

CLINTON PLACE



IHP7546

Established 1863
Size 0.80 acres
location Royal Avenue & Secord Street

Ammenities

- **Passive grassy open space**

Colonel Moody and the Royal Engineers created Clinton Place as a major civic square in the historic city plan they designed in 1863. The square, located at the intersection of Royal Avenue and Second Street, included the diagonal street entry to Park Row and a ceremonial access to Queen’s Park. Clinton Place mirrored its twin at the west end of Royal Avenue, Toronto Place/Simcoe Park, now adjacent to John Robson School.

Grand public squares like Clinton Place were intended to signify the importance of the Royal City as the capital of the Colony of British Columbia. It was located on the crest of a hill to take advantage of the sweeping views of the Fraser River and Golden Ears Mountains.

Clinton Place was originally a much larger park. It was acquired by the City from the Province in 1884, subdivided into residential lots, and sold in 1886 to raise funds for the city’s connection to the Canadian Pacific Railway. The remainder of Clinton Place remained a rough and undeveloped road right of way, but was finally cleared of stumps and leveled in 1889.

During the great boom of the 1890s, the Westminster and Vancouver Tramway Company used the square for the construction of their electric interurban railway line between the “sister cities” New Westminster and Vancouver. The tramline left its terminus at Eighth Street and followed Columbia Street to the east end of the city, winding up the hill from Leopold Place and westwards on Royal Avenue. The rails of the trolley looped at Clinton Place to change directions to the east, following Park Row up to First Avenue to the gates of the exhibition buildings at Queen’s Park before traveling through the upper residential district and Burnaby en route to Vancouver.

Clinton Place was formally transformed from a street right-of-way in 1910 when City Council allocated funding to create a pleasant grass park for the enjoyment of local residents. In 1913, the central boulevards of Second Street were laid out, and new curbs and sidewalks defined the area for the first time.

The streetcar tracks through Clinton Place were removed after the closure of New Westminster's streetcar system in 1934. The park retains much of its original design, with beautiful trees forming a small arbo-retum, including some of the largest red oak trees in the city.

Behind the Name...Clinton Place:



Henry Pelham-Clinton, Fifth Duke of Newcastle-under-Lyne

Born: May 22, 1811

Died: October 18, 1864

Clinton Place was named after Clinton Street, the original name for Second Street. Sir Henry Pelham Clinton was England's Secretary of State for the Colonies 1859 - 1864.

This English statesman became a member of parliament in 1832. He was appointed colonial secretary and secretary for war in 1852, presiding over the Crimean War. He resigned in 1855, but returned to government as secretary of state for the colonies from 1859 - 64, during the establishment of the Royal City. The surname Clinton means one who came from Clinton, Northamptonshire, an old place name meaning "settlement on the summit."