



Community Results Are in For Royal Oak's New Downtown Park

Community feedback will drive the future two-acre city centerpiece

ROYAL OAK, Mich. (Jan. 9, 2019) The City of Royal Oak has shared its findings from the community about the new downtown park project with construction projected to kick off in 2020 – future planning will come directly from residents who played an integral role in helping direct the look and feel of the new green space.

The Royal Oak Community Engagement Process was launched in August of 2018 and concluded in December. The goal was to create a civic focal point and gathering spot through a process of resident feedback, which guided the entire development project.

Consultants from Nowak & Fraus and LAP Inc. hosted multiple engagement sessions and received input from more than 1,500 Royal Oak residents. Ideas were derived directly from participant feedback through a, "Look and Feel" Community Input system, which consisted of stakeholder meetings, community outreach gatherings, visual preference surveys, online user opinion surveys and conversations with residents throughout the process.

"Our community engagement process really drove this project," said Royal Oak City Community Engagement Specialist Judy Davids. "The feedback allowed residents to provide a window into their experiences and expressions for what the park should become, and we can't wait to make the ideas come to life."

The public revealed vital findings to the development of the downtown park. Throughout the community engagement efforts, participants were also asked to provide examples of parks that represent what the new park in Royal Oak should "look and feel" like. Through a process of learning by example, participants provided over 60 example park references for the future design team.

The results concluded that the park needed:

- An open space designed for flexible use and visitors of all ages.
- Ecological elements such as water, trees, greenery, flowers and different scales of light.
- A high caliber of artistic composition, promoting local artists as much as possible.
- Natural and artificial elements – using form and function to create style.
- Physical and mental contemplation – ensuring that residents have a space to relax and enjoy the quiet solitude of the park.
- Features to draw people in such as four-season interest, including winter activities such as ice skating and others.
- A sense of security, cleanliness and safety for citizens to feel comfortable.
- Its own voice – providing an authentic space for Royal Oak.

Participants provided these ideas through hand sketches, narratives, references, photographs, images, opinions and oral descriptions. In addition to stakeholder input and survey responses, community outreach gatherings also generated ideas through listening sessions at the I Dig Royal Oak event, a Food Truck Rally, the Farmers Market, and Arts, Beats & Eats.

The next phase in the downtown park planning is the selection of a landscape architect. To learn more about this request for proposal visit www.romi.gov/1338/Downtown-Park-Community-Engagement.

About Royal Oak

Royal Oak is a vibrant metro Detroit community home to nearly 60,000 residents located in Oakland County. Destinations within the 12-mile community include The Detroit Zoo, The Royal Oak Music Theatre, William Beaumont Hospital, Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle and a successful Farmer's Market among others. The city's recreational services include more than 50 public parks and was recently named one of the Top 10 Most Exciting Small Cities in America by Movoto and the Best Place to Live in Michigan by AreaVibes. To learn more about Royal Oak, visit <https://www.romi.gov>.

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