

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

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DATE: July 15, 2022

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

SUBJECT: Consultation for Proposed Prince George Community Foundation – Rotary Destination Park (“Mega Park”)

ATTACHMENT(S): - Appendix “A”: Survey Questions
- Appendix “B”: Summary of Survey Responses

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Council RECEIVES FOR INFORMATION the report dated July 15, 2022 from the Director of Planning and Development, titled “Consultation for Community Foundation – Rotary Destination Park (“Mega Park”)”.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with the results of the community consultation that was held to gauge the public interest for a new park located at the corner of Ospika Boulevard and 22nd Avenue, and to advise on information that should be considered in determining the establishment of the park.

BACKGROUND:

On March 14, 2022, representatives from Prince George Community Foundation, Rotary Club of Prince George, and Colliers appeared before Council as a delegation to present a proposal for a new park.

The presenters provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the proposed Prince George Community Foundation – Rotary Destination Park (“Mega Park”) including information on proposed project scope, design elements, preliminary budget and timeline considerations, and a request for the City to continue working with the Project Team on next steps.

Council directed Administration “to continue working with the Park Project Team and return a report to Council with information on the next steps in the project”.

Administration identified the corner of Ospika Boulevard and 22nd Avenue as the potential site for the proposed park. This site is city-owned, undeveloped space on the Exhibition Park grounds that is intended to be used for recreation purposes.

Administration proceeded to consult residents on the proposed park to gain a sense of the level of interest in a “Mega Park” at the corner of Ospika Boulevard and 22nd Avenue.

DISCUSSION:

Method and Duration of Consultation

To capture a sense of the public’s level of interest in the proposed Mega Park, Administration developed an on-line survey with a series of questions that ranged between closed-ended, four-point scale, and open-ended questions. A copy of the 6-question survey is attached to this report as Appendix “A”.

The online survey was available to the public from May 26, 2022 to June 9, 2022. To promote this online survey, Administration advertised through City of Prince George social media pages such as, Facebook, Instagram and

Twitter. Further to this, a news release was shared with media outlets, and a banner was created on the City of Prince George website highlighting the survey and consultation period.

A total of 2,244 Prince George residents provided responses to the online survey for the proposed Mega Park.

Survey Summary

The responses to the survey questions are summarized in Appendix “B” with a variety of display methods. Bar graphs and tables are used to display the percentage breakdown of the answers to the survey questions, a Summary Response is provided to highlight the findings of the responses, and a sentiment analysis is provided for open ended questions, and questions that allowed for comments to be input.

The sentiment analysis sums up the comments collected and categorizes them as positive, neutral, or negative. The sentiment analysis is displayed under the heading “How People Feel” and includes the comments (generalized) and percentage breakdown of the positive (green), neutral (yellow), and negative (red) responses.

Overall, there appears to be support for a park at the proposed location as it will provide options for outdoor recreation and activity. Although respondents favour the park knowing there would be an increase to the annual cost to the City operating budget (Question #5), the comments through the survey consistently indicate concerns regarding the cost of the new park (short-term and long term) and point out that focus should be placed on the needs of our existing infrastructure (i.e. parks, park equipment, capital projects related to infrastructure).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The costs associated with the proposed park are not fully known at this time. The proponent has provided the upfront costs for the park features, however, there are other upfront costs to consider such as, site preparation and site servicing. Further cost analysis is required to understand the full lifecycle cost of adding a new park to the City’s inventory, including ongoing operations, maintenance, and eventual replacement. There will be financial implications related to this project both in the short term and long term.

Administration recommends that Council direct Administration to conduct a full lifecycle analysis of the financial implications of the proposed park.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This report provides Council with the results of the community consultation that was held to gauge the public interest for a new park located at the corner of Ospika Boulevard and 22nd Avenue. Overall, the feedback collected indicates support of a park; however, the comments also point to concern of the costs associated with the proposed park.

Administration is seeking Council direction to conduct a full lifecycle analysis of the financial implications of the proposed park to facilitate an informed review and consideration of the proposed park project.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Deanna Wasnik, Director of Planning and Development

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2022/07/25



Mega Park

Prince George Community Foundation & Rotary Mega Park - community input

The Prince George Community Foundation, Rotary Club of Prince George, and Colliers Project Leaders are proposing a mega park in Prince George. The cost of design and purchase of play structures would be funded by these proponents. They have approached the City to inquire if the City is willing to provide the land and take responsibility for the park. Before a decision is made, City Council would like to know if Prince George citizens are interested in this amenity.

At this time it is assumed the City will be required to: provide the land and the services to the property such as water, sewer and power as well as basic park amenities such as parking and washrooms. The City will also be responsible for maintenance and insurance costs. Those costs are not known at this time.

Other features have not been determined but the proposed park would include:

- 1. Pump Track**
- 2. Junior Adventure Park (18mos - 5yrs)**
- 3. Youth Adventure Park (5yrs - 12yrs+)**
- 4. Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station**
- 5. Spray Park**
- 6. Accessible Playground**

* 1. Are you a resident of Prince George?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 2. Do you have children in your household under the age of 18?

☐ Yes

☐ No

* 3. The proposed location at this time is a City-owned 6 acre site near Ospika Blvd. and 22nd Ave. Do you support this project at this location?

☐ I like this idea but not there

☐ Yes, at this location

☐ No, I just don't want the park at all

Comment

* 4. Tell us which features are important to you. Note: infrastructure and maintenance costs are not known at this stage.

	I want it no matter the cost	I want it but I'm concerned about cost	Not sure if I want it	this is not a priority for me
Pump Track	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Junior Adventure Park (18mos - 5yrs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth Adventure Park (5yrs - 12yrs+)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spray Park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessible Playground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Is there something else you want?

* 5. The proposed mega-park with the 6 features noted above will require an increase to the City's annual park maintenance costs. Are you in favour of the Mega Park project knowing there is an annual cost to the City operating budget?

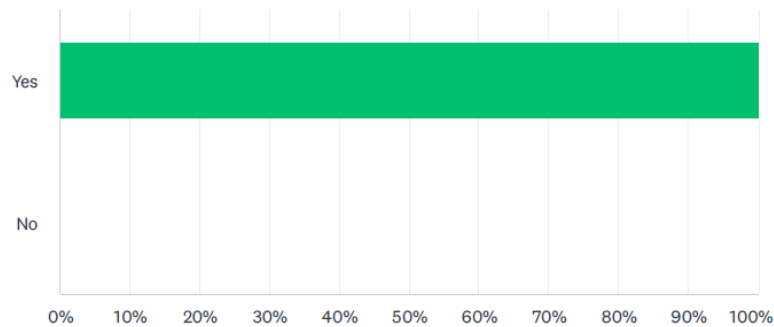
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I'm not sure

Comment

6. Comments – tell us what you think of this proposal

QUESTION 1: ARE YOU A RESIDENT OF PRINCE GEORGE?

Chart 1: Response to Mega Park Survey Question 1



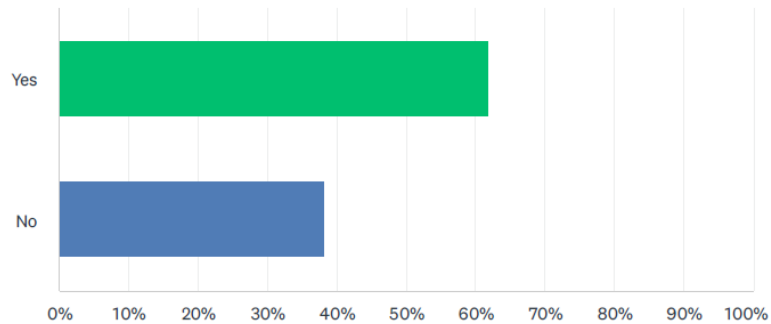
ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
Yes		100.00% 2,244
No		0.00% 0
TOTAL		2,244

**SUMMARY
RESPONSE:**

- 100% of respondents were residents of Prince George
- 2,244 Prince George residents responded to the online survey

QUESTION 2: DO YOU HAVE CHILDREN IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD UNDER THE AGE OF 18?

Chart 2: Response to Mega Park Survey Question 2



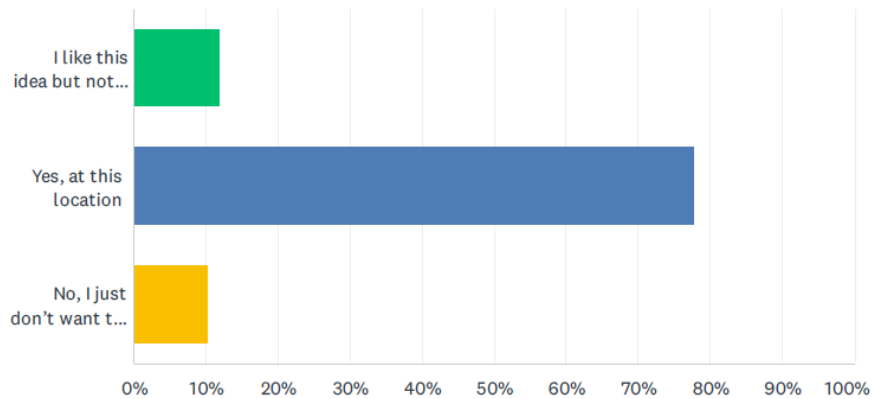
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.81%	1,387
No	38.19%	857
TOTAL		2,244

**SUMMARY
RESPONSE:**

- 62% of respondents have children under 18 years old living in their household
- 38% of respondents do not have children under 18 years old living in their household

**QUESTION 3: THE PROPOSED LOCATION AT THIS TIME IS A CITY-OWNED 6 ACRE SITE NEAR OSPIKA BLVD. AND 22ND AVE.
DO YOU SUPPORT THIS PROJECT AT THIS LOCATION?**

Chart 3: Response to Mega Park Survey Question 3

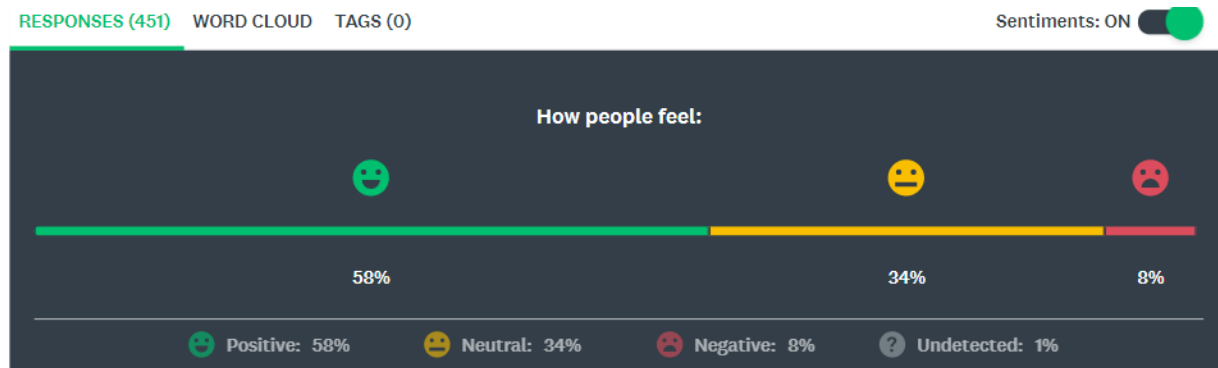


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I like this idea but not there	12.03%	270
Yes, at this location	77.76%	1,745
No, I just don't want the park at all	10.20%	229
TOTAL		2,244

**SUMMARY
RESPONSE:**

- 78% of respondents support this location
- 12% of respondents like the new park, but not at this location
- 10% of respondents don't want the park at all
- The comments provided by respondents to this question were 58% positive, 34% neutral, and 8% negative. See “How People Feel” for a summary of the themes that were in the feedback received.

“HOW PEOPLE FEEL” – QUESTION 3



COMMENTS PROVIDED:

451 comments provided and summarized in the “How People Feel” graph. Comments included:

Green

- good for the city and the neighbourhood.

Yellow

- concerns about increased traffic in the neighbourhood.
- Concern about lack of parking.
- Concern about a playground beside a busy road.
- Would I like to know what the other options are before deciding.
- There should be an assessment first to determine what our city actually needs.
- The area needs to be more pedestrian and cyclist friendly

Red

- opposed to the project in general – not in favour of any increased costs
- Should use the land for hotels since it is so close to CN Centre.
- Rather see more neighbourhood parks
- Would be nice to have more parks in the Hart
- Reinvest funds in our existing parks to improve what we already have

QUESTION 4: TELL US WHAT FEATURES ARE IMPORTANT TO YOU.

NOTE: INFRASTRUCTURE AND MAINTENANCE COSTS ARE NOT KNOWN AT THIS STAGE.

Table 1: Response to Mega Park Survey Question 4

	I WANT IT NO MATTER THE COST	I WANT IT BUT I'M CONCERNED ABOUT COST	NOT SURE IF I WANT IT	THIS IS NOT A PRIORITY FOR ME	TOTAL
Pump Track	33.38% 737	22.64% 500	11.68% 258	32.29% 713	2,208
Junior Adventure Park (18mos – 5yrs)	52.88% 1,165	21.43% 472	3.40% 75	22.29% 491	2,203
Youth Adventure Park (5yrs – 12yrs+)	60.99% 1,349	23.10% 511	2.17% 48	13.74% 304	2,212
Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station	38.35% 839	19.52% 427	10.01% 219	32.13% 703	2,188
Spray Park	55.09% 1,218	22.03% 487	6.51% 144	16.37% 362	2,211
Accessible Playground	59.56% 1,324	21.28% 473	3.06% 68	16.10% 358	2,223

SUMMARY RESPONSE:

This is a four-point scale question to have responses reflect the level of the interest in each park feature, with cost being a consideration in the level of priority for each park feature.

The level of support based on cost appears to vary for each feature, but in general:

- 4 of the 6 park features had over 50% for “I want it no matter the cost”. The 4 features include Junior Adventure Park, Youth Adventure Park, Spray Park, and Accessible Playground; and did **not** include the Pump Track or Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station.
- About 20% indicated “I want it but I’m concerned about cost” for all 6 park features.
- The number of respondents indicating “not sure if I want it” range between 2-12% with the Pump Track (12%) and Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station (10%) having the highest percentages in this response category.
- The number of respondents indicating “This is not a priority for me” range between 14-32% with the Pump Track (32%), Senior Friendly Outdoor Fitness Station (32%), and Junior Adventure Park (22%) having the highest percentages in this response category.

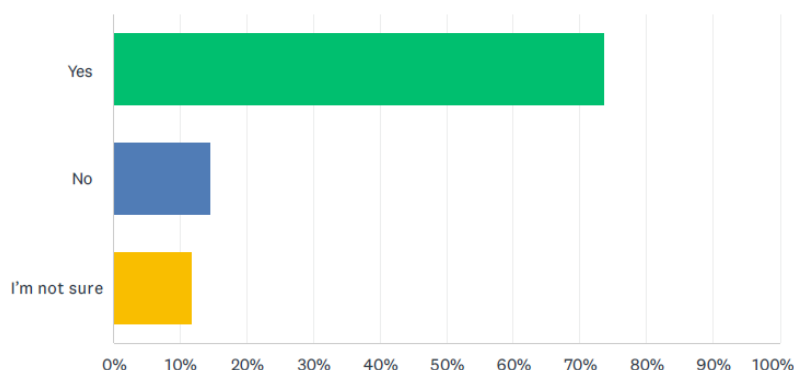
QUESTION 4: IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE YOU WANT?

**COMMENTS
PROVIDED:**

- Other park features residents noted they would like to have:
 - Trampolines
 - Zip line
 - Toddler pool
 - Spray park
 - Indoor walking track
 - Off-leash area
 - Shade
 - Lots of natural elements incl boulders and logs to climb on
 - Basketball court
 - Road hockey
 - Tire swings
 - Winter elements
 - Walking path – and accessible path
 - Tunnel slide
 - Covered stage
 - Covered ice rink – with chiller
 - Dirt jumps
 - Climbing wall
 - Outdoor pool
 - Batting cage
 - Water slides
 - Horseshoes
 - Chess tables
 - Ping pong tables
 - Sandbox
 - Food truck area
 - RC track
 - Covered skate park
 - Pickleball court
 - Badminton court
 - Tennis court
 - Lacrosse box
 - Asphalt pump track

**QUESTION 5: THE PROPOSED MEGA PARK WITH THE 6 FEATURES NOTED ABOVE [IN QUESTION 4] WILL REQUIRE AN INCREASE TO THE CITY’S ANNUAL PARK MAINTENANCE COSTS.
ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF THE MEGA PARK PROJECT KNOWING THERE IS AN ANNUAL COST TO THE CITY OPERATING BUDGET?**

Chart 4: Response to Mega Park Survey Question 5

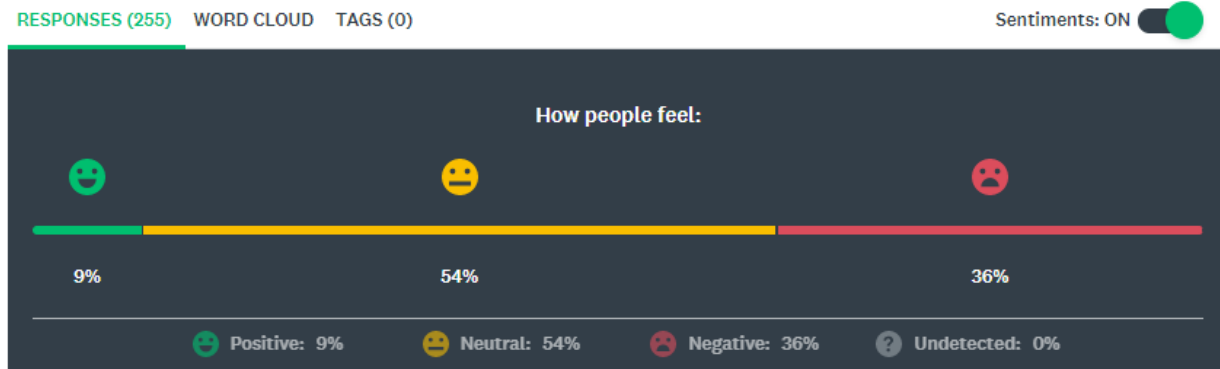


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.71%	1,654
No	14.48%	325
I'm not sure	11.81%	265
TOTAL		2,244

**SUMMARY
RESPONSE:**

- 74% of respondents are in favour of the proposed park knowing there will be an annual cost to the City Operating Budget
- 14% of respondents are **not** in favour of the proposed park knowing there will be an annual cost to the City Operating Budget
- 12% of respondents are not sure
- The comments provided by respondents to this question were 9% positive, 54% neutral, and 36% negative. See “How People Feel” for a summary of the themes that were in the feedback received.

“HOW PEOPLE FEEL” – QUESTION 5



COMMENTS PROVIDED:

255 comments provided and summarized in the “How People Feel” graph. Comments included:

Green

- We need more things for kids to do
- We need more things for families
- We need to act like a big city

Yellow

- Annual maintenance costs are a concern
- Need to know the tax implications
- As long as existing parks don't suffer
- Need corporate sponsor or more fundraising to cover all costs

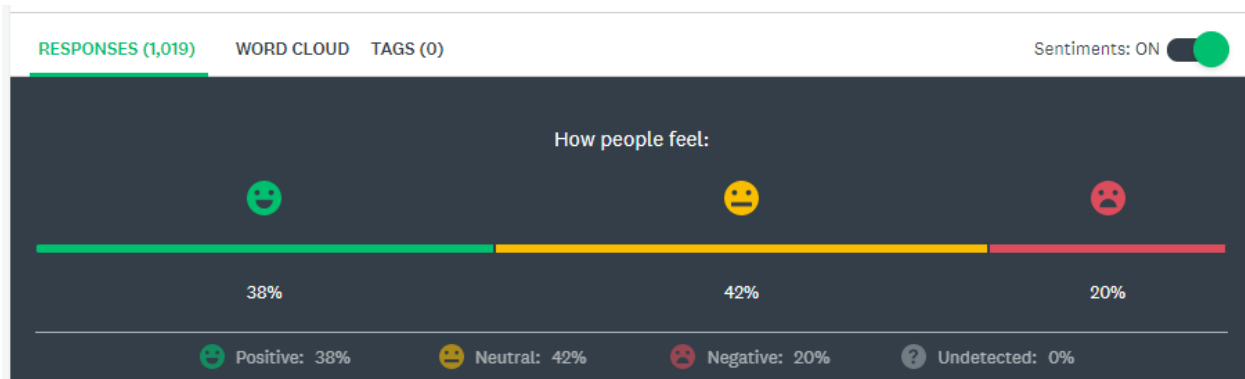
Red

- Existing parks are not well maintained and need new equipment
- We don't need this
- Taxes are too high
- It will be over budget
- The maintenance will be very costly
- We just can't afford it

QUESTION 6: COMMENTS - TELL US WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL

*open ended question – responses for #6 are summarized under “How People Feel”

“HOW PEOPLE FEEL” – QUESTION 6



COMMENTS PROVIDED:

1,019 comments provided and summarized in the “How People Feel” graph. Comments included:

Green

- This is so nice for our kids
- This will bring tourists
- We need more parks
- We need more playgrounds
- There is nothing for kids to do in PG
- It will encourage kids to be active

Yellow

- I like it but something indoors makes more sense for our city
- It will increase taxes
- It would really disrupt this quiet neighbourhood
- There is a senior's work-out site at Masich Park Stadium and I have yet to see anyone use it.
- Can we focus on arts and culture instead?
- Improve LTMP instead – focus on what we have
- Do one or two things really well instead of a whole bunch of things not very good
- Make sure to leave some green behind
- Great idea, concerned about cost and neighbourhood issues

Red

- This is the wrong location
- This will be over budget
- Concern about short-term and long-term costs
- Infrastructure repairs should be a priority over any new amenities

Red (cont.)

- It will impact traffic and parking in the area
- Our current parks are not well used
- The equipment we have for seniors now is never used
- This is a want not a need. We need to work on what we already have. Parks and other infrastructure are falling apart.