

# Moss Park Improvements & John Innes Community Recreation Centre Replacement Project

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT:  
Local Advisory Group and  
Project Champions Meeting #2

August 30, 2022



# Table of Contents

<b>1.0 About this Report</b>	3
1.1 Project Schedule	3
1.2 Engagement Timeline	3
<b>2.0 Overview of Local Advisory Group/ Project Champions Meeting #2</b>	4
<b>3.0 What We Heard</b>	5
3.1 Summary of Key Findings	5
3.2 Summary of Feedback on Key Project Components	6

# 1.0 About this Report

This meeting summary report summarizes key meeting findings from the Moss Park Improvements & John Innes Community Recreation Centre Replacement Project's second meeting held with the Local Advisory Group and Project Champions on August 30, 2022. This report summarizes the meeting details as well as feedback and input collected from engagement activities. To learn more about the project including past reports visit the project page [toronto.ca/MossPark](https://toronto.ca/MossPark).

## 1.1 Project Schedule

Summer 2022 - Phase 1: SET THE STAGE

Introduce the project, explain the process, and lay the project groundwork.

**WE ARE HERE**

**Summer 2022 – Fall 2022 Phase 2: CONFIRM THE VISION, PRINCIPLES, BIG MOVES**

Introduce the project, revisit More Moss Park findings, and explore how things have changed since 2015. Better understand evolving local issues and how the project can best support local needs. Confirm the Principles and Big Moves of the project.

Fall 2022 to Spring 2023: Phase 3 - CONCEPT DESIGN OPTIONS

Use what we learn in Phase 2 to start developing ideas for park amenities and concepts for the new Community Recreation Centre. Review ideas through design options presented to the community and revise ideas based on feedback.

Spring 2023: Phase 4 - PREFERRED CONCEPT

Refine the concept plans for the park and John Innes CRC based on feedback and present the preferred concept to the community. Review ideas with the community and revise plans and designs based on feedback.

## 1.2 Engagement Timeline

The following are other scheduled engagement activities with the Project Champions and LAG (subject to change):

- **Project Champions Meeting #1: June 13, 2022 (COMPLETED)**
- **Local Advisory Group (LAG) Meeting #1: June 13, 2022 (COMPLETED)**
- **Project Champions Meeting #2: August 30, 2022 (COMPLETED)**
- **LAG Meeting #2: August 30, 2022 (COMPLETED)**
- Project Champions Meeting #3: Fall 2022
- LAG Meeting #3: Fall 2022

- Project Champions Meeting #4: Winter 2023
- LAG Meeting #4: Winter 2023

## 2.0 Overview of Local Advisory Group/ Project Champions Meeting #2

### Meeting Overview

The virtual meeting took place over WebEx, with a total of 19 participants from the Local Advisory Group and Project Champions. The meeting began with a general welcome, Land Acknowledgement and an African Ancestral Acknowledgement. The project team also went over code of conduct which provided an overview of the roles, responsibilities and expectations of participants and process stewards (the project team) during the meeting. The project team then went over the meeting objectives (see below). Everyone that was present, including the project team, had an opportunity to introduce themselves.

The objectives for the second Local Advisory Group (LAG) and Project Champions meeting included the following:

- 1) Update the Local Advisory Group and Project Champions about the project's design process and progress since we last met.
- 2) Share the emerging designs for the John Innes Community Recreation Centre
- 3) Gather insights, ideas, and feedback for the John Innes Community Recreation Centre.

After the project team delivered objectives 1) and 2) for the meeting, participants were invited to participate in rotating breakout sessions that were focused on specific project components for the Community Recreation Centre. These included: **Tailored Community Spaces, Aquatics, Fitness Oriented Spaces, and Common Areas and Shared Spaces.**

A general set of questions guided discussion in each breakout room. These included:

1. What activities do you like to do in these spaces?
2. Are there additional activities or programming that you wish were available in these spaces?
3. What features, technology or design elements are needed for these activities to take place?

Two project team members were in each breakout room to facilitate discussion based on these questions as well as provide more information about each project component. The project team used Miro, a whiteboard tool, to share a detailed look at the project components and to record participant responses. Each rotating breakout room was twenty minutes each and after each interval, participants could choose the next project component that they wanted to discuss.

## Meeting Details

Date: Tuesday August 30, 2022, 5 PM - 7 PM

Location: Virtual, Webex

Attendees: 19 Participants  
Thirteen (13) Local Advisory Group Members  
Six (6) Project Champions

Project Team: City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division  
PROCESS (Public and Stakeholder Engagement)  
The Planning Partnership (Landscape Architecture)  
Two Row Architect (Landscape Architecture & Indigenous Lens)  
MJMA (CRC Architecture & Design)

## 3.0 What We Heard

### 3.1 Summary of Key Findings

Local Advisory Group members and Project Champions wanted the future John Innes Community Recreation Centre to provide opportunities for diverse users. When reviewing the project components, they offered a range of considerations for how the Community Recreation Centre could be more inclusive for people with disabilities, families, youth, women, 2SLGBTQ+, and seniors. General considerations for each project component included the following:

#### **Culturally Specific Programming**

The community kitchen, youth lounge and woodshop, specifically food and art programming, were seen as key opportunities to incorporate culturally specific programming. Participants felt that this kind of programming should reflect the neighbourhood demographics and was also an opportunity for sharing Indigenous ways of creating as well as teachings from other cultures that are predominant in the community.

### **User-friendly Booking System**

Participants wanted to be able to easily access the booking system for community spaces like the youth room and community kitchen. They wanted to be able to self-navigate a platform that allowed them to see when community spaces were available and make bookings on their own.

### **Open to all ages, genders, and abilities**

Participants wanted community spaces and programs to be accessible to people of all ages and genders. They recognized the need to have spaces such as the fitness rooms, woodshop, aquatics centre and youth lounge to have dedicated programming to accommodate specific demographic groups such as women, 2SLGBTQ+ and people with disabilities. Participants also wanted to see that each space was wheelchair accessible and accommodated people with different mobility needs.

### **Proper Ventilation and Public Hygiene**

LAG and Project Champions wanted to ensure that common areas such as washrooms, change rooms and seating areas have materials that are easy to clean and maintain so that they last a long time and are safe to use. They were also concerned about the air quality of fitness-oriented spaces and wanted to see more ventilation in those areas. They wanted the design to include windows that are able to be opened to the outside to ensure cross ventilation and alternative access to air.

### **Flexible, Multi-purpose spaces**

Participants felt that all spaces should be flexible to accommodate a range of uses. For example, the youth lounge could be a computer space, co-working space or a prayer space. They also wanted to see more connections be built between project components. For example, they felt that the community kitchen should be connected to the large multipurpose room as well as an outdoor area.

## 3.2 Summary of Feedback on Key Project Components

### **Tailored community spaces**

Participants were asked to provide ideas for programming and design features for tailored community spaces. Tailored community spaces include Youth Space/Lounge, Wood Shop, Community Kitchen and Cooking Classes, Games, Terrace. In general,

participants felt that all community spaces should be accessible to support the inclusion of people with disabilities and support gender diversity. Including features such as handrails in each community space as well as gender neutral bathrooms throughout the community centre would help to promote these outcomes. Another criterion of accessibility for community spaces was ensuring that the booking system was user friendly. For example, participants wanted to be able to use an online system that showed when spaces were available or unavailable.

Participants' ideas for each community space included thoughts about the programs and features that each space should contain. There was support for the improvement of community centres in the neighbourhood as more condominium development in the area will lead to less public spaces. Participants also asked the project team to recognize and consider the social entrepreneurship opportunities that were possible through the kitchen and woodshop. Specific ideas for each community space are detailed in the table below.

Community Space	Participant Ideas
Youth Space/Lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Computer programming               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Computer literacy for seniors and youth</li> <li>○ Laptop rental opportunities</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Prayer space</li> <li>● Co-working space</li> <li>● Whiteboards and television</li> <li>● Open hours for studying and tutoring with volunteer support</li> <li>● Accessible booking system</li> <li>● Listening and sharing space               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Drag Storytime</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Woodshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community programming ideas               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indigenous-led art making courses</li> <li>○ Woodworker led courses</li> <li>○ Bike mechanic courses</li> <li>○ Repair cafe</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Open to all ages and genders               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Programming specific to women</li> <li>○ Programming specific to youth (youth only hours)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Facilities management               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Proper ventilation</li> <li>○ Adequate storage</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Social enterprise opportunities for makers</li> </ul>
Community Kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Kitchen amenities</li> </ul>

Community Space	Participant Ideas
and Cooking Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Lots of counter space and food preparation areas</li> <li>○ Multiple refrigerators</li> <li>○ Inclusive design for people with disabilities or mobility issues for example, shorter countertops and accessible stoves</li> <li>● Nutrition programming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Life skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Culturally specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Indigenous cooking course</li> <li>○ Accommodations for kosher and halal</li> <li>○ Demographic-focused classes and programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Partnerships and social enterprises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Cooking courses taught by local chefs</li> <li>○ Support local caterers with Food Handling Certification and affordable kitchen space</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Games	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maintaining existing billiards and foosball games</li> <li>● Community building opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Partnerships with community organizations and businesses</li> <li>○ Intergenerational games</li> <li>○ Seniors games</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Terrace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Growing opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Community farm</li> <li>○ Flower garden</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Accessible booking system</li> </ul>

**Aquatics**

The aquatics centre will include a 25-metre 6 lane lap pool as well as a leisure/tot pool. Participants were asked to share their ideas regarding different features and programming for the aquatics centre. In general, participants wanted to ensure that a range of users can access the facility. Ideas about what this could look like varied. Some participants wanted to ensure all ages were able to access programming like swimming lessons while others wanted programming focused on specific demographics such as youth and women. Having swimming lanes that were dedicated to age groups was also suggested.

Regarding design features, participants wanted the aquatic centre to be well lit and have natural lighting if possible. They also wanted to see features that supported users who used wheelchairs or required mobility supports. Participants also wanted to see



connections built to the outdoors and for the aquatic centre to be integrated with an outdoor splash pad. However, participants also felt that a connection to the outdoors should be balanced with privacy features such as blinds. A slide was also suggested as a feature that children would love.

Water safety was the top priority in terms of programming. Participants felt that programming such as bronze cross or lifeguard training should be free. They noted that higher levels of swimming instructions would require more deck space.

### **Fitness Oriented Spaces**

The fitness-oriented spaces that are proposed for the community centre include the following: double gym mezzanine with running track, weight room, two fitness studios, and a dance studio. Overall, participants wanted to see that these spaces were flexible and could serve multiple purposes while also having enough safe storage such as a locker system for personal belongings. They also wanted to have safety devices such as automated external defibrillators (AEDs) and NARCAN kits (for overdose treatments) be made accessible on every floor.

#### *Double Gym*

Reflecting on the current demands in the community centre's gymnasium, participants shared that the future gym should be double the current size so that more users can access the space. Participants felt that a larger gym could also accommodate more ball sports such as volleyball or basketball.

Participants wanted to see more storage space in the gym which would coincide with seating areas. For example, having a cubby/locker storage system and benches in one area for users to change into their gym shoes was proposed by one participant. Seating areas for spectators was also proposed as well.

Participants felt that there needed to be dedicated programming for people living with disabilities to ensure that those with disabilities knew they could use the space as well. For participants, this could look like having hours dedicated to people with disabilities. This would be further accommodated by ensuring that the changing room facilities were wheelchair accessible.

#### *Weight Room*

The weight room is proposed to be a space dedicated to heavier gym equipment. Participants wanted to see more lower impact equipment be introduced to weight room such as stationary bikes or cardio equipment. It was felt that this would ensure more

older adults and seniors could make use of those types of equipment. Participants also felt that the weight room should be well ventilated and in close proximity to public showers.

### *Fitness Studios*

To ensure that the fitness studios were safer spaces, it was suggested that the fitness studio offers hours for women only and LGBTQ+ community members. Discussions about the fitness studio were mostly focused on the types of programming that could be offered in the space. The programming ideas that were suggested by participants that could operate fitness studio included the following:

- Indoor cycling/Spin Classes
- Gymnastics
- Martial Arts
- Self-defense for youth and seniors
- Boxing

Participants also wanted to see features that were easy to maintain such as fingerprint proof mirrors and seating areas with materials that are easy to clean.

### *Dance Studio*

There were minimal comments on the dance studio. Participants felt that the dance studio could host programs that were not as physically demanding as those held in the gym and fitness studio and that the dance studio could be a quiet space in the community centre. Suggestions for programs that could facilitate this included Tai Chi classes, yoga, and therapeutic stretching classes in general. Participants wanted this space to feel open and include mirrors and a view of the park.

### **Common Areas and Shared Spaces**

Common areas and shared spaces include the lobby, large community multi-purpose room, smaller community activity rooms, and community rooftop access/green roof. In general, the biggest priority for common areas and shared spaces was public hygiene and accessibility. Participants felt that there should be a reception area on each floor of the building and on opposite sides of each floor so that the space was always being monitored. They did not feel that passive surveillance of common areas was enough. They also wanted to know if the police were involved in the design process and advising on how Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) elements could be incorporated into the design. Participants also felt that there should be multiple elevators to make sure that the Community Recreation Centre is accessible to all.

### *Common areas and Lobby*

Participants felt that common areas were good opportunities to build in social spaces such as areas for eating and casual conversations. They also felt that the lobby should have a lot of seating to provide opportunities for respite and to serve as a cooling/warming centre when we are experiencing challenging climate conditions. There were also concerns raised about public hygiene in relation to seating areas and high-touch areas. Participants felt that the seating should be washable and that any handrails should be anti-bacterial.

Participants also felt that the design of common areas should be cohesive and connected. They suggested that art pieces going up the stairway for example could help to bridge upstairs and downstairs.

### *Community Rooftop Access/ Green Roof*

Participants liked the idea of having rooftop access at the Community Recreation Centre. They felt that it would add a new perspective of the community for community members. There were inquiries about year-round access to the rooftop and suggested that this kind of access be supported by sheltered space.

In general, participants wanted to see the rooftop be animated with a community garden or greenhouse that could have a link to the food programming in the community kitchen and cooking classes. This could look like having space in the garden allotted for growing Indigenous vegetable life that could supply the kitchen with fresh foods and provide community members the opportunity to learn about Indigenous vegetables and how to grow them. Opportunities for outdoor activities such as bar-b-ques and sports activities such as slack roping and a fenced in beach volleyball areas was also suggested.

Participants also inquired about the possibility of social enterprises and community partnerships to operate on the green roof. They felt that organizations such as Foodshare or Toronto Plant Life could help maintain or operate the community garden. They also wondered if there could be a snack shop or cafe on the rooftop to provide opportunities for food vendors in the community.

### *Community multipurpose room and small community activity room*

Participants wanted to know more about the capacity limitations of the multi-purpose room before they provided comments on the kinds of activities they could see taking place in there. For smaller community rooms, they liked the idea of having a study space and suggested that this area should have programming such as tutoring, adult

learning or computer skills as well as opportunities for passive use and casual studying. They felt that this space should be in a low-traffic area.