

Engagement Summary



Phase 2



June, 2026



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Executive Summary

The Weston in Gear planning study is a City of Toronto initiative that will create a long-term plan to guide growth and change in Weston. During Phase 2 of the study, residents, community organizations, Indigenous community members, youth, and other interested and impacted parties were invited to share their thoughts on an emerging development concept and draft policy directions. Engagement activities took place between April and June 2026 and included a community dinner, virtual meetings, an online survey, and Indigenous engagement around the Sacred Fire.

Overall, people recognized that Weston is expected to grow because of the presence of Weston Station and provincial direction to direct growth in proximity to higher order transit (transit with frequent service that operates entirely or partially in a dedicated right-of-way). While people had different views on the amount of growth that should occur, there was strong agreement that growth must be accompanied by investments in infrastructure, services, housing, parks, and transportation. Many people emphasized that Weston's unique character, history, and sense of community should be protected as the neighbourhood evolves.

Transportation was one of the most common topics raised. Many people expressed concern about existing traffic congestion and questioned whether the transportation network can support future growth. People supported improvements to walking, cycling, and transit, including safer cycling routes, better connections to Weston Station, and improved access across the rail corridor. Parking was also identified as an important issue, with many residents noting that private vehicles remain necessary for many households.

People expressed strong support for more parks, public spaces, and gathering places. Residents highlighted the need for spaces where people can meet, relax, play, and socialize, especially outside of the Humber River Valley in the built-up area. Safety, lighting, walkability, street trees, public art, and improved pedestrian connections were also identified as priorities. Indigenous people emphasized the importance of creating spaces that support cultural activities, gathering, and Indigenous expression.

Many people identified the Humber River Valley as one of Weston's greatest assets. People supported improving access to the valley, strengthening connections between the river and Weston Road, and protecting the valley's ecological health. Indigenous people also highlighted the cultural and spiritual significance of the river and surrounding lands.

There was broad support for preserving Weston's heritage and local identity. Participants emphasized the importance of protecting heritage buildings and features, including the Humber stone walls, and ensuring that new development reflects the character of the community.

Opinions on building height and density varied. Some participants felt that the proposed heights were appropriate, while others felt that proposed building heights were too tall. Regardless of their views, many people stressed that new development should provide clear community benefits, including affordable housing, public spaces, and community facilities.

Displacement and housing affordability were the most significant concerns raised throughout the engagement process. People expressed concern about rising housing costs, the loss of affordable housing, and the potential displacement of residents, businesses, community organizations, and service providers. Many shared that they would support policies that would encourage affordable housing, provide a wider range of housing options, and help existing residents and organizations remain in Weston.

The feedback collected during Phase 2 will help refine the study's development concept and policy directions. This input will inform the final planning framework, which will guide future growth and support the creation of a more connected, inclusive, and complete community in Weston.



Introduction



Project Overview

The Weston in Gear planning study is a City of Toronto led initiative aimed at creating a planning framework that supports complete communities, sustainable growth, and public space improvements in Weston. The study will culminate in recommendations to support the creation of a comprehensive planning framework to guide future growth and change in the Weston community. The framework will focus on how the elements of a great community come together: buildings, housing, businesses, heritage, public spaces, transportation and community services and facilities. The study will also reflect the City's objectives related to equity, reconciliation, sustainability, and inclusive engagement, including tailored methods for working with Indigenous communities, children and youth, seniors, newcomers, businesses, and local human service organizations.

To implement the study outcomes, the City will prepare a Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) to be added to the Official Plan, along with Urban Design Guidelines (UDG) that will provide direction for built form, streetscapes, and public spaces. To undertake the planning study, the City of Toronto has retained a multidisciplinary consultant team, led by Gladki Planning Associates (Planning), working in partnership with DTAH (Urban Design), Transsolar (Thermal Comfort), Edge of the Bush (Urban Indigenous Engagement), and Co-Effect (Graphic Design + Visual Communication).



Image 1 and 2. View of Weston Station (top) and Cruickshank Park (bottom)

Timeline

The Weston in Gear planning study is being carried out through a multi-phase process that integrates technical analysis with ongoing community engagement. Phase 1: Background Review and Phase 2: Emerging Development Direction of the study are complete. Phase 1 focused on the strengths, challenges and opportunities within Weston, as well as draft vision and guiding principles for the study. The Phase 1 Background Report and Engagement Summary can be found on the City's webpage. Phase 2 tested and refined an emerging development concept and draft policy directions.

The study is moving into the third and final phase of work, which involves finalizing the development concept and policy directions and producing a final report with policy and design recommendations.

The diagram illustrates the full study timeline, including key milestones, deliverables, and engagement touchpoints.

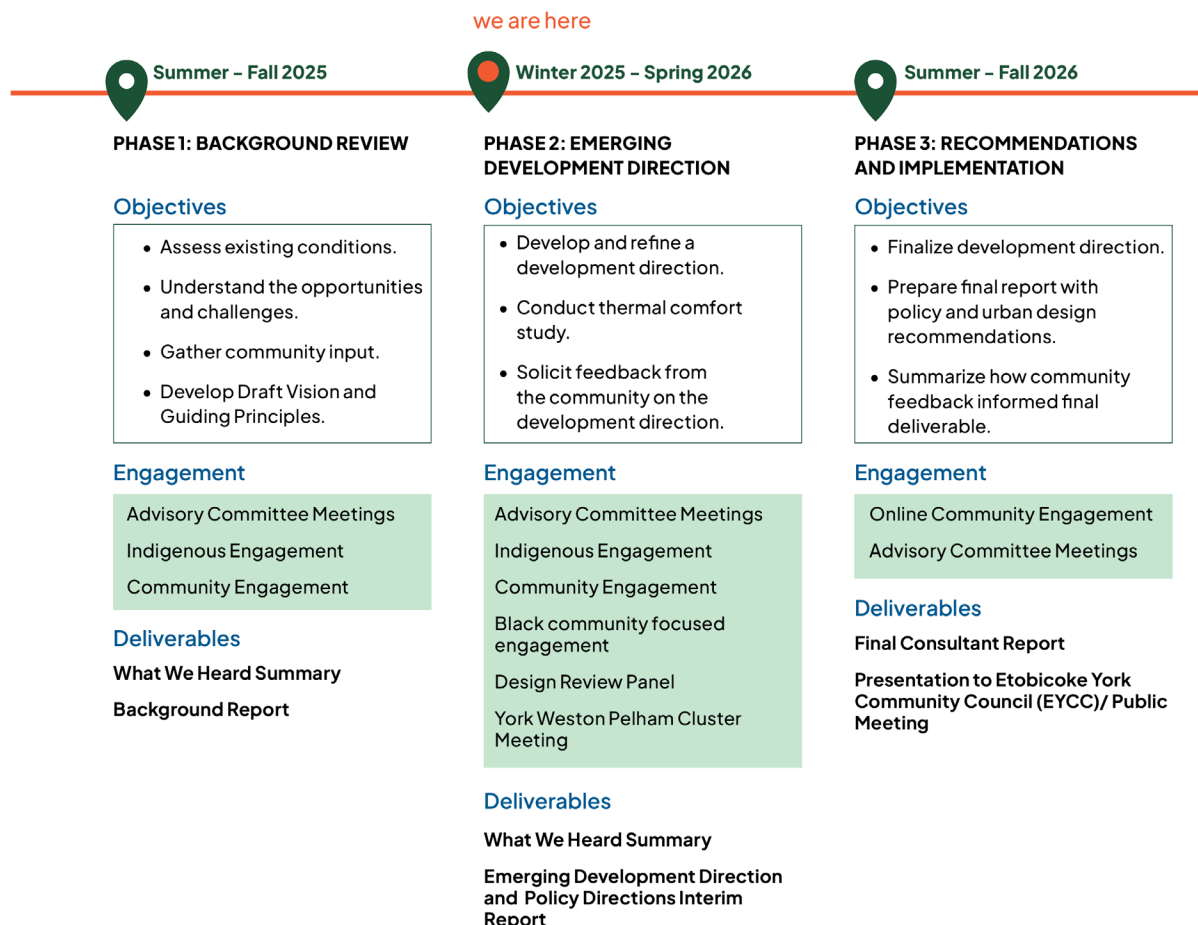


Image 3. Study timeline

Report Purpose

This report summarizes Phase 2 engagement as part of the Weston in Gear planning study. It documents the engagement activities completed during Phase 2 (between April 27 and June 23, 2026) and summarizes what was heard from community members and interested and impacted parties by theme.

How will feedback be used?

All feedback collected throughout Phase 2 was reviewed by the consultant team to identify themes, areas of agreement and disagreement, and issues requiring further study. This input is being used to further refine the emerging development concept and draft land use, built form, mobility, and public realm (public space) policy directions.

All of the feedback received has been recorded as part of the public record and will be used to inform the study's recommendations that will be considered by Council and adapted by City staff into a SASP and UDG. Feedback received as part of the engagement which is beyond the scope of this project has been recorded so that it may serve to inform on-going conversations within Weston, as well as concurrent studies being undertaken by the City and/or ongoing City-wide strategies and discussions.

Promotion

A range of outreach and promotion methods were used during Phase 2 to raise awareness of the Weston in Gear planning study and encourage broad participation in the engagement activities. Promotion was designed to reach residents, businesses, community organizations, and other stakeholders through multiple channels, including direct mail, on-the-ground distribution, digital platforms, and email lists. This multi-channel approach helped ensure that information about engagement opportunities was widely shared and accessible across Weston. Details on the promotion for all engagement activities can be found in Table 1.



Image 4. Flyer promoting the Community Dinner event.

Table 1: Promotion for Phase 2 Engagement Activities

Promotional Channel	Details
Community Dinner – Community Consultation Meeting	
Planning Community Consultation Meetings Webpage	Posted April 10, 2026
Project Webpage	Posted on April 13, 2026
Official City Mailout	6,306 notices sent on April 17, 2026
Flyer Distribution	50 flyers distributed across the community (hydro poles, message boards, library, businesses, places of worship and Community Place Hub)
Social Media – Instagram	1 post on April 28, 2026 2 story re-shares on April 28, 2026 and May 6, 2026
Social Media – Bluesky	1 post on April 28, 2026
Email Mailing List	Event Information emailed to 58 recipients on April 15, 2026
Schools	Flyer distributed electronically to local schools through Toronto District School Board and Toronto Catholic District School Board on April 20, 2026
Community Place Hub (Progress Place) Promotion	Flyer emailed to Executive Director to be circulated among network on April 13, 2026
York Pelham Cluster Members	Flyer emailed on April 24, 2026
Online Survey	
Project Webpage	Posted on May 6, 2026
Survey Link at the Community Dinner	A QR code was shared in-person at the Community Dinner on May 6, 2026
Email Mailing List	A reminder email and survey link was circulated to 58 recipients on May 12, 2026

What We Heard



Overview of Activities

The second series of engagement was focused on the emerging concept and draft policy and design directions, and took place in the Spring 2026. The engagement activities intended to capture the opinions and feedback of a diversity of people and groups who live, work, play, care for and visit Weston.

The engagement objectives for Phase 2 included:

- Present the emerging development concept and policy directions using accessible, plain-language materials, visuals, and maps.
- Explain how feedback and community input from Phase 1 was incorporated into the proposed policy directions and emerging development concept.
- Break down technical planning concepts and translate them into plain language to build capacity and understanding of the land use planning process.
- Clarify how community feedback will influence the study at this stage of the project, and clarify what is in and out of scope for this study.
- Gather community feedback on proposed land use, intensification strategies, public realm directions, potential heritage resources, and draft policy ideas.
- Provide an opportunity for people to validate or clarify any remaining areas of concern and/or areas of excitement.

Each of the engagement activities have been described on the following page.



Images 5 -7 . Various Photos from the Community Dinner event

York Weston Pelham Cluster Meeting, April 24, 2026

The project team joined the monthly cluster meeting to share a short presentation about the Weston in Gear planning study, as well as the emerging concept and draft policy directions. The presentation was followed by a facilitated discussion. The York Weston Pelham cluster is a local community coordination table made up of local service agencies, as well as City of Toronto and United Way of Greater Toronto staff.

Local Advisory Committee Meeting, April 27, 2026 (Virtual)

A Local Advisory Committee meeting was held with **9 community members** representing residents and local community organizations in Weston. Building on discussions initiated during Phase 1 of the study in Fall 2025, the meeting provided an opportunity for participants to offer localized insight. The session included a presentation on the emerging concept and draft policy directions, followed by facilitated discussion.

Community Dinner – Community Consultation Meeting #3, May 6, 2026 (In-Person)

A Community Dinner was held at the Community Place Hub on Weston Road, part of Progress Place, and was attended by approximately **135 participants**. Centered around a buffet-style meal, the event used food as a means of fostering connection and encouraging participation from individuals who may be less likely to attend a traditional public consultation. The event also included a youth table, where a facilitator guided 7 youth through the material and collected

feedback on their priorities. The evening included a presentation and facilitated table conversations, focused on the emerging concept and policy directions.

Online Survey, May 6 – May 22, 2026

An online survey was made available for individuals who were unable to attend the public consultation events or who preferred to provide feedback at a time that is more convenient. The survey included eight questions consisting of a mix of multiple-choice and short-answer responses focused on the study and emerging concept and policy directions. A total of **32 responses** were received.

Urban Indigenous Engagement, May 28, 2026 (In-Person)

An urban Indigenous engagement gathering was held in the evening at the Wiigiwaam behind 2700 Eglinton Avenue West (York Civic Centre). Facilitated by Dr. Hopi Martin of Edge of the Bush, the session brought together **5 attendees** around the Sacred Fire, following Ojibwe Anishinaabe Protocols of the Sacred Circle and grounded in Chi Gete Anishinaabe Inaakonigewin (Very Old Anishinaabe Law), which has long governed this land. Meeting at the “edge of the bush,” at the Traditional Meeting Place by the Sacred Fire with Asemaa (Sacred Tobacco) in hand, the consultant team reflected on what had been heard at the previous Sacred Fire in October 2025 and invite participants to share considerations for the next phase of work, including the development of

recommendations.

Anti Displacement and Presence of Black Communities in Weston Roundtable, June 23, 2026 (In-Person)

The session will bring together Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving organizations, community members, City staff, planners, and individuals with experience in anti-displacement work and community advocacy at the Weston Artscape Building. Building on conversations held in April 2026 between the City's Confronting Anti-Black Racism unit (CABR) and Black-led, Black-focused, and Black-serving organizations in Weston, the discussion will focus on the impacts of growth, change, and development in the area, and explore approaches that may support the continued presence and vitality of Black communities in Weston.

At the time this report was prepared, the Roundtable activity had not yet occurred. Therefore, feedback received at this event is not included in the thematic summary below. An Addendum will be prepared that will capture and summarize what was heard at this event and will be shared publicly, alongside this report, on the City's webpage.



Thematic Summary

Transportation

Traffic & Congestion

Many people expressed concern about the potential impacts of future growth on traffic and congestion throughout the study area, especially given the amount of traffic and congestion that exists currently. Residents noted that many people will continue to rely on private vehicles for at least some of their daily trips and questioned whether the transportation network can accommodate anticipated population growth. Some people also observed that heavy traffic and noise currently detract from the experience of Weston Road and may limit opportunities to create a more vibrant, pedestrian-oriented main street with patios and outdoor gathering spaces. Some people complained about pass-through traffic to Highway 401, especially during peak commuting periods.

Modal Split

Many people expressed a desire for improved alternatives to private vehicle travel, including safer and more pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, as well as more frequent transit service. Cycling was identified as a significant gap, with several people noting that they do not feel safe cycling in Weston, particularly with children. Improvements included protected cycling lanes, Bike Share locations along Weston Road, and improved cycling connections from Weston Road into the Humber River Valley, particularly to Cruikshank Park through King Street.

Several people emphasized the importance of strengthening “last-mile” connections between Weston Station, surrounding neighbourhoods,

and local bus routes to reduce the reliance on private vehicles. Some suggested that improved bus service and having buses go through Weston Station could encourage greater transit use and reduce the need for commuter parking and traffic during rush hour.

Parking

Parking emerged as a significant concern across engagement activities. Many people indicated that parking is already limited in parts of Weston and expressed concern that additional residents will make finding parking more difficult. Many residents emphasized that Weston differs from downtown Toronto and that private vehicles remain necessary for many households to access jobs, services, and daily needs, such as grocery shopping. As a result, some people questioned developments with limited parking provision and suggested that future development should continue to accommodate private vehicles through underground parking. A few people suggested that parking areas could support temporary uses, including community programming and farmers’ markets.

Weston Station

Participants generally recognized Weston Station as an important community asset but questioned whether existing GO and UP Express service alone will be sufficient to support future growth. Improving connectivity across the rail corridor and creating more direct access to station entrances were identified by residents as priorities. Several participants noted that limited connections across the rail corridor make the station difficult to access from neighbourhoods east of the corridor, despite its proximity.

Parks, Open Space and Public Realm

Safety

Safety was identified as a key consideration throughout the public realm by residents and local service agencies. While participants generally felt comfortable in the area during the day, several expressed concerns about personal safety at night and identified opportunities for enhanced lighting and activity in public spaces. Additionally, people emphasized the importance of creating safe routes for children and youth, particularly when crossing Weston Road and moving throughout the study area.

Places to Gather, Socialize, Play and Rest

Residents, Indigenous people and local service agencies all expressed a desire for additional parks, open spaces, and gathering places throughout the study area, particularly for space outside of the Humber River Valley. There was strong support for spaces that encourage social interaction, relaxation, and community activity, including patios, seating areas, street furniture, community gardens, and informal gathering spaces. This included strong support for the expansion of Memorial Park to Weston Road. Several participants noted a lack of play opportunities for children and youth outside of the valley lands and identified playgrounds and youth-oriented spaces as important community needs.

People also expressed support for expanding greenery and landscaping throughout the area, including along Weston Road, within Weston Commons, and through a potential expansion of Memorial Park to Weston Road. Indigenous participants highlighted opportunities to use public spaces for community gathering, ceremony, respite, and Sacred Fires, particularly during periods when redevelopment sites may remain vacant. They also emphasized the importance of incorporating Indigenous design, culture, and expression into the public realm.

People consistently emphasized that public spaces should be welcoming, comfortable, and accessible to all users. Several noted that urban design should avoid hostile design approaches and instead prioritize comfortable seating, gathering opportunities, and inclusive public spaces.



Image 8. Community Dinner attendee filling out a feedback form

Wayfinding, Public Art and Weston Identity

Many people expressed support for public art, wayfinding, gateways, and other placemaking initiatives and programs that reinforce Weston's identity and strengthen connections to local destinations. People saw opportunities to improve orientation and accessibility between Weston Road, key heritage features, community destinations, and the Humber River Valley.

Indigenous participants emphasized the importance of recognizing the area's rich Indigenous history through public art, storytelling, place naming, and wayfinding. Several noted that Indigenous presence and history are currently underrepresented within the study area and suggested that future initiatives should be developed in partnership with rights-holding Nations and the urban Indigenous community.

Pedestrian Activity and Connections

People strongly supported a more pedestrian-oriented environment and identified opportunities to improve walkability throughout the study area. Several people emphasized the need for wider sidewalks, additional street trees, and enhanced pedestrian comfort, particularly along Weston Road and around the Weston Road and Lawrence Avenue intersection where pedestrian activity is already high.

Many people also highlighted the importance of improving connections between neighbourhoods, parks, and the Humber River Valley. Suggested improvements included mid-block connections, improved east-west

pedestrian routes, new access points to the valley lands, and completion of the Mid-Humber Gap Trail. Several people noted specific challenges with existing pedestrian connections, including the link between Wadsworth Avenue and MacDonald Avenue and the lack of sidewalks in some locations.

Heritage

Many people identified the Humber stone walls as a defining feature of Weston's public realm and expressed strong support for their preservation. Residents viewed the stone walls as an important cultural and heritage asset that contributes to the area's distinct identity and sense of place.

More broadly, people emphasized the importance of conserving heritage resources throughout the study area. Many viewed heritage preservation as an opportunity to reinforce Weston's character and support a unique sense of identity amid future growth. Some participants suggested that existing buildings and heritage features should be incorporated into redevelopment projects where feasible rather than being removed or demolished.

Intensification and Built Form

The Village

People shared a range of perspectives regarding the concept of Weston as a "village." Many residents strongly identified with the village character and associated it with a human-scaled environment, views of the sky, strong social connections, walkability, and opportunities to

gather and interact with neighbours. There was concern that future growth could erode qualities that contribute to Weston's unique identity.

Youth participants generally expressed less connection to the idea of Weston as a village and instead viewed the area as an urban neighbourhood. While opinions varied, participants consistently emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong sense of community, safety, and local identity as the area evolves.

Height and Density

People expressed mixed perspectives regarding future growth and intensification. Some supported additional density, recognizing the opportunity to attract investment, support local businesses, increase housing supply, and create a more vibrant and active main street environment. However, many people questioned whether proposed heights and densities would deliver meaningful community benefits, including affordable housing, community services, and improvements to the public realm.

There was general agreement that higher densities would be appropriate in proximity to Weston Station, though, opinions on what that height and density should be varied. Some people thought that the proposed height and density regime was acceptable, others felt that buildings exceeding 30 storeys were not appropriate for Weston and other felt that predominantly mid-rise built form, generally not exceeding 14 storeys, was the maximum height that should be permitted.

People were concerned about shadow impacts, wind conditions, and the overall scale and feel of new development. Several people emphasized the importance of appropriate transitions between taller buildings and adjacent low-rise residential neighbourhoods. A recurring concern was that significant growth approvals have already occurred within the study area. Residents, Indigenous people and local service agencies expressed frustration that opportunities to influence the overall intensification framework appeared limited given the number of approved developments.

Building Variation and Diversity

While concerns regarding height were common, some participants supported a diversity of building heights and architectural styles to create visual interest and a more varied skyline. Youth participants, in particular, expressed interest in seeing more contemporary architecture and design throughout the area.

Infrastructure

Across engagement activities, people overwhelmingly questioned whether existing infrastructure can accommodate future growth. Concerns extended beyond transportation and included schools, childcare facilities, community centres, libraries, recreation facilities, servicing infrastructure, and parking. Many participants emphasized that growth should be accompanied by corresponding investments in community infrastructure and services to ensure that both existing and future residents are adequately supported.

Urban Structure and Land Use

Proposed Sub-Areas

People generally expressed support for the proposed urban structure and character areas. Many appreciated the diversity of uses, scales, and activities envisioned across the study area and felt that the framework could support a more complete and vibrant community. There were concerns about how the envisioned vibrancy of the core and corridor areas would be implemented and achieved over time.

Some people suggested that the core area be extended further south. Others suggested that greenery, landscaping, and stronger visual and physical connections to the Humber River Valley should be defining elements of the core area and articulated more strongly in forthcoming work.

Mixed Use Areas

People generally supported opportunities to expand mixed-use permissions and create a more diverse range of uses throughout the study area. Some participants specifically supported introducing mixed-use designations in areas currently designated as apartment neighbourhoods, noting that this could encourage additional commercial, service, and community-oriented spaces at grade.

Several people expressed support for integrating community uses, including schools, into mixed-use developments where appropriate.

Residential Areas

Some people expressed concern regarding the intensity of development proposed within residential areas and questioned whether certain neighbourhoods should accommodate 4 storeys, and 6 along major streets. Several participants emphasized the importance of retaining existing housing stock, including detached homes and lower-scale residential areas, as part of the community's overall housing mix.

Participants also highlighted the role of landscaping, greenery, and improved pedestrian connections in strengthening relationships between residential neighbourhoods, Weston Road, and Lawrence Avenue.



Image 9. Robert Walter-Joseph (GPA) presenting at the Community Dinner

Non-Residential Uses and Spaces

The Main Street

Participants expressed differing perspectives regarding the current function of Weston Road as a main street. Some residents indicated that they regularly use local businesses and are able to meet many of their daily needs within the community. Others felt that the area lacks the diversity of commercial uses needed to function as a complete and vibrant main street.

Many participants emphasized the importance of maintaining the human-scaled character of Weston Road and supporting locally owned businesses that contribute to the area's identity. There was also recognition that many commercial buildings are aging and could benefit from investment and renewal. While some participants supported opportunities for additional small scale retail, others cautioned that these types of spaces will result in boutique shops, that may over time contribute to the gentrification of the area.

Displacement and Loss of Space

Many participants expressed concern that redevelopment could result in the loss of existing non-residential spaces, including community-serving organizations and local independent businesses. Community service providers and agencies questioned whether policies could be introduced to support the replacement of community, institutional, and commercial spaces when redevelopment occurs.

Several participants highlighted the importance of retaining affordable spaces for service organizations and local businesses, noting that rising rents and redevelopment pressures may make it difficult for these uses to remain within the community.



Image 10 and 11. Table conversations at the Community Dinner, including the Youth table (top)

Community Spaces, Services and Facilities

Participants consistently emphasized the importance of community services and facilities in supporting both existing and future residents. There was concern that existing facilities, including community centres, childcare spaces, libraries, and recreation amenities, are already operating at or near capacity and questioned how future growth will be supported.

People shared that community organizations and service providers are critical and contribute to the wellbeing of the community by providing social services, mental health supports, child and youth programming, food security programs, and community gathering spaces.

Peoples expressed a desire for additional programmable community spaces, particularly for children and youth, as well as expanded childcare and daycare opportunities. Several people asked about the opportunity for future development could contribute to the delivery of additional community facilities and services through community benefits or other planning tools.

Office Space

Some residents inquired about the opportunity to introduce additional office and employment uses throughout the study area to support the local economy and reduce the need for residents to commute elsewhere for work. There was interest in creating a broader mix of employment-generating uses alongside residential growth.

Complete Community

Many participants expressed support for creating a complete community that includes a diverse mix of housing, employment, retail, services, community facilities, and active at-grade uses. Participants emphasized that growth should be accompanied by a corresponding expansion of amenities and services to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

Several participants noted the absence of key services within the study area, including a grocery store and certain financial services, and expressed a desire to see these uses incorporated into future development. There was also concern that Weston could become primarily a residential or “bedroom” community if employment, retail, and community-serving uses are not retained and expanded alongside residential growth.

Housing and Displacement

Affordability and Suitability

Housing affordability emerged as one of the most significant concerns across engagement activities. Residents and local service agencies questioned whether anticipated growth would deliver housing that would be affordable to existing and future residents. People were also scared that existing affordable housing would be demolished and not replaced.

Many participants expressed concern that new development may increase housing supply without providing the types of housing most needed in the community. Participants

emphasized the need for affordable housing options, housing that supports aging in place, and housing that would provide the opportunity for residents to remain in Weston as their housing needs change over time. A few residents shared that they would like to move as their housing is no longer meeting their needs, however, housing is so expensive that they cannot afford to move to a different unit.

Several people felt that developments proposing significant height and density should contribute directly to affordable housing provision and other community benefits. Some participants also identified opportunities to support affordable spaces for local businesses and community organizations through affordable commercial lease arrangements.

Variety of Housing Types and Tenures

Many people emphasized the importance of providing a broader range of housing options to meet diverse community needs. This included units with functional layout and 3- and 4-bedroom configurations, as well as accessible housing for seniors and people with disabilities. People expressed concern that future development may be dominated by small condominium units and emphasized the importance of securing a mix of housing types and tenures, including rental housing, supportive housing, rent-geared-to-income housing, transitional housing, co-operative housing, and community land trust models.

Several participants also highlighted the importance of considerations such as storage, parking, and space for work-related equipment,

particularly for residents employed in trades and other occupations that require vehicles and tools.

Anti-Displacement Strategies

Concerns regarding displacement were consistently raised throughout engagement activities. Many people expressed concern that existing residents, businesses, community organizations, places of worship, and service providers may be displaced as redevelopment occurs.

Local service agencies emphasized the critical role that local services play in supporting residents experiencing poverty, housing insecurity, food insecurity, and mental health challenges, etc. There was a concern that displacement of these organizations could create significant service gaps within the community.

There was broad support for policies and programs aimed at reducing displacement and supporting community stability. People identified opportunities for relocation assistance, affordable replacement space for businesses and organizations, and broader initiatives such as a Community Development Plan, affordability strategy, economic development initiatives, and anti-displacement frameworks to accompany future growth.

The Humber River Valley

Naming of the Area

Indigenous participants emphasized the importance of recognizing and using place names in line with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action related to language, culture and commemoration, and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) Article 13. Around the Sacred Fire there was support for the use of the name Gabekanaang-Ziibi (At the End of the Trail, River), for what is currently called the Humber River.

Indigenous participants also emphasized the importance of accountability and implementation, expressing concern that recommendations alone may not lead to meaningful change without clear commitments, responsibilities, and pathways for action.

Natural Asset

Many people identified the Humber River Valley as one of Weston's most important community assets. Participants described the valley lands as a valued recreational, ecological, cultural, and social resource that contributes significantly to community wellbeing and identity. Several participants noted that while the valley lands are highly valued, they often feel disconnected from Weston Road and the broader community due to challenges with access and visibility.

Indigenous people around the Sacred Fire emphasized that the ecological health of the Humber River is inseparable from its cultural, spiritual, and social significance to Indigenous communities.

Access to the River

Many people expressed a desire for stronger physical and visual connections to the Humber River Valley. Despite its proximity, participants often described feeling disconnected from the river and identified opportunities for improved access points, enhanced trail connections, and more accessible routes into the valley lands.

Several participants highlighted challenges associated with steep grades and barriers to access and suggested improvements that would create more inclusive and accessible connections to parks and natural areas.

Use of the Valley Lands

Participants highlighted the important recreational role that the valley lands play for residents of all ages, particularly children and youth. The valley was frequently described as an important destination for walking, cycling, recreation, and access to nature.

Indigenous people emphasized the Humber River Valley's role as a regionally significant cultural landscape and that the area is for community gathering, healing, cultural practices, and medicines and natural materials required for ceremony.

Both around the Sacred Fire and during the community dinner people expressed concern regarding the potential impacts of future development on wildlife, ecological systems, and the overall health of the valley lands.



Image 12 - 17. Various photos from the Community Dinner

What People Shared

"I think more could be done to link the residential low density area to that of Weston core and corridor."

"I want large setbacks from the sidewalks and every development to have retail space on the main level."

"The main intersection of Weston and Lawrence also needs to be addressed as it is already a choke point for cars and promotes pedestrians to take unnecessary risks J-walking."

"I'm worried this will become a high-rise ghost town."

"Part of what gave it a village like feel was despite changes over time, there still was a recognizable and historic streetscape on Weston Road with many heritage buildings."

"Weston needs accessible parks and open space for people to gather and safely socialize along Weston Road. A Town Square. Benches, parks. Welcoming placemaking patios and a streetscape that is full inclusive, open, walkable and encourages less car traffic."

"Traffic is already terrible around Weston and Lawrence. Putting residential buildings of up to 50 storeys will just create a traffic disaster."

"The concept could be appropriate if it is strictly adhered to and the items like large setbacks, 20 Metre max podium heights, retail on street level are included."

"I agree we need more housing but why can't more emphasis be placed on mid-rises mixed with some modest high-rises?"

"Ok with taller heights along Weston and along Lawrence."

"With all this intensification will there be quiet places....pedestrian alleys, laneways, or streets to get away from the hustle and bustle?"

"I am very worried that there will not be the infrastructure to adequately support all this development"

"I'm driving for 25 minutes to take a 7 minute route (kid pick up) because Weston is clogged and biking is too scary with kids. "

"New buildings should have a mix of sizes of space to encourage non-franchise "mom and pop" type stores to remain."

"I feel disconnected from the beautiful Humber Valley. Please ensure that it is made more integrated with Weston."

"Make Weston more walkable. None of these future developments will have parking so the area must be livable without a car and that means moving traffic congestion elsewhere."

"Development that doesn't displace residents and businesses."

"Keep Weston human - at scale, the purpose and function of these changes should all be in an effort to refocus on people."

"What will happen to local non-profits (Frontlines, etc..) that will be displaced? "

"Just because we have the UP Express does not mean that this area will miraculously be able to accommodate so much intensification. Weston, just like all of Toronto is struggling with traffic congestion and building high rises doesn't mean all those new residents will no longer drive."

"Somehow consider what will happen to the 90% of current businesses from Weston that will no longer be able to afford rent and will close their doors. This will be massive loss especially to the African / Canadian residents."

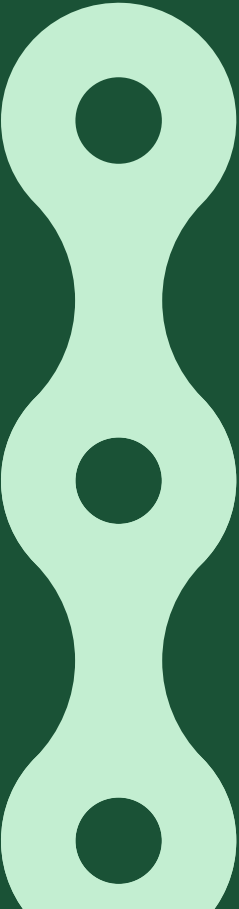
Next Steps

The second phase of work for the Weston in Gear study is complete and the third phase of work will begin in Summer 2026. The third and final phase of work will consider the feedback summarized in this report and refine the emerging development concept and policy directions. The third phase of work will focus on the development of policy and design recommendations, cumulating in a final planning framework report. This final report and recommendations will form the basis of the development of a Site and Area Specific Policy (SASP) and Urban Design Guidelines for the area, which will be completed by City staff in 2027.



Image 18 – 21. Various photos from the Community Dinner

For more information about this Weston In Gear and this report, please visit toronto.ca/weston-in-gear-planning-study



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