

## **Villiers Island Precinct - City-Initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment - Decision Report - Approval**

Date: June 19, 2024

To: Planning and Housing Committee

From: Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning

Ward: Ward 14 - Toronto - Danforth

Planning Application Number: 24 110589 STE 14 OZ

### **SUMMARY**

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The City of Toronto, together with CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto, is advancing a significant revitalization project for the Port Lands. The Port Lands is being transformed into a dynamic, inclusive mixed-use community, with housing at all levels of affordability combined with supportive community infrastructure. It will also continue as an employment hub, bolstering the City's film, television, and creative sectors, alongside sustained port and industrial activities.

The new Island, currently using the working name "Villiers Island" and receiving a permanent Indigenous name in the Fall of 2024, will be the first mixed-use residential community emerging through this transformation; defined by the renaturalized Don River it will develop into a sustainable and complete community. The Island is part of Toronto's broader waterfront revitalization, building on two decades of a successful tri-government collaboration. This model has spurred long-term economic growth and prosperity by flood protecting and remediating contaminated land, and developing both market and affordable housing. Waterfront revitalization has also delivered award-winning parks, public spaces, and architectural advancements, all while setting higher standards in sustainable development. This approach attracts innovation-focused companies and enhances the waterfront's appeal as a destination for both Toronto residents and visitors.

Over a decade of planning and consultation has focused on the future development of the Island. In 2007, Waterfront Toronto held an urban design competition for the Lower Don Lands, which include the Island, resulting in Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates' (MMVA) winning design. In 2011, a refined plan proposed a slight realignment of the Don River and the river mouth. The 2010 Lower Don Lands Framework Plan envisioned four mixed-used residential communities that would be adjacent to the new Don River valley and mouth, connected by bridges.

As envisioned in the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan and the 2017 Villiers Island Precinct Plan (the "Precinct Plan"), the Island will be a central connection point for surrounding emerging waterfront precincts, and will have destination parks, a new naturalized Don River Valley, community facilities including a new neighbourhood library, and unique opportunities to experience the Keating Channel.

Eighty percent of the developable area on the Island is in public ownership (see Figure 2). The City, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto have collaborated extensively to review the Precinct Plan and the density on public lands through a Density Study. The partnership sought to identify appropriate built form changes that could help contribute to the City's ambitious housing and affordable housing goals. This comprehensive Density Study process was informed by a series of iterative design workshops, expert advice from professional planning and design consultants, due diligence studies, feedback from the Waterfront Design Review Panel, and the public feedback through consultations and focus groups.

This report recommends the approval of amendments to the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, and Precinct Plan that describe how the Island will develop, based upon the outcome of the Density Study. It also recommends an update to the Municipal Code regarding parkland dedication, and endorsement of the Villiers Island and Keating Channel West Public Art Master Plan. Taken together, these revisions update the planning framework for the Island in response to Toronto's Housing Action Plan, to permit a dense, inclusive, sustainable, and walkable urban community.

The proposed amendments contemplate towers with heights between 19 and 46 storeys, enabling an estimated 9,000 residential units and resulting in a net density of 7.7 times the area of the Island's development blocks (see Figure 1). Of the estimated 9,000 units, approximately 2,200 - 2,700 will be affordable housing, with a target of 30 percent affordable housing on public lands. These affordable units will be secured as long-term or permanently affordable housing aligned with the City's income-based definition of affordable housing. Achieving affordable housing will require an intergovernmental funding and financing strategy.

The amendments also permit a minimum of approximately 80,000 square metres of retail and office space, 7,850 square metres of community space, and a Toronto Public Library neighbourhood branch.

A Business and Implementation Plan for the first phase of development on the Island will be presented to City Council later this Fall or in early 2025. The Business and Implementation Plan will build on this report by outlining the proposed costs and funding strategies, implementation roles and responsibilities, and implementation milestones (including phased development and early activation) for this emerging Island community, ensuring the planned density and necessary infrastructure are coordinated for maximum benefit.

**Figure 1 - A conceptual rendering of the community planned for the new Island.**



The redevelopment of the Island presents unique infrastructure challenges. Although close to the city, it requires replacing the existing infrastructure systems with contemporary ones, including stormwater management, water and wastewater systems. The public realm, established through the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Environmental Assessment, the Lower Don Lands Infrastructure Master Plan Environmental Assessment and the Precinct Plan, including the planned grid of streets, blocks, and open spaces, will support increased density through generous sidewalks, cycle tracks, green infrastructure elements and future transit connections.

Upon completion, the Island will house more than 15,000 residents, part of the larger Port Lands area, which is projected to be home to nearly 40,000 people and 20,000 jobs. The Island will also be a waterfront destination – its infrastructure and amenities will serve a local population, downtown, and the region. The revitalization of the Island and Toronto's waterfront will not only contribute to achieving provincial and federal housing targets, but also support the housing commitments in the City's housing plans.

Revitalizing the Port Lands is one of the largest and most complex city-building projects

in the City. The recommendations in this report will allow the City, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto to advance implementation plans to enable more affordable housing to be built faster. Building on the success of the Port Lands Flood Protection Project and a generation of planning for Port Lands revitalization; the report's actions will take the next crucial steps to transform a vast industrial and underutilized waterfront area into a vibrant, mixed-use community, important destination, home to tens of thousands of future resident amid a growing cluster of production, interactive and creative uses, and the hustle and bustle of a working port.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning recommends that:

1. City Council amend the Official Plan for 2, 62, 65, 105, 155, 165, and 170 Villiers Street 16 Munitions Street; 39, 51, 54, 63, 75, 85, 95, 97, 99 and 130 Commissioners Street; 222, 238, 242, 256, 275, 281, 301, 309 and 312 Cherry Street, and 72 Polson Street, substantially in accordance with the draft Official Plan Amendment attached as Attachment 10 to this report.
2. City Council amend City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013 for 2, 62, 65, 105, 155, 165, and 170 Villiers Street; 16 Munitions Street; 39, 51, 54, 63, 75, 85, 95, 97, 99 and 130 Commissioners Street; and 222, 238, 242, 256, 281, and 312 Cherry Street, and 72 Polson Street, substantially in accordance with the draft Zoning By-law Amendment attached as Attachment 11 to this report.
3. City Council amend Chapter 415 - Article III of the Toronto Municipal Code substantially in accordance with the draft By-law Amendment attached as Attachment 13 to this report.
4. City Council adopt the Villiers Island Precinct Plan 2024 Amendment, as described in Attachment 12 of this report.
5. City Council adopt the Villiers Island and Keating West Public Art Master Plan attached as Attachment 14.
6. City Council request that the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, together with Waterfront Toronto, CreateTO, and relevant Divisions, Agencies and Corporations:
  - a. Advance infrastructure and public realm design to align the Precinct Plan with the objectives of the City's Reconciliation Action Plan, as well as the Villiers Island and Keating West Public Art Master Plan; and
  - b. Develop a "Meanwhile Use Strategy" and implementing guidelines to inform intermediate use proposals to activate and animate the development blocks prior to development.

7. City Council authorize the City Solicitor to make such stylistic and technical changes to the draft Official Plan Amendment, draft Zoning By-law Amendment and draft Municipal Code amendment as may be required.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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The City Planning Division confirms that there are no financial implications resulting from the recommendations included in this report in the current budget year or in future years.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

## **EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT**

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Through the City's HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan, Toronto is envisioned as a city where all residents have equal opportunity to reach their full potential. This plan adopts a human rights based approach to housing, recognizing that housing is essential to a person's well-being, and crucial for building healthy, inclusive and sustainable communities.

To achieve a generational transformation of Toronto's housing system, the City aims to achieve the City Council target of 65,000 rent-controlled homes by 2030. This target includes 6,500 Rent-Geared-to-Income (RGI), 41,000 affordable rental homes, and 17,500 rent-controlled market homes. Additionally, through the Housing Action Plan 2022-26, the City is committed to meeting or exceeding the provincial housing target of 285,000 new housing starts by 2031.

Ensuring collaboration and engagement with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities in developing the Island, as well as the broader Port Lands development, aligns with the City's Reconciliation Action Plan. Increasing affordable housing in this proposed development will positively impact Indigenous peoples, who are overrepresented among those experiencing homelessness in Toronto.

The planning framework recommended in this report will enable delivery of much needed housing stock, and in particular, affordable housing, contributing to creating complete communities across the housing continuum in Toronto. The Island also is planned to include community space, a Toronto Public Library branch, parks and other crucial components that make up a complete community. These elements align with the City's goal to develop communities where residents from all walks of life are included and engaged.

## DECISION HISTORY

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### **Furthering Reconciliation and an Indigenous Cultural Framework for the Port Lands**

In April 2024, City Council directed City staff to report back to the October 2024 meeting of the Executive Committee with a permanent name for the Island and a framework for reconciliation projects that support Indigenous cultural revitalization on the Island and the Port Lands.

The Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EX13.5>

### **309 Cherry Street - Ontario Land Tribunal Hearing**

The City Solicitor sought direction from City Council on ongoing Ontario Land Tribunal processes regarding 309 Cherry Street in March 2024.

The Request for Direction Report can be found here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.CC16.16>

### **Housing System Transformation**

In November 2023, City Council adopted the Generational Transformation of Toronto's Housing System to Urgently Build More Affordable Homes report. This report included the Island as one of the sites under consideration for the new approaches to building affordable housing, requesting staff to leverage the report's framework in the Business and Implementation Plan for the Island.

The Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX9.3>.

On December 13, 2023, Council adopted the Advancing Generational Transformation of Toronto's Housing System - Aligning Housing Mandates and Strategic Efforts report. The report directed CreateTO to leverage City lands and partnerships to facilitate the creation of complete communities, such as the Island, as well as prioritize the delivery on affordable housing units.

The Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX10.2>

### **Villiers Island – Affordable Housing Update**

In February 2023, Planning and Housing Committee directed City staff to develop a preferred approach to increase housing density for affordable housing and recommends amendments to the Precinct Plan through a City initiated re-zoning process in 2024.

The Committee's decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.PH2.9>



## **Housing Action Plan**

In December 2022, City Council directed City staff to develop a Housing Action Plan for 2022-2026 supporting the City in achieving the provincial housing targets. As part of this Plan, Council directed Staff to optimize housing densities in the Port Lands through the lens of complete communities and infrastructure.

The Council decision is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.CC2.1>

## **Status Update on Achieving Additional Affordable Housing in Villiers Island**

In June 2022, City staff detailed how the City of Toronto, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto were advancing an affordable housing strategy to maximize housing options in the Island. The Committee directed City staff to assess necessary changes to the Precinct Plan to meet the City's housing goals.

The staff report is available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.PH35.17>

## **Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization**

In November 2021 and July 2022, City Council endorsed priorities for the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization, focusing on equity, inclusion, and access, and Indigenous engagement. This initiative includes further collaboration with federal and provincial counterparts.

The Council decisions and staff reports are available here: November 2021 - <http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2021.EX27.6>, and July 2022 <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.10>

## **Port Lands Planning Initiatives Final Report and Ontario Land Tribunal Appeals**

The Port Lands Planning Framework, Precinct Plan and Port Lands Official Plan Modification (the "Port Lands OPM", consisting of Port Lands Area Specific policies and amendments to the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan) were adopted by City Council in December 2017. Through Ontario Land Tribunal appeal proceedings, policy modifications were endorsed and approved by the Ontario Land Tribunal to resolve most concerns, with scoped ongoing appeals related to site specific concerns regarding some of the policies pertaining to parks, affordable housing and community benefits.

For more information on the Planning Framework and Precinct Plan see the Council consideration and Report for Action here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2017.PG24.6>

The most recent Council decision on appeals and policy modification are available here: <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.CC41.8>

The consolidated version of the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan and Port Lands Area Specific Policy (February 2, 2023) is available here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/8da8-city-planning-central-waterfront-secondary-plan.pdf>

## THE NEW ISLAND

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**Description:** The new Island is created by the rerouting of the Don River through the Port Lands. This is happening now as part of Port Lands Flood Protection – one of the biggest infrastructure projects in Canada. When the new wetlands and parks that line the river open in Summer 2025, work can begin on the community.

The Island will be surrounded by Quayside and the Keating Channel Precinct to the north, McCleary District to the East, Polson Quay and South River to the South and Lake Ontario to the West. Attachment 1 is a map of the Island and its surroundings.

**Area:** 39.6 hectares (98 acres)

**Parkland:** 20.2 hectares (50 acres)

**Developable Area:** 19.4 hectares (48 acres) including streets

- 10.6 hectares (26 acres) of development blocks (see Figure 2 for details)
- 8.8 hectares (22 acres) of right-of-way space (see Figure 3 for details)

**Density:** the net density on the Island will be 7.7 times the area of the Island's development blocks

**Total Gross Floor Area (GFA):** 800,000 square metres

**Dwelling Units:** 9,000

**Affordable Rental Housing Units:** 2,200-2,700 units (depending on ultimate unit size, the number of family sized units, and the outcome of ongoing litigation before the Ontario Land Tribunal on privately owned lands)

**Total residential population:** at least 15,000 people

**Total employment population:** at least 2,900 workers

**Heritage:** The Island has a concentration of industrial heritage buildings, including the low-rise designated heritage buildings that line Old Cherry Street, the Queen's City Foundry building, Ontario Portland Cement Company Silos and the Fire Hall, which was relocated into the park. The Precinct Plan and the 2024 amendments to the Precinct Plan reinforce the significance of Old Cherry Street as the key cluster of cultural heritage resources and its role as a special place that celebrates the Island's rich industrial and commercial heritage. The Toronto Preservation Board will consider a



report regarding alterations under Section 33 of the Ontario Heritage Act proposed for the heritage property at 309 Cherry Street in connection with the redevelopment of the site on June 5, 2024.

**Figure 2 - Approximate Area of Development Blocks by Ownership Type**

Ownership Type	Approximate Area
Public (Total)	8.5 hectares (21 acres)
• <i>Federal</i>	1.3 hectares (3.1 acres)
• <i>Municipal</i>	6.7 hectares (16.5 acres)
• <i>Waterfront Toronto</i>	0.6 hectares (1.3 acres)
Private (Total)	2.1 hectares (5.1 acres)
<b>Total Blocks</b>	<b>10.6 hectares</b>

**Figure 3 - Typical Right-of-Way Allocation of Conceptual Street Types**

Type of street*	Right of Way Width	Roadway Allocation	Parking Lane Allocation	Dedicated Bike Lane Allocation	Sidewalk Allocation	Buffer	Public Realm, Planting	Transit
Multi-Modal Streets and Transitways	40 metres	17%	N/A	10%	15%	4%	34%	20%
Local Streets	20 metres	33%	12%	N/A	35%	N/A	20%	0%
Pedestrian Priority Streets	20 metres	15%	12%	10%	35%	5%	23%	0%
Non-Vehicular	19 metres	31% (fire route)	N/A	N/A	45%	N/A	24%	0%

\*The streets are subject to further design.

\*\* NOTE: Figure 3 was updated to include the transit allocation

**Access and Transportation Network:** The Island has a network of existing and new streets, planned through environmental assessments and Council-endorsed planning frameworks. The Port Lands and South of Eastern Transportation and Servicing Master Plan EA anticipated that 70 percent of people could be accessing the Island by transit in the future. In addition, the new streets, which are identified by working names, are being designed to prioritize pedestrians and cyclists. Old Cherry Street, Villiers Street, Trinity Park Boulevard, Centre Street, New Foundry Street and Villiers Park Street will be

subject to detailed design and naming as part of the next steps to advance the implementation of the Island. New Cherry, Commissioners, New Munition Street and the Don Roadway are major streets that create critical vehicular connections, as well as supporting multi-modal uses and providing in-street green infrastructure. Attachment 7 illustrates the planned transportation network for the Island.

## **POLICY AND REGULATION CONSIDERATIONS**

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### **Provincial Land-Use Policies**

All decisions of City Council in respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter shall be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), and shall conform to provincial plans, A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020), the Greenbelt Plan, and others.

### **Toronto Official Plan**

Although the Official Plan is not in force for the Port Lands due to outstanding resolution of appeals to the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, which was adopted under the former City of Toronto Official Plan, it represents City Council's strategic direction for the development of the City.

The City of Toronto Official Plan is a comprehensive policy document that guides development in the City. It provides direction for managing the size, location, and built form compatibility of different land uses, as well as the provision of municipal services and facilities. The Official Plan integrates land use and transportation when creating new neighbourhoods centred on public focal points, including parks, open spaces, public streets, and community facilities.

The Island is designated Regeneration Areas, Parks and Natural Areas on Map 18: Land Use Plan (Attachment 4). In addition, Map 2: Urban Structure specifies that the Island is within the Downtown and Central Waterfront Area and includes part of the Green Space System (Attachment 3).

Toronto Official Plan policies can be found here:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

### **Former City of Toronto Official Plan**

The former City of Toronto Official Plan is the in-force Official Plan for the Island. The former City of Toronto Official Plan supports a waterfront precinct planning approach and sets out a policy framework, including goals and objectives for the waterfront in Chapter 14. The primary goal for the waterfront, as set out in Policy 14.2., is to promote increased and sustainable public enjoyment and use of the area by ensuring that future developments and actions by both the public and private sectors help to achieve objectives such as improving public access to the waterfront, increasing the amount of public parkland, and enhancing the quality of the waterfront as a place.

## **Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (CWSP)**

The CWSP amends and supersedes the former City of Toronto Official Plan. It envisions the transformation of the Port Lands into vibrant urban districts amidst the active backdrop of a working port. This vision is harmonized with the City's Official Plan, the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), and A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2020), to ensure that the Island becomes a resilient, sustainable and vibrant community integral to Toronto's waterfront revitalization.

Drawing from the CWSP, the amendment embodies core principles essential to the transformation of the Island and the surrounding Port Lands:

- (A) Removing Barriers/Making Connections
- (B) Building a Network of Spectacular Waterfront Parks and Public Spaces
- (C) Promoting a Clean and Green Environment
- (D) Creating Dynamic and Diverse New Communities

The CWSP designates the Port Lands as Existing Use Areas, Regeneration Areas, and Parks and Open Space Areas allowing for a diverse mix of uses including residential, commercial, and industrial, alongside significant open spaces and community services. This approach supports the establishment of new mixed-use residential communities, innovation districts, and cultural and recreational amenities, ensuring the Port Lands' ongoing economic contribution to the city.

## **Port Lands Area Specific Policy (2017)**

The Port Lands Planning Framework ("the Framework") guides the revitalization of the Port Lands. The Framework outlines a detailed long-term vision for the Port Lands and provides the planning rationale for the Port Lands Area Specific Policies.

The Framework envisions transforming the Port Lands into new, vibrant districts with unique and memorable local identities that promote social interaction, cultural enrichment, ecological health, a low-carbon future and a prosperous local economy. It establishes a resilient urban structure, connecting the Port Lands to the city and providing a robust legacy of fine-grained streets and blocks to allow the area to evolve and transform over time. The Framework provides careful consideration to the introduction of sensitive uses in the area, recognizing that portions of the Port Lands will continue to have port and industrial uses.

The Island has a land use typology of Mixed-use Residential Areas, which include a broad range of uses in a compact urban form, including residential uses, commercial uses (office, retail, service, and hotels), and media uses.

## **Lower Don Lands Infrastructure Environmental Assessment (2010 & 2014)**

The Council-adopted Lower Don Lands Infrastructure Master Plan Environmental Assessment (Phase 1 & 2 of the EA process) and Keating Channel Environmental Study Report (Phases 3 & 4 of the EA process) established the major street network for

Keating Channel, the Island, Polson Quay and South River precincts, as well as the water, sewer and stormwater servicing strategy.

Preferred (New) Cherry Street and Commissioners Street, to Don Roadway, cross-sections and a functional plan were included within the Infrastructure Master Plan. The Infrastructure Master Plan provided the design direction for the major road network and infrastructure approach, which was further designed through the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project.

Throughout the process, extensive public consultation was conducted, including four iterations of meetings with the public, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and the Landowner and User Advisory Committee. These meetings included a kick-off meeting to solicit goals and ideas, feedback workshops, and further public meetings to present and seek feedback on draft findings and recommendations. Approximately 1,600 people attended the public meetings or provided input online from December 2011 to August 2012, and nearly 100 organizations and businesses were engaged through the advisory committees.

## **Villiers Island Precinct Plan**

The Precinct Plan provides detailed planning direction to guide the revitalization of the Island into a new sustainable, walkable and connected mixed-use residential community with parks and open spaces along the four distinct water's edges. The Island is poised to become a significant new regional destination and the first climate positive community in the city. The Precinct Plan and the 2024 amendment to the Precinct Plan build on the directions and recommendations in the Planning Framework and inform the draft Zoning By-law Amendment. In accordance with the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan, all development applications will be required to address the vision, guiding principles and strategies, and guidelines for the Island established through the Precinct Plan and 2024 amendment to the Precinct Plan.

An extensive consultation process supported the Port Lands Planning Framework and the Precinct Plan, including six Stakeholder Advisory Committee meetings, five Land Owner and User Advisory Committee meetings, industry-specific meetings, and outreach to First Nations. There were also five broad community consultation meetings, a two-day Vision Workshop, and multiple presentations to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel. Please refer to Attachment 8 for an overview of 2012-2017 Port Lands Planning Framework and Villiers Island Engagement.

## **Zoning**

The former City of Toronto Zoning By-law 438-86 is in effect for the Island. The Island is currently subject to several industrial zones, including Zone IC (commercial industrial) and I3 (medium industrial). The IC category permits light industrial uses, with some retail, service, and commercial uses. The I3 category permits a range of light and medium industrial uses and some commercial uses. Residential uses are not permitted in the Island within the in-force zoning.

City of Toronto Zoning By-law No. 569-2013 does not apply to the Island.

A map of the existing zoning for the area can be found in Attachment 5.

## **Toronto Municipal Code - Chapter 415**

The Toronto Municipal Code - Chapter 415, Development of Land, describes and regulates the application of the City of Toronto's development charges, community benefits charges and parkland dedication by-laws. The application of the City of Toronto's parkland dedication by-law is contained within Article III of Chapter 415. The Island is subject to the Parkland Dedication By-law.

## **Airspace Considerations**

The federal government has sole jurisdiction for regulating the airspace around Canada's airports, which includes limiting the heights of buildings or structures within flight paths and establishing standards for airport operational procedures. Airport Zoning Regulations, per authorities in the federal Aeronautics Act, restrict the heights of buildings, structures, and objects near airports to protect the current and future accessibility and usability based on airport's obstacle limitation surfaces as recommended in federal standards known as TP 312.

The Island is outside of the existing Airport Zoning Regulations (SOR/85-515) established in 1985 for Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport. This is because the outer surface as recommended in TP 312 is not included north of approach surface. As a result, the northern boundary of the Airport Zoning Regulations generally aligns with Commissioners Street and, except for a very small portion of the western blocks, does not apply to the Island.

Beyond surfaces protected by Airport Zoning Regulations, airports have instrument flight procedures, published or approved by NAV Canada, that guide flight activity under certain conditions, such as bad weather. These instrument flight procedures are designed in accordance with federal standards known as TP 308, which require safe separation between aircraft and obstacles. Unlike surfaces protected by Airport Zoning Regulations, not all segments of these procedures are protected through regulation. They are typically sponsored by the airport operator or NAV Canada and procedures are reviewed regularly and can be updated to improve aircraft/airport efficiency or accommodate new obstacles, such as tall buildings, provided airport operations are not unduly impacted. Their maintenance relies on the coordination between various parties, including airports, NAV Canada, and developers. Several flight instrument procedures overlay the Island.

## **ENGAGEMENT**

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Over nearly two decades, engagement has shaped the Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project Environmental Assessment, Port Lands Planning, and Precinct planning. From 2005 to 2014, through extensive community consultation a preferred approach was established for the Don River naturalization and Port Lands

flood protection. From 2007 to 2014, the Lower Don Lands Infrastructure Environment Assessment and its amendments established the urban structure and major road network for the Island, as well as the Keating Channel, South River, and Polson Quay precincts.

Between 2013 and 2016 extensive public, landowner and user consultation was conducted for the Port Lands Planning Framework, Port Lands and South of Eastern Transportation and Servicing Master Plan (TSMP) and Precinct Plan. Detailed design consultation from 2018 to 2020 refined the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project, including the design of New Cherry Street and Commissioners Street.

The flood protection, river valley, regional parks, street and bridge designs were presented to the Waterfront Design Review Panel on 20 separate occasions. The resulting designs, based upon extensive consultation, have been constructed as part of the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project, which will be completed later this year.

Community and stakeholder engagement identified natural greenspace and affordable housing as main priorities. Other priorities were new jobs, places to learn, a low carbon footprint, inclusive communities, places to play, access to transit, and the ability to access and interact with the surrounding waters.

Over the past 18 months, the City of Toronto, CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto have studied options to increase density on the Island. This has been supported by extensive public engagement:

- **Pre-Engagement Meetings:** In March 2023, targeted stakeholder meetings were held to prepare for public engagement. Stakeholders, grouped by interest areas, discussed the relevance of the 2017 guiding principles and potential changes. Key concerns included energy use, diverse built forms, the connection to the naturalized river valley, flexible outdoor spaces, increased affordable housing, inclusivity, water access and appropriate community facilities.
- **June 2023 Public Meeting (Virtual):** On June 19, 2023, over 200 people attended a 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.
- **Waterfront Design Review Panel (June 21, 2023):** The panel reviewed density increase options and commented on the need for higher density, increased affordable housing, detailed public realm designs and transit capacity information.
- **March 2024 Public Meeting (Virtual):** A virtual public meeting on March 26, 2024, showcased the outcomes of the density study. Approximately 325 attendees heard a report back 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. Participants were generally in support of affordable



housing, human-scale design, diverse retail experiences and pedestrian prioritization. Comments also included suggestions for increasing density and open spaces, prioritizing transit access and creating vibrant public spaces.

- **Waterfront Design Review Panel (April 24, 2024):** The panel reviewed the density study and massing demonstration plan, emphasizing the need for a 21st-century neighborhood, detailed mid-block connections, flexible zoning, and pedestrian-friendly streets. The Panel voted for Conditional Support, with additional information on park design, pedestrian porosity approaches to development blocks and streetscape design, in relation to a flexible zoning by-law.
- **May 2024 Public Meeting (In-Person):** An in-person open house held on May 2, 2024, showed similar information to the virtual meeting held in March 2024. Approximately 175 attendees expressed support for the density increase and the overall built form approach, showing excitement about new park spaces and recreational activities.
- **Meetings with Stakeholders:** Continuous engagement with landowners, port industries, PortsToronto, school boards, and community service providers occurred over the last 18 months to review density options, due diligence findings and suggestions for refining the density approach.

## Statutory Public Meeting Comments

In making their decision with regard to this proposal, Council members have an opportunity to consider submissions made at the statutory public meeting held by the Planning and Housing Committee.

## COMMENTS

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### Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial Plans

Staff have had regard for the relevant matters of provincial interest set out in the Planning Act. Staff has reviewed the updates to the planning framework for the Island for consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement (2020) and conformity with the Growth Plan (2020) in effect at the time of the date of this report. The revised planning framework is consistent with the PPS and conforms with the Growth Plan.

### Former City of Toronto Official Plan

The proposed changes to the Island planning framework appropriately implement the intent of the former City of Toronto Official Plan, amended by the Central Waterfront Secondary Plan. They continue to plan for a vibrant waterfront with complete communities that achieve high quality, sustainable design, a mix of incomes and uses, and a generous public realm.

## **Port Lands Area Specific Policy Amendments**

The Port Lands Area Specific Policy (PLASP) was adopted by City Council in December 2017, based upon the recommendations included within the Port Lands Planning Framework and Precinct Plan. The PLASP was amended by the Ontario Land Tribunal on May 18, 2021, and July 11, 2022, based upon settlements with appellants. 309 Cherry has a number of outstanding CWSP appeals, focused on affordable housing, parkland dedication and Section 37 policies. 309 Cherry has been included within the draft Official Plan Amendment as part of the ongoing resolution of Ontario Land Tribunal appeal resolution.

City staff are proposing several specific policy revisions, implementing the outcomes of the review of the Island's planning framework. The revisions are summarized below. The draft Official Plan Amendment is attached to this report as Attachment 10.

### **PLASP Section 4 - Land Use**

The Island's land use policies are proposed to be updated, reducing the requirement for non-residential GFA from 20 percent to 10 percent. This reduction results in an unchanged total planned non-residential GFA from the prior permissions, as the overall density permission for the island is substantively increased. The intent of this change is to ensure that the increase in density permission is allocated to residential uses.

Mixed-Use Residential land use permissions were expanded to include light industrial uses such as production studios, light (artisan) manufacturing, and software development and processing, urban farms, entertainment, recreation, and sports facilities, and residential with home occupation. This policy change provides enhanced land use flexibility as the Island develops.

The introduction of a "Meanwhile Uses" policy permits non-residential uses to occupy a site prior to full build-out of the planned land uses. Examples of "meanwhile use" elsewhere in Toronto include Stackd Market and as proposed in the Downsview Secondary Plan Update. This policy amendment allows these uses as-of-right. The policies provide direction for the development of a "Meanwhile Use" Strategy and implementing guidelines.

### **PLASP Section 5 - Parks and Open Spaces**

The amendment of the Parks and Open Spaces policies are aligned with the Parkland Strategy Update, setting an appropriate park hierarchy and reflecting changes in the Planning Act Section 42 that apply to parkland dedication.

### **PLASP Section 6 - Heritage**

The amendment introduces minor modifications to a number of heritage view policies from Downtown and refined tall building setbacks from the east side of Old Cherry Street, to maintain the character of the retained designated heritage buildings.

## **PLASP Section 7 - Community Infrastructure**

The Community Infrastructure policies that apply to the Island were updated to be consistent with the outcome of the Port Lands Community Facilities and Services Study (2024), as further detailed in the "Villiers Island Precinct Plan 2024 Amendment" section of the report below.

## **PLASP Section 8 - Inclusive Communities**

The amendment adds a new housing policy that specifies, on publicly owned lands, a target of 30 percent residential GFA on the Island is set aside for affordable rental housing.

Further direction on affordable rental housing unit types and sizes is provided through two new policies which encourage modular and flexible designs to support the creation of inclusive communities, accommodate families, permit aging in place and accommodate accessible design, which reflect the direction of the City's Growing Up Guidelines: Planning for Children in New Vertical Communities.

In addition, the family-size unit policies were updated for public lands, with a minimum of 40 percent of the total residential units as two-bedroom units or larger.

## **PLASP Section 9 - Movement and Access**

The amendment adds a policy that permits subsurface easements, encumbrances, and encroachments under Centre Street, if approved by Transportation Services, allowing for subsurface connections between north and south blocks.

## **PLASP Section 10 - Built Form**

The Density Study recommended providing greater policy flexibility in the location of tall buildings, based upon criteria contained within Port Lands Area Specific policy, City-wide urban design guidelines and the Precinct Plan and the 2024 amendment to the Precinct Plan, to encourage diversity in architecture and urban design, while contributing to a safe and visually appealing environment.

Tower setback policies were simplified to provide greater flexibility in tower location for development proposals on a site-by-site basis, supported by studies on wind, solar access, land use compatibility, and heritage view. Policies specifying maximum tall building heights are removed.

The Built Form policy updates for the Island focus on its evolution from the 2017 vision of a predominately mid-rise community to a tall building community. This is reflected in the proposed new built-form vision for the Island as "an inclusive, sustainable and walkable, dense urban community with a diversity of uses and building typologies. Diverse built form will prioritize cultural heritage resources and a system of resilient high-quality parks and public realm with comfortable microclimate and design excellence."

## **PLASP Section 12 - Innovation and Sustainability**

"Meanwhile Uses" will be transitional development, projects or initiatives that will activate the Island prior to the planned mixed-use residential developments, supporting the new regional parks. Due to their temporary nature, it may be difficult to meet the required tier of the Toronto Green Standard. A new policy has been introduced which would exempt "Meanwhile Uses" from Toronto Green Standard requirements, although the aspiration of any "Meanwhile Use" is to meet the intent of the Toronto Green Standard.

### **PLASP Map 3C**

Map 3C: Priority Retail Streets and Frontages has been updated based upon the recommendations of the Commercial Retail Study. The location of priority retail streets and frontages, as well as secondary retail streets, on the Island are updated.

### **PLASP Maps 3D and 3F**

Map 3D: Cultural Heritage Resources and Map 3F: Heritage Building/Structures has been updated by removing the Toronto Harbour Commissioners buildings, located along Keating Channel Promenade. These buildings were identified in the 2017 PLASP work but their removal was ultimately approved due to significant deterioration.

### **PLASP Views**

Several views described within the Port Lands Area Specific Policy were amended, as a result of the deterioration, demolition, and removal of the Toronto Harbour Commissioners buildings. The Port Lands Skyline View was modified to focus on the view from Sugar Beach to Sherbourne Common, instead of from the foot of Yonge, next to Redpath Sugar Refinery west of Jarvis Street.

## **Zoning By-law Amendment**

The draft amendment to the applicable zoning on the Island will integrate the Island into the City's current zoning regime, under Zoning By-law 569-2013. The draft Zoning By-law Amendment exclude the privately-owned sites, focusing on those lands that are publicly owned. 16 Munition Street and 275 Cherry Street are privately owned designated heritage buildings that have not been identified for residential use permissions or intensification. 309 Cherry, the Island's largest privately-owned property, is the subject of an Ontario Land Tribunal appeal of two Zoning By-law Amendment applications. Lands to which the Zoning By-law Amendment will apply are shown on Attachment 6.

The draft Zoning By-law Amendment propose a simple zoning envelope to allow for architectural innovation and creativity, building design approaches to achieve the climate-positive objectives, and to allow tower location to be informed by policy criteria, built form guidelines and relevant studies submitted at Site Plan stage. The recommended Zoning By-law Amendment can be found at Attachment 11.

The draft Zoning By-law Amendment focus on the following areas:

### **Zoning - Permitted Uses:**

The public lands on the Island will be rezoned to implement the proposed land uses. Development lands designated "CRE – Commercial Residential Employment," the Parks areas are zoned "OR – Open Space Recreational," and the river valley is zoned - "ON – Open Space - Natural Zone."

The land use permissions for the CRE Zone, as modified, are broad, including residential, commercial activation, light industrial, urban agriculture, entertainment, recreation and sport, office, employment and home occupation uses.

The ON and OR land use permissions are equally broad, allowing for parks, agriculture, recreational, sport, cultural and commercial activation uses, as well as marine terminals or berths for vessels, permitting berthing locations and infrastructure for small ferries and water taxis.

Many permitted uses have associated conditions, such as maximum sizes for some entertainment, industrial, or commercial activation uses, so these uses can be incorporated into a mixed-use residential building within a dense urban condition.

For a full list of the permitted uses in each zone see the recommended Zoning By-law at Attachment 11.

### **Zoning - Commercial Activation:**

A commercial activation study determined the location of primary retail streets and frontages, along Keating Channel Promenade and Silo Square, Old Cherry Street, New Cherry Street, Villiers Street and fronting Promontory Park North. The zoning by-law permits commercial activation uses to be located anywhere on the Island, and requires commercial activation uses along the identified primary retail streets and frontages.

### **Zoning - Permitted Floor Area:**

The overall Floor Space Index (FSI) allocated to each block is shown in the table below. The maximum FSI per block is based upon the massing from the demonstration plan for publicly-owned lands on the Island, with mid-block connections, courtyards and Privately-Owned Publicly Accessible Spaces (POPS) extracted.

The resulting overall FSI is 7.7 times the area of the developable blocks, with density generally higher in the west and lower in the east.

- The western blocks (P03, P07, P08, P12 and P16) are proposed to permit higher densities. These blocks are closest to future rapid transit and are an appropriate location for the tallest buildings on the Island, creating a prominent urban gateway. Densities on the western blocks have an FSI range from 9.3 to 10.9.

The easterly blocks (10B, 11, 14 and 15), as well as most blocks north of Villiers Street (4 and 5) generally have a density of between 7 and 8 FSI. While still at a

level of density comparable to what is under construction adjacent to major transit around the City, somewhat lower height and density on the Island's easterly edge ensures excellent sunlight conditions for public spaces and natural habitats, part of the \$1.42 billion Don Mouth Naturalization and Port Lands Flood Protection Project.

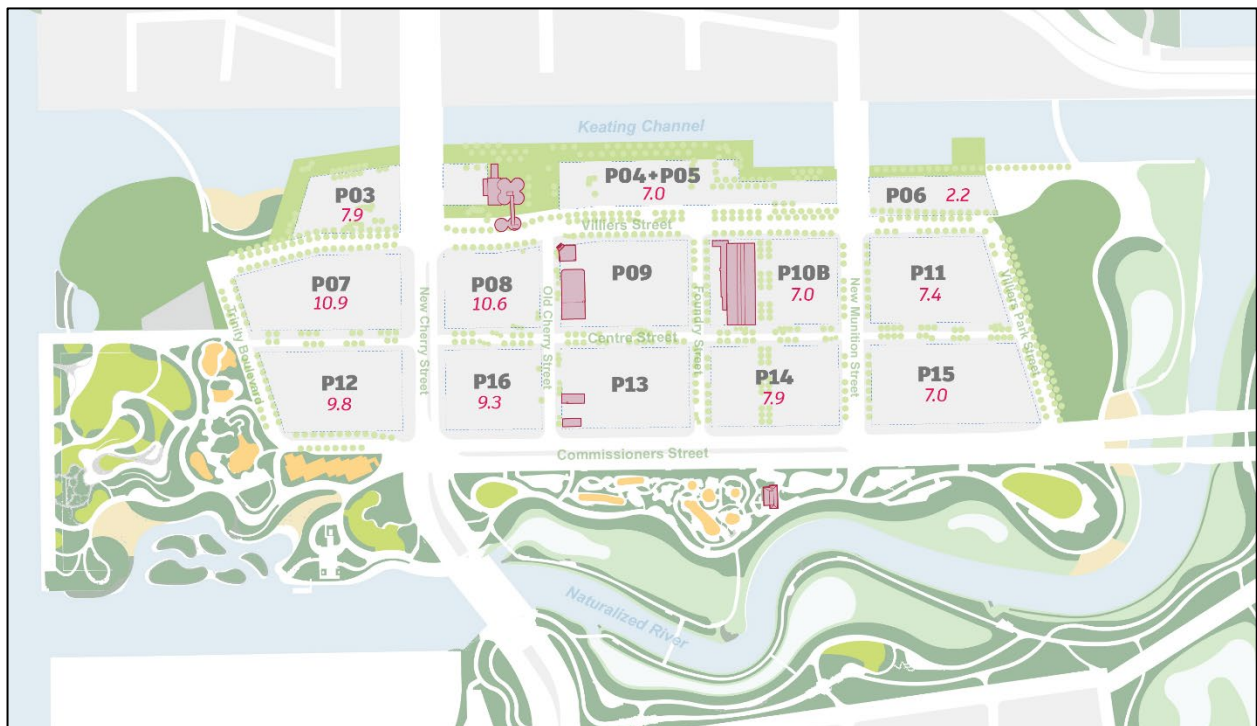
- A planned school block (P06) has a density of 2.2 FSI in the north-eastern corner of the Island, adjacent to the new parks system. The density and built form of P06 may be reconsidered based upon a proposal from the Toronto District School Board.

The density scheme is illustrated by block in Figure 4 below, with numbers in pink reflective of planned FSI on publicly owned lands. Blocks 9 and 13 are in private ownership and subject to a separate zoning process.

This approach not only meets the City's housing goals but also enhances the public realm, supports sustainability, and promotes the biodiversity and health of the new naturalized River Valley.

The final calculation of gross floor area will be based upon the final dimensions and area of a block, based upon a draft plan of subdivision, R-plan, or equivalent mechanism for land division.

**Figure 4 - Permitted floor area by block**





### **Zoning - Street Rights-of-Way:**

The local street grid was recommended through the Lower Don Land Infrastructure Environmental Assessment and further refined based upon the recommendations from the Precinct Plan. The next phase of the Island's implementation will develop more detailed designs of the local street network and public realm, focusing on pedestrianization where possible.

The local street rights-of-way widths are not defined in the zoning by-law to permit the street design exercise to proceed, with potential reconsideration of rights-of-way widths. Instead, block dimensions and property lines are derived from the limits of the public streets. This approach to the zoning envelope will provide flexibility in defining the block dimensions, gross floor area, and built form during the detailed design of the streets, public realm, and POPS spaces, and through design competitions for the development blocks. Tower areas defined in the Zoning By-law have been maximized on the development blocks to provide flexibility for future tower locations.

### **Zoning - Tall Building Heights, Separation Distances and Floorplate:**

Tower areas in the zoning by-law include a range of heights permissions, from 14 to 46 storeys (up to 140 metres). The distribution of height and density across the Island responds to the proximity to transit services, with the highest heights and densities planned for the westerly side, adjacent to higher order transit. Heights gradually descend towards the water to the east and south, preserving sun access for the river valley's sensitive habitats and key public spaces along the Keating Channel's north promenade.

Tower locations and setbacks will be established to ensure a comfortable microclimate at grade, adhering to the PLASP principle of a minimum 40-metre separation. Providing minimum distances between towers helps limit negative impacts on the public realm, while preserving sunlight and views for neighboring towers and properties. Separation distances on the Island support the waterfront redevelopment objective of removing barriers and making connections between the city and the lake.

Tower floorplate area is not addressed within the zoning by-law, relying on the overall direction within the PLASP and the more specific direction provided in the Precinct Plan and the 2024 amendments to the Precinct Plan. This flexible approach allows tower floorplates to be determined through a development proposal, based upon the context of the site, and informed by considerations such as sustainable design; increasing the number of family-size units; greater block permeability; and minimizing impacts to the public realm.

### **Zoning - Parking:**

The recommended Zoning By-law does not include minimum parking requirements and introduces maximum parking permissions. The 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. The recommended Zoning By-law does not vary the visitor or accessible parking regulations within Zoning By-law 569-2013.

## **Zoning - Meanwhile Uses:**

The draft Zoning By-law Amendment allows for a wide array of Meanwhile Uses on the Island, encompassing retail, commercial, light industrial, community, cultural, entertainment, sport, and agricultural activities. The diversity of these uses enhances the ability to seize opportunities that support the emerging community, experiment with new ways of activating spaces, enrich the programming and visitor experience of the new parkland and river system and facilitate the evolution of the Precinct as development progresses. In Parks and Open Space Areas, Meanwhile Uses are designed to be compatible with the future design and programming of the parks to be developed as development proceeds.

Meanwhile Uses are not governed by the specific policies or criteria that apply to the final form of development, allowing for greater innovation and flexibility and accommodating non-traditional buildings or activation concepts, which are informed by a Meanwhile Use Strategy and implementing guidelines.

## **Zoning - Holding Provisions:**

The recommended Zoning By-law incorporates holding provisions to allow development to proceed once conditions are met. These include:

- Confirmation that Port Lands flood protection infrastructure is complete.
- Verification of water, wastewater and stormwater servicing capacity, including the resolution of any sanitary servicing capacity issues.
- Provision of rapid transit service or submission and acceptance of a transit impact assessment or the implementation of any necessary interim improvements to the transportation network.
- A noise, vibration, and air quality report, including City peer review, to demonstrate land use compatibility.
- A public parking needs assessment.
- A housing plan that provides an affordable housing approach for a development.
- A community services and facilities implementation plan.
- An emergency services plan, including fire, paramedic, and fire service capacity.

## **The Villiers Island Precinct Plan**

The Precinct Plan envisions the Island as a model for sustainable urban development, transforming it from its industrial past into a vibrant, mixed-use community. It is informed by policies from the Official Plan, the Secondary Plan, and the Port Lands Planning Framework, providing direction for the Zoning By-law Amendment, including considerations for street and block networks, height and massing standards, public realm, streetscape design, heritage conservation and connections between parks and open spaces.

The Precinct Plan emphasizes the development of a complete community, incorporating community services and facilities, public art, heritage conservation, active transportation routes, parks and open space, affordable housing, and environmental sustainability and resilience.

It was developed through extensive consultation and background study.

The Precinct Plan's guiding principles include:

- Establishing character areas in support of a comprehensive vision for a vibrant community centered on inclusivity and sustainability.
- A climate positive framework aiming to make the Island a leader in environmental stewardship, promoting practices that have a positive impact on the city's environment.
- Highlighting the importance of accessible transportation options to enhance connectivity and encourage active, sustainable travel.
- Framing a system of parks, open space, and public realm, that provide different opportunities for people to enjoy the waterfront and the varied river, channel, and lakefront edges.
- Supporting activities, uses, and community services and facilities that provide a variety of services and recreational opportunities to meet the diverse needs of the community and enhance quality of life.
- Advancing a built form vision that encourages diversity in architecture and urban design, contributing to a safe and visually appealing environment.
- Ensuring provision of infrastructure that supports the community's long-term growth and development.

These foundational principles continue to guide the implementation of the Island and informed the approaches to density reviewed in the next section.

## **The Villiers Island Precinct Plan 2024 Amendment**

The 2024 proposed updates to the Precinct Plan reflect City Council's direction to maximize affordable housing and respond to advancements in sustainability standards and updated greenhouse gas reduction targets. Key elements of the proposed amendments include:

**Affordable Housing:** The update establishes a target of 30 percent of residential gross floor area across all public development blocks to be set aside for affordable rental housing.

Delivering this ambitious affordable housing target will require coordinated action and funding and financing support by all orders of government. The City, Waterfront Toronto and CreateTO will report on the approach for achieving the target as part of the Business and Implementation Plan. For example, land value contribution will be determined in the Business and Implementation Plan process and will depend on various factors, such as transaction structure (lease vs. land sale), rental to ownership ratio (which might vary per site), market rents, and land values at the time of offering, the costs of any additional city building needs that may be funded by land value, and transit delivery. Federal and provincial support for the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization will be required to achieve the affordable housing target and other city building objectives. The result of these discussions will be provided to City Council as part of an update on the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization.

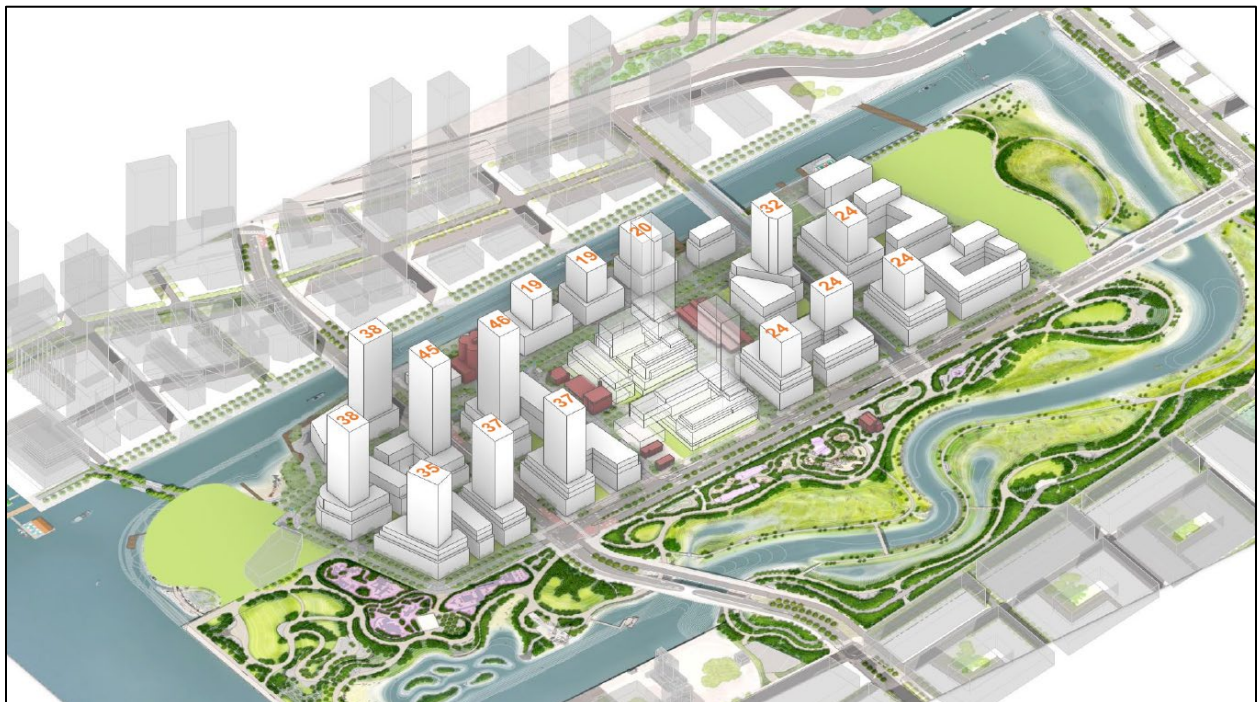
**Built Form and Density:** Increasing the gross floor area by approximately 60 percent, adjusting building forms, heights, and densities to support more intensive use of the Island while adhering to guidelines that ensure a high-quality public realm and address microclimatic effects.

## 2024 Demonstration Plan

The plan shown in Figure 5:

- Demonstrates how built form principles and guidelines result in a possible massing concept.
- Informs the zoning envelopes and maximum density (FSI) per block that are the basis of the draft Zoning By-law Amendment.
- Determined that a minimum 60 percent density increase over the 2017 plan was achievable while maintaining the initial vision, principles, and ambitions of the Island.
- Determined the 17 towers zones on the publicly owned blocks.

**Figure 5 - 2024 Demonstration Plan**



**Community Facilities:** Introduces additional priorities for community facilities, including a neighborhood library, to support the denser community.

**Activities and Uses:** Revises the allocation of space to decrease the minimum requirement for non-residential uses from 20 percent to 10 percent to accommodate more residential spaces while still supporting retail and service establishments on designated Priority Retail Streets. The intent of this change is to ensure that the increase in density permission is allocated to residential uses.

**Enhanced Sustainability Standards:** Updates the plan to include intensity targets for greenhouse gas emissions, focusing on achieving Climate Positive status through innovative low-carbon materials and construction approaches and setting benchmarks for net-zero carbon buildings.

**Waste and Circular Economy Goals:** Aligns with Toronto's zero waste and circular economy targets to minimize landfill waste and maximize product reuse, with strategies like community sharing spaces and designing for disassembly.

**Meanwhile Uses:** Enables temporary uses to activate undeveloped blocks or buildings during development phases, supporting sustainable and inclusive development.

**Urban Design and Public Realm:** Adjusts the guidelines for buildings to maintain human-scale environments and optimize sun access to public spaces, with specific attention to maintaining sunlight access to natural habitats and public spaces essential to the community's quality of life.

**Heritage Conservation:** Updates the plan to reflect that two buildings listed on the City's Heritage Register on the property at 62 Villers Street known as the Toronto Harbour Commission's office building and workshop, have since been demolished due to significant deterioration.

**View Corridors and Wind Mitigation:** Modifies view corridors to balance development needs with preserving key views and developing guidelines to mitigate wind impacts, enhancing comfort in public spaces.

**Public Art Strategy:** Introduces the Public Art Master Plan, which spans two precincts from Parliament Street to Cherry Street, and from the Keating Channel to the new, naturalized mouth of the Don River. The Public Art Master Plan is attached to this report as Attachment 14.

The 2024 amendments to the Precinct Plan are provided in Attachment 12.

## **Flight Instrument Procedures**

As previously described, several flight instrument procedures overlay the Island. The design of Instrument Flight Procedures involves numerous technical considerations, which are influenced by factors such as air traffic, existing obstacles, aviation technology, and airport infrastructure. This design process requires inputs from specialist and involves detailed, precise planning. Exemptions to criteria can be granted, but they require a demonstration that any proposed exemptions to procedures offer an equivalent level of safety. Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport currently operates under some exemptions due to its unique location and existing operational constraints. These existing exemptions and operational constraints limit the options for redesigning instrument procedures.

While municipalities have limited authority to provide protections to airspace, the City encourages the review of building heights against instrument flight procedures as an ongoing part of the development approval process. Consultations to identify and

address potential conflicts between obstacle heights and instrument flight procedures are relatively common in Canadian cities and are regularly resolved between developers, airports, and NAV Canada. Solutions may include redesigning instrument procedures, or other means of mitigation, or reducing the height of an obstacle.

The City engaged an independent aviation consultant to provide advice on the in-force instrument flight procedures. The consultant's analysis provided City staff with a better understanding of existing procedure and guidance on airspace considerations related to building heights considered through this report. Based on available information on instrument flight procedures over the Island, additional tower heights beyond what are being recommended on the Island's western blocks are not supported. Detailed aeronautical assessments will be required when final grades for the Island and building heights are established for individual development sites as part of site plan applications.

The Precinct Plan for the Island will be realized through 25 or more years of development activity, during which Airport Zoning Regulations and instrument flight procedures may be subject to change. Continuous coordination among the City, NAV Canada, and PortsToronto on these issues will be necessary. On public lands, the City will require its development partners to submit their detailed plans for NAV Canada and PortsToronto to review and assess impacts to the instrument flight procedures, and if necessary, coordinate appropriate responses. This review will also be necessary for the temporary erection of construction cranes.

Any future proposals to modify the Airport Zoning Regulations or that could impact instrument flight procedures, led and facilitated by PortsToronto, NAV Canada, or Transport Canada, should follow a transparent process that includes consultation with the City, its development partners, other affected landowners, and the general public.

## **The Villiers Island and Keating West Public Art Master Plan**

The recommended Public Art Master Plan builds on the City of Toronto's successful Percent for Public Art Program. Waterfront Toronto, in collaboration with the City, is developing a special public art program for each new waterfront precinct.

The approach is based on pooling development contributions for art to deliver artworks in curated locations based on the plans for each waterfront neighbourhood. Over the past 15 years, Waterfront Toronto has built a strong record of commissioning permanent artworks that become an integral part of each neighbourhood's identity. The Public Art Master Plan is the third precinct-wide public art strategy.

The Public Art Master Plan spans two precincts that extend from Parliament Street to Cherry Street, and from the Keating Channel to the new, naturalized mouth of the Don River. It identifies site-relevant themes to guide public art in the two precincts, and identifies key locations for high-impact pieces, as well as locations for more subtle, discoverable artworks. It also describes the processes for oversight of the conceptualization, commissioning, and integration of public art within the precincts' overall development.

The Plan identifies five key themes to guide public art on the Island, which are:



- Waterways – Reconnect the shoreline, the Great Lakes and Don River ecosystem.
- Public Art of Our Time – Accommodate ephemerality, innovation, and new ways of doing.
- Multiple and Layered Histories – Let the sites' stories emerge and co-exist across past, present, and future.
- Commit to the Environment – Sustainability and climate change are themes and integrated into art practices.
- Indigenous Place-Knowing – Honour pre-settler systems of knowledge, practices, and relationships.

The Plan is committed to increasing Indigenous cultural presence on the waterfront and will inform the framework for the Indigenous cultural revitalization and public realm. Throughout the waterfront, the Public Art Program aims to respect, recognize, and celebrate the historical and modern-day presence of Indigenous Peoples.

The full recommended Public Art Master Plan can be found at Attachment 14.

## **Toronto Municipal Code Amendment**

In November 2022, the Province of Ontario enacted Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, which, among other changes, amended Section 42 of the Planning Act which authorizes and regulates municipal parkland dedication. These changes include reductions to the permissible cap on the amount of land that can be dedicated as parkland through subsection 42(3.4) of the *Planning Act*, deeming to amend the Alternative Rate Parkland Dedication By-law. The parkland dedication policies contained within the Port Lands Area Specific Policy pre-date the changes to the Planning Act. This report provides the opportunity to reflect the legislative amendments on parkland dedication within our official plan.

The proposed changes to parkland dedication policies will not compromise the delivery of, or investment in, River Parks North and South, Promontory Parks North and South, the Keating Promenade, or Villiers Park. The Island's park network provides a range of park experiences, including regional destination parks as well as Villiers Park, which is intended to function as a community-oriented local park with recreation facilities. The parks system created through the Port Lands Flood Protection effort - River Parks North and South and Promontory Park South, including the new river valley - will be opened to the public in 2025.

Parkland provision is a critical component of the vision for the Port Lands, including the Island. City staff have analyzed the future anticipated parkland provision for the Island inclusive of the additional growth described in this report and confirm that the future parkland provision on the Island is sufficient to meet the needs of both local residents and visitors. For context, whereas the city-wide average parkland provision rate (not including ravines) is 8.7 m<sup>2</sup> per person, the forecasted parkland provision on the Island (not including the river valley) when the proposed increase in density is considered, is approximately 15 m<sup>2</sup>. Staff will continue to collaborate to seek opportunities for additional parkland and associated investment via cash-in-lieu of parkland as the Island develops.

Staff are also proposing to amend the City Council policy on cash-in-lieu allocation contained in Article III of Chapter 415 of the Municipal Code("Code Chapter") to implement the Port Lands cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication policy that directs any cash-in-lieu of parkland generated in the Port Lands to be used for Parks, Forestry and Recreation projects in the Port Lands. This Official Plan policy was adopted by Council in 2017, but was never reflected in the Code Chapter as a result of appeals. The draft amendment to the Toronto Municipal Code can be found in Attachment 13 to reflect the Council policy on cash-in-lieu allocation within the Port Lands.

## **Next Steps**

### **A Framework for Indigenous Cultural Revitalization**

City staff are collaborating with LURA and MinoKamik who are engaged with an Indigenous Advisory Circle of Elders, Knowledge Keepers, language speakers and community members to explore and propose Indigenous names for the new Island, adjacent parkland, and new streets. Over the last century, there has been an erasure of Indigenous Peoples' history and visible presence on this land. This process aims to advance the commitments of the City of Toronto's Reconciliation Action Plan and priorities heard from First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous communities through the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization. Specifically, the priorities included "elevating Indigenous languages in placemaking and placekeeping initiatives" and Action 17 of the Reconciliation Action Plan provides direction to "work with language speakers and Knowledge Carriers to ensure that Indigenous language is given priority in the naming and renaming of City streets, parks and other City assets."

The vision and guidelines for naming will be established through an Indigenous Advisory Circle.

Beyond an Indigenous name for the Island, there is a vision to root these parklands and future neighbourhoods in Indigenous placekeeping, ensuring that waterfront revitalization leads to places where First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, worldviews, cultures, and ways of life hold a respected, celebrated, prominent and distinctive place on Toronto's waterfront.

Staff, Waterfront Toronto and CreateTO are advancing numerous projects aligned with the City's Reconciliation Action Plan. These include precinct plans, design guideline studies, park, and infrastructure designs, placekeeping, and public art initiatives. These projects actively involve Indigenous community members, including designers, artists, and experts, ensuring that their perspectives are integral to the planning process.

Looking ahead, opportunities for Indigenous leadership in projects such as affordable rental housing and economic development initiatives are emerging. City Council authorized staff to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Miziwe Biik Development Corporation (MBDC) in October 2021. The City will continue to work in collaboration with MBDC and other Indigenous housing partners towards the shared goal of approving 5,200 new affordable rental and supportive homes by Indigenous organizations, for Indigenous residents.

These efforts build on the restoration of the Don River's mouth and the creation of new parks and open spaces along its original path. Together, these ongoing and future initiatives demonstrate the significant role of the Reconciliation Action Plan in one of North America's largest urban redevelopment projects and one of the world's most extensive waterfront revitalization efforts at a city precinct scale.

Staff are coordinating these initiatives to ensure that the emerging neighborhoods, parks, and the public realm in the Port Lands enhance Indigenous cultural and language revitalization, placekeeping, and representation. This includes involving Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, protocols, and land connections into the waterfront revitalization, thereby supporting Indigenous cultural visibility and belonging in Toronto's central waterfront. These interests were heard from First Nations, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous communities through engagement on the Next Phase of Waterfront Revitalization, as well as through the development of the Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Indigenous Cultural Revitalization Framework and Precinct Plan implementation will be supported by further updates and studies, including detailed designs for streets and open spaces. These designs will detail improvements for the Island's public spaces, including coordinated materials and planting plans, street furniture, and guidelines on integrating Indigenous culture and knowledge through place names and placekeeping strategies.

Ultimately, these efforts aim to ensure that the revitalization of Toronto's waterfront honors and celebrates Indigenous peoples, worldviews, cultures, and ways of life, thereby fostering new pathways for prosperity and wellness for Indigenous communities.

Staff will report on the names for the Island and parks in October 2024, and provide an update on the proposed Port Lands Indigenous Cultural Revitalization at the same time.

## **Transportation Infrastructure and Public Realm Design**

The infrastructure and public realm established in the Precinct Plan will transform the Island into a vibrant, sustainable community, building on the vision set by the Precinct Plan.

Existing roads delivered by Waterfront Toronto through the Port Lands Flood Protection project are essential for both adjacent industrial users and for accessing the island. Environmental Assessments identified that 70 percent of future access to the Island could be via transit. Accordingly, the planning for the Island prioritizes pedestrians, cyclists and public transit on all remaining streets. Concept and schematic design work, beginning later this year, will update these cross-sections and provide opportunities for community input.

Right-of-ways subject to upcoming public realm design work include:

- Old Cherry Street,
- Villiers Street,
- Trinity Park Boulevard,

- Centre Street,
- New Foundry Street, and
- Villiers Park Street.

A map of the street network is provided in Attachment 7.

Critical vehicular connections, such as New Cherry Street, Commissioners Street, New Munition Street, and Don Roadway, are necessary for industrial and port uses, relieving traffic pressure from Lake Shore Boulevard and providing connections to the Gardiner Expressway.

Designing the public realm for the Island is a future phase of work expected to commence later in 2024. All design work will be informed by the framework for Indigenous cultural revitalization, ensuring the redevelopment honors and integrates Indigenous cultural heritage and practices into the urban landscape.

The detailed designs for each street and park will be reviewed by the Waterfront Design Review Panel (WDRP) and will include the program and design for Promontory Park North, Villiers Park, and the Keating Promenade. This work will build on and also confirm the right-of-way widths, define the overall vision for streets, street character, program elements, and green infrastructure, and establish the relationship between building faces and public spaces.

The project will further establish additional parameters for development block setbacks and mid-block connections, considering microclimate, right-of-way width, pedestrian comfort, and safety, and will be designed to accommodate various building typologies and ground floor programming.

## **Business and Implementation Plan**

A Business and Implementation Plan for the first phase of development on the Island will be presented to City Council later this Fall or in early 2025. The Business and Implementation plan will be an essential strategic document designed to outline the comprehensive strategy and detailed work plan for the implementation and phased build out of the Island.

The Business and Implementation Plan will:

- Further respond to Council Directions on intergovernmental discussions supporting delivery of affordable homes.
- Provide a strategic framework that outlines the vision, goals, and objectives of the first phase of development. It will define the scope for the first phase of the project, including the uses, number of units, required infrastructure, and affordable housing, and other public amenities.
- Act as a roadmap detailing the specific actions, phases, and timelines for the first phase of development and more generally the full build-out of this complex initiative. This includes identifying key milestones and the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders involved, ensuring a clear path from conception through to completion.
- Include a detailed financial plan that outlines the project's budget, funding sources, and expenditure. It will provide forecasts on financial outcomes, demonstrating the

project's economic viability and how it will be funded, whether through public investment, private partnerships, or other means.

- Include a process for requiring all development partners to submit their detailed plans for Nav Canada and Ports Toronto review.
- Ensure that the development aligns with broader City, provincial, and federal strategic objectives, which are defined in the Precinct Plan and 2024 amendment to the Precinct Plan.

Overall, the Business and Implementation Plan for the new precinct will guide the entire lifecycle of the project. It will ensure that the development is strategically planned, financially supported, and well-coordinated, aligning with broader urban development goals, while contributing positively to the community and the surrounding areas.

## CONCLUSION

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The draft Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments, along with the Precinct Plan updates, Public Art Master Plan, and Municipal Code Amendment, articulate a comprehensive vision for the development of a vibrant, sustainable community on the Island. These integrated plans and policies are anticipated to accommodate at least 15,000 residents and provide approximately 2,900 jobs within the next 25 years, detailing a path to realize the community's potential through diverse, inclusive, and environmentally responsible growth and support achieving provincial and federal housing targets and expediate the delivery of housing commitments in the City's housing plans.

The recommended changes to the planning framework for the Island bring forward a vision for a vibrant transit-first complete community. While establishing a clear vision for completing this neighbourhood over a 20- to 25-year time horizon, the changes provide flexibility to allow for creativity, detailed design and the completion of future processes.

This report was prepared with the support of staff in numerous City Divisions, including Engineering and Construction Services, Environment and Climate, Heritage Preservation Services, the Housing Secretariat, the Indigenous Affairs Office, Parks Forestry and Recreation, Toronto Water, Transportation Services, as well as staff with CreateTO and Waterfront Toronto.

## CONTACT

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Kerri A. Voumvakis,  
Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning

## **ATTACHMENTS**

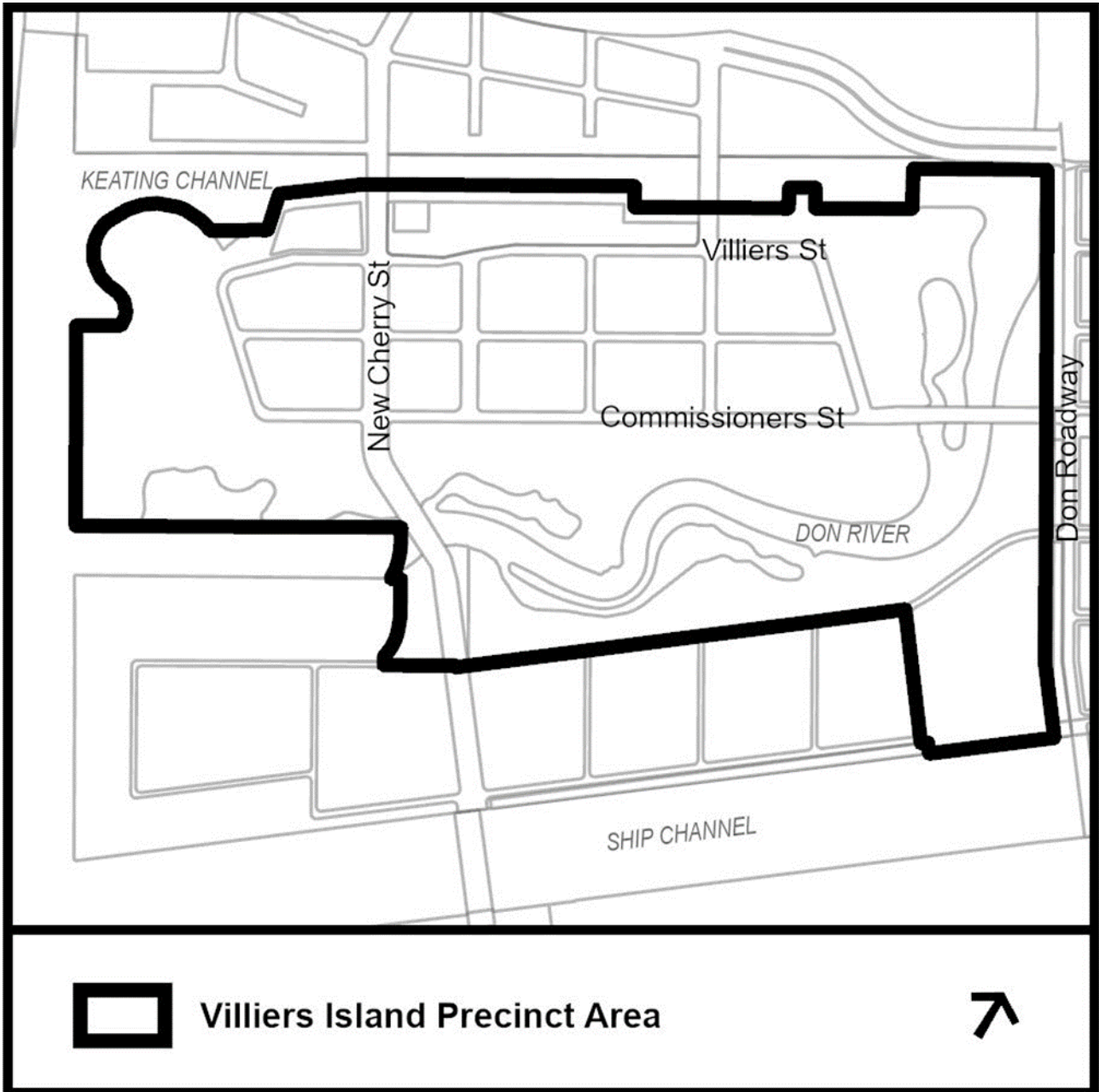
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Attachment 1: Villiers Island Area  
Attachment 2: Official Plan Urban Structure  
Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map #18  
Attachment 4: Central Waterfront Secondary Plan - Land Use  
Attachment 5: Former City of Toronto Zoning By-law No. 438-86  
Attachment 6: Map showing the lands subject to the Zoning-Bylaw Amendment  
Attachment 7: Transportation Network  
Attachment 8: Port Lands and Villiers Island 2012-2017 Engagement Summary  
Attachment 9: Density Study Due Diligence Summary  
Attachment 10: Draft Official Plan Amendment - Port Lands Area Specific Policy  
Attachment 11: Draft Zoning By-law Amendment  
Attachment 12: Villiers Island Precinct Plan 2024 Amendment  
Attachment 13: Draft Amendment Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 415 Article III (Parkland Dedication)  
Attachment 14: Villiers Island and Keating Channel West Public Art Master Plan  
Attachment 15: Public Art Master Plan - Appendix 1-3

- Appendix 1: Art Trail Location Detail Maps
- Appendix 2: Villiers Island & Keating West Permanent Public Art Budget
- Appendix 3: Consultation Summary



## Attachment 1: Villiers Island Area



## Attachment 2: Official Plan Urban Structure



Villiers Island Precinct Area

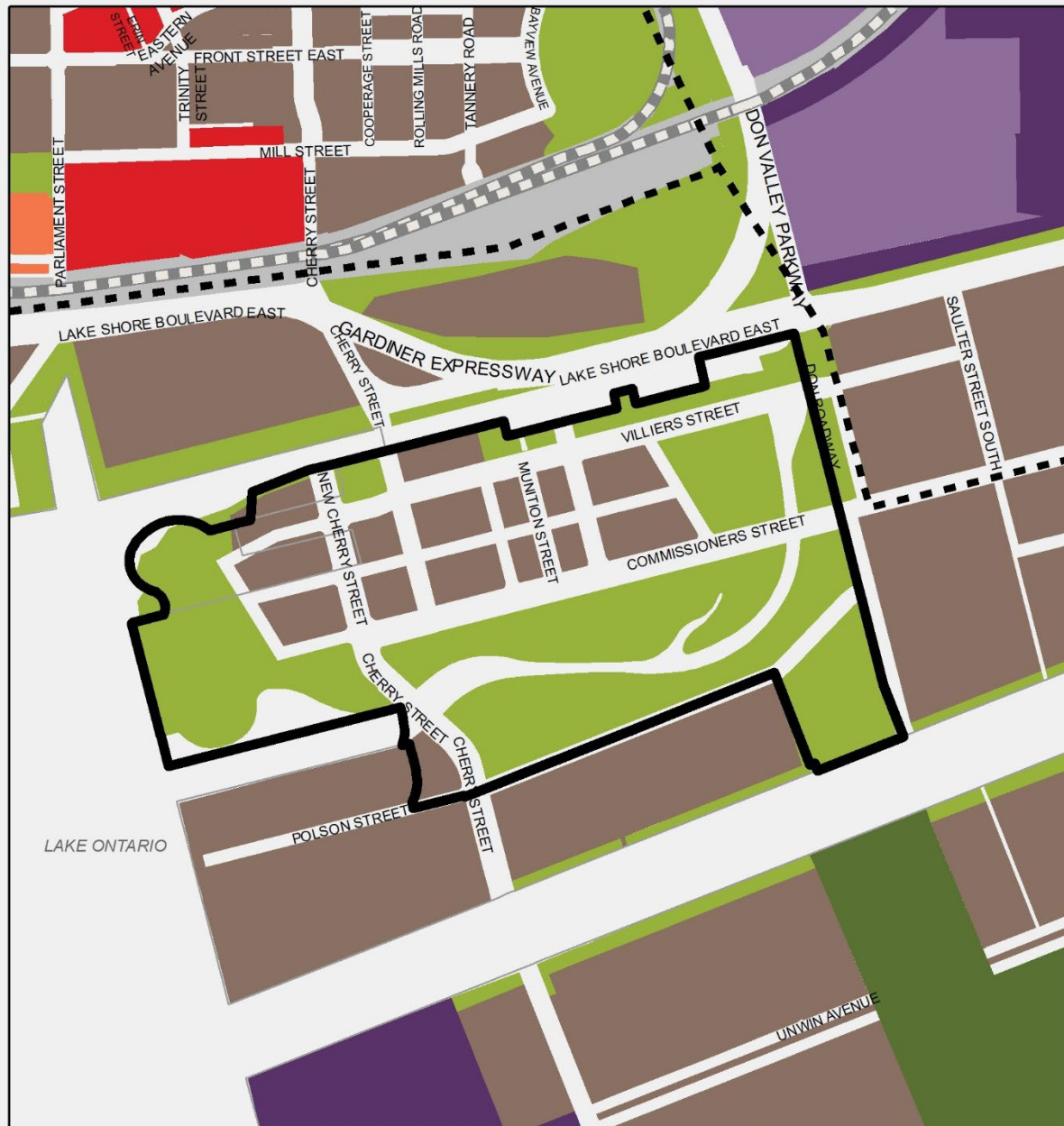
### Official Plan Urban Structure

File # 24 110589 STE 14 02



  
 Not to Scale  
 05/17/2024

## Attachment 3: Official Plan Land Use Map #18



### Official Plan Land Use Map #18

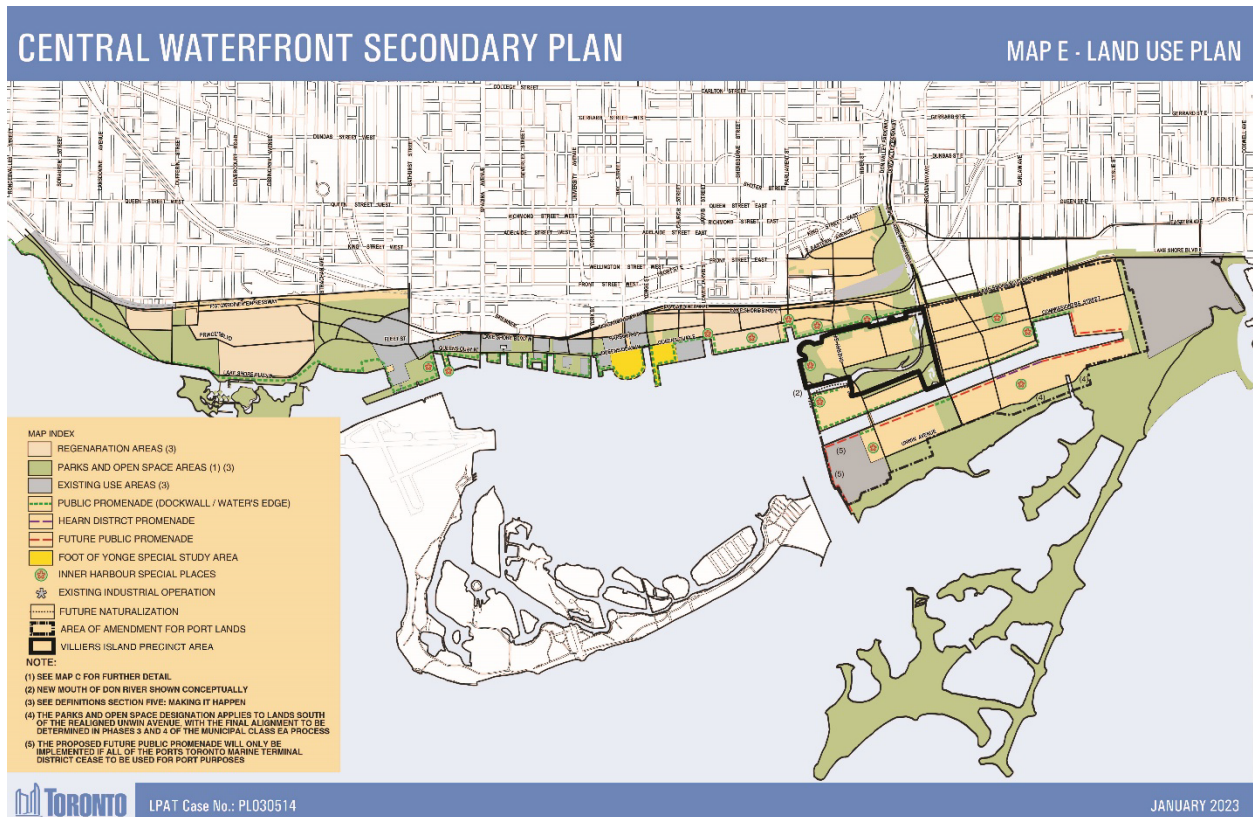
### Villiers Island Precinct Area

File # 24 110589 STE 14 0Z

Location of Application	Natural Areas	Regeneration Areas	Core Employment Areas
Apartment Neighbourhoods	Parks	General Employment Areas	Utility Corridors
Mixed Use Areas			

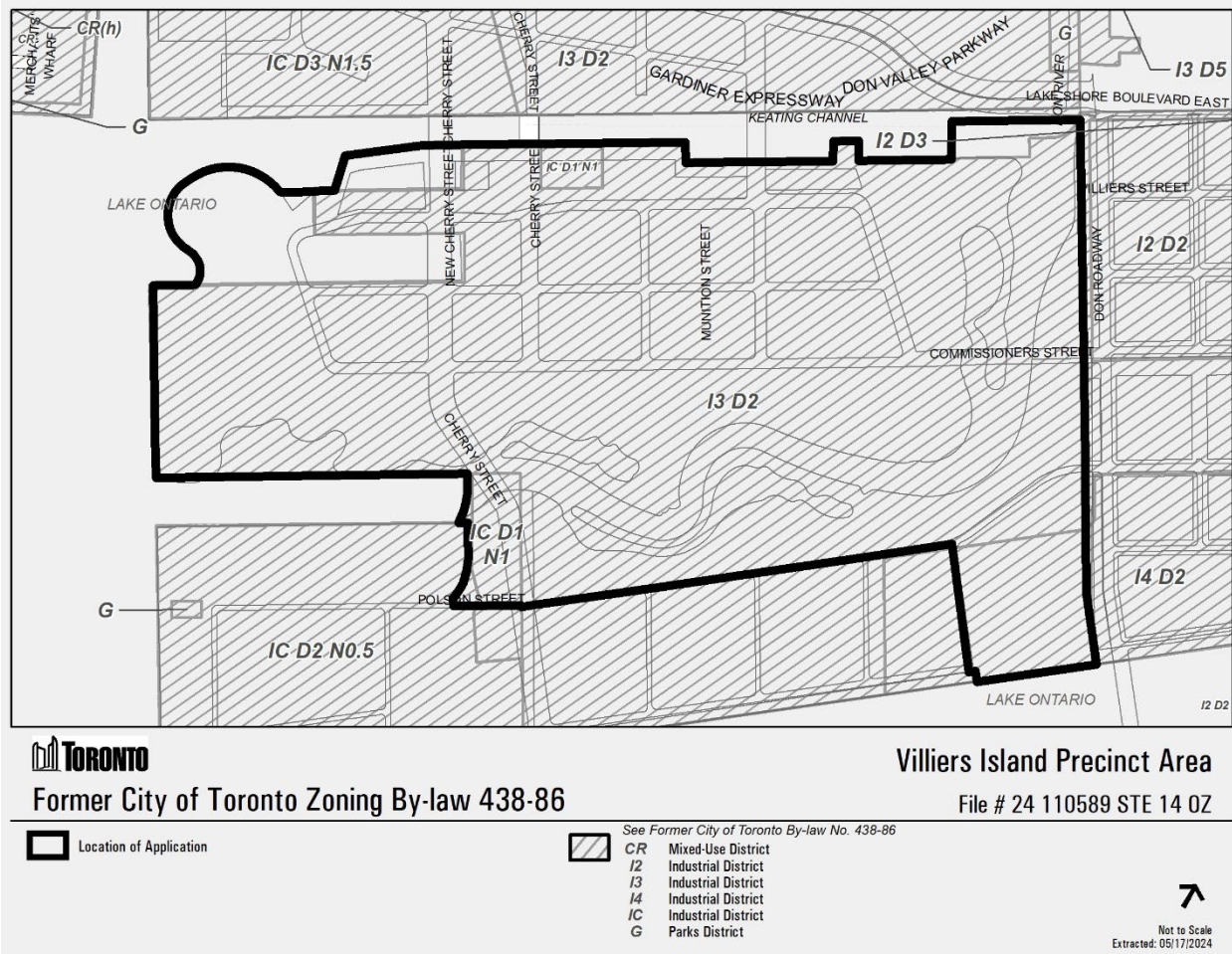
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Extracted: 05/18/2024

## Attachment 4: Central Waterfront Secondary Plan - Land Use

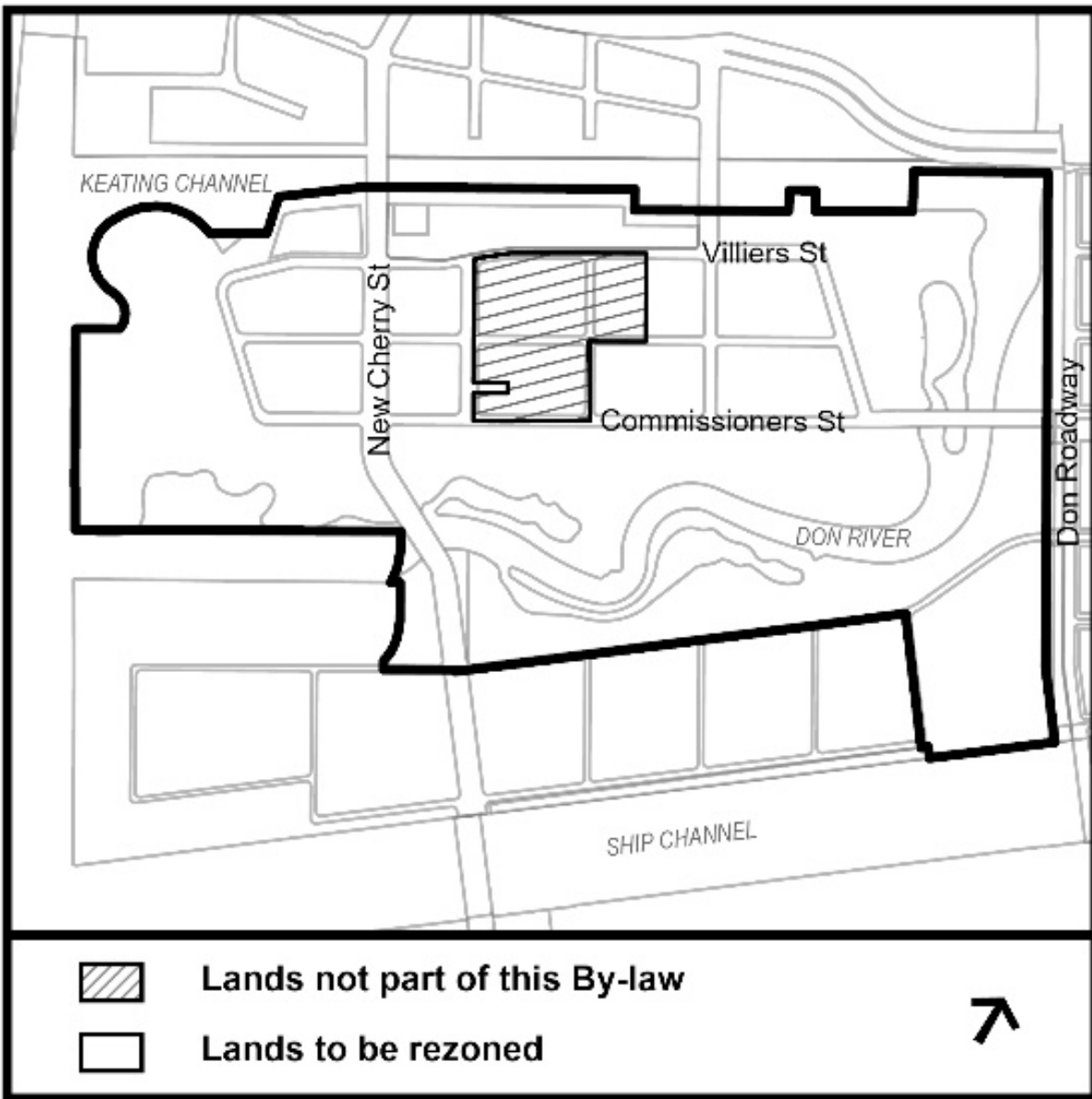




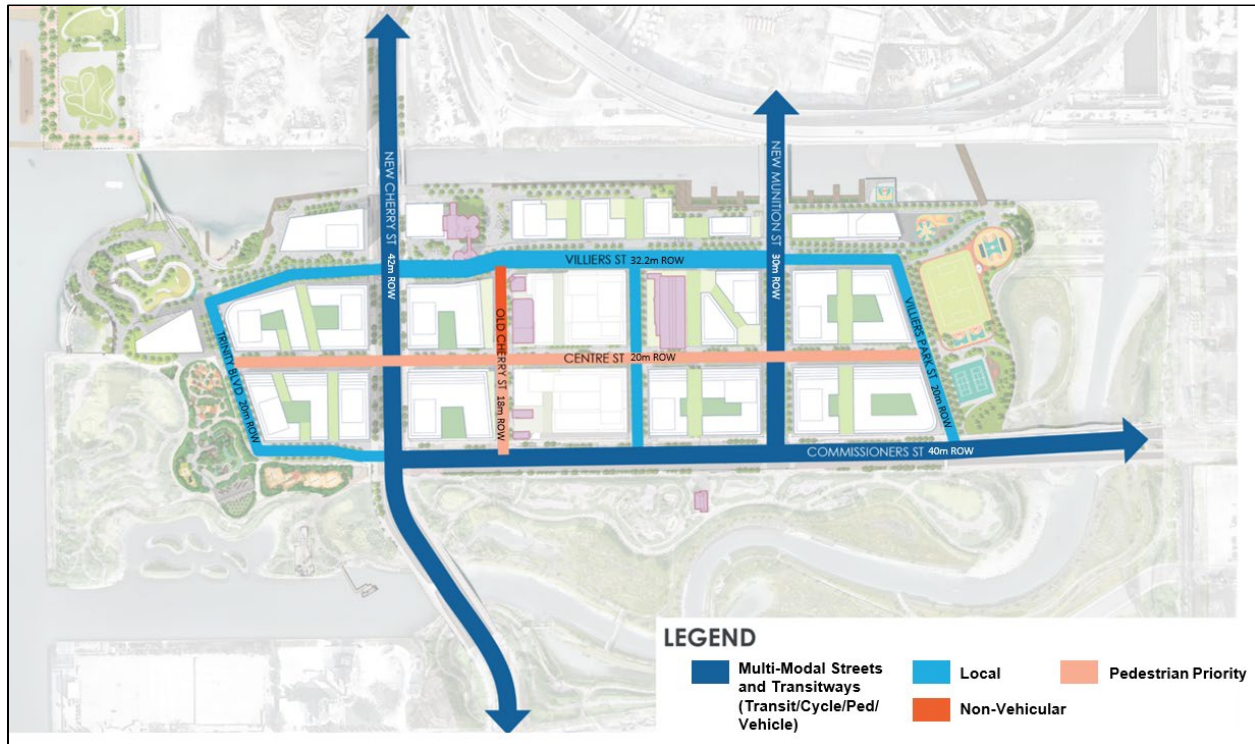
## Attachment 5: Former City of Toronto Zoning By-law No. 438-86



**Attachment 6 - Map showing the lands subject to the Zoning-Bylaw Amendment**



## Attachment 7 - Transportation Network



## **Attachment 8: Port Lands and Villiers Island 2012-2017 Engagement**

A robust and extensive consultation process was undertaken as part of the Port Lands Planning Framework and precinct planning. The engagement program was designed to exceed the City's standard practices and the regulatory requirements of the Planning Act, promoting broad participation from stakeholders and the public. The City and Waterfront Toronto also met extensively with groups in the area throughout the process to address key aspects of the plans.

Public engagement activities included:

- Six (6) Port Lands Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) meetings.
- Five (5) Landowner and User Advisory Committee (LUAC) meetings.
- Individual meetings at key stages with a wide variety of groups and agencies, including individual landowners.
- Industry-specific meetings with key industries anticipated to remain in the Port Lands and with the Toronto Industry Network.
- Engaging the film sector.
- Establishing a Biodiversity Working Group comprised of community and industry stakeholders, nature enthusiasts and experts.
- Outreach to First Nations, including meetings with the Mississaugas of Scugog Island and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations to provide an overview of the work and gather feedback.
- A two-day Port Lands Vision Workshop, referred to as the Port Lands Charrette, with representatives from the Port Lands SAC and LUAC.
- Five (5) broad community consultation meetings at key stages of the project, including an all-day open house and two evening workshops to present and receive feedback on the Framework.
- Specific consultation with the SAC (two (2) meetings), relevant landowners and users (10+ meetings), and one (1) broader community consultation meeting specific to the Precinct Plan.
- Presenting the emerging and final directions to Waterfront Toronto's Design Review Panel on three (3) occasions.
- Two (2) Precinct Plan presentation to the Waterfront Design Review.



- Presentation to a panel of urban planning and architecture experts to elicit feedback on the Port Lands Planning Framework and Precinct Plan recommendations.
- A project-specific website - [www.portlandsconsultation.ca](http://www.portlandsconsultation.ca) - to post information and to obtain online feedback from the public.

In addition to the engagement above, the City and Waterfront presented the findings of the Port Lands Planning Framework and the Precinct Plan to the Stakeholder Advisory Committee and Landowner and User Advisory Committee in March 2017, and provided a draft of the Port Lands Official Plan modification for comment and feedback.

**Figure 6 - Evolution of the design for the Island. The 2012 preferred option on the left and 2017 precinct plan urban structure on the right.**



## **Attachment 9: Density Study Due Diligence Summary**

### **Transportation Network**

The Island will be a place where you can walk or cycle to any destination within the Island within approximately 5 minutes. The transportation network is active transportation-focused, with a hierarchy of streets ranging from major roads to local roads, pedestrian-priority or pedestrian-only streets. All major and local roads have two lanes for vehicle travel, one in either direction. The entire street network prioritizes transit, walking, and cycling modes, facilitating links to the city mainland, central waterfront, downtown, the rest of the Port Lands, and within the Island itself.

There are three existing multi-modal bridge crossings, with a fourth crossing planned in the future. There will be at least one pedestrian bridge linking the Island with the Central Waterfront.

The major street network, including New Cherry Street and Commissioners Street, was the subject of an Environmental Assessment and designed through the Port Lands Flood Protection and Enabling Infrastructure Project. These streets provide linkages to the central waterfront and downtown, as well as future precincts to the south and east of the Island, and the employment, industrial and port districts that are integral to the Port Lands.

The local street network are conceptually designed, will be refined through the next phase of implementation. This network supports efficient movement within the Island and connects it to surrounding areas.

A Transportation Network Analysis assessed the impacts of greater density on the Island's transportation network. The study indicated that once the Island is fully developed, weekday peak hours will see vehicular congestion common in high-density urban areas. Vehicle traffic is expected to experience significant delay at the busiest times, especially at bridge crossings.

To ensure safe and efficient network operation, the presence of high-quality transit and active transportation infrastructure are crucial. Supporting the planned densities requires prioritizing the Waterfront East LRT (WELRT). City staff are advancing design for key segments of the WELRT and protect for future delivery of the remaining portions. Should the funding, financing, and implementation of the WELRT not proceed before to the completion of the first phase of development, a dedicated bus rapid transit facilities could provide adequate service and serve as an interim measure. Additionally, the frequency of other transit routes servicing the area will need to be increased to offer multiple connections to the Ontario Line and other routes, thereby enhancing the overall transit network.

New Munition Street will provide a secondary vehicular access point and pedestrian and cycling connections across the Keating Channel. The construction of bridge after the first phase is critical to accommodate anticipated traffic demands, projected to surpass the capacity of New Munition Street due to its connection to the Gardiner Expressway ramps. An amendment to the Lower Don Lands Environmental Assessment Master

Plan will be required to deliver New Munition Street. This amendment is necessary to accommodate the new alignment and its associated infrastructure.

Encouraging sustainable transportation choices is essential, enabled by proximity to jobs and amenities, frequent and excellent public transit options, and extensive active transportation infrastructure, including dedicated cycling routes. As part of the next phase of work, City staff will be further explore the design and function of the local street network.

### **Municipal Infrastructure**

City staff, CreateTO, and Waterfront Toronto have collaborated on an infrastructure due diligence studies to assess the impact of the densities on existing and planned servicing. Waterfront Toronto has updated the conceptual servicing approach for the Island and confirmed that appropriate servicing infrastructure will be available to accommodate the proposed population.

The phasing approach for the Island must coordinate with the delivery of downstream infrastructure along Commissioners Street east of the Don Roadway, and the planned sanitary pumping station at 545 Commissioners Street. Holding Provisions are recommended in the Zoning By-law to verify water, wastewater and stormwater servicing capacity, including resolving any sanitary servicing capacity issues before development.

### **Community Services and Facilities**

The Island currently has no residential permissions, and as a result, there are no community services and facilities. The recommended size and preferred location of the community facilities and services, including opportunities for co-location, were determined through an update of the Port Lands Community Infrastructure Strategy Study. The draft Official Plan Amendment will be refined to specify that the following services and facility be provided on the Island:

- A Community Recreation Centre, with an estimated size of 6,000 square metres, containing a multi-tank indoor lap and leisure pool, a double gymnasium and multi-purpose space.
- Up to three licensed non-profit childcare facilities, with a minimum size of 929 square metres per facility.
- One neighborhood library branch located near a transit stop.
- One community space with a minimum size of 495 square metres.
- One public (TDSB) elementary school.

City divisions, the Toronto Public Library, and the Toronto District School Board, responsible for the listed facilities, have participated in updating the Port Lands Community Infrastructure Strategy to reflect the planned density for the Island and Port Lands more broadly.

## **Noise and Air Quality Considerations**

The Port Lands Noise and Air Quality Feasibility Study (2016) was undertaken in support of the Port Lands Planning Framework and Precinct Plan. It evaluated potential land compatibility challenges and recommended mitigation strategies to permit new mixed-use residential communities to coexist with existing employment, industrial, and port uses. Industries identified as potential sources of noise and air quality challenges for the Island and surrounding areas include the Lafarge Cement Terminal and Portlands Energy Centre.

In 2020, the study was refined through a Port Lands Noise and Air Quality Study Update, presented to the Ontario Land Tribunal in 2021 as evidence at the Port Lands Official Plan Modification settlement hearing. The updated conclusions and recommendations removed the Portlands Energy Centre as an area of concern for tall buildings (those greater than 150 metres) on the Island.

The Villiers Island Noise and Air Quality Study further refined the earlier studies findings, with the most recent information provided by Lafarge and PortsToronto. Multiple attempts by City staff and the consultant to obtain updated air quality information for the Portlands Energy Centre were not successful. The study confirmed, at a high level, that there are some land use compatibility issues, with both at-source and at-receptor options available for consideration as mitigation measures.

Potential land use compatibility issues were identified with Lafarge's 54 Polson Street cement terminal, although the magnitude of noise impacts has been reduced since 2020. Potential air quality challenges from the Portland Energy Centre have been identified, although more updated information is required prior to site plan.

The consultant has recommended that specific noise and air quality impacts will need to be assessed at site plan application, with detailed built form and the most recent information available, where specific mitigation measures can be identified.

A Holding provision has been included in the draft Zoning By-law Amendment that requires a peer reviewed noise and air quality study, including appropriate mitigation recommendations and design requirements.

## **Commercial Activation Study**

An active public realm, with a diversity of retail, service, cultural, and entertainment opportunities, is a key objective of the Precinct Plan. The Plan's retail streets and frontages was informed by a 2015 Retail Study, which identified the amount of retail and service the Island could support and the location of retail streets and frontages.

The City undertook a Commercial Activation Study based upon the increased density and current market trends in retail and service, which have evolved since the previous study was completed. The study provided a refined approach to retail, services and other commercial activation uses:

- Optimal supportable space of approximately 21,500 square metres of retail and services.

- Commercial activation frontages focused on New Cherry Street, Old Cherry Street, Villiers Street, Centre Street, and the Keating Promenade, with a node of retail and service fronting Promontory Park North.
- Some larger-serving uses, such as a grocery store, may be located in the most western blocks.
- Due to the evolving nature of retail and service, a broader range of commercial activation uses were recommended, including entertainment, sports, cultural uses.
- The development of a "Meanwhile Use" approach to activation over the course of the 25-year development horizon.

### **Airspace Considerations**

See "Flight Instrument Procedures" in the "Comments" section of the report.