

New Parks at 10 Ordnance Street & 801 Wellington Street West

Phase 3b: Setting the Direction Indigenous Advisory Circle (IAC) Meeting #1 Summary

February 2024



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Overview

The Indigenous Advisory Circle Meeting #1 took place on February 13, 2024, from 6:00-8:00pm, hosted virtually on Zoom. The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Introduce the Indigenous Advisory Circle Members and Project Team.
- Introduce the project.
- Present draft vision and concept design for input.
- Discuss opportunities for meaningful Indigenous Placekeeping in the parks.

Project Presentation and ‘What We Heard’

The meeting began with a land acknowledgment, a review of the agenda, and a brief overview of the purpose of the meeting. The project team and participants were each invited to introduce themselves.

The project team then presented an overview of the project timeline, engagement, and design process as well as an overview of key events that helped shape today’s landscape.

The meeting agenda can be found in **Appendix A** and a list of participants can be found in **Appendix B**. The presentation slides can be found on the [project webpage](#).

Discussion and Feedback

Comments and suggestions made during the meeting are summarized below:

Q: Are you familiar with Placekeeping or spaces for Ceremony in the area?

Placekeeping

- Incorporate plants and trees and indicate their Anishinaabe names within the park.
- Signage and naming of plant relatives can be coupled with an actual incorporation of native species.
- Amenities such as medicine gardens would allow for a gathering space for Indigenous groups.

- Display educational information about Indigenous practices to allow for a more inclusive and safe space for Indigenous communities.
- Incorporate Indigenous practices and concepts creatively to highlight Placekeeping through design or activations.

Ceremonial Areas

- Make the location of ceremonial areas clearer to reduce the risk that the space is used for other purposes with little maintenance.
- Consider the accessibility, safety, misuse, and maintenance of fire pits in current parks. Specific concerns were raised about harassment by members of the public towards Indigenous groups engaging in fire ceremonies.

Q: Landscaping and Placekeeping: How can we take action?

Landscape Design Using Vegetation

- Include cattails, scouring rush, sweet flag, horsetail, and other marsh plants in Wellington Park to promote the overall function and health of the urban ecosystem.
- Consider access to plants used as medicine by Indigenous groups – such as the Black Oak Savannah.
- Consider that common plants that already exist on the site are also food and medicine (such as dandelions). There were suggestions to keep designated areas for plants to help pollinators and increase biodiversity.
- Consider water drainage and the natural flow of water.
- Ensure there is maintenance and care of the space.
- Consider sourcing plants from Indigenous growers (e.g. *Rainscape Toronto*).

Q: What would help make you feel welcome in the new parks? How do you envision Indigenous cultures and ways of knowing being reflected in the park?

Inclusivity of Many and Different Indigenous Nations

- Implement park elements that can be used to connect diverse groups together.

Public Art

- Incorporate Indigenous storytelling through artistic mediums to add colour and vibrancy to the park, especially during winter months.

Educational and Informative Signage

- Place signage in the park to provide a history of the space, as well as information about Indigenous practices that can take place at the park. Signage also presents an opportunity to honour the Anishinaabe language and educate park visitors.

Placemaking and Ceremonial Spaces

- Consider using natural elements like wood or stone instead of hard straight elements made of concrete.
- Incorporate a circle where Indigenous peoples could bring a fire table.

Indigenous Place Naming

- Consider an Anishinaabemowin name for the park or other landscape features. (Please refer to the [City of Toronto's policy around naming](#)).

Next Steps

Upon the meeting's conclusion, the project team thanked all members for their participation and insightful comments. It was noted that the participants are welcome to submit additional feedback through email. The next meeting will be held in March to review the updated concept plans and integrated Placekeeping elements.

Appendix A – Agenda

New Parks at 10 Ordnance Street and 801 Wellington Street West Indigenous Advisory Circle

Date: February 13th, 2024

Time: 6:00pm-8:00pm

Location: Zoom

Time	Agenda Item
6:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Acknowledgement • Welcome • Online Meeting Instructions
6:10pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting Purpose • Introductions
6:30pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the Project and Site
6:50pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park Concept Design Progress to Date
7:45pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion About Opportunities for Placekeeping in the Parks
8:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjourn

Appendix B – Attendance

Participants: 13 participants joined the meeting.

Project Team:

- Tanya Brown, DTAH
- Andrew Liang, DTAH
- William Skura, City of Toronto
- Helen Luu, City of Toronto
- James Miller, Trophic Design
- Vincent Browne, LURA Consulting