

Discussion Guide

Revitalization of Queen's Park North
July / August 2025

REVITALIZING QUEEN'S PARK NORTH

Queen's Park North is a historic part of Toronto's downtown. In a growing city facing social and environmental challenges, public and green spaces are as important as ever. To help sustain Queen's Park North for future generations, Toronto City Council directed City of Toronto staff to begin conversations to revitalize the park.

The Weston family has offered to collaborate with the City and provide an estimated \$50 million to fund enhancements to Queen's Park North, with additional support to ensure the park's long-term maintenance and programming.

City staff have been instructed by Council to conduct community and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis engagement – along with design exploration – prior to the City entering into a donation agreement to fund final design, delivery of park enhancements and ongoing operations.

The engagement conversations will inform opportunities related to park amenities, programming, maintenance and governance. This public feedback will be collected and form part of City staff's report back to City Council in late 2025, which will include a recommended path forward.

This Discussion Guide introduces the engagement process that City staff will be leading between July 2025 and February 2026, which will seek feedback from the community to inform the revitalization plans.



DID YOU KNOW?



Indigenous peoples have occupied these lands since time immemorial; the Mississaugas arrived as part of the great Anishnaabe migration pre-contact, followed by the Wendat (c.1200) and the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, which established villages & hunting grounds (c.1650).



Queen's Park North is Toronto's oldest park, opened in 1860.

Taddle Creek runs underneath the park and was buried in 1884.



There was a large pavilion and washrooms in the Park, which were built in 1893 and eventually replaced in 1969 by the King Edward VII statue.



The King Edward VII statue came from India in the 1960s, when its government was removing colonial sculptures. It was donated by the Jackman Foundation to the City of Toronto as public art.



The two surviving butternut trees in the park are protected species. They used to exist in relation to pawpaw trees, which were grown alongside by Indigenous communities as a food system.



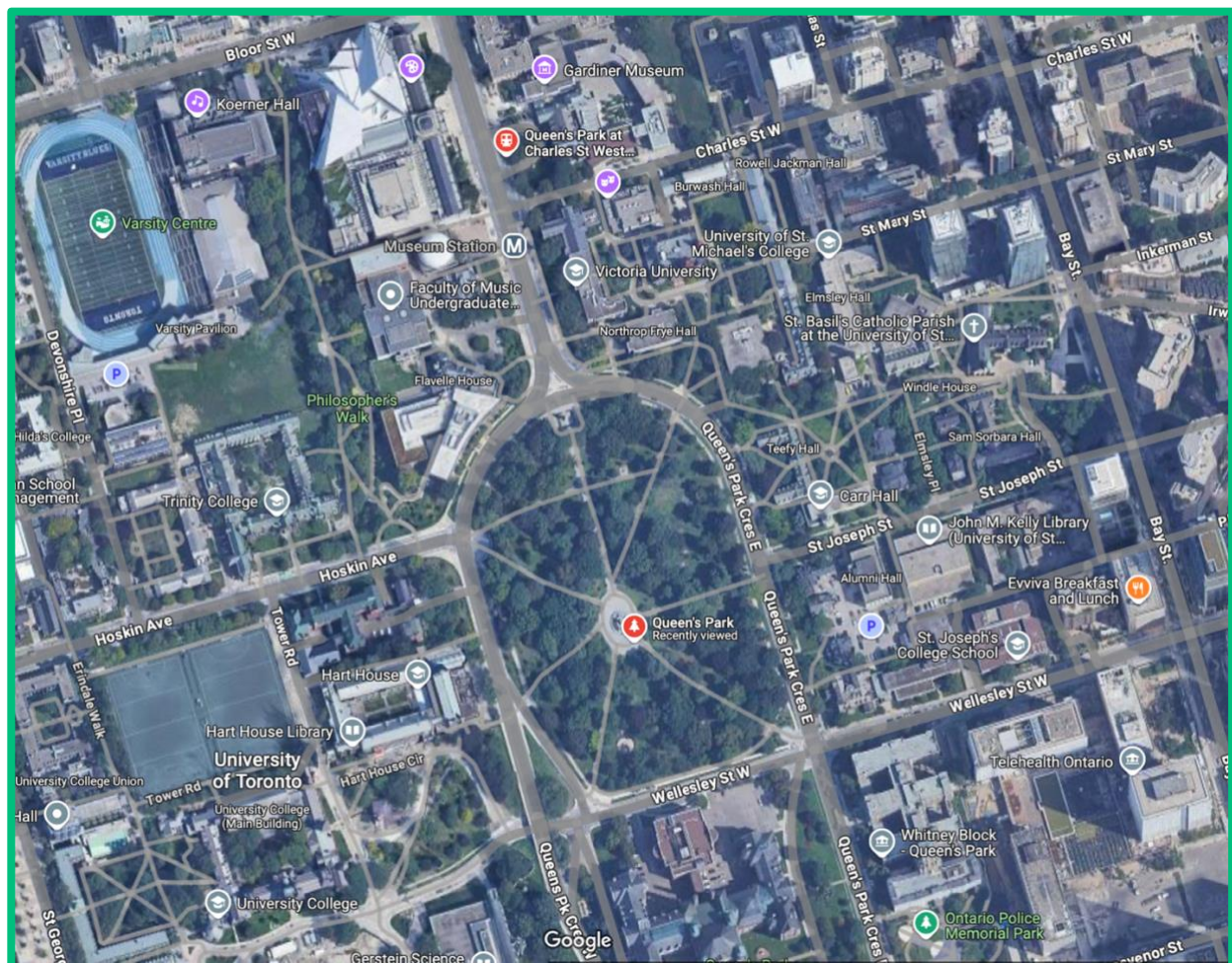
Since 2012, there has been a moratorium on large gatherings in the park to help protect the trees.

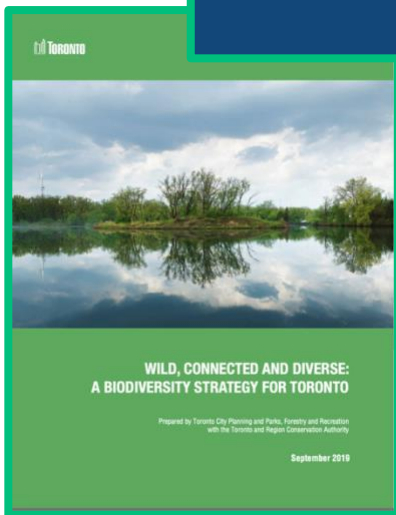
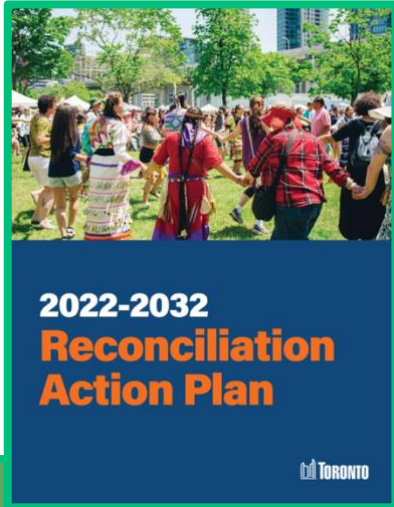
THE PARK TODAY

Queen's Park North is an important public space in the heart of downtown. The current state of the park – in terms of its ecology, infrastructure, and human uses – all inform how we think about future opportunities.

We know that:

- An **extensive tree canopy and root zone** covers most of the park and needs to be treated sensitively through high-quality care and maintenance.
- The park includes **several historic elements and public art**, some of which should not be moved or altered.
- **Many different people use the park in many ways**; identifying and understanding these uses are critical to informing revitalization plans.
- The park has a longstanding function as a **civic gathering space**.
- There are **many institutions around the park**, including the Ontario Legislature, the University of Toronto, the Royal Ontario Museum, the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the Gardiner Museum.
- The park is bounded by **busy roadways, and a subway tunnel** runs underneath the park.
- This land is covered by the **Eternal Council Fires Wampum belt** (also known as the Chief Yellowhead belt), which details locations and governance responsibilities of each of the five eternal Council Fires to support peaceful co-existence.





LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The City of Toronto is excited by the opportunity to revitalize Queen's Park North through a significant capital donation and support for long-term maintenance.

The revitalization process includes:

- Public engagement and visioning
- Design and implementation of new and revitalized features
- Enhanced operations and maintenance, supported by an endowment and new operating model
- Appropriately scaled, all-season animation

The City sees an opportunity to invest in the park in a way that both respects and sustains its great existing elements and responds to the evolving context and priorities that shape our parks.

Previous park investments were planned in 2014/2015 (including public consultation), with implementation from 2017 to 2019. Now in 2025, the planned revitalization of Queen's Park North also has new elements to consider, such as:

- The Downtown Parks and Public Realm Plan (2018)
- The Biodiversity Strategy (2019)
- The Reconciliation Action Plan (2022-2023)
- A new entrance to Museum Subway station in the north part of Queen's Park North (2024),
- Direction from City Council to enable more food and beverage offerings and opportunities for new public washrooms in parks (2025)
- A capital budget to implement priorities identified but not delivered in 2017-2019.

Questions for you

Thinking about the current state of the park and how it is currently used, tell us:

- What do you like about Queen's Park North today?
- What don't you like, and why?
- Which opportunities for the future would you like to see considered?



Your answers will help the City develop plans for revitalizing Queen's Park North. The City will work to protect things people like and work to change the things people don't like.

DRAFT VISION

The City, in collaboration with the Weston family, has developed a draft Vision and Principles for the revitalization of Queen's Park North:

Queen's Park North is an extraordinary place for people and nature throughout the seasons, that respects the existing beauty of Queen's Park and showcases excellence in design, ecological stewardship, programming and partnerships.



Questions for you

- What do you like about the draft Vision? Do you have any suggestions you would like the City to consider? If so, what are they?
- What do you like about the draft Guiding Principles? Do you have any suggestions you would like the City to consider? If so, what are they?

DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Celebrate and elevate Queen's Park North as a distinct urban green space and signature Toronto destination



Maintain Queen's Park as a public space and place for gathering and civic life, welcoming to all



Protect and celebrate the trees



Enhance the visitor experience and animate the park year-round through creative programming and improved amenities



Implement ecological and sustainable practices and ensure a high standard of operations and maintenance with appropriate funding and expertise



Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and being



Strengthen relationships between public space and institutional and community partners



Address outstanding priorities from the 2019 project



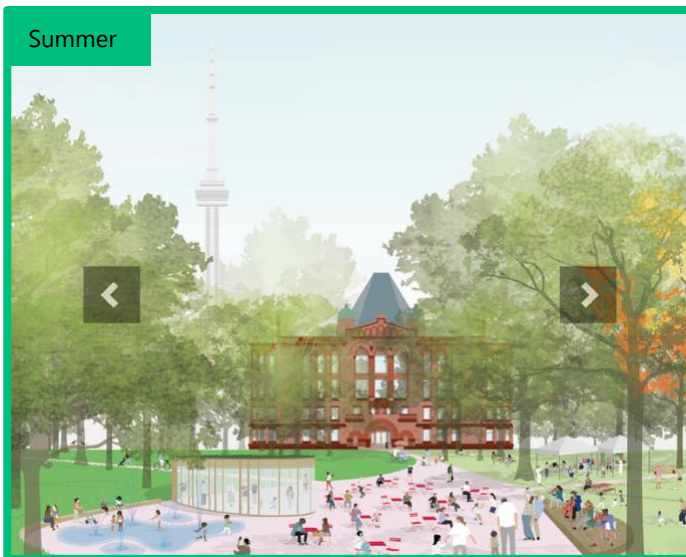
Connect the park to existing and emerging open spaces in the area, including the University of Toronto and the University Park project

EARLY IMAGES TO INSPIRE

The images here are an artist's rendering of a revitalized Queen's Park North, showing potential park features, uses, and programming. They were created to support the donation announcement in March 2025, and can be found on the City's web page for Queen's Park North.

The images show some possible new uses and features of the Park that the City is interested in exploring with the community, as well as show how the park could be animated during all four seasons. No elements in this drawing will necessarily be included in the revitalized Queen's Park North – we are including them here as a catalyst for discussion and to spark our imagination of what is possible.

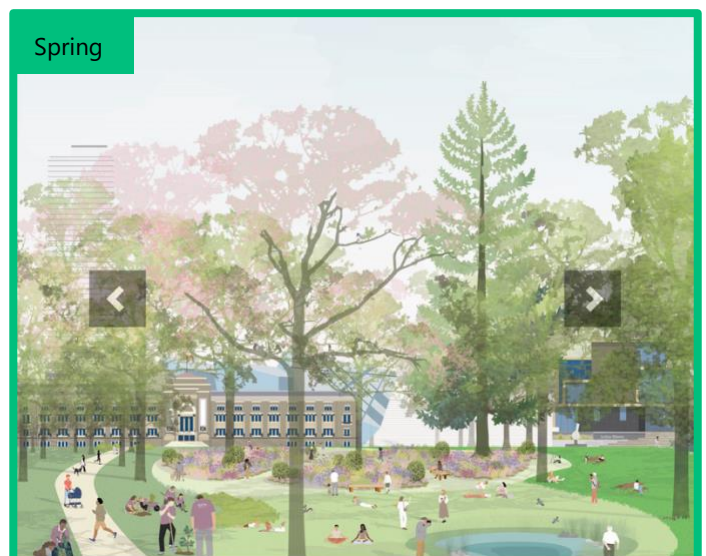
Artist's rendering of visitors enjoying various activities on a busy summer day in a revitalized Queen's Park North



Artist's rendering of visitors participating in learning activities on a fall day in a revitalized Queen's Park North



Artist's rendering of visitors skating and relaxing on a winter night in a revitalized Queen's Park North

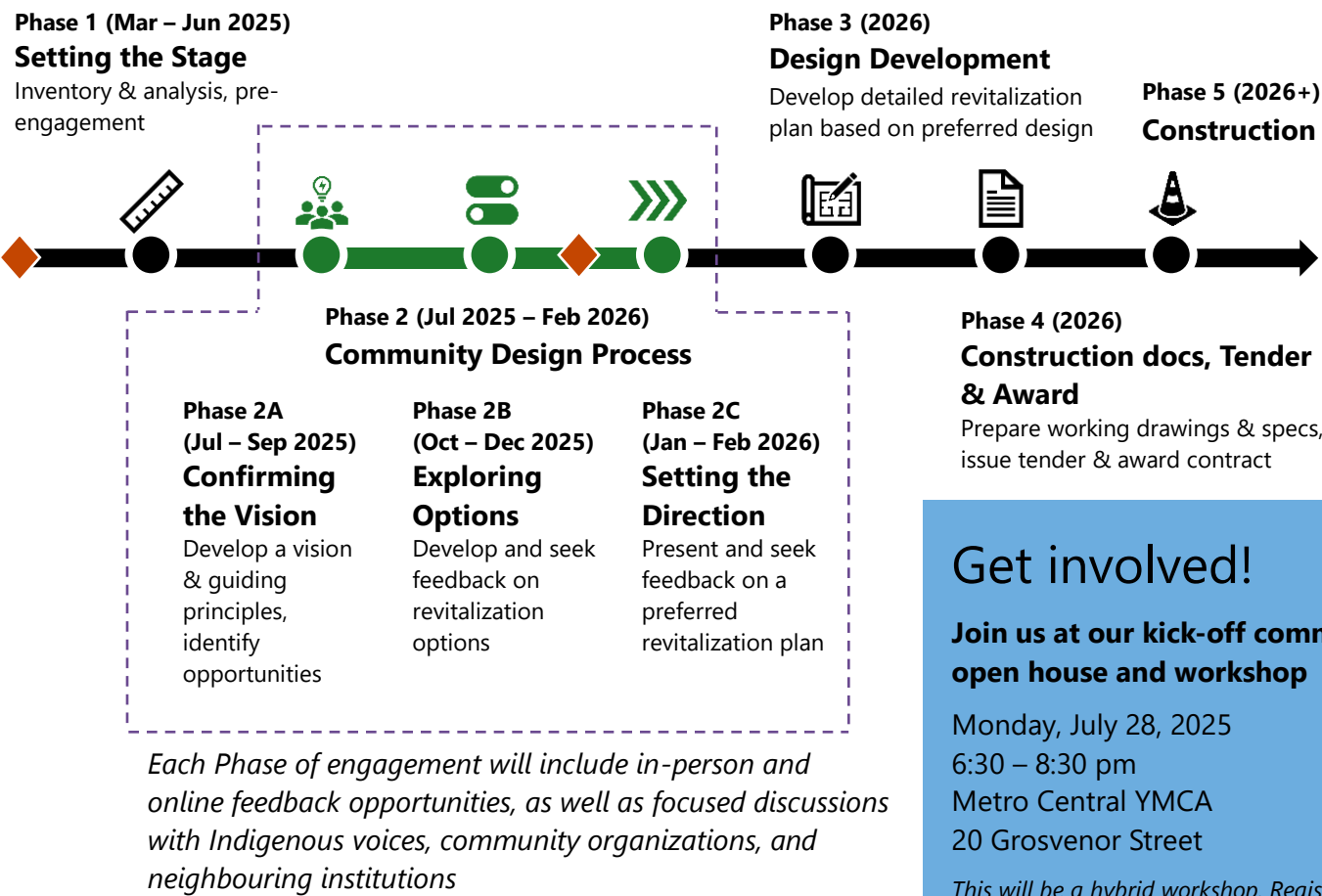


Artist's rendering of visitors enjoying quiet moments on a spring day in a revitalized Queen's Park North

PROCESS & TIMELINE

Queen’s Park North will follow the phases that the City of Toronto typically follows for the design and development of parks, as illustrated below. The important checkpoints with City Council that relate to accepting the donation are identified with orange diamonds.

This project started in March 2025 when Toronto City Council directed staff to begin community engagement and preliminary design of future park enhancements. Staff will report back to City Council in late 2025 (between Phases 2B and 2C of the community design process) with a project implementation update, including the terms of the recommended donation agreement between the City and the Weston family, covering final design, delivery and long-term operations, maintenance, and governance. City Council will decide on these recommendations before proceeding with further work and implementation.



www.toronto.ca/QueensParkNorth

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About the revitalization planning team: City staff from Parks & Recreation, the Strategic Partnerships office, and other City divisions are working closely with the Weston family to advance the project. The project team also includes specialized support from consultants including Janet Rosenberg & Studio (park design), Trophic Design (Indigenous lens to design and engagement), ERA Architects Inc. (heritage), and Bespoke Collective (communications). Third Party Public Inc. supports the City-led engagement process.