

Phase 2 Virtual Public Meeting Summary Report

Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan

Phase 2: Setting the Direction

July 16, 2025

Parks & Recreation Division
City of Toronto





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Overview

About this report

This report summarizes the contributions of members of the public who participated in the engagement process for Phase 2 the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan. This engagement reflects the City's commitment to meaningful collaboration in shaping the review of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan (PRFP) and the Parkland Strategy (PLS).

In the meeting, members of the public received an overview of what the PRFP is, what the City heard through Phase 1 of engagement, and the draft emerging directions proposed as updates to the PRFP.

The insights gathered will directly inform the PRFP update and recommendations going to Council. The City of Toronto looks forward to continued collaboration in future engagements.

Phase 2: Setting the direction

In this phase, draft directions informed by the needs and priorities identified by community members in Phase 1 were shared with the public for feedback. Community members were invited to help validate and refine these directions.

The community engagement activities in this phase included:

- an online survey
- equity-focused advisory group workshops
- virtual public meetings
- Indigenous Advisory Circles
- Do-it-yourself workshop kits

Feedback collected during this phase will help finalize updates to the PRFP. Visit the project webpage to review past engagement summaries and sign up for e-updates:

www.toronto.ca/ParksandFacilitiesPlans

Discussion highlights

The virtual public meeting took place on July 16, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. via Webex. 28 members of the public attended the meeting. The following section offers a concise summary of the most significant themes and pieces of feedback that took place during the meeting. The discussion questions for the PRFP virtual public meeting were as follows:

1. What do you think of the Emerging Directions one to four?
 - Are there any actions missing?
 - Any suggested adjustments?
2. Do you have any comments on the priorities for each recreation facility type? Refer to the priorities in the future provision chart.
 - Any facilities missed?
 - Do you think a facility type should be prioritized more or less?

Participants were assigned breakout rooms at random, and worked as a group to answer the discussion questions with City staff facilitating the conversations.

Although not all items discussed during the meeting fall within the scope of the Parks & Recreation Facilities Plan, all discussion has been captured and will be shared with the relevant teams within the wider Parks and Recreation team.

Emerging Direction One

Emerging direction one, and related actions include:

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.

Participant feedback

Priorities for future provision

- A parent of ringette players mentioned that their Long Branch arena is looking to be re-purposed or re-programmed during the day. The participant raised a concern about having to permit another facility for ringette.
 - City staff noted that arenas are not identified as a facility type to be repurposed.
- A participant asked about future planning for outdoor multi-use trails and bike paths. They noted that short and long-term planning is needed.

- Recommendation for indoor playgrounds to be added on to the provision list to support “vertical communities” (communities with high-rise buildings).
- Reduced soccer fields were accepted with the recommendation they remain two-sided to help get more facility diversity in a limited space.
- Ensure facilities and services for seniors are a focus in the PRFP Review.

Identifying under-used facilities and use at all times

- Suggestion to do an analysis of underused facilities in winter, particularly to serve high school students such as outdoor rinks and skateparks (i.e., Port Union Community Recreation Centre)

Proximity to transit

- A participant asked about if proximity to transit is a consideration in the selection criteria to determine the feasibility of adding an outdoor skating trail. For example, Scarborough has a skating trail at McCowan Park which is a 20 minute drive for the participant, and at peak time, there is no parking space.
 - City staff responded that transit proximity is a consideration as well as more parking in places with less access to transit.

Co-location

- Co-location was supported to increase access.

Wayfinding and access to information

- Request for strategic wayfinding incorporating fun public art.
- Clearer communications are needed on how to access recreation facilities.
- Ensure facility websites include up to date contact information.

Maintain facilities in a state of good repair

- A participant asked why the City has not been able to reduce the state of good repair (SOGR) funding backlog.
 - City staff responded that it is Council that decides how much money is allocated into the SOGR and that this matter is out of scope of the PRFP Review.

Emerging Direction Two

Emerging direction two, and related actions include:

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 not included in this survey as they are still being developed in consultation with Indigenous communities.

Participant feedback

No participant feedback was received on Emerging Direction Two.

Emerging Direction Three

Emerging direction three, and related actions include:

Emerging Direction Three: 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.

Participant feedback

Consider population growth and gentrification in facility planning

- Keeping up with population growth is important, recognizing that the future population may have different needs than the existing population.
 - City staff noted that the City uses pipeline data to see where new growth is set to go.

Consider gentrification in facilities planning

- A participant asked how the City calculates where people require social supports and CRC resources while considering gentrification of certain areas (e.g., Regent Park and Weston Village).
 - City staff responded that the City does not wait for gentrification to occur before providing supports and funding to communities. The City uses existing population data (Stas Canada) and City programming data to identify and respond to areas of need. A goal of the PRFP is to use data to identify, and build a plan to serve, areas of the city which have gaps in recreation facility provision.

Co-location and flexible spaces

- Investigate opportunities for partnership with the Toronto District School Board to build out spaces with computer labs for youth and adult learning.
- Build more advanced educational spaces as a part of co-location.
- Interest in community bike repair shops as a flexible facility.

Emerging Direction Four

Emerging direction four, and related actions include:

Emerging Direction Four: 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.

Participant feedback

Support for Co-location

- Co-location was supported to address the scarcity of a small facility that is usually not available. If facilities were co-located, this may increase access. Request for strategic wayfinding planning and fun wayfinding using public art.

General Feedback

- A participant representing the pickleball community said that the plan is amazing and to keep up the great work.

Acknowledgements

City of Toronto

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