

City of Toronto 20-Year Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan

Consultation Plan

October 2, 2015

1. Foreword

This consultation plan provides an introduction to the City of Toronto 20-Year Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, the principles that inform the consultation process, and an overview of the approach. It also includes a list of the key audiences that will be engaged through the consultation process, details of the various consultation activities, and the process by which input received through consultation activities will be summarized and documented.

To complete the plan, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants has engaged the expertise of Swerhun Facilitation.

This consultation plan is intended to be a living document – Throughout the consultation process, the consultation team will monitor the implementation of the consultation plan and may modify it in order to respond to participant feedback or changing conditions.

2. Introduction

Parks, Forestry & Recreation (PFR) is embarking on a new Facilities Master Plan that will guide the Division for the next 20 years. This is an update to PFR's 2004 Council approved Recreation Facilities Report. It will work with the existing inventory of the City's indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, identify and prioritize future investment and opportunities for parks and recreation facility provision, and develop strategic investment priorities by facility type based on the principles of inclusion, access, equity and quality. These principles are approved within the contexts of the Parks and Recreation Service Plans.

The Plan will provide a clear decision-making process guided by facility provision principles and criteria. This will allow the City to make long-term decisions on park and recreation facility location, construction, repair, replacement, management and financing in a responsible and cost effective manner that meets the needs of communities across the city.

The Plan will be informed by an understanding of parks and recreation trends, and demographic and growth projections that will impact future parks and recreation and service needs across the city and within Toronto's changing communities. The Plan will look at how the City has provided facilities in the past, and provide guidelines and principles on how facilities should be provided to meet future needs.

The Plan will address how additional service providers (e.g. Arena Boards of Management, Association of Community Centres (AOCC), Boards of Management and school boards) and private facilities should be considered when making decisions on City facilities and services.

An implementation and monitoring strategy will allow City staff to update, monitor and evaluate facility needs and priorities on an ongoing basis and provide a process for 5-year review and updates of the Plan. The implementation strategy will include benchmarking and performance measurement tools and a recommended framework for a score card reporting tool.

3. Principles

The consultation process for the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan will be driven by the following principles:

Openness and Inclusivity

The consultation process will be open to any member of the public or stakeholder group. Efforts will be made to engage diverse groups across the city.

Transparency

Transparency will be maintained by demonstrating how participants' views and perspectives have informed the Plan through timely posting of consultation results and a progress update report in Spring 2016.

Clarity

The purpose, scope and method of the consultation process will be clearly communicated. Roles and responsibilities will be clearly defined.

Timeliness

Engagement will begin as early as possible in the process to allow a greater range of opportunities and issues to emerge and to raise the chances of successful issue resolution and implementation.

Flexibility

The consultation process will seek to accommodate the needs of participants, taking into account their diversity, differing interests, areas of expertise, geographic distribution, and availability.

Coordination

The consultation process will connect and coordinate with any other relevant concurrent consultation processes.

Evaluation

Throughout the consultation process, the consultation plan may be modified in order to respond to participant feedback or changing conditions.

4. Approach

The consultation process for the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan will take place in two phases.

Understanding Needs and Establishing Principles – the consultation team will share and seek feedback on the current provision of facilities, principles for investment, and facility gaps and needs. The views and perspectives shared by participants will help inform the needs assessment and draft Plan.

Testing and Refining the Draft Master Plan – the consultation team will share and seek feedback on proposed facility needs, funding options, recommendations and strategic directions. The views and perspectives shared by participants will help inform refinements to the draft Plan. The Plan will then be finalized in early 2017.

5. Key Audiences

This consultation plan anticipates four key audiences who will have an interest in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan and whose views and perspectives will be invaluable in the development of the Plan. These key audiences include:

- The public (e.g. individual users of parks and recreation facilities, as well as non-users);
- Stakeholder organizations that are aligned with or advocate on behalf of parks and recreation activities (e.g. school boards, Park People);
- City staff (e.g. Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division staff and leadership from other Divisions); and
- City Council.

This plan includes a number of consultation activities targeted to each of the above key audiences. These activities are detailed in the following section and may be supplemented by other initiatives led by the City.

6. Consultation Activities

Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

The Stakeholder Advisory Group will provide a forum for 20-30 external stakeholder organizations to provide feedback throughout the consultation process. The group will be composed of organizations with a citywide lens/mandate and/or that represent a large recreational user group. In addition to providing their perspective and advice at key points in the process, this group will also be encouraged to help spread information about the Plan process, driving participation in the other consultation activities. A key role of the Stakeholder Advisory Group will be to share information on the Plan process with their membership/networks and bring their membership/networks views and perspectives to the Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings.

Meetings will be held with the Stakeholder Advisory Group to share and seek feedback on: (1) factors influencing the provision of parks and recreation facilities; (2) the needs assessment, gap analysis and principles for investment; and (3) the draft Plan and its financing.

Stakeholders will include:

- Newcomer organizations
- Sport umbrella organizations
- Groups that represent youth, seniors, women, Aboriginal peoples, people with disabilities, racial minorities and the LGBTTTT community
- Other recreation service providers
- Social planning organizations
- School boards and post-secondary institutions.
- Special interest groups (BIAs, resident associations etc.)

Online Surveys

All key audiences will be engaged through two online surveys that will be hosted on the project website and advertised through social and traditional media.

The first survey will help establish a broad picture of parks and recreation facility needs and preferences by focusing on facility usage, gaps and principles, with the results supplementing research and analysis undertaken by the consultation team.

The second survey will focus on testing and refining the draft Plan and will feature questions regarding proposed facility needs, funding options, recommendations and strategic directions.

Stakeholder Interviews/Focus Groups

In-depth discussions conducted through a series of topic or group-specific interviews/focus groups with key stakeholders who may or may not be a part of the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

Public Meetings & Electronic Town Halls

A series of four public meetings will be held in early 2016, with one meeting held in each of the City's four districts (Scarborough, North York, Toronto-East York, and Etobicoke-York). These meetings will provide an opportunity for the consultation team to share the results of their research and analysis to date, as well as the results of preceding consultation activities including the first online survey and Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting. Feedback will be sought on the current provision of facilities, principles for investment, and facility gaps and needs.

The meetings may take the format of a workshop featuring an overview presentation followed by facilitated small table and plenary discussions. This format will provide an opportunity for participants to hear from and share feedback with both the consultation team and fellow participants, allowing all to hear where views and perspectives converge and where they differ.

In addition to participating in-person, residents will have the option of participating in an electronic town hall. All of the public meetings will be live-webcast and individuals viewing the webcast will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback that will be shared at the in-person public meetings.

Discussion Guide/Conversation Toolkits

To inform and educate the public about the Facilities Master Plan and opportunities for engagement, a public discussion guide will be prepared and made available on the website and at project consultation activities. The discussion guide will provide an overview of the Plan including why it is needed, how it will be developed, the gaps/needs the Plan will address and how it will be used for future decision making.

A complementary conversation toolkit will be made available to encourage the public and stakeholders to document their own conversations with friends, neighbours and colleagues and contribute this feedback to the consultation process. The feedback will be incorporated along with other consultation feedback in the development of the Plan.

City Staff Consultation

City staff will be engaged through a series of workshops and a survey. The survey will assist in prioritizing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and constraints related to in-scope parks and recreation facilities.

City Council Consultation

Three staff reports will be brought to Council for their consideration over the course of the Facilities Master Plan process. Beyond these staff reports, the consultation team will engage all Councillors a drop-in information session and two sets of one-on-one interviews (one consultant led and one staff led).

Project Website

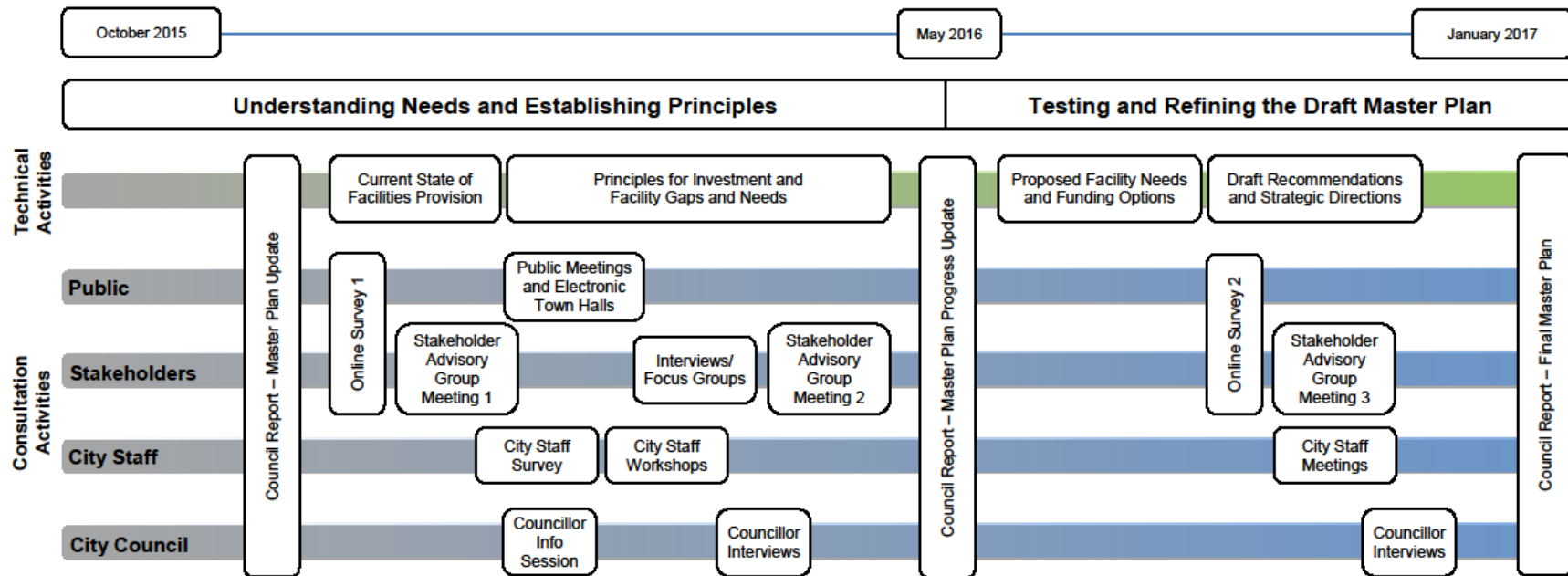
A project-specific website will play a key role in enabling public, stakeholder and City Staff engagement by hosting information and materials (e.g. presentations, background reports, discussion guides, etc.), providing updates, and hosting the online surveys. The website will provide a link to subscribe to e-newsletter updates. The project website will also include links to summaries of all consultation activities.

7. Reporting

In order to ensure that all participant feedback informs the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, all of the above consultation activities will be comprehensively documented:

- The consultation team will prepare a summary for each public, stakeholder and City Staff consultation activity which will highlight the full range of perspectives, including where they converged and where they differed.
- The summaries will be posted to the project website and distributed directly to those who have signed up to the project mailing list.

8. Consultation Process



*The timing of activities shown in this graphic is approximate.