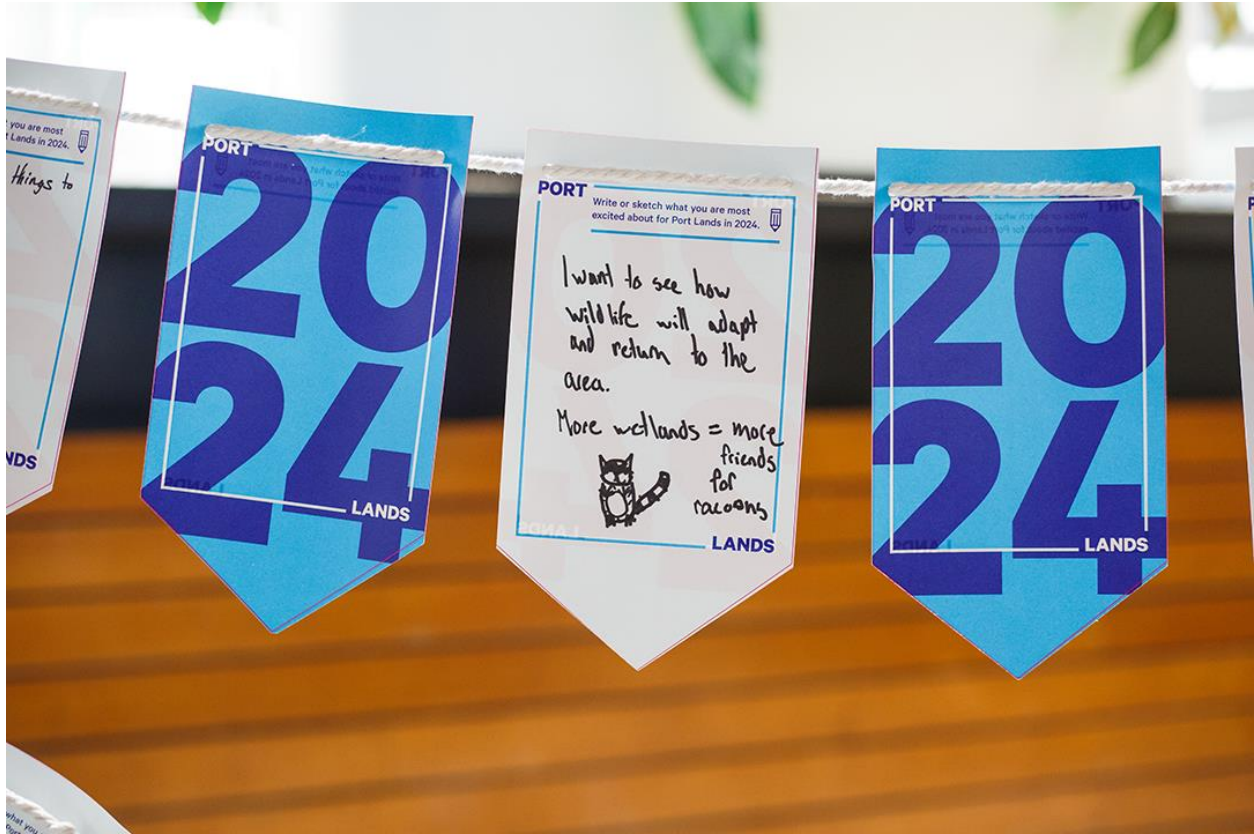


Summary of Consultation May 2018-July 2020

Port Lands Flood Protection



July 2020

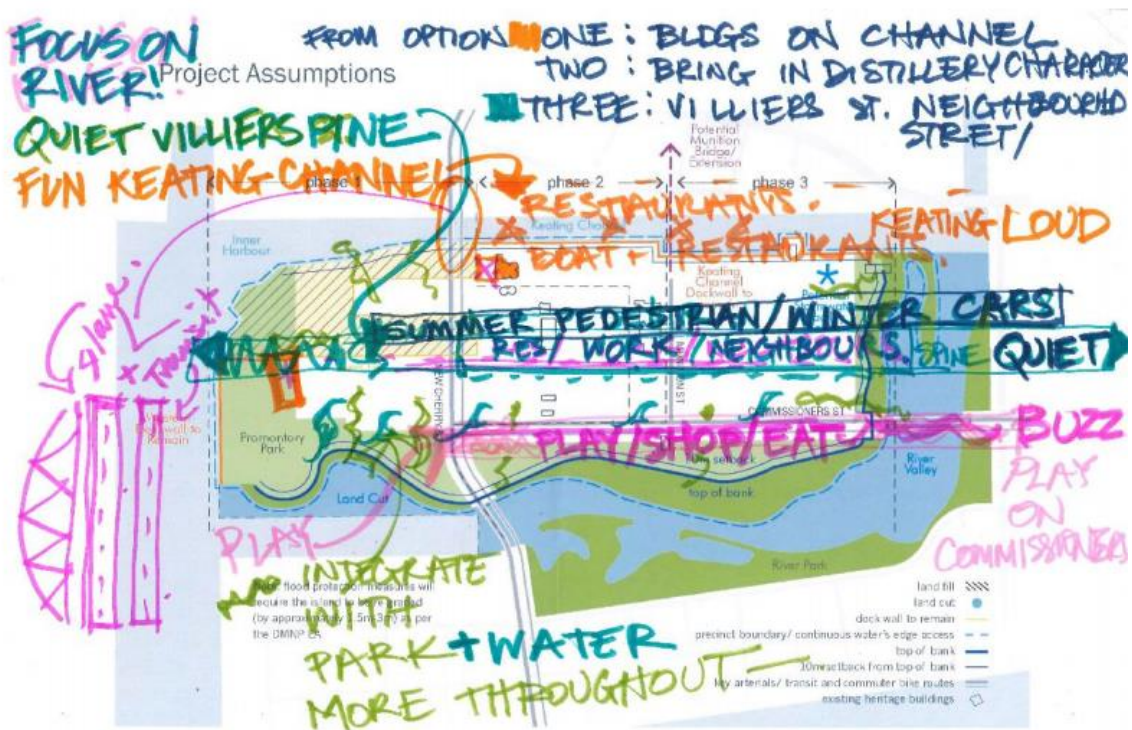
Prepared by Michela Comparey and Mira Shenker

Overview

This summary reflects comments from over 5300 people at 22 meetings¹ and events between August 2017 and May 2020. The information presented at these events ranged from detailed presentations and displays to broader questions related to user experience. These consultations were conducted as part of detailed design for components included in Port Lands Flood Protection, which received tri-government funding in 2017.

This followed 11 years of consultation, including an [Environmental Assessment](#) in collaboration with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and meetings related to the [Port Lands Planning Framework](#) and Villiers Island Precinct Plan in collaboration with the City of Toronto. Following the completion of schematic design for new parks, roads, bridges and river valley included in the Port Lands Flood Protection project, we began consultation to inform detailed design work. This report summarizes that public and stakeholder feedback. Key meetings related to these consultations are found here:

- [Rise of the New Don PIC, January 27, 2010](#)
- [Rise of the New Don & Lower Don Lands Plan PIC, May 9, 2009](#)
- [Don Narrows Workshop, May 24, 2008](#)
- [Public Presentation, Discussion and Drop-In, March 29, 2008](#)
- [Public Forum #3 and Open House, December 5, 2006](#)
- [Port Lands Boat Cruise and Site Walk at the Mouth of the Don River, October 14, 2005](#)



Feedback collected at a June 2014 meeting related to the Villiers Island Precinct Plan.

¹ See Appendix A

Who We Engaged



One of three workshops held with high-school students in partnership with the Toronto District School Board in April 2019.

Over 150,000 people engaged with our public consultations or online content. 5,325 people (3%) participated in a face-to-face consultation. The remainder engaged with us online and through social media.

Based on available data:

52% identified as male 48% identified as female (48%)

The median age group was between 35-44 years old

The median household income was between \$100,000 and \$199,999

73% identified their ethnicity as European descent or white.

66% live or work in the Downtown Toronto (M5) and East Toronto (M4) area

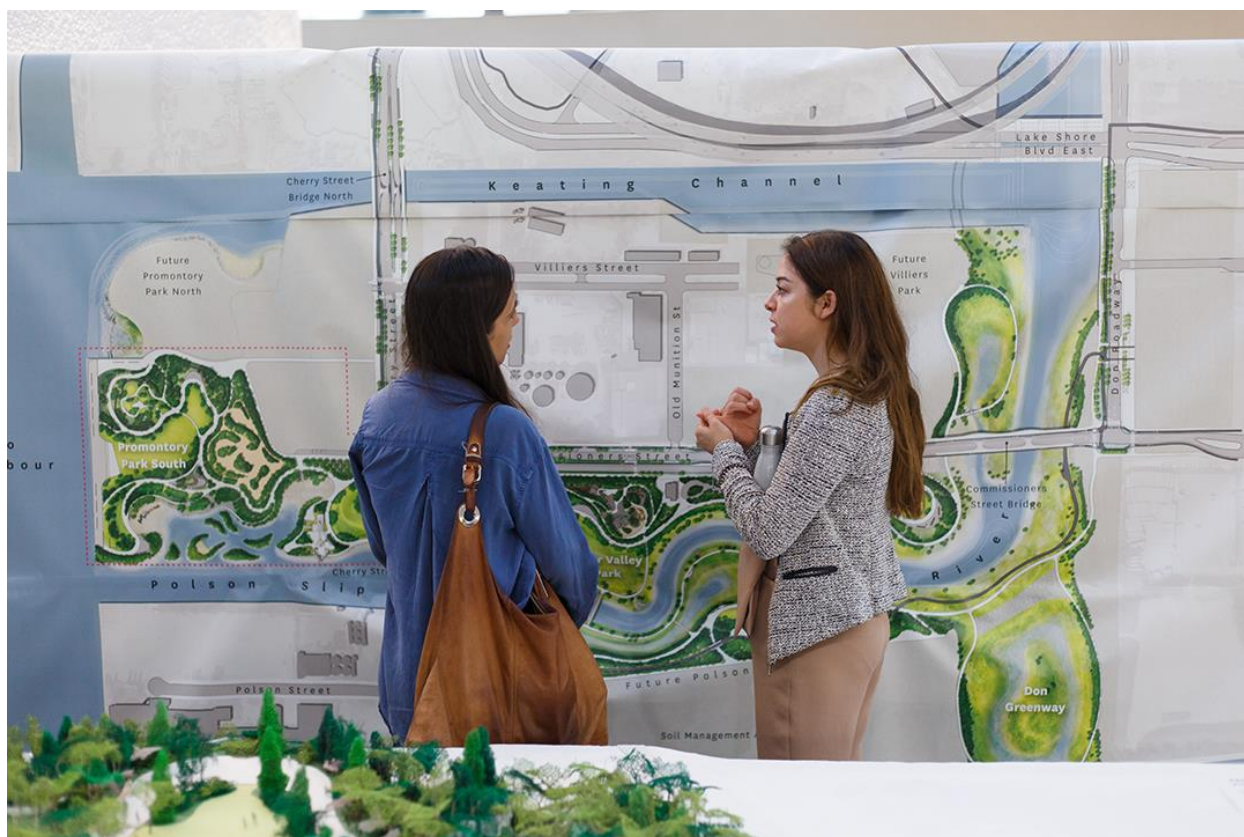
Focus groups and workshops provided an opportunity for deeper engagement with groups we identified as underrepresented in previous consultations. These sessions engaged youth and seniors in the Greater Toronto Area, with an effort to reach outside Downtown Toronto and East Toronto.

What We Heard



In 2018, we popped up in five locations over eight days to learn about people's priorities for Toronto's waterfront.

Based on feedback collected through pop-ups, surveys, community consultations, workshops and social media, people prioritize natural greenspace and affordable housing when asked about waterfront revitalization. Other priorities we asked about: new jobs, places to learn, low carbon footprint, inclusive communities, places to play, access to transit, dip our toes in the lake.



A public Information Centre at Toronto City Hall in 2019 opened for two full days, allowing people to drop in any time and discuss the latest designs with the project team.

Consensus Comments

We have identified 183 consensus comments² in the following areas:

- Accessible uses (39 comments)
- Affordable housing (16 comments)
- Arts, Culture and Heritage (8 comments)
- Transportation: bikes, cars, pedestrians, public transit, and street design (36 comments)
- Construction process (5 comments)
- Ecological balance (39 comments)
- Existing industry (4 comments)
- Indigenous history (5 comments)
- Infrastructure (3 comments)
- Kids and play (12 comments)
- Maintenance (1 comment)
- Programming (12 comments)
- Suggested features (7 comments)

² These comments were taken from summaries of consultation events, so these numbers do not necessarily indicate prevalence of each kind of comment overall. For example, if several people expressed the same opinion at a single event, it may only be noted once. However, the prevalence of comment themes over a number of events indicates that it is an area of significant interest.

Most comments fit into the theme of Accessible Uses and Affordable Housing, Ecological Balance and Street Design and Transportation.



Introducing strangers to help us all learn through new perspectives at a February 2019 public meeting.

Accessible Use

People spoke frequently about how they, and others, would be able to use the park and spend time on Villiers Island. Their comments fell into four subthemes: physical accessibility, economic accessibility, seasonal accessibility, and suggested uses.

Comments on physical accessibility focused on AODA-related issues such as surface treatments, lengths of pathways, resting areas, safety at night, access to washrooms and transportation. Some comments focused on the ability to access the park in the context of the city more generally and connecting it to the neighbourhood and broader waterfront park system.

Sample comments regarding physical accessibility:

- “Add an AODA overlay to delineate universally accessible trails” – from Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #2
- Most seniors in a focus group mentioned doing social activities outside, and it being a place for social connections
- “Safety at night is important, fostered by lighting and signage, and other people” – Community Consultation #2

Comments on economic accessibility focused on free activities and programming, the integration of affordable housing, and access for people of a lower socio-economic background.

Sample comments regarding economical accessibility:

- Support for accessibility by diverse groups of people – Community Consultation #2
- Support a free park, splashpad, and places for kids – Paddle the Don
- Suggested considering food sustainability through community gardens – Paddle the Don

In addition to these comments, people commented specifically on affordable housing, especially on Social Media. These comments were critical of the definition of affordable housing, and many people were opposed to the development of condos in the area and skeptical of ‘developers’.

Comments on seasonal accessibility focused on the uses and maintenance of the park during the winter. Some comments spoke about the need to consider winter activities, while the Seniors focus group shared concerns about safety – specifically slipping on ice in the winter.

Suggested uses included comments that supported or suggested free and accessible activities and programs in the park, including canoe and kayak rentals, dog parks, splash pads, grills and food stations/kiosks and walking trails.



A scale model on display at the Port Lands Drop-In Centre, which was open for one month on Queens Quay East in fall 2019.

Ecological Balance

People spoke often about preserving or adding greenspace and habitat for wildlife and creating a place where people can live in balance with nature. These comments had varying levels of specificity and broadly addressed protecting nature. Some focused on the built environment and habitats we are creating, while others talked about finding ways to protect these spaces from park-users on an ongoing basis.

Sample comments in support of ecological balance:

- Protect natural habitats while still creating places to engage with water and nature – SAC #2
- Try and direct fishing so habitats and vegetation aren't trampled. Consider keeping fishing nodes to a harder edge – SAC #2
- Increase biodiversity: support animals and plants and increase the number of species present – Paddle the Don
- Support for organic/wild/untended vegetation with larger trees to create a more immersive experience – Community Consultation #2

Some people raised concerns about the project's impact on water quality and the wetland creating a breeding ground for mosquitos. Some also mentioned concerns for wildlife during the construction phase.



People provided feedback through a variety of channels including adding written comments to images, surveys, social media comments, journey mapping, and providing verbal feedback.

Street Design and Transportation

People were supportive of creating extensive bike infrastructure through connectivity to other paths, a bike share system and bike parking. In comments related to street design, people identified a preference to keep different modes of transportation (such as bikes and public transit) separate. They also recommended using familiar road design for the streets. People supported public transit and suggested ways to reduce cars.



Community Consultation in February 2018: Our first big public meeting after getting project funding. 275 people attended in person and 900 people attended digitally.

Sample comments about street design and transportation:

- It's important to understand connections to the wider cycling network and circulation system – Community Consultation #2
- Concerns about visibility between pedestrians, bike and car lanes – Public Information Centre
- Provide people with familiar street typologies – SAC #2
- Character of recreational and multi-use trails should be different from commuter trails – SAC #2
- Parking maximums are a positive step, do not incite demand by over-providing parking – Port Lands Zoning Review SAC #1

Comments from stakeholders and members of the general public were considered as design progressed on roads, bridges, parks and natural green spaces within the river valley. Below is a summary of some key feedback that is reflected in the final design for the new parks and river valley.



Engaging First Nations

For more than 15 years, Indigenous communities have been engaged in the work Waterfront Toronto and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority have been doing in the Port Lands with support from the Government of Canada, Province of Ontario and City of Toronto.

DMNP EA (2005-2014)

During the EA (2005-2014), we worked closely with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), including regular meetings with Council and a presentation to the broader community at a Town Hall. Project updates were regularly shared with the following:

Huron-Wendat First Nation
 Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation
 Alderville First Nation
 Curve Lake First Nation
 Hiawatha First Nation
 Beausoleil First Nation
 Chippewas of Georgina First Nation
 Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation
 Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation
 Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation
 Metis Nation of Ontario

The DMNP EA was also presented in 2009 to the Hiawatha First Nation and in 2010 to the Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Hiawatha First Nation, Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation, Chippewas of Georgina First Nation, Beausoleil First Nation, Metis Nation of Ontario, Curve Lake

First Nation and in 2013 to Curve Lake First Nation, Alderville First Nation, Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

In addition to this, Miziwe Biik provided Project team support at distributing Project updates and public meeting notices regarding the DMNP EA through the Toronto Aboriginal Network.

Consultation during the DMNP EA was directed by the Crown and is summarized [here](#).

PLFP Detailed Design and Implementation (2015-2020)

During detailed design and construction, project details were presented at several informal community BBQs hosted by MCFN. We provided more detailed project updates and presented design elements for review and comment to MCFN Chief, Council and staff. A Memorandum of Understanding was executed between MCFN (the Treaty First Nation), and Waterfront Toronto in 2020 and a resulting Working Group Committee meets regularly to discuss MCFN participation in Waterfront Toronto projects, including PLFP. An Indigenous Design Support and engagement process co-chaired by Waterfront Toronto and MCFN and facilitated by the MinoKamik team under contract with Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, is also underway to inform the PLFP public realm design. This involves detailed discussions with the First Nations and Indigenous associations listed below.

In addition to this, project updates and offers to meet have been regularly circulated to:

Alderville First Nation
Beausoleil First Nation
Chippewas of Georgina First Nation
Curve Lake First Nation
Hiawatha First Nation
Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation
Chippewas of Mnjikaning First Nation
Kawartha Nishnawbe First Nation
Huron-Wendat First Nation
Metis Nation of Ontario

Education and Outreach



Helping future scientists and engineers learn about flood protection at our 2020 Science Fair, which attracted 600 people.



Skaters stopped to learn about flood protection through a series of short videos at The Bentway in winter 2020.

In addition to consultation, we have worked to communicate the work happening in the Port Lands to people across the GTA. As this is a public works project of regional and even national significance, it is part of our mandate to broaden awareness. Education and awareness also helps to deepen engagement in public consultations, allowing people to give more informed feedback.

Appendix A

This report summarizes feedback from the following consultations and stakeholder events and sources:

Meeting	Date	Meeting Type	Link to Meeting Materials
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #2	May 16, 2018	SAC	Presentation
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #3	Aug 21, 2018	SAC	Presentation
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #4	Feb 28, 2019	SAC	Presentation
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #5	July 16, 2019	SAC	Presentation
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #6	Feb 26, 2020	SAC	Presentation
Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) Meeting #7	May 28, 2020	SAC	Presentation
Community Consultation #1	Feb 22, 2018	Public Meeting & Online	Video part 1 , Video part 2 & Summary
Community Consultation #2	July 18, 2018	Public Meeting & Online	Video & Summary
Land User Advisory Committee Meeting #1	Feb 27, 2019	LUAC	Presentation
Land User Advisory Committee Meeting #2	May 2, 2019	LUAC	Presentation
Public Information Centre	June 19, 2019	Public Meeting	Summary
Paddle the Don Pop Up Event	May 6, 2018	Pop Up	
Youth Workshops	April 2019	Workshop	
Pop Up at ArtSpin	Aug 1, 2017	Pop Up	
Pop Up at Nathan Philip Square	Nov 8, 2017	Pop Up	
Pop Up at Democracy Exchange	Nov 18, 2017	Pop Up	
Pop Up at Yonge Dundas Square	Dec 8, 2018	Pop Up	
Youth Focus Groups	March 30 th , April 2 nd & 3 rd 2019	Focus Group	
Seniors Focus Groups	April 2 nd & 3 rd , 2019	Focus Group	

Social Media Comments (50)	From 2018 to Present	Online	
What Makes A Great Park Survey	Feb 2018	Online Survey	
Play Programming Survey		Online Survey	
Port Lands Drop-In Centre	Oct 4-Nov 4, 2018	Public Meeting	