

# October 27th 2022: Design Concepts Workshop Summary Report



# Background

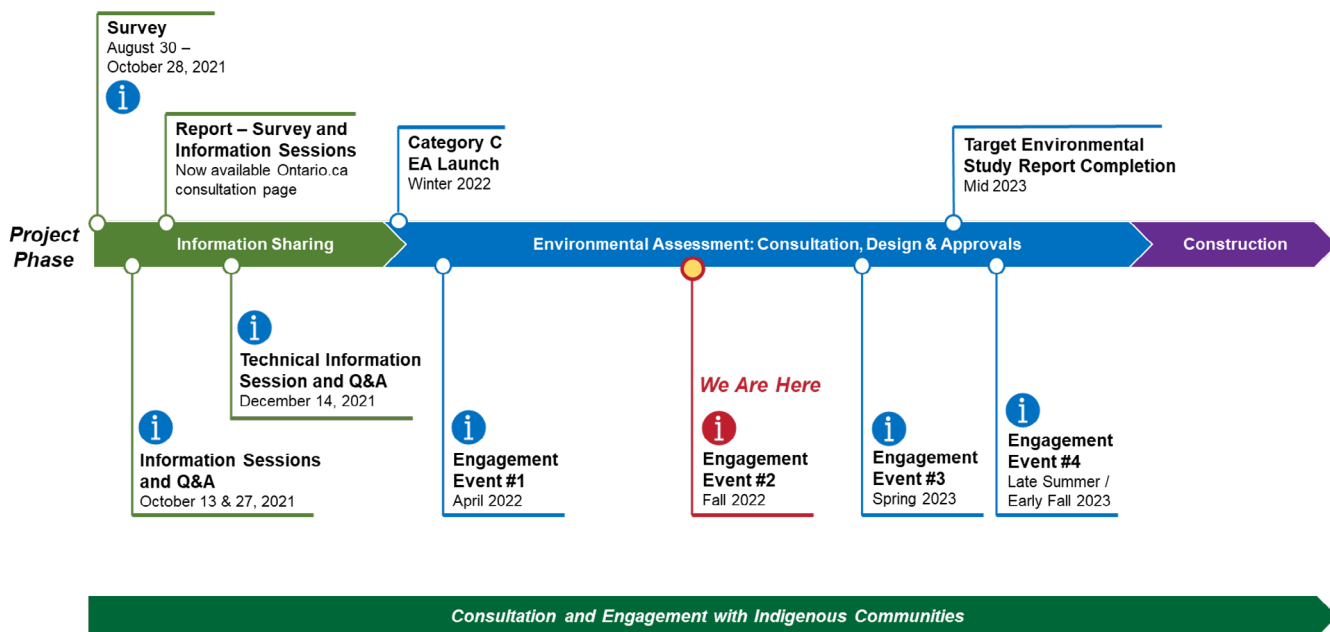
The Ontario government is bringing Ontario Place back to life, making it a remarkable world-class, year-round destination that will include family-friendly entertainment, public and event spaces, parkland, and waterfront access. Ontario Place will provide people of all ages with something to enjoy, including enhanced public spaces, increased access to the waterfront, beach, pools, health and wellness services, as well as an indoor-outdoor live music and performance venue.

As part of making the site redevelopment-ready, the government is undertaking a Category C Class Environmental Assessment (EA) for the government-led site-servicing updates and design and development of the public realm. On March 16, 2022, a Category C EA was launched with a Notice of Commencement posted on the Environmental Registry of Ontario and the Ontario Place project website ([EngageOntarioPlace.ca](https://engageontarioplace.ca)). As part of the EA process, the government is engaging with the public, Indigenous communities, and stakeholders to ensure their perspectives are recognized and considered in the EA and public realm design process. The government will continue to seek input from Indigenous communities, the public and stakeholders and work with the City of Toronto to bring this site back to life.

The second of four public consultation events as part of the EA and public realm design process for Ontario Place was held on October 27, 2022.

# Overview

Between April 2022 and Spring 2023, a series of public consultation events will be held where the public can learn more about and provide input on design of the public spaces and the Environmental Assessment process for Ontario Place:



On October 27, 2022, members of the public joined a two-hour public consultation event hosted on Zoom that focused on Ontario Place's public realm. The goals of the session were to (1) share information and project updates on the Ontario Place redevelopment, (2) engage with members of the public as part of the Category C EA process, and (3) receive public feedback on preliminary design concepts for the public realm.

The virtual event was facilitated by Bespoke Collective, and presenters included speakers from Bespoke Collective, technical consultants Jacobs, and public realm consultants LandInc, Martha Schwartz Partners and Urban Strategies Inc. The feedback collected from the event will inform the work of technical consultants Jacobs who are leading the EA, and the public realm consultants LANDinc and Martha Schwartz Partners, on behalf of Infrastructure Ontario (IO) and the Ministry of Infrastructure (MOI).

## Attendance

700 registered for the event, with 247 members of the public in attendance and about 47 government and consultant partners joining.

## Design concepts workshop agenda

The following agenda was used for the two-hour public consultation event:

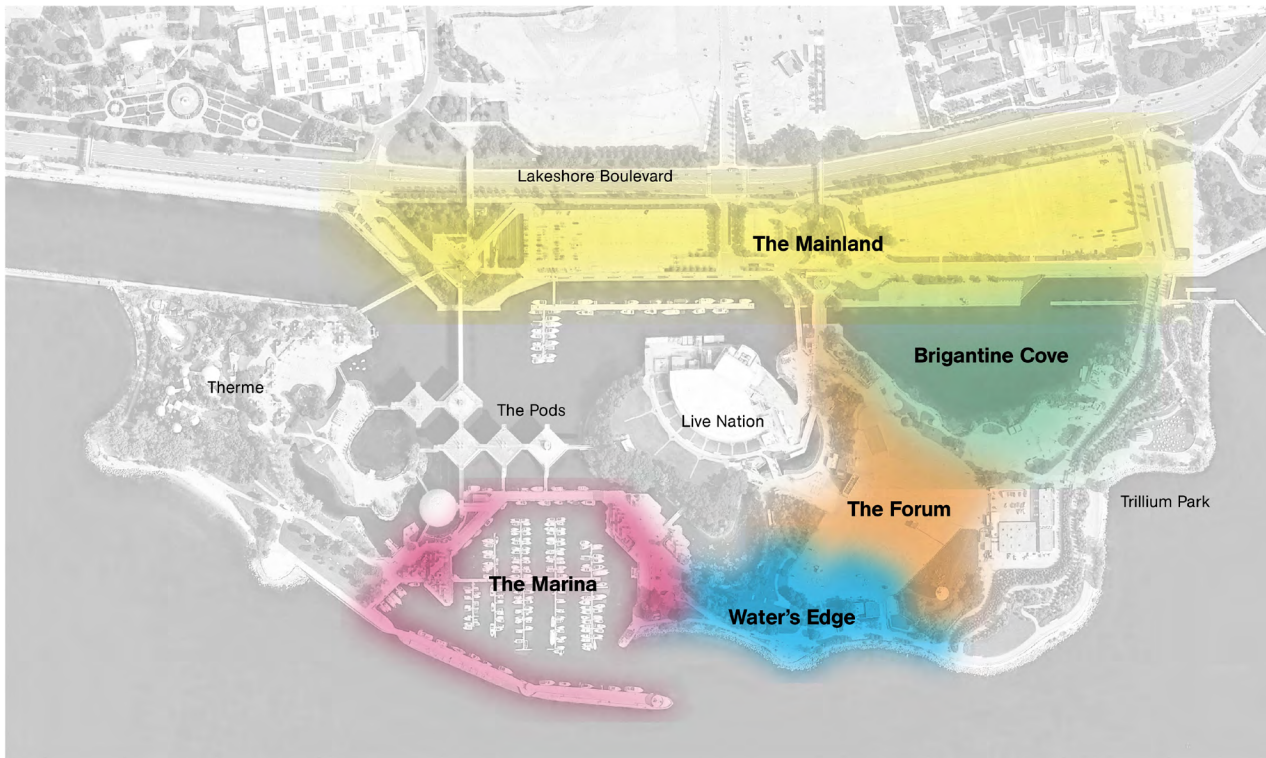
1. **Setup** (5 min.): The host provided land acknowledgments and outlined the agenda for the session.
2. **Project Updates** (10 min.): Participants were informed about the public consultation process, the Category C Class Environmental Assessment and the design of the public realm.
3. **A Bold New Vision** (10 min.): The vision for Ontario Place was shared with participants, including the government's intention to recognize and celebrate the legacy of Ontario Place while expanding and improving waterfront access, parkland and free public spaces.
4. **Environmental Assessment Overview** (10 min.): A general overview of the Environmental Assessment process that highlighted the primary objectives and public engagement process of the Category C Environmental Assessment was provided to participants.
5. **Design Concepts Workshop** (75 min.): Participants were introduced to the methodology and format of the breakout sessions, and instructed on how to provide feedback on the public realm design concepts.
6. **Wrap Up and Next Steps** (10 min.): The session closed with an outline of next steps and informed attendees that additional feedback on the design concepts and the Environmental Assessment evaluation can be provided through the Virtual Public Engagement Room.

# Facilitation approach for the design concepts workshop

Preliminary design concepts were shared for five zones within the public realm:

- **Zone 1:** The Water's Edge
- **Zone 2:** The Marina
- **Zone 3:** Brigantine Cove
- **Zone 4:** The Mainland
- **Zone 5:** The Forum

Participants were provided information on all five zones in Ontario Place, outlining the geographic area, the issues and opportunities for the designs, and two proposed design concepts for each zone. Participants were then directed to one of 15 breakout rooms for three 15-minute breakout sessions where they provided input on the presented design concepts verbally or by using the chat feature. Each group consisted of a facilitator and a note-taker from the project team who guided conversations and recorded public feedback. Subject matter experts from IO and consultant design teams were also scattered throughout breakout rooms to help answer project-related questions.



During the breakout sessions, facilitators asked members of the public what features of the proposed design concepts were of interest to them, and if they had other ideas that they would like to see in each of the five zones. The primary aim of the workshop was to obtain public impressions, input and ideas, which will be used to inform the next phase of the public realm design.

The consultation approach for the virtual event was informed by public input from the previous consultation events held on December 14, 2021 and April 12, 2022. When asked in December 2021 about public consultation preferences, participants stated that they wanted digital participation and the opportunity to participate in small groups.

## Key findings

Please note that these key findings capture both the public’s perspectives as shared in breakout group conversations, as well as in the written comments submitted in the chat. The comments documented in this report are focused on public realm feedback related to the current scope of work. This synthesis reflects a long list of key findings that emerged across 15 breakout groups. Feedback has been organized by zone and in the order that zones were discussed during a sequence of three breakout sessions focused first on Zones 1 and 2, then Zones 3 and 4 and finally Zone 5. More general comments and topics of interest have also been documented.

### Zone 1: The Water’s Edge

<b>Concept A: Stone Lookouts</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stone lookouts</li> <li>• Seating</li> <li>• Direct access to water</li> <li>• Flood protection</li> <li>• Hough lookout design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety concerns with stone lookouts</li> <li>• Inaccessible for people with accessibility and mobility needs</li> <li>• No mention of swimming access</li> <li>• Need to clarify intended use of walkway</li> <li>• Overcrowding</li> </ul>

<b>Concept B: Planted Piers</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised shoreline</li> <li>• Boardwalk</li> <li>• Emphasis on natural environment and nature conservation</li> <li>• Planted edges</li> <li>• Quiet and calm atmosphere</li> <li>• Safe access to water</li> <li>• Soft landscaping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of direct access to water</li> <li>• Lack of seating</li> <li>• Inaccessible for people with disabilities or mobility issues</li> <li>• No mention of swimming access</li> <li>• Narrow pedestrian paths</li> </ul>

<b>Longlist of Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain public access</li> <li>• Safe and direct access to water, e.g. ladders</li> <li>• Seating with shade and shelter</li> <li>• Child-friendly landscape and design</li> <li>• Safe and accessible design</li> <li>• More green spaces and plantings</li> <li>• Flat green spaces</li> <li>• Accessibility accommodations, e.g. handrails, ramps, etc.</li> <li>• Entry points into the water for swimming, kayaks, paddleboards, non-motorized watercrafts, etc.</li> <li>• Plantings</li> <li>• Expanded beach</li> <li>• Separated cycling paths</li> <li>• Cycling infrastructure, i.e. bike parking, bike share stations</li> <li>• Spaces for small group gatherings</li> <li>• Wildlife-friendly area</li> <li>• Maintain bird habitats and protection areas</li> <li>• Support presence of native species</li> <li>• Ability for public interaction with birds, wildlife and native plants</li> <li>• Year-round access to washrooms</li> <li>• Picnic tables/areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to swimming</li> <li>• Diving board</li> <li>• Educational programming and materials, e.g. swimming lessons, signage</li> <li>• Yoga</li> <li>• All-year activities</li> <li>• Winter activities</li> <li>• Youth activities, e.g. art, wildlife preservation</li> <li>• Storage and rentals for kayaks, paddleboards, etc.</li> <li>• Public art</li> <li>• Amphitheatre space</li> <li>• Community-owned gardens or urban farms</li> <li>• Winter-proof shoreline</li> <li>• Canopies</li> <li>• Address concern about impacts on the natural environment, wildlife, bird habitats and protection areas</li> <li>• Address concerns about changes to shoreline</li> <li>• Address concerns about water quality, sewage and unpleasant odour</li> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events</li> </ul>

## **Zone 2: The Marina**

<b>Concept A: Park Marina</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More green and public space</li> <li>• Less emphasis on commercial activities</li> <li>• Natural environment</li> <li>• Terraced seating</li> <li>• Open-air canopies</li> <li>• Pop-up event plaza</li> <li>• Wide public appeal</li> <li>• Quiet and calm atmosphere</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection process and the type of businesses and commercial tenants</li> </ul>

<b>Concept B: Ontario Port</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Plaza</li> <li>• Commercial opportunities along the water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration of activities may be inconsistent with other naturalized areas in Ontario Place</li> <li>• Too focused on commercial activity</li> <li>• Selection process and the type of businesses and commercial tenants. There was a particular concern about the selection of high-end retail and dining.</li> <li>• Commercial spaces may not appeal to a wide variety of people</li> </ul>

<b>Longlist of Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize public and non-commercial space</li> <li>• Direct access to water</li> <li>• Public access to dock</li> <li>• Allow space for visiting boats</li> <li>• Entry points into the water for kayaks, paddleboards, non-motorized watercrafts, etc.</li> <li>• Paths for kayaks and paddleboards</li> <li>• Integration with cycling paths</li> <li>• Bike racks/parking</li> <li>• Lockers and storage</li> <li>• Storage and rentals for kayaks, paddleboards, etc.</li> <li>• Year-round access to washrooms</li> <li>• Small food and beverage vendors and retail spaces</li> <li>• Well-lit public areas during evening hours</li> <li>• Connection to Trillium Park</li> <li>• Public event spaces</li> <li>• Entertainment, e.g. concerts, events</li> <li>• Focus on local talent for arts and entertainment programming</li> <li>• Focus on small and/or local businesses</li> <li>• Year-round retail and dining, e.g. restaurants, bars, stores</li> <li>• Spaces for community organizations</li> <li>• Spaces for arts programs, e.g. artist residencies, art and maker spaces, creative workshops for children, clay workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public art and design installations/exhibitions</li> <li>• Food and dining vendors that focus on waste reduction</li> <li>• Affordable restaurants run by culinary programs from local colleges</li> <li>• Canadian brewery</li> <li>• Youth programming related to watersports, e.g. kayak, canoe, sailing, etc.</li> <li>• Programming that showcases Indigenous history and culture</li> <li>• Sustainable architecture and design</li> <li>• Design collaborations or partnerships with Indigenous communities</li> <li>• Address concern about “deteriorating break wall (sunken ships)”</li> <li>• Consult with current users of marina</li> <li>• Restrict vehicle access</li> <li>• Consider creating a positive social and economic impact on communities</li> <li>• Job opportunities for BIPOC communities</li> <li>• Address concerns with viability of businesses during off-peak season</li> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events, motorized watercrafts and increased use of marina</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces for arts programs, e.g. artist residencies, art and maker spaces, creative workshops for children, clay workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events, motorized watercrafts and increased use of marina</li> <li>• Commercial spaces should be complementary and secondary to the naturalized areas in Ontario Place</li> </ul>
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## Zone 3: Brigantine Cove

Concept A: Events & Activities	
Likes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children Play Zone</li> <li>• Children’s activities integrated with nature</li> <li>• Outdoor playgrounds</li> <li>• Reminiscent of Children’s Village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too focused on events</li> <li>• Potential odour of putrid water with wooden boardwalk or wooden design elements</li> </ul>

Concept B: Wetland & Nature	
Likes	Concerns
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural environment</li> <li>• Wetland creation</li> <li>• Improved water circulation and quality</li> <li>• Floating boardwalk</li> <li>• Playground</li> <li>• Could be fun for children</li> <li>• Non-linear paths</li> <li>• Water access</li> <li>• Enhanced ecosystems and ecology</li> <li>• Allows for birdwatching</li> <li>• Allows for larger playgrounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dislike for non-linear boardwalk</li> <li>• Wetland overgrowth</li> </ul>

Longlist of Recommendations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maximize green space</li> <li>• Direct access to water</li> <li>• Expand on children’s play areas, e.g. water park, playgrounds, naturalized play areas, inclusive playgrounds, “destination playground”, reminiscent of original Children’s Village</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spaces for people to stay and socialize</li> <li>• Sculpture gardens</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Silence</li> <li>• Access to swimming</li> <li>• Swimming pool</li> <li>• Swan boats</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build innovative play areas or structures that encourage organic, imaginative, explorative, free and creative play</li> <li>• Hands-on learning for children</li> <li>• Playgrounds that cater to different children age groups</li> <li>• Use of natural materials for playgrounds</li> <li>• Family-friendly spaces</li> <li>• Attractive for all-day and year-round use</li> <li>• Softer and naturalized boardwalks</li> <li>• Wildlife observation areas</li> <li>• Year-round activities and public access</li> <li>• Outdoor sports and recreation, e.g. cycling, skating</li> <li>• Winter activities and sports, e.g. ice skating, hockey</li> <li>• Paths for walking and cycling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paddleboards</li> <li>• Paddle boats</li> <li>• Year-round access to washrooms</li> <li>• Sustainable design and innovation in relation to areas such as water management, waste management, solar and wind energy</li> <li>• Address concerns about water quality, sewage and unpleasant odor</li> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events</li> <li>• Address safety concerns with regard to swimming</li> <li>• Engage Indigenous arborists, horticulturalists and subject matter experts</li> </ul>
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## Zone 4: The Mainland

<b>Concept A: Urban &amp; Active</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban beach</li> <li>• Promenade</li> <li>• Connection to Martin Goodman Trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No solution to minimize or eliminate surface parking</li> <li>• Overcrowding and noise</li> <li>• Could be a “party space” or space for large gatherings</li> <li>• Unclear if public access to water and swimming are allowed</li> <li>• Too much paving</li> <li>• Too focused on summer activities</li> </ul>

<b>Concept B: Green Gateway</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promenade</li> <li>• Non-linear paths</li> <li>• More green and park space</li> <li>• More quiet and contemplative environment</li> <li>• Natural connection to Trillium Park</li> <li>• Increased surface permeability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No solution to minimize or eliminate surface parking</li> </ul>

<b>Parking</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some were in favour of underground parking</li> <li>• Few were in favour of surface parking for accessibility purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many expressed a need to minimize or eliminate parking</li> <li>• Underground parking will be a challenge for users transporting large and heavy equipment such as paddleboards</li> <li>• Flooding with underground parking</li> <li>• Vehicular traffic and congestion</li> <li>• Increase in demand for parking</li> <li>• No solution to minimize surface parking in both design concepts</li> <li>• Above ground structure parking will obstruct sightlines to the water</li> </ul>

<b>Longlist of Recommendations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More green space</li> <li>• Improve access via public transportation, e.g. transit terminal, ferry service, TTC and GO service connections, shuttle or express bus from Union Station</li> <li>• Integrated pedestrian corridors with public transportation</li> <li>• Encourage walking, cycling and ridesharing</li> <li>• Cycling infrastructure, e.g. bike share, parking, storage, rentals, repair</li> <li>• Prioritize accessibility, e.g. wheelchair access, chargers, parking, storage for mobility devices, etc.</li> <li>• Access to swimming</li> <li>• Entry points into the water for swimming, kayaks, paddleboards, non-motorized watercrafts, etc.</li> <li>• Stairway access into the water</li> <li>• Better connection to Exhibition Place</li> <li>• Consider water transportation</li> <li>• Expand beach areas</li> <li>• Beach sports</li> <li>• Volleyball courts</li> <li>• Spaces for skating, e.g. skating rink</li> <li>• Mountain biking</li> <li>• Skateboarding</li> <li>• Large play areas for children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rentals for canoes, kayaks and paddleboards</li> <li>• Equipment transport and storage services</li> <li>• Soft water's edge</li> <li>• Public access to electricity for water sports equipment, e.g. air pumps, etc.</li> <li>• Spaces for urban agriculture</li> <li>• Canals</li> <li>• Boardwalks</li> <li>• Year-round access to washrooms</li> <li>• Open and unprogrammed public spaces</li> <li>• Flexible spaces for public events and festivals</li> <li>• Convert parking lots into programmed spaces</li> <li>• Educational programming, e.g. swimming lessons, sailing lessons, signage</li> <li>• Youth sports and recreation</li> <li>• Renewable energy lighting</li> <li>• Green roofs for raised parking</li> <li>• Sustainable design</li> <li>• Remove 'no swimming' signs</li> <li>• Address concerns about water quality, sewage and unpleasant odour</li> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter activations</li> <li>• Warming stations in the winter</li> <li>• Tent rentals for private events</li> <li>• Food trucks with flexible licenses or permits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address concern with removal of protective railings to the water for people with mobility issues</li> <li>• Address concern on vehicular and pedestrian access because of construction on site</li> <li>• Consult with nearby residents on pedestrian flows and connections along the waterfront</li> <li>• Commemoration of Remembrance Drive</li> </ul>
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## Zone 5: The Forum

<b>Concept A: Fountain &amp; Flexible Space</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play fountain (also referred to as splash pads or spray jets)</li> <li>• Moveable tables and chairs</li> <li>• Activities for children</li> <li>• Family- and child-friendly</li> <li>• All-season use</li> <li>• Flexible and multi-use spaces, e.g. arts and culture events, festivals</li> <li>• Caters to a broad range of people</li> <li>• Attractive water features for summer use</li> <li>• Continuing main promenade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too focused on summer activities</li> <li>• Focused on passive activities</li> <li>• Fountain maintenance</li> <li>• Winter maintenance, e.g. snow removal</li> <li>• Stone fines may not be winter-proof</li> <li>• (Note: Stone fines are crushed rock used for surface cover or landscaping. This can also be referred to as gravel.)</li> <li>• Lack of flexible or open space</li> </ul>

<b>Concept B: Sports &amp; Recreation Hub</b>	
<b>Likes</b>	<b>Concerns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice track in the winter</li> <li>• Running track</li> <li>• Skating track (non-winter skating)</li> <li>• Basketball court</li> <li>• Hockey rink</li> <li>• Addresses the increasing demand for sports and recreation amenities from nearby residents</li> <li>• Public access</li> <li>• Connection to Martin Goodman Trail</li> <li>• Year-round activities</li> <li>• Consistent with Trillium Park and surrounding areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caters narrowly to specific sports and recreation users</li> <li>• No flexibility to allow for other uses or activities, e.g. farmers' markets, yoga</li> <li>• Running track may impede pedestrian access</li> <li>• Lack of flexible or open space</li> <li>• Some elements may already be present in other areas of Ontario Place</li> </ul>

## Longlist of Recommendations

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More green space</li> <li>• Allow for both sports and leisure activities</li> <li>• Child-friendly spaces and activities</li> <li>• Naturalized play areas, e.g. rock climbing</li> <li>• Flexible spaces for public/ community use, e.g. festivals, events, community programming</li> <li>• Flexibility of use with running track and courts, e.g. for other uses appropriate for the winter season</li> <li>• Winter sports and activities, e.g. skiing, Christmas lights, indoor downhill/alpine skiing, ice skating</li> <li>• Consider users of different age groups</li> <li>• Intergenerational activities/ experiences</li> <li>• Consider user experience of people with large and heavy sports equipment</li> <li>• Storage for large sports equipment</li> <li>• Year-round access to washrooms</li> <li>• Change rooms for swimmers and lake users</li> <li>• Change rooms with showers, lockers and storage</li> <li>• Year-round access to change rooms</li> <li>• Heated change rooms</li> <li>• Maintain volleyball and table tennis courts</li> <li>• Concession stands/food and drink vendors</li> <li>• Wildlife areas and habitat protection</li> <li>• Fire pits</li> <li>• Water-permeable surfaces</li> <li>• Free or low-cost public sauna, steam rooms, hot tubs</li> <li>• Large swimming pool</li> <li>• Year-round swimming</li> <li>• Giant chessboard</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pickleball</li> <li>• Entertainment, e.g. jazz, dance, music</li> <li>• Benches and seating</li> <li>• Charging stations</li> <li>• Shaded areas</li> <li>• Cooling stations</li> <li>• Restaurants</li> <li>• Ceremonial space for Indigenous groups</li> <li>• Outdoor theatre</li> <li>• Outdoor library</li> <li>• Wayfinding</li> <li>• Programmable lighting for safety and events</li> <li>• Access to electricity, lighting and water for programming partners</li> <li>• Public art</li> <li>• Food and drink vendors</li> <li>• Dog areas</li> <li>• Connections to other public realm zones</li> <li>• Educational materials, e.g. signage</li> <li>• Interpretative education areas on topics such as wetlands, climate change, microplastics, flowers, algae, etc.</li> <li>• Activities for seniors</li> <li>• Ensure AODA compliance</li> <li>• Consult with current users of East Island Commons</li> <li>• Release the estimated number of planted trees</li> <li>• Address concern for preserving the heritage, history and archaeological value of the site</li> <li>• Address concerns about noise pollution from nearby venues or events, particularly Budweiser Stage and Live Nation</li> <li>• Elevated play areas to improve sightlines to the lake</li> </ul> |
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## **Next steps**

Feedback received from the October 27th engagement event, as well as at previous public engagement events, will be used to inform the design for Ontario Place's public spaces and Environmental Assessment process. More opportunities for public feedback are being planned and public consultations will continue as part of the Environmental Assessment and public realm design process until Fall 2023. The next public consultation event on the public realm design and Environmental Assessment process is planned for Spring 2023. At this event the public realm preferred design will be shared with the public for comments, feedback and input.