

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Pop-Up Summary Report

New Park at Spadina Pier

Phase 1: Building a Vision

June 2024



SPADINA PIER

Site History

Built in the 1960s by a federal government development corporation, Spadina Pier was originally constructed as a commercial parking operation (located below grade in a 2-level garage structure), and as a breakwall for the Marine Quay West marina. The parking and marina uses have both historically been operated by Harbourfront Centre under long-term lease agreements. Ownership of the pier property was transferred from the federal government to the City of Toronto in the early 1990s, while the adjacent water lots were transferred to City ownership in 2016. In July 2022, Toronto City Council directed that City staff develop a plan to transform the under-utilized public property into a new park and public realm space. The below-grade parking use was permanently closed in summer 2023.

Site Size

Spadina Pier is approximately 6,800 square metres (1.6 acres) in size, roughly the same size as the main event space at Nathan Phillips Square.



Spadina Pier shown at left. Nathan Phillips Square shown at right.

Toronto Call 311 **Toronto**

HeH

Tell us what you would like to see at the transformed Spadina Pier!

Imagine you are sending a postcard from the future telling people the present about all the fun and exciting things there are to see and do at the new Spadina Pier waterfront park.

Write your ideas on a postcard and clip them to the wire frame.

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

More Grass/Trees
And Benches Please

Future of the Pier
Crash/...
June to end of October
- Water in Lagoon
- Pickers market
- Up and down the pier
- More water
- More people

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

Maintain some green space.
That can incorporate and play area - shade space for yoga, "hiking", etc.
Keep in green + low shade grade

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

Brooklyn Station to see the duck

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

an open-air public space with gardens! green space, space for farmers market, spring/summer/fall, a community planting garden space, and space for festivals and vigils to enjoy the waterfront! Leanne C.

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

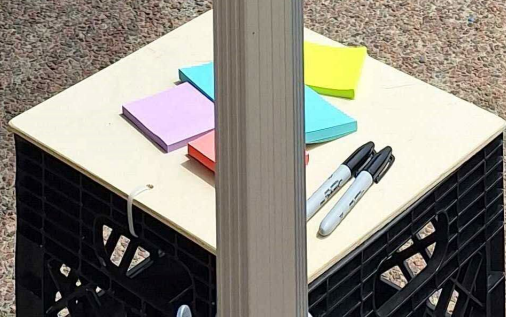
OUT DOOR Dance Classes
Yoga
Pet Free Zone

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

flower market
boys store
playground for kids
they're beautiful every day

Can't believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it's changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...

Giving, kids, playgrounds, a water slide, and an underground cafe/restaurant & public parking



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Introduction

A new 6,500 m² (about the size of two soccer fields) park is coming to Spadina Pier, located at 539 Queens Quay West in the Bathurst Quay neighbourhood. Improvements will occur in two stages, beginning with the creation of an interim “base park,” followed by the development of a permanent waterfront park.

Visit the [project webpage](#) for more information.

Pop-Up Event Overview

The pop-up event took place on Sunday, May 26, 2024, from 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. Located at the northeast corner of Spadina Pier, the pop-up was scheduled to coincide with tours of the nearby Canada Malting Silos that were running as part of Doors Open Toronto, an annual weekend event showcasing notable buildings across the city. Throughout the afternoon, the project team chatted with community members who were either coming from the Doors Open Toronto tour or who were passersby enjoying a Sunday afternoon stroll along the waterfront. The project team facilitated several activities to gather input on programming and preferred uses for the interim park. Approximately 150 people of various ages and backgrounds participated in the pop-up.



Four large boards hanging in a tent displayed key information about the project and community engagement opportunities during the pop-up. The first board gave an overview of the two-stage plan to deliver the park at Spadina Pier and the project timeline. The second board presented a history of Spadina Pier along with an aerial photograph of the site and surrounding area. The third board listed proposed features of the interim park. It also offered three ways for community members to share their vision for the park at the pop-up.

Opportunities to provide feedback included:

- Writing ideas for what to see and do at the interim park on a sticky note, then posting it on the fourth board;
- Writing a message on a postcard from the future about fun activities at the new park; and
- Voting with popsicle sticks for preferred interim park uses out of four suggestions.

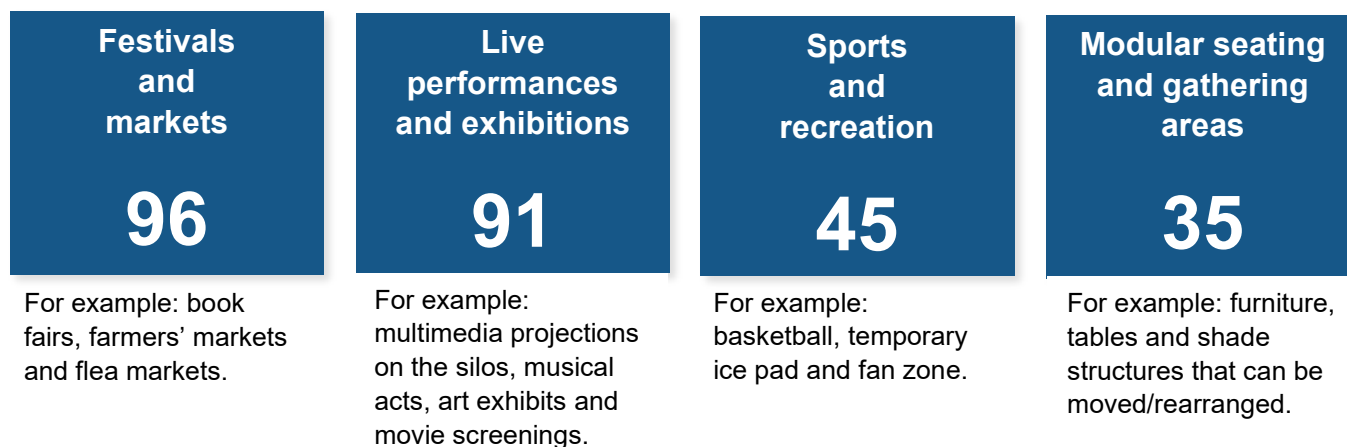
What We Heard

City of Toronto staff gathered input from community members through their participation in the pop-up activities outlined above and through conversations. Overall, the feedback received by City staff comprised a range of uses, programs and amenities for the interim and permanent park, with common themes emerging.

Outcomes of the three pop-up activities are summarized below.

Voting stations

Participants indicated their preference for any of the four suggested interim park uses by placing a popsicle stick at the corresponding voting station. Festivals and markets received the most votes (96), followed by live performances and exhibitions (91), sports and recreation (45), and modular seating and gathering areas (35). A total of 267 votes were cast.





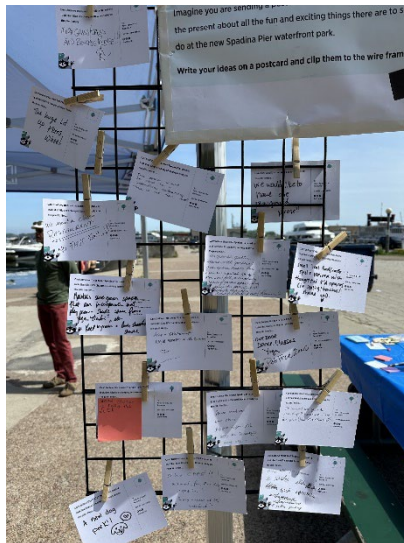
Postcards and sticky notes

Community members provided written feedback on postcards and sticky notes. Participants wrote messages on postcards in response to the following prompt: *“Can’t believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it’s changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...”* Postcards were then clipped to two wire frames secured to either side of the tent. On sticky notes, participants shared ideas in response to the following question: *“What would you like to see and do at the new interim park?”*

Of the 26 total postcards and 65 total sticky notes that were left on display, the most frequently commented ideas were:

- Food and drink options (23), such as:
 - Restaurants and cafés (16)
 - Coffee (4)
 - Local or independent establishments (4)
- Seating (10), including benches (5)
- Sports and recreation (9), including ping pong (3)
- Markets (8), including farmers’ markets (3)
- Green space and gardens (12), including a community garden (2)
- A playground (7)
- Outdoor fitness (7), including yoga (4)
- Gathering spaces (6)
- Live performances (5)
- Movie screenings (5)
- Public washrooms (5)
- Shade (5)
- Water features (5), including a splash pad (2)

Other suggestions included shops and vendors, parking, picnic areas, plantings, open space and winter use. All written responses can be found in **Appendices A and B**.



Next Steps

The input of community members at this in-person pop-up event will be combined with feedback collected from other public engagement events to help shape the vision for the interim park at Spadina Pier, and to guide programming once construction is complete.

To be informed of upcoming engagement opportunities for the new park, visit the project webpage at toronto.ca/SpadinaPier.

Appendix A: Postcard Responses

Participants were asked to imagine they were on the redesigned pier in the future and complete the following sentences on the postcard:

“Can’t believe this is what Spadina Pier used to look like! Glad it’s changed, because today on the pier I enjoy...”

Responses written on postcards are listed below.

- More grass/trees and benches please!!!
- The huge lit up Ferris wheel
- The space would be ideal for a waterfront restaurant that is not fast food!
- We would like to have one playground. Please!!
- We want a classy restaurant. No fast food!!!
- Maintain some green space that can incorporate small play area – shade space for yoga, tai chi, etc. Keep in green & cool shade
- Live & entertainment night market in the summer
- Bread station to feed the duck
- A new dog park!!
- Sit in a café!! Permanent, fun, Euro-style cafe(s)!! Badly needed at the waterfront!!
- Biking, kids playground, a water slide, and something underground.
Coffee/restaurant & public parking
- It would be great to see shops & restaurants lining the pier (like in San Francisco)
- Flower market, toys store, playground for kids. Enjoy the beauty for every day
- Outdoor dance classes, yoga, pet-free zone
- Small local food/cafe spots paired with thoughtful 3d spaces (i.e. seating/benches/shade etc.)
- An open-air public space with gardens/green space, space for open-air markets spring/summer/fall, a community planting garden space, and space for festivals and seating to enjoy the beautiful waterfront!
- Inspiration, original thinking, cultivating friendship – new and old friends.
Developing original beauty in nature (trees, grass, and flowers)
- Playing frisbee and having picnics with my family and friends
- Outdoor fitness, monkey bars, cafe/ice cream, farmers markets
- Playground with monkey bar and slide, food court.
- Fix the parking lot! Put the park in still on top.
- Green space and a park
- Yoga & meditation retreats

- Food stalls, different cuisines; swings & slides
- An iced coffee that I grabbed from a vendor on the pier as I sit on a bench. Around me are food vendors and other independent vendors. There is a stage for acoustic performances, and a movie screening on the silos this weekend too.
- Sustainable, eco friendly, water friendly for anything new coming to the piers (no plastic, vegan, solar panels powered stuff would be ideal). 24 hour washrooms (not portos). Pop up coffee/drinks/healthy snacks. Tents with spritzes for hot days. Water bottle refills station. Pop up movies & events & picnics. Solar panels.

Appendix B: Sticky Note Responses

Participants were asked to share ideas on sticky notes in response to the following question:

“What would you like to see and do at the new interim park?”

Responses written on sticky notes are listed below.

- Farmers market (organic food, pop up trucks, small businesses etc.)
- Meet up environment
- Plane-spotting look-out
- Splash pad
- Marina = \$ = homeless parking
- Community garden spaces for residents to use for growing!
- Green space/gardens
- Movies screened onto the silo!
- Workout space/event space like CIBC Square
- Sports, seating, gathering park
- Shade areas to enjoy the waterfront
- Kayak/canoe accessibility to the lake
- Extension of music garden. Amphitheatre
- Floating swimming pool like NYC has
- Open-air public space to enjoy the waterfront
- How do cars & trucks access the marina?
- Buskers, support for struggling artists, stalls
- Bring back parking & restaurants, table tennis, loungers
- Anything that beautifies the space
- Integration with the public space at the malting silos, water taxi, kayak & paddling, people/water/plane watching
- Public washrooms!
- Keep it open. Not more shopping/crowds
- Restaurants and food stalls
- Quiet festivals like markets. Places to sit and relax
- Splash pad. Boats that you can live on to rent
- Fix & reopen parking
- Public bathroom!
- Greenspace/more public benches. Nature protection
- Children's play area. Art. Anything not already here. Access to free island ferries
- Public washrooms, food stalls, green space, shade coverage

- Ice-cream store, fish & chips, restaurant
- Public washrooms
- Ping pong tables
- Oasis, intervention, visual appeal. Original, thought-provoking pride of Toronto
- Cafes (like Paris, Rome), greenery, winter use
- A bridge connecting the pier to the silo property
- Introduce domes for short term rentals for Toronto visitors (shelter ideas)
- Free movie screenings frequently x3 week. Purchase snacks
- Meditation & breathe work classes (paid or free)
- As long as it's not another condo
- Greenspace!
- Cafe(s) (Not corporate chains)
- BBQ grills
- Playground
- Mores cafes & more pedestrian friendly spaces
- Pong Toronto rentals
- Winter use such as fire pit & warming hut
- F & B for local & visitors. Be great.
- Rentals for islands, day adventures, picnics etc...
- More green areas, benches to sit & relax on, umbrellas, beach area
- Community social space with small coffee/snack vendors!
- Farmer's craft/antique market from June to end of October. Mobile library. Picnic tables. If anything goes up must be maintained (e.g. clean, garbage, etc.)
- Family centre – water park for children
- Sitting in the sun
- Covered structure to use to workouts. Yoga, pilates, dancing
- A skating rink for rollerblade, ice skating to use during different seasons
- Movie night
- Consistency in what you do!!
- Food markets
- Live entertainment
- Restaurant – beverages
- Water fun for kids
- Cafe, restaurants, clean up eyesores like construction & bad roadway
- Asphalt that doesn't radiate heat
- Something that can be used to swim at the lake