



Barbara Hall Park Revitalization Project and Engagement Overview

EC29.12 - Economic and Community
Development Committee - June 9, 2026



Barbara Hall Park – Site Context

- Located in heart of Church-Wellesley Village
- Largest park in the community
- Several development applications for residential and mixed used building are proposed or recently approved
- Park is home to important community spaces but lacks visibility and in need of upgrades



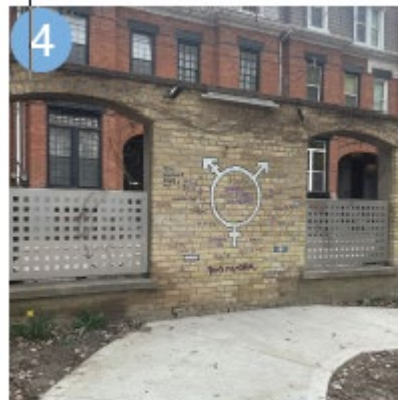
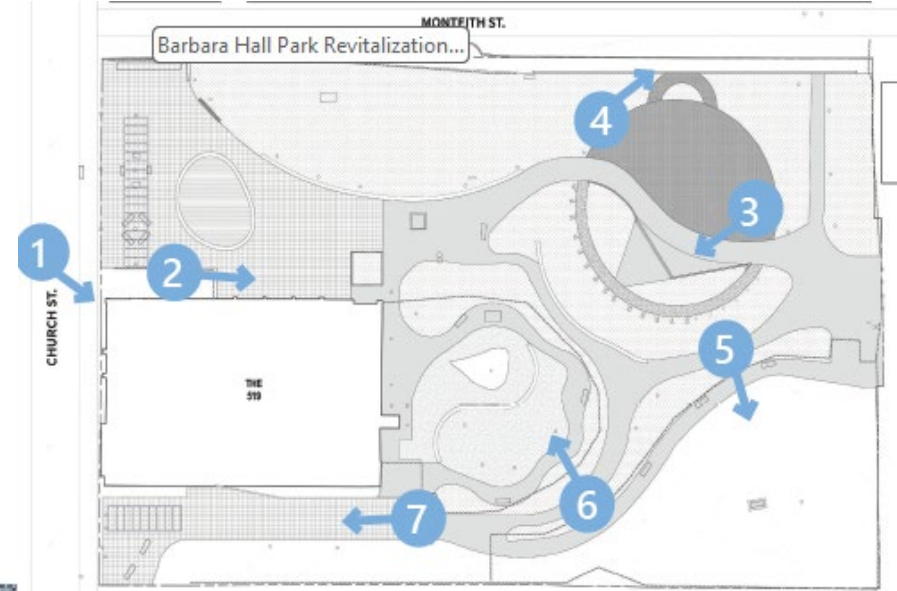
Barbara Hall Park – Today



1 Looking Southeast at the 519 Community Centre.



2 Looking East from Church Street into the park along the plaza area.



4 Looking north, towards the Trans Memorial.



5 Looking south into the Dog Off-Leash Area (OLA).



6 Looking into the playground area behind the 519 community centre.



7 Looking west along the laneway south of the 519 community centre.



3 Looking west, towards the AIDS memorial.

Barbara Hall Park

- **Core Amenities**

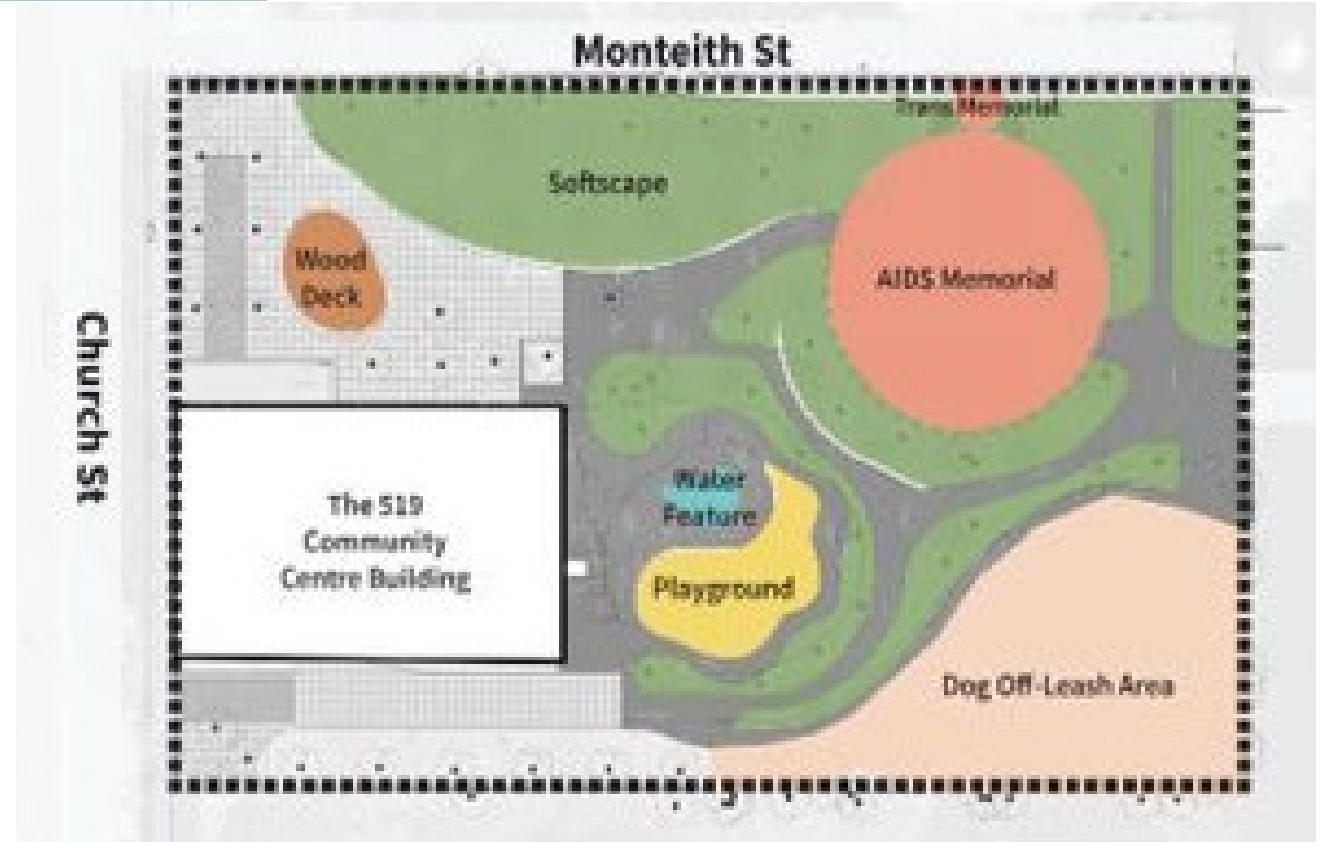
- Fenced splash pad
- Fenced off-leash dog area (OLA)
- Playground
- Open lawn space
- Seating

- **Memorials**

- Toronto AIDS memorial
- Trans memorial

- **Community Events**

- Adjacent to the 519 Community Centre and hosts several events



Barbara Hall Park Revitalization



Vision and Purpose

- Accessible and Equitable park
- Functional park design to improve circulation and provide variety of spaces for seating and passive use
- Balance design for a welcoming green oasis and community events
- Celebrate 2SLGBT+ communities
- Improve OLA, water play and playground to better support community need and the 519 programs
- Balance remembrance and celebration of the AIDS and Trans memorials and create a sense of arrival for these memorials through enhanced landscaping and paving

Project Timeline



We are here



Phase 1

Define overall vision and what matters most

Phase 2

Explore Concept Design Options

Phase 3

Select Preferred Concept Design

Finalize Conceptual Plan – Summer 2026

Detailed Design for OLA improvement to continue in Q4 2026

Detailed Design (2027-2028)

OLA construction 2027

Construction (2029-2030)

Construction of:

- park features
- playground
- splashpad
- memorial enhancements
- other amenities determined through conceptual plan

Engagement/Consultation

Implementation

Engagement Approach



Engagement Reach

- 2,250+ participants engaged
- 20+ local organizations
- 4 surveys of the broader General Public
- 5 workshops, 2 thought exchanges
- 16 stakeholder interviews + open house
- Ongoing stakeholder & community meetings

Engagement Approach (3 steps)

1. Develop vision and themes for park
2. Assess 3 possible design directions
3. Select ultimate design direction (current step)

Targeted Outreach

- HIV/AIDS and Trans+ communities
- Vulnerable or street-involved park users
- Local residents
- Business community
- Broader 2SLGBTQ+ community
- Off Leash Area users

Governance & Collaboration

- Community Advisory Committee guiding process

Local Organizations Engaged



- The 519
- Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association
- Church-Wellesley Village Business Improvement Area
- Trans Women's Association
- Progress Place
- Progress Place resident representative
- Rainbow Seniors Program representative
- ArQuives
- ACT Toronto / HYPE
- Patrick Fahn (Architect of AIDS Memorial)
- Gerstein Crisis Centre
- Circle of Cedar Singers
- AIDS Memorial Advocate
- Pride Toronto Board/Kiki Ballroom Alliance
- Barbara Hall Park Dog Park Association
- The Teresa Group
- HIV-Positive Youth Peer Engagement
- BIPOC Harm Reduction Program, Asian Community AIDS Services
- Echoes Proposal

What we heard



Accessibility & circulation

- Strong support for wider, accessible, well-connected pathways
- Current routes seen as difficult, unclear, and limiting mobility

Animation & gathering

- Support for flexible spaces and more seating to activate the park
- Concern re events impacting green space

Memorial spaces

- Strong support to preserve memorials + improve access and storytelling
- Different views on balance between remembrance and celebration

Inclusive amenities

- Playground and OLA seen as valued; support upgrades
- Mixed views on washrooms (needed vs. safety concerns) and café

Safety and comfort approach

- Safety is a top concern; support for lighting, sightlines, maintenance
- Split views on enforcement vs. inclusive, harm-reduction approaches

Challenges



- Ongoing health and safety challenges, significantly intensified since the COVID-19 pandemic, including increased opioid-related incidents
- Challenges have contributed to vandalism, violent behaviour, and ongoing maintenance pressures
- Memorials of significant importance to the 2SLGBTQ+ community are located toward the rear of the park, making them particularly vulnerable to damage and misuse
- P&R staff maintains park, collects litter and remove sharps/hazardous debris twice daily
- Extensive stakeholder and public engagement as part of Concept Design found many community members feeling unsafe in the park due to visible drug use and aggressive behaviour. There are split views on enforcement vs. harm-reduction approaches

Conceptual Design



Four key priorities identified:

- Improve comfort and safety
- Enhance accessibility
- Increase park animation and activity
- Balance commemoration and celebration

How feedback translated into conceptual design:

- Upgrade the playground, splash pad, OLA
- Improve accessibility, lighting, place keeping and safety
- Enhance memorial elements and the surrounding spaces
- Improve landscaping and planting



Next Steps



- Complete engagement and conceptual design:
 - Trans Youth and HIV/AIDS community engagement to finalize enhancements for memorials
 - Present final conceptual design to Community Advisory Committee
 - Update project webpage with final conceptual design
- Continue with detailed design for the OLA and the conceptual design as highlighted earlier.