

Update on Weston Foundation Donation for Queen's Park North Revitalization

Date: February 24, 2026

To: Executive Committee

From: General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management

Wards: Ward 11

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on the planned revitalization of Queen's Park North and the associated proposed donation agreement with the Weston Foundation, in response to Council direction ([2025.CC28.1](#)).

In response to the March 2025 Council direction, City staff entered into a first phase donation agreement with the Weston Foundation and have led initial community engagement on the design and operating model for a revitalized Queen's Park North.

This report summarizes the engagement activities, feedback to date from over 2900 participants, and the vision for revitalization. Overall, a wide variety of feedback was received, and emphasis was placed on trees and ecosystems, community and cultural heritage, improved maintenance and the opportunity to improve the visitor experience.

The report outlines recommended terms for two agreements: a further donation agreement to complete detailed design and construction; and a tri-party maintenance, operations and funding agreement with the Weston Foundation and University of Toronto to collaborate on stewardship of the park post-construction. The report also seeks authority to pursue any amendments to the City's existing lease with the University of Toronto in accordance with the revitalization project as well as any sublease and/or licence arrangements in connection with such lease which may be necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the revitalized park.

The report presents a vision, principles and design directions that City staff have developed through the first phases of community engagement and site analysis. This vision is illustrated in a draft design concept that staff will be sharing for feedback from the public, neighbouring institutions, First Nations and other project participants in March-April 2026.

Pending adoption from City Council, the project team, in consultation with the local Councillor, will complete the next phase of community engagement, due diligence and

refinement, to finalize the design concept, further informing the operating model and agreements to be negotiated with the donor and University of Toronto and enabling progress forward on detailed design, procurement and construction.

Queen's Park North is Toronto's oldest municipal park and a historically, culturally and environmentally important public space in the Downtown. The University of Toronto St. George Campus Secondary Plan seeks to enhance and maintain the picturesque character of Queen's Park and its connections with the University of Toronto, the Provincial buildings and nearby cultural institutions. The Council-adopted Parkland Strategy and Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan emphasize the priority of improving existing parks to adapt to increased demand, climate change, aging infrastructure and other pressures. The proposed investment and agreements recommended in this report will enable enhanced stewardship, strengthen the natural character of the park and provide amenities to improve the visitor experience for generations to come.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to accept a donation of up to \$50 million and any future donations from the Weston Foundation for Queen's Park North, and to negotiate and execute a donation agreement with the Weston Foundation to fund the final design and delivery of Queen's Park North enhancements (the "Donation Agreement"), on terms and conditions acceptable to the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor inclusive of key terms outlined in Appendix 5.

2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation to negotiate, execute, and amend any agreements necessary to complete the revitalization and continued operations of Queen's Park North, including a tri-party agreement with Weston Foundation and the University of Toronto to govern the maintenance, operations, and funding of the revitalized Queen's Park North, (the "Tri-Party Agreement") for a term of approximately twenty years, commencing when Queen's Park North re-opens or as mutually agreed by the parties, on terms and conditions acceptable to General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

3. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the Chief Procurement Officer, to negotiate and enter into any necessary agreements, including non-competitive agreements, with a value exceeding \$500,000, and execute any necessary purchase order amendments, with a value exceeding \$500,000 or more than 10 percent of the original commitment, for which the appropriate Committee and/or City Council approval would normally be required under City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 71, Financial Control, and City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 195, Procurement, for the provision of goods and services including professional and construction services required to deliver the Queen's Park North revitalization, provided that:

- a. the procurement and/or purchase order amendment is necessary to meet the timelines associated with the donated funds;
- b. the costs will be fully covered and funded by the donations provided by the Weston Foundation;
- c. the non-competitive procurement processes are completed in accordance with the City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 195, Procurement, and associated policies and procedures; and
- d. the terms and conditions of any such agreements and any amending agreements are acceptable to the General Manager, Parks and Recreation and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

4. City Council authorize the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management to approve any amendments to the existing lease dated January 1, 1859, between The Governing Council of the University of Toronto, as landlord, and the City, as tenant, as amended, in respect of the lands consisting of Queen's Park North (collectively, the "QPN Lease"), as well as any sublease and licence arrangements in connection with such QPN Lease, that are necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the revitalized park pursuant to the Donation Agreement and the Tri-Party Agreement identified in Recommendations #1 and #2 above, all on terms and conditions acceptable to the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, in consultation with the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

5. City Council authorize each of the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, and the Director, Real Estate Services, Corporate Real Estate Management, severally to execute any amendments to the QPN Lease and any agreements related to the sublease and licence arrangements identified in Recommendation #4 above, as well as any related documents on behalf of the City.

6. City Council direct the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, in consultation with the Chief Planner, take steps to ensure that the cultural heritage values and attributes of Queen's Park North are appropriately conserved, and where possible enhanced through the finalization of park revitalization plans.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no current financial implications resulting from the adoption of the recommendations contained in this report. The Weston Foundation is committed to providing up to \$50 million to advance capital improvements as part of the revitalization of the park, including funding for public engagement, design services, and capital costs for park enhancements. The scope of the project is not intended to require additional City capital funding. The Weston Foundation is committed to providing an additional estimated \$43 million (approximately \$2.15 million annually over an initial term of 20 years) to the University of Toronto to provide enhanced maintenance, operations, and programming.

The City will act as the delivery lead of the project and will procure and oversee all construction services through Parks and Recreation's Capital Projects, Design and Delivery team. All City costs for the design and construction of the revitalized Queen's Park North will be funded by the donation, except for any City staff overhead cost that exceed the agreed annual capital delivery recovery of \$100,000, which will be absorbed within the approved Capital budget.

The City will continue to deliver core municipal services in the park, with the University taking on enhanced maintenance. The City's aggregate operating costs associated with its maintenance and operations responsibilities will remain generally consistent with current expenditure levels for Queen's Park North.

Any City financial implications would be addressed through future budget processes or subsequent reports to Council as needed, related to this item.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on April 23 and 24, 2025, City Council adopted MM.29.8 "Time for Outdated Parks rules to Touch Grass" that requested General Manager, Parks and Recreation to report in the fourth quarter of 2025 with options to provide more food and beverage offerings in parks, where appropriate, including an assessment of physical structures and operating models.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.MM29.8>

At its meeting on March 26 and 27, 2025, City Council adopted CC28.1 "Authority to Negotiate Agreements Related to Queen's Park North Through Philanthropic Partnerships in Alignment with City of Toronto Priorities" that directed the General Manager to negotiate and sign a donation agreement with the Weston Foundation in order to complete first phase community engagement and preliminary design regarding Queen's Park North enhancements, to inform the scope of a larger donation agreement. City Council also directed General Manager, Parks and Recreation, to negotiate a donation acceptance agreement with the Weston Foundation to fund the final design and delivery of Queen's Park North enhancements, and provide additional funding support for ongoing maintenance and programming of Queen's Park North park enhancements, and report to the Executive Committee with a project implementation update, inclusive of an update on the terms of the recommended donation acceptance agreement.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC28.1>

At its meeting on June 14 and 15, 2023, City Council adopted MM7.11 "Advancing University Park" that authorized the City Manager to negotiate and sign a donor agreement with the Matthews Foundation and the Michael Young Foundation to receive a donation to fully fund Environmental Assessment, Preliminary Design, and related studies for University Park on terms and conditions satisfactory to the City Manager and City Solicitor. City Council also directed the City Manager to pursue options for further

partnership opportunities to support preliminary studies for the portion of University Park between College Street and Adelaide Street West.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.MM7.11>

At its meeting on May 10, 11, and 12, 2023, City Council adopted the amendments to the recommendations from TE4.70 "Update on Metrolinx's Ontario Line Construction within the Toronto and East York District" requesting the Deputy City Manager, Infrastructure Services and Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to report to the July 11, 2023 meeting of the Executive Committee with a status report on the planning for University Park, including a focus on the planning of the section of University Avenue between Richmond and Armory streets and opportunities related to Metrolinx's work on the Ontario Line and the rehabilitation of the University and Queen intersection.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.TE4.70>

At its meeting on July 19, 20, and 21, 2022, City Council adopted recommendations in EX34.4 "Priority Downtown Parks and Public Realm Opportunities" and directed Parks and Recreation, in consultation with other relevant Divisions to report back to the Executive Committee in 2023 with options to speed up the delivery of the Bathurst Quay and University Avenue parks; including phasing the University Avenue project by focusing on the northern section first.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.EX34.4>

At its meeting on July 19, 20, and 21, 2022, City Council adopted the recommendations from TE34.8 "University of Toronto St. George Campus Secondary Plan - Official Plan Amendment Application - Final Report" and directed the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to use the Secondary Plan policies, together with the Urban Design Guidelines, to inform the evaluation of current and future development applications. Additionally, City Council directed the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning and the Director, Urban Design to bring forward block-specific design guidelines for the University of Toronto St. George Campus Secondary Plan for City Council consideration. This Secondary Plan and Urban Design Guidelines included the cultural heritage landscape study of the Queen's Park Precinct as requested by City Council in 2021 (see below – 2021.MM28.35).

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2022.TE34.8>

At its meeting on October 1 and 4, 2021, City Council adopted the recommendations from IE24.7 "TOcore Implementation Strategy - Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan" and requested City staff to incorporate priority projects into the 10-year Capital Budget and Plan, advance implementation through development review, explore placemaking opportunities, pursue partnership and funding opportunities, and report back in 2024 on progress. City Council also request staff to identify opportunities for large parks, consider safety and public realm upgrades on University Avenue, prepare scopes of work for key greening projects, and work with Metrolinx to mitigate and enhance the public realm related to the Ontario Line.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.IE24.7>

At its meeting on February 2,3, and 5, 2021, City Council requested the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to immediately undertake a cultural heritage landscape study of the Queen's Park precinct.

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2021.MM28.35>

At its meeting on May 22, 23, and 24, 2018, City Council adopted the recommendations from PG29.5 "Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan" to direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, General Manager, Transportation Services, and General Manager, Parks, Forestry, and Recreation to consider the potential to prioritize the redesign of University Avenue in the development of the Parks and Public Realm Strategy.<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2018.PG29.5>

COMMENTS

Project and Donation Summary

The City was approached in 2024 by the Weston family regarding a proposed donation for enhancements at Queen's Park North. This donation would improve Queen's Park North through a funding contribution for park design, community engagement, and construction, as well as further financial support to ensure high-quality park operations, maintenance, and programming over the long term.

In March 2025, City Council directed City staff to enter a first phase donation agreement with the Weston Foundation (the "Donor") to complete initial community engagement on the proposed donation and preliminary design work. Council directed staff to report back to Executive Committee with an implementation update, inclusive of terms for a recommended donation agreement. The first phase donation agreement was executed to allow for initial engagement and preliminary design, effective March 2025.

Through this first phase donation agreement, the Donor is covering the costs of the project's consultant team and specific City staff resources. The project team assembled includes but is not limited to;

- Janet Rosenberg and Studio (landscape architecture) and sub-consultants (surveying, cultural heritage, arborist)
- Trophic Design (Indigenous design and Indigenous engagement)
- Third Party Public (public engagement)
- Belleville Placemaking (activation and operating model)

The City has dedicated a project and design lead, a governance and agreements lead, and a community engagement lead, funded by the Donor. The City is leading the engagement and design process and holds final approval on project deliverables.

Since directed in March 2025, the project team has significantly advanced engagement and design directions to inform the recommended terms presented in this report and the execution of the donation agreement and other agreements.

A comprehensive community engagement process is underway, ensuring a transparent, iterative, and collaborative approach to addressing the future of the park. The third phase of community engagement (Setting the Direction) is scheduled to conclude in April 2026. In the third phase, City staff will present the preferred design direction, which considers all feedback received through the previous two rounds of engagement, an overview of the proposed operating model and a plan for continued engagement throughout the detailed design and construction phases. Design development is anticipated to continue through summer 2026 concluding with a ceremonial groundbreaking event in late summer 2026, to mark the end of the design process and to signal the project moving into a phased construction period.

Queen's Park North - The Opportunity

Queen's Park North is a five-hectare park located just north of the Ontario Legislature and officially opened in 1860, named in honour of Queen Victoria. It is Canada's first municipal park and one of the largest parks in Toronto's Downtown. The park acts as a green oasis within the city centre. It has a longstanding function as a civic gathering space, has a rich cultural heritage, and has continued to change throughout the years to respond to an evolving and growing city with shifting public needs and expectations. Elements of the context, history, and cultural importance of the park are outlined in Appendix 1.

The park today is defined by its extensive tree canopy, simple amenities (e.g. picnic tables/benches, bottle filling station), public art, lawns, plantings, walking paths and perimeter recreation path and includes an entrance to Museum Subway Station. In 2019, the City undertook landscaping, lawn and pathway improvements in the park. Additional priorities highlighted through community input during the 2015-2019 consultation were not pursued due to a limited project budget.

Today's proposed revitalization of the park aligns with the City's commitment to ensuring the park system continues to expand and adapt to meet the needs of a growing city. The demand for high-quality public green space is especially strong in intensifying Downtown neighbourhoods.

Queen's Park North is well-positioned to benefit from the proposed investment and operating model, as an exemplar of urban ecology and given its central location, cultural significance, and connections with nearby educational and civic institutions. Proposed improvements to Queen's Park North prioritize celebrating and preserving the park's cultural heritage values and attributes, including the tree canopy, enhancing the natural landscape, and improving the visitor experience through additional amenities (e.g. washrooms, food and beverage, interpretative information) and appropriately scaled activations (e.g. educational programs).

Ensuring the revitalization aligns with the distinct landscape and cultural heritage of the park is key to project success, and a preliminary cultural heritage statement has been completed. A further Statement of Significance is being drafted in collaboration with City Heritage Planning and will be used to inform and ground decisions related to the revitalization. Where required, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) may be needed to assess impacts of the proposed changes to the existing heritage fabric. HIA's will also

include recommendations with regard to potential mitigation measures that address the impacts of the proposed changes and to ensure their compatibility with the heritage value, attributes and character of the park.

The revitalization will advance priorities of the City's Parkland Strategy, Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan and other strategies, and strengthen connections to recently improved open spaces at the University of Toronto. It will also support the City's broader vision for the University Park concept of expanding green space in the University Avenue corridor and will comply with the objectives of the University of Toronto St. George Campus Secondary Plan, which seeks to protect and enhance the historic and landscape character of the area.

The City leases the lands consisting of Queen's Park North from the University of Toronto for the use of the lands as a public park in accordance with a 999-year nominal lease dating back to 1859. The lease prohibits the City from erecting any buildings and will need to be amended to allow for the City to construct the envisioned park enhancements (e.g. washroom, café). City staff have been working with the University on the terms presented in this report and the University has indicated ongoing support for the project. The University agrees that a lease amendment will be required to achieve this project. Following the adoption of this report, and finalization of the park design, the City and University will negotiate and execute any required changes to the lease agreement.

Engagement Work

The project's community engagement process has been developed to ensure a transparent, iterative, and collaborative approach to the design of the revitalized park and the development of an appropriate operating model. Through this process, community members are providing feedback to help shape both the vision and details.

Engagement Timeline for Queen's Park North Revitalization:

March 2025 - June 2025: Preliminary work and pre-engagement - Completing inventory and analysis

July 2025 - September 2025: Phase 1 - Confirming the Vision - Developing a vision and guiding principles, identifying opportunities

October 2025 - December 2025: Phase 2 - Exploring Options - Developing and seeking feedback on emerging revitalization directions

January 2026 - April 2026: Phase 3 - Setting the Direction - Presenting and seeking feedback on the recommended plan

In July 2025, the City launched Phase 1. The objective of the phase was to build a shared understanding of the current state of the park, including what is working well, what needs improvement, and the key challenges and opportunities driving the need for change.

Engagement with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples also began during this phase. The engagement focused on introducing the project and team, listening to diverse Indigenous priorities, and starting a dialogue on how to work together effectively moving forward. Indigenous engagement is conducted in alignment with consent-based, protocol-informed practices and is continuing.

The feedback collected in Phase 1 helped the City and the design consultants finalize the vision and the guiding principles that inform design. Over 1,700 community members participated through focus groups, pop-ups, a community workshop, Indigenous Engagement and an online survey. The feedback reflected a range of perspectives on the degree of change community members were comfortable with in the park. While some preferred no changes, most supported conditional changes, and were open to adjustments if specific conditions met (e.g. protection of trees, alignment with park's cultural heritage). For the guiding principles, there was strongest agreement around protecting trees and maintaining a civic space, enhancing how people use and experience the park with light-touch improvements, and reflecting historic and ongoing cultural significance, with a focus on First Nations and 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Participants also emphasized that an increased role for institutions should not overshadow community voices.

During Phase 2, an updated vision and guiding principles for the revitalization were presented, informed by community feedback from the previous phase of engagement. The City also shared emerging ideas for the proposed park design and asked for feedback. The community had multiple opportunities to provide feedback through pop-ups in the park, inside Museum Station and at Hart House at the University of Toronto, an online survey, focus groups, continued Indigenous engagement, and a community workshop. Engagement continued between the City and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Wendat First Nation. In addition, the second Indigenous Sharing Meeting was held.

Similar to the previous phase, this phase reflected a range of perspectives on the proposed changes to the park. Trees and ecology remained a priority, with strong support for enhancing the tree canopy and overall ecological health. Feedback also called for clearer information about potential impacts of proposed elements on trees, heritage features, and the park's relationship to surrounding landscapes. Long-term stewardship and support for enhanced maintenance emerged as a key theme. More than 1200 community members participated and input gathered during this phase helped the project team refine the proposed design directions and principles, which will be further shared and refined in Phase 3.

For a summary of Phase 1 and Phase 2 community and Indigenous community feedback, see Appendix 2.

Vision, Principles, and Design Directions

Through the preliminary phases of the project, including community engagement, the project team drafted, tested and refined a park vision, principles, and 14 specific design directions to gather feedback and refine the conceptual design and operating model for the revitalized park.

The vision provides a high-level statement that unites the community around the project's overall goals. The principles reflect priorities and criteria guiding any changes in the park, while the design directions translate these ideas into concrete design strategies, ranging from physical changes to light-touch enhancements that achieve the vision and principles.

The vision presents Queen's Park North as an extraordinary place for people and nature throughout the seasons, that respects the existing trees and heritage of Queen's Park North, fosters a welcoming environment, and showcases excellence in design, ecological stewardship, education, animation and collaborative governance.

For an outline of the Vision, Principles, and Design Directions, see Appendix 3. For a visual representation of the draft design concept that will be shared for public feedback in March, see Appendix 4. Pending adoption from City Council, the design concept presented here will be refined and further detailed through community engagement, ongoing analysis, testing and design development.

Capital Project Delivery

Pending adoption from City Council, and once final design has been established and is ready for construction tender, the City will deliver the capital project through the Parks and Recreation Capital Projects Design and Delivery team. The City will act as delivery lead, and will procure and oversee all construction services, in accordance with City policies applicable to capital projects. The City will collaborate and consult with the Donor during the development of construction and contract documentation and procurement processes.

The initial phase of the revitalization is anticipated to start in September 2026, to be confirmed through design finalization. All existing consultants retained by the Donor for design services and design may be retained directly by the City when required and as agreed by the parties to ensure appropriate oversight and continuity of services.

These design consulting service costs, as well as continued funding for dedicated City staff positions and construction costs, will be funded out of the proposed donation. The City will cover any administrative and staff overhead required beyond that to deliver the project.

As part of capital delivery, the City will emphasize the reuse of any salvageable materials (e.g. pavers), considering recent improvements in the park.

Donation Agreement, and Framework for Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations and Funding Agreement

Pending adoption from City Council, the next phase of design, engagement, construction and ongoing stewardship will be guided by two agreements recommended through this report: a donation agreement between the City and the Donor, and a tri-party agreement between the City, University of Toronto and the Donor.

Donation Agreement

The Donor will provide funding for up to \$50 million of capital costs for the revitalization of the park, including funding for public engagement, design services, and capital costs for park enhancements. The key donation terms are outlined in Appendix 5.

Framework for Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations and Funding Agreement

In addition to the \$50 million donation, the Donor is committed to ongoing annual funding to support enhanced maintenance, operations and programming to be delivered by the University of Toronto through a tri-party maintenance, operations, and funding agreement. The City will continue to deliver core municipal services, with the University taking on enhanced maintenance. The draft terms of this agreement, which are subject to ongoing negotiation, refinement, and finalization (following completion of the park design) are included in Appendix 6.

A Queen's Park North steering committee (the "Steering Committee") amongst the three parties would be established to ensure effective collaboration, responsiveness, and delivery of responsibilities under the framework. An Executive Director will be hired and dedicated to Queen's Park North, to be employed by the University of Toronto.

Following the finalization of the park design, the City, the University of Toronto and the Donor will co-develop a detailed maintenance and operations schedule, including applicable service standards and allocation of operating responsibilities, and a corresponding annual budget. Based on the current design directions, additional annual funding to be delivered through this model is estimated to be approximately \$2.15 million per year, over an initial term of 20 years. The City's aggregate operating costs associated with its maintenance and operations responsibilities will remain generally consistent with current expenditure levels for Queen's Park North, and any unanticipated financial impacts would be submitted through the respective divisional budget process.

The \$50 million dollar donation for design, engagement and revitalization will make significant improvements to Queen's Park North in line with the vision and principles established and refined through engagement. Further, by leveraging the expertise and capacity of the City and the University of Toronto, and with an ongoing funding commitment from the Donor, investments made to the park will be maintained to a high standard, programmed with site specific intention and oversight, and realized to their full potential for many years to come for public enjoyment.

Queen's Park North Advisory Board and Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle

The community engagement process has consistently highlighted the need and desire for ongoing community and Indigenous involvement and representation in the park's future. To effectively ensure this, the Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations, and Funding Agreement envisions the establishment of a Queen's Park North Advisory Board (the "Advisory Board"), and an Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle, in addition to the dedicated Executive Director and the Steering Committee.

The Advisory Board would be comprised of representatives from Indigenous nations and groups and community partners, including cultural institutions and local stakeholders. The Advisory Board will help guide the implementation of the park vision, including input to the Executive Director and the Steering Committee on initiatives that foster community engagement and animation. Its purpose is to help ensure that the Steering Committee's activities are informed by and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the public, local community, key stakeholders, and Indigenous communities and perspectives.

In addition, and informed by ongoing Indigenous engagement, the framework envisions an Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle. The role of this body will be further developed through continued consultations with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous groups. A high-level outline of this framework has been described in consultation and engagement conversations to date with a commitment to continuing to develop an appropriate approach.

Next Steps

Following adoption of the report, staff will:

- Complete Phase 3 engagement with community and First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and urban Indigenous groups.
- Finalize designs for the revitalized park.
- Finalize phasing, procurement, and construction timelines.
- Work with the Donor to finalize and execute a donation agreement inclusive of key terms included within this report.
- Advance negotiations with the University of Toronto and execute any required amendments to the QPN Lease, or sublease and/or licence arrangements in connection with such QPN Lease, necessary for the construction, operation and maintenance of the revitalized park.
- Advance negotiations with the University of Toronto and the Donor, informed by ongoing engagement and design work, and execute the tri-party maintenance, operations and funding agreement following design finalization.
- Lead ongoing community engagement and public communications through phases of detailed design, construction and initiation of the operating model and establish the Advisory Board and Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle.

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix 1 - Cultural Heritage Summary
Appendix 2 - Engagement Summary Phase 1 and Phase 2
Appendix 3 - Vision, Principles and Design Directions
Appendix 4 - Draft Concept Design for Public Engagement Phase 3 - March 2026
Appendix 5 - Donation Agreement - Key Terms
Appendix 6 - Draft Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations, and Funding Agreement
Framework - Key Terms

Appendix 1 - Cultural Heritage Summary

Indigenous Context

The area now known as Queen's Park North has long been a place of gathering, travel, and sustenance for Indigenous Peoples. It lies within the overlapping traditional territories of the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and the Wendat peoples. The region supported vibrant Indigenous ways of being based on harvest, trade, and traditional forms of social organization and governance that continue to influence this place through governance, kinship and cultural practice.

The City of Toronto acknowledges that these territories are currently covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands. All facets of the City's work are carried out on the traditional territories of many nations, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The City honours the enduring care and stewardship of these lands and waters by Indigenous Nations and Peoples.

During the 1600s, conflict and shifting alliances among Indigenous Nations and European powers affected the Great Lakes region, including the Toronto area. Following this period, known as "The Beaver Wars", peace was reaffirmed through the Eternal Council Fire Wampum Belt, also known as The Chief Yellowhead (Musquakie) Belt. This belt was presented by the Haudenosaunee Confederacy to the Anishinaabeg, denoting enduring peace between the Nations and governance of the territory. The Dish With One Spoon Wampum, from the same era, further reflects this relationship — an agreement to share the land and its resources in peace and mutual care.

Land purchases and treaties with the Crown in the 1700s, 1800s and early 1900s were accompanied with expanding colonial settlement and the displacement of First Nations from traditional territories in Ontario. The treaties in many cases were not fully resolved until settlement decades later (e.g. Williams Treaties settlement in 2018) or remain subject to ongoing claims.

In 1840, the Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee renewed their longstanding alliance through a council gathering that reaffirmed their sovereignty, diplomatic relationship, and shared responsibilities under the Five Council Fires Wampum Belt, read by Chief Musquakie (Yellowhead). This renewal reflected a continued commitment to inter-Nation governance and peace — agreements that exist alongside, not beneath, treaties made with the Crown.

Land Subdivision and the Creation of King's College

The area now occupied by Queen's Park North is part of a natural region characterized by mixed woodland and creeks flowing into Lake Ontario.

In 1828, three Park Lots were acquired by King's College to serve as the site for their future campus. At the time, the lots were still outside the urban perimeter and characterised by field and remnant forest cover bisected by Taddle Creek in a north-south direction. Improvements to present day College Street and University Avenue provided ready access to the campus lots from the growing city to the south and the area became a popular place for recreational activities among Toronto's residents. In 1845, a wing of King's College was built on the campus lots as part of a grand vision that was never realized before the institution ceased to exist.

University Park – Planning Explorations

In 1849, the newly elected government responsible for the Province of Canada voted to abolish King's College and replace it with the secular, non-denominational University of Toronto.

Landscape plans for the new university produced throughout the 1850s were inspired by the early public park movement that was developing in the UK at the time to advocate for urban green spaces as a necessary response to the effects of industrialization and rapid urban population growth on public health and wellbeing in the overcrowded and polluted cities of the time.

A series of plans explored different possibilities including an experimental farm, botanical garden, and vice-regal residence. They incorporated key features of early public park design such as groupings of trees, grassy meadows and winding pathways. Plans dating to later in the 1850s assigned the land west of Taddle Creek to campus development and the land east of the creek as parkland.

Queen's Park – A Public Park

Under the lease dated January 1, 1859, the University of Toronto leased approximately 20 hectares (49 acres) of land east of Taddle Creek to the City of Toronto for use as an urban park to be named Queen's Park. The park was opened by Edward, Prince of Wales in 1860 and became the first public park in British North America, inspired by similar parks that had recently emerged in the UK and the United States.

The park quickly became a popular place of leisure, particularly for the nearby residents of the densely populated St John's Ward. Later, its appeal as a green space within the city led to the construction of stately homes along portions of the park's perimeter. Beginning in the late 1800s, a number of monuments and memorials were added, leading the park to serve an increasingly commemorative function alongside its recreational function. As a popular public space, it also became a site for public storytelling, preaching, and free speech advocacy.

Institutional Neighbours

Since its creation, a number of prominent institutions have been built around Queen's Park North. The addition of these institutions reduced the overall size of Queen's Park and gave it the character of a quadrangle.

Colleges affiliated with the University of Toronto were built west and east of the park. These include University College, Trinity College, Victoria College and St. Michael's College. Additional university buildings were added to the city block south-west of the park.

Between 1886 and 1892, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario was built in the southern half of Queen's Park following the Province's expropriation of university lands in the 1850s. This reduced the park to approximately half its former size and decreased its prominence given that it was now situated behind the south-facing legislature. A number of government offices were later added south-east of the park, adjacent to the legislature.

The Royal Ontario Museum was built immediately north of Queen's Park between 1910 and 1914 and was subsequently enlarged between 1931-32.

20th Century Changes

By the mid-twentieth century, urban development and the expansion of city streets to accommodate growing volumes of vehicular traffic hardened the park's perimeter and separated it from its surroundings.

A central bandstand that acted as a gathering place and housed washrooms was removed by the city because it had become a draw for the homeless and meeting place for gay men. It was eventually replaced by a statue of King Edward VII in 1969.

During the latter half of the twentieth century, heavy public use and poor upkeep caused a general degradation of the park and its natural features.

During this time, the park's proximity to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario meant that it had become a popular site for political protests and public demonstrations that sought to increase visibility for a variety of causes (e.g. education funding, LGBTQ+ rights and the environment).

The Park's Significance to the 2SLGBTQ+ Community

Queen's Park North has a long history as an important gathering space for 2SLGBTQ+ communities, hosting events, rallies, and public demonstrations. The project recognizes this history as an important part of the park's cultural heritage and current use.

In the early 1900s, the park became both a meeting place and a target of police surveillance. Even after Canada partially decriminalized gay sex in 1969, police patrols, raids, and the removal of park bushes in the 1970s showed how queer presence in public space was discouraged. Despite this, Queen's Park also grew into a powerful site of pride and visibility. In 1974, Toronto's first Pride Week culminated in a march to

Queen's Park, establishing the park as a symbolic gathering space for queer rights and celebration.

Today, Queen's Park remains an important and accessible space for 2SLGBTQ+ communities, continuing to serve as one of the few free public sites for a wide range of gatherings and demonstrations and a vital hub for expression, activism, and connection within the 2SLGBTQ+ community.

Present Day

Today, Queen's Park North is a natural oasis within the City's downtown where people can reconnect with nature. It is known for its large deciduous trees that form a canopy over an open lawn crossed by a network of paths that converge on the central paved area and statue. It remains well used by the public, including the large populations of nearby residents, workers and students as well as visitors to the Downtown. It also continues to serve as a place for recreation, acts as a thoroughfare for pedestrians, and is a site of commemoration, social mobilization and the public expression of community identities.

Appendix 2 - Engagement Summary Phase 1 and Phase 2

How we reached people

The City used a variety of outreach methods to invite community participation in the process, including direct outreach to organizations, groups, and community leaders; emails to individuals who signed up for updates; social media; the project website; the local Councillor's newsletter; and posters at local businesses and residential buildings around the park.

How we engaged

To ensure a meaningful and inclusive process, engagement included different methods of engagement which included: pop-ups, an online survey, focus groups, an Indigenous sharing circle, meetings with First Nations-Rights-holders, and community working session and open house.

Community Engagement: Pre-Engagement

- Pre engagement conversations: resident groups, cultural institutions, BIAs, special interest groups - June 2025

Community Engagement Phase 1: Confirming the Vision

- Online survey – July 15 to August 31, 2025 – 1,000 participants
- Pop-ups in the Park (3) – July 19, 23, 30, 2025 – 600+
- Neighbouring Institutions Working Group Meeting 1 – July 23, 2025 – 11
- Community Workshop and Open House – July 28, 2025 – 45
- Focus Group: Residents and Community Associations – August 5, 2025 – 10
- Focus Group: Heritage Groups (2) – August 7 and September 4, 2025 – 11
- Focus Group: University Students (2) – August 26, 2025 – 30
- Focus Group: 2SLGBTQ+ (organizations) – September 5, 2025 – 8
- Indigenous Engagement: Wendat Nation – October 2, 2025 – 2
- Neighbouring Institutions Working Group Meeting 2 – October 2, 2025 – 12
- Indigenous engagement: Six Nations of the Grand River – October 20, 2025 – 5
- Indigenous Engagement: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation – October 21, 2025 - 5
- Indigenous Engagement: Indigenous Sharing Circle – October 23, 2025 – 1

Community Engagement Phase 2: Exploring Design Options

- Community Workshop – November 4, 2025 – 65
- Online survey – November 14 to December 14, 2025 – 888
- Pop-ups in the Park (4) – November 15, 18, 19, and December 4, 2025 – 200+
- Neighbouring Institutions Working Group Meeting 3 – November 3, 2025 – 12
- Focus Group: Residents and Community Associations – November 12, 2025 – 11
- Focus Group: Cultural Heritage Groups – November 17, 2025 – 4
- Focus Group: Trees and Nature – November 19, 2025 – 3
- Focus Group: 2SLGBTQ+ Community Members – November 24, 2025 – 11
- Indigenous Engagement: Wendat Nation – December 2, 2025 – 2
- Indigenous Engagement: Indigenous Sharing Circle – December 9, 2025 – 4

- Indigenous Engagement: Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation – December 10, 2025 - 3
- Indigenous engagement: Six Nations of the Grand River – December 18, 2025 – 4

What we heard

Since launching Community Engagement Phase 1 in the summer and concluding Community Engagement Phase 2 in December 2025, over 2,000 participants were engaged through the various events and activities (pop-ups, focus groups, surveys, the public meeting, and the neighbouring institutions working group). The following are the key themes of feedback across multiple engagement activities that emerged during the community engagement to date. These key themes highlight areas of common ground within the range of opinions shared.

Phase 1: Confirming the Vision

Themes Across Engagement Activities

Community engagement for Phase 1 focused on developing a shared vision for the park’s revitalization and refining draft guiding principles to reflect community values, the donor’s priorities, and City policies. The key themes below summarize feedback from all engagement activities.

Protect, celebrate, and strengthen the capacity of the park to sustain trees and nature, and maintain the park as a place of serenity.

Community members emphasized that the trees are the heart of Queen’s Park North and should guide every decision related to park revitalization. Many described the park as a rare, calm refuge in the city and called for any new programming or partnerships to stay within what the treed landscape can tolerate. Many want to preserve the park’s quiet, natural rhythm and protect its place of serenity.

Keep Queen’s Park North a space for community and civic life.

Many community members emphasized that Queen’s Park North is a community space and civic commons, and they are concerned about any moves to commercialize the park or transform its identity into a tourist attraction. Queen’s Park North is the local park for many in the neighbourhood. It has long hosted public protests, neighbourhood gatherings, queer community events, and other ad hoc and informal community uses – it’s important that revitalization supports the continuation of these uses. Several participants supported small-scale, community-led activities and expressed concerns about any moves to introduce larger-scale programming that draws large crowds.

Enhance how people use and experience the park with “light-touch” improvements that support comfort, accessibility, and safety.

Many community members engaged asked for “light-touch” upgrades that avoid overbuilding and respect the ecology and current uses of the park. Accessibility and inclusion were highlighted as part of safety — ensuring appropriate lighting, barrier-free paths, benches, and year-round access for seniors, families, and others. Some suggested keeping darker areas to maintain a sense of calm and privacy, and to support wildlife.

Be inclusive when reflecting the park’s historic and on-going cultural significance to different communities.

Community members engaged widely agreed that the park’s story should go beyond its colonial past. Many called for a stronger Indigenous presence and place-keeping, as well as recognition of the park’s role in 2SLGBTQIA+ history, including Toronto’s first Pride Parade. Some encouraged educational and interpretive features—signage, storytelling, and native plantings—that share Indigenous, ecological, and community stories.

Make sure that any increased role for institutions in the park does not overshadow community voices or the park’s role as a calm refuge for all.

Some neighbouring institutions expressed interest in closer ties to the park. On the other hand, many participants stressed that institutional interests should not overshadow community voices and that the park continues to be a refuge from the city that welcomes all. Some participants also encouraged transparent, community-based stewardship and governance to ensure long-term care and accountability.

Phase 1 Update on Indigenous Engagement

The City began Indigenous Engagement by first meeting with First Nations Rights-holders. Meetings were held with the Wendat Nation, the Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation to introduce the Queen’s Park North Revitalization project and begin discussion about the relationship between the First Nations and the City as the project unfolds.

After meeting with the First Nations Rights-holders, an Indigenous Sharing Circle was hosted that involved representatives from Indigenous organizations.

The following are a selection of key themes of feedback that specifically emerged during Indigenous Engagement the First Nations-Rights holders from Community Engagement Phase 1.

Process, governance, and procurement

There was support for future Indigenous stewardship of the park, which can enhance sustainability and integrate Indigenous ecological knowledge. The Six Nations of the Grand River recommended considering the Two Row Wampum as a governance framework, establishing parallel Indigenous and non-Indigenous governance bodies, while emphasizing that building strong, reciprocal relationships requires creating meaningful opportunities for Indigenous communities to participate fully in both the project and the park.

Thoughts on overall park design

Subtlety is an important principle in the park, with all elements designed to feel natural as it belongs into the landscape. There were many considerations related to fire as it holds different meanings for different people, underscoring the need for spaces for reflection, seating, and the thoughtful incorporation of Indigenous symbols and designs throughout the park.

Ecology

There is strong support for preserving the park's trees, managing Norway Maples thoughtfully, and maintaining natural landscapes that balance ecosystem health with public use. Native, site-appropriate species, including those valuable for Indigenous crafting and sustenance, should be prioritized. Maintenance practices should consider potential harvesting and impacts on wildlife, while lighting should minimize effects on nocturnal and migratory species. There was recommendation to explore opportunities for sustainable features such as permeable pavers and rain gardens.

Indigenous placekeeping

Feedback emphasized the importance of recognizing Queen's Park North as a historically Indigenous landscape. The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation suggested incorporating Anishinaabe dodems (the Anishinaabe Clan System is a kinship based governance system with each Doodem (clan) inheriting specific responsibilities for leadership, law, knowledge, and care. Together, the Doodemag (clans) function interdependently as a moral and legal order (inaakonigewin) that emphasizes balance, reciprocity, and collective responsibility as a foundation for governance) as well as the Eternal Council Fire Belt. They also supported the concept of relocating the King Edward VII statue. The Six Nations of the Grand River highlighted the need to acknowledge broader Indigenous histories alongside existing statues on the Ontario Legislature grounds of Sir John A. Macdonald and John Graves Simcoe, through interpretive elements and by sharing the Dish with One Spoon and Two Row Wampum treaties. The Wendat Nation recommended including educational panels throughout the park to convey historical presence, ecological knowledge, and archaeological information, ensuring that Indigenous stories are visible, accessible, and integrated into the park's design.

Phase 2: Exploring Design Options

Themes Across Engagement Activities

Community engagement for Phase 2 focused on sharing early ideas for park design and programming to inform further refinement. The key themes below summarize feedback collected across all engagement activities, including pop-ups, focus groups, surveys, the public meeting, and the neighbouring institutions working group meeting.

- **Different perspectives on the amount of change proposed.**
There were different perspectives on the number of new and different design ideas being proposed. Some were receptive and excited by the ideas. Others felt strongly that there are too many ideas and too much change being considered that will detract from the unique experience that Queen's Park North offers today. There was interest in seeing a stronger explanation of the relationship between Queen's Park North and adjacent spaces and neighbouring landscapes.
- **Governance.** There is considerable interest among a range of voices in the future governance of the park, and particularly related to the role of community voices at the table with the City, Donor, and University of Toronto. There was interest in having the governance discussion upfront, not after the park design.

- **Protecting the trees.** Participants shared strong support for protecting the trees, enhancing tree maintenance, and adding understory plantings. Some participants have emphasized the centrality of trees in any vision for the future of the park and have expressed an interest in understanding the details of any impacts to the trees resulting from the proposed design concepts.
- **Culturally significant space and current uses.** Participation in the 2SLGBTQ+ Community Members focus group focused on the importance of understanding and respecting the range of park uses and users, including day and night uses, sightlines, lighting, and planting strategies at the base of trees.
- **Cultural Heritage.** Cultural heritage advocates expressed support for the Preliminary Historic Context Statement as well as the 2015 Heritage Impact Assessment, and an interest in the status of previous related City Council direction regarding a Cultural Heritage Landscape study of Queen's Park.
- **Opening up the centre of the park.** Many participants expressed support for opening up the centre of the park and using the area as a flexible plaza; however, there were exceptions. Many were supportive of relocating the King Edward Statue and at the same time there were participants who said they prefer to see the Statue remain in its current location.
- **Council Fire.** Many expressed support for the Council Fire proposed in the centre of the park, with strong interest in how it would be governed, maintained, and accessed. Feedback emphasized the importance of clear protocols – particularly regarding Indigenous cultural leadership and ceremonial use.
- **Washroom.** There is strong interest in adding a washroom to the park. Some suggested a location on the periphery of the park rather than in the centre to not detract from space for community.
- **Food and beverage.** The proposal to introduce food and beverage offerings in the park received a lot of feedback. Many were supportive of introducing an opportunity to grab a coffee and a snack in the park. Many others expressed strong opposition to the idea of introducing food and beverage offerings in the park. The public raised concerns around not wanting to see any type of commercial activity in this park because of concerns it could detract from the natural experience. There are also concerns about the viability of a café and how a café would be supplied and serviced.
- **Treewalk.** This element captured many people's imaginations, but cautions were also raised about safety, cost and feasibility, pressure on limited park space, loss of flexibility and openness, and appropriateness in the park given the cumulative impact of the other proposed elements.
- **Running track.** Improvements to the running track received a lot of support from many participants.

- **Commemorative garden.** Comments related to the introduction of a commemorative garden were typically accepting and supportive.
- **Workshop.** The workshop was not the focus of much discussion during the second phase of engagement. Those who did reference it expressed concern about structures being added to the park.
- **Existing fountain.** There is some interest in the future of the existing fountain in the southwest corner of the park. Some participants suggested it be repaired and restored, while other suggestions included introducing an alternative water feature in that location or removing the foundation.
- **Wellesley St.** There was keen interest in learning more about what is envisioned for the southern edge of the park along Wellesley.
- **Neighbouring Institutions.** Neighbouring institutions have expressed strong interest in the park's maintenance, operations, safety, accessibility, and wayfinding, along with an interest in ongoing involvement in appropriately-scaled activation opportunities.

Phase 2: Update on Indigenous Engagement

The City continued Indigenous engagement by meeting with First Nations rights-holders and hosting the second Indigenous Sharing Circle, which included a mix of Indigenous community members and representatives from Indigenous organizations.

The following key themes emerged from Indigenous engagement with First Nations rights-holders during Phase 2 of community engagement. Cultural and ceremonial ideas are shared here for awareness and require further discussion and with the appropriate Rights holders before any implementation.

- **At a high level, the three First Nations shared appreciation for the materials shared and general support for the overall design concept.** Elements of the design that sparked particular interest included the understory plantings, the proposed treewalk, and the Council Fire. There was also appreciation that the more granular design stages are still to come, which is when more detailed ideas will be discussed.
- **Feedback from participants at the Indigenous Sharing Meeting had a mix of perspectives on the design ideas shared.** Some were supportive of most of the ideas, particularly the open space in the centre of the park, the treewalk, and the proposed Council Fire. There were also participants who expressed concern that too much is being put into the park, including concerns about commercial activity (the café idea) and a preference to focus on the grove of mature trees and the opportunity to bring back the ecological heritage of the province in this park.
- **Ideas for cultural presence and stewardship in the park were shared, including:**

Note that ideas shared here are subject to ongoing guidance and protocol direction from the appropriate Nations or community leaders. No cultural elements will be implemented without appropriate permissions.

- Recognize that by tradition the Indigenous People come to Queen's Park Legislative Assembly to carry on their dialogue and relations with the Crown or Representatives. The People also come to the grove of mature forest to lay down their Tobacco and send their prayers beneath the tallest trees. Acknowledging that Queen's Park is a place where Indigenous Peoples continue to come for ceremony and civic dialogue with the Crown. The grove of mature trees is a site of prayer, tobacco offering, and connection to spirit.
- Some participants suggested new monuments or sculpture installations by Indigenous artists – such as a possible tribute to Tecumseh – as a way to rebalance colonial narratives and highlight Indigenous leadership in Ontario's history.
- Storytelling posts throughout the park that explain who the original caretakers of the land are. The post could provide a short teaching about the peoples' connection to the land; how the river systems shaped travel, trade, and relationships; and the meaning of stewardship and teaching about the four sacred medicines. There could also be a post dedicated to Cedar, Sage, Sweetgrass, and Tobacco that explains the role of each medicine, how they're harvested respectfully, and why they matter.
- A Wampum / Covenant Path or feature could be embedded in the park to create a visual "path" or walkway referencing the symbolic agreements that Indigenous Nations made, with reference to the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt (a treaty of shared stewardship and peace). This could be a mosaic, a series of plaques, or inlaid stones – as a metaphor for respectful sharing of land. Seed sharing wampum belts could also speak to relationality through knowledge sharing. This also keeps the voice of ecology elevated and in focus.
- Use of Indigenous languages (Anishinaabemowin, Wendat, Haudenosaunee, etc.) in signage or naming for places, plants, and features. This honours living languages, reaffirms presence, and teaches visitors a bit of Indigenous language and worldview.
- Representation of doodemag, their teachings, and their relationship to stewarding land, in Indigenous language(s).
- The treewalk could include QR codes linked to recordings from Elders or Knowledge Keepers telling stories or songs connected to the trees.
- It would be a great place to do Moon ceremonies.
- Walking paths and meeting places could be used for sharing knowledge around governance and civic connection.

- It would be meaningful for Indigenous community members to be included in the grand opening (e.g., Indigenous participation, acknowledgment, or cultural presence during that event, reference to the opening of the new Centennial College building which included an awakening ceremony for the building).
- Support the training and hiring of Indigenous youth to care for the park. Specifically, the Earthkeepers Employment and Training program should be renewed at Queens Park North, whereby The Indigenous Peoples Garden Inc. trainees are hired by the City's Parks and Recreation Division to plant and care for the ecological restoration plantings.
- **Land-based design suggestions from Indigenous participants were shared, including:**
 - **Understory plantings.** Consider how the community may react to seeing unmowed lawns. Have strong community education / signage explaining why there will be areas of the park where the grass will intentionally not be cut as well as signage for plant identification. In time, pollinator plantings and the existing meadow will play host to many butterflies and bird species and people will want to be part of this park space. Consider making the line between the mowed and unmowed lawn areas very clear (to minimize the potential for encroachment when the lawns are being mowed) and anticipate desire lines. Encourage walking on pathways within the meadows and signage to remain on the pathway to enjoy the beauty of the future growth.
 - **Plantings.** Consider having different flowering plants for each part of the season. Support the vital role of insects and pollen producing plants for the bees, hummingbirds, butterflies, etc.
 - **Treewalk.** Carefully select materials for the treewalk to reduce the risk of wildlife entanglement in the structure.
 - **Food forest.** It may be useful to research experiences in other cities where fruit trees have been removed because the uneaten fruits attract wasps. Public education would again be helpful here, to help the public understand the benefits of a "messy" park (e.g., the ecological benefits of crushed fallen fruits).
 - **The park after dark.** Think about opportunities for using the park after dark, since community use of the park is one of the best ways to support safety. Consider access to electrical power especially for earlier nights in the winter to help support activations throughout the year.
 - **Crossings.** Suggested improving pedestrian access on the North end of the park by lowering the road grade and providing an overhead walk.

Appendix 3 - Vision, Principles and Design Directions

Vision

An extraordinary place for people and nature throughout the seasons, which respects the existing trees and heritage of Queen's Park North, fosters a welcoming environment, and showcases excellence in design, ecological stewardship, education, animation and collaborative governance.

Principles

Protect and enhance the trees. Care will be taken before, during, and after construction to ensure the significant urban tree canopy continues to define the character of the park for generations to come. Enhanced tree maintenance practices, ecologically appropriate understory planting and education and interpretative programming and materials will ensure the trees will continue to thrive and be celebrated.

Respect the cultural and natural heritage of Queen's Park North. All current and future undertakings related to the planning, design, and management of Queen's Park North will be guided by the development of a Statement of Significance, and the conservation and enhancement of the site's character-defining elements. Through thoughtful planning, design, and interpretation, there is an opportunity to honour the past while recognizing that the park will continue to evolve to serve the communities of today and in the future. This includes strengthening the living heritage of the park, celebrating, and enhancing the landscapes, people, stories, and changes that have shaped the park over time.

Enhance the visitor experience and animate the park year-round through improved amenities and modest programming. New and improved park amenities, such as washrooms and seating, will provide a more welcoming and engaging park experience. Appropriately scaled animation and activity will focus on a revitalized heart at the centre of the park to avoid impacting existing root zones of mature, healthy trees. A well-supported governance model with appropriate funding and expertise will provide a high standard of operations and maintenance.

Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Indigenous cultural values will be reflected and celebrated within a revitalized Queen's Park North. These values, history and storytelling will be embedded in the physical landscape of the park as well as the stewardship strategy, guided by the concepts of:

- Spirit: fostering a sense of hope by renewing and rebalancing a reciprocal relationship with land and ecosystem,
- Heart: A sense of belonging through spaces where people feel represented and connected,
- Mind: interweaving the stories of the park with Indigenous histories, and
- Body: connecting these concepts into a cohesive park design; a space for all, for generations to come.

Implement ecological and sustainable practices that restore the land, support plants and animal life, and enhance and expand ecological health and biodiversity. A planting approach informed by restoration ecology will focus on natural systems and symbiotic relationships, focused on supporting the existing tree canopy and highlighting local species and ecosystems. Queen's Park North's position as a signature urban green space will provide a stage to showcase urban ecology practices, including through public education and engagement activities.

Maintain Queen's Park as a public space and a place for both respite and civic life, welcoming to all. Queen's Park North will continue to be a principal public space in the city, a place for gathering and democratic expression and for respite and reflection. The design and animation of the park will ensure a safe and welcoming experience for all ages, abilities, and interests.

Strengthen relationships between public space and institutional and community partners. The City will collaborate with the nearby cultural, educational, and governmental institutions such as the Royal Ontario Museum, Royal Conservatory of Music, Gardiner Museum, and the University of Toronto (UofT) to provide programming opportunities for small-scale activities, classes, and performances.

Design Directions

The Design Directions are specific directions for how the physical design and future operations of the park can achieve the vision and guiding principles, and reflect the main priorities of the community, the City and the donor.

Phase 2 of Community Engagement, which concluded in December 2025, collected feedback on the draft design directions. A refined park design will be presented in March 2026 for public input along with the proposed operating model for the revitalized park. The following design directions have been developed by the project team through community engagement, site analysis, due diligence and conceptual design:

Trees

- Implement enhanced tree maintenance practices and provide information on the trees and urban ecology, incorporating Indigenous ecological knowledge and practices
- Build a tree walk beneath the canopy to foster education and play, and to help reduce compaction and impact on understory planting
- Integrate complementary understory plantings and more ecologically productive layers of landscape to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon intensive maintenance practices
- Provide opportunities and spaces for learning about natural regeneration, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and habitat restoration.

Community and cultural heritage

- Provide features and spaces to support ceremony and celebrate Indigenous ways of knowing and being and the Indigenous presence on these lands
- Animate the heart by moving the King Edward statue within the park grounds, creating a central space for people

Visitor experience

- Add centrally located cafe and washroom building to provide new amenities.
- Consider a shelter structure for community and cultural programming ("Workshop").
- Introduce a water feature within the park to create opportunities for interaction and seasonal interest.
- Enhance the park's edge with plantings and an improved running track.
- Improve entrances and connections into the park, including the subway station.
- Ensure a variety of accessible and welcoming seating options.
- Provide flexible infrastructure for small events and winter animation.
- A commemorative garden with welcoming and unique experiences. A place for exploration, contemplation, and enjoyment for all.

Appendix 4 - Draft Concept Design for Public Engagement Phase 3 - March 2026

The draft concept design shows the current proposed park program. This concept will be further tested by City staff and retained consulting teams, refined by ongoing maintenance and operations discussions with the University of Toronto and City divisions, and further informed by feedback received through the next round of community engagement. Specific care will be paid to the protection of trees and natural environment, as well as cultural heritage, as the design progresses from draft concept to final concept. The individual design elements remain subject to change as a result of ongoing analysis and engagement.

Concept Plan | With tree canopy



Concept Plan | Without tree canopy



Appendix 5 - Donation Key Terms

Donation Size	Weston Foundation (the Donor) will fund up to \$50 million for the revitalization of Queen’s Park North, including funding for public engagement, design services, and capital costs for park enhancements.
Design Oversight	Following the final phase of public engagement, the City will oversee the finalization of a comprehensive design for the revitalized Queen’s Park North, funded by, and developed in consultation with, and with the approval of the Donor. The Parties will develop and agree to a Park Design Scope of Work, including but not limited to description of deliverables, detailed description of the work, phasing and class-appropriate costing, roles and responsibilities, processes and schedule, approvals, permits and sign-offs, and general design requirements which shall serve as the basis for the park designer’s scope of work on this project.
Capital Delivery	<p>The City will act as delivery lead, and will procure and oversee all construction services, in accordance with City policies applicable to capital projects. The City will collaborate and consult with the Donor throughout procurement, including with respect to design and requirements for deliverables for the revitalization of Queen’s Park North.</p> <p>The initial phase of construction, as to be agreed following design finalization, is anticipated to start in September 2026.</p> <p>All existing consultants retained by the Donor for design services and design may be retained directly by the City if and when required and as agreed by the parties to ensure appropriate oversight and continuity of services.</p>
Donation Payment Schedule	A payment schedule will be mutually agreed upon between the City and Donor once the projected cash flow for the project is established.
Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations and Funding Agreement	<p>The City, the University of Toronto and the Donor will enter into a tri-party maintenance, operations and funding agreement (the “Tri-Party Agreement”) to govern ongoing operations, maintenance, programming, and funding of the revitalized Queen’s Park North.</p> <p>Under the Tri-Party Agreement, the Donor will commit to additional annual funding (over and above the \$50 million donation for the design and construction of the revitalized Queen’s Park North) to support the fulfillment of the University’s enhanced maintenance and operations under such agreement, as well as funding for a dedicated Executive Director employed by the University of Toronto for Queen's Park North, and for</p>

	<p>park programming. Based on the current design, this additional annual funding is estimated to be approximately \$2.15 million dollars a year, over an initial term of 20 years. Following final park design, the City, the University of Toronto and the Donor will co-develop a detailed maintenance and operations schedule, including applicable service standards and allocation of operating responsibilities, and a corresponding annual budget. This budget will include reasonable allocations for long-term maintenance and eventual capital renewal of plants, structures, and park assets. The City's aggregate operating costs associated with its maintenance and operations responsibilities will remain generally consistent with current expenditure levels for Queen's Park North.</p> <p>Upon the occurrence of any event entitling a party to terminate the Tri-Party Agreement during its term, the remaining parties, prior to exercising any such termination right, shall act in good faith and work diligently and cooperatively to identify a mutually acceptable alternative structure or arrangement that preserves the shared vision for Queen's Park North and ensures the continued stewardship, funding, and management of the park for the remainder of the term of the Tri-Party Agreement.</p>
Lease	<p>The parties acknowledge that in order to give effect to the revitalization of Queen's Park North, the City will first need to secure any necessary rights and/or permissions to build the park enhancements as may be required under the QPN Lease.</p>
Donor Recognition	<p>Appropriate Donor recognition, which may include the commemoration of Hilary M. Weston, CM, CVO, Order of Ontario, who served as the 26th Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario from 1997 to 2002, to be approved by the Donor and the General Manager Parks and Recreation, in line with CRA requirements/regulations and typical donor recognition within parks and recreation spaces.</p>
No Financial Impact	<p>All City costs for the design and construction of the revitalized Queen's Park will be funded by the donation, except for any City staff overhead costs that exceed the agreed annual capital delivery recovery of \$100,000.</p>

Appendix 6 – Draft Framework for Tri-Party Maintenance, Operations and Funding

This outline summarizes the major terms of a maintenance, operations, and funding agreement among the City of Toronto (the “City”), the Governing Council of the University of Toronto (the “University”), and the Weston Foundation (the “Donor”, and collectively with the City and the University, the “Parties” and each, a “Party”) in respect of the ongoing stewardship and funding for a revitalized Queen’s Park North. Further negotiation between the Parties is required to determine definitive responsibilities following the completion of the ongoing design process.

1	Agreement	Queen’s Park North Maintenance, Operations and Funding Agreement (the “Agreement”).
2	Shared Vision for Queen’s Park North	<p>The Parties share a common vision: to preserve and enhance Queen’s Park North as an extraordinary place for people and nature throughout the seasons, that respects the existing trees and heritage (the Parties will prepare a Statement(s) of Significance that clearly articulates the Heritage character of the park and identifies the character-defining attributes) of Queen’s Park North, fosters a welcoming environment, and showcases excellence in design, ecological stewardship, education, animation and collaborative governance.</p> <p>The Parties and the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee (defined herein) will work together in good faith and cooperate to achieve this vision for Queen’s Park North.</p>

<p>3</p>	<p>The Queen’s Park North Steering Committee, Queen’s Park North Advisory Board, and Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle:</p>	<p>The City, University, and Donor shall establish a steering committee (the “Queen’s Park North Steering Committee”) responsible for overseeing the maintenance and operations of the Park, reviewing and approving Park programming, periodically reviewing the operational and strategic effectiveness of Park operation and management, selecting and overseeing the Executive Director, and fostering collaboration among the Parties to ensure the effective delivery of their respective contributions and responsibilities.</p> <p>The Parties acknowledge that concurrently with entering into this Agreement, the University and the Donor intend to enter into a donation agreement pursuant to which the Donor will provide annual funding to the University to support the fulfillment of the University’s obligations under the Agreement, as outlined in Row 7 (the “University Donation Agreement”). For greater certainty, the Parties confirm that the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee shall not have the authority to make decisions that conflict with the terms of the University Donation Agreement, which may only be amended with the written agreement of the University and the Donor.</p> <p>The initial composition of the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee will be one representative from each of the Donor, the City, and the University, as well as the Executive Director (non-voting). If the Parties expand the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee’s role to include adjacent spaces, its membership may be broadened to provide representation for additional partners with an interest in those areas; provided that any such expansion of the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee’s role or changes to the composition of the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee will require the prior written approval of the Parties.</p> <p>Queen’s Park North Steering Committee members will act reasonably and in good faith in furtherance of the vision and decisions will be</p>
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		<p>made by consensus among the voting Queen's Park North Steering Committee members.</p> <p>The Queen's Park North Steering Committee shall establish a separate group (the "Queen's Park North Advisory Board") with representatives from Indigenous nations and groups and community partners, including cultural institutions and local stakeholders. The Queen's Park North Advisory Board will help shape the vision for park activation and programming by generating ideas, and providing input to the Queen's Park North Steering Committee on initiatives that foster community engagement and animation of Queen's Park North. Its purpose is to help ensure that the Parties and Queen's Park North Steering Committee's activities are informed by and responsive to the needs and aspirations of the public, local community, key stakeholders, and Indigenous communities and perspectives.</p> <p>In addition, informed by ongoing Indigenous engagement, the Parties anticipate that an Indigenous Leadership and Stewardship Circle, or a similar body, may be established. Full details are not yet available as engagement continues and will be addressed in the final Agreement or through a mutually agreed approach among the Parties in collaboration with Indigenous nations and groups.</p>
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4	City Responsibilities for Core Municipal Services:	<p>The City shall, throughout the Term, operate, manage and deliver certain core municipal services in accordance with the Agreement. Following final Park design, the Parties will co-develop a detailed maintenance and operations schedule, including applicable service standards and allocation of operating responsibilities. It is envisioned that the City will continue to provide certain core municipal services (e.g., waste collection, snow clearing, tree maintenance and care, among other services to be detailed) at an agreed standard and will leverage existing City support infrastructure (e.g., 311, permitting, web, bylaw enforcement) as required. The City's aggregate operating costs associated with its maintenance and operations responsibilities will remain generally consistent with current expenditure levels for Queen's Park North.</p>
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<p>5</p>	<p>University Responsibilities for Park Enhancements, Enhanced Maintenance, and Administrative Functions:</p>	<p>The University shall, in furtherance of the University’s mission and academic priorities, throughout the Term, operate, manage, and maintain some or all of the Park enhancements and provide enhanced maintenance services in accordance with the Agreement.</p> <p>Following final park design, a detailed maintenance and operations schedule will be co-developed between the Parties, as described above. It is envisioned that the University will be responsible for operating some or all of the Park enhancements and providing enhanced maintenance services, subject to the finalization of the Park’s design (e.g., Café operations (whether operated by the University or a third-party), enhanced horticulture and gardens or plantings, new educational signage, fencing, wayfinding, seating areas, lighting, supportive irrigation systems, a tree walk, water features, among other services to be detailed). In this regard, the Parties will engage with one another throughout the design development phase in order to ensure that the University is able to perform its envisioned operational and maintenance responsibilities as described above.</p> <p>In addition, the University shall, throughout the Term, perform certain ancillary administrative responsibilities, including providing meeting space for the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee and performance and operational reporting to the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee, the City and the Donor.</p>
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6	Liability Insurance Coverage	<p>The City and the University shall each obtain and maintain appropriate insurance throughout the Term in connection with their respective responsibilities under the Agreement, in each case in a form, on terms, and with limits acceptable to the Parties, acting reasonably. The City and/or the University, as applicable, shall be responsible for liability arising from public use of the Park to the extent caused by or attributable to its own negligence, act, omissions, or breach of obligations under the agreement. The City and the University will each endorse the other as an additional insured on its policies for claims related to the use of the Park.</p>
7	Donor Ongoing Funding for University Responsibilities and for Park Programming:	<p>The Donor shall, on an annual basis throughout the Term, provide dedicated maintenance and operations funding to the University to support the fulfillment of the University's obligations under the Agreement, pursuant to the University Donation Agreement. Following final Park design, a detailed maintenance and operations schedule will be co-developed between the Parties as described above, inclusive of an allocated annual budget to the University for the Term of the Agreement. This budget will include reasonable allocations for long-term maintenance and eventual capital renewal of plants, structures, and park assets. In addition, the Donor shall, throughout the Term, provide dedicated funding to support Park programming through an additional annual donation. Park programming shall be coordinated by the Executive Director and approved by the Queen's Park North Steering Committee in accordance with Row 8. Based on the current design, the Donor's funding commitment is estimated to be approximately \$2.15 million annually.</p>

<p>8</p>	<p>Executive Director and Programming:</p>	<p>The Executive Director shall provide strategic leadership and direction in respect of Queen’s Park North, including long-term planning, performance management, and continuous improvement of park operations. The Executive Director shall be a member of the Queen’s Park North Advisory Board and shall serve as the primary liaison among the Queen’s Park North Advisory Board, the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee, as well as the public and other stakeholders.</p> <p>In addition, the Executive Director shall act as the central point of coordination and integration for all Park programming activities. The Executive Director shall from time to time solicit proposals from non-profit community partners for the coordination of Park programming for terms of up to three years, in accordance with programming principles to be developed by the Parties, in consultation with the Queen’s Park North Advisory Board, and with the approval of the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee. Programming proposals recommended by the Executive Director shall be considered for approval by the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee. The Parties will establish a streamlined permitting approach, including a pre-approval framework for recurring or anticipated events, while ensuring compliance with applicable City requirements, including permitting policies and rules.</p> <p>The Parties acknowledge that the revitalization of Queen’s Park North aligns with many of the University’s academic priorities in research, teaching, and public engagement, particularly those that relate to the University’s commitment to the study of and engagement with urban environments and urban public and open spaces. This alignment provides opportunities for the involvement of University units such as Hart House, School of Cities, Architecture and Forestry, Kinesiology and Physical Education, University camps, and others, in Park programming through the study and use of Park spaces. In this regard, the Executive Director will, as part of their duties described above,</p>
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		<p>consider proposals from University constituents to incorporate University-related programming and engagement in the Park, and may recommend any such proposals to the Queen's Park North Steering Committee for approval. For clarity, all such proposals shall be consistent with the University's mission and academic priorities, the approval of which shall remain within the sole purview of the University.</p> <p>The Executive Director is expected to be employed by the University, with the costs of the role and any additional resources required to enable the role to fulfill its responsibilities, such as administrative or programming support, to be funded by the Donor pursuant to the University Donation Agreement.</p> <p>The specific employment roles and responsibilities of the Executive Director will be further determined by the Parties.</p>
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9	Term:	<p>The Term of the Agreement shall be twenty (20) years (the "Term") commencing approximately when Queen's Park North re-opens or as mutually agreed by the parties, acting reasonably (the "Effective Date"). The Parties intend to work collaboratively and in good faith to extend the Agreement beyond the Term, with a view to ensuring the long-term stewardship and public benefit of the revitalized Park. Future City Council approvals will be requested when required, in connection with any such extension.</p> <p>If, following the comprehensive review and the good faith efforts of the Parties, the Agreement is not renewed or extended beyond the Term, the Agreement shall terminate, in which case full responsibility for the operation, management, maintenance, and programming of the Park shall revert to the City in accordance with the terms of the QPN Lease, unless the Parties agree in writing to an alternative structure or arrangement for the continued funding, stewardship, and management of the Park following the expiry of the Term. For greater certainty, if the Parties fail to agree to such an alternative structure or arrangement (or upon the expiry of the term of any such alternative structure or arrangement without subsequent renewal, extension or replacement), full responsibility for the operation, management, maintenance, and programming of the Park shall revert to the City in accordance with the terms of the QPN Lease.</p>
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10	Comprehensive Reviews:	<p>The City, the University and the Donor shall conduct an initial comprehensive review of the Agreement, the governance of the Park, and the operational and strategic effectiveness of Park operation and management two (2) years from the Effective Date.</p> <p>Additional reviews shall take place seven (7) and seventeen (17) years from the Effective Date, or as may be otherwise agreed upon in writing by the Parties, and may require amendments to the agreements.. Each review shall assess the Parties' performance, structure, and continued suitability to achieve its objectives, and may recommend adjustments to better align maintenance, operations, programming, and funding requirements, with the goals of the Agreement. For the final review, the Parties will also consider the conditions under which this Agreement may be renewed for an additional Term or replaced by another arrangement, as referenced in Row 9 above.</p>
11	Revenue and Improvements:	<p>The University shall retain all revenues it receives from the operation of Park enhancements (including the Café, if applicable), and shall apply such revenues (net of expenses associated with the operation, maintenance and improvement of the applicable park enhancement) exclusively toward the costs associated with the maintenance, operation, and improvement of Park enhancements, from time to time.</p> <p>Additional improvements to Queen's Park North during the Term will require the written agreement of all Parties.</p>
12	Public Park:	<p>Queen's Park North shall be operated, maintained, and programmed as a public park, accessible to all members of the public and the University community, faculty and students, except for temporary restrictions required for events, setup and teardown periods, maintenance, safety, or for designated time of use restrictions for certain Park features.</p>

13	University Park:	The Parties will support the University's and the City's longer-term vision for University Park in a manner that complements Queen's Park North, provided the design, operation, programming, or development of University Park will not be in material conflict with Queen's Park North. Park enhancements to Queen's Park North are intended to be designed in a manner that facilitates integration or avoids impediments to the City's and the University's vision for University Park.
14	Park Rules, Safety and Security:	The City and the University will work collaboratively to monitor the Park to ensure the accessibility, safety, and enjoyment of all Park users. Subject to the foregoing, the Parties acknowledge that the City will have ultimate responsibility for safety and security within the Park through the enforcement of rules, City bylaws, and other applicable laws.
15	Assignment:	The Agreement may not be assigned by any Party without the prior written consent of the other Parties, which consent may be withheld in each Party's sole and absolute discretion. Without limiting the foregoing, the Parties agree that the University may, with the written agreement of the City and Donor (including following review by their respective legal, tax and insurance advisors) delegate some or all of its responsibilities under the Agreement to a University-affiliated entity.

17	Lease Acknowledgement:	<p>The City and the University will work collaboratively and in good faith to agree to the terms of any approvals, modifications or amendments as may be required under the ground lease in respect of Queen’s Park North (the “QPN Lease”) to allow for the Queen's Park North revitalization project to occur and to ensure that there is no conflict between the terms of the Agreement and the QPN Lease. Any such approvals, modifications or amendments shall be executed prior to or concurrent with execution of the Agreement. Such approvals, modifications or amendments to the QPN Lease will be informed by the final design of the Park and will be shared with the Donor to provide certainty that it does not conflict with this Agreement. This Agreement will be subject to the terms of the amended QPN Lease between the University and the City.</p>
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<p>18</p>	<p>Dispute Resolution:</p>	<p>Each Party will act in good faith and perform its obligations in furtherance of the vision for Queen’s Park North.</p> <p>In the event of any dispute arising in respect of the Agreement, the City, the University, and the Donor shall first refer the matter to the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee to resolve such dispute. If the dispute is not resolved by the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee, it shall be escalated to a resolution body consisting of a senior appointee of the City, a senior representative of the Donor, and the University President or a senior appointee of the University President (the “Resolution Body”).</p> <p>The Resolution Body may, at its discretion, engage a third party to facilitate resolution.</p> <p>Upon the occurrence of any event entitling a Party to terminate the Agreement during the Term, the remaining Parties, prior to exercising any such termination right, shall act in good faith and work diligently and cooperatively to identify a mutually acceptable alternative structure or arrangement that preserves the shared vision for Queen’s Park North and ensures the continued stewardship, funding, and management of the park for the remainder of the Term.</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>Acknowledgement regarding Donor Role:</p>	<p>The Parties acknowledge that the Donor’s role under the Agreement is limited to providing financial support as described in the Agreement, and appointing a representative to the Queen’s Park North Steering Committee. Except in respect of the foregoing, the Donor does not have any operational, managerial, or administrative responsibilities in respect of Queen’s Park North, and shall not be liable for any obligations, costs, expenses, claims, damages, or liabilities arising from or relating to the operation, maintenance, programming, or governance of Queen’s Park North.</p>