



Summary of Roundtable Event Discussion

Approximately 36+ participants attended the February 28, 2016 Centennial Park Roundtable and provided ideas for the future of the park. A summary of their comments is as follows:

Theme 1: Market

The Saturday Market has become a tradition in Centennial Park. It uses its' maximum allowable area - 25% of the park area - and market organizers see no reason for this land percentage to decrease. Weekday and seasonal market use was discussed minimally, but some noted the functionality challenges faced by the larger Saturday Market were also applicable to them.

Challenges for the markets include:

- existing trees in planters cause problems for layout, organization, and circulation,
- not enough shelter from sun
- not enough parking capacity on Saturdays.

The opportunity for the park to maintain and increase tourism is desired; participants felt a major strength of the market was its role as economic driver for the community. There was discussion around expanding the market into Ganges and allowing collaboration and mutual benefit between organizations/retailers.

Theme 2: First Nations

Participants were unanimous in their desire to see increased integration of First Nations traditions into the community and Centennial Park. Opportunities for features/places such as a gathering place, welcome pole, traditional structure, and carvings are desired. Some felt that native species should be planted and that, in conjunction with their planting, traditional medicinal uses could be highlighted and provide educational and tourism opportunities. Some participants felt changing the name of Centennial Park and including a bilingual naming convention should be considered.



Theme 3: Accessibility and Circulation

Some participants expressed a strong desire for increased accessibility in the park. A clearer wayfinding approach to park entrances and internal circulation was considered a high priority by most. The existing wet conditions pose a challenge for accessing the park's green space.

Theme 4: Parking at the Park

Participants expressed conflicting views around parking. Some felt a need for increased parking in general, others felt parking was only a challenge on Saturday Market days. Discussion around expanding the market into the nearby area included the possibility of such expansion alleviating some of the parking issues.

Theme 5: Dogs in the Park

The majority of participants indicated support for the current regulation of 'no dogs in the park.' It was acknowledged, however, that visitors, especially tourists at the Saturday Market travelling from off island, are not always aware of the park rule and that having a doggy daycare is desirable on market days. The majority of participants indicated the regulations, layout and location of the dog area should be revisited and consideration should be given to a temporary structure.

Theme 6: Safety

Participants unanimously agreed that the park does not always feel safe and expressed concern with user safety, specifically at night. They also acknowledged that as Salt Spring Island values inclusivity, addressing the needs of the transient population is a critical factor to be considered, and perhaps worthy of greater discussion within the community (beyond the park master plan).

Theme 7: Water Access

Participants were unanimous in their opinion that views to the ocean were very important but conflicted around water access. Some participants felt shore access was highly desirable for a range of activities such as shore play (fun education), kayak/canoe launching and strolling/sitting. There was some discussion around improved &/or new pathways extending beyond the park and linking off-site places (other parks or 'nodes' of interest). (pedestrian greenways)

Theme 8: Gathering, Performance, and Art Space

Many participants identified a desire to include a central performance &/or art space. It was felt the spaces should be flexible, could provide shelter and shade when not being used for a performance or art, and could serve the community as a gathering focal point. Many participants expressed a desire for the park to be able to function as a town square.

Final Words

Participants were unanimous in their desire for Centennial Park to be an inviting and engaging park for everyone - children, seniors, tourist, and residents. Many felt the park has desirable elements, just not in the right places. Participants would like to see a comprehensive master plan that provides clarity of function, flexibility of space, and distinctive qualities that enhance Ganges.