

# Moss Park Improvements and John Innes Community Recreation Centre Redesign Project



Community  
Update

June 30, 2021

# Land Acknowledgement

We'd like to begin by honouring the land that we are on. If you are not currently in Toronto, we'd encourage you to learn about the lands you're on.

We acknowledge the land we are meeting on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

# Goals for This Project Update

1. Provide a resource with information about the Moss Park Improvements Project and the John Innes Community Recreation Centre Redesign Project in advance of public consultation beginning in the fall.
2. Explain the project process and how you can get involved.



**Image description:** Illustrated speech bubbles

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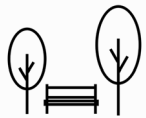
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# Project Overview

New Community Recreation Centre and Moss Park  
Improvements

# Key Project Components

## Major Park Improvements



Extensive park improvements with passive and active recreation amenities



Supporting equity-deserving groups in park and recreation programs



Integrate Indigenous placekeeping elements

## New Community Recreation Centre



Double gym



2 Pools



Multi-use community space

## Upgrades to Arena



Exterior Upgrades

**PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:** Every project component will be shaped by the public input collected through the process.



# Why is a redesign of Moss Park and the John Innes CRC needed?

The redesign of Moss Park and the 70 year-old John Innes CRC is needed to serve the evolving needs of both the **high concentration of vulnerable and equity-deserving populations in the local area** as well as meet the needs of the many new community members and to support the area's future **population growth**.



**Image description:** Exterior landscape of the John Innes Community Recreation Centre



# Project Context

## 2016: More Moss Park

### Who

Partnership between The 519 and The City of Toronto

### What

- Redevelop John Innes Community Recreation Centre
  - Social services co-located within the building
  - Proposed relocation of CRC
  - Redevelop Moss Park Arena
- Improve the park space around them

### Goals

Improve facilities, programs and services, and create new buildings and spaces that are welcoming, equitable and accessible for all

**NOTE:** This project only reached the feasibility study and engagement phases.

## 2021: Moss Park Improvements & John Innes CRC Redevelopment

### Who

The City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. This project is made possible through section 37 funding identified by Councillor Wong-Tam's office.

### What

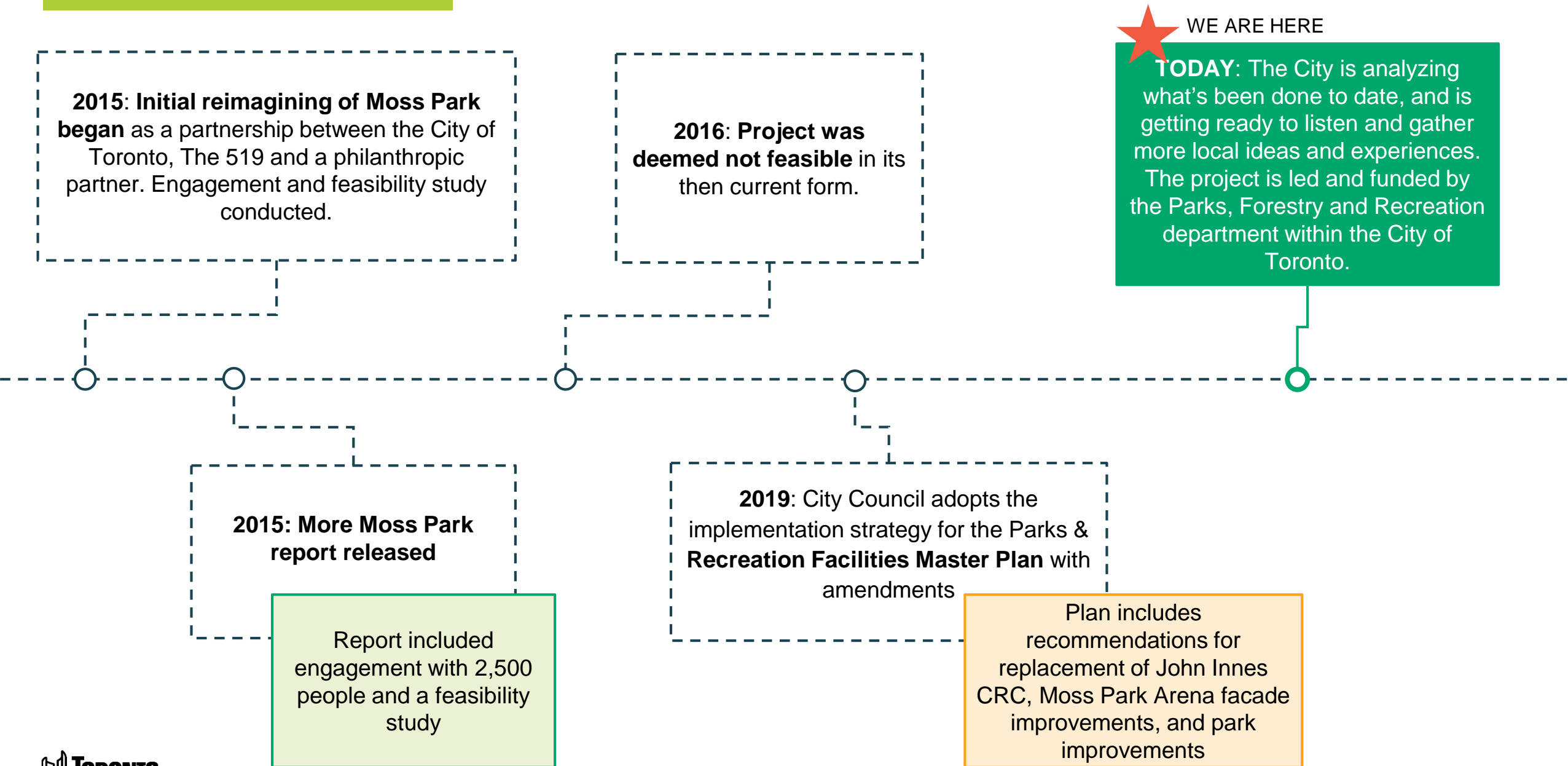
- Redevelop John Innes Community Recreation Centre
  - Focus on recreation rather than social services
  - New building has a smaller footprint than 2016 feasibility study design, but a larger footprint than the current building
- Remodelling of exterior of Moss Park Arena
- Extensive improvements to Moss Park

### Goals

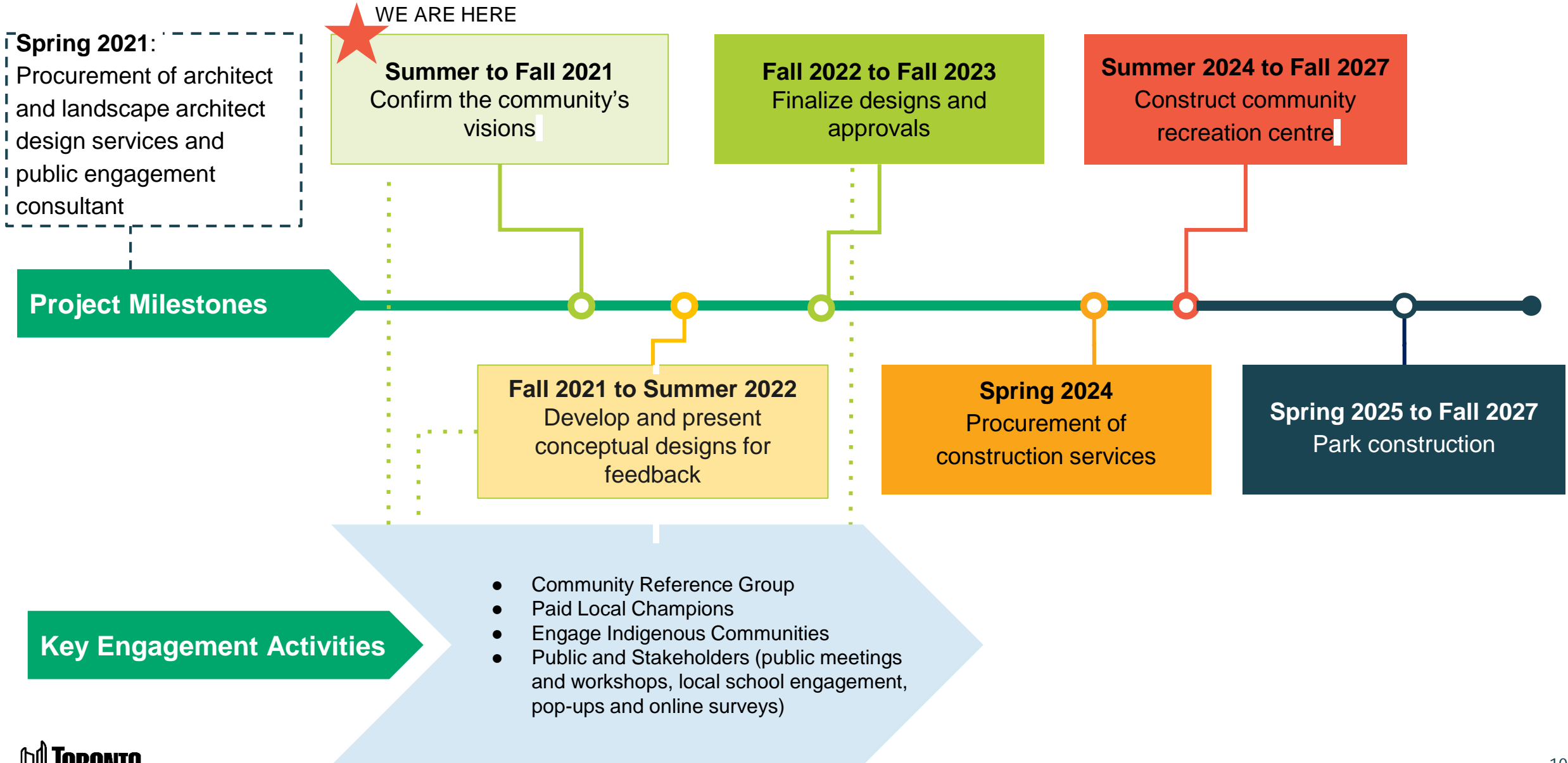
Build on learnings from the More Moss Park process to improve facilities, programs and services, and to create new buildings and spaces that are welcoming, equitable and accessible for all.



# Project History



# Current Project Timeline



# Introducing the Project Team



**Daniel Fusca,**  
Manager, Public  
Consultation, Parks,  
Forestry & Recreation

**Pablo Muñoz,** Senior  
Public Consultation  
Coordinator, Parks,  
Forestry & Recreation

**Suzanne Cooke-  
Wooland,** CP Capital  
Lead, Parks, Forestry  
& Recreation

**Nancy Chater,** CP  
Capital Lead, Parks,  
Forestry & Recreation



**Nadia Galati,**  
Principal and  
Engagement Lead

**Emma Clayton  
Jones,** Planner and  
Engagement  
Coordinator

**Trina Moyan Bell**  
Indigenous  
Engagement Lead

**Dr. Alex Abramovich**  
Strategic Advisor



**David Leinster,**  
Principal, Landscape  
Architecture

**Jennifer Williamson,**  
Studio Manager,  
Landscape  
Architecture

**Mike Hudson,** Urban  
Designer



**Brian Porter,**  
Principal

**Matthew Hickey,**  
Partner



**Chris Burbidge,**  
Principal

**Robert Allen,**  
Partner

**Janice Lee,**  
Architect

# Key Project Goals

**Launch a new initiative that is informed by the outcomes of the 2016 More Moss Park Feasibility Study:**

1. Replace the John Innes CRC with a new, bigger facility that can better meet the community's needs
2. Make extensive park improvements to meet current and future needs of the community
3. Build on the park's long standing role as a hub for the diverse communities and people of Moss Park
4. Ground the project by honouring local communities and by building on the assets of the park and community and the experiences and goals of diverse park users



# Key Project Goals

5. Build on the input received from the previous *More Moss Park* community consultation process
6. Deliver an accessible and welcome place for all members of the Moss Park and John Innes CRC community
7. Work closely with community throughout the project



**Image description:** Main entrance of the John Innes Community Recreation Centre



We can appreciate that you may be feeling...

- **Excited that this project is moving forward** about contributing your ideas and vision for a new park and community recreation centre
- **Frustrated** that many of you may have already been consulted and shared your perspectives and the centre and park haven't already been re-built
- **Looking forward** to seeing the project get done



# Moss Park & John Innes Community Recreation Centre Today

# Moss Park Location & Context

**Moss Park** (the area in the red box) is bounded by **Sherbourne Street** on the east side, **The Armoury** on the west side, **Queen Street** to the south and **Shuter Street** to the north.



**Map description:** Context map locating Moss Park and the surrounding area.

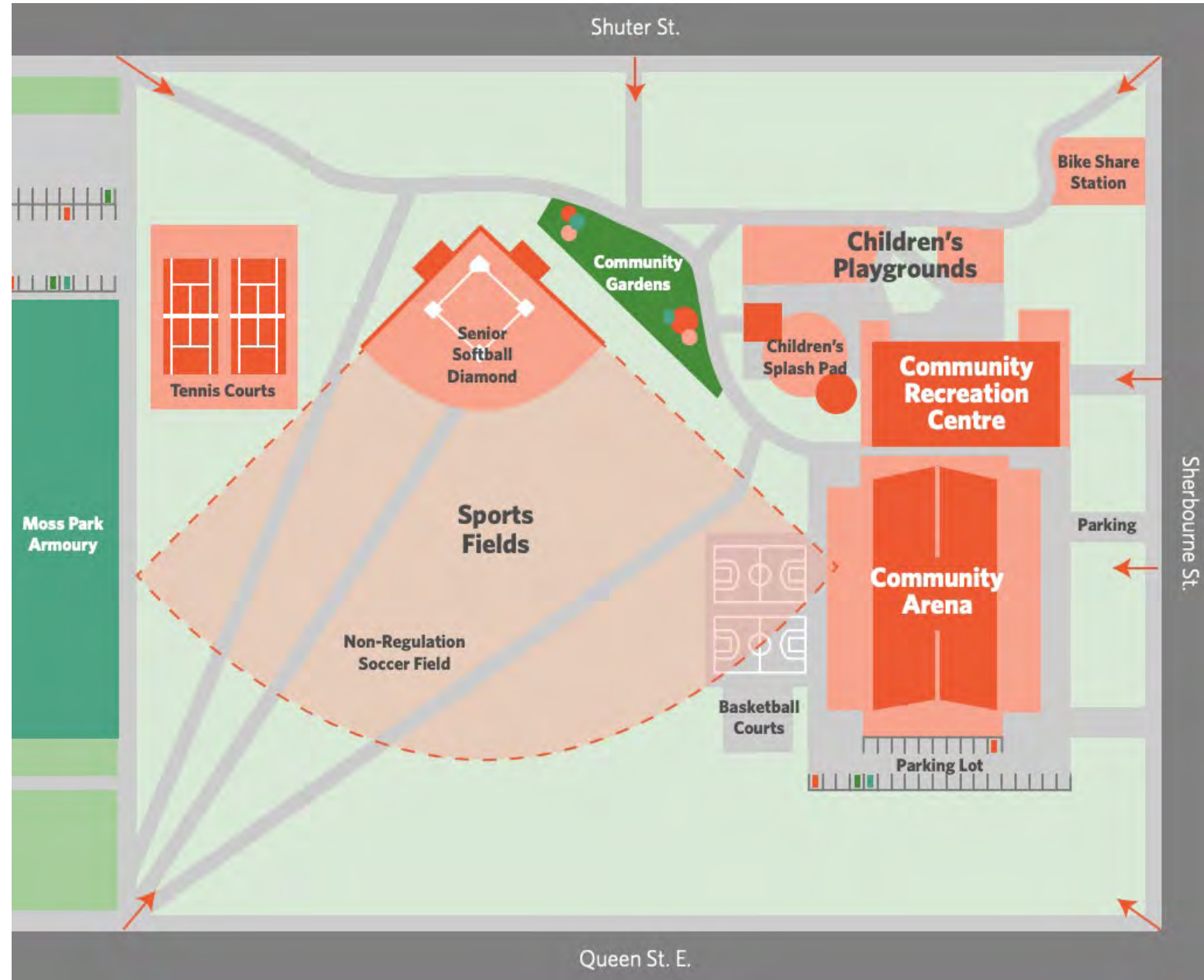
# Current Moss Park Site

Existing Public Park includes:

- Baseball diamond
- Soccer field
- Two tennis courts
- Basketball courts
- Wading pool
- Playground
- Community gardens
- Open lawn and trees

On the east side of the park is the Moss Park Arena and John Innes Community Recreation Centre.

**Map description:** Map of Moss Park that illustrates the locations of existing park amenities like the community recreation centre, the baseball diamond, the children's playground, community gardens, etc.





# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Moss Park welcome signage



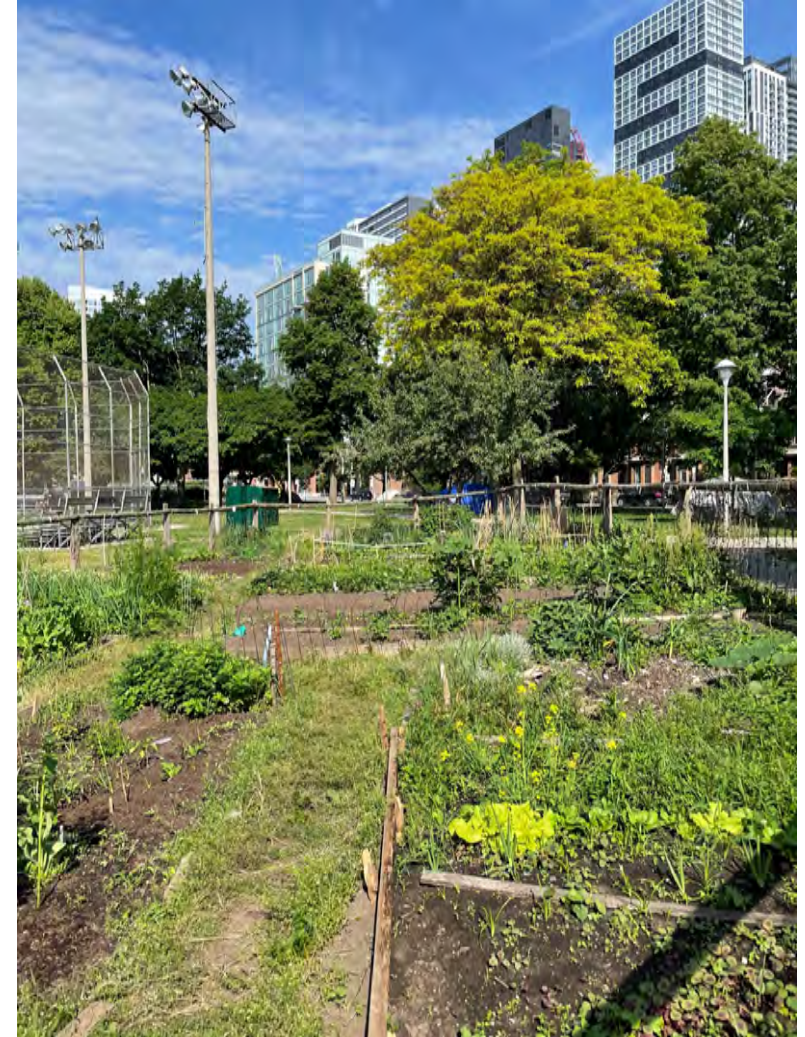
**Image description:** Moss Park at sunset



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Existing children's playground equipment



**Image description:**  
Existing Community gardens



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Non-AODA compliant entryway/exit to the John Innes Community Recreation Centre



**Image description:** Deterioration of wood window frames

# Moss Park Today: Context Images

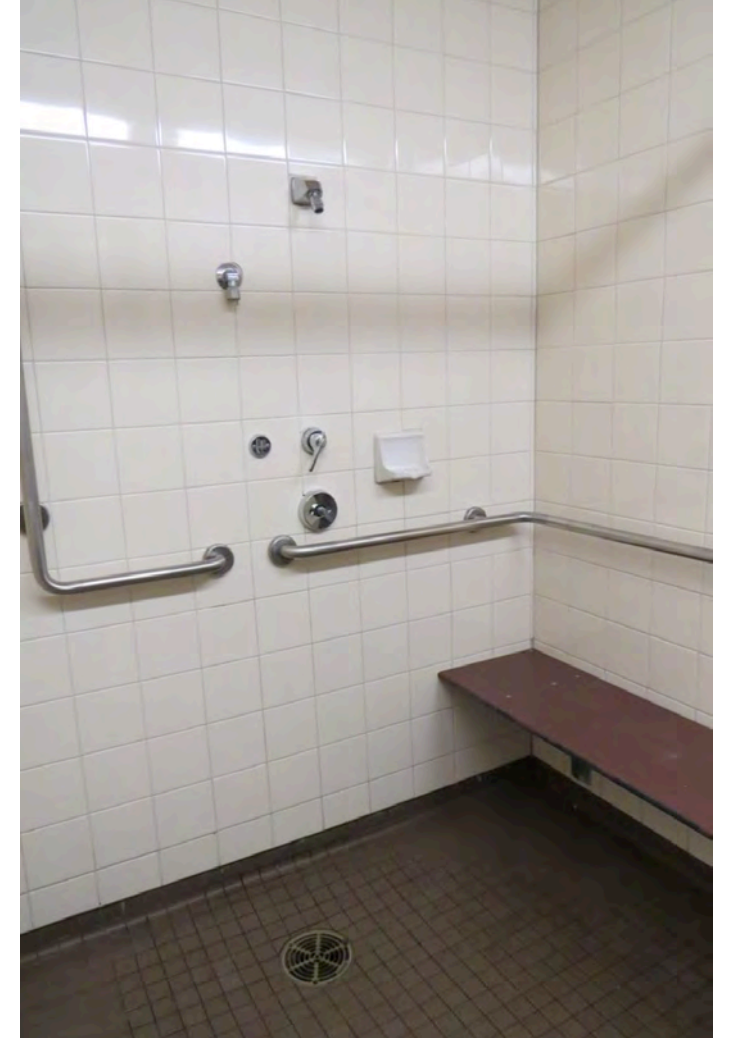




# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Existing hand washing areas in the washroom



**Image description:** Shower facilities

# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Reception area of the John Innes Community Recreation Centre (view from main entrance)



**Image description:** Reception area of the John Innes Community Recreation Centre (view from hallway)



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Fitness space with weight lifting equipment



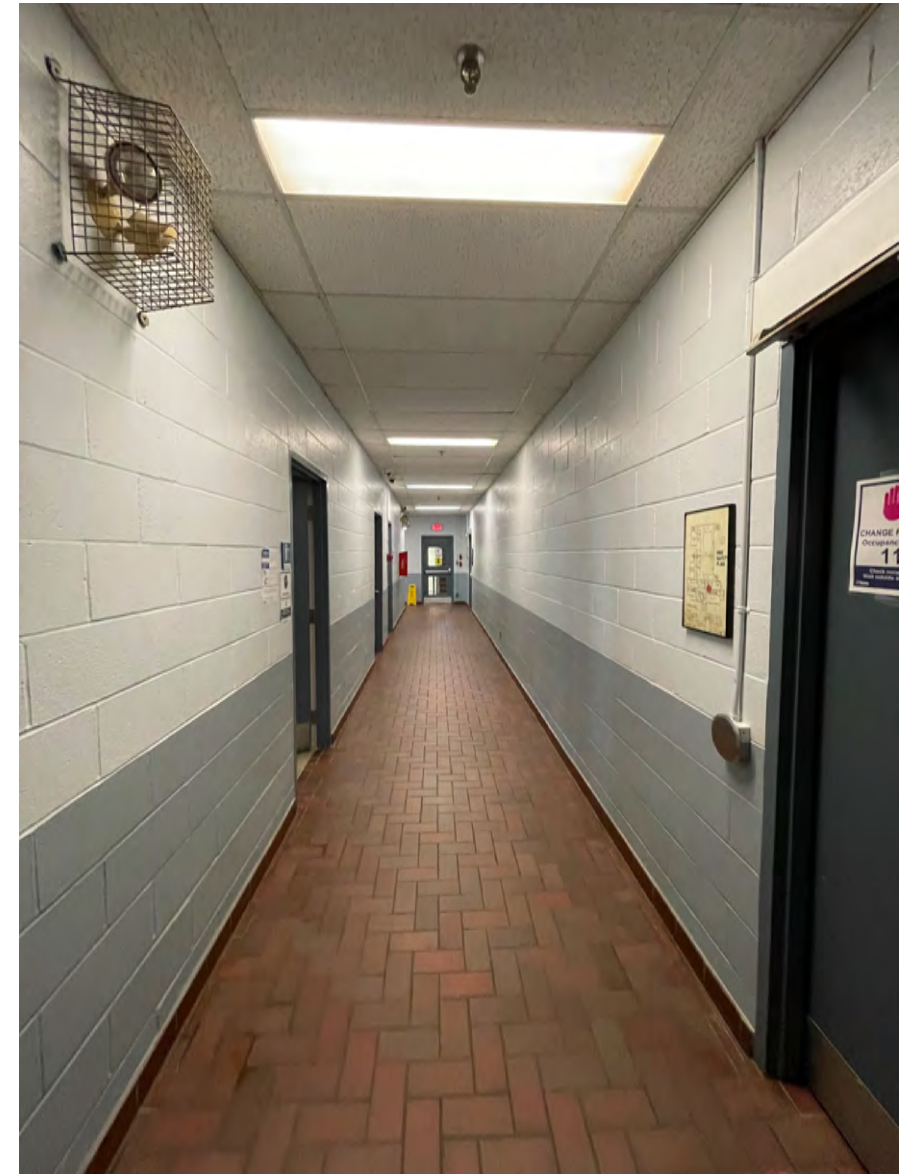
**Image description:** Multi-purpose programming space



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Workshop space



**Image description:** Hallway



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Gymnasium at the John Innes CRC



# Moss Park Today: Context Images



**Image description:** Lap pool at the John Innes Community Recreation Centre

# Other Relevant Local Projects

The neighbourhood around Moss Park has several proposed and confirmed improvements projects underway that provide better opportunities for more integrated health, mental health, housing, and other services.

2024

2021

2024 -  
2026

2026  
TB  
D

2029

2024

**St Luke's United Church (353 Sherbourne)**  
Revitalization include: Affordable Rental  
Health and Wellness, Food Bank

2021

**St Mike's Detox at Sherbourne Health  
(333 Sherbourne St)**  
Renovation to include withdrawal  
management beds

2024 - 2026

**George St. Hub (339 George St)**  
New multipurpose hub for people experiencing  
homelessness: Shower, Laundry, Food,  
Lockers, Haircuts

2026

**Dan Harrison TCHC Building  
(251 Sherbourne)**  
Supportive/Affordable Housing People with  
complex needs

TBD

**All Saints (315 Dundas St E)**  
Housing and social supports Community mental  
health/wellness programs

2029

**Downtown Relief Line Station  
(Queen & Sherbourne)**



# External Consideration: Metrolinx



**Map description:** Metrolinx Ontario Line map

# What We've Heard to Date

# 2016: More Moss Park - Key Findings

Overall enthusiasm about facilities and park redevelopment

Safety is a priority for everyone including that of vulnerable populations such as those experiencing homelessness

Desire for a more open and accessible park and CRC that is welcoming to everyone

Concern about disruption and displacement of services during construction

# 2016: More Moss Park - Key Findings

Desire for more flexible, multi-use spaces for different activities

Interest in how the redevelopment can balance the needs of local residents and regional users

Food security should be an important consideration and is an opportunity for community-building

Redevelopment must continue to include Indigenous people and organizations to shape the program design moving forward

## 2021: Pre-Consultation Conversations

In 2021, we have been having initial conversations with the following groups:

Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre

Garden District Residents Association

Cabbagetown South Residents Association

Housing and Shelter Operators

Residents and Sports Groups

Service Providers



# 2021: Pre-Consultation Conversations - Key Takeaways

**Many important ideas have been shared. So far in 2021, some key takeaways are:**

- Maintenance of Access to programming in the community is critical
- Displacement and other impacts of construction and revitalization, especially those faced by equity-deserving community members, should be avoided as much as possible
- Current park users should feel welcome and able to use the park and Community Recreation Centre in the future
- Accessibility and dignity should be prioritized
- The engagement process needs to be proactive, actively and regularly reaching out to public and stakeholders via email and other appropriate channels
  - This includes reaching out to unhoused communities and Indigenous communities in appropriate ways
- Safety is a priority for many stakeholders, though it means different things to different people, depending on their lived experiences
- The digital programming options and social media communications that became normal during COVID-19 should be maintained

# What Will Make this Project Successful?

The Park and Community Recreation Centre will serve as a **gathering place** for an array of people, communities and experiences.

The project will be a success if the **diversity of community members** who use the Park and Community Recreation Centre today as well as future community members – feel interested, **welcome**, and **safe** to use these amenities in the future.



**Image description:** Moss Park sports field area

# What's Next: How People Will Shape the Project

How public and stakeholders' participation and input will shape the future of Moss Park and the John Innes CRC

\*Please note that all consultations will follow relevant public health guidelines

# Anticipated Public Engagement Timeline

1

## SET THE STAGE Summer 2021

*Introduce the project, explain the process and lay the project groundwork.*

- Stakeholder Interviews
- Project Update: Jun 30, 2021
- Project Team Equity Training (Architects, Landscape Architects, Consultation)

2

## CONFIRM THE VISION Fall 2021

*Revisit More Moss Park findings and explore how things have changed since 2015.*

*Better understand evolving local issues and how the project can best support local needs. Confirm the project Vision, Principles, and Big Moves.*

- Community Reference Group (CRG) Meeting #1: Late Aug 2021
- Local Champions Group (LCG) Meeting #1: Sept 2021
- Indigenous Engagement: Sept 2021 onwards
- School Engagement: Sept/Oct 2021
- Pop-ups: Sept/Oct 2021
- CRG Meeting #2: Oct 2021
- LCG Meeting #2: Oct 2021
- Public Workshop: Oct 2021

3

## EARLY DESIGN IDEAS Fall 2021 to Spring 2022

*Use what we learn in Phase 2 to start developing ideas for park amenities and concepts for the new CRC (i.e., entrance locations, etc.). Review ideas with community and revise ideas based on feedback.*

- CRG Meeting #3: Dec 2021
- LCG Meeting #3: Dec 2021
- Indigenous Engagement: ongoing
- CRG Meeting #4: Mar 2022
- LCG Meeting #4: Mar 2022
- School Engagement: Jan/Feb 2022
- Pop-ups: Mar/Apr 2022
- Public Open House: Apr 2022

4

## FINAL DESIGN Spring to Fall 2022

*Work on plans and designs for Moss Park and the John Innes CRC. Review ideas with the community and revise plans and designs based on feedback.*

- CRG Meeting #5: May 2022
- LCG Meeting #5: May 2022
- Indigenous Engagement: ongoing
- CRG Meeting #6: Aug 2022
- LCG Meeting #6: Aug 2022
- Public Open House: Sept 2022

### Engagement Activities

**ONLINE ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT:** Project website, online surveys, local communications campaign, project newsletters, etc.

Design will respond to what is learned through engagement

Set the Stage

Confirm the Vision

Early Design Ideas

Final Design



# Community Reference Group

Who	Key local stakeholders including local residents, nearby business improvement areas, local service organizations, and community organizations operating within the vicinity of the park.
What	Focused, deliberative discussions Project newsletters and ongoing correspondence
When	PHASE 2 CRG Meeting #1: Summer 2021  PHASE 3 CRG Meeting #2: Fall 2021 CRG Meeting #3: Winter 2022  PHASE 4 CRG Meeting #4: Sumer 2022

# Local Champions

<b>Who</b>	Local residents who are already engaged in city-building and community organizing, who are well connected with residents in the community.
<b>What</b>	Paid community-based research role, provides a critical link to community members not often included in formal planning processes Project newsletters and ongoing correspondence
<b>When</b>	<p><b>PHASE 2</b> LCG Meeting #1: Fall 2021</p> <p><b>PHASE 3</b> LCG Meeting #2: Fall 2021 LCG Meeting #3: Winter 2022</p> <p><b>PHASE 4</b> LCG Meeting #4: Summer 2022</p>

# Engage Indigenous Communities

Who	Engaging Indigenous groups, activists and organizations that inhabit and serve Moss Park residents is paramount to accurately inform public programming, and establish Indigenous planning and design within the revitalization process. The Indigenous engagement process will be led by Trina Moyan Bell.
What	Specific meetings with Indigenous communities and organizations
When	<div>PHASE 2</div> <div>Indigenous Engagement: Fall 2021 onwards</div> <div>PHASE 3</div> <div>Indigenous Engagement: ongoing</div> <div>PHASE 4</div> <div>Indigenous Engagement: ongoing</div>



# Connecting with the Public & Stakeholders

<b>Who</b>	The diversity of publics and stakeholders connected to Moss Park.
<b>What</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dialogue with stakeholders</li><li>• Public information meetings, workshop and open houses Online engagement (project website, online surveys and project newsletter)</li><li>• Pop-ups (creative outreach to the general public, including story mapping or illustration-based inputs)</li><li>• School engagement (outreach to students and youth through pop-ups or other creative methods, such as online games)</li></ul>
<b>When</b>	<p><b>PHASE 2</b> School Engagement: Fall 2021 Pop-ups: Fall 2021 Public Workshop: Fall 2021</p> <p><b>PHASE 3</b> School Engagement: Winter 2022 Pop-ups: Winter 2022 Public Open House: Winter/Spring 2022</p> <p><b>PHASE 4</b> Public Open House: Fall 2022</p>

# Online Engagement

Who	Diversity of publics and stakeholders connected to Moss Park
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Updates to City of Toronto website, with links to online engagement activities and invitations to attend upcoming pop-up events, Workshops and Open House</li><li>• Project newsletter</li></ul>
When	<p>PHASE 2 Online engagement: ongoing Newsletter: Fall 2021</p> <p>PHASE 3 Online engagement: ongoing Newsletter: Winter 2022</p> <p>PHASE 3 Online engagement: ongoing Newsletter: Fall 2022</p>

# Next Steps



## Upcoming engagement opportunities

- Project Newsletter #1 (Late Summer 2021)
- Online engagement - project website (Summer 2021) and online survey (Sept 2021)
- Community Meeting / Workshop (September 2021)

## Ways for you to stay connected

- Project Website / Sign-up for updates: <https://www.toronto.ca/mosspark>
- Contact the project team by sending an email to:
  - Daniel Fusca: [daniel.fusca@toronto.ca](mailto:daniel.fusca@toronto.ca)
  - Pablo Muñoz: [pablo.munoz@toronto.ca](mailto:pablo.munoz@toronto.ca)



# APPENDIX

Area Context, Policy Context, Additional Information

# Moss Park Neighbourhood Context

56.4% of residents are couples without children (the median age is 41)

Apartment area  
- 94.7% of area housing is apartments

66.4% of residents rent their housing, while 33.6% own

Over 50% of seniors in the neighbourhood live alone (twice the city's average)

30% of households have an income of less than \$20,000

54.3% of residents are Black, Indigenous or People of Colour



**Image description:** Nearby buildings and built form on Shuter St



# Moss Park Context



**Image description:** Moss Park entrance way from Shuter St and Sherbourne St

Community of  
care, with  
many local  
shelters &  
social services

Significant  
unhoused  
population in  
the park and  
surrounding  
area

Gathering  
place for  
diverse  
Indigenous  
and  
2SLGBTQ  
communities

Area of  
significant  
population  
growth

# Key Policy Context



Toronto  
Official Plan



Parkland  
Strategy



Facilities  
Master Plan



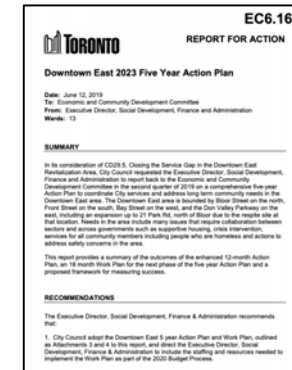
Poverty Reduction  
Strategy



Resilience  
Strategy



Downtown Parks and  
Public Realm Plan



Downtown East  
Action Plan



# What is a Community Recreation Centre (CRC)?

**CRCs are prominent community destinations that accommodate a wide variety of registered and drop-in City programming, spontaneous use and bookings, permits and events that reflect the specific needs of area residents.**



**Image description:** Reception area at the John Innes CRC



# Community Recreation Centre Components

## Standard components of a CRC are:

- **Aquatic component**, including two pools (a 25 meter 6 lane lap pool and a leisure/tot pool)
- **Gymnasium component**, including a double gym with a mezzanine walking track
- **Multi-purpose programming space**, including dance, fitness, aerobic and meeting spaces
- **Public/ administrative support spaces**



**Image description:**  
Gymnasium at the John Innes CRC



**Image description:**  
Programming space at the John Innes CRC

# Thank you!