

City of Toronto

Taylor Creek Park Management Plan

Community Meeting Summary Report



Prepared by Lura Consulting for:
The City of Toronto
October 2018



Taylor Creek Park Management Plan - Community Meeting Summary Report

This report was prepared by Lura Consulting. Lura is providing independent community consultation services as part of the Taylor Creek Park Management Plan. The report presents the key outcomes from the October 3, 2018 community meeting, and is not intended to provide a verbatim transcript. If you have any questions or comments regarding the report, please contact either:

Julia Murnaghan

City of Toronto
Environmental Specialist
Parks Forestry and Recreation
416-392-0440
jmurnag@toronto.ca

or

Alex Lavasidis

Lura Consulting
416-536-0184
alavasidis@lura.ca

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1. Project Background

Following the direction of the [Taylor Massey Creek Sub-Watershed Master Plan Update](#), the City of Toronto is developing a Management Plan for Taylor Creek Park. This Management Plan will explore park-scale concerns and evaluate proposed projects to improve Taylor Creek Park. The goal is to achieve a balance between the enhancement and management of ecological, recreational, cultural, functional, and social uses and needs. Through the identification and evaluation of relationships and responsibility, a governance structure for ongoing staff coordination and public engagement for future project implementation will be proposed in the Management Plan as well.

2. Community Meeting

The Taylor Creek Park community was invited to participate in a community meeting to learn about the park management process and to provide input on management opportunities. The meeting was held on Wednesday October 3, 2018 at the Stan Wadlow Clubhouse (373 Cedarvale Avenue), from 7 to 9 pm. The community meeting was widely publicized through email distribution of a notice to the project mailing list, promotion on the City's website, and social media. A copy of the meeting notice is included in Appendix A.

The purpose of the community meeting was to:

- Provide participants with an overview of the management plan process;
- Demonstrate integration with the Taylor Massey Creek Sub Watershed Master Plan and the Toronto Ravine Strategy; and
- Seek input and feedback on draft management opportunities for the draft management plan.

A drop-in open house was held from 7:00 -7:30 pm. Participants had the opportunity to visit three stations which contained maps, information boards (Appendix B), and a station host (who was part of the project team), relating to the following themes:

- Natural Systems
- Trails, Recreation and Cultural Heritage
- Creek Health and Stormwater Management

Participants were able to gather information and ask questions at each station. A feedback form was available for additional comments.

At 7:30 pm, Councillor Davis provided opening remarks, noting the community's and her own appreciation of Taylor Creek Park and the need to preserve the park for the future. Julia Murnaghan, City of Toronto, welcomed attendees. Susan Hall, Lura Consulting, reviewed the agenda, format, and purpose of the meeting. Markus Hillar, Schollen & Company, and Sarah

Mainguy, North-South Environmental Inc., provided an overview of the study area, project background, site analysis, management principles, management themes, and next steps. Presentation slides are available in Appendix C.

Following the presentation, participants were encouraged to visit stations to discuss each of the three theme areas.

In total, 25 people attended of which 14 people signed in.

3. Summary of Participant Feedback

The following provides a summary of all feedback received through the feedback forms, which were available throughout the meeting. One topic-specific feedback form was available at each station. In total, 7 feedback forms on Natural Systems, 8 feedback forms on Trails, Recreation and Cultural Heritage, and 5 feedback forms on Creek Health and Stormwater Management were received. Participants were also able to provide feedback until October 19, 2018, through email. Two additional feedback forms were received.

Station #1: Natural Systems

1.1 Do you support protecting highly sensitive seepage and forest areas with a 10-metre minimum buffer/no-go area? Why or why not?

Almost all responses were supportive of this recommendation. They expressed this would help protect and manage sensitive areas, which would in turn allow them to regenerate. One respondent expressed that their support for this opportunity would be dependent on the specific circumstances in each case. For example, they noted that the pooling behind the Dawes parking area is increasing, and should therefore be managed.

1.2 Do you support managing invasive species throughout the park, prioritizing areas of highest ecological sensitivity and hazardous plants? Why or why not?

All responses were supportive of this recommendation, as it would allow native species to return and re-establish themselves. However, one respondent expressed that while they are supportive of this opportunity, and support invasive species management, they questioned whether other initiatives proposed for the management plan would support this opportunity, or hinder it. Another respondent suggested that the public should be engaged to assist with identifying opportunities around invasive species management.

1.3 Do you support managing access to and proliferation of trails within the ESA and other highly sensitive sites from main paved trails? Why or why not?

Almost all responses were supportive of this recommendation, as it would enhance the protection of natural spaces. One respondent expressed that their support would be dependent

on the current use of the trails; they suggested data on pedestrian/cycle trail use be collected and shared in order to assist in making informed decisions for the management plan.

1.4 Do you support repairing fragmented portions of the riparian corridor with native trees and shrubs, providing flowering and pollinator species where acceptable? Why or why not?

All respondents were support of this recommendation. They expressed that it would enhance the maintenance and protection of riparian corridors.

1.5 Do you support encouraging stewardship and promoting environmental and cultural heritage interpretation through environmental-based education programs and signage? Why or why not?

All responses were supportive of this recommendation, as stewardship and education would encourage more people to feel a sense of ownership of the ravine system and would also motivate them to protect precarious natural spaces.

1.6 Of the five opportunities listed, which is the most or least important? Why?

Protecting highly sensitive seepage and forest areas, and managing invasive species were the most important opportunities identified by respondents. Respondents did not provide a reason behind their ranking. Encouraging stewardship and promoting environmental and cultural heritage interpretation was identified as being the least important opportunity.

1.7 Did we miss anything in terms of natural system enhancements?

A respondent suggested that wildlife habitat enhancement, enforcement, monitoring, and re-evaluation of the plan (e.g. to adjust to climate change impacts) should be incorporated. Respondents suggested efforts taken towards natural system enhancements should not be counter-productive. For example, it is important to ensure seeding along the hydro corridor does not include the accidental seeding of invasive species. Another respondent suggested wetland identification, especially north-west of Stan Wadlow Park was an important next step. They suggested this could lead to interpretative signage being installed at the site. A respondent suggested that overall, they would like to see more bioengineering with natural materials to address stream bank erosion, rather than gabion stones and armor stones.

1.8 Are there any additional comments on the *park wide natural systems enhancement* recommendations?

One respondent placed an emphasis on protecting “nature first”, while another emphasized encouraging fauna throughout the park. A respondent noted they are looking forward to the long-term vision. A respondent suggested that more members of the community should be involved in enhancing natural systems (e.g. schools, civic society groups, etc.), and that there needs to be more communication with the public on this topic.

Station #2: Trails, Recreation and Cultural Heritage

2.1 Do you support the boardwalk in Goulding? Why or why not?

The response was split between those who support and those who do not support this opportunity. Supportive responses indicated the boardwalk would address problems related to flooding and water and prevent unwanted alternate paths from being created during periods of flooding. One respondent who was unsupportive expressed that they would be unaffected by the boardwalk. Another respondent suggested that investment could instead be directed to the busiest trails.

2.2 Do you support the hydro trail (between access U and Q)? Why or why not?

Most responses were supportive of this opportunity. Respondents noted that there is already an existing, informal trail created by users of the space. One respondent who was unsupportive of this opportunity expressed that they wanted to leave the trail as they are, and expressed concern over the future use of pesticides in the hydro trail. Another respondent who expressed concern over this option was cautious about the impact increased traffic in this area may have on wildlife.

2.3 Do you support the creek side trail (between access H and J)? Why or why not?

Most responses were supportive of this opportunity. However, no reasoning was provided. One unsupportive response indicated that the existing footpath is generally in good condition.

2.4 Do you support the natural surface trails (access B through D)? Why or why not?

Most responses were supportive of this opportunity. Respondents expressed that natural trails could potentially alleviate erosion concerns. Respondents also suggested having different terrain types – paved, gravel, natural – would allow users to enjoy and partake in different types of activities. One respondent, however, expressed that the trails should be only for pedestrians, not cyclists. One supportive respondent felt that the space needs to be left in its current, natural state. Another respondent spoke to limited access, noting that the trails are only accessible from the Parkview Hills neighbourhood.

2.5 Do you support the nature trail in Coxwell ravine? Why or why not?

The support for this option was split amongst respondents. Respondents supportive of this opportunity did not provide a reason for their support. One unsupportive response indicated that the whole ravine is already a “nature trail”.

2.6 Do you support improvements along the pave trail to improve drainage and reduce amount of ice? Why or why not?

All responses were supportive of this opportunity. Some respondents noted that this opportunity would address flooding issues, protect wet/sensitive ground, and could potentially

be used as water collection and storage. One respondent suggested that drainage is an issue that needs to be addressed throughout the city, across multiple departments.

2.7 Do you support access closure (B, D, S)? Why or why not?

Responses were generally supportive of this opportunity. Respondents expressed that it would limit damage to natural areas and that the proposed access closures are intuitive as the traffic is low. Another respondent questioned how closures could be effectively enforced.

One respondent noted that the trail is used by many neighbourhood residents, suggesting that access closures could have implications on the accessibility of the space.

2.8 Do you support access formalization (E, M, Q)? Why or why not?

Responses were generally supportive of this opportunity. However, no reason was provided for this support. One respondent who held concerns about this option noted that formalizing access could mean a loss of wildlife, increased invasive species, and inappropriate uses.

2.9 Do you support access enhancement (all others)? Why or why not?

One respondent who was supportive of access enhancement suggested that it could occur at the Glenwood Crescent and Notley Place entrances. A separate respondent suggested that the metal staircase by Cullen Bryant park should be redesigned as it is not very functional.

2.10 Which trail or access point is the most important? The least?

Most respondents did not answer this question.

2.11 Did we miss anything critical in terms of access points?

Suggestions included opening up barriers to allow access for maintenance trucks; replacing and increasing signage; improving communication with neighbours who use the trails daily; limiting dog access to sensitive places; and removing the bike trail at Cullen Bryant Park.

2.12 Are there any additional comments on the park-wide trails and access recommendations?

Some respondents suggested removing the dog park from the valley, with one respondent noting that they do not want to permit off-leash areas. Other suggestions also included installing logs and wood chips to demarcate paths and to create more car parking. One respondent suggested improving communications with the public through an email list or social media to increase understanding about the importance of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.

Station #3: Creek Health and Stormwater Management

3.1 What do you like about the proposed weir/in-water crossing removal and bridge replacement at Area 7 & 8?

Respondents like that this option would provide users with a safe way to cross the water, and think that the bridge replacements are a good idea.

3.2 What do you like about the proposed boardwalk at Area 1?

Respondents noted that this opportunity would alleviate erosion concerns, reduce flood risk, and prevent soil compaction. However, one respondent questioned whether this would be a good long-term investment, and suggested that a trail with rails and culverts would be desirable. One respondent noted this is an especially desirable area to walk through because of the plentiful wildlife.

3.3 What do you like about the proposed creek bank restoration areas 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11?

Respondents expressed that creek bank restoration would address erosion concerns and help prevent flooding.

3.4 What do you like about the wetland creation in Area 12?

Respondents noted that wetland creation in Area 12 is important for water drainage, filtering, addressing stormwater runoff, as well as for the overall enhancement of the space for the enjoyment of nature.

3.5 Do you have any additional advice for the team with regards to the proposed weir/in-water crossing removal and bridge replacement at Area 7 & 8?

Respondents suggested design interventions that could be considered, which included building a wetland under the Hydro One towers, implementing trail improvements, and ensuring that the bridge replacement is wide enough to accommodate a multitude of uses and users.

3.6 Do you have any additional advice for the team with regards to the proposed boardwalk at Area 1?

Respondents noted that proper design and construction is important to ensure that the proposed boardwalk would be able to resist weathering and tolerate long-term use (e.g. rot resistant). Drainage could also be improved on the O'Connor Bridge which impacts this area. One respondent suggested that there may be the opportunity to build a lookout as part of this option.

3.7 Do you have any additional advice for the team with regards to the proposed creek bank restoration areas 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11?

Respondents expressed that long-term, high-quality solutions, and bioengineering techniques are desired.

3.8 Do you have any additional advice for the team with regards to wetland creation in area 12?

One respondent emphasized that it is important to take into consideration the habitat of local fauna when creating the wetland.

4. Next Steps

The project team will consider all feedback received in order to develop recommendations for the Taylor Creek Park Management Plan. The summary of this meeting will be posted on the project website. The final Management Plan will be released in the first quarter of 2019.

Please [click here](#) for more information as the process moves forward.