

The Revitalization of

Victoria Park

"WHAT WE HEARD"

Through March and April of 2015 the City of St. John's has been working with Tract Consulting to carry out a public engagement process designed to help shape a revitalization plan for Victoria Park. This document reflects the common themes we have heard throughout this public engagement process. As the Master Plan is developed for Victoria Park, ideas and suggestions from the public will be considered.

How you told us...

Online Survey

220+ respondents (March–April 2015)

Victoria Park Community Discussion

47 attendees (March, 2015)

Idea wall, Email and Social Media

141 comments (February–April, 2015)

Other stakeholders that we heard from:

Arts-based groups

Friends of Victoria Park

Native Friendship Centre

Pennecon

Softball field users

Victoria Manor residents

Wiseman Centre

COMMUNITY CONNECTIVITY

What we heard...

The park should be welcoming and accessible. This can be achieved by: making walkways safe and accessible for seniors and strollers; installing additional lighting; snow clearing entrance points and providing designated parking areas year-round.

What this means for the park...

We need to accommodate people who travel to the park in a variety of ways. It will be important to ensure that safe and convenient facilities are in place so that the users of the park enjoy visiting and connecting with their community.



PARK AMENITIES

What we heard...

Some people would like to see the ball field remain in the park, while others want it to be removed or be designed for multiple uses. Amenities people would like to see include such things as: skating surfaces; water-based activities; a dog park; hard court surfaces; more parking and seating areas and improved access to restrooms.

What this means for the park...

The park would benefit from additional amenities and an improvement to what is already there. Building and adapting the park amenities to meet the public needs will be central in revitalizing the park.



SEASONALITY

What we heard...

The park should be an enjoyable place to visit in all seasons. There is a desire to maintain current uses. Ideas concerning seasonality included: opening a year-round canteen; adding a community garden; maintaining the park's trail all year for improved walkability and adding an area where visitors can watch tobogganing in the winter.

What this means for the park

We need to provide support for current features like the sliding hill and look for opportunities to facilitate new and unique activities so visitors can use the park year-round.

OLD POOL BUILDING

What we heard...

People want to see the old pool house removed or improved. The building could have such practical uses as: performance space; exterior restrooms; an extended canopy area or a storage area for current users/groups.

What this means for the park...

The building is not meeting the needs of the current and future users. Need to provide a space that is attractive and inviting for new and current users.

SPECIAL EVENTS

What we heard...

People would like to attend a variety of events at the park year round. Having available open spaces, a sound system, suitable seating, and parking will be important for facilitating events at the park. The Lantern Festival should remain a key annual event that is held in the park. Some other possible events include: events that cater to seniors and families; winter carnivals; concerts and yoga classes.

What this means for the park...

The current park configuration is not accommodating for all possible events. We need to provide support for current events and accessible space that will allow for both spontaneous and organized/programmed events to take place in the park.



Photo credit: picture taken from Friends of Victoria Park – Lantern Festival webpage. <http://lanternfest.ca/>

YOUTH TABLE

What we heard...

As key users of the park, youth had some great creative feedback for how it could be improved. Some of their ideas for park additions included: a duck pond; a pool and waterslide; climbing and playground equipment; a balance beam; a Ferris wheel; a pirate ship; a haunted house on Halloween; and lots of open space to run, play games, and have fun.

What this means for the park...

Youth are looking for active and imaginative ways to be engaged when visiting the park. Playground equipment is still desired, but there should also be space for unstructured activities and creative play. We need to think outside the box.



OTHER COMMENTS

“The City should buy a vacant lot on Alexander Street.”

The vacant lot could be an element of the park; providing much needed amenity space without infringing on already established park facilities.

“Put storyboards throughout the park.”

Storyboards could help bring out the park’s rich history that isn’t currently evident. They could also commemorate other aspects of the City’s history.

“Restore the old waterfalls-uncover a section of the river.”

There was a desire to see the former cascades day lighted. This should be figuratively or literally incorporated into the revitalization.

“Ensure that the park is safe and secure”.

The lower portion of the park feels unsafe to some users. Enhancing security and visual quality of the landscape be important priorities.