

What We Heard Report

Allin Park Playground Renewal

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PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY AND RESULTS

Project overview

Allin Park is located in the Glenwood neighbourhood at 15901 96 Avenue NW. This park has been selected for playground renewal. The objective of this project is to use input from the public and align with the City's strategic objectives, plans and policies to replace the playground. A renewed playground will better serve the needs of existing community groups and partners, residents of adjacent neighbourhoods and City residents at large. The project is fully funded by the City of Edmonton.

The scope of this playground renewal project includes:

- Removal of existing playground equipment
- Replacing the sand playground base with engineered wood to improve accessibility
- Adding new play equipment
- Adding an accessible sidewalk curb at the 96 Avenue entrance to the park
- Adding a concrete pathway from the 96 Avenue park entrance to the playground for improved accessibility
- Adding an accessible concrete pad area with a bench, picnic table, and waste bin
- Adding trees throughout the park
- Keeping mature trees
- Keeping the existing playground border, light pole and lighting within the park

The project does not include:

- Any other improvements to Allin Park, including
 - The decommissioned building on the north side of the park
 - Renewal of the baseball fields in the park
 - Development of an off-leash dog area

What we heard

"I see kids here all the time, it will be nice for them to have more things to play on."

Onsite participant

Engagement participants were enthusiastic about the playground renewal project and look forward to the planned improvements. Participants noted the playground is valued (64 per cent) and using the playground is the activity most participants (66 per cent) liked to do when at the park.

"So excited for this project ... we (daycare) love coming to this park. Our children will be so excited for the new Allin Park."

Survey participant

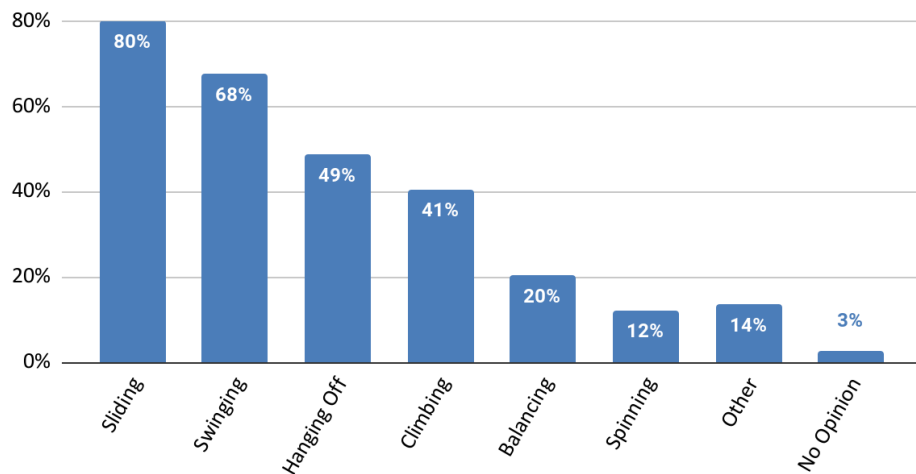
A few participants commented that they currently value the tire swing, small hill for winter tobogganing and playing soccer at the park.

A few participants commented that they do not support the project and believe it is a poor use of tax dollars.

Play activities and experiences

Participants supported all play experiences. Equipment that would allow park users to slide, swing, hang off bars and climb was the most favoured.

Top Three Play Activities/Experiences Selected



"Make sure you have something for the babies. They can't use the same things as the big kids."

Onsite participant

Participants emphasized the need for play equipment to meet the needs of all ages and abilities. Several participants suggested adding play equipment for young children, noting local daycare and after school care providers frequently use the park and playground. A few participants recommended an accessible swing and adding an American Sign Language and communication board within the playground elements. Several participants supported removing sand and replacing it with rubber or wood as the playground base.

"Create an inclusive park ... that fosters community and celebrates diversity."

Survey participant

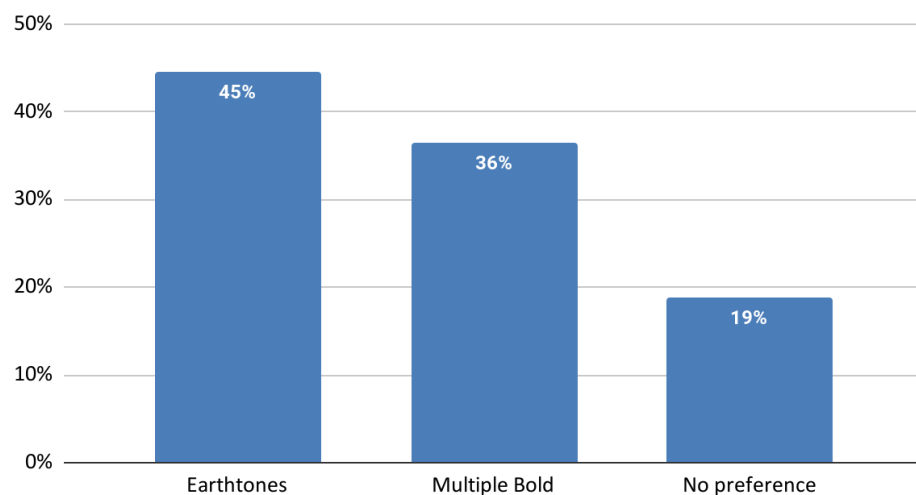
Many participants suggested adding a spray park or water feature. Other unique play ideas included: adding a zipline and glider, hanging spinner, merry-go-round and a small teepee structure that children can go inside of. Adding dirt to the hill within the park for winter tobogganing was also suggested. One respondent proposed a large structure like the Rocket Park. Another respondent cautioned against adding any enclosed structures as people experiencing homelessness may use it for shelter.

A few participants suggested equipment or facilities that span all age categories, including a multi-sport or basketball court, adult exercise equipment, skateboard and scooter area, an outdoor skating rink and all-ages climbing equipment.

Playground colour

Participants did not express strong opinions about colours for the playground. Survey results demonstrated a small preference for earth-tone colours (brown, green, sand), while slightly more on-site participants stated a preference for bold, bright primary colours. Unique colour ideas from on-site participants included: rainbow colours, pink and blue. Two participants suggested a nature-based playground theme.

Colour Preference Selected



*"A sidewalk leading to the park area would be great."
Survey participant*

Accessibility

The majority of engagement participants walk/run (87 per cent), use a vehicle (10 per cent) or roll (10 per cent) to Allin Park. Those who roll to the park use

bicycles, wheelchairs, strollers and skateboards. Public transit is the least frequent way to get to the park (four per cent).

"(Local child) is hard of hearing and this is a favourite play space in the area. It would be really neat to include (ALS) ... as a playground feature."

Survey participant

To improve park and playground accessibility, a sidewalk leading to the park, a pathway through the park and increased lighting were recommended. As noted earlier, accessible swings and an American Sign Language and communication board were suggested. Participants also restated the need for diverse play options for all ages and abilities.

"Equipment that is not only physically challenging, but also mentally challenging. Not all kids can use the equipment included as examples."

Survey participant

Many participants recommended picnic tables, with a few specifying picnic tables under a shade structure. Some participants noted adding picnic tables and shade would benefit all park users, support children's sun safety and increase care providers' comfort when at the park. It was also noted that increased park maintenance (e.g., mowing and weeding) would make the park more accessible for children with allergies.

Other feedback

"I'd like better signs and education about keeping dogs on leash."

Onsite participant

Pets at the park

Many people (34 per cent) indicated they like to walk their dog at Allin Park. While out of scope for a playground renewal project, the notion of adding an off-leash dog area to the park was included in many survey comments. Conversely, a few participants expressed concern about children's safety when dogs are off leash in the park. These participants recommended increased education and signs within the park to keep dogs on leash and encourage pet clean up. Information about City off-leash areas, dog parks and responsible pet ownership, including leash bylaws, can be found on edmonton.ca/Pets.

"To make the playground safer, an off-leash dog park should be created."

Survey participant

Park appearance and safety

"Vulnerable people loiter in the area at night."

Survey participant

Many participants noted people experiencing homelessness use Allin Park as a place to rest and this impacts park users' sense of safety. Participants said unsafe and discarded items such as broken glass, needles and mattresses are attributed to the park's use as a rest area. Several participants recommended increased lawn and tree maintenance, lighting, and clean up. One participant suggested adding security.

"Maintain the park, so we can actually go outside and enjoy it."

Survey participant

How the engagement results will be used

Results from this public engagement phase will be considered by the project team to develop design options for the playground. The engagement results will also be used to inform discussions with playground equipment suppliers. Design and construction standards, costs and operational considerations are also key decision-making factors.

The project team will re-engage with the community in fall 2024 to seek feedback on design options.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT APPROACH

What, when, how and who we engaged

The public was asked for their views on:

- Preferred play activities and experiences
- Playground equipment colour preferences
- Accessibility within and around the park and playground
- What they currently value about the park
- Park use and local knowledge that could inform the project

This first engagement period occurred from June 10 to 23, 2024.

The public was informed of the engagement opportunity through postcards delivered to postal codes surrounding Allin Park. The postcard informed recipients about the project, the opportunity to complete the online survey and to learn more about the project at edmonton.ca/PlaygroundRenewal.

The engagement opportunity was also promoted through a social media ad on Facebook and Instagram, the City of Edmonton Public Service Announcement and Public Engagement Calendar.

The online survey was available June 10 - 23, 2024 and the project team visited Allin Park on June 10 and June 14 to hear directly from park users.

A total of 74 people completed the online survey. The majority of survey respondents (80 per cent) were from Glenwood and neighbourhoods near



Project team at Allin Park

the park. Some respondents were from Edmonton neighbourhoods further away and/or worked at the daycare near the park (15 per cent). A few survey respondents chose not to indicate their Edmonton neighbourhood (five per cent).

A total of 22 children and adults spoke with the Project Team members when they were at the park in June.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

The Project Team will develop playground design options for community feedback in fall 2024.

For more information on the City's playground renewal program and this project, please visit edmonton.ca/PlaygroundRenewal.