

# Barlee, Casorso, Walrod Park Engagement Summary Report

Winter 2025



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# Project background

Parks play a major role in the social and physical well-being of Kelowna’s citizens; these public spaces offer both passive and active recreational activities, are accessible to people of diverse ages and abilities, and contribute to our community’s sense of identity.

Kelowna is making significant investments to expand and enhance its parks network. Over the next few years, several new or improved parks will be delivered throughout the city. In Fall 2025, the City engaged residents on preliminary concepts for three different Urban parks – Walrod, Casorso and Barlee – delivered through bundled approach, which aims to accelerate the delivery of parks, and create efficiencies for design, procurement and engagement.

Barlee Park is classified as a neighbourhood park, whereas Walrod and Casorso are both community-level parks. A neighbourhood park is defined as being centrally located and serving approximately 2,000 residents within a five-minute walk. They may include small playgrounds, open grass area, benches, picnic tables, and a secondary pedestrian access. Neighbourhood parks are not anticipated to generate or accommodate significant traffic or noise.

Larger, community level parks serve approximately 12,000 people within a 3km radius and may include amenities such as multi-use courts, sportsfields, community gardens, multi-use trails and off-leash dog parks. Small-scale washrooms and on-site parking are requirements of this type of park, along with being located on a bus route.

This report presents a comprehensive summary of community feedback gathered, highlighting key themes and concerns that have emerged, with the aim of informing the final design for each park.

# Approach to engagement

Project staff worked with a consultant to develop all three designs. Detailed technical and demographic analysis, along with a needs evaluation helped inform the amenities shown in each design. Engagement was aimed at understanding whether residents were generally in favour of what was proposed, priorities for new amenities, and potential opportunities for improvements.

Between October and November 2025, the City led a public engagement process to present and seek feedback on preliminary park concepts. Through an in-person pop-up event and the use of digital tools, residents shared their perspectives on the designs.

403 survey submissions were received. Participants were given the option of completing the full survey or just the sections most relevant to them. In addition, staff presented the concepts at the Farmers’ Market in October where approximately 77 people stopped to view the designs and speak with staff.

## Limitations

While a variety of tactics were used to reach a diverse range of citizens (see: Public outreach), results do not represent a statistically significant, random sample of all Kelowna citizens. Due to the opt-in and open nature of participation, results do not necessarily reflect the views of all Kelowna citizens.

Advertising efforts spanned a number of channels, including news releases, social media, e-newsletters, and traditional media. At the same time, audiences are becoming increasingly dispersed, making it more difficult to reach residents. Participants, as a result, are comprised of individuals who were reached through promotion – and among those reached, typically only those with a high degree or interest in the topic, along with the time and ability to participate, submit a response.

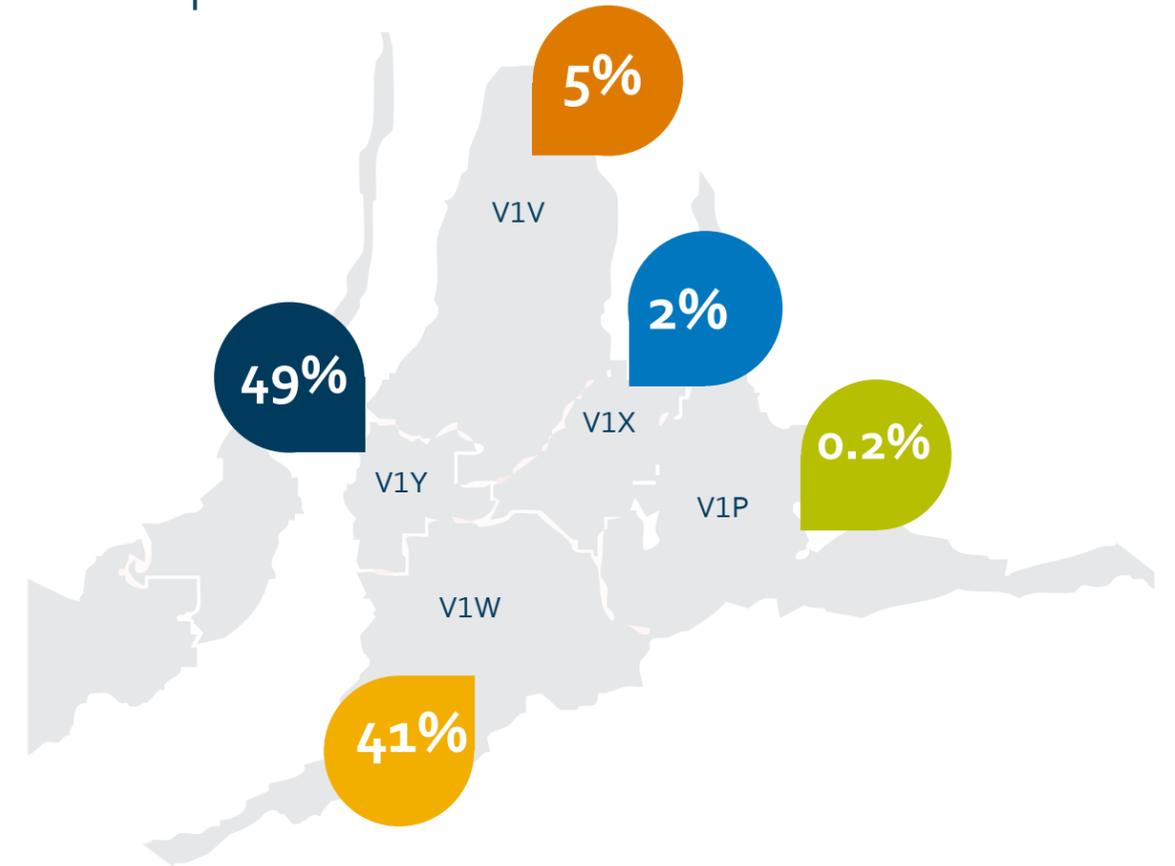
The topics presented may inadvertently exclude various groups (such as people for whom English is not a first language, those with reading challenges, etc.)



## Participation at a glance



## About our respondents



Nearly 90% of respondents reside within the project area.

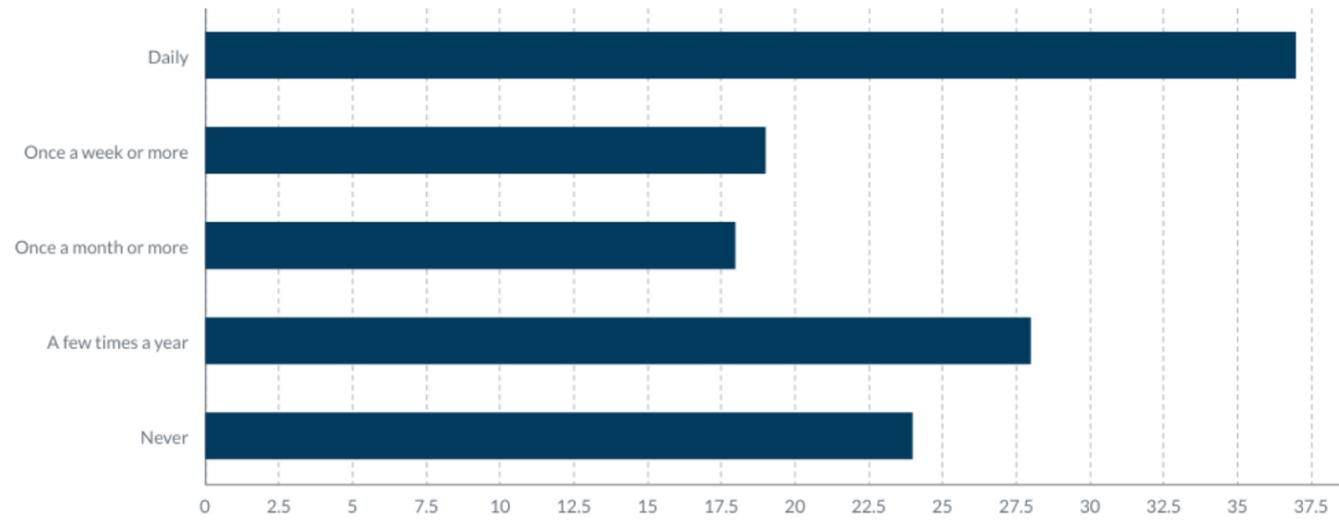
	V1P	V1V	V1W	V1X	V1Y
Labour force participation	69%	66%	60%	66%	66%
Primary method of travel to work	68% drive 4% passenger	63% drive 4% passenger	62% drive 4% passenger	61% drive 5% passenger	52% drive 7% walk
Dwelling type	76% detached	65% detached	67% detached	57% detached	35% detached
Tenure	80% own 20% rent	62% own 38% rent	77% own 23% rent	66% own 34% rent	49% own 51% rent
Avg. household income	\$152,897	\$143,805	\$172,427	\$110,814	\$114,644
Median maintainer age	54	48	57	51	47

# Barlee Park

Barlee Park is an existing park located in the Midtown Urban Centre. The proposed design will nearly double its total area to .37 hectares. Residents were invited to share their thoughts and priorities related to the park's proposed expansion with 126 respondents for this section of the survey.

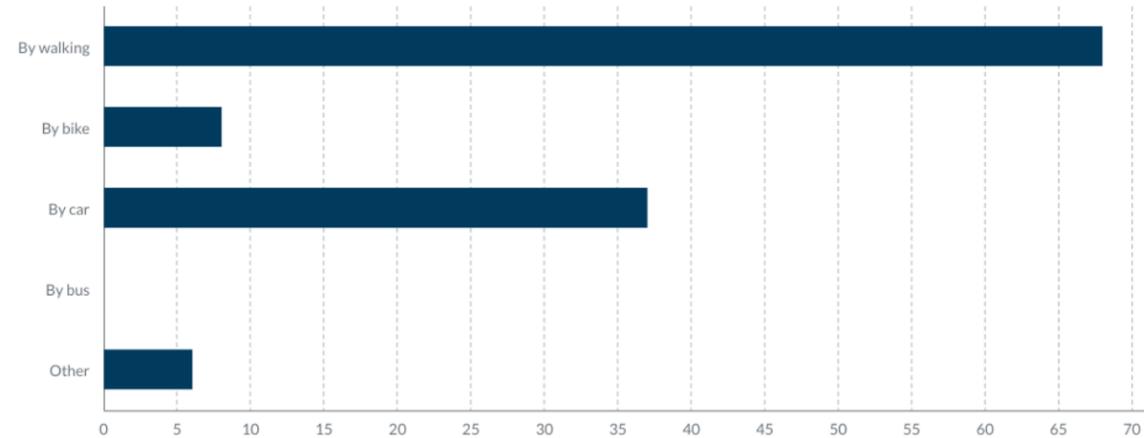
Asked how often respondents visit the existing park, nearly one-third said they visit daily and another 30 per cent said they visit at least once a week or once a month.

How often do you visit Barlee Park?



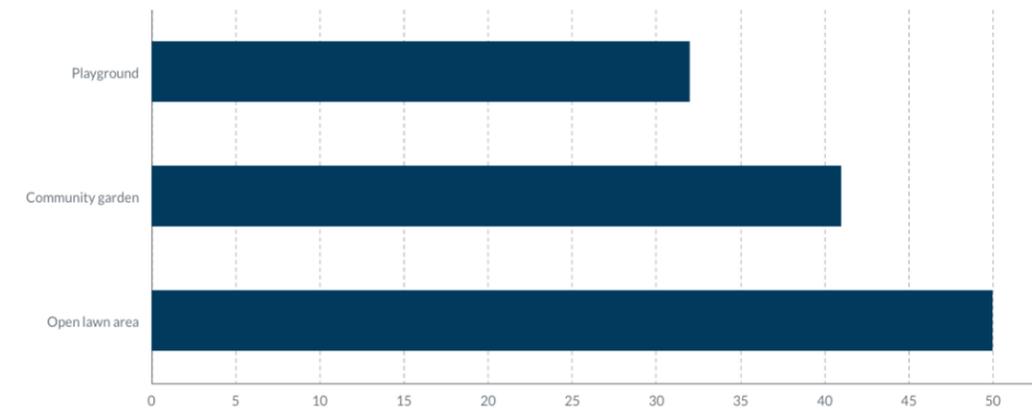
The vast majority of those who said they visit the park said they do so by walking, consistent with the compact nature of this neighbourhood and proximity to nearby apartments, and the neighbourhood-level classification of Barlee Park itself.

How do you typically access Barlee Park?



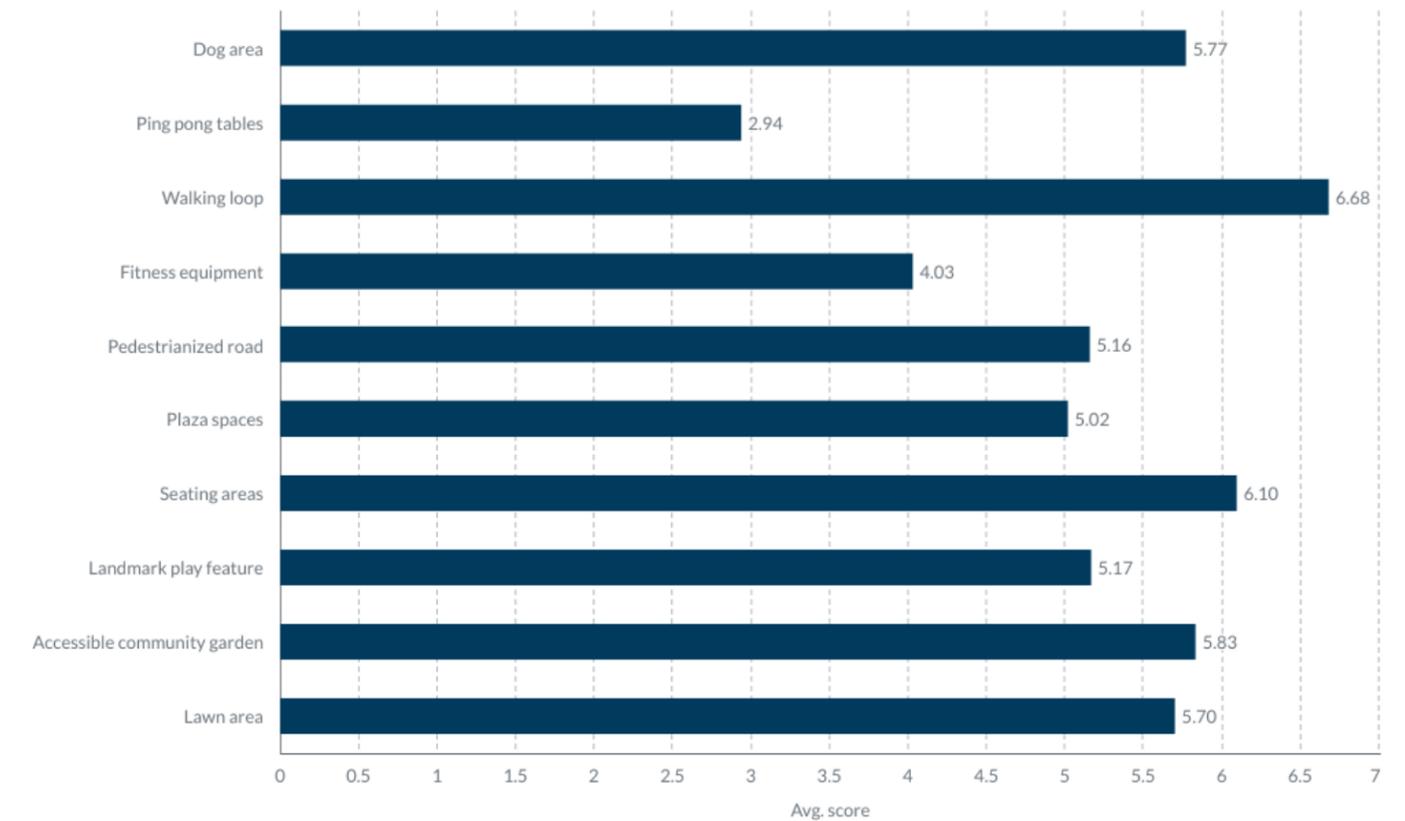
Asked which existing amenity was most important, the playground ranked lowest which may be reflective of the above-benchmark proportion of seniors and lower number of children within this neighbourhood compared to others.

Which of the following existing amenities in the park is most important to you?

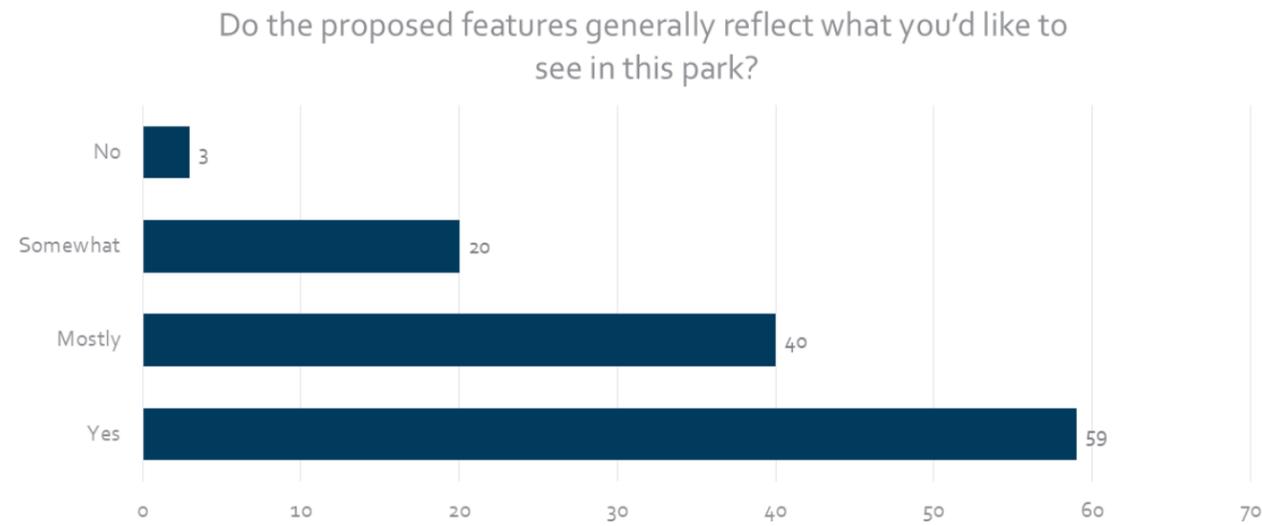


The walking loop was the highest ranking among the amenities presented in the design, followed by seating areas and the dog area.

Please rank following proposed amenities in order of importance for inclusion in the final park design



Over 81% of respondents said the park design reflected what they wish to see.



When asked what additional features might be considered to help improve their experience of the park, **81 comments** were entered, emphasizing a need for:

- Safety and security**
  - Calls for increased security, regular patrols, lighting and security cameras to address concerns about crime, substance use, and the presence of unhoused individuals.
  - Suggestions included better lighting and clear sightlines to improve safety.
  - Concerns about the pedestrianized roadway.
- Parking / road design**
  - Requests for more parking spaces and/or free parking
  - Some suggested reducing other amenities to allow for additional parking.
- Washrooms, drinking water, sanitary facilities**
  - Many respondents emphasized the need for public washrooms, outhouses, or sanitary conveniences, especially for families and community gardeners.
  - Concerns about potential misuse of washrooms were also noted.
  - Drinking fountains were requested.
- Shade and landscaping**
  - Many comments highlighted the need for more trees, shaded areas, and landscaping to provide relief during hot summers.
  - This was accompanied by suggestions for drought-resistant plants and native species



"More trees in the lawn area so my kids can kick a ball or throw a frisbee in the shade."

"Adequate and regular policing of the area to keep it safe for all people."

- Playground and youth amenities**
  - Desire for more play structures suitable for older children and teens (e.g., basketball hoops, climbing walls, pump tracks, monkey bars).
  - Requests for accessible playground equipment for children with mobility challenges.
  - Requests for separate areas for small and large dogs, water sources for dogs, and shaded dog parks.
- Dog park features**
  - Concerns about dogs being off-leash in undesignated areas.
  - Desire to see agility equipment and larger dog park
- Community and social spaces**
  - Suggestions for additional seating areas, market plazas, spaces for community events, interactive art areas and art installations.
- Water features**
  - Interest in features like ponds, pools, splash pads, or fountains
- Active transportation**
  - Calls for secure bike parking, bicycle paths, and features to support active transportation
  - Some calls for a completely pedestrianized road versus partial

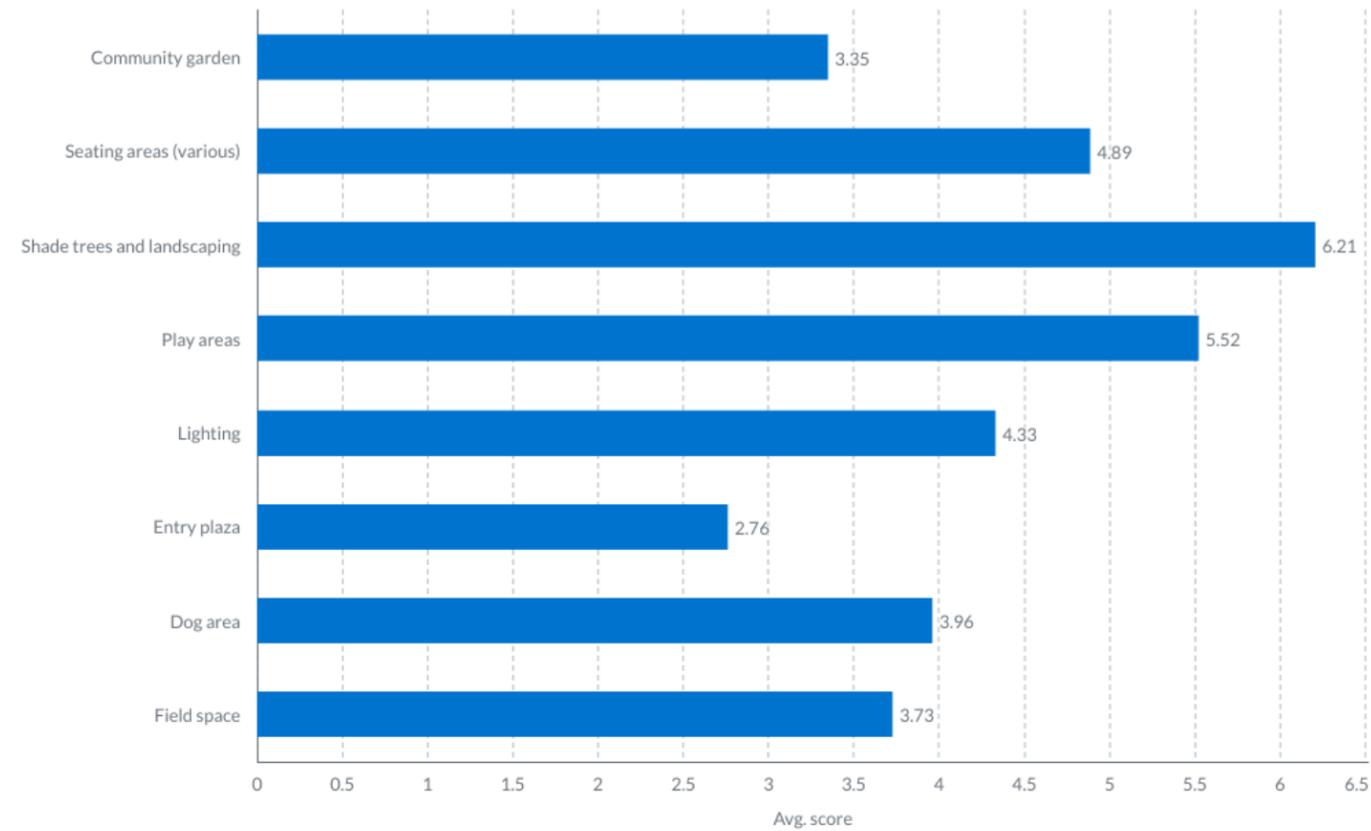


# Casorso Park

Casorso Park is a new 1.48 hectare park, adjacent to Casorso Elementary School. 272 respondents answered this section of the survey, which was the largest response among all three parks.

When asked to rank their priorities for the new park, shade trees and landscaping ranked highest. This was followed by play areas and seating areas.

Please rank following proposed amenities in order of importance for inclusion in the final park design



Respondents had corresponding suggestions for improvements for each of these amenities, asking for more shade, trees, seating, and areas for older kids to play.

When asked what additional features might be considered to help improve their experience of the park, some said that certain features such as parking, open field space, the community gardens or dog park should be removed to allow for greater amenities. A total of **196 comments** were received, with the following themes emerging:

Sports and recreation facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strong desire for sports courts (including tennis, pickleball, basketball, bocce, ping pong), and multi-use fields.</li> <li>Desire for fitness equipment for kids and adults.</li> </ul>
Water features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several respondents requested splash pads, wading pools, spray parks, water parks, or fountains. These are seen as essential for cooling off in summer, providing inclusive play for children, and compensating for limited lake access.</li> <li>Calls for drinking water fountains.</li> <li>Natural water features, such as ponds, were also mentioned.</li> </ul>
Bike tracks and skateparks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strong desire for pump tracks/bike skills facilities – some said neighbourhood kids are already using the park for bike skills development and that there is significant unmet demand, even with nearby Dehart Park’s track.</li> <li>Likewise, there is a strong desire for skateboarding and scooter facilities.</li> </ul>
Playgrounds and youth amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A strong desire for play structures designed especially for older children and teens - examples included climbing walls, monkey bars, zip lines, obstacle courses.</li> <li>Requests for swings, teeter totters, and merry-go-rounds/saucers</li> <li>Calls for accessible playground equipment for children with mobility challenges.</li> <li>Requests for features that encourage creative and nature-based play.</li> <li>Desire for unique features that are not replicated by the nearby school or other area parks.</li> <li>Concerns about playground safety (surfacing, equipment design).</li> </ul>
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments reflected mixed views on parking—some wanted more parking spaces (especially accessible ones), while others preferred less parking to encourage walking and biking.</li> <li>Concerns about parking location, access, and traffic safety were also heard.</li> <li>Some said parking should be reduced to allow for other amenities, citing that the surrounding neighbourhood offers ample on-street parking options.</li> <li>Several commentors requested bike parking facilities such as bike lockers or bike racks.</li> </ul>
Dog park features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mixed opinions – some support the park and made suggestions for lighting in dog areas, water taps, along with specific requests related to surface design/material selection, landscaping, and seating. Requests for agility equipment were also heard.</li> <li>Requests for separation of dog areas and safety features such as fencing.</li> <li>Others oppose a dog park, citing concerns about noise, hygiene, and exclusion of non-dog owners.</li> </ul>
Pedestrian features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desire for walking or running path around the perimeter of the park</li> <li>Requests for sidewalks to support direct access to the school</li> </ul>
Seating and shade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desire for more seating, especially near sports fields and playgrounds.</li> <li>Requests for shade (trees, canopies) in play and seating areas.</li> </ul>

- Environment / landscaping
  - Desire for more trees, diverse tree species, drought-resistant landscaping, native plants, and reduction of grass area.
  - Interest in features that support wildlife and pollinators.
  - Some asked that the retention of existing mature trees be prioritized.
- Safety and security
  - Requests for lighting, clear sightlines, and safe crossings.
  - Comments on fencing to separate the park from private residences and prevent unwanted access.
  - Neighbouring residents wanted to see the washroom and parking lots relocated to avoid potential nuisance issues
- Community and social spaces
  - Suggestions for picnic areas, BBQ and food truck locations, interactive features like chess boards, and spaces for art or community events.
- Accessibility and inclusion
  - Requests for features that support wheelchair users and people with mobility aids.
  - Calls for inclusive design in play and seating areas.

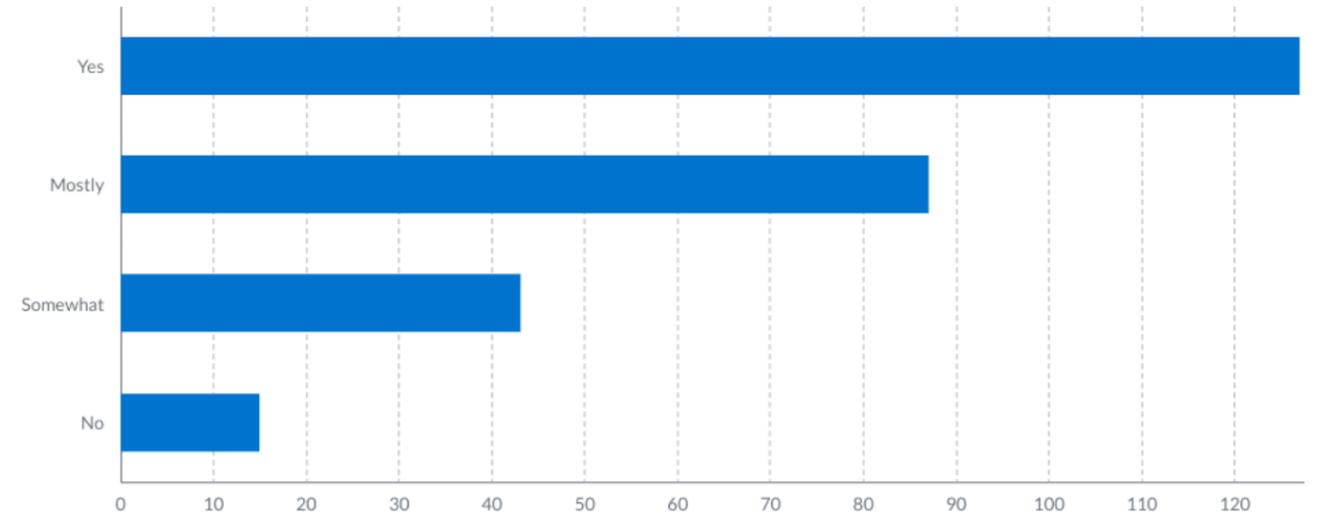
The majority of those who provided feedback on the Casorso Park said that it met their expectations, with the vast majority saying they are very likely to visit the park once it's built.



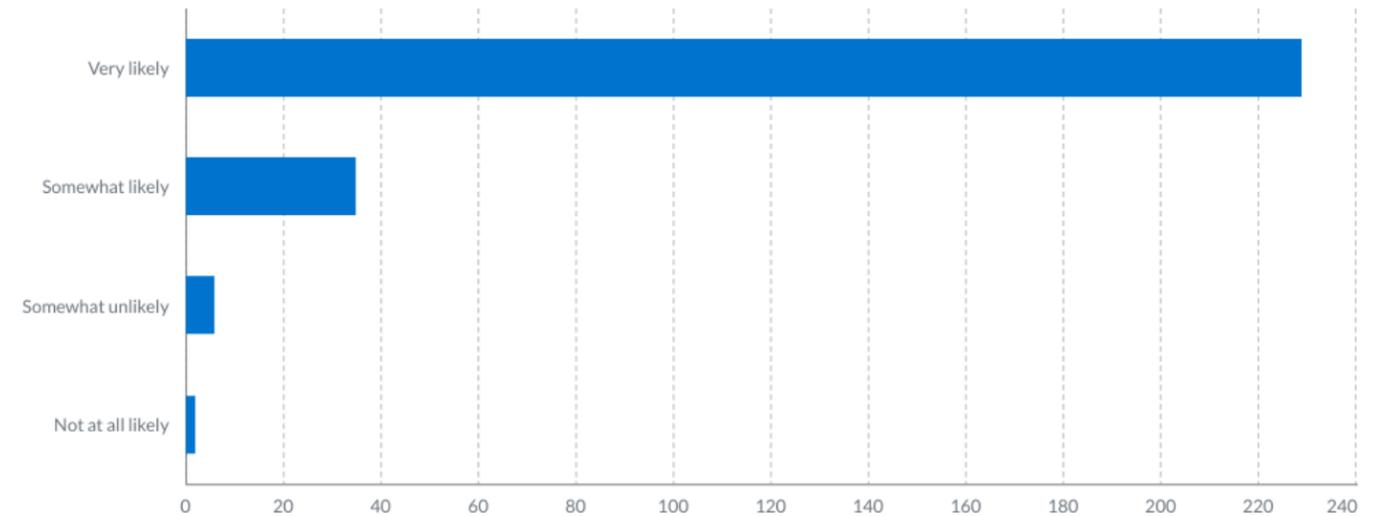
*"You are missing something like a skate park or adventure area for older kids."*

*"another games area for all ages such as: a tennis or pickle ball court, basketball, or badminton, bocce court."*

Do the proposed features generally reflect what you'd like to see in this park?



How likely are you to visit Casorso Community Park once it is developed?

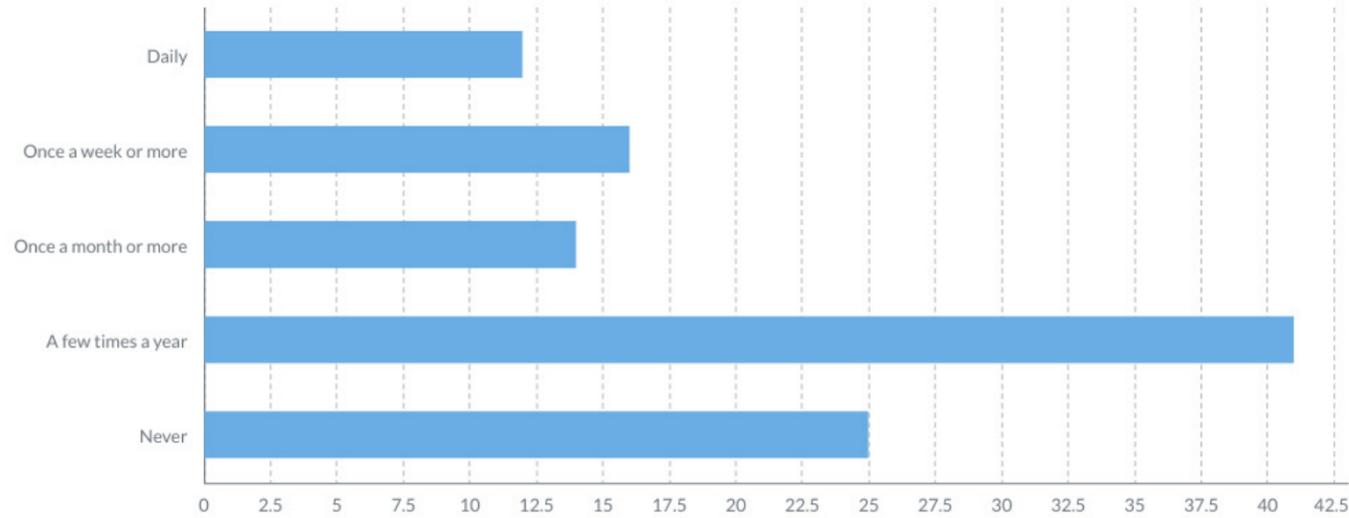


# Walrod Park

Walrod Park is an existing community park that is currently under-utilized. The proposed design explores expansion of the park and improved amenities to encourage more use of the space. 108 respondents completed this section of the survey.

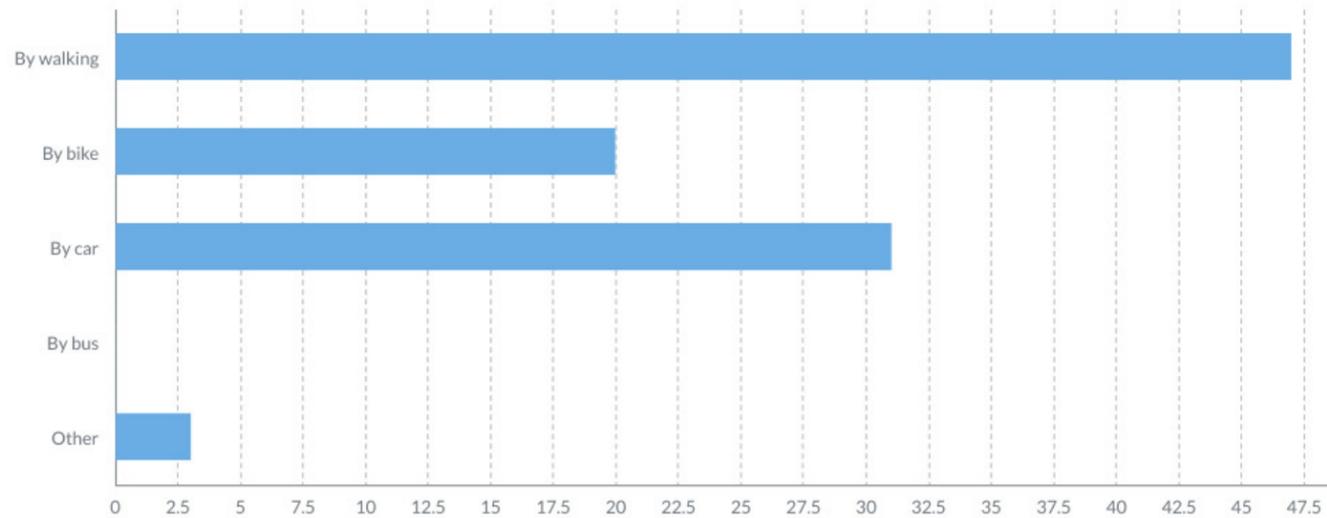
The majority of respondents said they seldom or never visit the existing park, consistent with the understanding that the park has unmet potential.

How often do you visit Walrod Park?



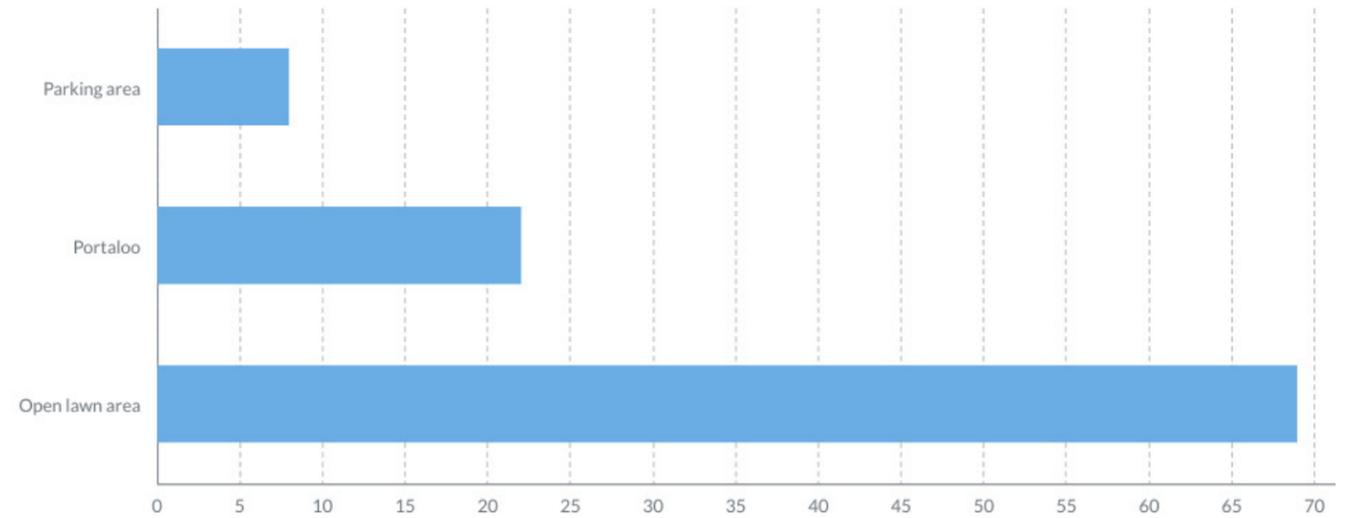
Nearly half of those who said they visit the park said they do so by walking, which reflects that the park is within walking distance of most homes within the adjacent North End.

How do you typically access Walrod Park?



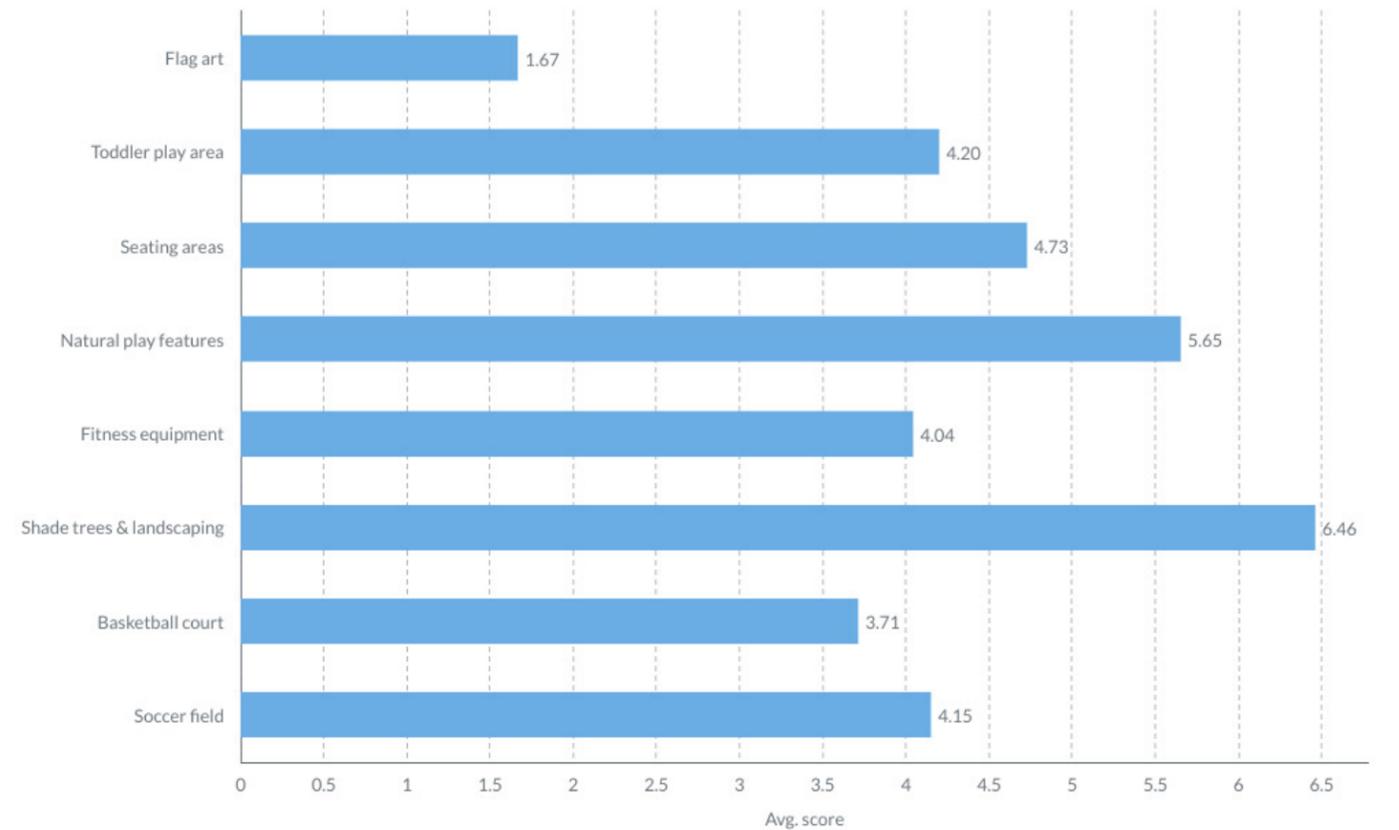
Of the park's existing features, the open lawn was deemed most important by the majority of respondents.

Which of the following existing amenities in the park is most important to you?



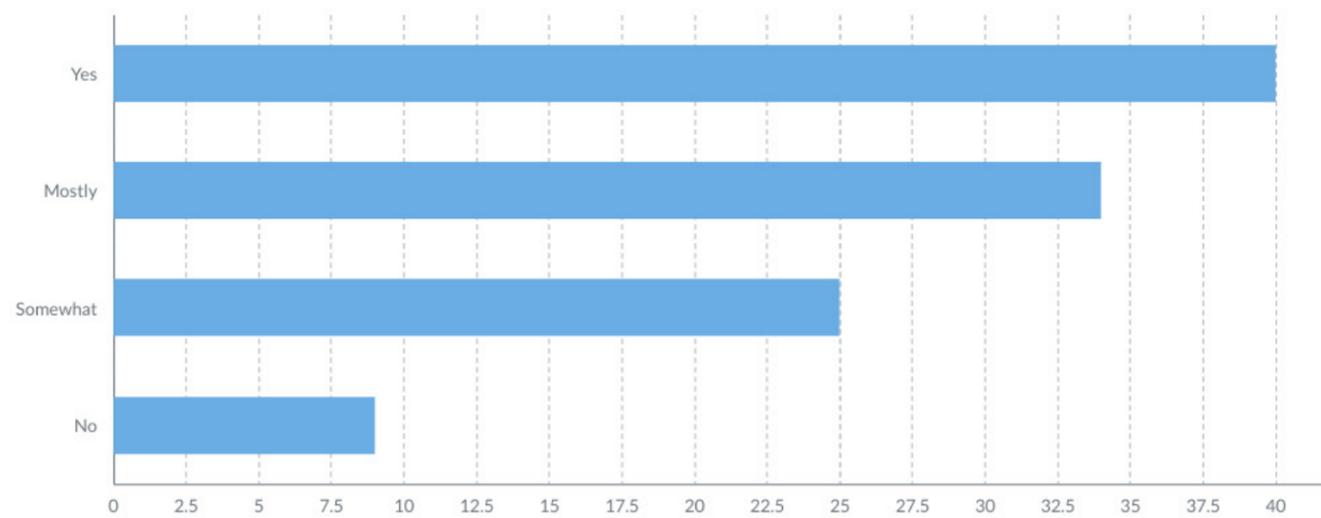
Shade trees, natural play features and seating areas were among the highest ranked proposed features.

Please rank following proposed amenities in order of importance for inclusion in the final park design



While the majority of respondents said the design met their expectations, this concept saw slightly lower support compared to the others with about 68.5% saying the concept reflects what they wish to see.

Do the proposed features generally reflect what you'd like to see in this park?



When asked what additional features might be considered to help improve their experience of the park, **66 comments** were entered, emphasizing a need for:

- Dog area /off-leash space**
  - Many respondents requested a dedicated dog area or a field where dogs can run off-leash.
- Parking**
  - Requests for more parking spaces, accessible parking for people with disabilities, along with concerns about parking location were common.
- Seating and shade**
  - Respondents want more benches and shaded seating areas, especially near sports fields and playgrounds, for comfort and to watch activities.
- Playgrounds and youth amenities**
  - Suggestions included more swings, teeter-totters, climbing structures, and play equipment for various age groups, including accessible features for children with mobility challenges.
- Sports and recreation facilities**
  - Requests for tennis/pickleball and volleyball courts, lacrosse boxes, horseshoe pitches, and multi-use sports areas.
  - Some also suggested disc golf and pump tracks for bikes.
- Washrooms and drinking water**
  - Comments and concerns about the location of the washroom facilities were heard, alongside a desire to see them moved to another area in the park, further from neighbouring residences.
  - Fountains were frequently mentioned as essential amenities.
- Environment/landscaping**
  - Desire for more trees, shade, and natural landscaping.
  - Some respondents suggested drought-resistant plants, mulching, and preserving mature trees.
- Safety and security**
  - Concerns about safety, lighting, and the impact of unhoused individuals.
  - Requests for features that discourage outdoor sheltering and substance use, with suggestions for security patrols.
- Accessibility and inclusion**
  - Calls for accessible paths, play equipment, and features for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Community and social spaces**
  - Suggestions for picnic areas, event spaces, vending areas, and spaces for community gatherings.
- Active transportation**
  - Requests for bike racks, secure bicycle/e-scooter parking, and safe walking/cycling paths.
- Year-round use**
  - Interest in features that support winter activities, such as sledding hills, fire pits, and lighting for evening use.



*"It would be great to have some water fountains for the people using the sports fields and basketball court."*

*Dog area. A field where dogs are allowed to run."*

## Event summary

The project team spoke to 77 residents at the October 25 Farmer’s Market. Attendees were able to speak to City staff one-on-one and have discussions about their priorities and concerns for the different sites.

In general, feedback about the three parks concepts was positive. The general sense from the community was that parks are highly valued spaces and the more public outdoor green spaces - regardless of what amenities are provided in them - the better. Below is a sample of feedback received:

- Desire for Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to be proactively considered, particularly at Barlee Park
- Acknowledgment that activation of the Barlee Park location may help discourage undesirable activity in the area
- Some support for partial closure of Barlee Road for pedestrians
- Concerns about tree canopy loss and corresponding support for trees, open green space, and other landscaping features within parks
- Appreciation for dog areas included in the concept designs

Additional comments included a desire to see accessibility built into parks and free parking at parks so as not to deter regular visitors

## Conclusion

Creating parks that are safe, inclusive, and accessible is essential for fostering vibrant communities. By prioritizing amenities for all ages and abilities, incorporating natural materials, increasing greenery, and designing spaces that deter unsafe behaviours, city planners can ensure that parks remain welcoming and enjoyable for everyone. Final designs will aim to meet residents’ evolving needs while maintaining a thoughtful balance between recreation, nature, and community safety.

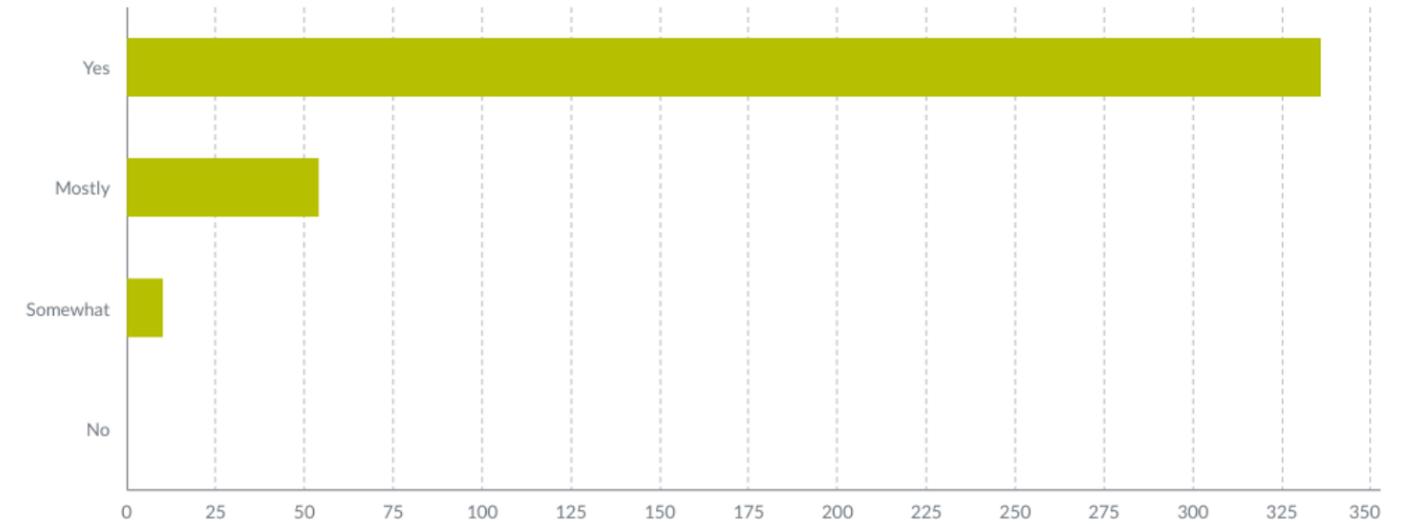
## Public outreach

Channel	Reach
Get Involved	4,017 page views; 2,768 visitors; 435 contributions
Direct outreach	825 letters sent within a ~50 metre radius of each park
Social media ads	101,538 impressions; 31,530 reach; 1,442 clicks
Google ads	31,701 impressions; 167 clicks
E-newsletter	9,278 recipients; 5,047 opens; 355 clicks
News Releases (2)	5,359 recipients; 57% open rate; 88 clicks 5,699 recipients; 54% open rate; 99 clicks
In-community signage	Posters placed at Barlee, Casorso and Walrod park sites

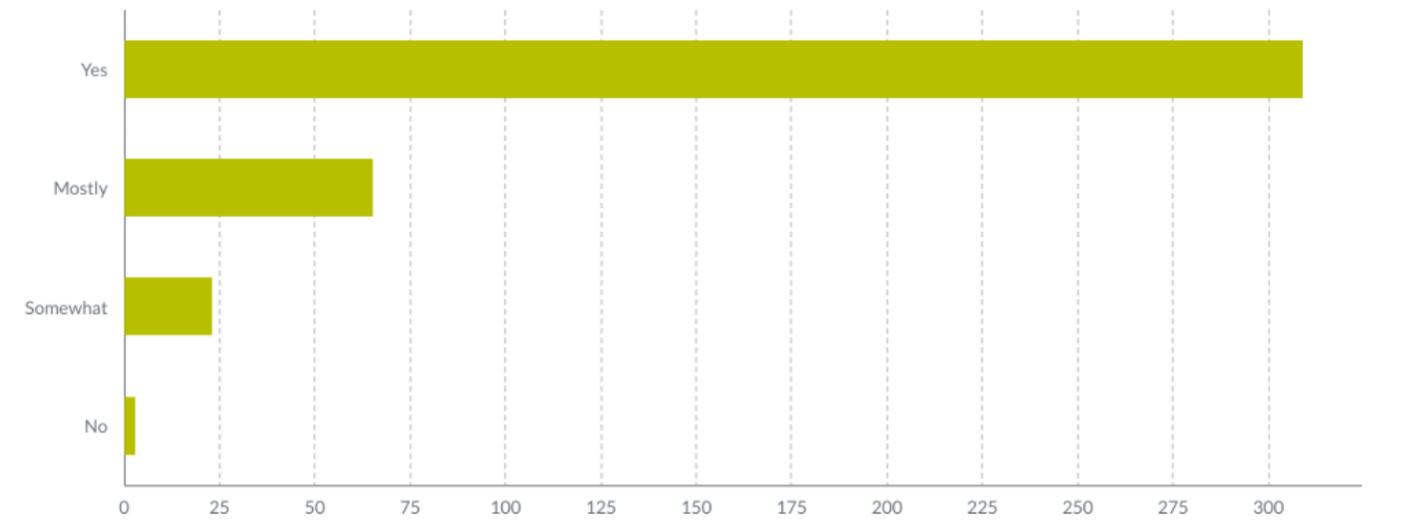
## Engagement feedback

84% of survey respondents said the information provided was easy to understand; 83.5% said they had enough information to participate, and 76.35% said they understood how their feedback will be used.

Was the information provided easy to understand?



Did you have enough information to participate in a meaningful way?



Do you understand how your input will be used?

