



Community Engagement Summary

(Comments from Phase 2 will be considered in conjunction with stakeholder feedback from Phase 1 as well as future consultations)

On November 28 and 29, 2018, The City of Kingston hosted two information sessions to re-initiate the Belle Park master planning process (Phase 2). Both events explained Council's direction for the project, provided an overview of the work done to date and reviewed the community's comments on concept plans presented in May 2018 (Phase 1). The consultants discussed the benefit of working with the community further before advancing any more concept plans.

Two different public exercises were facilitated to better understand values and to help develop some community ideas for the park: a card storming exercise (November 28th) and a design charrette (November 29th). In addition, a survey was provided and made available online in December. Approximately 45 members of the public attended the information sessions. Over 400 survey responses were received. The results of these two consultation sessions, as well as online commenting, are summarized below.



Questions and Comments Provided During the Information Sessions

The following general topics were noted:

- There were questions about the environmental conditions of Belle Park. It was suggested that the City should consider the whole ecosystem and ecological successions as part of the master plan. The topography is also something that needs to be reviewed in detail in the future when considering the location of the amenities to minimize environmental concerns.
- Discussion of how the site could be accessed was discussed, such as by transit, particularly for seniors, or by water. The idea of access by water had some conflicting views as it was felt that there is already small craft access nearby at Emma Martin Park.
- Questions were asked if Belle Island or how close to the island should the master plan consider. Belle Island is an important land which connects Indigenous people to their ancestors. The bridge to the island was noted to be in need of repair.
- Connections through the Orchard Street marsh from the south or the federal lands to the north could be considered but both may be beyond the 15 year plan.
- Outdoor gathering spaces, a shelter, a natural playground and seating areas were suggested as valuable amenities for the space.
- Since the site has a lot of history it was suggested it, and general information about the site, could be further shared in some form, such as interpretation.
- It was suggested that the implementing recreation play fields in this area should not conflict with the direction in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan that is currently under development.
- The master plan will need to consider and prioritize the various existing and proposed amenities, including the currently unmaintained tennis courts

Please see **Appendix A** for further questions and answers.

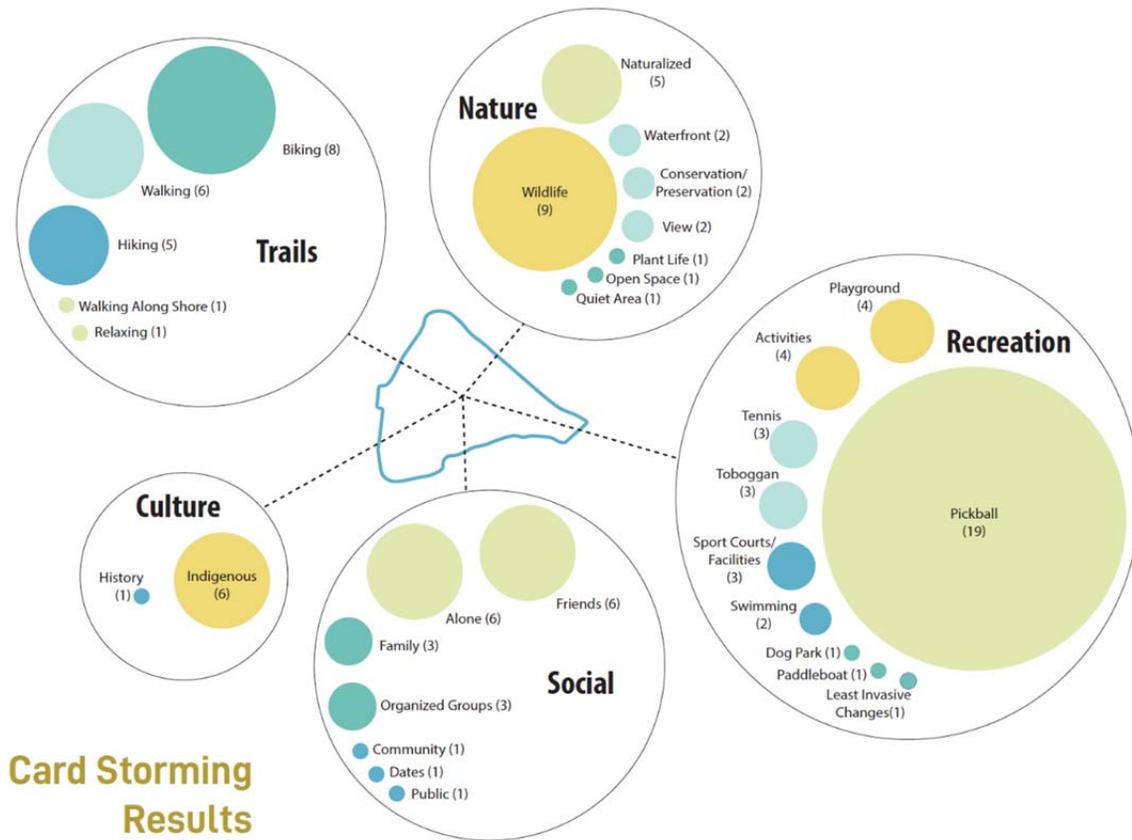
Card Storming Exercise

A card storming exercise was undertaken with the public on November 28th to help explore topics related to Belle Park. The participants were asked to write the first word that came to mind on a card as a response to a question. Following the questions the participants worked together to organize their responses into categories. The results were collected to be used to inform the design for Belle Park.

Questions Asked:

1. What word best describes what you like most about Belle Park?
2. What historic or cultural aspect of the park should be considered?
3. What public experience are we missing in this area of the City?
4. What recreational aspect do you currently like most about Belle Park?
5. What should be the primary consideration in the master plan for Belle Park?
6. Who do you go with to Belle Park?
7. What do you do in your favourite park that is NOT Belle Park?

The results from this exercise helped to understand the framework of the park by organizing it into five themes: Social, Nature, Trails, Culture and Recreation. While many different program elements were suggested, support for pickleball, biking, wildlife, and indigenous culture were significant. The graphic below helps to illustrate the responses and their groupings into themes.

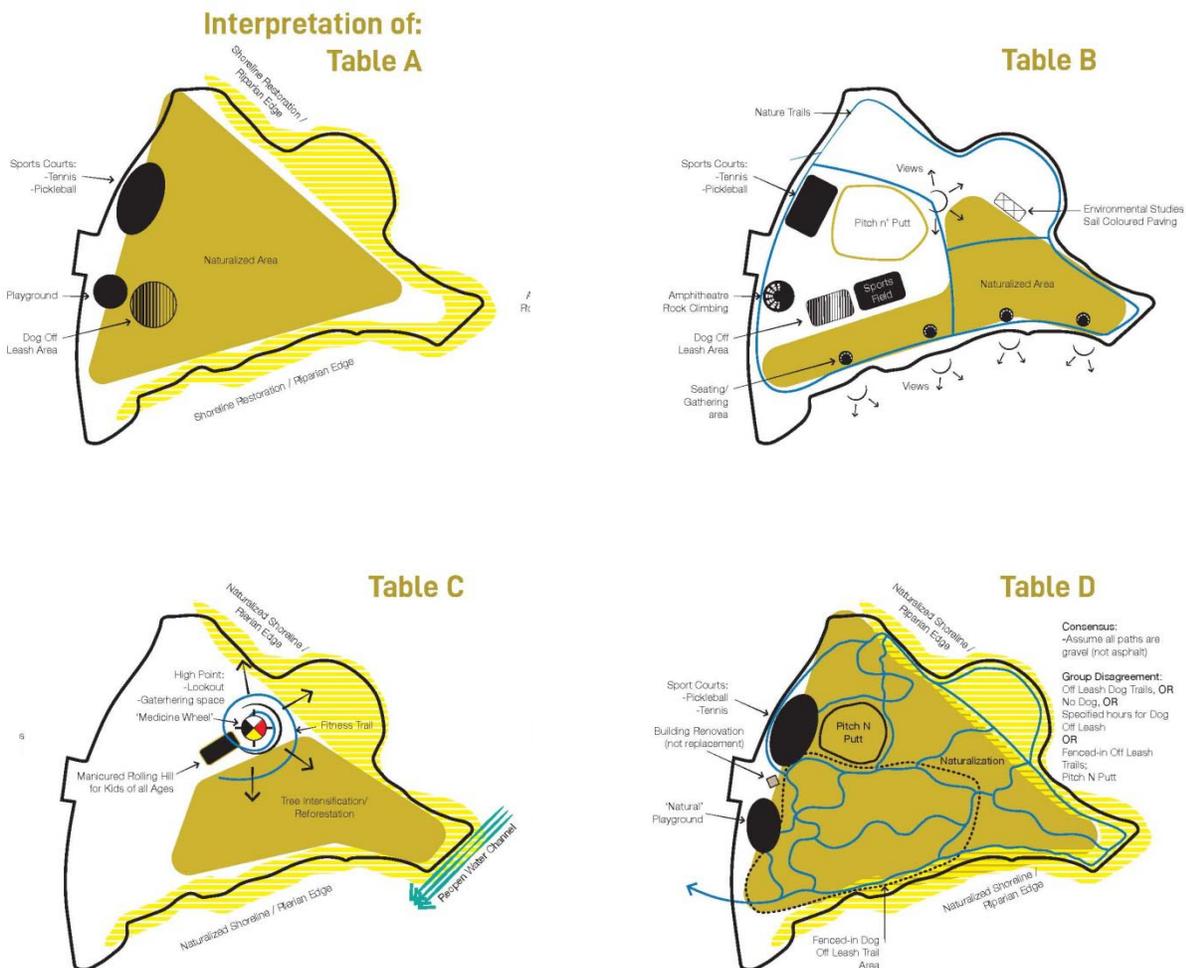


Design Charrette

The design charrette exercise at the November 29th public meeting explored the organization of the park into areas and uses. Participants worked in groups to locate the following items on a plan using simple lines, shapes, and labels:

1. More forest/trees
2. Main areas that should be protected
3. Pathways (paved)
4. Natural trails (unpaved pathways)
5. Best location for sport fields
6. Best location for sports courts
7. Best location for playground
8. Label/identify any other recommendations of interest

The information received through these drawings illustrate a desire to concentrate more active recreation closer to Montreal Street and to naturalize the central, east and shoreline portions of the park. The graphic below summarizes the feedback received.

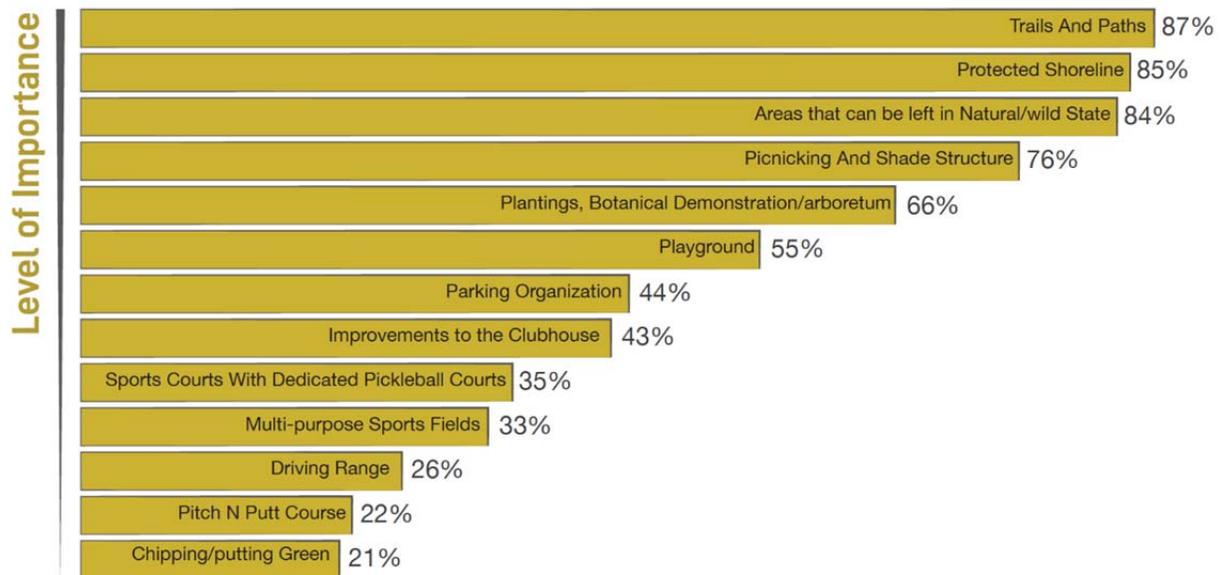


Online Questionnaire

From November 27th 2018 to December 27, 2018 a survey was provided for community feedback. From the survey, it was noted that approximately 50 percent of respondents use Belle Park once or twice a year. Almost 50 percent of respondents access the site by car. 80 percent of the respondents live further than one kilometre from the site. Access through walking was the second common means (almost 40 percent of respondents).

Participants were asked to rate the level of importance regarding the park supporting various park features with 1 being the highest importance and 5 being the lowest importance. Percentages shown below are based on the total selections that were rated 1 or 2 in importance (highest and next highest) divided by the total number of responses.

The results of this survey show significant interest in trails and pathways, naturalization and more passive park activities, with lower focus on recreation including recreation play fields, court sports and golf related activities.



Appendix A

- **How often do people monitor the water in Belle Park?**

The shoreline of Belle Park is monitored on a weekly basis. Sampling and testing of surface water, groundwater, and waste water occurs twice a year and is reported out to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks.

- **What pollutants are present at Belle Park?**

The pollutants present at Belle Park are typical of the landfill that operated on the site for 20 plus years, which included waste from residential, commercial, institutional and industrial. The site is operated under an approved management plan to ensure compliance with Provincial regulations and minimize impact on the river environment.

- **What are the possible toxins on the ground that might have health effects on people using the property?**

In accordance with a human health risk assessment conducted by the City in 1999, a cover of clean soil over buried wastes is maintained to ensure that park users are separated from the underlying landfill wastes. The development of new park uses would consider user risk and would include any mitigation required.

- **What investigations have the City done to evaluate the possibilities of cleaning up the site and removing the contents of the landfill completely or prevent leachates? It would be best to understand this as an option, even though it is expensive.**

A variety of management methods were evaluated in 2006, including, complete removal of buried wastes. A detailed report of the [Assessment of Long-Term Management Alternatives](#) is available on the City's website. The main challenge for a complete removal of waste other than the extraordinary cost is the impracticality of working below the level of the river water and groundwater table. The current system of clean soil cover, groundwater collection pumps, hybrid tree plantations, improvements to site drainage and regular monitoring and testing was the leachate management solution that scored the highest based on effectiveness, regulatory requirement, cost, and potential impact to the existing site and the natural environment.

- **How long is the shoreline of Belle Park?**

Approximately 1,100m

- **Can the floodplain be adjusted?**

No. The flood plain is a condition of the river's elevation. We are not contemplating any significant adjustments to the park's elevation, within the floodplain, as part of this initiative. Work can however, be completed within the floodplain under a permit with the Cataraqui Conservation Authority and Parks Canada for this site such as clean fill cover, plantings, amenities, pathways, etc.

- **What is the regulation around wildlife? Who is responsible for the wildlife such as beavers?**

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks are responsible for regulating activities that may impact wildlife in Ontario. While there is no regular wildlife management or control on site, any work done in response to a perceived wildlife issue is done in accordance with provincial regulations using qualified contractors. When projects are undertaken that require earthworks, measures are put in place based on qualified biologist's recommendations and assessments of the site to ensure vulnerable wildlife are protected from planned work areas.

- **Could the waterway separating Belle Island from the mainland be widened to improve waterflow?**

Yes, but there are many important considerations that must be examined before making such decisions. Introducing a new and increased flow during higher water levels could scour contaminated river sediments south of the park and create new unwanted environmental impacts elsewhere. At low water times of the year a widened channel would not likely create any increased flow. Widening would likely require excavation of buried landfill wastes requiring disposal at a landfill outside of Kingston at significant cost with likely little environmental benefit. Extensive engineering controls and permits would be required to ensure that no new environmental impacts were created due to new leachate seepages, erosion of sediment and damage to existing wildlife and habitats.

As the channel is bound on the east shore by Belle Island, these works are outside of the scope of the Belle Park Master Plan.

- **How dangerous is dredging with respect to leachate?**

The dredging of river sediment in itself is not necessarily dangerous, however, substantial assessment and controls would be required to eliminate the potential for existing contaminants to be released further into the environment, prevent sediment impacts to the aquatic environment, not create new impacts by disrupting existing groundwater flow patterns, and to ensure worker health and safety. Collected contaminated river sediment would need to have an initial dewatering with appropriate collection and treatment of water before being

transported for disposal at a licensed landfill site somewhere else outside of Kingston.

Works on the river bed are outside of the scope of the Belle Park Master Plan.

- **How close to edge of Belle Island can something be done?**

We are not aware of any regulatory distances that need to be maintained from Belle Island, however, any works occurring immediately adjacent to or connecting to the island would need consultation with the relevant Indigenous stakeholders.

- **Would pickleball be better than sportsfields for this site due to cap surface?**

Any sports field constructed on the former landfill will need to be designed to promote good surface drainage so there would be no advantage of one type of amenity over another assuming they are both managing drainage and not worsening water infiltration.

- **What is the status of the ruby field discussion?**

The rugby club and City continue to discuss options for their recreational programming needs. Belle Park continues to be an option for the club's consideration. Discussion is ongoing.