



# VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

## PUBLIC INPUT REPORT



# Veterans Memorial Park Public Input Report

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# Introduction

The City of Carlsbad is taking a new approach to community engagement based on several key principles:

- Members of the public have a right to be involved in decisions affecting their lives.
- Adequate time and resources are provided to allow for meaningful public involvement.
- The public involvement planning process is begun at the earliest stages of decision-making.
- Opportunities for public involvement are clearly defined, including the decision or decisions to be made, the decision-making process and how the public has influenced the decision.
- It is the city’s responsibility to seek out and facilitate the involvement of those interested in or affected by a decision. The city errs on the side of reaching out to people who might not be interested, rather than potentially missing people who are.
- Diverse participation helps ensure a broad range of perspectives is considered.
- Public involvement processes are designed to enable members of the public to participate in ways comfortable and convenient for them.
- City staff provide balanced and factual information to the public and do not engage in advocacy.
- Public dialogue strives for a focus on values over interests and positions.
- Members of the public do not need to have technical expertise to provide valuable input. Their everyday experiences as members of the community have intrinsic value to even the most complex and technical decisions.
- Public involvement planning is coordinated across all city departments to ensure consistency and avoid process fatigue.



## Veterans Memorial Park Process

In early 2019, the City of Carlsbad kicked off a master planning process for Veterans Memorial Park, located on 91.5 acres near the intersection of Faraday Avenue and Cannon Road.

To ensure the community's needs, priorities and values are reflected in the park's ultimate design city staff engaged the public at the beginning of the planning process. The public input process consisted of two main opportunities:

### Public Workshop

Community members were invited to participate in roundtable discussions facilitated by the project team. City staff provided a brief history on the site, along with an overview of the master planning elements, opportunities, constraints and potential amenities at the park site. Following the introduction, questions were posed for small group discussions designed to identify the community values, needs and priorities for the park. An optional tour of the site was offered following the workshop.

Saturday, March 9  
Faraday Administration Center  
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Attendance: 66

### Online Survey

The Veterans Memorial Park online survey provided an opportunity for members of the public to provide input at a time convenient to them. Topic areas identified at the public workshop helped inform the questions on the online survey.

March 9 – 23, 2019  
1,466 respondents  
2,137 individual responses from Carlsbad residents  
1,793 comments

### About the Findings

By providing multiple ways for the public to provide input, decision makers can hear from a larger and more diverse group of community members. Respondents were asked to disclose where they live, and the system prevented more than two responses per computer IP address (a computer's unique address). However, unlike a scientific survey, the findings of this process cannot be generalized to the entire Carlsbad population within a defined level of confidence.

That's why the input in this report should be considered with a similar weight as other qualitative forms of feedback that have always been part of the city's decision-making process, such as comments made at City Council meeting or emails sent to the city expressing an opinion.

## Differences Among Subgroups

In most cases, responses did not differ significantly when comparing subgroups, such as residents vs. nonresidents or based on geographic location. Where differences were observed, they are noted.

Carlsbad residents wanted to experience nature, peace and views the most. Nonresidents shared the desire to experience nature, but also wanted to experience fitness and fun at the park. For active features, Carlsbad residents had more preference for a children's playground, while nonresidents wanted an area for frisbee golf.

## Overall Themes

Comments have been categorized for the purpose of identifying key themes. Readers are strongly encouraged to read the verbatim comments in the appendices to get a better understanding of specific ideas, priorities and concerns expressed. Following are some of the key themes from the online comments:

- Experiencing nature
- Active recreation
- Honoring veterans
- Walking/hiking
- Dogs
- Art
- Accessibility
- Event venue
- Maximize views
- Peace/tranquility
- Places to gather
- Children's areas

## Workshop Input

With 66 participants, the public workshop reflects the input of a very small percentage of the overall community. However, by choosing to spend several hours at a public meeting, these community members have demonstrated a high level of interest in this project. For that reason, this input is being reported separately from the online input and deserves unique consideration.

Below are the key themes from each discussion. A full list of responses is included in the appendices.

Topic 1: What would you like to experience at the park? How would you like to feel when you come to the park?



Well being: community, peace, gratitude, enjoyment, calm, relaxation, happiness

Nature: openness, nature, views

Veterans: honor, respect, remember, gratitude

## Topic 2: How will you use this park?



Social: gather, walk, events, concerts

Fitness: walking, hiking, running

Active/organized recreation: mountain biking, pickleball, frisbee golf

Relax: enjoy peace, tranquility, nature, views

Contemplative: history, veterans, connection to the past

Topic 3: What else would you like us to consider about this park?

budget  
lighting  
veterans safety  
accessibility  
bathrooms  
noise habitat  
natural

Amenities: restrooms, drinking fountains, dog waste stations, lighting, interpretive center

Local impacts: noise, parking, safety, lighting

Budget: cost to build and ongoing cost to maintain

Access: parking, access for people with disabilities or mobility concerns

Habitat: protect habitat areas and wildlife

## Online Input

Input from the public workshop was used to refine questions for the online survey. The three most common responses for each question are shown below for Carlsbad residents (orange) and non-Carlsbad residents (green).

Total resident responses: 494

Total non-resident responses: 972

Detailed information about the responses for all questions is available in the appendices.

**Question 1:** First, help us understand what you would like to experience at this park. From the list below (some of the responses shared at our public meeting), choose the 3 things that are most important to you.

### Carlsbad Residents



### Non-Carlsbad Residents



**Question 2:** Please choose up to 3 “passive” recreational features you would like to see.

### Carlsbad Residents



### Non-Carlsbad Residents



Question 3: Please choose 3 “active” recreational features you would like to see.

Carlsbad Residents



Non-Carlsbad Residents



Question 4: Please choose three “built” elements you’d like to see at the park.

Carlsbad Residents



Non-Carlsbad Residents



Question 5: What else would you like the city to consider about this park? (open ended)

Key Themes From 290 Comments (some comments referenced multiple themes)

All Respondents



## Next Steps

The City of Carlsbad used the input and ideas provided by the community, as well as other sources of information including the physical characteristics and location of the site, the core values of the Carlsbad community, and the city's parks and recreation needs, to prepare conceptual plans for Veterans Memorial Park. Any ideas that came up more frequently were noted in the supporting appendices, with the understanding that the ideas represented those who decided to provide input, not necessarily the entire Carlsbad community. The conceptual plans will be shared at an upcoming community workshop in September 2019.