

Phase 2: Online Survey Summary Report

Parkland Strategy

Community Engagement: Phase 2 - Setting the Direction

Survey Dates: July to September 2025

Parks & Recreation Division

City of Toronto





VISION

NEXT STEPS

WHY?

WHO?

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Overview

Phase 2: Setting the direction

In Phase 2 of the update process, draft directions were developed by the project team that were informed by the needs and priorities identified through community engagement in Phase 1. The emerging directions were shared with the public for update and feedback. The community engagement activities in this phase included:

- An online public survey
- Virtual public meetings
- A workshop with the Equity Deserving Advisory Group (established for this update process)
- Meetings of the Indigenous Advisory Circle (established for this update process)
- Pop-up conversations in Indigenous community spaces
- Engaging with Council Advisory Bodies
- Do-it-yourself workshop kits distributed through various networks to different equity deserving groups, (including distribution to community organizations through the City's Social Development, Finance, and Administration network)

How we reached people

The project team promoted Phase 2 community engagement activities (including the online survey) to audiences across the city through the following channels:

- Paid and organic social media:
 - Video posts ran between July 18, 2025 - September 14, 2025, to boost promotion of the online survey.
- Communications through Councillor Offices:
 - Promotional material was provided to all 25 Councillor Offices, with a request that they share it via their respective newsletters and other distribution channels.
- Materials in community locations:
 - Community Recreation Centres, EarlyON Centres, and Toronto Community Housing sites across the city shared and displayed e-flyers and posters promoting the online survey.
- Email notifications:
- Emails were sent to the project listserv containing over 500 registrants.

Online Survey

2,500
Responses

From July 17 to September 15, 2025, an online survey collected feedback from the public on draft directions for the planning and development of recreation facilities and parks across Toronto. The input collected is helping to guide updates to the City’s Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan and Parkland Strategy. Approximately 2,500 responses addressed the portion of the survey specifically about the Parkland Strategy, which is the focus of this summary report. A separate report summarizes what was heard on the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan.

Survey respondents

Eight survey questions focused on the Parkland Strategy (Q40 to Q48). Of the approximately 2,500 survey responses to the Parkland Strategy portion of the survey, 1,400 reached the end of the survey (just over half).

39 respondents represented organizations. Some respondents indicated that they were providing feedback that represented multiple people (e.g. entire households), with over 6,500 participants to the overall survey.

6,500+
Participants

Participants were asked to provide socio-demographic information, which is a standard engagement practice used by the City to better understand who has participated and whether particular groups in the community have been missed during the engagement process. A summary of the socio-demographic responses is provided in Appendix A.

Feedback on Emerging Directions for the Parkland Strategy

Phase 1 of community feedback, along with extensive internal staff engagement and technical updates, led to the development of the draft directions provided in the online survey for public input.. The following sections provide summaries to each of the questions asked in the survey. Questions provided multiple choice answer options, with a final general question that allowed for open text responses.

Elements that make a high-quality park

The Parkland Strategy update process involves updating park planning and design considerations for what makes a high-quality park. Q40 asked: “Which of the following elements do you think are most important for a park to be considered high quality? Select up to 8”. Approximately 1,500 respondents indicated the following responses, in order of most selected to least selected:

- Washrooms (70%)
- Natural elements, including mature trees, and streams (69%)
- Well maintained, including garbage and graffiti removal (67%)
- Rest and comfort features (e.g., seating, shelter from the rain/sun, drinking fountains) (67%)
- Presence of gardens (e.g., for flowers, food, pollinators) (50%)
- Close to home and easy to access (45%)
- Relaxing and quiet spaces (45%)
- Accessible and inclusive design for all abilities (41%)
- Intergenerational design to be enjoyable for a wide range of ages (37%)
- Winter maintenance and programming (34%)
- Features for dogs, and to separate dogs from other park users (28%)
- Features for gathering and social interactions (e.g., chess tables, ping pong tables, amphitheaters) (26%)
- Interesting views of nature and/or the city (24%)
- Features that support sport and wellbeing (e.g., outdoor fitness equipment) (23%)
- Variation in terrain and landscapes (22%)
- Visually interesting, including art and design (18%)
- Unique elements that create a sense of place (17%)
- Recognition of Indigenous heritage and stewardship (15%)
- Celebration of diverse cultures and heritages (7%)
- Prominent and highly visible from the street (5%)

Lands included in parkland provision rate calculations

The calculation of [parkland provision rates across the city](#) is an important part of the Parkland Strategy. The rates are currently a measure of the amount of parkland that a person has access to within a 500-metre walking distance from where they live, and they vary for different areas. Understanding parkland provision rates helps the City to make decisions on future investment in parkland, directing more resources to areas with lower rates. What gets counted as parkland is an important input to calculate and map parkland provision rates. Two survey questions focused on this topic, relating to inclusion of parkland owned by other levels of government and land in hydro corridors used for park purposes.

Including parkland owned by Provincial and Federal governments

In the current Parkland Strategy, parkland owned by Provincial and Federal governments, such as Rouge National Park, Trillium Park, and Downsview Park, are not included in the calculation of parkland provision rates across the city. Including these parks in the methodology results in higher parkland provision rates for areas within 500 metres of these parks. These provincial and federal parks are designated as Parks and Open Spaces, Natural Areas, or Other Open Spaces in the City's Official Plan.

Q41 asked participants if they support this proposed approach. Approximately 1,400 respondents provided the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (29%)
- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (29%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (16%)
- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (10%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (6%)
- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (10%)

Including hydro lands that have park uses

The City of Toronto has agreements with hydro utility providers that permit some land in hydro corridors to be used for park purposes, while continuing their primary function as a location for hydro transmission towers. An example of this is the Meadoway in Scarborough, which is a linear greenspace that includes walking trails, benches, and native flowers. The City is proposing to include hydro lands that have park uses in the calculation of parkland provision rates. Including these lands results in higher parkland provision rates for areas within 500 metres of the included portions of hydro corridors.

Q42 asked participants if they support this proposed approach. Approximately 1,400 responded providing the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (32%)
- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (29%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (16%)

- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (11%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (6%)
- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (6%)

Proposed factors in the calculation of parkland provision rates

The Parkland Strategy has [a map showing parkland priority areas](#). These are areas of Toronto that the Parks & Recreation Division prioritizes for parkland studies (e.g., detailed analysis of parkland within a neighbourhood), parkland acquisitions (e.g., purchase of new parkland), and park improvements (e.g., upgrades in existing parks). The City considers multiple factors to determine whether or not a particular area is a Parkland Priority Area and is proposing to update which factors are considered for this decision making. Three survey questions asked participants for their feedback on the proposed factors.

Factor one: Excluding portions of natural areas that are inaccessible to the public

Parkland provision rates are defined as the estimated future amount of parkland per person, in each area of the city. The City is able to estimate future rates based on City of Toronto data of residential development applications. Over half of Toronto's parkland is located within ravines and some of these lands are not generally accessible to people (e.g., due to steep slopes and/or dense vegetation). To emphasize areas of the park system that are currently accessible to and used by people, in the first proposed factor, the City is proposing to exclude the portions of natural areas that are inaccessible to the public.

Q43 asked participants if they support this proposed factor. Approximately 1,400 responded indicating the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (37%)
- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (36%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (11%)
- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (8%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (4%)

- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (5%)

Factor two: Access to private yards

The second proposed factor to determine Parkland Priority Areas is areas of Toronto where residents are less likely to have access to their own private yard. People living in multi-unit dwellings are less likely to have access to private green space (e.g., a back yard) and may be more likely to depend on parks as spaces for leisure and social gathering. The City is proposing to prioritize those areas of Toronto with a higher number of dwellings that are apartments. This can be done using Statistics Canada data that identifies the location of apartment/multi-unit dwellings (from duplexes up to high rise buildings).

Q44 asked respondents if they support this proposed factor. Approximately 1,400 responded with the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (48%)
- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (31%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (10%)
- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (5%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (4%)
- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (2%)

Factor three: Equitable parkland access for Indigenous, Black, and equity-deserving communities

When determining the location of Parkland Priority Areas, “low-income” is currently the only factor considered that relates to equity. The City is proposing to change this by adding other socio-demographic factors, such as age, ethnicity (including Indigenous and Black identities), newcomer status, and knowledge of official languages (English or French) to low-income when considering equity.

Q45 asked participants if they support the use of this expanded equity index. Approximately 1,400 responded indicating the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (31%)

- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (23%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (20%)
- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (12%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (11%)
- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (3%)

Protect as a new Guiding Principle

The Parkland Strategy currently has 4 Guiding Principles: Expand, Improve, Connect, and Include. Through Phase 1 engagements, the City heard from some participants that "Protect" is missing as a Guiding Principle. In Phase 2, the City has proposed to add "Protect" as a Guiding Principle to reflect the following:

- 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, especially those with Indigenous significance.

Q46 asked participants if they support adding "Protect" as a new additional Guiding Principle in the Parkland Strategy. Approximately 1,400 responded indicating the following selections:

- **Strong support:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. No adjustments are needed. (72%)
- **Support:** This approach generally guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the right direction. Little to no adjustments are needed. (20%)
- **Neutral:** I don't have an opinion on this. (4%)
- **Oppose:** This approach guides the Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. Adjustments are needed. (2%)
- **Strongly oppose:** This approach guides Parkland Strategy updates in the wrong direction. The entire direction should be reconsidered, rewritten, or removed. (1%)
- **I don't know:** I don't understand the question, or not enough information is provided for me to answer. (1%)

Considerations for purchasing land to create new parkland

The Parkland Strategy currently contains a Parkland Acquisition Assessment Tool to help staff make recommendations to City Council about whether or not to purchase a specific piece of land to become parkland. This assessment tool is how the Parks & Recreation Division prioritizes the limited available funds for the purpose of creating new parkland. The City is proposing to update the assessment tool to reflect a greater number of City priorities.

Q47 asked respondents to rate each of the following considerations on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being low importance and 5 being high importance:

- Protects existing ecologically healthy natural lands.
- Results in new parkland in areas that currently have low parkland provision rates.
- Supports climate change adaptation and resilience (e.g., reduces urban heat island).
- Provides an opportunity to rehabilitate or create new ecologically healthy natural land.
- Expands the City's trail network (or closes a gap in the trail network).
- Supports climate change mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration and storage).
- Accommodates new recreation facilities (e.g., sports fields, community recreation centres).
- Expands existing parks to make those parks bigger.

Approximately 1,400 respondents indicated their selections as follows.

Protects existing ecologically healthy natural lands

- 5 - high importance (70%)
- 4 - (19%)
- 3 - Neutral (7%)
- 2 - (1%)
- 1 - low importance (1%)
- I don't know (1%)

Supports climate change adaptation and resilience (e.g., reduces urban heat island)

- 5 - high importance (65%)
- 4 - (18%)
- 3 - Neutral (10%)
- 2 - (2%)
- 1 - low importance (3%)
- I don't know (2%)

Results in new parkland in areas that currently have low parkland provision rates

- 5 - high importance (60%)
- 4 - (24%)
- 3 - Neutral (10%)
- 2 - (1%)
- 1 - low importance (2%)
- I don't know (3%)

Provides an opportunity to rehabilitate or create new ecologically healthy natural land

- 5 - high importance (60%)
- 4 - (25%)
- 3 - Neutral (10%)
- 2 - (2%)
- 1 - low importance (1%)
- I don't know (1%)

Expands the City's trail network (or closes a gap in the trail network)

- 5 - high importance (47%)
- 4 - (34%)
- 3 - Neutral (13%)
- 2 - (3%)
- 1 - low importance (2%)
- I don't know (2%)

Supports climate change mitigation (e.g., carbon sequestration and storage)

- 5 - high importance (54%)
- 4 - (21%)
- 3 - Neutral (15%)
- 2 - (3%)
- 1 - low importance (5%)
- I don't know (3%)

Accommodates new recreation facilities (e.g., sports fields, community recreation centres)

- 5 - high importance (32%)
- 4 - (33%)
- 3 - Neutral (23%)
- 2 - (6%)
- 1 - low importance (5%)
- I don't know (1%)

Expands existing parks to make those parks bigger

- 5 - high importance (20%)
- 4 - (30%)
- 3 - Neutral (36%)
- 2 - (7%)
- 1 - low importance (4%)
- I don't know (2%)

What We Heard:

Qualitative Feedback

Summary

Out of the approximately 2,500 survey respondents to the portion of the survey about the Parkland Strategy, 479 respondents provided qualitative feedback in response to Q48, which asked respondents if there was anything more they wanted to tell the project team about the topics covered by the survey questions on the Parkland Strategy. The input received is categorized into themes and sub-themes, as follows.

Maintenance

Park cleanliness and usability

- **Many parks are described as consistently dirty or filled with litter, and garbage lingers for weeks or months.**
 - Respondents reported sharp objects, broken glass, needles, and other hazardous materials near some playgrounds and sandpits, creating a tangible safety risk for children.
 - The absence of routine and visible maintenance including litter pickup, bin servicing, and surface cleaning leads residents to perceive parks as neglected across seasons.
 - Respondents requested the strategic placement of garbage bins, especially at TTC stops and park entrances, to prevent spillover trash from accumulating on park grounds.
 - A respondent requested more parks operations staff to properly maintain the park, mentioning the reliance on community clean up: “I spend hours in my community cleaning garbage out of the public parks because the job is never done.”
- **Dogs in off-leash areas (OLAs) create sanitation and safety risks due to widespread uncollected dog waste and a lack of enforcement.**
 - A respondent shared that OLAs have issues, including broken gates and surfaces that are not amenable to play, such as the pea stones at Clarence Square.

- With the dog population growing, respondents believe it would benefit all taxpayers to develop more and better OLAs.
- Respondents said that OLAs benefit those with dogs and those who do not like to interact with dogs, because OLAs separate the groups. This is good for people that do not like dogs because it separates and contains them.
- In addition to enclosed OLAs, a respondent recommended larger OLAs that have an open-space feeling, “Add more dog off-leash areas that are not enclosed and that have grass and trees. A good example is Monarch Park.”
- **Public washrooms and water fountain improvements are required.**
 - Some respondents described the public washrooms in parks as being in “dismal shape,” often non-functional, unclean, or closed, and not meeting acceptable hygiene standards.

Structural deterioration and outdated facilities

- **Some parks have not been repaired or improved for a while.**
 - Many respondents cited the lack of repairs in their neighbourhood parks, such as a Scarborough park that “has not been updated in 40 years” and poses potential health and safety risks.
 - High Park is highlighted as an example of poor upkeep, with its central water features nonfunctional “for years” and trails left perpetually muddy.
- **Investment cycles are perceived as too slow.**
 - Some respondents indicated that playground renewals are planned in 10 years time, leaving current structures feeling unsafe and outdated.
 - Respondents indicated that playgrounds, courts, fields, and equipment increasingly show visible wear, rot, rust, or structural instability, with several noting their local park looks the same as it did when they were children.
- **Ravines require more maintenance.**
 - Respondents indicated that ravines suffer from erosion, unmanaged overgrowth, toppled trees, and clogged drainage, making trails muddy or inaccessible.
 - Some indicated that ravines are used to dump garbage due to insufficient City follow-up after tree removal.
 - A respondent noted that the City contributes to dumping by “leaving brush piles and logs” after work.
- **Investment priorities need adjusting.**
 - Several respondents criticized the City for prioritizing investments in new amenities over maintaining current assets.

Lack of ecological maintenance

- **Many comments highlighted a lack of ecological maintenance.**
 - Respondents commented on the rapid spread of invasive species, with one noting that half of Toronto’s parklands are being overtaken due to inadequate intervention.
 - Respondents observed that naturalization efforts and plantings are not being sustained well with vines on green walls dying, native planting beds lose viability, and ravine ecosystems deteriorating from a lack of management.
 - Respondents indicated that unchecked overgrowth is occurring, especially in trails, ravines, and edges of parklands.
 - Respondents indicated that lack of maintenance creates physical barriers by making paths less navigable, and increases perceptions of safety risks.
- **Greater focus on native plantings and habitat restoration.**
 - Respondents proposed more investment in incorporating native plantings, habitat restoration, and multi-season ecological care in City parks.
- **Winter maintenance and flood mitigation challenges.**
 - Many respondents noted that playgrounds tend to flood in the spring, and trails are icy or inaccessible in the winter.
 - Respondents would like a clear plan to ensure year-round usability of parks, especially as climate extremes intensify.

Inequities in maintenance efforts

- **There was a strong sentiment that Scarborough, East York, and Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) do not receive the same level of maintenance.**
 - Respondents strongly expressed that maintenance, beautification efforts, and creative design efforts tend to take place in downtown parks or wealthier neighbourhoods in comparison to NIAs, neighbourhoods in Scarborough and East York.
 - Respondents expressed frustration that their parks seem to be neglected despite being in “priority” areas, with facilities described as “run down,” “never updated,” or “ignored for decades.”
 - Some respondents encouraged the City to ensure that park improvements and maintenance reflect equitable access, not just demographic prioritization stating, “everyone needs easy access to green space.”
 - The lack of TTC access to major parks (e.g., East Point Park and Scarborough Bluffs) is viewed as a barrier to equitable enjoyment of large natural assets.

Equity considerations

Desire for high-quality parks City-wide

- **All neighbourhoods and residents should have access to high quality parks, with natural and cultural features.**
 - Many respondents emphasized that all Torontonians, across all wards, should have access to well-maintained parks, natural habitats, and safe, open spaces.
 - Several respondents highlighted that cultural features, newcomer-focused amenities, and identity-based programming must be embedded into universal recreation programming.
 - A few respondents expressed the importance of municipal investment in all areas of the city including areas with a variety of income levels.

Targeted amenities

- **High-density neighbourhoods and aging populations need targeted amenities.**
 - Respondents noted that many Torontonians, especially in condos and apartments, do not have private yards and rely entirely on parks for shade, exercise, and outdoor space.
 - Apartment-dwelling seniors frequently called for more benches, shade, washrooms, and resting places to support mobility. A respondent shared, “They really want to get out, but need resting places.”
 - Some respondents highlighted increasing the need for senior recreation, such as walking soccer, lawn bowling, older-adult fitness, and social gathering spaces.
- **Many respondents suggested a needs-based criteria approach.**
 - Prioritizing lower income seniors, residents with disabilities, or high-density apartment dwellers that often face the greatest access barriers should be highly considered.
 - Several respondents noted that prioritization by demographics requires transparent population data to members of the public.

Universally accessible design

- **Respondents expressed strong calls for universal accessibility, including disability by design.**
 - Many respondents emphasized that disability has been insufficiently recognized using an equity lens and in the actual park design.
 - Accessibility should not be removed through vehicle bans, inaccessible trails, or overbuilt installations.
- **Specific accessible features mentioned by respondents include:**
 - Universal path access and more seating for seniors and people with disabilities who may require frequent resting spots.
 - Water fountains that are usable by wheelchair users and open at an earlier time for seniors.

- Accessible community gardens, “There is very little to no accommodations made for disabled individuals to access community gardens, allotment gardens, or the greenhouse.”
- Increase parking spaces at large parks (e.g., Milliken Park) to meet high visitor demand.
- Require visible display of permits for events so the public knows when an area is reserved.
- Improve outdoor recreational spaces with safe playgrounds, basketball courts, splash pads, and skating rinks.
- Add more family-friendly amenities such as picnic areas, shaded seating, and clean washrooms.
- Enhance accessibility with stroller-friendly paths, wheelchair ramps, and inclusive play equipment.
- Ensure proper maintenance and safety of outdoor equipment, walking trails, and lighting.
- Host seasonal community events (e.g., summer cultural festivals, winter fun days) to encourage park use year-round.
- Making sure that entering and exiting is safe from street traffic.
- Protect natural spaces by adding more trees, community gardens, and eco-friendly areas for relaxation, “Accessibility is paramount to all users while ensuring parkland is safe to use while protecting the environment and all wildlife species.”
- **Engage neurodivergent individuals when updated the Parkland Strategy and in park design.**
 - A respondent shared that, “neurodivergent and disability are not considered in the Equity survey and there are no autistic people on the Disability board. Please have people with disabilities be on the board.”
- **Ensure trails are accessible and provide access to natural park elements.**
 - Respondents viewed trails as vital to nature access, mobility around parks, and non-car travel across the city.
 - Respondents want existing trails completed where they “end abruptly” and want more continuous, connected open-space networks.
 - Some respondents proposed converting rail corridors into parkland or greenways where feasible.
 - A respondent recommended to identify gaps, holes and unsafe conditions in bike paths and connect bike trails together across parks so residents can easily access parkland seamlessly across the City.
 - Ensure that when there is construction happening at a park, the temporary gating is sturdy and that the paths are still wheelchair accessible using concrete for smooth pathways instead of rubble.
 - Respondents expressed a strong desire for more OLA trails throughout parks to walk with dogs around interesting parts of the park and for dogs

to get social reprieve if they do not like to interact with many dogs in the OLA space.

- A respondent highlighted The West Scarborough Rail Trail, a project proposed over 50 years ago, as a “keystone trail that would complete a continuous cycling and pedestrian trail from Lake Ontario at the mouth of the Don River to Rouge National Urban Park.”

Access to transit

- **Respondents strongly emphasized that easy access to transit (i.e., the TTC) is crucial for everyone; particularly for seniors and people with physical, psychological, and emotional divergencies and disabilities to fully participate in parks and use the amenities.**
 - Respondents recommended to make parks more accessible by transit by focusing new parks on high population growth areas such as Yonge St and Sheppard Ave, expanding small parkettes and connecting large park areas where possible.
 - A respondent reflected on the challenges taking their child to various activities without access to sufficient transit, “connect Sheppard East Park and Glendora Park. It is impossible on public transit to take kids to soccer league or hockey from Yonge and Sheppard. All sports for kids is so far.”
 - A respondent recommended an analysis of TTC access to parks. For example, “there is no East route to East Point Park in Scarborough and both Cherry Beach and Scarborough Bluffs have only limited seasonal routes.”

Access to third spaces (outside of home and work)

- **Some residents emphasized the need for third space access, particularly those who live in high-rises.**
 - The Queensway corridor between Kipling Ave. and Royal York Rd. was cited as an area that will not have enough parkland for the population density due to increased condo development. A respondent said, “Please consider this corridor for parkland improvement and expansion, especially when it comes to purpose-built recreation spaces within walking distance [...] Please save us from becoming a concrete wasteland, we need fun things too.”
 - A resident emphasized the need for third spaces that cater to adults as opposed to children and dogs.
 - Love Park and Berczy Park were cited as examples of preferred third spaces. A respondent mentioned several features they would like to see in a third space, “shaded trees, seating, and a place to meet the community, where you can have a coffee and chat.”

Food security and food services

- **Respondents strongly supported integrating food growing into parks, such as community gardens, fruit trees, orchards, berry patches, and urban farming sites.**
 - Food-growing initiatives were framed as equity tools for high-rise communities without private yards and as climate resilience strategies.
- **Parks as sites for food security.**
 - Many call for “farm-in-the-city” experiences for families, combining nature education, food security, and recreational programming, such as expanding community garden programming.
 - A respondent shared that Torontonians in high-density neighbourhoods often also experience poor tree equity and food security challenges, expressing that “It’s not the biggest intervention, but persistently done, more community gardens and fruit trees that communities can access would make a steady difference in food-insecure neighbourhoods: let people grow or use skills, build good relationships to nature, fit into Toronto’s climate response, and also be one more piece of the puzzle for stormwater.”

Parks as important ecological systems

- **A few respondents referred to parks as climate-resilient ecological systems.**
 - Respondents called for expanded tree planting, greening streets to connect parks, and stronger ecological functioning across the system.
 - Shade and noise-buffer trees are especially important in traffic-adjacent neighbourhoods such as Jane St and Finch Ave.
 - Respondents viewed “nature-first design” as compatible with food security, trails, and park enjoyment.

Support for cafes in parks

- **Respondents supported food retail services integrated into parks.**
 - It was indicated that food services in parks may increase community gathering and social spaces.
 - Many respondents suggested food service concessions such as:
 - food trucks/kiosks
 - farmer’s produce
 - small cafes
 - local food or beer gardens
 - concessions with seating

Sight lines

Lighting

- **Lighting inadequacies were noted by many respondents.**
 - There is a lack of visibility in some parks at night creating unsafe physical environments for park users at night.
 - Low lighting or complete darkness in many areas, including trails and ravines creates strong feelings of fear, vulnerability and avoidance of park areas, especially amongst women, seniors, and evening users. A respondent cited Garret Commons as a park with lighting issues and feelings of unsafety.
- **Lighting as a safety requirement.**
 - Respondents frequently stressed that lighting is not just an amenity but a safety requirement, enabling evening recreation and winter use when daylight hours are limited.
 - A respondent shared, “I have experienced the wilderness effects or overgrowth in our parks and they are not comfortable at dusk or anytime a park is not populated.”
- **A lack of lighting in parks creates accessibility challenges.**
 - The combination of poorly lit spaces and deteriorating surfaces, such as mud, ice, and uneven ground, makes accessibility challenging for seniors and people with strollers and wheelchairs.

Overgrown vegetation

- **Overgrown vegetation along paths and ravine corridors decreases sightlines.**
 - A lack of clear site lines could amplify concerns about concealed activity or unexpected encounters.

Encampments

Drug use in parks

- **Numerous respondents were concerned about drug use in parks.**
 - Respondents noted that needles left behind may cause safety concerns for park users.
 - Multiple respondents reported that encampments, open drug use, and lack of enforcement make parks unavailable to seniors and families.
 - Respondents recommended hiring security staff and increased lighting to increase feelings of safety.

Impacts to park infrastructure

- **Respondents emphasized that encampments can impact park amenities.**
 - Benches, lawns, and playground-adjacent areas are impacted by encampment areas, which deter some families from using certain parks.
 - Some respondents expressed frustration that destination parks like Allan Gardens or Queen’s Park now have an increase in encampments and garbage left on the ground.
- **Concern about enclosed amenities.**
 - Respondents expressed concerns about adding new indoor or semi-enclosed amenities, such as washrooms and shelters, claiming that they could unintentionally attract overnight sleeping or unsafe use without proper security measures.

By-law enforcement

More enforcement

- **Need for consistent, visible, and equitable enforcement of by-laws.**
 - Respondents requested improved enforcement of dog-related by-laws, including fines for off-leash dogs in on-leash zones, which is described as happening every day in some parks, and is often left unaddressed.
 - Respondents identified cyclists who speed, disobey stop signs, or ride too close to pedestrians as a major safety concern.
 - Respondents requested stronger enforcement and possibly park-specific speed regulations.
- **Respondents said the following actions negatively impact their park experience and require more bylaw enforcement:**
 - Littering
 - Illegal amplification (music, events, and pop-up vendors)
 - Unauthorized commercial use of amenities such as tennis coaches taking over courts

Facilities and amenities

Gaps in amenities

- **Need a more complete set of basic amenities.**
 - Clean washrooms, accessible water sources, winterized facilities, shaded seating, picnic areas and stroller-friendly paths were most commonly listed as basic amenities.
 - Wi-fi set up in all public parks for equitable access to the internet.
- **Better designed playgrounds.**
 - Respondents requested more and better-designed playgrounds, splash pads, and inclusive play structures.
 - Existing playground structures were described as outdated and unsafe.

- A higher quantity of play structures is needed to meet the demand of the growing population in Toronto.
- Innovative playgrounds were requested with structures for exploring and improving physical and social skills for overall family health.
- Specifically, a respondent suggested smaller playgrounds for children and parents to make playgrounds closer in proximity to residents, “The city should invest in more small, structured parks, where there is ample seating space, shade trees, children’s playgrounds and adult exercise equipment.”
- **Picnic areas and places for family gatherings.**
 - A respondent emphasized the importance of having BBQs, picnic tables, and covered picnic areas in parks to host celebratory gatherings, share food or to escape heat.
- **More community programming.**
 - Many respondents expressed a desire for more seasonal programming, such as summer cultural festivals and winter fun days to activate parks.
- **Incorporate musical elements.**
 - A respondent suggested to incorporate musical-focused activities in the park for children and all park users at large. For example, equipment that has a large xylophone, rain makers or giant shakers.

Facility requests

- **Strong support for facilities within parklands, including:**
 - **Baseball:** A respondent suggested reprising old decrepit baseball diamonds rather than building new ones and repairing or replacing batting cages
 - **Golf:** A respondent requested more community resources for golfers, available on park sites, while another respondent recommended to remove or repurpose golf courses due to the negative impact on wildlife and heavy water consumption
 - **Pools:** A respondent requested more water parks and outdoor pools, specifically in the Pape and Cosburn area
 - **Tennis courts**
 - **Volleyball courts**
 - **Lawn bowling**

Year-round park systems

Desire for year-round park systems

- **Respondents emphasized that park design should enable year-round use, with adequate winter maintenance, lighting, durable surfaces, and flood resistance.**
 - Parks should function as social spaces, not just land requiring seating, washrooms, water, food options, and shaded areas that encourage people to stay and gather.
 - A few respondents emphasized the importance of clearing pathways in winter for park use and accessibility.
 - A respondent recommended to winterize all park washrooms and water fountains, making them accessible year-round.
 - A respondent mentioned that protecting mature trees should be prioritized in winter maintenance.
- **Concern about the rapid expansion of parks over maintenance.**
 - Many respondents expressed concern that rapid expansion of parkland could dilute maintenance capacity, urging the City to “ensure we have the resources to maintain parks before we acquire more.”

Including parkland owned by Provincial and Federal governments

Opposition to including Provincial and Federal parks in parkland provision calculations

- **Several respondents recommended excluding provincial and federal parks from parkland provision calculations.**
 - Respondents frequently mentioned that the City cannot guarantee long-term protection, access, or programming on lands it does not own.
 - Some respondents highlighted Ontario Place and Wasaga Beach as examples of lands that were sold or re-developed, outside of City control.

Protecting and expanding naturalized parkland

Support for landscape restoration

- **Strong support for wilding, rewilding, and ecological landscape restoration.**
 - Many respondents asked the City to lead with nature first, with comments such as “wilding should be a priority when developing new areas” and “restoration of natural landscape that sustains itself”.

- **Nature-based design is described not just as aesthetic, but as ecologically necessary.**
 - Many respondents want parks that look after the planet, help nature, and respond meaningfully to climate change.
 - Respondents frequently described Toronto’s natural areas as undervalued ecological assets, “Forested areas are good for people, good for the environment, and good for the climate crisis.”
- **Strong requests for rewilding efforts.**
 - Rewilding was linked to reducing municipal maintenance and human impact. Respondents suggested to stop using gas-powered mowers to allow rewilding to occur and transforming parkland into a forested area.
 - A respondent suggested training park staff in sowing the seeds of native plants.
 - Respondents mentioned that a part of rewilding is limiting development to allow parkland inaccessible to residents remain inaccessible, “it is important it remain ‘wild’ with no other forms of development.”

Protecting existing ecosystems

- **Respondents strongly emphasized that existing natural areas must be shielded from disturbance, misuse, or development.**
 - Many respondents had a deep concern about wildlife displacement and declining habitat quality. A respondent stated “Expanding parks should only be done if the natural forests and green space are untouched and will not disturb our animals.”
 - Some raised concerns about increasing human access to parkland, noting that the over-use of some greenspace can be harmful to endangered species.
 - Dogs were described as a threat to wildlife in certain naturalized areas. A no-dog policy, such as the one at Tommy Thompson Park, is encouraged in other naturalized park areas.
 - High Park was cited as a specific park where respondents believe the nature and wildlife should be protected.
- **Managing predator species and safety.**
 - A few respondents called for managing predator species, reflecting tensions between wildlife protection and human safety.
 - Coyotes were specifically mentioned as an example of an animal that requires protection and management, to ensure parks are safe environments for humans and other animals.

Protecting ravines, waterways, and ecosystems

- **Protecting ravines, waterways, and ecosystems from deterioration was a top priority for numerous respondents.**

- Respondents noted that ravines are deteriorating due to lack of maintenance and invasive species.
- Respondents expressed strong support for stream and catchment restoration, including natural stormwater solutions.
- Natural water features were seen as educational for children and restorative for adults, “kids can play by a stream playing with sticks... adults listen to the natural world while at work.”
- Some respondents shared concerns with past City projects that damaged ecosystems stating, “Mature trees that sheltered bats were removed [on a previous development project]. I wish the trees could have been left alone.”
- **A few respondents viewed ravines as distinct ecological systems that should not be treated as regular parks.**
 - A respondent mentioned that “ravines and urban forests should not be included in calculation of parkland. They are completely separate spaces.”
 - Some respondents requested no additional paved paths, no new entrances, no lighting, and no modifications that would encourage heavy human traffic in ravines.
 - Respondents frequently referred to ravines as migratory bird stopovers and sensitive wildlife habitats in need of proactive protection.
 - Respondents requested that the City address erosion, maintain natural trails, remove invasive species, and restore wetlands and slopes to protect biodiversity.
- **Respondents recommended diverse park types in Toronto’s park classification system.**
 - A respondent recommended that parks should be classed as natural or tableland. Then within the two groups, key facility types, playgrounds, and sports fields in particular.
 - Measure if the parks and facilities are sufficient to meet population growth demands by looking at per capita provision rates or waitlists.
- **Respondents suggested a few practices that can be limited to protect and preserve park’s current ecological status.**
 - Many respondents called for reduced turf and mowing to allow natural plants to grow.
 - Request that the City better plan its grass cutting schedules with heat and climate emergencies so the grass does not burn.
 - Respondents expressed strong support for reclaiming or preventing land use for car parking (with the hope that limiting car use would lessen pollution), and condo developments.
 - Ensuring park operations is frequently picking up litter, to reduce the affects it has on the natural ecosystem and wildlife.

Opposition to over-development

- **Many respondents expressed concern that parks are becoming overbuilt, over-programmed, or over-paved.**
 - A respondent stated “don’t over-program and divide up the park so much that there’s not a green space left.”
 - Some respondents opposed playgrounds, sports courts, plazas, ping pong tables, and fitness structures replacing natural areas.
 - There is frustration amongst respondents that the City labels concrete plazas as parks, “Please stop calling open-air cement areas ‘parks.’ Those are squares or plazas.”
- **Support for a mix of programming and green space.**
 - Some respondents appreciated programming in moderation, but highlighted that it cannot compromise the ecosystem at the park and user access to nature.
 - There is a strong preference for unmanicured landscaping plots.

Converting underused land into naturalized spaces

- **Repurposing city-owned golf courses.**
 - Many respondents advocated for repurposing city-owned golf courses for public nature access.
 - Examples from other cities inspired strong enthusiasm from respondents, “Palm Springs partnered with a conservation organization to replant an old golf course. Toronto should do the same.”
- **Considerations for counting hydro corridors as parkland.**
 - Some respondents expressed caution around hydro corridors, concerned about exposing children to unsafe conditions.
 - Some respondents referred to hydro corridors as critical wildlife spaces.
 - If hydro corridors were to be used as parkland, respondents recommended adding reeds, trees, wildflowers to attract bees, benches, snow-cleared pathways, and clear wayfinding elements.
 - A respondent explained, “The hydro corridors are all through the city and definitely need to be included. Wildlife frequent these corridors and need management. Mallards and other birds need to be protected.”
 - A respondent requested additional clarity on what counts as hydro parkland. They explained, “In our neighborhood, we are beside the hydro lines that are part of the Don Valley trails. While they have bike paths in the middle, we think more should be done before the whole area can be included in park calculations. For example, the portion with the community garden is amazing and should count, as well as the dog park. But the portions that just have the bike lane and otherwise have tall grass (tick concern to go into) shouldn’t be included in the calculation.”

- A respondent recommended considering safety in hydro corridors for park users to walk their dogs as coyotes tend to frequent the hydro fields.
- A respondent suggested to build pollinator and butterfly meadows in corridors to support native species and climate resilience.
- **Finding new or vacant land for natural restoration.**
 - Many respondents emphasized that any new land, including industrial, ravine-adjacent, or vacant land, should focus on natural restoration rather than sports or infrastructure.

Planting more trees and protecting existing vegetation

- **Respondents emphasized planting trees for future generations, not just filling current gaps.**
 - Respondents requested for shrubs, native flowering plants, meadows, and drought-resistant vegetation. A respondent said, “mown grass dries out and turns brown... but flowering ‘weeds’ provide habitat and are beautiful.”
 - Respondents reject designs that remove mature trees.
 - A respondent mentioned New York City’s small parkettes with dense planting as a model Toronto could follow.

Recommendations for natural park types

- **Respondents recommended a variety of natural park types including:**
 - Naturalized forest parks
 - Urban parklets with shade and water
 - Sports fields and recreation areas
 - Passive-walking and contemplative spaces
 - Larger parks are preferred to small parkettes because small spaces are more difficult to maintain and often end up paved
 - Invest in waterfront parks and beaches

Balancing public access to parks with nature protection

Equitable access to parks and maintaining ecological integrity

- **Respondents encouraged the City to consider limiting new pathways and activations in parkland to preserve the natural land without human contact.**
 - Respondents highlighted that access should prioritize connection to nature rather than activations, such as art installations.
 - It was noted that naturalized areas bring peace to park users, rather than traffic which may feel more stressful.
- **Many respondents suggested an equity approach that prioritizes access to greenspace.**

- A respondent mentioned, “Equity should be guided by access of underserved communities to greenspaces.”

Mental health benefits of nature

- **Several respondents described the positive impact nature has on the mental health of park users.**
 - Respondents described rewilded land as a mental health resource, not just ecological infrastructure, “to walk in naturalized park land is a tonic for the soul.”
 - Respondents experience psychological relief and spiritual grounding when accessing natural parks. This experience was described as universal amongst park users.

Wildlife

Protecting wildlife habitats

- **Respondents strongly recommended protecting existing wildlife, habitats, and ecosystems.**
 - Respondents frequently emphasized that wildlife habitat must be a core planning consideration, not an add-on.
 - Many explicitly stated they prefer mature forests, ravines, and naturalized spaces over recreational lawns.
 - Respondents described Toronto’s wildlife (including foxes, coyotes, raccoons, rabbits, deer, mallards, and bees) as essential to the identity of Toronto and recommended the City ensure they have room to live, den, forage and move around safely.
 - A respondent expressed, “Coyotes and foxes need to be able to build dens; native planting supports insects as all stages, non-native pollinators do not necessarily supports caterpillars, grubs, etc. that become the pollinators; places for burrowing animals like groundhogs to dig; cover for animals that need it, like opossums; open covered areas for barn swallows; chimney-like structures for chimney swifts.”
- **Appreciation for quiet, unaltered spaces.**
 - Several respondents stressed the importance of quiet, unaltered spaces where birds and mammals can nest undisturbed.
 - Respondents noted that park planning should reflect the full life cycle of animals, including species at risk, young animals, burrowing animals, pollinators and migratory birds.
- **Including protecting wildlife in the guiding principle.**
 - Some respondents said that protecting parkland does not automatically mean protecting wildlife, “protecting parkland is not the same as protecting trees and other wildlife. This should also be added to the strategy.”

Restore degraded ecosystems using native plants

- **Respondents frequently requested to restore natural landscapes.**
 - The use of native plants, wildflowers, reeds, shrubs, and trees will support insects, birds and mammals in parks. A respondent shared, “Let plants that are supposed to grow here grow... long grassy areas with bushes and native trees always.”
- **Plant more gardens to support natural ecosystems.**
 - Respondents want more pollinator gardens, butterfly gardens, and vegetation that supports insects at all life stages.
 - A respondent said that native flowering provide pollen for insects, food, and habitats for small animals. They also tend to be drought intolerant and provide a beautified natural area as opposed to mown grass which dries out and can turn brown from the summer heat.
 - Specific flowers were mentioned to consider, “native flowering shrubs, and the wildflowers and flowering 'weeds' should be allowed to grow (dandelions, yarrow, Queen Anne's lace, bird's foot trefoil, sweet white clover, daisies, goats beard, fleabane, cinquefoil, golden rod etc.”
 - Many respondents pointed out that non-native garden plants, “do not necessarily support caterpillars, grubs, etc., that become pollinators.”
- A respondent recommended optimizing parkland space by creating vertical gardens where possible.
- **Remove invasive species.**
 - There was widespread support for removing invasive species as they were seen as suffocating native ecosystems.
 - A respondent shared, “Many parks contain invasive species which were planted by the city years ago, and have never been removed even though they are now known to be invasive and harmful”, specifically referencing Banbury Community Center.
 - Instead, respondents recommended to hire and fund professional nature stewards to support natural plant growth.
- **Respondents requested structural wildlife support such as:**
 - Bat boxes
 - Bird houses
 - Turtle nesting mounds
 - Chimney swift towers
 - Meadow areas
 - Wildlife corridors connecting fragmented habitats

Minimizing the impacts of construction to wildlife

- **Many respondents shared a desire for the City to put more measures in place to minimize ecological disturbance from construction and development.**
 - Several respondents express alarm at construction activities that disrupt waterways, habitats, and wildlife. For example, “the work being done by the creek has caused so much mud to go into the creek turning it brown. What are you doing to the fish?”
- **Opposition of developments near sensitive habitats.**
 - Many respondents strongly opposed development or urban intensification near sensitive habitats, noting that climate change mitigation and biodiversity protection must outweigh development pressures.
 - Respondents expressed frustration with cases like Quarrylands, where long-recognized green space on a migration route was “totally destroyed” for a development later abandoned, leaving “a barren pit.”
 - Some respondents mentioned that park expansions shouldn’t disturb natural forests.
 - Respondents were very concerned about the overuse of sensitive areas such as the Scarborough Bluffs. They recommended limited on-visitation models similar to provincial parks.
 - A significant number of respondents opposed expanding paved trails, snow clearing, lighting, or allowing electric vehicles (e-bikes, scooters) in urban forests.
 - Such interventions “pose a safety threat to walkers and cyclists” and negatively affect wildlife habitats.
 - A respondent shared, “No electric vehicles allowed in ravines and urban forests including e-bikes, electric scooters, mini bikes, etc. Electric vehicles pose a safety threat to walkers and cyclists. Electric vehicles should be allowed only on streets and on street bike lanes. Currently electric vehicles are prohibited in ravines and urban forests through City by-laws.”

Education on interacting with wildlife in parks

- **Many respondents urge the City to invest in education for residents, particularly around coyotes, nesting birds, and other wildlife.**
 - Learning goals of the programming could include cultivating respect, stewardship, and understanding of the natural world.
 - A respondent recommended hiring educated staff that hold knowledge on endangered species, plant identification and general ecosystem management to run educational programming.
 - Respondents expressed frustration with unsafe or inappropriate human interactions with wildlife that requires knowledge sharing efforts:
 - People approaching wildlife for photos

- Families allowing children to approach swans
 - Feeding wildlife or disturbing dens and nests
- **Respondents called for clear signage explaining:**
 - How to keep pets, children, and oneself safe,
 - What wildlife should or should not be approached,
 - Seasonal habitat protections, and
 - Trail etiquette and habitat boundaries.
- **Respondents suggested stewardship programming to organize educational sessions on native planting, treating wildlife with respect, and trail etiquette.**
 - Respondents suggested partnering with community-based groups such as Toronto Nature Stewards to assist with invasive removal and habitat restoration.
 - Some respondents recommended expanded volunteer stewardship programs for trail care, ravine monitoring, butterfly gardens, and pollinator habitat creation.

Enforcement to protect wildlife

- **Many respondents expressed concern that off-leash dogs, especially in nesting or shoreline habitats, cause significant wildlife harm.**
 - Some respondents called for much stronger enforcement, citing examples with \$10,000 fines and arrests for disturbing nesting grounds.
 - Respondents also called for enforcement against illegal trail-cutting by mountain bikers, unauthorized encampments, and ATV/electric vehicle use in sensitive zones.

Climate change and resilience

Parks play a key role in climate resilience

- **Respondents frequently linked park expansion, forest protection, and native plant use to reducing carbon emissions, improving shade, and supporting cooling.**
 - They urged the City to take an aggressive approach, including reallocating land from “spaces for cars, condos, industry, and other polluters” to natural ecosystems.
- **Many suggested that Toronto must plan for climate-resilient ecosystems, including:**
 - Stormwater management
 - Wetland restoration
 - Biodiverse plant communities
 - Wildlife corridors resilient to heatwaves

- **Using natural energy sources in new buildings.**
 - A respondent recommended installing solar panels on the roofs of park buildings, “solar panels installed on the roofs of park buildings if there could be some sort of agreement made with the panel company.”

Concerns regarding development affects on the climate

- **Several respondents stated that the increase in condo developments is limiting green spaces and undermining walkability goals.**
 - Respondents expressed concerns that development approvals are inconsistent with stated City goals around walkability, nature access, and climate mitigation.
- **Respondents recommended to mitigate overbuilding on existing green spaces and prevent future quarry land-type ecological losses.**

High Park access and parking

- **Many respondents viewed the removal of car access and parking as exclusionary.**
 - Many respondents fear that reduced parking and car movement has transformed High Park from a citywide destination into a space primarily accessible to local, able-bodied residents.
 - Respondents expressed concern that banning vehicles disproportionately impacts groups the City prioritizes include seniors, people with disabilities, families with young children, and multigenerational households.
- **Several residents described the impacts of no car access including:**
 - Decreased attendance
 - Loss of sports groups
 - Cancelled volunteer activities
 - Reduced accessibility to amenities spread across a large, hilly park
- **A respondent mentioned, “Attendance has dropped dramatically. Many free community/volunteer activities have ceased.”**
- **Some respondents felt that the public consultation process for the high park decision making was not satisfactory and that the decision is politically driven.**
 - Some respondents believe that the City is investing in movement strategies or redesigns while neglecting basic upkeep that would significantly improve daily user experience.
 - Multiple respondents felt that the High Park policy changes have privileged cyclists and dog owners at the expense of accessibility-focused users such as seniors, people with disabilities, and multigenerational families.

Car access seen as essential for families and people with disabilities

- **Respondents emphasized that High Park’s scale and topography make vehicular access a necessity, not a convenience.**
 - They said that a lack of car access has a negative impact for older adults, people with disabilities and mobility limitations, and families transporting children or gear.
 - A respondent shared, “Grandparents want to be part of the family outing. Car accessibility and parking needs to be part of recreational parks.”
- **Many respondents asserted that public transit is not a realistic substitute for all users.**
 - Respondents believe that parking availability directly determines whether some residents can participate in park life at all.
- **Many respondents referred to the park’s identity as a “destination” given the inclusion of the zoo, gardens, splash pads, sports fields, and ponds.**
 - Therefore, respondents argued that Torontonians outside of the local radius should have equitable access to the park by vehicles.
 - Respondents requested that High Park governance decisions account for its role as a regional destination serving thousands, rather than adopting a neighbourhood-centric approach.
 - A respondent shared, “High Park has many amenities like sports fields, tennis courts, hockey rink, swimming pool, a restaurant, allotment gardens, Dream in High Park, High Park Zoo, playgrounds and splash pads, walking trails, picnic areas, benches and trees to sit under for shade on a hot day. All of these are great amenities are recommended in the Parkland Strategy.”
- **Housing density and a lack of private yards warrant car access to high park.**
 - Respondents noted that as housing densifies (garden suites, multiplexes, and condos), many Torontonians lose access to private yards, strengthening the argument for maintaining vehicle access to parks.
 - They argued that restricting cars inadvertently fragments families by forcing some members to walk long distances while others wait for shuttles.

Support for a car-reduced High Park

- **A smaller segment of respondents supported car-free or car-reduced initiatives.**
 - Respondents expressed that car-reduced initiatives may provide better ambience, safety, and enjoyment when walking or cycling in a less vehicle-dominated green space.

- The respondents who supported a car-reduced park said that it can have environmental benefits, reduce noise, improve tranquility, and a more European-style urban experience. A respondent described, “
- **Opposition to food service vehicles in High Park.**
 - A respondent mentioned that the food services at High Park are satisfactory as is, and that food and beverage trucks may deter from the scenic experience i.e., during Cherry Blossom season.

High Park safety on trails

- **Many respondents describe High Park as increasingly dominated by fast-moving cyclists who treat the paved routes as training circuits.**
 - Pedestrians report feeling unsafe sharing space with “speed cyclists,” affecting families with young children, slower walkers, seniors, and recreational riders.
- **Several respondents call for structural changes such as speed enforcement, licensing, mandatory helmets, or separated pathways to restore safety and balance among user groups.**
 - There are concerns that cyclist advocacy has disproportionately influenced policy decisions compared to broader community needs.

Embracing the nature in High Park

- **Many residents value High Park’s natural elements, such as forests, wildflowers, and ravines and want these preserved or expanded.**
 - Respondents describe High Park as a rare refuge within an increasingly dense city, one that should remain ecologically rich, serene, and minimally altered.
 - A respondent said, ““Please keep the semi wild/nature spaces that currently exist.”
- **Strong opposition was indicated for over-programming or commercial additions that detract from natural beauty.**
 - Respondents expressed that parks should not be overrun with programming and commercial activities.

Signage

- **Signage on how to interact with wildlife.**
 - Respondents recommended increased educational signage where ecologically healthy areas may support predators such as coyotes about how to keep pets, children, themselves, and the wildlife safe.
 - A respondent suggested programming aimed at all ages, with the target audience being parents and children, on how to respect and interact with the natural world (e.g., not feeding animals human food, maintaining a

safe distance from wildlife, and not speaking with wildlife in a way that upsets them or initiates aggressive behaviour).

- **Educational signage about native species.**
 - Respondents recommended signage about native plant gardens to learn about the surrounding environment, and how they support the ecosystem, offer shade, and aesthetics for the park.
- **Signage regarding alcohol and drug consumption.**
 - A respondent recommended adding more signage about no alcohol or drug consumption in areas where children play.
- **Signage with improved maps that are easy to understand.**
 - A few respondents requested updates to park maps that are out of date or where the landscape has changed due to environmental conditions like flooding.
 - Don Mills, Black Creek, and Eglinton Flats were named as park maps in need of updates for clarity and changes to the site.

Next Steps

Feedback collected through community engagement Phase 2 will be summarized and compiled into an overview report. This information will be used to further inform the development of directions to include in the revised Parkland Strategy.

Appendix A – Survey Participant Demographics and Information

The approximate number of responses for each question is identified by “N”.

Who completed the survey

(N 2.5k)

- Toronto resident (Individual) 60%
- Whole household (i.e. including experiences of child(ren), spouse or other family members) 38%
- Representative of a group/organization 2%

Postal codes of participants

(N 2.5k)

- Downtown Core 13.87%
- Toronto East York 12.41%
- Etobicoke –York 11.68%
- Scarborough 12.41%
- North York 12.41%
- Outside of Toronto 37.23%

Organizations that completed the survey

- Agincourt Lawn Bowling Club
- Balmy Beach Lawn Bowling Club

- Beesworth
- Chabad on the Avenue
- Community Informative
- Cosburn Park Lawn Bowling Club
- Downtown Kids Academy
- Etobicoke Lawn Bowling Club
- Friends of Guild Park
- Get Active 'N Play
- Guildwood Tennis Club
- Harmony Place Support Services
- Horizons for Youth
- Kew Beach Lawn Bowling Club
- Lawrence Park Lawn Bowling & Croquet Club
- Lawrence Park Tennis Club
- Mimico by the Lake BIA
- Newmarket Lawn Bowling Club York Curling Club
- Oakwood Vaughan Community Organization – Healthy Aging Program, Climate Group
- Phoenix Child Centre
- Scarborough Sharks Girls Hockey Association
- South Asian Women's & Immigrants' Services Inc
- Stonegate Community Health Centre
- TELCCS
- Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee
- VWAT Family Services
- West End Curling Committee
- West Toronto Junction Historical Society
- Willowdale Lawn Bowling Club
- York-Weston Tennis Club

Age of the person filling out this survey

(N1.4k)

- 5 to 12 years old 0%
- 13 to 18 years old 7%
- 19 to 29 years old 20%
- 30 to 39 years old 31%
- 40 to 55 years old 13%

- 56 to 64 years old 16%
- 65 to 74 years old 8%
- 75 years old or above 4%
- Prefer not to answer 4%

Number of people of each age group who participated in this survey (excluding main respondent)

(N1.4k)

- 0 to 12 years old 476
- 13 to 18 years old 143
- 19 to 29 years old 162
- 30 to 39 years old 238
- 40 to 55 years old 344
- 56 to 64 years old 146
- 65 to 74 years old 201
- 75 years old or above 128

Preferred Language

(N 1.9k)

- English 94%
- French 1%
- Prefer not to answer 1%
- Spanish 1%
- Not listed. Please describe 1%
- Chinese-Mandarin <1%
- Bengali <1%
- Chinese – Cantonese <1%
- Indigenous – Other <1%
- Ukrainian <1%
- Albanian 0%
- Amharic 0%

- Arabic 0%
- Farsi 0%
- Greek 0%
- Gujarati 0%
- Hungarian 0%
- Indigenous – Oji-Cree 0%
- Polish 0%
- Portuguese 0%

Languages described

(N 7)

- German
- Dutch
- Gaelic
- Hebrew
- Bosnian

Respondents who identify as Indigenous, First Nations (status, non-status, treaty or non-treaty), Inuit, or Métis

(N 1.4k)

- Yes 2%
- No 90%
- Prefer not to answer 8%

Respondents' race/racial background

(N 1.4k)

- Arab, Middle Eastern or West Asian (e.g. Afghan, Armenian, Iranian, Lebanese, Persian, Turkish) 2%

- Black (e.g. African, African-Canadian, Afro-Caribbean) 3%
- East Asian (e.g. Chinese, Japanese, Korean) 6%
- First Nations (status, non-status, treaty or non-treaty), Inuit or Métis 1%
- Latin American (e.g. Brazilian, Colombian, Cuban, Mexican, Peruvian) 3%
- South Asian or Indo-Caribbean (e.g. Indian, Indo- Guyanese, Indo-Trinidadian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan) 4%
- Southeast Asian (e.g. Filipino, Malaysian, Singaporean, Thai, Vietnamese) 2%
- More than one race category or mixed race 3%
- Not listed. Please describe 3%
- Prefer not to answer 15%

Race/racial background described

(N 85)

- White Indonesian
- Middle Eastern and Jewish
- African and White
- South Asian and White
- White and Latin American
- White and Mexican
- Jewish
- Black and White
- Filipino and White
- Asian and White
- Jewish, Irish and Scottish
- White and Asian
- Bangladeshi
- Mixed South Asian
- French
- Native, Indigenous and Dutch, Canadian
- Canadien Français
- Irish, British and German
- South American
- Onondaga Nation mixed with Asian Indian Sindhi
- East Asian and White
- Acadien
- White and Egyptian
- Black, White and Spanish

- White and Arabic
- White and Indian

Respondents who identify as a person with a disability

(N1.4k)

- Yes 19%
- No 70%
- Don't know 1%
- Prefer not to answer 11%

Households that include a person with a disability (excluding the main respondent)

(N1.4k)

- Yes 15%
- No 73%
- Don't know 1%
- Prefer not to answer 11%

Respondents' gender identity

(N 1.4k)

- Woman 61%
- Man 26%
- Trans 1%
- Gender non-binary (including gender fluid, genderqueer, androgynous) 2%
- Two-Spirit <1%
- Not listed, please describe 1%
- Prefer not to answer 11%

Gender identity described

(N 9)

- Two-Spirit, non-binary
- Queer (male)
- Transgender

Respondents' sexual orientation

(N 1.9k)

- Heterosexual or straight 65%
- Bisexual 6%
- Gay 3%
- Lesbian 1%
- Queer 4%
- Two-Spirit <1%
- Don't know 1%
- Not listed, please describe 2%
- Prefer not to answer 19%

Sexual orientation described

(N 23)

- Asexual
- Questioning
- Pansexual

Respondents' current housing situation

(N 1.4k)

- Home owner 60%
- Renting 26%
- Permanently living with parent(s) or other family member(s) 4%
- Temporarily staying with others (no fixed address) <1%
- Unhoused (staying outside, in a shelter, in a 24-hour respite) <1%
- Prefer not to answer 9%
- Not listed, please describe 1%

Respondents' current access to outdoor space

(N 1.8k)

- I have access to private outdoor space like a yard 65%
- I have access to private outdoor space like a balcony 16%
- I have access to semi-private/shared outdoor space 8%
- I only have access to public spaces like parks (I do not have access to private or semi-private outdoor space) 13%
- Prefer not to answer 6%

Housing situation described

(N 11)

- Renting in subsidized Toronto community housing
- Condo
- Life lease in retirement community
- Shared house with a partner, not an owner
- Housing co-op
- Rent-geared-to-income recipient
- Homeowner but residing in a rental home

Household access to outdoor space

(N 1.4k)

- I have access to private outdoor space like a yard 51%
- I have access to private outdoor space like a balcony 23%
- I only have access to public spaces like parks (I do not have access to private or semi-private outdoor space) 17%
- I have access to semi-private/shared outdoor space 14%
- Prefer not to answer 7%

Respondents' household income before tax

(N 1.4k)

- 0 - \$29,999 4%
- \$30,000-\$49,999 5%
- \$50,000-\$69,999 6%
- \$70,000-\$99,999 13%
- \$100,000-149,999 15%
- \$150,000 or more 26%
- Don't know 1%
- Prefer not to answer 19%

How respondents found out about the survey

(N 1.4k)

- Ad or post from a City of Toronto social media account 39%
- Councillor's Office communications 25%
- Word of mouth (including non-City of Toronto social media account) 22%
- Email from the project team 7%
- Prefer not to answer 6%
- The project webpage 2%