

What We Heard

North Woodside Community Centre Park

Building on the work initiated by the Pleasant Woodside Neighbourhood Association, North Woodside Community Centre, and HomeBridge Youth Society, a public engagement program was launched in the summer of 2025 for the development of the North Woodside Community Centre Park.

As part of this process, several visuals and descriptions were shared to show how earlier community feedback had been incorporated into the development of a park concept. The materials also highlighted proposed improvements with a focus on enhancing user experience, accessibility, aesthetics, and safety, while preserving and enhancing the natural environment.

Below are a sample of the visuals presented to the community:

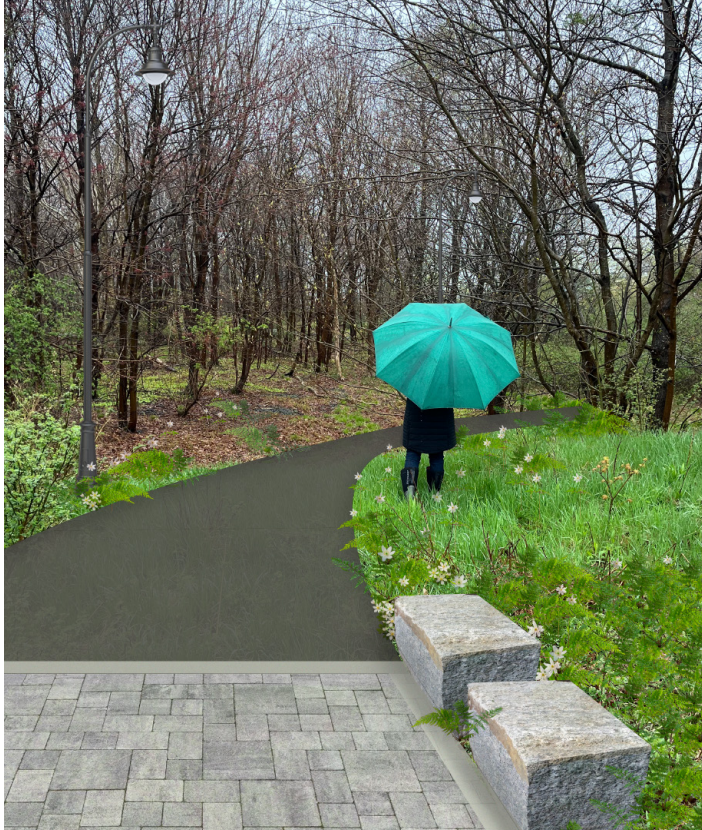


Figure 1: New defined entrances with clear access, lighting, seating, and landscaping.



Figure 2: Proposed upgrades would better meet accessibility standards.

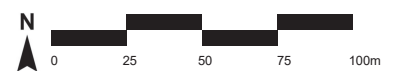


Figure 3: Aerial view of the North Woodside Community Centre Park concept as presented in June 2025.

Public Open House- June 25, 2025



Figure 4: A sample of the project and event promotion.

A public open house was held on June 25, 2025, with approximately 40 residents attending and providing feedback on the park concept plan.

Written and verbal feedback collected at the open house is summarized below:

Increase the amount of parking

Throughout the evening, conversations about parking dominated. The existing parking is already at capacity for uses within the Centre. While most park users were not personally affected, they noted that regular Centre users often struggle to find parking, particularly during events and for daycare pick-up and drop-off.

Provide access to water play

With few opportunities for water play in the surrounding community, participants suggested that a water feature would be beneficial for both children and adults, especially during hot weather.

Better separate people & bikes

Several conversations focused on the presence of bikes within the park. Some users preferred

that bikes not be allowed, given the narrow path widths and the presence of children at play. Others emphasized that the pathway connection to the Harbourfront Trail is essential and should be preserved and promoted.

Include supportive amenities for programming & events

Community members shared experiences of how the park is currently used during events and highlighted the need for changes that better support programming. Suggestions included seating, power connections, washroom access, and shaded areas.

Design a personalized approach

Residents expressed the importance of personalizing the park concept to reflect local history and community identity. Ideas included working with residents on plan implementation, engaging “Free Lab” students in developing park structures, and enhancing spaces such as painted sport courts to showcase community pride.

Protect & Enhance the Natural Environment

Participants emphasized the importance of protecting and enhancing the site’s natural features. While there was recognition that some portions of the wooded area may need to be used for recreation, residents stressed that the natural value of the site should not be lost. Suggestions included replanting new trees and stabilizing the drainage ditch embankments.

Other comments included:

- Accommodate all ages and abilities within the playground.
- Include details like benches, lighting and garbage cans.
- Provide a viewing area with seating closer to the waterfront.
- Post clear rules about dogs within the park.

Online Survey- June 25 - July 23, 2025

In total, 60 residents completed the online public survey that was available between June 25 and July 23, 2025. However, the reach of the survey, and the potential impact of park changes, extends beyond those who completed it. Approximately 85% of respondents indicated they were completing the survey on behalf of their household, with the average household size reported as 2.78 people.

In terms of project awareness, 800 participants visited at least one page of the project website, and 170 people downloaded the proposed park concept from the Shape Your City platform.

Most survey respondents (69%) live within the same community as the North Woodside Community Centre Park, with others residing in nearby communities, primarily on the Dartmouth side of the Harbour (Figure 5).

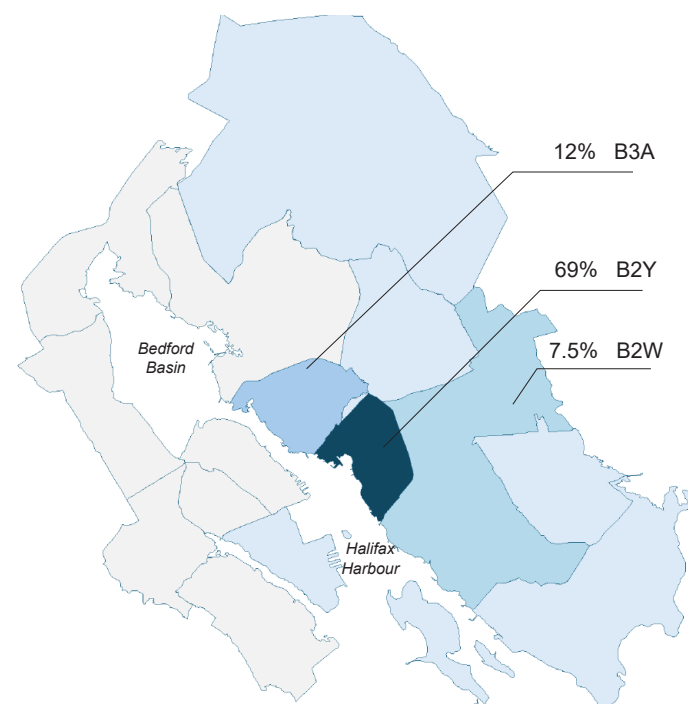


Figure 5: Respondent household location by postal code.

As a first impression of the proposed park concept, respondents were asked about their overall level of satisfaction. The concept was well received, with 62% indicating they were satisfied and 22% indicating they were very satisfied (Figure 6).

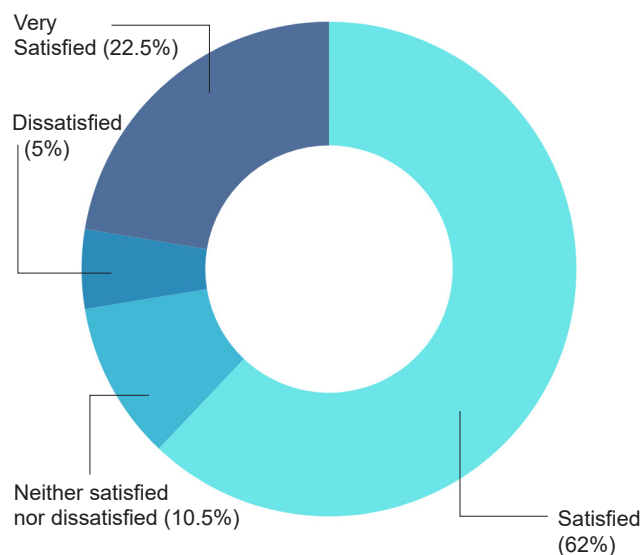


Figure 6: Overall survey respondent satisfaction.

The majority of respondents (74%) felt that the concept achieved a good balance between developed parkland and natural woodland. Among those seeking more site development, 14% felt the park was too natural (Figure 7).

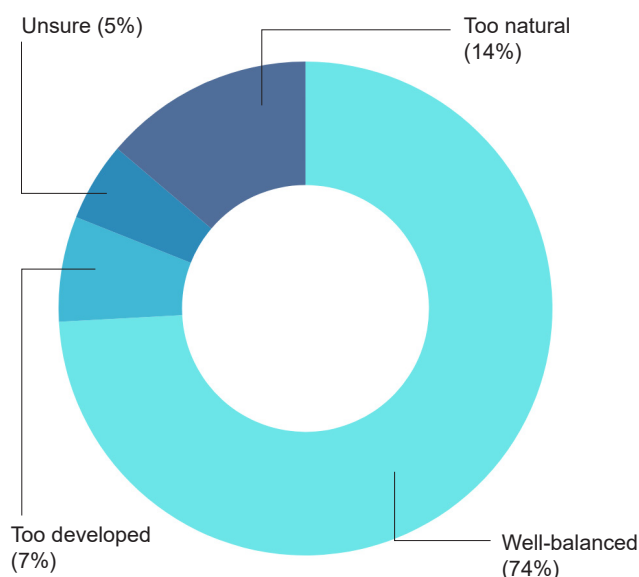


Figure 7: Respondent response on balance of developed park to natural woodland.

When asked about the balance of recreation within the park, more than half of survey respondents (57%) felt that the concept presented a well-balanced mix of structured and unstructured uses. Notably, 21% of respondents felt the concept should include more structured uses, suggesting there was too much unstructured space. Conversely, 13.5% of respondents indicated that there was too much emphasis on formal recreation and that more space should be available for passive use (Figure 8).

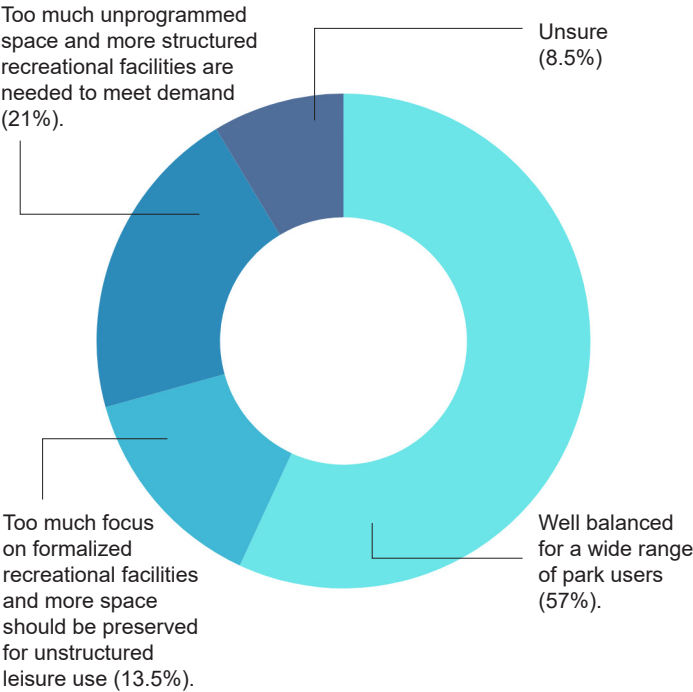


Figure 8: Respondent response on balance of formal recreation facilities to unstructured park uses.

Thinking about long-term park planning, survey respondents were asked whether the concept plan provides sufficient direction and recreational opportunities to accommodate increased park use over time. Most respondents (64%) agreed that the plan does allow for future neighbourhood growth and increased park use, while 21% did not feel this was the case. Another 15% of respondents were unsure (Figure 9).

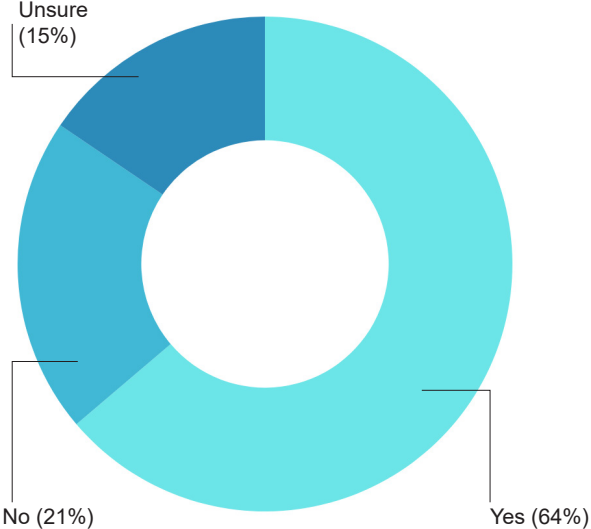


Figure 9: Respondent response on balance of formal recreation facilities to unstructured park uses.

If more space were needed within the park to accommodate future use from community growth, respondents were asked whether a portion of the wooded area should be used for parking or recreational facilities. Almost half indicated that the wooded area would be a suitable location for additional parking or expanded park facilities. However, approximately 40% of respondents preferred that the wooded area be preserved and not removed for additional uses (Figure 10).

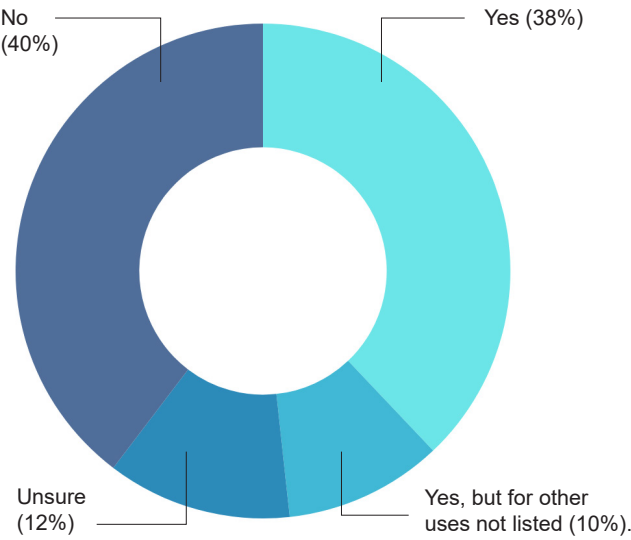


Figure 10: Respondent response on the future use of the wooded area.

Approximately one in four respondents identified as having a disability. When asked about the accessibility of the park concept, respondents generally felt that the proposal adequately considers access needs for people of all ages and abilities. Nearly 57% agreed that the plan integrates accessibility into the design, while 14% did not believe it would improve accessibility. About 29% of respondents were unsure, which may be due to the concept not including details such as grading information or the location of resting and seating areas (Figure 11).

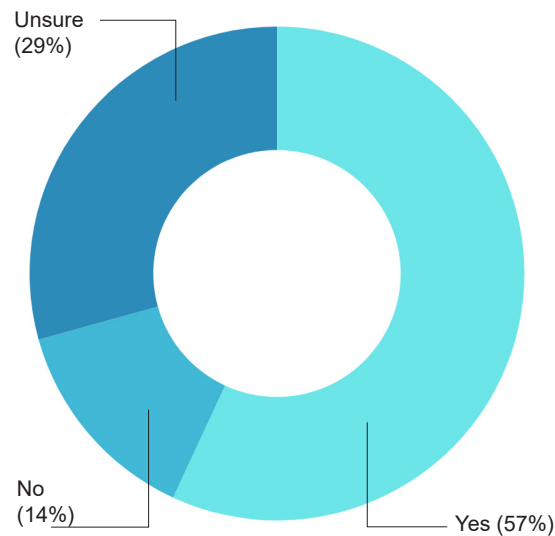


Figure 11: Respondent response on the overall accessibility integrated into the park concept.

Given that the proposed park concept changes the access and layout of park components, respondents were asked whether their use of the park would change if the proposed modifications were implemented. Almost 21% indicated their use of the park would not change, while just over 67% believed their use would change. The remainder of respondents were unsure (Figure 12).

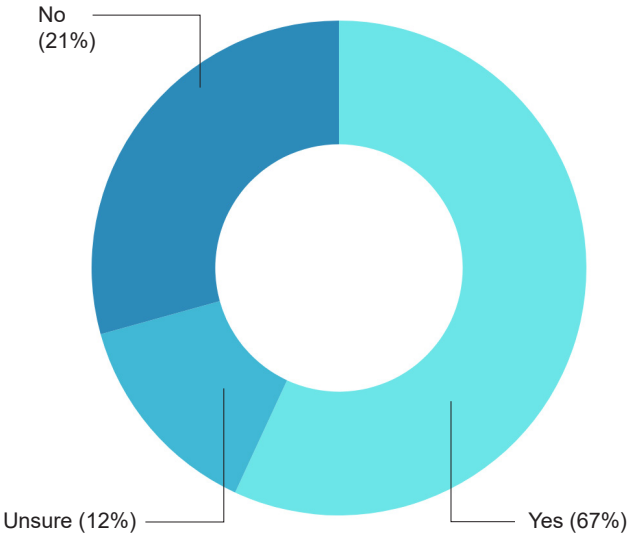


Figure 12: Respondent response on perceived change to park use if proposed changes were implemented.

As an open-ended question, respondents were asked what changes they would make to the park concept if given the opportunity. Overall, this response field was used to validate the concept, but the most frequently requested addition was a water or splash feature for the neighbourhood, given the limited opportunities for access to water-based recreation. In order of frequency, other suggestions included additional parking for the community centre, access to washrooms, more activation of the wooded area, better-defined and safer park entrances, a dog off-leash area, and more sport courts.