



lake ontario park

master plan

prepared for WATERFRONToronto

field operations + schollen & company

kidd consulting, north-south environmental, nina-marie lister, ccl/ibi, poulos & chung, archaeological services

FALL 2008

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FOREWORD

Toronto's Next Great Park:

It is a great pleasure to present the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan, a bold vision for transforming Toronto's waterfront and creating a world-renowned urban wilderness and recreational park. The proposed park covers a massive 375 hectares of lakefront land and its development will be a dramatic step forward in redefining our relationship to the water's edge.

The areas that comprise the future park are some of the most ecologically unique and distinctive landscapes in the Greater Toronto Area. From the rugged wind swept fields and wetlands that define Tommy Thompson Park, to the cathedral stand of Cotton woods that frame Cherry Beach, Lake Ontario Park will be defined by its ability to bring together diverse recreational activities while ensuring the protection and enhancement of the rich ecologically sensitive areas.

The scale of the proposal is ambitious, the Master Plan recognizes this, and puts forward a strategic framework that allows for the unfolding of the park over several decades. The process will continue to involve with further input from our many valued stakeholders.

Developing this master plan is the first major milestone in establishing the park which will be one of the most significant and exciting open space urban projects in our country's history.



John Campbell, President and CEO Waterfront Toronto

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	04	7.0 PARK ECOLOGY	79
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN	06	7.1 OVERVIEW	80
1.0 INTRODUCTION	09	7.2 CONNECTIVITY	82
1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND	10	7.3 CULTIVATING HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS	84
1.2 THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE	12	7.4 INCREASING CANOPY COVER	86
1.3 PROCESS & PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN	14	7.5 MANAGEMENT, ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION	88
1.4 CONSULTATION & PUBLIC OUTREACH	15	8.0 AREAS OF THE PARK	91
2.0 OVERVIEW OF THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE	17	8.1 THE BAR, CHERRY BEACH AND NORTH SHORE	95
2.1 ANALYSIS & KEY FINDINGS	18	8.2 THE MARINA PENINSULA	103
2.2 A BIG NATURE PARKLAND	20	8.3 THE SPIT	111
2.3 SOILS, CANOPY & FLEXIBILITY	22	8.4 THE BASE LANDS	117
2.4 PARKS WITHIN THE PARK	24	8.5 THE BAY	125
3.0 ORGANIZING IDEAS	27	8.6 THE EASTERN BEACHES	131
3.1 A CONNECTIVE, GREEN WATERFRONT	28	9.0 OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT	137
3.2 37 KILOMETRES OF SHORELINE	30	9.1 PARK MAINTENANCE	138
3.3 3 TRANSECTS	32	10.0 IMPLEMENTATION	143
3.4 40 "ROOMS"	34	10.1 KEY CONSIDERATIONS	144
3.5 400 "OUTPOSTS"	36	10.2 PHASING	146
3.6 THE HISTORIC SHORELINE	38	10.3 FINANCE	148
3.7 THE BAR AND THE BAY	40	10.4 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES	149
4.0 THE MASTER PLAN	43	11.0 CONCLUSION	151
4.1 SITUATING THE PARK	44	11.1 LAKE ONTARIO PARK: A 'BIG NATURE PARK FOR TORONTO	152
4.2 THE ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN	46	12.0 APPENDIX	155
4.3 PARK ZONES & LAND-USE	48	12.1 SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES	157
5.0 PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES	51	12.2 STORMWATER MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES	158
5.1 PARK ACTIVITIES	52	12.3 PARK LIGHTING GUIDELINES	159
5.2 ACTIVE RECREATION	54	12.4 CULTURAL FACILITIES	160
5.3 PASSIVE RECREATION	56	12.5 THE OUTER HARBOUR BOAT CLUBS	162
5.4 BOATING & WATERSPORTS	58	12.6 ASHBIDGE'S BAY BOAT CLUBS	164
5.5 SITE AMENITIES	60	12.7 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS	166
5.6 CULTURAL & ARTS PROGRAMMING	62	12.8 ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREAS	168
5.7 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE	64	12.9 EXISTING VEGETATION TYPES	170
6.0 TRAILS & ACCESS	67	12.10 RESIDENT BIRDS & HABITATS	172
6.1 CITY CONNECTIONS	68	12.11 OTHER WILDLIFE & HABITATS	174
6.2 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION	70	12.12 WILDLIFE SPECIES INVENTORY	176
6.3 PARKING	72	12.13 RESOURCES	178
6.4 TRAILS; PEDESTRIAN	74		
6.5 TRAILS: MULTU-USE	76		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLAN

Lake Ontario Park assembles a series of lakeshore sites into one magnificent ensemble. Existing parks, beloved beaches, under-utilized industrial sites, privately leased areas and regionally significant ecological areas are joined together and remade to form a 925-acre contiguous public park, with over 37km of shoreline. As such, Lake Ontario Park is one of the most unusual and distinctive landscapes in Toronto, a world class waterfront park with special ecological, recreational and cultural attractions. The Park will feature significant public spaces and active programs amidst huge successional ecotones, extensive beaches and large-scale waterfront landscapes. Conceived as a diverse reserve for wildlife, cultural and social life, and active recreation, the park offers an unprecedented array of experiences and opportunities for the residents of Toronto.

Lake Ontario Park is a powerfully unique place, a 'big nature' parkland with remarkably vast and distinctive landscapes of great ecological, cultural and scenic importance. Any new future landscape here should not normalize or diminish the strange and powerful qualities of the place – especially its rough and remote character and the extraordinary sense of the wild and the elemental.

The Master Plan represents a big picture vision for Lake Ontario Park. Developed over two years, after months of community and agency input, the primary purpose of the Master Plan is to provide a framework for future planning, design and decision-making. The plans and imagery contained within this report illustrate a flexible and on-going vision for Lake Ontario Park. The ideas and strategies described herein will undoubtedly require continued discussion and review at the municipal, provincial and federal levels, but the framework offers a solid basis for moving forward. The Master Plan is the first step in beginning the process of design that will transform the site into a new cultural and ecological landmark of international significance.

The Planning and Design of Lake Ontario Park is far from finished: there are still many steps necessary before implementation of the park is possible. What the Master Plan offers is a guiding vision: a set of principles, directives and design impressions that are meant to shape the physical future of Toronto's - and indeed the world's - next great Park.

The Master Plan is imagined as a flexible organizational tool that will guide all future planning at Lake Ontario Park and support six primary goals:

- 1 Promote a bold, flexible and resilient landscape framework.**
The Master Plan is a framework of strategic recommendations and physical landscape improvements. While the Master Plan demonstrates a bold, coherent and sensible organization of the park, the precise configuration, scale, location, quantity and character of its elements are adjustable according to future planning and design review, environmental assessment processes and the changing needs of the Toronto community.
- 2 Create a vibrant lakefront of distinctive activities and unique water-oriented programming.** Lake Ontario Park offers extraordinary large-scale settings for a range of activities and programs that are unique in the city, allowing for extensive active and passive recreation, diverse watersports, educational amenities and cultural enrichment;
- 3 Build a connective system to unify the large park.**
Create a network of pedestrian and multi-use trails that link together and unify the diverse parcels of the existing site with the surrounding city;
- 4 Cultivate a rich mosaic of terrestrial and aquatic life that becomes the center of a continuous regional greenway.**
Recognizing the presence of extraordinary ecological resources, the Master Plan's ecological goal is to preserve, restore and diversify the range, extent and health of its various ecosystems.
- 5 Create a realistic and sustainable landscape.** By promoting flexible site management responses, natural succession and a sensitive implementation timeline, the Master Plan offers a realistic and sustainable park framework.
- 6 Preserve and amplify the remarkably unique settings.**
Responding to its historical formation, its large-scale and its elemental character, the Master Plan seeks to capitalize on the existing "wild" characteristics of this unique site.



- THE BAR**
- 1 EASTERN GAP TAXI LANDING AND PROMONTORY
- 2 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
- 3 CHERRY ST. GATEWAY
- 4 FIRST NATIONS SITE
- 5 DON GREENWAY
- 6 TRANSITION SPORTS FIELDS
- 7 CRICKET PITCH
- 8 JUNIOR SPORTS FIELDS
- 9 FLEXIBLE OPEN FIELD
- 10 DON GREENWAY PROMONTORY
- 11 CHERRY BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)
- 12 SAIL AND WINDSURF CLUBS
- 13 OUTER HARBOUR SAILING FEDERATION (OHSF)
- 14 PUBLIC BEACH FRONT
- 15 HEARN
- 16 PORTLANDS ENERGY CENTRE
- 17 ALLOTMENT GARDENS
- THE MARINA PENINSULA**
- 18 ADVENTURE CENTRE
- 19 HANLAN BOAT CLUB (RELOCATED)
- 20 OUTER HARBOUR PROMENADE & LANDINGS
- 21 OUTER HARBOUR MARINA
- 22 BOAT STAGING AND STORAGE FIELDS
- 23 PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH RAMPS (RELOCATED)
- 24 TORONTO HYDROPLANE (RELOCATED)
- 25 RESTAURANTS / CAFES
- 26 PUBLIC FISHING PIERS AND PROMONTORIES
- THE SPIT**
- 27 EMBAYMENT A
- 28 EMBAYMENT B
- 29 EMBAYMENT C
- 30 EMBAYMENT D
- 31 AQUATIC PARK SAILING CLUB
- 32 ENVIRONMENTAL SHELTER
- 33 ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION
- 34 CELL 1
- 35 CELL 2
- 36 CELL 3
- 37 EAST COVE
- 38 LIGHTHOUSE PROMONTORY
- THE BASE LANDS**
- 39 WETLAND WATERWAY
- 40 BOARDWALK (LONG-TERM)
- 41 RIDGE & TROUGH FOREST
- 42 MARSH & OPEN WATER
- 43 UPLAND FOREST
- 44 SWAMP FOREST
- 45 TOMMY THOMPSON PARK GATEWAY
- THE BAY**
- 46 BAR TRANSECT OUTLOOK
- 47 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY INLET
- 48 ABYC SAILING SCHOOL AND DINGHY AREA
- 49 NAVY LEAGUE (RELOCATED)
- 50 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY YACHT CLUB (ABYC)
- 51 BALMY BEACH CANOE CLUB (RELOCATED)
- 52 PROTECTED, CALM WATERWAY
- 53 BRIDGE AND BREAKWATER
- 54 PICNIC PROMONTORY
- 55 WATER TREATMENT WETLAND
- 56 ENTRY DRIVE AND PARKING
- 57 BEACHES LIONS CLUB
- 58 PICNIC AND WATER PLAY AREA
- 59 NEW BEACHES FORMED BY DEPOSITION
- 60 PUBLIC KAYAK AND CANOE LAUNCH
- 61 BEACH VOLLEYBALL
- 62 BMX FACILITY SKATEBOARD PARK
- THE EASTERN BEACHES**
- 63 BEACH TRANSECT BOARDWALK
- 64 R.C. HARRIS PIER
- 65 POTENTIAL BLUFF TRANSECT CONNECTION
- 66 SILVER BIRCH RECREATION PIER
- 67 GLEN MANOR RECREATION PIER
- 68 BALMY BEACH CLUB HOUSE
- 69 KEW - BALMY BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)
- 70 MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL
- 71 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
- 72 FLOWERING MEADOW (NUTRIENT TRAPS)
- 73 KEW GARDENS
- 74 RUNNING TRACK & MULTI-USE FIELD
- 75 WOODBINE BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)

lake ontario park

master plan



CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Lake Ontario Park will be a landmark park and defining destination for Toronto. It will be a place with great presence in the life of the city of Toronto and the region—an iconic lakefront landscape and a place full of life. The park will knit together the distinct communities and territories of the waterfront, but it will also allow for points of refuge, protected niches and urban wilds.

Lake Ontario Park is intended to join the ranks of the world's great large urban parks. There is an increasing recognition that parks of this size present a unique combination of opportunities and challenges with respect to design, ecology, programming and sense of place. At their best, large urban parks define the character of the neighbourhoods around them, drawing both residents and visitors for a full range of experiences and catalyzing economic development. At the same time, large parks make a fundamental contribution to sustainability through their generosity of space, scale and range of habitat opportunities, and their contribution to urban livability. These are parks that help to define the cities where they are located and their unique features make them calling cards for their home towns around the world.

The Lake Ontario Park initiative builds on previous Central Waterfront planning such as the City of Toronto's Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (available at <http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/waterfront>), which designates these lands as natural area open space and the WT's Central Waterfront Public Space Framework (available on line at <http://www.waterfronttoronto.ca>).

The preparation of the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan was a complex project both in terms of the variety of 'parks within the park' and the number of stakeholders involved. A key challenge of the Lake Ontario Park master planning process was to understand the diverse existing ecologies and uses of the site—from the rare stands of Eastern Cottonwoods to the community boating clubs and kiteboard launch sites protected by Tommy Thompson Park (the Spit). Starting in the Fall of 2006, the Master Plan team has consulted with city agencies, residents and park users, as well as the wider public, to plan a park with different intensities of activity, with 'microclimates' for both the human communities and the animal species that have long inhabited the site.

The Master Plan team believes that the great challenge of the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan is as much about design vision as it is about rigorous analysis, discussion and planning. It was clear from the outset that the plan must project a bold, contemporary design for a place that is not primarily an industrial or corporate waterfront, nor simply a neighborhood park. Much of the site is currently wild and open to the elements, and design insight is needed to cultivate and amplify the dynamic experiential aspects of lake life. Fresh approaches to landscape and

to the 'large park' program were required to imagine unique features that could coalesce into the kind of world-class park that defines a city.

The Master Plan for Lake Ontario Park must also be strategic. It must be intelligently phased to ensure early successes and long-term sustainability. It must be attuned to the desires of the groups of avid long-time users, as well as new publics in Toronto and the region. The plan must be realistically priced, and ecologically and operationally sound. A strategic master plan is needed to quickly realize a contemporary solution that works, producing maximum effects with minimal means.

Prior to developing the Master Plan strategies and design proposals, the Team coordinated a research and field reconnaissance effort. The Team reviewed several of Toronto's existing planning frameworks and strategies, including the Central Waterfront Public Space Framework (WT), the Marine Use Strategy (WT), Central Waterfront Secondary Plan (WT), the Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan (TRCA), WT Sustainability Framework, Strategic Plan 'Our Common Grounds' (PFR) and many other planning documents and drawings as listed in the appendix for reference. Key site information and challenges were collated into the initial Master Plan document: 'Summary Report on Field Work and Key Findings' completed in July 2006. The key site findings and challenges are summarized in Section 2.1 of this document.



humber valley

don valley

lake ontario park

LAKE ONTARIO PARK AND THE RAVINES
THE RAVINES ARE THE DEFINING LANDSCAPE OF TORONTO.
LAKE ONTARIO PARK SHOULD MATCH THE POWER OF THE RAVINE PARK AND
OPEN SPACE SYSTEM BY CREATING A SIGNATURE LAKEFRONT PARK THAT
PROVIDES A CONTINUOUS GREENWAY FOR HUMAN AND WILDLIFE USE

1.2 THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE

The Lake Ontario Park site is an assemblage of various waterfront places: existing parks, beloved beaches, under-utilized industrial sites, privately-leased areas and regionally important ecological territories.

The park site stretches along the south edge of the Port Lands between the Eastern Gap and Ashbridge's Bay, extends south of Unwin Avenue across the Base Lands to the tip of Tommy Thompson Park, and includes Ashbridge's Bay Park, Coatsworth Cut and the Eastern Beaches.

The new park takes these previously disparate parts of the lake shore edge and assembles them into one large inter-connected whole – a new park comprised of 925 acres of contiguous parkland and more than 37 kilometers of waters edge. Only minutes from downtown Toronto, Lake Ontario Park offers an unprecedented opportunity for a world class, signature park for the whole city and region.

The Lake Ontario Park site limits are drawn broadly to encompass the widest possible interpretation of what could be considered part of the amalgamated park. The park site includes portions of public facilities including the Ashbridge's Bay Treatment Plant, the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant and the Portlands Energy Centre; existing park areas including Cherry Beach, Ashbridge's Bay Park, Woodbine Beach, Woodbine Park, Kew Gardens and the Eastern Beaches; privately leased areas on the Marina Peninsula, Ashbridge's Bay Park and the North Shore; and important ecological sites including the Base Lands and Tommy Thompson Park. It is important to note that the Master Plan illustrates the realignment of Unwin Avenue as a means to create a thickened parkland at the North Shore and a larger footprint (buffer) for the Base Lands. The feasibility and details of Unwin's realignment are subject to a separate Environmental Assessment (EA) process.

A number of other areas in the park also have parallel and on-going design and/or design implementation processes that are at various stages of completion:

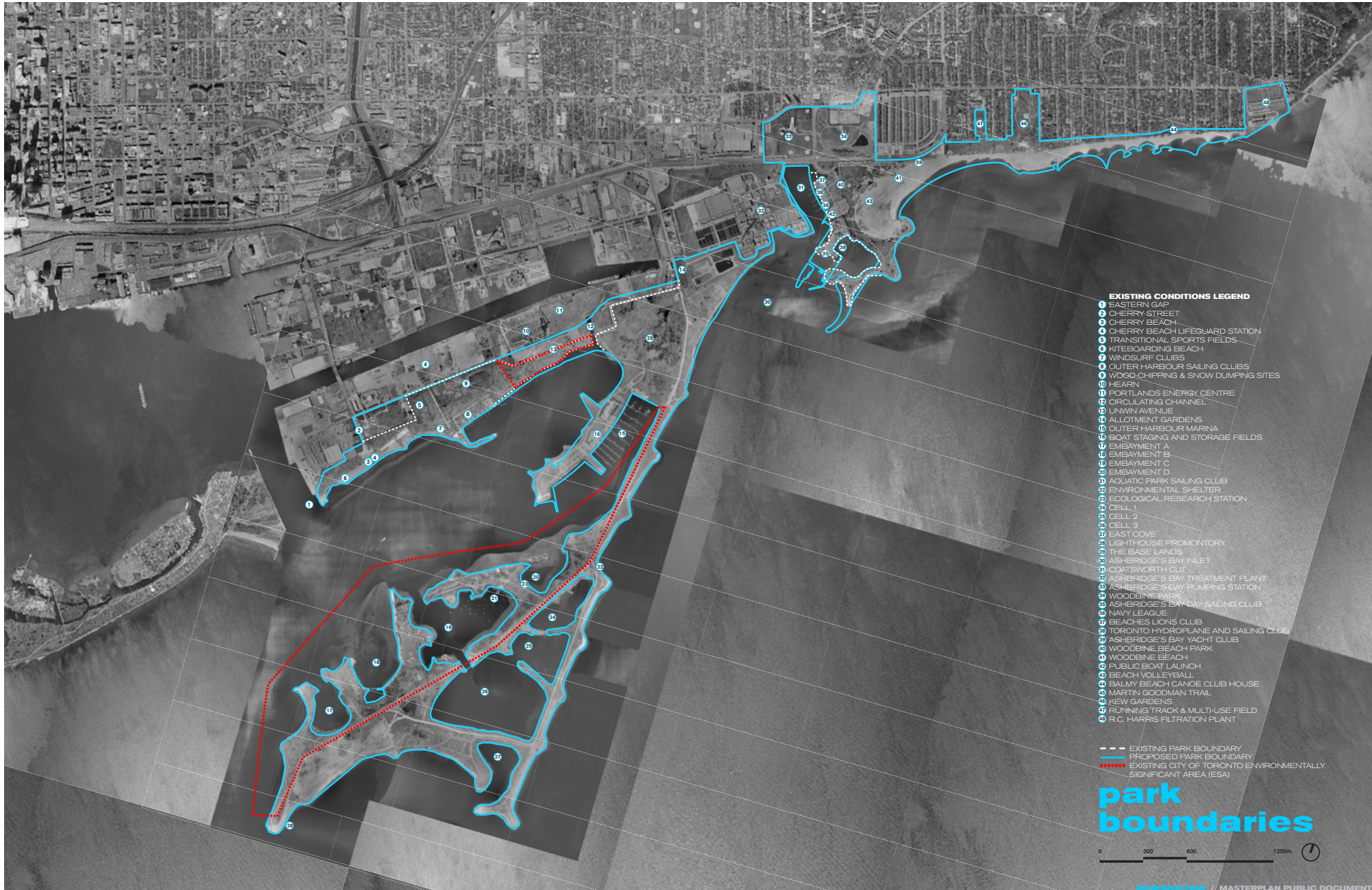
- Tommy Thompson Park;
- Ashbridge's Bay Treatment Plant (ABTP) landscape improvements;
- Ashbridge's Bay Treatment Plant Coatsworth Cut EA;
- Leslie Street greening;
- Transition Sports Fields;
- Don River naturalization and greenway;
- Wet Weather Flow Master Plan water quality improvements; and
- Environmental Site Management of the Safety Kleen plume.

The park site also includes two of the City of Toronto designated Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA). City ESAs are areas of land or water within the natural heritage system that are particularly sensitive and require additional protection to preserve their environmentally significant qualities. They are defined as areas with any one or more of the following characteristics:

- habitats for vulnerable, rare, threatened or endangered plant and/or animal species and communities that are vulnerable, threatened or endangered within the city or the Greater Toronto Area; or
- rare, high quality or unusual landforms created by geomorphological processes within the city or the Greater Toronto Area; or
- habitats or communities of flora and fauna that are of a large size or have an unusually high diversity of otherwise commonly encountered biological communities and associated plants and animals; or
- areas where an ecological function contributes appreciably to the healthy maintenance of a natural ecosystem beyond its boundaries, such as serving as a wildlife migratory stopover or concentration point, or serving as a water storage or recharge area.

Although the boundaries of these sites are currently being reviewed (it is possible that additional ESAs will be identified), the ESA framework provides a context to explore habitat enhancement and other ecological initiatives that will improve and/or expand the existing natural features within Lake Ontario Park. In moving towards the various stated goals of the project, the Master Plan attempts to find the balance between creating a world-class urban park that supports a wide range of activities and uses while maximizing the ecological value through a continuous and diverse green waterfront.

The graphic on the right is an outline of the existing and proposed limits of Lake Ontario Park on an existing aerial photograph of the site taken in 2004.



- EXISTING CONDITIONS LEGEND**
- 1 EASTERN GAP
 - 2 CHERRY STREET
 - 3 CHERRY BEACH
 - 4 CHERRY BEACH LIFE GUARD STATION
 - 5 TRANSITIONAL SPORTS FIELDS
 - 6 KITEBOARDING BEACH
 - 7 WINDSURF CLUBS
 - 8 OUTER HARBOUR SAILING CLUBS
 - 9 WOOD, CHIPPING & SNOW DUMPING SITES
 - 10 HEARN
 - 11 PORTLANDS ENERGY CENTRE
 - 12 CIRCULATING CHANNEL
 - 13 UNWIN AVENUE
 - 14 ALLOTMENT GARDENS
 - 15 OUTER HARBOUR MARINA
 - 16 BAY STAGING AND STORAGE FIELDS
 - 17 EMBAYMENT A
 - 18 EMBAYMENT B
 - 19 EMBAYMENT C
 - 20 EMBAYMENT D
 - 21 AQUATIC PARK SAILING CLUB
 - 22 ENVIRONMENTAL SHELTER
 - 23 ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION
 - 24 CELL 1
 - 25 CELL 2
 - 26 CELL 3
 - 27 EAST COVE
 - 28 LIGHTHOUSE PROMONTORY
 - 29 THE BASE LANDS
 - 30 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY INLET
 - 31 COATSWORTH CUT
 - 32 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY TREATMENT PLANT
 - 33 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY PUMPING STATION
 - 34 WOODBINE PARK
 - 35 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY DAY SAILING CLUB
 - 36 NAVY LEAGUE
 - 37 BEACHES LIONS CLUB
 - 38 TORONTO HYDROPLANE AND SAILING CLUB
 - 39 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY YACHT CLUB
 - 40 WOODBINE BEACH PARK
 - 41 WOODBINE BEACH
 - 42 PUBLIC BAY LAUNCH
 - 43 BEACH VOLLEYBALL
 - 44 BALMY BEACH CANOE CLUB HOUSE
 - 45 MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL
 - 46 KEW GARDENS
 - 47 RUNNING TRACK & MULTI-USE FIELD
 - 48 R.C. HARRIS FILTRATION PLANT
- EXISTING PARK BOUNDARY
 — PROPOSED PARK BOUNDARY
 EXISTING CITY OF TORONTO ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT AREA (ESA)

park boundaries



1.3 PROCESS & PURPOSE OF THE MASTER PLAN

PROCESS

Beginning in the Spring of 2006, WATERFRONToronto and the City of Toronto have been coordinating this master planning study for the development of a unified, connective Lake Ontario Park. At the outset, WATERFRONToronto and the City of Toronto have embraced an open dialogue with the community and demanded a design that would be responsive to stakeholder and public needs and desires. Stakeholder and Public outreach will continue through the environmental assessment and schematic level planning and implementation of the park. The goal of this outreach is twofold: to garner input from the community about the park that they will be using, and to build a constituency that has a vested interest in making the park a reality.

The process of developing the Master Plan included 4 phases:

- 1 Review, Synthesis and Outreach (April - July 2006)**
- 2 Programming and Problem Solving (July - December 2006)**
- 3 Vision, Design and Visualization (development of the Draft Concept Plan) (September 2006 - January 2007)**
- 4 Revision to Catalyse Implementation (development of the Master Plan) (February 2007 - May 2008)**

Throughout the project phases, the design process included extensive discussion, review and feedback from the design team, Waterfront Toronto, the City of Toronto Council, the Waterfront Secretariat, Toronto Parks, Recreation and Forestry (PFR), Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and other agencies. The ideas and suggestions from the city, agencies, stakeholders and the community have influenced and greatly enriched the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan.

After review and feedback from the city, agencies, stakeholders and the community, the LOP Master Plan will be finalized. It will then serve as the basis for implementation. Design development will begin after the Master Plan is finalized. Stakeholder and community outreach will continue through the Environmental Assessment stage and the more detailed schematic level planning phase for the park.

PURPOSE

The Lake Ontario Park Master Plan provides a vision and strategic framework for review, discussion and decision-making. Its recommendations are not fixed or final, but offer a flexible framework for implementation. The continued input of many experts, policy makers and the public will be critical to the refinement of the plan over the remainder of the planning process. These four points outline the purpose of this Master Plan Document:

- 1 Outline the goals, vision and organizational framework for Lake Ontario Park;**
- 2 Demonstrate that the goals, vision and strategic direction are grounded and realistic;**
- 3 Advance discussion at the leadership level regarding implementation, finance and long-term management options;**
- 4 Build broader understanding, support and leadership for the project at the community, stakeholder and civic levels;**

ORGANIZATION

This is not a conventional Master Plan that organizes information in a manner that clearly responds to existing conditions. Rather, this document foregrounds a bold but concise vision for the park, and describes the key principles, characteristics and opportunities that are enabled by such a vision. It is important to understand that this plan is an integrated document. For any goal, objective, or proposition to be fully understood, it must be read as a whole.

The Plan is loosely organized according to the primary goals (chapters 3 to 10) of the Master Plan:

Chapter 1 outlines the background and primary goals of the Master Plan;
Chapter 2 provides an overview of the extraordinary potential of the project;
Chapter 3 outlines the bold ideas that will organize future planning at the park;
Chapter 4 describes the Master Plan and the land-use principles;
Chapter 5 outlines the programmatic features of the park;
Chapter 6 outlines the strategies for building a connected park;
Chapter 7 identifies major ecological opportunities and objectives;
Chapter 8 describes the major areas of the park;
Chapter 9 outlines the management and financial aspects of the park;
Chapter 10 sets out the steps towards implementing the park;

1.4 CONSULTATION & PUBLIC OUTREACH

The scale and unusual nature of Lake Ontario Park has generated a great deal of interest and enthusiasm at public meetings over the past 24 months. In general, the public has expressed a strong desire for a broad mix of programs at Lake Ontario Park, with an emphasis on dedicating large tracts of the park for scenic passive uses, varied waterfront access and water uses, ecological restoration and habitat creation, and opportunities for recreation, art and culture.

Consultation with stakeholder groups began in 2006, with interviews to understand the needs of existing user groups. Formal stakeholder involvement took place through a Stakeholder Advisory Committee, augmented by Task Group meetings and many small group meetings. Public input was gathered through two Public Forums in June 2006 and January 2007. A further Public Forum will take place on the Draft Master Plan in Spring 2008.

A synopsis of main themes advocated by stakeholders during early public outreach is listed below:

- 1 capture the rural cottage landscape: maintain a sense of the remote, the rough and the experience of elemental nature;**
- 2 create a heterogeneous mix of uses: allow for diversity of uses and landscape types;**
- 3 ensure the park feels open and public: create a park for the whole city and the region;**
- 4 create new and diverse habitats: use ecological systems to diversify species range, improve water quality and connect green corridors to regional systems;**
- 5 provide for outdoor education: create places that support non-didactic, experiential approaches toward learning about the environment;**
- 6 provide strong connections to the city: establish clear entries and pathways that link both north-south and east-west;**
- 7 focus upon the lake: turn the park outward, toward the lake, and create varied experiences, edges and microclimates;**
- 8 allow for active uses: ensure that active recreational spaces, water sports and activity areas are provided within the overall “big nature” landscape setting.**

The Public and Stakeholder process does not end with the Master Plan. Stakeholder and Public participation in and support for the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan are critical for its future success. As the Lake Ontario Park project moves into future planning and design, the public and various Stakeholder Groups will continue to be consulted to ensure that the future park achieves the objectives of the Master Plan and the goals of the park users.

CHAPTER 2

OVERVIEW OF THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE

2.1 ANALYSIS AND KEY FINDINGS

Throughout the Spring and Summer of 2006, the Master Planning Team prepared a research document of field reconnaissance and key findings as part of the first phase of the Lake Ontario Park project. This document is titled 'Summary Report on Field Work and Key Findings', and is available for reference on the WATERFRONToronto website.

The Master Plan builds from these early findings, yet focuses on new propositions, goals, and objectives for a new Lake Ontario Park. Each of the goals and propositions, however, are responses to one or more of the following key site issues identified in the first phase of work:

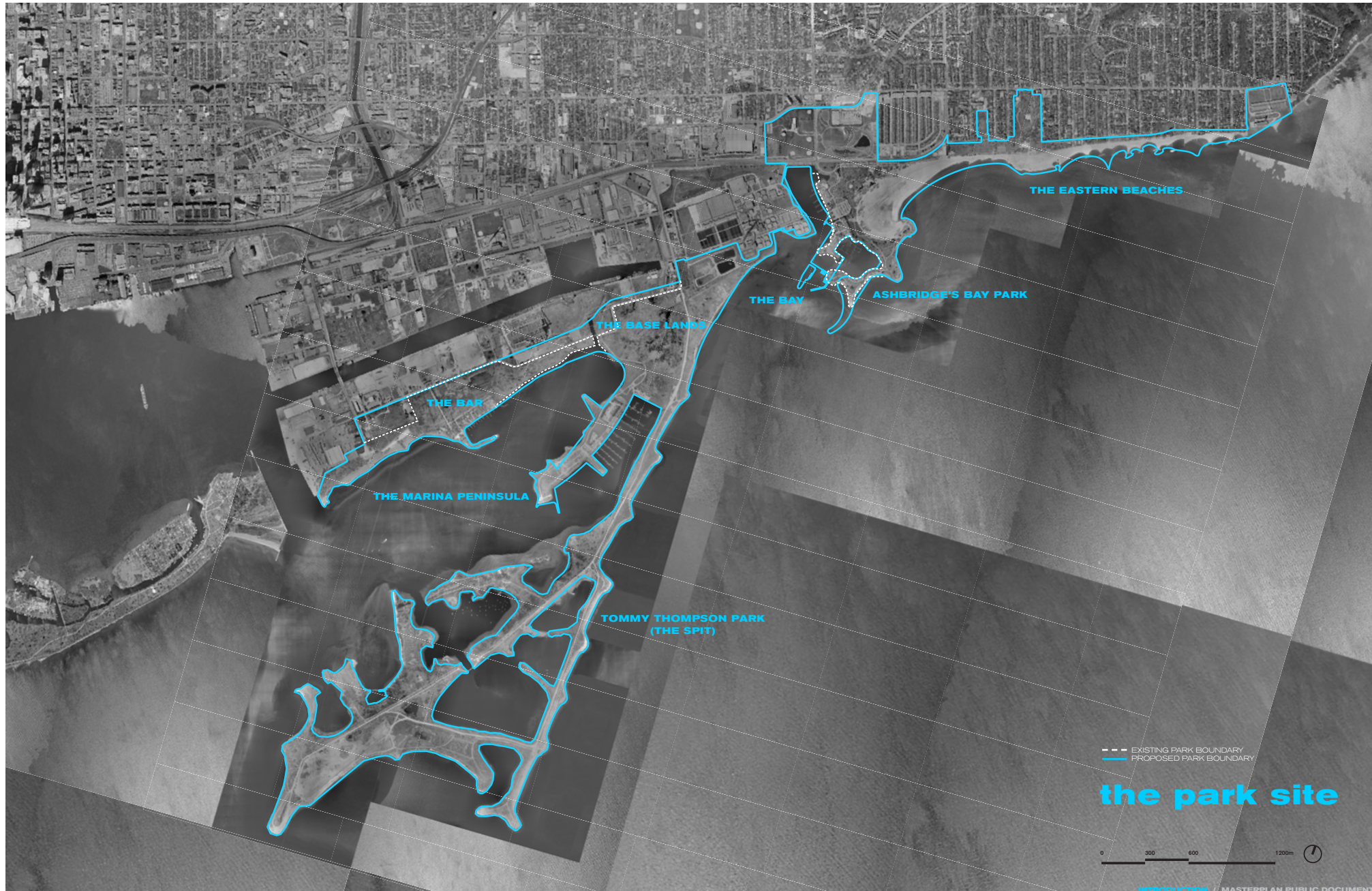
- 1 Change in context as the Port Lands become a mixed use urban centre**
The long-term plan for the Port Lands envisions a dramatic transformation: 240 hectares of new mixed-use development. Roughly 19,400 residential units will be built over time, creating a new community of over 40,000 people. Retail, commercial and office development will bring many more people to the area to work and shop. At the same time, major changes are underway in the Central Waterfront, the lower Don River valley, and other areas adjacent to the park. Planning for a new context and constituency is a key part of the master planning challenge for Lake Ontario Park.
- 2 Dynamism of the Lake Ontario shoreline over time**
The long, crenelated shoreline of the largely man-made land mass of the park creates opportunities for a uniquely diverse array of waterfront experiences, habitats and activities. The engineered shoreline interacts with natural processes of littoral drift, deposition, erosion, freeze and thaw of the lake, wave action, ice scour, and the emergence of pioneering plant and wildlife communities. These interactions produce a dynamic set of conditions and potentials — instability that supports beach and dune plant diversity, discourages unsheltered aquatic marshes, and prompts new users to colonize dormant areas. The design process should build on this dynamism to create a park that is alive and changing. The park design proposes to reveal the process of its making, or earlier configurations of the land like the shifting sand bar of Fisherman's Island. (See Sections 3.6, 3.7 and 8.1).
- 3 Water quality**
The health of the lake is a key issue in the design of this park. Recreational and wildlife use of Lake Ontario are the primary reasons this park is being created, yet water quality is variable and perceptions of it are worse. Lake Ontario Park includes two major public water quality facilities—the Ashbridge's Bay Treatment Plant and the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant—which contribute to the thematics of the park. Finally, a commitment to water

quality enhancement may be a way of honoring Ashbridge's Bay, once a vast, 525-hectare freshwater marsh and highly productive water filtration and habitat system.

Remedial options outlined in the city's Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan, including underground storage and treatment, and effluent treatment in a flow balancing filtration system in Lake Ontario, as well as other initiatives proposed for the Eastern Beaches, Port Lands, Coatsworth Cut and lake watersheds adjacent to the park, have been considered in the Park's design. (See Sections 3.7 and 8.5).

- 4 Unified ensemble**
The goal of the master planning process is to pull together disparate sites to create a unified ensemble while retaining a great deal of diversity in the character and programming of its components. To build continuity, the park plan will have to bridge the separations of the sewage treatment plant, Ashbridge's Bay, and Lakeshore Boulevard. A strong park threshold from Cherry Beach to Ashbridge's Bay will be needed to recast the park territory not as infill or leftovers of the prior port and industrial district, but as a powerful new landscape that transforms its context. Realignment of Unwin Avenue, options for new roads, paths, and crossings of the ship channel have all been explored. To build the diversity of the ensemble, the park design accentuates differences in program, spatial experience, habitat, finish, accessibility and landscape character.
- 5 Creative response to variable soil conditions**
The Port Lands area has been used for industrial purposes, power generation and stockpiling of coal, oil, salt and chemicals for decades. By-products of industrial processes became part of the composition of newly filled land. Not surprisingly, past studies indicate that the quality of soils and groundwater has been affected, but it is expected that further testing will show that areas of concern are fairly localized. In response to these variable conditions, the park design incorporates a range of environmental management to create distinctive landscapes, design features and approaches. (See Sections 8.13 and 8.43).

In addition to these key issues, greater discussion of the existing ecological features and assets of the Lake Ontario Park site are discussed in Chapter 7 of this document, and several existing conditions maps - developed in the first phase of the project - are included in the Appendix. The following sections in Chapter 2 provide a general overview of the Lake Ontario Park site, as well as begin to identify the Master Plan responses to the site's more challenging characteristics.



2.2 SITE | A BIG NATURE PARKLAND

The Lake Ontario Park site is big and wild. Large portions of the existing site are defined by spontaneous, successional landscapes – dense, extensive and thriving communities of pioneering plants and wildlife. Sumac thickets and mature Cottonwood stands, broad wetlands and meadows, mixed woodlands and dynamic cobble shorelines combine with the industrial context to create an expansive landscape that is both aesthetically and functionally ‘wild’. Because of the physically remote setting and unmanaged character of major areas of the site – these wild, urban landscapes have indeed become populated with a relatively broad range of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife species (Appendix 12.11). When understood in relation to the site’s proximity to downtown, the scale of the existing natural areas is impressive: these are ‘big nature’ sites in one of North America’s great urban centres.

This is not to say that all of Lake Ontario Park is - or will be - wilderness. Ashbridge’s Bay Park and the parks along the Eastern Beaches are very much ‘parks’ in the traditional sense: well managed and well-used sites full of social and recreational amenities, including trails, boardwalks, seating, performance spaces, sport fields, and mixed shade tree and specimen plantings. Notwithstanding this presence of ‘parks within the park’, there is great potential in conceiving of the new ensemble parkland as a site of ‘big nature’. This ‘big nature’ framework is a lens through which the City and public might view the new park: a distinctive, one-of-a-kind urban parkland that thematically exploits its remarkably extensive - and truly wild – ecological resources. The thriving habitat that has emerged on lakefill and dredged material at Tommy Thompson Park points to the potential for human intervention to not only strengthen local ecosystems here, but also to create extraordinary new landscape settings for public experience and recreation.

The existing ecological resources are documented in detail in Chapter 7 of this document, as well as in several sections of the Appendix. It is important to note upfront, however, that the existing designations of Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) and Important Bird Areas (IBAs), the presence of locally rare species found in Tommy Thompson Park and the Base Lands and the strong stakeholder desire to retain the site’s character of wilderness and refuge have all shaped the goals, objectives and proposals of the Master Plan. The Master Plan recognizes the site’s important ecological resources as critical assets of the new park, and identifies opportunities to both enhance these resources, as well as exploit them for aesthetic effect. Lake Ontario Park will be a beautifully unconventional park: new features, new amenities, new furnishings and new landscapes will contribute to a unique aesthetic character that is uncommonly rugged and rustic.

Toronto will soon boast of its new, “big nature park”.



AERIAL VIEW OF TOMMY THOMPSON PARK
MATURE SUCCESSIONAL AREAS CAN BE SEEN ON THE NORTHERLY SIDE (LEFT),
EARLY SUCCESSION CAN BE SEEN ON THE SOUTHERLY SIDE (RIGHT)

2.3 SITE | SOILS, CANOPY & FLEXIBILITY

Lake Ontario Park is an unusually beautiful landscape. Paradoxically, this wild, elemental site exists upon mostly man-made land, with a history of past industrial and port uses. Historic lake-filling and industrial uses have left a legacy of variable environmental conditions that will be addressed as part of the evolution of creating Lake Ontario Park. Not surprisingly, past studies indicate that the quality of soils and groundwater has been affected, but it is expected that further testing will show that areas of concern are fairly localized (see Section 12.7 of the Appendix for the preliminary soils findings).

ENVIRONMENTAL SITE MANAGEMENT

Although past industrial activity and historic infill materials have created environmental issues in parts of the Bar and the Baselands, the risks to public health from typical recreational uses of the park are expected to be very low or minimal. The Lake Ontario Park Master Plan is an opportunity to investigate and address historic environmental issues where necessary. As an adaptive planning response to unknown soil conditions, the Master Plan provides flexible design proposals for dealing with Environmental Site Management in several areas of the park.

Within the Master Plan document, the term Environmental Site Management is used as an all-encompassing one, and references a broad range of soil and site improvement practices that include capping, excavation, phyto-remediation and the like. Environmental site management plans will be developed and implemented in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Toronto Public Health and Health Canada.

PRESERVING THE EXISTING CANOPY

The Master Plan team understands that there is strong Stakeholder desire to preserve, wherever possible, the existing tree canopy within the Lake Ontario Park site. It is too early, however, to fully understand the implications of environmental management for the existing trees canopy at the park site. As more comprehensive information becomes available, appropriate strategies will be developed for specific sites. In some cases, it may be necessary to remove trees to address soil or groundwater issues. However, Waterfront Toronto and the City are committed to preserving, restoring or regenerating tree cover where possible and to providing a substantial increase in tree canopy coverage across Lake Ontario Park. The result will be a greater diversity of native tree species, contributing to the overall health and physical extent of the City's urban forest.

FLEXIBILITY

The Master Plan offers flexible strategies and organizational frameworks that can adapt and adjust to future soil investigations, tree inventories and changing public desires for the Park. The hillforms of 'the Bar' (Section 8.1) and the waterbodies in the Base Lands (Section 8.4) are two examples of flexible landscape elements that can shift, grow, multiply and move to most accurately respond to existing site parameters. Through its flexibility, the Master Plan attempts to offer a clear and powerful vision for the new park that is able to incorporate and exploit the loved, desired and functional qualities of the existing site – for these are the qualities that will shape the Park's unusually beautiful character.



A DYNAMIC SITE HISTORY

THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE HAS A LEGACY OF INDUSTRIAL AND PORT USES. THE PARK DESIGN INCORPORATES A RANGE OF STRATEGIES FOR RESPONDING TO THE CONTINUUM OF SOIL CONDITIONS TO CREATE DESIGN FEATURES AND APPROACHES.

2.4 SITE | PARKS WITHIN THE PARK

Lake Ontario Park will be the defining recreational amenity of Toronto's waterfront. The new park takes previously disparate parts of the lake shore edge and assembles them into one large inter-connected whole – a new park comprised of 925 acres of contiguous parkland and more than 37 kilometers of waters edge.

One of the great challenges in planning a new park at this site is the presence of the many loved 'places' that exist along the water's edge: the Outer Harbour Sailing Federation, the windsurfing club, the kiteboarding beach, the off-leash dog areas, the Base Lands, Tommy Thompson Park, Woodbine Beach and the parks of the Eastern Beaches. These spaces are indeed some of Toronto's most cherished sites, and all design efforts need to balance the critical need to unify the vast park while preserving the elements and character that make the site truly remarkable.

In its proposals for the various areas of the park, the Master Plan attempts to record, enhance and exploit the unique beauty and distinctive recreational settings of the existing site. Consultation with existing park users, boaters and activists has been instrumental in defining the full range of characteristics, qualities and features that make the existing places so memorable. Continued consultation with the public and Stakeholders through subsequent design stages will be critical to the Parks success.

The proposed network of trails, remediative earthworks, waterbodies and points of refuge are strategic: they represent a solid and practical means of creating a connected parkland without being overly prescriptive or transformative. The effect will be a vast, fully accessible landscape that is defined by a richly varied collection of places for play, reflection, exploration, learning and refuge.



THE MANY EXISTING PLACES WITHIN THE LARGE PARK
THE UNIQUE COTTAGE SETTING OF THE COMMUNITY BOATING CLUBS ON
THE NORTH SHORE IS ONE OF THE MUCH-LOVED AND CHARACTER-DEFINING
PLACES OF THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK SITE

CHAPTER 3

ORGANIZING IDEAS

PROMOTE A FLEXIBLE AND RESILIENT ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 A CONNECTIVE, GREEN WATERFRONT

The Lake Ontario Park project has the unprecedented potential to assemble a continuous green lakefront that links the City's great ecological assets: the lower Don River and Greenway to Tommy Thompson Park. Toronto will set a new standard for innovative park planning and design with its vibrant, active and refreshingly wild lakefront park.



* CURRENT WATERFRONT TORONTO PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT BY OTHERS.
 GRAPHIC PROVIDED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

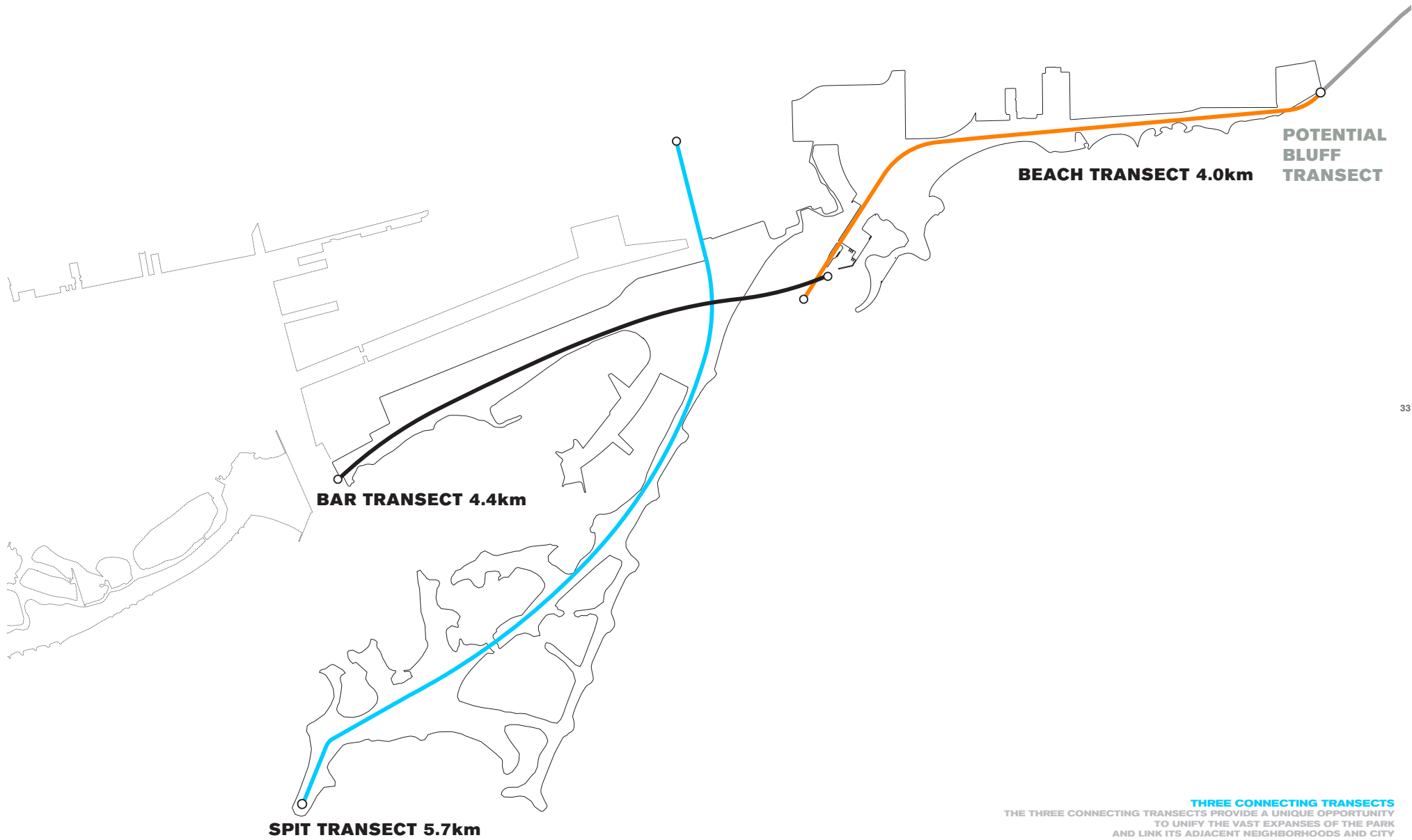
A CONTINUOUS GREEN NETWORK
 LAKE ONTARIO PARK IS A GREEN 'CONNECTOR':
 LINKING THE DON RIVER GREENWAY TO TOMMY THOMPSON PARK
 VIA THE BAR AND THE BASE LANDS

3.2 37 KILOMETRES OF SHORELINE

Vast, varied and rough, the extensive edge conditions of Lake Ontario Park support an incredibly diverse array of places, found conditions, features, habitats and uses. The long, crenelated shoreline of the largely man-made landmass of the park creates opportunities for a uniquely diverse array of waterfront experiences, habitats and activities. The engineered shoreline interacts with natural processes of littoral drift, deposition, erosion, freeze and thaw of the lake, wave action, ice scour, and the emergence of pioneering plant and wildlife communities. These interactions produce a dynamic set of conditions and potentials, supporting beach and dune plant diversity, while prompting new public uses for otherwise under-utilized sites. The master plan builds on this dynamism to create a park that is alive, changing and multivariate.

3.3 3 TRANSECTS

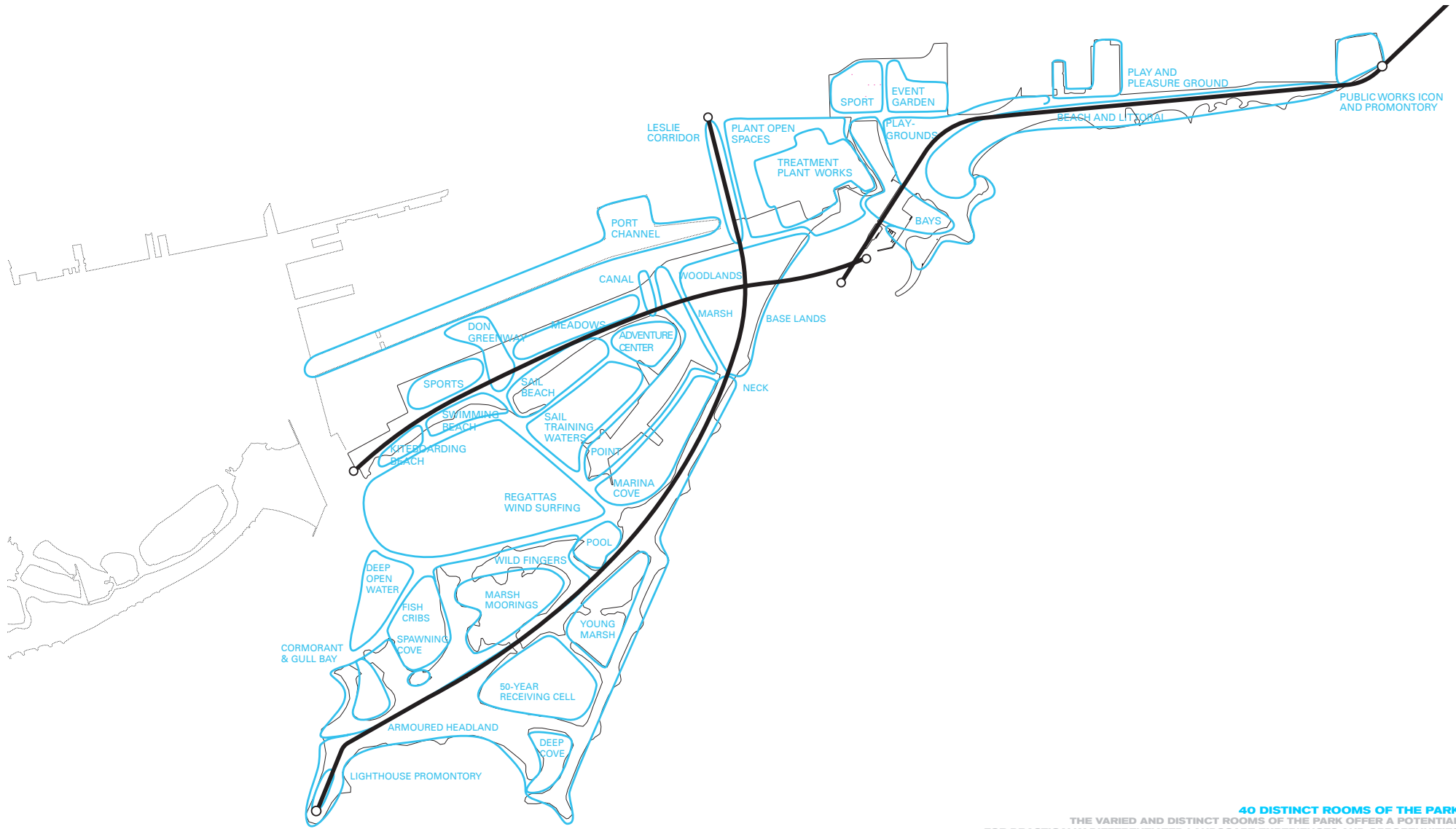
Three primary path armatures create a single coherent park framework and introduce visitors to a variety of distinctive landscapes along each trajectory. The transects represent the principle elements in a 'connective network' of circulation paths that unify the diverse park and link to the adjacent neighbourhoods and city. As continuous, unobstructed pathways, the transects pull together disparate landscapes to create a unified ensemble, while retaining a great deal of variety in the character and programming of Lake Ontario Park.



THREE CONNECTING TRANSECTS
 THE THREE CONNECTING TRANSECTS PROVIDE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY
 TO UNIFY THE VAST EXPANSES OF THE PARK
 AND LINK ITS ADJACENT NEIGHBORHOODS AND CITY

3.4 40 “ROOMS”

Varied zones of distinct character within the 925-acre site offer dramatically different landscape experiences and opportunities for park programming. The transects, rooms and outposts pull together disparate sites to create a unified ensemble of many different landscapes, experiences and uses.



40 DISTINCT ROOMS OF THE PARK
 THE VARIED AND DISTINCT ROOMS OF THE PARK OFFER A POTENTIAL
 FOR DRASTICALLY DIFFERENTIATED LANDSCAPE EXPERIENCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

3.5 400 “OUTPOSTS”

The Master Plan amplifies the site’s numerous points of prospect and refuge as defining elements of the Park’s design. The ‘outposts’ are both new and existing elements of the Lake Ontario Park site, some built and some wild: overlooks, frog ponds, picnic promontories, earthwork outlooks, unique plant colonies, water landings, seating and program amenities. These places are intended to lend a more intimate scale of experiences to the otherwise large-scale park.



PARK OUTPOSTS
THE NEW, RENOVATED, AND EXISTING OUTPOSTS CAPTURE THE DISTINCT AND DIVERSE CHARACTER OF THE PARK; PROVIDING AN ASSEMBLY OF THE PARKS' NODES, POINTS, LOOKOUTS, PICNIC AREAS, PLAYGROUNDS, BEACHES, FIELDS, MEADOWS, PROMONTORIES, AND WATER LANDINGS INTO A UNIFIED PARK EXPERIENCE

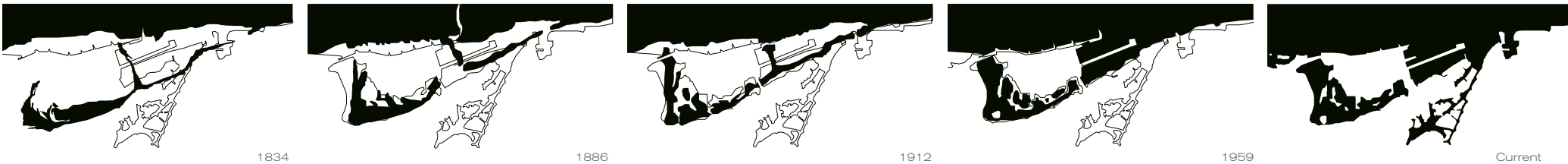
3.6 THE HISTORIC SHORELINE

The Lake Ontario Park shoreline has historically been dynamic and ephemeral. Moving sand bars along the margins of Lake Ontario were once suited to fishing, hunting, riding and camping, not settlement.

The original park shoreline was primarily defined by Fisherman's Island, a sand bar that sheltered the Inner Harbour and Ashbridge's Bay, a 1,300-acre marsh. Rich with plentiful fish and game, this protected harbour and marsh were the primary reasons for the founding of Toronto. In more recent history, Ashbridge's Bay was filled to create the portlands and the sewage treatment plant site. In turn, the spit was created from dredging sands and silts from the port. A defining, historical landscape of Toronto was lost.

The Master Plan looks to re-invent and amplify the historic dynamic character of the original shoreline through a vibrant mix of active and passive landscapes, the cultivation of vast areas of 'urban wilderness', and an understanding of the park's evolving form over time. Specifically, the bar and the bay form two historical landscapes that the Master Plan seeks to recover, or at least reinterpret.

38





Legend

- HISTORIC SHORELINE
- LAKE ONTARIO PARK

LAKE ONTARIO'S HISTORIC SHORELINE
 THE MASTER PLAN PROMOTES THE HISTORIC DYNAMIC CHARACTER OF THE ORIGINAL SHORELINE THROUGH A VIBRANT MIX OF ACTIVE AND PASSIVE LANDSCAPES, THE CULTIVATION OF VAST AREAS OF 'URBAN WILDERNESS', AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE PARK'S EVOLVING FORM OVER TIME

3.7 THE BAR AND THE BAY

Two historical geomorphological features—the Fisherman’s Island sand bar and Ashbridge’s Bay—are re-invented as new remediative, ecological and recreational landscapes in the Lake Ontario Park vision.

THE BAR (HISTORIC FISHERMAN’S ISLAND SAND BAR)

Whereas Fisherman’s Island was a historic, shifting sand bar, the existing landscape of western Lake Ontario Park was principally constructed by processes of filling and historic use that are not registered in any way in the existing site.

Materials used for fill vary considerably in nature and may require environmental site management to protect human and ecological health. The Port Lands area has been used for industrial purposes for decades and coal, oil, fuel and salt were, and continue to be, stored in the area. These elements have migrated into the soil profile and groundwater and are in some cases mobile.

The Master Plan looks to re-imagine the historic Fisherman’s Island as an interpretive planning model for a new defining edge of the city: ‘The Bar’. The Bar is proposed as a new form of dynamic shoreline landscape: a soft, undulating landscape of unique recreation and active play, a site of successional and managed regeneration and an evolving site of environmental site management and strategic implementation.

THE BAY (HISTORIC ASHBRIDGE’S BAY MARSH)

The eastern portion of Toronto’s waterfront has been heavily modified over the past 150 years. The Port Lands and Tommy Thompson Park largely consist of modern fills that were dredged, filled and shaped in the twentieth century. The pre-fill history of the area likely featured a succession of pre-contact Aboriginal uses followed by nineteenth century Euro-Canadian activities.

The Ashbridge’s Bay marsh was originally a 520ha area of extremely productive cattail marsh, shallow pools and sand. The marsh provided extensive habitat for wildlife such as breeding waterfowl, including loons, geese and swans; turtles; and muskrats. During the 1880s, spawning northern pike were recorded migrating into Ashbridge’s Bay by the thousands.

The productivity of the marsh and the protected harbour afforded by the sand bars of Fisherman’s Island/ Toronto Islands are the reasons why the city is located where it is. A major goal of the Lake Ontario Park design is to recapture some aspects of this lost, defining landscape.

The Master Plan looks to re-imagine the historic Ashbridge’s Bay as a new green landmark, ‘The Bay’: a publicly accessible, constructed wetland that helps to filter and clean the city’s stormwater before its release into the Lake.





Legend
THE BAR
THE BAY

THE BAR AND THE BAY
THE HISTORICAL FISHERMAN'S ISLAND SAND BAR AND ASHRIDGE'S BAY ARE RE-INVENTED AS NEW REMEDIATED, ECOLOGICAL AND RECREATIONAL LANDSCAPES IN THE LAKE ONTARIO PARK VISION

CHAPTER 4
THE MASTER PLAN
A BOLD, PRACTICAL FRAMEWORK OF RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 SITUATING THE MASTER PLAN

In moving towards the various stated goals of the project, the Master Plan attempts to balance the demands of many diverse public uses and activities with the ecological value of a large-scale, continuous lakefront.

In the pages that follow, the Master Plan recommendations are paired with a series of numbered objectives. Whereas some of the details of the plans, diagrams and strategies require additional review, consultation and design, the objectives represent the critical guiding principles for creating a park landscape at the Lake Ontario Park site. The plans are flexible, and will be adapted to respond to future planning processes, whereas the objectives are intended to remain consistent throughout the planning and implementation phases of Lake Ontario Park.

The map on the right is an overlay of the Master Plan proposals on an existing aerial photograph of the site. The graphic highlights the linkages to the City's circulation framework of roads and trails. Note that lakefilling is kept to a minimum, and is proposed solely where a critical linkage is needed between the western end of the park (Eastern Gap to the Base Lands) and the eastern end (Ashbridge's Bay Park and the Eastern Beaches). Fish Habitat Compensation is required for all lakefilling at Lake Ontario Park - one benefit of limiting the lakefill.

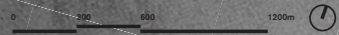


- THE BAR**
- 1 EASTERN GAP TAXI LANDING AND PROMONTORY
 - 2 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
 - 3 CHERRY ST. GATEWAY
 - 4 FIRST NATIONS SITE
 - 5 DON GREENWAY
 - 6 TRANSITION SPORTS FIELDS
 - 7 CRICKET PITCH
 - 8 JUNIOR SPORTS FIELDS
 - 9 FLEXIBLE OPEN FIELD
 - 10 DON GREENWAY PROMONTORY
 - 11 CHERRY BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)
 - 12 SAIL AND WINDSURF CLUBS
 - 13 OUTER HARBOUR SAILING FEDERATION (OHSF)
 - 14 PUBLIC BEACH FRONT
 - 15 HEARN
 - 16 PORTLANDS ENERGY CENTRE
 - 17 ALLOTMENT GARDENS
- THE MARINA PENINSULA**
- 18 ADVENTURE CENTRE
 - 19 HANLAN BOAT CLUB (RELOCATED)
 - 20 OUTER HARBOUR PROMENADE & LANDINGS
 - 21 OUTER HARBOUR MARINA
 - 22 BOAT STAGING AND STORAGE FIELDS
 - 23 PUBLIC BOAT LAUNCH RAMPS (RELOCATED)
 - 24 TORONTO HYDROPLANE (RELOCATED)
 - 25 RESTAURANTS / CAFES
 - 26 PUBLIC FISHING PIERS AND PROMONTORIES
- THE SPIT**
- 27 EMBAYMENT A
 - 28 EMBAYMENT B
 - 29 EMBAYMENT C
 - 30 EMBAYMENT D
 - 31 AQUATIC PARK SAILING CLUB
 - 32 ENVIRONMENTAL SHELTER
 - 33 ECOLOGICAL RESEARCH STATION
 - 34 CELL 1
 - 35 CELL 2
 - 36 CELL 3
 - 37 EAST COVE
 - 38 LIGHTHOUSE PROMONTORY

- THE BASE LANDS**
- 39 WETLAND WATERWAY
 - 40 BOARDWALK (LONG TERM)
 - 41 RIDGE & TROUGH FOREST
 - 42 MARSH & OPEN WATER
 - 43 UPLAND FOREST
 - 44 SWAMP FOREST
 - 45 TOMMY THOMPSON PARK GATEWAY
- THE BAY**
- 46 BAR TRANSECT OUTLOOK
 - 47 ASHBURIDGE'S BAY INLET
 - 48 ABYC SAILING SCHOOL AND DINGHY AREA
 - 49 NAVY LEAGUE (RELOCATED)
 - 50 ASHBURIDGE'S BAY YACHT CLUB (ABYC)
 - 51 BALMY BEACH CANOE CLUB (RELOCATED)
 - 52 PROTECTED, CALM WATERWAY
 - 53 BRIDGE AND BREAKWATER
 - 54 PICNIC PROMONTORY
 - 55 WATER TREATMENT WETLAND
 - 56 ENTRY DRIVE AND PARKING
 - 57 BEACHES LIONS CLUB
 - 58 PICNIC AND WATER PLAY AREA
 - 59 NEW BEACHES FORMED BY DEPOSITION
 - 60 PUBLIC KAYAK AND CANOE LAUNCH
 - 61 BEACH VOLLEYBALL
 - 62 BMX FACILITY SKATEBOARD PARK
- THE EASTERN BEACHES**
- 63 BEACH TRANSECT BOARDWALK
 - 64 R.C. HARRIS PIER
 - 65 POTENTIAL BLUFF TRANSECT CONNECTION
 - 66 SILVER BIRCH RECREATION PIER
 - 67 GLEN MANOR RECREATION PIER
 - 68 BALMY BEACH CLUB HOUSE
 - 69 KEW - BALMY BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)
 - 70 MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL
 - 71 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
 - 72 FLOWERING MEADOW (NUTRIENT TRAPS)
 - 73 KEW GARDENS
 - 74 RUNNING TRACK & MULTI-USE FIELD
 - 75 WOODBINE BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)

lake ontario park

master plan



4.2 THE ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN

The Lake Ontario Park Master Plan capitalizes upon and amplifies the existing “wild” characteristics of this unique site – the rough and remote landscapes, the open horizons and vistas, the active Outer Harbour, the exposure to the elements and to the vast scale of the lake. It creates a new active parkland, a place with extensive opportunities for physical exertion, play and passive use, while at the same time diversifying the range, extent and health of its various ecosystems.

Lake Ontario Park is intended to become a regional park that will be a signature destination and amenity for the Greater Toronto Area. It will also serve the adjacent neighborhoods, which are expected to change dramatically over the next 30 years. A new residential community of over 40,000 people is planned for the Port Lands. The retail, commercial and office development will bring many more people to the area and the park over time. At the same time, major planning projects for the Central Waterfront, West Donlands and Lower Donlands are paving the way towards achieving a connective network of open space and park amenities.

In the context of the changing waterfront and city, it must be understood that the greatest efficacy of the Master Plan is in providing a series of strategic recommendations to guide organization of land-use principles, key program sites and features, circulation networks and new and expanded natural areas. Although some of the park features and places currently exist, the Master Plan largely reflects a long-term vision that will require continued consultation and design prior to implementation.

A project of this scale and complexity requires determined leadership at the civic level in addition to a clear set of guiding principles that will ensure that the park grows into a coherent, signature park for the city. To this end, the Master Plan is intended to be both a bold, big picture vision for the future park, as well as a grounded, practical framework of realistic opportunities. To a large extent, the Master Plan proposals are based on the challenges and opportunities identified throughout the research and consultation phases of the project. Information on the project site, however, is still being compiled by a range of consultants at varying capacities. The information from these findings - soils investigations, tree inventories, bathymetry soundings, Environmental Assessments - will be used in the process of translating the following principles into the design of physical park.

Repeated here for reference are the six primary goals of the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan:

- 1 Promote a bold, flexible and resilient landscape framework.**
The Master Plan is a framework of strategic recommendations and physical landscape improvements. While the Master Plan demonstrates a bold, coherent and sensible organization of the park, the precise configuration, scale, location, quantity and character of its elements are adjustable according to future planning and design review, environmental assessment processes and the changing needs of the Toronto community.
- 2 Create a vibrant lakefront of distinctive activities and unique water-oriented programming.** Lake Ontario Park offers extraordinary large-scale settings for a range of activities and programs that are unique in the city, allowing for extensive active and passive recreation, diverse watersports, educational amenities and cultural enrichment;
- 3 Build a connective system to unify the large park.**
Create a network of pedestrian and multi-use trails that link together and unify the diverse parcels of the existing site with the surrounding city;
- 4 Cultivate a rich mosaic of terrestrial and aquatic life that becomes the center of a continuous regional greenway.**
Recognizing the presence of extraordinary ecological resources, the Master Plan's ecological goal is to preserve, restore and diversify the range, extent and health of its various ecosystems.
- 5 Create a realistic and sustainable landscape.**
By promoting flexible environmental site management responses, natural succession and a sensitive implementation timeline, the Master Plan offers a realistic and sustainable park framework.
- 6 Preserve and amplify the remarkably unique settings.**
Responding to its historical formation, its large-scale and its elemental character, the Master Plan seeks to capitalize on the existing “wild” characteristics of this unique site;



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- 49 NAVY LEAGUE (RELOCATED)
- 50 ASHBRIDGE'S BAY YACHT CLUB (ABYC)
- 51 BALMY BEACH CANOE CLUB (RELOCATED)
- 52 PROTECTED, CALM WATERWAY
- 53 BRIDGE AND BREAKWATER
- 54 PICNIC PROMONTORY
- 55 WATER TREATMENT WETLAND
- 56 ENTRY DRIVE AND PARKING
- 57 BEACHES LIONS CLUB
- 58 PICNIC AND WATER PLAY AREA
- 59 NEW BEACHES FORMED BY DEPOSITION
- 60 PUBLIC KAYAK AND CANOE LAUNCH
- 61 BEACH VOLLEYBALL
- 62 BMX FACILITY SKATEBOARD PARK
- THE EASTERN BEACHES**
- 63 BEACH TRANSECT BOARDWALK
- 64 R.C. HARRIS PIER
- 65 POTENTIAL BLUFF TRANSECT CONNECTION
- 66 SILVER BIRCH RECREATION PIER
- 67 GLEN MANOR RECREATION PIER
- 68 BALMY BEACH CLUB HOUSE
- 69 KEW - BALMY BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)
- 70 MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL
- 71 OFF-LEASH DOG AREA
- 72 FLOWERING MEADOW (NUTRIENT TRAPS)
- 73 KEW GARDENS
- 74 RUNNING TRACK & MULTI-USE FIELD
- 75 WOODBINE BEACH (SWIMMING BEACH)

lake ontario park
 master plan

0 300 600 1200m

4.3 PARK LAND-USE

This section of the Master Plan identifies land-use categories and areas of the park site, and provides an estimated land-use breakdown for the full park landscape, as per the categories of active; passive; habitat & natural areas; and boating. The land area estimates and park uses for each category are provided for descriptive purposes only, and are not intended to be prescriptive of how land-use is to be defined in Lake Ontario Park. It is important to note that these descriptions are not exclusive, as the boundaries between the various land-use categories are often blurred.

ACTIVE

The 'ACTIVE' land-use category refers to those park areas designated for high energy; active sports play, including customized and multi-use fields for formal and informal use, and all multi-use trails.

PASSIVE

The 'PASSIVE' land-use category refers to those park areas designated for general park use, formal and informal, including open lawn areas, picnic areas, playgrounds, youth pods, pedestrian trails, fishing piers, boardwalks, outposts, and beaches. The 'PASSIVE' land-use category differs from the 'HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS' category in that these areas are intended to be the primary areas for general use and leisure activities. Although consisting principally of soft, green landscape and beaches, the 'PASSIVE' areas will receive the bulk of daily park use and visitor activity, and will be maintained in a manner that differs from the 'HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS'.

HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS

The 'HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS' land-use category refers to those park areas that are intended to evolve into managed and increasingly 'naturalized' landscapes, including regeneration areas, managed native woodlands, managed meadows, and managed wetlands (for stormwater and habitat). Although these park areas may have restricted or limited public access during management, regeneration, or 'nesting' periods, the intention is to maintain their accessibility through walking, jogging, and hiking trails, educational outposts, and hillform overlooks.

BOATING

The 'BOATING' land-use category refers to those park areas that are principally used for boating and boating-related activities, including public and private boating clubs and organizations, water-sport sites (z), and boat launches.

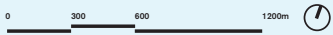
48





- Legend**
- HABITAT / NATURAL AREAS
 - PASSIVE PARKLAND
 - ACTIVE PARKLAND
 - BOATING & WATERSPORTS
 - TRANSECTS

**park land-use
master plan**



CHAPTER 5
PROGRAM & ACTIVITIES

**CREATE A VIBRANT LAKEFRONT OF DISTINCTIVE ACTIVITIES
AND UNIQUE WATER-ORIENTED PROGRAMMING**

5.1 PARK ACTIVITIES

As stated previously, Lake Ontario Park will be the defining recreational amenity of Toronto's waterfront. The Master Plan aims to promote the development of a lively mix of programs by creating extraordinary settings to accommodate a wide range of distinctive activities at Lake Ontario Park.

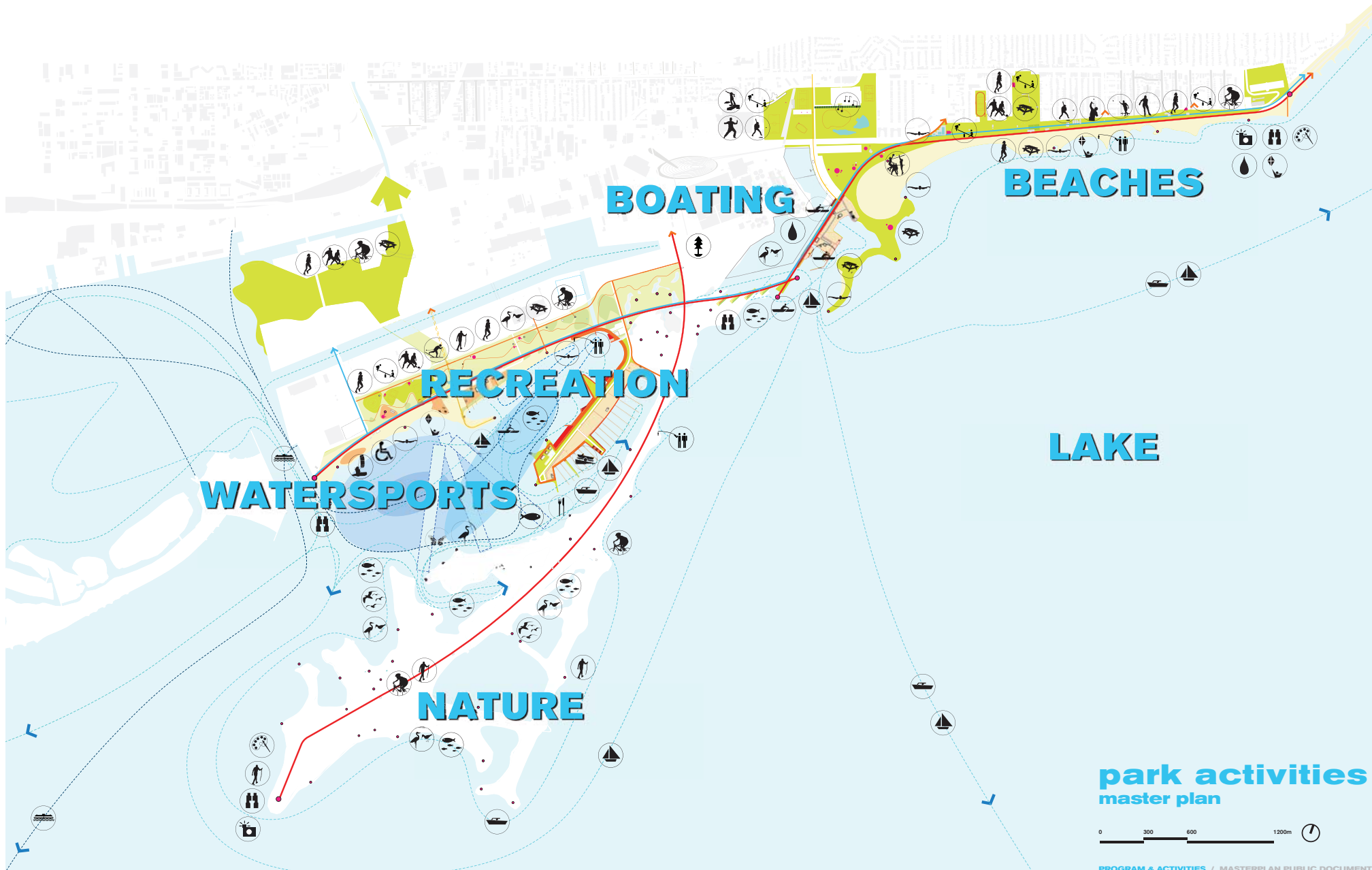
The program strategy for the Master Plan has three primary objectives:

- 1 Create a distinctive programmatic identity for the park that is contemporary, active and green;
- 2 Design a durable recreational framework that is flexible enough to accommodate new site information and future environmental assessment; and
- 3 Coordinate park programming to respect existing natural resources and important site features.

The many recommendations for recreation, educational amenities and cultural enrichment at Lake Ontario Park include:

- running, cycling, skating and seating along the 3 transects and extensive network of multi-use trails;
- wading and swimming in the newly renovated and extended beaches;
- exploring the unique habitats in the Base Lands;
- viewing the downtown skyline from multiple perspectives;
- combing the beaches for found objects and aquatic life;
- boating, windsurfing and kite boarding in the harbour;
- hosting picnics, bonfires and fireworks;
- renting a canoe for the afternoon at the Adventure Centre;
- kayaking through the aquatic landscapes of The Spit;
- sprint canoe & kayak programs in the calm water of Ashbridge's Bay;
- playing competitive softball, soccer, tennis and volleyball;
- eating in new cafés at Cherry Beach and the Marina Peninsula with views back to Toronto;
- touring the emergent landscapes of Tommy Thompson Park;
- take a guided birdwatching tour to view the spring songbirds as they come through;
- visiting and learning about First Nations heritage;
- bringing children to the distinctive waterfront playgrounds and eco-education 'outposts';
- enjoying sailing lessons at the harbour boatclubs; and
- fishing off the piers.





5.2 ACTIVE RECREATION

There is tremendous potential at Lake Ontario Park for a wide range of active uses to be set within generous and diverse landscapes - a rich reserve for nature and wildlife, cultural and social life, environmental education and outdoor activities. The sheer size of the site allows seemingly incompatible programs (wild, natural areas and major public gatherings) to coexist.

Lake Ontario Park will be a destination park. The future park will attract users - including new active recreation participants - from across the city and beyond. In addition, Lake Ontario Park will also have to fulfill the role of a neighbourhood park for residential communities that will be developed in the West Don Lands, East Bayfront and the Port Lands. Understanding that Lake Ontario Park will require designated active recreational facilities, the Master Plan looks to concentrate new facilities in proximity to parking and primary vehicular intersections.

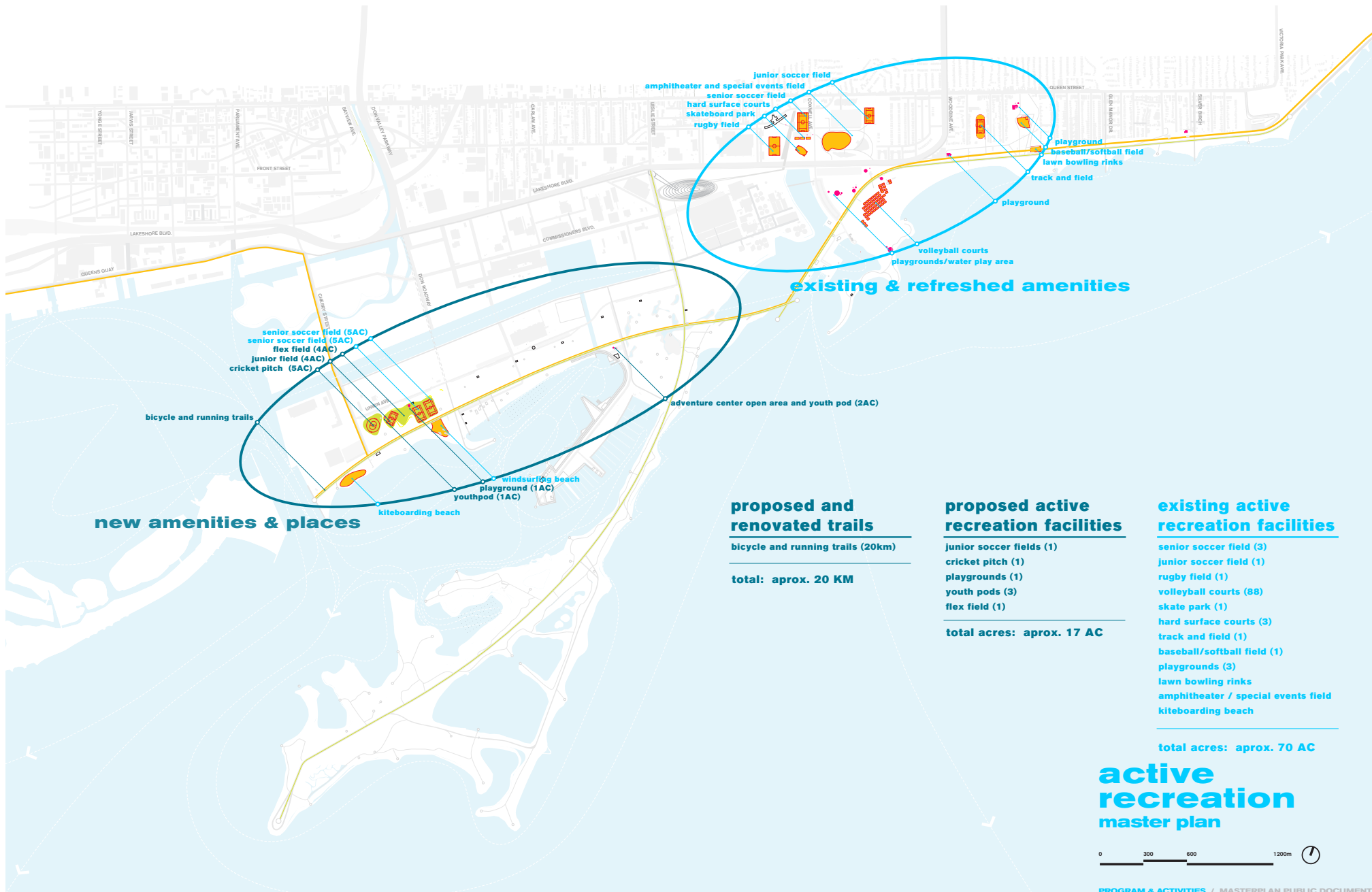
Active recreational programs are concentrated in three high-intensity areas: The Bar, The Marina Peninsula and Ashbridge's Bay Park. The primary new active facilities in the Bar are concentrated west of the Don Greenway - given their proximity and access to parking, the Blue Flag swimming beach, the proposed regional sports complex and the Transition Sports Fields. Boating, water recreation facilities, and waterside amenities are also expanded on the Marina Peninsula and within Ashbridge's Bay. Passive program areas are more dispersed. All of these settings are nested in open landscapes laced with paths and trails.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan has three primary objectives for active recreation in Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Concentrate active programs and structures at major intersections in the park, responding to both central connectivity and the preservation of large open landscape areas;
- 2 Create diversely-scaled, multi-purpose recreational facilities for different user and age groups;
- 3 Identify opportunities for commercial programs that will help generate revenue and sustain the park; and
- 4 Locate sports field footprints to avoid or minimize tree removal.





new amenities & places

- senior soccer field (5AC)
- senior soccer field (5AC)
- flex field (4AC)
- junior field (4AC)
- cricket pitch (5AC)
- bicycle and running trails
- windsurfing beach
- playground (1AC)
- youthpod (1AC)
- kiteboarding beach
- adventure center open area and youth pod (2AC)

proposed and renovated trails

- bicycle and running trails (20km)
- total: approx. 20 KM**

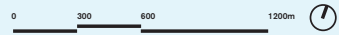
proposed active recreation facilities

- junior soccer fields (1)
- cricket pitch (1)
- playgrounds (1)
- youth pods (3)
- flex field (1)
- total acres: approx. 17 AC**

existing active recreation facilities

- senior soccer field (3)
- junior soccer field (1)
- rugby field (1)
- volleyball courts (88)
- skate park (1)
- hard surface courts (3)
- track and field (1)
- baseball/softball field (1)
- playgrounds (3)
- lawn bowling rinks
- amphitheater / special events field
- kiteboarding beach
- total acres: approx. 70 AC**

active recreation master plan



5.3 PASSIVE RECREATION

The unique settings and landscapes of Lake Ontario Park will make for wonderfully distinctive opportunities for passive park experiences. Many users of the existing park sites have already capitalized on this potential - hiking and exploring the Base Lands and Tommy Thompson Park, picnicking at Cherry Beach, seasonal events with Promise and fishing in the Outer Harbour. With the Master Plan proposals for the Bar and Marina Peninsula landscape, the range of amenities and possibilities for informal and passive uses will increase tremendously. To a large extent, the passive recreational facilities will consist of flexible open areas for informal play, hiking and picnicking. New trails are proposed to increase experiences for hikers, walkers and bladders and new fishing piers will be added along the water's edge near the Adventure Centre and Marina Peninsula. Each of these new amenities and landscapes - particularly in the Bar - will be designed to cultivate the rustic, rugged character of the existing landscape.

Because a significant portion of the Bar landscape east of Regatta Road is designated as an ESA, the Master Plan proposes a gradual shift from active to informal uses as one moves eastward from the Don Greenway. This is achieved by having the new active recreation concentrated in the western end of the park and less structured facilities as one moves toward Leslie Street.

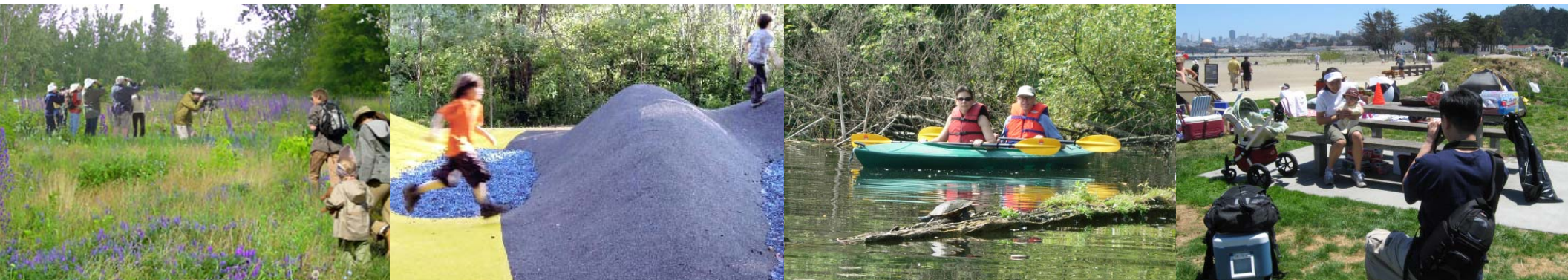
The north side of the Marina Peninsula is proposed as a recreation promenade for viewing and enjoying water-oriented activities: fishing, canoeing, kayaking and sailing.

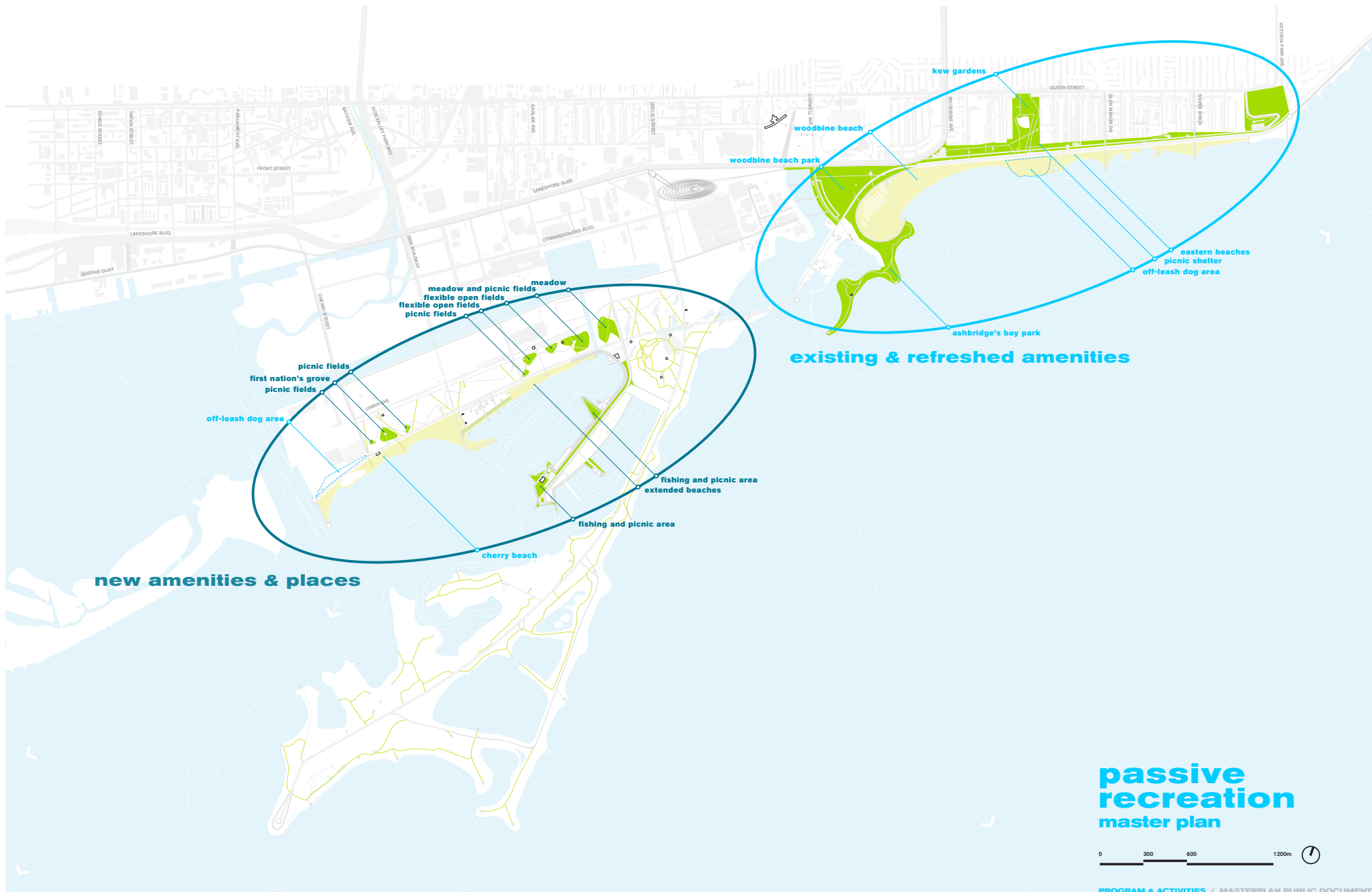
The Base Lands and Tommy Thompson Park will continue to host passive experiences with their trails, outposts and through guided tours. The parks along the Eastern Beaches will also continue to provide a variety of public amenities for informal use.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

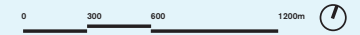
The Master Plan has three primary objectives for passive recreation in Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Provide a variety of multi-purpose, informal park features and landscapes that exploit the great recreational potentials and unique settings of the park site;
- 2 Ensure that the scale, configuration and topography of passive park features enrich the experiences of the varied, rugged character of the park; and
- 3 Ensure a means for protecting sensitive natural areas, regeneration zones and habitats through a clear, legible system of signage and wayfinding.





**passive
recreation
master plan**



5.4 BOATING & WATERSPORTS

The presence of diverse waterfront activities and water-oriented facilities is a defining characteristic of the Lake Ontario Park site.

Sailing, canoeing, kayaking, rowing, diving, cruising, windsurfing and kiteboarding all contribute to an extraordinarily distinctive urban waterfront. The Master Plan seeks to preserve these unique qualities that help make the site dynamic, and responsive to the long history of shoreline activities and water-oriented lifestyles.

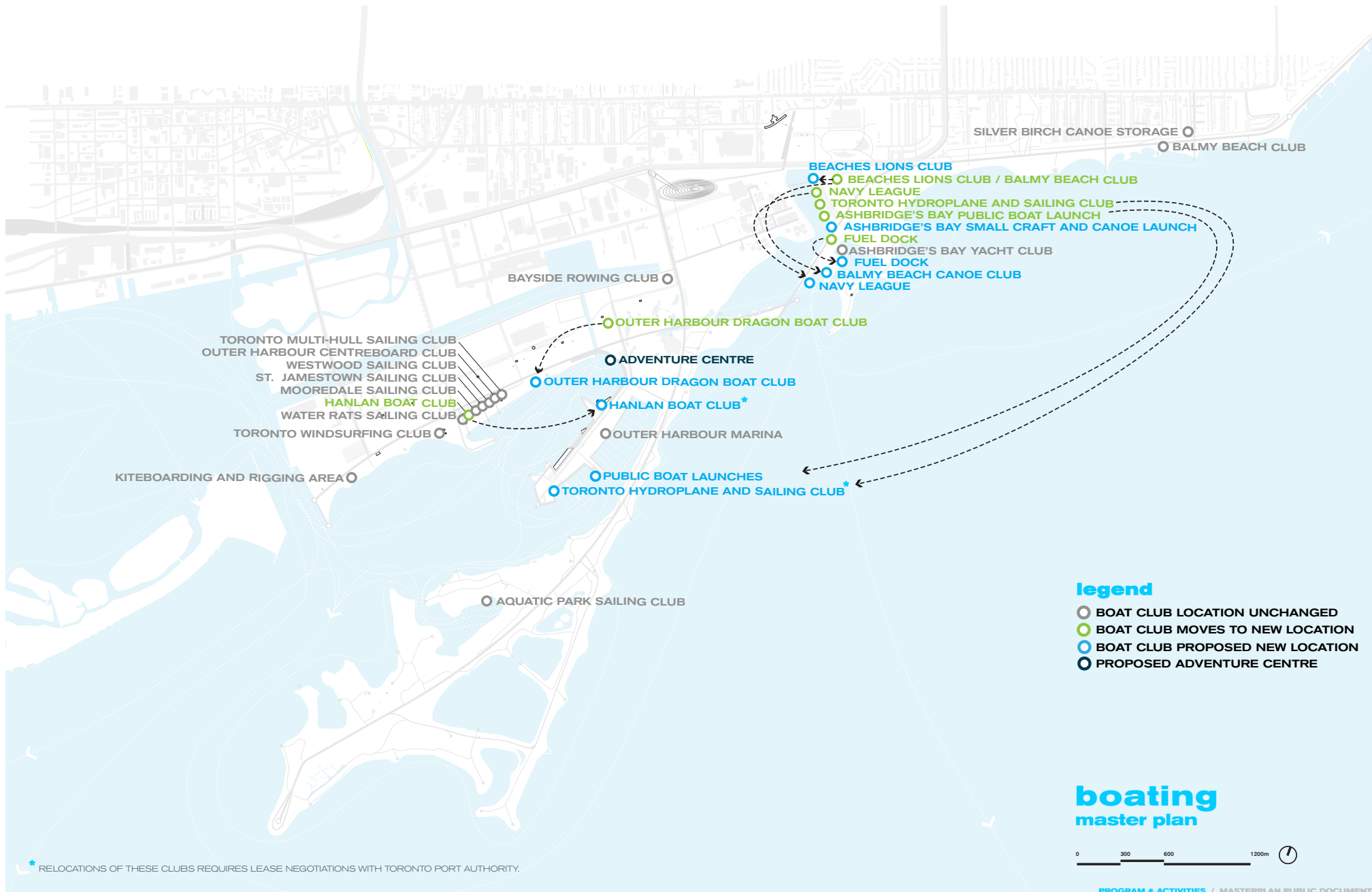
In addition to improvements and relocations of existing boating clubs (see Appendix Section 12.5 and 12.6), new points of waterfront access and activity are proposed in the form of numerous docks, launches and berths around the Marina Peninsula and Ashbridge's Bay and newly expanded cobble beaches along the North Shore (between the Boat Clubs and Adventure Centre). A broad, waterfront 'recreation deck' is proposed along the northern edge of the Marina Peninsula - complete with fish cleaning stations, pedestrian boardwalks and piers, spectator landings and a new waterfront café. A water taxi landing is also proposed to facilitate connections to and from downtown Toronto and the Toronto Islands.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan has seven primary objectives for boating in Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Create new points of public boating access in the form of public launches, informal landings, training sites and rental facilities;
- 2 Create opportunities for optimizing water access in a way that best accommodates the specific programs of the various boat clubs;
- 3 Establish a consistent and clear physical organization of the North Shore Boat Clubs, while preserving the distinctive, atmospheric character of water sports and recreation in a "cottage" setting;
- 4 Identify opportunities for expanded day-sailing and protected non-motorized boating areas in Ashbridge's Bay;
- 5 Identify the feasibility of achieving the desired expansion plans for each of the boat clubs; and
- 6 Enhance the opportunities for the public to explore and enjoy water-oriented activities.
- 7 Create an 'Outer Harbour User Committee' to regulate and advise on-the-water use throughout the Outer Harbour, and to ensure that safety and the quality of the recreational boating experience is not compromised. This committee might consist of representatives from all clubs whose members use the waters of the Outer Harbour, as well as the Marina users, the TPA, police, park authorities, and WT.





Legend

- BOAT CLUB LOCATION UNCHANGED
- BOAT CLUB MOVES TO NEW LOCATION
- BOAT CLUB PROPOSED NEW LOCATION
- ★ PROPOSED ADVENTURE CENTRE

**boating
master plan**



* RELOCATIONS OF THESE CLUBS REQUIRES LEASE NEGOTIATIONS WITH TORONTO PORT AUTHORITY.

5.5 SITE AMENITIES

Lake Ontario Park will be one of the City's key public parks and will offer a broad range of facilities to accommodate both daily and special event uses. In order to support these uses, facilities such as washrooms, change rooms, picnic shelters and rest facilities will be required. Because Lake Ontario Park incorporates a number of existing parks, service facilities to support activities at the Eastern Beaches, Woodbine Beach, Ashbridge's Bay Park and Cherry Beach already exist. The Cherry Beach washroom / change room facility was renovated in 2004. A small washroom facility is located within Tommy Thompson Park in the vicinity of the Aquatic Park Sailing Club to serve visitors to this area of Lake Ontario Park. The remainder of the existing washroom and change room facilities are serviceable but are in need of upgrading and enhancement to improve their appearance and durability.

In support of the new amenity areas for uses proposed within the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan, additional washroom / change room facilities are proposed to be developed at several locations. The Master Plan recommends a unified architectural language - one that is both rustic and contemporary - for all new furnishings and amenities. The newly proposed facilities include:

- The Adventure Centre, to be located at the intersection of the Bar Transect and the Peninsula Promenade;
- The tip of the Peninsula, in conjunction with proposed commercial / restaurant uses; and
- The mid-point of the bar transect, to support adjacent sports and passive recreational uses.

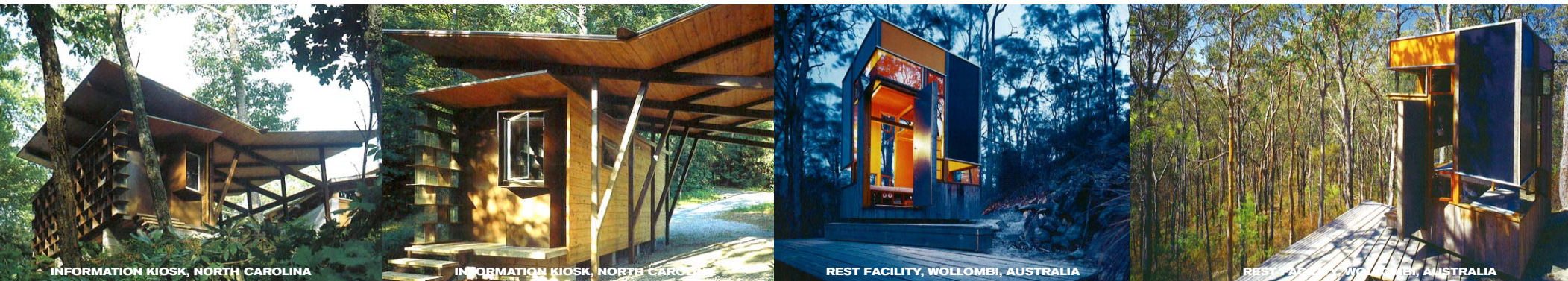
The Tommy Thompson Park Master Plan also envisions the implementation of additional washroom facilities both on the spit and at the gateway / entrance to the park. The locations and form of these facilities have yet to be determined but when implemented would be complementary to the adjacent areas within Lake Ontario Park.

In addition to site amenities and furnishings, the Master Plan has identified a number of park gateways, or primary park entrances. These gateways, shown at Cherry Street, Leslie Street, Woodbine Street and Queen Street, might consist of distinctive, iconic signage, lighting and plantings.

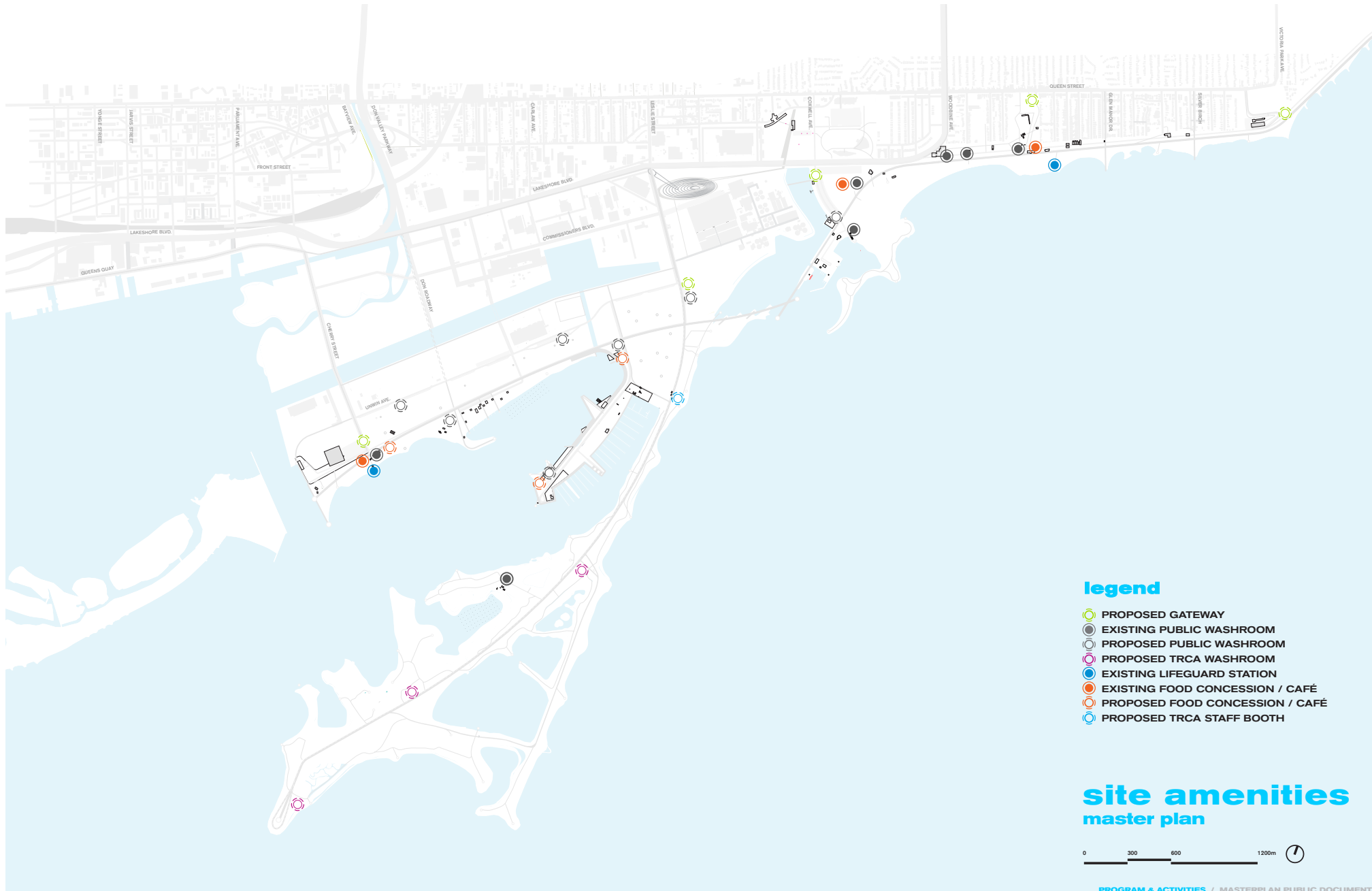
WATERFRONT ADVENTURE CENTRE

As a center piece for activities within the park - and in keeping with a unified architectural language for the park - the Master Plan proposes the creation of an 'Adventure Centre', located at the eastern end of the Outer Harbour. The 'Adventure Centre' is envisioned as a centrally located, 12-month facility that offers the following resources to park visitors:

- Multi-purpose community rooms and meeting spaces;
- Programming focus for PFR daycamps (especially eco-camps);
- Innovative recreational programming that incorporates education with active play;
- Orientation point for guided/self-guided exploration of the park;
- Referral to ABYC, BBBC, BLC and OHSF boat clubs for sailing, rowing, windsurfing instruction;
- Bike rentals;
- Canoe/kayak rentals and instruction, with a focus on boating safety and etiquette;
- Canoe/kayak public storage and launching;
- Fishing piers; and
- Equipment rentals.



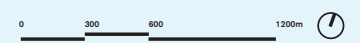
ARCHITECTURAL PRECEDENTS FOR NEW FACILITIES WITHIN LAKE ONTARIO PARK



legend

- PROPOSED GATEWAY
- EXISTING PUBLIC WASHROOM
- PROPOSED PUBLIC WASHROOM
- PROPOSED TRCA WASHROOM
- EXISTING LIFEGUARD STATION
- EXISTING FOOD CONCESSION / CAFÉ
- PROPOSED FOOD CONCESSION / CAFÉ
- PROPOSED TRCA STAFF BOOTH

**site amenities
master plan**



5.7 CULTURAL EVENTS & ARTS PROGRAMMING

Beyond all of the distinctive opportunities for active and passive recreation, the landscapes of the park are also radically eventful, and offer dramatic settings for remarkably unique cultural festivals, community programs and the arts. Some of Toronto's most distinctive cultural groups already use sites with the Lake Ontario Park site in surprising ways: Promise Cherry Beach hosts weekly musical 'raves' on summer afternoons; the Beacon to the Ancestors Foundation holds ceremonial gatherings within the beaches and forested groves of Cherry Beach; and the Beaches Jazz Festival dramatically activates a summer weekend at Woodbine Beach. Expanding on these distinctive events, the new landscapes at Lake Ontario Park provide settings for new cultural landmarks on Toronto's waterfront: iconic performance venues, astronomical observatories, public art and exhibition spaces, community gardens and clubs, outdoor classrooms, picnic areas, playgrounds, restaurants, meeting places and an active waterfront esplanade.

These new, eventful landscapes should correspond with the wild and ecological character of the park. New and continued events at Lake Ontario Park should support the park's rustic, raw and wild character in emphatic ways - potentially giving rise to drastically different means of using public park spaces. The open, flex fields in the Bar, the transects, Cherry Beach, the Woodbine Park Performance Room (Appendix 12.1) and the Marina Peninsula Promenade will become fantastic settings for seasonal arts festivals, temporary weather themed installations, informal theatrical productions, linear art fairs, spontaneous community celebrations and evening showcases of innovative lighting effects. Rather than offer specifically designated event facilities that can often limit the usage of public landscapes, the wonderfully unique settings of Lake Ontario Park should promote and inspire a diverse range of new cultural uses or 'settlements'.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan has three primary objectives for cultural events and arts programming at Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Foster radically creative means for using the park landscapes through the flexible design treatment of the open passive landscape of the park. Future detailing of these park landscapes should be multipurpose and resist the tendency to be overly prescriptive on the use and type of program amenities;
- 2 Invest strategically in park amenities that can be utilized in a number of sites within Lake Ontario Park, as well as the rest of Toronto's waterfront park sites: temporary art installations and performances, floating performance venues (Appendix 12.4) and temporary stages and lighting features; and
- 3 Promote linkages and collaborations with cultural, arts and event groups throughout the City, and encourage innovative arts programming on the park's passive landscapes: the beaches, the flexible open fields, the wide transects and the promenades.



WEATHER THEMED ART INSTALLATIONS



PROMISE CHERRY BEACH

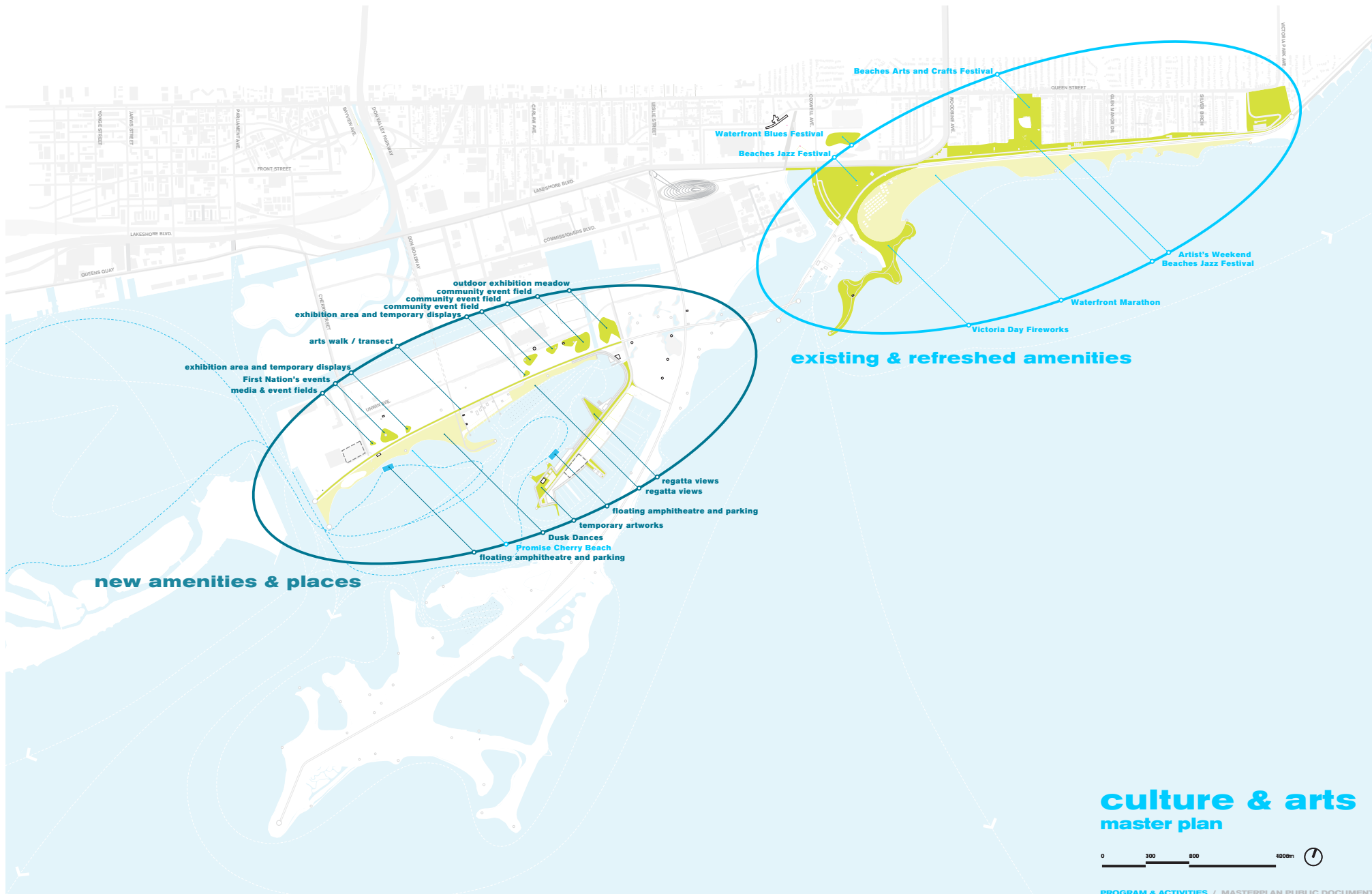


EVENING ARTS FESTIVALS



DRAMATIC ARTS PERFORMANCES

DISTINCTIVE LANDSCAPE SETTINGS SUPPORT UNIQUE CULTURAL EVENTS



new amenities & places

existing & refreshed amenities

**culture & arts
master plan**



5.8 HISTORICAL & CULTURAL HERITAGE

Although heavily modified over the last 150 years, the Lake Ontario Park site is host to several cultural heritage features. The Eastern Beaches - Balmby Beach, Beaches Park, Kew Beach and Woodbine Beach share historical significance and include individually recognized built features as well as landscapes and gardens of heritage value. The Master Plan recommends the maintenance of these features and landscapes through a 'light' approach to renovation and renewal. With strategic adjustments, updates and retrofitting, the heritage features will continue to provide a distinctive character to the 21st Century life and landscape of Lake Ontario Park.

FIRST NATIONS GROVE

In addition to the preservation and renovation of the built heritage features, the Master Plan also recognizes the archaeological resources and First Nations heritage of Lake Ontario Park. Patterns of land formation, particularly the dynamic and changing character of the Fisherman's Island sand bar, have inspired the thematic concepts and organizing principles of the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan. Moreover, in response to the strong presence of the First Nations community through various events in the landscape of Cherry Beach, the Master Plan has identified a potential location for a First Nations Heritage site at the corner of Cherry Beach and the Bar Transect. This 'First Nations Grove' can be enhanced with interpretive features, and accommodate large scale events as well as individual contemplation. The site will be an approximately 16 acre recovered forest supplemented with indigenous plantings including sumac, white pine, white birch, maple, cedar, hickory, and sycamore. Native grasses, berries, and other plantings will invoke the ecological realm in which the First Nations occupied their homeland. Traditional and contemporary histories, teachings, and ceremonies will be taught in the Grove, which will serve as an entrance to ceremonial grounds.

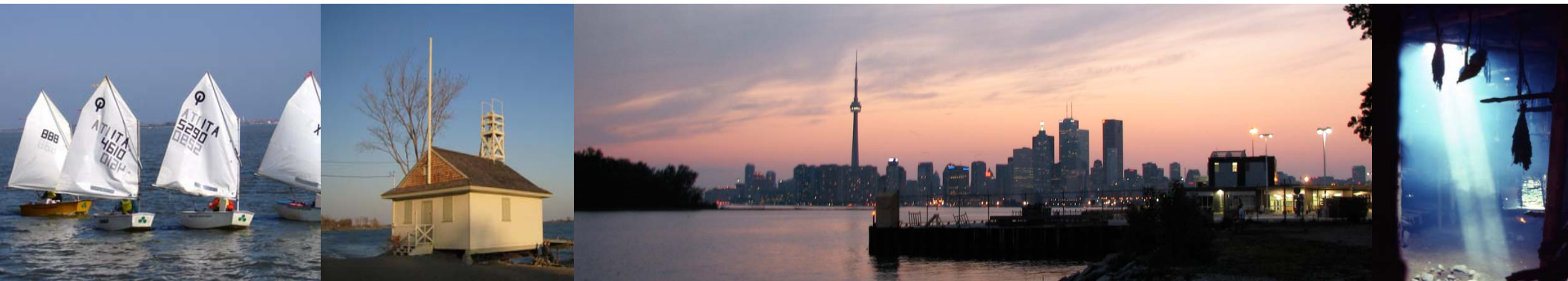
Developed and designed with full First Nations expertise and guidance, the ceremonial grounds and buildings will be a distinctive setting for practicing well established native protocols and duties to comfort and host all those who have come to share the land with them. The First Nations Grove is a powerful, yet simple, gesture toward the First Nations community. Most importantly, the site will provide a respectful and meaningful landmark for the Lake Ontario Park system.

With its proximity to downtown Toronto, bolstered by its vast collection of diverse landscapes and intact heritage structures nested in a rustic setting, the Lake Ontario Park site has the capacity to convey a multitude of stories, while also providing an extraordinary backdrop for Torontonians seeking an escape from the quotidian frenzy of urban life.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan promotes three primary objectives with respect to cultural heritage:

- 1 Continue the Waterfront First Nations Initiative consultation process (with the First Nations and Beacon to the Ancestors Foundation) to ensure that an appropriate setting is achieved;
- 2 Celebrate the rich history and heritage of the place through the creation of interpretive landscapes and amenities; and
- 3 Promote opportunities to experience and celebrate all aspects of the waterfront and Toronto's history.





A LASTING CULTURAL HERITAGE WITHIN A DYNAMIC, SEASONAL LANDSCAPE
THE MASTER PLAN RECOMMENDS THE PRESERVATION AND RENOVATION OF THE
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE LANDSCAPES AND FEATURES TO ENABEL A
CONTINUED DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF LAKE ONTARIO PARK

CHAPTER 6
TRAILS & ACCESS
BUILD A CONNECTIVE SYSTEM TO UNIFY THE LARGE PARK

6.1 CITY CONNECTIONS

The Lake Ontario Park site is currently served by a network of circulation systems including roads, trails, bikeways and sidewalks. As the park and its facilities are implemented, however, the demand for increased connectivity, continuity and circulation facilities (parking, service and vehicular access) will put great pressure on the long, thin Lake Ontario Park site.

A CONNECTED, UNIFIED ENSEMBLE

The Master Plan builds off of the WATERFRONToronto Central Waterfront Public Space Framework, which outlines a broad strategy for reconceptualizing distinct parcels to knit together the communities and territories of the waterfront. Connectivity for human and wildlife movement are considered in this layered framework. The framework also identifies the potential for continuous pedestrian and cycle access from the western end of Cherry Beach to the southern tip of Tommy Thompson Park to the R.C. Harris Filtration Plant.

STRATEGIC LINKAGES

Due to the long, thin footprint of the site, any circulation proposal for Lake Ontario Park must establish efficient connections within the park and well as north-south connections to the city and local neighborhoods. The proposed light rail project for the Portlands is a critical step in terms of meeting the accessibility and site design goals of Lake Ontario Park. Attempting to achieve park accessibility through adequate on-site vehicular parking facilities will only limit the potential for the park to provide extraordinary recreational and ecological settings.

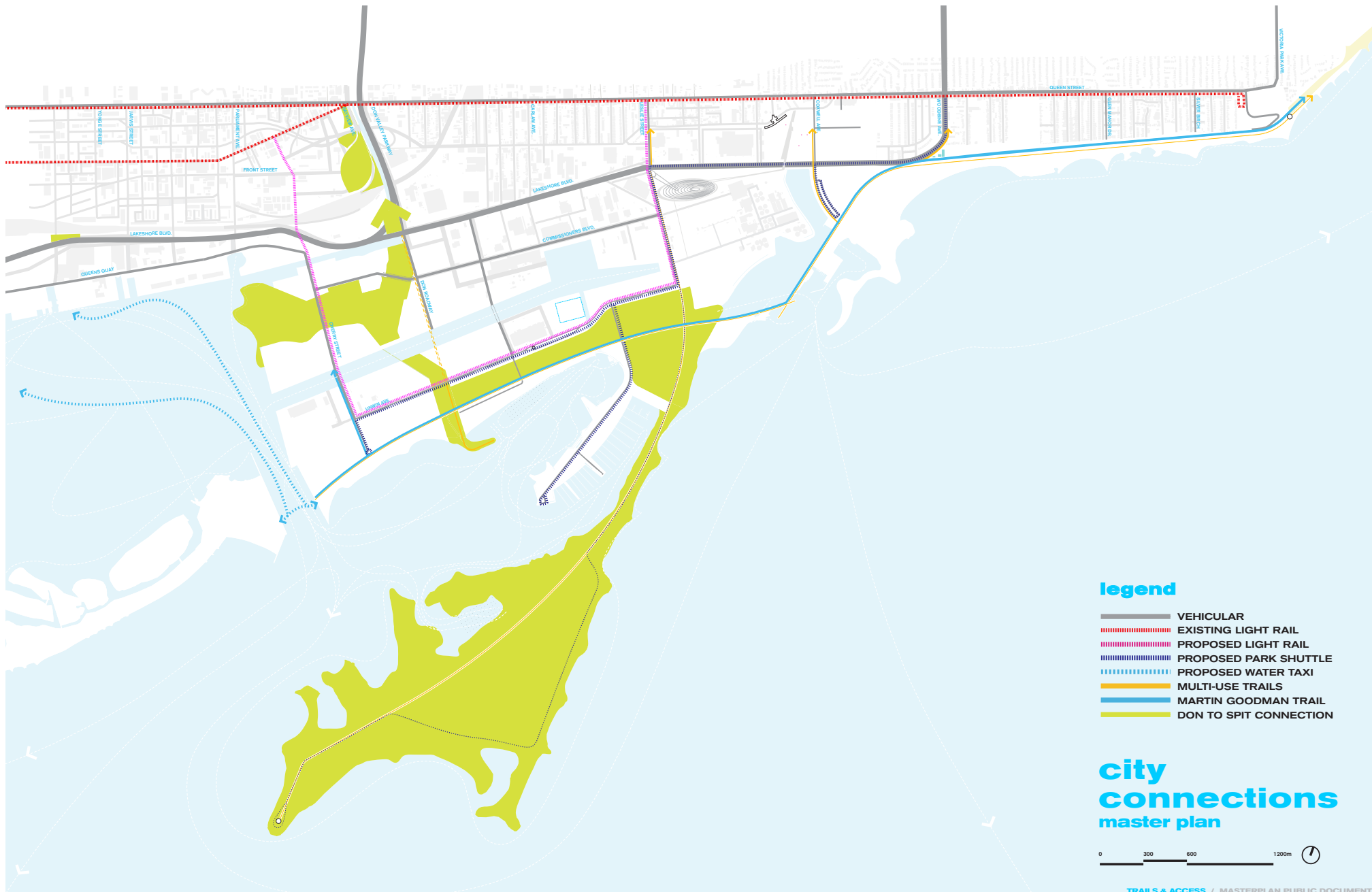
DESIGN OBJECTIVES

To maximize the ecological and recreational assets of the Lake Ontario Park site, the Master Plan has four primary objectives for greater connectivity to and from Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Promote light rail as the principle focus of future transportation planning for the Portlands and Lake Ontario Park;
- 2 Establish a park shuttle that will enable efficient, quick access to the disparate parcels of the park - enabling visitors to enjoy the vastly different settings of Cherry Beach, Ashbridge's Bay Park, the Eastern Beaches, the Base Lands and Tommy Thompson Park;
- 3 Utilize water-based connections, including water taxis and ferries; and
- 4 Create an emphatically clear, hierarchical network of pedestrian, multi-use and specially designated trails that extend throughout Lake Ontario Park and into the surrounding neighborhood and city.



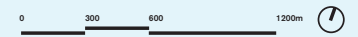
MULTIPLE MODES OF TRANSIT ACCESS



Legend

- VEHICULAR
- EXISTING LIGHT RAIL
- PROPOSED LIGHT RAIL
- PROPOSED PARK SHUTTLE
- PROPOSED WATER TAXI
- MULTI-USE TRAILS
- MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL
- DON TO SPIT CONNECTION

city connections master plan



6.2 VEHICULAR CIRCULATION

Lake Ontario Park should be largely car-free.

Vehicular circulation will be accommodated through existing and newly constructed roads. Designed as single-lane, two-way drives, limited to 50kph, they achieve required connectivity and access while preserving large open spaces and habitat areas. The city is committed to providing connectivity and access across Unwin Avenue. New and renovated entrances at Cherry Street, Leslie Street and Woodbine Beach will establish a unified frontage to the Park. In addition, the Marina Peninsula will continue to be accessed by a realigned drive off of Unwin Avenue.

As the specific siting of the drives must balance environmental assessment, future park construction and regulatory and local transportation demands, alternate alignments and access locations will be explored as part of future EA processes. In particular, the feasibility and details of the proposed realignment of Unwin Avenue are subject to an Environmental Assessment (EA) process that will occur separately from the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan process.

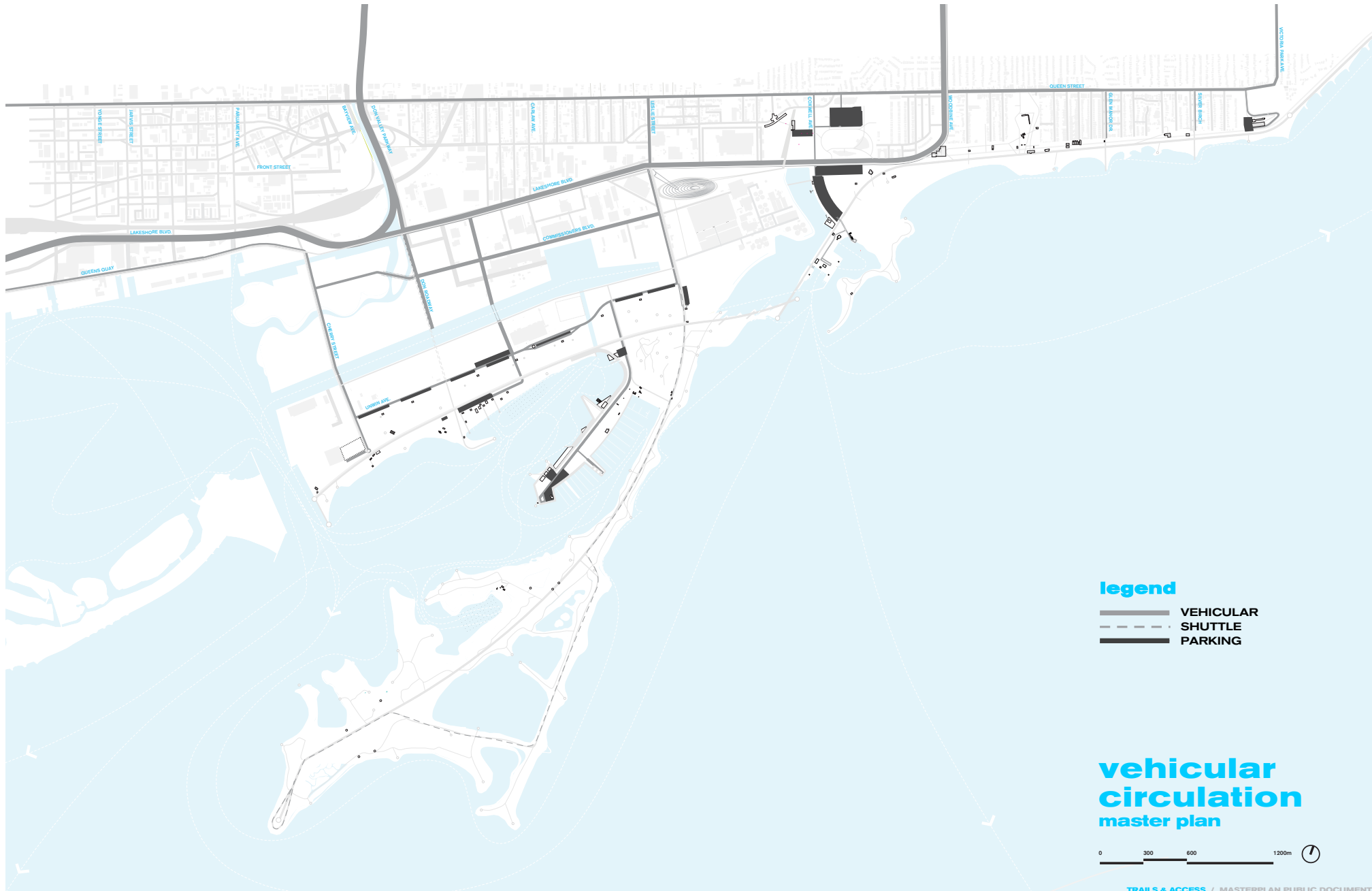
DESIGN OBJECTIVES

Although subject to future planning and review processes, the Master Plan offers four primary objectives for vehicular circulation:

- 1 LOP should be largely car-free;
- 2 The demand for parking should be balanced with alternative transportation plans including the park shuttle and LRT;
- 3 Unwin Avenue should be conceived as a park drive and not an arterial road; and
- 4 Pedestrian and cyclist circulation needs will take precedence over vehicular circulation systems.



MATERIAL GUIDELINES: A COMBINATION OF PAVING SURFACES THAT ARE POROUS AND 'TOUGH' IN CHARACTER



Legend

- VEHICULAR
- - - SHUTTLE
- ▬ PARKING

**vehicular
circulation
master plan**



6.3 PARKING

Parking should be limited to the margins of Lake Ontario Park.

Parking will be distributed in tree-shaded lots with permeable surfaces. Even though the goal of the Master Plan is to focus on public transportation, the site must be prepared to accommodate visitors arriving to the site by car. However, because the site is intended to be a major urban habitat, the parking program needs to be carefully integrated into the overall landscape - and its phasing - of the park.

The strategy is to disperse the parking at the vehicular edges or entrances of the park: Cherry Street, Unwin Avenue and Lake Shore Boulevard at Woodbine Beach. These entrances, intended to provide local residents with access to the park by bicycle or on foot, will also provide sufficient space for parking. The lots will be designed with permeable surfaces to reduce heat island effect and control runoff, and will be lined with trees to blend into the surrounding natural habitat. These parking areas will be scaled to adequately support the uses of nearby park areas and facilities.

Existing, temporary, shared and new parking facilities at Lake Ontario Park will require coordination and review at each stage of implementation. Each stage of implementation must ensure that adequate new, or shared, facilities are incorporated to enable the 'phasing-out' of existing parking areas that conflict with the Master Plan.

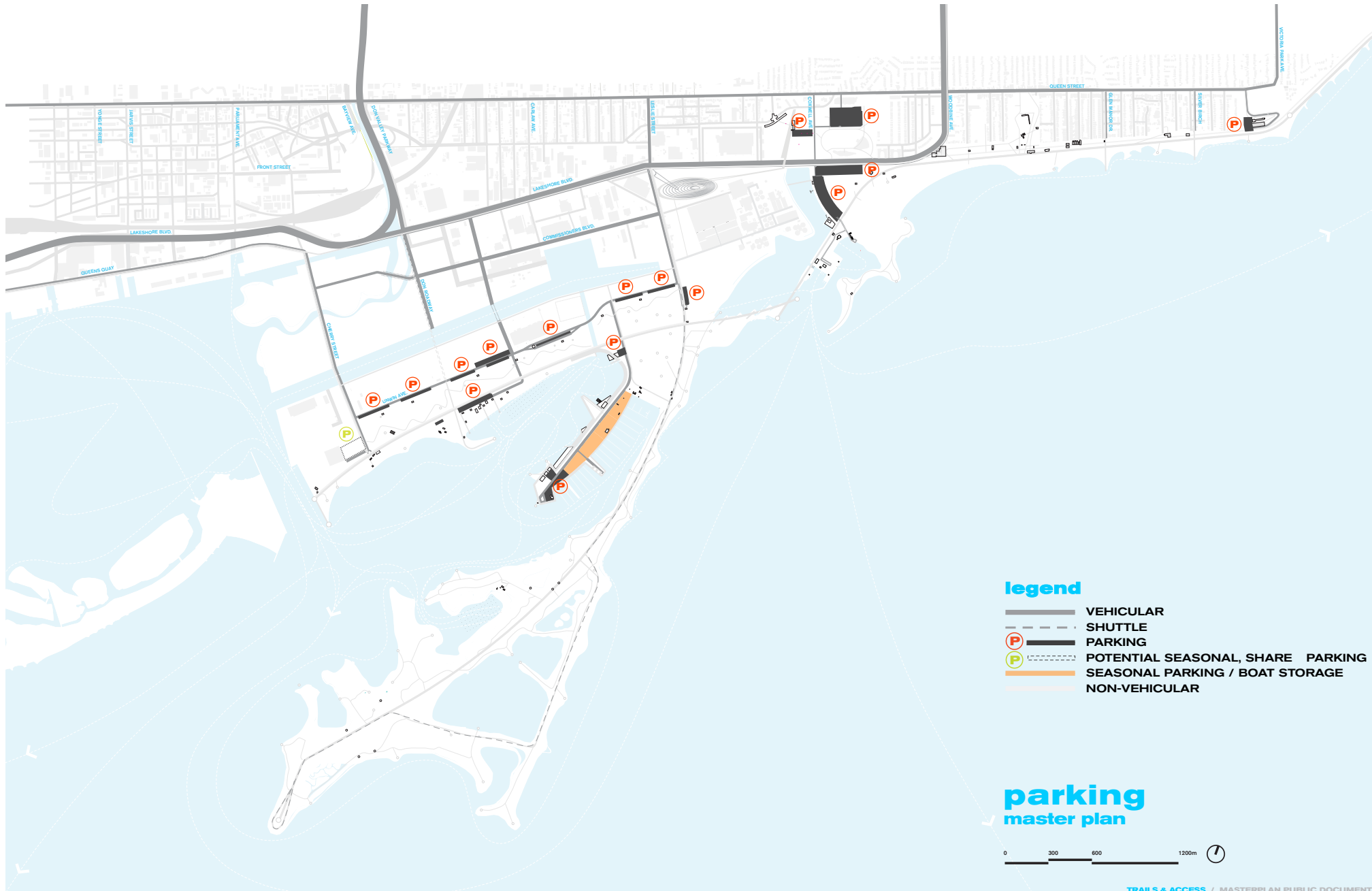
DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan offers four primary objectives for parking at Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Lake Ontario Park should not be designed with the objective of accommodating peak parking requirements for all program elements;
- 2 Temporary, shared and off-site parking facilities should be strategically considered as a way of addressing parking demand until the build out of the Port Lands and its associated transit infrastructure can accommodate future visitor demand;
- 3 The demand for parking should be balanced with alternative transportation plans including the park shuttle and LRT; and
- 4 Where possible, all parking surfaces within the park should be designed with permeable materials, to encourage the infiltration of run-off, and adequate canopy planting for shade and heat reduction.



MATERIAL GUIDELINES: A PRIORITIZATION OF POROUS, SHADED SURFACES



legend

- VEHICULAR
- SHUTTLE
- PARKING
- POTENTIAL SEASONAL, SHARE PARKING
- SEASONAL PARKING / BOAT STORAGE
- NON-VEHICULAR

**parking
master plan**



6.4 TRAILS | PEDESTRIAN

A variety of paths and trails allow for extensive pedestrian movement and access to all areas of the park.

The primary recommendation for pedestrian access and circulation in the Master Plan is to preserve the unique capacity for large-scale recreation and habitat landscapes through an efficient pedestrian network. The three transects (although designated for multi-use) are conceived as the primary pedestrian trails - those pathways used by the majority of visitors to Lake Ontario Park. The transects pass through the many landscapes, places and vantage points of the park site - and create a clear means for orienting visitors throughout the large park.

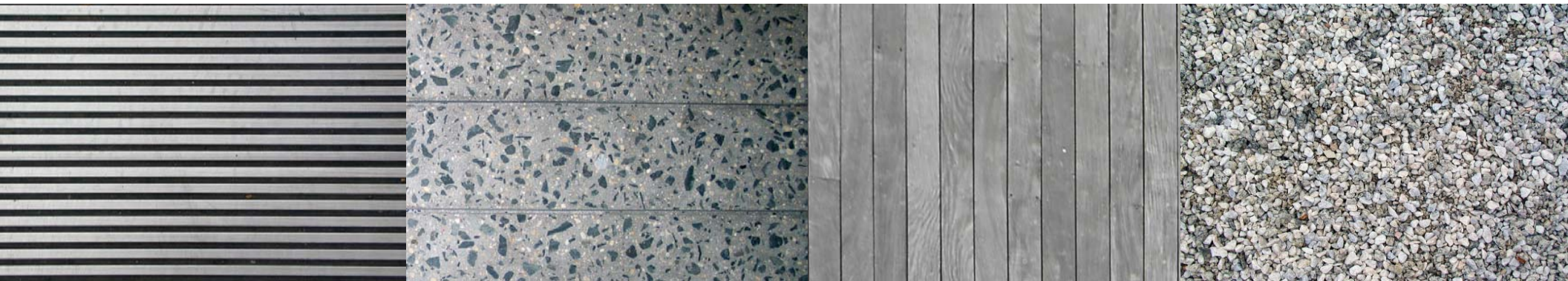
The transects are supported by a network of 'tertiary' pedestrian trails - or those pathways used for discreet access to specific places or for causal strolls through the unique landscapes. These pedestrians paths include trails that meander through The Bar and connect with Unwin Avenue, accessible pathways and boardwalks to the water's edge and footpaths to the many existing and proposed 'outposts'.

Although some pedestrian pathways will be limited to 'slow' use, many of the pathways throughout Lake Ontario Park will allow for multiple users (walkers, cyclists, runners, etc.), while others are specifically designated for single use. All paths will be separated from roads, with special pedestrian crossings as needed to facilitate safe passage.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan offers five primary objectives for pedestrian circulation at Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Ensure that pedestrian pathways and use will take precedence over vehicular circulation requirements;
- 2 Employ a hierarchical system of strategically scaled pathways that will connect the many landscapes and places of the park - while providing accessibility to the water's edge and the 'outposts';
- 3 Minimize conflicts between users;
- 4 Punctuate the pedestrian network with opportunities for clear orientation and wayfinding; and
- 5 Provide accessible pathways throughout the park to ensure access by park visitors with disabilities to playgrounds, water play facilities, picnic areas and swimming beaches.



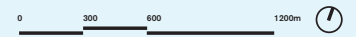
MATERIAL GUIDELINES: A BROAD MIXTURE OF SURFACES WITH A RUSTIC, BUT 'TOUGH', CHARACTER



Legend

- MULTI-USE TRAILS
- PE ESTRIAN TRAILS
- MARTIN GOO MAN TRAIL

**trails
master plan**



6.5 TRAILS | MULTI-USE

In addition to the extensive pedestrian network, Lake Ontario Park will utilize a collection of multi-use path and trails, specially designated trails for more rugged cycling and hiking. Multi-use paths accommodate a mix of non-motorized usage (walking, running, cycling, off-road biking, rollerblading and hiking). These 4.5 metre wide pathways create a network of crossing trails that allow visitors to traverse the large scale settings. This path type can be found throughout the Bar and the Marina.

There are four types of multi-use trails suggested for the park:

3 Transects provide 14 kilometres of multi-use paths that structure the site and support large-scale recreation. With signage, seating, picnic areas and lighting, the transects are the primary activity paths in the park. At widths varying from 5 to 15 metres, the transects also accommodate service, maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Specially designated paths and trails allow for separation of pedestrians, hikers and rugged cycling. This path type can be found throughout the Bar and Tommy Thompson Park.

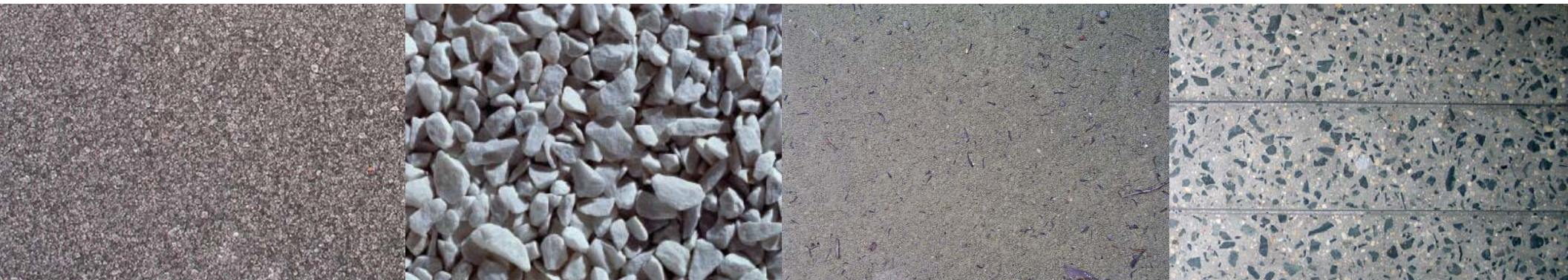
The Martin Goodman Trail remains as a primary east/west linkage for cyclists, runners and rollerbladers. Whereas the transects are clear, continuous and relatively straight multi-use paths, the Martin Goodman Trail will remain as a multi-use trail that winds its way through the 'rustic' landscapes of The Bar and the parks and gardens of the Eastern Beaches.

Seasonal trails allow access to and observation of ecologically sensitive areas. These trails will be designed to have the minimum impact possible, in addition to having limited or restricted usage during restoration periods, nesting periods or other ecologically sensitive time periods.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan offers four primary objectives for multi-use circulation at Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Provide a network of multi-use trails that exploit the great length and unique settings of the park;
- 2 Ensure that the materials, dimensions and topography enhance the trail performance and enrich the experiences of the varied, rugged character of the park;
- 3 Minimize conflicts between users; and
- 4 Ensure a means for protecting sensitive natural areas, regeneration zones and habitats through a clear, legible system of signage and wayfinding.



MATERIAL GUIDELINES: A SELECTION OF PERFORMANCE-BASED SURFACES



THE MARTIN GOODMAN TRAIL



THE BAR TRANSECT & COTTONWOOD FOREST



IMPRESSION OF MULTI-USE TRAILS IN THE BAR



HIKING TRAILS IN TOMMY-THOMPSON PARK

IMPRESSIONS OF THE MULTI-USE TRAIL NETWORK
VARYING CONDITIONS OF MATERIAL, WIDTH, SLOPE, MARKINGS AND SIGNAGE
WILL CHARACTERIZE THE PARK'S DISTINCTIVE MULTI-USE TRAILS

CHAPTER 7

PARK ECOLOGY

**CULTIVATE A RICH MOSAIC OF AQUATIC AND TERRESTRIAL
LIFE IN A CONNECTIVE WATERFRONT PARK**

7.1 ECOLOGY | OVERVIEW

In the Spring of 2006, the Master Planning Team reviewed extensive ecological background information from TRCA and other sources, and conducted a series of reconnaissance surveys of the Lake Ontario Park site. Results and findings from this research can be found in the Lake Ontario Park 'Summary Report on Field Work and Key Findings'. Excerpts from this document are included in the Appendix of this document. The following is a brief overview of the findings and key ecological considerations.

ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Situated near the mouth of the Don River watershed, Lake Ontario Park will fulfill an important regional ecological function by enhancing connectivity to the watersheds of the Humber and the Rouge Rivers along the Lake Ontario shoreline. These three watersheds occupy most of the Greater Toronto Area and extend north to the Oak Ridges Moraine. The waterfront provides a crucial interface between aquatic and terrestrial habitats, and is thus critical to ecosystem health and the diversity of species in Lake Ontario. Lake Ontario Park offers a unique opportunity to create a signature lakefront park that provides an important ecological function, within a continuous urban greenway. Two Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) designated by the City of Toronto are situated along the waterfront, encompassing the natural areas of Cherry Beach and Tommy Thompson Park.

The Lake Ontario Park site already includes landscapes that are important resources that contribute to building a significant waterfront greenway. Tommy Thompson Park is recognized as a globally Important Bird Area (IBA) because of its concentration of breeding colonial waterbirds. It is also a key stopover site on

the North Atlantic Flyway and an important migratory stopover for butterflies. Provincially rare and significant flora species have also been identified at Tommy Thompson Park. The 38 hectares of Base Lands represents a site with significant ecological potential. While most of Lake Ontario Park is long and narrow - all "edge" in ecological terms - the Base Lands is one of the widest zones. Already recognized as an 'urban wilderness', the Base Lands is a critical link in building a continuous greenway between the Don River watershed and Tommy Thompson Park. The Master Plan recognizes the importance of these ecological assets - Tommy Thompson Park and the Base Lands - and attempts to create an appropriate transition between the urban and 'active' park areas, and sensitive, natural landscapes.

EVALUATION OF EXISTING VEGETATION

The geographical and ecological importance of Tommy Thompson Park and the Base Lands notwithstanding, the existing vegetation that has spontaneously established itself along the waterfront west of Ashbridge's Bay is patchy and fragmented. Existing vegetation is young, having colonized non-native fill a relatively short time ago. A large proportion of the plant species are non-native. Those plants that are native tend to be ones that are adaptable to a wide range of conditions. Generally, these are indicators of relatively low landscape quality, although their location within an urban area enhances their value. However, the vegetation community type that has established itself in many of the treed areas along the waterfront is Eastern Cottonwood forest, considered locally significant within TRCA's area of jurisdiction.

Wet areas are somewhat higher in quality than uplands. Patches of native species have colonized the shorelines of Tommy Thompson Park and Cherry



Beach and wetland areas of the Base Lands. Native wetlands are very small, separated by large areas of thicket, cultural meadow and small groves of trees. Hydrology is interrupted by piles of rubble and a fractured topography resulting from the haphazard placement of unwanted fill. Because of this, conditions for establishing substantial areas of wetland habitat along the North Shore and in the Base Lands are limited. Part of the mission of the Lake Ontario Park is to improve the existing conditions with the explicit aim of creating natural conditions that will foster increased biological diversity.

ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION

Diversity of vegetation, cover, topography, and an abundance of habitat elements such as logs and rocks are primary contributors to a healthy population of both migrating and breeding wildlife species. Vegetation diversity can be enhanced in terms of structure and species, by selecting trees, shrubs and ground flora that together form the native communities that are most suitable for wildlife. This will include species that produce nuts, berries and other food. For example, common milkweed is the food plant for the larvae of monarch butterfly, and the numbers of this plant could be increased. Amphibian breeding habitats are particularly scarce, and pools could be deepened and improved with surrounding vegetation in order to make them persist longer into the season and provide better breeding habitats. Downed woody debris and snags (standing dead trees) are important cover and breeding sites for a variety of wildlife, and these are elements that could be placed in areas of the site where enhancement is desired.

Increasing diversity in habitats along the waterfront by planting native species, and by enhancing the diversity, quality and quantity of vegetation structure, particularly wetlands, would contribute to the function of the area as a habitat

for migrating birds. The Lake Ontario Park site is situated in an area which once supported an extensive marsh. Restoration of an extensive marsh community, with interspersed open water and vegetation configured to create habitat for waterfowl and amphibians, could create opportunities for enhancing biodiversity in the Lake Ontario Park site.

Plant communities along the waterfront are primarily disturbance-dependent, persisting because of natural processes associated with the instability of sand, such as blow outs and dune formation, and the dynamic forces of the lake. Many of the specialized plants that occur there are sun-loving and dependent on open habitats. Preserving this dynamism should be considered as part of any restoration strategy.

INTERPRETIVE OPPORTUNITIES

As use of the shoreline increases (with or without the development of Lake Ontario Park), the natural features that have established there will come under increasing pressure. Tommy Thompson Park is especially significant and needs to be nurtured and enhanced. The Base Lands and parts of the North Shore offer an interpretive opportunity through the enhancement of the existing valued natural features within a planned environment. At these sites, the park can provide an interface between users and representative elements of the natural environment that characterize Toronto's Lake Ontario shoreline. Simultaneously, it can alleviate pressure for increased access to Tommy Thompson Park, thus creating a buffer between the more urbanized uses and a highly valued urban natural feature.



7.2 ECOLOGY | CONNECTIVITY

OPPORTUNITIES & ASSETS

The Lake Ontario Park project has the potential to assemble a substantial green lakefront that links the Don River Greenway to Tommy Thompson Park. In considering Toronto's opportunities for creating a continuous, green network with high ecological value, the Lake Ontario Park site includes some of the City's great ecological assets:

1 **TOMMY THOMPSON PARK & THE BASE LANDS:** With big, successional vegetation communities, these two sites are already understood - by the City (through its designation of Tommy Thompson Park as an ESA), TRCA and the public alike - as important 'urban wilderness' areas, particularly as locally significant birds, mammals and amphibians have been identified in these sites. The Master Plan objectives for these sites are consistent with TRCA goals for the future management of Tommy Thompson Park.

2 **THE BAR:** As the site of greatest proposed transformation in all of Lake Ontario Park, The Bar is envisioned as a 'connector' landscape that links the Don Greenway to the Base Lands. The portion of the Bar east of the Don Greenway will consist of passive and natural area landscapes - open areas, meadows, thickets and mixed woodlands - to facilitate human and wildlife use. The ecological function of the Cherry Beach ESA is planned to be enhanced as part of any transformation of The Bar landscape.

3 **THE DON GREENWAY:** Although the Don Greenway is the focus of a separate planning process, the Lake Ontario Park Master Plan is flexible enough to incorporate the planning results. As shown in the plan to the right, the Master Plan promotes the extension of the greenway out to the lake edge by incorporating the North Shore 'hook'.

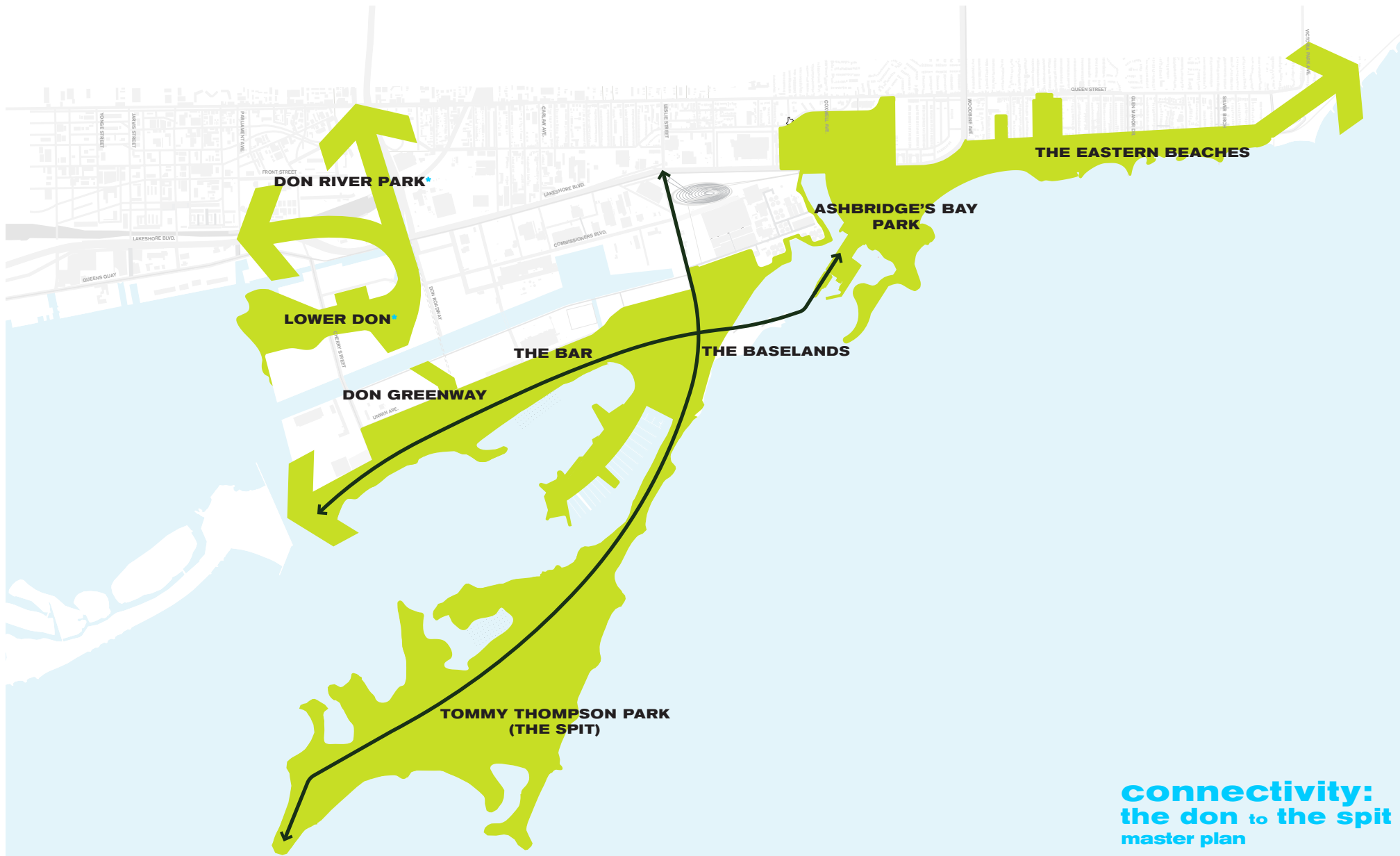
KEY FUNCTIONS OF THE 'DON TO SPIT' CONNECTION

The primary goals of the Master Plan incorporate cultural, ecological and financial directives for the future of Lake Ontario Park. A significant challenge for the Lake Ontario Park project is to simultaneously promote the enhancement of public recreational landscapes while maintaining and improving the ecological quality of aquatic and terrestrial habitats. The location of the Base Lands provides an ideal opportunity to achieve the required balance as sufficient nature viewing opportunities can be created to satisfy many Park users, thereby reducing the pressure for more public access to Tommy Thompson Park. Although specific land-use regulations will be set by the park's future zoning designations, the Master Plan has the following recommendations for the function of the 'Don to Spit' connection:

1 **A GRADIENT OF ACTIVITY:** The Master Plan envisions a gradient of public, human activity across the 'Don to Spit' connection. In a general sense, the high speed, formal and active uses proposed for the western portion of the Bar will transition into passive park uses in the eastern portion. Moving further east, the Base Lands and Tommy Thompson Park will offer trails, education and interpretive opportunities consistent with the City's GR zoning and the TRCA Master Plan, respectively. As a result, the decrease in active uses will correspond with an increase in 'wilderness' character and function.

2 **REDUCING FRAGMENTATION:** Current hydrology in the park site is interrupted by piles of rubble and conditions for wetland establishment are limited in the Bar and Base Lands. To the greatest extent possible, the Master Plan will utilize environmental site management and strategic park implementation practices to promote contiguous hydrologic conditions to ensure that the 'Don to Spit' connection performs as a high-value wildlife network.





* CURRENT WATERFRONT TORONTO PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT BY OTHERS. GRAPHIC PROVIDED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

connectivity: the don to the spit master plan



7.3 ECOLOGY | CULTIVATING HABITAT & NATURAL AREAS

The Lake Ontario Park site is vast and varied, with a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic habitats. Whereas the site today comprises a complex amalgam of industrial, man-made landscapes, there are a multitude of newly emergent habitats and ecosystems. These include the hundreds of acres of thriving woodlands, meadows, wetlands and ponds at Tommy Thompson Park, the magnificent stands of mature cottonwoods in the western shore, the diverse patches of nascent wildlands in the Bar and Base Lands, and the proximity to the ravines of the Don River valley from which a rich mix of species migrate. The Master Plan proposes to build on these natural assets to cultivate a diverse and resilient landscape, one that should improve the performance of the park as an regionally important ecological greenway.

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

The Master Plan has five main objectives for habitats and natural areas in Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Cultivate a diverse, resilient landscape that is a natural asset to the region in terms of ecological connectivity, water quality improvement, biodiversity and sustainability;
- 2 Create meaningful habitat for the region and the lake by building wildlife corridors linked to existing natural resources, taking into account not only plant life but also bird, mammal, fish, and insect communities;
- 3 Design a durable landscape framework that is flexible enough to accommodate existing natural resources and local opportunities for enhanced habitat creation;

- 4 Design and stage ecological improvements so that the parkland can be understood and enjoyed in each phase of its development as a legible "landscape in process," designed to promote ecosystem structure and function; and
- 5 Ensure both early successes and long-term sustainability with smart phasing and economic planning to create a park that will be explored and enjoyed in all seasons and be compelling over time.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

In keeping with the ecological goals of the Master Plan, three primary factors drive the organization of the proposed habitat landscapes:

- 1 location of existing natural features and opportunities for significant habitat creation;
- 2 east-west ecological connections across the waterfront, including a strong, continuous green connection between the lower Don River and the Spit; and
- 3 desired landscape setting for the park.





Legend

- AQUATIC HABITAT
- WETLAND
- MARSH
- BEACH
- MEADOW / GRASSLAND
- FIELD
- RECREATION TURF
- THICKET
- SUCCESSIONAL SCRUB
- WET WOODS
- ON GREENWAY
- MIXED WOODLAND
- EXISTING WOODLAND

habitat & natural areas master plan



* CURRENT WATERFRONT TORONTO PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT BY OTHERS. GRAPHIC PROVIDED FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY AND ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

7.4 ECOLOGY | INCREASING CANOPY COVER

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

In addition to promoting a green connection between the Don Greenway and the Spit, Lake Ontario Park will contribute to the City of Toronto's stated goal of increasing the overall urban tree canopy from 17% to 35-40%. Although areas of Tommy Thompson Park and the Base Lands already go a long way towards supporting the City's goal, additional opportunities for increased canopy cover exist in the Master Plan for Lake Ontario Park - particularly with the landscape proposals for the Bar.

The landscape between the Eastern Gap and Leslie Street - 'the Bar' - represents the greatest potential for new park space and, therefore, new canopy within the Lake Ontario Park site. Although portions of the Bar landscape are already home to remarkable stands of trees - the Cottonwoods at Cherry Beach and the Cherry Beach ESA - the potential realignment of Unwin Avenue affords new sites for the development of green parkland and canopy. The existing wood-chipping and snow-dumping sites are also potential locations to reclaim as vegetated park. There are several factors that will determine the location and extent of new canopy within the Bar, and the extent to which existing canopy can remain:

- **SOILS:** Based on limited soil information to date, it is clear that materials used for fill disposal may require environmental site management to address environmental issues. The location, extent and severity of environmental conditions will determine the potential for preserving, restoring or regenerating canopy species.
- **LAND-USE:** The conditions of the Bar landscape that make it a strong candidate for revegetation - its scale, underutilized industrial character, etc. - also make it a good site for active and passive recreation. As the Port Lands develop into a new community, the Bar will be under pressure to support a greater population of users. This will invariably have an effect on land-use within the Bar.

Additional opportunities and targets for increased canopy cover in Lake Ontario Park

include:

- **THE BAR:** in addition to new park areas, infill of young canopy species should be coordinated with mature tree stands to ensure their health and perpetuity;
- **THE BASE LANDS:** sensitive, in-fill and restoration planting in accordance with ecological goals;
- **ASHBRIDGE'S BAY PARK, WOODBINE BEACH PARK AND THE EASTERN BEACHES:** strategic infill of young canopy species within relatively mature stands to ensure that the presence of canopy persists for the life of the park;

PLANNING OBJECTIVES

To support Toronto's canopy goals, the Master Plan offers four primary objectives for canopy cover at Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 Preserve existing canopy species to the greatest extent possible;
- 2 Ensure the preservation of significant cultural stands, i.e. the Cottonwoods at Cherry Beach and the mixed specimens along the Eastern Beaches, through strategic infill of young tree species;
- 3 Promote the use of species native and well-suited to the dynamic shorelines of Lake Ontario; and
- 4 Consult with Forestry staff in detail planning stages to ensure that canopy species proposed at Lake Ontario Park meet the City's criteria for species type, diversity and resilience.



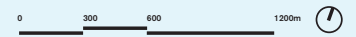


SOURCE: EXISTING CANOPY DERIVED FROM TRACING AN OVERLAY WITH CURRENT AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHS. TREE LOCATIONS AND MASSINGS ARE APPROXIMATE.

Legend

- EXISTING CANOPY
- PROPOSE CANOPY

**canopy cover
master plan**



7.5 ECOLOGY | MANAGEMENT, ENHANCEMENT & RESTORATION

MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

Lake Ontario Park presents an opportunity to refine and expand the ecological resources of this largely man-made landscape. Natural systems, however, are vulnerable to over-use, so there will be a need to control access to the most vulnerable and sensitive areas of the Park, while maximizing the use of the more robust components.

The six ecological management objectives at Lake Ontario Park are:

- 1 Restore and enhance the Park's ecology to:
 - protect important existing features and functions;
 - increase its ecological integrity;
 - enhance existing significant natural areas;
 - maximize biodiversity values; and
 - maintain ecological functions;
- 2 Provide access to natural features and processes consistent with their ability to sustain human use;
- 3 Provide opportunities for nature appreciation and interpretation;
- 4 Create new ecosystems for the purpose of fulfilling park programming needs, thus reducing the stress on the more sensitive, existing features;
- 5 Encourage ongoing management of natural resources, as needed, to ensure the features and functions are maintained; and
- 6 Monitor the ecological integrity of natural features in order to identify problems and initiate management responses, and periodically evaluate the success of the Park's ecological management.

KEY MANAGEMENT STEPS

Three steps are critical to the ecological success of Lake Ontario Park:

- 1 ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION:** The protection, restoration and enhancement of important and valued existing natural features is a primary objective of the Master Plan. The original, extensive wetlands associated with Fisherman's Island will be represented in the proposed wetland creation in the Bay and the Base Lands. Biological diversity will be enhanced through the creation of upland woodlands, successional areas and swamp forests. Fish habitat will be enhanced by providing appropriate habitat for spawning and foraging. The end result will be a more diverse landscape that supports a representation of the natural history of the Toronto shoreline.
- 2 MANAGING ACCESS:** The current ecological diversity of the site is one of park's greatest assets. This diversity must be preserved and enhanced, while providing opportunities for appreciation. This will be accomplished through:
 - The hierarchical nature of the trail system, which will be designed, constructed & managed in an ecologically sensitive manner over an extended timeframe;
 - Being selective regarding park areas that are readily accessible; and
 - Providing alternative nature experiences in constructed ecosystems to avoid stressing existing, sensitive park components.
- 3 MONITORING:** Monitoring is a critical management step, as it serves to:
 - Inform park managers of problems that require a management response;
 - Document natural changes in the park that need to be celebrated when positive, or managed when impactful;
 - Act as a weather vane for informing the public and agencies of changes in the larger ecosystems within which the park is situated (e.g., climate change, effects of air pollution, impact of changing lake levels, etc.); and
 - Facilitate evaluation of park management and design to identify what works and what needs refinement or improvement.





