



# ONTARIO PLACE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

November 25, 2022



An aerial photograph of a waterfront park area, likely in Toronto. The image shows a large stadium with a white roof, a large dome-shaped building, and a marina with many boats. The area is surrounded by water and greenery. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle containing text.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Southern Ontario has been the home of Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. The area we now know as Toronto is the traditional territory of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg and the historic homelands of the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and Anishinaabeg Confederacy and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the land, water, flora, and fauna around the Great Lakes. Toronto is within the territory covered by Mississauga Treaty No. 13, negotiated in 1787 and revised in 1805 between the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Crown.

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Prepared by Urban Strategies Inc. for Infrastructure Ontario, in support of the application to amend the Official Plan and Zoning By-Law for Ontario Place. Infrastructure Ontario is the agency responsible for delivering the Ontario Place redevelopment project, on behalf of the Province of Ontario.

The material compiled within this Comprehensive Plan reflect the input a multi-disciplinary team: engaged to support the revitalization of Ontario Place and coordinated to achieve the common ambition of an improved Provincial asset on the waterfront. Design team members are included below.

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## About this document

This Comprehensive Plan describes a bold vision for Ontario Place, developed in support of the Official Plan Amendment and comprehensive Zoning By-law Amendment application submitted to the City of Toronto. There is a concurrent Environmental Assessment (EA) process that assesses the government-led public realm design concepts on the East Island and Mainland. The outcomes of the EA process will impact future iterations of this document.

The focus of this document is the public realm elements that unify the experience across the islands and Mainland. Read in full, this Comprehensive Plan provides a thorough overview of the long-term ambition for Ontario Place as a place for all Ontarians to enjoy. The Plan begins with description of Ontario Place's legacy and ambition. The introduction is followed by an overview of the existing context. Together, these sections articulate a need and opportunity for revitalization. The vision is then described, followed by a overview of the character and quality of the public realm elements; the mobility infrastructure which will improve access and advance safe, sustainable travel behaviour; the program partners who will animate the site, and sustainability measures.





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# Executive Summary

## REVITALIZATION WILL RENEW THE LEGACY OF A SPECIAL PLACE: DRAWING ACTIVITY BACK TO THE WATERFRONT AND CREATING A CONTEMPORARY DESTINATION FOR ALL TO ENJOY.

The artificially-created Ontario Place was an early introduction to Toronto’s waterfront’s potential as an amenity and recreational resource. It opened in 1971 as a showcase for provincial innovation and excellence. Over the coming decades, Ontario Place evolved from an exhibition centre to a destination for play. By the 1980s, Ontario Place had established itself as a popular ticketed amusement park. However, by the late 1990s, attendance was in decline and the site struggled to compete in an increasingly crowded destination marketplace. In 2012, most of the Ontario Place amusement attractions were closed, after which only the Cinesphere and the seasonal Budweiser Stage remained in operation.

Since that time, thanks in part to the success of Trillium Park, Ontario Place has found a place in the lives of many local residents. But there remain challenges to supporting the necessary investments across the remainder of the island that will renew its distinctive land and waterscapes, make Ontario Place resilient to a changing climate, and create an attraction not just for local Torontonians, but for all of the province.

The proposed revitalization of Ontario Place will secure the long-term future of this important waterfront asset: introducing new excitement and attractions, creating a viable foundation for significant public realm investment and improvements, formalizing connections between the island the adjacent communities, and improving its role as an important local and provincial amenity.

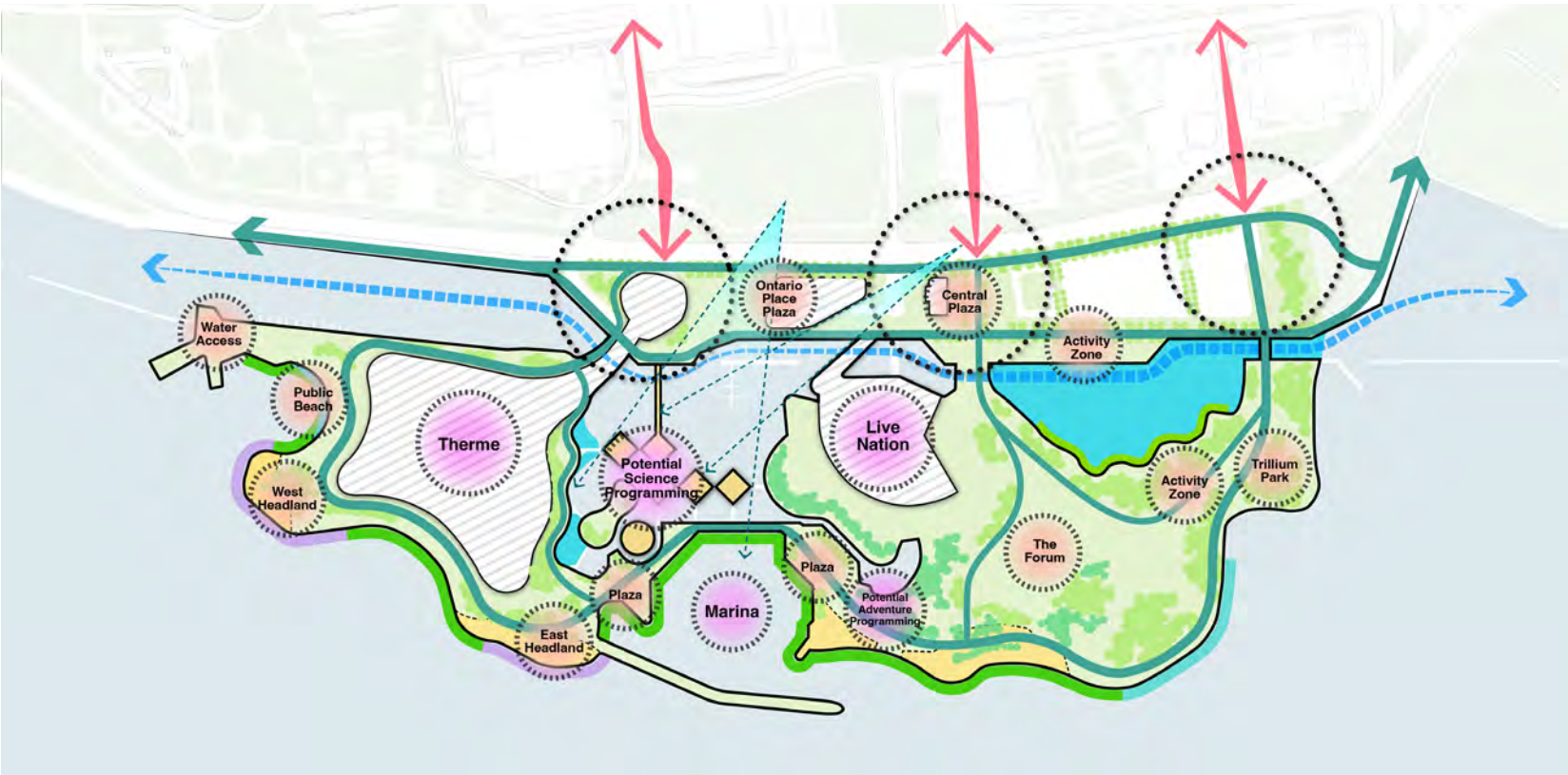


Figure 1. Proposed Framework Plan for Ontario Place.



# Key Directions Guiding Revitalization

**FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS TO ONTARIO PLACE WILL TAKE INSPIRATION FROM PROVINCIAL, MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL PRIORITIES. TOGETHER THESE KEY DIRECTIONS GUIDE REVITALIZATION.**

## Restore and enhance the water's edge and secure continuous public access



Revitalization will reinforce the islands' shoreline, creating a flood-resistant landscape that protects the waterfront destination for future generations. The future water's edge will be supported by a hierarchy of open spaces, stitched together by a network of multi-use trails. The open space network will improve access to the lake and provide future visitors with a variety of intimate waterfront experiences: waterfront boardwalks, a new beach for recreation and relaxation, and several landings of terraced stones that look-out over the lake. Improvements to the waterways and marina will also improve access for small watercraft, retaining Ontario Place as an important destination for boating and water recreation in the province.

## Improve connections to the waterfront and Exhibition Place



The consolidation of parking and servicing functions into a below-grade structure will unlock new Mainland open spaces. The enhanced Lake Shore Boulevard interface will transform this destination-focused precinct into a signature gateway for the western waterfront: a welcome place of arrival and celebration. Along the Mainland, revitalization will enhance and expand the Martin Goodman Trail and introduce a new waterfront boardwalk. The paved paths and trails that weave across the islands will be interconnected with these Mainland improvements and formally integrated into the wider waterfront network. The design and structure of the Mainland will protect for improved pedestrian, bicycle and transit links to Exhibition Place and the Exhibition transit hub.



## Create significant new parks, public spaces and landscaped areas



Foundational to the revitalization of Ontario Place is a comprehensive investment in the public realm. Trillium Park will be fully retained and integrated with new open spaces that can accommodate a diversity of programming and activities. Large new gathering spaces, like the new Forum and Children's Village Playzone, will be created throughout Ontario Place and include opportunities for recreation. Across these enhanced public spaces, the landscape strategy will prioritize plants indigenous to southern Ontario – native grasses, shrubs and multi-stem trees – to create a dense and diverse habitat.

## Respect heritage and activate the pods and Cinesphere



Zeidler's pods and Cinesphere will see reinvestment to extend their lifespan, and opportunities to introduce new types of programming, such as science-based education, will be explored. Landscape renewal will align with Hough's original intentions and ambitions: a rich, naturalized backdrop, featuring a combination of soft and protected edges, immersive wooded paths which open to views and vantage points, and undulating landforms. Elements within the public realm – gateways, lights, seating, canopies, shelters and other public furnishings – will recall the modernist, modular forms of the west and east Village Clusters, contributing to a unified sense of place. Reinforcing the cultural importance of the lands and water, the public realm design will also provide opportunities for Indigenous placekeeping.



## Ensure long-term resilience, environmental performance and sustainability



The updated landscapes at Ontario Place build on its beautiful and functional design. Reinforced edges along the water and raised elevations will protect it from seasonal flooding where appropriate, while expanding the public realm. Improvements along the inner lagoons and a new, submerged reef off the West Island will create new wetlands and aquatic habitat, and the landscaped islands will expand the tree canopy and increase permeability, reducing the level of stormwater runoff and urban heat island effects. New development will pursue high levels of environmental performance and sustainability to minimize carbon impacts.

## Welcome opportunities for animation with destinations that attract and inspire



New and enhanced attractions will re-establish Ontario Place as a world-class, family-friendly destination for year-round recreation, entertainment, culture and play. Future program offerings may include an expanded, all season Live Nation Amphitheatre and entertainment facility; the Therme water-based recreation and wellness centre; the potential for science-based programming; outdoor adventure; and marina programming. Program partners will inspire diverse visitation, animate the public realm year-round, and create the economic foundation on which the long-term viability of the destination will be built and secured.

# Comprehensive Plan Ambitions

THE AMBITIONS OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED OVER TIME AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED LONG-TERM TARGETS.



## Green Space

Important New  
Public Open Spaces



## Access

Preserve A Publicly  
Accessible Waterfront



## Water

Increased  
Water Access



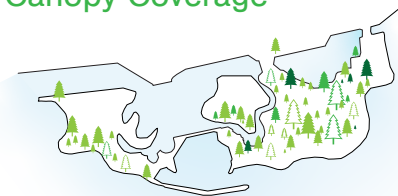
## Wetlands

New Aquatic  
Habitat And Wetlands



## Trees

Increased  
Canopy Coverage



## Bike Paths

New and Improved  
Multi-use Trails







**Figure 2.** Concept plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application.





## Section 1

# Background

Artificially created from Toronto's construction debris, Ontario Place is located on the northern shores of Lake Ontario, along the City of Toronto's western waterfront. Once an ambitious showcase for the province, the site struggled to perform for decades before the majority of its attraction closed in 2012. Comprehensive revitalization is an opportunity to renew the ambition of this important provincial destination and local amenity.



# 1.1 Ontario Place Throughout History

## BACKGROUND

Ontario Place is municipally known as 955 Lake Shore Boulevard West. It is located on the north shore of Lake Ontario, situated east of Marilyn Bell Park, west of Coronation Park and south of Exhibition Place.

In 1971, Ontario Place opened as a showcase for Ontario’s history, natural resource riches, and burgeoning diversity. Reclaimed from the lake, it was designed as a series of islands connected by bridges and walkways, surrounded by sheltered lagoons and Lake Ontario’s open waters.

At that time, Ontario Place was a window into a more progressive future: one that emphasized entertainment, recreation, and public interaction with the lake. With unique and accessible attractions, Ontario Place became a favourite destination for Ontarians across the province. However, by the late 1990s, attendance was in decline and the site struggled to compete in an increasingly crowded destination marketplace. Most of Ontario Place’s major attractions closed in 2012, after which only the Cinesphere and the seasonal Budweiser Stage remained in operation. Public spaces reopened in 2017 for passive uses and seasonal programming.

It is time to revitalize Ontario Place and align this waterfront destination with its legacy and potential.



Figure 3. Ontario Place in context. Source: Google Maps.

ONTARIO PLACE WAS DESIGNED AS AN INCLUSIVE PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT, EDUCATION AND RECREATIONAL SPACE - PROGRAMMED TO REFLECT THE PROVINCE. TO REALIZE THIS VISION, ITS FORM AND PROGRAMS HAVE EVOLVED SIGNIFICANTLY.

1960s  
WATERFRONT INFILL



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1970  
ZEIDLER PODS NEAR COMPLETION



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1971  
FREE CONCERT AT THE FORUM



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1986  
WILDERNESS ADVENTURE



Source: Toronto Public Library.



Source: Wikicommons.

time immemorial  
HISTORY OF INDIGENOUS SETTLEMENT

The shores of Lake Ontario and its watersheds have long been home to Indigenous peoples. Located 5 kilometres west of Ontario Place, the Humber River Valley – known by the Mississaugas of the Credit as Cobechenonk – facilitated movement and travel for countless generations. The Toronto Islands, immediately adjacent to Ontario Place, are also recognized as a sacred site.



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1968 - 1970  
ORIGINS AND CONSTRUCTION

Premier John Robarts announced the creation of Ontario Place: A response to the success of the temporary Ontario Pavilion at Expo' 67, it would be a permanent celebration of the Province's cultural identity, environmental landscape, and prosperity.

Ontario Place would reshape the relationship between Toronto and the water, with innovative structures, designed by Eb Zeidler, and picturesque new landforms, designed by Michael Hough. The islands were constructed of landfill trucked in from downtown Toronto construction sites.



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1971 - 1978  
OPENING DAY AND CHILDREN'S PLAY

Ontario Place opened in 1971 with the Pavilion, the Forum, pedal boats in the marina, restaurants, and the Cinesphere: the World's first permanent IMAX theatre.

The Children's Village opened the following year and was a new and innovative attraction that was replicated around the world. Its success leads to a water play area expansion the following year, and catalyzes Ontario Place's evolution as family-oriented destination. A splash pad is added in 1977, followed by the first of Ontario Place's water-slides in 1978.



Source: Toronto Public Library.

1980s  
ONTARIO NORTH NOW AND WILDERNESS ADVENTURE

Seven concrete silos and walkway links are built on the West Island for the Ontario North Now exhibition: a showcase for Northern Ontario which included a Northern Lights simulation.

Struggling to compete against other regional destinations, the Province begins to convert portions of Ontario Place to a theme park. The Wilderness Adventure Ride is introduced in 1984, after significant reconstruction and modernization to the West Island. The Children's Village mini golf course is removed in 1988.



Source: Vintage Toronto.

early 1990s  
EXPANDING THE ISLAND AND PARK PROGRAMMING

Throughout the early 1990s, several expansions to the East Island are completed: these include extension to the north shoreline and to the landform surrounding the Forum. New bridges and a hard-surface event space. The East Village Boutiques and Canopies are removed. Expansion requires significant lakefill.

Following the economic recession, revenue generating attractions replace Ontario North Now: a waterpark is initially developed in 1993 and expands throughout the 1990s.



1996

### CHILDREN'S VILLAGE WATERSLIDES



Source: Toronto Public Library.

2000

### BUMPER BOATS



Source: Toronto Public Library.

2005

### CINESPHERE IMAX THEATRE



2010

### SEASONAL FLOODING



Source: Toronto Public Library.

mid-1990s

### INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AND AMPHITHEATRE EXPANSION

In 1994, Ontario Place received recognition from the International Committee for the Documentation and Conservation of Buildings of the Modern Movement and listed on its inventory of significant works of the Modern Movement.

In the winter of 1994, the Forum is replaced by the larger Molson Amphitheatre, later renamed Budweiser Stage. The East Island forecourt is also demolished.



Source: Toronto Public Library.

2000s

### SOAK CITY AND THE EXPANDING CENTRAL WATERFRONT

The Children's Village and play areas are redeveloped as a water park, which is then expanded to become the 120,000 square foot Soak City.

In 2009, to align with updates along the Central Waterfront, enhancements are made to the Ontario place section of the Martin Goodman Trail. Concurrent with these enhancements, Trillium Plaza is installed on the East Island.



early 2010s

### CLOSURE AND REVITALIZATION EFFORTS

A Request for Information is released to generate new ideas for Ontario Place as the Province considers comprehensive redevelopment.

In Summer 2011, Echo Beach opens east of Budweiser Stage, and Ontario Place celebrates its 40th anniversary. Soon afterwards, as a result of declining visitor numbers and ongoing maintenance challenges, Ontario Place is closed, pending revitalization. In 2014, the Province commits to keeping Ontario Place a publicly-accessible asset.



late 2010s

### TRILLIUM PARK AND THE WILLIAM G DAVIS TRAIL

The new Trillium Park and William G Davis trail open in 2017, replacing a portion of the East Island formerly occupied by a parking lot. Designed by West 8 and LANDinc, the park's design is influenced by principles of sustainability – incorporating flood mitigation in its water's edge improvement; makes use of Indigenous species to support biodiversity and ecological functions; and embeds community input and influence, notably the influence Indigenous community representatives. The grounds are re-opened to the public for passive uses.



2019

### CALL FOR REDEVELOPMENT

The Province issued a Call for Development to identify potential private-sector partners in support of Ontario Place's revitalization. Over 30+ submission are received from potential development partners around the world.

# 1.2 Identifying Revitalization Partners

**"ONTARIO'S GOVERNMENT IS MAKING THE ONTARIO PLACE SITE A WORLD-CLASS, YEAR ROUND DESTINATION ONCE AGAIN. OUR GOVERNMENT IS REVITALIZING THIS UNIQUE WATERFRONT SITE; WE ARE MAKING IT AN ICONIC, SPECTACULAR DESTINATION..."**  
- 2019 Call for Development

The 2019 Call for Development was flexible to various commercial concepts, but was guided by the objective of aligning Ontario Place's future with its iconic stature and legacy uses (see quote above). To achieve this objective several priorities were listed: an emphasis on recreational and cultural programming; that the entire site remain in public ownership, and development enhance waterfront access; the preservation of Trillium Park and restoration of pods and Cinesphere; a need to demonstrate long-term financial viability; and a commitment to environmental sustainability and resilience.

Respondents were expected to demonstrate how the commercial program would enhance the value of Ontario Place as whole: achieving harmony between its elements, while advancing the primacy of the public realm. On July 30, 2021 the vision for revitalization was revealed, alongside the program partners who will advance this vision: Therme Canada; Live Nation Entertainment; and a potential partnership with the Ontario Science Centre.



Figure 4. Vision for Ontario Place, indicating the program partners.



Therme Group has proposed an affordable, all-season wellbeing and entertainment destination featuring: waterslides, indoor and outdoor pools and mineral baths, wellness amenities, arts and culture programming, and food offerings. The Therme program offerings are to be hosted from an iconic facility on the West Island. Renewed and enhanced public spaces are to be delivered alongside the new facility, including a new public beach and expanded pedestrian and cyclists facilities.



Live Nation is the global and Canadian entertainment leader, operating nationally for over 30 years. They are the present-day operators of the Budweiser Stage, which recently celebrated its 25th Anniversary and has successfully produced over 800 concerts and hosted over 8 million fans. Their proposal contemplates transforming the existing facility into a four-season concert venue: to include 9,000 indoor seats and capacity for 11,000 additional lawn visitors.



The Ontario Science Centre has been delivering science-based and educational programming since 1969, offering a space where visitors of all ages can learn through play and discover ways to think like a scientist every day. Building on this success, the provincial government is exploring opportunities to adaptively re-use the pods and Cinesphere for science-based programming in partnership with the Ontario Science Centre.



# 1.3 The Proposed Development

## THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ARE THE RESULT OF A COLLABORATIVE AND INTEGRATIVE APPROACH.

The following Comprehensive Plan is the result of the Province and the program partners coming together and, through collaboration with the City, the broader public, and Indigenous communities, solving for a future Ontario Place that advances City and Provincial priorities and is consistent with the public’s vision for this waterfront asset. It has been prepared to support the application to amend the Official Plan for the entirety of Ontario Place and to permit the first phase of new development.

The focus of this Comprehensive Plan is Ontario Place as a whole; however, where appropriate, this Plan provides suggested direction for future improvements to Exhibition Place and Lake Shore Boulevard West.

### OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT

The Official Plan Amendment (OPA) is intended to guide the long-term stewardship of the lands and provides policy direction for the entirety of Ontario Place, including policy guidance for longer-term investments in the public realm and facilities such as the Live Nation Amphitheatre.

### ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT AND PHASED IMPLEMENTATION

The current zoning by-law amendment (ZBA) application seeks permissions for the first phase of development, including development and public realm expansion on the West Island, Mainland, and East Island.

Future phases of development will come forward as additional detail is confirmed. Separate development applications would be required for future major facilities contemplated in the OPA and detailed in the submission materials, including the potential science entrance pavilion on the Mainland and redevelopment of the existing Live Nation amphitheatre. Targeted public realm improvements beyond the first phase, including the potential removal of the maintenance facility and improvements to the centre and east pedestrian bridges to East Island, will be implemented over time and potentially in coordination with other developments.

### ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A Category C Class Environmental Assessment (EA) process is also underway in parallel with the proposed Official Plan and zoning by-law amendment applications. The EA is currently assessing design concepts for the government-led public realm improvements, including the improvements proposed on the East Island (excluding Live Nation) and the Mainland (excluding Therme).

For the purposes of ensuring a complete application, the materials submitted in support of the OPA and ZBA application articulate a specific design for these public realm areas. However, multiple design concepts for the public realm continue to be considered through the EA process and are subject to further assessment.

It is anticipated that the EA process will be completed by mid-2023, at which point a preferred public realm design will be identified. This preferred concept will influence future updates to the public realm designs included in future resubmissions of the OPA and ZBA application materials.

# 1.4 Project Engagement

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION FEATURES ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PUBLIC, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND OTHER KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO MEET STATUTORY OBLIGATIONS AND ACHIEVE THOUGHTFUL AND SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES.

Both the development application and EA processes require significant engagement with the public, municipal and agency stakeholders, and Indigenous communities in order to meet legislative obligations and achieve a successful outcome. The objective for public engagement related to the revitalization of Ontario Place is to consult on the design development and site preparation activities specific to environmental assessment, public realm design, heritage, environmental investigations, and site servicing.

The public engagement strategy has been designed in part to meet the statutory requirements for the Category C Class Environmental Assessment (EA) public consultation, as per the Environmental Assessment Act and includes additional enhanced public engagement activities.

### PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

The target audience for public engagement includes all members of the public across the province who have either shown an interest in the project to date or who are not yet aware of the project. The primary objective is to gather a broad and diverse range of inputs, in order to revitalize Ontario Place in a way that reflects the interests and experiences of diverse Ontarians.

The approach to public engagement is centred around the four milestones of the EA process (see Figure 5). Each major consultation event has or will provide information, conceptual designs and opportunities to ask questions and provide input. The EA process is expected to take less than two years, beginning with the public realm visioning, and culminating in the selection of a preferred design.

Following submission, the City of Toronto will lead engagement on the development application, with support provided by the applicant team. These activities, which typically take the form of open houses and workshops, will offer additional points of engagement with the public and other stakeholders

### MUNICIPAL AND AGENCY STAKEHOLDERS

On February 2, 2022, Toronto City Council adopted the “Priority Areas for Collaboration and Development Approvals Process” for Ontario Place, which outlined the collaborative process to advance development approvals for Ontario Place agreed to by the Province and the City.

Guided by the principles contained within the decision, the project team engaged regularly with City Staff to ensure robust feedback and dialogue on all aspects of the emerging proposal. Following submission of the development application, the project team will continue to meet with municipal and agency stakeholders to refine the proposed development in advance of a final Council decision at the end of 2023, and well beyond.

Ontario Place sits within the designated Waterfront Area, and is subject to review by the Waterfront Design Review Panel. Because of the significance of the proposed development, the City of Toronto Design Review Panel was also invited to participate in reviews. The proposal was initially brought to the Waterfront Design Review Panel on July 27, 2022 for the “Issues Identification” session. A second review session is targeted for February 2023, and a third review is anticipated later in 2023.



INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

Consultation with Indigenous communities is an important part of both the site design and the EA process. The purpose of Indigenous engagement is to create a public realm design at Ontario Place that is truly reflective of Indigenous input and perspectives; including representation of Indigenous cultures and histories, as well as Indigenous traditions of spirituality, ceremony and storytelling as they relate to the City of Toronto, the land, the water and Ontario Place.

Seven First Nations (eight councils) communities were identified for engagement, as well as other Indigenous communities, organizations and urban Indigenous groups in Toronto. It is anticipated that will be at least 40 meetings cumulatively with the First Nation communities identified above over the 20-month Ontario Place public realm design period.

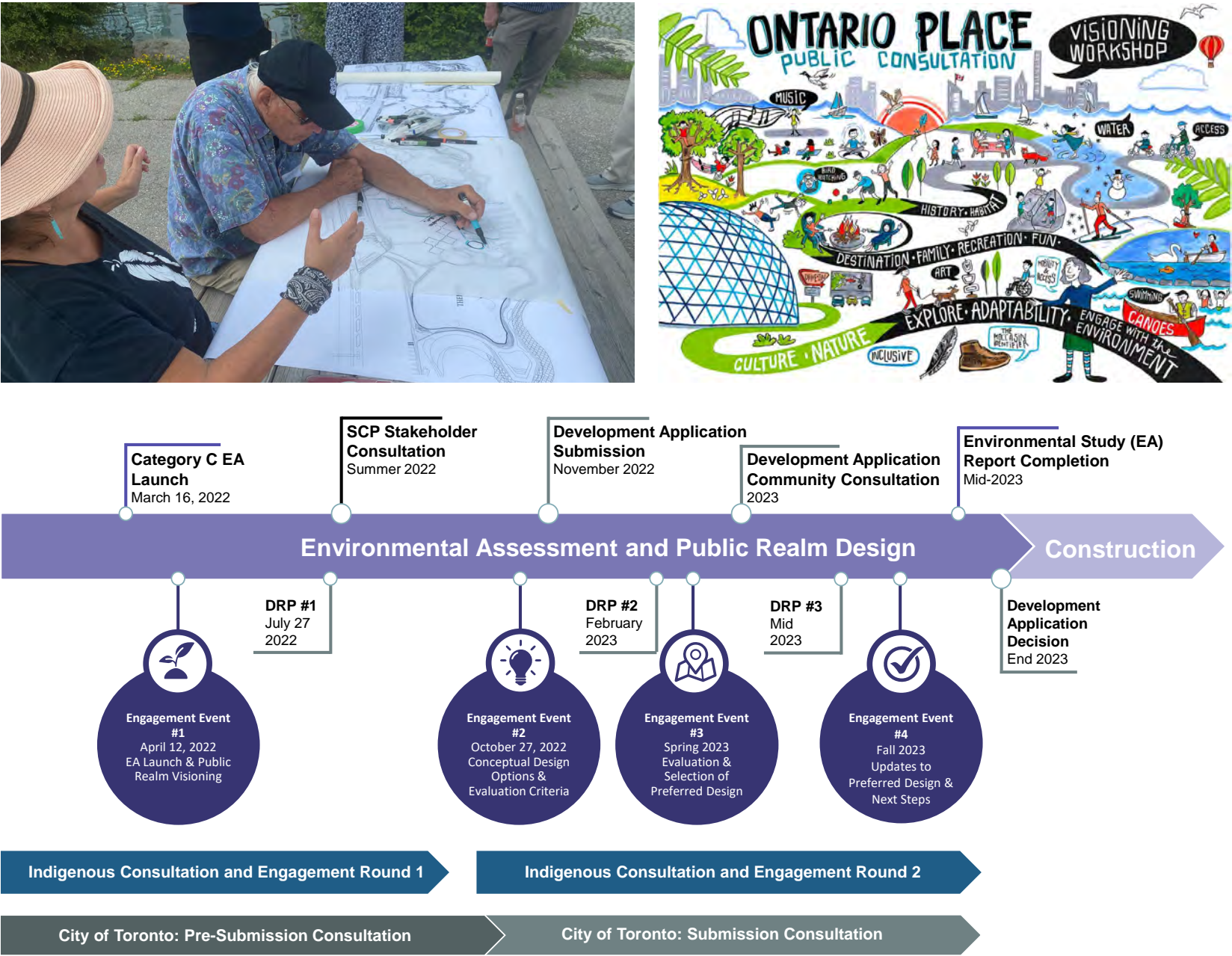


Figure 5. Engagement Process.



An aerial photograph of the Ontario Place waterfront in Toronto, featuring the Ontario Place building, a large dome, and a marina, all overlaid with a teal color filter.

## Section 2

# Ontario Place in Context

Ontario Place holds a special place in the hearts and memories of Ontarians. But finding an enduring, viable mix of uses – of the scale needed to sustain necessary improvements to the site – has always been a challenge. Updates to the public space network and transit improvements along the waterfront create the opportunity for reinvestment at Ontario Place that will align it with its legacy.



# 2.1 Ontario Place Today

ONTARIO PLACE IS COMPRISED OF 28 HECTARES (68 ACRES) OF LAND AND 35 HECTARES (87 ACRES) OF WATER, FOR A TOTAL OF 63 HECTARES (155 ACRES). THIS UNIQUE WATERFRONT SETTING CONSISTS OF TWO ISLANDS, WATER AREAS AND THE MAINLAND.

## MAINLAND

The 8 hectares (20 acres) south of Lake Shore Boulevard W includes two large parking lots accommodating a total of 1,270 spaces and a two-storey security and ticketing office. The islands are connected to the Mainland by one of three bridges, with a fourth connecting to the pods. A boardwalk follows the water’s edge.

## EAST ISLAND AND BRIGANTINE COVE

Formerly the site of the Children’s Village, the Forum, and Soak City waterpark, the 14-hectare (34-acre) East Island includes Trillium Park, Brigantine Cove, an administration building, a maintenance building and the East Island Commons. The western portion of the island hosts Budweiser Stage.

## CENTRAL WATER

The central water includes the pods and Cinesphere, a marina, Pavilion Bay and the inner channels. The Marina’s breakwaters were fashioned from sunken boats.

## WEST ISLAND:

The 6-hectare (15-acre) West Island includes a naturalized area with mature vegetation and a beach. Portions of former attractions – Village Clusters, plaza spaces and the ‘Wilderness Adventure’ ride – have been abandoned. A system of pathways connect these areas and provide circulation.



Figure 6. Ontario Place today, comprised of the Mainland and islands, connected by bridges, within the waters of Lake Ontario. Source: Google Maps.

# 2.2 Existing Programming and Site Conditions

ONCE, ONTARIO PLACE SPARKED THE IMAGINATION AND DREW MILLIONS OF VISITORS FROM ACROSS THE PROVINCE AND INTERNATIONALLY. BUT ITS ATTRACTIONS STRUGGLED TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE. INVESTMENTS ARE NEEDED TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY AS PROVINCIAL DESTINATION AND LOCAL AMENITY.

When it opened in 1971, Ontario Place attracted provincial and international visitors to experience its unique programs. Overtime, its attractions struggled to draw visitors. After several efforts at piecemeal revitalization, most of the park closed in 2012.

Budweiser Stage and the Cinesphere the primary paid attractions still in operation, though the East Island hosts a variety of seasonal programs, including the Echo Beach performance stage, occasional Cirque du Soleil programs in the Commons, the Vista Eatery restaurant, and other events throughout the year. With the exception of the Cinesphere, none of the buildings have been significantly upgraded since their construction and most have been decommissioned for over 10 years.

Trillium Park and the associated William G. Davis Trail opened in June 2017, quickly becoming an important park for local residents. Few other public realm improvements have been completed since the 1990s, and the shoreline is degrading.

Despite few attractions and significant state of good repair improvement requirements, the growing waterfront communities have welcomed Ontario Place as a local open space. To reclaim its relevance as a provincial destination and remain an effective local amenity, investments are required to improve the safety and accessibility of the island and address the condition of heritage buildings and landscape features.



Figure 7. Ontario Place existing programs and site conditions. Source: Google Maps.





**The Pavilion ("the pods"):** Five interconnected structures that provide over 40,000 square feet of programmable space. Their remote nature, floor layout inefficiencies, servicing deficiencies, and reinvestment requirements result in program challenges.



**Cinesphere:** A triodetic dome that introduced IMAX cinema to the world, the 614-seat cinema was upgraded with the latest IMAX digital laser technology and new sound system in 2017. It currently hosts classic films and major new releases.



**Budweiser Stage:** The 16,000-seat amphitheatre is one of the world's most successful outdoor concert venues. It hosts over 50 events and approximately 650,000 visitors annually. It operates seasonally during warmer months.



**Events Spaces:** The 5,000-attendee RBC Echo Beach is the largest attraction on the East Island. The 5-acre East Island Commons also provides seasonable animation, but as an impermeable paved surface, contributes significantly to heat island effect.



**Trillium Park:** Designed by West 8 and LANDinc, the 7.5-acre park includes passive and recreational amenities. By representing Ontario's diverse landscapes and embedding Indigeneity in the design, it is successful benchmark for revitalization.



**Water Access:** The inner waters support small watercraft movement, with raised western and central bridges to enable access. The Marina includes 240 slips and a fuel dock. A dock along the inner lagoon provides mooring for 40 additional boats.



**West Island:** The shoreline along the southern edge of the West Island forms a beach-like setting which is currently used informally for swimming and fishing.



**Access and Circulation:** Three bridges and the Pavilion provide access to the island from the Mainland. A series of walkways and trails connect discrete areas. Paths are intermittently maintained, prone to seasonal flooding, and not AODA compliant.



**Water Levels and Quality:** Ontario Place is prone to seasonal flooding and the water quality in Brigantine Cove compromised as a result of stagnation. Investment is needed to improve the island's accessibility, water quality and long-term resilience.



## 2.3 Heritage Landscape and Features

**ONTARIO PLACE HAS CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY SINCE OPENING IN 1971, WITH LANDSCAPES ALTERED AND BUILDINGS ADDED AND REMOVED IN RESPONSE TO CHANGING PROGRAM ELEMENTS. IT WILL CONTINUE TO REFLECT THE INTERESTS OF THE CHANGING PROVINCE.**

Ontario Place is a unique landmark: not just an island and Mainland formed entirely from lake-fill, but a destination constantly evolving to accommodate new attractions and fundamentally transformed since its inception. It has been identified as a Provincial Heritage Property of Provincial Significance.

The Statement of Cultural Heritage Value (SCHV) prepared for Ontario Place recognizes its constant evolution as fundamental to its heritage identity. Despite this dynamic nature, Ontario Place is known for its original and iconic architectural features, notably Eb Zeidler-designed pods and Cinesphere. The pods have been underutilized since construction and to be effectively programmed and protected, significant investment is required. Other early built features – the Forum, the Children’s Village, the East Island lookout – have been removed over time, and what remains of the Village Boutique clusters requires re-investment.

Designed by Michael Hough, the Ontario Place landscape treatment creates a rich green backdrop that juxtaposes Zeidler’s modernist aesthetic. It has morphed dramatically in response to changing programs and the effects of time: the degradation of the pathway system is extensive, view points have been lost and the island edge, canal landscape and marina structures have been compromised by seasonal flooding. Despite alteration and deterioration, the original vegetation that remains has matured.



Figure 8. Existing heritage features at Ontario Place. Source: Google Maps.



# ONTARIO PLACE STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE (2013): CONTEXTUAL AND DESIGN ATTRIBUTES

Ontario Place is a rare modernist expression of integrated architecture, engineering and landscape. The DRAFT Strategic Conservation Plan (SCP) for Ontario Place identifies several contextual and design attributes which contribute to this identity and its heritage value. The Heritage Impact Assessment submitted with this application identifies strategies for the proposed development to celebrate and conserve the site's important heritage attributes through redevelopment.



The sculpting of the entirely new landforms that provide shape and are shaped by an series of lagoons and canals, as well as a naturalized shoreline condition that opens to the larger expanse of Lake Ontario.



The varying scale of the complementary built structures – from the prominent triodetic structure of the Cinesphere, to the more modest Village Boutique and former Children's Village clusters.



The integration of design and program elements to advance the vision of Ontario Place – with landscapes shaped to create microclimatic conditions appropriate for recreation, entertainment programming, and public gatherings.



The geometric and technologically innovative Pavilion – interconnected buildings, bridges and pods composed of glass and steel, set against the naturalized surroundings of mature trees and native plant species.



The consistent and iconic presence of branding, way-finding elements, and bridge-entrances which communicate Ontario Place's role as a public works project dedicated to the people of Ontario.



The walkways, trails and bridges that connect discrete activity areas and gathering spaces, and open to vistas and constructed views of the urban landscape to the north and the open expanse of Lake Ontario.



## 2.4 Getting to Ontario Place and Moving Around

ONTARIO PLACE WAS ORIGINALLY ONE OF FEW DESTINATIONS ALONG THE WATERFRONT, AND LITTLE THOUGHT WAS GIVEN TO TRANSIT OR ACTIVE MOBILITY ACCESS. RECENT INVESTMENTS IN PUBLIC TRANSIT AND EXPANDING WALKING AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE CREATE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE ACCESS AND ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR, PARTICULARLY FOR THE DESTINATION ATTRACTIONS.

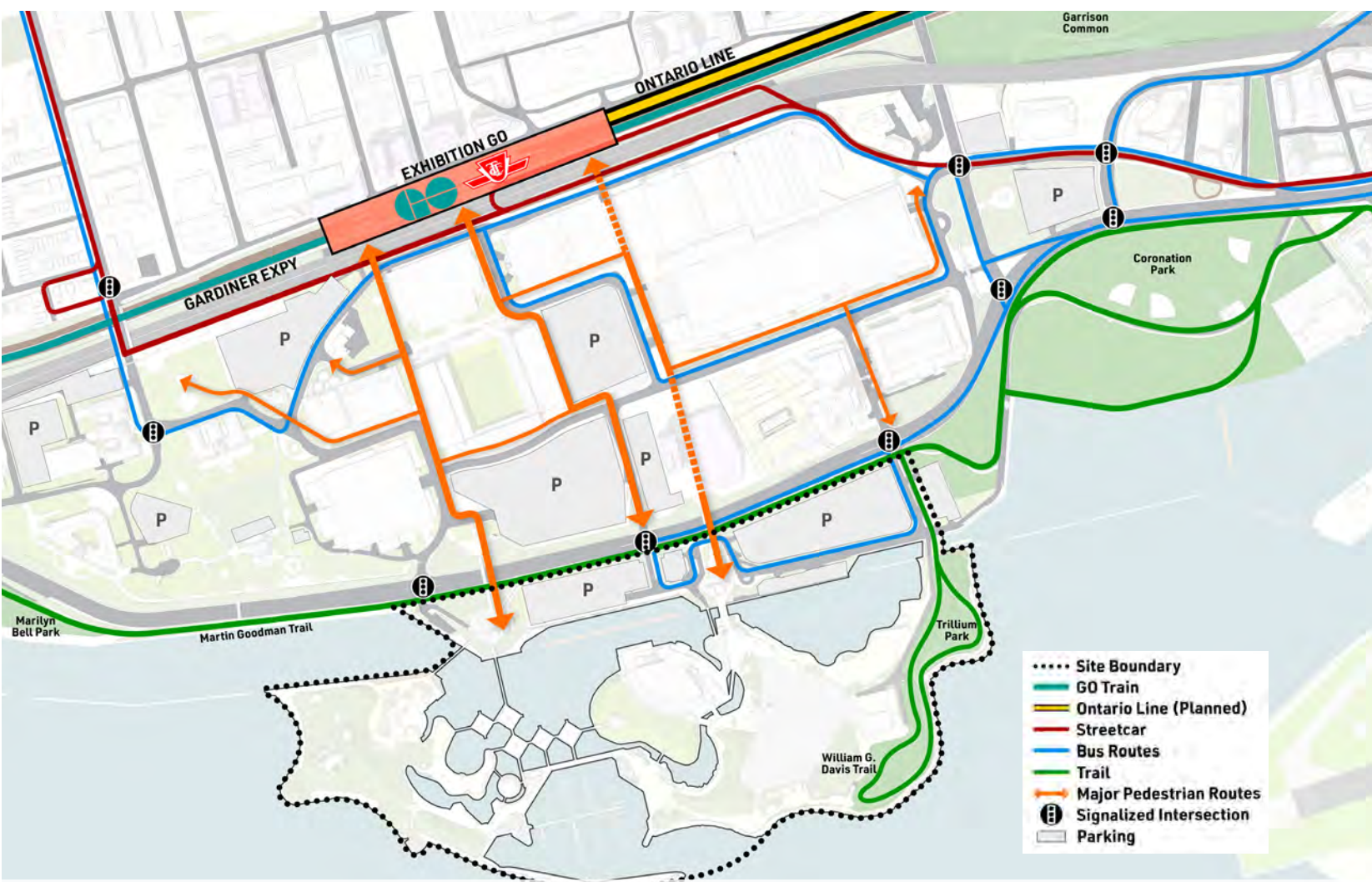


Figure 9. Existing and emerging mobility context.

### WALKING AND CYCLING

The William G. Davis trail connects Ontario Place to the Martin Goodman Trail and the waterfront trail network. A series of both formal and informal trails provide additional circulation within Ontario Place.

North-south connections are less established. Lake Shore Boulevard West is a six-lane barrier, crossed by two pedestrian bridges at New Brunswick Way/ Remembrance Drive and Ontario Drive. Currently there are no last-mile options that connect the GO Station and Ontario Place. Though the transit hub is only an eight minute walk away, the extent of the surface parking lots, insufficient way-finding and the lack of weather protection make the trip unappealing.



Figure 10. William G Davis Trail at Trillium Park



EXISTING TRANSIT

Ontario Place is located 500 m south of the Exhibition Place transit hub, which contains both regional Metrolinx GO transit and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) services. Three TTC streetcar and bus services provide regular connections between the city and western waterfront: the 29 Dufferin Bus; the 504 King Streetcar; and the 509 Harbourfront Streetcar. Exhibition GO is located on the Lakeshore West line which operates regular weekday and weekend service between Toronto and Hamilton, and occasional service to Niagara.



Figure 14. Exhibition GO Station. Source: Wikicommons.



Figure 13. Exhibition streetcar with direct service to the CNE. Source: Michael Gil.

ONTARIO LINE AND REGIONAL RAIL EXPANSION

The Greater Toronto Hamilton Area is undergoing a generational expansion in transit and Ontario Place is poised to become one of the most accessible locations along the lake, and a worthy gateway to the western waterfront:

- The 15.6-km Ontario Line subway will run from Exhibition Place, through the heart of Toronto downtown core, to the Ontario Science Centre. This new subway line will move over 400,000 passengers per weekday with services running as frequently as every 90 seconds. Expected delivery is as early 2027.
- Electrification along the Lakeshore West GO RER line will introduce 15-minute, all-day, two-way service between Toronto and Burlington, and hourly service to Hamilton seven days a week.
- A new King/Liberty GO station is planned 500 metres immediately north of the transit hub and will provide access to both Toronto Pearson Airport Express and the Kitchener GO RER line.

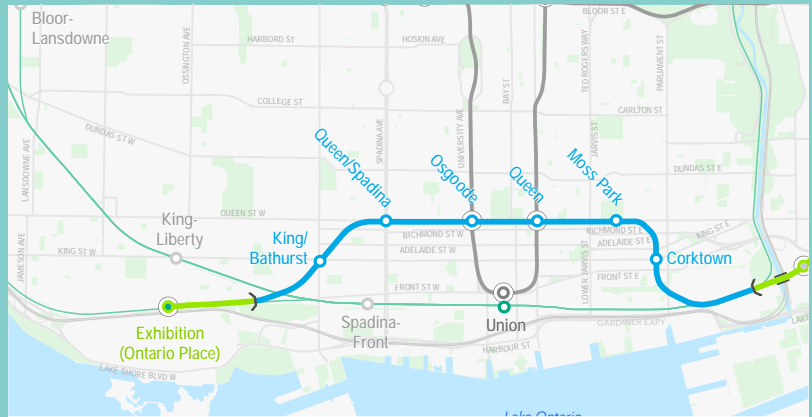


Figure 11. DRAFT Ontario Line Alignment. Source: Metrolinx.

VEHICLE ACCESS

Ontario Place is well located relative to major road infrastructure including the Gardiner Expressway. Vehicle entry points are located along Lake Shore Boulevard at Ontario Drive, Remembrance Drive and Ontario Place Boulevard. The primary pick-up and drop-off loop follows Remembrance Drive, south along the edge of the eastern parking lot, and includes space for both Wheel Trans vehicles and passenger vehicle queuing.

With few viable transportation alternatives many visitors travel by car to the site: benefiting from the 1,270 surface parking spaces on-site and the over 5,500 at Exhibition Place to the north, or using taxis or car-share services. This often results in significant congestion during peak rush hour or event times.



Figure 12. Vehicular context for the site.



# 2.5 The Exhibition and Ontario Place Precinct

**ONTARIO PLACE AND EXHIBITION PLACE CREATE A UNIQUE URBAN CONDITION: A LARGE WATERFRONT PRECINCT DEVOTED TO REGIONAL DESTINATIONS, COMMERCIAL AMENITIES AND PUBLIC SPACE. IMPROVEMENTS IN TRANSIT ACCESS CREATE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PRECINCT-WIDE INTEGRATION.**

Established in 1879, the 192-acre Exhibition Place is Canada’s largest entertainment venue – with grounds that combine exhibition and banquet centres, performance venues, monuments, parkland and sports facilities. These landmarks draw provincial and international visitors to the water. The addition of new attractions will also draw new visitors to the precinct, including a new E-Sports stadium connected to Hotel X Toronto Phase 2 and stadium and public realm improvements with the upcoming 2026 FIFA World Cup.

With the introduction of new program partners at Ontario Place, the Exhibition and Ontario Place precinct is strengthening its role as a world-class destination for major events and large-scale cultural programs.

Long separated from the city to the north by highway and rail infrastructure, transit expansion plans create an opportunity to better connect Exhibition Place with the city and region. But Exhibition Place’s intermittent festival programming and expansive surface parking lots create connectivity challenges to Ontario Place. The success of a revitalized Ontario Place relies on improved north-south pedestrian connections and a greater degree of integration between these distinct components of the precinct.



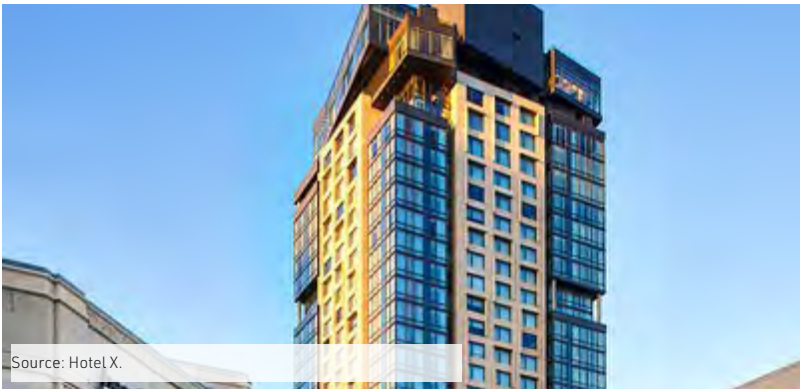
Figure 15. The Exhibition and Ontario Place Precinct, highlighting key open space and mobility connections and significant built-form assets.





Source: Exhibition Place.

**Enercare Centre:** The largest convention and exhibition centre in Canada and the sixth largest in North America, offering over one million square feet of exhibit space. There are plans for a 100,000 square foot expansion of the facility.



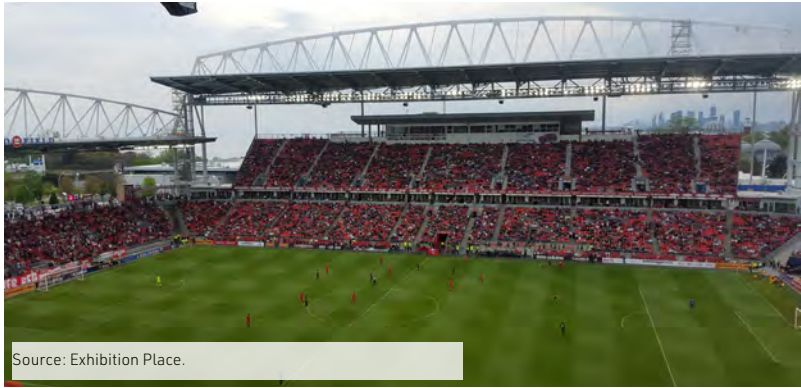
Source: Hotel X.

**Hotel X and E-Sports:** Opened in 2018, it contains 404 suites, restaurants, a bar, retail, and a cinema. In 2022, Phase 2 of the complex was approved: a 30-storey, 382-suite expansion, connected to a 7,000-seat E-sports entertainment venue.



Source: Exhibition Place.

**The Horse Palace:** Considered one of the finest Art Deco Buildings in Toronto, the Horse Palace was designed and constructed in 1931. It features low-relief friezes of horses at each of its entrances.



Source: Exhibition Place.

**BMO Field and Festival Plaza:** The official home of Toronto CF and the Toronto Argonauts. In 2022, Council approved the necessary investments to host five FIFA 2026 matches, including stadium upgrades and a 10-acre festival plaza.



Source: Stadium Journey.

**Coca-Cola Coliseum:** The Coca-Cola Coliseum opened for its first hockey game in 2003 and continues to host hockey games, trade/consumer shows, concerts, and special events.



Source: Cycle Toronto.

**Circulation:** Venues and parks are connected by an internal network of streets and pedestrians pathways. Circulation across the site is often interrupted during major events, like the Honda Indy or the Canada National Exhibition.



Source: Exhibition Place.

**Beanfield Centre:** Formerly the Automotive Building, the 160,000 square foot Beanfield Centre reopened in 2009 as a state-of-the-art facility which respects the buildings historic attributes.



Source: Exhibition Place.

**Better Living Centre:** Situated in the heart of Exhibition Place, the Better Living Centre contains over 200,000 square feet of exhibit space and hosts consumer shows, community events, and festivals.



Source: Foursquare.

**Parking:** The public realm at Exhibition Place is dominated by surface parking. In total, there are 4,500 surface parking spaces, plus an additional 1,300 underground spaces beneath the Enercare Centre.



# 2.6 Western Gateway to the Waterfront

**ONTARIO PLACE WAS THE FIRST OF MANY TRANSFORMATIONS ALONG TORONTO'S WATERFRONT. SINCE THE 1970S, THE ADDITION OF OPEN SPACE AND PROGRAM AMENITIES ALONG THE WATER'S EDGE HAS MADE IT NETWORK OF DIVERSE DESTINATIONS.**

When Ontario Place first opened, the waterfront was still largely in active industrial and port use. Since then, the city's office core has expanded south to the lake, and residential development has spread from the Don Valley to the Humber. Transit has made this possible, providing access to a diverse range of waterfront programming and experiences from three existing and emerging transit hubs.

The contemporary waterfront now supports many complete communities, with residential and commercial uses surrounded by distinctive waterfront destinations. Along the central waterfront, Harbourfront Centre, East Bayfront, and soon Quayside create focus areas of commercial and cultural activities.

Parks and natural areas contribute to this waterfront experience. Tommy Thompson Park and the Leslie Street spit, Woodbine Beach, and Cherry Beach are largely passive and have re-introduced a naturalized condition to the lake shore. The ambitious Don River Park in the Port Lands will be a massive addition to the area's rich ecology.

With the destination profile of Exhibition Place, and the introduction of higher-order transit, this portion of the western waterfront is poised to become highly accessible for city and regional residents. Revitalization is an opportunity to leverage improved connectivity to bring new life to this part of the waterfront.

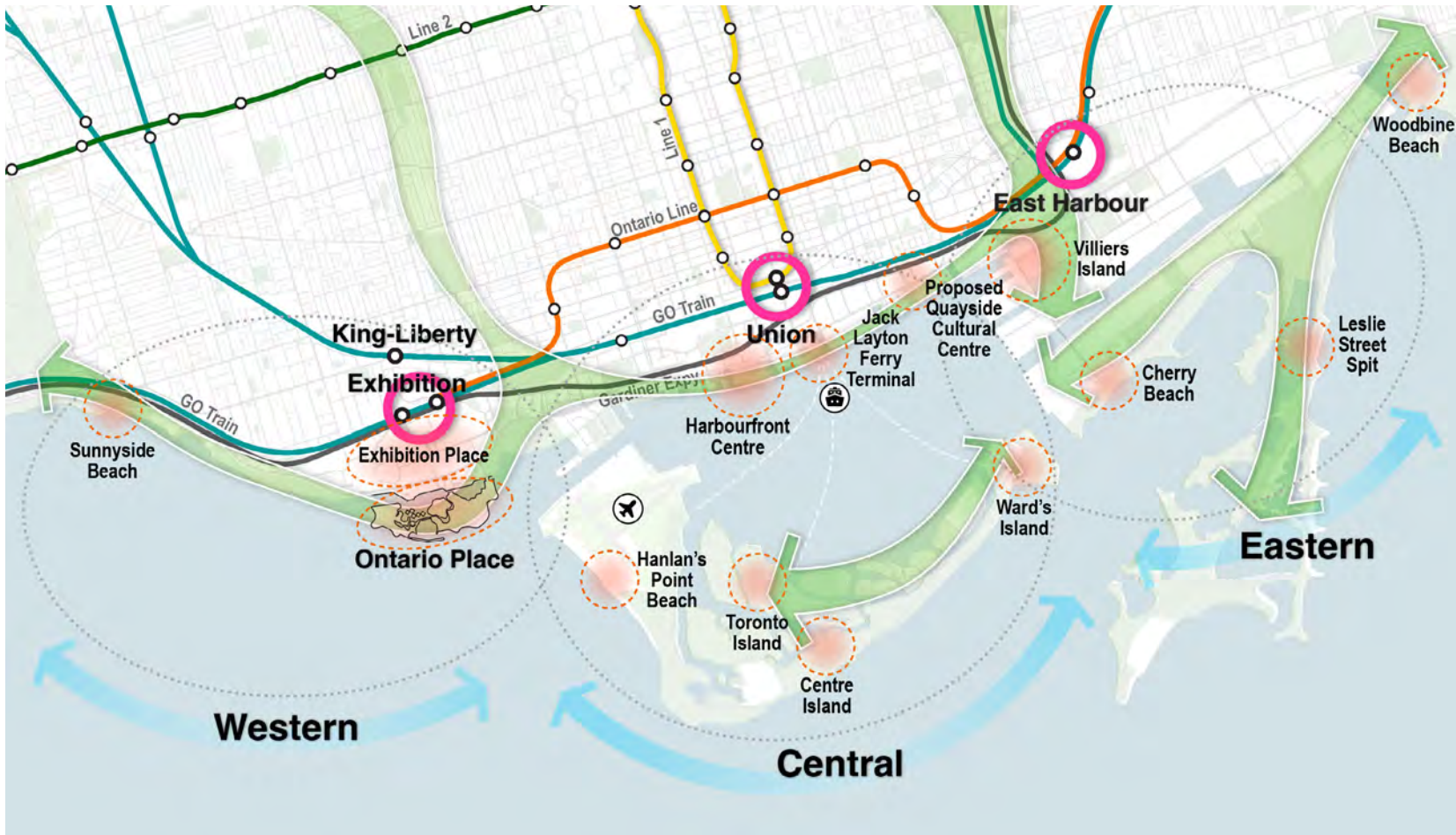


Figure 16. Three gateways to the central waterfront.





Source: City of Toronto.

**Toronto Island Park:** Made up of several islands, including Ward's Island, Centre Island and Hanlan's Point, the island includes swimming beaches, sports facilities, and a variety of natural and recreational programming.



Source: City of Toronto.

**Woodbine Beach:** A 15.2-hectare park that is a popular spot for picnics, sunbathing and swimming with wide stretches of sand, summer lifeguards and the Donald D. Sommerville Outdoor Olympic Pool nearby.



Source: City of Toronto.

**Tommy Thompson Park:** Located on the Leslie Street Spit, the park represents some of the largest existing natural habitat on the Toronto waterfront. Birds flourish at the park, making it one of the best nature-watching areas in the Greater Toronto Area.

## CONNECTING THE WATERFRONT

Ontario Place is flanked by large waterfront parks and recreational amenities. The recent creation of Trillium Park connected Ontario Place's eastern into this emerging waterfront environment. Comprehensive revitalization is an opportunity to extend and improve these connections, better integrate with the rapidly urbanizing context to the north and create a worthy gateway to the western waterfront.



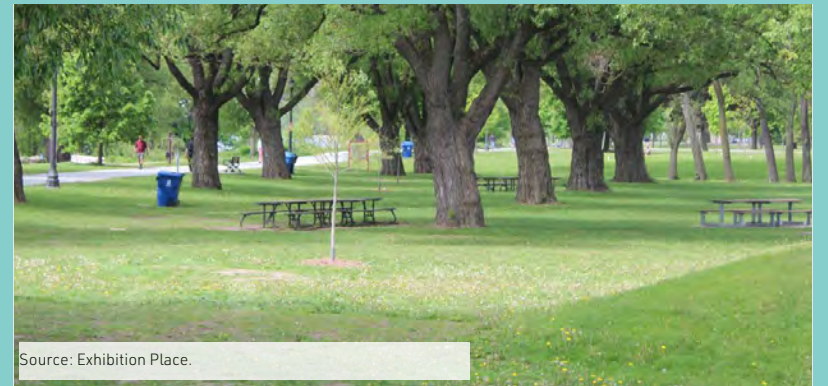
Source: Harbourfront Centre.

**Harbourfront Centre:** An international centre for contemporary arts, culture and ideas. Across its 10-acre campus on Toronto's waterfront, it provides year-round programming, supporting a range of artists and communities.



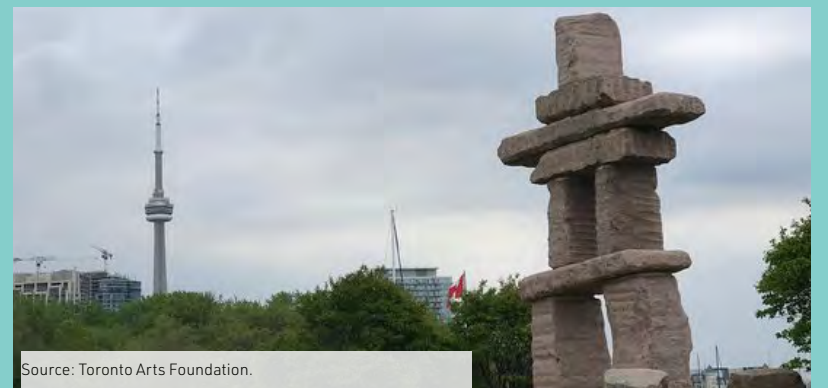
Source: CycleTO.

**Martin Goodman Trail:** Almost all waterfront parks are connected by this 56 km multi-use trail runs along Lake Shore Boulevard West, including Ontario Place.



Source: Exhibition Place.

**Sunnyside Beach:** Once home to Sunnyside Amusement Park, the park is one of several that follows the Martin Goodman Trail and is a popular picnic destination. The park includes the Sunnyside Pavilion and the Gus Ryder Pool.



Source: Toronto Arts Foundation.

**Toronto Inukshuk and Coronation Park:** Immediately east of Ontario Place, Toronto Inukshuk Park is named for its 30-foot Inuit stone structure. Further east, Coronation Park includes a marina, softball diamonds, an off-leash areas and picnic facilities.



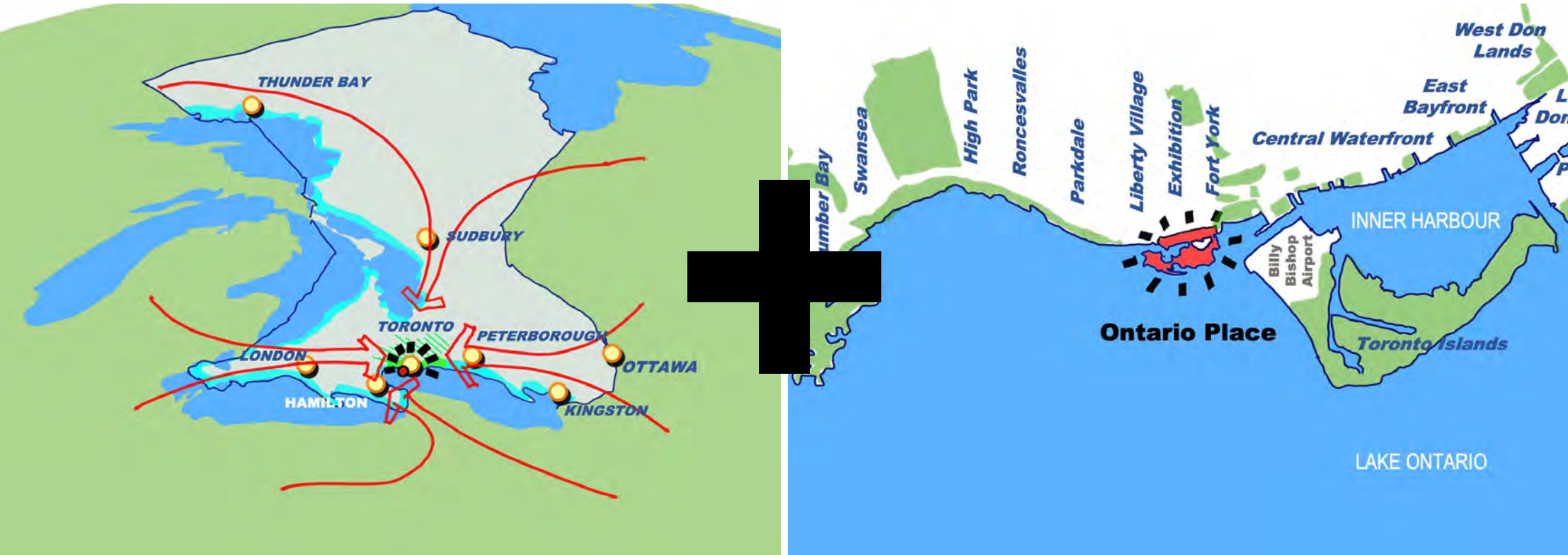
Source: City of Toronto.

**William G. Davis Trail:** By connecting to the Martin Goodman Trail at Coronation Park and crossing through Trillium Park, the trail is first step to formalizing a connection between Ontario Place and the waterfront open space and mobility networks.



# 2.7 A Provincial Destination. A Local Place.

REVITALIZATION WILL ENHANCE HOW ONTARIO PLACE PERFORMS AS BOTH AN ‘MUST SEE’ ATTRACTION THAT INSPIRES DELIGHT IN ALL ONTARIANS AND A LOCAL-SERVING PUBLIC SPACE AND AMENITY.



Ontario Place pioneered a one-of-a-kind waterfront experience. Its modernist design and program features, set within a natural and accessible open space network, sparked the imagination of Ontarians. But over time, other competitive attractions captured its share of the destination marketplace, and Ontario Place struggled to perform financially. Most of the site was closed to the public in 2012.

Comprehensive revitalization will draw visitors from across the province, becoming a ‘must see’ destination for all Ontarians to enjoy.

Ontario Place is located within walking distance of Toronto’s downtown core, surrounded by new or rapidly expanding neighbourhoods. Development has introduced new public amenities to the area, but the growing population continues to strain community recreational and open space resources.

Today, Ontario Place is a well-loved and essential open space amenity for nearby residents. Comprehensive revitalization will retain and enhance its performance as a local-serving space, better integrating it within the existing open space network.







An aerial photograph of Ontario Place in Toronto, featuring the large geodesic dome, various buildings, and the waterfront area. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color.

## Section 3

# Vision and Key Directions

Ontario Place was an early introduction to the potential of Toronto's waterfront. Comprehensive revitalization will address long-standing issues related to flooding and poor accessibility, align Ontario Place with its original intent and vision, connect it with transformations taking place along the waterfront, and secure the viability of this asset as a world class destination for future generations.



Ontario Place will **celebrate its heritage, original vision** and legacy as a **destination for all Ontarians** to enjoy.

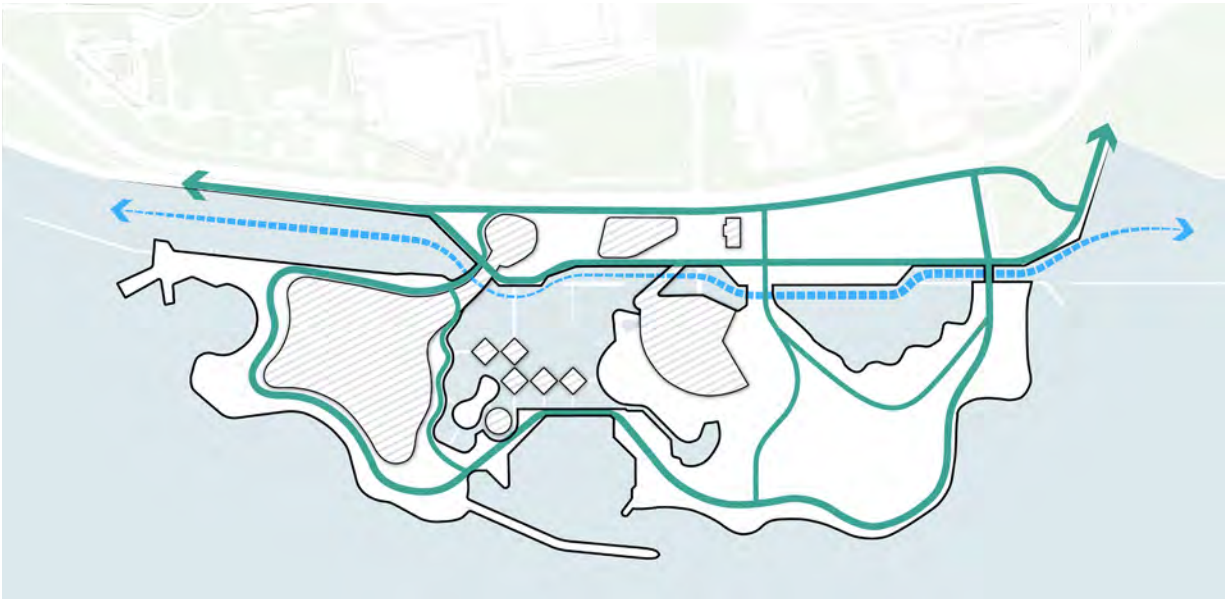
Revitalization will **recommit to waterfront access and animation** – integrating this rich destination into the wider City and waterfront network – provide an **viable basis for the preservation** and re-use of its unique architectural and landscape features, advance **sustainability and resilience**, and **ensure the long-term success and viability** of this cherished public asset.



# 3.1 Key Directions

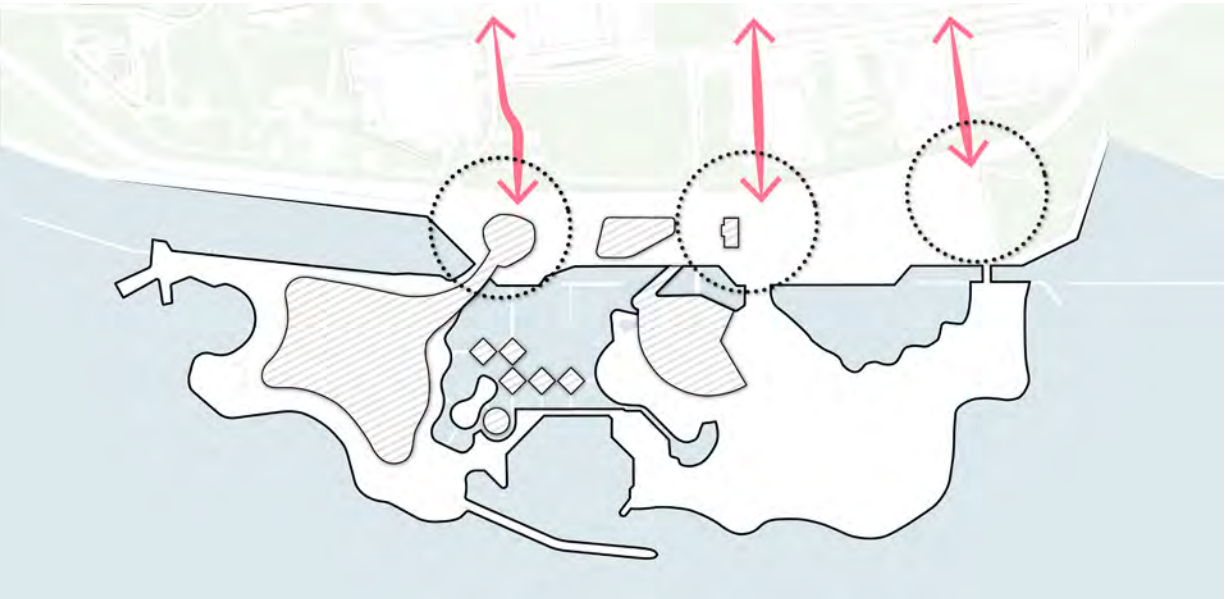
REVITALIZATION AT ONTARIO PLACE IS GUIDED BY SIX KEY DIRECTIONS.

## Restore and enhance the water’s edge and secure continuous public access



Revitalization will reinforce the islands’ shoreline, creating a flood-resistant landscape that protects the waterfront destination for future generations. The future water’s edge will be supported by a hierarchy of open spaces, stitched together by a network of multi-use trails. The open space network will improve access to the lake and provide future visitors with a variety of intimate waterfront experiences: waterfront boardwalks, a new beach for recreation and relaxation, and several landings of terraced stones that look-out over the lake. Improvements to the waterways and marina will also improve access for small watercraft, retaining Ontario Place as an important destination for boating and water recreation in the province.

## Improve connections to the waterfront and Exhibition Place



The consolidation of parking and servicing functions into a below-grade structure will unlock new Mainland open spaces. The enhanced Lake Shore Boulevard interface will transform this destination-focused precinct into a signature gateway for the western waterfront: a welcome place of arrival and celebration. Along the Mainland, revitalization will enhance and expand the Martin Goodman Trail and introduce a new waterfront boardwalk. The paved paths and trails that weave across the islands will be interconnected with these Mainland improvements and formally integrated into the wider waterfront network. The design and structure of the Mainland will protect for improved pedestrian, bicycle and transit links to Exhibition Place and the Exhibition transit hub.

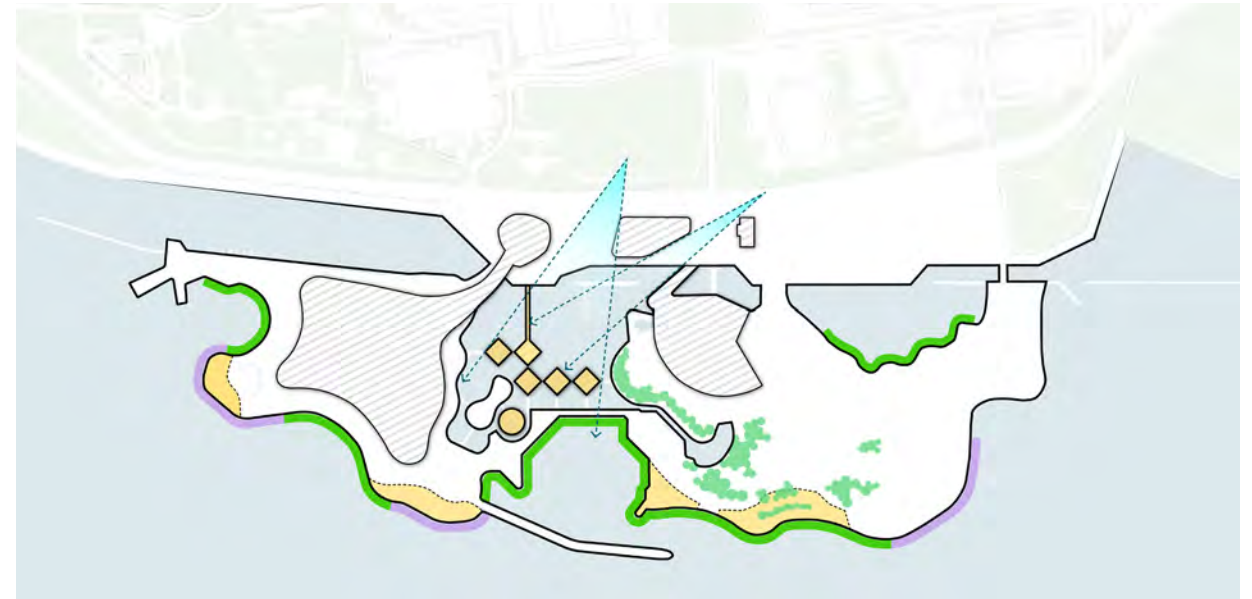


### Create significant new parks, public spaces and landscaped areas



Foundational to the revitalization of Ontario Place is a comprehensive investment in the public realm. Trillium Park will be fully retained and integrated with new open spaces that can accommodate a diversity of programming and activities. Large new gathering spaces, like the new Forum and Children's Village Playzone, will be created throughout Ontario Place and include opportunities for recreation. Across these enhanced public spaces, the landscape strategy will prioritize plants indigenous to southern Ontario – native grasses, shrubs and multi-stem trees – to create a dense and diverse habitat.

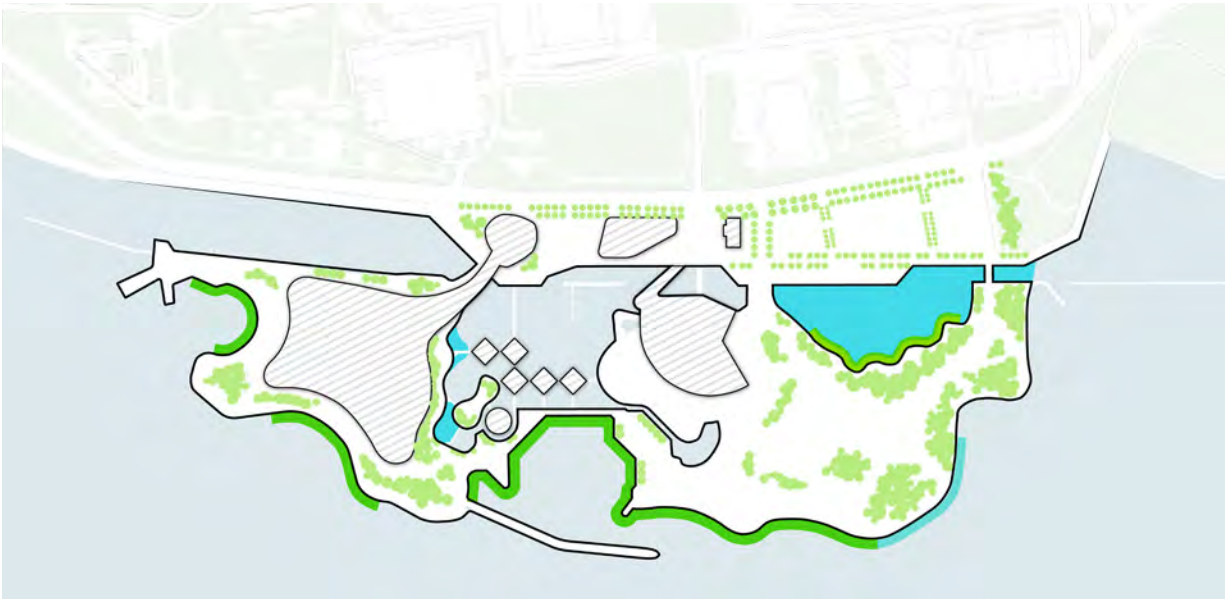
### Respect heritage and activate the pods and Cinesphere



Zeidler's pods and Cinesphere will see reinvestment to extend their lifespan, and opportunities to introduce new types of programming, such as science-based education, will be explored. Landscape renewal will align with Hough's original intentions and ambitions: a rich, naturalized backdrop, featuring a combination of soft and protected edges, immersive wooded paths which open to views and vantage points, and undulating landforms. Elements within the public realm – gateways, lights, seating, canopies, shelters and other public furnishings – will recall the modernist, modular forms of the west and east Village Clusters, contributing to a unified sense of place. Reinforcing the cultural importance of the lands and water, the public realm design will also provide opportunities for Indigenous placekeeping.



**Ensure long-term resilience, environmental performance and sustainability**



The updated landscapes at Ontario Place build on its beautiful and functional design. Reinforced edges along the water and raised elevations will protect it from seasonal flooding where appropriate, while expanding the public realm. Improvements along the inner lagoons and a new, submerged reef off the West Island will create new wetlands and aquatic habitat, and the landscaped islands will expand the tree canopy and increase permeability, reducing the level of stormwater runoff and urban heat island effects. New development will pursue high levels of environmental performance and sustainability to minimize carbon impacts.

**Welcome opportunities for animation with destinations that attract and inspire**



New and enhanced attractions will re-establish Ontario Place as a world-class, family-friendly destination for year-round recreation, entertainment, culture and play. Future program offerings may include an expanded, all season Live Nation Amphitheatre and entertainment facility; the Therme water-based recreation and wellness centre; the potential for science-based programming; outdoor adventure; and marina programming. Program partners will inspire diverse visitation, animate the public realm year-round, and create the economic foundation on which the long-term viability of the destination will be built and secured.



## 3.2 A Framework to Guide Future Development

THESE KEY DIRECTIONS COME TOGETHER TO FORM A FRAMEWORK FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF ONTARIO PLACE: ONE THAT ADVANCES PROVINCIAL, MUNICIPAL AND PUBLIC PRIORITIES

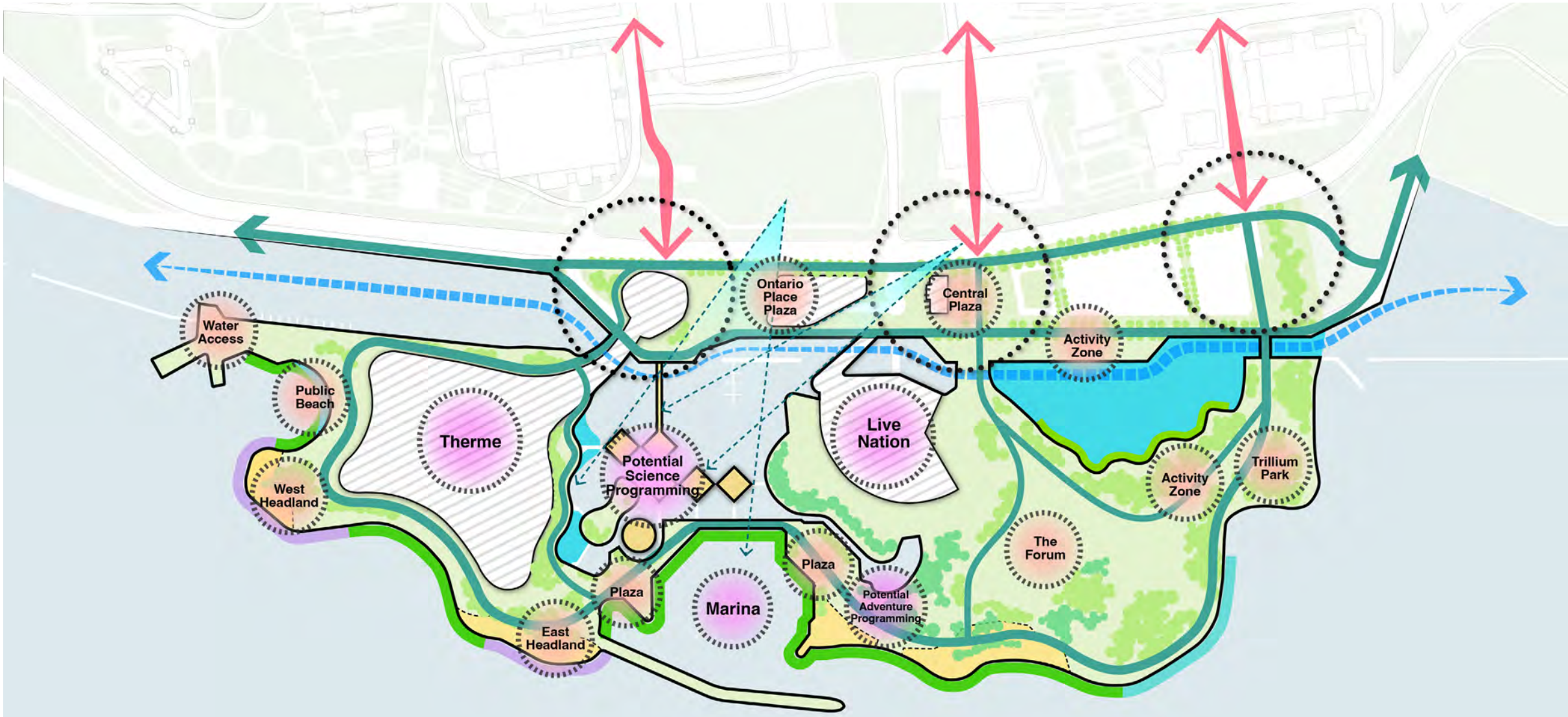


Figure 17. Proposed Framework Plan for Ontario Place.



This Comprehensive Plan outlines the approach to **revitalize and transform** Ontario Place.

The network of **open spaces will be expanded** and new **green space will be created**.

Improvements to the island will **address flooding and add new wildlife habitat**

**Public access to the water will be enhanced and protected** for future generations

And program partners will introduce **new attractions** and **increase year-round visitation**.





Artist's rendering of conceptual design

## New green spaces

## Continuous public waterfront access

Revitalization is anchored by comprehensive investment in the public realm.

Ontario Place will build on the success of the beloved Trillium Park by adding new green space across the Mainland and the islands.

New open spaces will be delivered in a variety of shapes and sizes, and provide diverse programming opportunities to attract visitors year-round.

A new beach and waterfront recreation pier will be added to the West Island. Other improvements to the water's edge create a cottage like setting on the shores of Toronto. The east commons is re-imagined as the new Forum: a large open space that will recall the original flexible event space ambitions of the original outdoor venue.



## Expanded tree canopy

### 6+ Acres of new aquatic habitat and wetland

New green spaces across the islands create opportunities to invest in and formalize Ontario Place's important role in sustaining habitat and enhancing biodiversity.

All open spaces will advance sustainability and resilience objectives by increasing the level of permeable surfaces to over 30% and expanding habitat and biodiversity. While 138 healthy and native large trees will be removed, there will be approximately 3,000 newly planted or preserved trees in the redeveloped site, supporting an increase in tree canopy and vegetation that will improve the parkland experience and reduce the heat island effect on the site.

Water quality will be improved by increasing water circulation throughout the inner lagoons, and improvements to the water's edge will create over 6 acres of wetland and aquatic habitat.



Artist's rendering of conceptual design





Artist's rendering of conceptual design

## Approximately 2.5 km of new and improved paths

Ontario Place will benefit from improved connections to the city and waterfront.

Improvements will include: enhancements to the Martin Goodman Trail and the experience along Lake Shore Boulevard West; a new water's edge promenade along the Mainland to complement the improved Martin Goodman Trail; a continuous multi-use trail, at least 6-metre wide, tracing the outer edge of the islands; and improved last mile connections to the mobility hub at Exhibition Station.

Revitalization will create new opportunities for water-based mobility, creating potential links between the central and western waterfront for canoes, kayaks and water taxis. Improved landings and new canoe/kayak rental facilities will allow the public to be immersed in Toronto's waterfront.



## A safe and resilient shoreline for future generations

To protect the island from the effects of seasonal flooding and erosion, the majority of the water's edge will be raised beyond long-term projected flood levels and the shoreline protected with an reinforced stone-edge condition that recalls the original design intentions of Michael Hough.

These improvements will protect Ontario Place for the enjoyment of future generations.



Artist's rendering of conceptual design





Artist's rendering of conceptual design

## New leisure destinations

### 5 million annual visitors

New program partners will be embedded within the public realm and will reinforce Ontario Place as a destination for recreation, culture and entertainment.

Therme will build on the legacy of water-based play, creating a family-friendly destination for recreation and wellness.

The expanded and weather-protected Live Nation Amphitheater will bring greater numbers of renown performing artists and musicians to Toronto.

A potential partnership with Ontario Science Centre to deliver science-based programming opportunities on the Mainland and in the pods and Cinesphere, and potential outdoor-adventure programming throughout the public realm, add to the attractions and amenities offered.



# 3.3 Comprehensive Plan and Ambitions

THE AMBITIONS OF THIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED OVER TIME AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED LONG-TERM TARGETS.



## Green Space

Important New  
Public Open Spaces



## Access

Preserve A Publicly  
Accessible Waterfront



## Water

Increased  
Water Access



## Wetlands

New Aquatic  
Habitat And Wetlands



## Trees

Increased  
Canopy Coverage



## Bike Paths

New and Improved  
Multi-use Trails







**Figure 18.** Concept plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application.



An aerial photograph of Ontario Place in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, featuring the Ontario Place building, the Ontario Place Pier, and the surrounding water. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal color.

## Section 4

# Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan for the revitalization of Ontario Place provides the structuring framework for future investments in both the public realm and the program areas across the site. This section describes the structuring elements at Ontario Place: public realm, mobility, program partners, and sustainability and urban systems. These layers will collectively define the experience and sense of place for future visitors.



# Comprehensive Plan Elements

The following elements provide the structuring framework for the comprehensive plan

## 4.1 PUBLIC REALM

The unique quality of Ontario Place’s public spaces are foundational to its legacy. This section introduces the expanded and enhanced public realm network at Ontario Place, which include new open spaces, water access points, gateways and landmarks.

## 4.2 MOBILITY

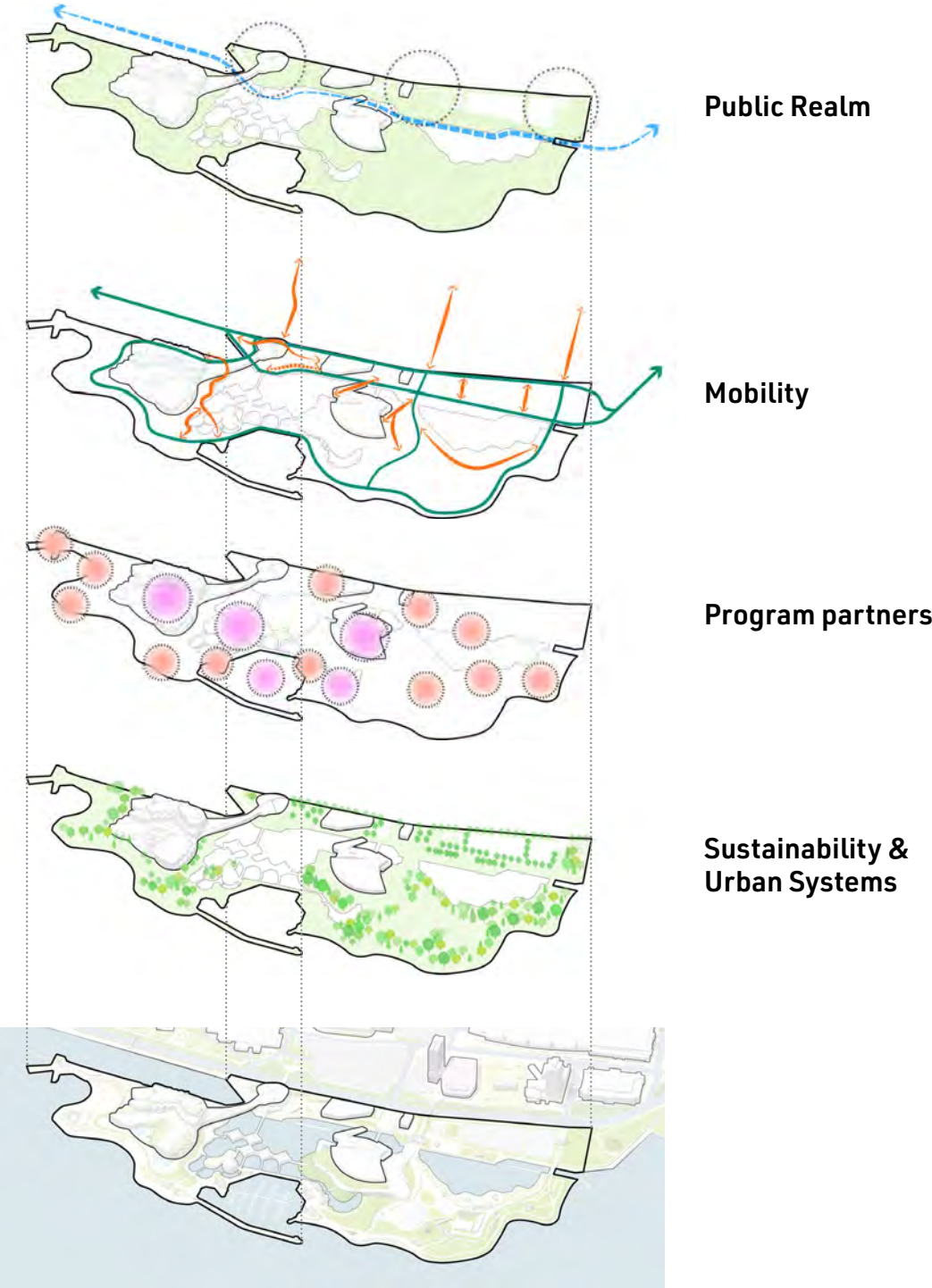
Separated by significant road infrastructure and water from the remainder of the city, Ontario Place has struggled from a mobility perspective. This section describes the investments in transportation infrastructure which rationalize the access to the site for all users, while prioritizing sustainable travel behaviour.

## 4.3 PROGRAM PARTNERS

This section provides an overview of the program partners that will enhance the experience of Ontario Place, draw visitors from across the province and animate its public spaces.

## 4.4 SUSTAINABILITY AND URBAN SYSTEMS

Sustainability and resilience influence each of the above elements. This section contextualizes the investments in public space, mobility infrastructure and development in terms of the improvements to sustainability, resilience and the environmental health of the island.



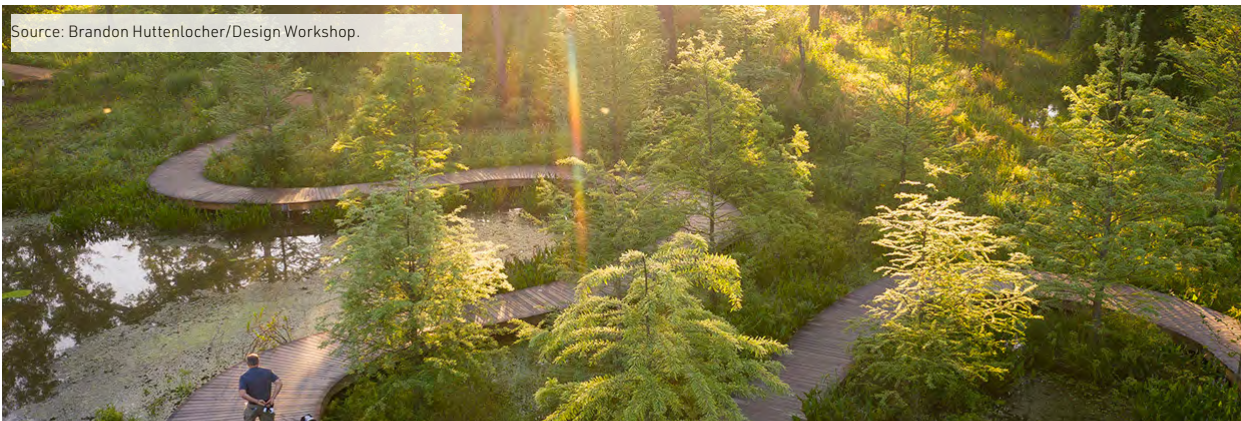




Source: Architecture AU.



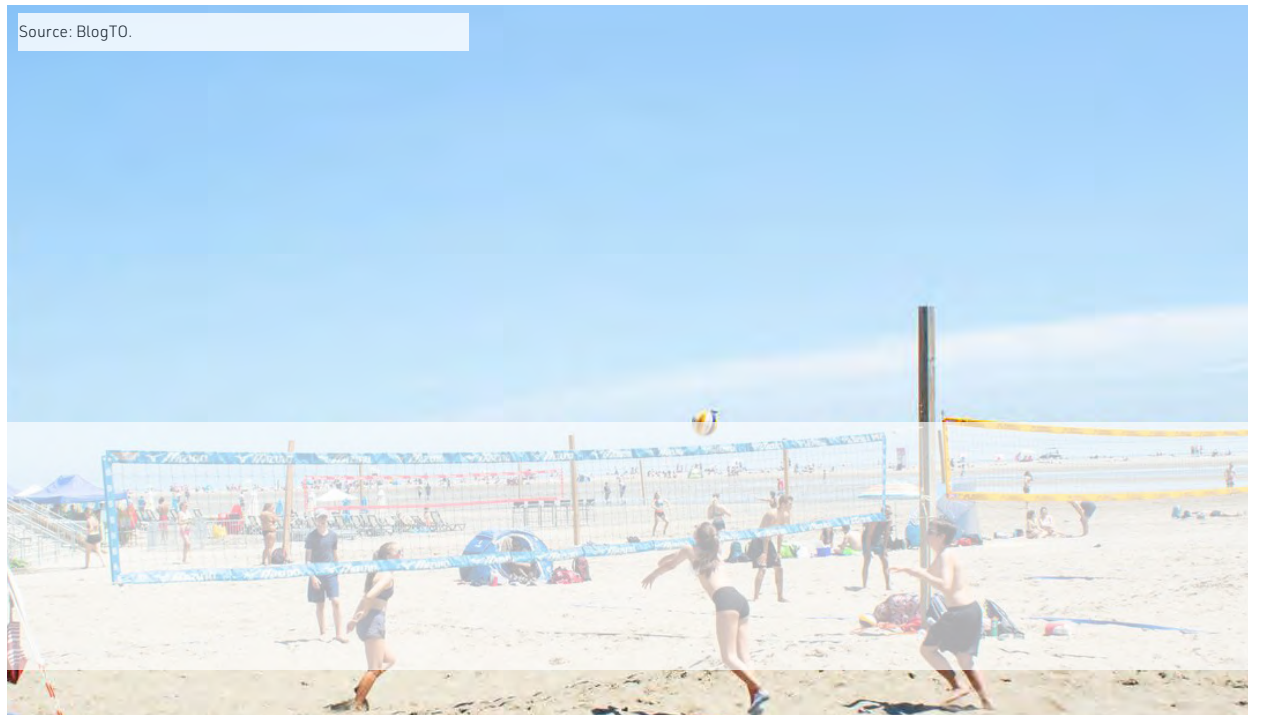
Source: Surfacedesign.



Source: Brandon Huttenlocher/Design Workshop.

# Public Realm

## Section 4.1



Source: BlogTO.



# Enhancing and Expanding the Public Realm

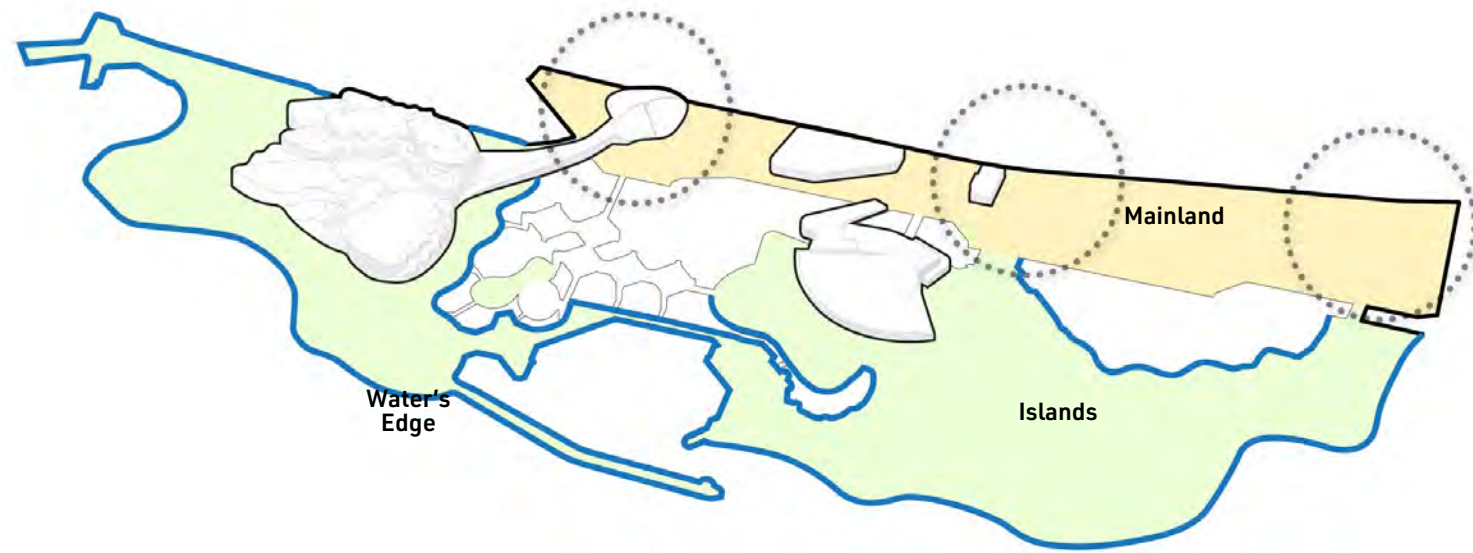
**THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WILL INCREASE THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF ONTARIO PLACE'S PUBLIC SPACES - BUILDING ON THE LEGACY OF GENEROUS AND DISTINCTIVE PUBLIC REALM AMENITIES.**

The Ontario Place public realm consists of all publicly accessible areas: parks, open spaces, passages, walkways, vantage points, gateways and landmarks. This section provides an overview of how these public realm elements are considered and is divided into three areas:

- Cultural Landscape Strategy
- The Mainland
- The Water's Edge and Islands

Collectively, these areas demonstrate how, through an integrated approach to public realm design, the revitalization of Ontario Place will greatly expand the quantity and quality of public space across the island, envisioning two-thirds of Ontario Place as publicly-accessible.

The detailed landscape design of the West Island is being advanced by StudioTLA through Therme's design process. The design of the broader public realm is being led by LANDinc and Martha Schwartz Partners (MSP) and advanced through a concurrent Environmental Assessment (EA) process. These design processes have been coordinated and considered comprehensively to create a seamless and unified experience that forms a single development application for the overall site.



**Figure 19.** Public realm at Ontario Place



# Cultural Landscape Strategy: Respecting the Legacy of Place

**ONTARIO PLACE WILL PROVIDE AN ENHANCED VISITOR EXPERIENCE WITHIN A UNIFIED LANDSCAPE: ONE THAT IS DEFINED BY THE ORIGINAL DESIGN INTENTIONS AND PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE WITH EXISTING HERITAGE ELEMENTS, AS WELL AS INDIGENOUS DESIGN PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES.**

## Protecting the Pods and Cinesphere



**Figure 20.** The pods at Ontario Place designed by Eb Zeidler. Source: ACO.

The experience of Ontario Place is synonymous with the pods and Cinesphere that rise dramatically above its central causeway and marina. Preserving these structures is essential to the sense of place, and potential science-based programming aligns with the innovative origins of Ontario Place. Revitalization will enhance the experience of these important heritage elements by protecting views of these features from key moments on the Mainland: Ontario Plaza and the Central Plaza. The improved pathways across the east and West Islands will also open up to new moments of vantage of the pods and Cinesphere can be experienced, and as well as views out to Lake Ontario and back to the downtown core.

## Introducing Design Elements that Reinterpret Original Features



**Figure 21.** The original Village Clusters. Source: Toronto Guardian.

Though clusters of the Village Boutique kiosks and buildings still exist across the site today, these structures do not meet contemporary accessibility standards, are not winter-proof, and their condition and obsolete design makes it challenging to animate or program these spaces. Many of these structure are also susceptible to flooding.

Features within the public realm - gateways, seating, open air canopies and other public furnishings will make visual references to these iconic structure - will be influenced by and preserve the quality of these iconic features. The design of these public realm elements will recall the iconic modernist and modular construction and reinforce a unified sense of place.



## Celebrating Hough's influence



**Figure 22.** Hough's water's edge, protected by rocks. Source: Ken Greenberg.

The original Ontario Place landscape and waterfront has degraded and requires remediation. But the design of the updated landscape will celebrate Hough's influence by re-introducing significant landscape features that build on his design legacy and contribute to the preservation of localized micro-climates.

Reinforced waterfront edges create opportunities to connect and engage with the water, recreate the shoreline lookouts, protect the islands mobility and open space network and support the preservation of original landscape elements. Soft landscape features, trees and topographic elements shield gathering spaces from adverse weather winds and improve programming potential. This careful integration of landscape and program design will maximize the opportunities for intentional animation across the islands.

## Creating opportunities for collaboration with Indigenous partners



**Figure 23.** Moccasin identifier at the ravine gateway to Trillium Park

Building on the success of the existing Trillium Park, the Plan will be realized through ongoing collaboration with First Nations, including Treaty Rights holders, to identify opportunities to make and hold space for Indigenous peoples at Ontario Place. Public realm improvements across Ontario Place will respond to and reflect the distinct histories, experiences, perspectives and interests of diverse First Nations groups. Native plant species will be re-introduced across the islands, prioritizing those with cultural significance to Indigenous partners and Treaty Rights holders. The design and programming of public spaces will be recognized as an opportunity to advance Indigenous priorities and increase the visibility cultural practices – including ceremonial fire.



# The Mainland: Creating a Welcoming Face

Ontario Place deserves a prominent and memorable public face, but the Mainland is currently dominated by large surface parking lots and does not present a welcoming face to the city.

## Introducing iconic gateways

The proposed Mainland improvements will prioritize three gateways as the primary means of accessing and experiencing Ontario Place along the Lake Shore Boulevard edge. These prominent points of arrival at the Eastern, Central and Western gateways will all improve connectivity with Exhibition Place the city to the north, but will each serve a unique function and feature unique character elements.

## Unlocking Mainland open spaces

The proposed below-grade parking garage consolidates vehicle parking and circulation areas and creates opportunities to dramatically expand public open space along the water's edge. The new public space offerings on the Mainland will be divided into three distinct areas. Ontario Plaza will provide a place to celebrate the future and legacy of the site. Many modes of travel will congregate at the Central Plaza, creating an iconic arrival gate and mobility hub. And the Boardwalk will offer new opportunities to engage with the water.

The remaining east surface parking lot will continue to provide required parking and a new pick-up and drop-off facility, but will be feature landscape improvements including pedestrian paths and tree planting.

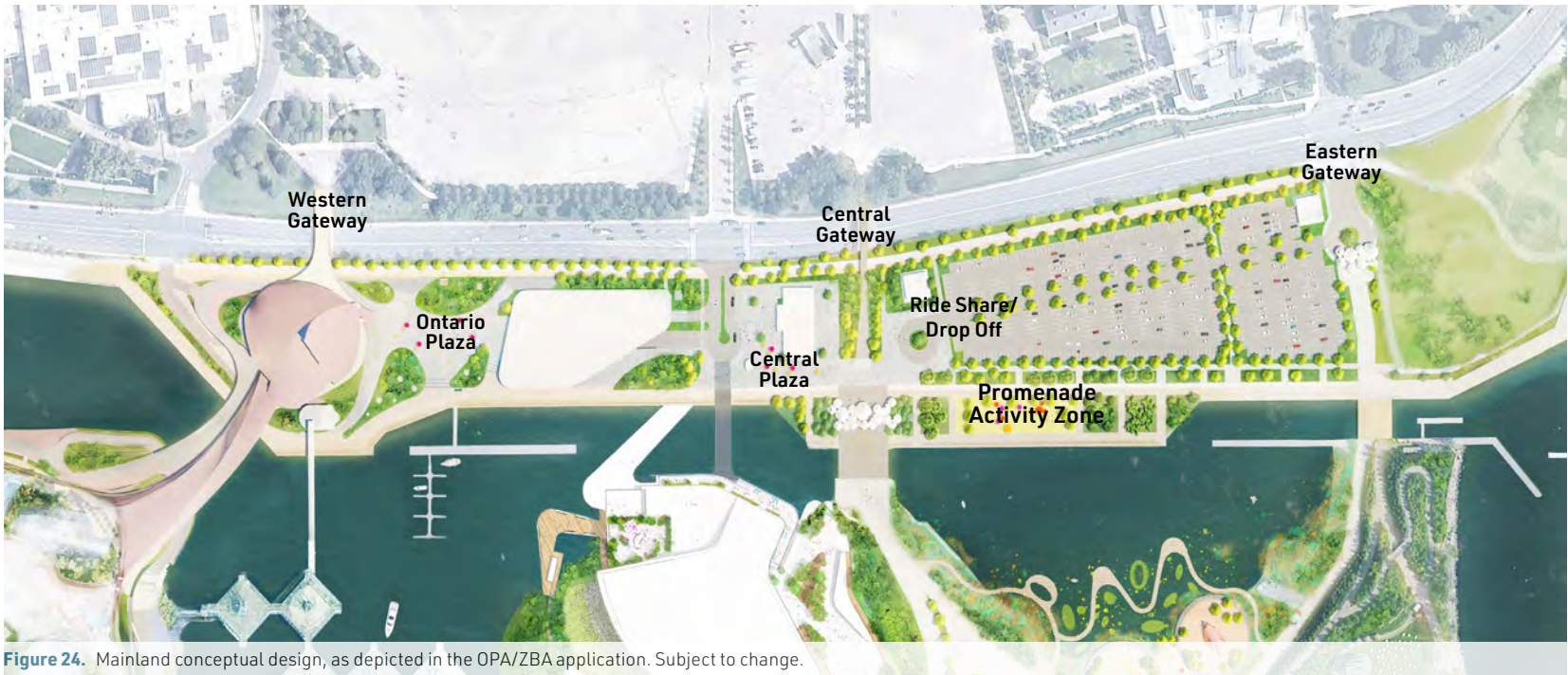


Figure 24. Mainland conceptual design, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Subject to change.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DESIGN CONCEPTS

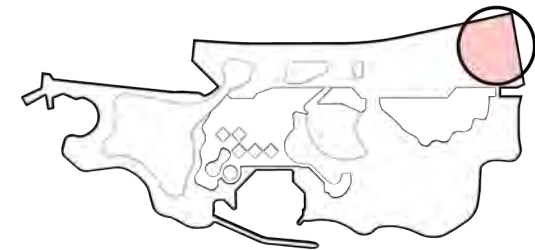
The Category G Class Environmental Assessment process includes mandated public engagement, during which alternative design concepts are evaluated to arrive at a preferred design. The visual material presented throughout this chapter reflects the design that have been shared through engagement to date. The EA process will be completed by Spring 2023, at which point the preferred public realm design future resubmissions of the OPA and ZBA materials. Despite illustrating various work-in-progress design concepts, all of the materials included are consistent with the broader ambitions for the public realm.



# Eastern Gateway



The Eastern Gateway is the point where the existing waterfront public spaces meet Trillium Park and Ontario Place. Removing the Remembrance Drive entrance and travel lanes facilitates improvements to the Eastern Gateway and will enhance open space connections by extending a green corridor from Coronation Park and Toronto's Inukshuk Park, through Trillium Park, and around the entire Ontario Place islands. In the long term, the causeway may be replaced with a raised bridge structure to improve water quality and facilitate small watercraft movement across the entire western waterfront.





# Central Gateway and Plaza

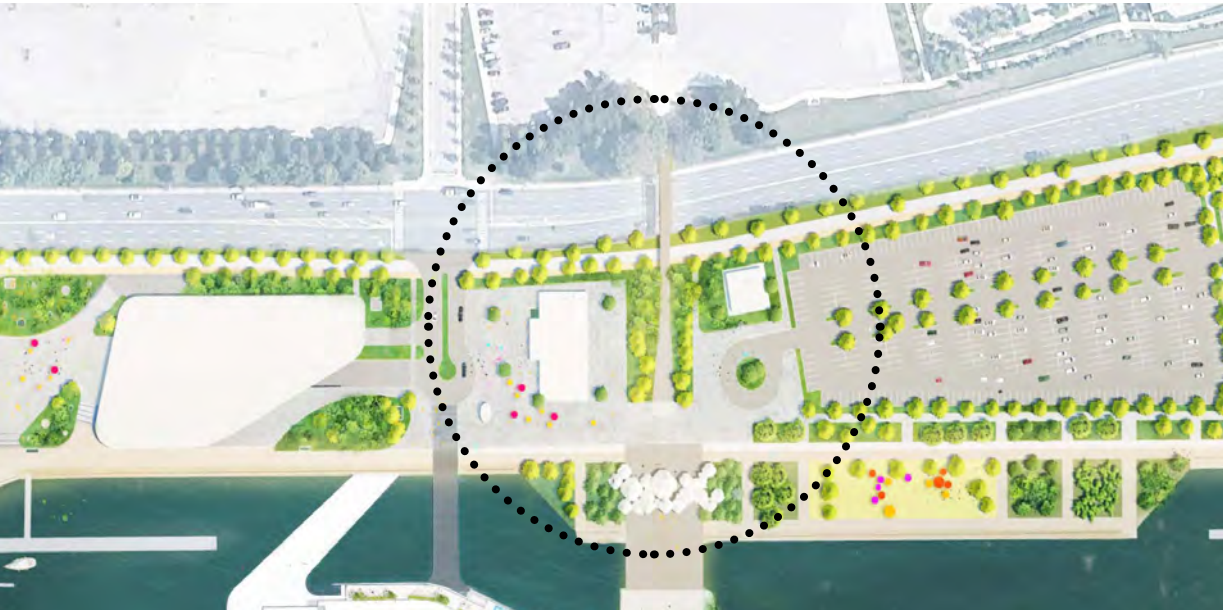


Figure 28. The Central Gateway and Plaza Concept, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

The Central Gateway and plaza will transform as a high-density pedestrian space in response to the expanded program offerings across the East Island and Mainland. The Central Plaza will function as a filter and crush space for users arriving on foot, by bike, by transit and through the dedicated pick-up and drop-off area. The gateway will become main entrance and the iconic face of Ontario Place. As the Live Nation Amphitheatre is redeveloped, landscape and bridge improvements will address capacity requirements of major events, and the entry design will be re-imagined for seamless public access.

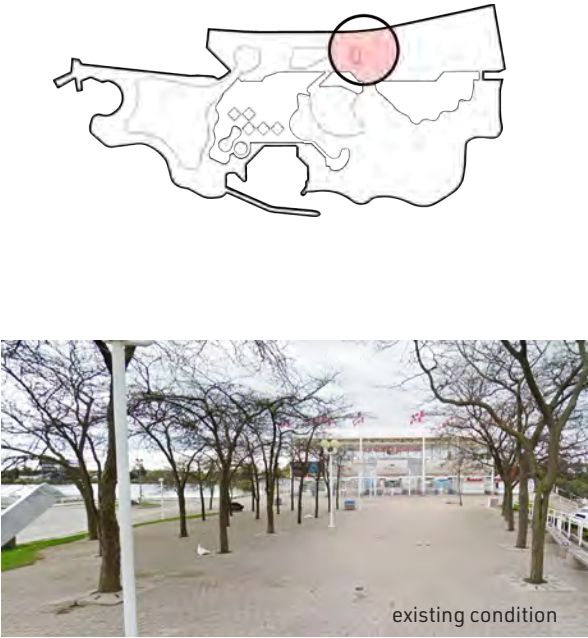


Figure 29. Artist rendering of the Central Gateway conceptual design. Subject to change.



Figure 30. Artist rendering of the Central Gateway conceptual design. Subject to change.



# Western Gateway

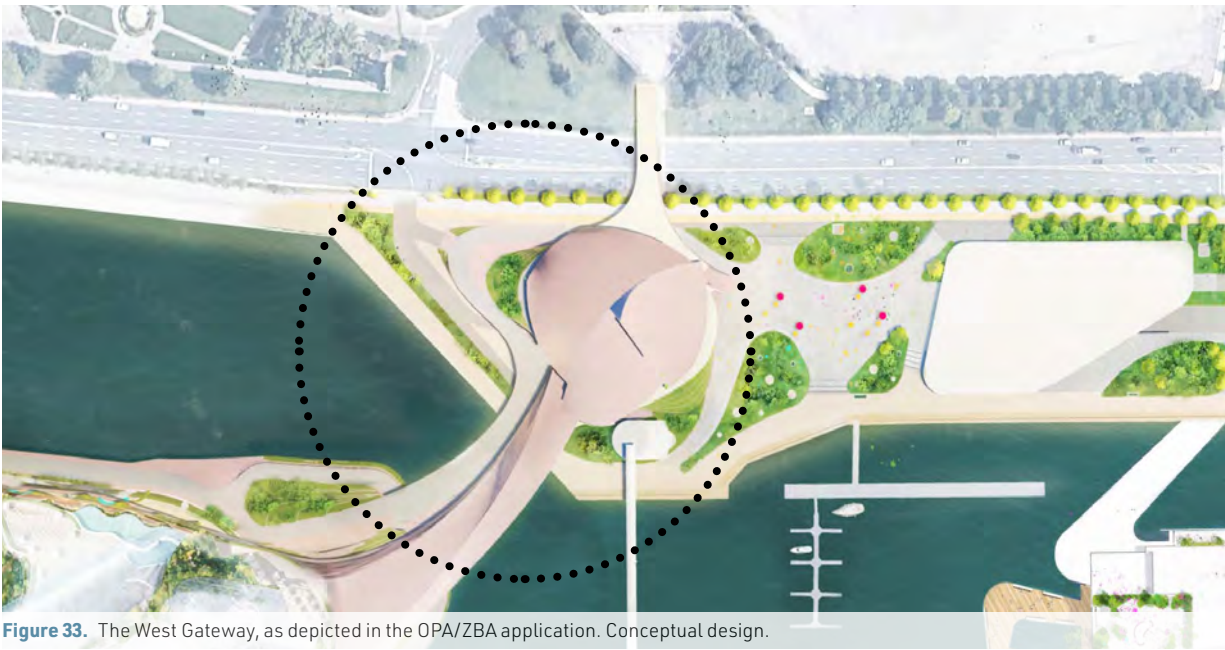


Figure 33. The West Gateway, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

The Western Gateway will be the most heavily programmed of the three gateways. Pedestrians and cyclists accessing Ontario Place from the east, north and west can seamlessly travel through the gateway to access the West Island and the Therme facility using a series of generous pedestrian walks and bridges. Defined on the Mainland by the Therme Pavilion entrance, visitors to the many new West Island public attractions can access them using the wide, landscaped West Island bridge. Visitors to the new water-based recreation and wellness attraction will enter through the Therme Pavilion and across the internal portions of the bridge.



Figure 31. Artist rendering of western gateway looking south. Conceptual design.



Figure 32. Artist rendering of western gateway looking south-west. Conceptual design.



# Ontario Plaza



Figure 34. Ontario Plaza, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

Framed by the Therme Pavilion on the west and the science entrance pavilion to the east, the plaza will be the centre piece of the Mainland public places. Ontario Plaza will add to the sense of arrival and become a large space for art, science and gathering. Low vegetation and high canopy trees will protect and frame views to the pods and Cinesphere, and will be integrated with large hardscape areas to accommodate large crowds and create an iconic sense of place.

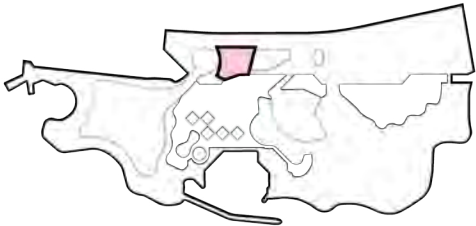


Figure 35. Artist rendering of Ontario Plaza conceptual design. Subject to change.



Figure 36. Artist rendering of Ontario Plaza conceptual design. Subject to change.



# The Boardwalk



Figure 37. Boardwalk Concept A, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

The Boardwalk will bring new life to the Mainland waterfront. The OPA/ ZBA application considers the potential for increased recreation and passive program elements, including a sandlot area, which builds on the success of other downtown waterfront amenities like Sugar Beach. Alternatively, the Boardwalk may feature significant landscaped elements for a cal, nature-based experience, including a sunken wetland bisected by an east-west promenade. Both concepts will increase the quantum of green space along the Mainland, contributing to permeable planting areas and increased canopy coverage across Ontario Place.

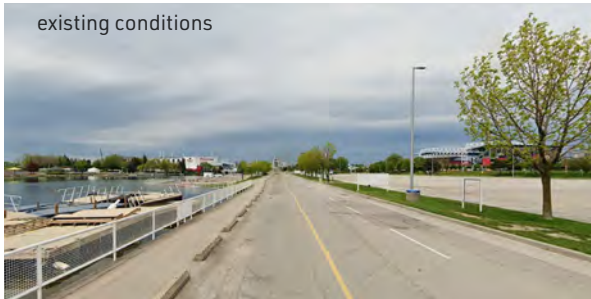
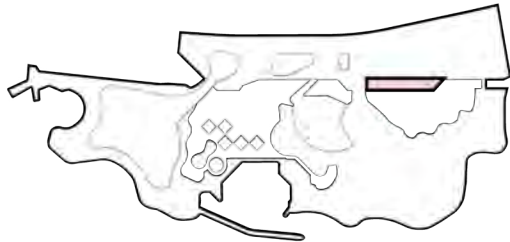


Figure 38. Precedent of pedestrian promenade with recreational uses, similar to EA Concept A. Source: Sasaki.



Figure 39. Precedent of sunken wetland-like feature along an animated waterfront, similar to EA Concept B. Source: Stantec.



# The Water's Edge and Islands: Surrounding the islands in public realm

CROSSING THE BRIDGES FROM THE MAINLAND, A VARIETY OF NEW OPEN SPACES WILL BE UNLOCKED ON THE EAST AND WEST ISLAND TO ENHANCE THE WATER'S EDGE EXPERIENCE.

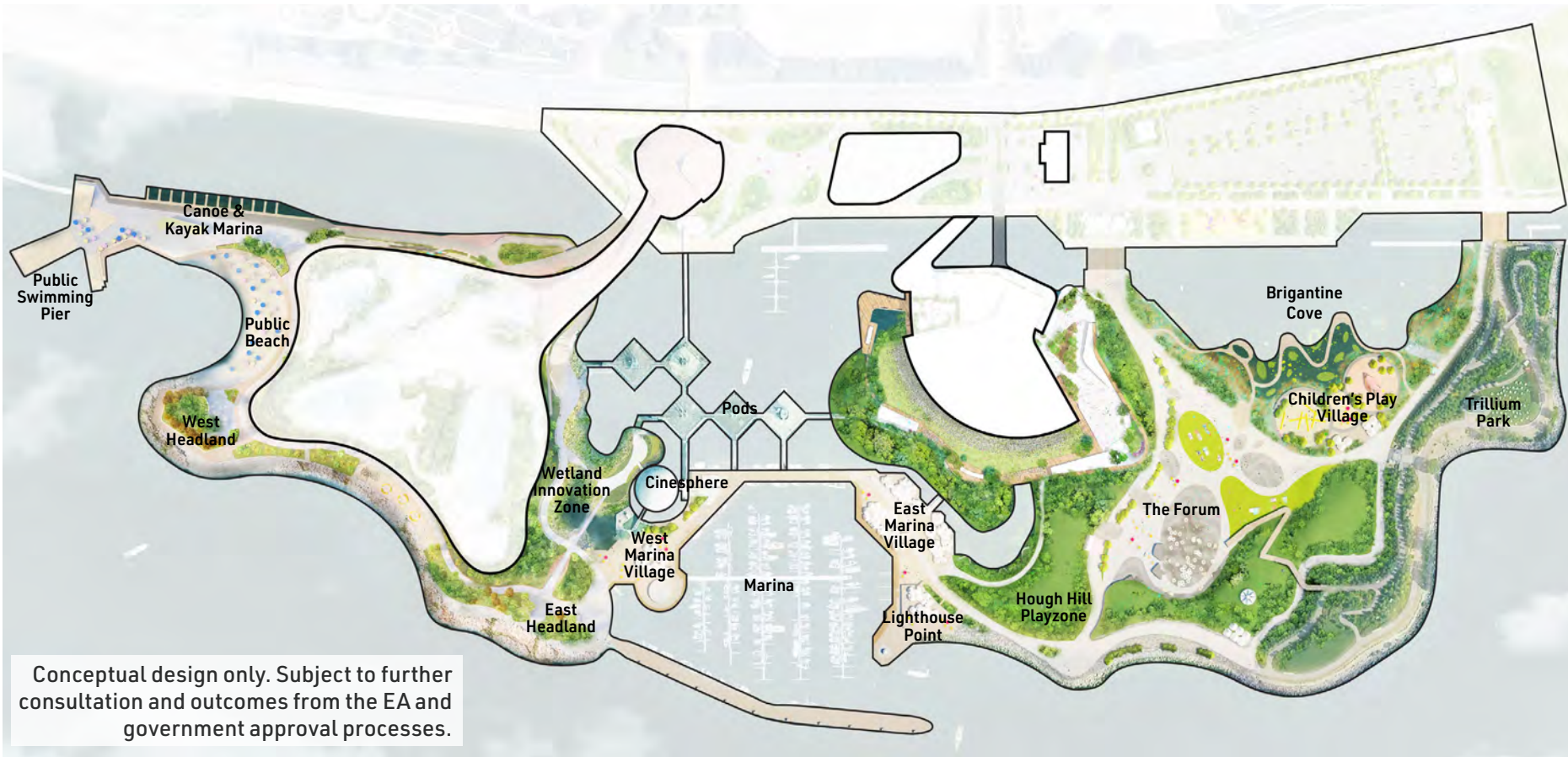


Figure 40. East and West Islands conceptual design, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application.

The islands of Ontario Place offer a 360-degree network of public open spaces and linked destinations with continuous waterfront access. This network of open spaces is further divided into a series of distinctive public spaces.

Beginning at Brigantine Cove, following the waterfront from east to west, visitors will weave through Trillium Park and the park extension, passing the Forum, to reach the Marina, including Lighthouse Point and the Marina Villages. Crossing the central water, over the improved causeway bridge, to reach the West Island, visitors may head north along the newly created Wetland Innovation Zone, or follow the water around the enhanced West Island public realm, which includes the East Headland, West Headland, West Island Beach and Public Swimming Pier.



# Brigantine Cove and the Children's Play Village



Figure 41. Brigantine Cove and the Children's Village Concept B, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

The water's edge at Brigantine Cove will be naturalized, creating a wetland condition that will function as an aquatic habitat. New habitat and wetland along this edge will improve the water quality and biodiversity. The quality of the space will have the added benefit of creating an immersive natural experience for East Island visitors. The original Children's Village will be re-imagined as a large play space set within a naturalized landscape, creating a destination for families. A collection of free and accessible spaces will allow people of all ages to engage with the ecology of the site and province.

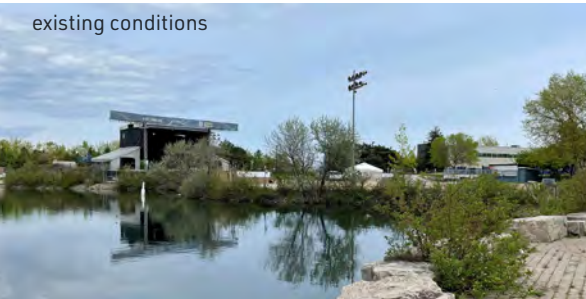


Figure 42. Artist rendering of the new Children's Play Village (EA Concept A) conceptual design. Subject to change.



Figure 43. Artist rendering of Brigantine Cove (EA Concept B) conceptual design. Subject to change.



# The Forum



Figure 44. The Forum Concept A, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.

The new Forum will replace the existing East Island Commons: a flexible programmed space embedded within a naturalized setting. Diverse facilities and amenities, such as basketball courts, a winter ice trail and furnished gathering areas, can support year-round use. The space can also accommodate large-scale temporary and seasonal event programming. Potential planting and fountain features can have positive environmental benefits by managing stormwater and reducing urban heat island effects.

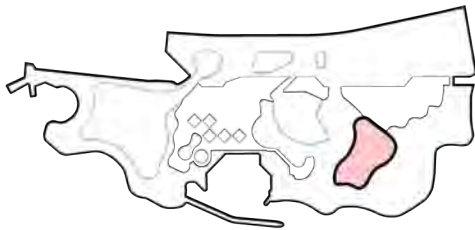


Figure 45. Artist rendering of The Forum (EA Concept A) conceptual design. Subject to change.



Figure 46. Artist renderings of The Forum (EA Concept A) conceptual design. Subject to change.



# Trillium Park Link and South Shoreline



Figure 47. Trillium Park Link as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application. Conceptual design.



Figure 48. Artist rendering of Trillium Park Bridge Connection conceptual design. Subject to change.

Improvements at Ontario Place will draw inspiration from and extend the design treatment of the award-winning Trillium Park. Intended as an escape into and gateway to Ontario’s diverse landscapes, the new green spaces will prioritize native plant species to support diverse habitats, and will offer opportunities for Indigenous place-keeping. Improvements may feature a raised bridge across the ravine-like grove and an updated lookout point on the southern edge of the East Island - with terraced armoured-rocks that both step out into the water, and provide protection from erosion and flooding.

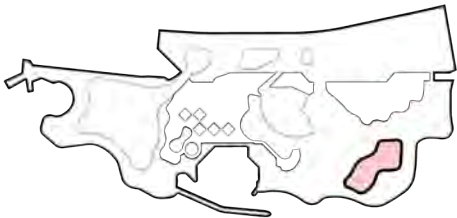


Figure 49. Artist rendering of Trillium Park Bridge Connection conceptual design. Subject to change.



# Outer Headlands



Figure 50. The Outer Headlands conceptual design, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application.

The outer headlands, located on the southern edges of the West Island, will be designed as unique gathering spaces, with shelters and seating for improved community use. These accessible open spaces will offer four-season programming opportunities, will create opportunities for Indigenous placekeeping and gathering, and will provide opportunities to connect directly with the water. As elsewhere along the water’s edge, these headland features protect against flooding and erosion and the new submerged reef will create new wetland habitat and provide ecological benefits.

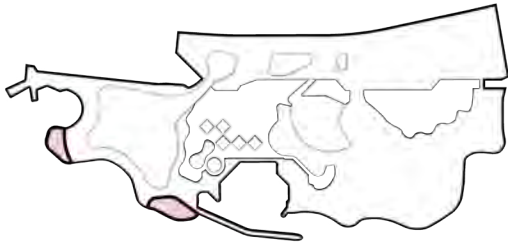


Figure 51. Artist rendering of West Headland conceptual design.



Figure 52. Artist rendering of West Headland conceptual design.



# West Island Beach and Public Swimming Pier



Figure 53. The West Island beach and pier conceptual design, as depicted in the OPA/ZBA application.

The legacy of swimming will continue at Ontario Place with a new publicly-accessible beach and public swimming pier on the West Island. The approximately 3,500 square metre beach will expand on the existing, informal use and be capable of accommodating many visitors. The beach and pier will also feature canoe and kayak rentals, food and beverage offerings, and public bathrooms and change rooms to support long days at the beach.

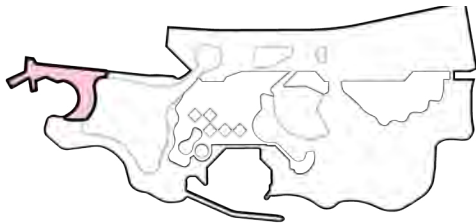
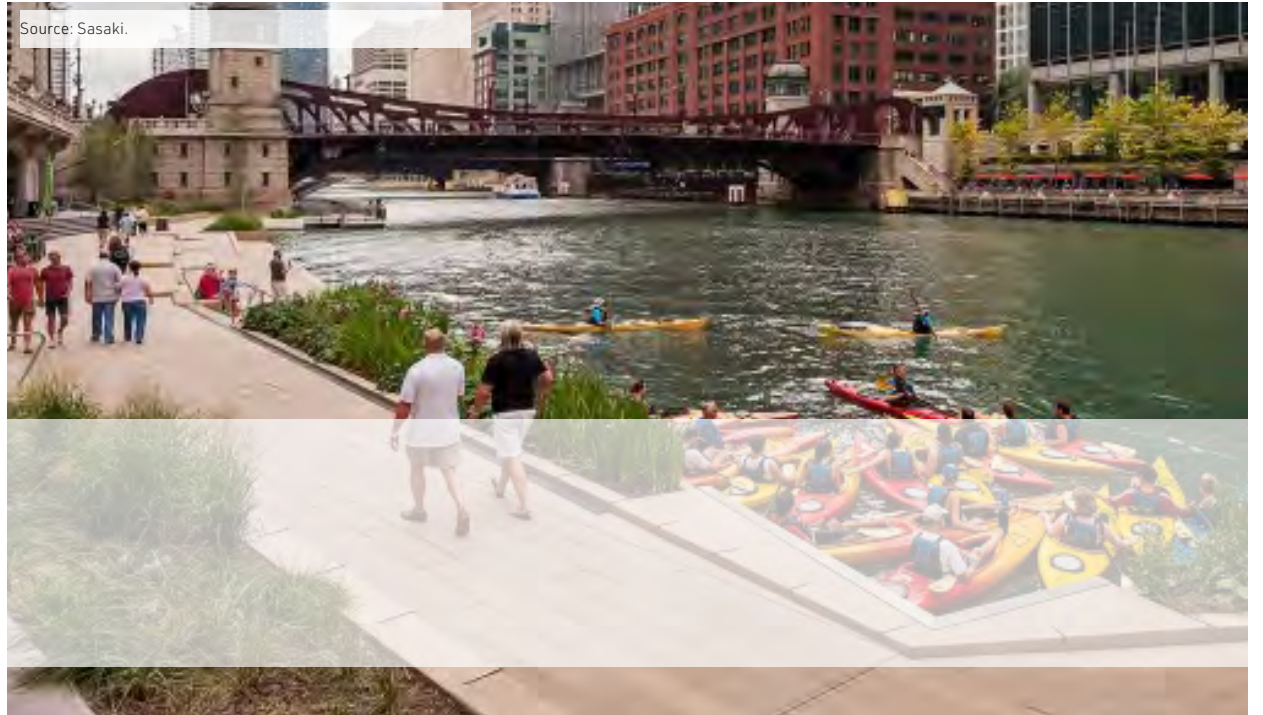


Figure 54. Artist rendering of western island beach conceptual design, looking south.



Figure 55. Artist rendering of pier off the West Island conceptual design, looking east.





# Mobility

## Section 4.2



# Improving Access to Ontario Place

**BY CONSOLIDATING VEHICLES BELOW-GRADE, PRIORITIZING THE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST EXPERIENCE, AND BETTER CONNECTING TO TRANSIT, THE MOBILITY STRATEGY SUPPORTS FUTURE ACCESS AND PLANNED VISITATION NUMBERS WHILE POSITIVELY CONTRIBUTING TO THE PUBLIC REALM EXPERIENCE.**

An island separated from the broader city by major transportation infrastructure, Ontario Place is somewhat detached from broader mobility networks.

This section describes the range of mobility infrastructure and placemaking improvements proposed across Ontario Place, which will support the growing numbers of anticipated visitors. These same improvements will also maximize public realm animation.

The section is divided into four topic-based subsections:

- Active Mobility
- Water Access
- Vehicular Movement
- Last Mile Connections

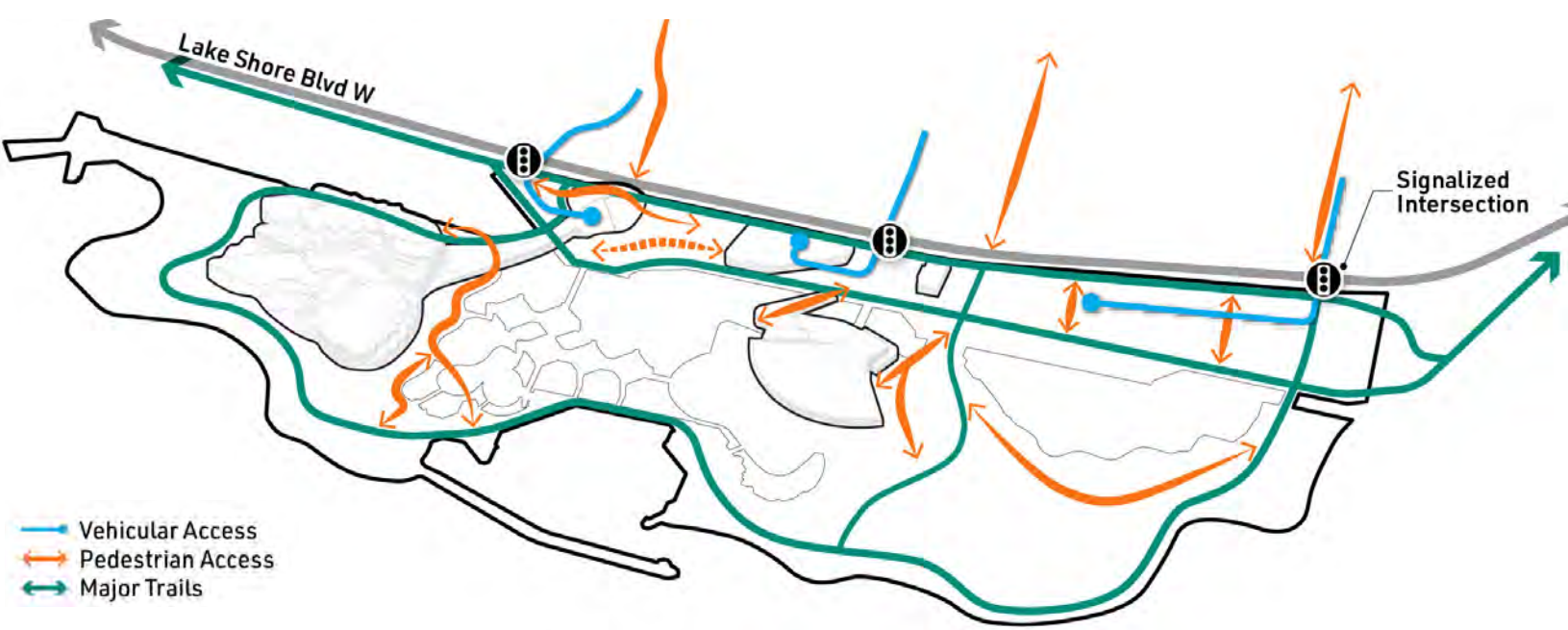


Figure 56. Elements of the mobility strategy at Ontario Place.



# Active Mobility: Formalizing Connections to the Waterfront Network

**THE PROPOSED REVITALIZATION OF ONTARIO PLACE WILL INCLUDE 2.5 KILOMETRES OF NEW AND UPGRADED ACTIVE MULTI-USE TRAILS THAT PROVIDE CONTINUOUS, ACCESSIBLE AND CONVENIENT PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE FULL RANGE OF PROGRAMS AND AMENITIES ACROSS THE MAINLAND AND ISLANDS**

The proposed revitalization of Ontario Place will be paired with improvements to the active mobility networks across the islands and the Mainland. In total, the comprehensive plan considers the potential for 2.5 kilometres of new and upgraded active mobility pathways and trails.

These new and improved pathways will provide visitors accessible and convenient access to each of the program areas and gathering places, and will be designed to minimize conflicts with other road users, and to feed into each of the island’s gateways. This network will also be integrated within the larger waterfront mobility network, anchored by the existing Martin Goodman Trail.

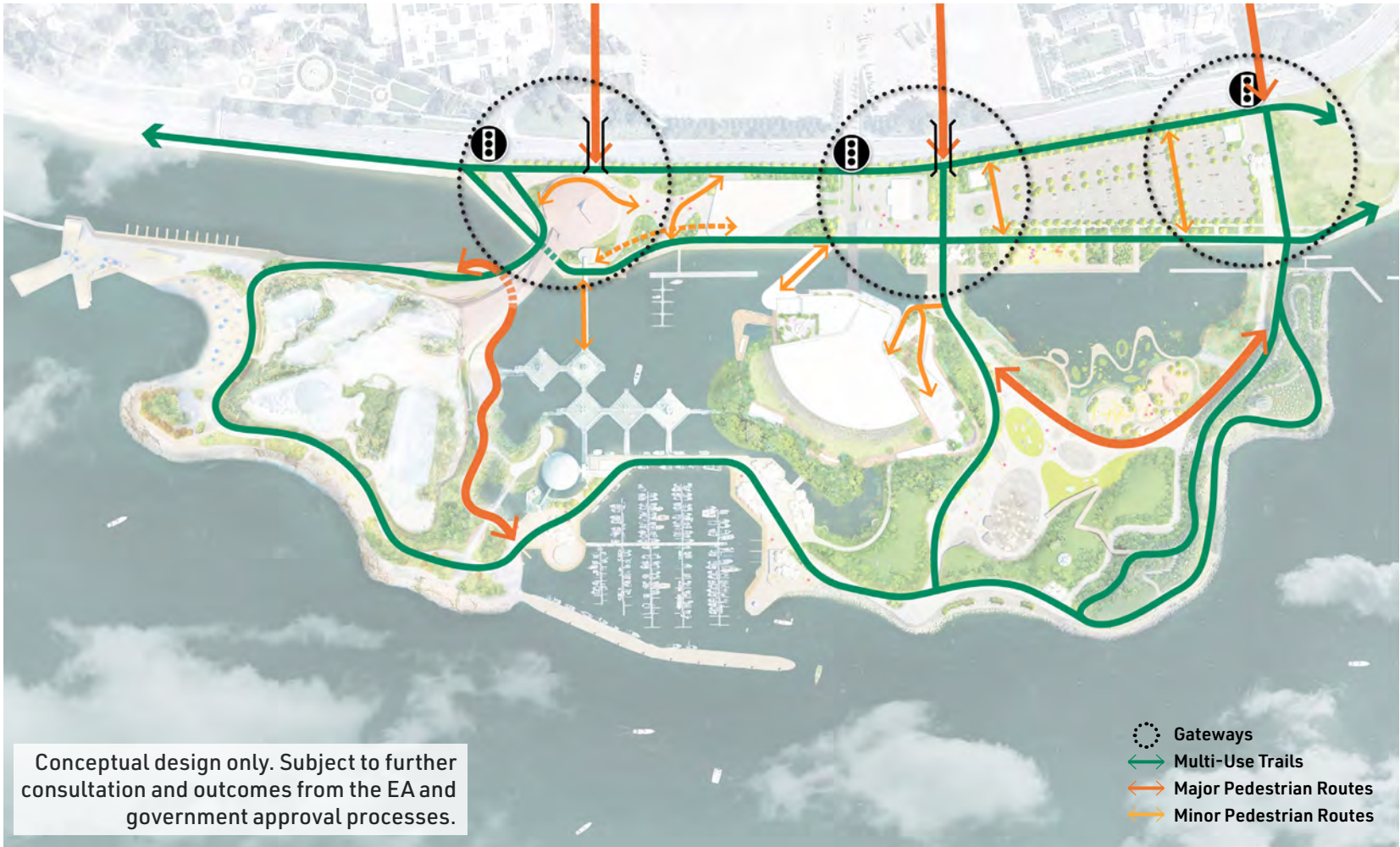


Figure 57. Ontario Place active mobility network



# Improving the Mainland Mobility Experience

The existing Mainland interface will be re-imagined to provide a more pleasant experience for all road users, and a safer, more comfortable and welcoming pedestrian and cyclist environment.

## Improving the Martin Goodman Trail

The existing 4.5 metre Martin Goodman Trail will be expanded to approximately 7 metres plus additional landscape buffers, which will support dedicated two-way bicycle activity and an adjacent pedestrian promenade. The enhanced bike facilities - including updated intersection design to improve visibility and prioritize safety of cyclists - will ensure the safety of all road users while allowing the flow of fast-moving cyclists across the site.

Consistent tree planting and low-scale plantings along the both sides of the trail will further enhance the pedestrian and cyclist experience and soften Lake Shore Boulevard edges. A series of north-south connections will draw users into Ontario Place, linking to programed attractions, new open spaces and internal trails.

## Introducing a slower Mainland alternative

A new waterfront boardwalk will follow the water's edge along the entire Mainland, creating an alternative to the Martin Goodman Trail. The shared pathway will permit cycling traffic, but the careful use of planters, animation and retail kiosks, seating and other well-placed interruptions will dictate slower travel speeds. Whereas the Martin Goodman Trail will continue to function as a fast-paced bicycle commuter route, the boardwalk will prioritize slower movement and integration with new open spaces..

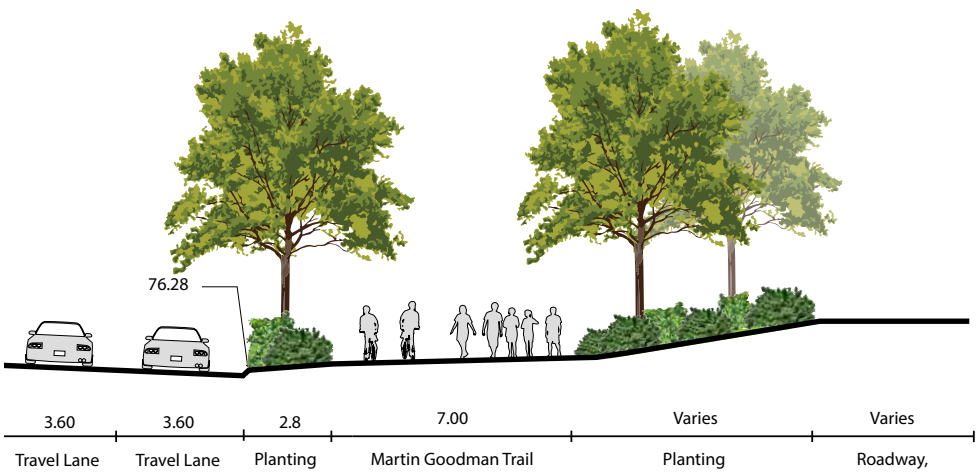


Figure 58. Conceptual rendering of improved Martin Goodman Trail along Lakeshore Boulevard at Ontario Place.



Figure 59. Artist rendering of shared path along the Mainland conceptual design. Subject to change.



# Improving the path network across the islands

The trails across Ontario Place today offer visitors a unique, intimate level of lake-access. But year-round accessibility is compromised by variable water levels, harsh wind conditions, AODA-compliance issues and inconsistent design standards.

The Plan proposes upgrades to the informal pathways that exist today - to ensure the safety of the islands and its diverse visitors. The 6-metre wide extension of the William G. Davis Trail will follow the exterior water's edge and serve as the primary route around the islands. This extension will be supplemented by a series of finer-grain pedestrians paths that provide additional north-south connectivity and provide access to gathering and programmable spaces located along the central lagoons.

While safe and accessible to all, this upgraded network will retain the natural and meandering character - weaving between program areas and gathering spaces, opening up to views of the city skyline and island assets, following the water's edge and imbuing a sense exploration and discovery.



**Figure 60.** Artist's rendering of the proposed improvements to the West Island pathway at the western gateway. Conceptual design.



**Figure 61.** Artist's rendering of the proposed improvements to the West Island pathway along the southern edge. Conceptual design.



# Water access

Ontario Place’s unique character of islands and water-based structures has always encouraged water-based activities. The Plan proposes to increase water access for all types of users while reinvesting in existing facilities such as the Marina.

The existing western and central bridge crossings from the Mainland have a vertical clearance that accommodates small-craft access throughout Ontario Place. The eastern causeway is proposed to be replaced with a raised bridge in the long-term to create continuous water access across Ontario Place, facilitating near-shore access from the Central Waterfront through to the Western Waterfront. This will also allow water taxis to travel from the Downtown to Ontario Place, supported by potential water taxi stops along the Mainland.

The eastern canoe and kayak launch will be maintained, and a new canoe and kayak rentals facility will be introduced on the west pier. The existing Marina will be maintained, but will see reinvestment to address rising lake levels and to modernize the marina building.

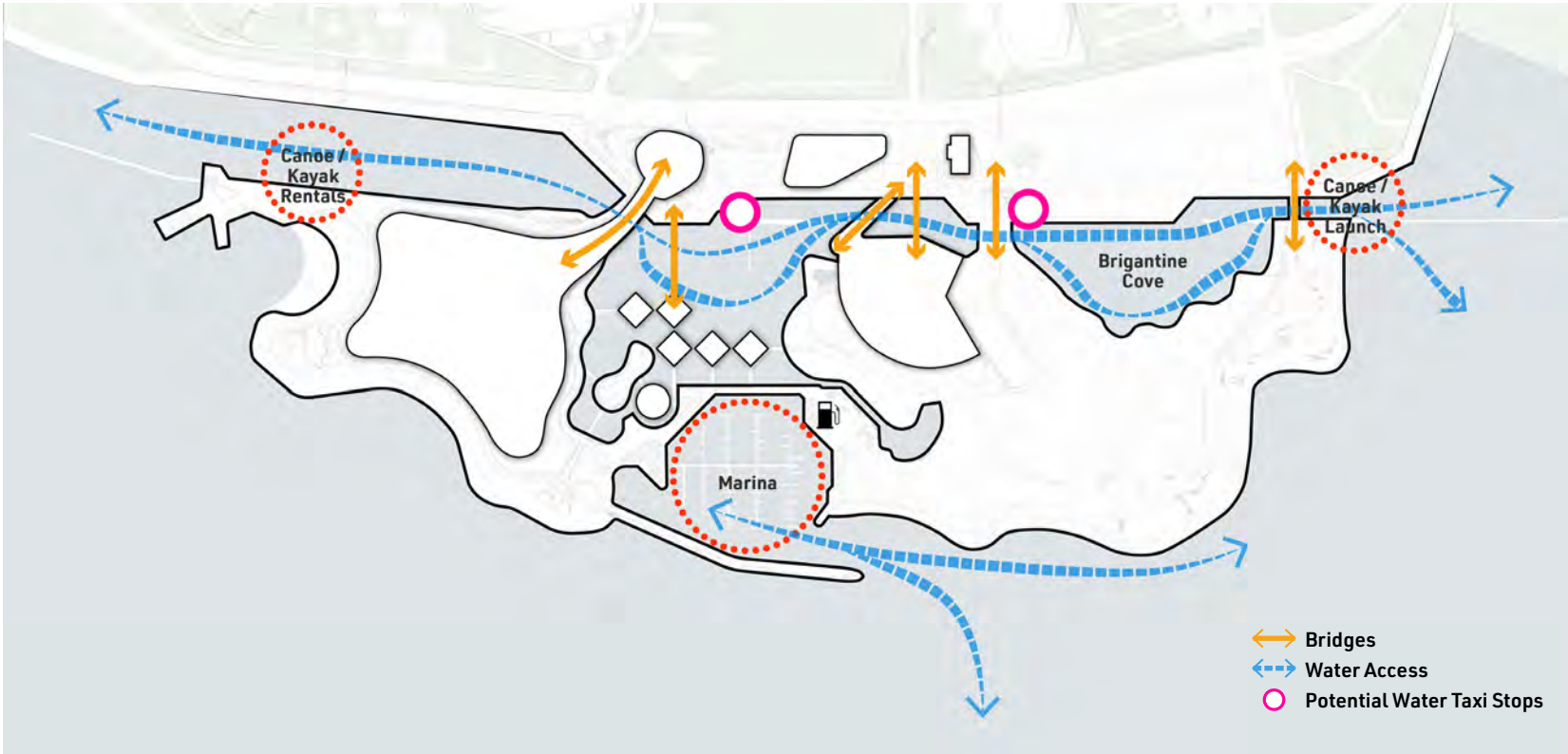


Figure 62. Water Access Strategy



# Motorized Vehicle Strategy: Consolidating Vehicular Movement

Despite a rich history of attractions and open spaces, much of Ontario Place has been dedicated to moving and parking vehicles. Opportunities for the conversion of parking areas to open spaces that began with Trillium Park are present across the Mainland. Space for parking, loading, and pick-up/drop-off activities will be scaled back and, where possible, located below-grade.

**Western Entry (Ontario Drive):** The intersection will be upgraded to support full pedestrian and bicycle movement and provides access to the potential below-grade parking structure through a ramp integrated into the Therme Pavilion. This ramp will also provide truck and bus access to the loading areas for Therme and the science entrance pavilion and the shared bus-drop off area. A pick-up/drop-off facility is integrated into the lower levels of the Therme pavilion building.

**Central Entry (Remembrance Drive):** This intersection extends Remembrance Drive as a short street into the Mainland, providing access to into the proposed below-grade parking structure integrated within the science entry pavilion building. Controlled loading access for Live Nation extends south from the terminus of Remembrance Drive, bridging the inner water to connect into the proposed Amphitheatre.

**Eastern Entry (Ontario Place Boulevard):** This intersection provides access to the retained surface parking lot, which will be redesigned to allow for tree planting and landscape improvements and improved pedestrian walkways. A new dedicated pick-up/drop-off facility at the west end adjacent to the Central Gateway will accommodate high volumes of activity associated with major events at the Live Nation Amphitheatre. Ontario Place Boulevard will be reduced in size, allowing vehicular space to be converted to pedestrian and bicycle space within the East Gateway open space area.

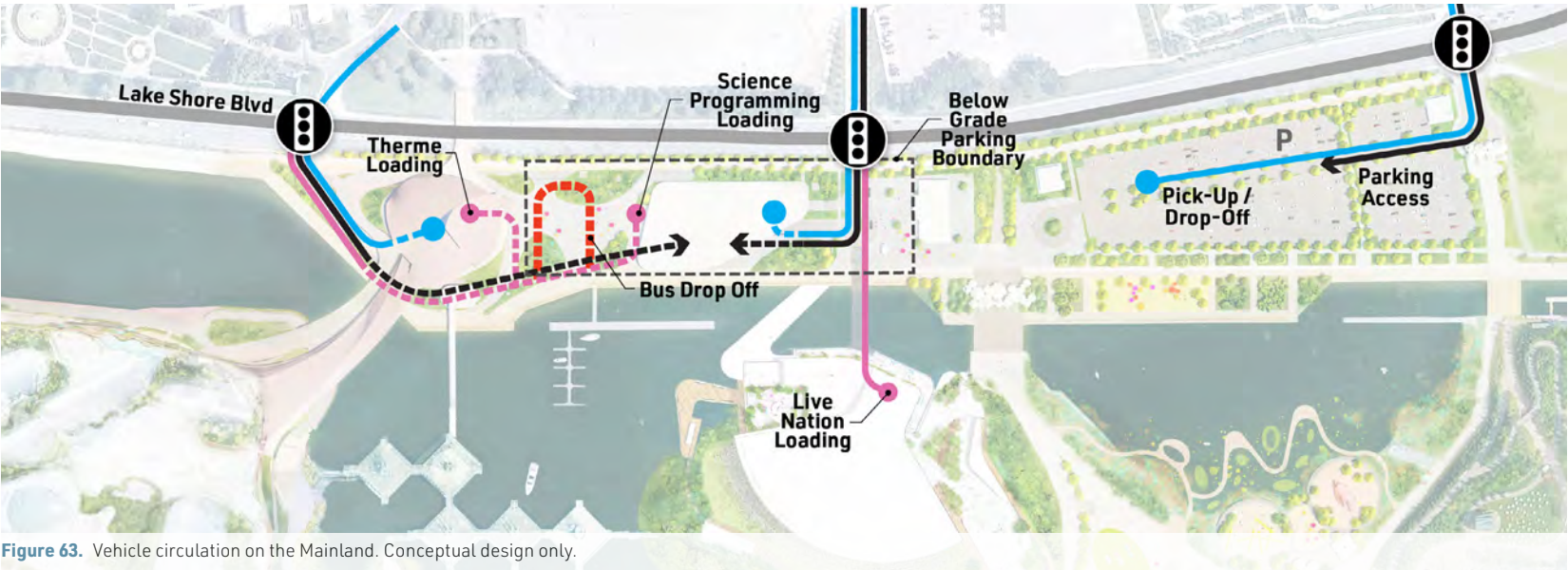


Figure 63. Vehicle circulation on the Mainland. Conceptual design only.



# Last Mile Connections: Integrating Ontario Place and Exhibition Place

Higher-order transit and frequent regional rail connections are coming to Exhibition Place. To best utilize planned transit investments for Ontario Place, convenient, comfortable and redundant connections between Ontario Place and Exhibition Place are required.

## Creating clear pedestrian and cyclist linkages

With care and consideration, the 550 m distance between the Mainland at Ontario Place and Exhibition Station can be traversed by both pedestrians and cyclists. However, the current prioritization of vehicles across Exhibition Place compromises their safety and comfort. North-south pedestrian and public realm connections within the precinct - with treatments that mirror the quality, character and care for vulnerable road users safety and comfort contemplated across Ontario Place - will ensure investments contemplated at Ontario Place generate maximum economic benefits.

## Protecting for future transit connections

The restructuring of the Mainland protects for a mobility hub and potential last-mile transit connection between the Mainland's Central Plaza and Exhibition Station. The form or mode that this last-mile connection takes has not been finalized: a number of concepts are being considered, including frequent shuttle services or a gondola. As such, the mobility hub has been oriented to be flexible to a variety of potential modes.

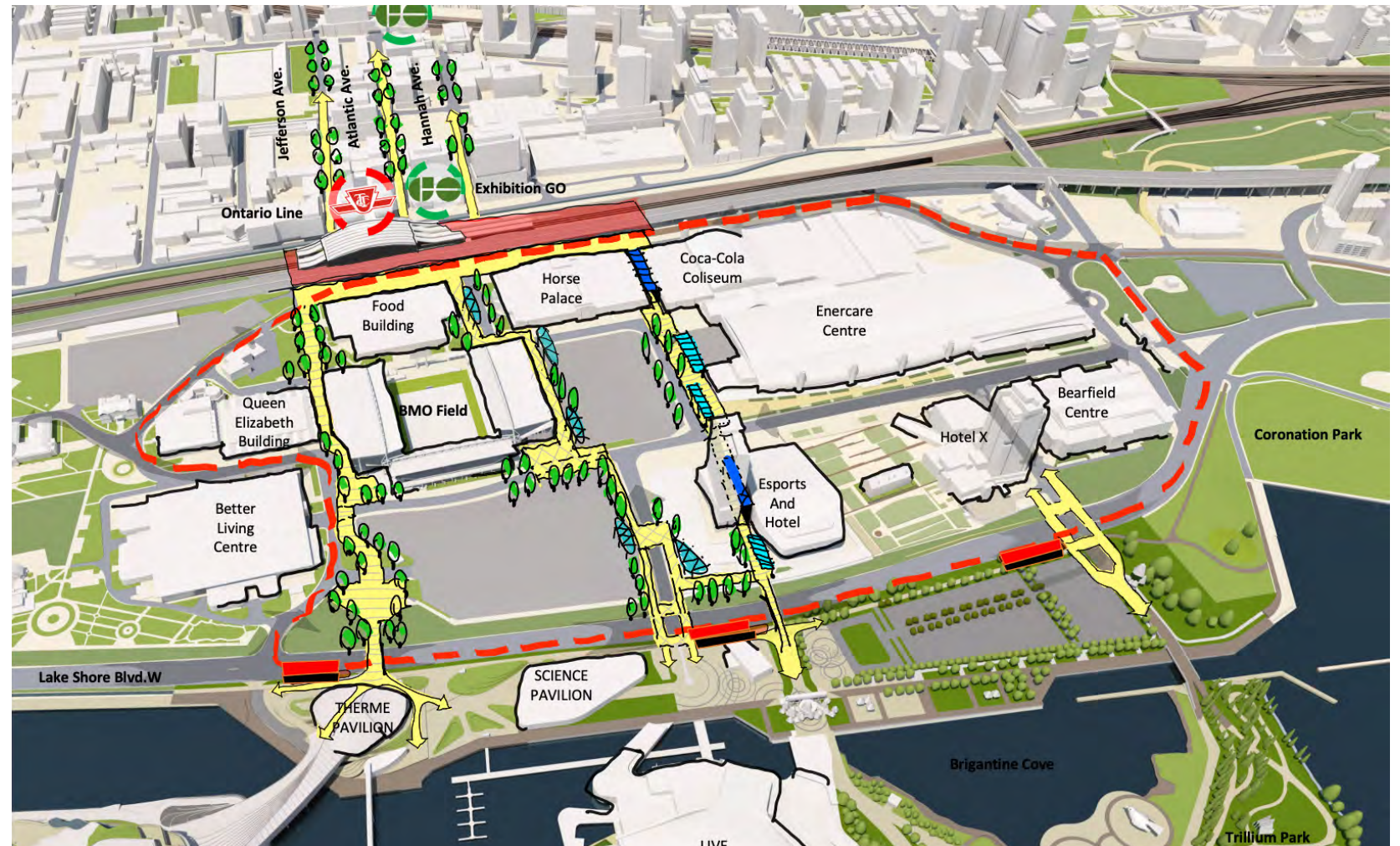


Figure 64. Potential public realm and last-mile connectivity improvements to support connectivity between Ontario Place and Exhibition Place.

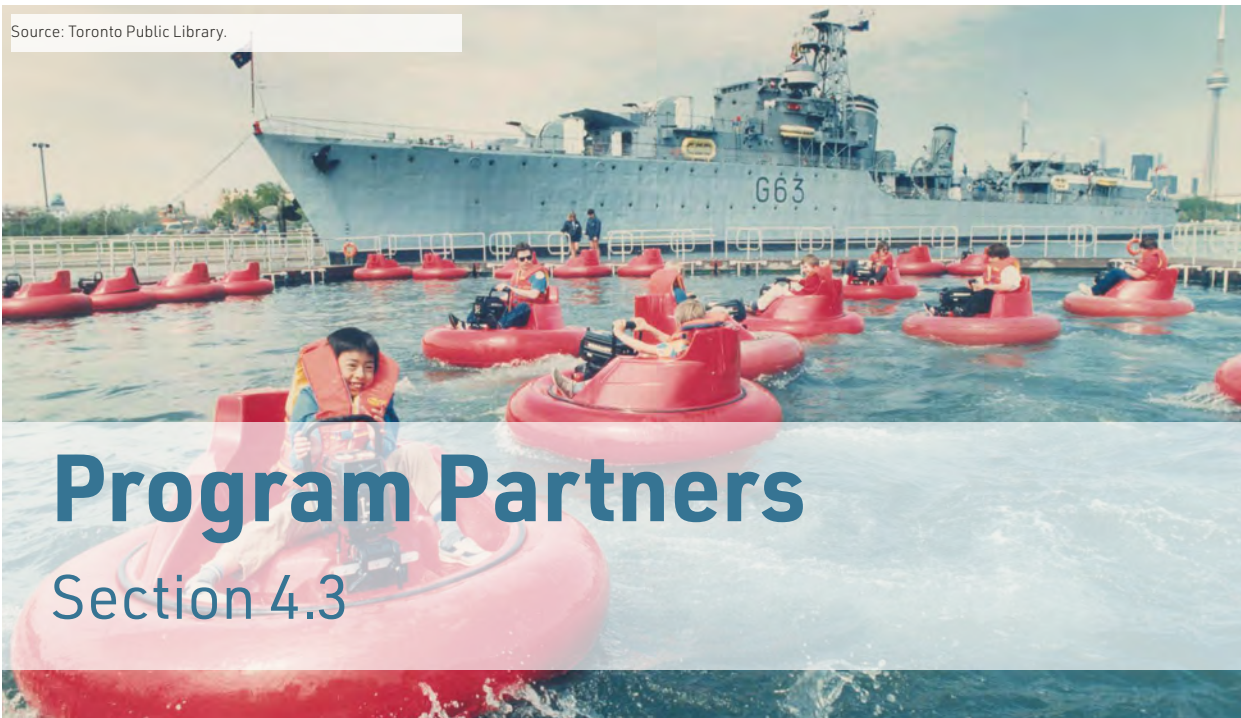




Source: Toronto Public Library.



Source: Toronto Public Library.



Source: Toronto Public Library.



Source: Toronto Public Library.

# Program Partners

## Section 4.3



# Animating Public Space 24/7/365 through Creative Partnerships

**TO SUPPORT THE REVITALIZATION OF ITS PUBLIC SPACE AND DRAW VISITORS FROM ACROSS THE PROVINCE, ONTARIO PLACE REQUIRES THE SUPPORT OF PUBLIC PARTNERS. REVITALIZATION INTRODUCES NEW AND IMPROVED USES THAT WILL ENSURE ECONOMIC VIABILITY OF THE ASSET FOR YEARS TO COME.**

Ontario Place is a unique public space. Whereas other sites are integrated with residential and commercial uses – bustling with residents and workers throughout the day – these isolated islands are segregated from the typical generators of public life by water and distance. Even with upcoming transit investments and greater integration with Exhibition Place, for Ontario Place to welcome all Ontarians, and for its generous public spaces to realize their full potential, compelling attractions are required.

Ontario Place will be enhanced by its program partnerships. This section provides an overview of the program partners that anchor the revitalization of Ontario Place:

- Therme
- Live Nation Entertainment
- Potential Science Programming
- Potential Adventure Programming
- The Marina

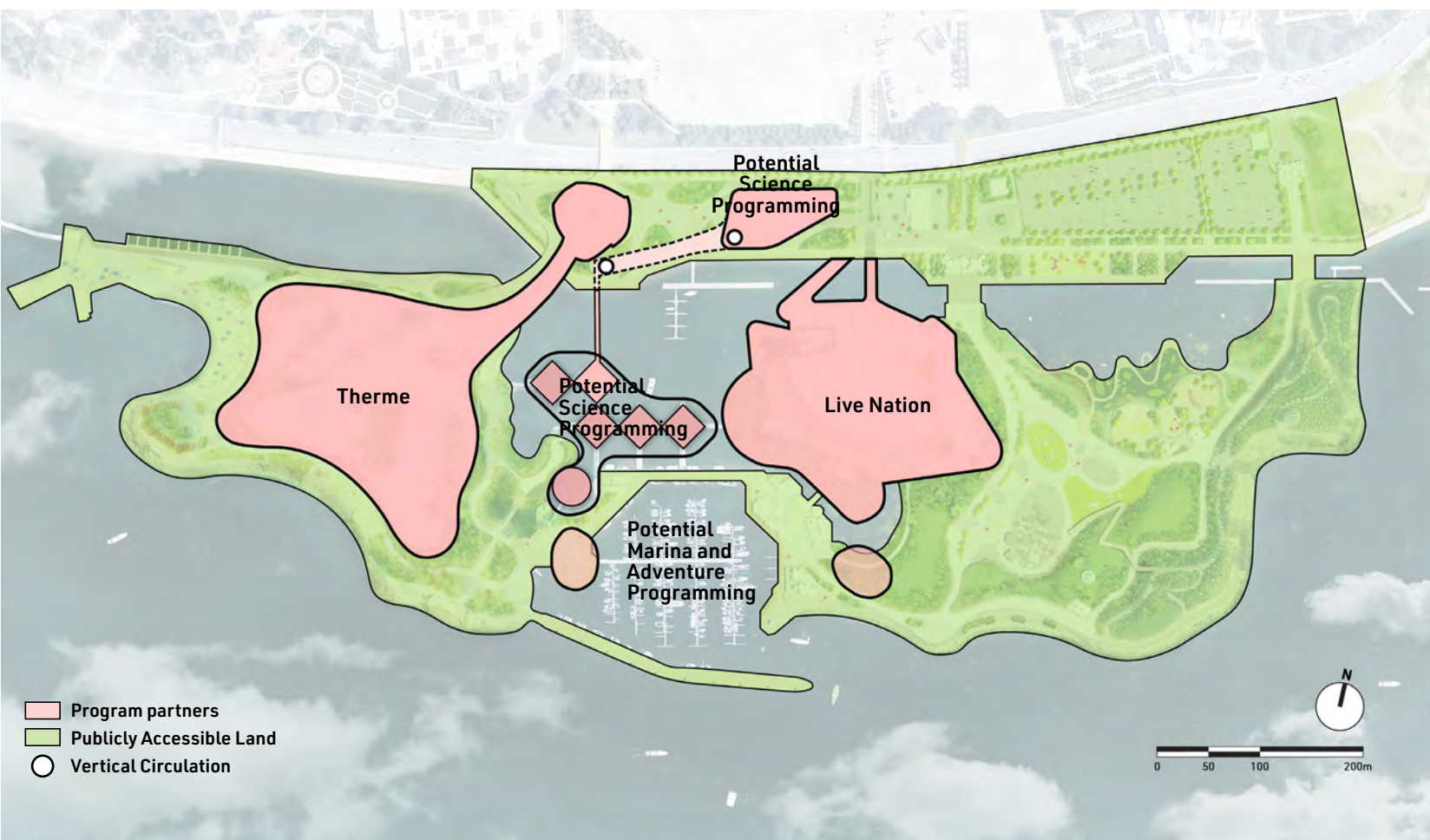


Figure 65. Program partners at Ontario Place



# Therme

## Creating a four-season, family-friendly destination on the waterfront

Therme will reinvigorate the West Island with a recreational and wellness facility. The new waterfront landmark will attract local, provincial and international visitors to the island and provide an anchor for the necessary public realm investments across the West Island.

Therme will draw up to 15,000 guests per day to the waterfront, for a total 2 million annual visitors. With waterpark features that recall Ontario Place's historical uses, Therme's program aligns with the legacy of family-friendly waterfront programming. These recreational uses will be supplemented with tranquil spaces and wellness services, all contained within a weather protected and sustainable facility.



Figure 66. Artist rendering of Therme's conceptual design.



# Enhancing the public realm

At Therme, the public realm and interior spaces form a symbiotic relationship. The programmed spaces within the facility spill out into the public realm, animating nearly 12 acres (over 47,500 square metres) of new waterfront open spaces along the West Island. Improvements to the West Island will also include an acre (5,400 square metres) of new wetland. As elsewhere at Ontario Place, improvement to the West Island will reinforce the shoreline, creating a flood-resistant and resilient landform, protecting Ontario Place for future visitors. In-water works and shoreline improvements will also introduce over six acres (25,500 square metres) of aquatic habitat and wetland.



Figure 67. Artist rendering of Therme's conceptual design.



Figure 68. Artist rendering of wetland walk on the east edge of the West Island. Conceptual design.



Figure 69. Artist rendering of improved lakefront multi-use trail along the southern edge of the West Island. Conceptual design.



# Creating a new waterfront landmark

The Therme facility will be landmark on the waterfront. Its geometric form, undulated and sculpted step-backs and varied materials soften the impact of the structure on the existing heritage landscape - conserving the prominence of the Pods and Cinesphere - while adding a bold new architectural element to the waterfront. With its unique combination of sustainability features and its scalable exterior elements, the facility represents the type of forward-thinking design for which Ontario place is celebrated.

The facility is comprised of three main elements: the pavilion, bridge, and West Island facility. Each components has its own features and program characteristics.



**Figure 70.** Artists rendering of the improved path on the West Island. Conceptual design.



**Figure 71.** Artist's rendering and side section of the Therme Facility from the West. Conceptual design.



# Building Elements

## The Pavilion

The three-storey and 26 metre tall pavilion entrance building will be a key point of arrival for Ontario Place and the gateway to the West Island. It will include vehicle entrance at the lower level and pedestrian access from the main levels. The cafe and retail stores located within will be open to the public and provide a direct and animating interface with Ontario Plaza to the east.

The pavilion provides Therme patrons with direct, weather-protected access to the Therme bridge and programming on the West Island.



Figure 72. Artists rendering of the Therme Pavilion conceptual design.

## Bridge

The Therme Bridge provides access to both the Therme Ontario Place main facility, and to the West Island public realm improvements.

The interior is heavily programmed: it will include servicing functions, including sufficient space for small freight and trucks, and includes lockers and hospitality facilities for Therme visitors

The improved waterfront trail network will extend around the pavilion and along the western edge of the bridge, providing 24/7 public access to the West Island and its many amenities.



Figure 73. Artists rendering of the West Island bridge conceptual design.



# Main Building

Therme's 50,000 square metres of program space are primarily contained within the main building with a smaller portion of the space contained in the bridge and pavilion entrance structures. At its 9-storey peak, the facility reaches a height of 45 metres, but the majority of the structure is approximately 27 metres tall.

The unique mix of indoor and outdoor recreation entertainment, spa facilities and therapeutic treatments will be distributed across four main zones: Genesis, Elysium, Palm and Galaxy. This size of the entire facility supports the variety of program elements, and ensures that the offerings can be affordable and accessible to all.

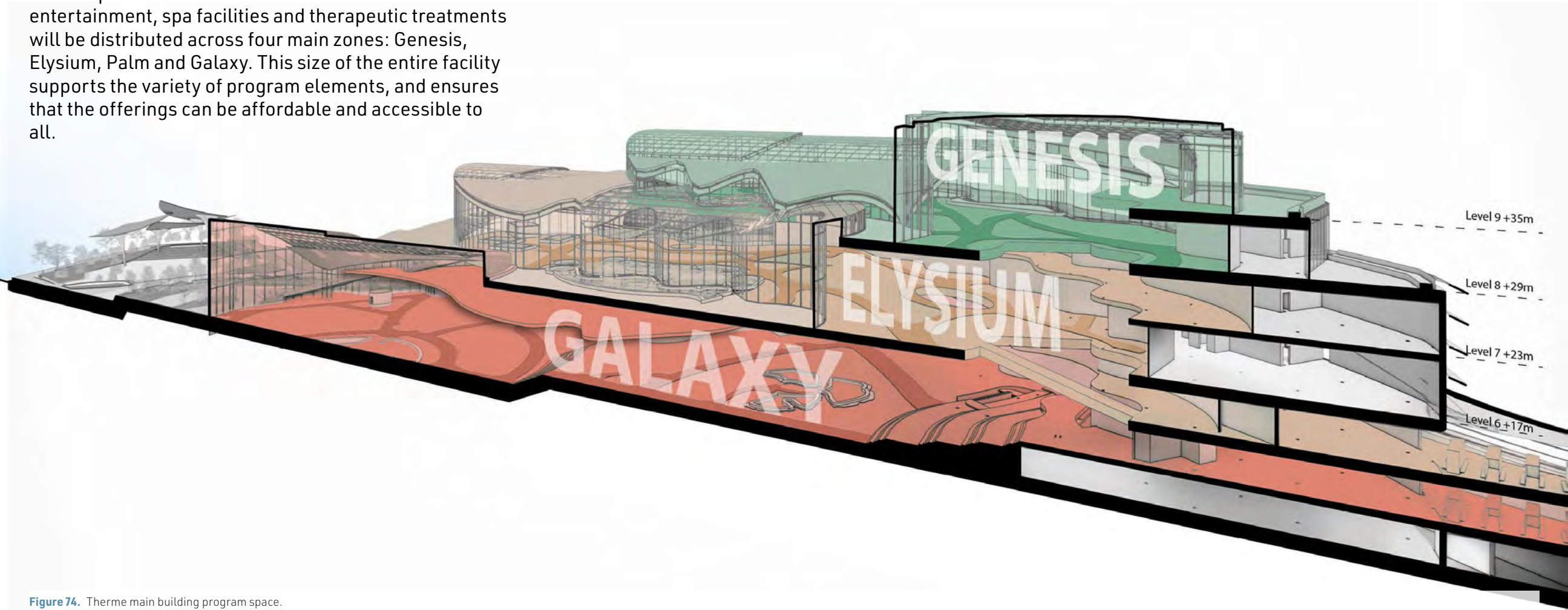
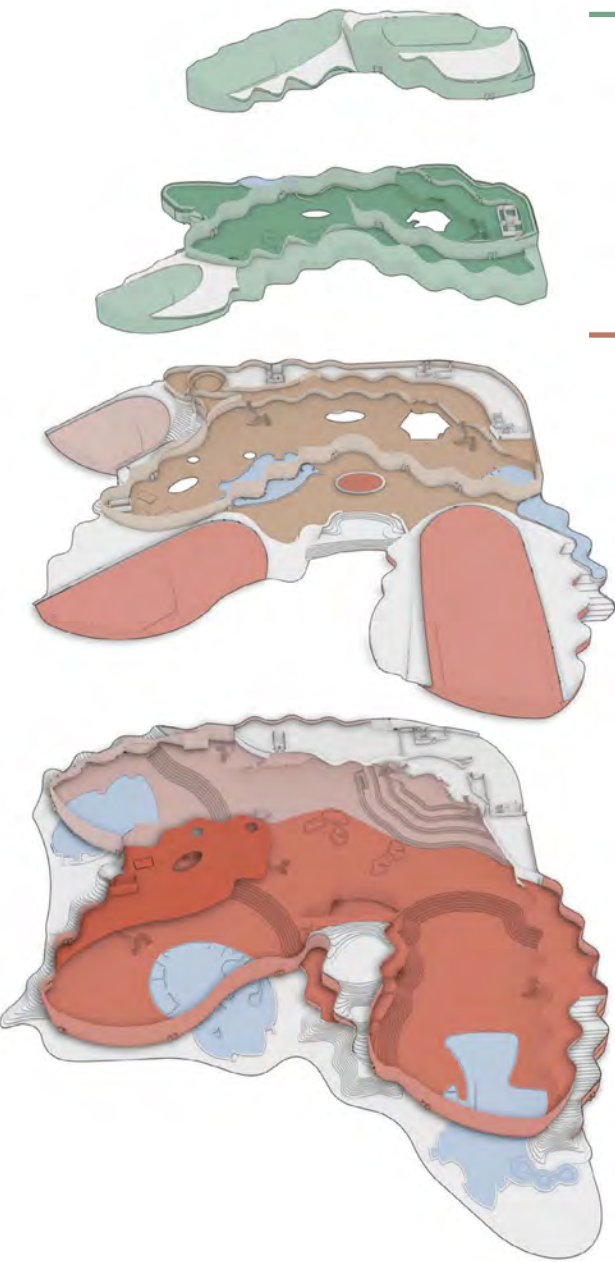


Figure 74. Therme main building program space.



# Program Overview



## GENESIS: THERAPY

Curated sauna and steam room experiences will provide visitors with an overview of the historical and global tradition of thermal therapy, and the associated health benefits.



Figure 75. Precedent of Genesis Program

## ELYSIUM: WELLNESS

Individually tailored therapies to enhance well being, including massage services, light and LED therapy, cryo-saunas, and vitamin and mineral pools.



Figure 76. Precedent of Elysium Program

## PALM: FAMILY RELAXATION

A quiet, relaxation zone for those 16 years of age or better with pools, mineral baths, steam rooms, and other water-based treatments.



Figure 77. Precedent of Palm Program

## GALAXY: FAMILY RECREATION

The largest single component of the program, it includes water-slides, a wave pool, relaxation areas, and steam rooms.



Figure 78. Precedent of Galaxy Program



# Live Nation Amphitheatre

Events promoter and venue operator Live Nation is proposing to redevelop the existing Budweiser Stage on the East Island, creating a new year-round entertainment venue with both indoor and outdoor space. The proposal will reconstruct the stage and seating bowl on a higher ground, protecting the venue from future flooding.

The expanded entertainment venue will increase the venue's capacity to 20,000 seats. It will be comprised of several components, including:

- A new stage and seating bowl;
- New service and pedestrian bridges to the Mainland;
- A new gateway plaza; and
- A new hospitality building and loading area.

The proposal remains at an early stage of development. A future rezoning submission will be required, which will provide greater clarity regarding the building design.



Figure 79. Concert at the existing Budweiser Stage



# Potential Science Programming

A potential science-based destination is being considered for Ontario Place, that will bring new life and activity to the underutilized pods and Cinesphere. Such a facility would feature family-friendly science programming to complement other proposed uses.

A single-storey Mainland pavilion is being considered above the potential parking structure, which would be integrated within the enhanced public realm. The new Mainland entrance pavilion will add some additional exhibit space to the 21,000 square metres of existing program space in the pods and Cinesphere. To address the challenge of accessing the pods and Cinesphere, the entry pavilion features a large below-grade area that allows programmed space to extend to the foot of the pods bridge - the established 100-year flood height.

As the revitalization of Ontario Place advances, the Province will continue to work with the Ontario Science Centre to explore opportunities to host science-related tourism and educational programming at Ontario Place.

The science entrance pavilion proposal remains at an early stage of development. A future rezoning submission will be required, which will provide greater clarity regarding the building design and programming.

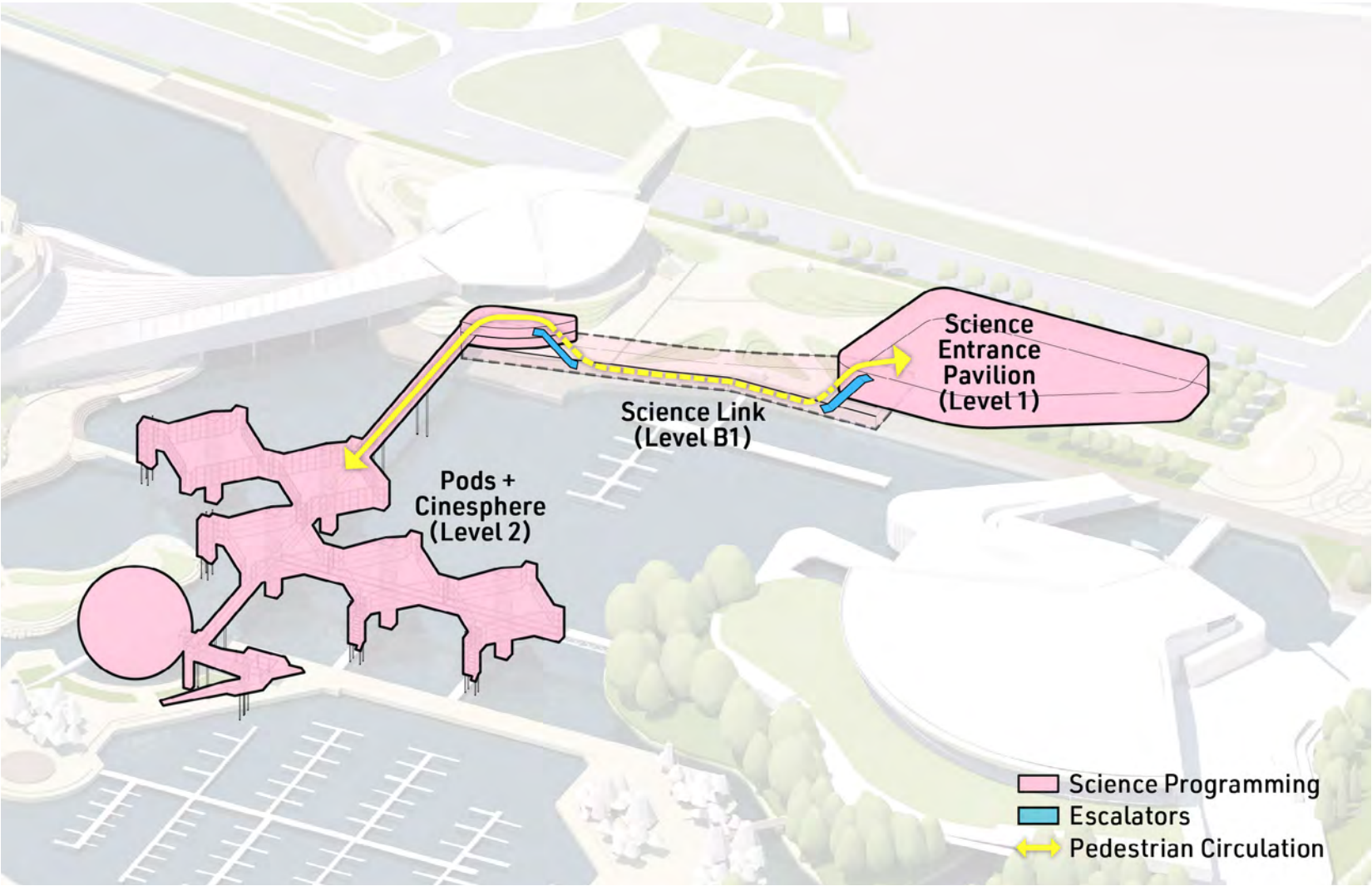


Figure 80. Connection between science entry pavilion and the pods and Cinesphere, indicating total potential science programming area. Conceptual design only.



# The Marina

The existing Ontario Place Marina will be retained. New investment will ensure resilience to lake level rise, raising established grade levels to minimize potential for flooding. Boat moorings in the inner channel are proposed to be removed to prioritize landscape investments and safe access for canoes and kayaks in response to public feedback.

The existing village clusters to the east and west require reinvestment, and are proposed to be replaced with a series of geometric clusters that recall Zeidler's modernist designs. The marina villages will provide for core functions, such as the marina and bathrooms, but also have the potential to accommodate retail, food programming or cultural uses.

The final design of the marina area is subject to the ongoing Category C Class EA process, which is anticipated to be completed in mid-2023.



**Figure 81.** Artist rendering of the Marina conceptual design. Subject to change.



**Figure 82.** Artist rendering of the Marina conceptual design. Subject to change.



# Potential Outdoor Adventure Programming

Outdoor adventure programming and active recreation uses have been identified as ideal programs for Ontario Place and are reflected in the Province's vision for the site and are under consideration. These uses may form part of a future application.



Figure 84. High ropes course. Source: Blue Mountain Resort.



Figure 83. Children's playground and adventure amenity. Source: Earthscape.



Figure 85. Canoe and kayak rental on the lake. Source: Harbourfront Centre.





Source: Ryan Associates.



Source: Daniels Homes.



Source: ERA Architects.

# Sustainability and Urban Systems

## Section 4.4



Source: Prospect Park Alliance.



# Investing in the future of Ontario Place

## INVESTMENTS IN THE PUBLIC REALM, MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND NEW DEVELOPMENT AT ONTARIO PLACE SUPPORT THE LONG-TERM RESILIENCE, VIABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE OF THE WATERFRONT ASSET.

In part due to declining visitor numbers, disinvestment in the aging infrastructure at Ontario Place has resulted in a site in desperate need of repair and rehabilitation. The improvements to the public realm and mobility network proposed throughout the Comprehensive Plan secure its long-term viability, sustainability and resilience. These improvements, as well as the commitments made by the program partners, will ensure that increased animation across Ontario Place does not negatively impact the natural environment.

Matters of sustainability and resilience are embedded within each layer of the Comprehensive Plan. This section clarifies how these improvements contribute to Ontario Place's environmental performance. It covers the following subjects:

- Water's edge
- Biodiversity and habitat health
- Stormwater management and permeability
- Sustainable travel behaviour
- Buildings and energy

The section closes with an overview of the servicing infrastructure investments required to support future development at Ontario Place.

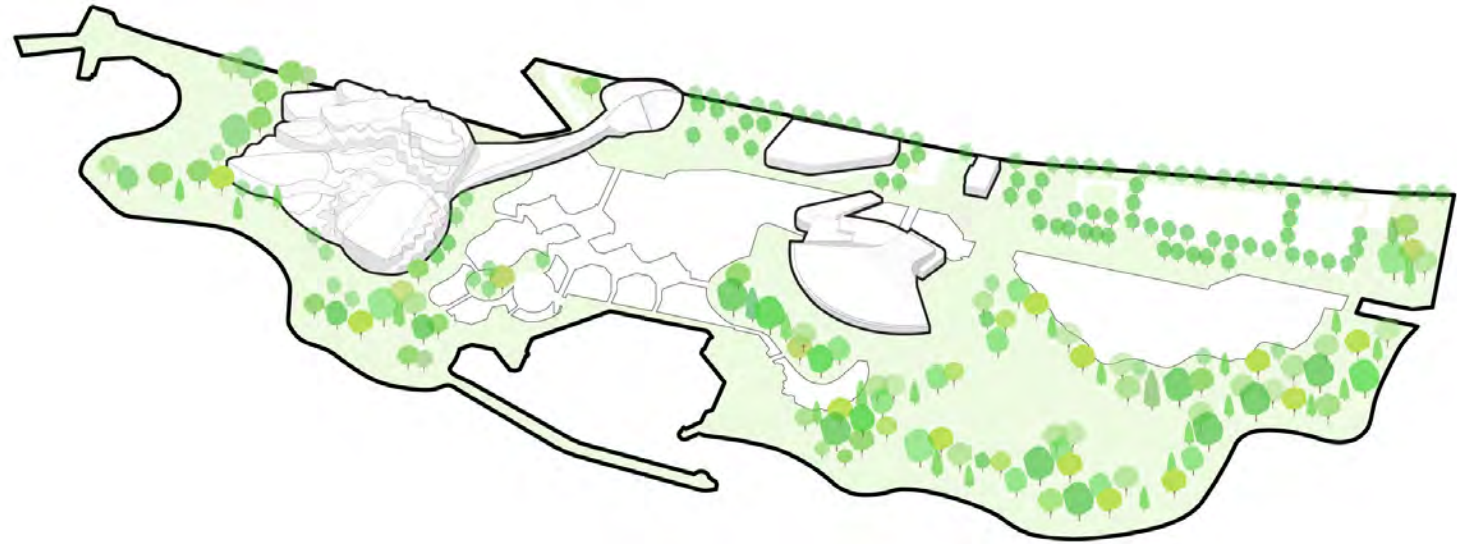


Figure 86. Public realm at Ontario Place



## **WATER'S EDGE: RAISING THE ISLAND TO IMPROVE RESILIENCE**

The infilled shoreline at Ontario Place has surpassed its 50-year design life and improvements to the water's edge are required to meet present day coastal engineering design standards. Years of disinvestment have demonstrated Ontario Place's susceptibility to seasonal flooding, the impacts of which are documented in the Shoreline Conditions Report prepared in support of the OPA. The report concludes that rehabilitation of the shoreline structures, protection from erosion and raising of the islands' elevation are all required to support long-term use and safety.

Improvements to the West Island and the public realm will rehabilitate the shoreline to meet present day coastal engineering design standards for erosion and flooding at 100-year storm levels, and will include resilience measures to respond to a changing climate.

The reinforced edges of Ontario Place will be raised above an elevation of 76.2 metres to address variable water levels and storm surge. These improvements will result in increased public space, enhanced connectivity to the water, additional opportunities for year-round use and improved aquatic habitat. By raising the topography along the southern shore area, it also protects existing trees and portions of the Hough landscape.

Consistent with Ontario Place's legacy, the use of lake fill will be required to protect the islands. The soil and materials used to increase the shoreline's elevation will be sourced in part from the debris created during excavation and construction elsewhere on the island and Mainland – resulting in lower embodied carbon.

## **BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT HEALTH: IMPROVING THE ISLAND'S HEALTH FOR FLORA AND FAUNA**

In the absence of significant programming, Ontario Place has been a refuge for wildlife. As documented in the Natural Heritage Impact Study, the immediate ecological impacts of revitalization will be a temporary loss of this existing habitat. However, the long-term shoreline modifications, lake-filling and public space improvements will create new habitat opportunities and improve the health of the island for all flora and fauna.

Revitalization will result in a net increase in softscape coverage of approximately 30,000 square metres and approximately 3,000 trees preserved and planted site-wide. These improvements will offer wind protection and shade, improving microclimatic conditions and reducing urban heat island effect for the broader area. The increased tree canopy coverage and the broader landscape strategy – which will prioritize grasslands, meadows and shrubs indigenous to Ontario – will also create new habitats for birds and other species.

The Comprehensive Plan will also introduce new aquatic habitat and a naturalized shoreline edge. The work proposed along the eastern wetlands and the submerged reef at the West Headland will result in approximately 1,100 square metres of new fish habitat. The creation of approximately 800 square metres of fish habitat on the East Island will result in permanent improvements across the 26,500 square metre Brigantine Cove and establish diverse riparian ecosystems where diverse aquatic species can thrive. The resulting approximately 6-acres of new wetland habitat and circulation improvements will also naturally filter the central waterways, improving water quality across the islands.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AND PERMEABILITY**

The Functional Servicing and Stormwater Management Reports prepared to support the OPA describe the stormwater servicing concept for Ontario Place. They recommend that existing drainage patterns and site outlets be reconstructed to reduce the total level of stormwater runoff and mitigate the impact of development on the lake ecosystem and coastal erosion.

To meet the City of Toronto WWFMG and TRCA requirements, an enhanced level of water quality treatment, equivalent to 80% average annual TSS removal, is required. For water balance, a minimum on-site runoff retention of 5 mm through infiltration, evapotranspiration and rainwater reuse by each tenant and across the public lands is required.

To achieve these targets, revitalization across Ontario Place will target a 33% increase in permeable and landscaped areas. These areas of the public realm will be graded to ensure runoff can drain through SWM infrastructure, primarily through Low Impact Development (LID) techniques: bioretention planters and trenches, tree planters and trenches, and raingardens. Areas of higher imperviousness will use a treatment train approach, with LIDs combined with oil-grit separators to achieve filtration targets. Large buildings (Therme, Live Nation) will feature green roofs and rainwater harvesting to reduce runoff and stormwater treatment volumes prior to discharge to Lake Ontario. The runoff that remains from the Therme building will also be directed to the constructed wetland condition along the southeast corner of the West Island to support the intended ecological function, and provide additional water quality polishing.



## SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

A Transportation Impact Assessment prepared to support the revitalization of Ontario Place concluded that the traffic associated with the revitalization can be accommodated by encouraging sustainable travel behaviour.

The current mobility networks are regularly congested as a result of programmed events at Ontario Place. Revitalization comes with the promise of new island programs and attractions, drawing additional visitors from across the province. To avoid a corresponding increase in automobile congestion, new program offerings will be accompanied by improvements to the broader mobility network focused on transit and active transportation.

The active mobility improvements across the Mainland and islands will be expanded, made accessible and integrated within the broader waterfront mobility network. To take advantage of incoming transit investment the Comprehensive Plan also protects for a variety of future last-mile connections on the Mainland. Opportunities for bike-share and bike parking are being maximized throughout the public realm. Transportation demand management and ride share strategies will also be encouraged by the program partners to encourage sustainable travel behaviour by staff and visitors.

Though trip behaviour varies significantly depending on time of day, the infrastructure investments described will ensure a more balanced modal split for Ontario Place - pushing visitors to more sustainable travel choices.

## BUILDING AND ENERGY

The built form and proposals advanced by the program partners include commitments to pursuing resilience and sustainability measures in the design of their buildings and in the elimination of on-site fossil fuel combustion.

The Therme zoning by-law amendment application includes an Energy Strategy, which describes a commitment to both sustainable energy production and energy efficiency overall. The strategy focuses on minimizing on-site fuel combustion, and three options are being considered for renewable heat: 1. Geo-exchange heat pumps; 2. Lake water exchange heat pumps; or 3. On-site water system and sewage heat recovery. Where heat must be generated by combustion, renewable fuels will be targeted.

To achieve its targeted LEED Platinum designation, the Therme facility will include building technologies and that contribute to energy efficiency. The proposed curtain wall system is Passive House certified and should result in an envelope which maximizes solar heat gain and visible light while minimizing conductive heat loss and space heating energy. The operable roof technology will also provide natural ventilation, and the glass will be designed to be bird-friendly. The building will also include approximately 4 acres (over 16,000 square metres) of green roof.

As the Live Nation Amphitheatre is not included in the rezoning application and its design drawings are conceptual, only general commitments to sustainability and resilience have been made.

## SERVICING AT ONTARIO PLACE

The Ontario Place OPA is supported by a Functional Servicing Study which describes the existing site servicing conditions and calculates the ultimate servicing requirements for Ontario Place.

The existing site is serviced through a single 150 mm diameter service connection to the City of Toronto watermain loop along the south side of Lake Shore Boulevard and two sanitary service connection. The City's water distribution network has sufficient capacity to address domestic and fire servicing requirements. However, the single water service connection has insufficient capacity to meet long-term fire servicing requirements and leaves the site vulnerable to a shutdown within the City's network. The City's combined sewer along Lake Shore Boulevard can accommodate the additional flow requirements associated with revitalization.

Revitalization will include an additional water service connection to the site at the east end of the site, creating a service connection for the West Island, pods and Cinesphere and another for the east island. The two water service areas will be joined through a private watermain along the Mainland, providing an additional measure of redundancy. The service connections to the City's network will include check-valves/back flow prevents to prevent any water supplied to Ontario Place from returning to the City's network.

All utilities at Ontario Place are private and will remain private throughout revitalization efforts. The servicing strategy for Ontario Place may be updated to reflect program refinements at the site plan stage.



