

# VILLIERS ISLAND DENSITY STUDY PUBLIC MEETING



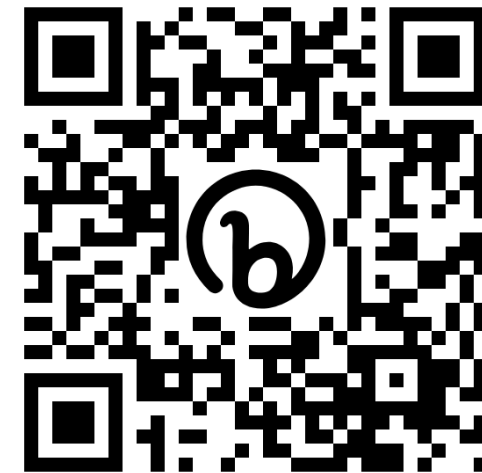




# Welcome!

Let us know at this link:  
[bit.ly/VilliersQuiz](https://bit.ly/VilliersQuiz)

On a scale of mud pile (1) to marshy oasis (6)  
how are you doing today?



## Housekeeping

- This meeting is being recorded and the recording will be posted on Waterfront Toronto's YouTube Channel in the coming weeks
- Mute yourself when you're not speaking
- You're welcome to have your camera on or off. Turning off your camera may help if you are experiencing connectivity issues.
- Use the chat window to note any issues and we'll do our best to help
- Add questions to the chat (at any time) or raise your hand to say your question out loud (during the Q&A)



The land upon which we are undertaking our revitalization efforts is part of the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is home to many First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples today.

Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.





## Welcoming Remarks

Councillor Paula Fletcher



## Presenters



Anthony Kittel, City of Toronto

Chris Glaisek, Waterfront Toronto

Scott Pennington, CreateTO





## Project Team



### At today's meeting:

#### City of Toronto:

Anthony Kittel

Jenny Lin

Mathieu Maslard

James Parakh

Eric Sehr

Sonja Vangjeli

Mai Wang

#### CreateTO:

Paul Arkilander

Kendra Barkman

Scott Pennington

#### Waterfront Toronto:

Aaron Barter

Michela Comparey

Josh Hilburt

Andrea Keleman

Jed Kilbourn

Yuxuan Lin

Rei Tasaka





This conceptual rendering is based on the 2017 Precinct Plan for Villiers Island.

The plan envisions a new neighbourhood framed by a unique ecological asset: the new Don River mouth. Extensive city parks and wetlands lining a natural river create opportunities to access the water and nature. **Whatever we do needs to preserve this new ecological system.**





The 2017 plan envisions a mixed-use, inclusive community with employment opportunities and a range of affordable and family-oriented housing. **There is unique opportunity to deliver on these public benefits on Villiers Island, as much of the land is publicly owned.**





The northern edge of the island is the existing Keating Channel, which is the only one of its kind in Toronto. **There is a unique opportunity to make an urban riverwalk that's lively and animated with shops and restaurants.**





It's also the gateway to the downtown waterfront. **It should feel connected to the neighbourhoods across the Keating Channel and to the downtown waterfront.**





We're building **cycling, pedestrian and vehicular connections** via new bridges and streets. But we need **transit** to make this the **fully connected, climate-positive community** the precinct plan envisions.





To achieve these goals – extending transit into the island, bustling public spaces with new retail, affordable housing – we need more density.





We must balance this with the need for adequate infrastructure and community services, and protection for the new ecosystems and greenspace we're building.

**This is why we're doing a density study.**

We're determining where new density would be most appropriate while still achieving the vision set by the 2017 precinct plan.





## Density Study for Villiers Island

In Fall 2023, the City of Toronto, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto will recommend to City Council a preferred approach for increasing densities on Villiers Island.

The Council-endorsed preferred approach will inform an update to the 2017 Precinct Plan, resulting in more housing and affordable rental homes while respecting the overall vision for this new community.

Public engagements will inform the evaluation of different approaches to building more housing on public lands by increasing densities by at least 30% above the 2017 Precinct Plan.



## What Is Villiers Island?

**A new island right downtown, created by the renaturalized Don River**



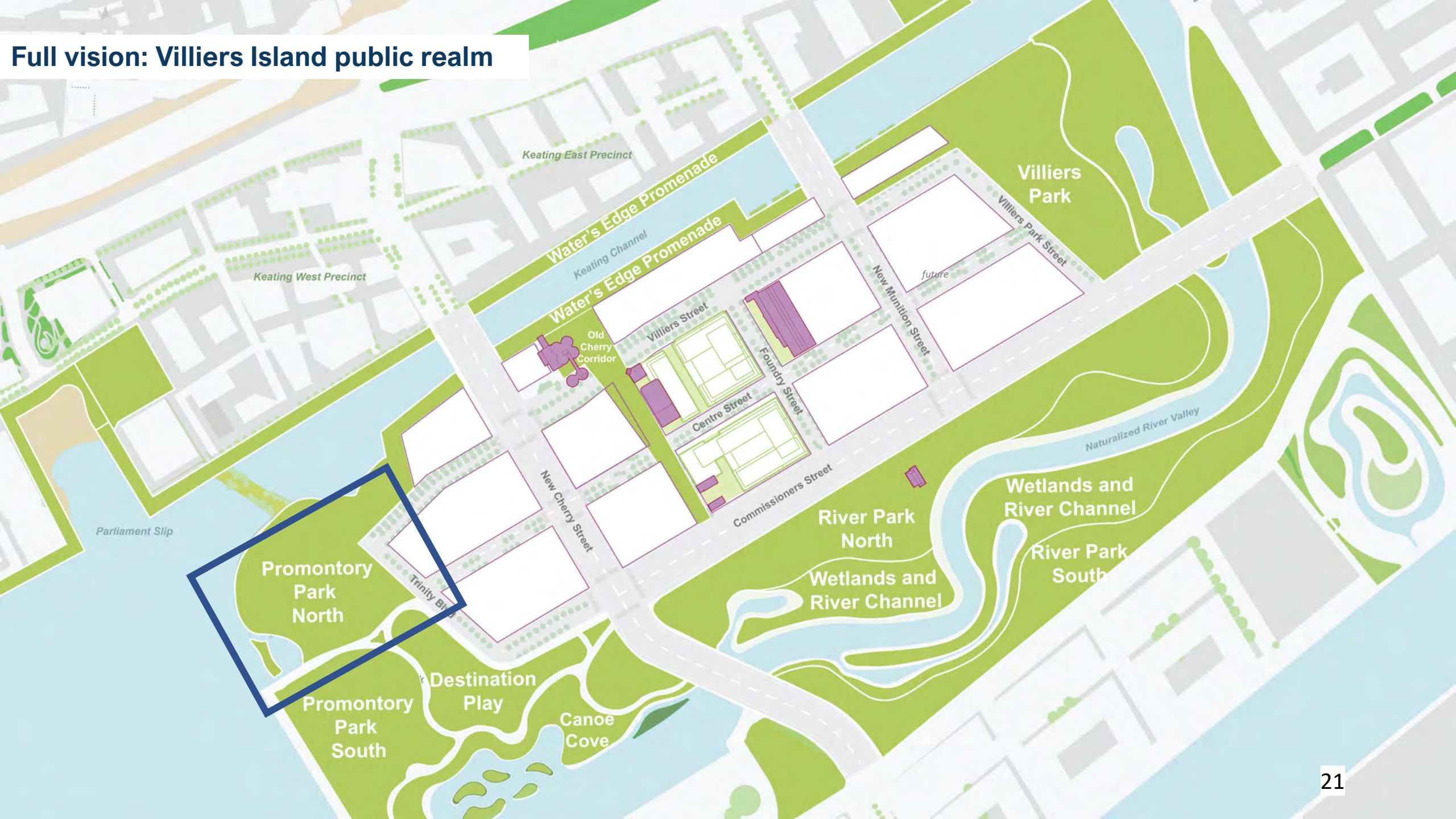


When Port Lands Flood Protection is Complete: New roads, bridges, parks, river valley





Full vision: Villiers Island public realm





# The Bigger Picture



East Bayfront

Quayside

West Don Lands

Keating Channel Precinct

East Harbour

Villiers Island

McCleary District

Polson Quay

South River

Media City





# The Bigger Picture

East Bayfront

Quayside

West Don Lands

Keating Channel Precinct

East Harbour

Villiers Island

McCleary District

504A King Line  
Waterfront East LRT

Polson Quay

South River

Media City



# How Did We Plan for This?



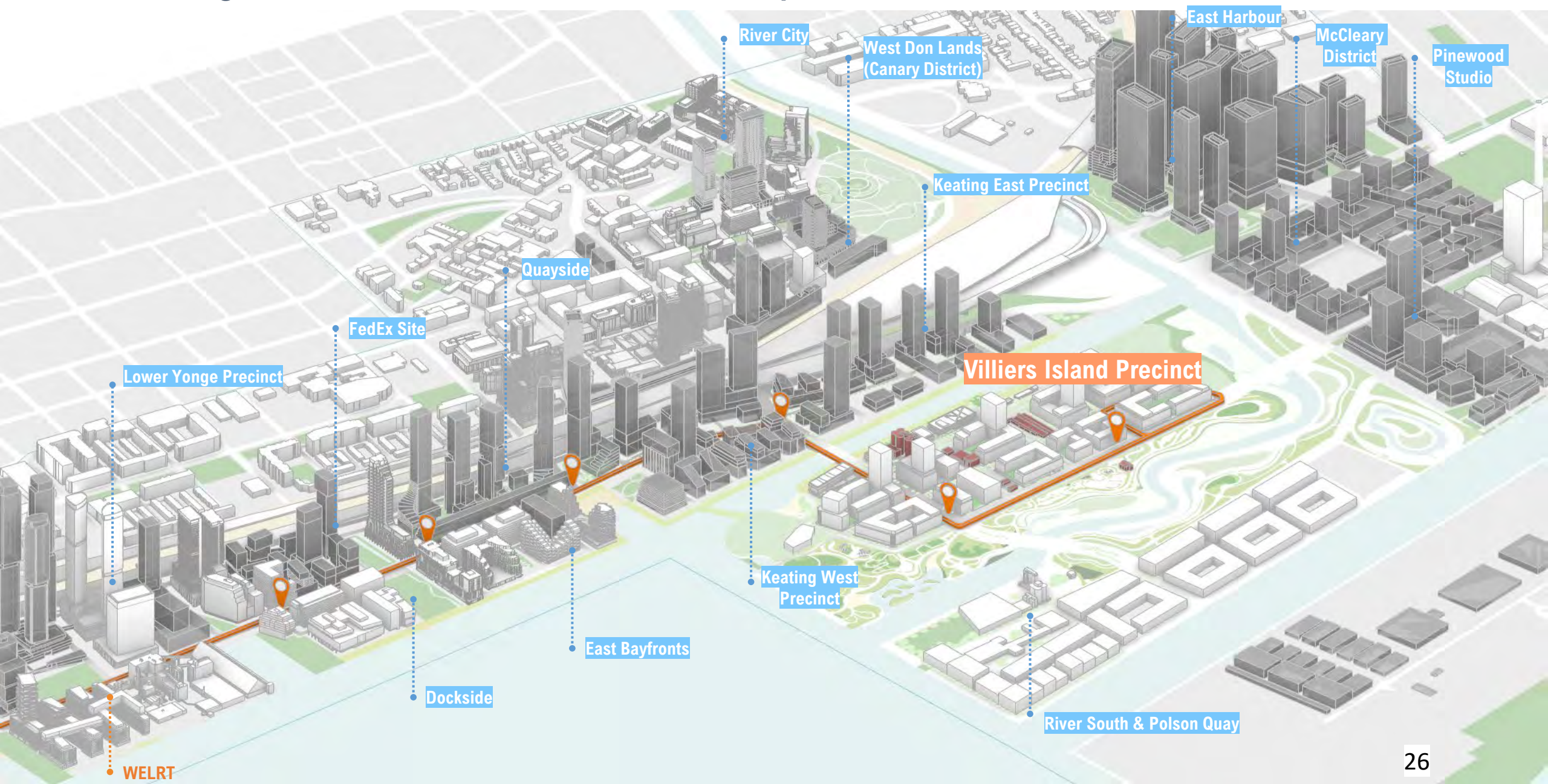


## Key Principles: Villiers Island Precinct Plan (2017)

- Plan for a diverse, mixed-use, inclusive community that maximizes the opportunity for **affordable housing**
- Animate and **activate the waters edges**
- Create a network of **spectacular open spaces**
- Provide a **catalytic use** opportunity (e.g., a cultural attraction)
- Reinforce the island as a **gateway**
- Celebrate the area's **industrial heritage** through conservation
- Prioritize **pedestrian, cycling and transit** infrastructure
- Provide a variety of building forms
- Develop an innovative model for **climate positive**
- Ensure that the precinct plan is viable and implementable



# What Has Changed Since 2017: New and Planned Development





# What Has Changed Since 2017: Housing Needs

In its recent Housing Action Plan, City Council set a target of building **285,000 new homes** within the next 10 years.

The City is also aiming to approve the development of **40,000 affordable rental homes**, including 18,000 supportive housing units, by 2030.





# City Council Direction

**City Council – supported by a series of motions by Councillor Fletcher - has repeatedly directed that affordable housing be a key priority for Villiers Island.**

## **2017**

Council requested that the project team investigate opportunities to achieve additional affordable housing in Villiers Island, over and above the minimum requirements in the Port Lands Planning Framework (PG21.4)

## **2021**

Council requested progress updates from City staff on achieving additional affordable housing in Villiers Island (EX27.6).

## **2022**

Planning and Housing Committee requested that staff report back on the pathway to achieve the affordable housing mandate and determine if any changes need to be made to the Villiers Island Precinct Plan to achieve the City's housing goals (PH35.17).

## **2023**

Planning and Housing Committee requested that the project team undertake public engagement and identify options and the number of affordable homes that could be built on Villiers Island (PH2.9).



# Goals for New Housing on Villiers Island

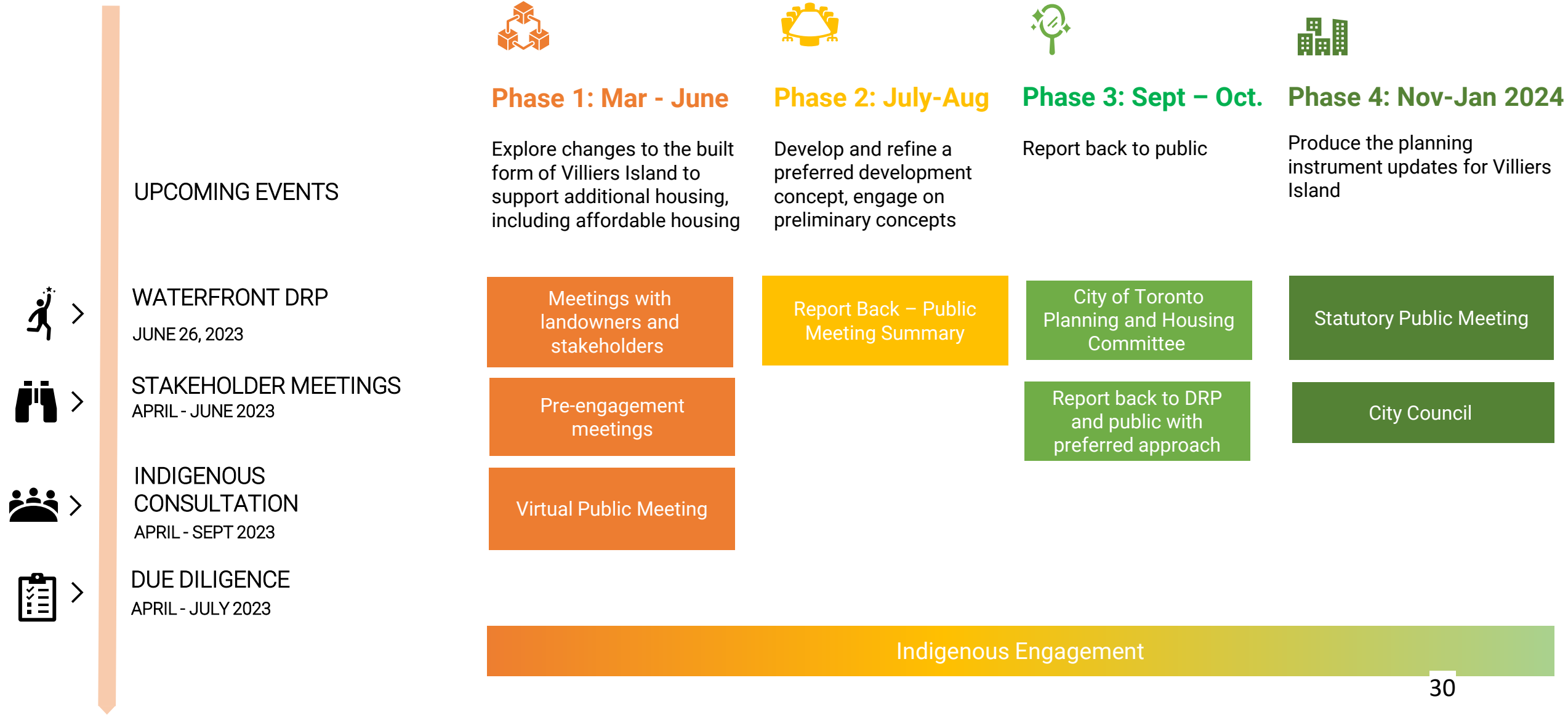
- **A higher bar for affordability.** Achieve a minimum of 20% and a target of 30% affordable homes on public lands; and ensure affordable housing is included in every project phase.
- **Housing opportunities accessible to all Torontonians.** A range of unit sizes, ownership and rental, and housing types, including homes for families with children, and housing for seniors with appropriate support services.
- **Innovative partnerships to deliver affordable housing.** We will partner with non-profit and cooperative housing providers and work with the City to identify opportunities to provide housing at a range of affordability levels, including deeply affordable and rent-geared-to-income units.
- **Engage all orders of government to make affordable housing a priority.** The project team will seek to unlock new funding and other incentives to maximize the opportunity for affordable housing, as quickly as we can on Villiers Island.





# What's Happening Now?

## Project Timeline

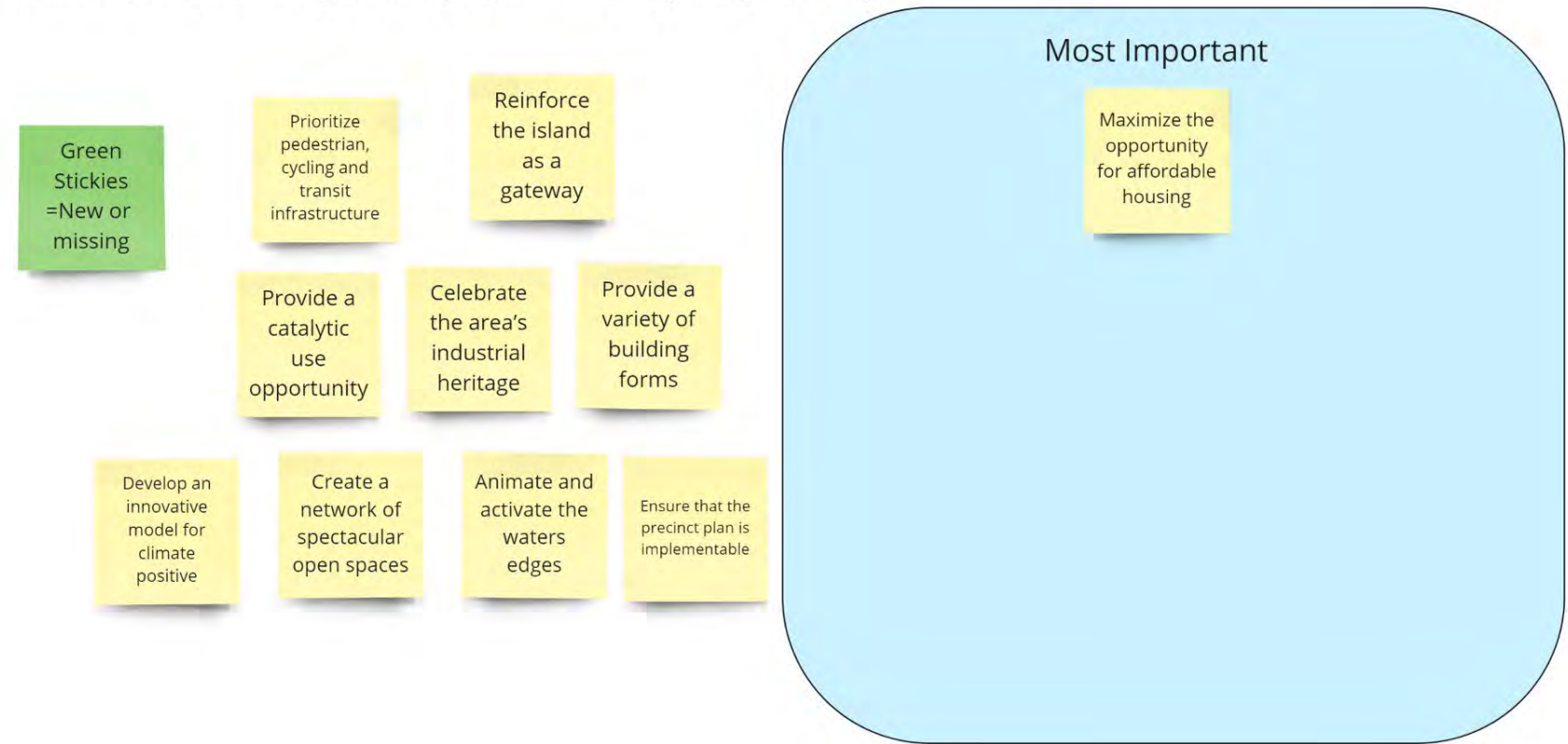




# FEEDBACK BREAK: Confirming Guiding Principles

What are the most important priorities? Is anything missing?

Join a breakout room to discuss





# 3 Approaches for Increasing Density



## Potential Changes to the 2017 Precinct Plan

- Increasing tower heights above the 29-storey maximum recommended in the 2017 precinct plan
- Identifying locations for towers south of Centre Street
- Identifying opportunities to introduce tall buildings (above 11 storeys) that have a mid-rise character
- Reconsidering the development approach to Keating Channel, introducing mid-rise or tall buildings to frame Keating Channel and the water's edge promenade



## What plans are being reviewed:

- The % of affordable housing units
- Densities on public lands
- Massing, built forms, heights
- Key views

## Ongoing Studies:



**Transportation network & 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**



**Delivering affordable housing**



**Shadow and wind impacts**

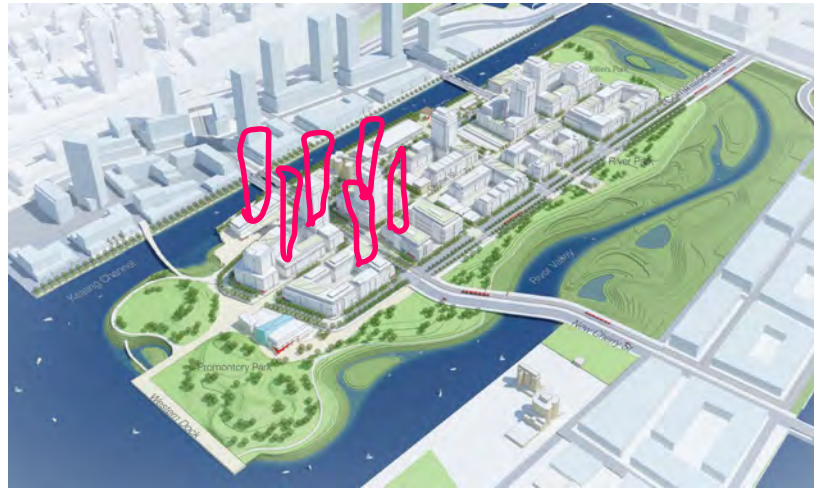


# Overview of Approaches to Increasing Density on the Island

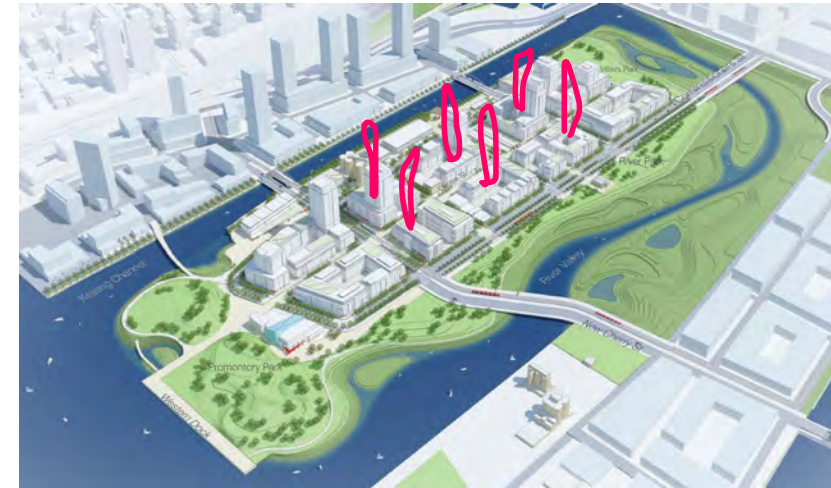
**Approach 1:** Increased density south of Keating Channel and on north blocks



**Approach 2:** Increased density on western blocks



**Approach 3:** Increased density on central blocks



These options would provide anywhere from 6,000 to over 7,000 total units of housing, compared to 4,865 in the approved precinct plan, a minimum of 20% affordable housing and a target of 30% affordable housing on public lands.



## Approach 1: Density Focused South of Keating Channel

- Intensification of Keating Channel & north blocks
- Tall towers along Keating Channel and Villiers Street
- Maintain mid-rise heights along on south of Centre Streets and east blocks

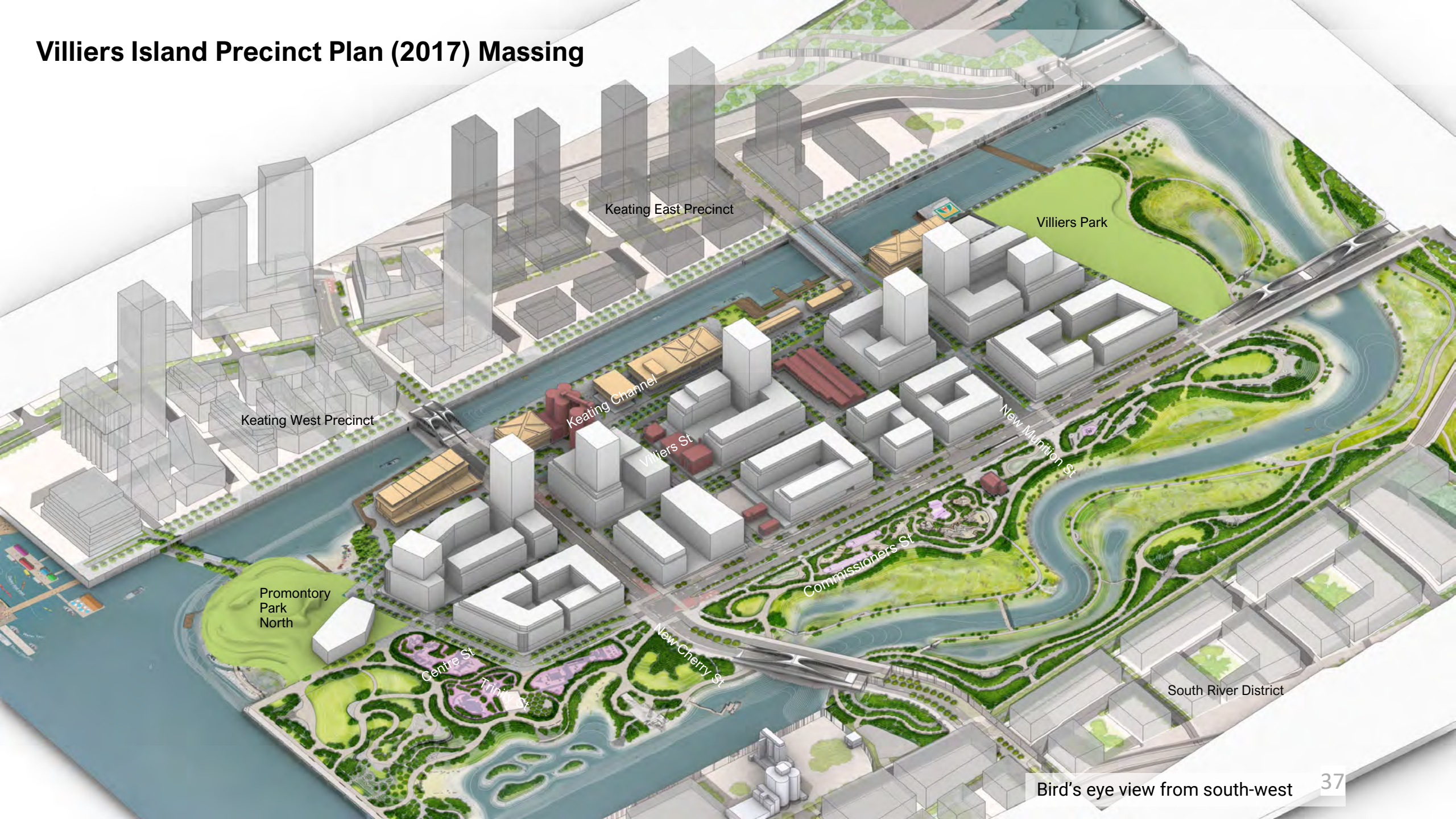


Future LRT stop

Bird's eye view from south-west



# Villiers Island Precinct Plan (2017) Massing





# Approach 1: Increased Density along Keating Channel - Towers

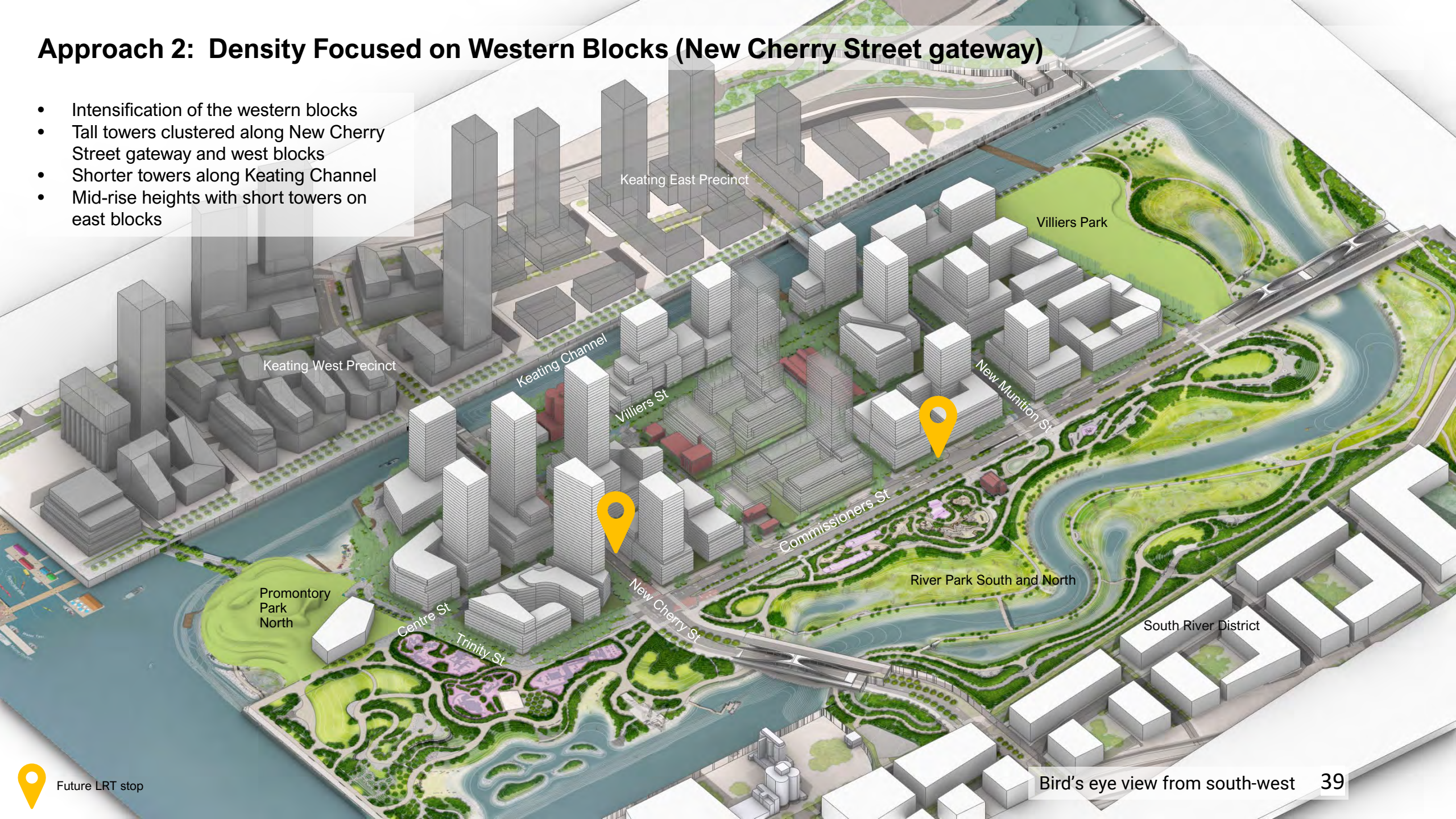
CHICAGO RIVER





## Approach 2: Density Focused on Western Blocks (New Cherry Street gateway)

- Intensification of the western blocks
- Tall towers clustered along New Cherry Street gateway and west blocks
- Shorter towers along Keating Channel
- Mid-rise heights with short towers on east blocks



Keating West Precinct

Keating East Precinct

Villiers Park

Keating Channel

Villiers St

New Munition St

Commissioners St

Promontory  
Park  
North

Centre St

Trinity St

New Cherry St

River Park South and North

South River District



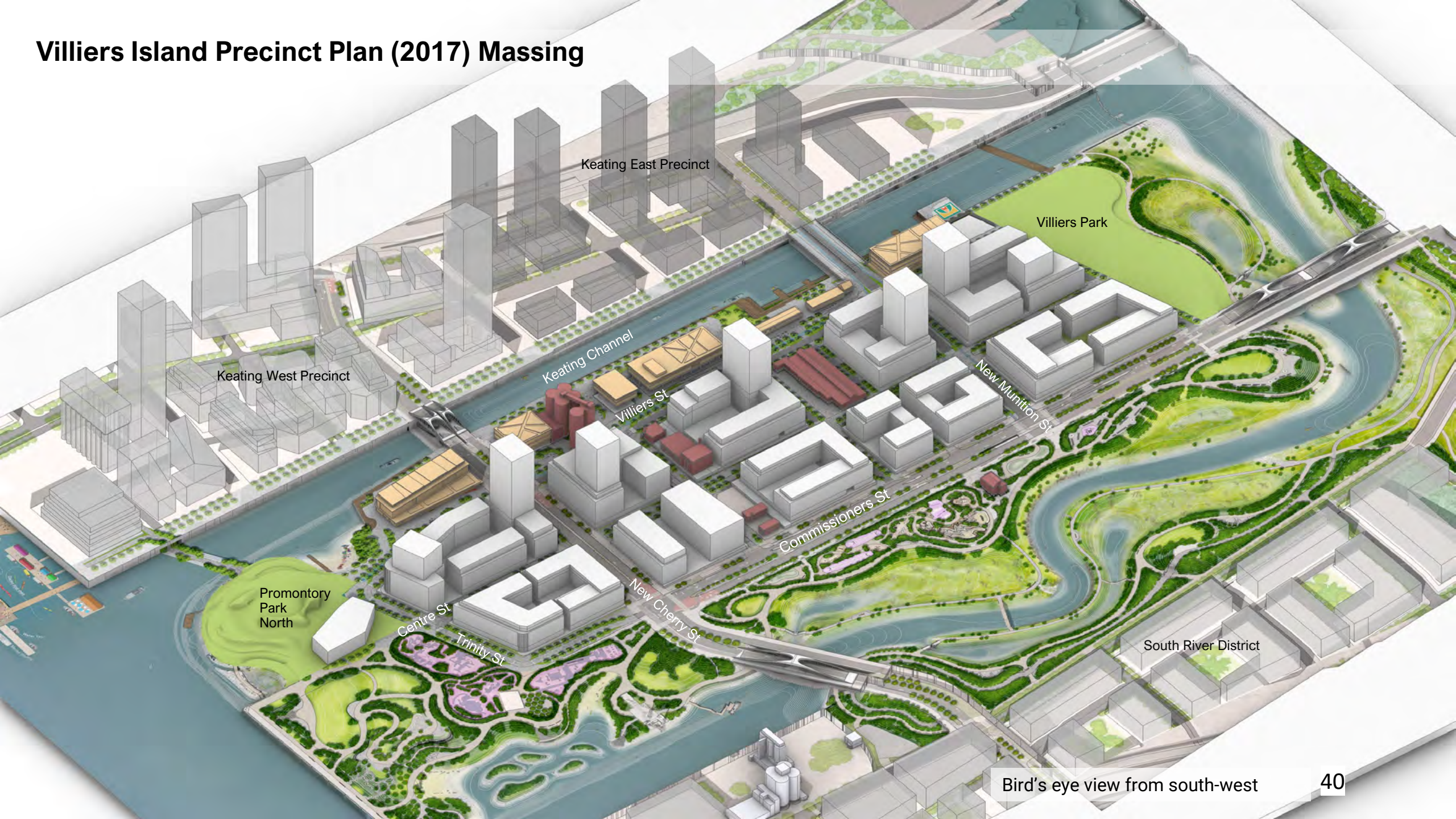
Future LRT stop

Bird's eye view from south-west

39



# Villiers Island Precinct Plan (2017) Massing

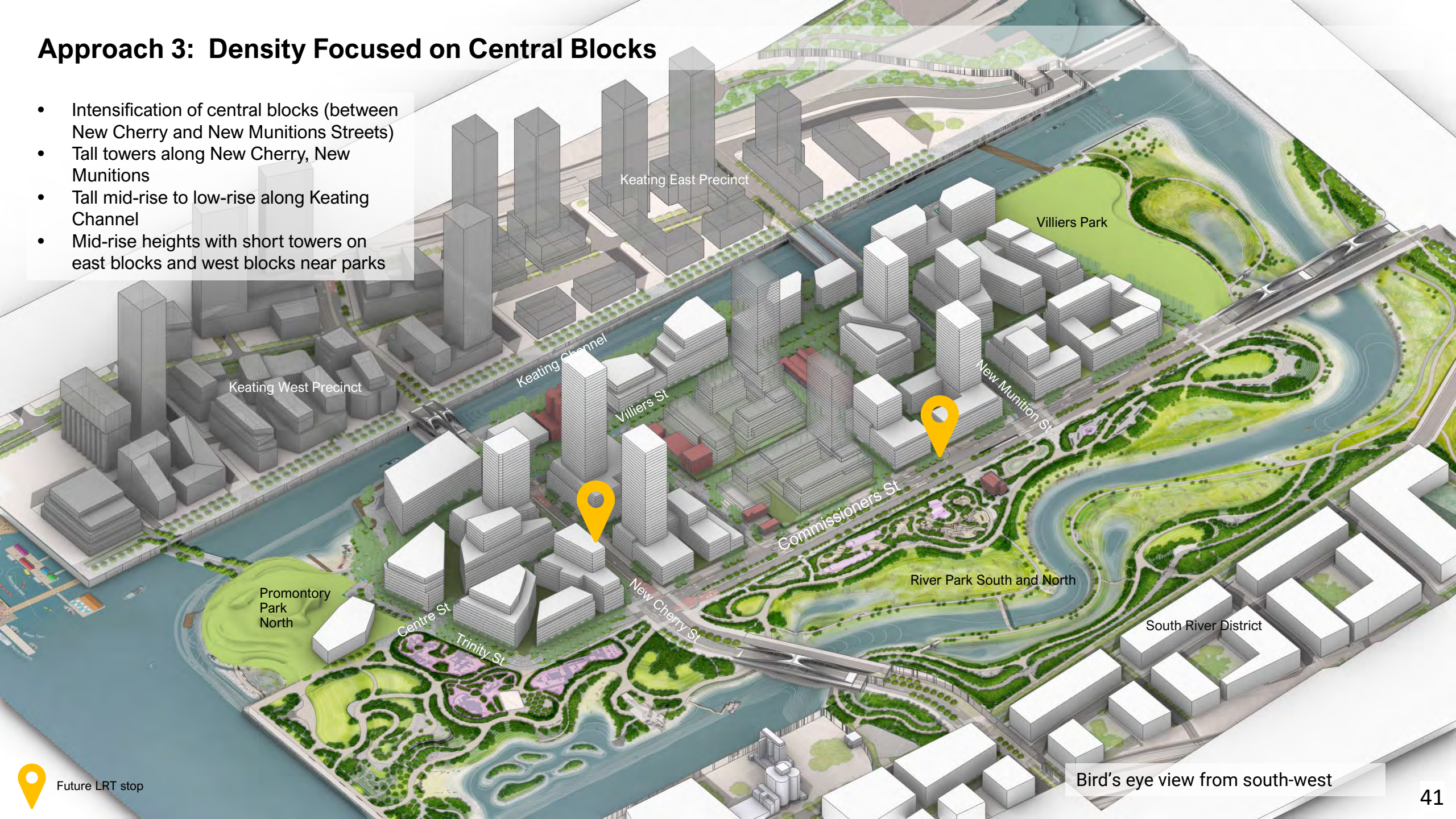


Bird's eye view from south-west



## Approach 3: Density Focused on Central Blocks

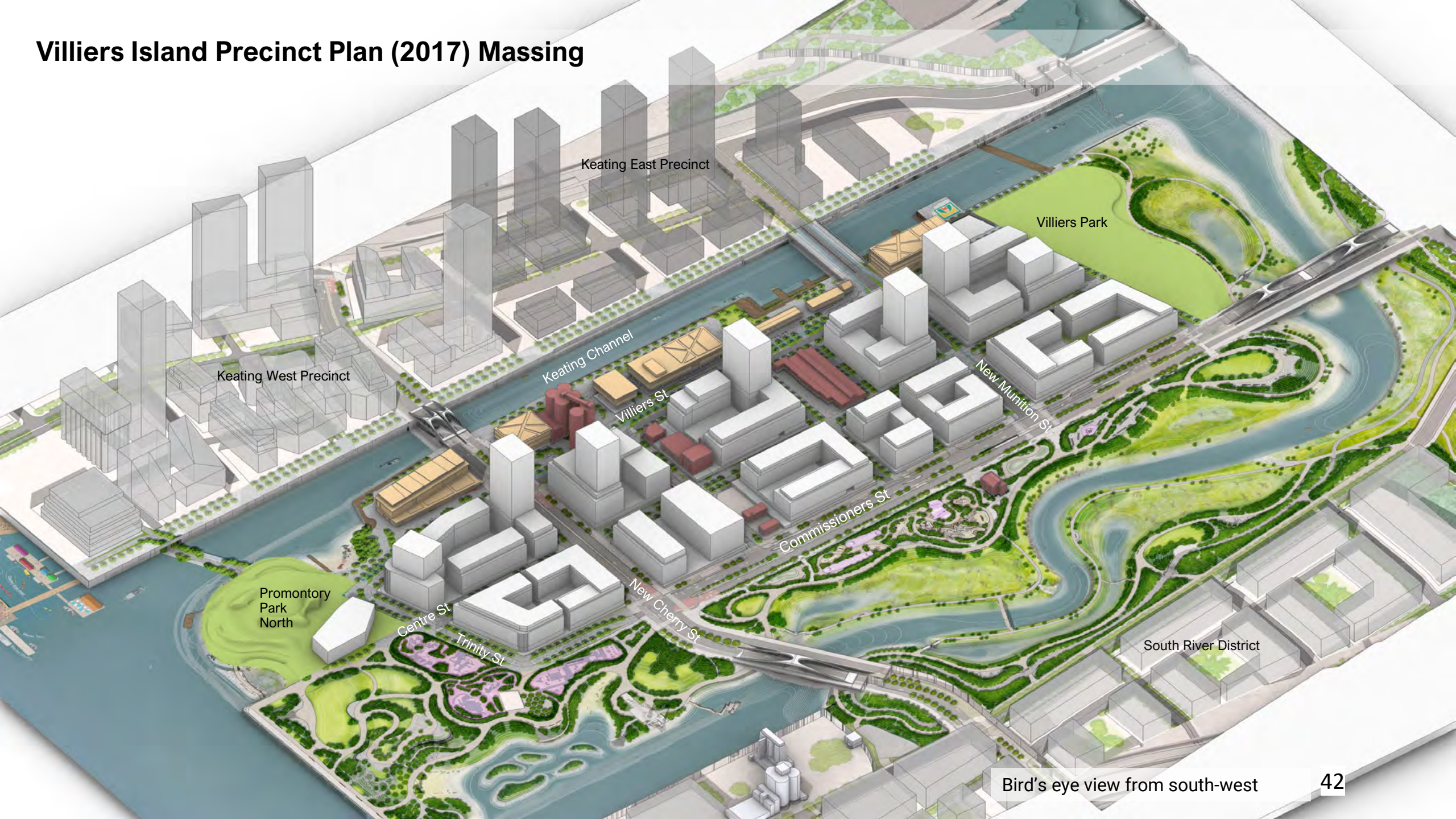
- Intensification of central blocks (between New Cherry and New Munitions Streets)
- Tall towers along New Cherry, New Munitions
- Tall mid-rise to low-rise along Keating Channel
- Mid-rise heights with short towers on east blocks and west blocks near parks



Bird's eye view from south-west



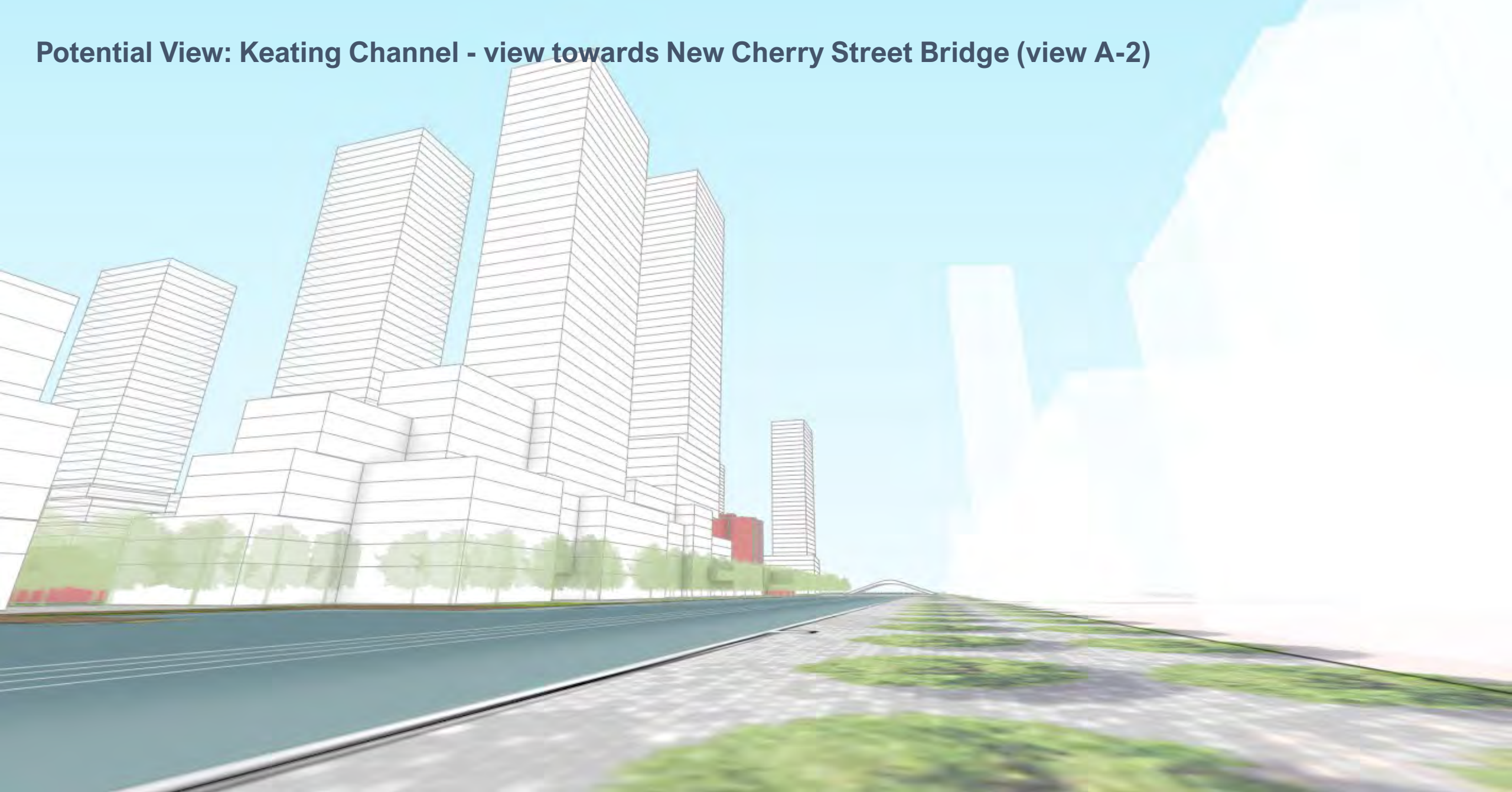
# Villiers Island Precinct Plan (2017) Massing



Bird's eye view from south-west

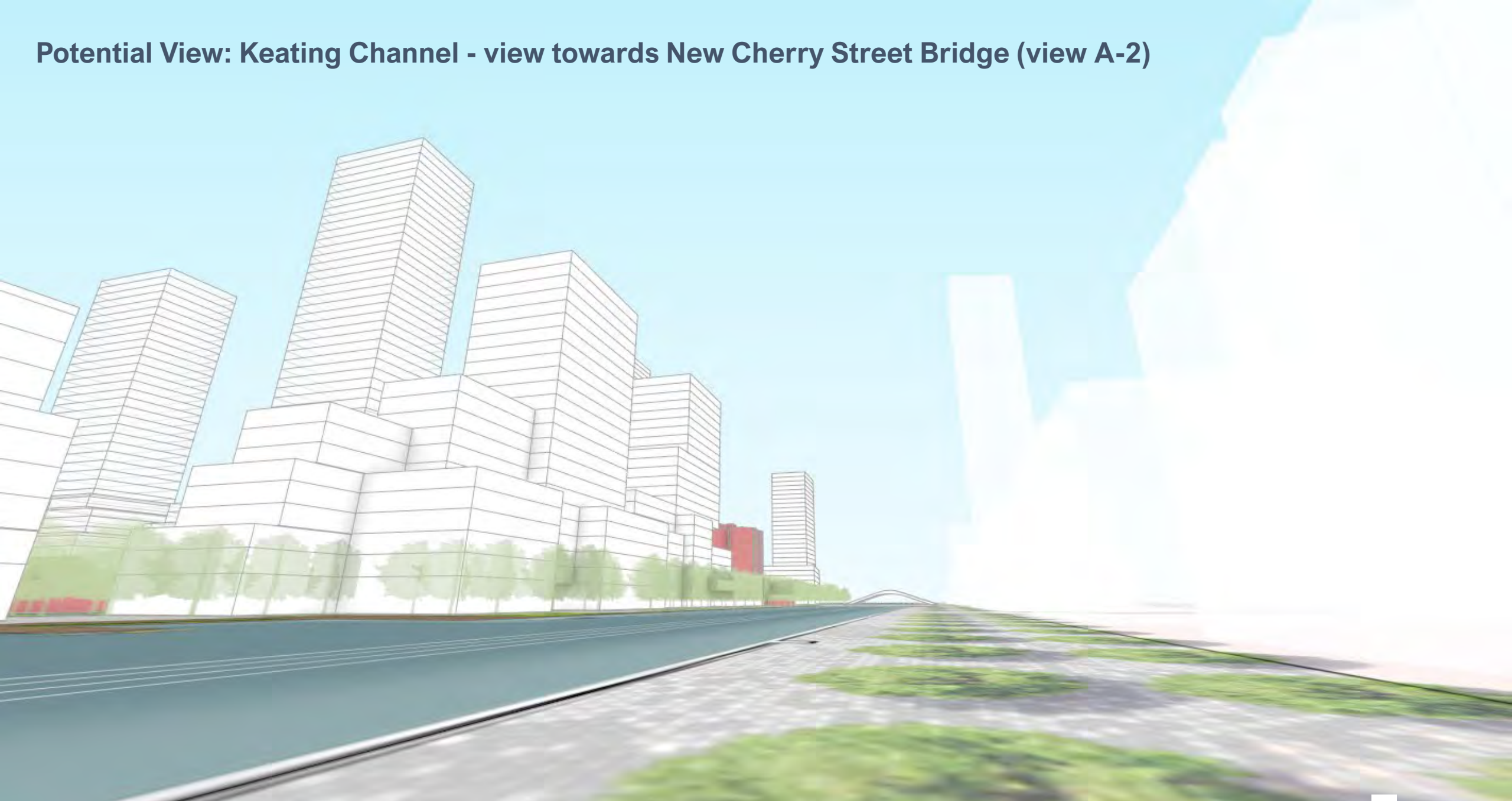


## Potential View: Keating Channel - view towards New Cherry Street Bridge (view A-2)



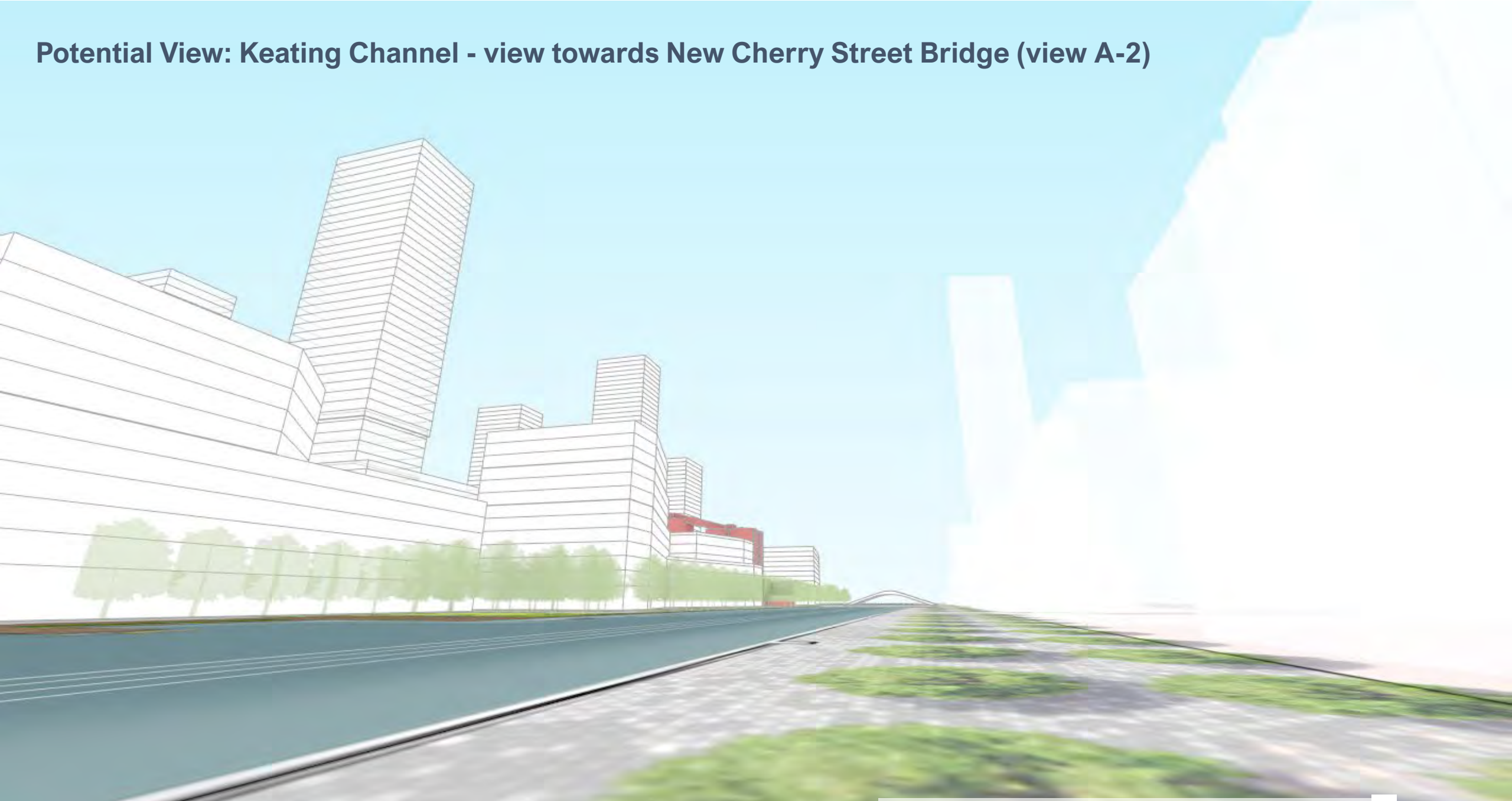


## Potential View: Keating Channel - view towards New Cherry Street Bridge (view A-2)



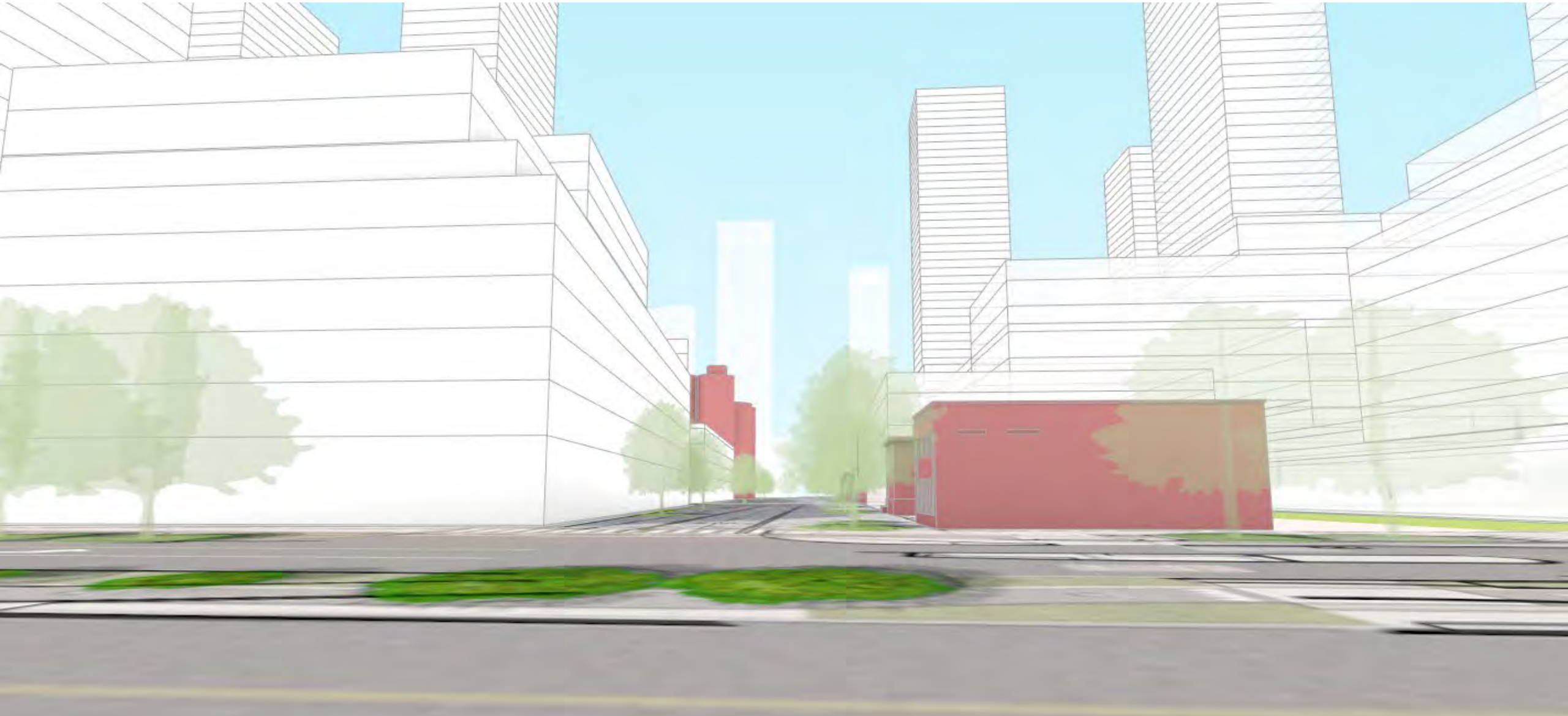


## Potential View: Keating Channel - view towards New Cherry Street Bridge (view A-2)





## View B-1: Old Cherry Street (At Commissioners St looking north)





## View B-1: Old Cherry Street (At Commissioners St looking north)





## View B-1: Old Cherry Street (At Commissioners St looking north)





Potential view: Looking east from Promontory Park towards Trinity Street (view B-2)





Potential view: Looking east from Promontory Park towards Trinity Street (view B-2)



**Approach 2 – Density focused on western blocks - Clustered towers near Promontory Park**



Potential view: Looking east from Promontory Park towards Trinity Street (view B-2)



**Approach 3 – Density focused on central blocks – Tall midrise near Promontory Park**



# FEEDBACK BREAK: Prioritizing Design Considerations

What do you think should be most important when assessing different approaches to increasing density?

More Important

- |                                   |                           |                                  |                       |                                     |   |                    |   |  |   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|
| Putting towers near transit stops | Preserving heritage views | Maximizing amount of new housing | Preserving lake views | Maintaining sun access to the parks | Size of buildings in relation to park edges | Views to the parks | Putting towers near community amenities | Minimizing wind impacts in public spaces | Maintaining sun access to the Keating Channel | Lively, animated public spaces |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------|

**Join a breakout room to discuss**

**What do you think should be most important when assessing different approaches to increasing density?**



# Questions?



## Approach 1

- Intensification of Keating Channel & north blocks
- Tall towers along Keating Channel and Villiers Street
- Mid-rise heights south of Centre Streets and east blocks



## Approach 2

- Intensification of the western blocks
- Tall towers clustered near Cherry Street transit, west blocks
- Shorter towers along Keating Channel
- Mid-rise heights with short towers on east blocks



## Approach 3

- Intensification of central blocks (between New Cherry and New Munitions Streets)
- Tall towers along New Cherry, New Munitions
- Tall mid-rise to low-rise along Keating Channel
- Mid-rise heights with short towers on east blocks and west blocks near parks

## Questions for consideration

**As you consider the 3 approaches for adding density to the island:**

- What elements or potential changes from each approach would you like to see carried into the preferred approach?
- What is the most appropriate location on Villiers Island for taller buildings?
- How do you think taller buildings would affect your enjoyment of the Keating Channel promenade?
- Does the scale of buildings along the park edge affect your experience or enjoyment of the park?