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Friends of High Park Zoo (FHPZ) has attended every Movement Study meeting. We have provided input from our perspective as an organization that has called High Park home since 2012.

At the last stakeholder meeting held on February 2, 2023 FHPZ suggested the addition of shuttle stops at The Children's Teaching Kitchen and Colborne Lodge where families visit to participate in Birthday parties, workshops and Harvest festivals. We also showed our support for what was then strategy #3, the strongest performer in the evaluations by staff. However, since then the preferred option being presented to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee has changed from a one-way route for vehicles, with a variety of traffic calming initiatives being implemented, being open seven days a week to "Full road closures within the park year-round on Sundays". Why? This does not make sense to us. With the changes planned to the road infrastructure we cannot support the park being closed on Sundays. This will affect ours (and many other organizations) ability to host events on weekends and our volunteers to participate. Not everyone is able to walk or ride their bike to the zoo due to the difficult topography of the park. Those with disabilities, seniors or families with young children have difficulty accessing the activities near the middle of the park. FHPZ is run exclusively by volunteers and the majority of us work during the week so weekends are the only time we can run our events.

FHPZ has worked with the City of Toronto on a Master Plan for the zoo. Our most recent project Phase 1, in partnership with the City, was to build a new barn for the llamas and capybaras. The front of the barn is where the llama pen activities take place on weekends and statutory holidays. Visitors enjoy the experience of interacting with the llamas, capybaras and other small animals. To watch children and adults feeding the llamas and the joy on their faces shows how valuable the zoo is and will continue to be particularly after the last few years of COVID. Without our volunteers this family fun event cannot happen.



Friends of High Park



Our next project in our Master Plan, Phase 2 is the reconstruction of the recreational trail through the zoo. This is being funded through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program Fund (ICIP) in partnership with the Federal and Provincial Governments, the City of Toronto and FHPZ.

FHPZ prides itself in providing accessible events and programming for everyone on weekends as we continue to raise funds to cover the cost increase of the Phase 2 project to allow the entire project to be implemented at one time.

**In closing Friends of High Park Zoo request that you:**

- **DO NOT SUPPORT THE YEAR-ROUND SUNDAY CLOSURES.**
- **That the city re-opens the park so everyone has access on weekends and statutory holidays until the accessible shuttle is up and running.**

Yours truly,

Sarah Doucette  
Chair, Friends of High Park Zoo