

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

New Parks at 10 Ordnance Street & 801 Wellington Street West

Phase 2: Building a Vision Online Conversation Summary Report

June 2023



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Overview

ThoughtExchange is a tool for hosting asynchronous conversations online. It asks participants to share thoughts related to a single open-ended question and then prompts them to rate the thoughts of others, creating a dialogue that leads to a deeper understanding of overall community priorities.

From April 27th to May 19th, 2023 the City of Toronto hosted an interactive ThoughtExchange activity so that community members could help shape the vision for the new parks at 10 Ordinance Street and 801 Wellington Street West.

Community members were provided with the following statement and question to prompt their responses to the online conversation.

“The City is developing two new parks and we want to know what you think will make them GREAT! What kind of character should the parks have to best serve the community? In a separate thought, share any features or amenities you value most in a park that you think would best support that character.”

726

Respondents

726 people responded to the online conversation, providing their comments, thoughts, and preferences to inform the parks’ vision, character, amenities, and features.

In total, there were **695 Thoughts** and **42,206 Ratings**.

The top five thoughts are listed below. Detailed results can be found in **Appendix A and B**.

	Ranking	Number of Votes
1. Clean park without dog urine poo [Too many dogs dirty the park]	★★★★☆ (4.5)	66
2. Make sure dogs on leashes are enforced [Many off leash dogs in the area]	★★★★☆ (4.5)	64
3. Keep dog on leash [With all my respect to dogs owners, there's way too much free dogs and barking all around. Please respect other users of the park]	★★★★☆ (4.5)	63
4. Trees and picnic area [Ban dogs at 10 Ordnance Park]	★★★★☆ (4.5)	55
5. Would love to see the community garden expanded [Ensure the park is kept orderly and dog owners aren't allowed to let their pets run wild/damage the park]	★★★★☆ (4.5)	54

'What We Heard'

Participants were asked to think about the kind of character the new parks should have to best serve the community. Participants were also asked to share any features or amenities they value most in a park that they think would best support the character of the new parks. Participants' ideas were then coded into six high-level themes for the purpose of understanding and reporting on the data. Figure 1 below shows the themes associated with responses and total number of thoughts associated with each theme:

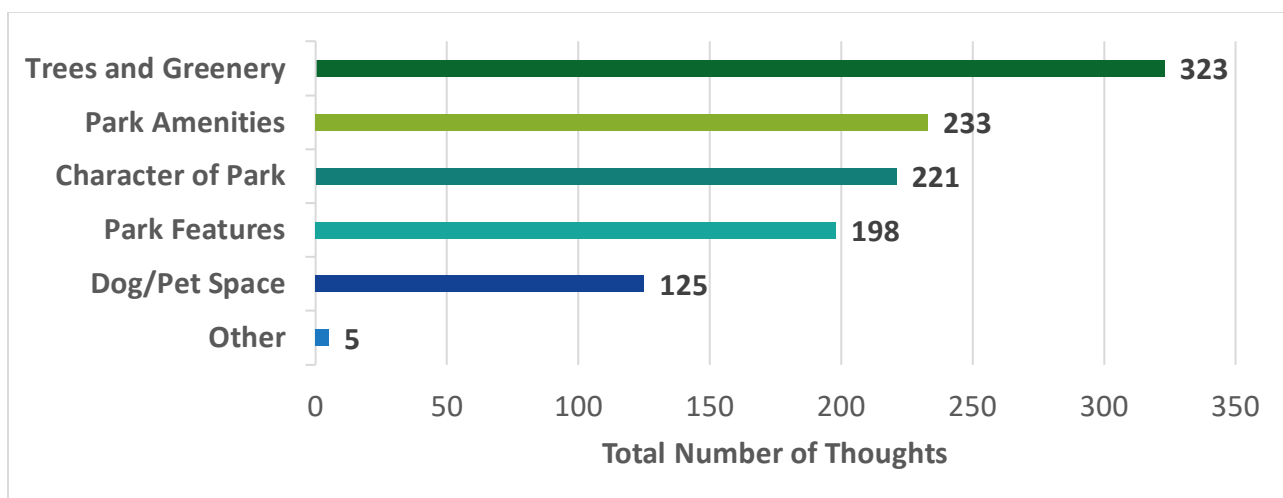


Figure 1: Summary of Themes by Total Thoughts.

Organizing themes according to the average rating of thoughts in each as opposed to the number of thoughts allows for a better overall understanding of community priorities. Figure 2 below shows the high-level themes according to the average rating given to the thoughts within them by participants:

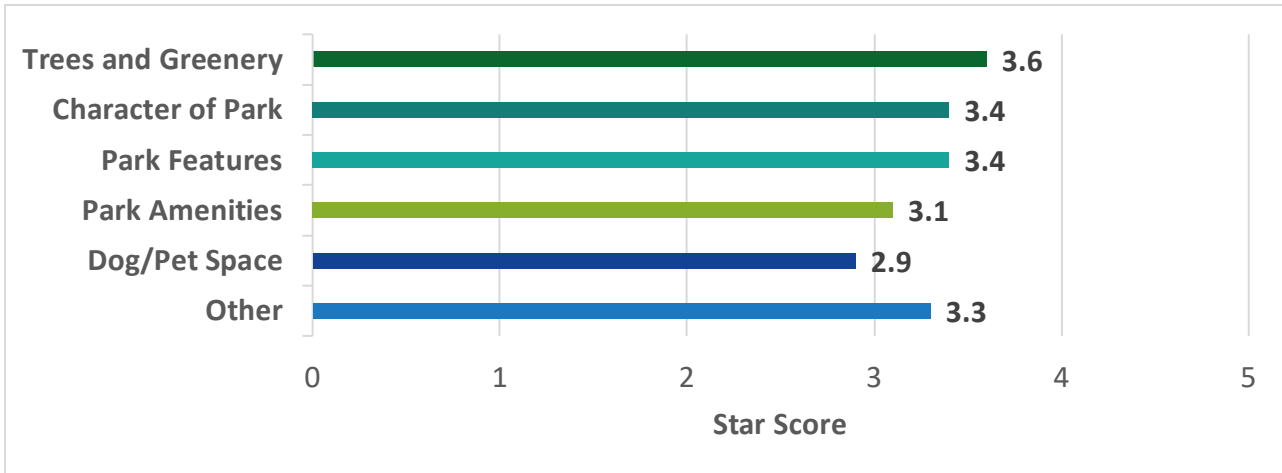


Figure 2: Summary of Themes by Star Score.

The thoughts within each high-level theme were further coded into sub-themes, described below:

Trees and Greenery (323 Total Thoughts)

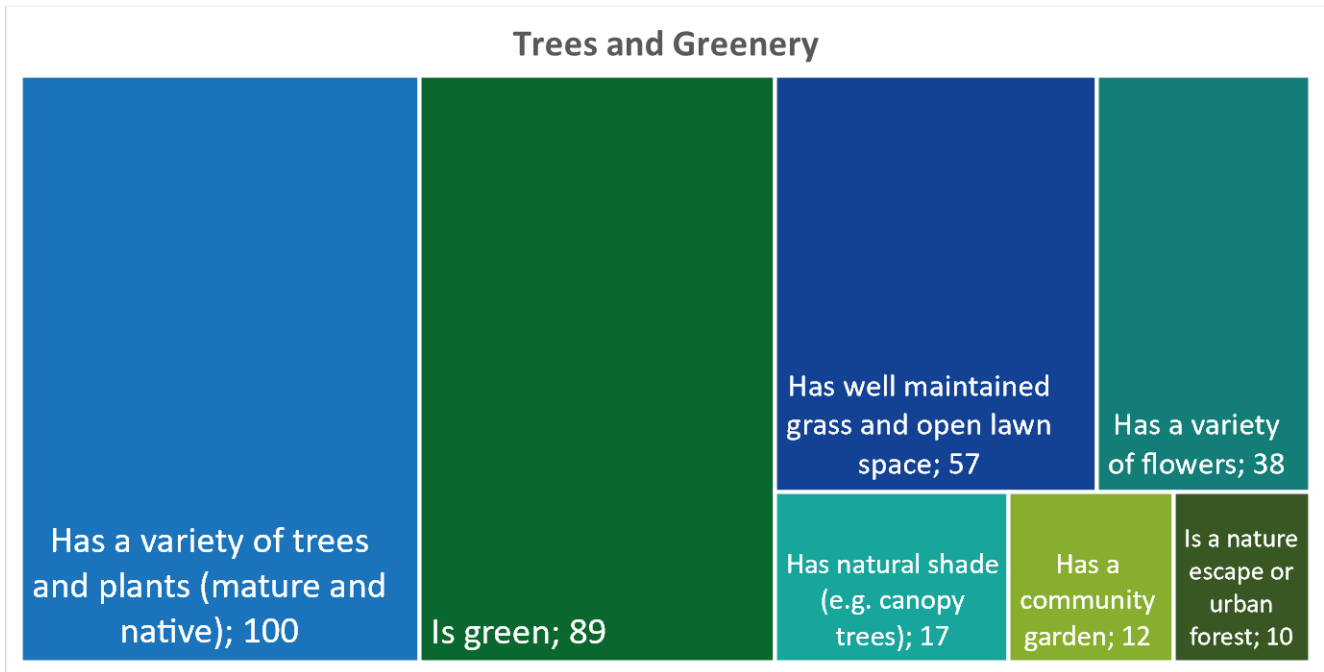


Figure 3: Summary of Top Themes in 'Trees and Greenery' by Number of Total Thoughts.

- The top themes ranked according to star score:
 1. Has natural shade (e.g. canopy trees) [3.8]
 2. Has a variety of flowers [3.7]
 3. Has a community garden [3.7]
 4. Has a variety of trees and plants (mature and native) [3.6]
 5. Is green [3.5]
 6. Has well maintained grass and open lawn space [3.5]
 7. Is a nature escape/urban forest [3.5]
- Summary of What We Heard
 - Strive to create a mini forest with a diverse tree canopy, providing shade and a contrast to the urban environment.
 - Implement thoughtful landscaping techniques, such as rain gardens and native plant species.
 - Expand the community garden and create a wildflower garden with gravel pathways to support bird, butterfly, and insect ecosystems.
 - Designate open green spaces for games and relaxation and create a designated area with trees for picnics and consider prohibiting dogs from these areas to preserve the grass.
 - Address the negative impact of dogs off-leash and uncollected waste on parks downtown by making it a community-focused space.
 - Ensure well-maintained grass and open lawn spaces free from dog waste.
 - Safeguard the public nature of the spaces and maintain their availability to everyone.

Park Amenities (233 Total Thoughts)

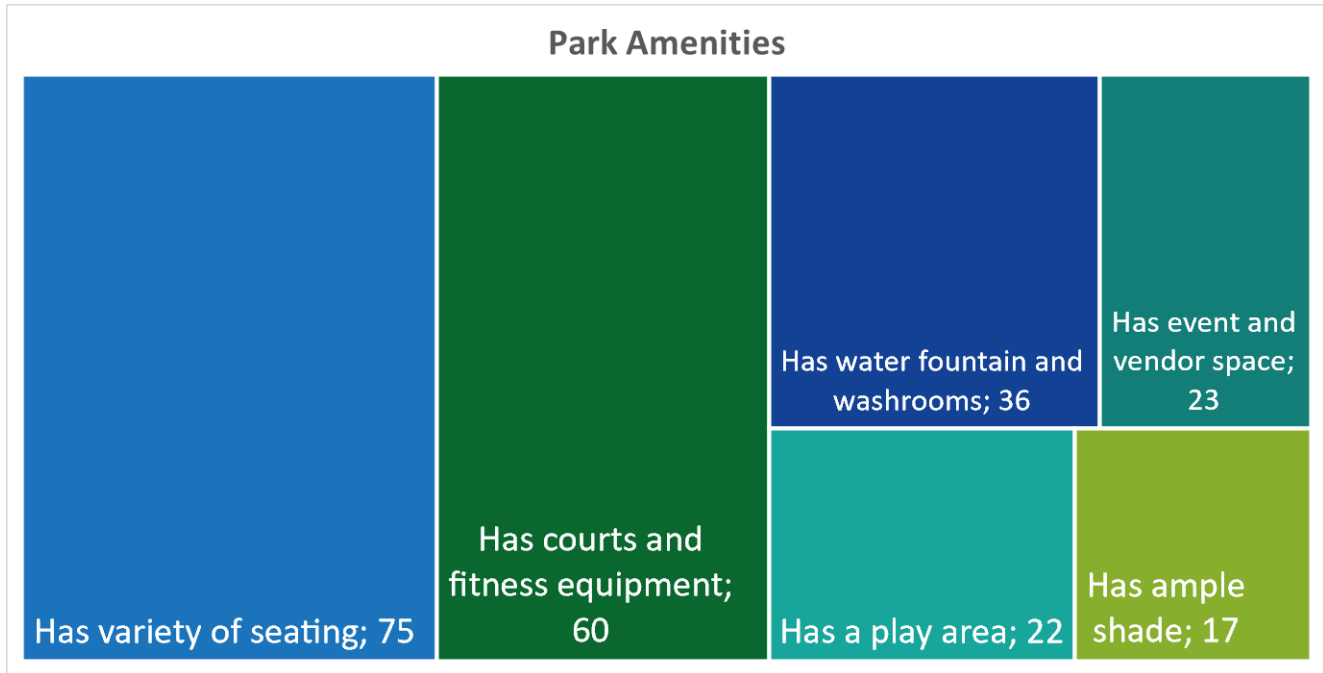


Figure 4: Summary of Top Themes in 'Park Amenities' by Number of Total Thoughts.

- The top themes ranked according to star score:
 1. Has ample shade [3.6]
 2. Has variety of seating [3.5]
 3. Has a play area [3.3]
 4. Has event and vendor space [3.0]
 5. Has water fountain and washrooms [2.7]
 6. Has courts and fitness equipment [2.5]
- Summary of What We Heard:
 - Increase the availability of seating areas, while also incorporating new trees, tables, chairs, or hammocks to provide more spaces for people to relax.
 - Create dedicated areas for child-friendly play, separate from dog area.
 - Organize events and activities such as art installations, food stalls, and sports furniture to keep the park lively.
 - Include water fountains and washrooms within the park for convenience and comfort.
 - Establish fenced and shaded areas with seating, water pads, and children's equipment to cater to the needs of young families during hot summer days.
 - Consider incorporating water features like ponds or water fountains to add character and uniqueness to the park.

- Create a community hub to facilitate social interactions and meet the diverse needs of the community.
- Ensure the park is accessible to all, with features that accommodate people with disabilities.
- Address the need for more trees and shade by planting mature trees, shrubs, flowers, and vegetation that receive proper maintenance to create a comfortable environment.

Character of Park (221 Total Thoughts)

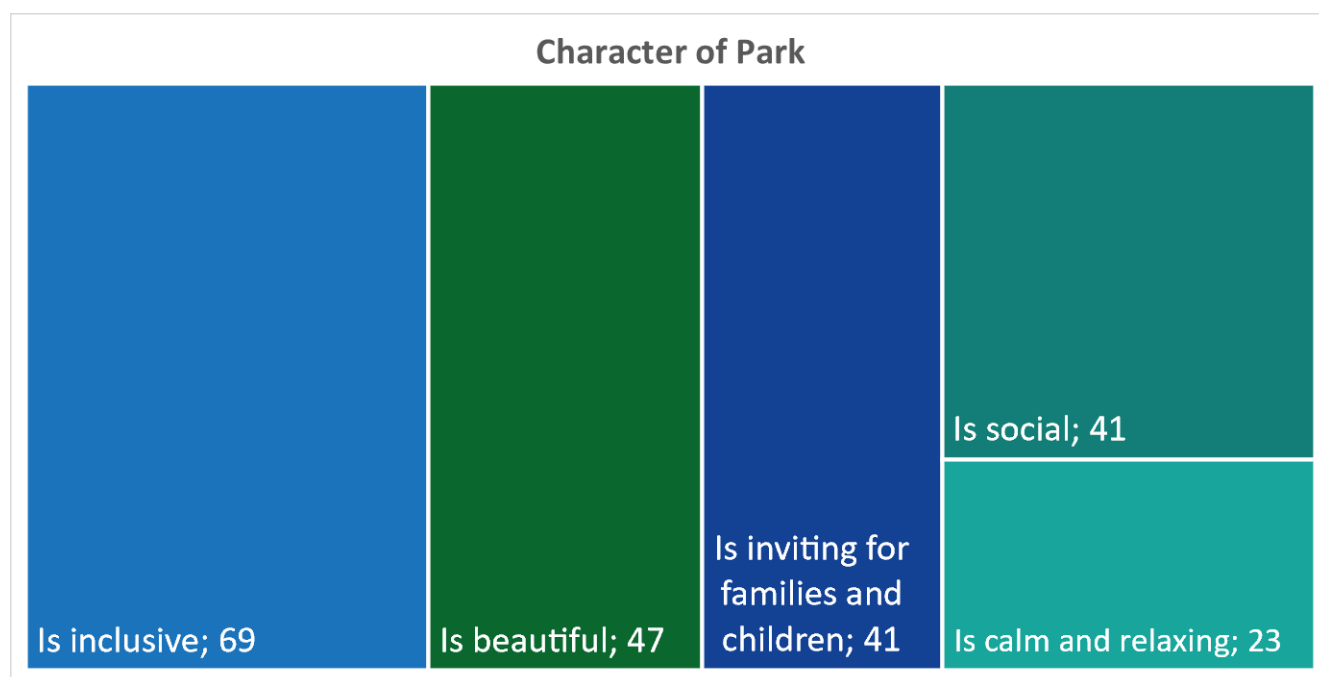


Figure 5: Summary of Top Themes in 'Character of Park' by Number of Total Thoughts.

- The top themes ranked according to star score:
 1. Is calm and relaxing [3.6]
 2. Is social [3.5]
 3. Is beautiful [3.4]
 4. Is inviting for families and children [3.4]
 5. Is inclusive [3.1]
- Summary of What We Heard:
 - Green spaces are important in providing a tranquil escape from urban environments.
 - Cultivate calm and relaxing environments, characterized by a quiet and clean atmosphere.
 - Enhance the beauty of the parks to benefit the local community.

- Foster a connection with nature and a sense of peace.
- Ensure parks are inviting for families and children, offering space for water games and outdoor activities for families and friends.
- Preserve unobstructed views, particularly during sunset and stargazing, by avoiding tree placements that block the skyline and maintaining a wide-open feel.
- Establish gathering spaces for people to meet with friends, recognizing that many individuals lack their own outdoor spaces.
- Design informal spaces where people can lay a blanket and hang out, especially in areas with good lighting and shade.
- Aim for inclusivity and celebrate the diversity of the city by ensuring parks are accessible to all individuals.
- Create multi-generational parks that cater to the needs of people of all ages.
- Utilize and showcase the scenic view of the CN Tower and skyline.
- Prevent the parks from becoming areas where homeless individuals establish encampments.

Park Features (198 Total Thoughts)

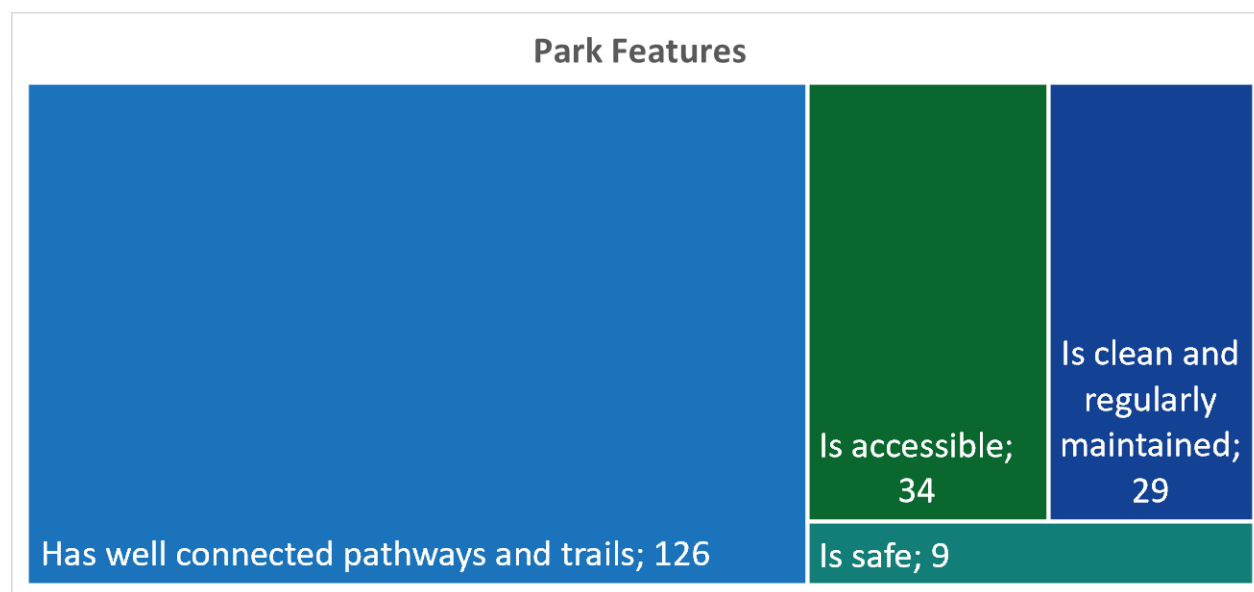


Figure 6: Summary of Top Themes in 'Park Features' by Number of Total Thoughts.

- The top themes ranked according to star score:
 1. Is safe [3.8]
 2. Is clean and regularly maintained [3.7]
 3. Has well connected pathways and trails [3.3]
 4. Is accessible [3.1]

- Summary of What We Heard:
 - Ensure the parks have well-connected pathways and trails for easy navigation.
 - Add a trail that connects the park's path to Wellington Street.
 - Add a pedestrian connection to the 801 Wellington parcel.
 - Extend the bike path to connect with CityPlace.
 - Provide trees and well-maintained grass for picnicking.
 - Maintain a balance of trees, benches, and open spaces, while ensuring proper lighting for safety.
 - Improve the landscaping by incorporating diverse elements beyond just grass to enhance the greenery and aesthetics of the park.
 - Ensure the parks are accessible throughout the year.
 - Provide outdoor gathering spaces for residents who may not have access to outdoor areas, especially in winter.
 - Maintain cleanliness and regular maintenance of the parks.
 - Create quiet parks that offer a safe and relaxing atmosphere.
 - Include seating and picnic areas to facilitate shared meals with friends.
 - Expand the community garden within the park.

Dog/Pet Space (125 Total Thoughts)

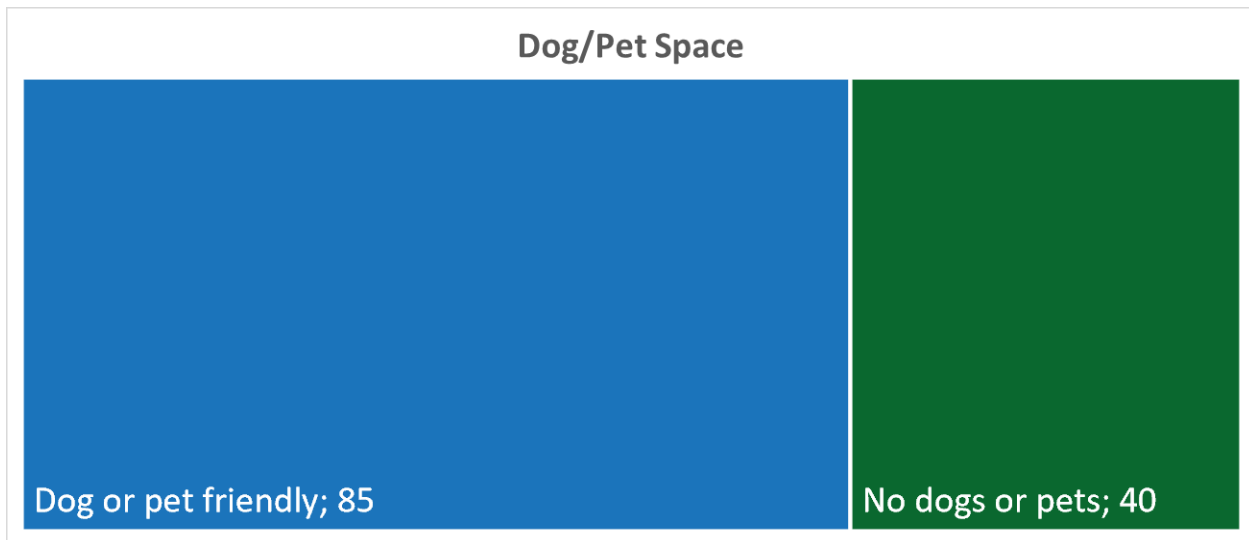


Figure 7: Summary of Top Themes in 'Dog/Pet Space' by Number of Total Thoughts.

- The top themes ranked according to star score:
 - No dogs or pets [4.2]
 - Dog or pet friendly [2.3]
- Summary of What We Heard:
 - Maintain orderliness in the park and prevent damage caused by unleashed dogs.

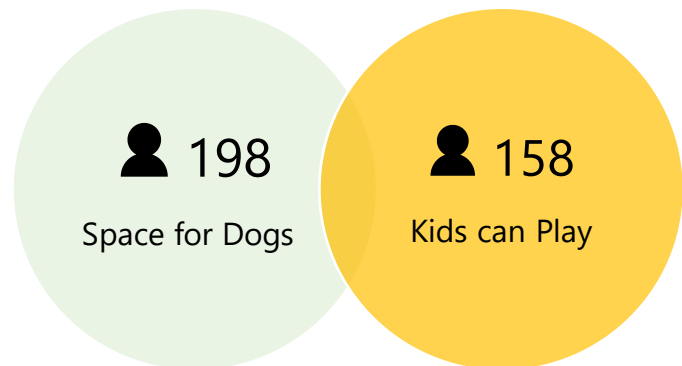
- Promote and encourage the use of the park by prioritizing more green space, benches, and chairs over dog parks.
- Ensure a peaceful environment for park-goers by keeping dogs out and addressing concerns about dog waste.
- Enforce the leash policy for dogs in the park.
- Respect other park users by addressing issues related to excessive dog barking.
- Consider implementing a dog ban in the park based on the expressed concerns.

Differences

ThoughtExchange identifies areas of polarization or division among participants and areas where those same participants are aligned, based on their rating patterns. The following shows the groups of ideas that people have polarized thoughts around and where there were consensus ideas.

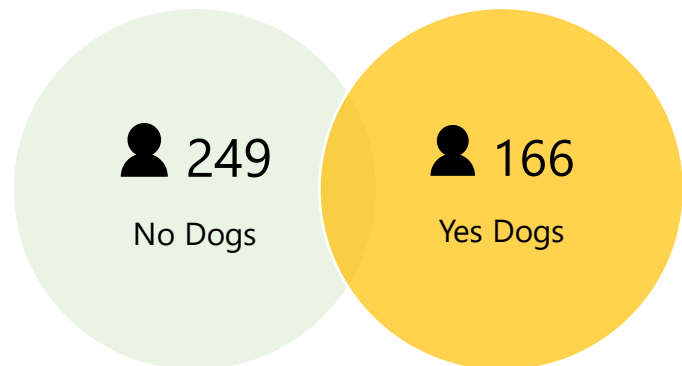
Space for Dogs | Kids Can Play

In this Exchange, people who prioritized spaces for dogs and people who preferred having a space where kids can play instead found consensus on the importance of having green space, amenities such as tables and seating, and the enforcement of leashes for dogs.



No Dogs | Yes Dogs

In this Exchange, people who expressed issues concerning dog waste, urine, and noisy barking, and those who advocated for a dog-friendly environment found consensus on the importance of prioritizing green spaces, trees, and amenities such as picnic tables and water fountains.



Who Did We Hear From?

Participants were asked to provide demographic information. This helps the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation better understand who participated and whether particular groups in the community were missed during the engagement process. A summary of the demographic findings can be found in **Appendix A**.

Next Steps

In summer 2023 the team will present concept design options to the public via an online survey and a pop-up event in the park.



Appendix A: Quantitative Response Summary

A dynamic summary of the exchange, which includes the ability to view all thoughts within each theme, is posted online and can be found [here](#).

 <p>726 Participants</p>	 <p>695 Thoughts</p>	 <p>42,206 Ratings</p>
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Frequency of Park Visits in Toronto

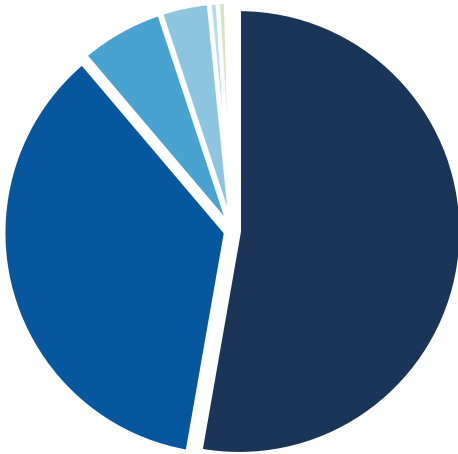










Figure A-1: Respondents' answer to "How often do you visit a park in the City of Toronto (e.g., parkettes, playgrounds, ravines, natural areas, trails, dog off-leash areas, or destination parks like High Park, etc)?"

Legend	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
	Daily	363	53%
	A few times a week	248	36%
	Once per week	42	6%
	A couple times a month	24	3%
	Once per month	4	1%
	A few times a year	4	1%
	Once a year or less	2	0%
	Never	1	0%

Access to Outdoor Space

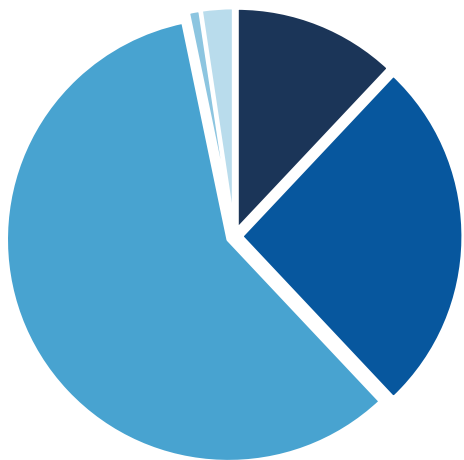


Figure A-2: Respondents' answer to "What best describes you and your household's access to outdoor space?"

Legend	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
■	I/we have access to private outdoor space like a yard	81	12%
■	I/we have access to semi-private or shared outdoor space	175	26%
■	I/we only have access to public spaces like parks (I do not have access to private or semi-private outdoor space)	396	59%
■	Prefer not to answer	6	1%
■	Other	16	2%

How Respondents Found the Survey

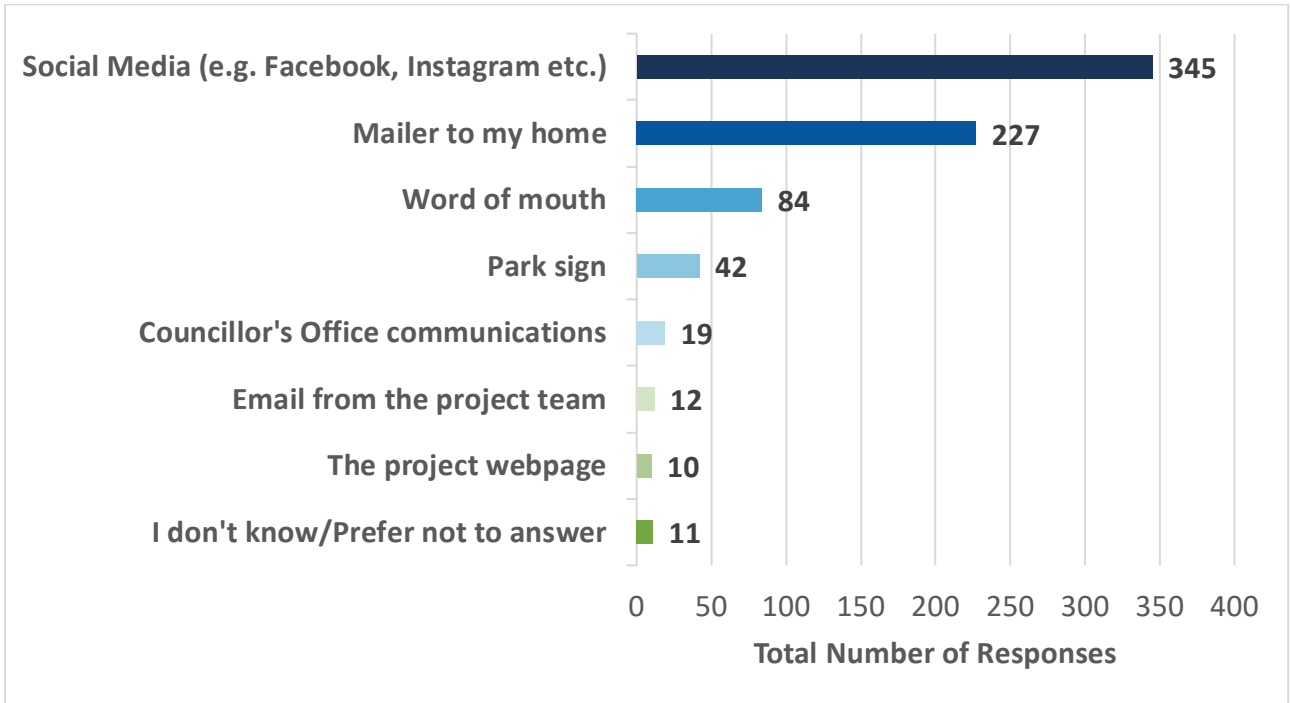


Figure A-3: Respondents' answer to "How did you find out about this survey?"

Survey Participants

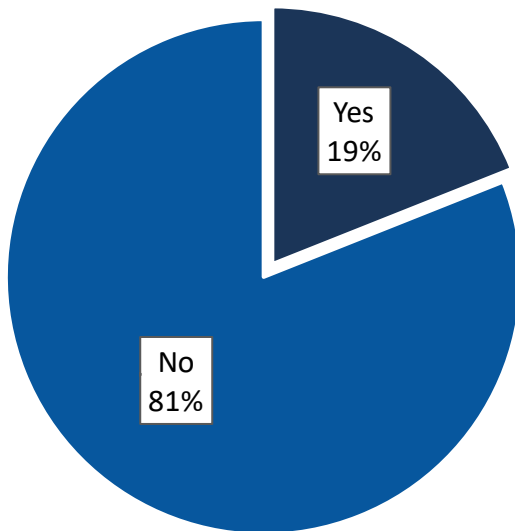


Figure A-4: Respondents' answer to "Excluding yourself, are there any other people who participated in this survey?"

Demographics

Age of Participants

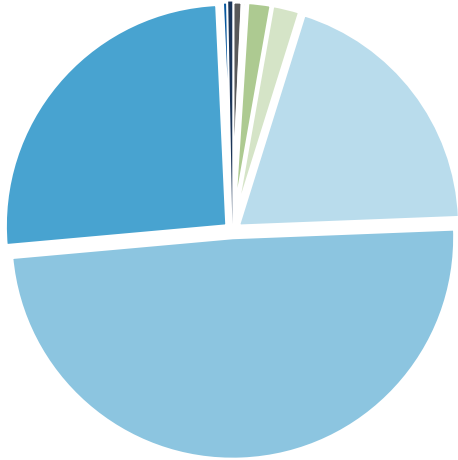


Figure A-5: Respondents' answer to "How old are you?"

Legend	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
■	5 to 12 years old	2	0%
■	13 to 18 years old	3	0%
■	19 to 29 years old	176	26%
■	30 to 39 years old	337	49%
■	40 to 55 years old	134	20%
■	56 to 64 years old	14	2%
■	65 to 74 years old	12	2%
■	75 years old or above	2	0%
■	Prefer not to answer	5	1%

Participation Languages

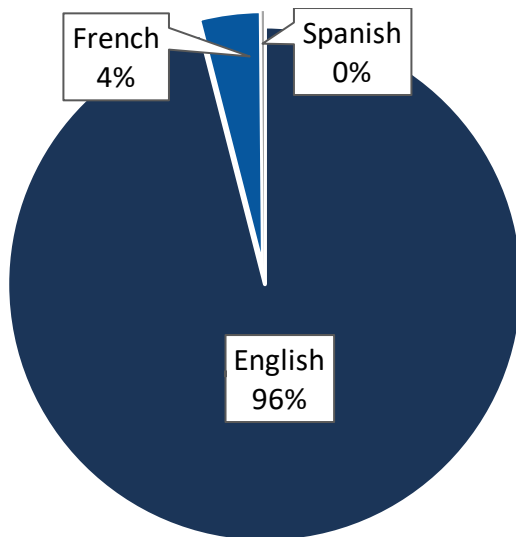


Figure A-6: Respondents' indicated participation language.

Disability Identification in Household

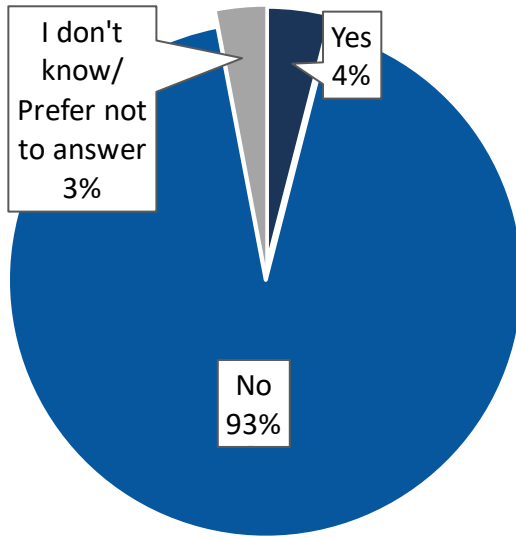


Figure A-7: Respondents' answer to "Excluding yourself, does anyone in your household identify as a person with a disability?"

Participant Demographics

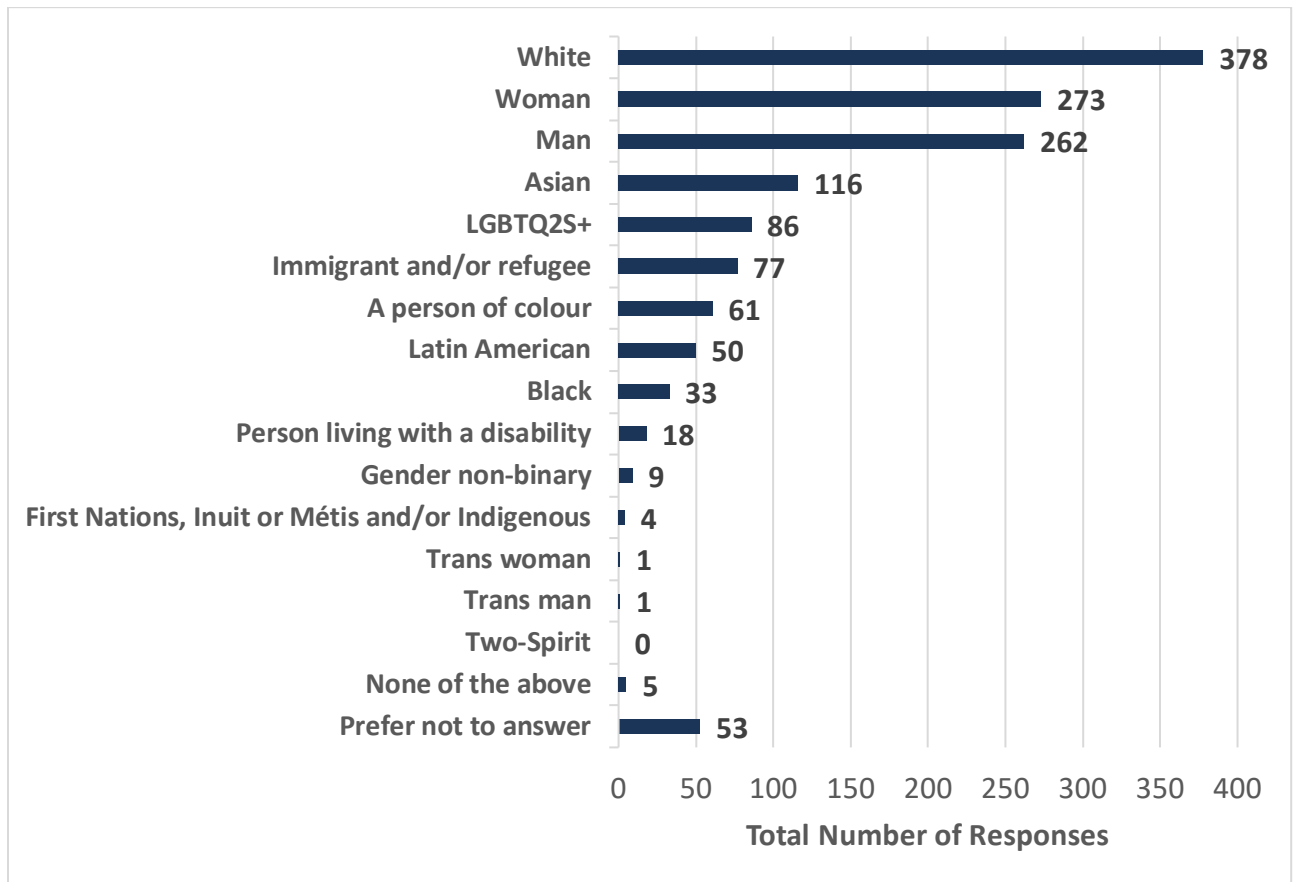


Figure A-8: Respondents' answer to "Do you identify as any of the following?"

Appendix B: Word Cloud

The following word cloud is a visual representation of the frequency of words in Thought Exchange responses and offers insight into recurring themes, prevalent opinions, and key topics expressed by respondents.



Figure B-1: Word cloud of Thought Exchange responses.