

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

# Humber Bay Park East Revitalization Project

Public Information Session Q & A

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Note: Questions may have been edited for clarity. Written answers may not be verbatim from the information session to ensure clarity.

## Shoreline

- **Residents enjoy the use of the beaches. Will the beaches be increased or shortened? When they can be used again?**
  - The beaches will be widened so that it can create a better buffer against wave activity. A lot of this widening will occur underwater but at minimum the current beach width will be maintained or widened.
- **Will the new shoreline wall in the park be as tall as the new rock work done in front of Palace Pier?**
  - The elevation of the new armourstone revetment will vary along the shoreline depending on localized site conditions. Generally, the crest of the revetment (top stone) will be widened and raised in order to prevent future wave overtopping. Width and height designs were selected to balance the impact between backshore vegetation/trails and lake sightlines. Park trails will be re-graded as needed in order to maintain lake sightlines; however, there will be a difference in height between the stone and surrounding ground level.
- **Could someone please clarify the comments around "discoloration" of armourstone? As a daily user of the East point, I would like to understand this more. The brown color appears to clearly be algae and vegetation.**
  - It is a natural process where armourstone ages over time and discolors. Nutrients in the water can also contribute to this. New works will result in imported stone material that may be a bit different in colour so we will have a combination of existing and new stone in the project.
- **Will the Shoreline construction be undertaken in parts/sections such that some part of the Shoreline is always accessible for park users at all times? While the east side of the park is being constructed, can the west side be accessible for visitors along the shoreline?**
  - The majority of the shoreline will be closed to accommodate the work area as well as construction access and stockpiling areas. Work will be prioritized on the eastern section of the park first and we do anticipate that once the majority of construction on the east side is complete, we can open up that section of the park to users. We are estimating the first phase on the east side will take around 18 months
- **The shoreline in Humber Bay Park West is also severely eroded, with multiple structure failures. Will this be addressed as well?**
  - TRCA is aware of the erosion in Humber Bay Park West and in the next year or two, a design project will be developed to address these concerns. Humber Bay Park East is just being addressed first because the priorities here are more significant.
- **After completion of the project, is there any consideration for creating "no wake" zones around the entire park to help preserve the shoreline or to include some sort of barrier to prevent jet ski traffic from entering the park? The increase in jet ski/noisy boat traffic in particular over the past couple of years has been substantive.**

- Federal waters are regulated by the federal government, but this is an ongoing challenge and problem. The City is working with the Toronto Police Service Marine Unit to increase patrols.

## Pond/Wetland

- **Question about the channel maintenance. When will the water level be restored there - August 2022 at the end of the restoration project? Will the dam under the east bridge hold until then?**
  - Throughout the construction process, staff will be regularly monitoring the area to make sure the dam is holding the water in the channel. It is difficult to say when water will be flowing through the area due to the adjacent building construction. Re-filling water in the pond and wetland are contingent upon proximate foundations and waterproofing being in place and secure.
- **Will plantings utilize native species?**
  - Yes, only native plants will be used.
- **Can I make a suggestion to plant hop trees to encourage giant swallowtails into the area? With the climate change these species are moving north but there is not enough host plants for them.**
  - Thank you for this suggestion. We will make a note of this for our re-planting areas.
- **In the pond plantings, is there also a plan to remove invasive - phragmites, etc.?**
  - The TRCA is working with the City to attempt to manage invasive species, although management of invasive plants is very challenging. TRCA recommends an invasive species management plan be developed for Humber Bay Park to guide control activities. Community stewardship will be an essential component of invasive plant control, such as common burdock removal that many community members have participated in.
- **What will be done to ensure the new plantings will take hold and grow? So many times new plants are put in the ground and they dry up and die.**
  - Plants are selected based on their site suitability. A monitoring plan is in place to assess the performance of the plantings. Survival rates are tracked and if needed, these areas will be targeted for replanting, or infill planting.
- **Is this work being done in part as a habitat compensation for impacts to other areas off-site?**
  - No. We are however required to compensate for the trees removed as part of this project, with over 800 trees being replanted on and off site.
- **Thanks for this overview and the focus on wildlife in the plan. How will they be affected by 4 years of construction? Will this revitalization work affect our shoreline nesting birds such as our resident Blue Herons? How will they be encouraged back to live, nest, etc.?**
  - The first step in this process is to dewater the area so the fish, turtles and frogs can relocate to other areas nearby before construction begins (fish are actively removed and relocated as they have no natural egress to the lake). During the construction period, this area will not be appealing to wildlife so we anticipate they will stay away on their own accord. Post-construction, based on the experience TRCA has garnered from many

previous successful restoration projects, we expect wildlife to return to the site, especially given the increase in wetland habitat availability.

- **Did you get rid of the round gobies?**
  - Yes, as part of our fish collection, gobies, a regulated invasive species, were found and were removed from the ponds.
- **You referenced Tommy Thompson Park as a reference. While I enjoy the park we must recognize that the trees there have been significantly denuded by the abundance of cormorant birds. Can we protect this new parkland from effectively being stripped bare by the invasive cormorants?**
  - At the existing Humber Bay Park, the habitat available is generally not suitable for cormorants; there are minimal suitable nesting/roosting areas. Cormorants are also quite "flighty" and avoid areas with lots of people so the traffic at HBPE should deter them as well. We do not foresee this as a problem.
- **When will the work on the pond and wetland system be completed so that the public can access the pond area, for instance, to use the large pond for radio control sailing.**
  - Yes, the pond will be available for radio control sailing after construction is completed.
- **Can informational signage explaining the native plants and native trees and how they benefit birds, butterflies and host plants be added?**
  - TRCA has previously installed educational signage at wetland restoration sites, this is something that can be included in the plan.
- **What kind of wildlife can we expect to recolonize the wetland once it is complete?**
  - We will likely see the same type of fish and wildlife that is at the Park now, but we expect there will be more diversity. Of the 4000 fish that were pulled out, we saw a lot of the same species. Given the diversity of habitat we plan on incorporating into this wetland area, we expect to also see a larger diversity of wildlife.
- **Has climate change been considered in the design of the wetland?**
  - Yes, we are trying to develop a varied ecosystem instead of monolithic. This project's design is focused on creating an environment where various things can grow, thrive, and flourish towards having a vibrant and resilient combined effect. We are above the elevation of Lake Ontario so do not anticipate high water levels to impact the new wetland.
- **Will a new water pumping system be installed as part of this project?**
  - Yes a new pump system will be installed.
- **Has the planned pump system upgrade been designed to avoid drawing overly nutrient rich water from Humber Bay/Humber River as the old one was?**
  - The idea is that yes, fresher water will be pumped in from Lake Ontario into these areas. The same pumping chamber will be used however, the inflow will be extended further into the lake into a deeper level so it draws colder water.
- **Are there any design features to manage beaver activity?**
  - Beavers are persistent and challenging to manage. Trees can be wrapped with wire to prevent beaver damage and staff will be on alert for damming activity.

## Consultation

- **In 2016, we were promised that the pavilion would be cancelled if the majority of responses to an official feedback period were negative. 80% of respondents opposed the pavilion. If residents and park users still oppose the pavilion today, will it be cancelled?**
  - The pavilion that was proposed in 2016 was larger and built in addition to the existing park buildings, and was proposed in advance of an extensive public consultation that served to review and respond to clear expression of concern for that original concept. The plan that evolved from public consultation actually serves to reduce urban footprint with the introduction of bermed buildings replacing the existing, that have green roofs and are blended into adjacent landscape: a place to dwell within and from where to observe nature.
- **Regarding the wetland proposal including new building and demolishing of existing buildings in HBPE, it's widely disapproved during the consultation back in 2016&2017, why it's still proposed?**
  - This proposal is part of a number of proposals for different parts of the park that were developed and recommended by the Master Plan process. The wetland design incorporates planting, flowing water and deeper levels, and raises the water level too close to the original buildings levels resulting in flooding. Also, there are conditional issues with the existing buildings, boardwalks and bridges that argue towards making a fresh start with integrated buildings and landscape.
- **Did you acquire feedback from daily park patrons vs the general public?**
  - The City undertook two processes for consultation and was available to input from all that chose to provide it. One with the community resource group for the Master Plan which was made up of residents and representatives of community groups; second, consultation for the building area where a public call was put out for previous and new attendees consisting of residents and community groups. At the time this was recognized to be one of the broadest community consultations the City's Parks department had undertaken.

## Buildings

- **What is the expected use of the new pavilions?**
  - The recreation building will include all-season washrooms, lobby/display area, program rooms that can be configured in different ways to join or close spaces off for combined or separate use, space for staff, mechanical space. The operations building will include staff spaces, washrooms and changing areas, storage and equipment spaces, enclosed garage and covered service yard.

- **What programming is planned for the pavilion?**
  - City of Toronto's Recreation department will be developing their own process for programming, the building will have two rooms available to the public.
- **How will the public book the rooms in the new pavilion?**
  - Details are not yet available, but will be developed in tandem with the City's Recreation department.
- **Will the public washrooms be open 365 days a year?**
  - Yes, that is the current plan for the washrooms.
- **Are the existing buildings being demolished? Why?**
  - There are ongoing conditional issues with the current buildings and the design of the wetland and water levels will impact them. Additionally, there have been calls for community use of the existing maintenance building, which is not laid out to accommodate that.
- **Will there be security? What will stop people from having bonfires on the roof and breaking the glass windows?**
  - Strengthened glass will be used and everything will be built as sturdily as possible, but this can be an issue as the area is not considered an urban environment. To combat late night vandalism, there will be a security system with cameras and motion detective lights.
- **Can you only access the pavilion via the wood boardwalk?**
  - There will be an entrance on the terrace area that is linked to the boardwalk. You can enter from the terrace that is accessed from the land side.
- **In the existing building, we (R/C model boat club) had a storage room as part of our permit. Will there be a similar storage room facility available for us in the new building?**
  - Storage arrangements will have to be coordinated with parks operations, as was the case prior.
- **Is the glass on the building/pavilion bird friendly to prevent window strikes?**
  - Yes, appropriate window treatments will be used to mitigate the impacts of bird collisions.
- **Are the structures LEED certified/other environmental considerations?**
  - This building is not designed for LEED certification, but there are a number of green design features. Project targets are near net zero, where we fall short is the provision of solar which is usually on a roof structure and we have landscaping and public access to the roof.

## Financial

- **What is the total cost associated with this project?**

- The original budget estimate for the project was around \$7 million. Associated work (eg. pond, wetland, boardwalk) was subsequently estimated at an additional \$6 million, and the discovery of impacted soils raised the cost again by approximately \$3-4 million. These costs include soil management, raised grade and soil capping. Project total cost investment in this park has increased as the scope has increased, taking on a significant amount of park area (~2 hectares) of extensive reworking of the core of the eastern park. This does not include costs associated with shoreline as that is a separate project.
- **How much will rehabilitating the pond cost?**
  - The ponds project undertaken by TRCA, includes wetland conversion, recreational pond works, boardwalk replacement, docks, bridges and pumping refurbishments, soils management and extensive landscaping, is estimated to be worth approximately \$8.2 million.
- **Why is this project being funded by all taxpayers versus being funded from Section 37 funds that are intended for community benefits?**
  - The project is being funded by development charges and SOGR (State of Good Repair) financial resources.
- **What is the source of funding for this project? We heard part of fund is from developers directly, how so? Is that the reason the City (developer) insists on building the new pavilion?**
  - The majority of funding for buildings and landscape is from development charges sources. The shoreline project is partly funded by the City, and partly from the Federal Government
- Why is the bulk of the budget being put towards a small \$7 million building that can be used by very few people? Why not focus on improving the actual park for everyone's use?
  - The original proposal showed a larger building and concerns were expressed by the public and local community that large gatherings would introduce negative effects, such as noise, garbage and undesirable activities. These were not consistent with the near-unanimous view that the park was a unique natural environment and should be appreciated as such. The project includes a careful integration of landform buildings, boardwalk, bridges, revitalized wetlands, trails and landscaping. The result will be a benefit to the local community and all visitors to the park.

## Construction/Timing

- **Will there be any access to the area during construction or will the entire peninsula be closed from the roadway?**



- There will be closures during construction in the interest of public safety. Depending on the nature of the work undertaken, the park and the roadway may be closed to the public at specific times during construction but those details have yet to be determined. There will likely be significant closures early on, but this is due to the extensive work with heavy machinery that will be happening on site. TRCA and the City do not want the public to be at risk during any part of the work.
- **Will construction work proceed through all months of the year?**
  - Yes.
- **Will the restaurants in the area be impacted from the construction?**
  - It is difficult to foresee or speculate impacts on local businesses as the works are taking place well into the park rather than adjacent to business locations
- **What is your plan for people who do not like sound and noise? 7am is too early of a start time.**
  - Work activities will be undertaken within the requirements of the noise bylaw.
- **Three years of construction can be considered disruptive to daily park users. Where do you recommend daily loyal park patrons go, with similar park characteristics?**
  - Humber Bay Park West, Humber River trail, Colonel Samuel Smith Park are three major nearby waterfront parks available to the public.
- **The East point gives an incredible place to take in the sunrise and view the city. And the walk to that point from the parking lot is unique, and more natural than other parks. For some one that visits this place daily for mental health reasons, I would like to know of a park that provides an east facing view of the city and view of sunrise like the East point?**
  - The view from Whimbrel Point (south-east point) at Colonel Samuel Smith Park has amazing views of the sunrise and the city.

## Trails/Boardwalk

- **Will the Martin Goodman cycling trail in the north (along Marine Parade Drive) that provides east west cycling route be impacted by the construction?**
  - The works are foreseen to take place within the boundaries shown on the site diagram in the presentation. Trucks and deliveries will come along Marine Parade Drive, so care must be taken at all times for safe access and passage.
- **What made you choose to replace the gravel path along the shoreline with the wooden boardwalk along the shoreline? The gravel pathway looks better and more natural setting.**
  - No boardwalks are planned for the Lake Ontario shoreline. The boardwalk will pass over the pond/new linear wetland.

- **Can you explain where TRCA will be installing the boardwalk? Are the trails along the shoreline being replaced by the boardwalk?**
  - The boardwalk will connect the north traffic circle with the south existing bridge/weir area.
- **Will the new boardwalk be fixed to the land or floating or a mixture of both?**
  - The boardwalk will be fixed and set on foundations throughout the entire wetland area. The boardwalk will also be connected to the terrace.
- **What will the boardwalk be made of?**
  - It will be a steel structure with metal decking.
- **Will the snow on this boardwalk be cleared in the winter, will that be difficult as the surface is wood? Concerns with using salt over the winter as runoff will go directly into the pond as well as wheelchair accessibility.**
  - The current wooden boardwalks are not ploughed and the use of salt would not be recommended. The proposed boardwalk is surfaced with steel planking, and use of salt is corrosive and damaging, and harmful to the adjacent aquatic environment. It is not designed to support vehicle loads and will be closed during the snow season.
- **Will there be signs telling people who bike through the area where to go and signs for detour?**
  - TRCA will work with the City to implement closure signs and fences to facilitate safe movement of cyclists and pedestrians. A majority of the work is also planned for the fall/winter to minimize impacts of construction as public use decreases over the cold weather.
- **Will provisions for cycling be increased or decreased?**
  - There will be an opportunity to cycle on the new boardwalk, however cyclists must exercise caution when active near all pedestrians. The majority of trails around the periphery of the pond are being maintained essentially in their form so will be accessible for cyclists as well.
- **Cyclists continually use the pedestrian pathways and tend to speed and act dangerously, how will this type of conflict be resolved?**
  - As is often the case, cyclists must share the path with pedestrians, and are encouraged to dismount and walk on boardwalks and narrow trails.
- **Will the Humber Bay Park East walking pathways entering the park be kept consistent with the biking/walking path along Marine Parade?**
  - Access to the park will remain the same, the area of works is adjacent to the ponds.

## Parking

- **I see a huge parking lot beside the wetlands and it seems too large. Could you please make it smaller and emphasize walking and biking in the area?**
  - There is no plan to change the parking lot in this phase of the Master Plan.
- **On the City's website, there are different drawings regarding parking lot "redistribution", is the parking lots' redo still part of Master Plan? If so please provide rationales.**
  - The future intent with parking in HBPE is to convert the large rectangular parking lot into a pollinator meadow with grass and flowers and a long green road and parking along the edges. Parking numbers would be reduced to 70-80% of what is currently there in terms of overall capacity.
- **How does reducing parking align with the goal of creating a destination city park? What of the people who will no longer be able to visit? Parking is being reduced on the west side, too, and Marine Parade is already congested.**
  - The proposal to convert the large rectangular lot to a ring road with peripheral parking, enclosing a pollinator meadow, is recommended by the Master Plan. It was observed that the eastern lot was seldom at capacity, and the reduction of parking numbers would align closer to actual usage.

## Watercraft Uses

- **Why does the plan not incorporate an area for local residents to launch paddle boards, kayaks, etc.?**
  - Small watercraft can be launched at Humber Bay Park West.
- **I am interested in how the plan will accommodate small water craft launching. Has there been feedback from boaters?**
  - There are currently no boat launches at Humber Bay Park East and none are planned. Small watercraft can be launched at Humber Bay Park West.
- **Where will small craft launch from in the new plan?**
  - The derelict launch at Humber Bay Park West at the river is currently being decommissioned as a launch as the water depth is not sufficient for small watercraft. This old launch will become a new recreational node for nature watching and provide access to the water's edge. The existing boat launch to the lake at Humber Bay Park west is being redesigned to improve functionality and will be accessible to all sizes of watercraft.

## Other

- **Once the park has been reopened, will there be any staff that will be monitoring the park users throughout the day. I.e. staff designated only to HBP?**
  - Parks Operations has an ongoing staff presence in the park for operational and maintenance purposes. The Recreation building would be staffed.

- **There are signs stating no mooring overnight, but there are boats illegally moored on the wall all summer, what can be done about this?**
  - Illegally moored boats should be brought to the attention of Parks Operations and may be the concern of bylaw enforcement officers.
- **Will anything be happening with the water filtration system to the north of the work area? Is that still functional?**
  - The Toronto Water Dunker's Flow system is not included in the Humber Bay Park Master Plan and no work will be undertaken on this system as part of this project.
- **Will there be any new elements for children (e.g. natural materials playground)?**
  - A playground is not foreseen within the area of upcoming works. The Master Plan recommends locations for playground development.
- **What is the TRCA?**
  - Toronto and Region Conservation Authority ([www.trca.ca](http://www.trca.ca))
- **Is the Butterfly Garden going to be better maintained for our beautiful pollinators?**
  - The Butterfly Garden is not included in the Humber Bay Park Master Plan, and as such is out of scope for this meeting, however the City of Toronto and TRCA are actively working on this site to remove invasive plants and see the restoration of butterfly habitat.
  
- **If you are creating a park more accessible to more than the local public, what is your needed plan for littering? The state of litter is quite bad, and requires a more innovative strategy**
  - This is an issue that requires ongoing attention. Litter collection in any park requires dedication. The works of these projects are expected to make the park more resilient with attractive and robust planting, habitat and ecology - a place to appreciate rather than despoil nature. Already we see dedicated local residents active in park cleanups, in addition to the litter management undertaken by staff. We hope that the new park will continue to attract this kind of care - by giving the public more to care about, and to inspire users to carry their litter to the appropriate receptacle, rather than discard into the landscape.