

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

New Park at 965 Ellesmere Road

Phase 1: Exploring Design Options Phase Survey Summary Report

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Project Background

The City is building a new park at 965 Ellesmere Road!

A new 1,353 m² park is coming to 965 Ellesmere as part of a condominium development project at 1001 Ellesmere Rd, in the Dorset Park neighbourhood.

This project is in the Exploring Design Options phase and community feedback collected during the community engagement process will create the preferred park design option.

The new park is proposed to include:

- A new playground
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Seating with shade
- Accessible pathways
- New plants and grass

Project Timeline

The anticipated schedule for this park project is as follows:

- Summer 2022 to Winter 2022: Design development and community engagement
- Early 2023: Construction starts
- Fall/Winter 2023: Construction complete

Online Survey

On August 24, 2022, the project team launched an online survey to collect feedback on the draft design options for the new park at 965 Ellesmere Road. Responses to the survey will help inform development of the preferred design option.

The online survey was available from August 24 to September 16, 2022. The survey received a **total of 266 responses from residents living within the immediate surrounding neighbourhood (a 250 metre catchment area was applied around the park)**, including input from participants of various ages and backgrounds, as well as families/groups who completed the survey together.

Key Feedback

The following summarizes key feedback from the online survey of the most popular ideas that are within the project scope. **feedback received regarding park maintenance has been noted and will be shared with the appropriate City Staff and will remain outside the scope of the **design and construction** phases of the project.*

Preferred Design Option




Survey participants were required to choose between two design options for the new park at 965 Ellesmere Road. **Design Option 1** contained angular shapes with a sleek approach applied to the overall design, including:

- 3 park entrances located at the north, west, and south sides
- A 3 metre wide asphalt pathway connecting the south side to the north side of Jolly Way. This path provides access throughout the park
- A concrete paved area located in the centre of the park with game tables, a bottle filling station, and a 2-tier shade pavilion with seating
- A 2.1 metre wide asphalt pathway connecting the west side to the east side of Jolly Way
- A 2.1 metre wide asphalt pathway connecting from the north to Ellesmere Road
- Trees along the east and west sides of the park and open green space
- Bike rings
- Seating options, like benches
- A decorative fence around the park with sightlines into the park for safety

Alternatively, **Design Option 2** contained more curved shapes and included:

- A park entrance at the southwest corner that connects to a path that goes to park entrances at the northeast corner and the northwest corner
- A 3 metre wide pathway connecting the south side of the park to the north side. This path provides access throughout the park
- A concrete paved seating area with umbrellas located on at the south area of the park
- A large 365 square metre programmable space with rubber surfacing (budget permitting) at the centre of the park
- A 3 metre wide pathway connecting the northeast corner to Ellesmere Road
- A 2.1 metre wide pathway at the northwest corner of the park from Ellesmere Road
- A 100 square metre programmable space with rubber surfacing, located near the north side of the park
- Bike rings
- Seating options, like benches
- A water bottle filling station
- Trees along the park boundaries and open green space
- A decorative fence around the park with sightlines into the park for safety

When asked which design option did survey participants prefer, **a majority of respondents prefer Design Option 2** (67%, compared to 25% for Design Option 1, and 8% who were unsure).

	Count	% of responses	%
Design Option 1	67		25%
Design Option 2	177		67%
I don't know	22		8%

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Design Option 1 (Sleek Approach and Angular Shapes)

Survey respondents were asked a total of 10 questions about the general layout and design of Option 1. Questions included a focus around seating, shape, size and location of proposed amenities and park features, as well as the preferred amount of plantings and trees residents would prefer to have in the new park. Responses to the 10 general design questions are summarized below:

- A higher proportion of survey participants (46%) strongly agree or agree that they would be interested in using games tables in the park
- A majority of survey participants (50%) strongly disagree or disagree that the seating options are insufficient
- A higher proportion of survey participants (48%) strongly agree or agree that they like the size, layout, and location of programmable space with cedar flooring
- A higher proportion of survey participants (48%) strongly agree or agree that they like the shape and location of the shade structure
- A majority survey participants (52%) strongly agree or agree that they like the pathway layout in this design
- A majority of survey participants (55%) strongly agree or agree that the amount and size of multi-use open lawn area(s) are sufficient
- A majority of survey participants (62%) strongly agree or agree that they like the location of the games tables
- A majority of survey participants (64%) strongly agree or agree that the location of the fencing is satisfactory
- A majority of survey participants (71%) strongly agree or agree that they like the location of the water bottle filling station/fountain
- A majority of survey participants (70%) strongly agree or agree that the new trees and plantings in Design Option 1 are sufficient

	Average	Count	% of responses				
I am interested in using the games tables proposed in this design	48%	265	14%	32%	16%	24%	14%
Seating options in this design are sufficient.	44%	265	8%	37%	32%	20%	4%
I like the size, layout, and location of the programmable space with cedar flooring in this design.	44%	265	10%	38%	23%	23%	6%
I like the shape and location of the shade structure in this design.	43%	265	12%	36%	26%	20%	6%
I like the pathway layout in this design (including entrances, connections and 'sleek/angular' form)	42%	265	12%	40%	23%	20%	6%
Open lawn areas for flexible use (i.e. relaxing, playing, small gatherings/events) is sufficient in this design.	40%	265	12%	43%	22%	18%	5%
I like the proposed location of the games tables in this design	38%	265	14%	48%	17%	13%	8%
I like the location of fencing in this design.	38%	265	13%	51%	15%	13%	8%
I like the proposed location of the water bottle filler/fountain in this design.	36%	265	17%	54%	11%	8%	11%
New trees and planting are sufficient in this design.	33%	265	17%	53%	15%	10%	5%

■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ I don't know

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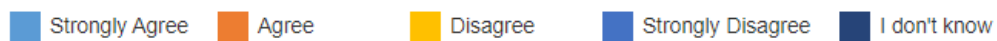
Design Option 2 (Curved Shapes)

Survey respondents were also asked a total of 10 questions about the general layout and design of Option 2, similar to Design Option 1. Questions similarly asked about seating, shape, size and location of proposed amenities and park features, amongst other aspects of Design Option 2. Responses to the 10 general design questions for Option 2 are summarized below:

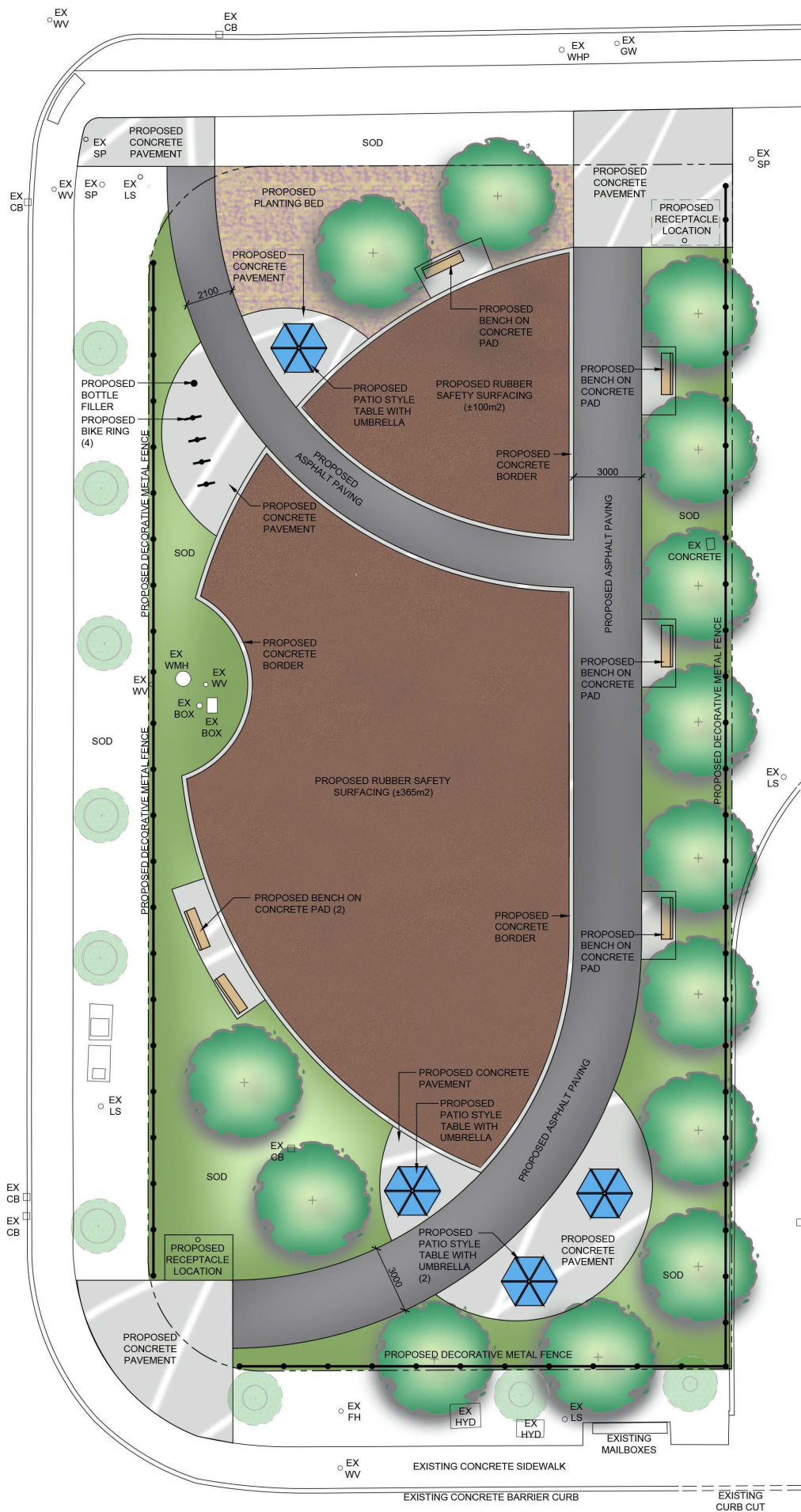
- A majority of survey participants (72%) strongly agree or agree that the seating options are sufficient
- A majority of survey participants (76%) strongly agree or agree that they like the location of the fencing
- A majority of survey participants (82%) strongly agree or agree that they like the location of the water bottle filling station/fountain
- A majority of survey participants (74%) strongly agree or agree that the amount of trees and planting are sufficient
- A majority survey participants (74%) strongly agree or agree that the multi-use open lawn areas are sufficient

- A majority of survey participants (75%) strongly agree or agree that they like the size, layout and location of programmable space with rubber flooring
- A majority of survey participants (81%) strongly agree or agree that they like the pathway layout in Design Option 2, including the location of park entrances, connections, and the curvilinear form applied to the overall design

	Average	Count	% of responses				
Seating options in this design are sufficient.	27%	265	32%	40%	18%	8%	
I like the location of fencing in this design.	27%	265	36%	40%	12%	5%	7%
I like the metal fence along the East and North sides of the park as a safety feature.	26%	265	37%	41%	10%	6%	6%
I like the proposed location of the water bottle filler/fountain in this design.	26%	265	32%	50%	8%	7%	
New trees and planting are sufficient in this design.	26%	265	37%	37%	15%	8%	
Open lawn areas for flexible use (i.e. relaxing, playing, small gatherings/events) is sufficient in this design.	26%	265	36%	38%	16%	8%	
I like the size, layout, and location of the programmable space with rubber flooring in this design.	22%	265	49%	27%	14%	8%	
I like the pathway layout in this design (including entrances, connections and 'curvilinear' form)	20%	265	49%	32%	11%	6%	



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Park Amenities

Survey participants ranked a total of 7 proposed park features from their most favoured to least favoured option. Survey results revealed a playground area as the most popular option (25%), followed by a splash pad (18%), and outdoor fitness equipment (16%). A full list of results to this question is included below:

	% of responses	%
Playground area		25%
Splash pad		18%
Outdoor fitness equipment		16%
Adult/Senior-oriented space (i.e. pollinator gardens and/or quiet zones)		14%
Youth-oriented space (i.e. leisure or active zones with focus on youth ages)		12%
Games tables (i.e. ping pong, chess, other)		10%
Skateboard spot		5%




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Playground Design Options




A total of 3 survey questions were included that focused on playground design options, which included questions about preferred playground features, colour, and flooring options. Results to these questions will help inform development of the future preferred design option. A summary of the responses to these questions are included below:

	% of responses	%
Swings		24%
Slides		21%
Climbing		17%
Balancing		11%
Spinning		9%
Quiet or sensory play		7%
Sound features (talk tubes, acoustic chimes, etc.)		7%
Playing in the sand		5%

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	Count	% of responses	%
Bright colours, like yellow, orange, and purple	111		45%
Earthy colours, like green, brown, and grey	102		41%
No preference	33		13%







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	Count	% of responses	%
Cedar chips	53		22%
Rubber (budget permitting)	167		68%
No preference	26		11%

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Seating Options


Survey participants were required to choose their preferred seating option and were allowed to choose up to 3 preferred options. Survey results revealed that benches (fixed locations) would be the preferred most popular seating option (81%), followed by picnic tables (74%), and seatwalls (large stones that form a short wall that you can sit on in fixed locations, 52%).

	Count	% of responses	%
Benches (fixed locations)	199		81%
Picnic tables	182		74%
Seatwalls (large stones that form a short wall that you can sit on in fixed locations)	127		52%
Muskoka chairs/Adirondack chairs (moveable individual chairs with a relaxed back and arm rests)	96		39%
Podium seating (fixed locations; no back support)	27		11%
No Preference	6		2%

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Park Safety Design Options

Survey respondents ranked a total of 6 park safety design features from what they each individually considered as the most important to least important feature regarding their sense of safety as a park user. Survey results revealed lighting as the most important (26%) safety feature to consider in the park design, followed by visibility and site lines (19%), and wide pathways (18%). A full list of results to this question is included below:

	% of responses	%
Lighting		26%
Visibility and sight lines (ability to see clearly ahead and around yourself while using the space)		19%
Wide pathways		18%
Planting beds, fencing and/or site furnishings (to promote safe circulation and to act as buffers from adjacent roadways)		17%
Active edge (ability to see into the park while passing by, and out of the park while using it)		13%
Signs and wayfinding (maps)		6%

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How We Reached People

In general, the community was informed of engagement activities through social and print media, listed below:

Print Media

Signage near the site

Project information was displayed on 36x48 notice boards placed near the new park site. These notice boards provided information about the project, details about the online survey, and how to access additional information on the project webpage.

Digital Media

eFlyer

A digital flyer was circulated to community groups and the local Councillor's Office for additional distribution.

Social Media and Digital Ads

The City of Toronto used its Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts to promote the virtual community meeting and online survey through paid advertisements and organic posts from August 24 to September 16, 2022.

Project Webpage

A webpage (toronto.ca/965EllesmerePark) was set up to act as a communications portal to inform the public about the new park project. The webpage hosts all up to date information regarding the project, including links to the online survey and a sign-up button for e-updates.

Next Steps

The feedback received from this phase of community engagement will confirm priorities for the preferred design option. To be notified about upcoming consultations for the new park, please visit the project webpage at toronto.ca/965EllesmerePark to sign up for e-updates.