



Lands for Learning

What We Heard

Consultation Program Phase 1

March 2014

8

weeks of consultation

1

phase of a 4-phase
process

7

key themes

Lands for Learning
urban walkable liveable connected

YORK
UNIVERSITY
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION

Executive Summary

With completion of the new Keele Campus Master Plan, and in anticipation of the subway extension through the campus, it is time for York University to turn its attention to the undeveloped university-owned lands outside of the Academic Core. These edge campus precincts are located along the south side of Steeles Avenue, west of Keele Street, and south of The Pond Road –they are the **Lands for Learning**.

From November 2013 to February 2014, the YorkU community was asked to help develop a vision for the **Lands for Learning**. The project team employed a mosaic of engagement tactics to encourage students, faculty, and staff to share their insights, including:

- Establishing a storefront **Lands for Learning** Studio in York Lanes that invited the YorkU community to drop in, learn about the **Lands for Learning**, and share their thoughts;
- A Roving Information Booth that was staffed by YorkU students and made its way to 33 locations across campus;
- Focus Groups facilitated by project team members to engage in small-group discussions on specific topics relating to the **Lands for Learning**;
- Presentations to Student Groups; and,
- A comprehensive Online Engagement Program.

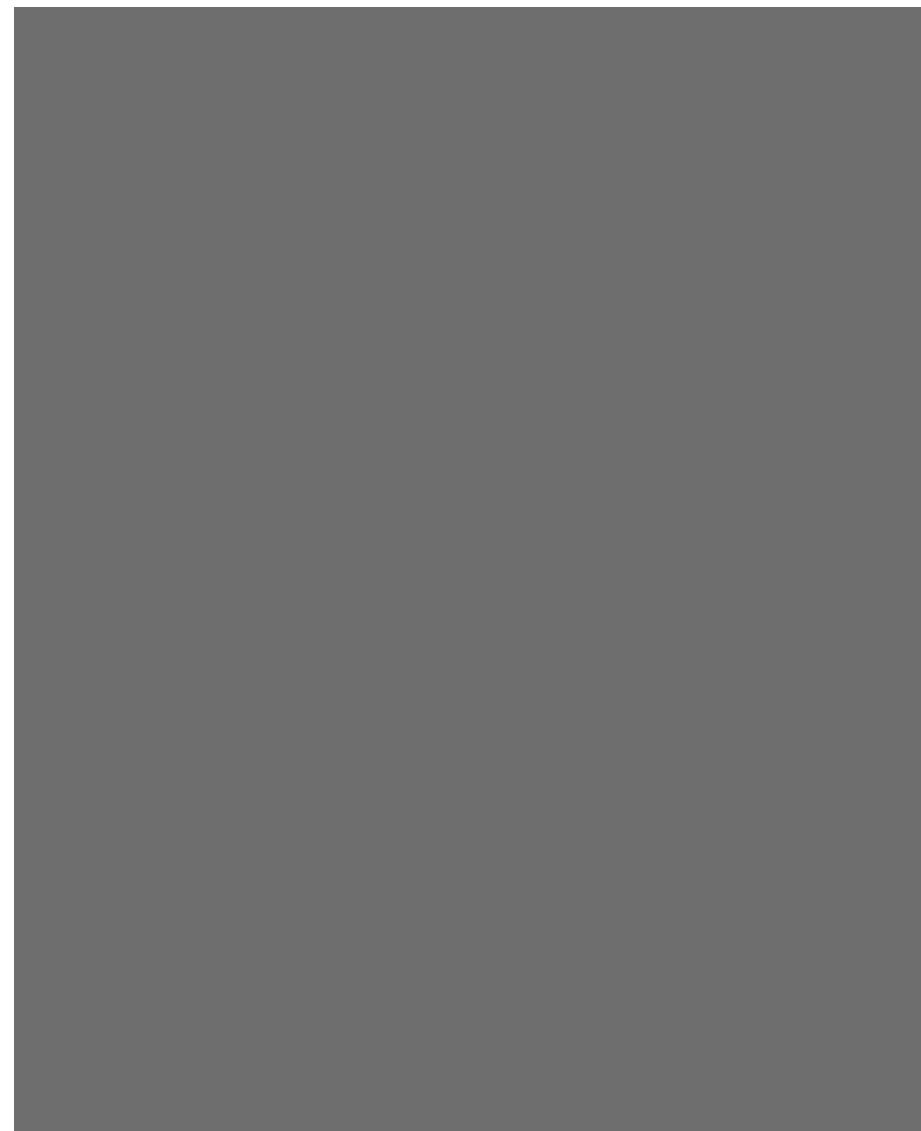
During Phase 1, Studio staff collected and organized feedback, which was made available to the public online and in the Studio.

Participants Phase 1 of the **Lands for Learning** consultation program expressed excitement around the possibilities of studying and working in the midst of lively, active, and urban neighbourhoods that surround the Academic Core. They were supportive of creating dense, mixed-use neighbourhoods in the edge precincts that consist of high-quality and well-designed buildings, streets and open spaces. Participants identified many benefits of developing the **Lands for Learning** for the Keele Campus. They believed that having dense, active and animated neighbourhoods adjacent to the campus that provide spaces to socialize, dine, work, study, live and play will support campus life, increase safety and raise the profile of the University.

Participants were supportive of creating healthy, mixed-use neighbourhoods in the edge precincts with space for residential, office, commercial, and community uses

The feedback and priorities captured through this consultation program will inform and shape the **Lands for Learning** Guiding Principles and Planning Framework that will in turn provide the foundation for Requests for Proposals to the development community to help realize the vision for lands outside of the Academic Core.

With completion of Phase 1 of **Lands for Learning**, we will begin Phase 2 in April 2014 to Confirm What's Important.



- 1 Overview of Lands for Learning
- 2 Summary of Phase One
- 3 Towards a Shared Vision
- 4 What's Next?

Overview of Lands for Learning

A Master Plan for the Academic Core of York University's Keele Campus was recently completed¹. The University community helped to shape the overarching principles, 3 lenses and 26 strategies that comprise the Master Plan. With completion of the new Master Plan, it is now time to turn attention to the lands outside of the Academic Core - lands along the south side of Steeles Avenue, west of Keele Street, and south of The Pond Road - the **Lands for Learning**.

The City of Toronto's Secondary Plan² which was approved in 2009, took the first step in setting a vision for our **Lands for Learning**. The Plan envisioned the development of vibrant mixed-use neighbourhoods surrounding York University's Academic Core, where up to 25,000 new residents and 21,000 jobs could be accommodated. The impetus for the creation of these new neighbourhoods is the subway extension and the three new stations - two on the Keele Campus and one at Finch Avenue.

Why participation is important

Consultation with the YorkU community will help us to shape the principles and broad frameworks to guide the detailed planning and design for the **Lands for Learning**. The planning and design will address all components of the built environment - such as the buildings, pedestrian space, streets, cycling, pedestrian routes and parking - and will guide development of those lands over the next few decades.

The feedback and priorities captured through this consultation program will inform and shape the **Lands for Learning** Guiding Principles and Planning Framework that will in turn provide the foundation for Requests for Proposals to the development community to help realize the vision for lands outside of the Academic Core.

The **Lands for Learning** Studio welcomed students, faculty and staff to learn more about the planning process and share their ideas for the edge campus precincts.

1. (www.yudc.ca/masterplan/)

2. (www1.toronto.ca/static_files/CityPlanning/PDF/10_york_university_dec2010.pdf)



Who is the YorkU community?

We are focusing the conversation at this time on students, faculty and staff to make sure there is a shared understanding of the change anticipated outside of the Academic Core. It's important to collect thoughts on what's important to the YorkU community with respect to for example, what buildings should look like, how parks should function, how people move around and what kinds of uses and services are located in these areas.

The York University community comprises:

Students: Full-time, part-time, undergraduate, graduate and continuing education students

Faculty: Tenured professors, Tenure-track professors, Associate professors, and Sessional instructors

Staff: Management, Administrative, Academic Support, and Unionized staff

Visiting students, staff, guest speakers, and participants in special events.

Urban, Walkable, Liveable, Connected

Four phases in the consultation program

Phase 1 Canvas the Possibilities - November 2013 to February 2014

The YorkU community was asked to provide insight to develop a vision for the **Lands for Learning**. The **Lands for Learning** Studio welcomed students, faculty and staff to learn more about the planning process and share their ideas for the edge campus precincts.

During Phase 1, Studio staff collected and organized feedback, which was made available to the public online and in the Studio. This feedback informed the development of draft key principles for the **Lands for Learning** Framework Plan.

Phase 2 Confirm What's Important - February to April 2014

The YorkU community will be given opportunities to learn about the draft key principles that were formed out of feedback gathered in the **Lands for Learning** Studio and online.

Outreach events and various displays on campus will provide opportunities for students, faculty and staff to comment on the draft key principles to ensure that they accurately reflect their needs and desires for the **Lands for Learning**.

Phase 3 Create the Priorities - April to May 2014

The YorkU community will be asked to establish the priorities for the development of the **Lands for Learning**.

"Prioritization pop-ups" on campus will invite the students, faculty, and staff to prioritize the draft key principles to shape the **Lands for Learning**. Interactive exercises will provide opportunities for the community to share their opinions and set priorities for the campus edge precincts.

Phase 4 Principles and Frameworks - June 2014

The input and ideas collected, confirmed, and prioritized through these three phases will inform the preparation of a final Lands for Learning Guiding Principles and Planning Framework document for approval by the University. The Principles and Frameworks will provide the foundation for Request for Proposals (RFP) from the development community interested in helping to realize the vision for lands outside of the Academic Core.



In this report:

what
we did

what
you said

what's
next

Summary of Phase One

Many opportunities to contribute ideas to the *Lands for Learning* Phase 1 consultation program engaged students, faculty, and staff interested in the future of the neighbourhoods surrounding the York University campus by employing a mosaic of engagement tactics.

1. The *Lands for Learning* Studio

A storefront studio was established in York Lanes to lend a physical presence to the consultation program on campus. The Studio opened in November 2013 and ran for 8 weeks throughout the Fall 2013 and Winter 2014 semesters. The Studio was staffed three days a week by three York University students who were trained by the *Lands for Learning* team to answer questions and engage participants in conversations about the edge precincts. These Studio Ambassadors encouraged students, faculty and staff to drop by the Studio, learn about the project, review precedents in university neighbourhoods, and share their insights into what kinds of neighbourhoods could support campus life at YorkU. One-on-one conversations, along with small group discussions, were facilitated by the Ambassadors.

2. Roving Information Booth on Campus

When not in the Studio, the Ambassadors also made their way around campus to reach out to students, faculty, and staff. The Ambassadors visited 33 different locations in the Academic Core to hand out information, engage people in conversation, and encourage ongoing participation in the *Lands for Learning* consultation program.

3. Focus Groups

The *Lands for Learning* team and the Studio Ambassadors facilitated 12 different focus group discussions in the Studio. This small group setting allowed for issue-specific, in-depth conversations with a diverse range of students, faculty, and staff.

4. Online Engagement

The **Lands for Learning** website was established as a sub-site to the York University Development Corporation website (yudc.ca/landsforlearning). The **Lands for Learning** website provided background information, including maps, to introduce the project to the York University community. Regular weekly updates on the consultation program were posted on the website, along with metrics of the progress of the program. The website also included contact information and an open comment form that could be submitted to the Lands for Learning team. A **Lands for Learning** Facebook page was established and linked through the website, and tweets regarding the **Lands for Learning** initiative were sent out via the York University Development Corporation Twitter account.

5. Presentations to Student Groups

The **Lands for Learning** team was invited to give presentations to, and lead discussions with, a number of student groups on campus. Similar to the focus groups, these sessions allowed for dedicated conversations.



33

campus
locations
visited



12

focus
groups



210

conver-
sations



230

hours in
the Studio



8

weeks of
consultation

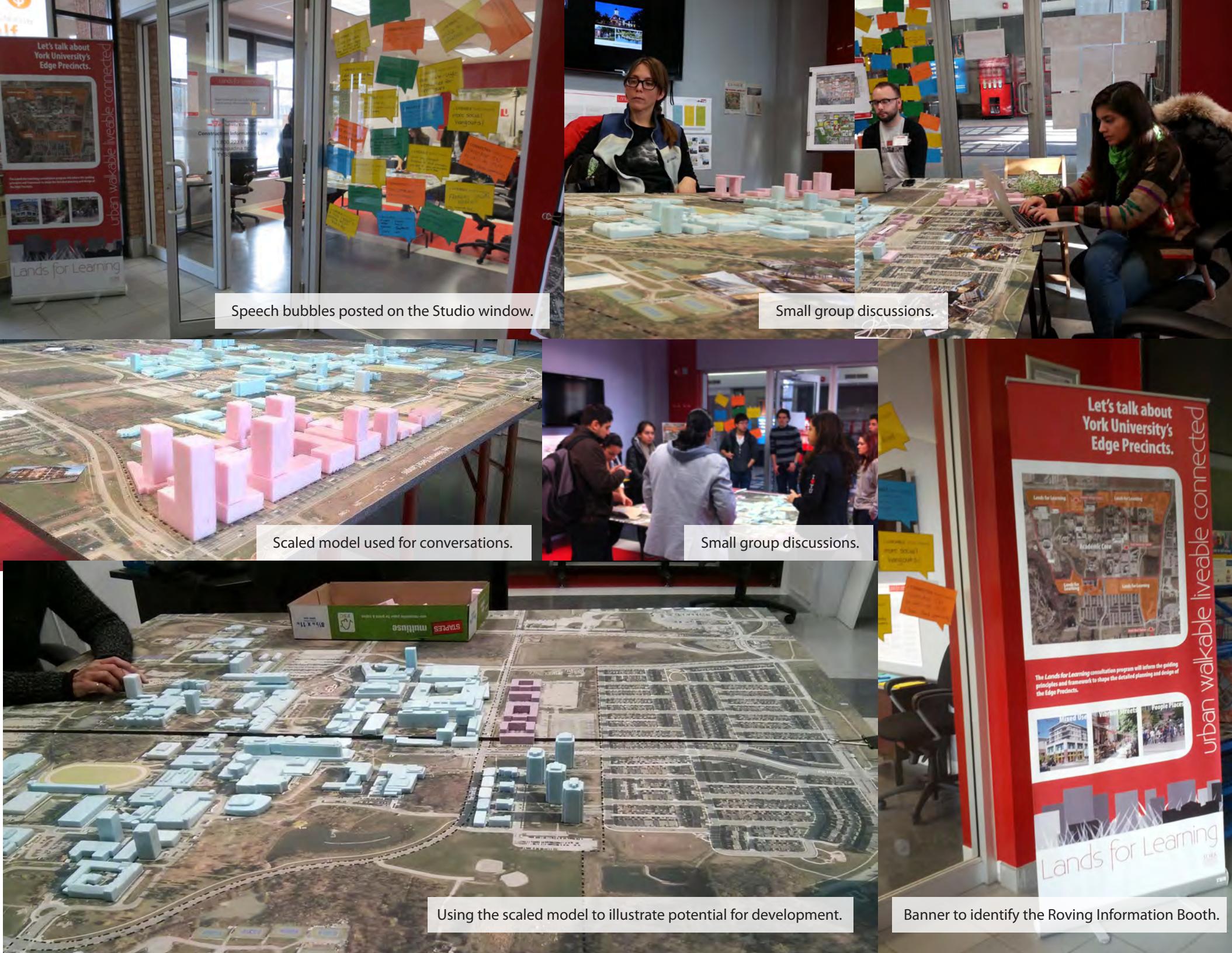
Getting People to the Table

The **Lands for Learning** team began a broad communications initiative in October 2013 to let the YorkU community know what the **Lands for Learning** are, and to encourage them to join in the consultation program.

After creating a recognizable brand for the project, the team designed and distributed postcards and posters around campus. Added incentive to visit the Studio was provided in coupons for \$5 York Lanes gift certificates that were redeemable upon participation in Studio conversations. A larger banner was also designed and used as a marker at the doors to the Studio, and as a visual aid at the Roving Information Booth.

Throughout these multiple channels, the **Lands for Learning** team employed a number of tools to support conversations and assist participants in explaining their ideas, which helped the team to gather accurate feedback.

1. A **scaled model** of the campus and the edge precincts, located in the Studio. This was used to illustrate the current built form of the area and encourage participants to suggest possible build-outs of the edge precincts by configuring movable building forms.
2. Hundreds of photos of different **precedent neighbourhoods**, including places to shop, sit, play, walk, cycle, drive, eat, work, study, access services, and relax, were provided in the Studio. Participants were encouraged to look through these photos and collage images that they felt were representative of their visions for the Lands for Learning.
3. A looping **slideshow** depicting precedents in university neighbourhoods was shown in the Studio. This helped to engage participants in conversations about what approaches to development would translate well to YorkU and provided information on the possibilities of the edge precincts.
4. Visitors to the Studio were also encouraged to write their visions anonymously on '**speech bubbles**' that were then posted on the windows of the Studio. Responding to the various prompts of the speech bubbles - *a liveable YorkU includes, a walkable YorkU includes, an urban YorkU includes, a connected YorkU includes* - helped participants to explain their ideas succinctly. These also became important visual aids that participants read and referenced during their visits to the Studio.



The following groups, faculties, and departments were represented in focus groups that took place in the **Lands for Learning** Studio and were facilitated by the **Lands for Learning** team.

1. Campus Services and Business Operations
2. Regenesis @ York
3. Joint Health and Safety Committee
4. Faculty of Fine Arts
5. CITY (City Institute at York University)
6. Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability
7. Department of History
8. Department of Geography
9. York Federation of Students
10. Faculty of Environmental Studies
11. School of Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies
12. Department of Humanities
13. Schulich School of Business
14. Schulich Real Property Students' Association
15. Department of Communications
16. Office of the Vice President, Finance and Administration
17. York University Libraries
18. Office of the President
19. Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
20. Office of the Council
21. Office of Recruitment
22. Residence Life
23. Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG)
24. Government Relations
25. Division of Advancement

The following campus locations were visited by the **Lands for Learning** Studio Ambassadors, and are mapped on the facing page. Information cards were distributed, Ambassadors engaged in conversations with students, faculty and staff, and in some locations roving information stations were established.

1. Accolade East
2. Accolade West
3. Archives Building
4. Atkinson Building
5. Bennett Centre for Student Services
6. Bethune College
7. Burton Auditorium area
8. Calumet College
9. Chemistry
10. Film + Media Centre
11. Founders College
12. Health, Nursing & Environmental Studies
13. Joseph G Green Studio Theatre area
14. Kaneff Tower
15. Lassonde Building
16. Life Sciences Building
17. McLaughlin College
18. Osgoode Hall Law School
19. Petrie Science and Engineering Building
20. Ross Building
21. Schulich School of Business
22. Scott Library
23. Scott Religious Centre (outside)
24. Seneca at York
25. Steacie Science/Engineering Library
26. Stong College
27. Student Centre
28. Tait McKenzie Athletic Centre
29. TEL Building
30. Vanier College
31. Vari Hall
32. William Small Centre
33. Winters College





Sample of Speech Bubbles

Urban
affordable sustainable
community a diversity of places to live
safe public spaces active streetscapes transit
grocery stores social places unique identity
children's play areas culture design green energy
new residents walking research and innovation
options mixed-use accessible restaurants transit
open spaces district energy

Most commonly used words to describe
a vision for the **Lands for Learning**.

Towards a Shared Vision

Participants in Phase 1 of the **Lands for Learning** consultation program were supportive of creating dense, mixed-use neighbourhoods in the Edge Precincts that consist of high-quality and well-designed buildings, streets and open spaces. Participants identified many benefits of developing the **Lands for Learning** for the Keele Campus. They believed that having dense, active and animated neighbourhoods adjacent to the campus that provide spaces to socialize, dine, work, study, live and play will support campus life, increase safety and raise the profile of the University.

When asked what would make YorkU a more liveable place, participants prioritized the development of adjacent mixed-use neighbourhood and repeatedly identified a need for more places to eat, shop, socialize, and relax close to the Academic Core. Students, staff and faculty feel that the neighbourhoods surrounding the Academic Core should take on a walkable, accessible and urbanized form. Participants were most interested in the design and animation of the ground floor and its contribution to place-making, rather than the upper floors of new buildings.

Participants felt that YorkU should build upon its existing strengths—including its identity as an innovation and education hub, its location relative to key highways, and its accessible public transit system—in order to attract high quality development to the **Lands for Learning**. Highlighting the area's competitive advantages could incentivize high quality development that would make the area more attractive to new residents.

Participants expressed excitement around the possibilities of studying and working in the midst of lively, active, and urban neighbourhoods that surround the Academic Core. They were supportive of creating healthy, mixed-use neighbourhoods with space for residential, office, commercial, and community uses.

Participants said...

How do we make inspired spaces? Must look for opportunities that take advantage of the synergies of the institution - otherwise we are just grafting. There are many brilliant stars here, we've just never formed a galaxy. In the next five years, there will be unbelievable pressure on YorkU to do it right. The peripheral lands are important opportunities for mixed use development, employment and residential. There needs to be a 'there' there. Students need to have a positive, interesting and emotional experience with the campus to have a lasting relationship with York. Make York a destination – it's hard to draw people here who aren't affiliated with York - it's a bit of an island.



Urban, Walkable, Liveable, Connected

A Dense, Sustainable Urban Community

Participants were supportive of development on the edge precincts and embraced the idea of increased density in the area for its potential to enliven the campus. Participants supported mixed-use development that includes residential, retail, commercial, and community space.

Sustainability and responsible growth remains a priority for the YorkU community. Participants suggested the incorporation of urban agriculture opportunities, rain gardens, bioswales and green infrastructure into the **Lands for Learning**. District energy was also highlighted as a possibility for the **Lands for Learning** to address energy concerns. The development of new buildings in the edge precincts presents an opportunity to integrate sustainable energy solutions and responsible building systems.

Many participants spoke of wanting to enhance the sustainability of food sources and supplies in and around the campus. Various remedies were suggested including ensuring a greater range of grocery store options (see below) but also by the provisioning of community kitchen facilities that would bring people together to learn about, make and eat food together. Establishing such a facility inside the new developments was cited as a significant benefit to the student community who could also partner with local organizations like Black Creek Farm at Jane and Steeles to access locally grown farm produce.

Participants said...

Mixed residential neighbourhoods that are appealing to families with York students who want to live near campus. I don't mind trading off density in exchange for an improved public realm and community programming. Provide a range of housing options, including homes for retired faculty and staff and families. We need some higher-end condos, housing for professors & staff who might opt to live on campus but don't now. Identify and build on York's competitive advantages to attract high-quality new development. The edges of the campus now make YorkU seem hidden, isolated. Building on edges will define the university, invite people in. Develop a sustainable grid system to address energy concerns. Sustainable food sources and programs bring people together.

A Connected Neighbourhood that Supports Active Transportation

Participants were eager to improve walking, cycling and transit connections to surrounding neighbourhoods and through the campus. The opening of the subway extension in 2016 was recognized as an opportunity to reimagine current connections to and from the **Lands for Learning** and the Academic Core. Participants felt that developing the Lands for Learning would integrate the campus into the fabric of the city while connecting YorkU to its neighbours.

Participants were concerned that the current campus and its surrounding areas are too reliant on vehicular travel. Many suggested that well-designed and lively streetscapes could enhance walking and cycling experiences and encourage more people to use alternative modes of transportation to travel to, from, and around, the edge precincts. Introducing separated bike lanes, installing covered bicycle storage facilities, and establishing an affordable bike-sharing program in the **Lands for Learning** were suggested as strategies for improving mobility, connectivity and safety. The concept of a community-run bike repair shop with an educational component was also proposed.

Participants offered ideas on how to improve navigation and make walking to, from and through the edge precincts comfortable and enjoyable – especially during the winter months. Several participants suggested providing covered walkways and accessible interior connections throughout the edge precincts, noting cold weather as a challenge to moving around and a deterrent to those considering spending more time in the neighbourhood and on campus.

Participants discussed the importance of maintaining efficient bus connections on the campus and in the **Lands for Learning** after the subway opens. People living and working in these areas must have access to viable and reliable transit and pedestrian linkages.

While participants encouraged the use of transit, they also recognized that transit may not be a feasible option for some students, faculty and staff. Participants discussed the importance of designing streets to accommodate vehicular traffic through the edge precincts. A number of participants acknowledged that underground parking and parking structures are more expensive than surface lots, but that the increase in land values may justify this cost. Several suggested that organizing shared underground or structure parking with private development would help to meet parking needs and preserve space for a pedestrian focussed public realm.

Participants were supportive of connected neighbourhoods that foster a feeling of community, connect new parks and open spaces with those existing on campus, enhance safety, encourage walking and cycling, and support the biological integrity of the area.

Participants said...

A bike share system like BIXI would be useful for getting around campus, but need proper bike lanes. Provide more cycling infrastructure, including sheltered bike parking. There are some people who will still need to park, so parking needs to stay affordable. Better signage on and around paths and walkways is important. Many people take transit to campus – this will only increase with two subway stops and would be encouraged by eliminating parking. There should be car parking but it should be expensive and limited. Parking should be cheaper, even free for students

A Safe and Social Neighbourhood

Participants felt that supporting the creation of urban neighbourhoods adjacent to the campus could increase pedestrian activity, provide more 'eyes on the street', and therefore improve safety in and around the Academic Core. This was identified by most participants as the preferred approach to creating a more welcoming and comfortable campus and community environment.

The need to design for safety was a key theme in discussions with the YorkU community. Many participants felt that increasing density and enhancing the urban character of the edge precincts would enliven the campus and the adjacent neighbourhoods and attract more people, social interaction and sense of community. This activity could help to make the campus safer. Participants also suggested strategies to animate the area in the evening with social, cultural and entertainment options. Participants noted that this greater social connection and liveability could also be fostered by the inclusion of well designed public squares, informal places for people to gather retail space, and dining and entertainment establishments that are open late.

Participants reflected on the need for a stronger sense of community on campus. Some cited a lack of social places to meet and linger on and around campus as a challenge to encouraging students, staff and faculty to spend more time on campus. Additional social spaces for this sort of informal study and social interaction in the edge precincts would be welcome. Participants also expressed a desire for expanded entertainment options, such as movie theatres, performance venues, and additional restaurants and bars.

Well-lit streets, walkways, cycling paths and transit connections were identified as priorities in encouraging on-street animation and fostering a safe and welcoming environment in the **Lands for Learning**.

Participants said...

We need more spaces to sit down, gather, and socialize, such as Scott Library, which is an excellent but overused space. Animate the edge precincts: activities or buildings that encourage students to hang out together. Need more activity at night to counteract culture of fear and insecurity. The campus needs to provide space for important student and communal activities like a DIY bike shop where people can learn how to fix their bikes, and a community kitchen that offers cooking classes for students.

A Beautiful and Active Public Realm, Including Parks and Open Spaces

Participants prioritized the development of parks, urban squares and other open spaces in the **Lands for Learning**. It was important to participants that these spaces be aesthetically appealing and comfortable, with pedestrian amenities such as seating with backs, shaded areas and tables. Students in particular were adamant that outdoor social spaces were as valuable as entertainment spaces and other shops and services. It was mentioned by several people that development in the edge precincts should be mindful of bio-diversity, ie. prioritizing native species and hardy plantings that foster habitat for insects, birds and butterflies.

Participants focused on the need for places to sit, walk, meet friends, and enjoy the neighbourhood. A series of smaller, urban parks and courtyards was favoured in place of larger recreational greens, as participants felt that there is currently an ample number of these larger spaces on campus. Indoor public spaces and interior connections were identified as areas that could encourage social activity in the winter.

Public art was mentioned numerous times as an important part of a lively, beautiful and engaging neighbourhood. Installing public art in the **Lands for Learning** would contribute to the vitality of the public realm and help to foster a sense of place.

The public realm, both on campus and in the Lands for Learning, is important to the YorkU community and must be designed to encourage socialization.

Participants said...

New green spaces in the edge precincts should have a recreational component. Emphasize pedestrian friendliness. Beautification efforts like parks and open spaces funded by development should be front-ended in order to offer community benefits right away. More covered walkways necessary in winter.

Connecting YorkU with the Greater Community

Participants expressed a desire for the campus and the edge precincts to feel like a community, with a unique identity, places to gather and meet friends, and a sense of social connection. Participants felt that animating the edge precincts and enhancing the livability of the area would encourage YorkU students, faculty, and staff to feel a sense of community.

Many participants noted the importance of engaging the local community that surrounds the Keele Campus in conversations about the **Lands for Learning**. Those who live and work in the Jane and Finch and Black Creek communities were identified as key stakeholders who have an interest in the future of the Lands for Learning and who could provide insight into what amenities, spaces and services would be beneficial in the edge precincts.

Participants noted that as a major landowner, employer and economic engine, York University has a responsibility to continue to support the surrounding community by encouraging stronger relationships between the local neighbourhoods and students, faculty and staff. The **Lands for Learning** presents an opportunity for the University to continue to fulfill this role as an active member of the local community. Participants encouraged interaction between students, faculty and staff and outside community members and understood the development of the **Lands for Learning** to be an opportunity to create friendly, affordable, diverse, and inviting environments that support community connections.

Participants said...

It should have a “community” feel. I am concerned about gentrification - how will this impact housing prices around the neighbourhood? Need to consult with Jane-Finch and Black Creek communities. Designated and protected community garden spaces are a priority. The new neighbourhoods should include multi-use community spaces. It should be inclusive to the outside community by opening up library system, fitness facilities to non-York community, small business opportunities.

Shops and Amenities that Support the Community and YorkU

There is a strong desire for amenities, shops, services, restaurants and leisure facilities to be situated within the **Lands for Learning**. Community services, including day-cares, a public library and community centres, were priorities for participants. Services, such as health facilities, salons, and auto mechanics, were noted as important parts of a new university neighbourhood.

The need for affordable grocery stores selling a diverse range of fresh food and produce on campus was the single most common concern people had. People are extremely eager to expand their options for grocery stores and sources of fresh, affordable produce. To that end, they were keen to see the establishment of a permanent farmers' market with affordable space for local vendors, artisans, and entrepreneurs.

Participants said...

At other universities, they’re partnering with business, non-profits, grocery chains or small community service providers - that is the way to go forward. Dynamic partnerships to draw students in, build community, and to think of multiple cores across the whole campus. The closest grocery store is 15-20 minute bus ride. Students often have to take a cab to the grocery store. So a grocery store within walking distance would be amazing. I’d love to see a St. Lawrence-style market building, with lots of fresh food options. There should be a mix of commercial, retail and student spaces adjacent to subway stops. There needs to be a balance between big, large-format development and small-scale, affordable cooperative development. Provide more entertainment options, like movie theatres. Attract amenities to the edge precincts, like cafés, more authentic nightlife, and more public art. It would be great to do my shopping here before going home. More high-quality food establishments that would be attractive to faculty members. Opportunities for retail and businesses could be linked to academic functions on campus. At first York Lanes was viewed with skepticism, but now it is invaluable.

Development of an Incubator / Accelerator and other Job Opportunities

Participants believe that the **Lands for Learning** present opportunities to create more career development opportunities around the YorkU campus. These can include research centres developed with industry partners and business and innovation incubators that provide opportunity for York University researchers to advance their work and create stronger ties between academia and the private and public sectors.

Participants felt that the **Lands for Learning** could enable the development of placement and part-time job opportunities for students, and greater employment opportunities for the local community.

Participants were excited by the potential job opportunities that could be created by large office and commercial tenants for students and graduates.

Participants said...

Think of adding 'social infrastructure' for community-building, form partnerships with non-profits and businesses that can provide jobs, entrepreneurial training, incubators and a place with hot desks like Centre for Social Innovation. A Medical School would be a serious magnet for corporate and private donors. We need to create/brand/market York as a technology/innovation hub, to take advantage of academics, education, resources and bring in private enterprise organizations that can leverage benefits of York partnerships. Provide space for innovation incubators like MaRS.

Other Discussion Topics

Many people discussed The Village, pointing to it as an example of the type of development they do not want to see happen in the Lands for Learning.

Participants said...

Let's avoid another Village. The worst possible scenario would be to hand over the Lands for Learning to developers for single-family homes like the Village.

A number of participants said that while they disapproved of how The Village was designed or currently functioned, it was offering important housing stock that was close to campus and comparatively affordable. Some participants said that they lived in The Village and that housing conditions, prices and quality varied widely. Most agreed that although this neighbourhood was not formally part of York University, it being privately-owned freehold, it was perceived as such. This perception is aided by the existence of shared wayfinding and branded signage.

Participants said...

Signage in The Village matches the YorkU colour scheme and layout, so this confuses people about whether its part of the campus or not. A lot of us who do live here, spend a lot of time at home, because there are no places to convene on campus. We go to any green space near The Village on weekends to ride bikes, walk, we just like to go to any place with outdoor benches.

Some participants pointed out that all the residents of The Village, whether they are students or not, shared a desire for increased and improved access to parks, shops, amenities, transit and social activities. Many expressed the belief that improvements on the edge precincts of York University would help mitigate a sense of disconnection and isolation for those who live in The Village and on campus.

It was noted that The Village was sold and developed prior to the City of Toronto's current Secondary Plan. The Secondary Plan now sets clear direction for the development of vibrant, diverse, mixed-use urban neighbourhoods.

What else did we talk about?

Did we miss anything? Help the ***Lands for Learning*** team understand what the YorkU community envisions for the ***Lands for Learning***. Speak to team members, send us an email, post on our facebook page or attend upcoming ***Lands for Learning*** events to share your thoughts.

landsforlearning@gmail.com

What's Next?

With completion of **Phase 1** of *Lands for Learning*, we will begin **Phase 2** when we **Confirm What's Important**.

In April 2014 we will focus on ensuring that the information collected during Phase 1 is correct and accurately represents the views of the YorkU community. This will be achieved by conversing with students, faculty and staff in-person and online to gather feedback.

The Principles on the facing page have been developed from Phase 1 conversations. These guidelines align with the 3-lens framework of the York University Keele Campus Master Plan Update: Pedestrians First, Greening the Campus, and Infilling the Campus. An objective of Phase 2 is to review and confirm these principles with the YorkU community.

Lands for Learning Principles

Master Plan Principles

Master Plan Principles

A network of streets for pedestrians, cyclists, transit & cars

Convenient, comfortable, pleasant and safe environments to move around

Pedestrian gathering spaces

Connections to the City's neighbourhoods

Master Plan Principles

A beautiful landscape

Protect places of value

Connected open space system

A variety of open spaces

Key views

Master Plan Principles

Protect the potential for growth & change

Provide a flexible framework

Reinforce the campus structure

Grow up: compact transit-oriented development

Respect existing structures

Integrate best practices in sustainability



Natural extension of the Academic Core

Seamless integration

Social spaces with all season animation

Small urban squares

Variety of shops and services on the ground floor

Vibrant neighbourhoods with a variety of choices for housing

Mix of places to work selected due to potential synergies with the University

Lands
for
Learning