

# MacMillan Farm Master Plan

## Phase 1 What We Heard Report

June 2025





# Table of Contents

## Contents

About the Project 3

## Engagement Approach 5

How we engaged 6

Who we engaged 8

## What We Heard 9

Key takeaways 10

Pop-ups 11

Online survey results 13

Student engagement activities 29

Indigenous engagement meetings 44

Conclusion and next steps 46

Appendix A: Survey participant demographics 47

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# About the Project

## Project Overview

MacMillan Farm is a unique part of Vaughan's history, with deep agricultural and natural roots. The land, nestled in an urban area, is home to barns, heritage homes, sprawling fields, forests, a nature reserve, informal pathways and a creek.

Located on the east side of Dufferin Street, just north of Marc Santi Boulevard at 9605 Dufferin St., MacMillan Farm was purchased and occupied by the MacMillan family in 1934. The original property encompassed over 59 hectares (146 acres) of natural woodlot and agricultural lands. In 2004, the MacMillan family severed the property into two parcels, 49 hectares (121 acres) and 10 hectares (25 acres),

and donated the larger portion to the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The donated lands are a mix of agricultural, woodland and riparian (edge of water) habitats. In 2010, the remainder of the property was sold to the City of Vaughan.

The MacMillan Farm and adjacent Nature Conservancy of Canada properties are situated in an increasingly urban area, providing the perfect setting to create an open space that promotes active and passive recreation for the community. As the city continues to grow, this site presents an opportunity to create a space that blends heritage preservation with new amenities for the community to enjoy.



The Valentine Keffer House



The William Cook House



### Legend

1. The Valentine Keffer House
2. The William Cook House
3. The Barn Complex
4. The MacMillan Cabin

**Figure 1:** Aerial image showing the site boundary for MacMillan Farms.

## Site context and history

MacMillan Farm sits on land rich with layered histories. For over 15,000 years, the area was part of what is now Treaty 13 territory, traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Huron-Wendat and Haudenosaunee, which includes ancient village sites and trade routes along the Humber and Don Rivers. Evidence of 16th-century Huron-Wendat settlements just south of the site reflects this long-standing Indigenous presence.

European settler history is also deeply rooted here. In the late 1800s, English immigrants William Cook and, later, the MacMillan family shaped the agricultural landscape by establishing farms, building houses and a sawmill.

Today, two heritage houses, the William Cook and Valentine Keffer Houses, are designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, symbolizing the site's transition from early settlement to modern community resource.

Together, these Indigenous and settler stories form the foundation of MacMillan Farm's identity, creating a significant opportunity to honour, share and weave both narratives into the master plan for future generations.

## The MacMillan Farm Master Plan

The City of Vaughan is engaging the community to develop a master plan to create a unique experience at MacMillan Farm, setting it apart from other park experiences within the city and neighbouring municipalities.

The purpose of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan is to:

- Develop and refine a shared vision
- Create concept plans that reflect the City's, residents' and interested parties' goals and objectives for the site
- Provide recommendations on programs and management
- Introduce an implementation and phasing plan

This report describes the approach, results and key takeaways from Phase 1 of engagement on the MacMillan Farm Master Plan project.





# **ENGAGEMENT APPROACH**



# How we engaged

This section outlines the engagement, communications, and outreach activities carried out during Phase 1 of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan study.

## Communications and outreach tactics



### Project Webpage

The online hub for all project information and engagement opportunities ([vaughan.ca/MacMillan](https://vaughan.ca/MacMillan)).



### Promotional Signage

Digital and mobile signs were displayed in the local community to raise awareness about the project and opportunities to participate in engagement.



### eNewsletters

The City of Vaughan shared opportunities for the public to get involved in the master plan through various e-newsletters.

#### By the numbers:

- 1 public service announcement,
- 1 Vaughan News email (~24,000 subscribers)
- 2 Vaughan Engagement eNewsletters (~2,500 subscribers)
- 2 Councilor eNewsletters



### Social media campaign

Social media posts were used to raise awareness about the project on Facebook, Instagram and X.

#### By the numbers:

- 5 mobile signs



# Engagement Methods



## Pop-ups

The project team held three pop-ups to reach people in the community. Participants were invited to learn more about the MacMillan Farm Master Plan project and participate in engagement activities.

Pop-up events were hosted at the following events and locations:

- Vaughan's Winterfest event (February 2, 2025)
- Vaughan's Earth Hour event (March 22, 2025)
- Pleasant Ridge Library (March 25, 2025)

### By the numbers:

- 3 pop-up engagement events
- 115+ participants



## Online Survey

To better understand public opinions and ideas about the future use of the property, the project team conducted an online survey. The survey was open to the public from March 3 to April 4, 2025 and was available through the City's official webpage.

### By the numbers:

- 594 survey responses



## Student Workshop and Activity Booklets

Local schools were invited to participate in engagement activities to ensure the master plan reflects the needs of youth in the Carrville community and surrounding area.

Two schools participated in the opportunity:

- Forest Run Public School
- Nellie McClung Public School

### By the numbers:

- 2 schools
- 3 classes representing grades 5, 7 and 8
- Over 75 students participated



## Indigenous Engagement Meetings

To honour reconciliation and support meaningful engagement, the City hosted meetings with local Indigenous nations.

Three meetings were held in the first phase of the master plan project:

- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- Hiawatha First Nation
- Alderville First Nation
- Wendake First Nation

### By the numbers:

- 3 nations participated in meetings



# Who we engaged

Between March 3, 2025 and July 15, 2025, the project team engaged with the following groups of interested parties:

## General public

Residents of Vaughan were invited to participate in pop-ups and an online survey, which was accessible via the MacMillan Farm Master Plan webpage ([vaughan.ca/MacMillan](http://vaughan.ca/MacMillan)). These engagement methods offered members of the public an opportunity to provide feedback on the amenities and programs they would like to have access to at MacMillan Farm in the future.

## Elementary school students

Elementary school students were engaged through an in-class workshop and a take-home activity booklet. These hands-on exercises invited students to share their ideas about the new greenspace coming to their local community, asking about the types of activities they would like to be able to do while at MacMillan Farm in the future. Students were encouraged to think outside-the-box and get creative in their responses to the project team. Collecting youth perspectives early in the process ensures that the future design of MacMillan Farm reflects the needs and aspirations of younger generations.

## Indigenous partners

To honour reconciliation and support meaningful involvement, the City shared details of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan with Indigenous partners. Through individual meetings, the project team invited their feedback on how they wish to be involved in the development of the master plan, and which programming and design elements are most important to them (i.e. placekeeping, education, traditional medicine gardens, etc.). Indigenous engagement is an ongoing priority, and the City will continue working directly with partners in future stages of the project to guide design, programming, and heritage interpretation at MacMillan Farm.



**Figure 2:** City staff hosting a pop-up booth at Winterfest



**Figure 3:** Student designing MacMillan Farm in the in-class workshop



# **WHAT WE HEARD**



# Key takeaways

Throughout Phase 1 public engagement, four themes emerged which are summarized below:

## Multi-use amenities and recreation

Residents identified a diverse mix of potential programming and uses, including trails, seating and picnic areas, nature-play zones, and spaces for seasonal events like markets, creating a site that is both passive and inclusive.

There was a common request to ensure balance between passive natural experiences and structured recreational activities to serve all community members.

## Celebrating natural and agricultural heritage

Residents appreciate the site's deep ties to nature and agriculture, emphasizing the value of preserving nature trails and open field areas. Some respondents suggested adding urban agriculture features, such as allotment and horticultural gardens, orchards, and edible landscapes to allude to the farm's historical roots.

Embedding interpretive signage, hosting educational programming, and maintaining existing landscapes were popular ideas reinforcing the site's agricultural legacy.

## Preserving and showcasing cultural heritage

There is interest in retaining the site's heritage houses and incorporating interpretive features that highlight Vaughan's history, including Indigenous connections, early settlement, and the MacMillan family's legacy.

Suggestions included offering heritage tours, wayfinding and interpretive signage, and cultural events to make the site a living history destination.

## Indigenous engagement and cultural recognition

Indigenous partners emphasized the importance of meaningful cultural integration throughout future phases of the project. They underscored the value of blending Traditional Knowledge with Western science, through practices like Indigenous planting, ecosystem stewardship, and ceremonial programming, to guide ecological, interpretive, and land use decisions in a spirit of reconciliation and respectful placekeeping.

Together, these themes reflect a strong community desire for MacMillan Farm to be a vibrant, multifaceted space that weaves together ecological preservation, living history, Indigenous involvement, and flexible, inclusive uses.

# Pop-ups

Through the pop-ups, participants were introduced to the MacMillan Farm Master Plan project and invited to share their ideas for the activities and events they would like to see in each of the three “character zones” (existing buildings and open space, open fields, and natural areas and woodlands).

A summary of programming and amenity ideas suggested by participants are summarized below for each character zone (see page 10).

## Existing buildings and open spaces

- Seating and gathering spaces
- Gardens and flowers
- Indigenous culture and history
- Nature or farm tours
- Learning centre
- Tea house
- Children’s activities
- Farmer’s market

## Natural areas and woodlands

- Cycling trails
- Hiking trails
- Protection for existing mature trees
- Boardwalk near ravine
- Gardens
- Opportunities to hike, bike and ski
- Opportunities for integration with MacMillan Nature Reserve (operated by the Nature Conservancy of Canada)

## Open fields

- Community gardens
- Farmer’s markets
- Quiet space (e.g., for reflection, meditation, yoga)
- Picnic areas (with shade and shelter)
- Playground near picnic areas
- Nature play opportunities
- Native plantings
- Opportunities to purchase food

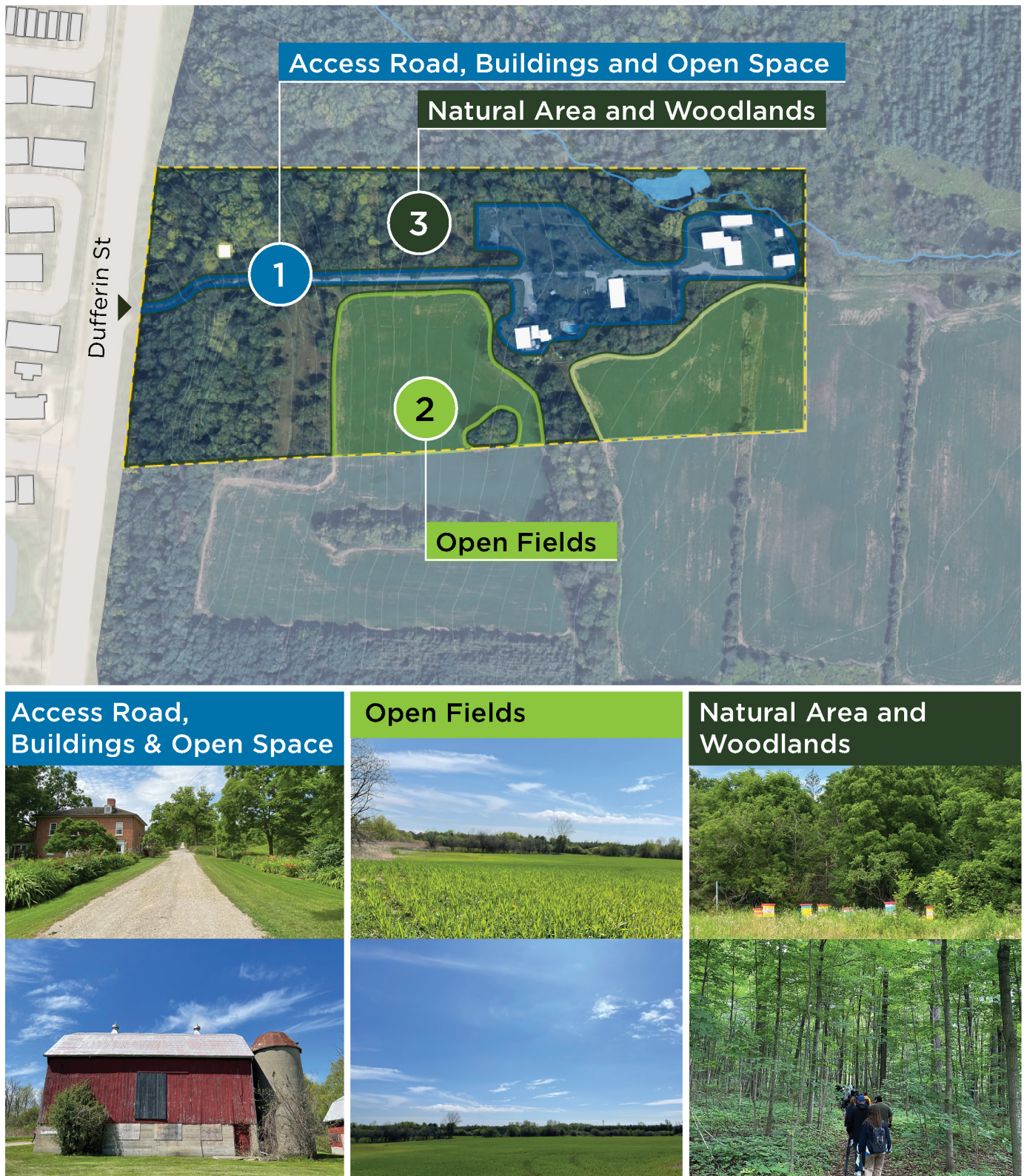
## Other

General suggestions for MacMillan Farm that were not specific to a character zone included:

- Encourage the use of public transit to access the site to minimize disruption to the local community
- Consider arrangements for parking
- Protect nature and existing assets at MacMillan Farm
- School field trips
- Youth identified interest in learning about animals and making forts in the trees



## Character zones at MacMillan Farm



**Figure 4:** The three character zones at MacMillan Farm

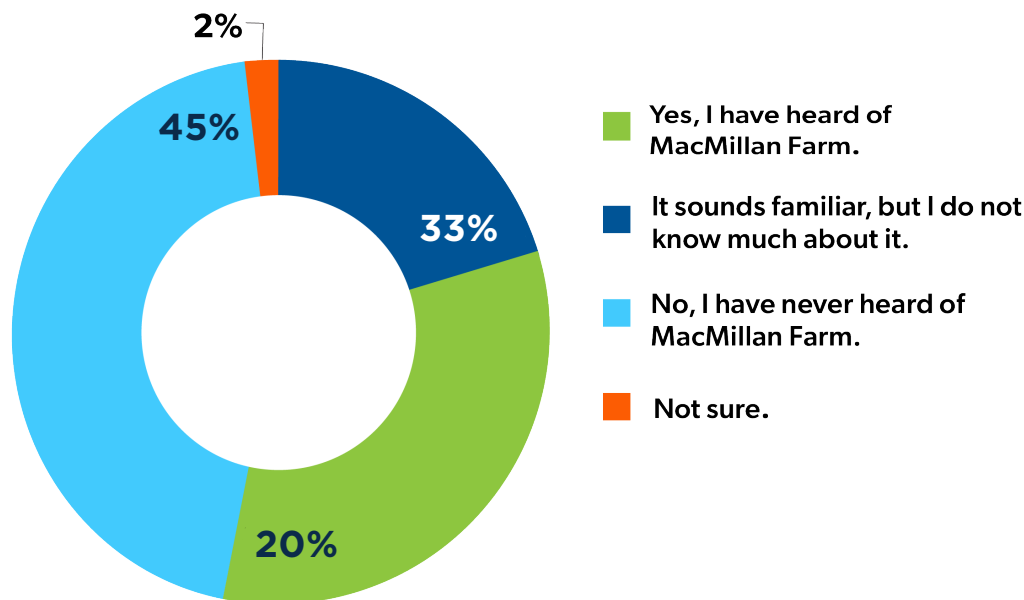
# Online survey results

To understand community perspectives on potential uses of the MacMillan Farm property, the City conducted an online public survey. A total of 594 responses were collected between March 3rd and April 4th, 2025.

Survey questions aimed to understand which existing features were most important to protect and enhance, new features and ideas for activities and events that could occur around different areas of the farm, such as the barns and existing buildings, open fields, natural areas, and woodlands.

## Question #1: Site context

“Have you ever heard of MacMillan Farm?”



**Percentage of Participants**  
(671 Respondents / 0 Skipped)

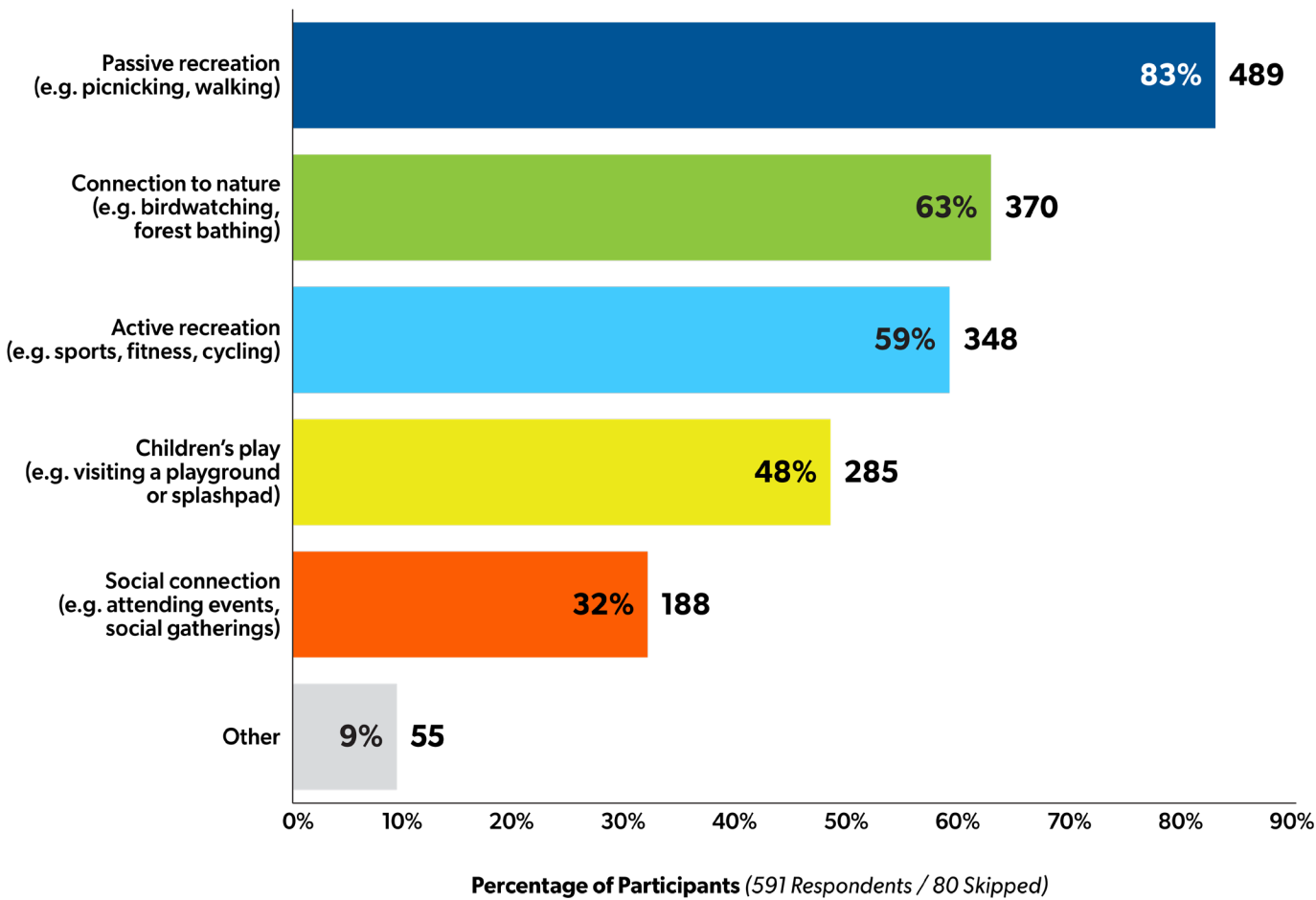
Respondents were asked about their familiarity with the MacMillan Farm site. Many respondents indicated that they had not heard about MacMillan Farm (45%), followed by 33% who said that they had heard of the site.

20% of respondents said that the farm sounded familiar but they had little knowledge of the site.



# Question #2: Current use of parks and greenspaces in Vaughan

“How do you currently use parks and greenspaces in the city of Vaughan?”



Survey respondents were asked about their current use of parks and greenspaces in Vaughan, with the ability to select from multiple options, such as passive recreation, connection to nature, active recreation, children’s play and social connections.

The most popular use was for passive recreational activities (e.g., picnicking, walking) which was selected by 83% of respondents. Other popular uses of parks and greenspaces include connection to nature (63%) and active recreational activities (59%).

48% of respondents reported that they used City parks and greenspaces for children’s play, such as playgrounds or splashpads. Social connection was selected by the fewest respondents (32%).

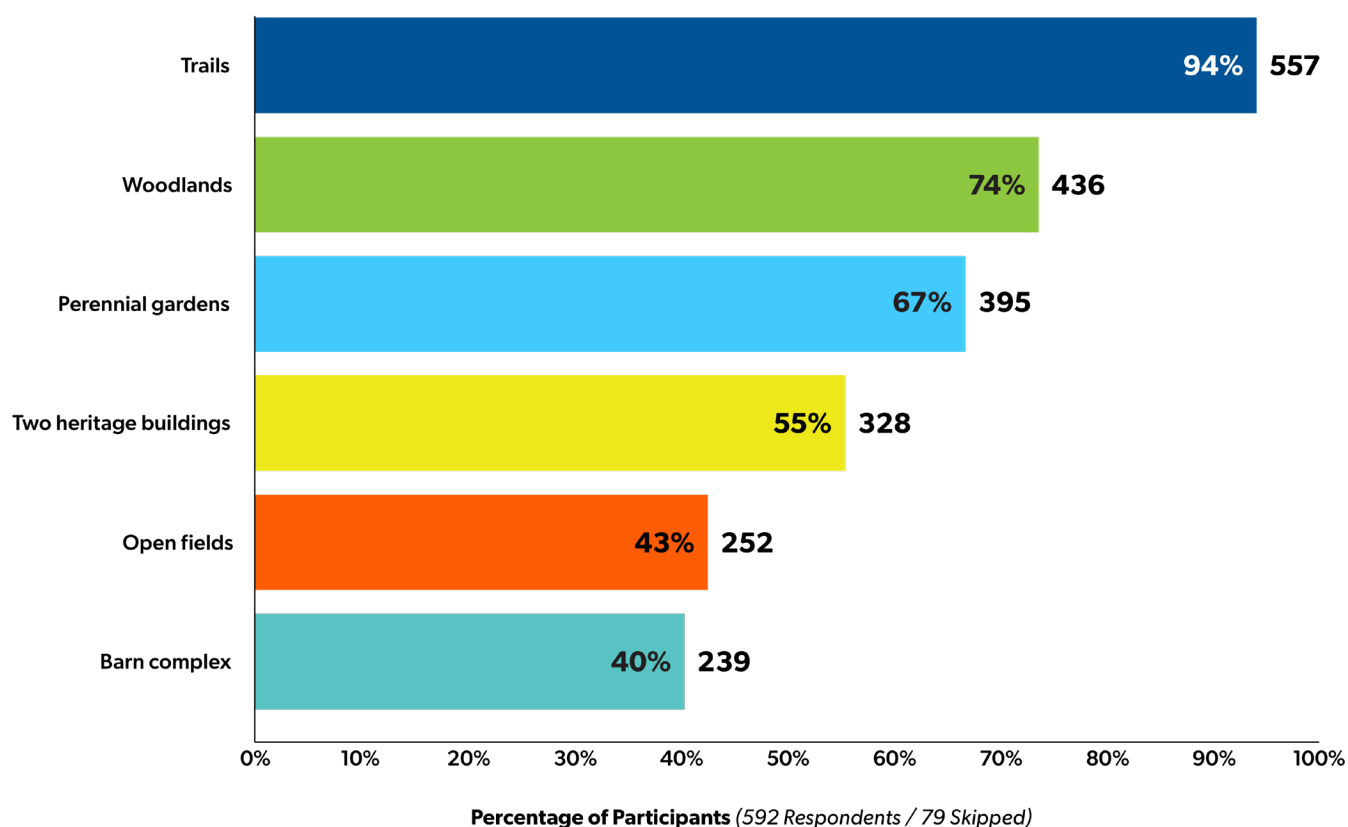
Responses to the “other” option provided additional examples of how respondents use parks and greenspaces in Vaughan. Frequently mentioned uses included dog walking, hiking and fishing.

## Question #3: Protecting and enhancing existing features

Survey respondents were asked to identify which of the existing features at MacMillan Farm they felt were most important to protect and enhance for future public use.

**“The MacMillan Farm site currently contains the following features.**

**Which of these features do you feel are most important to protect and enhance for public use in the future?”**



94% of respondents would like to see MacMillan Farm’s existing trails protected and enhanced, followed by woodlands (74%) and perennial gardens (67%).

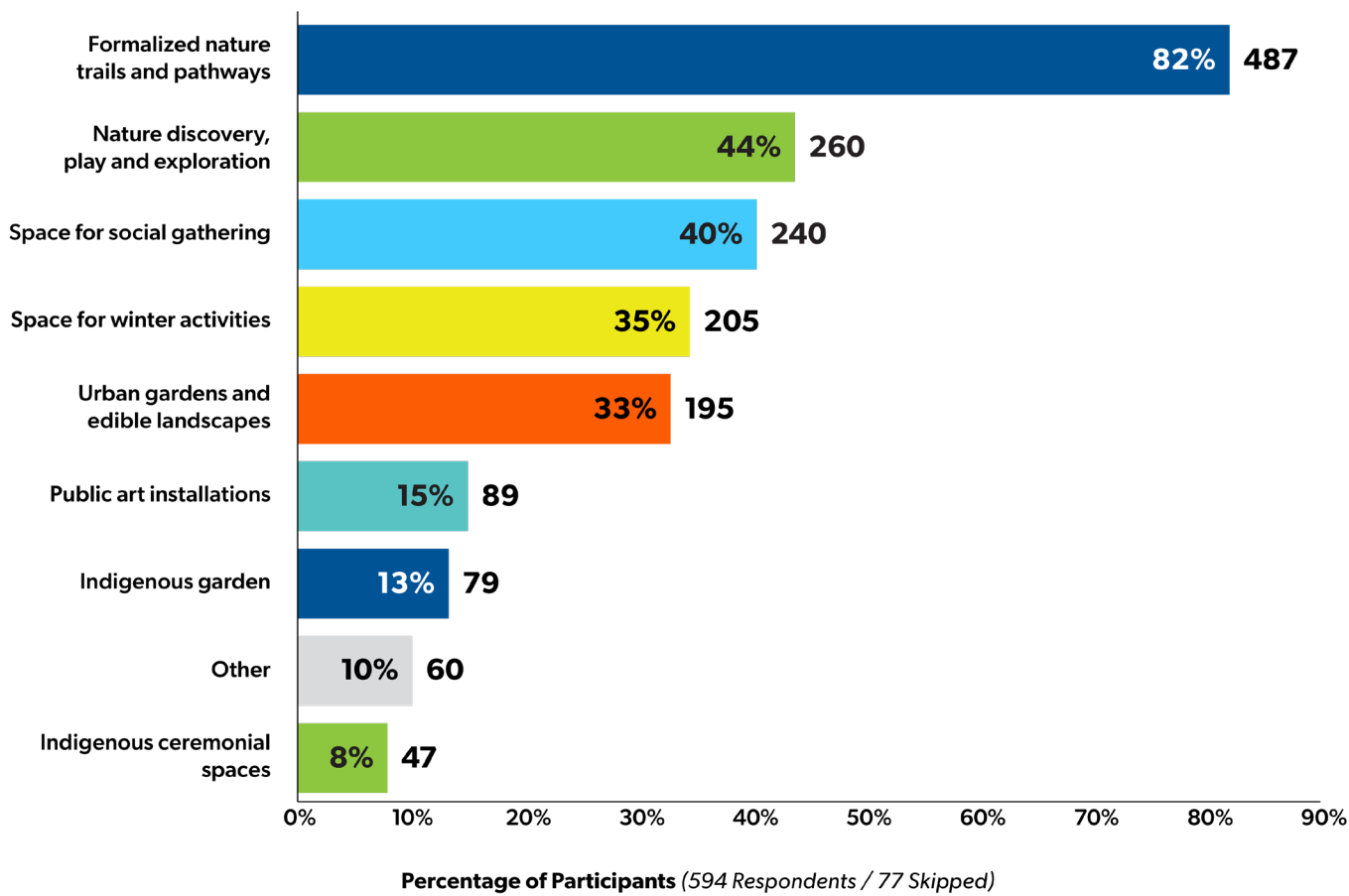
The two heritage buildings, open fields, and barn complex received the fewest responses at 55%, 43% and 40%, respectively.



# Question #4: Introducing new features at MacMillan Farm

## “Which of these features are you most interested in?”

Survey respondents were asked to identify three preferred features from a list that the City may consider introducing at MacMillan Farm.



Formalized nature trails and pathways were most preferred, accounting for 82% of responses. This result is well-aligned with respondents’ selections in the previous question.

The following four features were selected by many respondents: nature discovery, play and exploration (44%); space for social gathering (40%); space for winter activities (35%); and urban gardens and edible landscapes (33%).

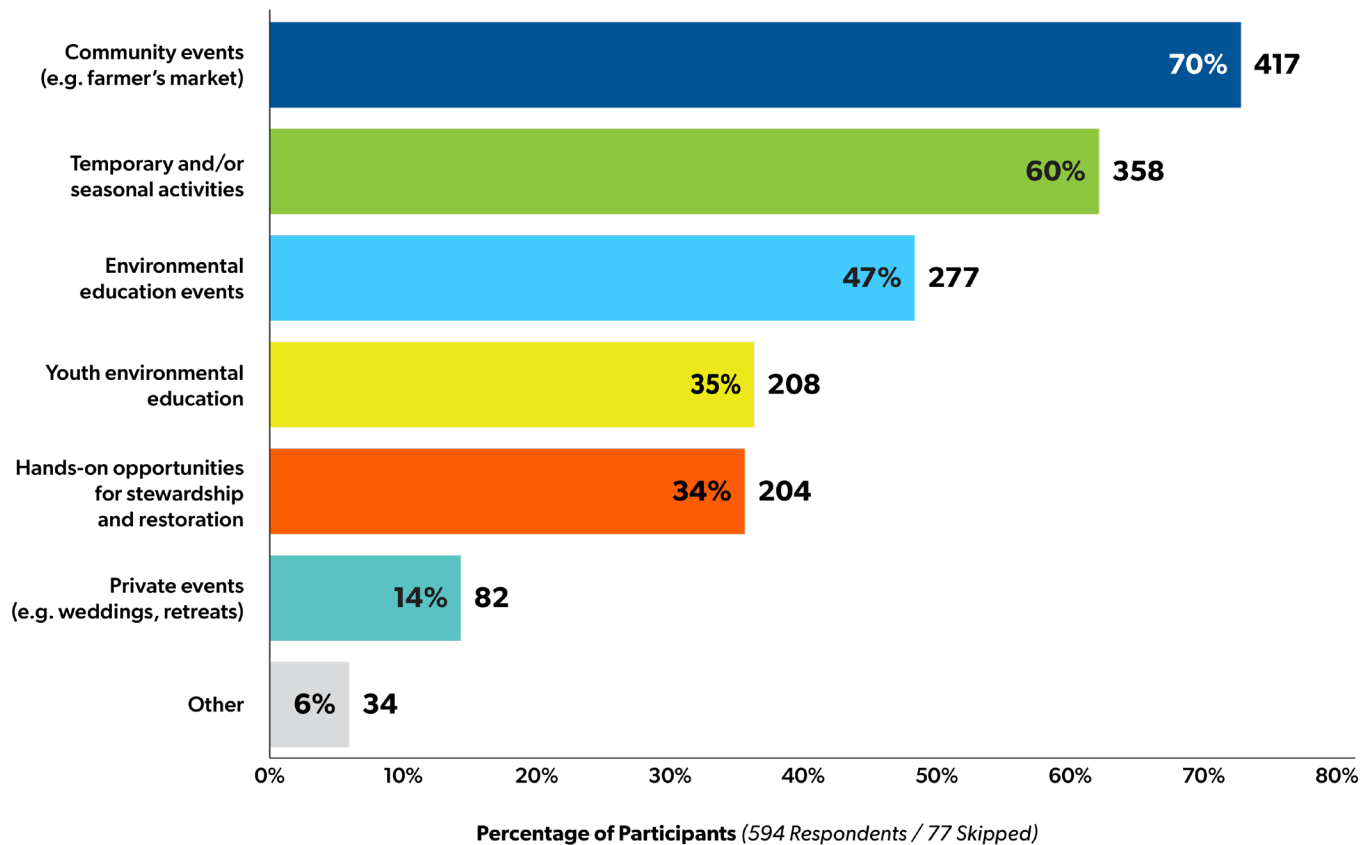
The least popular features include public art installations (15%), Indigenous gardens (13%), and Indigenous ceremonial spaces (8%).

10% of respondents used the “other” option to add detail to their multiple choice selection. Some respondents mentioned a preference to keep the site as natural as possible, while others identified opportunities for active recreation, such as building a swimming pool, establishing bike lanes, or building outdoor courts for pickleball, tennis, and basketball. Respondents identified an interest in various types of gardens, including healing gardens, community gardens and flower gardens, as well as educational opportunities and off-leash dog areas.

# Question #5: Experiences and event programming options

“Which of the following experiences and event programming options are you most interested in?”

Survey respondents were asked which three experiences and event programming options they were most interested in experiencing at MacMillan Farm.



Community events (e.g. farmers’ markets) was selected most frequently by 70% of respondents. This is consistent with responses throughout the remainder of the survey.

The second most frequently selected option was temporary and/or seasonal activities, with 60% of responses. Nearly half of respondents (47%) were also interested in opportunities for environmental education, which could include learning about local plants, gardening, ecology and ecosystems.

Youth environmental education and hands-on opportunities for stewardship and restoration received a similar number of responses at 35% and 34%, respectively.

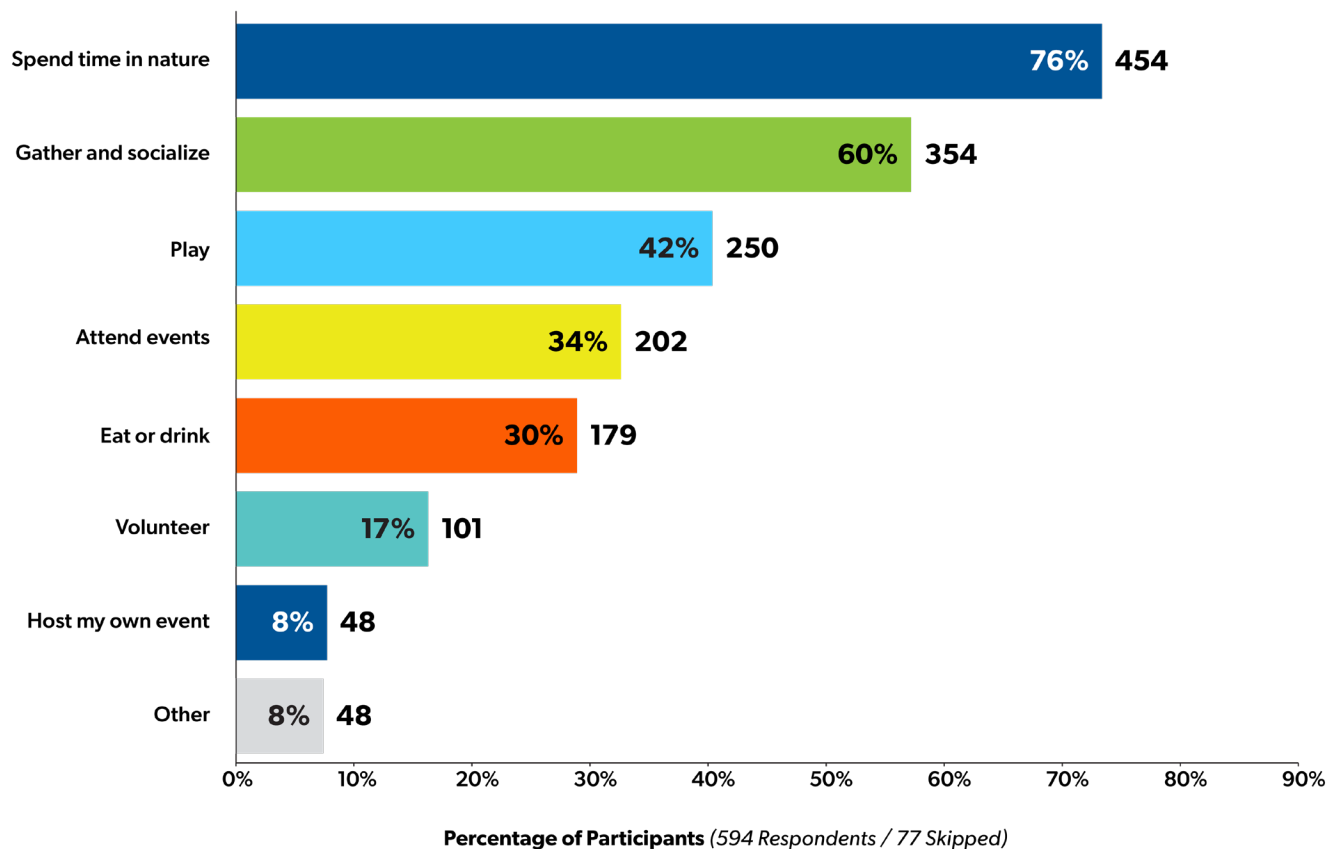
Private events such as weddings or retreats drew less interest, with only 14% selecting this option.

6% of respondents used the “other” option to describe their interest in activities like walking on nature trails, learning about nature and stewardship, horseback riding, off-leash dog trails, and festivals and events.

# Question #6: Activities at MacMillan Farm

## “What do you imagine being able to do at MacMillan Farm?”

Survey respondents were asked which activities they could envision themselves participating in at MacMillan Farm.



The most popular response was spending time in nature, such as birdwatching or spending time near ravines, with 76% of respondents indicating interest in this activity. Opportunities to gather and socialize with friends or family was also selected frequently, by 60% of respondents, while opportunities for children to play at MacMillan Farm received 42% of responses.

Attending events hosted by the City of Vaughan or a community organization received 34% of responses; however, only 8% of respondents would be interested in hosting their own event at MacMillan Farm. 30% would like to see opportunities to eat or drink on-site, such as having a picnic or purchasing food,

which supports opportunities for events and programming.

Few respondents expressed interest in volunteering opportunities like tree planting or invasive species removal (17%).

Respondents who selected “other” expressed interest in active recreation of all varieties, from swimming to zipline rides to horseback riding and playing pickleball.

Likewise, some participants were interested in walking or running on trails at MacMillan Farm, especially through nature. There was some overlap between this interest and the ability to walk or play with their dogs as well.



## Question #7: Activities and events for existing buildings and open spaces

**“The barns that exist on MacMillan Farm were previously used to support livestock activities with other existing buildings and open spaces used for beekeeping, horticultural gardens and other residential uses.**

**What activities or events do you think could take place in and around existing buildings like the barns and heritage houses?”**

Respondents were invited to submit ideas for activities and events they envisioned taking place in and around the existing buildings at MacMillan Farm, as well as the open spaces that surround them.

They expressed interest in opportunities for education and heritage preservation, events and programming, opportunities to connect with nature, as well as identification of specific amenities and facilities that would enhance their comfort and experience while on-site.

# Education and heritage preservation

Survey respondents described their ideas for educational programming that could take place in the existing buildings at MacMillan Farm, including the barns and heritage houses.

## Education on local heritage

Respondents were interested in learning about the history of MacMillan Farm or general farming history in the area. Several respondents suggested adopting an educational model similar to Black Creek Pioneer Village, with inclusion of both Indigenous and settler histories.

Respondents suggested that the heritage buildings could become museums, and special events like historical reenactments and tours could be offered to support education.

## Nature and horticultural education

Respondents mentioned outdoor or nature-based workshops as a way to teach visitors, especially children, about biodiversity, farming or horticultural knowledge.

## Youth education

Ideas for youth and family-oriented events were frequent, including outdoor education for children and teenagers such as field trips, summer camps and an outdoor environmental education centre. Thematic suggestions for youth education included: biodiversity, soil, habitats, farming and more.

Respondents referenced other programs and places that could be used as inspiration for youth programming at MacMillan Farm, including the Children's Farm and Playbarn at Bronte Creek Provincial Park and the Kids in the Woods initiative at Rouge National Urban Park.

A few respondents were interested in reusing the barn as a petting zoo or interactive zone where children could learn more about farming and raising livestock.

**“I think the heritage houses and barns should be kept how they are as museums. Maybe at certain times people can come visit them and learn their history from staff or volunteers.”**

**“Horticultural activities, sessions on how to plant, including house plants which people can take home...At all costs, initiatives should happen to restore more green in the city.”**

**“These buildings could be used for a biodiversity research centre that is accessible to the public, and hosts activities for kids.”**

# Events and programming

Survey participants described event programming options that could take place in the existing buildings at MacMillan Farm. These ranged from gastronomical retail opportunities and private rental opportunities, to public events.

## Retail opportunities

Respondents suggested that the barns could be repurposed for various retail opportunities, including food and beverage opportunities like a restaurant, a cafe or a tearoom, or markets like a craft or flea market. The most frequently suggested retail use was to hold a farmers' market using the barns. Other unique ideas included wine tastings, micro-breweries, fromageries or a butcher.

**“Having a few shops, specifically food places, will always attract more visitors...the barn can turn into a few shops and nice brunch place, coffee shop, ice cream shop, sandwich shop, etc.”**

## Rental opportunities

Respondents were interested in opportunities for the existing buildings to be rented for private events and programs, including weddings, photoshoots, private events or community-led events (e.g. concerts or cultural events).

Requests for youth summer camps were frequent; however, respondents did not specify a preference for privately-run or City-run summer camp programs.

## Events and workshops

Respondents envisioned opportunities for public events in the existing buildings at MacMillan Farm. Ideas included cultural or art exhibitions, art or educational workshops, panels or speakers and more.

Specifically, respondents identified unique opportunities for seasonal and pop-up events.

## Seasonal events and programs

- Maple syrup festival
- Summer camps
- Summer movie screenings
- Haunted houses
- Winter light shows
- Seasonal markets (e.g. spring garden fairs, winter/Christmas markets)

## Nature and horticulture

Survey participants expressed enthusiasm for horticultural and nature-related programming, such as establishing community gardens and greenspace opportunities that allow visitors to connect with nature.

### Horticultural and community gardens

Respondents showed enthusiasm for creating horticultural or botanical gardens for aesthetic purposes, as well as benefits for pollinating species. Some participants specifically mentioned maintenance of pollinator-friendly features, including beehives and pollinator gardens. In addition, respondents identified an interest in community gardens for educational purposes (i.e. workshops or demonstrations) or to enhance local food security.

### Natural spaces

Respondents mentioned opportunities to connect with nature through nature play areas, bird watching, forests and trails. This suggests an opportunity to connect the barns and heritage sites to other features through paths and signage for a seamless user experience.

**“Beekeeping! Save the bees! Butterfly gardens. There are wild turkeys that live on the property - they should be taken into consideration.”**

## Amenities and facilities

Respondents identified the amenities and facilities they wish to see included near the existing buildings at MacMillan Farm that would enhance visitor experience and allow them to remain on-site longer.

### Washrooms

Respondents suggested that washroom facilities would be a desired on-site amenity. Washrooms were often mentioned in relation to ideas for restaurants, cafes and private event opportunities.

### Food and beverage

Respondents identified opportunities for on-site food and beverage, through suggestions like farmers' markets, restaurants, and cafes.

### Social gatherings

Respondents highlighted the need for infrastructure to support events and social gatherings throughout the site, as well as near existing buildings, such as benches and picnic tables. Additionally, respondents mentioned a desire for shaded areas or indoor spaces (i.e. inside the barn) for protection from sun, rain and winter weather.

**“Offer opportunities for community members to learn. Continue beekeeping efforts (we need it) and offer lessons/workshops for families and community members. Offer workshops in gardening. Set up an animal sanctuary or petting zoo area where kids can learn about the farm animals and how to care for them.”**



## Question #8: Activities and events for open fields

**“The open fields that exist on MacMillan Farm were previously used for crops (such as hay, wheat, oats, corn, beets, carrots, apples and more) and livestock grazing (including horses, cattle, sheep, turkeys, chickens and pigs).**

**What activities or events do you think could take place in the open fields?”**

Respondents were invited to suggest the activities and events they envisioned taking place in the open fields around MacMillan Farm. They expressed interest in opportunities for active recreation, informal gathering spaces, agriculture and community gardens, youth amenities, events and celebrations, as well as food and beverage opportunities.

### Active recreation

When thinking about the open fields at MacMillan Farm, survey respondents described ideas for active recreation in these spaces. Many respondents suggested facilities to support team sports including soccer fields, cricket pitches and baseball diamonds, multi-use courts for basketball, volleyball, and pickleball, as well as skating rinks and open areas for activities like frisbee.

Within responses about the open fields, respondents identified opportunities to expand trails for walking, hiking, and cycling, with requests to develop natural trails that connect various parts of the site or incorporate gentle terrain features for accessibility. These trails could be used for winter activities, such as cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and tobogganing, which would ensure year-round use.

### Informal gathering spaces

Many respondents emphasized the importance of the open fields as a place to rest, picnic, and enjoy relaxed social interaction. Suggestions for amenities included picnic areas with tables, pavilions or gazebos, as places for families and friends to gather, eat, and unwind.

### Agriculture and community gardens

Survey respondents were interested in seeing the open fields become places for community gardening and urban agriculture with a range of productive, educational, and ecological purposes.

Community gardens and farms were frequently suggested, with ideas including food forests (garden of edible trees and plants), “pick-your-own” style farms, produce to be used for schools and food banks, or opportunities for visitors to learn about farming



**Figure 5:** Open fields at MacMillan Farm

on-site. Responses were divided between productive and educational farming activities. On the one hand, some participants suggested maintaining active crop production and integrating livestock grazing, with an emphasis on “pick-your-own” experiences such as apple, berry, and pumpkin picking. On the other hand, some participants envisioned the fields for agricultural education, including school field trips and model demonstrations of sustainable and regenerative farming practices.

Other related ideas included beekeeping, a greenhouse, pollinator gardens and children’s gardens.

Several respondents were interested in integrating live animals into the site as part of an educational and recreational farm experience predominantly oriented towards children. These suggestions included horseback riding, maintaining livestock such as sheep, cattle, pigs and chickens for public viewing, or petting zoos.

A few respondents identified their preference to preserve MacMillan Farm’s natural character, advocating for minimal to no development of amenities or facilities. These respondents prefer the land to remain as open space, serving as a quiet, green refuge for wildlife and passive enjoyment to appreciate the landscape and avoid large-scale infrastructure or heavily programmed uses.

## **Youth amenities**

In the open fields, there was interest in youth-friendly amenities that encourage play, exploration and learning in outdoor settings. Suggestions included traditional elements such as playgrounds, climbing structures and

nature play opportunities. Some respondents envisioned more immersive features like hay or tractor rides, pony rides, corn mazes and pumpkin patches to create seasonal and festive experiences for children.

## **Events and celebrations**

Respondents were interested in public gatherings and celebrations capable of bringing communities together. Recommended events were generally community-oriented and City-led, such as seasonal celebrations, fairs and concerts.

Several respondents supported the idea of incorporating rental spaces to accommodate a range of community, cultural and private events. Private events envisioned included individuals and organizations coordinating wellness retreats, fitness events or small weddings. A few respondents proposed dedicated rental options such as campsites or glamping domes, or rentable spaces for workshops and retreats.

## **Food and beverage**

Opportunities for food and beverage were common among respondents, who largely raised suggestions for farmers’ markets, food trucks, a cafe or other food vendors.

Several responses proposed that farmers’ markets could be regular or seasonal events, offering fresh produce, handcrafted goods, flowers and artisanal food, acting as an opportunity for cultural food experiences. The potential for “field-to-fork” retail or “pick-your-own produce” was seen as an opportunity to connect agriculture with commerce. Seasonal events such as producing maple syrup, were also suggested.

## Question #9: Activities and events for natural areas and woodlands

**“The natural areas and woodlands that exist on MacMillan Farm have largely remained undisturbed. However, several informal trails exist throughout the property supporting the MacMillan family’s recreational use for hiking and cross-country skiing.**

**What activities or events do you think could take place in natural areas and woodlands like these?”**

This question asked respondents about the activities or events they wish to see in natural areas at MacMillan Farm. While respondents alluded to the use of trails and natural areas in previous questions, they emphasized the use of these spaces for walking and hiking, winter activities, nature preservation education, youth programming and more.

### Nature trails

Hiking and walking were the most frequently mentioned activities for MacMillan Farm’s trails and woodlands, with many favouring the preservation of natural trails and minimal disturbance to the existing environment; for example, using gravel or woodchips in lieu of paved paths. Several respondents suggested that trails could also be used for cycling or horseback riding.

Programming suggestions included both guided and self-led hikes, with amenities to support these uses, such as educational signage (highlighting local flora and fauna), lookout spots, boardwalks and seating areas. A few respondents pointed out the need to accommodate accessibility for seniors or

people using mobility devices, as well as trail connections to local residential areas and adjacent properties.

### Winter activities

Respondents demonstrated interest in all-season access to nature trails at MacMillan Farm, with opportunities for winter hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

A few respondents suggested the creation of skating trails through wooded areas, with potential for seasonal lighting to enhance the experience. Others proposed tobogganing hills, downhill ski facilities, as well as rental opportunities for snowshoes and cross-country skis.



**Figure 6:** Old MacMillan Cottage in the Fall



**“I don’t want to see these disturbed...I fear anything else would scare away the wildlife and remove that connection with nature you get when you go there.”**

### **Connection to nature and environmental education**

Respondents are interested in the stewardship and preservation of MacMillan Farm to avoid disturbing the natural environment. These comments were attributed to the lack of natural areas remaining in surrounding areas, and a desire to continue to provide opportunities for connection to nature on-site.

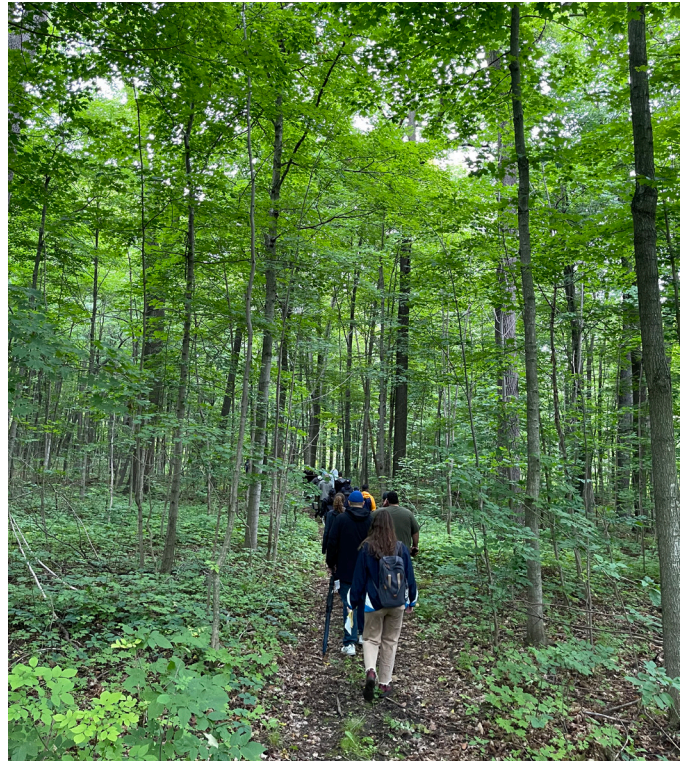
Respondents would like to see opportunities to connect with nature using the trails and woodlands, with respondents valuing birdwatching, forest bathing, stargazing and fishing.

Additionally, respondents suggested opportunities for outdoor environmental education, including guided hikes, scavenger hunts and youth nature programs and camps. These suggestions occasionally involved partnerships with organizations like the Nature Conservancy of Canada to expand educational programming, such as nature camps, field trips and forest schools.

### **Youth programming**

Respondents suggested a range of activities for children that encourage outdoor exploration and learning. Ideas included nature-based play structures, treetop trekking, scavenger hunts, and family-friendly trails suitable for walking, biking and skiing.

Educational components such as “StoryWalks,” scavenger hunts and signage about local flora and fauna were mentioned, in addition to seasonal events and nature programs for youth.



**Figure 7:** People walking along an informal trail within the forested area



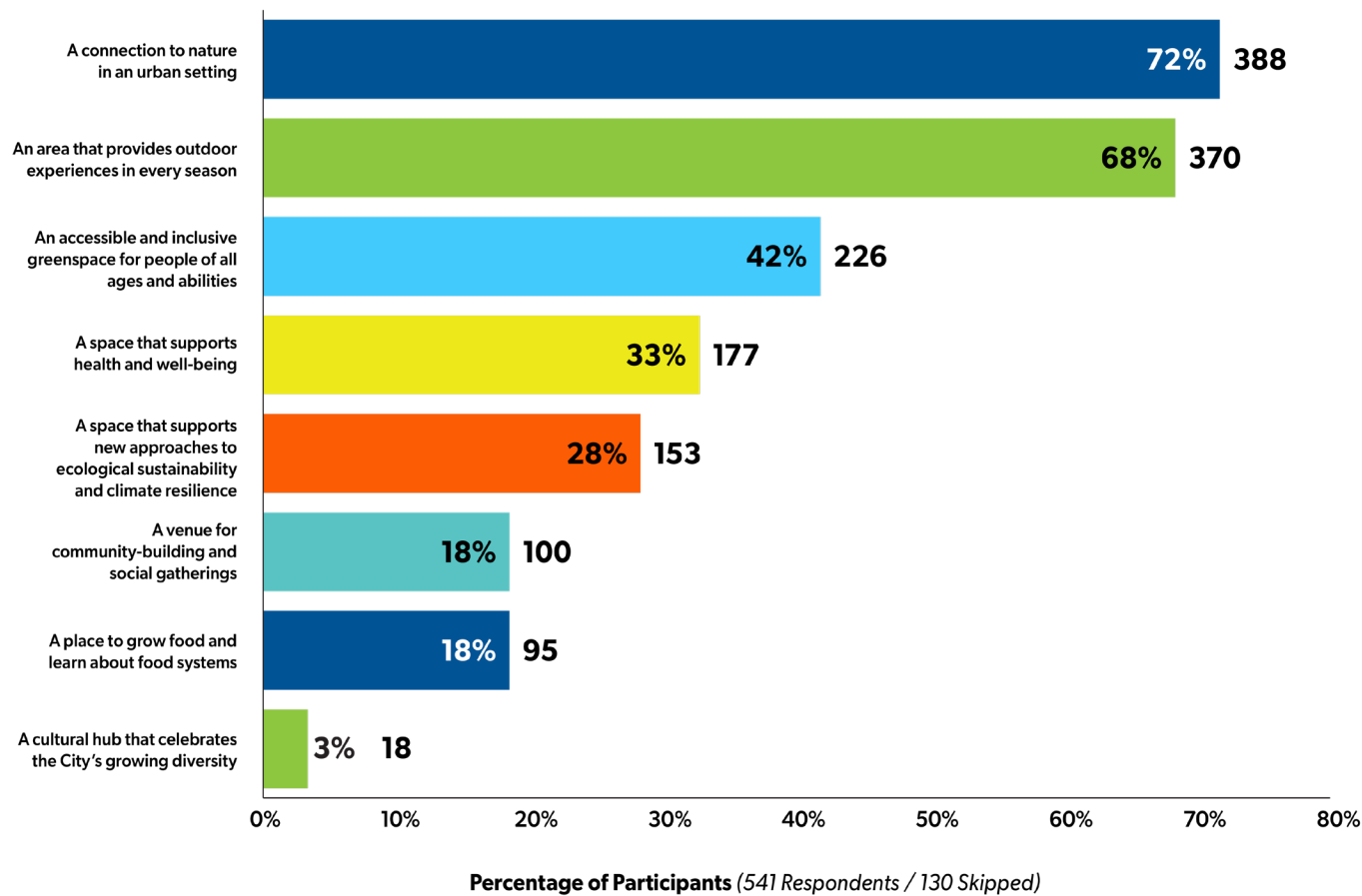
**Figure 8:** Horticultural gardens at MacMillan Farm near William Cook house



# Question #10: Key objectives for MacMillan Farm

“The City of Vaughan envisions MacMillan Farm as a community hub and destination for Vaughan residents. In the list of objectives below, which do you think are most important?”

Respondents were asked to select the three objectives for MacMillan Farm that resonated with them most and would contribute to the site’s role as a community hub and destination for Vaughan residents.



Two responses were selected most frequently. Many respondents believe MacMillan Farm should function as a space to enhance connection to nature in an urban setting (72%) and serve as an area that provides outdoor experiences in every season (68%).

“An accessible and inclusive greenspace for all ages and abilities” was selected by 42% of respondents. The site’s role as a space that supports health and well-being through social connection and access to nature, or as a space that supports new approaches to ecological

sustainability and climate resilience, were selected by 33% and 28%, respectively.

Fewer respondents envision MacMillan Farm as a venue for community-building and social gathering or a place to grow and learn about food systems, both selected by only 18%. The latter is surprising, given respondents’ overwhelming interest in community gardens, urban agriculture and food production.

The least frequently selected option was for “a cultural hub celebrating the City’s diversity,” with only 3% of responses.

## Question #11: Additional ideas

**“Is there anything else you would like us to know about your vision or ideas for MacMillan Farm?”**

This question asked respondents for additional open-ended comments on their vision or ideas for MacMillan Farm. These comments were often centred around nature conservation, accessibility and connectivity and heritage preservation.



### **Nature conservation**

Respondents emphasized their desire to conserve the natural character of MacMillan Farm. Many advocated for minimal intervention, avoiding overdeveloped infrastructure and commercialization through the creation of a nature reserve, protecting mature trees and restoring habitats.

Several respondents specifically mentioned their opposition to any urban or residential development on the site. Instead, they urged the City to preserve it as a natural space to serve local communities that already feel busy with traffic and development. Many envisioned the site as a tranquil ecological sanctuary, educational landscape or quiet refuge from city life.



### **Access and connectivity**

Site access was expressed by respondents as a key consideration for MacMillan Farm. They wish to see improved access to the site, by connecting the space to surrounding trails, roadways and public spaces like Marc Santi Boulevard, Nellie McClung Public School, Mill Race Park and more.

Other recommendations for site accessibility included adding wayfinding signage, entry points that enable access for seniors, strollers and mobility devices, as well as connections to public transit. Additional considerations included available parking, minimizing vehicular traffic and integrating active transportation, such as cycling.



### **Heritage preservation**

Several respondents took the opportunity to reiterate their opinions on MacMillan Farm’s historic buildings, which had strong support for retention and adaptive reuse. Overall, respondents expressed a desire to maintain the site’s character, acknowledging the farm’s role in settler histories. Preserving and activating the site’s heritage was seen as a vital way to connect the community to Vaughan’s agricultural history.

# Student engagement activities

Recognizing the importance of involving youth perspectives into the MacMillan Farm Master Plan, elementary school students were engaged through an in-class workshop and a take-home activity booklet. These hands-on exercises invited students to share their ideas for the new greenspace coming to their local community, and asked them about the types of activities they would like to do while at MacMillan Farm in the future.

On April 29, 2025, 56 students (grades 5, 7 and 8) at Forest Run Public School participated in an in-class workshop facilitated by the project team. This workshop consisted of a presentation about MacMillan Farm, followed by an individual and group activity. Students were also given a take-home activity booklet to complete on their own time, which teachers would collect and return to the City. Thirty-four completed booklets were returned to the project team.

Students from Nellie McClung Public School also participated in the take-home activity and 20 completed booklets were returned from grade 5 students.



**Figure 9:** Project team and students from Forest Run Public School at the April 29, 2025 in-class workshop.

# In-class workshop activity #1: Individual worksheets

Following the presentation about MacMillan Farm, students participating in the in-class workshop were asked to complete a worksheet to begin thinking about their priorities and ideas for the site.

In part one, students were asked to identify their three preferred themes for the site from a list of six. In part two, students were then invited to fill in the blanks in a series of statements to tell their story of MacMillan Farm in the year 2050.

## Part #1: Students' preferred themes for MacMillan Farm

- Nature (40)
- Food (33)
- History (27)
- Farming (23)
- Learning (20)
- Tourism (14)

Other theme ideas included: having fun, socializing, activities and events, video games, plants, animals and environmental protection.

## Part #2: A day at MacMillan Farm in 2050

**“In the year 2050, MacMillan Farm has transformed into a place where \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are everywhere!”**

- Trees (14)
- Flowers (8)
- Plants (8)
- People (7)
- Nature (7)
- Crops (6)
- Animals (4)
- Birds (3)
- Bees (2)
- Tourists (2)

**“In the open fields, which were once empty, I saw \_\_\_\_\_.”**

- Trees (11)
- Flowers (7)

- Plants (7)
- Animals (6)
- Grass (4)
- Crops (4)
- Fruit (4)
- Robots (2)
- Nature (2)
- People (2)
- Wheat (2)
- Activities (2)
- Vegetables (2)

### Additional ideas included:

- Crop speed accelerator (makes crops grow faster)
- Pets running around
- Parrot robot
- Robot butterflies
- Sheep
- Badgers
- Soccer fields

**“Along the trails within the woodlands, there are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

- Animals (14)
- Trees (11)
- Birds (8)
- Flowers (7)
- Grass (5)
- Leaves (3)
- Plants (3)
- Deer (2)
- Bugs (2)
- Sticks (2)



**Additional ideas included:**

- Poison ivy warning
- Sleeping potions
- Flying cars
- Kids' section
- Scavenger hunt
- Ziplines
- Stores for plants
- Plaques with facts
- Foxes
- Lots of blocks

**“Back at the barns, people are spending time together and using features of the greenspace like \_\_\_\_\_ to do \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Features:**

- Gardening (3)
- Planting (3)
- Farming (2)
- Animals (2)
- Sitting (2)
- Trees (2)
- Sightseeing (2)
- Seeds (2)
- Soccer (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- A magical paintbrush
- The land's Indigenous treaties

**Activities:**

- Planting (14)
- Farming (5)
- Reading (3)
- Animals (2)
- Playing (2)
- Games (2)
- Learning (2)
- Walking (2)
- Trees (2)
- Trails (2)
- Crafting (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Taking care of animals
- Spending time with their families
- Raising awareness

**“At sunset, I joined a community gathering where we celebrated \_\_\_\_\_ through activities like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Celebrations:**

- Earth Day (6)
- Birthdays (5)
- New Years Eve (4)
- The opening [of the farm] (3)
- Nature (3)
- Terry Fox (2)

**Activities:**

- Planting (8)
- Games (4)
- Plants (4)
- Scavenger hunts (3)
- Nature (3)
- Dancing (3)
- Campfires (3)
- Playing (3)
- Food (2)
- Farming (2)
- Learning (2)
- Fun (2)
- Crafting (2)
- Sitting (2)
- Picking (2)
- Growing (2)
- Partying (2)
- Dinner (2)
- Barbecue (2)
- Picking up litter (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Looking at the stars
- Creating posters
- Talking about the importance of Earth Day
- Decorating a tree
- Making a snowman

# In-class workshop activity #2: Group park design

In the second in-class activity, students were put into ten groups and tasked with designing a version of MacMillan Farm that emphasized one of the themes for the project (nature, food, tourism, farming, history, learning). Groups of students designed creative visions for the future park, with some variation by theme. The section below details the amenity and programming ideas offered by students throughout this activity.

## Park #1: “MacMillan Activity Place” Theme: Food

### Food-related amenities

- Crops (corn, wheat, bananas, cherries)
- Butterfly garden
- Flower garden
- Corn maze
- Snack bar
- Waste and compost collection

### Other amenities

- Trails
- A place for kids to participate in activities and learn
- Benches
- Playground
- Plank walking

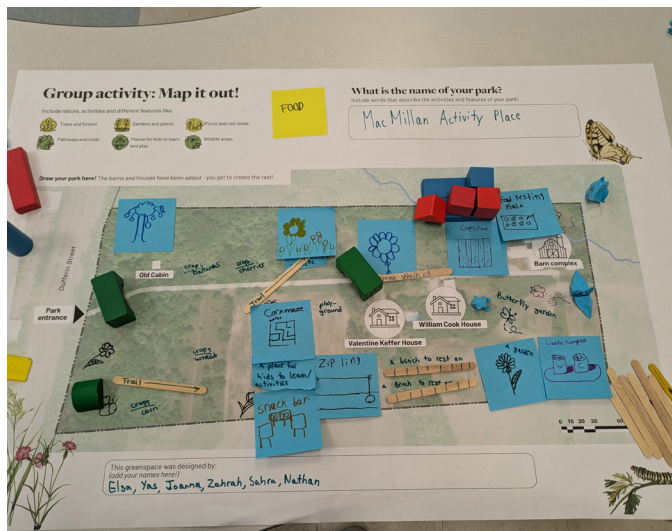


Figure 10: Park #1: “MacMillan Activity Place”

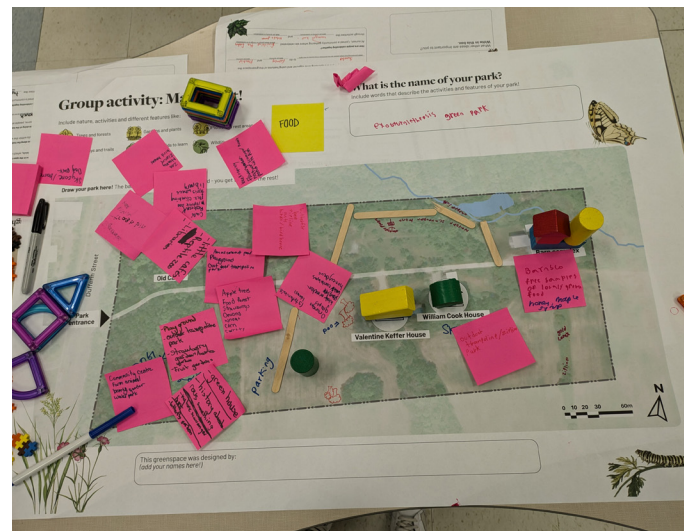


Figure 11: Park #2: “Exosturnletheosis Green Park”

## Park #2: “Exosturnletheosis Green Park”

### Theme: Food

#### Food-related amenities

- “Barnsco” (an idea for food retail, similar to “Costco”)
  - » Free samples of locally grown food like honey and maple syrup
- Farm animals
- Berry garden/fruit gardens (oranges, grapes, watermelon, cantaloupe, honeydew)
- Apple trees/food forest
- Crops (onions, wheat, corn, carrots)
- Greenhouse
- Butterfly garden
- Beekeeping
- Cafe
- Restaurant

#### Other amenities

- Birdhouses
- Ziplines
- Outdoor trampoline park
- Playgrounds
- Plaques with information about nature
- Nature scavenger hunt
- Water park
- Community centre
- Parking
- Reptile zoo
- Rock climbing
- Ferris wheel
- Library
- Dog park
- Pond with fish

## Park #3: “History of MacMillan Farm”

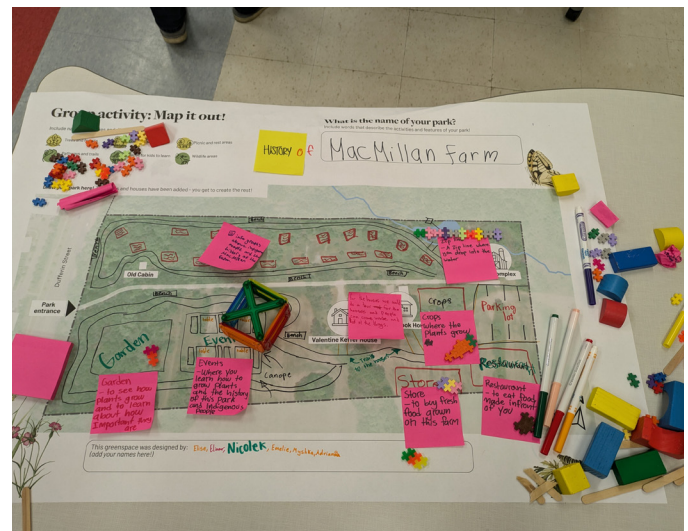
### Theme: History

#### History-related amenities

- Opportunities to learn about the history of the park and Indigenous people
  - » Events
  - » Plaques/“infographs”
- Tours of heritage houses

#### Other amenities

- Learning garden (to see plants grow and learn about their importance)
- Events to learn how to grow plants
- Outdoor event space with picnic tables and canopy
- Benches
- Trails connecting to heritage houses
- Crops
- Store to buy fresh produce grown at the farm
- Restaurant to eat food grown at the farm
- Parking lot
- Zipline that drops you into the pond



**Figure 12:** Park #3: “History of MacMillan Farm”

## Park #4: “MacMillan Farm 3000!”

### Theme: History

#### History-related amenities

- Museum

#### Other amenities

- Kiosk with washroom
- Basketball court
- Trails
- Bike trail
- Extended barn complex

## Park #5: “Wildflower Park”

### Theme: Nature

#### Nature-related amenities

- Trees and forests, including apple trees
- Beekeeping
- Garden
- Wildlife and animals
- Greenhouse

#### Other amenities

- Parking along Dufferin Street
- Map at entrance of park
- Playgrounds
- Ziplines
- Treehouse
- Sandpit
- Benches
- Dog park (separated for large and small dogs)
- Learning centre at Valentine Keffer House
- Museum at William Cook House
- Market to sell drinks, food, seeds, spices, flowers, pots, and first aid
- Barbecues and picnic tables
- Ice rink on the pond during winter

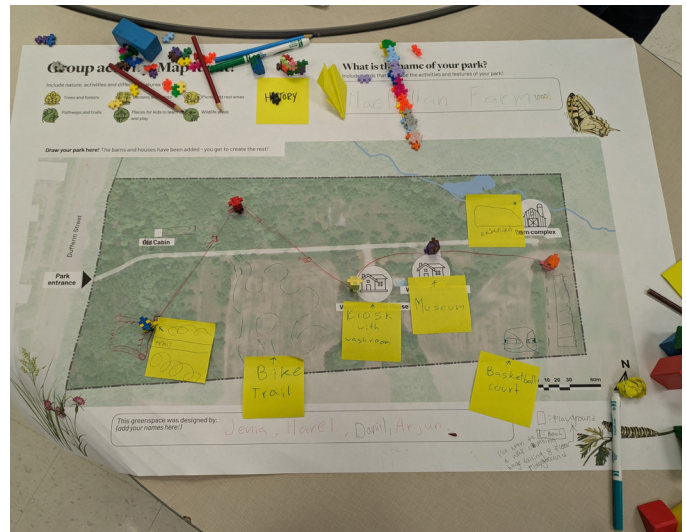


Figure 14: Park #4: “MacMillan Farm 3000!”

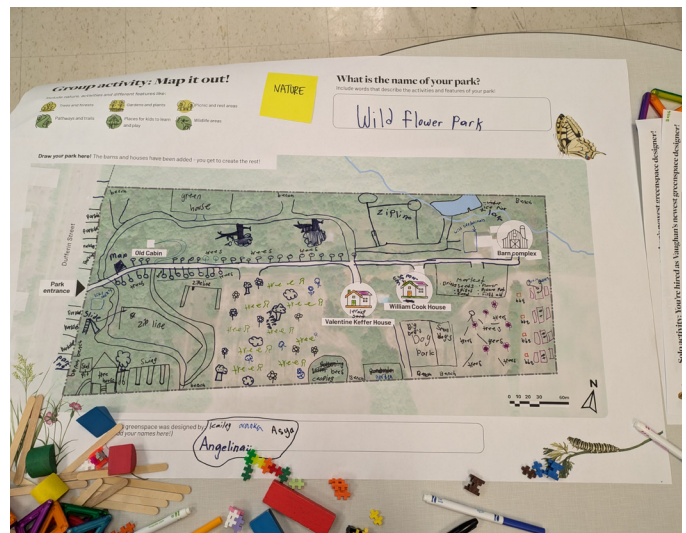


Figure 13: Park #5: “Wildflower Park”



## Park #6: (Untitled)

### Theme: Nature

#### Nature-related amenities

- Trees and forests
- Including trees surrounding parking lot to provide shade and keep cars cool
- Pond for fishing and looking at fish (catch and release)
- Gardens and plants

#### Other amenities

- Playground with rope swings
- Seating for parents near playground
- Bike trails and pathways
- Gift shop with figurines, stuffed animals and keychains
- “Market” barn complex
- Bike, scooter and skateboard zones
- “Trick zone” made out of dirt and grass that has trees

## Park #7: “Carrville Nature and Agriculture Historical Learning Centre (C.N.A.H.L.C)”

### Theme: Learning

#### Learning-related amenities

- Learning about beekeeping and how to harvest honey
- Nature scavenger hunt (looking for different plants, animals or insects)
- Community garden (learning to grow plants)
- Farming history and agricultural teaching
- Learning about how Indigenous people lived
- Story walk in nature on the trails



Figure 15: Park #6: (Untitled)

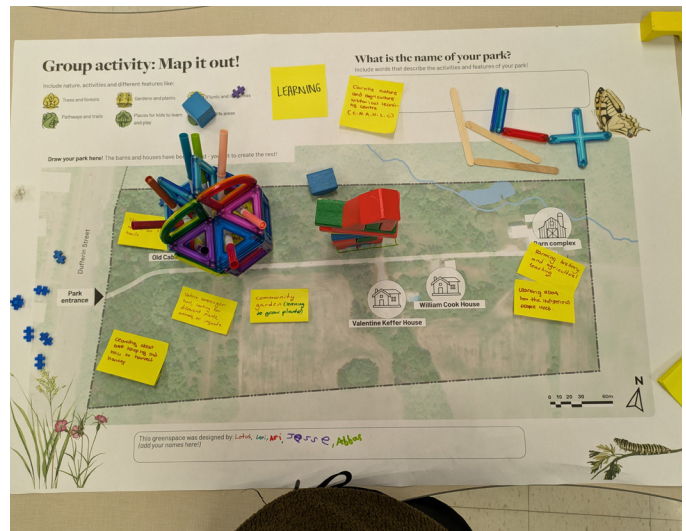


Figure 16: Park #7: “Carrville Nature and Agriculture Historical Learning Centre (C.N.A.H.L.C)”

## Park #8: “You Do You / Choose Your Own Adventure”

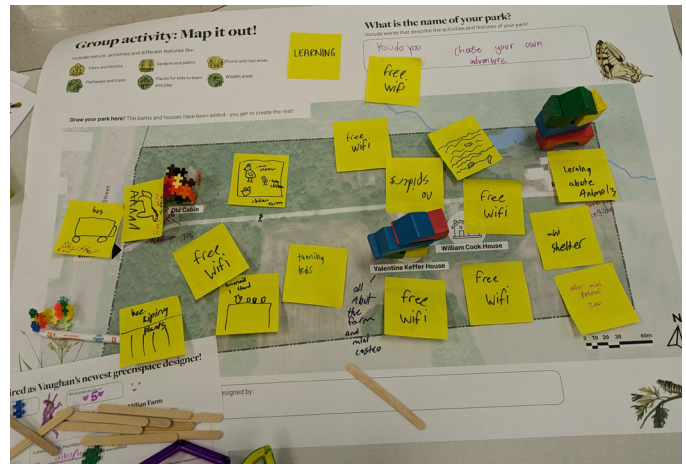
### Theme: Learning

#### Learning-related amenities

- Learning about animals
- Valentine Keffer House is about the farm and a “mini Costco”

#### Other amenities

- Free wifi
- Chicken farm
- Horses and cows
- Shelter
- Mini animal zoo
- Lemonade stand
- Beekeeping
- Plants
- Shuttle bus



**Figure 17:** Park #8: “You Do You / Choose Your Own Adventure”

## Park #9: “The Village of Nature”

### Theme: Tourism

#### Tourism-related amenities

- Seed store
- Statues of Keffer and Cook
- Souvenir shop with plushies, magnets, gardening tools, etc.
- Greenhouse shop (buy from the greenhouse)
- Sandpit with corn kernels instead of sand
- Food courts

#### Other amenities

- Play zone for kids
- Insect hotel
- Bridge
- Bird feeders and birdhouses



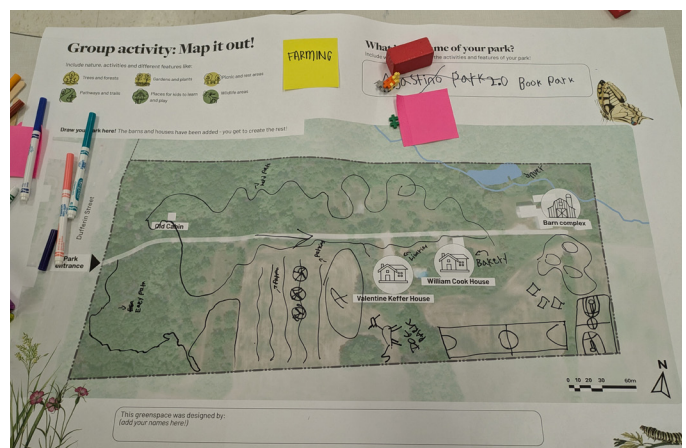
**Figure 18:** Park #9: “The Village of Nature”

## Park #10: Book Park

### Theme: Farming

#### Amenities

- Trails (easy and hard options)
- Parking
- Dog park
- Valentine Keffer House as a library
- William Cook House as a bakery
- Sports fields and courts



**Figure 19:** Park #10: “Book Park”



# Take-home activity booklet

This section details the responses received by the project team in the take-home activity booklets completed by students from both Forest Run Public School and Nellie McClung Public School. Many of the activities in the activity booklets were similar to those completed in the in-class workshop.

## Activity #1: Preferred activities for MacMillan Farm

In activity one, students were asked which activities and amenities they think would be fun and exciting for kids and families to experience.

**“What would make this space fun and exciting for kids and families? Check the boxes for the activities you would like to experience.”**

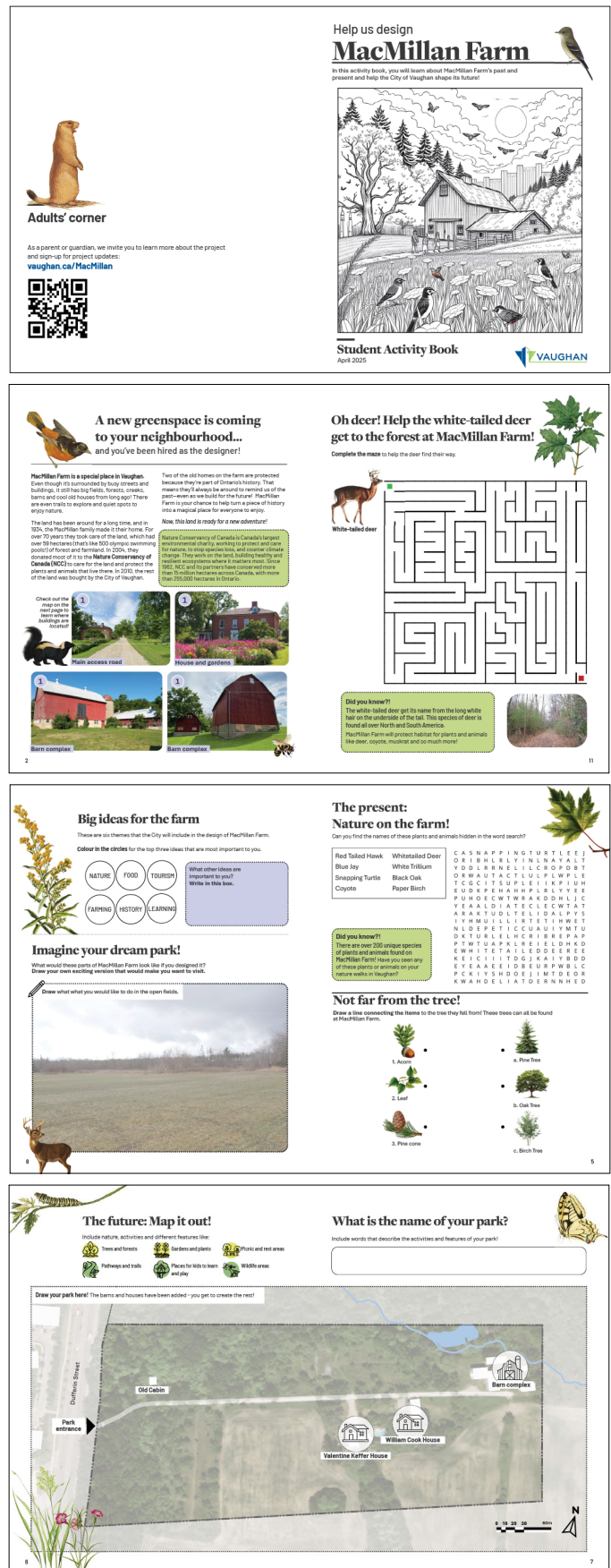
- Nature trails to walk and explore (30)
- Art and music events in the park (28)
- Quiet spots to sit and enjoy the view (27)
- Gardens full of flowers and vegetables (24)
- Places to play in all seasons (21)

## Activity #2: Themes

In activity two, students were asked to identify their three preferred themes for the site from a list of six.

- Nature (30)
- Food (28)
- Farming (18)
- Learning (17)
- History (13)
- Tourism (11)

Other ideas included: feeding animals, fishing, playground, creating habitats, sports, animals, safety and fun.



**Figure 20:** Pages included in the take-home activity booklet

### Activity #3: A day at MacMillan Farm in 2050

In activity three, students were invited to fill in the blanks in a series of statements to tell their story of MacMillan Farm in the year 2050.

**“In the year 2050, MacMillan Farm has transformed into a place where \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are everywhere!”**

- Animals (15)
- People (8)
- Flowers (7)
- Plants (6)
- Trees (4)
- Nature (3)
- Gardens (2)
- Fun (2)
- Kids (2)
- Vegetables (2)
- Houses (2)
- Cows (2)
- Chickens (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Robot butterflies and assistants
- Tourists
- UFOs

**“In the open fields, which were once empty, I saw \_\_\_\_\_.”**

- Crops (5)
- Deer (5)
- Flowers (4)
- People (3)
- Playgrounds (2)
- Horses (2)
- Animals (2)
- Plants (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Tourists
- Sports
- Carnivals
- Basketball courts
- Cafe
- Animal zoo
- Greenhouse

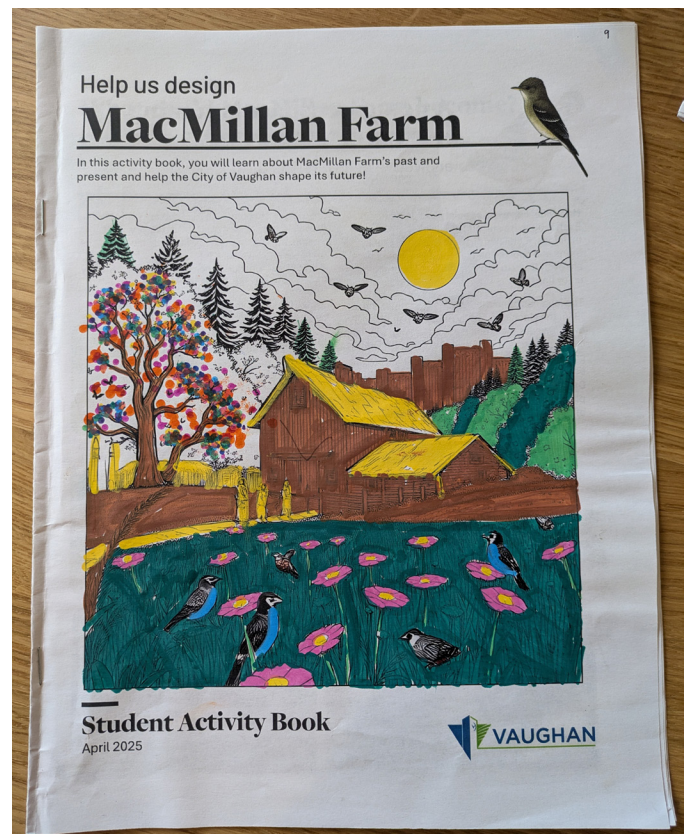


**“Along the trails within the woodlands, there are \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

- Trees (11)
- Flowers (6)
- Animals (6)
- Rocks (5)
- Plants (4)
- People (4)
- Trails (2)
- Squirrels (2)
- Birds (2)
- Insects (2)
- Pebbles (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Waterfalls
- Information stands
- Cherry blossoms
- Horseback riding trails
- Ziplines
- Campgrounds



**Figure 21:** Youth colouring pages from the take-home activity booklet

**“Back at the barns, people are spending time together and using features of the greenspace like \_\_\_\_\_ to do \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Features:**

- Animals (5)
- Fields (4)
- Playing (2)
- People (2)
- Planting (2)
- Garden (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Water fountains
- Sports balls
- Maps to follow
- Binoculars
- Pottery
- Badminton
- Robots
- Natural materials
- Hay

**Activities:**

- Fun (6)
- Running (5)
- Walking (4)
- Planting (3)
- Gardening (3)
- Animals (2)
- Playing (2)
- Petting (2)
- Art (2)
- Soccer (2)
- Learning (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Pool
- Sightseeing
- Relaxing

**“At sunset, I joined a community gathering where we celebrated \_\_\_\_\_ through activities like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Celebrations:**

- The farm  
(e.g. opening, anniversary, etc.)  
(8)
- Canada Day (3)
- New Year’s (3)
- Birthdays (2)
- History (2)
- Holidays (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Trampoline
- Carnival games
- Cultural food
- Football
- Ping pong
- Easter egg hunt
- Scavenger hunt
- Relay races

**Additional ideas included:**

- Around the fire
- Nature and Indigenous people
- Yalda (Nowruz)
- Carrville

**Activities:**

- Dancing (5)
- Games (5)
- Eating (5)
- Planting (3)
- Playing (3)
- Food (3)
- Fireworks (3)
- Volleyball (3)
- Art (3)
- Singing (3)
- Petting (2)
- Marshmallows (2)
- Learning (2)
- Fun (2)
- People (2)
- Talking (2)
- Party (2)
- Jumping (2)

## Activity #4: Imagine your dream park!

In activity four, students were shown images of MacMillan Farm's open fields, barns, heritage buildings and garden areas, and were invited to draw in the activities they would like to see included near those spaces.

### “Draw what you would like to do in the open fields.”

Students drew amenities and activities including:

- Animals (5)
- Picnics (5)
- Planting (3)
- Playground (2)
- Path (2)
- Crops (2)
- Food courts (2)

Additional ideas included:

- • Campfire for winter
- • Rest areas
- • Zipline

### “Draw what you would like to do at the barns.”

Students drew amenities and activities including:

- Farm/barn animals (9)
- Feed animals/petting zoo (5)
- Learning (2)
- Garden (2)
- Farm (2)
- Store (2)

Additional ideas included:

- Horseback riding
- Restaurant
- Ferris wheel
- Pool
- Skate park
- Lambs, lions and chickens
- Grocery store
- Beekeeping

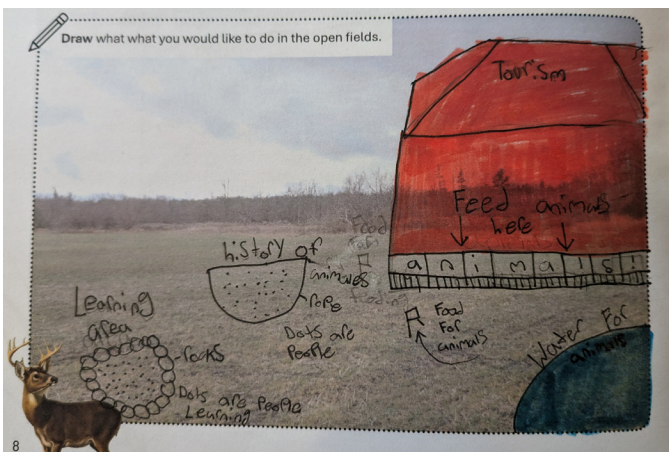


Figure 22: Youth ideas for the open fields

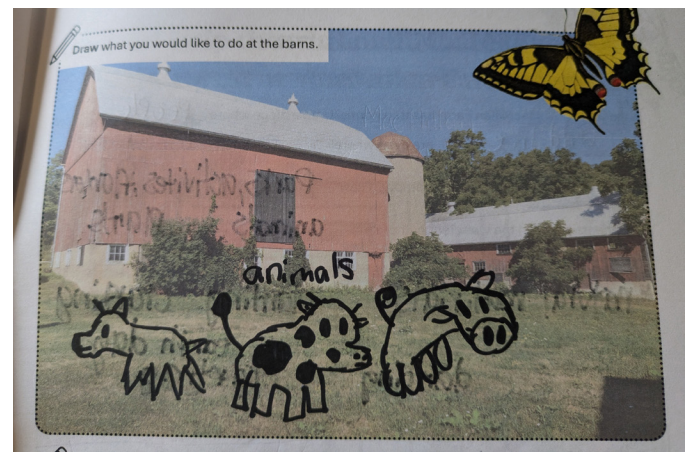


Figure 23: Youth ideas for the barns



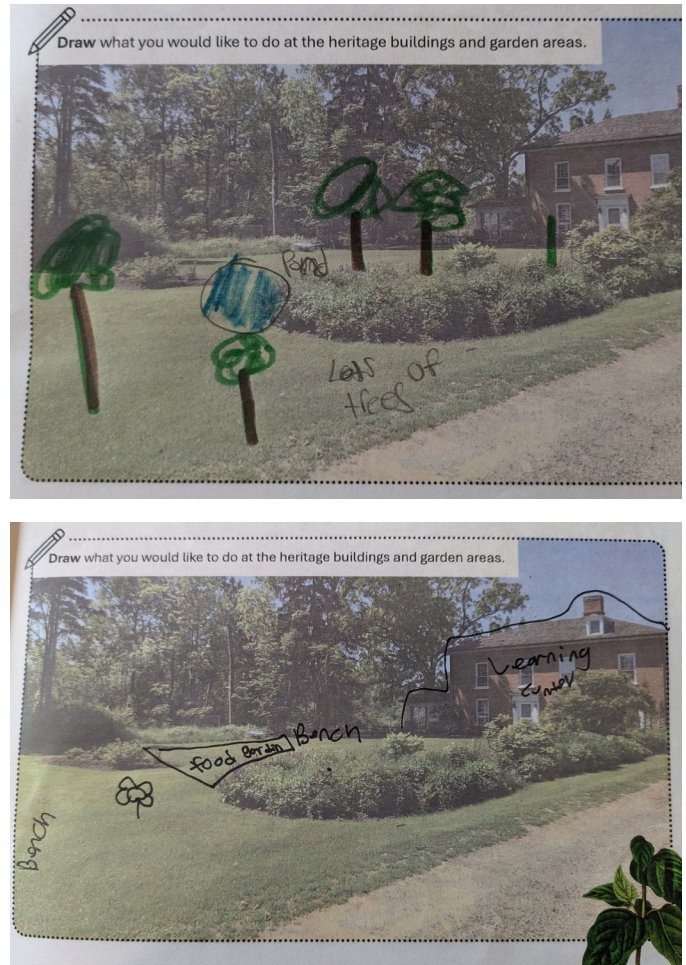
**“Draw what you would like to do at the heritage buildings and garden areas.”**

**Students drew amenities and activities including:**

- Flowers (6)
- Learning (5)
- Flower garden (4)
- Rest area (3)
- Trees (3)
- Food (2)
- Benches (2)
- Farm (2)
- Slide (2)
- Swings (2)
- History (2)

**Additional ideas included:**

- Secret trails
- Zipline
- Lounging on the grass
- Historical walking tours
- Nature walks
- Strawberry farm
- Monument



**Figure 24:** Youth ideas for the heritage buildings and garden areas



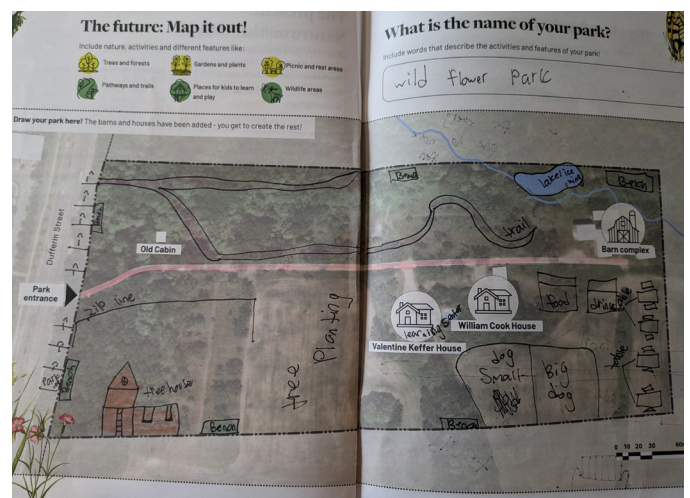
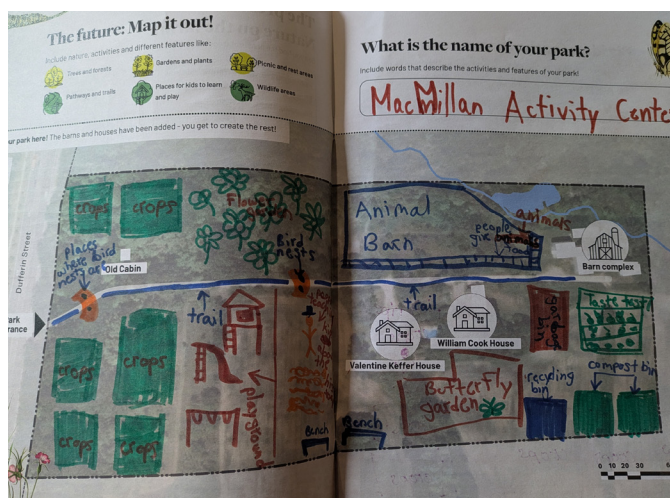
## Activity #5: Map it out!

In the final workbook activity, students designed creative visions for MacMillan Farm. They were provided with a base map with the key features, like the barns and houses, that will remain on-site, and were invited to design the rest of the site.

**“Draw your park here! The barns and houses have been added – you get to create the rest!”**

### Ideas:

- Trail in a ring shape and garden with a park
- Old cabin as a mini bank, bike park and fishing by the pond
- Petting zoo and a garden
- Indoor parking, a furniture store and a hardware store
- Places for kids to learn and play, gardens and plants
- Food forest
- Playground and go-kart track
- Restaurant and cafe
- Animal zoo and plant zone
- Strawberry picking, picnic area and wildlife area
- Picnic area, garden and corn maze
- Recycling centre, playground and butterfly garden
- Flower garden, cherry blossom trees, small beach for swimming, maze and trails for walking
- Greenhouse and play learning zone
- Path with scavenger hunt
- Parking lot and basketball court
- Indoor playground, daycare and grocery store
- Wildlife reserve for bears, garden walks, trail system and chairlift
- Giant playground, turn the old cabin into a store
- Wildlife reserve and pathway



**Figure 25:** Youth designs for the future of MacMillan Farm

# Indigenous engagement meetings

To guide the planning of Phase 1 of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan, the City of Vaughan conducted four focused engagement sessions with Indigenous partners: Hiawatha First Nation, Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, Alderville First Nation, and Wendake First Nation. These discussions were designed to welcome feedback on initial directions and Indigenous communities' involvement in the MacMillan Farm site.

## Key takeaways

Participants shared insights on Indigenous programming, placekeeping, archaeological assessment, and ecological stewardship—helping ensure that Traditional Knowledge and cultural protocols guide the project moving forward.

### Archaeology and site history

Participants expressed interest in reviewing previous archaeology work (including surveys, relevant archaeological findings, etc.) completed on the Nature Conservancy of Canada property to understand the site's history and inform conservation planning.

Several First Nations would like to be consulted and involved in future archeological work, including any on-site digging or land disturbance.

### Ecological wisdom and caretaking

Across meetings, “two-eyed seeing”—merging Indigenous knowledge with Western science—was championed as a guiding approach for ecological planning. Participants acknowledged their appreciation for tranquility in the city, as well as restoring natural systems to look like southwest Ontario pre-settlement landscapes.

Ecological caretaking practices suggested include:

- Plant native species with thought and care, including trees and prairie grasses that are traditionally found in similar landscapes.
- Include perennial plants to promote pollinators, fruit trees, and plants with medicinal value.
- Plant the Three Sisters (corn, beans, squash) and pollinator gardens, emphasizing symbiotic ecosystems, as well as strawberries or heart berry, which hold significance in Indigenous cultures as the first berries of the season.
- Recognizing wildlife, wetlands, and waterbodies as cultural and ecological medicines, supporting ecosystem health and traditional teachings.



## Cultural programming and placekeeping

Participants encouraged programming and placekeeping that embraces Indigenous cultural traditions, such as:

- Acknowledging the importance of carrying routes, like the Oak Ridges Moraine, which served as a “GPS system.” Indigenous peoples followed carrying routes along with marker trees, which identified safe river crossings, food, drinking water and hunting territory.
- Marker trees or interpretive markers (e.g., QR-code enabled) could be added along trail systems to acknowledge Indigenous travel routes and historical use.
- Spaces for medicine walks, ceremonial gathering areas and teachings rooted in cultural directionality (e.g., the Seven Directions).

- Highlighting the presence of Indigenous culture through integration of interpretive elements, signage, and wayfinding, led by First Nations’ historians.

Economic and social inclusion through Indigenous-led procurement, jobs, and learning opportunities tied to programming, stewardship, and site interpretation.

## Management and operations

Consider management that includes strategies to protect and restore the natural environment (e.g., management plans for fish weirs, bean planting to replace nitrogen, plant two trees if one is taken down)

Use of controlled burns, rotating land use, and focusing on medicinal plants, prairie grasses, and wetland protection as multi-purpose ecological strategies.



**Figure 26:** Pond at MacMillan Farm, located behind William Cook house.

## Conclusion and next steps

In Phase 1 of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan project, the City of Vaughan employed a range of engagement methods to gather diverse perspectives, including an online survey, pop-ups, student workshops and activity booklets, as well as conversations with Indigenous partners. These methods were designed to capture community voices, inspire creative inputs and build meaningful partnerships, especially with youth and Indigenous communities, reflecting a broader commitment to inclusive, place-based planning.

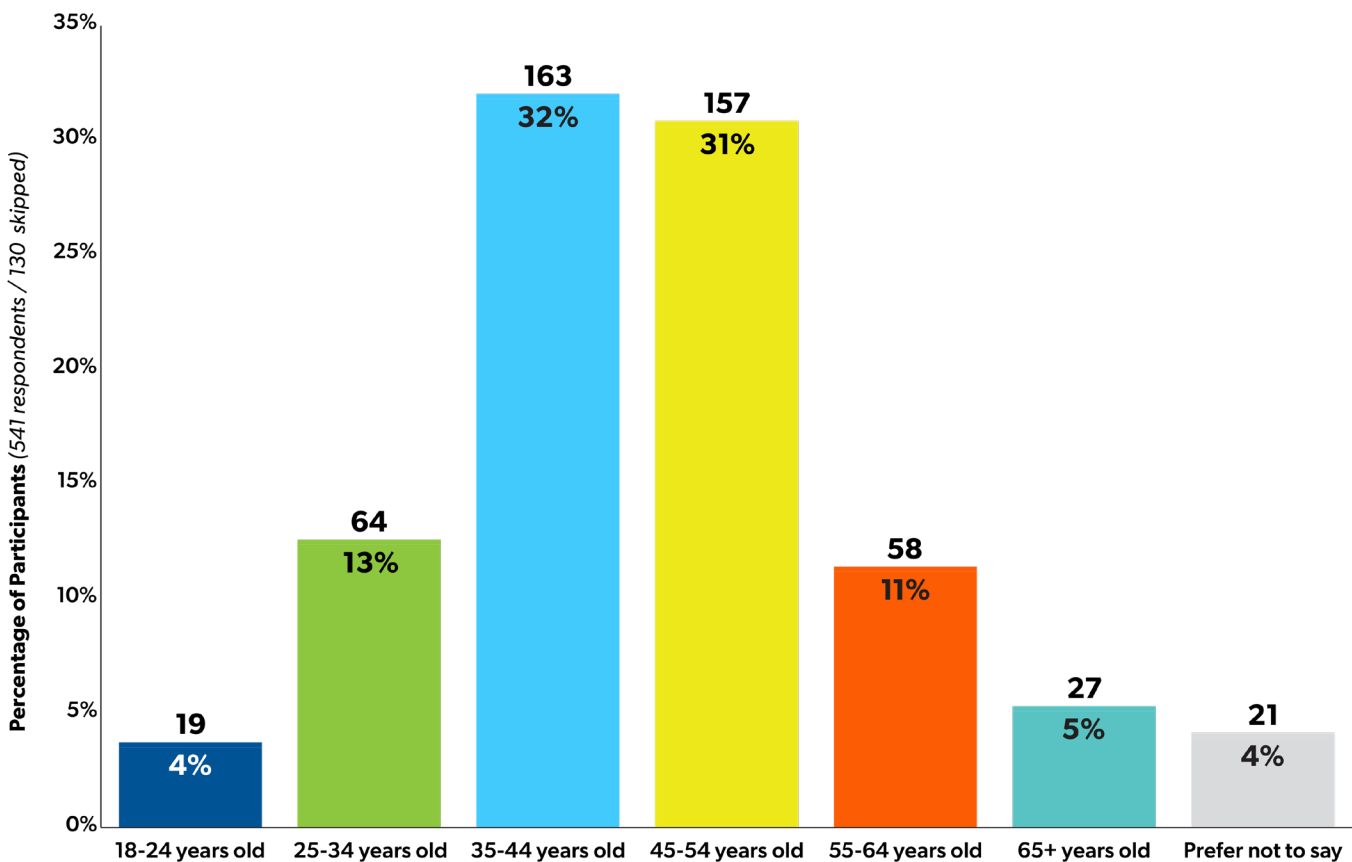
The level of participation in the project, especially through the survey and pop-ups, highlights significant community interest in shaping MacMillan Farm. Residents and students alike shared thoughtful, practical ideas that demonstrate a genuine investment in the site's future.

In Phase 2 of the MacMillan Farm Master Plan project, the project team will share preliminary design concepts with residents, Indigenous partners and other interested parties. The objective of engagement will be to determine a preferred concept and to understand how various elements should be prioritized in the short-, medium- and long-term. This multi-phased approach to engagement will ensure that MacMillan Farm becomes a well-loved, culturally vibrant, and ecologically rich destination for all Vaughan residents.



# Appendix A: Survey participant demographics

“What is your age?”



**“Please select any of the following that are applicable to you.”**

