



# Planning workshop: Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway Riverfront Linear Park Plan, Phase 2

Public consultation report, May 5, 2015

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## *I – Project description*

### Background

As part of the process of reviewing its Parkways Policy, the National Capital Commission (NCC) is developing a plan for the Sir John A. Macdonald linear park, along the south shore of the Ottawa River, from LeBreton Flats in the east to Mud Lake in the west. This plan will provide a vision and principles to guide the development of this sector of the national capital, while also identifying appropriate activities and uses for the park.

### Objective

**The creation of a linear park along the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway, between LeBreton Flats in the east and Mud Lake in the west, aims to encourage people to visit this sector more often, and to offer a variety of uses that will contribute to the quality of life of residents as well as to the visitor experience.**

### Plan development phases

- Phase 1: Report on current conditions and issues
- Phase 2: Preliminary concept and design principles
- Phase 3: Final plan

## *II – Consultation process*

### Overview

**Date and location:** Tuesday, May 5, 2015, NCC Capital Urbanism Lab, 40 Elgin Street, Ottawa, 5th Floor

**Time:** 7 pm to 9 pm

**Format:** Planning workshop

Each of the four segments of the waterfront linear park was presented at a station. Participants were able to visit the various stations and fill out a questionnaire.

## Consultation objective:

The objective of this second planning workshop was to present the draft concept of the Sir John A. Macdonald linear park, as well as the draft concepts for each segment of the park. Members of the public were invited to study the proposed concepts, and share their ideas and comments. The NCC was also seeking comments on the priorities for the next five years.

## Consultation process and tools

- **Workshop:**
  - The interactive, roaming workshop method allowed participants to comment on the various ideas proposed for the linear park concept. Each of the four segments of the linear park was illustrated on a different panel, with one panel displayed per station. Participants were invited to visit the various stations that interested them. At each station, NCC staff presented the ideas and proposed plans for that segment of the linear park, and participants were able to ask questions. Using a questionnaire-guide, participants were then asked to indicate on a chart what they thought were the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed plans, and to add comments for that particular segment. When the allotted time was up, the participants moved on to the next station, and NCC staff repeated the process for a new group of participants.
  - The linear park as a whole was displayed at a fifth station, where participants voted for the three projects that they wanted to see completed in the short term. They were also able to provide comments on “post-its” which they could stick on the map, or they could simply provide these comments on the questionnaire form.
- **Online consultation:** Reference documents on the project concept, as well as the questionnaire were posted on the NCC website from May 6 to 25, 2015.

## Invitations and promotion

- An email invitation was sent to the following stakeholders:<sup>1</sup>
  - Interest groups (residents, environmental protection groups, tourism industry, businesses)
  - Elected municipal representatives
  - Federal and municipal partners
- Members of the media were invited to participate.
- The workshop was advertised in local newspapers.

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1. Members of First Nations are participating in an ongoing dialogue and separate mobilization process.

- The workshop was promoted through Twitter and Facebook.

## Participants

### *Community*

Seventy-eight (78) participants representing more than 10 interest groups participated in the workshop.

Thirty-four (34) people filled out an online questionnaire.

### *Elected representatives*

Linda Last on behalf of Councillor Marianne Wilkinson

### *Media*

Metroland Media

## *III – Consultation highlights*

### **A. Themes**

The linear park plan proposes improvements to infrastructure on and access to the Sir John A. Macdonald waterfront for the enjoyment of all users. Points of interest in the area include animation areas, connectivity and permeability, balanced mobility, pathways and trails, valued ecological diversity, shoreline restoration, and recreational opportunities. Participants learned about existing conditions in the area, viewed proposed conceptual plans and were asked to offer suggestions on features, improvements and access enhancements to the linear park. The following are the main comments we heard from the public regarding the linear park.

#### **Placemaking**

- People are very supportive of the overall concept that strengthens people's relationship to the park and the river.
- Develop signature, context-sensitive spaces.

#### **Green aspect**

- Keep the green aspect: leave the shoreline free of construction; do not construct buildings or hard surfaces.
- There is interest in having potential commercial uses such as restaurants, but they must respect the park-like setting and scenic character of the lands and respect the views and public enjoyment of the spaces.

- Do not introduce retail that would replace neighbourhood businesses in nearby communities. Instead, use wayfinding to enhance interaction between the park and the communities.

### **Multi-use pathways**

- Resolve conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians and other users, such as inline skaters and skateboarders, while keeping paths for recreational cycling and walking along the shore. Many comments and suggestions stated that segregation of users is required by adding cycling lanes on the parkway.
- Keep the pathway as far as possible away from the parkway to reduce traffic noise on the pathway.
- Many participants want a pathway exclusively for their use (faster cycling, recreational cycling, walking and so on).
- Need context-sensitive approach to amenities and facilities (i.e. pathways, parking and so on) to accommodate users, while respecting the intrinsic qualities of parklands.

### **Parkway**

- People are supportive of the parkway realignment, but are questioning the need for a four-lane parkway, which they believe is contradictory to the vision of the linear park.
- Discussion on parking with some demanding more parking to attract visitors, while others think that there should be no additional parking.
- Acknowledged connectivity improvements with adjacent communities and suggestions to add more, safe at-grade crossings.
- Suggestions to address some of the parkway issues with other methods such as reduced speed limits, reduced traffic volumes, removal of lanes, roundabouts for traffic calming and speed reduction.

### **Animation areas**

- Bring all animation or commercial services as close as possible to the parkway, on the north side, to keep as much park space as possible closer to the river.
- The activity nodes should be focused on the two light rail transit (LRT) stations: Cleary and Dominion. This would encourage the use of public transit to access the park. By creating activity hubs around these stations, the NCC can expect there to be greater use of the lands.
- Provide more opportunities for park-related commercial facilities (e.g. Atlantis site) with retail and/or servicing associated directly with park uses.
- Bundle Maplelawn with Rochester Field for a heritage-themed walk and park-like treatment.

## Recreation

- Offer kayak and canoe rentals at water access and boat launches, and offer a place to store personally owned kayaks and canoes.
- Focus active recreation on existing areas to optimize services and avoid dispersion of many activity areas.
- Provide a diversity of recreational areas and uses for different needs.

## Conservation areas

- Many people are unaware of the Mud Lake Conservation Area.
- People are supportive of the various proposals for Mud Lake, but are against overwhelming this environmentally sensitive area.
- Better define the west portal/gateway by establishing a properly connected terminus and/or punctuating it with a key facility, such as an interpretive centre.
- Demonstrate leadership in environmental stewardship.
- People are supportive of shoreline restoration and landscape enhancements.

## B. Sectors

Participants were invited to share their comments and ideas at four stations, each representing a specific geographic sector. Detailed comments for individual sectors are found in Appendix 1, and are summarized below.

### Mud Lake/Deschênes Rapids

- Several people did not know about the extraordinary natural environment at Mud Lake, which is just off the Capital Pathway. How can the visibility of this place be increased without being a detriment to its fragile environment?
- Several people emphasized the importance of protecting biodiversity and ecosystems in this sector and reducing noise as much as possible.
- Several people loved the idea of building a walkway and lookout above the river and promoting the creation of aquatic habitats.
- A large number of participants indicated that access needed to be improved and services (such as parking, trails and so on) expanded to meet the needs of a larger number of visitors to the linear park.
- Several people questioned if public transit services would be provided at the linear park.
- All participants would like to have pathways exclusively for specific uses (faster cycling, recreational cycling, and walking).
- The western entrance should be made more prominent by establishing a special public transit station or specific service such as an interpretation centre.

## Kitchissippi—Westboro

- Several people also supported the idea of building a walkway above the river and creating aquatic habitats.
- Participants supported the idea of adding a buffer zone, through sufficient replanting of trees, while also protecting views, and creating more green space close to the river.
- Activity centres should be grouped close to Cleary and Dominion light rail transit stations, which would encourage the use of public transit to access the park. In this way, the NCC could promote the optimal use of the land.
- The four lanes of the parkway are not necessary and are a detriment to visibility for the linear park. If the NCC would like to create a linear park, then automobile traffic should be reduced to minimize noise, increase safety and provide more green space.
- The parkway design should be modified and speed limit signage should be added to reduce vehicle speed.
- Several people indicated that bike paths should be separate from pedestrian paths to meet traffic needs and ensure user safety; some people indicated that cycling lanes should be added to the parkway.
- Traffic circles should be added to decrease vehicle traffic and speed.
- Additional safe, level crossings should be built.
- It should be possible to rent a canoe or kayak, as well as to store personally owned kayaks and canoes at water access points and boat launches.
- Westboro Beach should be promoted to make it a key attraction, and year-round access to the park and activities should be offered.
- Commercial services associated with the park should be added (for example, in the Atlantis sector).
- Maplelawn Garden and Rochester Field should be linked by developing a walking trail with a historical theme.
- It is important to ensure that the train is entirely underground, as well as to minimize the visual impact (of things such as fences and wiring).

## Champlain Bridge—Remic Rapids Park

- Some people wanted to preserve the “green” character of the site, while others suggested that a medium-scale activity centre be established, which could include a restaurant, natural play structures for children, an orchestra pavilion and a historical walking trail, which would also preserve the site’s natural character and serenity.
- Resolve conflicts between cyclists, pedestrians and other users (such as skateboarders), while retaining the pathways along the shore for recreational cyclists and pedestrians.
- It is necessary to resolve the problems that arise on the pathways due to high volumes of traffic. Several comments and ideas leaned toward the separation of pathway users.

- Participants reaffirmed that they would like the NCC to address the problems associated with the parkway (speed and volume of car traffic, lane reduction) in the development of this plan.
- Participants were in favour of establishing a historical route highlighting the important heritage contribution of this sector.
- Suggestions were made to improve the facilities at Remic Rapids Park, such as fountains, a dock for kayaks and other boats, food counters and a beach; to offer services year-round, as much as possible; and to preserve a balance with the natural shore.
- Signage must be improved to indicate the various pathways, particularly under the Champlain Bridge.
- Some people preferred that there be no music on Bate Island.
- Some people were in favour of installing lighting under the bridge, while others were opposed because of the desire to protect conservation areas and nocturnal birds.

### Parkdale/Bayview

- Parking space was a major point of discussion. Some people thought that it was necessary to attract more visitors to the park, and others felt that no more parking spaces should be added.
- It is necessary to concentrate activities and commercial services as close to the parkway as possible and on the north side to optimize the space allocated for the linear park.
- Signage should be installed to direct park users to the various neighbourhoods, rather than encourage new businesses to set up close to the park, since the latter would be harmful to local business efforts.
- For safety reasons, it may not be appropriate to allow aquatic activities in this sector (this is where firefighters train).
- The pathways should be as far as possible away from the parkway in order to reduce the exposure to noise caused by car traffic.
- This sector has become very noisy and is not a good location to establish a linear park.
- Participants supported the changes suggested for the intersection at Parkdale Avenue that are aimed at creating a larger green space.
- Some people supported restoring the wetlands.
- Some people were in favour of installing lighting under the Prince of Wales Bridge, while others were opposed because of the desire to protect conservation areas and nocturnal birds.
- More emphasis must be placed on winter activities and maintenance in order to enable cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.
- Signage should not be installed close to adjacent neighbourhoods.
- Only temporary restaurant options (such as ice cream counters, food trucks and so on) should be allowed.



## *IV – NCC response*

The NCC is responsible for protecting and preserving the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway for all Canadians. The parkway is regarded as a signature feature and a key element in terms of showcasing the Capital. All comments provided by the participants at the workshop and in the online survey will be reviewed when the detailed concept is reviewed. Many comments will also be included as policies in the plan.

The plan recognizes and builds on the intrinsic scenic, recreational, environmental and cultural qualities of the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway corridor, and acknowledges the public desire for unimpeded and safe access to the river. This consultation has provided ideas and suggestions on how to best reconnect people to the river, enhance views, and accommodate attractions and animation areas that will make the waterfront more accessible and enjoyable for everyone.

Based on the input provided by participants, the NCC intends for this plan to include protected conservation areas, formal and informal public event space, gathering areas, shoreline access, interpretation, recreation, conservation areas, river walks and bike paths, as well as green, tranquil spaces. Although the many comments will be studied thoroughly as the plan is being developed, at this point the NCC can confirm the following main key facts:

### **Will the Mud Lake sector be protected?**

The entirety of the linear park area is included within the Important Bird Area (IBA) boundaries. The NCC recognizes the importance of valued natural habitats, including the IBA, as well as various species. The NCC's intention is to improve the natural habitat and functions, as well as create new aquatic habitat along the shoreline, where possible. Mud Lake/Britannia Conservation Area is the most ecologically significant urban natural landscape in the National Capital Region. Although the NCC intends to animate the linear park, it also intends to protect and manage this conservation area in a sustainable way.

### **Will the NCC relocate or realign any parts of the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway?**

There is today approximately 68 hectares of land between the Ottawa River shore and the lanes of the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway. As part of the western LRT 100-day memorandum of understanding, the NCC and City of Ottawa agreed on realigning an approximately one-kilometre section of the parkway slightly to the south and on top of the LRT tunnel. This realignment will increase the land area by 38 percent, bringing the total to approximately 93 hectares of land between the river's edge and the parkway.

The draft park concept also indicates several other opportunities for slight realignments of the parkway lanes in other sectors of the linear park to potentially create more public space along the river's edge. Any additional realignment would be subject to extensive feasibility and impact analysis, and would depend on funding availability.

**Will capacity be reduced on the parkway as a result of the linear park? In other words, will the parkway be reduced from four to two lanes?**

The NCC's long-term view is to undertake an in-depth feasibility analysis of potential lane reduction. The Western LRT agreement with the City of Ottawa offers an opportunity to start this analysis. Any modifications to the parkway would need to consider potential network impacts and mitigation measures.

**How can we be assured that this new buried LRT alignment will not change?**

The NCC and City of Ottawa have formally agreed to the solution recommended by the 100-day LRT memorandum of understanding (MOU), and project development will respect the MOU.

**Are commercial opportunities being considered in the park as part of this plan?**

The main building blocks for this plan include facilitating access and enjoyment of the river and its shoreline, through passive and active recreation, events and amenities. Waterfront-appropriate commercial amenities are therefore being considered for integration into the plan (e.g. provision of public, non-motorized boat, kayak and pedal boat rentals, repair services, and instruction programs). Other waterfront commercial functions could include seasonal food services (e.g. concession, or leased commercial kiosks, small-scale mobile food services, cafés or ice cream parlours, and artisan spaces).

**Is the NCC contemplating development of the Rochester Field lands?**

Waterfront parks typically provide fundamental environmental, aesthetic and recreational benefits. They have, in some cases, also been shown to be a source of positive economic benefit. They can enhance property values, and bring in home buyers and employment to nearby areas. The linear park is expected to transform the parkway lands from partially utilized and moderately accessible to a more vibrant, active area meant to improve the quality of life of Capital residents and visitors.

The City and NCC have, as part of the Western LRT 100-day MOU, agreed to designate two thirds in the northeast section of Rochester Field as "general urban" land use, with the remaining one third of the western portion of the site to be retained as parkland.

Any future development of the northeast portion of Rochester Field would be dealt with through a community planning process in collaboration with the City. The NCC does not at this time have any preconceived notions about the appropriate use or built form, and is committed to ensuring a compatible use with the Maplelawn site.

**What is the status of parcels of NCC land near Burnside and Forward avenues?**

According to the Capital Urban Lands Plan approved by the NCC Board in April 2015, the parcels of land at Burnside and Forward avenues are designated as Capital urban green space and part of the

National Interest Land Mass. The site is part of the ongoing planning process for the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway waterfront linear park. The adjacent site is used for the Embassy of Indonesia. The Capital Urban Lands Plan permits re-designation of the lands as a future diplomatic precinct or for other government land uses, if there is a need.

### **How accessible will the linear park be?**

The NCC aims to ensure that the waterfront linear park is universally accessible in order for all users to enjoy their visits. For example, the design of park features could include the following:

- walkways, ramps and stair surfaces with special textures that persons with a visual impairment can more easily distinguish;
- water features that could have distinctive sounds to help orient people within the park;
- electronically interactive kiosks to provide park information and wayfinding in both tactile and audio formats.

### **What actions is the NCC taking to avoid conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians on existing pathways in the corridor?**

The NCC recognizes that areas of conflict exist along its multi-use pathways, due to the pathways' growing popularity and the fact that use of pathways is shared by people engaged in various active modes of transportation. The NCC is increasingly asked by users for measures to avoid conflicts and ensure greater safety. We are proposing segregated cycling trails and walking paths in parts of the linear park concept plan.

### **What will the NCC do to preserve and enhance the forest growth as a solid buffer along the south edge of the linear park abutting residential areas?**

The treed landscape of the parkway corridor continues to play a critical role in preserving and protecting the original intent, purpose and character of the parkway. The NCC is committed to preserving, maintaining and enhancing the arboreal component, which defines the aesthetic quality and character of the parkway lands, including the waterfront linear park.

A particular example is the “stacked” solution reached collaboratively by the NCC and City, whereby the LRT tunnel runs under the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway, effectively avoiding the need to remove mature tree growth along the south edge of the parkway lands and resulting in additional shoreline green space for the proposed Sir John A. Macdonald linear park. The preservation and replacement of ash trees is one of the NCC's priorities for the proposed linear park.

### **Will there be additional amenities like public washrooms in the linear park?**

Among the many main ideas emerging from consultations on the linear park is the need for public restrooms, water fountains, benches, bike parking and so on. The draft concept proposes a number of public facilities at various locations throughout the park.

**Is the NCC consulting the First Nations on the linear park concept plan?**

The NCC is engaged in consultations with Aboriginal communities, including the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, the Pikwàkanagàn First Nation and the Algonquins of Ontario. These consultations are ongoing, and their comments and input to the planning process for the Sir John A. Macdonald waterfront linear park are welcome.

*V – Next steps*

The concept plan will be presented to the NCC Board of Directors at the end of 2016. While more detailed design and implementation is subject to the availability of funding, the NCC envisages that the section of the park between Woodroffe and the Westboro Beach/Atlantis sector will be developed in conjunction with the completion of the LRT.

## APPENDIX 1

### Questionnaire comments on the preliminary concept

#### Questionnaire, section 1

*For each sector, respondents indicated what they liked best and what they liked least, and made suggestions.*

#### Champlain Bridge—Remic Rapids Park

##### What respondents liked best

- Acknowledgement of a fragile ecosystem
  - Protection of natural bird habitat and shorelines
  - Tree planting
  - Unpaved pathways
- Programming, facilities, access
  - Neighbourhood/sector links
  - Winter activities
  - Boat cruise and beach access ramps
  - Restaurants
  - Multi-use pathways
- Historical route
- Better pathway network with separate and improved pathways
- Champlain Bridge lighting
- Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway realigned to the south, away from the shoreline

##### What respondents liked least

- Pathway network
  - Too many separate pathways: loss of green space
  - The plan did not propose changes with respect to the pathways.
  - Pathway narrowed under Champlain Bridge

- Access
  - Difficult access from nearby neighbourhoods because of frequent traffic jams
  - Not enough bus routes
  - Poorly located parking areas
- Champlain Bridge lighting (artificial)
- No rest areas or sports activities for children
- Music on Bate Island

### **What respondents suggested**

- Encourage a variety of sports activities
  - Kayak and canoe put-in/take-out points
  - Opportunities to play in the rapids
  - Beaches, preferably without excessive programming
  - Separate cycling and pedestrian pathways
  - Create exercise spaces on the south side
- Services and programming
  - Food trucks and restaurants
  - Washrooms
  - Winter chalets
  - A stage where musical groups can perform
  - Improved parking areas
- Protection of the natural environment
  - Natural play areas (with logs, for example) and natural wildlife corridors
  - Conservation of maximum green space
- Management of automobile traffic from Island Park Drive to the bridge; more pathways within the urban fabric
- Improved signage
- Prohibit aquatic sports enthusiasts from playing in the rapids

## Parkdale—Bayview

### What respondents liked best

- New use of Prince of Wales Bridge for cyclists and pedestrians
- Services and programming
  - Spots for contemplation, view of islands, bridge lighting
  - Restaurants at Rochester Field
  - Commemorative activities, sports and music events year-round
  - Washrooms
- Improvements to, and conservation of, aquatic habitats
- Restored wetlands
- Modified Parkdale Avenue intersection
- Installation of boat launches for canoes and kayaks
- More pedestrian crossings; more links between cycling pathways and nearby neighbourhoods
- Parkway shifted south; use of reclaimed space to build separate cycling and pedestrian pathways

### What respondents liked least

- Not enough action taken to prevent destruction of natural environments
  - Bridge lighting causes light pollution and thus endangers nocturnal wildlife, and consumes large amounts of energy
  - Few green wooded spaces, particularly where permanent businesses and parking are to be located
  - Programming near the Parkdale Avenue intersection, which impairs the unspoiled character of the present environment
- Inadequate safety measures
  - Danger associated with canoe and kayak access to Ottawa River rapids
  - Insufficient level crossings for pedestrians; excessive speed of automobile traffic
  - Multi-use pathways
  - Additional pathways or routes for persons with reduced mobility to reach the river
- Difficult access

- From Tunney's Pasture and surrounding area
- No new routes to access parks and the river
- Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway
  - Disrupts views from the park (unattractive, noisy roadway)
  - No evening lighting; women do not feel safe
- Trails not developed for cross-country skiing or snowshoeing in winter
- Facilities and programming
  - Birds at visitor picnic tables
  - Varied programming limited by narrow park profile

### **What respondents suggested**

- Services, facilities and programming
  - Food services, preferably food trucks to avoid permanent damage
  - Lighting of pathways and links
  - Parking areas, including areas for kayakers and canoeists
  - Winter activities; activities near bus stations and Westboro Beach
  - Smooth integration of linear park with LeBreton Flats; dog park on Lemieux Island; children's play areas; spots for contemplation
  - Public presentation on water filtration plant near LeBreton Flats
  - Optimum use of Bate Island
- Parkway and pathway redevelopment
  - Narrower parkway; use of former vehicle lane for cycling
  - Wider multi-use pathway
  - Separate cycling and pedestrian pathways
  - Signage directing people to business areas
- Protection of natural habitats
  - Conservation of maximum green space; optimum use of green space; removal of Parkdale Avenue cloverleaf ramps
  - Parkway shifted away from the river, to reduce harmful effects of vehicle exhaust fumes



- Partnerships and cooperation
  - With community associations
  - With the City of Ottawa, to develop Lemieux Island
  - With the Zibi project by Windmill, for contemplation spots and activities
  - Compatibility with public transit at the Bayview, Tunney's Pasture and Scott Street stations; development of LeBreton Flats
- Improved links with nearby neighbourhoods; easier pedestrian and cyclist movement between the parkway and the residential complexes near LeBreton Flats
- Security and redevelopment
  - Reduced speed limit on the parkway
  - Parkway narrowed to two lanes; one-way restrictions during regular working hours
  - Parkdale Avenue intersection replaced by a traffic circle

## Kitchissippi—Westboro

### What respondents liked best

- Boardwalks overlooking shoreline
- Platforms and spots for contemplation along boardwalks, central spaces
- Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway narrowed, shifted south to create more green space
- Better access
  - To the water and boat launches for kayaks and canoes
  - For cyclists and pedestrians from southern Ottawa
  - From Richmond Road, nearby neighbourhoods, and the Dominion and Cleary stations
  - At Rochester Field
- Respect for environment
  - Buffer zone to reduce noise from nearby roadway
  - Limited height of trees in buffer zone
  - Development of aquatic habitats
  - More green space
- Programming and services
  - Festivals

- Public art
- Washrooms
- Restaurants and spots to relax
- Maplelawn Gardens included in preliminary concept

### **What respondents liked least**

A number of respondents commented that certain expressions used in the presentation, such as “public art loop” and “cultural historic node” were undefined. A few respondents also found the map very hard to read.

Other weak points identified were the following.

- Width of Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway: straightening the route will increase the speed of vehicle traffic
- Pedestrian level crossings: speed of vehicle traffic constitutes a safety risk for pedestrians
- Not enough links between the linear park and Westboro Beach
- Programming and services
  - Public art perceived as imposing
  - Too much urban development
  - No washrooms
- Inappropriate infrastructures for various sports
  - Multi-use pathway too narrow, particularly to the north of Westboro Beach
  - No programming near light rail stations, thus affecting optimum use of light rail by cyclists and pedestrians
  - Boardwalks concealing and preventing access to shorelines by river travellers
- Other comments
  - Light rail stations perceived as unfavourable to contemplation
  - Apparent lack of provision in linear park plan for winter activities such as cross-country skiing and snowshoeing
  - Use Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens as inspiration for development of Rochester Field

## What respondents suggested

- Services and programming
  - A variety of restaurants
  - Public art loop
  - Evening programming; lighting of pathway along river
  - Washrooms, drinking fountains, parking spaces
  - Location-specific permits for consumption of alcohol in plastic containers
- Separate cycling and pedestrian pathways
- Improve water access for various sports
  - Beaches
  - Floating docks for recreational fishing
  - Boat launches for non-motorized boats
- Improve public safety
  - Widen the multi-use pathway, by narrowing the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway
  - Add more pedestrian crossings, particularly near Wavell Avenue, and from one side of the river to the other
  - Reduce the parkway speed limit to help reduce noise
- Promote public transit
  - Emphasize urban development, primarily near light rail stations
  - Public transit access to and from Tunney's Pasture
  - A lovely spot for contemplation at the Cleary light rail station
- Nature conservation
  - Plant trees, avoiding tall species so as not to block the high view, particularly where diseased trees have been cut down
  - Conserve a maximum amount of green space
- Encouraging physical activity
  - Install exercise stations
  - Development of linear park for winter sports
- Cooperation with the City of Ottawa to move the Cleary light rail station onto City land

## Mud Lake—Deschênes Rapids

### What respondents liked best

- Boardwalks over the Ottawa River
- Respect the natural environment: enhance aquatic habitat, ensure no harm to ecosystems, 100-year flood plain, expand valued habitat area
- Realign the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway away from the shoreline, and add more links to neighbourhoods
- Facilities
  - Dog access
  - Washrooms
  - Drinking fountains
  - Kayak and canoe access
  - Underground pedestrian crossings
- Programming
  - A variety of new businesses, including restaurants
  - Consultation with ornithologists
  - Variety of activities
  - Birdwatching tours, platforms for contemplation
  - Interpretation panels
- Better access
- Separation of multi-use pathway into cycling and pedestrian pathways
- Pathway restoration
- Quiet setting for listening to bird calls and appreciating silence

### What respondents liked least

- Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway
  - Lack of safety: too many lanes, traffic much too fast
  - Parkway realigned away from the shoreline: if the preliminary concept is adopted, the parkway will be too close to nearby neighbourhoods, too noisy and dangerous
- Multi-use pathway: dangerous for all sports enthusiasts who use it

- Heavier use will put pressure on natural habitats and plant species
- Boardwalks over shoreline
  - Probable destruction by river ice
  - Too expensive
- Access
  - To views (poor location of spot for contemplation near Britannia Bay)
  - To the water
  - To Mud Lake, because of pathway closure
  - From neighbourhoods
  - From the west and southeast
  - From Howe Street and Britannia Road
  - Using public transit
- Other problems noted by respondents
  - Dog access
  - Bird droppings

### **What respondents suggested**

- More services
  - Kayak and canoe storage
  - Evening lighting
  - Public washrooms
  - Better parking
  - Emergency telephone
- More programming
  - Restaurants
  - Sandy beaches
  - Create an application, and establish a shuttle service based on the history of the area
  - Children's play areas
- Better cycling pathway network

- Separation of multi-use pathway into cycling and pedestrian pathways
- Parking areas for cyclists
- Extended hours for Sunday Bikedays
- Environmental protection
  - Greater emphasis on ecological areas
  - A park that still has open spaces and trees
  - Erosion-prevention measures: clear visitor notification of conservation areas
  - Ban on boardwalks, which disturb the ecosystem, and on buildings higher than the trees, which block the view of the landscape
  - Silence
- Ban on fires, camping, cycling, dog access, hunting, fishing, motorized vessels, geocaching and damage to the natural environment
- Access
  - To the water
  - Using public transit
  - From west [and east] of New Orchard
  - Cyclist and pedestrian bridge from north of Mud Lake to the Voyageurs Pathway
- Safety
  - Reduced speed limit and fewer lanes on the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway
  - Wider multi-use pathway
  - Stiffer fines
  - More pedestrian crossings
- Redevelopment
  - Boardwalks over remaining muddy (wet) areas
  - Replacement of Richmond Road bridge by a traffic circle
  - Berms to reduce parkway traffic noise

## Questionnaire, section 2

### Programming locations

**Respondents were asked to indicate whether they thought the activity programming described in the preliminary concept was appropriate.**

Most respondents indicated that the balance between programming areas and other areas of the park was appropriate. That said, some respondents would like to see more programming all along the park, while many others are adamant that programming is superfluous and that visitors are attracted by natural beauty alone. The following additional comments were made more than once.

- The priority is to restore the shoreline and aquatic areas
- Provide easier access to the water for non-motorized vessels such as kayaks and canoes; and create exercise stations to encourage physical fitness
- It's a good idea to feature Rochester Field as a destination, with a multi-purpose building (housing meeting rooms, a restaurant and a patio, for example)
- Greater consideration is needed in terms of winter use of the park; optimize visitation to the area on a year-round basis, for example, by developing cross-country ski trails and snowshoe trails.

**Respondents indicated the following additional activities as being suitable for these locations.**

- Businesses such as patios, cafés, snack bars, public places, restaurants
- History, archaeology, theatre, public art loop, interpretation
- Interaction with nature, birdwatching
- Picnic areas, barbecues
- Natural games for children
- Services: washrooms, drinking fountains, evening lighting, better access including pedestrian crossings

According to respondents, it is of prime importance to separate cycling and pedestrian pathways all along the parkway, and to encourage the use of non-motorized boats by providing boat launches for kayaks and canoes. Trails for winter sports should also be developed.

Some respondents also noted that the linear park's natural environment must be protected, particularly the Mud Lake conservation area, as well as the Important Bird Area (IBA); noise pollution must be limited.

Others stressed the importance of reducing the number of lanes and the speed limit on the parkway, banning motorized activities, restoring natural habitats, and allowing only non-permanent businesses in the park.

A small number of respondents thought that mixed development along the river would be preferable.

## Shoreline improvement areas

### **Respondents indicated areas needing shoreline improvement.**

Most respondents simply indicated that the condition of the shoreline could be improved all along the park, particularly where the pathway runs close to the shoreline. Some respondents stressed the following needs: protect present ecosystems and allow plants to grow; clean up bird droppings; narrow the Sir John A. Macdonald Parkway, improve access to the water for kayaks and canoes; improve access to the park by means of cycling and pedestrian links. One respondent felt that it would be an excellent idea to build a boardwalk over the river, in parallel with the creation of aquatic habitats, so as to attract visitors without damaging shorelines. Some respondents suggested that naturalists and conservation authorities be asked to participate.

Other respondents pointed to specific locations.

- From east of Mud Lake to west of the Deschênes Rapids
- The wooded areas on each side of Westboro Beach
- Some areas between Remic Rapids and the Champlain Bridge
- The Cleary light rail transit station
- Between Tunney's Pasture and Island Park Drive

## Cyclists and pedestrians

### **Respondents indicated high-conflict locations for the NCC to address.**

Most respondents stressed the need to improve user safety all along the parkway, by separating cycling and pedestrian pathways or by widening the multi-use pathway. Reducing the parkway to two lanes would solve many problems, including the high volume of pathway use and the presence of speeding cyclists among recreational users (seniors and families). A pedestrian pathway along the shoreline would be another way to separate user groups.

As well, more pedestrian and cyclist crossings are needed, as is evening lighting to improve visibility along the pathways. Narrow pathways, at the following locations, need attention.



- Near Woodroffe Avenue
- At uneven sections, narrow sections and areas where Canada geese congregate
- At Mud Lake, where geocachers disturb other visitors who want to enjoy a quiet spot
- West of the Champlain Bridge, for safety reasons

## High-priority projects

Respondents indicated the following sectors as having high priority.

1. Mud Lake/Deschênes Rapids
2. Kitchissippi/Westboro
3. Bayview/Parkdale
4. Champlain Bridge/Remic Rapids

According to the preliminary concept map, to which respondents added comments during the public consultation, the most popular projects are the following.

- Prince of Wales Bridge
- Boardwalks over the shorelines
- Urban redevelopment, particularly Rochester Field, the cultural historic node, and the public art loop
- Westboro Beach restoration
- Possible parkway realignment
- New links with neighbourhoods
- Restoration of aquatic habitats

## High-priority projects that respondents would like to see completed in the short term

- ❖ Restaurants and food trucks
- ❖ Boat launches, storage areas and improved access to the water for kayaking, canoeing, fishing and swimming
- ❖ More services, particularly winter pathway maintenance
- ❖ Interpretive panels along pathways

## **Additional important projects identified by respondents**

- Boardwalks over the Ottawa River
- Redevelopment
  - Reduced speed limits on the parkway
  - Access corridors
  - Parkway realigned to the south
  - Parking areas in the space reclaimed by realigning the parkway
  - Removal of Parkdale Avenue cloverleaf ramps
- Protection of the ecosystem
- Urban development
  - Public art
  - Historical interpretation centre
  - Rochester Field development
  - Picnic areas and barbecues
- Easy access to sectors: signage and links to and through nearby neighbourhoods
- Services
  - Washrooms
  - Garbage containers and benches
  - Parking areas
  - Drinking fountains
- Separate cycling and pedestrian pathways, or wider multi-use pathway
- Kitchissippi/Westboro
- Spots for contemplation
- Bayview Bridge
- Champlain Bridge

## Additional suggestions by respondents

- Separation of the multi-use pathway into a cycling pathway (preferably with lanes for fast cycling and recreational cycling) and a pedestrian pathway
- Parkway narrowed to two lanes; reduced speed limit on parkway, particularly on straight stretches; traffic circle at Parkdale Avenue
- Better access to the water and to the park, by means of more links<sup>2</sup> and parking areas
- Park should focus on the river, not on vehicles and parking areas
- Urgency of shoreline cleanup; local volunteer overload
- Inclusion of Gatineau in the plan, so as to have more crossings from one side of the river to the other
- Promotion of active, not passive, transportation: more pedestrian crossings, a pedestrian and cyclist bridge over the Deschênes Rapids, improvements to the south side of the multi-use pathway, fewer parking areas
- Discreet infrastructure that blends well with the natural landscape
- The current link between Ambleside Drive and the park is on land that belongs to condo owners. Ensure that the new link between Ambleside and the park does not invade the privacy of area residents. Further, given that parking is limited along Ambleside, where many of the residents are seniors, increased traffic and parking present a safety risk for those residents who get around primarily on foot
- Create soccer fields, diving boards at beaches, natural play areas for children, floating docks, non-motorized boat rentals, boat storage, loudspeakers to encourage popular activities, development to encourage winter activities including winter biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing
- Extend the Sunday Bikedays idea to all non-rush hour periods
- Find a name for the linear park that is more significant and that corresponds to what the park will mean to the community
- Instead of over-extended programming, limit the programming to a few specific aspects that will increase park use, such as children's play areas, music, a gondola over the Deschênes Rapids, historical interpretation, community gardens, dog parks, cafés near or on the water

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2. From Preston Street to the river; to Lemieux Island; between Cleary station and Dominion Street; and from neighbourhoods

- Place priority on the conservation of natural habitats along the shoreline
  - Septic tanks instead of sewer connections for washrooms
  - Varied plantings along shorelines
  - Rain gardens; natural beaches for turtles
  - Limit light pollution, so as not to disturb bird life
- No more right-turn and left-turn restrictions at the Parkdale Avenue intersection
- More services: washrooms, evening lighting, parking areas