

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Kennedy Park - Ionview Parkland Study

Youth Workshop Summary Report

July 31, 2023

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Table of Contents

Introduction..... 2

What We Heard 3

 Key Findings.....3

 Site-Specific Feedback4



Image: Workshop mapping activity with dot stickers and post-it notes

Introduction

This report summarizes the insights gathered at a youth workshop held at the Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre on February 9, 2023.

The goal of this workshop was to understand how young people use parks and open spaces in the study area in order to help inform future opportunities to create inclusive park spaces and to connect, improve, and expand the parkland.

Leading up to the workshop, the project team coordinated with youth outreach workers to promote the workshop. Three project team members facilitated the workshop and provided pizza for participants.

Date: Thursday, February 9, 2023, from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre – Enhanced Youth Space

Address: 2467 Eglinton Ave. E.

Project Team: Pablo Muñoz, José Martí, and Toni Papa

Participants: 20 (approximately)

What We Heard

Key Findings

- **Parks are accessed by public transit or cycling**

The majority of participants said that they take public transit to go to school and to access parks and community centres in their neighbourhood. Travel times ranged from 15 to 30 minutes.

Some participants mentioned that bike trails in the study area needed better maintenance. One participant said that they would like to see more trees on bike pathways.

One participant mentioned that he enjoyed biking but that it wasn't a reliable form of transportation because his bike could get stolen.

- **Park usage is community driven**

When we asked young people why they visited a park, they often replied that it was because their friends were there. One workshop participant who had recently moved to Pickering said that he still traveled to the Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre to see his friends.

When asked why they didn't visit some parks within the study area they often said it was because they didn't know people there, or because the space was used by other youth who were not their friends. None of the youth at the workshop mentioned the recently renovated McCowan District Park. Some participants didn't know that it was there.

Despite most participants traveling via public transit for up to 30 minutes to get to parks, youth rarely mentioned going to larger signature parks nearby, like Bluffers Park or the Birchmount Community Centre which has a sizable pool. Generally, youth didn't mention parks too far south of Eglinton Ave. E.

The parks and amenities most visited by youth at the workshop included: Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre, Trudelle Street Park, Knob Hill Park, Jack Goodlad Park, David and Mary Thomson Collegiate Institute (north of the study area), and McGregor Park (north of the study area).

- **Basketball courts are a popular outdoor amenity**

The park amenity that youth identified as using the most was basketball courts. When asked what parks they visited, they generally mentioned parks or schools that currently have basketball courts: Jack Goodlad, Trudelle Street Park, Horton Park, Glen Ravine School, and Walter Perry School. Even youth that don't play basketball said that they went to hang out and watch their friends play. Several youth said that they would like to see more basketball courts in the study area.

- **Park facilities and amenities are old and aging**

A few participants commented that several park amenities were old, in poor condition, or broken. The amenities mentioned included playgrounds, trails, basketball courts, and washrooms.

- **Shade and planting is needed**

A few youth commented that there was no shade in the parks within the study area. One participant recommended gazebos, while other youth wanted to see more trees and gardens.

Site-Specific Feedback

- **Don Montgomery Community Recreation Centre**

The primary reason youth said they came here was to meet their friends and to access programming and services. A couple of youth mentioned that staff were supportive and connected them to programming and services, particularly services related to mental health.

- **Jack Goodlad Park**

Participants said that they like to hang out here and play basketball. They mentioned that the lineup to use the court is usually not too long, with the busiest day being Sundays.

Amenities that youth wished to see in this space included:

- Improved washrooms
- Gazebos and shade structures particularly near basketball courts
- Workout area
- Drinking fountains

- **Trudelle Street Park**

Some youth mentioned that they like to hang out here and play basketball, and that generally there was a lot of space. Some youth liked that there is a bus stop in front of the park. There were a few mentions of the space not feeling safe and some youth not getting along with others who live in this area.

- **Horton Park**

Youth like the basketball court here.

- **Corvette Park**

One participant said that they go to the Scarborough Centre for Alternative Studies next to the park. Another participant mentioned that this park is nice in the summer.

- **Pringdale Ravine**

Some youth mentioned using the trail.

- **Lord Robert Woods**

Youth said that there are no amenities at this park other than a swing. There is an opportunity to include other features and amenities.

- **Knob Hill Park**

Some youth mentioned that they like the soccer field at this park but that the basketball courts were in poor condition. Some participants said they wished the outdoor pool was deeper.

Other comments included:

- The facilities need to be cleaner
- There needs to be a cricket pitch here