

Phase One Engagement Toolkit

Towards A Vision (Phase 1 of 3)



This engagement toolkit is intended to support the City of Toronto's Phase One Public Engagement about its Toronto Island Park Master Plan. Phase One of the Public Engagement is running from March 17th to April 9th, 2021 and is focused on developing a vision for the park.

To learn more about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan, visit toronto.ca/IslandMasterPlan.

How to use this toolkit

- 1. Read.** Review the information in the discussion guide to learn more about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan. This guide provides important information to inform your feedback.
- 2. Record.** Document your feedback by filling out the workbook, where you can mark up a map and write down your detailed responses to questions. You can also share your vision for Toronto Island Park's future by filling out the "What if the island..." postcard.
- 3. Share.** If you are submitting feedback by mail, please use the self-addressed, prepaid envelope included with your mailed toolkit.

If you are submitting feedback by e-mail, please send photos or scans of your completed workbook and postcard to islandparkmasterplan@toronto.ca

You can also reach the team by voicemail: (647) 427 5331.

All feedback received or mailed by **April 9th, 2021** or earlier will be documented in the Phase One engagement report.

What's included in this toolkit?



A **discussion guide** with information about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan and public engagement process.



A **workbook** with more information and places for you to share your ideas.



A **"What if the island..." postcard** for you to share your vision for the future.



A **postage-paid return envelope** (for mailed toolkits).



A **pen and additional paper** for recording your thoughts (for mailed toolkits).



Discussion Guide

Towards A Vision (Phase 1 of 3)



The City is preparing a Toronto Island Park Master Plan!

For thousands of years, the group of islands sheltering the Toronto harbour has been known by several names. For the Michi Saagiig Anishinaabeg (the Mississaugas, signatory to the 1805 Treaty No. 13), it was simply known as Mnisiing, meaning "on the islands." Later, the islands were collectively known as Aionwatha or Hiawatha's Island. Today, they are known as the Toronto Islands and together, they make up one of Toronto's signature Waterfront parks.

Visitors from across Toronto are drawn to Toronto Island Park for its beaches, amusement park, marinas, clubs, nature trails, cultural places and events. In recent years, the park has faced numerous pressures, including increased demand, aging infrastructure, and flooding.

The Toronto Island Park Master Plan will address these issues and ensure the park can be a cherished gathering place for generations to come. It will be a long-term planning document that is being co-created with Indigenous rights holders, local communities, and the public. It will outline a Vision, Values, Guiding Principles, and Big Moves to guide change and investment in Toronto Island Park over many years.

Our engagement process



Through 2021 and 2022, we're working with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, other First Nations and Indigenous communities, island and waterfront communities and businesses, and people across the city to develop a Master Plan that cements Toronto Island Park as a cherished gathering place for many generations to come. We're currently in the first phase of our engagement process, which is focusing on developing a vision for the park.

What is the Toronto Island Park Master Plan?

The Toronto Island Park Master Plan will act as a blueprint guiding future decision-making around park improvements, programming, and management.

How to use this discussion guide

This discussion guide is part of the Phase One engagement toolkit for the Toronto Island Park Master Plan. It includes key background information about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan and information on how to get involved in the process.

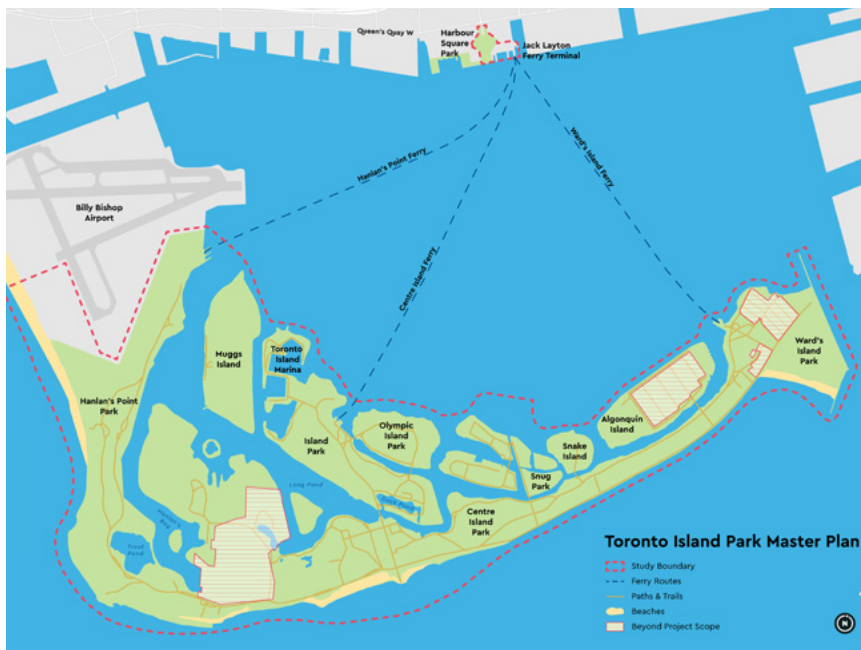
Read this discussion guide to learn more and share your feedback using the included workbook and postcard. You can submit your completed workbook and postcard over email, the phone, or mail. Detailed instructions on how to submit feedback are included in the cover sheet attached to the toolkit.



What will it accomplish?

The Toronto Island Park Master Plan will:

1. Identify park entrances, gateways, lookouts and improve access year-round
2. Improve wayfinding and signage
3. Help to uncover the natural and cultural history of Toronto Islands, including their significance to the Mississaugas of the Credit and other Indigenous communities
4. Consider improvements to shore treatments and marine activation
5. Review existing programs and uses (including events) and make recommendations for future uses
6. Improve service delivery and businesses on the Island to meet the needs of park visitors
7. Build a comprehensive understanding of the existing value of business opportunities within Toronto Island Park
8. Identify opportunities to improve the overall experience for visitors to Toronto Island Park.



What areas does it cover?

The study area for the Toronto Island Park Master Plan includes all of Toronto Island Park and the area around the Jack Layton Ferry Terminal on the city side of the harbour. It does not include the island's residential areas, the service area around the water treatment plant, or Billy Bishop Airport.

Building on previous work

Toronto Island Park Master Plan builds on a number of recent City policies and plans, including:



TOcore: Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan. This plan projected significant growth in Toronto's downtown and highlighted the importance of

Toronto Island Park within the Core Circle – a circuit of public spaces that connects existing natural features around Downtown – as an integrated and significant part of the city's greenspace network.



Toronto Parkland Strategy and Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. These

documents are driven by the importance

of parkland and recreation facilities within our city and highlight the need for increased parkland, programs, and recreation facilities in order to be able to serve our growing population.

Other related studies and initiatives

- Toronto Islands Flood Characterization and Risk Assessment Project, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Toronto Island Heritage Study, Toronto Island Community Association
- Toronto Biodiversity Strategy, Toronto City Planning and Parks, Forestry and Recreation
- Toronto Resilience Strategy, Toronto Resilience Office

What we've done so far

Island Stories

Before starting the Toronto Island Park Master Plan process, we launched a public campaign to celebrate the islands through collective storytelling, reflecting on the unique role the island plays in the lives of Torontonians of all walks of life.

Public Life Study

We conducted a Public Life Study to better understand how people are using Toronto Island Park. We studied 8 zones in late Summer, 2020. Among other things, we learned that the island park is a social place where many people spend time on beaches, but that seniors are underrepresented.

Pre-Engagement Dialogues

As part of scoping and planning for our engagement, we completed several pre-engagement interviews and focus groups during Fall 2020. These dialogues helped us understand of issues and opportunities in Toronto Island Park and informed our first phase of engagement.

Check out our work so far

You can check out the Island Stories, Public Life Study report, and a report of our pre engagement dialogues on our website at toronto.ca/islandmasterplan

What we've heard so far

Key messages from engagement so far

Here are some highlights of what we've heard in our engagement to date:

- Toronto Island Park should feel more like an Indigenous place
- The flooding of Toronto Island Park is a big issue, affecting residents, visitors, event planners, and others
- The park's ecology and ecosystems are under stress from heavy use and need protection
- Part of the park's charm is its separation from the rest of the city, but access to, from, and around it could be better
- The park could be safer for, more welcoming to, and more reflective of Toronto's diverse population
- Some of the parks facilities are in poor condition
- There could be more diverse and affordable food options
- It is a great venue for events, but there are high costs, logistical barriers, and other hurdles
- Increased recreational boating activity and lack of boating infrastructure is leading to conflicts and pressure
- Toronto Island Park could be a great winter destination
- It's important for the Master Plan to acknowledge and consider the existing community.

Our current focus: developing a Vision

Phase One of the Toronto Island Park Master Plan is focused on developing a Vision. The 'Vision' is an aspirational statement that describes what Toronto Island Park will become in the short and long term future. It will answer the question, "Where do you see Toronto Island Park in five, ten, and many years to come?" The Vision will be informed by:

Drivers of Change: A Driver of Change is an underlying challenge or opportunity that is driving the need for improvements to the Toronto Island Park. They are the reasons why the Master Plan will be developed and will form the foundation of the Plan.

Values: Values are the fundamental collective beliefs that the Master Plan will eventually embody. They will be high-level statements that will guide the development of the Master Plan.

Guiding Principles: The Guiding Principles are similar to the Values, except that they are more directed and defined statements that will guide the direction of what Toronto Island Park will become.

We want your feedback! Check out the workbook that came with this toolkit to share your thoughts on our Draft Drivers of Change and Preliminary Guiding Principles. You can also use the postcard to tell us about your vision for Toronto Island Park.

Have your say!

This first Phase of public engagement is called "Towards a Vision." We want to know your aspirations for the future of this important park as well your thoughts on our Draft Drivers of Change, and Preliminary Guiding Principles. **There are many ways to learn more and have your say:**



Join the virtual Public Visioning Workshop

April 7th, 2021 T 6:00 – 8:30pm via Zoom

Join the Public Workshop online or by phone to learn more about the Master Plan and share your feedback with the project team.



Contribute to the interactive map

March 17th – April 9th, 2021

Drop pins on a map telling us what's working well and what you'd like to see improved in Toronto Island Park.



Take the detailed survey

March 17th – April 9th, 2021

Help inform our understanding of how people use and want to use Toronto Island Park.



Complete the toolkit

March 17th – April 9th, 2021

Share your thoughts using the workbook and postcard included with this discussion guide.



Share your thoughts with us

March 17th – April 9th, 2021

Email islandparkmasterplan@toronto.ca or call (647) 427 5331



Join Forum #1: Indigenous Placekeeping

April 28th, 2021 6:30 – 8:30pm via Zoom

Join the virtual forum to learn more about the Indigenous significance of, and placekeeping on, Toronto Island.

To register for events, access information, or share your feedback, visit toronto.ca/IslandMasterPlan or contact us at islandparkmasterplan@toronto.ca or (647) 427 5331.



Placekeeping and Engagement

The City is committed to meaningful, Indigenous-centred engagement as part of the Toronto Island Park Master Plan. We are aiming to work closely with rights-bearing First Nations & Métis communities, Indigenous organizations, Urban Indigenous serving agencies, and grassroots First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community members.

The process includes both Indigenous placekeeping (discussions focused on how this Master Plan can help the Toronto Island Park be a truly Indigenous place) and Indigenous engagement (discussions with Indigenous audiences — particularly First Nations, Métis, 2-Spirit people, Indigenous women, and Indigenous youth — about the broader Master Plan).

Contact Us

For general information about the project, contact:

Lori Ellis

Project Officer Strategic Projects | Parks Development
+ Capital Projects

City of Toronto

(416) 420 5825

Lori.Ellis@toronto.ca

toronto.ca/islandmasterplan
[#TOIslandPlan](https://twitter.com/TOIslandPlan)



Phase One Workbook

Towards A Vision (Phase 1 of 3)



How to use this workbook

This workbook is part of the Phase One engagement toolkit for the Toronto Island Park Master Plan. It includes more information about the Master Plan and different ways for you to share your feedback. We recommend reading the discussion guide first to learn more about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan, but it's not essential — you can go straight to sharing your feedback if you'd like.

Once you've completed the workbook, you can submit it by:

1. Using the self-addressed, prepaid envelope included (if you requested this toolkit in the mail)
2. Emailing photos or scanned copies of your feedback to the project team at islandparkmasterplan@toronto.ca
3. Leaving a message at the project voicemail: (647) 427 5331.

All feedback received or mailed by **April 9th, 2021** or earlier will be documented in the Phase One engagement report.



Don't forget to send a postcard!

The Phase One engagement toolkit also includes a postcard for you to share your vision for Toronto Island Park's future.

What's inside

This workbook includes information and questions about:

- Toronto Island Park: today and tomorrow
- Draft Drivers of Change
- Preliminary Guiding Principles

Toronto Island Park: today and tomorrow

We want to know what you enjoy the most about Toronto Island Park today that you think should stay the same, what you don't enjoy that you think should change, and what suggestions for improvements to the Toronto Island Park experience you have. You can share your feedback either by writing in the spaces below, by marking up the map on page 4, or both.

1. What do you most enjoy, and feel should not be changed about Toronto Island Park?
Think about all aspects of the experience, including food service and operations, attractions, rental operations, the journey there and back, and other parts of your experience.

2. What do you least enjoy about Toronto Island Park, that you think should change?
Think about all aspects of the experience, including food service and operations, attractions, rental operations, and other parts of your experience.

3. Do you have any other advice to share with the City about the Toronto Island Park Master Plan?

Toronto Island Park: today and tomorrow map

Using the map below, share feedback about the map by drawing the following symbols:



MOST ENJOY

Use this symbol to tell us what you like in the location you marked: thing you'd like to see preserved.



LEAST ENJOY

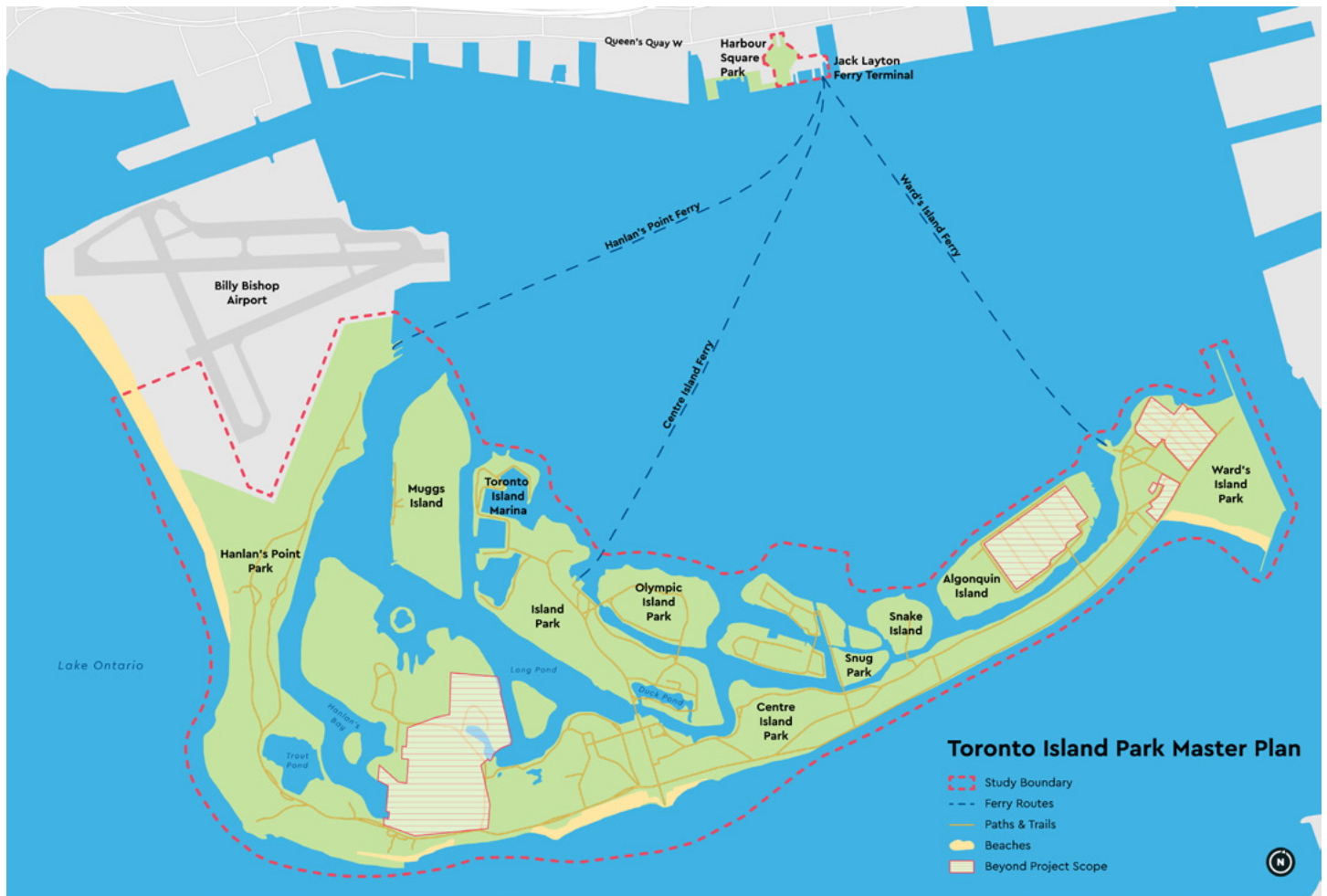
Use this symbol to tell us things you see or experience in the location you marked that you don't like and would like to see changed.



IMPROVEMENTS

Use this symbol to tell us what opportunities you'd like to see considered for the future of the location you marked.

Make sure to write a number beside the symbol to make it easy to refer to your comment. For example: ✓1 or X2 or ★3. Use the comment sheets on the following pages to write the comment connected to the location you've marked. If you run out of space, you can add as many pages as you'd like.





MOST ENJOY

✓1

✓2

✓3

✓4

✓5



LEAST ENJOY

X1

X2

X3

X4

X5



IMPROVEMENTS

★1

★2

★3

★4

★5

The Master Plan in Progress: Draft Drivers of Change



A 'Driver of Change' is an underlying challenge or opportunity that is driving the need for improvements to the Toronto Island Park. They are the reasons 'why' the Master Plan will be developed and will form the foundation of the Plan. Our Draft Drivers of Change are on the following pages.

Island Identity and Character

Since time immemorial, the Island has been a place of escape, respite, and healing. It is also a place for family and friends that supports a wide range of diverse users (the Indigenous community, families, newcomers, LGBTQ2S+) and experiences (hiking, biking, picnicking, days at the amusement park, lazy afternoons at the beach). It is important that the Island Master Plan creates opportunities to tell the story of the Island while reinforcing its existing character as a waterfront destination park that is safe and welcoming for all.

Indigenous Placekeeping

The Island is an important Indigenous place, and has been for millennia. For the Michi Saagiig, it was simply known as Mnisiing, meaning "on the islands." Later, they were collectively known as Aionwatha or Hiawatha's Island. It was long considered a place of healing and ceremony for Indigenous people. But this rich history and living culture is not reflected in Toronto Island Park as it exists today. The Master Plan process provides an opportunity to restore the Toronto Islands as an Indigenous place through storytelling and ceremony and by incorporating Indigenous approaches to land stewardship and placekeeping.

Visitor Experience and Programming

Currently, programming on the Island occurs mainly during the summer months, limiting opportunities for all-seasons enjoyment of the park. There is also limited information and no centralized location for promoting and informing Island users about available programming, either for planning purposes online or once people get to the Island. Expanding programming opportunities is impacted by the difficulties vendors experience accessing the island and a complicated permitting process that is not tailored to specific conditions on the Island or to event size. In addition, existing lease agreements limit opportunities to expand food and beverage options.

Access Improvements

Reaching the island is difficult in all seasons, from both a transportation and equity perspective. This is especially true during the winter months and for people with low-incomes or who live far from downtown. This can present a significant barrier to many people accessing the island. Circulation and getting around the island itself and reaching its many points of interest and destinations is also challenging since on Island transportation options are limited.

Ineffective Wayfinding and Information-Sharing

Finding your way around the Island's 330 Hectares of parkland is difficult because wayfinding and signage throughout the park is limited and not well coordinated. In addition, there is no way for park users to access comprehensive information about programming, ferry schedules, flooding, beach conditions, etc. This can be further complicated by intermittent cell service or WIFI on much of the island.

Inefficient Park Operations

Delivery of efficient and effective park operations on the Island are challenged by the lack of a system-wide approach and coordination between different City divisions overseeing various park management activities and functions. This can make event management especially difficult for third-party events and permit holders.

Aging Island Facilities and Infrastructure

Most facilities on the Island, including but not limited to ferry docks, washrooms, and concession buildings, were built decades ago and many are in a deteriorating state. The lack of winterization of facilities also limits opportunities for winter use of the Island.

Outdated Island Amenities

The Island's amenities include its beaches, internal waterways, amusement park, bike and canoe, kayak and paddleboard rentals, sporting facilities, and food and beverage options are a major part of the park's draw in the summertime, but not all of them are created equal. Some, like the Island's tennis courts, are significantly underutilized, while others, like the food and beverage options, lack diversity and are not meeting the needs of existing users.

'Taxed' Island Environment

Toronto Island is essentially a sandbar and has always been subject and vulnerable to the whims of Mother Nature. It is a dynamic environment that is constantly changing. The recent high lake effect has led to flooding and erosion, which has significantly impacted Torontonians' ability to use and enjoy the Island, and further degradation from these impacts needs to be mitigated. Park users are not aware of their impacts on the Island's sensitive ecosystems, such as sand dunes and forested areas. The Island Master Plan should address these impacts and ensure that Island users understand their role as stewards of this important park.

Lake Access Impacts

One of the defining features of the Island is the access it provides to water and the views across Lake Ontario or towards the city skyline. Recent flooding and erosion (especially in the last five years), has resulted in significant impacts to the beaches and natural and engineered shorelines of the Island. This has limited beach access, boardwalks and other shoreline areas across the Islands, limiting park users' ability to enjoy them.

Population Growth

The population of downtown Toronto is growing at a pace that far exceeds the rate of growth for the city as a whole, with 10,000 residents added each year. According to the City's new TOcore Downtown Secondary Plan, downtown could nearly double in size by 2041, to reach a population of 475,000. TOcore and City's Parkland Strategy have also identified that downtown Toronto is highly parkland deficient and have further linked population growth with increased demand and use of parks. As Toronto and its downtown grow, the park system needs to expand with it.

The Island as a Place for Arts and Culture

For many years, the Island has inspired artists, writers, composers, musicians, photographers and creative people from all walks of life. Today, it is home to a rich artist community complete with recording studios, artists residency programs and outdoor galleries, and it continues to serve as a backdrop and inspiration for creative people from around Toronto and beyond. The Master Plan presents an opportunity to celebrate and support the arts and culture community to continue to be a source of inspiration and contribute to the Island's unique character and identity.

New Trends in Demographics and Park Use

Further, changing demographics and most recently the global pandemic are giving rise to new trends and use patterns that can also be seen to be influencing the Toronto Islands. These changes and trends need to be better understood to inform decisions around improving island services and experiences. Toronto's park system will need to expand and improve as the city grows to ensure that parkland is accessible, functional, connected, and resilient as is addressing new trends for services and amenities.

-
4. Do our Draft Drivers of Change resonate with you? Based on your experience, is there anything major missing that you think should be added?

The Master Plan in Progress: Preliminary Guiding Principles



Guiding Principles are directed and defined statements that will guide the direction of what Toronto Island Park will become. Our Preliminary Guiding Principles are that Toronto Island Park will become:

- A model for resilience, environmental excellence, and sustainability.
- A destination of balanced and varied activity celebrating four seasons.
- A world-class waterfront park, central to Toronto's sense of place.
- An Island Park that Celebrates and protects its natural and cultural heritage..
- An Island Park that honours and respects the Indigenous Community in an authentic way.
- An Island Park that consists of rooms with diverse and memorable experiences.
- An Island Oasis – car-free, care-free and protected.
- A place to visit, explore and discover new experiences in every return visit.
- A park, community and culture centred on balance and respect for past, present and future, celebrating diversity while ensuring inclusion and accessibility to all.

5. What are your thoughts on our Preliminary Guiding Principles? Do any resonate for you more than others? Is there anything major missing or off-base?



What if the
Island was
accessible
to all?

What if there
was no garbage
at the island?

What if we could
celebrate the
Island's history?

What if the Island...

The City of Toronto is developing a Toronto Island Park Master Plan and we want to know your vision!



Toronto
Island
Master
Plan

Where do you see Toronto Island Park in five, ten, and many years to come? What's *your* vision?

Use the space below to finish the sentence "What if the island..."

Share your ideas!



Take a picture and email it to us:
islandparkmasterplan@toronto.ca



Post it on social media:
#TOIslandPlan



Call us and leave a voicemail:
(647) 427-5331



If you received this postcard in the mail, use the return envelope found in the toolkit and **mail it back** to us.