



Prairie Winds Park – Public Art

What We Heard/What We Did Report:
Summary of Input & How it was Used
April 8 2016 & March 20 2017

Background

After the public engagement for the refurbishment of Prairie Winds Park in 2015, the Public Art team conducted some additional targeted stakeholder engagement in early 2016 with the selected artists to better understand the site and context of the community. The prior public engagement for the park's redevelopment was reviewed and included by the public art team as much of what was needed for community context was included there. The artists reviewed the engagement input and considered it in their concept for the artwork. The artists met with other suggested stakeholders, the community social worker and the capital design team to further their understanding of the area, communities, and project site. The concept was created and presented to the selection panel for approval. The selection panel includes representatives from the community, arts and design professionals, and the commissioning business unit.

The [project web page](#) includes the final concept for the public art. The [Prairie Winds Park web page](#) has additional details about the park and its redevelopment.

What we asked

Through in-person, group interviews and email feedback with community leaders in the NE we asked:

- Who is in this community, who will this art serve?
- What would you want to feel through the artwork in Prairie Winds Park?
- What do you think your community would want to feel through the artwork? What kinds of feelings are important to your community?
- In a diverse community such as this, what are the factors that unite you?
- A quotation by a participant from the 2014 Park redevelopment engagement "I am looking forward to a space where the West and the East minds can be in agreement." What is your opinion of this quotation?
- Are there any other groups in the community who should be part of these interviews?
- Is there anything else the artists should consider in the creation of the artwork in Prairie Winds Park?

What we heard

Overall there were many common themes from all of the questions asked, as well as examples of experiences in the park and more details about the community at large. Those interviewed highlighted the importance of unity rather than difference and relationships rather than distinct cultures. There were many comments about the feelings,



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commonalities and features of community at large that could inspire the public art, but also about specific experiences and features within the park that are important.

What we did

After engaging the community it became very clear that we had to find a theme or symbol that was not only universal, but also spoke of the commonalities of the community and the interests and experiences that united them. People wanted to identify with one another and connect with nature. The Artists had gone on previous occasions to the site and had seen how the hill was a gathering place for many. It was a spot where people enjoyed a quiet moment and the surrounding view. It was also understood that the hill had to maintain its essence and the artwork had to respond to this.

See the [final concept online](#) or search Prairie Winds Public Art at www.calgary.ca.

For a detailed summary of the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.

- ▶ For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the [Verbatim Responses](#) section.

Next steps

- ▶ The artwork is being created on site. Please see the project websites for further details and timelines. A public art [project web page](#) and the [Prairie Winds Park web page](#).



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Summary of Input

The most frequent themes that came from the questions were as follows, there is one additional theme about “interesting language” that indicates where unique phrasing or words were used that may also prove inspirational to the artists’ process to develop their artwork concept.

Theme (greatest to least prevalence)	Examples – from stakeholder comments	Did this theme influence the proposal? Explanation by the Artists
Commonalities of people or groups in the community (General)	<u>Sub-themes include: showcase/celebrate, hard-working, families.</u> Welcoming, everyone is trying for contact, common humanity, exploration/discovery.	Yes, it made it very apparent that the artwork had to touch the human in us without speaking about any particular culture or religion.
Comments about the surrounding community (General)	<u>Sub-themes include: Cultures and Religions, Immigration.</u> Being represented/not just one culture but all, great view, we all live with the wind, enjoy diversity, we are from all over	The wind was an important element of living in this community and the Artists wanted to integrate it to the artwork from the very beginning.
Experiences in the Park (general activities)	<u>Sub-themes include: nature, calm/peace.</u> The feel of Prairie Winds, multipurpose hill, watching the stars, clouds, exercise, relaxation, dogs in park	This idea caused contemplation of a functional artwork that could be experienced not just looked at.
Human relationships and connections	Humanity, diversity, invisible communication, all working together in Canada, love and respect for each other	There is invisible communication in the workings of nature. Many elements in nature have to work in synchronicity for a seed to germinate.
Interesting language within the comment itself	Stories, turns of phrases or unique words that may provide inspiration to the artists’ creative process for making their artwork concept (see <i>appendix 1</i>)	Yes, the Artists reacted to words such as: exploration, discovery, sit, look, contemplate.
What community means as feelings	Belonging, welcoming, sharing, identifying with others, being accepted, common goals, how are we similar and connected, universal values, safe, celebration	The Artists thought it important the concept represents a common beginning in everyone and everything.
Physical aspects of the Park (hill and general)	Used to be yellow grass/farmland, bugs and gophers, used to have brook/water, the hill	The hill is physically a very beautiful element of the park. The Artist’s and The City liked it and wanted to maintain it’s natural feel.



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Verbatim Comments

1. Tell me about who is in this community and who you feel this art is going to serve?

- Only one location probably won't "miss" or not-serve too many people.
- CA Coral Springs doesn't have much participation from the "East" or other religious communities.
- New and old immigrants from all over the world along with generations old Canadians. South Asian population is a big number.

2. What would you want to feel through the artwork in Prairie Winds Park?

- Whatever inspiration you get from the art, you have a physical feeling. The more people that could feel that feeling - or make you want to cry. Physical feeling and be moved by the art.
- Stand for 45mins and come back next time and realized you didn't see some element.
- 3 painted electrical boxes some of the inspiration from attending multi-cultural day. People are finding meaning in the art. Even if the artist didn't actually have some of the details/meanings intentionally.
- Add to the magic, don't mess with it (the hill)
- Nature
- Humanity
- the feel of Prairie Winds

3. What do you think your community would want to feel through this artwork? What kinds of feelings are important to your community?

- Belonging
- Welcoming
- Sharing and identifying with [one another]
- Being represented. -- simple like family or something grand to represent the *Canadianism* of us all.
- We all live with the wind. It's not just in the park.
- Used to have a lot of yellow grass, farmland
- People don't think of the view (mountains, downtown) in the NE
- Being accepted.
- Not just "one" specific culture or religion. but everyone, all.
- They want it to represent who they are now not just who their grandparents were.
- Places to go and "just be"



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- Feel connected with nature, peaceful, calming and not iron and lights [un-natural materials]
- It's hardworking community
- would like [it] to feel welcoming park for individuals and families.

4. (Why do you think this community is diverse? What makes it diverse?) In such a diverse community as this, what are the factors that unite you?

- Common goal. Children & Food as common.
 - How are we similar and connected: values: families, faiths, children doing better than us, respect, appreciation, learning from each other.
 - Diversity: appreciating the differences. How different people use the hill differently - e.g. training/exercise on the hill and others for relaxation or observation.
- Appreciation for humanity as a whole. Appreciate talents. Work to the best of abilities. Universal values - inclusive place to live. Feeling of inclusiveness. I'm from Nova Scotia and seeing a little flag makes me feel connected.
- Unique because of variety of festivals - a lot of parties.
- Unique instead of diverse:
 - o The smile even if you don't have a common [spoken] language.
 - o Invisible communication
 - o Everyone is trying for contact and connection but just can't quite because of language
 - o There is a common humanity behind the greetings [in the park and elsewhere in the community]
 - o Connections are still happening!
 - Other things to know about this community:
 - o There are lots of 'myths' that need to be set straight – this is what people should know:
 - It's a safe community – of course you have to lock your door or lock your car, but it has low crime, no more crime than the rest of the City.
 - Prosperity – people care about and are successful.
 - We have great wayfinding signs and colourful electrical boxes that help build the sense of community.
 - We invite people to come and see us/visit! We invite each other to get to know each other better.
 - It's diverse because immigrants from all over the world come to make North East [Calgary] their first house and enjoy diversity.
 - They struggle together [in] their early years of life in Canada. The love and respect for each other and struggle unite them.



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5. In the Revitalizing Prairie Winds Park report (June-October 2014, phase 1) The City asked people what they liked or wanted to change about Prairie Winds Park. The following quote caught my attention: "I am looking forward to a space where the West and the East minds can be in agreement." What is your opinion of this quote? How do you think the East and West can be in agreement?

"What is the West?" - exploration and discovery, grandparents from Ukraine and England. We are from all over. Adventure.

"East" conversations are different based in culture and religious beliefs and that's very different. More religions.

All working together in Canada.

Calgary vs. Nova Scotia?

Phillipino, Dutch, it's all! Demystify: one of the lowest crime rates. Occasional random crime, unless you lock your car and house.

Large new Canadian population - these people want jobs and want their families to do well. Lots of families and most with more than 3 schools. Lots of schools within walking distance.

Constantly re-hashing families. Not a lot of singles or seniors.

- East/West is good, but it's should [be] for each and everyone.

6. Do you think there are other specific community group/stakeholders that should have the opportunity to answer these questions? (If yes, please tell us who...)

- Social worker: Clara Y, City of Calgary (did a "community of dreams" project in this neighbourhood [Falconridge/Castleridge])

- Heather G (NPC) for planning other places/times to tell the community about the art process and concept.

- There are various communities and groups but I can't suggest.

7. Is there anything else you'd like the artists to consider in the creation of the concept for the public art at Prairie Winds Park?

- Hill: running up-resting-running down, running up-rolling down, Easter egg rolling contest with family, university students riding ice blocks down the hill.

Sit, look, contemplate. A lot of fun and contemplation.

Running, bikes, sitting, drawing. Not a single-use hill. Multipurpose all at once.

Watching the stars, stars coming out. And clouds.

The hill is cool. I'm not too old to toboggan it!

(Question: sitting area that's subtle, changes? Not comfortable with changes...

- people have seen the Hill as an important place even in the call for the artist.



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- Something at the gate that incorporates the view of the hill as a welcome to Prairie Winds Park.

- There is more wind in later afternoon. No kite flying is allowed in the park, so no kites in the art.

Not so happy with the raves - "Sounds of Thunder" and the rock pop concert and that doesn't suit the community because it's so family-orientated. Noise and things left behind [things that can pose a hazard to children or are dirty] and monitoring on the way to transit was promised by not observed.

Other places are more suited to the big events [not Prairie Winds Park].

- Liked the brook [that used to be in park], the sound of it and the ability to observe the water.
- Leave the park natural, just trim grass not mow/manicure or over maintain it. Leave it natural, free, wild, flowing.
 - o Need to have more insects, there aren't enough – this is because the park is 'too groomed'. Kids learn from insects and the natural environment. Bugs are a whole world for a kid.
 - o Being properly manicured does make it more accessible, and that's good.
 - o Gophers. Some people may not like them, but they are magical, fun and great for kids. And better to have in the park than in your own lawn. They are part of the park too.
- Dogs are in the park. Usually on the pathways, but sometimes are off-leash (and sometimes owners let their dogs defecate and don't clean up)
- There are many seniors. The CA has a seniors group with East Asian, Caucasian, First Nations seniors but they still sit on separate sides. Lots of work to get this far and lots more to do.
- Stampede Breakfast is a big hit because of the two main "draws" food and kids/family-friendly. *What else makes it so popular?* Everyone comes out – lots of attendance. Everyone sits in long tables and she [interviewee] makes a conscious effort to introduce people to one another and help them make connections. There are [free/low cost] activities and entertainment (rope maker, bouncy house). People who attend see others whom they know (e.g. from a local daycare or grocery store clerk etc.) and while many Stampede Breakfasts are "long lines, bad coffee, little portions of food and no meat" this event in the community is a chance to see friends and community members, people with the same/similar interests (like minded, care about the community), safe, builds the sense of connection.
- Want to host more community activities that are free and have food – host free dinners like spaghetti 1-2/month but still working that out with The City.
- It should be welcoming for all not any specific religion or immigrant country.



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Appendix 1 – “Interesting Language within the Comment Itself”

new and old immigrants from all over the world along with generations of old Canadians.
Whatever inspiration you get from the art, you have a physical feeling. The more people that could feel that feeling - or make you want to cry.
Add to the magic
People don't think of the view (mountains, downtown) in the NE
They want it to represent who they are now not just who their grandparents were.
Feel connected with nature, peaceful, calming and not iron and lights [un-natural materials]
Appreciation for humanity as a whole. Appreciate talents. Work to the best of abilities.
The smile even if you don't have a common [spoken] language
Invisible communication
There is a common humanity behind the greetings [in the park and elsewhere in the community]
They struggle together [in] their early years of life in Canada.
The love and respect for each other and struggle unite them.
exploration
discovery
Adventure
Large new Canadian population - these people want jobs and want their families to do well. Lots of families and most with more than 3 schools. Lots of schools within walking distance. Constantly re-hashing families [once young families age they move out and new young families move in]. Not a lot of singles or seniors
East west is good but it's should [be] for each and everyone
Sit, look, contemplate. A lot of fun and contemplation
Running, bikes, sitting, drawing. Not a single-use hill. Multipurpose all at once.
Watching the stars, stars coming out. And clouds.
No kite flying is allowed in the park, so no kites in the art
Liked the brook [that used to be in park], the sound of it and the ability to observe the water
Need to have more insects, there aren't enough – this is because the park is 'too groomed'. Kids learn from insects and the natural environment. Bugs are a whole world for a kid