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What We Heard

Toronto Island Park Master Plan

Phase One Report – Fall 2021





The City of Toronto gratefully acknowledges that the area covered by the Toronto Island Master Plan is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of New Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat people and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City of Toronto also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of New Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

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1. Overview

About the Toronto Island Park Master Plan and Phase One engagement

For thousands of years, the Toronto Islands have been a meeting place, a place for healing and ceremony for the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and other diverse Indigenous communities. Today, it is one of Toronto's signature parks that acts as an oasis for Torontonians and visitors from many walks of life. However, 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.

A Park Master Plan is:

- A dynamic and long-term planning document.
- A blueprint to guide future decision-making around improvements, programming, and park management.
- A guiding document to protect and enhance what works and improve the things that don't work as well.
- A strategic way to introduce new park features, amenities and innovations over time, considering diverse opportunities and collaborations.

The Toronto Island Park Master Plan will be co-created with Indigenous rights holders, local communities, and the public. It will outline a Vision, Values, Guiding Principles, and Big Ideas to guide change and investment in Toronto Island Park over many years.

About this report

This report provides an overview of what we heard through across engagement inputs in Phase One.

It summarizes what we heard about participants' perceptions and experiences of Toronto Island Park today, their aspirations for its future, and their thoughts on the in-progress Master Plan. The feedback summarized in this report reflects a synthesis across all tactics and tools.

Detailed summaries of each tactic are appended.

This report includes sections highlighting

- What we heard in Indigenous engagement
- Highlights from the survey (including feedback from equity-deserving groups)
- Highlights from our social polls

For highlights from Indigenous and equity deserving groups look out for this symbol:



There are three phases in the engagement process, running from 2021 to 2022.

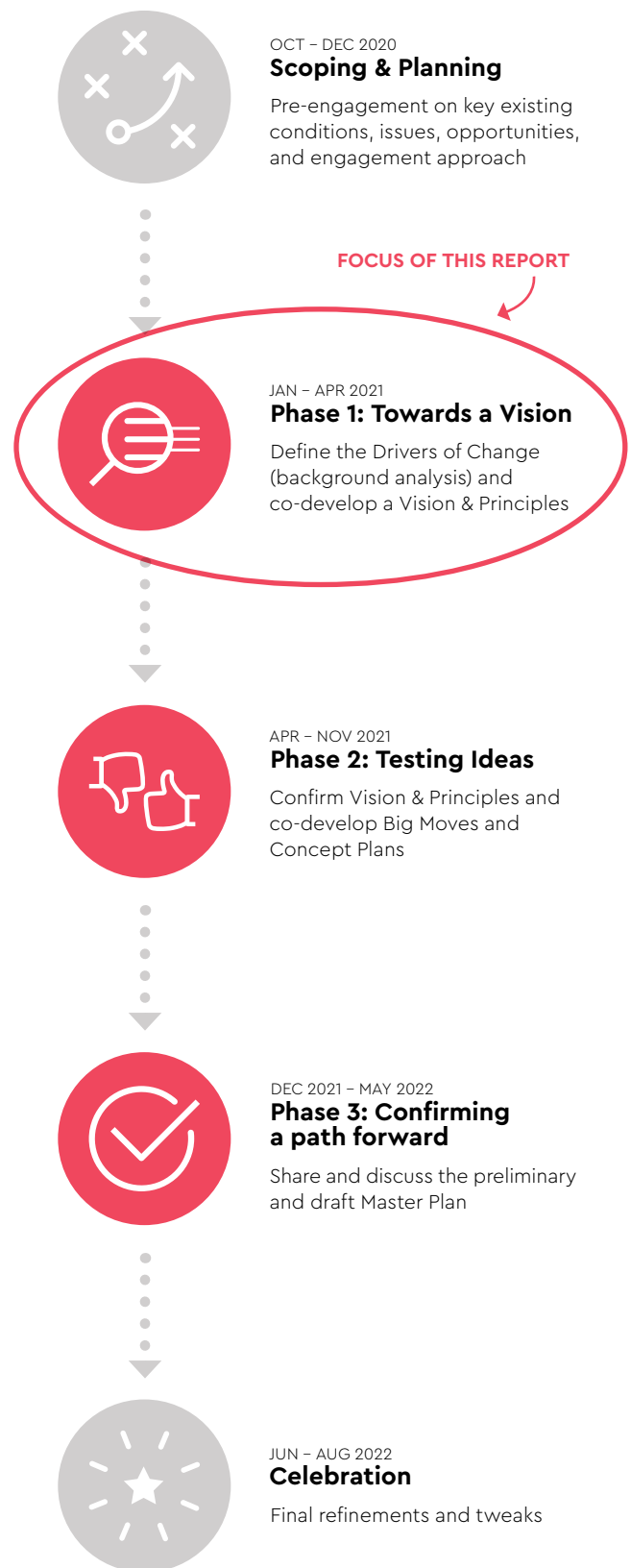
The first phase, called "Towards a Vision," took place from February to April 2021. Thousands of participants shared their experiences of Toronto Island Park and their ideas on what its future could look like, focusing on:

- What is working well that should stay the same?
- What isn't working so well that should change?
- What opportunities should be explored through the Master Plan?

Phase One also focused on co-creating several parts of the in-progress Master Plan with participants, including:

- **Drivers of change:** an underlying *challenge* or *opportunity* that is driving the need for improvements to the Island Park.
- **A vision:** an aspirational statement about "what will be" that identifies an end goal and priorities
- **Values:** or universal truths, that rules are not influenced by context or interpretation.
- **Guiding Principles:** identifying "what we need to do" and are specific to site and context.
- **Indigenous placekeeping:** an approach to design based on land stewardship that is centred around recognizing the rights of landscape as a living being first and considering our responsibilities to a place now and into the future. Indigenous Placekeeping thinks beyond our immediate benefits and defines a relationship of reciprocity to all living things and systems and how they work together.

A three-part process



How we engaged

Due to COVID-19, Phase One was an all-virtual, all-remote engagement process. It included Indigenous placekeeping and engagement, advisory group engagement, and broader public engagement.



Advisory group engagement

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, composed of City of Toronto and other public agency staff (including Toronto Region Conservation Authority, Waterfront Toronto, Ports Toronto, and others)

Community Advisory Committee Meeting, including representatives of waterfront and Island-based organizations, city-wide organizations, and organizations representing equity-deserving communities.



Indigenous engagement and placekeeping

A placekeeping meeting with Mississaugas of the Credit elders and knowledge holders.

Meetings with rights-holders, including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Huron-Wendat Nation, and Six Nations of the Grand River.

Focus groups held with distinct segments of the Indigenous communities, including Indigenous women, youth, and 2-Spirit peoples.

An Indigenous Community Sharing Meeting, providing First Nation, Métis, and Inuit community members with a dedicated, safe space to dialogue and collaborate.

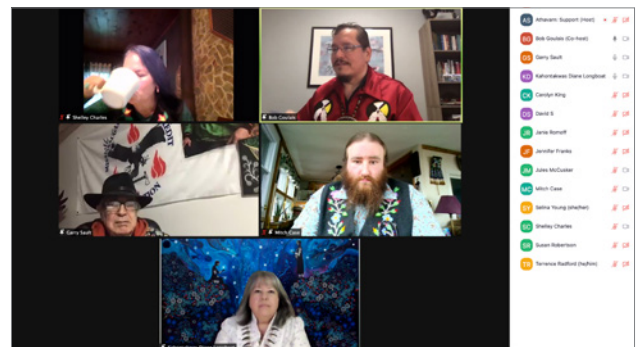
Indigenous-focused public events, including a Launch Ceremony and an Indigenous Placekeeping Forum.



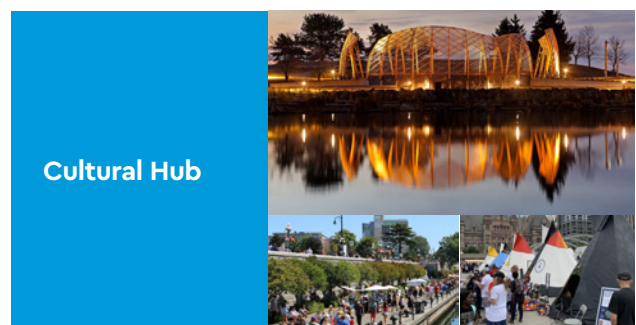
Screenshot from a Community Advisory Committee meeting



Miro board – a tool for documenting feedback at a Community Advisory Committee meeting



Screenshot from the Indigenous Placekeeping Forum



Presentation slide from the Placekeeping Forum



Broader public engagement

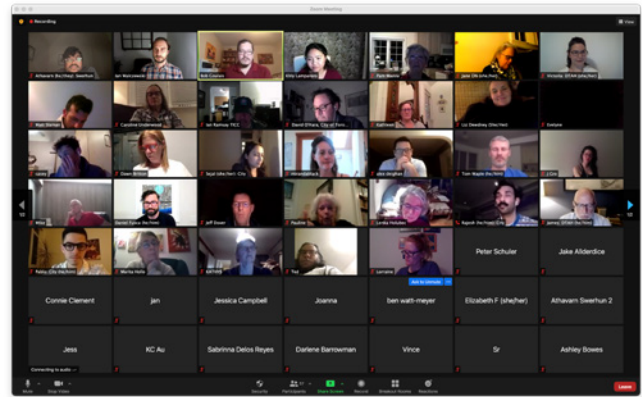
Online mapping engagement, asking respondents to place pins on maps identifying what's working well, what needs to improve, and opportunities for improvement

A detailed online survey, asking respondent to share insights about their perceptions of Toronto Island Park, their current experiences and desired future experiences, and their input on the Master Plan in progress.

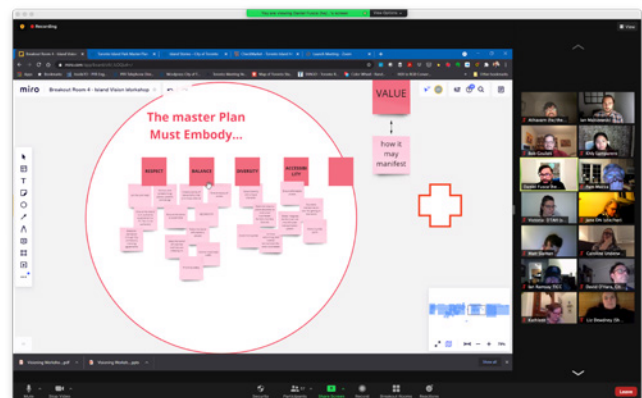
Other tools, including an Engagement Toolkit (available up on request in the mail) and a dedicated voicemail and email.

A public visioning workshop, open to all with an interest in Toronto Island Park and its future.

Detailed summaries of each engagement input are included in the Appendices.



Screenshot from the Public Visioning Workshop



Miro board used at the Public Visioning Workshop

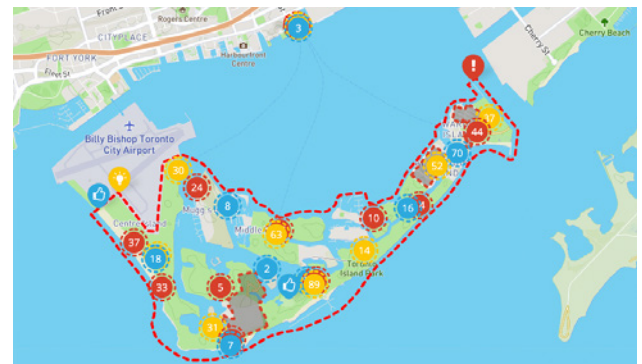


Image of responses on a map from Social Pinpoint – an online engagement tool



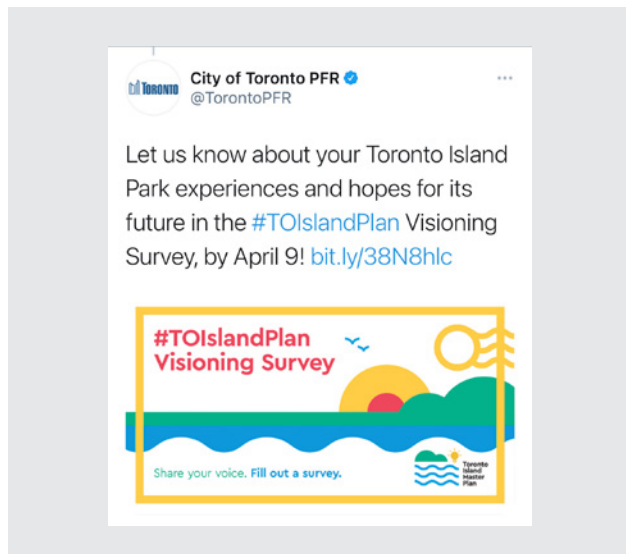
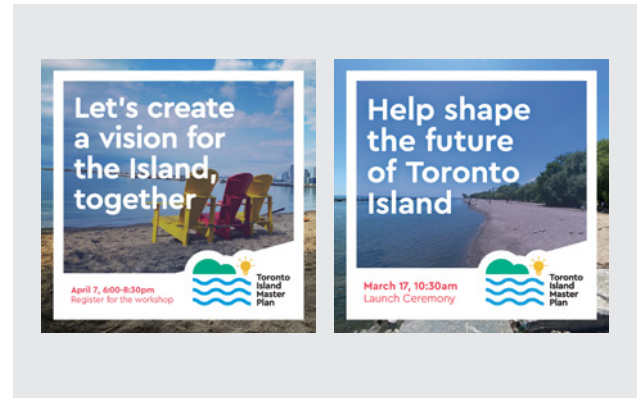
Phase One Discussion Guide and Engagement Toolkit

How we got the word out

Phase One promotion involved a multi-faceted effort combining focused tactical outreach and broader awareness generation, all tailored and targeted to priority audience groups.

Outreach through participants' networks

The City shared information with its Community Advisory Committee and participants in the Indigenous engagement and placekeeping process, and encouraged them to share and promote broader engagement opportunities with their networks.

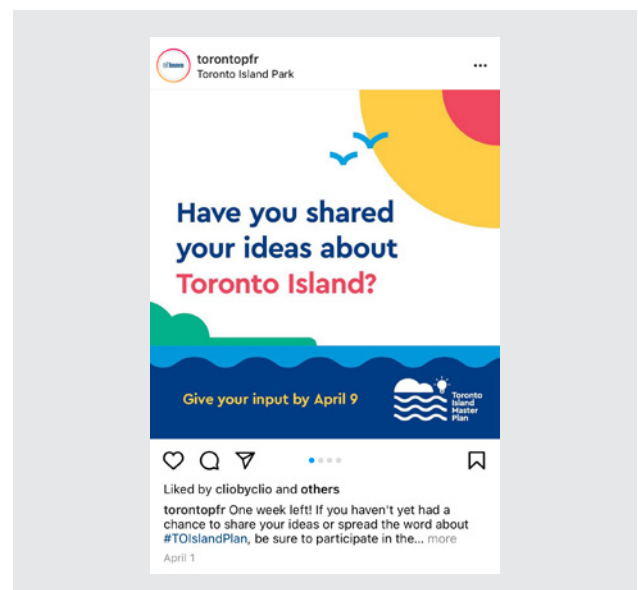


Organic social media promotion

Through a robust organic social content program, the City shared over 100 posts across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Linked In, promoted key components of the Toronto Island Master Plan, shared quick polls about the future of the Island, and shared back what we were hearing throughout the process.

Paid social media promotion

The paid social media campaign leveraged geographic and demographic-based targeting to focus promotion across five priority audience groups: general population, Indigenous and equity-deserving audiences, suburban and Neighbourhood Improvement Area residents, and waterfront dwellers. The campaign included both input-specific and project-wide assets, shared in multiple formats across Facebook and Instagram (including photos, video, carousels, event posts, Stories, and an Instant Experience).



Paid Indigenous media promotion

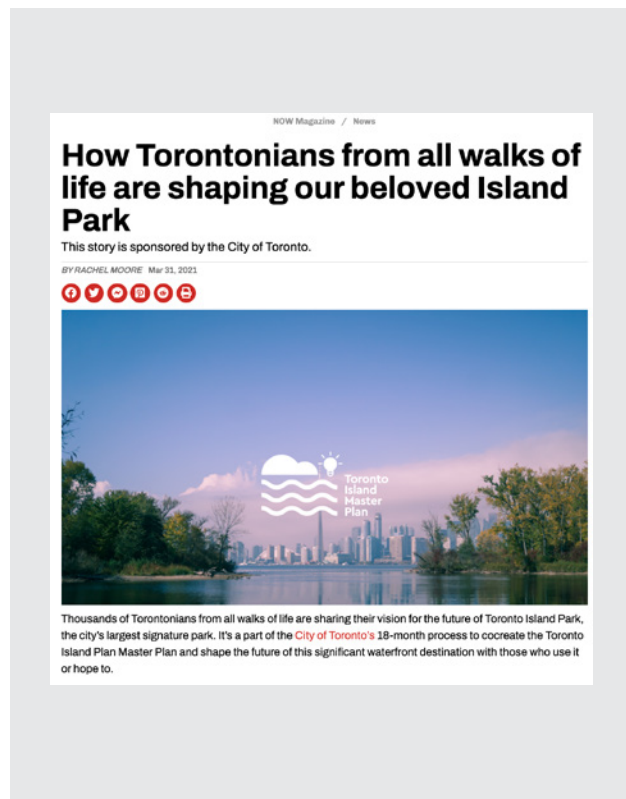
To help reach Indigenous audiences, the promotional approach included digital display advertising on three prominent Indigenous media outlets, including banner campaigns with Muskrat Magazine, Anishinabek News, and Windspeaker.com.

Paid print and editorial

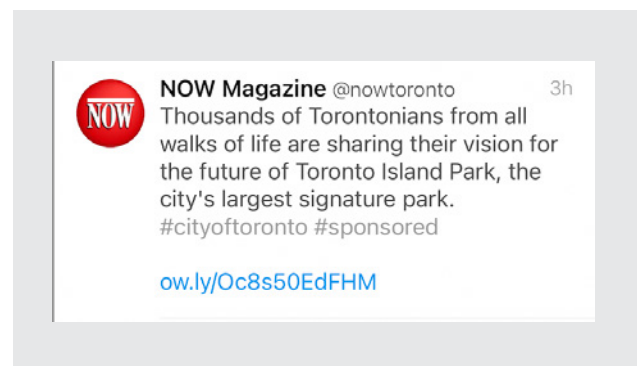
NOW Magazine ran a paid editorial piece, *How Torontonians from all walks of life are shaping our beloved Island Park*, that appeared both online and in print. NOW also supported social and newsletter promotion.



Paid ads on Muskrat Magazine, Anishinabek News, and Windspeaker websites



NOW Magazine article about Toronto Island



Promotion on NOW Magazine's Twitter

Phase One snapshot

The following graphic illustrates all Phase One engagement tactics and tools, with key statistics highlighted.



Check out the Appendices for more information about the Indigenous engagement process and to read the detailed summaries of feedback.

By the numbers



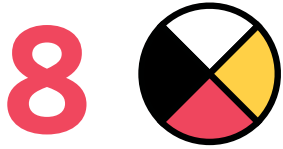
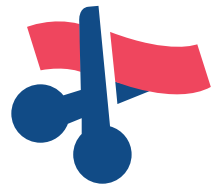
meetings with
advisory groups
involving 45
participants



respondents across online
engagement tools



attendees involved
in the **Kick-off
Ceremony**



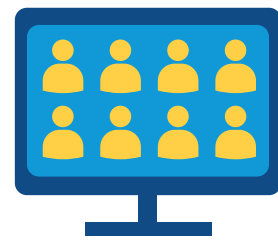
Indigenous
engagement and
placekeeping
involving



people reached through paid social media
promotion with



attendees involved in the **closing
Indigenous Placekeeping Forum**



By the numbers, continued

11,760

unique link clicks generated on paid ads



53%
of which occurred on Instagram



47%
of which were from under 34-year-olds



18%
were under 24



494,000

weekly readers reached through a paid editorial in NOW Magazine



1,594

votes in organic social media polls

21



minutes: average time spent on survey

+100

organic posts on @TorontoPFR accounts generating...



1,000

link clicks

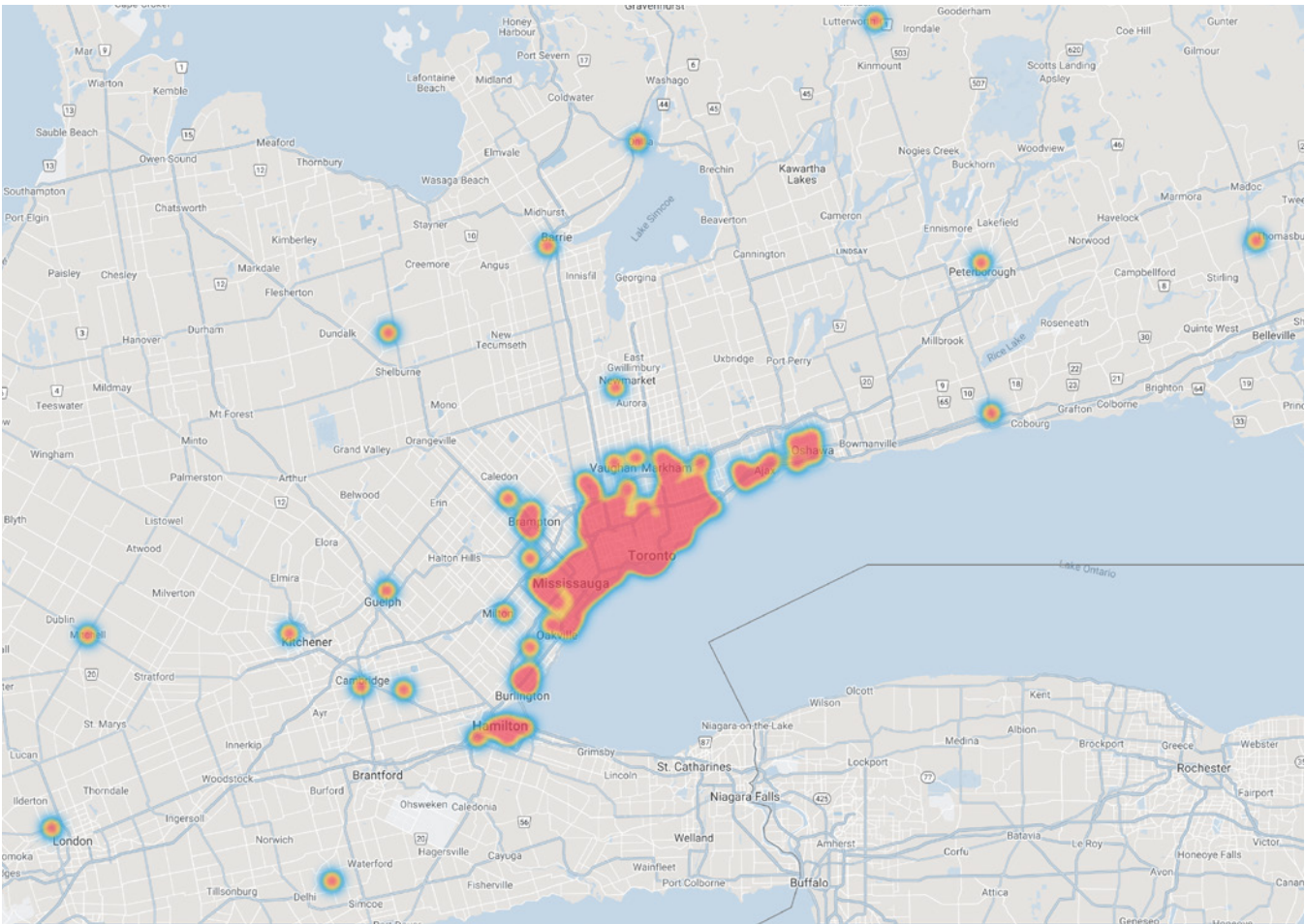


5,000

engagements (Likes, Comments, Shares, Clicks, etc.)

Survey highlights

Demographics of respondents:



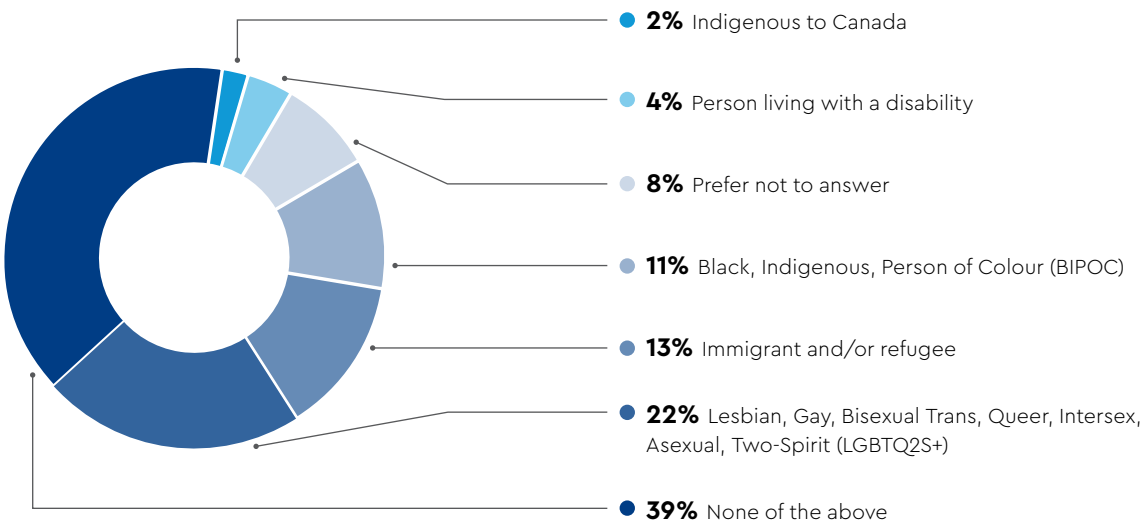
Map of survey respondents by postal code (Forward Sortation Area). The vast majority of respondents are from Toronto (97%). There were some responses from the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and a few from places across Ontario and Canada.



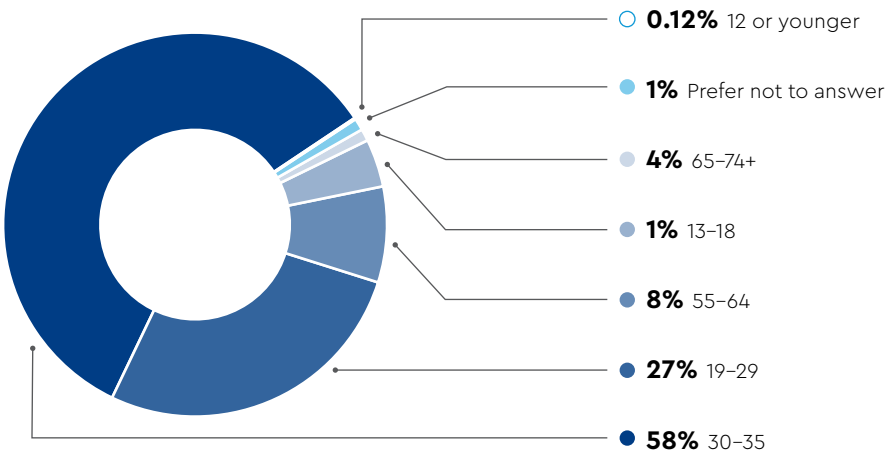
Statement on Equity

The City recognizes that many different and diverse communities have a relationship with the Toronto Island and that some communities experience barriers when it comes to accessing the park. For this reason, the City felt it was important to collect demographic data through some engagement tools to get a better understanding of how the park was serving the needs to different communities and how, through the Master Plan, it might address some of those barriers.

Respondents said they identify with the following groups:



Age breakdown of survey respondents:



2. What we heard about Toronto Island Park today

Perceptions of Toronto Island Park

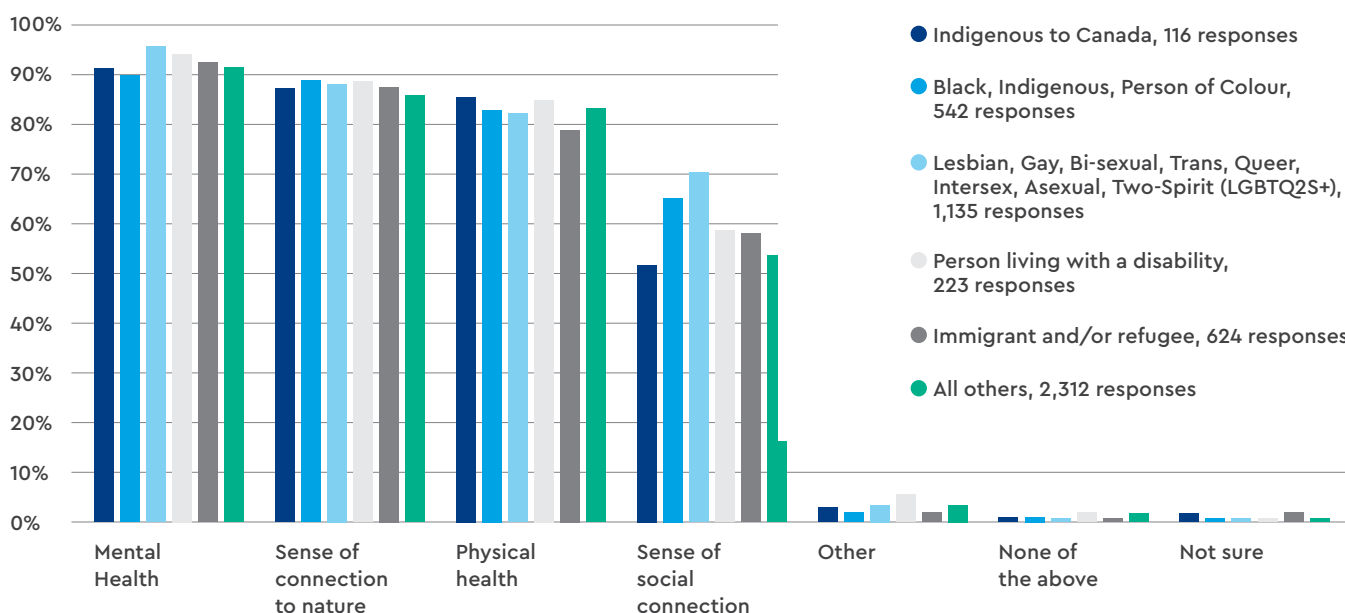
Overall, we heard that many have a very positive perception of Toronto Island Park, saying it contributes to their:

- physical and mental health
- sense of connection to nature and community
- civic pride/identity
- sense of natural escape
- recreation and leisure (festivals and events, disc golf, clothing optional Hanlan's Point, etc.)
- artistic inspiration
- nostalgia



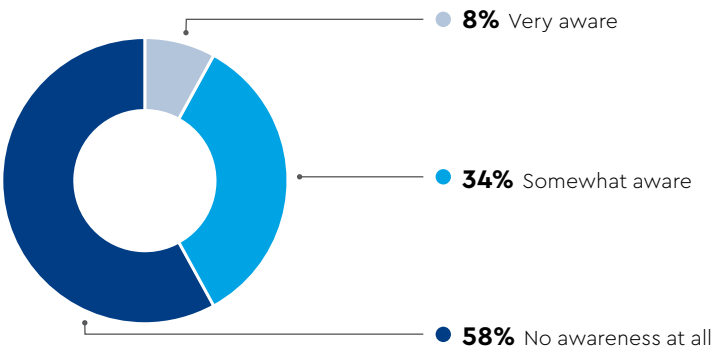
Survey highlights from Indigenous and equity-deserving groups about positive impacts

Respondents said the Toronto Island had a positive impact on their:

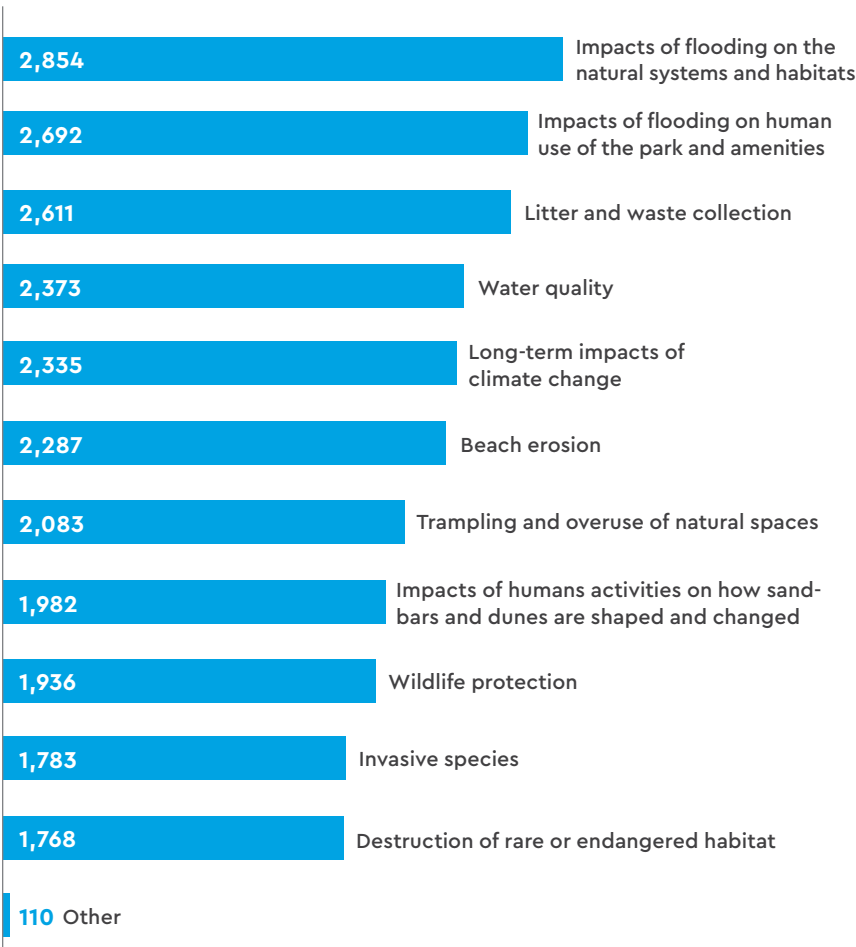


Survey highlights

Respondents' awareness of the significance of Toronto Island to Indigenous communities:



Environmental issues on Toronto Island respondents are concerned about:



Social Polls:

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram responses:

What gets you to the Island?

The beach:
52%

Getting active:
48%

What's your fave Toronto Island Season?

Spring + Summer:
90%

Fall + Winter:
10%

Do you usually head to the Island...

With friends & fam:
85%

Solo:
15%

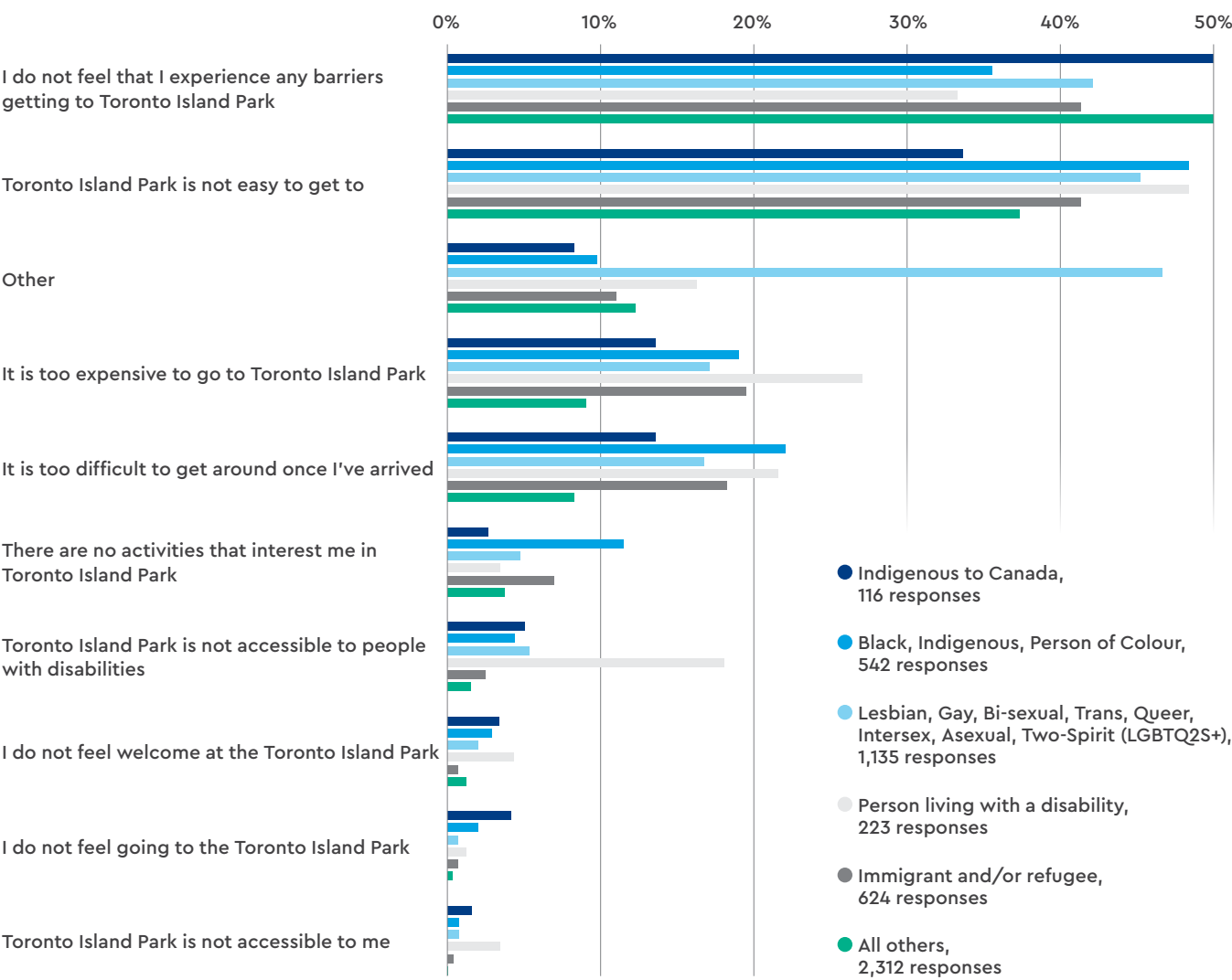
Accessing, navigating, and using Toronto Island Park

We heard that many plan ahead, looking up information ahead of time, using signage to find their way around, with some people asking staff and others for directions. Others do not plan ahead and instead catch the first available ferry or take a water taxi. Those who access via a boat, kayak, or other watercraft said they go on their own schedule.



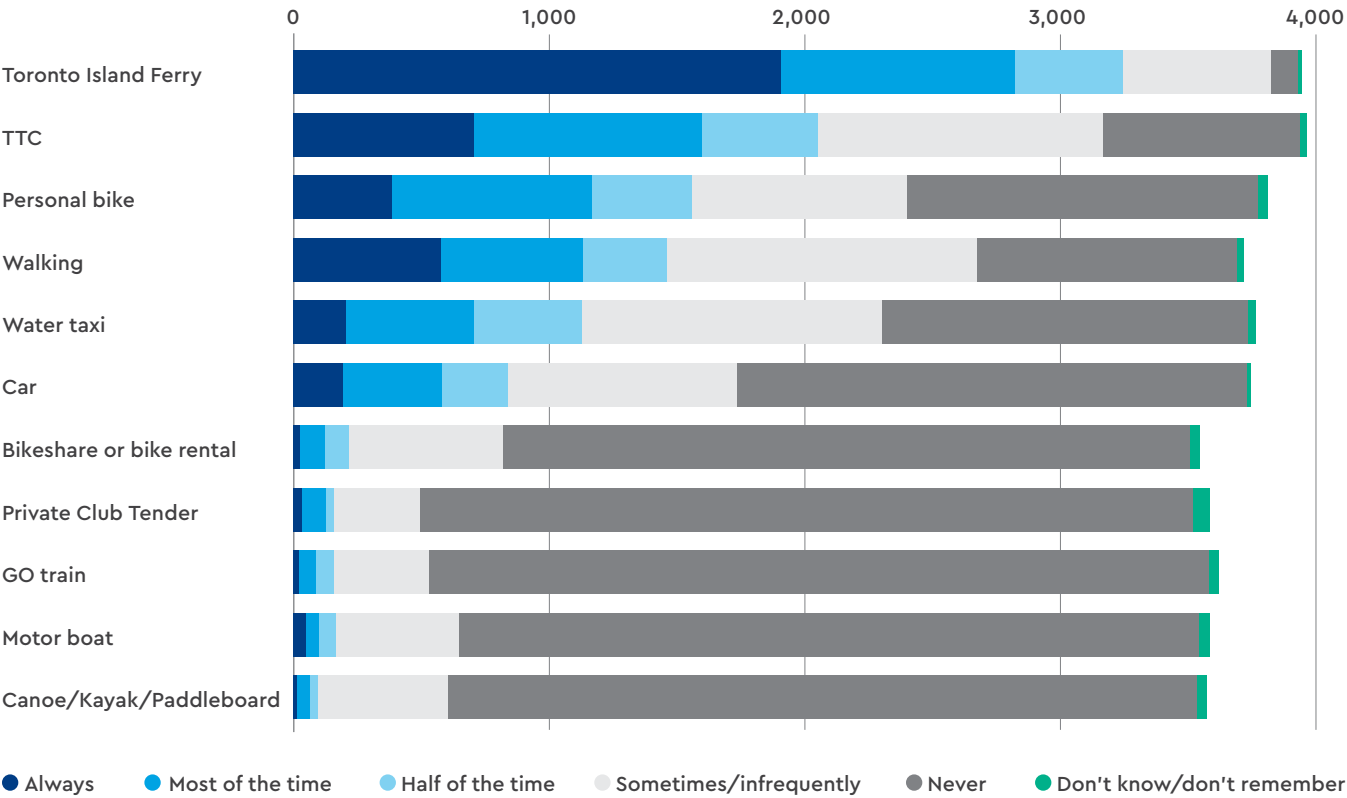
Survey highlights from Indigenous and equity-deserving groups about barriers:

Many respondents said they do not experience any barriers getting to Toronto Island Park. Of those that did experience barriers, the most common responses were that Toronto Island Park is not easy to get to, it is too expensive, and it is too difficult to get around once they have arrived.



Survey highlights

Respondents use following modes of transportation when travelling to the park:



Other modes respondents commonly said they use included watercraft (sailboats, boats, canoe, kayak, yachts, and Sea-Doos), taxis, Uber, UP Express, electric scooter, roller blades, motor cycles, and bikes.

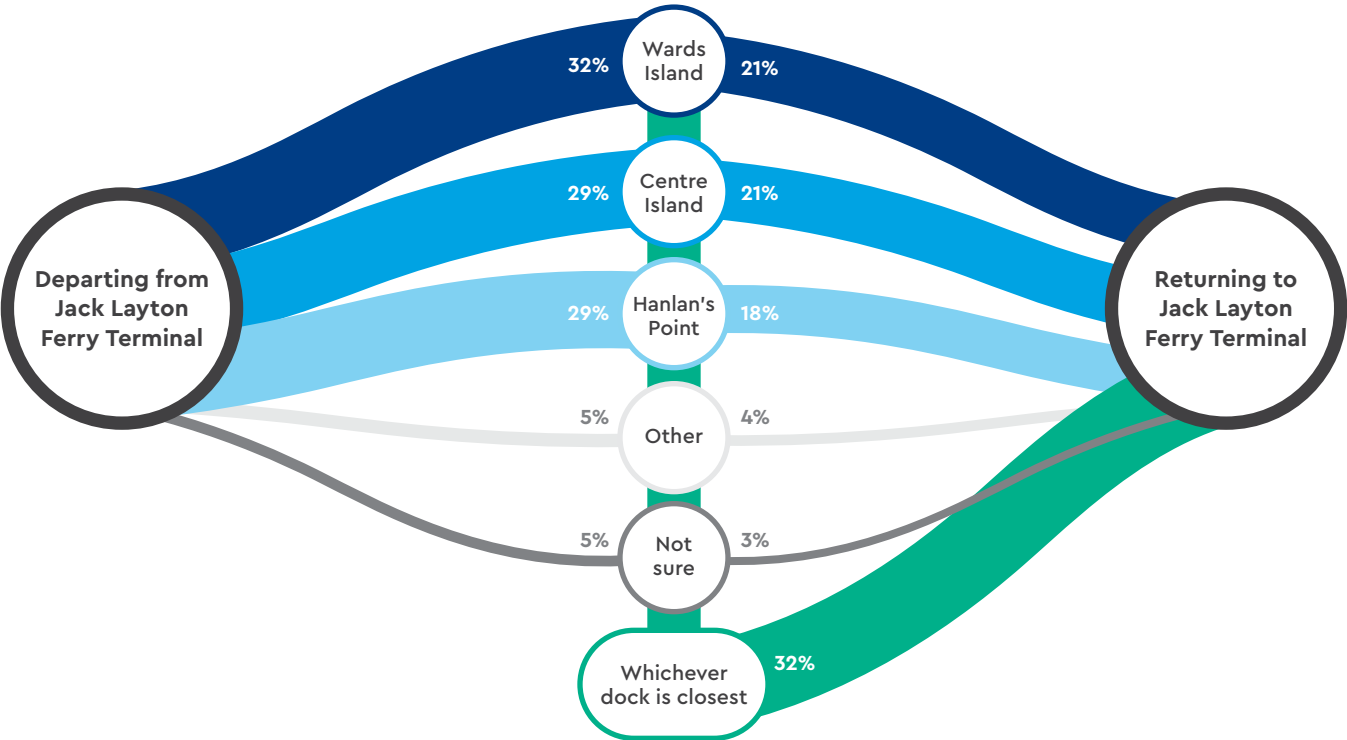
Social Poll: What's your preferred way to get to the Island?

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram responses:

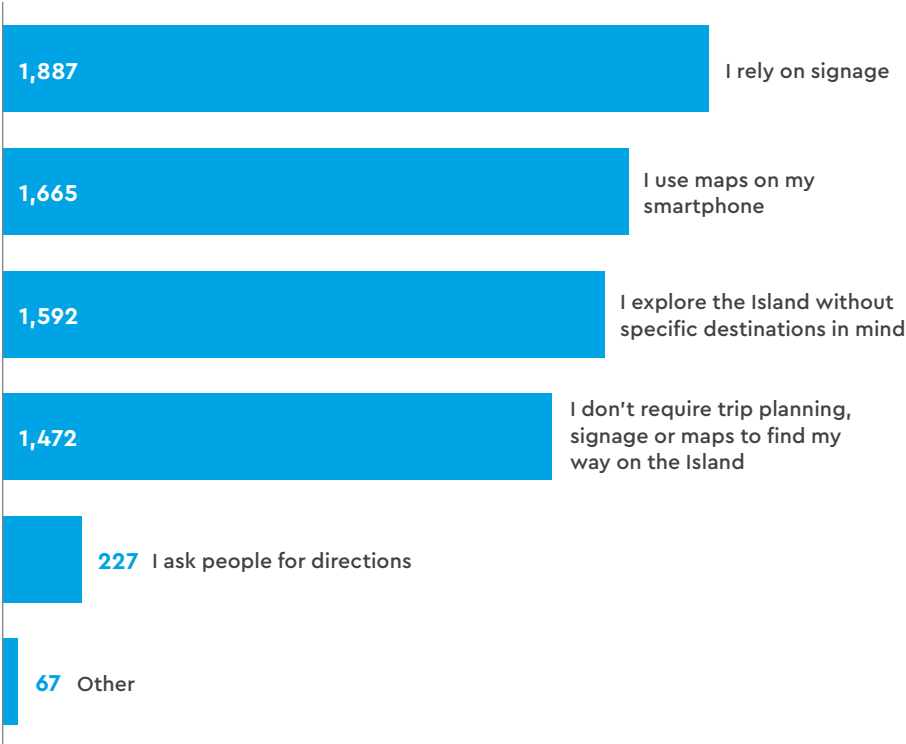
Ferry all day:
80%

Water taxi FTW:
20%

Where respondents said they usually arrive on the Island versus where they depart:



Respondents find destinations by:

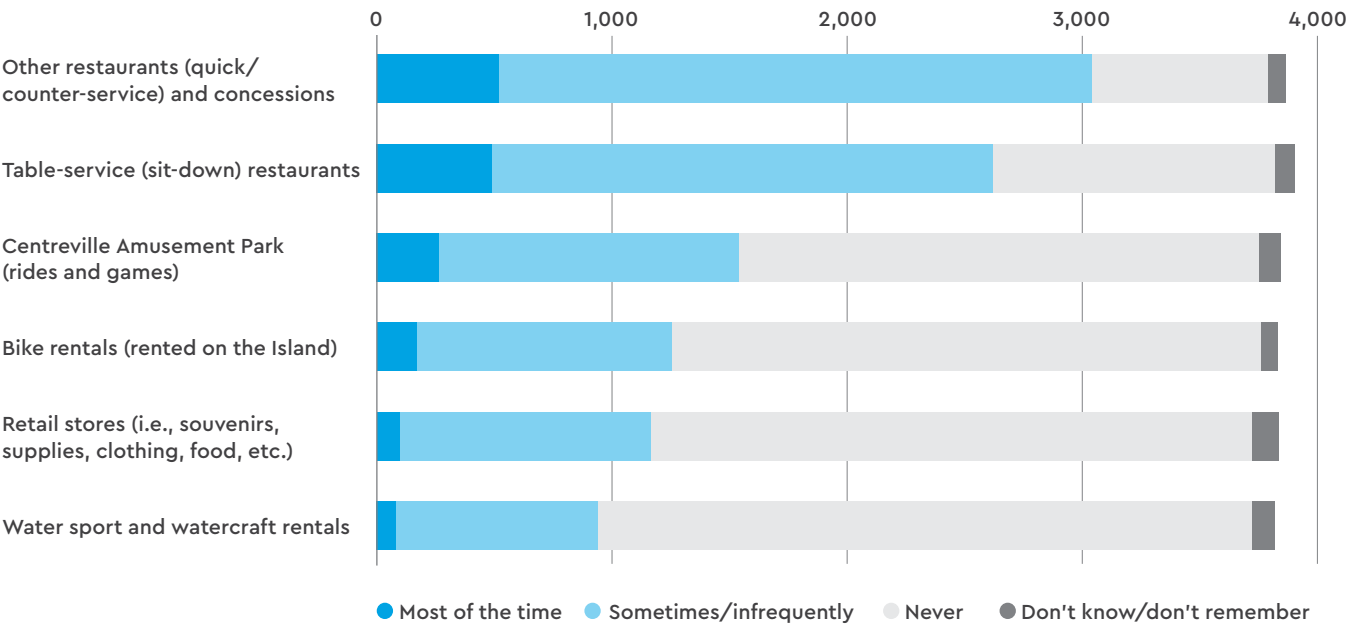


Social Poll:
How do you find your way around the Island?

Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram responses:

I like to explore:
68%
Mapping it:
32%

Services, attractions, and businesses respondents said they use:



On average, respondents typically spend approximately \$46 in total as part of their trip to Toronto Island Park. As a reference point, one adult ferry ticket costs \$8.50. The following lists the approximate average spending by category:



Total average of
\$46.00
 spent on trip to Toronto Island Park



Approx.
\$33.50
 at sit-down restaurants



Approx.
\$16.75
 at quick/counter-service and/or concessions



Approx.
\$15.50
 on attractions (amusement rides, mini golf, etc.)



Approx.
\$14.25
 on rentals (bike, boats, paddleboards)



Approx.
\$4.50
 on retail purchases

3. What we heard about the future of Toronto Island Park

What is working well that should stay the same?

Summary of Public Feedback

- **The Island as a natural oasis and escape from the city**, including wildlife, wilderness, beaches, peace and quiet, water, lack of commercialism, views of the city, and green space.
- **Existing amenities, businesses, and attractions**, particularly Centreville, the pier, the Disc Golf Course, Toronto Island Stand Up Paddle Boarding, Montessori School, Artscape, the Island Natural School, the Franklin Gardens, the Island Café, The Riviera – Ward's Island Kitchen, the William Meany Maze, Far Enough Farm and others. These amenities should be maintained but not over-expanded.
- **Beaches**, especially Hanlan's Point clothing optional beach, an inclusive, safe space significant to LGBTQ2S+ communities. Hanlan's and other beaches should be protected from further erosion and shrinking.
- **Unique culture, character, and freedom**, including the quirky, quiet, "cottage-country feel" of the neighbourhoods, the tranquillity of the natural areas and green spaces, the ability to choose the type of experience (structured or unstructured) based on mood or interest.
- **Ferry rides**, which are exciting, create a sense of ritual, make it feel like you're taking a journey, offer great views, and preserve the Island's charm and magic.
- **Recreational, social, cultural facilities and programming**, like walking, biking, and using watercrafts; being able to rent things like bikes, tandem bikes, quadra-cycles, stand up paddleboards, canoes, and kayaks; the disc golf course; the boat clubs on the Island; festivals and events; artistic programming; and the food at the restaurants and concessions.
- **Access for boating**, including docks, dock wall, moorings, and boating clubs.

Social Poll: What's your favourite feature of the Island?

Facebook, Twitter, and
Instagram responses:

Nature, naturally:
84%

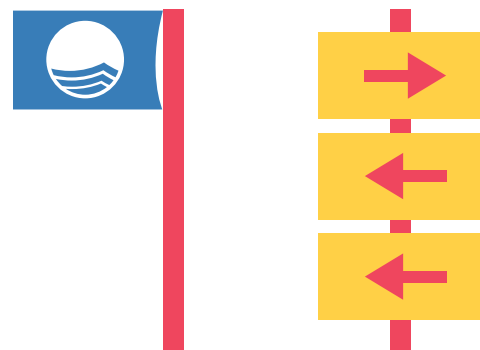
Rides and slides!:
16%



What is not working well that should change?

Summary of Public Feedback

- **Access to the Island, especially the ferry** with its crowding, infrequent service, and long line-ups. It takes more effort, time, money, and planning than it should (especially during peak season and hours). Suggested strategies to address this challenge included: 24/7 ferry service, adding more ferries and more frequent service, reducing ferry costs, exploring pass options and/or integrating ferry service with Presto.
- **Flooding, erosion, and environmental challenges**, including beach erosion, impacts of crowding on sensitive areas, increased litter, and animal feces.
- **Poor state and/or lack of amenities and attractions**, like the shortage of well-maintained washrooms, handwash stations, and drinking fountains; the lack of garbage bins; not enough seating or shade structures; not enough lighting along paths in the evening; Centreville; lack of bike facilities (repair stations, parking, bike lanes, rentals); poor internet, Wi-Fi, and cell service; lack of retail options (i.e., LCBO or grocery store); and lack of overnight or short-term stay options. The park needs more bike racks, washrooms, shower facilities, tables, grills, fire pits, umbrellas, water refill stations, gazebos, tuck shops, and seating areas.
- **The lack of healthy, diverse, and affordable food options**, including too many chain restaurants, lack of variety and quality, and poor distribution of food vendors across the park. Strategies to address could include adding food trucks, more beverage options, more local sit-down restaurants, community gardens or a local farm, concession stands, and supporting options that also reflect Toronto's diversity.
- **Lack of information about Indigenous history, culture, and placemaking**, with suggested strategies focusing on signage, wayfinding, and interpretation centre.
- **Poor communication, signage, and access to information**, including lack of wayfinding, signage, information about rules and what's going on at the park. Suggested strategies to address this included a centralized information system or website.
- **Lack of winter access**, including lack of winterized facilities (like washrooms or warming areas) or reliable winter ferry service.
- **Crowding and noise**, including from party boats, concerts, the airport, and other activities that disturb the peaceful environment and natural habitats.
- **Other concerns**, including: impacts from crowds and parties; challenge of getting around (especially for people who use mobility devices); public health risks from fire ants and ticks; lack of regulation for docked or moored boats; insufficient space for recreational boaters to dock; noise and pollution from Billy Bishop Airport; private areas (residential communities and boat clubs) taking away public space, and mainland parking.



Opportunities that should be explored through the Master Plan

Summary of Public Feedback:

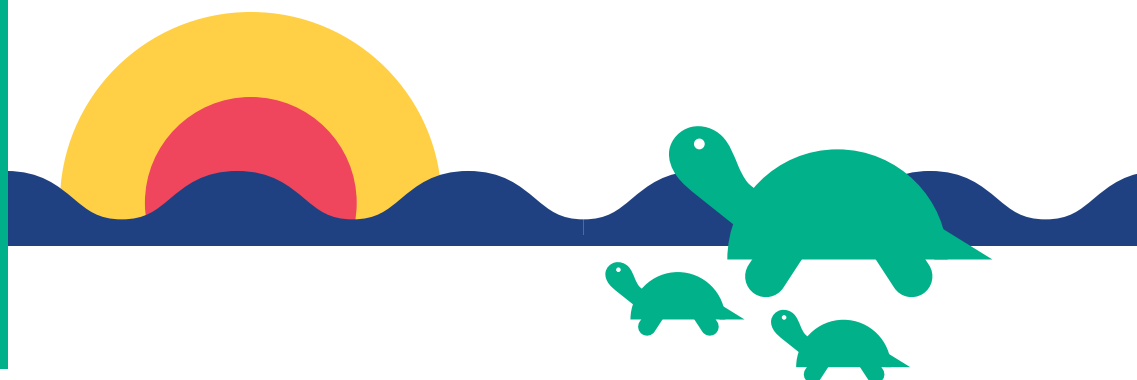
- **Improve access to Toronto Island Park**, by improving the ferry service (pricing, schedule and frequency, crowd control, and accessibility) or providing affordable parking options close to the ferry terminal. Some suggested building a bridge or tunnel for pedestrians and cyclists, others said it was important to keep the Island physically separate and improve access another way (increased ferry service, for example).
- **Improve mobility on Toronto Island Park**, with Bike Share, e-scooters, and a golf cart shuttle service between the docks.
- **Improve or upgrade to facilities and amenities**, including the disc golf course, washrooms, Centreville (while balancing not over-developing or commercializing it).
- **Expand the beaches**, in particular Hanlan's Point because of its increased popularity to a growing downtown population and significance to the LGBTQ2S+ community, increased popularity to a growing downtown population, and it is eroding.
- **Restore or re-wild natural areas**, even if that means restricting public access.
- **Provide more food options** that are healthy, affordable, locally owned, and/or includes pop-up options.
- **Improve winter access, activities, and amenities**, through supporting snowshoeing and skiing and adding heated shelters and washrooms.
- **Improve emergency services without increasing policing**. While safety is a priority, police presence should not be increased, especially at Hanlan's Point.

Social Poll: What would you love to see more of on the Island?

Facebook, Twitter, and
Instagram responses:

Amenities:
71%

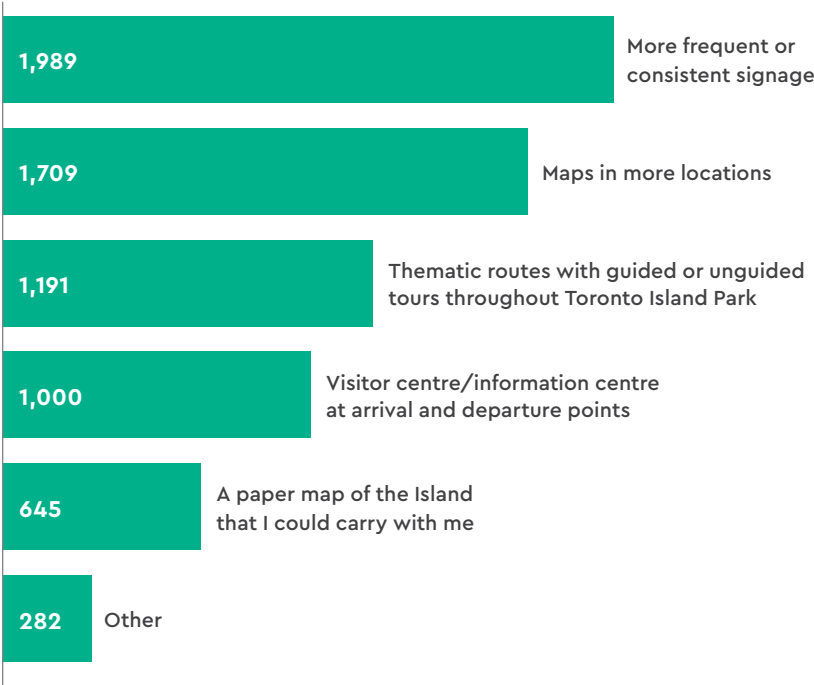
Programming
& events:
29%



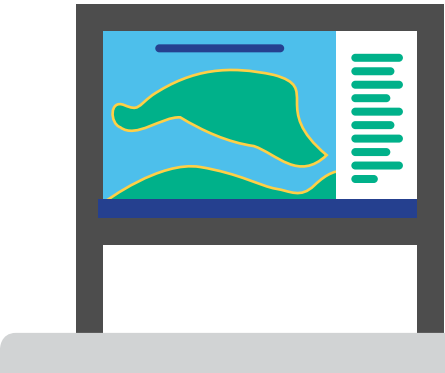
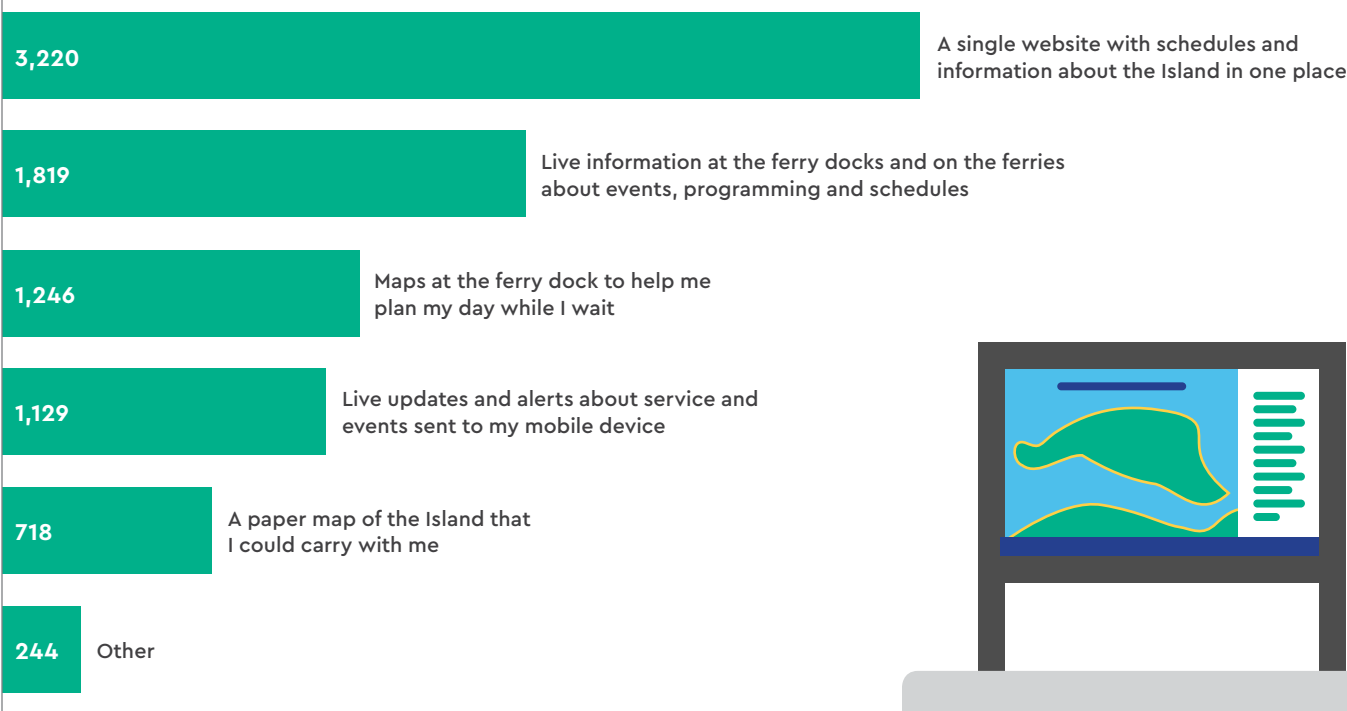
Survey highlights



To make navigating Toronto Island Park easier, respondents said:



Respondents said the following would make planning their visit easier:





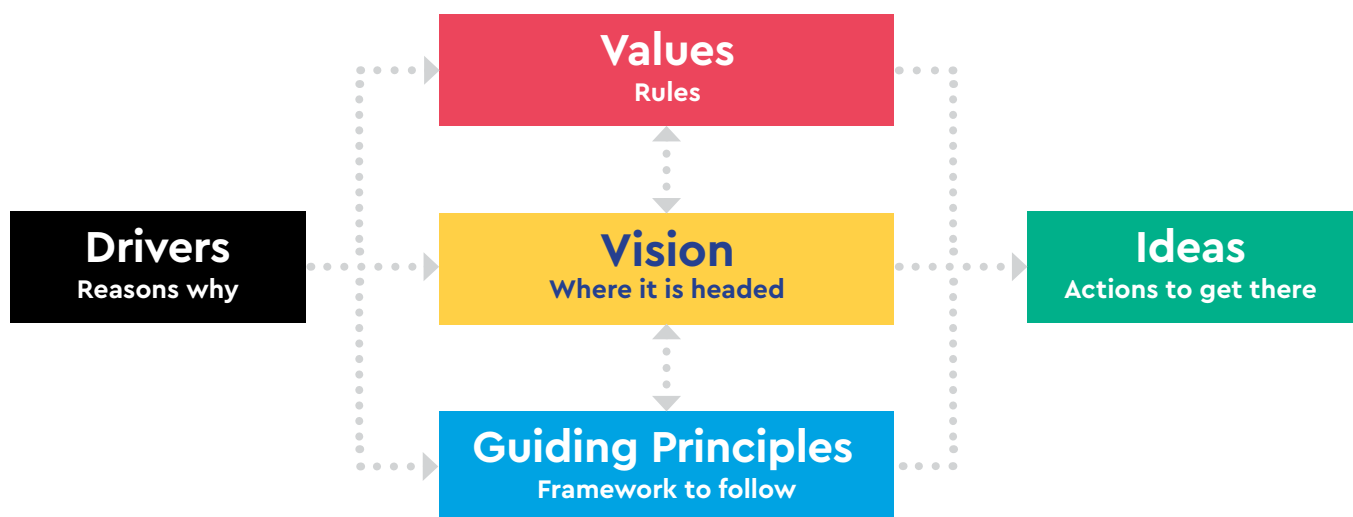
What we heard about opportunities in Indigenous engagement

- **Create space for ceremonial, healing, and cultural uses** like land-based cultural and language camps or retreats; places to hold sacred fires, sweat lodges and feasts; secluded space for ceremonies near the water (including sunrise and full moon ceremonies); a safe, flexible, multi-use ceremonial space (like an Anishinaabe teaching Lodge, a Haudenosaunee longhouse, or year-round community space) where people can claim their culture back and support inter-generational healing and learning.
- **Make Indigenous history, identity and living culture more visible** by teaching non-Indigenous visitors about Indigenous history and culture; naming and commemorating certain parts of the Islands after elders and other Indigenous people (like Mohawk athlete Tom Longboat), having Indigenous art on the ferry; creating Indigenous programming (for example, canoe-making and hosting medicine walks; a mural at the ferry docks; employing an Indigenous parks-keeper who could help share information; creating a village or museum reflecting and honouring Indigenous history including a monument space for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and 2-Spirit people).
- **Include Indigenous languages in wayfinding and interpretation** including Anishinaabemowin, Onkwehonwe languages and Michif.
- **Create economic opportunities for First Nations and Indigenous businesses** by making sure Indigenous people are employed in the park; creating a marketplace for Indigenous crafts; enabling new opportunities for Indigenous food service providers and including Indigenous foods; including Indigenous businesses in construction; developing a mentorship or employment program.
- **Consider creating housing**, such as small houses for short-term use by visitors, low-income families, and to help address homelessness. Include opportunities for Indigenous home ownership on the Island.
- **Explore Indigenous elements in the overall design**, such as a medicine wheel concept or references to dodems (clans).
- **Create spaces for arts and cultural programming**, such as workshops (on hide tanning, ceramic, pottery pit firing, wood carving, and others). Include diverse Indigenous traditional knowledge learning opportunities, including water teachings, land-based learning, and wampum teachings; sustainable harvesting; permanent funding for Indigenous involvement and programs.
- **Other suggestions, including** providing cultural safety training to City parks staff, creating a youth council or other governance structure so Indigenous youth have a voice, provide complimentary, barrier-free access to the Island for Indigenous people (including potentially via a bridge or tunnel); support habitat for traditional medicines and food plants.

Aaniin.
Sago.
Taanishi.
Hello.

4. What we heard about the in-progress Master Plan

There are four key components which build the foundation for the Master Plan, including: the Drivers of Change (why we need a Master Plan); the Values (the rules the Master Plan will abide by and embody); the Vision – (what we want to achieve); and the Guiding Principles (which inform how we hope to get there). Each component was co-developed throughout Phase One and is intended to continuously feed into one another, informing the Big Ideas and Concept Plans in Phase Two and how the Master Plan is later implemented. This section summarizes what we heard about each component.



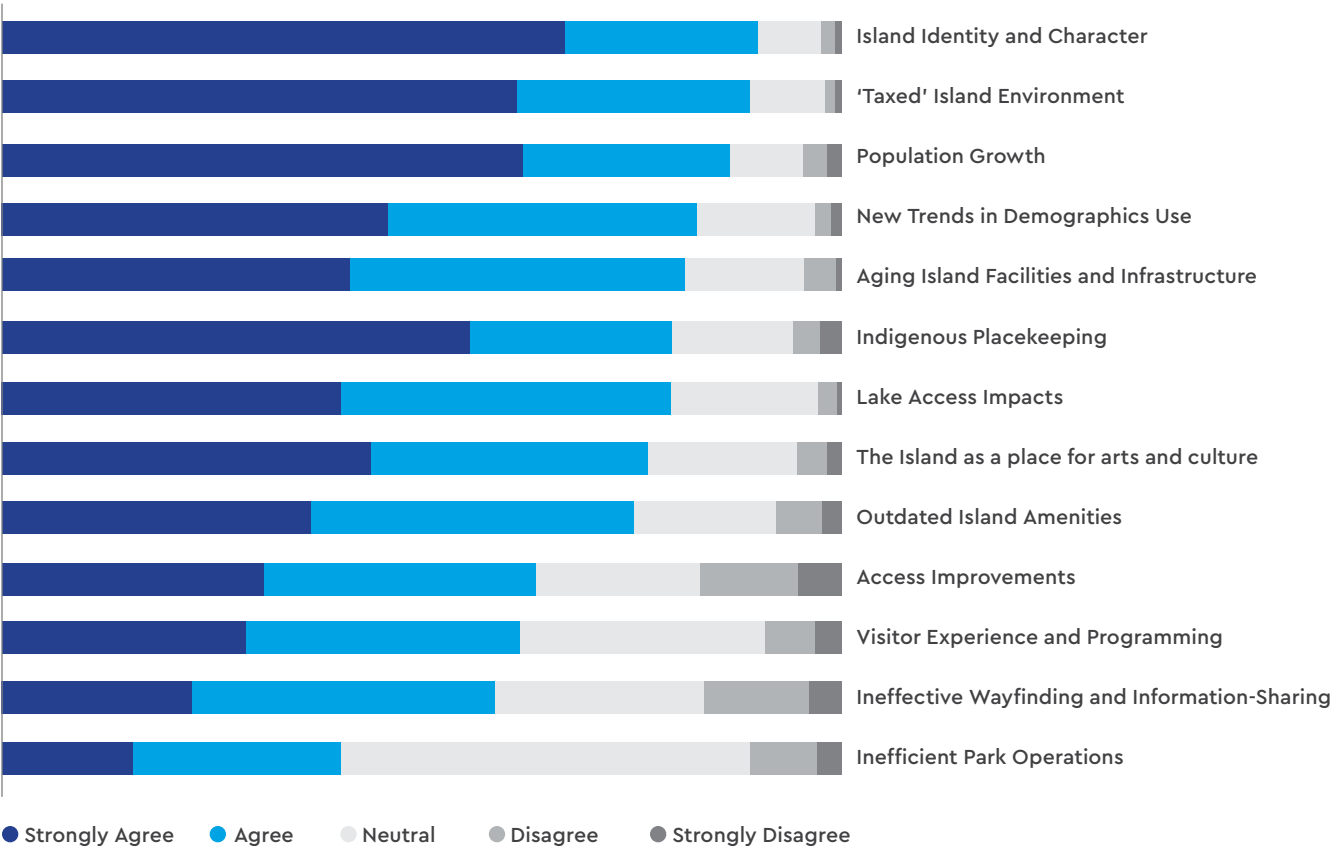
Drivers of change

Drivers of change are the reasons why the City is considering changes for Toronto Island Park. Over the course of Phase One, in collaboration with participants, the Master Plan team identified the following preliminary drivers of change, which were refined by the end of Phase One:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Island Identity and Character | 7. Aging Island Facilities and Infrastructure |
| 2. Indigenous Placekeeping | 8. Outdated Island Amenities |
| 3. Visitor Experience and Programming | 9. 'Taxed' Island Environment |
| 4. Access Improvements | 10. Lake Access Impacts |
| 5. Ineffective Wayfinding and Information-Sharing | 11. Population Growth |
| 6. Inefficient Park Operations | 12. New Trends in Demographics and Park Use |
| | 13. The Island as a place for arts and culture |

Survey highlights

Survey respondents rated their level of agreement with each of the drivers of change:



Generally, participants said the drivers of change are on the right track, and suggested a few additional drivers:

- **Climate change, sustainability, biodiversity, and/or the biological environment**, especially given the need for the park to be a place for people while protecting its delicate ecosystem.
- **LGBTQ2S+ communities**, especially given the historic (and on-going) significance of Toronto Island Park to these communities.
- **Population growth and changing demographics**, since different park users have different interests and the Island has become a popular waterfront destination and escape.
- **Others**, including "aging population," "food justice," "the history of the Island," and an approach that is less human-centric, the interface between Billy Bishop Airport and the park, and "existing Island amenities and communities."



What we heard about drivers of change through the Indigenous engagement

- The **Indigenous Placekeeping** driver of change was the highest priority for Indigenous participants, with **Island Identity** and the **The Island as a Place for Arts and Culture** also resonating with many.
- Other drivers that resonated included **Aging Island Facilities and Infrastructure**, **'Taxed' Island Environment**, **Ineffective Wayfinding and Information-Sharing**, **Outdated Island Amenities**, and **Visitor Experience and Programming**.



Vision

Over the course of Phase One, engagement tactics were also focussed on asking people about their future Vision for the park. Participants shared their visions by either finishing the sentence "What if the Island..." or "Toronto Island Park should..." The themes that emerged consistently in respondents' visions were:

- **Promotion, preservation, and protection of the natural environment and wildlife**, especially, water, flora, fauna, flood protection, sustainability, minimizing garbage, and encouraging stewardship. A common sentiment was wanting to see the Toronto Island Park "stay as it is," continuing to be a natural escape, oasis, or retreat.
- **Respecting, preserving, honouring, and celebrating Indigenous history, culture, and placekeeping**, with many saying the Island should be place for truth and reconciliation through signage, funding for Indigenous involvement in programming, habitats that support traditional medicines and food plants, healing lodges, and Indigenous shops that promote Indigenous arts and culture.
- **An Island with improved access and that is easier to get to**, with: more and better ferries, ferries that are financially accessible to all or discounted, and fewer long line-ups and crowds. Some visions included a pedestrian and cycling bridge or tunnel to improve access, while others were opposed to a bridge, saying it would take away what makes the Island special
- **An Island that is safe and welcoming to all**, including acknowledging and protecting the significance of the Island to LGBTQ2S+ communities and including diverse programming.
- **Other common topics** including: improved amenities and services; support for a diverse range of activities and programming; celebrating distinct character and charm; ensuring the Island is a year-round destination and championing the Island community as Island stewards and community partners.

We also heard from some that, since the Vision is a long-term document looking well into the future, the Master Plan should articulate a vision for the lands currently occupied by the airport (in case the airport ceases to exist after the current tripartite agreement expires in 2033).



What we heard about the Vision through the Indigenous engagement

Throughout Indigenous engagement, we heard visions for Toronto Island Park to:

- **Feel more like an Indigenous place** beginning with the ferry ride and through the experience on the Island itself.
- **Consider the land, water, flora and fauna over the needs of people** by keeping the Island natural through trails, plant life, trees and fresh air and passing laws to protect the rights of the Islands and water for the next seven generations.
- **Consider everyone a steward of the land and water** alongside the original stewards, Indigenous peoples.
- **Reflect and protect Aboriginal and Treaty Rights**, including the right to camp and harvest within the park.
- **Be welcoming and inclusive, reflecting the diversity of Indigenous peoples in Toronto** including women, youth and 2-Spirit people.



Indigenous placekeeping

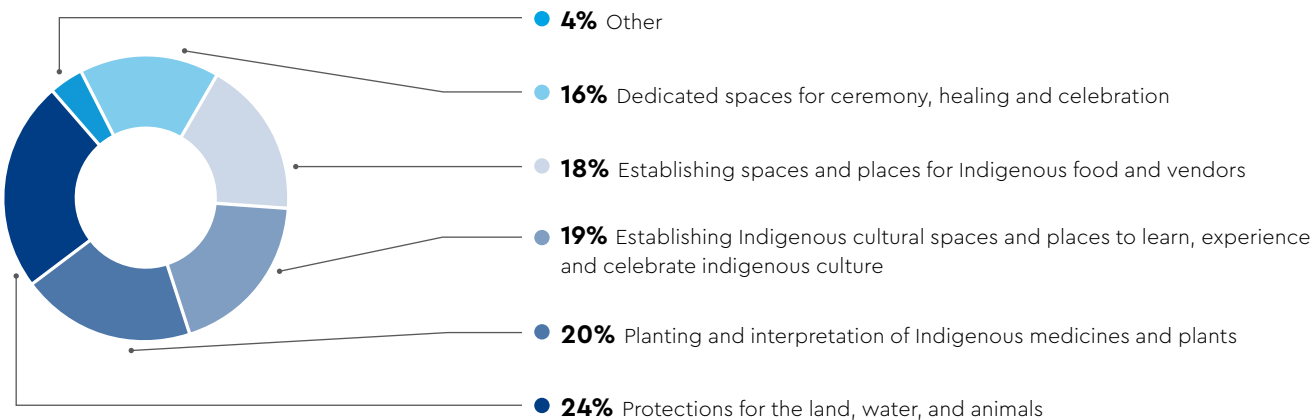
Indigenous placekeeping is an approach to design based on land stewardship that is centred around recognizing the rights of landscape as a living being first and considering our responsibilities to a place now and into the future. Indigenous Placekeeping thinks beyond our immediate benefits and defines a relationship of reciprocity to all living things and systems and how they work together.

One of the aims of the Master Plan is to make Toronto Island Park feel like a more Indigenous place through placekeeping.

In Phase One, participants shared the following advice about Indigenous Placekeeping for Toronto Island Park:

Survey highlights

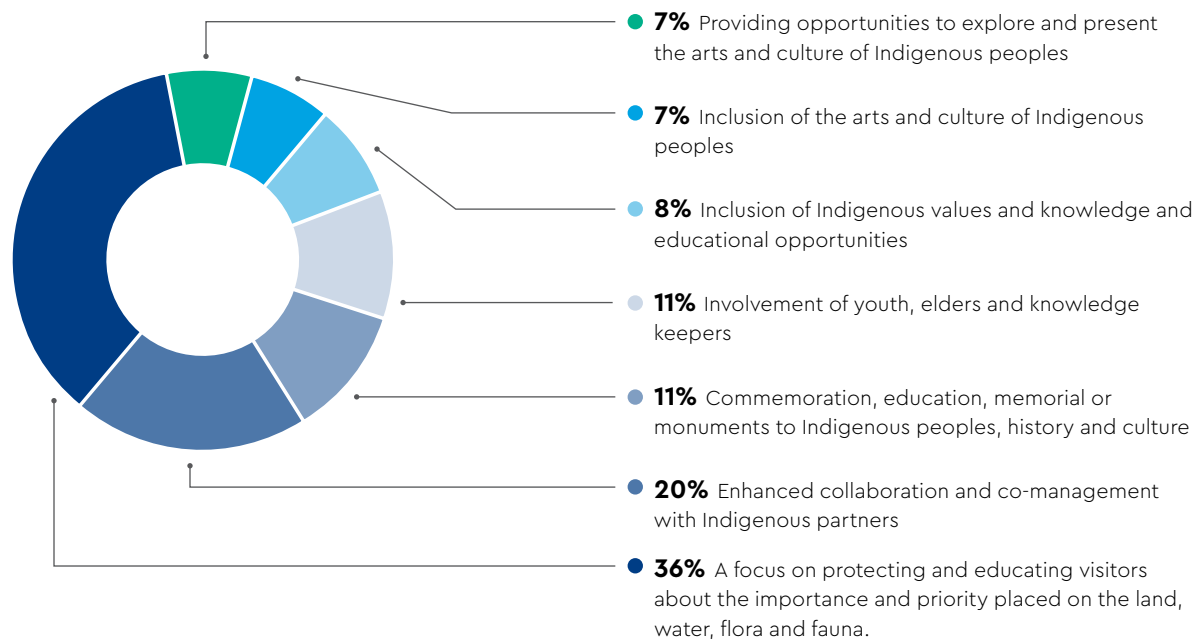
Respondents suggested methods/approaches to best reflect the significance of Toronto Island as an Indigenous Place, including:



Respondents said the following are priorities for inclusion of living Indigenous culture:



Respondents said the Toronto Island Park Master Plan should consider:



We also heard:

- **The Island should be a place that embraces Indigenous culture** with areas for Indigenous people to celebrate their culture (like hosting ceremonies).
- **Protection of the natural environment is critical**, including by moving towards a carbon-neutral footprint, having no garbage/litter, adding more native plants, and protecting the beaches from erosion.
- **Consider priority access for Indigenous people** through on-Island housing and businesses (ensuring Indigenous representation in the Island community) and making the ferry free for Indigenous people.
- **Acknowledge history**, including the significant history of colonialism.
- **Other suggestions to make Toronto Island feel like a more Indigenous place** including more paths, trails, fire pits; improving ferry service and/or make it free; offering quality canoe, kayak and paddleboard rentals; adding a plaque about the First Nations Water Declaration.

Values

The Values are intended to be universal truths that are not influenced by context or interpretation and are required in the overall success of the plan. The Master Plan team shared and sought feedback on three values in Phase One:

- **Respect**
- **Balance**
- **Diversity**

Overall, participants said the Values are on the right track, saying they complement and play-off one another. Many agreed with "balance" as a value, with some expressing to use this term with caution – referencing that, in some cases, balances does not mean all things are equal and the Master Plan should prioritize some things over others such as; protecting nature over human access and use of the park.

Additional suggestions and changes included:

- Add "harmony" as an umbrella over all values.
- Add "protection," "preservation," "sustainability," "eco-system," "honesty," "integrity," or "transparency."
- Consider reframing "diversity" to "inclusivity" or "accessibility."



What we heard about the values through the Indigenous engagement

Throughout Indigenous engagement, we heard visions for Toronto Island Park to:

- Respect is a key value: it is important that all human kind, the flora, fauna the Earth and the water are all respected on Toronto Island.
- Suggested additional values, including:
 - Truth-Telling by telling the history of the land from the perspective of Indigenous peoples' truth including honouring of the Treaties especially Mississauga Treaty No. 13 (such as through a museum of Indigenous history and/or acknowledgment and monument space for missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and 2-Spirit people).
 - Safety by making sure the park is personally and culturally safe (especially for Indigenous women and families) with safe places to swim, change, and even handle and cook foods with modern facilities at a cultural, ceremonial space.
 - Honouring Indigenous worldview, ways of knowing and the perspectives of Creation including the Seven Grandfather Teachings, Four Directions teachings, Anishinaabe law, and intergenerational knowledge sharing between Elders and youth.
 - Environmental sustainability, including replenishing the land, managing using the park in a sustainable (and fun) way.
 - Community and family.

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles are high-level directives that are specific to the vision and support and reference the values. In Phase One, the City Shared the following draft Guiding Principles:

- Celebrate and protect the diverse natural and cultural heritage of the islands.
- Honour and respect the Indigenous Community in an authentic way.
- Encourage exploration and discovery in every visit.
- Celebrate Toronto's unique and diverse character in equitable and inclusive spaces.
- Model resilience and sustainability of the landscapes and water bodies of the islands.
- Create a new generation of stewards to protect and advocate for the wonder of the islands.
- Balance new and existing uses within spaces that can be adapted for diverse and memorable experiences in all seasons.
- Project the unique character of Toronto to the world.
- Prioritize accessible spaces and experiences for all, including Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, LGBTQ2S+ Communities, disabled people, and people experiencing poverty.
- Support innovative models for sustainable business opportunities and practices.
- Embody an Island Oasis – car-free, care-free and protected.

These preliminary guiding principles were developed by the City through an internal and interdivisional engagement process with the idea

that these could provide a starting point for the public conversation. Working to establish these principles internally in advance of the public discussion allowed the internal City Divisions to also come to agreement on what the preliminary principles should be. These guiding principles may evolve based on feedback from participants and as the project advances.

Overall, we heard the Guiding Principles are on the right track, though they could be consolidated and/or prioritized. Participants generally liked principles about creating accessible spaces, honouring Indigenous communities, and stewardship. They suggested adding principles or language focusing on education, safety, and wildlife.

What we heard about the Guiding Principles in Indigenous engagement



The Guiding Principles should include, reflect, and support:

- a welcoming, inclusive space that reflects the diversity of Indigenous peoples in Toronto.
- improved access and transportation to and around the Park.
- habitat for traditional medicines and food plants.
- respect and honour Indigenous perspectives of water.
- permanent funding for Indigenous involvement and programs.

5. Next steps

Following the Phase One engagement, the City of Toronto staff will finalize and confirm the Drivers of Change, Vision, Values, and Guiding Principles, sharing these with the public and other participants as part of Phase Two.

Phase Two will also focus on co-creating and exploring big ideas and the preparation of 'Demonstration plans' for Toronto Island Park, and will run from May through to the end of 2021, including a Youth Ambassador-led effort focused on connecting with underrepresented youth. Phase Three, will launch in the first quarter of 2022, and will focus on presenting and seeking feedback on the Ideas and demonstration plans, and the preliminary Master Plan itself, culminating in a celebration where the final Master Plan will be shared in the summer of 2022.

This report was prepared for the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation by Swerhun Inc., Nbisiing Consulting, and Co-Effect.

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