

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo is creating a park with a playground in Beacon Hill.

We are seeking guidance from the Community Identification Committee to select an official name of the spaces.

BACKGROUND

The park/playground originated as a commemoration project to honour the community's past and on-going experiences with the 2016 Horse River Wildfire. In addition to acknowledging and paying respect to these experiences, the project was intended to create opportunities and an environment for the public to reflect upon the 2016 Wildfire, pay respect to first responders and remember the Fort McMurray residents, who passed away following evacuation.

There were two fatalities during evacuation. One family has respectfully asked to not be publicly identified as they deal with their loss, while the other family has been working with the RMWB to identify an opportunity to acknowledge their daughter, Emily Ryan.

The park is being built in Beacon Hill for several reasons:

- Beacon Hill was significantly impacted by the fire
- The Ryan family has a very close personal connection to the neighbourhood
- The park design features a lookout. This space overlooks some spectacular views: Grayling Terrace, Waterways, Abasand, the lower townsite, Responder's Way, Firehall #1. Cranley Ryan (Emily's father) was serving as a member of the Fort McMurray Fire Department at the time of the wildfire.

Administration has consulted with key stakeholders (Regional Emergency Services and the Ryan family) and conducted two rounds of public engagement with the community-at-large. The recommendations in this report reflect feedback gathered from these stakeholders.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In the second round of public engagement, stakeholders were specifically asked to provide input regarding the name of the park.

Here is what we heard:

- Many of the respondents were in favour of the name Wildfire Memorial Park
- However, there is also significant opposition to the name Wildfire Memorial Park. Respondents suggested that a name (or images) referencing the wildfire would trigger anxiety and PTSD (especially for those residents living in Beacon Hill)
- Respondents suggested that the name "memorial" was not appropriate (reminiscent of a cemetery).

- Alternate names were suggested by the community for consideration. Options included:
 - Beacon Hill Lookout
 - Lookout Park
 - Reflection Park
 - Reflections Lookout

CONSIDERATIONS

- Though the park is intended to pay tribute to experiences with the 2016 Horse River Wildfire, the general public and RES are not quite ready to use the space for this purpose (at this point in time).
- RES has suggested that the word “reflection” is the most appropriate of all the public options brought forth. RES has also suggested that the best name would include a nod to the future and the idea of moving forward.
- RES has also suggested that identifying Beacon Hill in the name might exclude – or potentially alienate - the rest of the community
- The word “resilience” has been used in past campaigns for both fire and flood. This word might be triggering.
- The Ryan family would like to name the playground after Emily (for example: The Emily Ryan Playground at Reflection Park).





King Street

63

Beacon Hill Drive

Beacon Hill Drive

Fire Hall #1

453

449

180

177

173

441

433

212

228

421

416

412

100

104

108

112

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120

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396

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101

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509