

## Balmoral Circus – Seeking Input on Park Design

### Project Overview & Background History

The corner of 19th Avenue and 2nd Street NW is one of the most unorthodox in the city. It might not be immediately extraordinary from the street, but from above, the landscape resembles four pie slices that join to form a circle. Its shape is not an accident, but a byproduct of a push for social order and civic harmony, the leftovers of urban planning's City Beautiful movement, which saw urban grandeur and formality as a means towards social order and increased quality of life. By the late 1930s, some 5,000 annuals were planted here every year.

Given this unique design and rich history, along with previously identified traffic concerns, it presented an opportunity to transform this space back to original form. In fall 2020, as part of the Neighbourhood Streets North Hill Area project, park expansion at Balmoral Circus transformed the intersection at 2 Street and 19 Avenue N.W. by changing roadways back into park space. Seeking to find an appropriate balance between creating a quiet space for passive recreation adjacent to homes and creating an attractive and meaningful community destination. The closure of this intersection is focused on these key points:

- Create a quiet outdoor space for community members
- Decrease short cutting and reduces volume of vehicles on street
- Provides all directions access for people walking and cycling
- Retains vehicle access to all homes
- Results in reduction of on-street parking
- Partial closure of a portion of street with potential for community programming and open space

### Engagement Process

The overall engagement took a 3 phase approach: **Phase 1** where we connected with the adjacent residents as to how they currently use the space and inquire about reaction to possible future uses. **Phase 2** ran in conjunction with the larger North Hill Neighbourhood Streets program, to encompass a broader base of the community, to assess how the temporary traffic installment changes affected use and continued with some future use inquiry as well. **Phase 3** incorporated this feedback, along with good design principles, and project goals to create two concepts that highlighted various features for the community to comment on. The goal was not to have a “pick and choose” process but rather think about how the varying features would enhance future use of the space in terms of look, feel and function.

To view the related pages and the What We Heard (WWH) reports from the previous engagement phases please click on links below.

[engage.calgary.ca/BalmoralCircus](https://engage.calgary.ca/BalmoralCircus)

[engage.calgary.ca/northhillarea](https://engage.calgary.ca/northhillarea)

## What we asked / What we heard (phase 3):

Phase 3 engagement was open from March 17-31. There were 229 respondents in that time period providing input on the following questions: The details of the type and answer rate is shown for each question.

**Full verbatim on supporting comments to answers can be viewed at bottom of this section.**

- 1) **Thinking about how you might use this space, tell us features from the two preliminary concepts presented above that best support those activities? Please choose up to your top 4.** Multiple Choice | Skipped: 12 | Answered: 217 (94.8%)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Larger green-spaces that support informal sporting or recreational activities	44.24%	96
A space with lots of trees creating walkways and entrances	53.00%	115
Green-spaces that create more visual definition and contours to allow for simple recreation or lounging	50.69%	110
Enhanced planting spaces that would allow for community or group plantings	32.26%	70
Larger paved areas that allow for informal activities	32.72%	71
Space that encourages more open flow throughout the space	35.48%	77
A series of smaller gathering spaces and more solitude spaces for quieter reflection and relaxation	29.49%	64
Other	17.05%	37
Total	100.00%	217

- 2) **We heard that some community members have been using both the paved and planted areas of the space. Are you drawn to the paved areas or the lawn areas?** Multiple Choice | Skipped: 31 | Answered: 198 (86.5%)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Paved	38.89%	77
Lawn	61.11%	121
Total	100.00%	198

- 3) We heard some community members have been gathering and using the space. Do you like the idea of a large, central gathering space or smaller plaza spaces? Multiple Choice | Skipped: 31 | Answered: 198 (86.5%)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Large central plaza	49.49%	98
Smaller plaza	50.51%	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>198</b>

- 4) Do the concepts respond to considerations around making the space welcoming and clearly distinguishing between public park and private yard? Multiple Choice | Skipped: 32 | Answered: 197 (86%)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	89.85%	177
No	10.15%	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>197</b>

- 5) We heard there is a desire for a safe turnarounds on 19th Ave. and maintaining as much parking as possible. Do you prefer a vehicle cul-de-sac within the park space or outside the park space? Please note that turning radius is the same in each design. The "outside" option = less street parking, larger park space. The "inside" option = more parking, smaller park space. Multiple Choice | Skipped: 31 | Answered: 198 (86.5%)

Answer choices	Percent	Count
Inside Turnaround	26.26%	52
Outside Turnaround	73.74%	146
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>198</b>

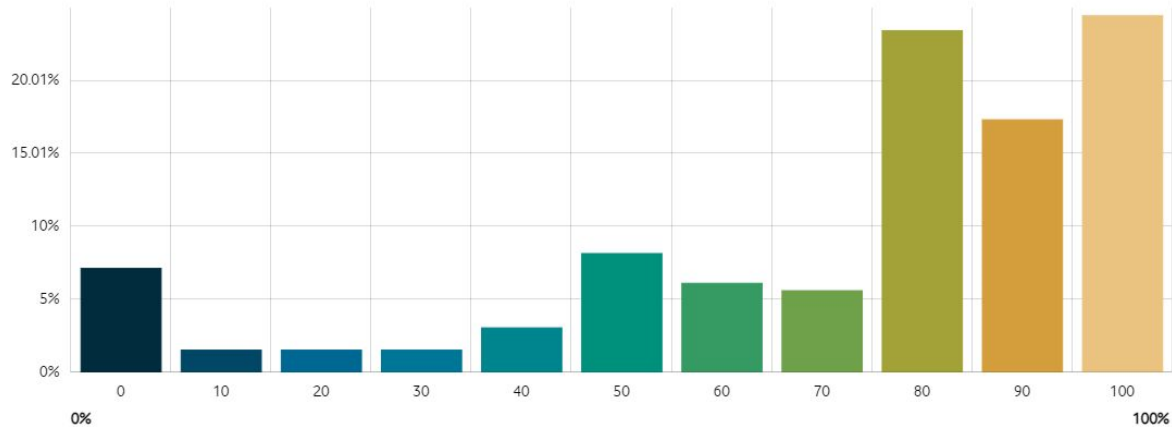
- 6) Please add any additional comments on how you see yourself using this space that will assist us in creating design? Long Text | Skipped: 69 | Answered: 160 (69.9%) – Provided are top categories and samples from the responses received, comments can represent in more than one category – full verbatim of all responses provided at end of section.

Category/Theme	# of responses attributed to category	Supporting sample comment
Added Amenities (playground, fire pit, pizza oven, garden) to enhance space usage	95	<p>Make it an inviting useable space for all ages and abilities as our community is not just one demographic</p> <p>Would love to picnic, skate in the winter, public firepit and picnic areas would be great, perhaps community BBQs / celebrations - birthdays, anniversaries etc</p>
Bike Routes & Use	25	<p>Bike routes/pathways must be considered. They should be directed to the edge on one side of the park space to not interfere with recreational activities. Bikes should not ride right through the middle of any plaza. The berm works on the North side only.</p> <p>Kids sports, basketball, hockey, football, learning to bike ride, family get togethers, friends and neighbours gatherings.</p>
Safety Considerations	18	<p>Maintain safe ways for commuter cyclists to efficiently pass through. 2nd is major cycling thoroughfare</p> <p>It is a place for children to play safely, and for adults to gather safely.</p>
Opposed to the Change	18	<p>Not a good place for a park. There is a school yard 1block away</p> <p>I would "use" this space more if it was left as originally intended as a road intersection that could be used as vehicles and bicycles alike to move efficiently from point A to B in any direction.</p>

**7) Are there specific features that create a particular concern for you - please identify and give reason why?** Long Text | Skipped: 79 | Answered: 150 (65.5%)  
**Provided are top categories and samples from the responses received, comments can represent in more than one category – full verbatim of all responses provided at end of section.**

Category/Theme	# of responses attributed to category	Supporting sample comment
Safety Considerations	58	<p>I'd like to see clear delineation for walking and cycling (like at the Glenmore Dam pathway or the Riverwalk) to avoid cyclists and commuters sharing the same path as leisure walkers and joggers.</p> <p>Please provide lots pathway lighting and security cameras to discourage crime.</p>
Landscaping & Maintenance	51	<p>The promenades - are they gravel or paved. Paves is preferable, the gravel is useless for more than half the year as it is not clear of snow.</p> <p>Whatever is installed has to be well maintained by the City -- plantings, rubbish bins, whatever. Can't rely on, or download burden onto, volunteers or neighbours.</p>
Traffic	39	<p>I adapted quickly to the loss of 2 Street as a conduit. For others, I'm sure it was more of an adjustment. I believe there is increased traffic on 18th Avenue now...keeping an eye on traffic concerns would be uppermost for me.</p> <p>I don't understand why you would block an intersection on 2nd street between two sets of lights - 16 Ave and 20 Ave. The lights at 20 Ave are useless and traffics south of 19 Ave is diverted to already busy streets - Centre and 4ST.</p>
Bike Flow	27	<p>I'm a bit worried about the speed of bikes going through if kids will be playing and families hanging out.</p> <p>Need to consider safety of users but also facilitate cycling route since it's a major route for commuter cyclists</p>

8) How well do the concepts consider safe, comfortable, and convenient travel through the space for shared walking and cycling? Slider | Skipped: 33 | Answered: 196 (85.6%)



9) We heard some community members have expressed interest in enhanced partner planting within the park. Is this something we should investigate further with community and/or via other potential partners? Multiple Choice | Skipped: 21 | Answered: 208 (90.8%)

Answer Choices	Percent	Count
Yes – consider space for this in design	50%	104
No – design for City maintenance standards	50%	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>208</b>

## Verbatim Comments:

The following are the full verbatim provided for each corresponding question. These comments are not altered for spelling or grammar to provide transparency of collection and reporting. Questions not listed (#1 & #9) are fully represented above.

**Question #2:** We heard that some community members have been using both the paved and planted areas of the space. Are you drawn to the paved areas or the lawn areas? **Please add additional comments as to "why" you chose your answer above?**

[Q#2Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #3:** We heard some community members have been gathering and using the space. Do you like the idea of a large, central gathering space or smaller plaza spaces? **Please add additional comments as to "why" you chose your answer above?**

[Q#3Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #4:** Do the concepts respond to considerations around making the space welcoming and clearly distinguishing between public park and private yard? **Please add additional comments as to "why" you chose your answer above?**

[Q#4Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #5:** We heard there is a desire for safe turnarounds on 19th Ave. and maintaining as much parking as possible. Do you prefer a vehicle cul-de-sac within the park space or outside the park space? Please note that turning radius is the same in each design. The "outside" option = less street parking, larger park space. The "inside" option = more parking, smaller park space. Please refer to photos below for reference. **Please add additional comments as to "why" you chose your answer above?** Short Text | Skipped: 71 | Answered: 158 (69%)

[Q#5Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #6:** Please add any additional comments on how you see yourself using this space that will assist us in creating design? Long Text | Skipped: 69 | Answered: 160 (69.9%)

[Q#6Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #7:** Are there specific features that create a particular concern for you - please identify and give reason why? Long Text | Skipped: 79 | Answered: 150 (65.5%)

[Q#7Verbatim click here](#)

**Question #8:** How well do the concepts consider safe, comfortable, and convenient travel through the space for shared walking and cycling? **Please add additional comments as to "why" you chose your answer above?** Short Text | Skipped: 117 | Answered: 112 (48.9%)

[Q#8Verbatim click here](#)

## Next Steps:

We will be using your feedback to help inform the final design for Balmoral Circus, transforming the intersection of 2 Avenue N.W. and 19 Street N.W. into a permanent expansion of the park. Construction is scheduled to begin in summer 2021.