

Evaluating Public Open Space; Three Winnipeg Cases

Central Park, True North Square, and Millennium Library Park

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Reasons for Research

- Urban open spaces provide opportunities for physical activity and promote a healthy lifestyle.
- They offer space for social interaction, community building, and a sense of belonging.
- They enhance the quality of life of residents and visitors by providing a place for relaxation and recreation.
- Understanding how people utilize urban open spaces can lead to improvements in their design and amenities, making them more enjoyable and useful for the community.
- Conducting research on urban open spaces is crucial for creating inclusive and accessible public spaces that meet the needs of diverse populations.
- Studying urban open spaces can help identify design elements and amenities that are more appealing to different user groups, leading to better and more inclusive public spaces.

Research Questions

- Who is using each of the spaces, and how are they being used?
- How do different spatial designs and elements accommodate the needs of the different users and groups of users?
- Are there observable impediments to the use of the spaces?

Methods

- Observations:**
- Six observations per site were conducted during weekdays, nights, and weekends to gather data.
 - Each observation lasted between 45 minutes to 1 hour.
 - Observations were recorded through photographs to ensure accuracy and reliability of the data collected.
- Site Analysis:**
- The site analysis involved an analysis of the neighborhoods within an 800-meter radius of each open space to understand the context in which they are located.

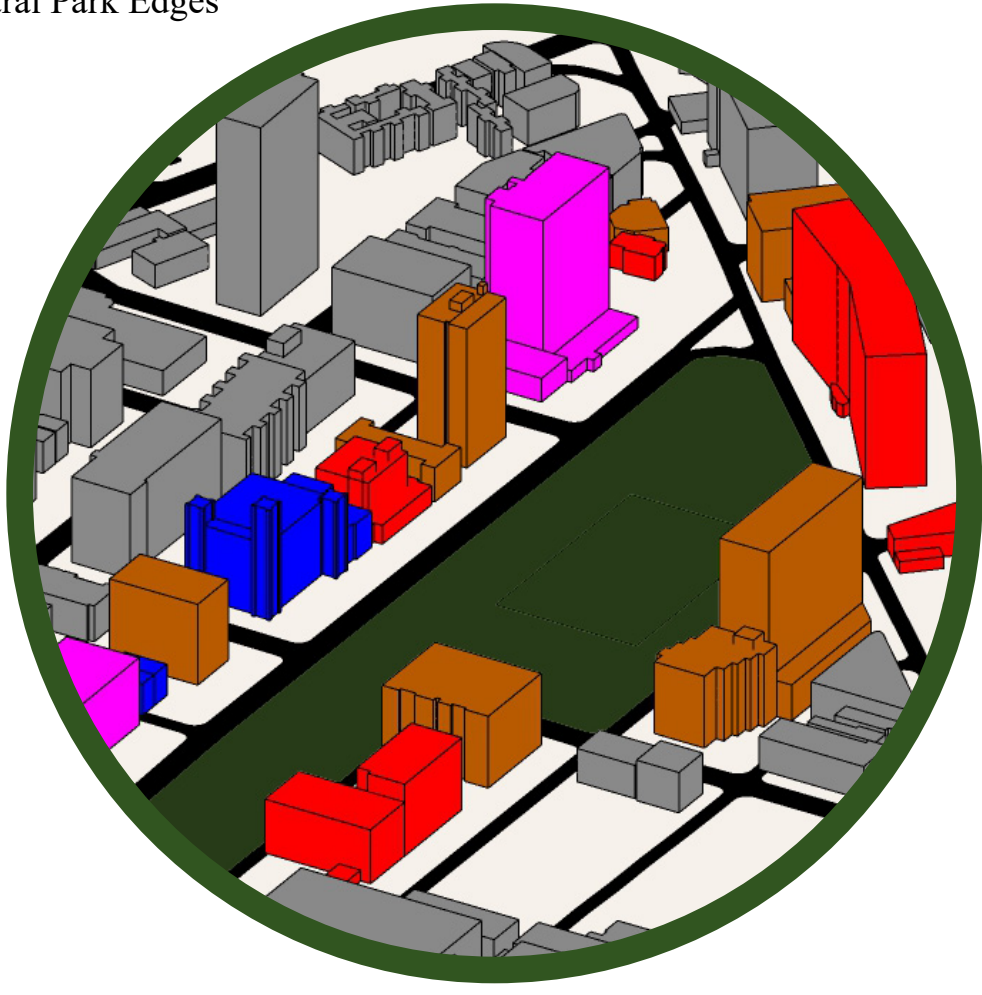
Site Analysis Findings



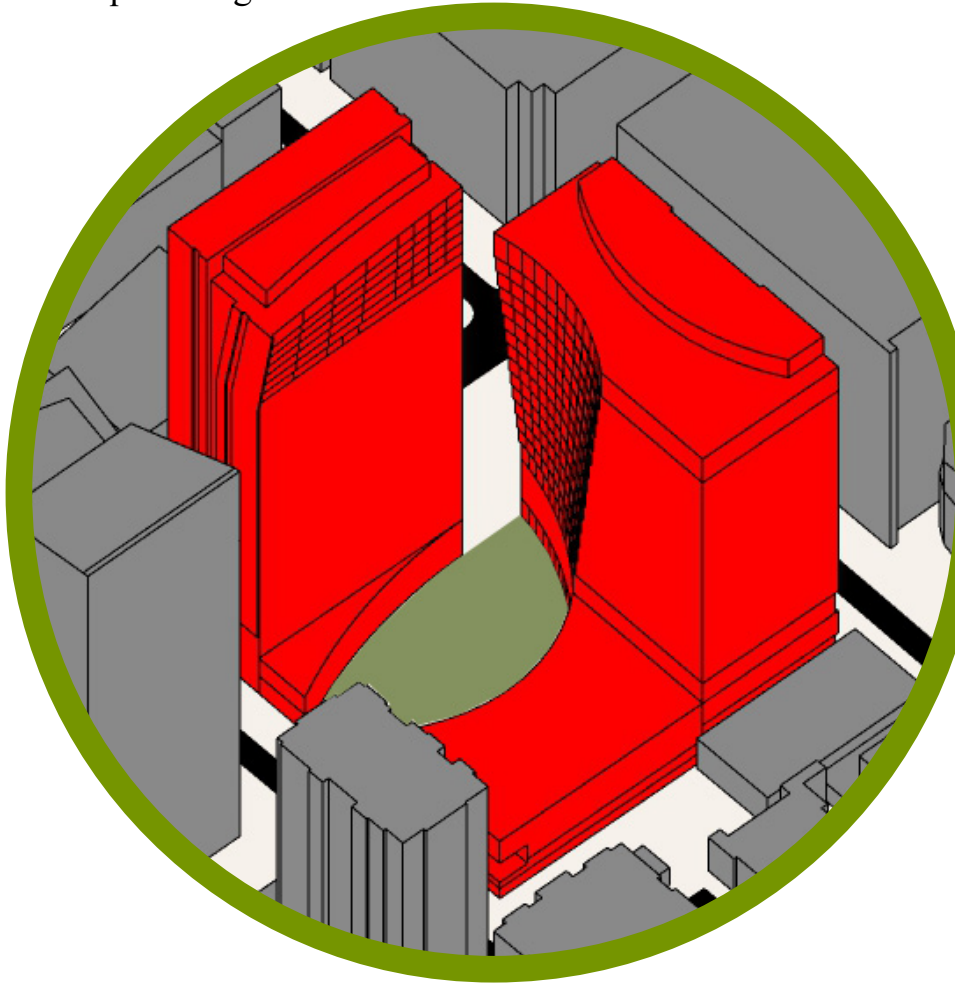
- Residential
- Commercial
- Public buildings
- Church
- Parking
- Park

150 m 150 m

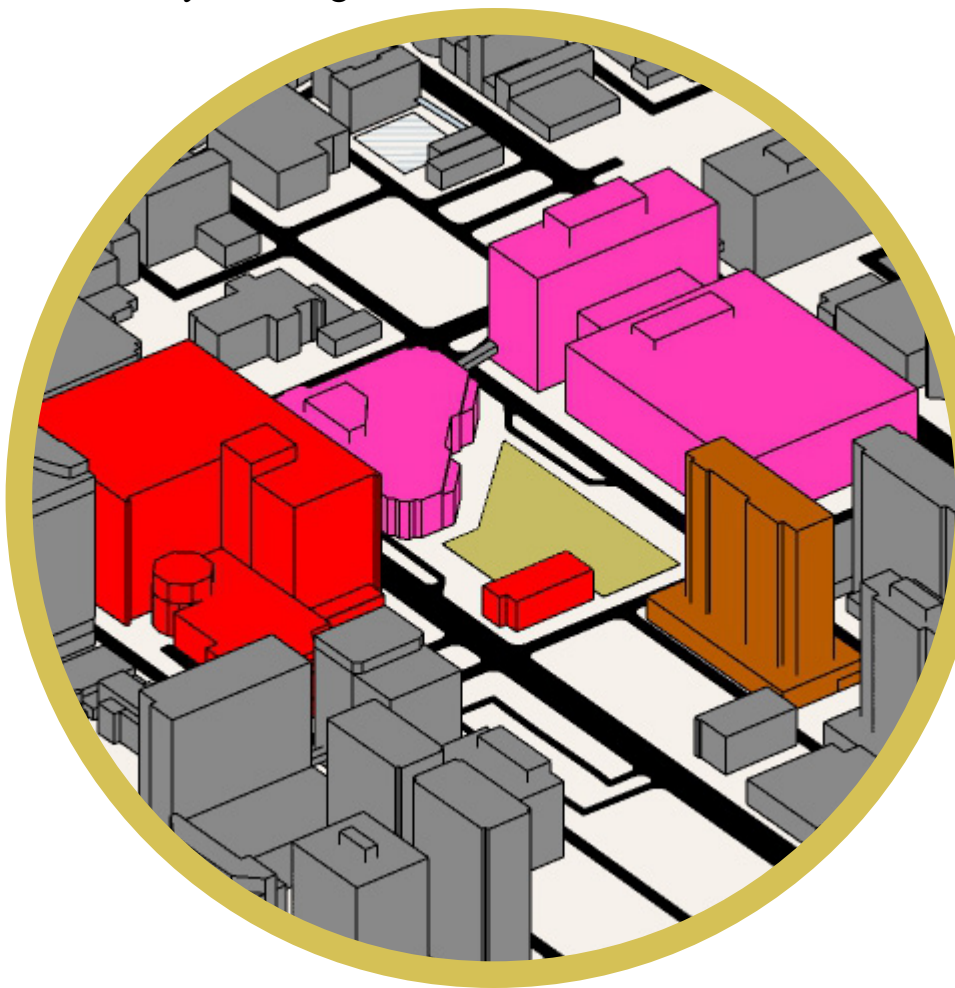
Central Park Edges



True North Square Edges



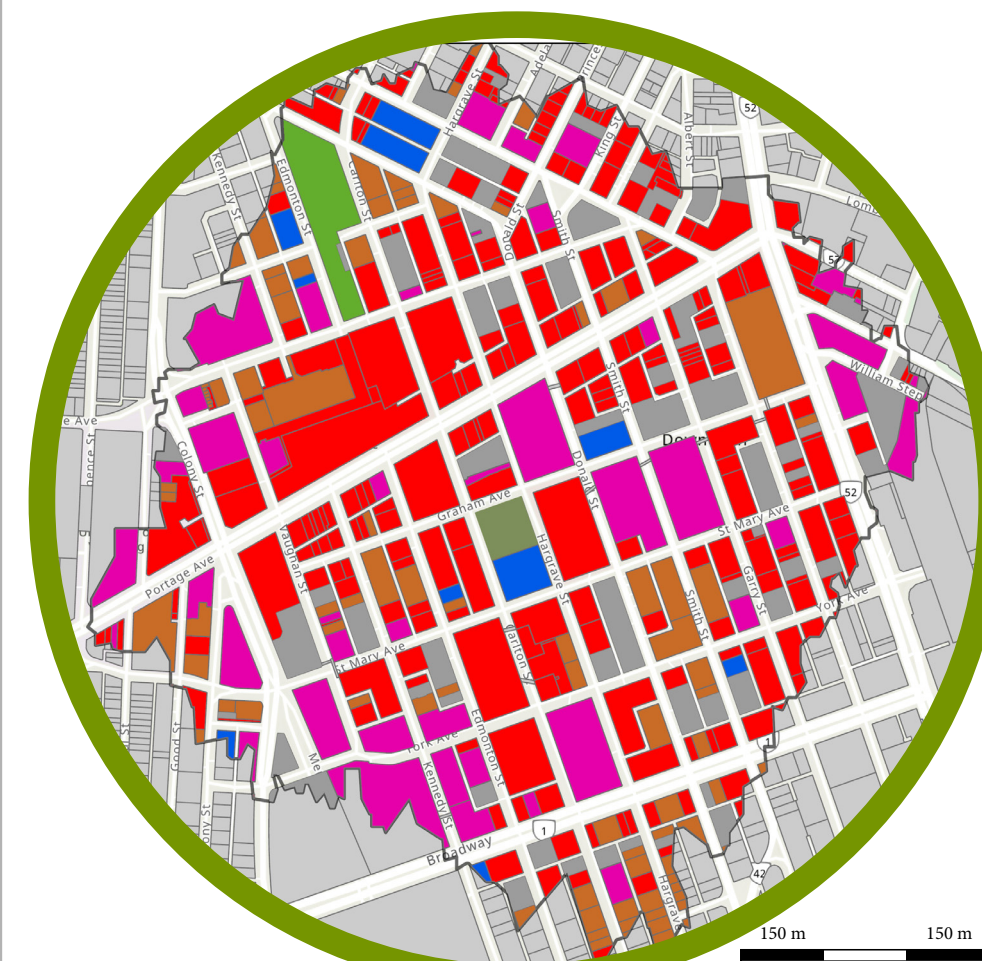
Millennium Library Park Edges



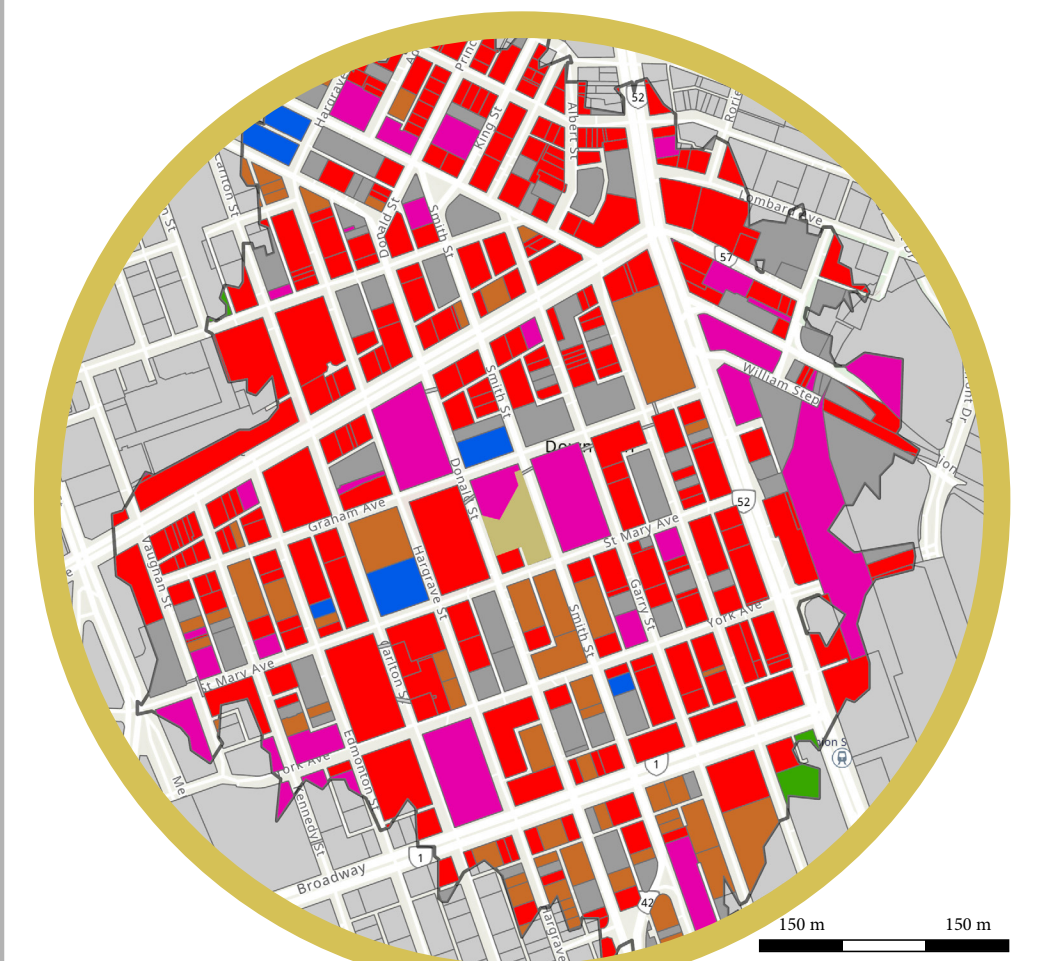
Central Park 800 m Walking Distance land use Map



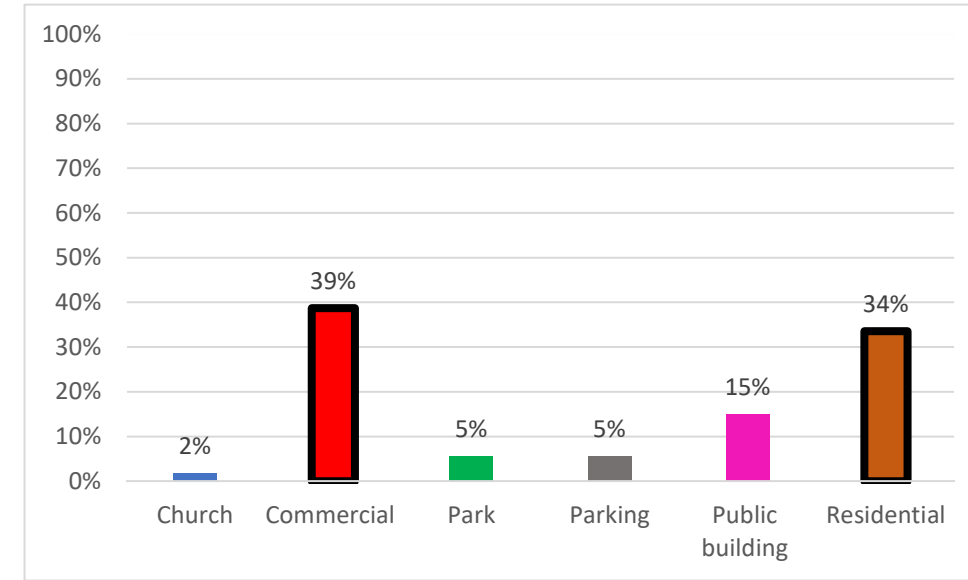
True North Square 800 m Walking Distance land use Map



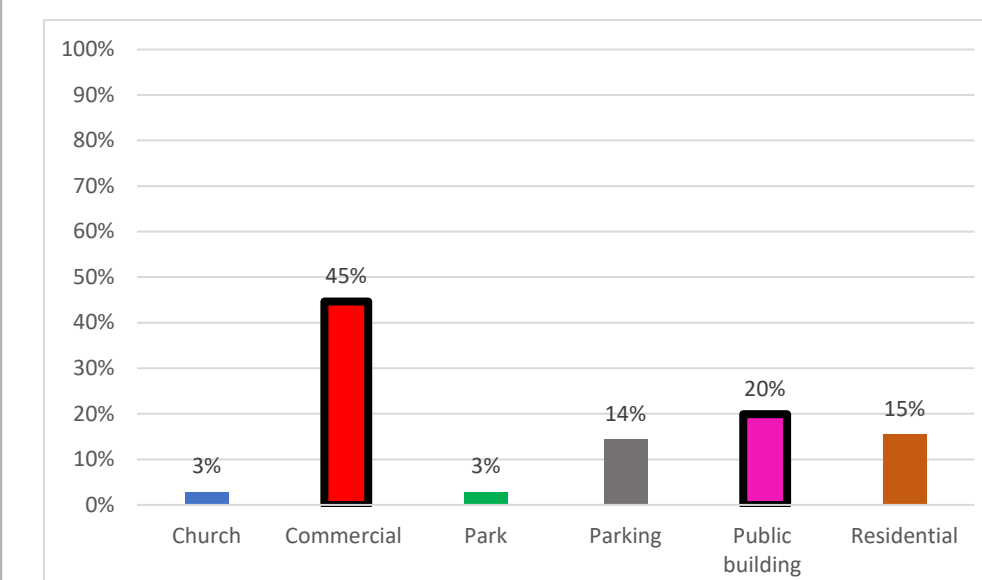
Millennium Library Park 800 m Walking Distance land use Map



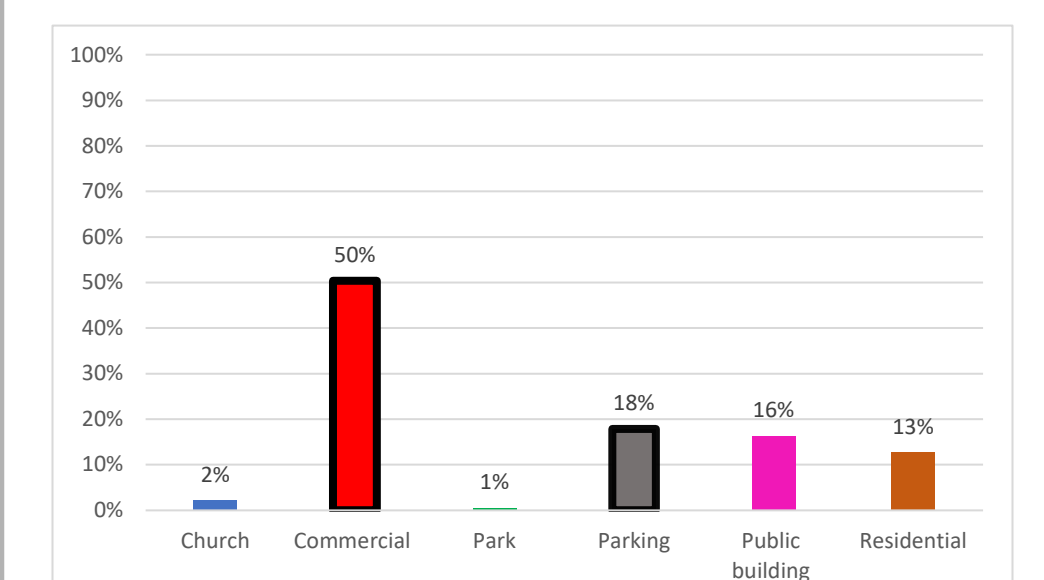
Central Park 800 m Walking Distance land use Graph



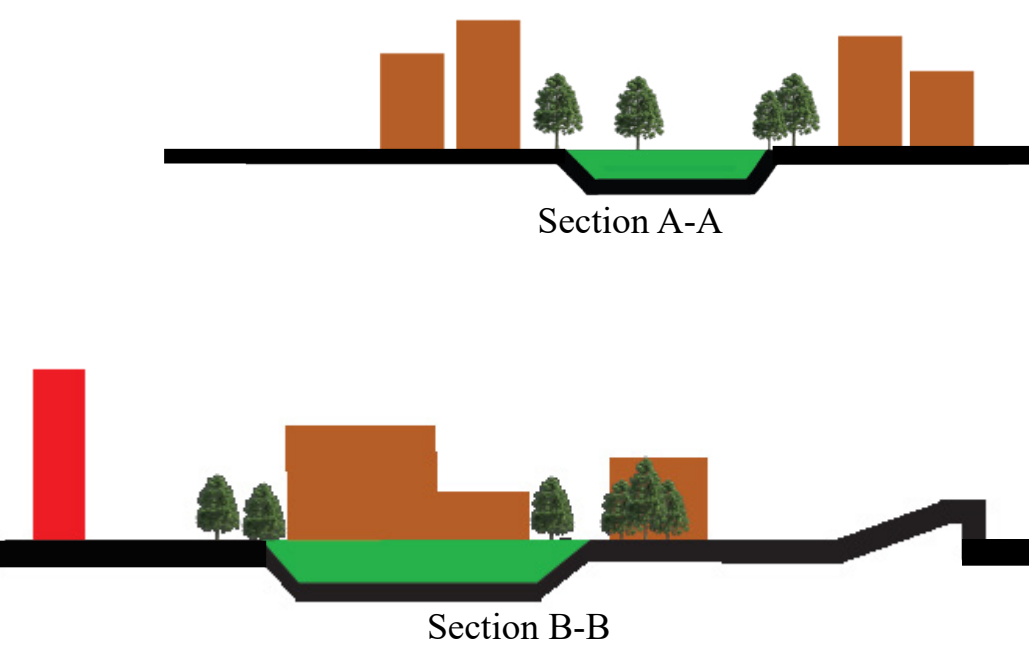
True North Square 800 m Walking Distance land use Graph



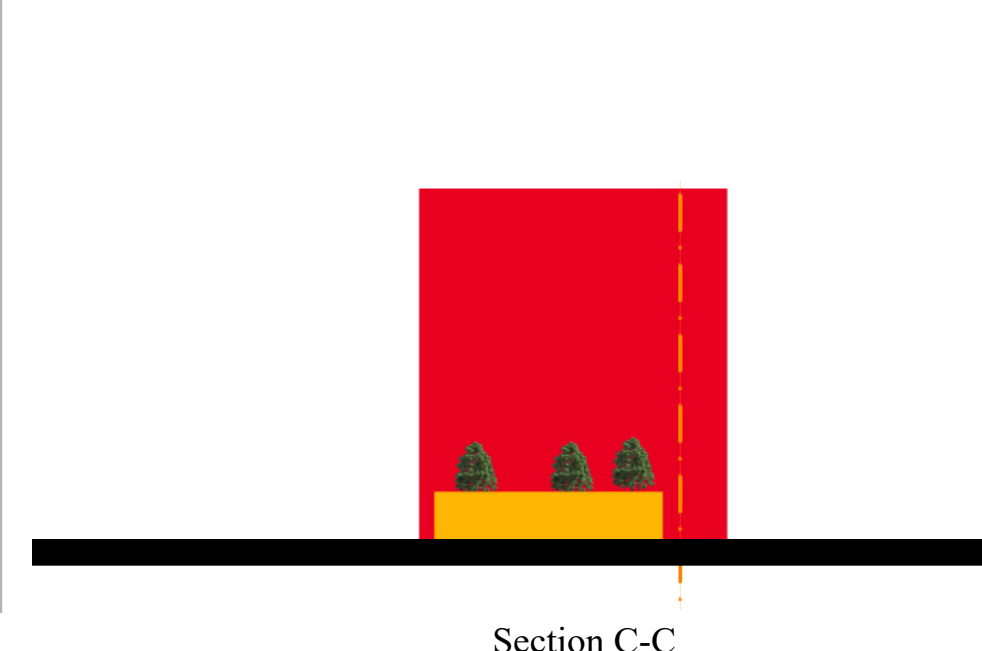
Millennium Library Park 800 m Walking Distance land use Graph



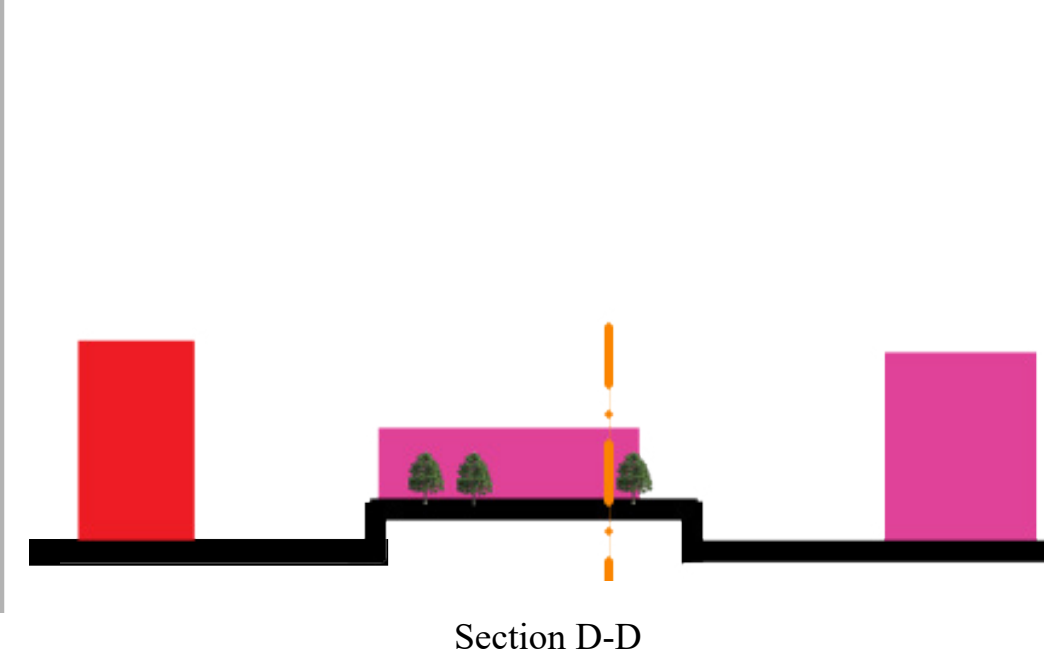
Demographic (NTS) Section A-A and B-B



Demographic (NTS) Section C-C



Demographic (NTS) Section D-D



Central Park

Located in a residential area
Good eyes on the street from surrounding buildings
Designed at street level
Provides good prospect and refuge
Has ten nodes and landmarks
Has a designated area for children

True North Square

Located in a commercial area
Good eyes on the street from surrounding buildings
South tower has restaurants that are opened till 10 pm
Designed at street level
Provides good prospect and refuge
Has eight nodes and landmarks

Millennium Library Park

Located in a commercial area
Surrounded by public buildings which are closed during the night, resulting in poor visibility
Designed above street level
Covered by parking entrance from two sides
Provides good prospect and refuge
Has nine nodes and landmarks

Observations Findings

Central Park

The number of users is higher compared to the other two case studies.
The number of children using the space is five times more than the other two case studies.
Children prefer using the topography as seating instead of the designed benches.
Women visit the park in groups, either with their children or other women.
People often lie down in the main green space.

True North Square

The number of users at True North Square is twice as high as that of Millennium Library Park.
Children enjoy walking through the ground lighting.
Women visit the plaza in groups.
Most users visit True North Square because of the restaurants in the southeast tower.
Security guards prevent certain people from entering the space.
The park is located near popular bus routes in Winnipeg.
The two towers are designed in the direction of the wind, creating a wind tunnel effect.

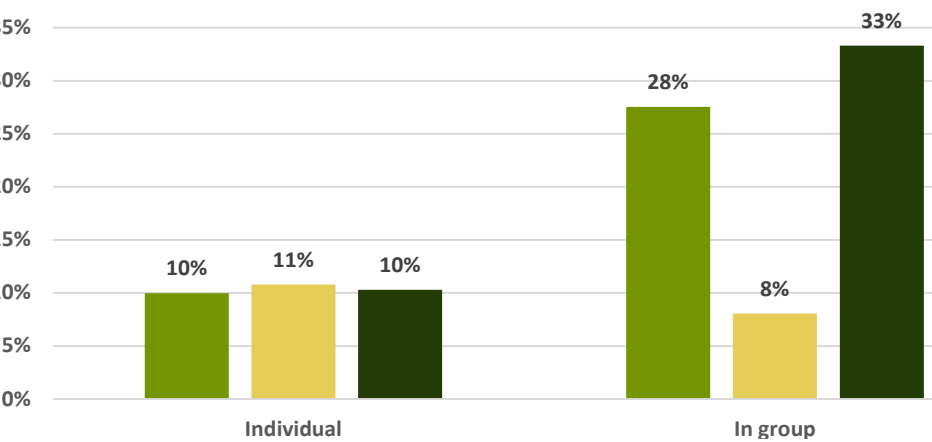
Millennium Library Park

The number of users at Millennium Library Park is lower compared to the other two case studies.
The number of children using the space is three.
Most women prefer using the L-design bench on the north side of the park.
One person who has experienced homelessness lives in the south side of the park.

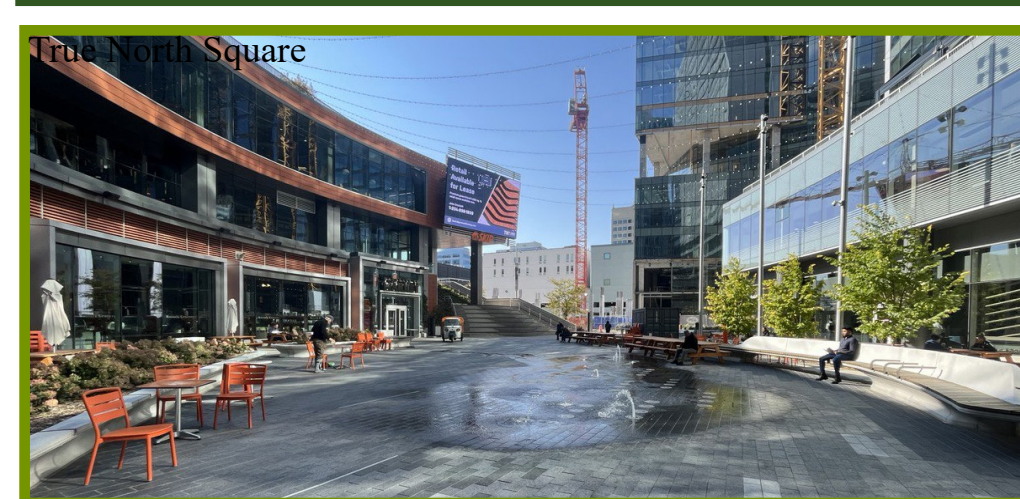
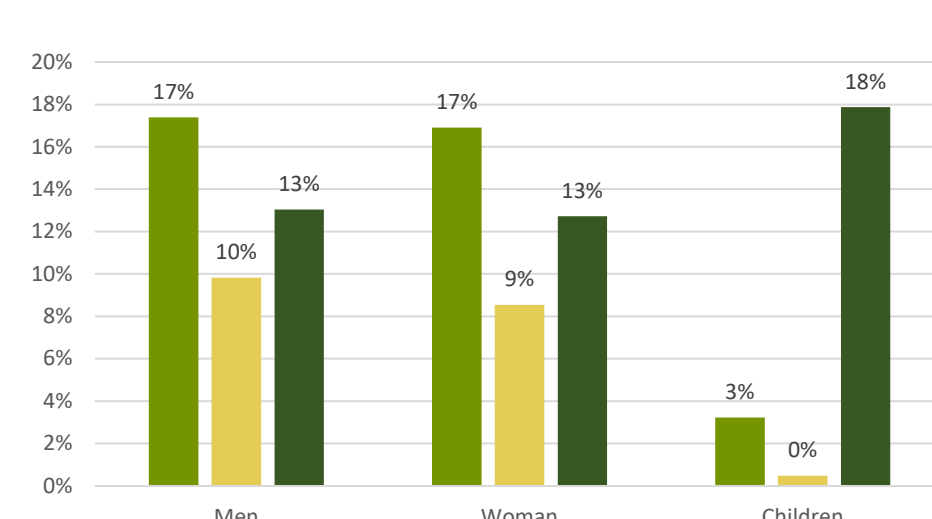
The Number of Observed People Who Used Each Space

Place	Gender	Count	Sum
Central Park	Male	81	271
	Female	79	
	Children	111	
True North Square	Male	108	233
	Female	105	
	Children	20	
The Millennium Park	Male	61	1.17
	Female	53	
	Children	3	

Percentage of Observed Users (Individuals/In Group)



Percentage of Observed Children, Females, and Males



Recommendations

For Future Public Open Space Design

- Improve Visibility
Design open spaces at the street level to improve transparency and access.
Improve security by incorporating more opportunities to eye on the space.
- Incorporate child friendly designs
- This is pilotary observation method and more observations should take place in summer and different method to understanding people's needs.

Conclusion

The Capstone Project focused on the crucial role of open spaces in the social and cultural life of a city, providing opportunities for people to interact with each other, engage in leisure activities, and connect with nature. Safety and security are also important factors in creating successful urban open spaces. Additionally, the principles and theories of urban design, such as Jay Appleton's Prospect-Refuge theory, can guide the creation of successful open spaces. The project emphasizes the need for ongoing evaluation and adaptation of open spaces, and the importance of continued research and analysis in this field to enhance the quality of life for residents and foster a vibrant and sustainable urban environment in Winnipeg.