

LIVING WELL ON THE WATERFRONT

Imagining the Future of Community Health



A Note From Sidewalk Labs

Neighbourhoods are key drivers of health.

In July 2018, Sidewalk Labs commissioned Idea Couture to dive into this idea and build a perspective on the future of community health, well-being and care. This report is a result of that effort. It is meant to inform Sidewalk Labs, our partners, and communities in and outside of Toronto as they imagine how neighbourhoods might come to foster good health in the future.

The perspective offered in this report is not meant to represent the community’s vision; rather, it is a first step, a collection of ideas for all of us to react to and build from. For Sidewalk Labs, this work has provided a deeper understanding of the current needs of Torontonians and the trends that could inform community-based care both in Canada and across the globe.

The concepts presented here by Idea Couture build on Ontario’s community hub model, and on the City of Toronto’s Downtown Community Services and Facilities Strategy.

In this report Idea Couture proposes a new type of community space; social infrastructure dedicated to health, well-being, proactive care, and community connection. The concept put forward brings together physical space, intentional programming and service delivery, as well as digital tools that foster good health and well-being. Dubbed the Care Collective, this space is envisioned as a hub for interconnected systems of proactive care, providing the neighbourhood with an array of options to foster health and wellbeing for themselves and others.

Introducing The Care Collective:


- » **A bustling yet relaxed gathering space** where visitors can connect, play, and linger;
- » **A health clinic** designed to facilitate collaboration between patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers in spaces that feel like home;
- » **A nature-infused place of respite** that allows visitors to unplug from their hyperconnected lives;
- » **A pharmacy, cafe, and teaching lounge** that offers visitors a spectrum of care and expertise;
- » **A forward-looking library** that goes beyond books to provide digital, physical, and human resources to enhance health literacy; and
- » **A prototyping space and fleet of mobile health pop-ups** that enable the community to experiment with new ideas and bring care to other spaces and neighbourhoods in need.

So, what comes next?

To date, our team has used the research from this report to help inform our work, and specifically, elements of Sidewalk Labs’ social infrastructure strategy. You can expect to see some of the ideas and themes generated from this work referenced in the Master Innovation and Development Plan (MIDP).

But our vision goes beyond that. The purpose of commissioning and releasing this body of research is to inspire new questions and spark new conversations. We know this is just the first step in our thinking about the proposed Quayside Care Collective. We look forward to seeking input from all of you—the individuals, organizations, service providers, partners, and future community members—who will help to shape this vision in the months and years ahead.



Be well,

**Alexis Wise &
The Sidewalk Labs Team**

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Part 1

THE JOURNEY

In this section we provide an overview of our research—how we engaged with Torontonians, identified future trends, and co-created with community partners to generate ideas for enhancing community health and well-being.



BEFORE YOU DIVE IN

We were humbled to have had the opportunity to imagine the future of community health, well-being, and care in Toronto with a diverse group of residents, service providers, and organizations that call this city home. These individuals raised critical questions, shared new and interesting concepts, and were vital in shaping the ideas found in this report.

Special thanks to:

- » BeACCoN (Better Access and Care for Complex Needs Network)
- » DIALOG
- » Findhelp Information Services- 211 Central Region
- » Healthcare Human Factors
- » Lori Casselman
- » Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- » Population Health Solutions Lab
- » Rexdale Community Hub
- » Saint Elizabeth Health Care
- » Second Harvest
- » St.Michael’s Hospital Academic Family Health Team
- » Toronto Public Library
- » WIHV (Women’s College Hospital Institute for Health Systems Solutions and Virtual Care)
- » YMCA of Greater Toronto

Key Project Stats:

Conducted baseline research and future looking horizon scan, identifying **7 drivers** and more than **140 signals** of change

Developed **90+ ideas** with over **20 community partners** at a day-long co-creation session

Conducted interviews and immersions with **20 residents and service providers** from across the city

Imagined **6 future spaces** that could make up a health-focused community space of the future



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Designing for well-being is complex. This is especially true in a diverse city like Toronto, which is home to more than 230 nationalities and 140 different languages. The city is also changing rapidly: according to the Ontario Ministry of Finance, by 2041 the Greater Toronto Area's population is projected to grow by 40.8 percent, reaching nearly 9.7 million people. To build healthy urban communities amid this complexity, it is essential to begin with a human-centred understanding of the challenges and opportunities people face today, while also imagining how life might change for the Torontonians of tomorrow.

» Taking a human-centred approach to design

means taking time to witness and understand people's experiences before jumping into the act of problem-solving. When it comes to studying how a group feels about personal subjects like well-being and community, it is important to expect nuance. Communities are always messy and imperfect—but that is what makes them so interesting to design for. The trick is teasing out potential areas of improvement without disrupting what is special and good.

» It is also about thinking beyond the realities of today

to understand the changes that could impact the future. This view is especially important when planning for the long term, which a project like this requires. By thinking about how the health and well-being needs of Toronto's inhabitants could transform over time, we will be better equipped to shape a brighter future.

Toronto Area's population is projected to grow by 40.8%

During the summer and fall of 2018, Idea Couture partnered with Sidewalk Labs to imagine how an innovative community space focused on health and well-being could best serve the diverse needs of Quayside's future residents, employees, and surrounding communities. As a Toronto firm specializing in human-centric and future-focused strategic design, we were up for the challenge. Though our work focused specifically on Quayside, many of the findings reported here could also inform the design of new community spaces in other neighbourhoods.

In the pages that follow, you will find an overview of our research and a glimpse of the co-creation session we conducted with community partners to generate ideas for healthier and more inclusive communities. You will also see a potential future brought to life via a series of vignettes. These stories and images illustrate some of the key spaces and technologies that future residents might experience in Quayside's Care Collective, a community space focused on holistic and proactive approaches to care that blur the boundaries between health, well-being, and social cohesion.

We hope this vision will inspire further discussion, feedback, and ideas about how Torontonians might shape their own personal health and well-being as well as that of their families, communities, and beyond.



OUR RESEARCH



There are many questions to consider when thinking about the future of health-service delivery, community well-being, and—perhaps most interestingly—the relationship between the two. In Toronto, and specifically in Quayside and its surrounding neighbourhoods, we asked ourselves: who might live there, and what pressing issues will keep them up at night? How can a community space focused on health and well-being help shape better futures for the people living in these communities?

To begin finding answers to these questions, we took a multifaceted approach to building a human-centred, future-focused perspective of Toronto—one that embraced and sought to understand the many contradictions that make it such a complex, exciting city to call home.

OVER THE COURSE OF THIS PROJECT, WE:

Built a baseline understanding of Toronto and its unique characteristics;

Spent time with a diverse group of Toronto residents and service providers to understand their unmet well-being needs; and

Explored how emerging trends could impact the health and well-being of Torontonians in the future.

Combined, these streams of research gave us a stronger understanding of the current and future state of people's health, well-being, and feelings of social cohesion in Toronto. This understanding created a foundation from which to ask community-based organizations, government, and local service providers to imagine innovative spaces, services, and technologies that could help residents from all walks of life to live well, individually and together.

CURRENT-STATE RESEARCH

Understanding the unique and unmet needs of Toronto residents and service providers

Sidewalk Labs has a unique opportunity to enable the growth of a new neighbourhood. The goal of our current-state research was to better understand how to support a healthy and diverse community—one that accepts (and embraces) groups comprising people with diverse bodies, ages, perspectives, cultures, and socioeconomic statuses. This is especially relevant in the context of a city like Toronto, which prides itself on the notion of diversity but does not always live up to the lofty ideals associated with it.

To build this understanding, we took an open-ended but rigorous approach. We spoke to 20 residents and service providers, who graciously allowed us to meet with them in their homes and communities. These conversations, also known as ethnographic “immersions,” were held across a wide variety of neighbourhoods and living, work, and recreation spaces. Residents came from a mix of age groups and cultural, professional, and political backgrounds. We also spoke with employees at a number of community organizations, including Toronto Public Library, Fred Victor, Health Access St. James Town, Cabbagetown Youth Centre, and Toronto Community Housing.



“

The goal of our current-state research was to better understand how to support a healthy and diverse community

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What we Heard

Our ethnographic research allowed us to uncover a complex picture of Toronto.

From this research, we identified six insights, detailed in the pages that follow. These insights highlight the most common—yet also provocative—ideas that emerged from our conversations with residents and service providers. We also uncovered a unique glimpse into the ever-evolving challenge of building more caring, healthy, and future-ready communities within the city.

01

Home Is Health



Home is more than just a physical location. Many residents expressed a desire for more formalized care to unfold in their homes and, conversely, for health facilities to foster a sense of “feeling at home.” People in Toronto want this sense of home attached not just to a residence, but also to their neighbourhoods, the public spaces they occupy, and the healthcare and wellness contexts they experience.

02

Preparing for the Inevitable and Unpredictable



When building a new community, it is easy to imagine how much better life could be. But in reality, utopias do not exist. Service providers stressed the importance of proactively planning (and even designing) for the people suffering from homelessness, substance abuse, and major mental health issues who will inevitably make their way to Quayside. Some will have vulnerabilities that are not always easy to see or predict, so working closely with community partners who have earned their trust is paramount.

03

Living Well Across Generations



Like many cities, Toronto is experiencing remarkable growth in its population of older residents. While younger generations are experiencing the precarity of life and labour, Toronto’s seniors want to share their resources, memories, and skills with people across generations. Opportunities exist to break down unnecessary barriers between generations who have much to offer one another, and to find ways to connect around shared interests.

04

Navigating Diversity



In a city like Toronto, embracing diversity means creating opportunities for people to connect across shared interests, needs, and experiences. This effort must be at the forefront of any attempt to build a truly equitable—if imperfect—sense of community well-being. Moving beyond idealized ways of thinking about diversity requires novel approaches that allow people to embrace what makes them different, alongside new spaces and opportunities for finding unanticipated similarities.

05

Low-Fidelity Care



Toronto is home to a lot of effective low-cost and improvised approaches to well-being, many of which coexist alongside technological solutions. When it comes to service provision, many acknowledge that although technology is necessary and often useful, it should never be allowed to get in the way of bringing people together. This suggests a need to accommodate low-fidelity options alongside high-tech digital technologies and modes of service delivery in Quayside.

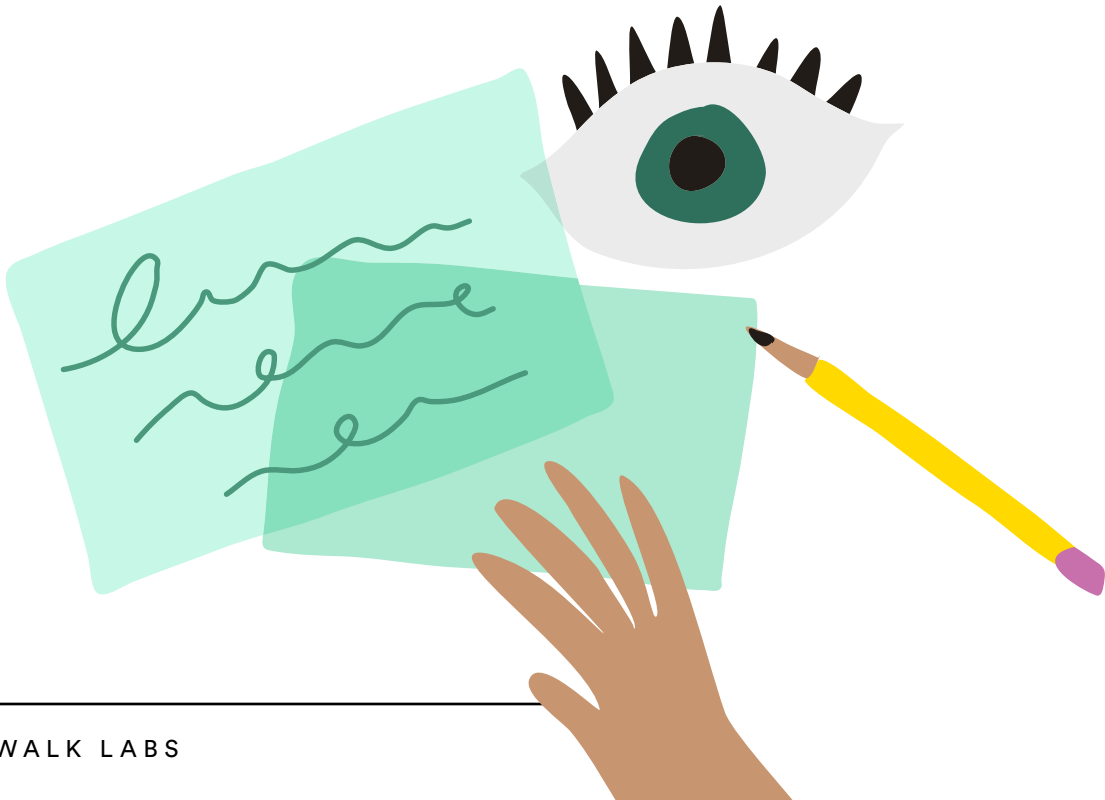
06

Balancing Purpose and Spontaneity



Building healthy communities will always require formal health services and infrastructures, but caring relationships can often emerge in fleeting moments of spontaneous connection as well. Alongside thoughtful and purposefully designed experiences, there is opportunity to design for chance—creating spaces and moments for surprise and delight that shape organic experiences of care in daily life.

What these insights reveal is that a truly integrated approach to community well-being is a must—one that recognizes and respects the nuances of the human experience and the complexity of urban life. Though they are Toronto-specific, these insights speak to deeply human needs and desires that are not restricted to this city alone. They are a stepping stone to understanding how to design for and support the well-being of a truly diverse community.



FUTURE-STATE RESEARCH

Uncovering the emerging changes that could impact the daily lives of Torontonians in the future

As we all know, life in urban centres rarely stands still. In addition to developing a deeper understanding of Toronto's current unmet health and well-being needs, it is important to think about the future. What emerging trends will impact how we live well and live together as future Torontonians?

By observing the emerging changes that have already begun to shape the world in subtle ways, we can begin to anticipate how a community space focused on health and well-being could serve people in the future. In our future-state research, we looked for changes in two main areas: how people care for themselves and others, and how they build social cohesion in cities and communities.

What We Uncovered

Around the globe, individuals, communities, companies, and institutions are questioning the status quo and seeking out alternatives that help them live well. These emerging changes, or “signals,” are things that may seem niche today, but that have the potential to become mainstream trends in the future. A few of the most interesting changes are noted here.

As part of this research, we looked at how individuals, groups, and practitioners are:

01

“Hacking” their bodies and minds with state-of-the-art equipment and wearables;

02

Immersing themselves in the healing properties of forest environments, or filling “park prescriptions” instead of pharmaceutical ones;

03

Integrating modern medicine with traditional and sacred healing practices to provide more holistic care for the mind, body, and spirit;

04

Experimenting with more collaborative and participatory forms of governance that empower grassroots, community-based innovation;

05

Challenging the nuclear family model of home ownership with shared living arrangements that combine families and generations under one roof to create more supportive environments for all; and

06

Finding ways to bridge gaps across different groups by cultivating rich and challenging encounters between people who might normally be in conflict.

IMAGINING TORONTO'S FUTURE

The future will present immense challenges for cities, and Toronto is no exception

As more and more people move to its urban centre, the city's residents, service providers, and government officials will need to find ways to adapt to new complexities and actively build the future they desire.

By immersing ourselves in the lives of everyday Torontonians and searching the globe for emerging signals of change, we were able to think about how Toronto might change in the future—and how it might stay the same.

Most important, this research provided us with a strong foundation for imagining how the city might move toward a future where everyone can enjoy the benefits of services designed to improve health and well-being, and where the social bonds between residents are strong and genuine. In the fall of 2018, we assembled a group of community stakeholders to help us build upon that foundation.



“

We were able to think about how Toronto might change in the future—and how it might stay the same.

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CO-DESIGN CHARRETTE

On September 14, 2018, Idea Couture and Sidewalk Labs hosted a co-design charrette at the Centre for Social Innovation in Toronto. A “charrette” is a session that brings a variety of individuals together to create a solution. Our goal in hosting this charrette was to collaborate with a diverse group of Toronto stakeholders to imagine what a community space focused on health and well-being could look like in 2028.

Participants included stakeholders from various backgrounds and practice areas. They came from public and private sectors, with many focused on community services, civic engagement, and urban planning.

We synthesized our current- and future-state research into thinking tools to guide the day’s exercises. To maximize the diversity and creativity of the exercises, we assigned the participants to mixed groups. The tools and exercises were intended to help participants think about how a new type of community space could enable a preferred future in 2028—one where well-being is equitably distributed, and where residents feel a strong sense of social cohesion.

Quick Stats:

36 participants broken into 6 working groups

90 ideas captured

12 “Big Ideas” shared

A NOTE ON THE CO-DESIGN CHARRETTE:

The co-design charrette brought together experts from cross-sector groups. There is no particular attribution or endorsement of any one group or person. The ideas produced in the charrette are not representative of any particular group’s personal and/or professional perspectives.

PARTICIPANT JOURNEY

The day was broken into five main “steps,” beginning with an introduction to the research and ending with a share-out of the groups’ “Big Ideas” for a new kind of health-focused community space in Quayside.

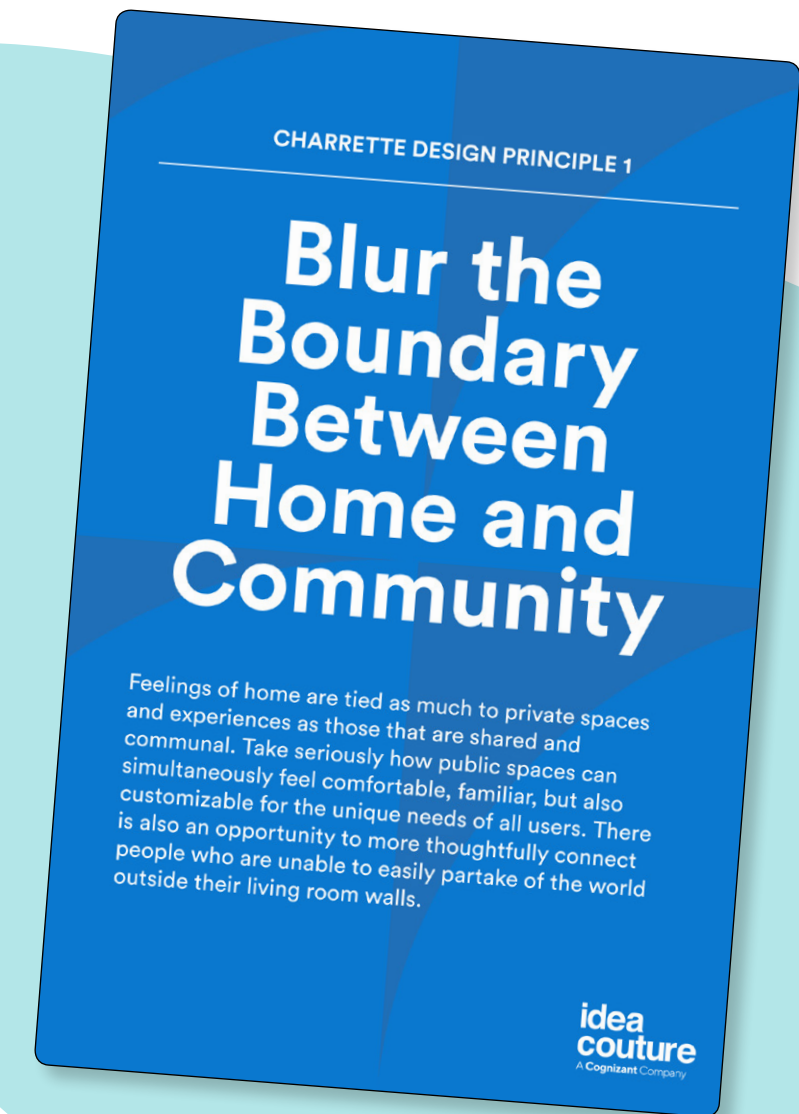
Step 01

Setting Guardrails: The Charrette Design Principles

The charrette “design principles” served as guardrails for participants’ thinking throughout the day. They were based on our previously conducted current- and future-state research.

We asked participants to consider how they might:

- 1. Blur the Boundary Between Home and Community** to enhance feelings of belonging, even for those in transitional or precarious moments in their lives;
- 2. Design for Solidarity** in ways that provide care for those struggling with isolation, while also respecting individuals’ need for solitude; and
- 3. Empower Change at Multiple Scales** to develop models of service delivery that simultaneously address individual- and neighbourhood-level needs.



Step 02

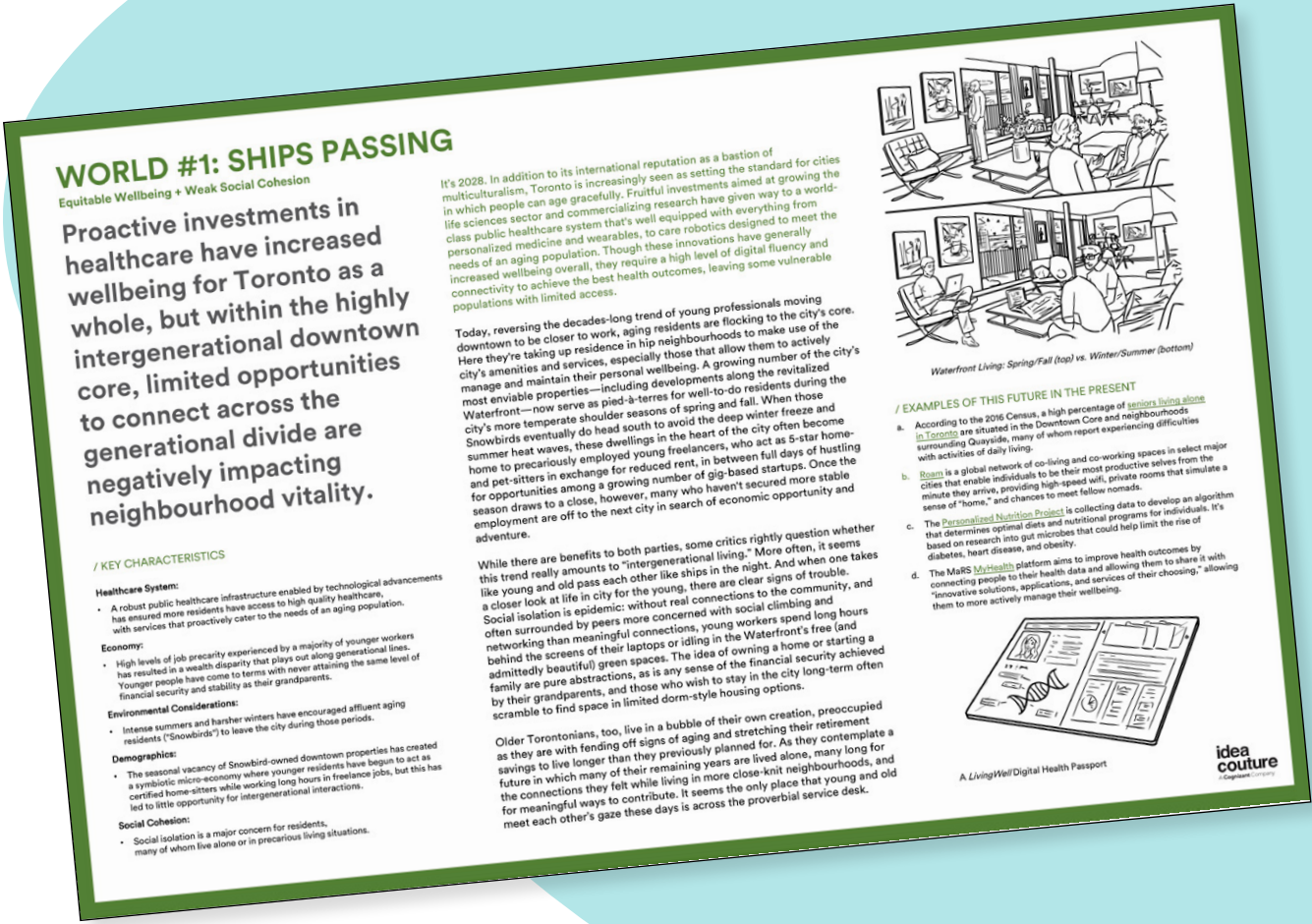
Exploring Possible Futures: Toronto in 2028

Next, participants were introduced to three future “worlds.” These scenarios represent a set of distinct and provocative—but plausible—futures for Quayside and Toronto in 2028.

For the co-design charrette, we developed three future scenarios from our research. These stories about the future were meant to highlight distinct challenges that could impact Toronto in the future, and to offer participants a thinking tool for exploring what role a community space focused on health and well-being would need to play in each of those futures.

It is impossible to predict the future, but by exploring three distinct scenarios for Toronto, we can help “future-proof” our ideas for a health-focused community space; ideas that solve problems across all three worlds are more likely to be effective, no matter which future becomes a reality.

To begin, each group immersed themselves in one world and discussed how their lives might be different ten years from now. Participants then identified the barriers and opportunities that could exist in that world, keeping in mind the goal of moving toward more equitable well-being and social cohesion in the future.



The three speculative future worlds the participants explored were:

» Ships Passing

Proactive investments in healthcare have increased well-being of Toronto as a whole, but within the highly intergenerational downtown core, limited opportunities to connect across the generational divide are negatively impacting neighbourhood vitality.

» Divided City

Toronto’s transformation into a 21st-century technology hub has come with many benefits, but it has also exacerbated the city’s standing as the “inequality capital” of Canada. This has impacted the city’s demographic makeup and cultural fabric.

» Life Out Loud

Faced with cuts to public spending and the threat of becoming yet another desirable but highly unaffordable city, Toronto has prioritized experimentation and community-led innovation. This has resulted in a lively and chaotic urban environment that rarely stands still.

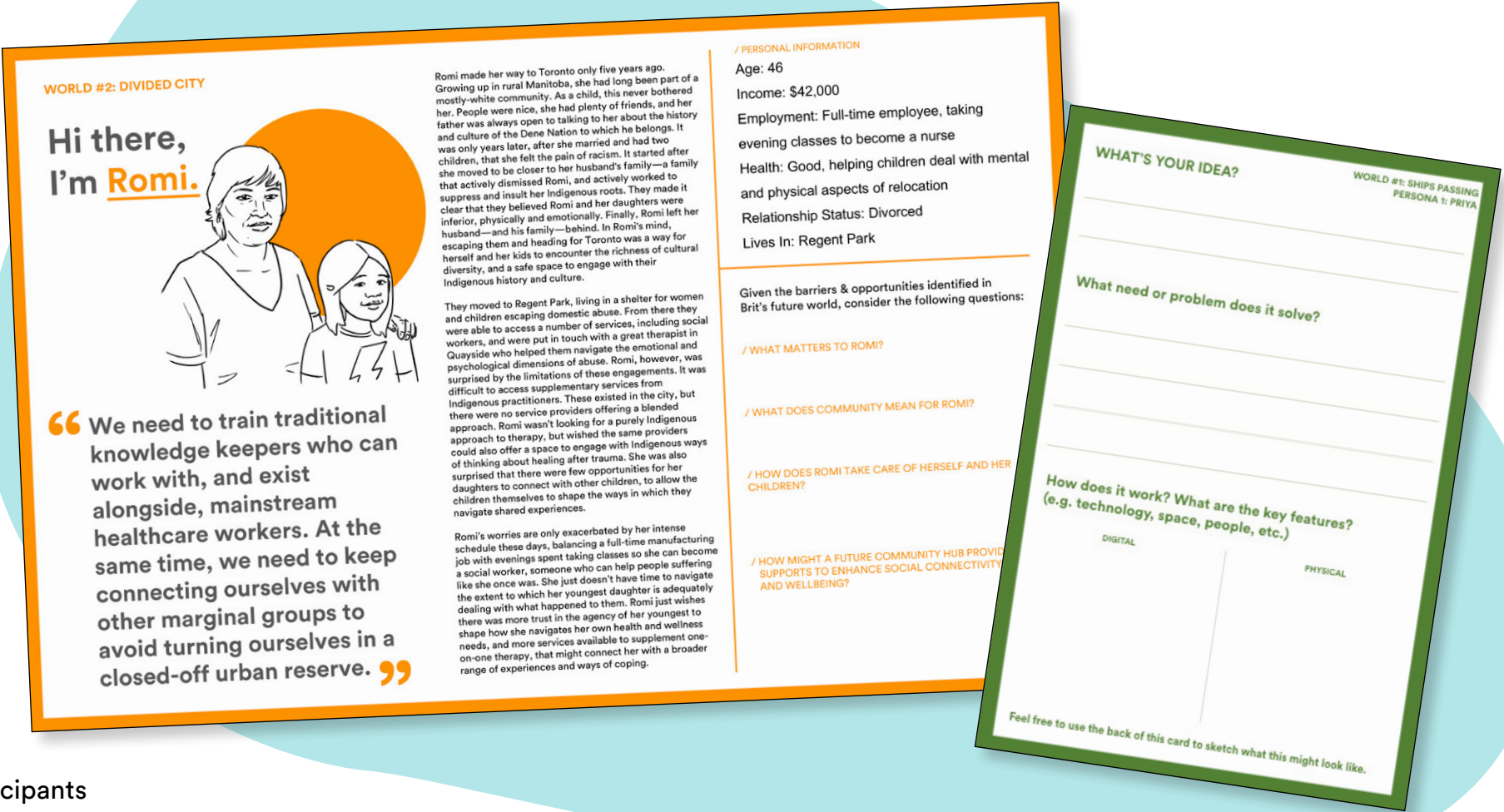
Step 03

Walking in Someone Else’s Shoes: Introducing the Personas

We used multiple personas to help bring the experience of future Torontonians to life. The personas were developed based on our research, and they aim to illustrate the types of people that Quayside will need to consider and design for.

We brought each persona to life through a short narrative that highlighted the challenges each person might face in 2028. Some of the challenges included isolation, lack of agency, and chronic disease, but also the desire to connect and contribute to community. Through a facilitated group discussion, we used these personas to help participants generate a deeper understanding of the experiences and challenges people in Toronto might face in the future.

Given this context, we then asked participants to generate ideas that would solve the personas’ challenges and unmet needs. The groups thought about actionable ideas that could be implemented today, as well as transformative ideas that might be possible in the future.



Step 04

The Big Idea: Quick Wins and Moonshots

From their longlist of ideas, each group then selected two ideas to develop in greater detail. Some chose “quick win” ideas, while others focused on “moonshots.”

Quick-win ideas were defined as ideas that can be built using existing resources and technologies. Moonshot ideas were exploratory, bold, and transformative concepts that might be executed in the future. During this step, the groups thought more deeply about the problem their idea addressed and the value it created. They also considered what physical, digital, and human resources they’d need to make the idea a reality. Afterward, each group shared their “Big Ideas” with the other participants.

YOUR NAME AND ORGANIZATION

I LOVE...

I WISH...

I WONDER...

CONCEPT SYNTHESIS WORKSHEET: THE BIG IDEA TEMPLATE

The Big Idea:

THIS IDEA IS A... (circle one)

QUICK WIN

MOON SHOT

NAME YOUR IDEA (create a short, memorable title for your community hub feature)

IDEA NAME HERE

This idea has been developed with PERSONA NAME(S) in mind, to increase:

WELLBEING

SOCIAL COHESION

/ DESCRIPTION What's your big idea? Remember to clearly communicate the challenge or opportunity area you've identified.

/ VALUE PROPOSITION Describe your idea's central value proposition—how might it increase wellbeing and/or social cohesion in Quayside and the surrounding community?

/ END USER What groups or individuals might benefit most from your idea? Why?

/ RESOURCES What resources do you need to bring your idea to life? Describe all that apply.

TECHNOLOGY Describe the key technologies that could enable your idea, and the user experience.

SPATIAL QUALITIES Describe the qualities of the physical space (e.g., size, light, materials, location, etc.) your idea requires.

KEY PARTNERS Describe the people and/or organizations who would manage or deliver the idea.

/ SKETCH How might the community interact with the space and features in the community hub?

On the back of this sheet, consider sketching a diagram or service map to outline steps, a room layout noting key features that are required to bring your idea to life, a conversation between two Quayside community members about the space, etc.

idea couture

The “I Love, I Wish, I Wonder” exercise was a thoughtful conclusion to an imaginative and collaborative day. It was a good opportunity for us to hear participants’ introspective thoughts about the co-design exercises and overall project.

Step 05

Concluding the Charrette: I Love, I Wish, I Wonder

At the end of the co-design charrette, the participants shared their remaining thoughts and reflections. They reflected on what they loved about the session, things they wished were addressed, and any lingering thoughts they still wondered about.

Some of the reflections included:

- » “**I love** the inclusive approach Sidewalk Labs is taking to design Quayside, the involvement of technology, and the fact that the hope is for Quayside to be diverse.”
- » “**I wish** families and children were more included in the community scenarios and worlds, in order to think through a truly diverse and intergenerational community.”
- » “**I wonder** how Quayside will balance being unlike anywhere else with remaining integrated into the city.”

WHAT CAME OUT OF THE CO-DESIGN CHARRETTE

A wide variety of concepts for a future community space came out of the co-design charrette. These unique ideas were reflective of the multidisciplinary group of participants, and included a breadth of ways to achieve equitable well-being and strong social cohesion by 2028.

Big Ideas



Twelve Big Ideas came out of the session: six quick-wins and six moonshots. Participants focused on high-impact concepts for future residents, service providers, and surrounding communities. Two of the ideas are highlighted here.

Big Idea 1

Quick-Win Quayshares

Quayshares is a hyper-localized digital marketplace that allows people to share skills, knowledge, and expertise. This digital platform helps match individuals who “have” with those who “need.” It also allows people to book designated spaces in which to offer classes or host events.

Quayshares uses community credits (“shares”) as a form of currency. Shares can be used to “buy” resources or services in Quayside and surrounding areas. Some examples included extended library checkout times or free extracurricular classes.

Quayshares are intended to reduce social isolation, create meaningful opportunities for connection, and give individuals the chance to give back to the community.

Big Idea 2

Moonshot Pop Hub

Pop Hub is a pop-up trailer that enables volunteers, organizations, and nonprofits to respond to community health needs in real time. For instance, imagine a community-based clinic that has long wait times for flu shots.

A Pop Hub might flag flu shots as a need based on community sentiment on social media, then dispatch a trailer to offer additional shot support. This type of agile system could be used as one input to inform programming and support systems focused on community well-being.

The unmet needs of the community might also be shared with organizations who are unsure of how to use their time to create the greatest impact in the neighbourhood.

CO-DESIGN CHARRETTE: THE THEMES

Even though groups explored different scenarios and personas during the co-design charrette, several themes recurred across the different group discussions. We found five of these to be especially valuable and thought-provoking. These include:

01

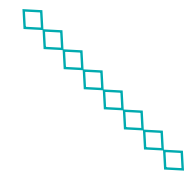
Connected Health

Many groups spoke about the potential for connected technologies to give people more access to personal health information, and more agency in their healthcare journeys. These included easy-to-use, digital health-monitoring devices that allow seniors to regain some autonomy in managing their well-being, and dynamic assessment tools that give service providers a view of their community's health and well-being.

02

Holistic Care

Many ideas explored how neighbourhoods could incorporate more holistic, culturally sensitive, and wide-ranging care options. Participants imagined clinics that integrate modern medicine and culturally specific healing practices in one place—in ways that honour many approaches to care. They also saw the benefit of co-locating diverse service offerings under one roof, giving people multiple ways to care for the mind, body, and spirit.



03

Peer-to-Peer and Service Matchmaking

Many groups identified an opportunity to facilitate connections between people and services through an online matchmaking platform. Such a platform could facilitate local mentoring, skill-sharing, volunteering, resource swapping, and even meeting new friends. It could also help to establish community marketplaces for goods and services. Groups noted that the platform would enable knowledge transfer and build a sense of community goodwill. Perhaps more importantly for a new community, it would also offer opportunities for much-needed peer support during difficult times.



04

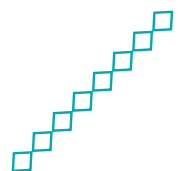
Common Resources

Many groups created concepts around collaborating and sharing resources. Participants suggested weekly communal meals prepared with locally grown produce in a community kitchen. They also envisioned multipurpose “third spaces” for residents and visitors and quiet common areas to relax in—one participant even imagined a community spa! Technology was often considered a mechanism to support community sharing—digital community boards that keep people updated on activities, for example. Individuals could use technology to access more resources and maximize use of community space.

05

Participatory Governance

Groups found bottom-up governance and community engagement important, especially in a community that is “finding its legs,” as one participant described it. They stressed the importance of iterative and dynamic service delivery based on community input. Others emphasized that community members should have a clear voice in decisions on programming and services and saw the benefit of governance models that shared power with the community.



NEXT STEPS



The co-design charrette revealed what was important to our participants, and their ideas became a key ingredient to our moving forward. As a collective, the group identified many avenues that could cultivate and maintain well-being in Toronto. Instead of a fixed and linear pathway, care was imagined as a dynamic, integrated, and symbiotic ecosystem—one that extends beyond patients and formal healthcare professionals. It was clear that care must be accessible to all who inhabit Quayside: residents, to be sure, but also employees, visitors, caregivers, practitioners, volunteers, and those who might ordinarily fall through the cracks.

Following the charrette, we synthesized the day's discussions along with our research findings for the next phase of the project: bringing a vision of Quayside's community space focused on health and well-being to life.

Part 2

THE CARE COLLECTIVE

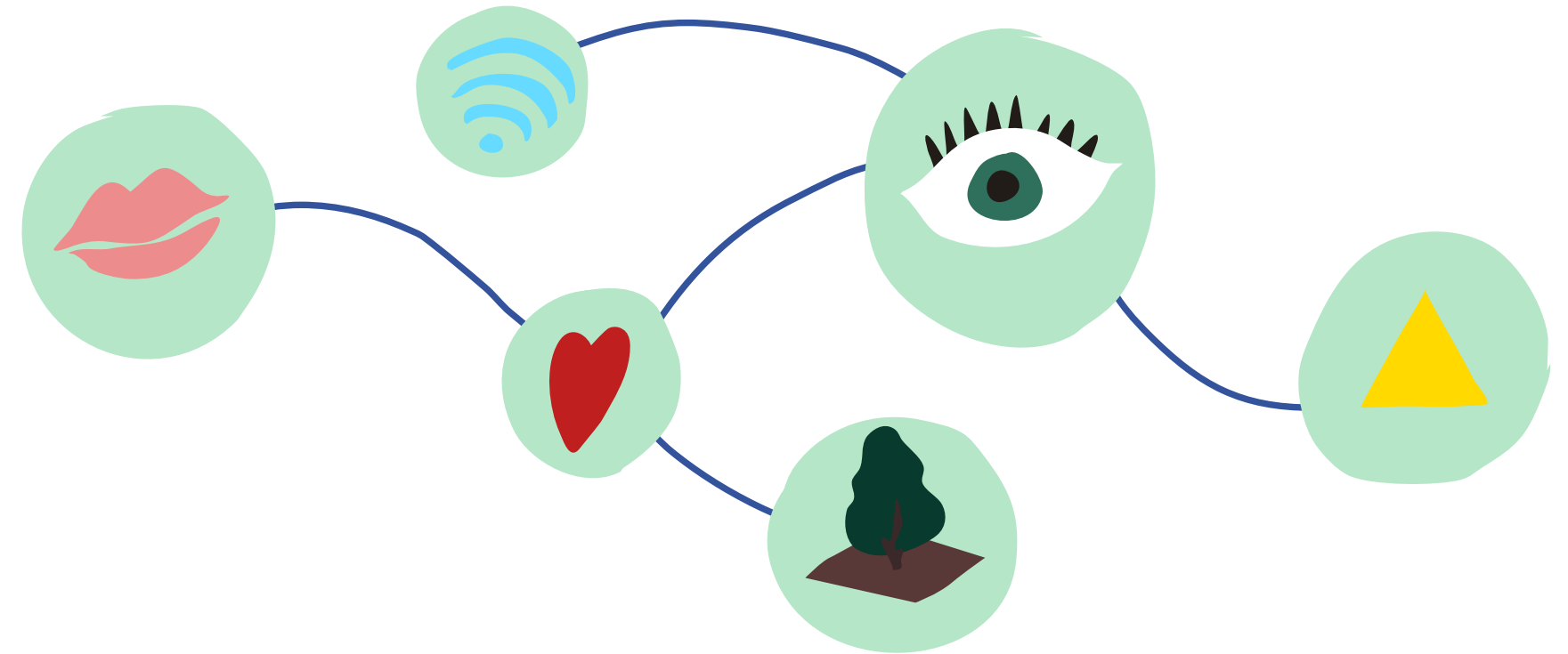
Here, we share a new concept for what a community space focused on health and well-being might look like in Quayside, bringing our collectively generated insights to life through a series of features and stories from the future.



CONCEPT OVERVIEW

During the co-design charrette, groups imagined networks that empower people with information, connect them to their communities, and give them agency.

They envisioned digital platforms that allow resources to be shared and cooperative relationships to thrive. And they designed services and spaces that care for not only the whole person—mind, body, and spirit—but also the whole community. From all of this, a bigger story about community well-being came into view. This story was about interconnected systems of care that support people on multiple levels—as individuals, community members, and citizens of the planet.



When designing what is yet to exist, it can be useful to think of metaphors.

And when thinking about care, we could not help but picture the forest floor. It is a useful metaphor because of what we know about how these thriving ecosystems operate. What once seemed like a collection of individual trees fighting for forest resources like nutrients and light, we now know to be a deeply interconnected ecosystem that lives beneath our feet. Scientists have discovered that trees are connected by a vast network of fungi that allow them to share resources, helping each other in times of distress and exchanging valuable information to keep each other healthy. To be sure, forests are not purely altruistic, but these hidden networks sustain thriving and diverse communities of life.

What if we thought of care this way?

Instead of viewing spaces of care as separate places that have little to do with one another, what if we viewed them as belonging to one connected network? Imagine a health-focused community space where physicians and complementary care practitioners collaborate, where formal and informal models of care coexist, and where providers celebrate community knowledge and expertise. A traditionally sterile space like a health clinic, for instance, might be placed next to tranquil and nature-filled areas. Add a layer of thoughtfully designed digital services, and you have a way of connecting people to information that helps them thrive, and to spaces that help them heal. Like the forest floor, each element is needed—and each has to be connected to form one larger system.

Introducing the Care Collective.

The concept that follows is not a plan, but rather an attempt to build on what we have learned from our research and community partners and bring it to life. There are, of course, many ways to interpret what we uncovered during this project.

This vision is meant to inspire, inform planning efforts, and spark discussions about how best to move forward. The team at Sidewalk Labs will be working with local partners who are excited about the opportunity to innovate and who see Quayside as a platform to bring their own ideas to life.

PROPOSED TECHNOLOGY FEATURES



During the co-design charrette, participants envisioned technology features as an important ingredient in the future of individual and community health; a complement to dedicated community spaces that support overall health and well-being. The following proposed technology features build on participant input to imagine a “Digital Spine,” an integrated layer of technology that facilitates new and interesting health solutions.

At its core, the Digital Spine would aim to provide purposeful and accessible support to patients, community members, and service providers, both within the Care Collective and beyond. It is imagined as a suite of digital features such as the four outlined in the pages that follow, but could also be designed to make it easier for anyone to create useful digital tools that benefit the neighbourhood.

Elements of the Digital Spine



A NOTE ON THE DIGITAL SPINE:

The technology features that follow are speculative in nature. Should these ideas be developed, a wide variety of questions related to data governance, inclusive design, and coordination with the Ontario Health System would need to be addressed. This will undoubtedly require iterative co-creation with community members and service providers.

All technology features and services would need to operate on an opt-in basis to ensure individual privacy and data ownership.

Feature 01

HEALTH CONCIERGE

A digital assistant that helps each person customize their path to well-being



The goal of the Health Concierge is to make it easier for community members to personalize their approach to living well, and to connect them to the opportunities and local resources (i.e., the people, places, and services) they need.

All people who come to the Care Collective will have access to a personal Health Concierge that helps them navigate the Quayside neighbourhood’s many services and amenities. People can sign up to access a curated dashboard of personalized recommendations based on their individual health needs, goals, interests, and

preferences. They can interact with the Health Concierge in a variety of ways (through voice, text, etc.); the platform is designed with accessibility in mind.

The Health Concierge also helps simplify health management by allowing individuals to manage prescriptions and referrals from a variety of healthcare providers, book services offered throughout the Care Collective, and keep up to date on the various events and meetups being hosted by practitioners and community members.

Notable Features:

UNIQUE FEATURES

- » Provides a curated dashboard of personalized, health-based recommendations
- » Manages prescriptions and referrals from a variety of healthcare providers
- » Allows users to book and manage local appointments and services, access bookable meeting spaces, and register for local health-related events
- » Can be accessed via personal devices, kiosks, and access points around the Care Collective; in-person help also available when needed

INTEGRATED FEATURES (with other components of the Digital Spine)

- » Feeds information and health data into and out of the Living Health Record for tracking and cross-linking
- » Curates a personalized, continually updated list of local events, opportunities, and service providers from the Community Matching Platform

Feature 02

LIVING HEALTH RECORD

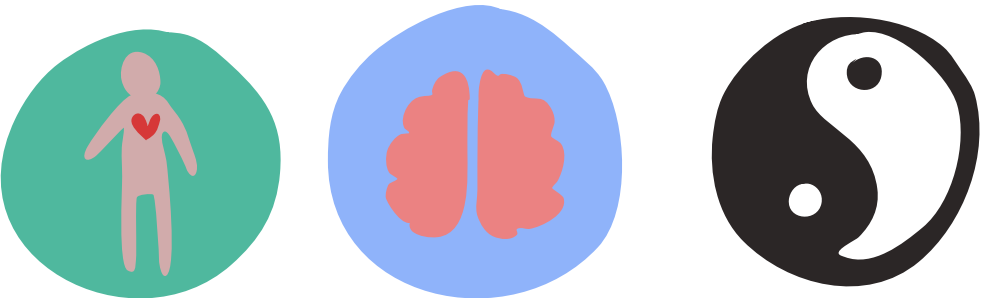
A consolidated view of each person’s physical, mental, and spiritual well-being

The aim of a Living Health Record is to give individuals greater ownership of their health and personal data, as well as more agency in managing their care. It also provides practitioners with a more holistic view of the people they are treating and allows them to offer integrated and personalized care options.

This platform gives patients, healthcare providers, and caregivers access to consolidated health information with consent from the patient. This includes formal records generated from past doctors’ visits,

as well as relevant information (like cultural sensitivities, for example) that patients wish to include. Patients also have the option to link supplementary health information to their record, including data from wearable health monitors, nutrition logs, and treatments from complementary medicine practitioners.

NOTE: This service assumes a coordinated approach with the Ontario Health System.



Notable Features:

UNIQUE FEATURES

- » Gives each individual access to a consolidated view of their personal health information (e.g., test results, prescriptions from primary care and complementary medicine practitioners) and personally generated data (e.g., from wearables or apps)
- » Has function for users to input personally relevant contextual information (e.g., cultural, spiritual, or environmental values)
- » Allows patients to share their Living Health Record with various practitioners or caretakers to help them create more integrated and personalized care options

INTEGRATED FEATURES (with other components of the Digital Spine)

- » Allows individuals to provide aspects of anonymized health information to the Community Health Dashboard (on an opt-in basis) to help inform community health and provision of services
- » Matches patients with a peer who is experiencing similar health challenges via the Community Matching Platform’s Health Stories tool by using their Living Health Record, with their consent

Feature 03

COMMUNITY HEALTH DASHBOARD

A tool for planners, service providers, and community organizations to better understand and plan for community needs and challenges

The Community Health Dashboard empowers planners, service providers, and community organizations with a bird’s-eye view of community health. This platform helps identify emerging needs and/or gaps in service offerings, which are then used to inspire well-being initiatives based on real community needs. It also enables faster and more localized service delivery.

This digital tool aggregates the health statuses and needs of Quayside and its surrounding neighbourhoods to help inform the provision of services, events,

and resources at the Care Collective. For instance, if a large percentage of residents are struggling with seasonal depression, the dashboard can inform service providers of this need.

Inclusion of personal data is on an opt-in basis, and residents can tailor the types of information they wish to share. They can also revoke access at any time. Their data is used in aggregate to inform and coordinate community-based initiatives by providing an additional input to traditional methods of care and service planning.

Notable Features:

UNIQUE FEATURES

- » Aggregates community health information (from those who have consented) to better inform and anticipate the provision of community services, events, and resources

INTEGRATED FEATURES (with other components of the Digital Spine)

- » Anonymizes aspects of visitors’ Living Health Records and feeds this information into the Community Health Dashboard (with the individual’s consent)



Feature 04

COMMUNITY MATCHING PLATFORM

A matchmaking tool that empowers people to seek out or provide care within their neighbourhood



Notable Features:

UNIQUE FEATURES

- » Provides digital matching service for community members and visitors to exchange or provide goods/services
- » Offers Community Credits to volunteer contributors, which can be used to purchase goods or access heightened services/experiences
- » Can be accessed through personal devices, community kiosks, and other access points
- » Matches people who have experienced similar health journeys and/or obstacles to act as sources of support for one another via the Health Stories tool

INTEGRATED FEATURES

(with other components of the Digital Spine)

- » Can be accessed via the Health Concierge (on personal devices or using kiosks in the Care Collective)
- » Uses individual Living Health Records (on a strict opt-in basis) to match peers via the Health Stories tool

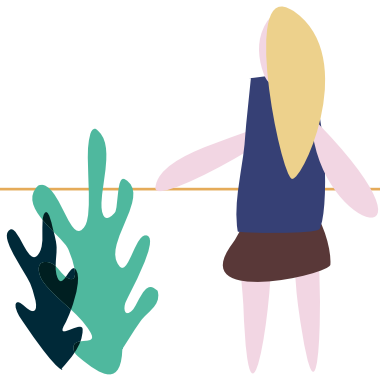
The Community Matching Platform enables peer-to-peer care and knowledge transfer to deepen community bonds and create a network of informal care.

The people of Quayside can access the Community Matching Platform, which connects those who “need/ want” to those who “have/can.” Through this tool, individuals are able to explore peer-to-peer service offerings (e.g., mentorship, upskilling, cultural classes), to engage in resource sharing/trading (e.g., swapping clothes, offering excess herbs from one’s garden), and to find health-based service

providers in the neighbourhood. Where required, transactions can be made via monetary exchange, barter, or on a volunteer basis. Those who volunteer can earn Community Credits that can be used in the Care Collective and at participating local businesses; for example, credits might be used to purchase goods from the on-site pharmacy and cafe, or to receive extended checkout privileges from the Care Collective’s health-focused library.

One of the platform’s unique features is the Health Stories tool, which enables people to connect with other members of the community who are

experiencing similar health issues. For instance, a mother experiencing postpartum depression could use the tool to connect with another new mother who has also gone through this experience. This feature is available to those who choose to participate; residents can use their Living Health Records in tandem with the Health Stories feature to discreetly connect with people nearby who are able to share advice, recommend resources and services, or even just offer a sympathetic ear.



PROPOSED SPATIAL FEATURES



So far, we've explored the technologies that might animate the Care Collective and the broader community to enable health and well-being. But what about the space itself?

In this section, we highlight six of the many features you might experience in this community space focused on health and well-being, and speculate on the kinds of stories that might unfold within them.

A NOTE OF THANKS:

The visual stories that follow could not have been possible without our partners at KPMB Architects and the Office of Adrian Phiffer, who worked tirelessly to bring the spaces of the Care Collective to life. We are grateful for their enthusiasm and collaboration.

» Health Clinic

A home-like treatment space designed to facilitate collaboration between patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers

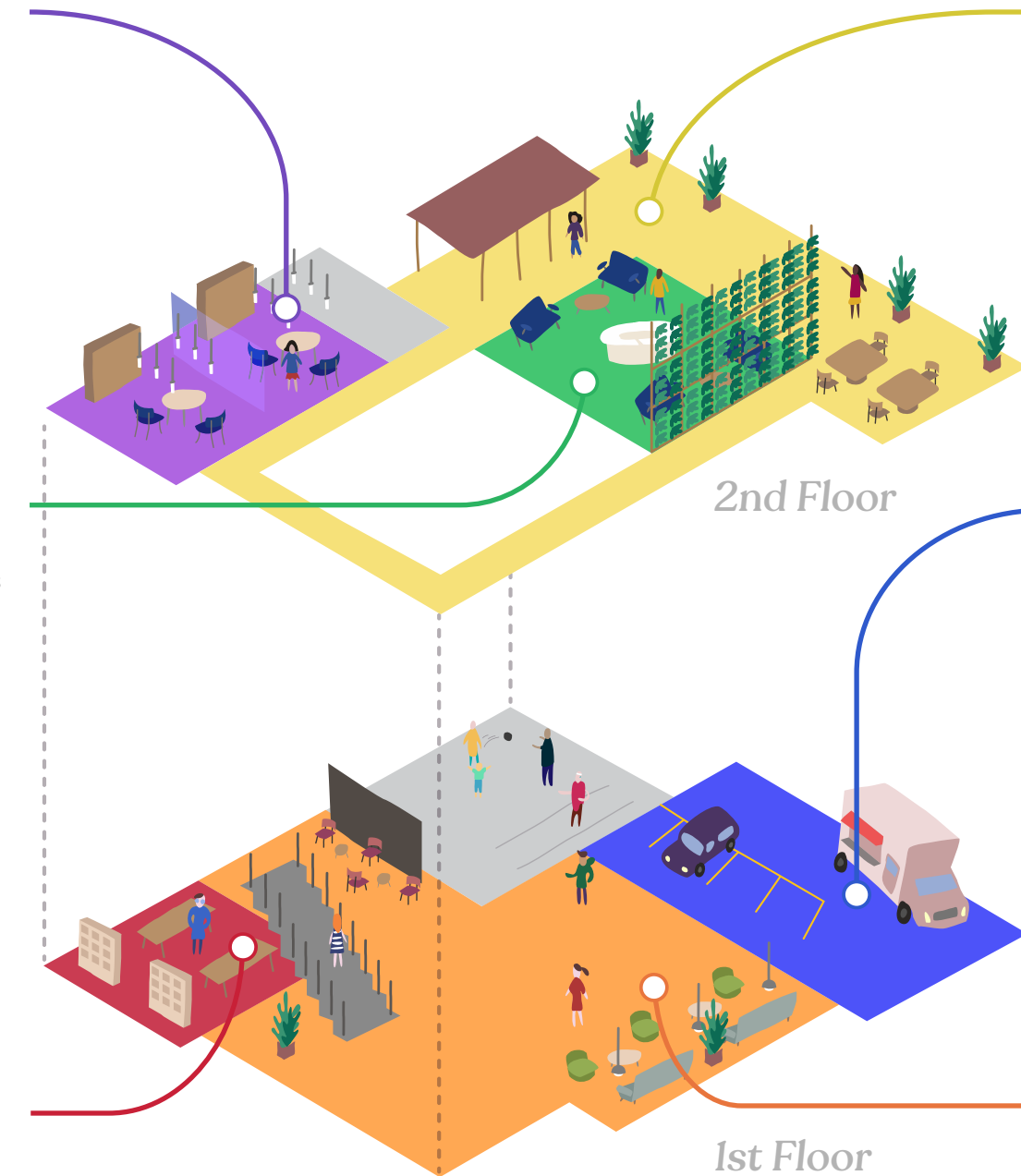
» Health Resource Library

A forward-looking library that goes beyond books to provide digital, physical, and human resources to enhance health literacy

» Vital Apothecary

A pharmacy, cafe, and teaching lounge that offers visitors a spectrum of care and expertise

The Care Collective



» Sanctuary Space

A nature-infused place of respite that allows visitors to unplug from their hyperconnected lives

» Mod Shop and Living Well Satellites

A prototyping space and fleet of mobile health pop-ups that enable the community to experiment with new ideas and bring care to other spaces and neighbourhoods in need

» Community Living Room

A bustling yet relaxed gathering space where visitors can connect, play, and linger

COMMUNITY LIVING ROOM

A bustling yet relaxed gathering
space where visitors can
connect, play, and linger



The Community Living Room: Romi’s Story

Romi was sweeping the kitchen floor when she noticed her daughter, Kira, looking sadly at a box of toys she was unpacking.



“What’s wrong, Kira?”

“Mommy, if I unpack this, am I just going to have to pack it back up again?” Kira asked.

“No, sweetheart,” Romi said reassuringly. “No, this time, we’re staying put.”

“Promise? Because I really don’t want to move again.”

Romi nodded and squeezed her daughter’s hand. In only three years, the pair had moved from Winnipeg to Regent Park, and now they were settling down in Quayside. Once again, Romi found herself worrying about how her young daughter would adjust to the rapid series of moves.

Quayside may be only a few blocks away from their former neighbourhood, but the constant changes, unfamiliar

faces, and packing and unpacking left both of them feeling unsettled.

The pair had been waiting for two years to move into one of Quayside’s affordable housing units. Three years ago, they left everything behind in Manitoba, including friends, family, and Romi’s ex-husband—Kira’s father. Romi had already confided in her therapist about her loneliness, but given Kira’s distress, she wanted to do more. During her next session, the therapist suggested Romi and Kira try Quayside’s Community Matching Platform.



“Hmm, this sounds a bit like online dating, but for friends,” Romi thought.

She was skeptical, but also figured she had nothing to lose, so she logged onto the platform later that night. She put in her and Kira’s details—including their ages, backgrounds, personality types, and interests—and explained that she was looking to connect with another family. A few hours later, she received a ping from Nina. She and her son,

Noah, had recently moved to Quayside from Halifax. Romi and Nina arranged to connect in the Care Collective’s Community Living Room the following week.

A week later, Romi and Kira waited in the Community Living Room, talking about Norman, the pet therapy dog that greeted them on their way into the Care Collective. They were interrupted by Noah, who bounced toward them excitedly. Nina was following behind him, trying hard to catch up.



“Hi! It’s so nice to meet in person,” Nina smiled. “Noah’s very excited too, clearly.”

Kira sank back a little, and Noah stopped bouncing. He leaned in and whispered in her ear, intentionally loud enough for their parents to hear.



“C’m on, let’s go play tag. Moms always talk about the boring stuff anyway!”



Kira smiled up at Romi, who encouraged her to go. The two kids ran toward the Living Room’s playful sculpture park while Romi and Nina began chatting. After rehashing some of things they’d already talked about online—what they each did for a living, where their kids went to school, and other details of a similar nature—the two women discovered they shared a passion for Inuit art. They talked about their favourite artists, Kenojuak Ashevak and Jessie Oonark, and discussed the importance of art in communities.

An hour and several cups of tea later, the two came up with an idea to host a class together. Romi knew of a women’s shelter in Regent Park that would be the perfect venue. Just as they were ironing out the final details of their plan, Kira and Noah ran back over. They were buzzing about how tag had evolved into Kira leading them on “an expedition to Saturn and back.”

As she listened to Kira recount their adventures, Romi felt that, for the first time in a long while, this really could be home.

– The End –

The Community Living Room:
The Space in Detail

Imagine if...

the entrance to a health-focused community space
felt more like a communal living room than a lobby.

Think of a bright, bustling, yet relaxed space brought to life by the shared connections between members of the community—one that acts as the unofficial meeting spot for residents and visitors, and that encourages people to linger, recharge, and watch neighbourhood life unfold.

As a centrepiece for communal experiences in Quayside, this space is simultaneously populated by residents on their way to appointments at the Health Clinic, visitors taking advantage of the ample seating arrangements to work, community groups making use of bookable meeting spaces, and newcomers to the neighbourhood meeting each other for the first time. In the evenings, the Community Living Room transforms into a venue for locally run events and programming for the community. Though the human connections generated within the

Living Room are its focus, the Digital Spine helps things run smoothly. Digital kiosks allow people to check in for appointments in the Care Collective, while interactive community boards inside the space keep everyone up-to-date on upcoming events and important local information. Visitors also use the Community Living Room as a place to connect with people they have met on the neighbourhood’s Community Matching Platform, to make friends, to swap resources, or even to join a local community group.

Notable Features:

SPACE

- » Large and bright atrium space that can accommodate various group sizes
- » Lockers to drop coats/bags/cell phones
- » Multiple seating options and private spaces bookable by anyone in the community
- » Interactive sculpture park created by local artists

TECHNOLOGY

- » Digital kiosks for appointment check-ins and wayfinding
- » Interactive community boards with event listings and local information
- » Communal tables, free Wi-Fi and charging stations

HEALTH CLINIC

A home-like treatment space designed to facilitate collaboration between patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers

Health Clinic:
Dominic’s Story

It was nearing Dominic’s 50th birthday. He was feeling his age more acutely these days, from the wrinkles on his face to the persistent stomach issues he had been grappling with for the past year. He had been working with a naturopath, Dr. Choi, for the previous three months. While these treatments were helping to mitigate his discomfort a little, they were not enough for Dominic to feel fully functional.

One night during dinner, his wife, Lina, looked at him pointedly. He knew she had something on her mind.



“Dom, I’m worried about you. You were stuck in bed with stomach issues three times this month,” she said. “We still have at least 30 more years together. I need my husband.”

Lina was never one to fret without offering a solution—it was one of the things he loved about her. She explained that a colleague of hers had recently gone to a preventive care consultation at

Quayside’s Health Clinic. Despite some persistent health issues, she apparently felt like a younger version of herself after only three sessions.

Later that night, Dominic used Quayside’s Digital Concierge app to book a consultation. To his surprise, a prompt came up recommending that he invite Dr. Choi to the session. He agreed.

On the day of his appointment, Dominic walked into the Care Collective and left his belongings in a locker. After using a digital kiosk to check in for his appointment, he sat down in the atrium and listened to a speaker from Toronto’s Art Science Salon answer questions from the crowd. His phone vibrated, alerting him that his new physician and Dr. Choi were both ready to see him.

He went upstairs, easily navigating the open-concept space, and found his private consultation room at the Health Clinic.



“Hi, Dominic, nice to meet you!” The physician greeted him. “I’m Dr. Khan, but you can call me Bella.”

She offered him a seat next to her and pulled up his Living Health Record onto a large digital screen. A video chat window with Dr. Choi’s smiling face popped up. “Hi everyone, thanks for including me in this session,” he said.

After introductions, the three dove into a discussion about Dominic’s health. The two professionals walked him through his record, pausing whenever Dominic had questions or additional input. They explored Dominic’s health risks and discussed areas for improvement.



“Dominic, I know you’ve been upping your intake of fermented foods, which is great,” Bella said. “Let’s keep that up but, alongside some lab tests I’ll order for you, I’d also like to add a few more dietary suggestions to your Living Health Record. On your end, a food journal could be a great way to keep us updated on your progress.”



“We’re also prescribing you a Healthy Gut cooking class, which I think you’ll really enjoy,” Dr. Choi added. “It’s hosted in the teaching lounge of the Vital Apothecary—right downstairs from the Health Clinic. How do you feel about that?”



“I think my wife is going to be very impressed when I cook her dinner!” Dominic laughed.

By the end of the session, they had come up with a plan that Dominic could easily implement, and the doctors had given him instructions for using his Living Health Record to share his progress and any concerns with his health team. As Dominic made his way home, he called Lina. He could not wait to tell her how well it went.

– The End –

Health Clinic:
The Space in Detail

Imagine ...

a health clinic where doctors and patients work collaboratively to plan more personalized and proactive approaches to care.

One where the doctor-patient relationship is facilitated by technologies that give patients more ownership over their health data, as well as greater agency in the decision-making process. Data is still central to conversations about health; however, unlike today, this information is presented through simple interfaces that allow patients to follow along with a clinician. In addition to traditional treatment rooms, the Clinic includes private consult rooms designed to feel less clinical and more inviting; here, patients and caregivers can discuss their needs with physicians without feeling like they are being “examined.”

In between visits, patients can schedule short virtual checkup sessions with their clinician and make use of the many amenities within the Care Collective. For those feeling overwhelmed by the stress of daily life, for example, a physician may recommend attending an upcoming class offered by a local practitioner at the Vital Apothecary, Quayside’s holistic pharmacy that also serves as a teaching lounge. Having access to a centralized suite of offerings creates more opportunities to take care of patients’ minds, bodies, and spirits.

The Health Clinic is also intentionally situated next to the Care Collective’s Sanctuary Space to make it easy to “prescribe” time spent in its restful, nature-infused alcoves. But this benefit need not end with patients. The proximity of the Clinic to a quiet and restful environment also provides much-needed relief to caregivers and practitioners. Family members might choose to spend a few quiet moments alone there as a loved one receives treatment, while nurse practitioners might use it to reset after having a difficult conversation with a patient.

Notable Features:

SPACE

- » No waiting room—patients are able to check in using their personal devices or via a kiosk in the Community Living Room, allowing them to make use of the Care Collective’s amenities while they wait
- » Consultation rooms designed to feel less clinical and more inviting
- » Located next to the Sanctuary Space, providing patients, caregivers, and healthcare providers easy access to quiet spaces of relaxation

TECHNOLOGY

- » Digital check-in station that gives patients the freedom to explore the Care Collective’s amenities as they wait for their appointment to begin
- » User-friendly digital tools and interfaces that facilitate collaboration between patients, caregivers, and clinicians

SANCTUARY SPACE

A nature-infused place of respite that allows visitors to unplug from their hyperconnected lives



Sanctuary Space:
Lilly’s Story

Lilly had always been an introvert by nature. She loved having time to herself and found it daunting when she was surrounded by too many people. She had always embraced her solitude—for the most part.

In the past several months, Lilly had gotten into the habit of attending community gatherings and classes in Quayside at the urging of her daughters. They felt that getting out of the house and connecting with others was important to her well-being. These social outings included cooking lessons, volunteer initiatives, and digital literacy classes. All of this was certainly interesting, but lately, Lilly was starting to feel that familiar sense of fatigue and anxiety whenever she looked at her calendar.

At the end of a busy week, Lilly’s caregiver, Armin, came to her house for their routine check-in. He could tell she was running on fumes.



“Don’t get me wrong, I like a lot of the people that I’m meeting,” Lilly explained. “But I feel like I’m losing my ‘me’ time.”

Armin pulled out a tablet with Lilly’s Living Health Record.



“That’s completely understandable, Lilly. How about we talk about some other options for how you can get out of the house?”

Armin asked Lilly a few questions, then looked up some alternate options. He raised his right eyebrow when he found something of interest, a habit that Lilly had picked up on a while ago.



“OK,” Armin said. “How about this? It’s five weeks of horticultural therapy sessions in the Sanctuary Space. It’s a semi-guided class, meaning your most active companions will be the plants.”

Lilly liked the sound of that.

On the first day of *Plant Power 101*, Lilly took the elevator up to the Care Collective’s Sanctuary Space. As soon as she stepped foot on the second floor, she was greeted by a greenhouse-like smell. The space was exactly as advertised—a quiet sanctuary filled with cozy spaces to sit and reflect. She could even see an open area being used for tai chi. Through the open doors, there was a beautiful roof garden she had not realized was there.

Looking past the lush foliage, Lilly could just make out Quayside’s streets below and Lake Ontario in the distance. She followed the signs to the designated horticultural therapy garden, where she was greeted by a volunteer therapist who was there to help her get started. There was a notice on a nearby post: “Quiet Zone. Please respect the serenity of others and check your devices into a locker downstairs.” She had not even remembered to bring her cell phone—this was definitely the right place for her.



Lilly found a comfortable seat to sink into and grabbed a garden fork from the workspace in front of her, where a series of pots, plants, and bags of soil were already laid out. A nearby water feature trickled pleasantly in the background. There was another person attending the class too, but he had his own space to work in. Lilly did not feel any pressure to talk about her day or make comments about the weather. She could spend the next hour focusing on repotting seedlings in need of larger homes and learning about their special

characteristics from the therapist, who was standing by to answer questions. She soon became so immersed that she barely noticed the time. As Lilly walked home after the session, she felt her energy returning. She did not feel exhausted like she often did after her other classes. She made a mental note to text Armin later and thank him for the recommendation. But for now, she was content to walk alone and watch the sky change colours as dusk set in.

– The End –

Sanctuary Space:
The Space in Detail

Imagine ...

a space dedicated to the rejuvenating power
of quiet reflection.

Infused with natural light, gardens, water elements, and sustainable materials, this Sanctuary Space leverages the healing power of nature to help people live well. It also offers a valuable respite from the stress of urban life. Visitors can engage in various forms of low-intensity activities here. Resources needed for horticultural therapy, meditation, tai chi, and journaling are all available, but there is no pressure to interact with others. There is also plenty of comfortable seating tucked into semi-private alcoves that allow people to take a break and enjoy expansive views of neighbourhood life down below.

During warmer months, part of this adaptable Sanctuary Space opens up to create a porous boundary between indoors and out, while in the winter, it enters a period of “hibernation,” encouraging visitors to slow down as well.

The sensory profile of the Space—what people see, feel, hear, and smell—changes along with the seasons. The one thing that is missing is technology. In fact, visitors are asked to check their smartphones at the door. Here, people are encouraged to disconnect from their hurried lives, reconnect with nature, and spend time in quiet contemplation and relaxation.

Notable Features:

SPACE

- » Nature-infused indoor space for quiet activities, including plenty of semi-private alcoves and seating options that encourage visitors to linger and reflect
- » Seasonal rooftop garden with views of the lake and surrounding neighbourhood

TECHNOLOGY

- » Lockboxes for mobile devices in the Community Living Room that allow visitors to “unplug” in the space and take advantage of a technology-free zone

VITAL APOTHECARY

A pharmacy, cafe, and teaching lounge
that offers visitors a spectrum of care
and expertise



Vital Apothecary:
Priya’s Story

After getting a promotion and starting a new project at work, Priya had become particularly diligent about managing her stress levels. Being a boss was exciting, but it was also a lot more isolating than she had anticipated.

After finishing yet another Friday night dinner alone and responding to a few lingering work emails, Priya decided it was time to consult her digital Health Concierge about how she might improve her work-life balance. Based on the personal details Priya added to her Living Health Record—including her increased stress levels and interest in learning about indigenous cultures—it recommended that she try a *Teas of the Tundra: Herbal Tea Blending 101* class at the Vital Apothecary. The class seemed like a promising way to make new connections and learn something interesting.

Priya made her way to the Vital Apothecary the next day. She took a

seat at a large table where a few other students were waiting for the class to begin. Sitting beside her was a newly engaged couple, who quickly introduced themselves as Mason and Elijah. After chatting briefly, Mason eagerly revealed that he used to be a stand-up comedian.



“Priya, what kind of music do chiropractors listen to? Hip-POP!” he chortled.

Elijah rolled his eyes. “There’s a good reason why Mason stopped being a comedian.”

Priya chuckled quietly, then introduced herself to another student who had joined their table. As the group warmed to one another, a Toronto-based tea entrepreneur came to the front of the table and started handing out tea blending kits that included herbs, measuring scales, glass jars, and tea strainers.



“Hello everyone! Welcome to the Herbal Tea Blending class. My name is Kirima. The practice of tea blending has been in my family for many generations,” she explained. “I’m looking forward to sharing their wisdom with all of you today. I imagine many of you are feeling stressed and may be looking for new ways to create moments of stillness for yourself.”

In the middle of class, Kirima came to sit next to Priya. She answered Priya’s questions before helping Mason and Elijah with a cloudberry tea blend, and the quartet shared jokes from their favourite comedians. As Priya worked with the herbs, she felt a sense of calm she had not experienced in many weeks—all before even taking a sip of her delicious new creation.

After the class, Mason and Elijah invited Priya to a storytelling night at the Community Living Room the following week, which she was determined to make time for.



Even with her stressful new role, Priya knew she needed to fit these types of activities into her life. She walked home feeling lighter than before, with a new tea blend tucked away in her work bag and her stress far from her mind.

– The End –

Vital Apothecary:
The Space in Detail

Imagine...

a next-generation pharmacy that offers modern medicinal treatments alongside a range of complementary approaches to care.

It is a place to fill prescriptions, to be sure, but it also acts as a resource for finding advice and cultivating personalized approaches to living well. It is also a space to learn from others—from modern practitioners, to local entrepreneurs, to experts from a wide range of international cultures and traditions.

That is what the Vital Apothecary aims to achieve. It is a pharmacy, cafe, and teaching lounge that takes a more collaborative and preventive approach to care. Imagine a place where you can order prescriptions in advance using your Health Concierge and pick up a freshly blended drink made from local produce on your way out. The next time you visit, you might take part in a class on maintaining mental health during the long Canadian winter, or spend extra time with a pharmacist who can answer frank questions about which natural remedies complement your physician’s prescribed drug regimen.

Like many spaces in the Care Collective, the Vital Apothecary transforms during warmer months into a permeable indoor/ outdoor space, offering extra room for workshops hosted by local health practitioners. It is also equipped with kiosks where residents can pull up their Living Health Records to facilitate discussions with a pharmacist. Everything is designed with the goal of giving individuals more agency in their approach to getting well and living well.

Notable Features:

SPACE

- » Dedicated seating for patients to speak to the pharmacist about medications/remedies, both modern and complementary
- » Small cafe with ample seating that serves locally made food and beverages
- » Small retail section that sells basic health and food items
- » Teaching lounge used by local health practitioners to offer a wide variety of health-based workshops and classes

TECHNOLOGY

- » Health Concierge allows patients to pre-order prescriptions and other items online and pick up in store
- » Digital kiosk at counter where patients can discuss their Living Health Record with the pharmacist

HEALTH RESOURCE LIBRARY

A forward-looking library that goes beyond books to provide digital, physical, and human resources to enhance health literacy



Health Resource Library:
Brit’s Story

Brit had always hated needles. The yearly flu shot was a necessary event and Brit simply had to grin and bear it while someone else administered the vaccine. This, however, was very different.

Brit’s three-year-old daughter, Kai, had been diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes a couple of months ago. After a brief hospitalization, Brit and Adrian had finally brought Kai home. But with that came the need to monitor Kai’s blood sugar levels—which meant multiple finger pricks a day—and to give her insulin injections. Although the home-care nurse, Daniel, had done an excellent job teaching Adrian how to test Kai’s blood sugar and give her shots, Brit had insisted on watching only.

Kai was not adjusting well to this routine, and Adrian was getting a little impatient.



“Babe, I need you to learn how to give Kai her shots,” Adrian said. The pair were watching Kai play in the sandbox at their local park. “And to test her sugar. It’s really not so bad once you get used to it.”

“I know...I just hate the thought that I’m hurting her. She lets you do it, but she screams the moment she sees me holding a needle or grabbing her glucometer.”

“That’s because she can tell you’re nervous. But I really need your help with this. We can’t have Daniel’s help forever, and besides that, he can only come during the day. Work is ramping up, and it’s hard for me to get home in time for dinner some nights. She still has to eat when I’m not there, babe. And you know she needs her shot.”

Brit let out a long breath. “Yeah...I know.”

“I do have a suggestion, though.”

Adrian pulled out his phone and brought up an app. He had been working up to this moment. A friend had told him about the Community Matching Platform’s Health Stories tool, and

although Brit usually shied away from such things, Adrian felt it could be helpful. Perhaps the two of them could find another family who had coped with something similar when caring for a child with Type 1 diabetes.

Brit was skeptical, but willing to try for the sake of Kai and Adrian. The next day, the platform matched Brit with Riley, a Quayside community member who was happy to share her story. Brit made arrangements for the two of them to meet at the Care Collective.

A few days later, Brit sat down in a cozy spot tucked away inside the Health Resource Library. Maybe this would not be so bad after all—at least the space was nice. Not long after, Brit saw Riley approaching.



“Hey! You must be Brit,” Riley said, smiling warmly. “I’m so glad you reached out. This place is actually an amazing resource, and it helped me a lot with my son.”



Riley walked Brit through the space and explained how to find and borrow various tools for health-related issues—exactly like a library. The pair scrolled through a list of resources on a tablet until one caught Brit’s attention: *No More Ouch! Injection Training Kit for Kids*.

Brit put in a request and picked up the kit a few minutes later. It included a doll covered in soft, skin-like latex, a needle set, and an illustrated book of instructions that parents could use with their kids. Riley helped Brit practice giving shots to the doll until Brit felt confident showing it to Kai later.

Brit thanked Riley for her support and promised to share an update on the family’s progress. Equipped with a plan and some newfound confidence, Brit’s anxiety subsided, even if just a little. Now, what to name the doll? Maybe after one of Kai’s favourite superheroes.

– The End –

Health Resource Library:
The Space in Detail

Imagine...

a health-focused library that allows you to check out more than just books.

One that houses a suite of resources, from documentaries and lists of expert-approved apps, to fitness, self-care, and health monitoring tools. A place for peers who have experienced similar health issues to connect, share tips, or offer advice. And a supportive environment in which to make sense of personal health data with the help of knowledgeable staff or visiting health practitioners.

That is the goal of the Care Collective’s Health Resource Library—to help visitors increase their health literacy and personal agency via curated resources, useful tools, and in-person advice. For one person that might mean checking out a guided meditation starter kit on the recommendation of a therapist. For another, it might mean booking an appointment with a staff member to help them sync personal health data to their Living Health Record. Meanwhile, health practitioners may direct patients to seek out specific books or care resources, or stop in themselves to stay up-to-date on information relevant to their work.

The space itself is outfitted with comfortable seating and tables for reading, and cozy alcoves for more personal conversations. It is also equipped with easy-to-use digital kiosks for using the Care Collective’s signature technology features and resources, ensuring all residents have access. The Resource Library’s flexible design means it can host a rotating roster of local health organizations looking to share information with community members. In coordination with these pop-ups, librarians may curate useful resources for those who wish to dig further into a topic or health concern.

Notable Features:

SPACE

- » Quiet library area where visitors can read curated health and wellness books, listen to podcasts, etc.
- » Checkout desk for fitness and self-care tools (e.g., theracanes, foam rollers, resistance bands, wearables, and remote monitors)
- » Designated “bar” for learning about new health offerings, testing devices, and asking for help with various health resources
- » Space for health-related pop-ups that host a roster of local health organizations

TECHNOLOGY

- » Health Concierge displayed at kiosks provides access to Living Health Records and Health Stories tool
- » Multiple computer stations to search for and access health resources (both digital and physical)

MOD SHOP AND LIVING WELL SATELLITES

A prototyping space and fleet of mobile health pop-ups that enable the community to experiment with new ideas and bring care to other spaces and neighbourhoods in need



Mod Shop and Living Well Satellites: Stefan’s Story

Stefan looked around the bustling Mod Shop. He heard cheers as another Living Well Satellite—the name for the Care Collective’s mobile health pop-ups—pulled out of the garage. He looked up to see that the group had just added another pin to their map of Toronto neighbourhoods visited by the Living Well Satellites.

On Stefan’s first day as an Innovator in Residence a few weeks earlier, the activity in the bustling space had felt overwhelming. He had a vision for his project, but he didn’t know where to start or how he would learn to use all the tools available to him. It was exactly the same feeling he had had when he entered his first hospital to train as a health technician in Jakarta.



“Hey, Stefan! Today’s the launch of your game, *Hai*, right?” Justine, a fellow Innovator said as she approached. “How do you feel? How did the playtest go on Thursday? Are the game pieces the right size yet?”

Stefan smiled and responded to Justine’s laundry list of questions—she always remembered the smallest details from their previous conversations. This was one of the best parts of winning the grant to become an Innovator in Residence in the Care Collective’s Mod Shop. People were taking an interest in his work, and it felt like he had a community again.

It had been a long wait to be granted status as an environmental refugee. Several years ago, after his community had been ravaged by flooding, Stefan made the heart-wrenching decision to leave the home he loved so much. Back home, he had been training to become a radiology technician for a medical device company, but his qualifications did not transfer to Canada.

He was, however, accepted into a registered nursing program at University of Toronto. Stefan saw it as a stroke of luck; he did not like being a technician and wanted to work more closely with people. Fast forward a couple of years, and here he was, trying to build a game

that helped seniors from different ethnic backgrounds connect with each other. It was an idea that grew during his student years focusing on elder care. Cities like Toronto were becoming increasingly diverse, and seniors in assisted-living centres often found language and cultural barriers challenging to navigate. However, they could always come together over a good card game. So why not create a game specifically designed to help them bond?

Stefan opened his bag and pulled out some brightly coloured game pieces as he looked at Justine.



“Check out the final product,” he said with a grin.

“You added ergonomic grips? What a great idea! And seniors with limited vision were experiencing difficulty with your last version, so the addition of some light haptic feedback was really clever,” Justine said, examining the game pieces.



“I wish I could take the credit. The idea came up in the prototyping session last week.” he beamed.

Stefan took the pieces back from Justine and packed them away. “Anyway, I have to run. I’ll tell you how it goes later!”

“Looking forward to it,” Justine replied.

He did not mean to rush away, but Stefan wanted to get his Satellite outfitted and ready to go so he could arrive early to his destination—he was hosting the launch of his game on

the front lawn of a nearby seniors’ facility that afternoon. A few hours earlier, he had received a message from a volunteer at the centre that a new senior from Jakarta was looking forward to speaking with him in her native language, and he wanted to ensure he had time for her. Connecting with people from his homeland was definitely a highlight of the project.

– The End –

Mod Shop and Living Well Satellites:
The Space in Detail

Imagine...

if innovative forms of care and support could more easily reach those in need.

What if services were not tethered to a centralized location? Senior centre residents could benefit from sessions on digital health literacy, parkettes might become temporary yoga studios, and neighbourhoods experiencing “care deserts” might gain access to services rarely offered outside the urban core. Now imagine if the delivery of care were also made more iterative for service providers—giving them space to prototype their solutions with real people and helping them deliver care in a range of different settings.

The Living Well Satellites are a small fleet of distributed and mobile pop-up structures—autonomous vehicles that provide small-scale options for service delivery and city-wide health innovation. Each Satellite is designed as a modular, multi-use structure that allows service providers to quickly customize the space. The Satellites can also be outfitted with items checked out from the Mod Shop or Health Resource Library—extra chairs, tablets, or yoga mats, for instance.

When not out on the road providing services, the fleet can be found in charging stations at the Mod Shop—the Care Collective’s dedicated prototyping space. Here, health innovators of all types can experiment with new ideas, share knowledge, and co-create new programming or services. Importantly, they can also invite members of the public to provide feedback on their solutions through workshops or usability testing sessions, making the Mod Shop a common space to learn “what’s new in health.” It is easy to imagine local usability testing initiatives like GRIT (Gathering Residents to Improve Technology) Toronto finding a home in this space. The goal is to support a community of health innovators as they contribute to the well-being of Quayside’s residents and beyond.

Notable Features:	
SPACE	TECHNOLOGY
LIVING WELL SATELLITES: Small fleet of modular, mobile, and autonomously driven health pop-ups that can be used by health innovators to offer services throughout the city	
» Mobile pop-up structures designed with modular seating, display space, and storage	» Built-in digital infrastructure for customizing the pop-up, including signage, colour, and sound
» Ability to transform during warmer months into larger open-air space	» Screens for sharing information, giving presentations, or playing videos
» Can be outfitted with additional supplies or resources checked out from the Mod Shop or Health Resource Library	» Wi-Fi enabled, and equipped with a suite of tools that can be synced to health innovators’ digital platforms or applications
MOD SHOP: Part garage, part prototyping space; the Mod Shop is used by health innovators to prototype ideas and get feedback from the public before taking their ideas “on the road” in Living Well Satellites	
» Dedicated workshop space for Innovators in Residence	» Access to 3D printers, open-source electronics, health monitoring equipment, 3D imaging, etc.
» Rooms to host feedback sessions with the public and/or potential users	» Charging stations for Living Well Satellites

Part 3 CONCLUSION

Here, we reflect on the Care Collective concept, the journey that brought us to it, and where to go next.



REFLECTIONS

We can say with confidence that this research project has touched everyone who worked on it on a deeply personal level.

It allowed us to see an often-overlooked part of healthcare: community building. It raised the importance of considering not only the physical structure of a community space focused on health and well-being, but also the rich and vast social infrastructure required to deliver critical services. The concept we envisioned is specific to Toronto, but many of its proposed features are also applicable to communities across the globe looking to future-proof their model of community-based health.

A neighbourhood like Quayside will have facets that endure, many of them similar to the spatial features we present in this report. Yet, like the ecosystem of a forest, the community that animates a neighbourhood is constantly evolving. Even though the view of the future presented here is tied to a physical space, the six spaces we imagine are malleable—a fluid infrastructure that can acclimatize and accommodate a community as it grows and changes. The future we have presented is not as much about the space as it is about the people who bring it to life.

Designing for the future of Toronto presents many challenges,

such as planning for an aging population, dealing with issues of affordability, and working toward more equitable well-being for all residents. It also presents an opportunity for organizations to work from the very beginning with both the community and local partners to co-create a rich and future-proofed view of what is to come.



Right now, community health is being reshaped around the world. Major players are working diligently to challenge the status quo, while vital communities of grassroots organizations are tackling change from the bottom up. Some of these new service models were presented within this report, but many others will emerge within the next decade. This report is meant to offer one perspective, and also to challenge innovators to identify and design for what is missing. Only then can we collectively build a new model—a complete experience of care and community—in Quayside.

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