

August 27, 2024

This open letter from an active arts group identifies four ways that “continued investment” at Guild Park will enhance this unique site as a City hub for arts and community.



To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing on behalf of Tender Possibilities to share our experiences and reflections on this summer's programming at Guild Park. Our collaboration with Friends of Guild Park been both rewarding and insightful, offering to a unique opportunity to engage with the community through the power of poetry and creative placemaking.

Guild Park is a beautiful and culturally significant space, rich with potential for arts and community engagement. However, during our time here, we identified a few areas where enhancements could further elevate the park's ability to serve as a welcoming and inclusive environment for all:

- **Public Washrooms:** The availability of more and better-maintained public washrooms would significantly enhance the visitor experience, particularly during events with large audiences.
- **On-Site Food and Beverage Services:** Introducing simple snack options/beverages would not only provide convenience to visitors but also encourage them to spend more time in the park, fostering a deeper connection with the space.
- **Signage:** Improved and additional signage throughout the park would help guide visitors more effectively, making the space more accessible and user-friendly for those unfamiliar with its layout.
- **Seating Areas:** The addition of more benches and seating areas, particularly in shaded spots, would provide visitors with more opportunities to relax and enjoy the park's natural beauty, creating a more inviting atmosphere for reflection and community interaction.

These suggestions are based on our experiences at Guild Park and our work in other public spaces. We believe that addressing these areas would greatly enhance the park's capacity to host arts-related events and improve the overall visitor experience, making it a more accessible and inclusive space for all.

As the founder of Tender Possibilities, my work is deeply rooted in fostering engagement with poetry as a tool for reflection, healing and community building. Creative placemaking initiatives like Tender Possibilities offer a much-needed break from the constant demands of work and technology, providing spaces where people can gather, co-create and imagine new possibilities together. Drawing from my background in community organizing and my commitment to social justice, I am acutely aware of how public spaces can either foster inclusion or perpetuate exclusion, particularly for marginalized communities. The improvements suggested above would make Guild Park more accessible to neighboring communities, ensuring that it remains a place where all individuals, regardless of background, can feel heard and understood.

Friends of Guild Park understands what is needed to make the park a more vibrant and welcoming space for both the arts and the public. Their advocacy is commendable and deserving of recognition. Our community partnership with Friends of Guild Park has not only enabled us to deliver a successful program this summer but has also underscored the need for continued investment in this unique cultural site. We look forward to future opportunities to work together and further contribute to the vitality of Guild Park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Farhia Tato
Founder & Artistic Project Lead, Tender Possibilities

Tender Possibilities is “a participatory poetry exploration” initiative bringing together young adults in shared cultural spaces. The group welcomed more than 250 participants at its summer-long series of poetry readings at Guild Park in 2024. **Tender Possibilities** is part of the City of Toronto 2024 Arts in the Parks program.

