

Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan Parkland Strategy

Do-It-Yourself Community Workshop Kit Summary Report

Community Engagement Phase 1: Towards a Vision
Fall 2024 – Winter 2025





Contents

Background	3
The Parkland Strategy (PLS)	3
The Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (PRFP).....	3
The Reviews	3
Do-It-Yourself Community Workshop Kits	4
Overview	4
Community Coordination Plan (CCP) Cluster Organizations	4
Open Call to Community Organizations and Groups	4
Summary of Results – Community Coordination Plan (CCP) Clusters.....	5
Summary of Results – Other Community Groups	11
Next Steps.....	14
Appendix A: DIY Kit Feedback	15
Appendix B: Black Resilience Community Coordination Plan Cluster Results	17
Appendix C: Newcomer Community Coordination Plan Cluster Results	20

Background

The Parkland Strategy (PLS)

The City of Toronto's [Parkland Strategy](#) (PLS) was adopted in 2019 to guide the long-term planning for Toronto's parks, including where the City adds new parkland and improves existing parks. The Parkland Strategy sets a 20-year vision and planning framework guided by the principles of: Expand, Improve, Connect, and Include. It fulfills the Ontario *Planning Act*'s requirement for a parks plan, enabling the municipality to apply the alternative requirement, under Section 42 of the *Planning Act*, to development and redevelopment that is eligible for parkland dedication. This is a tool that Toronto and other municipalities use to help address the increased need for parks and recreational facilities as Toronto's population grows. There are over 1,500 parks owned and/or operated by the City throughout Toronto and the system is growing with new parks added every year.

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (PRFP)

The City owns and maintains hundreds of recreational facilities in buildings and parks. The [Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan](#) and its [Implementation Strategy](#) help prioritize investments in indoor and outdoor recreation facilities across Toronto, like new basketball courts, cricket fields, skateparks, splash pads and community recreation centres. These documents also help the City assess new opportunities for partnerships and community proposals for new or improved recreation facilities.

The Reviews

Every five years, the City reviews the PRFP and PLS to reflect:

- Changing resident needs and priorities (e.g. changes due to Covid)
- A growing population
- Provincial legislation changes
- New city-wide policy directions (e.g. Net Zero Strategy, Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan, Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, and more)
- New financial tools resulting in less funding
- Updated accessibility and environmental standards

Do-It-Yourself Community Workshop Kits

Overview

From October 18 to December 18, 2024, the Parks and Recreation team created a do-it-yourself workshop kit to extend our reach – specifically to hear from Indigenous, Black and equity-deserving communities across Toronto. It included a presentation, a discussion guide, and an online submission form to help groups host their own community conversations and share feedback with the City. **Overall, the kit was used by 16 organizations across the city, to engage 332 community members in discussions about the future of their recreation spaces and parks.**

Community Coordination Plan (CCP) Cluster Organizations

The City's Parks and Recreation Division and Social Development, Finance, and Administration Division worked together to engage communities through the City's Community Coordination Plan (CCP) Clusters. The CCP Cluster model ensures communication with more than 400 community-based organizations and implements localized solutions to meet the needs of Toronto's equity-deserving communities. The CCP Clusters include:

- 10 geographic cluster areas (see Figure 1)
- Two city-wide clusters that focus on Newcomers and Black Resilience

12 self-selected organizations in each CCP cluster were provided funding to host their own community-led engagement on the PRFP and PLS. Table 1 provides a list of the 12 community coordination plan (CCP) clusters and the organizations leading community engagements in each cluster. Map 1 illustrates the service areas for the 10 geographic CCP clusters. In total, 12 CCP Cluster organizations hosted community engagements with 190 community members participating across the city.

Open Call to Community Organizations and Groups

The kit was recommended for use by community organizations, sports groups, friends-of-park groups, neighbours and other interested community groups, to enable members to get together, host community discussion, and share their feedback to inform the reviews of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan, and the Parkland Strategy.

In total, 4 community groups submitted results, representing engagement with 142 community members in North York, Scarborough, and Etobicoke. Groups involved included a senior's group, youth group, non-profit organization, and a Tennis Club (located at a City of Toronto Tennis Court).

Cluster and organization leading engagement:

- Downtown West led by West Neighbourhood House
- East York Don Valley led by Access Alliance
- North Scarborough led by Extend-A-Family
- South Scarborough led by Access Alliance
- North York led by Midaynta Community Services
- North Etobicoke led by Somali Women & Children's Support Network
- Black Creek Humber Summit led by Delta Family Resource Centre
- York Weston Pelham led by Jane Alliance Neighbourhood Services
- Downtown East led by Neighbourhood Information Post
- South Etobicoke led by LAMP Community Health Centre
- Black Resilience led by Be-initiative
- Newcomer led by WoodGreen Community Services

Summary of Results – Community Coordination Plan (CCP) Clusters

This section summarizes the feedback from the 12 CCP Cluster community groups who submitted results, representing engagement with 190 community members across the City. CCP Cluster engagements are intended to provide feedback from a range of equity-deserving communities across the City.

Participants provided the following feedback:

Recreation Facility Preferences and Priorities

The 15 recreation facilities most important for household to access, as ranked by participants:

1. Multipurpose rooms (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics) *(117 participants selected this option)*
2. Fitness equipment *(106)*
3. Gymnasium *(94)*
4. Basketball courts *(92)*
5. Sports field (e.g. soccer, football) *(88)*
6. Playground – outdoor *(74)*
 - *For various ages*
7. Pool - indoor leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs) *(74)*
8. Playground – indoor *(65)*
9. Bike park *(44)*

10. Pool - indoor lane pool (with shallow end and deep end) (39)
11. Pool – outdoor (37)
12. Splash Pad (32)
13. Tennis Court (24)
14. Ice rink – indoor arena (21)
15. Wading pool (16)

Recreation facilities ranked as less important included: Outdoor artificial ice rinks, dog off-leash areas, pickleball courts, skating trails, cricket fields, beach volleyball, natural outdoor ice rinks, lawn bowling greens, skateboard park, bocce courts, and curling rinks.

Additional facilities noted as important by respondents include: space for people with disabilities to play games, greenhouses, baseball, space for dancing, table tennis, washrooms, safety/emergency buttons, benches, fenced-in community gardens, running track, snowboarding (east end), computer rooms, roller skating arena.

The 15 Community Centre facilities most important for households to access, as ranked by participants:

1. Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics) *(103 participants selected this option)*
2. Gymnasium (for indoor sports, summer camps, and community meetings) (97)
3. Shared space to study, read and work, with Wi-Fi access (88)
4. Walking/jogging track (87)
5. Youth-specific room (e.g. Enhanced Youth Space) (84)
6. Weight/cardio room indoor (81)
7. Senior-specific room (75)
8. Fitness/dance/aerobic studio (66)
9. Tech space or computer lab (60)
10. Indoor playground or play space (59)
11. Kitchen (58)
12. Informal spaces to meet and spend time with other community members (52)
13. Indoor sports field (51)
14. Seating and lounge areas (49)
15. Leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs) (38)

Recreation facilities ranked as less important included: Music recording studios, preschool rooms, lane pools, sensory/multi-sensory rooms, indoor ice rinks/arenas, and curling rinks.

Additional facilities noted as important by respondents include: First aid rooms, open space, a food hub (e.g. to run a breakfast club), cinema room, BBQs, washrooms.

Co-Location of Services and Facilities at Community Recreation Centres

Overall, almost all participants support community recreation centres co-locating with other community partners, services, and facilities to become community hubs.

The facilities/programs participants suggest including in co-located community recreation centres, as ranked by participants, include:

1. Food-related facilities and services (e.g. food hub, food bank, café, kitchen, etc.)
2. Childcare
3. Library
4. Clinics/Healthcare (including mental health, dentistry, etc.)
5. Settlement/Newcomer Services
6. Spots/fitness facilities (e.g. pools, ice, gym, etc.)
7. Employment Services
8. Gathering/meeting/multipurpose spaces
9. Seniors' room
10. Tutoring/Homework Clubs/After School Programs
11. Event space
12. Youth space
13. Indoor playground
14. Performing art spaces
15. Computer lab/ tech lab/ Wi-Fi access
16. Social services
17. Women's programs (e.g. Sistering)
18. Legal services
19. Movie rooms

Parkland Preferences and Priorities

Participants ranked their preference for the type and size of park to prioritize investment in the following order:

1. **Community parks** (medium-sized parks serving several neighbourhoods, with a range of amenities and features)
2. **Local parks** (small parks serving residents within a 5–10-minute walking distance, with amenities like playgrounds)
3. **Destination parks** (large-sized parks with special features that attract residents from across the city, such as Earl Bales Park and Centennial Park)
4. **Naturalized areas** (e.g. ravines, woodlands, or wetlands, which might not be accessible to people but have significant environmental value)

Common barriers that prevent community members from accessing or visiting Toronto parks, as ranked by participants, include:

1. Feeling unsafe
2. Lack of year-round access to clean washrooms and drinking water
3. Poor accessibility
4. Lack of lighting

5. Lack of parking
6. Lack of cleanliness
7. Lack of seating
8. Lack of accessible transportation to parks
9. Lack of facilities for different community uses
10. Lack of shade
11. Lack of vehicle access
12. Waitlists
13. Inadequate opening hours
14. Too many people smoking
15. Inadequate signage/ information boards
16. Registration fees
17. Lack of sense of community
18. Pests
19. Poor issues resolution/communication process with city (when issues in parks arise)
20. Outdated facilities
21. Lack of active transportation routes to parks

Areas or neighbourhoods of Toronto participants suggested being prioritized for new parks, as ranked by participants, include:

1. Communities with lower incomes
2. Neighbourhood Improvement Areas or communities with other equity needs
3. Communities with high population growth and/or high density
4. Locations with strong active and/or public transportations routes available
5. Communities with high youth populations
6. Communities with high newcomer populations
7. Communities with few exiting parks (underserved)
8. Locations with parking
9. Communities with low tree density
10. Communities with middle incomes
11. Communities with high senior populations
12. Locations near tourist attractions
13. Locations with space for sports fields/ recreation facilities

Inclusive and Welcoming Spaces

Suggestions to make recreation facilities and parks more welcoming, inclusive, and safe for community members of all ages, abilities, genders, cultures, and races, as ranked by participants, include:

1. More washrooms
 - a. Including suggestions for accessible, safe, well-maintained, and cleaner washrooms
 - b. Including a suggestion to choose locations that are not isolated, which can reduce safety, especially for women

2. Improved accessibility
 - a. Including suggestions for accessible washrooms, pathways, seating areas, and playgrounds
3. Improved cleanliness
 - a. Including suggestions for more regular cleanings, public education programs, and community clean-up projects
4. Improved maintenance
5. Improved safety
 - a. Including suggestions for police presence or security, cameras, safety buttons, and phone booths
6. More lighting
7. Art and design
 - a. Including suggestions for art that is welcoming, and that represents diverse cultures
8. More programming
 - a. Including suggestions for school programming that encourages school and student-use of nearby recreation facilities and parks, more outdoor education programs for youth, and more community safety and community clean-up programs/projects
9. More seating
 - a. Including suggestions for accessible, comfortable, and well-maintained seating
10. Co-location to create community hubs
 - a. Including suggestions for co-locating in recreation centres and parks, with service related to newcomers, mental health, housing, security, employment, unhoused people
 - b. Increase cultural and religious inclusion by incorporating multi-faith spaces into community hubs
11. Signage
 - a. Including suggestions for signage that indicated spaces are open/welcome to all, and in different languages
12. Increased plantings
 - a. Including suggestions for (more) botanical gardens, pollinator gardens, trees, rooftop gardens, and plantings overall.
13. Access to water, including drinking fountains
14. Designing recreation facilities and parks as all-ages spaces, and designing playgrounds for a range of youth ages in mind
15. Improved booking processes that allow more people to access programming
16. Extended hours of service
17. Indigenous wayfinding
18. More shade
19. Inclusive community engagement
20. Some participants suggested gender-neutral washrooms while others suggested gendered washrooms
21. More facilities (overall/general)
22. More walking trails

23. Restrict dog access
24. Include fitness equipment for all ages and abilities in parks
25. Modernize facilities
26. Welcome/Info desk in facilities
27. Create more outdoor and indoor spaces for unhoused people in need.
28. Widen sidewalks

Additional Feedback

Additional feedback and suggestions *not included in the summary points above*:

- Program suggestions:
 - More accessible/inclusive recreation programs
 - More affordable programs for low-income families
 - Simplify the Welcome Policy renewal process
 - More community events to bring youth and other community members together
 - More outdoor winter programming (e.g. cross-country skiing)
 - Programs that bring residents outside of their own community (e.g. school-bus field trips)
 - More community volunteer programs for parks (e.g. park cleanups)
 - Allow camping in parks
 - Create a “Parks Passport” program to encourage people to visit many parks
- Partnership suggestions:
 - Collaborate with local schools
 - Collaborate with potential funding and programming partners such as Toronto Raptors Community Agency, Shoot for Peace, Tim Hortons Foundation, Nike Foundation, OVO Community Partner
- Communication suggestions:
 - Update each community recreation centre webpage daily with information on drop-in programs and closures in the local neighbourhood
- Park Improvements:
 - Some preference for reinvestment in existing parks to make them great, as opposed to investing in new, mediocre parks
 - Re-allocate resources to keep every park at the same maintenance standards
 - Increase playground size where existing equipment is overused (areas of high youth population)
 - Install handwashing stations
 - Include more educational features for children
 - Include more waste bins and signage to encourage responsible disposal
 - Winter pathway maintenance/snow clearing
 - Include more fire pits and BBQs
 - Include more picnic areas
 - Include more pools, basketball courts, and fitness equipment
 - Include mobile first aid facilities during busy periods
 - Include harm reduction features like sharps boxes

- Community Recreation Centre improvements:
 - Include first aid stations
 - Include more indoor playgrounds (year-round, weather-safe play areas)
- Sustainability suggestions:
 - Net-zero facilities
 - Encourage circular economies when building facilities
 - Parks as habitats for bees, birds, and nature
- Safety and enforcement:
 - Concerns around people using drugs in parks, and the immediate need to ensure park visitor safety
 - Include more bylaw officers in parks to ticket by-law violations
- Site-specific suggestions:
 - Community recreation centre/ hub in South Etobicoke instead of new parks (participants felt the areas is already well-served by parks)
 - New park at:
 - Frith Road (Between Jane and Frith)
 - Kingsview Village (The Westway Neighbourhood)
 - Jane and Finch
 - Sheppard and Laura
 - Central Etobicoke
 - John Garland Blvd
 - Jamestown
 - Improved park at:
 - South Etobicoke
- Other:
 - Increase staff presence/availability to answer resident questions
 - Charge fees for non-local garden visits
 - Concerns about low parking availability at some recreation facilities and parks, coupled with high parking ticket fees
 - Concern that improvements discussed in these engagements won't happen, or won't happen soon enough

Summary of Results – Other Community Groups

This section summarizes the feedback from the three non-CCP Cluster community groups who submitted results, representing engagement with 142 community members in North York and Scarborough. Groups involved included a senior's group, youth group, and a Tennis Club (located at a City of Toronto Tennis Court).

Participants provided the following feedback:

Recreation Facility Preferences and Priorities

The 15 recreation facilities most important for households to access, as ranked by participants:

Two of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Pool - indoor leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs) (29 participants selected this option)
2. Pool - indoor lane pool (with shallow end and deep end) (22)
3. Pool - outdoor (22)
4. Ice rink - indoor, arena (22)
5. Ice rink - outdoor, natural (22)
6. Ice rink – outdoor, artificial (22)
7. Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics) (21)
8. Fitness equipment (19)
9. Gymnasium (19)
10. Sports field (e.g. soccer, football) (19)
11. Ice skating trail (14)
12. Splash pad (14)
13. Tennis court (13)
14. Basketball court (10)
15. Skateboard park (10)

The Community Centre facilities most important for household to access, as ranked by participants:

Two of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Youth-specific room (e.g. Enhanced Youth Space) (32 participants selected this option)
2. Kitchen (25)
3. Weight/cardio room indoor (23)
4. Lane pool (with shallow end and deep end) (22)
5. Leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs) (22)
6. Gymnasium (for indoor sports, summer camps, and community meetings) (22)
7. Indoor ice rink/arena (22)
8. Indoor sports field (22)
9. Walking/jogging track (20)
10. Fitness/dance/aerobic studio (17)
11. Shared space to study, read and work, with Wi-Fi access (15)
12. Seating and lounge areas (15)
13. Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics) (14)
14. Tech space or computer lab (8)
15. Music recording studio (7)
16. Informal spaces to meet and spend time with other community members (6)
17. Senior-specific room (3)

Co-Location of Services and Facilities at Community Recreation Centres

Overall, more participants support community recreation centres co-locating with other community partners, services, and facilities to become community hubs, than those who do not.

All four participating community groups responded to this question.

Facilities participants recommended for co-location are:

Two of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Libraries
2. Sports Facilities
3. Cafes
4. Daycares
5. Ice Rinks
6. Fitness Rooms
7. Pools
8. Kitchens
9. Youth-specific spaces

Parkland Preferences and Priorities

Participants ranked their preference for the type and size of park to prioritize investment in the following order:

All four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. **Community parks** (medium-sized parks serving several neighbourhoods, with a range of amenities and features)
2. **Local parks** (small parks serving residents within a 5–10-minute walking distance, with amenities like playgrounds)
3. **Destination parks** (large-sized parks with special features that attract residents from across the city, such as Earl Bales Park and Centennial Park)
4. **Naturalized areas** (e.g. ravines, woodlands, or wetlands, which might not be accessible to people but have significant environmental value)

Common barriers that prevent community members from accessing or visiting Toronto parks include:

Two of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Dark/unlit spaces
2. Not enough seating
3. Facilities (especially outdoor rinks) are too far away
4. Lack of washrooms
5. Lack of drinking fountains

6. Pests
7. Lack of shade
8. Do not feel they are the target demographic for the park

Areas or neighbourhoods of Toronto participants suggested being prioritized for new parks include:

One of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Communities where immigrants first settle
2. Communities with high population of children and youth
3. Low-income communities

Inclusive and Welcoming Spaces

Suggestions to make recreation facilities and parks more welcoming, inclusive, and safe for community members of all ages, abilities, genders, cultures, and races include:

One of the four participating community groups responded to this question.

1. Multicultural room for community meetings, art and cultural programs
2. Seating and washrooms at all outdoor parks (parks of all sizes)
3. Youth specific rooms at recreational facilities
4. Regular patrol at all not just selected parks to ensure safety
5. Make parks more active spaces and encourage healthy living by including exercise equipment

Additional Feedback

Additional feedback and suggestions not included in the summary points above:

- Improving park facilities in low-income communities is especially important for youth in these neighborhoods, who need access to facilities that will occupy them meaningfully and divert them from engaging in counter-productive activities.

Next Steps

All feedback collected through community engagement Phase 1 will be summarized. This information will be used development draft directions for the PLS and PRFP, and will be shared with community members in Phase 2 of the community engagement process for review and feedback.

Appendix A:

DIY Kit Feedback

Each DIY kit submission form also included questions about the kit, including the support materials and overall process, to understand if this is a format to replicate or improve for future engagements. 14 of the 16 groups responded to this section of the survey.

If the City provided other Do-It-Yourself Workshop Kits on other topics, based on this experience how likely are you to try to host your own community discussion again?

- Very likely 12
- Likely 1
- Neutral 1
- Unlikely 0
- Very unlikely 0

How satisfied are you with the materials and process provided to support you in the Do-It-Yourself Workshop Kit?

- Very satisfied 11
- Generally satisfied 2
- Neutral 1
- Generally unsatisfied 0
- Very unsatisfied 0

Do you have any suggestions or feedback for improving future Do-It-Yourself Workshop Kits?

- The Workshop kit and presentation slide deck were extremely resourceful and helpful in the community engagement. Thanks!
- The material was well explained and easy to understand. To encourage greater interest, we could incorporate more visual elements.
- We found the Do-It-Yourself Workshop Kits to be highly beneficial and well-organized. We have no suggestions or feedback for improvement at this time.
- I appreciated the guide, but it would be ideal to have a document that captures the expected information that is aligned with this report.
- They worked excellently and made the process very easy and straight-forward for facilitators.

- The issue/topic was very relevant and resonated in the community. Attendees showed great interest in the facilities, parks and courts, and appreciated the space to express their concerns about insecurity and other problems in these areas. The theme of the workshop was relevant and well received. We appreciated having funding from the City to incentivize folks to join the workshop, provide food and TTC reimbursement. This made it possible for us to include folks who are low income and often marginalized/excluded from these kinds of conversations. The workshop provided a valuable opportunity for community members to share their views and opinions. It was beneficial to have a PowerPoint presentation to show all the questions, especially there were seniors and new immigrants among the participants, as it made it easier for them to follow the event.
- The kit was compiled very well. When presented to seniors as JANS did, the information needs to be condensed but the kit was overall very thorough.
- Needs to be more hands on, have actually park kits and community centre design layouts for youth to help envision.
- The workshop went well, all the participants were able to engage and share their experiences. The introduction and instructions were very transparent. The location being in the City of Toronto Parks & Recreation Center supported the workshop greatly.

Appendix B:

Black Resilience

Community Coordination

Plan Cluster Results

This Cluster engagement was organized and facilitated by [BE Initiative \(Black Environmental Initiative\)](#). In total, 10 participants took part in this community conversation.

Recreation Facility Preferences and Priorities

The 15 recreation facilities most important for households to access, as ranked by participants:

- Splash pad: 5
- Pool - outdoor: 3
- Gymnasium: 2
- Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics): 2
- Playground - outdoor: 2
- Wading pool: 2
- Basketball court: 1
- Beach volleyball: 1
- Dog off-leash area: 1
- Playground - indoor: 1
- Pool - indoor lane pool (with shallow end and deep end): 1
- Tennis court: 1

The Community Centre facilities most important for household to access, as ranked by participants:

- Preschool room: 3
- Lane pool (with shallow end and deep end): 2
- Gymnasium (for indoor sports, summer camps, and community meetings): 2
- Shared space to study, read and work, with WIFI access: 2
- Seating and lounge areas: 2

- Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics): 2
- Youth-specific room (e.g. Enhanced Youth Space): 2
- Sensory/multi-sensory room: 2
- Tech space or computer lab: 2
- Weight/cardio room indoor: 1
- Kitchen: 1
- Informal spaces to meet and spend time with other community members: 1
- Senior-specific room: 1
- Indoor playground or play space: 1
- Indoor sports field: 1

Co-Location of Services and Facilities at Community Recreation Centres

Most or all participants support community recreation centres co-locating with other community partners, services, and facilities.

Facilities participants recommended for co-location are:

1. Tutoring
2. New-comer services
3. Childcare services/ daycare
4. Mental health services
5. Cooking classes/community kitchens

Parkland Preferences and Priorities

Participants ranked their preference for the type and size of park to prioritize investment in the following order:

1. Naturalized areas (e.g. ravines, woodlands, or wetlands, which might not be accessible to people but have significant environmental value)
2. Community parks (medium-sized parks serving several neighbourhoods, with a range of amenities and features)
3. Local parks (small parks serving residents within a 5-10 minute walking distance, with amenities like playgrounds)
4. Destination parks (large-sized parks with special features that attract residents from across the city, such as Earl Bales Park and Centennial Park)

Common barriers that prevent community members from accessing or visiting Toronto parks include:

1. Lack of lighting
2. Homeless people and tents

3. Alcohol and drug use
4. Litter
5. Signage

Areas or neighbourhoods of Toronto participants suggested being prioritized for new parks include:

1. Jane and Finch
2. Jamestown
3. John Garland Blvd

Inclusive and Welcoming Spaces

Suggestions to make recreation facilities and parks more welcoming, inclusive, and safe for community members of all ages, abilities, genders, cultures, and races include:

1. More lighting
2. Regular upkeep and clean up
3. Prohibit dogs
4. More signage in different languages to accommodate newcomers

Additional Feedback

Additional feedback and suggestions not included in the summary points above:

- Invest in existing parks rather than creating new parks.

Appendix C:

Newcomer Community Coordination Plan Cluster Results

This Cluster engagement was organized and facilitated by [WoodGreen Community services](#). In total, 12 participants took part in this community conversation.

Recreation Facility Preferences and Priorities

The 15 recreation facilities most important for households to access, as ranked by participants:

1. Gymnasium: 12
2. Playground - outdoor: 11
3. Sports field (e.g. soccer, football): 11
4. Playground - indoor: 10
5. Fitness equipment: 9
6. Games for disabled people: 9
7. Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics): 7
8. Tennis court: 7
9. Pool - indoor lane pool (with shallow end and deep end): 7
10. Pool - outdoor: 7
11. Pool - indoor leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs): 6
12. Baseball: 5
13. Basketball court: 5
14. Beach volleyball: 5
15. Splash pad: 5
16. Wading pool: 5
17. Bike park: 4
18. Ice rink - indoor, arena: 1
19. Ice rink - outdoor, natural: 1
20. Ice rink – outdoor, artificial: 1
21. Ice skating trail: 1
22. Lawn bowling greens: 1

The Community Centre facilities most important for household to access, as ranked by participants:

1. Gymnasium (for indoor sports, summer camps, and community meetings): 12
2. Shared space to study, read and work, with WIFI access: 12
3. Youth-specific room (e.g. Enhanced Youth Space): 12
4. Seating and lounge areas: 12
5. First Aid Room: 10
6. Lane pool (with shallow end and deep end): 9
7. Walking/jogging track: 9
8. Informal spaces to meet and spend time with other community members: 9
9. Fitness/dance/aerobic studio: 8
10. Kitchen: 8
11. Senior-specific room: 8
12. Tech space or computer lab: 8
13. Indoor sports field: 8
14. Weight/cardio room indoor: 7
15. Indoor playground or play space: 7
16. Multipurpose room (for community meetings, art and culture programs, pop-up clinics): 7
17. Preschool room: 6
18. Leisure pool (warmer water and seating, typically children and senior programs): 6
19. Indoor ice rink/arena: 1

Co-Location of Services and Facilities at Community Recreation Centres

Most or all participants support community recreation centres co-locating with other community partners, services, and facilities.

Facilities participants recommended for co-location are:

1. Libraries to provide greater access to resources, programs, and community engagement opportunities
2. Childcare facilities to support families
3. Pools and offer swimming lessons to promote water safety and physical fitness for all ages
4. Newcomer services, including settlement support, to help newcomers integrate smoothly into the community
5. Language services such as LINC and ESL programs to support newcomers in improving their language skills and fostering integration

Parkland Preferences and Priorities

Participants ranked their preference for the type and size of park to prioritize investment in the following order:

1. Local parks (small parks serving residents within a 5-10 minute walking distance, with amenities like playgrounds)
2. Community parks (medium-sized parks serving several neighbourhoods, with a range of amenities and features)
3. Naturalized areas (e.g. ravines, woodlands, or wetlands, which might not be accessible to people but have significant environmental value)
4. Destination parks (large-sized parks with special features that attract residents from across the city, such as Earl Bales Park and Centennial Park)

Common barriers that prevent community members from accessing or visiting Toronto parks include:

1. Accessibility facilities for individuals with disabilities
2. Unavailability of clean washrooms
3. Concerns about excessive parking fees and improve accessible transportation options to parks
4. Congested parking area to accommodate more vehicles
5. Safety concerns and unavailability of clean drinking water for visitors

Areas or neighbourhoods of Toronto participants suggested being prioritized for new parks include:

1. Install and maintain fitness equipment in parks to promote physical activity and well-being
2. Develop and maintain dedicated biking paths to ensure safety and enhance the outdoor experience for cyclists
3. Consider creating indoor playgrounds to provide children with safe and weather-resistant play areas
4. Install and maintain basketball courts to encourage recreational activities and community engagement
5. Develop and maintain sports fields to support a variety of recreational and athletic activities for the community

Inclusive and Welcoming Spaces

Suggestions to make recreation facilities and parks more welcoming, inclusive, and safe for community members of all ages, abilities, genders, cultures, and races include:

1. Consider washrooms, including options designed for individuals with disabilities and facilities for changing children's diapers
2. Safety concerns in the parks to be addressed to ensure a secure environment for all visitors
3. Increase the seating areas and ensure the parks have comfortable, well-maintained seating options
4. Provide additional play facilities for children of different ages to enhance their recreational experience
5. Expand the pedestrian sidewalks to accommodate more foot traffic and improve accessibility

Additional Feedback

Additional feedback and suggestions not included in the summary points above:

“Some participants raised concerns about the security situation in certain parks, particularly the presence of individuals struggling with drug addiction in specific areas of Toronto. They stressed the need for immediate action to address these safety issues, including increased police presence to ensure the security of visitors. Additionally, participants suggested providing both mobile first aid facilities in the parks and permanent first aid stations in community centers, especially during busy periods such as public holidays and weekends. They also pointed out the challenges posed by the limited availability of parking spaces in the summer and expressed concerns about the high cost of parking tickets.”