

Make a Place for People

DUNDONALD PARK, OTTAWA





Make a Place for People

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8-80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places.

Our approach is to engage communities at all levels and across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for everyone. We have working experience in urban areas across Canada, the United States, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Why 8-80?

We are convinced that if everything we did in our public spaces was great for everyone, from an 8-year-old and 80-year-old, we would end up with healthy and vibrant communities for all.



What is an 8-80 City?

- 8-80 cities reflect social equality in the public realm and promote people's happiness.
- 8-80 cities nurture our need to be physically active by providing safe, accessible and enjoyable places for everyone to walk and bike as part of their daily routine.
- 8-80 cities recognize that people are social creatures and prioritize human interaction by fostering vibrant streets and great public places where people can rest, relax and play.
- 8-80 cities encourage sustainable and healthy lifestyles for people regardless of age, gender, ability, ethnicity or economic background.



Our Partners



**Centretown Community
Health Centre**

**Centre de santé
communautaire du Centre-ville**

Centretown Community Health Centre is a nonprofit, multi-service Community Health Centre that has played an active role in the community since 1969. Our programs and services provide an ingrained presence in communities throughout the city so people can access the support that they need. We offer a full range of community services delivered by a diverse team of professionals. Our team includes doctors, nurses, social workers, counsellors, dietitians, community developers, health promoters, and outreach workers.



This project is partially funded by the Ontario Government's Healthy Communities Fund.

The Make a Place for People Project

Make a Place for People is a project based on the idea that community participation is key to the creation of vibrant and healthy public spaces.

The overall goal of the project is to inject new life into currently under-performing public spaces in order to encourage physical activity and promote mental health while also contributing to creating more sustainable and people-friendly communities.

CITIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES



How to Use this Report

By working closely with local partners in identifying community stakeholders, 8-80 Cities has endeavored to tap into the imaginations of the diverse people who use or would like to use the space. This document is the culmination of those efforts.

The recommendations and visualizations are a representation of what we heard from the various stakeholders we engaged.

We see this report as a tool for community members, elected officials and public sector staff alike to generate action and to help sustain community participation in the space.

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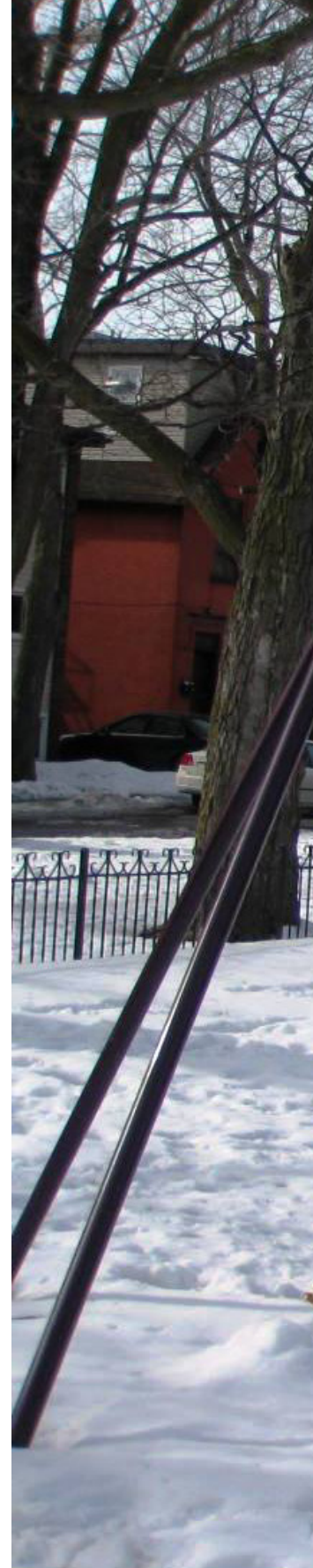
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1. INTRODUCTION

This section of the report provides a description of the Make a Place for People project methodology, as well as an overview of Dundonald Park and the Centretown Neighbourhood.





What is the Make a Place for People Project?

We know that parks and public spaces play an vital role in our communities- they create nodes where people meet, relax and play. But many parks and public spaces in Ontario are under performing, with very few uses and activities and lacking funding, management and community participation.

The goal of the Make a Place for People project is to educate and empower communities across the province with the tools to transform underperforming parks and public spaces into vibrant and active destinations that promote social interaction, mental health and well being for all.

Our Goal is....
to develop vibrant public spaces
that encourage physical activity
and promote mental health while
contributing to more sustainable
and people-friendly communities.



Thorncliffe Park, Toronto



Washington Sq., NYC

- COMMUNITY
- EMPOWERMENT
- IMAGINATION
- TRANSFORMATION

“One of the greatest strengths Centretown Community Health Centre brings to this project is our organization’s skill and expertise in collaboration and community building.

We are approaching this project as a catalyst where multiple organizations and groups can come together and help create Dundonald Park as a destination of choice, a place that people refer to with great pride.”

- Centretown Community Health Centre

Our Partner: Centretown Community Health Centre

8-80 Cities issued a call for partners in December 2011, asking communities across Ontario to nominate currently underperforming public spaces to participate in the project. We received over 30 applications from communities across Ontario and were delighted to receive an application from Centretown Community Health Centre for Dundonald Park, in downtown Ottawa.

From January to August, 2012 8-80 Cities worked with the Centretown Community Health Centre to develop a strategy for the design, programming and management of Dundonald Park through a process of community engagement.



Elizabeth Chin (Multicultural Community Developer) stands outside Centretown Community Health Centre (CCHC) on Cooper St. Elizabeth is one of the many dedicated staff members at CCHC who has used her creativity and can-do attitude to improve Dundonald Park.

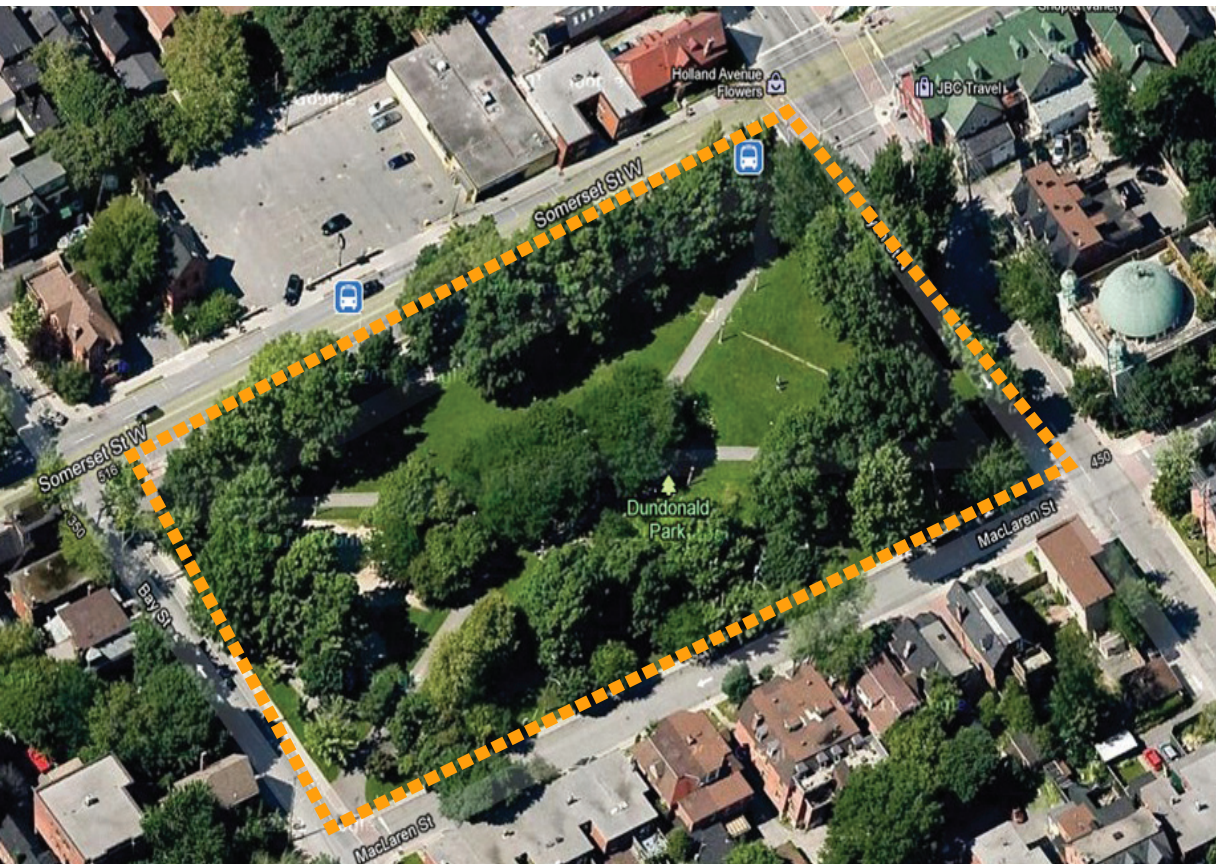
Dundonald Park

Dundonald Park is a century old park located at the southwest corner of Somerset and Lyon Streets in downtown Ottawa.

It occupies one city block (approximately one hectare) in the heart of the Centretown Neighbourhood. The park features mature trees, diagonal intersecting pathways, wooden benches, a paved central area, and a small playground area. It was named after Douglas Cochrane, 12th Earl of Dundonald, who was the last British officer to command the Canadian militia.



**CENTRETOWN
RESIDENTS HAVE
BELOW AVERAGE
ACCESS TO PARKS,
GREEN SPACE, AND
RECREATION***



A plaque commemorating the Soviet defector, Igor Gouzenko. On September 6, 1945 Royal Canadian Mounted Police agents monitored Gouzenko's apartment from Dundonald Park on the night men from the Soviet embassy came looking for Gouzenko. The incident is considered one of the first major international events of the Cold War.

26% adults of low income
(Ottawa average of 14.1%)*

35% children of low income
(Ottawa average of 16.8%)*

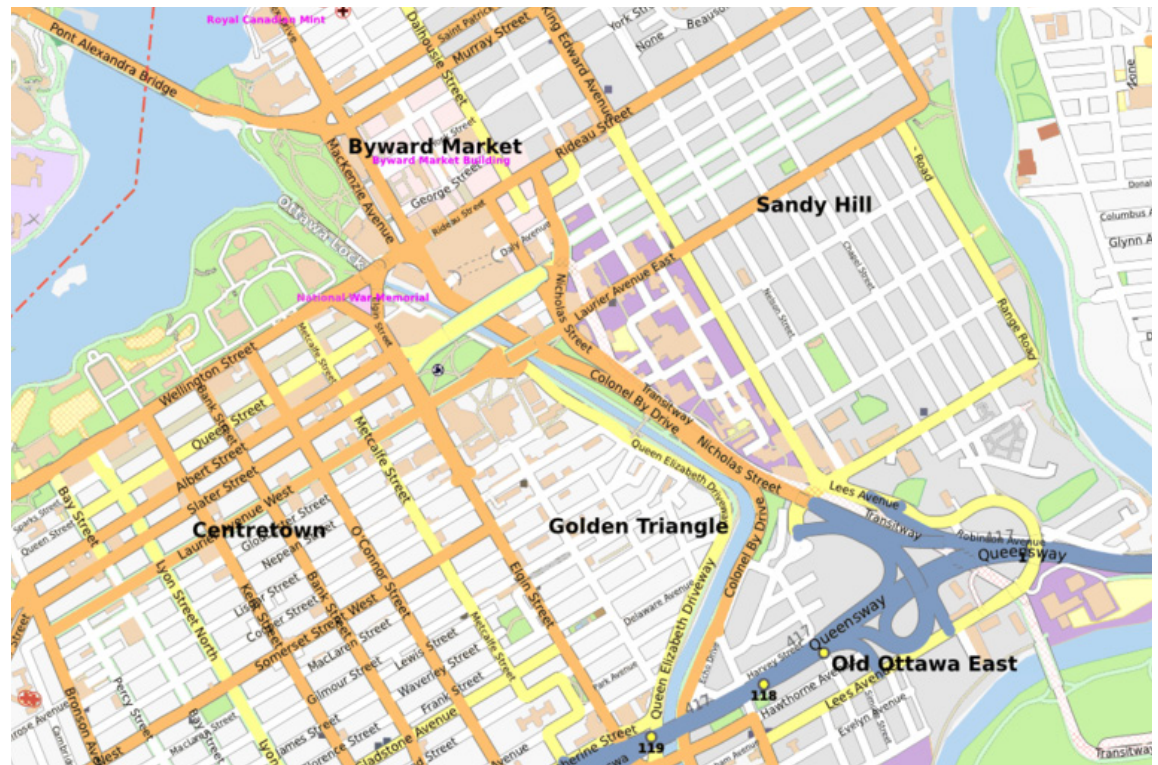
86% live in apartments*

43.7% walk to work
(Ottawa average of 7%)*

Centretown at a Glance

Centretown is a large neighbourhood located in downtown Ottawa, bounded by the Ottawa River to the north, the Queensway to the south, the Rideau Canal to the east, and Bronson Avenue to the west. It is a culturally diverse community with approximately 24,173 residents and a unique blend of residential and commercial areas, including the Parliament buildings, Chinatown and a large number of government offices.

Centretown has a below average amount of greenspace (.02km²/100 people vs. .26km²/100ppl for city-wide average) within or near its borders, as well as a significantly below average amount of park space (4.6m²/resident vs. 34.3m²/resident for city-wide average). Centretown has also been identified as an area with insufficient opportunity for recreation. Centretown has a recreation index score (which is an index that combines all recreation facilities, bike paths, and parks) of 36 versus the city average of 50.*



Making the Most of Dundonald Park

For many people in the community of Centretown, Dundonald Park represents an opportunity to create something better. As it is one of the few green spaces in the neighbourhood it's important to make the most of this precious resource and strengthen the role it can play in people's health and wellbeing.

Heightening the importance of Dundonald Park are the facts that the majority of Centretown residents live in apartments and there is a higher than average incidence of low-income status. These factors make access to greens spaces and recreational opportunities more challenging, which can result in lower rates of physical activity and less time spent outdoors. According to CCHC there are more than five subsidized apartment towers within a four block radius of the park, and one of the largest buildings is dedicated to subsidized seniors housing.

Current Problems

Unfortunately, the park isn't living up to its potential as a vibrant hub of recreation and social interaction. Poor maintenance and neglect is evidenced by broken and outdated infrastructure. In addition, by mid to late afternoon the park is often used by individuals with substance abuse issues who can be disruptive. Many people 8-80 Cities talked to during the project felt that the park was uninviting and unsafe, and did not use the park as a result.

"The park is not safe.
I won't let my children go there."

- Focus Group Participant

44.2% of residents are inactive
in their leisure time*

* Ottawa Neighbourhood Study

46% of adults are overweight or obese*

* Ottawa Neighbourhood Study



The state of existing infrastructure exemplifies the need for improvements in management and maintenance, as well as capital investments.

BUILDING ON EXISTING STRENGTHS: A LOT IS ALREADY BEING DONE!

Creating a strong sense of community ownership and stewardship is vital for the success of any public space. Dundonald Park has a strong base of community members and organizations dedicated to improving this important community green space, but they can't do it alone! Building on and supporting the knowledge, work, and strength of these community groups is key to the success of Dundonald Park.

The Friends of Dundonald Park

Since 1993 the Friends of Dundonald Park group has been volunteering their time and energy to care for the park. In 2004 they officially adopted the park under the City of Ottawa's Adopt-a-Park Volunteer Partnership program. The group organizes spring and fall park clean-up days, rehabilitated and maintains the park's two perennial beds, monitors maintenance concerns, and cares for the historical iron sign.

Service Providers

Individuals and organizations in the community have already come together to help animate the park! A diverse group of service providers have organized fantastic activities that range from Early Years education programs and seniors outreach, to hula hooping lessons, Chinese line dancing and movies in the park. These activities have already begun to improve the park and add vibrancy to the community. The service providers have also developed an online calendar to promote their activities to the community, which can be found at: <http://www.centretownchc.org/en/programs-and-services/spring-and-summer-programming.aspx#outdooractivities>.

Community Members

8-8o Cities was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm and generosity of community members who participated in the Make a Place for People project. Finding ways to harness this energy to improve and support the park will determine the long-term success of Dundonald Park.



The Friends of Dundonald Park group roll up their sleeves for the annual fall gardening session.



One of the many community activities in Dundonald Park this summer, a Jam Session brings together people of all ages to enjoy an afternoon outside!



A project volunteer enjoys a sunny afternoon measuring park activity during the summer site assessment.

Nothing draws a crowd like free cookies! 8-80 Cities and CCHC engaged the community with free snacks and activities such as hula-hooping, yoyoing and tai chi while community members shared their ideas about transforming the park.



The Make a Place for People process aims to tap into the imaginations of the diverse people who use a public space in order to create a vision and cultivate a culture of community participation in the space. The process involves 3 phases:

1. Participatory Planning

Working with the local project partner to identify stakeholders to be involved in the project and develop a strategy for engagement.

2. Site Assessment & Community Engagement

Assessments of the existing site, including both “hardware” (physical infrastructure) and “software” (uses, activities, and management). Community engagement with diverse stakeholders through a variety of activities such as workshops, focus groups, interviews and on-site conversations.

3. Vision Development & Action Planning

Data collection and analysis to inform the creation of the Make a Place for People report. Reporting and action planning synthesizes the data collected into a user-friendly format that reflects the community’s vision of the space.

Dundonald Park Project Time Line

1 Planning		2 Site Assessment & Community Engagement				3 Vision & Action Plan	
JAN	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identification of stakeholders- Site research & context assessment- Development of schedule and coordination of events logistics for first on-site visit- Outreach & promotion of events & activities for first on-site visit- Development of content & materials for community engagement sessions- Launch of social media site		1st On-Site Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Winter site assessment- Community engagement sessions- Media engagement- Collection of data from community engagement sessions- Debrief of 1st on site visit & planning for 2nd on-site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analysis of data and documentation of initial findings- Development of schedule and coordination of logisitcs for 2nd on-site visit- Outreach & promotion of events & activities for 2nd on-site visit- Development of content & materials for 2nd on-site community engagement sessions based on 1st on-site visit .		2nd On-Site Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Summer site assessment- Community engagement sessions- Media engagement- Review findings from previous on-site sessions & site assessment- Collection of data from community engagement sessions- Debrief of 2nd on-site visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyze data and document findings from community engagement & site assessments- Develop initial vision and recommendations for site-Draft report issued to local partner- Feedback incorporated into final report- Launch of final report	
							
Feb 14: Facebook page launched, 359 total weekly reach (as of July 12th, 2012)		March 7 - 10: Winter community engagement , 140 direct participants		June 9: Pop-up activities and community engagement at Dundonald Park		Data analysis & report development 377 ideas collected 	
							
On-going communication and planning with CCHC		March 7 - 11: Winter site assessment		June 6 - 10: Summer community engagement, 183 direct participants		Development of project report	

2. PLACES FOR PEOPLE

This section includes international research, evidence and tools to support the improvement of parks and public spaces in Ontario.

We hope that the people of Centretown Neighbourhood and beyond will be inspired to use this report to help “make the case” for improving parks, squares and streets so that we can create healthier, happier and more sustainable neighbourhoods.





GREAT PLACES HEALTHY COMMUNITIES HAPPY PEOPLE, VIBRANT CITIES

Parks and public spaces define our greatest cities and shape our most vibrant communities. Imagine Ottawa without the Rideau Canal, Montreal without the cobble stone streets of the Old Port, Toronto without the St. Lawrence Market, and Vancouver without the seawall at Stanley Park.

Putting the Public Back in Public Space

Public spaces are our community's most valuable assets, and they belong to all of us. We have a right and a responsibility to be involved in decisions related to their use, management and design. But in many cases the public has been left out of this decision-making process and we've stopped asking to be involved.

Our experience shows that the best parks and public spaces have a high level of community involvement, foster a sense of stewardship and ownership, and are sensitive to the changing needs and desires of the community they serve.

1. The idea for NYC's renowned Highline Park was originally conceived by two community members who objected to the destruction of the elevated rail bed where the park now stands.
2. While not technically a park, Guadalajara's weekly open streets program Via Recreativa was spearheaded by three successful business leaders now known as Guadalajara 20/20. Every week the program sees more than 300,000 people use the city streets to bike, run, walk and play.
3. Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto, is one of the city's most unique and successful public spaces thanks the ongoing coordination and partnership between Friends of Dufferin Grove and the City of Toronto.





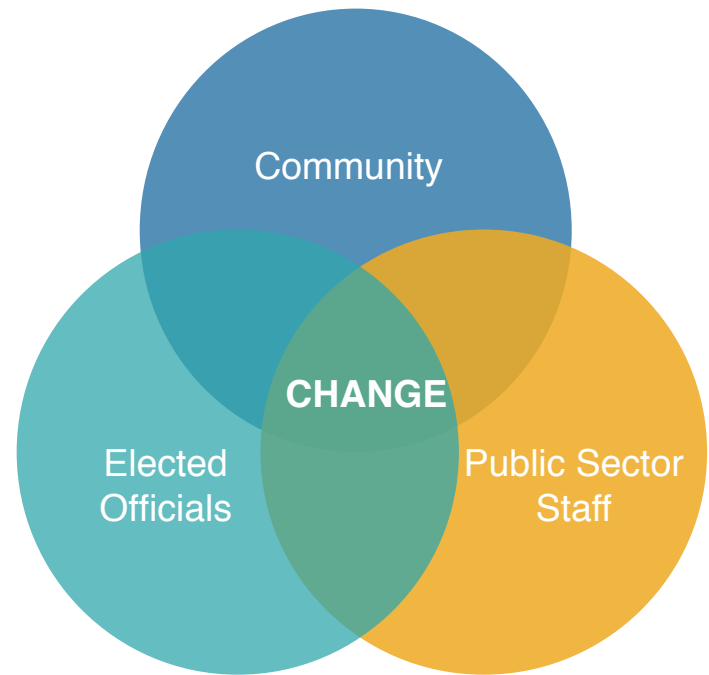
Tapping the Collective Brain

Engaging people in decisions related to their parks and public spaces is what 8-80 Cities strives to do. We never cease to be impressed by the creativity, knowledge and know-how community members possess about their communities. The great diversity of people and perspectives in any community is its greatest resource. Finding creative ways to “tap the collective brain” is the first step in creating public places that are people-focused and people-friendly.

By understanding what the community wants and needs, decision makers can work together to offer appropriate programming, infrastructure and design.

The Three-Legged Stool

The most effective management of parks and public spaces involves what we call the three-legged stool—a balanced combination of elected officials, public sector staff and the local community (including residents, business, non-profit organizations and community groups).



8-80 Cities works to bridge the gap between these actors to facilitate a process of meaningful and successful change. We use reports like this one to articulate the community’s vision and work with decision makers to develop strategies for implementation.

FOCUS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE

Often it's the people who have the most to gain from parks and public spaces that are the most removed from the decision making process. Children, older adults, newcomers and people of low-income often need to be given special attention in the engagement process.

While they may not be the loudest voice in the room, their opinions and ideas are no less valuable. We need to move beyond the idea that an evening public meeting hosted at the local city hall is sufficient public consultation--we need to be more creative!



HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY?

- Use social media to connect with people in their living rooms.

- Get kids to draw a picture of what they would like to do in their park.

- Meet with a small group of newcomers and find out what they think makes a successful place.

- Talk one-on-one with older adults about what they need in the park.

- Use cameras to help youth show you what they like and don't like in the park.

- Host an idea-sharing session in a park. Free food always draws a crowd!



Making the Case for Parks

Too often our parks and public spaces are undervalued, and this is reflected in the state of many parks and public spaces across Ontario.

Did you know that according to a recent report by Parks and Recreation Ontario about the state of recreational facilities in Ontario, more than 50% of public recreation facilities in municipalities of all sizes are more than 50 years old? The vast majority of community recreation and sports facilities were built between 1956 and 1980, during a time when there was dedicated funding for municipal sport and recreation facilities.* This is reflected by the general state of parks and recreation services in Ontario—we have lost sight of the important role these public facilities play in our communities and they seem to be sliding farther down the political priorities list year after year.

We need to talk about how great places do more than just provide a nice place to spend a sunny afternoon; they play a vital role in the health of our economy, environment, society, our bodies and our minds.

**ACCORDING TO A STUDY
CONDUCTED BY PARKS AND
RECREATION ONTARIO IN 2009,
67% OF ONTARIANS WOULD
BE WILLING TO PAY MORE FOR
IMPROVED LOCAL SERVICES.**

*Parks and Recreation Ontario. Investing in Healthy and Active Ontarians through Recreation and Parks Infrastructure



Breakwater Park, Kingston



Berczy Park, Toronto



Flemingdon Park, Toronto

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2007, a study conducted in Philadelphia, where there are more than 100 “friends of parks groups”, estimated that the total value of volunteer hours donated to parks in the city was \$8,6000,000.***

According to American Forests, trees in Atlanta remove 19 million pounds of pollutants annually, a service worth \$47 million.**

In Fort Worth, Texas, crime dropped 28% within a 1.6km radius of community centers with a midnight basketball program. During the same period, in areas around five other community centers where the programs were not offered, crime rose an average of 39% during the same period.****

New Yorks City’s Highline Park is predicted to bring \$4 billion in private investment and \$900 million in revenues to the city over the next 30 years. *

* The New York Times. Taking a Stroll Along the Highline. November 28, 2008

** The Trust for Public Land. The Health Benefits of Parks

***The Trust for Public Land. Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System

**** The Trust for Public Land. The Benefits of Parks

User fees and cost-recovery models at parks are like Robin Hood in reverse. Everyone pays for parks through taxes, but user fees make parks and recreation services inaccessible to the poor.

We need to realize that parks naturally pay us back through reduced health care cost, increased property values and cleaner air. Great parks are always worth the investment.

- Gil Penalosa, Executive Director 8-80 Cities



Union Sq., NYC

Active Places, Healthy People

According to the 2012 Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services known as the "Drummond Report", Ontario's health care system needs to be dramatically reformed.

Health care is the Ontario government's single biggest spending program. In 2010-11, the province spent \$44.77 billion on health. This is equivalent to 40.3 per cent of its total spending on programs, and health care costs are only projected to increase in the future.* Nevertheless, even with massive investment in healthcare, Ontarians are only getting sicker. We are fatter, less active and more susceptible to chronic disease than ever before.*

It is also important to note that as a nation we don't seem to be spending our health care dollars very wisely. According to the Fraser Institute, Canada spends more on health care than any other industrialized country in the OECD save Iceland and Switzerland but ranks seventeenth in the percentage of total life expectancy that will be lived in full health. It is clear that we need a new approach to creating healthy communities that focuses on keeping people healthy, rather than fixing them after they are sick.

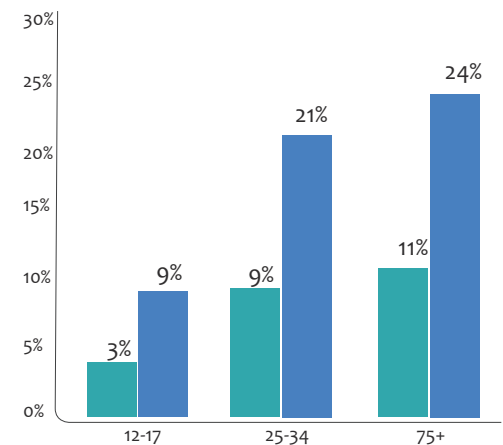
**"HEALTH IS
MUCH MORE
THAN PATCHING
UP PEOPLE ONCE
SOMETHING HAS
GONE WRONG."**

- The Drummond Report



Bogota, Columbia

Canadian Obesity Rates on the Rise



According to statistics Canada, obesity rates have increased dramatically in the past 25 years. The chart above represents results from the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), which directly measured the height and weight of respondents**.

* Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services, 2012
 **Statistics Canada. The Canadian Health Measures Survey, 2009

PARKS PRESCRIPTIONS PROVIDE EXERCISE & REDUCE STRESS!



Improvements in neighbourhood design, combined with health promotion and programming, is gaining increasing traction internationally among health professionals and patients alike. In the U.S. health care providers have begun to partner with parks and are issuing “park prescriptions” to get people walking, biking, hiking and swimming in nature more often. These prescriptions are also combined with incentive programs that include lower user-fees, fitness classes, and guided walking tours.

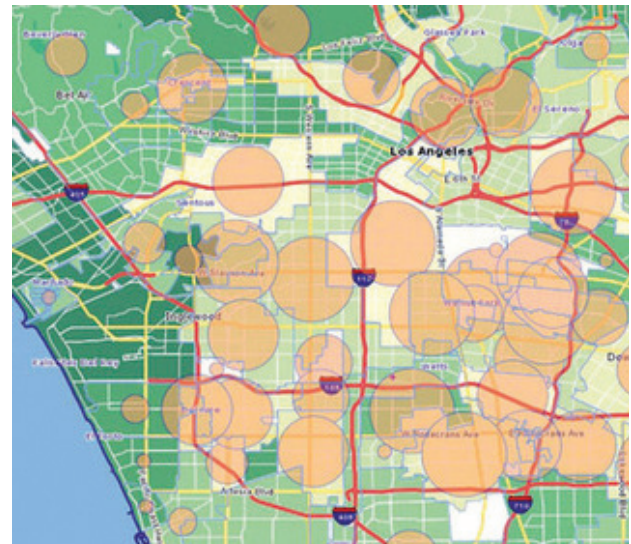
The value of parks and quality public realm for exercise is conclusive. Good quality public spaces encourage people to make short journeys on foot or by bike and they also encourage participation in physical activity and help to reduce stress.* A study by the UK organization CABI also showed that improving the quality of neighbourhood green spaces will encourage more active use and exercise. Overall, the study found that if parks were made more pleasant, people would use them more.*

Despite their extensive value, parks are often the first item on the chopping block when budget time comes. Short-sighted, siloed planning has relegated parks to a “nice to have” feature of communities rather than a “must-have” element of any healthy and sustainable community.

*CABI, *Using Community Green Spaces to Tackle Inequality and Improve Health*

**The Economist. *Mapping a Better World*, 2009

LOS ANGELES
STUDY: AREAS
WITH FEWER
PARKS (LIGHTER
GREEN) HAVE
HIGHER RATES
OF CHILDHOOD
OBESITY (LARGER
CIRCLES)**

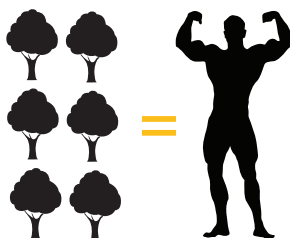


Active Places & Healthy People Fact Sheet



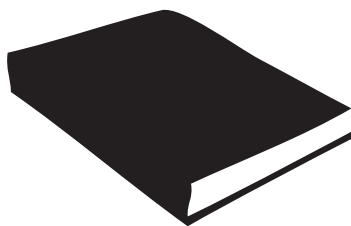
ELDERLY & YOUTH

in large cities seem to benefit more from the presence of green areas in their living environment than any other group.*



“Health inequalities” refers to the general trend that people living in poorer areas are more likely to be unhealthy and die earlier. Researchers found that living near parks, woodland or other open spaces helps to reduce health inequalities.**

Children with Attention Deficit Disorder can concentrate better than usual after taking part in activities in a green setting, such as walking or playing in a park.***



Research shows that residents of neighbourhoods with greenery in common spaces are more likely to enjoy stronger social ties than those who live surrounded by barren concrete.***



A study in Japan showed that seniors living in cities with access to walkable green spaces positively influenced them and helped them live longer regardless of socioeconomic status.*



Studies show that when people can't access parks, they often go without exercise. This is especially true of low-income people, who often can't afford gym memberships.***

* CABE, *Using Community Green Spaces to Tackle Inequality and Improve Health*

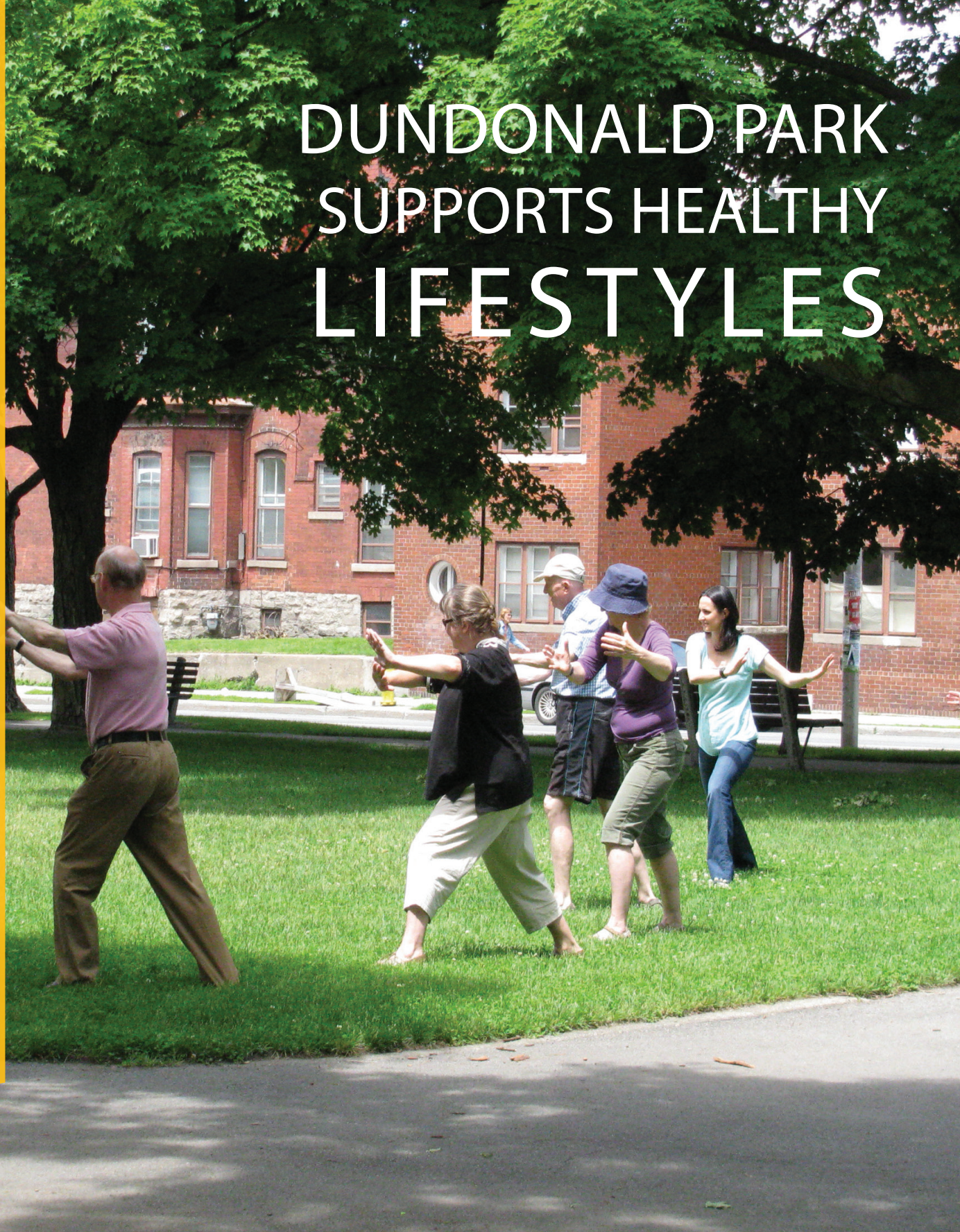
** Mitchel & Popham, *The Lancet*. “Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequalities: an observational population study”

*** The Trust for Public Land. *Measuring the Economic Value of a City Park System*

DUNDONALD PARK SUPPORTS HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

“HAVE DOCTORS
ADDRESS DIET
AND EXERCISE
ISSUES BEFORE
REACHING FOR
THE PRESCRIPTION
PAD WHEN
DEALING WITH
HEALTH ISSUES
SUCH AS
CARDIOVASCULAR
DISEASE AND
LATE-ONSET TYPE
2 DIABETES.”

- A RECOMMENDATION FROM
THE DRUMMOND REPORT

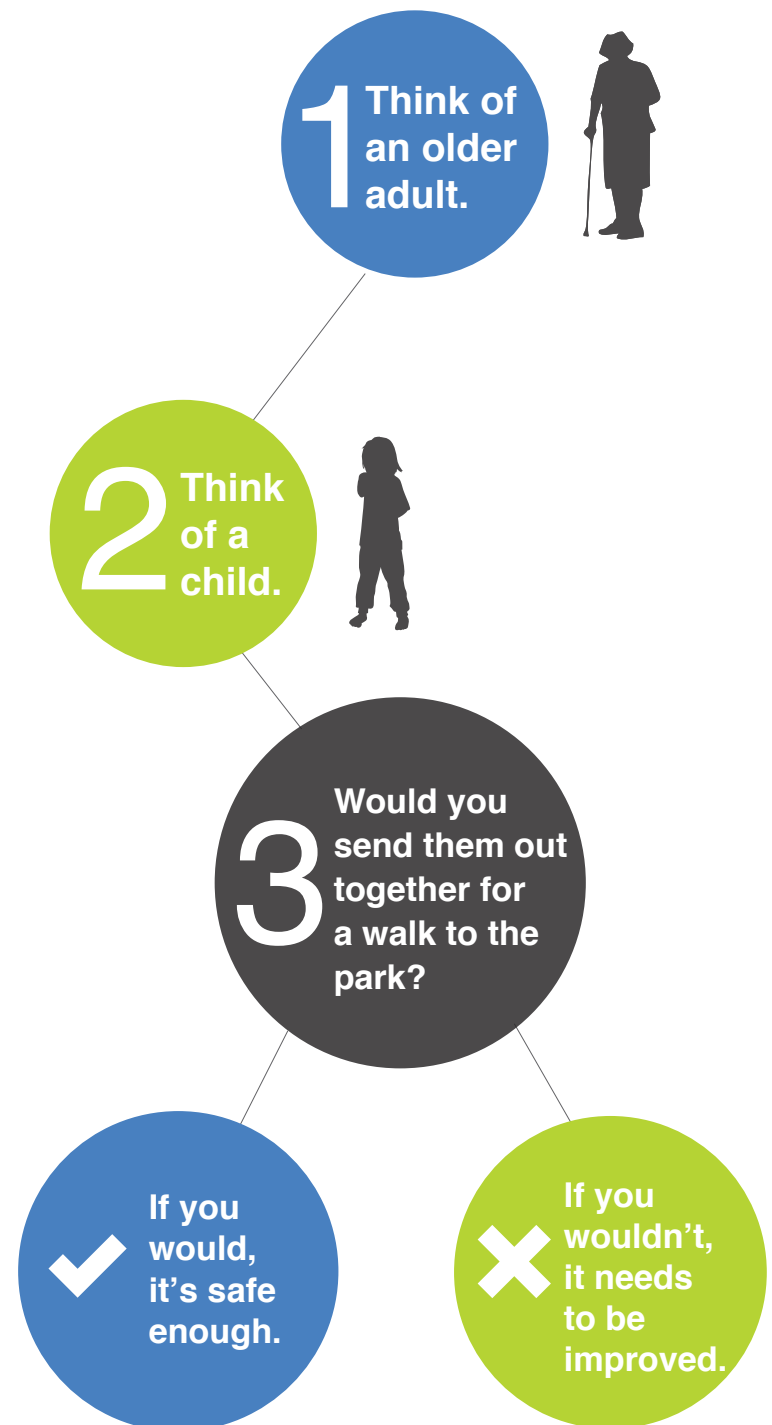
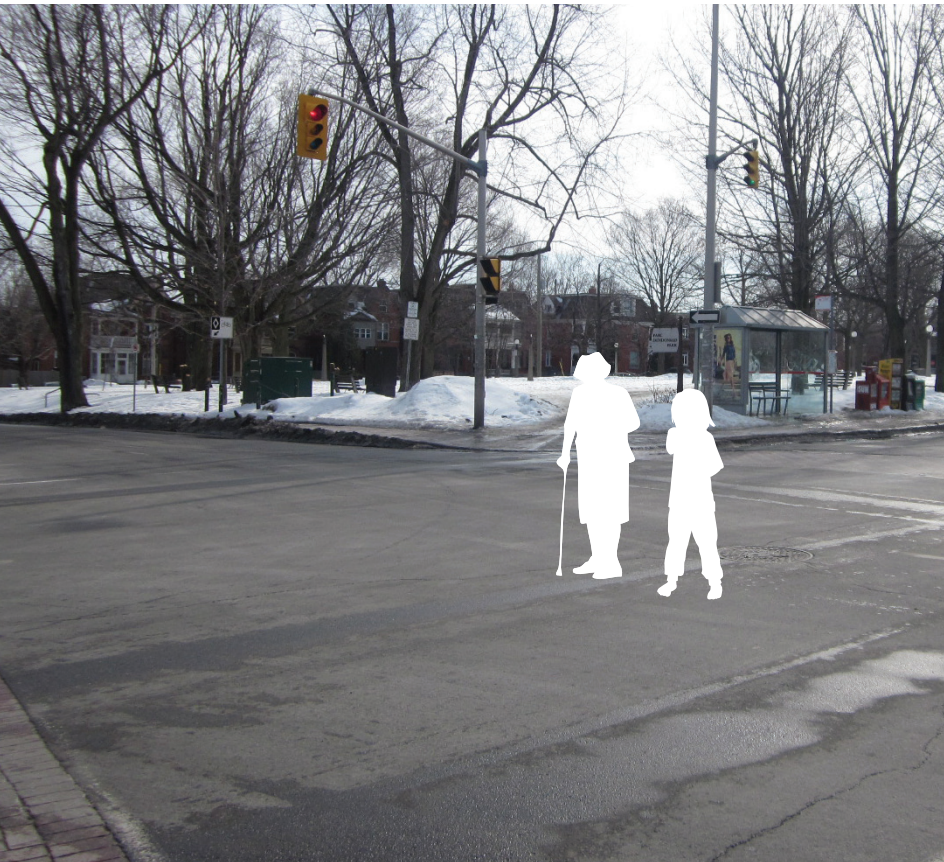


The 8-80 Rules

8-80 Cities has come up with a simple rule to evaluate public spaces called the “8-80 Rule”

The most basic characteristic of any public space is that it is open and accessible to everyone regardless of their age, ability, background or social status. Public space design, management and programming should reflect this philosophy.

**PARKS & PUBLIC SPACES ARE
SYMBOLS OF DEMOCRACY &
EQUALITY**



*Its a common sight in Ontario's urban parks;
October rolls around, washrooms and facilities
are locked up, events and activities come to a halt,
and walking paths fill with snow and ice.*

*"The parks are unofficially closed in the winter"
- Ontario Municipal Parks Employee*



Create Excitement!

Create Energy !

Create Sparkle!



THE BEST PUBLIC SPACES ARE ACTIVE 365 DAYS A YEAR.

It's easy to get people outside on a sunny summer day, but creating active public spaces in the colder months requires more creativity and ingenuity. In terms of health, people tend to be less physically active in the winter and spend more time indoors. Vibrant public spaces can help to draw people out of their homes to exercise and interact with friends and neighbours.

Keep it Simple: A Tool for Place Evaluation

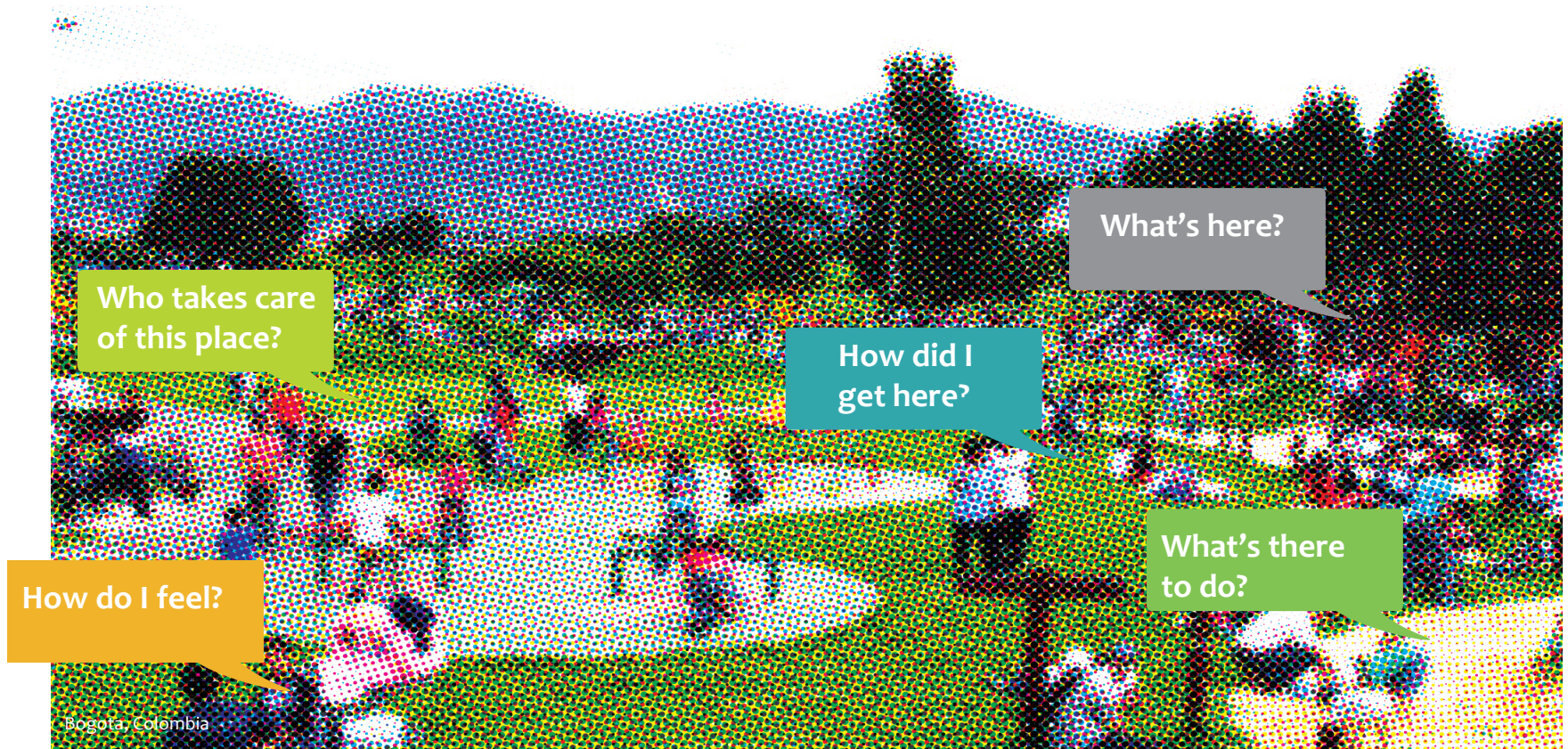
Great public spaces don't have to be complicated. A fancy design cannot make up for a space that's boring, inaccessible, uncared for or unsafe.

When thinking about any park or public space from a small neighbourhood square to a large urban park, ask yourself the five basic questions below. By thinking carefully about how people will get to the place, what they'll do when they will get there, what kind of infrastructure there is, and who manages or takes care of the space, you can start to assess what's working, what's not, and what could be improved.

Invest More in Management!

"About 80% of the success of any public space can be attributed to its management. No matter how good the design of a space is, it will never become a true place unless it is cared for well."

- Project for Public Spaces



How did I get here?

Is the place visible from a distance?
Is it accessible to wheelchairs and strollers?
Can you easily walk or bike to the place? Is there bike parking? Is it close to transit?
Are paths clear of snow, debris or water?
Are there 'desire lines' or beaten paths that should be formalized?

What's here?

Are there comfortable places to sit?
Is there good, quality lighting at night?
Is there a paved or gravel path?
Are there public washrooms? Are they clean and inviting?
Is there somewhere nearby to get a snack or drink?

What's there to do?

Is there a mix of stores and services nearby?
Are there opportunities for people to be physically active?
Are there inviting places for people to rest or relax?
Is there a diversity of people?
Are there activities for people of all ages?

Who takes care of this place?

Is there evidence of volunteerism?
Do you see any maintenance workers or staff?
Is there any contact information so you can reach someone in charge of the space?
Is there an active or passive security presence?

How do I feel?

Do you feel safe and comfortable?
Do you feel a sense of identity or history?
Is there something that makes this place feel unique?
Do you feel relaxed, energized or bored?
Do you want to stay and linger?



Seville, Spain



Harvard, Boston



Copenhagen, Denmark



Dufferin Grove Park, Toronto



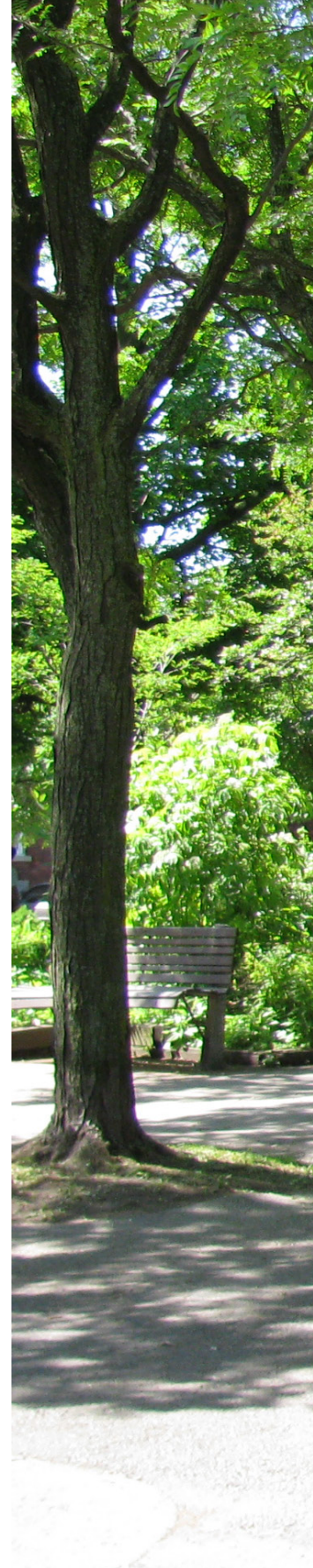
Washington Sq., NYC

3. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section includes a summary of the results of the site assessment as well as the ideas and recommendations generated by the community about how to improve Dundonald Park. The visualizations in this section are used to help people re-imagine Dundonald and to highlight specific recommendations, programs or improvements.

In addition to countless focus groups, meetings, interviews and casual conversations with community members, more than 300 specific recommendations and ideas were collected during the project. Trends, priorities and compatible best practices are highlighted in this section. To find a complete list of results from the project, please visit:

www.8-80cities.org > Resources > 8-80 Tools > Community Reports





Results Overview

A SNAP-SHOT OF THE DIVERSE IDEAS WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY!

More
flowers

Community
BBQs

Drama or
story telling
corner

Food
education

Yoga
classes

Community
garage sale &
kids gardening

Free wifi!

power
outlets

Solar twinkle
lights in the
trees

Healthy
food cart
& food

Splash
pad

Chalk
drawing

Pet or doggy
day!

Community
bake
oven

Bike
racks

Flower
stalls

Positive
code of
conduct

Farmer's
market

Badminton

Snowshoe
or ski
demos

Seniors
exercise
equipment

Prettier benches &
movable tables and
chairs

Bonfires

Paint
benches in
fun colours

Kite
flying

IF YOU DON'T COUNT, YOU DON'T COUNT!

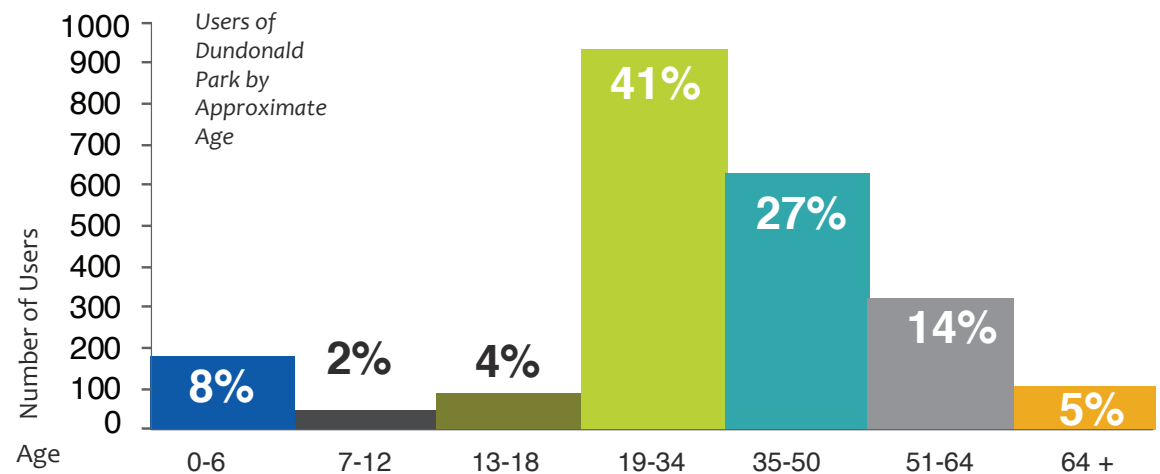
Collecting information about how public spaces are used is critical to their improvement. Understanding who is using the space and often more importantly, who's not using the space, helps to shed light on what improvements need to be made. Data helps to build the case for why investment and improvements need to be made and creates a "baseline" of information from which you can measure your success.

Dundonald Park Site Observations

With the help of community volunteers, site observations were conducted at Dundonald Park in both the winter and summer, and more than 2,300 users were recorded. A simple social observation chart (which is available in the Toolbox section of this report) was used to record who uses the park, how they use it and when.

Users

During the site assessments 8-8o Cities estimated the age of park users. Compared with demographic data from the neighbourhood, the most underrepresented user group is older adults. While people 65 and older make up over 8% of the population, they only represent 5% of users at Dundonald Park.



“In God we trust,
all others
bring data.”

- One of NYC Mayor Bloomberg's favorite phrases

THE LACK OF WOMEN AND OLDER ADULTS AT DUNDONALD PARK IS EVIDENCE THAT THE PARK NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED.

Average percent of men & women at Dundonald Park



Women Are an “Indicator Species”

When it comes to assessing public spaces, women are an excellent indicator of how well a place is working. Women tend to be more discriminating and have a lower level of tolerance for spaces that are disorderly, dirty or unsafe.

In Dundonald Park, we consistently observed more men than women in the park by a significant percentage. In the winter the number of women was even lower, making up only 33% of users.

Did you know...

In NYC’s Bryant Park, staff takes a daily count of users the park. If they observe less than 50% females they take action. Some strategies used to attract women include offering immaculate public washrooms with fresh cut flowers, yoga classes and knitting classes.

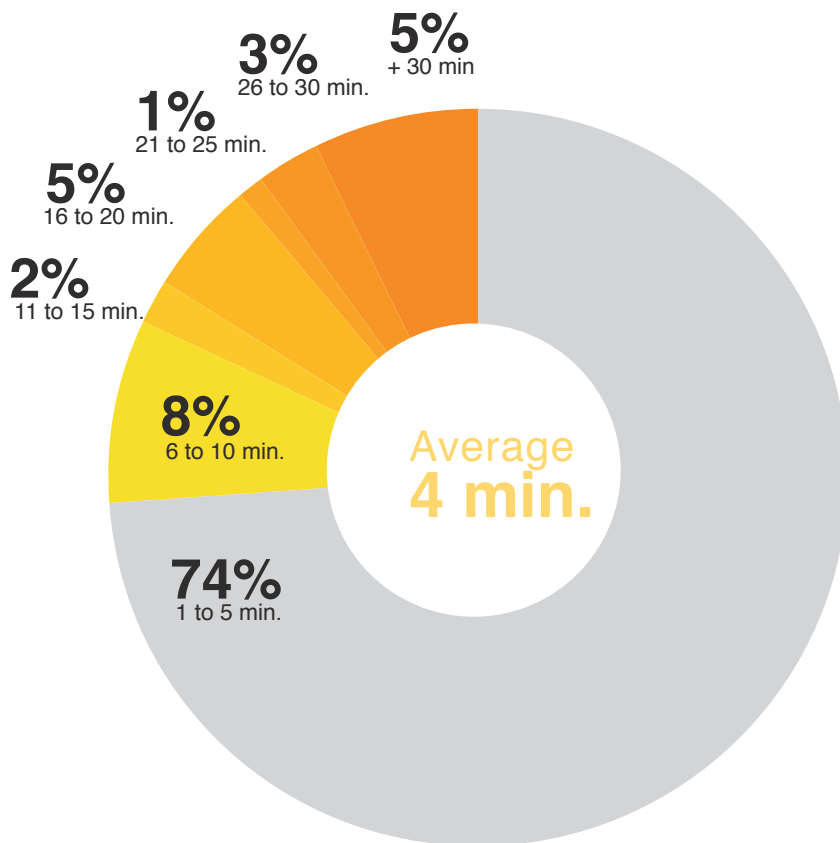


Bryant Park, NYC

TIME SPENT IN DUNDONALD PARK

Our observations showed that 57% of people simply walked through the park and 75% of users spent less than 5 minutes in the park.

Time Spent in Dundonald Park



AVERAGE NUMBER OF USERS PER HOUR IN THE SUMMER AND WINTER:



Observed Activities

Focusing on activities and infrastructure that invite people to stay for longer periods of time will help bring vibrancy, encourage social interaction and increase safety in the park.

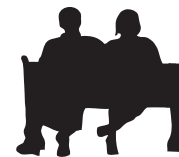
57%

Walking through the Park



15%

Sitting



7%

Playing in children's area



6%

Cycling



5%

Walking dog



1%

City of Ottawa Employees



Winter...
47/hr



Dundonald Park, Ottawa

Summer...
285/hr

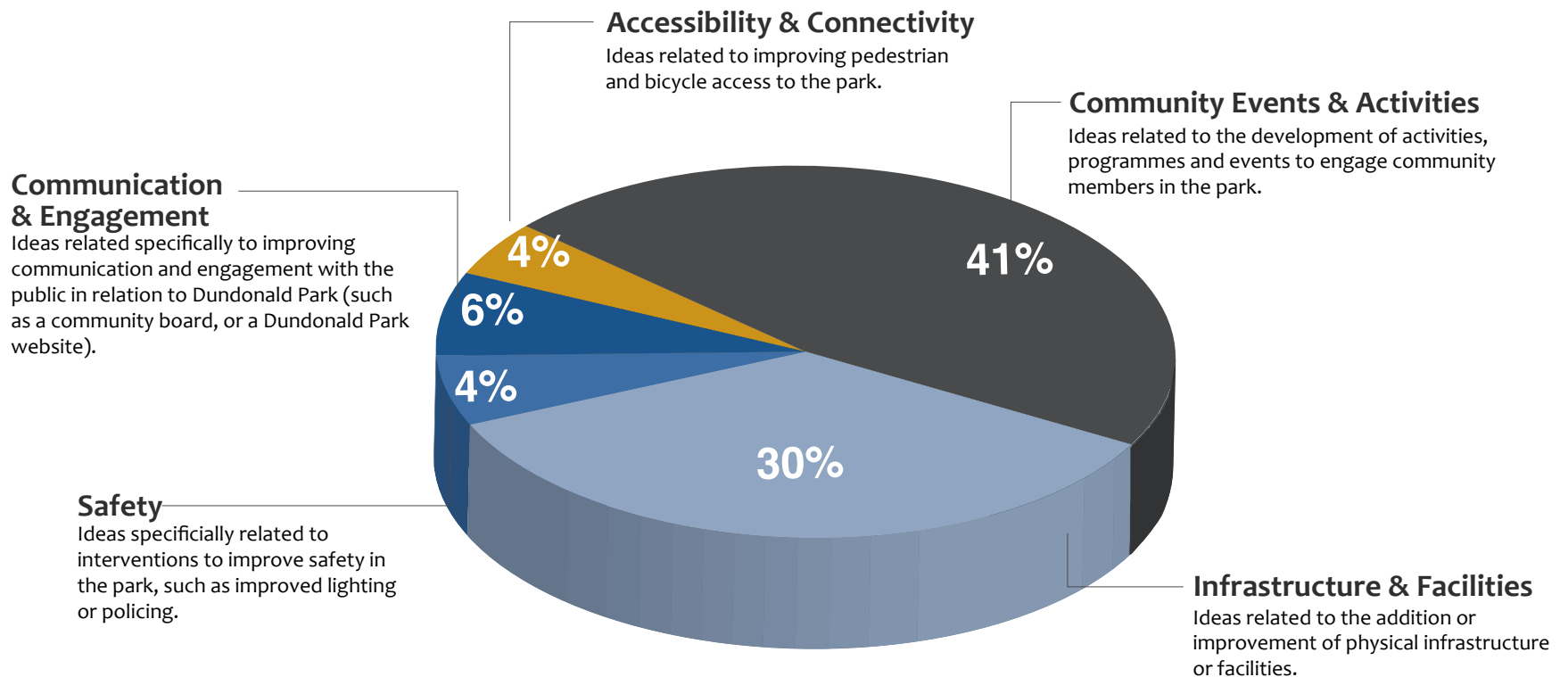


Ideas & Recommendations

Recommendations and ideas were collected from community members through mapping activities, facilitated group conversations, interviews, and idea sharing activities. 8-80 Cities recorded and analyzed the data in order to create a summary of the findings, which is presented below.

Recommendations by Themes

The chart below is based on 377 specific ideas or recommendations collected by 8-80 Cities through the process of community engagement. The chart indicates trends in themes related to the recommendations in order to help identify and set community priorities.



8% Beautification & Maintenance

Suggestions related to improving the aesthetics of the park through improved maintenance, greenery and painting.



SPECIFIC TYPES OF RECOMMENDATIONS STOOD OUT IN THE DATA, SUCH AS THOSE RELATED TO IMPROVING THE AESTHETICS OF THE PARK, INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT MORE ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS, AND INCREASING ACCESS TO FOOD AND DRINKS IN THE PARK.

9% Facilities for Activities & Events

Ideas related to the addition of permanent or temporary physical infrastructure that facilitates various activities and events, such as exercise equipment, a small stage, ice rink, and power & water hook-ups.



8.5% Food & Drink

Suggestions related to bringing food to the park such as a weekly farmers market, community bake oven, healthy snack canteen and public barbecues.



COMMUNITY BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

In the recommendations and ideas shared by community members a strong trend was found that can be identified as an over arching enthusiasm for community building.

Through the various recommendations related to everything from seating improvements, cultural events, and interactive features, 31% of the recommendations were related to helping foster a stronger sense of community and building stronger social ties in Centretown.

“Activities to bring together homeless and poor users with others in the community”

“Create a place that people of all walks of life can interact in to improve community cohesion. This is particularly important now with the changing the face of Centretown with gentrification.”

“Weekly communal dinner in park, like Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto.”

“Community day picnics with focus on promoting diversity between all age groups.”



29%
of all ideas
were related to
encouraging
physical activity

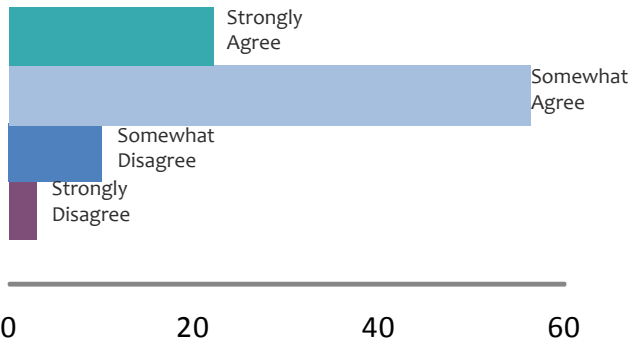
31%
of all ideas
were related
to community
building

DUNDONALD PARK IS...

8-80 Cities conducted a survey of general opinions about Dundonald Park to gain insight into people’s perceptions and beliefs related to: accessibility, safety, winter activity, overall and personal usage, and programming.

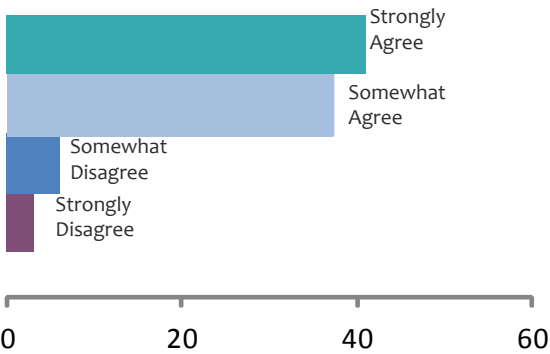
Safe?

Only 24% of respondents strongly agreed that the park is safe. Dundonald Park has been identified by police as one of the least safe public spaces in the city, and many community members expressed strong concerns about safety.



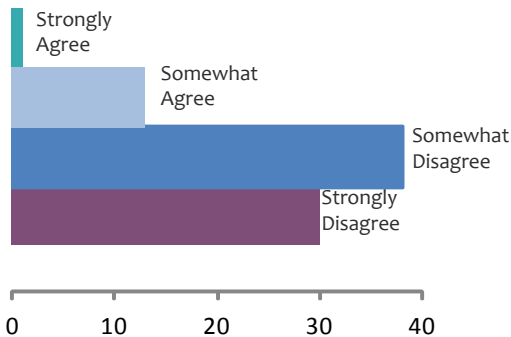
Accessible?

78% of people surveyed either somewhat or strongly agreed that Dundonald Park was accessible. See page 39 for ideas related to improving accessibility.



Active in Winter?

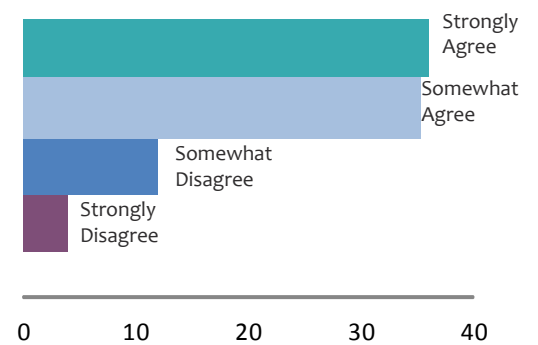
Our site assessment showed that Dundonald Park is poorly used in the winter and the survey reflected this. 83% of respondents either somewhat or strongly disagreed that the park was active in the winter





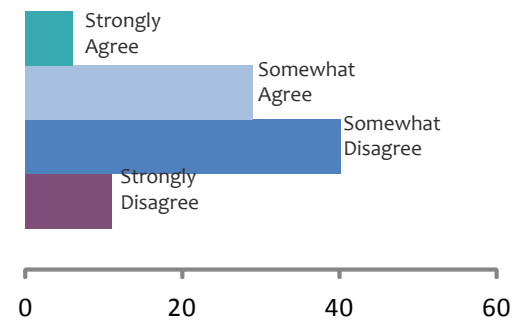
Well Used?

81% of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that the park was well used, however the majority of respondents were current park users rather than potential users.

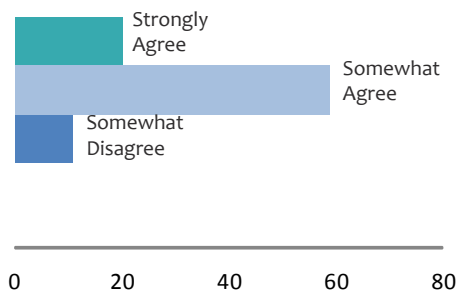


Well Programmed?

60% of people surveyed either somewhat or strongly disagreed that the park is well programmed. The need for improved programming at Dundonald Park is also evidenced by the community recommendations.



Comfortable?



Accessibility

Dundonald Park is well located in the heart of Centretown in downtown Ottawa. Surprising to some, the park is a short walk or bike from many of Ottawa's most famous landmarks, including the Parliament Buildings, Bank Street and the Rideau Canal.

The park can capitalize on its excellent location by improving access points and entrances to the park. Pedestrian access can be improved by ensuring year round maintenance and snow clearance on stairs and pathways as well as additional, attractive park signage that is visible from a distance.

Creating an Invitation

Making public spaces accessible is about more than providing safe infrastructure. It's also about creating an "invitation" that welcomes people into a space.

Community members suggested improving the park entrances in creative ways such as painting "welcome" in different languages on the stairs and using flowers, twinkle lights and community-made banners to entice people from the street.

Bicycle access can be improved by installing bicycle parking at the four main entrances (see the Zone Map on page 43 for specific locations). Many community members also voiced support for installing a new, separated bicycle path on Somerset to improve bike access and slow down traffic.

"I was thinking if you could do something at the entrances that kind of says "welcome". Like an arch or something. It's a cultural thing and a lot of cultures are like that, you have to be invited to come in."
- Focus group participant

"Dundonald Park was built as a passage way, as a connector to other neighbourhoods; people will do that all the time, all year long. That's how they get places."

- Centretown community member



Dundonald Park, Ottawa



“Software”

Uses, Activities & Identity

*Parks can be so much more than just pretty places; they can actually help individuals and communities be healthier and happier. Unfortunately, many of our parks are under-used and not living up to their potential. How can we do better? It turns out that research suggests that aside from proximity, having activities is one of the greatest predictors of park use.**

That is why, when evaluating and planning for parks and public spaces it is important to not only focus on the physical qualities of the space. After all a great park is so much more than the, grass, trees, benches and other features it may contain. Looking beyond the “hardware” and focusing also on the “software” of the place-- the uses, activities, and unique character-- is equally and in some cases even more important for creating a vibrant and healthy park.

* Cohen, Marsh, Williamson, Deroose, Martinez, Setodji & Thom McKenzie. Parks and physical activity: Why are some parks used more than others?

WHEN IT COMES TO SOFTWARE AT DUNDONALD PARK, ASK YOURSELF...

What makes Dundonald Park unique?

Are there events & activities that will attract people of different ages? ethnicity? income levels?

What do people want to do at Dundonald Park?

What kind of local cultural activities could be supported in the space?

What kind of social capital could be harnessed at Dundonald park?

Are there different things to do throughout the day? Week? Year?

By knowing and understanding the types of activities that people would like to do in the park, you can then start to think of the specific infrastructure that can support those functions, and not the other way around. This is the difference between creating a great park versus a great design.

Endless activities Bryant Park

Bryant Park in New York City is the most meticulously managed park in the world. The “software” at Bryant Park provides endless activities and experience for people of all ages, morning, noon and night. Activities range from chess and ping-pong, to knitting, yoga, language classes, juggling and much more.



RESULTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Dundonald Park Software Program Calendar

Based on ideas from the community, this conceptual calendar uses images from around the world to exemplify the different layers of activity that can take place at Dundonald Park throughout the year. Thanks to dedicated volunteers and service providers, lots of fantastic activities are already taking place at Dundonald Park and these have been identified with a check mark.

Entertainment



Winter festival Movie projection & Canteen



Community Building

"Increase the awareness of existing Dundonald focused groups (i.e. Friends of Dundonald, Centretown movies) through flyers in mailboxes or posters in park"
- Workshop Participant

BENCH PAINTING

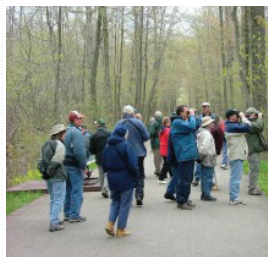


Baking Classes

COMMUNITY Gardening



Spontaneous



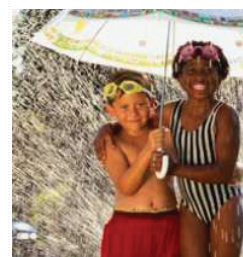
Bird Watching



Celebrate Spring Nature Walk

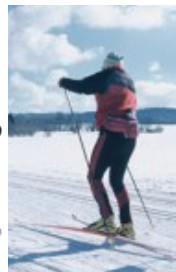


WATER PLAY



Formal Activities

Snow Shoe & Ski Lessons



Yoga & Tai-Chi in the Park Gardening



January


February

March

April

May

June

 = Already implemented!

Theater & Dance Performance



Music in the park!

All ages and abilities feel welcomed at the park and it reflects who they are. This should be done through activities, events, and visual aspect

- Workshop Participant



Christmas Celebration



Neighbourhood Picnics

Community Garage Sale

Music Talent Show



COMMUNITY Clean-up



Chalk Drawing Kite flying



Fall Walk WFLI in the Park



Snowman Making



Chess Tournament Children's Reading Classes

"There are a lot of seniors living in the area and I think the seniors can use the park a lot more than they do now. If there were something more for people to do like chess games or some other things, that would be quite nice and get people to go there."

- Workshop Participant

July

August

September

October

November

December

COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING

Creating a doable plan is the key to turning an idea into reality. 8-80 Cities uses a simple community action planning framework to help community members focus on one idea and brainstorm a plan for implementation. The idea highlighted below was developed as a way to encourage partnership between the City of Ottawa and the Centretown community in the improvement of Dundonald Park.

THE IDEA:

Develop a barter system to encourage programming in the park. People who provide services and programming at Dundonald park would receive points which could be used to access city services or discounts at local businesses.

Step 1.

Gather volunteers, community members, community groups, associations, businesses, the City of Ottawa -- and anyone else who is interested!

Step 2.

Brainstorm activities and services that could be delivered in the park based on interest.

Step 3.

Find volunteers for popular & realistic ideas and note their interest.

Step 4.

Partner with Parks & Recreation to create a schedule of events. Contact local businesses to set up the barter point system.

Step 5.

Advertise & promote the services and system.

Action Planning Instru

Creating a doable plan is the key to turning an idea into reality. In your group come up with a plan for implementation. The idea highlighted below was developed as a way to encourage partnership between the City of Ottawa and the Centretown community in the improvement of Dundonald Park.

*The majority of your planning time should be spent on the HOW? question.

What?

In the space below briefly explain what your idea is.

Set up barter system to encourage programming in the park.

Why?

Briefly explain why your idea is important.

Showcasing what people can do
Share skills / language

Who?

Who needs to be involved in the project? What partners are needed for it to be successful?

- all community members who share their skills
- people wanting to learn

When?

For software: How frequently? What season? What time of day? For hardware: when will it be implemented? How long will it last?

4 seasons -> different on the same day

weekly based on the

1. meet one food
2. meet two languages
3. active / fitness
4. practical skills
5. share traditions
6. book exchange /
7. photography

Instructions

Turning an idea into
plan for how your
next year or two.

should be spent

to
the part

ships need to be estab-

illing to

t day of the week? → rotate
ented? When will it be

things depending
ason

mos

d + culture

age exchange

S

/ cultural events

book club

How?

Without writing anything down, take a few minutes to discuss as a group what needs to be done to implement your idea. After you have discussed your plan, try to break it down into manageable steps. It might be easiest to think in chunks of time, but it is up to you. You can add more steps if necessary, but try to limit yourselves to no more than 6 steps. And don't forget to think about the resources you will need to implement the idea.

STEP 1

Gather volunteers, community members, community groups + associations, businesses, City of Ottawa—and anyone else interested!

STEP 2

Brainstorm in small groups (based on interests)

STEP 3

Seek volunteers for popular & realistic ideas & note their availability

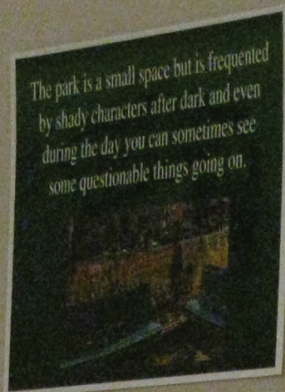
Step 4:

Partner with Parks & Rec to create a schedule of activities
Contact businesses for point systems

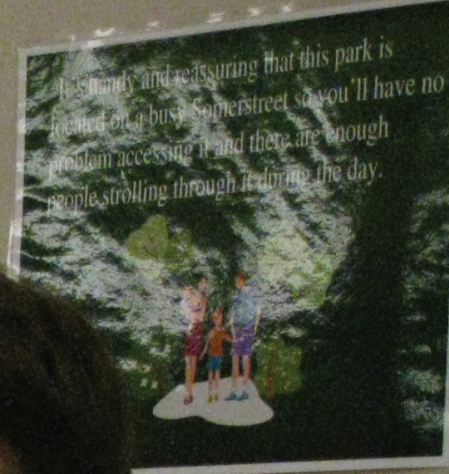
Step 5:

Advertise & Promote

The park is a small space but is frequented
by shady characters after dark and even
during the day you can sometimes see
some questionable things going on.



It's handy and reassuring that this park is
located on a busy Somerset street so you'll have no
problem accessing it and there are enough
people strolling through it during the day.



Hardware Design & Physical Infrastructure

Well maintained infrastructure or “hardware” that supports a park’s uses and activities is an important component of creating a successful and well used park.

Great parks offer a balance of natural “green infrastructure” that allow people to absorb natural beauty and tranquility, and added infrastructure to support a variety of uses serving the needs and desires of the community.



SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER WHEN THINKING OF HARDWARE AT DUNDONALD PARK...

- Are there basic amenities?
(i.e. washrooms, water fountains, etc.)
- Is there infrastructure to support activities for all ages?
- Are there comfortable and attractive places to sit & stay?
- Is there good lighting?
- Are there flexible and adaptable spaces and features that can support a variety of activities throughout the day/seasons?

"It is so clear that parks provide amazing benefits to everyone: the young, the old, the rich, the poor; but nevertheless funding for parks keeps getting cut.

Why is it that if a playground is broken the community is asked to go do some fundraising, but if there is a pothole on the road, it gets fixed? Is the pothole more important than the playground?"

- Gil Penalosa, Executive Director 8-80 Cities

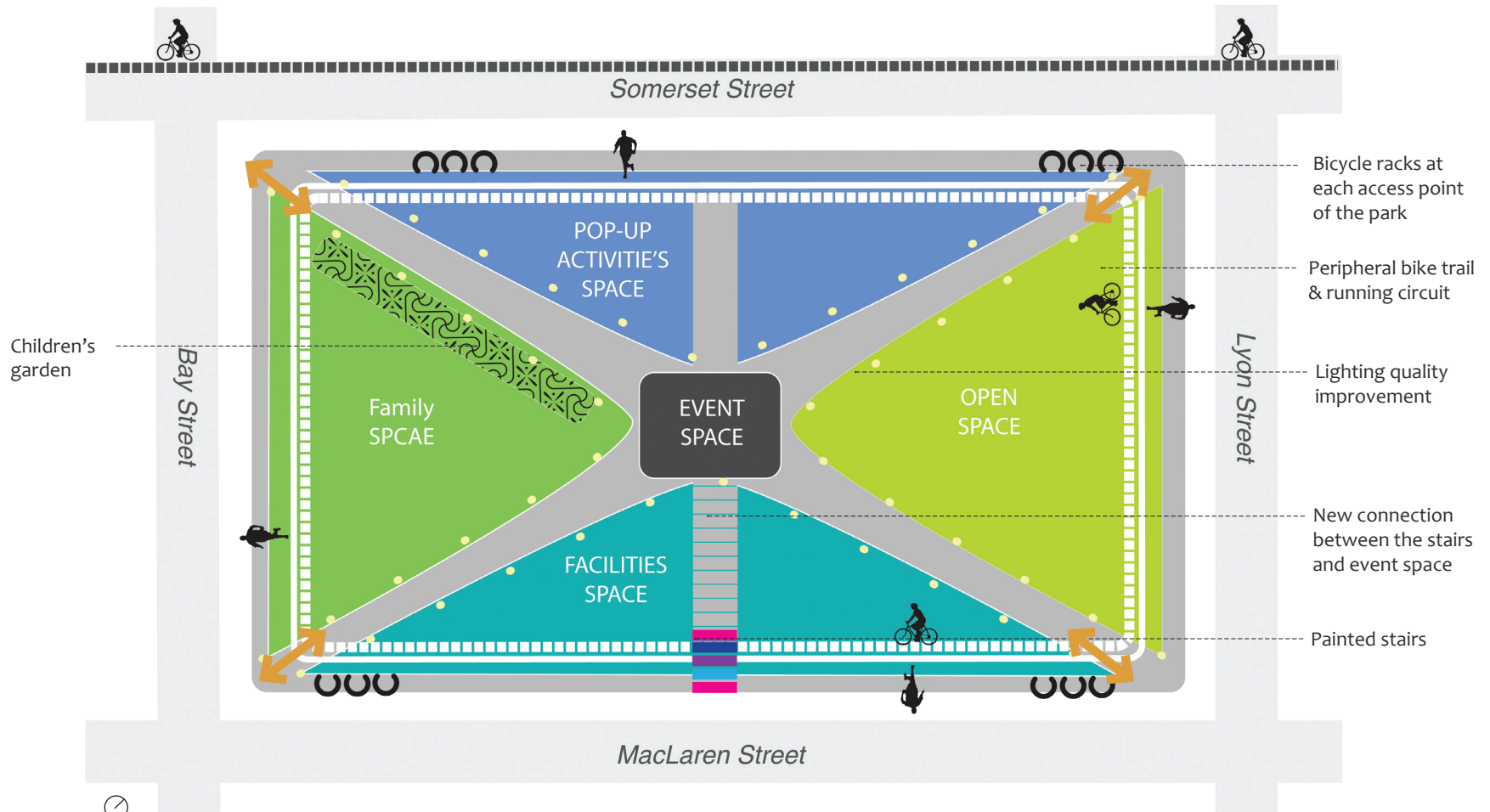


Zones, Improvements & Additions

While significant improvements can be achieved at Dundonald through programming and activities, physical improvements and investments in infrastructure need to be made if the park is to live up to its potential as a hub of community building and health.



Based on community recommendations, mapping activities, and site assessments, 8-80 Cities has developed a map for the park which identifies activity zones and specific areas for improvements and additions. Fixing broken and poorly maintained infrastructure should be an urgent priority for the city.

Lack of maintenance and disrepair sends the message that the park is neglected and uncared- for, which only encourages users to treat the park poorly. Basic maintenance, repairs and improvements, especially to the central area, should be completed within the next six months.





GATHERING SPACE

The Event Space is the central area of the park. It is used as a point of reference as well as a gathering spot for the community. It was identified as a priority area for significant improvement. See page 53-54 for more information.

-  Painting of benches
Community board & neighbourhood map
Repair or removal & replacement of broken site furniture
Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)
-  Interactive water feature
Electricity and water hook-ups
Improved surface treatment
Flexible group seating
Food & drink stand


FACILITIES SPACE

The facilities space has been identified as the best area for washrooms and community equipment such as a bake oven, barbecues or storage facility.

-  Painting of the southern stairs
Repair or removal & replacement of broken railing on stairs
Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)
-  Children's garden
Exercise equipment



PLAY SPACE

The play zone includes the children's playground. Community members identified it as a safe, dog-free active zone to encourage physical activity.

-  Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)


POP-UP ACTIVITIES SPACE

The Pop-up activities zone is a flexible zone capable of accommodating a wide range of activities such as yoga, a farmers market and community gatherings.

-  Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)
-  Addition of a pathway connecting the southern stairs and the gathering space,
Community bake oven, BBQ and/or bonfire facilities
Washrooms & storage facility


ENTRANCES

The six entrances that connect to the intersecting pathway system were seen as an opportunity to invite people into the park, and improve safe access.

-  Better maintenance of existing signage
More welcoming signage
Flowers & plants
Bicycle
Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)

OPEN SPACE

The open space area is a green space perceived as a relaxing, flexible zone.

-  Improved maintenance (waste pick-up, litter removal, fixing of broken infrastructure, snow removal)
Improved lighting (thoughtful lighting that improves both safety and ambiance)



Short term Improvements
(less than 1 year)



Longer-term Additions
(1-4 years)

Re-imagine Dundonald Park....

AN EXCITING, ACTIVE AND SAFE WINTER DESTINATION

Ottawa is known as a city that embraces winter, but 83% of people 8-80 Cities surveyed felt that Dundonald Park was not active in the winter. Creating parks and public spaces that are active and inviting year-round not only brings vibrancy to our communities, it's also important for our health.

1	Bringing Colour to the Park	Affordable interventions such as painting areas of the pavement and benches, and adding colorful banners or lights will help to brighten up the park in the winter. It's also a great way to get the community involved, and sends the message that the park is loved and cared for.
2	Informal Winter Activities	"Pop up" winter activities such as snow man making can be encouraged by setting a date with neighbours, gathering a few fun odds and ends (old hats, scarves, wigs and buttons) and spending the afternoon playing in the snow with friends and family.
3	Community Bake Oven	Following in the footsteps of Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto, a community bake oven is a great way to engage the community in all seasons, and was a popular idea among residents. Want to know more? See Pg. 57.
4	Improved Lighting	Good quality lighting is even more important in the winter months when the days are shorter. Currently the lighting in Dundonald is insufficient, especially along the pathways and central area. Creative lighting solutions should be considered that not only improve safety but also add to the ambiance of the park and minimize the impact on surrounding residents.
5	Formal Winter Activities	Ideas for winter park programming included snow-shoeing and cross-country ski lessons for children & newcomers. The City of Ottawa can help support these initiatives by making it easy for community groups to secure permits, and actively seek out partnerships with service providers.
6	Improved Maintenance	Improving maintenance of the pathways and central area is imperative to increasing winter usage. Paved areas should be consistently cleared of snow, ice and debris, and should be treated to prevent slips and falls.
7	Winter Festival	Just as Winterlude brings vibrancy to Ottawa, a winter festival at Dundonald Park will bring vibrancy to the Centretown neighbourhood. The idea of a winter festival to improve winter park usage was selected through the community action planning process and included ideas such as a snowman making competition, hot chocolate & roasted chestnut vendors, a park lighting celebration, and Chinese New Year activities.

“You need to create an exciting, active, safe space that entices people out of their homes.”

“Getting people off their couches, into the outdoors to move and meet neighbours takes effort.”

“During the winter, people tend to be less physically active and suffer a greater risk of social isolation, especially older adults.”



Re-imagine Dundonald Park....

A SAFE & ACCESSIBLE PLACE FOR COMMUNITY GATHERING

The paved central area of Dundonald Park is a natural gathering place. Unfortunately, community members identified it as an area of disrepair and a place that attracts negative behavior. Many community recommendations focused on improving the central area to create the “heart” of Dundonald park -- a vibrant, active, interesting and safe community gathering place.

1	Tables & Chairs	The tables and chairs that are currently in the central area of Dundonald Park are unattractive, uncomfortable and insufficient. Adding good quality, comfortable tables and chairs that can accommodate groups of various sizes is a critical improvement. Community members also expressed a strong interest in movable, bistro style chairs. See page 57 for more info.
2	Water Feature	Did you know that the NYC department of Parks and Recreation now includes water features at all new parks and playgrounds? Water features are a magnet for positive park activity and help people stay cool in the hot summer months. An interactive, multifunctional water feature that is attractive to all ages would be an excellent addition to the central area of the park.
3	Washroom & Storage Facility	Basic amenities such as a washroom and storage facility enable improved use of the park. Washrooms are necessary for people to stay for longer periods of time, especially older adults and children. A basic storage facility is useful for increased programming and maintenance to store items such as gardening equipment, tables & chairs, recreational equipment, cleaning & maintenance supplies, etc.
4	Children’s Garden	A children’s garden was a popular idea among project participants. Gardening helps to build flexibility and strength, teaches people about healthy food, brings colour to the park and helps to develop a sense of ownership and stewardship among gardeners.
5	Community Information	Finding ways to communicate with park users is an important step in building stewardship and a strong community connection to the park. A good quality community bulletin board can go a long way, and a neighbourhood map can be used to identifies local services (i.e. community centers, other green spaces, libraries and health centers) . Contact information for someone in charge of park management and maintenance should also be available.





IT'S BEEN DONE BEFORE! EXAMPLES FOR DUNDONALD PARK

➤ Bring colour to the park

Getting the community out to paint benches or areas of the pavement or pathways is a cost-effective way to bring colour and vibrancy to the park. Centretown residents suggested involving a local high school art class to paint picnic tables and make it an annual event. (fig. 8). Painting intersections around the park can also help to “extend the boundaries” of the park and sends the message that you are in a special area of the neighbourhood. (fig. 2)

➤ Building community with food

Dufferin Grove Park in Toronto is an excellent example of a place that uses food to build community. (fig. 1) One of the most popular features of the park is the two wood-burning community bake ovens. Built in 1995, the ovens are used to make bread for the farmers market, are available for public use on Thursday afternoons, and are the center of many community events and festivals. For more information on bakeovens, BBQs and bonfires, checkout “Cooking with Fire in Public” at <http://dufferinpark.ca/oven/pdf/cookingwithfire.PDF>

Montreal has recently undertaken a pilot project that helps to bring healthy food to downtown residents. Bike mounted carts, designed by a Université de Montréal student, deliver locally grown organic produce to parks, as well as local hospitals, which often have limited healthy food choices. (fig. 9)

1. Community bake oven, Dufferin Grove Park, Toronto.

2. Intersection painting, Portland, Oregon.

3. Outdoor exercise equipment, Huntingdonshire, UK.

4. Children's reading room, Bryant Park, NYC.

5. Moveable Chairs, Harvard University, Boston.

6. Signage at Carl Schurz Park, NYC

7. Sign at Union Square subway station, NYC.

8. Painted park benches, Plzen, Czech Republic.

9. Fruixi Bike mounted food cart, Montreal

Taking a Step Forward

➤ Flexible seating

Community members expressed an interest in flexible seating, like the bistro style tables and chairs used at Bryant Park. Movable tables and chairs have begun popping up in public spaces around Ontario, like at Kingston's Market Square and Dundas Square in Toronto. With proper management and storage capabilities, movable chairs could be an excellent addition to Dundonald Park's central gathering area. (fig. 4-6)

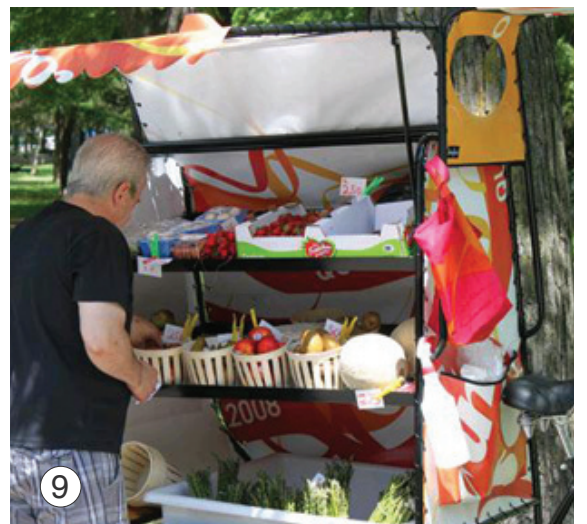
➤ Outdoor exercise equipment

Gaining popularity in parks across North America, outdoor fitness equipment is an easy way for cities to promote physical activity that is accessible and affordable. According to the Trust for Public Land, locating the equipment near playgrounds is a great way to encourage physical activity among parents. Providing basic signage about the benefits of physical activity and how to use the equipment can also encourage use. (fig. 3)

➤ Building a connection to the community

Could the City of Ottawa's Parks Department learn from this example at the New York City Subway? (fig. 7) Knowing that their passengers are the most in-touch with daily issues on the subway, NYC has taken a zealous approach to connecting with their users in order to provide a higher level of service and care.

The NYC Parks Department is also highly aware of the importance of positively communicating with the public about appropriate conduct and usage in parks. (fig. 6)



Key Recommendations

Remember the *Three Legged Stool*! The most effective management of of Dundonald Park will involve a balanced combination of elected officials, public sector staff and the local community. Much has already been done at Dundonald Park by individuals and community groups to animate and improve the park, through innovative programming and activities. The City has also made efforts to streamline the permitting process by making permits available directly from the councilor's office, however much more can still be done to improve Dundonald Park!

1 Maintenance

In the short term, the City of Ottawa should improve the overall maintenance of Dundonald Park and fix what is broken, such as site furniture and signage.

2 Programming

The City of Ottawa should continue to make it easier for community members to do programming that encourages physical activity and community building in the park by:

- Making the permitting process even more accessible and streamlined. Information about acquiring permits should be included on park signage, and online permits could be explored.
- Actively seeking out and formalizing partnerships with community groups and service providers to create sustainable change at Dundonald Park.

3 New management method

The City of Ottawa should move away from using cost recovery as criteria for successful management of the parks and recreation system and recognize the inherent benefit investments in high quality infrastructure, management and programming in parks and public spaces gives back to the city.

4 Community building

Formalize a Dundonald Park Working Group that has representation from the City of Ottawa, Centretown Community Health Centre, Friends of Dundonald Park, the City of Ottawa Police Department and other interested groups with the purpose of working collaboratively to implement the community-led recommendations, actions and visions of this report.

5 Improve safety

A particular priority, of the working group should be to establish a strategy to improve safety in the park. This approach should be a combination of animating and encouraging positive activities in the park, as well as a more direct approach to discouraging disruptive behaviors through a collective effort by both police and outreach workers.

6 Promote the park

Continue using social media such as Facebook & Twitter, as well as traditional media outlets, to inform the community about programming, activities and positive changes at Dundonald Park in order to continue building enthusiasm, participation and stewardship.

7 Improve facilities

Based on the recommendations in this report, the working group should undertake detailed planning and design for new infrastructure and facilities.



It's time to raise expectations

At 8-80 Cities, we couldn't tell you the number of times we've heard the phrase "we're worried about raising expectations". And, our response usually is "well, that's the whole idea". If we continue to have low expectations for our parks and public spaces, we will continue to have public spaces that are poorly managed, underfunded, and underused.

4. PLACE MAKING TOOLS

This section contains a variety of simple tools that can be used by the community to continue assessing and improving Dundonald Park.

We also hope the Make a Place for People Project at Dundonald Park will inspire other communities to use these tools to undertake developing community-led improvement strategies at other parks and public spaces accross the province.





Place Survey

Please circle the answer that best describes you.

Site: _____



1. Parks and public spaces contribute to my overall

Physical health	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Mental health	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

2. I visit this place...

Never	Once a year	2-5 times a year	More than 5 times a year	On a weekly basis	Every day
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If you answered "never" skip to question 4.

3. This place is...

Safe	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Comfortable	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Well used	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Accessible	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Well programmed (with events/activities)	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Active in the winter	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree

4. Gender: Male Female

5. Age: 0-12 13-18 19-34 35-50 51-65 65+



Public Space Observation Table

This tool can be used to assess the people and activities at any park or public space. By analyzing the data, you can begin to identify trends and build a picture of how the space is working.

[illegible]

Action Planning Instructions

Creating a doable plan is the key to turning an idea into reality. In your group come up with a plan for how your idea can be implemented within the next year or two.

The majority of your planning time should be spent on the HOW? question.

1. What?

In the space below briefly explain what your idea is.

2. Why?

Briefly explain why your idea is important.

3. Who?

Who needs to be involved in the project? What partnerships need to be established for it to be successful?

4. When?

When will it be implemented? When will it be used?
How frequently? What season? What day of the week? What hours?

5. Where?

On the map provided indicate where your idea will take place/be located

6. How?

Without writing anything down, take a few minutes to discuss as a group what needs to be done to implement your idea. After you have discussed your plan, try to break it down into manageable steps. It might be easiest to think in chunks of time, but it is up to you. You can add more steps if necessary, but try to limit yourselves to no more than 6 steps.

STEP 1


STEP 2


STEP 3





Share an Idea

One of the simplest ways to collect information about a park or public space is by asking community members to “share an idea”. Provide small sheets of paper and a bunch of colourful markers and let the ideas flow!

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 

Share an Idea 



Simple Site Evaluation Tool

When thinking about any park or public space, from a small neighbourhood square to a large urban park, ask yourself the questions below. By thinking carefully about how people will get to the place, what they'll do when they will get there, what kind of infrastructure there is, and who manages or takes care of the space, you can start to assess what's working, what's not, and what could be improved.

WHO TAKES CARE OF THIS PLACE?

Is there evidence of volunteerism?

Do you see any maintenance workers or staff?

Is there contact information so you can reach someone in charge of the space?

Is there an active or passive security presence?

HOW DID I GET HERE?

Is the place visible from a distance?

Is it accessible to wheelchairs and strollers?

Can you easily walk or bike to the place?

Is there a paved path?

Is the path clear of snow, debris, or water?

Are there "desire lines" or beaten paths?

WHAT'S THERE TO DO?

Is there a mix of stores and services nearby?

Are there opportunities for people to be physically active?

Are there inviting places for people to rest or relax?

Is there a diversity of people?

Are there activities for people of all ages?

WHAT'S HERE?

Are there comfortable places to sit?

What kind of lighting is there?

Is there a paved or gravel path?

Are there public washrooms? Are they clean and inviting?

Is there somewhere to get a snack or drink?



Software Program Calendar

Use this template to plan an effective range of activities, events and programming for your public space throughout the year.

Entertainment

Community building

Spontaneous activities

Formal activities



8-80 Cities is a non-profit organization based in Toronto, Canada. We are dedicated to contributing to the transformation of cities into places where people can walk, bike, access public transit and visit vibrant parks and public places.

Our approach is to engage communities at all levels and across multiple sectors to inspire the creation of cities that are easily accessible, safe and enjoyable for all.



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