



Final Report

# Keele St. Clair Local Area Study Public and Stakeholder Consultation

December 2020

# Table of Contents

<b>Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Consultation Goals</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Overview of Consultation Activities</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Consultation Themes</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Who attended</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>What we heard</b>	<b>11</b>
Public Feedback Summary	12
Feedback on the guiding principles	13
History we're building on	14
Present & future trends	17
Jobs & economic wellbeing	19
Prioritizing outdoor space	22
Restoring & protecting the health of the water	25
Streetscapes & mobility	26
Access & equity	30
Optimizing public infrastructure	31
Inclusive engagement	34
<b>Recommendations on best practices for engaging Indigenous communities</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Recommendations on further consultation</b>	<b>36</b>

# Overview

## Introduction

City staff are studying the Keele-St. Clair West area as part of the Growth Plan (2019) conformity exercise for lands in close proximity to the planned GO/Smart Track station near Keele Street and St. Clair Avenue West. The Local Area Study will recommend a planning framework to Council for the creation of a complete community in light of planned transportation, transit and infrastructure improvements approved through the St. Clair Avenue West Area Transportation Master Plan.

This report summarizes the findings from the stakeholder consultation activities conducted between September and December 2020 to inform the Local Area Study.

Groundswell Projects and PROCESS designed and facilitated the consultation activities. The City of Toronto led the outreach and communication efforts. All consultation activities were conducted virtually.

# Consultation Goals

The following objectives guides the design of the consultation activities.

## What we want participants to know or learn:

- What is a Local Area Study and how it will inform future development of this neighbourhood.
- This neighbourhood will change but it is a long-term process.
- Different stakeholders may have different needs and priorities. The Local Area Study needs to balance them.
- What this consultation process entails and what we'll do with the findings.

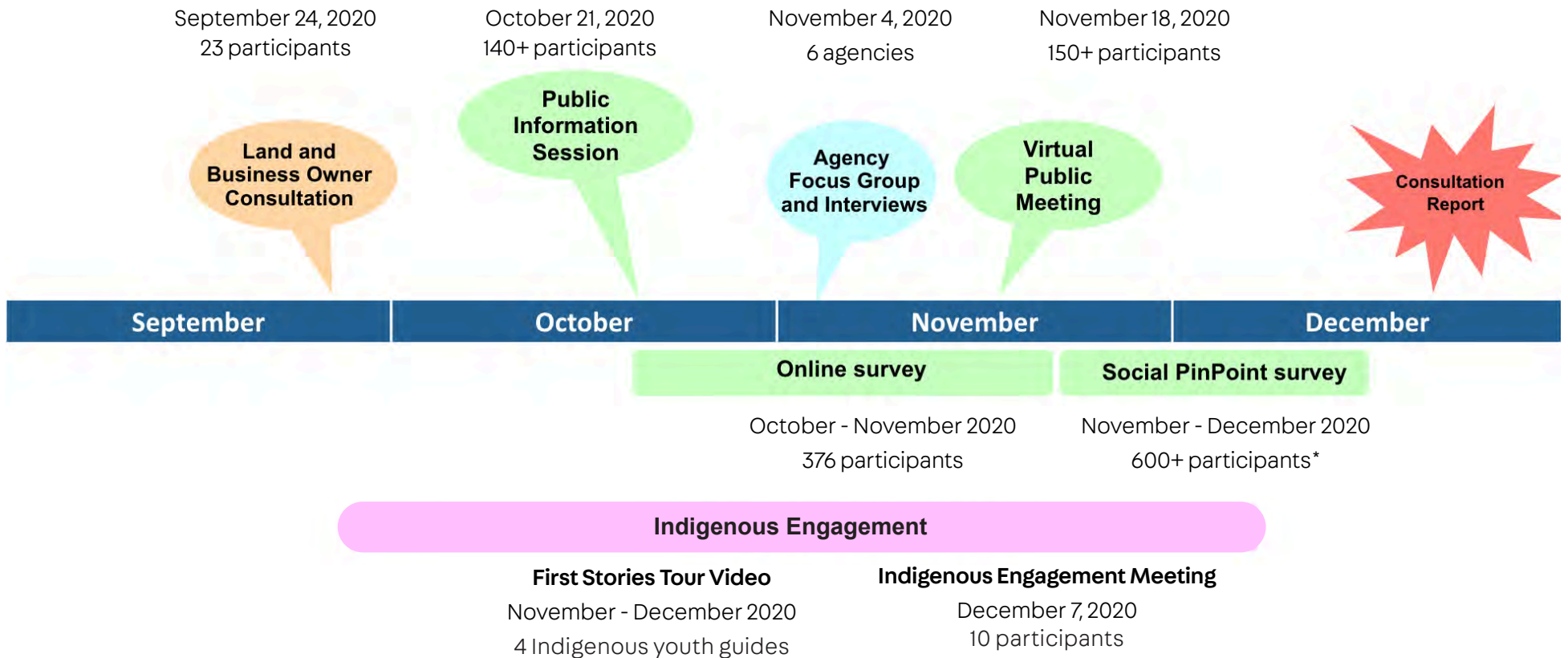
## How do we want participants to feel:

- Feel like partners in a city building process.
- Feel that their needs and concerns are heard.
- Feel that they've had a meaningful role in shaping a vision for this neighbourhood.
- Feel confidence and clarity about how change in the neighbourhood will be managed.
- Feel clarity about future opportunities for participation.
- Want to continue to participate and contribute.

## What we want to gather input on:

- Trends impacting this neighbourhood now and into the future.
- What makes this area distinct that we want to preserve?
- What does future employment look like in this area?
- What investments are needed in the public spaces, streets, transportation and community facilities now and as the neighbourhood changes
- What opportunities do stakeholders see and what are their goals?
- What does a “complete community” - a place to live, work and play - mean to different stakeholders?

# Overview of Consultation Activities



## Participants were notified via:

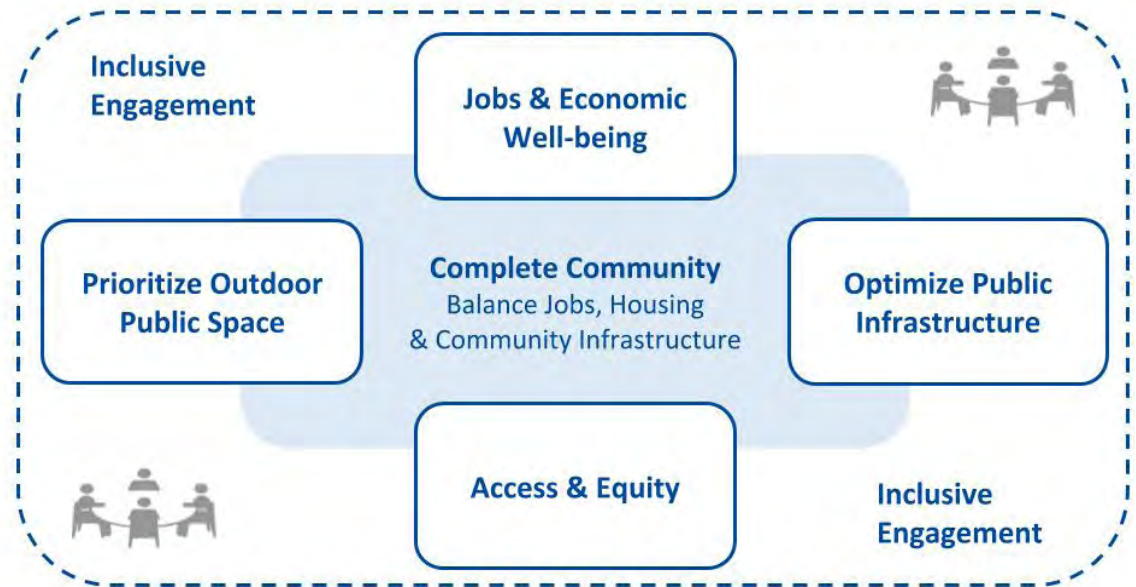
- City of Toronto website
- Canada Post mail-out flyer
- Direct invitations (landowners and businesses, Indigenous leaders, agencies)
- Councillor resident and business e-mail notification lists

\* This report does not include the findings from the Social PinPoint survey

# Consultation Themes

The consultation process centered on the core theme of **Creating a Complete Community**, a place where people can live, work and play. As part of this, the City of Toronto developed a set of principles that would help guide how the area changes over time and how to prioritize investments in the area. These guiding principles framed the more specific consultation sub-themes.

Grounded in these themes, the consultation asked stakeholders and the public about their experiences in the Keele-St. Clair area, their priorities and aspirations for the future, and how they would like to see their community evolve over time.



## PRINCIPLE 1:

### Secure Jobs & Economic Well-being

The City should work with existing businesses to protect jobs and plan for future economic growth. Opportunities for new types of employment should be identified and preserved to support access to a wide range of jobs and a diverse economy.

## PRINCIPLE 2:

### Prioritize Outdoor Public Space

The City should increase and improve public parkland, natural features and tree canopy cover in the study area. Access to these features, including pedestrian and cycling connections, should be enhanced and expanded. Community identity and Indigenous place-making should be prioritized.

## PRINCIPLE 3:

### Prioritize Access and Equity

The City should prioritize access to safe, good quality and affordable housing, including affordable housing for Indigenous peoples. Access to parks, open spaces and community services should improve to support live, work and play in the study area for people of all ages and abilities.

## PRINCIPLE 4:

### Optimize Public Infrastructure

The City should leverage planned transportation and transit projects to help increase community amenities, services and facilities through new development. New and improved local streets should be developed to support transit and community improvement.

# Overview of Consultation Activities

## Landowners, businesses and agencies

### Consultation meeting with landowners and businesses

The meeting included a presentation about the Keele-St. Clair Local Area Study and a question and answer session. The attendees then participated in two break-out group activities. The first involved a discussion of:

- the legacy of the past that we are building on at Keele-St. Clair
- how the current trends or shifts in the market are impacting this community; and
- the emerging issues that will need to be addressed in the context of this community's future development.

In the second activity, participants discussed the draft guiding principles for Keele-St. Clair and shared how they envision contributing to implementing those principles.

### Agency Focus Group

Participants of the focus group included representatives of human service agencies in the Keele-St. Clair Area. The focus group collected input for the Community Services & Facilities Study, which is an input into the Keele-St. Clair Local Area Study. The participants heard a presentation about the Local Area Study and the Community Services & Facilities Study and participated in facilitated break out group discussions.

Agency representatives shared insights on:

- challenges and needs they see through their work in the study area;
- the existing needs of their organizations with regard to space;
- how they have adapted to change; and
- how the City could best support them in adapting to future changes in the area and emerging space needs.

# Overview of Consultation Activities

## General public

### Public Information Session

The public information session was an opportunity for the members of the public to learn about the Keele-St. Clair Local Area Study, how the study outcomes will impact the area, and how they can provide input. Participants heard a presentation from City staff, asked questions and shared their priorities and issues they think about with regard to the future of this area.

### Online Survey

The survey was hosted on the Local Area Study website. Participants answered questions about:

- their current experience of the Keele-St. Clair area;
- what they enjoy about the area, including important landmarks, features and cultural experiences;
- what improvements they would like to see with regard to outdoor spaces, community amenities and experience on the streets and sidewalks; and
- feedback on the Keele-St. Clair guiding principles.

The survey results were spatialized using the Social PinPoint interactive map.

### Virtual Public Meeting

Meeting participants heard an update on the Local Area Study from the City of Toronto and provided feedback on a series of consultation questions pertaining to Parks & Open Spaces, Community focal points, Buildings & streetscapes, and Cycling & walking connections:

- what great park experiences participants would like to see more of in the area and what makes those experiences enjoyable;
- where are there areas with special character in the Keele-St. Clair community;
- what benefits different build scales would add to the community and what concerns participants have about each scale;
- how participants would like new streets to look and feel; and
- where it is challenging to walk and cycle, what connections need improvement.

At the meeting, city staff also answered participants' questions about the study. Finally, this meeting introduced and launched the Social PinPoint interactive map survey.



# Overview of Consultation Activities

## Indigenous engagement

Indigenous engagement was led by Trina Moyan Bell, Plains Cree leader, who works on including the histories and current realities of Indigenous peoples within urban planning projects. The engagement project included the following activities.

### Indigenous Engagement Meeting

The goal of this meeting was to build a relationship with Indigenous leaders and residents, to share information about the Keele St. Clair Local Area Study with them and to hear about their priorities for the future of this area.

The meeting included an interactive presentation of the study and a discussion on:

- the historical understanding of the study area;
- current experiences in the area;
- vision for future of this community; and
- how to better engage Indigenous communities on planning studies.

### First Stories Tour Video

First Story tours are normally in person land-based activities that cover the Indigenous history of Toronto through an interactive walking tour format. With COVID-19 altering the way in which these tours are normally undertaken, Trina put together a team of young Indigenous guides who alternatively filmed a First Story virtual tour.

The Keele and St Clair area represents a vital crossroads that has been used as a meeting point and thoroughway for Indigenous peoples for thousands of years. Throughout the First Story video, the team of Indigenous youth guides cover this history in a documentary style that goes over important Indigenous history covering topics such as: trade routes, hunting grounds, waterways, and important archaeological discoveries. All in all this video puts into context the rich Indigenous history that exists upon these lands.

As a result of having the ability to film this video and offer it virtually, many places not within walking distance, but with a connected history to Keele and St. Clair were also included. A welcome advantage to this alternative format.

# Who attended

The only survey respondents were asked to answer voluntary demographic information questions to help the City of Toronto learn who has been engaged in this consultation. In addition, participants of the Public Information Session and the Virtual Public Meeting were invited to answer a poll question about their connection to the Keele-St. Clair community.

At both, the Public Information Session and the Virtual Public Meeting, the majority of participants were home owners in the area (up to 45% of participants). The remainder of participants included renters, land owners, visitors and business owners.

The demographic representation of the survey respondents was as follows.

## **Tenure Split**

The survey respondents included 72% (271 out of 376) home owners and 7% renters (28 out of 376). According to the demographic information on the Keele-St. Clair area available from the Community Services and Facilities (CS&F) Study profile (draft), the tenure split in the study area is 55.7% owned and 44.3% rented.

## **Household Income**

60% of survey respondents had household income between \$100,000 and \$150,000, 12% between \$60,000 and \$90,000, and 8% of respondents had income of under \$60,000. The average household income in the study area in 2016 was \$70,000 (CS&F Study profile).

## **Immigration Status**

The immigration status of survey participants was 74% non-immigrant and 23% immigrant respondents. For immigrant respondents, 30% came to Canada more than 10 years ago and 6% came to Canada less than 10 years ago. The immigration status of residents within the study area (CS&F Study profile) is 52% immigrant population and 45% non-immigrant population.

## **Population Identity**

There is limited information on racial background of residents within the study area. The 2016 profile of the Weston-Pelham Park NIA, which is located within the study area, lists 38% of residents as visible minority population. The largest groups among visible minority populations listed, include 11% Black, 7% Latin American, and 4.5% Southeast Asian, of total NIA population. 24% of survey respondents self-identified as having a racial background that was included as part of the visible minority population in the NIA profile. 3% (7 out of 290) of survey respondents self-identified as Black, 4% (12 out of 290) as Latin American, and 2% (5 out of 290) as Southeast Asian.

It is recommended that the City of Toronto should carry out additional specific consultation activities to hear from community members that were under-represented in the consultation activities summarized in this report.



# What we heard

# Public Feedback

This section of the report provides a summary of the key findings from the public and stakeholder feedback. These findings are clustered into the following themes:

1. Feedback on the Guiding Principles
2. History We're Building on
3. Present & Future Trends
4. Jobs & Economic Well-being
5. Prioritizing Outdoor Public Space
6. Restoring & Protecting the Health of the Water
7. Streetscapes & Mobility
8. Access & Equity
9. Optimizing Public Infrastructure
10. Inclusive Engagement



## Feedback on the guiding principles

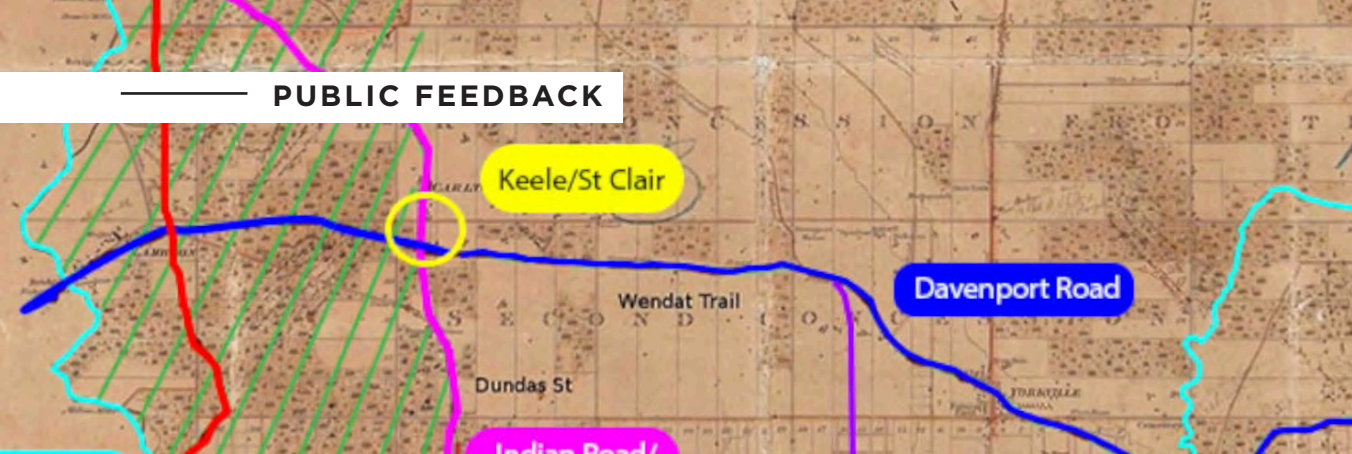
Based on the survey responses and feedback received during virtual meetings, the public and stakeholders expressed consistent support for the guiding principles.

Based on the survey results, the **Prioritize Outdoor Public Space** and **Optimize Public Infrastructure** principles ranked the highest as Very Important (70% and 66% responses, respectively).

The principles of **Secure Jobs & Economic Wellbeing**, **Prioritize Equity & Access**, and **Ensure Inclusive Engagement** ranked approximately equally as Very Important and Important (together adding up to 70% of responses for each principle).

Recommended changes and additions included:

- reframing the Secure Jobs & Economic Wellbeing principle as “striking the balance between residential and employment uses”;
- adding a guiding principle to address population growth and residential density;
- adding a guiding principle to address the health of the water, a priority for the Indigenous community; and
- removing Ensure Inclusive Engagement as a guiding principle and re-stating it as a general approach.



## History we're building on

### Indigenous History

Conversations with Indigenous leaders and research into the history of the area revealed the significance of this area as Indigenous ancestral lands. This area was a very important shoreline of Lake Iroquois and an intersection of two traditional trails, which are now Davenport and Old Weston Road. The First Story Tour video created by Indigenous youth shares more details about this history. Given this history, it was recommended to recognize the archaeological potential of this area and set out provisions for being intentional about managing archaeological discoveries in collaboration with Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous leaders underlined the importance of commemorating this history while creating opportunities for Indigenous peoples to re-engage with the land in this area through placekeeping and land activation as well as through creating space in parks and green spaces for Indigenous ceremony and land-based activities. The latter could include teaching gardens, learning centre and dedicated ceremonial space.

### SIGNIFICANT SITES

Throughout the First Story Tour video many important locations were included and filmed onsite, including the following:

- Keele and St Clair Intersection (Wendat and Weston Road Trails)
- Davenport and Old Weston Rd (original intersection of the East/West Indigenous routes)
- Davenport and Spadina Road (original Meeting point of Ishpadinaa and the Lake Iroquois shoreline)
- Lavender Creek (remaining greenspaces that still connects, barely, with the Black Creek and the Humber River, which is part of the Toronto Carrying Place Trail)

# History we're building on

## Settler and Immigration History

Participants across all consultations spoke to the richness of multi-cultural settler history in the area. We heard stories of family history in connection to working on the railroad. The shops and restaurants in the area also reflect this diverse settlement history. Today, there continues to be a large immigrant community in the area. The Community Services and Facilities Study can be referenced for more details on the demographic profile of the community.

## SIGNIFICANT SITES

Throughout this consultation process residents identified a number of sites that they see as having historical importance. These are:

- **Heydon House** was highlighted as an important local heritage building that requires restoration
- Other **historic buildings from the 1870s on the east side of Old Weston Rd & St. Clair W.**, such as The Bull cottage and carriage works
- The **Heintzman and Nordheiman piano** manufacturing history
- **Railway history** in the area (interesting installation on the site of the old roundhouse)
- ABC lumberyard and Ale yards on Symes
- Weston Flea Market



## History we're building on

### Experience of change

This area is known for experiencing a lot of change over the years. There is a rich history of businesses flourishing in the area, including a range of small businesses and larger industrial leaders. Over time there has been a transition from large industrial and transportation uses (railroad) to an increase in retail employment and residential development. The closing and redevelopment of the stockyards was one of the major transformation points for the area by improving environmental conditions and bringing in new housing development.





## Present & future trends

### Displacement and housing affordability

Many participants underlined that this area is one of the last few affordable communities, but as the area is changing and with new development there is concern about displacement. The agencies we spoke to noted that housing affordability is already a significant challenge that they deal with in their work and is a trend that continues to increase. This is especially impacting residents that experience marginalization. They are being priced out of the area. Many who grew up in the area can no longer afford to live here and are moving out. Most recently the agencies have seen a significant increase in evictions in the area. This includes clients living in rooming houses and clients who are most vulnerable to evictions.















### Future potential as a vibrant complete community

Participants felt that this area has the potential to be the next desirable and attainable neighbourhood to live, work and play. The planned transit improvements and the Smart Track/GO station will enhance existing transit infrastructure and will help to connect the area to downtown. The proximity to downtown is seen as a benefit, but there was a general agreement around the need for improving internal and external connections in order to take advantage it.



## Present & future trends

What do you enjoy about the Keele-St. Clair area? Please select all that apply.

What do you enjoy about the Keele-St. Clair area? Please select all that apply.	Count	% of responses	%
Affordability	163		52%
Architecture and buildings	43		14%
Community facilities (e.g. recreation centre, library)	115		37%
Community services and supports	37		12%
Local clubs and organizations	24		8%
Local jobs	21		7%
Local parks and green spaces	151		48%
Neighbourhood identity	120		38%
Public art	57		18%
Local shopping and dining	202		64%
Rich history of industry and businesses	62		20%
Schools	50		16%
Transit	162		52%
Other, please specify	27		9%



## Jobs & economic wellbeing

### Protect existing small & medium size businesses

One thing we heard consistently from all stakeholders is the importance of protecting existing small and medium size businesses from displacement as the area develops. Participants noted that these businesses add character and diversity to the community, provide local jobs and offer affordable goods and services. Agencies working in the area have already noted an increase in displacement and business vacancies along St. Clair Ave. W, especially by business that catered to lower income and working class customers. They noted that lower rent business tenants are finding it difficult to find space, despite vacancies, with landowners holding out for higher rent tenants.

### Transition away from industrial uses

A key message from the area residents, who participated in the consultation activities, was to transition away from industrial employment in the area. Participants expressed concerns about pollution, noise and traffic impacts that these types of employment are bringing into the area, and the compatibility of these uses with the expected population growth.

Many residents were also concerned about what would happen with the existing vacant lands if they retain employment designation while there is no interest from developers in creating employment facilities. There is a sense that vacant land makes the area feel neglected and unsafe.

However, there was an agreement about the value of keeping industrial buildings to maintain the historical character of the neighbourhood.



## Jobs & economic wellbeing

### Support local employment

There was a strong interest among all stakeholders in retaining and growing local employment opportunities and in supporting a thriving local business community. The following is a summary of ideas and suggestions around local employment and businesses:

- The area needs more affordable food options and local businesses that understand community needs.
- New commercial destination opportunity around a market featuring BIPOC folks that are reflective of the area (STAKT market mentioned as an inspiration) and commercial district for multicultural and diverse businesses.
- Interest in attracting new employment types into the area, including technology, breweries, local restaurants and bars, child friendly businesses.
- Future development offers a great opportunity to rethink retail, big box, and office uses. Residents expressed that they would not be in support of more big box stores in the area.

### SPECIFIC SITES

- Local restaurants were highlighted as important spaces for community gathering (eg. BBQ chicken restaurants holding outdoor BBQ)
- There is interest in seeing more unique small business commercial development along st. Clair West and Davenport.
- Strong culinary presence on Mulock Ave. (cheese factory and smoke house) could be a new destination.
- Symes St. breweries: great example of reclaiming industrial buildings into community and business hubs
- Cawthra Ave. small businesses could be the next Geary St.
- Existing commercial districts where improvements are needed:
  - \* The business district along Rogers road required improvement and diversification
  - \* Adding small businesses along Dupont St.

## Jobs & economic wellbeing

### Balance residential and employment uses

A key message we heard primarily from multiple landowners, is the need for striking the right balance between residential and employment uses. In particular, the argument is that an increase in residential density is needed to support further investment and the desired outcomes around improvements in local infrastructure, parks and green spaces, and community services. It was suggested that a mixed use designation is the best way to achieve this balance. The landowners were interested in seeing more details about the expected percentage allocation of residential vs employment land.

### SPECIFIC SITES

Specific sites suggested for a possible mixed use designation include:

- McCormack St.
- On and around the GO/Smart Track station
- Surface parking lots on St. Clair Ave (south side)



## Prioritizing outdoor space

### Increase green space

All participants agreed that increasing green space in the community is a priority. Residents underlined that the existing parks are well used, especially by young families, and are important spaces of community connection, gatherings and events. However, existing parks are not connected and are not well-coordinated, in terms of different experiences they offer.

Opportunities to increase green space that were identified include:

- linking small parcels rather than large parks
- leveraging Hydro land for more park spaces; it's already being used by residents
- street greening especially on streets connecting to parks
- City and developers working together for green interventions.

Participants also identified a variety of improvements needed in existing parks. These include improved maintenance (litter pick-up, upkeep), improved lighting, adding amenities (washrooms, garbage bins, seating), and new and updated equipment, especially playgrounds.

### SPECIFIC SITES

#### Locations identified for new parks or green spaces:

- Industrial areas being revived as green spaces
- ABS lumber yard location
- Lavender Creek lower valley - opportunity for naturalized space
- Black Creek culvert - opportunity for naturalized space
- Delta Bingo & Gaming site
- Unused hydro corridor parallel to Earls court Park

#### Green space connections to improve:

- Lavender Creek Trail to S.A.D.R.A. Park.
- Pedestrian connection between the Earls court Park & Davenport Village Park
- Connection between Gaffney Park Trail across the Symes Rd. Ale Yards to Maple Clair Park; connection between Gaffney Park Trail and Lavender Creek Trail.
- Link parks with walking and biking trails
- Green space connection between McCormack and Gunns Road
- Connection to the West Toronto Rail Path
- Multi-use trail connection between Davenport and Keele
- Cycling and walking connection to Keelesdale Park



## Prioritizing outdoor space

### Offer diverse park experiences

The park experiences that received the most interest among participants were Community & Civic experiences, followed by Passive & Ecological experiences. There was a small number of comments about Sports & Play experiences. There was also a strong interest in parks that offer multiple types of experiences in one space. Examples provided include High Park, Etienne Broulé Park, Evergreen Brickworks, Corktown Commons, Trinity Bellwoods, and Earlscourt Park. The following is a summary of more detailed features and elements that were of interest with regard to these park experiences.

#### Community & Civic experiences:

- Participants were interested in elements that support interaction, socializing and community-based activities, such as seating, picnic & lounging areas, community gathering areas, fire pits, BBQ and pizza ovens.
- Outdoor entertainment was of interest as an experience in parks. Examples provided include the Toronto Music Garden and Wychwood Barns outdoor space.

- Community gardens were of interest as spaces of local food production and education. Downsview Park was mentioned as a great example of such space.
- Participants highlighted commercial activities such as farmers markets, breweries, cafes and convenience stores for offering destinations to walk to in park spaces, and as elements that make the areas feel safe and welcoming. The West Toronto Railpath was described as one example of a green outdoor space with these experiences.
- Seating was highlighted as an amenity that offers a more relaxing and enjoyable user experience in a park.
- Elements that were highlighted for creating identity and character in parks include public art, signage and the way a park integrates in a neighbourhood. Examples of parks that do this well included the West Toronto Railpath and Corktown Common.
- Enjoyable physical characteristics for parks that offer community & civic experiences included covered gathering areas, comfortable surfaces, and diverse greenery.



## Prioritizing outdoor space

### Offer diverse park experiences - cont'd

#### Passive & Ecological experiences, details:

- For this type of park experiences, the most desired elements included walking and hiking trails. Examples of parks with great trails included Earls court park, Corktown Common, High Park and Evergreen Brickworks
- Shade was noted as an important environmental quality for trails.

#### Sports & Play experiences, details:

- Amenities of interest included tennis courts, outdoor skating rinks, child-friendly play areas and open fields for sports.
- There is an interest in having a dog park in the area.
- Good maintenance was an important physical characteristic for sports & play amenities.

General amenities of interest for parks included washrooms, drinking fountains and good lighting.





## Restoring & protecting the health of the water

Indigenous leaders suggested to add health of the water as an additional guiding principle for the future development of the Keele-St. Clair area. In Indigenous worldview water is the foundation of life; it ensures the health and wellbeing of communities and nations. Indigenous leaders underlined that future planning and development of this neighbourhood needs to begin with restoring and healing the water and the ecosystem in the area. Other elements of the urban environment can be added afterwards, but they will not be able to thrive without the foundation of healthy water.

Restoring the Lavender Creek, including it's expansion and connection to Black Creek, was identified as a good starting point for these efforts. The very first step proposed in this process would be an Indigenous ceremony with all of the stakeholders on the Land near the water. This approach would help to ground the planning process in Indigenous priorities and Indigenous principles of Land First and Land Back, and would provide an opportunity for further engagement with the Indigenous community.



## Streetscapes & mobility

### Create vibrant, safe and green streetscapes

Overall, there was an interest in seeing improved street-level experience and more animation of existing and new streets.

#### Streetscape look and feel:

- The words used to describe the desirable qualities of new streets include: pedestrian friendly, clean, safe, vibrant, fun.
- Wide sidewalks were noted as a desired feature. St. Clair was used as a local example of a great sidewalk.
- Seating was another highly desired feature because it offers an opportunity to pause and enjoy the street and people watch. Flexibility was noted as one desired quality for seating areas.
- Quality finishes for sidewalks were noted as a feature that adds to the pedestrian experience. Interlocking bricks was offered as an example.
- Better lighting and lighting features that add to the character of the street (the pedestrian lights on St. Clair were highlighted as an example).
- Garbage bins

### SPECIFIC SITES

#### New sidewalks to be added:

- South Side of McCormick St.
- Lavender Park
- Keele south of Rogers road on the east side
- Gunns Loop where it connects along Maple Clair park
- Ethel Ave. to West Toronto Street
- Glen Scarlett Road

#### Existing sidewalks that need widening:

- Weston Road
- Old Weston Road and Junction Road
- Residential streets northeast of Old Weston Road and St. Clair ave.
- Mulock Ave
- Cawthra and Hiron
- Sidewalk on St. Clair Ave west near Cosetti Meat Packer

#### Overall streetscape improvements:

- Streets around the big box stores: improvement for walkability and feeling of community.



## Streetscapes & mobility

### Create vibrant, safe and green streetscapes

#### Greening and planting:

There was a high amount of interest in adding more green features and planting to the streetscape, including:

- Trees
- Pollinator gardens and ancestral plants
- Potted plants, flower beds, plant boxes and living walls
- Parkettes
- Highlighted benefits of adding greening and planting include beautification, stormwater management and opportunities to support food sovereignty.

#### SPECIFIC SITES

- Rogers road
- Gunns road on both sides of the tracks
- Keele north of Gunns Road

#### Activity on the street:

- Music, because it makes the street more vibrant and fun. Examples used were broadcasting on St. Clair West east of Earls court and busking.
- Public art, including murals that represent the heritage of the area. Gunns Rd under the train tracks was noted as an opportunity for adding public art in the area.
- Patios and cafes, because they offer a place to sit and add vibrancy and activity to the street.
- Commercial activity and restaurants to add vibrancy and a mix of uses to the area. Union street leading to Benny Stark street and connecting to the GO Station was highlighted as an opportunity for adding commercial street level activity in the area.



## Streetscapes & mobility

### Prioritize cycling & walking

Cycling and walking infrastructure improvements was a top priority identified by residents. The most common concerns included:

**Walking:** improving and widening sidewalks, ensuring continuous sidewalks (this especially impacts people using mobility devices), safety especially at intersections, and connections to parks & green spaces.

**Cycling:** improving bike lanes network, connections to trails and green spaces.

**Shared concerns** included: connections and safety.

### SPECIFIC SITES

#### Connections across the rail lines:

- to the Junction from the east side of the railway; pedestrian bridge suggested
- Stockyards area to the Junction (North/West over the rail)
- to Dundas St. W., behind Metro / Runnymede park; pedestrian bridge suggested.
- across the tracks to get to Dupont St. and Perth Ave. area.
- Pedestrian walkway to connect across the tracks from the new GO station
- Connection across the tracks from Davenport Rd. to Lloyd Ave. to provide access to the Stockyards District.

#### Cycling connections:

- Connection between Rogers Rd. bike lane to the new Keele St. addition to create an east-west route. Rogers Rd. is a potential major cycling route.
- Create a north-south cycling route to connect communities north of the area.
- Pedestrian and cycling connection to the Junction.



## Streetscapes & mobility

### Understand impacts of different building scales

At the Community Consultation on November 18, we asked participants what they see as benefits for their community and what are their concerns when it comes to different building scales: low-rise, mid-rise and high-rise.

Participants saw **low and mid-rise development** as better suited for preserving the community feel and fitting in with the neighbourhood character. While low rise was preferred from this perspective, participants said that they saw mid-rise as being suitable from this perspective and being a scale that does not overpower the neighbourhood in terms of character and population growth. Both of these scales were also seen as being positive for local businesses, by adding more commercial space and possibly helping to improve affordability as well as by bringing in more local customers. Low-rise development was also seen as an opportunity to preserve views across the neighbourhood and of the city skyline.

**High-rise development** was seen as an opportunity to increase density, but residents noted that it would be important that it comes with the supporting public infrastructure, such as transit, schools, parks and amenities. Concerns around high-rise development included reducing the community feel and impact on the street-level experience and environment (eg. heat or lack of green space), and increasing the carbon footprint of buildings.

Concerns across all building scales included affordability, impacts on traffic and parking, and climate change risks such as flooding in particular in parts of the neighbourhood that are already at higher risk for flooding.

## Access & equity

### Keep affordability at the forefront

Affordability emerged as the main theme relating to access and equity. Discussions around affordability encompassed housing, affordable commercial space, and affordable access to community services and amenities.

As noted earlier, housing affordability is a growing concern in the neighbourhood that is already impacting some residents. It is also a major concern with regard to future development of the area, especially ensuring that existing residents are not driven out of the neighbourhood as it grows and develops. Affordability is especially a concern when it comes to family size units and high rise development. Comments highlighted the need to address housing needs of 55+ residents, new immigrants and refugees, and Indigenous peoples.

Participants were interested in seeing a range of interventions to support housing affordability including a mix of housing types and affordable ownership. There was an interest in seeing a rooming house study conducted in the area, similar to the one done in the Parkdale Neighbourhood.



## Optimizing public infrastructure

### Expand community services, amenities & spaces

The following needs around local community services, amenities and spaces were identified by local residents and agencies:

- More **services offered in different (local) languages** to improve access for residents who do not speak English.
- **More programs for seniors:** the population of the area is ageing and many senior clients are socially isolated.
- The area needs **more affordable recreational space and programming.**

Examples: Since the Joseph J. Piccininni Community Centre catchment area includes both wealthier and low-income areas, service fees are not waived. This leads to exclusion for low-income residents.












With an increased number of students from higher income families schools are starting to offer more paid programming that lower income children cannot access & are excluded from.

- Need more **intentional / purpose-built (designed) spaces for local agencies.** This includes flexible multi-purpose spaces, a mix of larger rooms for group sessions as well as private meeting space for confidential conversation and more free, social spaces for community members to hang out (eg. youth spaces, seniors spaces). The agencies noted that it would be important to have spaces that are built and designed to meet the needs associated with service delivery to vulnerable populations. Oftentimes spaces in condo storefronts do not work for this purpose.
- Need **digital / virtual spaces** to connect with the community / clients, especially during COVID-19 pandemic.
- Other services and amenities mentioned: **new community centre, expanded library, new schools.** It was suggested that generally there is a need for more local services and amenities to account for population growth.
- There is an interest in **more cultural spaces, including visual and performing art.**
- It was identified that there is a **gap in healthcare services in the area.**

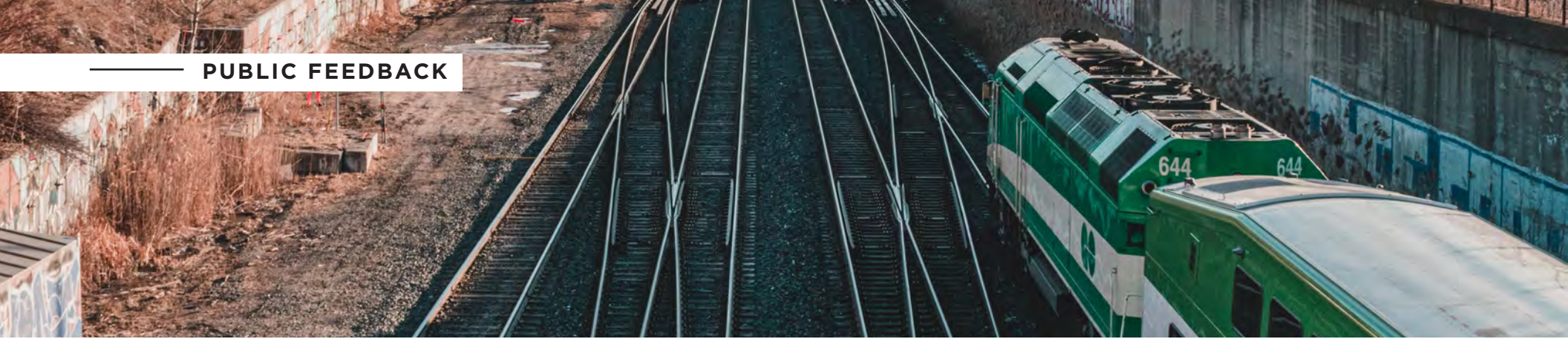


## Optimizing public infrastructure

What community amenities, services and activities would you like to see more of in the area? Please select your top three.

What community amenities, services and activities would you like to see more of in the area? Please select your top three.	Count	% of responses	%
Affordable housing	74		25%
Child care and early learning spaces	102		34%
Employment services	8		3%
Food bank	9		3%
Health and well-being (doctor, pharmacy, dentist, etc.)	93		31%
Indoor places for entertainment, recreation or gathering	132		44%
Local shopping	140		47%
More and/or different types of jobs	40		13%
Places to eat and drink	174		58%
Spaces for post-secondary programs	24		8%
Other, please specify	26		9%
	822		





## Optimizing public infrastructure

### Prioritize transit improvements & manage traffic impacts

Traffic volumes, speed and congestion throughout the area was a major concern for area residents. Specifically, residents expressed concerns about safety on streets, noise and pollution. Residents were concerned that this challenge will only increase with new development.

There is an interest in prioritizing investments in transit (connections, expansion, frequency, etc.) and other forms of mobility to make these modes more convenient. Residents were eager to learn about updates on the implementation of the Transportation Master Plan and the expected transit improvements. At the same time, residents have urged the City to address ongoing traffic issues and concerns. There is a concern that the new development might come sooner than the much anticipated transit improvements, which would lead to the worsening of the traffic situation.

### SPECIFIC SITES

#### Areas of concern with regard to traffic:

- St. Clair Ave. W. and Keele St. intersection
- Old Weston Road and St. Clair Ave. W. intersection
- Underpass on St. Clair Ave. W. between Old Weston Road and Keele St.
- Junction, Cawthra and Mulock Ave
- Residential streets especially adjacent to McCormack St.
- Congestion on Davenport, Old Weston Road and St. Clair Ave. W.



## Inclusive engagement

### Feedback on inclusive engagement

Overall, it was recommended that this becomes a more general approach rather than a guiding principle. The following is a summary of feedback received with regard to improving engagement with diverse stakeholders.

- Community engagement is important to help understand local needs and opportunities; it is important to include diverse voices to ensure planning processes take into account diverse experiences and needs.
- To improve the accessibility of engagement processes, participants suggested:
  - \* breakdown development & planning language
  - \* work with diverse residents to find engagement opportunities that work for them, engage people where they are
  - \* offer lots of opportunities to participate
  - \* increase outreach and awareness building about projects & studies

# Recommendations on best practices for engaging Indigenous communities

Indigenous leaders and residents that participated in this engagement process have expressed an interest in staying involved and participating in further discussion. The following recommendations were offered to keep in mind for the design of future engagement processes:

- Partner with an Indigenous leader and facilitator to convene the conversation.
- Work with Indigenous leaders to identify engagement opportunities that work for them.
- Be clear about what is open for input.
- Share information about how decisions are made and how participants' input will be used.
- Integrate Indigenous protocols into the consultation (i.e. ceremony, gift exchange, elder opening)
- Engage with Indigenous peoples on the land.
- Follow-up after the engagement to show how input has been integrated and opportunities for ongoing relationship building and further participation
- Include Indigenous-led research, and original history collection and sharing in support of planning studies.



# Recommendations on further consultation

The demographic data collected shows that the virtual public meetings were attended primarily by homeowners. The demographic data of those that completed the online survey was predominantly homeowners, white, 20-44 years old, with household income of \$100,000+ (over 60% of responses). In reality, based on the Community Services & Facilities profile, the area population includes 52% immigrants, 44.3% renters and 38% visible minority (based on the Weston-Pelham Park NIA profile, within the study area). It is recommended that the City should carry out specific consultation activities to hear from these community members.

In addition to the participant feedback outlined on page 31, the following are recommendations for designing inclusive virtual consultation activities:

- collaborate with local agencies to design & deliver consultation activities as well as to support communication and outreach;
- focus the consultation around an engaging activity, such as a film screening or a panel discussion;
- use breakout rooms to support dialogue and conversation or hold smaller size events to support interaction; and
- use social media platforms to stream consultation events to reduce the barrier to entry.

