

Social Infrastructure



Provide the health, civic life, learning, and workforce initiatives and facilities that enable everyone to thrive.

Building towards a complete community

The Quayside plan would integrate space for social infrastructure from the start, creating opportunities for community organizations and local service providers to activate these spaces, strengthen the community, and help community members thrive.

Whatever its form — library, online forum, health centre, weekly meetup — social infrastructure fosters health and well-being, ties together communities, and helps people reach their highest potential.

While Sidewalk Labs would not provide any community services, to build towards a complete community in Quayside it proposes allocating 90,000 square feet towards social infrastructure as well as supporting local community organizations and service providers with expertise, digital prototypes, resources, and planning to bring innovative service delivery models to the community. Sidewalk Labs would also work with partners to ensure that critical services are accessible to all populations, including the most vulnerable, and that Sidewalk Labs' commitments to diversity, equity, and inclusion are sustained.

While social infrastructure cuts across a wide range of disciplines, Sidewalk Labs has chosen to focus on social infrastructure spaces and programs that relate to health and community services, civic life, and learning, as a starting point to show what could be possible in this unique site.

Sidewalk Labs' contribution to **health and well-being** has two core components. One is a development plan that encourages healthy living and community well-being. Another is a physical hub called the Care Collective dedicated to enhancing health and well-being by co-locating health care and community services alongside proactive health programming. Upon approval of the MIDP, Sidewalk Labs plans to seek a local partner to convene health care and community service providers; working together with the community, this group could explore opportunities to provide proactive, integrated, digitally enabled, and holistic service delivery offerings.

Sidewalk Labs' contribution to **civic engagement** is anchored by a physical hub called the Civic Assembly, a place for gathering, learning, and engaging amongst the community. To complement the physical space, fully accessible digital tools — both those already existing in the market and others created in partnership with the community — could help people to participate in civic life, collaborate, and shape their neighbourhood and help governing bodies to undertake more transparent, inclusive, and responsive decision-making.

Sidewalk Labs' contribution to **learning** provides opportunities to push the boundaries outside the four walls of the classroom. It begins with an elementary school (proposed to be operated by the Toronto District School Board) and a collaboration with the Toronto Public Library to further expand the reach of its programming throughout the community.

In addition to the planning of physical spaces and partner-led programs, the conditions for innovation established throughout Quayside create unique opportunities for social infrastructure. For example, educational programming could pop up in Quayside's flexible spaces; organizations could explore new digital tools, with the confidence that all community members will have access to digital supports; and a community service provider could explore the implementation of a new operating model.

These contributions should evolve through the leadership and ownership of local partners and institutions — hopefully, resulting in a network of diverse and inclusive social infrastructure spaces, digital complements, and services that will continue to respond to a wide, inclusive range of community needs.

Prototype spotlight

Engaging the community in local decisions

Together with local communities and Digital Public Square, a non-profit spun-out of the University of Toronto, Sidewalk Labs prototyped a new digital tool in early 2019 called Collab.

This online resource engages community members in local decisions that can shape their neighbourhood, such as programming in a central public space, through a transparent process that reveals the decision-making framework and all community inputs. Users propose their choices for events in their community, and then the tool walks them through the trade-offs associated with each proposal — a farmers market provides fresh produce and draws a lot of foot traffic, but the space may feel too congested for a community picnic — and how their individual choices impact the community.

The Collab prototype has a publicly available Responsible Data Use Assessment. For use in Quayside, Collab would need to be approved by the proposed Urban Data Trust and would abide by all Canadian laws and the Responsible Data Use Guidelines for the Sidewalk Toronto project. The prototype is available to try at collab.sidewalklabs.com.

With new and existing technologies like these serving as easy entryways to engagement, everyone in the community could be activated to shape the Quayside neighbourhood.

Designing a healthy place

The Quayside plan will be developed through a health and well-being lens; in this way, the neighbourhood would encourage and enable healthy living.

Research has found that 60 to 80 percent of a person's long-term health outcomes are determined not by access to quality care, or even genetics, but by environmental conditions, social circumstances, and individual lifestyles and behaviors.⁹⁶ To enable all people to live well, these “social determinants of health,” defined by the World Health Organization as “the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age,” must be addressed. One way to do this is through planning and design.

Since the mid-20th century, many cities have been developed in ways that undermine people's abilities to lead healthy

lives. Too many people spend too much time commuting in cars and sitting all day in offices and spend too little time being active, outdoors, or interacting with people face-to-face — all risk factors for poor health and, in particular, preventable chronic diseases.

Designing for good health should be a key planning principle. To help guide the development of Quayside, Sidewalk Labs plans to use The Community Wellbeing Framework, developed by the Conference Board of Canada and the design firm DIALOG in 2018, which provides useful, evidence-based guidance for developers, urban planners, and architects to apply a health and well-being lens to their work.⁹⁷

The Quayside plan incorporates a range of strategies to create a healthier neighbourhood for all, including mass timber buildings, abundant open and green spaces, and a lively mix of community spaces.



Supporting a mix of uses

Quayside's development program calls for 67 percent of space to be devoted to housing, with roughly 33 percent devoted to office, retail, community, and maker spaces, as well as other non-residential uses. This approach to creating a dense, walkable, mixed-use neighbourhood can enable increased physical activity and enhanced social well-being.

Promoting active transportation

Safe and accessible cycling and pedestrian infrastructure can lead to increased physical activity. Sidewalk Labs plans to deploy heated pavement in bike lanes to make cycling more attractive all year and in some sidewalks to reduce falls and injuries.

Providing abundant green space

The Quayside plan provides accessible green spaces throughout the neighbourhood, helping to bring people together as well as to reduce levels of stress, depression, and anxiety. Sidewalk Labs' proposed outdoor comfort systems would also make outdoor spaces comfortable for 35 percent more hours throughout the year, compared with conventional development.

Encouraging social interaction

Formal and informal community spaces, activated with community-led programming, are designed to draw in diverse groups of people, enhance cohesion, and reduce isolation. Locating community spaces alongside spaces for the delivery of health care and community services can make interactions with service providers part of day-to-day life.

Designing healthy buildings

Buildings that embody biophilic design principles, optimize for natural light, use healthy materials (such as mass timber), and ensure indoor air quality can ensure that residents, visitors, and workers have healthy indoor environments.

Providing ubiquitous connectivity

Affordable, high-speed Wi-Fi, as well as access to digital support, would enable providers to extend support beyond the clinic via virtual care and digital health management tools.

Care Collective: Enabling health, well-being, and access to holistic care

The Quayside plan sets aside a central space, called the Care Collective, which would be dedicated to enhancing health and well-being by co-locating health care and community services alongside proactive health programming, and would be activated by local partners. If these partners choose, the Care Collective could demonstrate a forward-looking model of integrated local health programming and health care and community service delivery.

The city’s Downtown Plan recognizes a need to plan for more affordable, accessible, and appropriate spaces for delivering community services in downtown Toronto; what’s more, enhanced coordination in planning and delivering health care and community services, especially in parts of the city that are growing rapidly, has also been recognized as an urgent need.⁹⁸ The Care Collective is envisioned as a convenient place for community members to not only access both health care and community services but to receive proactive support so they can lead healthier lives and better care for themselves.

Helping people to remain healthy requires an increased focus on prevention and early intervention, alongside the delivery of more integrated health care and community services.

In Quayside, Sidewalk Labs plans to be a catalyst when it comes to promoting health, not a direct service delivery provider. In this role, Sidewalk Labs proposes providing a space, called the Care Collective, for the co-location of preventive support, health care, and community services as well as offering leases at below-market rates to ensure a diverse set of service providers, including non-profit organizations.

Local service providers would be invited to work together to activate the space and coordinate services to provide residents, workers, and visitors with responsive, community-based care.

The Care Collective would be located adjacent to a number of community spaces, including the Civic Assembly (see Page 224) as well as amenities (such as cafés, gyms, or health-related shops) that make it an essential community resource — a place for people to go not just when unwell, but to spend time and seek proactive support.

To envision what kinds of spaces could respond to the emerging health and well-being needs of future populations, Sidewalk Labs commissioned Toronto-based design studio Idea Couture to undertake preliminary concept work for a people-centred design of the space.⁹⁹

A plan for the Care Collective, and a vision for how health care and community services could be delivered in Quayside, must be led by local stakeholders and should build on the lessons learned from existing models.

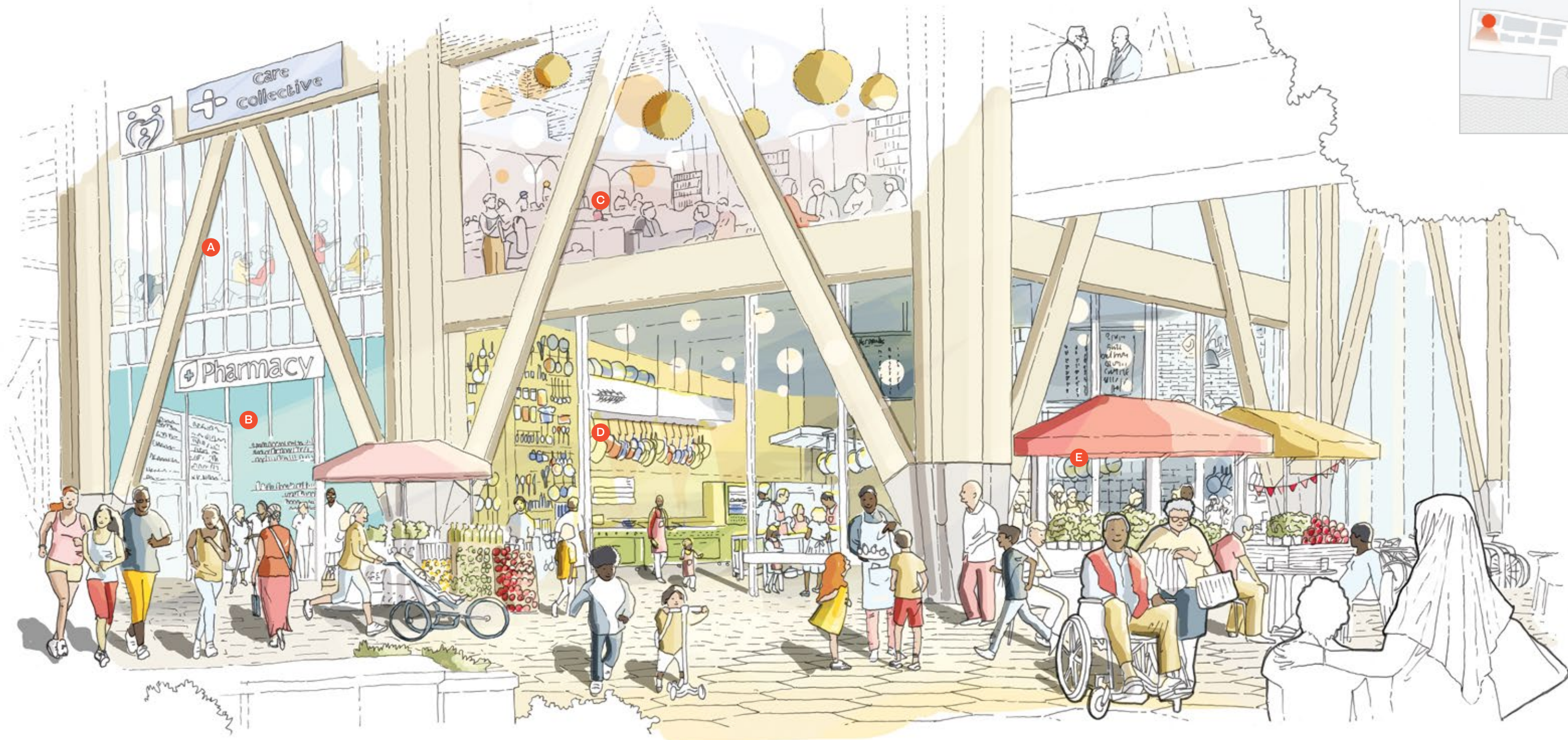
For example, recognizing growing health and equity gaps across the city, United Way Greater Toronto has supported the development of community hubs in underserved neighbourhoods, each a “one-stop-shop” that makes a range of services and programs available under one roof.¹⁰⁰ This model and others, such as family health teams and community health centres, are compelling examples of

operating models that seek to better coordinate services through co-location, respond to community needs, and treat people holistically through team-based care.

As governments and health care providers work to address the social determinants of health, and as care increasingly shifts from acute to community-based (and virtual) settings, new models of community care in new types of community spaces will be required in every neighbourhood.

If the MIDP is approved, a leading entity or entities (not Sidewalk Labs) could convene health care and community service providers and the community to co-create a proposal for the operations of the Care Collective. If desired by this group, the Care Collective could demonstrate a forward-looking model of integrated local health promotion and care delivery. This model could provide continuous disease prevention and management support as well as integrated community-based care, leverage emerging digital solutions and virtual care to enhance access, and reduce health inequities to improve health outcomes for all.

Sidewalk Labs proposes contributing resources to support the development of a proposal for the Care Collective. If desired, Sidewalk Labs would offer its expertise, including support on technical roadmaps for new or existing digital tools that could meaningfully improve outcomes, efficiency, and experience.



A Spaces for service delivery. Spaces for the delivery of health care and community services, including consult rooms, meeting rooms, and flexible multi-purpose spaces. Virtual consult rooms, which would be stocked with diagnostic tools and staffed with in-person technical support, could enable virtual care with specialized providers that aren't located in the Care Collective.

B Spaces for health-related retail. Retail spaces with a health and well-being focus, such as a pharmacy or fitness club, could be located near the Care Collective.

C Space to enhance health literacy. A health resource centre where visitors could test, learn about, and borrow a range of curated digital health tools and apps recommended by care providers. Staff in this centre could guide visitors to helpful resources in their

community and lead educational programming focused on health literacy, digital health, and self-care.

D Space to support healthy, communal eating. A community kitchen and dining space for use by residents, community organizations, and pop-ups could teach healthy cooking and eating skills while also providing space for communal dining to bring people together.

E Spaces to support well-being. Dedicated sanctuary space could help people to maintain their mental well-being by providing a place to relax, relieve stress, and unplug in a quiet, nature-infused environment. These spaces could support social prescribing (for example, a doctor could prescribe time in the sanctuary space).

Civic Assembly: Creating a connected community that is civically engaged

The Quayside plan sets aside a central space to connect with neighbours, learn about what is going on in and around the neighbourhood, share ideas, debate, engage in cultural activities, stay abreast of the newest digital tools, access local services, and participate in community decisions. This Civic Assembly would be the physical heart of civic life in Quayside.

It can be hard in the rush of urban life for community members to meet each other and connect, let alone to join in the shared project of shaping their neighbourhood. In the words of a Sidewalk Toronto Reference Panel resident: “A big part of social capital is the accident of bumping into people you know, and having unplanned conversations. It’s that magical pixie dust that happens between people when we are out together.”

The Quayside plan allocates space for both the Civic Assembly and the Care Collective in a prime location that spans Sites 1 and 2 (the first phase of

development). This space has direct access to Queens Quay and an animated pedestrian corridor, and is adjacent to housing and office space. This location would enable the Civic Assembly to draw off the energy of local street life, enhancing the likelihood of serendipitous connections and becoming a vibrant daily gathering place that brings people together and activates the community.

Community members and organizations could book space in the Civic Assembly for meetings or gatherings. Located in an adaptable stoa space, the assembly could evolve according to the

community’s needs and interests: one day, a stay-at-home dad could host a book club there; the next, a senior could teach a giant knitting class; or, throughout one summer, an emerging artist could lead a projection-mapping workshop.

Sidewalk Labs has started to prototype many of the ideas that could be present in the assembly — including innovative arts programming and tech demonstrations — in its collaborative workspace, 307, and will continue to pilot ideas leading up to the development of the Sidewalk Toronto project. However, Sidewalk Labs would not operate this space alone; Sidewalk Labs plans to convene and contribute resources to support local stakeholders to develop a proposed plan for the program and operations of the Civic Assembly, offering an opportunity for many organizations from across the city to shape this central gathering space with the community as it grows.

The Civic Assembly would become a central hub for community, arts, and cultural gatherings and could evolve to meet neighbourhood needs.

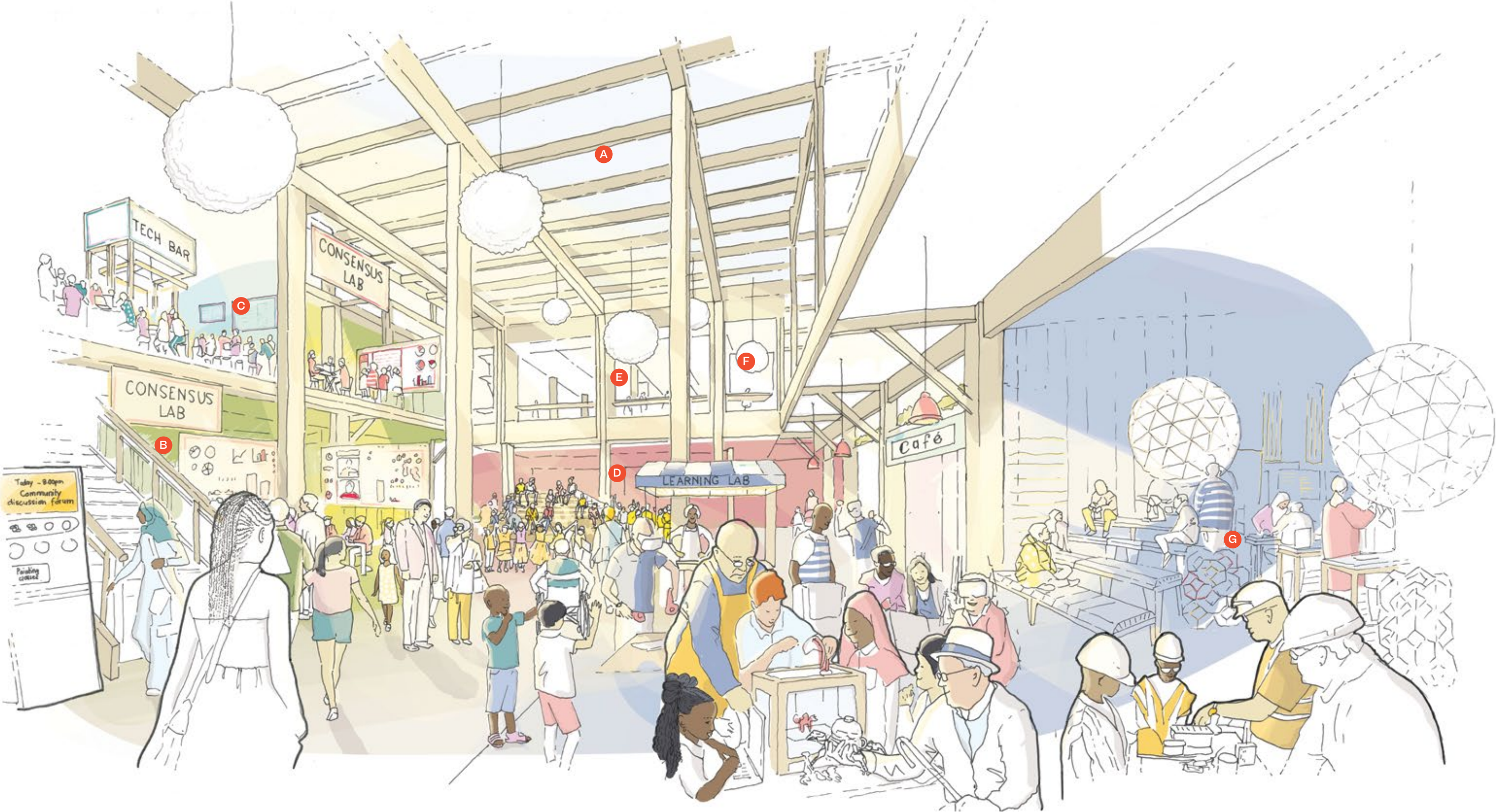
Digital spotlight

Activating civic life in Quayside

In Quayside, community members could attend neighbourhood meetings or provide input by visiting the Civic Assembly. With inclusive access to Wi-Fi and digital support, all community members could also use digital tools designed for participation, collaboration, and influence, helping residents as well as those who visit or work in Quayside to have a greater sense of ownership and belonging in the community.

Community organizations and governing bodies could also choose to leverage these technologies to help them engage with a diverse range of community members and use that community feedback to inform their decision-making processes. While Sidewalk Labs would not operate any of these bodies, it has secured the support of Toronto-based non-profit Digital Public Square to convene a panel of community members and experts that would advise on the creation of a Quayside Neighbourhood Association and offer insight into opportunities for new tools and spaces as well as processes for transparent decision-making.

When combined with Quayside’s flexible spaces that community members can adapt to meet their needs, and plentiful civic and gathering spaces that bring people together, these responsive governing bodies and convenient digital tools could activate the Quayside community to participate, enabling a strong, inclusive, and vibrant community.



A Community Central.
This flexible central atrium could draw and accommodate hundreds of people day and night and could feature digital displays that announce upcoming events and activities, new community ideas and participation opportunities, and environmental conditions.

B Consensus Labs.
This space could allow community members to explore the latest community initiatives, weigh in on a pending issue, contribute their ideas, or vote for community projects using large screens and touch tables that visualize initiatives and facilitate conversation.

C Tech Bar.
This space — staffed by digital experts who know the ins and outs of all of the technology in the neighbourhood — would allow community members to access support for any of their digital needs. Leaders in the field, such as the Toronto Public Library, could offer free digital and data literacy classes, as well as host open hours to facilitate input on digital tools and new use cases.

D Pop-up Learning Lab.
In this space, community members could use new technologies, such as robotics and 3D printers, computer workstations, or audio and video equipment to participate, learn, connect, and create online.

E Flexible bookable spaces.
These spaces would enable the community to connect, discuss ideas, build consensus, and participate in civic discourse, with breakout rooms for committees and smaller events as well as flexible spaces for government and non-profit programming.

F Office spaces.
Organizations, such as the Quayside Neighbourhood Association or the Open Space Alliance could reside in the Civic Assembly to easily reach the community.

G Arts and culture areas.
These spaces would include shared fabrication equipment and tools (such as laser cutters and wood-working machines) and have the flexibility to be carved into smaller studio spaces.



Elementary school: Making the community a classroom

Sidewalk Labs plans to work with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and the Ontario Ministry of Education to ensure that neighbourhood families in and around Quayside have access to a best-in-class school located near complementary services from the start.

To accommodate projected population growth in the eastern waterfront, the TDSB has proposed to locate a new school in East Bayfront / North Keating.¹⁰¹

To help accelerate this development, Sidewalk Labs proposes to work with the TDSB to plan up to 60,000 square feet on the lower floors of a mixed-use building for an elementary school for up to 600 students spanning grades pre-K through 8. A portion of the ground floor space of the school site could also be allocated for a child-care facility.

The TDSB would operate the school, which could support the short- to mid-term needs of this growing population.

Collaborating with TPL to expand community programming.

Planning Quayside around flexible spaces and high-speed connectivity enables lessons, after-school programs, and other learning opportunities to expand outside the classroom — in community spaces or even in the public realm.

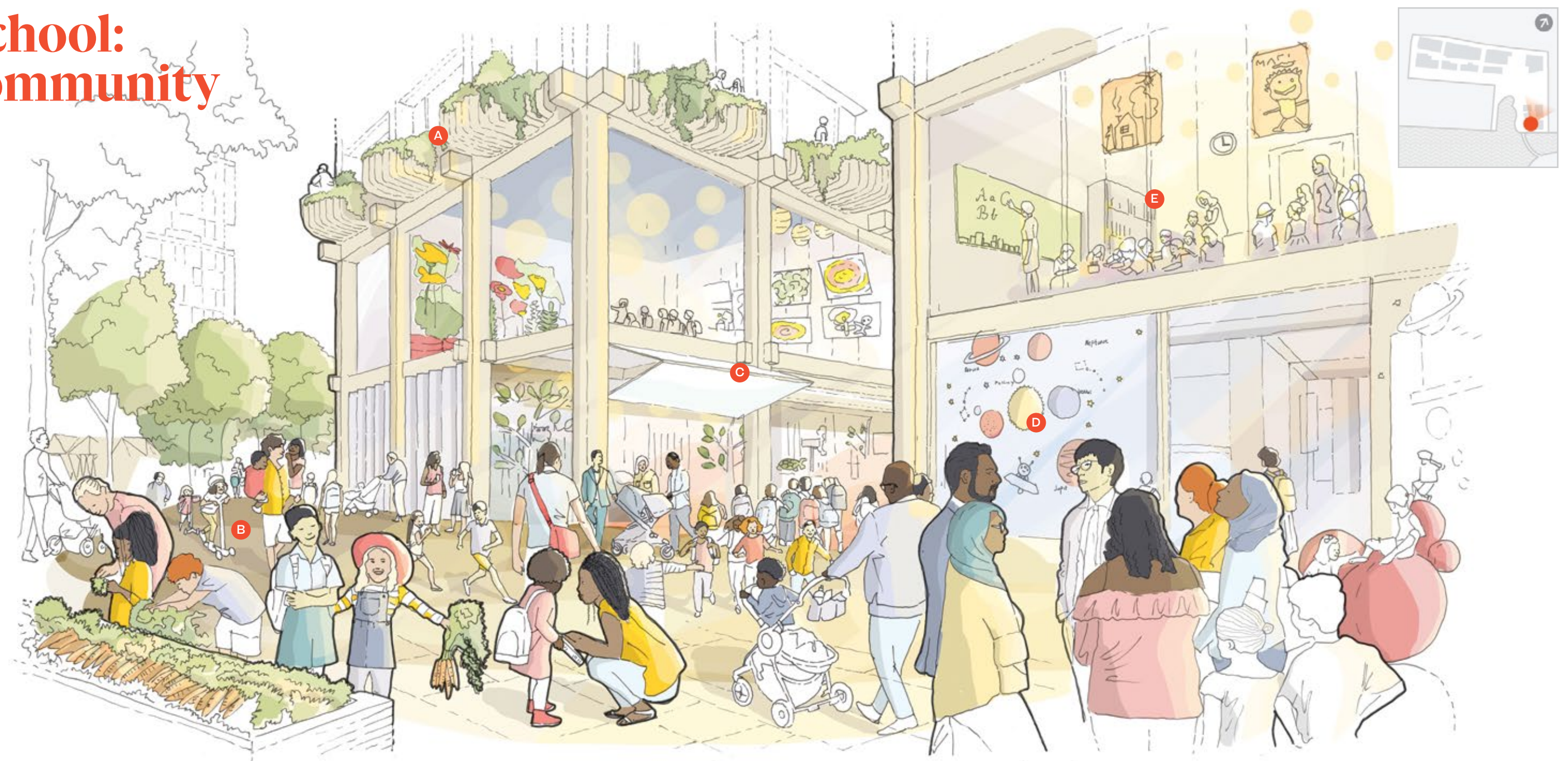
To begin activating opportunities for learning throughout the community, Sidewalk Labs is pursuing collaborations with educational leaders in Toronto. Sidewalk Labs and the

Toronto Public Library (TPL) are currently exploring opportunities to seamlessly integrate the library's presence throughout Quayside, building on the theme of learning happening everywhere.

These opportunities could include pop-up learning labs or lending services; TPL-developed classes, particularly those that support data, AI, and algorithmic literacy; or digital consult rooms in library branches or

pop-up library stations that could allow residents to easily book a private session or meeting with service providers.

Sidewalk Labs also proposes supporting TPL's Innovator in Residence program and working with TPL, employers, and other institutions, such as George Brown College, to explore the development of new training pathways.



A Mixed-use location.

Locating the school in a mixed-use, flexible building would lower up-front capital and operating costs and provide the ability to adapt to dynamic community needs.

B Proximity to open space.

Locating the school in proximity to vibrant open space, Silo Park and Parliament Slip, would allow students to learn from real-world situations. The waterfront could offer a living laboratory for a biology lesson, for example. Or teachers could create opportunities for students

to learn from community members, say by visiting an artist's studio in the Civic Assembly to gain exposure to new materials and techniques.

C Adaptable classroom spaces.

Classrooms with modular furniture and movable walls would allow educators to test new models of learning, such as a “flipped classroom,” where students consume lectures outside the classroom and participate in one-on-one and group work in the classroom.

D Common social spaces.

Common spaces outside the school would allow for gathering, lingering, and socializing for members of the school and the larger community, helping to build relationships and connections.

E Proximity to community services.

A school location near housing and complementary community services — such as primary health-care and childcare — would provide convenient access, save households time, and ensure students' and parents' holistic needs are met.