



Staff Report

Community Services

Report To: COW- Admin, Corp and Finance, SI, Comm. Services
Meeting Date: September 14, 2026
Report Number: CS.26.049
Title: Craigleith Community Park
Prepared by: Katie Love, Administrative Assistant – Acting Project Manager –
Moreau & Craigleith Park Development, Community Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report CS.26.049, entitled “Craigleith Community Park”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to continue coordinating with the developer and project partners regarding the timing of the Phase 2 subdivision process, conveyance of the Blue Vista park block, site access, grading, servicing and the future park-delivery approach;

AND THAT Council direct staff to provide semi-annual updates regarding the status of Craigleith Community Park until the timing of the parkland conveyance and future implementation can be confirmed;

AND THAT staff report back to Council with an updated implementation schedule, funding strategy and associated budget requirements once the timing, scope and delivery approach are sufficiently established.

B. Relationship to Strategic Plan

This report advances Corporate Strategic Plan Objective 2.3, “Continue to create opportunities for active living, leisure, and community building,” and Initiative 2.3.2, “Improve accessibility in Town facilities, public spaces and parks and recreation amenities.” The preferred concept supports the future development of an accessible and inclusive community park with opportunities for recreation, leisure and community gathering.

C. Executive Summary

Craigleith Community Park is planned on interconnected parkland associated with the Windfall, Second Nature and Blue Vista developments. Portions of the park area have been conveyed to the Town; however, the Blue Vista park block remains under developer ownership and is intended to be conveyed through the subdivision process. Staff advanced public engagement and concept planning and design work in anticipation of coordinating park delivery with the development. Economic and development conditions subsequently changed, and the

development has not advanced to Phase 2 within the anticipated timeframe. As a result, the timing of conveyance, site availability and construction cannot currently be confirmed, and the Town is not proceeding with park construction or recommending construction funding through the 2027 Budget at this time. The engagement, preliminary design, site analysis and project coordination completed to date remain valuable and will provide a foundation for future delivery. Staff will continue coordinating with the developer and project partners and provide Council with semi-annual status updates.

D. Public Engagement

The project has been informed by community engagement, including an initial survey completed in 2024 and a Design Open House and second online survey completed in 2026. The feedback established community priorities and informed the preferred concept plan. The engagement results will be retained and used to support future design refinement and implementation when site access and construction sequencing are confirmed. Detailed engagement results are included in Attachment 2.

E. Background

Craigleith Community Park is planned on interconnected parkland associated with the Windfall, Second Nature and Blue Vista developments. Portions of the broader park area have been conveyed to the Town; however, the Blue Vista park block remains under developer ownership. Block 119 is identified in the approved draft plan of subdivision as required parkland dedication and is intended to be conveyed to the Town through the subdivision approval and registration process.

The developer cleared the Blue Vista park block to facilitate its future use as municipal parkland. The lands are currently being used for temporary topsoil storage. The future Phase 2 Subdivision Agreement is expected to establish the grading, servicing, access and conveyance requirements.

Planning began before conveyance to respond to community interest and an opportunity to coordinate park delivery with the subdivision. In November 2023, Council directed staff to develop a public engagement strategy for the Blue Vista park block and adjoining publicly dedicated lands. The developer also asked the Town to consider whether the park could be built or partially built in coordination with the development. Advancing engagement and concept design created an opportunity to coordinate grading, servicing, access and construction activities and potentially support more efficient and timely park delivery.

Economic and development conditions subsequently changed, and the Blue Vista development did not advance to Phase 2 within the anticipated timeframe. It has now been confirmed that the park block will not be conveyed to the Town in 2026. As a result, the timing of conveyance, permanent access, final grading, servicing and construction cannot currently be confirmed, and the Town is not in a position to proceed with park construction. The engagement, concept design, cost estimating and project coordination completed to date will be retained to support future implementation.

F. Analysis

Engagement Outcomes and Preferred Concept Plan

The preferred concept plan was informed by an initial community survey completed in 2024 and a Design Open House and second online survey completed in 2026. The engagement identified strong interest in shade, tree planting, accessible play, washroom facilities, flexible open space, pathways, seating, naturalized areas and opportunities for community gathering. Detailed engagement results are included in Attachment 2.

The preferred concept responds to these priorities through an accessible playground, covered shade structure, universal washroom, open lawn, small community stage, approximately nine parking spaces, connected pathways, seating, tree planting, an ornamental tree grove, meadow and naturalized areas, a rain garden, boardwalk and connections to the surrounding trail network. The layout seeks to balance active recreation, accessible movement, community use and passive green space.

Although pickleball courts were frequently identified through open-ended feedback, they were not included in the preferred concept. The available site must accommodate a range of community priorities while maintaining green space, landscaping and neighbourhood compatibility. The identified interest in additional pickleball capacity may be considered through broader parks and recreation planning for a more appropriate location.

Value of Work Completed

The engagement, site analysis, preferred concept plan and preliminary cost estimate represent meaningful progress. Together, they provide a documented record of community priorities, a preliminary spatial plan and an initial understanding of project costs and technical requirements. This work can be retained and used as the foundation for future implementation, meaning the project will not be starting from the beginning when it is able to proceed.

The preferred concept is not a final construction design or a commitment to deliver every identified feature. Detailed design, technical investigations, accessibility review, confirmation of servicing and grading requirements, updated cost estimates and Council budget approval will still be required. Depending on the length of the delay and the final subdivision arrangements, elements of the concept may require review or refinement before implementation.

Current Project Status and 2027 Budget

Construction cannot proceed until the developer's Phase 2 subdivision process advances and the Town can confirm conveyance, access, grading, servicing and the future park-delivery approach. The current topsoil storage use must also conclude before the lands can be prepared for park development.

Although Council previously directed that a Craighleith Community Park workplan be considered through the 2027 Budget process, a reliable construction schedule and funding requirement cannot currently be established. Staff are therefore not recommending a 2027 construction

allocation. Any near-term funding request would be limited to work necessary to maintain project readiness, such as technical review, design updates or cost-estimate refreshes.

Options Considered

Option 1 – Continue coordination and provide semi-annual updates (Recommended): This option retains the completed work, maintains coordination with the developer and project partners, and allows the Town to respond efficiently when the subdivision schedule advances.

Option 2 – Include construction funding in the 2027 Budget: This option is not recommended because the Town cannot confirm that the lands will be available for construction in 2027.

Option 3 – Pause all project activity: This option may reduce short-term expenditures but is not recommended because it risks loss of project continuity, delays future implementation and may result in additional costs to re-establish or update the work.

Next Steps

Staff will retain the engagement results, preferred concept plan, cost estimate and supporting project information; continue coordinating with the developer and project partners; identify any limited work required to maintain project readiness; and provide Council with semi-annual updates. Staff will report sooner if a material change affects the anticipated timing or delivery of the park.

Once the subdivision schedule, conveyance, site access and delivery approach are sufficiently established, staff will return to Council with an updated implementation schedule, cost estimate, funding strategy and associated budget requirements.

G. Community Impacts

The future development of Craigleith Community Park is expected to provide recreational, environmental and community building benefits for Craigleith residents and the broader community. The preferred concept reflects community priorities for accessible recreation, walking and trail connections, shade, naturalized areas, flexible open space and community gathering. Deferring construction will delay access to these amenities and may create uncertainty for residents; however, it does not eliminate the anticipated benefits. The engagement results and preferred concept plan will be retained, allowing the Town to resume the project efficiently once land conveyance, site access and construction sequencing are confirmed. Semi-annual updates will keep Council and the community informed.

H. Financial Impacts

No construction budget approval is requested through this report. Approximately \$225,000 was authorized through the approved project budgets for consulting costs associated with public engagement, project management, site analysis, landscape design and preparation of the preferred concept plan.

The July 2026 preliminary cost estimate identifies a construction cost of approximately \$2.78 million for the preferred concept, including a 20 percent contingency. Together with actual and committed project costs, the total preliminary project value is approximately \$3.0 million. This is a planning estimate and does not account for future inflation, additional technical or design requirements, or changes resulting from the future subdivision and park-delivery arrangements.

Based on the approximately \$5.5 million Parks and Recreation Development Charge Reserve Fund balance referenced during the 2026 Moreau Park funding discussions, sufficient development charge funding appears to be available at this time to support the estimated cost of the preferred concept. However, funding has not been committed to construction of Craigleith Community Park. Before seeking future construction approval, staff will confirm the updated reserve balance, developer responsibilities, other potential funding sources, and lifecycle and operating impacts.

I. RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted and Informed)

R: Katie Love, Administrative Assistant – Acting Project Manager – Moreau & Craigleith Park Development, Community Services

A: Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

C: Colliers Project Leaders; SHIFT Landscape Architecture; Brian Worsley, Manager of Development Engineering; John McMullen, Manager of Parks & Trails, Jason Petznick, Communications Coordinator Capital Projects

I: CAO; Community Services staff; Finance staff; Blue Vista Developer

J. Attached

1. SHIFT slide deck
2. Craigleith Community Park 2026 Public Engagement Summary
3. Refined Concept Plan
4. Detailed Report Information

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Love, Administrative Assistant – Acting Project Manager – Moreau & Craigleith Park Development, Community Services

For more information, please contact:

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	CS.26.049 Craigleith Community Park.docx
Attachments:	- Att-1-SHIFT-Council-Deck.pdf - Att-2-Craigleith-Community-Park-Engagement-Summary.pdf - Att-3-Preferred-Concept-Plan.pdf - Att-4-Detailed-Report-Information.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 4, 2026

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Ryan Gibbons - Sep 4, 2026 - 11:11 AM

No Signature found

Katie Love - Sep 4, 2026 - 11:13 AM

Town of The Blue Mountains
Craigleith Community Park
Council Update
September 14, 2026

SHIFT
landscape architecture



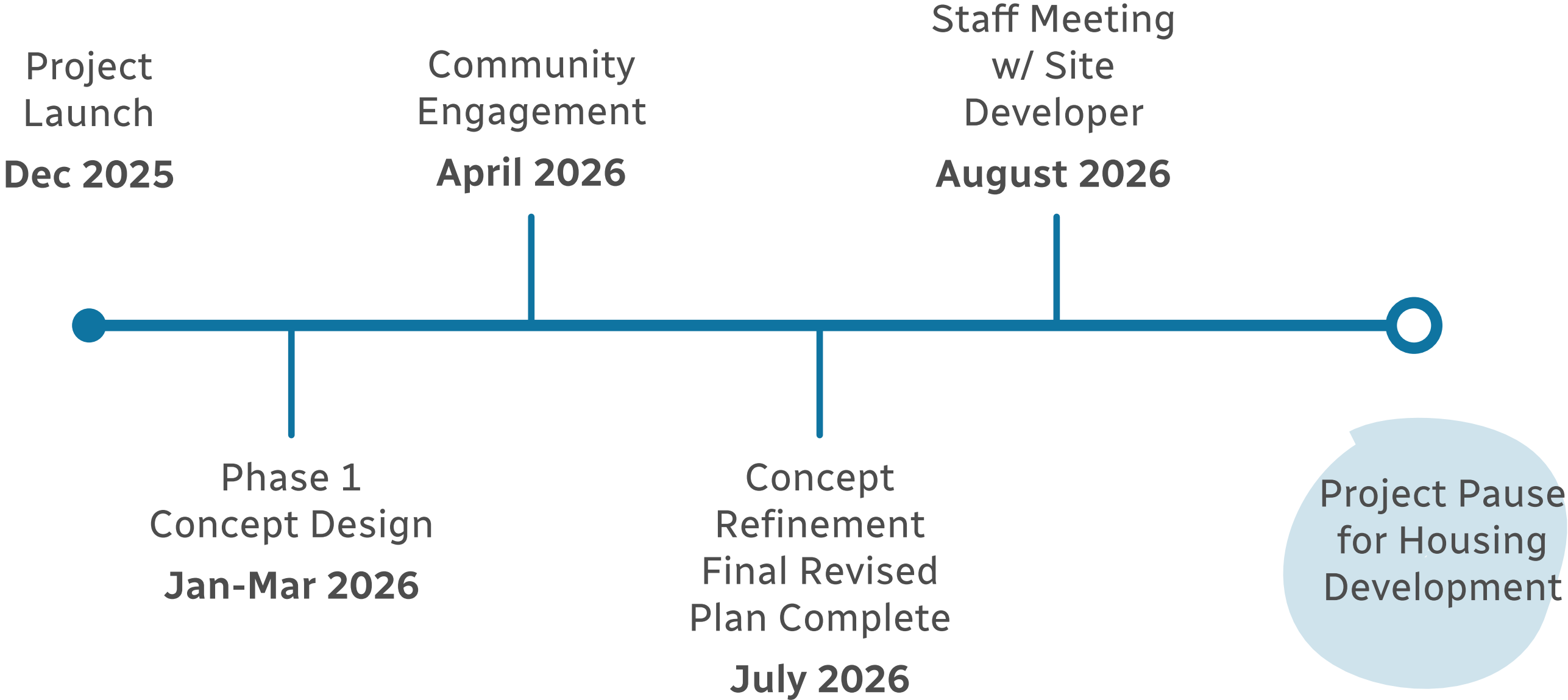
AGENDA

Craigleith Community Park

- **Overall project timeline**
- **The park site**
- **Preliminary design concepts**
- **Public engagement overview**
- **Outcomes & refined final design**
- **Questions**

OVERALL PROJECT TIMELINE

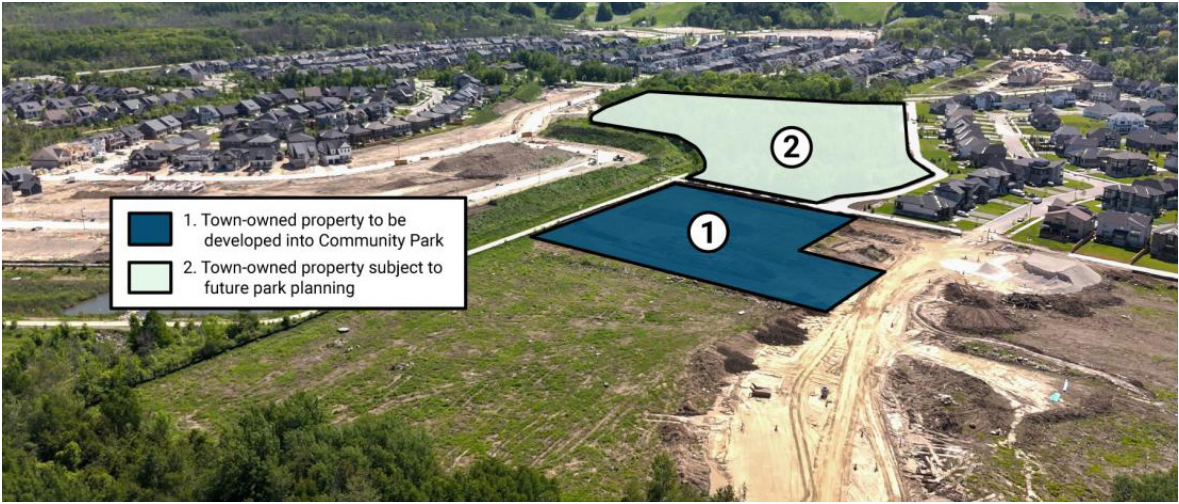
Craigleith Community Park



THE PARK SITE



Craigleith Community Park



Site Photos Showing Stockpiled Topsoil - March 2026



PRELIMINARY CONCEPTS

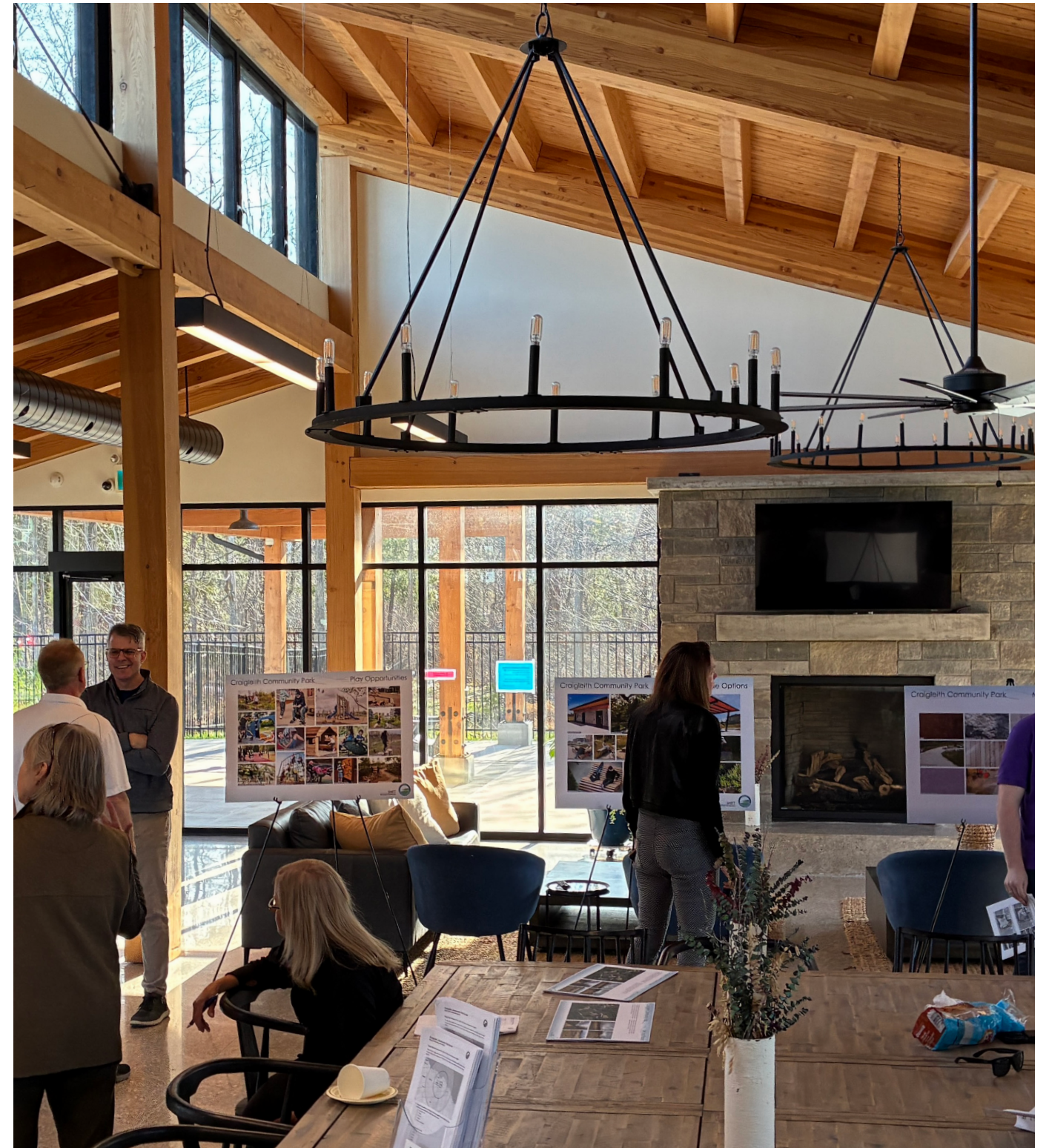
Craigleith Community Park



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Craigleith Community Park

- Public open house event hosted at The Shed to review 2 concepts
- Online opportunity to review plans, provide comments and complete survey
- Results of all compiled into engagement summary to assist SHIFT and Town with developing final program direction and concept plan



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Craigleith Community Park

Some common themes...

rain garden

high quality
playground

pickleball

shade
structure

washroom

trees

seating

climbing
structure

open lawn

swings

perennial gardens

adult fitness equipment

stage

lighting

OUTCOMES & REFINED FINAL CONCEPT

Craigleith Community Park

- **+/- 81 open house attendees** (April 16, 2026)
- **+/- 302 online surveys** (April 16 - May 10, 2026)

Community feedback highlighted a mix of desires for the final concept design, however there was also acknowledgment by many that the site needs to balance active recreation, passive green space, and the interests of different age groups.

- **Washrooms:** a majority of people (60%) want a washroom building in the park, though some raised concerns about maintenance costs and security, suggesting nearby homes and The Shed facility may reduce the need for on-site washrooms.
- **Shade and Trees:** people want to see shade created through both structures and canopy trees, with a shade structure (68%) and canopy tree planting (62%) ranking as the two clearest priorities in the survey, and a strong preference for mature plantings so the benefit is felt sooner.
- **Playground:** strong desire for a high-quality playground (60%), with focus on unique play opportunities such as climbing structures, obstacle courses, and accessible features that are currently lacking in other local playgrounds.
- **Open Lawn & Programming:** desire for open lawn space for flexible use (54%) and a stage for small performances, balanced against some residents' concerns about noise and a preference for keeping the park primarily passive and naturalized.
- **Circulation & Trails:** desire for a paved loop trail to allow people to walk, jog, and move for exercise, with several respondents also asking that it double as a winter skating loop.
- **Sport Courts (Pickleball):** the single most frequently raised request in open-ended feedback. This was not part of the program for Craigleith Community Park, but the feedback signals the need for a new facility in a more appropriate location

REFINED FINAL DESIGN

Craigleith Community Park



QUESTIONS?

Town of The Blue Mountains: Craigleith Community Park Community Engagement Summary Report

Engagement period: April 16th – May 10th, 2026



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Town of The Blue Mountains conducted community engagement for the Craigleith Community Park Revitalization Project between April 16 and May 10, 2026. Engagement included an online and paper-based general public survey (302 respondents) and an in-person Design Open House held on April 16, 2026 at which approximately 81 residents reviewed two preliminary design concepts.

The community is broadly supportive of the park's development. The clear top priorities identified through the engagement process were a shade structure (68%), canopy tree planting (62%), a washroom building (60%), a high-quality playground (60%), and open lawn space (54%).

Key design considerations flagged by the community:

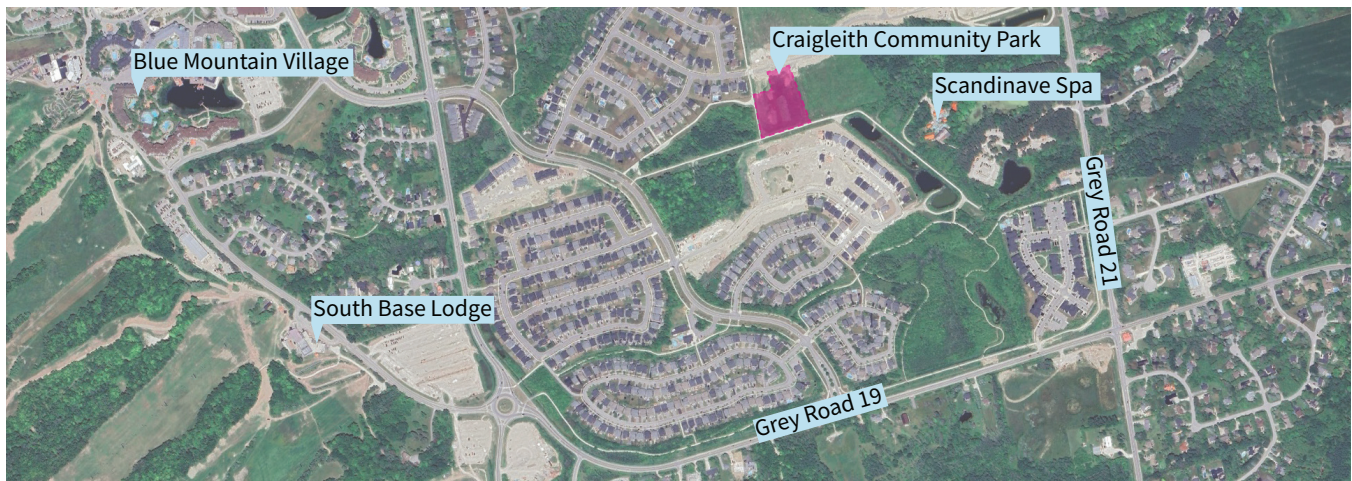
- Ensuring the park serves all ages including teenagers, adults, and seniors (not just young children)
- Preserving and adding mature tree canopy, with many respondents in favour of reforesting the cleared site and expressing enthusiasm for the quantity of trees shown on the plans.
- Considering year-round use, including winter activities such as skating trails or a rink
- Pickleball and sport courts (not shown in either concept plan) were the most frequently raised request in open-ended responses. These were not considered as part of the program for Craigleith Community Park, but the feedback suggests the need for a new facility in a more appropriate location.

While Concept 2 received the most direct support (36%), Concept 1 was closely behind it (30%) and many respondents expressed preference for a hybrid of both concepts (17%). The hybrid feedback indicated strong attachment to elements from each design such as the boardwalk from Concept 1 and the stage and open loop trail from Concept 2.

The final design will need to balance the interests of families with young children, active adult users, dog owners, and residents seeking passive amenity and natural green space.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past several years, the Town has strategically acquired six hectares of parkland in Craigleith from the Windfall, Second Nature, and Blue Vista development sites. This land was gained through the parkland dedication included in each development agreement. The intent is to transform the land into a community park for all to enjoy. The project responds to the rapid residential growth in this part of the municipality and the corresponding need for accessible local parkland serving residents of all ages.

METHODS

A range of engagement methods were used to inform the community and gather feedback from residents, park users, and stakeholders.

1. Project Web Page

A dedicated Craigleith Community Park project page was established on the Town's website to provide updates and share information about the project. The web page served as the primary source for project information and included updates on the planning process, background on the site, and opportunities for the public to participate in engagement activities.

Community members are encouraged to visit the project page to learn about the project and stay informed about upcoming engagement opportunities.

2. Public Survey

A general public survey was conducted online and in paper form to gather feedback from residents about their priorities for the new park. The survey provided community members with an opportunity to review two preliminary design concepts, indicate preferred park features, share ideas, and highlight the types of activities they plan to enjoy. Approximately 302 respondents completed the survey.

Note: Paper survey responses were digitized to ensure their inclusion with the overall survey metrics.

3. Design Open House

An in-person Design Open House was held on April 16, 2026 at which residents reviewed two preliminary design concepts for the park. The open house provided the public an opportunity to view draft park layouts, speak directly with Town staff and consultants, and provide comments on proposed elements and features.

Input from all sources has been analyzed and summarized to capture the most recurring feedback received during the engagement period. A summary of broad themes is included in this report, with additional detailed feedback captured in the supplementary sections.

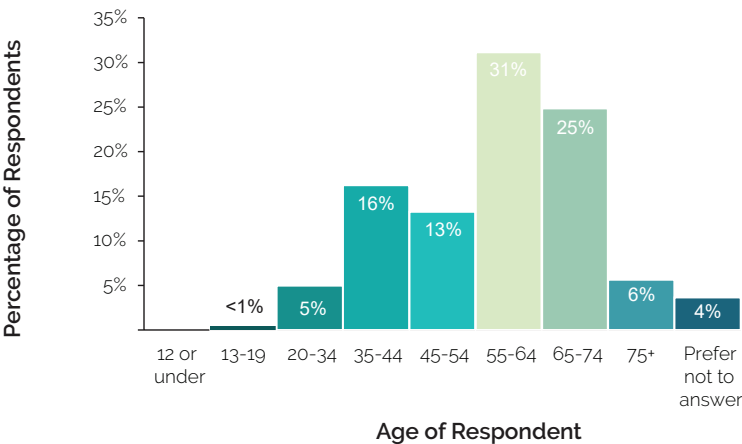


Image from the Design Open House hosted at The Shed in Craigleith on April 16th, 2026.

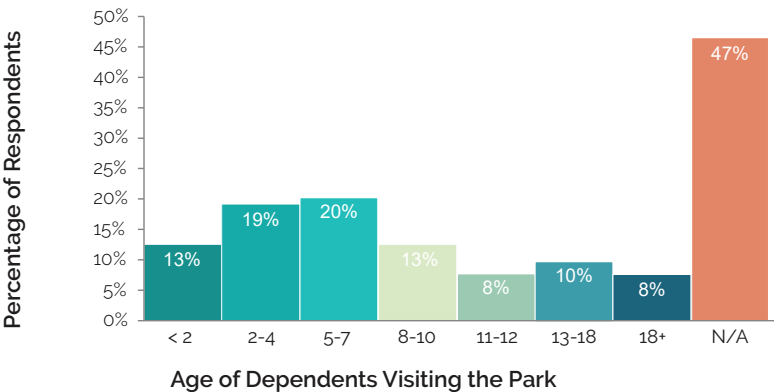
WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?

Of approximately 302 survey respondents, the majority live very close to the park. Nearly 69% live less than 1 km away, and another 17% live within 1–5 km, indicating that responses predominantly reflect the immediate Craigleith and Windfall residential community. About 67% of respondents expect to visit the park daily or weekly, demonstrating strong anticipated use.

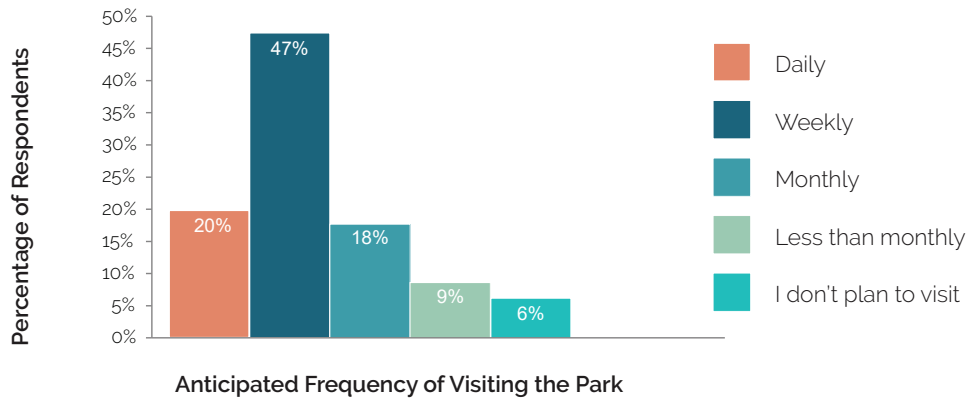
What is your age?



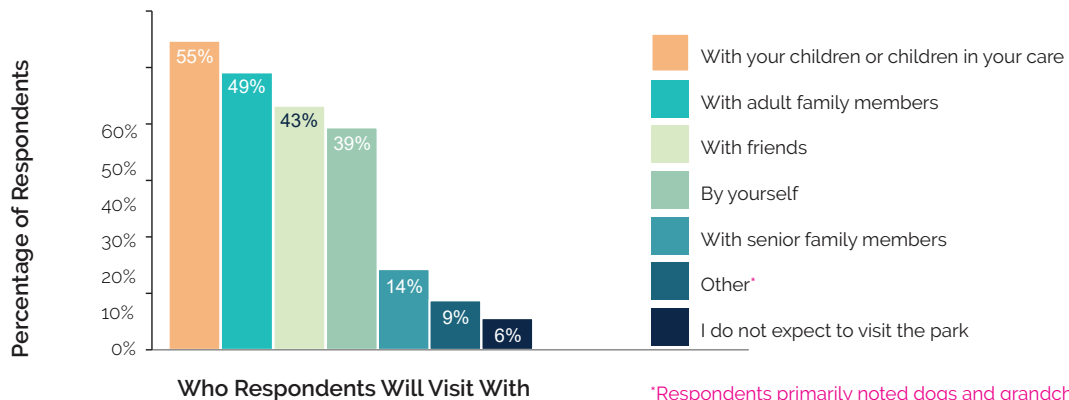
If you are the parent or guardian of children who use Craigleith Community Park, what is their age? (Choose any that apply if responding for multiple children.)



How often do you expect to visit Craigleith Community Park?



Who do you expect to visit Craigleith Community Park with? (Select all that apply)



*Respondents primarily noted dogs and grandchildren

TOP PRIORITIES FOR THE NEW PARK

Respondents were asked to choose up to six most important features from a list for the new Craigleith Community Park (Question 9). The clear top priorities were:

- A shade structure — 68%
- Canopy tree planting — 62%
- A washroom building — 60%
- A high-quality playground — 60%
- Open lawn space for flexible use — 54%
- Lighting — 41%
- Low Impact Development features (rain garden, bioswales, etc.) — 36%
- Native perennial garden planting — 36%
- A simple stage for small performances or events — 32%
- No mow and/or meadow areas — 17%
- Wayfinding signage — 5%

Your selections will help the project team understand which park elements are most important to the community. Choose up to six items that you feel are most important:

24% of respondents selected 'Other' as one of their choices. In these open-ended 'Other' responses, several recurring write-in requests were noted including: pickleball and tennis courts, a basketball court, a dog park, fitness/exercise equipment for adults, basketball nets, and a splash pad.

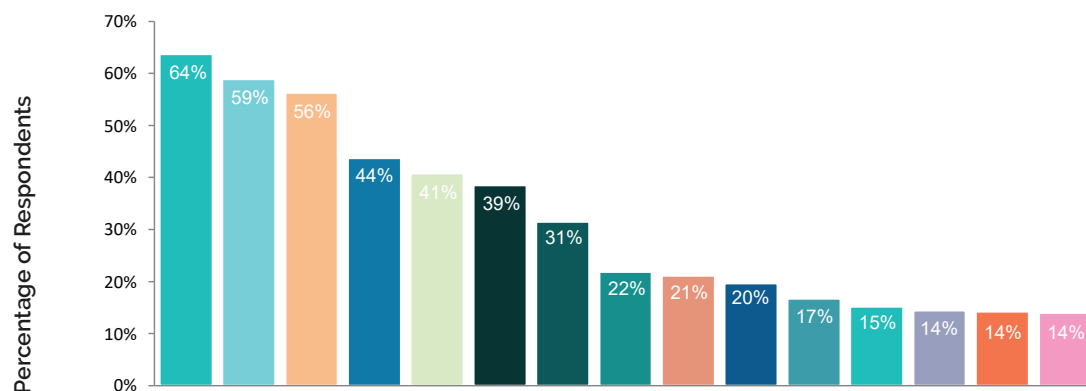
PLAYGROUND ELEMENT PREFERENCES

The survey confirmed that a high-quality playground is among the community's top priorities (selected by 60% of respondents in Question 9). To aid in the design of the playground, respondents were asked to choose up to six playground elements they would like to see in the final design. The most desired elements were:

- Climbing structure (64%)
- Traditional swings including toddler swings (59%)
- Slides (56%)
- Obstacle course (44%)
- Overhead climbing / monkey bars (41%)
- Balancing elements (39%)

In addition to this, the project team learned through the engagement process that there is a strong demand for accessible features which are lacking in other local playground areas.

Choose up to eight playground elements that you would like to see included in the final design.



Preferred Playground Elements

Climbing structure	Balancing elements	Puzzle/activity games
Traditional swings	Rope Climber	Spinning elements
Slides	Sand Play Area	Basket Swing
Obstacle Course	Quiet play options	Accessible swing
Other	Overhead climbing	Instruments

In the open-ended 'Other' responses, several recurring write-in additions emerged, including: zip lines, fitness/exercise equipment for adults, basketball nets, and adventure play structures.

CONCEPT PREFERENCE

Respondents were asked which of the two design concepts they preferred overall. Concept 2 received the most support (36%), followed closely by Concept 1 (31%). A notable 17% of respondents preferred a hybrid of both concepts, and 16% expressed no preference for either.

Concept 1

Concept 1 featured a boardwalk over a rain garden, a more angular path layout, and a shade structure and playground grouped together. It was valued for its sense of enclosure and distinct zones.

Common praise:

- Boardwalk and rain garden feature as unique and functional
- More enclosed, structured feel
- Shade structure proximity to playground and washrooms

Common concerns:

- Layout described as too broken up and limiting open lawn space
- Missing a stage area (as shown in Concept 2)
- Washroom questioned (some felt it raised security concerns)



Concept 2

Concept 2 featured a circular loop trail, a stage for small performances, and a more open lawn area. It was generally preferred by families and those valuing open space and the potential for event programming.

Common praise:

- Stage seen as a valuable addition for community events, music, and programming potential
- Circular loop trail was appealing for walking, jogging, and potentially skating in winter
- More open feel with easier sight lines for parents watching children
- Rain garden and meadow areas appreciated by nature-oriented respondents

Common concerns:

- Missing the boardwalk from Concept 1
- Stage seen as unnecessary by some who noted the Shed as an option for events
- Meadow areas viewed skeptically with some concerns about maintenance and functionality



BROAD THEMES & GENERAL PROJECT INPUT

The engagement period highlighted important considerations that will guide Town staff and the design team toward a final concept for Craigleith Community Park. The following themes emerged from the written response portions of the survey and the Design Open House discussions.

1. Pickleball/Tennis/Sport Court Demand

The most frequently raised request across open-ended responses was for pickleball courts or multi-use sport courts, appearing in questions 8, 9, and 11. In question 8 regarding concept preference, approximately 10% of survey respondents wrote that the main thing missing from both concepts is a pickleball or sport court. In question 9 which asked respondents about the most important park features, approximately 30% wrote that some form of sport court was needed. These responses sometimes noted that currently residents must travel to Thornbury or Collingwood to access pickleball facilities.

2. Shade and Trees are Critical

A shade structure and canopy tree planting were the top two priorities in the quantitative survey, and were reinforced repeatedly in open-ended comments. Respondents emphasized the importance of shade near the playground and seating areas, and a strong desire to restore the tree canopy on the previously wooded site. Several commented that new tree plantings should be as mature as possible to provide benefit in the near term.

3. Design for All Ages

A recurring concern is that both concepts are seen as too child-focused for a community that currently skews older. Some expressed that the park needs to serve adults and seniors as well as families with young children. Specific suggestions included fitness equipment, outdoor table tennis, and walking loops suitable for older residents.

4. Year-Round Use

Several respondents specifically requested features that would allow the park to function in winter and shoulder seasons. Suggestions included a winter skating loop (referencing the circular trail in Concept 2), a small tobogganing opportunity, and programming for winter months.

5. Washroom Concerns

While washrooms ranked third overall in quantitative priorities (60%), some residents did question whether they are necessary. Common concerns included maintenance costs, potential for misuse, and security issues overnight. Some suggested that nearby homes and The Shed facility reduce the need for on-site washrooms.

6. Concerns About Non-Resident Use and Overcrowding

A number of respondents expressed concern that a publicly accessible park could attract visitors from outside the community, particularly day-trippers from the Blue Mountain Village area. These respondents raised concerns about traffic, parking, noise, and the character of the neighbourhood. Overall this represents a minority concern in the data, but the preferred design will need to consider how access, signage, and programming can balance this amenity with appropriate management of visitor use.

OTHER FREQUENTLY REQUESTED AMENITIES

The following amenities were noted in open-ended responses across multiple questions:

- Bicycle racks and cycling-friendly infrastructure
- A splash pad
- Fitness equipment for adults (pull-up bars, outdoor gym equipment)
- Benches, picnic tables, and seating throughout the park
- Water fountains and bottle refill stations
- Food truck access or a small market/gathering opportunity
- Community garden or allotment plots
- Winter activation of the site
- Basketball hoops or nets for older children and youth

OVERALL COMMUNITY SENTIMENT

The community is engaged and generally supportive of the park's development. The majority of respondents expressed enthusiasm for having a local community park, with particular excitement around the playground, shade, trees, and event programming opportunities like the stage.

The main tensions in the data are:

- between child-focused programming and adult/senior amenities, with many respondents noting the community's currently older demographic or young families moving into the neighbourhood
- between a passive, naturalized park character and demand for active recreation
- between serving all Town residents equitably and the concerns of some Windfall residents about increased non-resident access.

The most frequently raised request (pickleball and sport courts) will be explored at a more suitable location in the future.



Perspective rendering showing the escarpment garden and washroom building in Concept 1.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS RAISED DURING ENGAGEMENT

In addition to feedback on proposed park amenities, several recurring concerns were raised through open-ended survey comments and in-person discussions. While not always directly related to the survey questions, these issues highlight important operational and design considerations for the future of the park.

Parking and Access

- Multiple respondents requested safe trail connections and bike paths linking neighbourhoods to the park
- Several respondents raised concerns about limited parking and the potential for the park to attract visitor vehicles from outside the community, leading to crowded street parking
- Others emphasized the need for accessible parking spaces and family drop-off zones

Lighting

- Lighting was the sixth-highest ranked feature (41%) in the quantitative survey
- Some respondents asked for pathway lighting and lighting near the playground
- A few respondents raised concerns about light pollution and the desire for Dark-Sky-compliant fixtures, consistent with the Town's rural character
- Safety and evening usability were the primary reasons cited for wanting improved lighting

Maintenance and Ongoing Upkeep

- Several respondents expressed concern about the Town's capacity to properly maintain the park, referencing the condition of existing parks such as Heritage Park as a cautionary example
- Washrooms, gardens, and new infrastructure were specifically flagged as requiring committed maintenance programs
- One respondent suggested that park staff or contracted services manage upkeep to a visible standard

Noise and Neighbourhood Fit

- A number of respondents from nearby residential properties raised concerns about noise from a stage, large events, and active use areas
- Some expressed concerns about sports activities like pickleball and basketball, suggesting that the park be kept primarily passive and naturalized to preserve neighbourhood character
- Designing buffers, including tree screening at park edges, was suggested as a way to mitigate noise impacts on adjacent homes

Tree Preservation

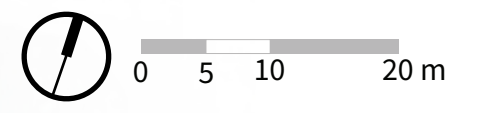
- Multiple respondents strongly urged the project team to preserve as many existing trees as possible on the site and to prioritize reforestation. (Note: there are currently no trees on the proposed park site and no removals are proposed.)
- Some asked for mature tree plantings rather than small saplings so the canopy benefit is felt sooner

CRAIGLEITH COMMUNITY PARK

Preferred Concept



Windfall Development (Phase 6)



Detailed Relationship to Strategic Plan

This report advances **Corporate Strategic Plan Objective 2.3, “Continue to create opportunities for active living, leisure, and community building,”** by supporting informed decision-making on the continued development and improvement of Craigleith Community Park as a welcoming, functional, and inclusive public space. Enhancements and planned investments in the park will help increase opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in outdoor recreation, leisure activities, and community gathering.

The report also directly supports **Initiative 2.3.2, “Improve accessibility in Town facilities, public spaces and parks and recreation amenities.”** By identifying current conditions, project progress, accessibility considerations, and any outstanding needs at Craigleith Community Park, the report helps guide improvements that reduce barriers to participation. This may include consideration of accessible routes, site amenities, recreation features, parking, seating, signage, and connections within the park.

Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has been the subject of community engagement. The Town completed an initial community survey in February 2024 to inform the vision and preliminary design direction for Craigleith Community Park. A further Design Open House was held on April 23, 2026, at The Shed Community Centre in Windfall, and preliminary design concepts were also presented through an online survey that closed on May 7, 2026. The engagement was completed with support from SHIFT Landscape Architecture and Colliers Project Leaders.

The feedback received will be retained and used to inform future refinement and implementation of the park when site access and construction sequencing can be confirmed. The completed engagement and preliminary design work remain valuable even if construction is delayed.

Project information and engagement materials are available on the Town’s Craigleith Community Park webpage:

<https://www.thebluemountains.ca/planning-building-construction/current-projects/municipal-infrastructure-projects/craigleith-community-park>

Any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Katie Love, *Acting Project Manager* – Moreau & Craigleith Park Development, Community Services klove@thebluemountains.ca.

Background

The future Craigleith Community Park is made up of interconnected parkland associated with the Windfall, Second Nature and Blue Vista developments. While portions of the broader park area have already been conveyed to the Town, the Blue Vista park block remains in developer ownership.

Block 119 is identified in the approved draft plan of subdivision as the required parkland dedication and is intended to be conveyed to the Town through the subdivision approval and registration process. The parkland designation and the developer's obligation to convey the block do not provide the Town with ownership or unrestricted access before the required legal transfer occurs.

The developer has cleared the Blue Vista park block to facilitate its future use as municipal parkland. The lands are currently being used for temporary topsoil storage in accordance with the Phase 1 Subdivision Agreement. This authorized interim use does not change the intended long-term use of the lands as part of Craigleith Community Park.

The Phase 2 Subdivision Agreement is expected to establish whether the developer will grade the lands to the Town's specifications and convey them to the Town for municipal park development, or undertake some or all of the park construction in coordination with the development. The final delivery approach, grading requirements, access arrangements and timing of conveyance have not yet been established because the development has not advanced to Phase 2.

The Town had anticipated that the Blue Vista subdivision would advance and that the park block would be conveyed within a timeframe that would support coordinated park construction. Changes in economic and development conditions have delayed the subdivision's progression. As a result, the timing of the parkland conveyance, permanent access, final grading, servicing and related development works cannot currently be confirmed. The Town is therefore not in a position to proceed with construction of the park at this time.

The current park-planning process began in 2023 following the clearing of the future park block within the Blue Vista development and subsequent resident requests for information and consultation regarding the future use of the lands. In November 2023, Council directed staff to develop a public engagement strategy for the Blue Vista park block and the adjoining publicly dedicated lands to establish a broader vision for Craigleith Community Park.

The Town launched its first community survey in February 2024 and received 991 responses. Council subsequently directed staff to proceed with an initial design concept for further community consultation. Colliers Project Leaders was retained in May 2025 to provide project-management services, and SHIFT Landscape Architecture was retained in December 2025 to undertake the park design work. Preliminary concepts were presented at a Design Open House in April 2026 and through a second online survey that closed in May 2026.

As this work progressed, the developer asked the Town to consider whether the park could be built or partially built in coordination with the development. Advancing the design before the anticipated conveyance of the Blue Vista park block created an opportunity to coordinate grading, servicing, site access and construction activities, potentially reduce future disturbance to residents, and support timely park delivery.

Economic conditions affecting the development industry subsequently changed, and the development did not advance according to the anticipated schedule. Staff continued the design and community engagement work while the timing and feasibility of the coordinated delivery opportunity were being confirmed. It has now been determined that the Blue Vista park block will not be conveyed to the Town in 2026, and the Town will not obtain the necessary control and access, within the timeframe originally anticipated. The Town is therefore not in a position to proceed with park construction at this time.

Analysis

Engagement Outcomes and Refined Concept Plan

The April 2026 Design Open House was attended by approximately 81 people, and approximately 302 responses were received through the second online survey. Participants identified a range of desired amenities while also recognizing the need to balance active recreation, passive green space, accessibility, environmental features and the interests of different age groups.

The clearest survey priorities were a covered shade structure, supported by 68 percent of respondents; canopy-tree planting, supported by 62 percent; a high-quality playground, supported by 60 percent; an on-site washroom, supported by 60 percent; and flexible open-lawn space, supported by 54 percent. Participants also expressed interest in accessible and distinctive play features, mature tree planting, seating, naturalized areas, walking and exercise routes, and opportunities for small-scale community programming.

Based on the engagement results and technical review, SHIFT Landscape Architecture consolidated the two preliminary concepts into a refined concept plan. The plan includes an accessible playground; a covered shade structure; a universal washroom; approximately nine parking spaces; connected asphalt and accessible aggregate pathways; open-lawn areas; a small community stage; tree planting and an ornamental tree grove; meadow and naturalized areas; a rain garden and boardwalk; seating; landscape berms; an entry feature; and connections to the surrounding trail network.

The refined concept seeks to balance active and passive uses. The playground, stage and open lawn provide opportunities for recreation and community activity, while the tree planting, meadow, rain garden and naturalized edges provide shade, landscape interest and quieter

passive spaces. The pathway network connects the park amenities and adjoining trails and supports walking, jogging and accessible movement through the site.

Pickleball courts were the most frequently raised request in the open-ended feedback but were not included in the refined concept. The proposed park program and available site area require a balance of community recreation, green space, landscaping and neighbourhood compatibility. The engagement nevertheless identifies an interest in additional pickleball capacity that may be considered through broader parks and recreation planning for a more appropriate location.

The refined concept represents meaningful progress and establishes a clear record of community priorities and preliminary spatial organization. It is not a final construction design or an approved commitment to deliver every identified feature. Detailed design, technical investigations, accessibility review, servicing requirements, operational considerations, cost estimates and Council budget approval would still be required before construction. Depending on the length of the delay and the ultimate grading, servicing and access arrangements established through the subdivision process, elements of the concept may also require review or refinement before implementation.

Site Access and Timing

At this stage, the primary constraint is that the Blue Vista park block remains under developer ownership and the development has not advanced to the Phase 2 Subdivision Agreement. Phase 2 is expected to establish the final grading, servicing, access, construction and conveyance requirements and determine whether the developer would prepare the lands for Town construction or undertake some or all of the park development. The current topsoil-storage use must also conclude and the lands must be graded to the Town's specifications before park construction can proceed. Until these matters are confirmed, staff cannot provide Council with a reliable construction start date or fully defined procurement and implementation schedule.

2027 Budget Considerations

On July 13, 2026, Council directed staff to include a Craighleith Community Park workplan for discussion through the 2027 Budget process. At that time, staff were continuing to refine the preliminary design and clarify the development schedule and potential delivery arrangement. Subsequent confirmation that the development would not advance to Phase 2 within the anticipated timeframe means that a reliable construction workplan and funding requirement cannot presently be established.

If site access is not available, a construction allocation in 2027 may not be appropriate. Depending on the outcome of ongoing coordination, a future budget request may instead be limited to work required to maintain project readiness, such as design updates, technical review, permitting, cost-estimate refreshes, or project-management support.

Options Considered

Option 1 — Continue coordination and provide semi-annual updates (Recommended)

Staff would retain the completed engagement results, refined concept plan and supporting technical information, continue coordinating with the developer and project partners, provide semi-annual updates to Council and report sooner if a material change affects the timing or delivery of the park.

Option 2 — Include construction funding in the 2027 Budget

Council could establish a 2027 capital budget for construction before site access is confirmed. This is not recommended because construction funding may not be required or usable in 2027 if the site cannot be accessed, and construction costs are likely to escalate yearly making it more likely to require additional funding to accommodate the construction cost.

Option 3 — Pause all work until future site access is known

The Town could suspend project coordination and design-related work until the developer confirms access. This may reduce short-term expenditures; however, it risks losing project continuity, delaying future implementation, and requiring additional effort to re-establish project knowledge and update designs.

Risks and Mitigation

Key risks include changes to the developer's construction schedule; incomplete confirmation of servicing, grading, access, and approval requirements; construction-cost escalation; and the need to update designs or cost estimates if implementation is delayed. Staff will mitigate these risks by retaining project records, maintaining coordination with the developer and project partners, identifying limited work necessary to maintain readiness, and returning to Council with semi-annual updates.

Next Steps

Subject to Council direction, staff will retain the public engagement results, concepts, and technical information; continue coordination regarding site access and construction sequencing; assess whether limited readiness work is required; monitor whether a future budget request is warranted for non-construction activities; and return to Council with semi-annual updates.

Community Impacts

Development of Craigleith Community Park is expected to provide social, recreational, environmental, and community-building benefits for Craigleith residents and the broader community. The completed engagement identified interest in walking paths, naturalized

plantings and shade trees, accessible play opportunities, parking, washroom facilities, and recreational amenities.

Deferring construction does not eliminate these anticipated benefits; rather, it delays delivery until site access and construction sequencing can be confirmed. The completed engagement and preliminary design work will help ensure that future implementation continues to reflect community priorities while balancing accessibility, natural-feature protection, traffic and parking considerations, operations, and long-term maintenance requirements.

Financial Impacts

No construction-budget approval is requested through this report.

Through the approved project budgets, approximately \$225,000 was authorized for consulting costs related to Craigleith Community Park. These costs support public engagement, project management, landscape design, site analysis and preparation of the preferred concept plan.

The July 2026 preliminary class “D” cost estimate identifies an estimated construction cost of approximately \$2.78 million for the preferred concept, including a 20 percent contingency. The estimate includes site preparation, grading, stormwater, water, wastewater and electrical servicing, pathways, parking, landscaping, a playground, a covered shade structure, a universal washroom, a small community stage, a rain garden, a boardwalk, irrigation and associated site furnishings.

When the approximately \$229,000 in actual and committed consulting costs is considered with the preliminary construction estimate, the total project value based on currently available information is approximately \$3.0 million. This is a preliminary planning estimate and not a proposed construction budget. It does not include future inflation, additional design or technical work that may be required.

During the 2026 Moreau Park funding discussions, the Parks and Recreation Development Charge Reserve Fund was forecast to have an available balance of approximately \$5.5 million. This was a financial planning estimate that considered forecast reserve activity and existing capital commitments.

Council subsequently approved an additional \$630,000 from the Parks and Recreation Development Charge Reserve Fund for Moreau Park Phase 1. On an indicative basis, applying this additional approval to the \$5.5 million forecast would result in a remaining balance of approximately \$4.9 million. Moreau Park Phase 1 also received \$635,000 from the Parks and Recreation Cash-in-Lieu Reserve Fund, which does not affect the Development Charge Reserve Fund balance. This assessment does not constitute a funding allocation or construction budget approval, and the amount ultimately funded through development charges will depend on confirmation of eligible costs and an updated reserve forecast.

Based on the current forecasted reserve balance and the preliminary project estimate, there appears to be sufficient capacity within the Parks and Recreation Development Charge Reserve Fund to support the development charge eligible costs associated with implementing the preferred concept. This provides reasonable assurance that funding capacity is not currently the primary constraint affecting the project. The principal constraints are the timing of the Phase 2 subdivision process, parkland conveyance and site access.

The timing and amount of any future capital budget request cannot be confirmed until the Phase 2 subdivision process, parkland conveyance, site access, grading, servicing and future delivery approach have been established. When the project is able to proceed, staff will return to Council with an updated cost estimate, an updated reserve forecast, recommended funding sources, lifecycle and operating implications, and a proposed implementation schedule.