

PIER 8

User Stories



Pier 8 is envisioned by the City of Hamilton as a vibrant and healthy creative community that is sustainable, innovative, beautifully-designed, socially relevant, and economically viable.

We want to create a great neighbourhood, where people and families can live rich and productive lives, engaged with a community that is inclusive, open and accessible, and an exemplar of what it means to live in Canada as a model of democracy in the twenty first century

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BLOCK 1
gh3

BLOCK 2
superkül

BLOCK 3
KPMB Architects

BLOCK 4
Omar Gandhi Architect Inc.

BLOCK 5
KPMB Architects

BLOCK 6
superkül

BLOCK 7
Omar Gandhi Architect Inc.

BLOCK 8
KPMB Architects

BLOCK 16
gh3

Alice
Age 34
Pier 8 Resident



When Alice and her husband Desh relocated to Hamilton from their one-bedroom condo in Toronto last year, Alice had a 1-year-old daughter and worried that she might feel isolated in Hamilton, where she didn't know anyone. She was relieved to find a welcoming community-feel in Pier 8, and since Pearl was two years old now, Alice made many new friends through the drop-in programs at the nearby Bennetto Community Centre.

By the time Alice gets Pearl dressed and into the stroller, she's running late for circle time at the community centre. Since she doesn't have time to make a coffee, she decides to stop and grab one at the nearby café. It's a quick walk from their townhouse in Block 1, and this spring Alice is enjoying watching all the life coming back into the Greenway as she walks along pushing her stroller, pointing out cattails and the occasional frog to her daughter.

After having some time to play, Alice and her friend Erin — another local mother she met through the community centre — decide to take a walk with their daughters in their strollers along the promenade. With any luck, the movement and the sound of the water will lull the girls to sleep.



The women stop at the playground in the shady spot they like near the picnic benches. They watch some older kids on the play-structure while the babies sleep. When Pearl begins to stir, the women get up and keep walking along the promenade, taking in the view of the Niagara escarpment and chatting about their plans for the weekend. Alice's parents will be coming in from Ottawa to visit, and she's grateful they no longer need to set up an inflatable mattress in the living room to host them; instead they will be staying in their guest room.

On her way home afterwards, Alice notices signs around the Harbour for the Supercrawl festival and realizes that it's happening this weekend. Good timing, she thinks — now she knows how she'll entertain her parents this weekend.

Ed and Sheila
Age 55 and 53
Pier 8 Residents

Ed and Sheila never thought they would leave their large family home in the nearby east end but, after the kids left, they found they had more house than they knew what to do with. They wanted to stay in Hamilton, as their eldest son had married and lived nearby with his two children. Driving by the presentation centre one day, they decided to have a look, just out of curiosity, and before they knew it, they were choosing fixtures and designs for their brand new 2-bedroom condo in Block 2.

On weekday mornings, Ed and Sheila take their coffees outside on the balcony. From the fifth floor, they have a spectacular view of the Niagara escarpment across the water. Afterwards, Sheila usually heads over to the fitness club for a yoga class or a swim, while Ed prefers to go for a walk along the promenade. Ed enjoys having the ability to walk several kilometers without ever having to leave the community; he loves weaving through the pedestrian mews and feeling a sense of safety and comradery. On his way out today, he grabs some empty shopping bags and decides to head east towards the farmers market.

Ed and Sheila love to entertain, and often host elaborate dinners at their place. Tonight, their old friends David and Judy are in town and Ed is planning to make salmon on the grill. Before dinner they could have some drinks on the rooftop terrace. Hopefully the weather will hold, he thinks, and we can sit outside.

He walks along the promenade, stopping now and then to watch the kids at the beach, or the young boys shooting hoops at the basketball courts. Two elderly gentlemen are playing chess on the terrace of the café, and Ed wonders idly if they'd teach him the game.

At the market, he makes small talk with the young vendor as he deliberates over which bouquet of asparagus he'll choose. Sheila meets him at The Landing at the north-east corner of the promenade after her class. She's looking forward to Saturday, which is when they usually babysit their two grandchildren so their son and his wife can have a date night. Their second bedroom, which doubles as an office, has a daybed set up with another mattress that slides out underneath. Ed and Sheila love waking up Sunday morning to the sound of the kids giggling together in the room next door.



Padma
Age 38
Pier 8 Resident



Looking North over the bay from the top floor of Hamilton's Sheraton Hotel, Padma could see the green roof of her new building on Pier 8. It's been a bittersweet move for her. Padma left Hamilton over twenty years ago to study tourism, and spent almost a decade working at various hotels around the world before becoming a manager at Toronto's downtown Sheraton Hotel. After years of living a nomadic life, she finally felt settled. She wasn't anticipating a move back to her hometown — until the day she got that phone call.

Her mother Priya had slipped on the icy driveway and broken her hip. Her father was once an active and agile man but the years had caught up to him. Even though he claimed they could take care of each other, Padma knew they just didn't want to burden her. Immigrants to Canada, her parents worked hard to give Padma every opportunity and they would never forgive themselves if she moved back in with them. She would have to find a happy solution...

It was hard to believe this was over 6 months ago. Although her office was able to relocate her rather smoothly, it still surprised Padma how quickly she had settled in to her new life. She loved being able to walk or bike to work, pick up fresh produce at the local market, and the local coffee shop clerk already knew her by name! Padma had really come to love the shorter commute and slower pace of life. Some days, she would take a detour to see her parents before work, sitting down for a quick breakfast with them. Other days, she would pop by after work. They enjoyed visiting her too. Priya, although she uses a walker these days, especially likes to stroll by the water. She could step directly outside from Padma's ground floor townhome, walk through the lush courtyard, across the Greenway, and onto the promenade — she was still getting used to her walker and she liked not having to worry about traffic.

It was a particularly clear and sunny morning and Padma could almost make out the cars crossing the Burlington Bay Skyway. It's a perfect day to sit on the patio, she thought. She would invite her parents over after work and try out the new restaurant around the corner from her townhome.



Joel
Age 31
Pier 8 Resident

Joel looked out the window and then back at the clock: 3:42. He had finished working out at the fitness club an hour ago to clear his head, but it looked like his clients were running late. He was excited about this job, and anxious for them to arrive to see his new ideas for their website. Perhaps the snow was causing some delay, he thought. He remembered back a few years, when he was still working as a freelance graphic designer: the constant commuting, carrying laptop from meeting to meeting, and moving from one coffee shop to another to meet clients. Winters in Southern Ontario sure didn't make it any easier. He was glad he didn't need to leave home today.



Funny, he thought, back then he never would have imagined himself living here. He spent more than a decade living off of James Street North, on Mulberry Street, a short 10-minute walk from his current live-work loft on Pier 8. He witnessed the growth of James Street's art scene, and had collaborated with many of the local artists and gallery owners over the years. But just as Hamilton's art scene began to boom, so too did its appeal. Joel worried about what this new housing demand would mean for his beloved neighbourhood; banal glass condo boxes? Or even worse, densely packed cookie-cutter rowhomes?

This was around the time his business was starting to grow, and while Joel could not afford to rent out a private office space, he knew he needed to set up a more permanent home for his business. Passing by the Pier 8 sales centre one day, his curiosity overtook his skepticism and he stepped inside. Looking at the elevations for the live-work units on Block 7, Joel was immediately reminded of his favourite coffee shop on James and Mulberry. He had gone in looking for a small shared office space but this felt like a sign. It didn't hurt that there was a brand new Beer Hall in the Pier Building that he could conveniently meet friends at for drinks and a few rounds of ping pong. It wasn't long after that he was setting up his office on the ground floor of his new two-storey loft.

Bringing down refreshments from his kitchen upstairs, he could make out the silhouettes of his clients through the snow outside as they approached from the courtyard. He took one last look around the space just as the doorbell rang – everything was ready.



Bill
Age 67
Hamilton Resident



Bill is a local retiree who grew up in Hamilton's North End and continues to call it home. Initially skeptical about Pier 8's development, he now enjoys a host of services and experiences that it offers.

This Thursday morning, after his usual breakfast of two fried eggs and toast, Bill walks north along John St. towards the Pier. The weather is nice so he decides to take the long way to the café this morning. He uses the Greenway to get to the water's edge. Stopping to sit on a bench at Hammer Harbour for a few minutes, he takes in the view of the HMCS Haida, and beyond that, the smokestacks of the factories. He thinks he can make out Stelco, where he worked for nearly fifty years before retiring two years ago.

Bill heads west along the waterfront, stopping

to read the engravings along the ship forms that line the promenade. He runs his hand along the rough steel. A group of joggers run by him and he gives them a nod. It's nice to see life return to the pier, he thinks. He loves seeing the sailboats dotting the horizon out on the water and docked in the marina. Bill realizes the time and picks up his pace. When he gets to the Pumhouse Café, he sees his old pal Frank has already gotten them the best table, the shady one by the waterfront. The chess board is already set up. Get ready to have your clock cleaned, thinks Bill.

Leila
Age 18
Hamilton Resident



At first, Leila didn't realize she was smiling. On her break, she was sipping her coffee while enjoying a familiar view of Burlington Bay from the new Fresh Market Hall on Block 7. Leila had spent countless winter days practicing her routines at the Pier 8 Skating Rink. She couldn't see the rink from where she was sitting, but she could make out William's Café, where she often waited for her parents to come pick her up after practice. Inch Park Arena was closer to the East Hamilton neighbourhood Leila lived in with her family, but she always preferred the outdoor rink at Pier 8. There was nothing quite like being on the water. While effortlessly gliding across the ice, Leila would imagine she was skating on Lake Ontario itself.

Skating had played such a big role in her life, she thought. Not only had skating introduced her to so many of her closest friends, and given her a chance to travel across the country while competing in tournaments, but it was through figure skating that Leila found her passion for kinesiology – she was going to pursue a degree at Western University come fall. In fact, it was also through figure skating that she found her part-time job as a barista at the new Fresh Market Hall in Pier 8. She was on her way home from practice one day when she noticed a "Help Wanted" sign on the door. She had wanted to get a part-time job to help her parents with upcoming tuition costs, but between skating practice and her schoolwork, Leila

already had a lot on her plate. Working close to the rink, however, would allow her to squeeze out some more practice time before her shifts and that was all the convincing she needed. She initially thought this would be a seasonal gig, while the skating rink was open, but Leila quickly made friends at work and enjoyed chatting with her regular customers so much that before she knew it, she was working her way through the summer.

She spent all year looking forward to her move to London, but as she watched the setting August sun turn the lake shades of pink and gold, Leila couldn't help but feel an overwhelming sense of nostalgia for her hometown, and her favourite waterfront skating rink.

Jesse
Age 34
Hamilton Resident

Jesse usually bikes from her house near campus to visit her grandmother, Anne, on Saturdays. It's only about a 25-minute ride, even if she takes the scenic route along the waterfront. But this morning the clouds look ominous, so she decides to drive her electric car. She parks her car in the lot underneath Block 8, leaves her car to charge at one of the EV charging stations, and heads upstairs in the elevator. In the lobby, her grandmother Anne is sitting near the reception area with two of the friends she's made since moving in six months ago.

When Anne first decided to move to Pier 8 after Jesse's grandfather passed away, Jesse and her parents worried it might be a difficult adjustment for her. She had lived in the same house for her entire adult life. But after a bad fall on an icy walkway last winter, she decided she was ready for a change. A friend from church had already moved into an at-grade unit in Pier 8, and after a tour with her family she was convinced. She was thriving, with new friends and daily activities that stimulated her and kept her active.

"Jesse!" her grandmother exclaims, standing up to embrace her. Anne uses a walker now but Jesse's still amazed by her grandmother's energy at 80. Anne's new friends, Shirley and Honey, make a fuss over Jesse and ask her about school. Jesse's started her Master's degree in Communications and New Media at McMaster University in the fall,

and between classes and her part time work at a restaurant downtown, she's been busy. She looks forward to these weekend visits. Anne had been a reporter and still had a keen ear for stories and characters. Jesse loved hearing her grandmother's gossip every week, and it felt good to be near the water, where the frantic pace of her week seemed to

slow down.

Soon they all head over to the feature restaurant on Block 4, with views overlooking the harbour. They're famished, they tell her, as the three women had all been at aquafit this morning. When lunch is finished, Jesse notices that the weather's cleared up, so she and



Anne go for their regular walk along the promenade. The week before, the weather had been bad so they'd stopped in at the cinema and caught a matinee. Today Anne wants to show Jesse a pop-up photography exhibit in the Pier Building. Anne has an appointment to get her nails done back at the spa in her building — an amenity that she loves to take

advantage of. On their way back, Anne buys a cookie at the local market and gives it to Jesse "for the road," even though the drive is less than twenty minutes. Jesse visits the Spiral to get some studying done, with an added bonus of stunning views to the water. Stuck in traffic on the way home, Jesse smiles as she remembers the cookie.



