

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Huron Street Playground Off-Leash Area



Online Public Consultation Meeting – Summary

Meeting Date: November 19, 2020

Lara Herald, Senior Project Coordinator

Pablo Muñoz, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

Contents

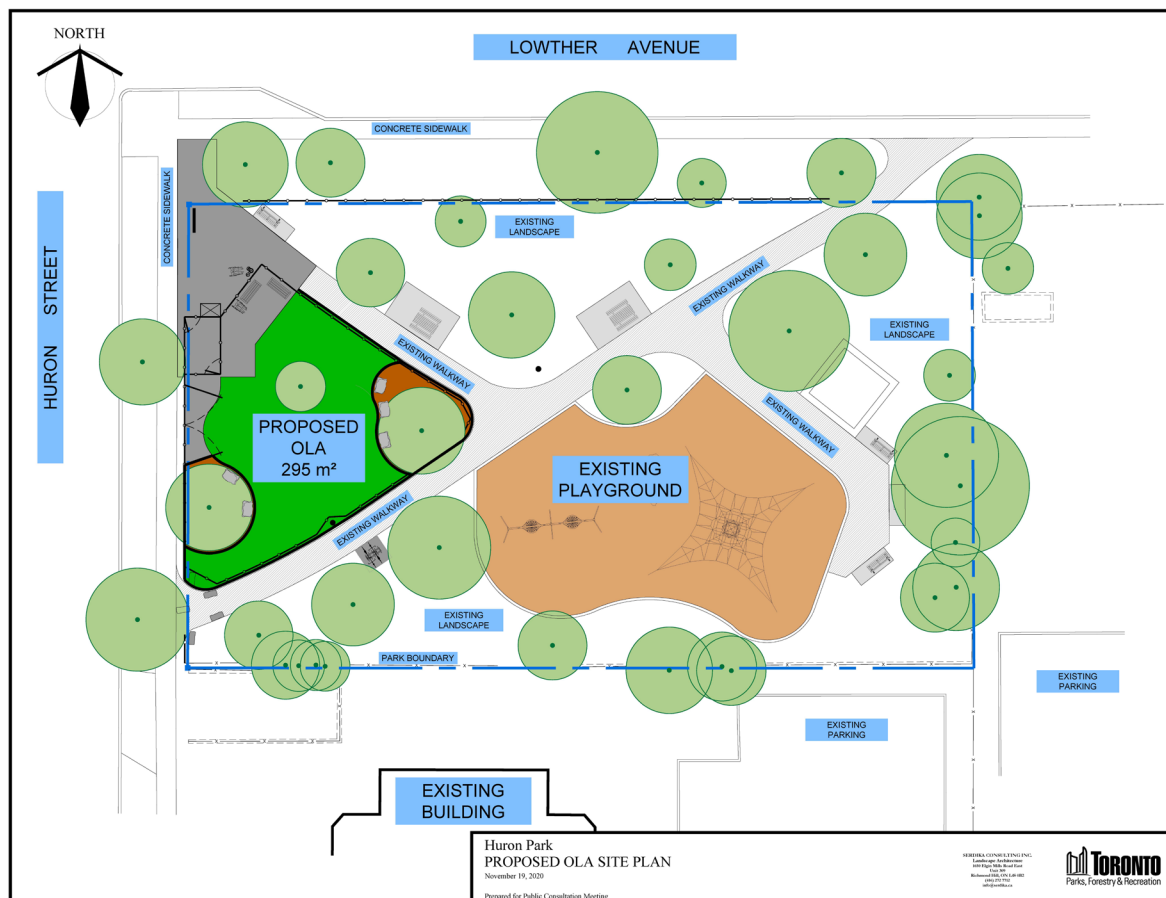
About the project.....	3
Public Meeting Goal	3
Promotion	3
Agenda.....	4
In attendance.....	4
Key Summary	4
Artificial Turf and Fiber-weave	4
Size and positioning of OLA	5
Fencing	5
Amenities and features.....	5
Timeline and impact on community	5
Out of Scope Feedback.....	5

About the project

The Huron Street Playground is located at 495 Huron St., near St. George Street and Lowther Avenue. The City is adding a dog off-leash area (OLA) in the open area west of the playground. The proposed OLA will be small in size at approximately 300 square metres. The scope of work may include:

- New fencing with entrance gates
- New surfacing
- Benches/seating elements
- Water fountain with a dog bowl

The following plan illustrates the proposed location for the OLA.



Public Meeting Goal

The goal of this public meetings was to present background information and concept plan for new OLA at Huron St Playground, and to provide an opportunity for the Huron Street community to ask questions and provide feedback regarding the new off-leash area.

Promotion

The public meeting was hosted on WebEx on November 19th, 2020. A social media ad campaign was placed leading up to the meeting reaching 28,930 people and generating 327

clicks. Councillor Mike Layton also shared information about the meeting through his e-newsletter.

Agenda

- Introductions
- Words by Councillor Mike Layton
- Project Information
- Presentation
- Questions
- Comments
- Next Steps

The full presentation can be downloaded at toronto.ca/HuronOLA

In attendance

- Mike Layton – Councillor University - Rosedale
- Marco Bianchi – Director of Operations and Issues Management (Councillor Mike Layton Office)
- Lara Herald – Senior Project Coordinator, Capital Projects
- Zori Petrova, Landscape Architect
- Pablo Muñoz – Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

Other City Staff in attendance:

- Peter Didiano, Capital Projects
- Paulo Fetalvero, Capital Projects
- Kelly McInnes, Parks Operations

There were 54 members of the public present.

Key Summary

Surfacing Material

There were several questions raised regarding the artificial turf that is being installed at the OLA including why this surfacing material was selected. A community member raised a question regarding the environmental impact and the safety for dogs. There were also questions raised about the permeability and longevity of the material. One community-member said they would prefer the entire area to be a mulch/fiber-weave surface while another indicated that they like the artificial turf surfacing.

The landscape architect, Zori, explained that the artificial turf was recommended by Parks Operations staff based on their experience with maintenance of OLAs. She also shared that this OLA project provides an opportunity to pilot the use of this material for a City of Toronto OLA. She confirmed that the material is safe for dogs, the turf product is designed for this particular application, and that a gravel bed would be installed underneath the turf to ensure drainage and permeability. Zori also explained the "fiber-weave" surfacing material that is being used at the base of the trees is a natural fiber that remains tightly woven while allowing water to flow through to the roots of the tree.

Size and Location of OLA

A few public meeting attendees recommended that the dog park be made bigger in order to accommodate larger breeds as well as potentially include a small-dog area. A couple of comments suggested moving or expanding the OLA to the north area of the park. The Senior Project Coordinator on the project Lara Harald, explained that the current footprint of the OLA was determined through a previous consultation process and internal stakeholder review. She also explained that the decision to locate the OLA at the west side of the park would have taken several factors into consideration including protection of existing trees, maintaining a buffer from the playground, and retaining other park uses.

Fencing

A member of the public recommended a tighter fence to prevent balls from going through.

Amenities and Features

Members of the public highlighted the importance of seating, particularly for seniors and the addition of waste bins. The project team highlighted the mobility device space and accessible benches on the plan as well as seating rocks near the trees; the team also pointed out the proposed location of the waste bins at the entrance of the OLA.

Timeline and Impact on Community

There were questions regarding the completion date of the project as well as some concerns regarding construction noise. One member of the public noted that a recent project in the neighbourhood was extremely noisy. The Senior Project Coordinator, Lara Harald, indicated that construction is expected to begin summer/fall of 2021. Zori Petrova, Landscape Architect, highlighted that construction would occur over approximately three months and that there was no concrete demolition so noise levels were not expected to be high during construction.

Out of Scope Feedback

There were some comments and suggestions that were outside of the scope of this project. One included a request to include a community garden, and another comment highlighted that a recent construction project had damaged the tree-line along the south edge of the park.