

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Dieppe Park

Improvements

Public Meeting 1

Meeting Summary

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Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Dieppe Park Improvements Virtual Public Meeting that was held on October 22, 2020, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. This meeting was hosted by the Ward 14 City Councillor's office. Approximately 92 people attended.

More information about the project can be found on the project webpage at www.toronto.ca/DieppeParkImprovements

Project Background

Dieppe Park is located on Cosburn Avenue just east of Greenwood Avenue. The three-hectare park has an outdoor artificial ice rink and skate trail, a lit ball diamond, a multipurpose sports field, a family play zone that includes a children's playground and a splash pad, and a parking lot.

The family play zone, including the playground and splash pad are being updated. In addition to these updates, the City is creating a Dieppe Park Improvement Plan to guide future park improvements. This plan will identify and prioritize future park improvement projects to undertake as funding becomes available. The Dieppe Park Improvement Plan does not include the removal or relocation of any existing recreational spaces. The Improvement Plan will influence:

- Use of the space between the existing ice rink and soccer field as a zone for new, non-permitted uses.
- Circulation and pathways through the park.
- The potential creation, location and design of a new fitness zone.
- Opportunities to enhance existing recreation spaces.

You can learn more about this project at the [Dieppe Park Improvements webpage](#).

Project Scope

This summary contains all of the suggestions and comments made by public meeting attendees. It is important to note that some of these suggestions and comments are outside the scope of this project.

What is in the project scope:

- Improvements to the Family Play zone, including the Splash Pad and Playground (Image 1).
- Improvements to spaces around sports facilities and the potential inclusion of multi-seasonal programming (Image 2).
- Circulation and pathways through the park.
- The potential creation, location and design of a new fitness zone.



Image 1 (above): Family Play Zone outlined in yellow.



Image 2 (above): Park areas for improvement outlined in yellow.

What is not in the project scope:

- Major updates related to sports fields such as field resurfacing and expansion, removal, or relocation.
- Major updates related to existing buildings, including changing the location of the buildings or their renovation.
 - While sports fields and existing buildings in the park are not within the scope of the Dieppe Park Improvement Plan, they are part of a City wide State of Good Repair Program. They will be assessed and if required they will be improved in the future as part of the City's State of Good Repair program.
- A Dog Off-Leash Area.
 - A suitable location for a Dog Off-Leash Area in the community is being explored. Sites are being assessed based on City's Off-leash Policy.

Operational Issues:

- Changes to facility access and maintenance will not be included in this project, but are currently being reviewed by Parks Operations staff to determine what actions or service improvements should be taken. Examples of operational issues include:
 - Maintenance and operating hours of the park's washrooms
 - Maintenance of the existing sport facilities including the rink, skate trail, baseball diamond, and soccer field
 - Maintenance of the parking lot
 - Park lighting
 - Cleanliness throughout the park

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the project to the community and to gather information from park users about:

- How the family play zone (playground and splash pad) is currently used
- How the family play zone should be updated moving forward
- Priorities and preferences for updates to other areas of the park, including:
 - The space between the existing ice rink and soccer field
 - The space north of the existing rink and skate trail
 - The potential addition of a new fitness zone
 - Existing recreation spaces
 - Circulation and pathways

Public Meeting Advertisement

The meeting was promoted through the multiple channels:

- Park Signage
- E-notification through the local Councillor's office
- Project flyers to local residents, through the Councillor's office
- Public updates through the project webpage and Councillor's website

Feedback Summary

Project staff presented a project overview, a review of the park context including current features of the park, and potential for new program and activity opportunities. A copy of the meeting presentation is available on [the project website](#). Following the presentation, participants were able to ask questions of clarification and provide comments and suggestions to inform the project. These paraphrased comments (C), questions (Q) and responses from staff of the Councillor (R) are presented below.

Q. Will any memorial trees be removed?

R. We are not at that level of detailed design but will take this as feedback to avoid the need to remove memorial trees.

Q. Is the addition of a pollinator garden possible?

R. Yes.

Q. Would it be possible to install a running/walking track around the soccer field?

R. That can be considered but will depend on space limitations.

Q. Pickleball is a fast growing sport, can a space for Pickleball be added or formalized?

R. We want to build flexible spaces that can be used for multiple purposes. If pickleball is a desired use we would try to design a multi-use space that allows for this activity.

C. My kids ride their bikes and scooters too. It would be good to have the path continue all the way around the ice rink to connect back to the skate trail.

Q. What is the project timeline, including construction?

R. We are currently in the visioning stage and are looking to come back to the community with design options in January or February. Once a preferred design is developed for the family play zone, we will hope to have construction begin in the second half of 2021. For the larger Improvement Plan we aren't certain of the scope of work. Once we have that more defined, we will be able to provide a timeline.

Q. What improvements can target teens?

R. We want to provide gathering spaces for this age group. Fitness equipment may also be appropriate, as well as flexible, multi-use spaces. Whether for adults or teens, it is important to have flexible spaces that can accommodate multiple uses.

Q. Can we plant more trees to increase shade?

R. Yes, that is a possibility. Shade structures provide immediate shade, but the introduction of a green canopy has several environmental benefits and as those trees mature people can seek shade.

Q. Can a dog off leash area be added?

R. There is city policy to dictate where off leash areas can be placed. There is a list of criteria the park must meet, some include size, and compatibility with other uses. We will look at the opportunity to install an off leash area here, though it is unlikely to meet the City's criteria.

Q. Will there be a review of the parking area?

R. When there are events the parking lot is well used but otherwise it is underused and could be used for other activities. There are some events that take place in the lot. When there aren't sporting events taking place, or skating available, there are opportunities for us to look at use and reuse of the parking area. A challenge is that we need to maintain safe separation between pedestrians and cars. For example, if we put up basketballs nets we need to be able to remove them to prevent any conflict between cars and people. Parking lot use is something we will consider.

C. We use the fence for workouts.

C. The issue of a walking path around the perimeter of the park should also be addressed. The difficulty at this point is that the lighting is extremely limited after dark once the sports activities are no longer taking place. Once they are over, the only lighting in the park is on the pathway running through the park that has very dim lighting. One of the four lights has been broken for more than a year. There was an attempt to repair it, but it is now broken again. Please improve lighting for safety.

Q. Will the playground and splash pad be expanded?

R. We are looking at various options, potentially keeping the same sizing for both features, or providing a slight expansion. Based on where the family play zone is, there are limits to how much the space can expand based on other features in the park.

Q. The soccer benches are in poor condition. Is it possible to put a shade feature over the benches?

R. Yes the soccer benches are fairly far back from the field, and one example we showed in the slides was a bench with a canopy on top. Maybe we can bring those benches back closer to the sidelines. The benches may have been placed there in the past before the fence was put up on the baseball diamond.

Q. Can you consider an off leash area that is fenced? Are they all fenced?

R. There are some without fences all the way around. Within a park it is likely fenced. The other assets in this park like the playground and field etc. would need to be considered when thinking of providing an off leash area here.

C. The off leash area at Monarch Park is not fenced.

R. Yes, that was established a long time ago and generally they are fenced now.

Q. Will there be equipment for small kids or teens (zones)?

R. Typically in playgrounds we provide equipment for two age groups, under 5 and 5-12 years old. Designing for all ages and abilities is something we will look to for the playground.

Q. Can you put a hill in the park for sledding?

R. That is probably not feasible based on the space available in the park.

Q. Can you install a dome with artificial turf?

R. No that is outside of the scope of this project.

Q. Do parks have curfews?

R. No and they will not be introduced.

Q. What about the greenspace south of the family play zone - is that an opportunity zone?

R. We looked at that area, but the width between the fence and path is narrow and there are offsets required around play equipment, so playground expansion would not fit here. Also, it is behind the soccer goal posts, which would be unsafe for small children.

Q. How will the park be used in all seasons?

R. There are already many year round uses with the snow mound, rink, and skate trail. The other sport uses and the water play area are seasonal.

Q. Can more lighting be installed?

R. We can look into lighting levels at the park, and based on what new amenities we may be providing, consider additional lighting.

Q. Would the family play zone be closed this summer for construction? How can we reduce impact on users?

R. For the playground and splash pad, the goal is to do construction in the fall after the water play area is closed. The playground construction would likely happen at the same time. For the rest of the park it depends on what elements are going to be installed. We can section off the park for improvements so everything doesn't need to be closed at once. It really depends on what the upgrades are. We would need to make sure the site was safe and fenced off so when work is being done people cannot enter.

Q. Can you add a crosswalk at greenwood and memorial?

R. The Councillor will take that matter to the City's transportation staff, as it is outside the scope of this project.

Q. What types of fitness equipment are you looking at? Is there something standard?

R. Outdoor fitness equipment is quite popular especially during the pandemic. The City has standards for those pieces of equipment. There are many options for different types of equipment that target different muscle groups.

Q. Is the change room building within the scope of work?

R. The buildings are not currently in the scope of work.

Q. Other than shade structures people really love trees. People would like to know you are not just considering the wood or metal shade structures and also considering tree growth?

R. Yes, we are also considering trees for shade.

Q. Is it within the scope to upgrade the hockey rink with benches, a penalty box and score board?

R. No, this is outside the project scope.

Q. Can there be a picnic or seating area by the play zone so people can relax and watch their kids, maybe have snacks?

R. Yes, we are looking at improving the area around the play zone too and seating is important for that.

Q. What kind of programming does the city run out of the fieldhouse and how many permits for the rink are provided in the summer time? If it is not used much, we can put basketball nets in the rink. In the winter we know people jump the boards and play after the lights go out.

R. We will learn what the permitting is on the site through this process.

Q. What surfaces are used for the playground surfaces?

R. Wood fibre, a woodchip material, and another is a rubber surface. For the splash pad concrete is usually used. Both types of surfaces are accessible.

Q. Will the soccer club be consulted about benches and other soccer related updates?

R. Yes.

C. Please consult with East York Soccer Club on proper placement of soccer benching. Benching needs to be set back a certain distance from the touchline to allow assistant referees to run the line and allow for player safety.

Q. Can we look at the trees along Cosburn, and consider planting more trees?

R. We are looking at putting in additional plantings. The City's arborist is also looking at existing trees to identify any hazard trees that may have to be removed.

C. There are houses around the park, please make sure lighting doesn't shine into houses.

Q. What kinds of surfaces are you looking at for pathways?

R. They would all be accessible surfaces, asphalt is the standard.

Q. Are the washrooms going to be updated? These have been vandalized, which is why they are not always left open.

R. Both sets of washrooms are outside the scope of this project.

Q. The open space is often used for soccer practice. There is a storage bunker in that space, is there an option to move that out of the middle of that space?

R. Yes, that is something we are looking at to improve use of space.

Q. Is there a fund for sports amenities for this park? How does the City approach the upgrade of sports amenities?

R. Many facilities fall into the state of good repair program. We conduct periodic audits and develop a 10-year plan to identify when improvements will take place. Now that we know there is an issue around the baseball diamond we can take that back and find out.

R. City staff will let the Councillor's office know when the baseball diamond, potentially including drainage, is planned to be improved.

Q. Is there any plan to remove the outfield fence?

R. No.

Q. The soccer field is rough and uneven. What class is this field and how is it maintained?

R. The field is Class A, it is an adult sized irrigated field with goalposts. The field is typically cut 2 times a week, fertilized annually and top seeded two times annually.

R. City staff will let the Councillor's office know when the soccer field is planned to be improved.

Q. Is there something planned for Riverdale Park East?

R. That has already had a major revitalization, the play area and the rink recently redone.

Q. Can the washroom be left open all year?

R. There are issues with vandalism when they were left open all year.

Q. How much space is required for a basketball court and is it possible to put basketball nets in the rink or by the washrooms?

R. A full size basketball court would take up the entire open space, but a half court is more likely for that area. We will look into hoops in the rink or parking area.

Q. Are you looking to reduce or change the parking lot or moving the bathroom structure?

R. No we are not.

Q. Are you considering a pool?

R. No.

Q. Will the upgrades make the park busier? Is it more for those who come from outside the neighbourhood or locals?

R. We are improving passive components, so it will be an improvement for the local community. It isn't being specifically designed as a destination playground. It is a local playground.

Q. Will the sports areas be changed or removed?

R. No.

Q. Is there a standard width for paths?

R. That depends on the use. If it is only designed for pedestrians, it will be 1,8 to 2.2 metres, but if it is also a path for maintenance vehicles it would need to be wider.

C. Thank you for the overview and briefing - it is well done. From a park circulation standpoint, I would strongly support that suggestion that the plan consider a pedestrian pathway that would loop around and integrate the entire park. I believe that would fit well with the input received for enhanced seating and shade opportunities, as well as play nodes.

C. I see a fair number of personal trainers working with clients in the area between the baseball diamond and soccer field because they use the fence in the workouts. Maybe fitness equipment can be located along there.

C. Outdoor play tables like ping pong and games tables and pickleball are particularly important with the pandemic.

C. I am happy to see this first draft of proposal. Well done. Please consider limiting noise levels after 10pm. It can be quite loud when sports leagues continue after 10pm. Also please ensure the soccer field is not replaced with turf and locked, as was suggested at one time.

C. Consider "green", non-tarmac options for park pathways.

C. Provide play structures that can appropriately challenge children of all ages.

C. The park has always been a great place to live near. Over the past few years though, it has become less accessible to local residents. Deteriorated and locked bathrooms, locked hockey rink, and lack of opportunity to permit the clubhouse are becoming an issue.

C. I think trees are really important as it's healthy to be close to trees and nature. Shade structures don't provide that beneficial function. Sitting in the grass under trees is one of my favourite things to do in parks!

C. Consider more crosswalks nearby to lead into the park (specifically on Greenwood near the south side of the park).

C. A lot of park visitors prefer to park on Memorial Park Ave and Lismore Crescent rather than in the parking lot. However, these streets only allow parking on one side so it gets very busy and driveways often get blocked. Please examine the effects on surrounding streets that increased visitor numbers will have on the community.

C. It would be good to have more lighting for safety and accessibility, especially if ping pong tables, running paths and fitness equipment are added.

C. Why are my comments about off-leash areas being dismissed? I'm an active user of this park and I do not want dogs off-leash unless they are in a fenced zone. I'm taking an hour and a half of my night to participate in this consultation. It is disrespectful that my comments on dogs in the park are being dismissed.

C. I do really like the idea of the play on the go! Off leash area is my biggest request and would love if you could find space so we don't upset anyone with our playing puppies!

C. Reconsider some of the existing sporting areas. Specifically, there would be much more use for parents/kids/teens for expanded playground/splash pad than baseball.

Only organized sports use baseball (parent/kid can use any open area) and there's lots of diamonds in Stan Wadlow Park, nearby.

Next Steps

Participants were asked to provide any additional feedback through the online survey, which was online from October 22 to November 8, 2020. The feedback collected through this meeting and the online survey will be used to develop three potential playground designs and a draft Park Improvement Plan, which will be presented to the community for review and refinement.

The Councillor will advance any out-of-scope concerns related to park operations to the operations team.

Contact Us

For questions or comments related to this project, please contact:

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