

Washington Park Master Plan Update

Survey Report



PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

Director Mike Abbaté
Commissioner Amanda Fritz



*Collaborative planning,
decisions & communication*

August 2016

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

During the months of June and July 2016, the public was invited to participate in a survey to inform the Washington Park Master Plan Update. The survey was administered both as an intercept survey and online. The majority of survey participants took the survey online from home. **A total of 523 people participated in the survey.**

Survey questions were developed by PP&R with guidance from the project consultant team including PLACE and JLA Public Involvement. The questions were written to get a better understanding of who uses the park, timing of visits, how often participants visit, how they get to the park, what park areas they visit and motivations for visiting, perceptions about the quality of park facilities and what improvements they suggest. Survey feedback will be used in Master Plan Update's Observations and Constraints Memo.

INTERCEPT SURVEYS

Staff spent over 120 hours talking to people in the community about the Washington Park Master Plan Update. Surveys were done predominantly in Washington Park, with a few days spent at other popular locations to get feedback from a cross-section of the community. Surveys were administered over eight days by a team of 2-3 surveyors at the following three locations on the dates indicated:

- Washington Park (June 25, July 10, July 16, July 17, July 29)
 - Area and trails near the Hoyt Arboretum Visitor Center
 - Area surrounding the International Rose Test Garden
 - Washington Park Reservoir
 - Elephant House Playground
 - Outside of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
 - Green space near Sacajawea statue and Lewis & Clark Column
- Peninsula Park, NE Portland (July 23 and July 24)

People who were not able to take the survey at that time were given business cards with a link to the online survey so they could participate at a more convenient time. Project team members visited the Grand Floral Parade (June 11) to hand out business cards and promote the online survey.

Survey forms were prepared in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Russian however, none were returned in languages other than English.

ONLINE SURVEY NOTIFICATION

The online survey was promoted to a wider public audience using the following methods:

WEBSITE

The project team created a website for the Master Plan Update that went live in early June. The site provided a link to the online survey in English, Spanish, Vietnamese and Russian.

EMAIL

Parks staff sent an email message to a list of 160 addresses that included a short description of the project and an invitation to participate in the online survey. The list consisted of:

- Individuals and organizations previously or currently involved with projects at Washington Park
- Organizations and individuals who represent underserved communities that rarely or never visit Washington Park.

MULTICULTURAL OUTREACH

The team reached out to several community partners and organizations that represent non-English speaking and limited English proficient individuals for their assistance in distributing the email described above to their contacts and networks. Though some community partners expressed potential difficulties getting participation in an online survey about Washington Park since the park is far from where the majority of the people they serve live and indicated that past email outreach efforts have resulted in a low number of responses, they agreed to distribute the email to their contacts and networks. They did not require the email to be translated since the majority of their emails are sent initially in English then translated if requested. No requests for translation were made. . A community partner in the Russian and Slavic communities recommended scheduling an appearance on *Slavic Family Radio*, as this radio station has a large listener base.

POSTCARD MAILING

The team produced a postcard briefly describing the project and inviting participation in the online survey. It was mailed to 652 addresses collected by Portland Parks and Recreation from previous activities related to Washington Park.

MEDIA & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS

A community announcement was emailed to 19 local community newspapers and newsletters. It included a short description of the project and an invitation to participate in the online survey.

PARK BANNERS

Three 6-foot banners were hung in the park for two weeks to advertise the project, introduce the project website and solicit participation in the online survey.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is based on survey feedback from members of the public received online and in-person at Washington Park, Peninsula Park and the Grand Floral Parade. The survey was intended to evaluate who is using the park, when and why they visit the park, as well as how they rate the quality of a variety of park facilities. An analysis of the data suggests the following observations:

Washington Park is not simply a place to bring children; non-venue specific locations in the park attract people without children

- 70% of survey participants do not have children under 18 living at home.
- The areas of Washington Park where intercept surveys were conducted were not near large venues, such as the Oregon Zoo, Children’s Museum or the Forestry Center. The 2015 Explore Washington Park Visitor Survey did focus on these venues and survey participants frequently had children living at home.

Survey participation suggests that the park is missing visitors from outer Portland neighborhoods, specifically from multicultural communities

- 85% of survey participants identified as white.
- No surveys were returned in a language other than English, but it isn’t clear why other language formats were not used at all. For example:
 - Surveyors talked to many people in Spanish, but no one took the survey in Spanish.
 - Survey demographics show 3.7% of participants identified as Asian, but no Vietnamese translated surveys were returned. The assumption is that Asian participants were not Vietnamese and/or were English proficient.
- Approximately half of the participants said there is another park they visit where they can enjoy similar activities.
- The project will explore possibilities for why communities are not visiting Washington Park and determine what the barriers might be. They will focus on outer SE and NE communities that might not be as familiar with the park.

Park facilities received a high approval rating with a few key exceptions

Participants felt generally favorably about the current park facilities, but indicated that the following areas could use some work:

- Parking - almost half of participants indicated parking could be improved
- Roads and traffic
- Food service
- Restrooms

Survey participants were using the park a few times a year on average, but neighbors use the park on a more regular basis

- Most people visit the park a “few times a year” – the most popular time being summer. Winter was the least popular time for people to visit the park. The percentage of people visiting a few times a year correlates with the percentage of people driving to the park. Neighbors who are visiting on a more regular basis are more likely to walk to the park.
- People surveyed visit the park to enjoy nature. This response was expected based on the location the in-person surveys were conducted, the park’s more natural areas.

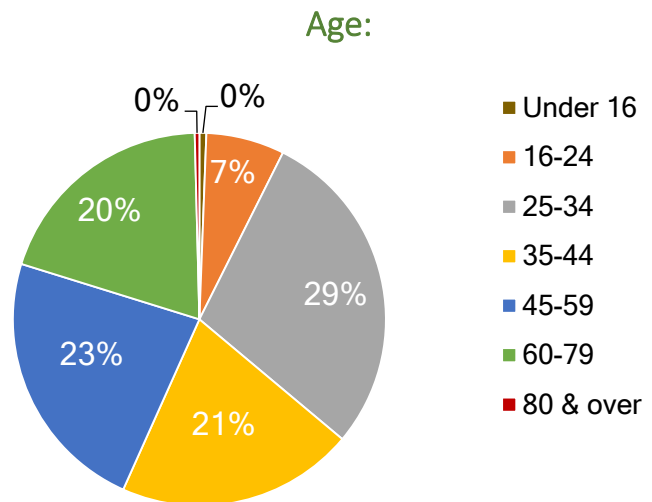
KEY FINDINGS

This section presents the key survey findings followed by the top three themes/comments received from open-end responses to each question (“Other”). Detailed comments are provided in the attached spreadsheet.

DEMOGRAPHICS

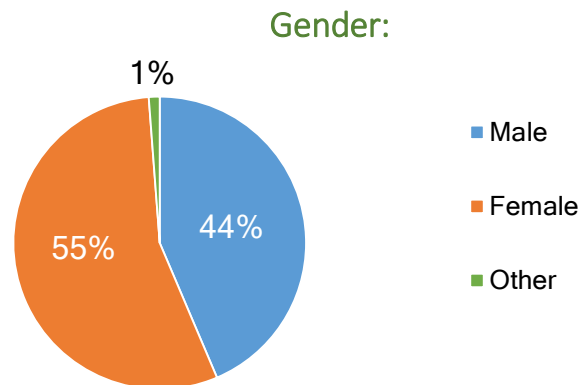
AGE

Of the 485 people who gave their age, 139 people were ages 25-34, 112 people were 45-59, 100 people were 35-44, 96 people were 60-79, and 33 were 16-34.



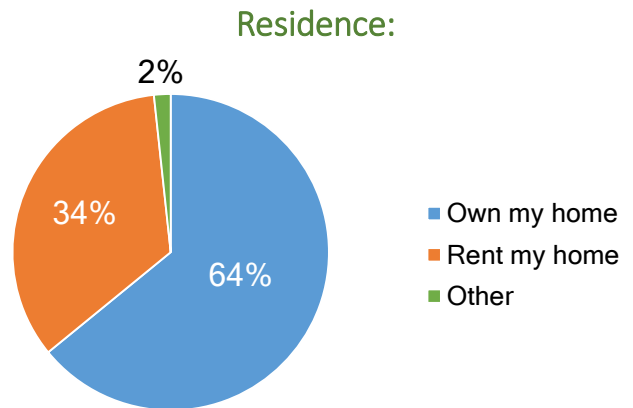
GENDER IDENTITY

Of the 482 responses to the question regarding gender, 266 identified as female and 210 identified as male.



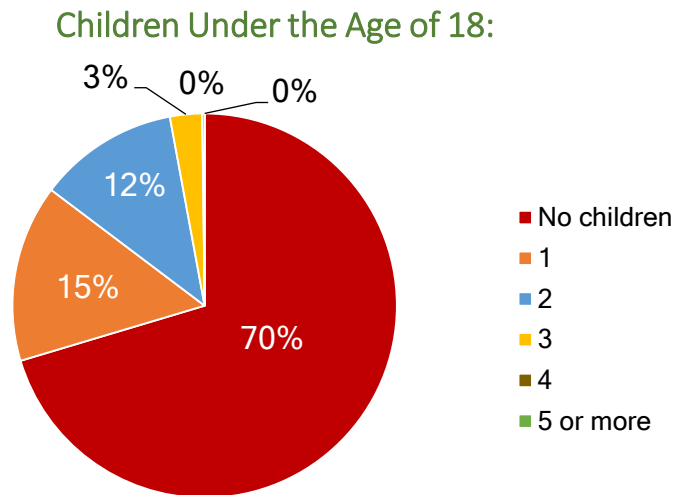
RESIDENCE

There were 476 responses to the question regarding residence, 305 own their home and 163 rent their home.



NUMBER OF CHILDREN

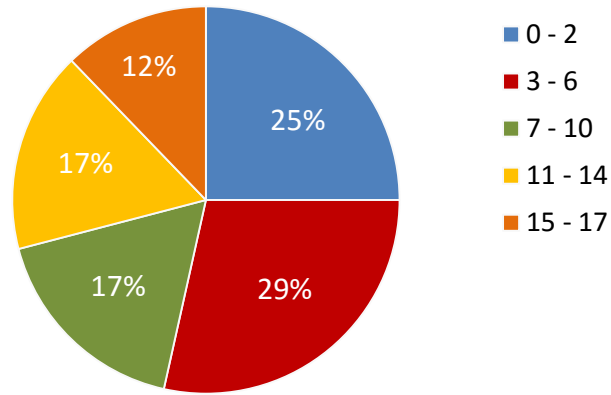
Survey participants were asked if they have children under the age of 18 living in their home, and if so how many. Of the 475 responses, 334 reported no children living with them, 71 reported one child, 56 reported 2 children, 13 report three children, and one participant reported four children.



AGE OF CHILDREN

There were 137 people who indicated having one or more children under the age of 18 living with them. These participants were asked to give the age ranges of their children: 43 had children 0-2 years old, 49 had children 3-6 years old, 30 had children 7-10 years old and 21 had children 15-17 years old.

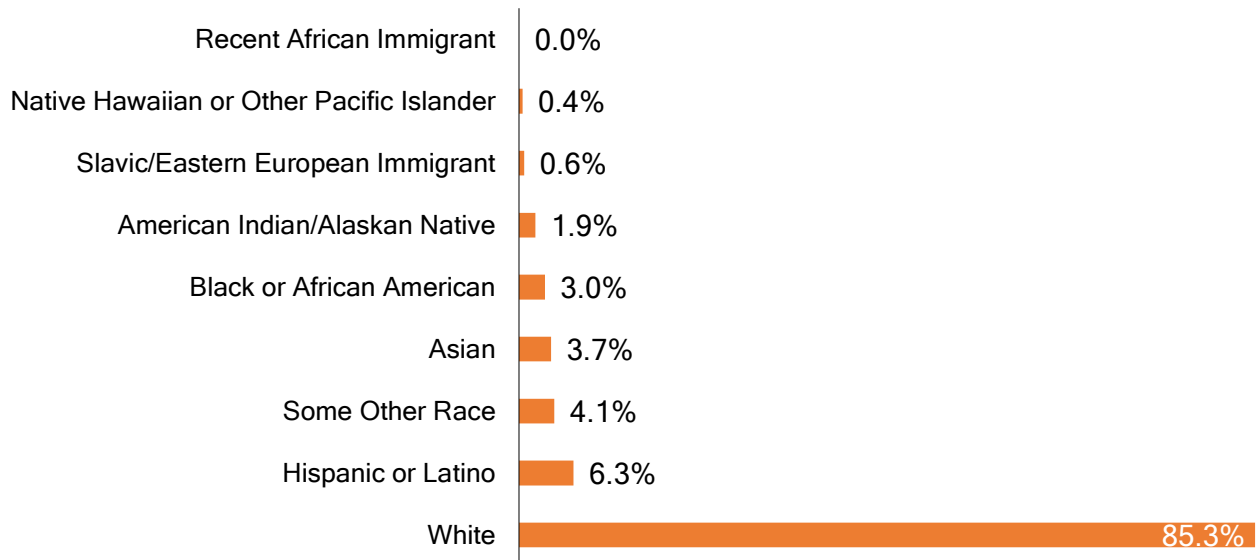
Ages of Children:



RACE/ETHNICITY

Survey participants were asked to identify their ethnicity and 463 responded. There were 395 White, 29 Hispanic/Latino, 19 “Some Other Race,” 17 Asian, 14 Black/African American, 9 American Indian/Native Alaskan, 3 Slavic/Eastern European and 2 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Some participants selected more than one race.

Race/Ethnicity:

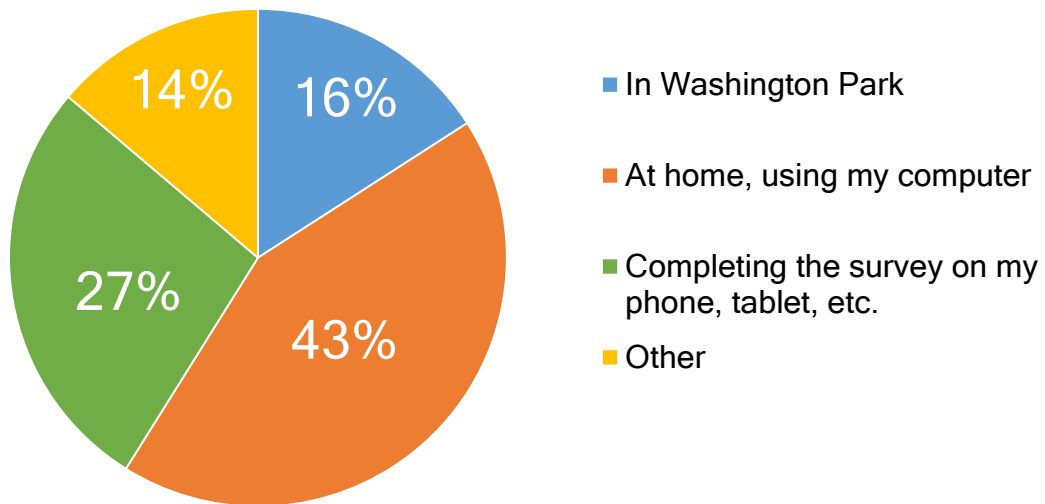


VISITING THE PARK

LOCATION OF SURVEYS

Survey participants were asked to indicate where they were taking the survey. Of the 523 surveys 225 people took it at home using their own computer, 143 took it on a mobile device (phone, tablet, etc.), 83 were intercepted in Washington Park, and 72 listed another location (includes Peninsula Park intercept surveys).

I am currently...



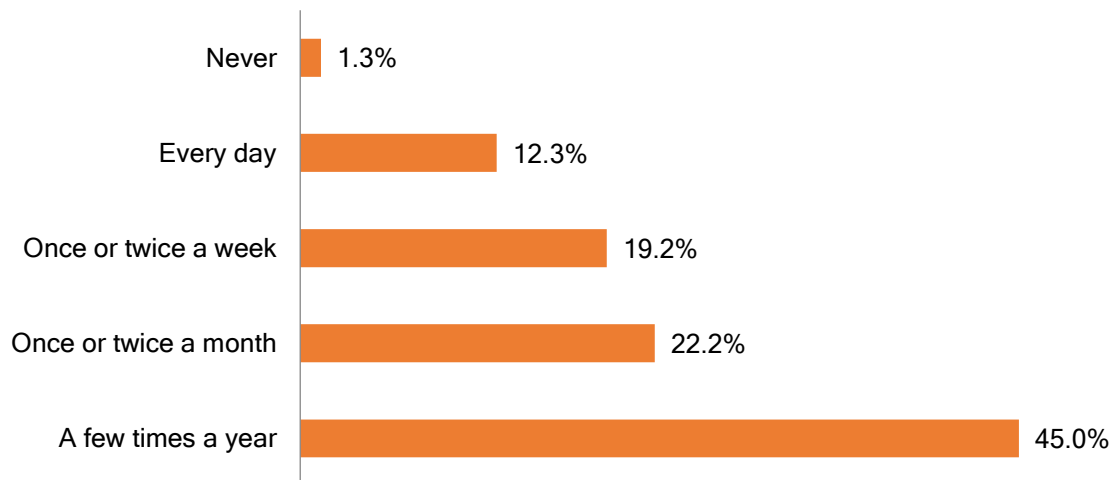
Of the respondents who chose to write in the location where they took the survey, the three most common responses were:

- Work (48)
- Peninsula Park (20)
- School (1)

FREQUENCY OF VISITS

Participants were asked how often they visit the park and 522 people responded: 235 people visit the park a few times a year, 116 visit once or twice a month, 100 visit once or twice a week, and 64 said they visit every day.

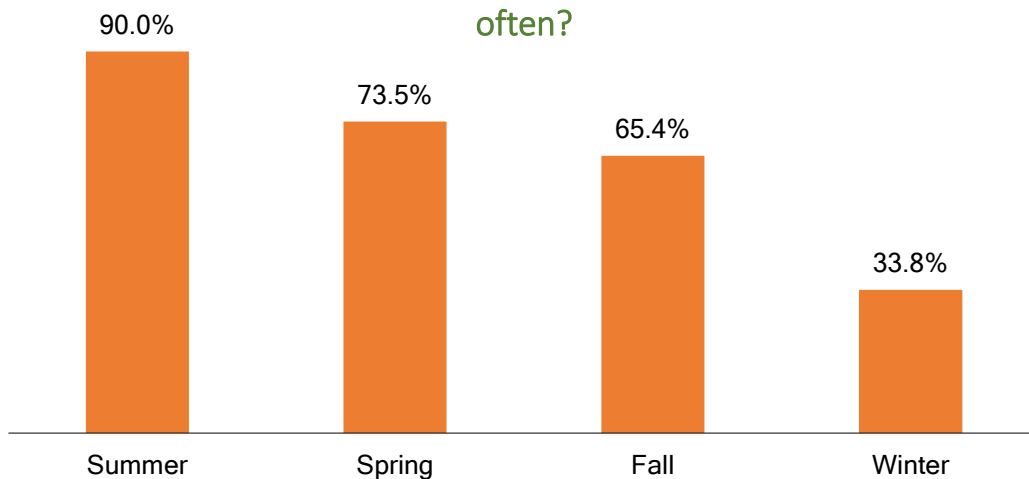
On average, I visit Washington Park...



SEASON OF VISITS

The survey asked what time of year participants visited most often. Of the total surveys, 522 responded to this question, with the option to select one or more of the options. Of the participants, 468 said they visit in the summer, 382 people said they visit in the spring, 340 listed fall and 176 said they visit in the winter.

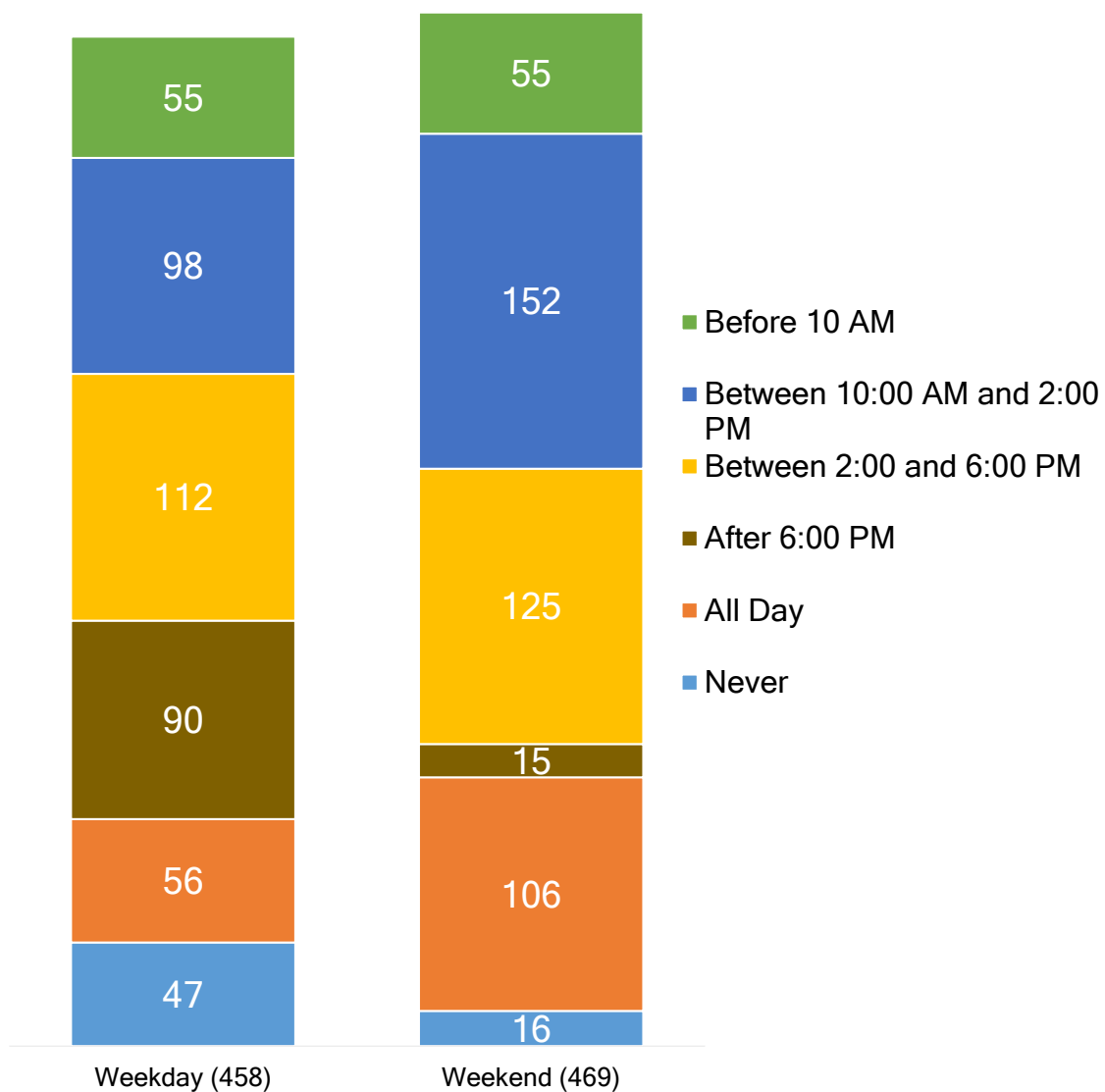
What time of year do you visit Washington Park most often?



TIME OF VISITS

Participants were asked what time of day they visit the park during the week and on weekends. Of the survey participants, 458 indicated weekday visits and 469 indicated weekend visits. Of the weekday visitors, 112 visit between 2:00 and 6:00 PM, 98 visit between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM, 90 visit after 6:00 PM, 56 visit all day, 55 visit before 10:00 AM and 47 never visit on weekdays. Of the weekend visitors, 152 visit between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM, 125 visit between 2:00 and 6:00 PM, 106 visit all day, 55 visit before 10:00 AM, 16 never visit and 15 visit after 6:00 PM.

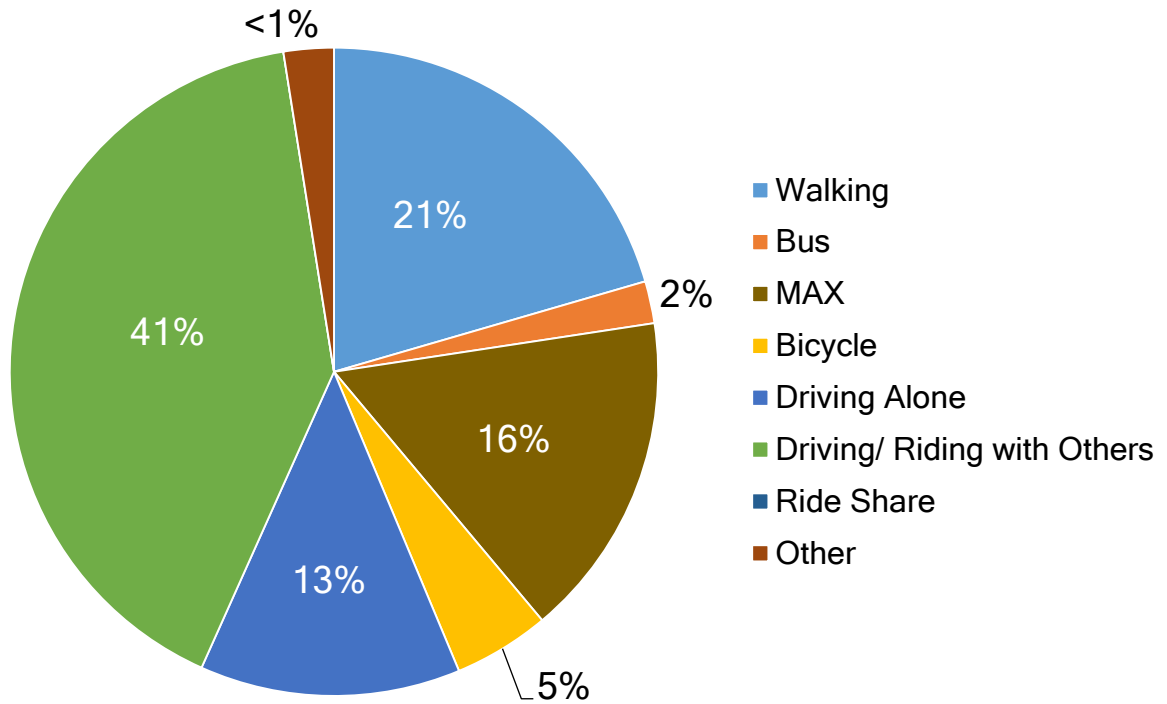
What time of day do you most often visit Washington Park?



METHOD OF GETTING TO THE PARK

The survey asked park visitors to indicate what their primary mode of travel is when going to Washington Park and 522 responded. The majority of 213 participants said they drive or ride with others, 107 walk to the park, 85 take the MAX, 68 drive alone, 25 bicycle and 11 take the bus.

My primary way of getting to the park is by...

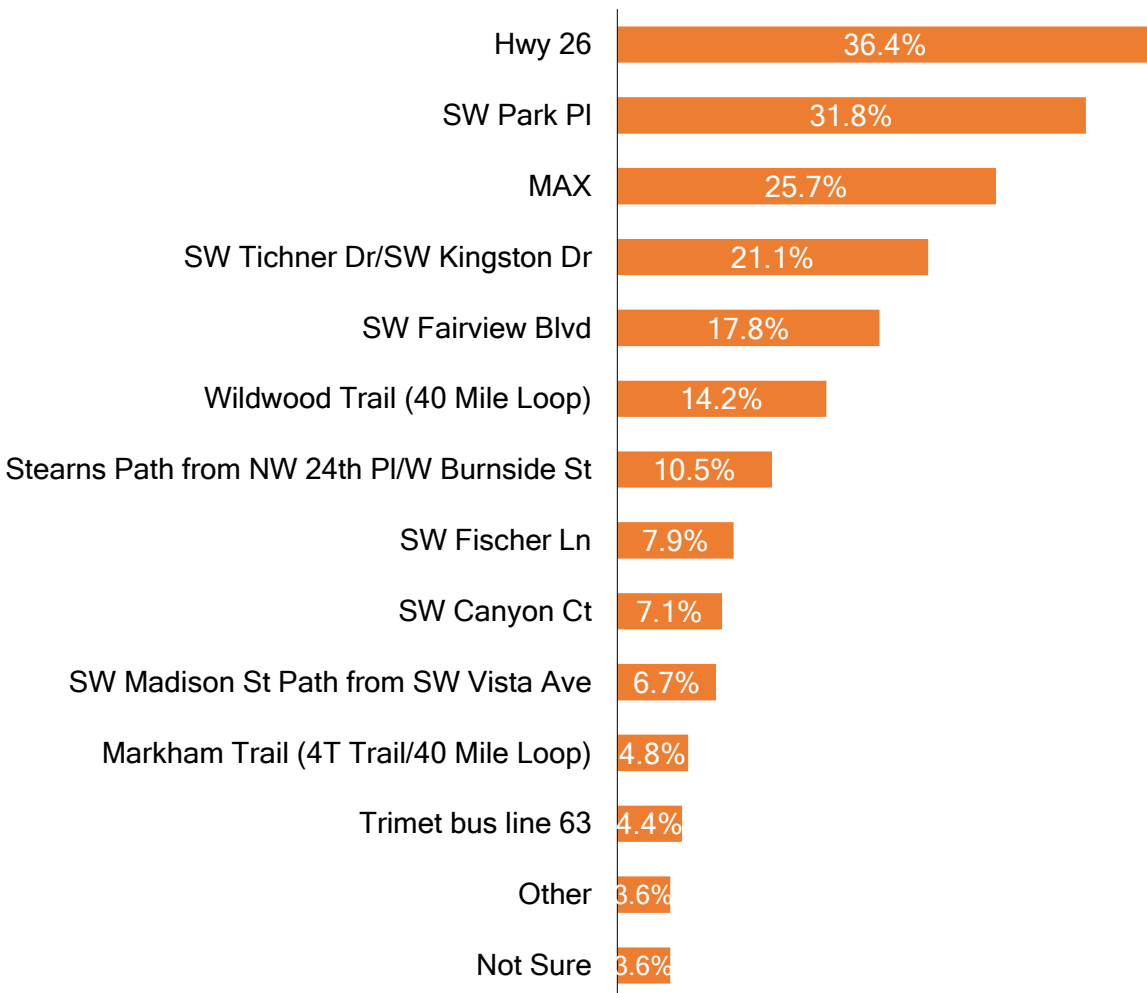


Of the respondents who chose indicated that they use another method of transportation, the most common write-in response was running.

VISITORS' PREFERRED ENTRANCE

Survey participants were asked to identify on a map the location they most often enter the park through. Of the responses, 190 enter by US-26, 166 use SW Park Pl, 134 use the MAX, 110 use SW Tichner Dr/SW Kingston Dr, 93 use SW Fairview Blvd, 74 use Wildwood Trail, 55 use Stearns Path from NW 24th Pl/W Burnside St, 41 use SW Fischer Ln, 37 use SW Canyon Ct, 35 SW Madison St Path from SW Vista Ave, 25 use Markham Trail, and 23 use the 63 Trimet bus line.

I enter the park through...



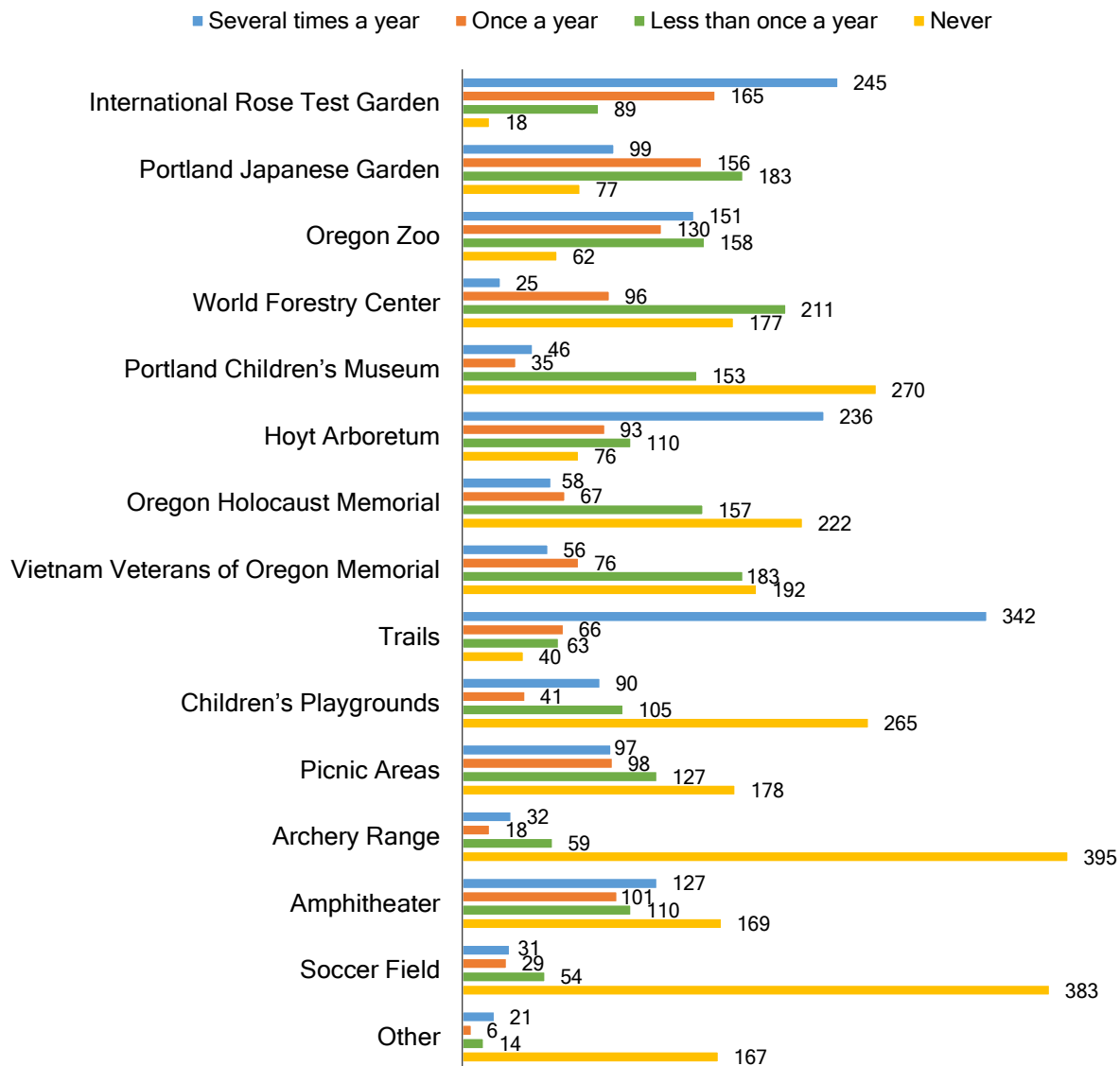
Of the respondents who chose to write in where they enter Washington Park that was not listed, the three most common responses were:

- Trails (6)
- Lives by park (4)

VENUES AND ATTRACTIONS

Park visitors were asked where in the park they have visited and how often. A total of 522 people responded to this question. The top locations participants visit several times a year were the trails (342), The International Rose Test Garden (245) and The Hoyt Arboretum (236). The top places participants indicated they visit only once a year were The International Rose Test Garden (165), The Portland Japanese Garden (156), and the Oregon Zoo (130). Places participants said they visit less than once a year were The World Forestry Center (211), The Portland Japanese Garden (183) and The Vietnam Veterans of Oregon Memorial (183). The top places people indicated that they never, or have never visited were the archery range (395), the soccer fields (383) and the Portland Children’s Museum (270).

I have visited the following places...



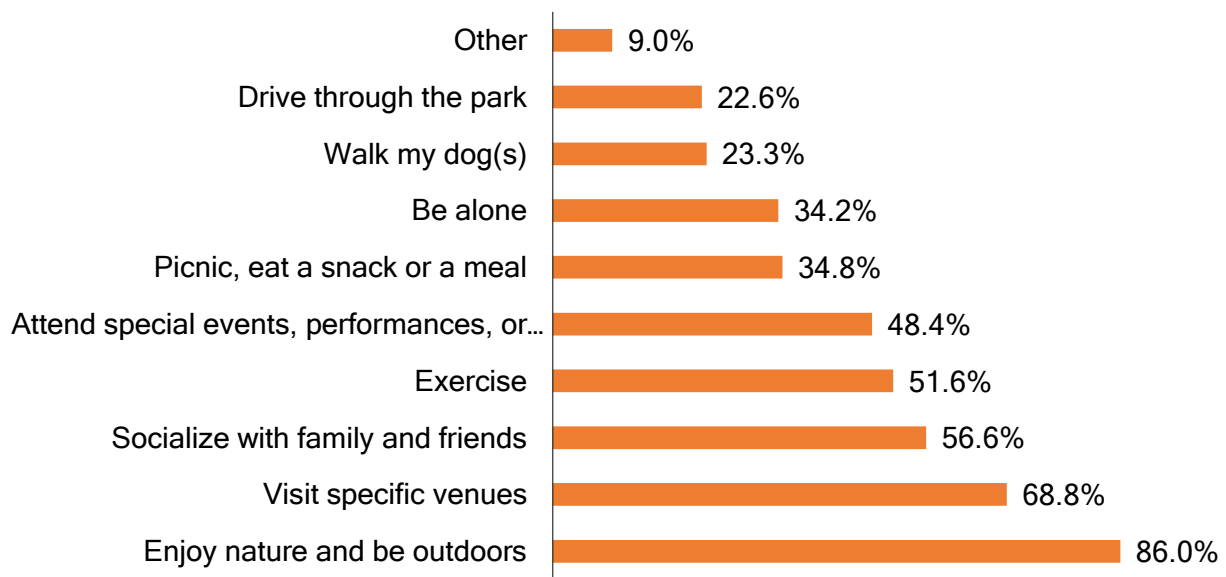
Of the respondents who chose to write in where they visit while in Washington Park, the four most common responses were:

- Tennis courts (7)
- Reservoirs (4)
- Roads for cycling (2)
- Rose Garden Store (2)

VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Participants were asked what activities they like to engage in while in the park, they could select multiple activities. A total of 523 people responded to this question – 450 come to enjoy nature, 360 visit specific venues, 296 socialize with family or friends, 270 come to exercise, 253 attend special events, 182 picnic in the park, 179 come to be alone, and 122 walk their dog(s).

When I come to Washington Park, I like to...



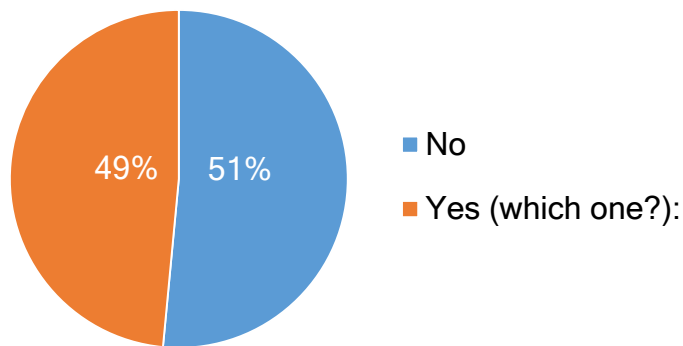
Of the respondents who chose to write in what they like to do while in Washington Park, the five most common responses were:

- Bike (12)
- Volunteer (9)
- Do photography (5)
- Play with my children (3)
- Play Frisbee (2)

SIMILAR CITY PARKS

Survey participants were asked if they enjoy similar activities at a different park in the city, and if so, to indicate which one. There were 522 responses to this question, 269 participants could not think of a similar park and 253 could.

Is there another park in the City where you enjoy similar activities?



The 5 most popular parks in the City where respondents said they enjoy similar activities were:

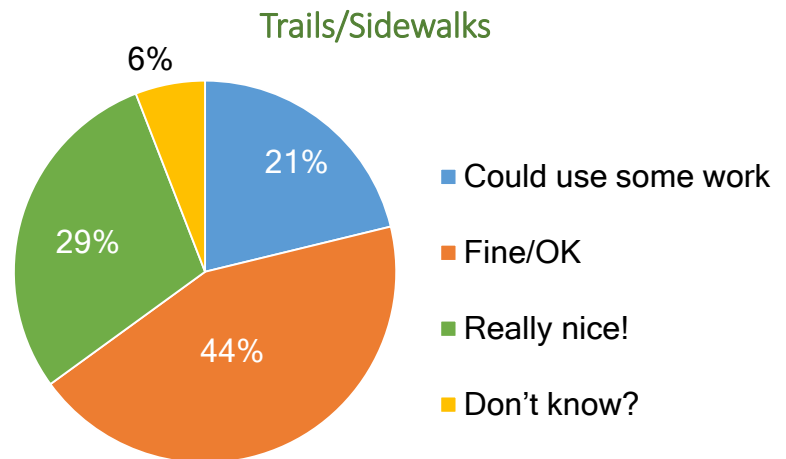
- Forest Park (66)
- Mt. Tabor (58)
- Laurelhurst Park (33)
- Peninsula Park (26)
- Gabriel Park (15)

FEATURES & FACILITIES

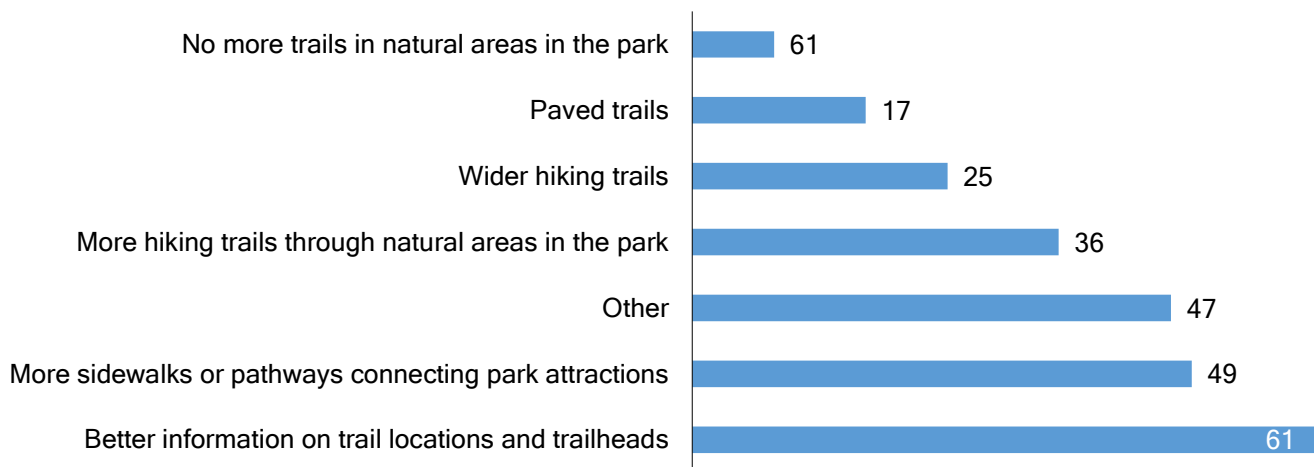
Survey participants were asked to rate the different features and facilities in the park. If a person expressed that a feature or facility could use work, they were asked how it could be improved.

TRAILS & SIDEWALKS

A total of 509 people responded to the Trails and Sidewalks question. Of those responses, 223 thought they were fine/OK, 148 thought they were really nice, 108 thought they could use some work and 30 did not know the condition of the trails.



For the respondents that indicated Trails and Sidewalks could use some work 108 provided the following responses:

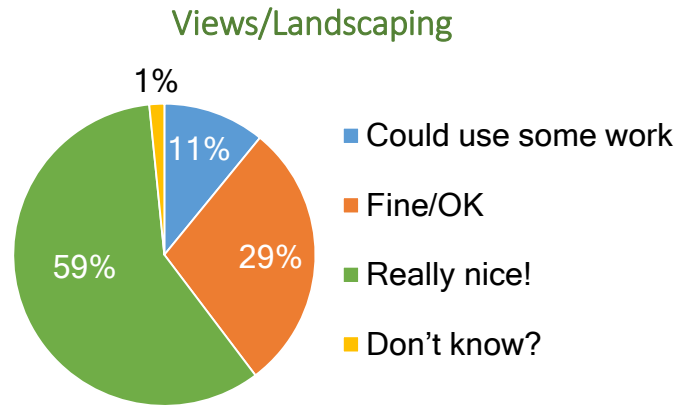


Of the 47 respondents who chose to write in comments about Trails/Sidewalks, the three most common responses were:

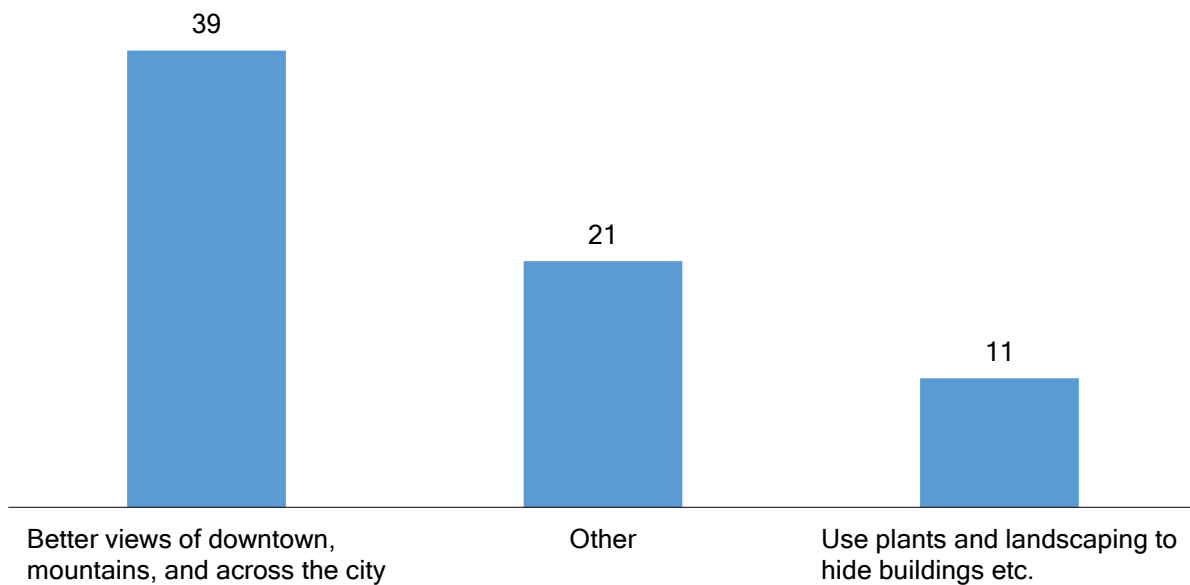
- Improve maintenance (12)
- Build mountain biking trails (10)
- Improve accessibility (6)

VIEWS & LANDSCAPING

A total of 504 participants responded to the Views and Landscaping question. Of those responses, 296 indicated that they were really nice, 145 indicated that they were fine/OK, 55 indicated that they could use some work and 8 didn't know.



For the respondents that indicated Views and Landscaping could use some work, 55 provided the following responses:

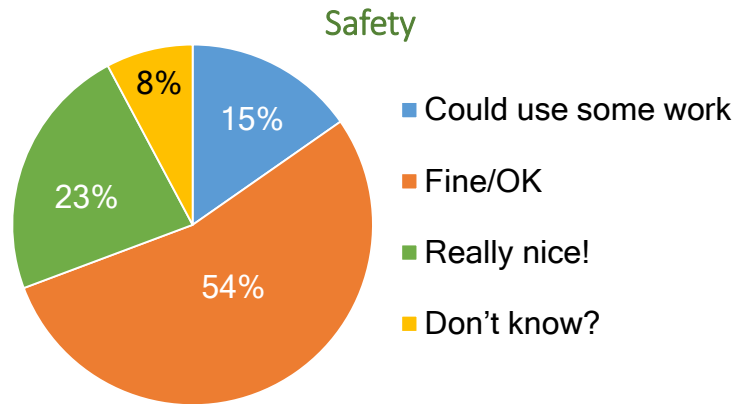


Of the 21 respondents who chose to write in comments about Views/Landscaping, the three most common responses were:

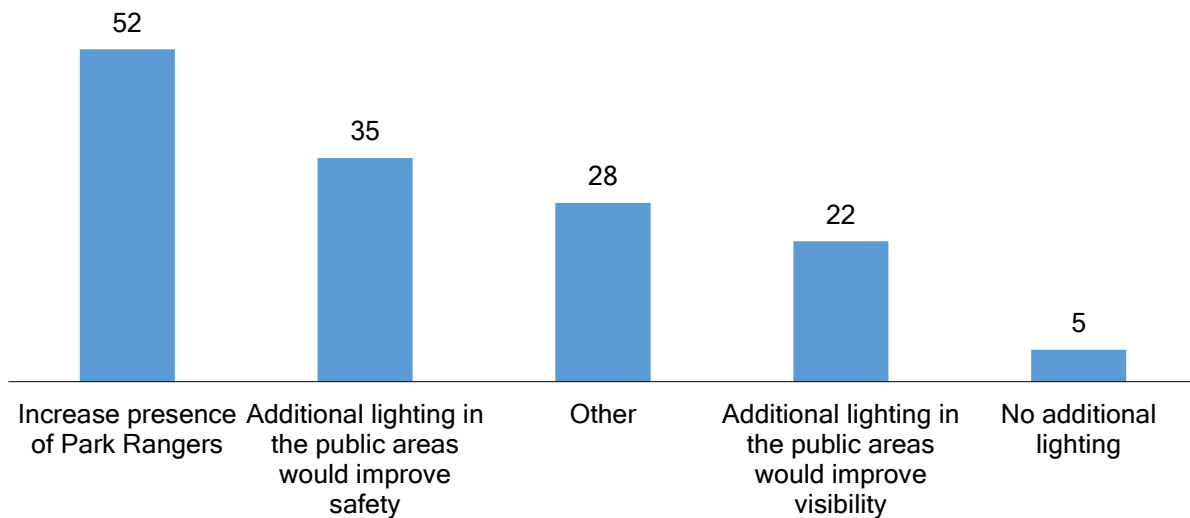
- Manage invasive species (9)
- Prune trees to improve views (4)
- Improve maintenance (2)

SAFETY

A total of 502 people responded to the Safety question. Of those who responded, 271 said safety in the park was fine/OK, 115 said it was really nice, 77 said it could use some work and 39 said they didn't know.



For the respondents that indicated Safety could use some work 77 provided the following responses:

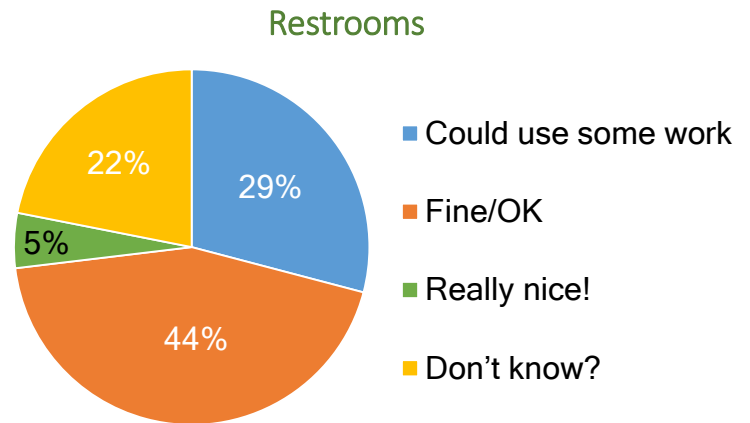


Of the 28 respondents who chose to write in comments about Safety, the three most common responses were:

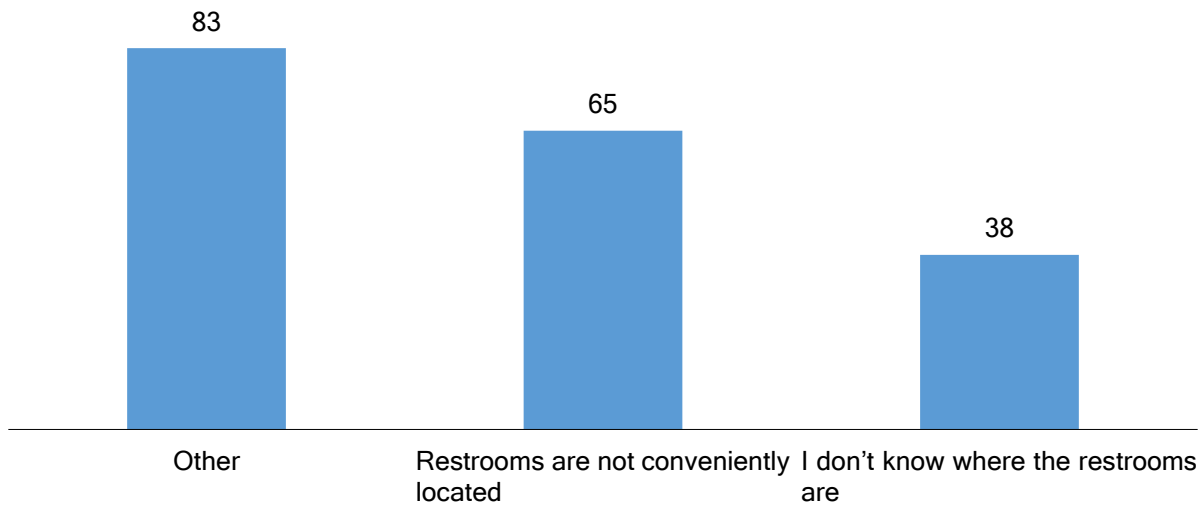
- Manage homeless population and camping (8)
- Improve safety for bikes/pedestrians on road (5)
- Monitor parking to prevent theft (3)

RESTROOMS

A total of 502 people responded to the Restrooms question. Of those who responded, 221 said the restrooms were fine/OK, 146 said they could use some work, 110 said they didn't know and 25 said they were really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Restrooms could use some work, 146 provided the following responses:

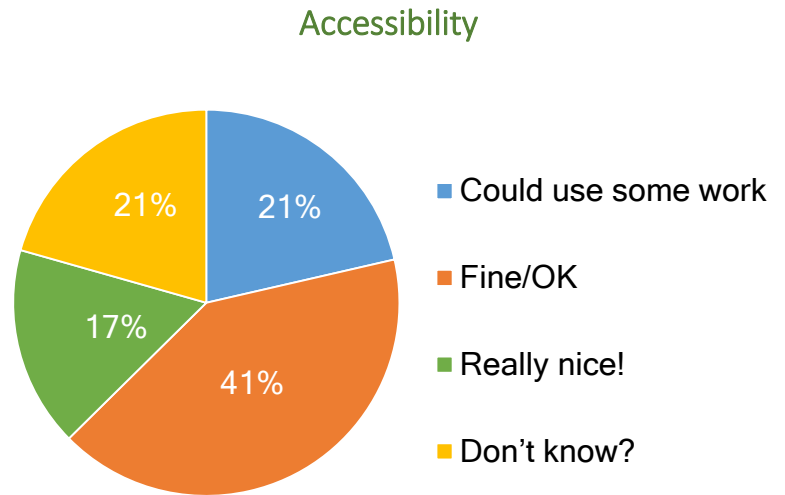


Of the 83 respondents who chose to write in comments about Restrooms, the three most common responses were:

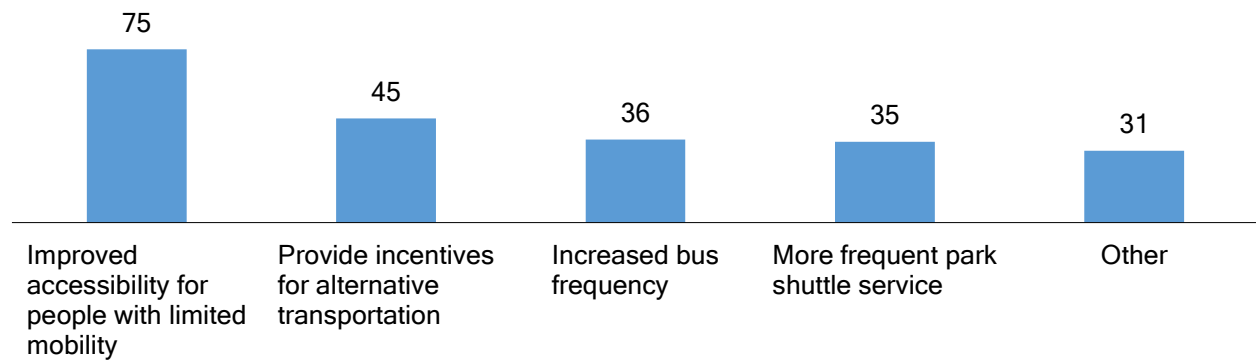
- Increase upkeep and maintenance (38)
- Build more restrooms (19)
- Fix up bathroom buildings (15)

ACCESSIBILITY

A total of 500 people responded to the Accessibility question. Of those who responded, 206 said accessibility in the park was fine/OK, 107 said it could use some work, 103 said they didn't know, and 84 said it was really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Accessibility could use some work 107 provided the following responses:

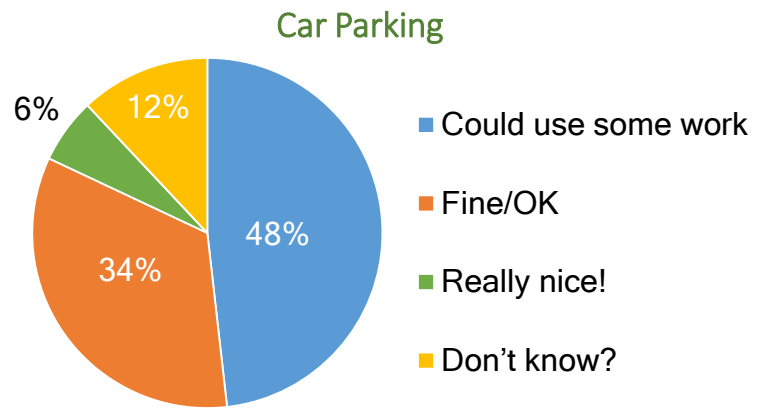


Of the 31 respondents who chose to write in comments about Accessibility, the three most common responses were:

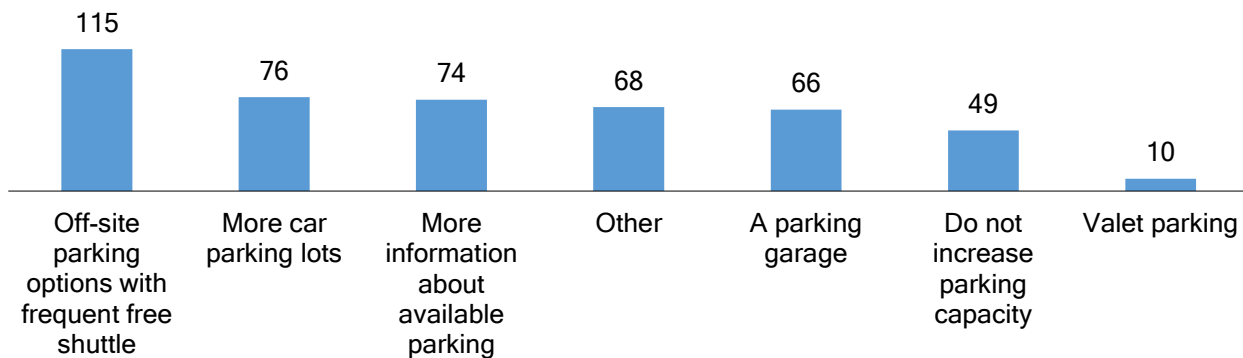
- Improve parking accessibility (14)
- Improve accessibility by public transportation (3)
- Improve accessibility at Rose Garden (2)

CAR PARKING

A total of 500 people responded to the Car Parking question. Of those who responded, 241 said parking could use some work, 169 said it was fine/OK, 60 said they didn't know and 30 said it was really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Car Parking could use some work, 241 provided the following responses:

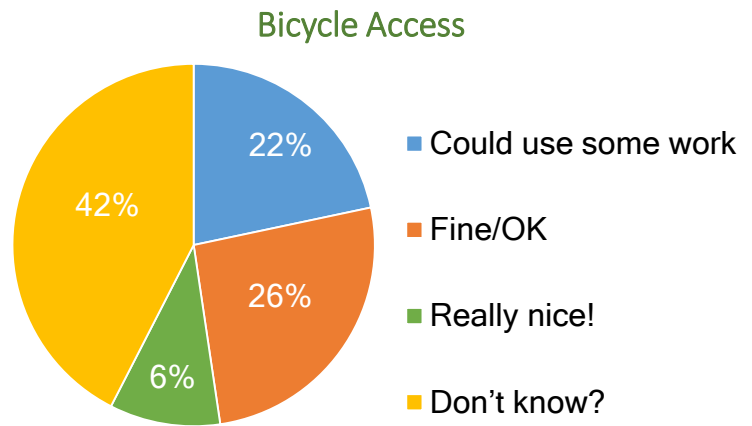


Of the 68 respondents who chose to write in comments about Car Parking, the three most common responses were:

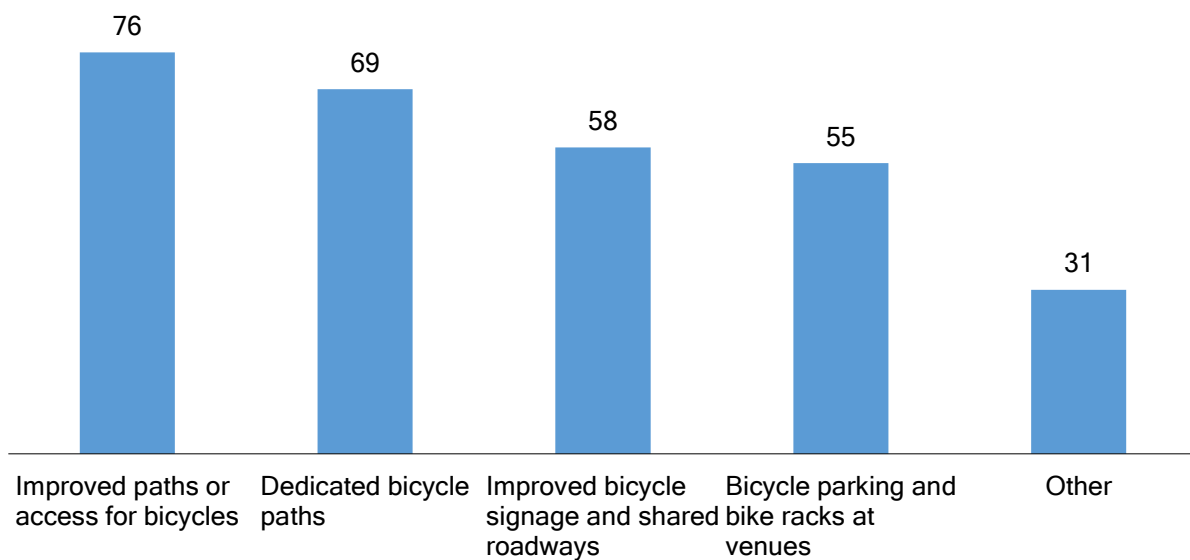
- Relieve parking pressures in surrounding neighborhood (13)
- Parking cost too high (12)
- Remove parking meters (10)

BICYCLE ACCESS

A total of 497 people responded to the Bicycle Access question. Of those who responded, 211 said they didn't know about the bicycle access in the park, 129 said it was fine/OK, 108 said it could use some work and 49 said it was really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Bicycle Access could use some work 108 provided the following responses:

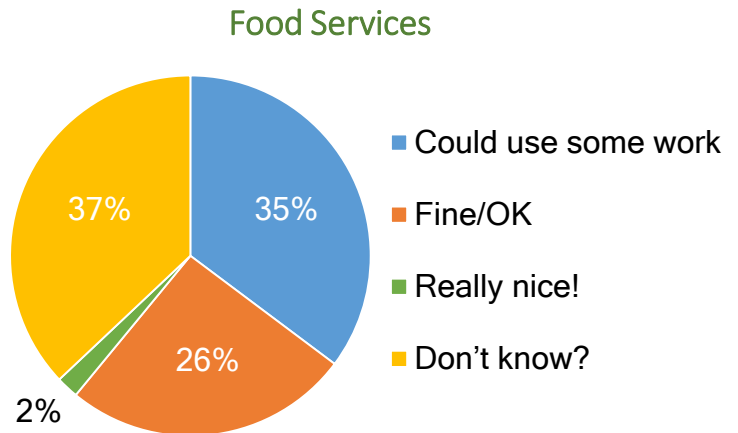


Of the 31 respondents who chose to write in comments about Bicycle Access, the three most common responses were:

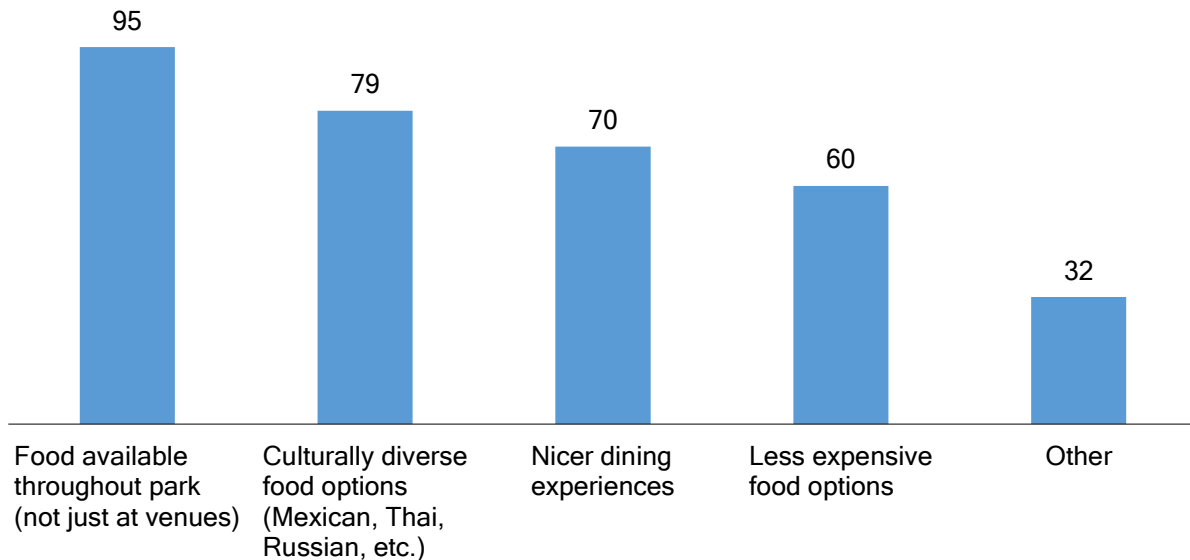
- Increase safety for bikes accessing the park (7)
- Build mountain biking trails (6)
- Restrict bikes on trails (6)

FOOD SERVICES

A total of 494 people responded to the Food Services question. Of those who responded, 183 said they didn't know about the food services in the park, 174 said it could use some work, 127 said it was fine/OK and 10 said it was really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Food Services could use some work, 174 provided the following responses:



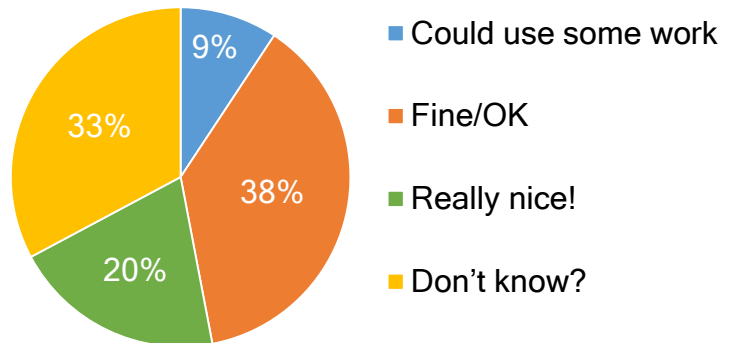
Of the 32 respondents who chose to write in comments about Food Services, the four most common responses were:

- Build a food cart pod (8)
- Provide more alternatives (e.g. vegetarian/vegan options) (6)
- Do not increase food services in park (3)

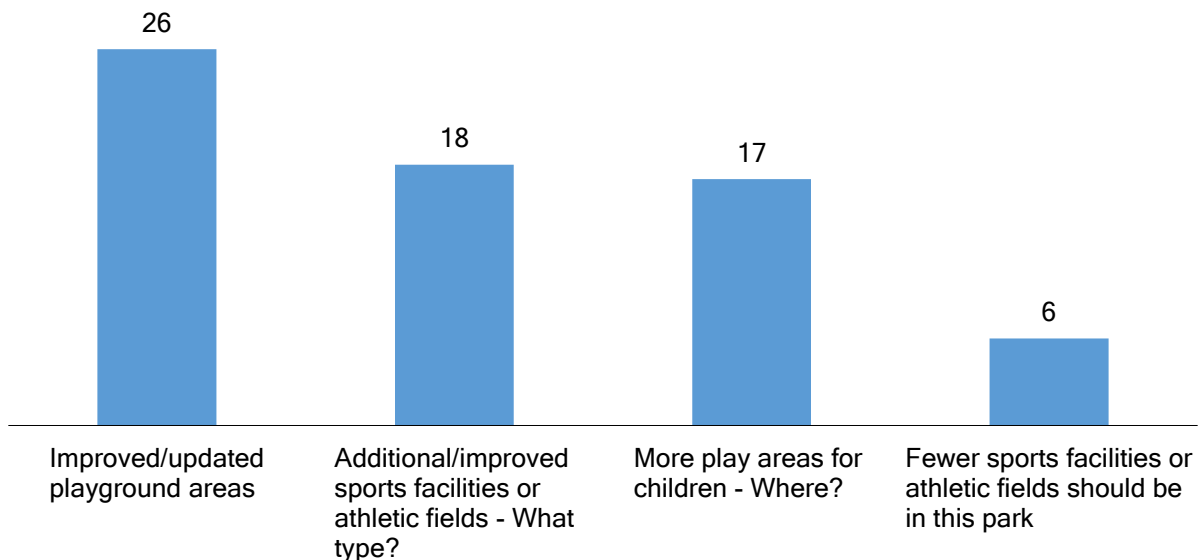
RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

A total of 494 people responded to the Recreational Facilities question. Of those who responded, 186 said they thought the recreational facilities at the park were fine/OK, 162 said they didn't know, 100 said they were really nice and 46 thought they could use some work.

Recreational Facilities



Of the respondents that indicated Recreational Facilities could use some work 46 provided the following responses:

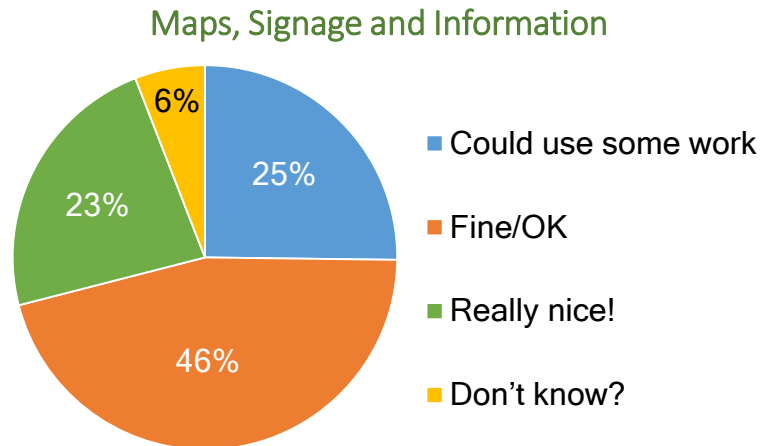


Of the 31 respondents who chose to write in comments about Recreational Facilities, the three most common responses were:

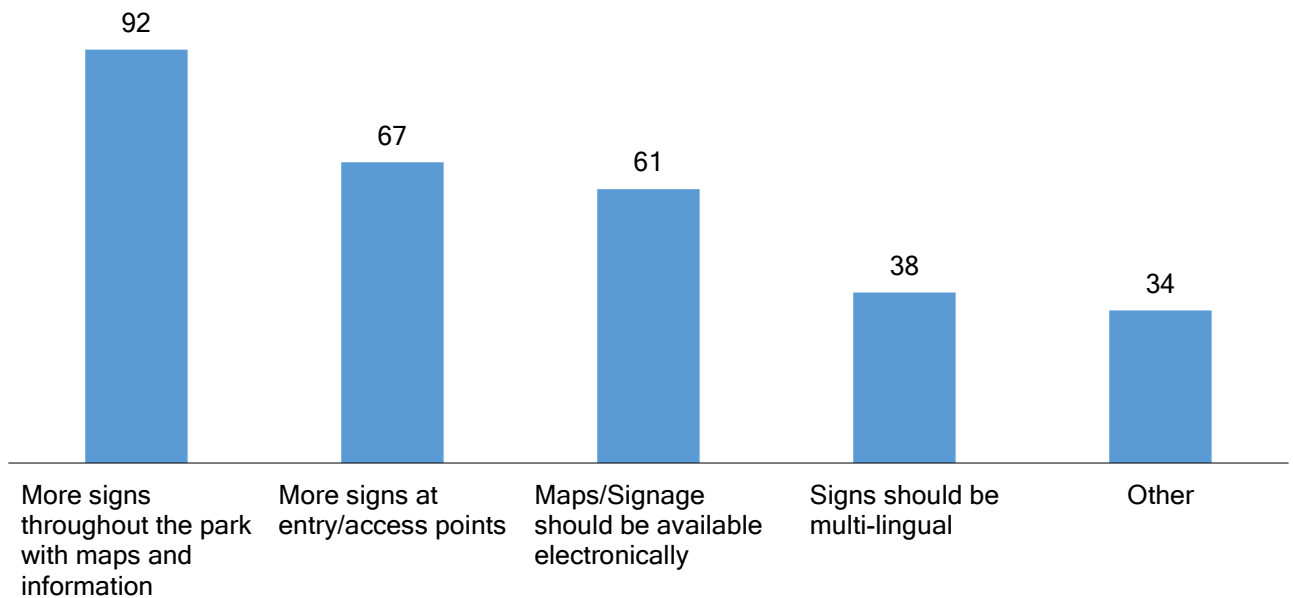
- Improve and maintain soccer field (6)
- Build a disc golf course (5)
- Build a dog park (4)

MAPS, SIGNAGE & INFORMATION

A total of 493 people responded to the Maps, Signage and Information question. Of those who responded 226 thought the maps, signage and information in the park were fine/OK, 124 thought it could use some work, 114 thought it was really nice and 29 said they didn't know.



For the respondents that indicated Maps, Signage and Information could use some work 124 provided the following responses:

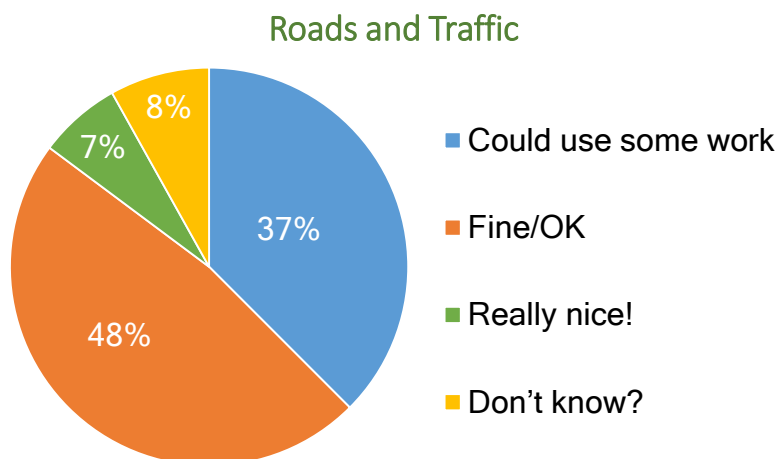


Of the 34 respondents who chose to write in comments about Maps, Signage and Information, the three most common responses were:

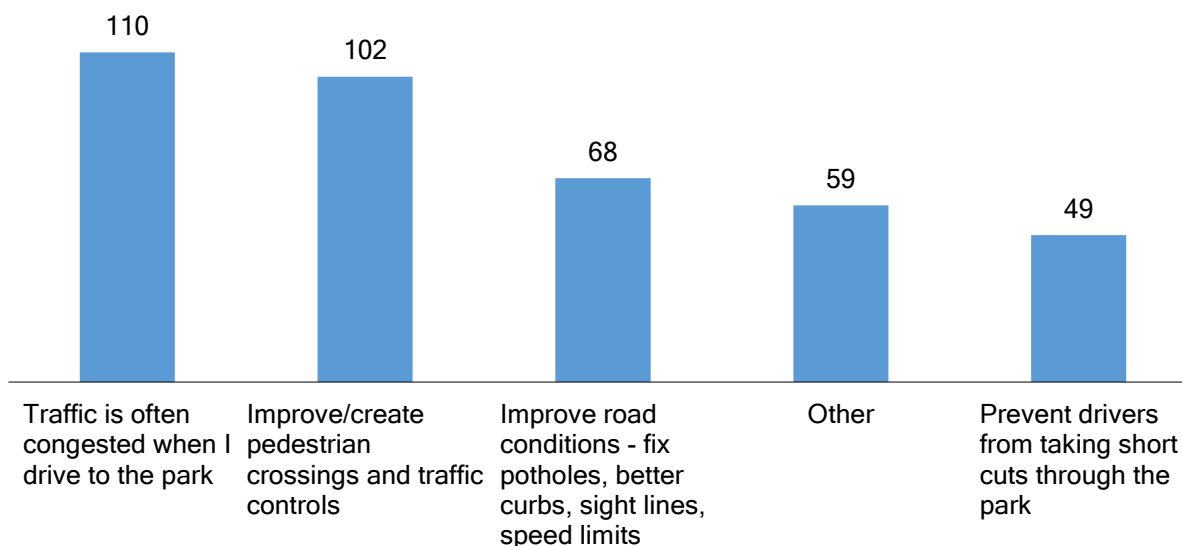
- Improve legibility of signage (6)
- Better identification of restrooms (5)
- Increase signage around the park (5)

ROADS & TRAFFIC

A total of 493 people responded to the Roads and Traffic question. Of those who responded, 235 thought the roads and traffic in the park were fine/OK, 185 thought it could use some work, 40 didn't know and 33 said they were really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Roads and Traffic could use some work 185 provided the following responses:

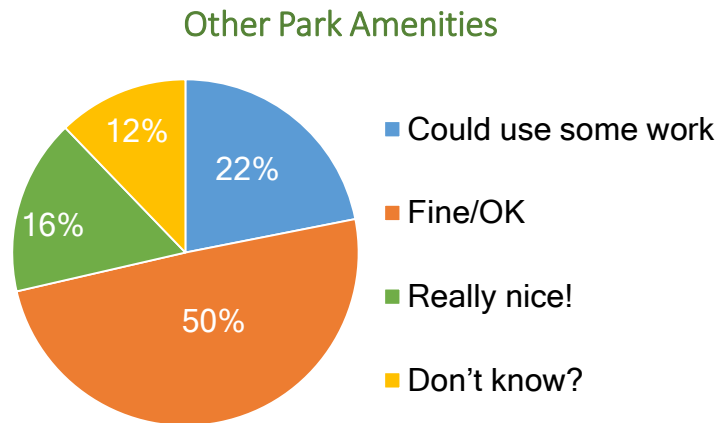


Of the 59 respondents who chose to write in comments about Roads and Traffic, the three most common responses were:

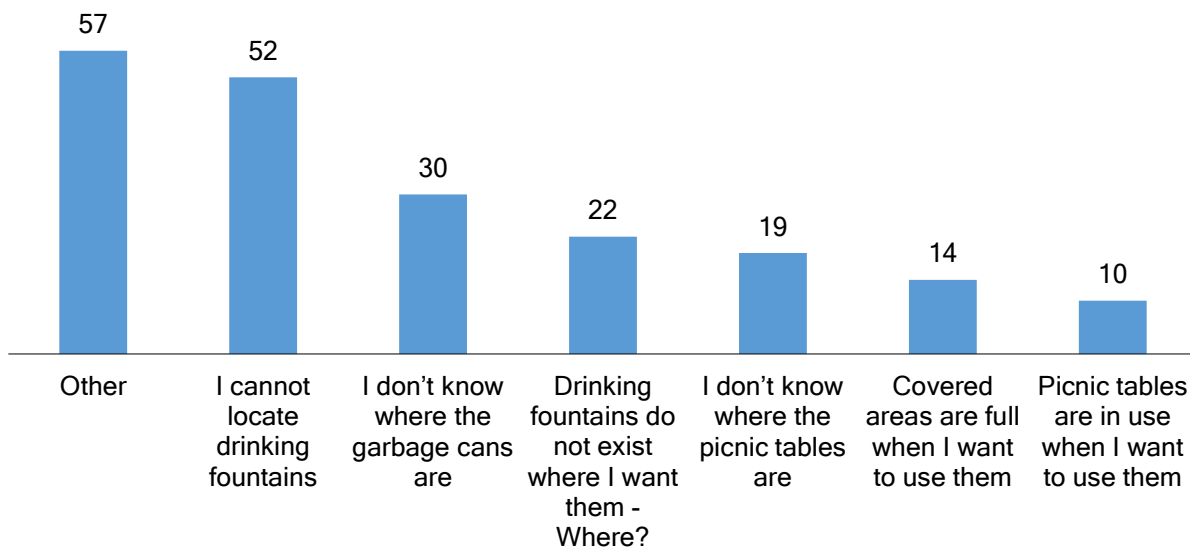
- Prohibit parking on the side of the road (7)
- Restrict vehicular traffic (7)
- Improve traffic by the Japanese Garden (5)

OTHER PARK AMENITIES

A total of 493 people responded to the Other Park Amenities question. Of those who responded, 244 thought the park amenities were fine/OK, 108 thought they could use some work, 81 thought they were really nice and 60 said they didn't know.



Of the respondents that indicated Other Park Ammenities could use some work 108 provided the following responses:

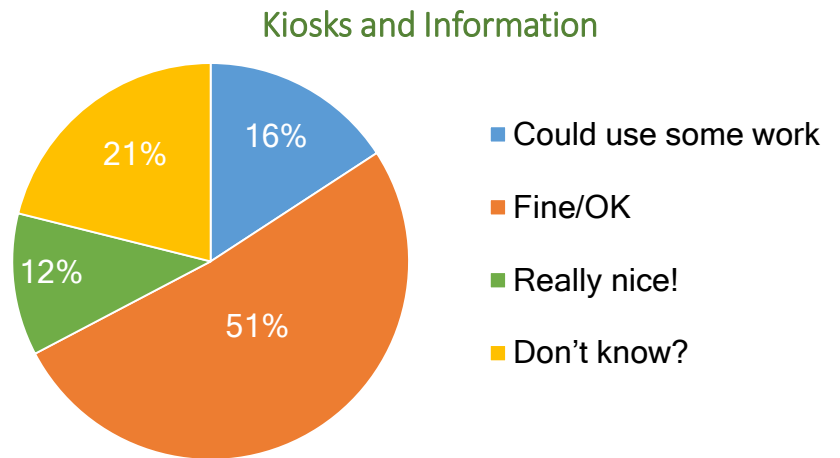


Of the 57 respondents who chose to write in comments about Other Park Amenities, the three most common responses were:

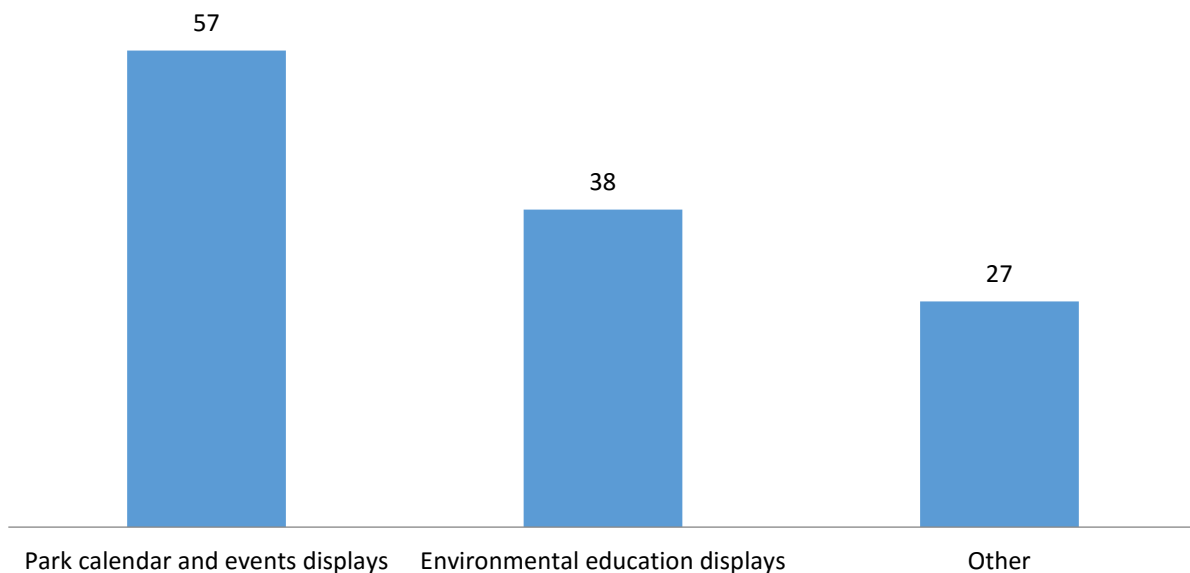
- Increase drinking fountains (13)
- Increase maintenance (8)
- Increase picnic areas (7)

Kiosks & Information

A total of 493 people responded to the Kiosks and Information question. Of those who responded 254 thought the kiosks and information in the park were fine/OK, 104 said they didn't know, 78 thought they could use some work and 57 said they were really nice.



Of the respondents that indicated Kiosks and Information could use some work 78 provided the following responses:

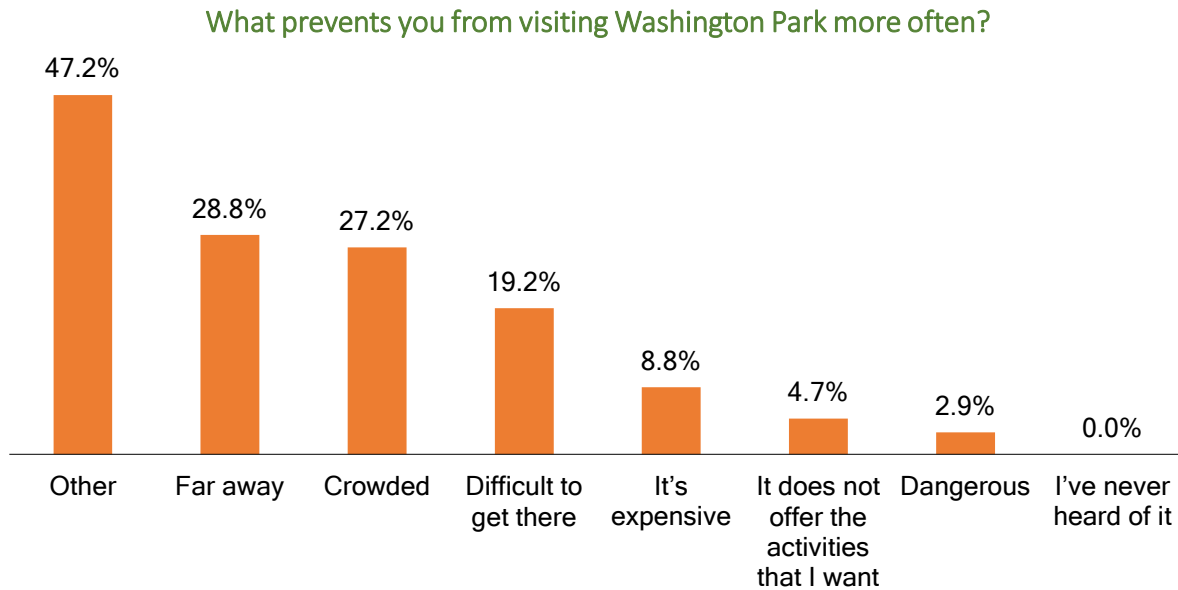


Of the 27 respondents who chose to write in comments about Kiosks and Park Information, the three most common responses were:

- Provide park info at more locations (11)
- Provide large-scale maps (4)
- Improve visitor information (3)

BARRIERS TO INCREASED PARK VISITORS

Survey participants were asked to identify what keeps them from visiting the park more often and 489 people responded. Of the 489 respondents, a majority of 231 provided a different reason from what was listed, 141 said it was far away, 133 said it was crowded, 94 said it was difficult to get to the park, 43 said it was expensive, 23 said it didn't offer the activities they wanted and 14 said it was dangerous.



Of the 231 respondents who chose to write in comments about what prevents them from visiting Washington Park more often, the four most common responses were:

- Nothing (84)
- Time constraints (53)
- Parking (23)
- Traffic (9)

FAVORITE PARKS

Participants were asked to list their three favorite parks. A total of 348 people responded to the question. Below are the top three responses.

- Forest Park (95)
- Mt. Tabor (81)
- Washington Park (60)

OPEN-ENDED QUESTION

At the end of the survey, participants were given the chance to offer any additional input. Of the 532 surveys submitted, 204 people responded to the final question. These responses varied in content and length, with many responses illustrating multiple issues and personal experiences. Staff reviewed these comments and determined Traffic/Parking, Safety, Accessibility, Landscape/Scenery and Amenities as the highest priority issues. Specific comments relating to these themes are listed based on how frequently they were mentioned. **Due to the nature of the question and the variety of responses, the input summarized below is qualitative rather than quantitative.** The individual comments can be found in the attached spreadsheet.

Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your experience in the park?

TRAFFIC/PARKING (45)

- Discourage vehicles in the park and encourage/increase transportation alternatives to relieve traffic issues
- Prevent parking on the side of the road (Fairview, Kingston)
- Improve the parking system and decrease costs – provide increased parking to relieve stress on neighbors and park goers
- The Japanese Garden and International Rose Test Garden have increasing number of visitors and are contributing to seasonal congestion and parking issues
- Encourage and advertise shuttle service
- Restore Line 51 to allow improved access by public transportation
- Consider creating a parking permit program for neighbors

SAFETY (21)

- Prevent homeless from loitering or camping in the park
- Parking and traffic create concerns relating to emergency vehicle mobility and active transportation users' safety
- Prohibit skateboarding and zoo bombing
- Improve trail safety and usability during rainy seasons
- Increase ranger presence and encourage them to move about the park
- Increase police presence to prevent illegal driving and skateboarding
- Enforce park hours to prevent zoo bombing and homeless activity
- Build a safe crosswalk at the intersection of Canyon Ct and Hwy 26

ACCESS (21)

- There is limited accessibility for active transportation users
- Improve access for elderly and handicapped individuals, especially to wedding venues
- Create more and improved drop-off/pick-up areas
- Consider offering daily, monthly and yearly passes to relieve park costs for regular visitors

LANDSCAPE AND SCENERY (15)

- Limit commercial development and promote green spaces
- Consider pruning and thinning trees to preserve views
- Botanical, geological and historical markers would add to the park experience
- Increase maintenance of the landscape, specifically addressing the English Ivy on the trees along Tichner

AMENITIES (15)

- Bring back the Zoo Train that connected to the International Rose Test Garden
- Consider building mountain biking trails
- Increase and improve restrooms, water fountains/water bottle filling stations, garbage/recycling, picnic areas, etc.
- Provide off-leash areas for dog owners
- Consider building a food cart pod
- Provide more kid-friendly amenities – playgrounds, water features, etc.

Other notable issues that were raised by frequent park users/neighbors that do not fall within the key themes include:

- Build an app with downloadable trail maps
- The new rules surrounding food and alcohol at Zoo concerts makes them cost-prohibitive
- Gauge the peak hours of use for the shuttle and increase/decrease depending
- Restore the connector trail from the Japanese Garden to the Wildwood and other trails
- Extend shuttle service across Burnside to Pittock Mansion
- Improve automobile access from Burnside to accommodate increased visitors to the Japanese Gardens and International Rose Test Garden
- Improve and expand the habitats at the Zoo
- Build a foot bridge across Burnside to improve pedestrian access to the Pittock Mansion

