

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

# **New Parks at 10 Ordnance Street & 801 Wellington Street West**

## **Phase 2: Building a Vision 'What We Heard' Summary Report**

**July 2023**



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## Introduction

The City of Toronto has engaged the community to develop a new park vision and design for two new parks in Spadina-Fort York located at 10 Ordnance Street & 801 Wellington Street West.

The city negotiated these new parks as part of the development agreement for the condominium project at Garrison Point. They were made possible by the construction of the Garrison Crossing pedestrian and cycling bridges. One new 1.2 ha (3 acres) park is located at 10 Ordnance St., and the other 1 ha (2.3 acres) park is located at 801 Wellington St. W., near Strachan Avenue. The design for each new park, including the amenities and features, will be determined in collaboration with the local community through the community engagement process.

## Project and Engagement Process

The project timeline is outlined below.

- March 2023: Design team hired.
- Spring to Early Fall 2023: Community engagement and design development
  - Spring 2023: Community Engagement Phase 1, Pre-Engagement
  - Spring 2023: Community Engagement Phase 2, Building a Vision
  - Summer 2023: Community Engagement Phase 3A: Exploring Design Options
  - Early Fall 2023: Community Engagement Phase 3B: Setting a Direction
- Fall 2023: Detailed design.
- Winter 2023 to Spring 2024: Hire a construction team.
- Summer 2024: Construction starts.
- Fall 2025: Construction complete, parks open.

This engagement process has been classified as a Collaborate project based on the [International Association of Public Participation](#) Public Participation Spectrum. This means the process aims to partner with the public, stakeholders and rightsholders in each aspect of the design process, including the development of a vision, design options and the identification of a preferred design.

### Community Engagement Phase 2: Building a Vision

The purpose of Phase 2: Building a Vision is to work with residents and stakeholders to help define an overall vision for the two new parks, including a series of design principles and big moves which will guide the development of design options in Phase 3A: Exploring Options.

## How We Reached People

### Community Mail Outs (Postcards)

16,520 postcards advertising the project webpage, online conversation, community pop-ups, and how to join the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) were delivered to all addresses in the neighbourhood within 750 meters of the park sites. The postcard included specific dates and locations of engagement activities.

**Help us shape the design of two new parks at 10 Ordnance St and 801 Wellington St W**

Get involved by sharing your vision!

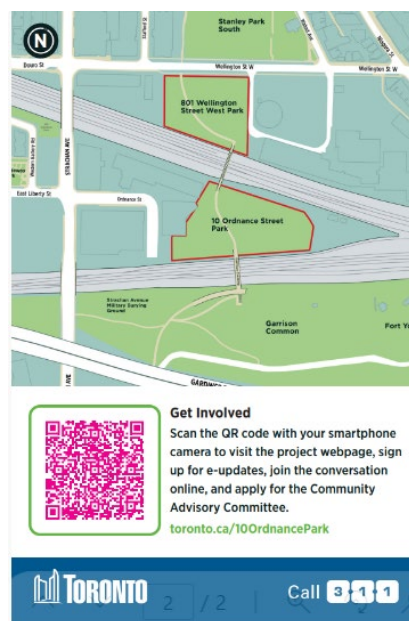
The City is developing new parks at 10 Ordnance St. and 801 Wellington St. W. Help shape the design of the parks by joining the conversation online, participating in a pop-up, or applying to join the Community Advisory Committee.

**Join the conversation online**  
 Opens: Thursday, April 27, 2023  
 Closes: Friday, May 19, 2023

**Participate in a community pop-up**  
 Sunday, May 14 from 1 - 3 p.m.  
 Wednesday, May 17 from 4 - 6 p.m.

**Apply to join the Community Advisory Committee!**  
 We are looking for 10-15 community members of all ages and abilities to make the new parks responsive to community needs. No professional experience necessary. A total of 4 meetings are planned throughout the spring and summer of 2023.

**Apply for the Community Advisory Committee at:**  
[toronto.ca/10OrdnancePark](https://toronto.ca/10OrdnancePark)



### Project Webpage

A [project webpage](#) 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 a sign-up button for e-updates.

### Digital Flyer

A digital flyer was circulated to community groups and the local Councillor's office for additional distribution.

### Social Media Advertisement

The City of Toronto used its Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts to promote the Thought Exchange activity and opportunity to apply to be part of the CAC through paid advertisements and organic posts from May 4 to May 19, 2023. These posts reached over 24,000 people and received over 45,000 impressions (the number of times an ad was shown on someone's screen), and led to over 822 action, including engaging with the post by clicking on it and/or clicking on an associated link.

## How We Engaged

The engagement activities during this phase of the process included two public park pop-up events, an online conversation and two community advisory committee meetings. These engagement activities reflect efforts to raise awareness of the project and gather input from community members and stakeholders. Summaries of each of the engagement activities can be found in the appendices.

### Public Pop-Up Events

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, from 1:00pm to 3:00pm and May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm members of the project team were present at 801 Wellington Street to generate awareness about the project and seek feedback through pop-up events. Community members were presented with four project boards and asked to provide input on the future look and feel of the park spaces. Over the two events, approximately 103 community members provided input to the project team.

### Online Conversation (Thought Exchange)

From April 27<sup>th</sup> to May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023, an interactive online conversation (Thought Exchange) activity was available for community members to help shape the vision for the new parks at 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West. Community members participated by sharing their ideas and rating the ideas of others. 726 people responded to the online conversation, providing their comments, thoughts, and preferences to inform the park's vision, character, amenities, and features.

### Community Advisory Committee

A 24-member community advisory committee (CAC) was formed through a civic lottery process to provide input to the project team. The first CAC meeting was held virtually on Monday May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The second CAC meeting was held in person on June 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023. The committee is comprised of community members as well as representatives from stakeholder groups.

Throughout the project, the design team will meet with the Community Advisory Committee to workshop and gather feedback on design progress before bringing information forward to the public at public meetings for feedback.

### About the Civic Lottery Process

A Civic Lottery is a process for establishing representative "mini-publics" that have a similar demographic profile to the overall community they are representing. For this project, the lottery process was used to establish the project's Community Advisory Committee. All households within 500 metres of the parks were invited to volunteer for the committee, and those who volunteered were asked demographic questions. Members were then selected at random from the volunteers, controlling for

demographic factors including age, gender, disability, newcomer, ethnicity, and others so that the final group reflects the community.

## Who We Heard From

Input on the design and features of the new park spaces was solicited from community members through two in person pop-up engagement events, an online conversation through ThoughtExchange and through the establishment of a 24-member community advisory committee (CAC), selected through a civic lottery. An overview of participation by engagement activity is outlined below.

Activity	Number of Meetings/Events	Number of Participants
Community Advisory Committee Members	2	24 <i>*(101 applications received)</i>
Pop-ups	2	103
Online Conversation (Thought Exchange)	1	726
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>853</b>

## What We Heard: A Vision and Big Moves for 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West

The project team created a draft vision for 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West that builds on the input, shared experiences, and learnings gathered from the community across all engagement activities. This draft framework of the vision and design principles is based on community input. As the process continues, the project team will incorporate additional input as well as professional design expertise, site context and background investigation.

Throughout the process, the language “design principles” and “big moves” are used throughout. Design principles are recommendations which guide the project and design process. Big moves are priority actions used to guide the implementation of the design principles and vision.

The following draft vision statement and design principles were developed for review, and in the next engagement phase, the community will be asked to share feedback on the drafts.

The vision statement and design principles were created based on community input from the park pop-ups, online conversations, and community advisory committee meetings. Some of the key themes which emerged from this stage of engagement include:

- A multifunctional, shared, and balanced space.
- Natural, green, and wild.
- Pathways and connections.
- An oasis within the city which highlights the unique city views.
- A place for the community.

### Draft Vision Statement

The new parks at 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West will be a distinct set of open spaces that will provide balance between green, restful spaces and a dynamic, playful public realm. The parks will be linked through continuity of materials, planting, and design narrative and will reflect the community participation and collaboration process.

### Community Input Towards Design Principles and Big Moves

The park design should;

- Develop a distinct identity for the two parks.
- Maintain, protect, and enhance key views.
- Embrace and build upon the site’s unique topographic features.

- Reflect the site's natural and cultural heritage.
- Develop a hierarchy of pathways and spaces.
- Improve and strengthen connections to the community.
- Create safe and inclusive parks for all ages and all abilities.
- Maximize and balance passive and flexible programming, avoiding overprogramming.
- Enhance and expand site ecology, include naturalized plantings, create habitat, and make space for wildlife.
- Increase the overall tree canopy.
- Create parks that can be maintained and managed to support a wide range of activities.



## 'What We Heard' Thematic Summary

The following section summarizes the input received during Phase Two: Building a Vision, sorted thematically. Each of the themes is comprised of input from each engagement activity. This includes both park pop-ups, the online conversation and community advisory committee meetings. Each theme contains the most common inputs that were received. The summary content has and will continue to inform the design principles and big moves throughout each stage of the process. Detailed summary reports for each engagement activity can be found in the appendices.

### Natural and Green

Community members expressed a strong desire to maintain the park spaces as natural and green. The new spaces should have an abundance of trees, wildflowers, and plants. Specific suggestions include planting a lilac grove to encourage a sensory experience for park goers, as well as Red Osier Dogwood and fruit trees. People would also like to see vertical gardens, or a trellis.

The introduction of trees was a consistent noted priority. People would like to see as many trees planted as possible, for the purposes of creating shade, beauty and encouraging climate resiliency. It was primarily noted that trees could be added around the boundaries and pathways of the park. Specific mention was made of using trees as a natural sound barrier between the park spaces and nearby condominiums, specifically the ones close to the 50 Ordnance Street development.

Specific mention was made of building a meadow space in the new parks. The meadow could be home to many indigenous and pollinator species to welcome birds and bees. A meadow would allow for a more naturalized look and feel, with ecological benefits. It was suggested that Ordnance may be the most appropriate location for a more naturalized or meadow space.

Many community members spoke about the importance of protecting and enhancing the existing natural habitat of many birds and animals. The northern shrike, foxes, and coyotes, amongst many others, use the current space as their homes, and the community would like to ensure they are protected. Further, it was mentioned that the introduction of a bird habitat is desired.

Some participants suggested that the current community garden be maintained and enhanced. A few community members noted that a community garden provides enjoyment and purpose for many. There was concern that if the existing garden on private land were to be moved into the new park space, it would take up too much space. For a community garden to be considered, the community would like further consultation.

Community members also raised the idea of education and awareness being an important part of the park spaces. This could include explanations of indigenous plants, as well as placemaking elements. It was also noted that wildlife education should be installed for safety and awareness. This was specifically noted for coyotes within the area as many coyotes use the rail corridors to travel throughout the city. Signage could affirm the existence of urban wildlife and the City's approach to coyotes and other wildlife. The desire for education regarding wildlife, plants and the history of the site was expressed. Community members spoke about signage that would help keep the plants, trees and flowers protected, such as "do not walk here" signs for the meadow space. It was noted that a more naturalized space provides a great teaching opportunity for children as well as visitors to the area.

### Gathering Spaces

Community members expressed the desire to see these two spaces provide comfortable, safe, and accessible gathering spaces. The overall sentiment expressed by community members is to have a passive area which enables people to make the space their own. Specific examples include people wanting to bring their friends and family and have a picnic, toss a frisbee and view the skyline.

To accommodate these types of passive activities, many community members spoke about wanting unique and varied types of seating. These include picnic tables, benches, muskoka chairs and seating for families. It was noted that shaded seating is very important, as well as plentiful accessible seating and tables.

Individuals also suggested using trees to provide shade throughout the spaces. A few individuals commented that they would like a gazebo structure or umbrellas to be available.

One of the most common current uses of the park is watching the skyline and enjoying the views. It is very important to the community to not only maintain the views but enhance the opportunities to sit and observe. Specific mention was made of installing amphitheatre style seating in Ordnance.

To ensure the space is usable at all times of the day, community members would like to see additional lighting provided, especially along the multi-use trail. It was noted that lighting contributes to the safety and accessibility of the space and is very important.

### Balanced

Many community members noted the unique opportunity of two separate, but connected spaces, and the desire to see them have distinct character while still being connected and balanced. Preference was expressed for Ordnance to be a quieter, more naturalized space and Wellington to be animated for active play such as pick-up soccer,

frisbee and games. This duality also encompasses the topic of dogs and how to best maintain a space that is open, clean, and safe for everyone, including dog owners.

Community members are divided in their opinions about dogs, with some in favour of the area being dog friendly, with additional garbage, or green bins for dog waste and water fountains, and some community members wanting to see the space designed to discourage dog gatherings and minimize dog noise. Primarily, as with many shared spaces, the concern is over dog owners who may allow their dogs to run off-leash when they should be on-leash. Community members would like to see an exploration of how to design the space to encourage responsible dog ownership.

### **Amenities**

Building a multi-functional space in the community's eyes would include paths for cyclists and pedestrian commuters, green space to play, meadows and flowers to enjoy and a calm and relaxing atmosphere. Included in the community's desire for a multi-functional space, is the introduction of some amenities which encourage outdoor physical activity. A few community members would like to see outdoor fitness equipment. Some community members would like to see a children's play area, and it was noted that a playground made of more natural materials would be suitable, or an adventure style playground with logs and wood chips. Specific mention was made to include a playground that would be suitable for children of different ages.

Some specific active play amenities suggested included a pickle ball or tennis court however, some people expressed that there are enough sports facilities nearby and there is no need for concrete sports pads within the design of the new parks.

Community members mentioned that an events space to host a concert or farmers market could be interesting, but that noise could be an issue due to the proximity of condominiums. Communal BBQs and fire pits were also suggested to build a space which invites connection.

### **Unique Features**

One of the most repeated items of input was regarding the views of the city from the park spaces. Community members noted that the views are one of the most unique aspects of this area and want to ensure that the views are maintained and enhanced through design. When discussing the park spaces, it was reiterated many times that the space should feel unique from other nearby park spaces. Community members see this space as a natural oasis within a busy downtown and want to enhance the natural beauty of the space.

Many community members see potential for educational opportunities throughout the space. This includes education about wildlife, Indigenous place keeping and the railways. There is an opportunity to create a learning place where children can sit and learn about

the trains as they pass. There were many specific suggestions regarding unique additions to the space, including bird baths, rain gardens, a giant sundial, water features and spaces for vendors. Community members noted that the natural topography of the spaces provides an opportunity for unique seating, or a multi-level playground.

## Connectivity

As the parks currently include a heavily used multi-use trail, community members expressed their desire to enhance connections, both within the park, to the surrounding neighbourhoods and the city. It was noted that informal pathways could be formalized to increase connection within the two spaces. To encourage proper and safe use of the space, people would like to see wayfinding signage. The signage could encourage quieter uses on the secondary pathways, and faster travel on the primary pathways, like the multi-use trail.

Community members spoke about increased access to the park, in a variety of locations. An example of this would be adding an official entrance at Wellington Street West, but also new access points at Ordnance Street and Strachan Avenue. Another specific suggestion was to create new connections from Garrison Crossing Bridge to a future east-west multi-use path at Fort York and along the rail corridor within the 2 Tecumseth development.

Community members would also like to see the improved connections and pathways provide an opportunity for murals or artwork throughout the space. This could include integrated art, wayfinding signage and formalized entrance ways.

## Big Moves

Throughout the engagement process, specific big moves have been identified by community members. Big moves can be understood as priority actions the project team may implement into the new park spaces to realize the vision of the parks. The list below is a high-level summary of big moves:

- Create a varied landscape of interest, using slopes, steps and shifting planes to enhance and maintain unique views.
- Incorporate curated meadows, a strong tree canopy and plantings that display seasonal colours.
- Incorporate habitat structures for wildlife.
- Incorporate engaging places for people to gather, including porch swings, picnic tables and accessible seating.
- Develop a hierarchy of movement communicated through different pavement approaches.

- Incorporate children's play.
- Incorporate sports and fitness, including outdoor fitness equipment.
- Incorporate interpretive design elements that use and enhance the unique features of the park, such as a Sundial, an amphitheater or a playground that incorporates topography.
- Incorporate feature lighting that enhances the space, improves safety, and generates interest.
- Incorporate dog-friendly spaces and amenities further away from residential areas.
- Incorporate public amenities to support maintenance such as waste bins and water stations.

## Next Steps

The feedback received from this phase of community engagement will confirm priorities for the design options. The project team will refine the draft vision statement and design principles, building upon community input in the next phase. To be notified about upcoming engagements for the new park, visit the [project webpage](#) to sign up for e-updates.

## Appendices

Click on the links below to view the Phase Two engagement reports on the project webpage.

[Pop-Up Summary](#)

[Online Conversation \(Thought Exchange\) Summary](#)

[Community Advisory Meeting Summaries 1](#)

[Community Advisory Meeting Summaries 2](#)

