

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

Eglinton Park Master Plan Implementation Community Advisory Group Meeting 1

Meeting Summary

January 12, 2022

Mario Pecchia, Program Manager, Capital Projects
Cristian Lukaszyk, Senior Project Manager
Tonya Crawford, Senior Project Coordinator
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Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) meeting that was held virtually on Tuesday, December 6, 2022 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

More information about the project can be found on the [project webpage](#).

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Welcome and introduce CAG members & the project team
- Review and confirm Terms of Reference
- Present a project overview and update on Phase 1 of the Eglinton Park Master Plan implementation
- Receive CAG members' feedback on Phase 1. Topics open for discussion included the locations of a dog off-leash area and skate spot
- Share next steps

Attendance

CAG Members Present

- Billy W
- Blaine L
- Brenda H
- Dave M
- Debbie T
- Gilbert M
- Jacquelyn W
- Jean P
- Jim L
- John G
- Katherine C
- Lisa F
- Francis F
- Nic H
- Thomas W
- Migs B

Project Staff Present

- Eli Bawuah, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator
- Cristian Lukaszzyk, Senior Project Manager, Capital Projects
- Tonya Crawford, Senior Project Coordinator, Capital Projects
- Mario Pecchia, Program Manager, Capital Projects

Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were reviewed with CAG members. Members made no suggested edits or comments. The Terms of Reference were approved by all CAG members present.

CAG members absent from the meeting will review and confirm the Terms of Reference through email.

Presentation

Project staff presented:

- An overview of the Eglinton Park Master Plan engagement and design process (2017-2019).
- A project overview about Phase 1 of the Eglinton Park Master Plan Implementation.
- A summary of what the engagement team has heard throughout Phase 1 engagement activities (park pop-up + interactive mapping activity), including:
 - Preferred location for the dog off-leash area.
 - Preferred location for the skate spot.

The full presentation is available on the [project webpage](#).

Questions and Discussion

A discussion period followed the presentation. Guiding discussion questions included:

1. How will the introduction of a dog off-leash area change the community's experience at the park? Which location works best?
2. How will the introduction of a skate spot change the community's experience at the park? Which location works best?
3. What features, amenities or improvements reflected in Phase 1 of the Master Plan Implementation are most important to you, and why?

- *Note: Discussion focused on questions 1-2. There was not enough time for the CAG to discuss question 3 in depth.*

Q & A

Questions received by CAG members (Q) and responses from staff and Design Team (R) include the following. These are not verbatim:

Q. What material will be used in OLA? And why is the OLA 1/3rd the size of the skateboard park?

R. Material has not been decided on, but we are open to your suggestions. Clarified that the OLA is 2000m² and the skate spot is 600m².

Q. Will the proposed new trees be planted inside or outside the OLA?

R. Trees will likely be planted both inside and outside of the OLA.

Q. Will the existing dog fountain remain in the new design of the OLA?

R. It will be relocated. The fountain was dedicated to someone so it will not be removed.

Q. I understand that the details of the Eglinton Park Master Plan are confirmed. Is the fence around the baseball diamond confirmed or open for discussion?

R. The fencing around the existing baseball diamond is not a part of Phase 1 of the Master Plan Implementation. We will invite feedback on this piece at a later date.

Q. Has the timing and permitting for baseball been considered alongside removal of soccer as an additional impact?

R. The proposed changes to the park assumes that park users kindly share the park space. Baseball and soccer's spatial allocation in the park was balanced. We are aware of the conflicts

between all the uses in the park space, and the City is aware this is something that will need to be addressed.

Q. Why are locations B and C preferred for the skate spot? Location A looks like a potentially suitable location because you can see it from the street.

R. Some feedback heard included parents wanting to be able to supervise kids (for example, one child plays soccer and one is skateboarding), youth don't want to be tucked in the corner of the park, and wanting the skate spot to be close to washrooms, lighting and other amenities. There wasn't significant opposition for location A, but location C surfaced as a preference in previous engagement sessions.

Design Priorities for Phase 1 of the Eglinton Park Master Plan Implementation

The following provides a summary of the CAG members' discussion about priorities and suggestions for the locations of the dog off-leash area and skate spot, as well as other conversations that emerged during the meeting:

- **General Summary:** The Community Advisory Group had difficulty reaching consensus about the ideal locations for the dog off-leash area and skate spots, due to competing interests around what amenities and activities should be prioritized and accommodated within Eglinton Park.
 - In general, much of the conversation was centred around the soccer fields, baseball diamond and potential for conflict between use of the park for active recreation and other activities.
 - The CAG meeting resulted in a rich and engaging discussion about how best to share space in Eglinton Park, and alludes to the neighbourhood's deep investment in and care for the park, as well as a broader need for more access to parks and recreation facilities in the neighbourhood.
 - Future conversations will likely continue to be centered around competing interests, but should strive to engage CAG members in discussions around how they can ensure everyone's interests and needs are met at Eglinton Park. The role of the CAG is to comment on behalf of themselves and the group they represent, as well as represent the perspective of the community at-large.
- **Location of the OLA**
 - Few comments and questions were directed toward the location of the OLA, despite this being a core objective of the CAG meeting.
 - One CAG member mentioned that if the OLA is placed in Location B, then it will result in the loss of additional soccer fields and further conflict between sports and access to open green space in the park, by reducing the flexibility of use
- **Other comments and suggestions for the OLA**
 - Use engineered mulch instead of gravel or other materials.
 - Include a dog fountain both inside and outside the OLA.
 - One CAG member expressed concerns around the OLA being too small and requested that the placement be in a spot where the OLA could be expanded in the future if overcrowded.
 - One CAG member expressed concerns about homeowners' property values being lowered due to the OLA (noise, waste, etc. associated with the park amenity).

- **Location of the skate spot**
 - Again, few comments were centred around the location of the skate spot, despite this being a core objective of the CAG meeting.
 - One CAG member suggested that Location A seems suitable for a skate spot and not suitable for other uses, whereas Locations B and C can be used for a variety of uses. If trying to maximize the use of all spaces, the skate spot should be located at Location A, making space at Locations B and C for other amenities.
 - One CAG member indicated that if the skate spot were located at Location A, skateboarders may use the sloped path down past the community centre, which could be dangerous for other park users. As such, they suggested Location C for the skate spot.
 - One CAG member stated their concern that if the skate spot is placed in Location C, then this will mean removing additional soccer fields from the park's design.

- **Soccer and park permitting**
 - The majority of the conversations at the CAG meeting addressed the changes to the park that may affect the number of soccer fields and access to them in a way that does not conflict with other uses. The local soccer community was well-represented at this meeting.
 - This suggests that, although the focus of the meeting was on the OLA and skate spot, there are some challenges that need to be addressed within the Eglinton Park CAG, such as building the recognition that the city has finite resources and park space within the community and needs to create a multi-purpose shared space that accommodates several activities, and with that comes a need for compromise between community members.
 - A couple of comments were made around the fact that the soccer and baseball diamond have co-existed for years, so putting a fence around the baseball diamond may restrict access for soccer players to use the diamond when it's not in use for baseball.
 - Two CAG members expanded on this idea to suggest that the fence around the baseball diamond is an eye sore and restricts other users from using that area in the park, especially in the off-season.
 - The Project Team reiterated that the fencing around the existing baseball diamond is not a part of Phase 1 and they will invite feedback at a later date.
 - One CAG member expressed concern that if the OLA is located in Location B and baseball is being played, then the soccer community is losing access five or more soccer fields. They asked that permitting and timing for both sports be considered in tandem.
 - Another CAG member agreed that permitting and user conflict should be considered earlier in the park planning process.

Next Steps

- Members can send additional ideas, comments, or suggestions to Elijah.Bawuah@toronto.ca.
- Staff will compile a written summary of the meeting and distribute to members for review.
 - Members will have one week to provide suggested edits to the draft summary, after which the summary will be finalized.
- Members will be sent an email with access to a poll to vote on their preferred location for both the OLA and skate spot.
- The design teams will consider feedback from the CAG meeting and poll, and other community engagement events to create draft designs for the new amenities.
- The second CAG meeting is planned to take place in late February 2023.
 - Members will receive an email in January to confirm a meeting date and time.

Contact Us

For questions or comments related to this project, please contact:

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Appendix A – Location Options for the Dog Off-Leash Area



Appendix B – Location Options for the Skate Spot



Appendix C – Eglinton Park Site Plan





prepared by PROCESS

January 12, 2022