

Dundonald Park

Although similar in scale to McNabb Park, Dundonald Park plays a very different role within the community. First established in 1905 as passive recreation space, this role has been retained over the past century. Dundonald Park is an important heritage park in the neighbourhood. Similar to Centretown’s other heritage park, Minto Park, the role of Dundonald Park is to enrich the wider heritage context and act as a community destination for less active recreation.

Today, Dundonald Park is one of eight parks being studied across the province by 8-80 Cities (in partnership with the Centretown Community Health Centre) in a two year project to examine how to enhance accessibility and safety for all users.

As a heritage park, Dundonald Park should be of the highest design quality. To achieve this, the following improvements are recommended:

- Existing asphalt sidewalks that edge the park should be removed and replaced with concrete.
- Existing asphalt paths internal to the park should be removed and replaced with brick or textured paving that reflects a heritage sensibility.
- When furniture is replaced over time, a coordinated palate should be introduced across the entire park (for furniture, paving materials, planting infrastructure, etc.).
- Planting should be maintained by season (spring, summer and fall).
- The existing fencing around the children’s play area should be used as the model for all Centretown’s park fencing.
- The City should continue to support the impressive efforts of the Friends of Dundonald Park to enhance the park. The City should work with them in partnership to implement improvements to the park space and ensure that the appropriate equipment is available to volunteers.

Minto Park

Fronting onto Elgin Street and occupying a full city block, Minto Park is one of Centretown’s more formal park spaces. Designed for passive recreation, the park is well used as a place to rest, play chess or have a picnic. Adding to its formality are the monuments present in the park, including ‘Enclave’, the Ottawa Women’s Monument, as well as a military tribute to Argentinian general José de San Martin.

Minto Park and the red brick heritage houses that surround it form the Minto Park Heritage Conservation District. Similar to Centretown’s other heritage park, Dundonald Park, the role of Minto Park is to enrich the wider heritage context and act as a community destination for passive recreation and reflection.

For the most part, as a heritage park, Minto Park already supports a very high quality environment. This level of investment and maintenance should set the standard for Centretown’s other park spaces.

5.2 Park Space Acquisition: Larger Spaces

5.2.1 Creating New Parks & Open Spaces

Centretown has an acute shortage of usable urban park spaces to serve the needs of the local community. For an area that supports such a large number of residents, a lack of park space is a serious shortcoming.

Based on current trends, opportunities to acquire additional open spaces suitable for larger community parks will continue to diminish as new projects are proposed on vacant sites and as Centretown land values continue to rise. However, due to the abundance of surface parking and number of underutilized sites, coupled with on-going development interest in the area, there are opportunities to remedy this situation.

As development interest increases, it will become increasingly important that the City undertake a programme of land acquisition sooner rather than later. As the City controls very limited land in Centretown, new parks can only be realized through partnership working with the development industry or through the direct purchase of a site by the City (paid for with a mix of city contributions and development levies, such as Section 37, development charges and CIL parkland). The City should move quickly to secure currently available vacant sites. The City should also continue to work with developers to provide open space as part of the development application process.

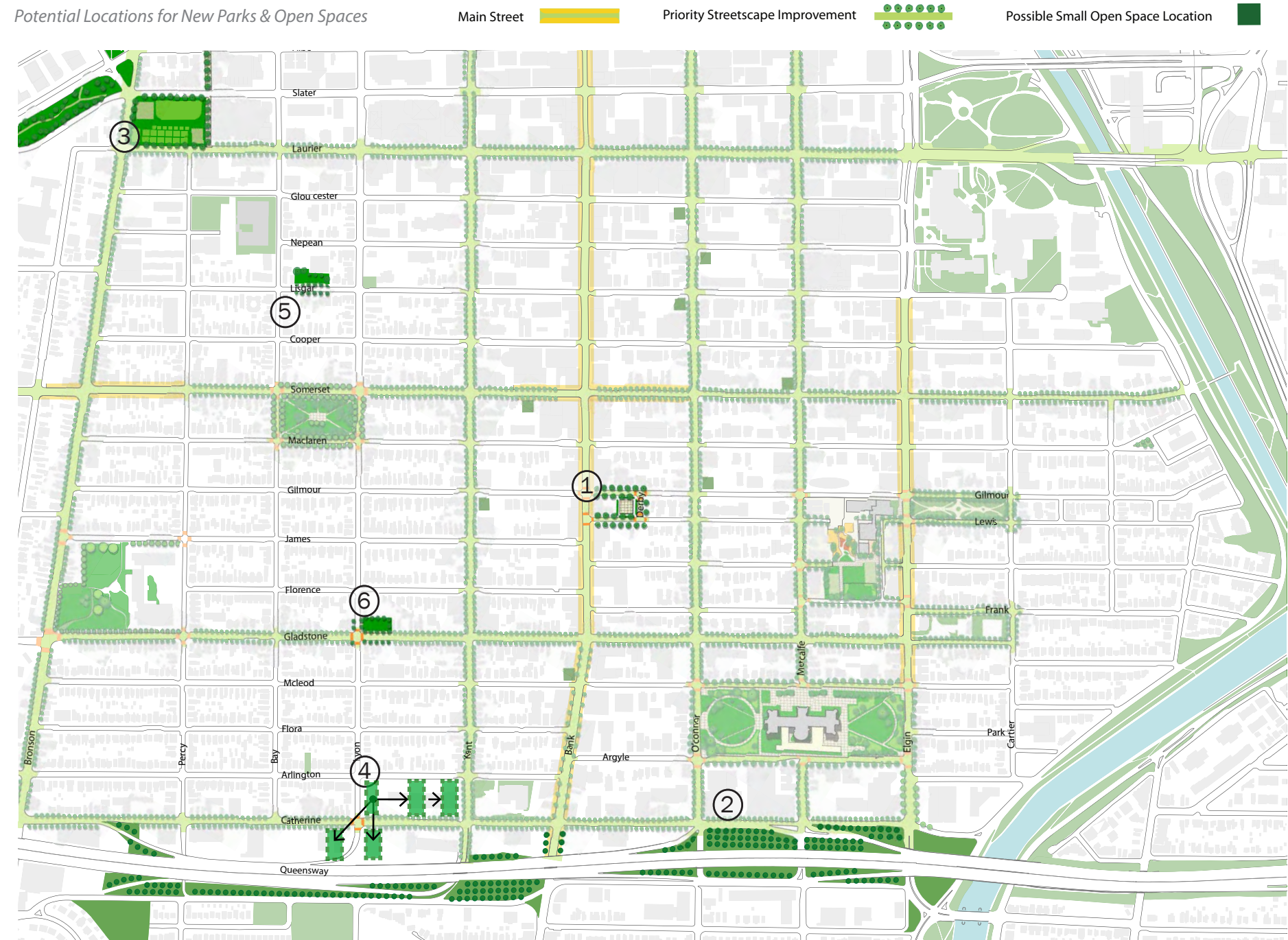
As presented on the plan to the right, priority sites for consideration include Derby Lane and at Bank Street and Catherine Street between Kent and Lyon Streets. The former is very close to the shopping, employment and tourist area of Bank Street as well as a established residential area, while the latter can service an under-provided part of Centretown. In some locations, such as along Catherine Street, the provision of open space may be created as larger areas of underutilized land is brought into redevelopment. Over the longer-term, the City should investigate opportunities to create a park space in the northern portion of Centretown where much of the intensification is occurring.

In addition to these two new parks, the CDP also advocates for the proposed Upper Town Commons in the Central Area, as presented in the Escarpment District Community Design Plan. As a high-rise apartment neighbourhood, the northern portion of Centretown is severely under-provided with formal park spaces.

The following should be considered when designing any new larger park:

- streets surrounding new parks should also be subject to public realm improvements that are complementary to park design; and
- new parks should ideally be located on corners or through lots.

Potential Locations for New Parks & Open Spaces



1. Derby Lane Square (illustrative)
2. Catherine Linear Landscape

3. Upper Town Commons
4. Catherine Park (illustrative)

5. Lisgar Parkette (Hydro Land)
6. Gladstone Park (Hydro Land)

5.2.2 Creating New Community Parks

Derby Lane Square Concept

Located just off Bank Street, Derby Lane Square could be a new hard-surfaced plaza to be used by residents, shoppers, office workers and visitors to Centretown. Derby Lane Square is envisioned as hard landscaped, which could be complemented with soft landscaped area, a flexible space that can be used for multiple purposes. In addition to its role as a place to rest and play, this space could also be used as a venue for outdoor community celebrations or a destination for events that support the role of Bank Street as a Mainstreet. Currently, there are no hard-surfaced park spaces suitable for small events or community gatherings in Centretown.

Today, the site operates as a parking lot and is in private ownership. Derby Lane Square could be realized as part of a larger redevelopment of the block, including potential new buildings on the west and south sides. If the site is re-developed, new uses should front directly onto the park to help animate the space and provide a greater level of passive surveillance.

The design of the park could include the following considerations:

- Hard landscape treatment, with some opportunities for planting and clusters of trees.
- A central feature, such as public art installation or water feature to provide a focal point.
- Open access along all sides of the square.
- A street furniture palate that is complementary to Bank Street’s recent redesign.
- Ensure that the plaza is serviced by water, drains and power outlets. This would allow the space to be used for community functions and some commercial events, such as a temporary farmers market, outdoor films or a Bank Street festival.
- The Bank Street streetscape treatments should be extended along the westerly portion of Gilmour and Lewis Streets.



Derby Lane Square Concept

Catherine/Queensway Linear Landscape

As a consequence of its relationship to the 417, Catherine Street between Bank Street and the Rideau Canal functions primarily as a one-sided street. The north side of the street is fronted by important community and institutional uses, while the south side supports some buildings, but has largely been given over to a highway ramping system set within a generous green open space. As a fenced-off area, this green space is used only as the setting for ramps and cars; no pedestrians or cyclists are permitted.

In the fullness of time and working in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation, there are opportunities to repurpose this residual green space and bring it back into more active use as an open space (between O’Connor Street and Queen Elizabeth Parkway). This may require realigning or consolidating the two exit ramps that serve Metcalfe and O’Connor Streets. The landscape treatment of this linear open space could include terracing, artistic lighting and an off-road shared path system that connects into the NCC’s trail system at the Rideau Canal.

Repurposing this residual land would not only provide a new linear open space for the Centretown community, but also provide a pleasant green edge to the neighbourhood, contribute to a more positive arrival statement from the 417 and create a green setting for new residential developments (such as Beaver Barracks) and the important community and institutional uses that front this portion of Catherine Street.

Improvements should also be made to residual lands on the south side of the highway corridor.

Catherine Park

As a zone identified for future growth, the Catherine Street Corridor would benefit greatly from an expanded open space network coupled with a program of streetscape upgrades. At the moment, this part of Centretown is not well served by usable park space and its public realm is poor. A new open space should be acquired to serve the needs of the existing residents as well as future residents. Catherine Park provides the opportunity to address this open space deficiency while also improving the image of the area. Catherine Park is envisioned as green open space (soft landscape). It should operate as a community park and include space for informal recreating and playing.

Today there is only one small publicly controlled parcel of land in this part of Centretown. There are, however, a significant number of privately held underutilized sites (such as parking lots), the bus terminal and residual lands that may be ripe for revitalization. Catherine Park could be realized as part of a wider redevelopment of the area and brought forward in conjunction with some of the larger redevelopment opportunities. At this time, some of these underutilized sites could be repurposed as park space.

The design of the park could include the following considerations:

- A central location within the Catherine Street Corridor, in blocks adjacent to the Catherine/Kent intersection and the Lyon/Catherine intersection.
- A corner location, with frontage onto at least two streets.
- Good sunlight exposure, taking into consideration future potential building locations.
- Park should be dominated by soft landscape treatments.
- A public art feature that is reflective of the Centretown community.
- A street furniture scheme that is complementary to that proposed for Catherine Street.
- Safe signalled pedestrian crossings across arterials into the park are required.
- Impacts from the 417 will need creative design solutions (noise, fumes, etc.).

Upper Town Commons

Over time, the northern portion of Centretown is expected to experience significant intensification. Already an 'Apartment Neighbourhood', this role is expected to be retained into the future as the area attracts further high rise residential development.

To balance this growth, Upper Town Commons, located in the Central Area, is proposed as a major new park space. This park is intended to be the focal point for community activity and will function as northern Centretown's main destination for active and passive pursuits. Upper Town Commons will help to offset any potential impacts new residential development may have.

Key to the success of the Upper Town Commons will be its ability to support the range of existing activities that occur here. Elements such as the community gardens and the Tech Wall (also known as the Graffiti Wall or Piece Wall) will be retained and formalized.

Key concepts and elements of the design include:

1. The retention of the existing community allotment gardens and affiliated composting facilities.
2. The retention of a managed Graffiti Wall / Tech Wall for use by the local arts community.

3. A hard-surfaced court area for sports such as basketball and floor hockey located in proximity to the Graffiti Wall / Tech Wall to build upon existing patterns of use.
4. An informal sports field to support pick-up games of soccer and football and a potential location for a winter skating rink.
5. A structured play area for children, including benches.
6. New planting to line and define the park and provide separation between activities where desired.
7. Hard-surfaced "gateway" areas that mark the primary entrances to the park and to the east create a gateway to the neighbourhood.

Hydro Lands

At present, there are two hydro-substations in Centretown that support un-programmed, informal green spaces. The first one is located between Bay and Lyon fronting onto Lisgar Street while the second is located on the north-east corner of Gladstone at Lyon. In the longer term, and in partnership with the Hydro Ottawa, either or both of these greenspaces could be formally recognized as part of the open space network and be upgraded as community park space. The City should enter into preliminary discussions with Hydro Ottawa to fully understand the opportunity and the process necessary to reinvigorate these spaces. For the Gladstone/Lyon site, it is recommended that the property on the corner of Gladstone and Lyon be included in the redesign.



Options for the location of a potential park along the Catherine Street Corridor

5.3 Park Space Acquisition: Smaller Spaces

5.3.1 Creating Smaller Moments

New park spaces do not need to be large to have an impact. In some cases, smaller well-defined spaces may be a better means to enhance the opportunity for passive rest and safe play than larger park areas. Smaller 'green moments' - including urban plazas, squares, terraces and pocket parks - all play an important role in softening the urban character of the neighbourhood and also help to connect larger park spaces.

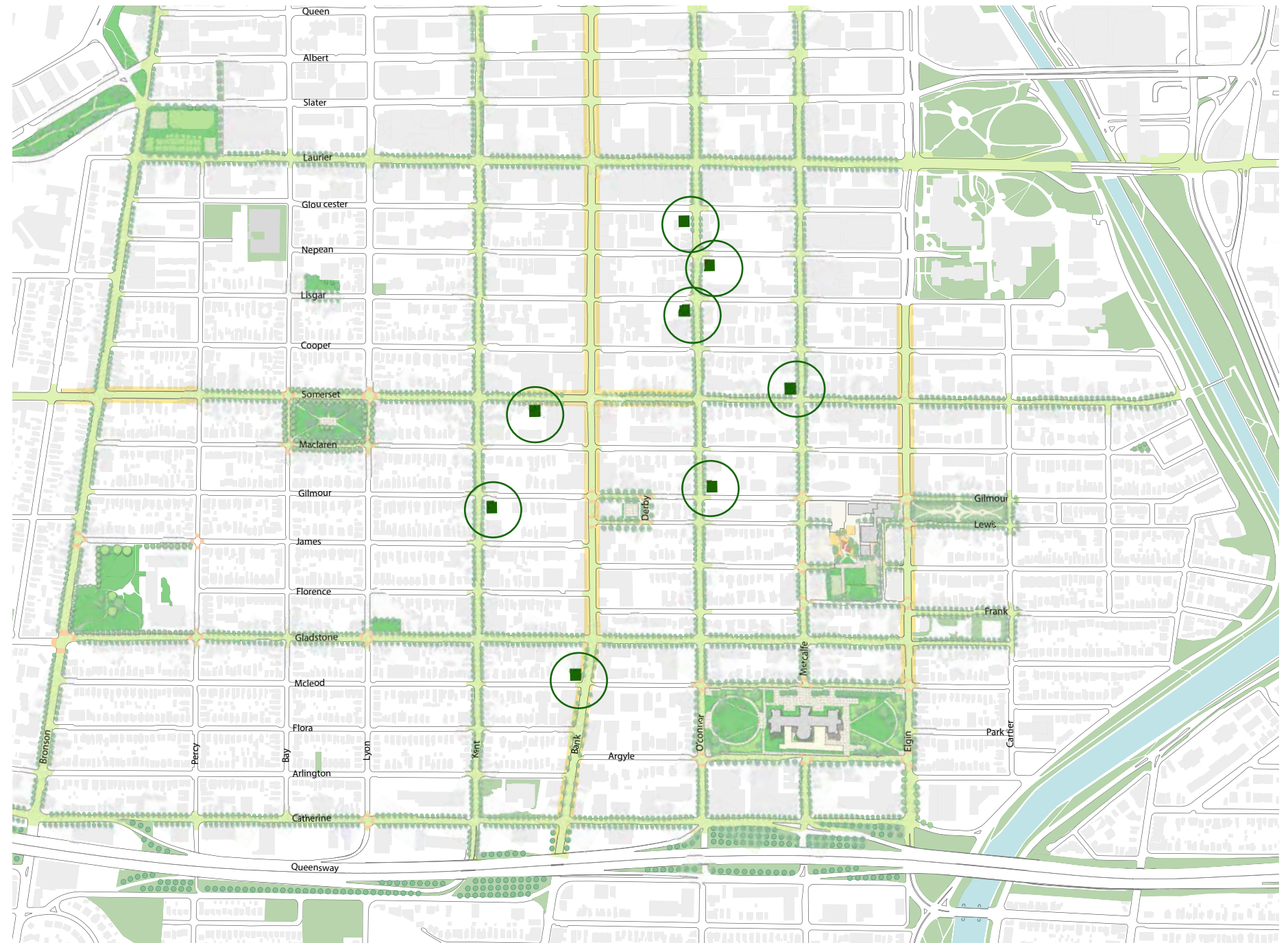
Due to the built up nature of Centretown, the limited availability of larger vacant sites, and the area's proximity to the larger NCC park system, creating smaller, more frequent open spaces is just as important as the introduction of a single larger park space. Providing a number of small formal and informal spaces augments the neighbourhood's open space network, diversifies the public realm experience and complements larger open spaces. Such spaces are generally more suitable in private ownership but should be publically accessible.

Presented to the right is a plan suggesting potential locations for new small open spaces. These locations are indicative. Actual locations for new open spaces will be heavily dependant on development applications and will need to be negotiated on a case by case basis as applications are received.

The following should be pursued to expand Centretown's open space network:

- Wherever viable, the City should require a new publicly accessible open space for each development application received. This is particularly important for developments attached to priority pedestrian streets including Bank, Somerset, Metcalfe, O'Connor and Kent;
- Format of open spaces include forecourts, linear parks, mid-block pedestrian connections, plaza, terraces, pocket parks or courtyards. Landscaping could be soft or hard;
- Open spaces should be located in an area that is not shadowed and is protected from the elements;
- Corner locations or though block connection should be given priority;
- If new spaces are private, they should be publicly accessible but maintained and built by private property owners; and
- For maximum sun exposure and to encourage year-round outdoor use, smaller urban parks should be sheltered by buildings and open to the south, where possible.

Potential Locations for Smaller Open Spaces



Urban Squares



Forecourts



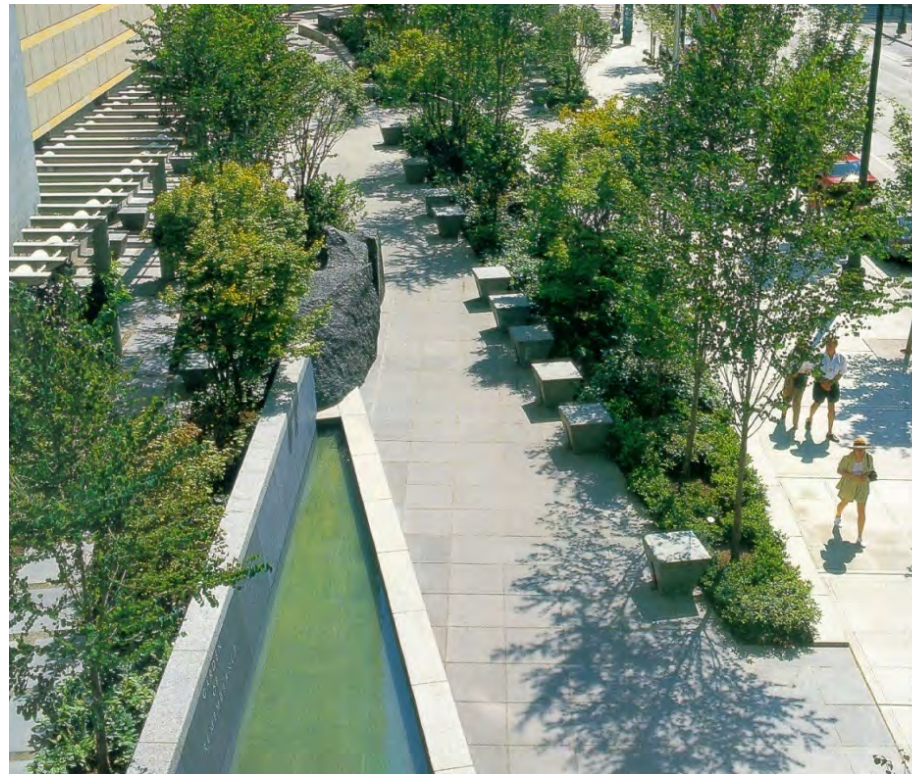
Terraces



Plazas



Linear Park



Courtyards



