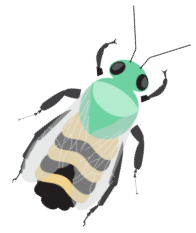


Green Line Implementation New Park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road

What We Heard

Phase 2 - Preferred Concept Plan

April 2021



Executive Summary

The City of Toronto is proceeding with plans for implementing the Green Line, including a new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road. This report summarizes the feedback received over the winter of 2021 on the second stage of concept design, the Preferred Concept Plan for this new park on Macpherson Avenue.

In response to COVID-19 public health guidelines, Parks, Forestry and Recreation held an online community meeting to discuss this park attended by 52 community members. The meeting was followed by an online questionnaire that received over 183 submissions, email communications with the project team, and a family-friendly activity book. This summary includes feedback from the virtual public meeting held on February 25, 2021, Indigenous engagement meeting, community stakeholder group meeting, and subsequent feedback from the online questionnaire and emails to the project team.

We heard the following key messages from the community about what they supported within the Preferred Concept Plan. Participants supported:

- **Green Spaces** including shade trees, meadows, pollinator species, and creating flexible open lawn spaces.
- **Accessible pathways, seating options, and park amenities** allow everyone to enjoy this new park and important destination on the Green Line.
- **Lighting and clear sightlines** to provide a sense of security to enjoy the park after dark.
- **Public gathering opportunities in the amphitheatre.**
- **Wayfinding and signage** help park visitors navigate the local community and enjoy the rest of the Green Line park system.
- **Indigenous Placekeeping** through art, interpretive signage, medicinal plants, story circles, and other features.

This feedback and the additional details provided in this document will help shape the detailed design for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road, which will be reviewed by Hydro One before approval and construction.

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LURA Consulting, independent facilitator and consultation specialists, prepared this meeting summary report for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road. If you have any questions or comments regarding the summary, please contact either:

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1 Introduction

The Green Line is a proposed linear park system in an active hydro-electric corridor that will connect neighbourhoods and expand the broader open space network in midtown and west Toronto. After completing an implementation plan for the entire 5-kilometre long park system ([read the Green Line Implementation Plan](#)), the City of Toronto has begun the implementation process through the design and consultation on a new Park near Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road intersection. The City is still determining the final name for this park.

The parcel of land south of Macpherson Avenue, west of Davenport Road, and north of the Canadian Pacific rail line is within this project's scope and a small portion of the sidewalk on the south-side of Macpherson Avenue next to the park. These lands are beneath an active hydro corridor that includes sections owned by the province and sections owned by the City of Toronto. Where there are hydro wires overhead and where portions of the park are close to hydro towers and the Macpherson transformer station, the design of this new park must be approved by Hydro One following their guidelines on secondary uses in hydro corridors.

[Read Hydro One's Secondary Land Uses guidelines.](#)

The following summary documents the feedback received during the Preferred Concept Plan phase of consultation on the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road.



Figure 1. A rendering of the new park on Macpherson Avenue viewed looking south into the park from the corner of Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road.

2 What We Heard

This summary is organized by overall feedback on the Preferred Concept Plan (Figure 2). It provides additional detail on what we heard from participants on design elements they liked and elements identified for further consideration or refinement.

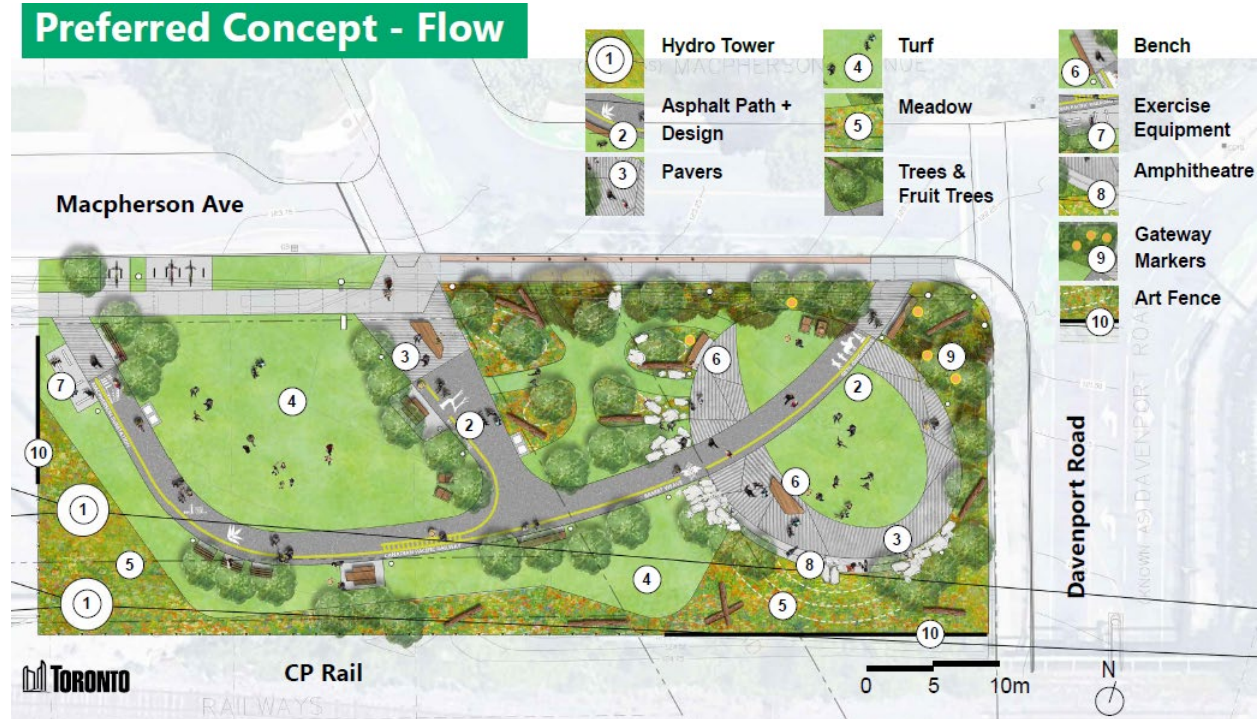


Figure 2. Macpherson Avenue Park Preferred Concept Plan

Overall, participants liked the Preferred Concept Plan and 89% indicated the design will meet the community's needs (Figure 3).

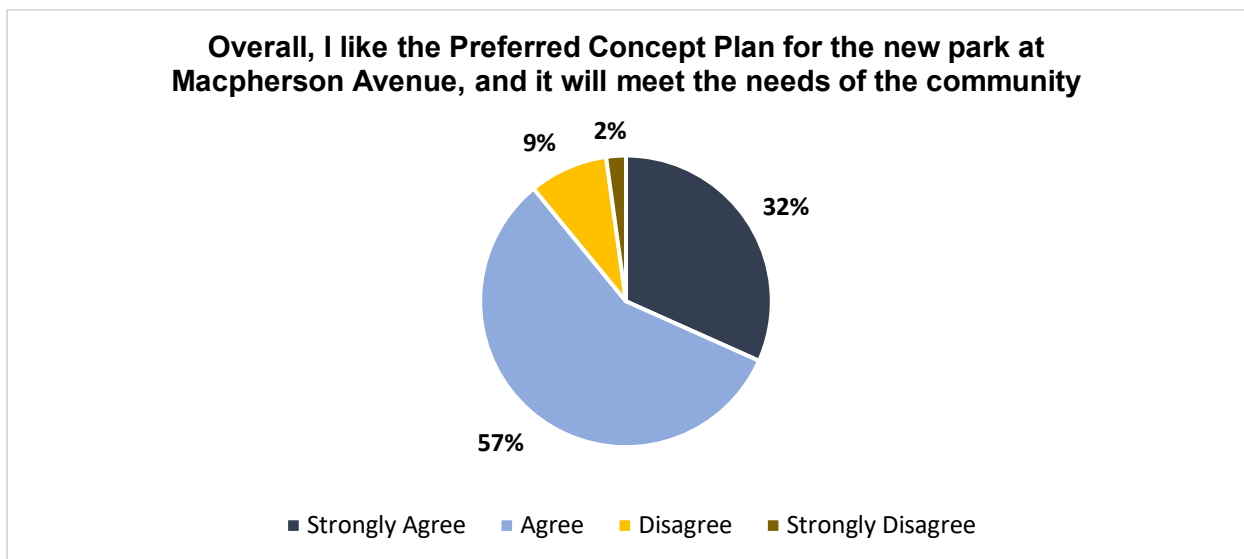


Figure 3. Questionnaire respondents' overall views on the Preferred Concept Plan.

2.1 Supported Elements within the Preferred Concept Plan

Participants provided feedback on various elements of the preferred concept plan for the new park on Macpherson Avenue near Davenport Road (Figure 4). The elements that received the most support were:

- The naturalized meadows, trees, and fruit trees;
- Site arrangement that meets needs and provides a sense of security;
- Park access is provided through the pathways.

The following section provides more feedback on the Preferred Concept Plan's park elements incorporating feedback received from the online questionnaire (**Appendix A**), polls conducted during the virtual community meeting (**Appendix B**), feedback from the Indigenous engagement meeting, community stakeholder group meeting, and other written and oral comments received through the consultation process.

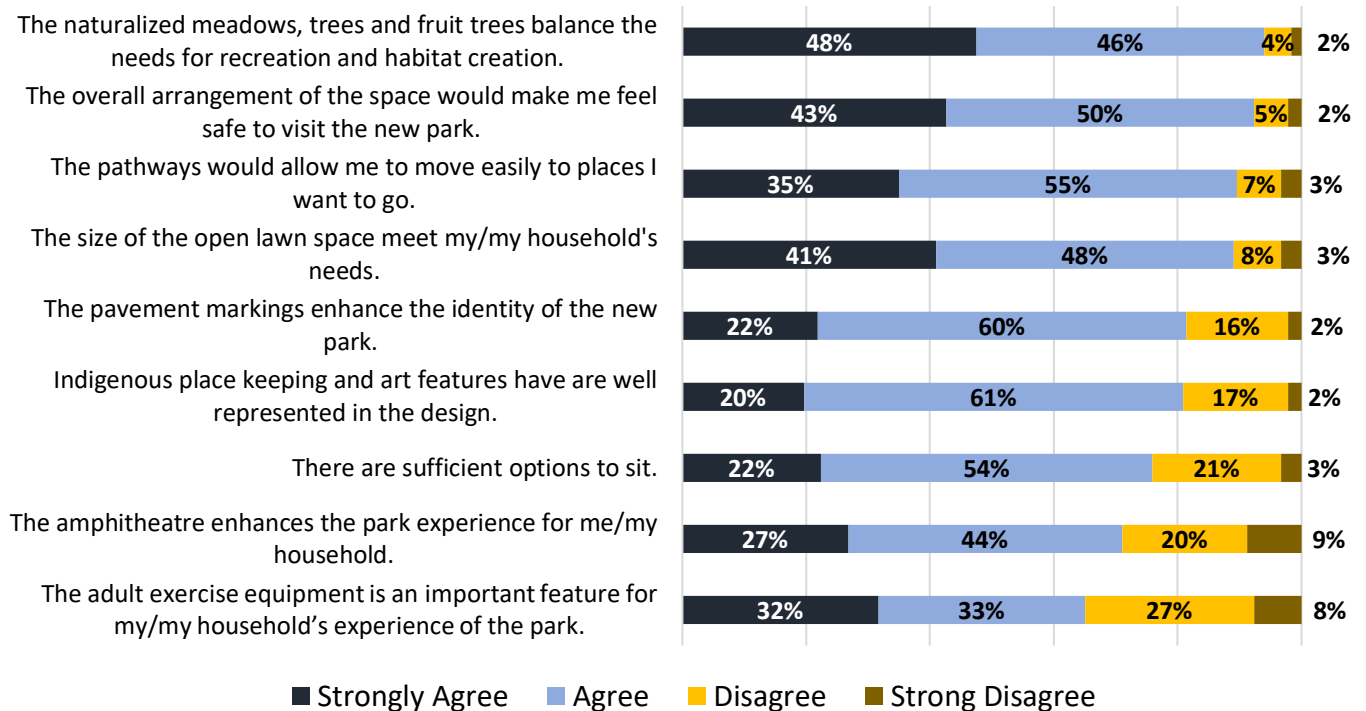


Figure 4. Chart showing questionnaire participants responses to park features they agree or disagreed with in the new park on Macpherson Avenue at Davenport Road.

2.1.1 Natural Elements and Environmental Impact

- Almost all questionnaire respondents (94%) strongly agreed or agreed that the proposed trees, meadows, and fruit trees balance the need for habitat creation and recreation.
- The majority of questionnaire respondents (89%) indicated they strongly agree or agree that the open lawn spaces meet their household's needs.
- Over 50% of participants indicated that permeable pavement and managing stormwater on-site are the most important or very important low impact

development principles to consider through the park design where possible (Figure 5).

- Where possible, questionnaire respondents and meeting participants requested the inclusion of a diverse selection of tree species to increase biodiversity and local habitat and provide shade.
- Development of the park should also include public education work on the park's importance as part of the urban ecosystem to raise awareness on environmental impact.
- Vegetation should have both ecological and aesthetic functions.
- Some individuals expressed interest in establishing a community garden through the City's community garden process and appropriate community resources to sustain it.
- Consider a short fence around gardens to dissuade trampling by people and pets. Educational signs about the ecological activity happening through the meadows may help protect these plants and reduce maintenance caused by damage.
- Consider how the park will be experienced in different seasons so that the space is sheltered, welcoming, and colourful for users throughout the year.

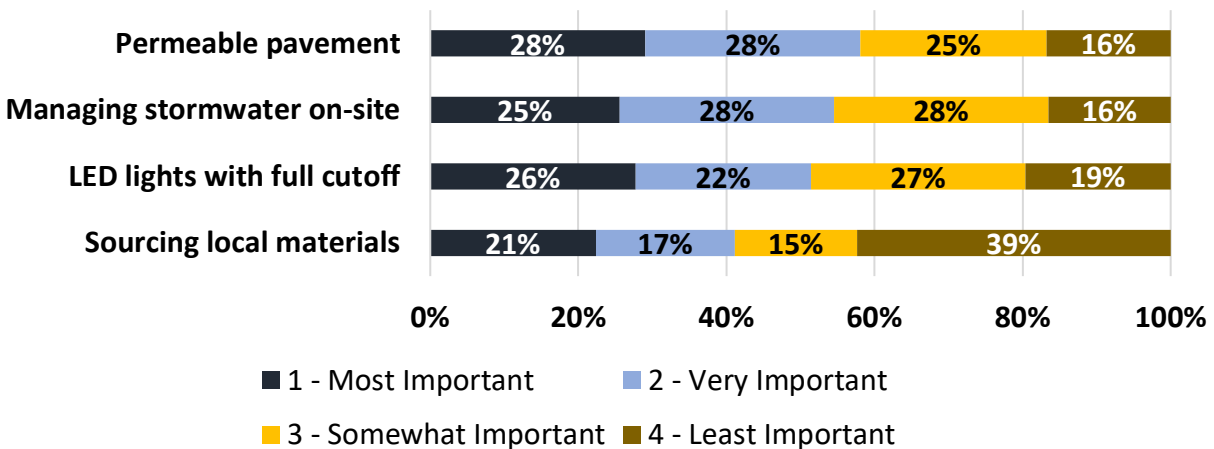


Figure 5. Chart showing questionnaire participants' responses to low impact development principles they agree or disagree with that may be used in the new park.

2.1.2 Accessible Pathways, Pavement Enhancements, and Streetscape Enhancements

- Participants (90%) either strongly agreed or agreed that pathways allow visitors to navigate the park easily and support making the park accessible.
- Nearly all questionnaire respondents (94%) either strongly agreed or agreed that they are satisfied with the proposed sidewalk improvements, maintenance of healthy trees, additional bike parking, benches, planting, and traffic bollards (Figure 6).

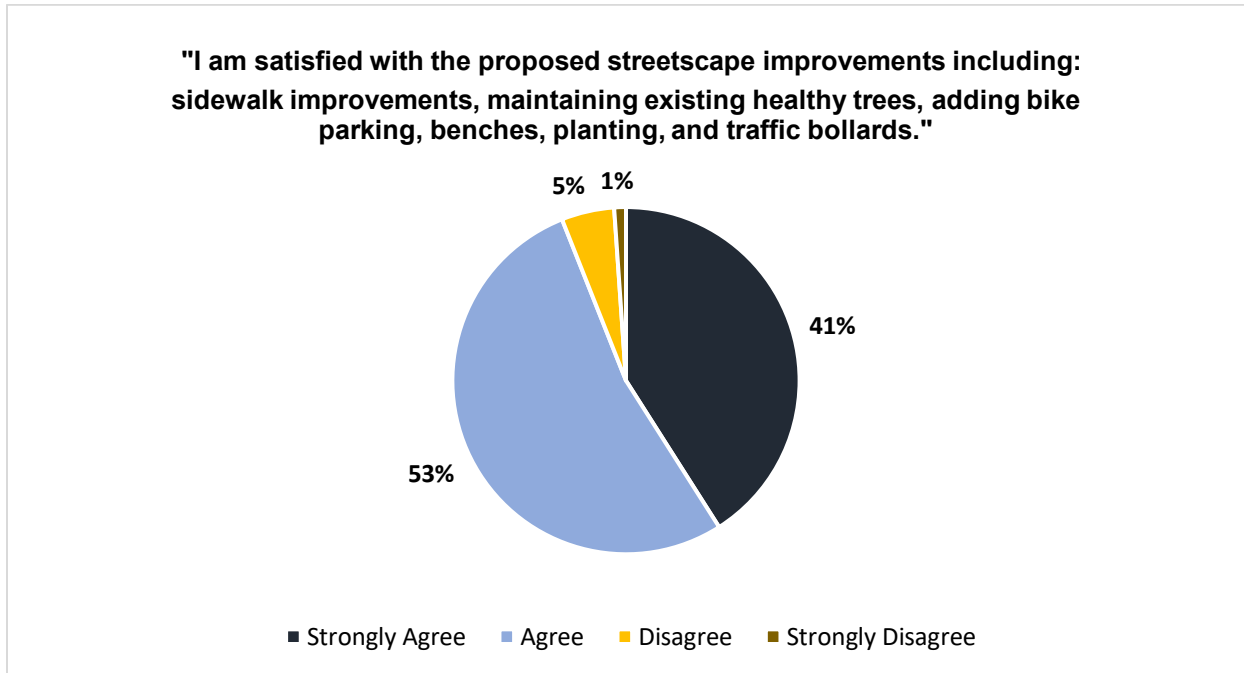


Figure 6. Chart showing questionnaire participants' responses to their agreement or disagreement with proposed streetscape improvements on Macpherson Avenue

2.1.3 Seating, Site Furnishings, and Lighting

Participants had the following suggestions relating to seating, furnishings and lighting:

- The park should be sufficiently well-lit at night.
- Participants were supportive of seating that accommodates mobility devices and seating with backrests and armrests.
- Consider additional elements such as ping pong tables which provide activity on a small footprint.

2.1.4 Signage and Wayfinding

- Overall, many participants indicated that friendly and welcoming signage, such as an archway or a gate at the park entrance, would help signify the start/end of the Green Line. More than half (57%) of questionnaire respondents mentioned the significance of having a start/end signage, a map of the Green Line park system, or historical information plaque at the new park entrance in their comments.
- Signage should consider unique artistic design elements that symbolize the Greenline parks.
- Some respondents suggested incorporating Indigenous artwork and elements of nature for the signage.
- The wayfinding site map should be highly informative and clearly outline all points of interest, making locations more accessible and easier to navigate within the park.
- It should also allow visitors to learn and understand how the park is connected to the Greenline Parks system.

2.1.5 Exercise Equipment

- Over half of questionnaire participants (65%) identified that they support exercise equipment as part of the plan.
- Exercise equipment adds value by attracting a consistent group of people to visit the park.
- Consider the needs of all ages and abilities in the selection of equipment.

2.1.6 Amphitheatre Space

- Participants were supportive of the amphitheatre space identifying it as a possible space for outdoor classroom programming and hosting events.

2.2 Further Suggestions on Park Elements

Although very well supported through the questionnaire, the following areas received several suggested improvements.

2.2.1 Indigenous Placekeeping

The City of Toronto's Parks, Forestry and Recreation division is undertaking an Indigenous placekeeping initiative in City parks, with the intent to integrate park elements that are welcoming to the City's estimated 70,000 Indigenous residents, reflect and support current Indigenous cultural practices and acknowledge and honour the history of traditional territories in the City of Toronto.

Through Indigenous engagement for this project, the team met with local Indigenous community members and professionals gather feedback on the Preferred Concept Plan.

- Many comments from members of the public, the community stakeholder group, and participants at the Indigenous engagement meeting emphasized the importance of telling and sharing local history (including its importance for Indigenous Peoples) through art, information plaques, and signs.
- Features such as the amphitheatre and open lawn provide opportunities for storytelling space and drumming and singing circles.
- The park design differentiates itself from the street and railroad grid through curving, organic lines, but should also consider the park's sunrise and sunset orientation.
- Consider Indigenous plants and gardens in the planting strategy.
- Local history should consider the park site itself and the context of Indigenous land, the local area, and the Green Line Parks system.

2.2.2 Art Fence

- Consider extending the eastern art fence and changing the western art fence to represent something less well-known or visible in the current landscape of the neighbourhood that contributes to a broader historical, cultural, or social understanding of the area.

2.3 Additional Out of Scope Feedback

- Additional traffic calming features and safe crossing opportunities at Davenport Road and Poplar Plains may be necessary to make people feel safe to get to and from the park. Community members are encouraged to share their feedback regarding roadway improvements and traffic calming with Councillor Matlow's office.
- Some participants expressed concerns about noise from the rail line and how that would affect people's experience in the park.
- Opportunities for public washrooms should be available in the area.
- Participants suggested recreational amenities they would appreciate in the neighbourhood, including basketball/tennis/multi-use courts, skateboard facilities, and new children's play structures. They recognized these elements would not be possible to accommodate on the park site given its size and Hydro One constraints.
- Some participants identified the desire for an off-leash area in the area. Participants in the public meeting discussed revisiting a dog off-leash area idea when the western portion of the new park on Macpherson Avenue is designed.
- Repairs and visual enhancements to the bridges along the CP rail corridor would complement improvements to nearby parks.

3 How We Engaged

Due to COVID-19 and following Toronto Public Health's recommendations, the City conducted community engagement on the Preferred Concept Plan using a mix of digital and print media to ensure appropriate physical distancing requirements were met.

3.1 Communication Methods

Printed Media: Eight (8) public meeting notice signs placed on City-owned property on the site of the future park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road, at Glen Edith drive Parkette, and near the Casa Loma steps displayed project information (Figure 7). These notice boards provided information about the project, the date and how to join the virtual community meeting, and information on accessing additional project information on the Green Line website. The local Councillor's newsletters incorporated notices of the virtual meeting leading up to the event.



Figure 7. One of several signs placed near the future park site advertising the virtual community meeting.

Social Media and Digital Ads: The City of Toronto used its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts to promote the virtual community meeting and online questionnaire from February 19, 2021, to March 14, 2021, through paid and organic advertisements (Figure 8). LURA Consulting and DTAH's Twitter accounts supported social media outreach activities.

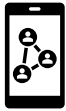
Project Webpage: The City's website acted as a communications portal to inform the public about the Green Line Implementation Plan. A landing page, <http://toronto.ca/macphersonavenuepark>, hosted all information regarding the project, including general information, project updates, a link to the online questionnaire, and an option to subscribe for plan-related e-updates.



Figure 8. A sample post from the City of Toronto's social media campaign raising awareness about the virtual community meeting and online survey.

Table 1. Outreach methods for consultation on the new park on Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road Preferred Concept Plan

| Outreach Method | Outreach Activities | Reach |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| Project Webpage | A dedicated webpage was developed within the City of Toronto's website to act as an integrated platform for all project-related information. Through the webpage, interested people could also subscribe to receive updates and information about the project. | Reached <i>Data unavailable</i> |
| Mail Outs | A flyer advertising the online meeting and website was delivered to addresses in the neighbourhood within 1-kilometre of the site. The virtual meeting notice was included in the local Councillor's newsletters leading up to February 25, 2021, virtual meeting. | Reached Approximately 8,000 |
| Posters | Eight (8) public meeting notice signs displaying information about the virtual community meeting were placed in highly-visible locations near Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road. | Reached 48+ |

| Outreach Method | Outreach Activities | Reach |
|--|---|--------------------------|
| Social Media  | The virtual community meeting and online questionnaire were promoted through the City of Toronto's Facebook, Instagram and Twitter account with additional outreach support from DTAH and LURA. | Reached 34,806 |
| Total Reached | | Over 42,000 |

3.2 Engagement Methods

Community consultation on the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road engaged members of the local community and individuals interested in developing the Green Line, including a community stakeholder group and Indigenous engagement.

3.2.1 Community Stakeholder Group

A meeting with representatives from local community stakeholder groups, including resident and ratepayer associations, building associations, and the Dupont by the Castle BIA, was held on January 28, 2021.

3.2.2 Indigenous Engagement

An Indigenous Engagement meeting was organized with invited members of local Indigenous organizations on January 29, 2021. Representatives from the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto and Two Row Architect attended the meeting to provide feedback on the concept plans and discuss Indigenous placekeeping opportunities through the new park's design.

3.2.3 Virtual Community Meeting

The community meeting was held virtually using Zoom on February 25, 2021, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The event began with a presentation from DTAH (the landscape architecture consultants), followed by a Question and Answer period. Participants could pose their questions by inputting them into the chat (these questions were read aloud by the facilitator) or by unmuting themselves. Questions were answered by the landscape architecture team, City staff, and Councillor Matlow.

The presentation slides were made available online following the meeting for review. [Access the virtual meeting presentation](#) on the City's webpage.

3.2.4 Online Questionnaire:

An online questionnaire was made available on the City's project webpage from February 25, 2021, to March 14, 2021. The online questionnaire asked for feedback on the Preferred Concept Plan presented in the virtual public meeting. A link to the presentation slides was included in the questionnaire for easy reference. **Appendix A** contains the questions from the online questionnaire.

4 Who We Engaged

4.1 Who Did We Hear From?

In total, 52 individuals attended the virtual community meeting, and 183 people responded to the online questionnaire.

4.2 Questionnaire Demographics

Participants from the online questionnaire were asked to voluntarily provide demographic information to understand better who was participating and whether particular groups in the community were missed as part of this engagement phase. Participants were predominantly white (75% of respondents) and homeowners (68% of respondents).

Compared to Casa Loma's neighbourhood profile, where the park is located, there were proportionally slightly fewer white respondents to the questionnaire than the neighbourhood population (83%). There is a higher proportion of homeowners among the questionnaire respondents than the neighbourhood population (40% of neighbourhood residents own their homes).


4.2.1 Email

In addition to attending meetings and completing the questionnaire, participants could communicate via email to Nancy Chater, the City's Senior Project Coordinator leading this project (nancy.chater@toronto.ca).

Table 2. Engagement and feedback opportunities for the new park and Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road Preferred Concept Plan.

| Engagement Method | Engagement Activities | Engagement Reach |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Community Stakeholder Meeting | A meeting with community stakeholders was held on January 28, 2021, to provide an overview of the future park site and gather ideas on opportunities for the concept plan option designs. | Engaged 6 |
| Indigenous Engagement | A meeting with Indigenous organizations' representatives was held on January 29, 2021, to discuss opportunities for Indigenous placekeeping in the emerging concept plan options and provide feedback on the plans. | Engaged 2 |
| Virtual Community Meeting | A virtual community meeting was held on February 25, 2021, to present the Preferred Concept Plan for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road, answer questions, and gather feedback from community members on the designs. | Engaged 52 |



| Engagement Method | Engagement Activities | Engagement Reach |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Community Stakeholder Meeting | A meeting with community stakeholders was held on January 28, 2021, to provide an overview of the future park site and gather ideas on opportunities for the concept plan option designs. | Engaged 6 |
| Indigenous Engagement | A meeting with Indigenous organizations' representatives was held on January 29, 2021, to discuss opportunities for Indigenous placekeeping in the emerging concept plan options and provide feedback on the plans. | Engaged 2 |
| Online Questionnaire & Email  | An online questionnaire was developed to gather detailed feedback on participant's impressions of the Preferred Concept Plan presented at the virtual public meeting. | Engaged 183 |
| Total Engaged | | 243 |

5 Next Steps

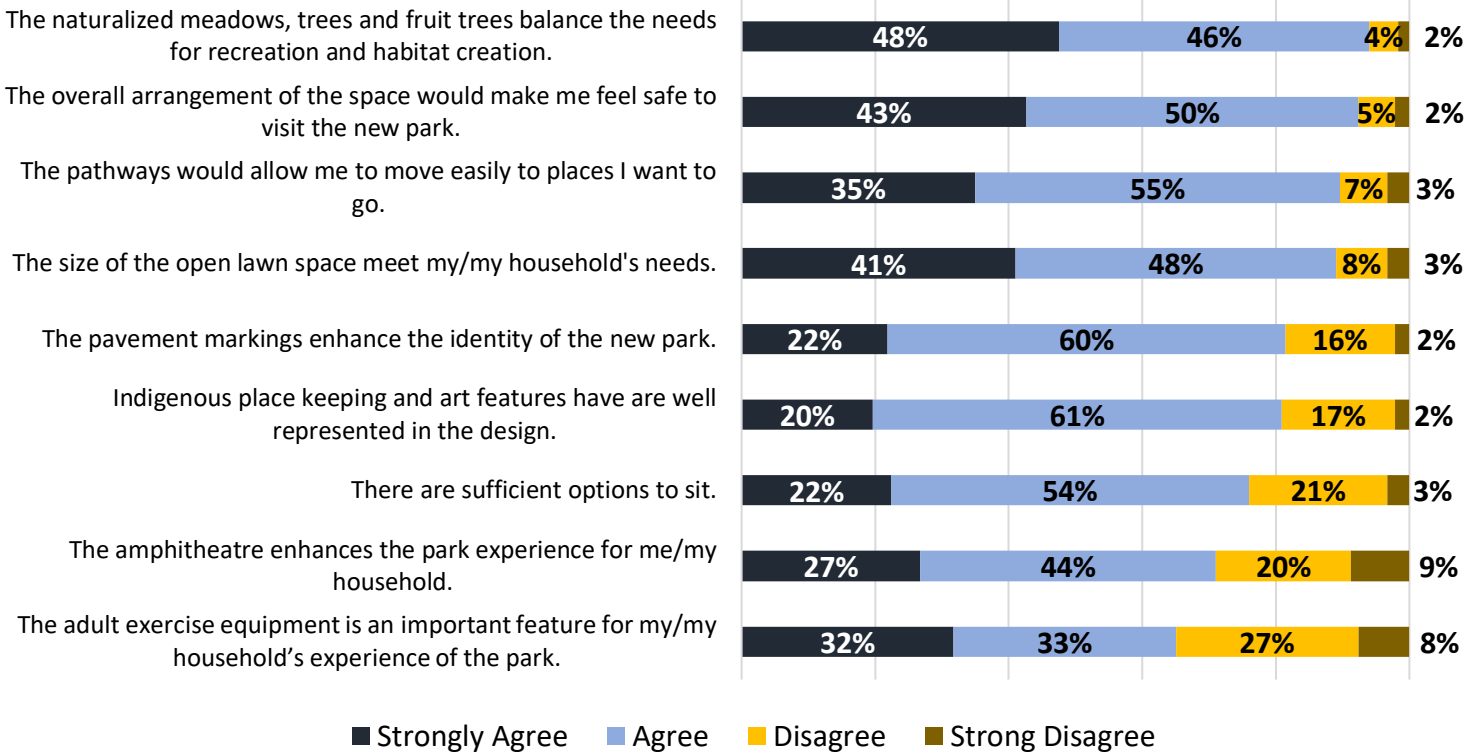
The feedback received through Phase 2 of concept design will inform the next stage of design for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road. The detailed design of the park will be developed to consider the important input from the community. It will be considered together with input from internal City stakeholders, project budget and the review and approvals by Hydro One, which are necessary to move forward into construction.

If you have any additional questions or wish to speak to someone at the City, please contact Nancy Chater by email at nancy.chater@toronto.ca.

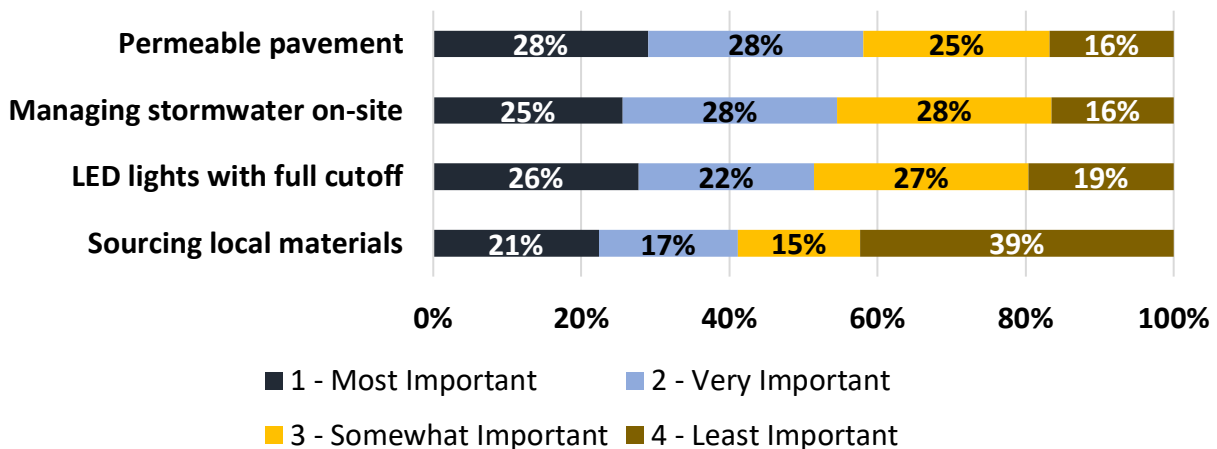
Appendix A

Online Questionnaire Questions

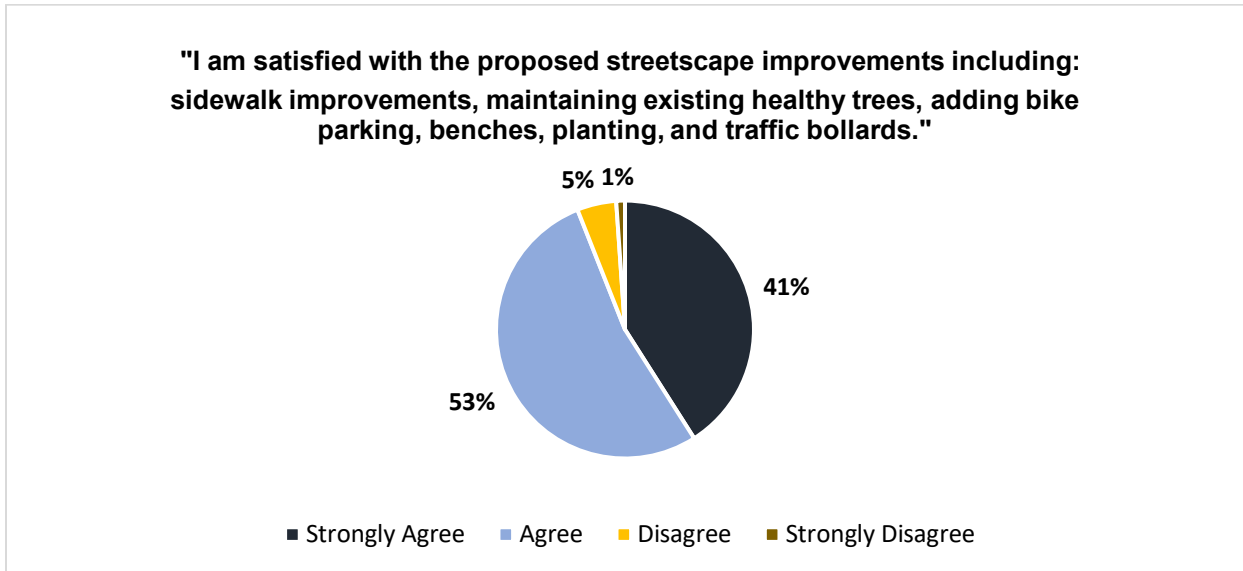
1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about the Preferred Concept Plan shown in the images above.



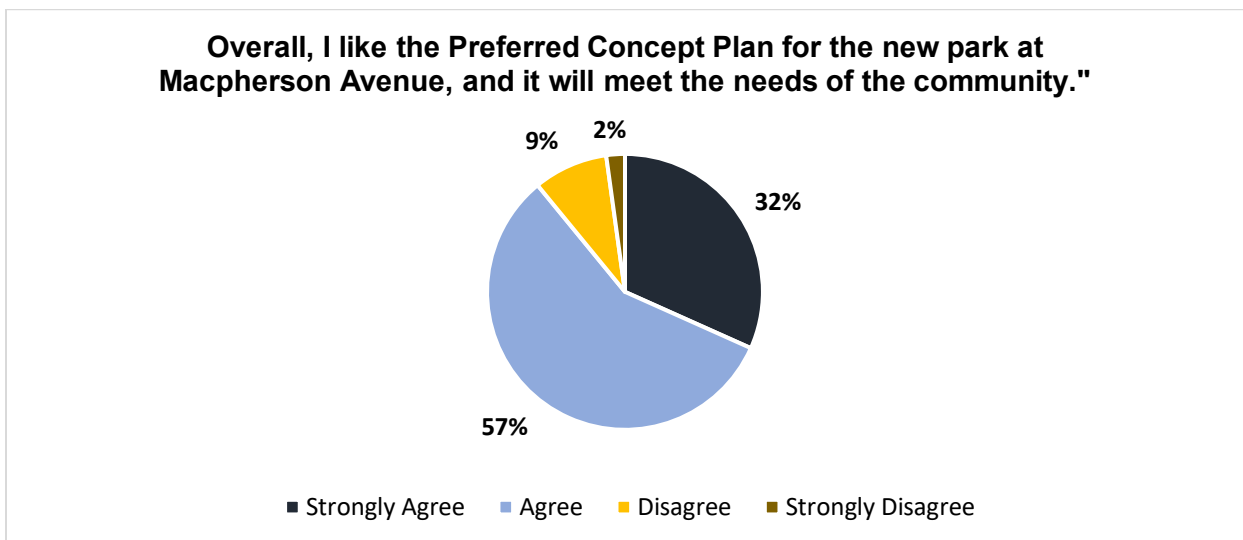
2. The overall design of the park considers the inclusion of Low-Impact Design materials and design approach. Let us know which Low-Impact Development principles are most important to you/your household, where 1 is most important, and 4 is least important.



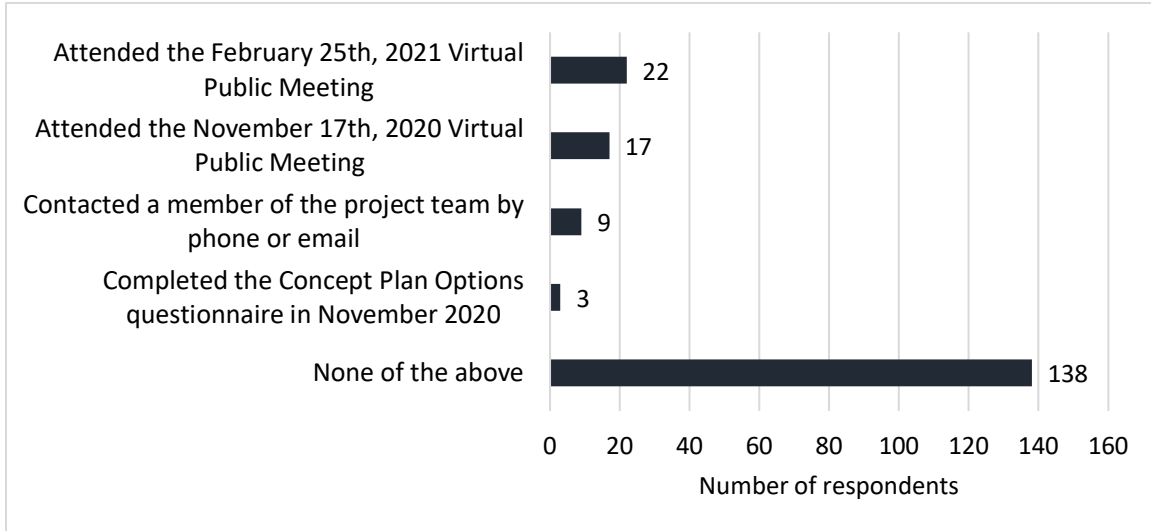
3. The development of a new park on Macpherson Avenue will also include streetscape improvements on Macpherson Avenue. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statement: I am satisfied with the proposed streetscape improvements, including sidewalk improvements, maintaining existing healthy trees, adding bike parking, benches, planting, and traffic bollards.



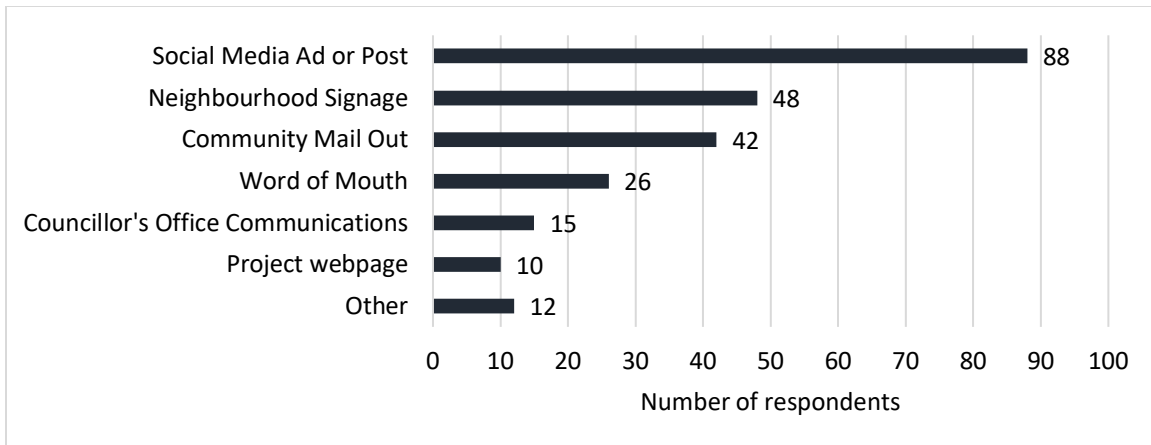
4. As the eastern extent of the Green Line, the new park on Macpherson Avenue will serve as a gateway to the start and end of the Green Line. What qualities should the entry points to this park possess to signify this arrival to the start/end of the Green Line? *(Qualitative answer provided as comments)*
5. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statement: "Overall, I like the Preferred Concept Plan for the new park at Macpherson Avenue, and it will meet the needs of the community."



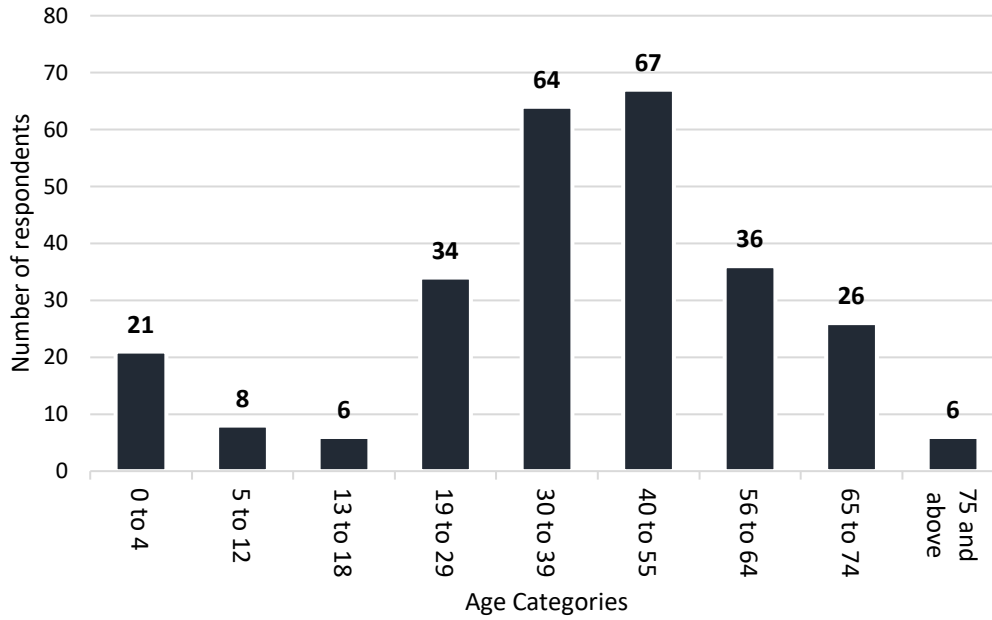
6. Do you have any additional comments to add on the Preferred Concept Plan for the new park? *(Qualitative answer provided as comments)*
7. How have you participated in the new park on Macpherson Avenue engagement process?



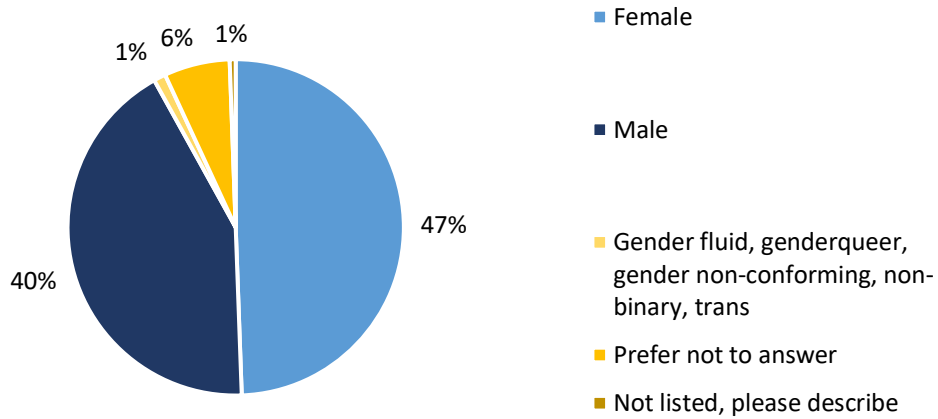
8. How did you hear about the Green Line consultations for the new park on Macpherson Avenue?



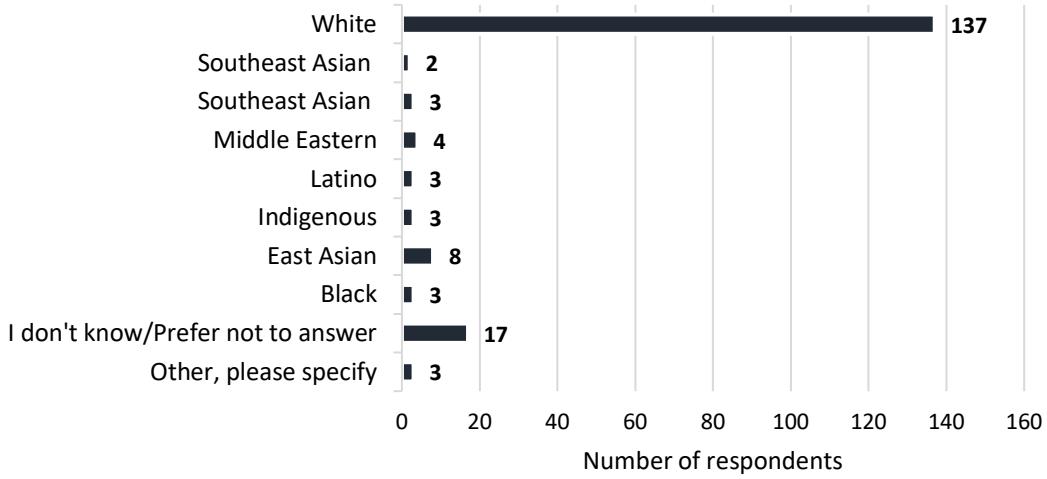
9. How many people of each age group participated in this survey in your household?



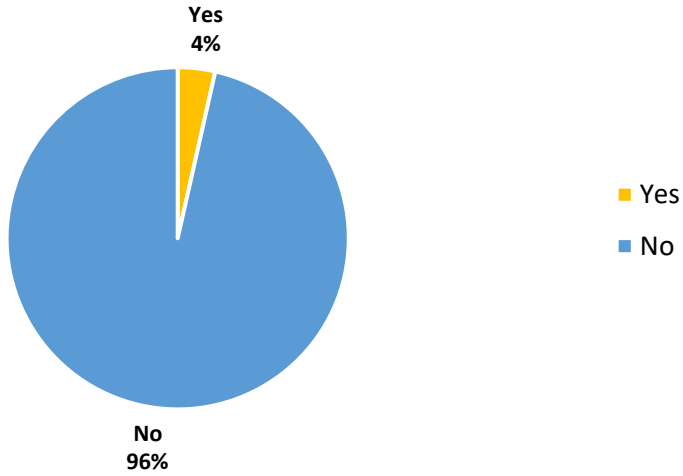
10. What best describes your gender?



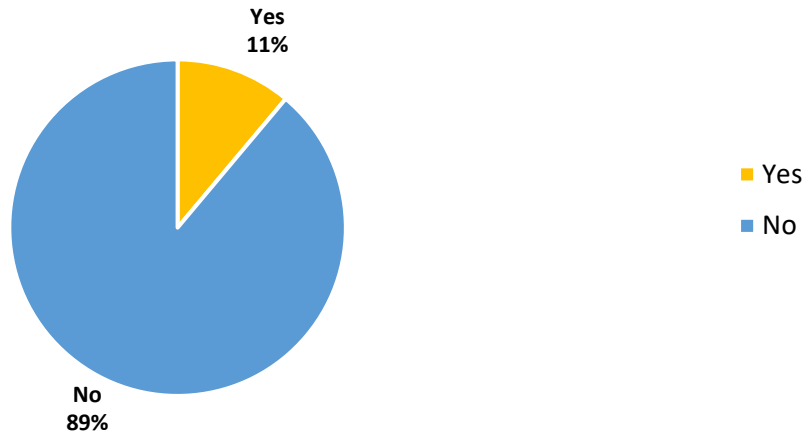
11. Please select the racial backgrounds that members of your household who completed this survey identify with. Select all that apply.



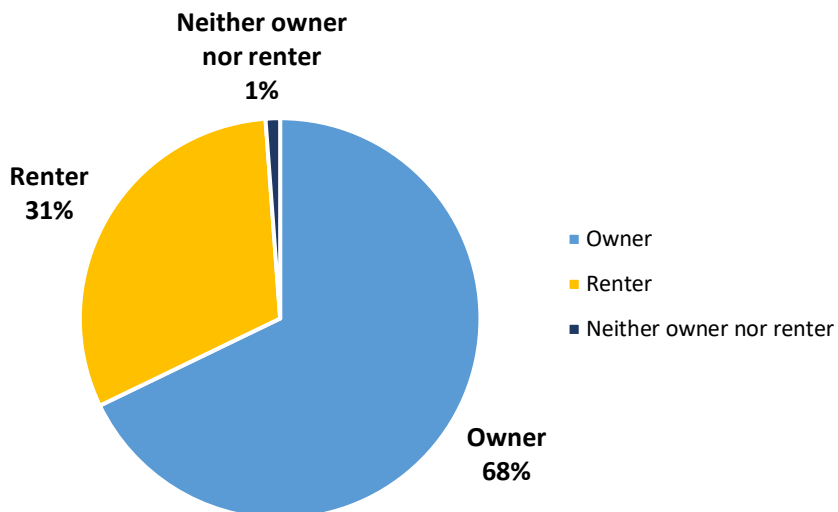
12. Does anyone in your household identify as Indigenous to Canada?



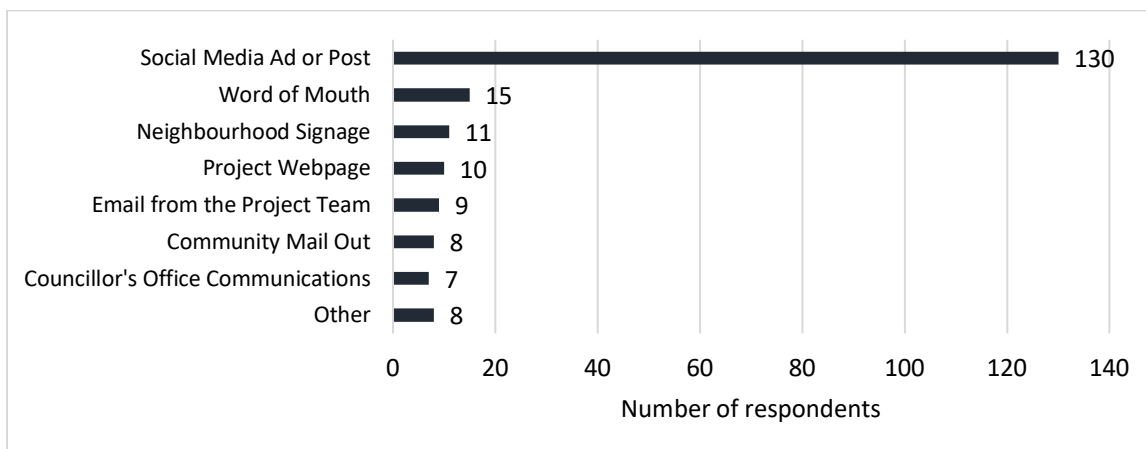
13. Does anyone participating in this survey identify as a person with a disability?



14. Do you rent or own your home?



15. How did you find out about this survey?

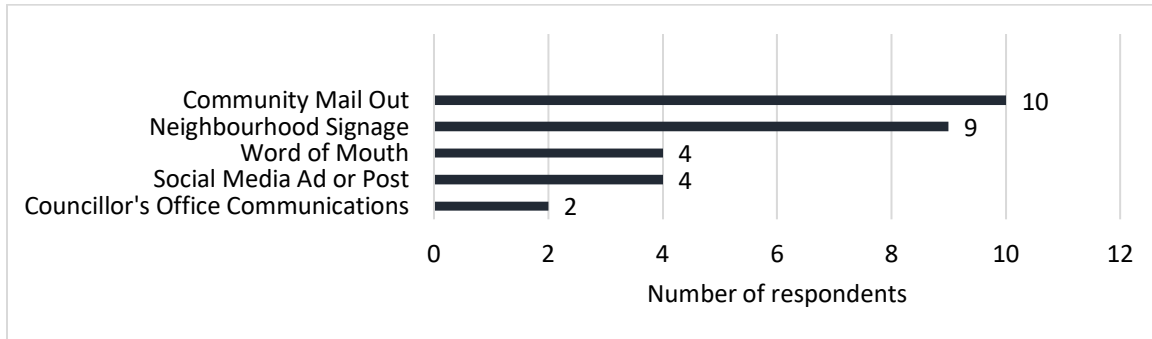


Appendix B

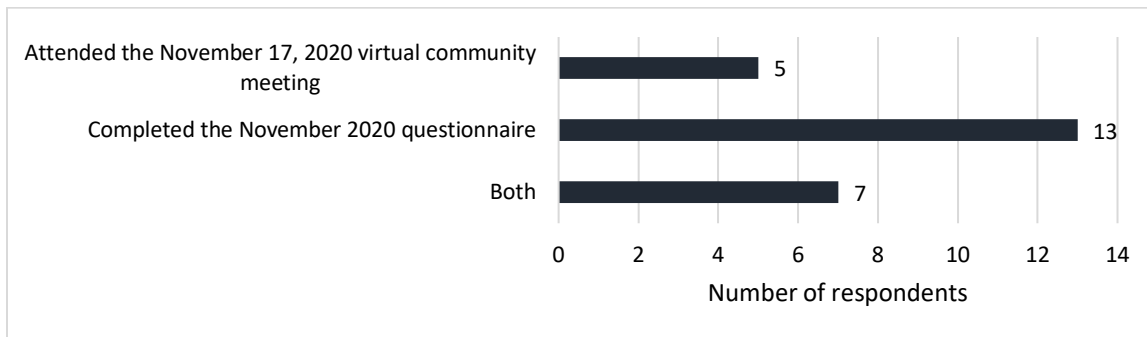
Virtual Community Meeting Poll Questions

During the virtual community meeting, participants were polled to prompt discussion about these park elements. The poll questions from the meeting and their responses are as follows:

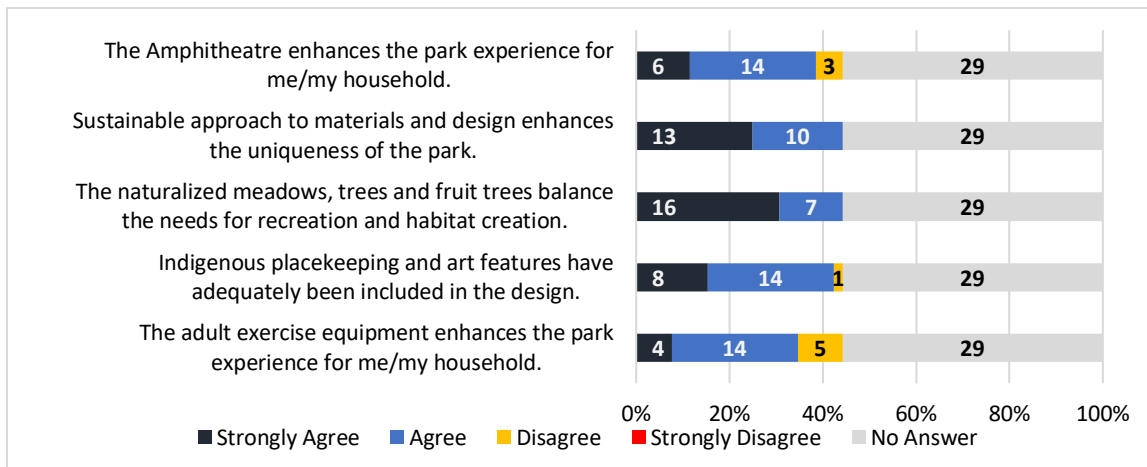
1. How did you hear about this event?



2. Please identify how, if applicable, you have participated in the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road consultation process so far



3. Participant perspectives on key elements of the new park design.



Appendix C

Questions of Clarification

The following questions were received through the virtual community meeting and add to the list of questions and responses addressed in Phase 1 of the design development for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road. To review these questions and answers, [access the Phase 1 What We Heard summary](#) for the new park at Macpherson Avenue and Davenport Road.

Question – Does the reference to "turf" on the lawns mean artificial turf or actual grass?

Answer – The open lawn area will be covered with actual grass, not artificial turf.

Question – What does the latest research say about health risks posed by being close to a live Hydro corridor?

Answer – Recent research findings have shown that the impact of being underneath active hydro corridors is minimal, primarily due to the relatively short duration people spend there. Research suggests a net benefit generated by the outdoor experience, exercise, and activity parks and other public spaces underneath hydro corridors can offer.

Question – How will the use of the amphitheatre be coordinated? Will space be booked through Parks Forestry and Recreation, or will a local community organization manage it?

Answer – Day-to-day, anyone will be able to use the amphitheatre for informal gatherings, sitting, eating, etc. If an individual, community group or Business Improvement Area wants to host an event or larger gathering in this space, they would need to go through the City's park permit process.

Question – What is the graffiti strategy for the park, particularly on unpainted concrete and wood?

Answer – Through the detailed design stage, the project team will be selecting materials that are graffiti resistant and easy to clean and maintain. Where possible, anti-graffiti coatings can be applied. The hope is that with more activity and lighting in the space, more people in the space will deter vandalism.

Question – Does Transportation Service have any plans for an east-west crossing at Davenport Road and Poplar Plains? Could a crossing here be considered?

Answer – Local ward Councillor Josh Matlow has made a request to Transportation Services regarding this crossing. His office can provide more information on the status of that request.