

Background

The St. James Civic Centre Expansion will provide new multi-purpose program and meeting space, a community kitchen, as well as improvements to the auditorium, building entry, washrooms and parking lot. The project will also provide administrative and shared program space for the St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre.

Engagement

The City of Winnipeg (City) reached out to user groups to discuss how they currently use the facility, understand their needs, and gather input on the proposed design. Discussions happened by virtual meetings, telephone calls, and emails.

Winnipeggers were asked what programs and activities they would like to see in the expanded and renovated facility and to share feedback on the proposed design. An open house was held at the St. James Civic Centre to share the site, parking, and building layout. A 3D model of the building layout was also available. A survey was also available online and at the open house.

Feedback received will help the City tailor the proposed design to meet the community's needs. Table 1 provides an overview of all public engagement opportunities.

Promotion

Public engagement opportunities were promoted using the following methods:

- Email invitations to 4 user groups – January 16, 2023;
- City of Winnipeg Public Engagement Newsletter with over 5,190 recipients – January 17, 2023;
- City of Winnipeg ActiveNet email with over 60,000 recipients January 27, 2023;
- City of Winnipeg LeisureNews email with over 8,673 subscribers January 27, 2023;
- Newspaper advertisement with Canstar, January 25, 2023;
- Over 3,076 postcards delivered to homes in the project area;
- Posters and postcards at St. James Civic Centre, St. James-Assiniboia Centennial Pool, St. James Library and St. James Assiniboia 55+ Centre;
- 4 Facebook posts from January 20- February 5 with 36,000 followers;
- 4 Twitter posts from January 20- February 5 with 118,000+ followers.

Examples of promotion materials are included in Appendix A.

Table 1: Public Engagement Opportunities

Date	Activity	Details
January 16 - February 8, 2023	Stakeholder meetings	4 stakeholder organizations
January 18 - February 8, 2023	Webpage	2,971 visits
January 18 - February 8, 2023	Public survey	1,554 respondents
February 1, 2023	Public open house	Over 100 attendees

What We Heard

Open house attendees and survey respondents were very supportive of the proposed amenities and proposed design for the site and building. On average, site and building aspects were rated as 'good' or 'very good' by over 70% respondents, with negative feedback averaging less than 8%.

Some participants expressed concerns with the site and parking lot layout, including:

- too few parking stalls or too many parking stalls (lack of consensus)
- the need for secure bike parking
- challenges with the recycling drop-off area causing debris to move around the site.
- accessible parking stall location is too far from the building entrance

Some participants expressed concerns with the building layout, including:

- the need to provide improved change rooms/family change rooms
- whether there is a need for a new pool viewing area
- potential for pool and facility closure during construction

Table 2 highlights some of the feedback received and provides a response to how it was considered.



Image 1: Attendees at the open house review the proposed design and talk to the project team.

Key Findings

Open house

Based on open house comment boards (64 total sticky notes), the two most positive aspects of the proposed design are:



Trees & landscaping
(5 comments)

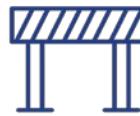


New pool viewing area
(4 comments)

The two aspects of the proposed project that participants had the most concerns with are:



The lack of investment in change rooms/family change rooms
(15 comments)



The potential for additional pool closures due to construction
(12 comments)

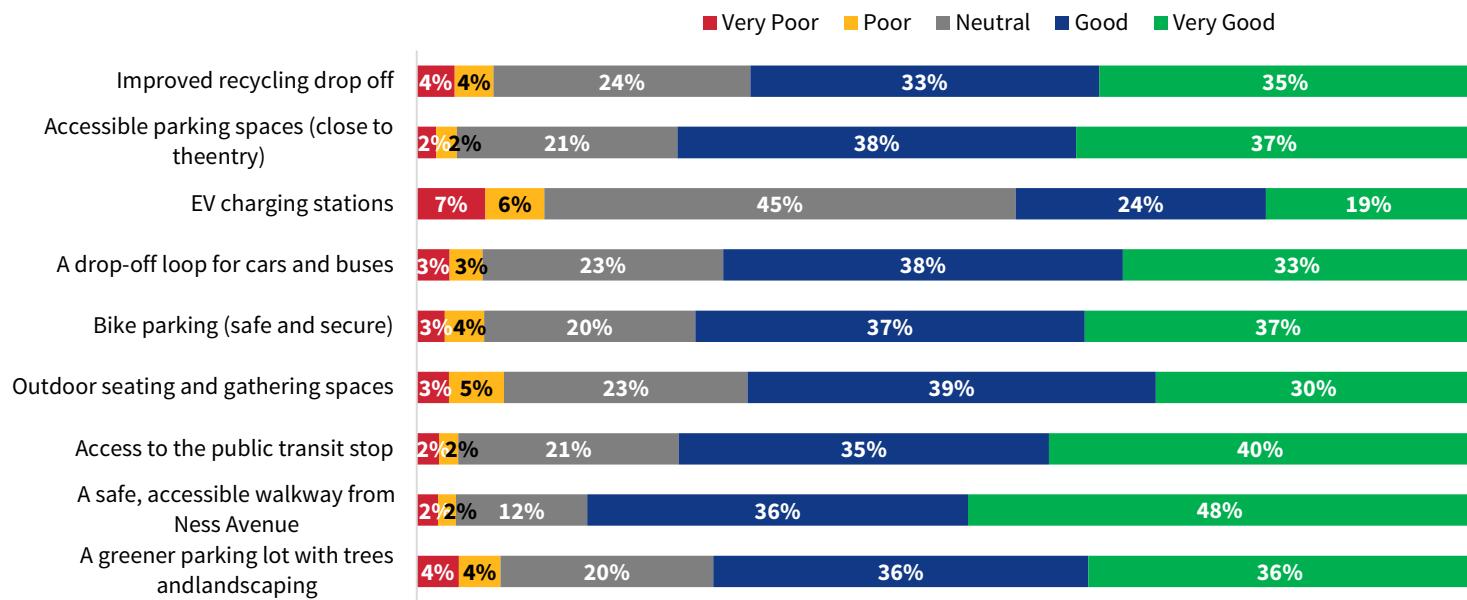


Image 2: Open house participants placed sticky notes on story boards and site layout to share feedback.

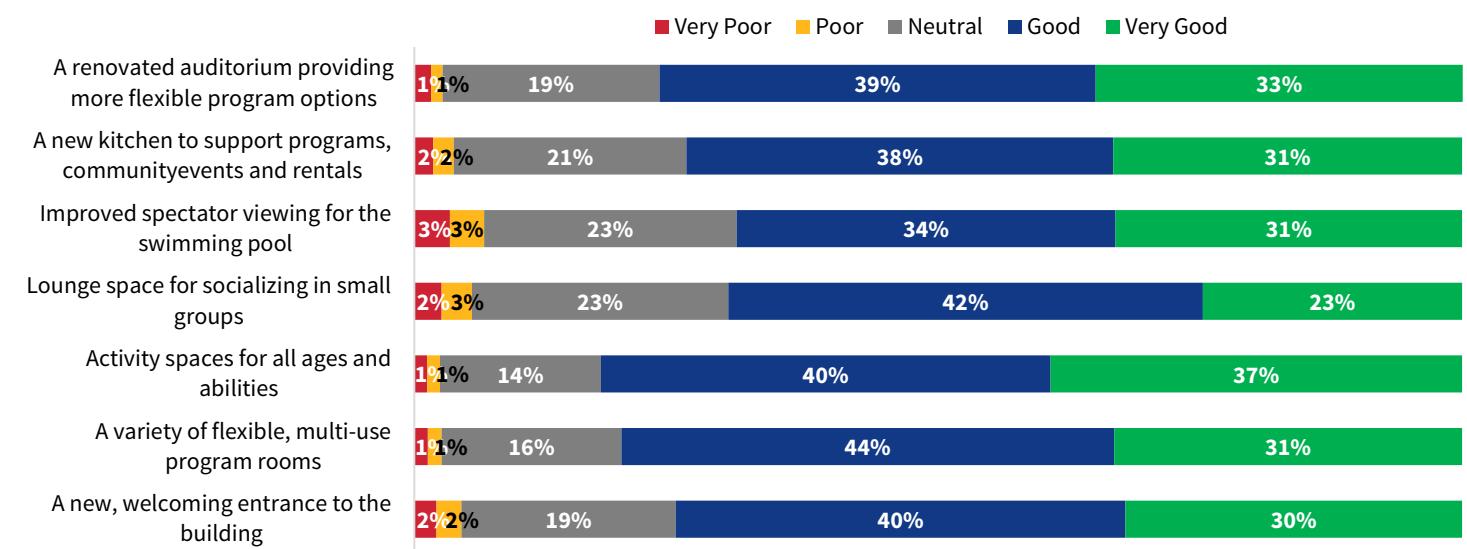
Online survey

Respondents were asked to rate the following aspects of the proposed building, site, and parking lot layout:

- How respondents feel about the proposed site and parking lot layout (1,473 responses):



- How respondents feel about the proposed building layout (1,473 responses):

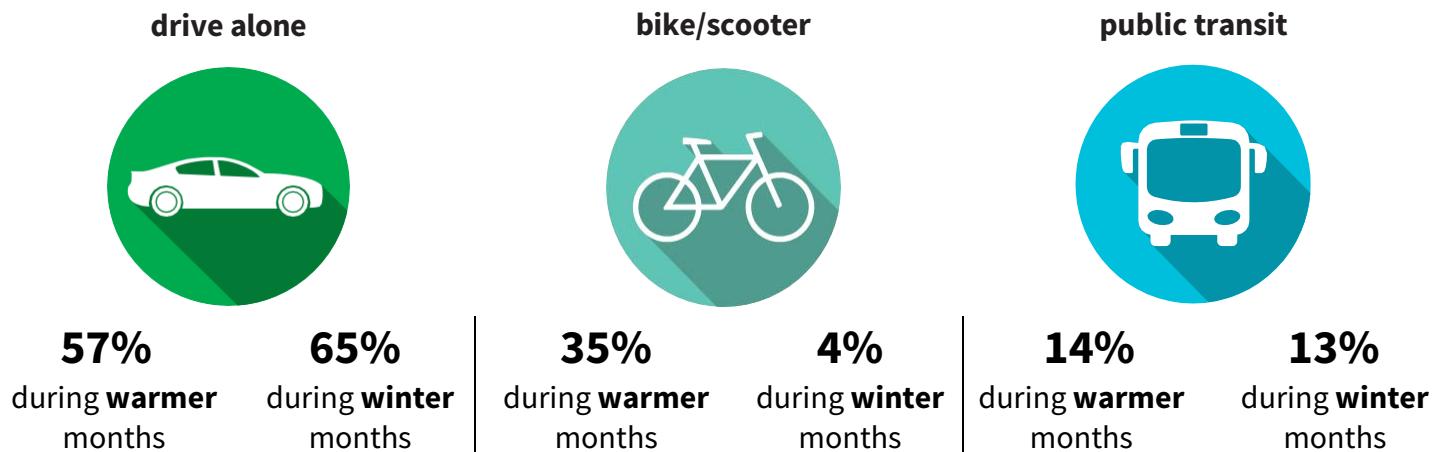


ST. JAMES CIVIC CENTRE EXPANSION

Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary

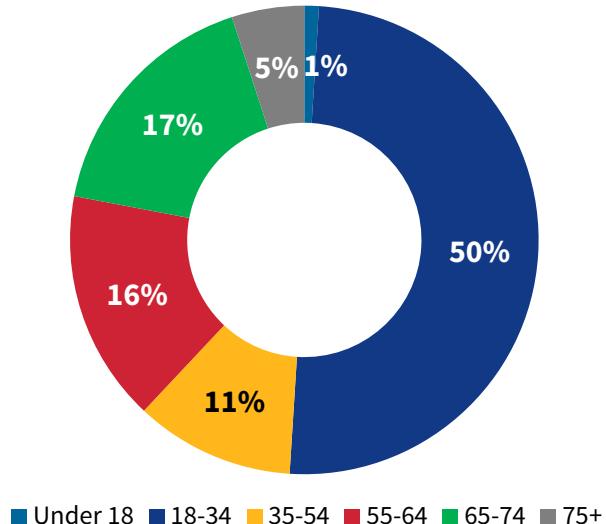


- Survey respondents were asked how they would like to travel to the St. James Civic Centre during both warmer and winter months (1,376 respondents). The top three modes were:



Who We Heard From

What is your age? (1,340 responses)



Please self-identify as you feel comfortable. (974 responses)

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 55% | A parent, guardian, or caregiver of dependent |
| 30% | A member of the older adult community |
| 12% | A person with physical or non-visible disabilities |
| 6% | An Indigenous person (First Nation (status or non-status), Métis, or Inuit) |

Table 2: What we heard and how it was considered

What we heard	How it was considered
Site and parking lot concerns	
<p>Eighty survey respondents commented that there is not enough proposed parking and/or that the new trees and walkway would displace existing parking stalls.</p> <p>Over 20 survey respondents commented that the proposed design has too much parking and more focus should be on trees, landscaping, and pedestrian/ cycling amenities.</p>	<p>The site currently provides 214 parking stalls. The proposed design includes 191 stalls, and includes a new central walkway, bike storage, and drop off lane to encourage ride sharing and alternate modes of travel. The project team will look at opportunities to provide additional parking stalls, while meeting Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan and Green Building goals in providing EV charging stations, enhanced tree canopy and a pedestrian and cycling friendly site.</p>
<p>Over 30 survey respondents commented that more secure bike parking is required to encourage people to travel by bike.</p>	<p>The site will include ten new bike racks, E-bike charging, and CCTV security. The layout was adjusted to improve access for larger bikes and trikes.</p>
<p>Three survey respondents commented that electric vehicle charging stations are not important whereas one respondent noted support in their comments.</p>	<p>To align with Winnipeg's Climate Action Plan and Green Building Policy, a total of 10 electric vehicle charging stations are proposed. Electric vehicle charging stations also contribute towards the project meeting the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver benchmark for building sustainability.</p>
<p>Eleven survey respondents commented that the proposed accessible parking was too far from the building entrance.</p>	<p>Accessible parking is proposed in the rows closest to the entrance and to the central pedestrian walkway. There is no way to safely locate them closer to the entrance given the requirement for a fire lane.</p> <p>As this is a public facility utilized by a significant number of older adults the 10 proposed accessible parking stalls exceeds the requirements of the City of Winnipeg Zoning By-law.</p>

Table 2: What we heard and how it was considered

What we heard	How it was considered
<p>Twenty-five survey respondents commented that they were concerned with the layout, location, and capacity of the recycling drop off. Respondents noted this could impact parking and result in recycling spilling out into the area.</p>	<p>The design was revised to reconfigure and consolidate the recycling bins to better contain any debris within a partial fenced area.</p>
Building and program space concerns	
<p>Fifty-nine survey respondents commented that improved pool change rooms and/or family change rooms should be included as part of the current project.</p>	<p>The City looked at options and costs to upgrade the existing change rooms and add new family change rooms based on public feedback. Unfortunately, the costs do not fit within the budget and are not included in the upcoming construction. However, the City aims to include change room improvements in a future project once enough money is available.</p>
<p>Nine survey respondents expressed concerns with the proposed pool viewing area, including that it is not needed, or should be open to the pool. Six survey respondents commented that they were supportive of the new pool viewing area because it has seating.</p>	<p>Providing a place for parents to watch their children take swimming lessons and place to view swim team events is important. There is currently no seating area and the windows to the pool are next to the building entrance/exit. The design proposes a new pool viewing area through opening up the south wall of the pool.</p>
Facility closure during construction	
<p>Eighteen survey respondents commented that the previous closure was challenging, especially for the user groups. Another extended closure of the pool and arena should be avoided.</p>	<p>The City is working to minimize any closures through sequencing of the work. The City is aiming to close the pool during its least busy periods to minimize impact on the public and user groups.</p>

ST. JAMES CIVIC CENTRE EXPANSION

Phase 1 Public Engagement Summary



Next Steps

Feedback received through Phase 1 public engagement was summarized and considered as the design was refined. Phase 2 public engagement is planned for spring 2024 and will show updated building and site plans for final public feedback before moving forward to construction. Construction is expected to begin in fall/winter 2024.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Promotion materials
- Appendix B – Online survey results
- Appendix C – Open house feedback
- Appendix D – Open house story boards