

IT'S **ON** AT ONTARIO PLACE - **OR IS IT?**

by
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A thesis
presented to the University of Waterloo
in fulfillment of the
thesis requirement for the degree of
Master of Architecture

Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.



ABSTRACT


This thesis *It's ON at Ontario Place - Or Is It?* addresses the roles that architecture and landscape play in shaping the waterfront and park systems into designed connected networks that respond to local, social, sustainable, economical and ecological conditions. The primary intervention focuses on Ontario Place, specifically the west and east islands.

The Ontario Place islands are currently radically unused areas, a void in the waterfront and urban fabric, which splits the ground plane and limits the connection between the city's core and its waterfront. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to intensively explore the refurbishing of the beloved landscape and social infrastructural interventions in Ontario Place through the role of re-connecting with the city and its waterfront. This would expand the perception of its performance to reintroduce social and cultural dimensions along the water's edge.

The proposal is an investigation of the role of the specialized park as an act of retrofitting and reintroducing a festival system, where the layering of both social amenities and infrastructural functions produce a composite network for Toronto and the harbour along Lake Ontario. The site of Ontario Place park is a proposal nested within in a larger series of proposals to reimagine the waterfront's edge in attempt to create a large series of connected park spaces along the water.

Waterfront and park systems present a dichotomy between the infrastructural and cultural influences that are inseparable from urban planning. Urban parks are one of the rare areas in architecture that have yet to reach their full potential in the urban fabric as a democratic, social and cultural city space. Urban parks are essentially cultural infrastructure because they shape the social environment and create city identity.

Over the past decades there have been several modifications made along Toronto's harbor and these interventions have generated spatial conditions that currently constrict the potential for urban growth. The city is focused on developing around these problematic interventions to meet its users needs in the ever-changing contemporary city.





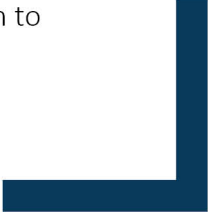
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DEDICATION

To my parents.

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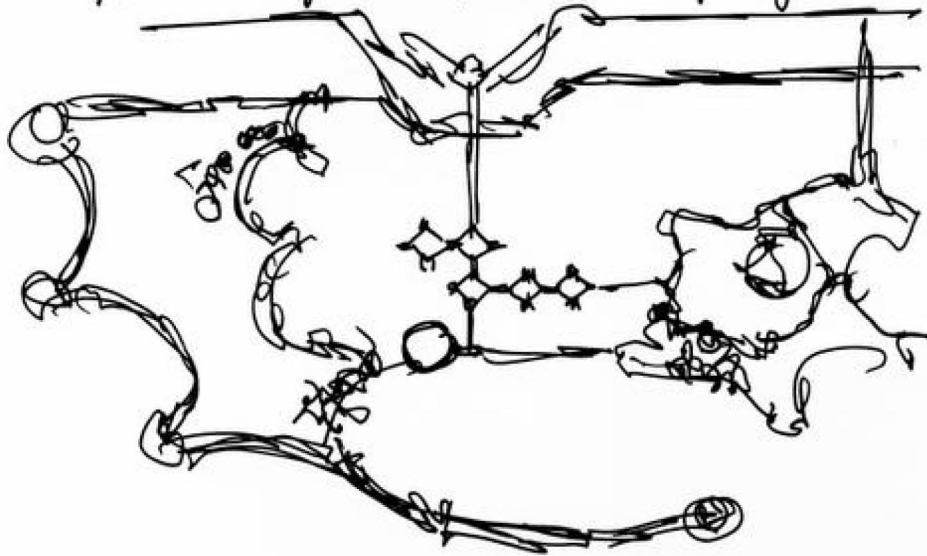
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00 | Introduction

- ② CREATION OF URBAN PARK LAND.
The idea of wave protection through land fill leads to the addition of **ISLANDS** that can be used as urban Parks or the villages for shops and restaurants, Canals Performance places, Childrens play areas etc.



21.2.

Figure 1 - Original Sketch, 1968-1970.

Lead architect Eberhard Zeidler's original sketch of the concept for Ontario Place is very close to what was built and still exists there today.

There exists an undeniable relationship between a waterfront and urban planning, as waterfronts are the core of cities for means of transportation and trade. The historical and continual role of a waterfront is to improve the quality of life for society through recreation, leisure, commerce, transportation and tourism. When coupled with effective urban planning and design a city benefits from an improved quality of life when intersected effectively with its waterfront. Historically, innovative plans were integrated within the urban fabric, known as Ontario Place, which at the time provided the critical services to residents of the province, such as sanitation and military bases to defend its cities and ports. However, the contemporary waterfront, especially Ontario Place, is no longer able to keep up with the ever-evolving fabric of the city and residents are confronted by these interventions every day. As issues of Ontario Place become more evident and more complex, under-designed elements of these systems must expand their criteria of performance. The future of the waterfront requires architects and planners to engage in revitalization, a method used to salvage and regenerate the existing infrastructure from the 60's into a cultural and social hub for the residents of today.

Ontario Place sits on an artificial island that should have been a former extension to the Canadian National Exhibitions grounds in attempts to bring the city closer to the water. This approach is crucial to understand, both in the greater context and architecturally, since the site was intended for designing a cohesive waterfront. Soon after, the site that was once obsolete and rapidly becoming outdated at its time was transformed into a leisure site that would tie into the rest of the urban fabric and become a cultural landmark. Much of the park was heavily inspired by the 1967 International and Universal Exposition in Montreal (also known as Expo 67), which was innovative and futuristic for its time. The innovative design and architecture of Ontario Place, inspired by Expo 67, on this artificial island were a major success from the 70's – 90's and attracted over three million visitors annually.

Much like its history along the waterfront, Ontario Place eventually could not keep up with its maintenance due to lack of funding. Unfortunately, the site was eventually shut down in 2012. It had unraveled itself from Toronto's city fabric as transit routes began to stop reaching

the area, most of the attractions were becoming old-fashioned and other amusement parks were outperforming Ontario Place. The islands were shut down to the public for nearly five years, except for concerts at festivals at the Budweiser Stage or Echo Beach, while the city worked on demolishing most of its amusement park on the islands. Although some of the beloved areas like the Soak City and the Wild Adventure Ride were taken down, some of its cultural landmarks remain. By 2017 Ontario Place was reopened to the public with a renovated Cinesphere and renovated landscape for people to pass through. The iconic five floating glass and steel Exhibition Pods also remained on the site, but like much of the site, the modern pods and surroundings are left empty and unprogrammed. This site has gone through several iterations to keep itself relevant yet it still lacks a sense of identity and has lost its spark. Implementing a revitalized masterplan to the once exciting designs on the site could serve as a role of a cultural incubator within the urban landscape of the city.

This thesis is an analysis and proposition for a way in which Toronto's waterfront, specifically Ontario Place, could be reimagined into a social and cultural networking hub within the city. Ontario Place is open to the idea of revitalizing itself, however, many proposals are aimed at densifying the site through housing, privatizing the site and demolishing its existing structure that stands as a cultural landmark. This proposal will rather look at intertwining cultural aspects on the site intersected with urban planning of the city using its existing architecture. Urban parks are one of the rare areas in architecture and planning that have yet to reach their full potential as democratic, social and cultural city space. Toronto is experiencing a series of changes throughout the city driven by privatization on publicly owned land that claim to serve the community as public park space. While there are several cases of privatization along the waterfront, the most concerning today is the site of Ontario Place.

The masterplan proposal is an idea that instills Ontario's cultural elements beyond the cliché notions of culture; where landscape interweaves activity, architecture, art, food, play, contemplation, sport, water and spontaneity. This speculative design serves as a catalyst for discussion in attempts to rediscover the forgotten and overlooked influence of Ontario Place – a once thriving publicly owned showcase for Ontario's

architecture, innovation, ecology, culture and evolving visions of the future – which is currently evolving into yet another picture of a gentrified and commercialized waterfront landscape. There exists examples of repurposing obsolete landscapes – such as the Barcelona and Marseille waterfronts – that provide an operation of evolving publicly owned landscapes into active participants in the cultural fabric of their respective cities. By expanding the role of nostalgia, historic and heritage architecture on the site, such as reviving the Exhibition Pods which currently do not engage the site, a new series of relationships would generate a new layer of activity. The production of revitalizing the nostalgic site is an exploration of designed composite network – where it is the ambition to include a variety of program, reintroducing park space and connecting the waterfront back to the city – which expands the waterfront edge from an obsolete landscape to a social instrument of amenity to the citizens of Toronto.

The design proposal engages Ontario Place, in Toronto, Ontario, as the primary site of intervention. By placing the site under a critical lens and assessing its successes and failures, a set of principles are derived that add to the discussion around what architecture can do in cities for its people beyond its direct function. This site is a prime opportunity not to only revamp 96-acres of public park space to Toronto’s park network but to also engage Ontario Place in a meaningful series of interventions reclaiming and rejuvenating the cultural and social importance of the once exciting site. This proposal speculates a dynamic layering of multiple systems, such as cycling routes and potential transit hubs, and specified programming attempts to maintain an active space will prove a major draw to the islands, in attempt to actively merge the site with the park networks of the city.

01 | **Waterfront Development in Urban Centers**

Identifying the Waterfront's Role in Urban Planning

Bodies of water, whether seas, oceans or lakes, connect distant places and facilitate the movement of goods and people around a vast landscape. In many ways, they are important foundations for economic development and a route for globalization. As cities began to move their industries further inland, the uses of ports were abandoned or neglected. Nonetheless, more recently in many areas around the world, the coastlines have been redesigned to create waterfronts that connect land and water for civic use.

Due to industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, much of the coastline creation led to the creation of mono-functional areas. The ports and their shipping facilities led to the creation of railway line and interstate trucking (highways), which essentially separated the inner-city from the coastline. However, proceeding from the industrialization era, ports from traditional waterfronts along the harbor were left abandoned, including Toronto's ports. Throughout the years, many city governments used the opportunity to confront these inhibited sites and take advantage of its water access and historical buildings for the renovation and rebranding of their cities. In attempts to reconnect people to the water to strengthen local culture, some cities celebrate their port histories through water-related activities, such as harbor birthdays or historic sailing ship parades. In



Toronto, many of these ports or abandoned sites have yet to redevelop into heritage sites, or leisure and touristic venues.

Although Toronto has attempted to reuse its waterfront via Ontario Place, the plan has since fallen short. However, even when Ontario Place was in commission it was treated as a separate entity from the city, detaching it from the surrounding urban fabric. It was a man-made island placed south of the Exhibition Place and was programmed to be a park. However, it has several physical barriers that separate the park from the rest of the city such as the Gardiner Expressway. These barriers make it difficult to attempt to 'return the shoreline to the people' and therefore further distances the site from the rest of the city. In order to attract visitors, Ontario Place attempted to turn the park into an amusement park for leisure which eventually resulted in the park closing. The park simply could not keep up to its needs of innovating and it could not upkeep its maintenance resulting in a major loss of revenue. Although redeveloping the waterfront was aimed at bringing a new quality of life to the city through methods of leisure, it resulted in the waterfront being abandoned yet again.

When redeveloping a waterfront, a planner looks at finding ways to improve the quality of city life through modes of transportation, the border of land, place of leisure and a backdrop to urban identity and culture. Although Ontario Place had a successful start and created a sense of Canadian Pride at the waterfront, it lost its focus around what truly mattered, a public green park for everyone to access and use. Creating an urban waterfront is a crucial landscape to the city since it reconnects the water's edge with its historical and urban moorings. It attempts to bring together various cultural, social and environmental elements of contemporary waterfront schemes, highlighting the way culture is deployed to shape consumable experiences and new marketing strategies for contemporary waterfront developments, and exploring more holistic strategies that might embrace the complexity of developing city-port-waterfronts. Although Ontario Place eventually failed to create such a place, the site still has potential to repurpose itself and become apart of the urban waterfront network in Toronto with its own identity and place. With the advent of industrialization, innovations regarding the means of transportation around the rigid grid and physical barriers of the site could still be met. This stride would very well be the first step in reconnecting the waterfront to the urban fabric of Toronto and the park network of the city.

Figure 2 - Port Industrial City.

This is an archival image of what the waterfront of Toronto looked like during the booming industrial era. A city is defined by its port system, and this illustrates Toronto's initiative to maintain a port for trades.

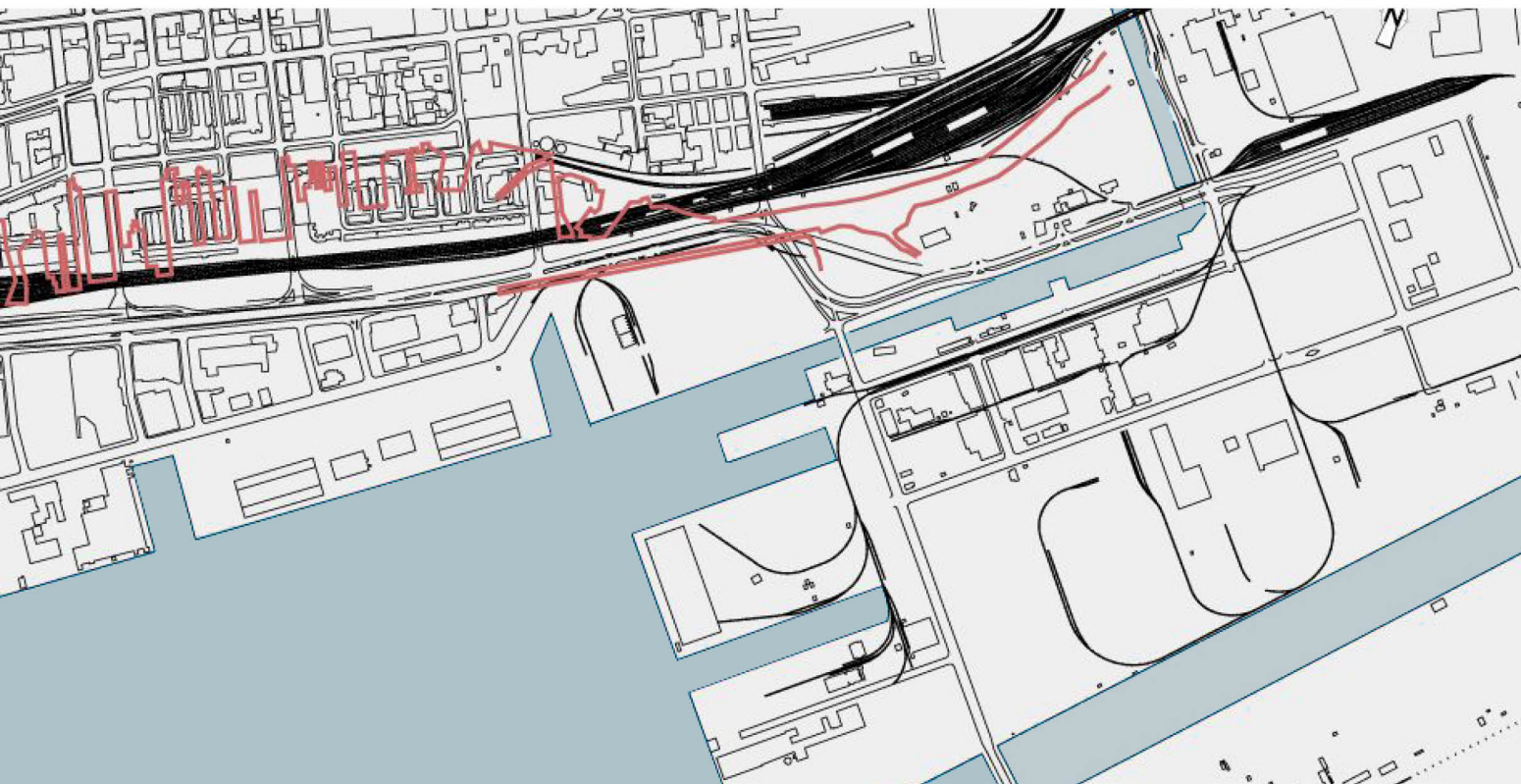


Figure 3 - Original Waterfront Line.

Throughout the decades, the waterfront has been pushed further back and the city has proceeded to build on artificial lands. The red line highlights the original waterfront line along Front St.

Figure 4 - Water's Edge Timeline.

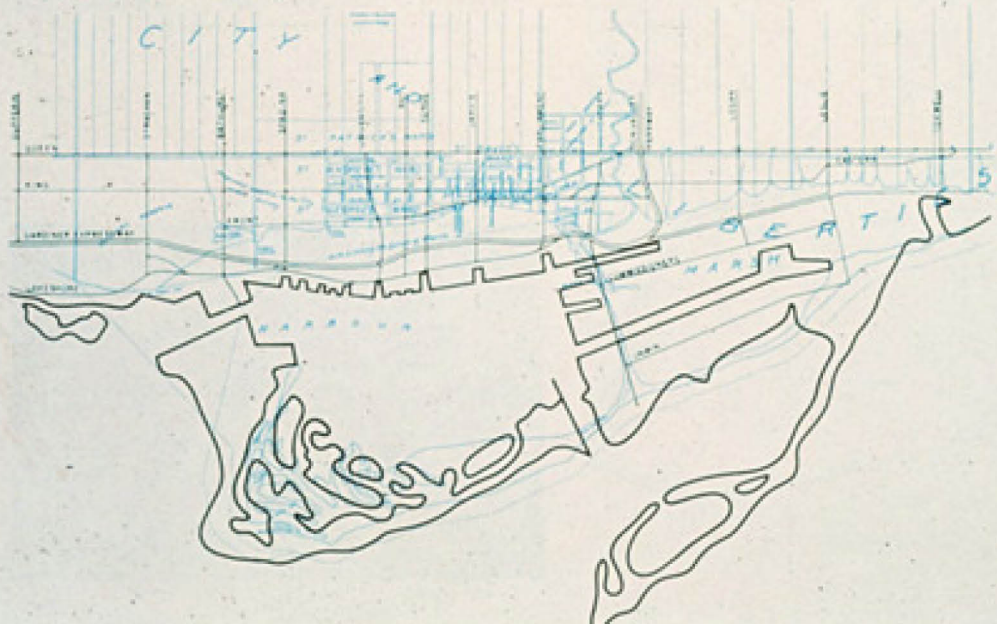
The City of Toronto has documented its waterfront growth and infill throughout the years.



THE WATERFRONT THEN and NOW

The Central Waterfront Historically

Toronto's Central Waterfront has evolved and expanded in step with the City itself. Much of the present land area, which covers about 2,700 acres, is man-made, a result of landfill operations which have been an ongoing feature of the last two centuries of waterfront history.



1974



1959



1912



1886



1834

TORONTO WATERFRONT

Then and Now/ 1

Addressing Renewal of Waterfront Park Systems in Toronto

Although Toronto is a relatively young city, just over 150 years old, its coastlines have been transformed several times to accommodate for its desires at that time. The water's edge, specifically Lake Ontario, was originally used by Aboriginal Peoples, known as the Mississaugas, as a shortcut through the Great Lakes, then became a military outpost. Later, Toronto's first governor, General Simcoe, grew to appreciate the water edge and claimed that a 3-mile portion would be reserved for public access. This idea was eventually revoked as industrial activity within the city began to grow drastically along the coastline. This was the beginnings of the complex social and ecological relationships between Toronto and its waterfront edge. This disconnection follows through and affects the urban fabric to this day as the waterfront has shifted between several governing bodies which cause delay in development and progress. It is also with the advent of industrialization that created the zoning approach that gradually evolved a more fragmented and distinct development which further isolated the port from the city.

Several governing bodies were put in place to attempt the development of the waterfront, from the Harbour Trust in 1850, to The Toronto Harbour Commission in 1911, to the Toronto Port Authority from 1999 onward, until most recently the Waterfront Toronto committee which was founded in 2001. During the 70s, the activity of the site reached its highpoint and new efforts to repurpose the site was met with opposition. The underutilized site was not considered for revitalizing until 1999 where the waterfront arose for the chance to host the Olympic Games (a thirty year, multi-billion dollar project). This opportunity, although shut down, allowed the waterfront to see new planning models which featured private and public partnerships and a shift from a well-rounded ecological strategy to a global imperative.

The most notable strides made to globalize Toronto's waterfront was the Waterfront Toronto committee, which was created by the federal, provincial and municipal governments. Waterfront Toronto has demonstrated their interest in overseeing development of Toronto's public spaces and parks. They currently have an investment from all three governments totaling to \$1.5 billion in the redevelopment of the forty-six kilometer stretch of waterfront land. Ontario Place would benefit from the stewardship of Waterfront Toronto in efforts to integrate the water's edge

seamlessly into the Toronto's park system and its city by people who are dedicated to achieving the prosperity of this unique and expansive stretch of waterfront land.

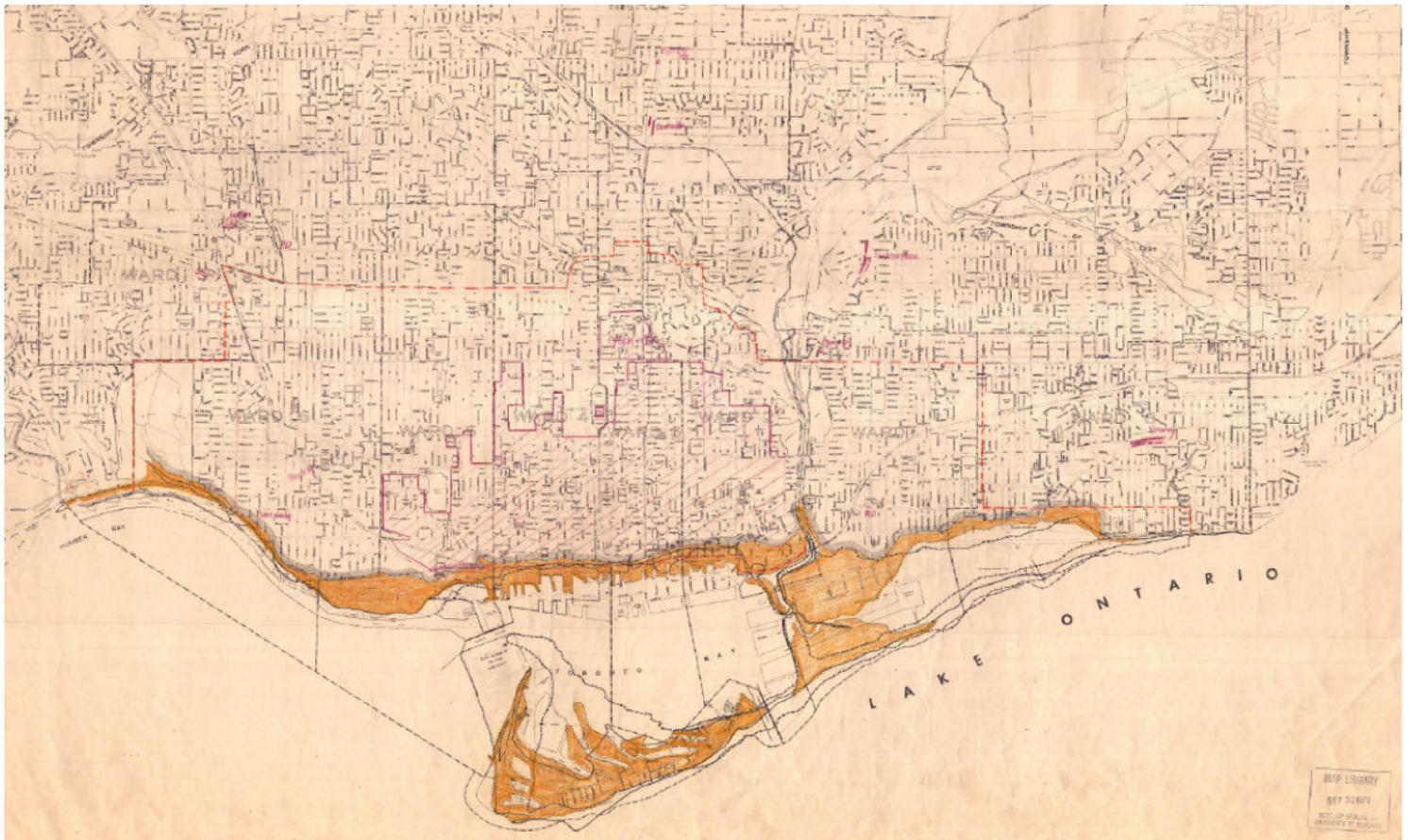


Figure 5 - Toronto's Waterfront Shift.

Over the years the land edge of Toronto was filled in to create the highlighted areas. Front Street used to really be the edge of the water. Over the years the highlighted areas had solidified and turned into parks, an airport and a Portland.

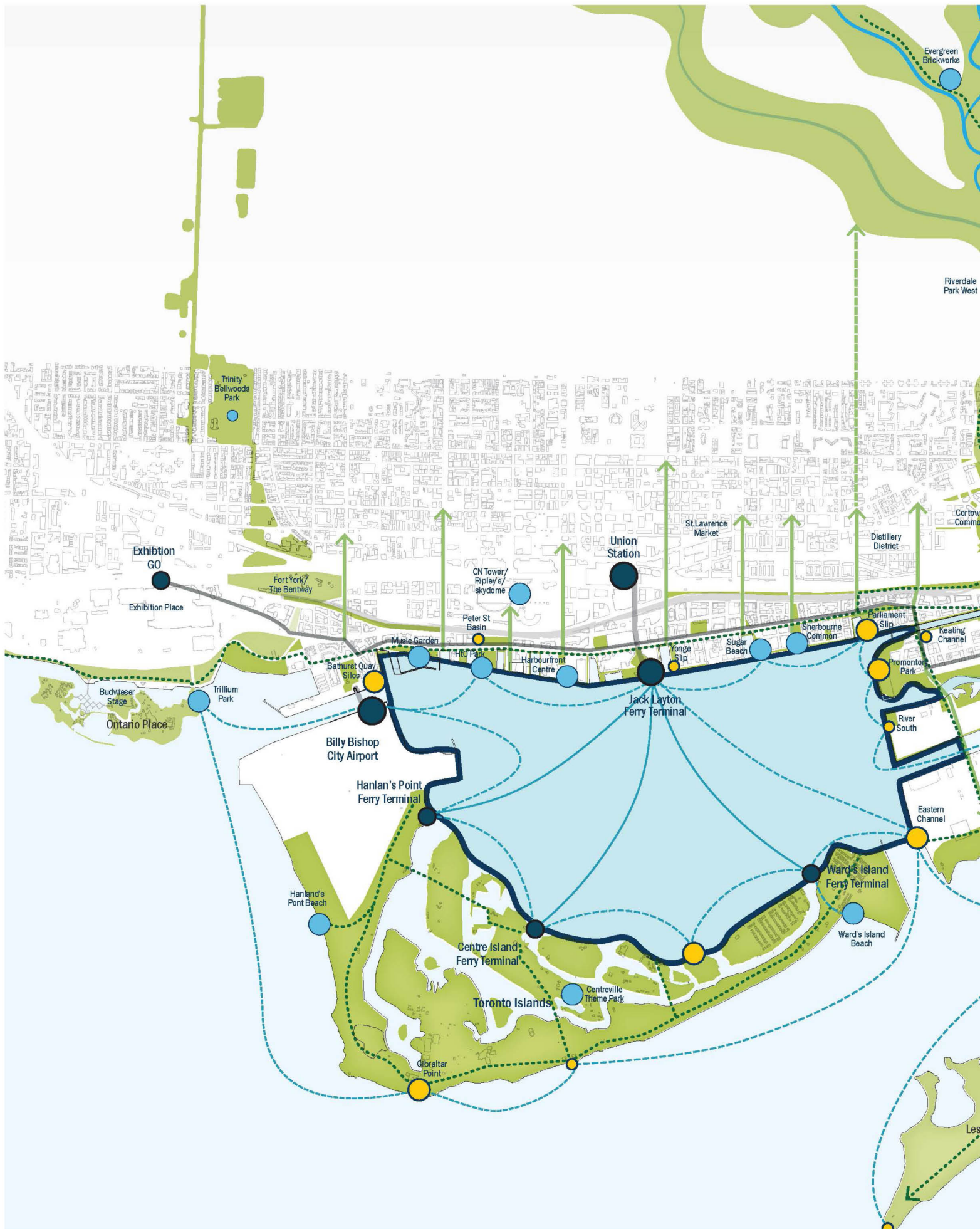




Figure 6 - Waterfront Toronto's Rolling Five-Year Strategic Plan

The vision is to have one connected waterfront that belongs to everyone and connect people to great places and activities. Toronto's waterfronts already has boardwalks, bike paths, parks and a ferry service, but the connectivity around the harbour remains limited.⁷

The goal is to leverage the framework of connections for a foundation of a longer-term evolution plan. The strategy is oriented towards filling in the gaps to unlock Toronto's full potential as leader in city-building, urban design, sustainability, resilience and the quality of life.

DESTINATIONS

- Existing
- Emerging/Future

CONNECTIONS

- Inner Harbour Loop
(Proposed Enhanced Pedestrian Access)
- Existing Transit Hub
- Existing Ferry System
- Potential Waterborne Transportation Routes
- Waterfront Trail System

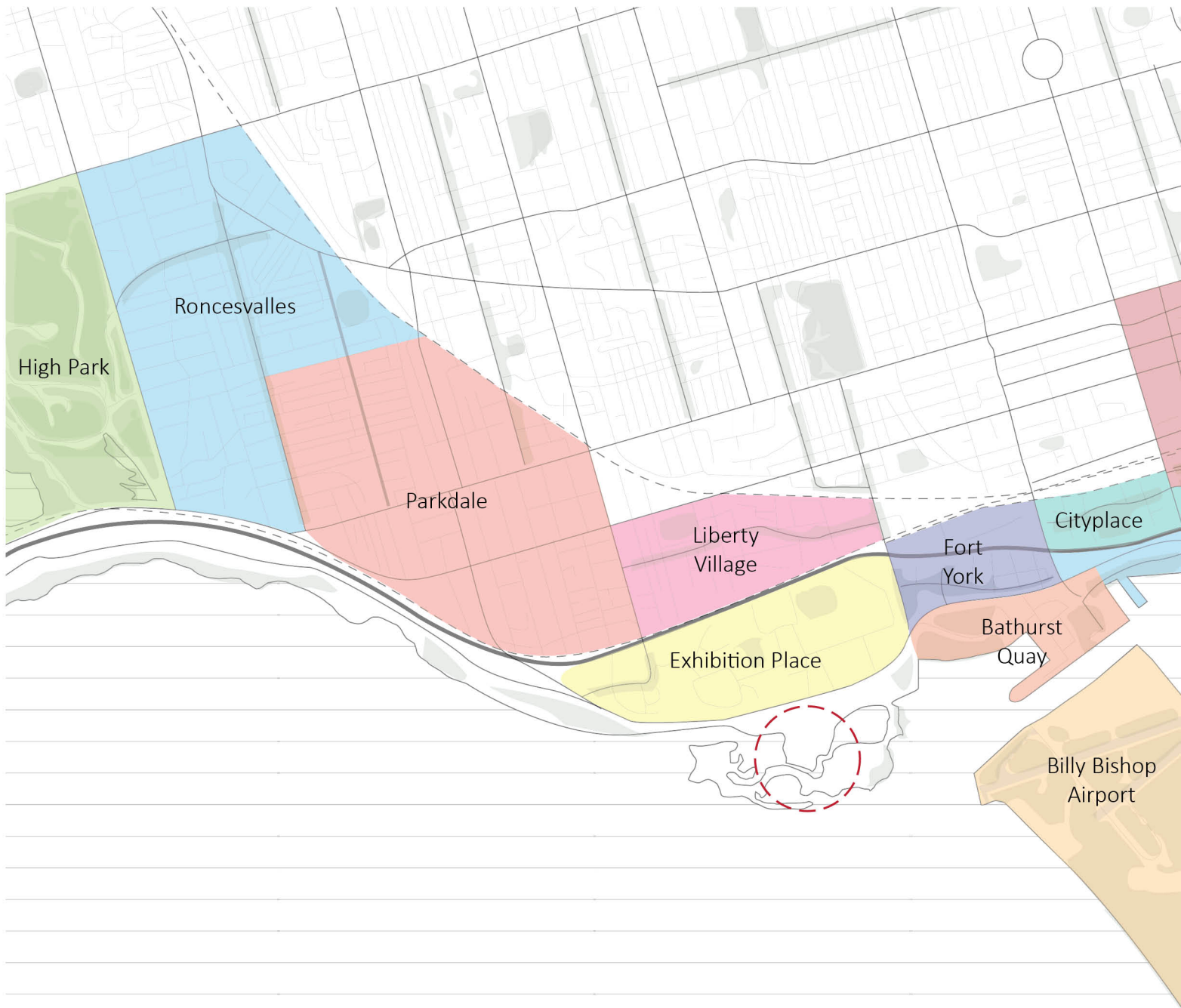
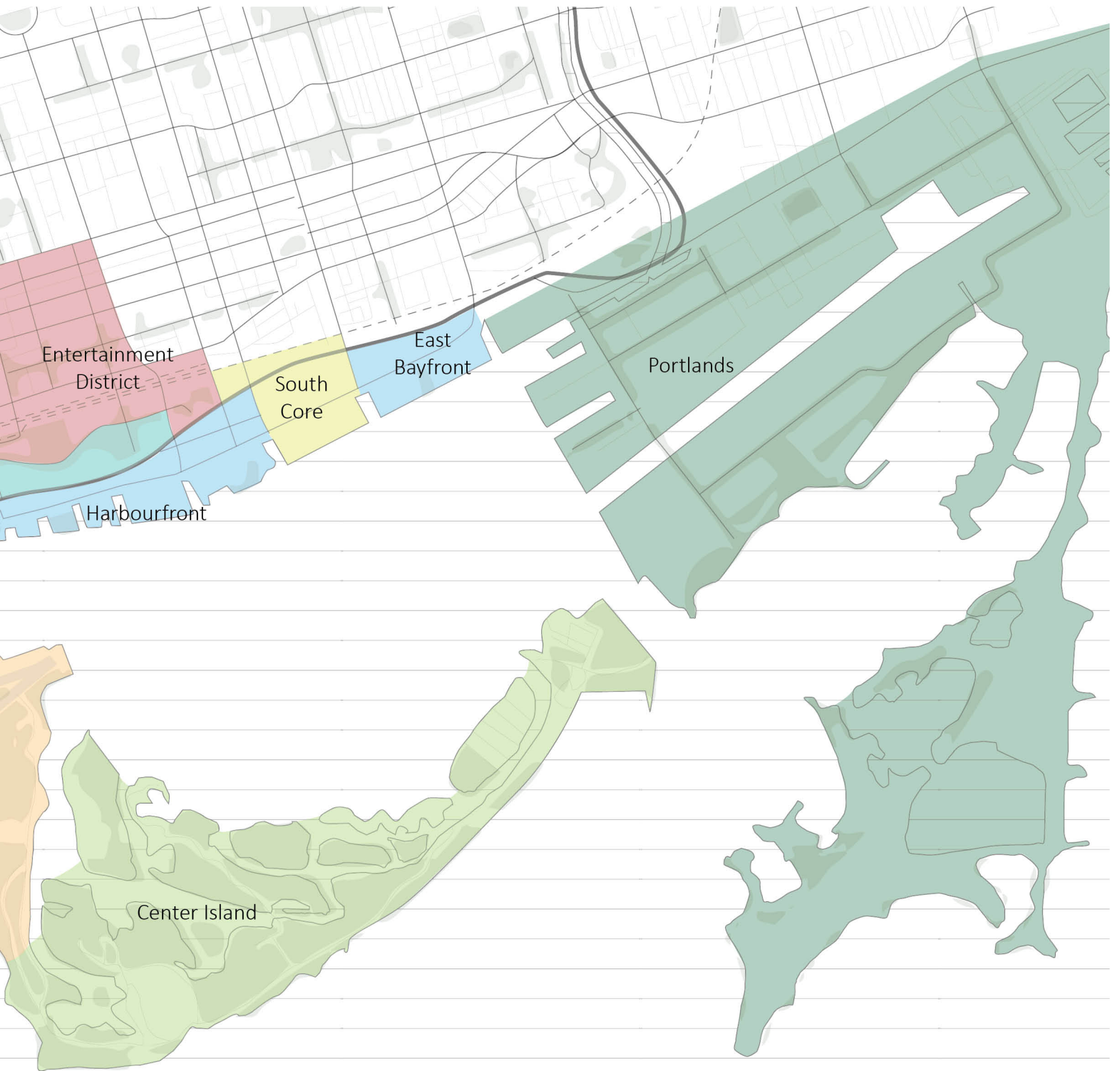


Figure 7 - Key Neighborhoods Along the Water.

Highlighted are the prominent neighborhoods in Toronto surrounding Lake Ontario.



Endnotes for Chapter 01

- 1 Carola Hein, "Port Cities and Urban Waterfronts: How Localized Planning Ignores Water as a Connector," (Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Water 3, no. 3, 2016), 421-423.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 Walks and Gardens Working Group. Report on the Walks and Gardens Trust (Toronto, PDF file. 2001). <https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2012/gm/bgrd/backgroundfile-45102.pdf>
- 4 Desfor, Gene, and Jennefer Laidley, Reshaping Toronto's Waterfront. (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2011), 203-223.

02 | **When was it ON at Ontario Place**

What made Ontario Place so special?

The public's interest in the future of Ontario Place has immensely grown since the provincial government declared closure in 2012. This is particularly shocking since the provincial government stated it as a failed site, however Ontario Place continues to impact people enough to create several civilian-run groups, such as Waterfront Toronto and Ontario Place for All, to represent the landscape. These are reasons enough to take a more sensitive approach in comprehensively investigating the site. Ontario Place is known for its nostalgia, especially to the generations of citizens who have experienced it in any point since its conception.

There exists a desire for this place to thrive, as evidenced by the various communities speaking out on its behalf since recent announcements were made to dismantle it. This is unusual for many reasons. It is typical for places that are beloved or considered valuable to inspire with a rich and complex sense of cultural, civil or architectural historic practices in the traditional sense of reviving itself. Ontario Place, however, is far from being traditional. It is an idea born on a whim without any permits, the island is completely man-made, it has undergone several stages of inactivity, has had numerous architectural and programmatic additions and demolitions, and is currently dilapidated – yet it holds a significant nostalgia from the community powerful enough to protect it from those who do not have the site's best interest. This raises the question, so if it is not about the tangible qualities, then what makes it so significant? The explanation lies in the following non-tangible qualities of the site.



Connectivity.

It is a cultural landmark. The island is a literal threshold where once passed, a sense of ritual and festivals upholds you and creates a moment of community unity. The island is set into Lake Ontario and separate from the rest of Toronto which encourages a slower lifestyle demeanor, a counterpoint to the machine-like city.



Culture.

This site is made up of nostalgia and holds a container of memories. Memories of pure entertainment that range from social buoyancy to a range of activities that are simply roaming through the landscape. It serves as a reminder of the kinds of places cities like Toronto aimed to provide. It allowed people to behave in a non-productive manner which contrasted their typical lifestyles – spending most of their days being hard-working and productive.



Water.

Ontario Place is a cherished city ground to Toronto because it is one of the few points in the city that allows its people to merge with the water. The water itself is a highly desirable feature to the ever-evolving city and its vastness and presence inspired floating architectural pieces that engage with this natural element, such as the



Figure 8 - Opening Day, 1971.

Opening day brought in thousands of people as they set off spectacular fireworks. This was marking for Toronto to become a renowned waterfront attraction and connect the city back to the water.

Figure 9 - Concerts at the Forum, 1974.

Culture was made through events such as concerts at the Forum. 10,000 fans of Stompin Tom Connors packed the Forum for one of the singer's ritualistic hootin' and hollerin' concerts.



Figure 10 - New Waterslide, 1978.

The new 370-foot long; \$400,000 water slide attracted mostly youngsters when it opened in 1978. It was a huge success for the park.



Figure 11 - Toronto 2020.

Toronto has grown throughout the decades to become a global city. Many events have marked Toronto on the map, such as redevelopments, cityscape, and ever-growing art industry. Most notably, the NBA champions in 2019 brought a new level of Toronto pride to the city as over 2 million fans joined to celebrate the Raptors and the parade, which started at the Exhibition Grounds.

Ontario Place Timeline

In the late 1960s, Ontario was looking at ways to reclaim the post-industrial waterfront edge into a publicly accessible space for Ontarians. There were several schemes put forth to remedy the ecologically and socially disconnected site. The most ambitious masterplan was chosen, which was boldly named Ontario Place and consisted of two man-made islands. Ontario Place as we know it today, is a 155-acre (96-acres of land) archipelago located west of Toronto's downtown core. On its opening day in 1971, John Robarts, the Premier of Ontario at the time, expressed his words about Ontario Place as "It should be an exciting place, just as Ontario is an exciting and dynamic province. A place brimming with activity and vitality. It should be cosmopolitan to match the cosmopolitan personality of the people of Ontario."

This site was proposed by Premier Robarts and designed by Toronto architect Eberhard Zeidler, FRAIC of Craig Zeidler Strong (now known as Zeidler Partnership Architects) and landscape architect Micheal Hough (Hough Stansbury and Associates). Ontario Place was designed with the intent of reflecting and showcasing the spirit of Ontario along the waterfront, a propaganda and marketing strategy for leisure and tourism. The architecture and design of its structures, such as the Cinesphere, were innovative and futuristic creating a new sense of charm along the coastline. Because of this, Ontario Place aspired to become a showcase for the province through the demonstration of leading architectural innovation, dynamic green spaces, entertainment, leisure, cultural events, and much more. It was meant to be an accessible recreational space for all people and not just for exhibitions or concerts; it was a park for the people of Toronto and beyond. This site became the renowned tourist attraction that brought in just under three million annual visitors during its peak years.

Ontario Place was an icon and well known for its numerous architectural awards, world class concerts, millions of visitors and having a good selection of food and spaces for children. The site was comprised of four major elements that made it attractive to its visitors – the Pods, the Cinesphere, the Forum and the various children activities such as the Children's Village. The Pods were constructed with Ontario-made steel and designed for flexibility in use. The modular design of the pods was created to potentially grow in number to become a series of floating pods on the water

that could be covered either in glass or steel. Zeidler explained these pods as an illusion of dimensionless space that exploit technology while they hosted several exhibits and events. The Cinesphere, also known as the golf ball, has won its international acclaim because of its triodetic dome that hosts the IMAX theater. This 800-seat theater was successful during all seasons and has undergone several renovations throughout the years to continue to attract visitors. The Forum was an open-air venue with a hyperbolic roof atop a revolving stage. It seated 2,500 on benches while the surrounding grass seated nearly 8,000 people. And finally, the children play spaces, such as the Children Village by Eric McMillan, were claimed to be the next Walt



Figure 12 - Ontario Showcase, 1969.

Premiere Robarts showing the first model of Ontario Place, originally named Ontario Showcase, in a 1969 press conference. As Robarts noted, "if you allowed your imagination to really run wild, you could perhaps see Showcase as a forerunner of the 'city of tomorrow.'"

Disney because of its success. Some activities such as the ball crawl or the net climbs remain as nostalgic memories with many people to this day. The Children's Village helped Ontario Place morph itself into a recreational space for children by including water slides, arcades and dedicated play zones.

Although water and children activities took up most of the site, adults still had their own spaces to enjoy such as the bars and restaurants that were scattered around the site and the Forum. The Forum was popular since it was free and brought in legendary artists such as Johnny Cash, Blue Radio, Blondie and many more. Symphonies, international orchestras and a jazz festival would also be hosted here. However, on June 2, 1980, the Forum became the site to Toronto's Punk Rock Riot. It was an overbooked teenage concert where youth swam through the lake to get to the grounds. This riot provoked a ban on hard rock music being played within the park for years to come after several injured policemen and dozens of arrests. Four years later, in 1984, the Forum was demolished, and a new corporate-owned venue named the Molson Amphitheater, now known as the Budweiser Stage, was constructed in 1995.

The Budweiser Stage was essentially a response to the destruction in 1980 and built to hold more people in the venue. There are many opinions about the design of the new stage however it remains one of the most successful endeavors on the site while it brings over 100,000 people to the site annually. The rest of the Ontario Place grounds have not done as well throughout the years and attendance had significantly dropped by 2011. This led to the official closure of Ontario Place in 2012 which left the status of the site to remain in limbo for many years. The closure of Ontario Place led to a billion-dollar economic deficit and a loss of over 600 jobs.

Nonetheless, in its last decade, after 40 years of operation, Ontario Place's design significance has grown and been recognized by the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA), the Royal Architecture Institute of Canada (RAIC), the National Trust for Canada and the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). The Cinesphere and the Pods are some of the most recognizable buildings within the city and have not been forgotten. In 2013, the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport conducted a heritage study that includes Ontario Place in the Ontario Heritage Act. And in

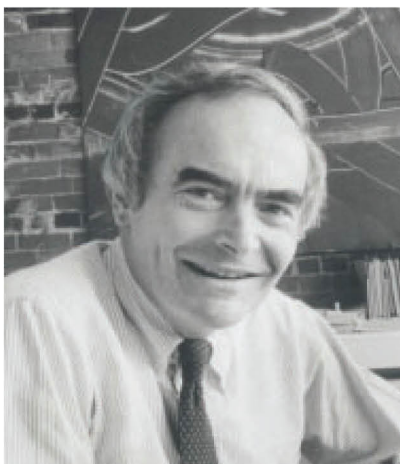


Figure 13. Eberhard Zeidler
Design Architect

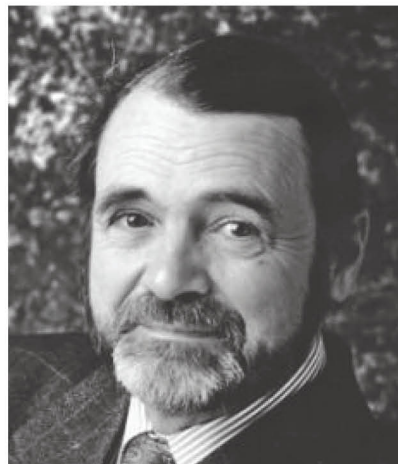


Figure 14. Michael Hough
Landscape Architect

2017, the Ontario government declared the property as a cultural heritage landscape of provincial significance. This site is, and should be, considered a cultural heritage landscape as we are only now beginning to appreciate the innovative, bold, and unusual modernist Canadian architecture that it has to offer. Even though much of Ontario Place is demolished, its energy and excitement has remained.

In attempts to improve the face of the site, in 2017 a new substantial park emerged on the west island of Ontario Place, known as the Trillium Park. This award-winning provincial park includes the William G. Davis trail along the waterfront which has a moccasin identifier imprinted into it at the entrance. This piece greets the cyclers and pedestrians as they enter the park and reminds them of the Mississauga First Nations that historically occupied the area. Trillium Park sits on what used to be a parking lot; however, it has been refurbished with over 1,200 trees and 28,000 diverse shrubs. Though there is a lot of criticism that Ontario Place is no longer revolved around being a family-oriented space, this park alone has brought in 1.2 million visitors annually since 2017. Hence, these claims have been politically silenced after the opening of the park and its success.

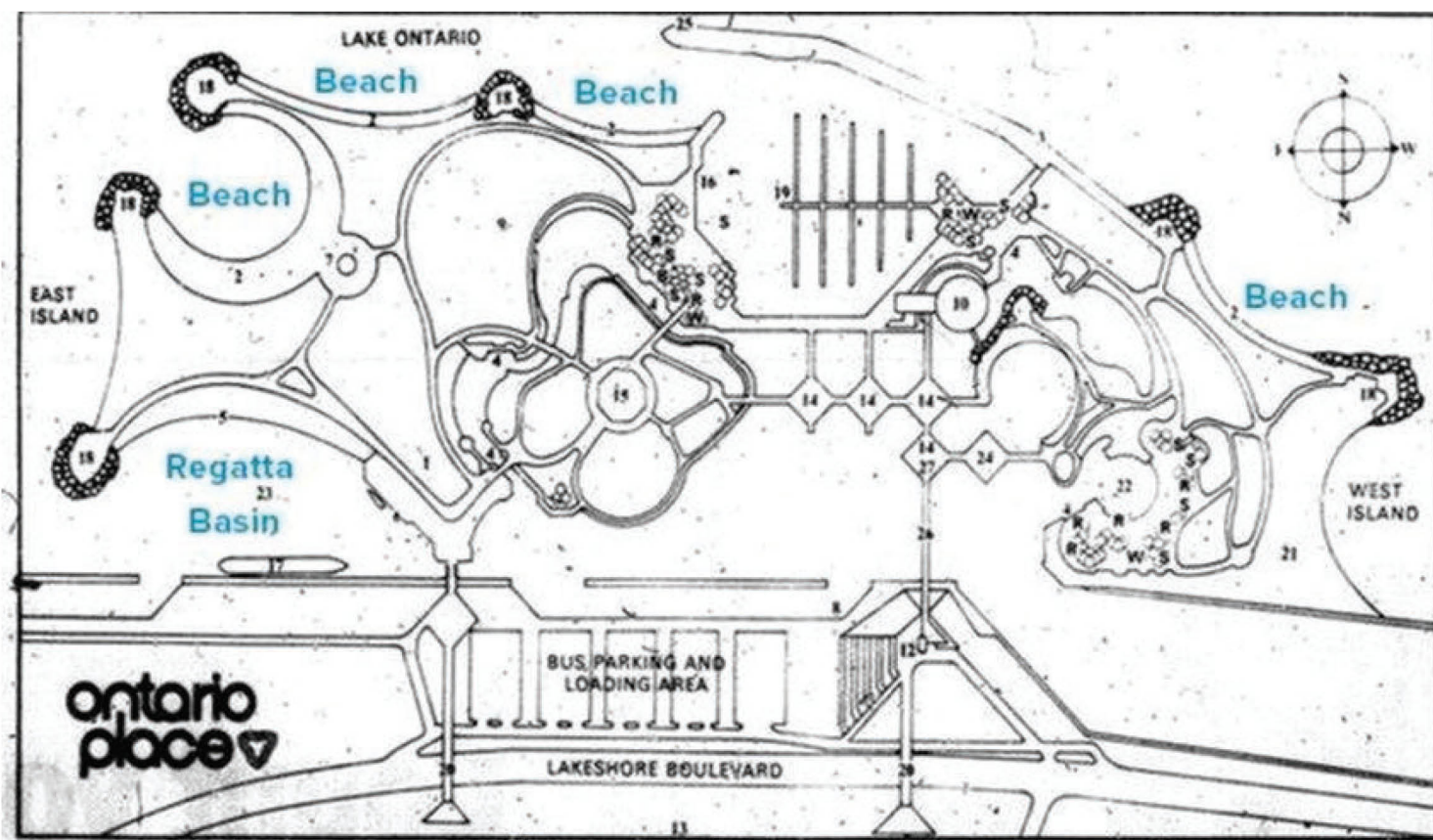


Figure 15 - Ontario Place's Original Master Plan.

Ontario Place was designed to become an urban woodland with beaches and multiple look out points. It was meant for one to wander and explore along the waterfront.

Figure 16 - Ontario Place's Highlights.

There have also been many modifications to the remaining of Ontario Place while it awaits a new improved design proposal. Most of these current changes are temporary fixes for the time being to maintain a sense of accessibility on the site. For instance, the west island is home to over 5 full basketball courts, which are always occupied especially after the Toronto's NBA Championships in 2019. There are also some half basketball nets scattered around on the rest of the site, along with new benches and seating areas along the coastline. Even during the midst of the current crisis of a global pandemic, the park still seems to be a hub spot for pedestrians and cyclists to pass by in. The city has even tried to incorporate a drive-in style theater on the west island where the Soak City used to sit to encourage visitation. Even though Ontario Place is in dire need of a renovation, it still brings in nearly one million visitors annually. This proves that even though the site is run down, the city can benefit greatly from its restoration as a public green space for its citizens to enjoy.

Opening Day

May 22, 1971

23,000 visitors that day.
2.5 million visitors that year.

Children's Village

1973

Attendance spikes up to nearly half a million.



Waterslides Open

1978

Became the highlight of the park.



Schussplash! Fun for all the family.

Bring your bathing suit and take a run on the newest attraction at Ontario Place. You board your special mat at the top of Waterslide's mini-mountain. Then you schuss down 370 feet of twisting water to an exciting splashdown at

the finish. There's nothing like it. Waterslide is open from 10:30 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily. And it's just \$2.00 for a full half hour of fun. So bring your bathing suit. Bring your friends. Bring your family. And take a run on the wild side.



Ontario North

1980

5 Silos (Exhibition)

Future Pods

1982

Held Candarm



Wilderness Adventure

1986

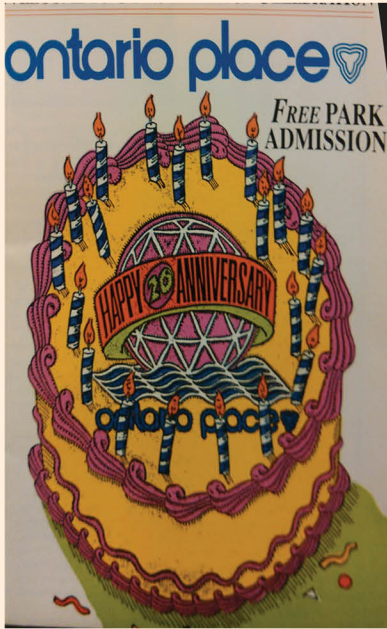
Renovation on the West Island reopens.



**Free Admission
20th Anniversary**

1991

Boosted attendance by 42% over the previous year. 2.4million visitors.



**Molsen Ampitheatre
Replaces the Forum**

1995

Planned to reduce the park's deficit of \$4.5million.



**Pods Bought
Becomes Atlantis Pavilion**

1995

Future Pods turns into an events facility (venues).

**Ontario Science Center Opens
IMAX theater competition**

1996

2nd IMAX theater to open in Toronto, drives people away from Ontario Place.

TTC Discontinues Transit

2001

Planned to reduce the park's deficit of \$4.5million.

SARS Outbreak

2003

Drops attendance to 1 million visitors.

Ideas to Revitalize

2010

Request issued regarding ideas to revitalize Ontario Place.

Echo Beach

2011

Outdoor music venue added to the East Island.



Shut Down

2012

Ontario Place is officially closed by the Government of Ontario.

Renewal

2019

Doug Ford announces renewal for the site, and potential demolition of the Cinesphere and Pods

Success and Failure Lessons for the Future

Ontario Place of the past has many lessons to offer that could be applied to any future proposal to rebirth a successful development. In many ways, the physical manifestation consisted of some of the most ambitious Utopian architectural ideas through the integration of water and ground plane. Although the site is currently neglected, at one point in time it was hugely successful because the site kept its promises that it made to the community. It was promised that this site would be a dynamic landscape, and Ontario Place delivered. The park sits on a man-made landscape that moulded the waterfront's edge. It was and still is a park that is to be used by its city inhabitants and the entire province. This was a brand-new environment for its time that hosted public entertainment, education, culture and recreation.

Success of Ontario Place

The architecture on the site was innovative and futuristic for its time, creating a fruitful environment for people of all ages. Some of the most successful pieces are the Cinesphere, the Pods and the Forum. The Cinesphere, one of the most iconic structures, is similar in design to the geodesic dome designed by Buckminster Fuller during Expo 67. This 35-meter wide triodetic dome is made of steel and aluminum and hosted the world's first permanent IMAX theater. However, the biggest success of Ontario Place was the elaborate play spaces designed for children. It is interesting to note that Ontario Place opened without any attractions designed for children and it was not until about a year later where the site introduced play spaces. Once the children attractions opened, the attendance to the site spiked up to nearly half a million. These numbers ultimately pushed Ontario Place in the direction of creating a profit driven park, or an amusement ride-based park. The first iteration of a play space was designed by Eric McMillian who opposed the generic production of play space at the time, such as traditional parks of slides and sand. He created a space that could engage both children and adults, which is very important as play appeals to each age group. The Children's Village hosted net climbs, punching bag forests, ball pits and whole range of interactive play. These areas were beautifully crafted and required the child's imagination to engage with the structures.



Figure 17 - Expo 67's Biosphere.

Figure 18 - Ontario Place's Cinesphere.

The cinematography and success of the futuristic dome inspired the Cinesphere. This structure hosted the first permanent IMAX theater in the world, placed right at Ontario's doorstep.



Figure 19 - Expo 67's Quebec Pavilion.

Figure 20 - Ontario Place's Exhibition Pods.

These pods, formerly known as Atlantis Pavilions, used to host exhibitions such as Candarm, Baseball Hall of Fame and occasionally turned into a venue space. Like the Quebec Pavilion, this structure is 4 sided and also floats above the water with bridges as access points.



The construction of Ontario Place was another success to promote local trade work and encourage Canadian architecture. The initial cost for the creation of the man-made lands were estimated at \$9 million. Through the design processes and multiple studies, Zeidler proposed the idea of creating the artificial reef with unused sunken ships and lake-filling around it. This method was not only immensely effective, but it cut the cost down to \$900,000. All of the construction materials originated in Ontario, resulting in creating a sense of provincial pride. The Cinesphere's materials were manufactured and hailed from Eastern Ontario, meanwhile the steel for the Pods were mined and refined in Ontario. The landfilling that took place was all taken and reused from Toronto's booming construction sites at the time, and many of the trees planted were transplanted from provincial lands near Barrie. Needless to say, this process of using Toronto based designed



Eic McMillan
Playground Architect

Figure 21 - Children's Village, 1972-2002.

This 2.5 acre play area under the orange canopy and the water park was a massive success. It was entirely designed just for kids in a way that other parks weren't, with mountains of colourful vinyl and foam, soaring watchtowers, monkey-bars over pools, etc.

and Ontario based material and construction efforts created an example of Canadian architectural pride at its most innovative and bold times that we are now only beginning to appreciate.

Failures of Ontario Place

The intent of Ontario Place was designed to evolve into a Lake Ontario woodland as if ‘God’ had planted the islands into the lake, although it is artificial. Hough designed a park that was meant to do as little as possible and let nature do the rest. The concept was to create an urban park where from no one place you can see everything at once. As you walked, you encountered different activities such as the Forum being nestled between trees to create an ambiance for concerts. However, the recent changeover into an amusement park throughout the years began to blur the original vision of a natural urban woodland. Buildings like the Forum were taken down and replaced with the Budweiser Stage, which involved massive changes to the landscape by cutting down more than 250 trees and limiting intimate spaces. The new amphitheater, along with the other makeshift huts along the site, destroyed the quality of the green pastoral islands. These structures might do well in any other place, but it strikes a discordance while it sits next to Zeidler’s futuristic buildings. As it evolved into an amusement park, the maintenance staff would continuously take out any tree that seeded in. Hough was always disappointed with how the islands were handled, because if the landscapes were left untouched then the site



Figure 22 - Maintenance Issues.

Rusting and interior flooding problems due to lack of care and upkeep.

Figure 23 - Off Season Vandalism.

Not only was the park needing maintenance but some structures were vandalized during off seasons. Although, these slides provided spectacular views, the park was in major need of repair and renovations.



would have grown to be a marvelous woodland. Due to poor planning and management throughout the years, the site grew into a static landscape with some of its original plantings that became manicured and clipped to fit the amusement park.

The amusement park led the islands to become an isolated cultural landscape that expressed an avant-garde set of architectural ideas of its time, causing it to operate independently from the rest of the city. Due to this, the park was unable to adapt to the changing user needs leading to dwindling attendance of only 300,000 people annually. As three levels of government jurisdiction in the Toronto city region and over 100 agencies were involved in trying to exercise responsibility, this resulted in little coordination and action among them. In other words, when everyone is in charge, no one is in charge. This is evidenced by Ontario Place's timeline, since it has dealt with ill-informed and sometimes deceitful decision-making by the three tiers of government. Due to poor management of the site, it resulted in the park being closed in 2012 and became reduced to nostalgic memories of a different time. Ontario Place could not adapt quick enough to the changing city culture which expects more than gimmicky decorated

sheds and parks. The inability to adapt led the site to gradually detach itself from the everyday user.

Lessons to Learn

The waterfront became cut off from the rest of the city because of the success of its previous port and transportation systems, such as the elevated Gardiner Expressway. Although Ontario Place has detached itself from the city and shut down, the physical barriers such as railways and the Gardiner also play a role in it becoming an obsolete site. The Exhibition Grounds and Ontario Place must come together to transform the neglected park system along the shoreline. These two sites go hand-in-hand since they both offer a sense of festivity and celebration, therefore combining the two to create a festival ground would encourage the rest of the city to come down and visit. Throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), there has been an increased awareness of a lack for green space (e.g. parks, beaches and fields) creating pressures on natural areas, parks and waterfronts to become a priority within the city. There is an increasing need for recreation within the city, especially since the city is getting further away from the waterfront and less accessible (specifically for Liberty Village and King West Village neighborhoods). As trends for health and fitness are on the rise, there is an increasing demand for trails and other recreational facilities to be closer to homes, which Ontario Place has ample room to offer.

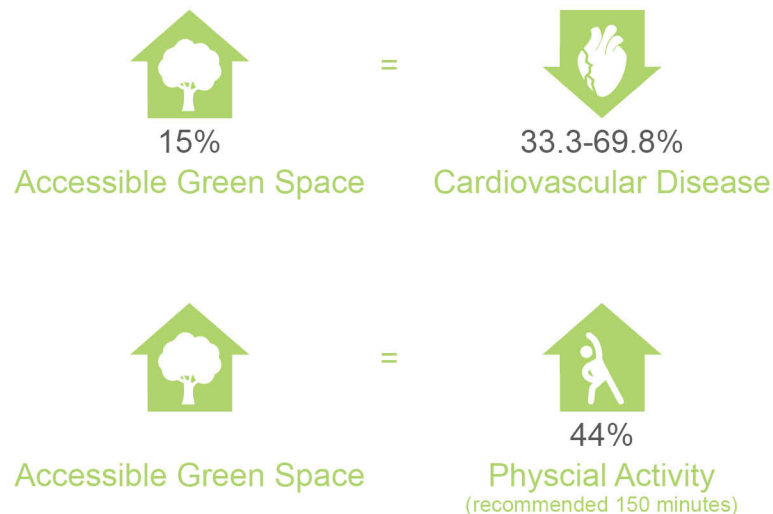


Figure 24 - Green Space and Health.

The more access to green space creates better health conditions and life longevity. Also accessible green space proves to show that civilians are more encouraged to be physically active.

By allowing the site to change into a greener space, it not only ensures a reason for people to keep coming back but will also prove to significantly reduce mental illness and cardiovascular disease within the city. Inner city cores are known for their dense populations and noise pollution, however areas with over 15% accessible green space have proven to reduce cardiovascular disease by 33.3-69.8% in neighborhoods of Adelaide, Australia. Similarly, if Ontario Place was redesigned as a green public park space that connected to its stand-alone features, such as the Budweiser Stage or the Cinesphere, it would amplify its neighboring residents' health. If these islands were to become connected through children play spaces, trails, fields and urban waterfront parks, it could significantly reduce mental health within the city, compared to the dense downtown core with tall concrete buildings. This would encourage neighborhoods, such as Liberty Village residents, to step out into a newly acclaimed recreational space for fresh air and physical activity. If Ontario Place were to redevelop its ecological state and reintroduce trails and habitats to the islands, it will encourage residents in the neighborhood to conduct at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week by 44%. Recreating natural parks with ample play spaces that connect the new festival grounds will most likely have Torontonians meet the recommended levels of physical activity. Therefore, restoring public parks and green spaces is one of the key mechanisms to bettering our health as civilians within a bustling city.

Much like the way in which an ecosystem consists of plants, animals, water and land to function, the urban ecosystem consists of multiple layers that cohesively work together to create a place of significance. This is known as the ecosystem approach applied to planning and architecture, which is based on the understanding that everything is connected to everything else. This, however, is not a new idea, but it is the basis for this thesis and principles practiced in disciplines of ecology and landscape architecture. The Aboriginal people have a clear understanding over their connectedness to rest of the ecosystem for decades and it is our time to begin understanding and applying this to the waterfront of Toronto. By acknowledging that human activity and the environment are interdependent, this will better our understanding for the need of green spaces within the city. Ontario Place is a prime location for applying the sense of connectivity by joining it with the Exhibition Grounds to create one large festival park area along the waterfront for the city of Toronto which will nurture all disciplines, ages and species.

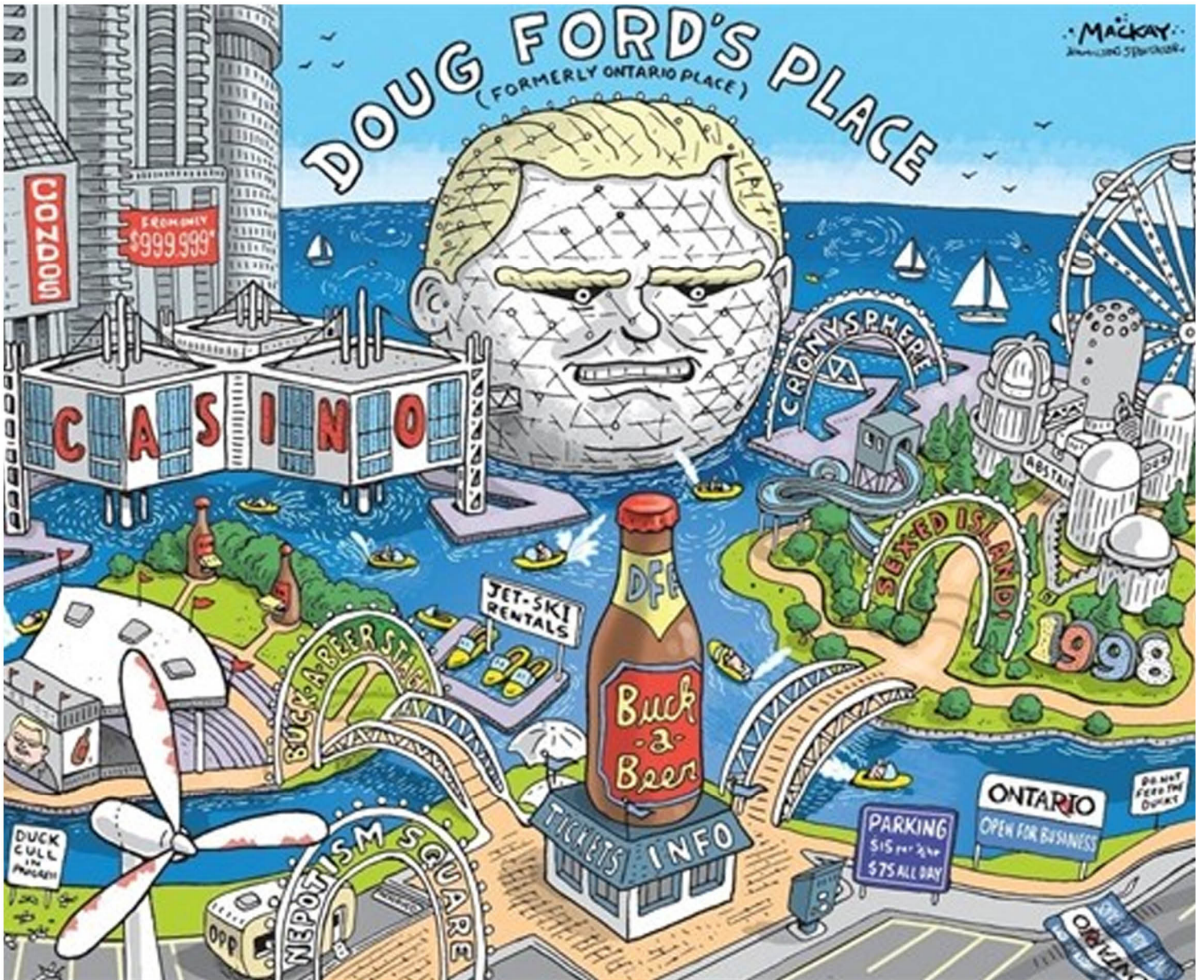


Figure 25 - Doug Ford's Plan for Demolition.

As many activists fight against the demolition of their childhood memories, the premier Ford has other plans in store. His initial intentions were to demolish and create a gentrified waterfront with a casino which was heavily shut down by Toronto's civilians. With conservation acts being applied, major buildings will remain meanwhile the rest of the site looks for a new design and concept to take over.

Site Analysis

The city of Toronto has experienced rapid development along its waterfront during the reclamation of space left behind the rail yards, ports and industries. With the new desire for a vertical urban fabric surrounding the Gardiner Expressway and the rail corridor, issues of connectivity, and amenities available to the residents and accessible parks along the waterfront have been overlooked. The city's needs to layer social amenities into the urban fabric can be accomplished by repurposing Ontario Place for a new greener park.

The population of Toronto's downtown core is expected to double to 475,000 people by 2021 and such amenities will have needed to be heightened for such a vast growth rate. Residents choose to live in the city for reasons such as proximity to work, entertainment and the waterfront. The waterfront has been undergoing massive developments on the southern side of Front Street and has neglected areas such as this site. From 2011 to 2016, the population of Toronto's Ward 10 (Spadina – Fort York) had increased by 40%, sitting at 115,510 residents. Former industrial and commercial lands north of Ontario Place are evolving into vibrant residential communities, such as Liberty Village and Parkdale. As more families and people choose to call downtown their home, the need for a place to play, relax and enjoy the outdoors with family and friends is needed.

Ontario Place is often overlooked at for its role in the network of public parks within the city. In a public report issued regarding downtown accessible parks, it is noted that 127 existing city-owned or operated parks totaled 667 acres (270 hectares) from the Toronto Islands to Dupont St. If the islands were eliminated from the study, the number shrinks significantly to 247 acres (100 hectares). Since 2005, Toronto has opened 22 new parks, where only four of which are over 1 hectare in area. When comparing the size of the Ontario Place to the rest of the parks it quickly becomes the largest park amenity in the downtown core, excluding the Islands.

Interestingly, although Waterfront Toronto is looking into redeveloping the coastline, Ontario Place did not originally make the official mandate until 2020. Though Ontario Place was envisioned as a parkland, there are crucial elements missing that would make the site act as a connective tissue in a network of public spaces within the city and its waterfront. There have a variety of attempts at revitalizing the waterfront by creating spaces of leisure and improving cycling and pedestrian routes. Ontario Place is hopeful about being able to reconnect itself back into the



Figure 26 - Parkland in the City of Toronto.

A bustling city in need of parks for its population however most public parks that are accessible are minor.

Ontario Place is often overlooked at for its role in the network of public parks within the city. In a public report issued regarding downtown accessible parks, it is noted that 127 existing city-owned or operated parks totaled 667 acres (270 hectares) from the Toronto Islands to Dupont St. If the islands were eliminated from the study, the number shrinks significantly to 247 acres (100 hectares). Since 2005, Toronto has opened 22 new parks, where only four of which are over 1 hectare in area. When comparing the size of the Ontario Place to the rest of the parks it quickly becomes the largest park amenity in the downtown core, excluding the Islands.

waterfront system and the park system of Toronto. Ontario Place should be envisioned as one piece in a much larger network of proposals along the waterfront while it redefines its identity. Although this park is slightly cut off from the rest of the city due to physical barriers, the layering of systems is a way to explore the potential continuities provided by its existing infrastructure. The continuity could make for a critical artery as the new entertainment hub and space for new pedestrian walkways and cycling lanes. Currently, the Martin Goodman Trail, a park adjacent to Ontario Place, has its cycling routes brush past the site and along Lakeshore Blvd, however there is potential to integrate these routes into the site as well. This example could provide a more cohesive and continuous route for activity within the urban fabric along the water's edge. In the existing cycling system within the city, there is a dependency on shared bike lanes and very few are continuous connections, whereas the waterfront can treat these spaces as separate entities from vehicular networks.

Although the site has tried to claim itself as a parkland and for the people, approximately 70% of the total land area is covered with above ground parking lots. Ontario Place and Exhibition Place lack significant public open spaces, and this results in a significant lack of a strong visual connection between the two parcels of land. The site is interrupted by poorly configured parking lots that are unconnected making it even harder



Figure 27 - Ontario Place in 2010.

This marketing map shows Ontario Place as an amusement park targeted for children with Soak City, the Go Zone and the water ride.

for a pedestrian to get from one place to another. These parking lots were also home to transit routes during the earlier days of operation, however as attendance began to decline many of these routes were discontinued. This results in having only two ways to navigate to Ontario Place, either by a vehicle or an extensive public transit route followed by a 30-minute walk to get to the water. Both Exhibition Place and Ontario Place are unwelcoming to its pedestrians and commuters as the sidewalks, pathways and bridges over Lakeshore Blvd are unkempt and not maintained due to poor efforts in design and maintenance budget cuts.

For Ontario Place to thrive again, it will require the active participation within the larger network of systems, such as connecting this park to the Exhibition Ground and possibly to the Bentway and the rest of the downtown core via strategic planning. Linking this site with other parks and public transportation routes would eliminate all competition with areas like the Exhibition grounds and offer more cooperative programming, joint ventures and compatible redevelopment. Allowing the site to reconnect with the rest of the city will give Ontario Place a sense of resiliency and flexibility to produce cultural and socio-economic milieu of an evolved and more mature urban realm along the waterfront.



Figure 28 - Ontario Place as of 2017.

The current demolished park with major attractions removed such as Soak City and the Children's Village. The islands are left to its bare bones.

Mapping

Current characteristics on the site:

Figure 29.
Key Map Plan of Ontario Place.

- 1. Entrance
- 2. Parking
- 3. Budweiser Stage
- 4. Echo Beach Stage
- 5. Cinesphere
- 6. Exhibition Pods
- 7. Retail Space
- 8. Concrete Silos
- 9. Marina
- 10. Maintenance Building
- 11. Trillium Park
- 12. Waterfront Lookout Points



Figure 30.
Buildings & Landscape

- Buildings/Structures
- Softscape
- Hardscape



Series of connectivity issues with the urban fabric:

- 1. Major Roadways
- 2. Transit Routes
- 3. Walkability
- 4. Cycling Routes

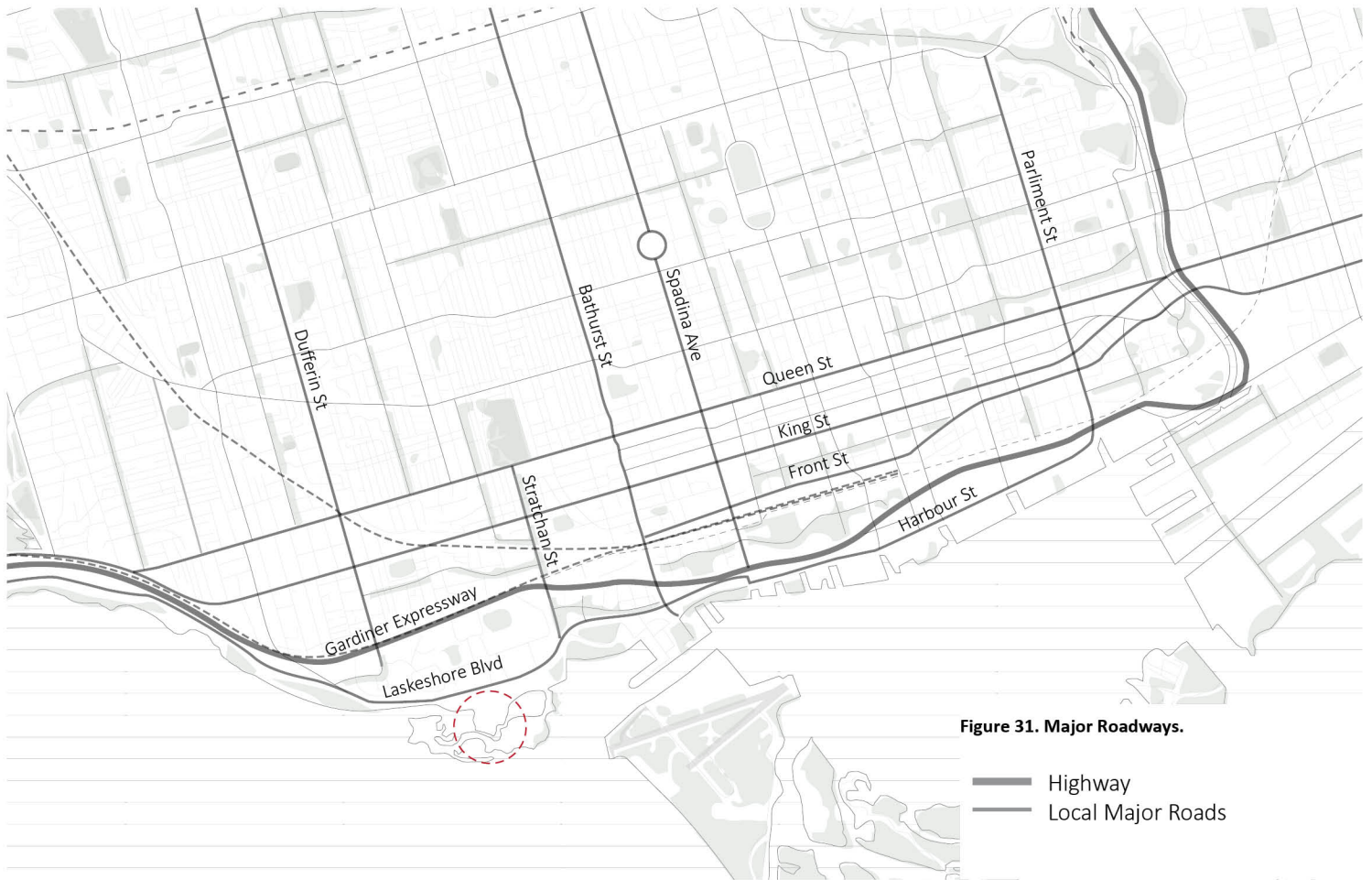


Figure 31. Major Roadways.

The Gardiner Expressway and the railroad system are physical barriers that isolate the waterfront from the city.

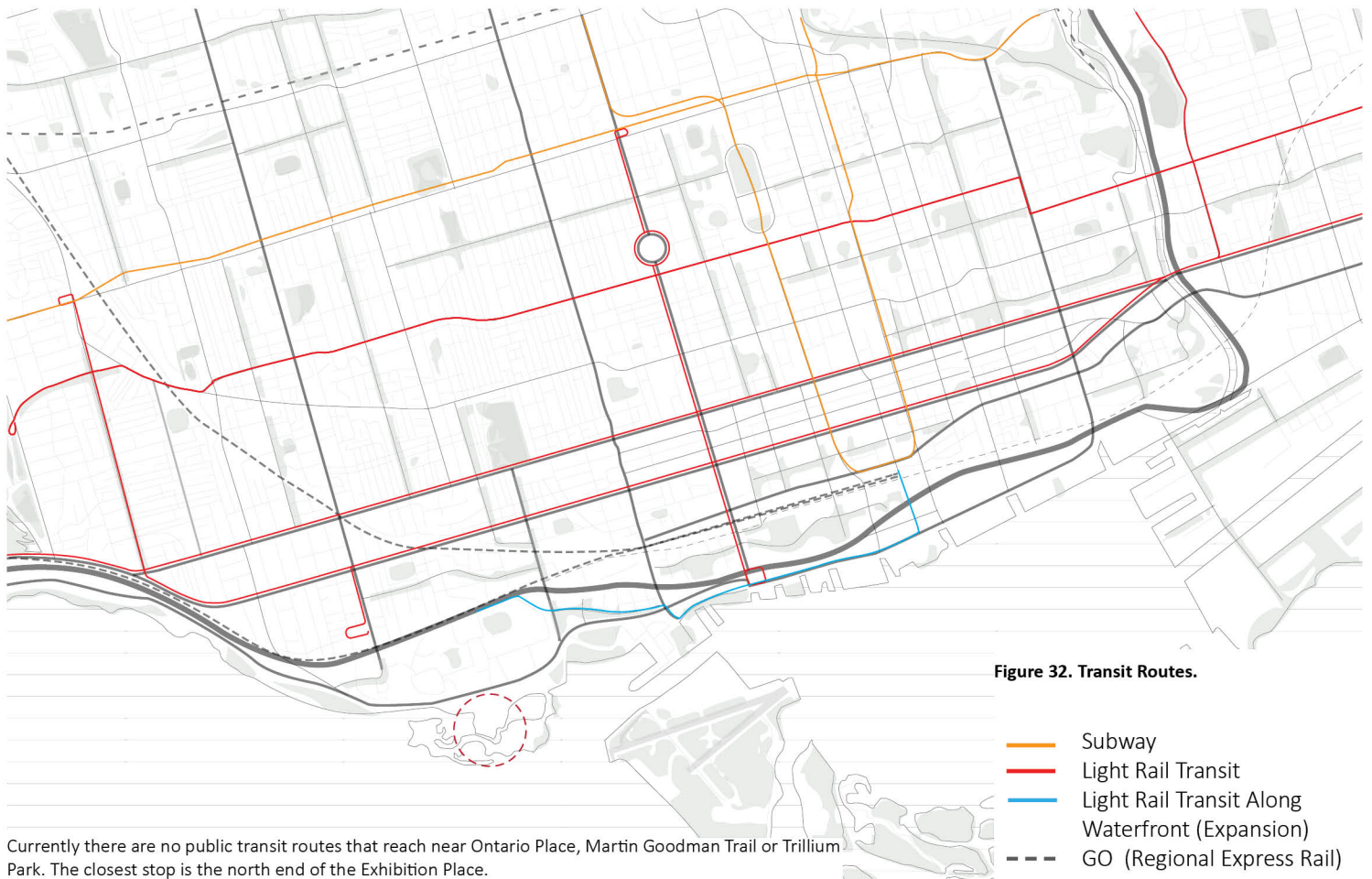
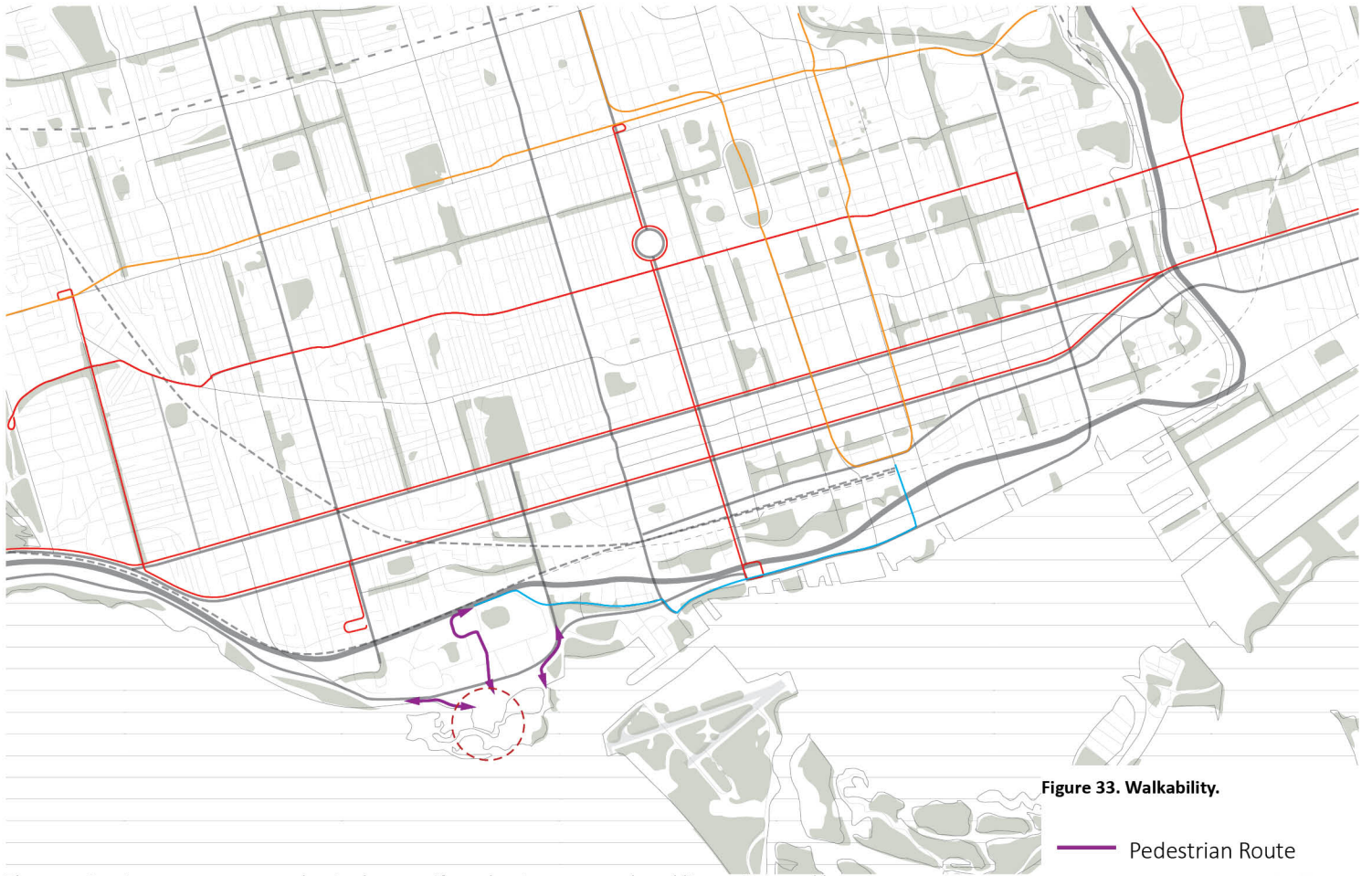
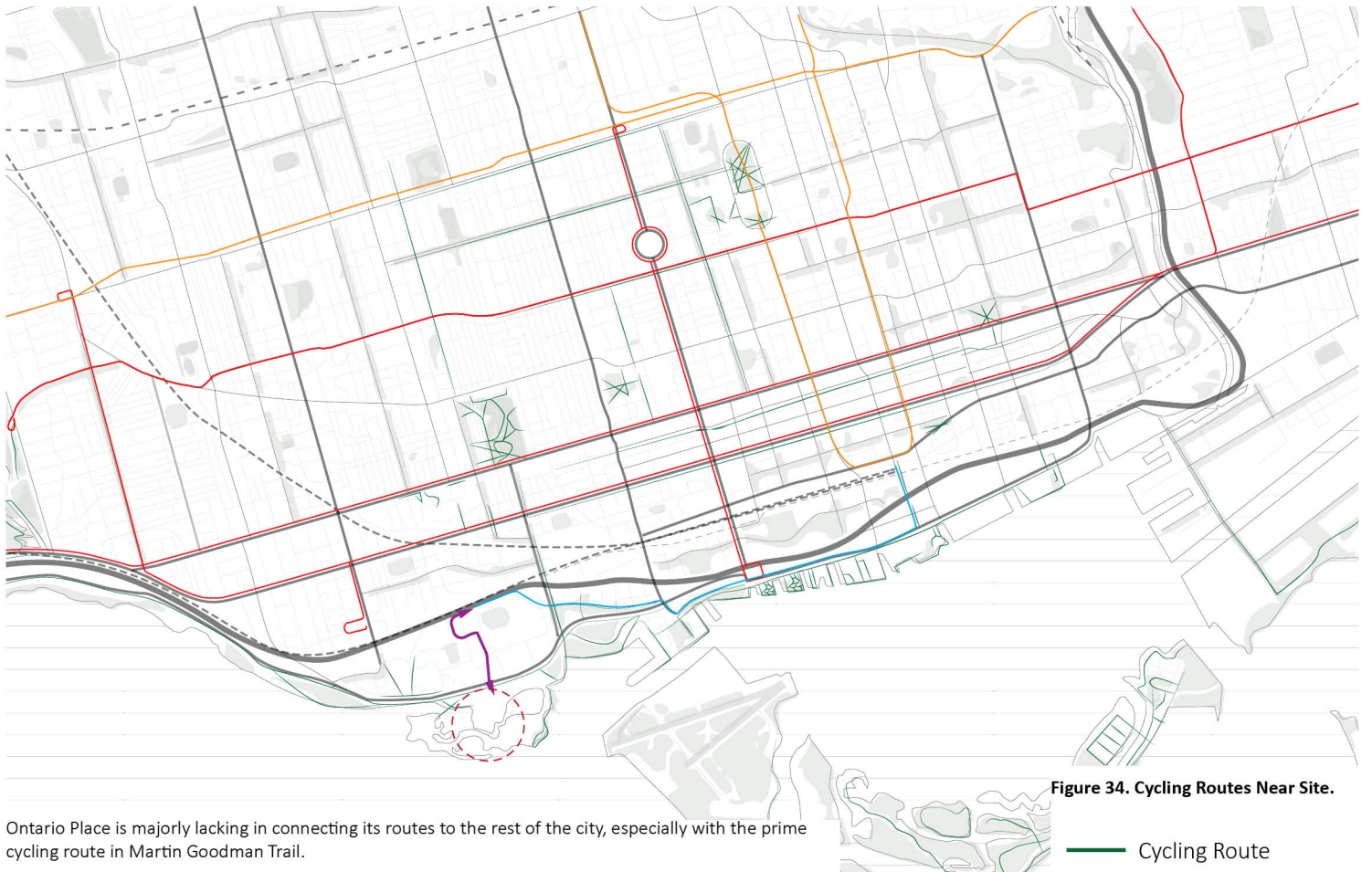


Figure 32. Transit Routes.

Currently there are no public transit routes that reach near Ontario Place, Martin Goodman Trail or Trillium Park. The closest stop is the north end of the Exhibition Place.



There are 3 main entrances to get to the site, however if a pedestrian were to take public transit, it would be a 20-25 minute walk to get to the water's edge.



Ontario Place is majorly lacking in connecting its routes to the rest of the city, especially with the prime cycling route in Martin Goodman Trail.

Closer look at the accessibility issues specifically to the site:



Figure 35. Pedestrian Walkability.

This is a radar map that shows the walkability of Ontario Place relative to the rest of the city. Much of the city finds it difficult to walk to the site with the Gardiner Expwy in the way.



Figure 36. Transit Routes.

The city is potentially looking at ways to connect public transit to Ontario Place. It would be a form of light transit that loops around the Exhibition Place, and could potentially reach to Ontario Place's original transit stops.

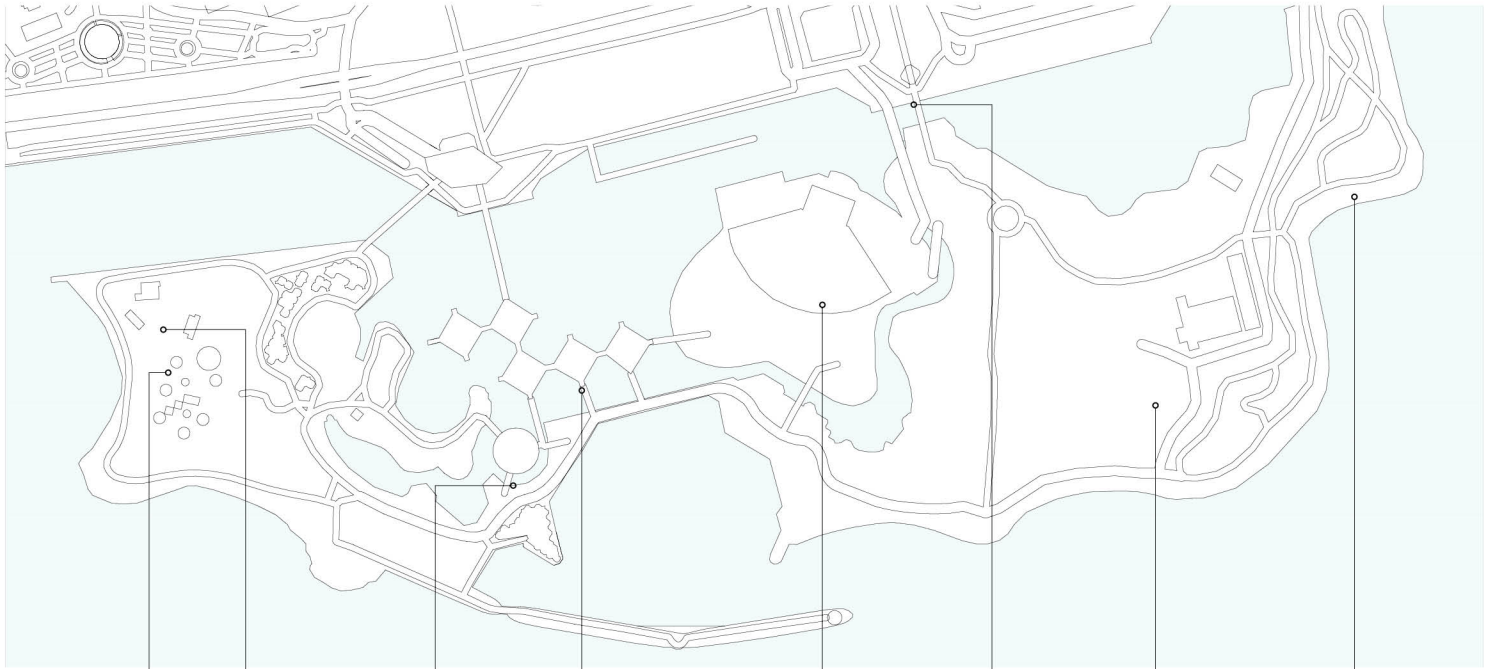


Figure 37. Cycling Routes.

Because Ontario Place was treated as an amusement park, there are no cycling routes throughout the site. There is potential to continue the cycling routes along the water, through Ontario Place.

Physical characteristics of the site:

Figure 38. Capturing some moments during a brisk autumn walk in 2019.



West Island



Cinesphere



Budweiser Stage



Closed-off Water Edge



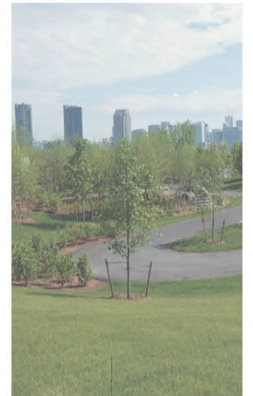
Wilderness Adventure



Exhibition Pods



Central Entrance

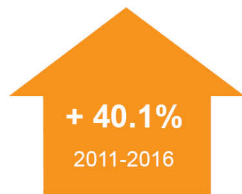


Trillium Park

Demographics of Toronto's Ward 10:

Figure 39. Infographics for Ward 10.

Ward Population
115, 510



Population Density



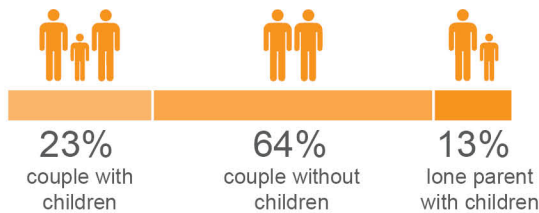
62
people per hectare

People per Household



1.68

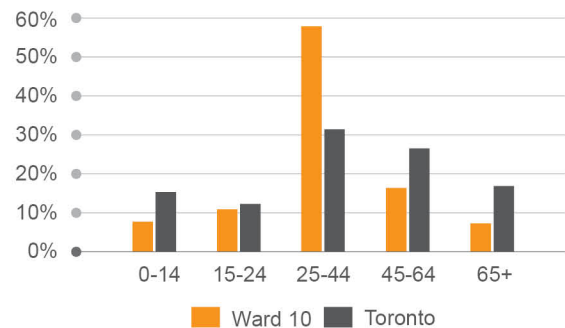
Family Composition



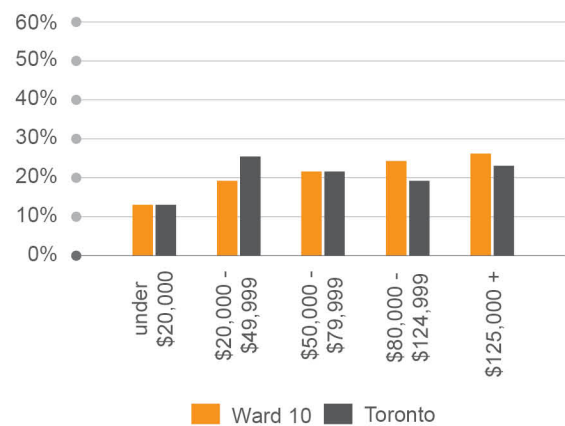
Median Age

32.4

Population by Age Group



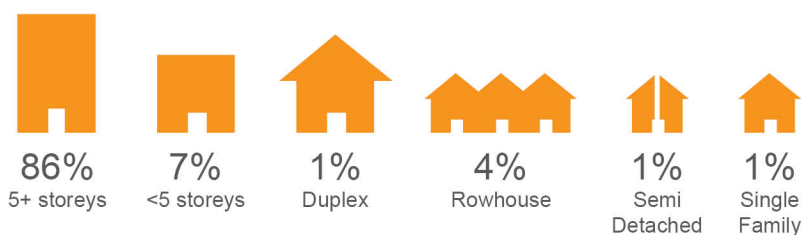
Household Income



Average Household Income



Occupied Dwelling Type



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03 | Intersection of Toronto's Waterfront and the Urban Fabric

Park networks and systems can be considered similar to ecological systems. They are complex, interconnected and contain adaptive components that exchange material and energies with themselves and their environment. Ontario Place is positioned between the west end of the waterfront corridor and the urban fabric of civic life, which creates a series of complex relationships with the landscape's ecology, economic networks and civic life that merge residents and tourists together to unwind along the water's edge. The future of the site involves the reclamation of the interspaces along the islands and changing its previous role, an amusement park, to participate in layering social amenities and functions. For Ontario Place to sustain itself, it must adapt to the current and future needs of the city, which it previously failed to adapt to throughout the years.

Finding strategic ways to create an adaptable park would allow the islands to have multiple dimensions that appeal to different functions, seasons and much more. The park currently does not have a relationship with its neighborhood or its neighboring park system, which is troublesome because it further isolates the site. The landscapes of other parks have their own identities and characteristics that allows them to stand out however they still find ways to connect back to the city's fabric through infrastructure, transit or attractions. For instance, High Park, a 161-hectare park, comprises diverse ecological zones that are designated for active and passive recreation. This park has multiple programmed areas to attract all sorts of people from a dog park to the infamous cherry trees to a zoo. On the other end of the waterfront park corridor, there are parks like Coronation Park, the Music Garden, Center Island and Sugar Beach. The Music Garden is a unique space that is tucked away along the edge of the waterfront and embodies a sense of artistic expression by offering regal serenity. The park was inspired by the renown cellist, Yo-Yo Ma, which aided in the design decisions through the curving paths, wildflower meadows and a public amphitheater. Center Island on the other hand is a part of the Toronto Island series, however it is the most popular of the bunch. It requires a ferry to get to, but it's known for its formal picturesque gardens, a children's park, a few beaches and picnic areas. This island does consist of a lot of programming and has some of the best views back to the city. Lastly, Sugar Beach draws on the industrial heritage of its area and creates a relationship with its neighboring Sugar Refinery Museum by using very fine white sand to resemble sugar. It is a

whimsical urban beach with iconic pink umbrellas. This beach allows visitors to linger, relax, read, play on the sand and watch boats pass by on the lake while still being attached to the bustling city.

For a park to be successful, it needs have a balance of what its city needs and wants. These Toronto parks are successful because they interweave a series of amenities and functions together such as being connected to the urban fabric, having diverse zones, a sense of exploration through trails and routes, effective programming, parkland spaces, being accessible, finding strategic ways to preserve its history or heritage and potentially have year-round use (Figure 41). Parks and green spaces do not necessarily need to layer all these social amenities however they do

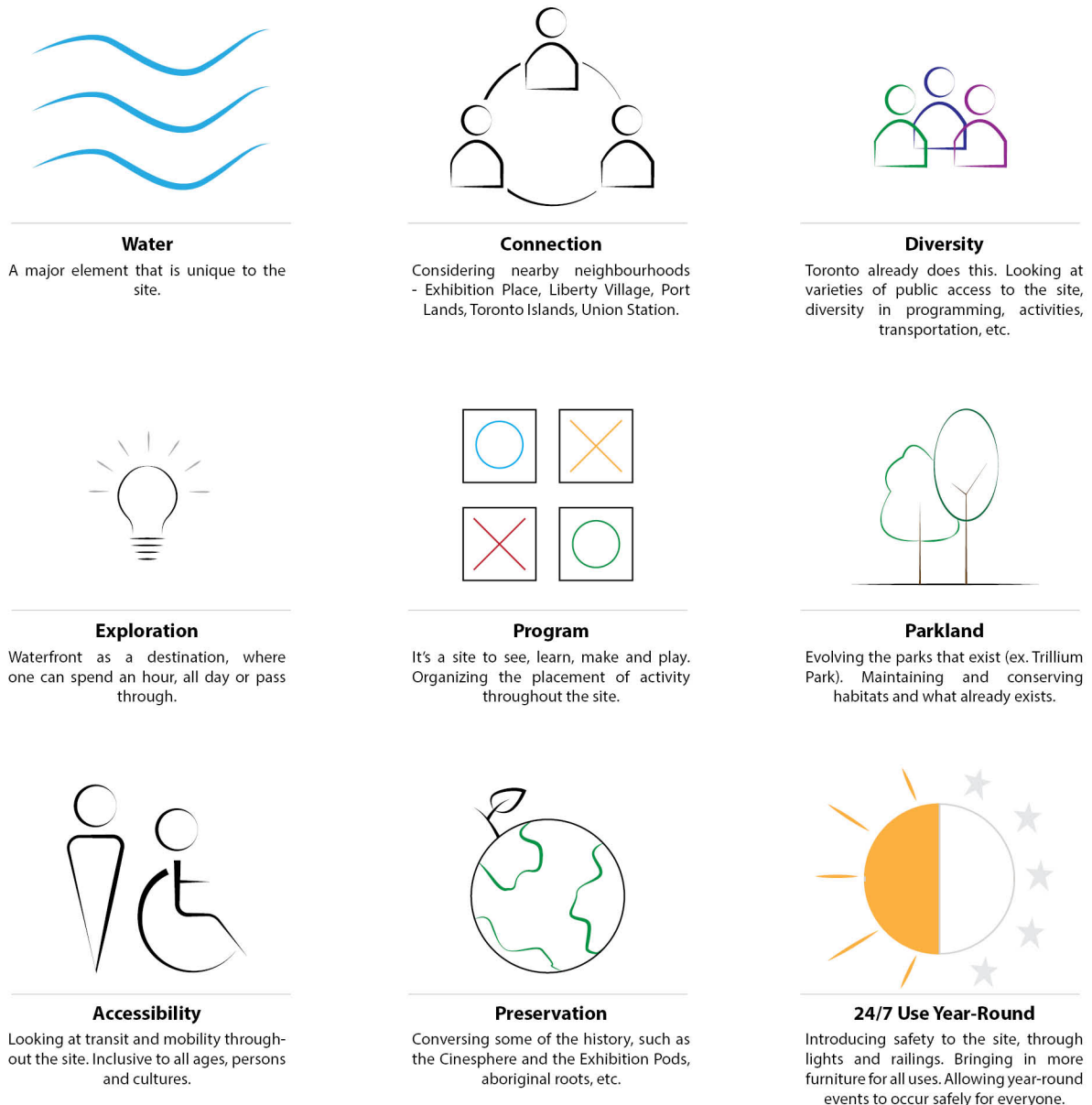


Figure 40. Waterfront Park System.

Characteristics of the waterfront parks in Toronto.

layer most. For instance, in colder seasons, High Park has trails to hike and ice-skating zones which creates a sense of diverse programming because it is being used year-round, for diverse programming by turning the pond into a winter activity for all ages. For Ontario Place to survive and remain relevant in this series of park networks, it needs to find its own identity and recreate new relationships that ties it back to its neighborhood and the city. During the park's prime years, it certainly did consist of some of these characteristics such as diverse zones, ample programming and parkland. It was however lacking in areas such as year-round use, a sense of exploration and accessibility. All these amenities need to be considered to determine what is appropriate for the site to sustain itself and form a new sense of self within the waterfront park network.

Figure 41. Layering of Social Amenities.



Park Inspiration

In establishing that layering amenities inherently creates successful and long-lasting urban parks; it becomes necessary to explore alternate precedents from around the world for inspiration. Some examples that could be used for inspiration are the Highline in New York and the BP Pedestrian Bridge in Millennium Park in Chicago. Both projects had their own set of challenges that were overcome, and both remain standing as architectural pieces within their own cities. They have managed to overlook their problems and solve them through analyzing what their cities truly need, which is urban parks, green spaces and simple routes that connect the parks back to their cities. Neither approach takes away from their city's environments, but rather create unique spaces that layer multiple functions aesthetically and strategically.

Much like Ontario Place, the High Line, by James Corner Field Operations and Diller Scofidio and Renfro (DS+R), was also an obsolete space that has transformed itself into a park as a pedestrian network and a cultural center within Manhattan. It was originally a railroad that ran for decades however as the shift to automobiles became more prevalent, it resulted in the elevated railroad to shut down. The last train to run its course on the tracks was in 1980 which left the viaduct to become unused from its intended purpose for years. Since the elevated platform was left untouched, wild plants began to sprout and create a new life on the tracks that slowly began to be used as an abandoned green space and began to gain public awareness as a cultural space within the city. The threat of demolishing this structure caused advocates to form a group to help preserve the railroad and turn it into public space. By 1934, the city approved of the construction of an elevated rail deck park to serve Manhattan's biggest district as a park space. Eventually CSX Transportation donated its rail corridor to the city in 2005 and construction began the following year in April.

Although the park is only 2.33 kilometers in length, it manages to connect the lower west side of Manhattan with the Chelsea district. The reimagined railroad became a social amenity for its neighboring context by providing spaces for people to come to and enjoy. It provides several diverse programming uses that could be used year-round, such as an amphitheater,

gardens, and seasonal activities like music-less concerts during summer nights or winter tours. Part of the success of the park also lies on the landscaper, Piet Oudouf. He was inspired by nature and its outer forms prior to human intervention and has achieved a garden ecology that involves a diverse plant palette to create a narrative for each section of the Highline. He stressed the importance of maintenance and properly trained staff for the public gardens to continue the park's legacy and design concepts. All these combined allowed the park to become known for its well-rounded architectural practice in the urban realm. This successful appropriation of the park also impacted its immediate neighborhood by creating opportunity for over thirty new development projects within its proximity. This obsolete infrastructure found a new life within its urban fabric through a change in its function.

Figure 42. The Highline, New York.



Like the Highline, the BP Pedestrian bridge, by Frank Gehry, is an elevated path, which connects several parks over Columbus Drive – an eight-lane road. This bridge is not built due to any sort of obsolete space that needed to be rejuvenated, but rather it was intended to resolve the problem of linking the Historic Michigan Boulevard District with the west to the Lake Michigan waterfront. This 285-meter-long serpentine-like bridge is the first Gehry bridge to be constructed that connects to a parking garage, Millennium Park, Maggie Daley Park and Grant Park. The design intent found a way to overlook its problem over a busy road and provide a view platform that has great views back to the parks and Chicago's skyline.

Although Gehry designed this winding bridge to match with his Jay Pritzker Pavilion at the northern end of Millennium Park, he also managed

Figure 43. BP Pedestrian Bridge, Chicago.



to layer several amenities on this structure. The serpentine-like structure is a design solution to the ever so slight slope that supports people with disabilities which creates the C-like curve over Columbus Drive. In a world that favours the quickest route to get from point A to point B, this winding path approach allows you to slow down. Along with being a connector for all sorts of people, the bridge also provides seating for people to stop and take a breather if needed. Lastly, the shimmering and bulky exterior provides an acoustic barrier that protects pedestrians and park visitors from the endless noises of the traffic below. A bridge like the BP bridge is an extensive sculptural work that expresses a sense of abstraction as a strategic solution to connecting several critical parks throughout the city. Its characteristics are a delightful pleasure that emphasize a unique way to resolve issues of connectivity due to physical barriers.

As demands for space in urban areas increase, it is necessary to consider techniques of layering multiple function and amenities into our park networks. Both these cities, unlike Toronto, understand the need for having a network of parks that link together, whether it is through the rejuvenation of a space or through finding ways to connect such spaces. Toronto, however, is slowly beginning to understand the need for these sites, like Ontario Place, to be converted into a public urban park for civic use. This 96-acre space should be looking for ways to reintegrate into the urban fabric through an extension of public realm and not private development. As the city continues to rapidly develop its waterfront park community, looking at other sources as inspiration is needed. Both these precedents demonstrate how to tackle with issues of physical barriers and rejuvenation, which is Ontario Place's current status as an abandoned site.

The Reimagined Waterfront

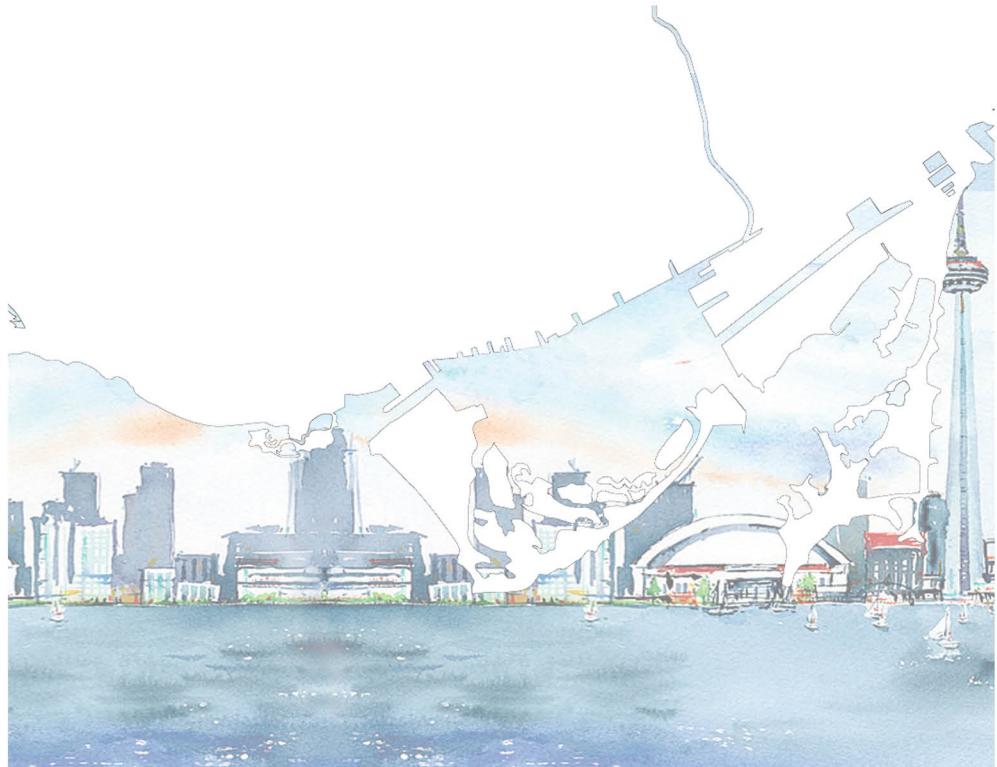


Figure 44 - Reimagining the Waterfront.

Looking for new way to reinvent the waterfront of Toronto and make it a cohesive with the rest of the city.

The Advisory Panel, led by John Tory in 2012, was formed to establish a set of eighteen recommendations for Ontario Place that would aid in the decision-making for a potential revitalization of the site. Although the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport claimed that voices of Ontarians are important in the process of the transformation, the proposals submitted were counterintuitive. They failed to provide a sense of what is best for the site and the needs of its residents because of suggestions that include a mixed-use development approach throughout the entire site. This approach could perhaps work if the site was placed in the downtown core however this would not work in a more remote area as an edge condition with various physical barriers. Ontario Place has been, and still is, surrounded by underdeveloped parcels of land which also need addressing before capitalizing on this site as part of the waterfront commodity. The report recommends that 15% of the west island to be zoned off for residential development, as well as a hotel or resort on the islands.

These conventional approaches to commercial feasibility and privatization would create a domino effect and perhaps eventually allow the site to be sold off. This would encourage private developers to further create public spaces which is problematic because most of those spaces are not quality inclusionary spaces. These patterns are noticeable within the streets of Toronto where these “public spaces” are concrete and sterile and make it hard for flexibility in programming. On the contrary, the report also does emphasize the importance of design excellence, accessibility, culture, sustainability and year-round use, these ideas quickly become clouded by the potential privatization.

Ontario Place also inadvertently contributes to the limited access of public parks since the site does not attempt to support programming for the bottom half of the socio-economic spectrum. If most of the infrastructure consists of activities that require paid entry, then the chances of children and youth visiting the site would become much lower rather having a park that promotes designed areas of play and engagement that are free and led by community run programs.

Although the province’s Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport identified Ontario Place to be under the Heritage Act as a significant heritage property, there is no guarantee that either the Cinesphere or the Exhibition Pods will remain. The report only asks for proposals to consider them feasible without encouraging proposals to look at ways to repurpose or maintain them. As of January 2019, Premier Doug Ford announced that all infrastructure could be potentially demolished depending on the winning proposal from an international competition that would be held. These two structures are a reminder of Canadian excellence and creativity both in construction and vision. These buildings were designed and built by Canadians, including immigrants, using only Canadian materials and trades which makes it a prime example of Canadian pride. These structures are also distinct and futuristic and apart of Toronto’s identity which cannot simply be placed or achieved in any other city. These structures are part of a unique urban culture thus demolishing them is counterproductive, destructive and takes away from part of the city’s identity.

The report makes it clear that the city is more interested in finding

an economic solution that would seek immediate financial benefits by privatizing. The report fails at finding a balance of what the people of Toronto need and finding way to profit off a public space. There is not much left of the site, except for its infrastructure and the marina, therefore the focus needs to be placed on the what the local population truly needs, an accessibly public park with green spaces and flexible programming. The city, especially its waterfront, is lacking a cultural space that is vibrant and buzzing. The site already has visitors that pass by, however this new public space needs to find ways of making people linger, slow down and enjoy a stroll with friends and family. Also, repurposing the existing infrastructure for financial benefit, such as the Exhibition Pods, is not only sustainable but could be the success story that attracts more people. Toronto's arts culture is growing, and the five pods have the potential to turn themselves into restored exhibits, studios, workspaces, and much more. Ontario Place has tried to dabble in the arts by hosting the Winter Festivals and other artists that create art installations year-round. The site just needs a push in the right direction and it would thrive off the booming art culture within the city. There are several ways to approach the design of Ontario Place without demolishing what is left of it. Finding ways around rejuvenating the once exciting site into a greener urban public park for all people would solidify Ontario Place as a public space for years to come.



SHORELINE STITCH

Figure 45. Shoreline Stitch Diagram.

Parti diagram by Public Works to create a waterfront park system.



Figure 46. Shoreline Stitch Map.

Created by Public Works as a mapping technique to look for cues in connecting most Toronto Parks.

Proposals of Ontario Place

When Ontario Place officially shut down in 2012, an Advisor Panel led by Mayor John Tory was formed to create a set of eighteen recommendations for Ontario Place to inform the provincial government about the potential revitalization. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport also had their own set of recommendations which entailed that “hearing from Ontarians is an important part of the transformation process,” however the proposals presented the contrary. Most of the proposals presented disregard the original intent of the site and for the needs and wants of the people. Although there are many positive takeaways, such as accessibility, culture, environmental impact and a focus on design excellence, they remain clouded by the call for privatization. Suggesting a mixed-use development throughout the entire site makes more sense in the city’s core, but it will not work in this location where the site is surrounded by underdeveloped lots. These lots need to be addressed first before beginning to capitalize on Ontario Place as a waterfront commodity.

A common method used by many cities eager to be on the rise for global recognition, such as Toronto, is to find the best suited design project through an international competition. This approach does not mean that the designs are more sophisticated but are aesthetic placeholders that could be interchangeable within any global city. These placeholder designs can never embody the respect and admiration that Ontario Place holds throughout its lifetime of five decades. Ontario Place was designed by a German immigrant, built by Canadian immigrants, using only Canadian materials and resources which makes it a prime example of civic pride. The architecture and the landscape designs are intentional and futuristic and have become part of Toronto’s identity and history which cannot be placed elsewhere. For these reasons, urban parks, especially this one, should continue to hold this pride by designing through people who actually know the city’s interests because these spaces are meant to be enjoyed by the people of the city and not just its visitors. There are many successful yet underrated local architects and architecture firms that would benefit greatly from designing a space in their proximity and to preserve the legacy that this site holds.



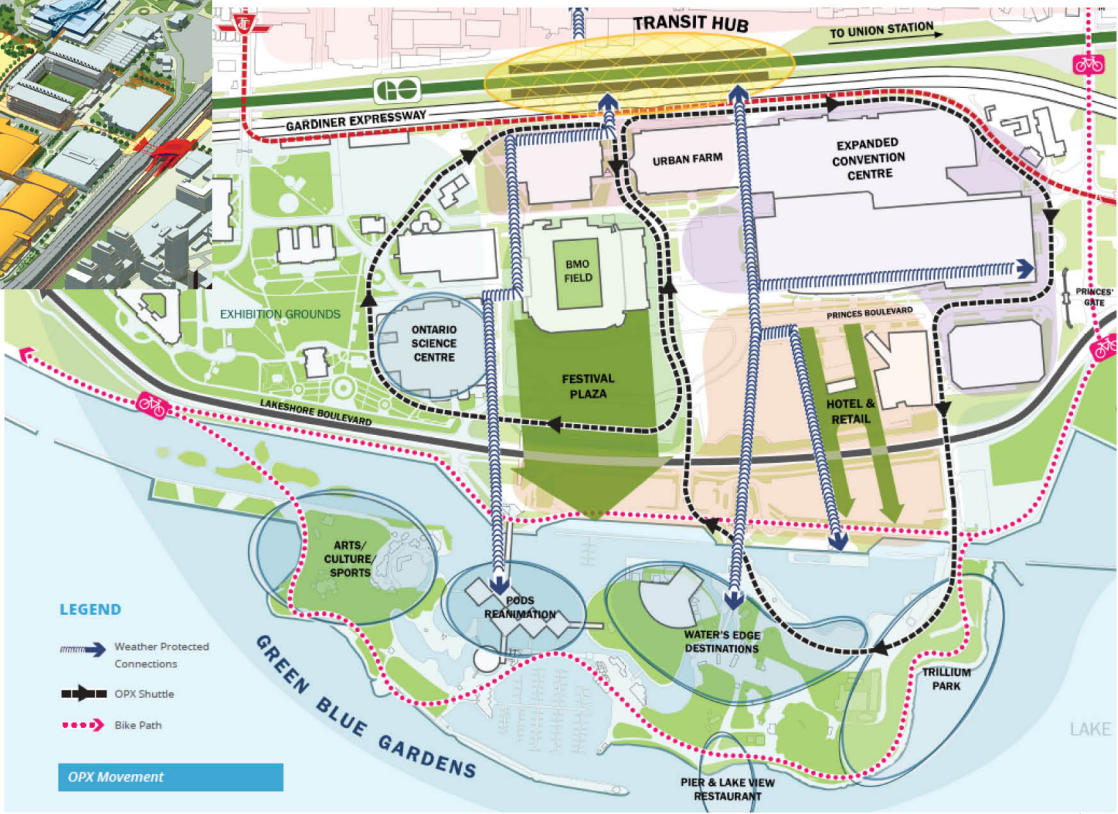
Figure 47. Professional Proposal. (Top)
 Figure 48. Professional Proposal. (Right)

Urban Designer: Urban Strategies Inc.



Figure 49. Professional Proposal. (Top)
 Figure 50. Professional Proposal. (Right)

Developer: Ken Tanenbaum
 Urban Planner: Joe Berridge



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04 | Ontario Park Proposal

Creating a Visual Corridor | Anchoring

Ontario Place has a role in the city of Toronto as it continues to shape the planning and evolution that is happening along the water's edge. The city has grown accustomed to the idea of Ontario Place being an amusement park and a space for concerts and festivals, however it has lost its touch with its relationship with the city and the water. Due to the current conditions of Ontario Place, the designs should gear towards investigating ways of connectivity and local engagement to engage the relationship to the rest of the city. The following proposal will stay centralized to the site of Ontario Place as a key puzzle piece in the waterfront community.

The 96-acre site, seated south of the Exhibition Place, is potentially planning for it to become a city park, especially after the major success of Trillium Park being built on the east island. Historically, the Gardiner Expressway has isolated most of the waterfront from the rest of the city providing little quality space along the city's edge. This thesis looks at ways of exploring the act of anchoring the waterfront back to the city. As activity and programming along the waterfront increases, separation between the urban fabric and the waterfront also increases as the main issue of connectivity has yet to be resolved. As the neighboring context continues to remain under-defined, the act of anchoring the urban fabric together with Ontario Place becomes a necessity for the city. The act of anchoring would be accomplished through layering social amenities on top of the already active infrastructure, such as the marina and the Budweiser Stage, which would engage program and continuity of the site.

Ontario Place currently holds some of its original Archigram and Metabolist style architecture, like the Cinesphere and the Pods, which represent significant heritage meaning to the site. The Cinesphere has gone through an interior renovation in 2017 and remains a successful stand-alone structure. The Pods however have gone through a series of iterations in programming and are at a stand still. They were previously used for exhibitions and event spaces; however the city of Toronto must look into finding ways to create a permanent exhibit. The 5 floating pods have great potential but need some rejuvenation, which could be achieved through simpler tasks of re-glazing and retrofitting the interior. For example, the Science Center in Toronto is looking to renovate and is looking to relocate for the time being, however the Science Center could also potentially take place

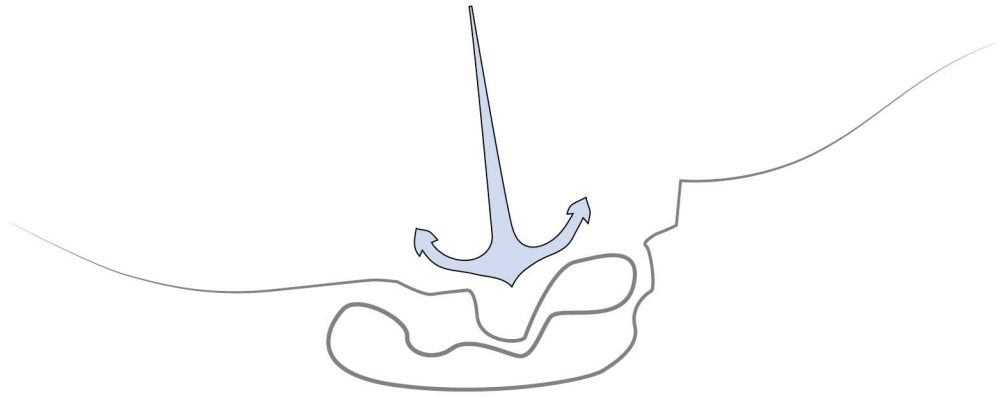


Figure 51. Concept.

Anchoring the city into Ontario Place and Lake Ontario to create a visual corridor.

Ontario Place, like the rest of the waterfront, is the barrier between the city and the lake, however this site has been neglected for several years. Anchoring Ontario Place back into city's fabric through methods of programming and visual corridors could increase the attention given to the site tenfold.

here at Ontario Place's Exhibition Pods if the space is staged accordingly. Lastly, the most used space on the site is the infamous Budweiser Stage. Although this amphitheatre replaced the previously successful Forum, the site could potentially continue to work around the current stage until the city is ready to replace it with a more iconic performance space. These 3 spaces within the site act individually but need to come together to create a more successful narrative along the site.

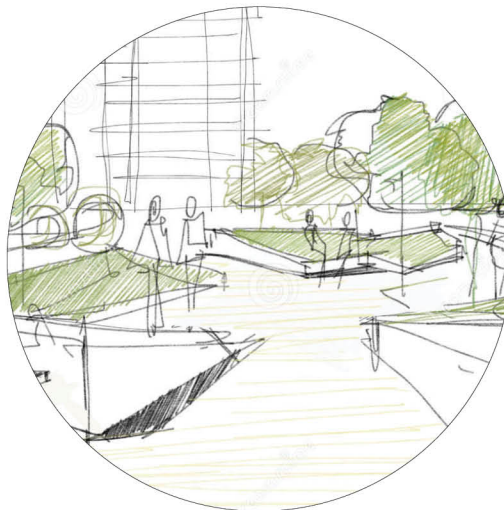
The relationship between the current infrastructure and its dull landscaping creates a spatial tension because the intended purpose of the site is long gone, and it is down to its bare bones. The infrastructure is currently floating amid an empty and deconstructed space, which further isolates site and drives away any sort of pedestrian traffic. The waterfront, especially Ontario Place, has the potential to regenerate life, industry and commerce by finding unique ways to anchor and tie the site back into the fabric of the city. The act of reintroducing the site back into the urban fabric through layering tackles any sort of spatial tension.

For Ontario Park to be accepted and merge into the network of Toronto's waterfront parks, the park needs to generate a cohesive and desirable architectural narrative that unifies the complex park and create a

Figure 52. 3 Focus Areas.



Play Revitalization



Connection Renewal



Water Connectivity

sense of identity. The original intent of the site was an urban woodland with infrastructural elements being scattered to create a sense of exploration within the city, which has been lost. Through the act of regenerating some of these woodland spaces and layering amenities, an urban park can be re-sculpted over the islands as a groundwork for circulation between the city and the site. The park must respond to the desired programming such as ***play revitalization, connection renewal and water connectivity***. These 3 elements take cues from the successes of previous experiences on the site and should make a presence for the new park experience as well. The intent is to create a consistent park-scape and landscape, and to create a journey and experience throughout the park by generating a new and improved field condition of anchoring to help Ontario Place find its identity in the vast park network. Anchoring could be explored in a variety of ways to sculpt the unique site where thematic programming zones are used to layer the desired amenities.

Designing a Festival Park

City park designs entail an analysis of both landscape design and urban design. The landscape principles of Michael Hough and urban design principles by Jane Jacob offer a range of ideas that a proposal should include in a design.

Michael Hough is known for his approach of connecting the cityscape with nature both integrally and visibly, and many of his principles remain relevant to this day. His approach went beyond aesthetics, incorporating urban and biological principles as long-term development strategies. He believed that cities and nature have a strong link to one another and that the regeneration of one is essentially the salvation of the other. His approach of comprehensive landscape design advocated for landscape as a process rather than a one-time development to create a unified composition.

Creating landscape that aids in finding the meaning of place is a design principle carried by the landscape architect Michael Hough. Hough notes that the design of a landscape should not be about mere ornamentation but rather espousing a framework of biological principles to create unique characteristics on the site. Through the exploration and study of Ontario Place, the design product includes a unified composition that attempts to tie nature back into the city to articulate a relationship between the landscape and the waterfront.

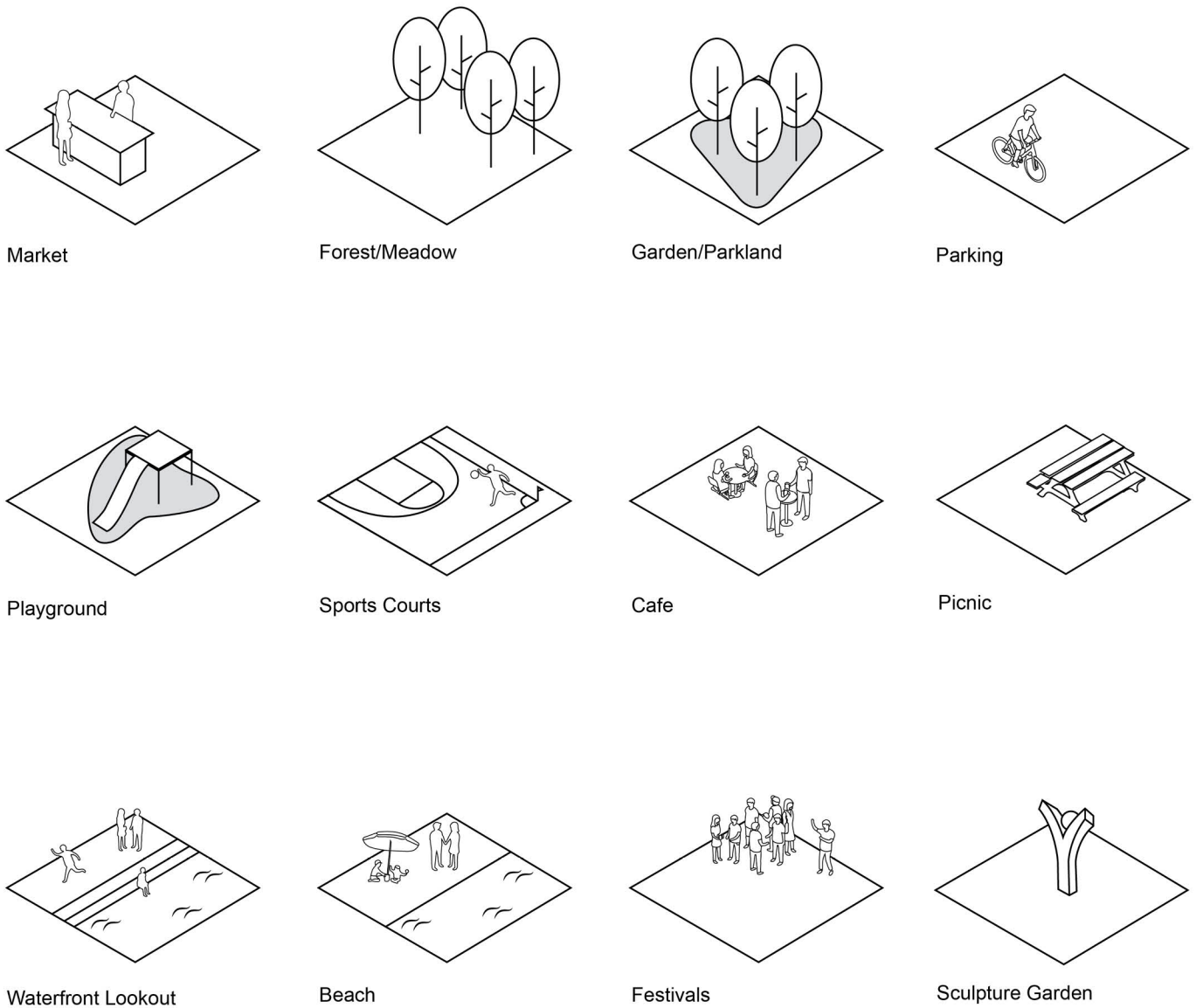
The idea of anchoring the artificial islands demonstrates a unifying motion for this site, which both Hough and Jacob believe in because it is an attempt at mingling multiple layers to enliven a park.

“The more successfully a city mingles everyday diversity of uses and users in its everyday streets, the more successfully, casually and economically its people thereby enliven and support well-located parks that can thus give back grace and delight to their neighborhoods instead of vacuity.”

Jane Jacobs states that parks are unpredictable spaces that run on extremes of popularity and unpopularity. The potential of the park, in the case of Ontario Place, can vary from large planned gatherings for festivals and concerts to a quiet weekend evening. Park designs are usually proposed as generalized park spaces that are open with carefully curated trees to add an aesthetic value to the community. However, each park has its own

characteristics that define its identity which defies generalization, such as Ontario Place being a festival park. A successful urban park is a complex space that is influenced by their surroundings. Ontario Place is influenced by its neighboring Exhibition grounds and generates a mutual support of diverse uses for carrying on the festivities and exhibition spaces. This diverse support promotes the park and encourages different types of people to occupy the site during different times of day.

Figure 53. Programming of Social Amenities for Ontario Place.

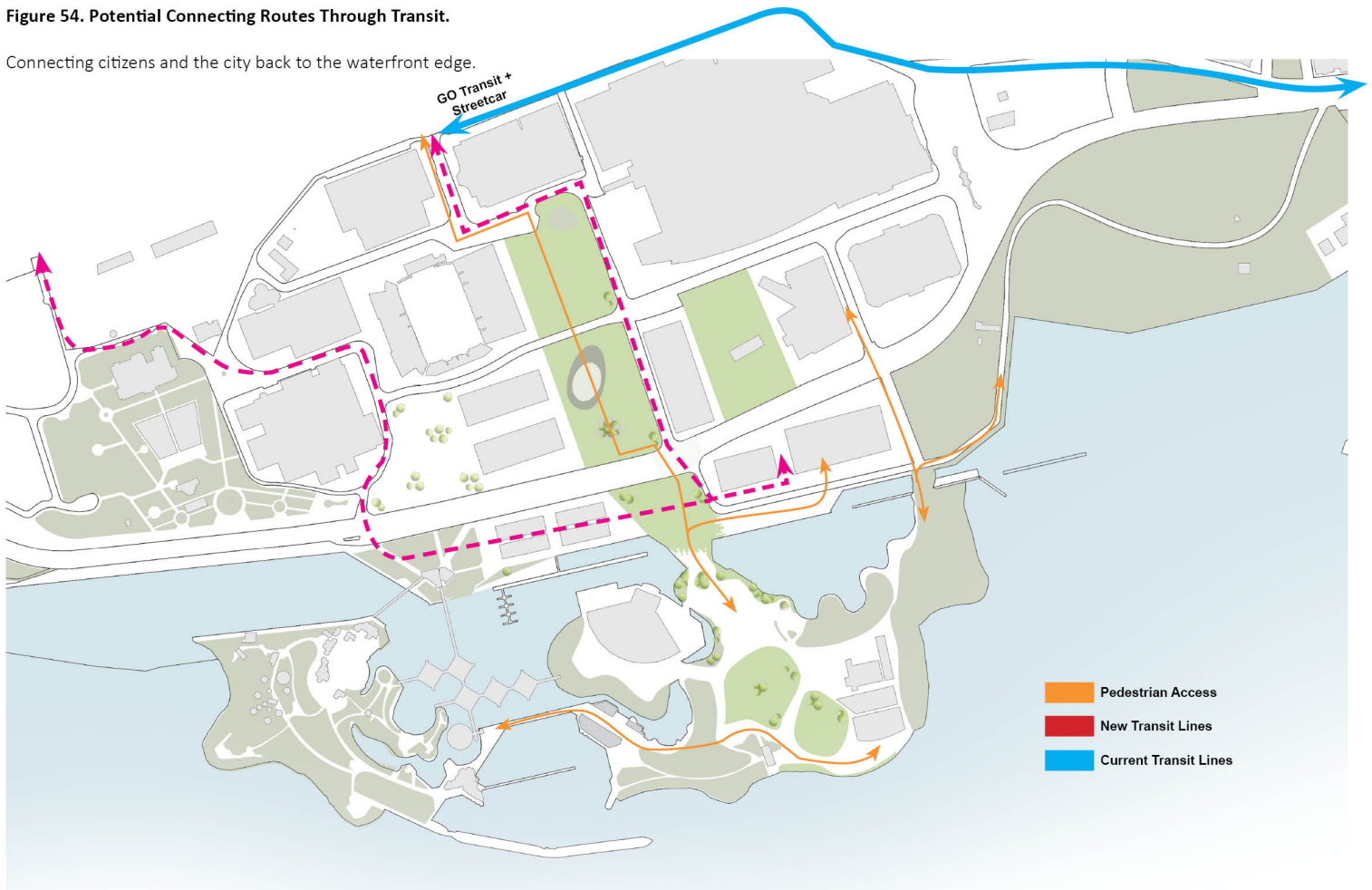


The programmatic layering and zones on the site are stimulated from a 2014 report issued by the City of Toronto regarding park visitation. In the survey, “Why do you visit City Parks,” tackles the question of what the Greater Toronto Area residents prefer in their parks. The survey showed that most residents prefer having spaces that are unstructured for various activity and an emphasis on nature through trees and walking trails. On the other hand, there is also a demand for structured events within city parks since there have been over 66,000 hours of special event permits applied for between 2004 to 2014. The major takeaway from the report is that city parks must be flexible in hosting structured and unstructured events during all hours of the day.

In response to the desires of the residents of Toronto and recognizing the basic principles of Michael Hough and Jane Jacobs, the proposal of an urban park should be specialized in some form to balance the relationship between the programmed areas as structural spaces, and naturalizing the islands to regenerate an intricate landscape experience. These zones must work homogeneously with the idea of anchoring the islands back to the city to create a cohesive narrative for an iconic new urban waterfront park in Toronto.

Figure 54. Potential Connecting Routes Through Transit.

Connecting citizens and the city back to the waterfront edge.



Proposal | Ontario Park

This proposal uses the narrative of anchoring and tying back the city to the waterfront while overlaying the desired programmatic design principles of this specialized park. There are three landscape thematic sections of the park; play rejuvenation, connection renewal and water connectivity. The three sections are identifiable through the spatial zoning created from the anchored trail that connects the park with the Exhibition Place as a route for cyclist and pedestrians. This trail weaves through the three points of the site, the entry points, the water and the play spaces. The architectural strategy of anchoring to create trails that connect to neighboring context allows for programming zones which provide a diverse use of space for points of destination and points of passing.

To combat the issues of the park, three gestures have been implemented to encourage occupation of the site. On the west island, the zones of connectivity and the water are explored with a path that winds through a public plaza, a café and elevated waterfront views. On the west island, the act of regenerating play spaces is seen through sport zones and kids' zones with intricate trails, woodlands and places of rest. The connectivity aspect is seen throughout the entire site as a sense of

Figure 55. Anchoring Concept

Parti Diagram of creating program and connectivity.

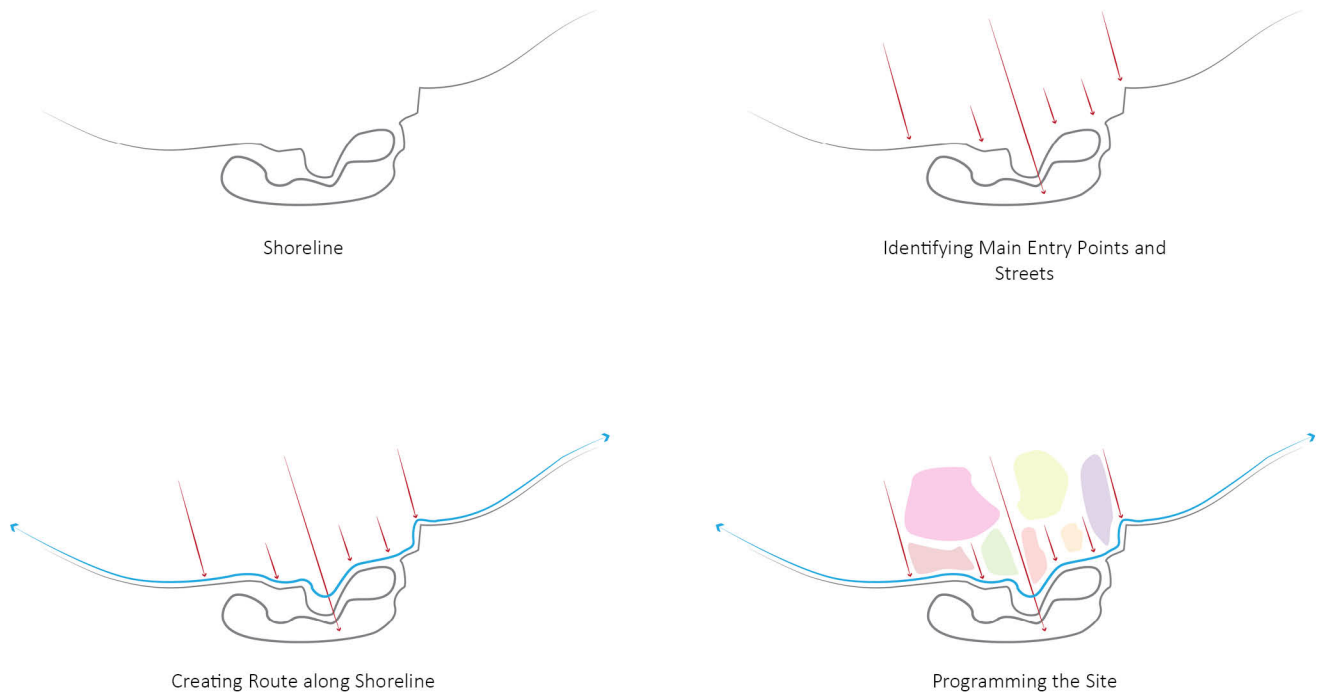


Figure 56. Parti Diagram.

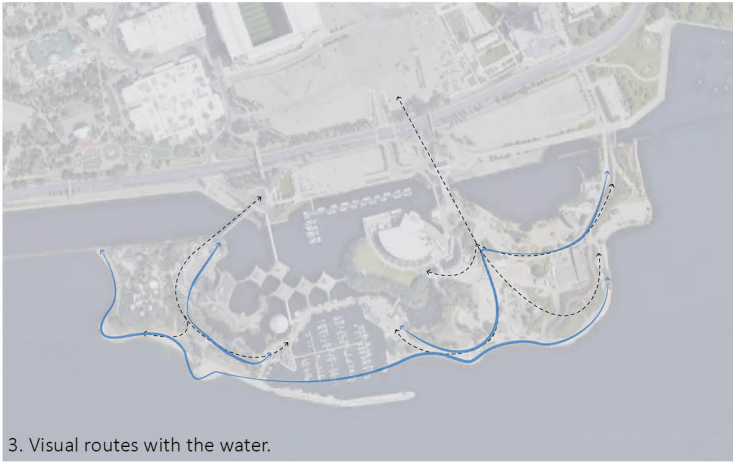
Creating Program.



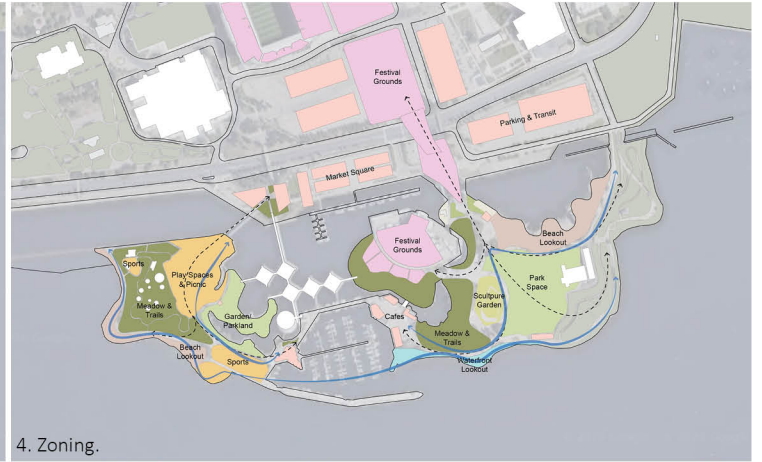
1. Anchoring connections to the lake.



2. Making routes through the site.



3. Visual routes with the water.



4. Zoning.



5. Program blocking.

movement through the park to allow visitors to pass fluidly across in any direction desired. This enclosing strategy is an attempt to populate and encourage foot traffic to the site.

The proposed landscape element that wraps around the site also addresses the already existing infrastructure as well as connects back to the Exhibition Place. The Exhibition Place is in a way like Ontario Place, it is a festival grounds for the city. This proposal looks at creating a formal festival plaza at the Exhibition Place that could connect with Ontario Place through a pedestrian bridge. This would be especially useful during festivals such as the annual CNE fest, that runs every summer for two weeks, where Ontario Place could partake in this event by expanding and connecting the west island. The west island can host such events at large capacities and it could coincide with the Budweiser Stage or Echo Beach for performances. The festival and bridge connection with Exhibition Place not only allow both sites to work together but it also helps both site to become less isolated and co-exist. This would allow for easier access into both sites while conquering the physical barrier of Lakeshore Blvd. Similar to the BP Pedestrian Bridge, the bridge proposed wraps around both sites to create a cohesive connection to and from the Exhibition Place to the water's edge in Ontario Place.

Figure 57. Locating Social Amenities.

Connecting Exhibition Place with Ontario Place.



Figure 58. Master Plan.

Anchoring the new site with Exhibition Place. Scale: 1-4000.





Transit Hub

Trillium Park

Legend

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Maintenance | Restaurant |
| Forest/Meadow | Washrooms |
| Children's Village | Garden/Parkland |
| Basketball Court | Budweiser Stage |
| Transit Station | Festival Grounds |
| Parking Garage | Pavilion Banquet |
| Bar/Cafe | Pavilion Museum |
| Picnic Area | Cinesphere Theater |
| Beach | Waterfront Lookout |
| Yacht Club | Marina |
| Skate Park | Market/Businesses |

Figure 59. 3 Focus areas on the Master Plan.

Three areas of main focus for the proposed rendered spaces.

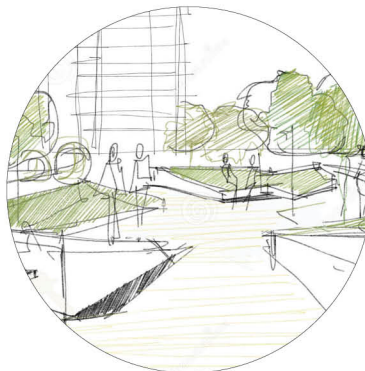


3 Focus Areas

Play Revitalization



Connection Renewal



Water Connectivity



Play:

On the west islands, there is a rebirth of activity and sports through play zones and sports courts. The winding path encloses this zone to create an intimate space for kids to run around freely from waterpark to the climbing nets to the swings. It is an attempt at bringing back Eric McMillan's play elements in a modern way that would allow for a more permanent use. Although the space will never be the Children's Village again, it maintains some of the elements it had along with a few more additions. The sports zones, such as the basketball courts or the skate park, are newer elements to the site. As the Wild Adventure Ride is currently being taken down, it still holds some of its steep dips and a central field that bikers, roller-bladders and skaters would enjoy. It is not the classic skatepark, but it would be retrofitting a dismantled waterslide into an intriguing place for people to do tricks on. On the other hand, as basketball continuously gets more popular throughout the city, there are some nets scattered around the island for another element of play. Currently, while the islands are being deconstructed, there are multiple basketball courts along the water's edge that are always occupied during all hours of the day and provide views back to the city. Some of these courts are carved out by the winding path and remain along the water. The basketball courts are a more recent addition to the site but are in demand since there currently are no courts along the water in any park in Toronto.

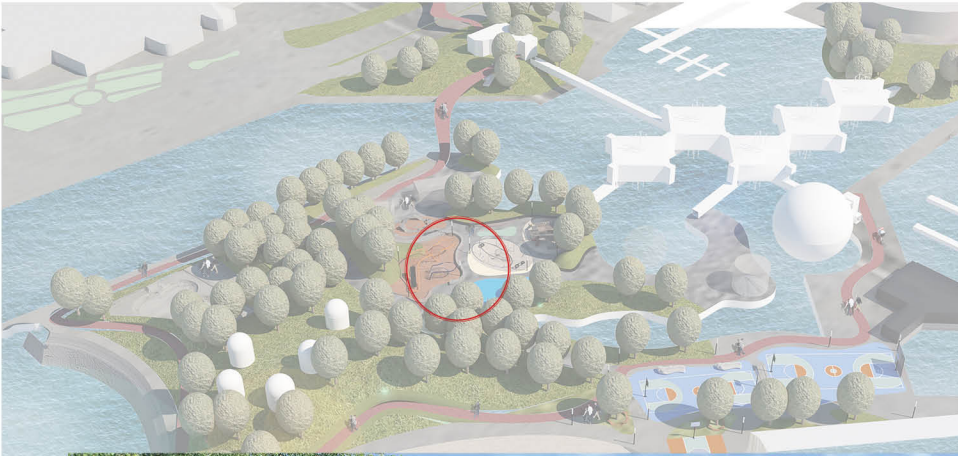


Figure 60. West Island birdeye view.

Focused on the play space.



Figure 61. Children's playground.

Incorporating nets, climbing, swing sets, etc. Inspired by Eric McMillan.



Figure 62. West Island birdeye view.

Focused on the sports space.



Figure 63. Maintaining the basketball courts along the waterfront.

The previous courts were heavily used during warmer seasons. These spaces can be transformed accordingly to host events or festivals during all seasons along the water.

Connection:

Both islands tie together and to the rest of the city via a winding trail that starts at the Exhibition Place to connect both sites. The winding trail acts essentially as a connector to get over the busy road, Lakeshore Blvd, but also to create a presence throughout the park as a way to splice through the site and create zones. The elevated pedestrian bridge is inspired by Frank Gehry's BP Pedestrian Bridge and is an attempt at organizing and structuring space in the vast open site. The path starts off as a bridge that turns into an entry point on both the east and west island. It continues throughout the site and aids in creating a public plaza, gardening and woodland zones, and commercial spaces. It also specifically curves around and encloses the waterfront with a café on the east island and a play space on the west island.

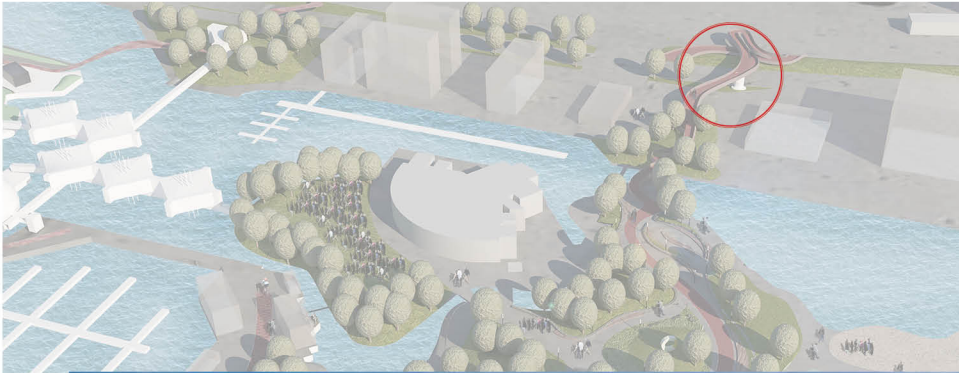


Figure 64. East Island birdseye view.
Focused on the connection renewal space.



Figure 65. Celebration Walk crossing over Lakeshore Blvd (from Ontario Place to Exhibition Place).

The new bridge acts as a sculptural piece that winds throughout the site and connects to its neighboring parks. The bridge provides views back to the city and allows for a new continuous route to the water's edge.

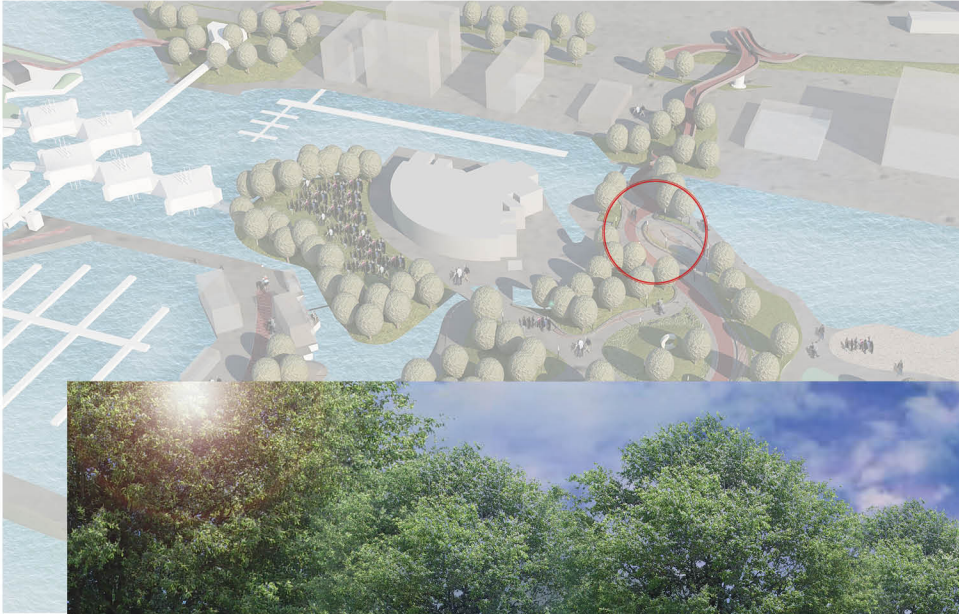


Figure 66. East Island birdeye view.

Focused on the connection renewal space with the park.



Figure 67. Walking along the winding path in the park.

This winding path connects to the water's edge and neighboring parks. It helps creating zones throughout the path, such as this space, the Celebration Walk. This walk is apart of the Central Plaza were vendors can take part in the space as well.



Figure 68. East Island birdeye view.

Focused on the connection renewal space with the park.



Figure 69. Woodland Outlook Pavilion.

This pavilion is a hidden gem beside the woodlands where people can come to for a sense of relaxation from the bustling city. It is inspired by indigenous designs and dedicated specifically to the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Water:

Towards the water's edge, the path is amplified through the act of peeling up the route to produce a change in typography. The lifted bridge holds a café beneath it while it maintains a path throughout the park. The elevated path is inspired from the archigram styled architecture along the site and all its floating infrastructure. The elevated route allows for more bicycle parking throughout the site and allows for an elevated view of the park and the waterfront. The sculptural pull allows different programming zones while it sculpts out garden and woodland areas, cycling and pedestrian paths, cafes and bicycle parking. The winding path allows for a more dynamic surface throughout the site as well as feeling the elevated path merge with the infrastructure in the park.

Figure 70. Elevated Celebration Walk.

The winding path lifts up off the ground around the lake promenade to create a shelter space for a cafe and bicycle parking. The lake edge promenade is a space that people can come to for hanging out with friends and family, or pass through. It's a space that provides multiple social amenities, such as, seating, cafe, bicycle parking, optimal views, etc.

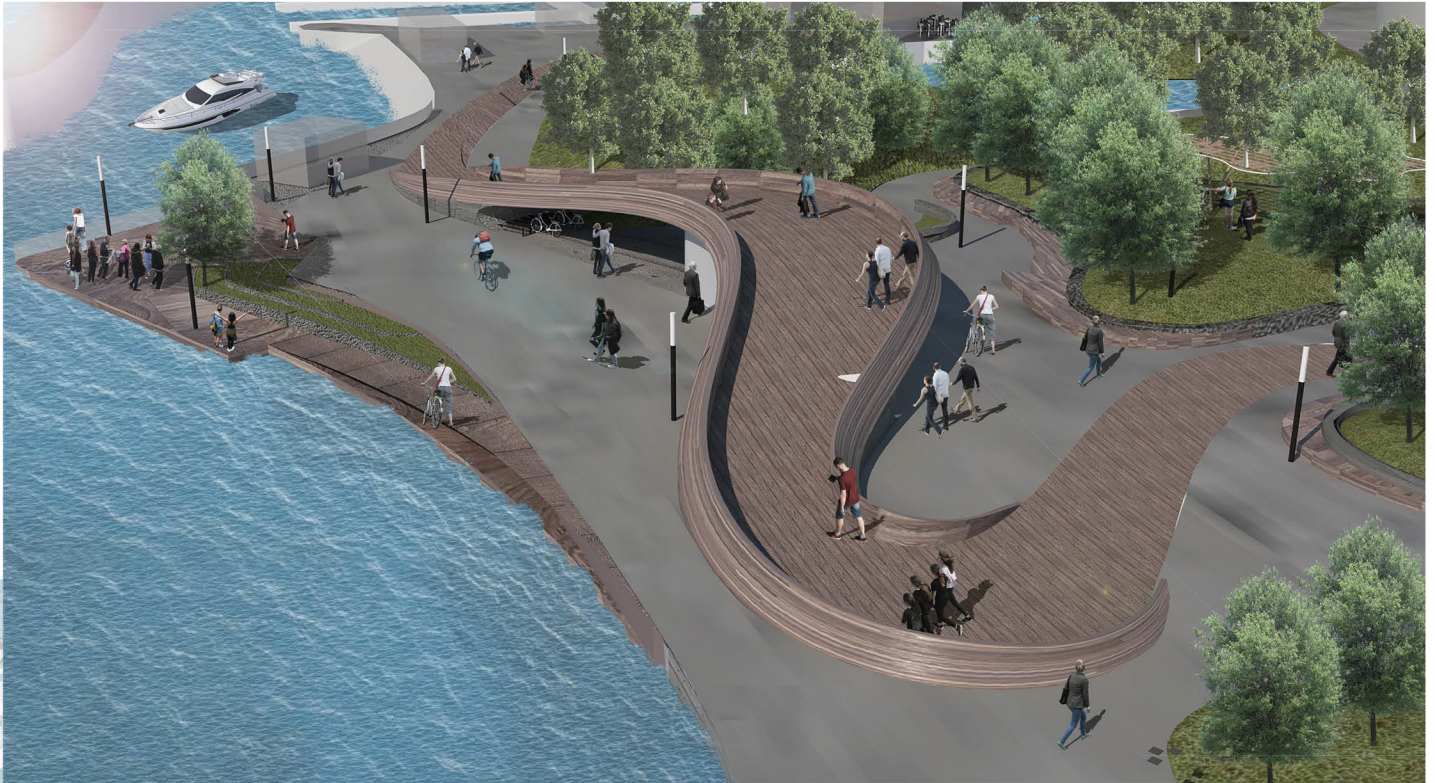


Figure 71. East Island birdeye view.

Focused on the water's edge space.

Figure 72. Entering from Trillium Park.

Connecting Trillium Park's water edge route with Ontario Park's Lake Edge Promenade space.



Figure 73. East Island birdseye view.

Focused on the water's edge space.

The Need for a new Gateway for Ontario Place at the Water's Edge:

The neighboring context of Ontario Place and the entrance space of the park are currently vacant and used as parking lots. As the Exhibition grounds continue to evolve into a festival park and more commercial spaces begin to occupy it, Ontario Place can also begin to treat its current parking lots as spaces for mixed use mid-rise development. It is prime location because it is still right on the water's edge and surrounded by ample park space and amenities. This would also help feed the park through commerce and encourage more people to reach out to the western side of the waterfront. Both the mixed-use development and the park spaces of Ontario Place and potentially the Exhibition Grounds could benefit from each other as it will bring in different types of people during different hours of the day.

The Pods would also benefit from this because it will bring more traffic to the site and excitement to the pods once a permanent exhibit is founded. This could be dealt through with the city to find the best fit and to find the more creative use out of all 5 pods. These pods should however stay within the realm of arts and crafts or science exhibits, not only because they tend to be the most successful, but it would also rebirth the original intent of the pods as exhibition spaces. These pods could also maintain some elements of event spaces and mixed-use spaces, such as studio office rentals, to bring in more diversity in usage.

Figure 74. Converting the Soak City's waterslide stairs into a unique lookout point.

Reglazing the structure and adding lights creates a new space and acts as a nostalgic sculptural piece.



Figure 75. East Island birdseye view.

Focused on incorporating sculptural pieces along the site.

Figure 76. Soak City Tower.

A new lookout point with views to the city, the water and the park.

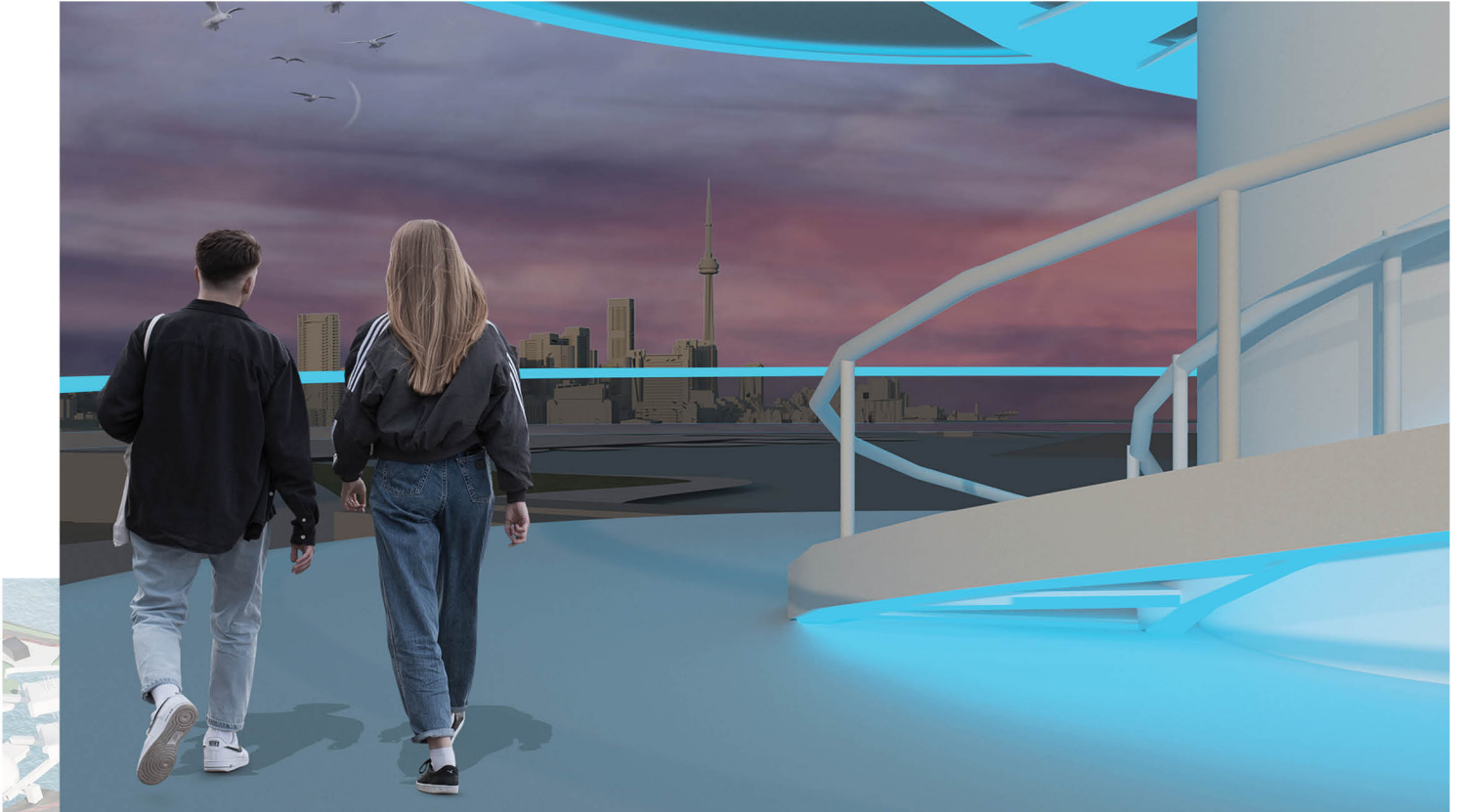


Figure 77. East Island birdseye view.

Focused on incorporating sculptural pieces along the site.

Final Remarks:

There are many layers of stimuli that have generated the form of this project to rebirth some of Ontario Place's legacies and retie the site back into the city's fabric. With the previous narrative generated in the past and the current state of the islands, the park responds to the current and future contextual relationships that will make it a destination within the city of Toronto. The layering of commercial and structure program will drive diversity of use throughout the day and a continuity of circulation. This park is only the start of a larger plan of reimagining the waterfront, especially along the west side of the city.

The proposal serves the opportunity to explore the reclamation of a void space in the urban fabric along the waterfront. This proposal attempts to look at both the social and cultural needs of the city and design a space that layers these desires in a unified narrative that anchors the park back into the city. The re-telling of the site's history generates a movement throughout the site allowing for clear zoning of different uses on the islands. The configuration of the site program aims to have diverse uses, to ensure a successful park and a positive investment impact for the city of Toronto. Through a larger series of urban waterfront park design such as Ontario Place, the city will look forward to more opportunities of redeveloping what living along the waterfront can mean in the future.

Endnotes for Chapter 04

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