



Riley Park Café – Public Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

Project overview

Riley Park will be undergoing infrastructural upgrades to introduce an oil & grit separator as part of a Water Resources project. To collaborate and provide value to this concrete slab, this project proposes to provide a flexible patio space with moveable seating (e.g. picnic tables, chairs, tables, etc.) with a small café (complete with a washroom) that can provide food and beverages. This option was highlighted supported by the community in the first round of Established Area Growth and Change Strategy engagement.

In coordination with upcoming Water Infrastructure upgrades, we are creating a multi-purpose space complete with a patio and café to provide food and beverages. This includes a basic enclosed café with seating, a washroom, and storage space which hold moveable chairs, tables, umbrellas and tents.

The goals for the design included:

- Ensure operational requirements of oil & grit separator are met (maintenance access).
- Provide vibrant and comfortable seating options on patio space.
- Café must meet the requirements of most startups (e.g. electrical, washrooms, potable water, secure when locked up).
- Good sightlines from the main pathway in the NW corner of the park.

Engagement overview

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, engagement was conducted entirely online with opportunity to provide input by visiting engage.calgary.ca/kensingtonarea/riley-cafe-space calling 311. Public feedback was accepted from August _____ until September _____.

What we asked

Participants were presented with a site layout concept and potential design treatments. Citizens were then asked to provide feedback on the following questions:

- 1) What do you like about this option?
- 2) What would you do to improve this option? Please tell us why.
- 3) Do you have any additional questions about this option?

What we heard

Question #1:

What do you like about this option?

Riley Park Café – Public Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

Category	Response summary
General support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants expressed enthusiasm and support for the Riley Park Café option. Respondents cited that it would deliver an amenity at a beloved park that would serve park patrons and create usable space in conjunction with a utility project. Stakeholders commented positively on the small building footprint and felt that the potential treatments options were aesthetically pleasing.
Improve social and park experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive comments touched on the positive social impact a café would create for park users. Participants indicated a café could extend the time people spend at the park and provide a practical amenity for nearby residents and park visitors.
Natural space considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants suggested that this could be a good addition to the park if certain considerations were integrated with the detailed design. Examples of important factors for a café in this park would be design integration with the natural environment and limiting food production smells (e.g. fryer grease).
Disagree with proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders in this category provided feedback that they did not like any aspect of the concept proposed. Respondents cited limited green space in the park and grass square footage should be maximized, as well as many cafes within walking distance of Riley Park and an in-park café was unnecessary.
Size observations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated the café proposal appeared small and compact. The small facility footprint was generally viewed favourably as it would not consume valuable park space, but still provide a service to people visiting the park.
Esthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens indicated the café would be a solution to the grit separator and would enhance what would otherwise be a sterile, concrete structure. Positive comments were received regarding the open concept presented in the treatment options. A few respondents emphasized the importance of ensuring the design did not look too industrial and fit in with the green space setting.

Question #2:

What would you do to improve this design option? Please tell us why.

Category	Response summary
Open concept café	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens suggested that the café structure should be as open and inviting as possible. Participants advised the project team to pursue a design that would allow park visitors to look and easily understand what the café is; if the structure is too industrial or closed in design park users might not know what it is. A group of respondents referenced the container park in Sunnyside as being claustrophobic and/or sterile and for the project team to avoid that design in Riley Park. They suggested constructing a facility that would be permanent in nature.

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Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard

December 2021

Year-round operational design integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants wanted to ensure the next phase of design would incorporate year-round enable year-round operations. Suggestions for features that would support four season operations included heat lamps and shade covers. A group of respondents indicated that the café should operate into the evening (at least 9pm) during the summer months.
Not supportive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders in this category communicated that a café was not an appropriate amenity addition for Riley Park. A few citizens were concerned that the structure would be too industrial and an unusual contrast to the natural beauty of Riley Park.
Maximize green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants indicated that the café should be positioned in a way to not consume extra green space or infringe on current plantings or flower beds. A group of respondents suggested that planters should be a mandatory feature at the café point of entry.
More seating and/or arrangement of seating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens recommended that the project team include more seating, and a variety of seating options, than what was displayed in the treatment options. Heat lamps and shading were suggested as important consideration for creating a comfortable user environment.
No improvements required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders were confident giving their support based on the proposed concept and did not make further suggestions for improvements.
Lack of clarity around design and location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants in this group had questions regarding the precise location of the café and did not fully understand the treatment plans as they were presented. Respondents communicated needing to see more detailed designed to adequately comments on what could be improved.
Must be local business and community amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders emphasized the importance of the café being operated by a Calgary-based business.
Alcohol service at cafes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens expressed support for the café being licensed to serve alcohol.
Additional features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike racks, flower planters and adequate waste reciprocals were cited as features that should be on-site when the café is constructed. Participants were supportive of programming such as utilizing the space in a way that is supportive of events and small concerts.

Question #3:

Do you have any additional questions about this option?

Category	Response Summary
Cost, maintenance, and operational consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants questioned if an outdoor park space is the best place to run a private business. A few respondents asked how the business operator would be selected. A few stakeholders wanted to know how washrooms would be built and maintained to ensure accessibility and ongoing cleanliness. A few respondents asked what the maintenance budget would be for the café. Citizens asked if the construction of the café would create a loss of space to existing flowerbeds and/or the cricket field area. Respondents asked how energy efficiency and renewable energy sources would be integrated in the project design as well as low-waste operational efforts (e.g. coffee cups, food containers) once the café is open for business.
Lack of clarity around design and location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder felt that the concept illustrations provided were inadequate to understand the café location within the park and indicated that another round of engagement was necessary for citizen to understand the project implications.
No further questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants in this category did not provide additional questions.
Preservation of greenery and park esthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholders provided feedback that the next phase of design should reflect a refined concept that that reflects details of architectural landscaping and building elements that integrate materials such as stone and wood beams. There was a noted theme of participants desired a facility that blended in as much as possible with the urban park setting.
Is it necessary?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Citizens posed the question of whether Riley Park was the best site for a café and if market analysis had been conducted to ensure it would be a successful enterprise.
Minimize social disorder and vagrancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few stakeholders expressed concern that a café structure and potential bathrooms could encourage encampments and social disorder in off peak times.
Parking and traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participants expressed apprehension regarding a perceived lack of parking in the area as well as increase vehicular traffic in the surrounding residential neighbourhood which could be caused by people visiting the café.

- For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.

Next steps

The public feedback received during this phase of engagement will be used in conjunction with technical analysis and cost considerations to select which projects will be carried forward for implementation. Phase 3



Riley Park Café – Public Space Project

Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard
December 2021

Engagement will include the presentation of refined design drawings of the projects that were selected through the Phase 2. The public can expect the Kensington Area Improvements Project Phase 3 to launch in the winter of 2022.



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Stakeholder Report Back: What we Heard
December 2021

Summary of Input

Part/Question/Phase

(if the report covers a multi-part/question/phase engagement)

Part/Question/Phase)

(feel free to summarize in table or paragraph form, depending on project and stakeholder need)

Theme/preference/value	Detailed explanation or example



Riley Park Café – Public Space Project

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Verbatim Comments

Verbatim comments presented here include all feedback, suggestions, comments and messages that were collected online and in-person through the engagement described in this report. All input has been reviewed and provided to Project Teams to be considered in decision making for the project.

Any personal identifying information has been removed from the verbatim comments presented here. Comments or portions of comments that contain profanity, or that are not in compliance with the [City's Respectful Workplace Policy](#) or [Online Tool Moderation Practice](#), have also been removed from participant submissions.

Wherever possible the remainder of the submissions remains. No other edits to the feedback have been made, and the verbatim comments are as received. As a result, some of the content in this verbatim record may still be considered offensive or distasteful to some readers.

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