

## **Appendix 2 – Alternative and Complementary Use Analysis**

### **Policy and Regulatory Context**

The City-operated golf courses under review are all public parks used primarily for the purposes of golf with off-season public access permitted. The Official Plan identifies all five of the courses under review as part of the Green Space System on Map 2, Urban Structure and designates them as "Other Open Space" on Maps 13-23, Land Use. All five of the courses are also located within the City's Natural Heritage System, the ravines and other green spaces that form the core of the City's natural ecosystems. Three of the courses – Humber Valley, Scarlett Woods, and Don Valley – are also adjacent to watercourses, the Humber River and the West Don River, that are components of the Greenbelt known as Greenbelt River Valley Connections.

Toronto Official Plan policy objectives for lands within the Green Space System include improving public access to lands under public ownership and restoring and protecting landscapes. Objectives for lands within the Natural Heritage System include protecting and improving the health of the natural ecosystem, supporting biodiversity in the City and targeting ecological improvements, preserving and enhancing the urban forest, and protecting, improving or restoring the quality and quantity of water and drinking water sources. These spaces provide habitat for flora and fauna, clean the air, recharge groundwater, store carbon, mitigate stormwater, and reduce soil erosion. As publicly-owned lands within the Green Space System, Official Plan policy prohibits the sale or disposal (e.g. leases beyond 20 years) of the courses and restricts development of those lands except for recreational and cultural facilities, conservation projects, public transit, and essential public works and utilities where supported by assessment. Residential development and/or uses are not permitted.

All of the courses are also subject to the Ravine and Natural Feature By-law, which regulates the trees, landforms, and functions (ecology and hydrology) of the ravine and natural feature system by encouraging environmentally responsible management. The courses are also located within/on flood plains which require the coordination and collaboration with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

### **Planning Analysis**

Profiles of each course were developed to support staff's evaluation of the golf courses and determine the feasibility of potential complementary or alternative uses. The profiles are organized using three "lenses": Play, Place, and People. The Play lens collected data pertaining to the courses' use as golf courses including rounds played, amenities, and programming. The Place lens analyzed the courses' physical characteristics and context including environmental features, land use, parkland provision, and connectivity. The People lens reviewed the demographic characteristics of the communities within approximately three

kilometres surrounding each of the courses, consistent with the service catchments of PFR's large facilities like community recreation centres. Demographic characteristics of the golf-playing users of the courses was not available and therefore could not be included.

The table below provides a partial summary overview of the course profiles.

|                       | <b>Play</b>                 |   | <b>Place</b>                  |                              |  | <b>People</b>                |                             |                               |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Course</b>         | <b>Rounds Played (2020)</b> | <b>Average Course Utilization (2013-2019)</b> | <b>Tree Canopy Extent (%)</b> | <b>Floodplain Extent (%)</b> | <b>Trail Connectivity</b>                  | <b>Senior Population (%)</b> | <b>Youth Population (%)</b> | <b>Equity-Deserving Index</b> |
| <b>Dentonia Park</b>  | 32,802                      | 45  | 50                            | 23                           | Interrupts Taylor-Massey Creek Trail       | 14                           | 20                          | High                          |
| <b>Don Valley</b>     | 34,997                      | 79  | 56                            | 45                           | Interrupts Earl Bales Park multi-use trail | 16                           | 20                          | Low                           |
| <b>Humber Valley</b>  | 33,308                      | 63  | 37                            | 94                           | No trail fragmentation                     | 15                           | 24                          | High                          |
| <b>Scarlett Woods</b> | 34,793                      | 51  | 44                            | 97                           | No trail fragmentation                     | 17                           | 22                          | Medium                        |

|                      | Play   |    | Place |    |                                     | People |    |      |
|----------------------|--------|----|-------|----|-------------------------------------|--------|----|------|
| <b>Tam O'Shanter</b> | 34,595 | 68 | 30    | 33 | Interrupts Wet Highland Creek Trail | 21     | 19 | High |

Note: The composite equity score index represents the aggregate concentration of four equally-weighted equity-deserving populations at the neighbourhood level: (1) low-income, (2) visible minority, (3) recent immigrants, and (4) Aboriginal populations (as defined by Statistics Canada).

### **Community Engagement**

The public engagement program was divided into two phases through 2021. The goals of the engagement program were to engage a diversity of people in the project, provide information about how the City is conducting the review, and gather the public's input on the future of the golf courses.

Phase One included one-on-one interviews with City Councillors with golf courses in or adjacent to their wards as well as three focus groups respectively comprised of golf community representatives, food access groups, and other advocacy and interest groups such as environmental organizations and public space organizations. Phase One concluded with a virtual public meeting open to all members of the public attended by 370 people and at which an online survey was launched.

Phase Two included the public online survey, five local community meetings, one for each community around the five courses under review, and an Indigenous focus group comprised of Indigenous organization representatives, community members, elders, and leaders. Staff also presented at the City of Toronto's Aboriginal Affairs Advisory Committee on October 22. In total, over 7,000 people were reached as part of the review's engagement program of which approximately 6,700 were respondents to the online survey.

The results of the engagement program indicated that there was support for both maintaining golf as well as expanding public access to the courses. From the perspective of industry and golf community advocates, including members of the public who play golf, expanding public access was seen as an opportunity to grow the sport and introduce more people to the courses. Industry and golf community advocates also indicated a strong desire for enhancing the golf experience itself through diversifying the golf program offering and improving the courses. In general, there was recognition that the City-operated golf courses served

an important recreational function but that the courses, as public parkland, were not being used to their full potential in the context of the City's strategic objectives.

Feedback from the public regarding the future use of the courses focused on the courses' role as components of the Natural Heritage System; more than 80% of respondents to the survey indicated that the golf courses should prioritize environmental stewardship, sustainability, and advancing the City's climate change goals. Other top priorities for the courses included increasing affordability (75%), expanding the complementary programming offering (66%), and increasing public access to the courses (66%). Of the opportunities identified, tree planting (75%), natural area restoration (71%), and trail access and connectivity (65%) were the most popular. On the whole, most participants in the public engagement process recognised a need for strong environmental stewardship on courses moving forward and supported introducing complementary uses while improving access to the courses for both golf and non-golf use.

A summary of the community engagement process can be found in Appendix 3.