



Thornhill SNAP Signature Projects Engagement Summaries

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SNAP Project Design Principles - Connected People, Places and Ecosystems:

- **Connect:** greenspace, institutions and destinations, elderly & youth, MUR & SFH, North & South, nature in public and private land
- **Increase** tree canopy, shade cover and places to sit
- **Improve** walkability and bikeability
- **Incorporate** multi-age, multi-season opportunities, art installations and cultural events
- **Encourage** contact with nature and environmental learning, community building and community participation
- **Prioritize** safety
- **Celebrate** historical heritage



SNAP Sustainability Framework

Gallanough Park Engagement Summary

Date: Wednesday July 29, 2020

Attendees: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) staff, City of Vaughan staff, residents and stakeholders of the Thornhill SNAP neighbourhood.

Purpose: To bring the community and partners together to co-develop a shared vision for Gallanough Park within the neighbourhood.

Objectives:

- Provide an update on the progress of Thornhill SNAP, highlight feedback received related to the signature project (Gallanough Park) and a high-level update on City plans related to cycling facilities and other improvements.
- To inspire participants with precedent images and project overviews of other innovative street projects (locally and from around the world).
- To brainstorm ideas or solutions that could be implemented in Gallanough Park to help us achieve the project design principles.
- Discuss ideas/thoughts related to potential innovative implementation partners

Outcomes

Outcomes from this workshop will be integrated into the broader action planning process to create the Thornhill SNAP. The following summarizes the overarching trends and comments received during the breakout group brainstorms and chat logs.

General Suggestions and Comments

- Features chosen to be implemented should focus on a few key areas/spaces as it is a small park.
- Residents are looking for a more traditional, family-oriented park for local events and activities.
- There is a need for the park to be promoted/showcased more broadly in the community (people don't know about it and it is currently underutilized).
- Washroom facilities are a high priority.

Trails

A common theme throughout the discussion included creating trails that are interesting for pedestrians and that travel throughout the park, not just around the park. Specific suggestions included:

- Aligning seating and shade along the trails, take advantage of existing areas under the trees for more seating, existing gazebo not big enough, use permeable pavers/asphalt for trails.
- Extending trails through/along the edge of the forest area to create trail loop around the park.
- Extending trails through open area to expand existing trail network.
- Connect trail out to Yonge with trail on the north side of soccer courts.

Playground / Activity Features

There were many suggestions for features that could be added to the park, however, the overall trend in responses suggest that a more naturalized play area with climbing

features and a variety of activities/textures to challenge kids physically, would be beneficial. Specific suggestions included:

- Keeping swings or provide a similar type that doesn't limit ability to go high.
- Incorporating spaces that will be attractive to teens and something active for adults/seniors to do.
- Multiple play areas for different-aged kids, could be on different levels with zipline or slide to connect them, keep in close proximity so parents with more than one child can see all play areas, look for alternatives to sand for the base.
- Need more play equipment to accommodate number of children who are often in the park.
- Enhancing winter activities, such as sledding, that currently occur in the park. Existing low area should be maintained at bottom of toboggan hill.

Programming Ideas

Discussions regarding programming in the park revealed that many residents would like small, community-oriented programs to occur. The park is too small for large events and there is an issue with parking and washroom access in the area. Specific suggestions included:

- Incorporating the historic Arnold House, Indigenous heritage and potential Spring Farm history into programming.
- Partnering with the Gallanough Resource Center and better utilizing the outdoor amphitheater for small events (music, guest lecturers, readings and incorporating Indigenous perspectives; add more natural levels/seating to grass area of amphitheater to improve safety because so steep). Also look to utilize existing patio space better (outdoor games tables, pergola for shade, etc., reinstate entrance to Resource Centre at this location).

Additional Comments from Participants

- Maximizing opportunities to add seating/shade, native plants/pollinator gardens, permeable surfaces, safety features, wildlife features (bees, birds, bats).
- More trees in southeast corner to provide visual barrier.
- Incorporating amenities/features for dog walkers that use the park.
- Incorporating art (possibly incorporate interactive art piece that relates to the preferred stormwater feature).

Information on related City Projects

Stormwater management improvements at Gallanough Park and Surrounding Area:

For more information and how to get in touch with the project manager, please visit the [Gallanough Project Webpage](#) or visit vaughan.ca and search "Gallanough Park and Surrounding Area".

Questions or comments can also be directed to: Gallanough@resilientconsulting.ca.

Off-Leash Dog Area Strategy:

For more information please visit vaughan.ca/DogPark. Questions or comments can also be directed to: michael.habib@vaughan.ca.

Questions and Answers from Workshop

1. **Could the high energy consumption in this neighbourhood relate to the Sabbath mode appliances that are left on - crock pots, hot plates, water urns?**

High energy use in the Thornhill SNAP neighbourhood is being explored. Through the Residential Retrofit Program, the SNAP team will gain a better understanding of when and how residents are using electricity.

2. Are there any First Nations community members who are living in this SNAP area?

The SNAP team is unaware of any First Nations members living in the SNAP neighbourhood, however the team is having separate meetings with First Nations to gather their input into the project.

3. Are there any bats left in Vaughan/Thornhill SNAP neighbourhood?

In terms of bats specifically at Gallanough Park, TRCA staff indicated that it would be unlikely that they would have a maternity roost in the park, but they may be there feeding during the night. They prefer to be closer to forest and water sources (wetlands, rivers, lakes). The Toronto Zoo bat conservation program is a good resource for anyone interested in learning about bats in Ontario: <http://www.torontozoo.com/bats>

York Hill Park Engagement Summary

Date: Wednesday September 2, 2020

Attendees: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) staff, City of Vaughan (COV) staff, residents and stakeholders of the Thornhill SNAP neighbourhood.

Purpose: To bring the community and partners together to co-develop a shared vision for York Hill District Park in the neighbourhood.

Objectives:

- Provide an update on the progress of Thornhill SNAP, highlight feedback received to date related to the signature project (York Hill Park) and provide a high-level update on City plans related to planned renovations at Garnet A Williams Community Centre.
- To inspire participants with precedent images and project overviews of other innovative projects (locally and from around the world). Guest presentation on Edithvale Park, Schollen and Company.
- To brainstorm ideas or solutions that could be implemented in York Hill Park to help us achieve the SNAP design principles.
- Discuss ideas/thoughts related to potential innovative implementation partners

Outcomes

Outcomes from this workshop will be integrated into the broader action planning process to create the Thornhill SNAP. The following summarizes the overarching trends and comments received during the breakout group brainstorms and chat logs.

Themes that emerged from the discussions:

1. Access and Connectivity

- Improve connections to surrounding facilities and increase awareness of access points into park (e.g. more wayfinding throughout park and signage at entrance locations from surrounding residential subdivisions).
- Access from Clark Ave is through community centre parking lot, wouldn't know the park is there unless familiar with area – plant more trees or make trail from Clark Ave into the park, include local art or sculptures and signage along the way.
- Improve connection and entrance on the East side.

2. Multi-age and Physical activities

- Encourage physical activities for different age groups with programmed use in the park.
- Accessible and multi-use playgrounds integrated together for all ages (i.e. playing card tables for seniors) and ability for caregivers/parents to supervise multi ages at once in playground area.
- Washrooms or access to publicly available facilities nearby would be important for creating an age-friendly park.

3. Incorporate a Focal Feature

- Interest in a fire pit or pizza oven.
- Different elevations for variety and landscaping.
- Group seating with shade, tranquil space for those without kids.

- Add water feature in the amphitheater – different from splash pad, as an activity for older kids.
 - Create opportunities for emerging artists and talent in Thornhill. Using amphitheater or another space to honour and showcase the arts.
- 4. Multi-use Pathways**
- Expand existing pathways to be multi-use (i.e. pedestrians, bikes, strollers). One side for cyclists and one side for pedestrians – increase safety because currently there is some conflict between different user groups.
 - Provide walking continuity or zones of use. Extend pathways into loop.
- 5. Increase Educational Function**
- Plant more gardens or trees with indicators so that school groups and kids can use in learning; nature class in the park.
 - Incorporate historical facts and self-guided tours.
 - Highlight First Nations where the park resides.
 - Add education about SWM near any water features.
- 6. Local and Fresh Food**
- Community gardens can provide educational opportunity for nutrition programming, can tie into outdoor firepit. Also partner with vendor from Farmers markets.
 - More accessible markets that offer fresh produce on a regular basis.
 - Planting fruit trees in the park.
 - Farmers market by the parking lot.
- 7. Innovative Partners**
- York Region Food Network (manage community garden behind Firehall 7-1).
 - Joint gardening project for a native garden, could be tended by the York Hill ES and the Catholic School, together.
 - DANI (Developing and Nurturing Independence) located nearby. They have a greenhouse that could perhaps be of use in a gardening partnership.
 - Youth groups.
 - Organized groups such as schools and parent-teacher groups.
 - Unorganized groups – create some sort of partnership so that these groups can use the space without paying for permit.

Information on related City Projects

Garnet A Williams Community Centre Major Renovation:

For more information and how to get in touch with the project manager, please visit the [project web page](http://vaughan.ca/GAWCC) (vaughan.ca/GAWCC).

Questions or comments can also be directed to: Tiffany Szeto, Project Manager – tiffany.szeto@vaughan.ca

Questions and Answers from Workshop

- 1. What budget was available for the Edithvale Park?**
Approximately \$4million in total, but that would likely be closer to an \$8million project today.
- 2. What are the opportunities for winter activities in the park?**
Our area does not have reliable snow coverage, so hard to incorporate show-shoeing or cross-country skiing. It is also difficult to maintain dedicated pathways for cross-country

ski trails because of multi-users in the park who use trails for other purposes. Introducing topography of any sort creates unofficial “tobogganing hills” without naming them as such – this presents an opportunity for kid activities in the winter. In addition, having a place to warm up is beneficial to draw people to park (seeing a shift to natural gas fireplaces, reduced hazards of real firepit and a reliable source of heat). Thinking of our microclimate, any mitigations/barriers towards wind is also beneficial. *Please note this response was provided by Mark Schollen, Schollen and Company, based on his experience in park planning.*

3. Is there work being made to address stormwater management/flooding issues?

Yes, the City is looking into how to best address the flooding in the park.

4. What is meant by “District Park”?

A District park is typically 5 hectares in size and larger than Neighbourhood parks. They support a variety of recreational and athletic interests with amenities, such as sports fields and courts, large skateboard parks, outdoor skating facilities, field houses, picnic shelters, off-leash dog areas and water play facilities. District parks are co-located with Community Centres, where possible.

Complete Streets Engagement Summary

Date: Wednesday July 22, 2020

Attendees: Toronto and Region Conservation Authority staff, City of Vaughan staff, residents and stakeholders of the Thornhill SNAP community.

Purpose: To bring the community and partners together to co-develop a shared vision for complete streets within the neighbourhood.

Objectives:

- Provide an update on the progress of Thornhill SNAP, highlight feedback received related to the signature streets (Atkinson, Hilda and Centre) and a high-level update on City plans related to cycling facilities and other improvements.
- To inspire participants with precedent images and project overviews of other innovative street projects (locally and from around the world).
- To gain a better understanding of how the community feels about the streets now, what's working and what's not and to gain an understanding of participant priorities for the future.
- Discuss ideas/thoughts related to potential innovative implementation partners.

Outcomes

Outcomes from this workshop will be integrated into the broader action planning process to create the Thornhill SNAP Action Plan. The following summarizes the overarching trends and comments received at the workshop.

General Suggestions

- Consider all ages and abilities when improving the local streetscapes.
- Add art and colour to the community and create streets that are “explorable” as destinations.
- Reviving or develop new programming to optimize existing destinations along these streets including Oakbank Pond Park, McDonald House and the Heritage Conservation District.
- Consider maintenance of any infrastructure before implementation to ensure an appropriate level of service is possible.

Pedestrians

Safety and wayfinding were the two main themes that were discussed during the pedestrian section of the brainstorm. Specific suggestions included:

- Redesigning some of the intersections in the neighbourhood to allow for drivers to see pedestrians better and reduce pedestrian-vehicle collisions.
- Developing educational programming for all user types (cyclists, pedestrians, and drivers).
- Integrating considerations for the visually impaired through signage and sidewalk/infrastructure design elements.
- Incorporating wayfinding and informational signage in public spaces to showcase natural and cultural stories of the area and to encourage people to explore the neighbourhood.
- Providing more shade and seating for pedestrians.

Cyclists

A large part of the discussion around cyclists was coordinating transit routes with cycling routes and making transit stops and buses more user/bike friendly. Specific suggestions included:

- Installing better wayfinding signs and signage on how to use the bike racks at the front of buses.
- Increasing the rest stops along routes and providing areas for cyclists to lock up bikes.
- Providing and enforcing education for all users regarding rules for road, new cycling facilities and sidewalks.

Drivers

A short discussion on drivers revealed that traffic calming measures may be useful at some locations. Several intersections were identified where improvements would be helpful. Specific suggestions included:

- Installing roundabouts to help with traffic flow and reduce idling, and the roundabout could be an opportunity to introduce art, plantings, colour into the streetscape.
- Investigating the location of existing signage on streets, as they are sometimes hard to see for drivers
- Providing education regarding rules of road.

Transit Users

Similar to the above discussions, signage and wayfinding was brought up as an obstacle to transit users. Signs should clearly identify transit information and more wayfinding signage would help users identify nearby amenities and/or other transit routes. Other specific suggestions included:

- Adding shade structures, benches, emergency features and shelters near bus stops.
- Increasing the frequency of buses to provide more options to riders.
- Investigating the coordination of fares for different transit systems

Information on related City Projects

For more information about the Clark Avenue Project and how to get in touch with the project manager, please visit <https://vaughan.ca/clarkave>.

Questions or comments can also be directed to: john.thompson@vaughan.ca

General walking and cycling questions and those related to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan can be directed to: IPCAM@vaughan.ca

Questions and Answers from Workshop

Below are questions that were received in the chat box during the workshop.

- 1. What is the maintenance plan for Clark Ave cycling facilities i.e. snow removal?**
Once the cycling facilities along Clark Avenue are installed, the City's Transportation and Fleet Management Services department takes over maintenance. The cycling facilities will be maintained in the winter.
- 2. Do any off-leash dog areas exist in Vaughan?**
There is one off-leash dog park in Vaughan, located at Concord/Thornhill Regional Park (299 Racco Pkwy). In response to interest identified by the community, Vaughan started a Local Off-Leash Dog Areas Strategy to define a process for developing local off-leash dog areas. For more information, please visit vaughan.ca/DogPark.

Questions or comments can also be directed to: michael.habib@vaughan.ca

3. Are there any cycling repair shops along the SNAP boundary?

The known bicycle repair shops in Vaughan are the following:

- Bike Medic - <https://www.facebook.com/BIKEMEDICVAUGHAN/> (Bathurst St and Highway 7)
- Giant Vaughan - <http://www.giantvaughan.com/ca> (Keele St and Highway 7)
- Cyclepath - <http://www.cyclepathbikes.com/> (Weston Rd and Highway 7)

SNAP offers the opportunity to explore innovative solutions along cycling facilities, such as public bicycle repair stations/stands.

4. How else can I get involved with the SNAP project other than attending these meetings?

If you are interested in volunteering with the Thornhill SNAP and/or getting involved with SNAP implementation, please email patricia.lewis@trca.ca.