



What We Heard Report – Public Art Bench Program

Community and Protective Services

February 16 – March 9 & April 19 – May 2, 2022

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May 9, 2022

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About The Project

The [Wood Buffalo Culture Plan](#) serves as a guiding document for regional arts and heritage initiatives over the next ten years. The [Wood Buffalo Public Art Plan](#) is based on the idea of strengthening community identity and sense of place through the creation and development of public art in the region.

The [Public Art Bench Program](#) (PABP) directly aligns with the strategies set out in the Wood Buffalo Public Art Plan, and the priorities set out in the Wood Buffalo Culture Plan. PABP is a pilot project that is anticipated to be repeated in each community and is intended to strengthen the visual connection between Wood Buffalo's rural communities and its urban core.

For this pilot project, Public Art Wood Buffalo will support local artists to create custom park benches that are designed based on the character of the rural communities. The artists apply to take part in the project and the successful candidates will create a design for two benches; one to be installed in the rural community, and a second to be installed at an urban location.

In the first phase of PABP, the selected rural communities are Anzac and Sapræ Creek Estates, and Kiyām Community Park in downtown Fort McMurray is the urban location.

Project Background

Beginning in October 2021, Public Art Wood Buffalo worked with Communications & Engagement to put out a call for Expression of Interest (EOI) and host an artist information session. The goal was to find local artists to design and create the benches for the targeted communities of Anzac and Sapræ Creek Estates.

In December 2021, two local artists were chosen based on their applications. Kritsana Naowakhun was chosen to create a bench for Anzac, and Amy Keller-Rempp was chosen for Sapræ Creek Estates.

After the artists were chosen, the first phase of engagement ran from February 16 – March 9. The objective of this phase of engagement was to consult with residents in Anzac and Sapræ Creek Estates to identify community themes. The artists would then use these themes as inspiration to create a series of bench design options that would reflect the character of each community. Once the design options were created, we engaged with each community once again to identify their preferred designs for each bench. This phase of the engagement campaign ran from April 19 – May 2.

Stakeholder List

- Residents of Anzac – targeted invitation
- Residents of Sapræ Creek Estates – targeted invitation
- Mayor and Councillors
- Public Art Committee
- Residents across the region
- Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo internal stakeholders

Engagement Objectives

When running engagement campaigns, the Municipality's Public Engagement team follows the foundations outlined by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2). IAP2 has developed a



Spectrum of Engagement to help define the public's role in any public participation process. The spectrum includes five levels: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower.

For both phases of the engagement, the primary objective was to “consult” with residents in each community, while the secondary objective was to “inform.”

In the first phase of engagement, we consulted with residents of Anzac and Sapræ to get a better understanding of the themes, qualities, stories and character of each community. This information would inspire the artists to create design options that resonate with each community – and ultimately result in art benches that mean something to residents.

For the second phase of engagement, we also consulted with residents of Anzac and Sapræ to see which design option they prefer. We asked residents to choose their preferred designs, and this information would be used to guide the artists as they fabricate the benches for each community – also with the goal of creating benches that mean something to residents.

The secondary goal for each phase was to inform residents about the Public Art Bench Program and about the value of public art – in addition to how the program works and where funding from the project comes from.

The following “*What We Heard Report*” summarizes how we engaged and the feedback we received during the engagement period.

Communication Channels

This engagement opportunity was promoted through several channels to raise awareness for residents and give them an opportunity to participate and share feedback. Communication channels included the following:

- Anzac Open House promotions
- Electronic variable signage (posted in Anzac and Sapræ)
- Municipal website
- Participate Wood Buffalo webpage – Public Art Connection project page:
 - <https://participate.rmwb.ca/public-art-connection>
- Posters (posted in Anzac and Sapræ)
- Pulse – Pulse Customer Service Agents able to respond to questions and assist residents to input responses on Participate Wood Buffalo
- RMWB's Employee Messenger
- Rural community newsletter
- Social media
- Stakeholder emails (sent to key community groups and leaders)

Engagement Tactics

- Participate Wood Buffalo: Project page for Public Art Bench Program
 - Area to ask questions
 - Artist biographies
 - FAQ's about the project
 - Links to related projects



- Online forum to share stories, ideas and inspiration
- Online surveys
- Video recordings of virtual engagements and information sessions
- RMWB website
 - Budget information
 - Information about proposed bench sites
 - Photos of art benches around Alberta
 - Project outline and goals
 - Project schedule

Engagements

- In-person conversations
- In-person engagement
 - Anzac Open House – April 23, 2022
- One-on-one meetings
- Phone conversations
- Virtual Engagement Sessions
 - Anzac – February 24, 2022
 - Sapræ Creek Estates – February 28, 2022

Timeline

- Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) – October 7, 2021
- Artist Information Session – October 21, 2021
- Submission Deadline (EOI) – November 18, 2021
- Notice of Award – December 10, 2021
- Rural Community Engagement
 - Phase One – Identifying Themes: February 16 – March 9
 - Phase Two – Identifying Preferred Designs: April 19 – May 2
- Bench Fabrication and Installation: Summer 2022 (*schedule subject to change)

Overview of Participation

Survey – Describing Your Community (Phase One)

This survey allowed residents to provide key words and phrases to describe the character of their community. The survey sorted responses by allowing residents to identify which community they live in and comment on specific communities.

Describing Your Community

Visitors 11	Contributors 9	CONTRIBUTIONS 22
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Forums – What would you want visitors to know? (Phase One)

Two forums were set up, one for Anzac and one for Sapræ Creek Estates, to allow residents to write longer responses, ideas, stories and anecdotes.



Anzac - What would you want visitors to know about your community?

Visitors 10	Contributors 6	CONTRIBUTIONS 6
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Saprae Creek Estates - What would you want visitors to know about your community?

Visitors 7	Contributors 3	CONTRIBUTIONS 3
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Surveys: Choosing Preferred Designs (Phase Two)

Once the artists had created a series of design options, they were posted on Participate Wood Buffalo with written descriptions to provide context and inform residents of how their feedback informed the designs.

Two surveys were created: one with the design options/descriptions for Anzac, and a second for Saprae Creek Estates. Residents were invited to choose their preferred designs, and we estimate that most participants engaged in both surveys and chose their preferred designs for each community.

Vote on Designs - Anzac

Visitors 136	Contributors 105	CONTRIBUTIONS 108
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Vote on Designs - Saprae Creek Estates

Visitors 140	Contributors 114	CONTRIBUTIONS 116
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Anzac In-Person Open House – April 23, 2022 (Phase Two)

- Approximately 110 attendees at the Open House event.
- Spoke with approximately 35 individuals about Public Art Bench Program.
- Received 28 votes for art benches through a “dot-mocracy” activity. All design options were presented on boards and participants were invited to place a dot beside their preferred design.



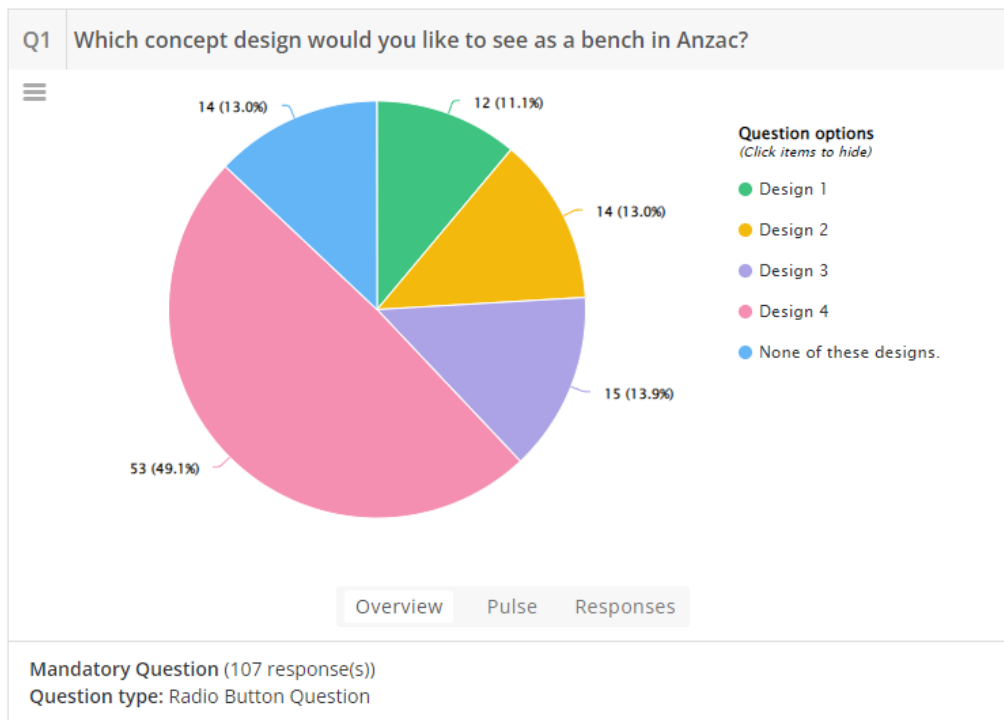
Survey Results: Preferred Bench Designs

Anzac Bench Designs:

We received 107 votes through Participate Wood Buffalo, and an additional 28 votes through an in-person Dot-mocracy activity at the Anzac Open House for a total of 135 votes.

Dot-mocracy votes on Anzac Designs by Kritsana Naowakhun:

- Design 1: 1 vote
- Design 2: 3 votes
- Design 3: 3 votes
- Design 4: 21 votes
- None of the Designs: 0 votes

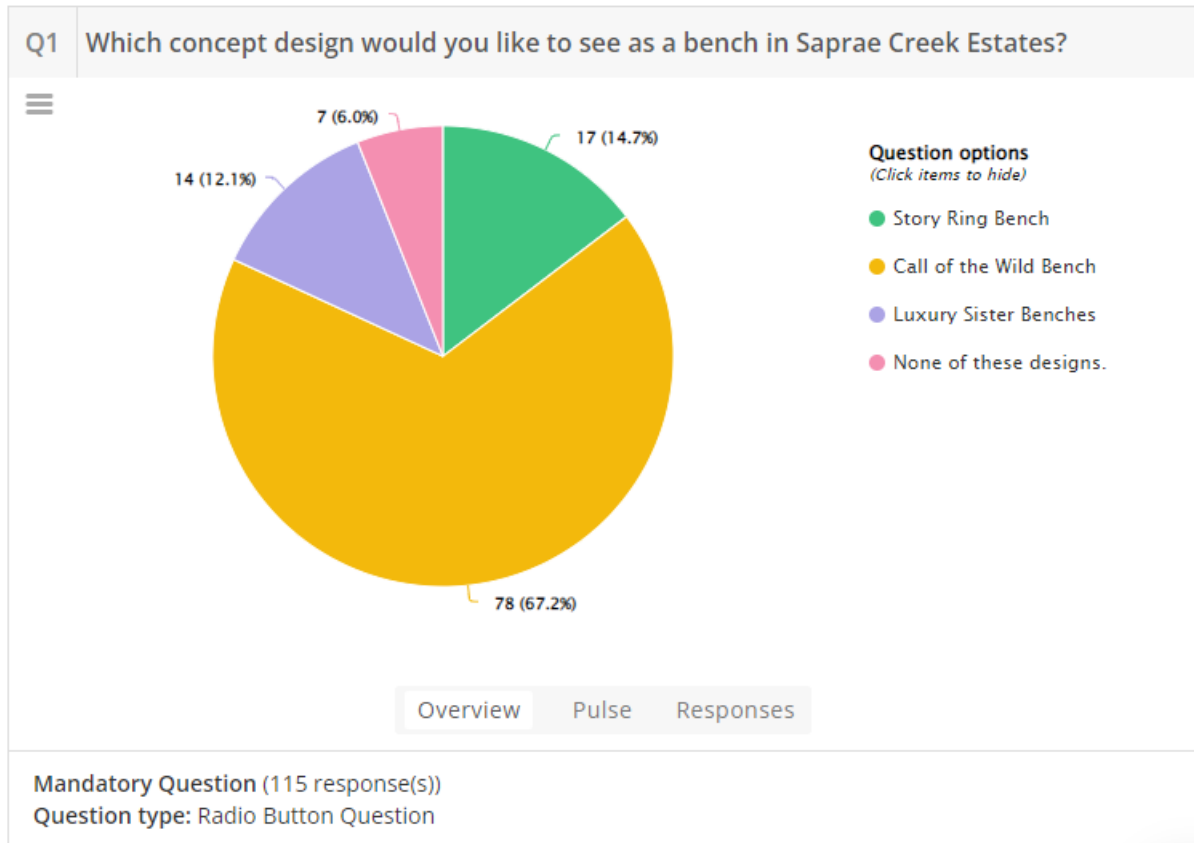


Final totals on Anzac design (online votes plus Dot-mocracy votes):

- Design 1: 13 votes
- Design 2: 17 votes
- Design 3: 18 votes
- **Design 4: 74 votes**
- None of the Designs: 14 votes

Votes on Saprae Creek Estates Designs:

We received 115 votes through Participate Wood Buffalo, but we did not run an additional Dot-mocracy activity.



Key Findings:

Based on feedback through the survey and Dot-mocracy, residents preferred the following designs:

- Anzac – Kraitsana Naowakhun
 - Design 4



- Saprae Creek Estates – Amy Keller-Rempp
 - Call of the Wild



Next Steps

Thank you for participating in the public engagement for this project. The Community & Protective Services team carefully reviewed your feedback and have begun working with the artists to build and install the public art benches for Anzac, Saprae Creek Estates and Kiyām Community Park.

The project team is targeting late summer 2022 to have the new benches installed. These timelines are subject to change based on the availability of construction supplies and site conditions.

To stay informed about the project, or to receive project updates visit participate.rmwb.ca/public-art-connection.

