

Hamilton Amateur Athletic Association Grounds Renewal Plan: Focused Engagement

Preferred options for skate dot, outdoor gym and bouldering.

Note that not all comments have been copied verbatim; some have been edited for clarity, summarized and/or combined with other similar comments.

Stakeholder Question / Comment	City Response
Skate Dot	
<p>Other skate dot features I would like at HAAA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Shaded seating. - Community art wall. - Stairs and handrails. - A bowl. - Pump track. - Water fountain. - Funbox. Include at least one ramp on either side because it creates a safe environment to practice jumping from an uphill slope to a downhill slope, especially for beginners and kids. - Beginner features. - Storage spot for items while skating. - A ledge that can also be used as a manual pad. 	<p>Thank you for your ideas, all suggestions will be considered however may not be feasible for this project.</p>
<p>The skate dot seems too small to serve the purpose. I think the idea that is sort of key to skateboarding is that the terrain be varied and as big as it can be.</p>	<p>A skate dot is included in the HAAA Renewal Plan because skateboarding was identified as a priority for the community during previous public consultations.</p>
<p>The skate dot is in the wrong location next to the tennis courts because teenagers and tennis players are likely not going to mix well and the skate dot will get spray painted and lightly vandalized.</p>	<p>A skate dot is a small area dedicated to beginner and/or intermediate level skaters, designed to blend seamlessly into a neighbourhood park. Skate dots are defined in the City of Hamilton's 2017 Skateboard Park Study as follows:</p>
<p>I am not supportive of the skate dot. Skateboarding is too loud and will encourage socializing late at night.</p>	<p><i>SKATE DOTS: (200sq ft to 1000sq ft – 0.5 km service radius) are a single skate element usually along or off an existing path system or paved area. These could be a bench, a ledge wall or a rail. Skate dots serve users one at a time.</i></p>
<p>Is the skate dot a necessary addition to the park?</p>	<p><i>SKATE DOTS: (200sq ft to 1000sq ft – 0.5 km service radius) are a single skate element usually along or off an existing path system or paved area. These could be a bench, a ledge wall or a rail. Skate dots serve users one at a time.</i></p>
<p>It would be best if the skate dot was not adjacent to a walking path. The skate dot will generate noise and people gathering there will likely block the path. A lot of dogs that walk through the park react to bikes, and skate boards. If the skateboarders are on the walking path and right beside it, that's a problem.</p>	<p>One of the goals of a skate dot is to serve as a linkage between larger skate park facilities. There is a new skate park coming to Alexander Park in 2024. Potential conflicts between the skate dot and tennis courts will be mitigated by the existing 3.3m high fence and hedge that surround the perimeter of the tennis courts.</p>
Outdoor Gym	
<p>Other outdoor fitness equipment I would like at HAAA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _Soft area or flat space to do warm up/cool down stretching or skipping. - A giant tire to flip. - Long jump. - Sheltered yoga pavilion for group exercise. - Balance board. - A swingset. - Paved track for year-round use. - Elliptical trainer. - Bottle filler. - Tennis backboard. - Stationary bike. - Rowing machine. - At least 2 pull-up bars. - Parallel bars. - Monkey bars. 	<p>Thank you for your ideas, all suggestions will be considered however may not be feasible for this project.</p>
<p>It would be great if the outdoor gym was close enough to the playground for parents to exercise while watching their children.</p>	<p>There is not enough space near the new playground for the outdoor gym because there are a lot of existing trees and berms in this area. The outdoor gym has been placed near the running track and the bouldering features so that people can seamlessly incorporate running, walking and climbing activities into their outdoor fitness regime.</p>

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Bouldering	
<p>Other bouldering options I would like at HAAA are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Have different levels of challenge that are colour coded. - If you want to put a complex activity there should be very obvious instructions for basics and safety. - The main boulders must have a high friction texture so the main boulder is a feature. - Rope swing obstacle feature - swing from one pedestal to another. - Training tools like a hang board for example. - Adjustable climbs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Zip line. - Realistic rock features or real granite block. - Natural or cut holds and different difficulty on each of the 4 sides - If two bouldering structures are selected it would be good if they could be combined to be one long one (or at least located near one another) for an added challenge. - Bells at the top of the walls. - Nice landscaping. 	<p>Thank you for your ideas, all suggestions will be considered however may not be feasible for this project.</p>
<p>I'm not supportive of bouldering. I have seen these climbing features at other parks and I don't think anybody uses them much. They are sort of not enough of anything to be fun: not tall enough; not potentially dangerous enough; made of plastic.</p>	<p>Bouldering features are included in the HAAA Renewal Plan because they were identified as a priority for the community during previous public consultations.</p>
<p>The bouldering is in the wrong place because it's too close to the skate dot.</p>	<p>The proposed bouldering features are 12' and 8' high. The larger feature offers 38 climbing surfaces with 300 grips of different shapes and sizes, offering 6 distinct climbing paths with positive and negative inclinations. This feature was designed so beginner climbers will want to give it a try, while experienced climbers will find it challenging enough to want to get on board.</p>
<p>Good cushioning around the boulders is important. Bouldering is inherently dangerous and many climbers sustain back and head injuries from falling off or negative inclinations. Falling from positive inclination features commonly results in ankle and knee injuries. The standard for practising bouldering safely is with thick gymnast-style mats and first-aid trained chaperones present. The HAAA Renewal project does not include either of these.</p>	<p>The goal of the bouldering features is to be fun for adults, teens and children. These features are not playground equipment. The bouldering features have been placed near the running track and the outdoor gym so that people can incorporate climbing activities seamlessly into their outdoor fitness regime.</p>
<p>The bouldering wall is a waste of tax dollars when there's a fantastic climbing gym less than 5 mins away that's been around for over 20 years, and they are constantly changing their boulder problems to keep it new and exciting for visitors. Outdoor boulder wall is a bad idea and a waste of money, space and other resources.</p>	<p>A protective safety surface conforming to the National Standard of Canada's CSA Z614:20 will be installed around the HAAA bouldering features.</p>
<p>I am disappointed to see that the "bouldering" will just be a type of playground climbing structure. It will not attract people who actually boulder in gyms and outdoors and will not get much actual use.</p>	<p>The Gravity Climbing Gym is a private facility that requires payment to access. Proximity to this facility does not remove the community's desire for bouldering features that are open to the public.</p>
<p>Climbing features are viable fun for adults, not just children.</p>	<p>There are no potential conflicts between climbers and skateboarders because a soft protective safety surface will be installed around the boulders. It will not be possible to skate close to the boulders because skateboarding requires a hard surface.</p>
<p>Bouldering features in a city park are used only by children and their chaperones and should be regarded as an extension of senior children's play and located next to senior children's play.</p>	
Other	
<p>The bouldering and outdoor gym will not work in this area because there are too many hiding spots making the park somewhat unsafe to visit.</p>	<p>The bouldering features and outdoor fitness equipment will be placed in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) best practices.</p>
<p>Will proposed trees be species native to the area? ie. Maples, Oaks, Walnuts.</p>	<p>The trees selected for the HAAA Grounds will be in accordance with the City of Hamilton's Park and Open Space Development Guide, Appendix K - Approved Tree Species for Parks and Open Spaces. This list serves to incorporate a greater diversification within the Urban Forest and to maintain a healthier forest by meeting cultural requirements</p> <p>Note: The City's Forestry Section is currently in a temporary suspension of Maple street tree planting to build diversity in our tree canopy.</p>
<p>Will an automatic irrigation system be installed for garden bed areas?</p>	<p>Yes, an automatic irrigation system will be installed to water garden bed areas at the HAAA Grounds.</p>
<p>Will the new running track be properly maintained? The material of the existing track is not suitable when it rains or during the Spring thaw because it scatters, washes out and accumulates in certain areas.</p>	<p>The new running track at the HAAA Grounds will be 350m in length. The track will have a new surface treatment that is accessible for people using mobility devices/aides, is low-maintenance, has a long lifespan and is durable.</p>
<p>The existing running track surface has become quite poor, and it needs to be refinished. There are many materials to consider from clay/cinder (I believe current), asphalt, to synthetic. Each have different weather and maintenance concerns.</p>	
<p>Leave the existing clay track. I believe it's the only one in the city, it's historical and it's nice to run on.</p>	
<p>The running track should be rubberized or crushed gravel. No asphalt or cement.</p>	
<p>It's important than the running track length is close to 400m, it's a standard in sport training and timing.</p>	
<p>What would have been great, with climate change and all, would have been a refrigerated ice-skating rink.</p>	<p>A refrigerated ice-skating rink has not been included in the HAAA Renewal Plan. A facility like this requires large quantities of concrete, an underground refrigeration system and a zamboni with dedicated operations staff.</p>

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Keep the hockey shinny ice pad every winter.	An area for seasonal ice-skating (rink to be built and maintained by the community) has been included south of the soccer field. A water connection will be provided to run a hose out from the field house building for this purpose.
Set up a Christmas tree in the park in the winter.	The HAAA Renewal Plan does not include an area dedicated to a Christmas tree. The City of Hamilton currently installs 3 Christmas trees in various locations throughout the City.
I live next door to the HAAA Grounds and I have not been consulted about the Renewal Plan. The previous Public Information Centres have addressed the recreational needs of general park users but have neglected to consider the effects of the new design on the wellbeing of adjacent residents.	The Councillor's office and City Staff were diligent in our public outreach for the HAAA Renewal Plan. In 2021, three Public Information Centres (PICs) were hosted and the community was notified of the public engagement via the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word of mouth through a task force that was assembled by the Ward 1 Councillor's office to come up with a communication strategy for the Renewal Plan public engagement. • 14,478 flyers delivered to homes within a 1km radius of the park (and an additional 800m to the west to capture the Chedoke area) for each PIC. • Social media posts on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. • Posters in the park and around the community. • Direct contact with schools. • Businesses informed and posters displayed within. • Committees. • City of Hamilton websites. • E-blast via the Ward 1 Councillor's office. • Participants of the first PIC were notified directly of subsequent engagement opportunities using the contact information from the PIC 1 distribution list.
The HAAA washrooms need to be upgraded to be clean and accessible. Include both men and women private bathrooms and at least 2 family ones with a change table and enough space for stroller.	The HAAA field house building will be renovated to include two individual washrooms and an additional universal washroom with adult change table. It's anticipated the new washroom facilities will be open to the public in 2025.
Add a small cafe in the patio area near the HAAA buildings. A cafe there would bring so many people to the park. Ice cream, healthy treats, etc	An additional building is not included in the HAAA Renewal Plan, however the HAAA field house renovations will include a large multi-purpose room that can be used for many different purposes.
Include more age-friendly features in the park, where active older people can participate in activities and socializing. There could also be facilities conducive to multigenerational engagement and features for people with mobility problems.	The HAAA Renewal Plan includes many features suitable for all ages. The track, outdoor gym, bouldering feature and skate dot all provide opportunity for multi-generation activities. Four different patio-style seating areas provide opportunity for multi-generational socializing. The new running track surface will be accessible for people using mobility devices/aides. The outdoor gym will include fitness equipment for all ages and abilities.
This renovation needs to happen ASAP. Why is it so behind? We did surveys years ago.	This project was originally planned to be built in phases over multiple years, with construction of the last phase planned for 2024. As the HAAA Renewal Plan design was developed it became apparent that it would be very difficult to build the east part of the park separately to the west part of the park so the construction of the first phase was put on hold to allow all of the exterior park works to be built at once in 2024.
Can't wait for the upgrade, thanks! Please don't close the play structure longer than necessary (we go almost daily)!!	The HAAA Grounds will be closed for the duration of construction in 2024. Scheduling updates will be posted on the project webpage: www.hamilton.ca/haarenewal
Add pickleball courts to the park.	Pickleball courts are not included in the park program because a focused engagement survey in 2022 identified basketball as the priority for hard court use at the HAAA Grounds.
Put in a zip line.	There is not enough space to expand the new playground to include a zipline because there are a lot of existing trees and berms in this area, along with a lot of new and exciting playground features.
Include parkour jumps / set up.	The HAAA Renewal Plan includes bouldering features that could be used for parkour jumps.
Please add a swingset. HAAA currently has the best swings in the neighborhood.	The HAAA Renewal Plan includes a 4-bay swing set with 2 toddler seats, 1 accessible bucket seat, 3 belt seats and 1 saucer swing.
Add a sandbox with running water to make moats.	Sand is usually not included in City of Hamilton parks because it's difficult to maintain and is not accessible for people in mobility devices. The HAAA Renewal Plan includes an upgraded spray pad for water play in the summer.
We need places for older kids to play. Teenagers do not have a lot of public spaces where they are allowed to be, so the inclusion of equipment designed for older kids would make the park a more inclusive community space. Please make sure that teenagers are no longer invisible in our public spaces. Too often we let neighbouring property owners who gain considerably from living adjacent to a public space have a veto on who gets to use the space, and how.	There are many features in the HAAA Renewal Plan suitable for teenagers, including the bouldering features, skate dot, basketball court, outdoor gym and covered seating areas. The playground includes an activity circuit for the more active kids and a saucer swing for socializing.

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Include water stations at basketball and play areas.	A water bottle filling station will be installed on the exterior wall of the field house building. We will investigate the feasibility of installing another water station elsewhere in the park.
Great to see this important renewal project moving forward - thanks for the team's work on it! The family can't wait for the new and upgraded park (while keeping the lovely, existing trees)! This is very exciting, thanks for doing it!	Thank you for your support.
Please update the name of the school on the plan.	The drawings will be updated to reflect current conditions and names.
The park needs to have a robust light installation to make these additions functional.	New lighting will be included in the HAAA Renewal Plan project. All lights will turn off at 11pm except for the lights along the pathway that runs north-south through the park and connects Tuckett/Pearl Sts to Charlton Ave and Kent St. No light will spill outside the park property.
Rather than people letting dogs run on the soccer field, perhaps there could be an off leash area.	An off-leash dog park has not been included in the park program. Currently, Ward 1 meets the recommendation of the Outdoor Study and the goal outlined in the City's Leash-Free Policy (2003) of one "free running area" per ward.
Include bike racks in the park.	Bike racks will be installed in the park.
HAAA is an important park and throughway. I like that the design acknowledges this.	Thank you for your support.
The cycling path is weird because the painted markings take up the whole path and it might seem to some that the path is just for biking.	Painted markings are not planned for the multi-use trail that runs north-south through the park and connects Tuckett/Pearl Sts to Charlton Ave and Kent St.
I can't figure out how you are going to shoehorn a path at the north end of the track between the running surface and the grassy/treed separation at the tennis club. When we walk that way now, we walk on the track because there is no room.	The existing running track will be removed and a new running track will be installed. The new running track will be a different shape to the old one.
There is too much going on, not enough space to accommodate the changes, and it would require too much site alteration to make it work. Personally, I like simpler park designs where you can just sort of rest and let your imagination wander.	The design of the HAAA Renewal Plan was informed by feedback gathered from the community through extensive consultation.
I could not locate an entrance to the park on the right hand side of the HAAA building which the children use to go to the school.	A pathway east of the HAAA field house building will connect Charlton Ave to the schoolgrounds.
Add more tables near the play and spray, basketball and bouldering areas.	Thank you for the suggestion. More tables will be included if feasible for this project.
Do not spend this money. Replacing perfectly fine equipment with new materials has a carbon footprint attached. Instead, don't raise my taxes by 10% next year.	The existing playground, spray pad, pathways and running track at the HAAA Grounds have reached the end of their lifecycle and need to be replaced.
Is the hard court a basketball court?	Yes, a focused engagement survey in 2022 identified basketball as the priority for hard court use at the HAAA Grounds.
Please ensure there is space for basketball.	A full basketball court is included in the HAAA Renewal Plan.
I don't like the location of the new basketball court for one or more of the following reasons: - A court near the back of the park will encourage late-night activities. - Neighbours on Reginald Street won't like a court near their backyards. - It's nice when you can see a basketball game being played from the street. - The new site for the basketball court is sloping and will require a bunch of existing trees to be cut down.	Moving the HAAA basketball court from its existing location is part of the Renewal Plan because during public consultation the community prioritized passive uses such as seating areas and memorial gardens in the areas of the park near Charlton Avenue. The HAAA site has a lot of berms and existing trees that the community wishes to preserve, and the Renewal Plan includes many upgraded amenities that the community asked for, including a larger play zone where the spray pad, playground and sheltered seating areas are clustered together, and an improved pathway layout that provides more logical circulation routes through and around the park. For these reasons, the best location for the basketball court is in the area made available by the removal of the existing playground.
A basketball court is not needed at the HAAA Grounds because there are new half-courts at the elementary school now.	The new half-courts east of the HAAA Grounds are on Hamilton Wentworth District School Board property, therefore are not open to the public during school hours. While the installation of these courts is great for the community and will help to relieve the wait times for the single court available at HAAA (please note that during public engagement it was discussed that a single basketball court isn't enough for the community), it doesn't remove the need for a full basketball court on City owned parkland that's open to the public during weekdays.
Noise from the basketball courts within the HAAA Grounds negatively affects residents in the south end of Reginald Street. The Renewal Plan does not address this problem.	The design of the HAAA Renewal Plan was informed by feedback gathered from the community through extensive consultation.