

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

1001 The Queensway Park

Phase 1: Visioning

Thought Exchange Survey Summary Report

December 2022

Leigh Litchenberg, Project Coordinator Landscape Architect
Elijah Bawuah, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator



Contents

Project Background	3
Park District Vision.....	3
Online Survey.....	3
Key Feedback.....	3
Necessary Design Considerations	8
How We Reached People	9
Print Media	9
Digital Media	9
Appendix A: Survey Feedback Analysis.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

Project Background

A new park is coming to 1001 The Queensway!

A new 1849.8m² park is coming to 1001-1037 The Queensway as part of a mixed-use development project near Islington Avenue and The Queensway, in the Islington-City Centre West neighbourhood.

Park District Vision

Online Survey

On October 31, the project team launched an online survey to collect community insights on the new park coming to the Islington-City Centre West neighbourhood. Responses to the survey will help inform future draft design options for the new park.

The online survey was available from October 31st to November 14th, 2022. The survey received a **total of 480 responses**, which included input from participants of various ages and backgrounds.

Key Feedback

Community members shared their excitement and ideas for this new park district. The following are key themes identified by survey participants in their responses (the total number of responses provided for each theme is shown in brackets. **The ratings associated with each theme area are summarized in the following pages**):

- **Greenery and Open Green Space (105)**
 - Green Space (63)
 - Trees and Plants (17)
 - Trees (9)
 - Pollinators (5)
 - Natural Building Materials (4)
 - Native Plants (3)
 - Community Garden (3)
 - Vegetation Barrier (1)
- **Not Applicable/Out of the Scope (80)**
- **Park Area/Design and Programming (65)**
 - Outdoor Market/Vendors (17)
 - Public Art and Performance Space (16)
 - Picnic/Gathering Space (10)
 - Noise concerns about traffic (9)
 - Intergenerational Space (6)
 - Mental Health Benefits (4)
 - Multi-Use Space (3)
- **Play Features and Games (22)**

- Playground Space for Children 1-12 (19)
- Play Space for Teens and Older Adults 13+ (1)
- Nature-Inspired Play Equipment (1)
- Games Tables (1)
- **Accessibility (17)**
 - Accessibility to Public/Green Space (7)
 - Drinking Fountain (2)
 - Equitable/Universal Park Design (3)
 - Public Washroom Access (3)
 - Wheelchair Accessibility (2)
- **Safety (16)**
 - Buffer Zone From nearby Traffic Areas (11)
 - Safety (2)
 - Sight Lines (1)
 - Fence (1)
 - Lighting (1)
- **Pets (15)**
 - More Pet Space (15)
- **Water Play/Features (11)**
 - Splash Pad (7)
 - Decorative Fountain (3)
 - Small Pond (1)
- **Seating (5)**
 - Diverse Seating Options (5)
- **Sports Equipment and Courts/Fields (5)**
 - Basketball Court (3)
 - Fitness Equipment (1)
 - Pickle Ball Court 1
- **Shade Structure(s) (1)**
- **History (1)**

All additional responses and a full summary of results for the survey questions can be reviewed through this [Thoughtexchange survey report link](#). 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** project.*

Gathering and Open Green Space

The new parks should be built with a higher portion of gathering and open green space and should be accessible during the warmer and winter seasons. Environmentally friendly & sustainable materials should be used in the park designs for building new park amenities and features.

- Popular relevant thoughts:

- "This looks small for the number of people that will be living in the area. Green space and outdoor areas are so important for mental health and quality of life" – 4.5 rating.
- "I'd like to see as much nature and greenery as possible. Allowing separation from the feel of the busy intersection. Because of the lack of greenery and nature in this location." – 4.5 rating.
- "I wish more space was given to the park. I would mostly like to see it as a green space with minimal concrete. I do not want to see nature developed out of our neighborhood." – 4.4 rating.
- "A place where the community can come together and neighbours can get to know each other. Sense of belonging and community is important to health and well-being" – 4.2 rating.
- "As natural as possible and eco-friendly. To use natural resources we have with a low eco footprint" – 4.1 rating.

Programmable Event Space With Diverse Seating Options

Create a flexible multi-use event space with diverse seating options within the park that could be used for various programming and play interests by park users.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "A park with seating and trees for shade would be nice. This will invite people out from their condos to be able to sit and enjoy the outdoors." – 4.5 rating.
 - "We have no farmers market in the area. Important to have walkable neighbourhood- not car oriented." – 4.4 rating.
 - "I am gardener for city of Mississauga but I live across from here. I'd like to see lots of colorful plants, seating and farmers market and be inviting. Because Queensway is so busy and it's important for a relaxed open space to get out from our condos and enjoy nature. I will see it from my balcony." – 4.3 rating.
 - "Public market (i.e. farmer's market, craft market, winter market. To meet the needs of the growing community." – 4.2 rating.
 - "Shade and non-business seating areas are hard to find on the Queensway. Areas that encourage foot traffic and welcome pedestrians instead of cars. It is a heavy traffic area so we need green, shady seating that encourages communal gatherings." – 4.2 rating.
 - "The park should allow for community events. With a large number of condo towers, a park is essential to build community among neighbors." – 4.1 rating.
 - "I'm very excited about this park and so pleased you are asking the community for their input. We need more space for cultural events and outdoor physical activities in this part of Etobicoke and hopefully this space can accommodate that." – 4.0 rating.

Shade, Trees and Plantings

Ensure the new parks include new trees for shade, pollinator and native plantings, as well as vegetation barriers to help improve climate conditions, air quality, protection against urban heatwaves, and to separate the park areas from nearby traffic.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "Lots of green, natives, and pollinators. Think nature first, then integrate the humans. There is such a lack of nature space in this community." – 4.4 rating.
 - "Lots of green, natives, and pollinators. Think nature first, then integrate the humans. There is such a lack of nature space in this community." – 4.4 rating.
 - "Space for native plants and places to sit in the shade are very important to me. I love the idea of holding community events here. I work with children and in Etobicoke it's hard to find activities (i.e. performances) nearby. I'm also disabled and need a shady place to sit in summer." – 4.0 rating.
 - "I would like to see a larger green space set further back from the Queensway. Rectangular with length along entry road. Need a green buffer from the noise of the Queensway." – 4.0 rating.

Ensure the parks provide ample shade for park users to relax, create, and play under.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "A park with seating and trees for shade would be nice. This will invite people out from their condos to be able to sit and enjoy the outdoors." – 4.5 rating.
 - "Prioritize shade tree plantings. Needed shade and greenery in an otherwise very grey and paved over area." – 4.4 rating.
 - "Somewhere where we can have small outdoor concerts where you don't have to bring your own seating. Tiered amphitheater type with shade trees behind. I feel we need more outdoor event space in Etobicoke." – 3.8 rating.

Park User Safety and Noise Mitigation From Nearby Roads

Residents and community members of the Islington-City Centre West neighbourhood consider safety from traffic as a top priority for the new park. Ensure the park is safe from traffic by considering the following popular thoughts:

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "A barrier, wall, or other separation from the heavy traffic of the Queensway. Perhaps natural / green / plantings? This area is so noisy and busy, a separation would create an oasis of calm." – 4.5 rating.

- "I'd like to see as much nature and greenery as possible. Allowing separation from the feel of the busy intersection. Because of the lack of greenery and nature in this location." – 4.5 rating.
- "It needs good landscaping to block street noise. Nearby parks are just grass patches." – 4.4 rating.
- "Greenery to reduce the traffic noise. Queensway is a busy street for the park to be meaningful it should feel like it's set apart from traffic" – 4.3 rating.

Accessibility and Inclusive Park Design

Build parks that are accessible to all age groups and consider a wide range of disabilities and barriers to access in the park design. The new park should include open green spaces, park amenities and pathways that could be accessed by users relying on any mobility device.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "This should incorporate accessible features for people who have disabilities. Community members with disabilities are too often overlooked in this kind of new planning." – 4.4 rating.
 - "The park should be accessible. We have elderly and disabled people in the family." – 4.3 rating.
 - "Physically accessible space (wheelchairs, strollers, hard of hearing/seeing, etc.). To bring people together and make sure everyone in the community feels welcomed in not just an accessible space, but an inclusive one." – 4.2 rating.
 - "Fully accessible! Wheelchair especially as we have none anywhere near this space. No matter what goes into this space it needs to be accessible. It is important to cater to all needs and abilities of the community you are creating a space for.." – 4.2 rating.
 - "Have lots of open space for people to gather and socialize ... encourage walking and biking to get there ... drinking fountains are a must ...If you build it they will come ... European cities have these spaces all the time ... we need more." – 3.9 rating.

Spaces for Dogs

Survey participants expressed an interest in dog-friendly space within the park for off-leash use or relief areas.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "This space is too small for the number of condo residents who will be using it. Make it bigger & include lots of trees & greenery; reduce hardscapes. Fenced off-leash dog area will be needed. Every TO park needs this to reduce issues btwn dog owners & park users. Dogs will use as a bathroom anyway." – 4.1 rating.

- "As a condo dweller I would love to see separate outdoor space for humans and dogs. To keep thing clean and functional this is important" – 3.9 rating.

Park Design for All Ages and User Groups

Ensure the parks are designed for all age groups, especially older adults and seniors.

- Popular relevant thoughts:
 - "Piazza style open space for multiple uses. Multi-generational use." – 4.0 rating.
 - "The space should be for kids and adults. For families to enjoy the space together." – 3.9 rating.
 - "Accessible, inclusive, safe and suitable for children of all ages." – 3.8 rating.
 - "There should be seating, shade, walkways, a playground, and some open green space. This makes the park accessible, safe and usable for residents of all ages and abilities." – 4.1 rating.

Necessary Design Considerations

A completed analysis of key themes (as summarized above) and additional data from the [1001 The Queensway ThoughtExchange survey](#) reveals the following design considerations that should be explored in future design options:

- Survey participants shared a significant preference in having more multi-use open green spaces for gathering and programming uses (i.e. picnics, spending time alone and with families, cultural events and community markets) in the new park (Include a green space option in 1 design – no sod; and 1 option movie themed space with as much green space as possibly – no sod)
- Natural building materials are preferred for the built form of amenities and additional features (i.e. seating and site furnishing elements)
- Shade trees, planting, and pollinator gardens are of significant interest to survey participants
 - Additionally, vegetation buffers to provide protection from nearby/adjacent roads and traffic for park users should be explored.
- The design options should look to address noise and visual concerns due to nearby traffic; and
- The park should include amenities and allow for park uses that are inclusive of all age and user groups, especially for those between the ages of 1-16.

How We Reached People

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 sites. 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 October 31st 15 to November 14th, 2022.

Project Webpage

A webpage (toronto.ca/1001TheQueenswayPark) 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.