

Final Report | November 2019

PARKLAND STRATEGY

Growing Toronto Parkland

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Prepared for the City of Toronto
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City of Toronto Team:
Parks, Forestry and Recreation
City Planning

Prepared by:
O2 Planning + Design Inc.

In collaboration with:
Gladki Planning Associates
Hemson Consulting Ltd.
N Barry Lyon Consultants

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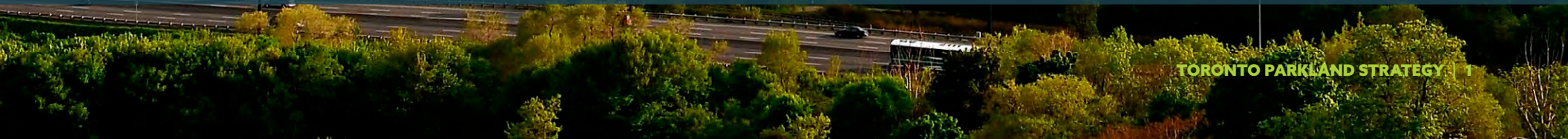
Indigenous Acknowledgment

The City of Toronto acknowledges that the Parkland Strategy was developed on the traditional territory of First Nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee, and the Wendat peoples. The City also acknowledges that Toronto and its surroundings is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Finally, this report acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

Don Valley Ravine



INTRODUCTION



Parks are important. They provide essential elements of health and well-being by connecting people to nature, building community, and opportunities for improving physical health. Toronto has built and sustained a parks system that is a defining element of the city and has become one of its most cherished features. Known as a city within a park, Toronto offers a network of green infrastructure that supports and provides essential mental, physical, social, economic, and ecological benefits. Toronto's system of parks and ravines covers approximately 13% of the total land area of the city, across more than 1,500 parks encompassing 8,000 hectares of land.

Toronto is growing. This growth needs to be carefully managed to preserve the most valued features and elements of the parks system, while positioning the City to maintain and enhance the system and provide additional greenspace to support greater demand for parks.

Toronto in 2019 is experiencing unprecedented growth, putting increased pressure on the parks system. It is anticipated that Toronto's population will grow from 2.9 million to 3.4 million with 1.7 million jobs by 2041. This intensification is adding more residents to existing neighbourhoods, primarily in residential high-rise buildings, and located within proximity to higher-order transit stations. In these higher-density urban areas the provision of parks is critical to the liveability of these new vertical

communities and to support Toronto's growing workforce. At the same time, the demographic composition of neighbourhoods is also changing, as are park user preferences and expectations. Parks should address inequities across the city to ensure access to high quality parks and natural areas for all Torontonians.

The Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division in partnership with the City Planning Division developed the Parkland Strategy to provide the City with a long-term vision and framework for the enhancement of Toronto's parks system. This will occur through the creation of new parks, and the expansion of, and the provision of improved access to existing parks. This report has been developed to address the planning, acquisition, and development of parks to ensure that Toronto's parks system will grow to support the needs of people and ensure a liveable city. This strategy deals with city-owned parkland, while acknowledging the importance of working with partners such as Toronto Regional Conservation Authority and others to improve the provision, quality and connectivity of all park space.

The first phase of the Parkland Strategy focused on developing a new, modernized approach for assessing parkland provision. This phase informed a number of major City initiatives, including the Rail Deck Park Official Plan Amendment, and the TOcore and Midtown Parks and Public Realm Plans and

Torontonians value the parks system, with an overwhelming 99% of online survey responses indicating that **parks are critical to quality of life.**

89% of survey respondents reported visiting a park at least once a week, and 63% of employees use parks during their workday.

official plan amendments. The second phase examined parkland need and considered how the City currently plans for parkland and decision-making processes related to prioritizing investments. A set of strategic actions have been included to inform the City's future parkland priorities and guide proactive park planning.

The Parkland Strategy is a strategic park planning framework that provides:

- » **Park Catchment Tool:** New methodology for measuring parkland provision and need;
- » **Parks Planning Priorities:** Priorities for the development of city-initiated local-level parks plans in areas of need;
- » **Acquisition Prioritization:** Areas for parkland acquisition and shared-use agreements with other public agencies;
- » **Development Review:** Framework to evaluate development review applications and support Official Plan;
- » **Planning Studies:** Framework to inform studies including new and underway Secondary Plans and Site and Area Specific Studies;
- » **Partnerships:** Strategic development of partnerships to leverage opportunities to support Toronto's parks system; and
- » **Community Benefits Strategy:** Support future community benefit strategy work as required through Bill 108.





ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The city engaged with the public and stakeholders to launch both phases on the Parkland Strategy and help set priorities for the project. The first phase of engagement (May-Oct 2017) supported the formation of an updated parkland provision measurement and assessment methodology. Themes explored included park supply and distribution, functionality, travel distances, and methods to access parks and natural areas. The second phase of engagement (Jan-Sept 2018) articulated a vision for Toronto's park system, as well as engaging participants on parkland acquisition and improvement priorities at both the local and city-wide levels.

Parks, Forestry and Recreation staff used a number of approaches to engage a diversity of residents from across the city. An equity lens was applied in all consultations so that voices of under-served and equity-seeking communities were brought to the forefront. Additionally, in-person consultations and online surveys disseminated through social media platforms were utilized to involve harder to reach populations.

'What We Heard Reports' for both engagement phases are available on the Parkland Strategy website (www.toronto.ca/parklandstrategy). These reports provide a summary and analyses of all the engagement feedback and comments.

3784

ONLINE SURVEY
PARTICIPANTS

100+

OPEN HOUSE
ATTENDEES

2152

ATTENDEES REACHED AT
50 POP-UP EVENTS



1000+ postcards
distributed at consultation
events

50+

TOPARKS TALK ATTENDEES
+ **350** ONLINE VIEWS TO DATE

199

ATTENDEES REACHED
AT **5** STAKEHOLDER EVENTS



228 flyers distributed to
civic + community centres
+ Toronto Public Libraries

VISION, PRINCIPLES & VALUES

Vision for Toronto's Parks System

Toronto is and will continue to be a city within a park. The city's system of parks are essential to Toronto's identity as a world-class, liveable city, and are the backbone of Toronto's diverse and vibrant neighbourhoods. Parks are an extension of people's homes and living spaces and contribute to the sense of community belonging. They are focal points of neighbourhoods and provide places for people to meet, socialize, gather, play, celebrate, and rejuvenate. Nature is also able to permeate the city through the interconnected network of parks and natural areas that, at its core, defines the city's system of parks.

Stakeholders and the public were engaged to provide input on a vision statement that captures the above sentiment:

Parks are essential elements for a good quality of life by supporting personal well-being, social connection, healthy living and ecological sustainability.

Toronto's park system will expand and improve as the city grows to ensure that parkland is accessible, functional, connected, and resilient.

As Toronto continues to grow and intensify, building on this rich legacy is crucial to not only preserve Toronto's image and brand, but cultivate and strengthen it. The system of parks must expand and improve as the city continues to transform and evolve to contribute to enhancing quality of life and a thriving economy, provide better access, and ensure a resilient and sustainable environment that supports people and wildlife alike.

To support the year-round needs of a growing and changing population, new, multi-functional parks of all shapes and sizes will be added to the existing system in lockstep with growth. This will occur as parks are creatively re-imagined across Toronto over time. Improved connections in and between parks and open spaces will not only provide better access for people, but also better link land and water to create a connected, accessible, resilient, and beautiful urban landscape.

Guiding Principles

Four guiding principles support the vision for Toronto's parks system and form the foundation of the Parkland Strategy. These principles will guide the work of City staff, City Council, and other stakeholders as the Parkland Strategy is implemented.

EXPAND the parks system by creating new parks to support growth and address gaps to ensure an effective parks system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.

IMPROVE the function of existing parks to promote community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and health and wellbeing through active living, access to nature, and the provision of spaces for rest, relaxation, and leisure.

CONNECT parks and other open spaces, physically and visually, and leverage opportunities to use other open spaces so that people, communities and wildlife have abundant access to parks and open spaces and can seamlessly navigate to and through the parks and open space system.

INCLUDE everyone by removing barriers so that parks and other open spaces are inclusive and inviting places that are equitably accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities, and incomes.

“Cities need a lot of things to be liveable – affordable housing, strong transportation, arts, culture, and of course greenspaces. There are so many reasons why we need greenspaces – they help clean the air, moderate temperatures, mitigate storm water, and of course, they are essential for our physical and emotional health.”

Carolyn Scotchmer, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, TD Bank Group, from the Sustainable Cities TD Bank Group – GlobeScan SDG11 Leadership Forum

The Value of Parks

Parks are publicly-owned land that is set aside for the enjoyment and use by people who live, work, and visit the city. The value of parks to individuals, communities, and the environment are significant and well documented. Cities, at a basic level, are comprised of buildings, streets, and parks. People live and work in buildings, move along city streets, and relax and play in parks. Parks grace the urban fabric and break up the hard landscape and providing places to escape for tranquility, health, and fun.

Toronto’s parkland contributes to the ecological, economic, and socio-cultural vitality of the city by:

Improving Citizen Health

Parks provide publicly accessible places for people to play sports, cool off in a splash pad, run, skate, or walk through nature. They facilitate active transportation along pathways, and provide opportunities for outdoor exercise. Even a short amount of time in a park amongst trees and nature can reduce stress, restore emotional balance, and increase happiness. Parks and tree-lined streets also actively improve air quality.

Building Community

Parks are places for people to gather, socialize, and attend concerts, theatre performances, and farmers’ markets. Parks help build strong community connections, give residents community pride, and shape city identity.

Acting as an Extension of the Home

Parks can be considered an outdoor living and entertaining space. Parks are available for anyone to use as places to eat, play, sit and relax. Having this type of outdoor space is important, as an increasing percentage of people do not have access to private greenspace such as backyards and gardens due to increasing intensification and vertical growth.

Enhancing Ecosystems

A network of parks is essential to support biodiversity. The parks system provides important habitat for wildlife and vegetation. Ravines and greenspaces create a connected network for wildlife to move safely through the city. Out of Toronto’s 10.2 million trees, 3.5 million (34%) are found within parks and natural areas. Parks are important for providing trees with suitable growing conditions that enable them to thrive and contribute to the city’s overall tree canopy.



Contributing to the Economy

As the population of Toronto continues to grow and as people continue to move to urban centres, a high-quality parks' system is essential to attract and retain a strong workforce and grow local investment. High-quality parks also have a positive impact on nearby property values.

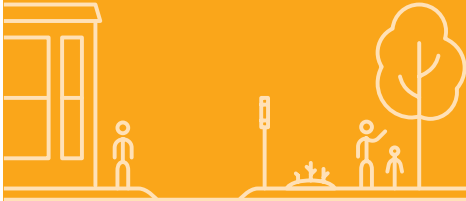
Boosting Tourism

Parks attract tourists. Many of Toronto's parks are high on the list of places to visit in Toronto, and often host events like arts festivals, sporting events, food festivals, and music and theatre performances. This tourism provides economic benefits by increasing traffic in local stores and drawing customers to fill accommodations and restaurants.

Providing Crucial Green Infrastructure for Climate Change Resiliency

Parks will play an important role in enhancing the City's resiliency to extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change. Parks absorb stormwater and filter it naturally before it reaches waterbodies or the water table. This helps prevent flooding and supports clean rivers and lakes. By increasing the amount of greenspace, urban areas can also minimize the heat-island effect and reduce the intensity of heat waves.

PROMINENCE & VISIBILITY



Parks need to be located and designed to ensure they are prominent, and visible features of the public realm to support safety, security, accessibility, and livability of the city.

IDENTITY & CHARACTER



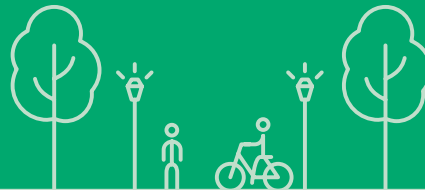
Parks need to be situated and designed to take advantage of character-defining elements and features that contribute to creating a sense of place.

USER EXPERIENCE



Parks need to be designed to both attract a wide range of users, and to entice people to stay and linger by providing a range of activities and seating options, reinforcing views, supporting vegetation and tree growth, and providing inclusive spaces that contribute to comfort and social interaction.

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS & THERMAL COMFORT



Parks need to be designed to provide visual interest, be safe and secure, and support a range of passive and active programming and activity. Their design and size should enable a range of year-round programming, maximize sunlight exposure, provide ample shade, and be safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities.

What Makes a High-Quality Park

Parks are an integral component of Toronto's public realm. They contribute to a liveable and vibrant city with inclusive, attractive, resilient, and welcoming places for people of all ages and abilities. While parks may have distinct characteristics, often reflecting the neighbourhoods where they are located, there are a number of important considerations for ensuring high-quality parks:

- » Prominence and Visibility
- » Identity and Character
- » User Experience
- » Physical Characteristics and Thermal Comfort

Figure 01: What Makes a High-Quality Park

TORONTO PARKS & OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Status of Toronto's Parks System

Toronto's parks system is influenced by its unique geography, topography, and growth and development over time. This has resulted in an extensive parks system that covers approximately 13% of Toronto's land base, with over 8,000 hectares of land and more than 1,500 parks. This stunning system is comprised of over 3,600 hectares of City-owned and operated parkland, and over 4,400 hectares of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) owned parkland that is operated and maintained by the City. The most significant spaces and defining features of Toronto's landscape is the extensive ravine system, which formed approximately 11,000 years ago when the last glaciers receded leaving rivers and valleys in their wake.

Toronto's parks come in all shapes and sizes. They are located throughout communities and neighbourhoods, ravines, and along the waterfront. Within this collection, exists a range of functions, and access to parks. Parks draw local as well as city-wide users often because of a combination of their size, functionality, and access.

Figure 02: Toronto's Parks System

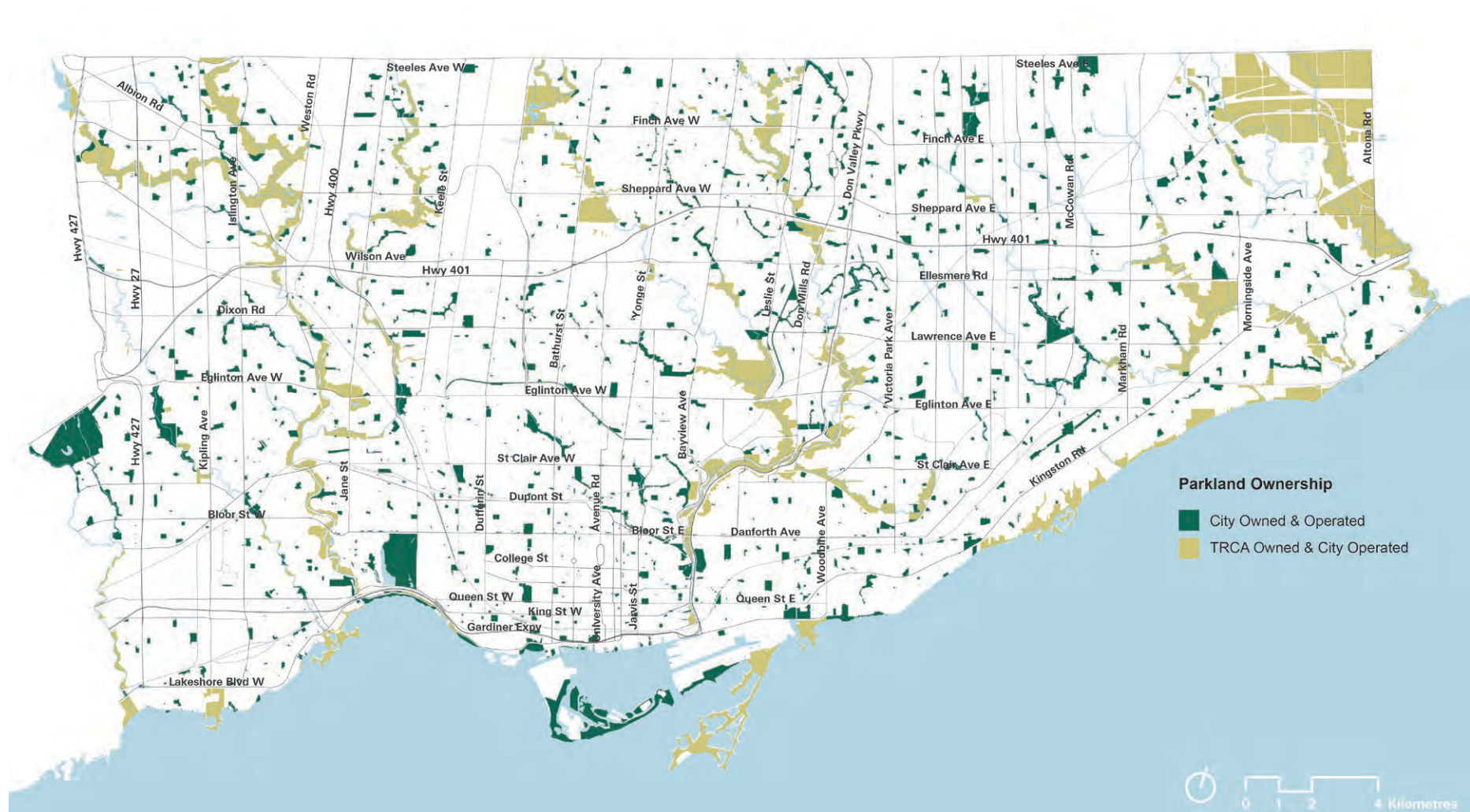


Figure 03: Classifying Parks for the Purposes of the Parkland Strategy



**City and Legacy parks have not been given a specific catchment area due to their very large size, the unique features they contain, which attract and serve a city-wide function.*

Parks Classification

The development of a park classification system is a routine part of park planning. Classification enables the city to better plan for its park system, identify gaps in types of parks, support operational work planning and will inform local-parks plans. **Figure 03** shows the approach to classifying Toronto's parks for the purposes of the Parkland Strategy analysis, which required a clear and simple framework for measuring parkland provision and assessing parkland need. This approach acknowledges Toronto's incredibly diverse and varied parks system in a post-amalgamated city.

Toronto's parkland can be broadly categorized into two types of parks: **planned** and **natural**. Planned parks can be defined as lands that have been acquired, designed, and conceived for public use. Natural parks can be defined as lands that have been preserved in a natural state, such as Toronto's ravines, wetlands, and the natural portions along the city's waterfront. There are also different functions for park space, including passive and ecological, sport and play, and community and civic. These functions are all important but are not all well-suited for every park, and can be better suited depending on the classification of park.

The programming and features offered within designed and natural parks provide health and well-being benefits for people, wildlife, and the environment, with the type of programming and features generally falling into three overarching functions:

- » **Sport + Play:** Organized or programmed sport and recreation, and active play
- » **Community + Civic:** Community activities and interaction, and social cohesion
- » **Passive + Ecological:** Passive recreation and nature play, biodiversity, and ecological services

Figure 04 shows the breakdown of parks functionality in Toronto's parks system. Over half of all Toronto parks contain sport and play features and assets. The remaining amount is split between park features that provide community and civic features, ecological features, and those assets which cross over these functionality themes.

Individual parks can have any range of the three functions, which is often dependent on park size. Toronto's parks system has parks of all shapes and sizes and can be broken down into six size classes. These range from the smallest parks that dot the city's neighbourhoods to the city's largest legacy

Figure 04: Toronto Parks by Function

Percent of Asset Categories in City of Toronto Parks, Grouped by Function (2018)

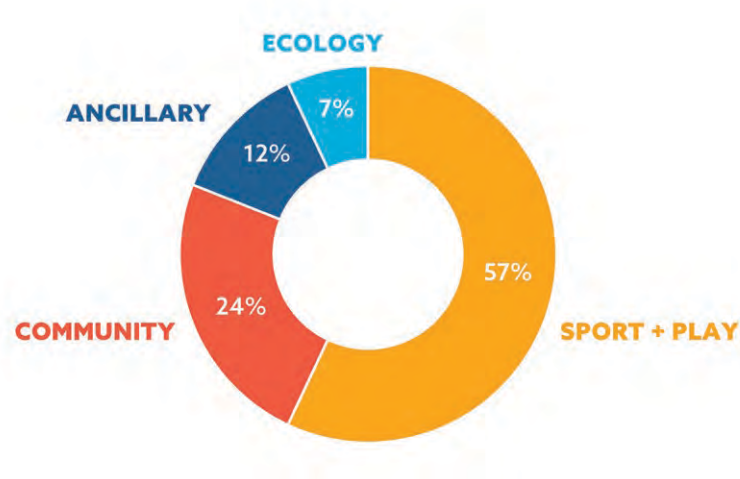
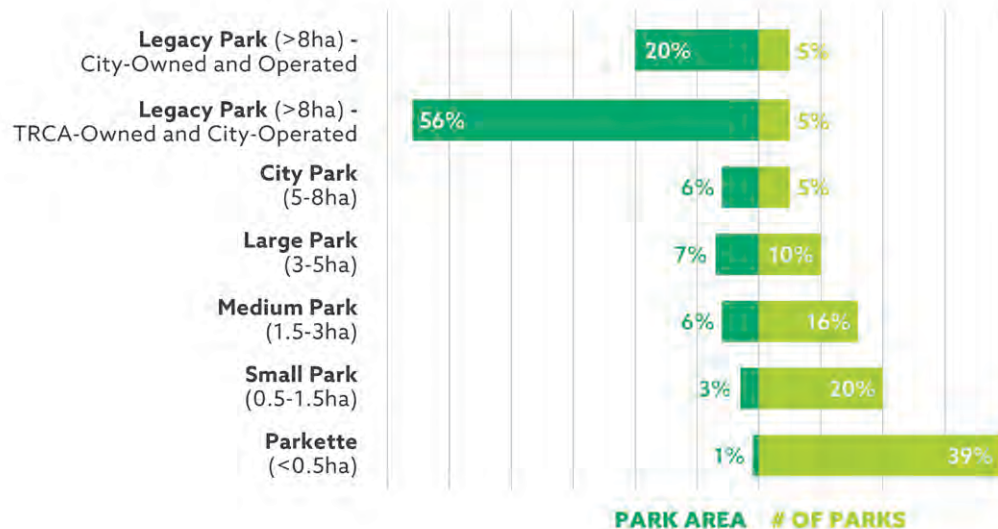


Figure 05: Toronto Park Size Breakdown by Quantity and Area

Percent of City of Toronto Parks and Park Area by Classification (2018)



parks that were the result of extraordinary natural or human intervention and provide an invaluable benefit to the quality of life in the city.

Each park size has an associated catchment area, based on a reasonable distance to travel to access the park. As the size of a park increases, so too does the catchment area. The consideration of park size and catchment areas are based on two assumptions: one being larger parks contain more space to accommodate various features and functions; and second, people are generally willing to travel greater distances to parks with more amenities.

A snapshot of the relationship between park size, number of parks, and the total areas of parks is shown in **Figure 05**. The majority of Toronto's parkland area consists of parks greater than 8 hectares (split between City-owned and operated, and TRCA-owned and City-operated). While Toronto's smallest parks make up the majority of the number of Toronto's parks at 39%, they only make up 1% of land area.

Achieving a Full Range of Parks

A combination of various parks sizes and their distribution in any particular geography is important. Toronto's parks system offers a diverse range of experiences and opportunities for people across the city. While the function and character of each park varies, the city's parks work together to provide a system of parkland that responds to the diversity and needs of the city. A parks system should comprise parks of varying size and function, distributed across the city is crucial to ensure that the different park needs of people are met. Different parks provide different functions, and collectively they support the three primary parkland functions of sport and play, community and civic, and passive and ecological, which together support the health and wellness of Torontonians.

Toronto's **smallest parks** offer limited opportunities for programming. Nonetheless, they provide respite from city life and contribute to creating a connected system of parks and open spaces. Small parks can accommodate a range of locally-oriented programming and act as important community focal points.

Medium-sized parks have the capacity to provide larger recreation facilities and a more diverse mix of active and passive programming. Larger parks have the most capacity to accommodate multiple functions. Local residents and people from across the city benefit from these larger spaces. They allow for a truly immersive experience and let us escape the hustle and bustle of the city.

Toronto's largest parks, **city-wide and legacy parks**, are typically the outcome of a unique era or major city-building initiative that resulted in a rare and significant park investment that attracts visitors from across Toronto.

Toronto's Ravine Strategy, approved by Toronto City Council in 2017, supports a ravine system that is a natural, connected sanctuary essential for the health and well-being of the city, where use and enjoyment support protection, education and stewardship. The Parkland Strategy supports Toronto's Ravine Strategy by providing recommendations to improve connections to and through ravine parks. This is particularly important in areas where neighbourhoods may be in close proximity to ravines but have low parkland supply due to poor or non-existing connections to those ravine parks. Creating appropriate and ecologically responsible entry points will improve access to, and use of ravine parkland both locally and city-wide.

“When we approach parkland planning, we always think of our greenspaces from a network approach. City parkland is only one piece of the greenspace puzzle—private lands, universities, schools, and other large greenspaces contribute to our cities and are important green infrastructure. Finding ways to better collaborate and connect these systems is key.”

Janie Romoff, General Manager, Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation, City of Toronto, from the Sustainable Cities TD Bank Group – GlobeScan SDG11 Leadership Forum

Toronto's Ravine System

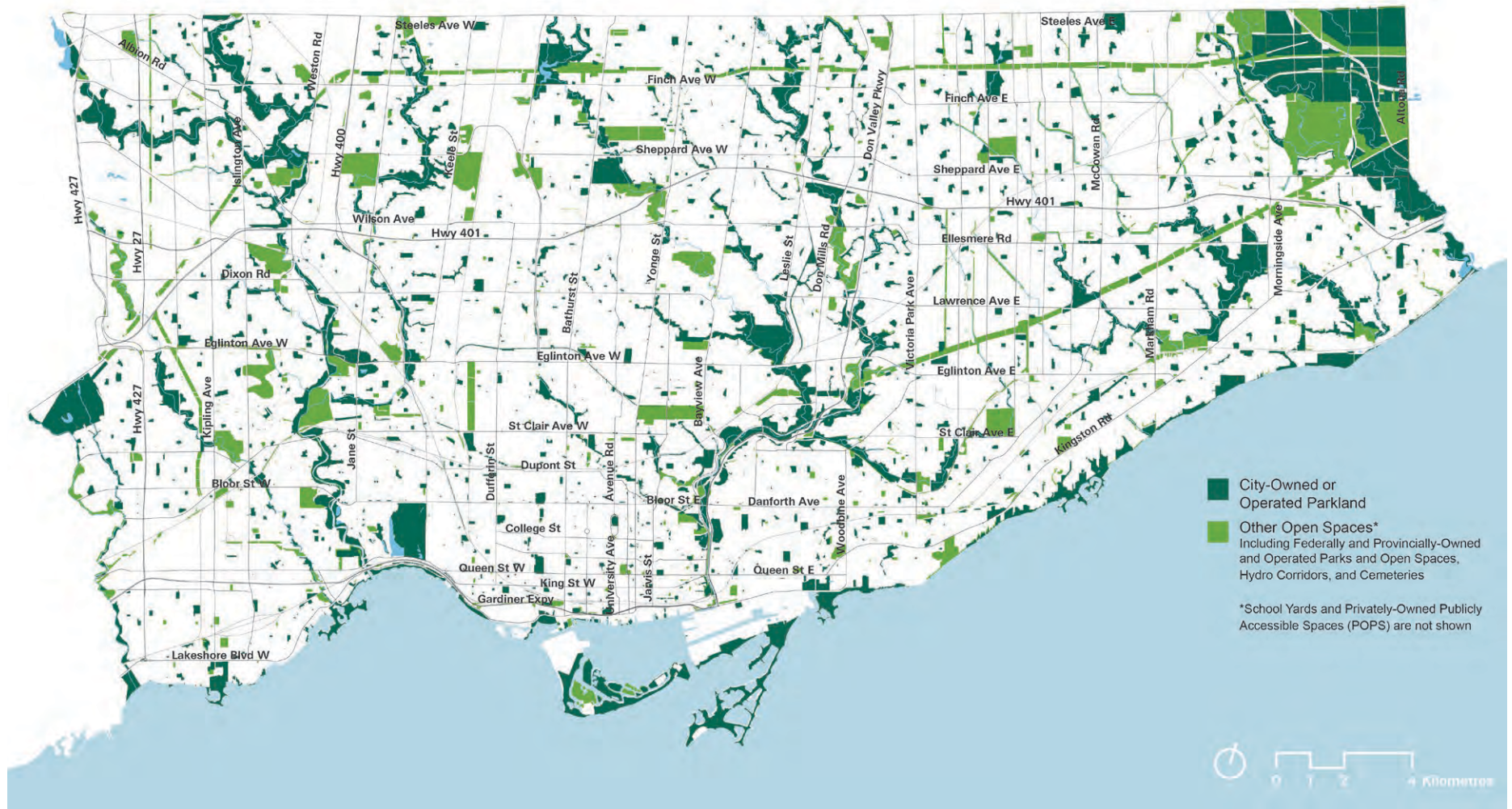
Toronto's ravine system provides important wildlife habitat, and support biodiversity and climate change resiliency. The Official Plan identifies that these lands should be retained and preserved in a natural state. This allows for some compatible recreational programming, while ensuring adverse impacts on natural features and functions are minimized. As a result, use of Toronto's ravines and natural parklands is generally limited to passive recreation opportunities including trail-based activities (e.g. walking, hiking, running, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and cycling), immersive experiences within nature, opportunities for rest and relaxation, and wildlife viewing.

Additionally, Toronto's Ravine Strategy, in alignment with the Parkland Strategy, is critical to navigate the fine line between protection and use, and identify and prioritize the actions and investments needed. The Parkland Strategy is aligned with the Ravine Strategy in providing recommendations to improve connections to and through ravine parks. This is particularly important in areas where nearby neighbourhoods are in relatively close proximity to ravines, but have low parkland supply because of the poor access to them.

Toronto's Other Open Spaces

Toronto's parks system is supplemented by a range of other public and private outdoor places like school yards, cemeteries, hydro corridors, and privately-owned publicly-accessible open spaces (POPS). These do not replace the need for public parks, but provide other opportunities for Torontonians to access greenspace. For the most part, these other open spaces provide limited active programming and largely offer passive recreation opportunities. While the City does not have jurisdiction over these lands, public access or use is in some cases enabled through partnerships, agreements, or easements. These other open spaces enrich the parks system by improving connectivity and access to outdoor public space, as well as through enriching the “parks” experience outside of City-owned or operated parkland. As a whole, the parks and open space network supports biodiversity, builds community capacity, and improves accessibility and connectivity. **Figure 06** shows Toronto's open parks and open space network.

Figure 06: Toronto's Parks and Open Space Network



Measuring Parkland Provision: The Park Catchment Tool

The Parkland Strategy has developed a new methodology to measure and map the provision of parkland across the city. The Park Catchment Tool, examines the amount of parkland available per person within a walkable distance. The tool relates to the public parks system for which the city is responsible. This tool is important as it enables the city to effectively measure parkland supply and provision which informs parks planning and acquisition and also helps identify areas of parkland need on which the city can focus its attention.

Parkland provision is measured against current population using Statistics Canada 2016 census information, and is reported through the use of Statistics Canada's dissemination blocks. Dissemination blocks are used by Statistics Canada as the smallest geographic areas to communicate census population and dwelling counts, and are typically the equivalent of a city block bound by intersecting streets or boundaries of standard geographic areas.

The Park Catchment Tool, shown in **Figure 07** is based on the following process:

- 1. Park Catchment:** a 500 metre walking distance (or five to ten-minute walk) along sidewalks, pathways, and local streets to a park.
- 2. Park User Population:** the total number of people a park serves within the 500 metre catchment.
- 3. Park Supply:** the total amount of parkland that is accessible to residents, and reported as park supply per person

The Park Catchment Tool provides a more realistic picture of parkland provision by accounting for actual travel distances between people and the parks they use. It more accurately represents the total population that shares a park and consequently, where new parks may be needed to address pressures on the system. The Tool results in maps that visualize parkland amount and distribution across the city.

The amount and variability of parkland distribution varies across the city. This is due to a combination of factors:

Population Density: In areas with high-population density, more people share the available park area, lowering parkland supply per person.

Existing Park Area: Areas that currently have a large amount of park area from the combination of several smaller parks or one or more larger parks will have a higher parkland supply than areas with few parks or little total park area.

Street Fabric and Walkability: Some areas have lower parkland provision due to physical barriers to accessing parks, such as discontinuous streets, larger blocks, or natural barriers such as steep slopes with no formal access into the parks system.

Figure 07: Park Catchment Tool

Additional assumptions used in the creation of the Park Catchment Tool can be found in the Appendix.



63% of survey respondents reported using parks during their workday.

Examining Toronto's Parkland Need

- Six Lenses

Six lenses were used to examine parkland need in the city, they are: parkland provision, the impact of growth, park range and distribution, equity, access and connection, and climate change.

Parkland Provision

Figure 08 illustrates the amount of parkland available to residents in 2016 per census dissemination block. This city-wide parkland provision analysis includes all City of Toronto owned and operated parkland, regardless of size. Parkland located within the City's ravine system is included in the city-wide analysis if the ravine has less than 45% slope and where the park is within 20 metres from a sidewalk or local road. This accounts for the fact that there are barriers to entering some parks due to slopes and other physical barriers (e.g. buildings).

In 2016, on a city-wide average, residents had access to 28 m² of parkland per person. There is significant variation in parkland across the city as a result of three key drivers: population density, park supply, and walkable access to parkland. Figure 08 shows that areas located close to the ravine system have the highest parkland provision. Areas with combinations of high population density, low park supply, or restricted access to parks have the lowest parkland provision. Further, the variations of parkland provision across the city can, in part, be attributed to how each former municipality approached city building and park planning. An additional analysis layering on employment population was also undertaken as workers use parks during the day. Factoring in 2016 employment, the average park provision was 18 m² per person (resident and employee).

Figure 08: Toronto Parkland Provision (2016)

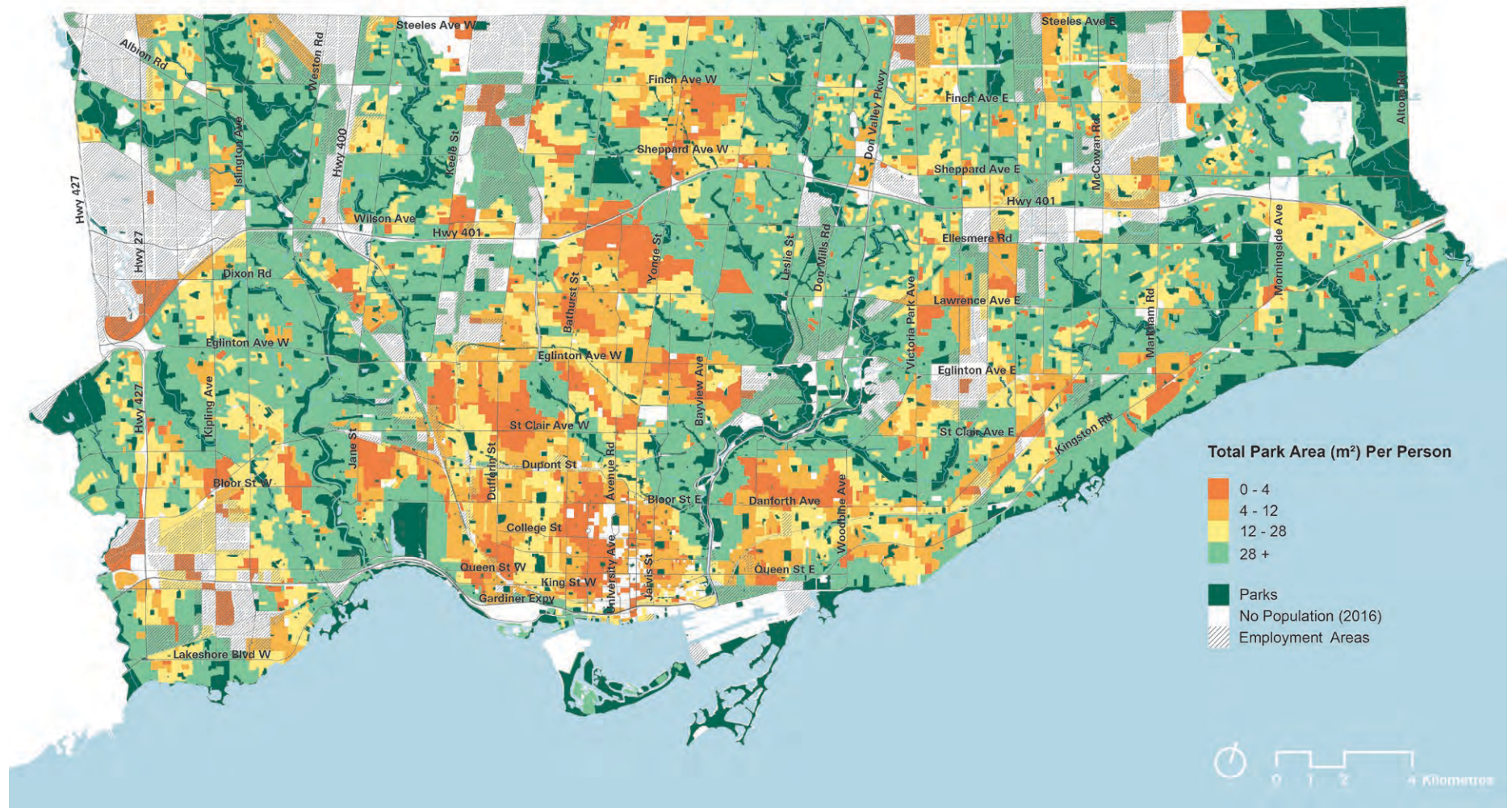


Figure 09 provides a snapshot and comparisons of the different provision ranges found across the city.

The parks within Toronto's vast ravine system provide a unique function and experience, primarily passive recreation and ecological services. However, ravine parks are also more difficult to reach safely because of limited access points due to topography and natural cover. While some parks located within Toronto's ravines (such as High Park, Earl Bales, and Sunnybrook parks) are accessible by foot, public transit, and car, and include a vast range of amenities and programming, these amenities are not typically

found in ravine parks. To assess a more locally-oriented parkland provision, a secondary analysis was conducted, where all parks within ravines (as defined by the City's Ravine and Natural Feature Protection By-Law limit) and Environmentally Significant Areas were removed from the park supply data. **Figure 10** illustrates that 69% of total park area is removed from the city, reducing parkland per person from 28 m² to 8.7 m². It is important to consider provision both with and without ravines, to better inform parks planning and where there may be gaps in programming and functionality.

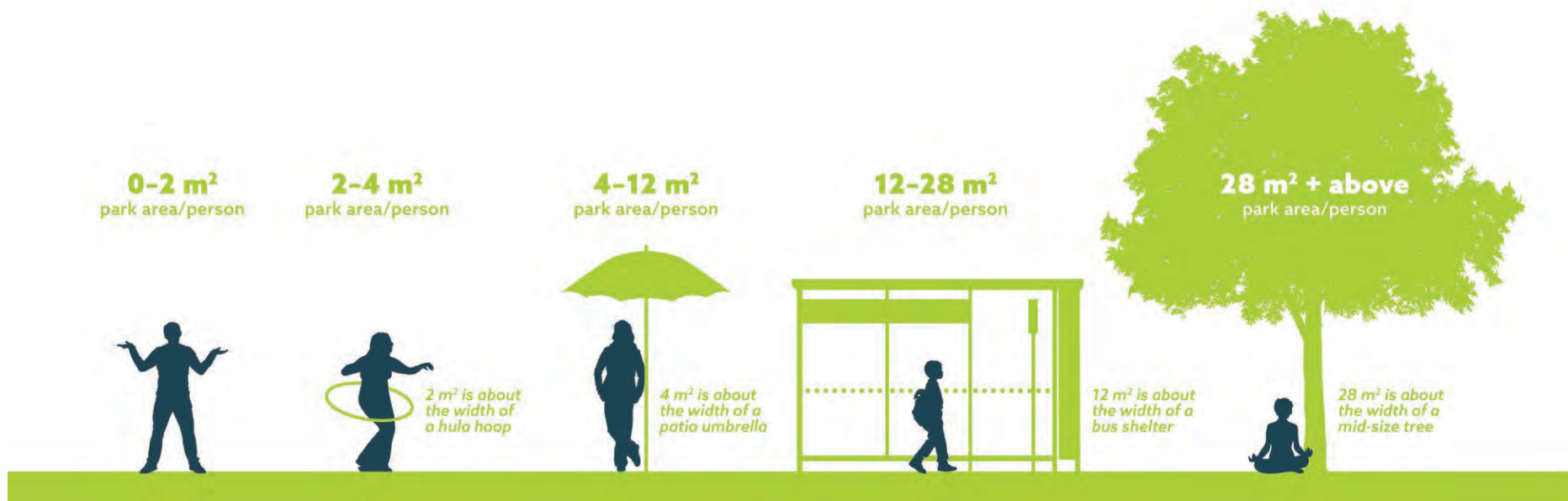
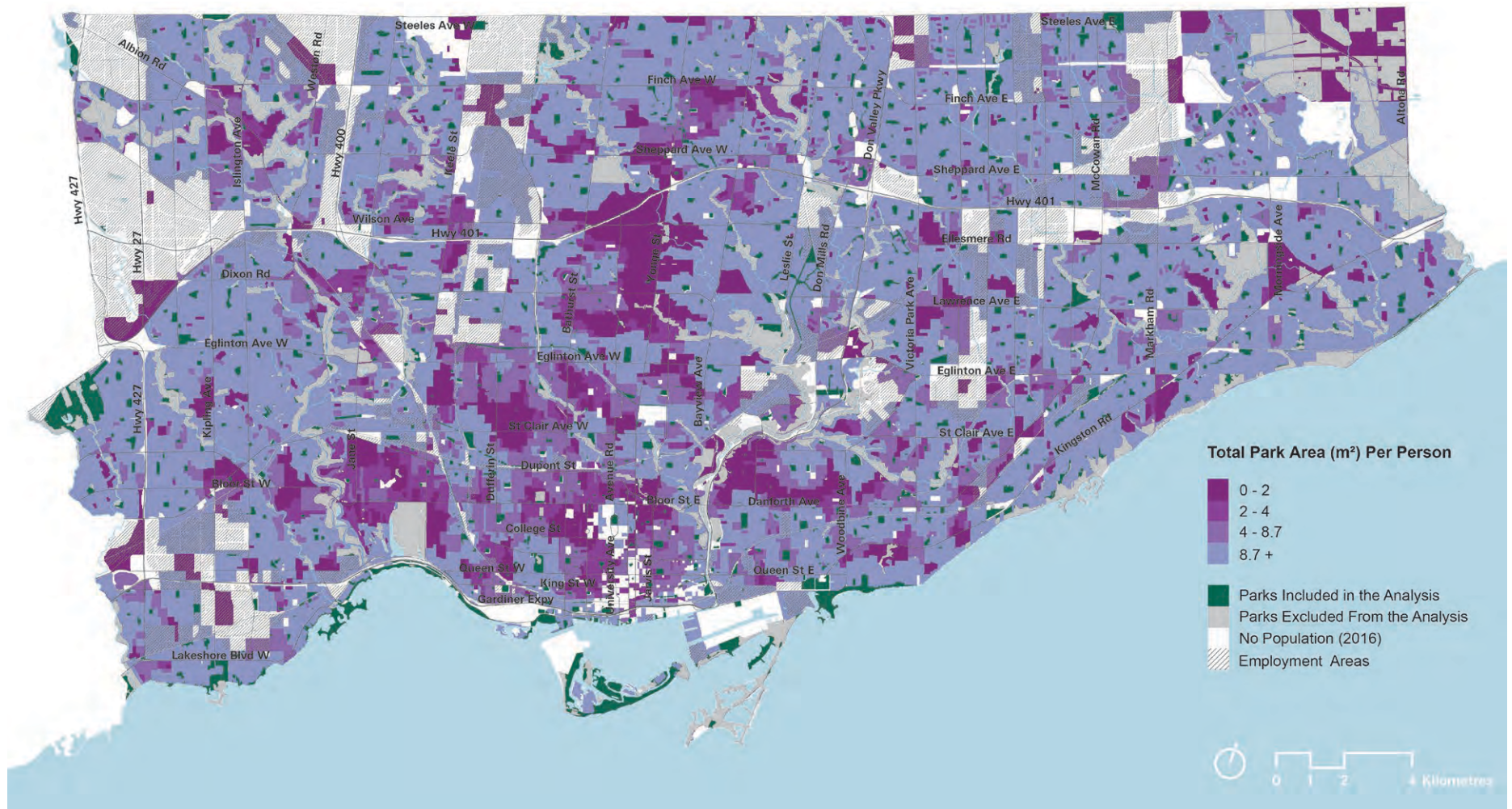


Figure 09: Toronto Parkland Provision Ranges

Figure 10: Parkland Provision with Ravines and Environmentally-Sensitive Areas Removed (2016)



Phase 1 Online Survey:
37% of survey
respondents reported not
having access to private
greenspace such as a
backyard.

The Impact of Growth

Toronto's population is growing. By 2041, Toronto's population is expected to grow to 3.4 million people, an increase of more than 500,000 people compared to today. The intensification required to support this population growth will place additional pressure on the capacity of the parks system to support these new residents. Population increase and density will decrease parkland provision across the city unless new parkland is acquired. Additionally, Toronto's workforce is anticipated to grow to 1.7 million, placing additional pressure on parks.

The future impacts on parkland provision were assessed using City Planning's development pipeline data. The development pipeline represents all active development projects for which applications have been submitted to the City. Though not all projects will be approved or built as proposed and new projects will be submitted, generally the development pipeline provides a gauge of where development will occur and where people are anticipated to live 15 years into the future.

Based on the development pipeline, if no new parkland is acquired, overall city-wide parkland provision is expected to decrease by 14% by 2033. The impact of estimated population has been mapped on **Figure 11** to identify where growth will have the greatest impact on parkland provision. The decrease in parkland provision is most evident in areas of high population growth. Many of these areas are already deficient in parkland and will continue to experience a decrease in parkland supply because of growth. However, the effects of declining parkland provision is also felt in adjacent residential areas. **Figure 11** shows that 87% of all census dissemination blocks will see a decrease in provision, with 17% of dissemination blocks having a pronounced decrease of 25% or greater due to nearby growth.

It is not only increased population that impacts parkland access and supply, but also how the city landscape is changing with the majority of growth occurring in a tall building form. Generally, development sites are decreasing in size and accommodating more intense developments. Even when the city's most intense growth areas, Downtown and Yonge-Eglinton, are excluded, this is a trend occurring throughout the city.

Percent Change in Parkland Provision 2016 - 2033

- > -50%
- 25% to -50%
- 10% to -25%
- 5% to -10%
- 0 to -5%
- < 0.1%

Parks
 No Population (2016)
 Employment Areas

0 1 2 4 Kilometres

Figure 12: Development Pipeline Site Sizes (Ha)*

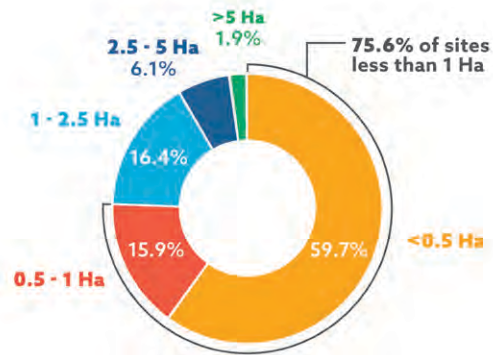


Figure 13: Concentration of Units/Ha by Access to Transit Type*

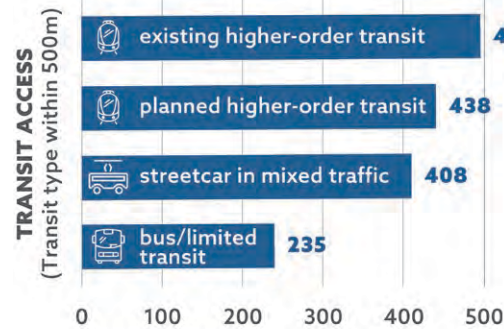
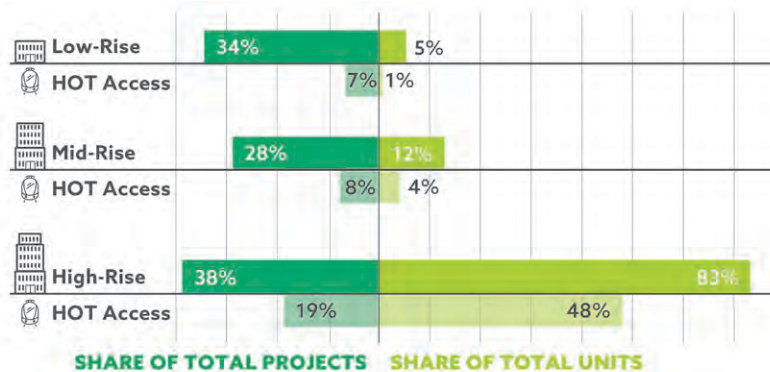


Figure 14: Development Intensity and Access to Higher-Order Transit*



*Excludes Downtown, Midtown, and Portlands

Key characteristics of the growth anticipated in the city include:

- » **Vertical development:** Toronto's additional population will be housed primarily in vertical form, with over 95% of new housing today being constructed in buildings greater than 5 storeys.
- » **A predominance of smaller development sites:** City-wide, approximately 60% of sites are less than 0.5 hectare (Figure 12), and more than three quarters of sites are less than one hectare.
- » **Development is concentrated where there is good transit access:** Over 50% of all units, and 33% of all projects are within 500 m of higher-order transit (HOT), such as subway or LRT in dedicated rights-of-way.
- » **A strong correlation between intensity of development and transit access:** On a unit per hectare basis, projects on existing higher-order transit have twice as many units as those with access to only bus lines or limited transit (Figure 13).
- » **A move to more intense building types:** 83% of all new units being proposed are in a tall building form (Figure 14).

This shift in development patterns is resulting in additional population having minimal or no private access to greenspace. This means more people will rely on the parks system to fulfill their outdoor needs. Population growth and changing demographic trends will result in greater use of existing parks, stressing their carrying capacity as they serve more people than they were originally intended or designed to.

Park Range and Distribution

The number, size, and shape of public parks has a direct bearing on the capacity to accommodate a range of recreation activities and needs. Toronto's parks system comprises over 1,500 parks, creating an extensive network of local and city-serving parks.

Gaps

There are gaps within the system that affect park supply. These issues can be generally expressed as gaps in park supply, size, and function. **Figure 15**, shows park supply within 500 metres (walking distance). Areas of low parkland supply experience a further decline in parkland provision with population growth.

As shown in **Figure 15**, some areas of the city have a lack of existing parkland within 500 metres walking distance. These areas of low parkland supply

experience a further decline in parkland provision with high population growth.

Larger Parks

Toronto's larger parks (5 hectares in size and above) are highly valued for the diversity of amenities and functions they can provide, however some areas of the city do not contain or have access to these large parks. **Figure 16** demonstrates the availability of City and Legacy parks (5 hectares and greater) across the city, and where gaps to access them exist.

Recreation Facilities

The city needs a full range of park sizes to accommodate programming. The **Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan** (FMP), adopted by City Council in November 2017, will guide investment in both outdoor and indoor parks and recreation facilities, such as community centres, swimming pools, sports fields, and arenas, over the next 20 years. The FMP is a plan to improve access to recreation by addressing gaps in facility provision; maintaining aging facilities in a state of good repair; and responding to future facility needs based on population growth, changing trends and increased demand.

A supply of parkland is critical to the successful implementation of the FMP. The FMP Implementation Strategy will identify facility needs in 5-year time-frames for the next 20 years. Some

More information on the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan can be found here:

www.toronto.ca/parks/facilitiesplan

Figure 15: Park Supply (2016)

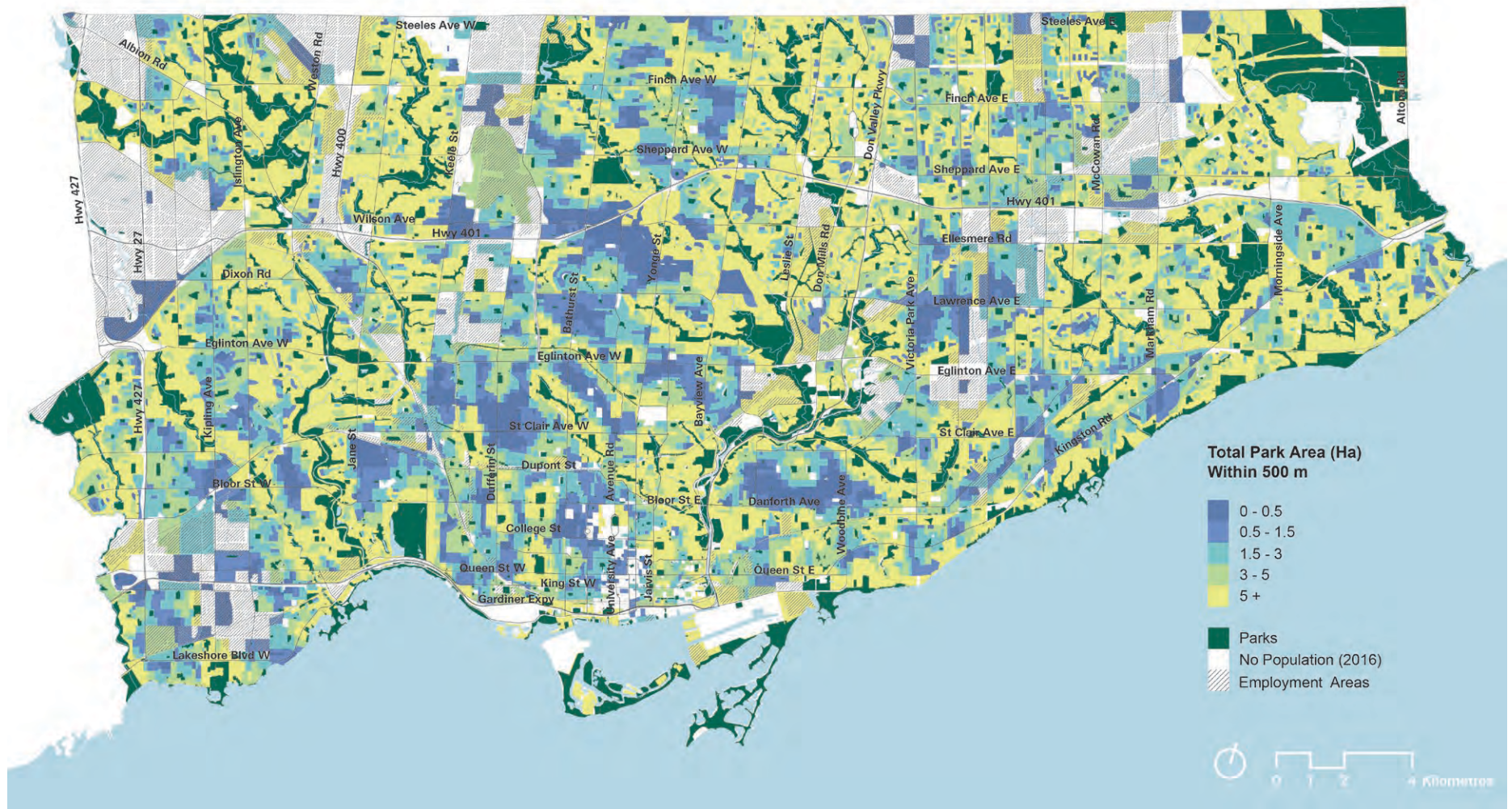
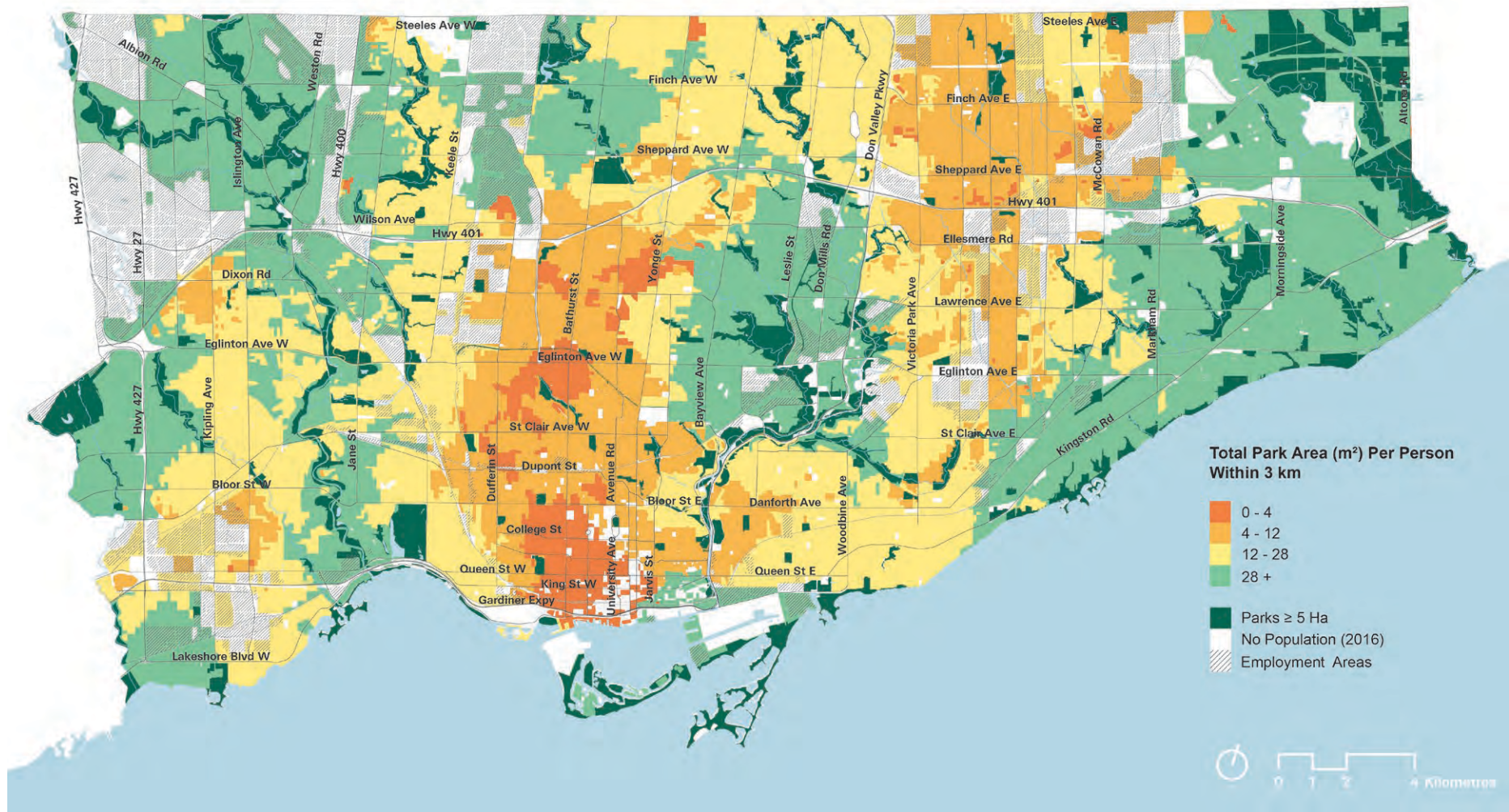


Figure 16: Parkland Provision of City and Legacy Parks (5 Ha and Greater) (2016)



recommendations will require using existing parkland and the acquisition of additional parkland to support recreational needs.

The FMP and the Parkland Strategy will be integrated to ensure that a balance of parkland uses is maintained as new facilities are constructed.

A streamlined and coordinated approach will be undertaken that is holistic in identifying parkland priorities for recreation facilities, informing geographic locations of facilities, and prioritizing opportunities for parkland acquisition. The Parkland Strategy supports the FMP through expanding available park space for recreation through acquisition but also through promoting improvements to existing parks.

Equity

Achieving equity in Toronto's parks system means addressing or removing systemic barriers so that all people have equal opportunity to the use and benefits from public services, facilities, and spaces. Parks can play a significant role in areas of need. It is important to note that equity means not only access to opportunities, but also equitable benefit from the City's parks system. Parks are for everyone, and park spaces need to be inclusive for all.

PFR has consulted and collaborated with a number of city divisions and key stakeholders to ensure the Parkland Strategy is reflective of equity in terms of considerations and objectives. This consultation has included outreach to Children Services, Equity Diversity and Human Rights, Social Development and Finance Administration, City Planning, and equity seeking and community organizations, has provided an equity lens on this analysis. Through this consultation with the public, stakeholders, and equity-seeking groups, the common barriers that were noted including low park supply, poor or no park access, and inequitable investment in park design and programming.

The Parkland Strategy has considered factors of equity across the parks system, including park supply, distribution and access, and how vulnerable populations may or may not enjoy access to the parks system based on these considerations. Quality is a significant issue in many areas of need, where parkland may be available but of low-quality and function. The identification of parkland need in this strategy has incorporated low income as a key factor in showing where more parkland is needed, to align investment to support communities comprised of equity-seeking groups (see **Figure 18** of page 45). "Include" is one of the key principles of this strategy, with a number of associated actions to begin to

address equity in Toronto's parks. Moving forward, these key partnerships can ensure that the City prioritizes these areas for future park improvements and plans to broaden standards in parks planning, implementation and design to bring the equity outcomes that will guide Toronto's future.

Access and Connections

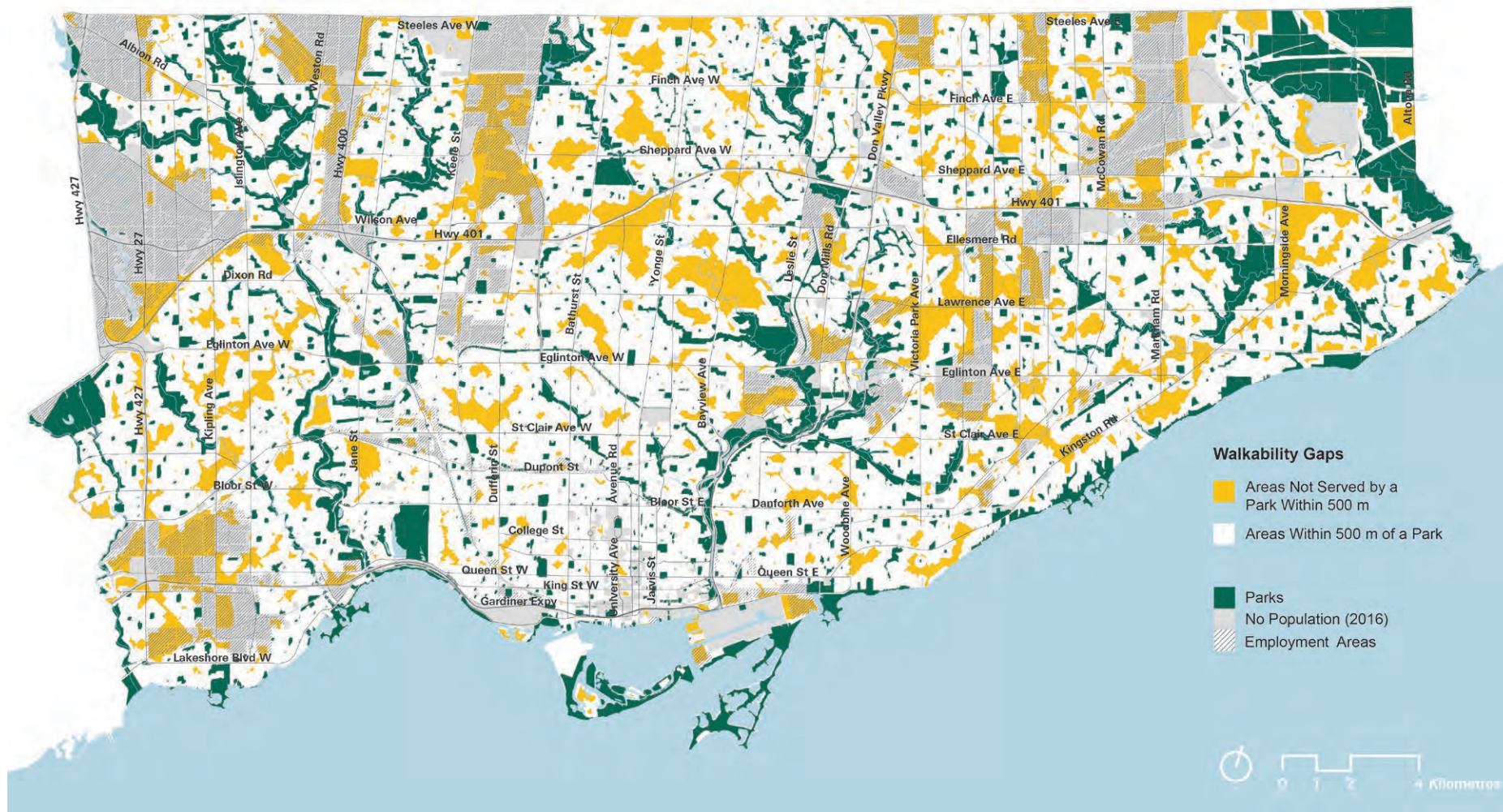
Many of Toronto's parks are well integrated into neighbourhoods and can be reached by foot, bike, transit, or private automobile. However, in many parts of the city walkable access to parks is limited by physical and natural barriers such as highways, railways, rivers, and ravine slopes. A successful parks and open space system should provide safe and effective routes for people to access travel between parks.

Post-war suburban areas of the city that largely developed after the 1950's generally have good overall supply of parkland. However, parkland in these areas is often difficult to access due to the prevalence of an auto-centric street network design. Those who do not have access to a private vehicle or cannot drive, have impeded opportunities to access and experience these parks. The distance from people's homes to their local parks also tends to be

greater in these communities than in more walkable denser neighbourhoods. This makes visiting parks less convenient.

Figure 17 shows those areas of the city where residents do not have access to parkland within walking distance (500 m or 5-10 minute walk) of their homes. Walkability has become an industry-standard park access measure. The ability for all residents to be able to comfortably and safely walk to a park, without the need of a vehicle, makes a parks system more accessible for everyone.

Figure 17: Walkability Gaps



Climate Change

Parks are an integral part of the city's green infrastructure that helps mitigate impacts of climate change while themselves being greatly impacted by climate change. Toronto, like other major urban centres, is vulnerable to the stresses and shocks associated with increased frequency and intensity from extreme weather events caused by climate change. As the impacts of climate change intensify, the infrastructure that the city depends on for urban and ecological services will be increasingly impacted.

In 2016, Toronto became a member city of 100 Resilient Cities, a network of one hundred cities around the world that have pledged to develop action plans to become more resilient. The City has also developed Toronto's Resiliency Strategy, launched in summer 2019, which sets out a vision, principles, and actions to help Toronto survive, adapt and thrive in the face of any challenge, particularly climate change and rising inequality.

Parks contribute to the city's resiliency. They provide a stormwater conveyance and management function by intercepting and absorbing water. Parks also play a role as microclimate adjusters, by reducing the impacts of Urban Heat Island (UHI), and improving air quality by filtering carbon and particulate matter from the atmosphere.

Availability of parkland to contribute to the city's green infrastructure is crucial for future resiliency against climate change. Toronto must continue to grow the parks system, and also design parks to specifically maximize their capacities for climate adaption and mitigation. Although parkland expansion, green infrastructure, and purposeful design has a cost, data indicates that the cost of doing nothing is much greater.

Toronto's Official Plan defines green infrastructure as: *Natural and human-made elements that provide ecological and hydrological functions and processes. Green infrastructure may include components such as natural heritage features and systems, parklands, stormwater management systems, street trees, urban forests, natural channels, permeable surfaces, and green roofs.*



THE STRATEGY: STRATEGIC ACTIONS

The Parkland Strategy will provide a framework to make informed decisions on how to expand, improve, and connect Toronto's parks system. It will ensure the system is inclusive for all Torontonians. There is not one-sized fits all solution to preserving, building and supporting Toronto's parks system. A multi-faceted approach is needed to ensure that the parks system is sustained, renewed, and expanded in the face of growth and increased demand for parks.

The Strategy sets out a series of actions to be undertaken, using the four guiding principles as a basic organizing framework. These actions identify what the City needs to focus on over the coming decades to not only reinforce the existing system, but also to ensure the system thrives as the city continues to grow and evolve.

Expand

A systems approach to expanding new parkland to support growth and address gaps is required to create a parks system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.

Objective: Ensure Toronto's system of parks expands as the city grows and evolves.

Expand Actions

Support Complete Communities through acquiring new parkland and expanding existing parks:

- » Advance implementation of parks and public realm plans in high-growth areas, such as the recently approved TOcore: Downtown Parks and Public Realm plan and Midtown in Focus Parks Plan.
- » Expand existing parks by acquiring and securing lands adjacent to existing parks and particularly in high-growth areas to improve programming potential and accommodate more use and activities.
- » Establish new or expansion of existing, multi-functional parks within walking distance of growth areas, areas of historical deficiencies, and within low income neighborhoods to support complete communities, address gaps, and create a connected and walkable parks system.

"Downtown parks please! If the downtown is to be a place for families, it needs more parklands."

Phase 2 Survey Response

“Let parks be parks... less emphasis on ‘animation’ and more on quality of space.”

Phase 2 Survey Response

- » Seize key opportunities to acquire and create new legacy parks over-time that will be powerful city-building moves and iconic open spaces that strengthen Toronto’s identity as a global, liveable city.
- » Continue to capitalize on the revitalization and regeneration areas occurring along the waterfront and the new, major park opportunities afforded by the revitalization.
- » Partner with the schools boards to expand and/or create new shared park/open space opportunities that would benefit both the City and the school boards in enhancing both the quality and quantity of park space accessible for community use.
- » Ensure that new neighbourhoods in both horizontal and vertical forms include new, high-quality parks to support residents and workers. These new parks should create community focal points to foster social interaction and active living and balance the amount of land set aside for streets, buildings and park.
- » Streamline parkland acquisition processes so that the City can be ready to act when new opportunities for parkland expansion arise.

Improve

The City must expand its parks system and it must also commit to improving existing parks, especially where land for acquisition is scarce. This is both practical, given the ever increasing cost of land, and critical to achieve high-quality parks that have the carrying capacity to support their use. In high-growth cities such as Toronto, parks must be high-quality and multi-functional to accommodate the needs of the diverse groups of users accessing the parks system.

Improvements to Toronto’s parks will lead to greater use of park spaces. Parks, Forestry and Recreation undertakes continuous improvement of parks across the city through regular capital planning and investment. The Parkland Strategy did not include a site-specific assessment of parks quality or condition, rather it recognizes that multi-functional and high-quality design is crucial for future park improvements to support the needs of the growing city, where parks act as prominent civic spaces as well as assets to the local community.

Improvements to existing parks is particularly important in low income communities where parks play a vital role in supporting quality of life and/or where access to private greenspace is limited. It is also important to improve parks in stable neighbourhoods that have historically had little-to-no revenues from growth-related tools to fund parkland

improvement. Investing in parks in these neighbourhoods, as well as in low income communities will ensure greater equity in the distribution of high-quality parks across the city.

Objective: Invest in park improvements in areas of need to support a range of functions and meet the changing needs of users.

Improve Actions:

- » Improve parks to enhance their prominence, comfort, accessibility, utility, safety, and quality of design in order to support changing parkland needs over time.
- » Design future parks to be flexible, high-quality, multi-functional, inclusive, durable, and inviting in all seasons, for stable neighbourhood areas, low income communities, and to support increasing intensity of use in growth areas.
- » Continue to advance existing Park Master Plans, including Humber Bay, Island, Centennial, Crombie Park and Eglinton Park.
- » Prioritize the development of master plans for larger parks that have intense use, have not had major capital investment, are in areas targeted for growth, areas near higher order transit, or are located within NIAs with high concentrations of children and seniors.
- » Recognize the interrelationship of parks within identified geographic/study areas and ensure that communities have access to a range of parks that

meet the three categories of park functionality: sport and play, passive and ecological, and community and civic.

- » Develop park design best practices to improve the resiliency of Toronto's parks and recognize the role that parks play in the broader resilience of the city.

Connect

Creating better connections to, and between both existing and new parks is an important part of creating a seamless parks system. In addition, connecting parks to other open spaces enables people to navigate to and through the entire parks and open space network. This initiative is crucial in all areas of the city, including suburban areas of the city where new connections will remove barriers caused by disconnected street networks, and in high-growth areas where improved connectivity to parks and open space will in effect serve to increase parkland provision.

Objective: Extend the park experience by connecting parks to each other and between other open spaces, to create a seamless public realm.

"Protecting natural areas and providing corridors between them should be top priority."

Phase 2 Survey Response

Consult with Indigenous Peoples to determine whether (and where) there are culturally significant spaces within the city that should be restored in spirit of reconciliation."

Phase 2 Survey Response

Connect Actions:

- » Improve connectivity through expansion of the City's Cycling Network Plan to create safe links between parks spaces that encourage exploration and physical activity.
- » Improve and integrate the design of streets and other city-owned land adjacent to parks to enlarge the feeling of park spaces and make the pedestrian experience more seamless, safer, and comfortable.
- » Pursue agreements with educational and other institutions to expand available open space resources for community use to create "win-win" partnerships that recognize school yards and other publicly owned open spaces as integral to the overall open space network.
- » Continue to improve the public realm (e.g. streets, publicly accessible spaces) where it serves to connect and complement the parks system and support an interconnected network of parks and open spaces.
- » Recognize the role and importance of parks in supporting biodiversity and as wildlife corridors, and help to contribute to that role.
- » Leverage transit and hydro-corridors as opportunities to improve connection and access to parks.
- » Work with the school boards to develop an improved and inter-connected park and open space system.

Include

Parks are for everyone. Removing barriers to Toronto's parks system, ensuring that parks and open spaces are inclusive spaces and accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities, and income levels across the city is a priority. Toronto is a diverse city, rich in culture and history, and the parks system should reflect that. Creating a sense of belonging and welcoming, along with implementing universally accessible design best practices in parks will encourage more people to make use of the parks system more often. Additionally, park design and programming should reflect the needs of local communities.

Place-making, by planning, designing and managing public spaces through a people-centered lens is important as it allows for the creation of more meaningful relationships between people and the place that they call home. Indigenous place-making looks different depending on the context of its surroundings and community. Each project is shaped uniquely by the communities interacting with it. By bringing Indigenous culture and tradition into the design and stewardship of our parks and public spaces, the City aims to ensure that our First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities can see themselves and their traditions reflected in the city around them.



Objective: The diversity of Toronto is reflected in its system of parks.

Include Actions:

- » Ensure Indigenous place-making is considered in park design, public art, and programming to celebrate the rich history and culture of Indigenous communities.
- » Include local communities and equity seeking groups in park planning processes to ensure that different social and cultural needs are reflected in new and improved park design.
- » Pursue partnerships with local communities, parks advocacy groups, and equity seeking groups to support programming opportunities that animate parks and provide space for events and festivals.
- » Seek out and pursue philanthropic contributions to add resources and contribute to creative place-making in parks in all areas of the city.



THE STRATEGY: IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

The Parkland Strategy provides directions and actions needed to build and enhance the city-wide parks system. It will support achieving the long-term growth objectives of Toronto's Official Plan and policies that recognize that parks are essential in planning for complete communities. This section will highlight priority setting tools that will guide Toronto's parks planning and decision-making.

Leveraging Opportunities to Enhance Toronto's Parks System

Some of the tools at the City's disposal have distinct roles and can only be used as directed through legislation. Moving forward, the use of the various tools, and processes that support them, need to be optimized to ensure effective and strategic parkland investment.

The City has a unique opportunity to provide additional parkland through the strategic management of its real estate assets. Through the creation of CreateTO, a broader city-building lens is being factored into the future re-use of the city's land assets. Leveraging these opportunities is essential given the rising cost and limited availability of land for parks and other city priorities.

In addition, the City has and will continue to partner with other land owners to leverage access to parks and open space. The school boards, colleges, and universities all have large public land holdings that can support additional community use and activity. For instance, the City recently completed a review of school sites that were being declared surplus by the Toronto District School Board. Some of the school sites have been identified by the City for park purposes, and the Land Acquisition Reserve Fund enables the City to act nimbly when the opportunity to acquire a surplus school property arises. Additionally, the City can partner with various public institutions with open spaces, such as universities, to increase public access and enjoyment of these open spaces, and has worked with public institutions to protect open spaces as part of any redevelopment projects advanced by the public institutions. The TRCA and the City of Toronto have a strong partnership, as both land owners and operators of Toronto's park system and will continue to work together on solutions to expanding, improving and connecting park space in the city. Addressing the pressures of growth and building connections to this system will improve parkland provision and access, and will ensure that generations of Torontonians will have the ability to experience nature close to home.

Identifying Parkland Priority Areas

Toronto's parkland need is significant and varies across the city. To support the acquisition and improvement of Toronto's park system, priority areas for parkland planning and acquisition have been identified in the city. Building on the six lenses of need noted previously, priority areas have been identified based on factors of:

- » Parkland provision (less than 12 m² per person in 2033)
- » Low park supply (less than 1.5 Ha total park space within 500 m in 2016)
- » Impact of growth (areas projected to have over 5,000 people/Ha in 2033)
- » Low income residents (25% or more of residents are low income in 2016)

Priority areas, as shown in **Figure 18**, highlights areas across the city where the city will focus and prioritize parks planning and acquisitions. More detailed, locally-oriented parks plans will be recommended in these high-priority areas (unless existing planning work, including secondary plans, is already underway), which will enable the City to take a strategic approach to acquisitions and improvements.

These parks plans should address:

- » The amount of locally-accessible parkland per person;
- » The range of park sizes and functions within an area;
- » Population change, demographic and social characteristics;
- » Estimated future development intensity including residential and employment populations;
- » Opportunities for new parkland or acquisitions that contribute to the city's system of parks and open spaces, with consideration for achieving a full range of parks;
- » Opportunities to leverage city-owned land for new parks and open spaces along with meeting other city-building priorities;
- » Potential improvements to parks and need for recreation facilities;
- » Natural features that should be protected and enhanced;
- » Opportunities to commemorate and celebrate Indigenous peoples or other cultures;
- » The potential to link parks and open spaces through new trails, bicycle infrastructure or public realm improvements;
- » The relationship between existing and potential new parks to the urban form and street network;

Priority areas indicate where there is low parkland provision, low park supply, high-growth, and a high percentage of low income residents.



"Parks should be created as first priority in areas with high densities and large concentrations of low income people."

Phase 1 Survey Response

- » Opportunities to use parks to create community focal points to provide places for community gathering and celebration, public art, heritage interpretation and cultural expression as well as recreational opportunities;
- » The potential for publicly-accessible open space to complement the provision of public parks by meeting some programmatic needs and to improve connectivity between elements of the parks and open space system; and
- » Prioritization of tools at the City's disposal and the development of an acquisition strategy to implement the local parks and open space framework.

Implementing the Parkland Strategy

Expanding and improving the parks system for current and future populations is an important task for the City of Toronto. The successful implementation of the Parkland Strategy requires us to commit to and work together to build Toronto's future parks system. This city-wide initiative will require a corporate commitment and collaboration between the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division, the City Planning Division, and other City Divisions such as Real Estate Services, Facilities Management, Transportation Services and Toronto Water.

Partnerships with CreateTO, Waterfront Toronto, Metrolinx, TRCA, and the school boards can provide new opportunities for parkland through major City-building and planning initiatives. Community groups, "friends of parks" groups, equity-seeking organizations, and individuals can contribute to better planning and design for a parks system that is inclusive and reflects Toronto's diversity.

The development industry has a role in the provision of new parkland in partnership with the City. Dedication, design, and construction remains a potential outcome of the development process even in the face of legislative change affecting parkland requirements.

Parkland Assessment Tool

Currently, investment in parkland acquisition is informed by parks provision mapping, and by the availability of funding. The Parkland Strategy has created an assessment tool (Figure 19) that supports more strategic acquisition opportunities when the City is in a position to consider whether a site or sites should be acquired for parkland purposes. The tool uses the principles as well as the factors of parkland need as criteria; and is used to assess and inform the viability and value of all forms of acquisition. This assessment tool for parkland acquisition provides clarity to staff and City Council on the priorities for new parkland, and will help to ensure that evaluations are conducted fairly, transparently and consistently.

Figure 19: Parkland Assessment Tool

PRIMARY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA			
EXPAND + INCLUDE	Is the site in a parkland priority area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the site suitable for parkland purposes (e.g. size, shape, and utility)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the site improve connectivity to other parks and open spaces?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		If all criteria are answered YES, Proceed to Secondary Assessment Criteria	If any criteria are answered NO, Do Not Acquire
SECONDARY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA			
EXPAND	Does this address a park range gap in the area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the site located within an area with a high number of employees, students, or tourists?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Is the value of the acquisition reasonable relative to the number of people who would benefit?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
IMPROVE	Can the site accommodate an FMP facility?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CONNECT	Is the site within 500 m of transit access?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
INCLUDE	Is the site located in an area with a high percentage of low income residents?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Does the site have cultural significance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		If a majority of criteria are answered YES, Recommend for Acquisition	If a majority of criteria are answered NO, Do Not Acquire

Figure 20: Metrics to Measure Success

Strategy Principle	Metric	Units
Expand	Park area per person	m ²
Expand	Amount of new parkland acquired	Ha
Expand	Total land area attribute to parkland	% Coverage
Connect	Number of residents within a 500 m walk of a park	Number of People
Connect	Total park area that is within 500 m of a high order transit stop, or active transportation network	Hectares
Improve	Total public spending on parks per resident	CAD \$ per resident
Improve	Visitation counts at selected parks	Number of people by time period
Improve	Parks plans developed	Number of parks plans
Include	Amount of money invested in NIAs and low income areas	CAD \$
Include	Average number of hours of weekly programming at selected parks	Number of hours

Measuring Success

To measure the effectiveness of the Parkland Strategy, indicators have been identified to monitor progress. These indicators will be measured over the next five years and included in a progress report-back. **Figure 20** outlines metrics that have been grouped based on the Strategy's four principles, and will guide the Parkland Strategy's monitoring and review process.

APPENDIX

The Appendix contains technical background to the Parkland Strategy's Park Catchment Tool.

Park Catchment Tool – Assumptions

The following assumptions were used in applying the Park Catchment Tool:

1. City-owned or operated parkland is included in the overall parkland supply of a dissemination block when they can be accessed by sidewalks, pathways, and local streets.
2. Dissemination blocks are treated as though population density is constant throughout the entire reporting unit.
3. To capture the effect of private property acting as a physical barrier to park access, sidewalks, pathways, and local streets are not used in the analysis if they are more than 20 metres away from the edge of a park. The distance of 20 metres was selected as a logical separation distance but does not represent average or median lot depth.
4. As comprehensive park entrance data was not available at the time of release of this report, the Park Catchment Tool accounts for steep slopes along the edges of parks to more accurately reflect how people access parkland. Some parks, especially those within ravines, have steep slopes on one or more edges which limits access. To recognize this limited access, park boundaries that have a slope greater than 45% have been treated as inaccessible, resulting in some parks having smaller catchment areas.



CITY-OWNED OR OPERATED PARKLAND



POPULATION DENSITY



DISTANCE TO SIDEWALK



ACCESS ON SLOPES

Statistics Canada – Range of Census Dissemination Blocks within Toronto

Toronto's Dissemination Blocks	2016	2033
Total Number	12,615 (total)	
	11,014 (with population)	
Average size (ha)	5	
Average Population	248	302
Highest Population	7,607	13,142
Lowest Population	0	0

