

# PRESS RELEASE

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## FRANKLIN PARK COALITION SURVEY SHOWS NEIGHBORHOOD SUPPORT FOR ADVANCING WHITE STADIUM RENOVATION

### Survey of 700 residents shows broad support for White Stadium renovation if park and community concerns are addressed

The Franklin Park Coalition (FPC), a 50-year old community-based, park advocacy organization that serves as a voice for the park and the diverse community of park users, conducted a survey to understand how park users feel about the City's proposed White Stadium renovation project.

More than **700 park users** responded to the survey between February 20 and March 8. Nearly all reside in the neighborhoods surrounding Franklin Park. Here's what we learned:

- **There is substantial support for this project:** 32% of respondents are "all for it"; 24% "cautiously support" the project; 25% "have some concerns"; and just 20% are "against it". Support for the project was remarkably consistent across neighborhoods. Many respondents were enthusiastic about renovating the stadium and bringing a women's soccer team to Franklin Park.
- **Many park users feel the stadium renovation will benefit Franklin Park and those who use it.** Many are excited about the potential for upgraded and well-maintained facilities, public bathrooms, and improvements to the adjacent Playstead, Overlook, and "Grove". Respondents also cited the benefits to BPS students, job creation, and enthusiasm for women's soccer.
- **Support for the project could be much greater if concerns of park users are addressed,** including: current project size and integration with the park; the impact on other park uses; conflicts with existing community events; and traffic and parking.

The survey results, including hundreds of thoughtful written responses, demonstrate the deep love that community members have for Franklin Park as an "urban oasis", an "emerald jewel", a "sacred" space. Park users want to ensure that the stadium does not infringe on their existing experience of the park. If concerns are addressed, we believe there is an exciting path forward for a renovated White Stadium.

"Renovation of White Stadium is long overdue," says Rickie Thompson, FPC Board President and lifelong park user. "The Park has much to gain if the project is done right. FPC will continue our work to lift up community concerns and work with the City to address them. We hope the stadium redevelopment goes forward and is not tied up in a lawsuit; we don't want to miss this generational opportunity to fix a major blight in the park."

FPC fought for implementation of the Franklin Park Action Plan. We celebrate Mayor Wu's State of the City announcement of new funding for a dedicated Franklin Park administrator with six additional maintenance and woodlands restoration staff. The revitalization of White Stadium and its surrounding areas can, and should, be a further step towards fulfilling Franklin Park's promise to the community.

The Franklin Park Coalition (<https://www.franklinparkcoalition.org/>) advocates for the park and runs free community programs in the park. Thousands attend summer concerts at the Elma Lewis Playhouse in the Park, the Kite & Bike Festival, and the Thanksgiving Turkey Trot. Our newsletter with close to 7,000 readers keeps our members informed about park events, news updates, and advocacy opportunities.

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