

Public Feedback Summary

Proposed Land Donation to the Cranbrook Kimberley Hospice Society Baker RV Campground Site

Executive Summary

The City received approximately 276 total e-mails, representing **140-150 public submissions** regarding the Cranbrook Kimberley Hospice Society's request for a municipal land donation at the Baker RV Campground/Baker Park site. The volume of correspondence demonstrates significant public interest and engagement in the matter.

Analysis of the submissions indicates:

- Approximately **58%** of respondents supported the proposed donation of land at Baker RV Campground for development of a hospice facility.
- Approximately **42%** opposed the use of the Baker RV Campground site for the project.

Importantly, many respondents who opposed the proposed location nevertheless expressed support for establishing a hospice facility within Cranbrook or the East Kootenay region. The primary area of disagreement was the proposed location rather than the need for hospice services themselves.

The feedback reflects a community that largely agrees on the importance of hospice care but remains divided on questions related to public land use, preservation of greenspace, campground operations, alternative site options, and the decision-making process.

Number of Submissions Received

Review of the correspondence dataset identified approximately:

- **140-150 individual submissions**
- Primarily web-form submissions directed to Mayor and Council
- A small number of duplicate or repeat submissions from the same individuals

Distribution of Public Feedback

Position	Approximate Percentage
Support Land Donation and Baker RV Campground Location	58%
Oppose Baker RV Campground Location	42%

Further Breakdown

Among those opposed to the proposal, a substantial portion indicated:

- Support for hospice services generally.
- Support for a hospice facility in Cranbrook.
- Preference for alternative locations such as the Frost Property, Highlands lands, former hospital lands, Tudor House property, or other municipal sites.

Overview of Public Feedback

Support for Hospice at Baker RV Campground

A majority of submissions supported both the hospice project and the proposed location.

Common reasons included:

- Urgent need for dedicated hospice services.
- Improved dignity and comfort for patients and families.
- Lack of hospice beds within the region.
- Proximity to East Kootenay Regional Hospital.
- Access to healthcare providers and volunteers.
- Natural surroundings provided by Joseph Creek.
- Potential relief of pressure on hospital beds and healthcare services.

Many supporters viewed the proposal as a long-term healthcare investment and a significant community benefit.

Support for Hospice but Opposition to Baker RV Campground

A significant number of respondents supported hospice services while opposing the proposed site.

Common concerns included:

- Protection of public green space.
- Preservation of historical community assets.
- Availability of alternative locations.
- Concerns regarding traffic noise.
- Concerns regarding long-term land-use planning.

Preservation of the RV Campground

Some respondents focused primarily on retaining the RV campground.

Frequently cited reasons included:

- Tourism benefits.
- Support for local businesses.
- Historic significance.
- Downtown visitor accommodation.
- Preservation of community character and public space.

Key Themes Identified

1. Strong Support for Hospice Services

The strongest recurring theme was broad recognition that a dedicated hospice facility is needed within the region. Many respondents described the project as overdue and critical to improving end-of-life care.

2. Dignity and Compassionate End-of-Life Care

Many respondents emphasized the importance of:

- Privacy for patients and families.
- Comfort and dignity during end-of-life care.
- A home-like environment rather than a hospital setting.
- Better support for grieving families.

3. Preservation of Green Space

Respondents opposed to the location frequently cited:

- Loss of public parkland.
- Long-term environmental value.
- Recreational benefits.
- Preservation of public assets for future generations.

4. Importance of Location

Supporters identified the site's:

- Proximity to the hospital.
- Central location.
- Accessibility.
- Natural setting.

Opponents expressed concerns regarding:

- Traffic impacts.
- Emergency vehicle noise.
- School activity.
- Alternative locations viewed as more tranquil.

5. Public Consultation and Process

A recurring theme involved governance and transparency.

Respondents requested:

- Additional public consultation.
- Review of alternate sites.
- Greater clarity on the extent of the land donation.
- Information regarding future operating sustainability.
- Transparent decision-making processes.

Personal Stories and Community Experiences

A noteworthy feature of the correspondence was the large number of personal experiences shared by residents, healthcare workers, volunteers, and families.

Hospice Experiences Outside the Region

One resident described the experience of both her mother and sister receiving care in hospice facilities in Vernon and Abbotsford. She emphasized the comfort, dignity, and peace hospice care provided compared to hospital environments and expressed a desire for local families to have similar opportunities.

Family Members Dying in Hospital

Several respondents described loved ones spending their final days in hospital rooms due to the lack of a dedicated hospice facility.

One resident described her husband spending his final days following a brain bleed in a hospital room because palliative care space was unavailable. She stated a hospice facility would have provided a more appropriate setting for both patient and family.

Another resident shared experiences involving both parents dying in hospital settings and described the lack of privacy and peaceful surroundings during their final days.

Front-Line Healthcare Experiences

Numerous healthcare professionals submitted correspondence.

Registered Nurses, physicians, pharmacists, occupational therapists, and hospice volunteers described:

- End-of-life care being provided in acute-care environments.
- Patients being moved due to hospital capacity pressures.
- Family challenges encountered in hospital settings.
- The need for dedicated hospice beds and facilities.

One physician noted spending six weeks with a dying family member in hospital and stated that a dedicated hospice environment would have better served both the patient and family.

Historical and Community Connections

Residents opposed to the proposed site frequently shared memories involving:

- The former Baker Park swimming pool.
- Winter skating activities.
- Family gatherings.
- Community events.
- Long-term use of the campground.

Many indicated that their opposition was rooted in preserving a valued community space rather than opposition to hospice care.

Additional Observations

Strong Healthcare Sector Support

Supportive submissions included correspondence from:

- Physicians.
- Registered Nurses.
- Hospice volunteers.
- Pharmacists.
- Occupational Therapists.
- Health system leaders.
- Community health organizations.

Healthcare professionals consistently emphasized the need for expanded hospice services and the challenges associated with providing end-of-life care within acute-care hospital settings.

Regional Nature of the Project

Respondents frequently noted that the proposed hospice would serve:

- Cranbrook.
- Kimberley.
- Rural East Kootenay communities.
- Patients and families throughout the region.

Potential Areas of Compromise

Some respondents suggested possible approaches that could balance competing interests, including:

- Retaining portions of the campground.
- Maintaining public greenspace.
- Reducing rather than eliminating campground operations.
- Exploring integrated site designs.

Conclusion

The correspondence reviewed indicates that **approximately 58% of respondents support the proposed donation of land at Baker RV Campground for development of a hospice facility, while approximately 42% oppose use of the site.**

The feedback demonstrates strong community support for improving end-of-life care and establishing a dedicated hospice facility in the East Kootenay region. The principal disagreement concerns the appropriateness of the Baker RV Campground location and the use of public land for that purpose.

Supporters emphasize healthcare needs, dignity in end-of-life care, proximity to hospital services, and long-term community benefit. Opponents emphasize preservation of public green space, historical significance of the campground, tourism impacts, evaluation of alternative sites, and the importance of public consultation.

Overall, the correspondence suggests that while opinion is divided regarding location, there is broad consensus that hospice care remains an important and needed service for Cranbrook, Kimberley, and the wider East Kootenay region.