



# **PARTICIPATE** **WOOD BUFFALO**

## ***WHAT WE HEARD ABOUT ABASAND DOG PARK FEASIBILITY STUDY***

*Public Works - Parks*

*May 16 – June 6, 2022*

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June 24, 2022

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**We humbly acknowledge that the land on which we live, learn, work and play is Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional and ancestral lands of the Cree, Dene, and unceded territory of the Métis.**

## ***ABOUT THE PROJECT***

The Public Works department is committed to providing outdoor recreation opportunities for residents in Wood Buffalo and wants to ensure new projects are supported by the community. Administration has been asked by Council to investigate the feasibility of an off-leash dog park in the neighbourhood of Abasand Heights.

There are currently four off-leash dog parks in the RMWB urban service area with three of them south of the Athabasca Bridge, and one in the Thickwood neighbourhood.

While the RMWB is above average in off-leash areas compared to similar communities, the Parks Master Plan recommends an exploration for an off-leash dog park in Abasand Heights. The Athabasca Avenue Storm Pond was recommended as an area to pilot an off-leash dog park, but Land Administration has also identified additional viable locations for this park.

As part of the feasibility study, Public Works and Public Engagement worked together to gather feedback from residents in the Abasand neighbourhood to gauge their sentiment about building an off-leash dog park in Abasand.

The engagement strategy was designed to help to gauge how residents feel about an off-leash park for the community, potential amenities, and the potential locations.

This feedback will provide Public Works with well-rounded information that can be presented to Council regarding the feasibility of this project. Council will provide guidance to the Public Works department on the future of the project.



# STAKEHOLDER LIST

- Residents of Abasand
- Residents of Wood Buffalo
- Dog Owners
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Internal Stakeholders
- Mayor and Councillors



## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The project was promoted through the project's Participate Wood Buffalo (PWB) page and in-person during a pup-lick engagement session held on June 4, 2022.

## ENGAGEMENT TACTICS



In-person Pup-lick  
Engagement Session



Online Survey



Idea Widget on PWB

## ENGAGEMENTS

**719**

Online Visits to Participate Wood Buffalo  
Project Page

**~25**

In-person Information Session Participants

**463**

Online Survey Respondents

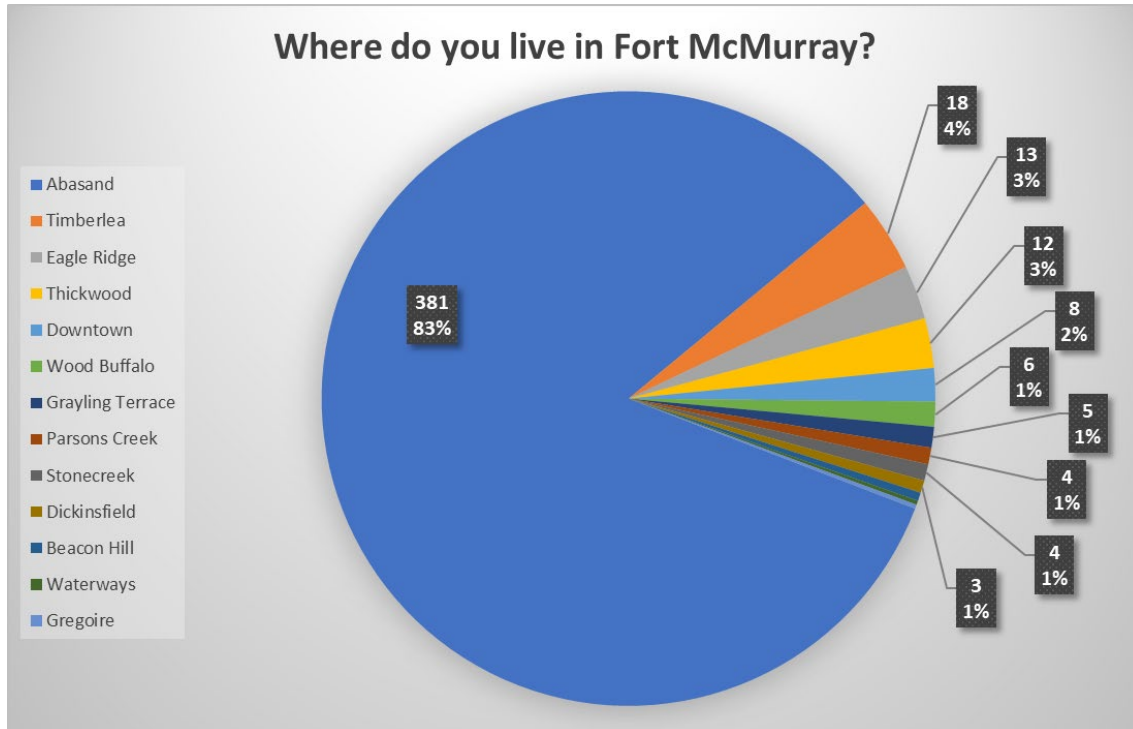
**30**

Doggy treat bags distributed



# ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Dog parks are amenities for the entire region to use but having one in Abasand meant it was important for us to know if the people answering the survey resided in Abasand – since you were the primary stakeholders – or if you were an interested party in another community or neighbourhood.

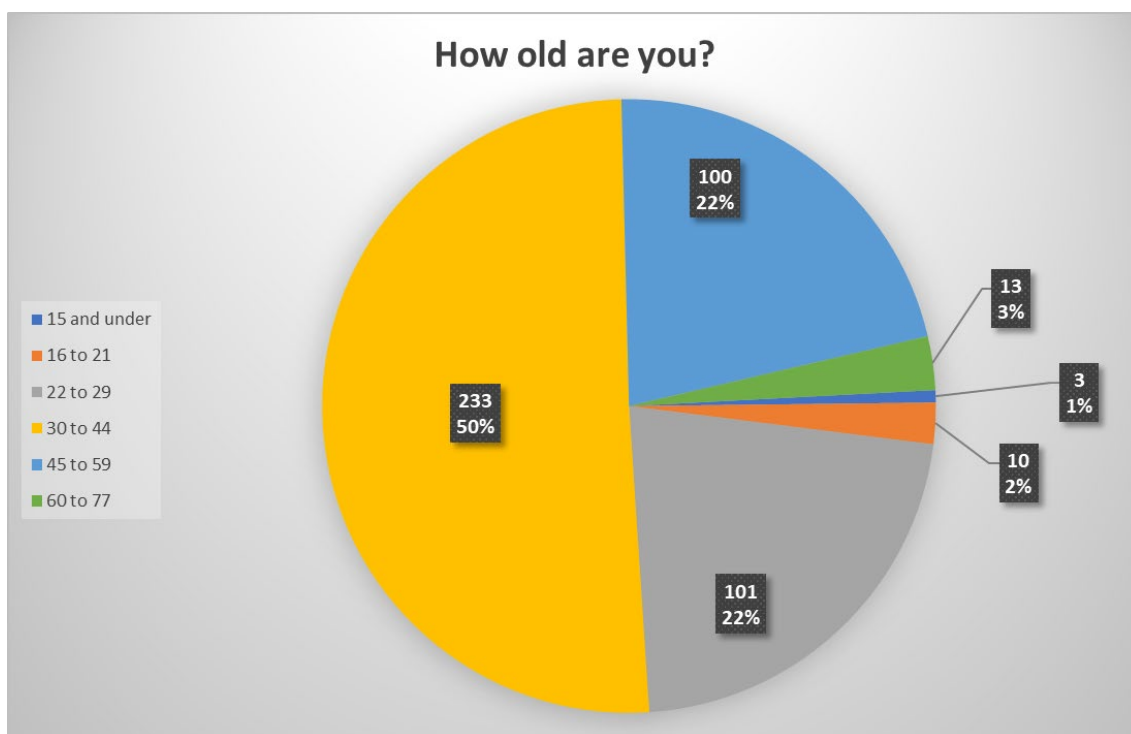


Most of the survey responses were from Abasand residents. Response rates indicate you are part of a very active community who truly cares about what happens in your neighbourhood.

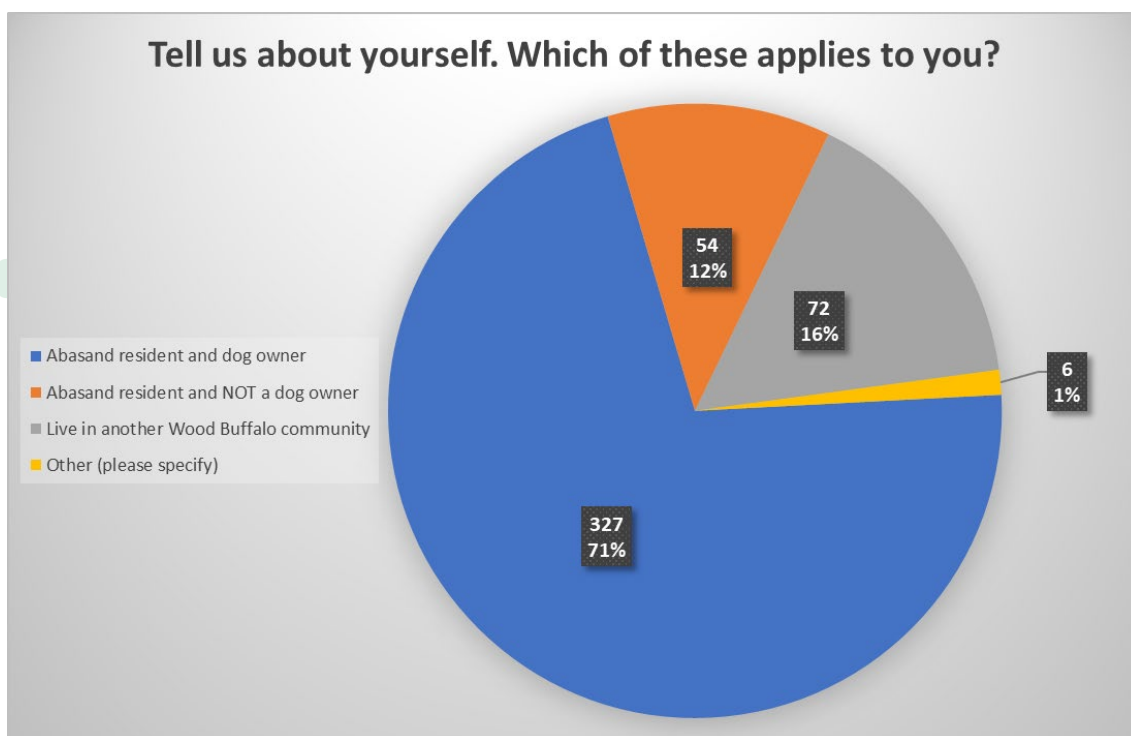
After Abasand, residents were from three neighbourhoods that responded to the survey the most: Timberlea, Eagle Ridge and Thickwood.



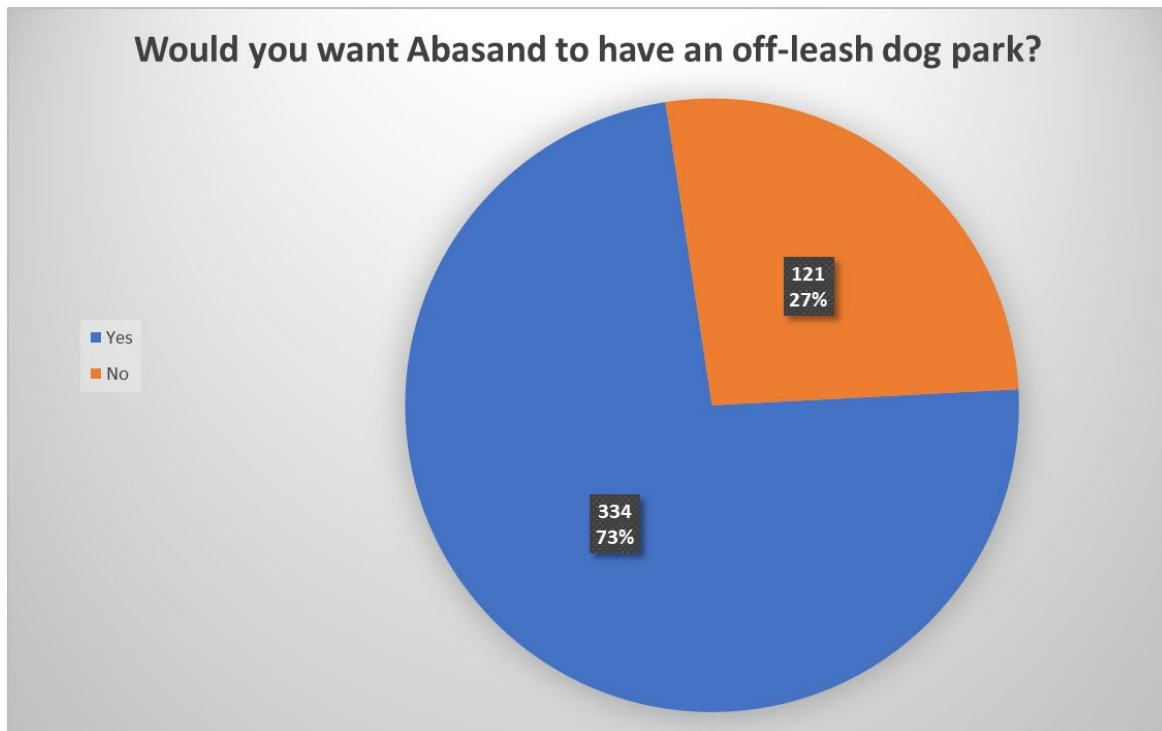
By asking you what age range you were, you are helping us understand how the neighbourhood is growing, and the needs of your neighbourhood. Half of the respondents are in the 30 to 44 age range.



It was very important to understand who was answering the survey. While the dog park is meant for residents with dogs, it is very important to also listen to those residents without dogs and those in other neighbourhoods or communities.







It was amazing to see how many residents of Abasand have dogs, but it was refreshing to see both Abasand residents without dogs and members in other communities wanting to be involved in the conversation.



The most important question to ask you was whether you wanted a dog park in Abasand. We understand you may have had additional thoughts to this simple Yes/No question, which is why there was opportunity to provide feedback and concerns you may have.

Looking at the survey, more than 10% of the Abasand population said they wanted a dog park. For the most part, the feedback and concerns you mentioned had to do with:

	Noise		Smell
	Traffic		Responsible Ownership



You were invited to provide any additional feedback and concerns. For these questions we received 225 responses with concerns and 174 responses with feedback. The following is a summary of key themes.

### Feedback Themes:

- Great idea for Abasand – close and convenient
- Waste of money/don't want/need this
- Use existing trails/greenspace
- None of the locations are ideal
- Separate areas for small/large dogs or by weight class or height
- Lighting needed for safety
- OHV staging area/trails are more important
- Proximity to OHV staging area is an issue
- Paved trails are more important
- Spray park is more important
- Skate park – use funds to enhance existing skate park
- Please fix other issues before creating park (i.e., potholes, bus shelters, vacant properties, sidewalks)
- Dog parks need to be maintained
- Avoid dog park behind condos – too close to people's homes
- Want a dog park north of the bridge
- What will the dog park be called – should be named after my son as he just passed away (anonymous respondent)
- Too much traffic by Option 1 (cars, buses, etc.)
- Add water source to existing dog parks
- Poop bags and garbage bins needed – sign board for posting concerns/questions
- Needs good drainage so it's not muddy
- Needs lots of parking
- Put it next to a playground for kids
- Put clover as a ground cover instead of grass
- Every community should have a dog park
- Option 2 is more centrally located
- Why isn't there a park near the cemetery?
- Need appropriate parking / no overnight parking

### Concerns Themes:

- Irresponsible owners
- Who will clean up the dog poop?
- Maintain existing trails/walking paths/greenspace
- It will create more traffic in a quiet neighbourhood
- All locations are too close to residential areas
- Park will create an area that smells and will drive property values down
- The park will be too noisy
- Parking will be an issue as the streets by option 1 and 3 are small
- The park will impact local natural wildlife
- Who will maintain the park?
- OHVs path will be blocked by the park
- The park will need proper drainage



# Proposed Locations – Ranking the Options

We asked you to rank the three options that are available for the dog park. While Option 2 was ranked as the preferred option, primarily due to its location, both Options 1 and 3 were close.

Proposed Locations	Votes	Average Ranking
Option 1	136	2.00
Option 2	157	1.82
Option 3	135	2.03



# SUBJECT AREA MAP

## Abasand Dog Park Options

Dog Park Option	Dog Park Area_ac +/-	Parking Option	Parking Area_ac +/-
1	3.123108	1	0.128254
2	9.187617	2	0.35269
3	6.339624	3	0.205152



Dog Park Option 1



Dog Park Option 2



Dog Park Option 3



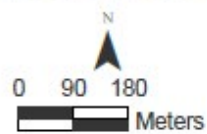
Parking Option 1



Parking Option 2



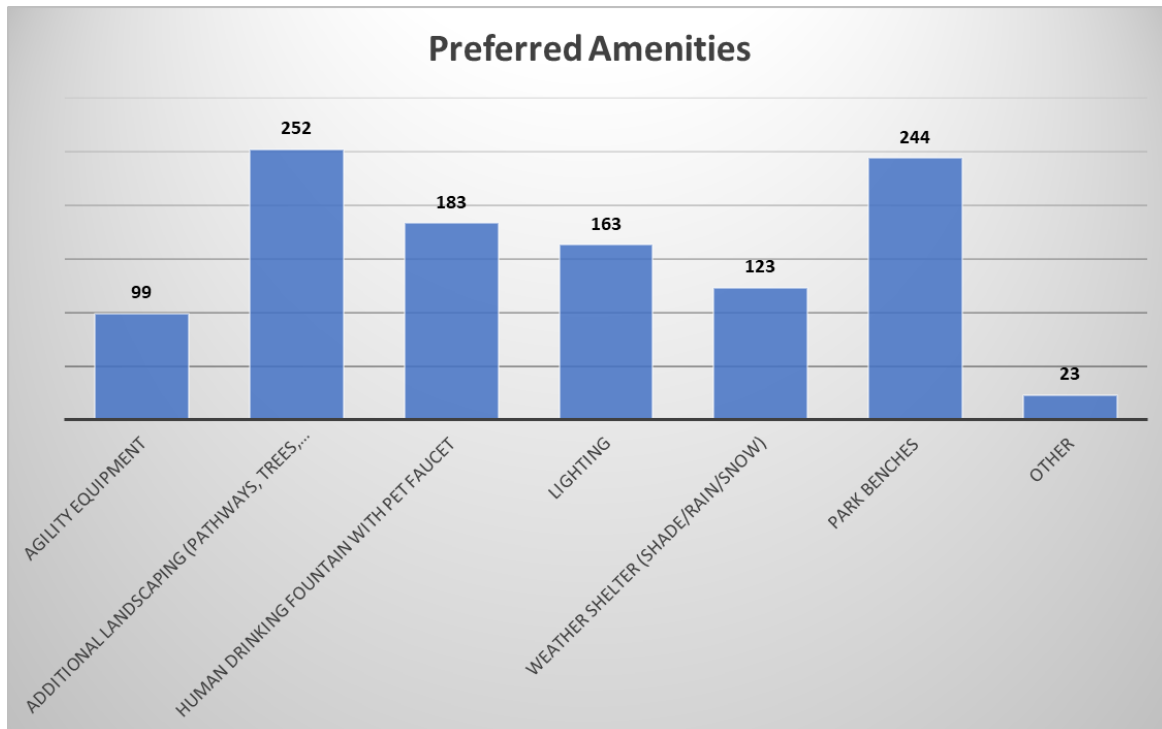
Parking Option 3



REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
OF WOOD BUFFALO

TICK74670  
Map produced by the GIS group on  
5/10/2022

You were also asked what type of amenities you would like to see in the dog park. We asked this question to be proactive in understanding what you would like to see if this park were to be built. This information will help with planning the park and informing Council of the potential scope of this project. The information will help Council make an informed decision about approving funding for this project.



There were two amenities you chose the most: park benches and additional landscaping. It has been brought up that the Sara Holden Dog Park in Waterways is the benchmark for what a park in the region should look like. You want trees and trails instead of a fenced-off open-area design.

The other amenity that garnished a lot of feedback was the water fountain. You also said that having some sort of weather shelter (such as a gazebo) and lighting (for when it's dark) would be beneficial.

One of the concerns that you pointed out was the park hours. While the dog parks are open 24 hours, there were concerns about noise during the middle of the night.



## NEXT STEPS

Overall, the majority of those who answered the survey want a dog park and you prefer it to be in Option #2 which is closer to the townhouses due to its central location. We do want to emphasize that the area highlighted for each option does not mean that is where a fence would go but it is a general idea of the location.

We thank you for your input and ideas throughout the engagement process of this project. The Public Works department is carefully reviewing all the information. Once they have gathered all the information necessary, they will present to Council and proceed as directed.

To stay informed about the project, or to receive project updates visit <https://participate.rmwb.ca/abasand-dog-park>.



We encourage you to continue using your voice to make our region even better by learning about all current projects. Visit [participate.rmwb.ca](https://participate.rmwb.ca) to stay connected!



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June 27, 2022

