

Appendix E

Public Consultation Summary Report

Public Consultation Summary Report

This report was prepared by ISL and IMI *strategics* and includes an overview of the public consultation plan, a description of the various public consultation activities, a summary of the feedback, comments and ideas provided by stakeholders and the public, and an overview of the interpretation of the feedback and the resulting impacts on the preparation of the concept plan. The report also summarizes the important role played by the Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee during the Study. The detailed breakdown of the results of the various public consultation activities is not included, but was provided to and utilized by the design team, the City project team and the Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee throughout the Study.

The public consultation process included the following components which are defined in detail in the following sections:

- Public Consultation Plan
- Communications Plan
- Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee
- Stakeholder Consultation – Program Development
- Project Website
- Public Open Houses - Concept Options
- Public Open House – Draft Final Concept

1.1 Public Consultation Plan

A public consultation plan was prepared by IMI *strategics* at the beginning of the Study using the City of Edmonton Corporate Public Involvement Framework. The plan was designed to ensure that the concept planning process would build on the consultation completed during the preparation of "A Vision for Terwillegar Park", while providing opportunities throughout the Study for stakeholders and the public to provide critical input into the concept designs. The following is a summary of the key components of the plan.

The first section in the Public Consultation Plan defined the commitment of the Terwillegar Park Concept Plan Study Team to:

- Engage those who are affected by modifications made to the design, management or development guidelines of Terwillegar Park.
- Consider the public's contribution towards the development of the Terwillegar Park Concept Plan.
- Clearly communicate the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers.
- Seek out the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in the future of Terwillegar Park.
- Seek input from stakeholders in designing opportunities or activities that enable more effective participation.
- Provide participants with adequate and relevant information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Communicate to participants how their input affected the decision.

The following table summarizes the overall scope of the public consultation process as proposed in the Public Consultation Plan, including how the public would be engaged and how the information would be utilized as a key part of the Study:

Description of the overall project or initiative:	The Terwillegar Park Concept Plan will provide the overall conceptual plan, management objectives and strategies, and development guidelines for Terwillegar Park over the next 10 years.
The decision being made is:	Whether to adopt the concept plan as an implementation framework for “A Vision for Terwillegar Park”.
Decision makers	City Council will make the final decision based on recommendations from senior administration represented on the Terwillegar Park Study Steering Committee.
The scope (impact, and complexity) of this decision is:	<p>The concept plan will influence future development and land use within Terwillegar Park, thus adding it to the suite of natural and recreational resources available to citizens of the City of Edmonton. This project will affect a number of City Departments, and will primarily affect park users and those residing in the area surrounding Terwillegar Park, although park users reside throughout the city. The development of the Concept Plan will be supported by a consultation strategy with the following key components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An Advisory Committee composed of representatives of key park users, recreational and community groups ➤ Planning workshops in which invited stakeholders can assess what the project team has learned about opportunities and constraints and to help identify preferred program elements. ➤ Public open houses in which the public will help identify preferred elements of two proposed concept plans ➤ Public information session to present the proposed concept plan
The public is being involved in because:	<p>The following stakeholders possess a breadth of knowledge, and understanding their needs and expectations of Terwillegar Park will help it develop in a balanced manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recreational user groups – are able to provide insight into the park environment and current uses as well as detailed technical information regarding possible park programs and facilities. ➤ Local residential community – will provide valuable information on access, linkages, and other interactions with local neighborhoods. ➤ General public from outside the Terwillegar area – will view Terwillegar Park as a destination park and could provide insight into the development of unique resources.

Level of involvement:	This process predominantly fits in the shaded area below:				
	Information Sharing	Consultation		Active Participation	
	Sharing information to build awareness	Testing ideas or concepts to build knowledge	Collaborating to develop solutions to build commitment	Sharing decision making to build ownership	Delegating decision making to build responsibility
The specific information being sought is:	Through stakeholder and public engagement, insights will be gained into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How stakeholders interpret the key components of the Vision for Terwillegar Park. ➤ The preferences of stakeholders and the public regarding potential park programs and facilities. ➤ Stakeholder assessment of opportunities and constraints that will affect park enhancements and design. ➤ The opportunities and constraints identified by adjacent residents. ➤ Potential development options for unique park features. ➤ Stakeholder receptiveness of concept ideas. ➤ The general public's view towards the proposed concept plan. 				
How will information be used in the decision making?	The information will: Provide park planners with program and design ideas from stakeholders and the general public. Help gain public buy-in and acceptance for the proposed concept plan. Generate awareness and excitement in the community for the proposed Terwillegar Park concept plan.				

Public Involvement Methods Strategy

The following table outlines the key methods to be used to ensure that the public and stakeholders are properly engaged:

Potential Participants	Proposed Level of Involvement (Information Sharing, Consultation, or Active Participation)	Involvement Strategy
Park User Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaboration, including: ➤ Two-way information sharing ➤ Consultation on the elements to be included in the concept plan ➤ Assistance in identifying opportunities and constraints ➤ Developing project support/buy-in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Website ➤ Advisory Committee meetings ➤ Planning Workshop with invited stakeholders
Adjacent Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consultation, including: ➤ Information sharing ➤ Consultation on the elements to be included in the concept plan ➤ Assistance in identifying opportunities and constraints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Website ➤ Planning workshop ➤ Open Houses

Broader Public	➤ Information Sharing	➤ Website ➤ Open Houses
City Departments	➤ Consultation , including: ➤ Regular updates on project progress ➤ Consultation with the City at key decision points.	➤ Internal Review ➤ Interim Reports

Communication Strategy

The communication strategy for the project is outlined in the following table:

Target Audience	Key Messages and timing	Information Sharing Tool
Park User Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Team is listening to their ideas and concerns ➤ Opportunities are available to be involved in the process ➤ Clear program proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Road Signs ➤ Stakeholder Contact List ➤ Stakeholder Workshop ➤ Open Houses ➤ Project Website
Adjacent Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Team is listening to their ideas and concerns ➤ Opportunities are available to be involved in the process ➤ Clear program proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Road Signs ➤ Open Houses ➤ Project Website
Broader Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Clear information regarding the proposed concept plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Open Houses ➤ Project Website
City Departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Outline concept plan opportunities and constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Project Updates and Interim Report

The Public Consultation Plan also included a preliminary list of stakeholders for the Study. This list was maintained and revised as the Study proceeded, and stakeholders on the list were invited by mail or email to all public consultation events.

1.2 Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee

The Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) was formed by the City of Edmonton to represent the interests of the Park's many stakeholders during the study. The committee of 9 was made up of representatives of seven different stakeholder groups, and two representatives of the 'community at large', who had applied to participate through public advertising and were subsequently interviewed and selected. Committee members were invited to participate based on some combination of their role in a particular organization, their knowledge of the Park, and their experience with a specific activity (eg. Dog Walking, paddling). Most of the committee members had also participated during the public consultation activities of "A Vision for Terwillegar Park" and so they knew the history of the Park planning efforts and results.

At the first meeting of the Advisory Committee, IMI Strategics presented the following 'Principles for Partnership' which defined how the committee would operate, support the design team and ultimately succeed in their role. The committee discussed and agreed

to the principles and ultimately, the principles do reflect the role that Advisory Committee played in the Study

A. Operation of Advisory Committee

- **Role:** The Committee will review and provide feedback on proposed processes and timeline for the plan, and project documentation including public input, draft management plans, and concept designs.
- **Perspectives:** Members are expected to provide perspectives from their area of expertise, while remaining cognizant of other perspectives as well.
- **Communications:** The City of Edmonton will be the primary media contact for the project and the status of the Advisory Committee process.
- **Confidentiality:** Advisory Committee members agree to respect the confidentiality of any information identified as confidential that is distributed to the group.

B. Agreement to Succeed

For the Advisory Committee to succeed, all members must commit to the creation of a supportive and constructive environment of trust and respect. Advisory Committee members agree to:

- **Stay Focused:** on the tasks at hand, which are outlined in the Terms of Reference and the meeting agenda.
- **Respect Timelines:** to ensure that work is completed in a timely manner.
- **Speak Freely:** with candor and honesty, what is said during meetings will not be recorded or attributed to any individual.
- **Participate Actively:** by providing information and data to the Advisory Committee where such information/data will help the group to complete its work.
- **Work for Consensus:** on matters before the Advisory Committee. It is not necessary for all members to be in total agreement as options and alternatives are welcome.
- **Respect Decisions:** that the Advisory Committee has made even if not all members of the committee were present during the meeting. Wherever possible, Advisory Committee members not part of the decision will be given an opportunity to comment. Members will fairly and accurately represent decisions made at Advisory Committee meetings in all communications.
- **Respect Each Other:** by using respectful language, providing constructive feedback on others' opinion, and avoiding interruptions. By respecting their Advisory Committee colleagues' commitment to the process and maintaining an atmosphere of trust.

C. Commitment of the Design Team

The Design Team is also committed to the creation of a supportive and constructive environment of trust and respect by:

- Engaging those who are affected
- Considering the public's contribution
- Clearly communicating
- Seeking out the involvement of those potentially affected
- Seeking input from stakeholders in designing involvement opportunities
- Providing participants with information they need to participate
- Communicating to participants how their input affected the decision

Throughout the study, the design team was supported by the Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee. Regular working meetings with the committee allowed the design team to present findings, learn historical and environmental details about the Park, discuss potential program features, and develop and refine concept options. The Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee proved to be a hard working,

knowledgeable and well spoken group that was an invaluable resource to the design team. The committee also played a role at all public consultation activities by engaging attendees, listening to their ideas and concerns and providing information and clarification on the proposed program and concept design.

1.3 Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholders representing a broad cross section of park users, community representatives, interest groups, and not-for-profit organizations were invited to attend a workshop held in Edmonton on October 20, 2007. The workshop was hosted by ISL Engineering and Land Services and was facilitated by IMI *strategics*. Participants included invited stakeholders and members of design team, City planning team and Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee. The workshop objectives were to:

- enable stakeholders to provide input to the park design team responsible for creating a program statement and options for a concept plan;
- engage stakeholders in the design process;
- share results of the opportunities and constraints analysis; and
- identify preferred program options.

Workshop participants provided feedback on several design questions to identify:

- activities they considered both compatible and incompatible with the vision of Terwillegar Park as a *"unique natural park within the City of Edmonton's river valley"*;
- significant opportunities and critical constraints in designing Terwillegar Park as a *"unique natural park within the City of Edmonton's river valley"*; and
- infrastructure, facilities and amenities, as well as operational considerations, required to design Terwillegar as a unique natural park.

The following is a summary of the feedback provided by the stakeholders:

1. Compatible activities for Terwillegar Park were identified as those that are Nature-based; relatively unstructured and spontaneous; family or group-oriented; require limited infrastructure and facilities; and offer strong potential for educational and interpretive activities. Examples of compatible activities included walking, dog-walking, birdwatching, cycling, fishing, swimming, paddling, cross-country skiing, tobogganing, roller-blading and picnicking.
2. Incompatible activities for Terwillegar Park were identified as those that involve motorized recreational vehicles such as motorboats, quads and motorcycles; equestrian activities; and events such as bush parties. Concerns surrounding these types of activities related to noise pollution and enforcement issues. Extensive paved surfaces/trails, manicured or sown surfaces, lighting other than in the parking area, picnic tables, firepits and uncontrolled dogs were also identified as being incompatible with the park.
3. Significant opportunities for the Terwillegar Park program were identified as those that build on trail and river connectivity, both within the park and regionally; those that are educational or interpretive in nature and that focus on the park's undeveloped natural setting; and those that provide easy access to a natural setting for people with disabilities. Indeed, this park could become a flagship park by merging these two elements in ways that other parks have not.

4. Critical constraints for the design of Terwillegar Park were identified as balancing its existing undeveloped state with the need for some basic amenities such as washrooms, signage and parking, while ensuring the park vision of a natural area is retained. This will involve a commitment to keep development unobtrusive and minimal, both in extent and in visual presence. Another constraint relates to incorporating public transit, which is not currently available given the physical limitations of road access. A third constraint relates to providing park users with a sense of security and safety by providing a greater enforcement presence than is experienced at present.
5. In support of the opportunities and constraints identified, it was emphasized that the appropriate infrastructure, facilities or amenities must have a low environmental impact and be aesthetically pleasing in ways that are conducive to the undeveloped surrounding landscape. Again, improved parking and road access were supported by the stakeholders at this workshop, as were environmentally sustainable, wheelchair accessible washrooms, improved signage, all-season shelter, and enhanced trail connections.
6. The primary operational considerations for managing Terwillegar as a unique natural park involve ensuring that any management strategy is as visually and environmentally unobtrusive as possible, with an emphasis on keeping it natural. A variety of views were expressed about the size and nature of the parking lot, for example given that it might not be clearly understood what park usage numbers are at the present time. The Fort Edmonton parking lot was referred to as an excellent design example that could be used as a model for Terwillegar.

Overall, but with some exceptions within this group of stakeholders, it was felt that this park can accommodate a wide range of use options, especially given its size, so long as those uses are balanced by keeping the vision of a unique natural park as a priority. It was noted that this park cannot be all things to all people and, indeed, that other City parks may be better suited to offer some types of activities and amenities, such as established picnic areas and some types of boat use.

Terwillegar Park must remain as “an oasis within the City”, by:

- promoting its pride of place as a unique natural park by guarding its worth as a special area for Edmontonians;
- keeping all development simple, natural and low-impact in ways that align with Nature-based activities;
- ensuring connectivity of its trail systems, some of which can be paved;
- supporting a variety of users involved in non-motorized and unstructured active outdoor recreation;
- providing a safe environment for responsible users;
- focusing on educational and interpretive opportunities;
- highlighting a specific design focus that enables users with disabilities to access at Terwillegar what they cannot access at other natural-type areas; and
- demonstrating leadership by making the park “state-of-the-art” in terms of environmental technology, for example by designing and building washrooms and other infrastructure to LEED standards.

In addition to the stakeholder workshop, a number of stakeholders were contacted on an informal basis through phone conversations and meetings for feedback, information, expertise and ideas at various stages of the project. This additional stakeholder consultation included:

- City staff – feedback from staff from various departments regarding items such as programming, maintenance, operations, standards, safety and facilities
- Dog Walking – informal discussions on site by various members of the design team with dog walkers gathering input on how they used the Park, favorite locations, and issues/concerns with use and management
- Paddling Groups – included a meeting on site at Rundle Park to discuss existing facilities, needs, the variety of groups and the level of use
- Jet Boats – meeting on site and at Laurier Park to review river access opportunities and constraints
- Mountain Bike/Cross Country Skiing – meeting with two Advisory committee members representing mountain bike groups to discuss opportunities, constraints and design objectives for meeting the needs of individuals, groups and race organizers. Also reviewed opportunities and constraints related to cross country skiing in Terwillegar Park.

1.4 Project Website

To provide another vehicle for getting information out to the public and for gathering additional feedback, ISL launched a project website in July of 2007 and managed the site throughout the project. (www.terwillegarpark.com). The website was structured to provide an overview of the project including information on the process and consulting team, contact information, background reports and links to relevant pages on the City of Edmonton website. The project website was used throughout the study to post documents (eg. the technical reports) as they were completed so that the public could review available information. The site was also used to advertise upcoming consultation activities and provide background information that would be helpful for people planning to attend the events. Following each of the open houses, the displays and online comment forms were posted to allow the public to provide feedback and general comments to the ISL team. The website proved to be a valuable tool for exchanging information with interested citizens and Park users.

1.5 Public Open Houses (Two Concepts)

Two public open houses were conducted by the City of Edmonton and ISL Engineering & Land Services in March 2008, for the purpose of presenting two concepts as options for potential development of Terwillegar Park (See Appendix D). The first open house was held at St. Thomas More Church and was attended by 156 individuals. The second open house was held at City Hall and was attended by 72 individuals. Both of the open houses were “drop in” events with approximately 35 display boards set out to provide information on the project, the vision, the park environment and the proposed concept plan options. Members of the design team, project team, and advisory committee were in attendance to listen to attendees and to answer questions.

A total of 228 individuals attended the Open Houses, of whom 172 submitted comment forms. A detailed summary of the open house input as gathered through the comment forms was compiled by IMI Strategics. The program and concept plan options were also posted on the project website after the open houses and comments were received from 43 individuals. The summary of all of the open house and website input was reviewed by the City planning team, the Terwillegar Park Citizen’s Advisory Committee and the ISL design team.

The comment forms asked respondents to identify whether specific program elements (16 total), fit with the park vision, and whether the element was suitable as presented in Concept 1, Concept 2, or both Concepts. Respondents all had the opportunity to provide comments or suggestions related to each of the program elements. Respondents were also asked to rank their preferred timing (early or later) for the

implementation of the program elements. The final question asked existing users to identify their primary current activity, and asked those that did not currently use the park what activities might attract them to become a Park user. The following is a brief summary of the responses to the questions:

- As indicated by a majority of respondents, all of the proposed park elements fit with the vision of Terwillegar Park as a “unique natural park within the City of Edmonton’s River Valley Park system”.
- The most favoured elements in terms of fitting with the vision were the parking lot expansion, the activity area access, the regional trail, and the remote toilet(s) (Supported by 80% or more of respondents). Between 70% and 79% of respondents indicated that the entrance node; universal access trail; enhanced walking trails; enhanced mountain bike trails; dock and canoe/kayak launch; and sheltered viewpoints, each fit with the vision. The elements identified as fitting with the vision by between 60% and 69% of respondents were the picnic area; program/washroom building; designated on-leash area; interpretive nodes; paddling lake; and nature playground.
- Three elements were preferred as illustrated in Concept 1 rather than in Concept 2 (the activity area access; the nature playground; and the paddling lake), the other 13 elements were preferred as presented in Concept 2.
- A proportion of respondents indicated they were comfortable with the elements as presented in either of the two concept plan options, suggesting there is some flexibility in the ultimate placement of those elements in the final concept plan.
- The program elements which ranked the highest for early implementation were the paved park entrance road, the paved parking lot expansion, the enhanced walking trails, the overflow parking and the remote washrooms. The program elements ranked as being preferred for later implementation included the shelter viewpoints, the interpretive nodes, the sledding hill, the paddling lake and the control gate.
- Approximately half of respondents (51%) identified dog-walking as their current single primary use. The activity identified by respondents as most appealing for future use of the Terwillegar Park was connection to the river valley trails (64%), followed next by bird-watching (45%).

The following is an overview of the “what we heard” as a design team based on conversations that we had with attendees at the event (anecdotal), and from the summary of results as compiled through the comment forms. The following represents the consistent messages regarding the proposed development of Terwillegar Park as well as common themes related to ideas and suggestions for the various program elements:

- ‘Good Concepts’ – many respondents indicated their support for the concepts in general, using words such as “good work”, “pleasantly surprised” and “pleased”.
- “A Good Balance” - comments from respondents including some identified dog walkers indicated that both concept options represented a “good balance” and “best of both worlds” in terms of off-leash area, natural area, and proposed new development.
- “Leave it Alone” - many respondents indicated that park should be “left alone”, that “less is more”, or to keep the park “as natural as possible”. The majority of

these comments come from current users who like the park as is and may only want some minor changes such as paved road and washrooms.

- 'No Restrictions on Dogs' – some dog walkers expressed concern related to the potential for further restrictions to off leash dogs in the future – ie. if incidents occur between dogs and other users, then they perceive that more restrictions may be placed on their use of the Park.
- 'More on-leash area' – some respondents indicated that the proposed designated on-leash areas was a good idea and should be larger than the proposed area indicated on the concept plans. Generally, this was suggested as a way to better meet the needs of the users other than dog walkers, and in particular families with children.
- 'Preference for Concept 2' – Although there was not a direct question asking respondents to choose a preference between Concept 1 and Concept 2, there was an overall preference expressed for Concept 2 in both the ranking of where the program elements fit best (13 of 16 were preferred in Concept 2), and as expressed in the general comments. A common theme was that Concept 2 was preferred because it concentrated the new activities, leaving most of the Park in its current natural state.

1.6 Public Open House (Draft Final Concept)

A public open house was hosted by the City of Edmonton and the project design team on May 29, 2008, for the purpose of presenting the draft Final Concept Plan for Terwillegar Park (See Section 3.0). The event was held at Sir Thomas More Church in Edmonton. ISL conducted two formal presentations of the final concept plan followed by a 30 minute question/answer period. Prior to and following the presentations, members of the public were able to review static displays and ask questions of the design team, city staff and members of the Terwillegar Park Citizens Advisory Committee.

A total of 180 members of the public attended the open house and the following is a summary of the feedback derived from comment forms as well as general information gathered from question and answer component of the open house. A detailed summary of the open house input as gathered through the comment forms was compiled by IMI Strategics. The program and concept plan options were also posted on the project website after the open houses and comments were received from 19 individuals. The complete record of all of the open house and website input was reviewed by the City planning team, the Terwillegar Park Citizen's Advisory Committee and the ISL design team.

A total of 180 people attended and 146 comment forms were received. Of the 146 respondents, 62% indicated that they were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the draft Final Concept Plan. This level increases to 80% for those respondents who indicated that their primary activity was something other than dog walking.

Of the 146 comment forms, 112 respondents identified their current primary activity in the Park as follows: dog-walking 46%, walking 21%, mountain biking 12%, and other users 21%. Those who were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the draft Final Concept Plan in relation to their primary current activity are as follows: Dog walkers 35%; Walkers 96%; Mountain bikers 62% and Other users 72%.

Common Themes:

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments, which were then grouped in relation to the identified level of satisfaction (Satisfied, Somewhat Satisfied, Somewhat Unsatisfied and Unsatisfied). The following is an overview of the common themes that were identified in relation to the four levels of satisfaction:

1. Satisfied

Respondents in this group generally indicated that the draft Final Concept was a “good plan” and that it was a “good balance” or “good compromise” of access and amenities for the various user groups with protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Some of the other themes and consistent suggestions included:

- Paddling Lake - overall this group likes the lake concept, but there are a few concerns regarding safety and access
- Infrastructure – in general, this group identified the proposed upgrades to the road, expanded parking, washrooms and the enhanced trails as the top development priorities.
- Designated On-leash area - This group liked the designated on-leash area because it provides opportunities for families.
- Maintenance - There is concern regarding vandalism and ongoing maintenance of the proposed upgrades. Addition and maintenance of dog bag dispensers and garbage/recycling receptacles is seen as critical.

2. Somewhat Satisfied

Respondents in this group could be categorized as either satisfied with the concept plan with specific suggestions for improvement, or satisfied with the concept plan but concerned with the limitations on use related to the designated on leash area. Some of the consistent messages of this group included:

- “Keep it Natural” – this group included those that recognized that the concept plan does a good job keeping the park natural as well as those respondents that simply requested that it be left “as natural as possible”.
- Designated On-leash area – dog walkers in this group expressed concerned with the limitations being placed on their use of the Park. Some other respondents in this group suggested that the on-leash area be made larger.
- Support for specific program elements – this group included support for a range of specific program elements such as the enhanced trails, river access, washrooms and expanded parking lot.
- Suggested improvements – several respondents provided suggestions aimed at improving the plan such as the locations and widths of trails, landscape buffering, and access controls.

3. Somewhat Unsatisfied

The overriding theme expressed by respondents in this group was to “keep it simple”. This group supported the basic infrastructure improvements which are being proposed but did not express much support for other program elements. Some of the consistent messages of this group included:

- “Keep it simple” – the message here was that the Park was well used and working well in its current condition and therefore the rest of the proposed development was unnecessary
- No Paddling Lake – several respondents in this group questioned the need for the paddling lake, or specifically suggested that it was a poor idea related to cost and the fact that it was not a natural feature

- Other Parks for Families/Groups – several respondents indicated that there were already many other parks in the City that catered to families and groups.
- Trail Enhancements – several respondents expressed concerns that the enhanced trails were unnecessary and/or would not be an improvement

4. Unsatisfied

The overriding theme expressed by respondents in this group was to “leave it alone”. This group generally supported the basic infrastructure improvements which are being proposed but did not express much support for other program elements.

Some of the consistent

- “Leave it alone” – the clear theme for the respondents that expressed this position was generally – “fix the road, more parking, add a washroom, leave the rest alone”. Part of the message for some was that the Park works well as it is.
- Natural Beauty - This group likes the natural feel of the park as it is. There is concern that any development in this park will be detrimental to the wildlife, as will the influx of more people.
- Costs – several respondents in this group expressed concerns over the estimated costs of the development and defined it as a “waste of taxpayers money”. Also concerns about the ongoing costs of maintenance

Interpretation of Comments

In interpreting the open house and website comments, the design team came to several conclusions related to the overall support for the final draft Concept Plan and for the specific program elements that were being recommended:

- General support – there is general support for the concept plan with 62% of respondents indicating that they were satisfied or somewhat satisfied. This level increases to 80% for those respondents who indicated that their primary current use was something other than dog walking. Despite the fact that many respondents think that the concept plan represents a “good balance” for the environment and for a variety of users, it is clear that some members of the dog walking community remain unsatisfied with any proposed development beyond basic infrastructure.
- Fits with the Vision – based on specific comments related to the recommended program elements, it appears that respondents feel that most of the program elements do fit with the vision of “a unique natural park”. The program elements that raised the most concern include:
 - Paddling Lake – several respondents expressed concern with the lake based on reasons such as cost, that they didn’t see the need, or that they didn’t think that a “man made pond” was a good fit for the Park. The lake concept has been designed to “fit” within the Park by being physically separated from the off-leash area, lower than existing ground and fully screened with berms and native vegetation.
 - Designated On-leash area – despite the fact that only 15% of the total park area is to be defined as on-leash only, dog walkers remain concerned with (or against) any restrictions on their use of the Park. The specific concern is that the proposed development is only the first step in future restrictions on off-leash use. Based on input throughout the Study, it is clear that it would be difficult to change this perception for some users. However, by leaving the majority of the Park undeveloped, the concept has been designed to allow current users to use the Park in much the same way as they do today.

- Picnic – while supporters like the addition of this program element, those that are unsatisfied point to the “fact” that dogs and food don’t mix. In the concept plan, the picnic area is well separated both visually and physically from the off-leash area.

- “Leave it Alone” - those that don’t support the concept generally want the Park left alone, except for provision of basic infrastructure (i.e. upgrades to the road, expanded parking, washroom). This is the same message that was expressed during the preparation of “A Vision for Terwillegar Park” and throughout this study. Those that express this position don’t take into account the future growth in demand due to population, the potential for the Park to deteriorate over time if left without basic infrastructure (improved roads and parking, washrooms) and unmanaged, or the opportunity to meet the needs of other potential users. The concept plan addresses all of these issues.

- Management – there were many concerns related to the impacts of insufficient management on the use and natural features of the Park. There were also many good suggestions that have been added to Section 5.1 of this report related to management approaches that would assist in protecting the resource and facilitating shared use by many different groups.

- Capital Costs - a few of those that are unsatisfied with the concept plan have expressed concern that the development of the Park is an unnecessary cost to tax payers, particularly in light of other perceived priorities for capital dollars. A few other expressed concern related to the ongoing management costs which are not included with the capital cost estimates.