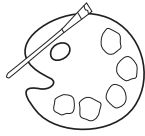


WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY

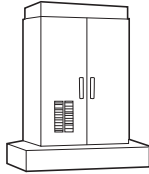
# How much does a street cost?

For other cities, order comes easily. Washington, D.C. was built all at once on the Potomac River to the specifications of the 1791 L'Enfant Plan; a half-century later, Paris was gutted and remade, top to bottom, per Georges-Eugène Haussmann's instructions. Things in Toronto have always been a little less tidy—instead, we've got "messy urbanism," as American urban planner James Rojas has called it. Take the intersection of St. Clair Avenue West and Vaughan Road, which is among the messiest: St. Clair is wide, long, cut in two by a streetcar right-of-way, and follows a straightforward grid, while Vaughan is narrow, short, and hits on the diagonal as it chases a slithering ravine. In a city where there's no such thing as a typical intersection, though, this one might just count as normal. Here's how much it takes to put together.—David Topping

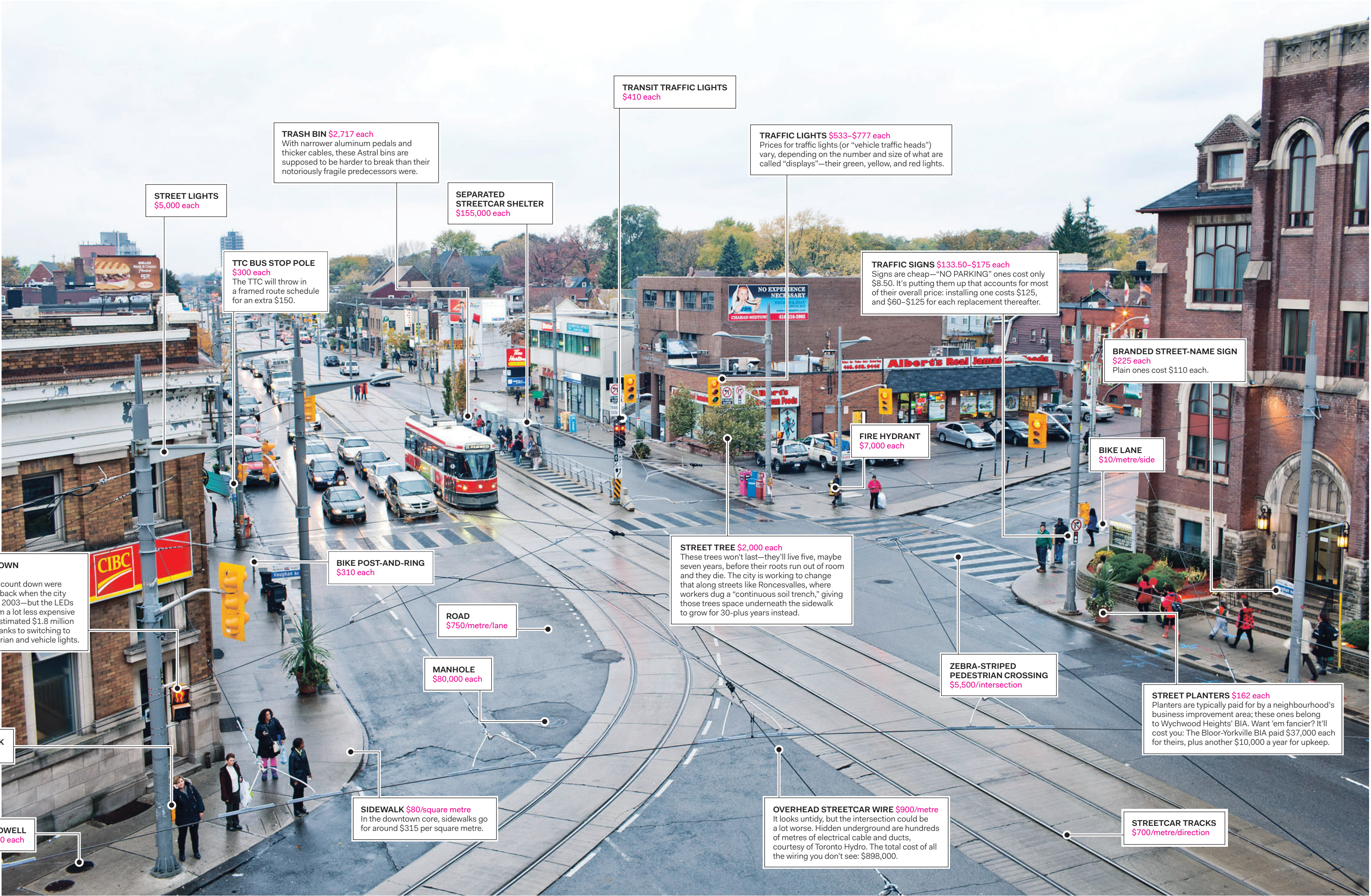
NOT PICTURED



**PUBLIC ART \$38,000**  
Yvonne Lammerich's checkerboard *Brick Works—The Body Speaks to Us*, on the opposite streetcar shelter, was one of two-dozen pieces installed at stops along St. Clair's streetcar right-of-way in 2010. (It actually cost a little more than \$38,000, but no one can seem to remember how much money it took to install.)



**TRAFFIC CONTROLLER CABINET \$18,000 each**  
The brains of any intersection, the electronics inside one of these boxes (hiding on the southeast corner) calculate things like how long you've got left waiting at that red light or when to let streetcars through on a yellow. The more complicated the intersection, the costlier they are.



**STREET LIGHTS \$5,000 each**

**TRASH BIN \$2,717 each**  
With narrower aluminum pedals and thicker cables, these Astral bins are supposed to be harder to break than their notoriously fragile predecessors were.

**SEPARATED STREETCAR SHELTER \$155,000 each**

**TTC BUS STOP POLE \$300 each**  
The TTC will throw in a framed route schedule for an extra \$150.

**TRANSIT TRAFFIC LIGHTS \$410 each**

**TRAFFIC LIGHTS \$533-\$777 each**  
Prices for traffic lights (or "vehicle traffic heads") vary, depending on the number and size of what are called "displays"—their green, yellow, and red lights.

**TRAFFIC SIGNS \$133.50-\$175 each**  
Signs are cheap—"NO PARKING" ones cost only \$8.50. It's putting them up that accounts for most of their overall price: installing one costs \$125, and \$60-\$125 for each replacement thereafter.

**BRANDED STREET-NAME SIGN \$225 each**  
Plain ones cost \$110 each.

**BIKE LANE \$10/metre/side**

**FIRE HYDRANT \$7,000 each**

**STREET TREE \$2,000 each**  
These trees won't last—they'll live five, maybe seven years, before their roots run out of room and they die. The city is working to change that along streets like Roncesvalles, where workers dug a "continuous soil trench," giving those trees space underneath the sidewalk to grow for 30-plus years instead.

**ROAD \$750/metre/lane**

**MANHOLE \$80,000 each**

**BIKE POST-AND-RING \$310 each**

**PEDESTRIAN COUNTDOWN SIGNAL \$544 each**  
The old signals that didn't count down were a lot cheaper—\$265 each back when the city stopped installing them in 2003—but the LEDs in the new ones make them a lot less expensive to run. The city saves an estimated \$1.8 million a year on its energy bill, thanks to switching to this technology for pedestrian and vehicle lights.

**PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK BUTTON \$590 each**

**HANDWELL \$8,700 each**

**SIDEWALK \$80/square metre**  
In the downtown core, sidewalks go for around \$315 per square metre.

**OVERHEAD STREETCAR WIRE \$900/metre**  
It looks untidy, but the intersection could be a lot worse. Hidden underground are hundreds of metres of electrical cable and ducts, courtesy of Toronto Hydro. The total cost of all the wiring you don't see: \$898,000.

**ZEBRA-STRIPED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING \$5,500/intersection**

**STREET PLANTERS \$162 each**  
Planters are typically paid for by a neighbourhood's business improvement area; these ones belong to Wychwood Heights' BIA. Want 'em fancier? It'll cost you: The Bloor-Yorkville BIA paid \$37,000 each for theirs, plus another \$10,000 a year for upkeep.

**STREETCAR TRACKS \$700/metre/direction**