

# Developing a Community Vision for New Edinburgh Park

## Overview

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### Background

At its May 16, 2017 meeting, the New Edinburgh Community Alliance (NECA) board approved a motion to begin work to develop a comprehensive vision and plan for New Edinburgh's park, based on stakeholder and community input and consultation.

While the overarching sentiment is to maintain the park's natural state to the extent possible, there have been issues and concerns raised regarding various aspects of park: bike/pedestrian pathways, flood protection, traffic and safety at park entrances, Fieldhouse use and configuration, ice clearing damage, tree and greenspace loss, and others.

Rather than seeking solutions piece-meal, a larger vision for the park, one supported by the local community and various other park and river stakeholders (NCC, City of Ottawa, Province of Ontario, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, CCC and NECTAR), would allow for a holistic approach to finding solutions.

Undertaking a process of information gathering, option analysis and broad community and stakeholder consultation should provide our community with a framework to assist planning and decision-making with regard to New Edinburgh's park for years to come.

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### Consultation strategy

At a facilitated session directly following the NECA AGM on October 25, 2017 residents were invited to provide their initial input to the park vision—by exploring who uses the park and why, identifying what they love about the park as well as where they feel improvements might be worth considering. One specific outcome of the session was to identify the overarching principles that the community volunteers and other stakeholders will need to take into consideration as they look to developing a draft long-term vision for the park as well as identifying possible near-term improvements for further community consultation. (See Annex A for more details on Oct 25 session.)

Park stakeholders, such as the City of Ottawa, NCC and RVCA, will also be engaged to explore and discuss how to ensure that the community's vision for the park feeds into their planning with respect to New Edinburgh's Park.

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**Overarching principles**

The first step of the process involved the definition of overarching principles to be applied to the analysis of issues and options. From the October 25, 2017 community consultation, the following overarching principles were identified:

- Conservation of physical and aesthetic properties – informal greenspaces, native species and biodiversity
- No net loss of greenspace; no substantial expansion of fieldhouse footprint
- Respect for needs of all users and accessible to everyone
- No commercial development; no parking, paving or curbstones
- Complement historic nature of the community; limited, appropriate lighting
- Good governance that involves consultation with users and park stakeholders; appropriate long-term management of contaminated soil and odour control.

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**Long term vision**

*New Edinburgh park is a place for local residents and others to come and spend time relaxing and enjoying the natural environment, or taking advantage of the many physical fitness opportunities available, either through formal programs run out of the enhanced fieldhouse and community hub, or by following the many inviting paths. The park serves as a gathering place for social interaction and community events.*

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**Near term enhancement opportunities**

The October 25 facilitated session also identified a number of park enhancements that residents may embrace (subject to further consultation with more detailed information on each):

- Better park maintenance (including garbage, cleanup)
  - Re-treeing
  - Move ice-breaking launch area back to Green Island
  - Separation of cycle and pedestrian pathways; fix Dufferin/Union bike path junctions
  - Closing/reconfiguring Stanley Ave between bike path (currently egress for CSST) and Dufferin curve to reclaim as greenspace/parkland.
  - Flood protection (north end)
  - Accessible drinking fountain and washrooms
  - Outdoor recreation programs; city-wide education facilities
  - Augmented (more functional) fieldhouse
  - Toboggan hill
  - Canoe launch
  - Community orchard, butterfly garden and bee hives
  - Better links to nearby community areas (Porter Island, Bordeleau park)
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## **ANNEX A**

### **Park Vision Community Input October 25 2017**

#### **BOARD #1:**

Who uses the Park?

- Dog walkers- multiple times a day – from neighbourhood and farther afield
- Dogs
- Students from nearby schools
- Families and children from the neighbourhood
- Elderly (including from retirement homes)
- Cyclists (recreational and commuter)

For what purposes?

- For fitness and exercise – including parcours equipment
- Wellness that comes from being in a natural environment
- Community and special events and gatherings
- Family programming
- Social interaction
- Cross-country skiing
- Skating
- Fishing
- As an extension of a backyard
- Remembrance and commemoration

#### **BOARD #2:**

What do we love about the Park?

- Natural setting – split into formal and natural areas (such as the forest area/old butterfly garden, now the CSST site) – lots of trees, flowers, birds, etc.
- Views – Minto Bridges, downtown, river
- Benches
- Community hub for social interaction (especially in the dog park and fieldhouse/playground/skating areas)
- Place to have community events (plant sale, picnic, winter carnival, etc.)
- Playground and splash pad
- Users are a mix of age groups
- Fitness equipment (tennis, soccer, baseball, basketball, parcours)
- Winter skating rinks (one for shinny hockey – no boards)
- Leash-free area for dogs
- A place to contemplate, remember and commemorate
- Effect on property values in the area

#### **BOARD #3:**

What are the principles we must respect when considering the way forward for the park?

- Conservation of physical and aesthetic properties – native species and biodiversity
- No loss of greenspace

- Respect for all users
- Accessible to everyone
- Keep it wild – preserve the informality
- No commercial development
- No parking, paving or curbstones
- No substantial expansion of fieldhouse footprint
- Complement historic nature of the community
- Lighting should be limited and appropriate
- Good governance that involves consultation with users and park stakeholders
- Appropriate long-term management of contaminated soil and odour control

#### **BOARD #4:**

What changes would we like to potentially see in the park (while still respecting the identified principles)?

- Outdoor recreation programs
- Better park maintenance (including garbage, cleanup)
- Move ice-breaking equipment launch area back to Green Island
- Separation of cycle and pedestrian pathways; fix Dufferin/Union bike path junctions
- Closing Stanley Ave between bike path (currently egress for CSST) and Dufferin curve to reclaim as parkland.
- Flood protection (north end)
- Covered picnic pavilion
- Re-treeing
- Accessible drinking fountain and washrooms
- Augmented (more functional) fieldhouse
- Tobogganing hill
- Canoe launch
- Community orchard and bee hives
- City-wide education facilities
- Pedestrian bridge to Porter Island to link with retirement homes
- Zip line to Bordeleau Park
- Donation opportunities at park and elsewhere