

## For facilitators using this presentation deck:

- The City of Toronto is collecting feedback from community members to inform updates to the **Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (PRFP)** and **Parkland Strategy (PLS)**.
- This presentation is part of a **Do-It-Yourself Workshop Kit** and is meant to be used with the **Discussion Guide**, to encourage community groups (like park groups, local sport organizations, neighbours, high school classrooms, and more) to lead their own conversations about the future of recreation facilities and parkland in Toronto.
- A summary of your conversation should be shared with City staff through the **online submission form**, so your feedback can be used to inform updates to both strategic documents.
- Visit the **project webpage** to sign up for e-updates, get more project information, and find other ways to get involved: [www.toronto.ca/ParksAndFacilitiesPlans](http://www.toronto.ca/ParksAndFacilitiesPlans)



# Do-It-Yourself Workshop Phase 2 Engagement:

Parkland Strategy &  
Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan

Fall 2025

# Agenda



## 1. Introduction

- Participant round of introductions
- What is the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan?
- What is the Parkland Strategy?
- Community engagement so far

## 2. Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan

- Emerging directions
- Your feedback through community discussion

## 3. Parkland Strategy

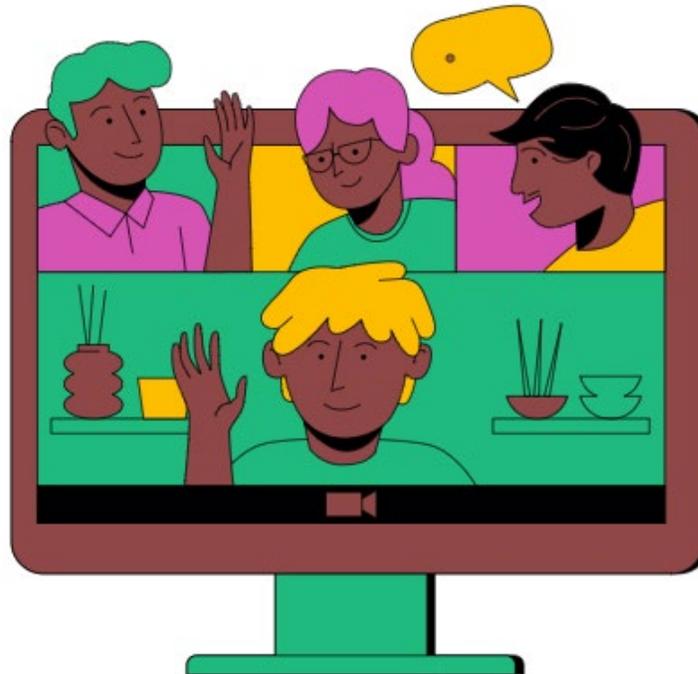
- Emerging directions
- Your feedback through community discussion

## 4. Next Steps

- Facilitate **meaningful discussion** about the City's Parkland Strategy and Facilities Plan.
- Have a **productive** conversation where **everyone feels heard**.
- **Provide your feedback** to the project team's for implementation.

# Participant Introductions: Who is in our discussion?

**Please take turns to share your name, and your favourite activity when you visit a park (e.g., walking, reading, playing sports).**



# Workshop Introduction

Toronto's recreation facilities and parks offer communities spaces to play, connect, learn, exercise, and celebrate.

The City of Toronto's **Parkland Strategy** and **Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan** are 20-year documents that guide the growth of, and investment in, recreation facilities and parks across the city.

Before we start, take a moment to think about the recreation facilities and park spaces that are important and meaningful to you and your community.



# Community Input

The **Parkland Strategy** and **Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan** (and implementation strategy) are being updated to ensure they continue to meet the changing needs and priorities of residents and reflect updates in population growth, policies, and funding.

**Today's facilitator will summarize key points from this community conversation and share your feedback with the City to help inform the updates for both documents.**

## Parkland Strategy



## Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan



# The Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan

**The next few slides explain what the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan is, at a high level.**

# The Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (PRFP)

The **Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (2017)** and **Implementation Strategy (2019)** are Council-approved 20-year plans to build and renew recreation facilities to meet changing and growing needs across the city. Facilities covered in the plan include:

## Community Recreation Centres

- Gymnasiums
- Indoor Pools
- Multi-purpose Spaces



## Ice Facilities

- Arenas
- Outdoor Artificial Ice Rinks (Airs)
- Skating Trails
- Curling Facilities



## Outdoor Aquatics

- Outdoor Pools
- Splash Pads and Wading Pools



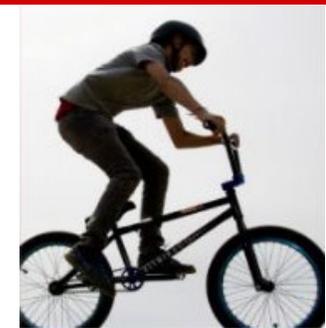
## Sports Fields

- Soccer and Multi-use Fields
- Ball Diamonds
- Cricket Pitches
- Support Buildings
- Sport Bubbles



## Sport Courts and Zones

- Tennis and Pickleball Courts
- Basketball Courts
- Skateparks
- Bike Parks
- Bocce Courts
- Lawn Bowling Greens
- Dog Off-leash Areas (OLA)



Note: Smaller amenities like seating, picnic areas, and outdoor fitness equipment are not included in the plan. Golf courses and playgrounds are addressed through other planning projects, so are not included in the plan.

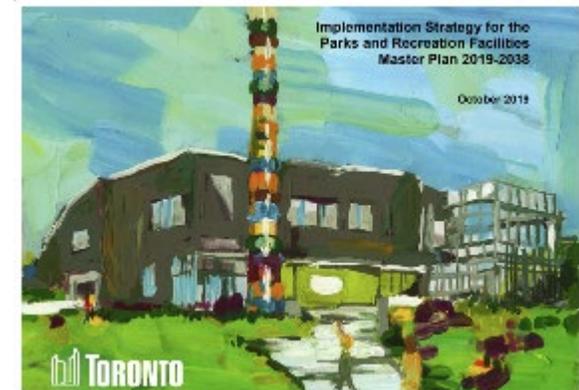
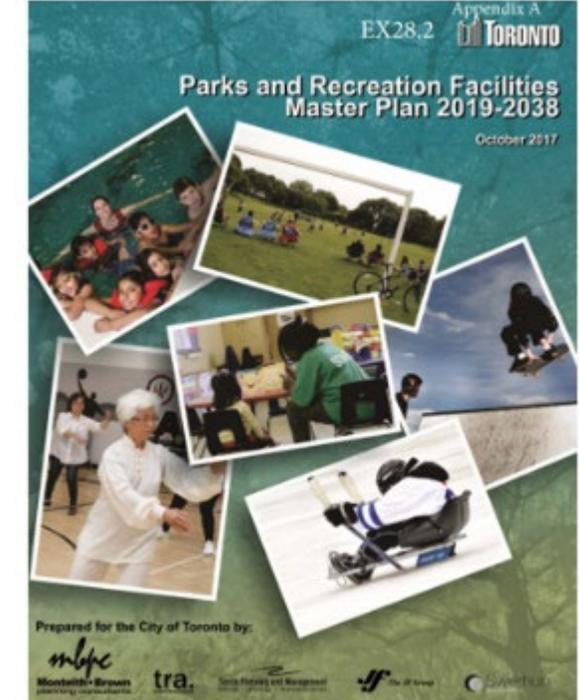
# PRFP Recommendations

The PRFP guides investment decisions and identifies priorities for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities across the city in 5-year increments, from 2019 to 2038.

The recommendations in the PRFP guide future capital budgets and determine when and where to:

- **Reinvest in existing recreation facilities** through replacement, repurposing, renewal, when facilities reach their end of life or are under-used.
- **Address recreation facility gaps** where there is a lack of facilities or large waitlists
- **Respond to future recreation facility needs** based on estimated population growth

**The current PRFP is being implemented across the city, every day.**



# The Parkland Strategy

**The next few slides explain what the Parkland Strategy is, at a high level.**

There are **over 1,500 parks throughout Toronto** that are owned and/or operated by the City.

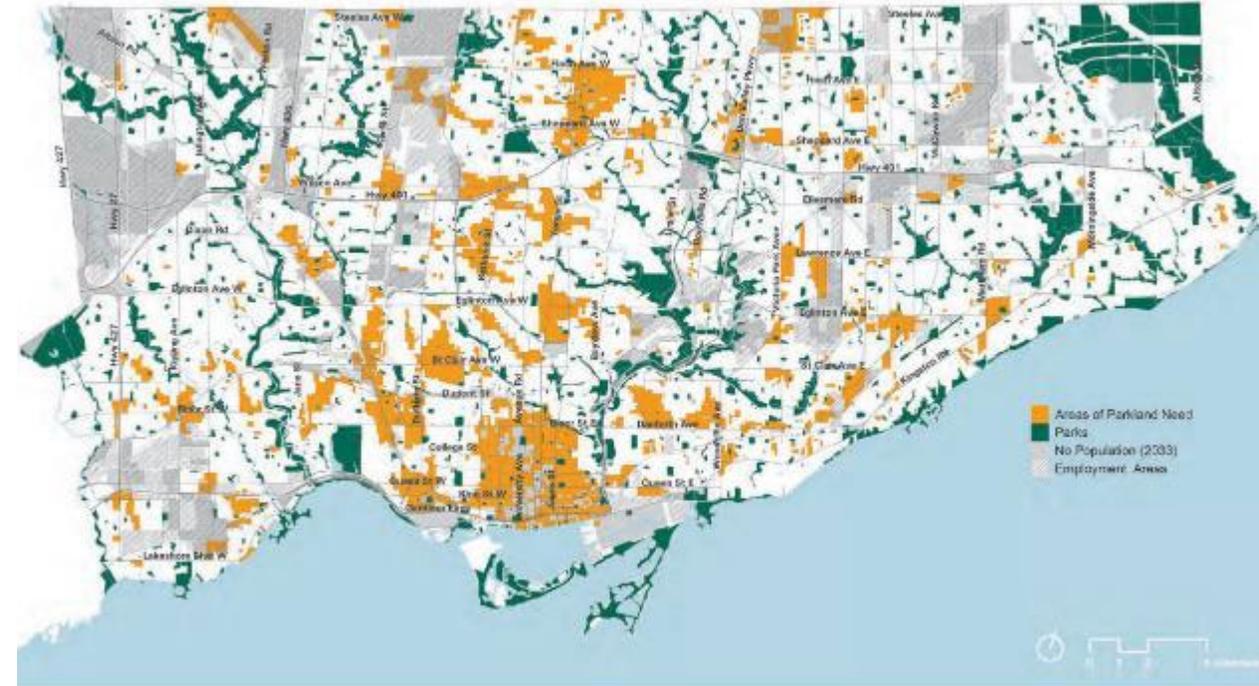
The Parkland Strategy (PLS) was adopted by Toronto City Council in 2019 to set a **20-year vision and planning framework** to guide where the City should prioritize **investment in adding new parkland and improving existing parks**, as the population grows.

The PLS uses data to calculate **parkland provision rates**, which is the amount of parkland available per person, measured in square metres, within a 500 m walking distance of residences.

Rates of parkland provision vary considerably across the city, with some areas having rates as low as 0 m<sup>2</sup> and others having over 100 m<sup>2</sup> per person. **There are many gaps in the parks system that need to be addressed.**

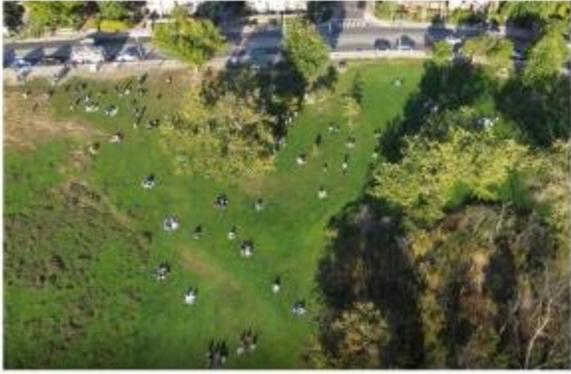
A series of maps in the PLS helps staff to analyse the parks system.

Figure 18 in the PLS is shown below



Orange indicates **Parkland Priority Areas** for park studies, land acquisitions, and onsite land dedications from developers (the City's primary tool for creating new parks in areas that are densifying).

# The Parkland Strategy is guided by four principles



## EXPAND

the parks system by creating new parks to **support growth and address gaps** to ensure an effective parks system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.



## IMPROVE

the function of existing parks to promote **community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and health and wellbeing** through active living, access to nature, and the provision of spaces for rest, relaxation, and leisure.



## CONNECT

parks and other open spaces, physically and visually, and leverage opportunities to use other open spaces so that people, communities and wildlife have abundant access to parks and open spaces and can **seamlessly navigate to and through the parks and open space system.**



## INCLUDE

everyone by removing barriers so that parks and other open spaces are **inclusive and inviting places that are equitably accessible** for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities, and incomes.

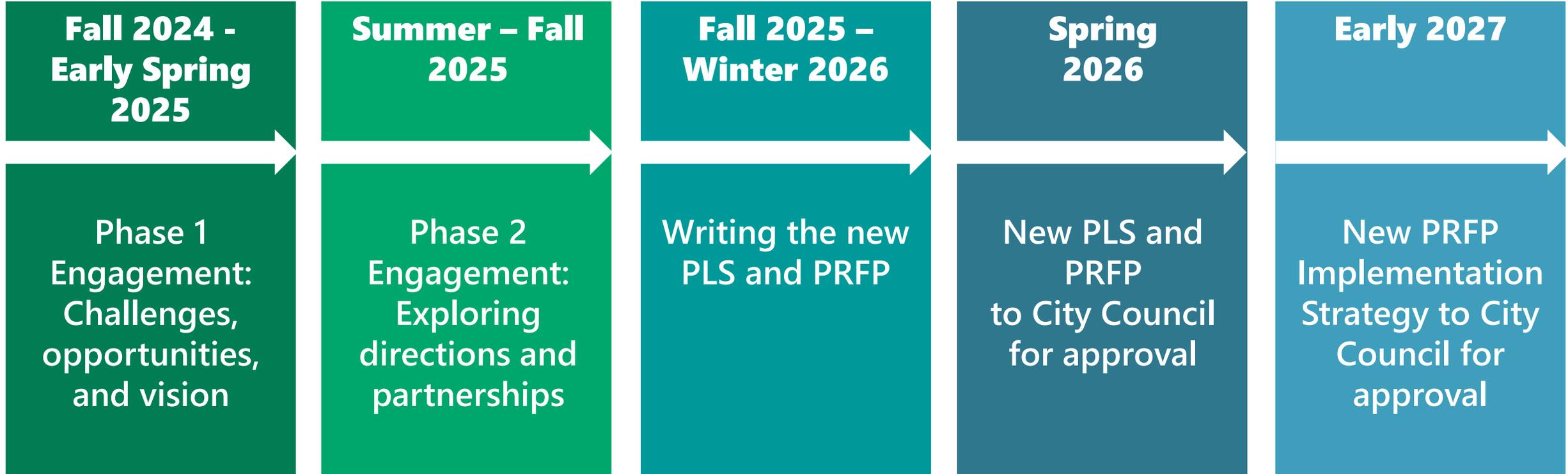
# Community Engagement: Phase 1

**The next few slides highlight the community engagement that took place in Phase 1, and a high-level summary of the feedback that was received.**

# Timeline



We are here



*Timeline is subject to change.*

# Community Engagement Phase 1 – Over 10,000 people engaged!

## Engagement activities:

4 online public meetings

Classroom workshop kits

200+ student participants

Online surveys

8,800+ responses

Visits to existing City Advisory Bodies

E.g. Seniors' Forum; Lived Experience Advisory Group; Parks and Recreation Community Disability Steering Committee

Indigenous communities & First Nations engagements

Equity-Deserving Advisory Group

Meeting 1

Community-led DIY engagements with equity focus

12+ events

In-person pop-ups in all 25 wards

3,000+ interactions

Additional Engagement for Ice Facilities Strategy

1 online public meeting

Online survey

2,800+ responses



# Community Engagement Phase 1 Feedback: Recreation facilities overall

Support for **co-locating** community recreation centres with other community services and facilities. Libraries are most commonly suggested for co-location.

**Improving existing facilities** (maintenance, cleanliness, upgrades and updates) is of high importance – for some, more than new facilities.

**New facilities** (of a wide range of types) are needed to keep up with growing demand.

**Communications improvements** are needed to ensure communities know what recreation facilities and programs are already available to them and welcome new users into existing facilities.

*The number one reason survey respondents listed for not having used a city-run community recreation centre in the past 12 months was that they were unaware of the opportunities.*

Need for **greater 'fairness' and equity in access** to existing programs and permit times. Concerns around local community access to new centres, and women and other equity-deserving groups accessing limited permit timeslots.

Respondents value access to standard recreation facilities like gymnasiums, pools, weight/cardio rooms, and similar spaces.

The **ice activity** ranked as most important by survey respondents is drop-in/public skating.

# Community Engagement Phase 1 Feedback: Community Recreation Centres (CRCs)

Overall, the majority of participants reported feeling satisfied with their local City-run community recreation centres and other recreation facilities, and reported these spaces as feeling safe, welcoming, and inclusive for all. Key suggestions for making CRCs more safe, welcoming, and inclusive include:

- **Co-location with supportive services** (e.g., food banks, employment services, newcomer services, and mental health supports, etc.)
- **Gender-neutral and inclusive facilities**, with the ability to have private spaces for women based on cultural or religious needs
- **Youth-dedicated spaces**
- **Casual gathering spaces**
- **Representation of diverse communities through art and signage**
- **Clean, better maintained facilities**
- **Physical accessibility improvements**
- **Accessible equipment** (e.g., skate supports, water wheelchairs, etc.)
- **Friendly, welcoming and well-trained staff**
- **Affordable, inclusive programming**
- **Clear, accessible and up-to-date communications and information**

**Rouge Valley Community Recreation & Child Care Centre:** Anticipated Fall 2025 opening.



**Western North York Community Recreation Centre:** Anticipated Winter 2028 opening.



**Canoe Landing Community Recreation Centre:** Opened in 2020



# Community Engagement Phase 1 Feedback: About parks (1/2)

## Top areas to prioritize for new parks

1. Areas that don't have a park within walking distance
2. Areas where more people living in high-rise buildings
3. Areas with few existing parks

## Top park improvements to prioritize

1. More comfort facilities
2. Protection for existing natural areas
3. Create more natural areas

## Top park types to prioritize

1. Community parks (medium-sized parks with a range of amenities)
2. Local parks (small parks with daily-use amenities)
3. Naturalized parks (ravines, woodlands, wetlands)



# Community Engagement Phase 1 Feedback: About parks (2/2)

## Improving access to parks:

- Parks that remain free and open
- New parks in high-rise communities
- Reduce park walkability gaps (areas with no park within a 5-to10-minute walk)
- Focus investment in Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving neighbourhoods
- Improve transit access and parking
- Post clear signage when land is a park

## Improve park inclusivity:

- Culturally relevant programming (reflecting the local community)
- Free and affordable programming
- Multilingual signage
- Public art and murals that are culturally relevant
- Respect existing park character during upgrades

## Improve park safety & security:

- Improved lighting
- Improved maintenance (including waste removal)
- On-leash dog signage and enforcement
- Off-leash dog areas
- Work to address encampments (with other City Divisions)
- Reduce police presence while providing supportive staff trained in culturally safe enforcement
- Improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists (e.g. separate paths)

## Improve park accessibility:

- Accessible park entrances and paths
- Year-round access to clean accessible, washrooms
- Winter snow clearing
- Shaded seating and rest areas
- Accessible and inclusive playgrounds
- Disability-informed and senior-friendly park design



# **Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan Emerging Directions and Discussion Questions**

**Proposed changes to the PRFP are outlined on the following slides. As a group you will be prompted to share your feedback on the proposed changes. The meeting facilitator will take notes and share this with City staff.**

# Priorities for Future Provision of Recreation Facilities

The Facilities Plan sets out goals and priorities for investment in each type of recreation facility over the next 20 years. Based on a review of recreation facility use and demand, there are four proposed categories to guide future investment. Multiple categories can apply to the same type of recreation facility:

## **Category A) Build more to fill existing gaps in service**

There are existing gaps in the availability of some facility types across the city. The new Facilities Plan proposes to build more of these facility types, where gaps exist.

## **Category B) Build more as the population grows**

Build new recreation facilities in areas with high population growth, to provide consistent levels of access.

## **Category C) Improve to increase use and accessibility**

Improve or upgrade existing recreation facilities to increase their usability and available hours for permit use (e.g., adding artificial turf or lighting to increase seasonal use) or upgrading the physical accessibility of an older community recreation centre.

## **Category D) Repurpose to a higher use**

Identify individual under-used facilities and connect with communities to understand reasons for low use with the aim of revitalizing, reprogramming, or converting the facility to meet current community needs and maximize use.

# Discussion A: Preliminary Overview of Priorities for Future Provision

Facility Type	A) Build more to fill existing gaps in service	B) Build more recreation facilities as the population grows	C) Improve to increase use and accessibility	D) Repurpose to a higher use (site-specific)	Current Supply 2025
Basketball Courts	X	X	X		149
Cricket Pitches	X	X	X		27
Skateparks (outdoor) and spots	X	X	X		19
Community Recreation Centres	X	X	X		125
Gymnasiums	X	X	X		98
Indoor Pools	X	X	X		64
Outdoor Artificial Ice Rinks	X	X	X		61 outdoor ice pads
Dog Off-leash Areas	X	X	X		80
Bike Parks (Off-Road)	X	X			5
Sports Bubbles	X	X			variable
Pickleball Courts	X	X			19 dedicated/229 shared
Curling Rinks	X		X		3
Beach Volleyball	X				25
Tennis Courts	X	X	X		595
Splash Pads	X	X	X		175
Outdoor Skating Trails	X	X			8
Soccer and Multi-use Sports Fields	X	X	X		316
Outdoor Pools			X		58
Arenas			X		65 indoor ice pads
Ball Diamonds			X	X (Selected C-Class Diamonds)	334
Clubhouses and Fieldhouses			X	X	188
Wading Pools				X	88
Bocce Courts (outdoor)				X	71
Lawn Bowling Greens				X	28

Is there a type of recreation facility that you feel is included in the wrong category?

If so, identify which categories the facility should be in, and why.

**The next slides show four Emerging Directions for how the Facilities Plan is proposed to change. These Emerging Directions reflect community feedback.**

**Each of the four Emerging Direction has a set of actions to support it. The directions and their actions overlap and interconnect.**

**First, as a group, read through each of the four Emerging Directions (the next four slides). Then, go back to Emerging Direction One and discuss your level of support for each direction, and note anything you would change or adjust.**

# Discussion B: Emerging Direction One

**As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for Direction One (scale below). Identify anything you think is missing, or should change, about Emerging Direction One.**

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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**Seek to maximize year-round, all-day use, improve accessibility, and improve the overall resident experience by building new, renewing, replacing, or repurposing recreation facilities.**

- **Maintain facilities in a state of good repair and continue to improve accessibility**, to ensure all residents can enjoy existing facilities, regardless of the age of the facility.
- **Co-locate Community Recreation Centres with other facilities and services** to bring in a wider range of community members (e.g., libraries, schools, employment services, seniors' services, newcomer services, etc.) and where appropriate, build housing on top of new Community Recreation Centres.
- **Engage with communities and partners to keep recreation facilities in use at all times of the day and in all seasons** (e.g., working with local community groups or schools to program arenas during the day, when use is typically low).
- **Maximize year-round access** (e.g., increase use of facilities in their "off" season, such as pickleball or skateboarding on outdoor ice rinks in the summer).
- **Upgrade facilities** to serve more community members and respond to new recreation needs.
- Proactively **assess facility use to identify under-used facilities**. Connect with communities to understand reasons for low use and **revitalize, reprogram, or convert the facilities to meet current community needs** and maximize use.
- **Develop design and facility standards** for each type of recreation facility to provide more reliable facilities for residents across the city.

# Discussion C: Emerging Direction Two

As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for Direction Two (scale below). Identify anything you think is missing, or should change, about Emerging Direction Two.

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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## Use recreation spaces to provide a wider range of community benefits in addition to traditional recreation services, including:

- **Supporting emergency response and public health** (Example: Community Recreation Centres as places to gather in emergencies, space for vaccination clinics, cooling stations, access to water and shade, etc.).
- **Adapting and responding to climate change** (Example: Build new facilities with sustainability and carbon emissions in mind. Achieve high green building standards and include features like green roofs and on-site green-energy production).
- **Encouraging community gathering and improving resident experience at facilities that offer food services** (e.g., in Arenas and community centres).
- **Responding to the City's Reconciliation Action Plan, and work towards Reconciliation** by meeting to local Indigenous communities' needs through recreation facilities (Example: Visual representation of Indigenous communities and cultures, including treaties; art and signage for celebration, Placekeeping, and education; access to lands and waters for Indigenous ceremonial, cultural, and community practices, including Pow Wows).
- **Supporting food security at recreation facilities** (Example: Community Centres that include teaching gardens, community kitchens, and food banks).

\*Note: Details regarding Indigenous Placekeeping work are still being developed in consultation with Indigenous communities.

# Discussion D: Emerging Direction Three

As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for Direction Three (scale below). Identify anything you think is missing, or should change, about Emerging Direction Three.

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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## Ensure the new Facilities Plan serves high-needs communities and reduces barriers to access.

- **Prioritize the needs of Indigenous, Black, equity-deserving\*, and underserved communities** when deciding where to place new facilities, and when to improve or upgrade facilities.
- **Accelerate facility upgrades** to meet modern accessibility standards.
- **Invest in flexible facilities that serve diverse communities' needs**, including people of all ages, abilities, races, cultures, genders, and incomes.
- **Develop new approaches to assess and serve areas of very high population and growth** (e.g., the downtown core) to ensure residents have equitable access to facility spaces.

\*Note: The City refers to equity-deserving communities as communities that face significant collective challenges in participating in society because of barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources due to disadvantage and discrimination, and, therefore, deserve social justice and reparation including but not limited to, women, persons with low income, immigrants, refugees and undocumented people, 2SLGBTQ+ communities, persons with disabilities, racialized group(s), seniors and youth.

# Discussion E: Emerging Direction Four

As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for Direction Four (scale below). Identify anything you think is missing, or should change, about Emerging Direction Four.

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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**Actively pursue and enhance collaboration and partnerships (e.g., schools, libraries, etc.) to better meet community needs and make the most of the land available for recreation facilities and other community services and facilities.**

- **Co-locate Community Recreation Centres with other facilities and services** (e.g., libraries, schools, employment services, seniors' services, newcomer services, etc.) based on a specific community's needs (determined in part, through early engagements with a community).
- **Where appropriate, build housing on top of new Community Recreation Centres**, in partnership with different housing providers and levels of government.

# **Parkland Strategy: Emerging Directions and Discussion Questions**

**Proposed changes to the PLS are outlined on the following slides. As a group you will be prompted to share your feedback on the proposed changes. The meeting facilitator will take notes and share this with City staff.**

During Phase 1 engagement, participants identified considerations they felt make for a high-quality park, which are listed below.



**Share your thoughts on the items that are most important to you. As a group, answer: Is the list complete? Is there anything missing? If so, what?**

- a. Features that support sport and wellbeing (e.g., outdoor fitness equipment)
- b. Washrooms
- c. Features for dogs, and to separate dogs from other park users
- d. Variation in terrain and landscapes
- e. Unique elements that create a sense of place
- f. Visually interesting, including art and design
- g. Intergenerational design to be enjoyable for a wide range of ages
- h. Features for gathering and social interactions (e.g., chess tables, ping pong tables, amphitheaters)
- i. Interesting views of nature and/or the city
- j. Winter maintenance and programming
- k. Celebration of diverse cultures and heritages
- l. Rest and comfort features (e.g., seating, shelter from the rain/sun, drinking fountains)
- m. Relaxing and quiet spaces
- n. Close to home and easy to access
- o. Well maintained, including garbage and graffiti removal
- p. Recognition of Indigenous heritage and stewardship
- q. Presence of gardens (e.g., for flowers, food, pollinators)
- r. Natural elements, including mature trees and streams
- s. Prominent and highly visible from the street
- t. Accessible and inclusive design for all abilities

Complete

Some things are missing (describe)

# Discussion G: Proposed new guiding principle, "Protect" (1/2)



The Parkland Strategy is guided by the four principles below:



**EXPAND:** the parks system by creating new parks to support growth and address gaps to ensure an effective parks system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.

**IMPROVE:** the function of existing parks to promote community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and health and wellbeing through active living, access to nature, and the provision of spaces for rest, relaxation, and leisure.

**CONNECT:** parks and other open spaces, physically and visually, and leverage opportunities to use other open spaces so that people, communities and wildlife have abundant access to parks and open spaces and can seamlessly navigate to and through the parks and open space system.

**INCLUDE:** everyone by removing barriers so that parks and other open spaces are inclusive and inviting places that are equitably accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities, and incomes.

**As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for adding "Protect" as a guiding principle in the Parkland Strategy to reflect the points below. You can brainstorm on the next slide.**

- Protecting parkland from conversion to other uses, ensuring that parks remain as parks
- Protecting the natural environment, including landscapes, wildlife, and ecosystems
- Protecting cultural and heritage spaces and practices, especially those with Indigenous significance

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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# Discussion G: Proposed new guiding principle, "Protect" (2/2)



For individual use

# Discussion H: Parkland Priority Areas mapping



**We are proposing changes to the map that identifies Parkland Priority Areas (shown in the presentation).**

This map is used to identify areas where parkland studies, improvements, and new parkland should occur.

The City considers multiple factors when mapping Parkland Priority Areas – we are proposing to revise these factors in the following ways:

- **Factor 1: Parkland provision rates (amount of parkland per person).** Revisions involve excluding portions of Toronto’s natural areas that are generally inaccessible to the public (such as portions of ravine lands that are too steep or hazardous for use), to provide a more realistic measurement of the amount of parkland available to residents.
- **Factor 2: Areas with less access to private yard space.** This would be a new input that involves prioritizing areas of Toronto where there is a higher proportion of residents living in apartments (multi-unit buildings) who are less likely to have access to their own private yards and are more likely to rely on parks.
- **Factor 3: Equity-deserving areas.** Revisions involve expanding the equity lens to consider socio-economic variables such as age, race (including Indigenous and Black identities), newcomer status, and knowledge of official languages (English or French), in addition to low-income (which is the only equity variable currently used for prioritization).

**As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for including the three factors and revisions (above) that are proposed to determine Parkland Priority Areas. Provide a response to each factor.**

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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# Discussion I: Revising the Parkland Acquisitions Assessment (PAA) Tool

## Current PAA Tool

### PRIMARY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

<b>EXPAND + INCLUDE</b>	Is the site in a parkland priority area?
<b>IMPROVE</b>	Is the site suitable for parkland purposes (e.g. size, shape, and utility)?
<b>CONNECT</b>	Does the site improve connectivity to other parks and open spaces?

### SECONDARY ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

<b>EXPAND</b>	Does this address a park range gap in the area?
	Is the site located within an area with a high number of employees, students, or tourists?
	Is the value of the acquisition reasonable relative to the number of people who would benefit?
<b>IMPROVE</b>	Can the site accommodate an FMP facility?
<b>CONNECT</b>	Is the site within 500 m of transit access?
<b>INCLUDE</b>	Is the site located in an area with a high percentage of low income residents?
	Does the site have cultural significance?

The PLS includes a Parkland Acquisitions Assessment (PAA) Tool to inform where land should be purchase or accepted through transfer to create new parks. The PAA Tool has proven to be too limited in its scope, so we are proposing to **broaden the list of considerations included to account for more City priorities and to allow for unique opportunities that arise to be explored.** This includes but is not limited to the following:

- **Theme 1:** Enhancing waterfront access
- **Theme 2:** Advancing Indigenous reconciliation projects
- **Theme 3:** Serving equity-deserving areas
- **Theme 4:** Increasing tree canopy (e.g., to reduce urban heat island)

**As a group, discuss and decide on your level of support for the above revisions to the PAA Tool. Share which considerations are most important to you when the City is acquiring new parkland. Provide a response for each theme.**

Strong Support	Support	Neutral	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
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# Thank You!



Thank you for sharing your feedback today! The meeting facilitator will submit the results of today's discussion to the project team.

You can visit the project webpage to sign up for e-updates and learn more about this work:



**Scan the QR code or visit the  
project webpage at:**

**[toronto.ca/ParksAndFacilitiesPlans](https://toronto.ca/ParksAndFacilitiesPlans)**

