

SUMMARY OF ENGAGEMENT FOR THE PARKS AND PATHWAYS BYLAW REVIEW

Stakeholder engagement was completed through several means including a citizen panel survey, an online Engage page, and meetings with cultural and senior groups. In addition best practices from nine other municipalities were investigated.

Citizen Panel Survey

In 2017 May, Calgary Parks did a citizen panel survey that provided an initial insight on what citizens would like to see in parks. A summary of highlights from the 927 responses are as follows:

- About 80% supported vendors in city parks, particularly for food and beverages
- Overwhelming support for goats to control weeds with 95% supporting
- Religious services and political rallies are supported each by about 60%
- Overall support for pedelecs (85%) and segways (77%), but not for gas assisted bikes (41%)

Engage 'What We Heard' Report

Responses to multiple choice and open-ended questions uncovered the following themes that have been addressed in the new bylaw:

- Use of radio-controlled hobbies (eg drones), ability to harvest edible plants or participate in urban agriculture, and openly consume alcohol, were cited as activities that many respondents would like to enjoy in parks
- It was felt that goats and other animals to control weeds throughout parks should be included in the Bylaw
- Encouragement of gathering spaces and opportunities to showcase artists in parks should be included in the Bylaw
- Restrictions on risky activities such as tobogganing, should be relaxed in the Bylaw.

Some issues arose not directly related to the Bylaw and these are being addressed separately:

- Capital planning issues such as a desire for more off leash areas, and year round washrooms are considered in the capital project prioritization process
- Snow removal has been addressed through a report to Council's Strategic Session and budget item One Calgary
- Smoking in parks, which will be addressed through a Motion Arising (CPS2018-0367) from Council on 2018 April 05, to further strengthen the Smoking and Vaping Bylaw 23M2018 with consideration to prohibiting smoking and vaping in outdoor public parks. The report with recommendation and bylaw amendments will go to Council through the SPC on Community and Protective Services, no later than 2019 Q4
- Enforcement challenges regarding encampments, and unsafe pathway behaviour (both cyclists and pedestrians) are addressed within current availability of Bylaw Officers.

Issues Identified Internally

The following issues were prominent in interviews with staff across business units:

- The current Bylaw is overly restrictive with many activities only with approval from the Director, creating undue bureaucracy for both staff and citizens
- Inability to close certain sections of a park, or restrict use within sections, during construction, natural area rehabilitation, or when safety issues are present
- Lack of ability to address encroachment as it is only a policy, not an offence under the Bylaw
- Restrictions on activities such as tobogganing are difficult to enforce
- Limited capacity to enforce the Bylaw

Comparison with Other Cities

Parks bylaws from nine Canadian cities were reviewed. Highlights of that review are as follows:

- All cities prohibit dangerous behaviour such as throwing objects and golf. Regina specifically states that spontaneous, non-organized sports are allowed.
- All cities require a permit or written permission for events, ceremonies, parades and public gatherings
- Pathway speed limits are stated only in Calgary (20km/hr) and Winnipeg (30km/hr). However, many other pathways reference due care and attention, or that speed cannot be immoderate.
- All cities with a river, except Red Deer, place restrictions on water access and activity
- Over half of the cities restrict the use of any remote controlled aircraft (which could possibly apply to drones). The remaining cities are silent on the issue.
- All municipalities restrict commercial activities and require either a permit or written permission from a senior level
- Each bylaw has some means for a senior authority to make exceptions to the bylaw, usually in the interest of safety or park protection. Most of these indicate that the senior authority must act within the intent of the bylaw.