

THE LAKEVIEW LEGACY PROJECT » VISIONING THE LANDSCAPE'S POTENTIAL

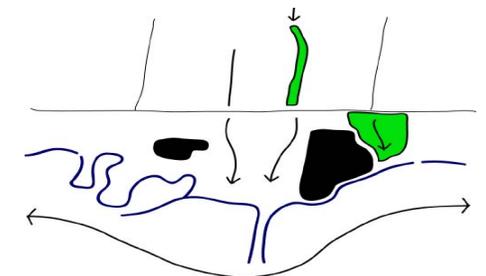
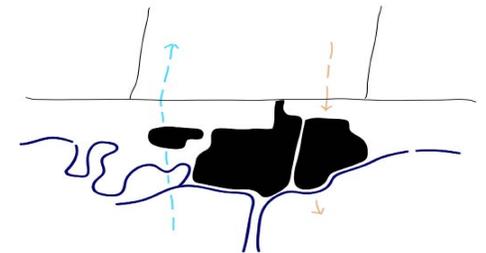


THE SITE » A HERITAGE OF MILITARY & INFRASTRUCTURE USE



The overlay black and white 1954 airphoto shows the military firing ranges appearing as long dark strips and the location of the first airfield in Canada where many of Canada's WWI aces learned to fly. This site spawned the aviation industry in Canada. In WWII the Canadian Small Arms facility at the right (east side) saw 40,000 women enter the workforce as machinists making most of the rifles used by the military.

The colour air photo shows the shoreline changes post WWII (including the coal power plant and unloading piers) and land filling at the regional sewage treatment facility. The recreational landfill on the right of the diagram illustrates the change and opportunity to connect the community to the waterfront at its core.



THE ISSUES » 120 YEARS WITH NO ACCESS TO THE LAKE

Lakeview is situated in the south east corner of the City of Mississauga and borders the south-western corner of Toronto, Ontario. Mississauga is Canada's sixth largest city with a population of 700,000 people. Lakeview has a population of approximately 25,000 people in an area that largely built out following World War II.

The combined area for new development is approximately 460 acres and spans approximately 1 mile.

Visioning, educating and translating people's values into the language of planning, politics and landscape architecture empowered the Lakeview community to convince Canada's 6th largest city to think bigger and more sustainably about Lakeview.

120 years of military and heavy infrastructure land use has kept Lakeview from all but the western edge of its waterfront. The visioning project by the community sought to demonstrate that the demolition of the Lakeview coal fired electric station presented a once in a lifetime opportunity to reconnect Lakeview to its waterfront. A new community core could replace the former suburban job zone lacking a contemporary village centre. The ambition was to reverse the legacy of pollution and create a healthy model for sustainable reclamation of post war suburban communities.

As part of the provincial government's effort to improve greenhouse gas emissions, the Lakeview coal fired electricity plant was closed and is now demolished. A gas fired replacement was proposed, however this visioning process convinced all levels of government that the opportunity to develop a smart growth sustainable community on the waterfront was more valuable.

Ontario Hydro was very diligent about cleaning up toxic spills and has re-mediated much of the site to an industrial level. The coal field remains an issue and has been capped. Preliminary analysis suggest that contamination is isolated and current land values can off-set re-mediation costs if medium density development is contemplated.

The study identified a variety of programmatic uses for each type of site and contamination. The vision plan anticipates various scenarios and phasing. It is possible to proceed or delay any of the strategy's components without compromising the viability of individual properties. The fundamental servicing and infrastructure is already in place such that individual property holders can incrementally develop toward the vision.



THE IDEAS » THE CITIZENS' VISIONING PLAN



THE IDEAS » 10 GUIDING DESIGN PRINCIPLES



1

Make Lakeview's waterfront an unbroken 7 kilometer network of public waterfront parks that act as the foundation for the Lakeview community experience, economy, and lifestyle.

2

Re-institute the original 1954 shoreline behind the coal plant breakwater to form a protected water canal feature and re-establish a continuous walkable beach front in front of the regional sewage treatment plant to provide a continuous unobstructed trail system at the water's edge that people can easily access and where they can safely engage the water.

3

Create the Lakeview Piers destination experience out on the water, surrounded by 360° lake views, using the former coal piers' harbor as Mississauga's destination venue on the Lake. (Entertainment and educational components such as a fresh water aquarium as well as enhanced harbor functions for tourism could be included.)

4

Create a multi-purpose stadium as a regional destination feature to support athletic and cultural events for the city. This function can cap the brownfield coal pile. Create a performance sailing venue for the Pan Am Games and Mississauga's Lake Ontario 300 race on the Pier feature.

THE IDEAS » CREATE 7KM OF NEW PUBLIC SHORELINE



5

Arts and entertainment destination feature on an island (foot print of the generator plant) completing a constellation of features that establish the area as a regional destination.

6

Lakeview Waterfront Community Core south of Lakeshore, consisting of compact mixed use intensification including residential, employment, and post secondary research and education facilities. Consisting of compact medium density and a built form designed to maintain Lakeview's "sky views" lifestyle by establishing a form of 2-4 storeys at Lakeshore Road and sloping building heights up to maximum heights of 12 floors at the centre of the Lakeview Core area and then sloping building heights back down to four storeys at the waters edge parks and destination features (strategies 1-5).

7

Create Linkages and a Major Natural North South Corridor to the Water using the foot print of legacy infrastructure.

Develop a major north-south green linear park at the location of the first aerodrome, firing range and former hydro transmission corridor. Re-align north-south streets in the intensification area south of Lakeshore Rd to establish views and access corridors to the lake for the community north of Lakeshore. Then connect these corridors to the northern neighborhoods with pedestrian and bike friendly road improvements and crossings at the railway tracks.



10

9

THE IDEAS » CREATE A SET OF WATERFRONT DESTINATIONS



8

Improve Atwater Road as the secondary, east-west, public realm corridor creating a safe pedestrian and bike friendly boulevard linking Lakeview's high schools, bus transit, community centre, and library.

9

Encourage four-story, intensification with live work units, mixed use commercial, and residential on the north side of the Lakeshore Corridor to create an appropriate transition and to preserve traditional neighborhoods and Lakeview's "Sky" and "Tree Canopy" view experience in the public realm experience.

10

Establish the Lakeshore Corridor as a tree lined linear Heritage Park including an LRT and bikeway on the south side of Lakeshore Road flanking and servicing the medium density south of Lakeshore in the Lakeview Core (strategy 6) and linking Lakeview's existing neighborhoods to the waterfront, core community services, revitalized commercial and employment zone.

THE PROCESS » USING THE VISIONING TOOLS

As design progressed and specific solutions were proposed the model was used to evaluate views. In future, when specific consultant proposals are submitted the detailed proposals can be placed in the virtual model for people to see for themselves if the principles behind the vision are met.

The overall idea was to help educate the community in urban design language and strategies for place making and sustainable regeneration and do it in a cost effective way. The landscape architect has been developing interactive design and analysis tools that allow people to research the parameters of design while a conversation takes place. The imagery is simple, precise and responsive.

It operates in real-time and combines analytical information with perspectival eye-level experiential information. This project was the first time that these techniques could be used on a low-cost tablet PC and netbook computer. This allowed the "lab" to go onto the kitchen table or the community centre meeting and provide a level of professional imaging not normally accessible to a community group operating without a large consulting budget.



THE PROCESS » VISIONING SCALE & PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

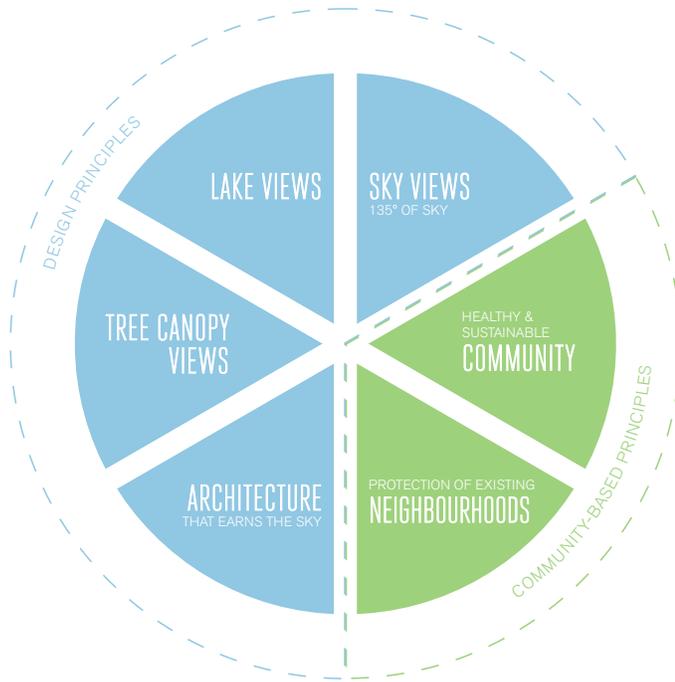
The design vision process began by using the digital tools with lay people to facilitate spatial thinking. It provided the ability to place two and three dimensional scale models of well established design and economic precedents proved extremely valuable in analyzing the scale of the site and the program elements under discussion. The process began with two dimensional imaging and progressed to three dimensional models as the conversation and spatial dialogue evolved toward consensus or shared agreement.

The West Don Lands project by Waterfront Toronto was used extensively (both visually and numerically) to demonstrate to authorities that these ideas are buildable in the Greater Toronto context.

Pictured at right are a samples of the many examples and precedents people asked to see to scale on the site. The large image is a hybrid 3D site collage of Waterfront Toronto's West Don Lands and elements of the Chicago waterfront elements. Below are Toronto Zoo (top left), Granville Island, Vancouver (top right), Mississauga City Centre (bottom left), Ontario Place, Toronto (bottom right).

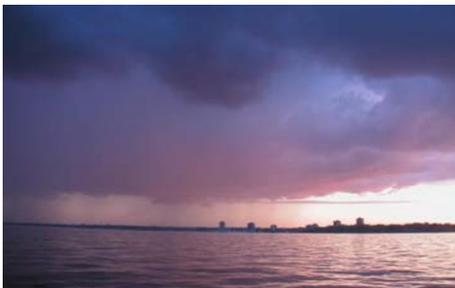


THE STRATEGY » CORE PRINCIPLES



The community identified the following principles for evaluating proposals and maintaining the sense of place that attracts people to live in Lakeview while championing intensification that can support a more sustainable community form and infrastructure.

1. Lake views
2. Sky views - 135 degrees of sky
3. Tree canopy views
4. Architecture that earns the sky
5. Protection of existing neighbourhoods
6. Healthy and sustainable community



THE STRATEGY » 3P STRATEGY

The community organization is the key to the success of this process. The executive of the ratepayers association decided to adopt the following operational principles in everything they did working bottom-up in a planning system that was not used to citizens leading the call for regeneration and sustainability. Most authorities expect resistance to this type of intensification agenda. The association's "3P" theory for strategy was implemented to achieve local community, shared community, bureaucratic and political buy in. They took the view that there must be a creative way to find solutions that did not create losers. It was not always possible to create the win-win situation but it was possible to identify core values and negotiate ways to protect those interests. That attitude shifted the mind set from the usual notion of asking authorities to fix problems to one of championing a positive alternative to the status quo.

PROACTIVE

Be proactive in identifying what negatively impacts your community, and more importantly, what may negatively impact your community in the near or distant future.

PERSISTENT

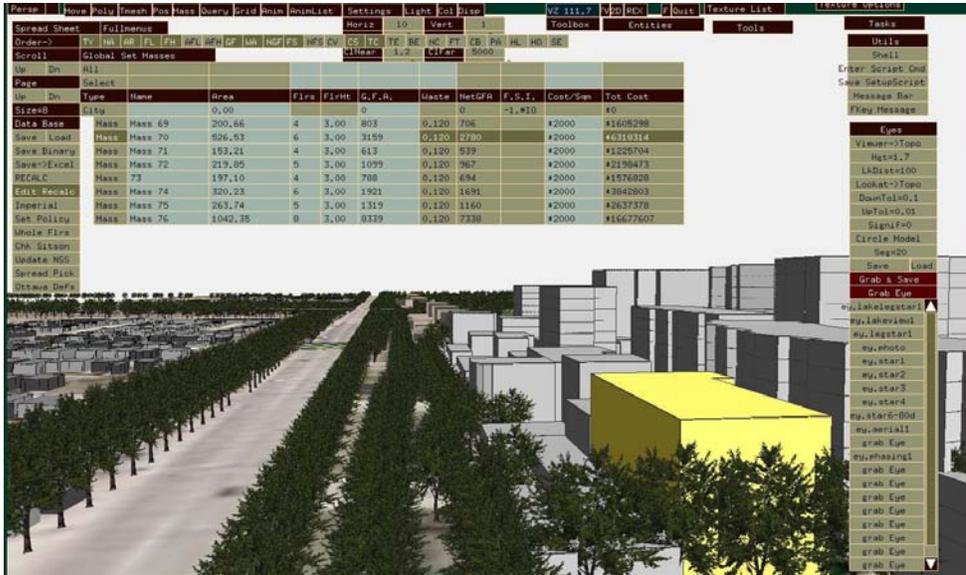
Be persistent in gaining, and sharing with your community, the knowledge required to make fair, informed decisions, and to be able to engage all stakeholders in the discussion.

POSITIVE

Never offer a solution to a difficult issue unless it is a positive solution. If you cannot find a solution where there are no losers, revert to the second "P"; Persistent.



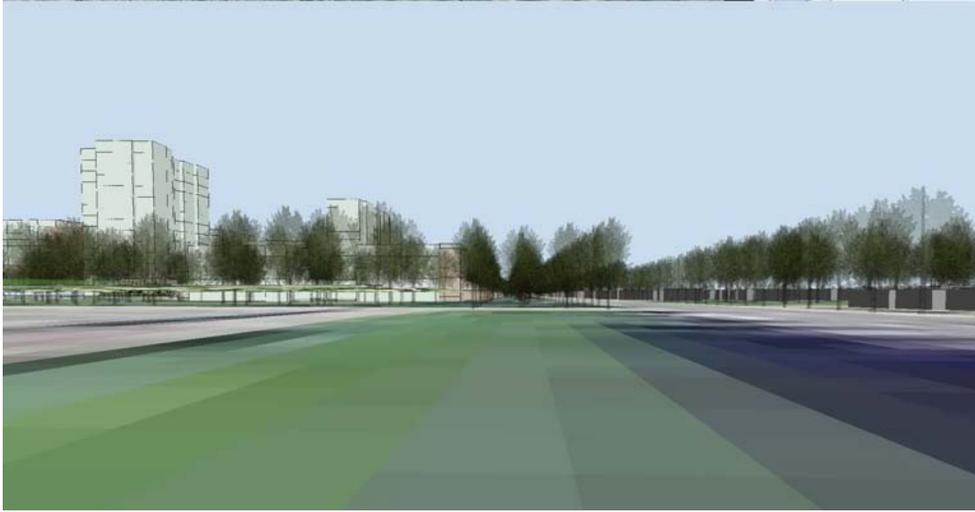
THE PROCESS » DESIGN VISIONING TO DEMONSTRATE FEASIBILITY



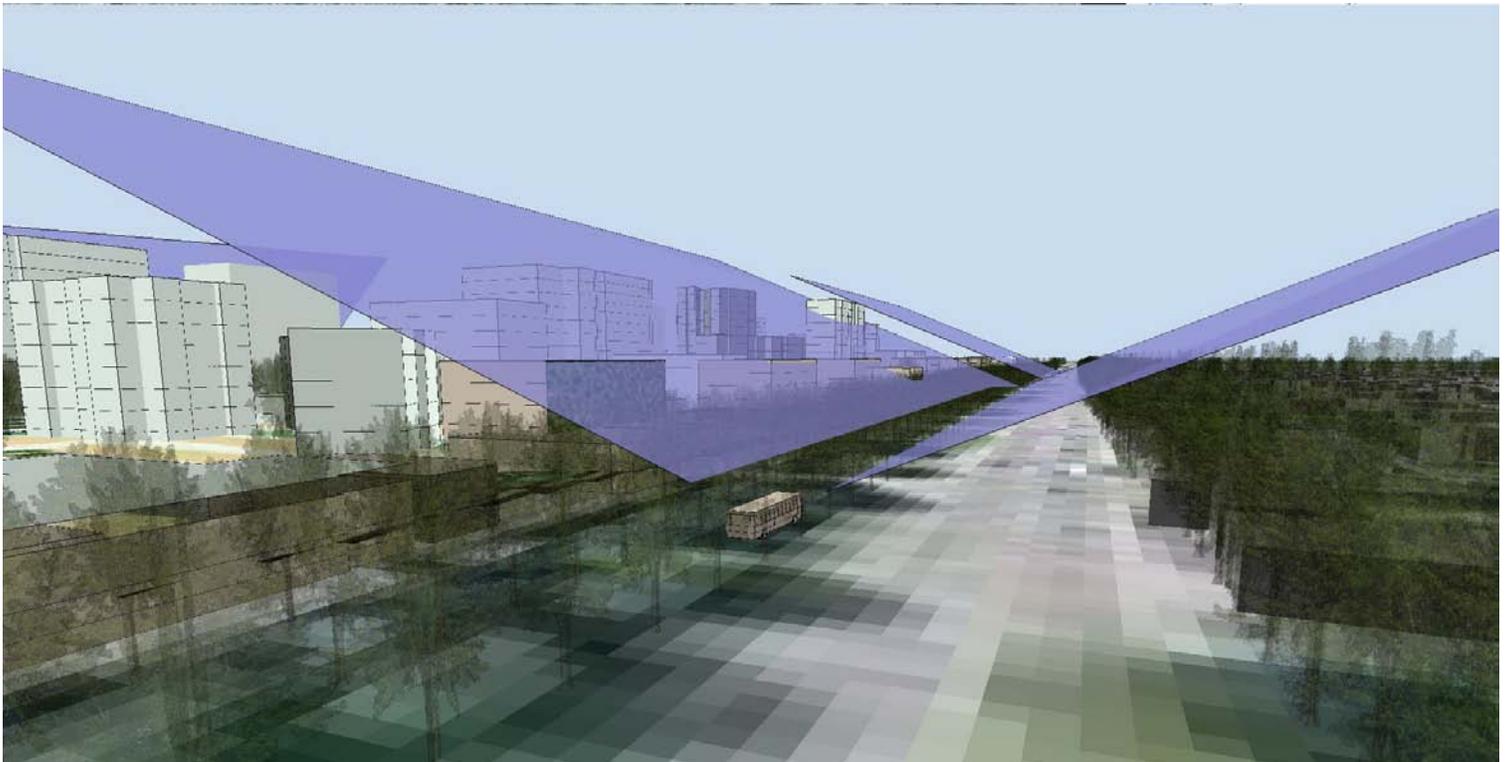
The interactive software allows people to calculate population and density while studying how to maintain “sky views” and a healthy tree canopy in the major public boulevards. The 135 degrees of sky view was possible to achieve in the boulevard by stepping back the massing to let light to the trees and the street and establish the “sky view” so important to people.

A key point illustrated in this document about the research and method is that a very effective professional level of graphic representation can result as a “free” by-product of the real-time conversations using the computer. There is no “photo-shopping” or expensive complicated movie quality CG (computer graphics) imaging. These images are what people saw as they worked. As such the representations are a documentation of the dialogue at the early and conceptual stages.





As the interactive software supported people in calculating higher levels of population and density to support better transit, diverse housing types, more services and energy savings through district heat, the tool simultaneously provided templates to study trade-offs between built form and “sky views”. The core principles of sky views (an approximate 135 degree sweep of sky) identified in the analysis and a healthy tree canopy were found to be achievable along the major public boulevards and waterfront public realm.



THE POLITICS » UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FROM CITY COUNCIL



"THIS SHOULD RENEW YOUR FAITH IN DEMOCRACY...
THIS IS PEOPLE POWER. THIS IS DEMOCRACY IN ACTION."

CAROLYN PARRISH (MISSISSAUGA WARD 6 COUNCILLOR)

"REAL PEOPLE DON'T LIVE AT CITY HALL. REAL PEOPLE LIVE OUT THERE.
AND THE REAL PEOPLE CAME IN TODAY."

NANDO IANNICCA (MISSISSAUGA WARD 7 COUNCILLOR):

"THIS IS, AND YOU'VE READ IT IN ALL THE MEDIA, OUR LAST OPPORTUNITY
TO CREATE A VIBRANT, URBAN WATERFRONT. IT BELONGS TO US AND WE MUST
TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT TODAY BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE."

CARMEN CORBASSON (MISSISSAUGA WARD 1 COUNCILLOR):

This community vision is unique because it was initiated and created by the community. The vision and the analysis that resulted from the real-time interactive "kitchen table" modeling discussions were presented to city council by the community to initiate and change planning policy and development action.

The typical planning process in Ontario begins with provincial government policy on planning. The Places to Grow legislation mandates more sustainable intensification and reduction of car use. The municipal governments then must create plans that intensify land use and inform communities how they expect to plan. In the case of Lakeview, the community association decided to ask for assistance from the landscape architect to educate itself and develop a vision capable of influencing both levels of government.

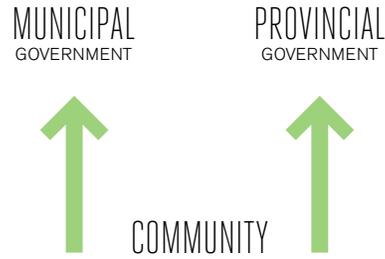
A number of articles in the Toronto Star, National Post, Mississauga Business Times, Mississauga News, and local TV, combined with a variety of public meetings, created strong public awareness of the issues. Some meetings were hosted by the community association and other meetings occurred as part of the city lead district plan review process where the ideas spawned a formal dialogue on the future of Lakeview. The residents, and the councillor were able to bring forward a motion and convince Mississauga City Council and Mayor McCallion to unanimously support the idea and to charge the planning department to study how the city can realize the vision.

THE POLITICS » SUPPORT & NEXT STEPS

Typical planning process:



Lakeview Legacy process:



The next stages of implementation are looking more closely at ways to incorporate all of the possibilities of the residents vision as part of the 5 year District Plan and Zoning Review along with a new set of design review policies. The first two steps in this process took place recently with the addition of the Lakeview area to the terms of reference of the City's Urban Design Review Panel and the formation of a new citizen and multi tier government review panel to provide direct input to planning staff on Lakeview.

The community association has formed the Lakeview Legacy Foundation with experts from business, the arts and education to foster the aims of the vision. The foundation is developing an adaptive reuse of a heritage factory as a centre for arts and science. A series of symposiums is planned on topics such as brownfield legislation and mixed use employment to work with the local businesses and development industry.



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