



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 19, 2012
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Meeting Date: June 27, 2012

TO: Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment

FROM: Acting General Manager of Community Services group in consultation with the General Manager of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan Implementation: New Brighton Park Connection - Adoption of Concept Plan

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council adopt the concept plan for the Connection to New Brighton Park (as shown in Appendix A) as part of the implementation work on the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan.
- B. THAT Council instruct staff to proceed to the next phase - construction tender and award - for the Connection to New Brighton Park.

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks Council's approval of the concept plan for the connection to New Brighton Park, a key outcome of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan. As one of the first outcomes of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan, the New Brighton Connection will play a key role in providing a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connection between Hastings Park and New Brighton Parks. The site of the connection to New Brighton Park, whose working title is "Creekway Park", will also be home to the first leg of the daylighted stream connection between the Sanctuary in Hastings Park and Burrard Inlet. The plan for the New Brighton connection was developed with extensive stakeholder and community input.

COUNCIL AUTHORITY/PREVIOUS DECISIONS

In December 2010, Council adopted the Hastings Park/Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) Master Plan. The Plan proposes to transform the Hastings Park/PNE of today into a greener, year-round destination creating:

'A Fair in a Park' - a significantly greener and more publicly accessible Hastings Park/PNE which renews Vancouver's historic annual fair and amusement park, while ensuring economic vitality and long-term sustainability.

The Master Plan determined that a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connection to New Brighton Park (the only waterfront park between Main Street and Boundary Road) was a top priority. In addition previously proposed stream, connecting the existing constructed wetland pond in Hastings Park (the Sanctuary) to Burrard Inlet, was also to be brought forward as a key component of the Master Plan.

Along with the adoption of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan, Council endorsed a number of early implementation priorities designed to deliver on Master Plan objectives of community connections, access to parks and creation of additional park space. These emerging priorities, that included the development of the land currently designated "Creekway Park", were approved in the 2011 Capital Budget.

The Park Board approved the concept plan for Connection to New Brighton "Creekway Park" on April 30, 2012.

CITY MANAGER'S/GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager approves the recommendation of this report. The implementation of "Creekway Park" is a key component of a high priority project for the City - the transformation of green space on the Hastings Park/PNE grounds into a new destination urban park. The plan for Connection to New Brighton Park delivers on City and Park Board's sustainability and accessibility priorities. These include the Greenest City Action Plan's "Access to Nature" and "Clean Water" goals and the Park Board's "Leader in Greening" and "Parks and Recreation for All" strategic directions. The name "Creekway Park" is a working title developed in the 2009-2010 Master Plan process and will be the subject of a formal naming opportunity as per the City's Civic Assets Naming process.

REPORT

Background/Context

The Creekway Park site (Figure 1) is strategically located between Hastings Park to the south and New Brighton Park to the north. Bounded by Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail line to the north, McGill Street to the south, an access tunnel to New Brighton Park to the west, and Bridgeway Street to the east, the park site has an east/west linear orientation and is approximately 3.2 acres in area.

Figure 1: Creekway Park context map



Currently the site of Creekway Park is a non-descript gravel lot that serves as a parking area for New Brighton Park, Hastings Park and the PNE. The site slopes gently to the west and drops off to accommodate a vehicle and pedestrian tunnel under CP Rail. A section of the Trans Canada Trail runs through the park in an east/west orientation, which also serves as the proposed alignment of the City's Portside Greenway. A considerable number of above and below ground utilities run through the site.

The 2010 Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan outlined the high-level program for this site: 1) a clear, safe, accessible pedestrian and bicycle link to New Brighton Park and; 2) creation of the first portion of the daylighted stream connection from the Sanctuary, the existing constructed wetland pond in Hastings Park, to a future proposed salt-water marsh on Burrard Inlet.

The name Creekway Park is a working title; the final name of the park has yet to be decided and would be at the discretion of City Council and the City's Civic Assets Naming process. The current name was adopted during the 2009-2010 Master Plan process to assist in providing an identifiable moniker for this key connection between Hastings Park and the waterfront.

Strategic Analysis

Through a request for proposal process a multi-disciplinary consultant team was retained in 2011 to design Creekway Park and the connection to New Brighton. The team began by clarifying a number of questions regarding the daylighted stream:

- How would the stream function if the connection to the Sanctuary was a number of years away?
- How would the stream pass under McGill St.?
- What role could the stream play in creating habitat and managing stormwater?
- Could this newly created stream provide habitat for migratory salmon?

Thorough site assessment, research, and a review of regional precedents allowed the following key conclusions to be made:

- The daylighted stream would be designed to carry flows for the eventual stream connection from the Sanctuary, but in the interim it would be designed as a stormwater feature: filled with water during rainy periods and green with vegetation in drier periods;
- The most feasible crossing of McGill Street for the daylighted stream would be through the Bridgeway Street Tunnel, adjacent to the greenway. This will also reinforce the experience of traveling along the greenway adjacent to the stream for the full length from the Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet;
- Based on available water quantity and quality and experience in the region with restoration of existing streams in much less impacted watersheds, the daylighted stream would not be suitable for migratory salmon. However, if future water supply was adequate, it could be home to resident fish such as cutthroat trout.
- The daylighted stream will be part of a significant ecological corridor that will eventually connect the Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet with a diversity of habitat types for birds, amphibians and insects;
- Given the number of utilities running through the park site, options for routing the daylighted stream were limited and in some areas the stream would need to be shallow so as not to impact utilities and;

- Due to the cost of undergrounding the existing overhead power lines, they are planned to be maintained in the present location and considered in the design of the park.

With these clarifications the layout of the daylighted stream over the park site was confirmed. The design of the daylighted stream was done in consultation with Park Board staff and Engineering Services Sewers and Drainage Branch.

The planting design of the daylighted stream corridor and the park will focus on native plants that have evolved in Vancouver's climate and will need little additional watering once established. Large scale planting such as trees and shrubs will be limited to the north and south edges of the park to maintain clear and open site lines through the central portion of the park where the greenway is located. Due to the proximity of high mast highway lighting, ambient light levels in the park are very high and additional lighting is not required in the park.

The park site is currently used for overflow parking for New Brighton Park and for trailer parking during the PNE annual Fair, accommodating approximately 50 vehicles, during non-fair-times. Currently New Brighton Park is not served by transit nor is it easily accessible by bicycle or on foot. Developing a safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connection to New Brighton will reduce vehicle use and the demand for parking in the vicinity of New Brighton Park. Fair-time parking use will be re-located to Lot 9 within Hastings Park. The finalized design includes a small parking lot for 12 vehicles which will be open year round and will provide parking for New Brighton Park during fair-time.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections and Routes

The site presently accommodates a well-used east/west stretch of the Trans Canada Trail. Proposed improvements to this connection includes a new path configuration that provides a smooth transition of the existing trails to the east and west and a gently curving multi-use trail (asphalt 4m width) through the park. The trail will provide a safe and visually open route for pedestrians and cyclists. A smaller, parallel gravel path adjacent to the daylighted stream will provide a slower-paced, meandering alternative route aimed for pedestrian travel.

Due to the high cost of an overpass structure over McGill and CP Rail (R.O.M. \$6M) the Master Plan proposed a more achievable at-grade connection to New Brighton Park. This was to be done through enhancements through existing tunnels connections to make them welcoming, safe and accessible. This option still leaves the ability for future implementation of an overpass, if warranted at some future date. The following at-grade modifications are proposed:

Bridgeway Tunnel

Currently there are two sidewalks on either side of the tunnel with on-street bicycle lanes in both directions (Figure 2). The proposed redesign of the tunnel cross section would result in a 4.05m width grade-separated pedestrian/bicycle pathway, a 3.5m southbound vehicle lane (current width) and a 4.0m northbound lane (increased to accommodate turning movements) (Figure 3). Also through the tunnel, the day-lighted stream is proposed to be conveyed in a concrete channel covered with a decorative grate. This channel is located between the vehicle lanes and the pedestrian/bicycle pathway at the back of the new curb. A safety railing

is proposed to further separate the pathway and stream channel from the vehicle lanes. The upstream connection of the daylighted stream to the Sanctuary will occur with future phases of the stream connection.



Figure 2: Bridgeway Street Tunnel - existing condition

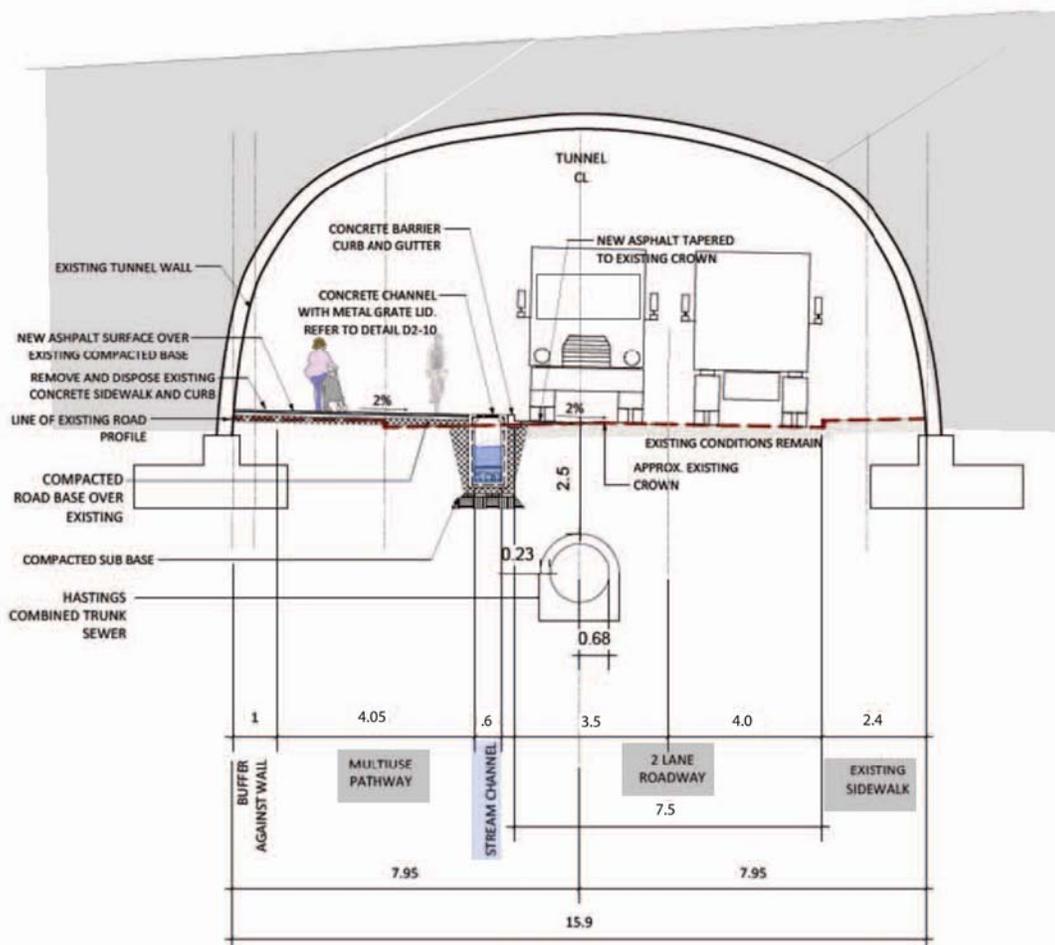


Figure 3: Bridgeway Street Tunnel - proposed modifications

This re-design to better accommodate pedestrians and bicycles is achieved through the reallocation of the tunnel's road width while still maintaining the City's standard for truck movements. Such consideration is essential to goods movement as the Bridgeway tunnel is a key connection to Port Metro Vancouver and the Bridgeway Business Park. The reallocated road widths and pedestrian and bicycle facilities have been developed with the concurrence of Sewers and Drainage Design, Active and Strategic Transportation branches of Engineering Services.

The design has also been reviewed by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOT). While the City owns and maintains the road right of way through the Bridgeway tunnel, the Province owns and maintains the Bridgeway tunnel structure. The Ministry reviewed the proposed tunnel improvements and accepts that the improvements do not alter the bridge structure and that the improvements fall under the jurisdiction of the City. Port Metro Vancouver has also been informed of proposed tunnel improvements and its opinion is that none of the proposed work will be on Port Metro property, so accepts the proposed improvements if they are acceptable to MOT and City Engineering.

CP Rail Tunnel

Currently the vehicle access to New Brighton Park is made via Commissioner Street overpass. The CP Rail tunnel only provides vehicle drop-off and pedestrian access to New Brighton Park. The roadway through this tunnel is proposed to be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle trail through the installation of bollards and narrowing the width leading to the tunnel to 4m. Service vehicle access will be maintained, the Park Board is supportive of this approach. The addition of lighting in the tunnel (currently lighting is not provided) will further enhance the convenience and safety of this connection to the park. CP Rail was consulted and do not have any concerns with the proposed designs.

Public Consultation

The park program was confirmed and further developed through consultation with the Hastings Park Open Space Advisory Group and two public consultation events (October 26, 2011 & February 22, 2012) held to gather input and feedback on the park design. The open house materials and questionnaires were also hosted for review and response on the project web pages for approximately 2 weeks after each of the two open houses.

The Hastings Park Open Space Advisory Group (OSAG) was established to provide on-going stakeholder input into the open space projects being implemented as a result of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan. The OSAG is comprised of a broad range of on-site, community, and city-wide representatives who have experience or a specific interest in the initial park developments. Representation includes to following group or interest areas:

- Circus West
- Cycling and walking (commuting or leisure)
- Hastings Park Conservancy
- Leaside Tunnel users
- Pacific National Exhibition
- Residents from Hastings/Sunrise Neighbourhood
- Vancouver Field Sports Federation

- Vancouver Sports Network
- Youth

Table 1: 2011/2012 Public Consultation Activities

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting Type</i>	<i>Attendees</i>
May 18, 2011	OSAG	OSAG members
September 07, 2011	OSAG	OSAG members
October 13, 2011	OSAG	OSAG members
October 26, 2011	Open House	Residents and stakeholders
November 28, 2011	OSAG	OSAG members
February 8, 2012	OSAG	OSAG members
February 22, 2012	Open House	Residents and stakeholders

Based on the feedback on options presented at the October 2011 Open House, a more developed concept plan was presented to the public at an open house in February 2012. In response to comments regarding parking lot size in the October 2011 Open House, the parking lot was reduced to 12 spaces (from 20) in the finalized option which gave greater flexibility in the layout of the constructed watercourse. The finalized option (Appendix A) was supported by a majority of respondents (see Appendix B for detailed consultation results):

- Ecology (daylighted stream) 81% support
- Access & Connections (greenways) 77% support
- Overall Concept 72% support

Implications/Related Issues/Risks (if applicable)

Financial

Capital

Council approved \$1.64 million in the 2011 Capital Budget (RTS 8990) for the New Brighton Connection (\$0.79 million) and Internal Trail & Park Connections (\$0.85 million), both funded from the Hastings Park Reserve. A total of \$0.18 million of the Internal Trail & Park Connections funding is earmarked for work associated with Empire Field Restoration. Thus \$1.46 million is available for the Creekway Park project. A total of \$134,000 has been spent to date to prepare the Creekway Park concept plan. This leaves a balance of \$1.33 million for park construction.

Because the project will be constructed by a contractor, the actual costs for park construction will only be known through the tendering and award process in 2 or 3 months. Staff and the design consultant have reviewed the scope of work and typical unit costs and believe that the funding available is sufficient to complete the identified scope of work. As with all construction projects, a contingency has been built into the budget. If current funding proves to be insufficient, staff will reduce the scope of work and/or defer certain items.

Operating

On-going maintenance of the Connection to New Brighton is estimated at \$24,000 per year. It is anticipated that the Connection to New Brighton will be maintained by the PNE, who also maintain the Sanctuary and Italian Garden at Hastings Park. The PNE has historically maintained the site as "Lot 10" and utilized it for parking and storage for a variety of events in Hastings Park. PNE Operations staff have been closely involved in the development of the concept plan.

Environmental

Greening of Hastings Park (which includes Creekway Park) is listed as a high priority action item for 2011-14 in the City's 2020 Greenest City Action Plan. Creekway Park's dual program themes of active transportation and ecology are consistent with the City and Park Board's sustainability and accessibility aspirations. The specific deliverables of 155 metres of new stream corridor and 560 metres of new and improved bicycle and pedestrian pathways directly support the Greenest City Action Plan's "Access to Nature" and "Clean Water" goals and the Park Board's "Leader in Greening" and "Parks and Recreation for All" strategic directions.

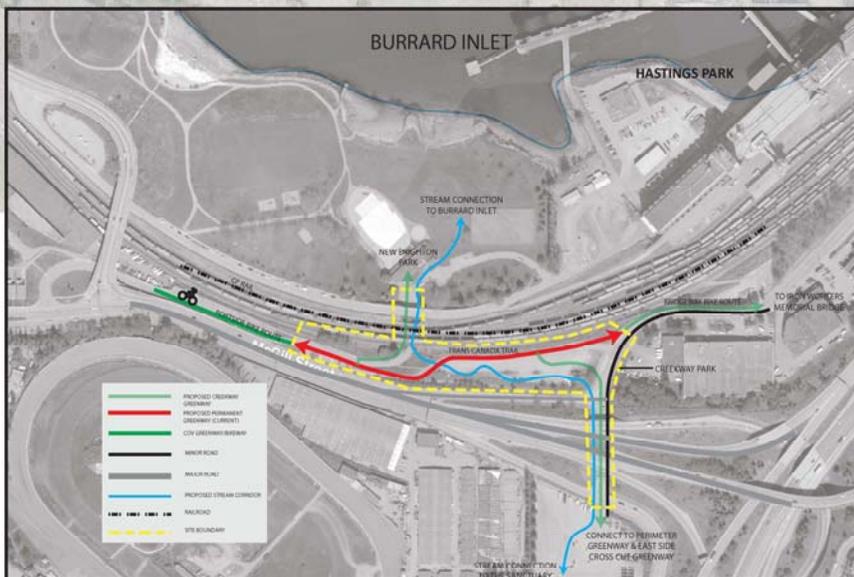
CONCLUSION

The final proposed concept plan for Creekway Park is highly supported by residents and stakeholders. The inclusive plan sensitively combines separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities that provide safe and convenient access to New Brighton Park and connections to the Trans Canada Trail. The daylighted stream component of the Creekway Park will dramatically transform this former parking lot into an ecologically rich and diverse riparian landscape that will signal the first section of the daylighted stream connection to Burrard Inlet.

The implementation of this project will be one of the first visible outcomes of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan and will deliver on community and City priorities of improving pedestrian and bicycle access to parks and improving urban habitat and the quality of stormwater runoff.

Staff are recommending the adoption of the concept plan for Creekway Park and the connection to New Brighton park and construction in 2012 (completion early 2013) pending construction tender and award process consistent with the City's' Procurement policy.

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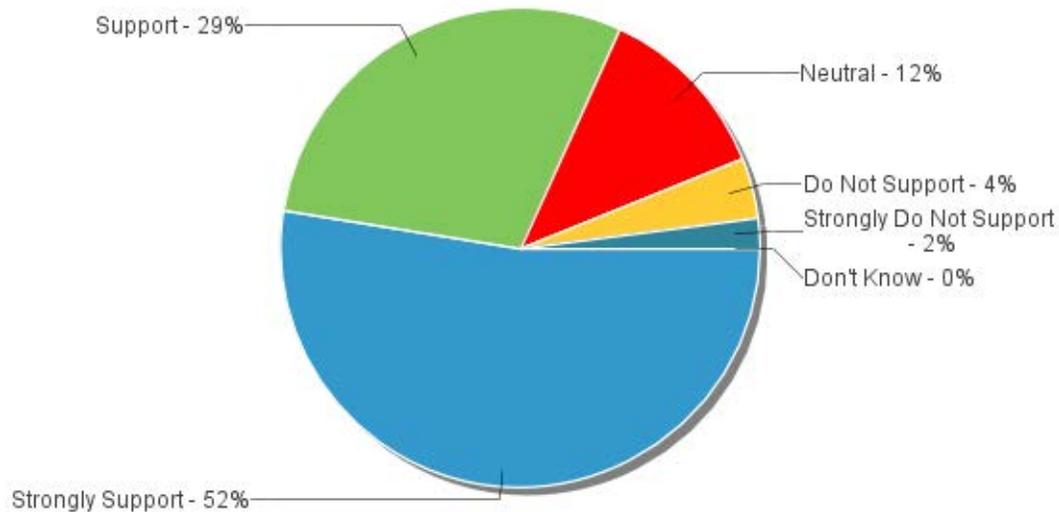
Connections

Safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to New Brighton Park and the waterfront are central to the overall pedestrian network of Hastings Park.

Creekway Park will serve as a place to accommodate active transportation connections, notably the Trans Canada Trail, and connections to Hastings and New Brighton Parks.

Creekway Park - Ecology

Open House and On-line Responses total 48 - (Open House February 22, 2012)

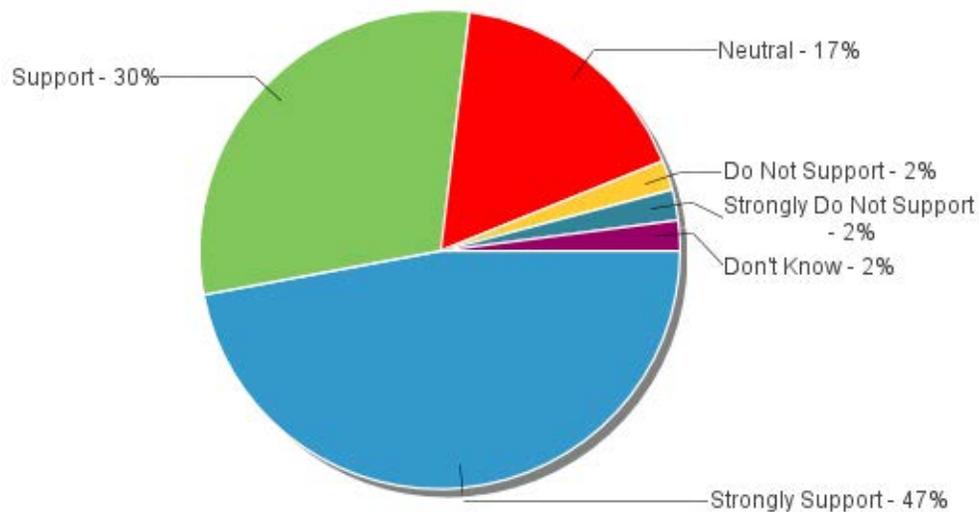


Comments:

- Really support this part of the development
- The stream from Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet should be daylighted. Creekway is a good start and should be done well for wildlife and native plants
- Looking forward to daylighting from Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet
- Yes! This is very important! Our East Van community needs more "alive" parks.
- Be careful that the stream isn't bringing garbage and waste to Burrard Inlet.
- The idea appears somewhat ill-developed. Have a grate in the McGill tunnel for the stream defeats the ecological purpose. I would prefer that the stream is better developed to prevent squandering our resources on a dirty stream. I am aware there is more green space further down to "filter" the bad water, we need more!
- It is nice to see streams returned to the area and will greatly enhance the park concept.
- I don't know why this is the first phase. No one will want to spend any time between the freeway and the railroad tracks. Other areas are more important.

Creekway Park - Access and Connections

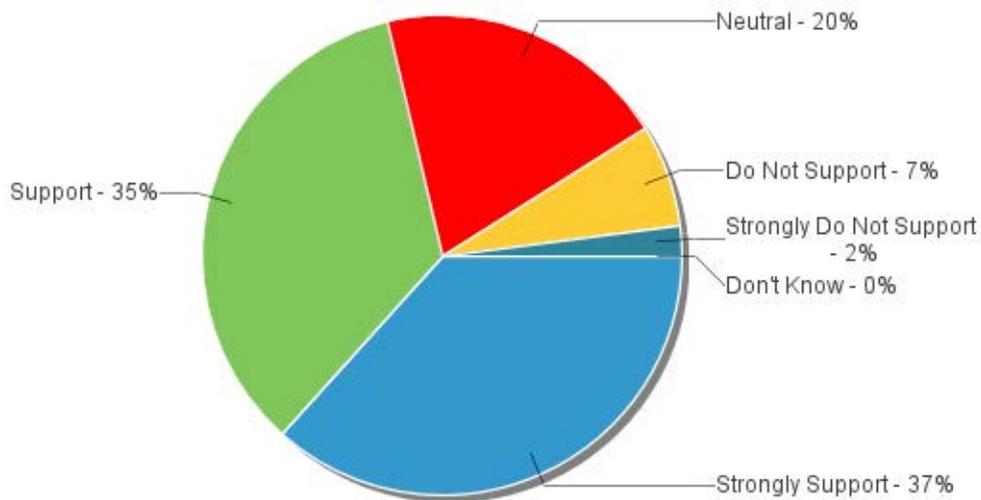
Open House and On-line Responses total 47 - (Open House February 22, 2012)



- Make sure the gravel paths are high enough to drain and be permeable so that there are not puddles and lakes
- Put Greenway along Dundas.
- Bicycles trails that are well maintained mean that our entire family (including kids) can ride and use Hastings Park. Yay.
- Yes more!

Creekway Park - Overall Concept

Open House and On-line Responses total 46 - (Open House February 22, 2012)



- Follows a natural waterway and establishes a bridge to New Brighton supporting the ecology of the area.
- Would like the greenway from Burnaby to Wall St at Dundas to be further developed for pedestrians, cyclists, as a scenic portion of the Trans Canada Trail.
- Strongly support ecological issues, less noisy transit corridor
- Should be much better than it has in decades.