

# Wellesley Community Centre & St. James Town Public Library



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The St. James Town quadrant of Toronto is the location for this new library and multi-service community centre, a project that re-connects a community to the City, and also provides a unique combination of facilities and programming to a critically under serviced neighbourhood of low to moderate income families. The staggering demographics of this multi-ethnic community give it the distinction of being Canada's highest density per capita neighbourhood. With the creation of this new facility, the Wellesley Community Centre & St. James Town Public Library demonstrates a unique and collaborative community partnership between the Toronto Public Library and the City of Toronto's Community and Neighbourhood Services Department. By virtue of this partnership, the joint facility provides opportunities for collaborative programming and convenient access to a much wider range of services than would normally be possible. A large central lobby links and connects main entrances, on both the east and west sides of the building. Within the lobby a central control desk allows for panoramic views to both major streets as well as all major components of the centre. The design relies heavily on transparency to create dynamic interior spaces, provide visual overviews, and to showcase programming with a storefront like attempt to invite one into the Centre and use facilities such as the library and gymnasium, which are visually linked to the street. Floating and projected volumes act as visual cues to denote the many program components of the multi-use facility. Remarkably, this project has been heralded by many as having achieved "Beauty on a Budget", a significant compliment given the modesty of the program and corresponding funding.

(in j. v. with MacLennan Jaunkalns Miller Architects)

