

The id8 Downsview process launched an online feedback tool on May 20, 2020 at [id8downsview.ca](http://id8downsview.ca) to seek feedback from the public on the following questions about Downsview:

1. **What do you value?** These are things that you like, and potentially want to see more of.
2. **What challenges do you see or experience?** These are things that you don't like and wouldn't want to see repeated.
3. **What opportunities would you like to see considered,** particularly for the future of the 520 acres?
4. **Do you have any other advice for the id8 Downsview team?**

People had the option of responded on a map of the area and/or providing responses in writing.

This tool is one of several public and stakeholder consultation activities conducted during Round One of the engagement program for id8 Downsview. It was not designed or intended to ensure a statistically significant sample, but to capture a range of perspectives. A hard copy of this online feedback tool was (and continues to be) available by mail, on request.

This summary captures feedback received to these questions online and by mail as of June 30, 2020. The feedback tool remains open at this time.

id8 Downsview

## Social Pinpoint and Mail-in Workbook Feedback Summary

May 20, 2020 – June 30, 2020

Total unique online visits: 185

Total mail-in workbooks received: 15

### SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK

Participants placed a **total of 204** markers on a scalable map focusing on the Downsview area (see screenshot of map below) including:



147 yellow markers to identify “Opportunities” participants suggested that Northcrest and Canada Lands consider for the future of the 520 acres;

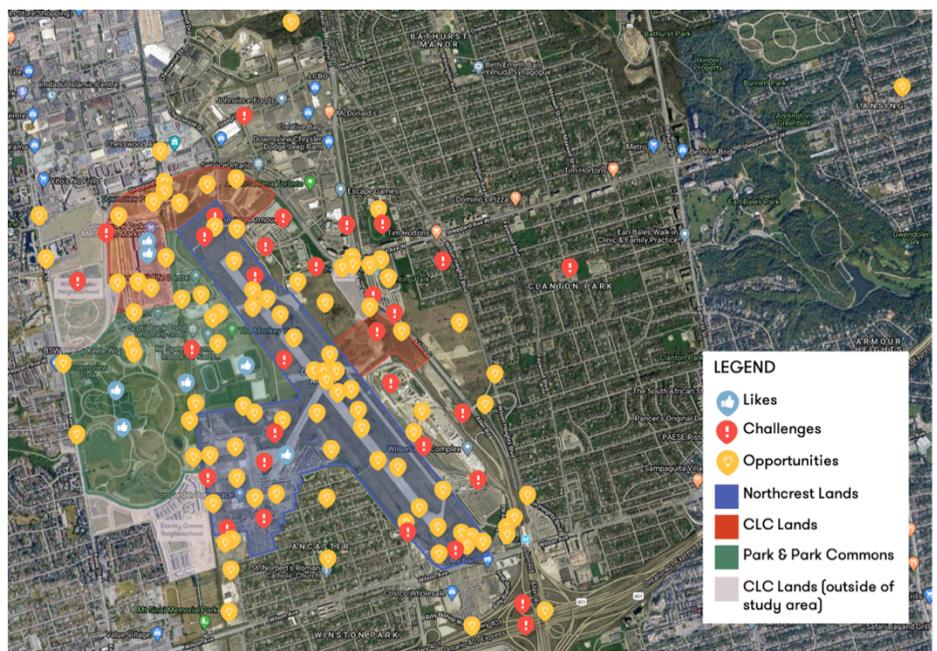


14 blue markers to identify “Likes” that reflect things in the area that participants said they value and want to see more of; and



42 red markers to identify “Challenges” that reflect things participants don't like and wouldn't want to see repeated.

There were no restrictions on the number of markers a participant could put on the map.



Many participants provided written feedback, which in some cases was place-specific and in other cases was more general. This feedback is summarized below.

## **OPPORTUNITIES PARTICIPANTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE CONSIDERED**

### Expand and improve access to usable greenspace

- Improve and create more connections to Downsview Park for pedestrians. The routes should have scenic commuter paths (i.e. straight routes from the park to transit.) East-west connections to the park are also important as they are currently separated by train tracks, but make sure that such connections do not ruin the greenspace. Consider building a bridge accessible by pedestrians and cyclists only.
- Additional green space on the east side of the tracks is needed, especially with the developments planned in this area. New greenspace should also have trail/path connections to Downsview Park.
- Improve wayfinding from the TTC subway stations to Downsview Park.
- Increase security and lighting to make the area safer.
- Connect the Black Creek ravine pathway system to the Don River ravine pathway system.
- Consider creating a dog park north of the site. The trail along the railway could serve as a nice dog-walking area and become a part of a good size dog park.

### Improve connections and road network

- Make this site the first genuine welcoming area in the city for pedestrians and cyclists. Build a road network that is safe, comfortable, and inviting for pedestrians and cyclists. Build it before building residential areas.
- Create more east-west and north-south routes across the site to integrate the community and future residents to surrounding neighbourhoods, improve travel times, and address traffic congestion. Specific route alignments include: an east-west connection between Sheppard Avenue and Wilson Avenue from Bathurst Street to Keele Street; routing Sheppard Avenue West straight across the site; re-route Dufferin Street through the site as a major north-south corridor. The suggested straight Sheppard Avenue West route could be made into a pedestrian/cycling-oriented main street, featuring wider sidewalks, storefronts with retail/restaurants with on-street parking. The original Sheppard routing can be maintained to allow for the current commercial traffic to detour from local traffic safely.
- Consider traffic calming measures to ensure safety of all residents. Cars will try to avoid major roadways by using neighbourhood side streets as shortcuts. Consider designing the streets with pedestrian focus – narrow streets, bike lanes, frequent intersections, instead of speed bumps and bulb outs.
- It is essential to create easy pedestrian connections from the three subway stations (Wilson, Sheppard West, Downsview Park).
- Create a cycling path alongside the rail corridor to connect to the Finch Hydro Trail.

### Improve access community resources and amenities

- Improve accessibility to community resources such as a transit, community centre, seniors facility, library, indoor and outdoor swimming pool, daycare, churches, and walkable necessities like shops, grocery stores (preferably more healthy and organic grocery options), restaurants, cafes, post office, drug store, etc. to elevate the area. The area currently lacks many of these community resources and amenities.

- Improve transit connections to the sports facilities on the site.
- Consider building a community centre near the Ancaster neighbourhood to make it easier for families to access a community centre without having to drive.
- Create places for people to gather and enjoy the community. Provide facilities that offer a variety of events and that people can use and enjoy year-round.
- Provide opportunities for youth programs to keep them engaged and expand their minds.

#### Maintain employment in the area

- Anchor good tenants to create jobs and create long-term, well-paying employment opportunities.
- Reach out to businesses and industrial unities north of the site to make sure development does not negatively impact them.
- Build on what's already on the site by expanding the current film studios. It would add great employment opportunities to the area. Expansion here would help keep Toronto competitive while being a global leader in the industry.
- Create a centre for entrepreneurs offering 24/7 co-working space and meeting space rental to provide spaces outside of downtown Toronto. The entrepreneur centre should be reflective of the diversity in the community.
- Create job opportunities for local youth.

#### Improve integration of new residential areas to existing residential areas

- If the current site of the Bombardier Aerospace manufacturing building is converted to residential, make sure that it is seamlessly integrated into the Ancaster area.

#### Different opinions on housing and types of housing

- Housing was one of the most discussed topics. There were different perspectives shared, with most stating that they would like to see more housing, particularly affordable housing, to address the housing crisis in the city.
- Those that want to see housing considered on the 520 acres, would like to see a resilient, sustainable, mixed income residential housing. It should be a mix of deeply affordable (RGI), affordable (non-profit/co-op), supportive and market housing (both ownership and rental), post-secondary student-oriented housing in terms of tenure and affordability, and senior housing with supporting amenities nearby. Provide opportunities for affordable housing to be developed by non-profit developers such as Options for Homes and St. Clare's Multifaith Housing.
- Two respondents said that no more housing is needed as there is enough condo development along Wilson Avenue and they do not want to see densification in the area. Some said that introducing high-rise buildings would put a lot of strain on the public transportation in the area, while others said that they do not want to see TCHC properties in the area.
- Build stacked townhomes or 4 storey walk-ups to create gentle density in the area.

#### Design the buildings and urban spaces with beautiful, friendly and sustainable architecture

- Be bold, be ambitious, and be unique with design and architecture. Make it a place that people would actually want to visit and live in. Encourage architectural diversity in the proposed buildings through different styles, materials and forms. Make sure that it is not over-engineered to create comfortable and friendlier spaces.
- Build a vibrant, beautiful, mixed-use main streets that attracts people from all over the region.
- Design with green standards and sustainability in mind. Consider a zero-emission cutting-edge housing design.

- Do not over-develop with bland and uninteresting architecture.

#### Build the highest density closest to transit stations.

- With the access to both TTC and GO, the area surrounding Downsview Park station should be the densest and tallest area of the development.
- The area closest to Wilson Station and Sheppard West Station should also be a main focus of density and height. Buildings in this area should be mixed use with ground floor retail and engaging streetscape.

#### Consider impact on infrastructure

- When developing the site, make sure to consider impact to the water table and stormwater and flooding risks.

#### Make Downsview a destination

- Bring back the Downsview Aerospace Museum and make Downsview Park a destination for different types of school field trips.
- There are mixed opinions on making the runway a park like the Berlin Tempelhof Airport. Some are advocating for it as it would create a unique opportunity for a new landmark in Toronto, while others disagree as there is already a huge park next to the site and there is a housing crisis in the city.
- Increase the promotion of the existing assets such as Downsview Park and the wildlife in the park, Merchants Market, and sports facilities to boost attendance and international interest.
- Consider using the film studios in a way that could create a great tourism value to the area.
- Build an outdoor skating rink similar to Nathan Phillips Square.
- Create an outdoor market similar to St. Lawrence Market and Distillery District.
- Design a world class park, with fountains, sculptures and art displays designed by renowned artists.
- Provide more places to eat in Downsview Park to attract more people.
- Plant more trees to provide relief from the sun during the hot summertime.

#### Celebrate the history of the site

- Pay homage to the old runway by creating a greenway that mirrors its footprint.
- Consider naming roads after the de Havilland aircraft manufactured here and other aerospace creations.
- Consider using the aviation history of the area as a "welcome" to the neighbourhood. Use something appropriate that was built/flown at Downsview and put it on a pedestal to welcome people.
- Reflect what has been filmed here in street and park names.

#### Design with the underrepresented demographics in mind

- Design the streets that enable mobility and walkability for people with disabilities, seniors, parents with children. Consider the curbs, sidewalk length, shaded areas for rest, etc. Bring planners and designers from underrepresented demographics.

## **“LIKES” - WHAT PARTICIPANTS VALUE**

#### Green and natural space

- Green and natural spaces in Downsview are very important. The mound and the hills in Downsview Park are great for a city that feels so flat. The wildlife at Downsview Park is also highly valued by many. The park and greenspace in the area offer a good place for children and youth to play and learn about the environment and wildlife.
- Pedestrian access to greenspace, parks, trails, and walking, running, and cycling paths are valued by many.

#### Growing and maintaining employment uses

- Employment lands on the site are important to the community. Many would like to see a significant component of the site be used for employment. Keeping the thousands of people employed at the airport was also strongly supported.
- Many would like to see diverse, locally owned businesses instead of big-box retailers. It is important to make space and set affordable rent to accommodate a variety of small businesses that provide useful services to the community to make the neighbourhood unique.
- The existing buildings have been adapted to interesting uses, including sports, entertainment, a market, and a movie industry. Make sure it continues. There is a need for more sports fields as there is not enough in the area.
- The Merchants Market has a significant value to the community. It provides space for independent vendors and interesting food experiences. It should be preserved, but it doesn't have to remain in its current location. The Market is also in need of improvement. It needs to give a greater value back to the local community through jobs and culture. Also, consider installing solar panels and green roofs on the building.

#### A safe, walkable, accessible and diverse environment

- Pedestrian and transit-oriented designs are key to making better communities. Convenience and proximity to community resources and places for people to gather, play and relax are highly valued. Providing a multitude of options to get around is important.
- Proactive planning to manage density is also valued.
- Crosswalks and crossing guards near schools are important to make the area safe for kids to walk to and from school.

#### Affordable housing and mid-rise housing

- Affordable housing and mixed-income neighbourhood are important given our city's housing crisis.
- Many participants prefer low-rise/mid-rise housing and detached single homes more than expensive high-rise condos.

### **“CHALLENGES” – THINGS PARTICIPANTS DON'T LIKE AND WOULDN'T WANT TO SEE REPEATED**

#### Road network, connections, and traffic

- The existing curved road network creates longer travel times. For example, travelling from east to west across the site along the Sheppard Avenue West loop/curve takes much longer and is very inconvenient for pedestrians. There needs to be more pedestrian and cycling access to Sheppard West Station. The area also lacks safe sidewalks as much of the space is taken up by car parking and road lanes.

- Lack of safe access to community resources. People can't walk or bike safely to community resources and amenities without having to cross a major intersection or being completely impeded by a highway, particularly for residents south of the runway. The highway 401 interchange is a significant barrier for movement between the quadrants of this intersection. It is also huge and so things are very far apart. Find a way to bridge these gaps and tie this neighbourhood together. There are also no clear signs or indicators as to how to get to Downsview Park from Wilson.
- Traffic is a commonly mentioned challenge in the area. Participants are concerned that increased development will add to traffic congestion.
- Speeding in residential areas is also an issue. The residential neighbourhood by Banting Park is an example of failed zoning. By demanding single family detached housing, this area encourages driving when they are beside a subway station.

#### Insufficient school capacity and lack of spaces for community

- Schools in the area (e.g. William Lyon Mackenzie CI and Dublin Heights E&MS) are already critically over capacity. Any new residential development must account for this issue by building new schools.
- There are many communities in the area, and it can sometimes feel divided or separated. There isn't a community space that allows everyone to come together regardless of the neighbourhood, social economic status or ethnic/culture heritage. It can be hard for someone to make connections in a community they may be the minority in.

#### Loss/lack of employment uses

- De-industrialization is a problem in the area. There are concerns that changes to the site will destroy industrial infrastructure and jobs. Some would like the airport and the aircraft factory to remain on site.
- The area lacks public institutions that can offer more jobs to the community.

#### Tall buildings and bland architecture

- Giant, expensive, glassy, grey condos create wind tunnels and shadows on the street. Units are also tiny and make it nearly impossible to raise family in them.
- Parking in front of businesses (e.g. along Wilson Avenue) is too far back from the street and makes the neighbourhood and businesses lack in charm and appeal.
- Buildings that are not well-maintained or run down are also an issue.

#### Not enough density at William Baker

- The planned development in William Baker is a misuse of the site. It is not as dense as ought to be expected for one of Toronto's few remaining large plots of land available for large-scale intensification. Ensure that this is not repeated on the rest of the Downsview lands.

#### Noise from GO trains and TTC Wilson Yard

- Identify ways to muffle noise from railways, especially for the residents in Stanley Greene next to the track.
- Consider potential nuisances from the Wilson Yard and security issues by restricting movement into the Wilson Yards.

## OTHER ADVICE

### Continue transparent engagement with the community

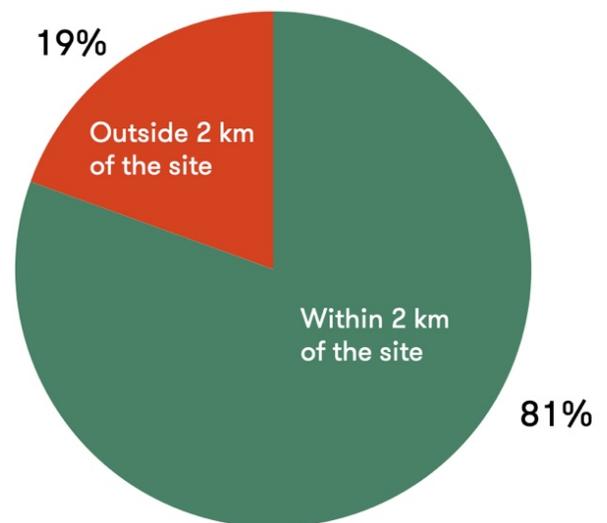
- Keep the planning process transparent by continuing meaningful engagement with the community. Continue promotion of events so everyone in nearby neighbourhoods are aware of the change coming.
- Meet with different groups and encourage involvement of elected officials, including the MP and MPP during townhalls.

## PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS

The profile of participants captures the response of participants between May 20 – June 30 to the demographic questions. Note that not all participants answered all demographic questions.

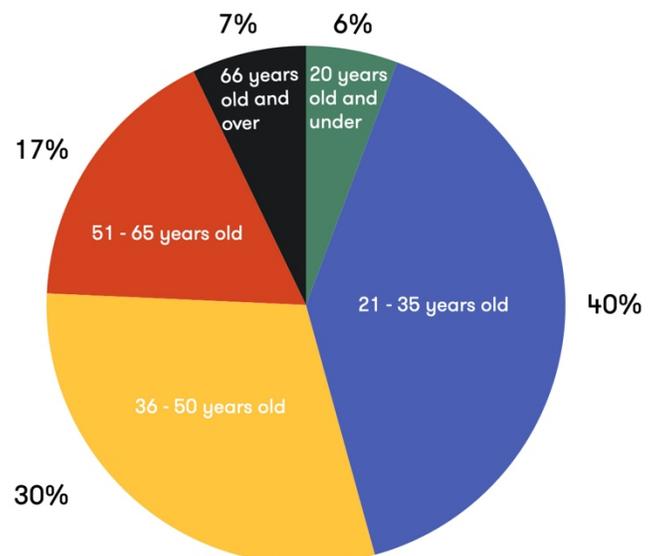
### Where participants live:

Over 80% said they live within 2 km of the site.



### Age of participants:

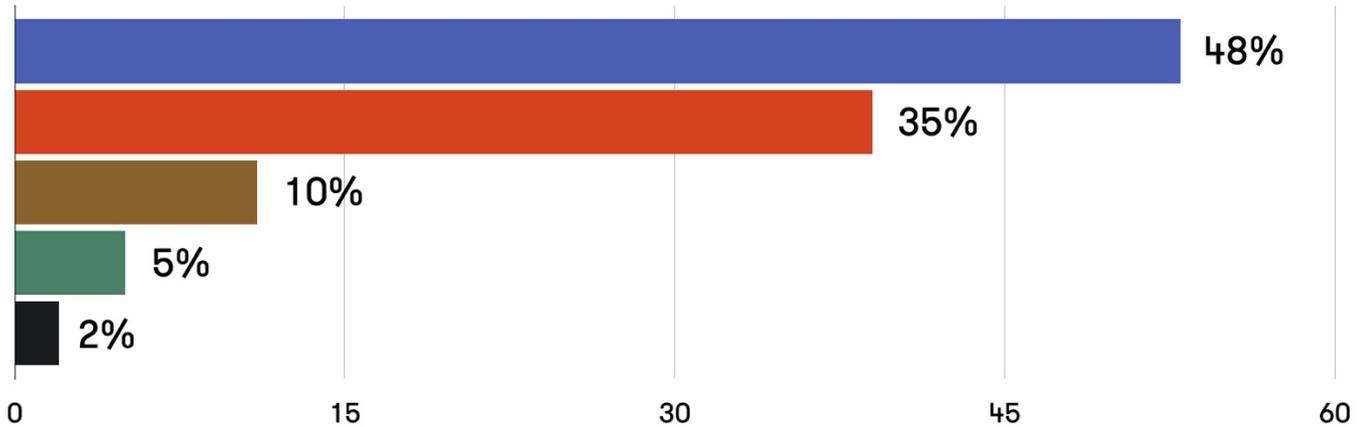
Almost 50% were 35 or younger, and another 30% were 36-50 years old.



Relationship to Downsview:

Almost 50% said they live near Downsview and 35% said they visit. Note that participants could select “all that apply”.

- I live near Downsview
- I visit Downsview for education, sports, nature, recreation and/or cultural events
- I work in/near Downsview
- Other
- None



How people heard about the process:

Almost 40% heard about it through the mail flyer distributed by Northcrest and Canada Lands, with another almost 40% hearing about it via social media and/or the id8 Downsview website. Note that participants could select “all that apply”.

- Mail flyer
- Social media
- Other
- id8 Downsview website
- Email from project team

