

Woodcote Park Playground Replacement - What We Heard Report

May 21st 2025



Introduction

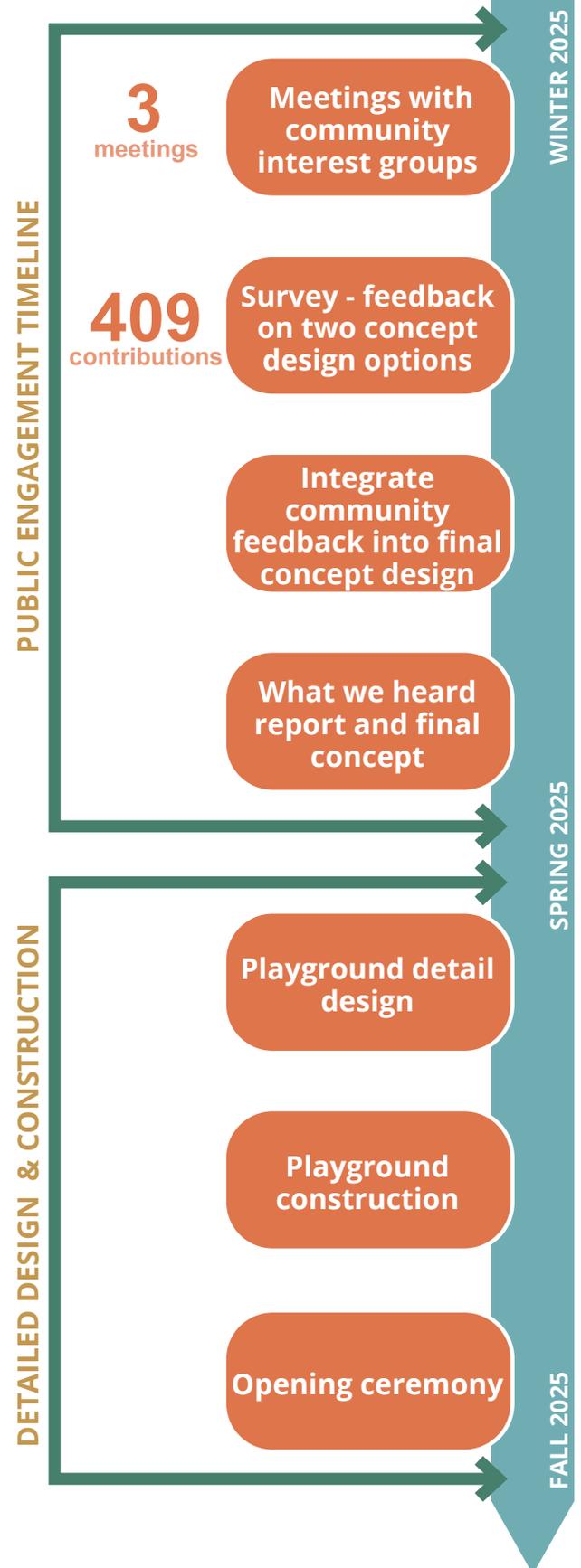
The Woodcote Park playground replacement project aligns with the City's newly adopted *Let's Play, Courtenay!* playground design standards, which were developed through extensive public consultation. The Woodcote Park Playground Replacement Project underwent one round of public engagement. The public engagement took place through March and April 2025, and included the following:

- One online survey with paper copies available at select locations.
- Project boards displaying the proposed concept designs as well as a QR code linked to the online survey, located at the Woodcote Park Playground.
- Several community interest group meetings.

The primary objective of the engagement process was to ensure the final concept design accurately reflects the aspirations of park users and the community.

Project updates and public outreach initiatives were promoted through the project website at engagecomoxvalley.ca/woodcote and the City of Courtenay's social media platforms.

The following pages provide a summary of the feedback received throughout the public engagement process, highlighting the efforts made to gather input and how the feedback directly impacted the final concept design for the Woodcote Park Playground Replacement.



409
people
participated in
the survey



ONLINE SURVEY - What we Learned

The online survey was open to the public from April 9th 2025 to April 28th 2025, with a total of 409 respondents. Majority of respondents lived in the City of Courtenay, with 132 respondents living within a 5-minute walk to Woodcote Park and 84 living within a 10 minute walk. 257 respondents were caretakers for children under the age of 12 between the ages of 25 and 49. 105 respondents were 17 and younger. Paper copies of the survey were available at City Hall, the Lewis Centre, and Courtenay Library.

The first section of the online survey presented two concept design options for the proposed Woodcote Park Playground Replacement: **Playing Among the Clouds** and **Playing Among the Trees**. Each concept design was followed by a series of questions that sought specific input on what respondents liked or felt was missing from each concept. The final questions had people select their preferred concept. The second section of the survey focused on specific play equipment to inform the final selection of play elements for the new playground.

Playing Among the Clouds Feedback:

Significant themes and results for the Playing Among the Clouds concept design questions are summarized below. Refer to the appendices for the comprehensive report of the survey results. *The number in () refers to the number of respondents who selected each answer.*



Majority of respondents liked **'Active Play' (287)**, **'Risk Taking and Challenges' (250)**, and **'Inclusive Play' (178)**



Majority of respondents thought the design concept was missing **'More Risk-Taking' (93) Elements.**

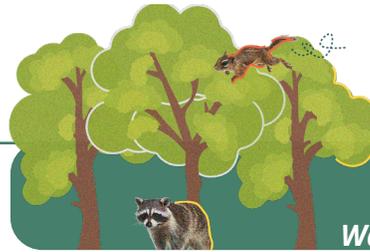


Themes Derived from Respondent Comments for Plating Among the Clouds

- Opportunity to relocate the sand play further away from the busy intersection at Cumberland Road and Willemar Avenue
- Desire to include monkey bars as a play element

Playing Among the Clouds Feedback:

Significant themes and results for the Playing Among the Trees concept design questions are summarized below. Refer to the appendices for the comprehensive report of the survey results. *The number in () refers to the number of respondents who selected each answer.*



Wander. Leap. Connect

Majority of respondents liked **'Active Play' (225), 'Risk Taking and Challenges' (217), and 'Nature Play' (194)**



Majority of respondents thought the design concept was missing **'More Risk-Taking' (108) Elements.**



Themes Derived from Respondent Comments for Playing Among the Trees

- Desire for a more comprehensive play structure
- Concern that the older kid and toddler swing set are in two separate locations
- Desire to include in-ground trampolines

Overall majority of respondents preferred the 'Playing Among the Clouds' (174) concept design over 'Playing Among the Trees' (86). Many respondents liked both concepts (96).

Overall Themes Applying to both Concepts Derived from Respondent Comments

- Many respondents preferred a blended concept combining nature-based elements from Among the Trees (e.g., trees, boulders, logs) with the inclusive play features and rubber surfacing from Among the Clouds.
- Among the Clouds was seen as more accessible and inclusive for all ages and abilities.
- Among the Trees was favored for its toddler-friendly play options.
- Concerns were raised about visibility and safety; respondents requested stronger separation from adjacent roads and fewer hidden areas near park exits.
- There was concern about the safety of the sand and risk of contamination
- Interest was expressed in improving the connection between the playground and the basketball court to as well as between the toddler play area and the sports field to the north.
- Respondents requested multi-generational spaces with seating, shade, and accessible pathways, such as picnic areas and rest zones.
- Desire for more comfortable play areas for toddlers
- Include play areas or elements that are inviting for neurodiverse kids
- There is a lack of shade in the park.

Play Equipment Feedback

Significant themes and results from the play equipment questions are summarized below. Refer to the appendices for the comprehensive report of the survey results. *The number in () refers to the number of respondents who selected each answer.*



Respondents liked both the **'Universal Carousel' (163)** and the **'Accessible Spinner' (163)** for inclusive spinner play elements.



Majority of respondents liked **'In-Ground Trampolines' (280)** for jumping and active play elements.



Other Specific Play Features Requested

- More substantial water play features
- Shade structure
- Monkey bars or alternative climbing structures
- Additional swings
- Increased area of resilient rubber surfacing
- Additional sensory play features

COMMUNITY INTEREST GROUP MEETINGS - What we Learned

Woodcote Park Playground is highly valued and frequently used by a range of community groups and organizations. To ensure the new playground reflects the needs of those who use the park the most, the City facilitated three virtual engagement sessions with key community interest groups: Lake Trail Community School and Courtenay Elementary on March 20, 2025; the Comox Valley Child Development Association on April 3, 2025; and the Wachiay Friendship Centre on April 10, 2025.

Each group was invited to share their vision for the future of the Woodcote Park Playground. The sessions included a brief presentation summarizing site observations, opportunities and constraints, and findings from the *Let's Play, Courtenay!* engagement sessions. Participants provided valuable feedback on current usage patterns and offered insights into how the space could be improved to better serve the diverse needs of children and families in the area.



Community Interest Group Feedback Themes

- Include natural and sensory elements like logs, boulders, music features, and tree stump circles; add cultural features like Indigenous language scavenger cards
- All-resilient surfacing is preferred over having specific resilient pathways to eliminate barriers; wood chips spilling onto resilient rubber surfacing pathways make areas inaccessible.
- Add more upper-body and active play features like ziplines, monkey bars, slide poles, and swings with broader appeal (e.g., net swings)
- The playground is underused by nearby schools due to poor condition; upgrades would increase usage by large groups
- Prioritize inclusive play by ensuring equipment is usable from the ground for kids with varied abilities.
- Provide adequate shade. There were requests to provide a large pavilion or picnic shelter that could accommodate gatherings and social activities, in close proximity to the playground.
- Improve connection between the playground and the basketball court. There were requests to improve the surfacing and add more hoops or introduce multi-use court lines to the basketball court to support smaller group play; courts are a major draw for older kids



COMMUNITY IMPACT AND NEXT STEPS

Community members provided thoughtful and constructive feedback that has directly informed revisions to the concept design. The updated concept aims to reflect this input through the following refinements:

- **Proceeding with the preferred Among the Clouds Concept:** Elements from the Among the Trees concept that resonated with participants will be incorporated into the Among the Clouds concept
- Specific play features requested, such as monkey bars to support climbing, net swing and additional nature-based elements for sensory play, are being integrated into the design
- The resilient rubber surfacing will be extended to improve accessible entry points and inclusive play.
- Fencing options are being explored to improve safety and define the playground perimeter.
- More informal seating opportunities will be added to support families and caregivers
- The sand play area will be reduced in size and relocated closer to the soccer field, away from busy roads, to enhance visibility and safety for families
- Additional trees will be introduced to provide shade throughout the playground, and the addition of a shade structure is being explored.
- A more extensive water play runnel feature will be introduced.

Thank you to all the community members who generously shared your ideas, insights, and experiences. To stay informed about project updates and key milestones, please visit engagecomoxvalley.ca/woodcote



Appendices

1. Comment Themes not Directly Related to the Playground Concept
2. Survey Results - Comprehensive Report



COMMENT THEMES NOT DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE PLAYGROUND CONCEPT

Shade, Gathering, and Community Spaces

- Emphasis on shade via trees or gazebos, especially while waiting or gathering.
- Desire for picnic/gathering areas, seating with good visibility, and family gathering spaces.
- Interest in community edible gardens.

Court and Sports Facility Requests

- Suggestion to add multi-use courts: basketball, pickleball (lines on court pad), and hockey nets.
- Requests for soccer nets and a multi-sport court instead of single-use ones.
- Mention of football field use and needing visibility across spaces for parents.
- Need for regulation outdoor basketball courts; current options are limited and outdated.

Safety, Security, and Cleanliness

- Concerns about the unhoused population, drug use, and finding needles in sand.
- Requests for security patrols, fencing, and well-lit areas to prevent vandalism.
- Requests for cameras to deter drug use and vandalism.
- Health concerns about cats using sand pits as litter boxes.
- Need for safe pedestrian infrastructure, including traffic calming near park areas.

Broader Park and Neighborhood Context

- Support for paths and loops for biking, rollerblading, and walking around the park.
- Comments on lack of nearby inclusive recreation options, especially on their side of town.
- Suggestions to improve nearby parks, e.g., Muir Rd & Alderwood Place.
- Suggestions to include local Indigenous culture through art, education, and native plants.

Closed

Woodcote Park playground concepts survey
Woodcote Park Playground Replacement Project

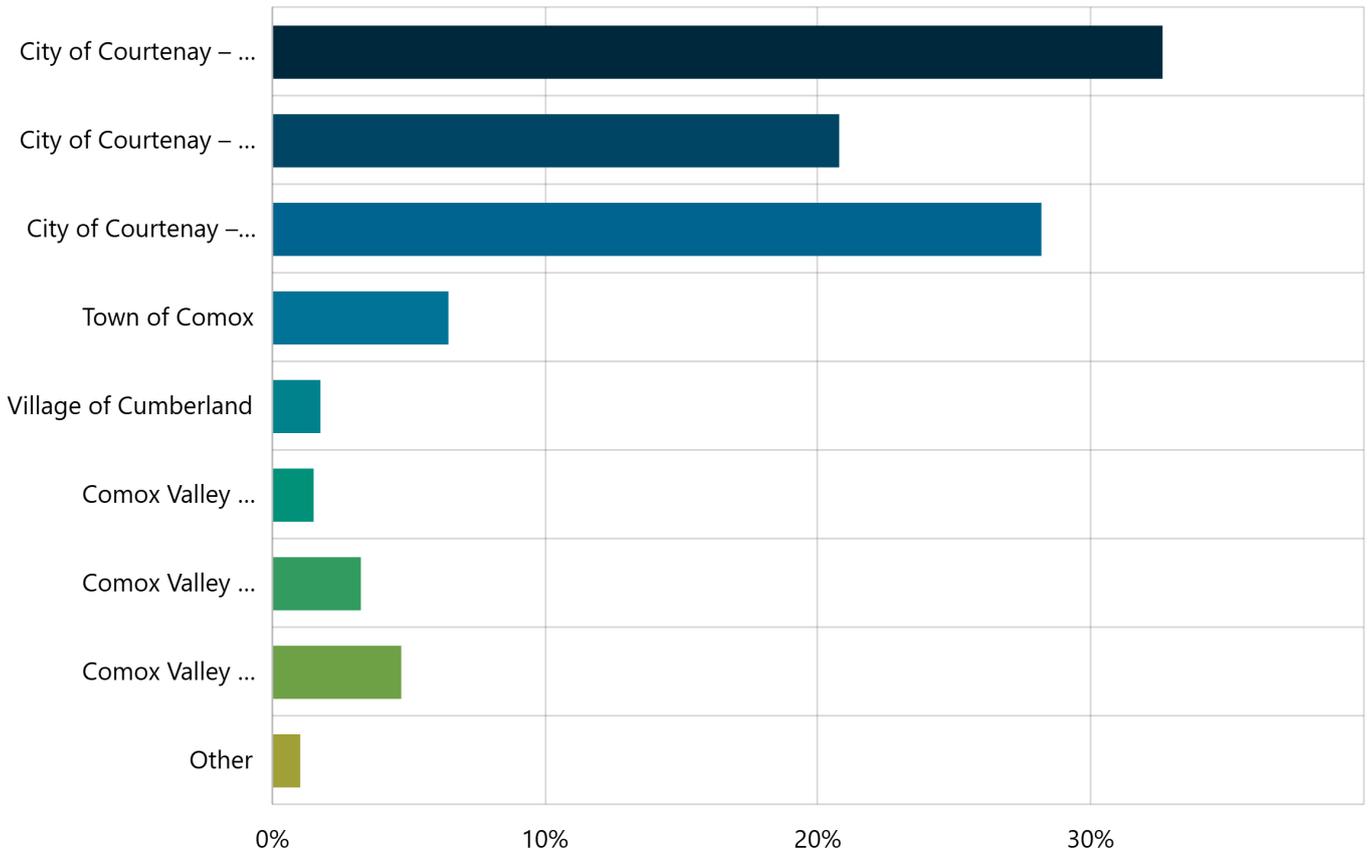
279
Contributors

409
Contributions

Contribution Summary

1. 1. Where do you live?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 405 (99%)

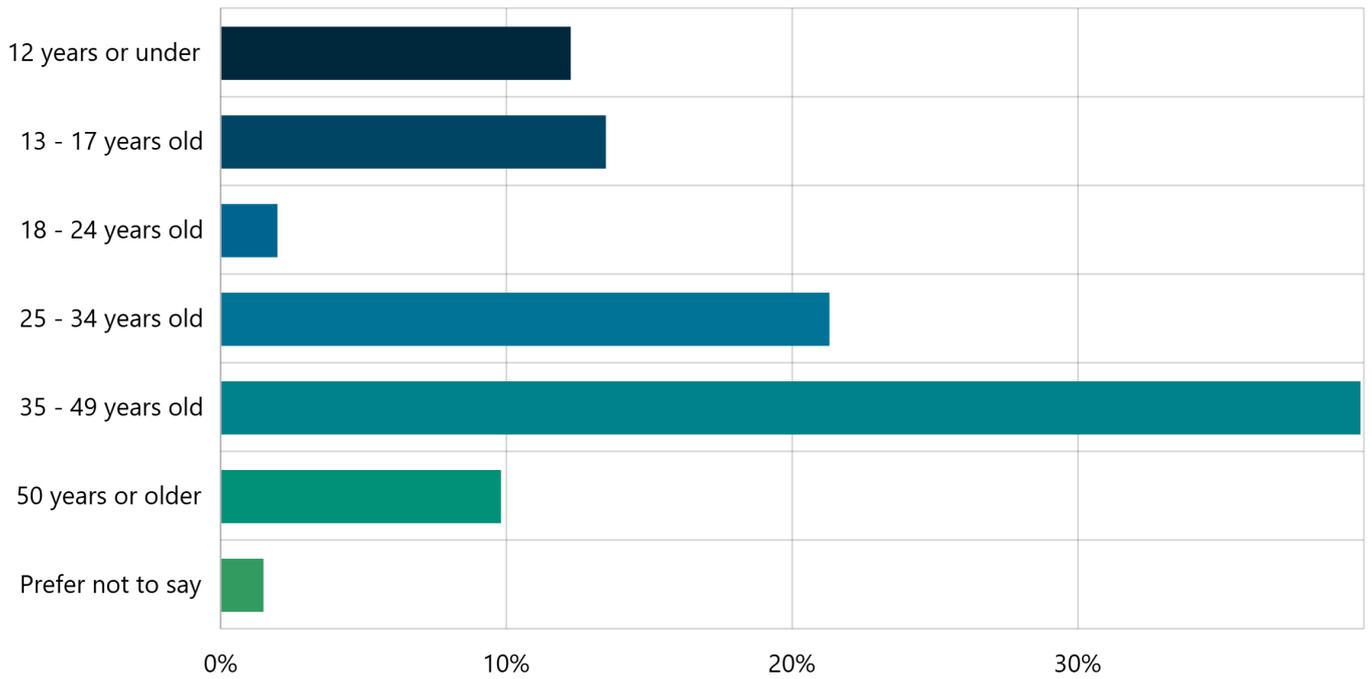


Answer choices	Percent	Count
City of Courtenay – Within a 5-minute walk to Woodcote Park	32.59%	132
City of Courtenay – Within a 10-minute walk to Woodcote Park	20.74%	84
City of Courtenay – More than a 10-minute walk to Woodcote Park	28.15%	114
Town of Comox	6.42%	26
Village of Cumberland	1.73%	7
Comox Valley Regional District Electoral District A	1.48%	6

Comox Valley Regional District Electoral District B	3.21%	13
Comox Valley Regional District Electoral District C	4.69%	19
Other	0.99%	4
Total	100.00%	405

2. 2. What is your age?

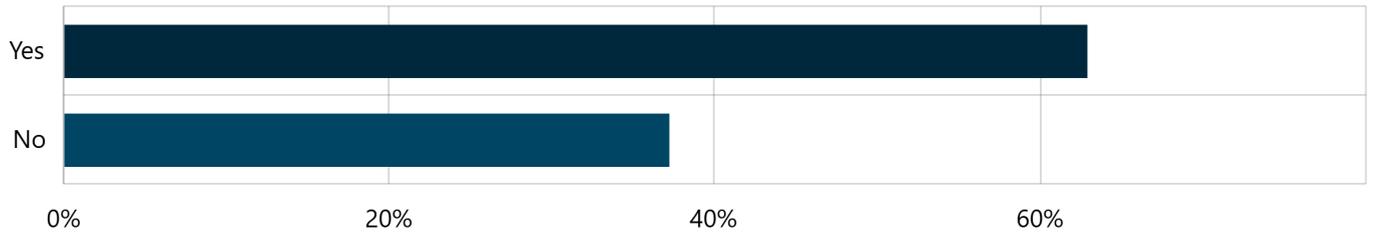
Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 409 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
12 years or under	12.22%	50
13 - 17 years old	13.45%	55
18 - 24 years old	1.96%	8
25 - 34 years old	21.27%	87
35 - 49 years old	39.85%	163
50 years or older	9.78%	40
Prefer not to say	1.47%	6
Total	100.00%	409

3. 3. Are you a parent or caretaker of a child under 12 years old?

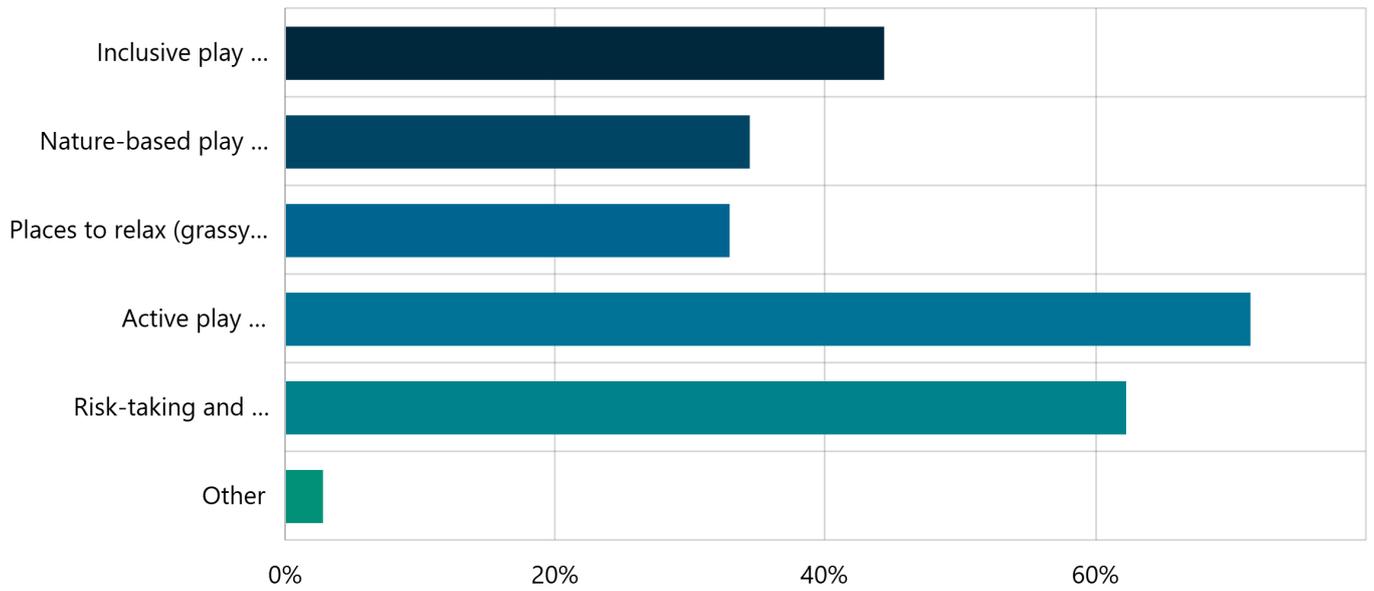
Multi Choice | Skipped: 0 | Answered: 409 (100%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	62.84%	257
No	37.16%	152
Total	100.00%	409

4. 4. What do you like most about "Playing Among the Clouds?" Choose up to three things.

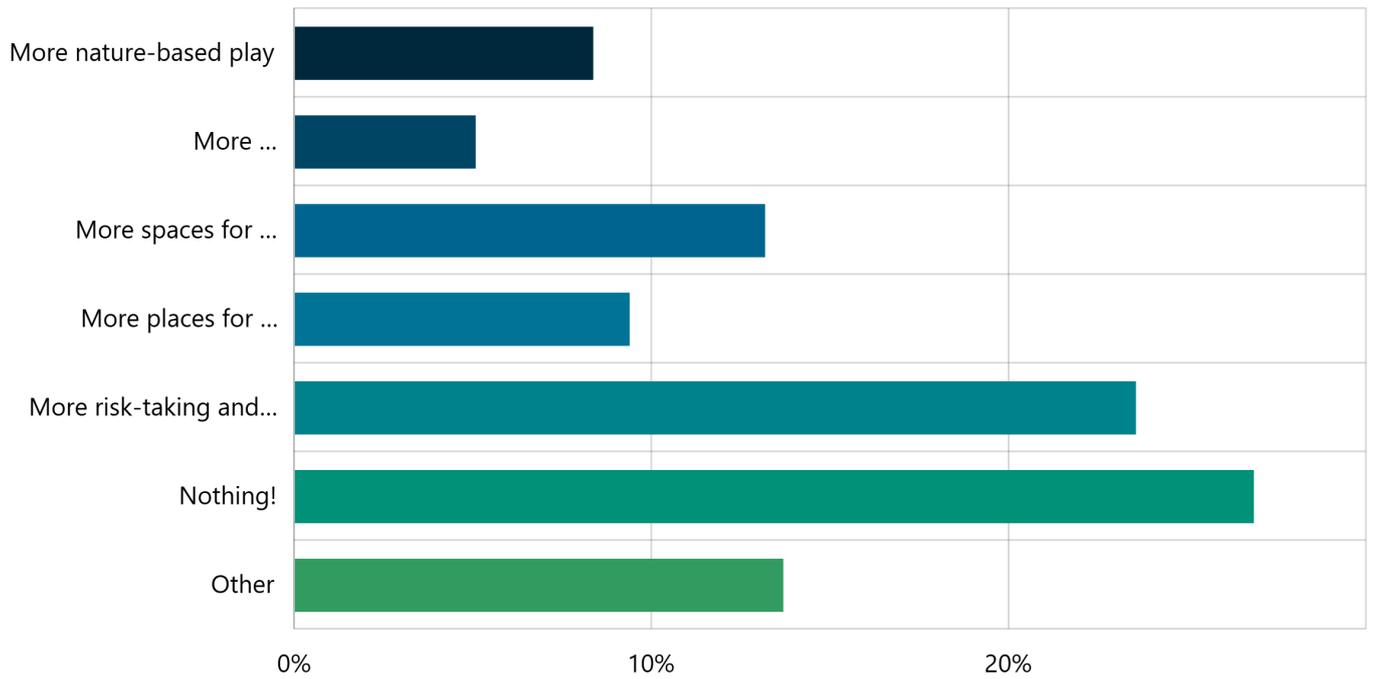
Multi Choice | Skipped: 7 | Answered: 402 (98.3%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Inclusive play (universal carousel, accessible roller slide, rubber play surface)	44.28%	178
Nature-based play (sand play, sensory garden)	34.33%	138
Places to relax (grassy hill, picnic area)	32.84%	132
Active play (in-ground trampolines, swings, open running areas)	71.39%	287
Risk-taking and challenges (main play structure with slides, wiggly bridge, circuit, and climbing nets)	62.19%	250
Other	2.74%	11

5. 5. What, if anything, do you feel is missing from “Playing Among the Clouds?” Choose one thing.

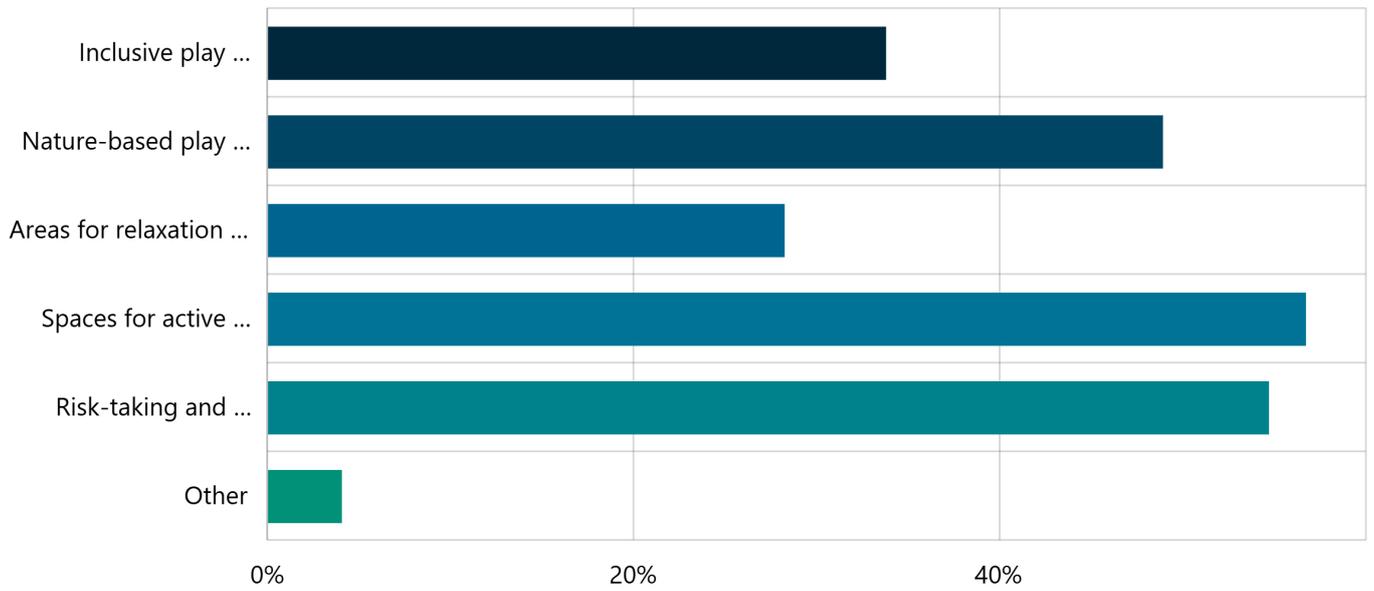
Multi Choice | Skipped: 14 | Answered: 395 (96.6%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
More nature-based play	8.35%	33
More wheelchair-accessible play	5.06%	20
More spaces for gathering with friends and family	13.16%	52
More places for running and jumping	9.37%	37
More risk-taking and challenges	23.54%	93
Nothing!	26.84%	106
Other	13.67%	54
Total	100.00%	395

6. 6. What do you like most about "Playing among the trees?" Choose up to three things.

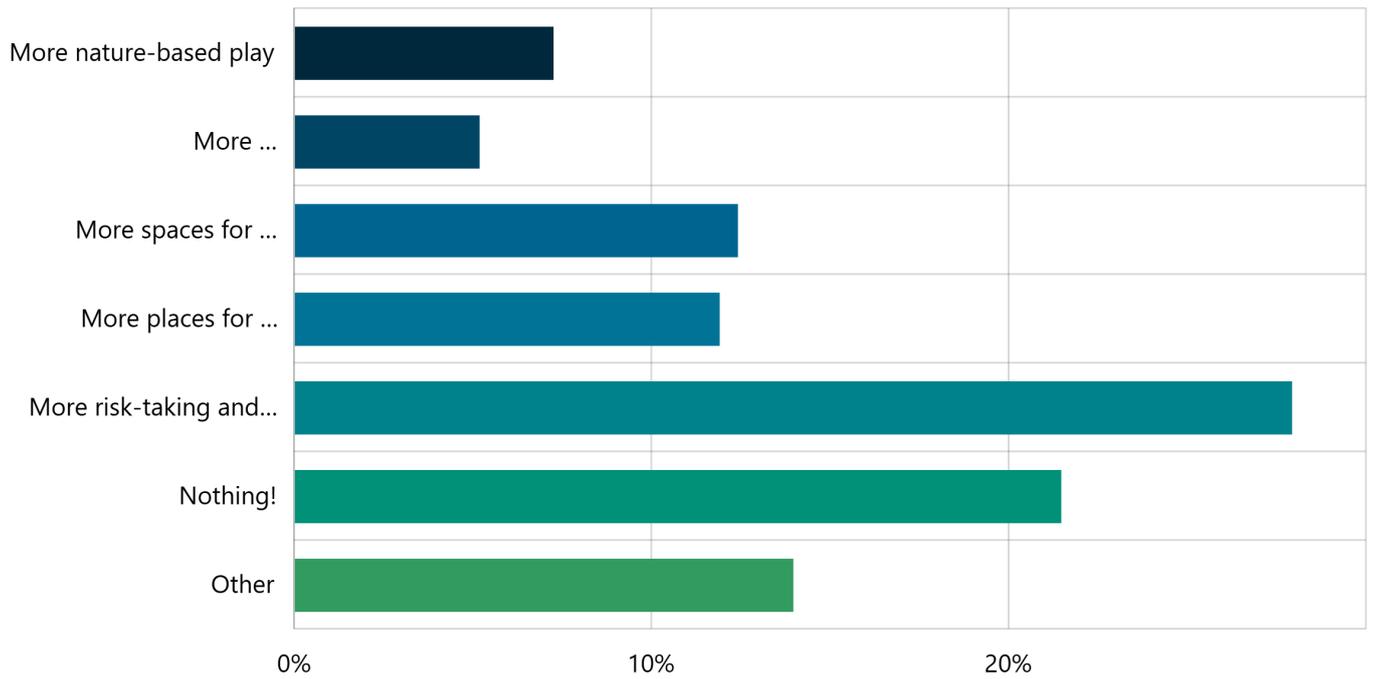
Multi Choice | Skipped: 12 | Answered: 397 (97.1%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Inclusive play features (chinning bars and spinner, adaptive cycler)	33.75%	134
Nature-based play opportunities (forest grove, sand play, sensory garden)	48.87%	194
Areas for relaxation (picnic area, hang-out spots)	28.21%	112
Spaces for active play (jumping bridge, swings)	56.68%	225
Risk-taking and challenging features (main play structure with climbing nets and a wiggly bridge, and a stand-alone slide)	54.66%	217
Other	4.03%	16

7. 7. What, if anything, do you feel is missing from "Playing Among the Trees?" Choose one thing.

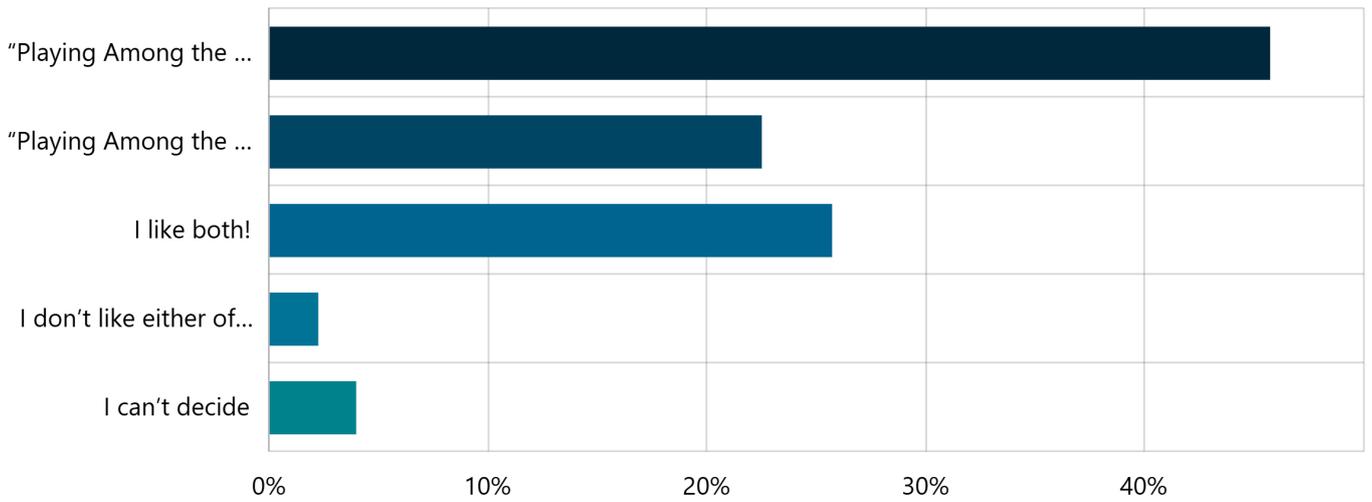
Multi Choice | Skipped: 22 | Answered: 387 (94.6%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
More nature-based play	7.24%	28
More wheelchair-accessible play	5.17%	20
More spaces for gathering with friends and family	12.40%	48
More places for running and jumping	11.89%	46
More risk-taking and challenges	27.91%	108
Nothing!	21.45%	83
Other	13.95%	54
Total	100.00%	387

8. 8. Which playground concept do you prefer? Please select one and specify why.

Multi Choice | Skipped: 4 | Answered: 405 (99%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
"Playing Among the Clouds"	45.68%	185
"Playing Among the Trees"	22.47%	91
I like both!	25.68%	104
I don't like either of them	2.22%	9
I can't decide	3.95%	16
Total	100.00%	405

9. Please tell us more about your choice of playground concept:

Long Text | Skipped: 191 | Answered: 218 (53.3%)

Sentiment

No sentiment data

Tags

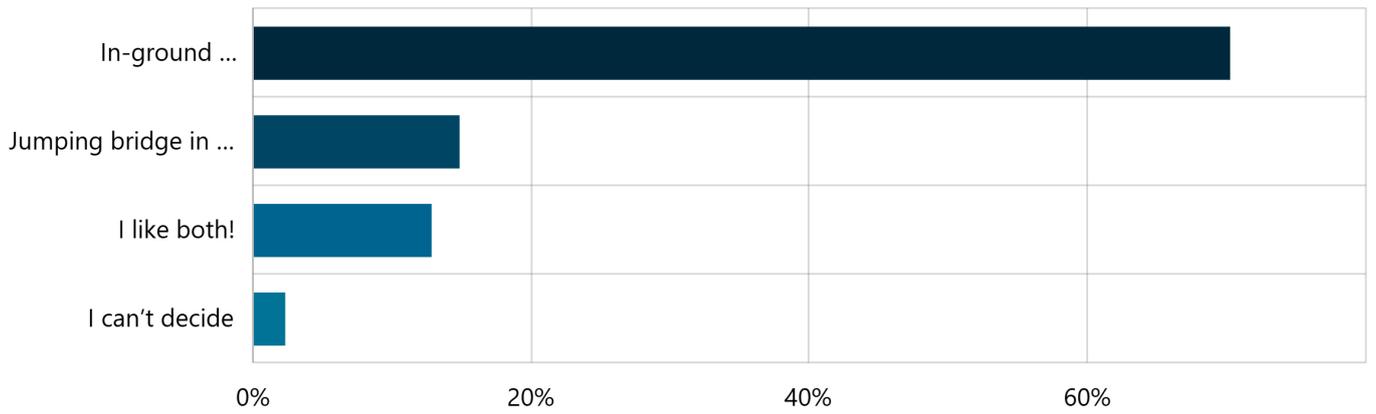
No tag data

Featured Contributions

No featured contributions

10. 9. For jumping and active play, which do you like better?

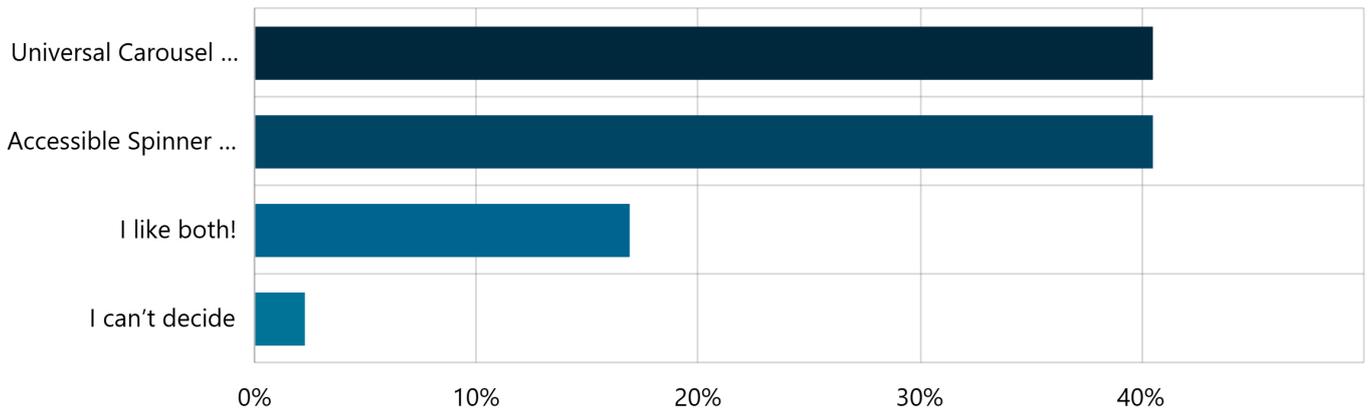
Multi Choice | Skipped: 10 | Answered: 399 (97.6%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
In-ground trampoline in "Playing Among the Clouds"	70.18%	280
Jumping bridge in "Playing Among the Trees"	14.79%	59
I like both!	12.78%	51
I can't decide	2.26%	9
Total	100.00%	399

11. 10. For inclusive spinners, which do you prefer?

Multi Choice | Skipped: 6 | Answered: 403 (98.5%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Universal Carousel in "Playing Among the Clouds"	40.45%	163
Accessible Spinner in "Playing Among the Trees"	40.45%	163
I like both!	16.87%	68
I can't decide	2.23%	9
Total	100.00%	403

12. 11. Is there anything else you would like to share?

Long Text | Skipped: 253 | Answered: 156 (38.1%)

Sentiment

No sentiment data

Tags

No tag data

Featured Contributions

No featured contributions