

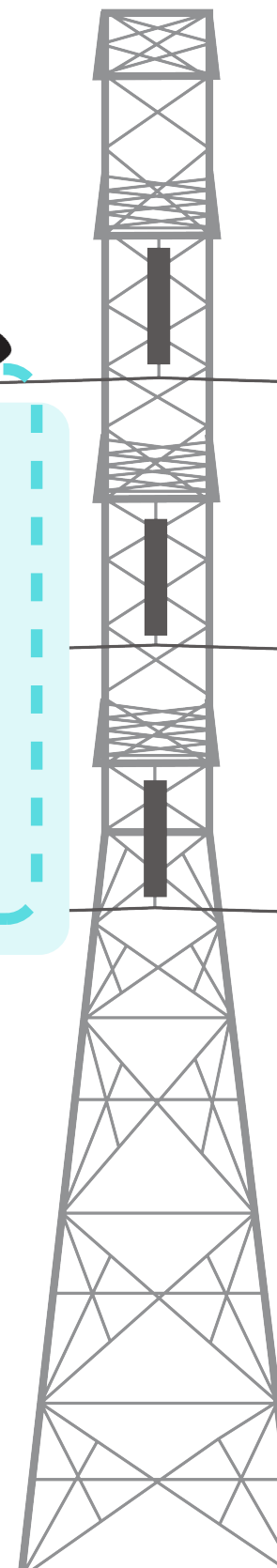


Green Line Implementation Geary Avenue Park Expansion

What We Heard

Phase 1 – Concept Plan Options

October 2020



Executive Summary

The City of Toronto is proceeding with plans for the implementation of the Green Line, starting with the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. This report summarizes the feedback received over the summer of 2020 on the Concept Plan Options for the Geary Avenue Park Expansion.

In response to COVID-19 public health guidelines, Parks, Forestry and Recreation held their first online community meeting to discuss this park which was attended by 75 community members. The meeting was followed by an online questionnaire that received nearly 120 submissions, as well as a family-friendly activity book, and email communications with the project team. We heard the following key messages from the community about what is important to them.

Participants identified a number of park features as very important:

Green Spaces that include shade trees, meadows, pollinator species and preserving large open lawn areas in the future park.

Accessible Pathways which were important to **more than 75% of respondents**, with support for sustainable materials.

Streetscape Improvements such as new trees, seating, and bike parking.

Lighting to provide a sense of security to enjoy the park after dark.

Participants identified other park features as important:

Seating that offers a variety of comfortable and durable options to enhance vibrancy in the park.

Community Gathering Space is an important use to be included.

An **Off-Leash Area** performs an important role to separate uses, while its size and location need to balance other park uses.

Indigenous Peoples should be recognized through Indigenous place-making elements such as the narrative in the path markings and other features.

Consider Public Art for future phases of the park.

This feedback and the additional details provided in this document will help shape the Preferred Concept Plan for the Geary Avenue Park Expansion, on which the City will consult with communities again in Fall 2020.

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This meeting summary report was prepared by LURA Consulting, independent facilitator and consultation specialists for the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. If you have any questions or comments regarding the report, please contact either:

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1 Introduction

The Green Line is a proposed linear park system in an active hydro-electric corridor that will connect neighbourhoods and expand the broader open space network in midtown and west Toronto. Following the completion of an implementation plan for the entire 5-kilometre long park system ([read the Green Line Implementation Plan](#)), the City of Toronto has begun the implementation process through the design and consultation on an expansion to Geary Avenue Park near Dovercourt Road and Geary Avenue.

The two parcels of land on the west and east sides of Dovercourt Road, south of Geary Avenue, and north of the Canadian Pacific rail line are included in the scope of this project, as well as the sidewalk along the south side of Geary Avenue between Salem Avenue North and Delaware Avenue North¹. These lands are located beneath an active hydro corridor owned by the province, operated by Infrastructure Ontario and managed by Hydro One Networks Incorporated (Hydro One). As a result, the design of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion must be approved by Hydro One in accordance with their guidelines on secondary uses in hydro corridors. [Read Hydro One's Secondary Land Uses guidelines](#).

The following summary documents the feedback received during the Concept Plan Options phase of consultation on the design of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion.



Figure 1. Rendering of Geary Avenue Park west of Dovercourt Road.

¹ Future improvements to the streetscape along Geary Avenue will be managed by the City of Toronto's Transportation Services division through a separate process.

2 What We Heard

This summary is organized by general park elements that participants identified as important (Section 2.3), and features in the plan for refinement and improvement (Section 2.4). Additional feedback differentiating the Concept Plan Options is included in Section 2.6 and 2.7. Feedback documented in the following section represents groups of similar comments received through the engagement process.

This feedback will be used by the landscape architecture team to refine the concept plan working to incorporate elements that were strongly supported, address areas of improvement, and incorporate additional ideas where possible.

A list of the questions from the online questionnaire is included in **Appendix A**.

2.1 Intended Park Uses

Participants identified broadly how they planned to use the new park, including uses such as walking, sitting, using the lawn, enjoying lunch/coffee, exercising (for humans and pets), learning about pollinator plants, and meeting with friends. Participants also identified the top activities they would do most in the park - travelling on the paths, eating lunch/drinking a coffee, and relaxing on the lawn.

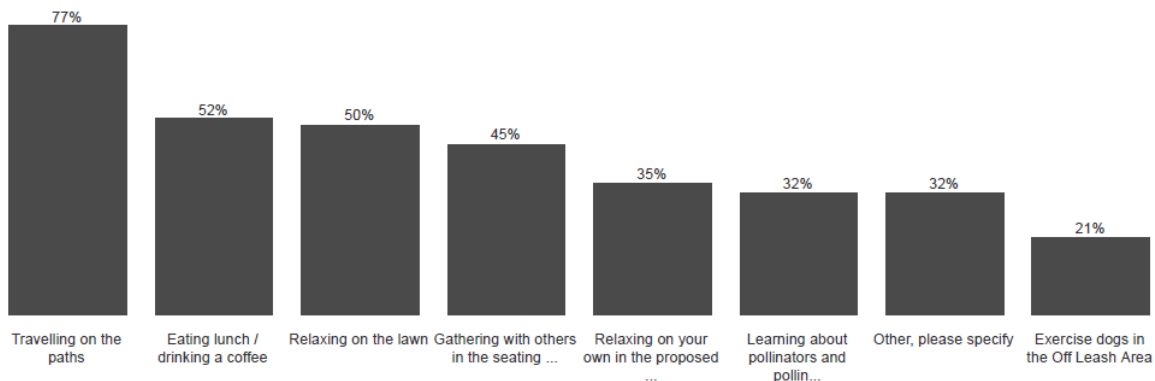


Figure 2. Activities participants saw themselves doing in the expanded Geary Avenue Park.

2.2 Ways People Will Access the Park

Over 90% of participants indicated they would travel to the park by walking or cycling (Figure 4).

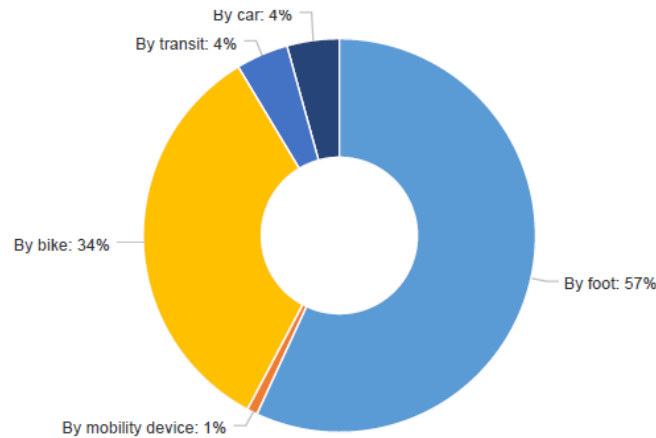


Figure 3. Participants indicated they are most likely to visit the park on foot or by bike

2.3 Important Concept Plan Elements

Participants provided feedback on what elements were most important in the park concept plans. The most important elements were:

- Trees and meadows.
- Accessible pathways.
- Streetscape improvements.
- Lighting.

In addition, seating and Open Lawn Areas were also recognized as important. Placemaking and off-leash areas received mixed levels of support. The following section provides more feedback highlights related to each of these important concept elements.

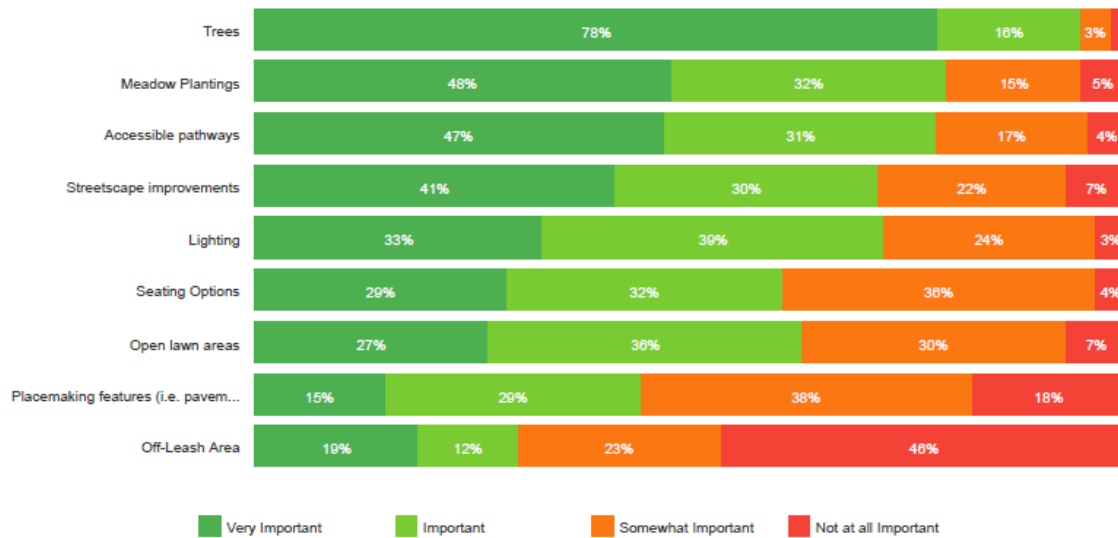


Figure 4. Responses to questionnaire question regarding which design features are important to participants' households.

2.3.1 Trees and Meadow Plantings

- Over 80% of participants indicated trees and meadow plantings are important aspects of the park designs.
- Meadow plantings were well supported overall for their ecological role supporting pollinator species and for the beauty they add to the space.
- Fruit trees that can be harvested by community members were requested.
- Participants requested that efforts be made to maximize shade, acknowledging Hydro One does not permit structures or tall trees (more than 4 m. height) within the Hydro Corridor.

2.3.2 Open Spaces

- Over 60% of participants indicated open spaces are important.
- Open lawn spaces should maximize the size of open space to provide flexible opportunities for community use.
- Participants identified potential uses of the open space for community events, play, and informal gathering.
- Additional play features such as ping pong tables were suggested for consideration.
- Some non-permitted uses in the hydro corridor such as a skate park were requested.

2.3.3 Accessible Pathways

- More than 75% of respondents identified accessible pathways as an important feature of the park concepts.

- The width of the path and sustainability of path material were identified as areas to reconsider for the next plan revision (additional detail provided in Section 2.4.1).
- Pathways should balance access with maximizing green space for flexible use.

2.3.4 Seating and Site Furnishings

- Over 60% of participants indicated new seating is important.
- The quantity of seating options in all of the Concept Plan Options were well-supported.

Some suggestions participants made related to seating included:

- Creating a range of seating options for different uses (solo or group seating) and abilities.
- Providing picnic tables and other convenient places to sit and eat.
- Distributing seating throughout the site to provide a range of views and options to enjoy the sun or shade at different points during the day/seasons.
- Ensuring that seating should be welcoming to all park users and avoid unnecessary barriers, while meeting accessibility design codes.
- Using low maintenance, preferably wood or other natural materials, in seating construction.

2.3.5 Streetscape Improvements and Lighting

- Over 70% of participants identified streetscape improvements and adequate lighting as important.
- Bike parking was identified as a useful feature to encourage cycling to the park and other destinations along Geary Avenue.
- Additional feedback on out-of-scope improvements to Geary Avenue are included in Section 2.5.

2.4 Design Features to Refine or Improve

The following features and park elements in the concept plan options were identified by some participants as requiring additional thought or improvement by considering:

2.4.1 Pathway Width and Location

- Consider reducing the path width to preserve more green space.
- Consider location of paths to retain green lawn areas for flexible use

2.4.2 Place-making

- Use the pavements markings in the concept plans to better highlight the significance of the area to Indigenous Peoples, immigrant community histories, native plant species, the railway, and industry.

- Consider adding public art in future phases of park development that is representative of the diversity of the neighbourhood.
- Artistic opportunities could allow participants to interact actively with art rather than only passively observing it.

2.4.3 Off-Leash Area (OLA)

Participants identified a mix of views about the option to include an Off-Leash Area (OLA). Overall, close to 70% of respondents indicated an OLA is somewhat or not important to them (Figure 5)

When asked whether they support the two OLA options shown in the plans, 32% of respondents further identified that they do not support creating an OLA in the park regardless of size and location. The remaining 68% of participants expressed support for either OLA Option A (45%) or OLA Option B (23%) (Figure 6).

Participants indicated that that size and location of an OLA is important to them. Overall, 45% of participants preferred the size and location of OLA Option A (Figure 6), this was reinforced by over 50% of participants indicating that OLA Option B is too large (Figure 7). Additional feedback helped elaborate on questionnaire participant's perspectives on an OLA:

- In both OLA options, 18% to 19 % of participants indicated an OLA is not needed, with the remainder of participants providing feedback on the size of the OLA (Figure 7).
- Comparing OLA Option A and OLA Option B, over half of participants identified OLA B as too large (Figure 7).
- Participants identified that creating an Off-Leash Area should balance the needs of various park users.
- Off Leash Area should be fenced to separate this use from other users in the park.
- Consider adding more features for dogs in the off-leash area, such as features that dogs can run through, climb on, or jump from.

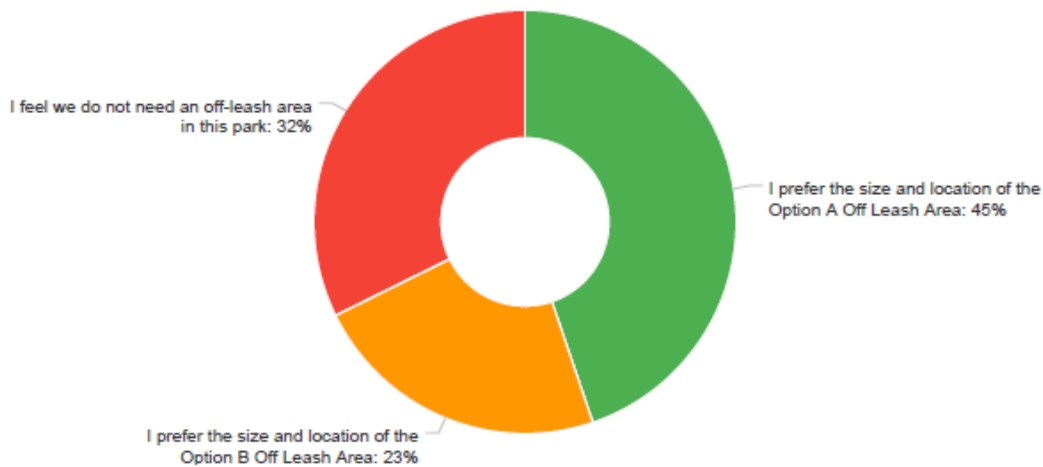


Figure 6. More participants demonstrated a preference to include an OLA.

The Off Leash Area (OLA) in this design is _____

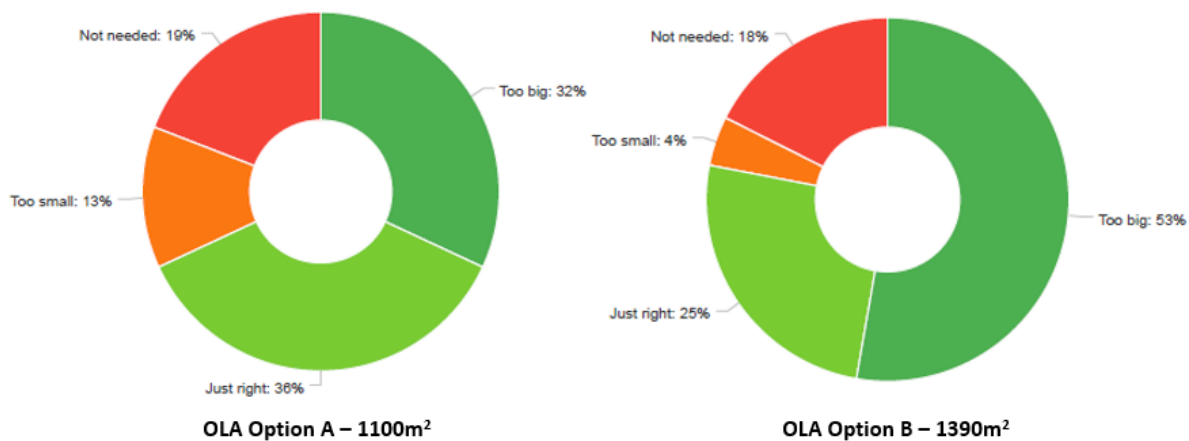


Figure 5. Comparing Perspectives on the size of the Off-Leash Area proposed in Option A and Option B.

2.5 Out of Scope Questions and Comments

Question: What about including bridges crossing streets that run north-south through the Green Line?

Answer: Bridges were proposed during the Green Line Design Competition and featured in the initial stages of the Master Plan, however they were ultimately removed from consideration because Hydro One would not permit them.

Question: Are you including playground improvements to the existing Geary Avenue Park?

Answer: Playground improvements in Geary Ave. Park are planned pending approval in the 2021 Capital Budget. Playground improvements will be done as a separate project, with community consultation.

Question: Will you include a community garden?

Answer: Establishing a community garden requires a separate process that must be initiated by a committed community garden group who apply to the City's Community Garden program and must be reviewed and approved. To learn more visit the [City's Community Gardens webpage](#).

Traffic calming. Participants provided feedback on traffic calming improvements located in Geary Avenue the right-of-way including speedbumps, bump-outs, stop signs, and painted crossings at intersections. Though not covered in the scope of this project, this feedback has been provided to Transportation Services.

2.6 Geary Avenue Park West Concept Plan Options Feedback

The following feedback was received on the concept plan options for the portion of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion located west of Dovercourt Road and south of Geary Avenue. This feedback was received through the virtual community meeting and the online questionnaire. Overall, participants preferred the balance of uses created by Option 2A Boomerang Pathway and OLA Option A.



Option 1 - Ribbon Pathway



Option 2A - Boomerang Pathway + OLA Option A (1100 m2)



Option 2B - Garden Room + OLA Option B (1390 m2)

Figure 6. Concept Plan Options for Geary Avenue Park west of Dovercourt Road

2.6.1 Option 1 – Ribbon Pathway

- Path divides the lawn into spaces that are too small for uses such as frisbee, ball sports, and larger community events.

- Balancing the amount of meadow and open space should also consider current uses of the space (which is an empty field in the active hydro corridor and not permitted for public use by Hydro One) and how these would be accommodated into the new park.

2.6.2 Option 2A – Boomerang Pathway and OLA Option A

- The straighter pathway in this option creates a more flexible open lawn area.
- OLA size in Option A provides a better balance of uses in the park.

2.6.3 Option 2B – Garden Room and OLA Option B

- The OLA size in Option B takes away too much space from shared park features such as the open lawn and meadows.

2.7 Geary Avenue Park East Concept Plan Options Feedback

The following feedback was received on the concept plan options for the portion of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion located east of Dovercourt Road and south of Geary Avenue. This feedback was received through the virtual community meeting and the online questionnaire. Overall, participants preferred the destination created by the meadows and seating in Option 1 Knot Pathway but suggested that the amount of paved area be reduced.



Figure 7. Concept Plan Options for Geary Avenue Park east of Dovercourt Road

2.7.1 Feedback on Option 1 – Knot Pathway

- Seating near the meadows is pleasant and would provide visual interest.
- Side path introduces more paved areas that should be avoided.
- Pathway through the meadow helpful to bring people towards flowers they can enjoy.

2.7.2 Feedback on Option 2 – Circuit Pathway

- Meadow plantings should be used strategically around the pathway to make walking enjoyable by providing visual interest and seasonal change.

3 How We Engaged

Due to COVID-19 and following the recommendations of Toronto Public Health, community engagement on the Concept Plan Options was conducted using a mix of digital and print media to ensure appropriate physical distancing requirements were met.






3.1 Communication Methods

Printed Media: Project information was displayed on eight (8) notice boards placed on City-owned property in the existing Geary Avenue Park and Bartlett Parkette, and the future sites of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. These notice board provided information about the project, the date and how to join the virtual community meeting, and information on how to access additional project information on the Green Line website. Notices of the virtual meeting were also incorporated in the local Councillor's newsletters leading up to the virtual meeting.

Social Media and Digital Ads: The City of Toronto used its Facebook and Twitter accounts to promote the virtual community meeting and online questionnaire from June 23rd, 2020 to July 25th, 2020. The unique project hashtag #GreenLineTO was used to categorize and promote information on social media. Additional social media outreach was supported by LURA Consulting and DTAH's Twitter accounts.

Project Webpage: The City's website acted as a communications portal to inform the public about the Green Line Implementation Plan. A landing page, <http://toronto.ca/greenline>, hosted all information regarding the project including general information, project updates, a link to the online questionnaire, and an option to subscribe for plan related e-updates.

Project Promotional Video: A short promotional video was created to provide information about the Green Line and the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. The video included details on how to learn more about the project and invited viewers to the virtual community meeting. The video was shared through the City's YouTube channel.

Outreach Method	Outreach Activities	Reach
Project Webpage 	<p>A dedicated webpage was developed within the City of Toronto's website to act as an integrated platform for all project related information. Through the webpage, interested people could also subscribe to receive updates and information about the project.</p>	Reached <i>Data unavailable</i>
Mail Outs 	<p>A flyer advertising the online meeting and website was delivered to 5,000 addresses in the neighbourhood</p> <p>The virtual meeting notice was included in the local Councillor's newsletters leading up to July 7th 2020 virtual meeting.</p>	Reached Over 5,000
Posters 	<p>Posters displaying information about the virtual community meeting were placed in key locations near Geary Avenue Park.</p>	Reached <i>Data unavailable</i>
YouTube 	<p>A short promotional video was created to provide information about the Green Line and the date of the virtual community meeting.</p> <p>The July 7 virtual public meeting was archived on the City's YouTube Channel to view following the online event.</p>	Reached 531 Reached 13
Social Media 	<p>The virtual community meeting and online questionnaire were promoted through the City of Toronto's Facebook and Twitter accounts with additional outreach support from DTAH and LURA.</p>	Reached Over 28,000
Total Reached		Over 33,000

3.2 Engagement Methods

Community consultation on the Geary Avenue Park Expansion engaged members of the local community as well as individuals interested in the development of the Green Line.

3.2.1 Virtual Community Meeting

The community meeting was held virtually using WebEx Events on July 7th, 2020 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event began with a presentation from DTAH (the landscape architecture consultants), which was followed by a Question and Answer period. Participants were invited to pose their questions and comments in the meeting chat box. Questions were read out loud and answered by members of the project team.

The presentation slides and a recording of the presentation were made available online following the meeting for review. [Access the virtual meeting presentation](#) on the City's webpage or [check out the entire meeting on the City's YouTube channel](#).

3.2.2 Online Questionnaire:

An online questionnaire was made available on the City's project webpage from July 7th, 2020 to July 25th, 2020. The online questionnaire presented a series of questions asking participants for their feedback on the concept plan options presented in the virtual meeting. The online questionnaire was accompanied by a copy of the presentation slides and the option to watch the recording of the Virtual Community Meeting which were posted on the City's project webpage.

Questionnaire Demographics

Participants from the online questionnaire were asked to provide demographic information to better understand who was participating and whether particular groups in the community were missed as part of this engagement phase. Of note, participants were predominantly white (69% of respondents) and homeowners (61% of respondents).

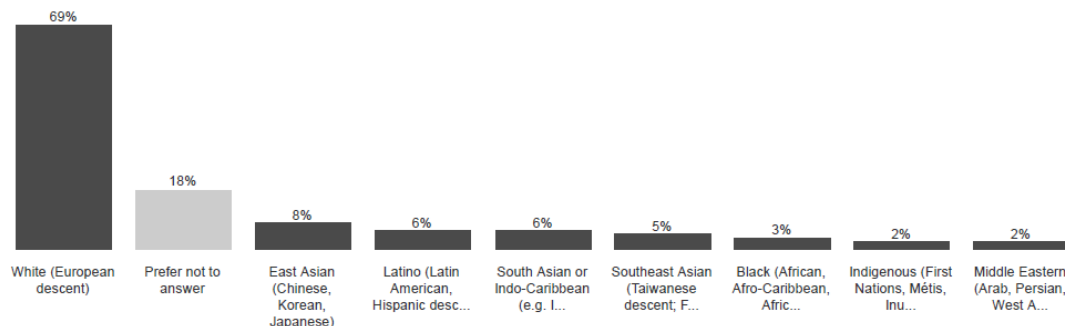


Figure 8. Racial background of questionnaire respondents

A list of the questions from the online questionnaire is included in **Appendix A**.

3.2.3 Towers and Flowers Activity Book:




An activity book was developed as a family-friendly way to learn about the Green Line and provided feedback on how young people and families might use the new park spaces as part of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. The booklet contains information about the hydro corridor, pollinators, and the importance of ecological connectivity. The

workbook was made available on July 7th, 2020.

[Access the Towers and Flowers Workbook](#) on the City's Green Line webpage.

3.2.4 Email

In addition to attending meetings and completing the questionnaire, participants were invited to communicate via email to Nancy Chater, the City's Senior Project Coordinator leading this project (nancy.chater@toronto.ca).

Engagement Method	Engagement Activities	Engagement Reach
Virtual Community Meeting 	A virtual community meeting was held on July 7 th , 2020 to present the concept plan options for the Geary Avenue Park Expansion, answer questions, and gather feedback from community members on the designs.	Engaged 75
Online Questionnaire & Email 	An online questionnaire was developed to gather detailed feedback on participant's impressions of the Concept Plan Options presented at the virtual public meeting.	Engaged 118
Towers and Flowers Activity Book 	The Towers and Flowers workbook was developed as a family-friendly activity booklet to learn about the Green Line and provided feedback on how young people and families might use the new park spaces as part of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion.	Engaged 2
Total Engaged		195

4 Next Steps

The feedback received through Phase 1 will be used to inform the development of a Preferred Concept Plan. The preferred Concept Plan will consider the feedback on the various concept plan options to create one plan for the west and east portions of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion. As with the concept plan options, the preferred concept plan will be developed with mindfulness to Hydro One's technical design guidelines, which may limit the inclusion of certain park features and their placement in the park.

The City of Toronto will return to the community to consult on the design of the Preferred Concept Plan in Fall 2020, on November 4th at 6:30 p.m.

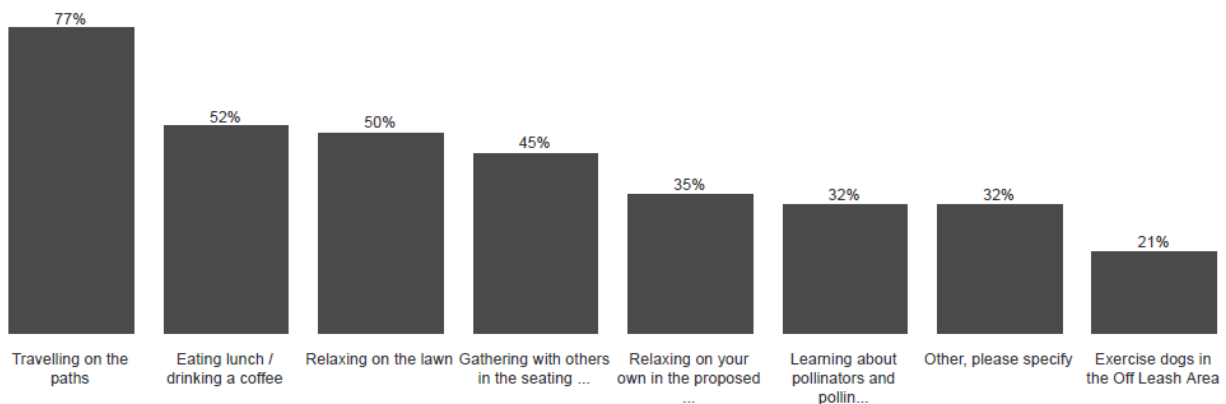
To be notified about upcoming consultations for the Geary Avenue Park Expansion please sign up for email updates at toronto.ca/greenline.

Appendix A – Online Questionnaire and Questions

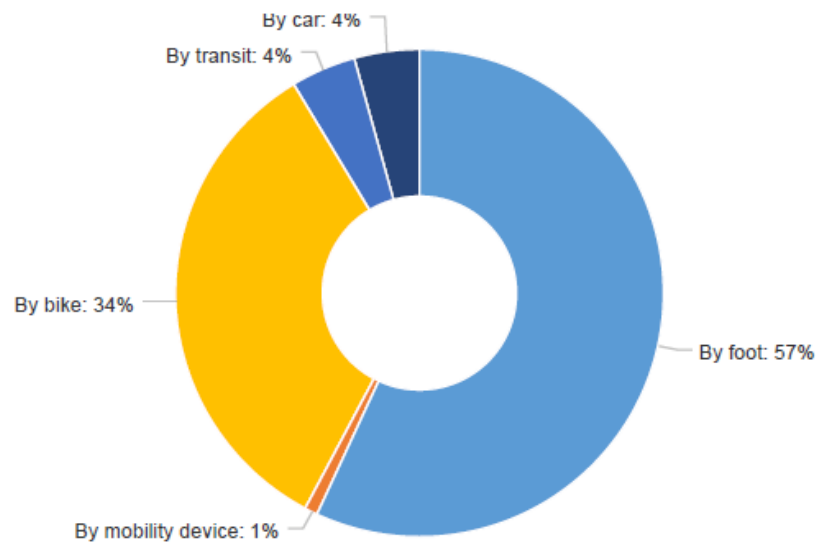
Online Questionnaire Results

SECTION 1: GENERAL PARK DESIGN QUESTIONS

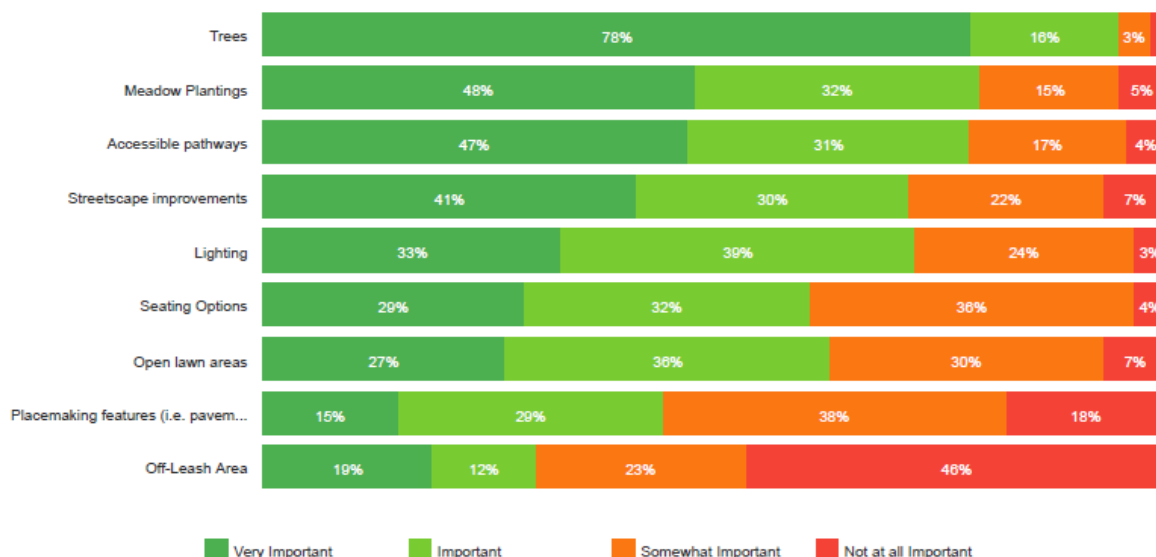
1. What activities do you see yourself doing most often at the park? (Select All That Apply)



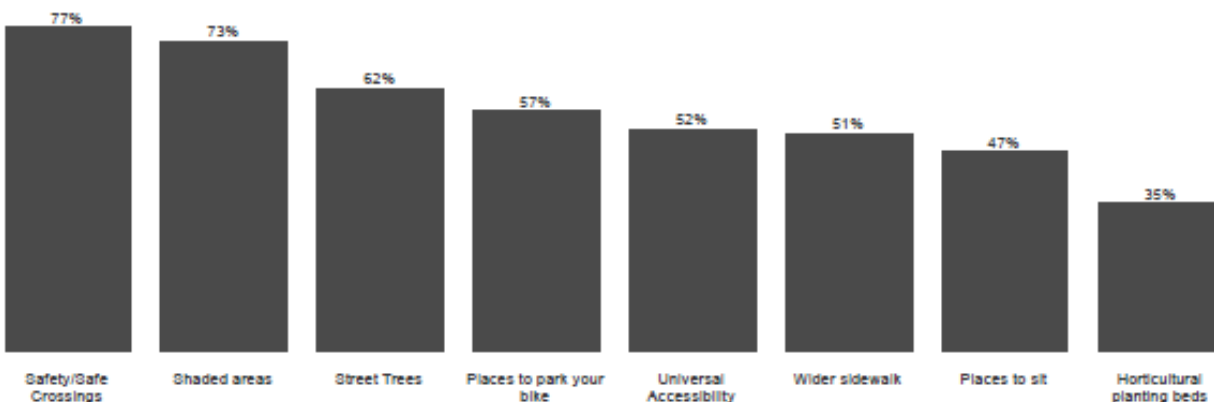
2. How will you be getting to the park most of the time?



3. How important are each of the following design features to you and your household in the new Geary Avenue park space:

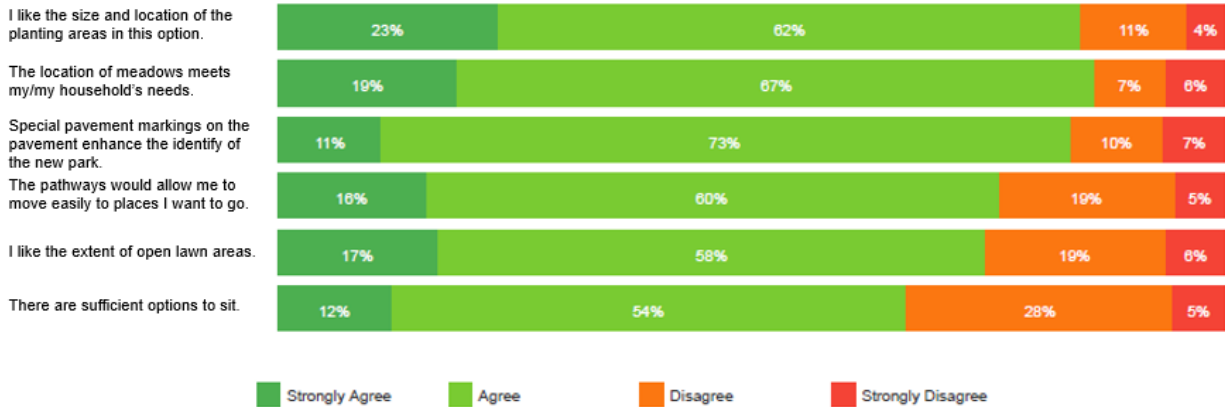


- A variety of seating is proposed in all of the concept plan options. What is important for you when thinking about seating areas in this park?
- One of the key design features for the Green Line is the path that connects different parks and neighbourhoods. Pavement markings on the path, like the ideas shown above, will highlight and celebrate the heritage and character of the neighbourhood. What do you think is special about your neighbourhood (in the present or the past), that you might want to see depicted through the park or pavement design?
- Part of the creation of an expanded Geary Avenue Park will involve improvements to the streetscape along Geary Avenue. What issues are most important to you when thinking about the sidewalk and pedestrian boulevard spaces along Geary Avenue?

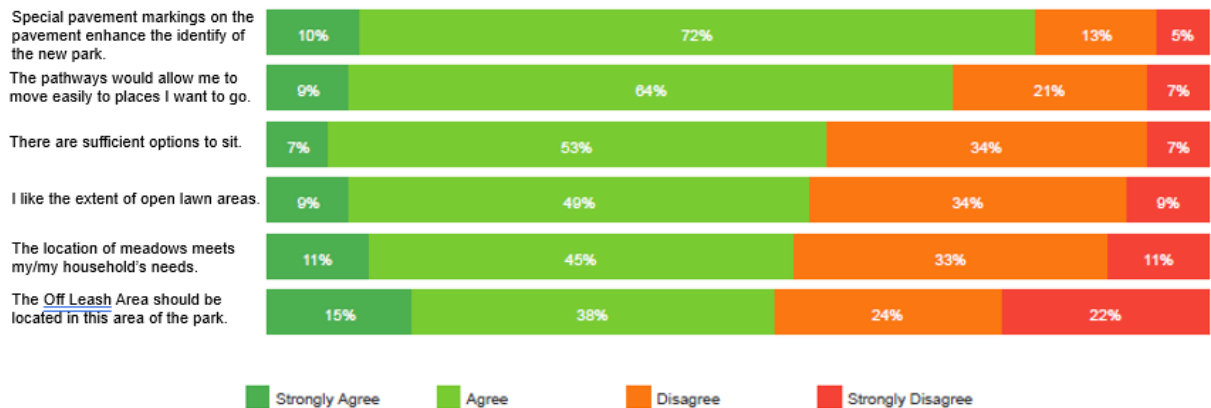


SECTION 2 – Concept Plan Options

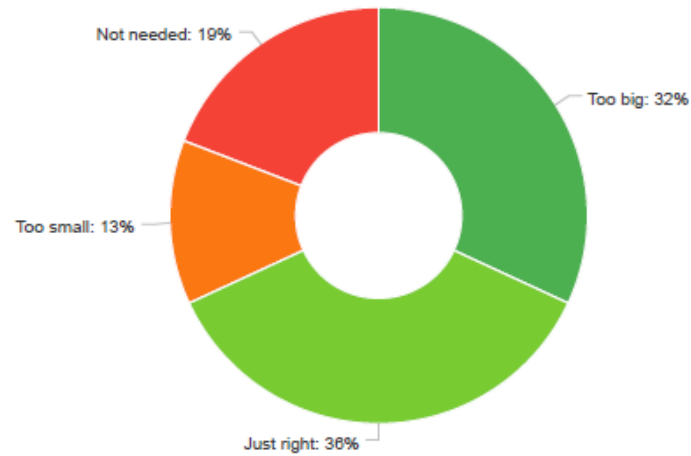
Option 1 West - Ribbon Pathway



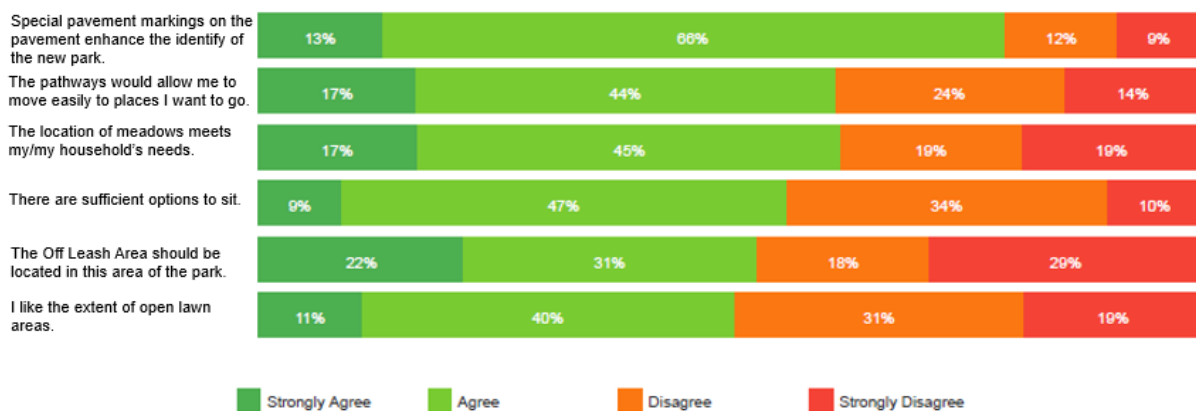
Option 2A West - Boomerang Pathway + OLA Option A



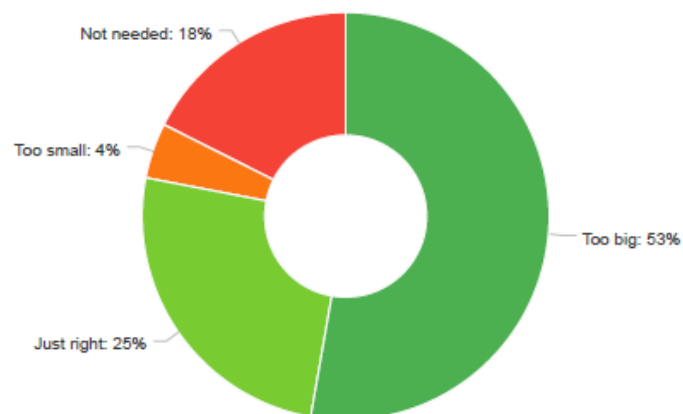
The Off Leash Area (Option A) in the Boomerang Pathway design is:



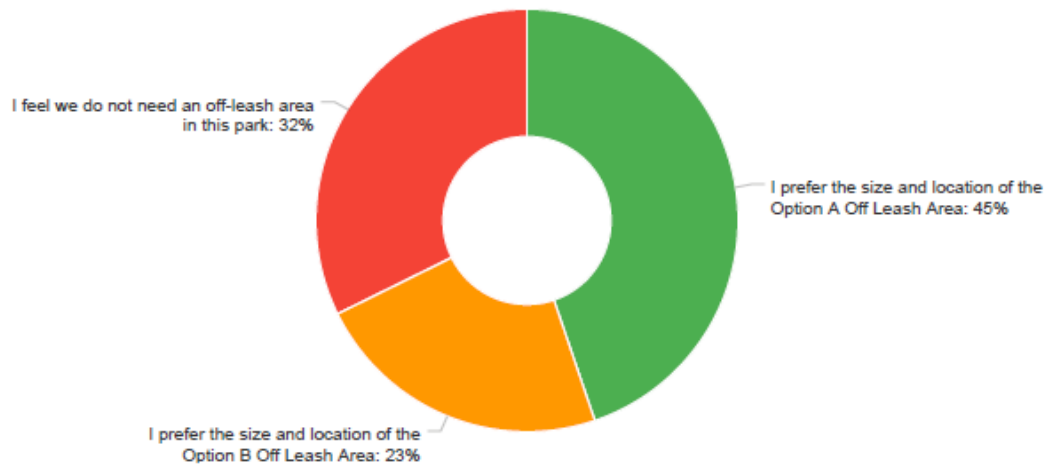
Option 2B West - Garden Room + OLA Option B



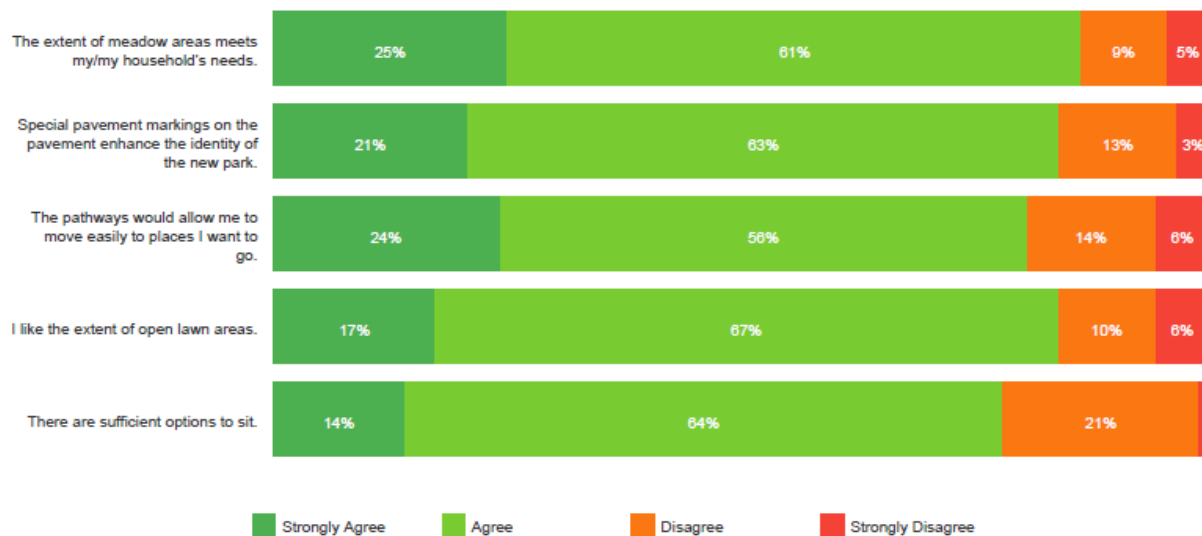
The Off Leash Area (Option B) in the Garden Room design is:



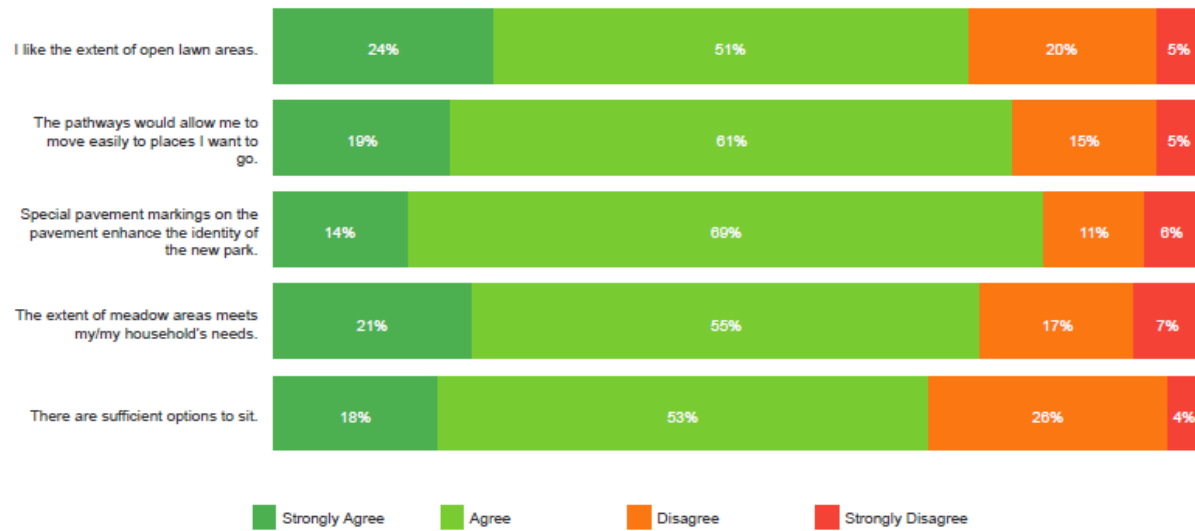
Looking at the two Off-Leash Areas in the images above, please provide your feedback.



Option 1 East - Knot Pathway



Option 2 East - Circuit Pathway



Questions

List of all questions received from the virtual meeting and questionnaire, organized thematically.

Connectivity

Question - Is there any plan to build a pedestrian bridge to cross Dovercourt?

Answer - During the Green Line Implementation Plan, Hydro One did not support a pedestrian/cycling crossing twinned with the bridge. The design team did pursue the bridge concept design during the master plan phase but Hydro One expressed a firm and unsupportive response. The City cannot proceed with any improvements without Hydro One's approval as it has authority over the hydro corridor for the safe operation of its infrastructure.

Question - Will the 3-metre path interrupt the soccer field? This is well used and it would be ideal if the two could co-exist.

Answer – The 3m path does not extend through the soccer field and volleyball area in the existing Geary Avenue Park. Opportunities to extend the path introduced in the Geary Avenue Park Expansion to the rest of the park will be coordinated as part of future park improvements and will take into consideration existing uses.

Question - Would the asphalt paths running through the park be suitable for bikes?

Answer – The Green Line is not part of the City's cycling infrastructure. The asphalt path running through the park is defined as a park path, which is a designation that allows cyclists but prioritizes pedestrian use, so cyclists are instructed to travel at walking speed, and accommodate walkers. Streetscape improvements may be proposed as part of Geary Works planning study to create opportunities for cycling in the neighbourhood.

Question - Can you please confirm if Asphalt paths are required for Hydro? And is that the guiding principle behind the paths?

Answer – Paved pathways are not required by Hydro One. The Green Line Implementation Plan created a master plan vision for a connected linear park system with a continuous, accessible path and set a guideline of 3-metres as a recommendation to be assessed during the development of individual park parcels designs. The City of Toronto's Accessibility Guidelines requires that walkways must be of "firm, level, and non-slip material." Paved pathways through parks can also be used by parks operations vehicles to avoid damaging turf.

Question - Has CPR been asked if the south side of the rail tracks can be paved, similar to the West Toronto Railpath, to allow cyclists from across the city to be able to access the Green Line?

Answer - The City has not contacted CP Rail for this project. The Canadian Pacific Rail corridor has many safety restriction and public access limitations. Although there is a widened path on the south side adjacent to Geary Avenue Park, it is not designed for public access and use. The rail corridor north of Dupont St does vary greatly in its width which could be a limiting factor when exploring a linear multiuse path. The West Toronto Railpath is a fantastic space that has safety barriers and is able to re-purpose rail bridges for the multi-use path while building new bridges for train-only use.

Question – Are there more sustainable options to the asphalt paths?

Answer – Yes, there are sustainable options as alternatives to asphalt for path material such as concrete or permeable pavement, and these are being explored for this project, which needs to balance budget constraints. The decision to include these pavement options must be approved by City of Toronto Parks management and Hydro One.

Question - What are the other greenways / pathways that this will be connected to this - Belt Line, Railpath, etc?

Answer – While the Green Line does not connect directly to other greenways such as the Belt Line or Railpath it will connect with on-street bike lanes and other pathways that travel through the neighbourhood and beyond. The Green Line Master Plan proposes a connection with Earlscourt Park (across a signalized intersection on Davenport) and with a potential open space associated with the Metrolinx Barrie line extension, which was in the planning stages when the master plan was developed.

Question - What discussions are taking place to honour and uphold existing and past Indigenous landscapes here?

Answer - The City of Toronto's Parks Forestry and Recreation Capital Projects division is currently working with the City's Indigenous Affairs Office (IAO) for guidance on consulting with Indigenous organizations and groups about several current park projects, including the Green Line. The IAO is working to create an Indigenous Place-making Advisory Circle with whom to consult on future projects. Though still in development, the Indigenous Place-making Advisory Circle will assist in the consultation process with Indigenous community members that respect the time, energy, and capacity of Indigenous organizations to spend time consulting with all City divisions, including but not limited to Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

Question - How does the greenway strategy planning team connect in with or leverage current Active TO planning?

Answer – The Green Line does not directly connect or leverage current ActiveTO planning given that the anticipated timeline to complete construction of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion is 2022.

Question - How does this project dovetail with the Geary Works study?

Answer – Members of the Green Line team have participated on the Geary Works planning study and attended the public consultation hosted by the planning study, where they heard from the community about desired parks and public realm improvements. The expansion of Geary Avenue Park contributes to many of the public realm and open space improvements identified in the Geary Works consultation, including opportunities for community gathering spaces, seating, access to nature, an off leash area, bike parking, and general improvements to the streetscape along Geary Avenue.

Question - Will fences be extended along the train tracks for safety?

Answer – Yes, fences are proposed along the south side of Geary Avenue Park Expansion to prevent access to the train tracks.

Question - Will there be Green P parking provisions residents living in the area are having a hard time to park on their street as it is

Answer - The park plan does not include any change to on-street parking at this time.

Ground Cover and Vegetation

Questions - Are there any particular plants, shrubs, or trees that have been selected thus far?

Answer – A preliminary palette of plants was proposed as part of the Green Line Implementation Plan that focuses on native, meadow plant species which help support biodiversity and includes pollinators. The final planting plan for the park will include meadows, shrubs, and small trees and will ultimately need to be approved by Hydro One. You can access information about the planting palette proposed in the [Green Line Implementation Plan](#) on page 69.

Question - Could you incorporate a community garden?

Answer - Establishing a community garden in a City of Toronto park is a separate process that involves establishing a community group tasked with the upkeep of the garden and consent from the Supervisor of Community Gardens Program [learn about the process for starting a community garden](#).

Question - Will the big apple trees at the southwest corner of Dovercourt and Geary be preserved/maintained?

Answer – An arborists report is being prepared to determine the health of all the current trees on site. It is the intent of the project to preserve as many trees as possible, especially mature trees along Geary Avenue.

Question - Are there any plans to re-add the meadow sections back to the existing parkettes at west of Dufferin?

Answer – That area is beyond the scope of this capital improvements project. The park Supervisor for existing parkettes can be contacted with questions about planting.

Question - With Geary becoming a strong creative hub in the city. will there be any common activation space to allow for artistic/culinary use?

Answer – The design of the Geary Avenue Park Expansion seeks to accommodate a range of community uses, including creating flexible spaces that allow for community activation and events. As with all City parks, the permit system for use of parks will be in place.

Off-Leash Area

Question - Will the off-leash area be fenced?

Answer – The City of Toronto's guidelines for Off Leash Area design includes fencing and double gates.

Questions - What is the surface planned for the Off-Leash Area?

Answer - As per the current City of Toronto's guidelines for Off Leash Area design, the surface would be pea gravel.

Question - Has any consideration been given to developing a linear off leash zone that parallels the southern boundary?

Answer – A linear off leash area was considered as part of the initial design development but was not pursued given the size of the park preserving the 15 metre offsets required by Hydro One from its towers, and best practices for ensuring that large and small dogs can enjoy the Off Leash Area. Linear off leash areas are fantastic for dogs that are ball motivated and like to run, however they create straight sightlines that can encourage more aggressive behaviour and the linear form removes options for nooks and corners often used by smaller dogs or puppies.

Play

Question - Will the City be updating the playground in the existing Geary Avenue Park, adjacent to the new /expanded park?

Answer – Parks, Forestry and Recreation Capital projects is planning to make improvements to the Geary Avenue Park playground. However, this project is pending capital budget approval for the 2021 budget which will take place next spring. The anticipated schedule is design and consultation in 2021 and construction in 2022, pending budget approvals and also HONI technical review and approvals for work in the hydro corridor.

Question - The consultants mentioned that Hydro One does not permit adding structures - does that mean fencing and a splash pad is not an option?

Answer – At this time, Hydro One does not typically allow the construction of new structures within the hydro corridor. In certain circumstances, park elements such as playgrounds and splash pads have been “grandfathered” into hydro corridor parks as can be seen in Geary Avenue Park today. Hydro One is concerned with ensuring the 15 metre offset is preserved to enable safe access to maintaining its equipment and unobstructed clearways in the corridor to allow vehicular access for maintenance of its infrastructure. In some cases, fencing is allowed, pending Hydro One approval, and must be constructed with proper grounding. There is an existing wading pool in the adjacent Geary Avenue Park playground, so the City will not add a new splashpad adjacent to this feature in the new/expanded park.

Public Art

Question - Any public art part of the plan?

Answer – Not at this time. Public art may be considered for future phases.

General Park Features

Question - Will there be any water fountains for people?

Answer - Yes, there will be a bottle filler for people in the park.

Question - What is the plan for waste and recycling containers?

Answer – The City’s standard park garbage and recycling containers will be used.

Question - Will there be bike posts introduced?

Answer – Additional bike parking along the street right-of-way is being considered in the plan pending approval by Transportation Services.

Timeline and Consultation

Question - Can you explain the process by which you will choose between the options?

Answer – Community feedback gathered through various methods (virtual community meeting, online questionnaire, emails etc.) contribute vital inputs into the design as the City seeks to meet current and future community needs. Other inputs are also important parts of the process, including review by internal staff stakeholders with respect to safety, ensuring it can be maintained within their operating capacity, and best practice. The consultant team must design to meet budgets and all technical and legal requirements and guidelines and brings their design expertise to the table. The project is led by City staff, who make final decisions, taking all inputs into account.

Question - What is the anticipated completion date?

Answer - The target completion date for construction is Fall 2022, pending approvals by Hydro One.