 10th anniversary edition. We decided to commission a garage door mural in a laneway to celebrate our roots of supporting urban artists and activating underused public spaces. We teamed up with Emily May Rose, a local artist best known for outdoor murals featuring a cast of recurring raccoon characters depicting humorous situations in the city. Her murals can be found all over the world, where she's painted in street art festivals, artist residencies, and other commissions during her various travels (she also opened Northern Contemporary, a gallery based in the Roncesvalles neighbourhood, in 2016).

This past summer, we asked *Spacing* subscribers to submit their garage doors for consideration for a free mural. With over 20 entries to select from, we landed on Joanne and Ted's garage near Little Italy, where Emily worked her magic on a beautiful October weekend.

INSTAGRAM: [@EmilyMayRose](https://www.instagram.com/EmilyMayRose)

ALSO: Watch a time-lapse of the cover be painted, on social media & [Vimeo.com/Spacing](https://vimeo.com/Spacing)



A TIMELINE OF SPACING

A graphical retelling of the magazine's unique history

September 2002

Meeting held at Grange Park to plan for a magazine

Weekly editorial meetings begin

"Spacing" is chosen from list of 15 names

Issue 1 published

Sneak peak 'zine of Spacing released at Canzine 2023

Spacing.ca launched

launch of daily blog, **Spacing Wire**

Spacing Votes election blog launched

Spacing Montreal blog launched

Spacing begins **3 issues/year**

Spacing Wire renamed **Spacing Toronto**

Spacing Atlantic blog launched

Spacing Ottawa blog launched

Spacing Votes election blog relaunched

1st national issue

Spacing Vancouver blog launched

Spacing begins **4 issues/year**

Best Canadian Magazine Website & Blog CSME 🏆

MAGAZINE

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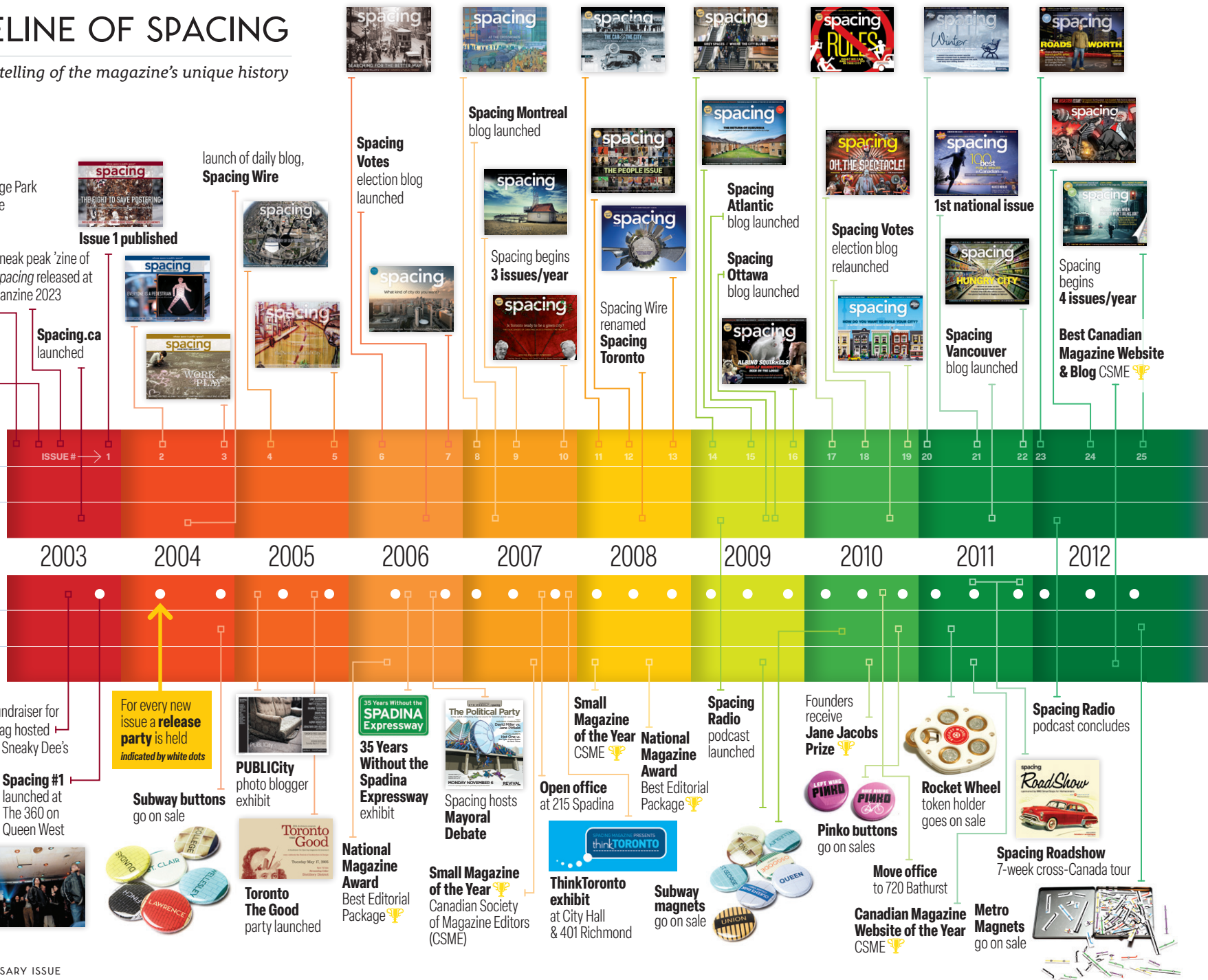
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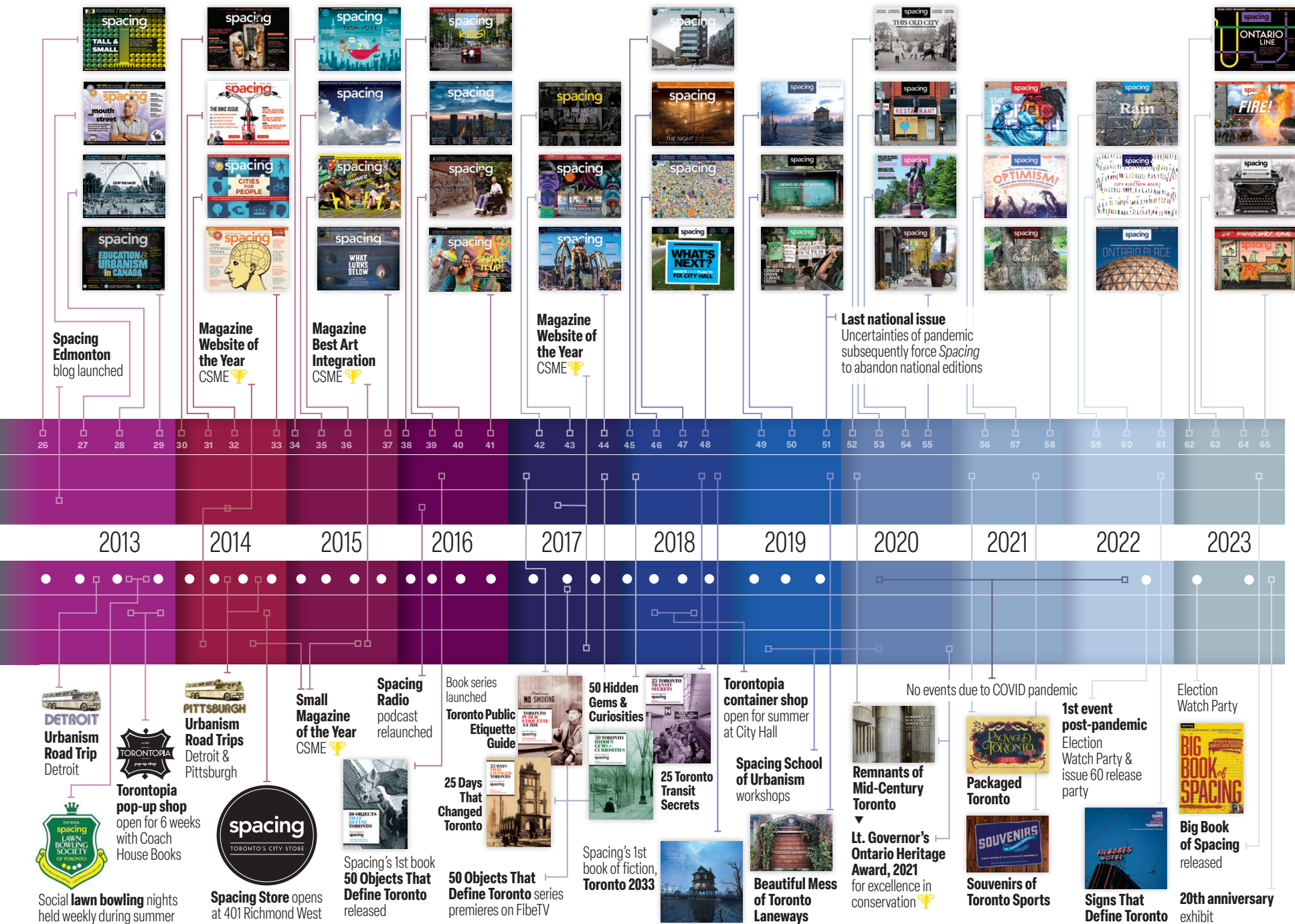
YEAR

EVENTS

RETAIL

AWARDS 🏆







Recon
VII

JOYNE SEX CLUB
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The issue that launched the 1st issue

BY TODD HARRISON

The cover section of the first issue of *Spacing* was about postering. It included a feature I wrote about a “sign harmonization” bylaw the City was trying to pass at the time, which would have made it illegal to hang posters on 99% of hydro poles across Toronto. As you might imagine, we called out this effort for the shortsighted, ham-fisted move that it was, and the proposed bylaw eventually went away.

In the years since, the rise of online options has caused the urgency of protecting the right to put up posters to fade as well. Yet posters have endured, and today they represent a tactile reminder of why public space matters, and who it’s truly for.

I learned about the postering bylaw — and was introduced to the world of civic engagement — as an aspiring reporter and musician. In the spring of 2002, I was wrapping up my journalism degree, which included writing an in-depth feature about activism coverage in alternative weeklies. Part of my research work meant joining some activist listservs (remember those?), and one post caught my eye because it seemed too ludicrous to be true. According to some guy named Dave Meslin, Toronto was trying to ban postering!?! This pissed me off on a personal level; I was just starting to play gigs all over the city back then, and I relied on postering to get the word out.

I reached out to Meslin (or Mez, as I quickly learned to call him), and he told me about the bylaw — and about an organization he’d started called the Toronto Public Space Committee (TPSC). I invited him to come to a show I was organizing the following week at Rancho Relaxo, so that he could share news about the postering ban and rally more musicians to his cause.

Two weeks later, I was standing on the corner of Queen West and Soho with Mez and some other TPSC people, collecting petition signatures and chatting amongst ourselves about what other things we might do to make the city a better place. A few months after that, frustrated

by the lack of media coverage about issues that mattered to us, we conceived of the idea of starting a magazine of our own — the 20th anniversary issue of which you now hold in your hands.

The launch of *Spacing*, and the fight against the postering bylaw, happened at a time when social media was a tiny baby version of what it has since become. There was no Facebook, no Twitter/X, and barely any prominent blogs. My musician friends and I relied on four things to promote our shows: word of mouth; email lists; online message boards like Secret Arcade (and later, 2ohz and Stillepost); and posters. There was no digital version of a universal gathering place, so posters served as the most important way to reach a wide audience. They were also far more eye-catching than an email message or a message board post; a good music poster is a work of art in and of itself, and we took pride in promoting ourselves in the cleverest and most beautiful way we could.

Fast-forward half a decade, though, and things looked radically different. News and events that people put up posters about, from upcoming gigs to lost cats, were now shared online. We still created posters, of course, but their importance was greatly diminished in favour of a digital commons. At first, this was a beautiful thing, but we all know what happened: once it was clear that there was enormous profit to be had from social media, organic content became commodified, and using online channels to promote one’s cause became a pay-to-play hellscape governed by bullshit like targeting, conversion rates, and keyword bidding.

As we promoters and communicators — musicians, community organizers, rabble rousers, and owners of lost pets alike — continue to trudge through the toxic sludge that social networks have become, we would be wise to remember that the humble poster has been here for us all along. In Toronto, we fought for, and won, the right to stick a piece of paper to a hydro pole (and, more recently, kiosk); let’s double down on that effort, and vow never to take that right for granted.

In the two decades since our first issue was released, we’ve covered many topics of far greater importance — issues that are a matter of literal life and death to Torontonians and beyond. But that said, postering remains a valuable link in the ethos of the *Spacing* DNA. They are the concept of “messy democracy,” manifest: a simple and powerful reminder of why and how small voices need a forum to be heard. And today, in a landscape dominated by billionaires profiteering from strident loudmouths barking their self-interest, it’s more important than ever for us to take the time to truly listen to those small voices, and do what we can to amplify them. 🦋

Todd Harrison is a co-founder and senior editor of Spacing. He’s also a musician, educator, community organizer, and proud dad of two city kids.



20 Objects that Define Spacing

After the release of our book *50 Objects That Define Toronto*, we ran a regular feature in the magazine for a few years showcasing other items from the City of Toronto's museum collection that were related to the theme of our cover section. In this issue, we're resurrecting the feature but turning the lens on our own archival materials to reveal objects that tell tidbits of the magazine's two-decade history.



ROOTS

Picnic table in Grange Park

In September 2002, a handful of members of the Toronto Public Space Committee met at a picnic table in Grange Park to discuss the merits of creating a magazine to explore ideas and topics about Toronto's public spaces.



MERCHANDISE

Subway buttons

In December of 2004, a year after launching *Spacing*, we released a set of buttons representing every Toronto subway station. They became one of the city's first products to go viral on the web: 30,000 buttons were sold within two months. Revenue from buttons sales outpaced magazine subscription sales for two years. The buttons continue to be the top-selling item at the Spacing Store, now with over one million buttons and magnets sold.



DIY ETHOS

Posters

Posters were the theme of the cover section in our first issue. In the early years of the magazine, we used posterizing as a way to promote our events, new issues, and public protest messages.

MORE ON POSTERS: *page 8*

STICKER

Everyone is a Pedestrian

The "Everyone Is A Pedestrian" sticker was one of the first merchandise items from *Spacing*. For years, you could find these stickers attached to downtown traffic light poles above the pedestrian crossing button.



DISTRIBUTION

Wike bike trailer

Before cargo bikes became widely available in the city, our staff would use this Wike bike trailer (built in Guelph) to cart boxes of magazines to stores, release parties, and Word On The Street events, often on foot, too. It took up an inordinate amount of space in our first, tiny office.



DISTRIBUTION

Canada Post bins

Our staff handled our own subscription mailing until 2014. This gave us a deeper understanding of our country's mailing system and familiarized us with these white plastic bins and Canada Post's massive South Central Letter Processing Plant near Eastern Ave. and Leslie St.



INTERVENTION

Painted bikes

Spacing, in collaboration with the City Beautification Ensemble (just two cool graffiti artists), hosted "Pedals & Paint" on two occasions in 2005, where we took readers around downtown and painted abandoned bikes and ring-and-posts in a single colour.

NEWSMAKERS

Newspaper clippings

After our launch, *Spacing* was successful in getting ourselves into the newspapers. We were demonstrating that residents and our readers were interested in the finer details of city building, so we became both a source of news and a curiosity to the older guard of local media. The impact of a feature in the *Toronto Star* or *Globe and Mail* could be felt instantly in our subscription and merchandise sales.



THE SPACING BANK

Money box

This money box was initially used by publisher Matthew Blackett during his independent comic publishing days pre-*Spacing*, and has been used at every release party and public event where our staff have handled cash. It was essentially the magazine's bank until our incorporation in 2007.

RELEASE PARTIES

Tablecloth

Since the launch of *Spacing*, this tablecloth (purchased in San Francisco by publisher Matthew Blackett) has been used at the door of parties and at merchandise tables for numerous events. For *Spacing* staff, it's a symbol of the earliest days of our public outreach.



20 Objects that Define Spacing

MERCHANDISE

Pinko buttons

Spacing was selling buttons on our website within an hour of Don Cherry deriding “bike riding, left-wing pinkos” at Rob Ford’s mayoral swearing-in ceremony. Within four hours, we had actual buttons for sale in three stores. In less than a week, 15,000 buttons were sold across North America.



MERCHANDISE

Streetcar t-shirts

The first *Spacing* t-shirt, created in 2007, depicted the silhouette of the now discontinued CLRV streetcar. Our staff wore these at public events, and it continues to sell well in our store.



MERCHANDISE

Rocket Wheel

In 2010, transit advocate Ed Drass stumbled upon a distributor in the United Kingdom with a surplus of obsolete token holders (UK systems had switched to card readers). The holder held Toronto’s token perfectly. *Spacing* bought the excess inventory — 10,000 units — and branded them as the Rocket Wheel.

We contemplated making our own mold of the holder, but by then the TTC and Metrolinx were far along on their way to eliminating this fare option.



POP-UP



Container shop

In the summer of 2018, *Spacing* operated a container pop-up on the steps of City Hall. For eight weeks, our staff ran Torontopia at Nathan Phillips Square. The plan was to open again in the summer of 2020, but the pandemic put a stop to that. We yearn to go back.

MOBILE SHOP

Spacing cargo bike

In the days before we had a permanent store, we used a customized cargo bike to act as a pop-up shop. We built a lid that could flip open and act as a display table. We used this at public events, bike tours, and as our “mascot” for the Spacing Store, where it was parked by the interior entrance to the shop. Sadly, the bike was stolen in 2020.



RETAIL

Spacing Store sign

After expanding our online store to include merchandise by other vendors in 2010, we operated a pop-up shop during the 2013 holiday season to gauge interest in a permanent store. The success of that venture inspired us to create the Spacing Store. We moved into 401 Richmond in November 2014.

MORE ON THE STORE: page 30





PUBLISHING

Magazine's shape

A landscape-oriented magazine is discouraged by distributors because it can be easily blocked by portrait-oriented magazines on the newsstand. Luckily, *Spacing* was in high demand and was often placed at the front of the magazine rack. The design and shape of *Spacing* has made it stand out in the publishing world and has garnered the magazine numerous design and newsstand awards over the years.

MORE ON SPACING COVERS: *starting on page 14*

PUBLISHING

Spacing's books

In 2015, with the prodding of our longtime mentor Stephen Otto, *Spacing* released *50 Objects That Define Toronto*, the magazine's first book. We've produced 11 books in total, from guidebooks to sci-fi to photo collections.



SELF-PROMOTION

Printed materials

From the outset of the magazine's launch, *Spacing* relied on word-of-mouth promotion. We found economical ways to print postcards, flyers, and other materials for our blogs, events, and products.

FORGOTTEN

Buttons that failed

While we've always been happy to promote our merchandise success stories, we've also kept a tight lid on some of our retail flops. Those failures would include a series of notebooks, hats, and of course, buttons. Most notably, in 2010 and 2011, we tried to take advantage of a mild earthquake that shook the city and a disastrous flood at Union Station, both of which totalled about 50 sales combined.



photo by Yvonne Bambrick

EVENTS

Big map of Toronto

We began to use the Big Map of Toronto as an interactive party game as part of the Toronto The Good event series in 2005. We would pose questions to guests such as, "Where was your first job in Toronto?" or "Where did you first make out in Toronto?" and have attendees place a sticker on the map. By the end of the night, a unique picture would emerge. 🧑

The cover

The cover of a magazine tells a story of what's inside, but there are lots of stories that go into making a cover

BY MATTHEW BLACKETT



The first seven years of my publishing career were spent as an art director designing sports magazines, with the final two specifically dedicated to working on covers for the company's various annual sports fantasy-league guidebooks. I even went to "newsstand school," where I learned about the type of words to use in headlines, which colours popped off the newsstand, and a variety of other distributor mumbo-jumbo. By the end of my time at the company, I had worked on over 350 covers. After I lost that job (kids, take note: show up to work on time...) I began to work on the design of *Spacing*. I took what I had learned in the corporate world and threw it out the window. Or more precisely, I modified it for my own vision of a small-scale and independent publishing company.

I landed on a landscape format for *Spacing* based on two ideas: photos are mostly taken in landscape and display better when printed large; and while cities grow upwards, they mostly spread out wide, so I wanted the magazine to replicate that feel. But a landscape format magazine was mostly unheard of at the time of our release. Why? Because distributors discouraged it since a portrait-oriented magazine can block the entire cover of a landscape magazine if placed in front of it on the newsstand. And a publisher has to pay to be at the top and front of a newsstand. But since *Spacing* was in charge of our own distribution for the first few years and had direct relationships with the stores carrying us, our magazine was almost always on the top rack, front and centre, allowing me to concentrate on creating cover designs that looked attractive instead of focusing on more traditional newsstand considerations.

My favourite covers

#24, Disaster issue, 2012

Rob Ford's election in 2010 was a spiritual blow to *Spacing* after seven years of Toronto under David Miller's leadership. As we prepared for our summer edition in 2012, we had to be nimble with the choice of content we would promote on the cover. The previous three issues saw us scrambling to edit articles and headlines days before going to press due either to Ford's erratic antics or his on-the-fly policy decisions. The best way to alleviate this concern was to just assume he would do something ridiculous, so we worked him directly into the theme of our cover, focused on disasters hitting Toronto. I reached out to local graphic artist Steve Murray (pen name Chip Zdarsky) because my vision for the cover felt comic-inspired, like Godzilla rampaging through the city's streets. Having designed every cover of the magazine in its existence, I can honestly say that I have not experienced more elation upon opening a downloaded file and seeing the final illustration than for this one. We sold over 250 prints of this cover at the release party for this issue. Murray has moved on to bigger things, winning multiple Eisner Awards for his comic work, writing a number of *Spider-Man* comic series (Marvel), leading the new *Daredevil* comic (Marvel), and launching a *Batman* anthology (DC Comics).

illustrator: Steve Murray

30



#30, 10th anniversary issue, 2013

Concept covers are often hard to pull off, and our 10th anniversary issue was no exception. When baking artist Sarah Fortunato revealed her cake design to us at her shop, our staff jumped around with excitement. It looked so realistic and reached almost three feet in height. We lit the candles, threw down sprinkles, and thought we'd hit the jackpot with this cover. But after the studio photography was complete and I began to place the photos into the cover template, the concept wasn't working for me. As an afterthought, we had captured some images of the cake half-eaten by our staff. So when I found myself frustrated with the direction of the cover and looking for new ideas, I dropped in the partially devoured cake photos on a lark. And behold, the cover for the issue was discovered. Some of the best graphic design work comes from a combination of being prepared (i.e. taking extra photos) and being open to modifying your original idea. It remains at the top of my list of *Spacing* design highlights.

photo: Bouke Salverda

Other covers I love

#4, History of our Future issue, 2005

This cover was our first to explore the new possibilities of digital photography. We discovered the image by Stephen Rothlisberger on the photo-sharing site Flickr. While on vacation in Toronto, the New Zealander took 54 photos from the viewing deck of the CN Tower and combined them in Photoshop to create a 360-degree panorama. The cover won our first National Magazine Award in 2006.

photo: Stephen Rothlisberger



#7, Election issue, 2006

I worked with local photoblogger Sam Javanrouh on this cover, the beginning of a long relationship between him and the magazine. Sam and I were granted access to the roof of the Sheraton Hotel to take the photos. The security guard who escorted us up to the roof was extremely scared of heights and told us to "just come tell me when you're done." We proceeded to stay up there for three hours and captured hundreds of other photos of downtown buildings from this unique vantage point.

photo: Sam Javanrouh



#44, National issue, 2017

Giant mechanical spiders roaming downtown streets in the country's capital seem like the farfetched plot line of a bad sci-fi movie, but it was the reality for Ottawa residents in the summer of 2017. But what makes this cover special? Ottawa's mayor at the time, Jim Watson, was defending the cost of the *La Machine* event during a press conference on live television when he held up and pointed to this cover and proclaimed, "this is the reason why we brought the spiders to the capital region. *Spacing* gets it, so should you." The cover was a finalist for a National Magazine Award in 2018.

photo: Andre Vandal

#54, The Pandemic issue, 2020

We were set to go to press with another issue when the pandemic took hold in March 2020. We shifted gears about one week into the lockdown, and this issue was produced over the following week, with the special issue coming out in mid-April. Our art director, Julie Fish, captured the essence of the time with this image of the Skyline restaurant on Queen St. W. in Parkdale. Fittingly, it's the only cover in the magazine's history without any headlines or captions (this issue's cover now joins that club). The cover was a finalist for a National Magazine Award in 2022.

photo: Julie Fish



#19, Election issue, 2010

I began following a handful of Lego artists on Flickr around 2008 as I was totally smitten by their charm, humour, and creativity. One artist who stood out was Chris McVeigh, who was based in Halifax. I commissioned him to create a Toronto scene out of Lego for our election issue and the theme of "How do you want to build your city?" Chris would eventually be hired directly by Lego in 2019 and has designed numerous products for the company (Brick Sketches, Elf Club House, Santa's Visit). The cover was a finalist for a National Magazine Award in 2011. 🙌

photo: Chris McVeigh

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20 Historic *Spacing* covers

What if *Spacing* existed before 2003?

In a tradition started in our 10th anniversary issue, we imagine what *Spacing*'s response would be, both seriously and satirically, to seminal moments and important events in Toronto's history by designing magazine covers to editions that never existed

BY MATTHEW BLACKETT
WITH SHAWN MICALLEF



1943

On the occasion of *Spacing*'s 50th anniversary, a box set of the magazine's first 100 editions was issued. Weighing it at over ten pounds and with a price tag of \$5.50, it contained a cigar, three wartime ration coupons for rubber tires, and a LET'S BUILD THE QUEEN SUBWAY lapel pin and matching brooch.



↑ 1903

The outdoorsy type

Many of Toronto's returning soldiers from the South African War were looking for ways to shake off their lingering "shell shock", which resulted in an explosion of outdoor and sporting activities. *Spacing's* 1903 Outdoors & Recreation issue included features on how to hunt and skin a squirrel, the rules of Gander Pulling (exactly as it sounds), and an illustrated essay on young boys in Rosedale competing in Phonograph Tossing. *Spacing* editors dominated the newspaper cycling leagues at the dawn of the 20th century, and were all too happy to pose for this edition's photo collage cover.

Previous historic covers

1893

When *Spacing* was founded in 1893, it was envisioned as a way for locals to write long-winded essays on topics such as cholera, architecture, and the exposure of women's ankles in public. Its unique size — 3.5 inches wide, 5 inches in height — was designed to fit into a gentleman's coat pocket so he could read it during his streetcar commute or on a horse-and-carriage ride out through the remote forests of Etobicoke.



1914

This issue marked our transition to the landscape format. *Spacing* typesetters and editors were inspired to take advantage of the photography of William James in our commemorative issue marking ten years after the Great Fire.



1925

The years after the Great War were prosperous for Toronto and *Spacing*. Advertisements rolled in for such products as eye massagers, toe socks, and moustache protectors. When the editors shed their Protestant concerns and published the LET THE FLAPPER GIRLS DRINK! issue, it was deemed unwholesome, and the office was pelted with tomatoes by irate Temperance supporters.



Previous historic covers



1936

The Depression was a lean time for Spacing: excess office space was rented to the Toronto Tuberculosis Vaccination League. Spacing, accused of employing Communist sympathizers, had its printing press smashed by a baton-wielding mob of thugs.



1945

While Spacing's editors were firm supporters of defeating Hitler, the magazine did question some aspects of the war. Where would the city house all the returning soldiers? And could the proposed Queen Street subway cure downtown's expected traffic boom?



1949

A sombre edition marked the waterfront tragedy of the S.S. Noronic — a fire, likely started by a discarded cigarette, killed over 120 people and is the worst nautical disaster ever to hit the city.



↑ 1937

Bless this mess

As the 1930s rolled on, the effects of the Depression took their toll on Toronto. A housing shortage (mass rural migration to the city) and the lack of cleanliness on the streets were two major sources of concern. Local business leaders in 1937 led a city-wide protest when they stood and pointed at piles of litter for hours at a time in the hope that passersby would pick it up. The polio outbreak in the summer of 1937, spread through the city's outdoor pools, was about to hit Toronto, and the shortage of iron lungs would be a hot political topic, despite our editors' flippant attitude. *Spacing* was also still on the lookout for the culprits who smashed the magazine's printing press during a wave of anti-Communist protests the previous summer.



↑ 1966

Going mod

The opening of the Bloor-Danforth line in 1966 — adding 18 new stations to the existing 18 stations on the Yonge and University lines — cemented Toronto as a city on the move. At the time, the TTC projected it would have seven lines and over 100 stations in operation by 1999. Toronto was also motivated to overtake Montreal as the country's biggest city, and *Spacing's* editors' bought into this urban rivalry by prematurely slagging off the funky and playful Metro line design ("clean lines and modest tones will always outlast soft edges and garish colours" read the embarrassing editorial).

Previous historic covers

1950

A fresh redesign of the magazine coincided with the removal of the ban on Sunday sports. *Spacing's* editors — who often flouted the "blue laws" by playing charity baseball games at Riverdale Park against the Toronto Star's city desk on the last Sunday night of the month — couldn't have been happier.



1954

Our "Progress" issue in 1954 included a "From Farm to Raised Ranch" fold-out map of the proposed developments in Don Mills. Our launch parties in the Gerrard St. Village were fun, though some complained it was too much of a "down-town beatnik scene."



1959

Balancing transit and expressway building was a challenge in the post-war era, but *Spacing* editors were keen to remind Big Daddy Gardiner that he wasn't the king of the city. He would enter the phone operator's room at Old City Hall and personally disconnect the magazine's phone line when he was annoyed at our stories.



Previous historic covers



1967

After the Spacing office was relocated to Yorkville in the early '60s, things got weird. A young staff embraced decentralized community planning, camping in city parks, and Rochdale College's attempt at self-education. In 1967, a no-shoes-in-the-office policy was also implemented.



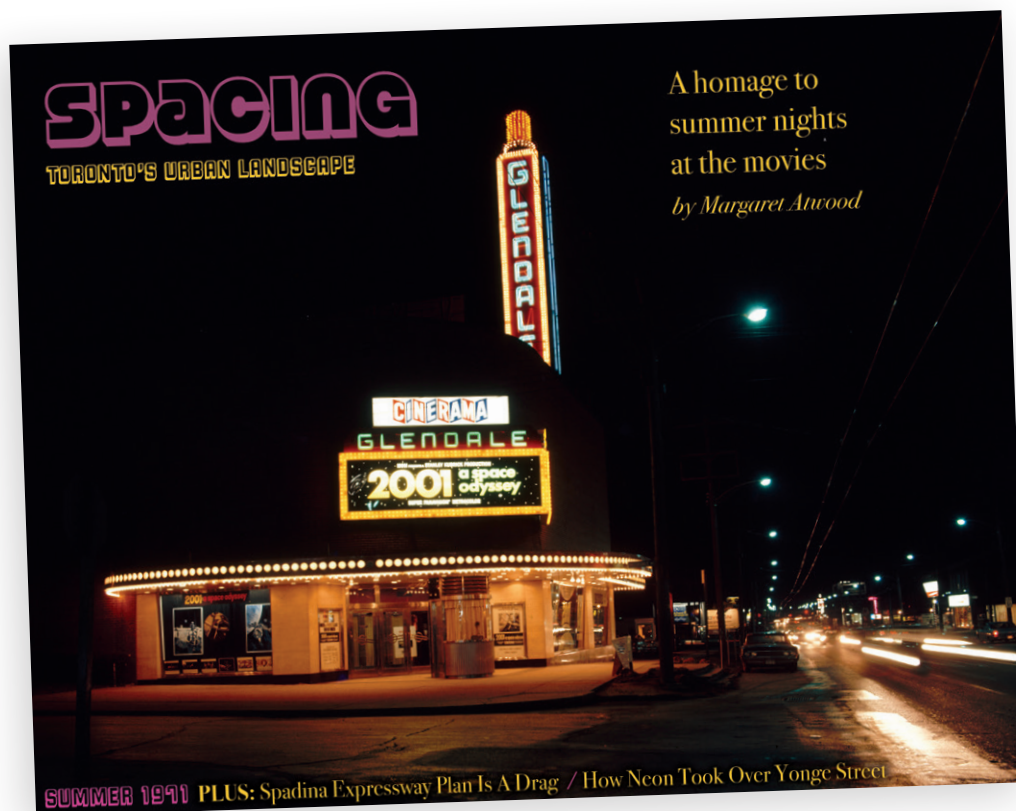
1968

Clearly, distrust in the government was creeping into Spacing's editorial coverage during this time period, most likely due to the effects of Neil Young's prolonged stay on the couch at the magazine's Yorkville office.



1973

For most of the early '70s, our office above the El Mocambo was a haven for Vietnam War draft dodgers who paid "rent" by copy-editing; an unfortunate consequence being that Spacing was rife with American spelling for some time.



1971

What a trip

The Glendale Theatre showed the film *2001: A Space Odyssey* for four straight years and became a midtown stoner destination. *Spacing* held "Head Space" nights at the theatre after *2001* screenings where filmgoers would debate what cities could look like in space in the future. This issue's new book-review editor, a young Bob Rae, resigned hastily after a draft-dodging American copy editor headlocked him over a dispute about the use of the letter "u" in words like colour, candour, and humour.

Previous historic covers

1974

By the time the CN Tower was half built, the original sprawling project had shrunk to just the tower itself. Our editors were also weirdly obsessed with the tower falling over in a wind storm and distributed “warning posters” within the tower’s ‘fall zone.’



1984

The popularization of breakdancing and video arcades, and the resulting NIMBY backlash, occupied Spacing’s readers. Also: an amazing new transit technology came to Scarborough!



1994

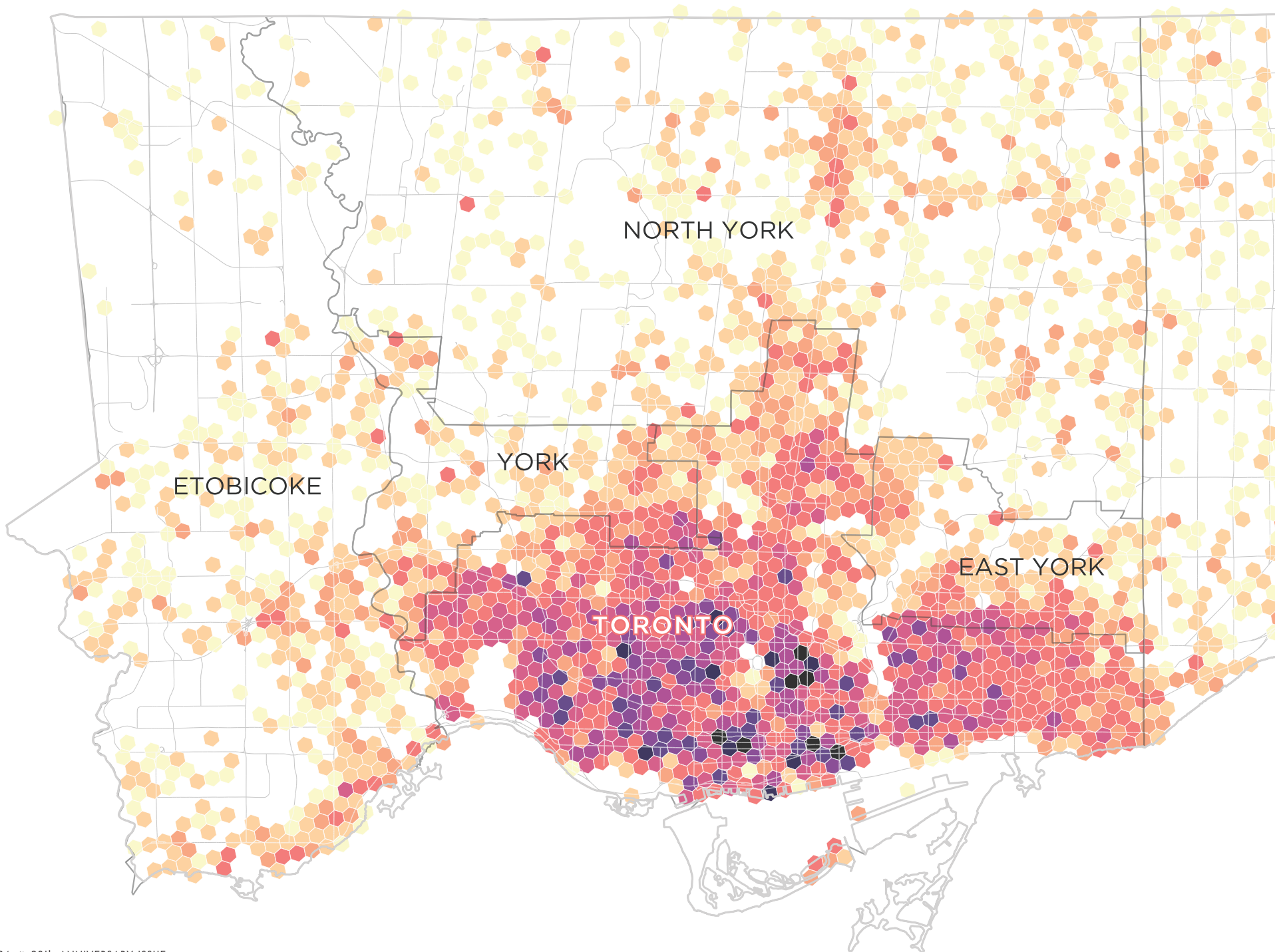
Spacing editors were only peripherally aware of the looming Common Sense Revolution that Mike Harris and the Tories would unleash on Toronto: they wouldn’t dare to amalgamate the city, would they? But thank goodness that Eglinton was finally getting a subway line!



1997

Square headed

A creeping anxiety was setting in at Spacing HQ as the days counted down to the merging of Toronto’s six municipalities. After opposing Mike Harris’s amalgamation plans to no avail, our editors tried to comfort themselves with the notion that local voters would never truly entertain the clownish Mel Lastman as their first megacity mayor. Also, renderings of what the future of Dundas and Yonge could look like shocked residents. Luckily, Spacing readers were happy to start up their modems and log into our Usenet group alt.fan.spacing to rip the new designs. ⤴

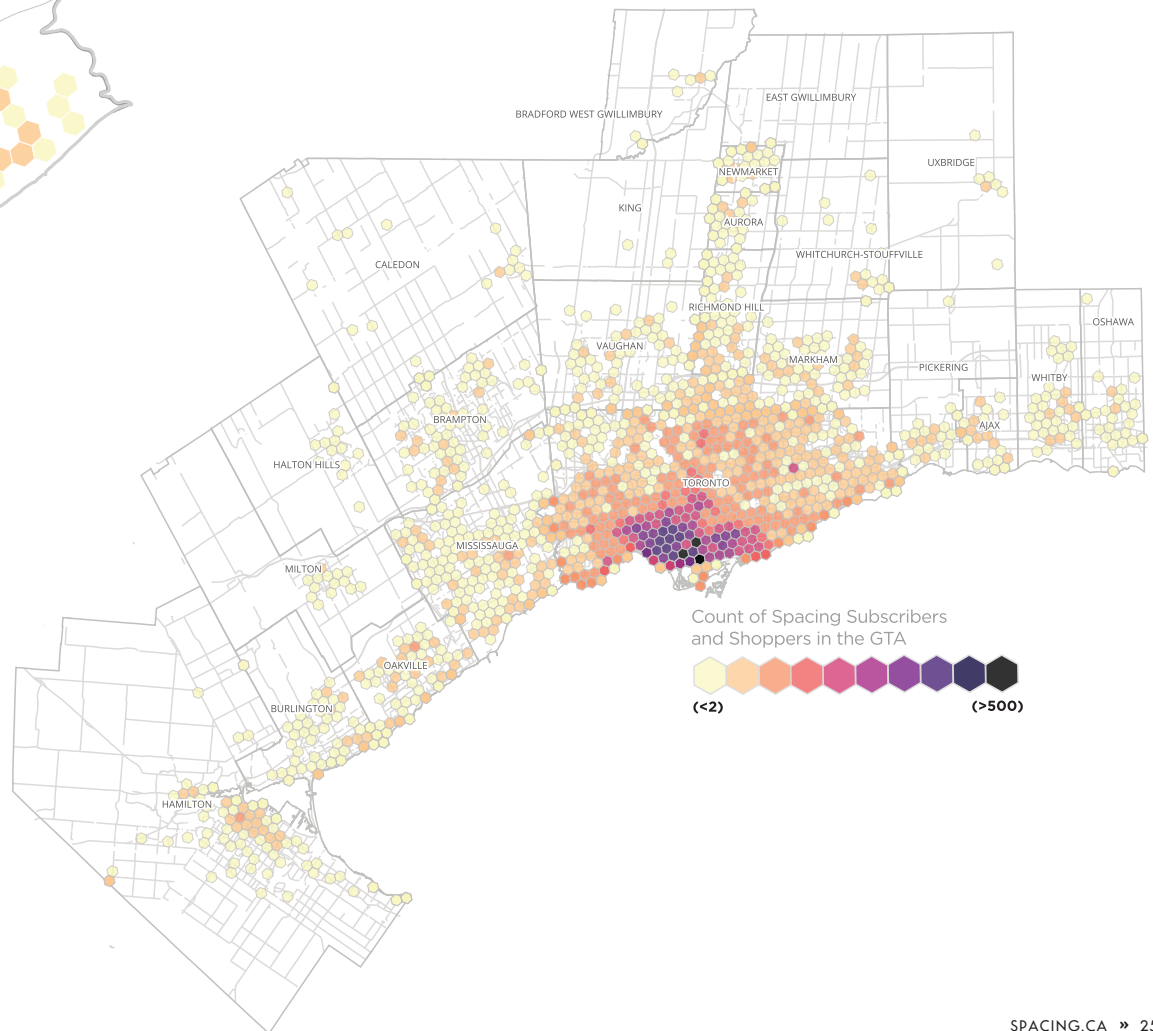
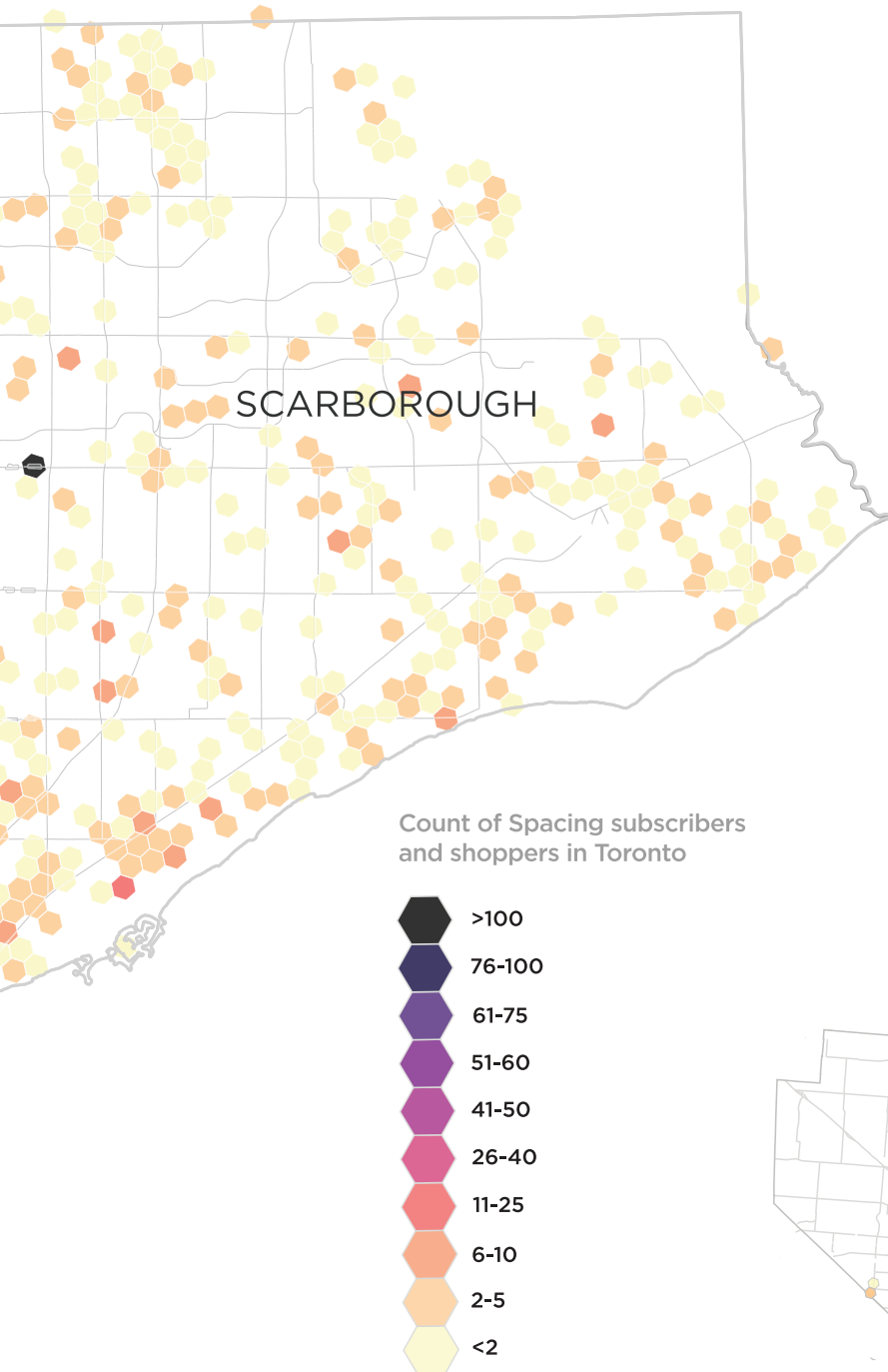


MAPS

Where our readers live

MAP BY TOM WEATHERBURN / MAPTO

Maps have always been an important element of *Spacing*, whether in our magazine or store. Over the course of 20 years, we've sent out subscriptions and mail orders of our products to nearly 30,000 households across the city and Greater Toronto region. Not surprisingly, the density of our readership and shoppers matches that of the city itself. 🚶



We Have an Agenda

Spacing has proudly played an advocacy role in Toronto's city-building world, and we've used our platform to expose new stories and to effect change at City Hall.

But after 20 years, it's time to revisit our public space agenda and help set new goals for Toronto's urban landscape.

BY JOHN LORINC

WITH MATTHEW BLACKETT + DYLAN REID



About two months after taking office, Mayor Olivia Chow dipped her toe into the chilly waters of Toronto public-space politics with a simple solution to an utterly unnecessary roadblock. Despite CaféTO's huge popularity, and a council resolution to make the program permanent, the City — predictably — had managed to doom it, first with unreasonable fees and regulations, and then intransigence.

Besides the fee hikes, which were reduced by Council before Chow took office, City officials slow-walked applications and even refused some from restaurants who'd had a CaféTO license in the previous year — a mystifying tone-deafness. To forestall a repeat next year, and the possible death of the program, Chow moved to significantly accelerate approvals while also requiring the bureaucrats to have all the paperwork done before the May 2-4 weekend.

Toronto for sure has worse problems than a constipated patio-licensing process, but this gesture reconfirms the fact that Chow, unlike her predecessor, has a keen appreciation for why residents want both better public-space experiences, and the policies that will enable them.

In many ways, such a shift will require the City to fire itself as the arbiter of what's fun. We know all too well that Toronto's gnarled web of open-space regulation has deep roots in the city's history as a parochial Tory town whose parsimonious officials distrusted what residents did in public when left to their own devices. This story stretches from temperance movements that never truly died to police enforcement of morality, the neglect of public parks, and the preference given to private vehicles over all other means of moving around.

Chow has a very long list of entrenched problems to fix, many of them verging on the desperate. But my hope is her agenda will include a wholesale rethink of Toronto's controlling approach to our open spaces — beginning with some deep reflections on why they've become so atrophied in an era when the public realm has never been so important.

On the occasion of *Spacing's* 20th anniversary, we fervently believe Toronto needs an ambitious new public-space agenda that recognizes the city as a grown-up place whose residents deserve much more when it comes to what happens outside our homes and workplaces.

We weren't the first to speak up on behalf of public space in Toronto, of course. As I survey the city's modern era (post-1965), I can quickly compile a short list of the people and organizations on whose shoulders we stand: Eric Arthur, Stop Spadina, Streetcars for Toronto, Tooker Gomberg, Bring Back the Don, the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, and so on.

When we launched *Spacing* back in 2003, the TTC was bleeding ridership. Amalgamation (1998) had beggared the parks department. Meanwhile, the mega-council reckoned it was more important to collect the leaves of suburban homeowners than to fund Bring Back the Don's guerilla tree-planting campaigns. City officials had declared a war on the "poster" and the transportation department was still nursing fantasies of building one more downtown highway. Public space is as diverse as the city itself. For that reason, we've taken an expansive and eclectic approach to the topics that animate our coverage: the ban on poster- ing, to begin with, but then a shopping list of preoccupations that includes subway tiles, wayfinding, LRTs, cycling infrastructure, public bathrooms, ravines, parks funding, mid-rises, transit policy in all its guises, walking, strip malls, privately-owned public spaces, Ontario Place, climate, hostile design, local history's place in the city, tower renewal, public art, and laneways, to name a few.

We like local politicians who care about, and invest in, public space, and we take on those who align themselves with residents whose primary concerns run to low taxes, the privileging of private spaces, and the policing of public spaces. Private space is integral to urban life. But local government's primary responsibility, besides the table-stakes duties of all municipalities, is to find an equilibrium between private and public interest in the many and varied spaces between buildings.

That balance has always been elusive. In the distant past, the City blithely erased popular public spaces, like Sunnyside, in favour of the privatized realm of the highway. To this day, the construction of new parks and an improved urban realm continues to be a fraught exercise, and the City still insists on justifying these projects by identifying some kind of return on investment.

I don't want to ignore or diminish periods of progressive investment. In the 1960s and 1970s, the City and Metro spent heavily on amenities like arenas, pools, community centres, and public libraries. The ravine-park network dates to this period, and so does the public backlash against the repurposing of these natural corridors as highways.

But with a few exceptions, the past 20 years will be remembered as a period

of great progress for public-space policy across the Western world, but it's been one step forward, two steps back for Toronto over the last decade, and not just because of the corrosive impact of continual budget-cutting. We also saw the City refuse to spend the huge sums deposited in parks reserve funds while Mayor John Tory hyped up a scheme — Rail Deck Park — that turned out to be impossible to execute. The fact that it took a global pandemic for City Council to shed its retrograde approach to cycling infrastructure speaks volumes. Even now, we're lagging way behind the global urban conversation about re-engineering rights-of-way to ensure far more generous road allowances for surface transit, bikes, pedestrians, and micro-mobility devices.

I am also hoping that Toronto policy-makers are beginning to wake up to the insidiousness of the "pay-as-you-grow" ideology of financing municipal infrastructure — an approach that guarantees that the development of civic amenities will occur at the end of the meal instead of at the beginning, when these investments can truly impact city-building.

Given her foreshortened term and a boatload of truly urgent problems, it may be unrealistic to expect Chow to lead a root-and-branch overhaul of Toronto's approach to public space. But I'd argue that a public-space agenda in a rapidly growing city with a housing-affordability crisis is a necessity, not a frill.

What would such an agenda include? First, a broad recognition that there should actually be an overarching public-space agenda that is coherent, ambitious, and includes an explicit recognition that city streets are public spaces and not merely corridors for cars.

I'd also argue that the process for creating a new public-space agenda must begin with an effort to systematically purge the accumulation of outdated procedures and rules that treat Toronto residents and businesses like children. The first question should be: is the prohibited or over-regulated practice tolerated in other cities of Toronto's size and wealth? If the answer is yes, then scrap the rule.

The agenda should connect the dots. Public space isn't just about parks. It touches city streets, urban design, place-making, architecture, civic buildings, infrastructure, and so on. For too long, Torontonians and their elected officials have tolerated a culture of mediocrity and cheapness. As a matter of principle, public-space considerations should never be treated like the window-dressing that gets edited out by value engineers. Rather, these elements must be present at both the beginning and the end of municipal decision-making, planning processes, and investment.

The related point is that a public-space agenda should aspire to shift our collective mindset about why we invest in the public realm. Toronto is mired in a culture that regards investment in public space and design as a cost, and therefore an expense to be minimized. Great cities are great, in large measure, because they understand that public open space is essential to urban life — its defining, elemental truth. There's a cost, of course, but also a return that far exceeds the dollars that cities invest in caring for and elevating their public realm.

It's been a very long time since Toronto had a mayor who got public space, used it, loved it, and even seemed prepared to defend it. Oliva Chow has inherited a depressingly neglected public realm, but also the opportunity to change this narrative, perhaps once and for all. 🦋

AGENDA SETTERS

Over the years, *Spacing* has prided itself on its commitment to making Toronto a better place to live by breaking stories and raising concerns to get City Hall's attention. Here are some cases where *Spacing* has had an impact, to varying degrees, on issues and policies.

Helped stop ban on poster

Spacing began as a project of the Toronto Public Space Committee (TPSC), which was the leading advocate working to stop the City's planned ban on poster. The cover section of our first issue was dedicated to telling a variety of stories about poster in the city. *Spacing* became a legit business by issue #2, but the magazine and TPSC worked together to convince city councillors to change their minds on the bylaw. By 2008, the proposed bylaw was dropped.

Rearranging street furniture

Spacing and the TPSC battled City Hall on the topic of street furniture (transit shelters, benches, bike racks) which was directly tied to the poster issue — isn't it hypocritical to ban posters when the City is selling ads on its own garbage bins? Our public critiques stopped the Eucan and Megabin from being installed and forced the City to rethink their approach to the public realm (a victory!). This led City staff to propose a co-ordinated street furniture program, but instead of funding from taxpayers it would be funded and managed by an outside source, Astral Media (not our intention!). While the program reduced the number of ads on streetside infrastructure, it left the maintenance in the hands of a third party, resulting in massive functional failures like the overflowing and over-designed garbage bins.



Wayfinding our way

As a result of *Spacing*'s interest in street furniture, the lack of local wayfinding (signs that give directions or display maps of an area) became an area of focus. Editors used the blog to highlight excellent examples spotted in their travels around the U.S. and Europe. The City included our editors in all stages of development of the wayfinding strategy and implementation, and would do so again when the parks department began their multi-year project of updating park signage and wayfinding kiosks on trails. In 2015, *Spacing* teamed up with Metrolinx to present two events — one downtown, the other in Mississauga — on the transit agency's plans to co-ordinate wayfinding across the network.

TTC brand awareness

Spacing has had a large impact on the TTC's brand. **MERCHANDISE** The introduction of our subway buttons in 2004 marked the beginning of when Torontonians independently began to create their own merchandise inspired by the city's transit system. At first shunned by the TTC, *Spacing* eventually won over communications and marketing staff by demonstrating how the TTC could build on its own brand. The current TTC merchandise shop is a direct response to the success of our own line of products.



MAPS A number of maps currently used in the system — individual subway line maps, streetcar-network maps, integrated subway and streetcar maps — were all first proposed by *Spacing* staff in the magazine or on the website, and presented to TTC marketing and communications staff. And a post by contributor Daniel Rotsztein in 2014 proposing to add the "TTC Rocket" airport route to the subway map prompted quick action by the agency. **WEBSITE** In 2007, *Spacing* teamed up with a number of local websites (*Torontoist*, *Reading Toronto*, *BlogTO*) to challenge the TTC to improve their website, which was accepted by the agency and helped inform a future Request for Proposals for the website's redesign.

Revealed Gardiner East demo & Front Street extension death knell

In 2007, *Spacing* broke the story on our blog that the City and Waterfront Toronto planned to demolish the eastern portion of the Gardiner Expressway and remove the Front Street Extension (Bathurst to Dufferin) from any future transportation plans. It forced the agency to acknowledge these plans weeks in advance of the intended announcement. Mayor John Tory would later reverse the Gardiner demolition plans.

Helped reverse ban on street hockey

A feature in issue #3 (2004) exposing the extensive and arbitrary ban on ball sports in laneways and side-streets in the old city of Toronto led to a years-long push by *Spacing* to legalize street hockey and other sports in safe spaces. Councillors Josh Matlow and Christin Carmichael Greb led the charge at City Hall (with an unlikely ally in Doug Ford) that eventually led to a changed policy in 2016.



Parks' \$250-million fund revealed

Spacing's six-part investigative series on the state of parks financing in Toronto dug into the strangely secretive way in which hundreds of millions of dollars contributed by developers to various parks reserve funds had gone not only unspent but also unallocated. The City's highly convoluted formula for spending the money masked the reality that the spending wasn't happening at all. The series also looked at privately-owned public spaces and the increasing pressure on existing parks. Since the series ran, the City has become more transparent about these reserve funds and has stepped up efforts to actually invest the money.

Canoe Landing Park naming

Spacing had a great mentor in the late Stephen Otto, a longtime city-builder and local historian. In 2009, he proposed a naming competition for the forthcoming Douglas Coupland-designed park at CityPlace. He convinced the City's parks department, Councillor Adam Vaughan's office, and CityPlace developers to let *Spacing* readers submit park-name ideas that would be put to a jury of stakeholders. Canoe Landing was picked from amongst the hundreds of submissions.

Audible signal sign on pedestrian beg button

When the City introduced audible pedestrian-signal buttons at major intersections that activate the sound signal for people with limited or no vision, they looked like the regular "beg buttons" pedestrians need to press to get a walking signal. In 2014, Dylan Reid wrote an online explainer about the confusing variety of pedestrian buttons and suggested it would be helpful to indicate the difference. Not long afterwards, the City added "Audible signal only" signs to these buttons.

Bringing history to light

We often feature interesting but little-known investigations into Toronto history – and sometimes they have an impact. After Sheila White's online article about her uncle, union organizer Jack White, for Black History Month in 2023, Heritage Toronto got in touch about establishing a plaque to commemorate him. Earlier, Tyler Wentzell's 2018 magazine feature on the 1920s Jewish Standard Theatre helped inspire the installation of a historical plaque at its location on Spadina Ave. And in a more private vein, the 2017 identification by Ellen Scheinberg and Jim Burant of a house painted by Lawren Harris inspired the property's new owner, a designer, to create a bag featuring the painting! 🧡



ADAPTIVE REUSE WATERWORKS BUILDING

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Photo: Steven Evans, 2022.

ERA

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We opened a store to save the mag



Spacing has never been a conventional business. Our first issue was a project of the Toronto Public Space Committee before breaking off and forming a business. We were initially uncomfortable selling ads, so we held massive release parties to make money. It felt odd to make self-promotional items, so we instead made Toronto-centric merchandise. So it shouldn't have surprised many people when we decided, as a magazine publisher, to open a retail store in 2014.

The narrative of the digital publishing world eating into the printed publishing world really started to ring true around our tenth anniversary in 2013. We had set great editorial expectations for ourselves, but those couldn't be met without the requisite funding. Even though we had writers and outlets across the country by this time, our advertising and newsstand sales were dropping, and subscription sales were stagnant. When we tried to operate like a traditional publisher, the business model wasn't working for us. Yet the least traditional pillar of our business, our online shop, was doubling its revenue year-over-year.

So, in order to save our publishing business we turned to retail. In December of 2013, we teamed up with Coach House Books for six weeks to operate Torontopia, a pop-up shop near Queen and Bathurst. We used the experience to gauge whether shoppers were open to our concept of a Toronto merchandise shop that didn't sell only Canadiana stuff (mostly made overseas) with moose and beavers and igloos, but instead showcased local icons like raccoons and white squirrels and streetcars. With overwhelmingly positive

feedback, we embarked on opening the *Spacing* Store. Trading the volatile publishing industry for the volatile retail industry may seem risky, but the balance between the two worked for us. For instance, during the first ten years of *Spacing*, we would sell 50%-60% of the printed copies through newsstands, amounting to about 25% of our annual revenue. But with the closure of numerous independent book stores — Pages, This Ain't the Rosedale Library, Ballenford Books, and a number of Book City outlets — those numbers were cut in half, and eventually another half. Having our own shop to push our magazine made a lot of sense in this new environment.

When the *Spacing* Store opened in November 2014, we became the only consumer magazine in Canada with a brick-and-mortar shop. On top of selling our own products (where we take 100% of the revenue), the store also opened the door for us to begin to publish books, giving us a platform, built-in audience, and customers that went beyond the readership of *Spacing*. The store's Toronto-centric book section started with 65 titles and now contains over 300 books about the city, ten of which are *Spacing* collections.

We were able to host our own events (a godsend to our backs after carting magazines and merchandise to over 30 events and venues). And just as importantly, we were finally able to pay our staff living wages.

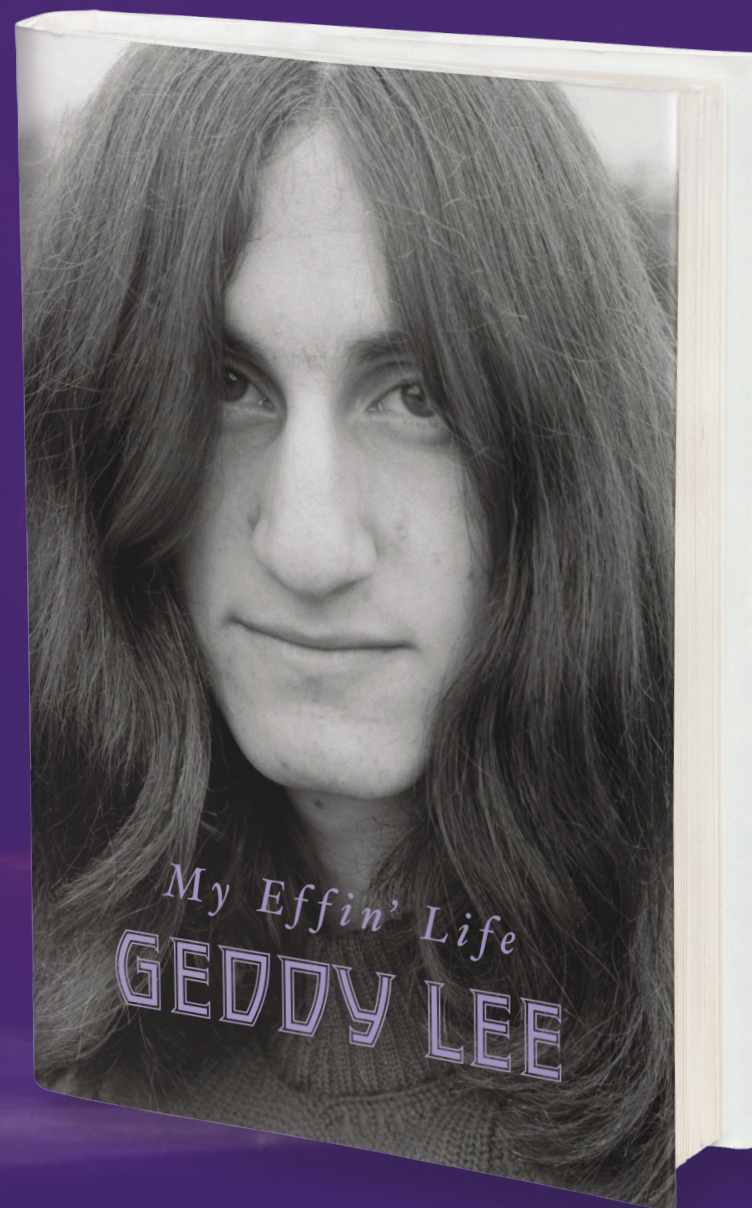
As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the magazine, we need to toast the *Spacing* Store for helping prolong, promote, and prop up our publishing ambitions. ↑

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A voice heard

How has *Spacing* changed over 20 years? We asked Edward Keenan to go through 64 back issues, ten books, and loads of podcasts to document how the magazine has evolved.

BY EDWARD KEENAN

I remember a boozy City Hall press gallery holiday party on Yonge Street in the mid '00s, when then-Mayor David Miller spent a good chunk of time hanging out with a bunch of editors and writers from *Spacing* (even going with us to Fran's for a 2:00a.m. after-party meal).

I can't remember all the details from that night, but at some point one of the folks from the *Spacing* group said he didn't think, despite their best efforts, they were very influential in the city's politics.

"Oh, you have a lot of influence," Miller said. "Influence doesn't mean you get everything you want. But people are paying attention to what you say and think. I'm paying attention."

Miller was clearly paying attention to *Spacing*: he wore the subway-station lapel pins made by *Spacing* at every public appearance and talked regularly with me — I was then an editor and writer at *Eye Weekly* — about what he was reading in the magazine. When *Eye* and *Spacing* co-hosted a well-attended and well-covered mayoral candidates' forum during the 2006 mayoral election, Miller was there,

ready to try to impress the crowd *Spacing* attracted but also willing to argue back against questions about priorities.

This is a big city, and as he said, becoming influential doesn't mean winning every argument. It means your voice is heard in every argument, and often that you're framing the argument.

On *Spacing*'s 20th anniversary, and after reviewing two decades' worth of back issues to mark the occasion, I think that's a handy way to measure its relative success. You cannot look at City Hall after 12 years of Rob Ford and John Tory and think this magazine's editors and writers have shaped the political agenda of Toronto to their will.

But they — we, I suppose, as I have in the past been a columnist and feature writer, and am still listed as a contributing editor on the masthead — have helped shape the discussion at City Hall. And more importantly, *Spacing* has provided a home and a hope through the hills and valleys of those battles for a community of people who love the city, who love walking around its streets, exploring its back alleys, noticing its details, appreciating its nuts and bolts, lingering in its parks, pointing out its oddities.

It's a community built not on complaints or fights, but on optimism. "What kind of city do you want?" was the cover line on one issue in 2006. It's a question — and a belief that your answer matters to the kind of city you'll get — that has fuelled the enterprise.

And, by the standards of Canadian media in the 21st century, especially by the standards of independent media, it has been a grand enterprise to watch grow. Not just the magazine, and the website and blog that accompany it, but the merchandise lines of Torontophernalia that turned into the retail store, the books, the podcasts, the parties and events. So many storied Canadian magazines have spent the past two decades dying, while *Spacing* has been growing.

And giving us gifts, such as the writing career of Shawn Micallef, the City Hall columnizing of John Lorinc, those "Bike Riding Pinko" buttons people rallied behind in the early 2010s, and the vivid, unforgettable imagery by Mathew Borrett of an imagined Toronto of 2033 from the sci-fi-themed 15th anniversary issue and book.

If you weren't around in the very early years after

amalgamation, it may be hard to understand how much of a breath of fresh air the very approach of *Spacing* seemed at the time. The Lastman years had been chaotic and corrupt, and cynicism was the dominant sentiment among the media types and activists I encountered regularly. Then along comes this gang of folks obsessed with posterizing on lamp-posts and billboards, suggesting people garden on public property or spray-paint bike racks hot pink, analyzing sidewalk date stamps or the bolts on park benches like they were collectible trading cards, or rating the evolution of road signs. Making political arguments for a better city, yes, but also encouraging people to just go out and make the city better.

It was part of what in my mind seemed a movement at the time, one summed up by the Coach House Books anthology *uTOpia*, in which I included my own thoughts and observations about the moment. Micallef (my friend and colleague at *Spacing*, *Eye Weekly*, and now the *Toronto Star*) wrote of the "super-hot heat" of the renaissance of "sexy civic enthusiasm" in the Fall 2006 issue. Viewed from late 2023, it's fair to say some of that enthusiasm has been worn down by time and housing prices, and some of the optimism has been dulled by hard experience. Indeed, prior to the election of Olivia Chow as mayor in the surprise election of early 2023, the prevailing mood in the city was a fed-up-with-it-ness bordering on exasperation.

Looking back, amid a housing affordability and homelessness crisis, in which the city is broke and somewhat broken down, some of the early obsessions of *Spacing* seem almost quaint. The first issue was based around a feature package about the legality of posters stapled to lampposts, which though I dearly love as a form of low-cost, low-tech community media, hardly seems pressing today.

Yet as a magazine based around "public space" as an organizing principle, a look back also reveals that most of the central preoccupations of the magazine over the years — transit, pedestrian safety, parkland, the waterfront, urban planning — remain issues of vital concern. In the first issue, the shortcomings of Yonge-Dundas Square were explored; this year, the shortcomings of that same square are the subject of debate at City Hall. The current fight over the future of Ontario Place, subject of a late

2022 cover package, seems to crystalize the kind of fight *Spacing* has informed and led.

There are many other issues in the city's politic, some of them with obviously higher stakes — hunger, homelessness, racism, and policing, to name just a few. It would be fair, if you were judging *Spacing* as an entire political movement's voice, to ask if these have been given too little prominence to make way for (for instance) a feature I wrote along the way about the legality of billboards. But I don't think it's fair to judge the magazine that way: it is not a political party, not meant to encompass an entire worldview. Its particular mission has been clear from the start.

It's also fair, as an assessment of influence and success, to ask if *Spacing* has had a "Spadina Expressway" victory moment, like an earlier generation of "sexy civic enthusiasts" who led a renaissance in the city. I can't think of one, at least not of similar scale and impact. Nor have *Spacing* and the wave of projects that emerged alongside it produced elected officials in the way that Spadina Expressway battle launched Colin Vaughan and John Sewell, among others, into positions of lasting influence.

Befitting a magazine more than a movement, *Spacing* has produced and promoted some good writers who help lead the city's political and media conversations. It has seen as many (or more) losses in short-term battles than victories: the removal of the Jarvis Street bike lanes lives on in memory of those who lived through the Rob Ford years at City Hall. But over time, the city's politics have evolved further along the path *Spacing* has been blazing: the extension of the Bloor West bike lanes into Etobicoke passed last year with only a single city councillor voting against it.

Among decision-makers at City Hall and in the private enterprises engaged in city building, the magazine and its affiliate cultural output remain required reading. Among the city's media, *Spacing* has become an established, essential part of the landscape. Among enthusiasts of Toronto, the retail store has become holiday-shopping headquarters.

Influence doesn't mean always getting your way. But it means people are paying attention to what you think. By that measure, after 20 years, *Spacing's* influence in Toronto endures. 🦋



20 Years after Mayor Miller

Spacing coincidentally launched at the same time David Miller was elected mayor of Toronto in 2003.

A new mayor with a progressive city-building mandate and a fresh new magazine with similar goals made the timing fortuitous for both.

20 years on, the former mayor looks back at the time period and helps contextualize the matching trajectories.

INTERVIEW BY GLYN BOWERMAN

PHOTO BY BETH DOMAN



The fates of *Spacing* and former Toronto Mayor David Miller were historically intertwined. Miller's mayoralty and his optimistic, urbanist agenda began at the same time *Spacing* founders came together to create a publication about the potential of Toronto. We asked Miller for his thoughts about *Spacing's* contribution to the history of Toronto politics, and what's next for urbanism in the city.

BOWERMAN: 20 years ago, you became mayor of Toronto. You were considered the progressive, urbanist counterpoint to the suburban Mel Lastman, your predecessor. That same year, a group of activists and urban thinkers came together to form *Spacing* magazine. It seems like we were riding the same wave for a time. What do you remember about that time, in terms of urban thinking and people's attitudes to what a city should or could be?

MILLER: It was a time of hope. There was a variety of reasons why I got elected, but one of them was a real desire for Toronto to become the city it could potentially be, and a feeling that City Hall was holding it back. That Toronto, once upon a time, had been a city of new ideas and innovative thinking, and it wasn't that kind of city anymore. One of the issues that came to dominate the election was about the Toronto Island airport. That, symbolically, was about a whole range of things: the prevalence of backroom deals at City Hall at the time before me, where you could influence change in your favour depending on who you were, not what your ideas were, and was also symbolic of the fact the City was going in the wrong direction around issues like public space and who the city is for. Is the city for people who are well connected, who can afford to own a car, with extremely large houses on huge lots, or is it for everybody? What are our collective rights? What about public space? What are other cities doing? And there was a level of excitement as my campaign started to take off about rethinking Toronto in a lot of ways.

To me, it was in that milieu that *Spacing* came along. And I was so excited as mayor, because the fact that a group of young, really smart people who deeply cared about the city would create something with the mandate of *Spacing* was a validation of the way I saw things as well. It spoke to the possibilities if people were involved with City Hall and thinking about parks, walkability, cycling, transit, the kind of buildings we built and their quality, environmental standards, and much more. I was thrilled when it happened.

BOWERMAN: You and your colleagues would often come to the magazine launches and events. A lot of local politicians seemed generally supportive of *Spacing*. What did it mean for you to have a publication like ours contributing to the discourse?

MILLER: It's important there are places we can have conversations amongst people about city-building ideas, which is what occurs in *Spacing*. The mayor before me and the two mayors afterwards saw

their job at City Hall as simply constraining expenditure. And, in a way, that's a very easy thing to do. It has really serious and terrible consequences for people and for the city and our environment. But, turning the tap off, you just turn it off. But building a city is a complicated thing. There are elements of experimentation you might get wrong. And so, where do you have that conversation with Torontonians about new ideas, what's happening in other places that works, and how to build a city that is equitable, inclusive, vibrant, and fun? *Spacing* has dealt with all sorts of serious topics, but there's a sense of joy in the city, of hope and possibility. You need a place to have conversations about what it is we're trying to build. *Spacing* was a way to have those conversations, which was one of the reasons I, and members of Council, enjoyed coming to the launches. Not because they were fun — of course, that's a reason — but because they were a place where that conversation could happen.

BOWERMAN: In looking back at this time, it strikes me Toronto is still facing many of the same issues. Take, for example, the Gardiner Expressway. Does this surprise you?

MILLER: No. By the time I became mayor, I'd been elected for nine years, and been involved indirectly in local politics through my legal practice. So I had a view of local politics from the mid-1980s, onwards. I'd gone to Council and committee meetings, represented people in litigation against the City and the former Metro government, and then been elected. By the time I was mayor in 2003, I had nearly 20 years of in-depth experience with politics in Toronto. I watched a Conservative government get elected and force the then-Metro region, which was amalgamated as a city in '97, to spend \$100 million to fill in the beginning of construction of the Eglinton subway. (An odd parallel with a Conservative mayor elected after me spending \$100 million to stop the construction of the Sheppard LRT, but I digress.) By the time I was mayor, I saw there were big issues Toronto and the province — which has far too much influence over Toronto — have difficulty grappling with, particularly issues of social inclusion and big infrastructure projects like transit. So, one of the reasons I really pushed (against advice, by the way) on a whole range of fronts all at once as mayor — on social inclusion, housing, street-involved homeless people, supports for young people, low-income neighbourhoods, the Transit City transportation plan, and our environmental strategy — was because I'd seen a tendency in Toronto for one foot forward, two steps back. I was very worried, as mayor, that if we didn't take advantage of every opportunity, things would never happen. So, am I surprised? No,



After the New Year's Day City Hall Levee in 2005 — where the mayor meets and greets a long line of residents — *Spacing's* editor Dale Duncan and publisher Matthew Blackett ran into Mayor David Miller. He insisted to the pair that they had to come to his office. When they arrived, they found his entire desk was covered by the *Spacing* subway button collection, pinned to felt strips matching the colour of the subway lines that had been assembled by his son.



ABOVE: In issue 6 of *Spacing*, our editors had their first sit-down interview with Mayor David Miller to discuss the state of public transit.

RIGHT: In issue 10, we put Miller and David Suzuki together to debate how cities could fight climate change.



these are big issues we have a history of difficulty grappling with. When we have progressive provincial and federal governments, and a progressive mayor, we make huge progress. We have a moment now, with a progressive mayor elected, and we have to seize it. And that mayor is best able to do that when we have provincial and federal governments supporting the same goals.

BOWERMAN: *It wasn't all rubbing elbows at urbanist events. Many Spacing contributors could dig in hard when they felt they had to take a stand. We could be pests. For instance, we were not big fans of the Astral Media street furniture and garbage-can deal. As our Publisher Matthew Blackett says, we could be "righteous" and "demanding of immediate change." Did that ever get uncomfortable? Was it difficult for you and your colleagues not to write us off as naive and idealistic?*

MILLER: It's an interesting question. I still think we were right about the Astral deal, to give an example. But we were wrong about a part of it, which is the garbage cans: they were a disaster. What I think was lost in that particular debate was there was advertising all over the street furniture in the various suburbs that made up Toronto before that. And this was a very good way to organize that advertising in a way that was less intrusive. But I think *Spacing's* advocacy on that issue was exceptionally important. As an elected official, you really do get caught up in the day-to-day and what you're trying to do, and it's actually helpful to have voices you respect from outside to, in effect, say, "Are you really sure you know what you're doing?" It's like the figure of the jester in medieval courts who was the one person allowed to say the truth to the king. That is an important thing. Astral was a billion-dollar contract: the largest contract with a private sector provider in the history of Canada. Turning down a billion dollars is tricky for an elected official, as you can imagine. But the issues *Spacing* raised on it were entirely valid and resonated with a lot of people. So, although nobody wants criticism, criticism from *Spacing* got through. If the *Toronto Sun* said stuff, it sort of fell on deaf ears,

particularly after they ran a cartoon of me as Clifford Olson, because I'd proposed a tax increase. I'm not sure how proposing a tax increase equates, in any way, to being Canada's greatest mass murderer. There's not any balance there. It's so ludicrous you just you have to ignore it. *Spacing*, on the other hand, if it was critical, you paid attention. And that criticism, in particular, made me think a lot about that issue. I came to different conclusions, but I had a slightly different set of facts before me.

But journalism helps people engage with the city. Some people like to come to meetings, some just want excellent city services, but everybody needs to know what's going on, and the best journalism does that. I would classify *Spacing* as excellent journalism. It was an important place to engage with the city. Those criticisms around Astral or anything else were certainly valid and came from a perspective of people with journalism, planning, architectural backgrounds, and were an important part of the discussion. As an elected official, if we're going to have the benefit of a place like *Spacing* helping create a conversation around the best way to take a city forward, you've got to accept that, when something you're doing is seen in a negative light, people are going to point it out and yell from the rooftops. That's not only fair, that's good.

BOWERMAN: *I joined the magazine ten years ago at a very different time, politically, than when the magazine started. It was the Rob Ford era and people generally seemed a lot less receptive to the ideas we were championing. Where the Spacing founders were trying to cheer on the opportunities and hope they saw for Canadian cities, my experience here has been mostly one of frustration and anger. Did attitudes towards cities change for the worse somehow? And do you feel some of the same frustrations?*

MILLER: I'm sad about both the Ford and Tory eras. Because one of the things we did quite deliberately, and well, was enhance the status of Toronto as a government. We wanted people to gain respect for the city government. It's one of the reasons we, early in my tenure, worked to root out corruption, make lobbying trans-



parent and bring in the lobbyists registry, and then implement the recommendations of the MFP computer-leasing inquiry, et cetera. It's one of the reasons we left the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). It was subtle, but the province passed a law that said AMO spoke for all of its members in dealings with the province. Our view was the City of Toronto speaks for itself. We consciously tried to create a government that was respected, in which the politicians, mayor and, more importantly, the institution was respected. We succeeded in that.

I was very sad in the Rob Ford era, and very disappointed in the John Tory era, at the efforts, accidental and deliberate, to diminish the City of Toronto and its ability to solve problems on behalf of, and in partnership with, its residents. Mayor Ford, through his personal conduct, and allowing his brother Doug to pretend to everybody that he was running the City on behalf of the mayor. Doug Ford went around doing all sorts of damage. The City was very diminished because of Rob Ford's personal conduct, and because of actions like cancelling the Sheppard LRT. John Tory is even worse, by far. His legacy is meeting in secret with Premier Ford to deliberately diminish City Council and the powers of Toronto. I'm proud that, in my time, we can point to the City of Toronto Act. People will look back at that Act as a moment where the people of Toronto were given the ability to build the kind of city they want in partnership with the people they elected. But those secret meetings between Doug Ford and John Tory to gut Council and give themselves virtual veto power, and the shocking request from the mayor to have minority rule — which goes against about 1,000 years of history in the United Kingdom and its colonies like Canada — it's absolutely disgusting. The legacy 20 years from now, if we don't turn it around — and I'm optimistic that Mayor Olivia Chow will — is people will point to all sorts of disasters and say, "That happened when John Tory gave up the City's ability to lead." The shame brought on the City by Mayor Ford, and the fact that Mayor Tory deliberately gave away the City's ability to act on behalf of its residents, to me, is the most depressing thing. Because political

tides will come and go, but if you gut the structure too much, you may cause irreparable damage.

BOWERMAN: *What is your hope for progressive urbanist discourse, going forward? What needs to happen to bring people on board, or empower people who are already making positive change in their communities?*

MILLER: First of all, the discourse doesn't just disappear because Mayor Ford and Mayor Tory ran governments that deliberately tried not to solve problems, spend as little money as possible, and not invest in maintaining basic social and public services, to predictable consequences. Mayor Chow has inherited a broken and bankrupt city which was created by deliberate action. That's a real problem to fix. But the discourse hasn't gone away. For me, the urban discourse, globally, including in Toronto, is really exciting at the moment. There's amazing potential around ideas like making cities far more walkable and transit-friendly, so people don't have to drive all the way across the city to meet their daily needs. A city of neighbourhoods: that's Toronto's image of itself, and, in many places, what it is. How do we make a place where people can contribute to the life of the city, live in relative dignity, and succeed?

Spacing and others have pushed ideas of densification and affordable housing, social inclusion, and transit. You can see, not only were the seeds planted 15 years ago, the shoots are up and the trees are growing. There's far more attention to things like green space, our parks, and our natural environment than before *Spacing* existed. We have another moment where we're in a position to make amazing things happen. From my perspective, the people of Toronto came together for seven years, 20 years ago, and it's going to happen again. We're seeing City Hall push away the debris on top of these shoots, and we'll see these shoots start to flower and grow more rapidly, and they'll be properly nurtured. We're in a position to influence the city's progress in a positive way. So, *Spacing* was important when it started, it was important when it was a bit of a lone voice, and it's even more important now. ↑

↑ **LEFT:** In 2006, *Spacing* co-hosted with *Eye Weekly* a mayoral debate between Miller and Jane Pitfield. It was attended by over 200 readers.

MIDDLE PHOTOS: Miller made it a priority to attend many *Spacing* release parties and was often engaged in long conversations with readers looking to discuss their concerns or ideas with him.
photos by Yvonne Bambrick

RIGHT: Miller continued to engage with and support *Spacing* after he left office. In 2018, he showed up for the opening of *Torontopia*, *Spacing*'s pop-up container shop at City Hall, an idea he had discussed with publisher Matthew Blackett as far back as 2005.

 **spacingradio**

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ON THE SPACING RADIO PODCAST**



King Street

Colouring Toronto's history

In the 1850s, Canada's political elites debated which city should be chosen as the permanent capital of the Province of Canada. Toronto City Council hired local photography firm Armstrong, Beere & Hime to produce a series of photographs to help convince Queen Victoria to pick our fair city over others (the bid failed, unfortunately). Of the 25 photos made in 1856-57, 13 formed a nearly 360-degree panorama taken from the roof of Toronto's tallest building — the five-storey Rossin House Hotel at King West and York streets. While we now take for granted how easy it is to produce panoramic images on our mobile phones, the photographic processes of the 1850s would have made this a complicated and time-consuming effort. To bring this 166-year-old scene back to life, we asked local historian and graphic designer Jeremy Hopkin to colourize 12 photos from the panorama. ↑

PHOTOS COLOURIZED BY JEREMY HOPKIN / TEXT BY WAYNE REEVES + JEREMY HOPKIN



Bishop's Block

Northeast corner of Adelaide and Simcoe

Four of the eventual five high-class rental townhouses that comprised Bishop's Block were built 1829-1833 by John Bishop, one of Toronto's early butchers. Thirty years following their construction, this type of accommodation was no longer in fashion and most were converted to new uses. The two houses nearest to the corner were merged to become a hotel. By the 1990s only the two units close to Simcoe were still standing, but they were in terrible condition. Major efforts were made to save the facades of what remained: they were meticulously taken apart and rebuilt on the original site. The reconstructed portion is still there as a unique piece of the Shangri-La Hotel.



Above the Low-rise Core

Looking northwest toward Queen and John

Church steeples contrasted with the one- and two-storey frame and brick buildings mixing together homes, shops, and factories. On the left horizon is St. George the Martyr (1844) at John and Stephanie. It burned in 1955, leaving just a tower stub that can still be seen at Grange Park's south entrance.



Lawyerly Magnificence

Looking north up York toward Queen

Built by the Law Society of Upper Canada, Osgoode Hall (1832, expanded 1844) gave a fine Neoclassical aspect to York/Toronto. The building was intended to be the north terminus of a grand Regency street leading down to the harbour, but the plan never materialized.



Row House Model

Looking north to Adelaide

The three-storey houses comprising “Ritchey’s Terrace” (1855) on Adelaide were said by *The Globe* to be the finest of their type in Toronto. The end units were in red brick; the middle used “white” (yellow) brick. To the south, small frame cottages line what is now Pearl Street.

City of Churches

Looking northeast toward Bay and Temperance

Seven churches are visible here. The most prominent spire is on Knox’s Church (1847; far centre right) at Queen and Bay. The sole survivor is the two-towered Church of the Holy Trinity (1847; far centre left) on the west side of the Eaton Centre.

Old Old City Hall

Southwest corner of Front and Jarvis

This iteration of Toronto's City Hall was constructed in 1845. In use until 1899, city council then moved to what we now call "Old" City Hall. In 1902, the centre block of the 1845 City Hall was retained as the primary entrance to south St. Lawrence Market. Since the 1970s, the former council chamber on the second floor has been home to the City of Toronto's Market Gallery.



Once a Royal Court

Looking northeast toward Yonge

Toronto's first substantial indoor sports venue was the Toronto Racket (or Racquet) Court near King and Bay. Designed by John Howard (1837), it was used by the Prince of Wales during his 1860 Royal Visit. The four-storey frame building burned down in 1861.

Muddy York Mud

Looking east along King toward Jarvis

Despite being Toronto's principal commercial street, King's condition varied. Here, one section has been recently macadamized, while mud persists between St. James' Cathedral (1853, spire added later; top centre left) and St. Lawrence Hall (1850, with dome; top centre). Planks helpfully line and cross the roadway. Two people can be seen talking on the sidewalk.

St. Lawrence Hall

Southwest corner of King and Jarvis

St. Lawrence Hall was built in 1850 as Toronto's first large meeting hall — here its clock tower stands tall on the horizon. Restored in the 1960s, the hall still serves Toronto as a popular event space. To the left of the hall is the Cathedral Church of St. James, which is short in appearance, not yet complete. By 1874 its steeple would soar several feet above the top of St. Lawrence Hall.



Theatrical Turn

Looking southeast toward Front and Yonge

In 1848, John Ritchie built the Royal Lyceum Theatre (lower right) on a lane south of King Street (the theatre's name can be seen near bottom edge of photo). The Royal Lyceum was Toronto's first purpose-built theatre, and Ontario's first proper theatre. It was rebuilt after a fire (1874) but did not survive a second one (1883). Three people can be seen working in the bottom left corner.

Wellington Transect

Looking southeast across Wellington toward Bay

The era of single-family villas in this area (represented by Holland House [1831]; left-centre) was ending. Even row houses were being put to new uses, like Sword's Hotel (1856; far right centre), here overlapping the four-storey Jacques & Hay furniture factory. In 1862, Sword's would become the Queen's Hotel. It closed in 1927 and was demolished to make way for the Royal York Hotel.



Working on a Railroad

Looking south along York to Front

Hugging Front Street is the single line of the Ontario, Huron & Simcoe Railway — Toronto's first such enterprise (1853). Its passenger depot is hidden by Sword's Hotel (far upper left). Rail facilities would soon be moved further to the newly filled Esplanade, impeding public access to the waterfront.

Local Land Baron

Looking south on Simcoe across Wellington

Concealed by trees is the 1818 home of Rev. John Strachan, Upper Canada's first Anglican bishop. His son, James McGill Strachan, practiced law, politics, and land speculation. He sold off or developed many of the properties seen here in the 1840s and '50s, including the rental row houses known as "Wellington Terrace" (centre right).

Gateway to Toronto

Foot of Simcoe south of Front

Beyond the fine residences one can see ships moored at Dr. Rees' Wharf, at the time the only nautical port of entry designated for immigration by the Toronto Board of Health. Soon, most newcomers reached Toronto by rail through Union Station — an arrival point eclipsed by Toronto Pearson Airport since the 1960s. ↑

20 Good Things

Despite the challenges facing the city, many amazing things have sprouted up on the streets of Toronto over two decades

BY GLYN BOWERMAN

The years since our tenth anniversary in 2013 have not been the most inspiring for Toronto, dominated by do-little mayors and comfortable councillors. But *Spacing* has also always tried to celebrate the good things that happen in the city. When looking back over the past decade, it's important to salute the victories, small and large, that have made Toronto a better place to live and an easier city to access and enjoy. Presented here are 20 good things that have happened since our tenth anniversary that we think are worthy of celebrating.



CIVIC PRIDE

The Toronto Sign

It's possibly one of the most-photographed landmarks in Toronto. You'll see it all over social media, on brochures, and on postcards. It has become almost as iconic as the CN Tower or the SkyDome. But, unlike most civic icons, the TORONTO sign in Nathan Phillips Square wasn't meant to be a permanent symbol of the city. It's a bit of a fluke it still stands today. It was originally created for the Pan Am and Parapan Am Games when Toronto played host to the event in 1976, as a temporary attraction. But people fell in love with the simple, bold, boxy letters, which could be lit up in a variety of colours. The light plays off the reflecting pool in the warmer months, and illuminates ice skaters in the winter.

While it was an immediate hit, it wasn't built to last, and quickly showed signs of deterioration. At the same time, Nathan Phillips Square was in the process of a lengthy revitalization process to make

the space more welcoming for different types of cultural events and gatherings, build a multi-purpose outdoor theatre, redesign the skating pavilion, and relocate and update the Peace Garden, with an Indigenous Spirit Garden added later.

The architects behind the square's redesign weren't too keen on keeping the sign, which had nothing to do with their vision for a new Square. But the people loved the TORONTO sign, so it not only stayed, it was added to. In 2017, a maple leaf was added to commemorate Canada's sesquicentennial. In 2018, a medicine wheel was added to honour Indigenous people. And, in 2020, the entire aging structure was replaced with a newer, more durable model. Each letter of the sign can be illuminated with any of around 220 million colours, a feature often used to celebrate special occasions or festivals, demonstrate solidarity, or to mourn.

photo by Greg Stacey

TRANSIT

TTC timed transfers & kids under 12 ride free

Public transit isn't just about where you can travel, it's also about how accessible it is, and cost is an essential factor. In 2018, the TTC introduced two-hour time-based transfers — what is referred to as a “hop on, hop off” system. Before this, transfers could only be used as part of a continuous, linear trip in one direction. That's fine for the average work commuter trying to get from home to their place of business in the morning, then return at the end of the day. But many people, it's been shown, rely on transit to make more local trips, with frequent stops. Women and caregivers (often the same group) are statistically more likely to make these kinds of trips. This could involve taking kids to school on transit, then stopping to run whatever errands are necessary, pick up groceries, and so on. That kind of use case isn't supported by the one-way linear trip model. So it was a major win for many people who rely on transit to be able to make frequent stops, in multiple directions, on the same fare. This, in addition to free rides for children under the age of 12, made the TTC a much friendlier way for people outside of the business-commuter type the service typically catered to. It became all the more important when the COVID pandemic upended travel patterns, leading to fewer commuters but more people travelling by transit for local errands. It's a prime example of how looking at City services through a different lens can lead to massive improvements in quality of life for people who are often overlooked.



TRANSIT

Subway goes to York U

I came to Toronto to attend York University the same year Spacing was founded. At the time, students who needed to get downtown were stuck on buses that meandered around North York's residential neighbourhoods and office parks before arriving at Downsview Station, where the students would hop on the subway. It was a long trip, I remember well. At the time, there were whispers that one day there would be a subway right to the heart of York campus. And, while it obviously never arrived during my time there, in 2017 a subway did arrive at Canada's third-largest university, where over 50,000 students are enrolled.

It was no easy feat. Beyond the obvious financial and engineering challenges, construction suffered significant delays, went over budget, saw the firing of two veteran TTC managers, and got embroiled in legal battles. There was also debate about whether or not York Region was paying its fair share — the terminus of the new line is in the City of Vaughan. But the line was built. It took nearly 30 years from conception to completion, but the Line 1 now has six new stations: Downsview Park, Finch West, York University, Pioneer Village, Highway 407, and Vaughan Metropolitan (a municipal hub whose growth has exploded, in part because of the subway extension).

photo by Vik Pahwa

TRANSIT

King transit corridor

With an average of 84,000 business-day riders, the 504 King Streetcar is far and away the busiest streetcar line in Toronto. It is a major transit arterial in and out of the city's business district. That's why, in 2017, the City introduced a pilot project to prioritize a large section of King Street for transit. Personal vehicles could only drive a block or so before being required to turn onto another street. Parking was also eliminated along much of the thoroughfare. This raised the inevitable “it's a war on cars” battle cry, but the fact was, in 2017, 65,000 people rode the streetcar daily, while only 20,000 drivers used King. The pilot worked as intended and was hailed by staff as a success. It increased daily ridership to the number we see today, and improved efficiency and travel time. It also had the side effect of making King safer for pedestrians and cyclists. In 2019, Council voted to make the changes permanent. The changes also made it possible to introduce patios along the stretch — a prelude of things to come. Unfortunately, however, the police have become complacent about enforcing the restrictions on motorists, and the temporary-pilot infrastructure is crumbling. Clearly, for continued success, the King Street corridor needs a champion once more.





PARKS

Claude Cormier parks

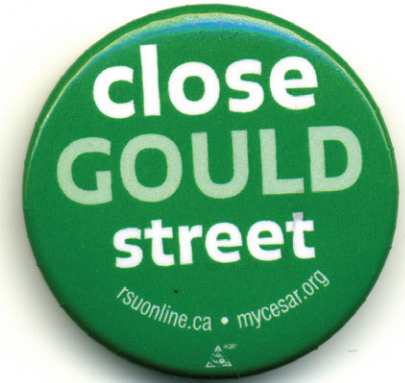
Landscape architect Claude Cormier, who sadly passed away this year, was a major part of the waterfront transformation, and beyond. He and his firm were involved in a number of iconic projects along the shores of Lake Ontario and surrounding district. HTO Park, on the harbourfront, opened in 2007 and features bright yellow umbrellas and Muskoka chairs. Sugar Beach, opened in 2010, features fine white sand (invoking the sugar of the nearby Redpath Sugar Plant) and pink umbrellas. More recently, this year Love Park opened: a quiet oasis, straddling the waterfront and the busy business/tourist district, it features a heart-shaped pond with a large tree in the centre, and beautiful mosaic stonework throughout. These quirky, effective, and internationally-recognized projects are a major component of the beautification of the waterfront, and they welcome people to enjoy it with open arms. Of course, Cormier's work isn't contained to the waterfront. He reimagined Berczy Park in the St. Lawrence Market district, which was unveiled in 2017, introducing life-sized statues of different dogs surrounding the central fountain. And his firm is currently at work on the landscape aspects of The Well, a mixed-use development between Wellington Ave. and Front St. Cormier set an incredibly high bar for the look, quality, and utility of public spaces in this city. His legacy will be felt for generations to come.

photo by Industryous Photography (above)

STREETS

CaféTO

The pandemic forced us all to get innovative about maintaining some sort of quality of life, and even fun, while minimizing the spread of COVID. One of these innovations was a long time coming — really, it shouldn't have required a public-health disaster to happen, but the disaster provided the necessary political will. With the knowledge that COVID transmission was less likely to occur outdoors, and in an effort to buoy local restaurants and bars that were struggling as a result of the pandemic, the City implemented CaféTO: a policy that allowed these establishments to create ad hoc patio spaces on the sidewalk and/or in the curb lane in front of their property. It wasn't the usual overbaked policy Toronto usually prefers, where every minute detail is regulated until the actual intent of the policy is obscured. It built on the new, more flexible patio rules adopted in 2019 that allowed curbside patios — but those, by comparison, took five years of consultation and controversy to introduce. For CaféTO, the City seemed to recognize expediency was needed, and the result was messy, brought millions in economic benefits, and was extremely popular — although accessibility issues needed addressing. But, in classic Toronto fashion, when the City moved to make the program permanent, patio owners complained the permits were too expensive, the permit process too onerous, and that the City was basically ruining what already worked. Mayor Olivia Chow recently promised to streamline the process, recognizing the value these patios bring to Toronto.



WALKING

Gould Street pedestrianized

It's one thing to carve out road space for cyclists or reduce speed limits for cars, it's another thing to remove road space entirely and give it over to pedestrians. But that's what happened on Gould Street in the heart of Toronto Metropolitan University campus. On occasion, streets will be blocked off to cars for a set amount of time, as they are with Kensington Market's longstanding Pedestrian Sundays or John Street's pop-up pedestrian mall. But the Gould street zone is permanent: from O'Keefe lane to Bond Street, going east to west, and on portions of Victoria Street, north of Dundas. It came after much advocacy from TMU's student union and other students. The City agreed to a one-year pilot in 2010 and another year extension before the pedestrian zone was made permanent in 2012. It was fully reconstructed with permanent pedestrian infrastructure in the early 2020s, becoming Toronto's first fully pedestrianized street. Today, it's a busy place, full of students hanging out without having to worry about traffic; there's a farmers' market, and even an assortment of street food vendors. It's proof that removing space for cars doesn't ruin a neighbourhood, it strengthens it.



BIKES

Lanes to call their own

The two men who cut the ribbon on Toronto's first separated bike lane in 2013 were about as unlikely a pair as you could imagine: Mayor Rob Ford and Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong. As a councillor, Rob Ford famously told Council "I can't support bike lanes," and compared cycling to swimming with sharks. Minnan-Wong, then chair of the Public Works Committee, was a fiscal tightwad who resented pretty much every red cent the city spent. Strange, then, that these two opened a separated track along Sherbourne from Bloor to Front Street.

Since then, Toronto's cycling network, and the number of separated bike lanes, has expanded greatly. Lanes on Richmond (going west), Adelaide (going east), and University (going north) provide important routes in and out of the downtown core. The long-advocated-for "Bike Lanes on Bloor" were finally built and are expanding west and east. Even busy Yonge Street is receiving permanent lanes in stretches, after the pandemic provided an opportune time for a pilot project. Most of these new lanes are fully separated from traffic by concrete barriers. It's not perfect: many lanes still aren't fully separated, cars often park in them, there is confusion about the rules, many stretches don't connect with each other, and construction creates constant blockages and detours. Still, as of 2022, Toronto had 367 kilometres of on-street cycling infrastructure, and the plan is to continue growing the network.

photos courtesy City of Toronto

SPACING.CA » 47



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PROPERTY GROUP

20 Good Things

LINKING GREENSPACES

Meadowway trail

In the northeast of the city, a trail is being blazed from the Don River in North York to Rouge National Urban Park in Scarborough. That's a 16-kilometre expanse that will include paths for active transportation like walking and cycling, as well as community gardens and greenspace filled with native grasses and plants to support pollinator species and other wildlife. It's called The Meadowway: a renaturalization of the Gattineau Hydro Corridor, formerly an expanse of mowed lawn, being led by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and funded by multiple levels of government along with private donations. As of this July, the project was 60% complete, with many portions already in use. When complete, The Meadowway will connect seven rivers and ravines, 13 neighbourhoods, and 15 parks. In concert with other trail projects like the Railpath and East Don Parkland Trail, this means there are a growing number of ways to traverse the city and commune with nature without competing with cars. The genesis of The Meadowway arguably began with, you guessed it, the Pan Am games. In 2013, as the games were approaching, a "Pan Am Path" was proposed to connect existing multi-use trails and hydro corridors to make a continuous east-west connection from Brampton to Pickering. It was an ambitious proposal and, this being Toronto, it is still being built out, but it got the City thinking about ways to provide better active transportation connectivity across the city. The Meadowway is part of that legacy.



NEW SPACES

The Bentway

Since it was built in the late 1950s, the Gardiner Expressway has represented a major physical and psychological barrier to the waterfront. But, politics in Toronto still being heavily weighted in favour of car infrastructure, it's not likely to go anywhere (at least until *Spacing's* 40th anniversary). What, then, to do about all the land underneath it? Is it doomed to be a shadowed, exhaust-choked, miserable blight separating Toronto from Lake Ontario? That is the question The Bentway tries to address. A donation from Judy and Wilmot Matthews of \$25 million dollars made it possible for urban designer Ken Greenberg's Public Work studio to reimagine the land underneath the expressway as public space. Since then, the project has opened in stages, with Phase 1 officially complete in 2018. There is a linear park and trail system in the warm months, and skating trail in the winter, running alongside Fort York National Historic site. In fact, The Bentway provides an excellent connection to the new Fort York Visitor Centre, which opened in 2015. It even played host to a pop-up basketball court, where Raptors fans could throw some shots up with shooting guard Gary Trent Jr.

photos by Michael Shaw (right) and Whyllie Poon (above)

PARKS

Rouge National Park

What's at the end of The Meadowway? The only national urban park in Canada you can get to by public transit. Actually, Rouge National Urban Park is the only urban national park in Canada. It is 79 square kilometres, stretching from Lake Ontario north to the Oak Ridges Moraine in the Greenbelt, and straddles the boundaries of Toronto, Markham, Pickering, and the Township of Uxbridge.

The land was carved out by the Rouge River. According to the *Canadian Encyclopedia*, archeological discoveries made in the park include "some of the oldest known Indigenous sites in Canada." It was settled by farmers in the 18th century. In the 20th century, it was home to a popular downhill skiing facility. Activists helped preserve the land for decades, rebuffing development until, in 2015, the federal government passed the Rouge National Urban Park Act, giving it official designation. Today, you can camp, hike, bike, boat, fish, swim, or commune with the many wild species who thrive in the park. Ideally, the Rouge will inspire more such urban national parks. There is currently a federal plan to establish a network of up to six by 2025.





'Misson House' laneway suite by Lanescape

GENTLE DENSITY

Laneway houses

Anyone who's explored Toronto's older downtown neighbourhoods has probably found themselves wandering down a laneway. I often play a game to see how far I can get by primarily taking these wide paths, often lined with garages and sometimes including houses. The houses there were mostly grandfathered in, a holdover from a time when Toronto urban planning wasn't anywhere near as formal. That was until 2018, when City Council officially legalized building laneway suites in the Toronto and East York area. This allowed people to turn spaces typically taken up by garages or a large backyard into a secondary living space on their property. It was a way of adding gentle density to existing neighbourhoods. It's not going to solve the housing crisis, and buy-in has been slow (with 50 completed suites and just over 300 permits issued as of 2021), but every little bit counts. And, as the beginning of the City's Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON) program, laneway suites were the vanguard that opened the way for garden suites, boarding houses, and four-unit multiplexes that can help provide more much-needed housing in low-density residential parts of the city, with more ambitious changes in the pipeline.

photo courtesy of Lanescape

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YOUTH

Sports on streets legalized

In a dense urban environment, space to play is hard to come by. It's natural, then, for good Canadian kids to take to their neighbourhood street and get in a round of hockey or, increasingly, basketball. So natural, in past years it came as a surprise to many to discover that it was not actually legal in Toronto. In fact, it was one of the earliest windmills *Spacing* tilted against. Of the dreaded By-law 522-78, which prohibited street hockey, on pain of a \$55 fine per person, *Spacing* publisher Matthew Blackett wrote this in the *Work & Play* issue, #3, 2004: "Hockey is gloriously celebrated in our culture and national identity. The game's importance is obviously lost on some of our city planners who single-mindedly view the roadways as a means of getting from here to there."

Upon become mayor, David Miller was also shocked. He told *Spacing*: "I can remember a push somewhere to stop kids playing ball hockey on the streets. And somebody said, 'Is Toronto a city where fun has gone to die?'"

While it took an embarrassing amount of time, however, this affront to one of the most sacrosanct features of Canadian identity was rectified when, in 2016, council finally legalized sports in the street. Our long national nightmare came to an end.

SPORTS

Raptors parade

Until the Toronto Raptors won the 2019 NBA Championship, Toronto hadn't seen one of its major-market international sports teams hoist a finals trophy since the Blue Jays' Joe Carter won the World Series with an inspired home run in 1993. (Though the growing Toronto FC, founded in 2007, did win the Major League Soccer championship in 2017). So, when the Raptors beat the dynastic Golden State Warriors and brought home the Larry O'Brien trophy for the first time in franchise history, Toronto was ready to party. The parade wove its way from the Princess' Gates in Exhibition Place to City Hall, with the team, support staff, local heroes like "superfan" Nav Bhatia, and (of course) Drake waving to people from cars and large, Raptor-red buses. Attendance was estimated at between one and two million people: the celebration truly brought the city together like little else could.

For the culminating ceremony, 100,000 people packed into Nathan Phillips Square. Mayor John Tory, who had taken to wearing a Raptors-themed suit throughout the playoff run, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau were warmly received. Premier Doug Ford was thoroughly booed by the crowd. The championship and ensuing parade let the world know Toronto is a basketball town, Canada is a basketball country, and We The North.



SAFETY

Speed-limit reductions

Speed is a major factor in making streets unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. In 2010, Ontario's Deputy Chief Coroner released a report that showed 67% of road deaths occurred where posted speed limits were at or above 50 km/h. Below that speed, the death rate dropped to 5% — a drastic improvement. In the past 20 years, the number of road deaths and serious injuries in Toronto has consistently been high. While former Mayor Ford and his allies raged about the "war on cars," many tried to make changes that would prevent pedestrian and cyclist deaths. Community councils can vote on speed limits in their own boroughs, and Toronto and East York Community Council took a bold stand in 2013 when it voted to reduce speed limits on all residential streets to 30 km/h, which greatly improves the chances of surviving a crash. Others of the former Metro municipalities were reluctant to follow suit.

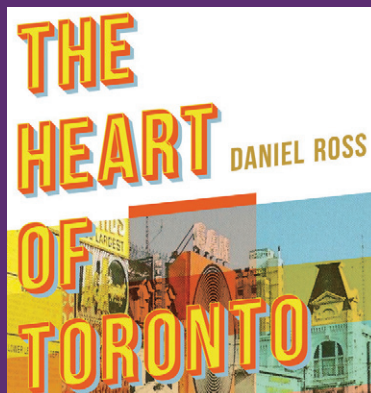
Still, Vision Zero — the concept that road deaths are preventable and a matter of infrastructure, education, and enforcement — was catching on all over the world in the last 20 years, and Toronto eventually adopted the idea, at least in principle. The policy led to at least a 10 km/h speed-limit reduction on many roadways across the city, although plenty of major and minor arterials remain at the demonstrably lethal 50 km/h threshold. Beyond that, the City implemented structural changes to certain patches of roads to improve safety, implemented advanced pedestrian signals at an increasing number of crossings, and installed automated speed-enforcement cameras in areas of high concern. Far from perfect, but progress is being made.

Congratulations to the 2023 winners of the **HERITAGE TORONTO AWARDS!**



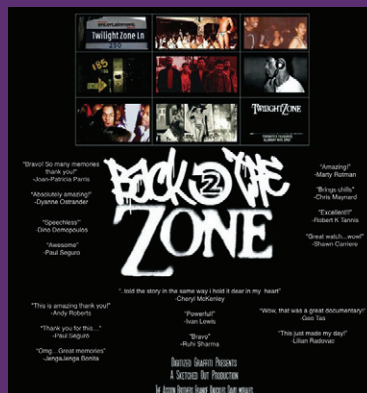
**A Big Vision for
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PUBLIC HISTORY AWARD



The Heart of Toronto

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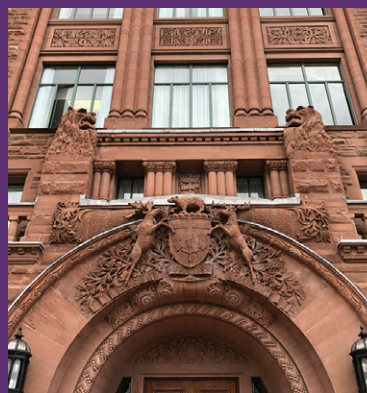
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Waterfront transforms

Like many lakeside towns whose major come-up happened in the industrial age, Toronto's waterfront used to be a pretty utilitarian, often grimy space. It was a place of shipping, bulky factories and refineries, pollution, and parking lots. Not a lot of thought was given to esthetics, or to finding ways to highlight the natural beauty of Lake Ontario. However, as the city's economy started to shift away from smokestacks and rusty metal, there was an opportunity to reimagine the city's shores. The Waterfront Revitalization Corporation (commonly called Waterfront Toronto) was created by all three levels of government together in 2001 to oversee a massive revitalization of 2,000 acres of land by the lake. So far, it's gone a long way to creating new parks and public spaces along the waterfront, such as Sherbourne Common, Sugar Beach, and the WaveDecks. It also oversaw the remaking of Queen's Quay in 2015 to include more beautiful, welcoming spaces, shared-use trails for pedestrians and cyclists, and a completely redesigned road. Currently, vast swaths of land around the mouth of the Don River and in the Portlands are going through renaturalization and development.



PAN AM GAMES

UP Express

The UP Express, a high-speed train connection between Union Station downtown and Pearson International Airport in Mississauga, is also a legacy of the Pan Am Games. A rail connection to the city's largest airport had been planned for decades, but the Games became a deadline for completion so that visiting athletes, support staff, dignitaries, and spectators would have a quick way to reach the city.

The deadline was met, and the line was operational in time for the Games. However, not everyone was happy about the line. Environmental groups and residents along the rail path argued the trains should be electric instead of diesel, to prevent pollution and possible health risks for people close to the line. The price was also a point of contention, with the original one-way adult fare set at an eye-watering \$27.50. Metrolinx ultimately relented on the price, and you can now ride the UP for a more reasonable \$12.35. With stops at Dundas West and Bloor, as well as Weston, the UP is not just quick passage between the airport and the core, it's a useful line for commuters travelling from and within Toronto's northwest neighbourhoods.

photo by Wylie Poon

EAST BAYFRONT

Sidewalk Labs vs. Everybody

This year Crow's Theatre had an unlikely runaway hit with a play dramatizing the story of Sidewalk Labs on the waterfront. *The Master Plan* was written by Michael Healey, based on a non-fiction book by Josh O'Kane called *Sideways: the City Google Couldn't Buy*. It may seem odd that so many people lined up to see a play about recent municipal history, but this was a topic that almost everyone had an opinion about. Waterfront Toronto had a patch of land at its disposal called Quayside and, perhaps buoyed by the above successes, it wanted to do something ambitious. It put out a call for proposals, and Sidewalk Labs, and an affiliate of search-engine turned mega-corporation Google, won the bid. Sidewalk Labs promised a neighbourhood of the future, using sensors, data, smart technology, and eco-friendly materials and design. At first, people were excited about the possibilities. All three levels of government were on board. However, concerns started to be raised about how Google would gather the data, and how it would be used. As well, Google kept pushing for more land. Finally, when internal documents came out showing Google was not acting in particularly good faith, and some of their data plans were as creepy as detractors warned, public opinion turned against the project. COVID added further hurdles and, in 2020, Sidewalk Labs pulled out of Quayside. Much of Toronto breathed a sigh of relief, but *The Master Plan* asked people: if not that, then what?



NEIGHBOURHOODS

Corktown Common

The answer to Sidewalk Labs may not be as flashy as “smart” condos and robotic garbage trucks, but the impact may be more profound and longer-lasting. The paradigm is Corktown Common. Officially opening in 2014 in the West Donlands precinct, Corktown Common is an 18-acre park with a giant playground for kids, a splash pad, and a nature walk full of native plants and ponds designed to sustain wildlife including birds, ducks, turtles, and frogs. It was designed by Michael Von Valkenburgh Associates, a landscape firm that’s worked all over Toronto. The park incorporates sustainable features, such as recycling water from the splash pad and storms to be used for irrigation, and a central pavilion that has solar panels to offset energy consumption. But it is so much more than a park. It is also designed to provide essential flood protection from the Don River for the new West Donlands neighbourhood.

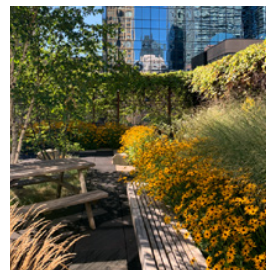
This is essential infrastructure, largely self-sustaining, that doubles as excellent public space. It is a precursor to the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Plan. Waterfront Toronto has been working on since 2017. This massive project will realign the Don River mouth to a more natural flow, and transform parts of a huge, forgotten, polluted former industrial precinct the size of the downtown into naturalized parks, trails, and activity hub. It’s expected to open next year.

HOUSING

Land trusts

Community land trusts (CLT) were introduced in Canada in the 1970s. The idea is to purchase land to be owned and maintained for a specific purpose, often housing, in perpetuity, removing it from the market. This model has grown in fashion across Canada in recent years, as many cities are experiencing a housing crisis where people find it increasingly hard to find a safe and affordable roof over their head. In Toronto, the recent CLT renaissance was sparked by the Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust. This not-for-profit organization managed to secure its first property in 2017 at 87 Milky Way through fundraising. It used the property to establish a community garden, where locals could grow produce. From there, it started looking to other properties to secure as affordable housing. The Kensington Market Community Land Trust followed suit and, in 2021, was able to purchase a property, with the help of the City, to maintain the units within as affordable rental.

The City is also doing its part to help this idea scale outwards to other neighbourhoods. It implemented the Multi-Unit Residential Acquisition program to help land trusts and other organizations secure housing units for people who need them, keeping some existing affordable housing from becoming unaffordable as market pressures increase. ↑



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20 People we Love

Each year, our editorial staff meet a wide assortment of people who care deeply about urban issues and the future of Toronto.

In our tenth anniversary issue, we identified ten people changing the course of this city.

As we hit 20, here are 10 more phenomenal folks whose work has helped inspire the magazine's staff in the past two decades.



NEXT GENERATION

Hafeez Alavi

Early on, Hafeez Alavi imagined neighbourhoods as they might be rather than how they were. In 2020, at age 15, Alavi saw how unsafe cycling was in his Thorncliffe Park neighbourhood and agitated for the City to introduce a separated bike lane on Thorncliffe Park Drive. Armed with renderings and flyers, the grade 10 student started a petition and encouraged neighbours to support his plan. A year later, the bikeway was installed.

"A lot of people love Thorncliffe Park because of how connected everyone feels, an overwhelming sense of community," says Alavi of his motivation. "Once I realized you can create that change – making sure that other people have a safe environment – I was determined to work more on that."

Next up: Alavi joined with students at his school and the local Cycle Toronto ward group to push for bicycle improvements for Overlea Bridge to safely connect Thorncliffe Park and Flemingdon Park.

When overtures to the local councillor were rebuffed, the group circulated more flyers and peti-

tions and eventually made a presentation to the City's Infrastructure and Environment Committee. In July 2022, when City Council voted to renew both the bridge and Overlea Boulevard, the renderings featured all of Alavi and his co-conspirators' design features (work is expected to be complete by 2027.) "I've learned you can't do it all yourself. You need people you can work together and bring your ideas to life," notes Alavi. "Activating the community is essential."

If proximity to where Hafeez Alavi lives is the key to better streetscapes, then Scarborough residents should be thrilled. When Alavi and his family moved to Dorset Park in 2021, the now second-year University of Waterloo planning student started an initiative called Lawrence Prospect that reimagines a stretch of Lawrence Avenue East with reduced road-lane widths, transit priority, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, and street furniture and greenery.

"I feel optimistic because people — especially young people — are informed about what's wrong with our cities right now and what they want to improve," says Alavi. He is committed to seeing his project to completion. Given his record, I wouldn't bet against it.

— Steve Brearton

THE ARCHIVIST

Wayne Reeves

"I love stories and can get passionate about any topic," says Wayne Reeves. He was chief curator of Toronto's history museums from 2009 to 2021. We met at the Fort York Visitor Centre — the largest capital project in the history of Toronto's museums, creating 2,900 square feet of exhibit space to tell the story of Toronto's founding, and the achievement Reeves is most proud of.

Asked to name some favourite acquisitions, Reeves cites an exhibit he and his team created at the Market Gallery to commemorate the last performance by The Beatles in Toronto, at Maple Leaf Gardens on August 17, 1966. Reeves recreated a suburban rec room of the 1960s and scoured second-hand shops for a Seabreeze portable record player made in Toronto by Art K. Tateishi (1918-2012). Reeves treasures the record player because it was designed by a Japanese-Canadian who, despite being interned during the Second World War, went on to found an innovative company that produced home entertainment electronics in Canada.

There is a tradition for the City's chief curator to visit outgoing mayors to ask if there is anything they want to donate to the archives. Reeves recalls visiting David Miller (2003-2010), who handed Reeves a red brick from the first apartment building demolished at Regent Park. The brick symbolized the pride Miller felt in leading the revitalization of the neighbourhood and providing affordable housing. "What I love is telling stories through objects," says Reeves. He has contributed to three Spacing books: *Souvenirs of Toronto Sports*, *Packaged Toronto*, *The Signs That Define Toronto*, and is currently working on a fourth book to be published in 2024. "Even the most innocuous thing may have the most amazing story behind it."

— Ian Darragh



THE INTERVENTIONIST

Shari Kasman

How does a prolific and mischievous artist like Shari Kasman decide what project to do next? "It's a combination of what's bothering me the most and what seems doable," she tells me over coffee in the Bloordale neighbourhood she calls home.

Some will know Kasman as the author of *Rocks Don't Move and Other Questionable Facts*, in which she documented the process of exchanging "books for facts" from a box on her front lawn. Another book, *Goodbye, Galleria*, is a love letter to the now-demolished Galleria Mall, complete with swatches of pretended Pantone colours (such as "Galleria Green") to match the anemic, 1970s-era palette of the mall.

Kasman gives me a tour of the places where she's affected the urban landscape. "I was pissed off about biking through the water," she says of a spot on Bloor St. where water pools after it rains. City staff told her it was "ponding." The Bloordale Pond is now on Google Maps, complete

with user reviews: "Wonderful reflective pond that also doubles as an impromptu ice rink come winter," says one. "Bonus: no wait time."

We walk across the street to the lot where Brockton High School used to stand. After the building came down in 2020, Kasman and "a guy with a wrench" slipped through the fencing and put up signs declaring it the Bloordale Beach. The Beach became a popular place for community projects, including concerts, birthday parties, and a community garden.

Kasman's signs have generated other local transformations. An empty lot on Brock just north of Queen St. W. became a provincial park. Four giant signs in public parks announcing the "Alcohol in Parks" pilot program became "All Cool in Parks" signs, quickly removed by city staff. Official-looking signs at TTC stops mock the transit agency's confusing route change announcements.

As we approach the southern entrance to what was once Bloordale Beach, Kasman points out a pink wildflower. "There's a flower come back from the garden! That's where the community garden was," she says, with obvious pride. Art, as Kasman shows, has a way of punching through the city's mess.

— Joseph Wilson

photos by Ian Darragh (left) and Ariel Teplitsky (above)

The Previous 10

In *Spacing's* tenth anniversary issue, our editors identified ten people we thought were making a great impact on Toronto. We revisit that list and see what they're working on now.



Desmond Cole

THEN: *City Idol* winner & voting reform activist

NOW: Author of *The Skin We're In* & anti-racism leader



David Crombie

THEN: Former mayor involved in city issues

NOW: Former mayor involved in city issues



Kat Cizek

THEN: Groundbreaking documentary filmmaker of *HIGHRISE*

NOW: Artistic Director of Co-Creation Studio / MIT Open Doc Lab



Margie Zeidler

THEN: Brains behind 401 Richmond

NOW: *Spacing's* landlord! (we moved there in 2014)



Stephen Otto

THEN: Friends of Fort York founder & mentor to *Spacing* editors

NOW: Passed away in 2018

URBAN GEOGRAPHER

Daniel Rotsztain

"I'm not sick of libraries... yet," says Daniel Rotsztain, a.k.a. the Urban Geographer. He is well acquainted with the 100 branches of the Toronto Public Library after drawing them all for his colouring book, *All The Libraries Toronto*. He's eager to do an updated version to capture the newly-renovated branches, but at the moment he's got his hands full. Rotsztain currently co-leads plazaPOPS, a not-for-profit devoted to transforming parking lots in strip malls into people-friendly meeting places. It began with a 2019 pilot program in Wexford, taking over ten parking spots for six weeks. "We created this room in the middle of the parking lot surrounded by planter boxes with stadium seating," he says. It hosted community leader meetings, pop-up concerts, and art exhibits.

But don't expect Rotsztain to settle into the sedate life of a not-for-profit administrator. His portfolio teems with an eclectic array of projects including short films, hand-drawn maps, and art projects. He's also teaching in the Masters of Urban Design program at the University of Toronto.

"I deeply and irrationally love Toronto," Rotsztain says when I ask him about his relationship with the city, "but as a result I also hate it." He tells me about his efforts to preserve the old structural pillars running from the Gardiner at York St. "It's so inconsequential," he admits, compared to the bigger problems faced by the city. He hosted concerts, started a petition, and planned a "pillars picnic," but they were torn down in 2021 to make room for Claude Cormier's Love Park.

The plazaPOPS projects function in the same way, bringing ephemeral moments of delight to the car-dominated inner suburbs. Of his efforts to improve the city, Rotsztain says, "you've got to act on the things you love or else you'll never do anything." — *Joseph Wilson*



THE DISRUPTOR

Chloe Brown

Despite her star turn on the debate stage in the 2022 mayoral race, and then her strong seventh-place finish in the 2023 by-election, Chloe Brown did not love her first and, it seems, last encounters with municipal politics. "It wasn't a great experience," she says.

Her assessment of why she came away with a bitter aftertaste bears itemizing: she was ghosted by many media organizations in the second race and served as a kind of "trauma dump" for the many people she met on the campaign trail who downloaded their grievances on her. "I made a bunch of people feel good," Brown observes, though many of those didn't end up voting for her. There's a plausible scenario in which someone like Brown — whose charisma and candour resonated with young people — goes on to the next electoral stage after a grassroots debut that brought in almost 19,000 votes.

But Brown, a policy analyst, says she has no further aspirations to win high public office. Her encounter with politics reaffirmed that the city's political institutions are wired to serve the affluent and homeowners. "People south of Bloor," she says, "have everything they need." The rest of Toronto, Brown adds, "is a city in decline. It's left me quite jaded."

In her view, the best way forward for people on the margins is a new approach to entrepreneurship — one that focuses not on relentless competition, but rather on the more collaborative approach exemplified by the co-op movement. Brown is in the process of starting a co-operative small business

incubator/acclerator and is partnering with the tax software giant Intuit as well as a few credit unions. "I'm stepping away from politics to speak in the language of business, which seems to be the only language that these politicians understand."

— *John Lorinc*





DYNAMIC DUO

Kofi Hope & Zahra Ebrahim

In autumn 2021, city builders Zahra Ebrahim and Kofi Hope were brainstorming ways to make the real-estate development industry more inclusive when they got an idea. “We wanted to create a program that gave racialized folks an opportunity to participate in the generational wealth creation that real estate can drive,” says Ebrahim.

The result was FutureBUILDS, a BIPOC real-estate development incubator that launched this past spring after Ebrahim and Hope secured a grant from the federally funded Future Skills Centre. Through mentorship, technical sessions, and networking events, the free program teaches members of the BIPOC community how to navigate the often-complex municipal planning process to bring housing projects to market. Participants meet city planners, architects, industry leaders, and more, gaining valuable skills and insights first-hand.

The first cohort of 30 students, who completed the five-month program in September 2023, was made up of mid-career professionals. Many were landowners who had aspirations to undertake multiplex or mid-rise projects but didn’t necessarily come from a real-estate background.

“There are all sorts of trade secrets that you swap if you’re in the industry that help you get your projects done on time and on budget,” Ebrahim explains. “We spent a whole field trip talking about electric panels.”

FutureBUILDS is just one of the notable steps that Ebrahim and Hope have taken to effect change in the traditionally white, male-dominated field of property development. Under the umbrella of their boutique consultancy and studio, Monumental Projects, they advise other real-estate enterprises alongside developing their own in-house programming like FutureBUILDS. “We support organizations in that space to think about how social impact, equity, and doing things in a culturally competent lens is embedded in what they do,” Hope explains. “We actually work in the spaces where I think a lot of urbanists think that no social change can actually happen,” Ebrahim adds.

Founded in 2020, Monumental has worked with government institutions including the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation as well as private developers. It is also behind Making Space, a separate program designed to give municipal planners the tools to establish more equitable community-engagement processes.

Their decision to join forces was met with immediate interest. “Within a week, we were busy until the end of the year,” says Ebrahim. “It was more accelerated than we planned, but also the moment in time called for it,” she adds. Monumental, she points out, was established shortly after the murder of George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, by a Minneapolis police officer, a tragedy that captured international headlines and sparked major discussions about systemic racism.

Today, as some members of the inaugural FutureBUILDS cohort move forward with development plans and others return to the drawing board with fresh perspectives, Ebrahim and Hope are looking to secure funding for a follow-up round of FutureBUILDS. The Monumental co-founders also want to figure out how to make project financing more accessible and are putting out an open call for partners. “To put people through that [development application] process and then have them still face all of the barriers around financing is not that full, systemic change that we’re looking for,” says Hope.

There’s no denying that the world of real-estate development lacks diversity. For Hope, levelling the playing field not only creates more equitable outcomes, it’s also crucial to solving Canada’s ongoing housing-affordability crisis. “The entire sector benefits from getting new people with new perspectives, new approaches, and dynamism injected into this field, which has been very exclusive.”

— Josh Sherman

10 YEARS AGO

The Previous 10

In Spacing’s tenth anniversary issue, our editors identified ten people we thought were making a great impact on Toronto. We revisit that list and see what they’re working on now.



Alejandra Bravo

THEN: Manager of Leadership Programs at Maytree Foundation

NOW: City Councillor for Ward 9, Davenport



Dave Meslin

THEN: Serial starter of advocacy groups

NOW: Living in rural Ontario working on voting reform



Elieser

THEN: One of Toronto’s most prolific street artists

NOW: One of Toronto’s most prolific street artists



Laura Reinsborough

THEN: Founder of Not Far From the Tree

NOW: CEO of Ottawa Riverkeeper



Jane Farrow

THEN: Jane’s Walk executive director

NOW: Runs her own public-engagement consultancy



STREETS FOR ALL AGES

Amanda O'Rourke

"I have an amazing team. We're scrappy," says Amanda O'Rourke. She has been executive director of 8 80 Cities for six years and was one of the first project managers Gil Penalosa hired after founding the non-profit in 2007. With a staff of just seven, 8 80 Cities has worked with more than 350 communities on six continents to promote walking and bicycling on streets and in public spaces.

One of her memorable projects was initiated in 2018 by an anonymous donor who gave the group \$150,000 in memory of a friend who was killed by a motorist in Toronto. The donation was to raise awareness about pedestrian fatalities and demonstrate that streets are not just motorways. 8 80 Cities created a pop-up pedestrian- and bike-friendly street on Toronto's Danforth between Woodbine and Woodmount, narrowing the street from four lanes to two for two days. They created bicycle lanes, café seating, play zones with trampolines, planters with flowers, and a street mural. The pilot project helped pave the way for Toronto's long-term transformations of the Danforth, and other streets in Mississauga, Markham, Hamilton, and Kitchener.

"I am a lover of cities," O'Rourke writes in her foreword to *Exploring Toronto* by Ken and Eti Greenberg. "I'm endlessly fascinated by them... Our stories are intertwined with our city, each shaping our identities in exciting and delightfully unpredictable ways."

— Ian Darragh



ON THE FRONTLINE

Diana Chan McNally

This past summer, as hundreds of asylum seekers were finding themselves stranded on the street in downtown Toronto, community worker Diana Chan McNally decided something had to be done — and fast. With the City withholding shelter space from refugee claimants, she helped set up an online fundraiser to purchase and distribute basic necessities. The campaign rapidly surpassed an original target of \$3,000. Within weeks, the City effectively reversed its decision. The campaign wrapped up having raised nearly \$82,000, which went towards everything from water, blankets, and pillows to contributions to community groups including the African Centre for Refugees and the Rwandan-Canadian Healing Centre. "We just saw something incredibly egregious happening and we reacted very quickly," says McNally.

The fundraiser is the kind of direct front-line intervention that McNally, by day a harm-reduction manager at All Saints Church-Community Centre, has been employing even before she entered George Brown College's Community Worker program in 2014. An educator prior to switching career paths in 2014, she noticed that many of the students in the one-year communications program she was co-ordinating were international; for some, she says, enrollment provided a pipeline to safety from persecution in their home countries. "It just became almost like I was a case manager," she says, recalling how she'd help match international students with housing and employment opportunities. "I've always been good at connecting people in that way to resources that they might need," she says.

Over the years, McNally's on-the-ground approach has not only impacted innumerable lives in a real and tangible way but also helped shape public policy by underscoring where systems and institutions are failing vulnerable populations. "What is the frontline except the articulation of all of the policy gaps that are in place?" she asks. "I shouldn't even have a job, but I do because of those policy gaps."

— Josh Sherman

EQUITY PLANNER

Cheryll Case

While completing her degree at Toronto Metropolitan University, Cheryll Case, now 28, was constantly taking steps to create something valuable for the public. Her work ranged from learning how cities could better support seniors to completing a City of Toronto leadership program. In 2017, she put out a report entitled, *Protecting the Vibrancy of Residential Neighbourhoods*, which was featured in the *Toronto Star*. Informed by Case's experiences growing up in Kingsview Village, the report highlighted the declining population of Toronto neighbourhoods over a 30-year span and how zoning restrictions prioritizing detached homes blocked the construction of new housing.

Following the report's release, Case applied to work in urban planning firms but received no offers. Yet at conferences, Case saw the map from her report being used by mainstream organizations. "My knowledge was being co-opted," she says. "I said, 'Okay, who's interacting with my material? How can I leverage that?'" She won her first \$10,000 contract to study development patterns along transit in Toronto.

One of her latest initiatives is Roadmap for Redevelopment, a project that works to build community capacity and connect residents with affordable housing resources. "It's taking all that we've learned, building community capacity," she says.

Despite being initially shut out, Case's career as a policy innovator has made waves. Her non-profit firm, CP Planning, is now a team of 12, and Case's projects have included hosting a conference of her own, The Next Steps, focusing on equity in planning.

— Sakeina Syed



photos by Ian Darragh (left) and Matthew Blackett (above)

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Thank you Spacing for leading
the conversation for over 20 years.

Listen to the kids

BY JOSH FULLAN

One of the curious features of our civic discourse is that the people with the longest futures get the shortest shrift. Young Torontonians — especially middle and high-school students — are rarely seen or heard from in debates about housing, public transit, community safety, or the future of public spaces like Ontario Place. And yet, when it comes to time spent with the outcomes, they have the most skin in the game. Children are a kind of muted majority partner in the investments we make, or don't make, as a city today. Rather than packing our public meetings with middle-aged and retired folks, a more enlightened approach would also involve those with many decades of city life ahead of them: vision as well as experience.

Other, structural, barriers threaten the youthfulness of our city. Toronto, in spite of its reputation for openness, is increasingly inimical to young families. At a population level, the city is growing but losing children. The most recent census was the fifth in a row that recorded an increase in Toronto's population while its youngest cohort declined, both as a total and a percentage of everyone. In round numbers, the city has nearly 330,000 more people than it did at the turn of the century, yet 50,000 fewer children under age 15. When young parents are pushed or pulled to somewhere else in the province, their current and future children go with them.

This demographic trend can be starkest in places where children actually prefer to live, play, and go to school. In Toronto's two dense and growing downtown wards, children represent less than 8% of the population. Yet many children actually prefer compact urban places compared to suburbs or smaller municipalities. In our work at Maximum City with thousands of children evaluating their neighbourhoods across the province, kids consistently rank dense, walkable places with lots of stuff — just like Toronto's core — highest.

So what do children want for the future of Toronto? What will keep them here as they start careers or families of their own? I asked 100 middle and high-school students from across the city what they want for Toronto

in the next 20 years. Their answers reveal that the future of the city is not some distant conflagration for them but something more urgent and changeable. I share here some of their unedited ideas, which I organized into three overlapping themes: Safety and Belonging; Mobility; and Environment and Social Justice. In summary, children want a fun and welcoming city, they want more density and growth, a housing solution for all, ease and safety of movement, and a greener, more just and environmentally sustainable city. And for anyone who thinks that kids don't have the language or insights to contribute meaningfully to our civic discourse and ultimately help us make a better urban future, I let the quotes speak for themselves.



Mobility

I want less car-friendly design and more train networks.
— Alex, grade 8, old city of Toronto

I'd like Toronto to be a city with cheaper transportation and better TTC service, with only adults having to pay as kids don't always get allowances. Bigger libraries would also be nice.

— Janel, grade 8, Scarborough

I envision a Toronto where Scarborough transit is valued, efficient, and accessible for all community members to enjoy. I envision a Toronto where the TTC does Land Acknowledgements along popular routes like that of the GO Train arriving at Union Station. I envision a Toronto where the housing crisis is resolved by promoting the missing-middle housing strategy.

— Audrey, grade 12, Scarborough

A more connected city with more transit, more reliable transit, and less cars.

— Kai, grade 12, old city of Toronto

I want a city that has a safe, clean, and efficient subway system. I hope Line 4 can be extended to Sheppard East, and there is a WiFi signal underground. I hope people

can be kept safe, and no one falls or gets pushed onto the tracks.

— Jessica, grade 8, North York

In 20 years, I would like to see improved streets and more green space. Toronto has used its space poorly — its roads have worn-down asphalt, no bike lanes, and many of them are stroads, which are poor-functioning, multi-lane roads.

— Matthew, grade 12, Etobicoke

More and better subways. Larger parks and more density, but less high rises, like in Paris.

— Clara, grade 8, old city of Toronto



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I think the city getting taller is great and it sounds awesome. I want that for Toronto in 20 years because it will likely shorten commute times, have more available jobs, and be great for businesses.

— Kenzo, grade 8, old city of Toronto

I want a community that is compact and has mixed land use.

— Justin, grade 8, old city of Toronto

Instead of having to drive large distances, I would prefer it if Toronto built up instead of across. This means that people can stay within a specific area for all of their needs. I think this could decrease traffic and pollution. It might sound busy with people but less car noise.

— Grace, grade 8, North York

Safety & Belonging

Toronto should be a safe place that anyone could go through without worrying. It should also be a lively city with lots of colour.

— Adi, grade 8, Etobicoke

I want Toronto to be safer. As someone who takes public transport every day, I always feel unsafe in some way. This isn't only because of my experiences but what I hear and see on the news and the internet in regards to people having scary experiences while on public transport.

— Clara, grade 8, GTA

I want a city with thriving and interconnected people where homelessness is much less rampant.

— Charlotte, grade 8, North York

I want Toronto to have multiple cultures, many different places where people can feel safe. I want this city to feel like home to those who have just arrived, as to those who have lived here for a long time.

— Cathy, grade 8, North York



I want Toronto to be a city that provides, and includes, all of its citizens. I want it to provide further services for people in need, for example homeless people, and to reduce air pollution through more eco-friendly decisions and construction.

— Sarah, grade 8, GTA

In 20 years, I would like to see more affordable homes available. I would like to think about starting a family in 20 years and so I'd like to continue to see children's activities such as parks, splash pads, community centres, camps and pools available.

— Arabella, grade 6, GTA

I want a safe and welcome place for everyone with colourful and welcoming streets. And no more housing crisis.

— Allison, grade 8, GTA

I want more buildings and fun places, such as the Science Centre and cinemas, to visit, and better services such as transportation.

— Roger, grade 8, North York

Lots of tall buildings, well-developed with more affordable housing and better uses of public space.

— Elizabeth, grade 8, North York

Environment & Social Justice

I want Toronto to get rid of its un-eco-friendly ways and be more sustainable. This could include more greenery, taller apartments, more schools. Hopefully, there will be less traffic every day and more people will use bikes or sidewalks to go places.

— Kaylyn, grade 8, old city of Toronto

I hope that more people will use public transport instead of cars, since cars are a large part of global warming. I also hope that there will be more greenery and parks in Toronto.

— Hannah, grade 8, GTA

I want less homeless people, less trash, and more equality.

— Grover, grade 7, old city of Toronto

I want more dog parks.

— Jeremiah, grade 8, Scarborough

I want more greenery in Toronto, less and faster construction, less subway breakdowns, cleaner subways, and less expensive convenience stores.

— Beatrix, grade 8, North York

In the future I hope all of Toronto has access to reliable and safe public transport so we can reduce our city's carbon footprint by getting more cars off the road. I also hope as new high-rise buildings are put in place the city makes space for affordable housing so everyone can have a roof over their head.

— Claire, grade 11, old city of Toronto

I want a beautiful and dense city, with low emissions, lots of shared spaces, and healthy people, good social networks and lots of mixed land use.

— Nikhil, grade 8, East York ↗

Josh Fullan is the Executive Director of Maximum City. He has over 20 years of experience engaging children and youth in urban issues in Canada and internationally. He contributes to Spacing's magazine and website.

20 years of SPACING

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EXPLORING THE EMERGENCE & GROWTH OF ONE OF CANADA'S MOST INNOVATIVE MAGAZINES

The magazine as a launchpad

COMPILED BY TODD HARRISON

When *Spacing* started, we were all essentially interns: the early issues of the magazine were a volunteer-powered exercise in sweat equity. Eventually, we transitioned to a formal model of paid staff and interns who came to us through postsecondary job placement programs across the GTA. We're proud to have been part of the formative experiences of many young writers and thoughtful urbanists who have gone on to a variety of unique careers, many of whom continue to contribute to *Spacing*. Here we share 20 of those success stories.

Mieke Anderson

YEARS: 2009–2012 **ROLE:** podcast producer & host
After almost ten years at the CBC working as a narrative audio producer and multimedia podcaster, I'm now the senior producer of a true-crime series, Canada's first podcast-turned-TV show to premiere on a major network. *Spacing* taught me that Toronto can do better. Instead of being fearful of getting run over or disappointed to discover another bad planning decision, I want to be delighted and surprised when I move through my city.
ALSO: Mieke was the second host of the first iteration of our podcast *Spacing Radio*.

Marcus Bowman

YEAR: 2010 **ROLE:** web writer
Spacing was incredibly influential in articulating what makes Toronto and other Canadian cities so special. It also opened the door for me to the

world of urbanist communities that devote their time and energy to celebrating the city and making a better place for everyone. Today, I am a Station Sponsor at Metrolinx and am also discovering the family side of Toronto with two kids.

Stephen Brophy

YEAR: 2013 **ROLE:** web & mag writer
This past spring, I left Toronto and moved to Berlin, where life is more affordable, public transit works, and bike-riding pinko urbanists can exist without basic aspects of urban life feeling like a sigh, a cringe, a headache, or a chronic migraine. Urban issues are deeply rooted in local communities, and *Spacing* helps to bridge the gap between the “experts” and everyone else.

Nicky Bruun-Meyer

YEAR: 2009 **ROLE:** web & mag writer
I got involved with *Spacing* after six years living abroad in the UK, and it was the perfect forum to reintroduce myself to Toronto, and the large urban changes that had happened in the city while I was away. I recently opened my own architecture and design firm, Plural Projects, with a focus on residential renovations and small-scale construction. I'm especially interested in gentle density and infill projects that help tackle Toronto's missing-middle problem.

Tyler Cheese

YEAR: 2021 **ROLE:** mag & web writer
My time at *Spacing* really helped shape a new perspective on Toronto and just how much is going on in a major city at any given time. Writing about the city exposed me to so many different aspects of Toronto I had never experienced. I'm now a reporter with CBC Toronto. I file TV, radio, and web stories, covering basically anything that's happening in and around the GTA.

Amber Daugherty

YEAR: 2012 **ROLE:** mag & web writer
Working at *Spacing* made me more curious about the city. Today, I'm a senior communications advisor at Ontario Health, where I help communicate decisions made by the Ministry of Health to providers, mainly focused on those related to primary care and Ontario Health Teams. I'm also complet-

ing my Master of Communications Management at McMaster University.

ALSO: Amber was *Spacing's* books editor, 2018–20.

Emma Feltes

YEAR: 2009 **ROLE:** mag & web writer
I'm an Assistant Professor of anthropology at York University, and I'm also just trying to survive each day with twin one-year-olds and a precocious four-year-old. *Spacing* made me an annoying friend. Now when I walk through the Junction I recount factoids about the history of its forgotten movie houses or the etymology of street names. Seriously, though, being an intern at *Spacing* helped me break down some of my downtown urbanist pretensions and better understand equity across the city. And that the east end does not equal death.
ALSO: In the fall of 2009, Emma was the co-founding editor of the *Spacing Atlantic* blog.

Matthew Hague

YEAR: 2008 **ROLE:** mag & web writer
Spacing taught me to delight in the details of cities — the street lights and sewer grates, tree pits and bus shelters. Such things are easy to overlook, but, when thoughtfully designed, can elevate the everyday experience of the places we inhabit. Since my *Spacing* internship, I have written about design, architecture and sustainability for many publications, including *The Globe and Mail*, *Azure*, *Châtelaine*, *Toronto Life*, and the *National Observer*.

Leah Jensen

YEAR: 2015 **ROLE:** mag writer
I'm the Reviews Editor at *Spacing*, currently on maternity leave with my son, Lewis. My time at *Spacing* showed me that whatever you find most interesting about cities — parks, transit, architecture, local history, etc. — there is always a group of people who share your interest and care deeply about your cause, hoping you will join them.

Ian Maleczewski

YEAR: 2006 **ROLE:** election blog correspondent
I'm a Principal at Third Party Public, an organization that specializes in public engagement. My early thinking about cities was really focused on grand gestures, big ideas, and how they could bring about change. *Spacing* helped me explore these interests,

but it also helped me meet others whose relatively unheralded work and advocacy had just as much influence as any big thinker or writer.

Eric Mutrie

YEARS: 2010-11 **ROLE:** web feature writer

I'm a Senior Editor at *Azure*, where I write and edit stories about design and architecture. Writing *Spacing's* "Street Stories" made me a lot more curious about a city's history — giving me a deeper appreciation for how various neighbourhoods evolved to look and feel the way that they do. The magazine also taught me the importance of advocacy when some aspect of a city — like transit or housing — isn't meeting the needs of its population.

Jake Schabas

YEAR: 2009 **ROLE:** mag & web writer

I'm currently on parental leave from Metrolinx, where I'm the Vice-President, Head Sponsor for GO Rail and UP Express. My time with *Spacing* taught me how to think critically about cities, to challenge traditional wisdom and listen to the people passionate about the issues and the local community, regardless of professional designation or credentials. Those hours spent at the 215 Spadina office taught me it could be cool to nerd out about cities and showed me that there was a career path in this kind of work.

ALSO: In the fall of 2009, Jake was the co-founding editor of the *Spacing Atlantic* blog.

Dave Scrivener

YEAR: 2006 **ROLE:** election blog correspondent

I'm juggling finishing my Master's in urban planning at University of Toronto and working full-time for Mayor Olivia Chow. It's been busy, but a lot of fun and in a lot of ways comes full circle back to my working with *Spacing* back in the day. My time at *Spacing* really helped to show me what a small group of really committed and engaged citizens can pull off.

Josh Sherman

YEAR: 2013 **ROLE:** mag & web writer

My experience interning at *Spacing* inspired me to explore cities more broadly and consider the myriad elements and factors that make a city as a whole, from municipal zoning rules and revenue

streams to architecture, history, and more. These days, on top of filling in as *Spacing's* acting Book Review Editor, I've been freelancing for publications including the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Globe and Mail*, and many others.

Tammy Thorne

YEAR: 2006 **ROLE:** election blog correspondent

After my time at *Spacing*, I ran the independent cycling advocacy and arts magazine *dandyhorse* from 2008 to 2016. We built a positive community around cycling and cycling issues in the city, while I and many others fought for cycling infrastructure like the bike lanes on Richmond and Adelaide. I also sat on the City of Toronto's cycling advisory committee and the inaugural steering committee for Toronto Coalition for Active Transportation.

Jake Tobin Garrett

YEAR: 2011 **ROLE:** mag & web writer

Spacing taught me to look closely at the details and to love every single bit of cities, no matter how seemingly small. At the end of 2021, I took the leap and went freelance to pursue a passion and career in illustration after eight years working at the charity Park People as policy and planner manager. While I still do public-space policy writing, my weeks are mostly filled with drawing cartoons, which makes me endlessly happy.

Daniel Viola

YEAR: 2012 **ROLE:** mag & web writer

At *Spacing*, while reporting on small-scale issues like new mailbox designs and graffiti removal policies, I learned that decisions often come down to intention and attention — and that, unfortunately, intentions aren't always good, and attention isn't always paid. I've spent the past eleven years working in magazines, mostly recently as senior editor at *The Walrus*, and prior to that as editor-in-chief of *Maisonneuve*. This September, I turned my attention toward writing, as well as studying law at Osgoode Hall.

Monika Warzecha

YEAR: 2007-09 **ROLE:** mag & web writer

I'm currently the digital editor at *The Walrus*. *Spacing* taught me to look for the little things that can make living in a city compelling: the hidden his-

stories found in the unexpected curve of a street or the pattern of tiles on a subway platform. There are much more urgent problems at hand, but I wish Toronto had more street food. Carts, kiosks, hot dogs, not-hot dogs, whatever — it doesn't have to be complicated.

Liz Worth

YEAR: 2005 **ROLE:** mag writer

I am working on my tenth book and just launched a podcast about the 1980s. I also run an online tarot business doing readings and tarot classes over Zoom. *Spacing* shaped my ideas about cities quite a bit. It made me notice the details a lot more, and taught me to stop and appreciate the spaces I move through. It taught me to see cities as extensions of human imagination — for better and for worse. ♣

INTERNSHIP INTO EMPLOYMENT

Mike Bulko, Julie Fish, and Glyn Bowerman

Mike (2008, mag writer), Julie (2013, layout design), and Glyn (2013, mag writer) all came from the Humber College journalism program and are now core members of the Spacing team.

MIKE: I was still a suburban kid when I first started with *Spacing* so my entire urban education has been tied to this magazine. I've worn a few different hats here, but for over a decade I've been the **Director of Retail for the Spacing Store**. I've helped expand our retail presence from our line of subway buttons into an online store highlighting many Toronto artists and designers, which eventually grew into our own brick-and-mortar store that has been going strong for nine years.

JULIE: After my internship, I was hired on contract, eventually joining as the Assistant Art Director. I currently split my time between *Spacing* (**Assistant Creative Director**) and ERA Architects (Graphic Designer). I've always been a Toronto history buff, but being part of the editorial team for the last eleven years has really deepened my knowledge of urbanism.

GLYN: I am the **host and producer of the Spacing Radio podcast** and sit on the editorial board. Through *Spacing*, I've been able to speak to people who have the imagination and energy to make big changes, even if it's at a very local level. It helped me understand the city as a complex organism, constantly evolving, which every person is a part of in some way. ♣

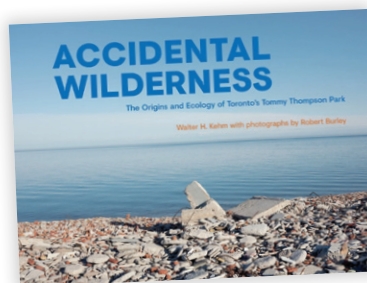
20 important Urbanism books

Choosing the most important Toronto urbanism books published between 2003 and 2023 is perhaps easier said than done. Throughout this period, the city has contended with major growth and major growing pains. New challenges, such as a previously unimaginable global pandemic, have not only exacerbated existing problems but given rise to whole new ones. And we're also at a point where traditional narratives are rightly being questioned more than ever before. That's a lot of ground to cover.

To compile our list, we laid out a few ground rules. Each title must explore one or more urban issues primarily through the lens of Toronto. We also aimed for texts that weren't overly academic and were reasonably ambitious in scope. The following selections aren't ranked but are among the best that addressed Toronto's defining issues in the past 20 years.

COMPILED BY JOSH SHERMAN

with contributions from Nick Anapliotis, Matthew Blackett, Glyn Bowerman, Dale Duncan, Amy Lavender Harris, Todd Harrison, John Loring, Shawn Micallef, Steve Munro, Dylan Reid, and Josh Sherman



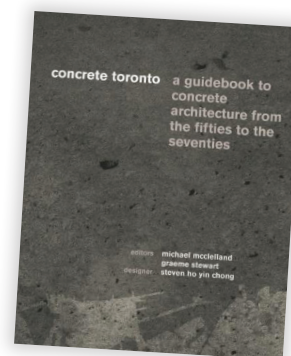
Accidental Wilderness

AUTHOR: Walter Kohn photos: Robert Butley

YEAR: 2009

PUBLISHER: Aevo UofT Press

Accidental Wilderness: The Origins and Ecology of Toronto's Tommy Thompson Park is a gorgeous book — somewhat informed by Robert Fulford's notion of Toronto as an accidental city — that explores how a massive landfill became one of the continent's most diverse habitats.



Concrete Toronto

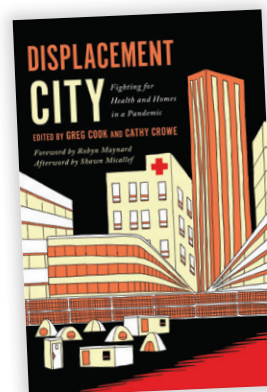
EDITORS: Michael McClelland and

Graeme Stewart

YEAR: 2007

PUBLISHER: Coach House Books

An oft-misunderstood architectural style that proliferated in postwar Toronto finally gets its due in *Concrete Toronto: A Guide to Concrete Architecture from the Fifties to the Seventies*, a collection of interviews, transcripts, editorial pieces, photos, and more. The focus may seem narrow, but when one considers how many of Toronto's most recognizable structures are examples of concrete architecture — New City Hall, the CN Tower, the Don Valley Parkway, the Gardiner Expressway, the Manulife Centre, the list goes on — well, the book's significance becomes apparent.



Displacement City

AUTHOR: Greg Cook and Cathy Crowe

YEAR: 2022

PUBLISHER: Aevo UofT Press

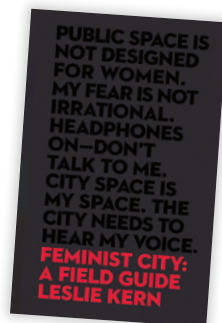
Displacement City: Fighting for Health and Homes in a Pandemic gives voice to those who have been left behind without safe shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic, and provides valuable insight into the politics, policies, and practices that led to growing encampments and failed to meet the needs of our city's unsheltered and unhoused residents. The book also presents a strong and resilient community rich with knowledge of what is needed to address this disaster — if only those in power would listen.

Feminist City

AUTHOR: Leslie Kern

YEAR: 2019

PUBLISHER: *Between the Lines*
Feminist City: A Field Guide is an irresistible mashup of author Leslie Kern's lived experiences in her native Toronto (and abroad), pop-culture critique, and feminist and urbanist theory. These elements mesh to create a compelling, highly accessible overview of all the ways in which public spaces aren't designed equitably — and how cities can go about doing better.



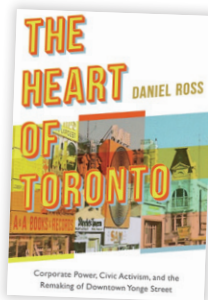
The Heart of Toronto

AUTHOR: Daniel Ross

YEAR: 2022

PUBLISHER: UBC Press

Yonge Street has always been Toronto's main street, even as its centrality to the city's zeitgeist seems to wax and wane through the decades. *The Heart of Toronto: Corporate Power, Civic Activism, and the Remaking of Downtown Yonge Street* shows how an understanding of Yonge Street offers an understanding of so much of how modern Toronto came to be and how it works today.



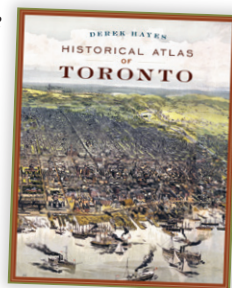
Historical Atlas of Toronto

AUTHOR: Derek Hayes

YEAR: 2009

PUBLISHER: Douglas & McIntyre

This indispensable atlas traces the history of the city through an amazing collection of maps and related ephemera spanning the 17th century to the turn of our current one — from Wendat settlements through to the major urban centre Toronto is today.



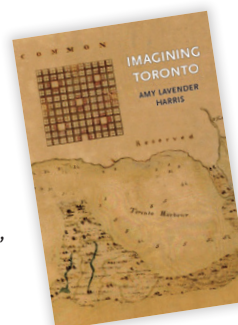
Imagining Toronto

AUTHOR: Amy Lavender Harris

YEAR: 2010

PUBLISHER: Mansfield Press

Amy Lavender Harris explores the works of fiction that feature Toronto and its varied locales, from ravines to towers. They create a kind of literary public space, a Toronto of the imagination that shapes our perception and understanding of the city and its inhabitants.



Indigenous Toronto

EDITORS: Denise Bolduc, Mnawaate Gordon-Corbiere, Rebeka Tabobondung, and Brian Wright-McLeod

YEAR: 2021

PUBLISHER: Coach House Books

Through vital works from Indigenous Elders, academics, historians, creatives, and journalists, *Indigenous Toronto: Stories That Carry This Place* reclaims narratives about Toronto going back hundreds of years right up to the present day. The book elevates Indigenous voices through essays as well as lyrics, photographic portraits, art, and more.



Planning Toronto

AUTHOR: Richard White

YEAR: 2016

PUBLISHER: UBC Press

An in-depth and fascinating study of planning in Toronto that covers the transformative period of 1940–1980. White looks at the official plans, and the planners that produced them, in the context of their time, and notes the legacies that each respective phase had on planning and the city. Not a polemic, but even-handed in its evaluations, *Planning Toronto: The Planners, The Plans, Their Legacies, 1940–80* offers great insight into an often-overlooked aspect of our history and provides context to the physical form of the city today.



Spacing Store TOP SELLING BOOKS of All-Time

1. Toronto ABC

by Paul Covello, Harper Collins

2. Good Night Toronto

by Adam Gamble, Penguin Random House

3. The Toronto Book of the Dead

by Adam Bunch, Dundurn Press

4. Toronto Then and Now

by Doug Taylor, Pavillion

5. Stroll

by Shawn Micallef, Coach House Books

6. Toronto Architecture: A City Guide

by Alex Bozickovic, Penguin Random House

7. The Ward

various contributors, Coach House Books

8. Historical Atlas of Toronto

by Derek Hayes, Douglas & McIntyre

9. The Subway Mouse

by Barbara Reid, Scholastic

10. Frontier City

by Shawn Micallef, Signal Books

11. Toronto Street Art Strolls

by Nathalie Prezeau, Word of Mouth

12. Transit Maps of the World

by Mark Ovenden, Penguin Random House

13. Subdivided

various contributors, Coach House Books

14. Indigenous Toronto

various contributors, Coach House Books

15. Lost Toronto

by Doug Taylor, Pavillion

16. House Divided

various contributors, Coach House Books

17. Death & Life of Great American Cities

by Jane Jacobs, Penguin Random House

18. Toronto Street Names

by Leonard Wise & Allan Gould, Firefly Books

19. Full Frontal TO

by P. Cummins & S. Micallef, Coach House Books

20. Concrete Toronto

various contributors, Coach House Books



BOOKS by Spacing

50 Objects That Define Toronto by Matthew Blackett & Jamie Bradburn

The first book examined unique items that help tell the city's history

50 Toronto Hidden Gems & Curiosities edited by Matthew Blackett & Dylan Reid

Profiles of the under-appreciated & overlooked elements of the city

25 Days That Changed Toronto edited by Matthew Blackett & Dylan Reid

Selected historical stories that altered the course of the city's history

25 Toronto Transit Secrets edited by Matthew Blackett & Dylan Reid

Little known facts and underground urban legends are revealed about the TTC

Toronto Public Etiquette Guide by Dylan Reid

A cheeky & useful look at the historical social intricacies of Toronto

Toronto 2033 various authors; edited by Jim Munroe

Published in 2018, ten sci-fi short stories about Toronto in a post-pandemic world

The Beautiful Mess of Toronto Laneways by Matthew Blackett

Collection of photos documenting the battle between garage doors, nature, graffiti

Remnants of Mid-Century Toronto by Vik Pahwa, edited by Matthew Blackett

Photos & short essays situating the buildings & architecture of the city's postwar boom

Packaged Toronto edited by Matthew Blackett & Wayne Reeves

Collection of essays & photos of products designed in Toronto, 1870-1950

Souvenirs of Toronto Sports edited by Matthew Blackett & Wayne Reeves

Mining Toronto's museum collection to uncover forgotten sports memorabilia

Signs That Define Toronto edited by Matthew Blackett, Kurt Kraler, & Philip Evans

A deep dive into the iconic signs of the city & the evolution of retail storefronts

The Big Book of Spacing edited by Matthew Blackett & Dylan Reid

A collection of the best writing & features from the magazine's first 20 years

Rapid Transit in Toronto

AUTHOR: Ed Levy

YEAR: 2013

PUBLISHER: Neptis Foundation

Ed Levy's masterful collection is more than a series of maps — it traces the political and technical evolution of Toronto's transit plans for over a century.

This book shows how Toronto might be a very different city if only some of these plans

were built to establish transit as a competitive way to travel beyond the downtown neighbourhoods.



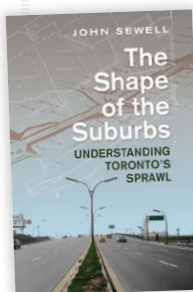
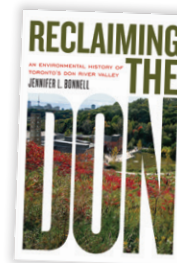
Reclaiming the Don

AUTHOR: Jennifer Bonnell

YEAR: 2014

PUBLISHER: University of Toronto Press

Not only is *Reclaiming the Don* an excellent work of urban environmental history, the book reminds readers that when we "reclaim" natural spaces, we are making something new rather than restoring spaces to Edenic wilderness. The revitalized lower Don River — with the riverbed altered to improve flood protection while also supporting wetland plants and wildlife — is an excellent example of how a (re)constructed space can be a sustainable environment, too.



The Shape of the Suburbs

AUTHOR: John Sewell

YEAR: 2009

PUBLISHER: University of Toronto Press

With his characteristic careful research and contrarian outrage, John Sewell's *The Shape*

of the Suburbs: *Understanding Toronto's Sprawl* chronicles the transformation of the Greater Toronto Area from countryside to sprawl, providing an essential guide to understanding the roots of where the GTA stands today. In a sequel of sorts to his earlier *The Shape of the City*, he argues that provincial subsidies for basic infrastructure enabled unsustainable low-density development.

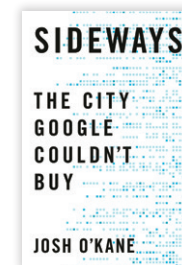
Sideways: The City Google Couldn't Buy

AUTHOR: Josh O'Kane

YEAR: 2022

PUBLISHER: Penguin Random House Canada

Josh O'Kane has gone so much deeper in his reporting on the Sidewalk Labs scheme than any other journalist covering this story. His insights about the origin of the scheme and the ways in which Sidewalk Labs' then-CEO Dan Doctoroff reckoned he could play Torontonians provides us with a full sense of what went on — and why it failed.



The Skin We're In

AUTHOR: Desmond Cole

YEAR: 2020

PUBLISHER: Doubleday Canada

Through examples from Toronto, the GTA, and beyond, Desmond Cole's *The Skin We're In: A Year of Black Resistance and Power* presents an indictment of our political and legal systems as upholding systemic racism in direct and indirect ways. He challenges the reader to confront how the institutions meant to provide for and protect everyone equitably are, in fact, actively harming Black, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities.



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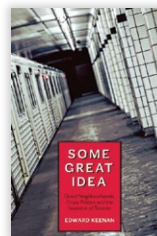
Some Great Idea

AUTHOR: Edward Keenan

YEAR: 2013

PUBLISHER: Coach
House Books

Longtime *Toronto* Star columnist and city writer Edward Keenan applies his unique ability to weave the personal and the universal in *Some Great Idea: Good Neighbourhoods, Crazy Politics and the Invention of Toronto*, which traces the city's post-amalgamation evolution and lays down the gauntlet for why and how we can achieve civic greatness.



that during this transformative time Toronto is on the cusp of greatness, due in large part to its unique history, development, and character. Illustrating his argument with specific cases, *Toronto Reborn: Design Successes and Challenges* looks at things like shifts in the way we move around the city, our shared public spaces, our natural environment, our educational institutions, and our urbanized suburbs. These elements, he believes, can coalesce to produce something remarkable. Only time will tell if he is right, but he makes a good case.



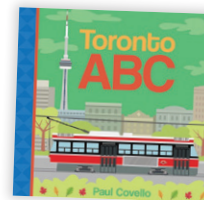
Toronto ABC

AUTHOR: Paul Covello

YEAR: 2014

PUBLISHER: HarperCollins

This board book for babies and toddlers may be the most charming book about the city ever created. Illustrator Paul Covello pairs each letter of the alphabet with a Toronto icon: A is for AGO, B is for Blue Jays, etc. This brightly coloured and beautifully illustrated book is the perfect match for sharing the city and your own experiences of its different places with children. This is the top-selling book at the Spacing Store.



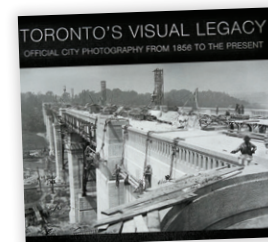
Toronto's Visual Legacy

EDITORS: Steve Mackinnon, Karen Teeple, and Michele Dale

YEAR: 2009

PUBLISHER: Lorimer

Including over 100 images selected by City of Toronto archivists from their collection of hundreds of thousands, *Toronto's Visual Legacy: Official City Photography from 1856 to the Present* was published in 2009 to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the City's founding in 1834 (it had been the Town of York since 1792). Many familiar landmarks of today are seen in their early phases of construction — such as the Bloor Street Viaduct and R. C. Harris Water Treatment Plant — while the Old and New City Halls are also celebrated.



Toronto Reborn

AUTHOR: Ken Greenberg

YEAR: 2019

PUBLISHER: Dundurn Press

Renowned urban designer Ken Greenberg believes that the nature of cities is changing globally. He is also convinced

BOOKS by Spacing's editorial team

Dream States

by John Lorinc, Coach House Books, 2022

Cities

by John Lorinc, Groundwork, 2008

The New City: The Crisis Of Canada's Cities Is Reshaping Our Nation

by John Lorinc, Penguin Canada, 2006

Stroll: Psychogeographic Walking Tours of Toronto

by Shawn Micallef, Coach House Books, 2010

Full Frontal TO: Exploring Toronto's Architectural Vernacular

by Shawn Micallef & Patrick Cummings, Coach House Books, 2012

The Trouble With Brunch

by Shawn Micallef, Coach House Books, 2014

Frontier City: Toronto on the Verge of Greatness

by Shawn Micallef, Signal Penguin Random House, 2017

Rebound: Sports, Community and the Inclusive City

by Perry King, Coach House Books, 2022

Toronto, the Unknown City

by Sarah Hood and Howard Akler, Arsenal Pulp Press, 2003

Unbuilt Toronto

AUTHOR: Mark Osbaldeston

YEAR: 2008

PUBLISHER: Dundurn Press

Unbuilt Toronto: A History of the City That Might Have Been (and its sequel, *Unbuilt Toronto 2*) explores a parallel-universe Toronto of visionary schemes and alternative designs that were proposed but never implemented. Detailed research and beautiful-but-unfulfilled renderings evoke a city that in some cases might have been better, in others much worse, but in any case would have been very different, capturing the evolution of how people have imagined the city's future.



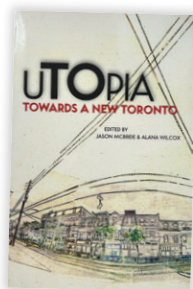
uTOpia

EDITORS: Alana Wilcox and Jason McBride

YEAR: 2005

PUBLISHER: Coach House Books

uTOpia: Towards A New Toronto captured a moment of civic optimism and pride in the early 2000s when Toronto seemed full of possibilities. Even if that optimism has faded, this collection of essays is a reminder that there can always be space for imagination and hope in a city. It also inaugurated a series of similar collections about the arts, the environment, water, food, and civic engagement in Toronto.



spacing

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Walking the walk

BY SHAWN MICALLEF
+ MELISSA JANE TAYLOR

Shawn Micallef's Flaneur column, describing his wanderings around Toronto, has been a constant presence in *Spacing* since issue 2. Beginning in issue 5, each column has been faithfully accompanied by an illustration by artist Melissa Jane Taylor. Here is a selection of her most memorable illustrations, accompanied by a quotation pulled from the relevant column. ↑

Shawn Micallef is a senior editor at *Spacing* and writes about cities, politics, culture, and art as a columnist at the *Toronto Star*. He has written three books: *Stroll*, *The Trouble With Brunch*, and *Frontier City*. He was a 2011-2012 Massey Journalism Fellow.

✉ @ShawnMicallef



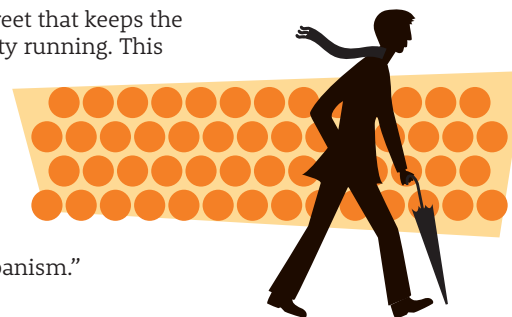
ISSUE 7, 2006 UNDERNEATH THE LAYERS

The idea that behind all these doors and staircases exist whole worlds connected to other places and times makes these sidewalks seem magical. Along Bloor [in Koreatown], this Jane Jacobs urban fairytale feeling is everywhere. Here, staircases lead to a Korean discotheque, or a vinyl sign shop, or a hairdresser, or a travel agent specializing in flying people to places where tourists don't go.



ISSUE 46, 2018
THE UNEQUAL DARK CITY
The city at night is another place entirely, staffed by a different shift, running on a different narrative arc, and with different rules and conventions. Big cities at night can be either exciting or scary, or both at the same time, in the same place, depending who you are.

ISSUE 14, 2009
DUPONT GETS IT DONE
Dupont: a working street that keeps the prettier parts of the city running. This has been its role for years, but Dupont is changing, and its look now, like a lot of Toronto, is a heterogeneous mix of styles and uses, sometimes called our "messy urbanism."



ISSUE 42, 2017
DOGS DON'T LOITER
The intimacy with geography is profound when dog walking. Every step might be a stop in a place that would never be a stop otherwise. New angles are seen, change is noticed, and it's the most guilt-free and unsuspecting kind of walk a person can do.



ISSUE 49, 2019
THE IDEA OF DOWNTOWN
The speed, pace, and scale of change some parts of Toronto have seen is a rarefied thing, experienced by only a relative handful of cities in North America.

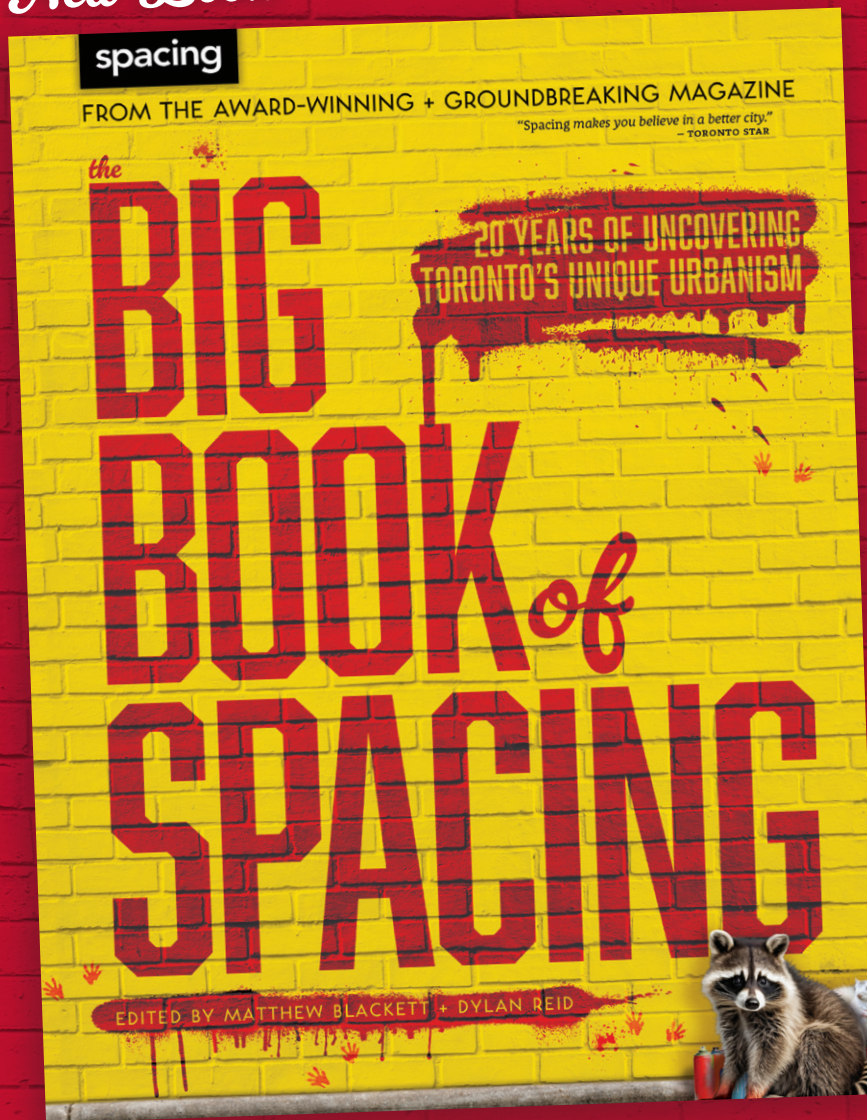
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