

QTN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

QUEENSWAY TERRACE NORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Use of Park Spaces in QTN: Survey Results and Analysis

I. Introduction

QTN residents care deeply about the green spaces and parks in our neighborhood. That came through strongly in the 214 responses to a survey sponsored by the community association. The responses included desired uses, suggestions for improvements, and concerns. These will inform further discussions within QTN and with City parks officials and our City Councillor.

There are some common themes through all sections of the survey. Following are three areas for further attention. These will form the basis for an on-line forum and other discussions with City parks officials and Councillor Theresa Kavanaugh:

1. Preserve, protect, and manage well the wooded areas and other green spaces within QTN. Residents expressed as a high priority keeping all the current wooded and green spaces, following the loss of significant green space for the Phase 2 LRT expansion. Concerns were expressed about:
 - the impact of intensification for green space and use of parks;
 - how diseased trees are managed and fostering new growth to replace dying trees;
 - maintenance of walking paths;
 - dumping yard waste into the wooded areas, garbage, and dog droppings; and
 - tensions between dogs, children, walkers, cyclists on wooded paths.
2. Provide a greater diversity of recreational opportunities and casual ways to enjoy the green spaces in our neighborhood. Issues for further discussion include:
 - more creative, accessible, and flexible play spaces for all ages
 - adding splash pad and other water play to wading pool
 - spaces for other sports such as soccer, pickle ball, volleyball, etc.
 - shaded places to rest and well-maintained walking paths
 - access to public washrooms when the building is not open
 - more activities that bring the community together
 - improved accessibility to and within Frank Ryan Park
3. Find a way to accommodate differing views about dogs in parks and green spaces.
 - Residents voiced strong, differing views about the increased presence of off-leash dogs throughout our parks. The loss of the off-leash area in Connaught Park has increased tensions in other park areas. Various views are described in the section on concerns below.



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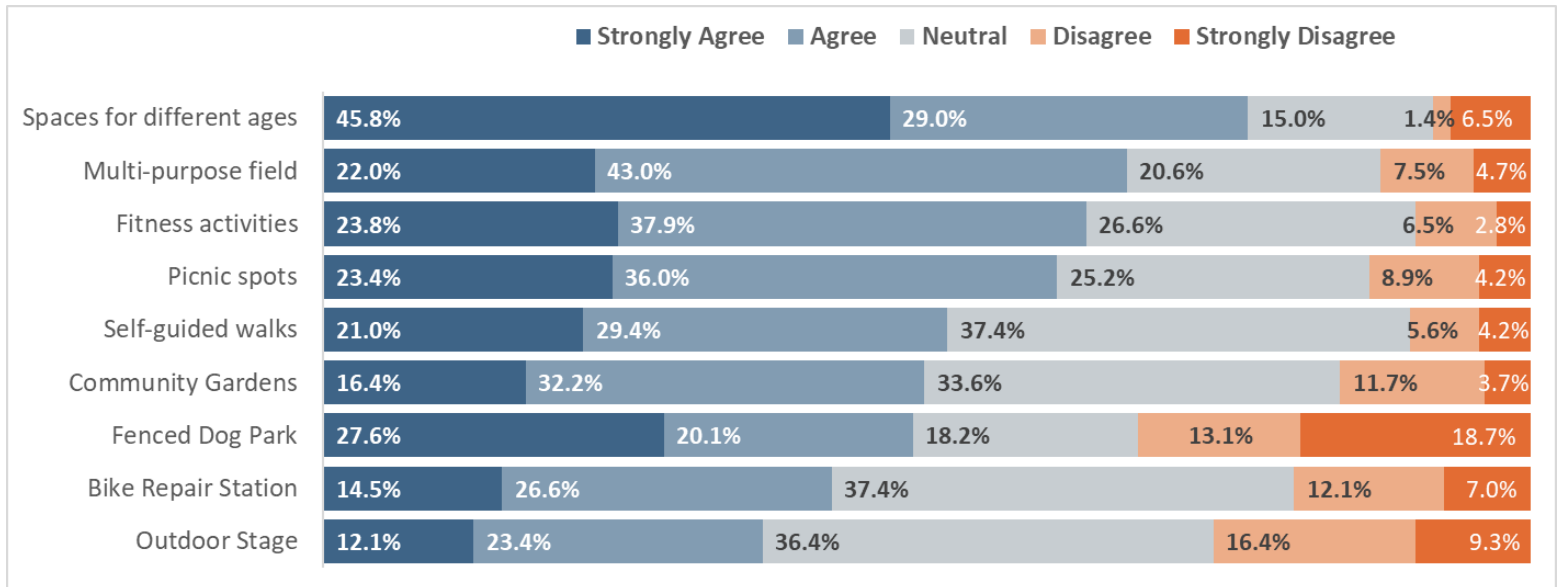
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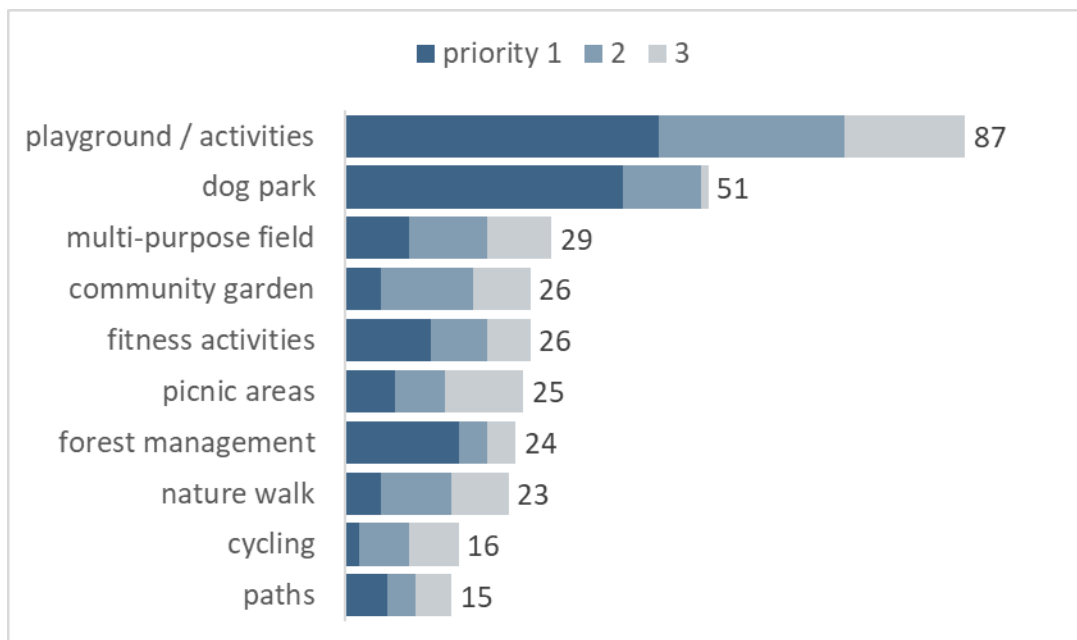
II. Support for Suggested Uses

The following chart indicates the level of support by respondents for various uses that have been suggested in the past (N = 214).



III. Priorities

The survey invited residents to write down their top 3 priorities. 75% of respondents chose to do so (160 of 214 responses). Here are the top 10 named priorities:



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IV. Suggestions

54% of respondents used the suggestion section to provide additional details on their priorities as well as providing new suggestions (115 of 214 responses). Below are the strongest messages in this section (detailed lists available on request):

For the **playground**, several respondents suggested more focus on creative play; flexible, natural materials; splash pads and water play; and features that appeal to different age groups.

Spaces for a **greater variety of sports** also drew numerous suggestions, from a pickle ball court and soccer field to a skateboard park and an upgraded basketball court. Keeping the toboggan hill was highlighted by some, along with upgrading rinks for both hockey and skating for the winter.

Preservation and enhancement of treed areas in Frank Ryan and Elmhurst parks, already established as a high priority for QTN, drew more specific suggestions, from adding wood chips to paths in Frank Ryan Park to improved walking trails and adding birdhouses. Leaving spaces as natural as possible was suggested by several respondents.

More casual uses were suggested, such as rest spots and benches, as well as restoring or replacing the outside exercise trail and space for yoga. Suggestions for **activities** included adult social hour, outdoor stage events, and strong support for an indoor gathering space that could be used for a variety of purposes. Common to these uses was a repeated suggestion for access to a **public washroom** even when the building is closed.

Lighting, safety, accessibility, and bilingual signage were all highlighted as areas for more specific attention.

All the suggestions are recorded and will be used to inform more detailed discussions about plans for park spaces in QTN. Some suggestions can be pursued by QTN itself or by volunteers within the community. Others need to be pursued with the City of Ottawa, as part of City plans for these parks.

V. Concerns

68% of respondents shared one or more concerns about park uses (146 of 214 responses). All of the concerns will be used to inform more detailed discussions. The following are some of the most common concerns:

- **Preservation and management of wooded areas and other green spaces**
43 respondents named concerns about losing green space and a need for improved management of the wooded areas to ensure their preservation, to encourage new growth to replace the removal of diseased trees, and to maintain paths for informal walks through natural spaces. While there are different views on how fallen trees should be managed and how to best combine preservation and walking paths, the over-riding concern is an



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intentional, well-developed plan for their maintenance. The QTN Community Association has already starting discussions on this matter and will facilitate further discussions so that residents can also be informed and contribute to the long-term preservation of these treasured parts of our neighborhood.

- **Dogs in the Parks**

There is no consensus and there are strong views about the increased presence of off-leash dogs in Frank Ryan and Elmhurst parks – due in part to the temporary loss of a designated off-leash area in Connaught Park during Stage 2 LRT construction. Below is a summary of the range of views expressed by 41 respondents, for the purpose of facilitating further discussion and resolution of competing desires.

7 respondents expressed support for designating an off-leash area, including the option of a fenced area. 1 respondent expressed concern that Elmhurst might be declared on-leash only. Several stated that the off-leash area in Connaught Park should be re-established when the LRT project is finished.

21 respondents expressed opposition and/or significant concerns about what they are seeing as current trends. Among the concerns are the following:

- Off-leash dogs frighten children, should not be in areas where children gather; some expressed that priority must be given to children and other human uses of limited park space in QTN.
- Excessive presence of off-leash dogs in Frank Ryan Park and sometimes out-of-control;
- Questions and concerns about off-leash dogs on trails in Elmhurst and Frank Ryan Park;
- Concerns that providing an off-leash area will result in more dog waste left behind and more traffic as an off-leash dog area will attract users from a wider area.

13 respondents expressed mixed views, a need for greater clarity, and support for some form of accommodation; concerns and suggestions included:

- Clarification needed about off-leash dog use in wooded areas, especially Elmhurst and Frank Ryan areas.
- Without a designated area, off-leash dogs are everywhere, which is less safe for other users and is leading to increased dog waste all through the parks; better to have clear spots for families and designated spots for dogs.
- Support for a designated off-leash area, but not fenced, to have space where dogs are expected and space where those who don't want dogs can go
- A fenced in dog park would limit presence to a limited space; off-leash outside of a fenced area is not responsible – dogs are often out of control
- A designated dog park will reduce use of already limited space; intensification requires more rather than less space for various human uses of parks.



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- **Accessibility Issues and Conflicts between Users**
 - Accessibility to Frank Ryan Park was named in both suggestions and concerns, including barriers on the south side for strollers, wheelchairs, or walkers; curbs at intersection of paths and streets; and safety of some paths for persons who have difficulty walking.
 - Increased biking through wooded areas is becoming excessive; unsafe for walkers
 - Speeding bikers on narrow paths in Connaught are danger for walkers; and
 - Narrow paths in Connaught Park, e.g., along Pinecrest Creek.
- **Baseball Diamonds and Greater Diversity of Uses**

4 respondents expressed concerns about the baseball diamonds, including:

 - Baseball diamonds can't be used for other sports because of gravel; change some to allow soccer, volleyball, or other sports.
 - Small baseball diamond is not used – should be modified for other sports
 - Eliminate baseball diamond at Connaught and 1 at Frank Ryan Park to allow space for other recreational activities.
- **Miscellaneous concerns and comments**
 - More shady spots, with benches for rest. Some expressed concern that picnic tables might invite loitering and late-night uses. Others favoured small picnic tables for small groups but not large gatherings.
 - Remove non-native plants growing in Frank Ryan Park to encourage long-term health.
 - Spread out uses, some more active uses in restored Connaught, and keep Elmhurst more natural.

Finally, one respondent suggested restoring the exercise park and naming it “after an Olympian who came out of this neighborhood.”

