

Gulleden Park Redevelopment: Virtual Targeted Public Meeting

A Virtual Targeted Public Meeting was undertaken targeting residents in the immediate neighbourhood around Gulleden Park. A local community organization, Dixie Bloor Neighbourhood Centre (DBNC) was also invited. A total of 964 notification letters for the meeting were delivered.

The Virtual Targeted Public Meeting was held on October 19th, 2021 between 6:30-8pm. Through this public Virtual Information Session, opportunities were provided for residents to:

- Learn about the survey results.
- Learn about the Gulleden Park redevelopment preliminary recommendations based on the survey results and on regular park planning considerations.
- Ask questions and provide comments on the survey results and recommendations.

City staff and local Councillor Chris Fonseca were present to answer questions.

Preliminary recommendations were presented to the residents. Residents commented that the recommendations were well thought-out and especially liked that facilities like the soccer field(s), tennis courts, and multi-use courts are proposed to be flexible spaces that could accommodate multiple uses.

There were also resident questions regarding plowed trails, park enforcement and spray pad and playground design, which were addressed by staff.

Summarized Questions and Concerns from Residents

1. Question: Do we have stats on demographics of the changing community?

ANSWER:

- The park was built in 1966, so it has seen many different people and generations use its space. Usage rates have changed over time to reflect these changes.
- When planning for parks, City considers all age groups, even if not present in the immediate community.

2. Question: The city staff referenced Forest Glen in the presentation. That park doesn't seem too attractive to me. It's too big for little kids, just a round circle, not much for kids to do besides running through the water, the playground is too old, woodchips, etc. When we go to spray pads we go to the ones that are nice and where there is also a nice playground.

ANSWER:

- Forrest Glen is set to be replaced in 2027. We will keep your feedback on record to inform future plans at that location.
- Residents will have an opportunity to view the Gulleden Park concepts and provide additional comment on specific conceptual features.

3. Comment: I do like the idea of the outdoor rink idea and the multiuse courts multi use area where the softball diamond is at the moment sounds great and allows for more and diverse uses.

- Comment noted.

4. Question: Will the walking/running circuit be able to be used year round? Will it be plowed in the winter?

ANSWER:

- The park trail is currently plowed in the winter. It is expected that the trail will continue to be plowed after the redevelopment. However, the extent of winter park maintenance will be determined through the detailed design process.

5. Question: Would it be possible to include a Community Garden as part of the park?

ANSWER:

- The community gardens are done in partnership with Ecosource. They run all the programming and lots. The City has established criteria for location selection and we work with Ecosource to determine locations based on community need and interest and site feasibility. To view a list of community gardens across the city, visit their website, ecosource.ca/community-gardens
- City staff can add this location to our potential projects list for consideration.

6. Comment: Walking/running circuit sounds great too, kids also love to ride their bikes, scooters, etc., around these, also great for moms with strollers.

- Comment noted.

7. Question: will there be an option at some point later to give feedback on the new playground design?

ANSWER:

- The proposed playground is a community playground. Community playgrounds are designed to provide equitable play value across all City community parks and include a variety of play experiences for children of various ages and stages of development. As Gulleden is a community park and not a destination park, service levels are set with City Standards.

- New play equipment is selected from the City's current list of pre-qualified equipment suppliers, in keeping with the City's Purchasing By-law, considering, best fit, play value, safety, accessibility, durability, maintenance requirements, sustainability and cost. As such, equipment selection does not go through a detailed public feedback process.
- Residents will have an opportunity to view the overall Gulleden Park design concepts and provide comments on playground location and its relationship to other park amenities.
- The playground will be designed with accessibility in mind, and using the latest play-structure models.

8. Question: People drink alcohol regularly in the park, what can be done about it?

ANSWER:

- Drinking alcohol in parks is not permitted, this is an enforcement issue.
- If residents see any illegal activity they can call 311, and Corporate Security can deal with the situation.
- We also consider Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) when planning and designing our parks, including for Gulleden Park's redevelopment.

9. Comment: It's hard work to get a unified consensus and the recommendations are well thought out.

- Comment noted.