

Green Necklace from Jones Avenue to Grand Boulevard

First Open House Questionnaire - Summary of Feedback

Introduction

On Wednesday, November 30th, 2016, the First Open House was held at Silver Harbour Seniors Centre. A series of concept plans displayed the proposed alignment for the greenway and indicated which side of the street each section of path would be located. In keeping with the rest of the Green Necklace, a 3m wide asphalt multi-use path is proposed that will accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists and provide full accessibility for all ages and abilities. The valuable feedback received will allow staff to develop a design that is responsive to the needs of the community.

Feedback Questionnaire

In total, 116 people signed-in to the Open House and 63 completed questionnaires were submitted. Attendees were provided a questionnaire where they could comment on conceptual plan as it passed through five distinct Character Zones along the route, how they use the neighbourhoods along the proposed route now and how their use patterns might change with the building of a new greenway. Residents were able to submit their responses at the Open House or also through the on-line questionnaire or drop it off at City Hall.

Summary of Responses

Staff reviewed the responses and were able to gauge the level of support they indicated. Accordingly, of the responses received, 48% of respondents provided feedback indicating support of the proposed greenway project.

Reasons for support focused on:

- That the greenway will connect neighbourhoods
- The amenity will encourage walking and cycling for people of all ages and abilities
- People looking forward to using it both for pleasure and to run errands between the neighbourhoods and Lonsdale

Another 22% of respondents provided answers which indicated they had concerns with or required additional information about the project, particularly with specific issues in certain neighbourhoods.

The remaining 30% of respondents indicated significant concerns about the project and focused on:

- Feel that funds should be allocated to other improvements in the City
- Not pleased with aesthetic of the proposed asphalt path
- Don't want the greenway on their street

Specific Concerns by Topic

Although neighbourhood-specific issues were identified, there are some topics that are common to all areas:

1. Street Related Issues

Summary of Concerns:

In general, neighbours had concerns about potential loss of on-street parking, especially in neighbourhoods like West 21st between Jones and Mahon where finding parking can be difficult when sports events occur in the area (Mahon Park and Carson Graham School) was identified as an on-going concern of residents. Several respondents felt the greenway may further increase the amount of traffic and parking pressure on their streets. They were reluctant to potentially have travel lanes narrowed as they felt this could potentially be unsafe. Residents of 300 block W. 21st and 300 block E. 23rd also noted speeding as an issue. In denser areas, such as the 100 block West 21st, some had concerns regarding safety of pedestrians crossing driveways to parkade entries as well as further loss of parking.

Design Implications:

The City will look at the challenges and opportunities of each block to develop a design that is sensitive to the needs of each and safe, adhering to applicable transportation and engineering standards. This is an opportunity to address current issues and improve the overall function and aesthetic of each streetscape, with a priority of preserving on-street parking in key areas.

2. Intersection Safety

Summary of Concerns:

Intersections such as 21st / Chesterfield, 23rd / St. Georges and 19th / Moody were noted by many as being difficult to cross due to sightline concerns, vehicular speeds and/or overall traffic volumes. Grand Boulevard, near E.20th, was also noted as a place where many students jaywalk to short-cut to and from Queensbury Elementary School. Many respondents recommended integrating this into the greenway in some way.

Design Implications:

Enhancing crosswalks and providing safe routes to schools will be an important part of the greenway design. Safe crossing points at convenient locations will be required. Clear, safe sightlines will be a primary design consideration as well as implementing a design which follows applicable transportation safety standards and guidelines.

2. Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety

Summary of Concerns:

Some people noted concern regarding potential conflict between pedestrians and cyclists on the greenway – in particular on sloped pathway sections.

Design Implications:

Special consideration will be given to the design of these areas of the greenway to ensure the safety of all users, including signage, markings and pathway design.

3. Grand Boulevard “Bench”

Summary of Concerns:

Generally speaking, residents are supportive of routing the greenway along the “Bench”, that is, the vegetated portion of the old road bed located above Grand Boulevard between E.19th and E.23rd. People had concerns regarding slope stability, lighting, privacy and security of the residents along the route, impact on existing vegetation and views.

Design Implications:

Site safety and slope stability needs are key issues that will drive the design of this section of greenway. Specific attention to the greenway along the “Bench” is needed to separate path users from adjacent homes, thus enhance privacy while offering access to views of the City and a unique user experience.

4. Impact on Residential Properties

Summary of Concerns:

Many respondents were concerned about how the greenway would impact existing encroachments and felt that their privacy might be compromised. Some felt that the greenway might bring more litter (especially near schools and existing sports facilities). In some areas, such as upper Grand Boulevard (adjacent to the “Bench”), residents had concerns regarding security as well. Residents in a number of neighbourhoods agreed for the need to provide lighting (especially in areas such as Wagg Creek and Grand Boulevard area) however did not want “light pollution” to spill onto their properties.

Design Implications:

As with other sections of the Green Necklace, the City will work with residents to integrate the greenway with adjacent properties in a way that is sensitive to the needs of the neighbourhood while ensuring the new recreational facility is safe to use at all times of the day.

5. Harry Jerome Precinct

Summary of Concerns:

Some respondents are concerned that building a path in this area may not be appropriate in light of potential future changes to this area.

Design Implications:

The intent is to allow greenway users to fully access and connect between destinations along the Green Necklace. In the near term, the goal will be to create a fully accessible temporary path at minimal cost. A more robust and complete facility will be integrated as part of the Precinct Master Plan process.

6. Existing Mature Trees

Summary of Concerns:

Respondents, especially those living on Eastern and East 19th were concerned about retaining mature trees, namely large conifers (Cedars). As well, many people mention the connection they have to the forests of Wagg Creek and Greenwood Parks and how they would like to see these preserved.

Design Implications:

All effort will be made to retain existing mature trees and to design the greenway around them wherever possible. Street trees will also be planted along the greenway, enhancing the character of the Green Necklace and adding a net gain of trees to the City's urban forest.