

Crescent Road Promenade

Open House and Online Survey // What we Heard

October-14-15



Project overview

Several years ago, in consultation with area communities, a ground limestone material was installed on the surface of the Crescent Road Promenade and trails on 7a Street and Samis Road.

Due to a number of factors including severe weather events, seasonal maintenance, and general wear and tear, this material has not performed as well as anticipated.

Some of the issues The City has observed include severe erosion by weather and displacement of materials on the trails by general usage. On the Crescent Road Promenade, The City was asked to pilot snow and ice control measures during the winter of 2014-15. Unfortunately, this resulted in extensive trail damage by snow clearing equipment — to the extent that the promenade trail requires complete rehabilitation.

Engagement overview

Because of the challenges faced with these trails, The City invited the communities of Crescent Heights, Rosedale and Hillhurst/Sunnyside to an engagement and information session to discuss current challenges and seek feedback. A public open house was held on September 23, 2015.

The open house provided an opportunity to learn about some of the challenges with the surface materials in place on these trails and to provide input into ideas for their long term improvement.

An online opportunity to provide input on trail improvement options was available from September 21 to October 4, 2015.

What we asked

For the Crescent Road Promenade, the community was asked for input regarding the following two options:

- Option 1: Repair and refill ground limestone trail to pre-snow and ice control pilot project conditions. Snow or ice control will not be performed on the trail during winter months.
- Option 2: Remove remaining ground limestone from the trail. Pave the promenade with asphalt to create a smooth, hard surface. Snow and ice control will be performed during winter months.

The communities were also informed of plans for the following two trails:

1. 7a Street NW down the McHugh Bluff to 7th Street NW,



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2. 1st Street NE down the north side of Samis Road to Centre Street.

These are both soft-surface ground limestone trails that are subject to severe erosion. The City presented rationale for replacing the limestone with trail mix, which is far hardier against erosion and general wear and tear and inexpensive.

What we heard

Preference for Option 1

- Open House 15
- Online 145

Preference for Option 2

- Open House 7
- Online 95

Key Themes

- **Natural Environment** - Participants expressed value in the promenade as part of a natural area that is an unpaved oasis in an urban setting. Participants also shared concerns about environmental damage that may occur through the disruption caused by paving, or run off down the slope from an impermeable surface.
- **Types of Uses** - It is clear from participant feedback that there are many types of uses along the promenade. It is a route for pedestrian and cyclist commuters as well as a great location for all-age recreational pedestrians, dog walking and jogging. Participants expressed that a soft surface in this location was easier on their joints for their chosen activities. Dog walkers expressed concern that paving the path would require dogs to now be on-leash.
- **Volume of Use and Safety** - Some participants expressed concern that paving the promenade would result in high-speed, wheeled use (i.e. bikes, skateboards and roller-blades) causing conflicts with pedestrians and dogs. Others remarked that paving the path would make it more accessible for those with mobility challenges, and allow for regular snow and ice control reducing chances for slips and falls and allowing for year-round use. A safety concern expressed was that a soft surface offered better traction in the winter. There was some concern expressed that a soft surface could not hold up to the amount of use existing on the promenade.
- **Nearby Options** - Many participants who prefer a soft surface noted that there were several other paved-surface options in the vicinity. For instance, the sidewalk across the street and the roadway along the promenade that are snow cleared for those users who prefer a paved, snow cleared surface.
- **Maintenance** - Participants who preferred a soft surface generally cited the reduced need for snow and ice control as a positive. Other participants felt that paving the promenade provided a more durable, longer-lasting surface that would see lower maintenance costs (for rehabilitation) in the long term. Aesthetics were mentioned for both options with some participants preferring the more informal look of the crushed limestone and others preferring a cleaner look offered by asphalt.
- **Cultural Asset** - Participants mentioned often how this promenade is a gathering place for community members that increases cohesion in the community, in addition to being a valued location often frequented by visitors and tourists to take in the view. Some participants felt that this value would be maintained by a more natural-look promenade,



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others felt that a paved surface increased the stature of the area in keeping with its cultural and scenic value.

- **Other Comments** - Some participants expressed concern for other trails in the area, most often the one at 7a Street, expressing a desire for this area to be paved rather than the promenade. A few participants suggested other types of surfaces, for example, concrete, something similar to the River Walk in the East Village, or permeable pavers.
- **Project engagement and communication** - There was some concern expressed, largely verbally at the open house, about the short notice for the event, as well as the short timeline for engagement. A couple of participants were not comfortable using a log-in for the online tool.
 - ▶ For a more 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](#) appendix.

Next steps

The engagement input was reviewed by several key City staff members, including the Parks Pathways Lead, responsible for the project, and the Parks area manager. They considered both the volume and content of the responses. Factors such as the availability of nearby paved and snow cleared options and the potential affect of paving on the off-leash area were also taken into account.

Based on this feedback, a decision was made **to proceed with Option 1: Repair and refill ground limestone trail to pre-snow and ice control pilot project conditions. Snow or ice control will not be performed on the trail during winter months.**

Work on the restoration will start the week of October 19 with the intent of being finished before winter weather arrives.

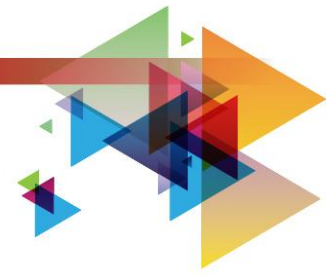
During the engagement, citizens also raised concern that a portion sidewalk along City land and adjacent to the Crescent Road Promenade is not being regularly snow cleared. The City has made arrangements to have it cleared quickly after snowfall to ensure there is a clear paved option nearby.

Work on the Samis Road and 7a Street trails is scheduled to begin in late October.

This decision will be communicated directly with the surrounding community associations and online the week of October 13.



Summary of Input

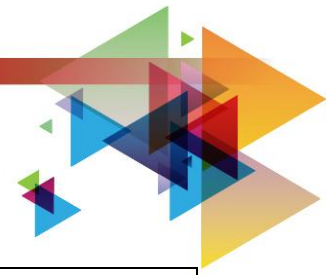


Key Themes related to Options 1 and 2

Option 1	Option 2
<p>Natural Environment <i>Natural area, environmental considerations</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft surface/ground limestone keeps with the natural area of the park • This high-traffic area has maintained a natural look and feel, "a natural woodland in the middle of the city" • The city has too much pavement already • Ground limestone is less invasive, more permeable and helps with drainage • It feels like a hiking trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paving will add to the heat island effect in the city • Asphalt contains toxic tar/bitumen • Limestone or lime products do not absorb heat from sunshine, and are not suitable for Canadian weather • Ice control with de-icer is bad for footwear, tracks into the house, and hurts the paws of dogs • Increased rain water surface run-off • Paving is a disruptive intrusion. The grass still hasn't come back from the last intrusion
<p>Types of Uses <i>Dog walking, running, walking, biking, skateboarding, rollerblading, commuting route</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft surface is good for running and walking as it is easier on joints • A soft surface allows for more traction in the winter, asphalt gets icy even with snow clearing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that paving would result in the loss of off-leash use in the area • A cleared surface is better for winter bike use • Paving permits snow and ice control and extends the period of use of the promenade for pedestrians and cyclists • Limestone is difficult to run on • Important to be able to have snow clearance during the winter as high commute route
<p>Volume and Safety <i>High numbers of users, accessibility, safety, speed</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairing the trail with limestone will just result in more damage given the high volume of daily traffic • Prevents usage for people with physical disability or limitations in winter months • The trail is heavily used year-round. It needs snow removal in the winter to optimize this usage • Paving the trail may increase it's traffic • This area is heavily and respectfully used by many dog walkers • A natural trail keeps speed slower we should try to keep the pace as it is 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter commuting by bike or foot is dangerous on an unpaved promenade, especially in the dark • Asphalt encourages heavy bicycle traffic • Paved pathways get extremely icy in the winter • Materials should be site-specific and should consider traffic volume • Pavement is easier for snow removal and will be more accessible year round for those with mobility challenges • The limestone is difficult to walk on in summer while wearing sandals and is dirty • Concern that paving would result in higher-speed use by cyclists, skateboarders, and rollerbladers, increasing user conflicts



Summary of Input



Option 1	Option 2
<p>Nearby Options <i>Alternative routes in the area</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a sidewalk across the street if it is icy • There are other paved trails already, soft surface is better for running/walking • Paved options to go up the hill already exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrians can use sidewalk, bikes can use road • It simply isn't big enough for [pedestrians] and bikes, bikes have alternatives on the road and the pathway up the hill by the curling club
<p>Maintenance <i>Aesthetics, durability, snow and ice maintenance, ongoing maintenance, cost</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The limestone looks unkempt over time • Prefer the natural and informal look of the ground limestone • The limestone looks good and fits the use of the trails better • Level of public use of the promenade requires a safer and more durable surface • Without snow clearing is not usable year-round • Black or covered ice is a serious concern on gravel trails • We don't need snow removal • The erosion of the limestone from the rain will be repeated, why waste taxpayers' money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asphalt is unsightly - it cracks • I believe a concrete surface is more attractive than asphalt • I doubt pavement would stand up and need remedial maintenance • It will last longer and cost less in the long run • Snow and ice are larger issues on the paved portions than the sections with aggregate • Pedestrian packed snow quickly transforms to a bumpy, icy trail surface in the winter • It would be expensive to pave • Waste of tax dollars to pave, when sidewalk is below slope and across road
<p>Cultural Asset <i>Sense of community connection, Calgary and community asset</i></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a strong dog community formed because of this area, it's a place to meet friends • The promenade is a slower, more relaxed kind of walk. People stop and chat, people watch the city, they put up tripods to take photos of downtown. E.g.: People gathered to watch the flood waters in 2013 and the lunar eclipse this week • It builds a strong sense of community among people who use these paths • Dog walkers provide much needed security as daily users and discourage (by their presence) criminal activity • Many visitors stop and admire the view. What can we do to enhance their viewing experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If paved can be a place to gather, a place people want to come • This creates community is a very valuable asset to the surrounding communities • Tourists travel by bus to this area for the city and Crescent Hts. Park views • This is one of the best views available of the city and the mountains to runners and cyclists and with the heavy usage by people in and out of the neighbourhood I don't believe the current surface is up to the task • Consider a more durable, as well as more aesthetically pleasing option as this primary pathway in the city and to make a better impression for both visitors and residents



Summary of Input



Additional Feedback

Other comments

Other surface suggestions, comments regarding other trails, etc.

- Red shale should have been kept not the change to crushed limestone
- The 7a street trail down to Sunnyside needs to be paved as there is a clear erosion problem with this one
- The current descents along Crescent hill are difficult to negotiate for my young children
- The best option is for a concrete sidewalk-like surface
- To make a better impression for both visitors and residents use stamped pavement/concrete, stained concrete or paving stones
- Something like what we have for the Eau Claire / Riverwalk would be my preference

Project engagement and communications

Engagement process, notice of events, project information

- It was tried and didn't work very well, why try again? Unsure sure why this public consultation is necessary
- This is a poorly written survey
- Can you change the survey so that sign up/registration is not required
- The project information available online was insufficient
- There was not enough effort put in to notifying residents about the opportunity to provide input

