

Villiers Island Density Study Public Meeting Summary



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Public Meeting Overview

In 2023, the project team of the City of Toronto, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto began a density study for Villiers Island in response to direction from Toronto City Council to increase the density by at least 30% above the 2017 Precinct Plan. The Council-endorsed preferred approach will inform an update to the 2017 Precinct Plan, resulting in more housing and affordable rental homes.

A public meeting in June 2023 engaged participants in a discussion about the relevance of the 2017 guiding principles and potential changes to the plan. The project team sought feedback on three proposed approaches to increasing density. Over 200 people attended this virtual public meeting, followed by 747 survey responses. Participants prioritized placing tall buildings near transit, maintaining sun access in public spaces, maximizing affordable housing, creating vibrant public spaces and restricting private vehicle movements. A summary of the June 2023 meeting can be found here: [Villiers Island Density Study Public Meeting Summary \(portlandsto.ca\)](#)

In spring 2024, the project team reported back on the outcomes of the density study and on the emerging precinct plan update for the Island, including the proposed changes to built form and future opportunities to provide input as design advances on the public realm:

- March 26, 2024:
 - Virtual Meeting attended by approximately 325 people
 - Watch a recording here: [Virtual Villiers Island Public Information Centre, March 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)
- May 2, 2024:
 - In-person drop-in attended by approximately 175 people
 - Boards at this event presented the same material that was shared at the March Virtual meeting, recording above. The content of these boards is included in Appendix B.

At the virtual meeting, Mira Shenker, Waterfront Toronto, introduced the presenters:

- Fred Martin, City of Toronto Indigenous Affairs Office, offered an Anishanaabemowin greeting to open the meeting
- Councillor Fletcher welcomed participants
- Sarah Henderson, City of Toronto, provided background context on the project
- Scott Pennington, CreateTO, shared the targets and direction from the city to increase housing
- Fred Martin, City of Toronto, outlined the actions taken to advance Truth, Justice and Reconciliation in the context of a revitalized vision for the waterfront
- Anthony Kittel, City of Toronto, explained the planning process for Villiers Island and the density study
- Rei Tasaka, Waterfront Toronto, outlined the proposed changes to the 2017 plan
- Mira Shenker, Waterfront Toronto, shared the opportunities for future engagement and moderated a Q&A. We weren't able to answer all the questions during the meeting, and they are answered in appendix A.

At the in-person drop-in centre, attendees were welcome to submit comments or questions to be answered in this summary. Please see appendix A for the list of questions and answers from the two public meetings.

Participants at both meetings were invited to sign up for future public engagements as part of next steps to develop a community on the new island. The topics for future engagement listed were:

- Housing (104 people, 70% of respondents)
- Public Realm and Streets (102 people, 69% of respondents)
- Transportation Planning (85 people, 57% of respondents)
- Community Facilities (84 people, 57% of respondents)
- Natural Environment and Stewardship (78 people, 53% of respondents)
- Early uses on the Island (71 people, 48% of respondents)
- A Framework for Reconciliation (40 people, 27% of respondents)

Proposed Changes to the 2017 Precinct Plan

We're updating the Villiers Island Precinct Plan to increase the amount of housing in this new community, including affordable housing. The changes we are making only apply to the buildings, which increases the potential number of units and number of future residents for the island. The vision for the new community remains the same: a compact, walkable and affordable community with lively public spaces. The streets and other public spaces have not yet been designed and will be subject to their own public engagement process as plans for the island progress.

Updates to the precinct plan propose:

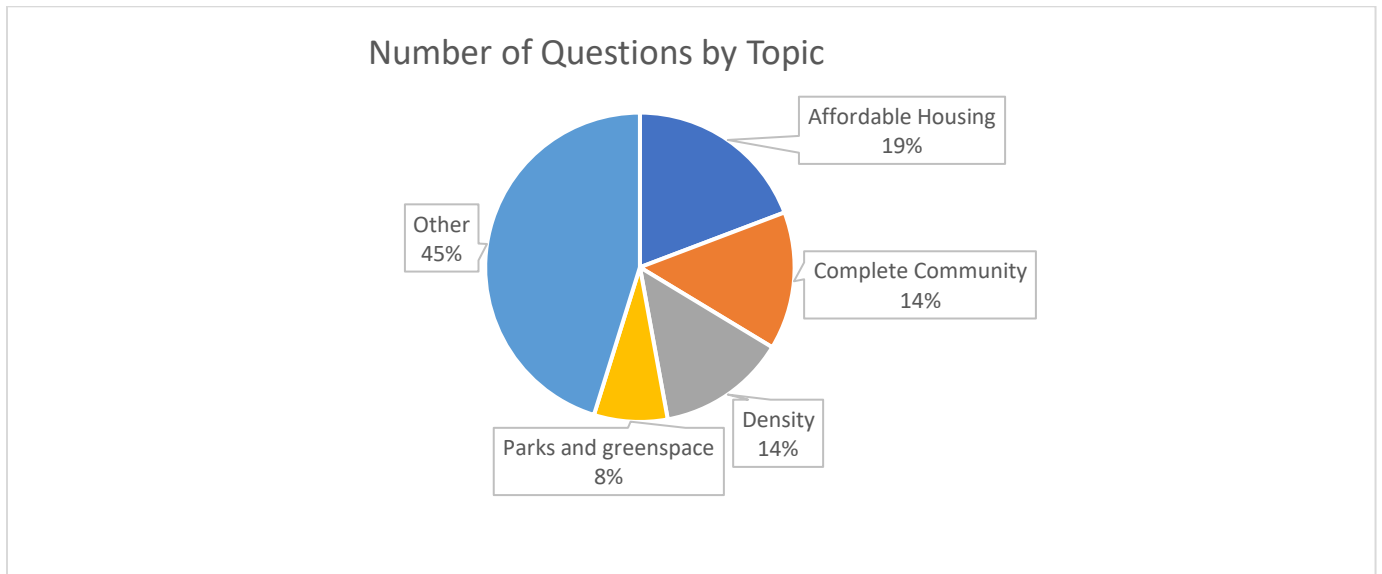
- Updating the affordable housing target to 30% of units on public land
- Increasing Gross Floor Area (GFA) by 60%. GFA is the total property square footage, as measured between the exterior walls of the building(s). It is also acceptable to measure from the inside perimeter of the exterior walls if that is more readily available. This includes all areas inside the building(s) including supporting areas. In this plan, this 60% increase translates to:
 - Approximately 800,000m² GFA island-wide
 - Approximately 9,000 units island-wide (depending on the size of units)
 - 2,200- 2,700 affordable housing units (range based on unit sizes and number of family-sized units)
 - A population of approximately 15,000 people (an increase of approximately 80% from the 2017 plan)
- Locations to increase density by increasing building heights:
 - Intensification of Keating Channel & north blocks
 - Intensification of the western blocks
 - Height peak clustered along New Cherry Street gateway
 - Intensification of blocks between New Cherry and New Munition Streets
 - Mid-rise heights with short towers on east blocks

Questions and Comments During the Meeting:

This meeting was a report back on the findings of the density study, so the project team did not pose any questions to the public for specific feedback. Comments and questions from the chat during the virtual meeting were recorded and combined with feedback from the drop-in centre. We have also included

emails and social media comments related to the public meetings and materials. All comments and questions themes are summarized below.

Summary of Question Themes:



We received 104 questions during the public meetings. Most questions were related to affordable housing, building complete communities, density, or parks and greenspace.

Affordable Housing:

These questions focused on the different kinds of affordable housing that could be created, how to access the affordable units, and how to create more units faster.

FAQ: What kind of affordable housing will it be? What about supportive housing, co-ops, or rent-geared to income?

There are different options for providing the affordable housing, including potentially co-op, seniors, or supportive housing, and the strategy for Villiers Island has not been determined yet. As part of this work, we will ensure new development is guided by enabling Innovative partnerships; including advancing partnerships with Indigenous communities to ensure a complete community process.

FAQ: Why do you need to increase density to increase the amount of affordable housing?

A: The sale and development of market units can offset the cost of delivering affordable housing. So, the more housing we can deliver overall, the most revenue can be directed towards building affordable housing.

Complete Communities:

These questions asked for more information about the proposed community facilities, services, and programs, as well as vibrant retail and street level spaces, physical accessibility, and creating a welcoming and inclusive culture on the island.

FAQ: Why are the amenities located where they are? How will you make sure the community has strong retail and service offerings?

The locations of community amenities shown are still conceptual, and their location will evolve with the plans for the island. We're planning for a complete community, which includes space for retail opportunities and service providers.

While Villiers Island feels remote right now, as the entire area transforms, the demand for facilities and services will grow, creating a more attractive location for retailers and service providers throughout the Port Lands and surrounding areas.

Density:

Questions about density asked about limits to increasing density, why towers were proposed at certain locations, and why a density increase is necessary to achieve more affordable housing.

Where were the opportunities to add more density?

The Density Study identified the greatest opportunity for density on the western and central blocks, close to future transit stops. Additional density is also being planned along the Keating Channel Promenade, which will be an active retail and commercial strip. Design refinements may lead to more density than what's currently approved and, at the direction of Council, the project team of City, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto will also explore the possibility of a mixed-use residential building on the Essroc site west of Cherry Street.

While there's no established formula or analysis that determines exactly how much density can or should be added to a neighbourhood, the project team considered several due diligence studies. Many of the factors that were considered were examined with the new island as part of a larger development area, with more than 100,000 future residents to come over the next several decades.

The factors include:

- Minimizing shadow impacts on new habitats and wetlands returning to the Don River. This limited density on the east blocks.
- Infrastructure, specifically transportation and municipal services. Transportation planning and engineering consultants, working with City, Waterfront Toronto and CreateTO staff, evaluated the 60% density increase on Villiers Island. Analysis determined that Villiers Island will experience transportation and transit congestion, reflective of its projected growth. The increase in density at full buildout requires the planned pedestrian, cycling, and transit network, including the proposed Waterfront East Light Rail Transit, and the nearby Corktown Ontario Line and combined East Harbour Ontario Line and GO Station serving Villiers Island.
- Municipal servicing. While we may not see these infrastructure systems as a hard limit on growth, they are important to consider and plan for, as we must understand the cost implications of any changes. There is also planned downstream infrastructure that receives flows from a broader geography, including Villiers Island, East Harbour, South River, and McCleary Precincts, and which will have capacity limits.

Flight Paths. City staff have consulted with PortsToronto, NAVCanada and Transport Canada on airspace issues around airports, and specifically on the Villiers Island Precinct Plan. At this point in time, City staff

have noted that additional tower heights beyond what are being recommended on the Island's western blocks are not supported.

What factors did we consider when increasing the density?

The Keating Channel, surrounding parkland, new Don River valley, and Indigenous and industrial heritage provide a unique context for this emerging community. Due to this unique context, each block has different opportunities and constraints to increasing density.

Some factors taken into consideration:

- Delivering affordable housing
- Transportation network and transit capacity
- Community facilities and services capacity
- Impacts on the Don River Valley
- Noise and air quality impacts
- Infrastructure and servicing capacity
- Airport operations
- Achieving sustainability objectives
- Shadow and solar access

The City of Toronto Port Lands Area Specific Policy: 0.7.6. specifies that all buildings will be located, oriented and massed to maximize sunlight access on streets, and parks and open spaces and not shadow the Don Greenway and naturalized river valley during the spring and fall equinoxes.

How dense will it be? Can you increase it more?

The City, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto established what level of housing was achievable after taking into consideration the existing policy framework, public policy priorities, transportation network, and proposed community and servicing infrastructure.

Our new design incorporates elements of each of the three 2023 approaches and achieves the highest amount proposed in the three approaches presented in 2023 (+60% GFA), to maximize the amount of housing that can be delivered.

Various parts of the Island will have different built forms. The western blocks have similar densities to CityPlace and the eastern and Keating Channel blocks will have shorter towers, with similar densities and built form to the West Don Lands.

Parks and Greenspace:

Questions about parks and greenspace were mostly focused on the recreational activities that will be available in the parks or asking if the amount of greenspace could be increased.

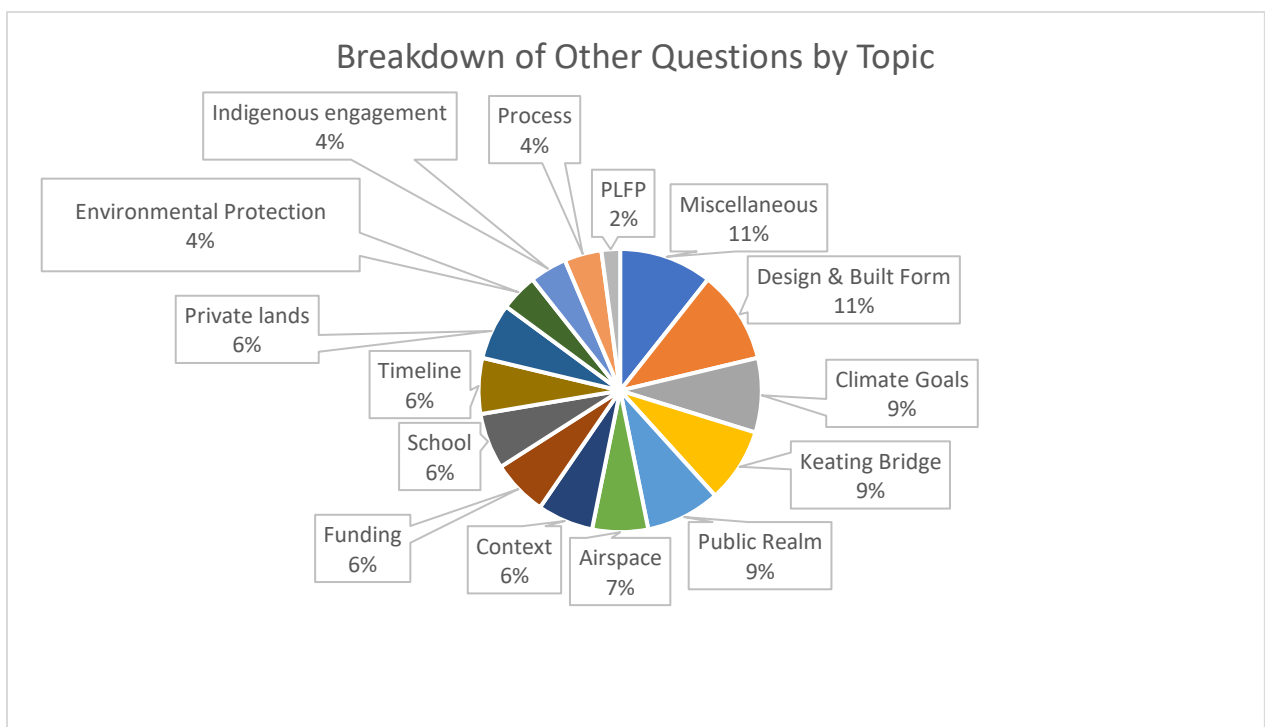
Can you increase the size of the parks more?

The Island is almost 40 hectares, almost half of which is natural greenspace and parks. Thanks to Port Lands Flood Protection, the Island sits next to an extension of the Don Valley system: the new river valley and associated wetlands, habitats and parkland create almost 17 hectares of open greenspace.

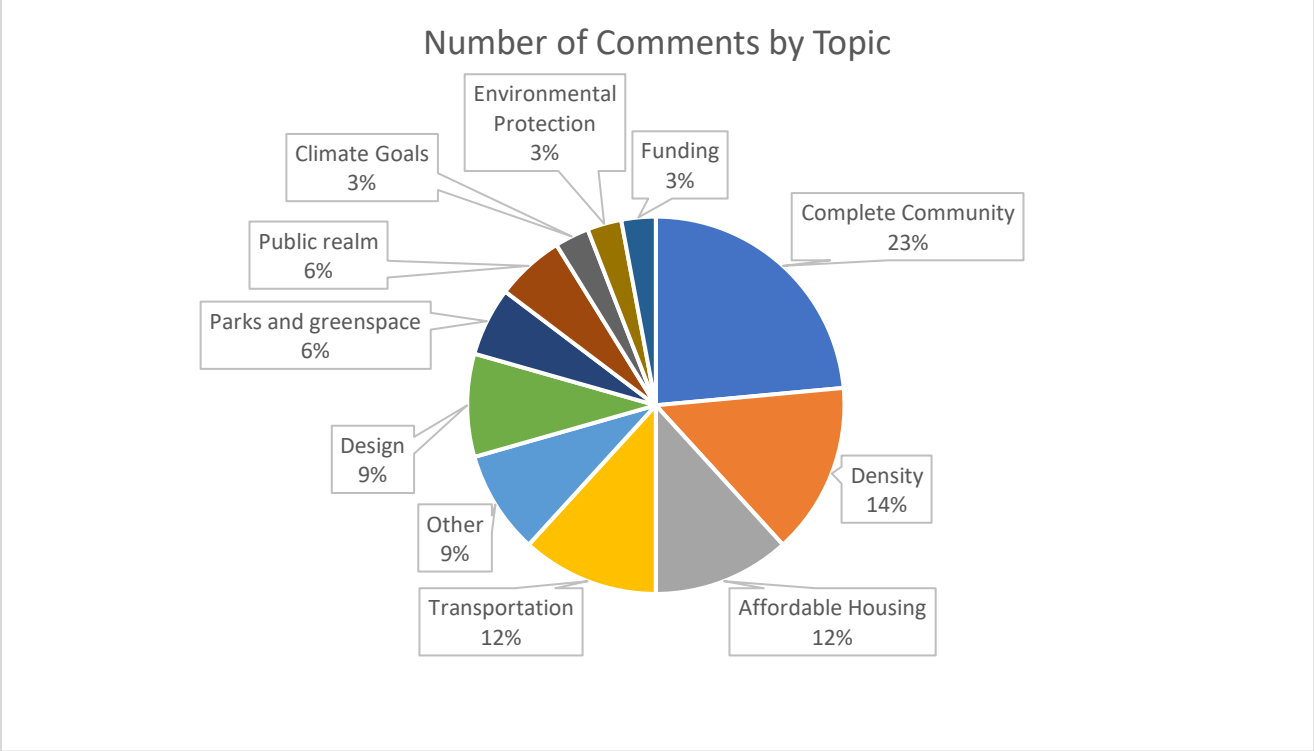
While this natural green space and destination parkland serves a much larger area than just the island community, residents will benefit from it. Think of it as similar to neighbourhoods that are close to the Don River valley ravine system north of the Port Lands. It will be a valued ecological resource for people who live nearby. In addition to that natural river system, the island community is planned to have just over two hectares of local parks. These will include amenities that serve the local school and community members.

Other:

45% of questions fell into other categories and are answered in Appendix A.



Summary of Comment Themes:



Of 36 comments, most focused on creating a complete community, with similar sentiments to the questions on that topic: a support for vibrant street-level retail and commercial spaces, and support for creating a community that is accessible and inclusive to everyone. All comments on density supported increasing it beyond the 60% outlined in the proposed changes. Comments about affordable housing were supportive of the efforts to increase it on Villiers Island and elsewhere in Toronto. Comments about transportation were in support of active transportation and stating the need for well connected transit.

Social Media Comments

While public meetings are one way of getting feedback, we also pay attention to social media conversations that we’re tagged in to gather additional feedback. Throughout the report-back period, we were tagged in 26 conversations about the Density Study. The common themes of those discussions were:

- The widths of the rights-of-way, and the proposed mode split between them
- The need for transit connectivity
- A desire for increased density

The most frequent topic conversation was the widths of the rights-of-way and the proposed mode split.

Why Does This Plan Make So Much Space For Cars? Why Are We Building Such Wide Roads?

In planning language, a right-of-way (ROW) refers to all the public space between buildings. It includes the roadway for vehicles, transit lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, medians, planters, and buffers. While the ROWs for the recently opened New Cherry and Commissioners Streets are around 40-metres, the space for cars is 6.6 metres, which is two lanes. At some locations, this expands by 3 metres for turning lanes.

The rest of the ROW is dedicated to separated transit lanes, cycling, walking and landscaping. These streets are major routes on and off the island, so they have space for all modes of transportation.

The future ROWs on the Island are planned to be between 18-20 metres, some with one vehicular lane; others with none. Some of the street cross-sections you may have seen show extra space between the sidewalks and building faces, called setbacks. These have been eliminated, still leaving enough space for amenities like street furniture and bikeshare stands and activity created by retail.

Future Engagement

During the public meetings we opened a poll to gauge interest in future consultations. 148 people responded to the poll with their interest in the following topics:

- Housing (70%)
- Public Realm and Streets (69%)
- Transportation Planning (57%)
- Community Facilities (57%)
- Natural Environment and Stewardship (53%)
- Early uses on the Island (48%)
- A Framework for Reconciliation (27%)

An upcoming design process will take a more detailed look at the cross sections for these streets and the overall ROW. Through that process, some of what has been shown is likely to change. The design work that is still to come includes:

- Seven rights-of-ways that make up the interior transportation network
- Public spaces like parks and plazas
- The buildings themselves
- The Keating Channel urban boardwalk

That design process will:

- Confirm street cross-sections (i.e., what type of traffic each right-of-way will accommodate and how big each of those spaces will be)
- Identify materials for roads, sidewalks, buffers, etc.
- Examine how the right-of-way integrates with the buildings

Appendix A: Questions and Answers

The questions below were added to the chat during the virtual meeting submitted to the feedback box during the public drop-in. Edits have been made for clarity and similar questions were combined.

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Affordable Housing

What is the definition of "affordable housing"? Does it include rent-geared-to-income housing?

The 2024 proposed updates to the Villiers Island Precinct Plan include establishing a target of 30 per cent of residential gross floor area across all public development blocks to be set aside for affordable rental housing.

These affordable units on public lands will be secured as long-term or permanently affordable housing aligned with the City's income-based definition of affordable housing.

Achieving this affordable housing will require an intergovernmental funding and financing strategy.

Affordable Housing Definition:

Toronto City Council adopted Official Plan Amendment 558 – Updating the Definitions of Affordable Rental and Ownership Housing at its meeting on November 10, 2021, which revised the previous definition of affordable housing. The new definitions are intended to better respond to the needs of low- and moderate-income households by establishing definitions that are aligned with incomes instead of solely on market rents/prices.

Under the new definition, affordable rental housing refers to housing where the total monthly shelter cost (gross monthly rent, inclusive of utilities for heat, hydro, hot water and water) is at or below the lesser of one times the average City of Toronto rent, by dwelling unit type, as reported annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), or 30 per cent of the before-tax monthly income of renter households in the City of Toronto as follows:

1. Studio units: one-person households at or below the 50th percentile income
2. One-bedroom units: one-person households at or below the 60th percentile income
3. Two-bedroom units: two-person households at or below the 60th percentile income
4. Three-bedroom units: three-person households at or below the 60th percentile income

Affordable rents for 2024 can be found on the City's website.

How will you be ensuring affordability is maintained while developing a net zero community?

Creating energy efficient buildings with central heating and cooling will help to keep utility costs low. The higher costs associated with building more sustainable buildings will be reflected in the land sale price and absorbed by the City/Waterfront Toronto, not the future residents.

Will the privately owned buildings be required to build a percentage of affordable housing?

While the increased target of 30% affordable applies to the publicly-owned lands, City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto are working on ensuring that the private landowners on the island are providing as much affordable housing as possible.

How will individuals be selected for the affordable housing?

In July 2022, City Council directed the Housing Secretariat to establish a Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System, under which all affordable homes will be made available. The system will help people find and apply for available affordable housing and help affordable housing providers to advertise available homes and find tenants. The access system will be added to the MyAccessstoHousingTO system for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing. This will allow for affordable rental homes to be added and integrated into a 'one-window' system. The City's access system is being piloted and rolled out in 2025.

How do non-profit housing providers connect with Waterfront Toronto about this?

Non-profit housing providers can connect with WaterfrontTO by contacting info@waterfronttoronto.ca. It is a bit early in the process, but the team of City of Toronto, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto will be reaching out to potential partners. There are different options for providing the affordable housing and the strategy for Villiers Island has not been determined yet. As part of this work, we will ensure new development is guided by enabling Innovative partnerships; including advancing partnerships with Indigenous communities to ensure a complete community process.

How Can someone in Rent-Geared-to-Income housing elsewhere move into the units on Villiers Island?

Currently, there is no requirement for Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI) housing through the Villiers Island Precinct Plan.

The details of the affordable housing target for the Island will be further evaluated and determined in the Business and Implementation Plan and Affordable Housing Strategy associated with the implementation of the Precinct Plan update.

Is any co-op housing planned? Will affordable housing include residences specifically geared to senior citizens, including supportive housing? What percentage of affordable housing will be allocated for supportive housing?

There are different options for providing the affordable housing, including potentially co-op, seniors, or supportive housing, and the strategy for Villiers Island has not been determined yet. As part of this work, we will ensure new development is guided by enabling Innovative partnerships; including advancing partnerships with Indigenous communities to ensure a complete community process.

Why do you need to increase density to increase the amount of affordable housing? Can't you just require a higher ratio of affordable housing?

The decision to allocate 30% of units as affordable housing is driven by multiple factors, most importantly ensuring the financial viability of the project and building mixed-income communities. The City, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto work with developers to deliver these projects. The developers need to sell market-rate units to cover construction costs and make a profit. Developers bid based on what they will be able to build based on the zoning. A higher proportion of affordable housing reduces the amount of potential market units, which results in lower land sale proceeds, and decreases the amount of money that we can reinvest into building the affordable housing and public realm. So selecting the proportion of affordable units is a balancing act. This ensures that projects are financially viable and can attract investment. Proceeds from market unit sales can then be directed to fund the

construction of affordable housing and public spaces. This cross-subsidization is essential to finance the development of affordable units.

This approach addresses challenges across the housing continuum also and will help the City achieve the new Council-approved target of achieving 65,000 rent-controlled homes, which includes 41,000 affordable rental, 6,500 rent-geared-to-income and 17,500 rent-controlled market units. It also fosters diverse, vibrant neighborhoods, enhancing social cohesion and community well-being. The mixed-income community in Villiers Island will positively impact residents and in particular, equity-deserving groups to access a safe, adequate and affordable place to call home.

Is the 30% target affordable housing for rental only? What about affordable home ownership?

The 30% target is for affordable rental housing only. There are no targets for affordable home ownership to share publicly right now, but it is something that could be considered.

Is the new city affordable housing system [Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System] separate from the RGI waiting list? Or does it build on top of the existing wait-list system?

The City's new Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System, once it is established, will provide a one-window approach through the City's existing MyAccessToHousingTO portal, for applicants to apply for both rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing and affordable housing.

Why not increase the proportion of affordable housing by more? Why can't all the units be affordable?

The decision to allocate 30% of units as affordable housing is driven by multiple factors, most importantly ensuring the financial viability of the project and building mixed-income communities. The City, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto work with developers to deliver these projects. The developers need to sell market-rate units to cover construction costs and make a profit. Developers bid based on what they will be able to build based on the zoning. A higher proportion of affordable housing reduces the amount of potential market units, which results in lower land sale proceeds, and decreases the amount of money that we can reinvest into building the affordable housing and public realm. So, selecting the proportion of affordable units is a balancing act. This ensures that projects are financially viable and can attract investment. Proceeds from market unit sales can then be directed to fund the construction of affordable housing and public spaces. This cross-subsidization is essential to finance the development of affordable units.

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How will you prevent short-term rentals (e.g. AirBnB) from taking up a large number of the units?

- City Council approved limiting operators to renting short-term rentals for a total of 180 nights per calendar year (regardless of whether the rental is a partial or entire unit rental).
- City Council has requested that the Government of Canada clarify the eligibility criteria and related funding allocation of \$50 million for municipalities to support enforcement of short-term rental restrictions, as noted in the 2024 Federal Budget.
- Further, the Council-approved Short-Term Rental Regulatory Framework came into effect in August 2020 (licensing and zoning regulations) and January 2021 (Municipal Accommodation Tax).

- The City's short-term rental bylaw is likely responsible for between 3,320 and 5,100 housing units returning to the long-term market.

How do we apply for the housing opportunity?

In July 2022, City Council directed the Housing Secretariat to establish a Centralized Affordable Rental Housing Access System, under which all affordable homes will be made available. The system will help people find and apply for available affordable housing and help affordable housing providers to advertise available homes and find tenants.

As the City works to develop the new system, in the interim, all affordable rental homes in new buildings are posted on the City's website (<https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/community-partners/housing-partners/affordable-rental-homes/>) where you can also subscribe to the ListServ to receive updates. Information about new Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) affordable homes can be found on TCHC's website at <https://www.torontohousing.ca/prospective-tenants/affordable-housing>.

How can you fast track the processes leading to the construction stage to deliver affordable housing faster?

The timeline for the start of development depends on when the project team is able to secure funding for this next phase of work.

Once funding is secured, work on infrastructure and development partnerships can begin, and the current timeline anticipates the first people could be moving in by 2031.

Waterfront Toronto, the City of Toronto and CreateTO will work collaboratively to advance plans and approvals for housing on the island as fast as possible.

One of the key next steps is to design the infrastructure and public realm, and we're taking steps to continue that work through the rest of 2024 (and beyond), and there will be public consultation associated with that.

Airspace

How will the heliport's increased flights and helicopters affect this project? Are they going to limit heights of buildings? Or will the heights of buildings limit the helicopter business? Is there a helicopter launch pad right next to Promontory Park? What about how noisy they are?

Helipads are regulated by the federal government. The existing helipad at 20 Polson Street is operating under a certificate from Transport Canada which was approved in 2016. The Port Lands has been home to a helipad since about 1998. PortsToronto is responsible for taking in all noise complaints within its airspace. This includes helicopters. Any noise complaints related to operations out of 20 Polson will be forwarded by PortsToronto to the helipad operator to resolve. The proposed buildings will not impact the helipads operations.

Climate Goals

Will Villiers Island be net carbon zero by operation or by design? Is this focused on balancing any operating costs and offsets any taxpayers' cost numbers?

Our plan is to design the buildings and infrastructure on the island to be net-zero carbon, in partnership with utilities such as Enwave Energy Corporation.

Future buildings on Villiers Island will be designed to demonstrate 'net zero' carbon emissions, using whole-building energy modelling (by design). This is based on the requirements set out in the Toronto Green Standard and Waterfront Toronto Green Building Requirements. We will also be advancing a limitation on embodied carbon, informed by recent work at the City of Toronto, alongside the requirements for net zero operational emissions.

Will district heating and cooling be a requirement of the city-controlled development?

We expect that development on city-owned lands will connect to a low-carbon thermal energy network (i.e. district energy), although details will be refined as the district energy system and buildings advance through design.

The City of Toronto has a Joint Development Agreement with Enwave Energy Corporation which includes a 'node' on Villiers Island.

Are there any details about the planned district energy you can share?

Technical details are not yet defined, but there is some high-level information we can share: The City of Toronto has a Joint Development Agreement with Enwave Energy Corporation which includes a node on Villiers Island. The city and Enwave are considering several options, including deep geothermal and geoexchange energy.

There are benefits of connecting into the central DE system in Toronto, sharing back low-carbon energy (e.g. geothermal) from Villiers Island with the rest of the city.

More design and cost-benefit analysis will be required by the City and Enwave before moving forward.

Is the Enwave lake water cooling system being considered for this development?

An extension of Enwave's deep lake water cooling system to Villiers Island is under consideration.

The City of Toronto has a Joint Development Agreement with Enwave Energy Corporation which includes a node on Villiers Island.

[Complete Community](#)

How will you keep Villiers Island from feeling isolated from the rest of the city?

The planning of Villiers Island has always set a clear goal of creating a complete community connected by transit. The Transportation and Servicing Master Plan for the broader area projects that as many as 70% of residents and visitors to the island will be using transit in the future. This is why it's critical that the Waterfront East LRT receive funding to support finalizing the design work and starting construction. Plans to extend the streetcar into Villiers Island will, in conjunction with dedicated cycling lanes and generous pedestrian connections, help make sure it's accessible to all.

In addition to transportation connections, the Precinct Plan specifies that there will be a mix of residential and commercial uses on the island, encouraging animating uses, like retail and cultural spaces. While Villiers Island feels remote right now, as the entire area transforms, the demand for facilities and services will grow, creating a more attractive location for retailers and service providers throughout the Port Lands and surrounding areas.

A Meanwhile Use strategy will also be developed to encourage and guide the introduction of a variety of temporary uses to help animate the Island while development progresses over the next 25+ years. Specific community facilities will also be required to locate on the island including a school, a community centre, a library and day care spaces, all surrounded by new parks, playgrounds and open spaces. All of this will create a complete community that feels connected and whole.

What design considerations are in place to ensure that the mixture of affordable and market housing is such that a single, unified community is created?

Developers haven't been selected yet. They will be selected through an international competition where proponents will bring forth their vision for the island. This is a similar process to what has occurred in Quayside, where Quayside Impact Limited Partnership was selected. (Read more about Quayside <https://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/our-projects/quayside>). Once selected, developers will be required to bring their proposed designs to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel for reviews.

How will accessibility be incorporated into future developments? How many units will be physically accessible?

Waterfront Toronto launched the Accessible Design Guidelines in 2024, which will help to ensure the public realm is accessible. The minimum number of accessible affordable rental units will follow the City of Toronto affordable rental housing design guidelines. The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, who we expect to work with to finance the construction of the units, also has some requirements about the number and kind of accessible units which we will meet or exceed.

Why were public facilities located near the edge of the community instead of more centrally? Why aren't they more connected?

The locations of communities amenities shown are still conceptual, and their location will evolve with the plans for the island. We're planning for a complete community, which includes space for retail opportunities and service providers.

While Villiers Island feels remote right now, as the entire area transforms, the demand for facilities and services will grow, creating a more attractive location for retailers and service providers throughout the Port Lands and surrounding areas.

A new library is going into the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood. Will Villiers Island have one too?

Yes. The Island will have one as well.

What hospital will serve the new residents?

Existing hospitals will serve the new residents.

What retail/commercial opportunities will be part of this new community?

A consultant was engaged to produce a commercial study for Villiers Island, and it concluded that the Precinct Plan overestimated the amount of retail that could likely be successful on the island, especially in the early stages of the development of the island. They also concluded that big changes in the retail landscape, including COVID and the explosion in online shopping with home delivery, has further reduced the demand for bricks and mortar retail.

We're planning as best as we can for a successful retail landscape, including a grocery store, but much of this will ultimately be a result of market forces.

However, a potential benefit of increased densities on the island is the increase in residents and therefore customers for local retail stores.

Will there be schools or recreation programs for seniors?

A community centre is planned for Villiers Island and a Community Facilities and Services Study in 2023 recommended increasing its size. Programming will be determined by the community centre operator.

How are you making sure that places of 'weak social bonds' (e.g., grocery store, bakery, restaurants, clinics, etc.) will be included in the new community?

A consultant was engaged to produce a commercial activation study for Villiers Island, and it concluded that the Precinct Plan overestimated the amount of retail that could likely be successful on the island, especially in the early stages of the development of the island. They also concluded that big changes in the retail landscape, including COVID and the explosion in online shopping with home delivery, has further reduced the demand for bricks and mortar retail.

We're planning as best as we can for a successful retail landscape, including a grocery store, but much of this will ultimately be a result of market forces.

However, a potential benefit of increased densities on the island is the increase in residents and therefore customers for local retail stores.

Will there be a city-based effort to assist the growth of a 'culture' unique to the island including the park spaces? How would Indigenous peoples be involved?

Many Indigenous placekeeping and cultural revitalization initiatives are being advanced by the City, Waterfront Toronto, CreateTO, including park feature and landscape design, plantings and stewardship, public art and interpretive signage, planning and design studies, and infrastructure design. A framework for reconciliation action in the Port Lands will be developed that coordinates, communicates, and guides the many current and future actions in the Port Lands that can support the Reconciliation Action Plan, including precinct plans, design guideline studies, park and infrastructure designs, placekeeping initiatives, public art initiatives and future opportunities around affordable housing, economic development and stewardship.

How will the area be preserved to be safe and enjoyable for all, including local residents who already live in the area?

Villiers Island does not have any residents yet. The plans for Villiers Island, as well as the nearby precincts, take into account the surrounding neighbourhoods that do have residents. While construction across the eastern waterfront may cause some disruption in the near-term, the plans for all of these neighbourhoods is to create safe and welcoming places for everyone.

[Context](#)

What are the plans for the rest of the Port Lands?

These neighbourhoods also fall under the Port Lands Planning Framework, and will be subject to their own precinct planning exercise. The changing context around Villiers Island and the increased density of the Central Waterfront will be at play in these areas too. Work is about to start on the plans for the McCleary District, and Phase 1 of a two-phase exercise to update the 2010 Keating Channel Precinct Plan has recently started.

Could film studios and other privately owned commercial lands be relocated? Why are we prioritizing these uses on such valuable lands?

The Port Lands and South of Eastern Employment District have long been established as the central cluster for the screen industry in Toronto. Many of the city's premier studio facilities, including Pinewood Studios, Cinespace Studios, and Revival 629, Unwin Studio, and the planned Basin Media Hub are located in the area, along with related ancillary businesses. These industries provide valuable employment for Torontonians and act as catalysts for urban revitalization. The City is working closely with the Toronto Film, Television and Digital Media Board, industry partners, and other orders of government, to support a major economic driver and reinforce its position as one of the leading production markets in North America.

Density

What are the hard infrastructure/buildability limits to density? Why are you limiting density at all?

The island will be a high-density neighborhood, with a minimum of 450 people and jobs per hectare. Determining the density of the community is about balancing growth and development with the capacity of infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and the quality of life of residents. The precinct plan was updated to significantly increase densities and create vibrant, livable, and sustainable communities. Realizing the vision will require significant investment and upgrades to infrastructure. Key factors considered included the relationship to nearby waterfront communities, planned transit infrastructure, community services, open space and parkland, and land use compatibility. The development aims to create a comfortable and well-connected public realm.

Why not distribute the increased density over all the buildings?

The variation in tower heights achieves several important goals. Primarily, taller towers increase opportunities for more housing and more affordable housing units on limited publicly owned lands. Achieving the same number of housing units in buildings without taller towers would result in significantly “chunkier” buildings that wouldn’t allow light to penetrate to the majority of the streets and public realm on the island.

When sited properly and with adequate tower separation distances (40m is the standard on Villiers while the tall building guidelines recommend 25m for the rest of the city), shadow impacts are minimized and move more quickly over the surrounding lands. For instance, placing towers strategically can optimize sunlight reaching streets and public spaces throughout the day.

Different tower heights also make the urban design more interesting, adding architectural appeal. They also help define how the neighborhood connects with the new river valley, the existing Keating Channel, the Harbour, and views of the Islands' heritage sites.

Furthermore, tower heights influence the public spaces by affecting wind patterns, shading, and the feeling of openness. By carefully thinking about how tower heights work, the precinct plan can improve residents' quality of life and enhance the experience of living on and visiting the Island. The way the towers' heights are planned will create an environment that's comfortable for those who live there and inviting for those who come to explore."

Does the change in density change the city's objection to the density proposed for 309 Cherry Street?

Staff cannot comment on the matter as the rezoning application is subject to ongoing litigation before the Ontario Land Tribunal.

What is the expected population of Villiers Island?

Over 15,000 people.

Why don't you make Promontory Park larger instead of building west of Cherry Street?

This study responds to direction from City Council to increase the Density on Villiers Island. It responds to:

- The urgent need to increase the supply of housing in Toronto, including affordable housing
- Changing context of nearby neighbourhoods that are also increasing in density

Villiers Island is surrounded by regional-scale parkland and greenspace that will serve the broader area as well as local residents. Including planned local parks, the total parks and natural greenspaces (which includes wetlands and aquatic habitats) is 50 acres. So the community that develops here will have a lot of park space.

As one of the largest areas of publicly-owned land in downtown Toronto, Villiers Island presents a unique opportunity to make a big difference in the housing supply.

Density brings much needed housing but also helps to create a successful community by making it easier for new retail and cultural uses to thrive and making a stronger case for new transit needed to avoid traffic from too many vehicles and to meet sustainability goals.

How does the proposed density compare to that of other dense neighbourhoods of Toronto? Are there any notable neighbourhoods around the world that currently demonstrate what the proposed density would be like?

Various parts of Villiers Island have different built forms. The western blocks have similar densities to CityPlace and the eastern and Keating Channel blocks will have shorter towers, with similar densities and built form to the West Don Lands.

What was the rationale for locating the towers where you did?

Key principles from the 2017 precinct plan have been maintained while introducing added density. This included avoiding shadowing on new aquatic habitats, generally located below top-of-bank which limited building heights on the eastern side of the island. The western blocks can accommodate greater heights with minimal shadow impacts key public realm areas and are well located near a future LRT stop.

Do the building heights you showed include the base buildings?

Building heights shared refer to the total height, including both the podium and tower components.

Why don't we spread the density around instead of overconcentrating it in places like Villiers?

As one of the largest areas of government-owned land in downtown Toronto, Villiers Island presents a unique opportunity to make a big difference in the housing supply. While density is increasing in many places around the city, the majority of land is privately owned, which results in a piecemeal approach to increasing density as developments come up on a case-by-case basis.

What are the proposed heights for the towers closest to the transit stops?

The proposed tower heights are approximately 140 metres or 46 storeys.

How can you have infrastructure limitations if the infrastructure isn't built yet?

It is important to clarify that new subsurface infrastructure has been built under new rights-of-way constructed as part of the Port Lands Flood Protection project, including sanitary and storm sewers, utilities and more, although this in itself is not necessarily a limiting factor. There would be a cost associated with making further changes to existing infrastructure, or increasing the size/capacity of future infrastructure.

The expansion of municipal services on the island, such as sanitary sewers, must consider the capacity of downstream infrastructure that serves multiple redeveloping areas, including Villiers Island as well as East Harbour, McCleary Precinct, South River and more.

Design and Built Form

Who are the architects of the new buildings?

Developers haven't been selected yet. They will be selected through an international competition where proponents will bring forth their vision for the island. This is a similar process to what has occurred in Quayside, where Quayside Impact Limited Partnership was selected. (Read more about Quayside <https://www.waterfrontoronto.ca/our-projects/quayside>). Once selected, developers will still need to bring their designs to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel.

Will there be any publicly accessible greenroofs?

Developers and designs haven't been selected yet, so it is premature to state what kinds of amenities future buildings will offer.

What will the underground parking opportunities be?

Developers and designs haven't been selected yet, so it is premature to state what kinds of amenities future buildings will offer.

How will you ensure the buildings on Villiers Island will not be bland or uninspiring?

The buildings are also not yet designed. The Zoning Bylaw that will be considered by City Council in June will specify Gross Floor Areas per block and a large building envelope, providing lots of flexibility. Stepbacks and setbacks have been removed to allow for more design expression as work progresses.

There is also a significant amount of design work still to come for public rights of way, including streets, and other public spaces. The foundation of this future neighborhood is its innovative green space and unique parkland, set to open in 2025. These parks and the river valley will be a unique ecological asset, forming the backbone of the new neighborhood. This landscape will extend throughout the island, including streetscapes, public spaces, and walkways. Low-impact design approaches have been used to integrate Cherry and Commissioners Streets with the surrounding landscape. The northern edge of the island will feature an urban boardwalk along the Keating Channel, a unique spot in Toronto. The Keating Channel will remain an urban waterway, with promenades on both sides. This area will be a vibrant public space with shops, cafes, and a tree-lined walkway connected to Quayside by a new pedestrian bridge.

To build on this foundation, detailed design work for the streets and public realm will define street cross sections, incorporate midblock connections into an integrated street network and public spaces, as well as providing an opportunity for community input. This work will advance the vision for a compact and walkable community featuring lively public spaces that integrate seamlessly with the landscape established by the Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP). The plan includes becoming Canada's first climate-positive community, with an emphasis on sustainable and interactive public spaces.

Environmental Protection

How will these tall towers impact wildlife? Especially birds. Will these new tall buildings impact the flight paths of birds that use Tommy Thompson Park?

The Toronto Green Standard includes bird-friendly guidelines such as visual markers, building-integrated structures to mute reflections on glass surfaces, non-reflective glass, which would apply on Villiers Island.

It is generally accepted that the lower stories of buildings are the most dangerous to birds because they are at the same level as trees and other landscape features that attract birds. However, monitoring programs accessing setbacks and roofs of tall buildings are finding that birds also collide with higher levels especially during inclement weather at night.

Collision is generally a consequence of two things: night-lighting and glass. Given the sustainability ambitions for Villiers, we effectively deal with both. We would anticipate that all lighting will be on timers, thus will not operate as much at night. Second, the window-to-wall ratio will be lower than in business-as-usual buildings in order to achieve the thermal energy demand intensity targets. In other words, the facades of future towers will likely not be dominated by glazing.

Funding

What is the total cost to the public? Where will the funding come from?

Beyond the Port Lands Flood Protection project (to create the island), there will be considerable additional public investments required to service the lands, provide parks and community facilities.

- A new light rail line (WELRT)
- Enabling infrastructure (streets, pipes)
- Affordable housing

- Parks and public realm (Villiers Park, Promontory Park North, Keating Channel Promenade)

Multiple billions of dollars of public investment are required. We are refining our cost estimates and engaging actively with the Provincial and Federal governments.

We are also still working on finalizing a Business and Implementation Plan with inputs from the density study. Then we will work with our partners to determine the best way to fund and phase this.

Is there a publicized financial plan?

An update on the business and implementation plan is expected later this year, which will include details on the scope of work and the available funding.

Has a financial feasibility analysis been undertaken on the 30% affordable requirement for new developments including public-private partnerships? If that requirement makes new development unfeasible, will there be flexibility so that housing can be delivered?

At this time, we are targeting 30% affordable rental housing on all public development sites on the island, which would rely on government contributions. We are also conducting some preliminary market sounding with the development industry, and working with government partners on the financial implications and funding plan.

Indigenous Engagement

Who are your Indigenous partners?

The City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto have been meeting with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation on the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization and Port Lands Flood Protection more broadly, building on Waterfront Toronto's long-term relationship and MOU with the Mississaugas of the Credit and their participation in the Port Lands Flood Protection project. In addition, there has been extensive engagement with other Indigenous communities and organizations throughout flood protection project.

With regards to Port Lands place naming and placekeeping, a Circle of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language speakers and community members from across multiple First Nations, including Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation, Williams Treaty Nations and Métis Nation of Ontario have been meeting throughout spring and summer 2024 to discuss and recommend Indigenous place names for "Villiers" Island, parkland and streets.

The City of Toronto is now embarking on a broader Indigenous community engagement process to discuss opportunities for advancing the Reconciliation Action Plan in the Port Lands. This includes things like affordable housing, economic development, placekeeping, public realm and art, and cultural and language revitalization. This includes invitations to 1:1 meetings with First Nations and urban Indigenous communities, discussions with the Indigenous Advisory Circle for Port Lands place naming, and an upcoming urban Indigenous community event.

A key priority in the City's [HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan](#) is to improve Indigenous Peoples' access to safe, secure, affordable, and culturally-appropriate homes. To advance this objective, the City continues to work closely with Indigenous-led organizations to deliver a range of new housing options for Indigenous residents in neighbourhoods all across Toronto.

The City's Housing Secretariat has entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Miziwe Biik Development Corporation (MBDC); as well as TICAB and ALFDC to advance outcomes and objectives co-developed as part of these MOUs. They include approving "5,200 for Indigenous, By-Indigenous" affordable and supportive homes, as well as targeting the allocation of 20% of housing grant fundings to Indigenous organizations.

In light of the Reconciliation lens, will the City be acceding to the demands of TICAB (Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board) by transferring ownership of land to Indigenous housing providers as part of the development process?

Through the [City's Reconciliation Action Plan](#), the City has committed to work towards "returning land and stewardship rights" to Indigenous Peoples including actions such as developing a framework to guide the City's real estate acquisitions and disposal processes and policies that affect Indigenous communities; and making every effort to facilitate the transfer of stewardship, control, and/or ownership of lands and waters to Indigenous Nations, communities, collectives, and organizations and agencies.

In 2022, City Council [approved](#) the conveyance of the City- owned site at 15 Denison Avenue to an Indigenous housing provider to design, build, finance, own and operate a new mixed-use affordable rental housing development. The Indigenous housing provider will be selected through a Request for Proposal process.

In 2022, City Council reasserted the Mission of the Reconciliation Action Plan which states that 'The City will dedicate time, space, and money with the goal of Returning land to Indigenous governments, communities, collectives, and organizations' and further include that the mission of the Reconciliation Action Plan applies to agencies, boards and commissions, including Waterfront Toronto and CreateTO, and should be a core consideration in redevelopment of all City-owned properties." This will be reiterated through a future framework on cultural revitalization and reconciliation action in the Port Lands.

The related AAAC and City Council motions reasserting the mission of the Reconciliation Action Plan, are below:

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.AA18.2>

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2022.EX34.38>

Keating Channel Pedestrian Bridge

Which design won the Keating Channel Pedestrian Bridge design competition?

WilkinsonEyre's, design concept, Equinox Bridge, was selected following a design competition that attracted submissions from leading local, national, and international firms.

Will there be a pedestrian bridge from Bayside?

A pedestrian bridge is in the early stages of design which will connect the Keating Channel West precinct near Parliament Slip to Promontory Park North on Villiers Island

When will the Keating Channel Pedestrian Bridge be built?

Construction is expected to begin in the next year or so, with a tentative completion date of 2026.

Will the pedestrian bridges also accommodate bikes?

The bridge is intended to carry pedestrians and active transportation users, including cyclists.

Other

Will the ward have its own electoral representative?

The new island is currently part of Ward 14 (Toronto-Danforth). In 2018, the Province of Ontario passed the Better Local Government Act, which aligned the municipal wards of Toronto with the provincial electoral districts. Electoral boundaries are periodically reviewed and adjusted to accommodate population growth and demographic shifts. However, it is unlikely that the new island will ever have its own dedicated electoral representative. The population size of approximately 15,000 residents does not meet the existing criteria typically required for a separate electoral ward, which is around 120,000 residents.

What facilities or events will encourage tourists to visit and stay on Villiers Island?

The initial portion of the park system opening in summer 2025 will include an adventure playground including ziplines, a children's outdoor theatre, sculptures and water activities, and beyond the adventure playground there will be an event lawn, a picnic and BBQ area, trails, water access, and washrooms. More information to come - there will be plenty to do!

What will happen to the Harbour Lead Line?

The decision to remove the Harbour Lead Line has not been officially approved by City Council yet. However, the removal of the line in the area of the Lake Shore Boulevard East project was approved by the city.

Wasn't REBEL trying to become a 20k person nightclub? How will existing uses like this coexist with future residential development?

To address the conflicts between nightlife and residential living, nightclubs will need to comply with existing noise bylaws. Further, by the time buildings will obtain their development approvals and begin construction on Villiers Island, the fourth version of the Waterfront Toronto Green Building Requirements will apply. These requirements will include stringent building standards, including thermal energy demand intensity targets, which will lead to higher-performing buildings with thicker insulation and triple-paned windows, which will often help to dampen interior noise levels even further.

How can we find more about pre-construction opportunities next to the Parliament Slip?

The development next to Parliament Slip is part of Quayside. You can learn more about Quayside here: <https://quaysideto.ca/>.

Parks and Greenspace

What kind of small boat amenities will be in the parks? (Storage, rental, etc.)

The Villiers Island park system will have multiple places where canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards can launch into the new Don River. The City is currently exploring options and locations for storage, rentals, and other opportunities for the public to access watercraft and experience the water.

How will you manage the increase of dogs to the area? Is there a dog park?

The new parks include two dog off-leash areas, south of Commissioners Street. The new parks we are building include 6.1km of recreational trails. Villiers Island is also quite close to the Cherry Beach Off Leash Area, which is one of the biggest in the city.

What swimming opportunities will there be? What will the water's edge be made of?

There will be multiple access points to the water of the new Don River to facilitate non-motorized boating, fishing and dipping your feet in the water, if that is of interest. Some of these are pebble beaches, and some are stone 'steps'. Swimming in the river is not recommended. Park users are encouraged to make use of one of the nearby "Blue Flag" beaches for swimming including Cherry Beach, Ward's Island Beach, or Centre Island Beach.

How will you keep people recreating on the water safe? Canoe Cove is right across from very large vessels.

Large vessels will not be permitted in the new river itself, but the Inner Harbour is still an active place, and the Port Lands contains working port uses. The public will need to exercise caution as with other publicly accessible water bodies. It is important to remember that this will be a river, so there will be a current. There will be multiple locations and destinations within the river park system to access the water and/or exit the water. Canoe Cove, part of Promontory Park South, is designed to be a calm and sheltered collection of small islands that can be explored by canoes, kayaks, and SUPs.

Can you use volunteers to help plant the trees and get the parks open sooner?

We can't offer opportunities for the public to work on an active construction site, but there should be lots of opportunities to volunteer with the City's Parks department or TRCA once the parks and river valley are open.

Private Lands

How will private landowners with historical business in the area be protected?

Private landowners with historical businesses are vital to the character and economic diversity of the neighbourhood. Continuous consultation with business owners will ensure their needs are addressed and to help them adapt to the evolving urban landscape.

Will you be expropriating any buildings?

No buildings are proposed to be expropriated.

How tall are the buildings on privately owned lands going to be?

The height of the buildings on private lands are subject to ongoing litigation before the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Process

Are the street and block layouts subject to change?

The Precinct Plan outlines the streets and blocks for this new neighbourhood. The locations and designs for New Cherry and Commissioners Streets were determined through the Environmental Assessment process, while the general locations of the local streets were established through subsequent studies and the Precinct Planning process. This plan is the foundation for a new neighbourhood on Villiers Island, and it's a

starting point, not the end point. The Zoning Bylaw City Council passed this summer will specify the Floor Space Index (FSI) per block and a large building envelope within which buildings can be designed. FSI is the relationship between the total amount of usable floor area and the total area of the property, or development block, on which it stands. Focusing on FSI rather than Gross Floor Area (GFA) creates more room for the GFA permissions for a block to adjust if the block's boundaries are moved in response to future right-of-way and public realm design work. While the foundation of the plan won't change, there is ample opportunity for changes as development proceeds over the next several years.

Infrastructure and public realm design work is anticipated to commence in late 2024 which will include examining the currently planned right-of-way widths and determine how best to optimize them and allocate this space to different modes of travel, the public realm and planting zones. This work will also explore and recommend how best to organize mid-block connections into and through the development blocks to increase porosity and the public realm on the Island. The massing you see on the demonstration plans is conceptual. The ultimate siting and massing of buildings on the development blocks will depend on the proposals brought forth by developers and reviewed by City and Waterfront Toronto staff and the Design Review Panel.

How did Waterfront Toronto create the original plan? Why wasn't increased density included in the original plan?

The 2017 Precinct Plan was developed alongside a robust consultation process, including presentations to the Waterfront Design Review Panel, meetings with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and the Land Owners and Users Advisory Committee, public meetings, and extensive and collaborative work between Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto.

The 2017 plan reflected the context and priorities at that time. A lot has changed since 2017, including increased density in the surrounding neighbourhoods and an urgent need for more housing across the city. With amendments, the plan creates the foundation needed to deliver on the original vision of I be a compact and walkable community featuring lively public spaces that integrate seamlessly with the landscape established by the Port Lands Flood Protection. The plan includes becoming Canada's first climate-positive community, with an emphasis on sustainable and interactive public spaces.

Public Realm

What is the vision for the old Keating Channel?

The vision for the Keating Channel is for it to be a vibrant urban canal with generous water's edge promenades on both the north and south edges. It is planned to be an important east-west pedestrian thoroughfare along a unique urban waterway. Buildings situated along the Island's south water's edge promenade will require active retail and dining uses at grade with patio and spill-out opportunities on both their north and south frontages.

How did you arrive at the street-grid plan for the island? Why not make some of the roads closed to cars?

The design of Villiers Island has its roots in a 2007 international design competition, which significantly shaped the Port Lands Flood Protection (PLFP) Project, public spaces and urban design, setting high standards for the area's development. This vision was further refined through the Lower Don Lands

Environmental Assessments (2010 and 2014), which turned these designs into actionable infrastructure plans, establishing the major street network and servicing strategies crucial for future developments.

The existing roads delivered through PLFP are required for adjacent industrial users and accessing the island. They include two lanes of vehicular traffic (one in each direction), space for a dedicated transit line, biking and walking, as well as space for green infrastructure that will contribute to the neighbourhood's resilience by managing stormwater and supporting healthy street trees.

The Transportation and Servicing Master Plan Environmental Assessment identified that 70% of people could be accessing the island via transit in the future. Applying this to planning for the island, all remaining streets should (and will) be designed to prioritize pedestrians, cyclists and public transit to the greatest extent possible.

Concept and schematic design (starting later this year) will define these cross sections, determine the program for the streets, material choices, and more. This work will include public engagement. No street will have more than one lane in each direction, accommodating necessary services such as emergency and sanitation, as well as industrial vehicles on and off the island. Many streets will be pedestrian priority and one will be pedestrian only.

Why are all the streets between the buildings so large?

The rights-of-way between the buildings include more than just roadway. Space in the right of way for pedestrians, cyclists and transit users has been prioritized, with only about 15% of space dedicated to vehicular traffic. This means generous sidewalks and, in some places, separate bike lanes. Streets already built through Port Lands Flood Protection have been designed with low-impact development approaches and green infrastructure, which will give greenspace and trees space to thrive and allow a more natural, less manicured landscape to develop in the rights of way. This design means extra space was needed for the green landscaped portions of the rights of way.

How will you ensure good urban design principles are followed?

To ensure our future work follows good urban design principles, we will follow the thorough process that will focus on the spaces between the buildings and streets.

The plans you see now are just initial ideas showing potential building sizes and layouts for each block, as a representation of the density on the island. Each block will go through a detailed master planning or site planning, and design process, adhering to specific rules in the planning policies such as maximum density, building heights, and the distances between towers.

While there are limitations to the density (how much floor space you can built on each block), the exact form of the buildings can vary. Every design proposal will be reviewed by the Waterfront Design Review Panel (WDRP) to ensure they meet our high standards for design excellence in architecture, sustainability, public realm – all the elements which will address good urban design principles.

Furthermore, the spaces between buildings, such as streets and parks outside the PLFP project area, have not yet been designed. Later this year, we will start planning these areas, focusing on:

- Creating programs for open spaces and identifying what amenities are needed on Villiers Island;

- Designing parks and streets to enhance the public realm, which include: Villiers Park, Keating Channel Promenade, Silo Square, Promontory Park North, and Villiers Street, Trinity Street, Munitions Street, Villiers Park Street, Old Cherry Streets;
- Ensuring that public spaces flow into development areas (mid-block connections) to create a seamless and engaging experience for everyone; and lastly,
- Making sure the open space system aligns with the Indigenous Cultural Interpretive Plan.

School

What school will the children living on Villiers Island go to? (Elementary and High School)

The TDSB is planning to build an elementary school on the Island.

There are eight public secondary schools and three catholic secondary schools serving the Port Lands area. Based on historic enrolment trends, the Islands and broader Port Lands area would be served primarily by St. Patrick Catholic Secondary School, Riverdale Collegiate, and Eastdale Collegiate.

Why is the school located near the Keating Channel? Isn't that a safety hazard?

The location of the school near the Keating Channel has been carefully considered with safety as a top priority. There is an existing school on the waterfront at 635 Queens Quay W, also located on the Water's edge. The advantages of the school site include proximity to the future Villiers Park.

Why has only one school been allocated?

The 2023 updated Community Facilities and Services Study looked at the needs of the future community based on projected population. Based on the increase in density, that study recommended increasing the size of the school.

Which school board will get to have a school on Villiers Island? Why that one?

In 2015, the City undertook a Port Lands Community Infrastructure Strategy along with the TDSB and TCDSB. Based on detailed analysis of capacity, enrollment, and future growth the study recommended three public elementary schools and one Catholic elementary school in the Port Lands. The TDSB sites were identified conceptually in Villiers, McCleary, and South River, and the TDCB identified a conceptual site in South River as well. The analysis was updated in 2023, and the conceptual size of the school on Villiers Island was increased, but no change was recommended by the school boards to the number of facilities planned for the Port Lands. The City and school boards will continue to monitor enrollment and school capacity as development progresses.

How are you including children and youth in these conversations? Especially in regards to the new school.

The consultation undertaken as part of the design for the Port Lands Flood Protection project included dedicated outreach to youth. During detailed design, workshops were held in collaboration with local high schools. Since construction began, we have engaged with children at the Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre's after school and March Break programs on multiple occasions. While these conversations have not focused on the new school, we have the relationships in place to engage them again if deemed necessary.

Timeline

When will individuals have the opportunity to buy/rent market rate units?

Developers for Villiers Island have not been selected yet. Once selected, it will be up to the developers to decide when to take units to market. We anticipate first occupancy on the island will be as early as 2031.

What is the timeline for everything that needs to happen between now and occupancy? (I.e., park completion, transit/LRT construction, release of RFP, building construction, market units for sale etc.)

The new parks in being built as part of the Port Lands Flood Protection project will open in summer 2025. Hard work underway at City, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto to move forward on development of Villiers Island.

A broad outline of what needs to happen before occupancy includes:

- Zoning by-law and Official Plan Amendments (which are being considered by Toronto City Council in June 2024).
- Renaming the island and park based on recommendations from an Indigenous Advisory Circle
- Further Indigenous community engagement on cultural revitalization and reconciliation action
- Phasing and implementation plans
- Designing and constructing enabling infrastructure (street, pipes, parks, etc.)
- Public realm design updates
- Issue a Request for Proposals and selection of development partners
- Constructing new buildings
- First Homes occupied by 2031.

Additional work, such as building the Waterfront East LRT, and building community facilities and amenities will also happen in this time, but may not be complete by 2031.

What is the target completion date for new housing?

We anticipate that construction could start as early as 2027, with the first homes occupied by 2031.

It is worth mentioning that not all buildings will be complete at the same time. 2031 is when the first buildings will be ready for occupancy, with more opening in the years following.

What efforts are being made to deliver homes as soon as possible?

The timeline for the start of development depends on when the project team is able to secure funding for this next phase of work.

Once funding is secured, work on infrastructure and development partnerships can begin, and the current timeline anticipates the first people could be moving in by 2031.

Waterfront Toronto will work collaboratively with City of Toronto and CreateTO to advance plans and approvals for housing on the island as fast as possible.

When will all of the homes on Villiers be built?

We expect the first homes to be ready for residents by 2031, however, it's difficult to say when all of the buildings will be complete this early in the process.

Transportation

How will you manage safe traffic flow in and out of the Port?

A study by Golder Associates (now WSP) confirmed that it's possible to create high-quality living and working environments without disrupting port and industrial activities. As part of the development, new policies and plans were put in place to manage noise, air quality, and transportation. This includes future improvements to roads and services in the area.

This neighbourhood is designed to encourage active transportation, with dedicated cycle tracks already up and running on New Cherry and Commissioners Streets. Eventual additions of the pedestrian bridge at the Parliament Slip and dedicated cycle tracks on the future Munition Street bridge will provide additional active transportation connections to and from the island across the Keating Channel and help reduce the number of residents using [MN: not just residents, also visitors to the island] vehicles on the roads that connect to the Port. Transportation planning and engineering consultants, in collaboration with City, Waterfront Toronto, and CreateTO staff, have also evaluated the transportation impact of a 60 per cent density increase on Villiers Island. The increased density is expected to cause congestion, highlighting the importance of a robust pedestrian, cycling and transit network, including the proposed Waterfront East Light Rail Transit and nearby subway and GO stations.

Is there a longer-term plan to connect the Villiers Loop to Ontario Line's East Harbour Station?

The long-term plans for transit include a dedicated LRT along Cherry and Commissioners Street, which would connect to major transit routes at Union Station and East Harbour, as well as Corktown Station on the Ontario Line. The currently planned alignment of the Waterfront East LRT includes a direct connection from Villiers Loop to the Ontario Line, at Corktown Common Station via an extended 504A King route. Once Broadview Ave is extended south to Commissioners Street, a future additional phase of the Waterfront East LRT is planned to provide a direct connection to the Transit Hub at East Harbour Station.

Are you planning to build out the tracks and infrastructure for the Waterfront East LRT when the streets are being built?

In the near term, the Port Lands will be served mostly by buses. We have reserved the space for the future Waterfront East LRT on Cherry St. and Commissioners St., and it is currently planted as a meadow. As the Waterfront East LRT is currently progressing towards 60% design, the tracks and other infrastructure will be built in a later phase.

Is there a parking maximum?

The proposed maximum parking rate is 0.75 spots for each 100 square metres of non-residential gross floor area and 0.4 parking spaces per dwelling unit.

How much of the roadway is set aside for cars and parking? Can you reduce it to make more space for pedestrians and housing?

In planning language, a right-of-way (ROW) or the roadway refers to all the public space between buildings. It includes the roadway for vehicles, transit lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, medians, planters, and buffers. While the ROWs for the recently opened New Cherry and Commissioners Streets are around 40-metres, the space for cars is 6.6 metres, which is the minimum requirement for two lanes, one in each direction. At some locations, this expands by 3 metres to accommodate a turning lane. The rest of the ROW is dedicated to separated transit lanes, cycling, walking and landscaping. These streets are major routes on and off the island, so they have space for all modes of transportation. The future streets on the Island are planned to have a ROW between 18-20 metres, some with one vehicular lane in each direction; others with none. Some of the street cross-sections you may have seen show extra space between the sidewalks and building faces, called setbacks. These have been eliminated, still leaving enough space for amenities like street furniture and bikeshare stands and activity created by retail.

An upcoming design process will take a more detailed look at the cross sections for these streets and the overall ROW. Through that process, some of what has been shown is likely to change. That design process will confirm street cross-sections (i.e., what type of traffic each right-of-way will accommodate and how big each of those spaces will be); identify materials for roads, sidewalks, buffers; and examine how the right-of-way integrates with the buildings.

Appendix B: Materials from the May 2 Public Drop-In

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What is this public update about?

- Toronto City Council has taken action to urgently build more affordable homes, including directing staff to explore opportunities to achieve more affordable housing on ‘Villiers Island.’ The City of Toronto, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto have been working on a Density Study to determine the best way to deliver more housing on the island.\
- Following a public meeting in June 2023 where we presented 3 approaches for increasing density on ‘Villiers Island,’ we’re reporting back on our proposed updates to the Villiers Island Precinct Plan, originally approved in 2017.
- What we’re presenting tonight is approximate, based on proposed changes to the built form, or what we call “massing” – the white boxes you’ll see on plans.
- Tonight’s materials should give you a sense of how we plan to shift the island from a predominantly mid-rise community to a dense, urban neighbourhood. We now project that over 15,000 people will live there and 3,000 will work there.
- We’re also sharing details about the overall process that gets us to a complete community on the island – things like added infrastructure and community amenities and design for public spaces and streets – and future opportunities to lend your voice to impact decisions throughout the process.

Changes to the precinct plan will ensure we take advantage of this opportunity to deliver:

- More housing, including affordable housing
- A greater investment in infrastructure, spaces and community amenities
- Canada’s first climate-positive community

We’re not changing the vision for this new community.

Increasing densities on the island will help deliver the kind of community envisioned in the 2017 Precinct Plan. A compact, walkable and affordable community with lively public spaces.



The foundation of this future neighbourhood is the innovative green space and imaginative parkland that is being completed now, through Port Lands Flood Protection, and set to open in 2025. The parks and river valley are going to be a unique ecological asset. This landscape will extend throughout the island, in streetscapes, public spaces and walkways. Low-impact design approaches have already been taken to make sure new Cherry and Commissioners Streets integrate with the landscaping that surrounds this neighbourhood.



This island is created by the rerouting of the Don River through the Port Lands.

The island will be surrounded by water on all sides.



The northern edge of the island will be an urban boardwalk along the Keating Channel – the only place like it in Toronto. The Keating Channel will remain as an urban waterway, with the Water’s Edge Promenade along both sides of the channel. It will be an active public space where we envision shops, cafes and a tree-lined promenade connected to Quayside by a new pedestrian bridge.



There will be multiple connections between land and water. A fine-grain street network will support transit, walking and cycling to and within the island, with links to the city mainland to the north and the Port Lands to the east and south.

Renewed Vision for Waterfront Revitalization

We engaged people from across the Greater Toronto Area in renewing the vision for the City of Toronto's waterfront, which spans from Etobicoke Creek to the Rouge River.

In 2022, Toronto City Council approved a renewed vision for the next phase of waterfront revitalization, including:

- Truth, justice and reconciliation, including through Indigenous engagement
- Strategic and inclusive economic development
- Equity, inclusion and access, including through housing and community benefits
- Climate resilience and sustainability

The Density Study for Villiers Island is housing-focused, while other projects across the waterfront include those that focus on greenspace, sustainability, access to water, and recreational uses.



Image courtesy of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

Public input in the new vision was gathered from:

- 10 Indigenous Community Meetings
- 11 Stakeholder Meetings
- 3 Public Meetings
- 100 Surveys

Centering water in waterfront revitalization

As told by Grandma Pauline Shirt, Water Protector (Plains Cree First Nation):

“For thousands of years Indigenous Nations have gathered along [the shores of Niiganii Gchi Gamig (Leading Lake)], netted and fished from her waters, building homes and communities, living in a reciprocal way, always being mindful, respectful to the lake and her inhabitants.

Keeping this in mind as we move forward together in the protection and sustainability of the lake and all that call her home, it's important to reach back to the original relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the lake.

Our worldview is clear and focused as we see all life as part of a Sacred Hoop that honours all of Creation; every living thing plays a vital role in life; no less than or greater than, there is balance.”

Image courtesy of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation

The City heard from First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities that there is a clear priority for improving access, stewardship and connection to the water and waterfront land as well as enhancing the visible presence of Indigenous cultures and communities along the waterfront.

Indigenous Cultural Revitalization

How can Indigenous values, language, art, history, culture, stories and communities shape development of the new island in the Port Lands to create neighbourhoods, parks and an environment that stands as a beacon of Indigeneity along Toronto's waterfront?

Building off the renaturalization and restoration of the mouth of the Don River as part of the Port Lands Flood Protection project (PLFP), the redevelopment of the Port Lands offers a unique moment to support Indigenous cultural revitalization on the waterfront.

An Indigenous Advisory Circle and broader Indigenous communities will guide us on opportunities for Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, protocols, and connections to the land to shape the processes of waterfront revitalization and reconciliation action in this area.

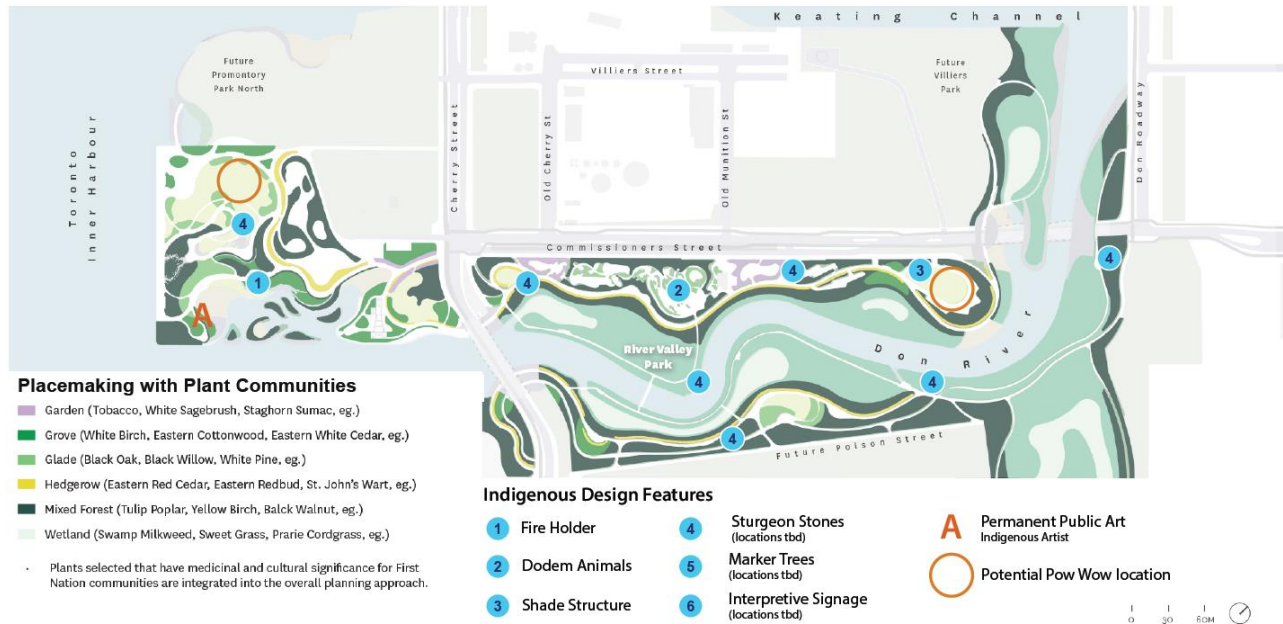
Through discussions about the future of the waterfront with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities, we heard a desire for increased:

- Cultural revitalization and representation
- Indigenous placekeeping and art
- Affordable housing
- Space for ceremony
- Access to the water and nature
- Economic and business opportunities
- Return of land and stewardship



Indigenous cultural representation on the waterfront

PLFP Indigenous Design Approaches



Many Indigenous placekeeping and cultural revitalization initiatives are being advanced by the City, Waterfront Toronto, and CreateTO, including park features and landscape design, plantings and stewardship, public art and interpretive signage, planning and design studies, and infrastructure design.

We are engaging with an Indigenous Advisory Circle, as well as with wider Indigenous communities and the public to permanently name the Island and parkland, with a recommendation to City Council in Fall 2024.

“Since 1805, from the Don River to the Humber River, there’s been no evidence that Indigenous Peoples ever lived on the waterfront of Toronto” – Elder Dr. Duke Redbird



Many actions in the Port Lands can support the City’s Reconciliation Action Plan, including:

- Precinct plans and design guideline studies
- Park features and landscape design
- Placekeeping initiatives
- Public art and interpretive signage
- Plantings and stewardship
- Infrastructure design

Our ongoing work aims to improve the recognition of the ongoing presence, culture, and history of Indigenous Peoples on Toronto’s waterfront.

Proposed Changes to the 2017 Plan
2017 Precinct Plan



2024 Demonstration Plan

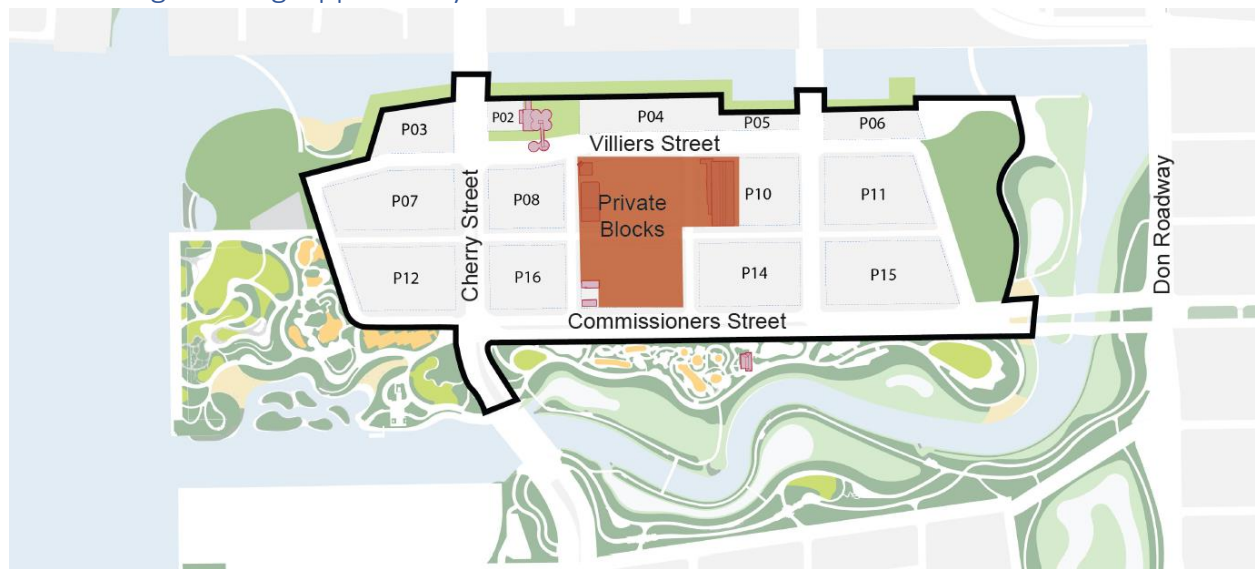


- Updating the affordable housing target to 30% of units on public land
- Increasing Gross Floor Area (GFA) by 60% -- this means that while the development blocks stay the same, the total amount of usable floor area and the total area with the blocks has gone up
 - Towers are focused on western and central blocks, with some towers along the Keating Channel Promenade. The tallest towers are concentrated near the future streetcar stop on New Cherry Street, with shorter towers east of Munition Street.
 - Base buildings remain 6 to 10 storeys, with more now on the higher end
- Introducing a new public library and updating community facilities and services space requirements
- Updating the infrastructure and servicing approach for the Island

The numbers we're showing today are still estimates based on the proposed changes to the built form.

- What we're showing is the amount of affordable rental housing possible on public lands
- There is also a minimum 10% non-residential uses
- The potential amount of affordable rental units is an estimated range at the moment, based on the increased Gross Floor Area and a target of 30% affordable rental on public lands - because we don't know what the unit sizes will be.

Maximizing Housing Opportunity on Public Lands



13 Publicly Owned Development Blocks

Opportunity to maximize housing:

- The City is updating the affordable housing target to 30% of units on public land
- About 80% of the Island is in public ownership
- By increasing density on public lands, we can increase housing, including affordable housing, on the Island



- Short Towers (12-24 storeys)
- Moderate Towers (25-34 storeys)
- Tall Towers (35-44 storeys)
- Height Peak (45+ storeys)

The approved 2017 plan:

- Approximately 500,000m2 Gross Floor Area (GFA) island-wide
- Affordable Rental Housing: about 850 units
- Market Housing: about 4,000 units island-wide
- Planned as primarily a mid-rise community

Proposed plan:

- Approximately 800,000m2 GFA island-wide (~60% increase)
- Affordable Rental Housing: up to 2,700 units
- Market Housing: about 8,500-9,000 units island-wide
- Planned as a dense, urban neighbourhood with 20 towers

The density study recommended a 60% increase in density over the original precinct plan. This translates roughly to 15,000 new residents and 3,000 jobs.

This estimate is based on an overall increase in GFA. The resulting demonstration plan is a guide for future developments as it proceeds block by block. Massing won't be exactly as it appears on the plan.

What Does This Look Like?

Here's how some of the neighbourhood streets could look, based on the scale and height of buildings proposed. These views will be shaped by the design of streets and architecture of buildings, work that has not yet started.



New Cherry Street looking south just after crossing the new bridge and landing on the island shows a wider right-of-way to allow room for multi-modal travel onto and off of the island, including 2 vehicle lanes, separated bi-directional



In a higher-density mixed-use neighbourhood in central Oslo, this street allows for a mix of transportation modes including dedicated transit and cycle lanes, and the dense built form supports a variety of retail uses at grade.

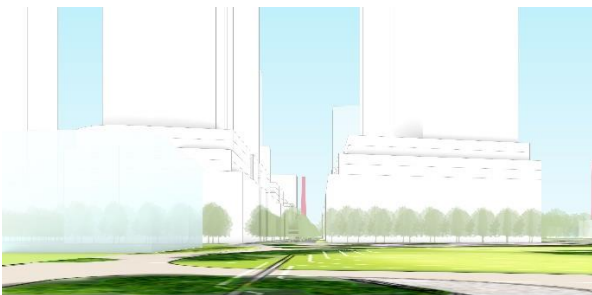
bike lanes and dedicated bi-directional streetcar tracks.



Looking north along the Old Cherry heritage corridor from River Park North and Commissioners Street. Lowrise heritage buildings lining the eastern (right) side of the street with a view of the Essroc silos to the north.



Looking east along Commissioners Street with midrise base buildings and taller towers above parkland on the south (right) side of Commissioners Street. Two heritage buildings are highlighted in red: one at the southern base of the Old Cherry Street heritage corridor, as well as Fire Hall 30 now sits at the entrance to the park.



View eastward from the destination park on the western edge of the island looking along Centre Street toward the chimney stack in the McCleary District. Midrise base buildings frame the street



This examples from Oslo shows midrise buildings framing a pedestrian priority street with landscaping and heritage buildings.



Fort York Blvd. looking east in the CityPlace neighbourhood shows a consistent streetwall along the north (left) side of the wide landscaped street. Canoe Landing Park is located to the south (right) providing the central greenspace for the dense urban neighbourhood.



View westward from Regent Park's large central green space shows midrise buildings of varying heights and taller towers above. A church with heritage value and a modern pavilion are in the foreground.

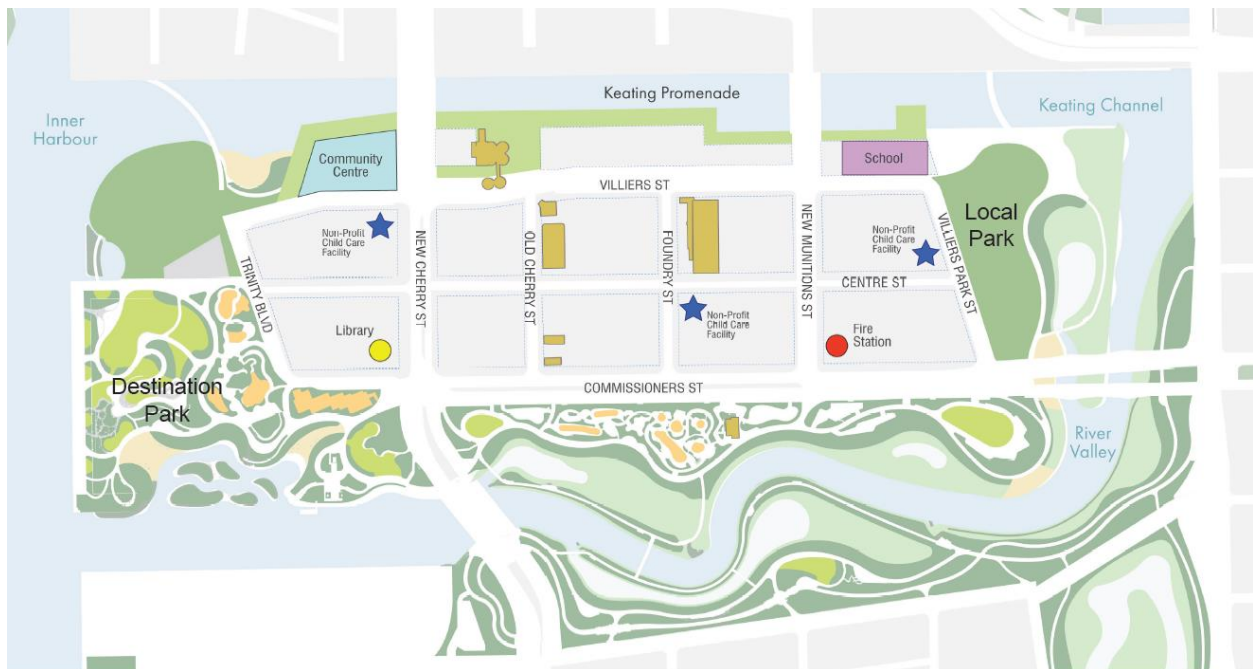
and provide a strong and consistent face toward the park and support the taller towers above.

Next Steps: Community Facilities and Parks

Community Facilities

The 2023 Updated Community Facilities and Services Study recommends:

- Larger community centre
- Larger elementary school
- New childcare facility
- New library



Parks

- The Island is unique because it's home to a major park destination on the west side. That park will be a regional draw. On the east side, future Villiers Park will serve the local community.
- With the estimated population, the parkland provision level will be greater than the Downtown average and well above the City's low parkland provision threshold.



Parkland on the west edge of the island will be a destination, attracting over a million people per year.

Next Steps: Transportation and Infrastructure

Transportation Planning

- At full buildout, increase in densities can be accommodated only with the planned transit network, including the proposed Waterfront East Light Rail Transit (LRT).
- Transportation Analysis is ongoing, and required changes will be implemented in future stages of design.

Next Steps:

- Promote active transportation
- Advancing Waterfront East LRT work and interim transit options, such as Bus Rapid Transit
- Future Munition Street Bridge
- Advance recommendations in the Marine Use Strategy, to create options for water transport



Infrastructure + Servicing:

- New and existing municipal services can support the projected populations.

Next Steps:

- Advance design and construction of the Port Lands Sewage Pumping Station
- Detailed design of Commissioners Street Sanitary Sewer
- The Business and Implementation Plan will specify the new infrastructure needed to support future development

Next Steps: Public Realm



Design for Port Lands Flood Protection has taken past feedback into account. Input that was applied to the new parks and open spaces opening in 2025 includes:

- Enhancing Indigenous placekeeping
- Creating welcoming and safe spaces for all
- Creating spaces for all four seasons
- Exploring opportunities for fishing, canoeing, gardening, and swimming

Next steps:

- Begin design on remaining public realm (outlined in pink on the graphic above)



As the public realm plan update gets underway, there will be more opportunities to provide input into:

- Design for additional parks
- Street design
- Public spaces like squares and promenades

These conceptual renderings show the types of spaces still to be designed.

Get Involved



The information you have seen today is a report back on the density study and some of the recommendations the project team will be making to City Council.

As plans for Villiers Island move forward, there is still lots more work to be done, and opportunities for you to provide input.

Complete the poll to express your interest in getting involved in future conversations about:

- Housing
- A Framework for Reconciliation Action in the Port Lands
- Natural Environment and Stewardship
- Public Realm and Streets
- Transportation Planning
- Community Facilities
- Early uses on the Island

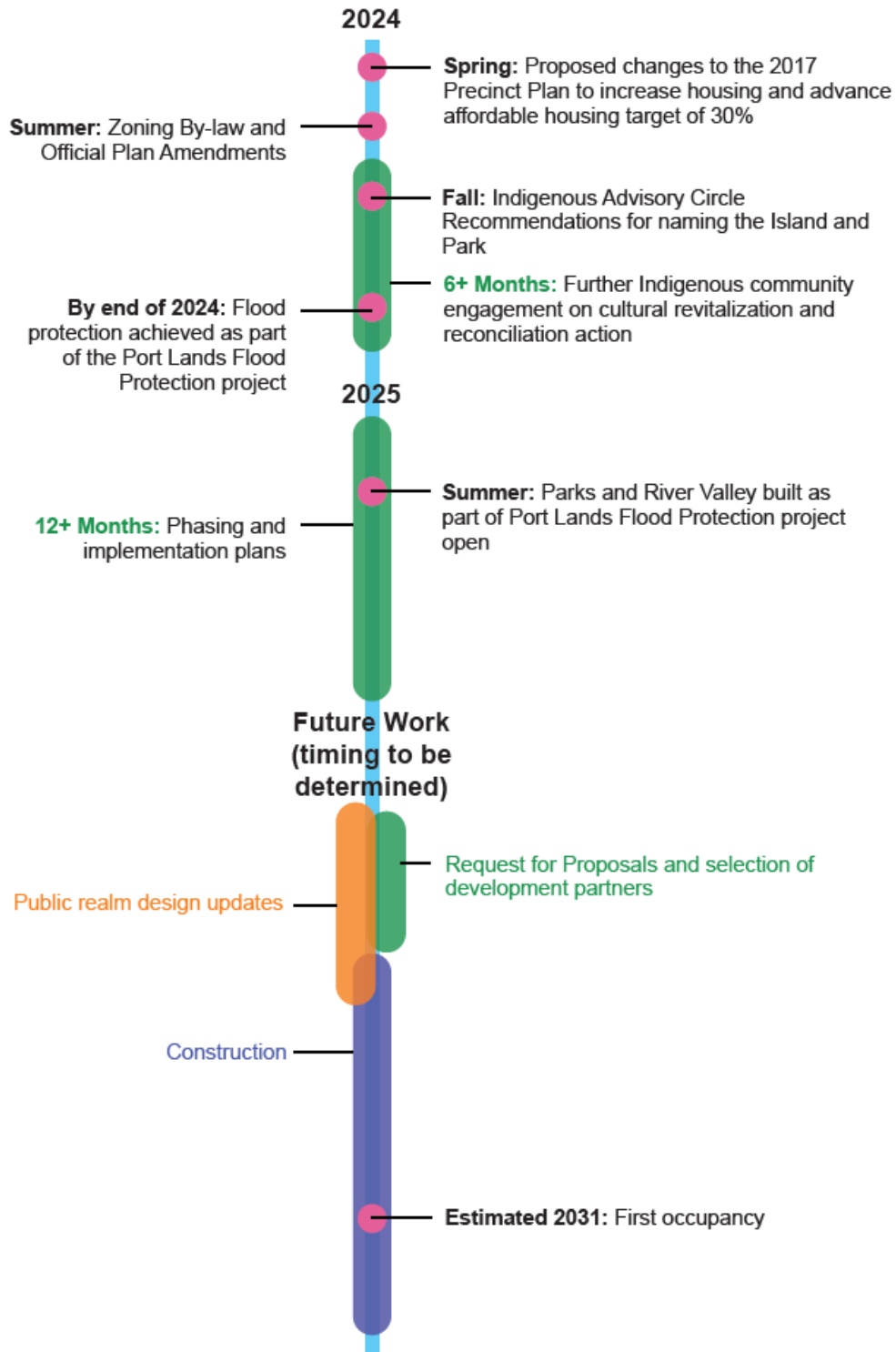


Is there a topic we haven't listed that interests you?

Scan the QR code or visit bit.ly/PICpoll to take the poll and enter your email if you'd like to be notified of future consultations.

Estimated Timeline to First Occupancy: 2031

The timeline for the development on Villiers Island will depend on many factors, including additional funding for infrastructure and public realm work.



FAQ: Affordable Housing on Villiers Island

FAQ: What kind of affordable housing will there be?

A: There are different options for providing the affordable housing, including delivery models like rent-g geared-to-income and co-op housing. The strategy for Villiers Island is not yet final. Delivery of affordable housing will be done through partnerships, including exploring partnerships with Indigenous communities.

The proposed increase in Gross Floor Area over the approved 2017 plan creates the opportunity for as many as 2,700 affordable rental units. That number will be partially determined by the unit sizes.

Affordable housing is intended for households with low and moderate incomes, including key workers who are vital to supporting our social and economic growth. This type of housing is much needed, as according to the 2021 Census: two in five renter households in Toronto experienced affordability issues, spending more than 30% of their before-tax income on housing.

FAQ: What is the definition of affordable housing?

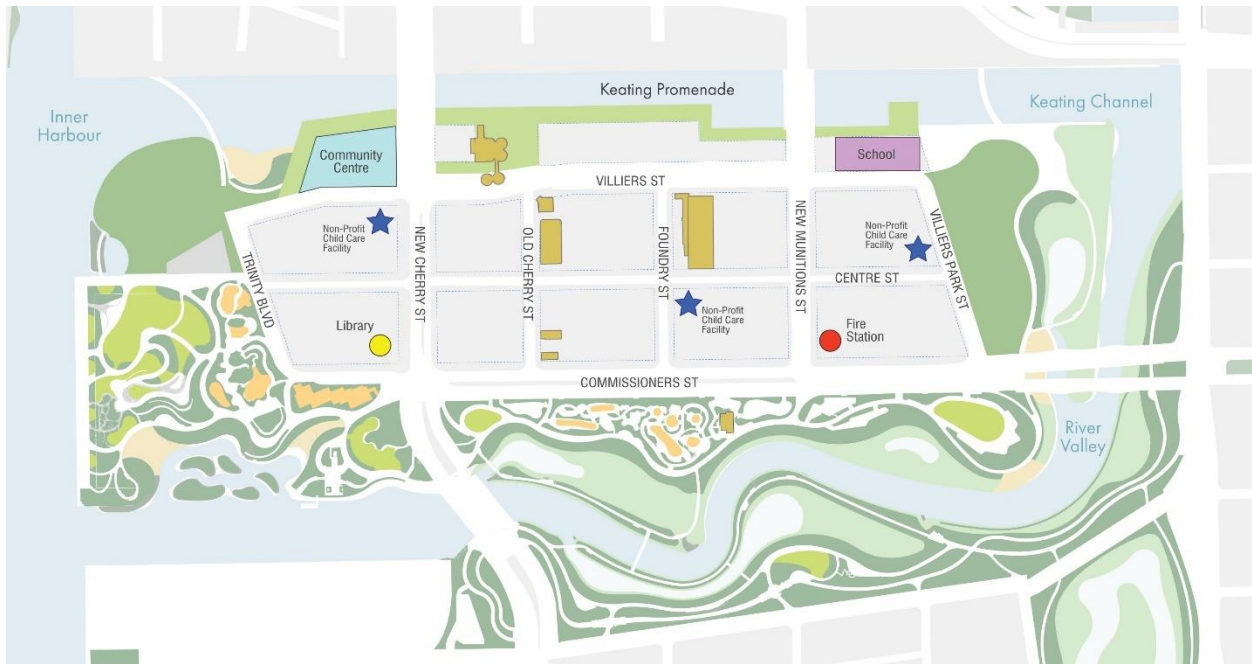
A: Affordable rental housing refers to housing where the total monthly shelter cost (gross monthly rent, inclusive of utilities for heat, hydro, hot water and water) is at or below the lesser of one times the average City of Toronto rent, by dwelling unit type, as reported annually by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, or 30% of the before-tax monthly income of renter households in the City of Toronto as follows:

- Studio units: one-person households at or below the 50th percentile income
- One-bedroom units: one-person households at or below the 60th percentile income
- Two-bedroom units: two-person households at or below the 60th percentile income
- Three-bedroom units: three-person households at or below the 60th percentile income

FAQ: Why do you need to increase density to increase the amount of affordable housing?

A: The sale and development of market units can offset the cost of delivering affordable housing. So, the more housing we can deliver overall, the most revenue can be directed towards building affordable housing.

FAQ: Building a Complete Community



The 2017 plan identified a need for:

- 1 elementary school
- 1 community centre
- 2 licensed non-profit childcare facilities

To support increased density, a 2023 Community Facilities and Services Study recommended:

- Increasing the size of the community centre and elementary school
- 1 additional childcare facility
- 1 additional neighbourhood library

FAQ: Why are the amenities located where they are? How will you make sure the community has strong retail and service offerings?

A: The locations of community amenities shown are still conceptual, and their location will evolve with the plans for the island. We're planning for a complete community, which includes space for retail opportunities and service providers.

While Villiers Island feels remote right now, as the entire area transforms, the demand for facilities and services will grow, creating a more attractive location for retailers and service providers throughout the Port Lands and surrounding areas.

FAQ: How do we decide where to add density, and how much?

Where were the opportunities to add more density?

- There are different factors to consider in each development block

- We're able to add the most Gross Floor Area to the western and central blocks, close to future transit stops
- Additional density is also being planned along the Keating Channel Promenade, which will be an active retail and commercial strip



CityPlace (left) is a neighbourhood with similar density and building heights to the west blocks. The West Don Lands (right) is a neighbourhood with similar density and building heights to the more eastern blocks.

What factors did we consider when increasing the density?

The Keating Channel, surrounding parkland, new Don River valley, and Indigenous and industrial heritage provide a unique context for this emerging community. Due to this unique context, each block has different opportunities and constraints to increasing density.

Some factors taken into consideration:

- Delivering affordable housing
- Transportation network and transit capacity
- Community facilities and services capacity
- Impacts on the Don River Valley
- Noise and air quality impacts
- Infrastructure and servicing capacity
- Airport operations
- Achieving sustainability objectives
- Shadow and solar access

What is set by the 2017 precinct plan, and what still needs to be designed?

- The Precinct Plan is our guiding document. It outlines the streets and blocks. As design progresses, we can apply lessons learned and best practices to make refinements.
- The plan sets out principles for the new community that include a focus on active transportation (walking, biking, transit) and high quality of life.
- One of the things that has changed since 2017 is the proposed route for the Waterfront East Light Rail Transit (LRT) which changes the space allocation to transit in the rights-of-way.

FAQ: Parks and Open Spaces



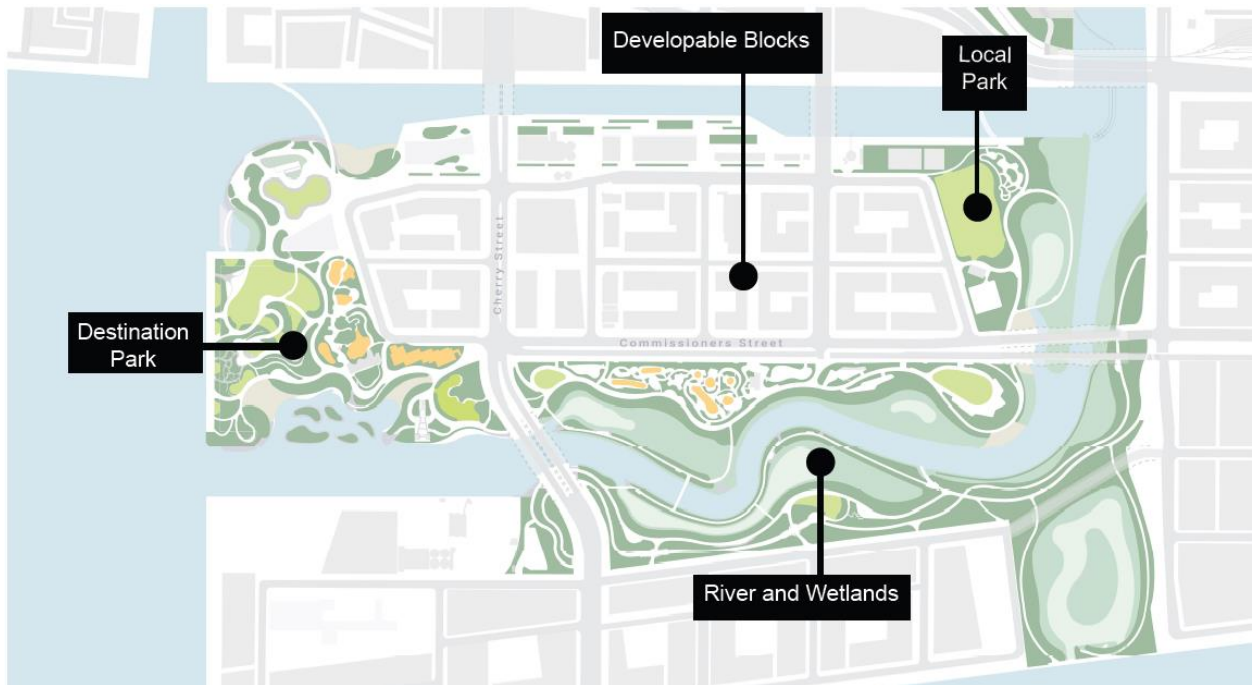
The new greenspaces are an important connection to the ecological corridor that runs through the whole city. The Island will be surrounded by natural environments, becoming an extension of the Central Waterfront, and the Don Valley trail system.

Don Mouth Naturalization Project (DMNP) Environmental Assessment (EA)

During consultation through the DMNP EA and detailed design for the Port Lands Flood Protection project, and the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization – we heard from thousands of people at 100s of meetings and workshops. We heard repeatedly the importance of:

- Preserving and expand greenspace and habitat for wildlife, and
- balancing public access and naturalized quiet spaces.

Proposed updates to the precinct plan still support this.



This island is unlike other communities because it has a substantial amount of parkland that is intended to be a regional – and even global – draw. These parks are expected to attract over 1 million visitors per year. This is the downtown waterfront’s main attraction.

About half the space on the new island is made up of parkland and natural greenspace like wetlands.