



Looking Back, While Moving Forward: Small Arms Inspection Building Redevelopment Project Brief

Pre-Budget 2015 Submission to the House of Commons Standing
Committee on Finance

August 6, 2014

Executive Summary:

Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA), is planning to restore the heritage structure known as the Small Arms Inspection Building, located at 1352 Lakeshore Road East within the waterfront community of Lakeview in Mississauga, Ontario.

The Building renewal is intended to create a dynamic and ever-evolving mixed-use space, providing for a unique combination of office, studio and community occupancies, with an emphasis on promoting culture, arts, heritage, scientific research, idea exchange and small business opportunities. The benefits will include, but not be limited to:

- attraction of small businesses to the Lakeview community;
- contribution to the health, vibrancy and diversity of the community;
- preservation and enhancement of heritage features, that represent Lakeview's contributions to World War I (WWI) & World War II (WWII);
- promotion of education and research related to sustainable urban design and planning;
- enhancement of public amenities and connected network of regional parks and natural open spaces that bridge Toronto and Mississauga; and
- promotion of arts and culture.

The Building is situated on a 15.7 hectare parcel of land, commonly referred to as the Arsenal Lands, and acquired by TRCA in 1992. The Arsenal Lands (and surrounding grounds) have played an important role in Canada's history. In 1806, the lands were patented to Colonel Samuel Smith who served with the Queen's Rangers during the Revolutionary War and later as administrator of the Province. In 1910, the land was acquired for military purposes and shortly after registered by the Department of National Defense as 'The Toronto Barracks Site'. The lands became part of the Long Branch Rifle Range which was used in training exercises until 1957. Canada's first aerodrome also operated nearby, training pilots that went to England to serve with the Royal Naval Air Services during WWI. And finally, during WWII the Arsenal Lands became the site of a large munitions plant that manufactured rifles and small arms for the Canadian Army, supported by thousands of women who joined the war effort.

The Building, designed in 1939 by Allward and Gouinlock Architects, is an important artifact in Canadian heritage. Under the threat of demolition in 2008, the City of Mississauga –in 2009 - designated the Building as being of cultural heritage value or interest under the Ontario Heritage Act. Since that time, the rich history of the site and its importance within the Lakeview community, and Canada has inspired a community-driven plan to reinvent the Building as a centre for arts, culture, heritage and science. TRCA's community supported vision for the Building redevelopment, aligns with the funding priorities of the Federal Government, and is supported by the City of Mississauga, as presented in their proposed Lakeview Local Area Plan. The redeveloped Building will:

- provide support for Canadian families within a vulnerable Lakeview community, by providing opportunities for education, training, and mix-type job growth;
- increase the competitiveness of Canadian businesses by providing spaces for research, development, innovation and commercialization; and
- ensure prosperous and healthy communities through the provisions of art and cultural spaces within a heritage structure, that has a strong connection to Canada's military and economic development history.

It is estimated that the Building will require, at minimum, a capital investment of approximately \$10 million to renovate and redevelop the property to support a sustainable and dynamic multi-use facility. The Region of Peel has committed to \$1.5 million and TRCA has initiated an Expression of Interest process to identify additional redevelopment partners. Detailed design and permitting is to be completed by end of 2014, with construction anticipated to commence in 2015, once financing and partnerships have been confirmed.

TRCA kindly requests that the Government of Canada provide support in the order of \$5 million, with the condition, that the Region of Peel and/or other partners provide additional commitments to match the federal contribution.

The Small Arms Inspection Building, is more than a structure, it is a collection of stories – a story about a resilient community; the role of women in the development of our nation; Canada's proud military heritage; and the citizens of Canada, and their ambition towards the creation of a sustainable nation, that is built upon a shared heritage of hard work and innovation. By way of the Building redevelopment, another proud chapter in Canadian history shall be written.

Background:

The Mississauga community of Lakeview is situated along the waterfront and borders the City of Toronto (**Figure 1**). Mississauga is one of Canada's largest municipalities (2014 population = 771,245), with an estimated growth of 4.4% by 2019. In contrast, Lakeview (2014 population = 21,912) is declining, has been since at least 2001 and is estimated to continue by 1.4% from 2014 to 2019. A similar downward trend in employment rates (from 2009-2019) between Mississauga (+5.8%) and Lakeview (-1.6%) has occurred/is forecasted. The trends/predictions emphasize the need for investment in the Lakeview community.

Although significant development of Lakeview began during WWII, the community's industrial and military history pre-dates WWI. In 1915, Curtiss Aeroplanes and Motors Limited established Canada's first aerodrome, officially known as the Long Branch Aerodrome and Flying School. Around this time, the Long Branch Rifle Ranges, located at the terminus of Dixie Road, were used as an active militia training area and a Cadet program used by the Department of National Defense during WWI. Remnants of the bunkers and baffles remain today. Also south-west of the Building are the former Ontario Power Generation lands where the Lakeview coal powered generating station operated between 1962-2005.

In 1935, the Department of Defense purchased the lands and in 1940, the Small Arms Limited munitions factory commenced operation. By 1943, the approximately 43,000 ft² Small Arms Inspection Building was constructed to provide inspection and administrative purposes to the munitions factory. Throughout WWII and until 1974, the company manufactured armaments, and munitions. At peak operation capacity, the factory employed 5,300 to 5,500 workers, supported by a 65% female workforce which has resulted in recognition by the Rosie the Riveter Organization in California (a first in Canada), for its employment of a mostly female workforce during WWII.

TRCA acquired the Building in 1992, as part of the purchase of the larger surrounding lands (approximately 15 hectares), commonly referred to as the Arsenal Lands. The goal of the purchase was to foster environmental conservation through the development of a regional waterfront park that would link Mississauga and Toronto. In 2009, the City of Mississauga designated the Building as being of cultural heritage value or interest under the Ontario Heritage Act.

The Vision – Looking Back, While Moving Forward:

Adaptive re-use of a landmark building that would support the transition of Lakeview into a rich mixed-use community, by providing a green structure, that encompasses opportunities for new public, entrepreneurial, educational, artist and cultural spaces.

Lakeview is slated for renewal under the City of Mississauga's ongoing Inspiration Lakeview and Local Area Plan planning processes. Under the draft Local Area Plan (scheduled for completion/ratification by Council in 2015), there is consideration for a Special Site on the Arsenal Lands to allow for additional uses such as community facilities, a conference centre, commercial school, restaurant and secondary offices within the Building.

Proposed Building redevelopment activities will include, but not be limited to:

- Restoration and refurbishment, as well as preservation of items of historical/associative value.
- Commissioning and purchasing of works of art that complement the Building's historical and cultural value.
- Provision of an interactive and functional exterior space; using environmental best management practices; complimentary of the Building's natural setting; including linkages to the adjacent park/trail systems; parking and site access improvements and featuring artistic displays.
- A commercial food facility within the Building that features local and artisanal produced products.

Benefits of the Building redevelopment, as presented below, align with the Government of Canada's funding priorities: to support families and build healthy communities; provide opportunity for education and employment growth; and support local entrepreneurs.

Arts and Heritage:

- Restoration of a heritage structure; which will improve citizen access to a cultural space that could be used for the visual arts, media arts, museum collections, and heritage displays.
- Access to a restored heritage space, for local and regional citizens to create, present, preserve and exhibit arts and cultural components that are of value for all Canadians.

Economic Prosperity: Invest in the Workforce of Tomorrow:

- Establish spaces for entrepreneurs within the sciences, mobile content and computing industries - particularly those that are conducive to the longer-term economic sustainability of the community. Contribute to leadership, expansion, integration and innovation within the referenced industries.

- Connect leading regional, national and international experts and firms with Building tenants, in order to foster a regional hub of education, job growth, integration and innovation.
- Attract start-ups and new industries to the Lakeview community; which will seed its transition from industrial to a modern economy focused on services, engineering, sciences and computing.
- Compliment the role of women as a majority, in the Small Arms Limited labour force, by focusing on providing space, support and leadership for female entrepreneurs.
- Create jobs through sustainable industries. Lakeview – and all of Canada – require strong, sustainable, high-potential business that can grow into globally competitive firms, drive job creation, innovation and economic growth. The Building is adjacent to the Inspiration Lakeview study area; which is a Regional Council Approved, Master Plan for the revitalization of approximately 245 acres of lakefront estimated to accommodate approximately 20,000 new residents. The Building could serve as an incubator hub for professional development; technologies; knowledge; and firms that will be required in order to achieve the vision and goals of the Plan.

Advance Sustainability: Performance and Pathway:

- Redevelop the Building into a high performing structure that will raise the bar in one or more dimensions of performance (i.e. energy).
- Serve as a case study, for how Canadians and citizens of the world may restore brownfields and retrofit existing heritage structures into high performing buildings.
- Align with community goals; integrate with existing systems, networks and planned/existing infrastructure (i.e. Long Branch Go Station and proposed public transit improvements to Lakeshore Road and active transportation trail networks along the Lake Ontario waterfront).
- Enhance public amenities and support a connected network of regional waterfront parks and natural open spaces that link Mississauga and Toronto.

Furthermore, the proposed Vision for the redevelopment of the Building compliments and supports the City of Mississauga’s long-term goals for Lakeview; which are presented within the six themes of the Lakeview Local Area Plan:

Local Area Plan Themes	Building Redevelopment Contributions
Reconnect Citizens to the Waterfront	Serve as a gateway from the urban parts of the community into the waterfront. Establish itself as a ‘destination’ that will draw people to the waterfront.
Community Health	Provide a vibrant and innovative space for meeting, learning, communicating and reflection.
Distinct Neighborhoods – Preserve Heritage Features	Compliment, recognize and promote the Buildings key heritage attributes, its role within


	the Lakeview community and its role within Canada's military and economic development history.
Complete Community – Mix of Use, Economic Stability	Establish a place for job creation, community use, celebration of local and Canadian heritage,
Social Well-Being – Public Spaces for Social Interaction	A place where citizens (local, national and international) can gather to learn, interact, be entertained and become inspired.
Leadership in Sustainability	Built to high environmental standards both within the Building and throughout the exterior landscaped areas.

Conclusion:

The redevelopment of the Small Arms Inspection Building is an exciting opportunity to promote the rejuvenation of Mississauga's Lakeview community. It is an opportunity to commemorate and celebrate local and national history, while moving towards a sustainable and prosperous future.

We thank you for your interest in this project and your continued support of TRCA. We look forward to future discussions with you, on the redevelopment of the Small Arms Inspection Building.

Sincerely,


 Gerri Lynn O'Connor
 Chair
 Phone: 416-667-6288
 Email: goconnor@trca.on.ca


 Brian Denney, P.Eng
 Chief Executive Officer
 Phone: 416-667-6290
 Email: bdenney@trca.on.ca

Figure 1:

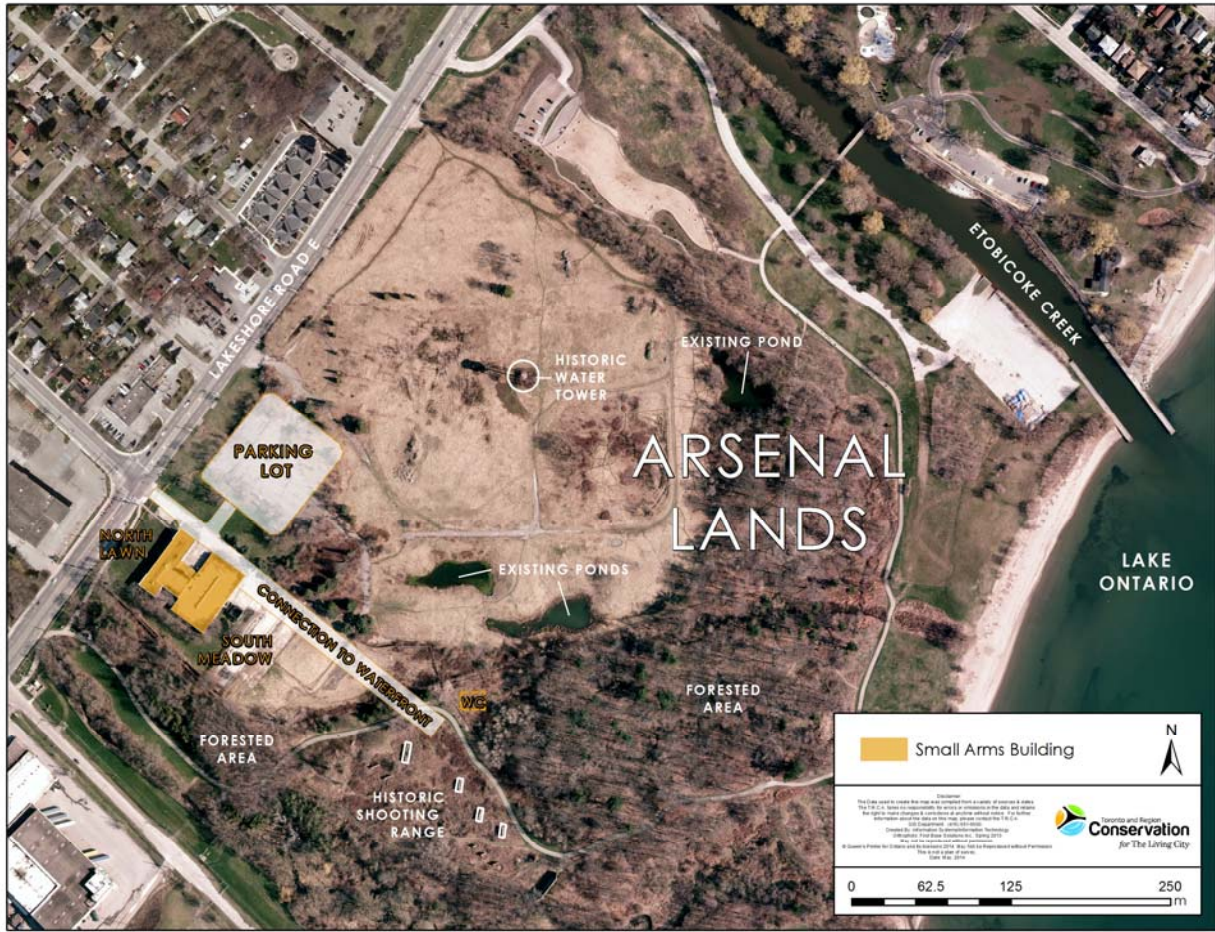


Figure 2- Proposed Redeveloped Building:

