

Survey of Caledon residents shows support for wider variety of park amenities

By Zachary Roman

Town of Caledon staff are currently in the process of making a new parks plan.

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. was hired by the Town to help create the plan, and a draft of it was completed on May 10.

The draft plan was presented to Caledon residents at a May 25 open house at Caledon's Town Hall in Caledon East.

The draft parks plan was created to examine the need for parkland in Caledon between the years of 2022 and 2031, though a longer range view through to 2051 was also included.

"In doing so, the Parks Plan assesses the Town's existing hierarchy of parkland along with the amount of active parkland required to support the needs of Caledon residents living across the Town's urban and rural settlements," the draft plan reads.

As part of the parks plan process, the Town launched a survey about its parks for residents to complete, and it received 316 responses.

Of those who responded, 82 per cent had a park within ten minutes of their place of residence.

Sixty-eight per cent of respondents said they used a Town of Caledon park at least twice per month, and 75 per cent said Caledon's parks need more of a variety of things to do at them.

43 per cent of respondents said they want to see more parks in Caledon, while eight per cent said Caledon has enough parks already. 37 per cent of respondents wanted to see more parks in their neighbourhood, and just seven per cent said Caledon's parks have enough of a variety of things to do at them.

Survey respondents were asked whether they'd rather walk/bike/use a mobility device to get to a small park near where they live, or drive to a larger park further away. While 56 per cent of respondents agreed both park types were equally important to have, only five per cent said they'd rather drive to a bigger park further away. 39 per cent said they'd prefer a smaller park closer to their home they could get to without driving.

Next, survey respondents were asked to write three words that describe how they want Caledon's parks to be. Clean was the top answer, with 74 responses; accessible came in second with 52 responses, and safe came in third with 48. Other words rounding out the top-ten most responded with were fun, age-friendly, maintained, updated, variety, seating, and splash pads.

Caledon survey-takers were also asked where they thought more parks could be implemented in the Town.

Bolton was the number one answer with 43 responses, and 15 of those 43 people specifically mentioned the North Hill area of Bolton as the area in need. However, they further specified that they did not necessarily need new parks, but instead updates to existing ones due to their age.

According to the draft plan, other locations provided by respondents in order from most mentioned to least include: Caledon East, new developments, updates to existing parks, Palgrave, Caledon Village, Mono Mills, Southfields and Belfountain.

The demographics of the 316 Caledon residents who responded to the survey varied.

Children and youth under 18 made up 0.6 per cent of respondents, and adults aged 18 to 34 made up 19.6 per cent.

Adults aged 35 to 54 were the majority at 62.6 per cent of respondents, while those aged 55 to 64 made up 9.4 per cent. Seniors aged 65 plus made up 7.4 per cent of respondents. The vast majority of respondents live within walking distance of a park ? 86.4 per cent ? while 13.6 per cent do not.

The survey was open from March 18 to April 11 of this year on the Town's community engagement website, haveyoursaycaledon.ca.

More information about, and a copy of, the Town's new draft parks plan is available on that site.