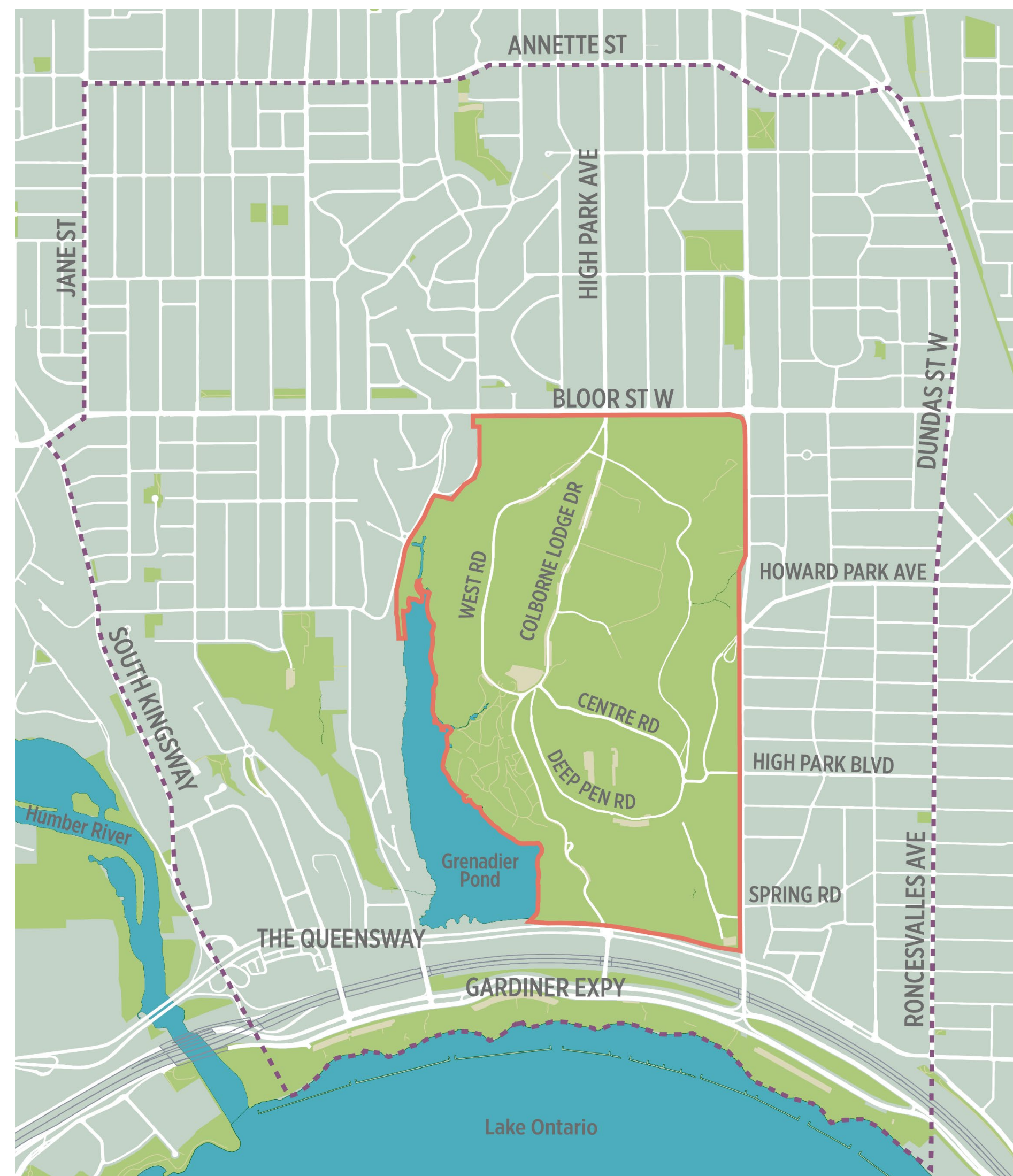


High Park Movement Strategy Introduction & Overview



STUDY AREA
HIGH PARK
MOVEMENT STRATEGY



What is a movement strategy and why is it needed?

Since March 2020, roads in High Park have been closed to visitor vehicles on weekends and holidays to give park users more space to safely physically distance. These closures sparked public interest in exploring comprehensive and long-term improvements to the travel network in High Park.

The City launched the High Park Movement Strategy (HPMS) in summer 2021 to evaluate road closures and to address other important mobility matters in High Park such as transit improvements and reducing conflicts among road users.

The goal of the HPMS is to better serve all park users and the surrounding community while prioritizing **safety, accessibility and the park's natural environment.**

What sort of changes are being considered?

The HPMS is exploring design and programming improvements to the existing travel network in the park. Changes will target existing paved areas including roads, sidewalks, parking lots and driveways.

Mobility is the focus of the HPMS. Other important park matters such as conservation and facility maintenance will be addressed through established City plans and policies including the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, Parkland Strategy and Ravine Strategy.

Improvements will be focused within the Study Area, but the study will also consider possible impacts and opportunities in the wider Context Area.

The HPMS is being developed through a multi-stage process informed by early and ongoing engagement, as shown in the diagram below.



Scan with your
smartphone camera for
the project website.



Park Profile

Indigenous & Environmental Significance

High Park is situated upon the traditional territories of the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Anishnabeg and the Mississaugas of the Credit. It is an area with a significant pre-colonial Indigenous history, including connection to the Humber River Watershed - part of a vast and vital trade and travel route known as the Carrying Place Trail. There are a number of known archaeological sites of Indigenous significance in High Park.

The unique natural landscape found in High Park today is a legacy of thousands of years of environmental stewardship by generations of Indigenous peoples. The rare oak savannah found in High Park is one of the few found in southern Ontario. It has been maintained through continued controlled burns, historically used by Indigenous peoples to support fire-dependent ecosystems. High Park continues to be an important place for Indigenous ceremony and knowledge-sharing.



Native species supporting birds and pollinators

The majority of High Park falls within the Natural Heritage System and many areas are also designated as Environmentally Significant Areas, Areas of Natural or Scientific Interest and as Provincially Significant Wetlands through the City's Official Plan.

New or expanding infrastructure should be avoided within the Natural Heritage System unless there is no reasonable alternative, adverse impacts are minimized and natural features and ecological functions are restored or enhanced where feasible.



Black Oak Savanna in High Park



 Natural Heritage System
 Areas of Natural or Scientific Interest (ANSI)

Park Profile

Facilities and Activities in High Park

High Park is often recognized as a centrepiece of the City's parks and open space network. At 400 acres, it includes a variety of natural features and habitats, outdoor recreational facilities like the pool, rink and sport courts, and cultural and commercial attractions such as High Park Zoo, Colborne Lodge, Grenadier Café and the High Park Nature Centre. It is a popular destination for hiking, cycling, dog-walking, bird-watching and many other outdoor activities.

In 2022, High Park supported over 3400 bookings including ongoing permitting to established groups such as Allotment Gardeners and the High Park Little League, as well as other events such as walk-a-thons, fitness camps and filming activity.

Another important facility is the High Park Greenhouse, which supports horticultural and restoration activity city-wide. The wide range of year-round activities in High Park attract diverse park user groups with different travel priorities and preferences.



Children playing soccer at the outdoor sports fields



Map of Main Destinations and Facilities in High Park



Park visitors enjoy cherry blossoms in spring



Audience gathered to enjoy a production at the outdoor theatre



Families skating at the outdoor rink

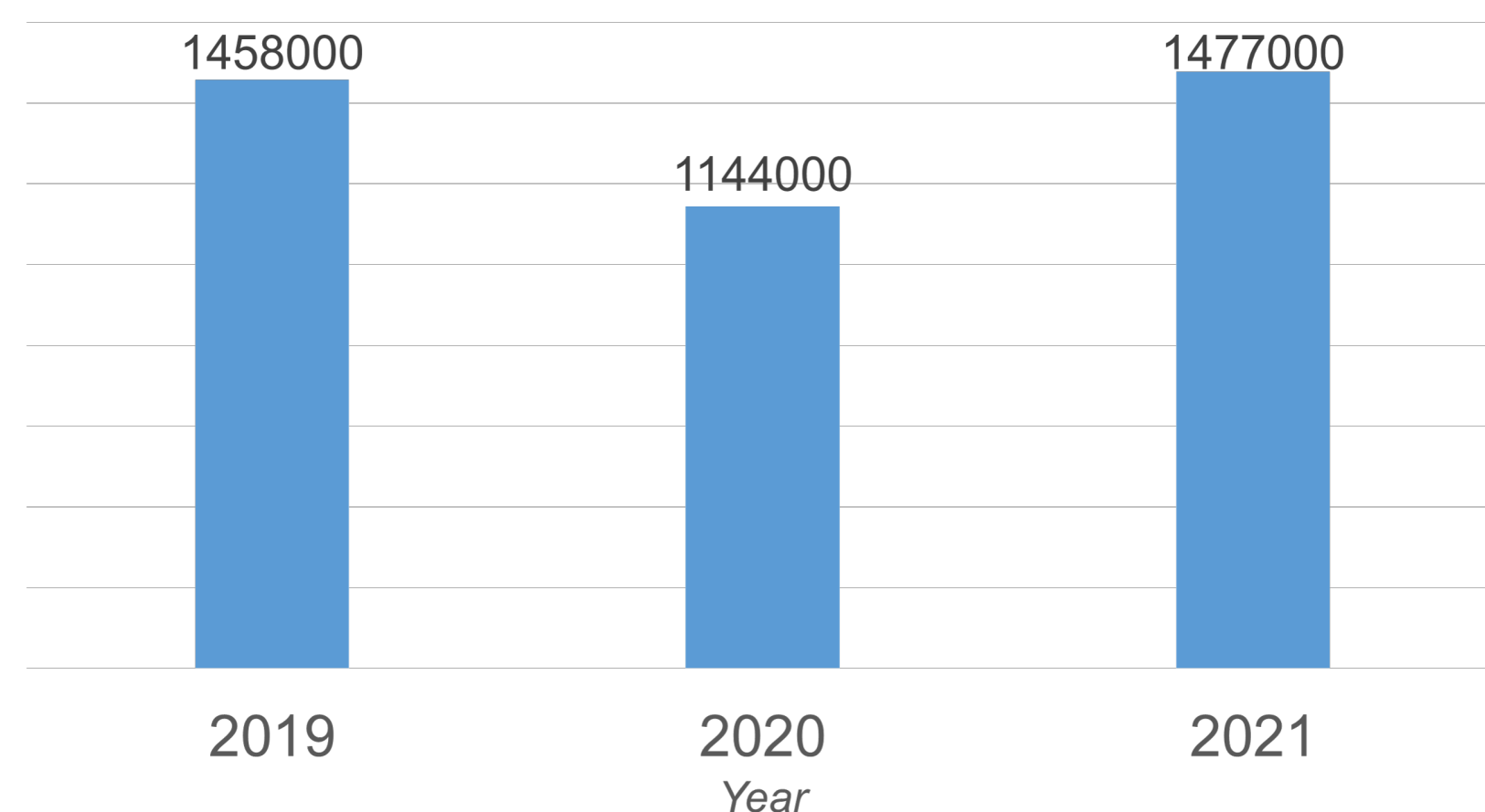
Park Profile

Park Visits & Mode of Travel

High Park is classified as a legacy park through the City's Parkland Strategy. Legacy parks are defined by their large size, unique features and city-wide and regional draw.

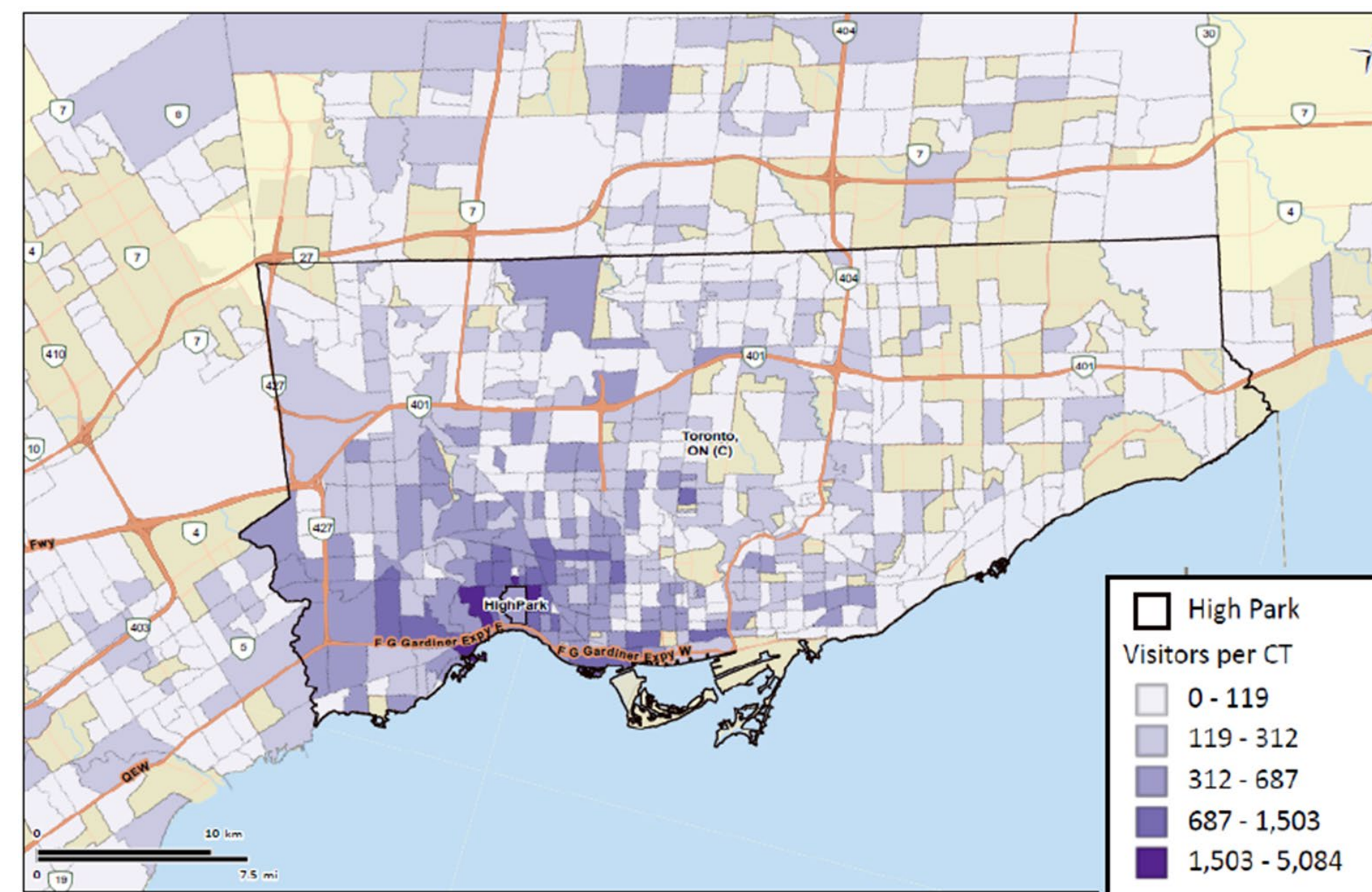
Analysis on park visits was conducted using data gathered from mobile devices. The annual number of visits to High Park has consistently surpassed one million, even throughout phases of pandemic lockdowns.

High Park serves as both a local park asset and a major outdoor destination attracting visitors from across the region. In 2021, approximately 30% of visitors lived within 5km of the park, and approximately 50% lived 8km away or further.



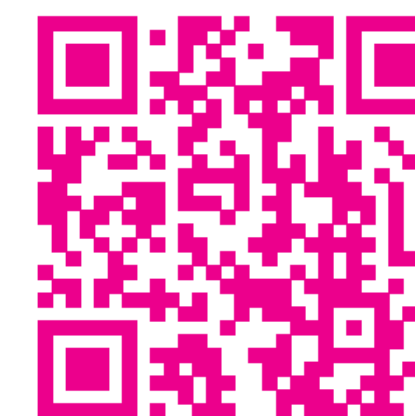
Total Number of Annual Visits to High Park based on EnviroNics Mobilescapes data

Information on where and how people travelled to visit High Park was also collected through online surveys. Based on self-reported postal codes, 41% 2022 survey respondents lived in neighbourhoods that border the park.










Home location of High Park visitors in 2021. EnviroNics.

More information on park visits and travel patterns can be found on the project website.



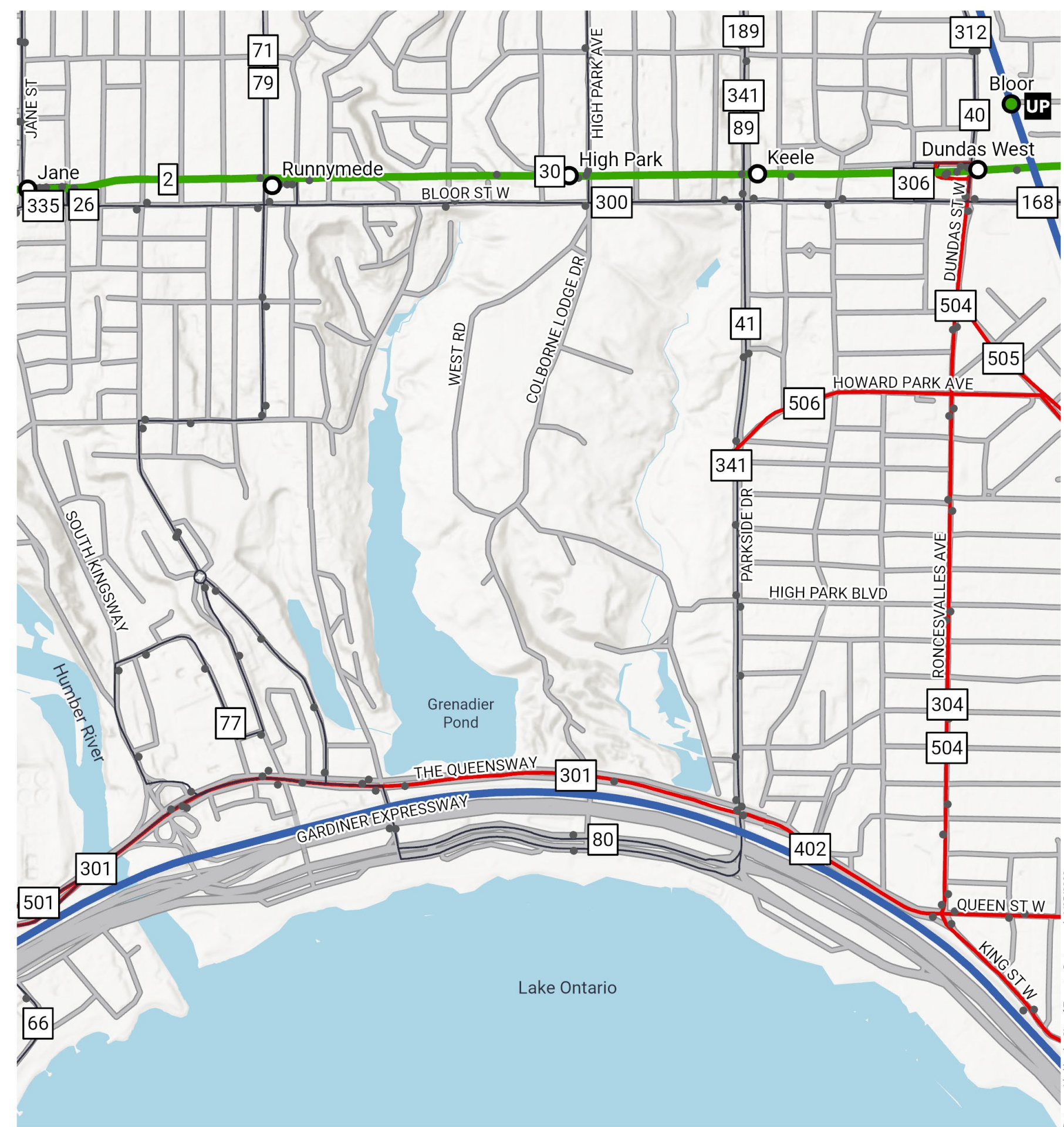
Travel distance to High Park is another factor that can impact a park user's preferred mode of travel. When asked about travel modes to and from High Park, the 2022 online survey respondents indicate that many use active transportation.

-  • 55% often walk, jog or run
-  • 48% often ride a bike or similar non-motorized mode like rollerblading
-  • 37% often drive a private motor vehicle
-  • 26% often take transit
-  • 3% often ride an e-bike or similar
-  • 2% often use a mobility aid
-  • 1% often take a taxi or ride share

Specific attention was given to travel choices of vulnerable road users, including park users who identified as living with a disability, park users with children under 12, and park users that are 65 or older. In comparison to general respondents, these groups were more likely to drive, 47%, 49% and 51%, respectively.

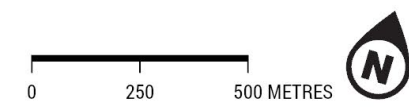
Park Profile

Transportation Infrastructure Servicing High Park



TRANSIT ROUTES SERVING HIGH PARK
HIGH PARK MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Station Type	Transit Service
UP Express	GO Rail
GO Rail	Subway
Subway	Streetcar
Transit Stops	Bus



Location of nearby transit routes.

High Park is located near transit, active transportation infrastructure, arterial roads and regional highways. Below is a summary of the current conditions:

Transit

- High Park is serviced by TTC subway, streetcar and bus routes.
- Bloor GO/UP station is located one kilometre east of the park and provides access to the Union-Pearson Express Train and the GO Kitchener Line.
- Seasonal, weekend bus service is available on interior park roads.

Cycling

- West Road and the north portion of Colborne Lodge Drive have painted bike lanes. All other roads have shared lanes with motor vehicles.
- Eight bike share stations are located in the park and along the park boundary.

Walking, Rolling and Jogging

- Most roads have sidewalks on one side.
- The trail systems and pedestrian park roads provide additional space for pedestrian activity.

Driving

- All roads permit vehicle use in at least one direction
- Over 550 car parking spaces available in the park
- Car-free weekends and holidays since March 2020



ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION
HIGH PARK MOVEMENT STRATEGY

Major Gateway	Multi-Use Trail	Pedestrian Park Road
Pedestrian Access	Painted Bike Lane	Soft-Surface Trail
Pedestrian and Cyclist Access	Shared Route	Other Pedestrian Routes
Bike Share Stations	Contraflow	
	Sidewalk	



Active transportation infrastructure in High Park and surrounding area.

Park Profile

Current Travel Patterns in High Park



Sidewalk in High Park that is obstructed by a light pole.

Walking, Rolling and Jogging

- The Bloor Street West entrances and exits see the most pedestrian activity, followed by entrances and exits on Parkside Drive.
- Pedestrian infrastructure is not consistent throughout the park; physical obstructions create undesirable pedestrian conditions. The sidewalk network is not continuous and sometimes ends abruptly.
- The topography and terrain of High Park provide natural challenges for accessibility, specifically in the south-east and north-west quadrants of the park where grades are steep.
- Pedestrians do not have the right-of-way at crossing points on West Road which causes confusion and conflict among road users.

Cycling

- The north end of the park carries the highest volume of people cycling, approximately 800 cyclists per day in peak periods.
- Most people cycling enter and exit the park on Bloor Street West
- The highest volumes of people cycling are seen on weekends.
- The "High Park Loop" is a popular recreational cycling route in Toronto's west-end
- From 2019 to 2021, Bike Share Toronto ridership doubled, with an average of 73 trips per day starting or ending in High Park.

Parking

- Parking spaces in High Park are typically at capacity on weekdays in peak periods. The average parking duration is between 1-1.5 hours.
- On-street, paid parking spaces on Bloor Street West are typically under capacity on weekends.
- A parking utilization study in the context area found that on average, parking supply is 60% occupied.

Driving or being driven in a private motor vehicle

- Approximately 66% and 31% of motor vehicles enter at Bloor Street West and Parkside Drive, respectively.
- Approximately 56%, 18% and 26% of vehicles exit at Bloor Street West, Parkside Drive and The Queensway, respectively.
- The eastern and southern roads carry approximately 2500 motor vehicles per day.
- The northern roads carry approximately 6000 vehicles per day.
- On average, motor vehicle speeds exceed the 20km/hr speed limit.
- In the past 15 years there was one reported collision that resulted in a serious injury in High Park; it occurred between a motorist and a cyclist.



Mixed traffic in High Park.