

St. Patrick's Island

“St. Patrick's Island had a master plan based on the principles of ‘biophilia’ – a landscape design approach that nurtures the instinctive bond between people and nature and, by fostering harmony between constructed and natural elements, provides opportunities for life-enriching experiences and activities.”

(Calgary Municipal Land Corporation 2015)

Key features: Opened up historic river channels, shallow water habitat and riparian plantings

Location: Bow River, Calgary, Alberta Canada

Lead entity: Calgary Municipal Land Corporation

Status: Completed

Cost: \$45 million (Klingbell 2015)



Figure 1, Artist's rendering of the St. Patrick's Island design features.

1.1 ENHANCING AND PRESERVING HABITAT

A major goal of the St. Patrick's Island project was to increase aquatic and terrestrial habitat through 3 design elements:

- **Seasonal Breach:** This high-flow channel connects the north and south sides of the Bow River during flood events, providing shallow water habitat for aquatic organisms. A pedestrian boardwalk provides access with minimal disturbance. The south inlet has a wading area where visitors can swim, while the north end is more private and natural.
- **Lowland Channel:** This seasonal riparian wetland is located in the center of the island and provides habitat for aquatic organisms.
- **Gallery Forest:** This forest is located in the center of the island and is important habitat for nesting eagles, owls, and songbirds. This area was protected during construction, and now has an elevated boardwalk to provide no-impact public access.

(Calgary Municipal Land Corporation CMLC 2015)



Figure 2, The Breach, connecting the north and south sides of the Bow River.

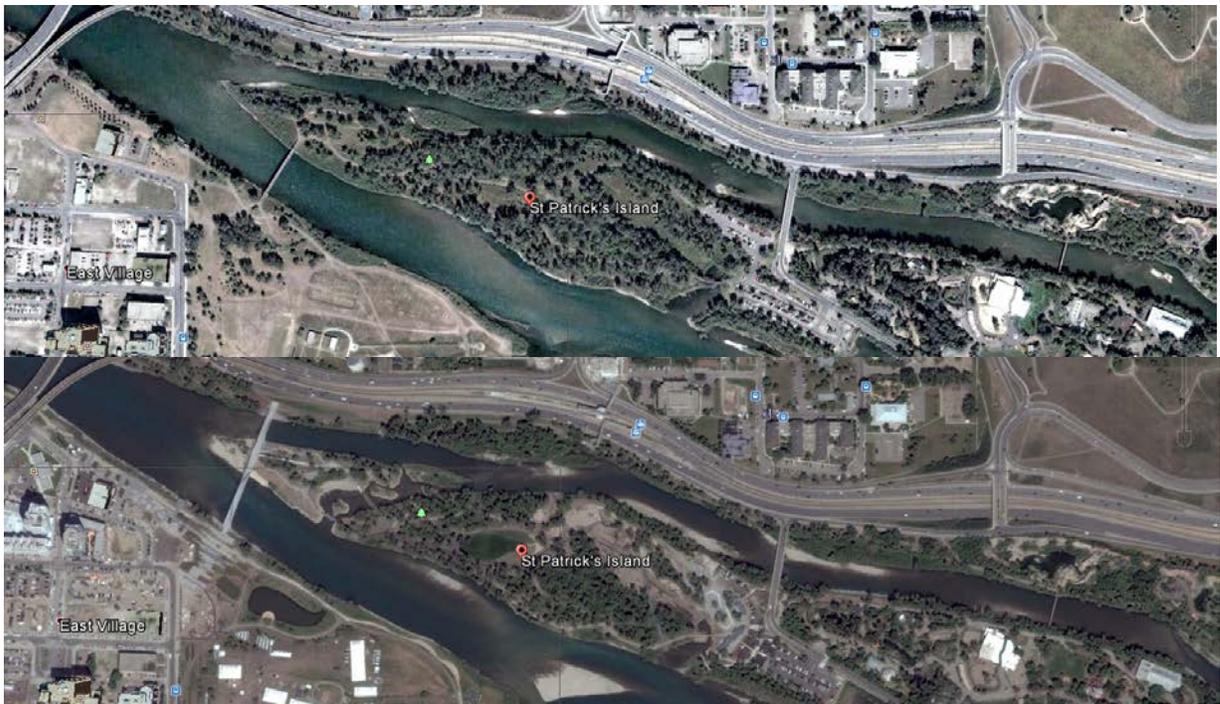


Figure 3, Aerial image of St. Patrick's Island before (top, 8/15/2007) and after (bottom, 7/5/2015) construction.

1.2 ENHANCING PUBLIC ACCESS

The second goal of the St. Patrick's Island project was to reconnect people with nature by increasing public access to the island. The following 3 features were designed allow people to connect with nature:

- **Pathways** throughout the island provide access by foot, bike, and snowshoe, and are designed to minimize impact.
- **Picnic Grove** is a family picnic area.
- **Cove** provides river access for fishing and rafting. (CMLC 2015)



Figure 4, The Cove provides public river access at the southeast end of the island.

The following 4 features provide public enjoyment without a primary focus on nature:

- **Tip:** This vantage point is located at the western edge of the island, providing seating and a great view of downtown Calgary.
- **Rise:** This 30 ft tall grassy knoll serves as a gathering place and sledding hill.
- **Confluence Plaza:** This small amphitheater is a place for concerts and gatherings, providing seating and a sun deck.
- **Playmound:** Playground for children.

(CMLC 2015)



Figure 5, Confluence Plaza has an amphitheater and seating for concerts and events.

References

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- Hajnoczky, Julya. "Photo Tour of St. Patrick's Island." Avenue. August 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.avenuecalgary.com/City-Life/Photo-Tour-of-St-Patricks-Island/>>.

Figure References

- Figure 1: Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. *Cartoon Overview*. Digital Image. East Village. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.evexperience.com/patrick-island>>.
- Figure 2: Hajnoczky, Julya. *The Breach Middle*. Digital Image. Avenue. August 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.avenuecalgary.com/City-Life/Photo-Tour-of-St-Patricks-Island/>>.
- Figure 3: "St Patrick's Island." 51°02'49.75" N and 114°02'27.81" W. Google Earth. August 15, 2007 and July 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015.
- Figure 4: Hajnoczky, Julya. *The Cove*. Digital Image. Avenue. August 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.avenuecalgary.com/City-Life/Photo-Tour-of-St-Patricks-Island/>>.
- Figure 5: Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. *Confluence Plaza*. Digital Image. Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.calgarymlc.ca/patricks-island>>.

Image References

- Confluence Plaza: Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. *Confluence Plaza*. Digital Image. Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.calgarymlc.ca/patricks-island>>.
- Cove: Hajnoczky, Julya. *The Cove*. Digital Image. Avenue. August 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.avenuecalgary.com/City-Life/Photo-Tour-of-St-Patricks-Island/>>.

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The Breach north: Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. *The Breach North*. Digital Image. Calgary Municipal Land Corporation. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.calgarymlc.ca/patricks-island>>.

The Rise: Hajnoczky, Julya. *The Rise*. Digital Image. Avenue. August 5, 2015. Web. September 2, 2015. <<http://www.avenuecalgary.com/City-Life/Photo-Tour-of-St-Patricks-Island/>>.