

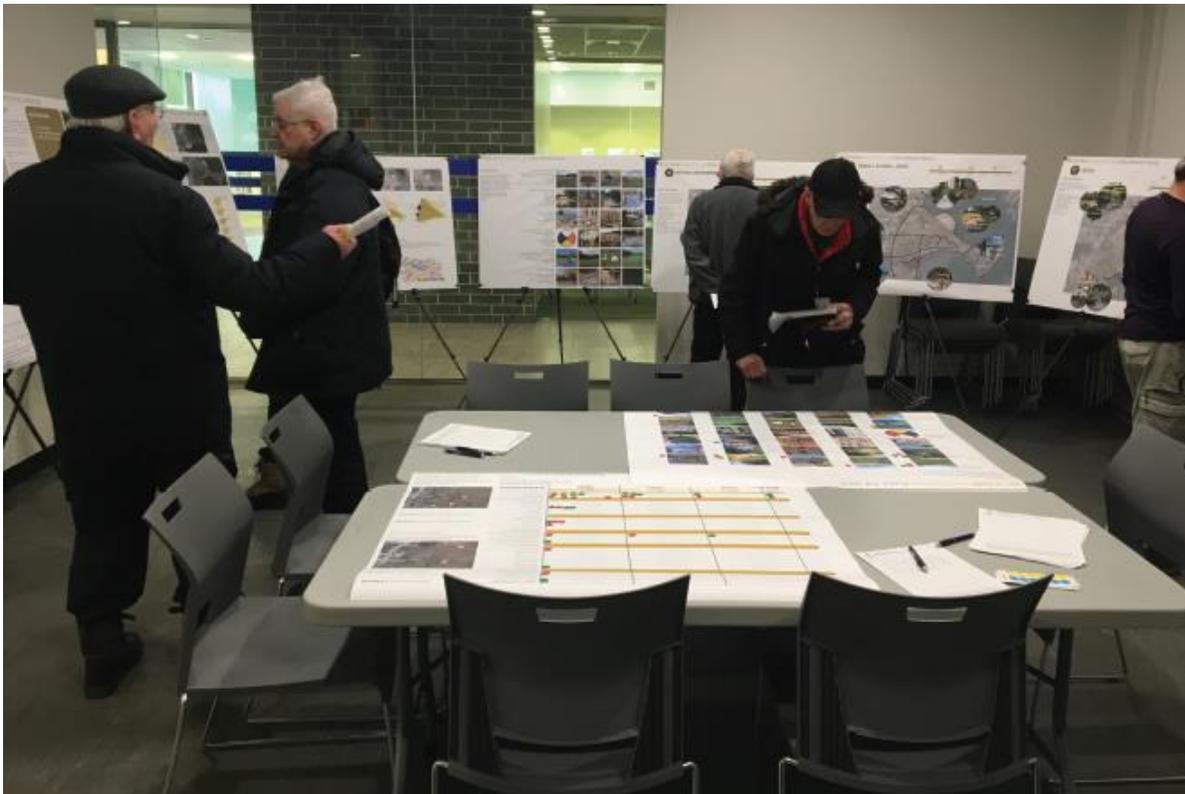


Belle Park Master Plan Community Engagement Summary

Open House – February 27, 2019

(Comments from Phase 2 will be considered in conjunction with feedback from previous phases as well as future consultations)

On February 27, 2019, the City of Kingston hosted an open house, at the Rideau Height's community centre, in which preliminary ideas were reviewed and discussed. Approximately 30 people attended the session. Following the open house, an online survey was made available between March 11 to April 12 (in which approximately 175 people completed), number of stakeholder meetings were held throughout March and April, and a pop-up at Belle Park on April 27 as part of Earth Day celebrations.



The following general points were made during the consultation:

- The preliminary ideas proposed and the idea of phasing the amenities was generally well received. It was thought that the ideas proposed closely reflect what people had said in the November meeting. However, it is important that the phasing should be well thought out.
- The area currently does not feel safe and welcomes improvements to the space.
- The introduction of the different trails throughout the park is a great as it allowed the exploration of different areas of the park.
- There is a need for pedestrian connection at the front of the park and potential for school buses to access the site.
- The sports field was received to be only rugby related. A dedicated facility for rugby was perceived not to be a good fit for the site.
- Golf is considered to be a good fit for the site since it attracts a variety of age groups and has been on the site for a long time.
- Some think the dog off leash area is great as it helps manages the activity that already exists on site, while others do like having a dog park on site as it may interrupt peaceful walks through the park.
- If the driving range is underutilized, it was suggested that perhaps it can be shared for dog park area. However, many dog owners would prefer a nature trail off leash area than a fence only area for the site, even though having some form of fencing or restriction is noted to be important.
- Many felt the shoreline should be left as a refuge for while wildlife, particularly aquatic animals, while others would like a vehicular access boat launch. Small craft landing areas such as for canoes has been considered a good fit for the site.
- Given the future influx of the people in the surrounding area, a protective buffer zone is needed for Belle Island. This buffer could be in the form of an arboretum with labelled native species.
- It was felt that if the existing courts could fixed up then more users can enjoy the space sooner.

- The pickleball club would like to have dedicated pickleball courts with lights and fence, and even help maintain the facility. There is a desire from the club to not only have practice space but space to hold tournaments. Others, while they agree pickleball courts should be included, a multi-use courts for other activities such as tennis and basketball is also desired.
- The term naturalization needs to be clearly defined. There is a desire to have the plants managed and restored to native species in Ontario rather than left alone in its current state.
- Frisbee golf, indoor tennis and mountain biking were mentioned as being needed in Belle Park, given its central location.
- Other small amenities such as secure location to park bikes, pollinator garden and amphitheater for gathering are desired.
- Material use on the site is important to be in keeping with the surrounding natural setting. The clubhouse building could be renovated into a more sustainable system such as recycled material and grey-water recycling.

During the open house and online, people were asked to identify elements and activities they preferred most for the park, as well as identify preferred phasing of their preferred elements and activities to be implemented.

The hierarchy of result was as follows for elements and activity preference:

1. Natural Environment – 22.5%
2. Trails, Access and Views – 20.5%
3. Recreation – 18.5%
4. Social – 14%
5. Infrastructure – 12.5%
6. Culture, Heritage, Education and Land Management – 12%

The top result was as follows for phasing:

Phase 1

1. Public washrooms (82%)
2. Lighting at front of park (71%)
3. Major pathways (69%)
4. Naturalization (66%)
5. Wildlife habitat (60%)
6. Indigenous interpretation (59%)
7. Parking improvements (55%)
8. Gathering spaces (38%)

9. Picnic areas (37%)
10. Recreation fields (37%)
11. Playground (36%)
12. Dog off leash area (34%)
13. Sports courts (31%)

Phase 2

1. Minor pathways (51%)
2. Boardwalk (42%)
3. Outdoor learning spaces (35%)
4. Lookouts (34%)
5. Small craft launch (33%)

Phase 3

1. Driving range (46%)
2. Frisbee golf (43%)
3. Pitch n' Putt (42%)
4. Practice Green (36%)

		COMBINED AVERAGE OF OPEN HOUSE AND ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS				
		PHASE 1 (1-5 YEARS)	PHASE 2 (5-10 YEARS)	PHASE 3 (10-15 YEARS)	BEYOND 15 YEARS	ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION
A.	Naturalization	66%	10%	4%	3%	18%
	Wildlife habitat	60%	15%	6%	3%	16%
B.	Major pathways	69%	18%	4%	4%	5%
	Minor pathways	29%	51%	8%	4%	8%
	Walking trails	69%	20%	2%	1%	8%
	Boardwalk	27%	42%	20%	12%	0%
	Lookouts	24%	34%	23%	10%	9%
C.	Gathering spaces	38%	33%	14%	8%	7%
	Playground	36%	36%	14%	8%	6%
	Picnic areas	37%	29%	21%	7%	7%
	Dog off leash area	34%	21%	15%	26%	5%
D.	Indigenous interpretation	59%	12%	8%	9%	12%
	Environmental interpretation	48%	23%	10%	7%	13%
	Outdoor learning spaces	26%	35%	17%	10%	12%
E.	Sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball)	31%	23%	14%	27%	6%
	Recreation fields (soccer, rugby, open play lawn)	37%	18%	15%	25%	5%
	Pitch n' putt	13%	20%	19%	42%	7%
	Driving range	22%	14%	11%	46%	7%
	Practice area	19%	22%	23%	36%	0%
	Frisbee golf	14%	19%	16%	43%	8%
F.	Parking improvement	55%	20%	9%	10%	7%
	Public washrooms	82%	12%	2%	1%	3%
	Small craft launch	23%	33%	21%	17%	6%
	Lighting at front of park	71%	11%	6%	6%	6%

Sample of comments provided:

Naturalization / Conservation

- I prefer natural restoration to “do nothing” naturalization.
- Keep the area as nature orientated as possible so it will be a green space for people to enjoy without any interruption.
- The Belle Park Master Plan should prioritize naturalization in order to mitigate climate change and foster biodiversity.
- Consider the long term carefully. For example, building an amphitheater 10 years AFTER an area has been naturalized is a waste of resources and would also destroy a lot of nature in the process.
- It should be respected and rehabilitated as a "wild" space, not littered with game courts and playgrounds.

Recreational Amenities

- While the Belle Island Caretakers group may oppose sports and recreation in Belle Park, the park itself is a former garbage dump and is not part of the Island. It is in fact the perfect site for a sports field and recreation activities. These can occur in conjunction with the natural environment. There is space available for both to co-exist.
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- There could be more uses for a driving range when it is not in full demand (ie. middle of the day when people are at work). The driving range could double as 3 holes for pitch and putt that can be used during the days for sports camps or junior programs.
- Golf doesn't need to be part of this Park. participation in golf is declining and many golf courses now are barely used.
- Can we not have another dog park taking up space.
- My major objection concerning the proposed plans is that rugby is not a good fit at Belle Park.
- The Kingston Panthers have a great track record of supporting local youth, especially impoverished youth.

- There is a large ultimate frisbee community here and the closest frisbee golf course is 1.5 hrs away.
- With regards to sports - Pickleball is a fad and will fade out. Tennis is an enduring sport so I would prefer that the focus be on tennis.
- I would like to see an improved clubhouse and multisport playing field.
- Recreational facilities are important and I support their expansion but not if it means further disrespect of the bodies interned on that land and their descendants.

Culture / Social

- I think there needed to be more emphasis on the Indigenous considerations for this park. I only saw a few options that mentioned Indigenous considerations and I think that should have been at the forefront of many options considering the history.
- Please consider indigenous representation for each part of this plan and prioritize indigenous needs in this unceded territory.
- To help mother nature heal herself after the city's abuse, Belle Park should be left as natural as possible. This would allow the connected area of Belle Island to be treated as a sacred place and honour the Accord signed with the chiefs.
- Although we know that there is much contamination in the area, the park and its connected wetlands are important for wildlife habitat and the site has intricate connections with Indigenous histories.
- I feel strongly that there should be an outdoor performance/gathering space such as an amphitheater. A place for festivals, celebrations, concerts, theatre, etc.

Others

- It should be a park for everyone regardless of individual interests.
- I think this is an amazing initiative that can benefit so many people in the community.
- We could also use more signs about keeping dogs ON leash because the swans were already chased off the first nesting site.

- The whole area needs to be cleaned up. I found it somewhat dangerous to run through the area (people camping out, bonfires, garbage).
- I would prefer a long off-leash walking trail and roaming area rather than yet another small fenced-in dog park