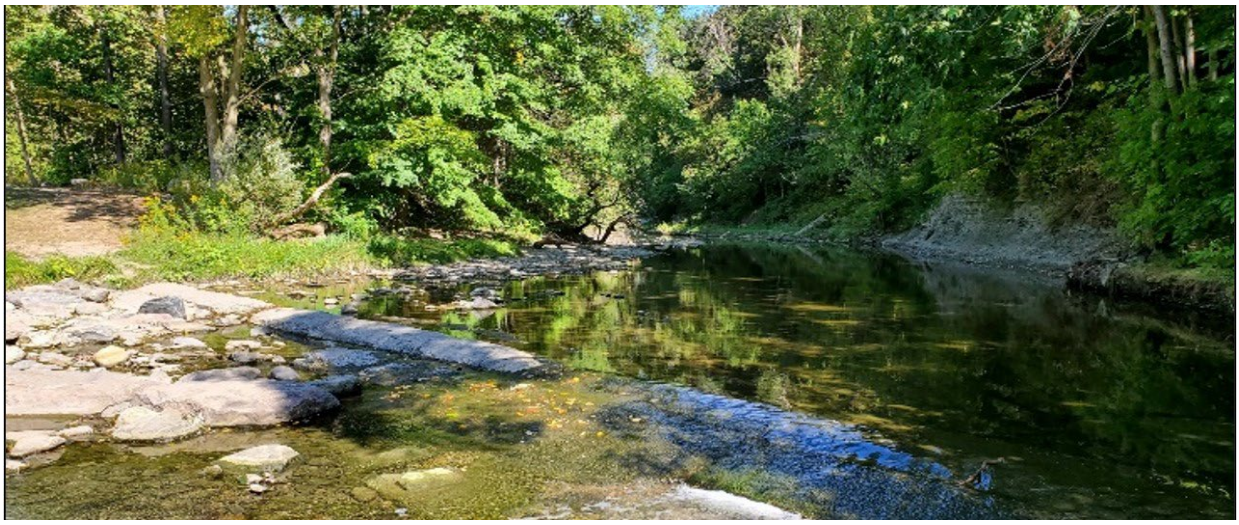

Mimico Creek Restoration and Water Infrastructure Protection Study

Public Consultation Report

September 2024

TORONTO

Contents

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Executive Summary

The City of Toronto is carrying out a study to identify storm sewer and watermain infrastructure

The study looks at how the City's storm sewer and watermain infrastructure can be protected within the creek to ensure the City's infrastructure continues to operate and service residents and businesses. The solutions will be part of a Mimico Creek Geomorphic Systems Master Plan (GSMP) to be implemented over a multi-year period.

This report details the activities and feedback received during consultation that took place between May 27 and June 28, 2024. Members of the public and interest groups were provided with information about the risks to City water infrastructure and a summary of the recommended solutions. People were invited to ask questions and provide feedback on the recommended solutions for creek restoration and water infrastructure protection.

Public consultation included a virtual public event on June 12, 2024, with 12 participants, an online survey on the project webpage which was completed by 32 respondents and comment submissions received from seven individuals via telephone and email.

Those who provided feedback were generally concerned with erosion in Mimico Creek. There was overall support for recommended projects, with requests for action in the near term.

There is concern for tree loss as a result of project implementation, and an interest in ensuring and protecting wildlife habitats and replanting with native plant species.

Concerns for pollution in the creek, and the impacts of a recent spill (August 2023), are outside the scope of this study, which focuses on protection of the City's water infrastructure.

Study Summary

In Mimico Creek, there are 203 City of Toronto water infrastructure sites. This includes 93 sanitary sewer sites (with 80 sewer crossings) spanning 17 kilometres, 27 watermain sites (with 25 watermain crossings) and 83 storm sewer outfalls. A risk analysis and evaluation of alternative solutions was carried out for the 25 infrastructure sites in Mimico Creek identified as the most 'at-risk'. As a result of the study, fourteen projects are recommended to stabilise the channel bed and banks of the creek protecting the 25 most at-risk sites. The fourteen recommended projects include:

- Five projects with channel work less than 100 metres in length, referred to as 'local works'.
- Nine projects with channel work greater than 100 meters in length, referred to as 'sub-reach' scale.

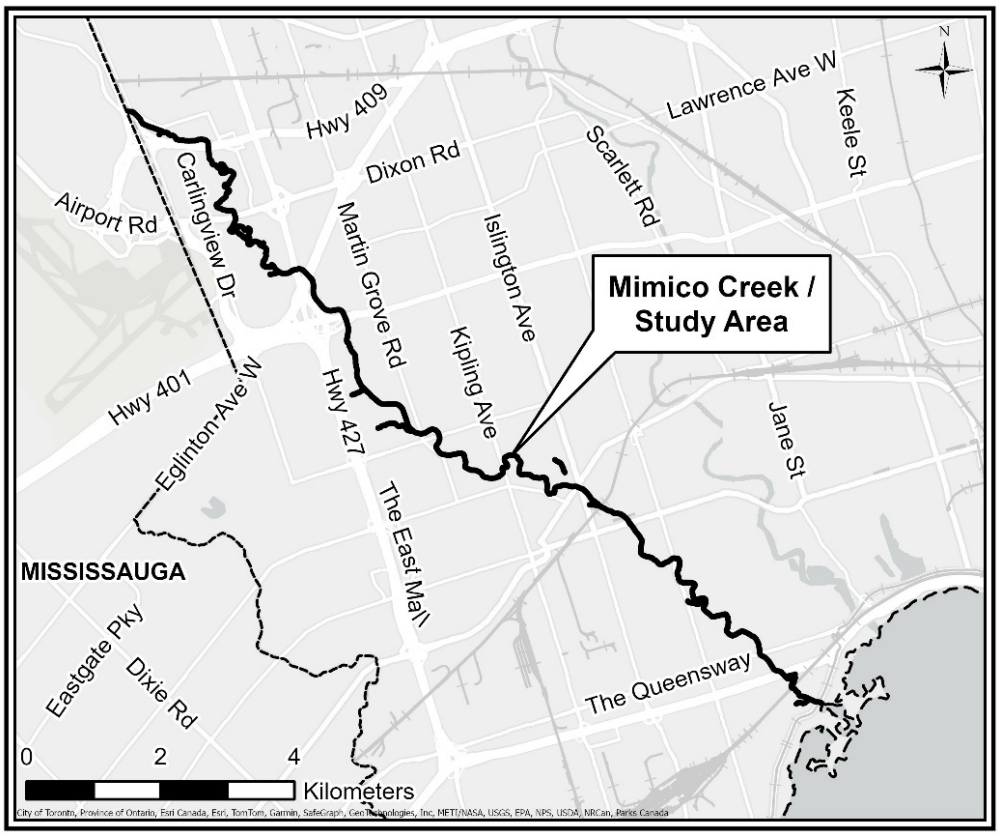
The 14 projects have been assigned priority levels for implementation. Exposed sanitary sewers are the highest priority projects, as they pose greater negative impacts if broken, as compared to broken storm sewer outfalls or watermains.

- Nine projects are high-priority
- Three projects are medium-priority
- Two projects are low-priority

The above noted projects will be prioritized against all watercourse projects identified city-wide.

Study Area

The study area includes the 19 km length of Mimico Creek in Toronto from Highway 427 near Disco Road and Attwell Drive to where it meets Lake Ontario.



Notification & Consultation Activities

A variety of communication tools were used to notify the public and interested parties about the Mimico Creek Restoration and Water Infrastructure Protection Study.

Notification

Prior to public consultation, information about the study and study recommendations were shared with key groups potentially impacted by recommended projects.

- Registered letters were sent to 46 property owners where private properties intersect with, or are adjacent to, recommended projects. Communication with property owners is on-going and will continue as needed leading up to, and during the detailed design and construction for individual projects recommended through this study.
- First Nations communities identified by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks were provided with information about the study, study recommendations and a report on archaeological potential in the study area. Communication with First Nations communities is on-going leading up to and during detailed design.
- Agencies and Utilities were provided with information about the study and study recommendations. Communication will continue during detailed design.

Public notification of the study was provided early in the study period. A Public Consultation Notice providing information on the study recommendations and opportunities for feedback was shared publicly the week of May 27, 2024 through the following methods:

- Notices were sent via Canada Post direct mail to 31,594 addresses in the study area
- An emailed notice was circualted to 37 community groups, organizations, institutions and elected officials and 61 government agencies and utility companies
- The project website was updated to include public consultation materials and a link to the feedback survey: toronto.ca/MimicoCreek

Public Consultation

Public consultation activities are an opportunity to learn about the study recommendations and provide feedback. Feedback was received during meetings, via email and phone and through an online survey:

- A virtual public meeting took place on June 12, 2024, from 6 to 8 p.m. and was attended
- Feedback was received via email from seven individuals.
- An online survey was available from May 27 until June 28, 2024 and received 32 responses. Participation was anonymous.

Feedback Summary

Many people recognise and are concerned about high flows and erosion along the creek. Among those who provided feedback, there is general support for creek restoration. Feedback on recommended projects was minimal with some respondents identifying observed impacts of erosion near projects sites and on water infrastructure.

Concerns relating to project work focused on implementation and potential tree loss and impacts to wildlife habitats during construction. There is an interest in ensuring and protecting

wildlife habitats and riparian zones during construction and replanting with native plant species during restoration.

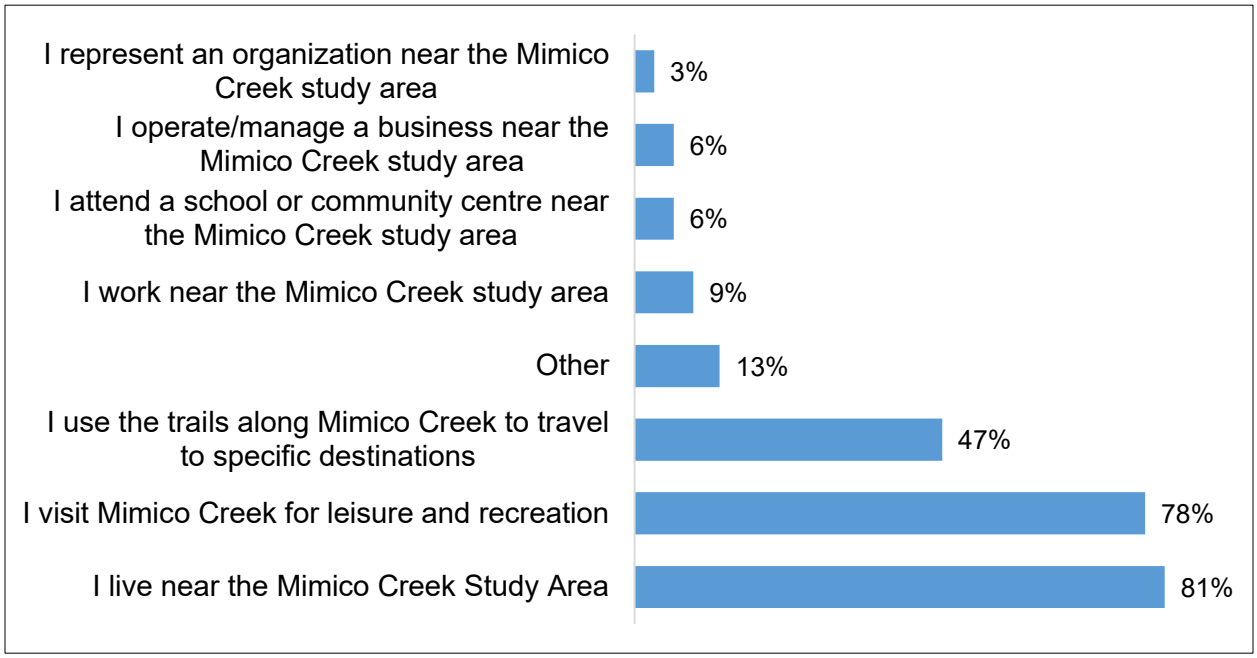
Concerns that are out of scope for this study include erosion on lands that are not in proximity to the City's water infrastructure and soil, water and groundwater quality.

Survey

A total of 32 respondents completed the on-line survey. Participation in the survey was anonymous. Responses received to study related questions are in this section. Responses to optional demographic questions are in the Appendix.

Which statements best describe your relationship to the study?

Respondents were able to select multiple answers.

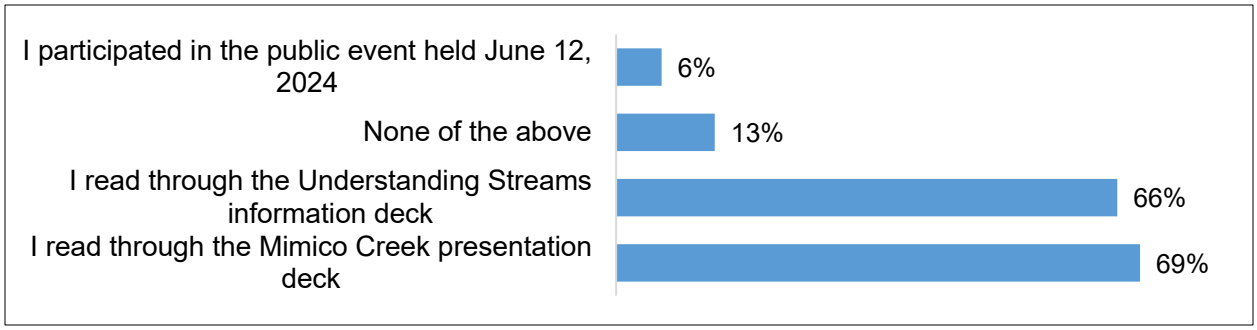


Most of the respondents live near the study area, 81%, or visit the study area for leisure and recreation, 78%. Of this 66% of total respondents responded positively to both living near the study area and visiting the creek for recreation and leisure.

For the respondents who described their relationship as 'other', two respondents live along Mimico creek, one in Ontario and one respondent scuba dives in the area.

How did you review project information?

Respondents were able to select multiple answers.

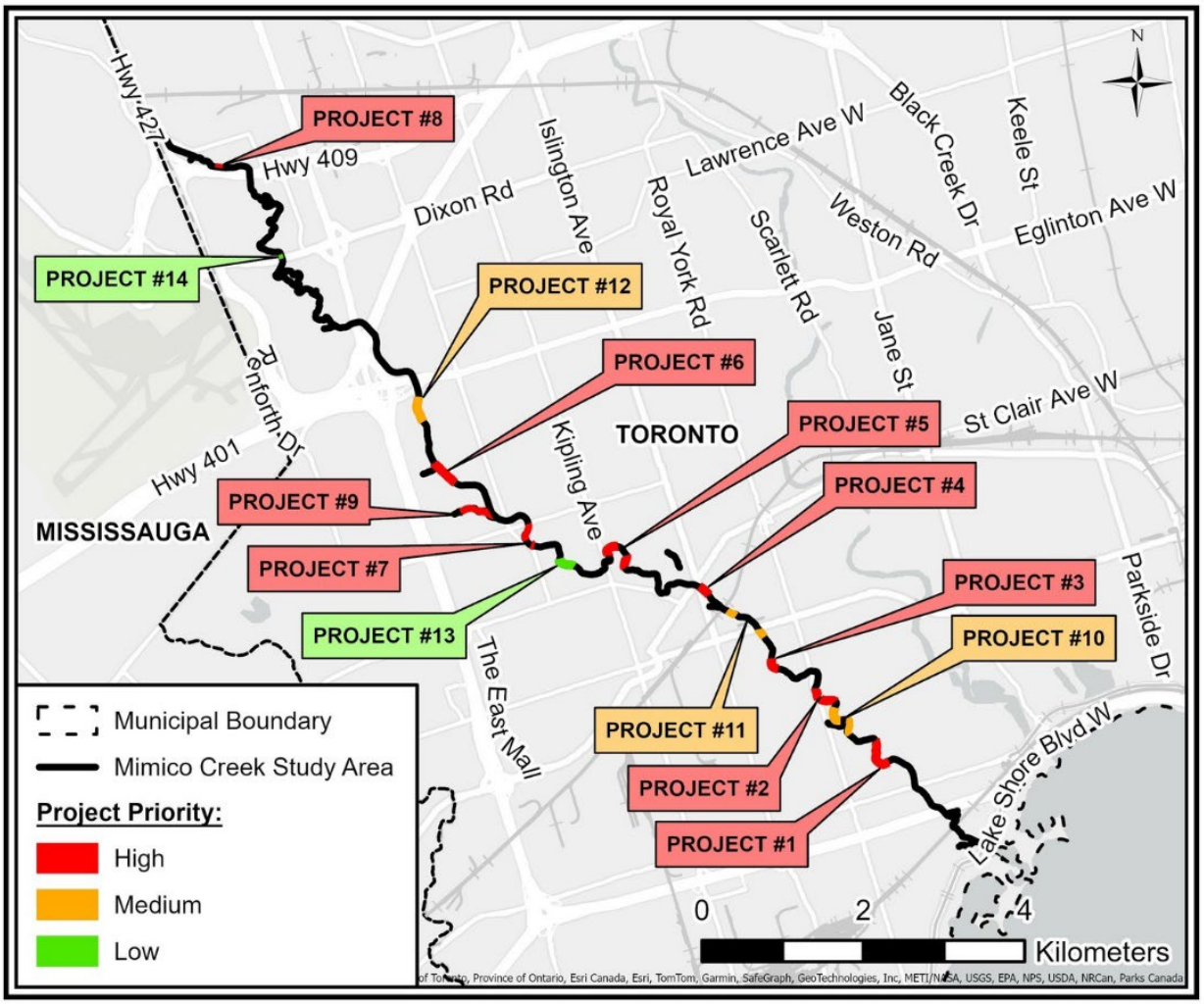


Most of the respondents, 87% reviewed the project information prior to giving feedback.

This section of the survey asked respondents to provide feedback on the recommended projects. The project map was provided as a reference in the survey and in the presentation deck.

Do you have specific comments about any of the recommended projects?

Respondents were able to reference the project map when providing feedback.



Project # and recommended scope of work	Comments
#1 Sub-reach work approximately 390 metres	• There is support for recommended project work and prioritisation based on project numbering • Current observations include erosion and dead vegetation • Moonseed vine has been identified in the area • Suggestion to plant native species to assist with erosion
#2 Sub-reach works approximately 300 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • Storm sewers and covers need to be maintained and made more functional
#3 Sub-reach works approximately 170 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • There is an interest in ensuring spawning fish can migrate upstream • Suggested method of improvement should include dredging the area (remove the sediment from the creek bed)
#4 Sub-reach works approximately 150 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • There were questions about potential impacts on the Montgomery Inn and the Islington Golf Club • Current observations of the area include silt at the bridge under the Islington / Dundas intersection, erosion downstream and storm drains eroded at their footings • A question was asked about the (abandoned) watermain under the bridge • Construction related concerns include potential impacts on traffic at Dundas Street and Islington Avenue
#5 Sub-reach works approximately 350 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • There were questions about potential impacts to the Islington Golf Club • Concern for current conditions include erosion around the area of Echo Valley Park, ice jams in the winter and water in backyards as part of floodplain flows seasonally or in response to heavy rains • A suggestion was made to plant more stable vegetation and stones to assist with erosion control
#6 Sub-reach works approximately 350 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • Current observations of the area include owl habitat • Continued observation of the creek walls and storm sewer outfall grates is needed to ensure efficient water flow

#7 Local works approximately 40 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • Drains in the area need to be maintained and improved for water flow
#8 Local works approximately 20 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • There is a concern for pollution entering the creek from local factories and businesses
#9 Sub-reach works approximately 370 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • Current observations of the area include owl habitat • There is concern for the storm sewer outfall south of the West Dean Park bridge where there is erosion, material debris and a tree blockage
#10 Sub-reach works approximately 420 metres	• There is support for recommended project work
#11 Local works approximately 60 metres	• There is support for recommended project work
#12 Sub-reach works approximately 375 metres	• There is support for recommended project work • Current observations of the area include owl habitat • Concern for current conditions include the impact of backfill on the concrete channel and erosion at the bend combined along with debris downstream and a large fallen tree • Suggestion for native trees and bushes to be planted in this area
#13 Local works approximately 70 metres along the creek with approximately 90 metres of bank work	• There is support for recommended project work • Concern for the high creek flow when it rains and vandalism of the vegetation on city land
#14 Local works approximately 25 metres	• There is support for recommended project work

Do you have any general feedback about the study recommendations?

Open comments have been themed and summarized in the table below:

Observations on current conditions	• The creek bank has eroded and shifted over the years • Trees on either side of the creek appear to be damaged or in poor health

	• There is pollution in the creek, frequent industrial run-off (north of Eglinton Avenue), personal waste, golf balls • There are small fish in the creek south of Rathburn Road that should be protected • Concerns that erosion is likely to get worse as global warming increases • Concern for potential spills from sanitary sewers
Feedback on the study and recommendations	• Appreciation and support for the project recommendations, • Request for improvements to be made with for greater urgency
Implementation	• Concern that vegetation is sparse and construction will make it worse • Concern for the impacts of construction on vegetation and wildlife (habitats) • Construction should be planned to minimise multiple disturbances to the land around the creek • Concern that potential pollutants embedded in the soil (and creek bed) will be released once soil is disturbed during construction
Feedback outside the scope of creek restoration for protecting water infrastructure	• Requests for additional recreation amenities: a walkway under the QEW to north of the Queensway, a recreation trail along the creek • The section between the GO tracks over Park Lawn to the Queensway could benefit form restoration improvements and landscaping as many people will be moving into the area

Public Event

Questions and comments from the June 12, 2024 event are themed and summarized below.

Theme	Comment	Response
Study Area	Is the Southern portion of Mimico Creek, south of the Queensway, part of the study? This area needs revitalization.	Yes, the study considered the entirety of Mimico Creek within the City of Toronto. This area did not contain any critical risks to Toronto Water Infrastructure, as such, no work is being proposed in this area.
	What sort of projects does the TRCA have ongoing within Mimico Creek?	The majority of the projects are currently in the high-level planning phase, and not currently publicly available. Please send the project team an email, and we will put you in touch with TRCA.
Design - armourstone	Will there be bank armouring for the full length of channel as part of the solutions?	Sub-reach scale works involve creating a robust channel bed and channel banks using armourstone. Typically, this would involve armouring an entire section of channel. Where possible, vegetated armourstone, or vegetated boulder buttresses, will be used to help promote vegetation growth. Local protection works typically involve bank work and may not involve regrading the entire channel. Similarly, where possible, vegetated rock solutions will be used to promote vegetation growth. The solutions will be implemented in accordance with MECP and TRCA guidelines. Attempts will be made to reconnect the channel to the floodplain and use approaches conducive to the many parks sites within the study area.
Design - vegetation	Do your proposed solutions consider restoration of native riparian vegetation? What consideration is there for ecology?	– The proposed solutions employ a combination of vegetated buttresses and armourstone retaining walls, with the aim of providing erosion protection. All vegetation removals will be compensated appropriately through post-construction restoration planting of native wildflowers, shrubs, and trees. – Every project will be designed for site specific constraints, but effort will be made to always try to incorporate as much natural

		material as possible, and give consideration to aquatic and terrestrial habitats. – Projects will be designed with site specific solutions as much as possible. For example, many of the recommended projects are located in parks and a “soft” bank design will be investigated for use in these areas, as much as possible. However, there will be situations where a more robust design will be required to maximize erosion protection.
Implementation	There are a number of projects identified in, lower Mimico Creek. Would implementation and construction happen concurrently or sequentially?	It is too early in the study to say at this point, project implementation will depend on a variety of factors including the City-wide prioritization of projects.
	Will project priorities change over the next couple of years given the regular high water levels seen in the creek?	There will be future inspections and monitoring undertaken by the TRCA. This monitoring will inform project planning to update project prioritization, as required, and to inform infrastructure stakeholders, such as PF&R, Toronto Water, Transportation and TRCA.
Study Scope	I have observed frequent flooding and erosion near my property. Will your proposed projects address this erosion? Will the proposed improvements aim to improve the water levels, soil erosion, etc.?	This study is a high-level plan to determine where the highest risks exist to Toronto Water infrastructure. However, significant erosion on private property is documented and shared with TRCA. Please submit more details on your particular concern via email to the project team.
	Will you consider soil contamination as part of this project? How much attention is given to possible soil contamination sites?	This study is primarily focused on the form and function of Mimico Creek, and the associated erosion processes. However, the projects recommended by this study will require a future series of site-specific soil studies, including an Assessment of Past Uses Study and an Excess Soil Destination Report, as part of the detailed design phase, prior to construction. Soil and groundwater quality assessments are not part of this study.

	Who can I contact for erosion and vegetation loss on the publicly owned property in close proximity to my house? There are multiple divisions/units responsible for different aspects for parks/erosion/soil contamination. Is there a specific contact within the City that takes care of Mimico Creek that we can get in touch with?	– The City has a Coordination Working Group, as part of the City Ravine Strategy, where public authorities meet to improve the planning and implementation of projects in the City's watercourses and ravines. – In general, TRCA are the contact for erosion impacting private property. If you have a concern regarding erosion impacting private property please send the project team an email, and we will put you in touch with TRCA. – For erosion impacting public property, it is best to contact 311 Toronto and they will ensure your concern is sent to the appropriate member of the watercourse and ravine Coordination Working Group for review and response. – For further information on the City's Ravine Strategy, please visit the City's Ravine Strategy webpage. www.toronto.ca/city-government/accountability-operations-customer-service/long-term-vision-plans-and-strategies/ravine-strategy/

Phone & Email

Questions and comments received via phone/email from members of the public are themed and summarized below:

Concerns and feedback on current conditions

- Sustainability and long-term health of the creek and waterway as a result of climate change, land use and management changes and pollution
- Erosion of the creek and the impacts on infrastructure and ecology
- Water in backyards as part of floodplain flow, seasonally or in response to heavy
- Failing gabion baskets south of Dixon Road
- Maintenance for sanitary sewers, including water-tight maintenance hole covers in the Thompson Avenue area
- Pollution from spills and dumping.
- Appreciation for current green space, trees and trail system
- Shared news clippings and local geographic history referencing weather events, such as previous storms, and pollution from recent spills and dumping in Mimico Creek.

Comments and feedback related to project implementation and construction

- Support for projects and recognition of much needed work
- Shared engineering advice and recommendations including drawings
- Questions of clarity and requests for more detail
- Requests to minimise the impact on trees and vegetation
- Concerns the study and solutions don’t go far enough to address pollution
- Appreciation for the tree canopy and concern that trees and vegetation will be impacted by project implementation

Appendix A – Survey Respondent Profile

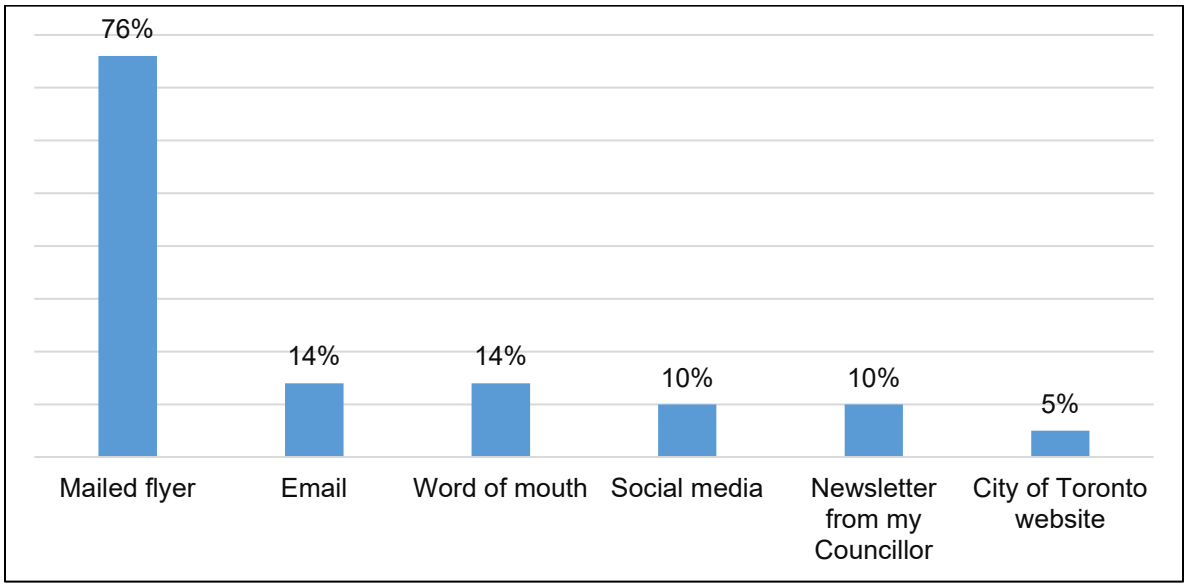
What are the first three digits of your postal code?

Postal code data is requested to understand where in the city respondents who have an interest in the project are coming from. The responses indicate that most respondents live close to the project area.

Post Code	Respondents
M5A	1
M6N	1
M8V	8
M8X	1
M8Y	3
M8Z	1
M9A	8
M9B	6
M9C	1
M9R	1
L3C	1

How did you hear about this study?

Respondents were able to select multiple answers.

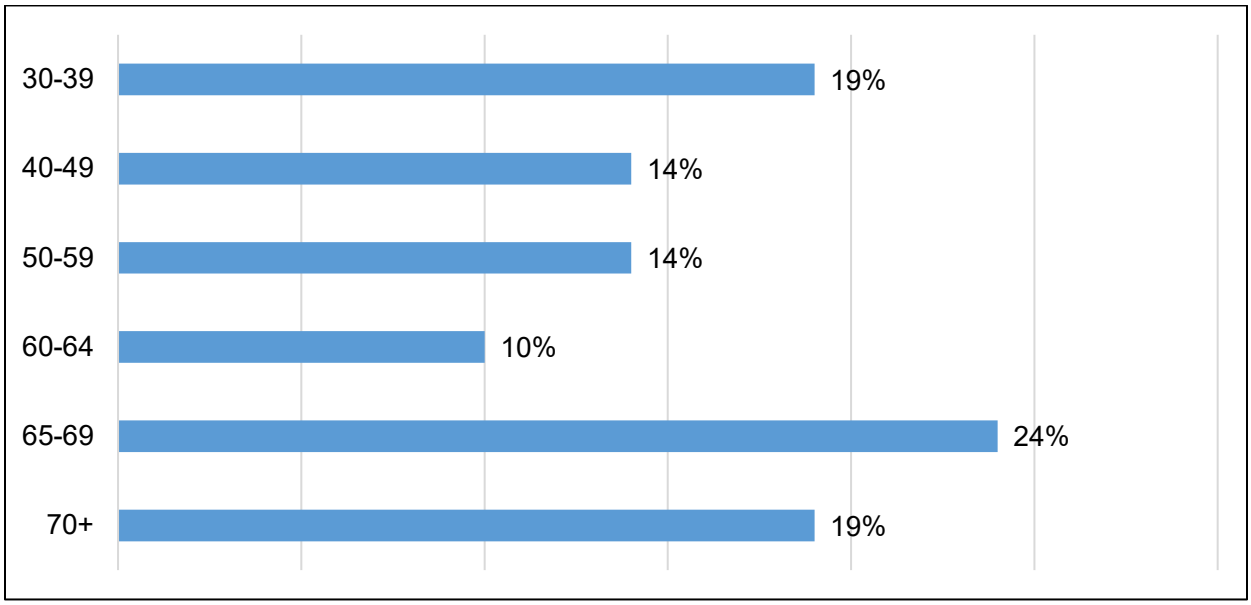


Most of the respondents heard about the study from the Public Notice distributed through Canada Post.

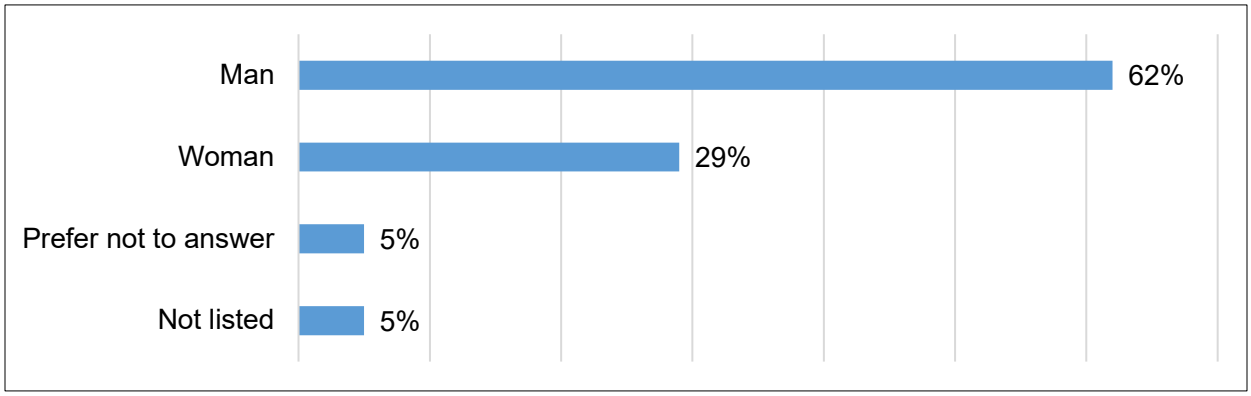
Demographics

This information is used to help City staff recognize general trends among those who participate in public consultations.

What is your age category?



What is your gender-identity?



Do you identify as a person with a disability?