



## Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting 3

Wednesday, October 19, 2016

8:30am – 11:00am

North Toronto Memorial Community Centre

200 Eglinton Avenue West

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### OVERVIEW

On October 19, 2016, the City of Toronto hosted the third Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting as part of its Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The mandate of the SAG is to provide a forum for information sharing, feedback, guidance, and advice to the Project Team at key points during the consultation process. The SAG is composed of a number of organizations representing a range of interests and expertise. All of the organizations have either a citywide lens/mandate and/or represent a large recreational user group. Representatives from 10 organizations participated in the meeting (see attached participant list).

At this third meeting, SAG members were provided with: (1) a recap of the master planning process and timeline; (2) a summary of the feedback from the phase 1 consultation process; and (3) an overview of the Strategic Framework and Emerging Directions. The project team also proposed holding an additional (fourth) SAG meeting at the conclusion of the process to present the final FMP to the SAG. There were no objections raised to this suggestion. Following the presentations, SAG members engaged in a facilitated discussion guided by a series of focus questions (see attached agenda for more detail).

This summary was written by Matthew Wheatley of Swerhun Facilitation, a third-party facilitation firm that is part of the consultant team led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants (MBPC). This report is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript of the meeting but instead provides a high level summary of the perspectives and advice provided by participants during the facilitated discussion.

This summary was subject to participant review prior to being finalized.

### Questions of Clarification

Following the presentations and throughout the facilitated discussion members of the SAG asked questions of clarification. Responses from the project team are denoted in *italics*.

- What is the thinking on including a guiding principle that focuses on keeping facilities and parkland as public assets of the City? And will this plan take a position on the type of ownership for facilities and parkland? *The key narrative around this will be public access to facilities. There are some facilities that are not City owned but include lease agreements that protect public access. The City also has policies in place that protect parkland and prevent the City from selling parkland.*
- How will emerging social needs influence the work you are doing for this plan? *We are currently carrying out this analysis and are planning to share more at the next SAG meeting. We know that this analysis needs to be grounded in the plan's principles, goals, directions and objectives. One of the benefits of working in a single tier municipality is understanding how other community facilities are serving community needs. We will use this data to understand where there are gaps and opportunities to co-locate service delivery with different community facilities.*

- When you put this plan forward how will you prioritize what happens first if Council doesn't approve the entire budget? *This plan will develop criteria to help identify areas of greatest need. Growth is one of the ways need will be identified but not the only way. The plan will be very clear about where the gaps are currently and the need to fill these gaps. The City is developing a long term fiscal plan which will be related to the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.*
- What other municipalities from around the world have you looked at in developing this plan; are there any examples from Europe? *From a design perspective the City works with renowned architects to better understand different approaches and there is an architect on the FMP project team. We will also be looking at the expectations across the Greater Toronto Area, Canada and the world in terms of provision rates. We have not looked at specific examples from Europe but are open to doing so and welcomes suggestions from this group, for example of interesting case studies.*

## SUMMARY OF ADVICE

The perspectives and advice provided have been grouped into the following three categories: Observations and Advice on the Consultation; Observations and Advice on the Vision, Principles and Directions; and Observations and Advice on the Preliminary Objectives. Responses from the project team are denoted in *italics*.

### Observations and Advice on the Consultation

#### City-wide representation

SAG members discussed the importance of obtaining feedback from people across the entire city and said they are happy see that the upcoming consultation activities will take place at multiple locations across the city. SAG members raised concerns about surveys, noting they can result in a concentration of responses from one area. *We know that specifically with surveys you can get a concentration of respondents. This is why we have and will continue to use a number of different tactics, including pop-ups across the city.*

### Observations and Advice on the Vision, Principles and Directions

#### General observations.

**Principles are in the right order.** Though no one principle is intended to take priority over another, a SAG member commented that the principles are in the right order, with equity being above all others. The member also felt that the principles are aligned well with the current thinking in the industry, including the 2015 Framework for Recreation in Canada.

#### Additional principles to consider

**Climate adaptation.** A SAG member suggested considering climate adaptation, noting that our seasons are changing, which has a direct impact on the types of facilities that may be needed in the future. *This will be a consideration, especially with the five year updates to the 20-year Master Plan. Climate change considerations could include shortened seasons for outdoor rinks, use of artificial turf and the need for additional shade around outdoor facilities.*

**Improvements to mental health.** A SAG member said it would be good to try to find a way to quantify how facilities impact and improve mental health to help build a business case for the Master Plan. *Quantifying impacts can be challenging, one of the benefits of having this Stakeholder Advisory Group is that all of you can help us identify sources that can help to quantify the benefits of this Master Plan.*

## Equity

**Equity and equality.** It was suggested that equity doesn't necessarily mean making everything equal and having the same facilities in every area of the city. Rather, equity is more about 'leveling the playing field', which could be different for each City ward. *Yes, absolutely, and one of the challenges we have, due to the breadth of facility types, is acknowledging that some facilities will be in many neighbourhoods and some will only be in a few areas of the city. We will need to be very open about this.*

## Observations & Advice on the Preliminary Objectives

### General observations

**Making the objectives more specific.** A SAG member recommended explaining the preliminary objectives in greater detail (e.g. evidence based, needed most, equitable access, etc.) in an effort to provide clear parameters for retrofitting and reshaping different facilities across the city.

### Need and equitable access

**Identifying need in established areas.** A member of the SAG commented that some established areas (areas with limited growth) are still in need of facilities because of transient populations, changing demographics, and residential intensification *We recognize that in certain parts of the city the traditional facilities are not being used as they once were because of changing demographics; this will have to be acknowledged as part of the Master Plan.*

**Local needs and regional facilities.** SAG members said that large regional centres don't always meet local needs because they draw people from across the city, making it difficult for local residents to access them. It was suggested there be a distinction in the Master Plan between community centres which help with community building, and recreational centres. *We need greater classification and understanding of the target market for different facilities, including large regional facilities. We understand that just because a large facility exists doesn't mean that the community's needs are met.*

**Balancing permitted and non-permitted use.** It was suggested that the Master Plan speak to balancing the amount of time facilities can be permitted for sports use. *We heard in consultations that communities really need flat open safe spaces that aren't being permitted by sports groups exclusively. We will talk about this going forward; we are not planning to build all our facilities to be permitted exclusively by sports or other groups.*

### Co-location and partnerships

**Maintaining public access.** A SAG member said the Master Plan needs to address the perceived and real loss of public access through partnerships, for example with private facility providers. *We have heard that exclusive use arrangements can restrict public access and we know we need to be clear with the parameters and language used for partnerships and exclusive use arrangements.*

**Parks, Forestry & Recreation and community development.** A member of the SAG said developing stronger connections with others working locally on community development could help facilities meet the needs of local residents and give them a greater sense of engagement with and belonging at their local facilities. *Parks, Forestry and Recreation is interested in assistance with developing language and solutions on this issue for the Facilities Master Plan.*

**Partnerships with schools.** SAG members discussed the loss of recreation facilities on school sites, in part due to the school boards' inability to collect development charges. Members said that these facilities (e.g. outdoor basketball courts, baseball diamonds and green space) are important to local communities and there should be a collective effort among the City, school boards and user groups to find ways to

fund maintenance and preserve public access to them. *The City is being far more intentional about how we look at future surplus school sites and the level of interest different City divisions have in these facilities. We should include an explanation of this process in the Facilities Master Plan so that people understand how it works.*

#### Sustainable funding model

**Funding community hubs.** SAG members discussed community hubs, noting the importance of exploring creative and sustainable revenue tools that provide the funds required to build and operate these hubs. It was noted that many organizations are operating in a precarious funding environment, so it's important to explore the extent to which hubs, which require a long term operating commitment, can be a revenue generating tool. *Completely agree, the financial infrastructure that supports the hubs model needs to be considered.*

## NEXT STEPS

The project team thanked participants for their feedback and continued participation and provided a brief overview of next steps in the process. SAG members were told that the next phase of consultation would be launched the following week and were asked to help get the word out by sharing information with their networks. Staff said they are planning to hold a fourth SAG meeting early in the new year to share the actions that will help support the strategic direction. Staff also said they anticipate that the final Master Plan will be brought to Council for approval in the spring of 2017, including financial recommendations for the 2017 capital budget. Finally, SAG members were told they would receive a draft summary of this meeting for their review.

### Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting 3 Participants

The following is a list of Stakeholder Advisory Group members to date. Those organizations that participated at SAG Meeting 3 are signified with the word *present*. (organizations are listed alphabetically).

1. The 519
2. Alliance for Equality for Blind Canadians (present)
3. Boys and Girls Club of Toronto
4. Building Industry and Land Development Association (present)
5. City of Toronto Disability Access and Inclusion Committee (present)
6. CivicAction (present)
7. COSTI Immigrant Services
8. Lifesaving Society of Toronto
9. Native Child and Family Services
10. Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport
11. Park People (present)
12. Parks and Recreation Ontario (present)
13. Parks, Forestry and Recreation Disability Steering Committee
14. Social Planning Toronto (present)
15. Toronto Catholic District School Board
16. Toronto District School Board (present)
17. Toronto Foundation
18. Toronto Local Immigration Partnership
19. Toronto Sports Council (present)
20. Toronto Youth Cabinet
21. United Way Toronto and York Region (present)
22. YMCA of Greater Toronto

### Stakeholder Advisory Group Meeting 3 Agenda

- 8:30am Sign-In and Light Refreshments**
- 9:00 Welcome**  
Howie Dayton, Director, Community Recreation Branch, Parks Forestry & Recreation, City of Toronto
- 9:05 Introductions and Agenda Review**  
Nicole Swerhun, Swerhun Facilitation
- 9:15 Master Plan Overview, Timeline, and Consultation Findings**  
Matt Bentley, Project Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto
- 9:35 Strategic Framework and Emerging Directions**  
Steve Langlois, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants
- Questions of Clarification
- 10:00 Facilitated Discussion**  
Focus Questions:
1. Do you have any observations or comments on the consultation findings?
    - o How are these consistent or different from what you expected?
    - o What issues may be missing or not emphasized strongly enough in terms of the work that your organization does?
  2. What are your thoughts on the guiding principles, goals and emerging directions?
    - o What may be missing or not emphasized strongly enough?
    - o How does this address the needs of the communities served by your organization?
  3. Do you have any suggestions for our upcoming consultation process?
    - o Recommendations for engaging diverse groups and non-users?
    - o Networks to connect with?
    - o Good social media sites/hubs for outreach?
- 10:50 Wrap Up & Next Steps**
- 11:00 Adjourn**