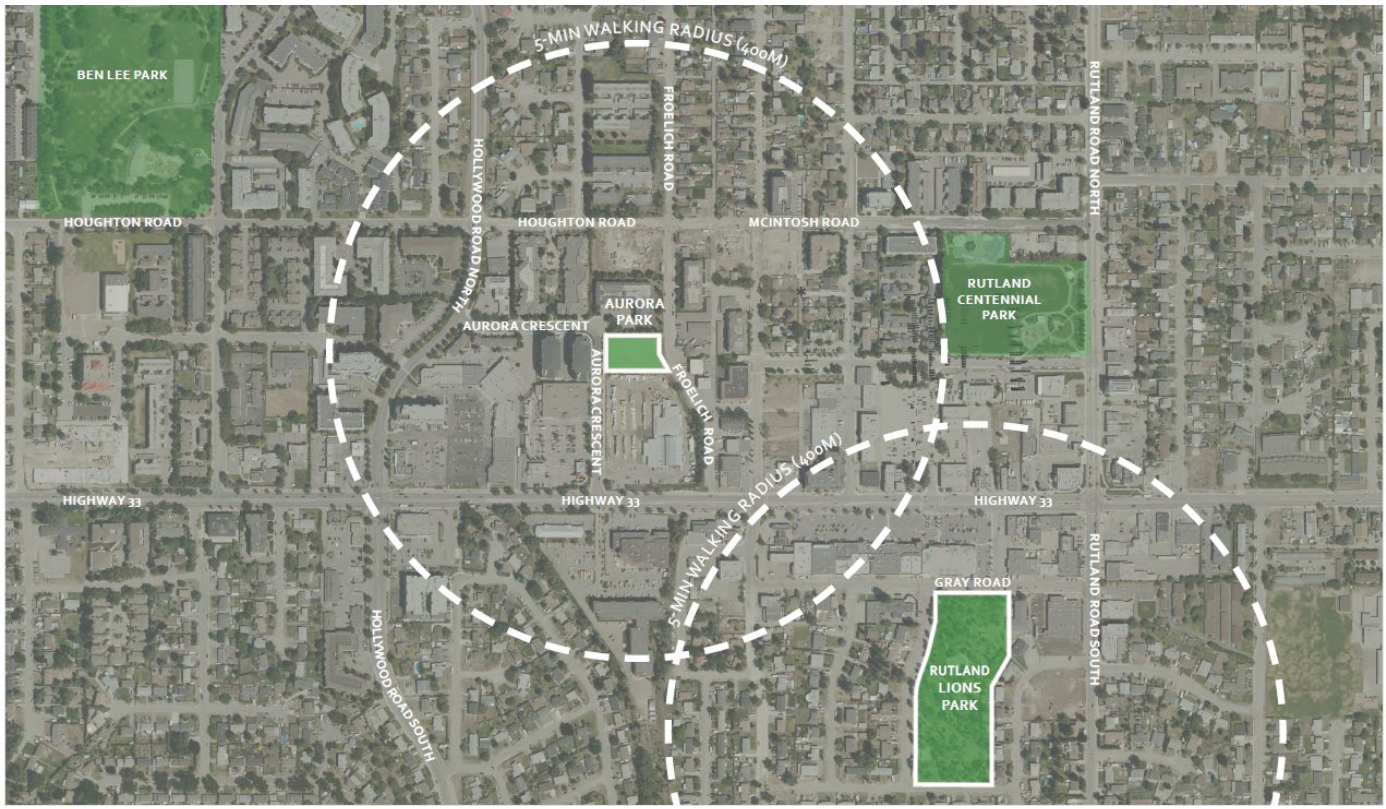
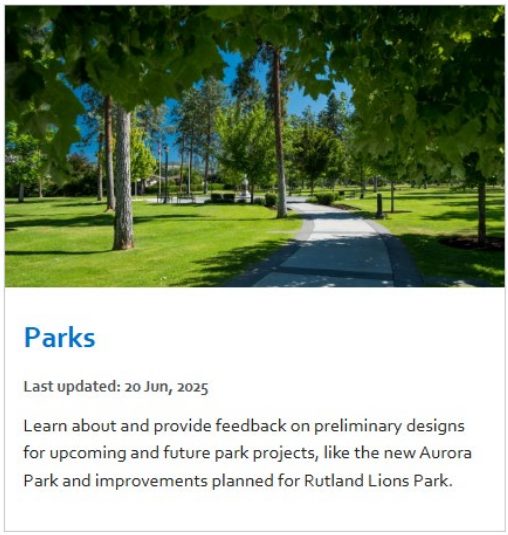
Aurora Park & Rutland Lions Park Engagement Report

July 2025



Project background

In 2025, the City of Kelowna sought public feedback to help inform future designs of two Rutland park projects. Aurora Park, a brand-new neighbourhood park, and Rutland Lions Park, an existing community park scheduled for improvements. Due to their proximity and Rutland audience alignment, promotion of the engagement was done for both parks simultaneously. Responders were able to learn about both park projects and complete one or both parks surveys. While park concept designs were not yet available, surveys were constructed to understand the community's needs, values and priorities for these parks and featured possible future amenities.

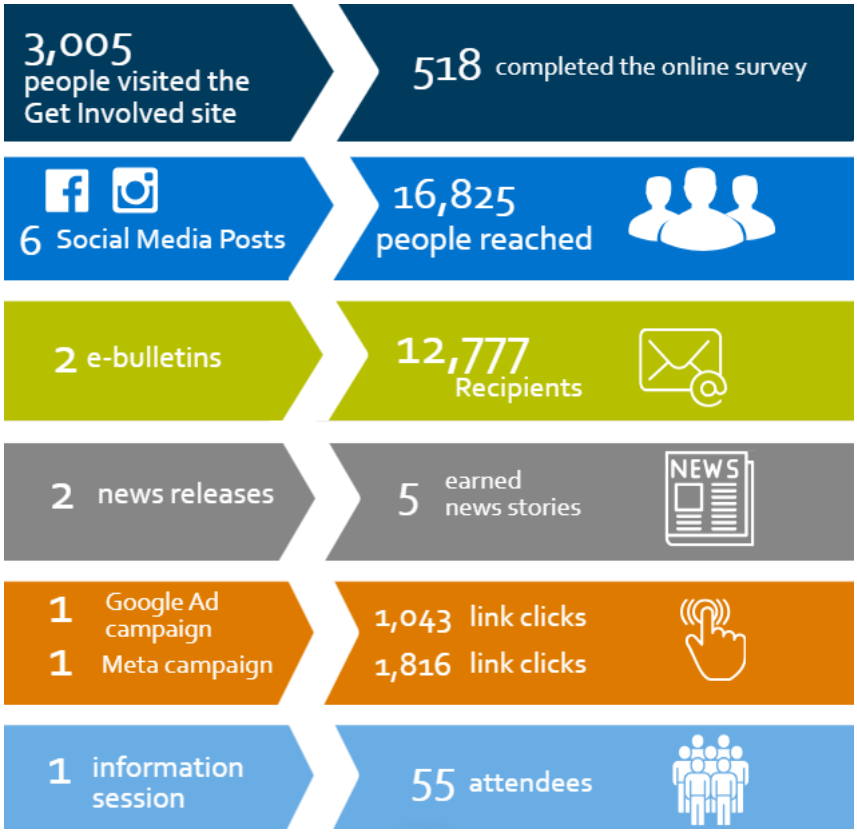


Engagement Overview

Residents in the Rutland neighbourhood were engaged to learn more about the project, ask questions to the project team and provide feedback on features they'd most like to see in the Aurora Park design and Rutland Lions Park re-design. Feedback was generated through an online survey on the *GetInvolved* engagement portal and an in-person survey completed during the Information Session held on June 22, 2025. Residents had the choice to share feedback on one or both of the parks surveys. Both park surveys consisted of 15 questions each and surveys were live from June 19 to July 13, 2025.

Promotion and information on the engagement opportunities included:

- Instagram organic reach: 6,633 (81 post interactions)
- Facebook organic reach: 10,192 (55 link clicks)
- Letters to 276 properties during the engagement
- City In Action newspaper ad
- Sound-off board with engagement panels placed in Rutland Lions Park during the length of the engagement



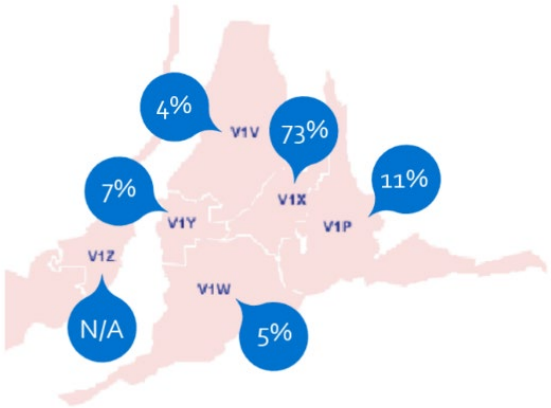
During the engagement, the online survey was completed by 518 respondents, 471 of which were survey submissions for Rutland Lions Park and 318 were for Aurora Park.

55 people attended the in-person Information Session, held as part of the 4th annual Rutland Residents Celebration, and 20 paper surveys were collected for Rutland Lions Park and 15 paper surveys were collected for Aurora Park.

333 surveys received for Aurora Park

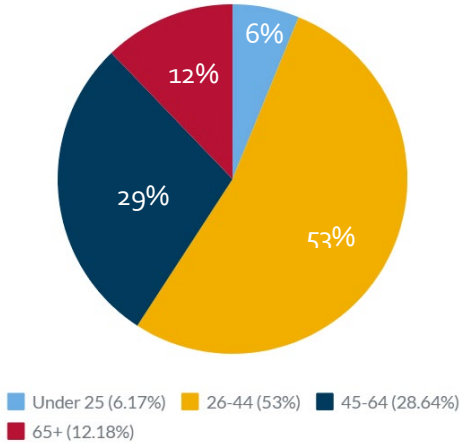
491 surveys received for Rutland Lions Park

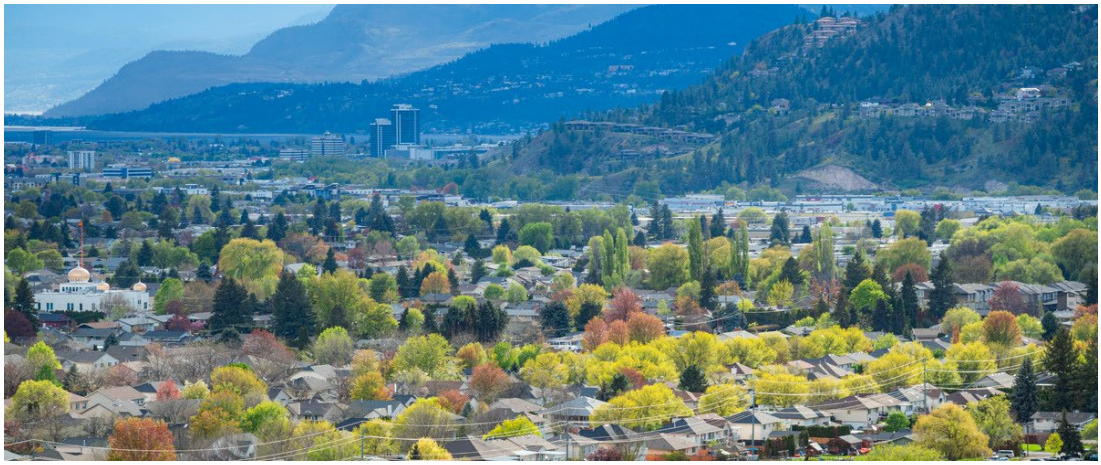
Respondent Demographics



More than 73 per cent of respondents selected Rutland as their area of residence, which aligns with the project locations and the targeting of this engagement campaigns promotions.

There was a range of age among the respondents, with the largest (53%) between the ages of 26-44. This is consistent with known demographic data for the East-Central boundary of Kelowna, where roughly 55 per cent of the population are residents aged 35-44.





Aurora Park Survey Results

Total of 333 survey responses (including online and in person)

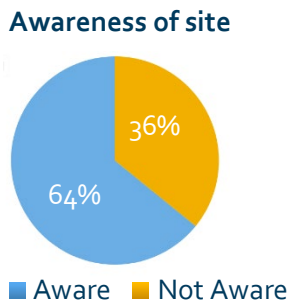
Respondents were able to complete one or both park surveys, therefore their respective park survey results and feedback will be kept separated to maintain the integrity of this report.

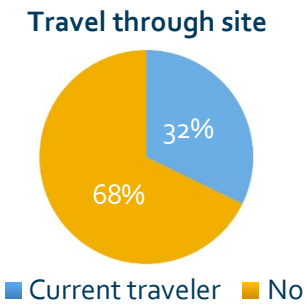
Limitations: While a variety of tactics were used to reach a diverse range of citizens results from open surveys such as those provided do not represent a statistically significant, random sample of all Kelowna citizens. Due to the opt-in and open nature of participation, results do not necessarily reflect the views of all Kelowna citizens.

Familiarity and current use

The majority of respondents expressed they were aware of the existing Aurora Park site.

Approximately a third of respondents stated they have traveled through the park site to get from Froelich Road to Aurora Crescent (or vice versa).





Of those that travel through the park site, the most common reasons for doing so included:

- Travel between home and local businesses
- Walking and recreational exercise
- Dog walking and pet-related activities

Additionally, the most commonly expressed reasons for using the site in the past included:

- Use as a shortcut or throughway
- Walking and dog-related activities

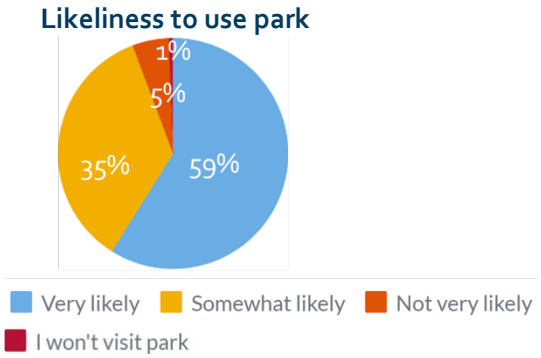
Only a couple respondents mentioned using the site for recreational purposes, such as kite flying and winter activities including snowman building and tobogganing.

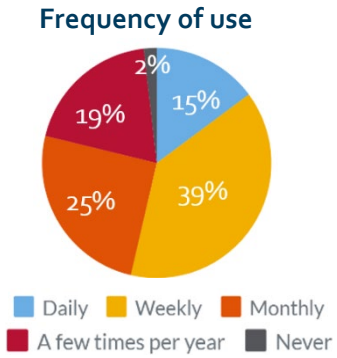




Future Park Use

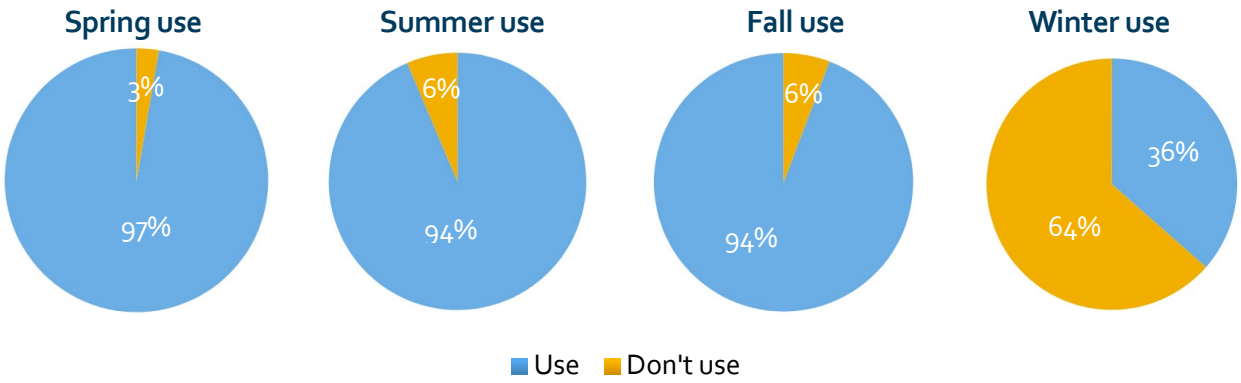
Respondents expressed an overwhelming likelihood of visiting the future park. Additionally, respondents noted their expected frequency of use, with over half stating that they'd expect to use the park at least once per week.





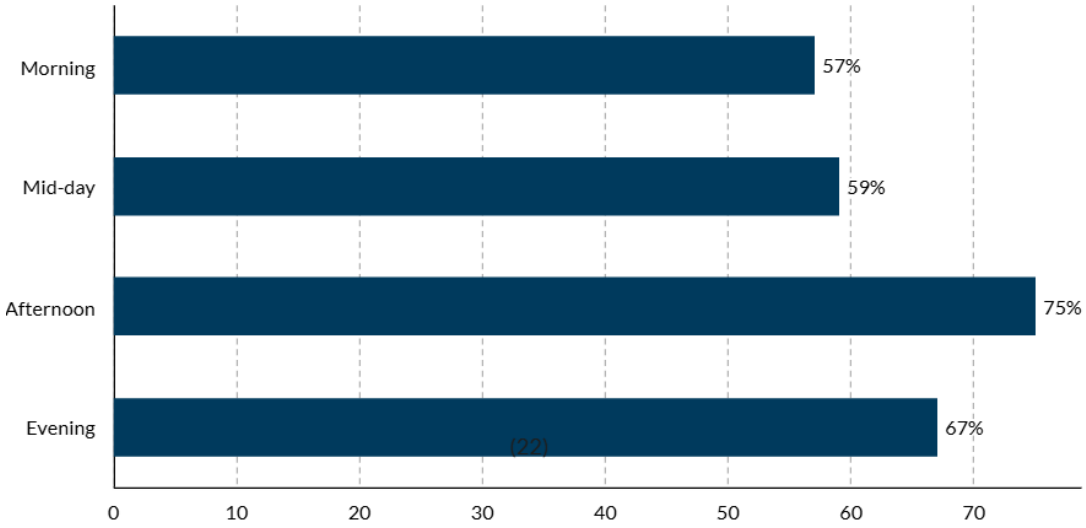
Seasons of use

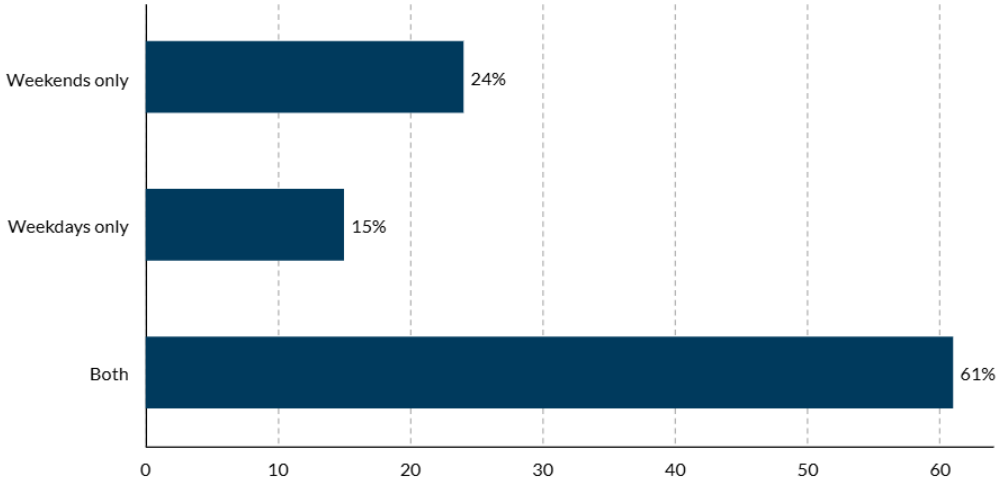
Based on the responses, responders suggested they'd use the park at all seasons of the year, with the most popular times of use being spring, summer and fall.



Times of use

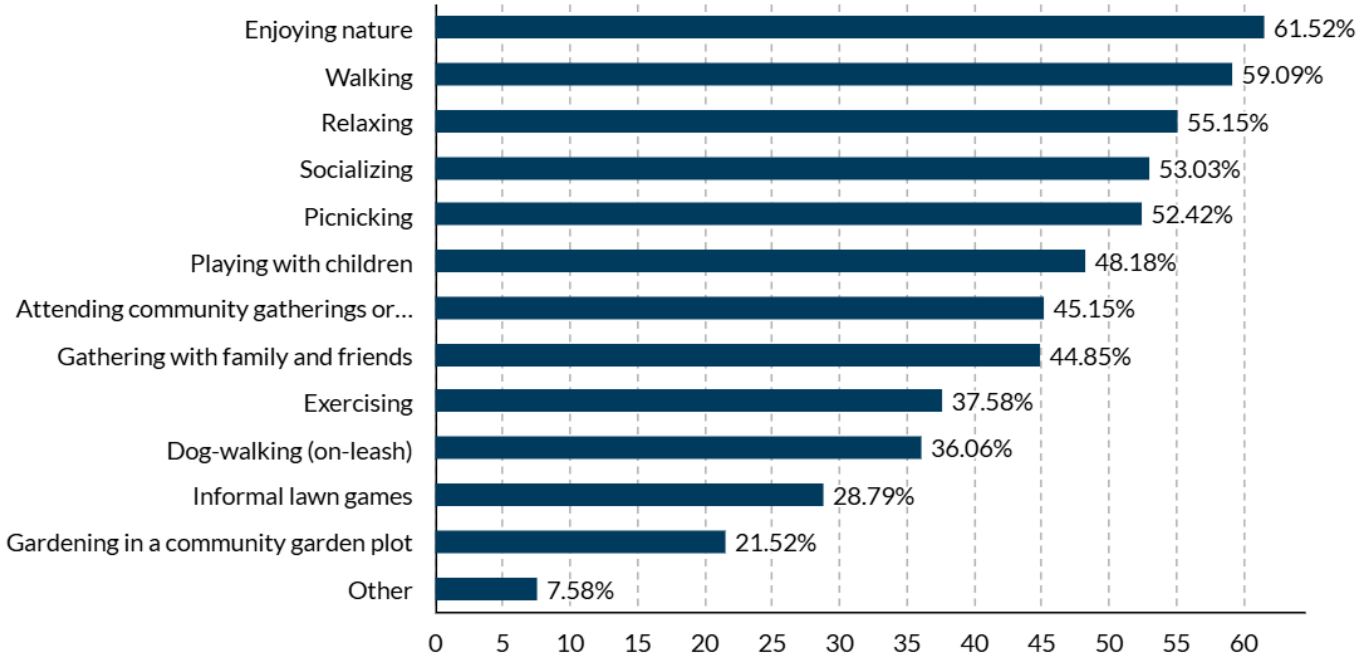
Respondents suggested they'd use the park at various times of the day, with the most popular being afternoon and evening, followed by mid-day and morning. Additionally, the vast majority of respondents (61%) said they'd use the park both on weekdays and weekends.





Participant Activities & Use of Site Features

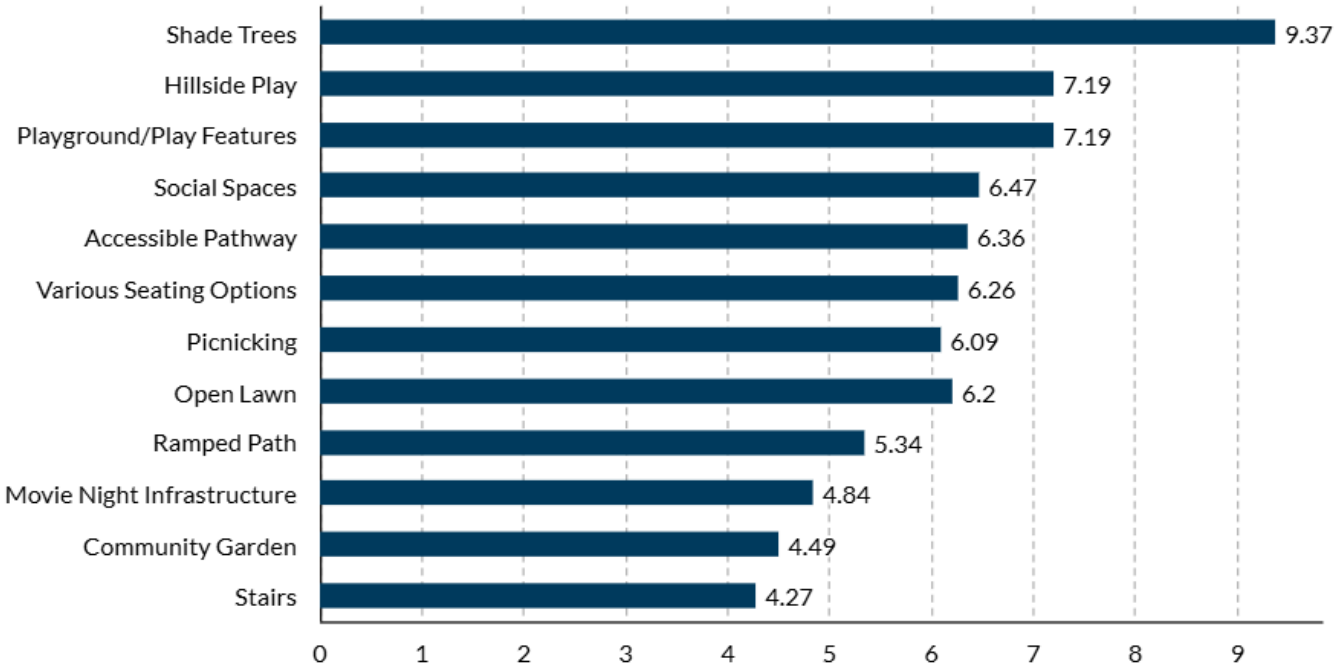
Respondents provided feedback on the activities they'd like to perform in the park. Of the options provided, enjoying nature, walking and relaxing were the most selected.

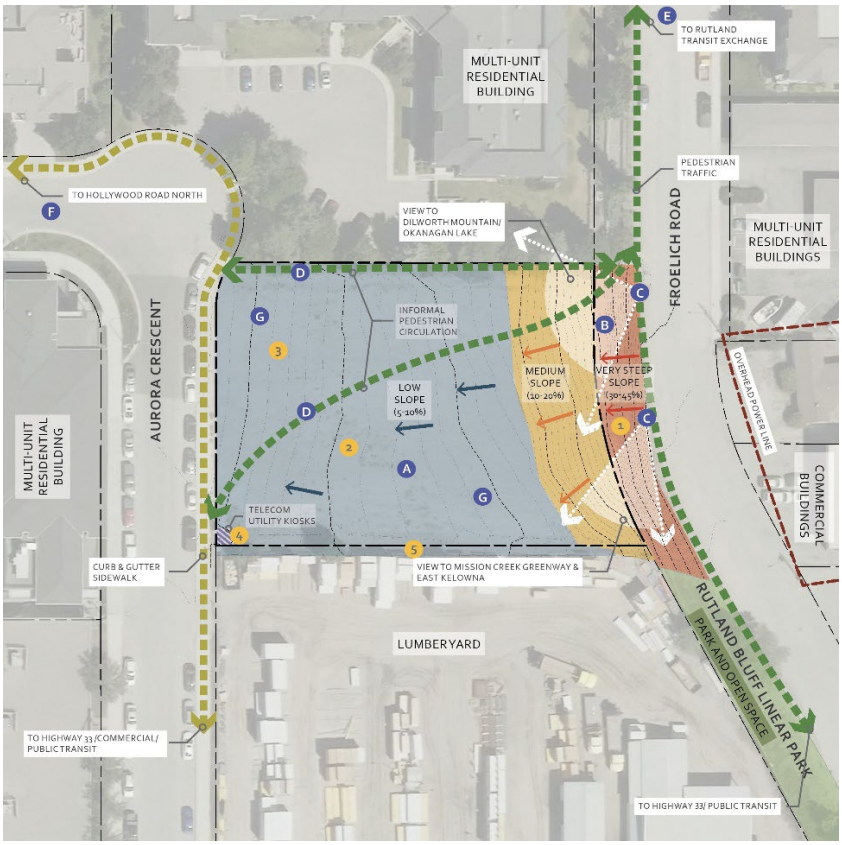


"I'd love to have a park to take my grandchildren too. One of my grandchildren is in a wheel chair so accessibility is very important and if some playground features could be included like the ones at Julia's Junction in West Kelowna."
- survey respondent

Respondents ranked possible features from 12 to 1 (with 12 being the most important) they'd like to see included in the park design. These possible features included hillside play, playground/play features, social spaces, shade trees, open lawn, picnicking, community garden, various seating options, movie night infrastructure, accessible pathway, ramped path and stairs.

The most favoured elements were shade trees, hillside play, playground/play features and social spaces. The least favoured element were stairs, community garden and movie night infrastructure.

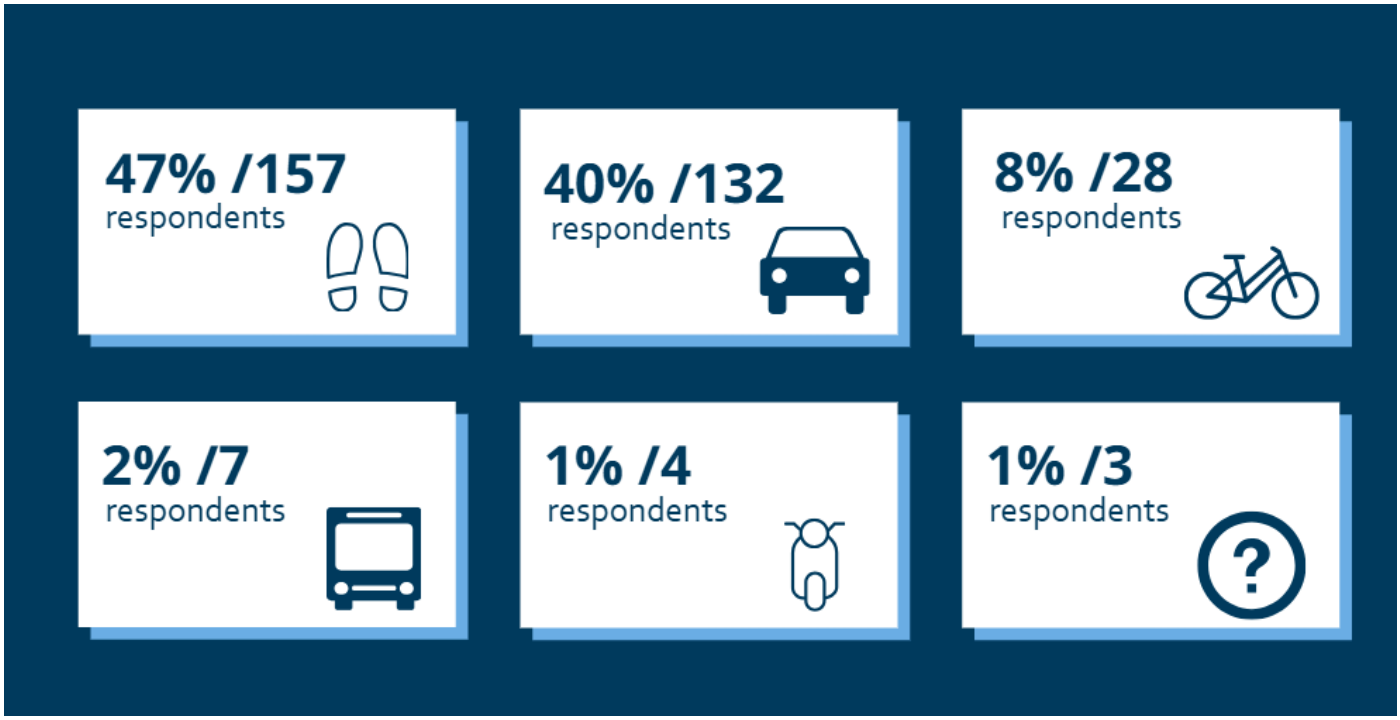




Site plan embedded in survey demonstrating potential site realities and opportunities.

Travel to Park

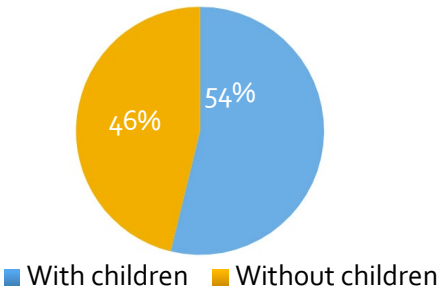
Respondents were asked how they'd access Aurora Park and the majority (47%) suggested they'd access the park by foot, followed by car (40%). The high walking score is supportive of a neighbourhood park and reflective of the high-density residential area surrounding this site. Bike was a distant third place with 8 per cent, followed distantly by bus, scooter and 'other' as the least popular ways to get to the park.

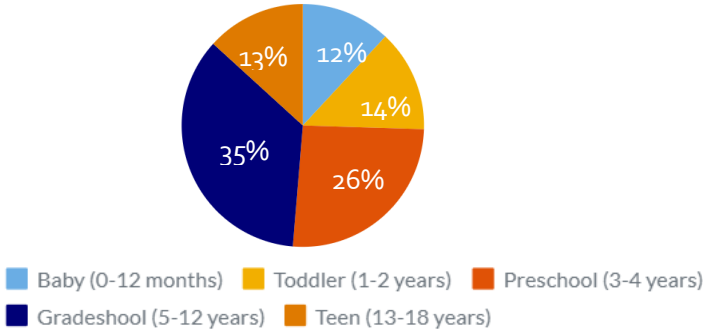


Children

Respondents were asked if they'd visit the park with children or without. Of the 329 who responded, a slight majority, 54 per cent, said they'd attend with children while 46 per cent of responders said they would not.

Those that said they'd visit the park with children were asked to provide the general age group of the children, with gradeschool (ages 5-12) years being the most common, followed by preschool (ages 3-4). Baby, toddler and teen were similar representations.





Comments/Questions Key Themes

Lastly, respondents were invited to leave a long answer question or comment related to the Aurora Park project. In total, over 123 long answer responses were received with the following key themes emerging.

1

Safety, security and homelessness

- Respondents expressed safety concerns over the presence of homelessness, drug use and encampments at this current site and at other parks. Many contributors suggested increased safety measures be taken, including an open design with clear sight lines, increased lighting and regular patrols by bylaw, security or law enforcement.

> "The biggest concern for the park would be security. There seems to be a large amount of homeless that have shown up in Rutland and all parts of Kelowna. This would need to be of priority."

2

Pet-friendly space

- Respondents expressed a desire to see a dedicated dog park or off-leash area incorporated into the design, citing the high number of dog owners in the neighbourhood who currently use the site with their dogs.

> "This space would be best used as a dog park. I don't even have dogs but the community has so many and it would be a smart use of such a small spot."

3

Environmental considerations

- Respondents expressed a need to prioritize shade in the park through the planting of lots of trees. Additionally, there were comments emphasizing the importance of biodiversity with requests to prioritize native plants and pollinator gardens.

> "Trees, trees and trees, a true green space. I live in the neighbourhood and it's a concrete jungle out there. A cool place to walk your dog or relax would be great for the area."

4

Playground, recreation and inclusive features

- Respondents expressed strong interest in playgrounds (including swings) for varying ages, hillside slides, sledding hills and recreational amenities such as exercise equipment, disco golf and courts for various sports.

> "I don't have kids, but I strongly think you should incorporate hillside play into the site-- not every park has this option."

5

Pathways and accessibility

- Respondents expressed a desire to ensure the new park be accessible and suitable for all users, including those with mobility challenges. Many cited and praised the newly opened Dehart Park as a good example of their connective pathways.

> "Regarding the two pathways, I'd like to see the two pathways connected with a large paved oval, triangle or connecting paths, for people who might like to walk a few circles in the park for exercise, much like what we see at Davie Park."

Rutland Lions Park Survey Results

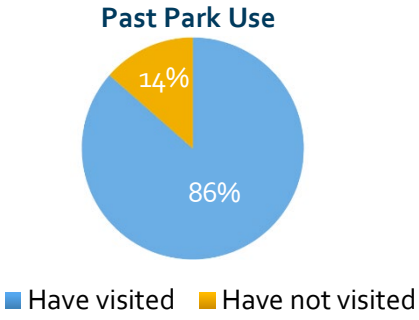
Total of 491 survey responses (including online and in person)

Respondents were able to complete one or both park surveys, therefore their respective park survey results and feedback will be kept separated to maintain the integrity of this report.

Limitations: While a variety of tactics were used to reach a diverse range of citizens results from open surveys such as those provided 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.

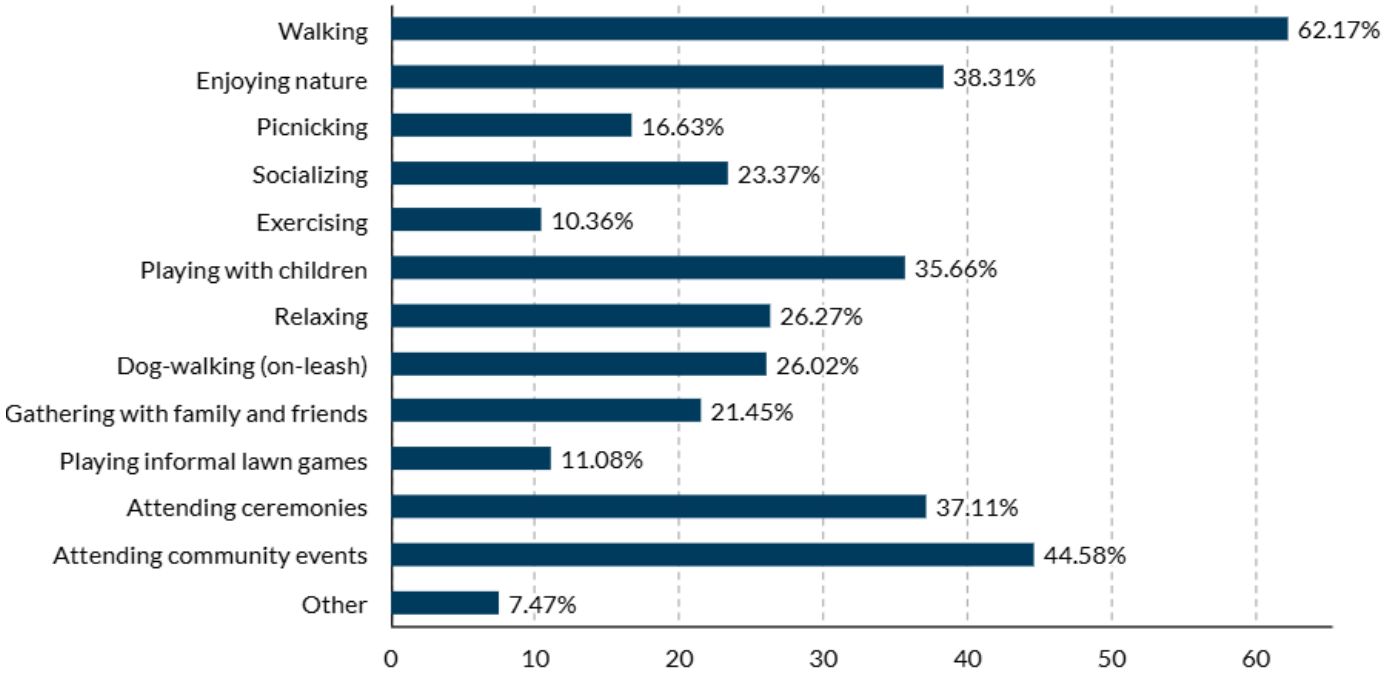
Current use

The majority of respondents (86%) expressed they have visited Rutland Lions Park in the past.

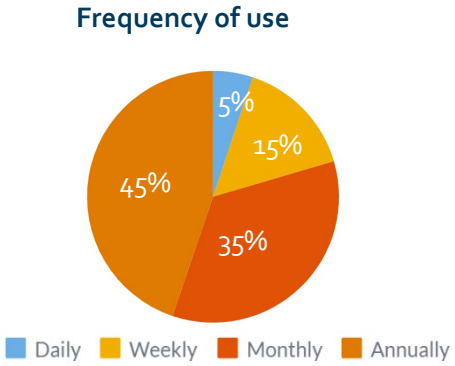


Of those that have visited the park, the most common reasons for doing so included:

- Walking (62%)
- Attending community events (45%)
- Enjoying nature (38%)

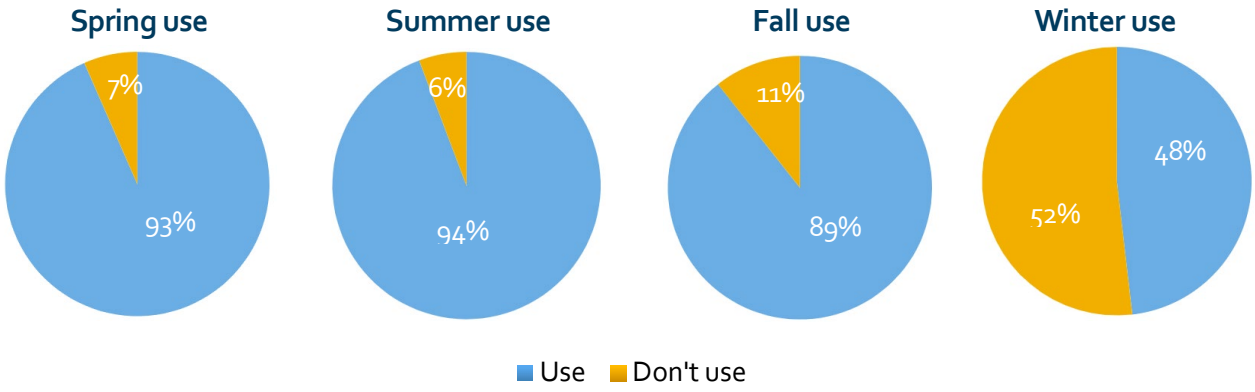


Respondents shared their frequency of current park use, with nearly half (45%) stating that they only use it annually. Otherwise, monthly use was next popular at 35 per cent, followed by weekly (15%) and daily (5%).



Seasons of use

Based on the responses, responders suggested they'd use the park at all seasons of the year, with the most popular times of use being summer, spring and fall.

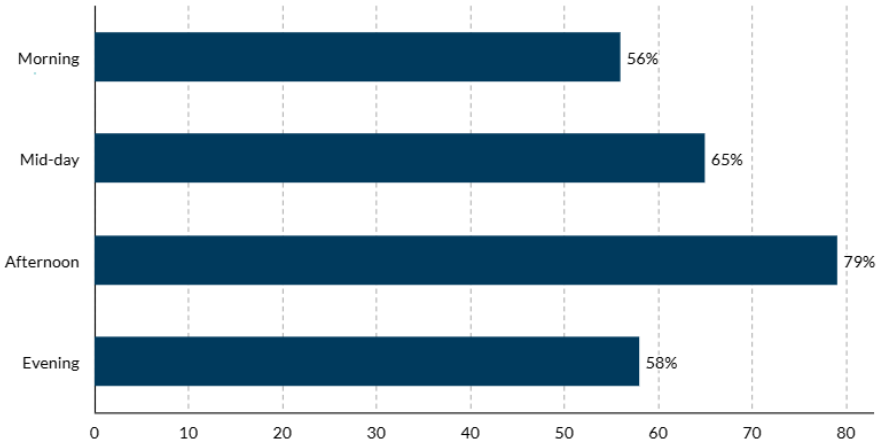


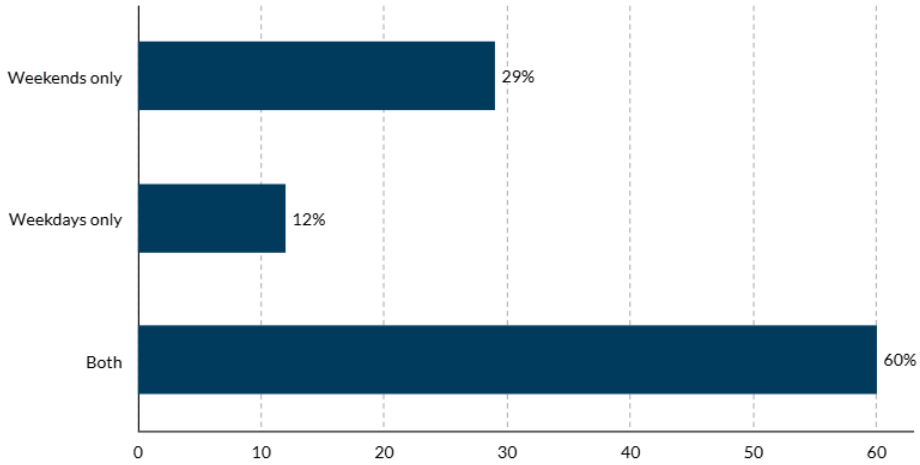




Times of use

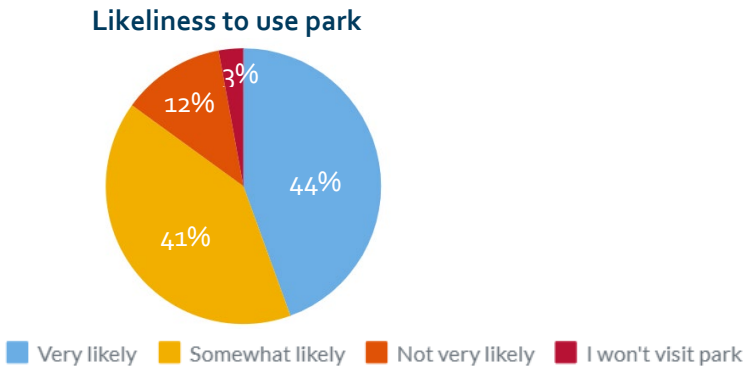
Respondents suggested they'd use the park at various times of the day, with the most popular being afternoon and mid-day, followed by evening and morning. Additionally, the vast majority of respondents (60%) said they'd use the park both on weekdays and weekends.





Future Park Use

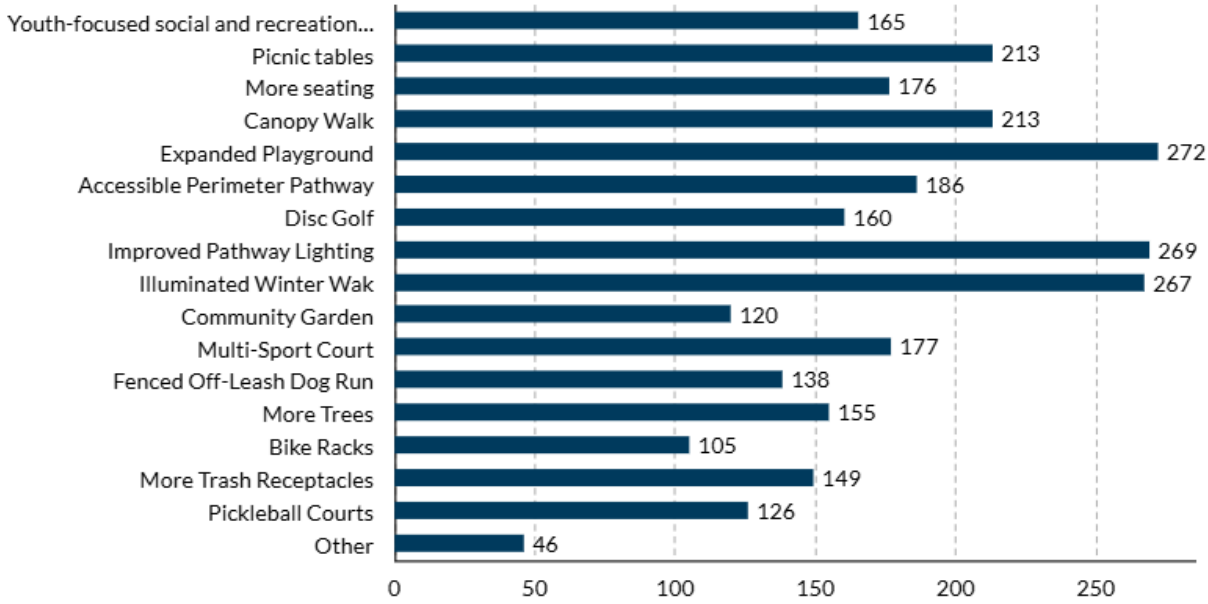
Respondents expressed an overwhelming support to use the park in the future, with nearly 85 per cent stating they'd likely or somewhat likely use the park.

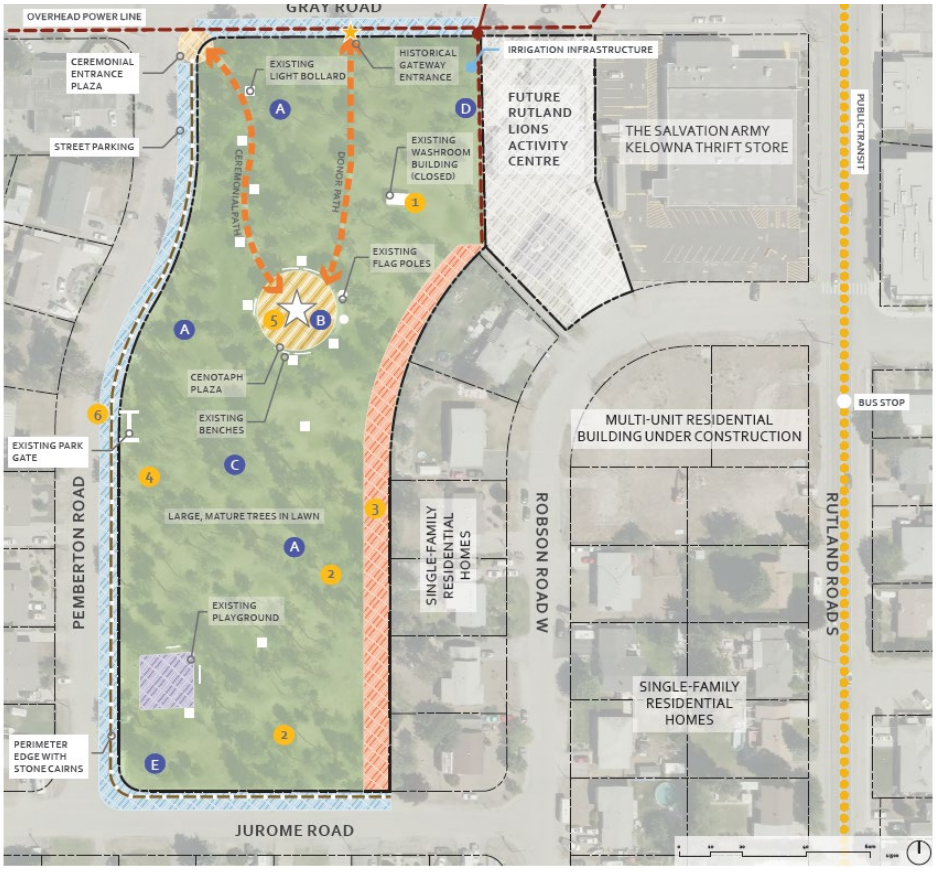


Participant Activities & Use of Site Features

Respondents provided feedback on the activities, amenities or features they'd like to see included in the park re-design. These possible features included youth-focused social and recreational amenities, picnic tables, additional seating, canopy walk, expanded playground, accessible perimeter pathway, disc golf, improved pathway lighting, illuminated winter walk, community garden, multi-sport court, fenced off-leash dog run, more trees, bike racks, more trash receptacles, and pickleball courts.

The most favoured elements were expanded playground, improved pathway lighting and illuminated winter walk. The least favoured elements were bike racks, community garden and pickleball courts.

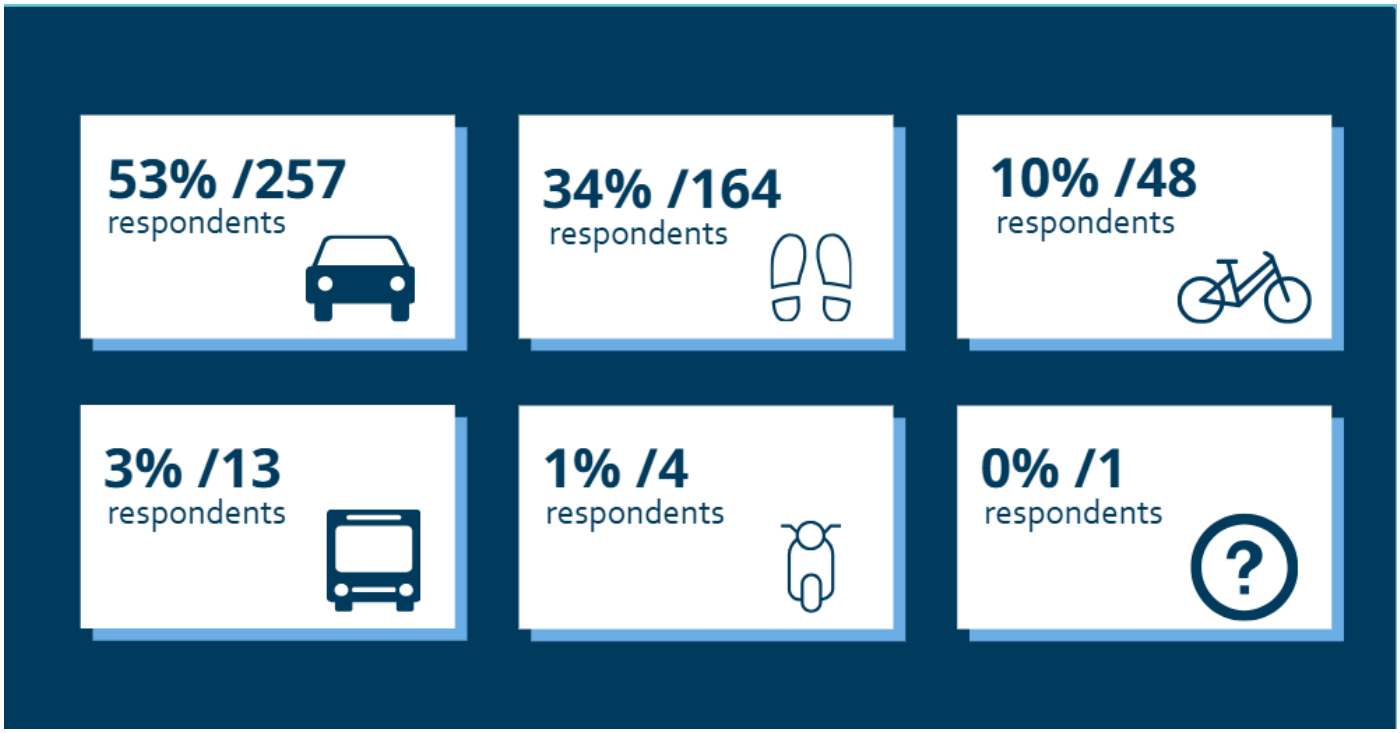




Site plan embedded in survey demonstrating potential site realities and opportunities.

Travel to Park

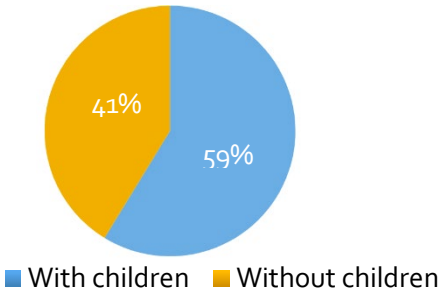
Respondents were asked how they'd access Rutland Lions Park and the majority (53%) suggested they'd access the park by car, followed by foot (34%). The higher drive score is likely a reflection of the parking available per community park goals. A strong walkability score is likely reflective of the residential neighbourhoods bordering the park. Bike was in third place with 10 per cent, followed distantly by bus, scooter and 'other' as the least popular ways to get to the park.

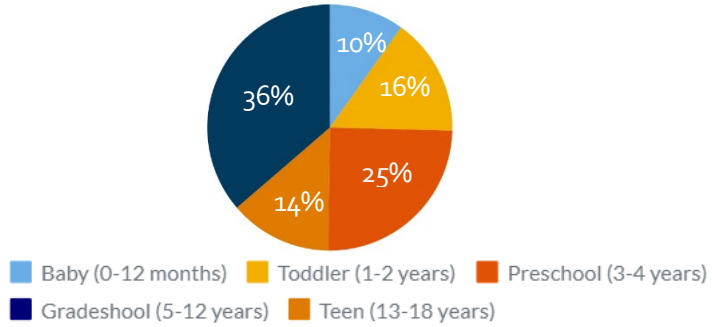


Children

Respondents were asked if they'd visit the park with children or without. Of the 487 who responded to this question, 59 per cent, said they would attend with children while 42 per cent of responders said they would not.

Those that said they'd visit the park with children were asked to provide the general age group of the children, with gradeschool (ages 5-12) years being the most common, followed by preschool (ages 3-4), toddler (ages 1-2) and teen.





Comments/Questions Key Themes

Lastly, respondents were invited to leave a long answer question or comment related to the Rutland Lions Park project. In total, 223 long answer responses were received with the following key themes emerging.

1

Safety and security concerns

- Respondents overwhelmingly expressed not feeling safe to use the park in its current state due to the prevalence of homelessness, drug use and drug paraphernalia/garbage. Many contributors expressed appreciation that this park was being considered for improvements but felt that any money spent would be wasted unless the community's feelings of safety were also addressed. Few suggestions were provided but included supporting the unhoused with safe options for relocation, daily cleanup of drug paraphernalia, improved lighting and more security by bylaw and/or law enforcement.

> "Currently there are significant challenges with accessing the park due to the large population of unfocused people/and open illegal drug use. I would not and do not feel safe being anywhere near this location let alone bringing small children into this space."

2

Enhanced amenities and all-ages activities

- Respondents expressed a desire to see the park be refreshed with inclusive amenities for all-ages and abilities. Disc golf was very popular with many citing it as a low-barrier activity which would not only animate the park but fill an important need in the greater community. Additional suggestions support for all-age exercise equipment, water stations, perimeter pathways and off-leash dog run area.

> "I'm ecstatic that disc golf is being considered for this location. This sport is affordable and accessible to all, and currently Kelowna is far behind most other communities in BC in regard to quantity and quality of disc golf courses."

3

Youth-focused activities and priority

- Respondents expressed a strong desire to see youth-focused amenities or activities be prioritized. Many respondents suggested that the existing playground while being great for very young children doesn't currently support play for school-aged kids or older.

> "The Rutland area is in desperate need of more community-focused parks and rec spaces that serve not just young children, but also youth. As someone who grew up in this city, it's been disheartening to watch as the fun, affordable activities we once had have slowly disappeared."

4

Environmental features and heritage preservation

- Respondents expressed strong support to preserve the natural beauty and historical features of the park, including all trees, cenotaph and the concrete slabs detailing families that donated to the park's creation.

> "The walkway into the park has flagstones pavers that are engraved with historic community figures names."

Next Steps

City staff and the design consultants are reviewing survey results and synthesizing the data. Using the information provided, an Aurora Park design will be developed in fall 2025 with construction expected in 2026.

The design of Rutland Lions Park will be developed in coordination with the new adjacent Activity Centre in fall 2025.

Participant Feedback

Based on participant feedback received, engagement undertaken for this project met the objectives of informing the public about the project and gathering usable feedback to shape these park project's preliminary designs. As shown below, most respondents indicated that they understood the information presented, had enough information to participate, and had some understanding of how their input was going to be used.

