

Food-Friendly Neighbourhood Plan: Don Mills & Parkwoods



About this neighbourhood

The Don-Mills & Parkwoods area is home to many new immigrants and low income families, especially north of York Mills which is physically isolated due to highways on its northern and western boundaries. Located just south of Hwy 401 on the eastern edge of North York, the Don Mills area contains a mix of residential, commercial and industrial lands.

Special thanks City of Toronto, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Food Strategy, Community Share Food Bank and Don Mills & Parkwoods residents who participated in neighbourhood consultations.

Opportunity:

Don Mills & Parkwoods residents identified more access to fresh produce as their top priority for a more food-friendly neighbourhood. This highlights the opportunity to start another affordable produce market in the neighbourhood to complement the existing produce market at Toronto Botanical Gardens. Residents also indicated a mobile market would be a welcome addition to the neighbourhood's current food assets. This would improve access to affordable fresh produce for residents as a mobile market could visit multiple locations, reaching more neighbourhoods, reducing the amount of time spent in transit for some residents. Local organizations could support the produce markets in the neighbourhood by directing some of their food budget towards purchases from the market to ensure sustainability.

Who should be involved:

- Ward 25 Councillor Robinson
- Foodshare
- Local community organizations
- Community Share Food Bank
- Overland Learning Centre

Opportunity:

Local food organizations in the Don Mills and Parkwoods neighbourhood can connect with the Flemingdon/Thorncliffe Food Security Network which aims to facilitate better coordination and planning around food. Food Action Teams in other neighbourhoods have been successful in bringing about new food programming and addressing other local food issues. For example, the network is interested in exploring the possibility of opening a public market in partnership with different local food vendors.

Who should be involved:

- Community organizations working with food
- Flemingdon/Thorncliffe Food Security Network
- City of Toronto, Community Development Officer
- Community Share Food Bank
- Ward 25 Councillor Robinson

Retail



Findings

Don Mills & Parkwoods have poorer access to healthier food stores within a ten minute walking distance from each residential block compared to many other neighbourhoods in Toronto. The Don Valley Parkway to the east and the rail line to the south of the neighbourhood also create challenges for residents accessing retail locations. The Don Mills & Parkwoods neighbourhood has nine major supermarkets and a number of smaller grocers. Community members would like to see more discount chains in the neighbourhood and improved access to affordable produce.

Grade

C-

Produce markets



There is only one produce market in this neighbourhood, located in the Toronto Botanical Gardens. Many residents did not know about the market and felt that prices remain a barrier. A Good Food Market would be a welcome addition to the neighbourhood as many residents indicated this is a priority. Residents also indicated a mobile market that can reach multiple neighbourhoods, and operate year round, would create more options for people who have mobility issues.

D

Food assistance



There are two food banks that operate in the neighbourhood and two more that serve the surrounding area. The Community Share Food Bank is the main food bank for Don Mills and Parkwoods, providing food hampers to more than 500 families. Community members are satisfied with the service provided and appreciate the links to other programs but would like to see more access to fresh produce made available

B

Food skills and growing



There were few community kitchen and garden programs identified in this neighbourhood. Community Share Food Bank run a successful community garden in partnership with a local school that is popular with food bank clients and provides an opportunity for community members to connect and improve food literacy skills. Community members would be interested in access to more programs in the neighbourhood, especially community gardens.

D

Opportunity:

Another priority for residents was more access to community garden spaces. Community Share Food Bank run a successful garden program in partnership with a local school that can offer a model to replicate and connect with other programs in the neighbourhood. The garden donates fresh produce to the food bank and local partners such as Better Living support with community outreach to ensure the garden attracts a diverse group of participants. A harvest festival is organized to celebrate the seasons bounty and provide a community event for local residents to enjoy.

Who needs to hear it:

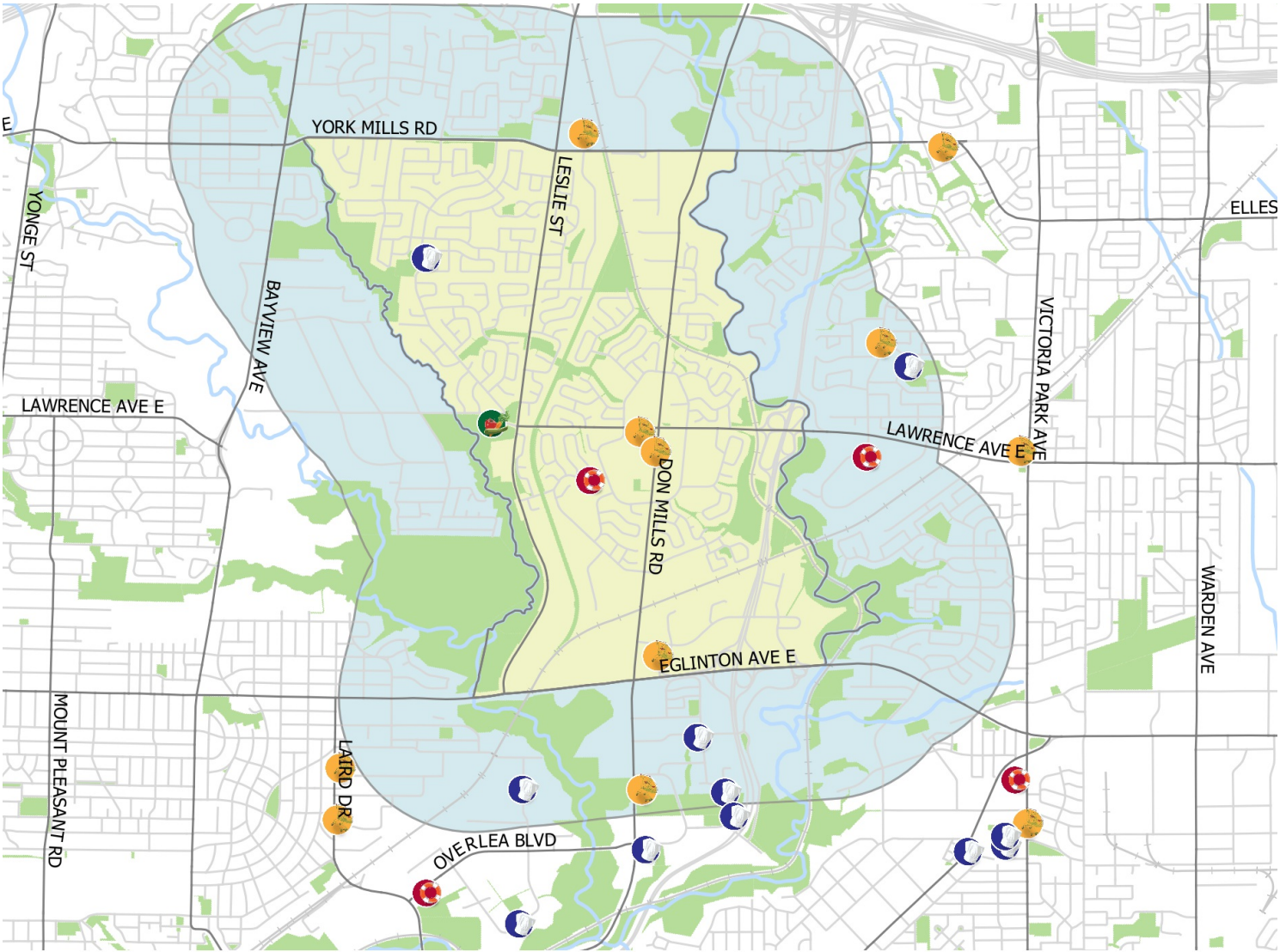
- Community Share Food Bank
- Other local organizations interested in establishing and supporting community garden spaces
- Toronto Community Housing
- Toronto Botanical Gardens
- Ward 25 Councillor Robinson

Don Mills & Parkwoods Food-Friendly Highlights



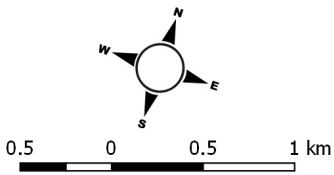
Community Share Food Bank

This food bank was established in 2004 by five churches in the Don Mills and Parkwoods area, supported by over 100 volunteers and open every Tuesday and Saturday morning, serving approximately 500 families per month. The food bank is located in a wealthy neighbourhood that is also home to many newcomers and a low income community members. CSFB has recently embarked on a three year pilot project with North York Harvest to enhance their services, create closer connections to other social service agencies and to promote civic engagement opportunities for community members to come together and organize around poverty and food security issues. CSFB partners with local businesses and organizations to offer programs like food tasting demonstrations and cooking workshops. CSFB is keen to establish partnerships with local community organizations and agencies in the Don Mills and Parkwoods area.



Legend

- Retail
- Produce Market
- Food Assistance
- Food Skills and Growing
- Major Arterial Street
- Priority Area
- 1 km Buffer (15 minute walk)
- Park or Greenspace



Toronto
Source: City of Toronto, Open Data;
Toronto Food Strategy, Toronto Public Health



Volunteers and staff at Community Share Food Bank

About this document

This Food Friendly Neighbourhood Food Plan is the product of a year-long consultation process with North York Harvest member agencies, community organizations and local residents. The yellow priority area highlighted in this map are the following City of Toronto, Social Planning Neighbourhoods; Banbury Don Mills

Published by

**NORTH YORK
HARVEST
FOOD BANK**

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FOUNDATION**

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Catalogue of primary food assets
For information about food assistance programs please call 211 or visit <http://www.211toronto.ca/>

Retail	
Bruno's Valumart	83 Underhill Dr
Food Basics	1277 York Mills Rd
Mcewan Enterprises	38 Karl Fraser Rd
Pioneer Deli	747 Don Mills Rd
Real Canadian Superstore	825 Don Mills Rd

Metro	1050 Don Mills Rd
Great Food Supermarket	1400 Victoria Park Ave
La Rosa's No Frills	1450 Lawrence Ave E
Longo's	85 Laird Dr
Sobey's	147 Laird Dr
Longo's	808 York Mills Rd
Produce Markets	
Toronto Botanical Gardens Organic Farmers Market	777 Lawrence Ave E

Food Assistance	
Community Share Food Bank	33 Overland Dr
Toronto International Celebration Church Food Bank	190 Rainside Rd
Thorncliffe Food Bank	1 Leaside Park Dr
Friends of Jesus Christ Food Bank Ministry	1420 Victoria Park Ave
Food Skills and Growing	
Banbury Community Centre	120 Banbury Rd
Broadlands Community Centre	19 Castlegrove Blvd
Centennial Apartments (TCHC)	5-11 Wakunda Place

Dennis R. Trimbel RC	29 St. Dennis Dr
Flemingdon Community Centre	140 Grenoble Dr
Flemingdon Health Centre	10 Gateway Blvd
Flemingdon Park Community Garden	150 Grenoble Dr
O'Connor Drive (TCHC)	90 Parma Crt
O'Connor Community Centre	1386 Victoria Park Ave
Thorncliffe Family Garden	46 Thorncliffe Park Dr
Thorncliffe Park Garden Club Community Garden	50 Beth Neilson Dr