Bowwood Park Improvement

What We Heard: November 2026

Project overview

The Bowwood Park Improvements project is funded through The City of Calgary's Established Area Growth and Change Strategy (EAGCS), a program that invests in communities experiencing growth and increased demand for public amenities. As Bowness continues to welcome new residents, Bowwood Park provides an opportunity to enhance an existing green space with new recreation and gathering opportunities that better meet community needs. By improving access to quality public spaces, supporting active lifestyles, and creating a more vibrant and connected neighbourhood, the project helps ensure established communities remain great places to live, play, and connect now and into the future.

Through public engagement, participants were encouraged to learn more about the project, review the design concepts and share feedback. Each concept was accompanied by perspective renderings and example images to illustrate potential elements.



Engagement overview

The project engagement page (engage.calgary.ca/bowwoodpark) accepted public input from September 16 to October 26, 2026. Promotional activities included a mailout and social media ads targeting nearby residents, a BOLD sign and sandwich board near the site, and emails and posters shared with the councilors' office, Community Association, local businesses, agencies and other community organizations. Pop-up events and visits in the community included a presentation to the Bowness Community Association Planning Committee and a drop-in session at the Bowness Seniors Centre.

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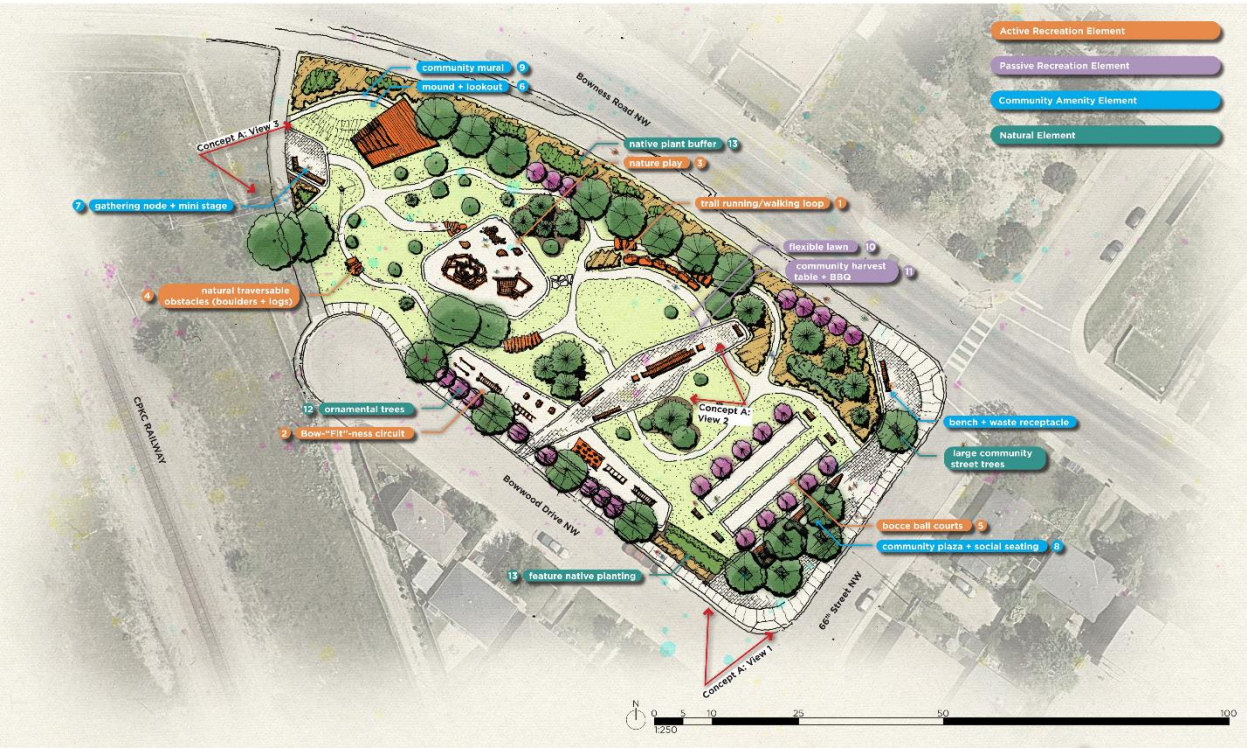
The project's engage page received 1,981 visitors, with 266 choosing to respond to the questions. These web statistics provide support that outreach was effective in promoting the project, directing people to the page for information, and gathering input from those who chose to provide more detail.

What We Asked / What We Heard

Two design concepts were presented on the page to gather feedback on which approach best support the park's future use. The concepts were intended to show different approaches to the park layout and overall focus, rather than as an either-or choice. Elements or features from either concept could be incorporated into the final design. Each concept was given a design name to help differentiate between the two: Concept A, Bownessian Point, and Concept B, Bownessian Athletica. These are design concept names only. Official Park naming follows a separate process and is not part of this design project.

Concept A, Bownessian Point, emphasizes a layout that focuses on more separated nodes that balance activity space and gathering spaces.

CONCEPT A: BOWNESSIAN POINT



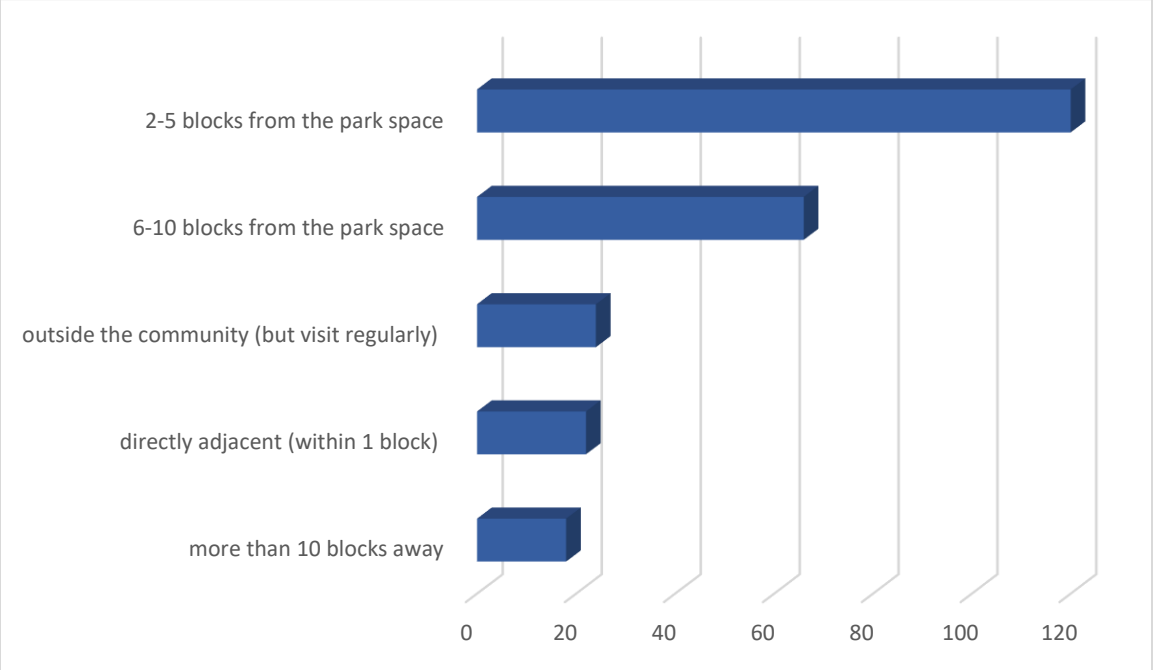
Concept B, Bowness Athletica, features a more linear design with open lawn space for user directed recreation flow while still incorporating gathering spaces.

CONCEPT B: BOWNESS ATHLETICA

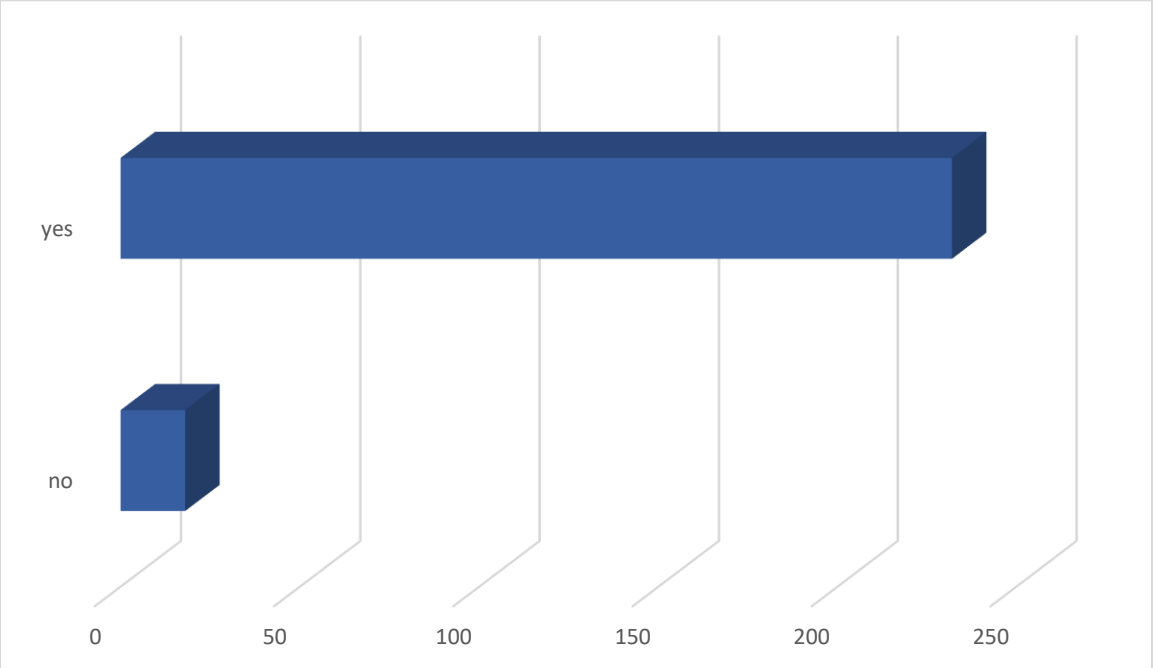


The first question asked respondents to indicate where they live in relation to the park space. Location was collected for context and was not used to weight responses in the analysis. Questions two and three explored whether the park could become a desired destination and what uses or features could make the space appealing to the community. Question four asked respondents to choose one of the two concepts. Question five asked respondents to explain their preference, while clarifying that the final design could incorporate elements from both concepts.

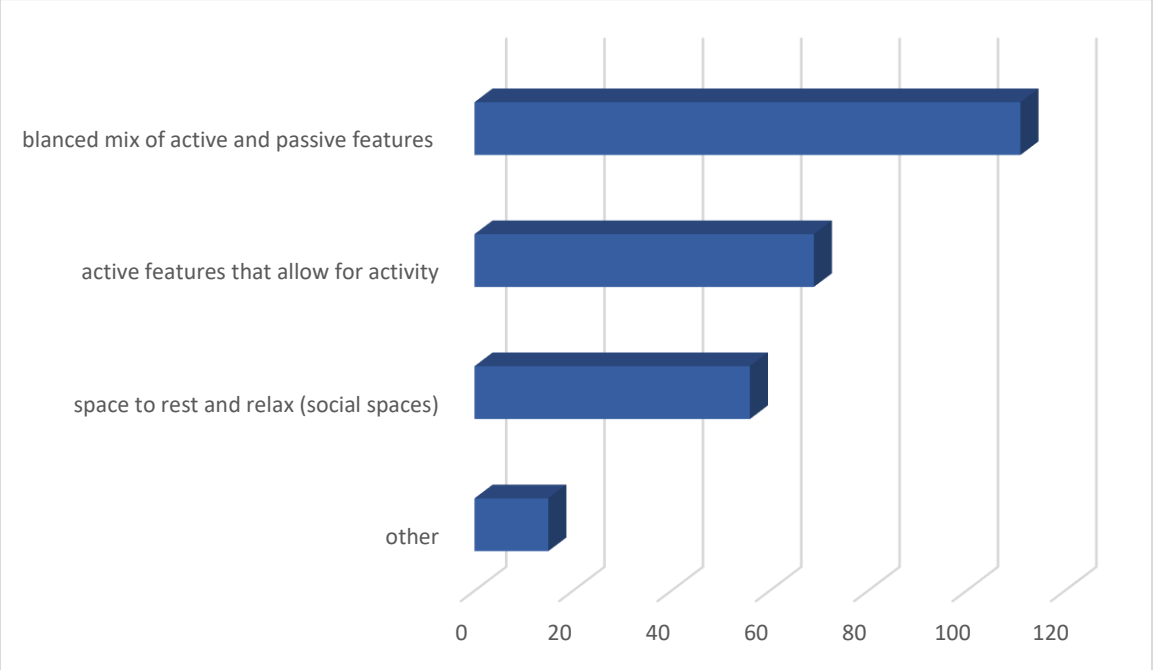
Question #1: Can you tell us how far do you live from this park location?



Question #2: Once developed is this a park space you would visit?



Question #3: Once developed what would encourage you to visit and spend time at this park?

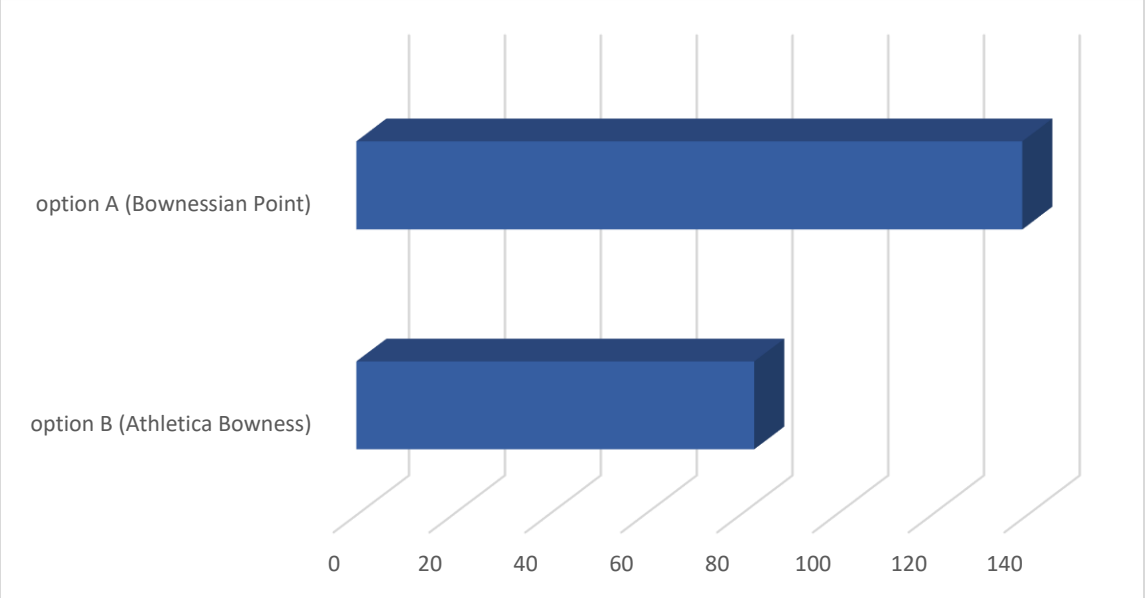


Key themes of "other" comments as received: (see full verbatim in linked section at end of report)

- **Preserving green space and existing trees:** Comments emphasized retaining open space, protecting trees, and maintaining a quiet area for activities such as dog walking. Some preferred leaving the space unchanged.
- **Recreation and play opportunities:** Suggestions included a playground with swings, basketball and pickleball courts, exercise opportunities, and concrete table tennis and chess tables. Some emphasized making the park a space for children.
- **Safety and a welcoming environment:** Comments highlighted safety as a condition for visiting, including a suggestion for a security button and concerns about potential encampments. Other comments on safety mentions need for fencing as barrier to roadway in relation to child monitoring.
- **Location, noise and accessibility:** Concerns included proximity to the road and railway, traffic and train noise, difficult site access, and transportation barriers that could prevent visits.
- **Investment priorities and alternative locations:** Some questioned spending money on the proposed site and preferred improvements to existing parks or green spaces, including the playground at Bow Crescent and 66 Street.

- **Gathering spaces and community events:** Seating, covered picnic tables and event programming were identified as potential attractions, although comments questioned whether noise would make events practical.

Question #4: Considering your previous responses, which of the two concept designs do you prefer (refer to descriptions for each proposed concept use)? Please remember these are preliminary designs which represent the potential use of the space rather than detailed, final designs. This helps us to focus design direction based on concept and use.



Question #5: Please tell us why you made your choice above? Give us a short description of what you like about your choice. What is important to you in the design? Think about what features or amenities would enhance your experience at this park space. Please note, final concept may be a mix from both options presented.

The following is a summary chart that groups the comments into overlapping themes. Mentions count individual bulleted entries that explicitly address each theme, once per entry per theme, whether supportive, critical or neutral. A single entry may contribute to several themes, so counts must not be added together as a respondent total. Counts reflect interpretive thematic coding, and not a voting process (whether supportive, critical of neutral) for either concept.

The full verbatim comments are also included in a link at the end of this document.

Theme	What the comments express	Specific requests and differing views
Balance of active and passive uses Mentions: 35	Interest in a park that combines recreation, relaxation and social connection, including suggestions to blend the two concepts.	Combine nature play, fitness, courts, seating and gathering areas. Some favour an athletic focus; others prefer a quiet, less-developed park. Both concepts receive support and criticism.
Children's play and playground replacement Mentions: 61	Requests for local play opportunities and replacement of a playground participants say was removed to facilitate a nearby housing development.	Swings, slides, monkey bars, climbing and nature play, with seating for caregivers. Some consider the proposed play elements insufficient; others prefer recreation that extends beyond a traditional playground.
Sport courts and recreational variety Mentions: 49	Interest in nearby, publicly accessible sports facilities, with differing accounts of what is already available locally.	Basketball, pickleball, tennis, volleyball and multi-use courts; suggestions also include soccer, winter skating/hockey, table tennis and a bicycle pump track. Some oppose courts or question bocce demand; others support bocce. Pickleball noise is a concern.
Outdoor fitness and affordability Mentions: 52	Support for free outdoor exercise opportunities close to home, alongside doubts about equipment use and longevity.	Calisthenics, fitness circuits, workout equipment and bouldering. Some would stop during a run or bike ride; others anticipate underused or deteriorating equipment.
Community gathering and Main Street connections Mentions: 56	Interest in an outdoor place to meet neighbours, eat, visit and complement trips to businesses and the library.	Community tables, picnic areas, barbecues, seating, markets and festivals. Some see a destination that strengthens Bowness identity; others question its distance from existing gathering places.
Amphitheatre, stage and lookout Mentions: 37	Mixed views on performance and lookout features: enthusiasm for community events contrasts with	Support for music, arts and a distinctive gathering feature. Others question railway noise, views toward the tracks and likely use, or suggest relocating the

	concerns about location and use.	stage or replacing it with play or gathering space.
Green space, trees and planting Mentions: 32	Desire to retain a natural setting and mature trees, particularly amid nearby development.	Native planting, shade trees, edible shrubs, insect habitat and community gardening. Some want minimal construction and less asphalt, citing drainage and cost; others raise concerns about vegetation affecting visibility or concealed camping.
Seating, shade and quiet enjoyment Mentions: 51	Interest in comfortable places to rest, read, enjoy nature, have coffee and spend time with others.	Benches, long or wide seating, picnic tables, shade and canopies. One comment explicitly requests seating without barriers to lying down. Other comments express concern about how seating may be used.
Walking routes and track design Mentions: 27	Support for walking and running opportunities, but disagreement about a straight dash track.	Meandering paths, walking loops or a perimeter running route. Some welcome a dash track; others question its usefulness, inclusiveness or interaction with children and other park users.
Road and railway conditions Mentions: 26	Traffic and railway proximity are seen as constraints on safety, relaxation and performances.	Roadside fencing, railway fence repairs, sound or visual buffers and safer crossings. Some favour active recreation because of noise; others still want a relaxing setting with mitigation.
Perceived safety and park management Mentions: 22	Comments raise concerns about harassment, drug activity, litter, encampments and feeling safe using the park. These are participant reports and perceptions.	Requests include lighting, sightlines, cameras, signage, defined hours and regular upkeep. Some advocate restricting use by unhoused people; that viewpoint is recorded here without treating housing status as evidence of unsafe behaviour.
Access and shared use Mentions: 34	Interest in a welcoming space for different interests and activity levels, with concerns about overly	Combine places to rest with opportunities to play and exercise. Comments differ on which concept best

	specialized or fast-moving uses.	supports shared use and whether courts would limit simultaneous access.
Dogs and everyday park use Mentions: 10	Existing dog walking is valued, with interest in retaining routes and adding designated dog space.	Requests for a small fenced off-leash area and natural walking paths. Some worry that more intensive recreation would interfere with current use.
Parking, density and neighbourhood impacts Mentions: 16	Concerns about additional visitors, limited parking and loss of green space alongside residential development.	Questions about drop-off and pick-up, bike and stroller storage, noise and impacts on nearby homes. Some welcome amenities serving new residents; others prefer a smaller-scale intervention.
Maintenance, seasonality and fire pits Mentions: 22	Questions about long-term upkeep, winter use and the practicality of particular amenities.	Path clearing, equipment condition, garden upkeep and seasonal sports. Fire pits receive support as gathering places and opposition over fire risk, liability, fuel supply and management.

Engagement Summation

Public comments on Bowwood Park reflected varied views on development, recreation, gathering spaces, children's play amenities, and preserving mature trees and open space. Feedback also addressed accessibility, safety, road and rail noise, parking, lifecycle costs, value for investment, and amenity suitability and sustainability.

All feedback, along with costs, feasibility and overall design considerations, will inform a balanced design that considers community preferences and site constraints.

Verbatim Comments

These comments are unaltered with no corrections to spelling and grammar. The only editing is to remove offensive or personal identifying information (deletions noted by **XXXX**). Comments are provided as links to manage document length, and to provide full transparency on comments received.

- Verbatim for question #3 "other" comments
- Verbatim for question #5 "why" option chosen