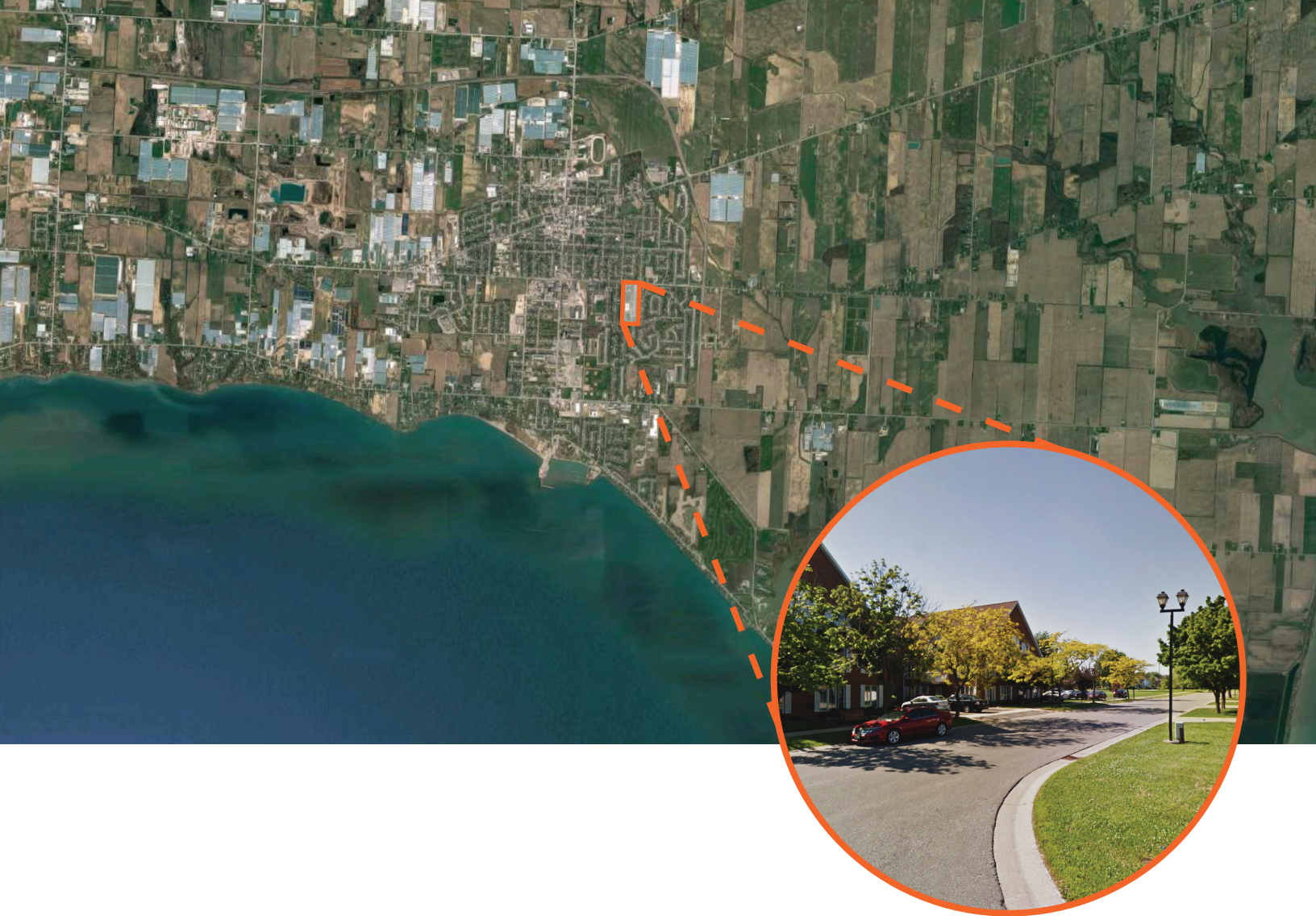




September 3, 2026

THE LEAMINGTON MENNONITE HOME

35 Pickwick Dr, Leamington ON

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT



LEAMINGTON

Mennonite Home



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PROJECT BACKGROUND



The Leamington Mennonite Home (LMH) first opened their doors to provide retirement living and care to the local community in 1965. The building has transitioned to an Assisted Living Retirement Residence & the campus has grown to include 84 Long Term Care beds, 95 Independent Living Apartments, & 44 Townhomes.

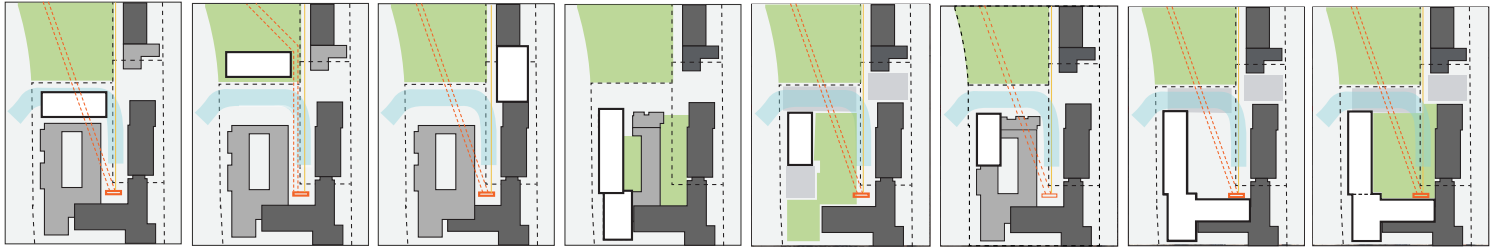
Today, the Leamington Mennonite Home remains a well-loved fixture in the community and offers a complete continuum of community-based care.

In recent years, and particularly through the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, LMH began looking ahead at how its campus could continue to evolve alongside the needs of the people it serves. After nearly 60 years of service, the Assisted Living Retirement Residence had reached a point where both the building itself and the model of care it was designed to support warranted exploration of a longer-term solution.

Like any building of its age, the 48-bed Assisted Living Retirement Residence with amenity space for the entire complex (also referred to in this document as the residence) requires ongoing investment to maintain and renew its aging systems. At the same time, its original design — including block-wall construction, shared washrooms, and no in-suite bathing options — limits how far renovation alone can bring the building toward contemporary expectations for privacy, dignity, comfort, and care. Rather than continuing to invest in a building with inherent limitations, LMH saw an opportunity to consider what would best serve residents and the organization for the next generation.

To advance this vision, LMH formed the Retirement Residence Building Committee (RRBC) in 2023 and retained Glos Arch + Eng to assess the architectural viability of a range of potential paths forward.

FEASIBILITY TESTING & DUE DILIGENCE



Beginning in 2023, the project team spent two years testing the full range of development options available to LMH. The goal was to fully explore the alternatives before committing significant resources to design – ensuring that the path forward was both achievable and the best long-term investment for LMH.

BUILDING ON THE EXISTING CAMPUS

Options explored included:

- Single-phase redevelopment
- Multi-Phased redevelopment
- Expansion into adjacent parkland
- Rerouting existing municipal drains to unlock development area

Key constraints included:

- Major municipal infrastructure beneath the site
- Limited space for new construction within an active campus
- Multiple land parcels and potential amalgamation requirements
- An existing parking deficit
- High water table limiting below-grade construction
- Zoning restrictions on building height
- The minimum number of suites required for long-term financial viability

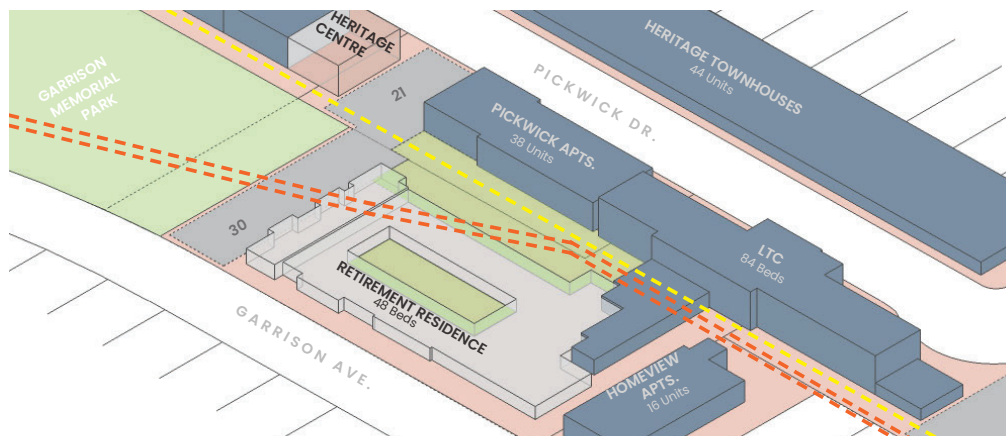
BUILDING ON AN ALTERNATE SITE

A range of off-site opportunities were explored, including:

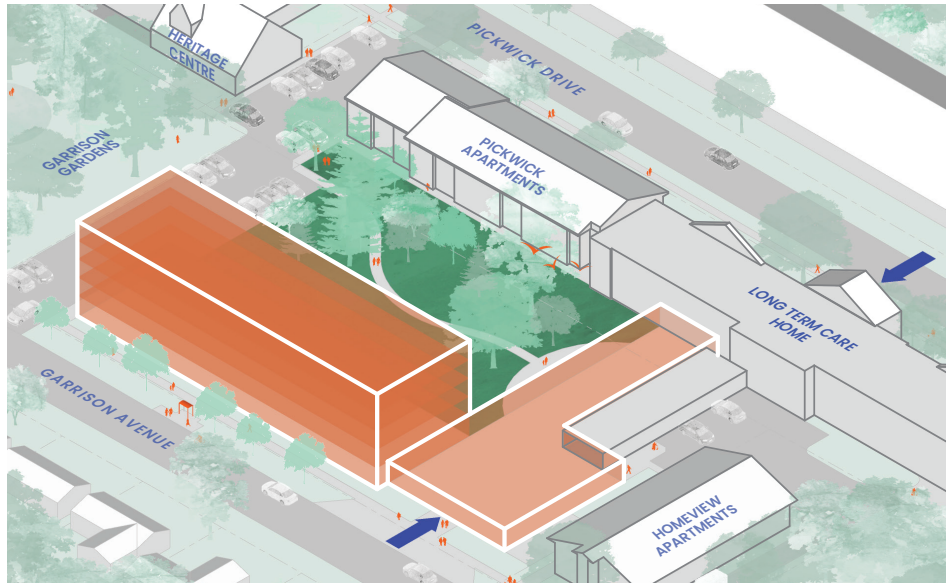
- Larger standalone sites
- Shared-use sites
- Temporary or transitional sites

Key constraints included:

- Displacement of residents from the existing LMH community
- Land acquisition and development costs
- Duplication of staffing & operational resources across multiple locations
- Investment that would not benefit the broader LMH campus
- Additional costs associated with temporary or transitional solutions



THE PATH FORWARD



Through this process, phased redevelopment on the existing LMH campus emerged as the strongest path forward. It allows LMH to:

- ① Keep residents connected to the existing LMH community throughout redevelopment
- ② Optimize staffing and programming by maintaining one integrated campus
- ③ Keep investment focused on the end goal, avoiding significant interim or “enabling works” projects that would consume funding without directly delivering the new residence
- ④ Ensure that any investment benefits the entire LMH community.

The resulting two-phase approach provides a clear foundation for design: one informed by two years of testing, due diligence, and consideration of the alternatives.

PRIORITIES MOVING INTO DESIGN

With this path selected, a few priorities are clear from the outset and are considered fundamental to the project’s success:

Protect day-to-day life on campus throughout construction, with careful planning around noise, dust, parking, access, and other impacts

Preserve continuity of important spaces and services, including the kitchen, hair salon, and chapel

Bring the LMH community into the process, ensuring residents, staff, and stakeholders have meaningful opportunities to inform the design as it develops

ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

OVERVIEW



The feasibility process established **where and how to build**.

With that path established, the focus now shifts to **what the LMH's community needs from a new residence — and how those needs will shape the design**.

Our engagement approach prioritizes listening before designing, giving residents, staff, and stakeholders an opportunity to share their experiences, needs, and priorities before concepts are developed.

Our goals in engagement focus on three key areas:

Build Awareness & Understanding

Establish a shared understanding of the project context, intent, scope, constraints, and next steps.

Learn from Lived Experience

Explore how spaces are used today, what works well, and where opportunities for improvement exist.

Discuss Possibilities & Set Priorities

Explore possibilities, identify shared priorities and values, and establish direction for the decisions ahead.

Engagement Activities to Date:



Spiritual Services — Focus Group



Staff Representation from All Departments — Focus Group



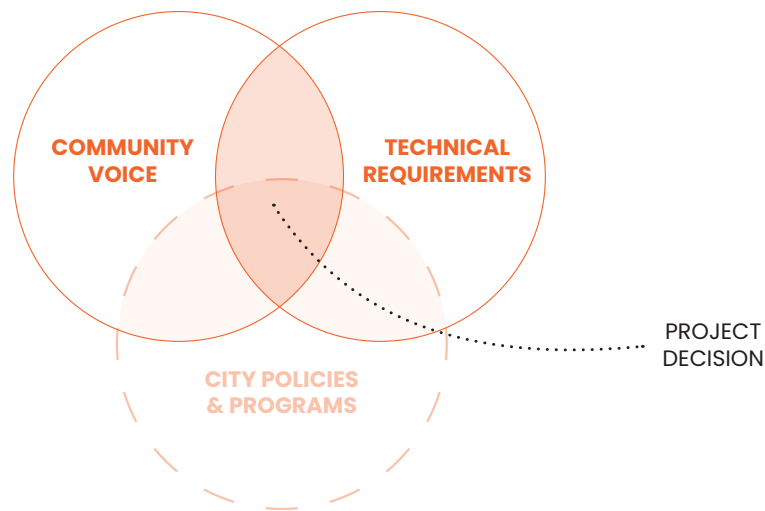
Residents & Family Members — Tableside Interviews



Staff — Open House



Broader Community & Supporting Churches — Open House



Engagement is an important input into the design process — but it does not operate in isolation. The role of engagement is to help the design team understand what matters most to the LMH community, so that those priorities can meaningfully inform decisions within the realities and requirements of the project.

Where Community Voice Can Shape the Design:

Experience — How should the space look and feel? (aesthetics, atmosphere, character)

Identity — What makes this space distinctly LMH, rather than a generic residence?

Programming Priorities — Beyond required spaces, which amenities or program elements are most valued, where flexibility within budget allows?

Key Relationships — What should the design team understand about how spaces relate to one another (eg, privacy, lines of sight, transitional logistics, connection between spaces, etc)?

What We're Working Within:

Effective engagement requires a shared understanding that some aspects of the project are already established. Being clear about these parameters keeps the conversation focused on where community input can have the greatest impact.

1. The project has a defined purpose.

The goal is to replace & expand the existing Assisted Living Retirement Residence. Other campus needs may emerge through engagement, but not all will fall within this project's scope.

2. The feasibility work has established the path forward.

Phased redevelopment on the existing LMH campus was a strategy established through two years of feasibility testing and due diligence. Alternate sites and development strategies are not being revisited through engagement.

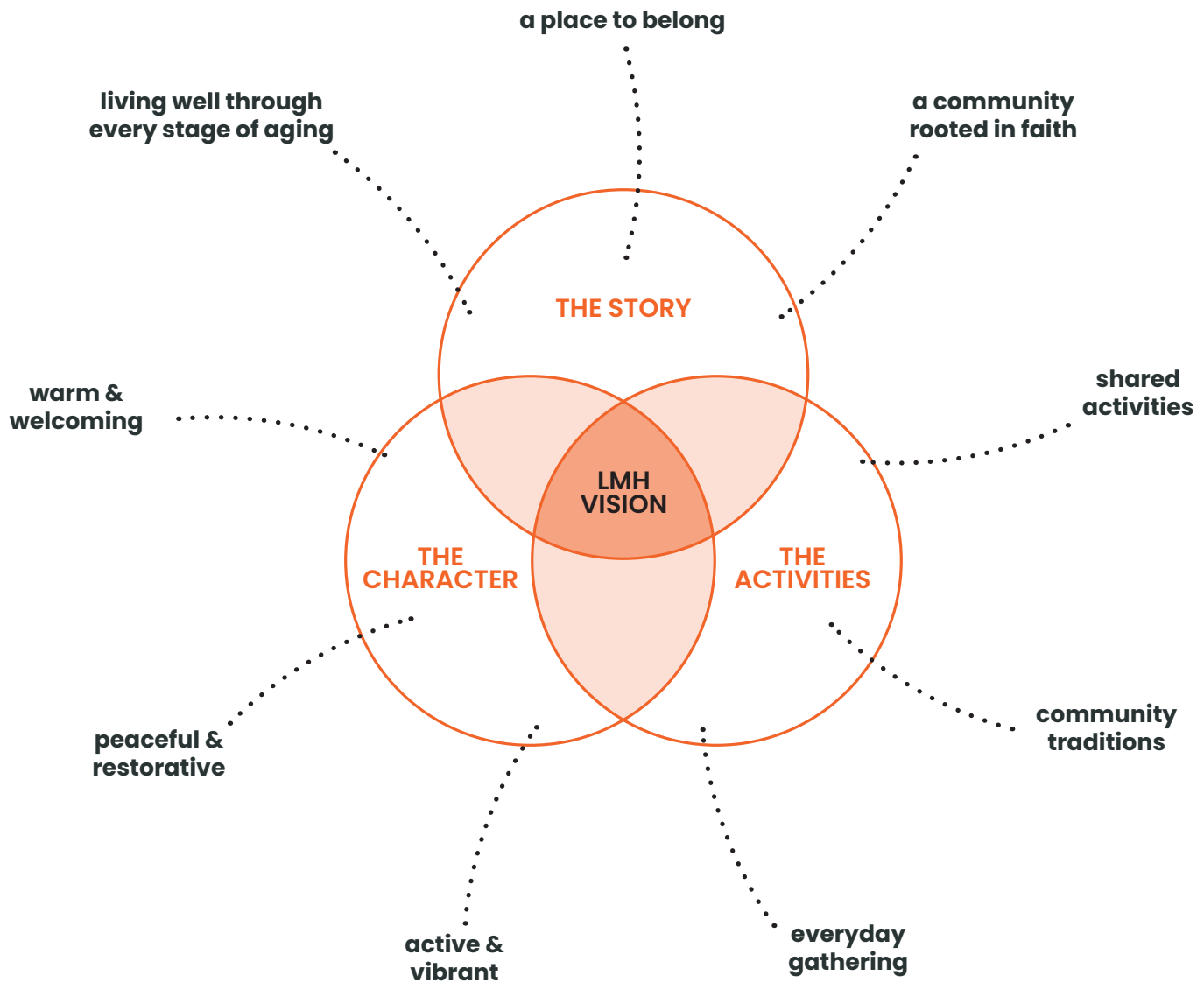
3. Some requirements are fixed.

The project must comply with the Ontario Building Code, municipal planning and zoning requirements, and applicable residence standards.



ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

Engagement revealed three interconnected dimensions of the future residence: the story it should tell, the character it should embody, and the activities it should support. Together, they begin to define a shared vision for a place that feels **distinctly LMH**.



To meaningfully carry this vision forward, 3 additional perspectives are captured in this report to help deepen and ground this vision of a place that is distinctly LMH:

- **FUNCTIONAL NEEDS**

What must work well in everyday life?

- **CUES ON AESTHETICS**

What should it look like?

- **UNDERLYING THEMES**

What we heard beneath the feedback

Keep our
elderly safe
with dignity,
love and
faith.

Tell the stories
of families +
histories.

OUR
FAITH.

A place for our
elders to age with
dignity + purpose;
where we honor +
listen to their
experiences and
stories. ~~and they are~~
valued.
A place of faith

HELP/
SUPPORT
FOR FAMILIES.

caring
for
people

SAFE
LANDING
SPACE

What is the Legacy of the Leamington Mennonite Home?

KEEPING
LOVED
ONES
SAFE

Display for
meaningful
objects.

Reading room
connected to
heritage

THE STORY

What kind of community is LMH?

A COMMUNITY ROOTED IN FAITH

We learned that faith is part of everyday life at LMH, it's not just something that happens in the chapel. Faith is both a core-value and shared identity that informs how the community understands care, compassion, celebration, grief, service and belonging. We heard a desire for:

- Chapel space for worship, gathering & special music
- Spaces that support dignified & meaningful memorial services
- Private areas for spiritual support
- Areas for quiet reflection, both inside & outside

*"The chapel should be the heart of this home.
It should have a central purpose, not just a sideline."*

— Open House Participant

A PLACE TO BELONG

Residents want to continue to welcome the people and traditions that make life meaningful, such as:

- Hosting family & friends overnight
- Hosting daytime gatherings for extended family; rooms that support various size groups
- Spaces that feels welcoming to children
- Space that support doing things with guests such as cooking, baking, crafting
- Technology & programming that supports legacy documentation & story-telling

A PLACE THAT SUPPORTS LIVING WELL THROUGH EVERY STAGE OF AGING

Residents want to maintain autonomy, and welcome support with ease as-needed without compromising their dignity or important pieces of their identity. For example:

- Suites to allow couples to stay together
- Outdoor spaces that residents can access independently
- Kitchenettes that support some in-suite independence
- Space for personal furniture, decor, & display of meaningful objects
- Individual temperature controls
- Easy-to-reach outlets, switches and storage
- Call system for emergency support as-needed

What Should This Space Feel Like?

Comfortable
aspec. temp control
AC + heat in reach - dangers

PRIVACY OK!
→ ABLE TO CONTROL YOUR SPACE

Humidify
- dry in winter
Ind. temp control

CHapel STAINED GLASS
TOO DARK

Don't want concrete walls

Soundproof

longer open door

Soundproof

Lots of windows - brightness

Home

wall art trendy
- keep changing
- fine restaurant
- TUT.
- people living there work

ACOUSTICS
SMOKE RM.

→ TEMPERATURE
→ PERSONALIZATION
→

Feels like home

Friendly / staff

Calm + welcoming
Not too quiet
Fun atmosphere
Open - Airy

no frills

personal
decor / space
individuality
- door

HOME FRIENDLY CONVERSATION

LESS INSTITUTIONAL

WELCOMING

people come in and play music
expand / bigger room
Music is very important

Embrace Nature

like courtyard

o Clean lines
o Simple
o functional

NO INSTITUTIONAL PLAYFUL

lots of windows
Balconies?

care

nature
- ducks
- wildlife
- pond

scenery
- neighbours
- kids

Trees / garden
Gazebos
Places to sit

feels like home!

Enjoy garden not work on it

living things
- aquarium
- plants
- birds

Rooms FEEL LIKE CAGE!!

Wide hallways
- wheelchairs
- hands hitting walls

peaceful
- kids noisy
- busy road
- garden

more of love?

noisy staff
w/ closed door

NO HOOPS TO JUMP THROUGH TO GET OUTSIDE

MODERN

controversial
NO Builders Beige

THE CHARACTER

How should it feel?

"This place should feel like home."

— Open House Participant

Residents & community members described a place that is both peaceful & full of life. They don't want a noisy, chaotic environment, but they also don't want a place that feels silent, sterile or inactive. The goal isn't to choose between peaceful & vibrant, but to create a place where both coexist.

Key theme included:

WARM & WELCOMING

- Warm colours & natural materials
- Comfortable, home-like, familiar – not institutional
- Friendly & welcoming spaces
- Opportunities for personalization: resident artwork, decorated doors, & personal furniture.

"No builder's beige!"

— Resident

PEACEFUL & RESTORATIVE

- Areas of quiet & privacy
- Natural light without harsh glare
- Good acoustics for events or special music
- Peaceful, accessible outdoor areas with shade
- Indoor spaces that still allow connection to nature: watching the sunrise, hearing the sounds of nature, seeing wildlife, sitting among plants

ACTIVE & VIBRANT

- Areas of social connection, both large & small
- Areas that support special music & live entertainment
- Space for outdoor events or music
- Kitchen space that is useable by residents & their families
- Spaces that support children of all ages
- Spaces that support various activities, and allow those activities to be visible to others
- Integration of living things such as aquariums, plants, or views to bird feeders

"We need to see things that are alive!"

— Resident



THE ACTIVITIES

What should happen here?

Feedback from staff and residents on specialized activity spaces, such as woodshops, sewing rooms and fitness rooms, was mixed. Changing mobility & participation needs suggest that flexible, multi-purpose spaces may provide greater value than highly specialized rooms. The success of many activities is also highly dependent on the people available to animate them — whether that is an individual resident carrying forward a lifelong hobby, staff capacity to support regular programming, or volunteers able to sustain it over time. Designing for flexibility allows activities to evolve as residents, interests, abilities & available supports change. It also allows residents to participate in different ways — by doing, watching, listening or simply being part of the activity around them. Across all conversations, we heard a desire for:



PLACES FOR EVERYDAY GATHERING

Informal & easy to join

- café*
- bar/pub/happy hour*
- outdoor gathering spaces*
- casual conversation & visiting
- spaces to watch sports or entertainment together



PLACES FOR SHARED ACTIVITY

Flexible spaces to participate, observe or simply be around the activity

- cards, bingo, games, trivia*
- music, sing-alongs & performances*
- woodworking, crafting, sewing & hobbies
- cooking & baking
- reading*
- hair salon*
- fitness / swimming



PLACES FOR COMMUNITY TRADITIONS

Space to carry on the events and rituals that bring people together

- holiday traditions
- BBQs (car show, Canada Day, etc.)*
- hosting family for celebrations*
- memorial services



PLACES FOR PRIVACY WHEN NEEDED

Space outside resident bedrooms for things that require privacy

- small room to meet with a lawyer, accountant, etc.
- private room for health or wellness services

* = highly rated among participants

FUNCTIONAL NEEDS

What must work well?

Engagement identified a range of practical considerations that can make a meaningful difference in how well the building works every day. These needs reflect both the lived experience of residents & the operational knowledge of staff, while recognizing that needs, models of care & technology will continue to evolve over the life of the building.



RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Practical details that support comfort, independence & ease

- a suite that works:
 - accessible bathrooms & showers (seats, grab bars)
 - convenient controls, outlets & charging
 - personal storage & space for mobility aids
 - individual temperature controls
- ease of getting around:
 - manageable travel distances
 - benches & rest points
 - convenient washrooms near amenities
 - space to manoeuvre & park mobility aids
- comfort & safety
 - secure entrances & appropriate access control
 - resident call / assistance systems
 - acoustics & soundproofing
 - natural light & glare control



STAFF EXPERIENCE

Practical considerations that allow staff to ultimately provide better care.

- efficient circulation & workflow
 - back-of-house corridors where appropriate
 - separation of clean/dirty flows
 - service elevators
- kitchen, laundry & services:
 - improved kitchen workflow & capacity
 - preferred laundry strategy to be determined (discussion of chutes, centralized, & per-floor)
 - storage distributed where it's needed
- staff wellbeing:
 - well-sized break rooms, work areas & decompression space
 - consideration for an overrepresentation of women staff
- infection control:
 - ability to separate or repurpose areas during outbreaks



ADAPTABLE OVER TIME

Designing for needs we know will change — and some we can't yet anticipate.

- changing care needs, flexibility as models of care evolve
- flexible operations, spaces that adapt as programming/staffing changes
- built to anticipate evolving technology

CUES ON AESTHETICS

What should it look like?

Participants responded to a range of precedent images to explore the visual character of the new residence. While preferences varied, several consistent cues emerged — favouring an approach that feels familiar, approachable and distinctly residential rather than institutional or overly decorative.



FITS INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Feel like part of the surrounding community — residential in scale, character & expression.

SIMPLE IS BETTER

Clear, uncomplicated forms & familiar materials were generally preferred over unnecessary complexity.

“NOT FOR OLD PEOPLE”

Avoid the visual language of an institution or stereotypical seniors' residence; create a place that feels contemporary, welcoming & relevant.

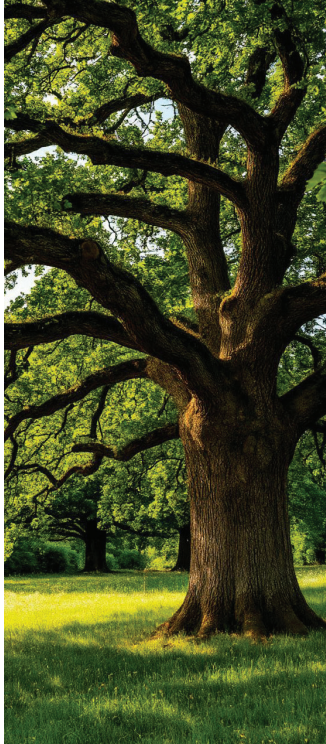
RESOURCEFUL, NOT EXTRAVAGANT

Participants valued thoughtful use of materials & resources over complexity or excess — investment where it matters, without needing to look expensive.

UNDERLYING THEMES

What did we hear beneath the feedback?

The themes below reflect an empathetic interpretation of what we heard beneath the feedback — the human needs, tensions & emotions that surfaced across conversations. They invite us to look beyond what people asked for, toward what those requests may tell us about the experience of aging & belonging at LMH.



NAVIGATING CHANGE

"Change is scary — I don't know exactly what I will need"

People naturally imagine their future through the lens of their lives & abilities today. This was visible in current vs. future residents: future residents imagined continuing the lifestyles they enjoy today, while current residents spoke from lived experience of changing mobility & capacity — emphasizing ease, accessibility, passive enjoyment & connection to activities they may no longer physically participate in.

There is similar uncertainty around the level of care the new residence should anticipate. The existing building currently serves an older population with higher care needs than would be typical in a retirement residence. Whether this reflects the existing building or LMH's broader campus of care is difficult to know. The intent and desire is for this building to be a true "Assisted Living" residence, but the specific details and nuance of that care will be determined throughout the design process. An overarching goal is to remain adaptable as residents and models of care change.



PRESERVING IDENTITY

"I still want to be me"

Aging brings change, but it does not erase the lives people have lived. Participants expressed strong connections to faith, family, farming, gardening, baking, music, hobbies & community traditions — even as changing abilities affect participation. The opportunity is to honour identity without making belonging dependent on ability: a lifelong gardener may no longer be able to tend a garden, but can still enjoy being around it & remain connected to that part of themselves.



REMAINING CONNECTED

"I still want to belong"

Across almost every topic — coffee, family gatherings, chapel, gardens, games, entertainment and even the hair salon — participants returned to opportunities to remain part of community life. Connection does not require formal programming; it can come from spaces that draw people out, make it easy to join or observe, and give family and community reasons to come in. The new residence should build on LMH's existing culture of relationships to keep people connected.

KEY DESIGN TAKEAWAYS

What did will we do with what we heard?

The feedback captured throughout this report includes hundreds of individual ideas, needs and observations. Together, they point toward five design commitments that can carry the most important themes forward into design — and provide a framework for evaluating how future concepts respond to what we heard.

1

DESIGN FOR BELONGING

Create places beyond the suite where residents can gather, host, encounter others and remain part of everyday community life.

2

SUPPORT AGING WITH DIGNITY

Support independence and meaningful participation as abilities change, with opportunities to do, watch, listen or simply be present.

3

MAKE FAITH VISIBLE

Express faith as part of LMH's identity throughout the building, with spaces that support worship, reflection, celebration, grief and quiet connection.

4

BALANCE PEACE & VIBRANCE

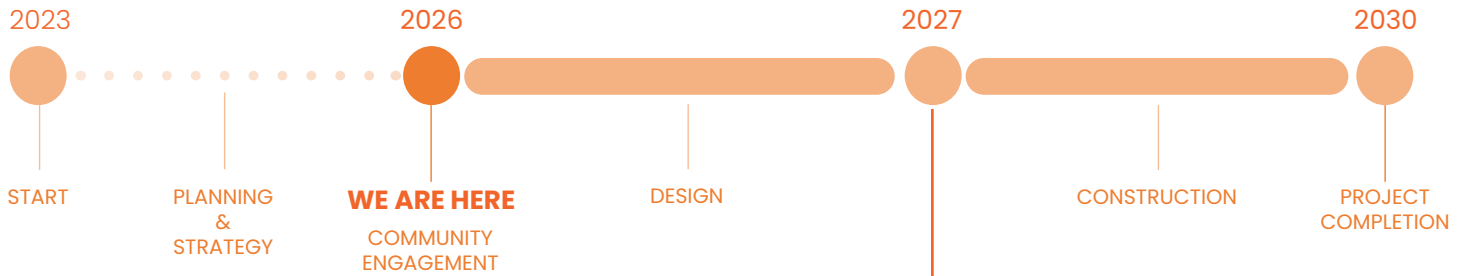
Balance places of quiet, privacy and restoration with spaces that feel active, social, colourful and full of life.

5

BUILD IN FLEXIBILITY

Design spaces and systems that can evolve as residents, activities, care needs, staffing, partnerships and technology change.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



RECOMMENDED: “CLOSING THE LOOP”

This first phase of engagement generated thoughtful, candid and highly useful feedback that will now directly inform the design of the new Assisted Living Retirement Residence with amenity spaces for the entire complex. The next step is to take what we heard and do the work – translating these priorities, needs and ideas into an emerging design.

Once the design has taken shape, we recommend closing the loop with the community by sharing how the feedback influenced the design, confirming that the key priorities were understood and identifying any important gaps before the design progresses further. How and when LMH undertakes this follow-up remains to be determined as the project develops.

CONTACT

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