

Golf Review

Exploring Potential Opportunities for
Toronto's City-operated Golf Courses



City-wide Public
Meeting

June 14, 2021

Land Acknowledgement

I'd like to begin by honouring the land that I'm on. If you are not currently in Toronto, I 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.



Agenda



6:00pm Zoom Tips, Meeting Goals & Introductions



6:10pm Presentation

- **Project Overview**
- **Setting the Scene: Policy and Site Profiles**
- **Preliminary Opportunities**



6:40pm Q&A Period



7:15pm Breakout Groups



7:50pm. Final Q&A and Next Steps



Project and Engagement Goals

Golf Review Project Goals

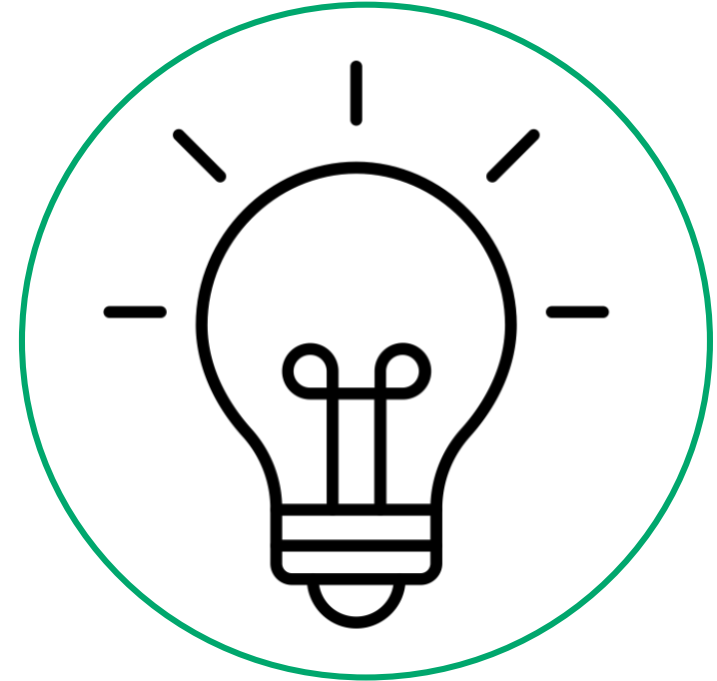
- High-quality and affordable golf
- Uphold environmental stewardship
- Be financially sustainable and responsible
- Improve golf-related amenities
- Increase public space access
- Balance multiple and competing desired uses for the sites



Photo: City of Toronto

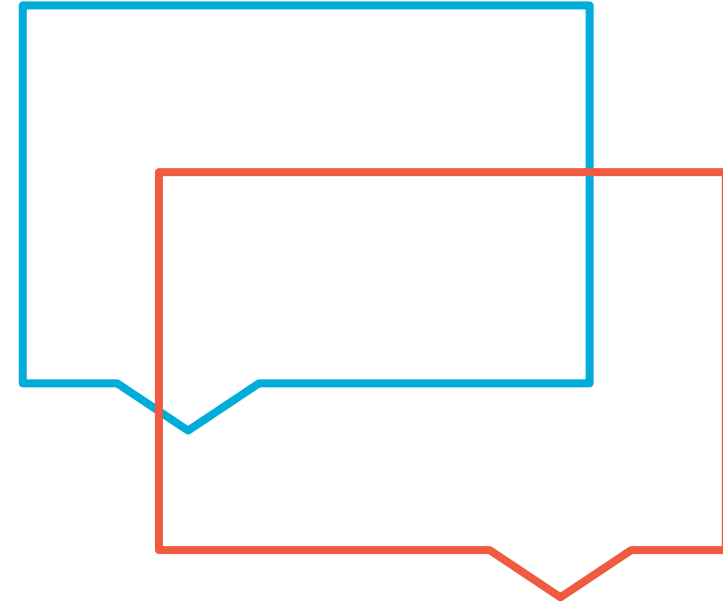
Golf Review Public Engagement

- Engage a diversity of people in the Golf Review process
 - Focus Groups and One-on-one interviews
 - Public Meeting (June 14, 2021)
 - Local Community Workshops (Early July 2021)
- Provide information about how the City makes decisions
- Share preliminary opportunity ideas and gather the public's input, visions and perspectives about the future of the City's golf courses



Meeting Goals

1. Share information about the golf operational review project including context, policy framework, and preliminary opportunities
2. Learn about your experiences (if any) with the City's golf courses and what you want for the future



Project Team



Alex Deighan, Project Manager, Parks Forestry & Recreation (PFR)

Danny Brown, Project Officer, PFR

Alex Lavasidis, Senior Public Consultation Officer, PFR



Nadia Galati, Principal and Engagement Lead

Jao Dantes, Planner and Engagement Coordinator



Carol McGran, Vice-President, Project Manager

Josh Colle, Senior Vice-President, Project Manager

Cecilia Wang, Director, Project Coordinator



Alex Deighan

Project Manager, Parks, Forestry & Recreation
City of Toronto



Project Overview

Project timelines & activities to date, consultation process overview, review what is open for discussion

Where We Are in the Project Today

- The City is **reviewing the operations** of its five (5) golf courses
- The City is considering opportunities to **improve the golf courses as places to play golf**
- The City is also exploring potential opportunities for **additional and/or complementary uses** for the golf courses
- This exploration is informed by ongoing processes including a **city-wide community consultation**



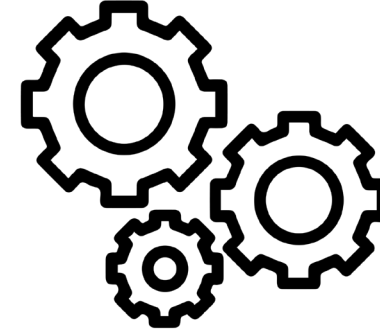
Photo: City of Toronto

Background Context



Ownership Structure

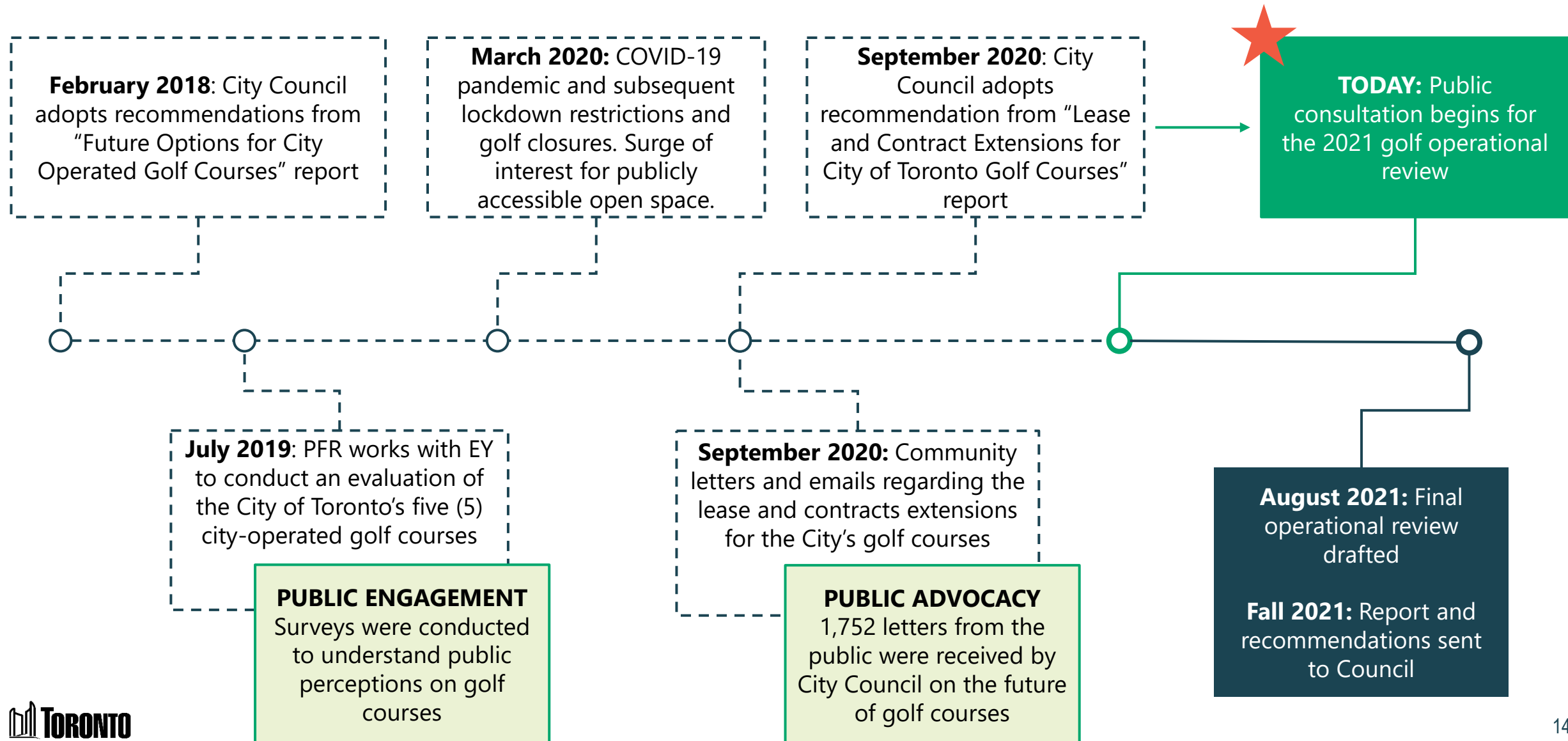
- All five (5) city operated golf courses are either primarily owned by the City or the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)
- The golf courses are designated as Parks and Open Space Areas. They are governed by the City of Toronto Ravine and Natural Feature Protection by-law and TRCA regulations.



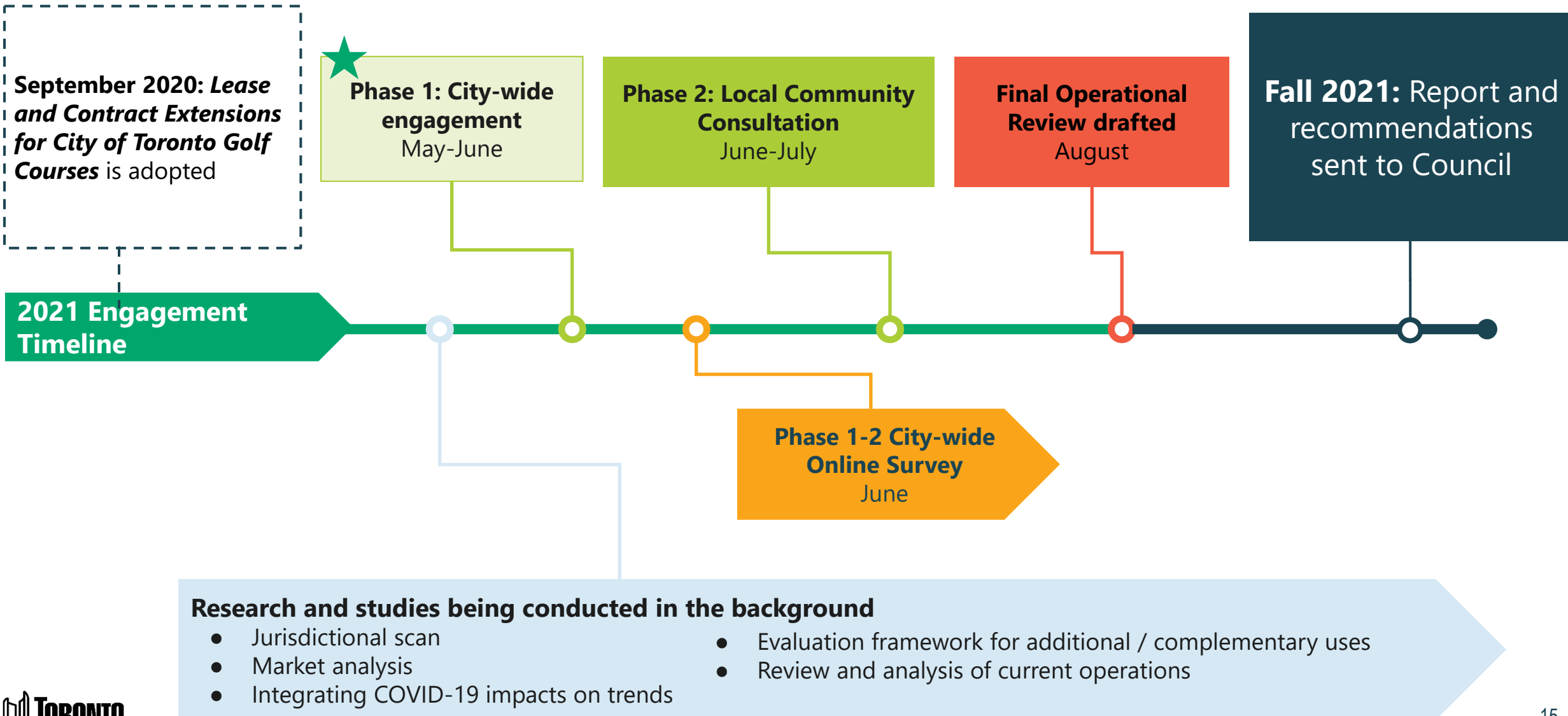
Operational Structure

- All five (5) golf courses are managed by PFR and are under a mixed operational model:
 - PFR maintains golf course assets and turf
 - Procured operators manages ticket sales, golf cart rentals, pro shops, and food and beverage operations
- This golf review process will inform future operating models that ensure long-term success and financial viability

Project Overview



Project Timeline



Opportunities for Discussion

Ideas **OPEN** for Discussion

- Improving the sites as golf courses
- Improving complementary non-golf access to courses
- Expanding recreational opportunities
- Ecological restoration and environmental stewardship
- Access to food growing opportunities
- Facilitating opportunities for Indigenous cultural practices
- Other innovative ideas that you may have within current possibility

Ideas **NOT OPEN** for Discussion

- Residential uses
- The construction of large facilities within floodplains
- The sale or disposal of parkland
- Free golf play



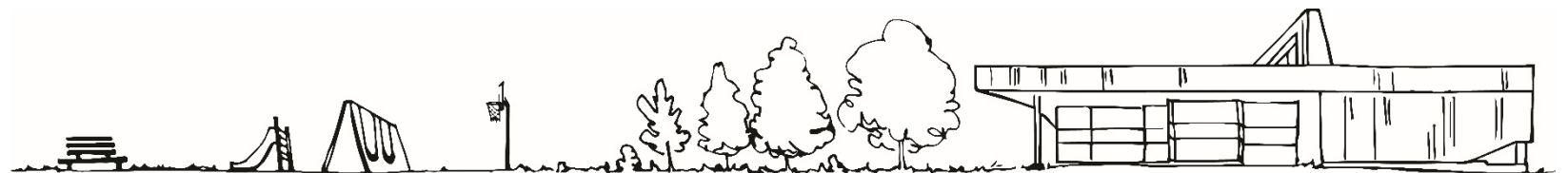
What We Have Heard to Date

July 2019 EY Consultations

- Location and price matter
- Improve speed of play, facilities, and food and beverage
- Non-golfers' suggestions for alternative uses (e.g. naturalization, off-season uses, camping, housing, etc.)

September 2020 letters to City Council

- Reallocate areas for food growing opportunities
- Focus on food sovereignty with/for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC)
- Repurpose to address multiple City challenges (public space, food insecurity, etc.)
- Naturalize golf courses to improve resilience and advance climate goals
- Declining golf revenue trends



What We Have Heard to Date – PHASE 1 Engagement

Engaged Group	What We Heard
Golf Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open to additional and complementary uses• Open to reducing number of holes to accommodate additional programming• Outcomes from previous engagement still resonate (i.e., location, pricing, speed of play, food and beverage, etc.)• Top Golf, additional golf programming, designated practice areas, and fling golf can make golf more approach for new audiences• City courses currently providing entry level golf for those new to game, and helping grow the sport
Advocacy / Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritize Indigenous placekeeping• Leverage the golf review project to address City's biodiversity goals and challenges• Identified that preliminary opportunities resonate and are all interconnected• Appreciate efforts to make golf play more accessible and approachable for prospective users• Identified growing and changes in demand for all-season uses• Prioritize the needs of the immediate local community

What We Have Heard to Date – PHASE 1 Engagement

Engaged Group	What We Heard
Food Access Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure food growing opportunities on golf courses are accessible to local community• Explore alternative food opportunities like beekeeping and backyard hens program if food growing is limited (i.e., floodplains, soil quality)• Identified that most of the necessary resources to grow food already exist on golf course sites (i.e., storage sheds, tilling equipment, gardening tools, etc.)• Prioritize community garden model over allotment garden model• Use data on the City's community gardening and allotment gardening waitlists/demand data to determine areas of most need for food growing• Prioritize the needs of the immediate local community

Setting the Scene

Backgrounder, Policy Context, High-level Golf Course Profiles, Parkland and Environmental Context

City of Toronto Golf Course Locations



Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)

- The golf course lands are subject to the TRCA regulations and approvals regarding use of the lands.
- While TRCA is being consulted as part of this process, any future suggested changes or significant alterations to the landscapes would be subject to TRCA review and approval.

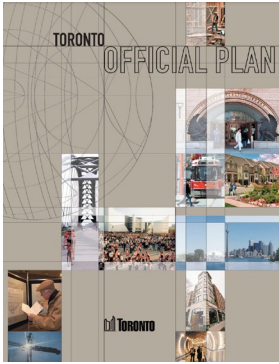
Ravine and Natural Feature Protection Bylaw

- The golf courses are also subject to the the Ravine Protection & Natural Feature Bylaw, first passed by City Council on October 3, 2002. It is a tool to protect features (trees and landform) and functions (ecology and hydrology) of the ravine and natural feature system by encouraging environmentally responsible management.

Designated as Parks and Open Space

- Cannot sell or get rid of golf course lands.
- Development is generally prohibited within Parks and Open Space Areas except for recreational and cultural facilities, conservation projects, and similar non-residential or commercial uses

Key Policy Context



**Toronto
Official Plan**



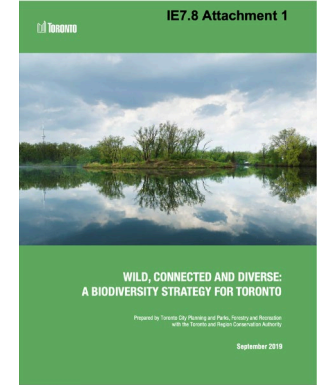
**Parkland
Strategy**



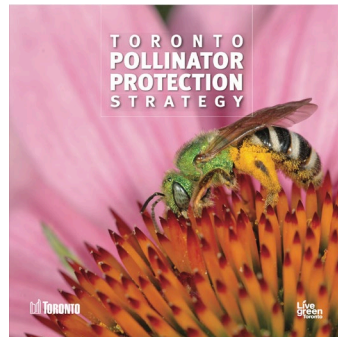
**Facilities Master
Plan (FMP)**



**Ravine
Strategy**



**Biodiversity
Strategy**



**Pollinator Protection
Strategy**



CanopyTO



**Poverty Reduction
Strategy**



**Resilience
Strategy**

City of Toronto Golf Course Locations



Profile: Tam O'Shanter

Play

- 34,595 Rounds played in 2020. Down from 36,711 in 2019
- Facilities include restaurant, rentals, 3 washrooms
- Additional recreational programming: fling golf, snow trail loop

Place

- Adjacent to trail network, transit network, community/recreation centre and two parks
- Including Tam O'Shanter, local residents have adequate access to local parkland

People

- Above-average senior population (21%)
- Above-average visible minority population (82%)
- Large immigrant population (70%)
- Below-average median household income (\$69,264)



Photo: Google Maps

Profile: Scarlett Woods

Play

- 34,793 rounds played in 2020. Up considerably from 25,934 in 2019
- Facilities include restaurant, rentals, 3 washrooms
- Additional recreational programming: fling golf, disc golf, snowtrail loop

Place

- Adjacent to trail network, transit network (Humber River trail), existing recreational facilities (e.g. sports fields, cricket pitches, playground, etc.) and two parks
- Local neighbourhoods have above-average parkland provision

People

- Below-average median household income (\$66,760)



Photo: Google Maps

Profile: Humber Valley

Play

- 33,308 rounds played in 2020. Down from 35,260 in 2019
- Facilities include restaurant, rentals, 3 washrooms
- Additional recreational programming: fling golf, snow trail loop

Place

- Adjacent to trail network (West Humber Recreational Trail), sports fields and 6 parks
- Less accessible to public transportation
- Low density housing nearby
- Above-average parkland provision

People

- Above-average youth population (24%)
- Above-average visible minority population (68%)
- Large immigrant population (61%)



Photo: Google Maps

Profile: Don Valley

Play

- 34,997 rounds played in 2020. Down from 37,824 in 2019
- Facilities include restaurant, rentals, 3 washrooms
- Additional recreational programming: guided nature walks, snow trail loop

Place

- Adjacent to trail network (Don Valley Park and Trail System), transit network (York Mills TTC), and one nearby park
- Local neighbourhood significantly under-served with access to local parkland and parkland provision

People

- Above-average median household income (\$94,125)
- Above-average apartment residents (51%)



Photo: Google Maps

Profile: Dentonia Park

Play

- 32,802 rounds played in 2020. Up from 24,181 in 2019
- Facilities include rentals, 1 washroom
- Additional recreational programming: fling golf, snow trail loop

Place

- Adjacent to trail network (Taylor Creek Trail and Gus Harris Trail), transit network (Victoria Park TTC), community/recreation centre and multiple parks
- Neighbourhood is well-served with access to local parkland



People

- Smaller immigrant population (35%) compared to other golf courses




Photo: Google Maps

Parkland and Environmental Features

	Neighbourhood has above-average parkland provision*	Tree Canopy Coverage	Floodplain Extent
Tam O'Shanter	✓ 	30%	33%
Scarlett Woods	✓	44%	97%
Humber Valley	✓	37%	94%
Don Valley	✗	56%	45%
Dentonia Park	✓ 	49.5%	22.5%

* = based on Parkland Strategy

 = golf course is significant contributor to local parkland provision rates

Preliminary Opportunities

Opportunities at the centre of today's
conversation

Preliminary Opportunities



**Improved
Trail Access**



**Recreational
Facility**



**Natural Area
Restoration**



**Tree
Planting**



**Food Growing
Opportunities**



**Complementary
Programming**

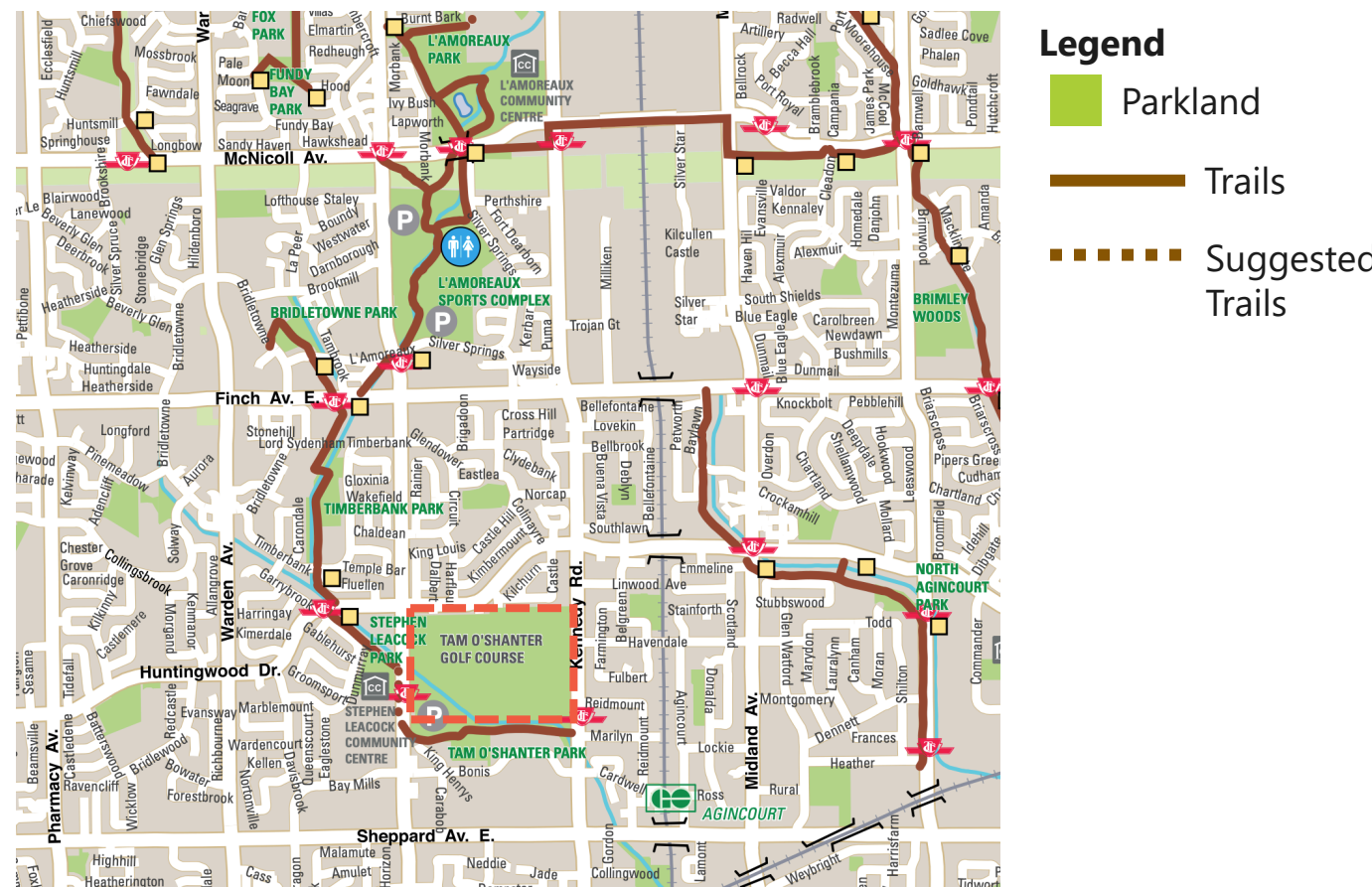


**Indigenous
Placekeeping**



IDEAS

- Improved trail access and connections to/through golf courses
- Improved trail access near other parks and trail systems
(Tam O'Shanter, Don Valley, Dentonia Park)



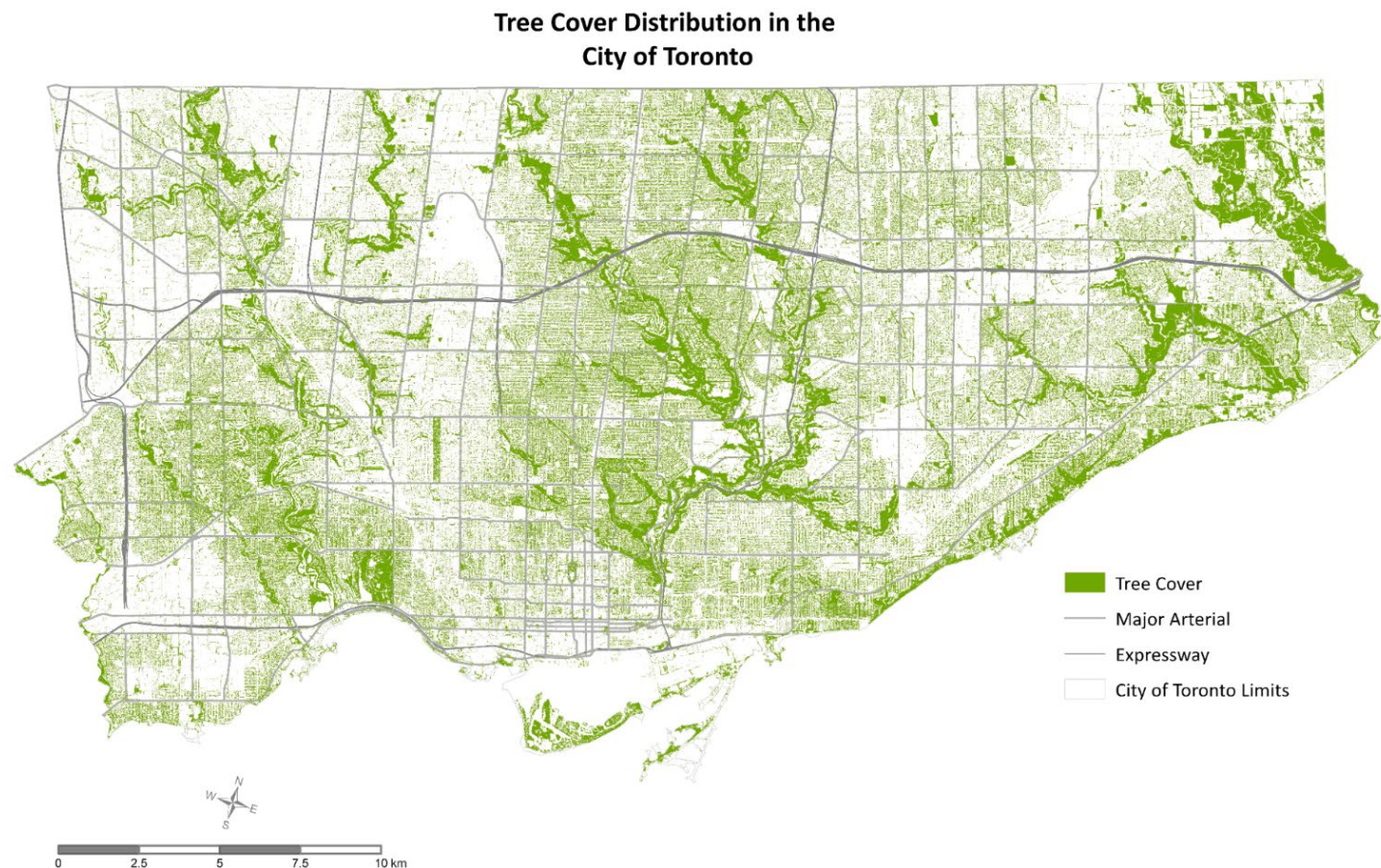
Map: Showcasing Tam O'Shanter's proximity to nearby trails.



Tree Planting

IDEAS

- Additional tree planting that does not impact golf operations
- Prioritize tree planting for golf courses with the lowest canopy coverage (Tam O'Shanter, Humber Valley)



Source: 2018 Tree Cover: City of Toronto Automated Land Cover 2018.

Map: Tree Cover Distribution in the City



Recreational Facility

IDEAS

- Make space for recreational facilities/amenities to serve community
 - Recreational facilities (e.g. splash pads, sports fields, etc.)
 - Recreation facility targeted on courses with the least floodplain coverage (Tam O'Shanter and Dentonia Park)



Photos: Sports Field and Track at EarlsCourt Park [credit: City of Toronto] Splash Pad in High Park [credit: MEP Design]



Food Growing Opportunities

IDEAS

- Increasing community access to the greenspace in new and interesting ways, such as providing space for community gardens.
- Increasing food security and equitable access to food are strategic City priorities



Photos: (Left) Ben Nobleman Park community garden [credit:The Star] and (Right) Black Creek Community Farm [credit: TRCA]



Natural Area Restoration

IDEAS

- Renaturalize golf courses for ecological benefits like increased tree canopy and flood mitigation on floodplains.



Example of a renaturalization project a Miliken Park in Scarborough [credit: City of Toronto].



Complementary Programming

IDEAS

- Add new complementary evening and winter uses that do not impact golf operations
 - Some initial complementary programming ideas include movie nights and picnicking infrastructure



Photos: (Left) Movie Nights at Canoe Landing Park [credit: DailyHive] and (Right) Picnic area at Woodbine Beach [credit: City of Toronto]



Indigenous Placekeeping

IDEAS

- Working with Indigenous Treaty Rights holders and Indigenous leaders to find opportunities for Indigenous cultural practices and placekeeping



Photos: Five Indigenous flags. Artwork by Rebecca Czarnecki

Preliminary Opportunities

* tableland = portions of land that lie above the slope of a ravine

Golf Course	Improved Trail Access	Tree Planting	Recreational Facility	Food Growing	Natural Area Restoration	Complementary Programming	Indigenous Placekeeping
Tam O'Shanter	✓ Adjacent trail connection interrupted by course	✓ 33% tree cover	✓ 66% tableland*	✓ 66% tableland	✓ Course included in Natural Heritage System and within the Ravine and Natural Feature By-law Area	✓ Complementary programming is feasible	City is consulting and engaging with Indigenous groups and Treaty Holders to gather their thoughts, ideas, and suggestions to inform the review
Scarlett Woods	✗ Adjacent trail connection not interrupted by course	✓ 44% tree cover	✗ 3% tableland	✗ 3% tableland			
Humber Valley	✗ Adjacent trail connection not interrupted by course	✓ 37% tree cover	✗ 6% tableland	✗ 6% tableland			
Don Valley	✓ Adjacent trail connection interrupted by course	✓ 56% tree cover	▣ 55% tableland	▣ 55% tableland			
Dentonia Park	✓ Adjacent trail connection interrupted by course	✓ 49.5% tree cover	✓ 77% tableland	✓ 77% tableland			

Thank you!