

What We Heard Report - Engagement Phase 2

Secord South Park Development

Ryan Andres
14th Floor Edmonton Tower
10111-104 Avenue NW, Edmonton AB
780-496-4920
edmonton.ca/SecordSouthPark

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Public Engagement Summary and Results

Project Overview

The Secord South Park Site is located in the Secord Neighbourhood and will include a Catholic (ECSD) elementary and junior high school.

The City of Edmonton is developing a community park in the south section of the Secord neighbourhood, located on the northeast corner of Secord Drive and 93 Avenue. The park site is approximately five hectares (12 acres) in size and is proposed to include a Catholic (Edmonton Catholic School District) elementary and junior high school. The park is anticipated to be constructed in 2023 (subject to funding).

This project will provide base-level park infrastructure such as sports fields and landscaping, including tree planting. The project is currently in the Concept Phase.

In addition to the base-level infrastructure, the City is developing a concept plan identifying future amenities for the park that could be developed as part of a partner-led project through community organizations. This includes amenities such as the playground and community garden. While these types of amenities will not be constructed as part of this project, input collected through this public engagement will inform planning for future infrastructure projects.

Two phases of public engagement happened at the ADVISE level of the spectrum. The first phase was held in November 2021 to gather input on the draft concept plan for the park. A survey was provided on Engaged Edmonton for participants to share their feedback. A second public engagement phase was held in February 2022 to share the preferred concept plan. This phase of engagement invited the public to share feedback on Engaged Edmonton through an interactive tool that supported discussion among community members. The draft concept plan was adjusted

based on consideration of feedback gathered from stakeholders, the public, technical considerations and cost.



Figure One: Project Phases

What We Heard

In the first phase of public engagement 94% of respondents supported the concept plan.

Feedback Gathered from the First Public Engagement

People shared their feedback on the project's Engaged Edmonton page from November 1-15, 2021. A total of 180 responses were collected. Overall, the engagement respondents supported the concept plan and base-level amenities proposed for the site, with 94% supporting the concept plan. The preferred base-level amenities that are possible for this school-park site (as identified in the [Urban Parks Management Plan](#)) were identified as: a sledding hill, social gathering place and open space.

Additional comments were received by email identifying support for an off-leash dog park. The community league expressed interest in the opportunity for partner-led amenities for a community garden, orchard, gazebo and community beekeeping.

For more information on the First Public Engagement Phase please review the [Phase 1 What We Heard Report](#).

Feedback Gathered from the Second Public Engagement

In the second phase, people were invited to share their thoughts on the preferred concept plan on the project's Engaged Edmonton page from February 7 - 22, 2022. The Engaged Edmonton page was viewed by 97 visitors who shared 62 comments. The comments that received the most attention (views and likes) included:

Question 1: What do you like most about the preferred concept plan?

- Support for the retained tree-stand
 - *"I like that you are keeping the trees"*
 - *"Anywhere we have trees is ideal"*
 - *"I am happy the treestand is being retained"*
- Community garden
 - *"The community garden is a great idea but location may have sunlight blocked by houses and school."*
 - *"I would still love a community garden. Having some shade might not be for heatwaves."*
 - *"A community garden provides lots of utility considering this area has smaller yards than mature neighbourhoods."*
 - *"[community garden] would be a great resource for this area... give people the ability to get to know their neighbours while gardening and providing an all-ages activity."*
 - *"I really like the community garden."*
- More benches, and covered shelters for resting and shade
 - *"More benches and resting areas and covered shelters as there is a seniors complex being built nearby."*
- No off-leash park
 - *"We want to walk safely in our neighbourhood for everyone to enjoy the park."*
 - *"Want this park to be friendly to everyone to enjoy."*
 - *"No dog park. We need more natural areas: treed areas to enjoy."*
 - *"I am a dog owner. As much as I would love the idea of a closer off-leash park, I definitely agree this isn't the palace for one due to the size of the area."*

"I really like the community garden."

Question 2: Is there anything else you would suggest to adjust the concept plan?

- More seating areas including covered seating (such as gazebo, shelter)

- *“Add more benches along pathways, maybe a gazebo of shelter as is in Terra Losa Park for resting or picnics.”*
- *“More seating areas along pathways. Grandparents taking children through the park may be mobility challenged.”*
- *“A sheltered area with seating would allow everyone to enjoy walking trails and rest and take in the beauty of the park.”*
- Spray park
 - *“Our neighbourhood has many parks around the area but we desperately need a spray park.”*
 - *“The long jump area seems out of place next to an elementary school in a younger community but definitely a water park would be utilized. We need a dog park too but definitely not next to a school.”*
- Off-leash dog park
 - *“A small off leash dog area as some people in the area still live in apartments. Doesn't need to be huge.”*
 - *“There are a number of underutilized ball diamonds in North Secord. Some of that space be repurposed for soccer so that an off leash dog park could be made available in South Secord.”*
 - *“We absolutely need an off leash area. Even if it's small, it would make such a difference in our community.”*
 - *“An off leash dog park is the only thing this community is missing.”*

Other comments included topics such as:

- Switch the soccer field for a track and throwing circle
 - *“There is already a soccer field in Secord, could it be switched to a track to go with the long jump pits? Maybe add a throwing circle?”*
- Add volleyball courts and ice rink
 - *“Spray Park! Volleyball Courts! Dog Park! Ice Rink!”*
- Add bat and bee boxes in the tree-stand

- *"I am not sure on the feasibility but it might be nice to add some bat boxes in the trees to keep the mosquitos down. It also might be nice to add some Bee boxes and a perennial/native species flower garden. Gotta do our part to save the bees."*
- Add a ball diamond
 - *"Is there a reason there is no ball diamond for the school's use? or is that not a physical education requirement any longer."*

Additional comments received through telephone calls and emails to the project team have been considered and incorporated into the decision-making process alongside input received on the Engaged Edmonton page.

For both questions, there were comments in support of a dog park and not in support of a dog park. Overall, there were a total of 27 comments requesting a dog park with 85 votes in favour; and 11 comments not in support of a dog park with 3 votes in favour. Participants were informed in advance of the activity the reasons why an off-leash dog park was not feasible for the site, further information regarding this topic is provided in the next section.

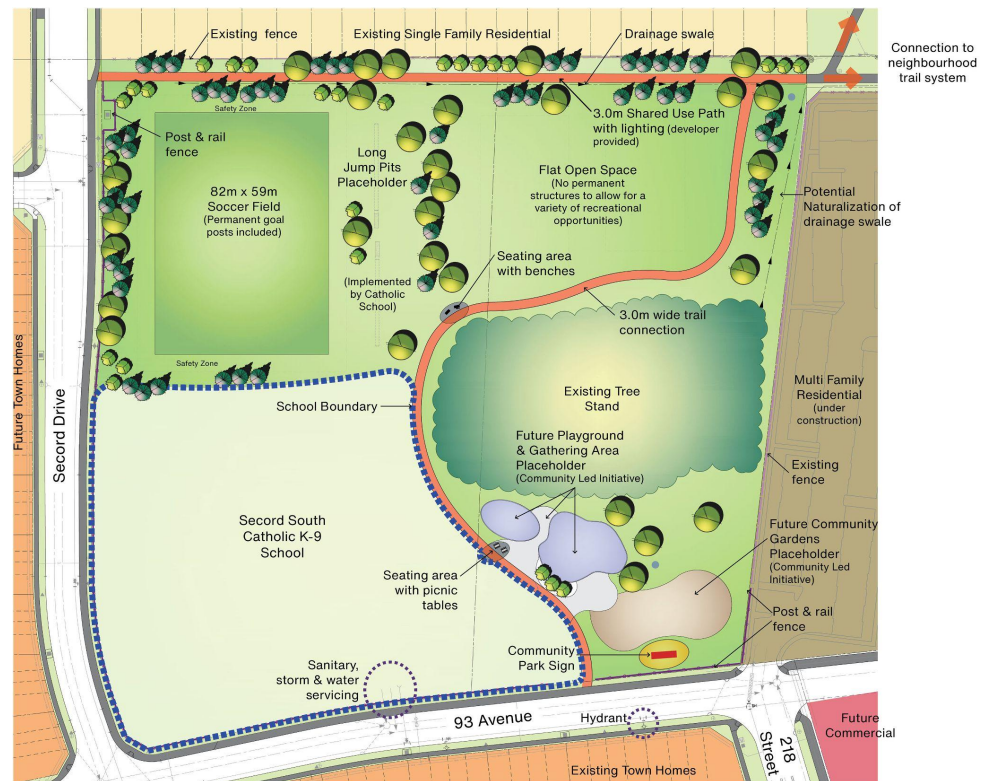


Figure One: [Preferred concept plan](#), presented during the second engagement phase.

What We Did

The draft concept plan was adjusted based on consideration of feedback gathered from stakeholders and the public, technical considerations and cost.

Based on what we heard during the first phase of public engagement, the following changes were made to the preferred concept plan:

- The walking trail was realigned to edge around the treestand and flat open space, connecting with the shared use pathway to the north.
- The playground was moved further north away from 93 Avenue, and closer to the school. The long jumps moved to a vertical alignment to allow for adequate spacing between the soccer field and open space.
- The community garden was added as a placeholder for future, partner-led developments as a result of the input received. The

best location for it was determined to be close to 93 Avenue, with access to water for optimal accessibility.

- An off-leash dog park was a popular request in the feedback. The City of Edmonton's [Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy \(2016\)](#) outlines the considerations for a fenced off-leash dog park on this type of park site; however, a number of constraints do not make it feasible for this site. The constraints include:
 - The requirement for key base-level amenities such as a playground, walking paths, sports fields, benches, etc. to support the school operations are the priority programming.
 - The retention of the treestand was supported by 91% of survey respondents as an important feature of this park site. The treestand takes considerable programmable space and is considered a trade-off for other preferred amenities such as a dog park.
 - The scope of the project is a base-level development, as per the [Urban Parks Management Plan \(2006\)](#), and an off-leash dog park is not considered a base-level amenity.
 - At five hectares (twelve acres) in size, the park is considered small to contain a school, supporting amenities for school operations and an adequately-sized fenced dog park.
- A recreation centre was requested for both base-level and partner-led amenities. The Lewis Farms recreation centre is planned for the Rosenthal neighbourhood, in proximity to this site, at the southeast corner of 92 Avenue and Rosenthal Way. Information on the recreation centre and up-to-date project information is available [here](#).

The second public engagement phase resulted in the addition of a third seating area in the northeast corner of the concept plan. This is in response to the request to provide additional seating areas for seniors and individuals with reduced mobility. The second public engagement concluded generally in support of the draft concept plan. The comments did not highlight any new amenities that were

not already considered in the first round of public engagement and feedback supported the retention of the tree stand and the future community garden.

A significant amount of feedback continued to request a dog park, despite the rationale as to why it is not feasible for this site (as outlined in the What We Did Section of the first public engagement event, and above). Despite this park site not being a viable option for a dog park, the feedback from this survey has highlighted the demand for a dog park in this area of the city and the information will be shared with the Dogs In Open Spaces strategy team. The City of Edmonton's [Dogs in Open Spaces Strategy \(2016\)](#) outlines the direction and appropriate sites for off-leash dog parks.



Figure Two: Final concept plan.

Public Engagement Approach

How We Engaged

Public engagement followed the ADVISE level on the City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Spectrum. Public engagement events were adapted to online methods to align with COVID-19 public health restrictions.



Two public engagement phases were held. The first on November 1-15, 2021, on the project's Engaged Edmonton page, requesting feedback on the draft concept plan through an online survey. The second phase invited participants to share their thoughts on the preferred concept plan February 7-22, 2022, on Engaged Edmonton. Participants used a feature allowing them to post comments on the page for others to up-vote and respond. Advertising for both events included information postcards mailed to residents of the Secord neighbourhood, roadside signage placed in the neighbourhood, promotion in the City's weekly engagement PSA and social media, and a direct invitation to participate in the engagement sent to the Secord Community League.

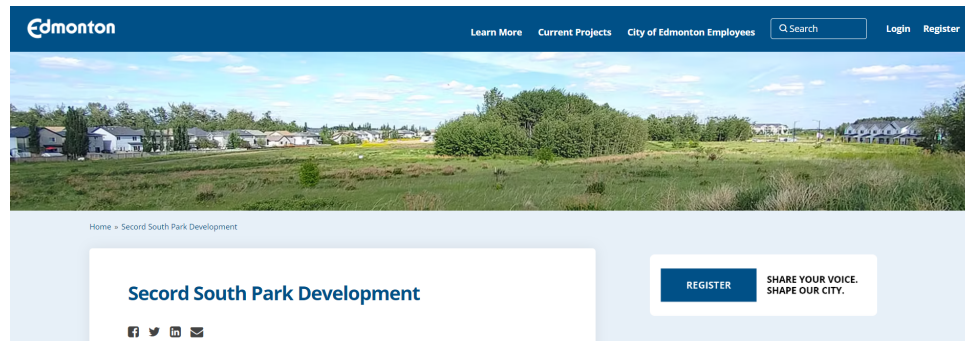


Figure Three: Engaged Edmonton project page



Figure Four: Roadside sign advertising the online survey

Who Was Engaged

Secord residents and the Secord Community League were directly notified about the public engagement opportunity via mail notices. Roadside signs placed in the Secord community notified all passersby whether they were residents of the community, visitors, or passing through.

Additionally, a series of meetings took place between the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Catholic School District, to understand the school and educational program requirements for the site.

What We Asked

In the first phase, the Engaged Edmonton page provided an online survey that asked the the following questions:

- Neighbourhood demographics of respondents
- Age groups of park users
- General support for base-level infrastructure provisions
- Top three preferred options for potential future enhanced amenities
- Support for retention and enhancement of the central tree stand
- General support of the draft concept plan

In the second phase, Engaged Edmonton invited comments on the following questions:

- What they liked most about the proposed plan.
- Any changes they suggest to improve the Preferred Concept Plan.

What Happens Next?

The public engagement phase for this project has now concluded.

The project team will finalize the concept plan based on the feedback gathered from the second public engagement along with technical and financial considerations. The final concept plan will be used to advance to permitting and shared on the project web page. Construction is scheduled for 2023 (subject to funding).

Thank you for providing input into the Secord South Park project. Please visit edmonton.ca/SecordSouthPark for up-to-date project information.