

Spring Mini at Foster Park

Summary of Data Collection and Results

June 9, 2018

Prepared by VIU Students

On Saturday, June 9, Vancouver Island University (VIU) students and faculty collaborated with City of Parksville staff and volunteers from Friends of Foster Park to host an event to collect data as part of the City of Parksville's Parks, Trails and Open Space Master Plan. The Spring Mini event had three objectives:

1. To involve and engage with the citizens of Parksville to collect data on their vision for parks, trails and open spaces in the City;
2. Inform the public on the purpose of this project and future development having to do with the Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan for the City of Parksville; and,
3. Promote future consultation events for this project, including comment boxes that will be placed in all parks on rotation throughout the summer.

The Spring Mini was the third public event of the consultation process for this project, following the "Parks on the Street" Day event held in March and user group interviews held throughout April and May.

"Parks on the Street" day collected information based on responses from the following questions:

1. Apart from the Community Park, what other parks or open spaces do you use frequently, and why?
2. What changes would you like to see in these parks or open spaces?
3. What is your favourite trail around Parksville?

After analyzing the results, common themes were found relating to dogs in parks, services and amenities, connectivity and future acquisition, wildlife and accessibility.

The user group interviews were set up with the intent to gather information from existing users of the parks and to find out what they would like to see happen with Parksville's parks, trails and open spaces in the future. VIU students met with four user groups: Arrowsmith Cycling club, Arrowsmith Tennis Club, Long Distance Running and Oceanside Pickleball Club. Each group was asked questions related to: the history of their group, which parks and trails they use and how, and what they see for their organizations and parks, trails and open spaces in the future.

The data from these consultation events were used to identify themes of interest to Parksville residents and helped guide the data collection for the Spring Mini event.

Data collection

VIU students and faculty, a City of Parksville employee and volunteers from Friends of Foster Park arrived at Foster Park on the morning of June 9 to set up activities and games, food and an open house for the public to enjoy. The open house included several ways for Parksville residents to voice their opinions:

1. Precedent image posters with a dotmocracy style voting system for all park types.
2. General comment sheets for community members to write down (or dictate to staff to write down) any questions, concerns or comments they had regarding parks, trails and open spaces in Parksville.
3. Comment sheets for community members to voice opinions specifically regarding Foster Park. This portion of the open house was to give an example of comment boxes that will be hung in parks as part of the next consultation event for the Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan.

The event ran from 11 am to 2 pm with all components of the event being open to the public during that time. The event had an estimated fifty public participants, including everyday Foster Park users and Parksville residents coming specifically for the event.

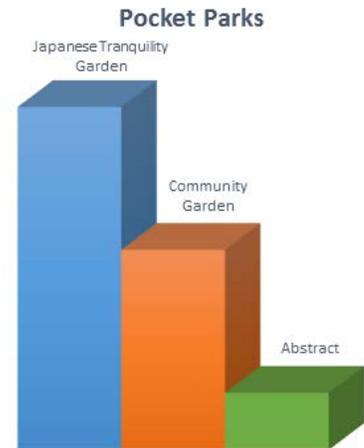
Convenience sampling was used for this event: this involved surveying people who were conveniently located at the park and were willing to participate. It is a beneficial method for pilot studies and for discovering general themes in public responses. It is however non-representative of the population and is limited in generalizability. In other words, the answers do not reflect the thoughts of all Parksville residents and results are not meant to be a true representation of their opinions. The goal of the Spring Mini was to gather data about specific opinions of Parksville residents to know more about what they like and dislike about parks, trails and open spaces in Parksville and what they want to see in the future. Preliminary events gathered more generalized data of what Parksville residents were looking for in regards to parks, trails and open spaces. This event gathered more specific information based on park classification, and information collection will continue to become more precise with the next consultation event requesting comments for individual parks in Parksville.

Results

Dotmocracy - This event had precedent posters with three possible themes each separated into five park classifications: pocket parks, neighbourhood parks, community parks, greenways/linear parks, and natural resource parks. The public had the opportunity to vote for their favourite theme for each park classification by using a dotmocracy voting style. In dot-voting, participants vote on their chosen options using a limited number of stickers. This approach is a form of cumulative voting. The results from the dotmocracy are shown in the following column charts.

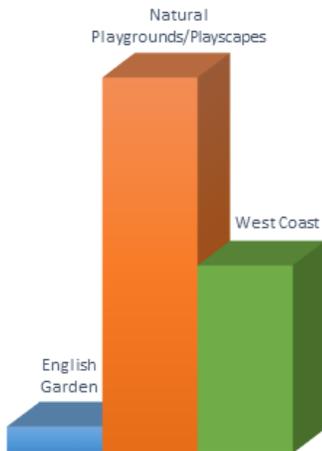
Pocket Parks - Participants' favourite theme for pocket parks was the Japanese tranquility garden style, indicating residents of Parksville are looking for a simple and minimalist design for their pocket parks that

promote beauty and relaxation.



Neighbourhood Parks

Neighbourhood Parks: The style that had the most votes for neighbourhood parks was the theme that incorporated natural playgrounds and playscapes. These results indicate that park users in Parksville are wanting their parks to have as little man made components as possible, and instead contain structures that look and feel like the natural environment.



Natural Playgrounds/Playscapes

An area that has as little man made components as possible, and that contains structures that look and feel like the natural environment



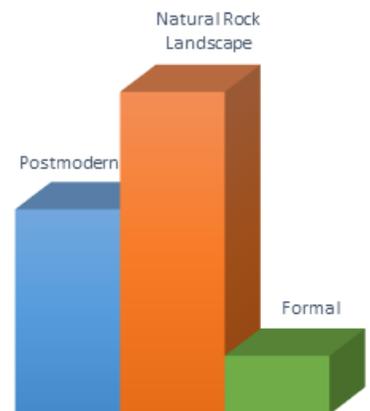
Community Parks: For the Community Parks precedent poster, participants voted for the natural rock landscape theme, indicating that Parksville residents may enjoy if parks were designed using natural rock to create elements such as playgrounds, gathering areas and amphitheatres to promote connection to the natural world.

Natural Rock Landscape

Natural rock is used to create elements such as playgrounds, gathering areas and amphitheatres to promote connection to the natural world



Community Parks



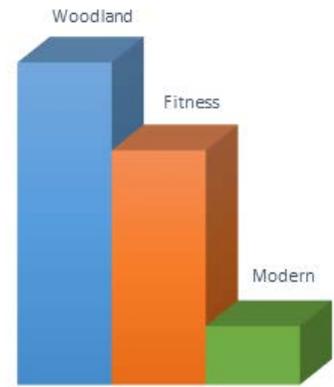
Greenways/Linear Parks: Participants indicated that they wanted to see greenways and linear parks that are lined with vegetation and trees, which are more natural and relaxing looking, and which have the added benefit of reducing climate change and providing shelter from wind and rain.



Woodland

A landscape that is natural and relaxing, that can help reduce climate change and that provides shelter from wind and rain

Greenways/Linear Parks



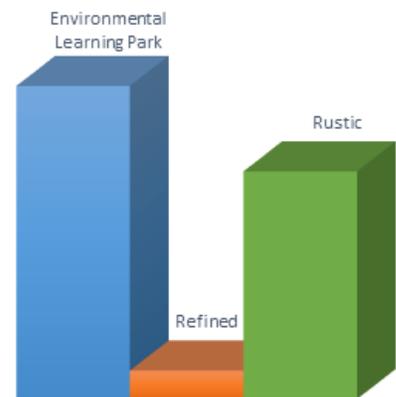
Natural Resource Areas: Participants voted that they would like to see natural resource areas be turned into environmental learning parks. This means additional built features in the parks for the purpose of educating and connecting community members to the surrounding natural environment with minimal environmental effects.



Environmental Learning Park

Additional built features for the purpose of educating and connecting community members to the surrounding natural environment

Natural Resource Areas



Comments

The results from both the comment boxes and the comment sheets overlapped and can be represented in four themes:

- Maintenance:** There was a strong desire for increased maintenance in Foster Park specifically, along with other parks. For Foster Park better maintenance was mostly directed towards the removal of the dead trees and debris in the park. With increased maintenance of the long grass and trails, accessibility will be increased for all peoples.
- Mapping:** Community members indicated that there was a lack of awareness of the locations of parks in the City and there was a desire for more maps (online and printed), which provide the location of the parks to visitors and locals. These maps would then increase accessibility and greater utilization of the parks.
- Safety:** A component of the safety theme that overlapped with the maintenance theme, was concern about the dead trees, debris, and long grass in Foster Park. Additionally, due to the bathrooms obstructing the main entrance at Foster Park, there was a shown desire to have the entrance moved. Another component of safety was the traffic on Sanderson road. Even with speed limit signs of 30 km, traffic has not seen a reduction in speed. Comments were made about adding a speed bump near the entrance of the park or signs indicating that the road is restricted to parks users and local residents only.

- d) **Multi-use:** It was expressed that the parks provided many opportunities for multi-use activities and facilities. Foster Park hosts and encourages many events; however with a designated dog area, the park would be able to provide more uses to the public.

Conclusion

Overall the Spring Mini event provided useful, positive feedback through a fun and interactive environment. The data from the Spring Mini complimented the data that was collected from the “Parks on the Street” event as the data provided a wider range of comments opposed to specific questions. Participants were able to comment on what they felt passionate about in relation to parks, trails and open spaces, as well as identified specific themes they would like to see moving forward. Data collected will inform the next stages of the project and contribute to suggested implementations for the Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan.

