

**City of Hamilton  
HAAA Grounds Master Plan  
Public Meeting of Thursday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018**

**SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE/COMMENTS HANDOUT**

*Last Update: June 26, 2018*

1. What features do you use in the park? Check all relevant answers and if possible, rank the features with #1 being the most used.

FEATURE	Yes	No	Total Responses	*Average Rank
Splash Pad	16	7	23	2
Track	22	4	26	4
Sports Field	17	6	23	3
Playground	16	5	21	1
Basketball Court	12	9	21	6
Walkways	25	1	26	3
Open Space	21	3	24	4
Seating	20	5	25	5
Shade	18	5	23	6
Public Washrooms	10	11	21	7
Other, indicate:	2		2	1 = gardens 1 = fountain/drinking

\*Note: Many people chose not to rank the features. When features were ranked, it was often incomplete.

2. How would you rate the current features?

FEATURE	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Splash Pad	17	9
Track	21	7
Sports Field	19	6
Playground	20	5
Basketball Court	4	19
Walkways	21	4
Open Space	25	2
Seating	16	7
Park Lighting	17	7
Shade	16	6
Public Washrooms	6	12
Other, indicate:	1 = gardens are very good 1 = move water fountains to be closer to playground and bike rack	1 = more parking needed

**3. What features and/or furnishings would you like to see improved, removed or added to the park?**

<b>FEATURES AND/OR FURNISHINGS</b>	<b>Improve</b>	<b>Add (new)</b>	<b>Remove</b>
Splash Pad	10	3	0
Track	12	1	1
Sports Field	13	0	1
Playground	14	3	0
Basketball Court	11	2	2 remove, 1 move
Walkways	16	1	0
Open Space	7	0	0
Seating	13	5	0
Park Lighting	11	3	0
Shade	4	5	0
Public Washrooms	12	3	1
Furnishings, i.e. benches, bicycle racks, drinking fountains, etc.	10	8	0
Other, please specify:	1 = gardens 1 = additional security and/or police presence 1 = building 1 = pavilion 1 = picnic tables/kitchette	1 = recycling bins 1 = more parking 1 = drinking fountain 1 = pet water fountain 1 = long jump pit	

**4. Please provide any additional thoughts, comments, etc., in the space provided below.**

1. Walkways potential safety hazard with uneven/broken asphalt.  
Ice rink in the park during winter months a neighbourhood asset.  
Draining at north end of sports field is a problem after a rain storm or ice melt/thaw.  
Track is graded on regular basis which is a neighbourhood asset.
2. The Charlton Avenue side of park is lovely. Improvements needed in all other areas.  
Flowers, trees, seating, theatre. More green. Outdoor theatre?
3. More monitoring of basketball court after dark (noisy).  
Splash pad needs improvement for larger numbers of users.  
Replace fence on west side of park.
4. Play structures for multiple age groups.  
Update splash pad.
5. The Hamilton Hurricanes provide the opportunity for kids and young adults a place to play football for ages 12-22 years of age. We have rented HAAA field from 1963-1994 and from 2008 to present.
6. The landscaper Frank should be given the proper resources to maintain the landscaping.  
Frank is also retiring so there should be a plan to ensure the tradition of those gardens.
7. Sporting events should be directed to parking at other side of Ryerson School. Bylaw officer to ticket people who park illegally on Kent Street during events.
8. Communication to the sports team as to where to park, i.e. Ryerson School, not Charlton and Kent.
9. Basketball court needs to be moved. Where it ends at the track isn't good, by the tennis court. Also, need walkway beside track by Ryerson to connect Duke and Charlton.  
Parking continues to be an issue. Residents compete with people who go to Locke Street and those who use the park. It is particularly difficult to find parking near my house on football nights. Arrangements have been made to have them park at Ryerson School but there is no way to monitor or enforce this. I do not understand how the City can rent the park to user groups without providing sufficient parking. It inconveniences the residents.  
Why not use the existing basketball court that is under-utilized? There is an approach from Charlton already there. New courts could be put elsewhere or even half of the existing courts could be fenced in like Victoria Park. We need parking there.
10. Heritage building run down, needs fixing up but will be abused unless used semi continuously e.g. coffee shop, rentals. Safer pedestrian and cycling use at 3-way intersection Charlton/Kent, building centered on Kent is problematic. Whatever needs to be done to control Charlton speeds is useful but should be clear to drivers that ped/cycling high use area for kids.

11. Please improve the basketball court. Public art would be great.  
I love the track and use it every morning. Historic info boards would be wonderful.
  
12. I prefer multiple entrances to the park. Having a field house, trees/shrubbery and multiple entrances creates intimacy and privacy from the business of the street (Charlton). It creates the feeling of a hug. Having multiple entrances helps create a good energetic and aesthetic flow.  
The berms are good!! They highlight the separate activities, distinguishes little kids activities and “sports area” from basketball area.  
PLEASE DO NOT PUT PARKING IN THE PARK. IT CHANGES THE ENERGY – EXHAUST POLLUTION, NOISE POLLUTION, PEOPLE HANGING OUT IN THEIR CARS LISTENING TO MUSIC/SMOKING, ETC.  
The walkways need to be accessible but please keep some hills/berms and trees to create “social moments” visual interest and diversity. Please don’t flatten it out and take away the character and uniqueness.  
Incorporate interesting public art i.e. Simon Frank, Dave Hynd.  
Cultural landscape heritage landscape – consider. PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THE QUAINTESS AND CHARM in the process to modernize.  
KEEP THE TREES AND BERMS.  
Include “work-out” exercise equipment to appeal to middle aged/older folks.  
Fencing along park line is poor and looks rundown, disheveled.
  
13. The late-night basketball games must stop. The lights seem to stay on all night encouraging this. We were told that the lights should go out at 10 pm or 11 pm?  
At least some nights those basketball court lights stayed on all night allowing basketball from 11:30 pm to 2 a.m. The swing set needs oiling. It is squeaky.  
Some nights see people hanging out right behind our house (Reginald Street) at the picnic tables. In this case, perhaps the seating, trees and lack of lighting facilitate antisocial behaviour. Tables must not be located behind residences in close proximity. Put seating in better locations, not behind residences.  
Additional security or police presence more regular.
  
14. Overall the park works well and is well used. An upgrade of the existing components is needed but the current functionality of the park should stay similar to the current use.  
Pay homage to the history of the site.
  
15. The park is nice, and we go there all the time. Please just repair damage/work items. Add more seating and open splash pad sooner. Please direct more funds to parks in other underserved areas of the City. Some of them are in much worse shape.
  
16. Maintain the beautiful gardens.  
Better garbage options – recycling. Most garbage is plastic.  
Bike racks – Sobis.  
Leash-free dog park or zone or off leash hours.  
Encourage parking in Ryerson pkg lot to free up spots for residents on Charlton and Kent.  
Water/hydration station closer to play area.

17. Keep the building intact for its heritage but improve on washrooms and indoor storage for sports clubs and hockey rink maintenance material.  
 Keep the gardens as lovely as ever. This is a gem for our neighbourhood. Thank you, Frank! Please ensure someone is mentored to maintain these by Frank. These are the best kept gardens anywhere in the city.  
 Improve the track surface, very uneven and has poor drainage.  
 Recycling bins are needed.  
 Two water fountains please (one at south end, the other at north east corner).  
 Add an emergency call box (to what MAC has on campus).  
 Add more benches with shade (gazebo?). Gazebo near playground for parents and kids to be out of the sun.  
 I'm a resident of this area for 26 years and HAAA is our gem.  
 Please up heritage signs up to highlight the history of this park. The current plaque is in bad shape.  
 Improve accessibility.  
 Keep some of the benches near trees and put other at walkup.  
 Move the basketball court next to Ryerson School (less noise impact to neighbours).  
 Add small set of bleachers.  
 Improve parking at Ryerson and access to park.  
 Give residents on Charlton priority parking passes.
  
18. There needs to be substantial engagement with children. Holding a PIC at most kid's bedtime when under 12 years old likely make up 70% of the use is a joke. School is out in 3 weeks. There needs to be immediate outreach with home and school councils at Ryerson, Earl Kitchener, St. Joseph's School and Central Public School to solicit the needs of the majority of users. A full engagement process modeled after the Cootes Paradise Playground consultation would be preferable but that would not be able to take place until October. Better to delay a few months and do it right. Further, please hire CivicPlan run your public consultation. They understand this area very well through their work for Ward 1. PIC's are singularity ineffective.
  
19. Pollinator gardens.  
 Vegetable gardens.  
 Workout equipment.
  
20. Larger historical display, maybe with photos.
  
21. I am happy to see the park get some attention, but I am curious if youth have been consulted. I think youth and local school needs should be prioritized. As an example, my son chose to compete in long jump for his school track and field. I was surprised kids had to compete by jumping on grass and dirt. He was fortunate enough to win, but when competing at next level, he saw a real long jump pit for the first time.  
 I reviewed the presentation and surprised that the basketball courts are listed in Fair Condition – as my son and I use them I would be curious to know how that assessment was reached. Quite honestly, they can be listed as Poor (at best). The hard top is cracked and the nets are positioned such that a game can't be played on half or full court. Kids hand draw chalk to designate the court.

I have mixed feelings on the water fountain that has come and gone. I think a water fountain is needed but have witnessed too many people hoisting their dogs to drink directly from them. Perhaps adding a dog fountain or somehow restrict the fountain to be a contain refill station.

In regard to lighting, as I walk through the night, I do find parts of the paths very dark. For seating, there really could be more for family.

22. The public washrooms are unsafe unless supervised.

Relocate the basketball nets so there is one court that can be used for a game. Current courts are for shooting practice only.

After speaking with several of my neighbours and fellow park users I would like to express some concern over the timing of the meeting as many younger people with evening/family responsibilities could not attend-putting kids to bed, etc. The information you provided does not reveal how many people actually showed up to the meeting or address any concerns that were expressed by the residents present at the meeting. Do you have meeting minutes available?

What the scope for this project is? Are we doing a total redesign or is this just a facelift??

What is the total budget for this project?

The splash pad and playground equipment are definitely popular with park users at all times of the day, and they are in need of repair. The washrooms at the HAAA grounds are rarely open, so I cannot comment on their condition.

However, I do have some general safety concerns with providing UNSUPERVISED public washrooms in the park. Unfortunately, there is a serious drug problem in our city and public washrooms are a favourite spot for consuming illicit drugs or taking part in other illegal activities. Personally, I wouldn't allow my kids to use those washrooms if they were open due to these safety concerns.

Finally, I have attached a specific idea for an outdoor amphitheatre or public meeting place. I'm not sure if anyone else presented the idea so please take a look at it.

23. I love this park as the hub of the neighbourhood (or at least hub for people with kids). I wouldn't want to see dramatic changes or have it be a "destination" park.

I would not want to see any dedicated parking spots.

Many kids like to ride their bikes/scooters, so it might be nice to have a track or route for them to do that which would keep them off the main walkway.

It's true, the splash pad and even the playground are a bit low tech, but kids are great at using their own imagination. If the splash pad could have a "softer" surface, rubber, that would be an improvement, or perhaps a wading pool as well.

The entrances could be beautified but that is not a big concern of mine.

A pavilion would also be a nice addition for people to have gatherings.

24. 1. Improve asphalt in basketball court.

2. Maintain grass in sports field (it is spotty in places).

3. More lighting at night (and on for longer).

4. BALL HOCKEY COURT (with boards). Combine with basketball area?

25. Submission for consideration for an outdoor natural amphitheatre

Location: HAAA Grounds

Date: June 19, 2018

**Scope**

The HAAA grounds are already a hub for the members of our community. We gather by the playground and splash pad with our youngsters. We walk the pathways with our dogs. Some of us enjoy exercise by circling the running track or shooting some hoops. Many of us just sit down on a bench or under a tree with a book and a coffee while we take a break from a busy day. The HAAA grounds are the heart of our neighbourhood and there are many groups and individuals who wish to share a stake in the future use of this public property.

The goal of adding a natural amphitheatre to the HAAA grounds is to create a centralized and defined outdoor “podium” for the promotion of community interests, community wellness and education, and the celebration and sharing of cultural events.

This area would be a multi-use, fully accessible space dedicated to the sharing of arts and ideas.

A “neighbourhood soap-box” designed to encourage community growth.

**Potential use of space**

Outdoor classroom- The 3 schools located within walking distance of the HAAA grounds are Ryerson Middle School, St. Joseph’s Elementary and Earl Kitchener. There are also several private schools and daycares in the immediate area including Lyonsgate Montessori School (375 Aberdeen Ave), Mother Goose Pre-school (407 Charlton Ave West), Little Learning House (86 Homewood Ave). Students from these facilities visit the park during school hours and would be able to use a natural amphitheatre as a learning and teaching space.

Community Wellness- Organized outdoor community activities such as aerobics, yoga, meditation, seniors events, church groups, children’s programming, public health events/displays, theatre groups or neighbourhood performances, non-amplified musical performances, movie nights.

Outdoor Farmers Market- The current farmers market operating on Locke Street is located on private property (corner of Herkimer and Locke) and is limited by the wishes of the property owners. Space at the HAAA grounds can be utilized for a weekly farmers market event.

**Design**

The natural amphitheatre would be designed to connect all areas of park use- playground/splash pad, basketball courts, running track, football field. This can be achieved by creating a multi-use area that can be used by residents at all times of day/evening and in all seasons.



The above photo is a good example of a centralized outdoor meeting space. Note that the structure is very passive in natural while providing seating and gathering space.



The above photo illustrates a potential use for the hill that separates the running track and playground area. Once again, the design blends into the existing space.



The above aerial photo of the HAAA grounds with a highlighted area that is currently occupied by the splash pad. This area is very central to all sections of the park and would be a possible location for the amphitheatre.



Below is an example of outdoor seating and lighting:



### **Conclusion**

This submission is a first draft and I would like to ask that this idea be entered for further public consultation and discussion. I feel that an outdoor amphitheatre or similar meeting space is a needed in our neighbourhood and a basic variation of this idea could be achieved within a modest budget. Please feel free to reach out to discuss this idea further.