Out of the Greyzone:

Exploring Greyfield Design and Redevelopment

By

Konstantinos Pavlou

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Guelph

In partial fulfilment of requirements
for the degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

© Konstantinos Pavlou, May, 2013
ABSTRACT

OUT OF THE GREYZONE:
EXPLORING GREYFIELD DESIGN AND REDEVELOPMENT

Konstantinos Pavlou
University of Guelph, 2013

Advisor: Professor Cecelia Paine

Community shopping centres in many North American suburban areas have been in decline for two decades. Failed community shopping centres, termed ‘greyfields’, have resulted in large parcels of unused lands in core urban areas, forcing residents to travel longer distances to regional malls. The decline of community shopping centres may have a number of causes, but for this study it was hypothesized that successful community shopping centres share a number of design qualities that unsuccessful shopping centres do not have. A design framework was developed based on retail design and planning literature. The framework was applied to assess an existing redevelopment, the Shops at Don Mills in Toronto. The assessment findings derived from site observations and key informant interviews resulted in a revised design framework. The final framework provides a guide to those interested in transforming commercial greyfields into vibrant components of our urban communities.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my research advisor, Professor Cecelia Paine for your support, encouragement and thought provoking commentary on my research methodologies, written work and overall readiness in terms of academic preparedness for my professional career. You are an amazing woman and you will always be in my heart. I am so very grateful to have met you in this great big world.

I also want to thank my Professor Nathan Perkins, for your diverse approach, critical thinking and encouragement. Your wisdom created an ideal support system from start to finish. You pushed my thinking into new directions and reinvigorated my love for learning. I anticipate giving back all you have given me. I am forever indebted to you.

I would like to thank Diana Foolen who always took the time to explain and re-explain everything to me, chase me down for signatures, overdue books, registration forms, etc. Thank you for always looking out for me, being positive and having a great sense of humour.

Lastly, I want to thank my parents who taught me to live, love and learn; the most valuable lessons of all. I will always cherish you for all you have done for me and for that, I shall serve you until the end of time.

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all”. Aristotle
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>i-ii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>iii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Chapter One</td>
<td>Introduction**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 Background</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Problem Statement</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Goals &amp; Objectives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Assumptions</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Chapter Two</td>
<td>Research Methods**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0 Overall Approach</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Literature Review</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Framework Development</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Study Site Application</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 Site Observations and Activity Mapping</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Key Informant Interviews</td>
<td>8-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6 Revised Framework</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Chapter Three</td>
<td>Literature Review**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0 Overview</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 History of Retail Shopping &amp; the Rise of the Mall</td>
<td>11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 The Congress of New Urbanism</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 New Urbanism Charter</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Greyfields</td>
<td>14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Retail Development</td>
<td>16-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Retail Typologies</td>
<td>18-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.1 Corner Stores</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.2 Convenience Centres</td>
<td>18-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.3 Neighbourhood Centres</td>
<td>19-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.4 Community Centres</td>
<td>20-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.5 Regional Centres</td>
<td>21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6.6 Open Air and Lifestyle Centres</td>
<td>22-24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Characteristics of Retail Development</td>
<td>24-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7.1 Mixed-Use Development and Community Design</td>
<td>24-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8 Retail Site and Planning</td>
<td>31-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.1 Programming</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.2 Building Configuration</td>
<td>32-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.3 Anchors</td>
<td>34-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8.4 Parking</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9 Retail Design</td>
<td>36-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.1 Signage</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.2 Awnings</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.3 Visual Merchandising</td>
<td>38-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.4 Street Lighting</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.5 Site Furniture</td>
<td>39-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.9.6 Landscaping</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.10 Preliminary Framework</td>
<td>41-44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four | Study Site Analysis 45-67
  4.0 Introduction 45
  4.1 Study Site Introduction 46-47
  4.2 Framework Application 47-54
    4.2.1 Factors Influencing Greyfield Development 48-50
    4.2.2 Retail Site Planning 51-52
    4.2.3 Retail Design 53-54
  4.3 Site observations and Activity Mapping 55
  4.4 Data Collection 55
  4.5 Results and Discussion 56-66
    4.5.1 Site Visit One 56-58
    4.5.2 Site Visit Two 59-61
    4.5.3 Site Visit Three 62-63
    4.5.4 Site Visit Four 64-66
  4.6 Conclusion 67

Chapter Five | Key Informant Interviews 68-87
  5.0 Introduction 68
  5.1 Key Informant Interview Results 68
    5.1.1 Interview 1 68-72
    5.1.2 Interview 2 72-75
    5.1.3 Interview 3 76-79
  5.2 Results and Discussion 79-87

Chapter Six | Revised Framework 88-96
  6.0 Introduction 88
  6.1 Revisions to the Framework 88-90
  6.2 Applicability of the Framework as a Tool 90-92
  6.3 Additional Considerations 93-94
  6.4 Relevance of Framework to Practice 94-96
  6.5 Revised Framework 98-105

Chapter Seven | Conclusion 106-111
  7.0 Summary 106
  7.1 Concluding Remarks 110-111

References 112-115

Appendices 116-126
  Appendix A: Research Ethics Board Certification 116
  Appendix B: Key Informant Prequalification Email 117-118
  Appendix C: Key Informant Reminder Email 119-120
  Appendix D: Interview Guide 121-126
List of Figures

Figure 1: Research Methods Flow Diagram ........................................ Page 5
Figure 2: Corner Store ................................................................. Page 18
Figure 3: Convenience Centre ...................................................... Page 19
Figure 4: Neighbourhood Centre .................................................. Page 19
Figure 5: Community Centres ....................................................... Page 21
Figure 6: Regional Mall ............................................................... Page 22
Figure 7: Open-aired/Lifestyle Centre ........................................... Page 24
Figure 8: Basic Retail Building Configurations ............................... Page 32
Figure 9: Study Site Context Map .................................................. Page 45
Figure 10: Framework Concept Analysis ........................................ Page 47
Figure 11: Land Use Map ............................................................. Page 50
Figure 12: Circulation Map .......................................................... Page 52
Figure 13: Awning Schedule ......................................................... Page 53
Figure 14: Activity Map One, Visit One ......................................... Page 58
Figure 15: Activity Map One, Visit Two ........................................ Page 61
Figure 16: Activity Map One, Visit Three ...................................... Page 63
Figure 17: Activity Map One, Visit Four ........................................ Page 66
Chapter One | Introduction

1.0 Background

The shopping center represents one of the most socially influential and influenced forms of real estate. It is a space where people shop and socialize and serves as a place of leisure and recreation. The Urban Land Institute defines a shopping centre as “a group of architecturally unified commercial establishments built on a site which is planned, developed, owned and managed as an operation unit related in its location, size, and type of shops to the trade area that the unit serves” (ULI 2008, p. 4). The shopping center is a planned assemblage of shop units that may or may not exist as part of a shopping district (Dawson, 1983, p. 1). A shopping centre can come in the shape of many different organizational constructs for the sole purpose of attracting customers, in one convenient location that is designed to maximize profits.

In the 15 years between 1976 and 1991, the number of shopping centres in the United States increased from 17 523 to 37 975 (Newman, 1996, p. 9). Between 1986 and 1991, retail footage increased 23 per cent while the population increased only 5 per cent (Newman, 1996, p. 9). The construction of shopping centres dropped dramatically in the early 1990s and many centres had already begun to decline in economic activity and influence (Newman, 1996). The era of shopping mall overbuilding had come to an end. In 1998, the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) coined the term ‘Greyfield’ to describe a failing or obsolete shopping centre that is characterized by high vacancies, deteriorating building conditions and extensive parking. The decline of these retail centres has detrimental economic and community impacts. For a local community, a greyfield is more than just visual blight; it means lost tax base, lost job opportunities, and valuable land
sitting unused (Sobel, 2001, p. 1). Consequentially, residents of a community have to travel longer distances to larger shopping centres that are more competitive and modern. However, the fate of Greyfields is not tragic as case studies suggest that Greyfields are excellent investments when redeveloped properly. The CNU sees many of these shopping centres as ideal sites for transit-oriented and mixed-use development. Some of these sites are no longer suitable for regional retail; nonetheless, many are well suited as the sites of New Urbanist development study reflected. These may include housing, retail, office, services and public space (Sobel, 2001, p. 2).

The redevelopment of a greyfield site presents both a vast challenge and a great opportunity for design professionals and the host community. This undertaken redevelopment can revitalize economic activity and rebuild the viability and liveability of a community. Investigating examples of successful greyfield developments, architects and landscape architects can better understand how to rehabilitate greyfield sites to meet the needs of their users and the communities they are intended for.

The purpose of this study is to develop a framework for the evaluation of site design for former greyfield sites. This study will examine how such former Greyfield sites are redesigned to re-function and meet the needs of their communities, and will profile the physical attributes that contribute to their success. The methods that will be used during the data collection process will include investigation into and analysis of the case study of a former greyfield that has been successfully redeveloped.
1.1 Problem Statement

Greyfields have detrimental effects to a community by decreasing property values and deterring new investment within a community. The decline of these retail centres decreases the quality of life for its residents. Longer distances must be traveled to larger shopping malls. This inherently reduces accessibility to basic amenities and decreases quality of community life.

1.2 Goals & Objectives

Redeveloping a Greyfield is a challenging and complex task. It involves the landowner, the municipality and the community who all work together to find a workable and profitable solution. Ultimately, it is the landowner who has the final say as to how the property is developed. There are many factors involved in the redevelopment of a Greyfield site: market conditions, site and location factors, zoning, municipal and community capacity, developer and lender capacity and financing. While mixed-use development is considered most favourable by many design professionals for infill projects, often, the developer and/or the community may have to be convinced of its inherent benefits.

The goal of this study is to develop a framework to support physical redevelopment of greyfield shopping centres that contribute to the quality of the shopping experience and to the quality of the community in which they are located.

The following met aims and objectives will complete this goal:

- Explore key retail design and community development concepts through the review of related and applicable literature.
• Examine the relationship between New Urbanism principles and contemporary retail development in newer retail formats.

• Compile a series of concepts and themes for development of a design and planning framework that can serve as a reference tool for the redevelopment of greyfield sites.

• Select a site where the framework can be applied and tested.

• Conduct site observations and activity mapping to better understand site function and utility.

• Conduct key informant interviews with experts from design and real estate professions. The information gathered in this process will verify what was learned in the literature review and provide revisions to the framework.

• Provide a revised framework based on the findings during data collection process.

1.3 Assumptions

• Greyfields can increase property values within a community and generate revenue for major stakeholders.

• Greyfields are valuable to residents because they offer places of shopping, socializing and are in close proximity to basic amenities.

• Principles of New Urbanism can help facilitate sustainable retail and community development.
Chapter Two | Research Methods

2.0 Overall Approach

Chapter Two outlines the approach undertaken in identifying components of, reviewing, developing and applying a design framework to a specified Greyfield site. Fostering a design framework can highlight elements of design that will work faster and better than others do, can aid in the development process of a greyfield site and can act as tool for success for future developers, designers and community groups.

Primarily growing out of examination and analysis of the literature review, the site development and framework design criteria are crucial to future success of a greyfield site. Developing a workable design framework followed; it involved the collecting, comparing and analyzing of design attributes which fostered successful retail and community development. Upon the completion of the design framework, the findings were applied to a selection of contemporary and varied case studies.

Figure 1: Research Methods Flow Diagram

Figure 1 roadmaps the method of study used in the research process.

Focused interviews were thereafter conducted with professionals in the retail real estate industry in order to reassess the initial framework and revise it to a more workable and applicable one.
2.1 Literature Review

A review of pertinent literature was conducted to better understand the current state of shopping centres in North America. This included but was not partial to: the reasons for decline of shopping malls; the reasons for decline of some shopping malls as comparable to others; implications of failing shopping malls on host communities; and challenges facing the retail development industry. In doing so, the literature review aimed to examine retail design and the role of community development in pursuit of redeveloping greyfields into socially and economically viable centres.

In the last twenty years, the shopping centre industry has experienced several changes in development practices, shifting away from a single use methodology into a more comprehensive and diverse application of uses. Socio-economic factors have influenced this evolution of the local shopping mall into the super-sized shopping mall. In redeveloping certain shopping centres by applying of new urbanist approaches, thereby promoting the concept of walkable neighborhoods and effecting an assortment of residential, commercial and civic uses.

Specified literature was examined to better understand the role of New Urbanism in commercial practices and how it is shaping the retail landscape in North America.

2.2 Framework Development

To satisfy the study objective, a series of concepts and themes were compiled from the literature review to create the design framework. The framework identifies a set of design considerations and strategic themes and links them to three different scales. The first scale looks at factors influencing overall development of greyfields. It includes mixed-
use development, community development and transportation linkages. The second scale is set at contemporary retail site planning that includes programming, building configuration and land uses. The third and final scale of the framework looks at more detailed design features of retail development and its implementation in the final design. All three scales aim to address different objectives and considerations during planning and design process.

2.3 Study Site Application

The study aims to apply the framework to a selected site. For the purposes of this research, a former greyfield site, Shops at Don Mills (SDM), located in Toronto, Canada was selected for the application of the framework. The framework constructs were applied to the former greyfield site, providing this study with an opportunity to assess and analyze its applicability as a tool for redevelopment. SDM was selected based on the following criteria:

1) The site must have been an enclosed shopping centre, failing due to high vacancies.
2) Community shopping centre with gross leasable area (GLA) 250 000 ft.\(^2\) - 500 000 ft.\(^2\).
3) The study site should be located in first ring suburb in a mature neighborhood.

2.4 Site Observations and Activity Mapping

Retail formats such as open-aired/lifestyle centres follow the new urbanist paradigm of design. Open spaces and walkable districts are a recurring design element in newer retail formats and warrant special attention and consideration when being implemented. An outdoor space cannot stand alone and success depends largely on how the space is used in conjunction with what is offered on site: retail mix, food and drink, scheduled programs and entertainment (Francis, 1997). A series of sketch plans were
created for SDM to identify and highlight important aspects of the site. Included in the plan were all features of the site as designated by: boundaries, entrances, paths and roads, site furniture, major plant massings, sport courts or play equipment (Francis, 1997).

Site observations and activity mapping were two methods used to observe how the actual site is being used. According to Cooper, Marcus and Francis, observation of actual activities should be conducted for at least four separate half-hour periods, preferably on different days at different times of the day, including a weekday and a weekend morning, and a weekday and a weekend afternoon. Observations were conducted at night, weekday and weekend evenings to capture activity in late evenings. Several tenants are restaurants and cafes. For each observation period, a complete record was kept of activity conducted in the space - by sex, age, ethnicity, type of activity, and location (Francis, 1997).

This observation was conducted twice in summer and twice in winter to examine the manner within which the site is used during both seasons. Site observations and activity mapping are common methods used in post-occupancy evaluation (POE) and in determining type of activity occurring on the site that would assist in the development of the design framework. Data collected during this process allowed the researcher to gain information not covered in the literature and provided for revisions to the framework.

2.5 Key Informant Interviews

Pertinent to this study was to conduct a series of key informant interviews with professionals who have experience in greyfield redevelopment and retail design. Information provided by the respondents allowed the researcher to verify previous information acquired through the literature review and also to gain new site specific
information not covered in the literature review. In conjunction with the site observations and activity mapping, data gathered from the interview stage enabled the researcher to make revisions to the framework and provide a final draft in a point-by-point format.

In order to formulate appropriate, applicable and comprehensive questions, theoretical underpinnings of retail and community development were analyzed. According to Zeisel, this analysis can then be used as the basis for detailed discussion of the situation with the respondent. Such a situational analysis guides the discussion; the interviewees’ responses are used to test, refine and modify analysis (Zeisel, 1981).

Zeisel suggests that an interview guide be developed to conduct an interview; and this guide is much like a road map to interview development. “The map therefore, is a set of topics, elements, patterns, and relationships that the interviewer tentatively intends to cover. The researcher’s goal is to determine which of the many hypothesized elements are important to the respondent [thereby thoroughly understanding] what these elements mean in the [respondents’ definition(s)] of the situation” (Ziesel, 1981, p.139). Pre-interview analysis was conducted through review of relevant literature and in synthesizing series of lines of inquiry that informed and focused the interview process. Three separate professionals from varied disciplines were interviewed during this stage of research. Each respondent shared a unique experience from their direct involvement in this field.
2.6 Revised Framework

The framework was revised following application, completion and satisfaction of all research methods. Data collected in this process enabled the researcher to make revisions to the framework and discover alternative concepts and themes not covered in the literature review.
Chapter Three | Literature Review

3.0 Overview

Literature presented herein reviews social and physical aspects of retail design. In doing so, information collected in this process is used in developing a design framework, applying it to the site of The Shops at Don Mills. This literature review further satisfies the goals and objectives presented in Chapter One, verifying the correlation between community development and retail design. More specifically, verifying the correlation between declining shopping centres and direct impact of these on their host communities.

Strong and viable design framework hinges upon a detailed and thorough Literature Review. The former is developed through reviewing relevant literature, with specific focus in literature on the principles of new urbanism and its implications for contemporary retail development. The design framework developed is applicable to greyfield sites undergoing transition and functions as a tool for future development.

3.1 History of Retail Shopping – The Rise of ‘The Mall’

In Canada, the modern retail paradigm was first adopted by department stores such as Eaton’s and The Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), whose approach to merchandising dominated the consumer landscape in this country until at least 1940 (Belisle, 2011). Before HBC established itself and introduced mass retail to the Canadian marketplace, Canadians purchased most of their goods through catalogues or at farm stands and general stores. The HBC department store environment revolutionized the way people shopped by consolidating a wide variety of products in one multi-level building. The world’s first such department store is widely considered to be Aristide Boucicaut’s Bon Marché in 1870 Paris (Belisle, 2011). Like later mass retail environments, it was built to draw people in, with glass skylights, gallery-style departments and curving staircases. Other merchandisers soon followed suit, and by the end of the nineteenth century the rapidly expanding
urban landscape was defined by these unique buildings. In the years 1880–1890 Eaton’s acquired property for its delivery stables and farms to supply food for its restaurants, and continually expanded its services to include pharmacies, hardware departments and home furnishings. In other words, Eaton’s created one of the first multi-use retail environments, leading the way for what would eventually come to be known as ‘shopping centres’ (Belisle, 2011).

In 1872, the first department store opened in the United States when Joseph and Lyman Bloomingdale opened their East Street Bazaar, later to be located at 59th and Lexington in New York City (Bloomingdales, 2012). The early 20th century saw the proliferation of such stores, bringing with them a new attitude toward the shopping experience. (Askegaard and Csaba, 1999) It was not until 1956, however, that Victor Gruen constructed that which is presently considered the first mall in America – the Southdale Shopping Centre. Gruen used the then established department store format to draw customers, adding a covered, climate-controlled pedestrian mall. This innovation led shoppers to stroll between shops and stay longer, adding to the impression that they were not running errands, but enjoying leisure time. In his designs for suburban retail environments, Gruen sought to meet two different kinds of need; first came convenience and accessibility and secondly, an opportunity to participate in community life, similar to those in the urban centres. Gruen believed that the shopping mall could become a replica of the city centre for suburban-dwellers, a “colorful, lively, dynamic environment” (Gruen, V. 1973, p.18) for shopping, socializing and entertainment.

As suburban demographics evolve, the needs retail environments will have to address will adapt accordingly. When Gruen first began his work, the primary user of the shopping mall was the middle-class housewife. Now, demographics are far more diverse, including immigrant families, professional couples with no children, aging and elderly people, affluent and peer-pressured teenagers and families with children. Suburbanites of all kinds increasingly rely on nearby shopping centers to fill material and economic needs; more and more so though, shopping centers have
become places for socialization and entertainment. To this end, movie theatres, restaurants, coffee shops and community groups businesses pop up in shopping centers one next to the other. People want the convenience of dinner and a movie, without spending time traveling between the two. They also want the convenience of and social nature inherent in early morning walking groups and special occasion events that regularly are a part of contemporary shopping malls.

### 3.2 The Congress of New Urbanism

The Congress of New Urbanism (CNU) is an organization that promotes building cities that are more livable, compact and accessible by walking, bicycle and public transit. The CNU argues new urbanist principles have the ability to rehabilitate neighborhoods and communities into more livable and viable places. The CNU suggests that new urbanism neighborhoods foster social interaction through an increase in the use of outdoor space (Duaney 2000). Physical design characteristics play a major role in developing strong neighborhoods and therefore should be implemented and strongly considered.

Established by co-founders Andres Duany, Peter Calthorpe, Elizabeth Moule, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Stefanos Polyzoides and Dan Solomon and supported today by distinguished board members and other leaders from the worlds of urban design, development, academia, citizen activism, and government policy, CNU works to deliver these hallmarks to communities across North America and overseas on multiple scales (CNU 1999).

The New Urbanism movement was codified through the Congress for the New Urbanism (Leccese and McCormick 2000) founded in 1993 by a meeting of 170 designers to exchange ideas about New Urbanism. By 1996, the CNU charter was developed and ratified at the fourth annual Congress in Charleston, South Carolina (Leccese and McCormick 2000). The charter consists of twenty-seven principles that outline the goals and objectives of New Urbanism and assert principles to guide public policy, development practice, urban planning, and design.
3.3 New Urbanism Charter

The New Urbanism Charter is categorized into three separate sections of scale, designated from 'large' down to 'small'. They are a set of guidelines and principles that promote more compact, mixed-use and pedestrian friendly types of development. The first section of the charter outlines the region: Metropolis, city, and town, whereas the second summarizes the neighborhood, the district, and the corridor. The third and final section encapsulates the block, the street, and the building. For the purpose of this study, the last two sections of the charter are discussed and analyzed. These two sections are distinctly connected to community design elements that create vibrant neighborhoods. The first section of the charter is important in its own right, as a community is part of a much larger realm that is intricately interconnected.

3.4 Greyfields

Greyfield redevelopment typically occurs in suburban areas, generally in first ring suburbs where aging and out of date properties are present. This research exclusively examines declining, enclosed shopping centres that are redeveloped into open-aired, mixed-use developments. The scope of greyfields can include strip retail centres and industrial parks. In Retrofitting Suburbia, Dunham-Jones and Williamson (2009), they conclude that these sites make excellent cases for suburban retrofits. Suburban retrofitting is a process of revamping, in many cases completely replacing, the conventional zoning that has dominated land use decision-making and development for decades.

Dunham-Jones and Williamson describe how instant cities and suburban retrofits can become urban nodes within a new polycentric metropolis that simultaneously
complement the core city’s downtown and serve a predominantly suburban population. To achieve strong community development and create places that stand the test of time, the inherent benefits of instant cities should be considered and not those of instant architecture. Instant cities replace obsolete pockets of development with mixed-use approaches rather than single-use; which is typically concerned with a single building and adequate parking. The ideals behind suburban retrofits and instant cities are those of incremental urbanism – cities that evolve over time through gradual accretions and infill so the collective form bears the imprint of a broad spectrum of interests (Dunham-Jones and Williamson 2009). Incremental urbanism can facilitate sensitive interventions that both respect the existing urban structure, and advance evolving cultures over time, contributing to making these urban retail structures great places in which to live, work, play and shop.

Failed shopping malls sites are among the most prolific examples of suburban retrofits and instant cities. Obsolete shopping malls have been redeveloped into mixed-use developments using New Urbanist principles of increased public and civic space. These redevelopments are examples of interplay between local interconnectivity, permeable surfaces and green space, pedestrian-friendly road networks and walkability, better public transportation which inherently reduce vehicle miles travelled and reduce land consumption. The argument is that developing greyfields with New Urbanist approaches in mind will serve host communities, providing meaningful places while remaining profitable.
3.5 Retail Development

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a non-profit research and education organization supported by its members. Established in 1933, the institute today has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the spectrum of land use and development disciplines (ULI 2008). The ULI is a trusted organization that set standards of development in housing, retail and shopping mall design. The institute has been recognized as one of the most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth and development (ULI 2008). A long-time proponent in shopping centre development ULI provides designers and developers with tools and knowledge about the retail real estate industry. The book Retail Development is an update of the Shopping Center Development Handbook Series. This fourth edition marks a name change, Retail Development, to reflect changes have developed in formats, configurations, and connections to other uses. Stand-alone shopping centre developments have given way to other formats not necessarily shopping centres but districts, downtowns or centres of a community (Kramer et al. 2008).

Competition is intense for smaller shopping centres. They must compete against regional malls. The industry is reinventing itself through new concepts of designs and uses for obsolete shopping centres that provide competitive advantages for developers and communities. The Retail Development Handbook (ULI 1999) suggests a variety of shopping centre formats, whether new development or transformations, is expanding. Hybrids are increasingly common: street-front, infill projects seamlessly connect to existing urban settings; mixed-use shopping districts replace monolithic shopping centre or are the core of a planned community. New formats further previous generations of shopping centres,
providing nonretail activities, entertainment and public open spaces. Advancements in retail design catalyze community development in the process.

The *Handbook* addresses topics on fundamentals of development or redevelopment, project feasibility, financing, planning and design. For the purpose of this research, information will be gathered from it to form a framework for physical design of open-air/lifestyle centres. Information will be collected from ancillary sources specializing in mixed-use retail formats to finalize the framework that is used as a tool for development.

The shopping centre industry has been undergoing a process of change. Shopping centre developers and municipalities cope with market changes and adapt to newer, more competitive retail concepts and models. Many enclosed shopping centres are on the brink of closure as larger regional malls out-compete smaller community shopping centres. Successful retailers and shopping centres must pay attention to how target demographic groups experience shopping at their stores and focus on the way in which shoppers prefer to shop. All elements of the shopping environment, including lighting, colour, fixtures, merchandising and music, must be meticulously planned out and designed in order to meet customer expectations and to increase amount of time and money customers are willing to spend in the store (Gibbs 2012). Although regional malls are more diverse in their offerings to the consumer because of size and selection, community shopping centres can reposition themselves as town centres that provide a pleasurable retail experience to visitors. An emerging trend since 1980 is open-air concept shopping centres which are challenging conventional enclosed shopping structures. SDM is one such example.
3.6 Retail Typologies

3.6.1 Corner Stores

Corner stores are the smallest of all retail types. They range from 1,500 to 3,000 square feet in Gross Leasable Area, GLA. Typically, corner stores are stand-alone structures or mixed use buildings that have residential units above. Preferably situated on a corner where two streets intersect, these retail types offer food, beverage and sundries to local residents.

![Figure 2: Local Corner Store](image)

3.6.2 Convenience Centres

Typically between 10,000 and 30,000 square feet in GLA, the convenience centre offers an array of goods and services geared to the daily needs of its surrounding neighborhood (Gibbs 2012). The International Council of Shopping Centres (ICSC) defines a convenience centre as providing for the sale of personal services and convenience goods similar to those of a neighborhood centre. It contains a minimum of three stores, with a total gross leasable area of 30,000 square feet or less. Instead of being anchored by a supermarket, it usually is anchored by some type of personal/convenience services such as a minimarket” (Kramer et al, 2008).
To be economically viable, a convenience centre needs about 2,000 households – the equivalent to two TND neighborhoods. In suburban locations, the average primary trade area for a convenience centre is a 1 to 1.5 mile radius (Gibbs 2012).

3.6.3 Neighborhood Centres

The neighborhood centre is considered the core of the traditional neighborhood and a staple of the shopping centre industry (Gibbs 2012). These centres are generally anchored with a supermarket, pharmacy and restaurant, a neighborhood centre offers the complete range of goods and services needed by households on a regular basis but not available at smaller or larger centres (Gibbs 2012).
The ICSC and Urban Land Institute (ULI) define a neighborhood centre as a centre that provides for the sale of convenience goods (foods, drugs and sundries) and personal services (laundry and dry cleaning, barbering, shoes repairing and so forth) for the day-to-day living needs of the immediate neighborhood. Its principal tenant is a supermarket and typically contains a gross leasable area of about 60,000 square feet. In practice, it may range from 30,000 to 100,000 square feet. (Gibbs, 2012)

To be economically sustainable, a neighborhood centre needs 6,000 to 8,000 households within its primary trade area. In a suburban setting, the trade area is within a one to two mile radius and its residents, on average, will shop at the centre once or twice a week (Gibbs 2012).

3.6.4 Community Centres

Suburban community centres are typically 250,000 to 350,000 square feet in size and draw customers from within a four to six mile radius trade area with populations of 50,000 or more (Gibbs 2012). Their business models call for tenants that are 10,000 to 20,000 square feet in size: junior anchors that are destinations in themselves. At times pejoratively described as “power centres” or “category killers” (power centres have at least 80 percent of their GLA developed as anchors), these large-format retailers include arts and craft stores, booksellers, and electronic, pet supplies, office supplies, sporting goods and toy stores (Gibbs 2012).
3.6.5 Regional Centres

Regional centres are among the largest of all shopping centre retail types and offer different sizes of retailing at a single location. These centres are always anchored by at least two full-sized fashion department stores and often include 200,000 to 300,000 square feet of inline shops and restaurants (Gibbs 2012). They have 10 to 12 mile radius trade areas in regions with suburban densities. When and where a regional centre opens is determined by its lead department stores, which require 150,000 people living within the primary trade area (ULI 2009). According to Gibbs, regional centres must compete with newer design concepts such as open-aired lifestyle and town centres. Regional centres were first developed as enclosed shopping malls in the mid 1950’s. In order to curb the competition from more modern concepts, regional malls may sometimes retrofit the site to include an open-aired retail component to the existing structure.

The ICSC defines regional centres as providing general merchandise (a large percentage of which is apparel) and services in full depth and variety. Its main attractions and its anchors are traditional, mass merchant, or discount department stores or fashion specialty stores (Gibbs, 2012). A typical regional centre is enclosed with an inward orientation of the stores connected by common walkways and parking surrounding the
outside perimeter. Regional centres are easily accessible and typically located along an interstate freeway. Developers seek locations for these centres near the intersection of multiple freeways and, optimally, where at least two separate freeway interchanges reduce traffic congestion (Gibbs 2012).

![Figure 6: Regional Mall](image)

### 3.6.6 Open-aired and Lifestyle Centres

Currently the prevalent trend in the shopping centre industry, lifestyle and town centres have gained popularity among developers. This format is often used in rehabilitation projects where enclosed shopping centres are failing due to competition of neighboring regional malls. These types of centres often have mixed-uses incorporating residential, commercial and office units. The influence of such retail types can be largely attributed to new urbanism principles that incorporate several uses through a series of street systems which link these uses together. Street-oriented developments are gaining ground and enclosed malls are being reinvented by adding open pedestrian components and incorporating other uses on former surface parking lots (ULI, 2008). These centres are built with or without streets; however, those with streets tend to be more economically sustainable (Gibbs, 2012).
The ICSC defines lifestyle centres as most often located near affluent residential neighborhoods; it has an upscale orientation, contains 150,000 to 500,000 square feet (14,000 to 46,000 square meters) of GLA, is built in an open-air format, and includes at least 50,000 square feet (4,650 square meters) of national specialty chain stores (Gibbs, 2012).

In theory, weather plays a circumspect and deciding factor in this type of Canadian commercial and retail development. The Canadian winter climate is characterized by cold, short days, icy road conditions and blizzards, snow and hail. This series of climate conditions lasts months. It would thus be expected that lifestyle centers would fare worse under such conditions. According to Gibbs, both lifestyle and town centres are vulnerable to the fluctuations of climate, but not to the extent one might expect. Hot and humid climates, such as those in the Sunbelt, pose the greatest challenge to the open-air lifestyle centre format, while the colder climates and even snowy regions of the North are more economically sustainable. The shopping centre industry depends on the fall and holiday seasons for most of its sales and profits, while the summer and late winter seasons are considered bonuses. The cool fall and cold winter seasons encourage shopping for back-to-school apparel and holiday gifts. Practically speaking, consumers in both northern and southern regions both seem to enjoy being outdoors during these periods, excluding bouts of extreme precipitation. In northern areas, cold weather likely encourages more purchases of sweaters and winter gear.
3.7 Characteristics of Retail Development

3.7.1 Mixed-Use Development and Community Design

A common characteristic of all suburbanites is the fundamental need for human community. This need has long been met successfully in urban neighbourhoods. Conversely, the suburbs, due to a combination of commuter lifestyles and lower population density, have been viewed as alienating, isolating places. The craving for community is expressed in attempts to build environments and structure facilities in a way that mimics urban neighbourhoods. In Hester's *Neighbourhood Space* (1975), many examples of such attempts are outlined, most of which were constructed based on rules of ‘ideal’ park-to-road ratios, or other such conceptual guidelines. Hester argues that even accomplished and emulated architects such as Le Corbusier have failed to build successful neighbourhoods because they were not concerned enough with the habits and social lives of real people. On the other hand, neighbourhood rehabilitation can be successful when residents themselves actively participate in the design process:

“People in middle-class as well as in poor neighbourhoods that are threatened by highways, renewal, and suburban growth are saying that a good, clean, livable environment begins at home, at the neighbourhood level. They are demanding neighbourhoods that are well designed, or redesigned to be socially suitable, and that meet the needs of the individuals living there.” (Hester, 1975, p.3)
In *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*, William Whyte argues: “[that which] attracts people most, it would appear, is other people” (Whyte, 1980). This attraction is facilitated by features such as abundant seating, good lighting, trees and convenient places to get food, as well as structures that lend themselves to a feeling of safety and openness. Imbued in combination with a series of different shops, cafés, services, bars and restaurants, these features draw in people and encourage them to “stick around”. Thusly documented in Whyte’s insightful film are many real-life illustrations of this new urban design principle. Whyte is critical of certain aspects of urban design, such as the empty arcades surrounding some skyscrapers, or neglected third-story office courtyards; he is quick to give praise where it is due though, commending developers, for instance, on the installation of water features that remain open to the public. Countless hours of observation led him to believe that people enjoy relatively simple environments that allow them to move in and be around each other, without the obtrusion of too many regulations, fences or unsettling geometries (particularly connected to pathways and seating). Making reference to the swaths of underused commercial space in downtown Los Angeles, Whyte states: “ironically, twenty miles away at Disneyland, people pay good money to enjoy a replica of a regular, old fashioned street with shops, windows and doors at street level” (Whyte, 1980).

The irony of Disneyland’s successful street replicas is repeated all over North America, in suburban shopping centres that are continually evolving away from what Gruen called “machines for selling” (p.22). In keeping with current trends, suburban shopping centres are being reinvented into what he would call “shopping towns” (Gruen,
These retail environments attempt to recreate the best elements of urban streets, markets and neighbourhoods. But designers are starting to understand that “old-fashioned” is not so easy to replicate. As illustrated in Jane Jacobs’ *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, (1989) a neighbourhood emerges from patterns of human behaviour, and cannot be designed. Jacobs emphasises, “A city cannot be a work of art” (p.372) which is to say that the appeal of ordered arrangements and other aesthetic considerations must not take precedence over the lifestyle requirements of the people who will actually live, work and play in the constructed environment. Nonetheless, the way urban space is constructed does impact what kinds of behaviours, interactions – and therefore neighbourhoods - are conceivable. In one analysis of street layouts, Jacob observes that shorter blocks promote diverse sidewalk life. By breaking up the monotony of long streets and allowing locals to weave around their neighbourhood, shorter blocks bring more foot traffic to shops, bolstering local commerce, not to mention facilitating the myriad social exchanges that occur on a well-travelled neighbourhood street.

The impact of street configurations on a neighbourhood is echoed by the CNU in article 23 of their Charter (2001). Streets and squares must be safe, comfortable, and interesting to the pedestrian. Properly configured streets can encourage walking and enable neighbours to getting to know each other. This will allow for residents to protect their communities.

The above is one of several examples from Jacobs’ persuasive text that reflect relatively simple changes to architectural and landscape elements can nurture the growth of strong communities and neighbourhoods. At the same time, the examples and principles
proposed by *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* point to the importance of allowing for organic, community-driven development, as opposed to monolithic structures and heavily ‘planned’ designs. Jacobs’ recommendations regarding high-density, mixed-use, walkable neighbourhoods that bring together both old and new buildings are considered essential tenets for developers who wish to design livable community and retail spaces that integrate naturally with surrounding neighbourhoods.

Due to their simplicity and well-documented success, these principles continue to inspire urban design sixty years later. In the CNU *Canons for sustainable architecture and urbanism* (2009) it is argued that:

“Neighborhoods, towns and cities shall be as compact as possible, with a range of densities that are compatible with existing places and cultures and that hew tightly to projected growth rates and urban growth boundaries while promoting lively mixed urban places.” (p.5)

This vision of the neighbourhood, which is synonymous with New Urbanism, is elaborated upon in Jan Gehl’s *Life Between Buildings* (1987). Gehl describes the many social, psychological, economic and political advantages of urban interaction - whether on sidewalks, in parks or other public areas. Like Whyte, he points out that "people are attracted to other people" (p.25). It follows that developers should aim to create retail spaces that people enjoy being in, because in doing so they attract more customers to come 'where the people are'. He cites spontaneous gatherings in parks and on pedestrian routes, which centre on particular activity such as a game of chess, a street performer, or children playing. "No one stops in front of banks and prestigious showrooms. Quite a few people stop to look at children's toys, photos, and other items related more directly to life and other people" (p.30) He concludes that the human life in and around buildings is "more
important than the spaces and buildings themselves” (p.31) Nonetheless, buildings and public spaces can be designed in such a way to improve the quality of public life. Multi-purpose gathering space is crucial, as are richly varied pedestrian routes. He also emphasizes the value of preserving older structures, noting that most people-friendly urban spaces in Europe consisted of a blend of architectural styles and time-periods. (p.43)

The emphasis on a site-specific, people-driven approach to development is reiterated in Kramer et al.'s Retail Development1 (2008):

“The notion of community has evolved so that today the connection to community is literal (with newly created streets internal to a development site linked to existing streets and storefronts directly on existing streets), interactive (gathering places specifically designed to encourage meeting, eating and greeting), and aspirational (bringing stores together that reflect how customers view themselves, their community and their environment). These changes after years of mostly stand-alone shopping centre development have led to the perception that many of these new formats are not necessarily shopping centres but something else - districts, downtowns or just the centre of a community.” (p.4)

It is evident that people living in suburban areas are seeking a stronger sense of community and physical change. Demographic data suggests that increasing percentages of households are without children, even in the suburbs. Suburbia is also increasingly characterized by diversity in income, race and ethnicity (Dunham-Jones and Williamson 2009). Increase in diversity therefore fosters change in societal tastes and in how people view and relate to their built environments. As Peter Calthorpe argues in The New American Metropolis, the North American landscape must be made “more accessible to our diverse population: singles, the working poor, the elderly, and the pressed middle-class

_________________________
families who can no longer afford [the American dream]” (Calthorpe 1993, p. 16).

Calthorpe proposes that the alternative to socially-fracturing sprawl is neighbourhoods consisting of housing, parks, schools, shops, civic services, workplaces and transit within walking distance – precisely the vision suggested by new urbanist principles. Calthorpe, again echoing these principles, also calls for an increase in open, public spaces. He decries the underutilized, under-funded public sites found all over modern North America. As he puts it:

“The traditional commons, which once centered our communities with convivial gathering and meeting places, is increasingly displaced by an exaggerated private domain...we must return meaning and stature to the physical expression of our public life. From streets and parks to plaza, village squares and commercial centers, the Commons defines the meeting ground of its neighborhood and its local identity.” (Calthorpe 1993, p. 23).

Clare Cooper Marcus, in her paper *Shared Outdoor Space and Community Life*, distinguishes between three categories of public outdoor space, which are useful for discussion of Calthorpe’s ideas. These are: public (streets, parks), privately owned but generally accessible (corporate plazas, school campuses) and shared outdoor space (community gardens, courtyards). Marcus argues that the latter of these is a significant basis for social ties, and should be incorporated into more neighborhood designs. This fits within the New Urbanist consensus on public space. Whether it is privately or collectively owned, used by strangers or exclusively by neighbours, open and accessible public space is crucial to creating a truly appealing, child-friendly site.

Calthorpe continues his critique of the suburban landscape, pointing out that it is strange that in what is supposedly the greatest consumer society in history, we have evolved a “myopic and almost grotesque retail form”:
“Human scale and neighborhood focus have been exchanged for auto access and national distribution... Two traditional aspects of commerce have been lost; shopping as an integral part of a community center and the unique quality of local products and services.” (Calthorpe, 1993, p. 24).

The unfortunate consequences of ‘mall culture’ extend much further than to the local neighbourhood. Without a doubt, the surrounding region would benefit from reinstatement of lively community hubs and the promotion of local identities. By attracting new residents, shoppers and businesses, both the economy and culture of a region would be enriched by the integration of walkable public and community space, and the reclamation of underutilized land and resources.

Urbanism is the purveyor of change that is guiding suburban retrofits. However, despite the fact that the work of the authors cited above has been around for decades, these are still relatively new ways to approach development, and while theoretically considered orthodoxy, in practice remain difficult to apply. These changes will be incrementally applied as communities and developers seek to change obsolete greyfield sites into denser, multi-use developments catering to a variety of lifestyle choices. Its ideals and principles can fuse living, shopping, working and leisure rather than separating each use into single entities. But first, it must be integrated into development schemes and public works projects. This requires consultation and collaboration between policy-makers, community members and developers. As proved within, all parties would benefit from the acceptance and implementation of urbanist-inspired greyfield revitalization.
3.8 Retail Site and Planning

3.8.1 Programming

The shopping centre industry is a highly competitive industry constantly keeping updated with current trends. Some of these challenges are effected by everchanging consumer preferences, the evolution of the retail model and multiple on-site uses. Contemporary site planning for retail centres are more intricate than their predecessors therefore, design and function are inextricably linked to the success of a site. The programming of a site has become an important aspect of retail design since developers seek to maximize uses other than shopping activities.

“Programming defines the project’s objectives and functional requirements, including the proposed activities, area allocated for each activity, and the functional or spatial relationships among those activities” (LaGro, 2008, p.8). Programming often includes market analyses or user demand studies, and the analysis of relevant precedents (LaGro, 2008, p.9). An initial site plan should take into account present program requirements (as outlined through a feasibility study) and the possible future requirements of the site, building in flexibility not only for growth and expansion but also for changes in use (ULI, 2008 p.151). In terms of retail and community development, both the developer and host community should have clear objectives and develop functional requirements for the site. The site should aim to meet the economic goals for the developer and social needs of the community.
3.8.2 Building Configuration

**Figure 8:** Basic Retail Building Configurations (Adapted from ULI, 2008, p.171)

New retail concepts in shopping centre design can facilitate new town centre developments, redevelopments or infill projects. Several different types of building configurations exist. The most effective type of open-air development is the cluster configuration, which closely resembles urban pedestrian environments. In a cluster configuration, buildings and their storefronts are situated on pedestrian walkways or streets which typically mimic those of urban environments or town centres and offer a more authentic shopping experience (Kramer *et al.* 2008).

‘The town center is typically an outdoor community or neighbourhood variation of the cluster. Instead of a department store, the town center may
be anchored by a public, recreational, or entertainment feature such as a park, ice-skating rink, cinema complex, restaurant cluster, or civic building. Housing is often integrated vertically or horizontally, and the retail streets typically lead to other nonretail anchors around the town centre such as hotels, office buildings, and transit stations.” (Kramer et al. 2008 p. 170).

Building configurations for a town centre development will often be in the form of a cluster. This type of configuration is typical of urban environments, is more interesting than a simple linear or L shape configuration. Site building configuration is crucial to design and inherently determines circulation of the site. The circulation of a site, whether sidewalks or street systems, is the framework that enhances accessibility in and out of a site, improving the mobility of pedestrians and vehicles (La Gro, 2008). Integrated transportation solutions create more options for mobility by vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and users of public transit.

“Organizing a site’s circulation systems requires an understanding of the site’s context- specifically, the existing circulation systems serving the site. The entry and arrival sequences to destinations on the site must begin at one or more points of access to the site’s periphery. Entrances to the site, or to buildings and major pedestrian walkway intersections, are places where plazas or seating areas may be developed. These nodes warrant special design treatment, including paving, lighting, planting, and furniture. Other design objectives related to circulation include establishing gateways and creating a strong sense of arrival.” (La Gro, 2008, p.222)

The development of new retail concepts whether, open- aired, lifestyle or town centre should respect the laws of circulation not only for onsite development, but also for existing infrastructure, surrounding the site so that connections are fluid and flow into surrounding neighbourhoods and communities by vehicle or walking.
3.8.3 Anchors

The ICSC defines an anchor store as “a major store (usually a chain store) in a shopping center having substantial economic strength and occupying a large square footage. A major department store branch in a shopping center.’ The stores and other uses that occupy the largest in a center serve as primary traffic generators. Free standing anchors excluded (ICSC, 2005). Retail anchors are one of the most misunderstood and most critical components of a competitive shopping district (Gibbs, 2012). Full-service anchors, such as department stores, can be responsible for generating up to 35 percent of the total traffic and annual sales in a shopping center or downtown (Gibbs, 2012). Anchors are vital to commercial centres and often shape the configuration of the site. Once an anchor makes a commitment, the developer can begin to set the theme, master plan, and architectural character for the centre. A merchandising and tenant-mix plan follows, and key retail tenants are approached for inclusion (Gibbs, 2012). Contrary to popular belief, shopping center anchors rarely pay the full market rate for land or rent. In reality, shopping centre developers usually offer anchor retailers either free land or deeply discounted leases (Gibbs, 2012). If the anchor pays any rent, the smaller inline retailers almost always pay more on a square-foot basis. This business model is sustainable so long as the anchor successfully pulls enough shoppers into the center to generate substantial sales for the smaller retailers and restaurants. Anchors are essential to most types of shopping centers over 30,000 square feet, and those without anchors require extraordinary conditions (Gibbs, 2012).

Recently, the need to include department stores in large shopping centers has been challenged by open-air lifestyle centers. From the beginning, lifestyle center developers
realized that they could avoid catering to the whims of major anchors by grouping together smaller highly desirable retailers; known as the “dirty dozen,” these leading stores, including apparel and home furnishing stores, target a well-educated and moderate- to high-income demographic. Without having to construct a monolithic shopping center or give the anchor major subsidies, the developer could charge lower overall rents while allowing stores to enjoy strong sales (though not as strong in a large enclosed mall) (Gibbs, 2012).

3.8.4 Parking

Parking is one of the most challenging and complex components to site planning and configuration. The parking lot is often a shopper’s first contact with a mall, and the experience of parking should be as pleasant and welcoming as possible (ULI, 2008). Components of parking design - size of parking area, driveway layout, access aisles, individual stall dimensions and arrangements, pedestrian movements from the parking area to the center, grading, paving, landscaping, and lighting - are major elements of site planning (ULI, 2008). Easy-to-use, clean, well-lit parking is essential to the sustainability of shopping districts and their individual stores (Gibbs, 2012). Nonetheless, parking should be planned with storefronts lining pedestrian-oriented streets that have convenient on-street parking (Gibbs, p. 97). Whenever possible, new shopping centers should be modeled on walkable, urban environments where retail stores are built near sidewalk edge and parking is within an easy walk (Gibbs, 2012, p. 98).
3.9 Retail Design

A multitude of physical design elements have been investigated and collected through review of literature in order to form this section. This section, 3.9 Retail Design, provides detailed insight into common and/or recurring urban design elements and features in a retail design framework.

3.9.1 Signage

Signage is an integral aspect of retail design. It allows consumers to recognize brand name retailers and enforces brand presence. A sign must be carefully designed and properly scaled to suit the image of the retail district yet respect the developer’s criteria for signage placement and scale. Each center should have well-developed criteria for tenants’ signs that regulate the type of signage allowed, mounting systems preferred, maximum scale allowed, and designate permissible locations (ULI, 2008). Approval of signs is one of the conditions typically included in a tenant’s lease. The developer’s control over style and size of signs is often more rigorous than municipal regulations (ULI, 2008).

Scale and design are inextricably linked to a centre’s image and can therefore have either positive or negative economic impacts. Too much diversity in signs, including oversized signs, lowers the expectation from a consumer’s standpoint that a commercial area offers quality goods and services, and replaces it with the assumption of low prices (Gibbs, 2012). Lifestyle and town centres often prefer to have smaller scale signage because it is perceived that smaller signs warrant an image of higher quality. This is not to denote that signage makes or breaks a center’s marketability. Signage is a crucial part of a center’s ability to promote its merchants and for the latter to thus market and sell its wares.
According to Gibbs, as a rule of thumb, each business located in a pedestrian-oriented urban setting should be limited to one square foot of signage for each linear foot of store front. For example, a 20-foot-wide store would be allowed 20 square feet of signage. Commercial signage along major corridors should be double the signage in pedestrian-oriented urban areas, which is two square feet of sign area for each linear foot of storefront.

3.9.2 Awnings

Awnings are an effective way to protect storefronts from the sun while providing pedestrians with shelter from the natural elements. They help define the first-level storefront, reinforce its brand, and, most importantly, get the business noticed. Gibbs states that awnings should be no more than 6 to 8 feet in length and have a pitch of no more than 25 degrees (p.118). Steeper awnings hide too much of the building and become billboard that distract the shopper. It is not recommended that every storefront have an awning. Such a streetscape becomes monotonous and can create a dreary sidewalk (Gibbs, 2012).

Consequently, awnings can add or detract from the business’ marketability. They can offer pedestrians a place to converge during inclement weather and can contribute to the business’ impulse sales market. In lieu of escaping inclement weather, pedestrians seek out and hide under awnings, are compelled thereby to “look around” and inside the business and are thus more prone to purchasing items they normally would not have purchased.
3.9.3 Visual Merchandising

Visual merchandising encompasses many aspects of retail design, including in store visual merchandising. It is a crucial component of the retail sales mix. Literature concerning visual merchandising abounds. For the purposes of this study, emphasis will be placed on exterior visual merchandising, that is, on the storefront and recommendations concerning storefront visual merchandising. According to Principles of Urban Retail Planning and Development, certain laws of visual merchandising have proven to be effective in drawing in customers. The visual display of a store is one of the first encounters a shopper has with the site. To this end, the visual merchandising of the storefront is crucial to attracting customers and to selling the business’ wares. Gibbs outlines in detail several important and influential rules for storefront visual merchandising, the most important of which are his guidelines in escaping fallibility wherein storefront visual merchandising is concerned. Window displays should be simple and easy to understand within a few seconds; do not attempt to load the display area with a sample of the store’s entire stock. Secondly, change window displays weekly; borrow display props from other businesses; antiques, bicycles, barbeques, wheelbarrows, etc. (p.119).

Of utmost importance is that visual merchandising of the business’ storefront must adhere to the following rule of thumb: customers will be attracted to the beautiful, to the comical and to the unusual, but they will buy that which feeds their needs. To this end, as humans love beautiful things, the store front visual merchandiser has the added concern over finding beautiful, quirky and marketable wares that will feed the needs of prospective buyers. A respectable portion of prospective buyers are impulse buyers; store front visual merchandising must adhere to the idea that the impulse to buy stems from the needs
buried within each prospective buyers and that impulse drives prospective buyers to want to buy that which fulfils their buried needs. This impulse buying impetus is fleeting and yet powerful enough to cause prospective buyers to become customers. It is for this reason that storefront visual merchandising is often regarded as the hinge upon which businesses hang that portion of their sales they normally would not have garnered.

3.9.4 Street Lighting

Street light planning should be carefully designed for night time uses. Night time attendance for a site is becoming more popular as restaurants and entertainment facilities are becoming more important and necessary for successful retail development.

The Retail Development Handbook (ULI) suggests that:

“The most important tasks of a comprehensive lighting system are to illuminate building facades and entrances; spotlight architectural features and landscaping; highlight shop windows and signage; define walkways, roadways, and parking; create illuminated images on walls and sidewalks; and ensure safety” (Kramer, 2008).

Of added importance of late in this matter is that as more and more customers come out at night, to socialize, for entertainment purposes, street lighting becomes an important component of the issue of maintaining safety as well as highlighting businesses’ wares.

3.9.5 Site Furniture

Furnishings are an important component of retail design and contribute to the mood and atmosphere within the business. To this end, furnishing will affect mood and feelings within a business’s clientele. Just as importantly, furnishings can and do impact
upon the impulse buyer, as (as stated above) beautiful things appeal to people. Furnishings are a huge part of tempting prospective buyers to enter the business, stay a while and spend some of their hard earned money. Prospective buyers love to see the unusual mixed in with the ordinary; the human eye seeks out and finds the luxurious mingling in with the humdrum. As long as the mixture of these is appealing and attractive to the eye, prospective customers will be pulled in by it.

According to Linda Cahan of Caha & Co, a store design and display consultant in West Linn, Oregon, “It is...important to avoid clutter because in retailing, space equals luxury” (Tice, 2012). Furnishings should make a fresh, lasting impression. According to Pat Johnson, co-owner of the Seattle-based consulting firm Outcalt and Johnson: Retail Strategists: “One problem in many small stores is a high rack up front that blocks views of the rest of the shop. If customers don’t like what they see on that first set of shelves, they might leave. Instead, use lower shelving units with shorter pegs and narrower shelves. This makes the store look full without having to stock too much merchandise, as well as allows customers to see farther into the shop” (Tice, 2012).

A large portion of prospective buyers are also environmentally conscious. To this end, there is an up and coming and emerging discussion on two trains of thought. Firstly, furnishings should be, where able, environmentally friendly; secondly, that furnishings include garbage receptacles and recycling bins. There is nothing more detracting to the customer then dirty, garbage filled displays, soiled furnishings and unkempt retail space. The carpeting, walls, display sectionals, as well as the tables, chairs and wall mountings of a
retail space should speak to customers’ buried needs for the beautiful, the quirky and the appealing.

3.9.6 Landscaping

In rehabilitation of an existing center, improving the landscaping may range from a simple refurbishment of existing landscaping to its total replacement. According to www.plants-in-buildings.com: “Research clearly tells us that people do respond positively to the presence of plants in buildings. Healthy, well-maintained plants in well-designed displays enhance the character and appearance of a building and improve the psychological and physical well-being of its occupants. Above all, interior landscaping has been shown to be a sound investment by reducing sickness absence, improving mental agility, increasing use of communal facilities and positively changing a person's perception of a building.”

“The outdoor landscape can be the unspoiled extension of shop interiors, providing indoor and outdoor continuity for a positive shopping experience that enthralls all our senses. Interior plants and landscaping work together synergistically to create store interiors that are more favorable for retail activity. Although much of the evidence is subjective, it is clear that most retailers believe that plants are a vital part of the selling environment and are prepared to allocate the space and resources to accommodate them” (LaDow, 2012, p 1).

3.10 Preliminary Framework: Assessment Checklist

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors influencing greyfield redevelopment</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-use</td>
<td>Calthorpe, 1993; CNU, 2000; Gehl, 1987; Kramer et. Al., 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more uses of: retail, residential, office, civic, open space, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>Calthorpe, 1993; Hester, 1975; Jacobs,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walkable district, open/civic space; pedestrian-friendly environments;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Civic Activities; Sense of Place;</td>
<td>Site should be situated in adjacent residential, office and commercial land uses; close in proximity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------
<p>| <strong>Land-use</strong>                               | Site should be close to highways and interchanges; existing public transportation, bike paths and friendly pedestrian environments. |
| <strong>Transportation Linkage</strong>                 | La Gro, 2008; Kramer et. Al., 2008                                                             |
| <strong>Retail Site Planning</strong>                   |                                                                                                 |
| <strong>Programming</strong>                            | Site meets functional requirements, adequate activities, spatial relationships between activities. |
|                                            | Site could accommodate future growth and expansion.                                             |
| <strong>Building Configuration</strong>                 | Road and pedestrian walkways are in a cluster/town centre configuration.                         |
|                                            | La Gro, 2008; Kramer et. Al., 2008                                                              |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Circulation</strong></th>
<th>Good accessibility, establishing gateways and creating strong sense of arrival through road and pedestrian networks.</th>
<th>La Gro, 2008; Kramer et. Al., 2008</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anchors</strong></td>
<td>One or more type of anchor: major retailer, 'dirty dozen' and/or other type (civic building, etc.). Anchor must be visible from major streets and highway.</td>
<td>Gibbs, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parking</strong></td>
<td>Parking should be well-lit, clean, welcoming, have on-street parking modelled around walkable, urban environments and parking built close to stores.</td>
<td>Gibbs, 2012; Kramer et. Al., 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail Design</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signage</strong></td>
<td>Scale of sign is proportionate to store frontage (1sq. Ft. of signage per linear foot). Brand image is recognizable.</td>
<td>Gibbs, 2012; Kramer et. Al., 2008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awnings</strong></td>
<td>Awnings should be attractive, while providing protection from sun and</td>
<td>Gibbs, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual Merchandising</strong></td>
<td>Storefront merchandising is simple and easy to understand. Props used in display and cross promotion.</td>
<td>Gibbs, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Site Furniture</strong></td>
<td>Adequate places to sit. Movable seats and tables. Distributed around evenly around site.</td>
<td>Francis, 1997; Whyte, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Landscaping</strong></td>
<td>Priority to indigenous species. Plantings should massed at periphery, entrances, along streets and open spaces.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.plants-in-buildings.com">www.plants-in-buildings.com</a>; LaDow, 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Open Space</strong></td>
<td>Functional open space. Programmed for activities. Green space.</td>
<td>Calthorpe, 1993; Gehl, 1987; Francis, 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lighting</strong></td>
<td>Lighting should be planned for night time uses, at entrances, walkways, parking, etc.</td>
<td>ULI, 2008</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Four | Study Site Analysis

4.0 Introduction

Chapter four first introduces the Shops at Don Mills study site, briefly describing SDM’s history, redevelopment efforts and outlines its current status. The developed framework is then applied to the site and to the recommendations made, testing their validity. Finally, the researcher’s recommendations and suggestions are given. The latter part of this chapter will look at site observations and activity mapping conducted by the researcher during four separate visits to SDM. These visits allowed the researcher to gather information and analyze how the space is being utilized by its visitors to further verify what was learned in the literature review and make revisions to the framework which will be presented in Chapter Six.

![Study Site Context Map](image)

**Figure 9:** Study Site Context Map (Adapted from Google Earth)
4.1 Study Site Introduction

Shops at Don Mills formerly, The Don Mills Shopping Centre, was originally built in 1955 as a strip mall in Canada’s first planned community. It is located in North York, Ontario, a first-ring suburb north of downtown Toronto. It had undergone continual renovations and improvements throughout the years to meet the demand of a growing community. In 1978, a major renovation was undertaken to enclose the mall. The mall was expanded from 37 000 to 43 000 sq. m (400 000 to 462 000 sq. ft.), with the number of tenants growing to 120 (McKay, 2007). Further renovations to the mall occurred in the late 1990s to stem the decline of sales due to the expansion of the nearby Fairview Mall and the recession in the mid-1990s (McKay, 2007). Don Mills Shopping Centre eventually became a greyfield and plans for redevelopment began in 2001. In 2008, this former greyfield was redeveloped into what is known today as Shops at Don Mills (SDM).

The Cadillac Fairview Corporation Limited, owners of Don Mills Centre, submitted applications for the redevelopment of the mall in 2001 (McKay, 2007). The original proposal included internal and external renovations of the enclosed mall and expansion of retail, service and entertainment space to 47 550 sq m (512 000 sq ft) (McKay, 2007). The proposal was later modified to accommodate an open- aired retail concept with mixed-use development. This revision aimed to incorporate a street system through the site, open concept retail and a central civic space. Cadillac Fairview proceeded to obtain approval only for the non-residential component in 2006 as a first phase of development (McKay, 2007). The process of redevelopment for the site will undergo two phases with the first phase already completed in August 2008. Phase two was scheduled for completion in 2013 which will include the residential component ranging from 8 to 20 stories.
The community at large has played a vital role during the redevelopment of the SDM. The enclosed shopping centre once served the needs of the community by providing a place where residents were able to shop, socialize and remain close to various amenities without having to travel long distances. The community is largely comprised of senior citizens, who viewed the closure of Don Mills Centre as negative because of its function to the community. When redevelopment plans commenced, the community had expressed concerns over the type of development proposed. The loss of the enclosed mall was seen as having a negative impact because the community relied on it as both a place of congregation and shopping. It is assumed that the proposed open-air retail concept was hard to grasp for the community since this design concept was the first of its kind in Canada. There was a tremendous opposition by area residents to increasing the height limit for residential buildings on the site. The current height limit is eight stories, despite the existence of a fourteen storey office tower on the site (McKay, 2007).

4.2 Framework Application

The framework is a set of guidelines and principles that guide future development of greyfield sites. The strength of the framework, as well as its versatility, will in turn determine the success of the development of said greyfield sites. Priorities to planning and design are based on factors influencing greyfield development, retail planning and urban design.

Figure 10: Framework Concept Analysis
Shops At Don Mills, The study site, was selected based on the following criteria:

A. Don Mills Centre was an enclosed shopping centre that became commercially unviable due to loss of anchor which resulted in high vacancies and a growing competition and pressure from nearby regional shopping centre.

B. Don Mills Centre was a community shopping centre with 250,000 to 350,000 GLA.

C. Don Mills Centre was a site that had a strong connection within the community; a place of shopping, congregation, recreation and leisure. The site is situated in a first-ring suburb along arterial roads that is easily accessible and visible, and good public transportation is available. The site is located in a mature suburb with existing residential and commercial land uses.

4.2.1 Factors Influencing Greyfield Development

The following guidelines determine the context in which a greyfield site should be considered at a macro level and therefore be considered for redevelopment.

1. **Mixed-used development:** SDM is located in a first ring suburb that was redeveloped to accommodate several uses. The core area is characterized primarily by retail and office used space. There are no residential uses above the retail component however, development of residential towers are currently under construction on the periphery of the site. Mixed uses will determine how the site is being used and the type of economic and social activities it can support.

2. **Community Development:** The site is characterized as a walkable district which that supports a pedestrian friendly environment. Residents from the neighborhood
are able to walk to the site and conduct daily errands since several amenities are available to them with which to do so. There is a strong sense of SDM acting in the role of community place that is reinforced with civic/open space which that encourages social and civic activity.

3. **Land Use:** Adjacent land uses surrounding SDM are characterized by residential towers approximately six stories in height along with some retail uses. The SDM’s close proximity to residential areas helps contribute to pedestrian traffic and residents from neighboring areas can utilize the site for day to day shopping and in taking part in social activities. An economically viable community shopping centre cannot be supported solely by the residents of the community thus SDM relies on visitors traveling to the site from other communities. However, being situated in an area which is surrounded by residential uses is critical to the success of SDM.

4. **Transportation:** SDM is located at the intersection of two major arterial roads: Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue East. The Don Valley Parkway, a major highway that runs north and south is located nine hundred metres east from SDM, on Lawrence Avenue. There are two major bus routes that travel on Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue that terminate at major and well-used subway stations. Currently there are no designated bicycle paths on the site or on major roads surrounding the development. SDM is a pedestrian oriented site that is characterized by safe and efficient connections to existing municipal infrastructure and adjacent land uses.
Figure 11: Land Use Map

Figure 11 above illustrates on-site and surrounding land uses.
4.2.2 Retail Site Planning

Site planning is essential in building successful developments and in establishing the physical characteristics of a site, both of which are essential to the site’s viability.

1. **Programming:** SDM is programmed to support several activities that reinforce each other. Besides shopping, the site supports social, civic and cultural activities. The buildings, open space and pedestrian systems promote sustainable programming and work together as one unit. Currently, the site is scheduled to incorporate on site residential uses and is capable of future expansion and growth.

2. **Building Configuration:** The built-form supports the landscape, streetscape and buildings that are arranged in the form of a cluster. This type of massing supports the overall programming of the site that enhances the framework of the streets, squares and open spaces.

3. **Circulation:** The site has a clear and legible sense of arrival through an established gateway. There are several entrances into the site accessible by municipal roads and pedestrian walkways further enhance good circulation. The interior street system supports both vehicles and pedestrians. Figure 12 highlights vehicular and pedestrian infrastructure.

4. **Anchors:** The SDM site supports a major supermarket that is situated on Don Mills Road, located at the main entrance of the site. The supermarket is the site’s anchor and is the tenant with the largest GLA. There is also a skating arena located on the south side of the site that is considered a contributing anchor.

5. **Parking:** There is ample parking located at the periphery of the site, on-street parallel parking and also a four story parking structure. At first glance, the site is not dominated by
excessive parking surface. On-street parallel parking further defines a walkable urban environment and shoppers are able to park close to the stores of their choice. Overall, all parking lots are well lit, landscaped and neatly maintained.

**Figure 12**: Circulation Map SDM
4.2.3 Retail Design

The following section will examine physical elements of urban design in a retail setting. As empirical findings suggest, such elements should always be incorporated when designing lifestyle/open-air retail formats.

1. **Signage**: Store signs are proportional to store frontage and brand image is well recognizable. Store signs in the front of the centre are larger in size as they are meant to be legible from larger distances. Street name and way finding signs are present throughout the site to reinforce the retail experience.

2. **Awnings**: As a protective measure from natural elements, several continuous awnings line store fronts. These awnings are built into the facades rather than more traditional awnings made from fabric. Figure 12 illustrates the awning schedule. An adequate use of this design feature is presented to provide comfort and protection.

![Figure 13: Awning Schedule](image-url)
3. **Visual Merchandising:** Overall the store windows were simple and clean with adequate uses of props. None of the store windows were over stylized or congested with products. Store windows were well lighted at night featuring products that were available for that given season.

4. **Site furniture:** During summer months, there was plenty of movable seating with tables that were highly utilized by visitors. This type of seating was situated around the designated lawn space complementing the surrounding restaurants and cafes. There are benches evenly distributed around the site; these are permanent fixtures. Site furniture is contemporary, reflecting the overall character of the centre.

5. **Open Space:** The open space at SDM is characterized by active and passive areas. The central feature of the open space is the designated lawn area. The lawn area is converted into a skating rink in the winter months that aims to take advantage of all seasons. Also present is a water feature in close proximity to the open space that is very popular among visitors and contributes to the overall experience of SDM.

6. **Landscaping:** There is an array of indigenous species: trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and perennials. The site is well planted; periphery and entrances are thoroughly lined with trees, the interior has been planted to complement streets, street corners and open spaces. There are several planters situated at corners and access points, softening the site with touches of colour, texture and scents.

7. **Lighting:** Streets are well lit at night, which create a heightened and unique feel to the “urban experience”. Adequate lighting provides safety and security for night visitors. During holiday seasons trees are wrapped with lights to enhance a festive ambiance throughout the streetscape and the public square.
4.3 Site Observations and Activity Mapping

Site observation and activity mapping is an effective method in collecting user data. The researcher was able to observe how the site was being used and how people interact with the space. The study site at Shops at Don Mills in Toronto, Canada was redeveloped as an open-air shopping centre with new urbanist design characteristics entrenched within the site. The area of research (retail component) was the first phase of redevelopment in the proposed two-phase plan. This area includes open space, street systems and pedestrian walkways. Activity mapping was conducted in the retail core of the site. Currently, the areas surrounding the retail component are being redeveloped for residential uses.

4.4 Data Collection

As suggested by Cooper Marcus and Francis, site visits should be conducted at least four times and at different hours of the day and special features of the study site should be highlighted. A detailed account of sex, age, type of activity, time and location was documented by the researcher during these said visits. Each visit lasted approximately forty-five minutes to an hour. Two site visits were conducted during the winter season; the other two visits took place during spring and summer. Site visits were also conducted at different times of the day and evening to observe which areas and features were being best utilized at differing times.

During each period of every site visit, the study area was patrolled by walking through it and recording the activity of the visitors. Each visit warranted a separate sketch plan with a detailed account of activity.
4.5 Results and Discussion

As previously stated, the researcher attended Shops At Don Mills on several occasions and at different times in the day as well as in the seasons. Figure 11 illustrates the particulars of visit one, which took place on Wednesday May 11, 2011.

4.5.1 Site Visit One

This first of four site visits was conducted on Wednesday, May 11, 2012 between 12:00pm – 12:45pm. The temperature made for a pleasant day. There was a considerable amount of visitors in the retail area. Many people were milling about in different directions, walking in and out of stores, crossing the streets and looking at shop windows. The area most occupied was the central square of the complex that is characterized by a lawn area in the shape of an oval. This open space is the centrepiece of the site and it is surrounded by cafés and restaurants. There are several benches and movable seating with tables scattered around the area. As the weather was pleasant, people seemed to be enjoying themselves. Younger children were accompanied by adults; presumably by their parents or grandparents. Some children were running and playing in the designated lawn area while their caregivers were engaging in conversation with other adults. The patios that border the lawn area had several people sitting upon them, enjoying a meal, coffee or ice cream. Another important part of this area is the water feature where a group of people were standing around. One child was walking in the water feature as his caregivers were engaged in conversation.

Two other areas that were highly populated were the patios of the Jack Astor’s restaurant and Starbucks café situated on the eastern edge of the site. In these areas, the
activity was common of what one would expect on the patio of a restaurant or cafe. Customers were sitting in groups of two or more; laughing or engaged in conversation enjoying a meal or a beverage.

Other notable observations of activity taking place were on or around street corners. People were crossing at street corners or, looking where to go next, sitting on benches or having conversation. There were several visitors walking through the covered walkways which connect the site with the adjacent parking lots or structures.

Lastly, the supermarket entrance had customers entering and exiting the building while two customers were standing outside conversing. Overall the site was adequately populated with visitors holding shopping bags or walking to other locations. There were several customers inside the stores as well. The overall impression of this visit concludes that there was high social activity around the open spaces and restaurants and considerable shopping activity in the stores themselves.
Figure 14: Activity Map One, Visit One
4.5.2 Site Visit Two

This site visit was conducted on Thursday, June 16, 2012 between 6:00pm – 7:00pm. The temperature was warm and made for a lovely night on the patio. The site appeared to be very busy with visitors and customers alike. The designated lawn area with surrounding restaurants and cafés were densely populated. There was a considerable amount of families located in the centre and children appeared to be enjoying the lawn area. The water feature was quite popular as well as two women were standing in front and having a conversation while a mother with her two children were sitting on the bench close to the feature. Several of the patios abutting the storefronts were occupied with customers either having a meal or coffee depending on the type of establishment they were visiting. On the south-end street corners, adjacent to the lawn area are popular restaurants, one of which is Joey’s Bar. Customers appeared to be either waiting for more company or having conversation while others appeared to be entering the restaurants.

Street corners were busy with activity as well; people crossing intersections, discussions or conversations taking place, and social activity at its height. A considerable amount of people watching was taking place; this was made easier by that several benches were scattered throughout the site. During this visit, more people seemed to be conversing outside of boutiques and on one occasion a job interview was being conducted on one of the benches.

Figure 14 illustrates the particulars of visit two, which took place on Thursday June 16, 2011 at the dinner time hour of 6pm to 6:30 pm.
Starbucks Café and Jack Astor’s restaurant were highly occupied on this visit, with customers who were sitting on the patios, laughing, eating and socializing. Many people were either entering or exiting the two establishments. A significant amount of people were entering and exiting the site using the covered walkways. These walkways are important physical features that connect the parking lots and structures to the retail areas.

As on the previous visit, this site observation concluded with similar findings. The designated lawn area was densely populated with visitors enjoying the open spaces provided. Many people were standing, sitting and conversing among friends and family. This visit had more people walking and generally there was more pedestrian activity. The restaurants appeared busy with many customers occupying the seats indoors and outdoors. Generally there was more activity on the street corners and more customers were shopping, dining and socializing. As this visit took place in the summer months, this
heightened activity was expected.

Figure 15: Activity Map Two, Visit Two
4.5.3 Site Visit Three

This third of four site visits was conducted on Wednesday, January 25, 2012 between 4:00pm – 4:45pm. The temperature during this visit was just below 0°C and the day was a cloudy one. The designated lawn area is transformed into a skating rink during the winter months. Even in colder temperatures, this area was most populated with visitors and customers. Children were skating and parents were standing at the edge of the rink encouraging their children. Many were sitting on benches and chairs having coffee and conversing. It was observed that three elderly men standing in front of the café were having a friendly argument about municipal politics.

Generally speaking, the site had fewer visitors during this visit for obvious reasons. The weather was cold, the temperature was not conducive to out of doors socializing as it was during the summer visit. However, there was a significant amount of people in the retail shops and also customers walking with shopping bags.
Figure 16: Activity Map One, Visit Three
4.5.4 Site Visit Four

Conducted on Saturday, January 21, 2012 between 8:00pm – 8:45pm, this site visit was conducted on a weekend. The temperature was -2°C and although cold, there was little wind. The site appeared to have considerable activity especially with pedestrians walking to their destinations - many seemed to be on the go, although that would be a given, considering the coldness of the day. There were more people skating on the rink as it is a destination for recreational skating within the community during the winter months. There were few people sitting and standing drinking coffee. More people were on foot walking and talking, more properly to keep warm then for any other reason. The restaurant entrances were areas of higher occupation: people smoking cigarettes, some were engaged in conversation while others were waiting for their friends to arrive. The restaurants also appeared to have a high occupancy inside as many were dining and having drinks. There were also some last minute shoppers entering and exiting the supermarket.

SDM is capable of sustaining itself during the winter months. Although attendance is lower during winter, the areas that seem to attract visitors are the open spaces and restaurants. To a lesser degree, the retail stores, although this did not include the holiday season. The site works as a cohesive unit which promotes retail activity and contributes to social and civic function. All accesses into the site (connecting street to parking to retail) are well distributed and utilized. The storefront parking appears to be first choice for visitors as most spaces were occupied and allow for faster shopping and destination arrival.
Generally speaking, SDM has a typical urban atmosphere; a walkable district with a variety of retail options and amenities. The site is still under construction as Cadillac Fairview is currently working to add its residential units on the periphery, adjacent to the retail area. It might be beneficial to observe at a later time how the residential areas will complement and contribute to the vibrancy of the site once the projects are completed.
Figure 17: Activity Map Four, Visit Four
4.6 Conclusion

Chapter Four presented an analysis of the framework for applying the guidelines and principles of mixed-use/community development, retail site planning and urban design to a former greyfield site. The framework application that was conducted in section 4.2 evaluated the selected site of SDM based on the three selected guidelines and principles. Following the framework application, section 4.3 examined site observations and activity mapping that was conducted for analysis to gain additional pertinent information.

In Chapter Five, the researcher will conduct key informant interviews with professionals who have worked on greyfield projects and obtain further information regarding these.
Chapter Five | Key Informant Interviews

5.0 Introduction

The interviews for this study were conducted over a one-week period in early March of 2013. Three key informants were interviewed based on their professional experience in greyfield redevelopments and infill projects. The interviews have been arranged in chronological order from the time they were first conducted. All key informants' names and affiliates will be kept confidential in this research.

5.1 Key Informant Interview Results

The interviews were transcribed in point form notes by the researcher. They were replayed twice from an audio device in which the interviews were recorded. The following is a synopsis of information garnered from the interviews.

5.1.1 Interview One

The respondent in interview one identified specific challenges that retailers and shopping malls are currently faced with, stating that there is a demand for new retailers to expand into new locations. However, currently there is not enough capital to build new shopping centres. Retailers are now seeking to establish themselves in urban locations but do not have the right know-how to do so.

When asked to elaborate on some important principles used when entering urban environments, the respondent stated that retailers like to establish themselves in cities that are well managed and well led. These cities have strict codes about the quality of what is built there. Retailers also like to be in places that have other retailers in close proximity because they do not like to operate alone.
Asked by the researcher as to why alternative retail formats such as lifestyle/open-aired centres have gained momentum in the last twenty years, the responded stated that such formats offer lower rents (two thirds lower) and they allow for quicker shopping.

The respondent was then asked whether consumers are shopping differently and whether they have different expectation when visiting a shopping centre. The respondent stated that people are much more value conscience and more time stressed today. The interviewee also mentioned that the overall duration of a shopping trip has been reduced to about 30 minutes versus two hours. Consumers are much more brand focused and not willing to experiment with new brands. Shopping today is perceived as a chore, and it is something that must get done as quickly as possible.

An ancillary question asked was: how have mixed-use developments influenced shopping centre formats and whether this method of development is proving to be more sustainable. The respondent stated that mixed used is making the shopping centres more sustainable. By bringing in various uses such as civic, this helps bring people into the development on a regular basis. Residential and office help support additional commerce. The respondent was quick to point out that there is a mystic perception that a centre is supported purely from the people who live there – but that is a myth and not the reality of the situation.

Upon being asked about specific related issues to mixed-use development, the respondent mentioned that residential is 20-25 percent more expensive to build than single-use, and generally you do not recoup that back with higher revenue.
In answer to whether new Urbanist approaches to retail development are more sustainable, the respondent answered, generally yes. The respondent did not expand upon this answer.

Design factors play a role in designing sites and in effecting profitability. As so, the researcher asked interviewee one whether there are design factors that cannot be compromised when designing such sites. Interviewee one stated unequivocally that the guiding principles are: you need a good site, the right location, high design standards, good architecture, good planning and you have to have good building design. He added that this is not as easy as it sounds.

Certain anchors work more profitably then others. Working within this framework, the researcher asked the interviewee whether the restaurant tenancy was an important factor to the tenant mix. The respondent stated that people are dining out a lot more, so yes they are more important than they used to be. In addition, he then added that, they’re [restaurants] generally overrated, they are tough business deals. They’re expensive to start and they don’t contribute to retail sales.

The researcher probed with an additional question to follow up on this response. If restaurants can attract people after retail hours, is this not a good thing? The respondent replied that yes it is a good thing but still, it does not do much for retail sales.

Parking is a key element of the retail experience. Too often, prospective customers will drive away from a retailer or a centre because parking was congested or too far away from the desired retailer. When asked about parking and its importance, the respondent mentioned that parking is key element of the retail experience. How much parking is
needed depends on the size of the centre and centre type. In regional centres, people are willing to park further because they will be spending more time there.

In varied cases, retail development can well reinforce community development. When the respondent was asked if retail development could reinforce community development, he stated that it is critical and that retail is essential to sustainable housing and employment. Furthermore, the respondent stated that there should always be some sort of public realm to every retail development.

The respondent was asked about methods used to involve the community in the planning process. He stated that involving the community depends on the site and project. The charette process is often conducted in private so that competitors are not aware of what is proposed. Once the plan is finalized the developer is ready to go public.

Asked about typical concerns from communities when projects are proposed, the respondent stated that opposition to height of buildings, traffic and density, are among most common concerns. In the case of lifestyle centres, they are generally opposed to by higher income earning communities and more welcomed by lower earning communities. To this end, the respondent was asked whether anchoring a retail site is crucial in creating an economically viable site. His response was adamant, he stated: almost always. Anchors are necessary because they are capable of attracting 30-50 per cent of visitors to a site.

More often, non-traditional anchors pop up in the case of mixed use developments. When asked if non-traditional anchors such as a city hall or library make a strong anchor, the respondent stated that such anchors are contributors - not substitutes.
To conclude the interview the respondent was asked if lifestyle/open-air developments will gain momentum in the future, to which he responded that future growth will occur in lower income communities.

5.1.2 Interview Two

In this interview, several of the same questions were asked of the second interviewee as they were asked to the first interviewee. Ancillary and corresponding questions were put to the interviewee in response to his comments.

The respondent was asked, “What are some of the challenges and obstacles that the shopping centre is facing?” He was quick to point out that currently, in Canada, there is a continued influx of American retailers that enables developers to redevelop. Moreover, the industry is trying to create new retail platforms. Other significant changes are the desire to build better looking sites; municipalities, rate-payers and consumers are asking for better planned, configured facilities. The respondent added that good design does not have to be expensive, but, landscaping, street furniture and public amenities, which are necessary, all have a cost associated to them. The respondent added that there is a downward pressure for retailers to pay additional rent because more and more so much of their business comes from online sales. So, there is a conflict brewing in that developers are required to spend more money but they don’t get higher rents to offset their investment.

Asked about mixed-use development in retail development, the respondent stated that it depends where the site is located. Mixed-use development is a game changer but it relies on transit and walking. The respondent further stated that it works better in urban environments and value is higher in urban areas so it makes logical sense.
When asked if new Urbanist approaches are more sustainable, the response was that it really depends. This approach does not make a difference for convenience centres although it does make a difference to open concepts and newer retail formats with specialty stores.

In certain situations, design factors can be compromised when developing a site. The interviewee agreed with this assertion, stating that centres must have good signage and accessibility because if not, it is very frustrating to the customer. There is ample opportunity to improve signage and circulation.

Traditionally, anchor stores like The Bay and anchor restaurants like Jack Astor’s were critical to the profitability of a mixed use development. The interviewee agreed with this premise, adding that restaurants more so than brand name stores create a more vibrant site because they stay open later well after the retail shops are closed thus, bringing continued activity to the site. Restaurants are very capital intensive and they are often required to pay a percentage rent that is based in sales per square foot. The respondent stated in addition that when another restaurant opens on site, the other restaurants tend to do better in overall sales.

The question regarding parking and its importance was put to interviewee two. He outlined a reminder that customers don’t like to pay for parking and that parking should not dominate the site. If permitted, multi-story parking lots should be incorporated into the design; it can alleviate the demand for parking. There are many factors involved in parking lot design; certain tenants will not sign a lease if parking in front of the centre is missing so, parking design is very driven by the retailer.
A supplementary question was put to interviewee two at this stage. The respondent was asked if such developments can help reinforce community development. The respondent stated that these developments can and in fact do reinforce community development. Shopping malls of any format act as “de facto” community centres; a place of congregation, places where seniors meet. If a site is located by adjacent residential land uses, a shopping centre is useful to such communities especially if there are elderly or people with disabilities who can conduct day to day errands within these mixed use developments.

When asked about community involvement and its importance, the respondent stated that it is important that the community is involved. The province of Ontario has a public planning process. Often there is strong opposition to new developments within communities however, the landlord has an adherent right to develop land as long as they are within planning guidelines. The respondent continued to state that often, strong opposition by the community can delay projects for many years. Residents of a community almost always dislike the following issues: height, traffic, noise and congestion.

Supplementing the earlier question on anchors, the researcher asked the interviewee whether anchoring a retail site is crucial to its success. The respondent answered, absolutely: you can anchor a site with a major retailer or you can have a cluster of smaller, solid retailers. Also, a group of restaurants can act as an anchor. The respondent continued to state that developments that have banks, supermarkets and dry cleaners within them ensure constant customer and client traffic as clients and customers will make multiple trips to the site on a weekly basis. It should be the goal of such developments. A
unique and diverse retail mix is the aim, so that customers continue to return to the site for multiple reasons. Libraries and city halls are good anchors as well because they are civic buildings. However they cannot attract as many visitors as major retailers do.

A response gathered by the researcher in interview one was that open air retail formats worked better in lower income earning neighbourhoods. This question was put to interviewee two. The question asked was whether open-air retail formats would work in lower income earning neighbourhoods. The respondent felt that it would be difficult to gage an answer to this question. Land is expensive and a developer has to charge rent; a retailer will pay only if they can get it back in sales. If they thought they could achieve their sales targets, then maybe. In a lower income neighborhood, that might be difficult.

The respondent was asked if there were any examples of failures for such developments. He stated that centres which fail can happen for many reasons. Poorly merchandised retailers, too many restaurants, not enough retail mix, bad layout and connections into the site all can cause a centre to decline.

When asked if these types of developments can satisfy the goals of the developers, municipalities and communities, the respondent felt that it is possible to do so. These types of developments can satisfy different goals; the developer needs to make a return especially if they are working for a pension fund. Municipalities can achieve places for congregation and places that are safe and service neighborhoods.
5.1.3 Interview Three

The last of three interviews was left for last as the interviewee has decades worth experience in the retail industry. The researcher was and is of the opinion that his knowledge, expertise and advice are invaluable.

The respondent was asked about some of the challenges and obstacles the shopping centre industry is facing. The respondent stated that many retailers are trying to establish themselves in urban areas that have their own set of challenges. Often retailers need to compromise their floor plans and overall set up of merchandise. Urban commercial spaces tend to be less square footage and multi-level, which pose problems for the retailer. The informant also mentioned that Canada is becoming a desirable market for American retailers. Such changes in the retail landscape has outcompeted Canadian retailers and now they are far less prominent in the retail mix.

When asked why lifestyle centres have gained momentum in the last twenty years, the respondent stated that regional malls are not being built anymore and that a public realm in a retail environment is becoming more desirable.

A trend gathered from the responses of the first two interviewees is that they noticed that customers are shopping differently. The researcher put this question to the interviewee who stated that people are shopping differently and, in turn, people have different expectations when visiting a retail space. Place making is becoming more important. Customer service is better than it ever has been and retailers are taking a community approach when marketing themselves to consumers.
The respondent was asked about mixed-use development and how it is changing the retail landscape. He stated that not every lifestyle centre is successful; they are very complicated to design. When incorporating mixed uses, residents often feel that they have control over everything to do with the development of the centre. Sharing parking is an issue as well so incorporating several uses has its own set of challenges. The respondent went on to say that it is difficult to beat a traditional shopping centre; most planners don't like traditional shopping centres.

Interested in the interviewee's opinion of urbanist approaches to retail development and whether they are more sustainable, the researcher put the question to the interviewee, who responded that such approaches are relatively new to Canada. Developers are beginning to see the value in them however time will tell if they are sustainable.

The respondent was asked: what are some major design factors that cannot be compromised when designing such sites? In his opinion, the pedestrian realm and amenities are crucial factors that cannot be compromised.

When asked about the importance of restaurants/entertainment tenancy to a specific site, the respondent stated that that it is a very important aspect of mix use development. For lifestyle/open-air centres they are important because they continue to attract visitors to the site after hours. However fashion stores are more desirable since they generate more sales. Nonetheless, restaurants are necessary in the overall mix.

Parking is often designed according to pre-leased tenants the responded mentioned as an aside. Some retailers want to be close to the parking lot or right in front of it. Parking
garages are very important in the final design because you are able to build more buildings later on if necessary, for expansion.

Upon being asked if retail development can reinforce community development the respondent stated yes. The informant was then asked if he felt that civic spaces should be the goal of every redevelopment project, and he assented that it was, as long as they are not forced.

The respondent was then asked about methods involving the public and public inquiry into future developments, to which he responded that public meeting are most common. The public is often very opposed to redevelopment projects. Citizens are not retail focused - residents almost always oppose density and height.

In being asked the question of whether an anchor is important to the success of a site, the respondent stated that anchors are very important to the success of a site because they are able to attract a large amount of people. When asked if non-traditional anchors such as libraries or city halls are strong anchors, the respondent stated that they are good to have for the overall mix but they cannot attract as many visitors as a large department store.

Questions concerning lifestyle/open-air centres followed. The respondent was asked if he/ felt that lifestyle/open-air centres cater to a higher income market. His answer was: generally yes. When asked if this model of success could work in lower income neighborhoods the respondent stated that it is possible but location is very important. So too is important whether the centre can secure the right tenants.
Some lifestyle centres fail. It is par for course in the development of these types of centres. The query was put to the interviewee, “Why do some lifestyles centres fail after they have been built?” He argued that this occurs because there is not enough critical mass, not enough retailers and/or too many retailers that should not have been there in the first place.

The respondent was asked if lifestyle/open air centres will gain momentum in the future, and he responded that if they are designed and managed properly, they will become more popular. They might also become more common because enclosed shopping centres are not being built anymore. When asked if such types of developments can satisfy the goals of the developers, municipalities and communities, the respondent stated that they are supposed to and that is the overall goal.

5.2 Results and Discussions

This section will analyze interview findings. The interviews were structured so that the researcher could understand certain trends within and currently being faced by the retail development industry. The results of these interviews will then be compared and verified to the findings from the literature review.

Five topics were referred to and acknowledged in the interviews and will be discussed in order of importance. The interview guide can be viewed in Appendix C that outlines the structure of the interview and the topics covered. Although most of the literature covered stems primarily from an American perspective, two of the respondents were able to provide valuable information pertaining to the Canadian retail industry. Both Respondent
Two and Respondent Three have over thirty years of experience in the Canadian retail industry, working as planners or architects.

Discussion Topic One: Contemporary retail development and future trends

Common responses from two of the interviewees are that more American retailers are establishing themselves in the Canadian market. Canada has become a very desirable market for American retailers, which also creates opportunities for developers to build newer more modern retail formats. Since the construction market has slowed down for regional malls, lifestyle/open-air formats are often considered for new development. This is confirmed in (Newman 1996) and (Kramer et. al, 2008).

Respondent two stated that there is a pressure for developers to build more comprehensive retail sites that are more design focused however, they are very costly and such costs should be retrieved in (projected) revenue. Furthermore, the same respondent stated that good design does not have to be expensive which can imply that there is more room for design exploration of such sites.

All respondents agreed that consumer habits have changed and that consumers are more brand focused. Customers are taking fewer chances when buying (particularly big ticket items) and will continue to purchase products they are familiar with and from brands they trust.

Respondent one stated that overall the shopping trip experience has been shortened so lifestyle centres can fill the need for that quick shopping trip. For example, having parking in front of stores can allow a customer to minimize the duration of their trip. In addition, life is fast paced and responsibilities are many. People have less disposable time
in order to window shop or dedicate a day to shopping. As so, shopping centres have evolved into lifestyle ones, in which shopping and other daily tasks and routines can be fulfilled.

**Discussion Topic Two: Retail design**

Currently, the industry is seeing more mixed-use developments being built, which appears to be a recurring trend. The general consensus is that mixed-use development is more sustainable and usually more favourable when building centres that are built to last. All literature reviewed confirmed the benefits of mixed-use development is more sustainable and the obvious right choice. Although mixed use is often the goal of most developers, municipalities and communities, it is often very complex to achieve and the inherent costs must be considered. The literature that was reviewed did not thoroughly discuss the issues or implications regarding mixed-use development. The information obtained through the interviews clarified the issues related to such development.

Another pressing issue is zoning and municipal approvals for commercial zones. Often, sites are scheduled for commercial uses and rezoning for other uses could lengthen the time wait for municipal approval. Sometimes, projects need to move quickly and municipalities do not respond as fast as is expected or required. One respondent stated that municipalities need to begin working more efficiently when issuing approvals.

An additional and other issue that occurs with mixed-use developments is that residents often feel they have the right of way when residing on such sites. One respondent stated that sharing parking and elevators brings its own set of challenges.
Overall, the general reaction towards mixed-use development is that it is an acceptable and desirable approach to retail development. For the reasons discussed above, it is often difficult to achieve because of feasibility, zoning and on site discrepancies between commercial and residential users who share the facilities. It is assumed that every situation is unique and if the site can support this type of development, then all parties typically aspire to build such sites as they are often more sustainable than single use development.

Common to all respondents, it is generally agreed that retail sites should incorporate open space and be situated along public transportation routes. Having a public realm to a site is important and having such amenities helps reinforce sustainable practices to retail and community development. However, respondent two stated that for smaller sites such as convenience and neighborhood centres, open space is not all that important. Such centres generally cater to quick shopping where customers are often going to the dry cleaners, convenience stores and so forth. It is therefore assumed that open space or transit systems will not contribute to the overall success of such centres since they are meant for quick shopping and not as a destination.

Upon discussing design principles, the respondents' answers differed slightly; however, the overall notion is that good design is imperative. Elements of good design, location, high design standards, planning, architecture, signage, accessibility, a pedestrian realm and amenities are all crucial in designing successful sites. This coincides with readings from Kramer et. al, (2008), Gibbs (2012), Calthorpe (1993), and La Gro (2008).
There are many design elements involved in designing lifestyle/open-air centres; each situation is unique and complex, and every detail should be examined with care.

Regarding restaurant/entertainment tenancy, the view of Respondent one differed much from Respondent two and three. The first respondent felt that restaurants were not vital to a site even though the current trend suggests that people are eating out more. He felt that they are capital intensive and that they do not generate enough revenue. In his view, most restaurant tenants must pay what is called ‘percentage rent’ which is calculated by the amount of square footage of a space. This is an additional rent based on sales and square footage. Since profit margins are lower in the food industry, the pay out to the developer is much less than that proffered by apparel businesses.

The other two respondents felt rather differently about restaurant tenancy and that they are important to a site. Often, a cluster of restaurants can act as an anchor. It was stated that when another restaurant opens, sales tend to increase – as the trend is that restaurants tend to reinforce each other. Furthermore, restaurants add to the retail mix and more importantly, they can attract visitors to a site after hours. This inherently creates more vibrancy to the development and contributes to fostering the social element that many may view as an important feature in building sustainable developments. It can be assumed that the opposing views might be cultural differences between American and Canadian perspectives. However, such cultural discrepancies would require further investigation.

All respondents agreed that parking is crucial to a site and that there are many factors involved in the final design. Pre-leased tenants often will dictate the overall plan
because some retailers will not sign a lease if they do not abut or are not in close proximity to a parking lot. These specifications were not addressed in the literature review and the responses from the informants provided more insight to the issue. Another important feature is parking structures because the existence of this type of structure is able to provide more spaces for automobiles and allow for more surfaces at grade to be developed. Even though they are expensive to build, it is possible for the developer to achieve a return if the developer decides to build more commercial space at a later time. Parking structures allow for better flexibility if a site needs to be reconfigured at a later date.

**Topic 3: Community Development**

In pursuit of building new developments, community involvement during the planning process is often conducted in the form of town meetings involving the developer, the municipality and members of the community. All respondents felt that there is usually a strong opposition towards new development projects. Typical concerns that arise from the community are density, height, traffic and congestion. Although involving the community is important in terms of transparency, all respondents expressed that strong opposition can cause timely and costly delays in the project. Respondent two stated that once projects are completed, the community is satisfied with the final product, when all is said and done. Overall, the respondents agreed that if the developer abides by zoning regulations, it is their inherent right to develop the site and that community involvement should be limited.

Respondent one stated that the development of lifestyle centres often face strong opposition from higher income earning communities and are more accepted from members of middle earning communities. It is assumed that middle earning communities view these
developments as positive places for public space, employment and an increase of tax base. Further growth can be assumed in these types of communities for the development of open-air/lifestyle centres. Furthermore, Respondent one stated that a retail component is imperative to sustainable employment and housing to a community and that middle earning communities could benefit from such centres.

**Topic 4: Limitations**

One of the most crucial planning elements to shopping centre design is the presence of an anchor tenant. As mentioned in chapter three, an anchor tenant is a major contributor that generates high revenue, typically occupies highest GLA and attracts many visitors to a centre. It was noted that many centres have failed due to an absence of an anchor tenant and it is difficult to pre-lease to other retailers if one is not present. This is confirmed in (Gibbs, 2012). Some centres are also anchored with non-traditional anchors such as libraries, community and civic centres. Although they are considered great contributors, they cannot attract high volumes of visitors as do major retailers. The Canadian respondents mentioned that a group of restaurants, bars and cafés can form a successful anchor and that they are beneficial because they contribute to after-hours visitation, keeping a centre vibrant and social. However, it was stated that too many restaurants can over saturate the centre therefore having detrimental effects while affecting the overall quality and image of a site.

When asked if open-air/lifestyle centres can achieve success in lower income earning neighborhoods, the responses differed from the informant. As mentioned in the previous section, it is expected that these types of format will be developed in lower income neighbourhoods as they are desired in such communities. However, Respondent
two stated that it might be difficult because land is expensive and if a developer cannot generate revenue based on rent then, securing a retailer in such communities might be a challenge. However, this does not mean it’s impossible to do so rather it depends on the retailers and the goods and services they offer.

When asked concerning some of the reasons lifestyle centres fail after some years, the overall consensus is that location and design are imperative to the success of such retail formats. Location is a universal rule of any commercial venture and location in terms of visibility and accessibility will attract new tenants and visitors alike. Design is more subjective due to many intricate planning and detail objectives. Often, the design of a centre is over stylized and too thematic, making it out of context and/or not authentic enough. It is encouraged that the configuration, circulation, parking and open space of a centre work in a manner that reinforce each other rather than over embellishing the architecture with details. To conclude, open-air/lifestyle centres are risky investments because they challenge the conventional single use model of development. However, when carefully designed and planned these retail formats can secure the interests of developers and municipalities and should be considered in rehabilitation efforts.

**Topic 5: Personal Perspective**

When asked whether in the opinions of the respondents, this model of development will gain momentum in the future there was an overall consensus that these retail formats will become more popular as the industry evolves. Since regional formats are not projected to be built in the future, developers and municipalities will seek to redevelop existing
centres creating incremental urban nodes that incorporate several uses, creating more vibrant, sustainable developments.

It was also noted, that municipalities need to be more swift in issuing approvals for mixed use developments because zoning restrictions cause long delays in the process. Although mixed-use development has become the favoured choice, it is only possible to achieve if amendments are made in a timely manner.
Chapter Six | Revised Framework

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the framework will be further examined and revised based on the findings collected during the research process. The first draft of the framework in chapter three was developed based on findings from the literature and synthesized as a list of themes and trends. The researcher developed the preliminary framework so that it can be applied to and tested by the study site of Shops at Don Mills. Following application of the framework to the selected site, the researcher conducted site observations and key informant interviews to gather additional information and provide revisions to the final draft of the framework. This chapter will discuss subsequent revisions to the framework; themes and special considerations, the applicability of the framework as a tool and its limitations.

6.1 Revisions to the Framework

The information gathered during the site observations and interviews allowed the researcher to gain a further understanding for the redevelopment of greyfield sites. Site observations allowed for the analysis of how a site is utilized and how buildings and people interact with the overall configuration and programming. The interview process granted additional information from professionals who have worked on such redevelopment projects providing a testimony of their experiences during the design and implementation stages. Based on the above methods of analysis, the following revisions have been suggested to the final draft of the framework:

Views: Open-air shopping centres aim to create new urbanist developments; views about the site are crucial for its overall success. Open spaces and landscaping should be
visible from distances so that they can spark the interests of pedestrians, drivers and passengers alike, while promoting openness in welcoming its visitors. The open/public space at SDM is one of the most prominent and highly utilized design features, accessible in all seasons. Establishing strong views is an important objective in site planning and design. Respondent two in the key informant interviews stated that lack of clear views into SDM has contributed to higher vacancies at specific locations leading into the site. It is assumed that this problematic area on-site could have experienced greater success had the views into the site been more visible to highlight the interior and connection into the site.

**Restaurants:** Tenants supplying food and drink are becoming increasingly important to open-air centres. Based on the findings from the site observations and interviews, restaurants reinforce the public realm by offering places of congregation and social life. Respondent two and three mentioned that they attract many visitors to the site and contribute to a richer retail mix. Restaurants make significant anchors and typically should be grouped together. It was noted that when another restaurant opens on-site, these establishments tend to reinforce each other, in terms of revenue. The findings from site observations showed that food and drink tenants work best when situated on street corners and close to designated open/public spaces. Adequate patio space should be granted in the final design as customers enjoy the benefits of being outside thus, emphasizing a public urban realm.

**Pedestrian realm:** Open-air/lifestyle formats are designed in such a way that promotes urban life implementing pedestrian walkways and traditional street systems. A
pedestrian oriented site makes shopping and day-to-day activities pleasant for the visitor. An emphasis should be placed on landscaping, hardscaping and overall site furnishings.

**Diversity:** A retail format such as open-air/lifestyle centres should aim to provide visitors an assortment of merchandise, services, programming and amenities. The findings from the interviews suggest that the higher in diversity of offerings, the greater chances of success. Since these developments are generally high risk for the developer, it is important to establish a diverse character of offerings. Not only is it important to attract visitors from other communities but the viability of a site also depends on the host community and their perception of utility towards the centre. These types of community centres aim to grasp the daily needs of their customers who will use the site for all their daily needs.

### 6.2 Applicability of the Framework as a Tool

This study enabled the researcher to explore greyfield redevelopment and inherent benefits it can provide stakeholders and communities. The framework was applied and tested to the site of SDM to provide an opportunity to assess its applicability for assisting future redevelopments in the planning and design stages. In doing so, SDM became the benchmark of assessment in finalizing the framework since it met the criteria of the site selection process. Since SDM was the first open-air/lifestyle centre in Canada, much can be learned from this retail format and more importantly, whether Canadians will continue to see these types of development in the future. It is assumed that if these types of developments are planned, designed and implemented accordingly, many more declining community shopping centres will follow in the footsteps of SDM. The following considerations were noted in assessing the applicability of the framework as a tool:
The application of the framework to the study site allowed for a critical assessment of issues relating to: greyfield redevelopment, retail site planning and urban design while observing the site’s form, function and utility; it’s relationship to the community, establishing a sense of place by reinforcing social and cultural ties and creating an urban node which promotes live, work and play. Overall, the application of the framework allowed the researcher to assess the positive aspects of this development but also provide recommendations that may be considered by future developments.

The framework was organized in three conceptual scales/categories, beginning at the macro level that considers greyfield development as part of a larger realm of urban infill, mixed-use development and community building. The second scale looks at retail site planning; physical and logistical aspects of arrangement, configuration and circulation. The third scale of the framework looks at a more narrowed perspective of urban design and details that contribute to a positive, aesthetic and pleasurable experience.

Every project is different therefore; some elements of the framework may not apply in a particular situation or might become relevant at a later time as developments progress. For example, incorporating mixed uses on a site may require zoning amendments that can take several years to approve. Open-air/lifestyle centres can be developed as single use formats; however, multiple uses imply greater longevity and viability of such centres.

Due to the sensitivity of greyfield development, a site that is scheduled for redevelopment should consider the numerous factors involved to ensure success. Aside from the suggested elements of the framework, a universal rule of locations is crucial. Greyfield redevelopment should occur in mature neighborhoods that have existing density
so that a symbiotic relationship can reinforce both new development and the existing community that surrounds it. A developer must also secure tenants during the pre-leasing stages and a diverse mix of tenants is desirable since diversity can improve the overall utility and perception of a new shopping centre.

The challenges that were encountered with the development of the framework were deciphering real estate, planning and design literature to formulate the final draft. Since greyfield design is a highly specialized form for redevelopment, the level of detail in the framework presented its own set of challenges. It was not the intention of the researcher to create a framework of rigidity but rather create a tool that is flexible and can be adjusted accordingly to meet the needs of the end-user. Proving too much detail would create an overzealous framework while too little detail would reduce its effectiveness as an assessment guideline. The researcher aimed to create a framework that provides the end-user with adequate information and guidance for greyfield redevelopment; specifically open-air/lifestyle centres whose goal is to create sustainable mixed-use, community developments. In doing so, the framework was created to respect the goals and objectives of developers while insisting on the importance of municipal and community development by emphasizing public life and open space.

The framework proved to be a useful tool in exploring the development potential of greyfield sites by applying it to an existing redevelopment. In doing so, the framework was revised to accommodate additional recommendations based on the findings from SDM that are presented in section 6.5.
6.3 Additional Considerations

The literature available to this study was largely based on an American perspective and very little information was available from Canadian sources. Greyfield development is a relatively new phenomenon and based on research studies conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers (2001), failing community shopping centres will continue to rise and prevail on the urban landscape. It was therefore crucial to conduct key informant interviews with Canadian professionals who have knowledge and experience in retail development. Since Canada has approximately two established open-air retail formats, one being SDM and the other in British Columbia, more time will be needed to better understand how these centres will integrate into the Canadian market.

The research in this study is largely exploratory and based on qualitative findings. It is therefore the study author who reviews and interprets the data to formulate the conclusion this study offers. Indicators of success are viewed as how a site is being used based on the merchandise, services and amenities offered. In retail development, quantitative data is typically expressed in terms of project feasibility, projections and revenue. The ultimate goal of a retail development is to secure the capital interests of the developer, its shareholders and the tenants. The developer has the inherent right to develop a site any which way that suits the developer’s interests as long as the developer abides by existing zoning and regulatory laws. What makes greyfield redevelopment special is that it aims to secure the interests of developers, municipalities and communities by providing a new urbanist approach. These types of retail formats are therefore conceptualized and implemented by developers who have a progressive approach to development and who see the value of a community/public realm to their centres. The
developers who wish to build such formats see the value and long-term viability to this approach which is part of a much larger vision of inclusion for all. Success is therefore viewed in terms of short-term generation of revenue with the long-term ideals of economic and social sustainability.

Another consideration in the application of the framework to the SDM site is its reliability, since it was tested on a single site rather than several sites. This may imply that the insight to the framework is limited and therefore there could possibly be question to its applicability to other greyfield sites which may have a different mandate and set of challenges. However, applying the framework to the SDM was an important step in creating a guideline for planning, design and implementation. To further verify its applicability as a tool and assess its performance, the framework could be tested on similar developments and evaluate its relevance. In addition, the applicability could be assessed by academics and professionals who have the expertise to critique and amend the framework as tool. It could therefore be concluded that the framework has value to developers, municipalities and community groups.

6.4 Relevance of Framework to Practice

There is no such thing as a ‘one size fits all’ type of framework and it is not the objective of this research to create an impossible feat as such. The framework considers at the very least general principles of commercial retrofit developments, retail planning and design. At large, it is assumed that following the framework's guidelines could promote sustainable economic and community development with new urbanist approaches. The framework can potentially be applied to other types of retrofits, urban infill and
revitalization projects pursuing a commercial and retail program. Greyfield sites have been the focus of this study because they make strong candidates for mixed-use, community developments because of their inherent; historical presence as commercial nodes, their existing site infrastructure, proximity to transportation systems and mature neighborhoods.

The framework could reveal itself as being a useful guideline in several contexts. First, it can provide thought provoking discussion for redevelopment projects among municipalities, developers, citizens, policy makers and the design community. In doing so, it can help identify opportunities and constraints for the revitalization of declining shopping centres and other commercial developments while promoting a new urbanist, comprehensive approach to redevelopment.

Second, the framework could be beneficial during the predevelopment stages where proposed development and masterplans require further evaluation. This would allow a clearer assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of such proposals, giving an opportunity to improve or refine program objective.

Finally, the framework could assist municipalities and developers during the public consultation process. The easy to follow guideline can clarify project objectives, look at development potential at all scales of the planning and design spectrum and provide an overall vision for elusive proposals. It is is often the community that does not initially see the benefits of mixed-use development projects because new formats are often hard to grasp or conceive. Similarly, the framework can promote the inherent benefits of new
urbanist retail development by providing vision and inspiration for communities in identifying key concepts of planning and design.
6.5 Revised Framework

Below is the detailed framework for applying principles of greyfield redevelopment, retail site planning and urban design.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALE</th>
<th>OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>CONSIDERATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greyfield Redevelopment</td>
<td>Mixed-Use Development</td>
<td>Mixed uses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed uses will determine site functionality, the interaction between uses (economic and social). A variety of uses may include two or more of the following: Commercial, office, residential, open/public space and civic/municipal. Increase of uses will provide greater diversity, utility and vibrancy to a site. Municipal ordinances and zoning laws will determine approvals and/or amendments to rezoning if necessary. It is suggested that municipalities be capable of providing amendments and approvals in a timely manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greyfield Redevelopment</td>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>Essence of Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community development is an intricate and complex task involving several factors. Physical attributes of design can reinforce community life through and incorporation of the following: walkable districts that are interesting, inviting and safe. The</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The use of open and public spaces is essential to every community because they create a sense of place and promote an active social life. Civic activities could be supported by public space and civic buildings. Civic activities further reinforce community and social life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Greyfield</th>
<th>Land-Use</th>
<th>Adjacent Land uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment</td>
<td>Location is important and it is essential that a selected site be situated in a first-ring suburb. The connection and proximity of a site to an existing community can reinforce its prominence in a neighborhood. It is important that both site and community should share a symbiotic relationship. A greyfield site should be situated and adjacent to residential uses since a community will rely on the centre for day-to-day civic, social, shopping and service needs. Other commercial and office uses are also important because it provides further support other than residential. Note that a surrounding community cannot solely support a sustainable site and that visitors from other communities will be required as important contributors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greyfield Transportation Modes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redevelopment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation is an integral part of any development and should not be limited by a single option. New developments must close to existing highways and major roads, accessible by public transportation, city bicycle lanes should connect into a site and a site must be accessible by walking as well. All modes of transportation must be considered and accessible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning Pedestrian Realm Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Open-air/lifestyle formats are designed in such a way that promotes urban life implementing pedestrian walkways and traditional street systems. A pedestrian oriented site makes shopping and day-to-day activities pleasant for the visitor and an authentic experience. An emphasis should be placed on landscape development and integrated design of site furnishings. The pedestrian should always have priority over the automobile where permitted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Site Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A retail site must first meet its functional requirements to support commerce and retail activity. Second, it should support adequate activities other than shopping such as festivals, concerts sidewalk sales etc. The spatial relationships between buildings are important as they will support public, social and civic activities. Open spaces should be in close proximity to cafes and restaurants since they can reinforce and complement each other. Open space cannot stand alone and needs its own programming schedule.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Building Configuration</th>
<th>Arrangement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The built-form should support the landscape, streetscape and buildings. The preferred building configurations should be in a cluster/town square arrangement, typical of an urban streetscape. This type of massing supports the overall programming of the site that enhances the framework of the streets, squares and open spaces and provides an interesting experience to the end user. Linear and L-shape configurations should be strongly avoided.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Site Planning</td>
<td>Circulation</td>
<td>Interior/Exterior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A site must have a clear and legible sense of arrival through an established gateway(s). It is imperative that there are several entrances into the site, accessible by municipal roads and pedestrian walkways which will further enhance good circulation. The interior street system must also support both vehicles and pedestrians; however some developments project might prefer a pedestrian only policy for the interior.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Anchor</th>
<th>Typology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every retail development must have an anchor to ensure viability and reduce risk of failure. Securing an anchor will further secure smaller retail tenants in the pre-lease stages. A major anchor should have a minimum GLA of 30,000 sq. ft. A retail development can also be anchored by a group of restaurants, cafes and bars. Non-traditional anchors such as libraries, civic centre etc., are good contributors but cannot attract the same numbers as the former. Above all, the most effective anchor tenant is a major retail, yet the incorporation of all three typologies can assume greater</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
success due to diversity in offerings of goods and services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Restaurants/Cafes</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tenants supplying food and drink are becoming increasingly important to open-air centres. Restaurants reinforce the public realm by offering places of congregation and social life. Restaurants can make significant anchors when grouped together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parking is a key component to successful retail site planning yet it is very complex and requires special consideration. The parking lot is usually a visitor’s first encounter with a centre. An open-air centre should not be dominated by vast amounts of parking. Instead, parking should be situated along storefronts; parallel or 40°-60° arrangements. This type of parking is similar to urban environments and allow for quicker shopping since you are able to park closer to the retailer of your choice. It minimized the time it takes to walk from the parking lot to the interior of the centre. Underground and parking structures should be strongly considered as they consume less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
land which would be used to add GLA or adaptive to change for future amendments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Since open-air shopping centres aim to create new urbanist developments; views into the site are crucial for overall success. Open spaces and landscape developments should be visible from a distance so they can spark the interests of pedestrians, drivers and passengers alike, while promoting openness and welcome visitors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Site Planning</th>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A retail format such as open-air/lifestyle centres should aim to provide visitors an assortment of merchandises, services, programming and amenities. The greater diversity in the retail mix will increase a site’s success. These types of community centres aim to grasp the daily needs of their customers who will use the site for all their daily needs. More is more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCALE</td>
<td>OBJECTIVE</td>
<td>CONSIDERATIONS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Design</td>
<td>Signage</td>
<td><strong>General</strong>&lt;br&gt;Store signage identifies brand and contributes to image. Scale of sign should proportionate to store&lt;br&gt;frontage (1 sq. ft. of signage per linear foot). Oversized signs can give the impression of lower&lt;br&gt;quality while smaller sign imply more exclusive, higher quality offerings. Sign is properly scaled to centre or offset. Decals may also be used on windows or on the valance of an awning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Design</td>
<td>Awning</td>
<td><strong>General</strong>&lt;br&gt;Awnings should be attractive, while providing protection from sun and shelter from rain and snow.  Awning helps define brand and store. Awnings may be constructed out of fabric or be fixed structurally above the storefront.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Design</td>
<td>Visual Merchandising</td>
<td><strong>General</strong>&lt;br&gt;Storefront merchandising is simple and easy to understand. Props used in display. Potential props used from other retailers for cross promotion. Props and themes should reflect seasonal festivities. Avoid overcrowding the display</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
windows with too much merchandise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Design</th>
<th>Site Furniture</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>In general a site should have adequate places to sit. Movable seats and tables are most effective because they can be arranged in anyway. Site furniture should be present in and around open space to provide comfort especially in summer months. Benches should be evenly distributed throughout the site on street corners and in front of stores.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retail Design</th>
<th>Landscaping</th>
<th>General</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Priority should be given to indigenous species: trees, shrubs, grasses, groundcovers and perennials. Planting schedule should include; periphery, entrances, interior should be planted to complement streets, street corners and open spaces. Planters should be situated at corners and access points, softening the site with touches of colour, texture and scents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Seven: Conclusions

7.0 Summary

The overarching goal of this study was to examine design strategies and processes for the revitalization of greyfield sites, with an emphasis on contemporary retail design and principles of new urbanism. The findings from the methods were compiled into a framework of principles influencing greyfield redevelopment, retail planning and urban design. The framework was developed so that it can guide future redevelopment projects that can assist developers, designers, municipalities and communities.

The following objectives were established to satisfy the research goal:

- To explore key retail design and community development concepts through the review of literature.
- To examine the relationship between New Urbanism principles and contemporary retail development in newer retail formats.
- To compile a series of concepts and themes for the development of a design and planning framework that can serve as a reference tool for the redevelopment of greyfield sites.
- To select a site where the framework can be applied and tested.
- To conduct site observations and activity mapping to better understand site function and utility.
- To conduct key informant interviews with experts from design and real estate professions. The information gathered in this process will verify what was learned in the literature review and provide revisions to the framework.
To provide a revised framework based on the findings during the data collection process.

The first and second study objective aimed to establish the context of this research by reviewing literature that examined the following: history of shopping centres, greyfield and retail development, mixed-use and community development, principles of new urbanism, urban and retail design. The exploration of these concepts provided key understandings for contemporary retail development, its evolution and an emphasis on community place-making. The literature review also indicated that new urbanist approaches to design and development can be incorporated in new retail formats which inherently foster economic and social sustainability. Greyfield development is an extension of urban infill in a suburban setting that can create a node for economic, social and cultural activity. It may be argued that this form of development is a ‘band-aid’ approach and lacks authenticity when compared to older urban neighborhoods. Nonetheless this approach can contribute to place-making and enforce community ties by providing services, amenities and a public realm to a community - all common attributes of a traditional neighbourhood. In doing so, these developments can improve the quality of life for residents by minimizing vehicular trips and distances traveled which can be achieved with density and walkability.

This research has placed an emphasis on commercial development as the proponent to successful infill projects because retail can promote sustainable housing and employment. The literature review further revealed that the shopping centre is inextricably linked to our past, our future and is the basis of social and cultural life in North America and that opportunity exists in creating multi-faceted developments that sustain an array of interests.
To meet the study objective, common practices and themes that were discovered in the literature review were compiled and categorized into a systematic hierarchy of scales. When common practices and themes were identified, a preliminary framework for applying factors influencing greyfield development, retail site planning and urban design was created and applied via case study method. Three scales of development and design were identified in the framework, each with its own set of implication and considerations. The scales of development and design begin at the macro level of analysis to micro level of design detail.

Furthermore, the study goal was satisfied by applying the framework to the former greyfield site of SDM. This presented an opportunity for the researcher to test the preliminary framework by applying it to an existing site so that a revised and final version could be used in the pre-design and development stages of future projects. Included in this analysis are context, land use and circulation diagrams and also a series of photos that indicate the implementation of specific design principles. This analysis granted the researcher the opportunity to critique and provide recommendations, while making necessary revisions for the final draft of the framework.

Site observations and activity mapping were conducted to gain firsthand experience into how the site is being utilized and into how supporting elements interact with each other. This method was effective for attaining information that would not otherwise be available or discovered by reading the literature review. The data collected in this process further enabled the researcher to make additional revisions to the framework.
Key informant interviews were facilitated by the researcher and several lines of inquiry were addressed. The information gathered in this process reinforced the themes and concepts learned from the literature review and attributed to the framework. This opportunity also granted the researcher access to discussions with design and planning professionals who have experience in retail development and could offer this study informed perspectives because of direct involvement in the field. As discussed in the previous chapter, most available literature is written from an American perspective and little has been published by Canadian sources. The interview process was critical in attaining information from professionals who were able to provide insight from a Canadian perspective. Although the focus of this study was to explore greyfield redevelopment for the purpose of creating a general framework, information about the Canadian industry could further reinforce the applicability of the framework as a tool in Canada but not exclusively.

The final component of the study objective aimed to revise the framework in a final draft based on what was discovered during the data collection of the site observations and through key informant interviews. It was discovered that views into a site are crucial to a site’s success because it allows for better transparency. Although establishing strong views into a site during site planning is relevant in planning and architecture literature, it is not present in retail planning literature. As seen at SDM, it is hypothesized that a strong view into the site at specific locations could help with higher vacancies. During the key informant interviews conducted by the researcher, the restaurant component for a site was considered crucial by Canadian interviewees. It was concluded that restaurants keep a site operational well after closing hours and contribute to its vibrancy by further establishing
revenue and social activity. The pedestrian realm to a site is an element that cannot be compromised especially when attempting place-making practices. Such practices reinforce sense of place because visitors are able to interact with a site based on its physical make-up through sidewalks, open space and a walkable district. Diversity in a site’s offering further contributes to a high quality shopping experience. A site that can offer an array of goods and services creates a centre that can attract visitors on a daily basis and minimize vehicular trips since amenities are offered in close proximity.

7.1 Concluding Remarks

The research in this study is largely exploratory and based on qualitative findings. It is therefore the study author who reviews and interprets the data to formulate the conclusion this study offers. Indicators of success are viewed as how a site is being used based on the merchandise, services and amenities offered. In retail development, quantitative data is typically expressed in terms of project feasibility, projections and revenue. The ultimate goal of a retail development is to secure the capital interests of the developer, its shareholders and the tenants. The developer has the inherent right to develop a site any which way that suits the developer’s interests as long as the developer abides by existing zoning and regulatory laws. What makes greyfield redevelopment special is that it aims to secure the interests of developers, municipalities and communities by providing a new urbanist approach within its framework. These types of retail formats are therefore conceptualized and implemented by developers who have a progressive approach to development and who see the value of a community/public realm to their centres. The developers who wish to build such formats see the value and long-term viability to this approach which is part of a much larger vision of inclusion for all. Success
is therefore viewed in terms of short-term generation of revenue with the long-term ideals of economic and social sustainability.

It is expected however, that these types of formats will gain momentum as community shopping centres will continue to decline and developers and municipalities will look for more competitive models of development. This suggests that growth and development will not only occur in high-income communities where they are often situated but accepted in middle income earning communities which may value the inherent benefits of walkable districts. Open-air, lifestyle centres have generally been catered towards higher-income earning communities; providing luxury goods and services in highly designed, thematic complexes. Competitive models do not necessarily imply luxury centres that are expensive looking. Good design should focus on implementing a strong public realm; incorporating open and public spaces, promote walkability, public transportation and encourage social interaction. This suggests that growth and development will not only occur in high-income communities where they are often rejected but, accepted in middle income earning communities who may value the inherent benefits of walkable districts.

Since the success of greyfield development has not been extensively documented in Canada, the benefit of this study aims to explain how new urbanist approaches of mixed-uses, public spaces, pedestrian friendly districts can revamp failing sites into vibrant community centres that offer an array of goods and services while securing economic and social objectives for developers and municipalities. As community shopping centres continue to decline, the new urbanist paradigm can revive public and social life through the basic fundamental concepts of density, openness and human interaction.
References


Appendix A: Research Ethics Board Certification

RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD – General REB-G
Certification of Ethical Acceptability of Research Involving Human Participants

APPROVAL PERIOD: April 23, 2013 to April 23, 2014
REB NUMBER: 13JA051
TYPE OF REVIEW: Delegated Type 1
RESPONSIBLE FACULTY: CECELIA PAINE
DEPARTMENT: School of Environmental Design & Rural Development
SPONSOR: N/A
TITLE OF PROJECT: Out of greyzone: Exploring greyfield design and redevelopment

The members of the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board have examined the protocol which describes the participation of the human subjects in the above-named research project and considers the procedures, as described by the applicant, to conform to the University's ethical standards and the Tri-Council Policy Statement, 2nd Edition.

The REB requires that you adhere to the protocol as last reviewed and approved by the REB. The REB must approve any modifications before they can be implemented. If you wish to modify your research project, please complete the Change Request Form. If there is a change in your source of funding, or a previously unfunded project receives funding, you must report this as a change to the protocol.

Unexpected events and incidental findings must be reported to the REB as soon as possible with an indication of how these events affect, in the view of the Responsible Faculty, the safety of the participants, and the continuation of the protocol.

If research participants are in the care of a health facility, at a school, or other institution or community organization, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that the ethical guidelines and approvals of those facilities or institutions are obtained and filed with the REB prior to the initiation of any research protocols.

The Tri-council Policy Statement, 2nd Edition, requires that ongoing research be monitored by, at a minimum, a final report and, if the approval period is longer than one year, annual reports. Continued approval is contingent on timely submission of reports.

Membership of the Research Ethics Board - General: S. Banerjee, Community Member; J. Carson, Community Member; C. Carstairs, COA; S. Chuang, FRAN (alt); K. Chuong, Graduate Student; J. Clark, PoliSci (alt); J. Devlin, OAC; J. Dwyer, FRAN; M. Dwyer, Legal; B. Ferguson, CME (alt); H. Gilmour, Community Member (alt); J. Goertz, CME; B. Gottlieb, Psychology; B. Giguere, Psychology (alt); S. Henson, OAC (alt); L. Kuczynski, Chair; R. Ragan, Legal (alt); V. Shalla, SOAN (alt); R. Stansfield, SOAN.

Approved: per

Chair, Research Ethics Board- General Date: _____________________

116
Appendix B | Key Informant Pre-Qualification Email

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am a graduate student at the University of Guelph currently completing my Masters in Landscape Architecture. I am writing my master’s thesis under the supervision of Professor Cecelia Paine. I am requesting professional input from your company for my research.

My research aims to explore Greyfield redevelopment, more specifically, having to do with declining community shopping centres. I am interested in investigating the causes of such declines and how comprehensive planning and design can restore economic and social viability for developers and communities.

I am requesting an individual from your department who can dedicate 45 minutes to 1 hour for an interview wherein I will be asking a series of pre-determined questions. The interview will be conducted preferably in-person however, if that option is not available, a telephone conversation will suffice. I can assure complete confidentiality - no names will be used in the final draft of my thesis – no expenses will be incurred other than the individual’s time.

To ensure the consistency and validity of my study, I ask that the informant of the interview meet a few criteria:

- The informant has worked in the fields of planning, architecture, landscape architecture or commercial/retail development.
- The informant has worked on actual development project(s) of commercial/retail development.
- The informant has some information or experience working with developers and community groups during the planning process.

The information gathered from the interview will be used to develop a design framework for greyfield redevelopment. This framework for design will be applied to a case study where the findings will be analyzed in support of sustainable retail development.

I hope that you can forward this email to the appropriate person who would be willing to take part in the interview. Participants have a great opportunity in expressing their thoughts and experience in this field of study.

I would like to thank you for taking the time in reading this request. The information I gather from this interview will be very valuable in conducting my research. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further question or require more information.

Thank you,

Costa Pavlou, MLA Candidate, University of Guelph

Please note, this study has received clearance from the University of Guelph’s Research Ethics Board. Their information is available at your request.
Dear Sir or Madam,

I have recently emailed your company seeking participants who are willing to take part in my research study on the subject of greyfield redevelopment. As a reminder, I am a graduate student at the University of Guelph currently completing my thesis for my Masters in Landscape Architecture. My research is an investigation of greyfield redevelopment and how developers and communities can build more economically viable retail centres. I am seeking a professional from your planning or design department who can dedicate approximately 45 minutes to answer a series of pre-determined questions over the telephone or via Skype. Their experience and knowledge is crucial to my research which will assist in concluding my thesis. Since your company has been involved in projects concerning greyfield redevelopment, your input is especially important to verify my findings.

I would like to thank you for considering my request for conducting an interview. I assure you utmost confidentiality and I will respect not to exceed the 45 minute timeframe dedicated to completing the interview. If possible, please respond whether or not an informant is available for participation since this work is time sensitive. If you have any further questions or require more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at this email address.
I look forward to your forthcoming response.

Thank you,

Costa Pavlou, MLA Candidate, University of Guelph

Please note: this study has received clearance from the University of Guelph’s Research Ethics Board. Their information is available at your request.
Appendix D | Interview Guide

Time of interview: _______________________

Date: _______________________

Location: _______________________

Interviewer: Costa Pavlou

Respondent: _______________________

Introduction

I would like to take a moment to thank you for your time in assisting me with my research project. By taking place in this interview, your experience and expertise in this research topic will be very important to the completion of my study. This study is being conducted for my master’s thesis in Landscape Architecture from the University of Guelph under the supervision of Professor Cecelia Paine. If you wish, I can provide you with both our contact information after the interview.

Firstly, I would like to give you some background information to my study. I am currently investigating failing shopping centres and the reasons for their decline. These sites are often termed “greyfields” which are parcels of unused vacant land in urban and suburban areas. I want to further explore how design and planning practices can create quality shopping destinations and reinforce community development.
You can be assured that your name will remain confidential on all records of this interview and will be omitted from use in my thesis. If you are not capable to take part in the interview or if you are not comfortable to answer a certain question, please inform me and you may answer at a later time.

Before we begin the interview, do I have your permission to record this conversation for later analysis? A transcription of this interview will not be attached as an appendix to this thesis.)

(The recording of this interview will be store on my PC which is owned and accessible by me. At your request, would you prefer that the recording is deleted after the study has been completed?)

Do you have any questions before we proceed?

**Part One | Background**

Here are some easy questions to get us started.

1. What is your professional and educational background?
2. How long have you worked as an architect/landscape architect/planner/developer?
3. Have you been involved in any retail development projects in the course of your career?
Part Two | Contemporary Retail Development

In this section, I will be inquiring about the current state of the retail and shopping centre industry in Canada and the United States.

1. What are the significant changes and obstacles that are faced in the current state of the retail/shopping centre industry?
2. How do developers and planners overcome such issues?
3. Why do you think the development of lifestyle/town centres have gained momentum in the last twenty years?
4. Are people shopping differently and/or do people have different expectations when visiting a shopping centre of their choice?

Part Three | Mixed-Use Development and Retail Design

I would like to discuss the importance of design when redeveloping a retail site. We have seen for decades how single-use retail formats have dominated the landscape. Currently, this format in some cases has become obsolete, paving the way for more comprehensive redevelopments. In this series of questions, I will cover concepts of mixed-use development, building configurations and layout. Based on my previous findings in literature reviews, such concepts of urbanism have been crucial in shaping redevelopment projects. It is apparent that centres which choose to incorporate such concepts may sustain a new development both economically and socially.

1. How is mixed-used development changing the game for shopping centre development? Is this approach proving to be more sustainable and/or favourable?
2. Can you describe some specific issues related to mixed-use approaches in retail design?

3. Do you believe the new urbanist approaches to retail development are more sustainable ie: open spaces, transit systems, etc.?

4. What are some major design factors that cannot be compromised when designing such sites?

5. How important is the restaurant/entertainment tenancy to a site?

6. Can you describe some specific issues related to parking design and implementation?

Part Four | Community Development

Community development has become an important topic in the past several years. We are seeing more retrofit and infill projects that are incorporating principles of urbanism in their design. Design features such as town squares, plazas and green spaces are becoming more commonplace in practice. Furthermore, I would like some more information on how the community is involved in the planning stages of development.

1. Can retail redevelopment reinforce community development?

2. Do you feel that town squares and civic spaces should be the goal of every redevelopment project where permitted?

3. Can you please describe some of the methods used to involve community groups in the planning stages of development?

4. What are some issues that residents typically express during the pre-development stages?
Part Five | Limitations

(Many case studies in the retail design literature focus on the successes of open-air/lifestyle centres. I am curious to investigate lifestyle centres that are experiencing a decline (if any) and, if so, what might we learn from this.)

1. Is anchoring a retail site with the right tenant(s), crucial in creating an economically viable development?

2. Other than big box stores as anchors, that can attract 30-50 percent of visitors to the site; how effective is anchoring a new development with smaller national retailers or non-traditional anchors such as a library, city hall, community centre, etc.?

3. In essence, does typical redevelopment of open-air/lifestyle centres cater to a high-end market with higher-income earning?

4. Can this model for redevelopment achieve success in lower-income earning neighbourhoods?

5. Have there been any examples of redevelopments that chose the above approaches, yet managed to fail after some years?

6. What are the reasons for this?

Part Six | Personal Perspective

1. Overall, how important do you think these types of redevelopment projects will be in the future? Will they gain momentum or level off?

2. Do you believe that these types of developments can satisfy the goals of the developers, municipalities and communities?
3. That brings this interview to an end. Do you have anything further you would like add that was not covered in this interview?

Conclusions

I would like to thank you for time in helping me with this interview. Your experience is very valuable to the field and I appreciate your time rendered. Before this meeting is adjourned, do you have any closing statements?

No follow-ups will be required hereafter. If you have any questions or comments at a later date, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Once my thesis is completed, it will be available digitally.

Should you have any second thoughts or regrets for participating in this interview, you can withdraw from this study at any time and your contribution will not make the final draft.