Reweaving the Urban Fabric
Examining Greyfield Redevelopment in the Greater Toronto Area

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Executive Summary

Suburbanization of population and decentralization of economic activity has created numerous “greyfield” sites in postwar suburbs across Canada. The term “greyfield” refers to a previously developed commercial site that is currently underperforming both economically and socially. These sites present unique development opportunities as they occur in, “developed… urban area[s] that [are] well positioned, both economically and physically for redevelopment” (Congress for New Urbanism, 2001a). This report addresses factors that contribute to the redevelopment of greyfield sites. Using two redevelopment projects located in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) as case studies, this report examines challenges and opportunities involved in the redevelopment of greyfield sites. Based on the research findings, this report suggests guidelines for successful redevelopment of greyfields in large Canadian cities.

The report examines a set of greyfield redevelopment guidelines developed by Tomalty and Jozsa (2004). These guidelines were designed as an assessment tool to evaluate projects upon their completion in small to medium sized Canadian cities. A decade has passed since Tomalty and Jozsa guidelines were developed, and this report assess their relevance and reinforces why they are still effective in 2014. By examining these guidelines, this report will demonstrate their effectiveness by assessing two case studies. It will further illustrate that Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines can be used as a guiding document to assist new greyfield projects.

Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines will be used to examine two case studies in the GTA. They will provide insight into whether the original guidelines for redevelopment of greyfields remain relevant, and identify opportunities for improvement. Ensuring that these guidelines remain current with evolving standards and trends associated with design and policy is important for successful redevelopment outcomes. Based on the research findings of the two case studies, this report recommends that the following 10 points be added to the Tomalty & Jozsa’s guidelines:

1. Determine the local procedures of the municipality that rel-
ate to greyfield redevelopment and assess the circumstance to which the project lies; Does the municipality have regulations and guidelines for greyfield redevelopment already or do they need to implement a set of guidelines?

2. Municipalities need to create a list of existing greyfield sites and vulnerable commercial areas that might become greyfields so that they can monitor them and advertise them as redevelopment opportunities.

3. Develop a monitoring and evaluation program for new projects so that missing elements in one project can be incorporated into new developments.

4. Current policies specific to greyfield remediation and prevention need to be created.

5. Encourage more community engagement at the beginning of each greyfield redevelopment project. Creating a good relationship with the community will make a project more successful once it is finished.

6. Create continuing education programs for professionals to become more aware of the consequences associated with greyfields and the potential there is when redeveloped.

7. The only way to promote greyfield redevelopment is to focus development and seek approval from the municipality. Municipalities in the GTA continue to operate on outdated planning practices (ie outdated bylaws), that creates inefficient development that does not meet the needs of communities (Tuckey); this needs to change.

8. Local governments control land use decisions allowing certain types of development. It is the responsibility of the local government to find alternatives and push for sustainable development.

9. “Secondary Plans” can be used as an effective tool to guide development in specific areas of a municipality. They provide direction for development by specific land use plans and policies. They are adopted into the Official Plan to ensure that their intent is binding.

10. Greyfield redevelopment is about reuse and sustaining the environment therefore salvage is an important part of redevelopment. If material can be reused it
should be used in the redevelopment or deconstructed and stored at a designated facility for later use.

Based on the research findings, this report found that Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines from 2004 remain a suitable framework for planners and developers to use in future redevelopment projects; but can be improved by integrating these recommendations which increase the relevancy for future use ensuring the guidelines are up-to-date with current planning trends and policies. The research findings in this report illustrate that greyfield redevelopment is a challenging endeavor but may be significantly aided by following a set of guidelines developed from first hand experience. The report concludes that Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines from 2004 need to be updated to serve current greyfield redevelopments and illustrates that these guidelines can be used as an assessment tool to evaluate completed projects but perhaps could be used more effectively as a guide for new greyfield redevelopment today.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The term “greyfield” was first introduced by The Congress of New Urbanism (CNU) in the 1990s to describe failing retail malls and commercial strips surrounded by large grey parking lots that began popping up all over North America (CNU, 2001a). These sites not only represent blighted areas exemplified by vandalism and neglect but also pose as physical detriments to the quality of life in their surrounding community.

Greyfields are therefore one of the many consequences of urban sprawl. In post-war Canada the need (of returning soldiers and the accompanying baby-boom), desire for larger housing (to accommodate growing families), and the availability of cheaper land, created the necessary conditions for the development of housing to spread outward past the urban fringe into exurban areas. As urban sprawl continued in the post-war generation up to, and including present day, existing commercial and retail building stock in inner cities and especially in suburban areas have demonstrated a susceptibility to economic decline. Furthermore, as existing building stock became abandoned by both tenants and developers the properties were neglected, eventually falling into disrepair. These large retail malls and commercial strips which once drew quality tenants and retailers continually lost them to newer, more attractive locations.

Greyfield sites therefore present a unique opportunity for urban planning. The sites contain existing buildings and accompanying infrastructure; they also allow for greyfield sites to be, “well positioned, both economically and physically for redevelopment” (CNU, 2001a). These properties also represent an opportunity or a “chance [for interested stakeholders including developers] to rejuvenate a part of the city that has lost its vitality in the eyes of the owner, tenant and customer” (Michael, 2012, 2), however the redevelopment of greyfield sites poses unique challenges.

For many planners and developers currently operating in Canada, greyfield redevelopment is not an attractive investment. As David Onishenko mentions in his research,
interviews with selected stakeholder revealed that planners and developers remain unaware of the opportunities and challenges associated with greyfield redevelopment. “Interviewees confirmed a lack of existing municipal policy regarding greyfield redevelopment; they noted that what often existed was generalized language that supported redevelopment but lacked any direction to carry out such redevelopment. Any form of a guideline or adaptive toolbox to guide the redevelopment of these sites was missing” (Onishenho, 2012, 85).

Greyfield redevelopment is not a new concept in the field of planning but has yet to be fully accepted and utilized in the Canadian context. Canadian literature on greyfield redevelopment is relatively non-existent and limited to a few practicing professionals and academics with the leading Canadian literature on the subject having been penned in 2004 by Ray Tomalty and Alexandra Jozsa. In their 2004 research for the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation (CHMC), the authors, examined ten greyfield redevelopment cases located in small to medium sized municipalities in Ontario. From these case studies, Tomalty and Jozsa produced a set of guidelines which sought to clarify some uncertainty surrounding a relatively new concept of greyfield redevelopment. The research and accompanying guidelines primarily focused on what conditions were evident to produce quality redevelopment projects, and how to best structure development projects in order to avoid a greyfield site from reoccurring.

Since these guidelines were first produced, Ontario has seen an increase in density, a financial crisis, new transportation initiatives, an increase in housing prices, and a record number of buildings being developed. Municipalities within Ontario have also experienced new policy direction, with the introduction of the Ontario Government’s Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (GGH). Municipalities in Ontario are also required to pass Official Plan and Secondary Plans, which are subject to review, and potential updates, every five years. It is important to examine these guidelines because standards, regulations and policies have evolved in the last ten years. Ensuring that these guidelines remain current and relevant is important for the success of future greyfield projects.
This report will add to existing Canadian greyfield redevelopment literature so it can become broadly understood. Greyfield redevelopment is slowly becoming common practice amongst professionals but there should be clear guidelines that help them produce successful projects. This report will discuss the influencing factors associated with greyfield redevelopment in the hopes that this research will give transparency to areas of theory, policy and practice and produce a set of recommendations that are up-to-date and more accessible for planners and developers to use.

Examining the validity of Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines for greyfield redevelopment will be conducted through two case studies. This report will apply Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines to two greyfield sites to examine whether their guidelines and observations remain relevant a decade later, and whether they can be applied to greyfield developments in a large municipality.

The original guidelines had previously been used to analyze a case study at Olde Thornhill Village in Markham Ontario and will therefore be studied to see if the findings made by Tomalty and Jozsa still hold a decade later. These guidelines will also be applied to a new case study in 2014 called Hullmark Centre. An analysis of Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines in relation to Hullmark Centre and Olde Thornhill Village, will illustrate where gaps exist in their set of guidelines.

The research findings in this report will present information that details the challenges as well as the opportunities of greyfield redevelopment. This report seeks to evaluate if Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines remain relevant or can be reinforced, but in the process will also address greyfield redevelopment from a practical, theoretical and governmental perspective to illustrate how influential greyfields can be to the future vitality of our cities. The research findings will inform a set of recommendations to strengthen Tomalty and Jozsa’s greyfield redevelopment guidelines aiding both planners and developers to realize the potential of greyfield redevelopment in light of enacted legislation and policy since 2004 and current planning trends. By updating Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines, the guidelines may illustrate to private/public developers interested in greyfield redevelopment how
to overcome potential challenges unique to greyfield sites, informing them about the redevelopment process and suggesting ways to minimize the associated risks associated with greyfield projects. Planners may use find value in these guidelines as a measurement tool for completed projects and as a tool to guide best practices in future projects.

Scope of Work

This report will discuss important aspects that directly influence greyfield redevelopment and will update and reinforce the importance of Tomalty and Jozsa's set of guidelines. The report will examine how affective Tomalty and Jozsa's set of guidelines were in 2004 when Olde Thornhill was being redeveloped; and will then be used to analyze Hullmark Centre, which is currently under construction. Using Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines to assess Hullmark Centre will show if they are still an effective strategy to guide redevelopment and identify areas that need improvement so that they are more applicable to current planning trends. These two cases have been chosen for analysis because although they are both greyfield redevelopments, they showcase contrasting redevelopment strategies in two different settings. A comparison of Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines to Olde Thornhill Village and Hullmark Centre will investigate whether similarities and differences exist between the two sites effect the relevancy and applicability of the guidelines. The scope of this report is limited to the examination of Hullmark Centre and Olde Thornhill Village and although this report sufficiently explains the main aspects of greyfield redevelopment, it is recommended that a broader study be conducted.

Before the case studies are examined and compared the report will first explain what greyfields are and why they exists; it will then divulge into planning theories that pertain directly to greyfield redevelopment and why they are an integral part of the redevelopment process. These planning theories will include New Urbanism, Smart Growth, Transit Oriented Development (TOD) as well as Sprawl repair. All of these theories have relevant features that can be applied to any greyfield redevelopment project and should therefore be discussed. Policy and governmental documents that guide development from
a local and provincial level will also be examined and discussed. There should be a process for greyfield redevelopment that is required for planners and developers to follow; and this report will seek to explain these important aspects so that these professionals are aware of the challenges and opportunities associated with greyfield redevelopment. Reinforcing the importance of Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines as well as existing planning theories and policy documents will give professionals interested in greyfield redevelopment an informed opinion in order to create better spaces in our communities.

Report Structure

Chapter 2 of this report provides the methods of research used for the analysis. Chapter 3 provides an overview of literature and an explanation on greyfield redevelopment detailing what opportunities; challenges and factors of success are prevalent in greyfield redevelopment as well as planning theories and policy documents associated with redevelopment. Chapter 4 will discuss the two examples of greyfield redevelopment. Chapter 4.1 will assess how relevant Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines where in 2004 and how successful Olde Thornhill Village is today and Chapter 4.2 will discuss a greyfield redevelopment called Hullmark Centre in North York district of Toronto, Ontario; it will explain the area and context of the site as well as its history. The report will then go into detail about planning procedures involved in the project; it will describe whether Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines are still relevant in 2014 and are applicable to large municipalities not just small and medium sized municipalities. Chapter 5 will present an evaluation of chapter 4 and draw comparisons between the two cases. To conclude this report, Chapter 6 will provide lessons learned and recommendations for professionals.
Chapter 2

Research Questions

This report will address the following research questions:

1. In 2004 Tomalty and Jozsa published a set of guidelines that were submitted to the CMHC, this report will determine if this guideline effectively measured a successful greyfield redevelopment at Olde Thornhill Village.

2. Is this set of guidelines still effective in 2014 and can it be applied to a large scale municipality?

3. What recommendations can be drawn from this research that would support the redevelopment of other greyfield sites in other Canadian cities and allow this set of guidelines to be used as a guide, not only as an assessment tool?

Methods

To address these research questions this report will use a qualitative case study approach. Research for this report will comprise of a literature review and a descriptive case study of the redevelopment project called Olde Thornhill Village located in Markham Ontario and Hullmark Centre located in the North York District of Toronto Ontario. Both redevelopment case studies will be examined using Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines that have been used to examine many other redevelopment projects across Ontario. Conducting a literature review and examining existing planning theories and policy documents will also help the analysis of each case study at Olde Thornhill and Hullmark Centre. By looking at existing planning theories this report will assess how pertinent the guidelines are for greyfield redevelopment and provide recommendations to help reinforce the effectiveness of their use. Furthermore, information extracted from local and provincial policy documents will inform planners and developers of existing barriers and opportunities regarding redevelopment. This report will therefore examine the redevelopment of greyfields from a variety of angles; and will identify strengths and weaknesses in the process and provide recommendations to strengthen Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines in the hopes that professionals will recognize their potential and use them as a guiding document for future redevelopment projects.
Research Techniques and Sources

Data was collectively gathered from multiple sources to gain validity; combining literature from primary and secondary sources will help validate the evidence for this report and create reliability (Yin, 2009).

Literature Review

A review of significant literature concerning greyfield redevelopment is referenced within this report. This literature provides reasoning for these projects as well as insight justifying the opportunities and challenges involved in any redevelopment project. These sources focus on ageing areas of existing municipalities, and the need to transform them by redevelopment. A literature review will be used for this report to analyze Tomalty and Jozsa's set of guidelines with the help of two case studies; Hullmark Centre and Olde Thornhill. It will help identify the importance of implementing existing academic planning theories as well as governmental policies with professional planning practice to obtain optimal success.

1.1 Map of Canada, source: www.aerotekcanada.ca

The existing literature illustrates that practical guidelines are very important when initiating a redevelopment project but it also indicates that larger forces are at work. Public policy influences development and plays a very large part in the creation of successful projects by controlling and promoting types of development in particular areas of the city. Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines provide a well-researched and detailed set of guidelines that broadly identify the necessary components of successful greyfield redevelopment. The recommendations contained in this report will ensure that the guidelines will be current;
will continue to allow factors of success to be evaluated upon a project's completion; and will suggest that these guidelines may be used as a tool to guide new projects from beginning to finish.

Site Visit

The purpose of a site visit was to gather first-hand knowledge concerning the project and the surrounding community. This was a necessary component of this research because it validated the information taken from the literature review and yielded concrete observations.

Case Studies

In 2004 Tomalty and Jozsa published their research on the redevelopment of Olde Thornhill Village. Now that a decade has passed since Tomalty and Jozsa's original observations, this report will seek to evaluate the greyfield development of Olde Thornhill Village and analyze whether, as Tomalty and Jozsa's 2004 findings concluded, that it can still be considered a success. To do so Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines will be scrutinized to see if they are an appropriate set of guidelines that can be applied to a new case study in North York, Toronto.

The case study at Olde Thornhill Village represents an example of good greyfield redevelopment and what can be achieved with mixed-use intensification. The examination of Olde Thornhill-Village will include a brief history of the site, the context of the neighborhood and project information as well as redevelopment and implementation strategies. The analysis will reveal that much has changed since 2004. Not only has planning policy evolved but housing markets and public interests have
changed. Evaluating these issues as well as referencing relevant literature will aid this investigation of Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines to form a set of recommendations for greyfield redevelopment to which professionals and members of society can consult in the future.

The Hullmark Centre is located in the district of North York, Toronto and is one of the case studies that will be examined in this research report. Similar to Olde Thornhill Village this site was chosen because it is near completion; is a former greyfield site; and it is expected to be a huge success. This redevelopment project will test the relevancy of Tomalty and Jozsa's set of guidelines and confirm whether or not they remain applicable in future redevelopment projects and whether these guidelines can be applied to a large municipality. Figure 1.3. shows the site before redevelopment and Figure 1.4. shows an artistic rendering of the final product.

Although the planned development will be a huge transformation for the neighborhood, this redevelopment will service a large portion of the population in North York creating jobs and new places to live. A detailed analysis of Hullmark Centre will include a history of the site, the context of the neighborhood, project information and a redevelopment strategy of the project, as well as implementation strategies. Analyzing this case study will bring different issues to light, including the process of redevelopment, public consultation, ownership structure, mixed use

1.3 Aerial view of Willowdale Plaza, North York Toronto Ontario, Source: googlemaps.com

1.4 Hullmark Centre rendering Source: urbantoronto.ca
development and public transit. Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines include the present opportunities, challenges and factors of success which will reveal the strength of Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines but it will also help inform a set of recommendations for future redevelopment projects. These case studies will help explain the analysis of greyfield redevelopment and produce a set of recommendations that professionals and members of society can reference in the future.
Chapter 3

What is a Greyfield?

There are many definitions that explain what greyfields are but there is only one that best describes what they entail; coined by the Congress for New Urbanism, a greyfield refers to a mature commercial development that has become underused or abandoned. “Greyfields are economically obsolescent commercial sites that offer large infill redevelopment opportunities, which are usually surrounded by a sea of asphalt separating a mall or commercial area from its community” (Sobel, 2001, 20). Although greyfields can occur in urban settings, they are more predominant in suburban areas. They come in all shapes and sizes and are a consequence of changing preferences, demographics, income and a desire to move into better markets (Sobel, 2001). Greyfields derive from incremental changes to retail patterns over time and continued greenfield development at the urban fringes allowed by municipalities across the GTA. Caught in between expansion and out-classing, development patterns in Canada have predominantly become single use, single story developments apathetic to sustainability and mixed-use (Onishenko, 2012).

Literature Review

Unfortunately there is little Canadian research available on greyfield redevelopment and therefore most of the literature reviewed in this report is American. One of the few and leading Canadian resources on greyfield redevelopment is Ray Tomalty and Alexandra Jozsa's research for the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation. Their research entitled, Residential Intensification through Redevelopment of Greyfields and Other Commercial Sites in Small and Medium Size Ontario Cities, “demonstrates the opportunities of greyfield redevelopment and recommends strategies and techniques that promote successful redevelopment projects in mid-sized cities within Ontario” (Smith, 2010, 19). Tomalty and Jozsa's research provides a detailed set of guidelines that explain the opportunities and challenges that can be present in any greyfield redevelopment. It is this set of guidelines that will be examined in this report to help identify how applicable they were in 2004 and what recommendations need to be included so that they are up to date and relevant for practical application a decade later. Every greyfield redevelopment project is different and
comes with its own set of challenges and opportunities; this is why it is important to update this set of guidelines. The findings revealed that this set of guidelines can be generalized to other projects but because each project has unique challenges and opportunities that make each project special not every criteria will be as applicable to every project. Below is a list of Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines for greyfield redevelopment; these guidelines promote opportunities and challenges that must be addressed in order for any project to be considered successful.

Opportunities

- Changing retail patterns, Land Use
- Available land
- Good access to public transit
- Reusing existing building infrastructure

Challenges

- Price of land
- Ownership structure
- Demolition and alterations
- Transportation access
- Site constraints
- Impacts on the site/ project
- NIMBYism
- Complications
- Provincial policy framework
- Upgrading

Factors of Success

- Location
- Positive planning framework
- Financial incentives
- Partnerships with private developers
- Early and thorough communication with the affected communities
- Creative problem solving
- Good design
- Mixed land uses
- Range of housing types and prices
- Targeted marketing
- Patience

Tomalty and Jozsa’s research report was originally submitted to the CMHC in 2004 and was meant to show the potential of greyfield redevelopment. The report defined what greyfields are and the reasons for their appearance in small to medium sized municipalities in Ontario. Tomalty and Jozsa’s research describes the benefits associated with greyfield redevelopment as well as the barriers. Their research surveyed 48 municipalities across Ontario that summarized the number of greyfields in each, as well as projects currently in the process of redevelopment and municipal policy initiatives that have helped stimulate greyfield redevelopment. This information was used to identify 10 case studies that Tomalty and Jozsa researched in detail. These detailed case studies were divided into two groups; projects that were currently under development or being planned and development cases which triggered Community Improvement Plans or Secondary plans.

The first group detailed seven cases studies focused on projects that have been or were planned to be built on greyfield sites. These sites were identified by: significant size, located in a mature area, large parking areas and sites that are uncontaminated. The second group of cases studies included three cases focused on municipal policy measures that facilitated the redevelopment of greyfields and other commercial sites that triggered Community Improvement Plans or Secondary Plans that provided guidelines to rehabilitate redevelopment.

Tomalty and Jozsa’s research revealed that opportunities, challenges and success factors from the 10 case studies exhibit high levels of urban sprawl and have the potential to implement planning theories and new policy. Their research concluded that the interest in greyfield redevelopment is expected to grow in coming years and there is substantial evidence identifying the potential of greyfield redevelopment.
Although there is a limited amount of Canadian literature, recommendations will be taken from available Canadian as well as American sources. The literature referenced in this report outlines the significant research to date and explains what greyfields are but also why and how they should be redeveloped. Looking specifically at Olde Thornhill Village and Hullmark Centre will help justify whether Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines are worth implementing in future redevelopment projects.

Existing literature has reinforced that academic research is an important resource for planners who want to stay up-to-date with current theories and practices. Academic literature was referenced for this report because it helped create a set of recommendations to increase the validity of Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines; which was achieved by identifying areas of weakness within the guidelines and integrating recommendations that include important planning research that Tomalty and Jozsa may not have been aware of in 2004. Some of the research referenced in this report was published after 2004 and presents important theories on greyfield redevelopment that Tomalty and Jozsa did not have access to in 2004. The report recognizes the information in this new research and feels it should be included in the guidelines.

A prevalent planning theory directed at greyfield redevelopment is New Urbanism. New Urbanism is a fundamental planning theory that deals with the redevelopment of greyfields. The main goals of New Urbanism are to end urban sprawl and disinvestment by revitalizing communities, towns and regions. This planning theory started a movement against sprawl and focused on promoting cities that are livable, compact and accessible. The theory of New Urbanism is important to this discussion as it focuses on the redevelopment opportunities of greyfield sites in an effort to reverse sprawl (CNU, 2001a). New Urbanist criteria includes: big enough sites that can be used for mixed use residential neighbourhoods, transit accessibility, mixed-income housing and civic space (CNU, 2001a). Although they recommend that a greyfield site should be a certain size (18 hectares) to develop a proper New Urbanist neighborhood, this report will argue that many principles can be applied to smaller compact parcels. The Congress for New Urbanism has been a forerunner and advocate for redevelopment since the 1990s, and have published important
literature on the topic of greyfield redevelopment, which has been referenced within this report.

*Retrofitting Suburbia* by Ellen Dunham-Jones & June Williamson is another academic resource for planners and discusses the need for resilient suburbs by making them more sustainable. Both authors are professors of architecture and urbanism and bring both theory and practice to this book. *Retrofitting Suburbia* states that, “building complete communities is the greatest challenge in the postindustrial era; urban sprawl can be blamed for disjointed areas of development but it is the developers and existing policy that are truly responsible” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, XXVI). This literature sheds light on the process of changing policy to create patterns of sustainable growth, which can promote infill and curb sprawl. Retrofitting is a process of revitalization but it can also mean substituting conventional methods of development with ones that can complement the surrounding community and create vibrant nodes that can stand the test of time. The research presented in *Retrofitting Suburbia* is relevant to this report because it not only promotes the reuse and reutilization of greyfield sites but explains that they are vital to exiting communities. Redeveloping existing areas into connected and sustainable sites will be the biggest challenge for stakeholders moving forward. This goes hand-in-hand with the larger picture, providing sustainability at the municipal level will support sustainability at a regional level. “Sustainability will integrate economic, social, and ecological performance so that needs are met without compromising the needs of future generations” (Dunham-Jones & Williamson, 2009, XXVI).

Finally, *Sprawl Repair* by Galina Tachieva was the last noteworthy publication referenced for this report. Tachieva is a partner and director of town planning at Duany Plater-Zyberk and Company. Her award winning publication called *Sprawl Repair* focuses on retrofitting suburban places into complete, vibrant communities. The book acts as a design manual for the creation of sustainable communities that associate sprawl as the source of many modern day problems and illustrates how to transform sprawling areas into complete communities. Tacheiva therefore sees areas like Olde Thornhill Village and Willowdale (Hullmark Centre) as opportunities. “This manual is a guide that illustrates how to repair
the full range of suburban conditions, demonstrating a step by step design process for the creation of more sustainable communities” (Tachieva, 2010, 14). The intentions of this guidebook are mimicked in this research report, because they aim to generalize a set of guidelines that can be applied to a wide range of greyfield sites just waiting to be redeveloped.

The literature referenced for this report provides a strong argument for greyfield redevelopment. It also presents planning theories that were not present in Tomalty and Jozsa’s research; using this literature as a reference will help form a clear set of recommendations to include in their set of guidelines. By doing this the guidelines will be up-to-date and relevant to current practices and procedures.

How are Greyfields Created?

The development trends over the past century illustrate the formation of greyfields. The development of Canadian cities has been shaped by changing policies and a general focus on greenfield development. In Canada, at the turn of the 19th century and prior to the popularity of the automobile, the majority of Canadians commonly lived in traditional neighborhoods. Within these settlements individuals primary transportation occurred on foot, which necessitated that their communities were grouped together with a mix of uses. “There was housing, shopping and offices all within walking distance of one another; [as well as] a main street that provided the neighborhood with a sense of community” (Schindler, 2012, 478).

In the proceeding years of World War Two there was a change in development. Housing was in great demand by expanding post-war families and much of the development to accommodate this rise in population occurred in the suburbs. Families wanted additional space and wanted to get away from the poor health conditions and close confined spaces of the city. Decentralization and the absence of policy spurred suburban growth which created car dependent and low-density areas which remain today. As residential neighbourhoods began to formulate in these new suburban areas, retailers began to relocate some of its operations and stores to these new suburbs, to meet the needs of this new suburban population. This all happened so fast that there were little to no planning regula-
tions to inform proper development. Strip malls, which are characterized by stand-alone stores with ample parking was the first wave of retail development in the suburbs. Shortly following the strips malls the introduction of large shopping malls were built to satisfy multiple suburban shopping needs. The introduction of large malls led to the slow decline of the appeal and vitality of strip malls as they were no longer needed and outclassed by the larger malls. In the latter half of the 1980s development shifted and a new form of suburban retail experience the “Big Box” store became popular. “Although the change in retail formats and consumer preferences were a major factor in the emergence of greyfield sites, societal, demographic and economic changes have [again shifted to try and bring new life into these areas to meet the needs of their community]” (Onishenko, 2012, 12).

What planners and practicing professionals have now realized is that greyfields are a consequence of urban sprawl and suburban development. The development of greenfields on the fringes of metropolitan areas has left existing development in inner suburbs to decline into outdated and unattractive retail space that represent gaps in the urban fabric. These parcels of underutilized land that provide little to no services to the surrounding communities.

How do we Combat NIMBYism?

What are the consequences of neglecting greyfields? So what if municipalities left greyfields to degrade? What if municipalities did nothing to help reintegrate greyfields back into their communities? The broken window theory, which stems from criminologist George Kelling and James Wilson suggest, “that the police can make cites safer by cracking down on minor crimes like vandalism to avoid large and more severe crimes” (Sterbenz, 2013). This theory can easily be applied to greyfield redevelopment and what can happen if they are not looked after. “If greyfields are left undeveloped they can have blighting effects; which are characterized as weeds, graffiti, litter, loitering and crime” (Schindler, 2010, 492). When sites become abandoned they are prone to chaos; which can lead to serious crime. “People recognize this and begin to identify their neighborhood as unsafe and become even more disconnected” (Sterbenz, 2013). Therefore redeveloping greyfields is important to the health and safety of a community. Like the police, the municipality needs to crack down on struggling areas of the community and make sure they contribute to the success
of the area and not the demise.

**Challenges and Limitations of Redevelopment**

For the past decade or so there has been a growing concern of suburbanization on human activity and health; this has motivated planners to curb sprawl and regulate new development in their communities. Planners are now promoting mixed use development that integrates more density into existing areas.

Unfortunately there is no one size fits all strategy as every greyfield site is unique and presents its own set of opportunities and challenges. However, by ignoring the potential that greyfield sites offer will often lead to continued greenfield development on the urban fringes of sprawling communities.

Greyfield redevelopment can benefit the community in many ways but many community members “are resistant to new development because they believe change will bring higher taxes and more undesirable populations into their community; other community members have concerns over access to services and parking as well as congestion, overdevelopment and change in the character of their neighborhoods” (Otto, 2012). This NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard) creates a challenge for redevelopment, but with proper communication and consultation, community members and project leaders can compromise and manage expectations.

“Developers and building professionals face their own obstacles to greyfield development, no matter how well intentioned their efforts are to provide a product to the community” (Carwell, 2012). Developers must acquire and develop the land, which includes acquiring the site, potentially demolishing existing infrastructure on the land, cleanup, site preparation, often considerable cost and a lot of patience. It takes time for a developer to acquire a site that has multiple owners, it takes time to acquire permits to demolish existing buildings, seek approval to amend bylaws such as zone changes if necessary, and subdivision approvals to construct a variety of buildings. A lot of time, effort and money go into any pre-redevelopment stage and many developers and professionals are not interested in investing the time needed for redevelopment projects when less complex development opportunities may exist in the development of greenfield proj-
ects. Complex forms of ownership structure also make redevelopment difficult. When dealing with a redevelopment one must first examine the ownership and leasing structure. “Many land owners impose restrictive covenants and contracts like non-compete clauses that restricts the ability [to have] creative [redevelopment]; this is not uncommon and it is used by some retailers to protect their market share and prevent competition from others moving in, or nearby” (Schindler, 2010, 508). When this happens the municipality should take responsibility to step in and resolve the issues for the future of the community.

There are also concerns about the number of developers who specialize in this type of development. Greenfield sites are much easier to develop, usually taking less time and money to prepare than compared to greyfield sites. Many unforeseen challenges can arise in greyfield developments and to someone with little experience, a longer timeframe and limited funding can present significant barriers. Developers also point out that although existing infrastructure is available at greyfield sites many require upgrades, which can be expensive. “The developer also needs to make sure that the project continues to stay connected to the community's needs and as well as respecting the neighborhood concerns and input” (Otto, 2012). Developers must also find a mix of new uses that are economically viable within the community so the project can last. Existing buildings must also be examined and retrofitted for new use while meeting current standards, or they will be replaced altogether.

Municipalities have the responsibility to make a difference. Local governments make decisions regarding zoning and permit allocation that allows development to fail. Municipalities spend taxpayers money to lure developers into communities with large subsidies however, “municipalities have failed to regulate how much retail development takes place by allowing new stores to be constructed while others stay vacant” (Schindler, 2010, 521). Municipalities should develop policy that guides greyfield redevelopment because the result of current policy is affecting the future vitality of existing communities.

Policy Documents

Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines were published by the CMHC in 2004 and since this time the government has introduced new planning legislation aimed to guide more
sustainable development. Produced by municipalities as well as the province, these new documents promote sustainable growth by developing, recommending, promoting and implementing strategic and effective land use plans and policies to sustain and enhance the quality of life of people living in Ontario. These are board ideals that include greyfields but they are not specific enough to target areas that need improvement. Detailed literature needs to be integrated and further discussed in these documents because they are under-represented.

“The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is the statement of the government’s policies on land use planning; it is applied province wide and provides clear policy direction on land use planning to promote strong communities, a strong economy and a clean and healthy environment” (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). Unfortunately, there is no mention of greyfield redevelopment within this Ontario specific policy and focuses on brownfield remediation. “The PPS describes brownfield redevelopment as having, positive impacts on the site and on the surrounding community across a range of economic, social and environmental factors they generally result in increased tax revenue and perceived growth of business in the study areas” (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2005). The same can be argued for greyfield redevelopment and yet there is no mention of it.

The Places to Grow Act helps the Ontario government plan for growth in a coordinated and strategic way, and on June 16, 2006, the Government of Ontario released the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. It was prepared under the Places to Grow Act, 2005, as part of the Places to Grow initiative to plan for growth throughout Ontario. The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe aims to:

- Revitalize downtowns to become vibrant and convenient centers,
- Create complete communities that offer more options for living, working, shopping and playing
- Provide greater choice in housing types to meet the needs of people at all stages of life
- Curb sprawl and protect farmland and green-spaces
• Reduce traffic gridlock by improving access to a greater range of transportation choices.

The growth plan specifically says potential growth should support the creation of more compact, mixed use and transit-supportive communities. The Act requires municipalities to meet a 40% intensification target through infill development by 2015 and for each year thereafter (Ontario Ministry of Infrastructure, 2006). Unfortunately these are broad terms and municipalities interpret them in different ways producing ad hoc development.

Markham and Toronto Official Plan

The Official Plan of both Toronto and Markham specifically announces and explain the importance of providing a mix of uses that service the surrounding communities. This information provides details regarding development requirements including scale, massing and siting of development that is compatible and consistent with adjoining lands that ensure pedestrian accessibility while maintaining residential convenience and safety (Markham Official Plan, 2013). Although there is no mention of greyfield redevelopment, in either Official Plan there is language that alludes to development that integrates a mix of uses that service the surrounding communities. These plans also allow for the possibility of amending by-laws, site-specific amendments and providing density incentives to suit different situations.

Both the City of Toronto's and Markham's Official Plan has a Secondary Plan providing details on planning policies specific to those project areas. The Secondary Plan is intended to outline stipulations for development that include residential, commercial areas, parks and open space and institutional uses through the establishment of development policies for each project.

Why Should we Redevelop Greyfields?

Ignored greyfield sites pose a threat to the vitality of a community, making them a great opportunity to rejuvenate a neighborhood. Working with local governments and communities members can help to create a new identity and create a sustainable, competitive atmosphere. Greyfields are attractive because they are usually located in existing com-
munities with access to existing infrastructure (water, sewer, electrical, communications services), and can accommodate a mix of amenities and services that include a range of housing, retail and civic space. They can also create a ripple effect; because these sites are located within an existing community once revitalized they can rejuvenate the surrounding community, increase the tax base and create jobs. Although there are challenges associated with redevelopment the opportunities outweigh them because in the long run they provide neighborhoods with complete communities and healthier lifestyles.

Factors of Success

Before planners can develop communities in a way that is preemptive to the point of anticipating declining factors, local governments need to first employ a reactionary model. This will be followed by a preemptive model to diminish the possibility of developed sites becoming greyfields. There are a number of features that contribute to the success of any redevelopment project and the literature review references a number of lessons learned for the practical application and transformation of greyfields into successful projects that strengthen surrounding communities.
Chapter 4

Case Study Research:

Case study research is an essential part of this report and will be used to analyze Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines to identify where improvements need to be made and whether they can effectively be applied to a new case study. To evaluate this set of guidelines a case study called Olde Thornhill located in Markham Ontario from Tomalty and Jozsa’s original research will be re-examined. It is important to assess Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines because a lot of change has taken place in the last ten years. Not only has planning policy changed but Canada has gone through a financial crisis and the GTA has experienced a record number of buildings being developed. These changes implicate Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines with new perspectives on greyfield redevelopment. This is why assessing their legitimacy and identifying how they can be improved is important before applying them to future case studies.

4.1 Case Study: Olde Thornhill Village

Located at the corner of Bayview Avenue and John Street, Olde Thornhill Village represents a successful example of greyfield redevelopment. It exemplifies what can be achieved with mixed-use intensification, good design, and communication between a municipality and project developers. Olde Thornhill Village is a 15 hectare parcel of land that originally consisted of a failed shopping mall built in the 1970’s within the established community of Thornhill. Redeveloping this land not only focused on the failed shopping mall, but integrated urban design principles that incorporated the entire parcel. At the time the 2005 version of the PPS, as well as the growth plan for the GGH were not yet in place. Prior to 2005 there was a 1996/97 version of the PPS, which was issued under the authority of section 3 of the Planning Act. The policies laid out in this version complemented local policies that addressed local interests. This meant that policies set out by municipalities in Ontario had to conform to provincial plans approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. For the purpose of this project the 1996/97 version of the PPS was referenced, as well as Markham’s OP (2005). Although this was uncommon at the time, a secondary plan was developed as a necessary component to guide development in Thorn-
hill. This plan was developed to provide the area of Thornhill, and more specifically the redevelopment project, a set of design guidelines to provide direction for the process of redevelopment.

Area Context

Olde Thornhill Village is located approximately 30 minutes north of downtown Toronto in the municipality of Markham. “Markham is considered to be a medium sized city with a population of approximately 301,709 people and a growth rate of 15.3% according to the 2011 census. Markham is approximately 212 sq/km of land with a diverse and highly educated labor force. Markham’s development activity has put a major focus on residential construction at $242.7 million in 2013 with 1,132 residential building permits issued within the year” (Markham.ca, 2014).

Since Olde Thornhill Village lies within an existing community, residents already had access to many amenities; which explains why this project was selected for redevelop-
ment. Amenities that lie within the redevelop include: a community center that provides residents with a library, ice arena, fitness and recreational facilities. Within the immediate vicinity lies an elementary school that is located across the street from the project on the south side of John Street. A hospital, and a senior’s home are situated west of Bayview Avenue, and a church is located at the northeast corner of the site. The surrounding area also has its merits. There is an 11 hectare park and natural areas north of the project site. As well, an old industrial area is located to the east of the site in close proximity to the CN tracks. Transit is also available near the project site, but is limited to a bus route along John Street with a stop 200 meters from the site. This is within walking distance to Bayview Avenue which provides local and regional transit, as well as GO service.

**Site Visit**

A site visit was conducted to gather firsthand knowledge of the project and the surrounding community. The observations gathered during this site visit were used to evaluate Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines to see if the practical application of their research was still evident a decade later. Pictures taken during this site visit are used throughout chapter 4.1 to help visualize the projects various elements, and the descriptive analysis associated with the site plan and planning terminology.

**History of site**

“Prior to re-development, a 23 226 square meter mall, a six story office building, with surface and structured parking were located at the site” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 24). The mall was built in 1970s, but was never successful because of its location on the site, as well as a lack of interest from the residents. “The mall offered several uses including major department stores like Zellers, Winners, and a flea market” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 24). The mall itself never performed very well, and once these anchors left the decline of the
rest of the mall was inevitable. The site then became an underperforming and semi-vacant greyfield.

**Project Chronology**

2000  The municipality received a redevelopment application to demolish a large portion of the mall and replace it with a big box store. The municipality denied the application because it was not compatible with the surrounding community.

2001  A large portion of the mall closed, and the present developer submitted a development application for the Townhomes of Thornhill Village in 2003.

2003  The municipality approved the zoning amendment.

2004  The site plan was approved in July and construction started in August.

2006  The project was completed

**Physical Description**

This project involves the redevelopment and refurbishment of a 15 hectare parcel of land. The western portion of the site includes a four story office building, and an enclosed

![Aerial Map of redevelopment](image-url)
mall that has been renovated, re-clad and expanded. On the eastern side of the site a portion of the shopping mall was demolished. This portion of the mall was replaced with 352 stacked townhomes and nine low rise blocks. The townhomes and apartments were sold as condominium units at market price. Today this relationship between residential and commercial areas continues to thrive. Although there are a couple vacancies in the small service shops along the urban thoroughfare, the commercial sections are strongly anchored by Food Basics, a grocery store.

The urban roadway, constructed between John Street and Green Lane, connect the various sections of the development while also providing a small buffer between residential and commercial areas. The site also includes pedestrian paths throughout that adjoin the residences to the other land uses, as well as promote access from off-site destinations.

Parking continues to dominate this site, but accommodates consumers commuting from distant locations. There are 592 parking spaces for the commercial land uses and 555 parking spaces for residential development (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004). Today the parking is maxi-
mized, which highlights poor access to public transit. The site has been divided into sections and is monitored by a parking attendant.

Who was Involved in the Project?

Rosebud Homes Development Corporation in collaboration with Townhomes of Thornhill Village Inc., and Harry Kohn Architects were the residential project managers whom operated with The Wynn Group to fund the project. Rosebud Homes was responsible for the residential portion of the project, whereas the Wynn Group was the primary owner of the commercial office components of the project.

The Planning Process

Town Staff as well as City Council strongly supported this project. Although they did not bestow financial incentives; they supported the project by providing various approvals. Site specific rezoning, as well as a site plan approval was required to accommodate the project. This process took a total of four years. “A Secondary Plan was amended in 2002 by the Town that incorporated a site-specific set of urban design principles to guide redevelopment of this part of the municipality” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 26). These guidelines are set out in the Official Plan section 3.4.6.2 entitled Community Amenity Area. They gave the redevelopment strategies for the layout and site design of the project. Pedestrian connectivity and street oriented commercial uses, as well as mixed use development that included high and medium density residential, commercial and retail uses are a few of the features that are promoted in the guidelines (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004). Various housing
types were also supported by the secondary plan.

“The public consultation process was also successful in that it avoided the need for major changes to the design of the project by dispelling the unsubstantiated fears of local residents” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 28). Communicating with the public, and addressing community concerns was a useful tool in the design process. “This gave the resident’s ample opportunity to voice their concerns about the project…[as well as] opportunities to provide input on the design of the project including building design, orientation, and the inclusion of green space” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 26). Although residents supported the project, there were some concerns about increasing the density and height of the proposed residential buildings, and what impact it would have on the surrounding low-density neighborhoods.

Marketing

At the time of completion, all residences at Olde Thornhill were market driven. Since the redevelopment is close proximity to the CN rail lines first time home owners were more likely to buy here. This project is profitable because there were very few medium density developments in Markham and even fewer mixed use developments. “[Adding to the project’s marketability,] the project features new housing within an urban area with easy access to services, transit and amenities.” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 27). Units went on sale in May 2003 and quickly sold out.

Financial Aspects

“Development charges were paid to the municipality and were estimated to be $5,950,000; the developer paid approximately $13 million for the land and the development costs for the project as a whole totaled $48 million” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 27). The project required upgrades to the underground parking facility, which was the responsibility of the developer. “Units will be condominium ownership with prices ranging from $159,900 to $300,000 offering future residents affordable home ownership; the average townhouse resale value in Markham in $284,925 while the average condominium resells at $266,557” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 27). According to Trovit real estate, resale values for condos and townhouses in the area are between $370,000 and $550,000.
Moreover, during the redevelopment of Olde Thornhill, negotiations between the church and the Town of Markham about incorporating rent assisted housing into the project. “The discussion included a block of 20 units being purchased by the non profit sector, but funding was never secured. This never took place so all the housing available on site is ownership type” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 27).

Olde Thornhill Village

What was once a huge mall surrounded by a sea of parking, is now a unique mix of housing, retail, and office space situated in one location. The project was a success upon completion in 2006 and continues to be in 2014. In 2004 there was a strong demand for medium density, entry level housing which was met in very few areas in Markham. According to census data in 2013, there was a huge increase in residential construction, as well as residential building permits. This data shows an increase in demand for housing, meaning infill developments can be very attractive areas for redevelopment.

This project highlights the importance of strong staff and council when redeveloping a mixed-use, greyfield project. “From a planning perspective, key objectives such as residential intensification, transit supportive development, and [enhancing] the range of housing typologies in Thornhill were addressed and satisfied” (Tomalty & Jozsa, 2004, 27). Integrating a set of design guidelines similar to Tomalty and Jozsa’s into the predevelopment phase could be a strategic way of attaining successful outcomes. These guidelines, as well as planning theories and policies instigated by the municipalities are an integral way of producing prosperous results.

This project reveals that using a secondary plan to guide the design of the redevelopment project was a preemptive model for controlling a successful outcome. This was proven to be a good strategy, but was not mentioned in Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines. Olde Thornhill does, on the other hand, prove that Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines are an affective assessment tool for projects. Modeling these tools into a set of preemptive and formal principles will help guide projects from the beginning to finish, and hopefully aid the process of implementation (reference chapter 3).
4.2 Case Study: Hullmark Centre

Now that the analysis of Olde Thornhill Village has proved Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines to be an effective measure of greyfield redevelopment in 2004, these guidelines will be used to assess a case study called Hullmark Centre. Because this is a current case study applying these guidelines to Hullmark Centre will identify areas of weakness and features of the guideline that need to be improved. Hullmark Centre is located in the North York District of Toronto and was chosen because it is located in a municipality that supports redevelopment and infill development. It was also chosen to ensure that new policy is being applied and to see if the municipality and developers are playing an active role in the redevelopment process. As the project is currently under development, the case study ensures that any data needed to analyze the project is available and relevant to current practices. The assessment of Hullmark Centre will use a qualitative approach that will focus on the relationship between theory and existing research while targeting policy, rather than collecting numeric data. This approach investigates the success factors of Hullmark Centre; which will help answer the research questions set forth in this report. This will also help create a set of recommendations for future redevelopment projects to consult. The case study will therefore demonstrate how general forces present in this as well as other projects can produce different results in different circumstances.

Hullmark Centre is located in a former low density suburb at the northern boundary of Toronto called Willowdale. It is located at the corner of Yonge and Sheppard, in a plaza built in the 1960s. This strip mall was situated within an existing and

4.9 Hullmark Centre rendering
source: urbantoronto.ca
established neighborhood with easy access to amenities; which explains why developers were initially attracted to the site. Amongst the redevelopment towers being constructed along Yonge Street, Hullmark will eventually complement its surrounding community of high density infill.

Because the 1.5 hectare plaza was no longer viable it was purchased by Hullmark Developments Inc. and demolished. To redevelop this greyfield site, Tridel and Hullmark teamed up to construct a mixed-use development that will erase the previous strip mall and maximize the density of the site. The Centre has been designed using smart growth principles in the hopes that it will generate an urban hub. Hullmark Centre will soon be complete and is expected to open in fall 2014.

The redevelopment will include 237 office condominiums, 62 400 square feet of retail, anchored by a 49 000 square foot Whole Foods grocery store, along with 682 luxury condominium residences in 49 story and 35 story towers (North York Secondary Plan, 2010). The redevelopment will also include indoor public access to both the Yonge and Sheppard subway lines. When complete the Centre will be one of the tallest structures in the northern Toronto skyline making this redevelopment a landmark in North York.

Area Context

North York is a former municipality that is now part of the amalgamated City of Toronto and is governed by Toronto City Council. The population is roughly 670 840 with a 4.4% increase from 2006 to 2011 according to the 2011 census (Stats Canada, 2011). Hullmark lies within a very diverse and multicultural population; (57% having been born outside of Canada), it has a low unemployment rate of 9.3% with an average income of $95 580 (City of Toronto, 2011). The population is dominated by an age range of 25-64 with 45% of the total population living in apartment buildings over 5 stories’ high (City of Toronto, 2011). The population of North York is expected to grow rapidly in the next few
years so this redevelopment will aid in accommodating the growing population.

North York began as a grouping of scattered houses that evolved into an agricultural hub (Anonymous Planner). This hub eventually grew into a low density suburb as a result of the economic boom following the Second World War. Much of the area is still suburban in nature but efforts lead by governmental policy has promoted intensification and redevelopment. To relieve density pressure in downtown Toronto, extensive development has begun in North York. North York not only has access to the Subway line but transverses with the 401 freeway, putting Hullmark in the center of two major transit corridors. In some ways this area was destined to be one of the most substantial crossroads of northern Toronto. The central area of North York is gradually becoming less suburban and may soon resemble the skyline in downtown Toronto. Today high rise condominiums line the corridor along Sheppard Ave. and Yonge Street and development will continue to add density to the area.

Residential development in this area has created issues. As the higher condominium towers created a boom in the immediate population, it has exceeded the school board’s admittance rates to which they have begun to refuse students because they are unable to accommodate them (North York District, 2010).

“Corporate offices like Shoppers Drugmart, as well as head offices like Procter and Gamble, Destle, Cadbury Adams, Lindt and Sprugli, Equifax and Xerox are located in North York giving the district economic stability” (North York District, 2010, 6). Also speaking to North York’s economic vitality are its shopping malls and community hubs, which include:
Ontario Science Centre, Black Creek Pioneer Village, Toronto Centre for the Arts, Yorkdale, Fairview mall and Don Mills Centre.

Site Visit

From its modest beginnings this parcel of land is now unrecognizable. Currently the exterior finishing touches are taking place on the south tower and centre podium. Cladding is almost complete on the north tower, and work is taking place on the mechanical penthouse level. Work continues on the green roof and signage can be seen from the street advertising that Whole foods, RBC Royal Bank, Rexall Pharmacy, Chipotle and Guu Izakaya restaurant will be opening soon. The south TTC subway entrance is also open to the public.

History of site

“The area including the Willowdale plaza was originally settled by the United Empire Loyalists who were invited by Lt. Gov. John Simcoe to build houses; the area slowly grew as an agricultural hub, and after the opening of Yonge St. development grew steadily” (Hunter, 2013). From its modest beginnings Willowdale was the foundation of Hullmark Centre. “The strip mall called Willowdale was built in the 1960s and consisted of a food store that was later converted to a sports store anchoring three or four personal service shops” (Anonymous Planner). The 1.5 hectare site stood on a quarter of the site with a surrounding parking lot. Unfortunately, demand declined and the site turned into an unsuccessful commercial area. Today the North York community resembles the Toronto skyline of high density towers.
Project Chronology

2006  The City of Toronto received an application for the redevelopment of Willdowdale Plaza.
2006  The City of Toronto received a zoning by-law amendment application.
2007  A statutory community meeting was held to receive community feedback.
2007  Voluntary Design Review, the project went before the city’s design review panel and the panel voted to support the proposed direction of the project.
2008  A site plan control application was submitted.
2009  An Official Plan Amendment was submitted to the city, to seek an order from the OMB to resolve the outstanding appeals.
2009  North York Centre Secondary Plan came into effect.
2010  Final Report requires that the owners must complete a TTC level 3 Technical Review.
2011  Ground breaking ceremony, construction begins.
2014  Proposed completion.

Physical Description

“Hullmark development Inc. was conceived by the late Murphy Hull, [and since his passing] the current CEO Jeff Hull has partnered with the developer Tridel to see that the project is finished” (Wintrob, 2008). Hullmark is a master planned community that will be a destination, a hub and a meeting place. It will include retail, office space, direct subway access and luxurious condos. When completed, Hullmark will comprise of 1 100 000 square feet of mixed used development (North York District, 2010). In an effort to be environmentally sustainable, the project is a green development that features condo units that have low VOC paints and carpeting, as well as energy efficient windows (North York District, 2010). Also located at the site is a large retail and office podium that has direct access to the Yonge Street subway line. It also has a large private courtyard that acts as outdoor amenity area for residents which is located at the base of the condo towers.

Who was Involved in the Project

Hullmark development Inc. in partnership with Tridel collaborated with Builder
Deltera and Kirkor Architects & Planners to develop Hullmark Centre. “Originally con-
ceived by the current CEO Jeff Hull’s Grandfather, Murphy Hull, began his enterprise as a
plasterer that eventually formed Hullmark Developments” (Wintrob, 2008). “Hullmark has
been in partnership with Tridel on numerous commercial and residential projects for over
thirty years and is not new to redevelopment” (Wintrob, 2008). This experience and famil-

Planning Process

Much support to increase the density of the North York Region was instigated by
the City of Toronto as well as the Ontario Municipal Board OMB. In 1998 the North York
Centre Secondary Plan came into effect and identified the area as a significant commercial
node. The Secondary Plan designated the lands as mixed used, which includes commer-
cial, residential, open space recreational, institutional, entertainment and cultural uses. The
Secondary Plan required the applicant to conform to the policies set out in this plan as well
as the PPS and the growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. Furthermore, conformity to these policies meant that the development of Hullmark Centre needed to incorporate an appropriate mix of land uses to meet broad economic and employment goals as well as intensification targets.

In order for this project to move forward the proposal needed to acquire certain Official Plan amendments. Prior to 2006, the City of Toronto received an application to demolish Willowdale Plaza located at the corner of Yonge St. and Sheppard Avenue east. This demolition permit was approved and any salvaged material was sent to the applicable scrapyard. In 2006, a preliminary report was submitted to the City of Toronto to review the Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendments. The applicant proposed a six-fold increase to the current maximum density of the lot, which was eventually achieved by providing incentives like conveyance of lands and density bonusing in exchange for parkland and zoning changes to accommodate residential uses as well as shopping centers and other commercial uses (North York District, 2010). To provide these incentives, the city required the applicant to conduct an environmental study report detailing the lands for the new road extension, a housing a flood plain special policy area report that respected the affected areas and to integrate a publicly accessible landscape with open space located at the grand plaza. The city also required that the applicant provide a pedestrian connection from the major office development to the north and south subway stations.

A community meeting was held on June 2, 2007 and approximately 40 people attended (North York District, 2010). “Issues that were brought to light were that density already existed in the area and the community wanted commercial offices as well as a grocery store; there were also concerns over building heights and shadowing. Community members had issues with traffic patterns and adequacy of parking. There were also concerns over the vehicular circulation, drop off activity and visually screening the area from surrounding condominiums” (North York District, 2010, 8). Conformity of the project proposal to the provisions set out in the official plan states that development could contribute to the livability of the area. Another statutory public meeting was held on May 14, 2009 to help address public concerns. The applicant also voluntarily proposed
to initiate an urban and architectural design review that would be processed by the city.

When complete, the project will showcase an interconnected mix of residential, retail, commercial and office space. The project will include a thirty-five story retail and residential tower, a five story retail amenity space, and lastly a forty-five story tower consisting of twelve stories of office space and thirty-three stories of residential (North York District, 2010). Other features of the redevelopment will include two new pedestrian connections to Yonge and Sheppard TTC subway stations and a new services road. Offering amenities and providing public spaces will help to connect the surrounding community with the new redevelopment. It will also complement the surrounding community from an urban design perspective, Hullmark is a combination of towers that will integrate with the surrounding towers along Yonge Street which range from nine to 29 stories high (North York District, 2010).

**Marketing**

The redevelopment of Willowdale Plaza asserts that all residences and office condos are market driven. “The development is targeting young professionals who want access to public transit and the highway, as well as empty nesters and the growing Korean and Persian communities” (City of Toronto, 2011). To advertise the new development and create transparency among the community members the public could attend a free tour of the building and attend a discussion immediately following the tour. The Canada Steering Committee launched the first in a series of public tours of the Hullmark Centre, which were attended by more than 40 people on August 13, 2013. “The tour was lead by were Tridel project manager, Tim Wiseman; Delterra project superintendent Guido Mazzonne; and Kirkor project architect Carlos Antunes” (Garland, 2013)

**Financial Aspects**

Development charges were paid to the municipality, which amounted to $5.2 million; the price of the Willowdale plaza and lands is unknown but the redevelopment when finished will be worth approximately $500 million (North York District, 2010). The project required upgrading of utilities as well as integrating the subway entrances to have interior access for the public and residences of Hullmark Centre. This was proposed by the devel-
oper and therefore at their expense.

Residential units range in price from $506,000 to 1.6 million while office condos range from $346,500 to 739,000 (Starr, 2011). Office space was included as part of the deal but was the highest element of risk in this development. “The proposal initially included rental space but the market was slow and the community is used to ownership” (Starr, 2011).

Hullmark is not complete however the development is almost sold out. “The residential component of the Hullmark Centre is 98% sold, the office component is 70% sold and the retail component is 78% leased” (Dunning, 2009). There is a total of eight banking institutions cooperating to fund this development, and when completed the total commercial value of the Hullmark Centre will be $493.7 million” (Dunning, 2009). This project will create approximately 2,400 employment positions and support industries with over $123 million in wages. “It will generate over $74 million in revenues for the Federal and Provincial Governments and contribute $3.3 million for education” (Dunning, 2009).

**Hullmark Centre**

What was once a small strip mall surrounded by asphalt will soon be a crowning jewel of North York. Hullmark will fit well with the surrounding intensification and will provide the community with office space and luxurious residential condominiums. This project has been very successful from the perspective of both the developer and the municipality; with over 90% residences sold and 70% office space sold and retail leased this project will be a huge success (Dunning, 2009).

This project highlights the importance of having strong municipal staff as well as council but also strong negotiations between the municipality and project proponent. Hullmark Centre exemplifies what can be done on a small amount of land with a huge vision. This project is extremely dense but will service the community appropriately. Key planning objects seen at this redevelopment are intensification and transit supportive features that support the surrounding community. The establishment of the North York Centre Secondary Plan provided regulations and objectives to specifically guide this project and future projects within the area.
Summary

By applying Tomalty and Jozsa’s 2004 version of the guidelines to Hullmark Centre identified areas of the guidelines that can be updated and improved to better reflect current greyfield redevelopment. In Chapter 5 these two case studies will be compared against each other. Based on these research findings, this report will make a set of recommendations to improve Tomalty and Jozsa’s guidelines so that when they are applied to future case studies they are current and more applicable.
Chapter 5

Case Study Comparison

In this Chapter, Olde Thornhill Village and Hullmark Centre will be compared. This will improve the understanding of greyfield redevelopment by highlighting important details of the process. This will guide planners and developers to make informed decisions and reduce confusion. Understanding similarities and differences between these two case studies will also help identify weaknesses in Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines so future projects will be aware of challenges as well as opportunities involved in the process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Hullmark Centre</th>
<th>Olde Thornhill Village</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Use</td>
<td>The land was originally designated commercial, but was changed to accommodate mixed use.</td>
<td>The land was originally designated commercial, but was changed to accommodate mixed use.</td>
<td>Both sites are located in ageing municipalities. These two sites show the lifecycle of a commercial strip mall. Changing the land use allowed the density to increase. Both projects took advantage of zoning amendments to their own OP's and integrated mixed use development at both locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Available Land</td>
<td>1.5 ha</td>
<td>6.1 ha</td>
<td>Every project is unique and there should be no minimum amount of land required for redevelopment. If land is available and in a prime location it should be redeveloped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to Transit</td>
<td>Before redevelopment the site had immediate access to public transit. Redevelopment renovated subway connections and integrated indoor access for the public.</td>
<td>Before redevelopment public transit was 200m away, and not accessible on site. This was not changed when the site was redeveloped.</td>
<td>Both sites accommodated a small strip mall that was surrounded by a parking lot. Olde Thornhill was redeveloped before planning policies like the PPS and Growth Plan so transit was not integrated into the final design. However, at Hullmark, what was originally built to accommodate the car is now focused on balancing parking and public transit. Minimum parking spaces have been allocated for residents and visitors. The availability of transit makes it easier for residents and consumers to go to and from the site. This promotes pedestrian traffic at the site, which is important for the economic vitality of the site because it attracts not only car traffic but foot traffic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-using existing infrastructure</td>
<td>Semi-vacant site with no anchor. There were small shops open but could not sustain the strip-mall financially.</td>
<td>Declining grocery store with no amenities for the office building and community centre.</td>
<td>Reusing the existing infrastructure allows redevelopment to capitalize on existing utilities. This mitigates cost for both the developer and municipality, while offering the opportunity for it to be, retrofitted or replaced. At Olde Thornhill half of the existing infrastructure was renovated and reused in the redevelopment. However at Hullmark everything was demolished to accommodate a completely new design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Value</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>$13 million</td>
<td>It is hard to compare prices because this information was unavailable for Hallmark and these parcels are different sizes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership Structure</td>
<td>Hullmark Development Inc, as well as eight banking institutions helped to finance the project.</td>
<td>Rosebud Homes, and the Wynne Group financed the project.</td>
<td>Greyfields often have more than one owner because the site is large and expensive to maintain/ built etc. Therefore financing these projects is often a barrier for even the most determined developers. Extra time and resources also need to be considered when dealing with greyfield redevelopment because unforeseen delays can happen. Like partnerships falling apart as well as environmental assessments conducted or upgrades to existing infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing Infrastructure</td>
<td>The existing strip-mall was demolished, and the remaining materials were salvaged. Upgrading of existing services was also required at Hullmark.</td>
<td>Some demolition was done and many alternations needed to be made to the existing underground parking lot as well as existing utilities. Upgrading of existing utilities were required to accommodate new loads on the system.</td>
<td>Demolishing a site is easy, the real challenge occurred in trying to reintegrate existing infrastructure into a new design.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation access</td>
<td>Transit was already available on site but was better integrated into the redevelopment. It was renovated and indoor access was given to the public. The redevelopment lies above subway access and has access to seven bus routes and six Go transit buses.</td>
<td>Transit was not integrated into the redevelopment. The original site was serviced by bus and Go transit 200m away with no access on site. There is a proposal for the Viva (rapid bus) to service this area, but no concrete evidence supporting this information is available.</td>
<td>Integrating existing transit routes into a redevelopment is almost impossible. This becomes a barrier to redevelopment because current policy supports public transit. Choosing a site with easy access to public transit is important when deciding who will be living, working, and visiting the development.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site constraints</td>
<td>There were no site constraints.</td>
<td>1. The existing rail tracks. 2. The existing layout of the community centre, and office building.</td>
<td>Creative problem solving needs to take effect when there are barriers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts on the site</td>
<td>There were no impacts on the site but the city did require the applicant to conduct an environmental review and a TTC level 3 Technical Review.</td>
<td>There is no mention of any assessments being done to ensure the redevelopment would have minimal impact on the site and community.</td>
<td>Each redevelopment is dependent on a wide variety of internal and external factors. There is a continuous push and pull from the municipality and the developer to finish the project and to redevelop the parcel in a way that will benefit all parties involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIMBYism</td>
<td>Yes, the community was worried about increased density and impacts on the existing community.</td>
<td>Yes, the community was worried about the density of the project and that it was close to the railway tracks.</td>
<td>Consultation with the affected community is important to mitigate fear and establish a consensus or common vision. Addressing the public early is always helpful and making the public feel involved usually creates support. Many developers do not want to deal with the public but they need to find a way to integrate them and their concerns. Minimum requirements specified by current policy are not enough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complications</td>
<td>An extended approval process and negotiations with the City of Toronto took place.</td>
<td>Unforeseen challenges with existing infrastructure extended the approval process with the municipality.</td>
<td>When municipalities and developers are not familiar with greyfield redevelopment, it is challenging to facilitate implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincial Policy Framework</td>
<td>Integrated policies and recommendations from the PPS and the Growth Plan for GGH into the redevelopment.</td>
<td>Completed before PPS and Growth Plan for GGH so the redevelopment referenced policies laid out in the 1996/97 PPS and Markham’s Official Plan.</td>
<td>Most developers and public citizens are unaware of any directed greyfield policy. Although there is no policy specific to greyfield redevelopment there is a number of documents that impact the redevelopment of greyfields. These existing guidelines are halfway between being a policy guideline and an information document. There is established language set out by the municipality that supports redevelopment but there is no existing policy that specifically targets greyfield redevelopment. A toolbox to guide the redevelopment of these sites is missing.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Factors of Success | Hullmark Centre, North York | Olde Thornhill Village, Markham | Both areas are a mix of residential, retail and office space. Both sites are walkable districts that support a pedestrian friendly environment where social and civic activity is encouraged. |

| Location | Hullmark Centre, North York | Olde Thornhill Village, Markham | Hullmark is required by policy to integrate and make certain planning considerations to the redevelopment. Olde Thornhill Village did not have to make these same considerations but has proven to be a success. Integrating both new policy and an extensive design studies (evident at Olde Thornhill) will likely produce very successful redevelopment projects. |

| Positive Planning Framework | Smart Growth principles were used as well as re-urbanization to focus growth and development in area of the city that already has infrastructure. The redevelopment adhered to current policy guidelines for intensification which is outlined in the PPS and Growth Plan for GGH. | Although policy did not provide the redevelopment with guidelines, the extensive planning process produced a well-designed project that fit well into the existing community. | The Places to Grow Act requires municipalities to meet a specific intensification target by 2015. This can be achieved with infill development; making greyfield sites a great opportunity. |

| Financial Incentives | Density bonuses were negotiated with the city. In exchange for density the city asked for the applicant to develop parkland onsite. | No incentives were provided by the city. | Incentives provided by the municipality are uncommon in Canada. Therefore the goal is to secure interested shareholders and have them fund the project. |

| Public consultation | Yes, minimum consultation. | Yes, minimum consultation. | Early and thorough communication with the affected communities is important. Community workshops and public engagement tools like surveys, tours and design charrettes can be useful in achieving early public support. |
Hullmark demolished the existing structure and negotiated mutually beneficial trade-offs with the city to obtain more density than originally allowed. Olde Thornhill took advantage of existing infrastructure and used the underground parking lot as well as half of the existing mall in the redevelopment. Hullmark creatively obtained more density by providing the city with other amenities and upgrades. Olde Thornhill creatively made solutions to problems with existing infrastructure. Creating solutions to problems is what greyfield redevelopment is all about. It is not meant to be easy and takes good negotiation skills.

The built form at both locations supports functional and aesthetically pleasing designs. Both sites have clear and established entrance ways and thoroughfares; both sites are pedestrian oriented with safe and efficient connections to existing municipal infrastructure and adjacent lands. There are major supermarkets located at both sites to anchor the retail components. And there is parking available but it is limited to promote the use of public transit. Open space was integrated at Hullmark as part of municipal recommendations but was not at Olde Thornhill.

Both sites have a mix of residential, office and retail. This is one fault of the both redevelopment projects. Affordable housing should be present to integrate a range of income levels. This is to avoid pockets of wealth in some areas and pockets of low socioeconomic status in others.

Young professionals and seniors were targeted because of the range of amenities, close proximity to transit in a busy, noisy neighbourhood. What takes the most time is the approval and negotiation process with the municipal body. By developing specific policy and a set of guidelines for both the municipality as well as developers to follow will help expedite this process and make it easier to produce.

Summary

Comparing these two case studies does not necessarily provide solutions to all the issues involved with greyfield redevelopment but each case study has provided some
insight into the process. The main criticism of this study method is that most individual cases do not provide enough insight to be applicable to every project. Therefore an increase in the number of case studies could increase the validity of the findings and mitigate any shortcomings of this methodology. This comparison chart is not extensive but does establish that Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines are still a relevant measure of success and is generalizable to most case studies. Due to the exploratory nature of the research an in-depth analysis of the guidelines should be undertaken with the help of additional case studies. Even though there are limitations to this research, findings from the comparison chart have created a set of recommendations to aid policy, design and consultation for future greyfield redevelopment. Furthermore, chapter 6 will discuss a set of recommendations that should be integrated into Tomalty and Jozsa’s set of guidelines to establish a general framework that future projects can reference from beginning to finish.
Chapter 6  
Closing Remarks and Recommendations  

Academic research like this report is one of the few measures of success for these projects once they are finished. Projects like Olde Thornhill Village as well as Hullmark Centre should be re-evaluated after a period of time to ensure planning strategies are producing the best type of development for local citizens. This is one way municipalities can keep tabs on development in their jurisdictions but also gain knowledge about what types of develop creates better living. Tomalty and Jozsa's guidelines recognize the opportunities and challenges of each project and are a good way of implementing successful projects elsewhere in Canada.

This report has also shown that there is a clear justification for greyfield redevelopment. Younger generations are now being educated about the negative ramifications of sprawl, which will undoubtedly create a shift that influences where and how they choose to live. The population of Canada is expected to reach even larger numbers in the future and most inner cities as well as first generation suburbs will not be able to accommodate this large population influx. And if not planned correctly, will only ensure additional greenfield development. “This is why intensifying second and third tier suburbs need to be addressed” (Levy, 2011, 23).

Findings from the existing literature and case study analysis revealed a set of recommendations that can improve the policy, design and consultation process of greyfield redevelopment which have reinforced the importance of Tomalty and Jozsa’s research. This research has illustrated that these guidelines can be used to evaluate a project upon completion but can also be used to guide projects from beginning to finish. These recommendations include:

1. Determine the local procedures of the municipality that relate to greyfield redevelopment and assess the circumstance to which the project lies; Does the municipality have regulations and guidelines for greyfield redevelopment already or do they need to implement a set of guidelines?
2. Municipalities need to create a list of existing greyfield sites and vulnerable com-
3. Develop a monitoring and evaluation program for new projects so that missing elements in one project can be incorporated into new developments.

4. Current policies specific to greyfield remediation and prevention need to be created.

5. Encourage more community engagement at the beginning of each greyfield redevelopment project. Creating a good relationship with the community will make a project more successful once it is finished.

6. Create continuing education programs for professionals to become more aware of the consequences associated with greyfields and the potential there is when redeveloped.

7. The only way to promote greyfield redevelopment is to focus development and seek approval from the municipality. Municipalities in the GTA continue to operate on outdated planning practices (ie outdated bylaws), that creates inefficient development that does not meet the needs of communities (Tuckey); this needs to change.

8. Local governments control land use decisions allowing certain types of development. It is the responsibility of the local government to find alternatives and push for sustainable development.

9. “Secondary Plans” can be used as an effective tool to guide development in specific areas of a municipality. They provide direction for development by specific land use plans and policies. They are adopted into the Official Plan to ensure that their intent is binding.

10. Greyfield redevelopment is about reuse and sustaining the environment therefore salvage is an important part of redevelopment. If material can be reused it should be used in the redevelopment or deconstructed and stored at a designated facility for later use.
Conclusion

What planners and practicing professionals are now starting to realize is that greyfields are a consequence of urban sprawl and greenfield development. The development of greenfields on the fringes of metropolitan areas has left existing development to decline into outdated and unattractive retail space that represent gaps in the urban fabric. These parcels of land consist of underutilized land with declining tax revenues that provide little to no services to the surrounding communities.

This report has outlined the potential of greyfield redevelopment, and these recommendations of the report should be used to evaluate completed projects and serve as a guide for future development projects to ensure their success. Both of these projects lie at the heart of their communities and are essential to their future vitality. They represent what can be achieved with hard work and dedication to curbing sprawl. This research report is evidence that strategies set forth by Tomalty and Jozsa as well as other planning theories like New Urbanism, Transit Oriented Development and Smart Growth principles produce successful projects. Modeling these guidelines into a set of principles that municipalities can use to help guide the redevelopment and implementation process will produce sustainable communities. This report has updated and endorsed these guidelines in the hopes that others will apply this knowledge to future redevelopment projects.
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