



NEW WESTMINSTER



Westminster Pier Park Equipment Replacement

Public Engagement Summary Report

November 24, 2021

Introduction

On May 13, 2021 the Westminster Pier Park toddler play structure located west of the concession and washroom buildings was removed due to vandalism. Given the unexpected loss of a park feature and the recent construction of the new play area at the Sixth Street overpass and ramp, staff sought to engage the community regarding options for replacement.

In choosing potential replacement features, the Parks and Recreation Department considered the following:

1. Minimizing impacts to existing Westminster Pier Park (planting, boulders and seating);
2. Fitting within the spatial constraints of the site;
3. Meeting the needs of Downtown residents and visitors to the riverfront; and
4. Responding to changes within the park such as the new play area at Sixth Street ramp/overpass, the loss of the eastern portion of the park, and the future westward expansion.

The four options staff proposed for public feedback were:

1. Toddler Play Structure - similar to the removed structure. Ages 2-5
2. Static Fitness Equipment - such as pull-up bar, ladder. Ages 13+
3. Table Tennis - one table. Ages 4+
4. Trampoline and Mounds - in-ground trampoline. All ages



**Option 1
Toddler Play Structure**

- Play tower with slide and similar play opportunities as the removed play tower
- Metal structural elements
- Resilient surfacing: Engineered wood chips
- Age group: 2-5

**Option 2
Static Fitness Equipment**

- Combination of training equipment such as pull up bars and ladders
- Resilient surfacing: Engineered wood chips or rubberized
- Age group: 13+

**Option 3
Table Tennis**

- One table with space for recreational play
- Resilient surfacing: Compacted gravel or rubberized
- Age group: 4+

**Option 4
Trampoline and Mounds**

- In-ground trampoline surrounded by play mounds
- Resilient surfacing: rubberized
- Age group: All Ages

** Images are shown as examples only. Final products, materials, surfacing and colours to be determined.*

Engagement Process – Online Survey

Information about the options and an online survey were posted on July 27, 2021 via the Be Heard New West engagement platform on the [Westminster Pier Park - Equipment Replacement](#) project page). The online survey was open for feedback was open for three weeks from July 27 until August 16, 2021 and was promoted via the following means:

- signage installed in Westminster Pier Park at the former playground and the new play area at the overpass ramp;
- social media posts on the Parks and Recreation Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages, as well as the City's official social media channels;
- email newsletter to more than 1,400 subscribers to the Be Heard New West online platform;
- direct emails to stakeholders which included members of the Facilities, Infrastructure and Public Realm Advisory Committee; Downtown New West Business Improvement Association; Downtown Residents' Association; Quayside Community Board; River Market; and individual community members who have contacted staff directly to request more fitness equipment in parks and open spaces across the city.

The survey consisted of two questions:

1. Which of the proposed options would you like to see in the space formerly occupied by the wooden toddler play structure?
 - Option 1 - Toddler Play Structure
 - Option 2 - Static Fitness Equipment
 - Option 3 - Table Tennis
 - Option 4 - Trampoline and Mounds
2. Please tell us why you chose that option (open response question)

What We Heard

A total 883 individuals visited the New West Westminster Pier Park - Equipment Replacement page. Of those, 259 provided input to the two-question survey. Additionally, there were three comments posted in response to the survey promotion on Facebook.

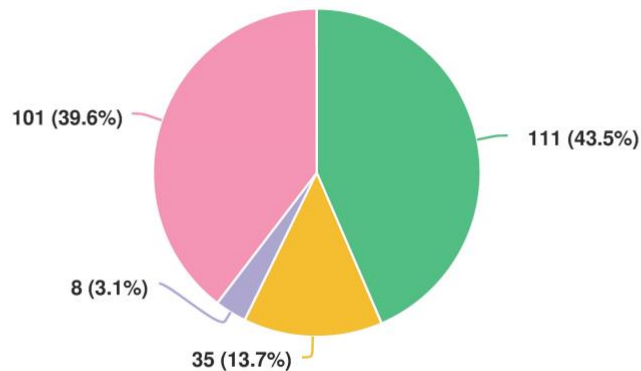
The below is a summary of the results and feedback received. The full results and [verbatim survey comments](#) are also available in the Documents section of the Westminster Pier Park – Equipment Replacement page.

The majority of respondents - 83%, or 112 respondents - preferred some form of unstructured play (toddler tower or trampoline), rather than fitness or table tennis as replacement features.

Of these:

- 43.5% (111 respondents) preferred Option 1 – Toddler Play Structure;
- 39.6% (101) preferred Option 4 - Trampoline and Mounds;
- 13.7% respondents (35) preferred Option 2 - Static Fitness Equipment; and
- 3.1% respondents (8) were in favour of Option 3 - Table Tennis.

Q1 Which of the proposed options you would like to see in the space formerly occupied by the wooden toddler play structure?(cl...



Question options

- Option 1 - Toddler Play Structure
- Option 2 - Static Fitness Equipment
- Option 3 - Table Tennis
- Option 4 - Trampoline and Mounds

Optional question (255 response(s), 4 skipped)
Question type: Radio Button Question

Many respondents who chose Option 1 - Toddler Tower cited the perceived lack of toddler play space in the riverfront and Downtown areas and said they value age-targeted toddler play opportunities that are separated from older children’s play space. Some perceived the trampoline option as not appropriate and too risky for toddlers. Respondents who preferred Option 4 - Trampoline and Mounds perceived this as a fun and unique option, and many said they felt it would serve the play needs of both toddlers and older age groups. Many of those who preferred Option 2 - Fitness Equipment or Option 3 - Table Tennis, wrote that they believe there are sufficient existing children’s play amenities provided in the new overpass playground in Westminster Pier Park and throughout the city in general.

A number of themes emerged in the comments. These are listed below and grouped by the corresponding preferred option.

Option 1 – Toddler Tower

1. Many commenters in this group identified themselves as parents of toddlers.
2. Many expressed sadness at the loss of the former toddler play area and stated that it was a well-loved space.
3. A perception that there is not enough play spaces for toddlers on the riverfront, Downtown and throughout the city.
4. An appreciation for the value of a separate toddler play area, including a perception that this is safer, less intimidating, and more appropriate for young children than an all-ages play space. This sentiment was echoed by one parent of a child with “invisible disabilities.”
5. An expression that the new play area at the overpass does not sufficiently accommodate young children’s play needs or that it leads to conflicts with older kids using the space.
6. An expression of the particular value of play amenities for young children, both in terms of providing a critical amenity for those growing up in “tight living spaces” and of this location’s close proximity to washrooms and food concession.
7. Concerns about Option 4 – Trampoline and Mounds: risk of injury; limited versatility of play types, and ability to accommodate more than one user.
8. A perception that Option 2 – Static Fitness or Option 3 – Table Tennis would as well-used as toddler play equipment and that table tennis was already available at Quayside Park, which is located along the riverfront.

Option 2 – Static Fitness

1. A perception that the city lacks amenities serving teens or adults, as well as opportunities for adult exercise equipment, combined with a perception that there are already sufficient play areas for kids in the area and across the city.
2. An expression that Option 1 is not very exciting.

Option 3 – Table Tennis

1. An appreciation of table tennis as a novel addition to the park.
2. An expression that table tennis is a fun activity for older kids and adults, and is a low maintenance feature.

Notably, two respondents mentioned that there are few table tennis facilities in New Westminster but seemed to be unaware of the tables on the riverfront in Quayside Park.

Option 4 – Trampoline and Mounds

1. An appreciation of the fun novelty of trampolines. Many respondents felt this was a unique feature.

2. An expectation that this feature would be an amenity for all ages, although two respondents expressed that the mounds would be “taken over” by older kids.
3. Perception of versatility of uses offered by the mounds (e.g. seating) and of the minimal maintenance or risk of vandalism.
4. Comment from a few respondents that the toddler tower (Option 1) was a close second choice behind Option 4.

Next Steps

The unexpected vandalism and resultant removal of the former toddler play structure presented an opportunity to gauge whether toddler play equipment or an alternate use would be the right fit for the space going forward. Input collected through the summer engagement has been valuable in understanding community needs in an area of the city that is undergoing significant change, including the recent development of the play area at the Sixth Street overpass and ramp and planning for the future westward expansion of Westminster Pier Park. The results of the engagement process indicated a clear preference by the community for age-targeted toddler play equipment.

With the public consultation process complete, Parks and Recreation staff will begin to develop a design for the future toddler play equipment replacement. A public tender process for the play equipment is anticipated to be underway in early 2022. Following award of tender, a detailed construction schedule and project updates will be posted on the City of New Westminster [Projects on the Go](#) page.

The Parks and Recreation Department thanks everyone who provided feedback on the Westminster Pier Park Toddler Equipment Replacement project.