purpose of Queen’s Park North revitalization plan

why is Queen’s Park North special?
• significant and cherished landscape
• cultural, social, and ecological value
• one of the earliest public parks in Canada
• home to a significant collection of mature trees
• unique open space character in central downtown

why is Queen’s Park North under pressure?
• increased residential development in the surrounding community and corresponding increased use of the park
• significant number of cultural institutions and a large number of tourists in the park area
• adjacent to the legislature, which creates significant pressure for events and memorials that impact the sustainability of the park
• the park is aging and needs revitalized walkways and seating
purpose of Queen’s Park North revitalization plan

what are we doing?

Comprehensive Revitalization Plan, Management Plan and implementation strategy that will:

• **Establish** a guiding vision for revitalization

• **Restore** walkways and connections to the surrounding community

• **Regenerate** the urban forest

• **Renew** seating, lighting and other park amenities

• **Revitalize** community enjoyment of the park
canvassing the possibilities & considering the options
what we did

1 Project Launch Event
   May 23rd, 2014

2 Focus Groups and one-on-one Meetings with Stakeholders

3 Roving Information Booth
   July 15th, 16th, 21st, 23rd, 29th, October 29, November 3, 2014

4 Website
   May 23rd, 2014 - ongoing

5 Working Group Meetings
   October 6th and 30th, 2014, January 13, 2015

6 First Public Open House
   November 5, 2014

7 Second Public Open House
   January 28, 2015
consultation summary

what we heard about our ‘early thoughts concept plan’

1. Protect the unique beauty, open space, tree canopy and environmental integrity of the Park - light touch ‘facelift’

2. Limit events and programs to hard surfaces

3. Support for key components of the plan

4. Support for moratorium on monuments to preserve green space

5. Support for heritage value and telling the story
Stats:
- 6.7 acres (approximately 300m x 200m)
- owned by University of Toronto
- leased to the City in 1859 for a period of 999 years, set to expire in 2858
- operated by City of Toronto, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
- home to over 200 trees
**Queen’s Park North Cultural Heritage**

- **1829** - University grounds and connecting promenades create a special precinct in 19th century Toronto.
- **1860** - Queen’s Park officially opens as public park.
- **1892** - Legislature bisects park into two portions, north and south.
- **1949** - Intensification of roadways including Wellesley St. W and Queen’s Park Crescent West encloses park.
- **2015** - Connectivity between park and surrounding context has been altered over time.

**Evolution of Scale, Role and Civic Identity of Queen’s Park**
queen’s park north cultural heritage

Character-defining heritage elements

1. Civic public space
2. Picturesque landscape character
3. Mature tree canopy
4. Collection of monuments in picturesque setting
5. Component part of larger picturesque precinct
6. Connectivity to larger picturesque precinct

key direction: revitalize the picturesque and reconnect to city
The framework for the draft concept plan:

- The plan has evolved out of consultation and technical studies and represents a ‘facelift’ for the park.

- The concept is to protect the spectacular tree canopy by aligning new walkways and public spaces with the existing network of paths, and to minimize infrastructure changes in the tree and lawn areas.
goals for the concept plan

- **protect** the tree canopy
- **enhance** the community’s use and enjoyment of the park
- **preserve** the Picturesque quality of the landscape
- **rationalize** pedestrian traffic patterns and manage bicycle traffic
- **provide** more, and better quality seating areas & amenities
- **strengthen** the connection between Queen’s Park and the surrounding community both in terms of program and circulation
key components:

- Highlanders Entrance
- Queen Elizabeth II Mall
- King Edward VII Plaza
- Diagonal Walkway
- Hoskin Entrance
- Wellesley-Queen’s Park Entrance
- Seating
- Trees
highlanders entrance & queen elizabeth II mall

- an 8 metre wide granite walkway ties the Highlanders Memorial to the King Edward VII statue
- seating and pedestrian lighting line both sides of the walkway
- terminating the mall at the north end is Highlanders Entrance with its newly restored monument and granite paving surround
- a transformed Queen’s Park Crescent intersection creates a strong pedestrian priority area
- new front door address for Queen’s Park North; connects to Bloor Street and cultural corridor
queen elizabeth II mall - programming

strolling
Union Sq., NYC

relaxing
Dorchester Sq., Montreal

8m
**king edward VII plaza**

- large, vibrant central social space with family-friendly amenities including a dynamic fountain in the centre of the park
- existing King Edward the VIIth statue is retained, along with the existing granite seatwall
- granite plaza incorporates water jets around perimeter of seatwall
- open space allows space for programming, including small concerts and exhibits
- creating seasonal interest through the introduction of horticultural plantings
king edward VII plaza
- options

option 1

option 2

Overlays - existing centre and
Option 1

Overlays - existing centre and
Option 2

CURVED BENCH WITH NO BACK

Red Ribbon Park, Qinhuangdao

Place D’Armes, Montreal
king edward VII plaza
- programming

- browsing market events
- people-watching
- sunning

- browsing art fair
- performing
- gathering

- splashing
- studying
- eating
king edward VII plaza - programming

browsing market events
Union Sq., NYC

people-watching
Central Park, NYC

sunning

browsing art fair
Washington Sq Park

performing
Central Park, NYC

gathering

splashing
Place de la Republique, Paris

studying
Union Square, NYC

eating
Battery Bosque, NYC
main diagonal walkway

Alternating benches line the walkway

Clarence Square, Toronto

Dorchester Square, Montreal

textured paving
defined edge - curbs and benches
existing pathways
pathways to be removed
new hardscape areas to be constructed in existing softscape
overlap of existing and proposed pathways
The modestly-scaled Hoskin Entrance is paved with coloured and textured concrete and is lined with bench seating, pedestrian lighting and seasonal planting beds.

An information kiosk in the centre provides programming information on the park, the university, and the museums.
wellesley-queen’s park crescent entrance

- permanent seating lines the walkway edge
- horticultural beds provide seasonal interest
wellesley-queen’s park crescent entrance - options

- a modestly-sized entrance is designed to accommodate a small cafe
- space for cafe tables and/or chess tables is provided on granite fines paving
- potential food truck pilot project location

option 1 - no cafe

option 2 - cafe
reconnect wellesley street
- park road treatment

- upgraded paving
- pedestrian priority road
- flexible event space
- reconnect to University bridge entrance
- reconnect to Ontario Legislative Assembly
A few proposed program elements are outside the scope of work for the Queen’s Park North Revitalization. These elements are part of a longer-term vision for the park.

The following elements are outside the current scope of work:

1. Cafe
2. Pedestrian-priority intersection at Highlanders entrance
3. Wellesley Street Street improvements
seating options

movable tables and chairs
- Union Square, New York

long benches
- Hudson Park & Blvd., New York

chess tables
- Red Ribbon Park, Qinhuangdao City

picnic seating
- Battery Bosque, New York

stone seatwall
- Queen's Park North, Toronto

lawn
- Queen's Park North, Toronto
• review existing lighting for safety levels and comfort

• consider lighting special features such as King Edward VII statue and water feature; Highlander’s Memorial at entrance to QEII Mall
removals required with the framework for the concept plan

- arborist report indicates less than 10% of the existing trees are to be removed

- many of the removals are due to fungal disease-affected evergreens (Diplodia and Dothistroma)

**KEY**

- trees to be removed (per arborist report)
- trees to be removed or transplanted (due to conflict with design)
‘stars’ of the existing tree canopy - to be preserved

Northern Red Oak  Horse-chestnut  Eastern Black Walnut

London Planetree  European Ash

KEY

● important trees to be preserved
new trees to be planted

- plant new trees and aim to plant 75% native species
- new trees could include the following species:

overstory trees

- Bur Oak, Swamp White Oak, White Oak, and English Oak (used sparingly)
- Red, Black, and Sycamore Maples
- European Beech (used sparingly)
- Eastern White Pine (Provincial tree)

understory (trees + large shrubs)

- Yellowwood
- Eastern Redbud
- Pagoda and Eastern Flowering Dogwood
- Vernal Witchhazel
table group activities

Share your thoughts by joining a conversation on one of 5 topics:

1. Culture and Heritage
2. Trees, Horticulture and Ecology
3. Queen Elizabeth II Mall & Circulation
4. Entrances at Hoskin, Wellesley-QP, and Highlanders
5. King Edward VII Plaza - Vibrant Social Heart

Feel free to move along to the next topic of your choice whenever you want

Or, record your comments on your own at the table at the side of the room.