

KOYAANISQATSI

ARC363: Planetary Gardens

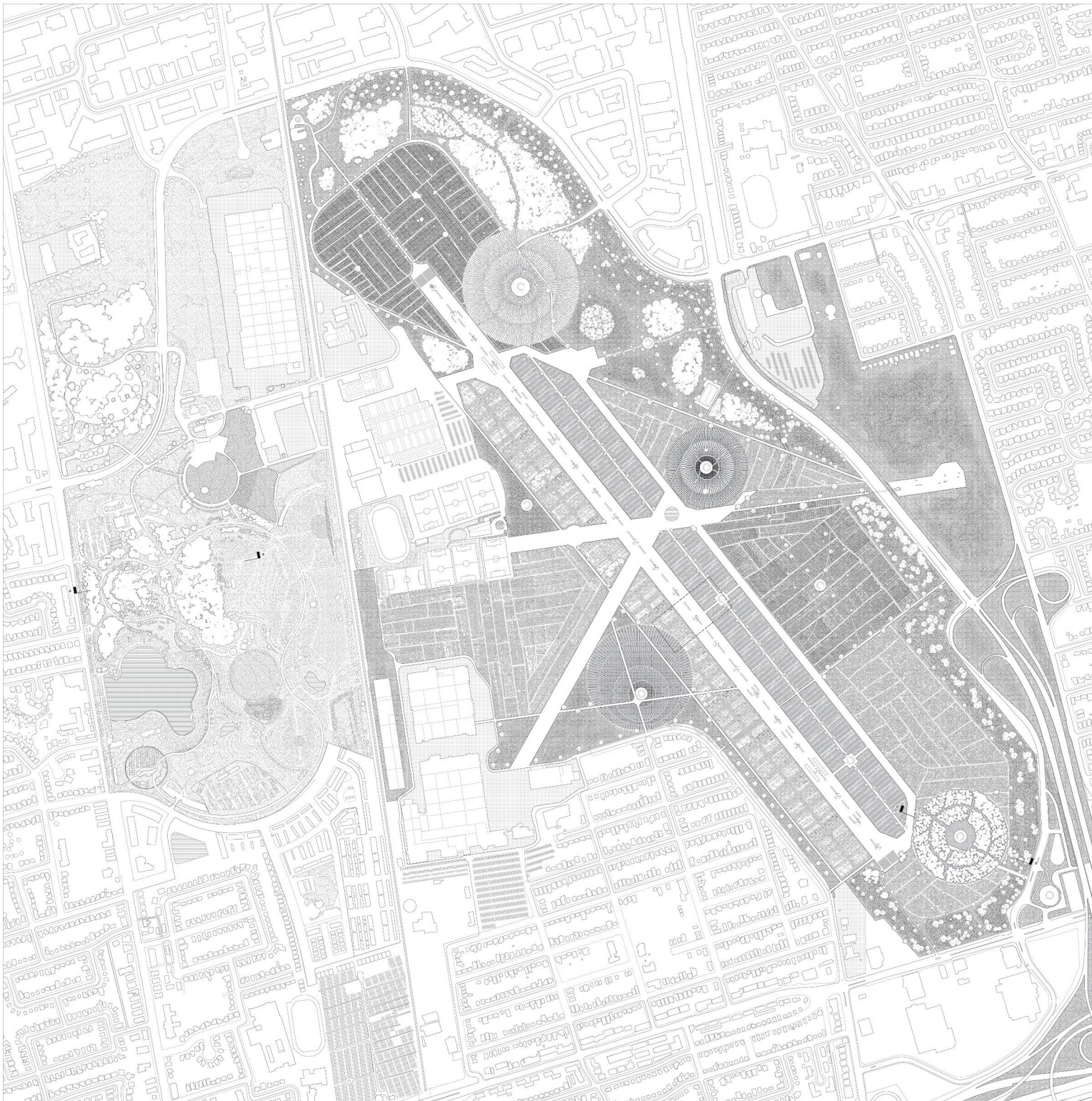
Adobe Illustrator drawing, fall 2023
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Ko·yaa·nis·qatsi (from the Hopi language), n. 1. crazy life. 2. life in turmoil. 3. life out of balance. 4. life disintegrating. 5. a state of life that calls for another way of living.

Canada must confront a history of violent European invasion and colonial transgressions. On shared Haudenosaunee, Anishinabeg and Mississaugan land, Downsview Park was transformed through federal appropriation for military and aerospace remediated through terraforming. Land was irreversibly altered, poisoned with de-icing agents and military contaminants over two centuries of colonial ownership. As the airport prepares for decommissioning, the Federal Government plans gentrified residences, symbolizing profit extraction amid economic challenges. Koyaanisqatsi represents lost Indigenous culture and a chance for physical reconciliation simultaneously.

A CHANGE IS PROPOSED TO THIS SITE.

Proposed Intervention | DOWNSVIEW
AIRPORT, 43.7369, 79.4718





Tkaronto currently faces several crises, key to which is a real estate crisis that drives up the cost of living and food for many. In some cases, this leads to food insecurity for Tkarontonians. In other cases, homelessness can be observed.

Indigenous peoples are disproportionately susceptible to homelessness, highlighting colonial governance's role in land occupation.

An urban agricultural operation rooted in Indigenous practices aims to empower

Indigenous land management. From tarmac redesigns to companion planting, interventions span ten years, repurposing aircraft hangars for food banks, establishing greenhouses as Indigenous knowledge hubs, and reclaiming the airstrip for community purposes. Four important Indigenous medicines — sage, sweetgrass, tobacco and cedar are planted in circles across the airfield in an interpretation of medicine wheels.

Current urban farms in Downsview cover 13 hectares, feeding 72 people. The proposed

regime on 520 hectares addresses Toronto's food insecurity, supporting over 2600 people and introducing Indigenous cuisine. Beyond a land acknowledgement is an interrogation of colonial power to restore lost Indigenous cuisine and culture.

Circles delineate Indigenous planting regimes and superimpose upon linear grids in the plan, representing the four directions and their sacred medicines embodied within the medicine wheel, a sacred and ancient symbol used by various First Nations. Sweetgrass, tobacco, cedar and sage are planted in the four circles respectively as a way of promoting Indigenous cultural awareness and production.

At the same time, the area is sustained by bioswales planted on the edges of the intervention, which purify runoff water from nearby industrial activities before use.

On top of that, new infrastructure goes further in supporting Indigenous knowledge. Greenhouses scattered around the territory will house Indigenous medicinal plants found



Previous page: Detailed plan (detail). Above, left: Section view (detail) Right: Diagrammatic research

Repurposing tarmac for a community market, establishing agricultural fields around airstrip, greenhouses as libraries for medicinal species of national Indigenous importance, and wind turbines for electrical generation. Indigenous planting of sacred plants are cultivated within non-rectilinear forms.

Section drawing of elevated circular mound hosting coniferous and deciduous old-growth simulacra, as well as greenhouses acting as Indigenous knowledge hubs, housing specimens of national Indigenous importance.

Snapshots of various diagrams made based on research of how Indigenous populations are disproportionately affected by the housing crisis, as well as food insecurity caused by increasing living costs. On the far right bottom, a planting regime mix of historically and culturally significant European and Indigenous food crops are proposed for cultivation.

