

Summary: Third Meeting with Wendat Nation

Queen's Park North Revitalization

Community Engagement Phase 3: Setting the Direction

March 31, 2026



Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Meeting Summary 2

Next Steps 5

Introduction

On March 31, 2026, the City of Toronto hosted a third meeting with the Wendat Nation via Microsoft Teams. The purpose of the meeting was to share and discuss updates on the Queen's Park North revitalization planning process, including the proposed operations and maintenance framework, the draft design concept and core elements, including the workshop, tree walk, café and washrooms, and the proposed Scope of Work for Indigenous Rights Holders. Key points shared by participants are summarized below. Text *in italics* reflects responses from the Queen's Park North Project Team, where provided.

Attendance

Wendat Nation.

Queen's Park North Revitalization Project team: City of Toronto, Janet Rosenberg & Studio, Trophic Design, Third Party Public.

For more information about the project and to review summaries from other community engagement activities, visit the project webpage: toronto.ca/QueensParkNorth

Meeting Summary

This summary was written by Third Party Public and was shared with participants in draft before being finalized.

- **Strong support for the project and the draft design concept, particularly the tree walk with interpretive panels and engravings, the integration of the commemorative garden, and the preservation of the tree canopy.** Overall feedback was very positive, with participants acknowledging the great work done by the project team and noting they were impressed with the draft design concept presented. The preservation of the tree canopy is particularly appreciated and viewed very positively. They said this is the kind of project that motivates their work and that it is beautiful to know they are contributing to sharing the history of First Nations, something that has not always been done in the past. They said the project helps create bridges between different groups and populations in Ontario and across Canada. Participants said they are grateful and proud to be part of the project and are very happy to continue working with the project team in a strong and positive collaboration. *The City explained that it's good to hear support for the tree walk, and at the same time the City also noted that the Queen's Park North team is revisiting the tree walk because of concerns that have been expressed by some community leaders at Committee and Council. A final decision about the tree walk has not yet been made.*

In response, participants acknowledged that communities know their own needs best and expressed openness to change, feedback, and further discussion to understand concerns, fears, and perspectives.

Additional feedback shared after review of the draft summary: Participants emphasized their continued interest in ensuring that the development of educational and interpretive content remains an integral part of the project. Ideally, this component would be considered not only along the tree walk, but also elsewhere throughout the park. As noted in this summary, the participants are open to potential adjustments to the tree walk; however, they would want to ensure that such changes do not compromise the broader objective of installing educational panels across the park—particularly if the tree walk were to be the primary or sole location currently envisioned for this purpose. This feedback reiterates the importance they place on the educational component of the project, and not out of concern or over-precision.

- **Integrate art by Indigenous artists throughout the design, including the interpretive panels, engravings in the tree walk, rather than limiting Indigenous art to a single standalone piece.** Artwork was seen as a good way to bring balance to an area that can feel “heavy” in context. The draft design brought

many ideas to mind for artists who could be included, creating an opportunity for Indigenous artists to shine across many parts of the site (e.g., Terry Dachtl, a Wendat tattoo artist in Montreal who has worked with Parks Canada on projects involving engraved plants and animals. They noted that understanding how artist selection works through the City would help clarify the public art procurement process). *The City expressed their thanks for ideas shared by the Wendat and for their earlier proposal that helped inform the City's thinking about how to approach art within the project. The team explained that Council has directed the development of a broader public art strategy, including (but not limited to) Indigenous artists, and that the City is now working with Economic Development and Culture to define the early steps of that strategy, including artist procurement. Trophic Design noted that the process for integrated elements such as interpretive signage may differ from the City's formal public art process. In some cases, the design team may work directly with Indigenous artists on components like botanical drawings or engravings for interpretive panels, as these are considered part of signage rather than standalone public art pieces. While some aspects of the process are still to be determined, the project team confirmed there is opportunity within the project scope to include Indigenous artists and to consider recommendations. The project team encouraged Wendat Nation to share artist recommendations with the City or the design team so they can be considered as discussions continue.*

There were a range of questions of clarification asked including:

- **How much is the donation for ongoing maintenance?** *Approximately \$2.3 million each year for an initial 20-year term (in addition to the \$50 million capital investment). The annual funding would allow University of Toronto to perform enhanced maintenance and operations beyond typical city park standards.*
- **How does the City envision ongoing stewardship with Indigenous communities?** *The Wendat Nation wants to understand the City's approach to assess whether participation would be appropriate and meaningful for them. Specifically, they asked whether the City is considering involvement from multiple First Nations at the table, a single representative, or another approach. They emphasized the importance of being respectful, avoiding overlap with other Nations' roles, and ensuring they do not "step on anyone's toes" before deciding whether and how to be involved. *The City said that Indigenous stewardship and governance are complex and cannot be fully defined at the outset. For this reason, the approach is intentionally evolving through ongoing engagement and learning. The Council Fire governance model remains under development and will be shaped collaboratively with Indigenous partners. The intent is to embed Indigenous involvement as an ongoing, living part of the park's governance and operations. The City has experience working with Indigenous service agencies in other contexts, including**

operational roles, but is still assessing which models are appropriate here. The City said that the Executive Director will be responsible for building and sustaining relationships with Indigenous communities, and the advisory board will include dedicated urban Indigenous representation to ensure ongoing input into park operations and emerging priorities.

- **What is the timeline and expected deadline for submitting the 30-page materials?** *The project team explained that the first step is to finalize the scope of work. They asked participants to share any comments on the draft within the next week, with the intention of issuing the final scope within two weeks. Once that's in place, the project team is looking to receive a fee proposal and work plan from Rights Holders by the end of April. These will be reviewed quickly so that kick-off meetings can be scheduled as soon as possible. The goal of those meetings is to confirm roles and authorship and to bring the team up to speed on the design work completed so far. For the 30-page deliverable (the translations), the expectation is a fall completion, so roughly six months to complete that work.*

Participants said that the timeline is fast given their existing workload, but they will do their best to meet expectations. They asked the project team to follow up if responses are delayed, clarifying that slower communication should not be interpreted as a lack of interest or commitment.

Other comments

- **Requests for recommendations on key City and partner contacts for the Wendat Nation's upcoming strategic presentations.** The Wendat Nation will be travelling to Toronto for a week in May 2025 to present their strategic vision for involvement in projects, including their history with the land, particularly in relation to Toronto. They are reaching out across multiple City of Toronto departments they already work with and are trying to identify the most strategic audiences for these presentations. They said that navigating how the City operates is complex and asked for suggestions on additional people, departments, or related consulting agencies and firms that might benefit from attending. They clarified that the Wendat Nation does not yet have a formal strategic plan specific to Ontario, which makes prioritization difficult. However, their work is well established in archaeology, heritage planning, and Indigenous engagement, and they are becoming increasingly involved in parks-related projects. *The City said they would circulate the request internally and ask colleagues for recommendations. Trophic suggested reaching out to Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), particularly Craig King, as well as Six Nations, including Lonny Bomberry and Phil Monture. They noted that these individuals have a strong understanding of City activities and are deeply involved in engagement and land-use consultation work. Trophic offered to share their contact information.*

Next Steps

The project team asked Wendat Nation to review and provide feedback on the proposed Scope of Work, particularly Sections 4.1-4.3 of the proposed Scope of Services (Interpretive Plan, Planting and Ecologies, and Art Jury/Panel) and submit a fee proposal and work plan by April.

The project team thanked participants for their time and feedback and reminded them that the online public survey remains open until the end of this week. The draft design concept will continue to be refined through engagement feedback, Executive Committee direction, Design Review Panel input, and Council review. A City Staff report will be submitted to the Infrastructure and Environment Committee on May 27, presented to the Committee on June 10, and reviewed by City Council on June 24–26.