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News / Toronto

## Take a tour of Toronto's 'vegetative infrastructure' hotspots

By: [Luke Simcoe](#) Metro, Metro Published on Mon Jul 20 2015



Toronto's [Jonathan Silver](#) has a thing for green roofs and green walls.

"I don't just like vegetative infrastructure. I love it," the 26-year-old says.

Silver has made a list of green walls and roofs in the city and published it online -- complete with a handy map.

"It's incredible how many we have, but people don't really know they're there because they're on top of buildings or behind closed doors," he said.

Asked about the benefits of green roofs, Silver rattles off a list of environmental, economic and psychological perks.

"It's great for the environment. It helps retain storm water. It provides a place for bees to gather pollen and for birds to rest," he said. "And buildings use less energy if they have a green roof. It helps keep the building cool in the summer and warm in the winter."

Green walls are similar to their rooftop counterparts, but are typically installed indoors. They help regulate humidity, dampen noise and create a pleasant environment for any employees working inside, Silver said.

"We're so busy in Toronto, just running around. Living infrastructure helps grab us out of our minds and puts us in our bodies. That feels really good," he said.

By making it easier to find Toronto's green walls and roofs, Silver hopes the project will encourage more people to appreciate them.

"First hand experience plays an important role in understanding. You need to see things for yourself to really get them," he said.

Silver initially made the map as a kind of "self-guided tour." However, there's been enough interest that he's begun leading guided tours of green sites as well.

An upcoming walking tour is already booked up, he said, but there are still some spots left in a free cycling tour scheduled for Aug. 9.

For more information, visit [livingarchitecturetour.ca](http://livingarchitecturetour.ca) or follow Silver on Twitter at [@silverjonsilver](https://twitter.com/silverjonsilver).

### Silver's favourite green roofs and walls in Toronto

1. *Rotman School of Management (105 St. George St.)*
- "There are two green roofs in the building. They're great," he said.
2. *Terrence Donnelly Centre for Cellular and Biomolecular Research (160 College St.)*
- "The building is unbelievable," he said. "There's basically a bamboo forest growing inside the building."
3. *University of Toronto Exam Centre (255 McCaul St.)*
- "The designers knew it was going to be an exam building, so they put in a green wall to help calm down all the stressed-out students," he said.

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