

High Park Movement Strategy

Open House
July 27th 2022

Land Acknowledgement

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.

High Park is located within “Dish With One Spoon” Territory. The “Dish with One Spoon” is a Wampum Belt Covenant between the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Mississaugas to share and protect this land together by using only one spoon to eat from the Dish and ensuring the Dish is never empty.

Agenda



Welcome, Introductions and Meeting Tips
Councillor Remarks



Presentation

- Meeting Purpose
- Project Background & Scope
- What We've Heard So Far
- Existing Conditions
- Draft Movement Strategies



Q&A



Wrap Up and Next Steps



Adjourn at 8:00pm

Meeting Tips & Conduct



All participants are **currently muted** for the presentation.



We encourage you to turn on your camera throughout today's session.



You can ask questions and give your feedback by typing into the **Q&A window**. You may also use the **raise hand** function to be unmuted and ask a question verbally. Please be respectful of other people's time and opinion.



In the event we aren't able to answer every question, there will be contact information at the end of the presentation you can use to reach the project team.

Please be aware this meeting is being recorded and personal information, such as your opinions, statements and voice will be recorded but not made publicly available. Any future reports that reference the discussion today will not be directly attributed to the person/s who made the comment.

Q&A – How to Participate

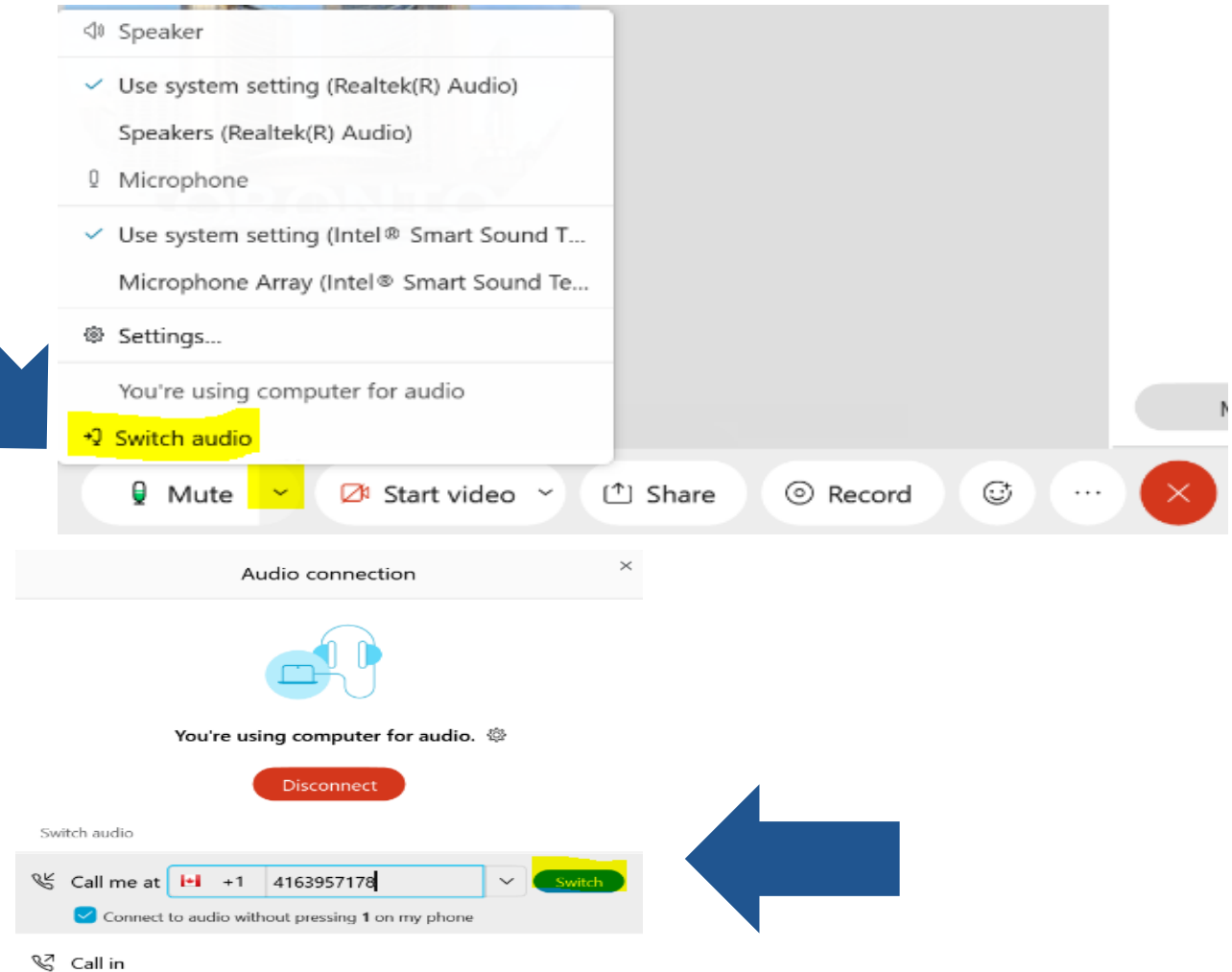
- Type your feedback or question into the **Q&A panel** on the right hand side of the screen. Questions will be read aloud and answered by the Project Team.
- **“Raise your hand”** to ask a question verbally. Click the raise hand icon next to your name, or press ctrl+shift+R. The Project Team will unmute you, and you may ask your question. Please lower your hand once you’re done.
- If you’re calling in, you can press *3 to raise your hand.

Please remember to be respectful and give space for everyone to provide feedback.



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2. Click **"Switch audio"**
3. Use **"Call me" function**
 - Enter your phone #
 - Webex will call your phone
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- Dial: 416-915-6530

When prompted for a meeting number enter:

- 2451 908 4793

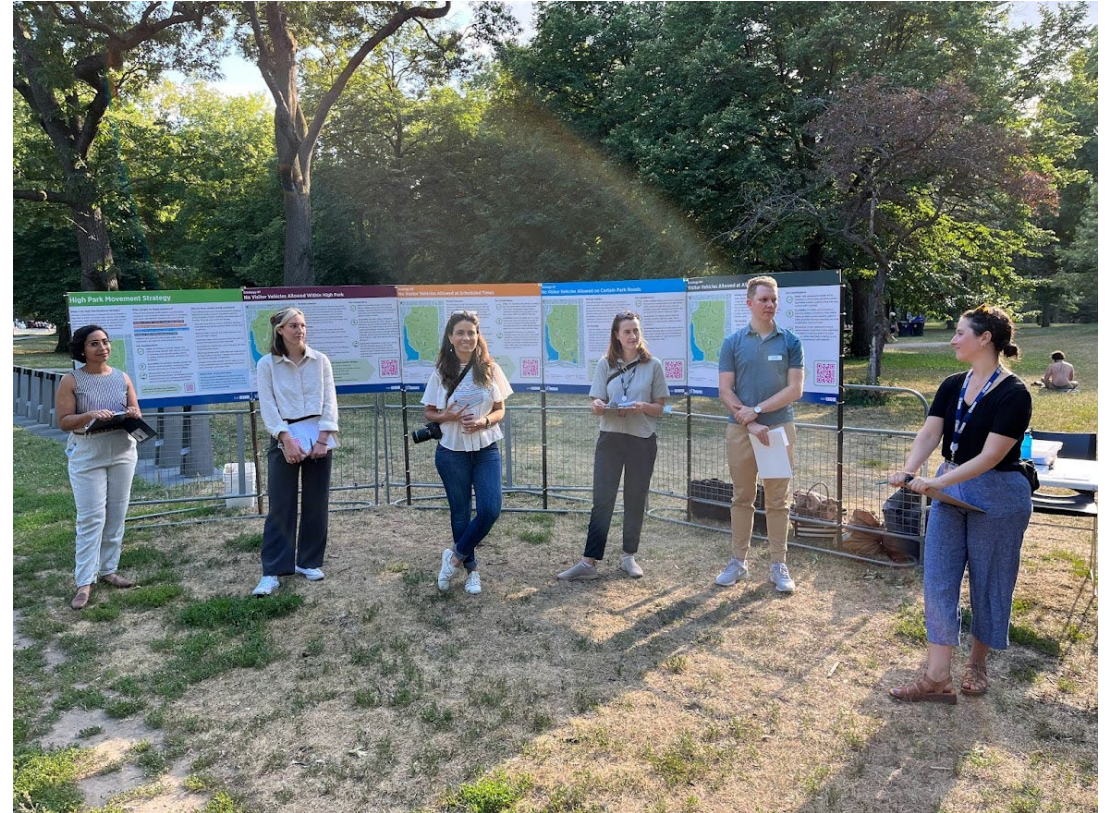
Project Team

City of Toronto

- Heather Oliver, Parks, Forestry & Recreation
- Alyssa Krantzberg, Transportation Services
- Amanda Franco Guerardi, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Wood

- Lachlan Fraser
- Anika Shams
- Leanna Augsten



Meeting Purpose

- Share key findings from our work to date
- Hear your thoughts and answer questions about the study process, background work, and draft mobility strategies
- Promote ways to stay informed and involved as the project advances.



Background & Objectives

- Since March 2020, all roads in High Park have been closed to motor vehicles on weekends and public holidays to provide more space for park users to physically distance
- The road closures sparked public interest in exploring longer term and comprehensive changes to improve the park's travel network
- Parks, Forestry and Recreation and Transportation Services are co-leading the study to evaluate and rethink the travel network within High Park to:
 - ✓ better **serve park users** and the **surrounding community**, while
 - ✓ prioritizing **safety and accessibility** for all visitors, and
 - ✓ preserving the park's **ecological integrity**.



Scope

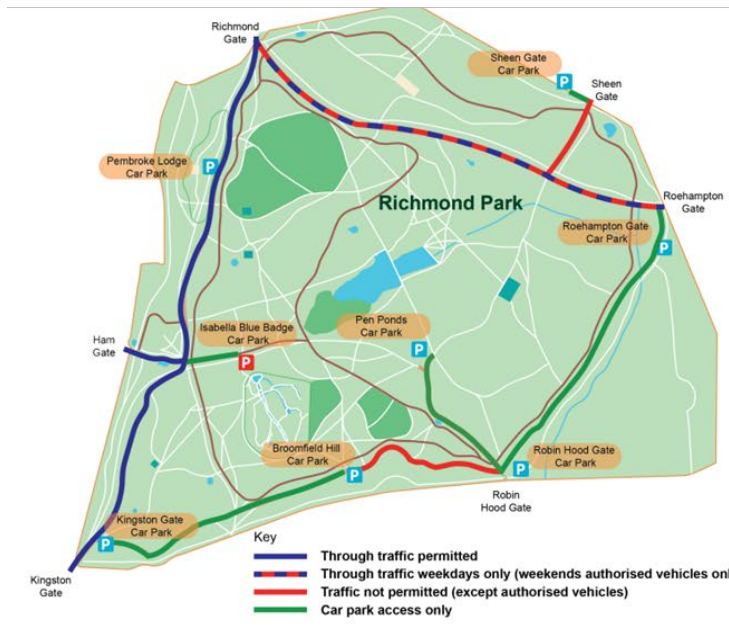
- Improvements to the travel network will be focused within the **Study Area**, including
 - ✓ Roads
 - ✓ Driveways
 - ✓ Parking lots
 - ✓ Paved Trails
- The study will also consider impact and strategic recommendations to address the wider **Context Area**.
- Study is not intended as a comprehensive master planning exercise to evaluate current land uses or management practices.
- As a companion study to the High Park Movement Strategy, Transportation Services has initiated a study that will explore long-term possibilities for the reconfiguration of Parkside Drive.



Case Studies

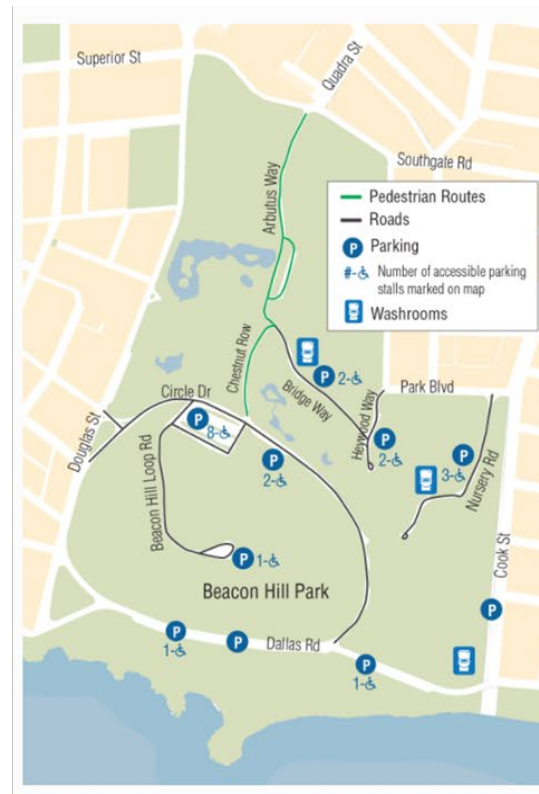
Royal Parks: London, UK

- Road closures enacted in August 2020 in 6 major urban parks, pilots have continued as part of a broader study. Focus on reducing cut-through traffic.



Beacon Hill Park, Victoria BC

- Road closures enacted in 2020 and partially re-opened to address accessibility concerns



Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

- Car free route established in 2020. Access and safety program launched in 2021, focus on accessibility, transit, and reducing park user conflicts.



Past Engagement Activities

- Online public survey ran from June to October 2021, received over 6000 responses
- Pre-engagement meetings with Mississauga of the Credit First Nation and outreach to groups serving FNIM communities
- One internal stakeholder meetings held with staff from City agencies and Divisions,
- Two stakeholder meetings held external stakeholder groups active in and around the park
- Meeting with the Parks Forestry and Recreation Community Disability Steering Committee
- Dedicated project website, email and subscriptions to e-updates

Key themes:

- Any potential changes should support and protect the park's environment
- Many park users are supportive of the weekend road closures but others have raised concerns regarding accessibility of the park's interior destinations
- Conflict mitigation between road users is a fundamental need
- Opportunities for calming motor vehicle traffic should be pursued
- There is support for expanded transit access

Summer 2021 Online Survey

Survey Highlights

- 75% of respondents agreed that weekend road closures had a positive impact on their visits to High Park
- Most respondents (59%) said that the weekend road closures have not impacted them. However, 33% noted increased street parking and 25% noted increased traffic in the neighbourhood.
- 77% placed a high priority on enhancing and conserving ecological integrity, and 60% placed a high priority on reducing the impact of vehicle traffic on the park.
- Most respondents indicated that they often used a main roadway to enter or exit High Park (66%), followed by unpaved (31%) and paved trails (27%).
- 59% of survey respondents most often travelled by foot to reach High Park, followed by cycling or other non-motorized devices such as bicycles or rollerblades (38%).
- The most popular times for visiting the park prior to COVID-19 were weekend mornings and afternoons. Most respondents did not report a change to this preference during the pandemic.
- Summary of the Summer 2021 survey results is available on the project website: www.toronto.ca/highparkmove



Who we reached

- 6,717 responses were received
- 70% of all respondents live within 2km of High Park.
- 16% of respondents identified as having a disability
- 15% reported having people over the age of 65 in their household
- 20% reported having people under the age of 18 in their household

Stakeholder Consultation

Highlights from Stakeholder Feedback

- Strong support for preserving and improve the park's ecosystem, noting the need to manage access and impact to naturalized areas.
- Road closures are supported by some, but others are concerned that these may discourage visitors from accessing the park especially seniors, young children, and those with disabilities.
- Support for traffic calming actions, noting that conflict between users and speeding in the park was a major concern.
- Ideas discussed include speed humps, textured pavement, paid parking and restricting vehicle traffic at times of day or on certain roads.
- Interest in exploring public transit options to better manage traffic flow while providing mobility options. Options should be affordable and environmentally friendly.



Who we reached

- External stakeholder group comprised of 39 different organizations active in and around High Park
 - Local Resident associations
 - Local Business owners and operators
 - Sport and Recreation Leagues
 - Environmental Organizations
 - Cultural and Social groups
 - Other interest groups

Summer 2022 Engagement

- **Second Online survey** will run from July 8th to August 19th and will gather feedback on the draft strategies.
- **Two “Talk To The Team”** events held in High Park on Thursday, July 14th and Saturday, July 16th
- **Online Open House**, is being hosted tonight. The presentation materials and meeting summary will be shared online.



Highlights from our Talk to the Team events

- Traffic in the park is heavy and vehicles speeds are often excessive.
- Cut through traffic should be discouraged and parking spaces in the park should not be used by subway commuters.
- Road network redesign could reduce conflicts between park users and help to make all park users feel safer.
- Many who live within walking distance of the park enjoy the car-free weekends.
- Street parking and congestion is a concern within the neighbourhood
- High Park must be accessible for people of all ages and abilities. Providing convenient mobility options for people to get to their destinations is important.
- High Park is first and foremost a park, and opportunities to increase green space and reduce emissions should be explored
- High Park is well loved!

Engagement moving forward

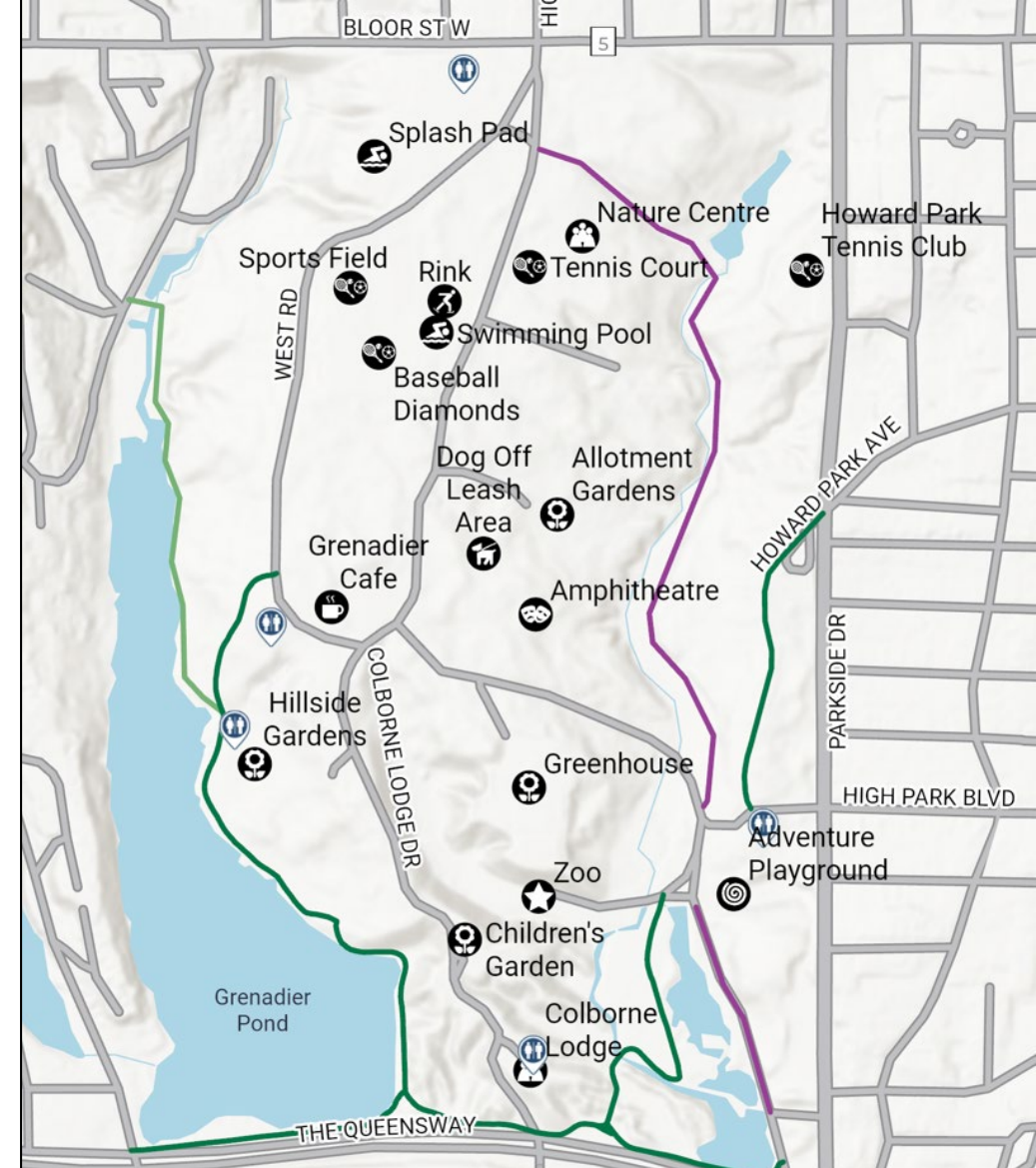
- Feedback from this round of public consultation will inform the selection of a preferred strategy including an approach to road closures and other traffic management measures.
- Results from the second online survey will also be shared online.
- Following this round of public consultation in the Summer 2022, the project team will host workshops with key stakeholder groups in the Fall to refine and evaluate the strategies
- A preferred draft strategy will be selected and presented for public review and comment in Winter 2022.
- Final recommendations will be brought forward to Council in early 2023, with opportunities for public deputations
- Implementation workshops will be held with key stakeholder groups in early 2023 to discuss detailed design, phasing and monitoring of travel network changes.

Background / Existing Conditions

What We Know About High Park

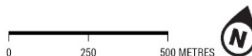
Park Context:

- Important biodiversity and ecological value, designated as an Environmentally Significant Area (ESA), and an Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANS).
- Place of historical and cultural significance, maintained through the generations of stewardship by Indigenous peoples.
- Wide range of active recreational facilities (sports fields, pool, arena) and other recreational amenities (picnics sites, dog park, gardens).
- Hosts many social and cultural events such as CanStage productions, programming at Colborne Lodge
- Supported over 500,000 hours of permitted activities across approx. 3,700 bookings in 2019.



PARK FACILITIES HIGH PARK MOVEMENT STRATEGY

- | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Amphitheatre | Playground | Washrooms |
| Dog Off Leash Area | Rink | Multi-Use Trail |
| Buildings | Sports | Park Road |
| Garden | Swimming Pool | Soft-Surface Trail |
| Grenadier Cafe | Zoo | |



What We Know About High Park

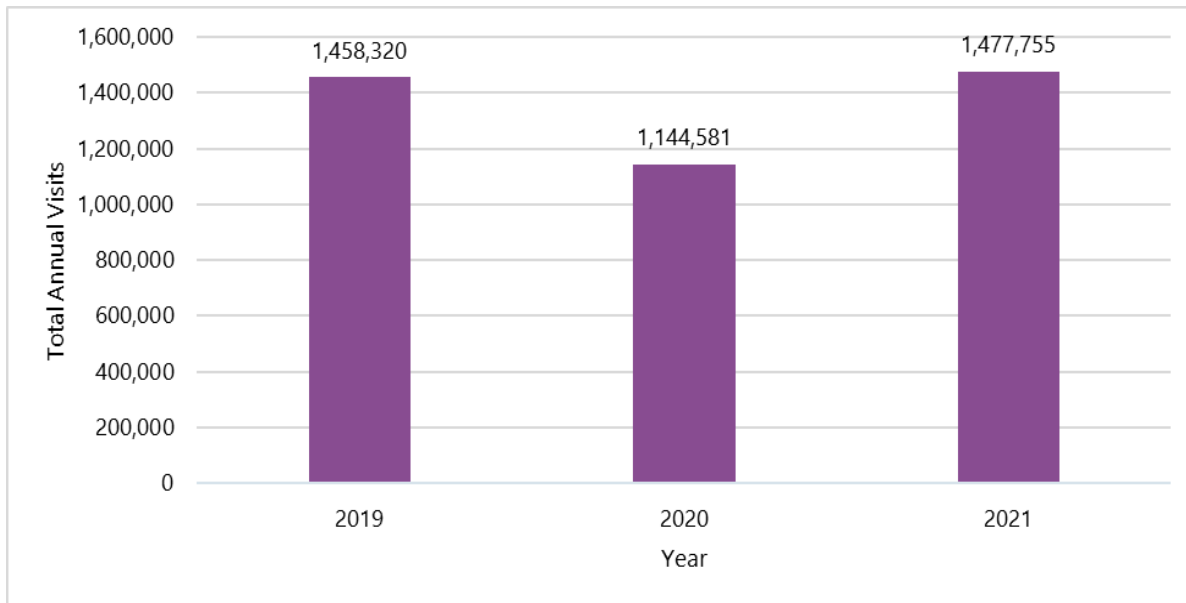
To understand existing conditions in High Park data are gathered from various sources:

- **Sociodemographic data** from Statistics Canada and Environics
 - Provides insights into the demographics of High Park users
- **Collision data** collected by Toronto Police Services
 - Collisions resulting death or serious injury
 - Collision data is publicly available on the City's Vision Zero Mapping Tool
- **Traffic studies** conducted by the City to measure vehicle volumes, speeds and turning movement counts
 - Studies from 2017 to 2021 available for data review
 - Traffic studies are publicly available on the City's Open Data portal
- **Feedback gathered** from park users and staff
 - Calls to 311 about park operations and road safety are formally documented
 - Emails and calls to the High Park Movement Strategy project team
 - Survey responses and information collected through initial public engagement

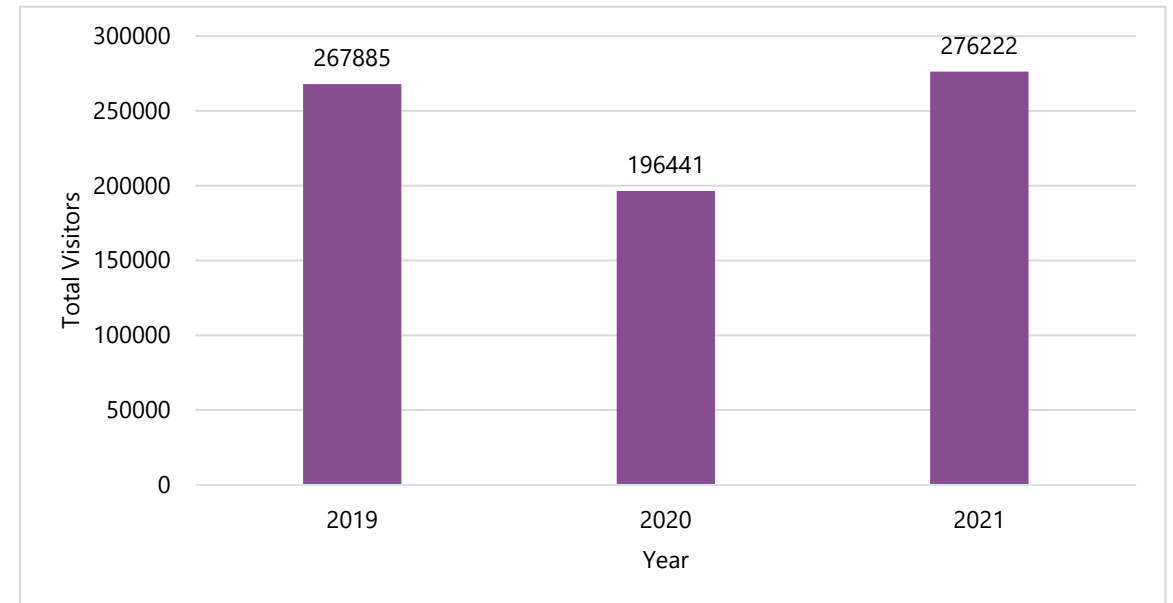
What We Know About High Park

- The total number of **annual visitors to High Park exceeded one million** in both the pre-pandemic (2019), and current (2020 and 2021) periods

Total **Annual** Visits (Environics, 2019-2022)



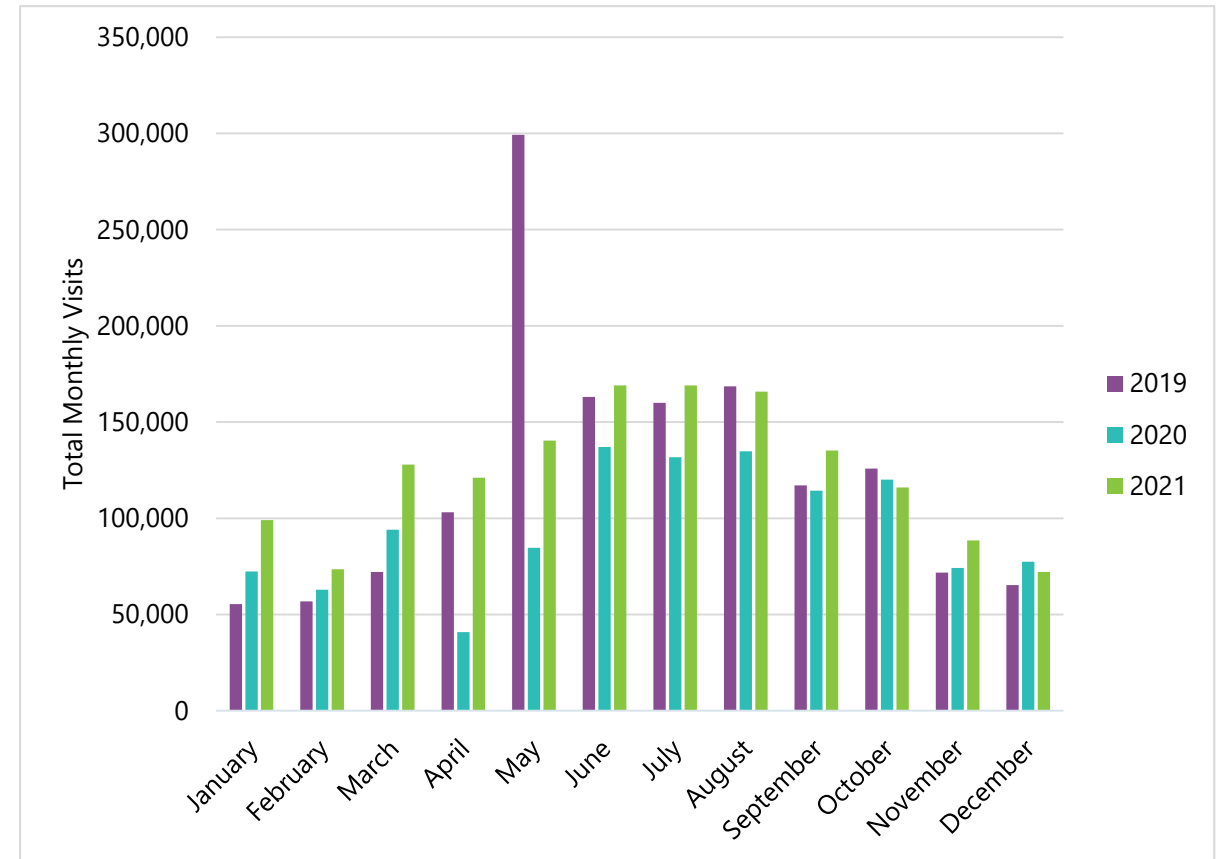
Total **Unique** Visitors (Environics, 2019-2022)



What We Know About High Park

- May 2019 recorded the highest number of visitors at close to 300,000, reflecting the impact of the cherry blossom season.
- To be expected, the summer months generally have higher visitor counts.
- The impact of COVID-19 has shown an increase in park usage outside of these months.

Total Monthly Visits (Environics, 2019-2022)



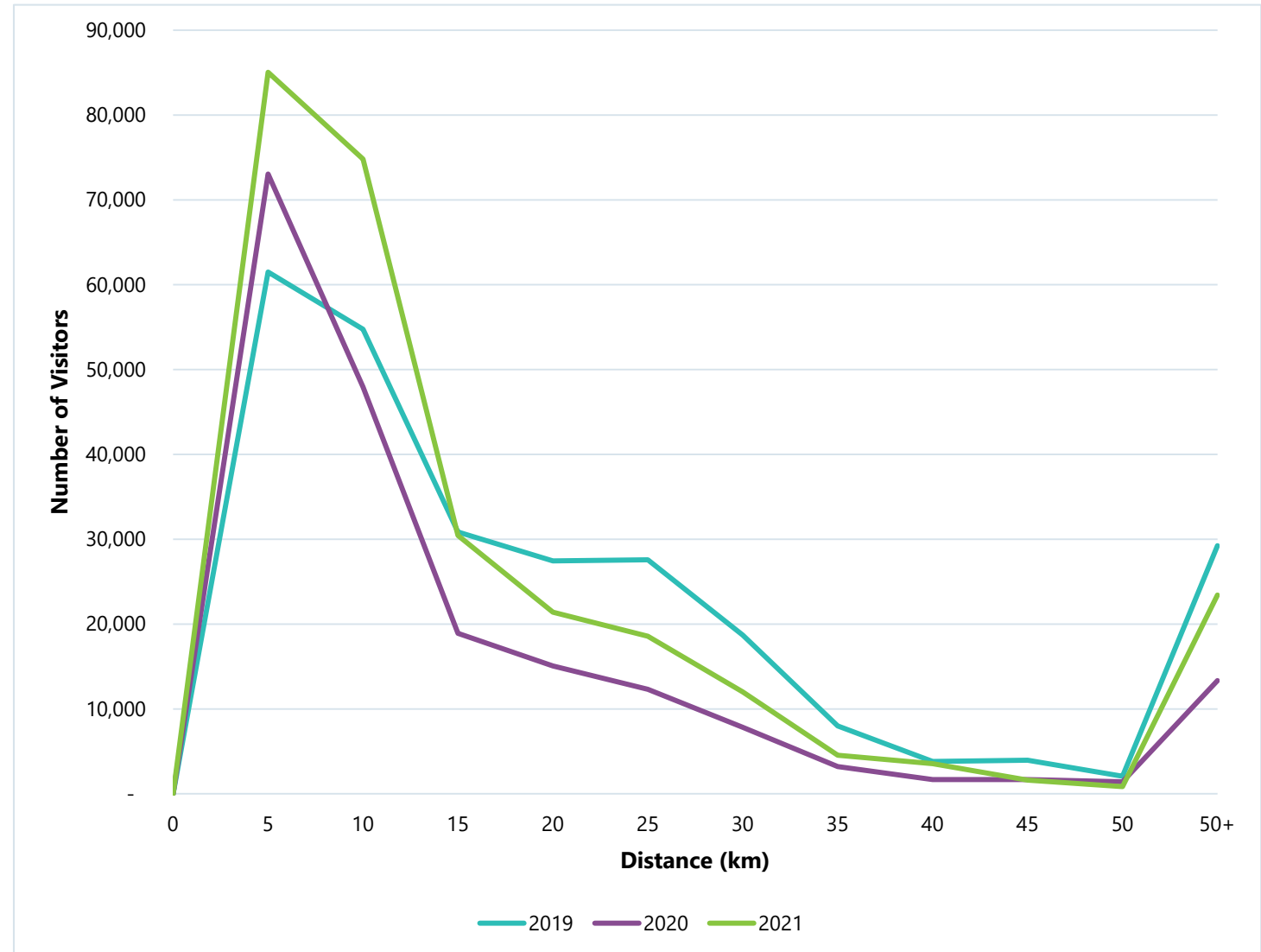
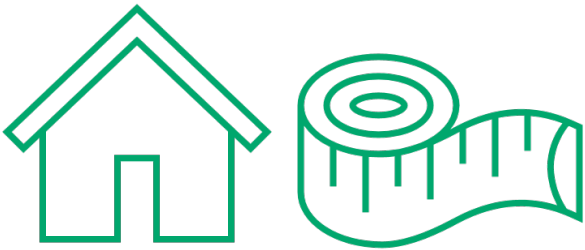
What We Know About High Park

Many park visitors live nearby

31% of park visitors live **5km** or less from the park (Environics, 2019-2021)

High Park is also a city-wide and regional destination

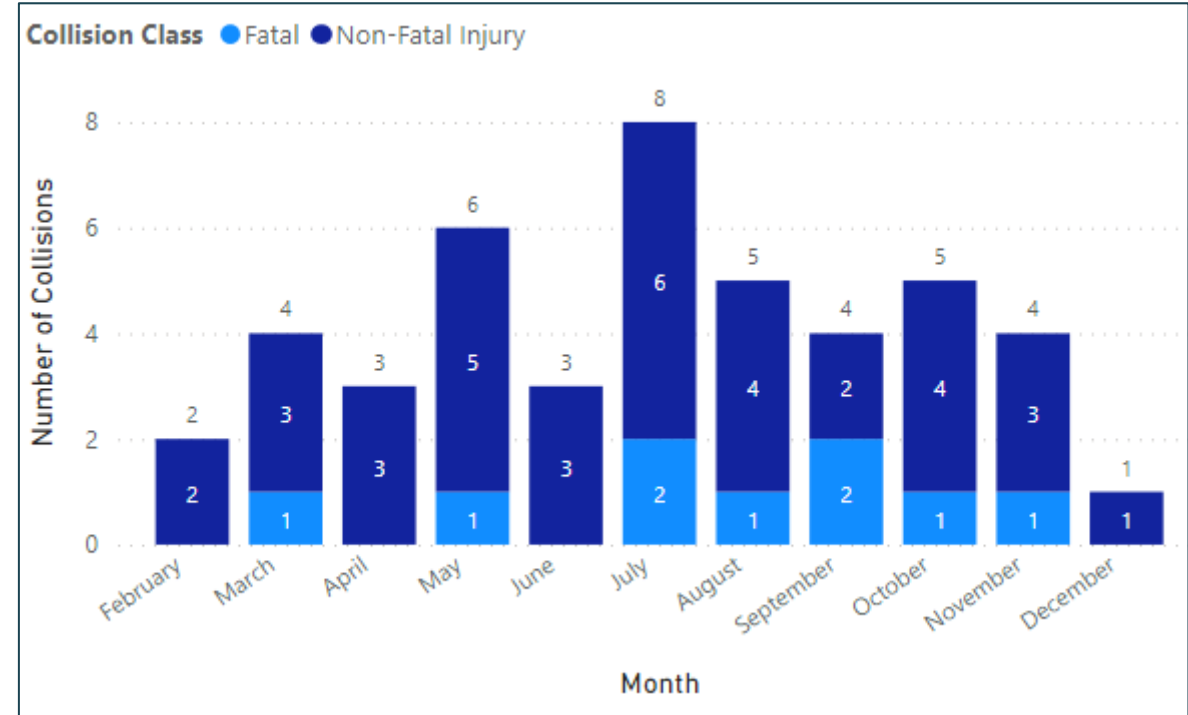
42% live more than **10km** from the park (Environics, 2019-2021)



Transportation Highlights

Road User Safety

- In the past 10 years there was one (1) collision on the road network within High Park that resulted in a serious injury. It took place at the intersection of High Park Blvd and Spring Road in July 2020.
- Over the same period, there were 44 collisions resulting in serious injury or death in the context area around High Park, many of which took place on arterial roads in the area.
- In the past 10 years there have been seven (7) collisions resulting in serious injury or death on Parkside Drive. The City has initiated a companion study to to identify interventions that could improve safety and mobility along Parkside Drive with a focus on people walking, cycling and other vulnerable road users.

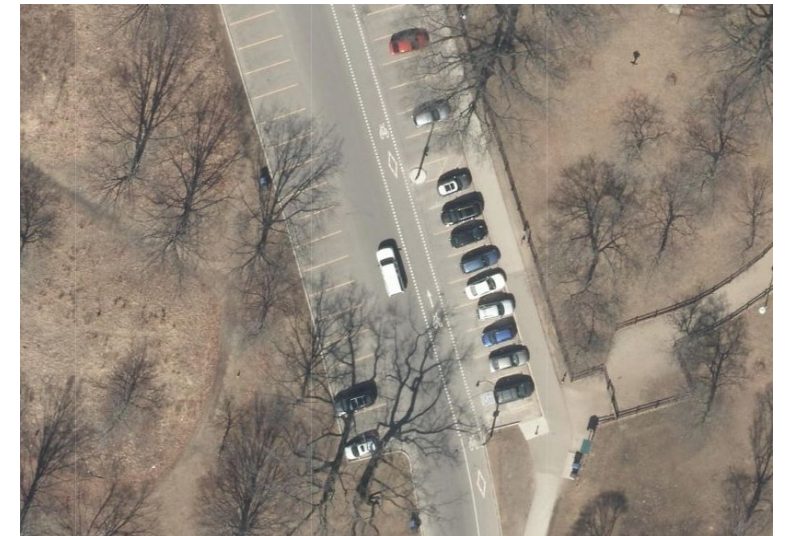


Collisions Resulting in Serious Injury or Death from 2011-2021 in the High Park Movement Study Context Area

Transportation Highlights

Road User Safety

- There are many opportunities to address the conditions of High Park to improve the safety conditions for park users, with a focus on vulnerable road users like people walking, cyclists, children and seniors.
- Opportunities for improvement:
 - Popular destinations in the park should be supported by stop signs or lights to facilitate safe crossings.
 - Sidewalks should connect and create an accessible walking network throughout the park with no obstructions or gaps.
 - Angled parking within High Park is not ideal for a pedestrian and cyclist environment.



Transportation Highlights

Active Transportation

- Pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is a key element contributing to the visitor experience in High Park.
- Once visitors arrive, their park experience is often through the use of multi-use trails, bike lanes, sidewalks, and paved/unpaved trails throughout the park.
- Traffic studies suggest that up to 20% of road users in High Park are cyclists.
- 94% of survey respondents indicated that they often or sometimes walk/jog/run between destinations in the park. While others (60%) indicate that they often or sometimes use a non-motorized device (bicycle/rollerblades) to move around the park.
- There are six bike share stations within the park, and seven more within the immediate area. There are an average of 73 trips per day for bike share trips starting/ending in High Park.
- 59% of survey respondents often walk/jog to/from the park, and 38% often cycle.



Transportation Highlights

8hr Pedestrian volumes were highest at the Bloor St. W./High Park Ave. and Bloor St. W./Parkside Dr. entrances.



8hr Cyclist volumes were highest at the entrance at High Park Ave., Bloor St. W./Parkside Dr., and The Queensway.



Transportation Highlights

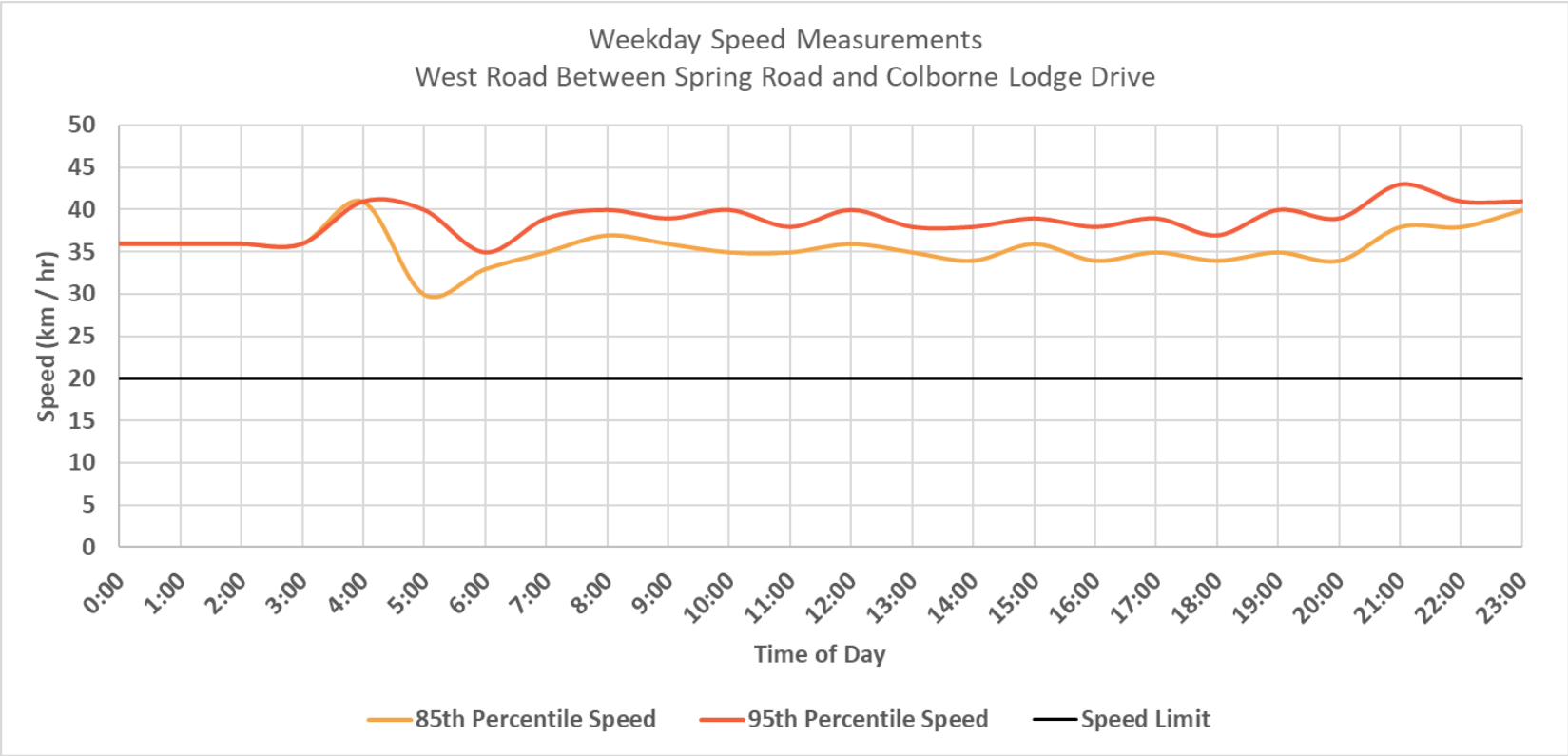
Traffic Speed

- The speed at which vehicles travel in the park has been highlighted as a key concern from early engagement activities.
- The regulatory speed limit in High Park is 20km/hr for all vehicles.
- Traffic studies suggest that excessive speeding of motor vehicles is observed in High Park. The average motor vehicle travels above the regulatory speed limit.
- The speed at which 85% of all motor vehicles travel in High Park ranges between 30-43km/hr. This is 10-23km/hr faster than the regulatory speed limit.
- Existing conditions like wide travel lanes, sloped roads and smooth road conditions may contribute to higher travel speeds.
- Limited traffic calming and speed management tools have been implemented in High Park.

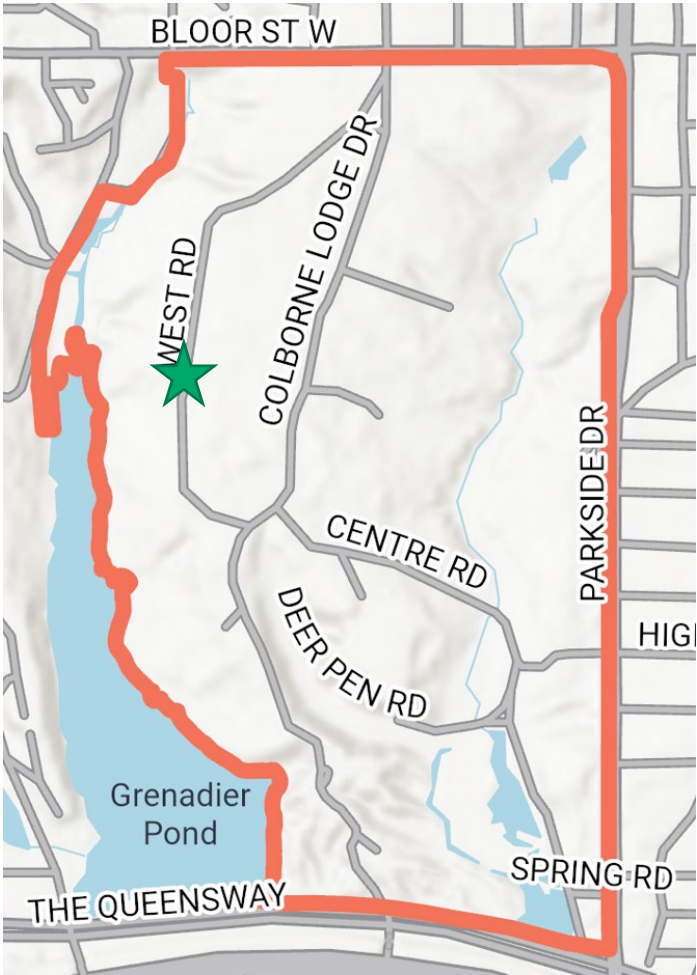


Transportation Highlights

Speed measurements along West Road for 85-95% of all motor vehicles



Data was collected at the starred location below (West Road)



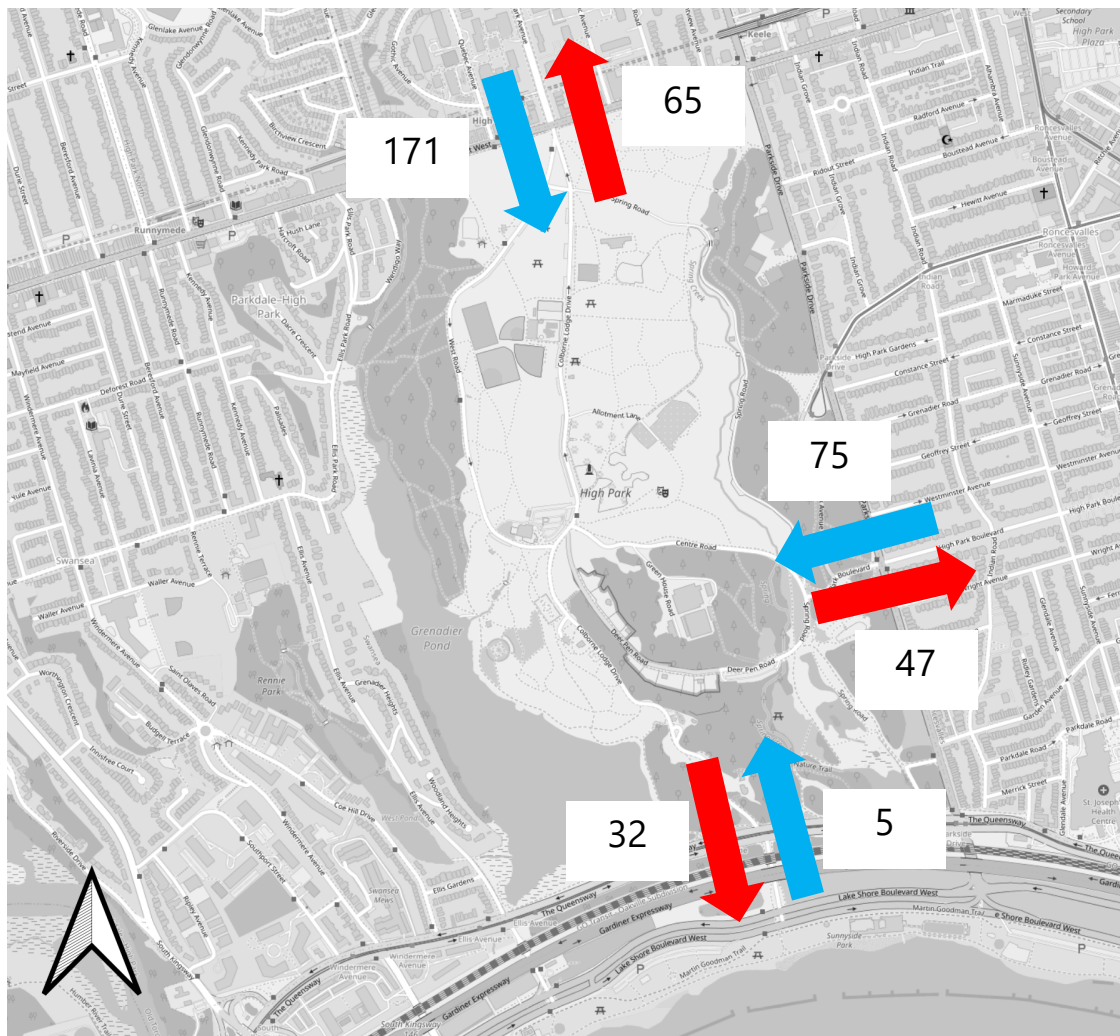
Transportation Highlights

Motor Vehicle Volumes

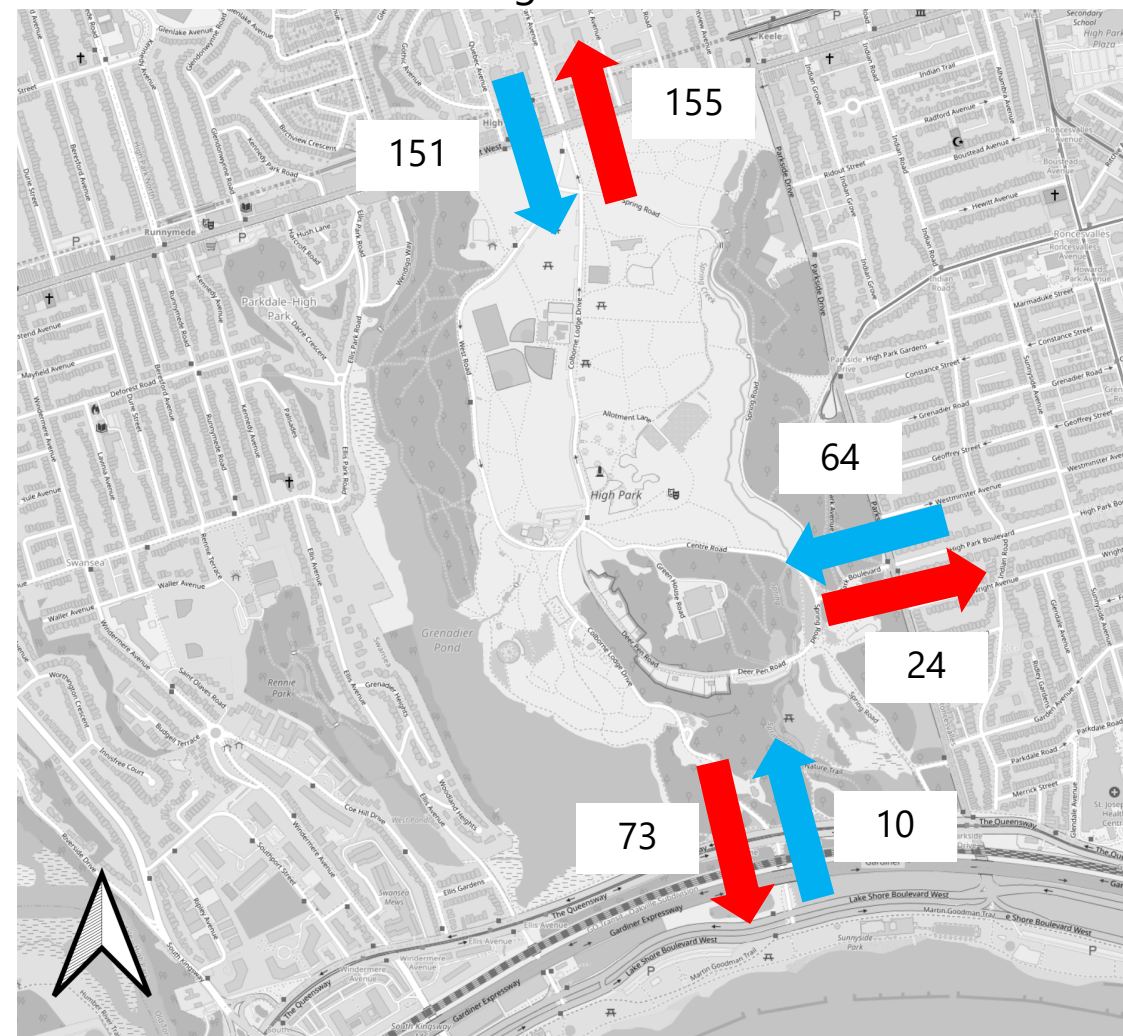
- High motor vehicle volumes, congestion and cut-through traffic in the park has been highlighted as a key concern from early engagement activities.
- Park roads are not governed by the typical road classification system, and there is no standardized range for acceptable vehicle volumes.
- Data show that the “High Park Loop” sees the highest vehicle volumes in the High Park, exceeding 6000 vehicles per day.
- Most motorists enter and exit at the Bloor St W entrance.
- Roads in the southern and eastern portion of the park see under 2500 vehicles per day.
- Motor vehicle activity in the park peaks between 8-9am and 5-6pm on weekdays, and suggests that some motorists use park roads as a cut through route to The Queensway, Parkside Dr. and Bloor St. W.

Transportation Highlights

AM Peak Period vehicle activity is highest at Bloor St. W./High Park Ave.

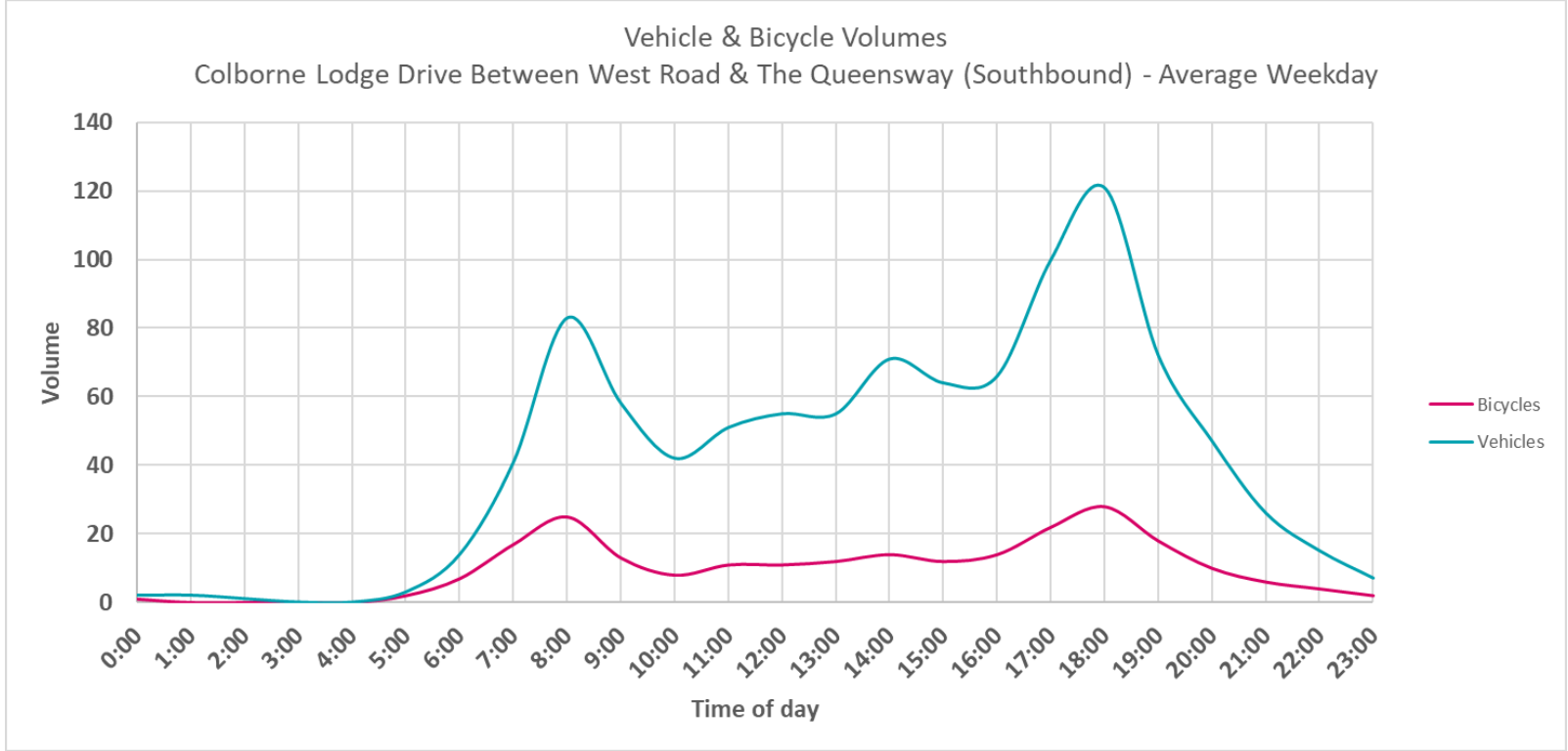


PM Peak Period vehicle activity is also highest at Bloor St. W./High Park Ave.

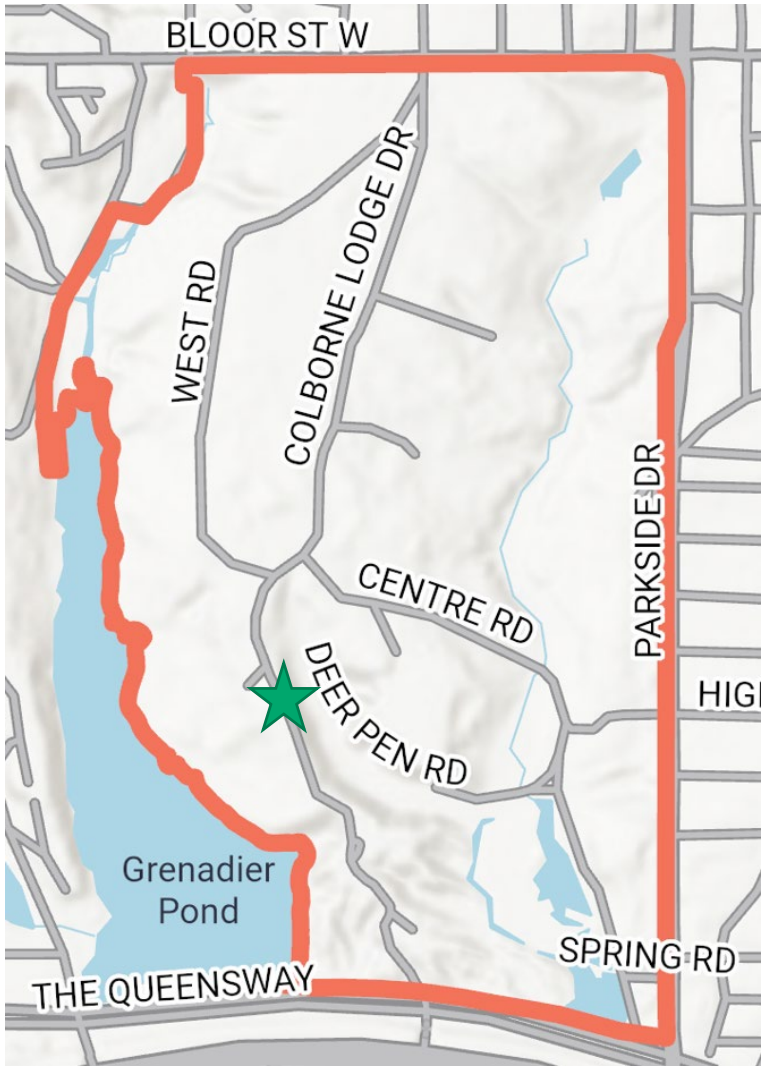


Transportation Highlights

24hr count for Vehicle and Bicycle volumes during the weekday



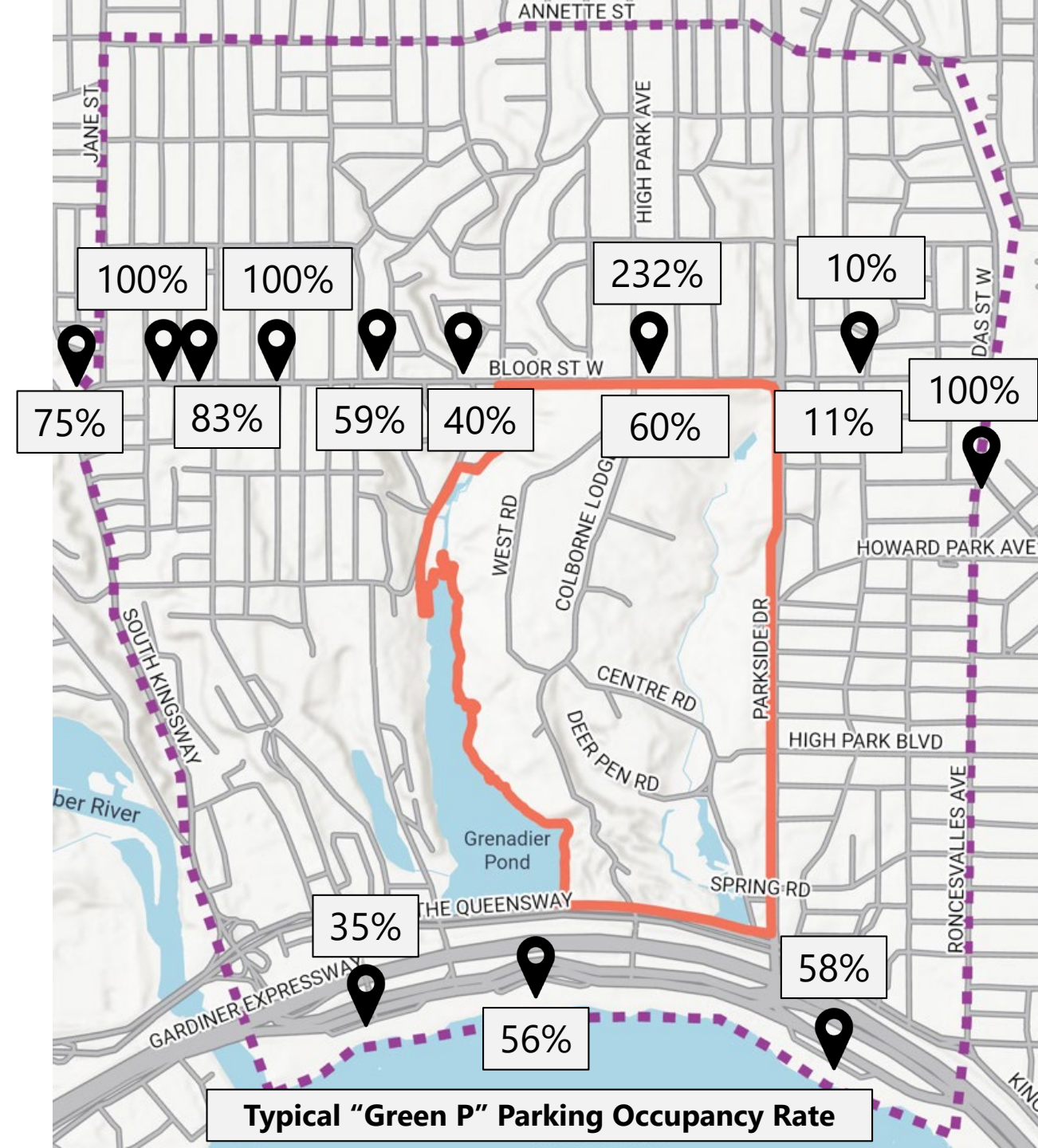
Data was collected at the starred location below (Colborne Lodge Drive)



Transportation Highlights

Parking

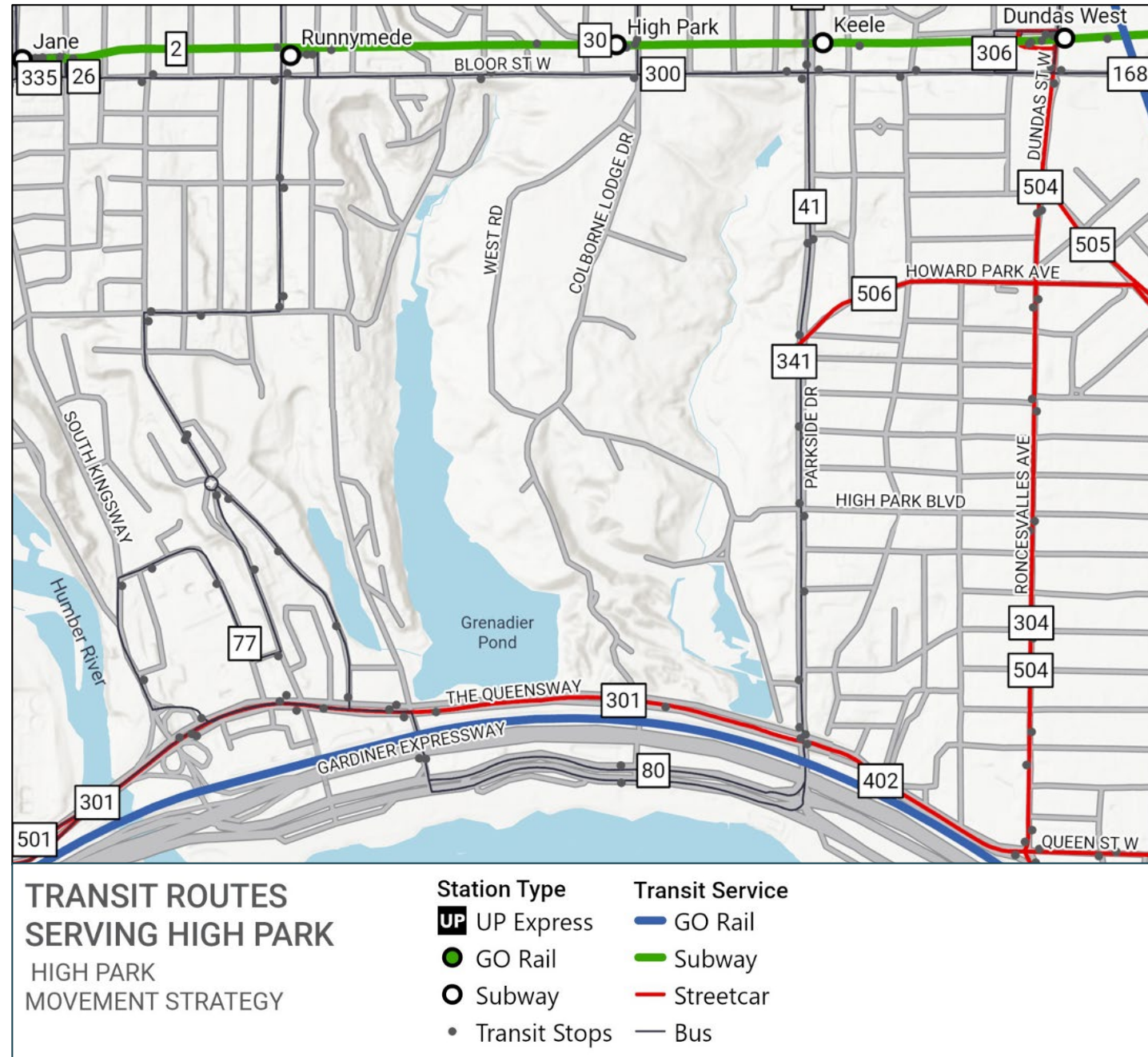
- A parking study was completed in High Park and the surrounding context area to analyze occupancy rates of on-street permit spaces, Green P parking and in-park lots.
- There are 561 spaces located within High Park, 22 of which are accessible spaces. This represents approximately 6% of the available parking within the study's context area (roughly 800m surrounding High Park).
- Parking spaces in High Park were found to be frequently at capacity on weekdays. The average time for parked vehicles in the park is around 1hr 12mins.
- The initial parking study indicates that the available parking supply (within the study and context area) is usually around 60% occupied.
- Green P parking along Bloor St. W. offers 283 spaces for vehicle parking with an average occupancy rate of 71% on weekends.
- Overflow parking in the neighbouring communities has been highlighted as a concern.



Transportation Highlights

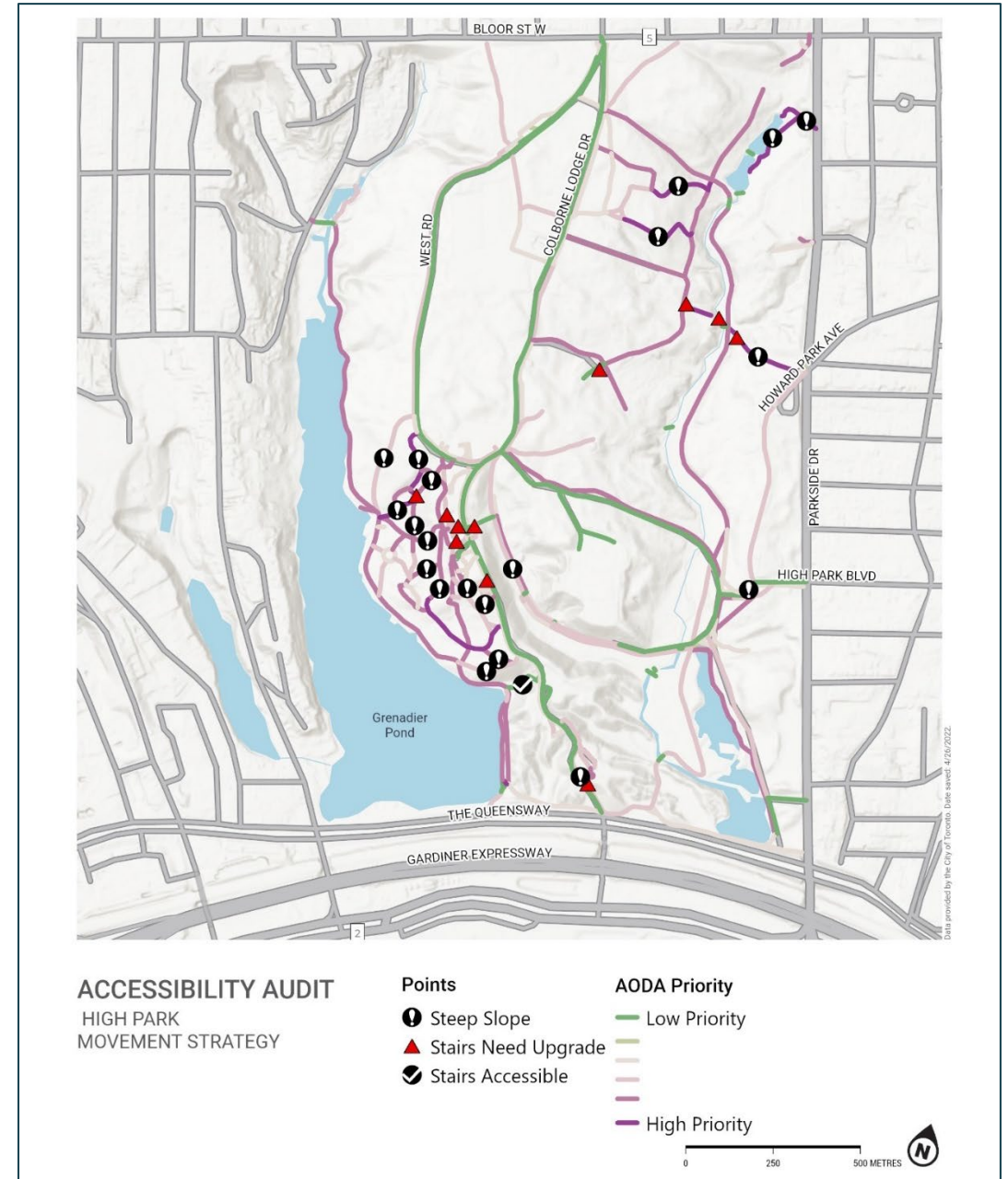
Transit

- Several public transportation routes service the area surrounding High Park and provide park visitors with a direct connection to the wider TTC network.
- There are four subway stations within walking distance from High Park: Dundas West Station, Keele Station, High Park Station and Runnymede Station.
- The 506 Streetcar route has a transit-only loop on the east side of High Park
- In June 2022 TTC resumed service of the 30B bus, connecting from High Park subway station to 5 stops within the park. The 30B bus runs on weekends from 8am to 7pm. Wheel-Trans service is also offered during these operating hours.
- A trackless train operates in High Park on weekdays and weekends.



Existing Conditions Highlights

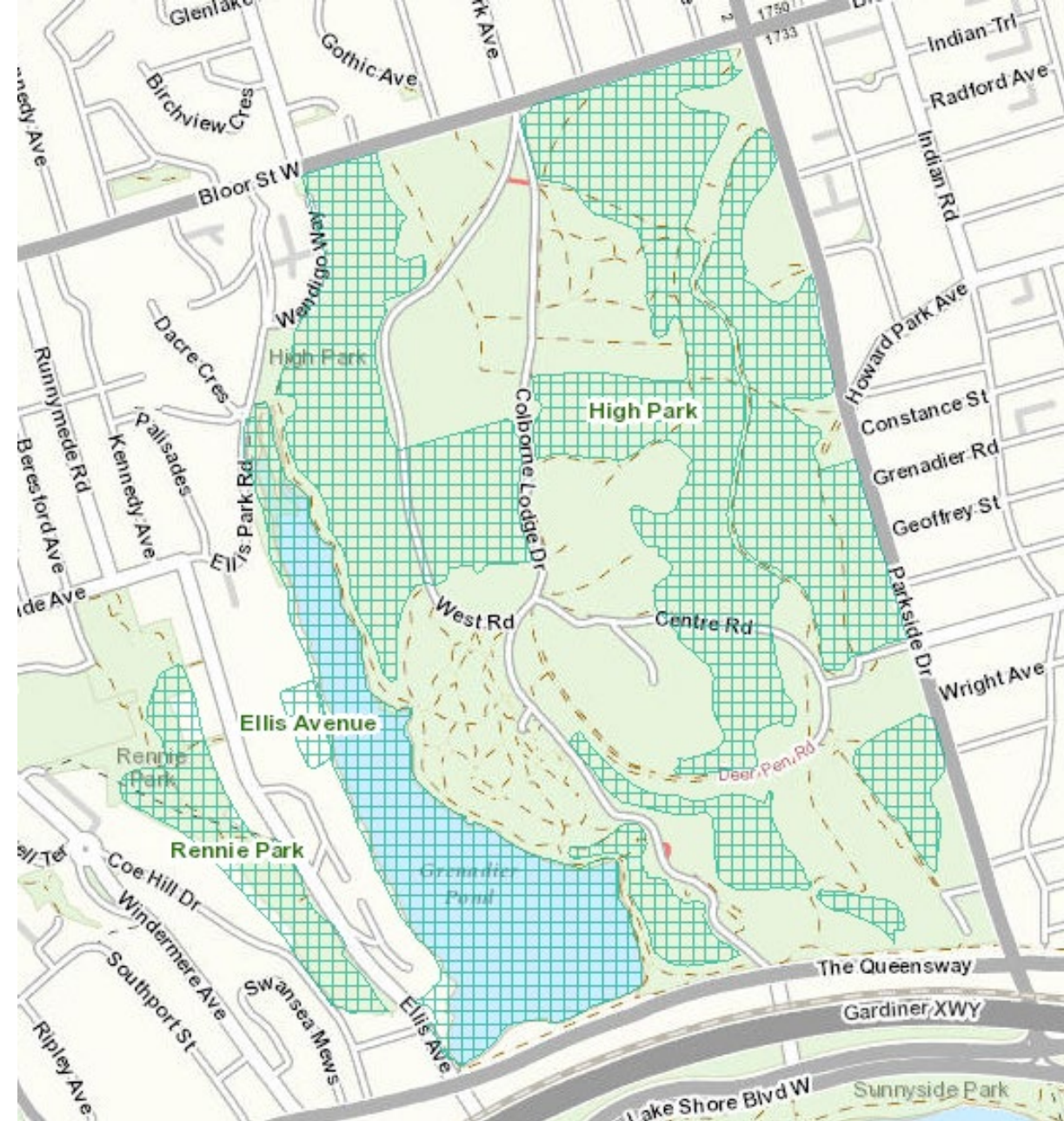
- An audit was conducted in High Park to determine compliance of the travel network with AODA (2021) standards. The audit assessed all paved transportation routes and formal trails that provide direct connection to park facilities.
- The audit identified several gaps in compliance, built-form challenges and opportunities for improvement.
- Highlights from the report include:
 - Grade changes contribute to significant slopes, insufficient ramping
 - Gaps in connectivity of the sidewalk network
 - Pinch-points, physical barriers and natural features obstruct the sidewalk and contribute to sub-standard sidewalk clearances in some areas
 - Inconsistent spacing of benches
 - Opportunity to improve surface materials of pathways that connect to facilities



Existing Conditions Highlights

Ecological Integrity

- High Park contains Environmentally Significant Areas and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest. These are large, diverse, and relatively undisturbed habitats, which may be home to rare or endangered plants or animals.
- These provide important ecological functions that contribute to the health of the ecosystem beyond the park itself.
- The City's Official Plan provides for the conservation of Toronto's urban forest, ravines and river valleys in policies protecting the Natural Heritage System.
- The study will not be proposing change to naturalized areas.
- This study will include environmental criteria to help evaluate possible impacts or benefits of the preferred strategy.



Map of Environmentally Significant Areas within High Park

Short Survey (Slido)

Draft Movement Strategies

Draft Movement Strategies

There are four possible strategies that are being considered. Each will prioritize safety, accessibility and the park's ecosystem:

1. No visitor vehicles allowed within High Park
2. No visitor vehicles allowed at scheduled times
3. No visitor vehicles allowed on certain park roads
4. Visitor vehicles allowed at all times

All four of these strategies will include actions that improve road safety for vulnerable road users, reduce vehicle speeds and volumes, and provide a more comfortable experience for pedestrians and cyclists. Access to the Children's Garden, and Colborne Lodge/Spring Road parking lots will also be maintained.

Draft Movement Strategies

Initial community feedback indicated support for changes that improve road safety for vulnerable road users, reduce vehicle speed and volumes, and provide better separation among road users.

All four strategies will include traffic management tools that respond to this feedback. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Traffic calming
- Bikeways
- Sidewalk widening
- Pavement markings
- New traffic controls
- Wayfinding
- Increased accessible parking spaces
- Reduction of parking spaces in High Park
- Paid parking
- Transit service



Draft Strategy #1: No Visitor Vehicles Allowed Within High Park

Draft Strategy 1 closes roads in High Park to visitor vehicles at all times and creates opportunities for major changes to rebalance and redesign existing roadways and paved areas.

- Closes roads in High Park to visitor vehicles at all times.
- Stops cut-through traffic.
- Allows major changes of existing roads to expand and improve pedestrian and cyclist spaces
- Creates opportunities for dedicated transit and shuttle service.
- Creates opportunities to permanently re-program or re-naturalize existing paved areas.
- Does not provide direct visitor vehicle access to the park's interior destinations.
- May increase parking demand in surrounding areas.
- May improve air and noise quality in the park.



Map Key

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
|  No Visitor Vehicle Access |  No Visitor Vehicle Entry |  TTC Streetcar Stop |
|  Visitor Vehicle Access Permitted |  Parking |  TTC Bus Stop |
|  Pedestrian Park Roads | |  TTC Subway Station |

Draft Strategy #2: No Visitor Vehicles Allowed At Scheduled Times

Draft Strategy 2 closes the road network in High Park to visitor vehicles at scheduled times and introduces improvements to calm traffic and reduce conflict when park roads are open to vehicles

- Focuses improvements to existing roads to calm traffic and reduce conflict between park visitors when roads are open.
- Creates some opportunities to redesign roads to improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure while safely accommodating visitor vehicles.
- Creates some opportunities to optimize transit service, could be coordinated with the timing of road closures.
- Allows some paved areas to be temporarily re-programmed, however opportunities for permanent naturalization may be limited.
- Provides direct visitor vehicle access to the park's interior destinations when roads are open.
- May improve air and noise quality in the park depending on schedule of road closures



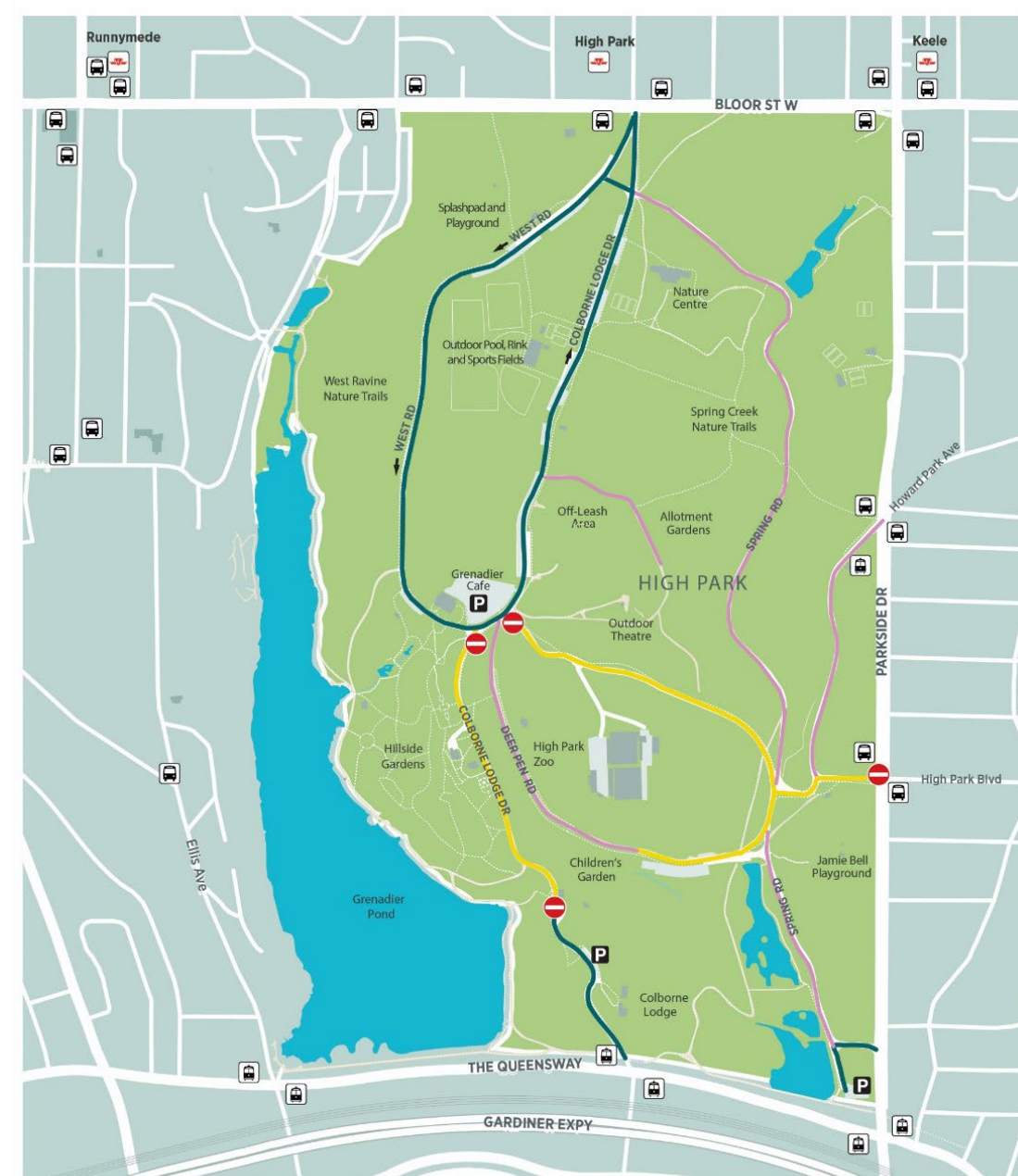
Map Key

- | | | |
|--|---|--------------------|
| No Visitor Vehicle Access at Scheduled Times | No Visitor Vehicle Entry at Scheduled Times | TTC Streetcar Stop |
| Visitor Vehicle Access Permitted | Parking | TTC Bus Stop |
| Pedestrian Park Roads | | TTC Subway Station |

Draft Strategy #3: No Visitor Vehicles Allowed on Certain Park Roads

Draft Strategy 3 closes certain park roads to visitor vehicles at all times, introduces improvements to calm traffic on roads that remain open, and creates targeted opportunities to re-balance and re-naturalized other roadways.

- Limits cars to the one-way “High Park Loop” along West Road and Colborne Lodge Drive, entering and exiting from Bloor Street West.
- Introduces improvements to calm traffic and reduce conflict along the High Park Loop and prevents cut-through traffic.
- Allows changes to certain roads to expand and improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.
- Supports transit service integrated with mixed traffic.
- Creates opportunities to permanently re-program or re-naturalize some parking spaces and paved areas.
- Provides direct visitor vehicle access to many of the park’s interior destinations.
- May improve air and noise quality in some areas of the park, however traffic may be heavier on the High Park Loop.



Map Key

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|--|--|--|
|  No Visitor Vehicle Access |  No Visitor Vehicle Entry |  TTC Streetcar Stop |
|  Visitor Vehicle Access Permitted |  Parking |  TTC Bus Stop |
|  Pedestrian Park Roads | |  TTC Subway Station |

Draft Strategy #4: Visitor Vehicles Allowed at All times

Draft Strategy 4 opens park roads to visitor vehicles in High Park at all times. Existing pedestrian park roads continue to be car-free. Improvements focus on traffic calming measures and reducing conflict in a mixed-traffic environment.

- Opens park roads to visitor vehicles at all times, with access from Bloor Street West, Parkside Drive and the Queensway.
- Does not prevent cut-through traffic.
- Focuses on traffic calming and reducing conflict between park users in a mixed-traffic environment.
- Creates some opportunities to redesign roads to improve pedestrian, cycling and transit infrastructure while safely accommodating visitor vehicles at all times.
- Offers limited opportunities to permanently re-program or re-naturalized paved areas.
- Provides direct visitor vehicle access to all of the park's interior destinations.
- May not improve air or noise quality



Map Key

 Visitor Vehicle Access Permitted
 Pedestrian Park Roads

 Parking

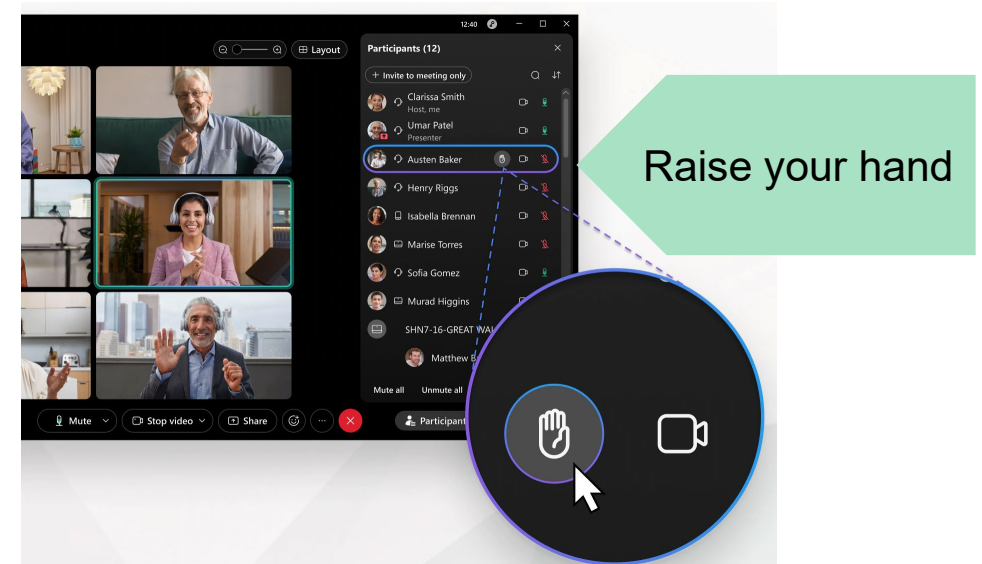
 TTC Streetcar Stop
 TTC Bus Stop
 TTC Subway Station

Question & Answer Session

Q&A – How to Participate

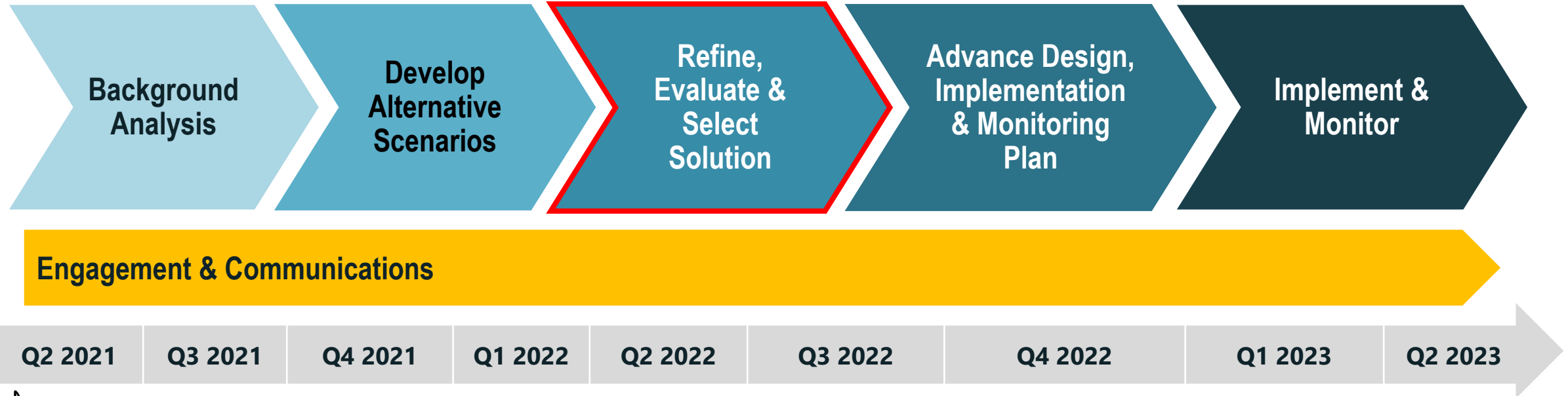
- Type your feedback or question into the **Q&A panel** on the right hand side of the screen. Questions will be read aloud and answered by the Project Team.
- **“Raise your hand”** to ask a question verbally. Click the raise hand icon next to your name, or press ctrl+shift+R. The Project Team will unmute you, and you may ask your question. Please lower your hand once you’re done.
- If you’re calling in, you can press *3 to raise your hand.

Please remember to be respectful and give space for everyone to provide feedback.



Next Steps

- Feedback from this session will help to inform the types of options that are explored and evaluated further as part of a comprehensive mobility solution for High Park.
- The survey will remain open until **August 19th, 2022**.
- Project updates will be available at www.toronto.ca/highparkmove
- Additional comments and questions following this Open House can be directed to highparkmove@toronto.ca.



Thanks for your feedback!

If you have any other thoughts or questions, please email highparkmove@toronto.ca

- Heather Oliver (Project Officer, Parks, Forestry and Recreation)
- Alyssa Krantzberg (Project Manager, Transportation Services)
- Lachlan Fraser (Project Coordinator, Wood)