

# San Lorenzo Park Redesign

## Section 2: Existing Conditions Research and Observations & Engagement Process

**Prepared for**



Parks and Recreation  
City of Santa Cruz

Parks and Recreation Department  
323 Church St  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
831.420.5270

For more information, contact:  
Noah Downing  
[ndowning@santacruzca.gov](mailto:ndowning@santacruzca.gov)

**Prepared by**



Landscape Architecture  
Urban Design  
Planning

PO Box 460309  
San Francisco, CA 94146  
415.206.0648  
[www.bioniclandscape.com](http://www.bioniclandscape.com)



# Table of Contents

4	Section 2 Introduction
6	Existing Conditions Research & Observations
56	Engagement Process & Overview



# Section 2

## Introduction

This redesign effort for San Lorenzo Park will define the new City needs, as well as the unique opportunities the park can offer to an evolving Santa Cruz and the park's diverse population of users.

The redesign effort began in December 2022 and will be conducted in three stages. Stage 1 consists of community engagement and research of existing conditions to inform a needs assessment. The needs assessment, included in this document, identifies the unique opportunities, guiding principles, design goals, and potential programs that will guide the redesign effort. Stage 2 consists of drafting alternatives for the park and developing the concept plan. And Stage 3 consists of developing the final preferred plan and final report documenting the complete redesign process and preferred vision for the park.

The design team conducted Stage 1 from December 2022 through April 2023. Stage 1 is documented in three separate documents:

- Section 1: Executive Summary and Needs Assessment
- Section 2: Existing Conditions Research & Engagement Process
- Section 3: Appendix

This document, Section 2, includes the existing conditions research and observations, as well as the engagement process summary. The content in Section 2 informed the Executive Summary and Needs Assessment contained in the Section 1 document. See Section 1 and Section 3 for additional information.





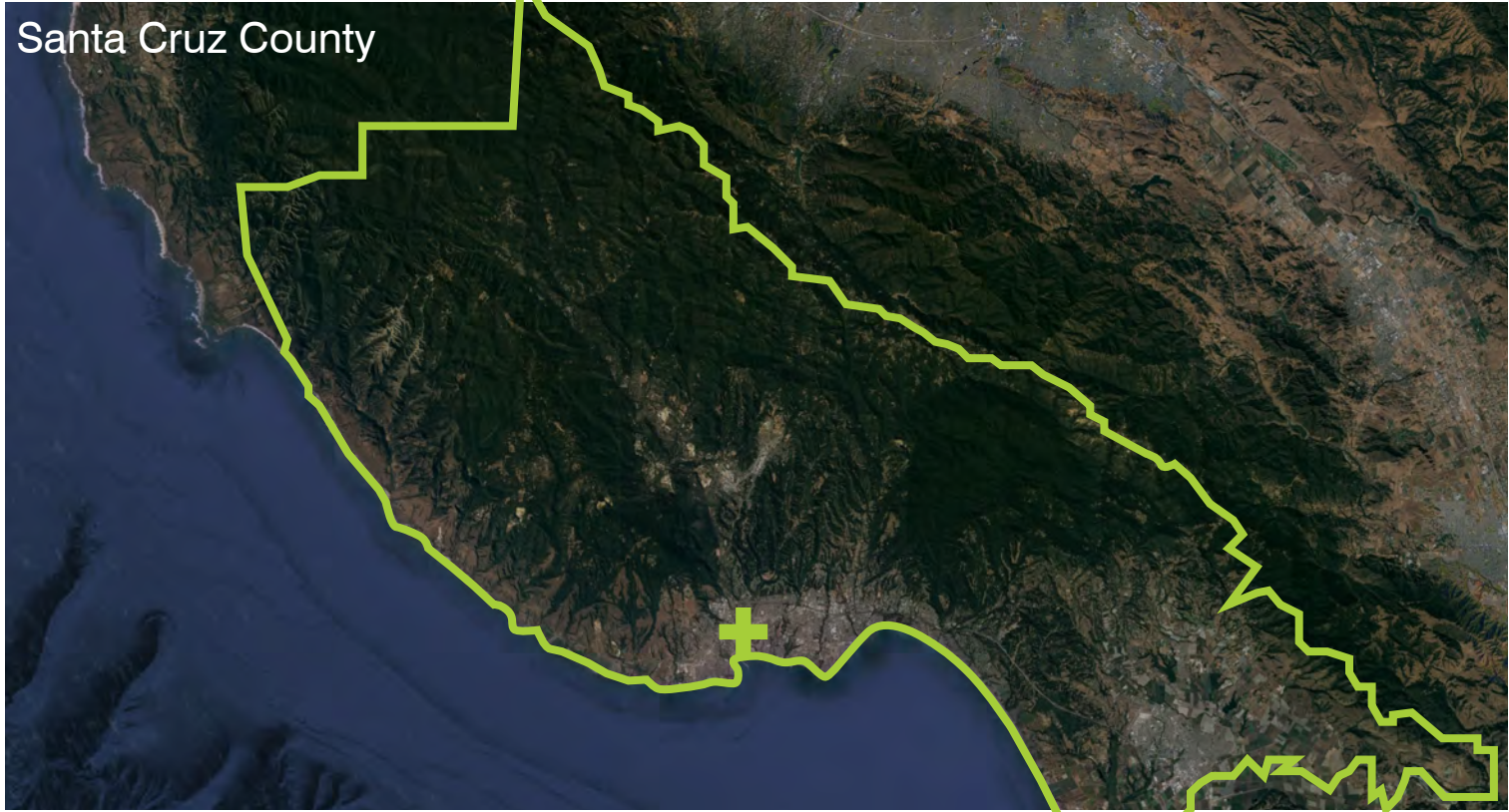
# Existing Conditions Research & Observations

Bionic began Stage 1 of the redesign process by conducting an extensive research effort to understand the context, access, circulation, history, habitat, existing features, and previous design efforts to inform the design process. Bionic also researched other downtown park and playground precedents relevant to the scope and scale of San Lorenzo Park. The following section includes the research and observations as part of this phase of the project that has informed the needs assessment.



# Central Location

Located at the heart of the city and county, San Lorenzo Park is a cherished but outdated park with unique potential to be transformative for the city of Santa Cruz and its communities. San Lorenzo Park serves surrounding neighborhoods and is a downtown park. It is located at the center of the city halfway between the ocean and the mountains. It is also central to Santa Cruz County and could serve as a regional destination.



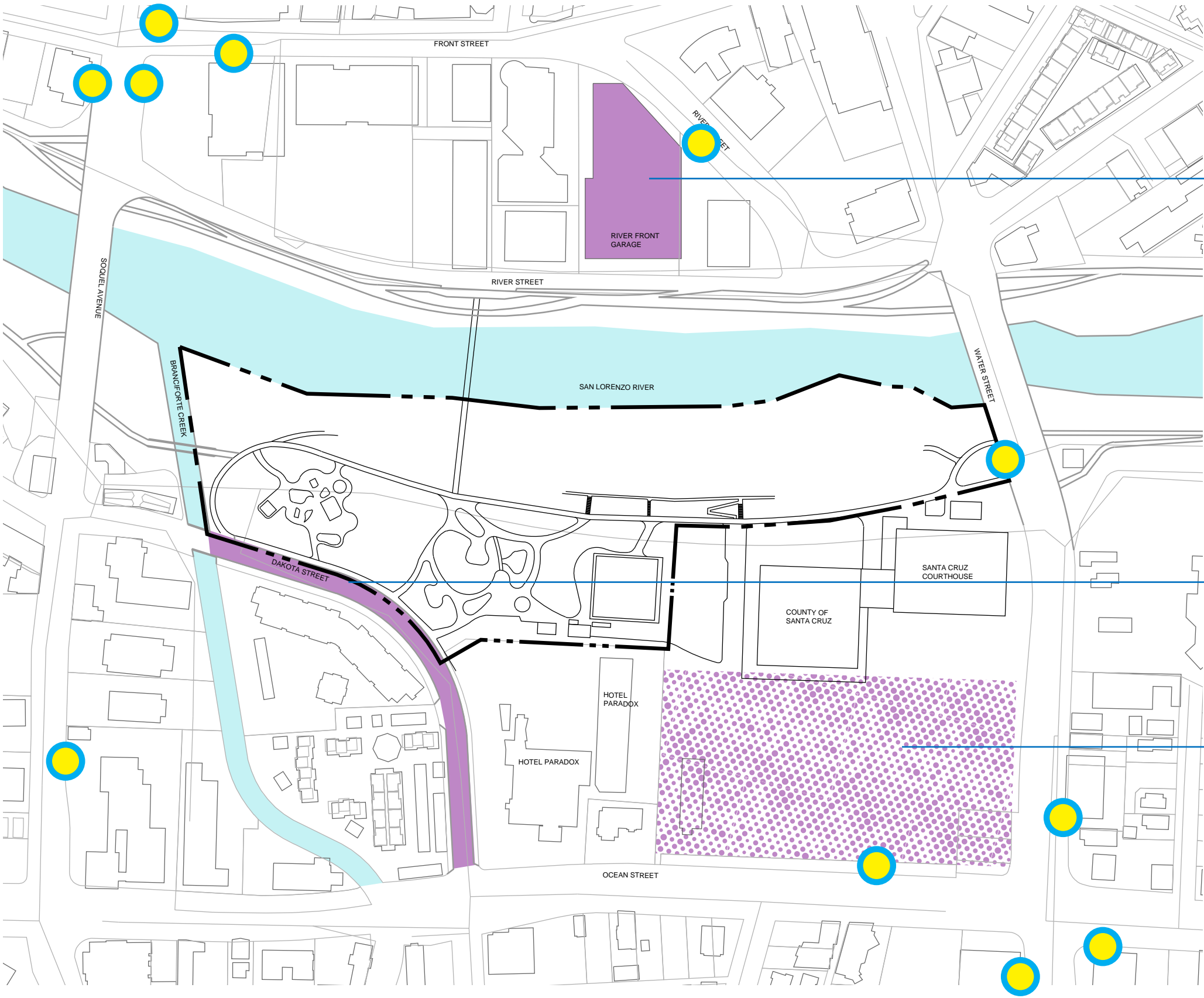
# Access & Connections

There are many ways to access the park today by foot, bicycle, bus, and car. Access to the park from downtown and adjacent neighborhoods, however, is unclear, hidden, and disconnected in locations. This presents opportunities to better connect the park, create more visibility for accessing the park, and more prominent and safe entry points.





# Transit & Parking



Parking Garage #10

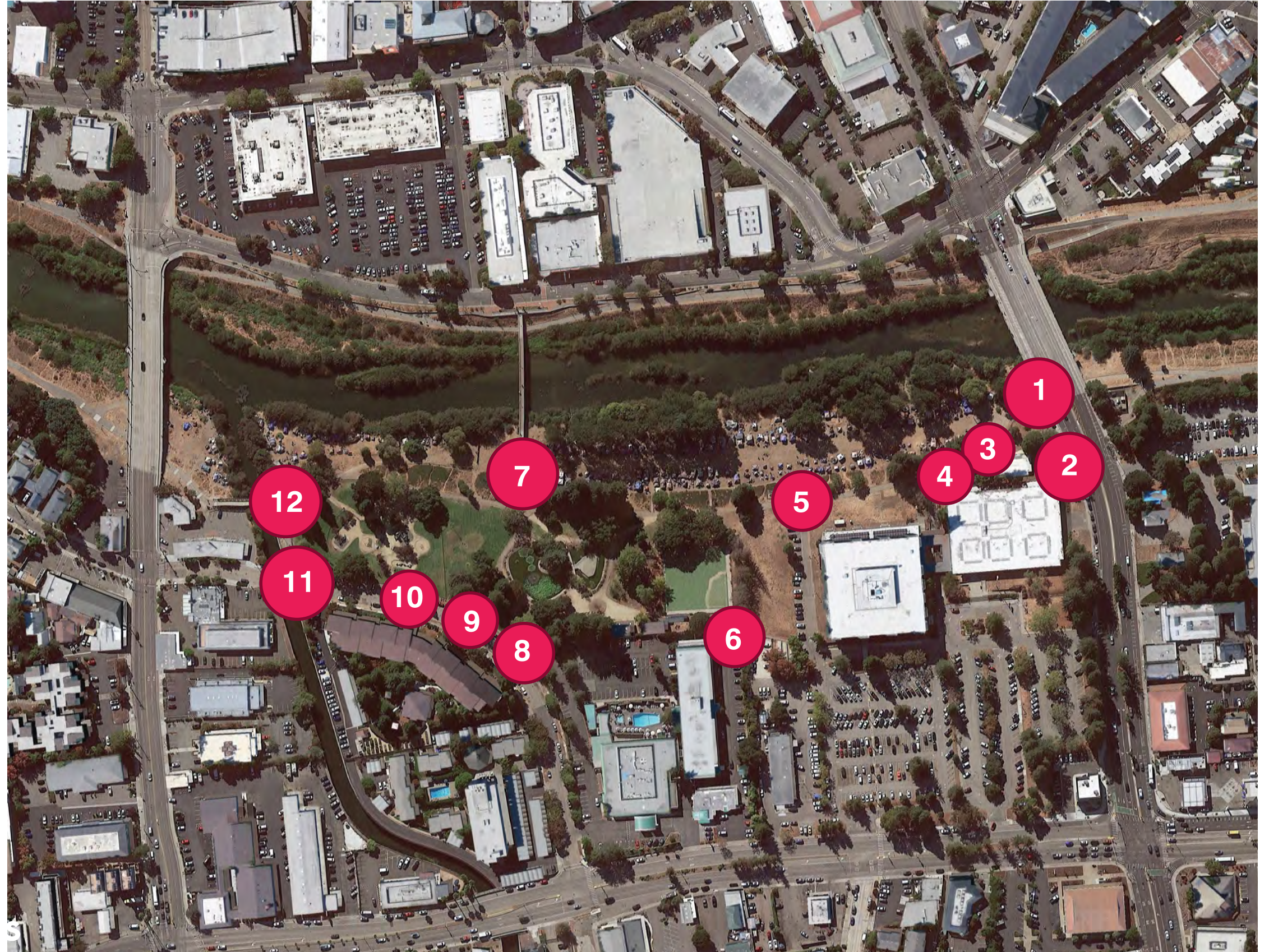
Dakota Ave street parking

County Parking lot  
(Select events only)

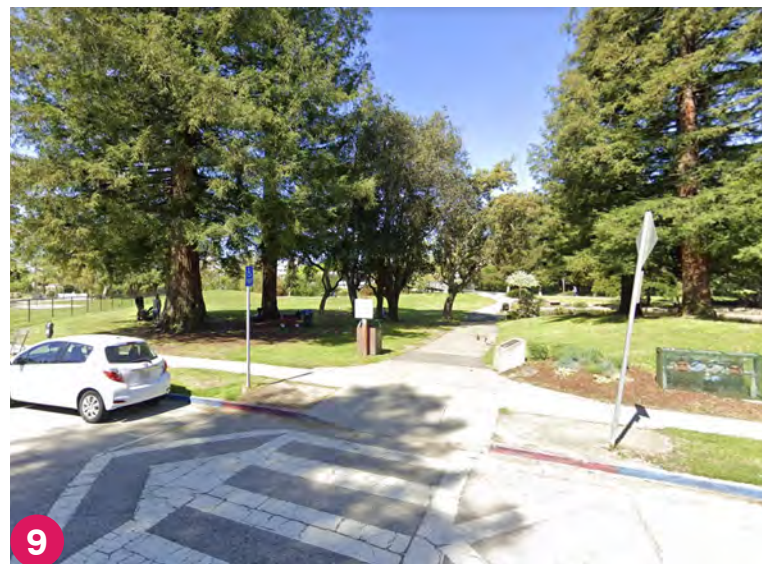
Transit Stop

# Current Park Entries

The park currently has many entries. Some are hidden, hard to find, unclear, and some community members feel unsafe.

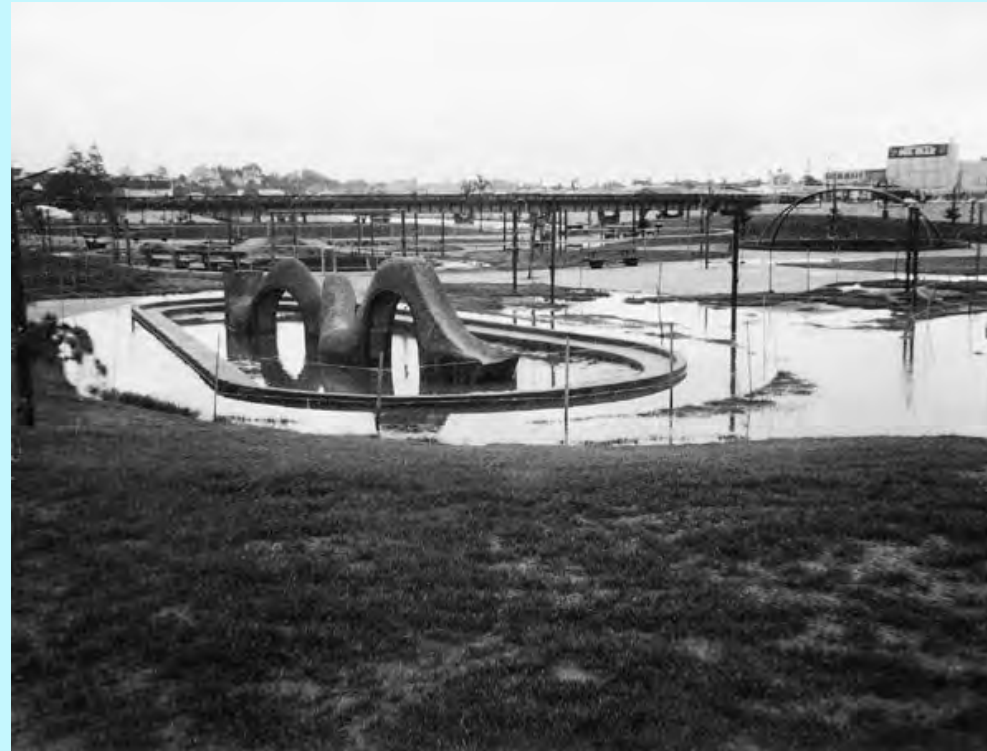


# Current Park Entries



# Park History

San Lorenzo Park is the largest park in downtown Santa Cruz, directly adjacent to the San Lorenzo River and diverse riverside neighborhoods. The park was created in the redevelopment project following the catastrophic 1955 flood. One of its attractions since 1964 has been “Lorenzo” the sea serpent in the play area.



Serpent play structure at San Lorenzo Park  
Resource: Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History



San Lorenzo River at San Lorenzo Park  
Resource: Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History

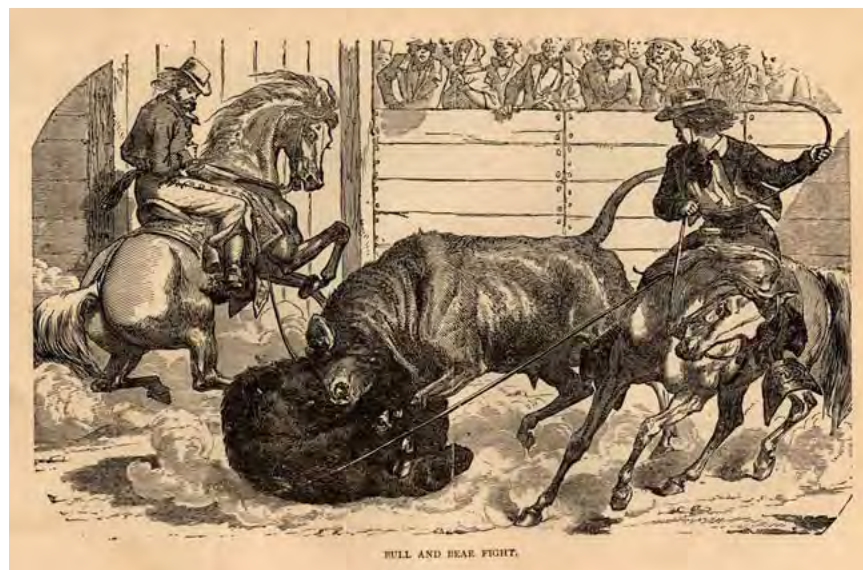


San Lorenzo Park, built 1964

# Historical Events



Resource: <https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=100961>, Photographed By Jim Cirner



**Historical Bull and Bear Fights**  
 Resource: Library of Congress; Bancroft Library



**The first Venetian Water Carnival, 1895**  
 Resource: Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History



**Swimming in the San Lorenzo River at Brookdale. Right: Decorated boats and barges in the Water Carnival, 1890's.**  
 Resource: Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History



**Central stage for the Water Carnival on the San Lorenzo River, 1890's**  
 Resource: Santa Cruz Public Libraries Local History



# Villages Along the River & Indigenous Santa Cruz Peoples

The park and surrounding area may have been a village site of the indigenous Awaswas-speaking Uypi tribe. Sources suggest that Chalumü was an indigenous village of the Awaswas-speaking Uypi tribe located at or near the present-day San Lorenzo Park. Archeological evidence suggests that the area was inhabited for approximately 2,000 years before Spanish colonization in the late 1700s. For centuries, indigenous peoples tended to the land through restorative practices. The Amah Mutsun Land Trust is helping restore natural lands in the Monterey Bay area.

**Source:** <https://coastal-watershed.org/the-meaning-of-aulintak/>  
Rizzo, M. A. (2016). No Somos Animales: Indigenous Survival and Perseverance in 19th Century Santa Cruz, California. UC Santa Cruz. Doctoral Dissertation, <http://www.protectjuristac.org/2020minilessons/>  
Michelle Lorimer & Shelley Brooks, (2019). Missions' impact on environment and



# River Confluence

The confluence of San Lorenzo River and Branciforte Creek on the southwest edge of the park also presents a unique opportunity for the park. Confluences often have historical significance. The confluence today is hidden and forgotten.

# River & Habitat

The extreme flood events of winter 2023 remind us that San Lorenzo Park is connected to a dynamic and regional ecological system much larger than the park itself. Portions of the park are designed to flood. The park already hosts numerous wildlife species along the river and in the park. The mature canopy cover along the riparian edge of the river is unique to this section of the river, due to the levee requirements up and downstream from San Lorenzo Park. It allows for riparian habitat and species to exist in this location.

San Lorenzo River & Park provide habitat for swallows, great horned owls, wood ducks, spawning Coho salmon, seals, and steelhead trout.



Low-Lying Riverlands

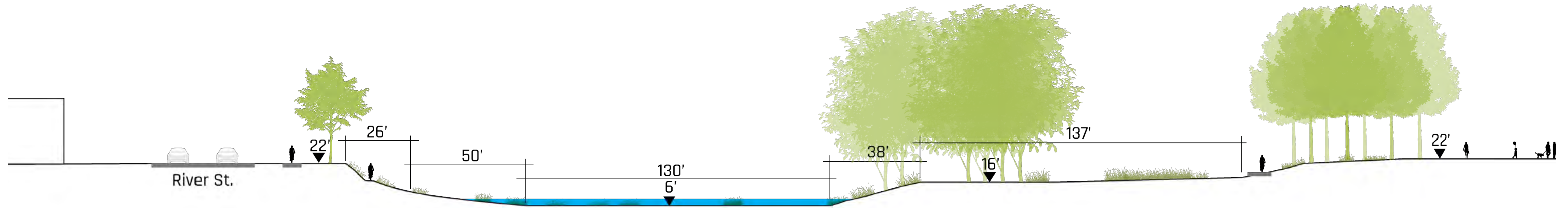


Riverlands Designed to Flood, January 2023

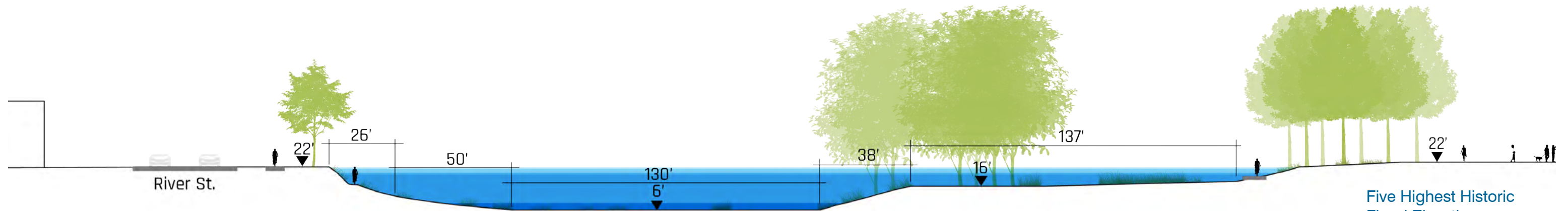


# Existing San Lorenzo River Section

## Section 1 : Low water volume

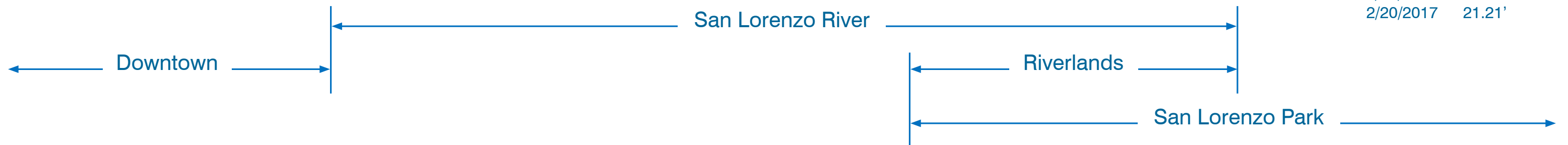


## Section 2 : High water volume



### Five Highest Historic Flood Elevations

1/9/2023	24.54'
2/7/2017	23.59'
12/31/2022	22.15'
1/14/2023	21.83'
2/20/2017	21.21'



# Unique River Section



Reach 1

Reach 2

Reach 3

Reach 4

Reach 5

Reach 1



Reach 2



Reach 3

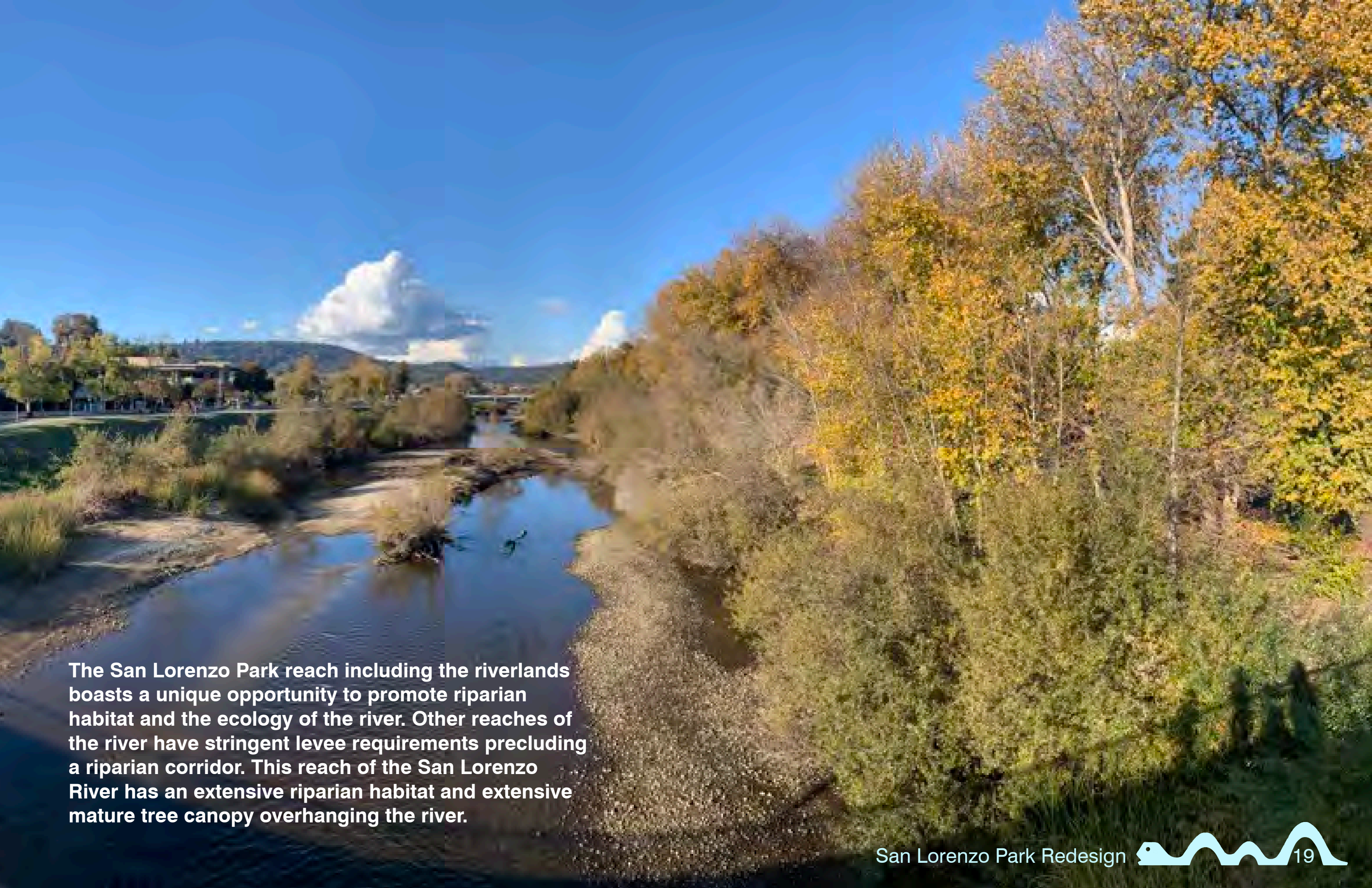


Reach 4



Reach 5





**The San Lorenzo Park reach including the riverlands boasts a unique opportunity to promote riparian habitat and the ecology of the river. Other reaches of the river have stringent levee requirements precluding a riparian corridor. This reach of the San Lorenzo River has an extensive riparian habitat and extensive mature tree canopy overhanging the river.**

# Mature Trees

There is an extensive mature tree canopy that contributes great value to the urban forest. The heritage trees should be preserved.



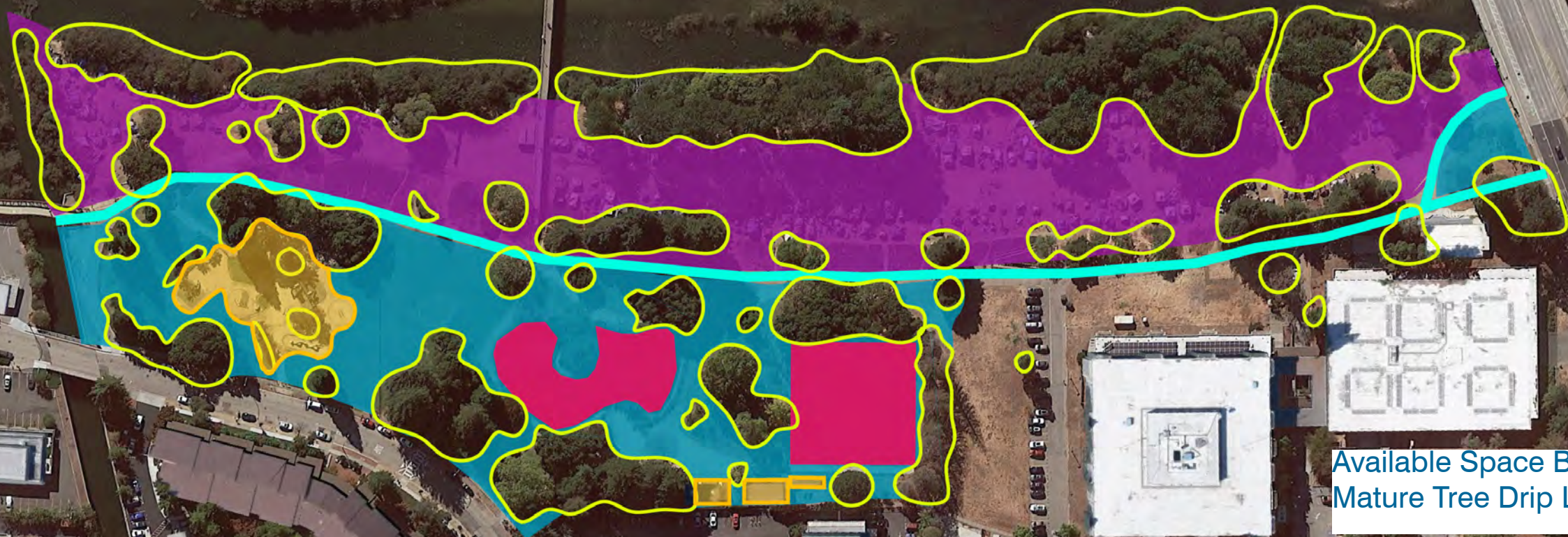
# Mature Trees





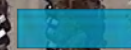

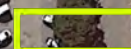
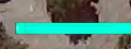


Where heritage trees are located, the area within the drip line needs to be preserved in place with minimal improvements to preserve the trees;

# Available Space



Available Space Based on Mature Tree Drip Line

-  Pond & Lawn Bowling:
-  Benchlands: 3.56 acre
-  Upland: 2.48 acre
-  Playground & Building
-  Tree Drip
-  Trail

# Existing Park Features

The park today has a number of cherished features including the sea serpent “Lorenzo”, the pond, the playground, and the Chinatown Bridge. All exist in different conditions: some have been refurbished recently like “Lorenzo” the sea serpent, while others are degraded and in need of significant repair like the pond that leaks frequently. The park has also historically hosted numerous events. Current conditions are not conducive to the level of interest for events in the park.





# Sea Serpent "Lorenzo"



**"Lorenzo" will be repainted summer 2023 by the San Lorenzo Park Neighbors Group.**

# Chinatown Dragon Bridge & Archway

The Chinatown Bridge and Dragon Archway honor Chinese immigrants and the site of Santa Cruz's last Chinatown.



# The Playground



The playground has been used and loved by many families for decades. The playground area has drainage issues and is not inclusive for all ages and abilities.

# Events in the Park



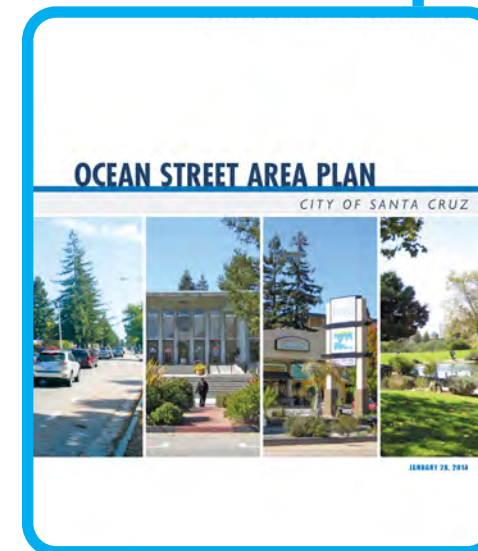
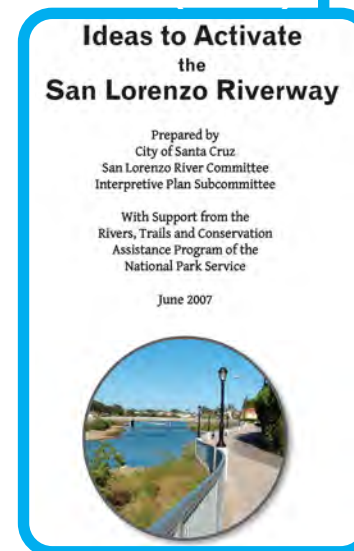
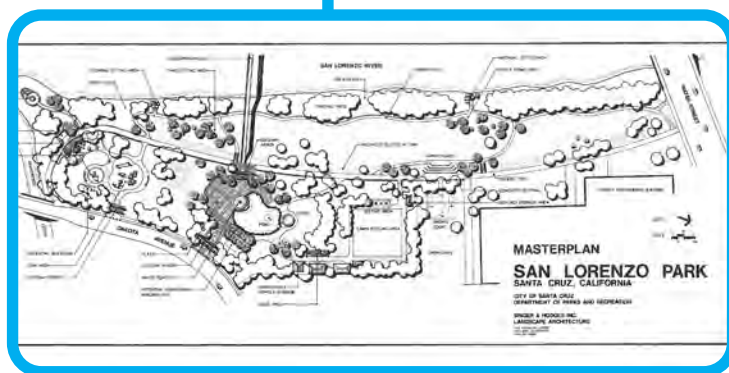
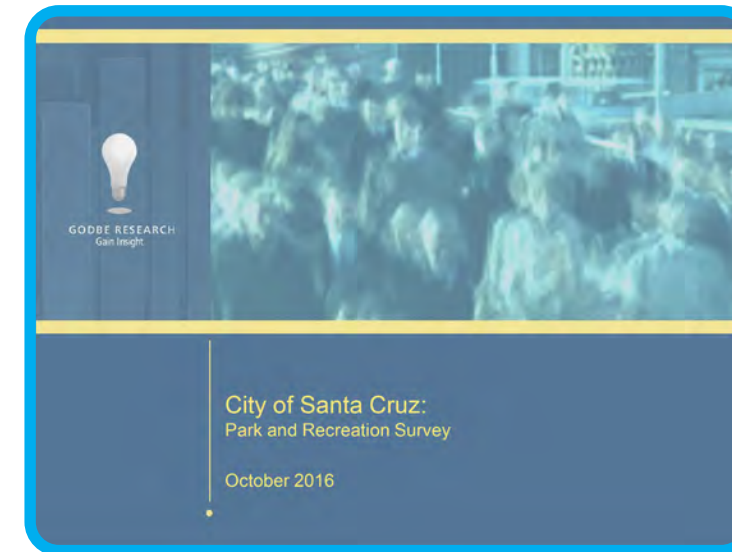
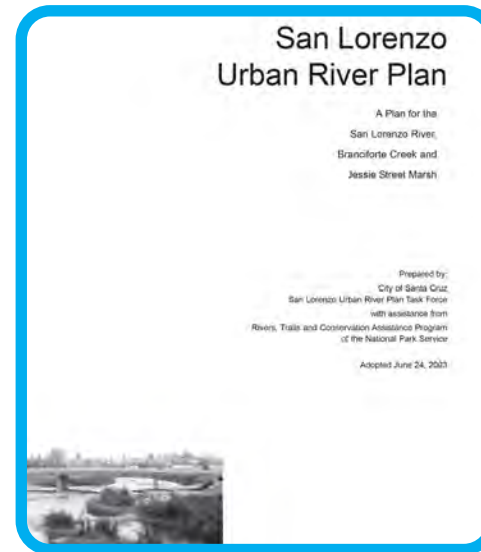
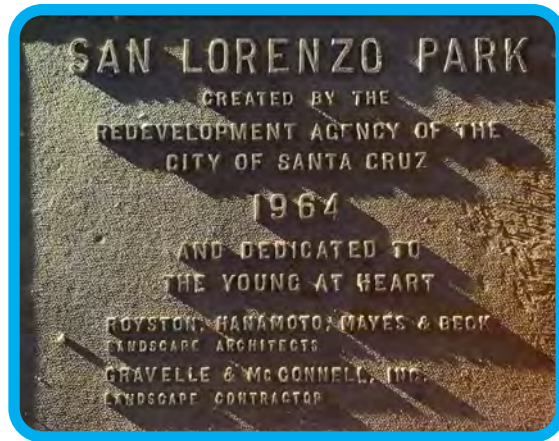
The park has hosted numerous events in the riverlands and uplands areas.

# The Lawn Bowling Facility



As of Spring 2023, the Lawn Bowling Club includes 25 members. The facility is a regulation size, artificial field.

# Previous Efforts



This redesign project is not starting from scratch. Many previous efforts have studied opportunities for San Lorenzo Park redesign and will inform this project.



# Summary of Previously Recommended Programs























## San Lorenzo Park Redesign Master Plan (Disapproved in 1988)

-  Wayfinding
-  Art / Sculpture
-  Performance
-  Picnic Area
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Restrooms
-  Restoration
-  Flood Control
-  Water Feature
-  Athletic Field / Large Lawn
-  Café / Restaurant
-  Playground
-  Recreation Center















## Ideas to Activate San Lorenzo River (2007)

-  Lighting
-  Wayfinding
-  Art / Sculpture
-  Performance
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Restrooms
-  Flood Control
-  Maintenance
-  Restoration
-  Seating
-  Water Feature
-  Café / Restaurant
-  Historic / Cultural Activity
-  Recreation Center
-  Trails





## City of Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 (2020)

-  Vehicular Parking
-  Wayfinding
-  Art / Sculpture
-  Riverwalk/Trails
-  Performance
-  Picnic Area
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Restrooms
-  Gardens
-  Maintenance
-  Restoration
-  Water Feature
-  Athletic Field / Large Lawn
-  Café / Restaurant
-  Fitness
-  Off-Leash Dog Area
-  Playground
-  Pump Track
-  Recreation Center
-  Skating
-  Slackline
-  Trails
-  Zipline














## San Lorenzo Urban River Plan (2003)

-  Lighting
-  Wayfinding
-  Art / Sculpture
-  Riverwalk/Trails
-  Bike Path
-  Overlooks
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Flood Control
-  Restoration
-  Seating
-  Water Feature
-  Historic / Cultural Activity
-  Recreation Center
-  Trails

## Ocean Street Area Plan (2014) & Draft Downtown Plan (2017)

-  Vehicular Parking
-  Riverwalk/Trails
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Trails

## 2016 Godbe Quantitative Survey

-  Vehicular Parking
-  Art / Sculpture
-  Performance
-  Picnic Area
-  Plaza / Promenade
-  Restrooms
-  Gardens
-  Café / Restaurant
-  Off-Leash Dog Area
-  Off-Leash Dog Area
-  Playground
-  Recreation Center
-  Trails



# Summary of Recommended Programs



# Other Santa Cruz Park Offerings

The Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 documented recreational facilities by location available in Santa Cruz. This table is from the Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 and will be a reference for this project.

**Source:** <https://www.cityofsantacruz.com/government/city-departments/parks-recreation/parks-beaches-open-spaces/parks-master-plan>

**Table 2.4-1 Recreational Facilities by Location**

General Recreational Facilities by Location	Baseball/Softball Field	Basketball Court	Bike Park	Bocce Courts	Community Gardens	Disc Golf	Exercise Equipment	Horseshoe Pits	Off-leash Dog Run	Pickleball Court	Playground/Play Equipment	Pump Track	Reservable Picnic Areas	Roller Hockey	Sand Volleyball Court	Skate Park	Soccer	Table Tennis	Tennis Court	Tot Lot Playground
Beach Flats Park											1									1
Branciforte Dog Park									1 (fenced)											
Central Park											1									
Chestnut Park		0.5									1									
Cowell Beach															2					
Depot Park/Bicycle Trip Bike Park /Scott Kennedy Fields			1								1						1 adult or 2 youth practice			
Frederick Street Park									1 (fenced)		1				1	1 (small)				1
Garfield Park		1									1							2		1
Grant Park	1 diamond field	1		1					1 (fenced)		1									1
Harvey West Park	6 baseball			2			1	2			1	1	9 (7 > 50 capacity)		1		2 (outfield of baseball fields)			1
John D. Franks Park							1				1									
Ken Wormhoudt Skate Park at Mike Fox Park		0.5								3 (painted on multi-purpose area)				1		1				
Laurel Park		1								1 (painted on b-ball)	1							1		1
Lighthouse Avenue Park					1 (18 plots)						1									1

**Table 2.4-1 Recreational Facilities by Location**

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Lower DeLaveaga Park and George Washington Grove	2 softball			2				2			1		7 (5 > 50 capacity)		1						
Main Beach															16						
Mimi De Marta Park									1 (fenced)												
Mitchells Cove									1 (hour limitations on beach)												
Neary Lagoon Park											1								2		
Ocean View Park		0.5							1 (open, non-fenced)		1										1
Pacheco Dog Park									1 (fenced)												
Poets Park and Beach Flats Community Garden					2 (32 plots)						1										
Westside Pump Track												1									
Riverside Gardens					1 (11 plots)		1				1										
San Lorenzo Park						9 holes					1	1 (fiberglass)									1
Santa Cruz Riverwalk							2														
Sgt. Derby Park						3 holes				6 (painted on tennis courts)	1					1				2	
Trescony Park					1 (54 plots)						1										1

Page 2 of the table from the Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 documenting recreational facilities by location available in Santa Cruz.

Page 2 of the table from the Santa Cruz Parks Master Plan 2030 documenting recreational facilities by location available in Santa Cruz.

Table 2.4-1 Recreational Facilities by Location

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Tyrrell Park																					
University Terrace Park		1							1 (Fenced-in)		1								2		
Westlake Park											1										1
West Cliff							1														
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5 (115 plots)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	

# Park & Playground Precedents



**San Lorenzo Park**  
Santa Cruz  
12-acre



**Downtown Park**  
Palm Springs  
Palm Springs  
1.5-acre



**Discovery Green**  
Houston  
12-acre



**Maggie Daley Park**  
Chicago  
20-acre



**Mission Dolores Park**  
San Francisco  
16-acre



**Tongva Park**  
Santa Monica  
6.2-acre



**Chanticleer Park**  
Santa Cruz  
4.5-acre



**Presidio Tunnel Top**  
San Francisco  
14-acre



**Chapman Adventure  
Playground & Riverwalk**  
Tulsa  
20-acre

# Downtown Park Palm Springs, Palm Springs

A 1.5-acre open shady oasis for residents and visitors.





# Discovery Green, Houston

A 12-acre park located in downtown Houston with extensive programming.







# Maggie Daley Park, Chicago

A 20-acre public park with lots of playful spaces.





# Mission Dolores Park, San Francisco

A 16-acre public park as the vibrant heart of its equally vibrant, culturally diverse neighborhood.

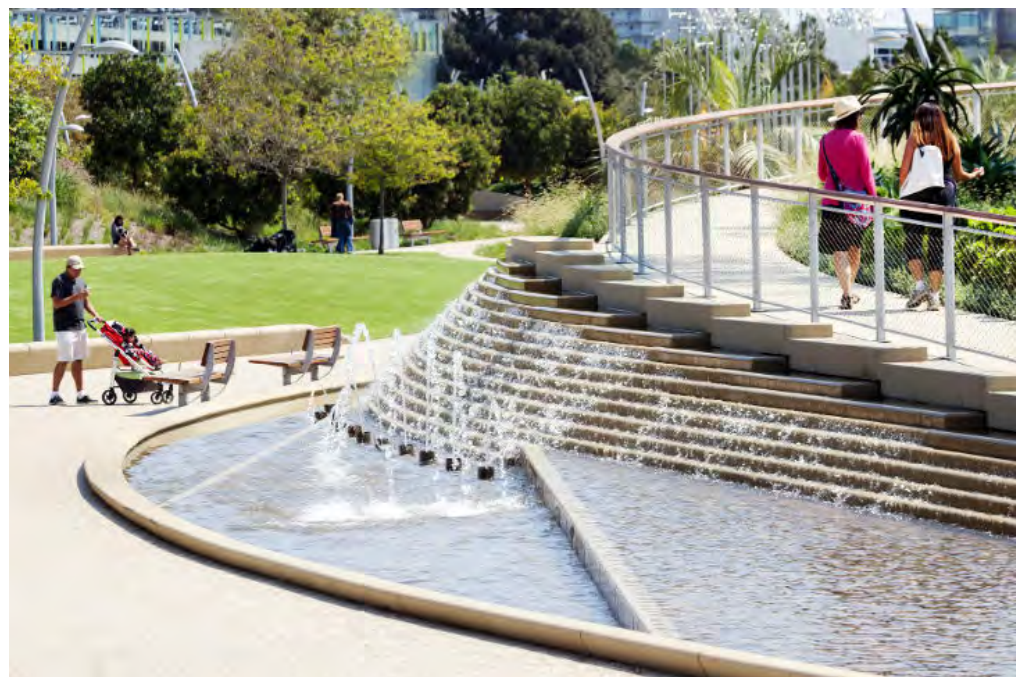
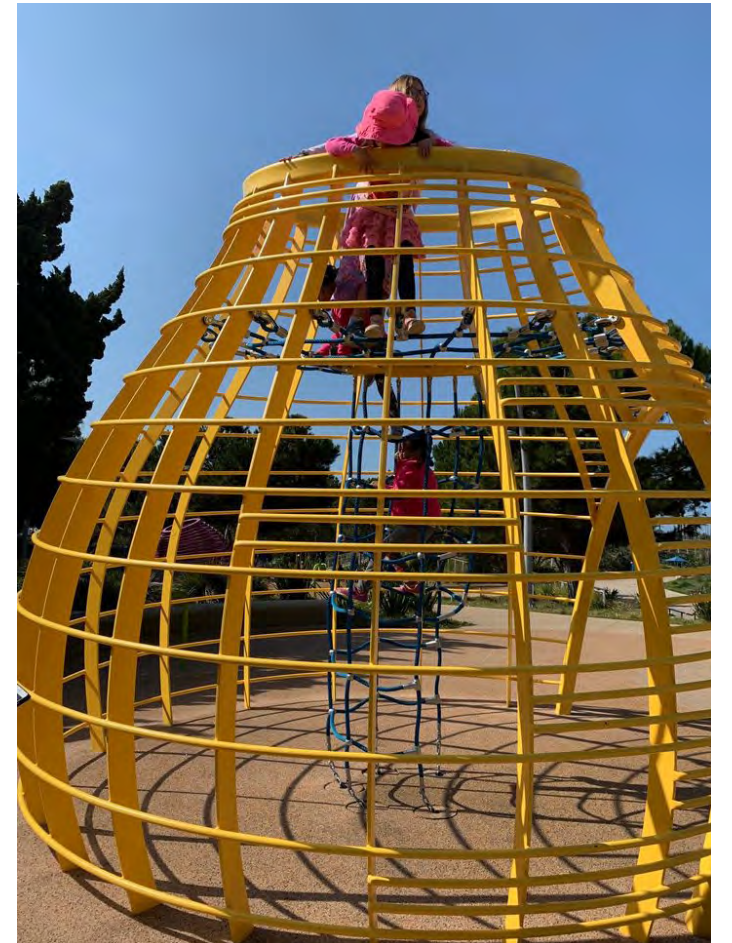




# Tongva Park, Santa Monica

A 6.2-acre park with a range of topography and programs.





# Chanticleer Park, Santa Cruz

A 4.5-acre public park with a universally accessible playground at the center.







# Presidio Tunnel Top, San Francisco

A 14-acre park with natural and playful facilities for children made possible through many partnerships.





# Chapman Adventure Playground & Riverwalk, Tulsa

Part of the riverwalk park, a 5-acre kingdom for kids to learn through play.





# Francisco Park, San Francisco

A new 4-acre park built by a Park Conservancy including a combined restroom and maintenance facility.





# Engagement Process & Overview

To identify and confirm the project needs, the design team and client conducted extensive community engagement in Stage 1 in the form of key stakeholder meetings, email correspondence, 1 community meeting, and an online survey. The following chapter includes the engagement conducted and the summarized input received. See the appendix for meeting notes, emailed comments, and survey results.

## Stage 1 Engagement by the Numbers

**1,322**

online survey responses

**212**

key stakeholder meeting attendees

**73**

emailed comments

**72**

community meeting #1 attendees





### Select Sentiments

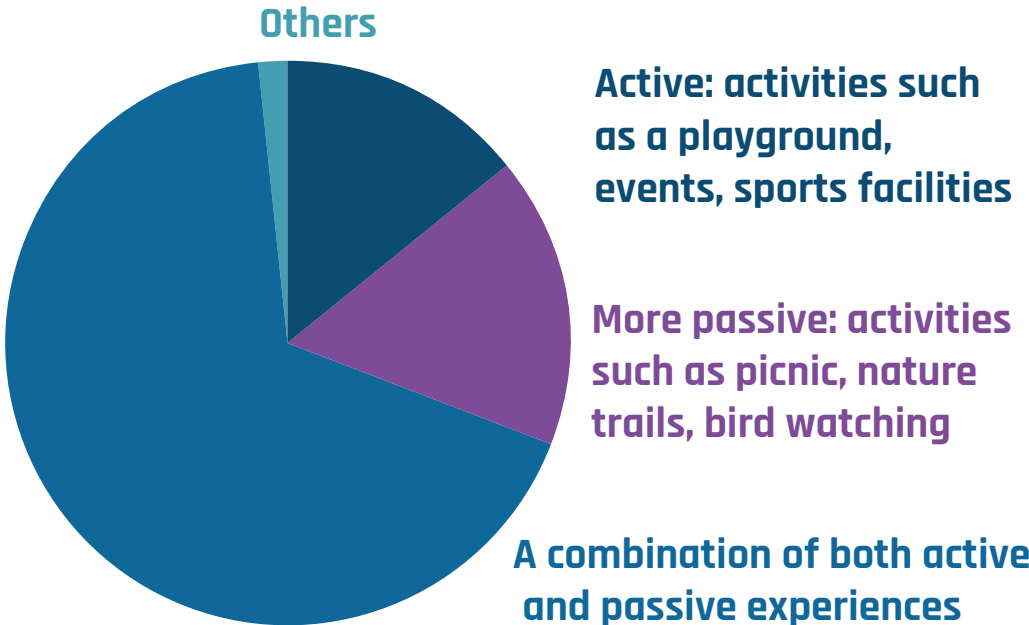
“San Lorenzo Park and the river are crown jewels in the city.”

“Restore sacredness to the land.”

“We want to see the park as an asset to the community.”

“Keep Santa Cruz Memorable.”

### Overall Park Experience



### Top program recommendations

- Active Recreation
- Events
- Habitat Restoration
- Passive Recreation
- Playground

# Community Meeting # 1

Location: Hotel Paradox, Sequoia Room A

Date: Saturday, February 25, 2023

Time: 10am - 1pm

Attendees: 72

Community meeting #1 began with an introductory presentation that introduced attendees to high level observations about the park. There was a 15 minute question and answer session after the presentation. Attendees were welcomed to participate in an open house to review the exhibits that lined the perimeter of the room, and provide input on the exhibits using 2 colors of round stickers and sticky notes. The following summarizes the input received during the question and answer session, and from the open house exhibits.

Spanish/English translator present.





EXIT

SECTION 5:  
FEATURES &  
EXPERIENCES

The park has some  
unique existing  
features.









**Presentation**



**Question & Answer Session**



**Activities**



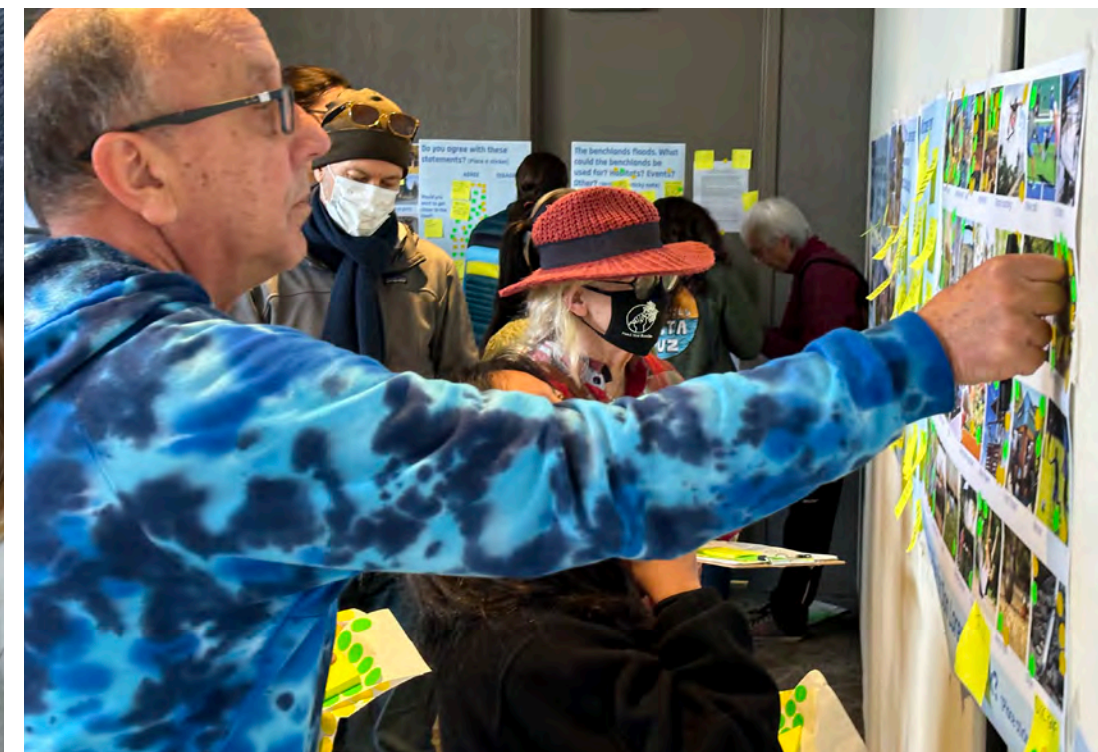
**Write Ins**



**Conversations with City Staff**



**Small Group Conversations**









# Anecdotes

Community meeting #1 asked questions to receive anecdotes about the current park and how people use the park and/or feel about the park. The following includes anecdotes received during the community meeting #1 input section.

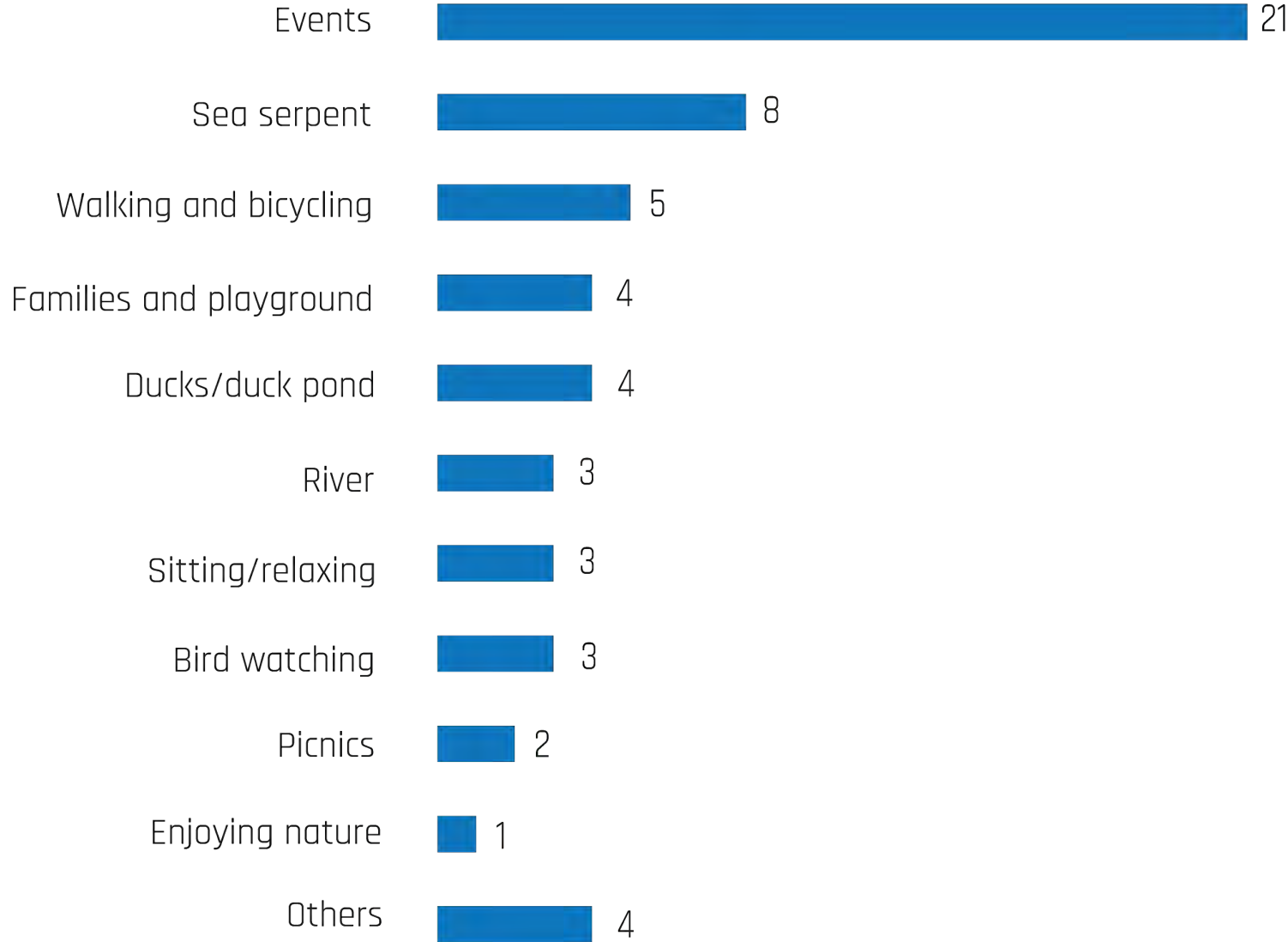
**Would you want to get closer to the river?**



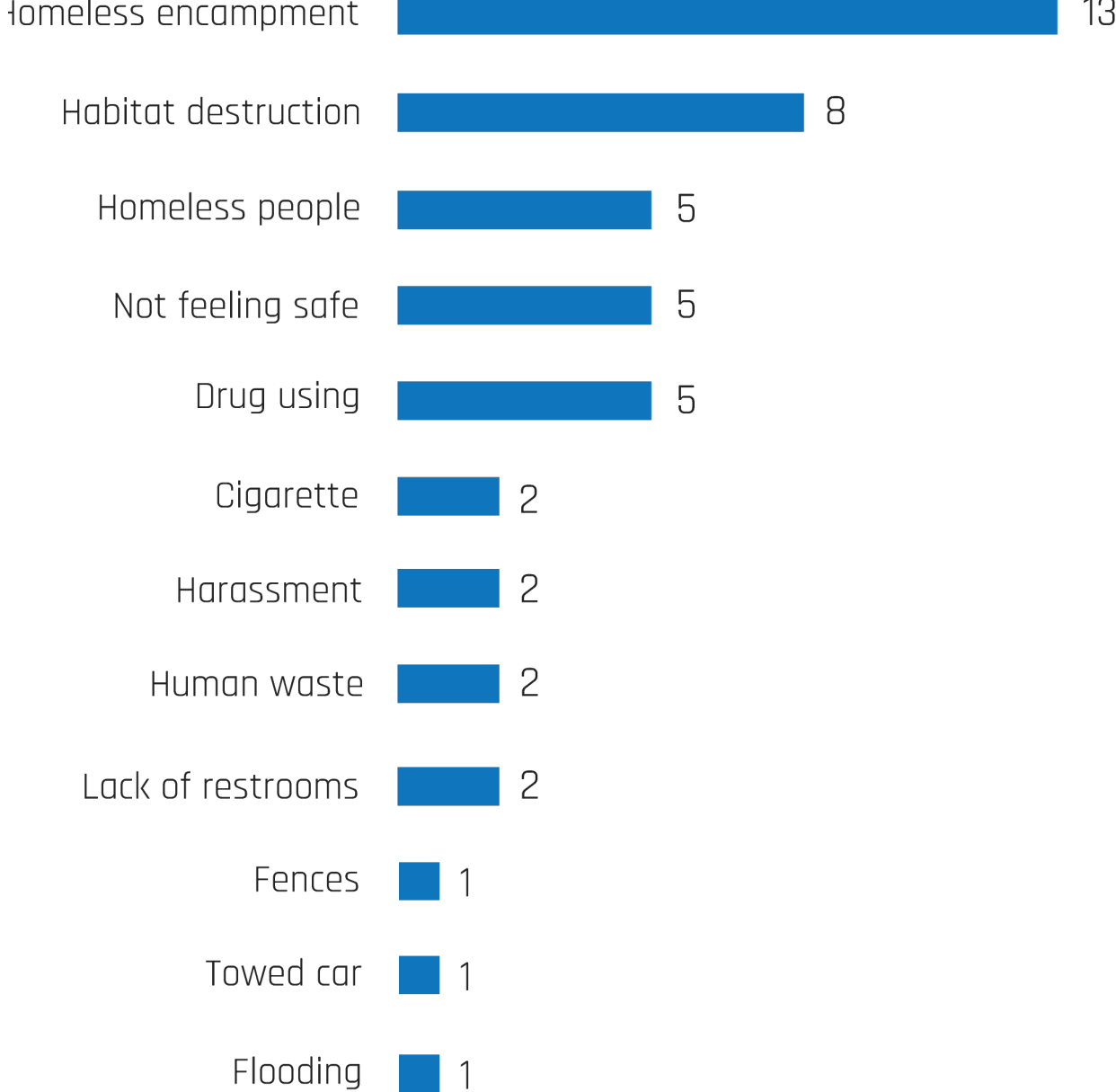
**Do you like the pond?**



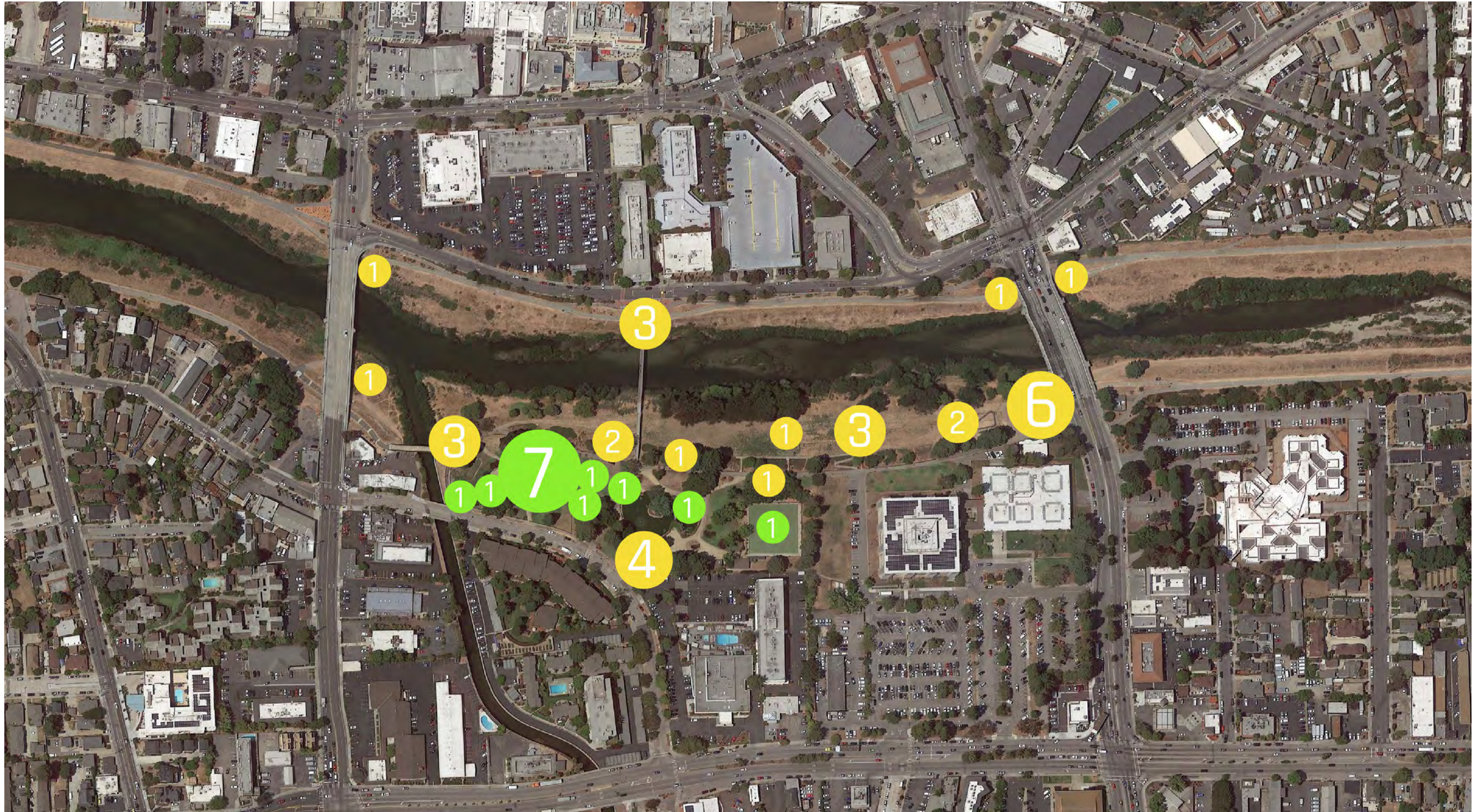
# What is your favorite memory in the park?



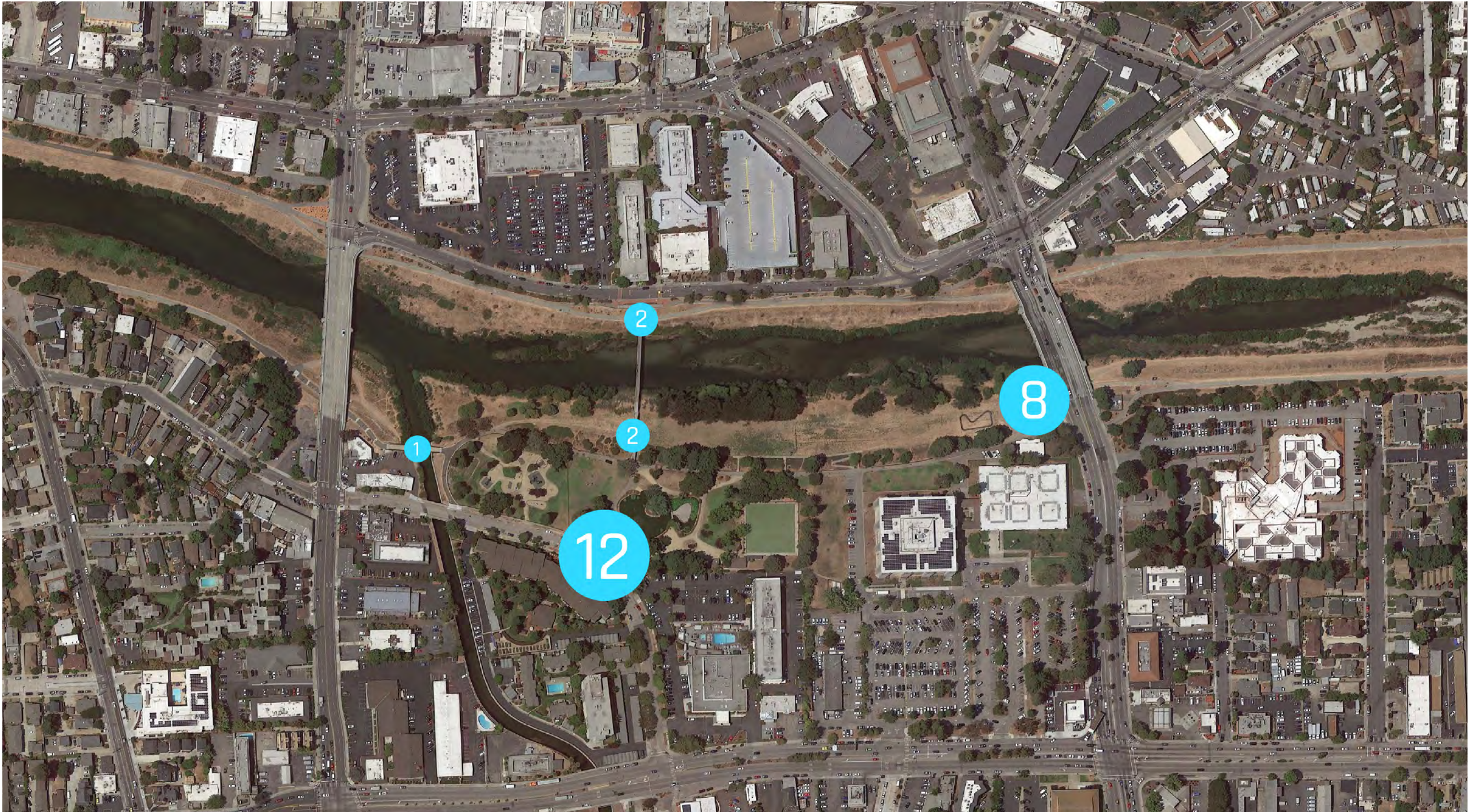
# What is your least favorite memory in the park?



# Where in the park feels the safest and where feels the most dangerous?



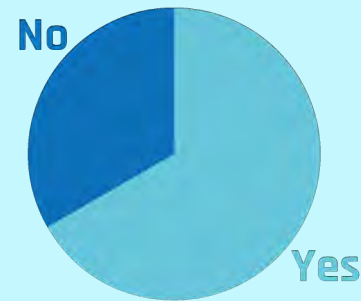
# Where is the main entrance to the park?



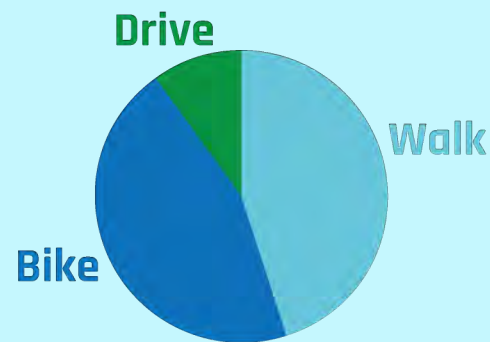
# Uses

Community meeting #1 asked questions to about how people use the park. This section includes data on current uses and preferences for how people use the park now and in the future.

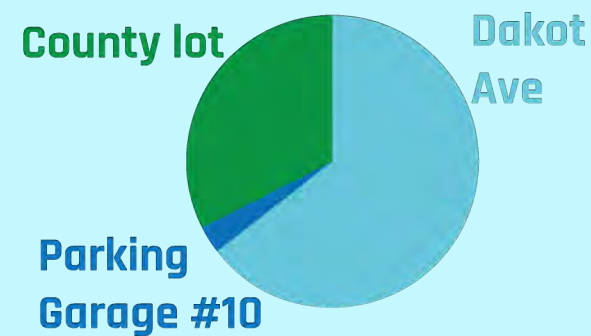
**Do you come to the park for bird watching?**



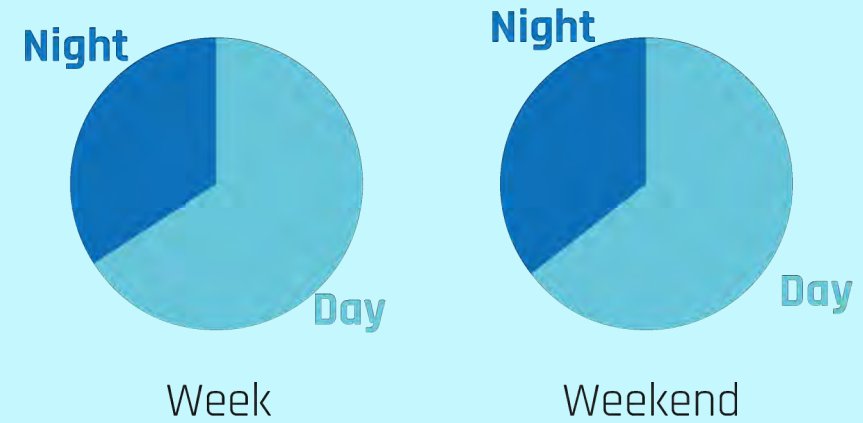
**How do you get to San Lorenzo Park?**



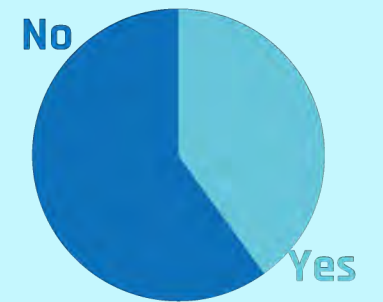
**If you drive, where do you park?**



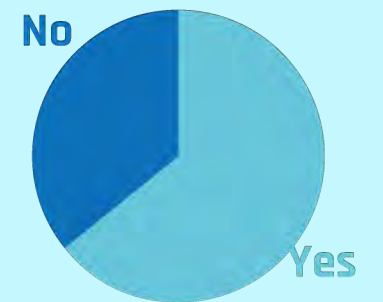
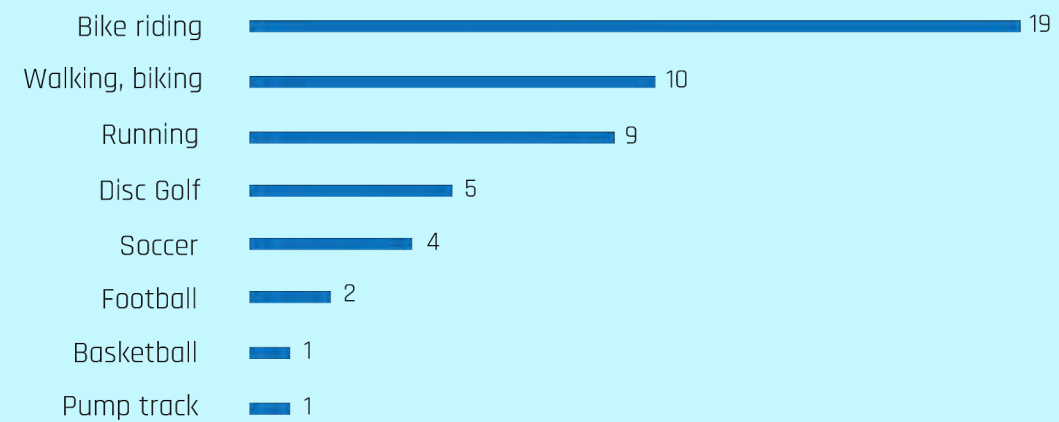
**When will you come to San Lorenzo Park?**



**Do you have young kids (ages 0-12)?**



**Do you play a sport for recreation/exercise?**



# The benchlands floods. What could the benchlands be used for?

- Cultural gatherings
- Habitat restoration
- Disc Golf
- Pump track
- Educational area
- Bird watching
- Music events or theater with temperate stage
- Soccer field
- Watch movies with big screen
- Raised stage for events
- Bike loop for kids
- Art installation
- Amphitheatre
- Fishing
- Small boat use
- Botany

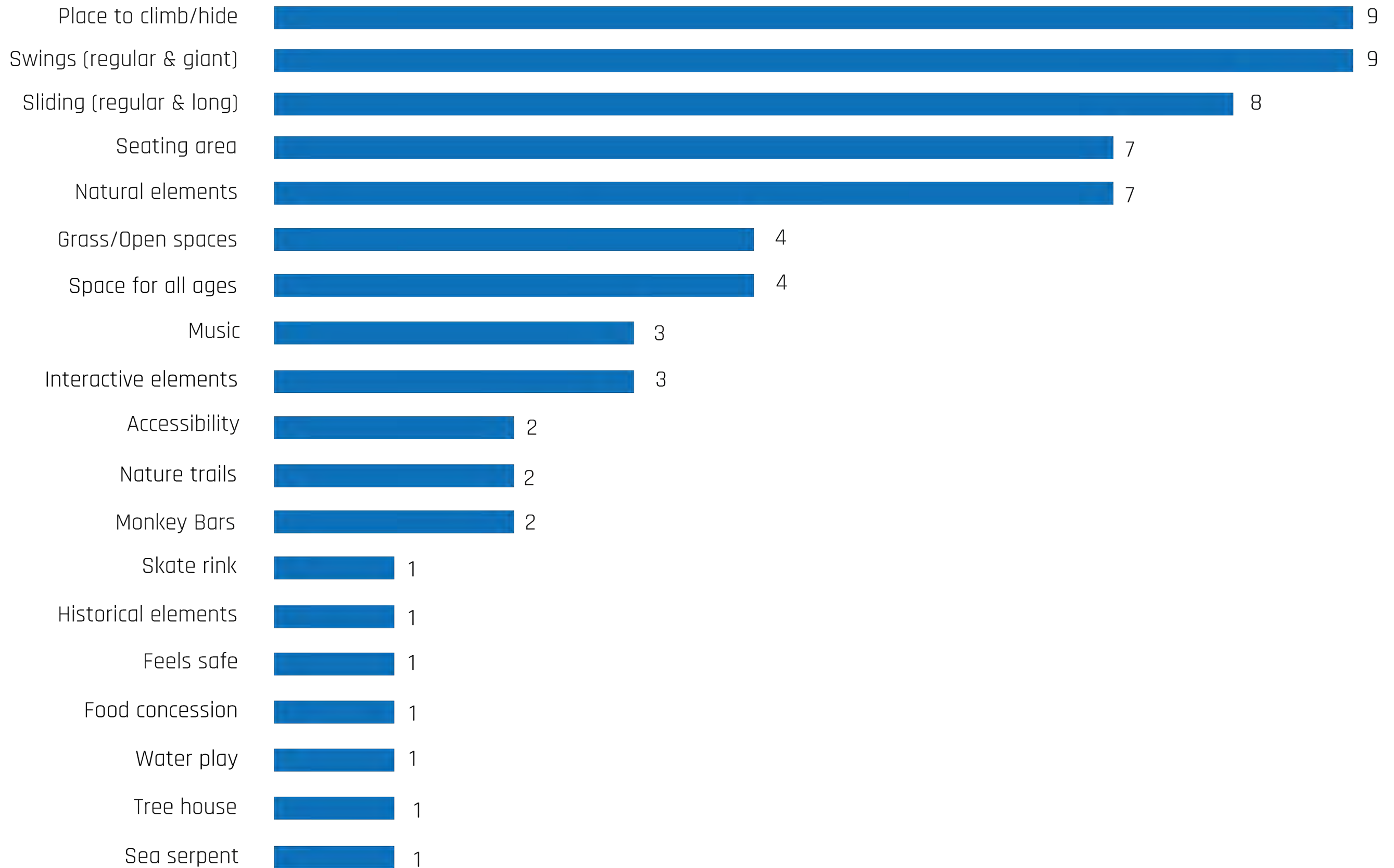
MOST INTEREST



LEAST INTEREST



# What makes a great playground?





# What types of events would you like to see?



# Program

The community meeting asked a range of questions to gauge preferences for different programs and amenities in the park. The following is a summary of the feedback received and shows preferences for which programs should be included in the redesign of the park.



# What programs would you like to see?



Events



Fishing



Wayfinding



Food Truck



Pump Track



Disc Golf



Covered Outdoor Space



Bird Watching



Observatories /  
Decks / Benches



River Cleanups



Soccer



Picnic



Zipline



Lawn  
Bowling



Plaza



Trails



Native Plants



Playground



Tacos & Tequila



Dog Park



Pickle Ball



Water Feature



Art / Sculpture



Pavilion / Building



Beer Garden



Restroom



Miniature Trolley /  
Historic Train



Vehicular Parking



Community Gardens

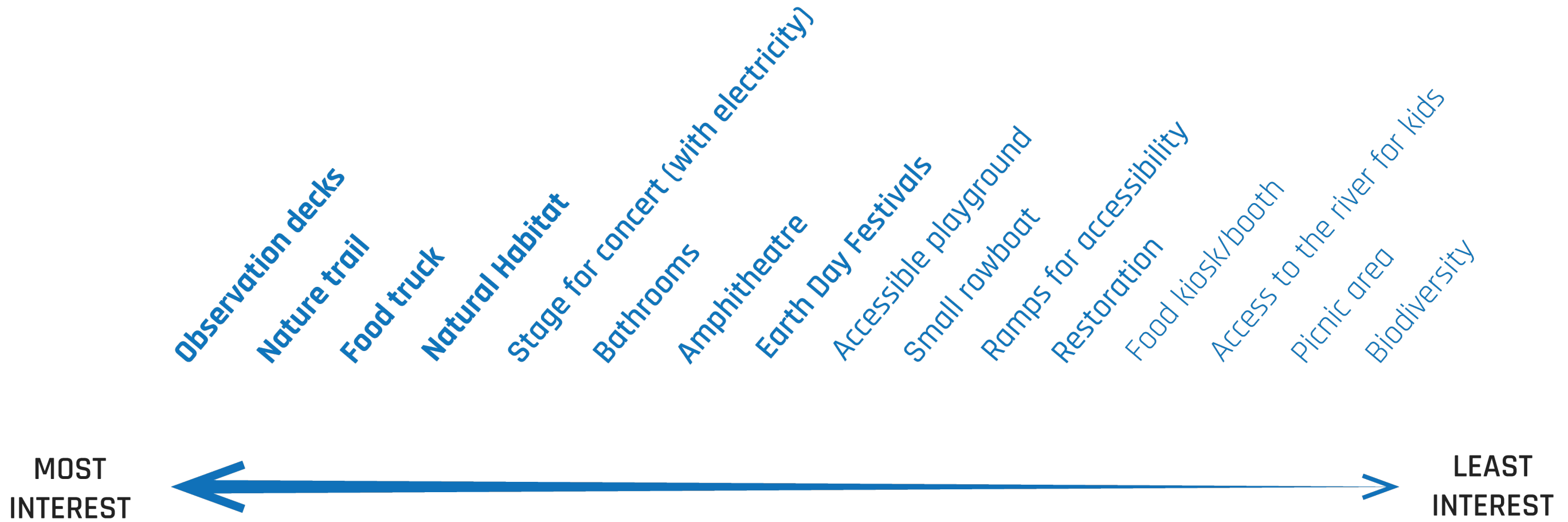


Café

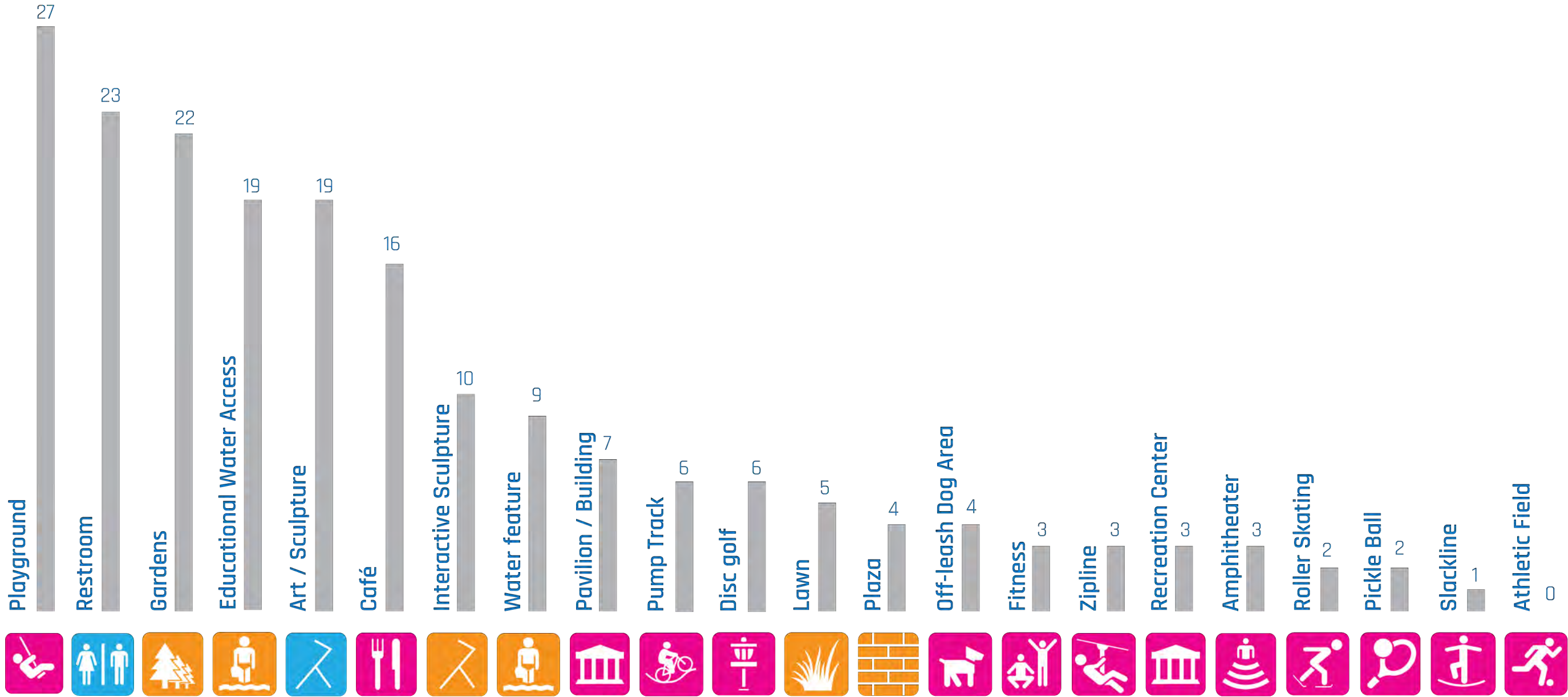


Skating

# I wish San Lorenzo Park will have



# Top 5 programs people would like to see in San Lorenzo Park





Nature play elements



Overlook



Climbing play elements



Stage



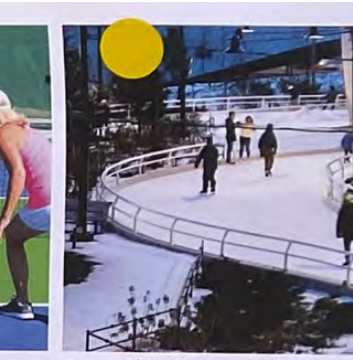
Amphitheater



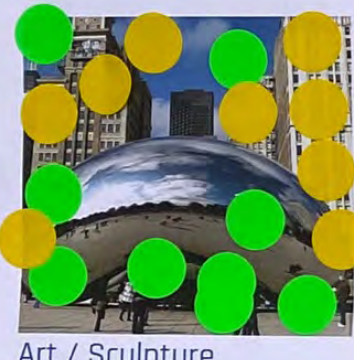
Skate boarding



Pickle ball



Ice Skating



Art / Sculpture



Lawn



Climbing



Play Swing



Zipline



Tree house



Weddings



Stewardship



Bird watching



Field trip



Outdoor fitness



Train



Community garden



View Tower



Food Stand



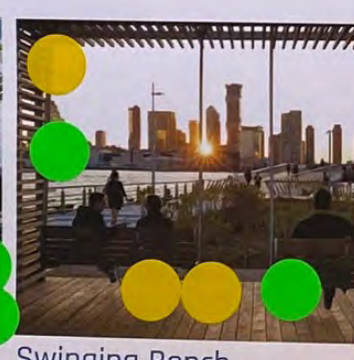
Soccer



Picnic



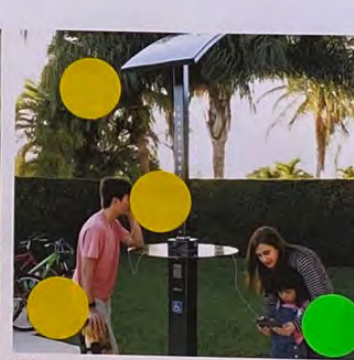
Water Access



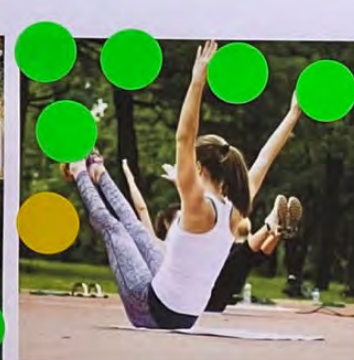
Swinging Bench



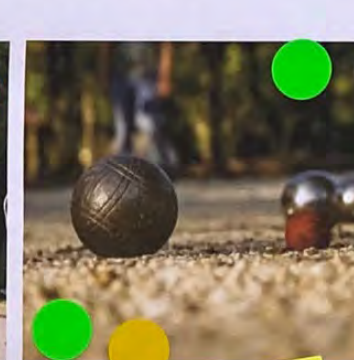
A small dog run will keep people from running their dogs in the kiddie park



Charging Station



Fitness classes



Bocce Ball



Slide

small picnic area at Courtland and Franklin - with separate...

Parks - the needs to remember its role as a steward of open space. A park without a natural area...

Bikes! Bikes major way...

ca. native garden, nature trail

What about places to life?

Tai Chi

Include more options for passive recreation: trails, nature walks, California native...

tennis court

DISC GOLF

# What do you like for San Lorenzo Park?



Public art 28



View tower 15



Community garden 8



Charging Station 4



Picnic 28



Tree house 12



Outdoor fitness 7



Skate boarding 3



Water Access 28



Slide 12



Towers and bridge 7



Bocce Ball 3



Playground elements 24



Field trip 11



Play Swing 7



Pickle ball 2



Stage 21



Viewing Platform 10



Dogs 6



Zipline 2



Amphitheater 20



Lawn 9



Fitness classes 6



Ice Skating 1



Stewardship 20



Cafe and plaza 9



Soccer 5



Train 1



Bird watching 18



Climbing 8



Swinging Bench 5



Wedding 0

# Community Meeting #1 Summary





**Benchlands**

What are the best uses for the benchlands? (Place a sticker)

Soccer field

Other

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating preferences for various uses like soccer field, playground, etc.

**Existing Mature & Specimen Trees in park**

More trees

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed over photos of trees in the park, with green dots marking specific trees.

**The benchlands floods. What could the benchlands be used for? Habitats? Events? Other?**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating preferences for various uses like habitats, events, etc.

**Do you agree with these statements? (Place a sticker)**

AGREE DISAGREE

Would you want to get closer to the river?

Do you like the pond?

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating agreement or disagreement with various statements.

**Pick the top 5 programs you would like to see in San Lorenzo Park: (Place stickers)**

Restroom, Art / Sculpture, Interactive Sculpture, Plaza, Water feature, Garden, Lawn, Educational Water Access, Fitness, Off-leash Dog Area, Roller Skating, Slackline, Zipline, Playground, Pump Track, Athletic Field, Pickle Ball, Café, Recreation Center, Pavilion / Building, Disc Golf

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating preferences for various programs.

**Please identify where in the park feels the safest and where feels the most dangerous.**

Place dot for safest. Place dot for most dangerous.

WHY? (Write on a sticky note)

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a map of the park, with green dots indicating areas that feel safest and yellow dots indicating areas that feel most dangerous.

**What is your favorite memory in the park? (Write on a sticky note)**

**What is your least favorite memory in the park? (Write on a sticky note)**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating favorite and least favorite memories.

**What is your favorite memory in the park? (Write on a sticky note)**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating favorite memories.

**Adventure playground, Tulsa**

**Adventure playground, Chicago**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on photos of adventure playgrounds, with green dots indicating preferences.

**What makes a great playground?**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a grid, with green dots indicating what makes a great playground.

**San Lorenzo Park is centrally located downtown and is a big park. What role could it play for Santa Cruz?**

Handwritten notes on yellow sticky notes are placed on a map of the park, with green dots indicating potential roles for the park.

# Key Stakeholder Meetings

Bionic and the City held 17 key stakeholder meetings between January 2023 and April 2023 remotely or in person for one hour each. The following groups were included in the key stakeholder meetings to receive initial input and inform the needs assessment.

Groups included:

- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Beach Flats Residents @ Nueva Vista Center
- Blaine Street Residents
- Coastal Watershed Council and Jane Mio
- County of Santa Cruz
- Downtown Association
- Downtown Streets Team
- Environmental Advocates
- Lawn Bowling Club
- Other Neighborhoods (Tannery, Felker Street, Lower Ocean, Blain Street)
- Paradox Hotel
- Riverfront Apartments
- Santa Cruz High School
- San Lorenzo Park Apartment residents
- San Lorenzo Park Neighbors Group
- Teen Center
- Special Needs



San Lorenzo Park Apartment Residents



Downtown Streets Team

# Select Quotes

**“Restore sacredness back to the land.”**

Valentine Lopez, AMTB

**“There is no other downtown Santa Cruz location. It is so important to have a space this size.”**

**“Think of the park as a central downtown park.”**

Leslie Wooding, SLPNG

**“From across the river, you don’t know there is a park there.”**

Sonja Brunner, Downtown Assoc.

**“River is an incredible, beautiful jewel in the city.”**

Jane Mio

**“See the river as the water feature, rather than the pond.”**

Laurie Egan, CWC

**“How do we incorporate San Lorenzo Park into the tourism and the people that visit the downtown?”**

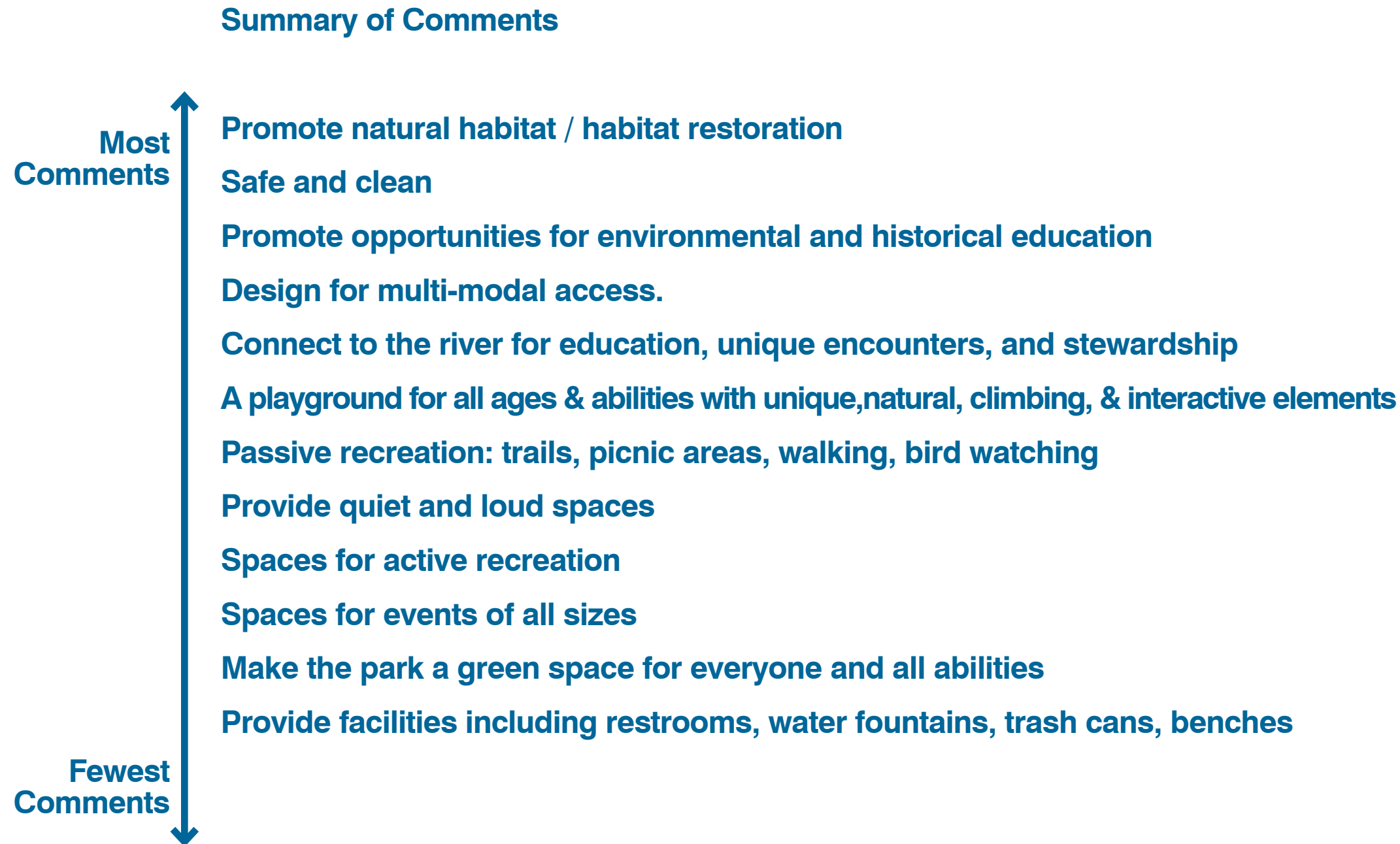
Katie Fairbairn, Downtown Association

**“San Lorenzo Park is a crown jewel in the city.”**

**“We want to see the park as an asset to the community.”**

Grant Dentremont, Hotel Paradox

# Summary of Key Stakeholder Input



## Desired Programs

- Benchlands transformation
- Native plants restoration
- Community gardens
- Events
- Restroom
- Café / food truck
- Plaza
- Amphitheater seating
- Soccer, football
- Skateboarding
- Zip lines
- Miniature trolley
- Roller-skate
- Pump track
- Lawn bowling
- Rec center / gathering space
- Fishing
- Covered outdoor space
- Dog park
- Popup business
- Workforce development
- Speed bumps on Dakota
- Kiosks
- River cleanups
- Bike path
- Bird watching
- Surf boards
- Long swings
- Stages / pavilion
- Parks host/park steward/police supervision
- Water feature/access
- Interactive sculptures
- Beer garden
- Picnic
- Playground
- Observatories / decks / benches
- Art
- Disc golf
- Signage, wayfinding
- Pickleball / basketball





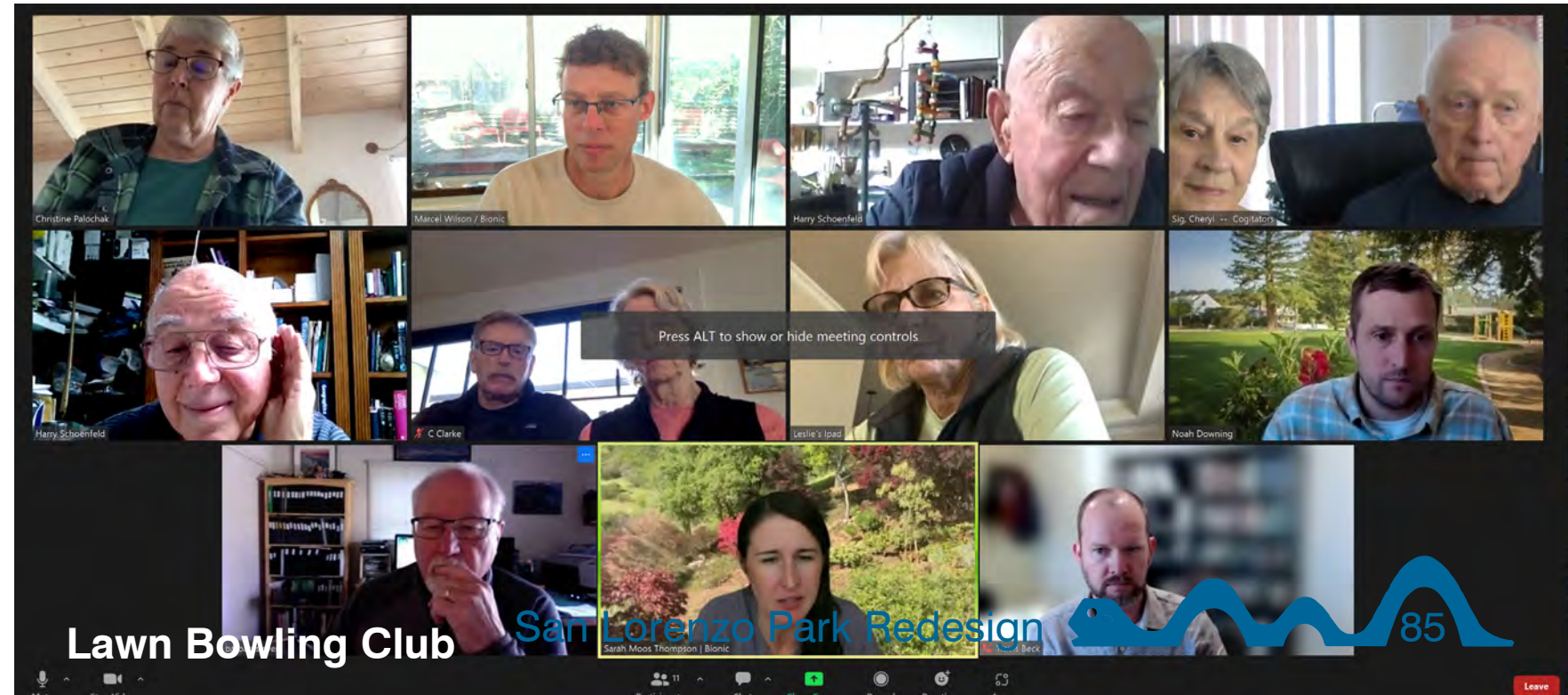
Downtown Streets Team



Santa Cruz High School



San Lorenzo Park Apartment Residents



Lawn Bowling Club

# Email Comments

The city received 27 emails including 73 separate comments for the park from February 9, 2023 to April 14, 2023 as part of the Stage 1 engagement process to inform the needs assessment.

## Summary of Comments

- Habitat Restoration
- Stewardship, environmental education, encounters with nature
- Duck pond
- Events
- Safety
- Dark skies
- Inclusive playground
- Basketball
- Pickleball
- River history
- Exercise Course
- Learn to surf play equipment
- Bicycle pump track
- Bocce ball
- Botanical garden
- Trails



# Select Email Comments

**“Offering an overview of the history of the land the park is on.”** - LeonArdo Cruz

**“Sponsors of the Taco festival would also support the environmental values of restoration.”**

**“Working in close partnership with local Native American tribes and nature advocacy groups.”**

- Barbara Riverwoman

**“Make lighting safe and beautiful.”** - Andy Kreyche, International Dark Sky Assoc.

**“Taking a nod to the history of surf at the San Lorenzo River mouth.”** - Laurie Egan

**“We need to plant as many trees as possible as outlined in the City Climate Action Plan.”**

**“Allow easy access to nature to help calm anxieties and depression in County workers.”**

- Batya Kagan

**“The park should be inclusive to all.”** - San Lorenzo Park Apartments

**“Park needs to be safe.”**

- Residents of the San Lorenzo Park Apartments

# Online Survey

An digital survey was available online from 3/24/2023 to 4/11/2023 to gather input from the community to inform the needs assessment for the redesign process.

The survey was prepared and hosted using SurveyMonkey.

It was available in English and Spanish versions.

There were 1,322 respondents to the survey.

On average, it took respondents 7 minutes to complete the survey.

The following includes the results from the online survey that have informed the needs assessment.

See the appendix for the survey.

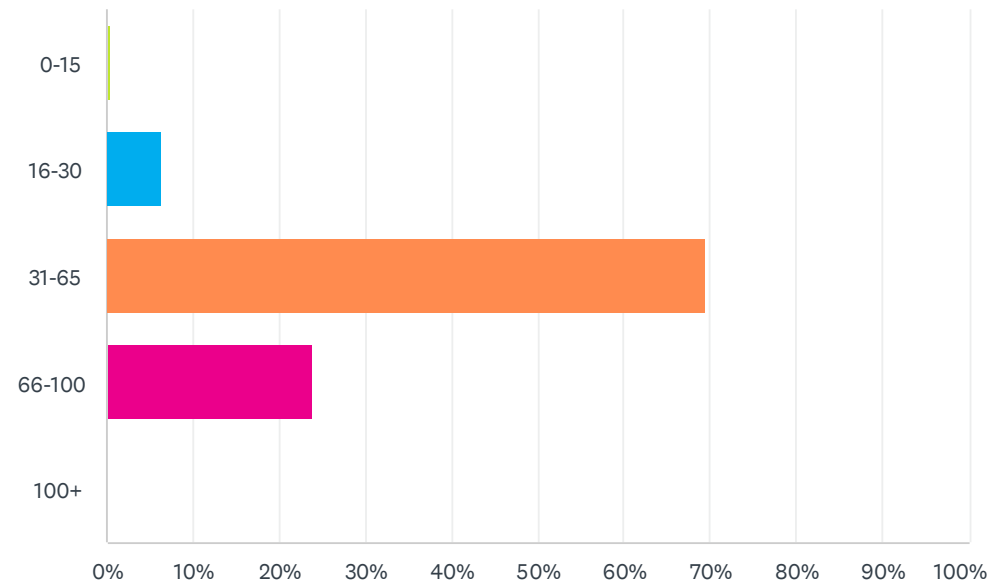




# Online Survey Results

## Q1 What is your age?

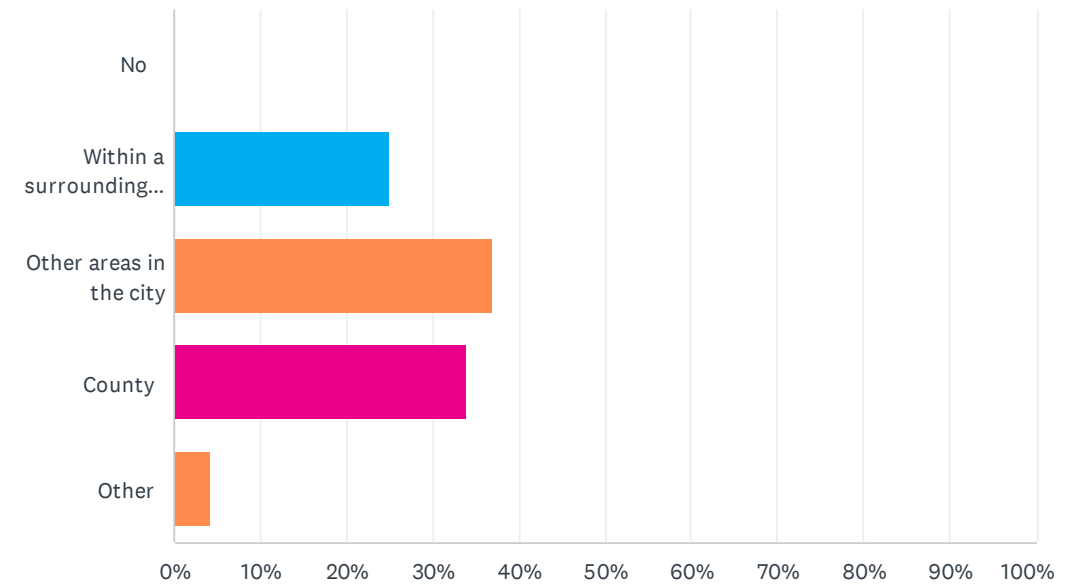
Answered: 1,694 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0-15	0.53% 9
16-30	6.43% 109
31-65	69.42% 1,176
66-100	23.97% 406
100+	0.06% 1
Total Respondents: 1,694	

## Q2 Where do you live in relation to the park?

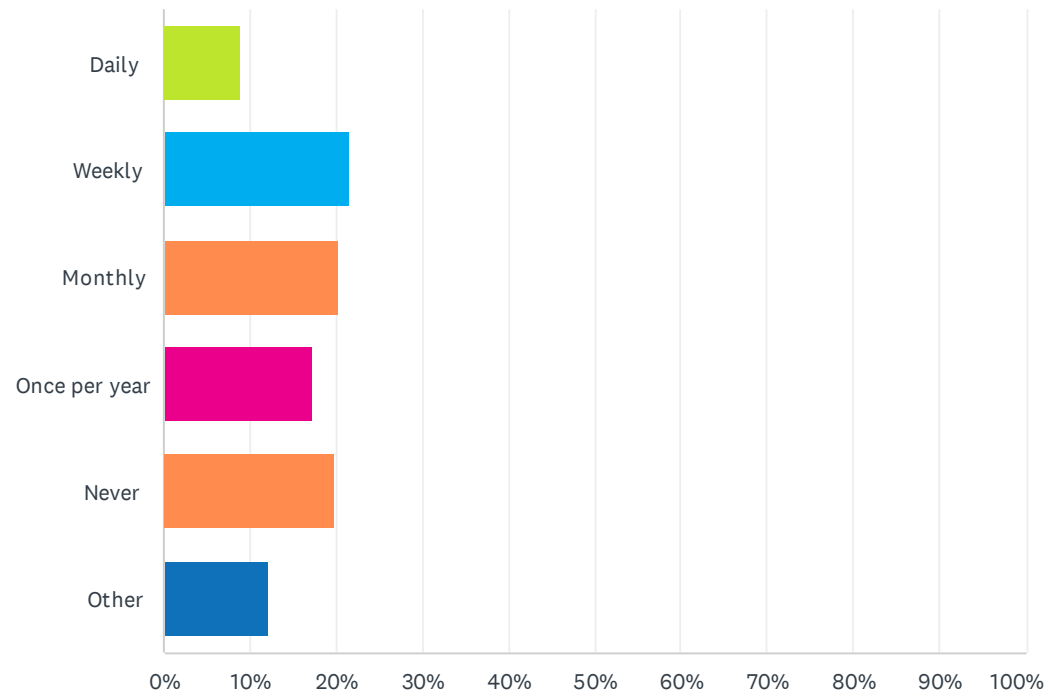
Answered: 1,700 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
No	0.06% 1
Within a surrounding neighborhood, including downtown	24.88% 423
Other areas in the city	36.88% 627
County	34.00% 578
Other	4.18% 71
Total Respondents: 1,700	

### Q3 How often do you go to the park?

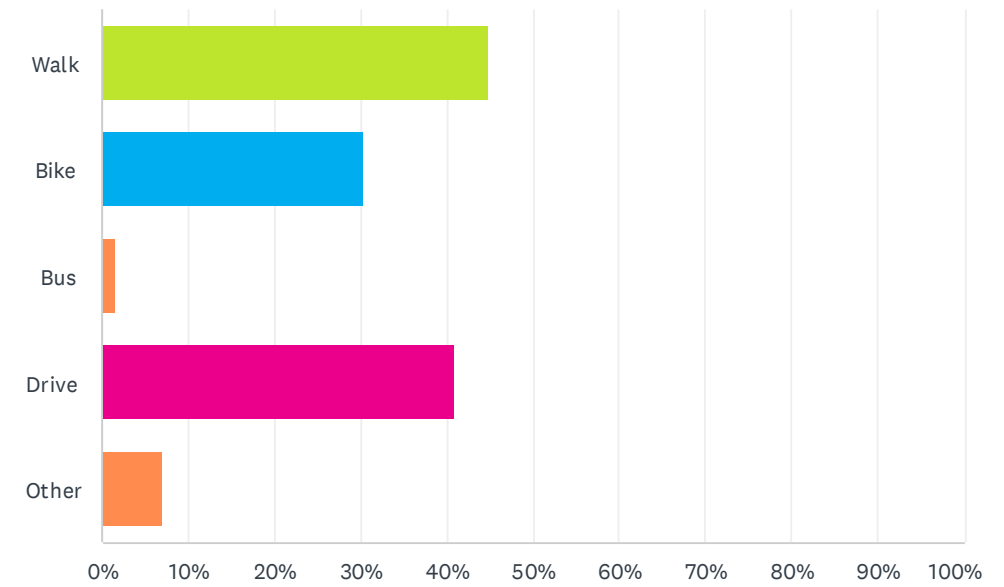
Answered: 1,700 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
Daily	9.00%	153
Weekly	21.53%	366
Monthly	20.29%	345
Once per year	17.18%	292
Never	19.88%	338
Other	12.12%	206
Total Respondents: 1,700		

### Q4 How do you get to the park?

Answered: 1,699 Skipped: 1

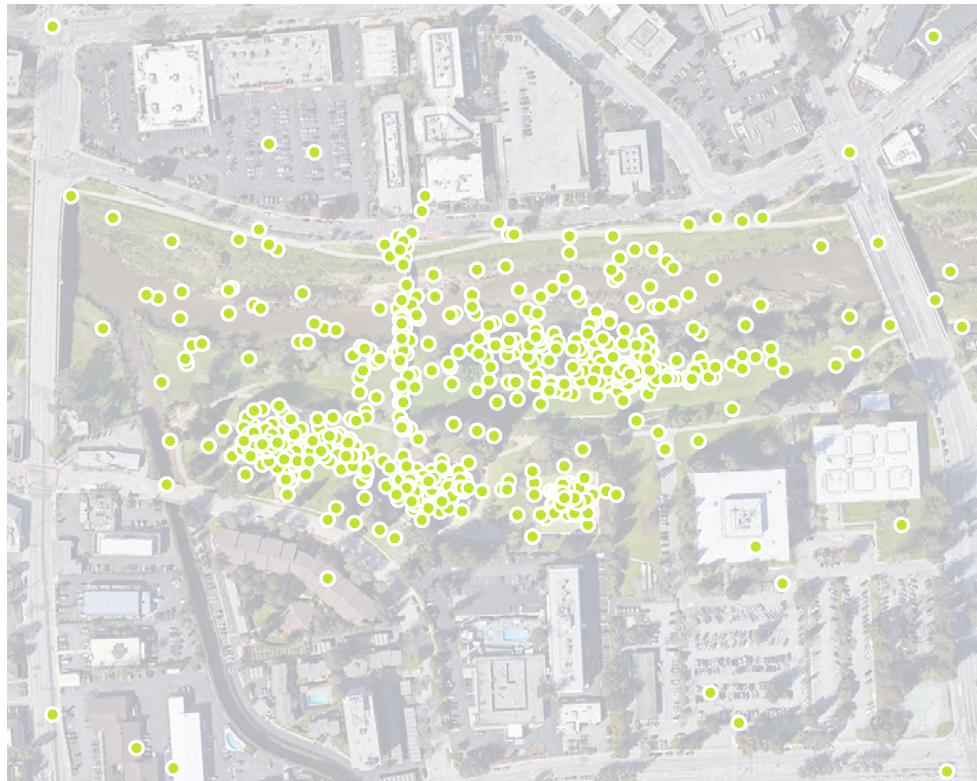


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	Count
Walk	44.73%	760
Bike	30.19%	513
Bus	1.59%	27
Drive	41.02%	697
Other	7.12%	121
Total Respondents: 1,699		

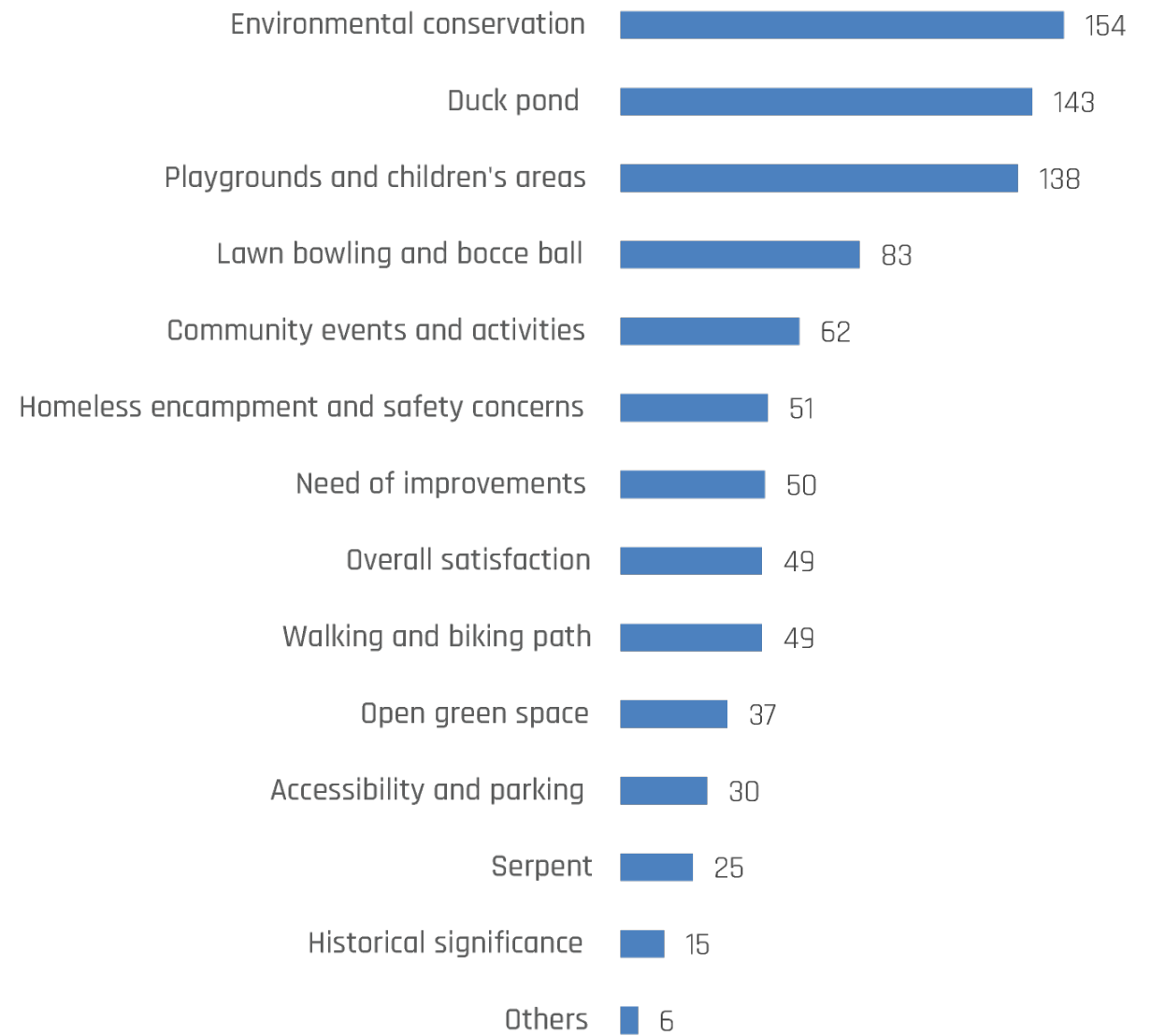


Q5 What part of the park should not change? (Click on the map to select preferred location.)

Answered: 874 Skipped: 826



### Question 6: Why should that part of the park not change?

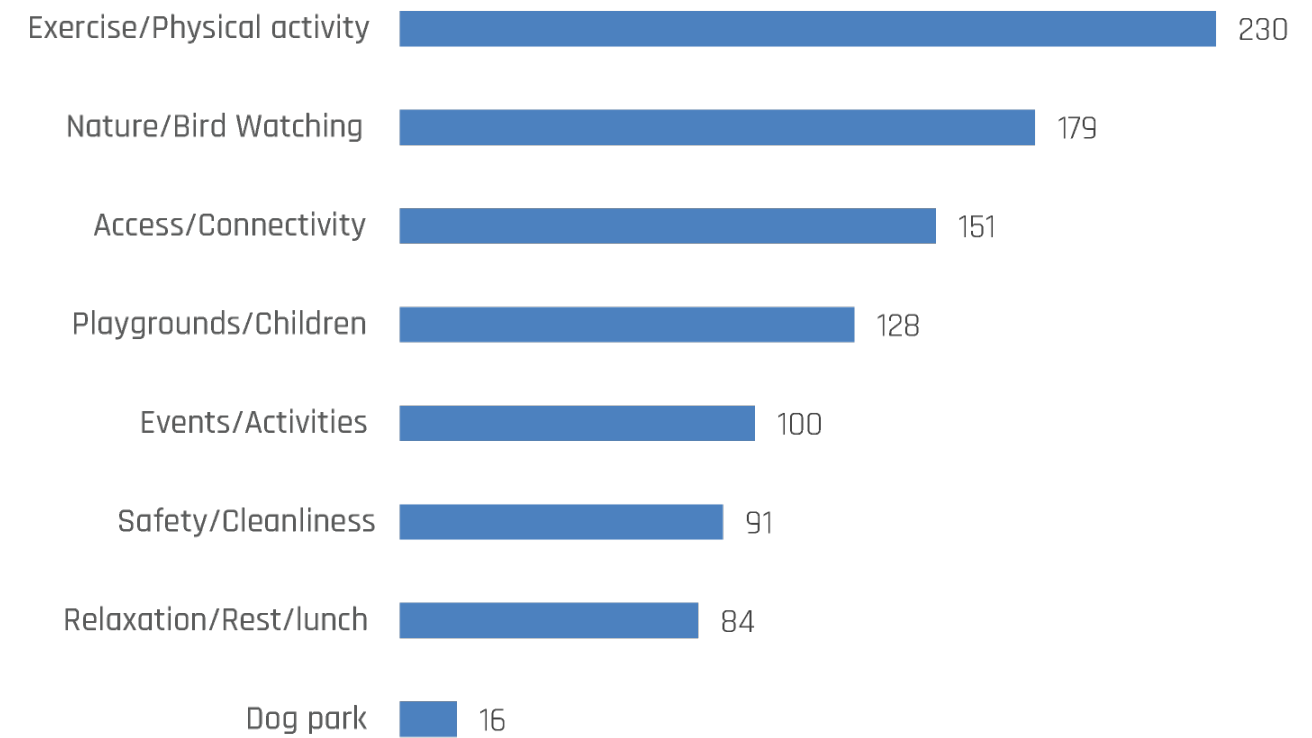


Q7 Where in the park do you spend more time? (Click on the map to select preferred location.)

Answered: 902 Skipped: 798

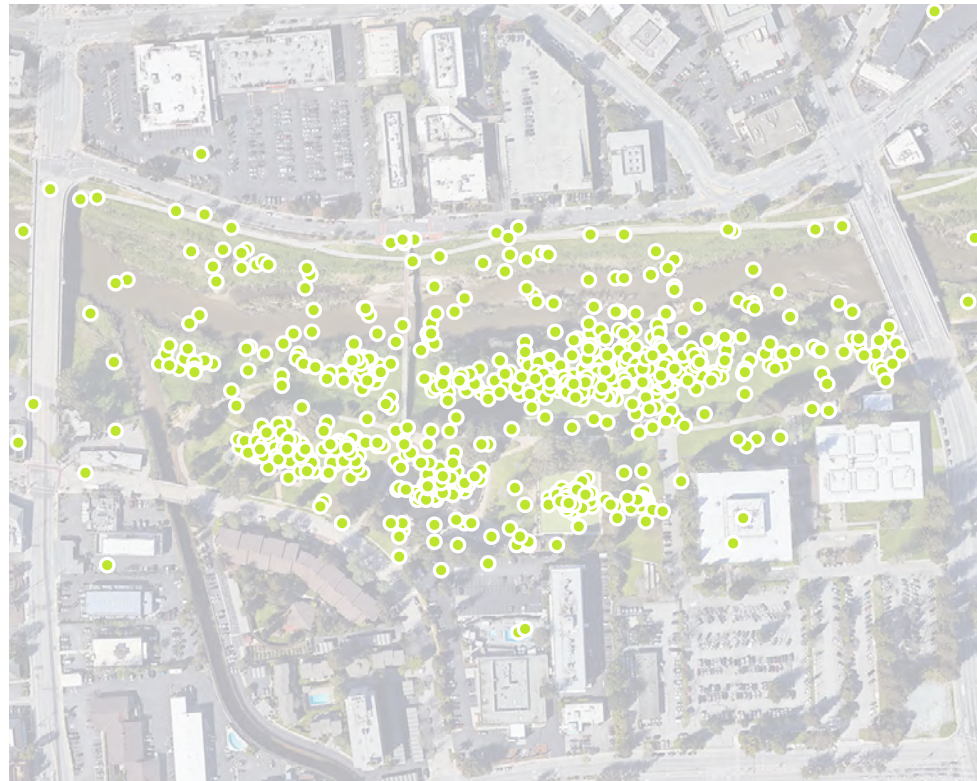


### Question 8: Why do you spend more time in that part of the park?

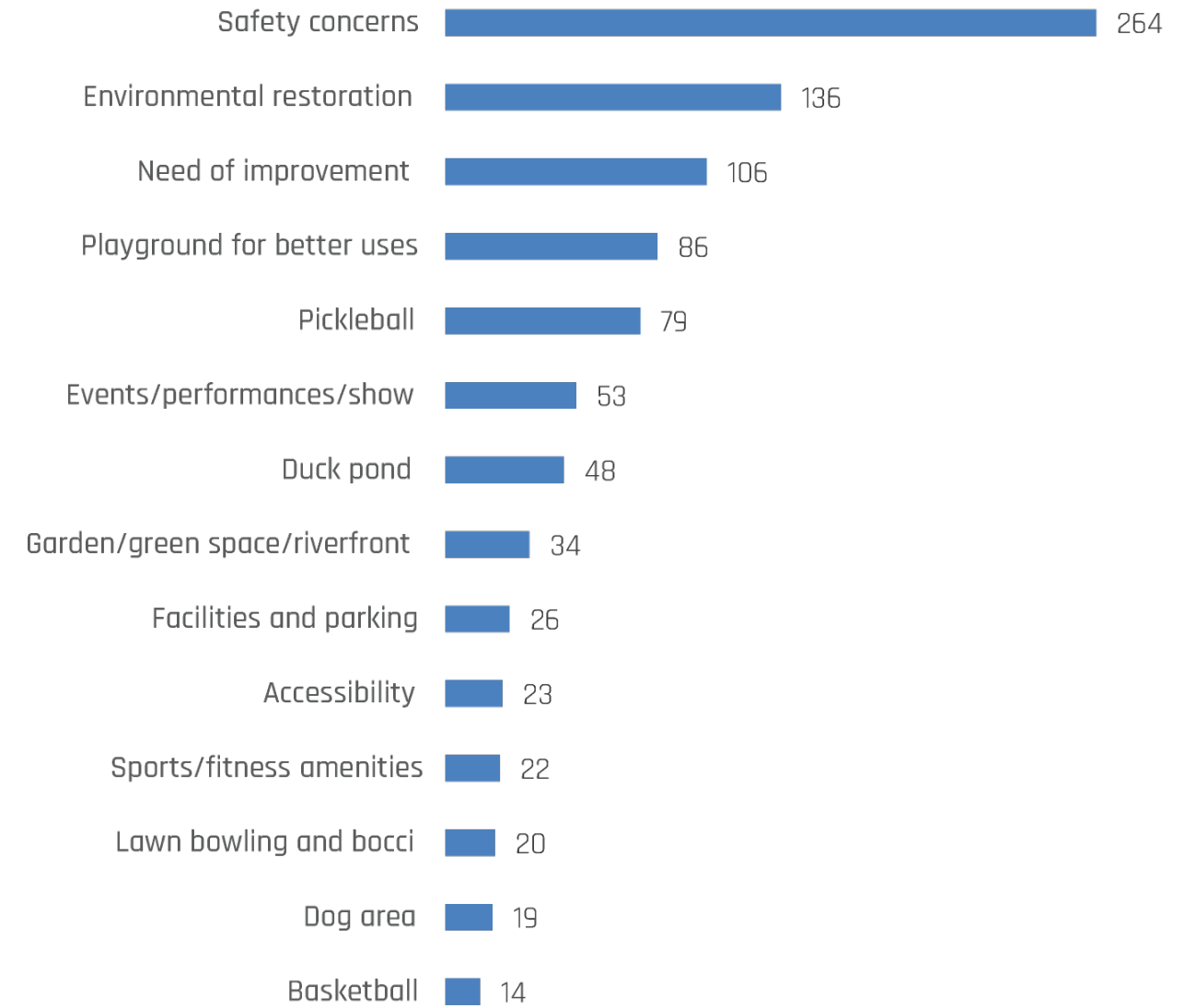


Q9 What part of the park would you change? (Click on the map to select preferred location.)

Answered: 833 Skipped: 867

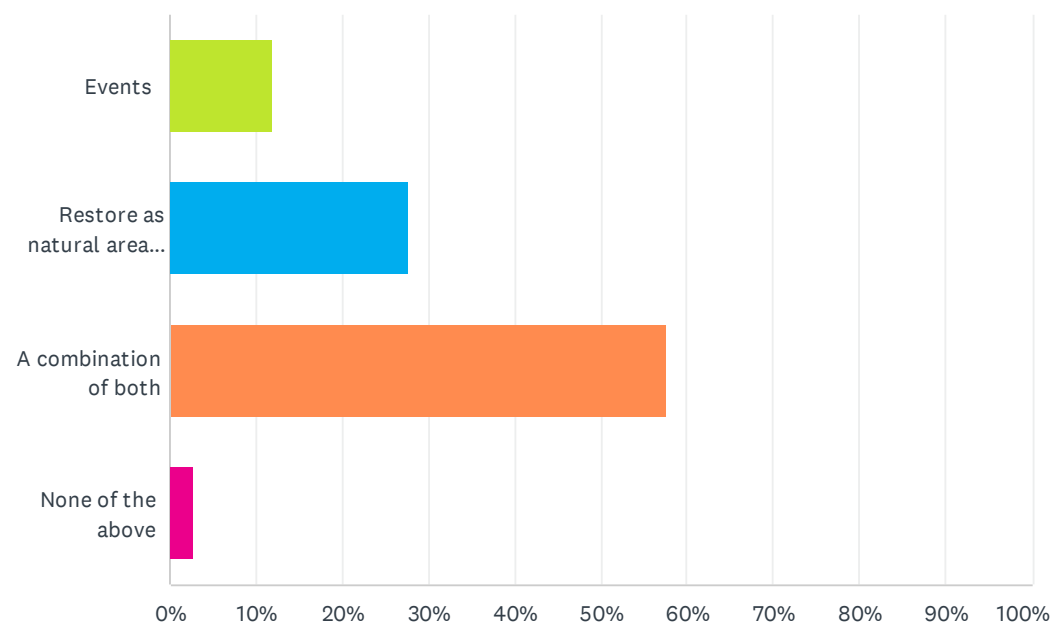


Question 10: What would you change it to? And why?



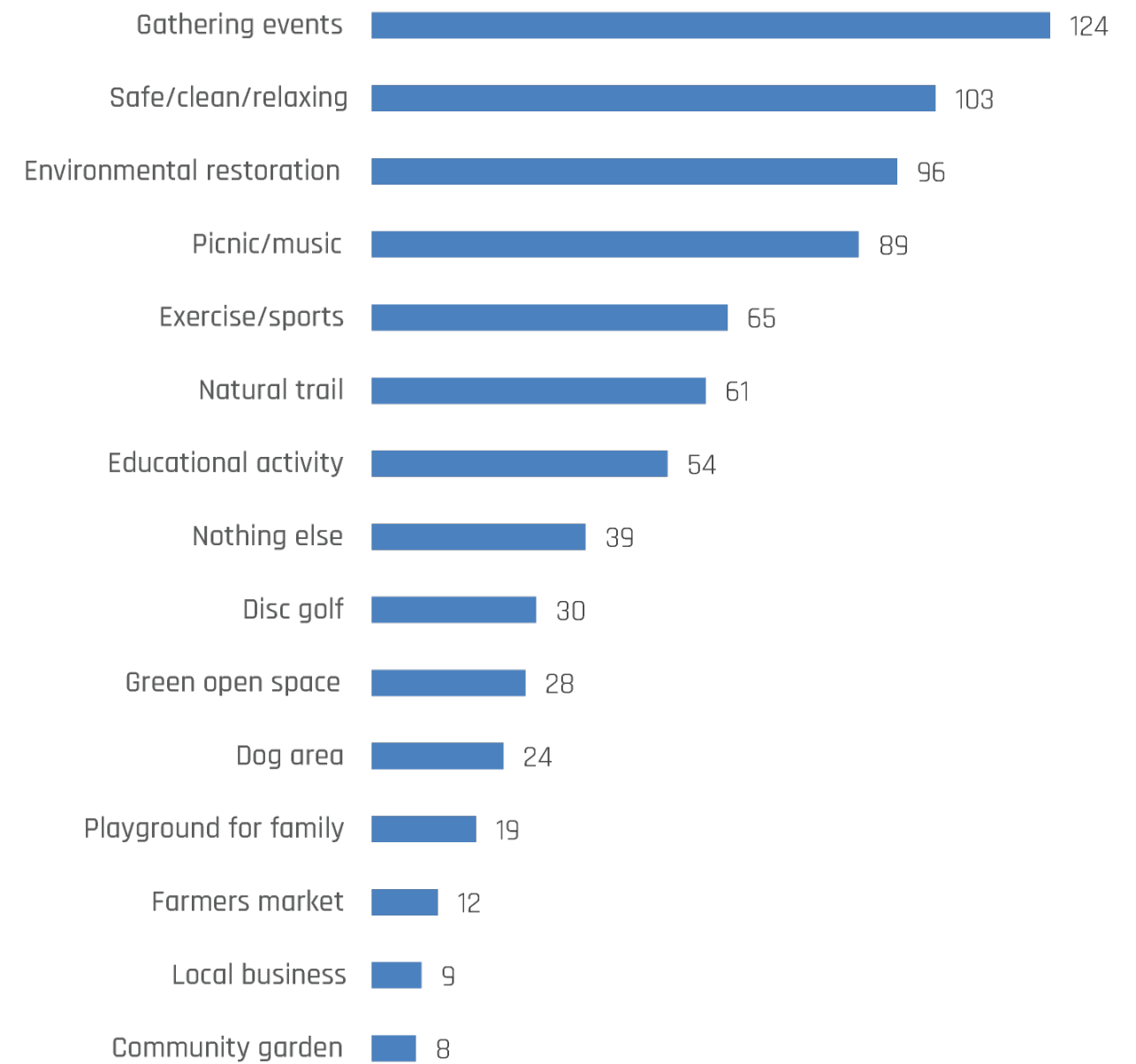
**Q11 The benchlands area of the park floods and development is restricted. Which use would you prefer in the benchlands.**

Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



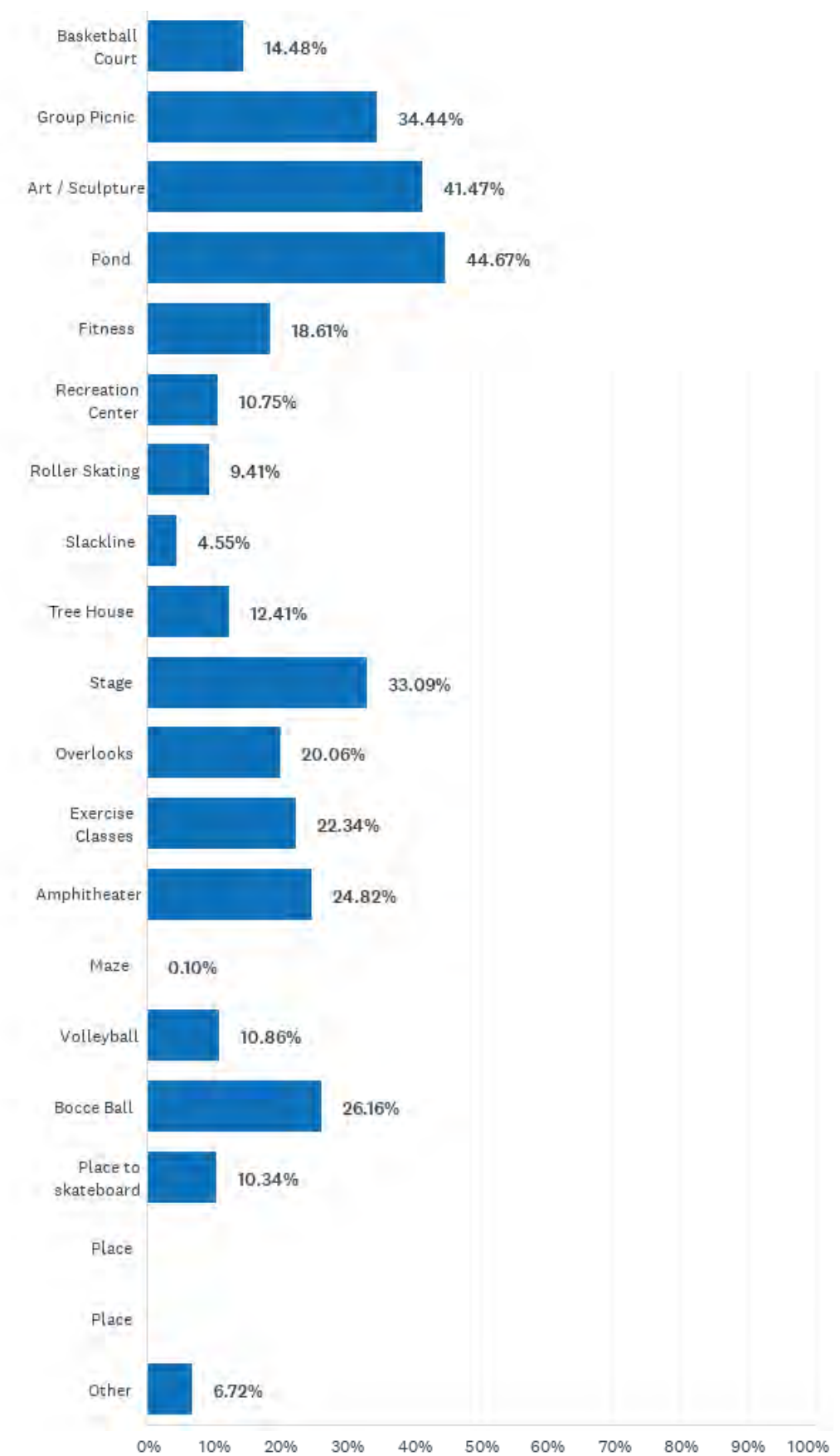
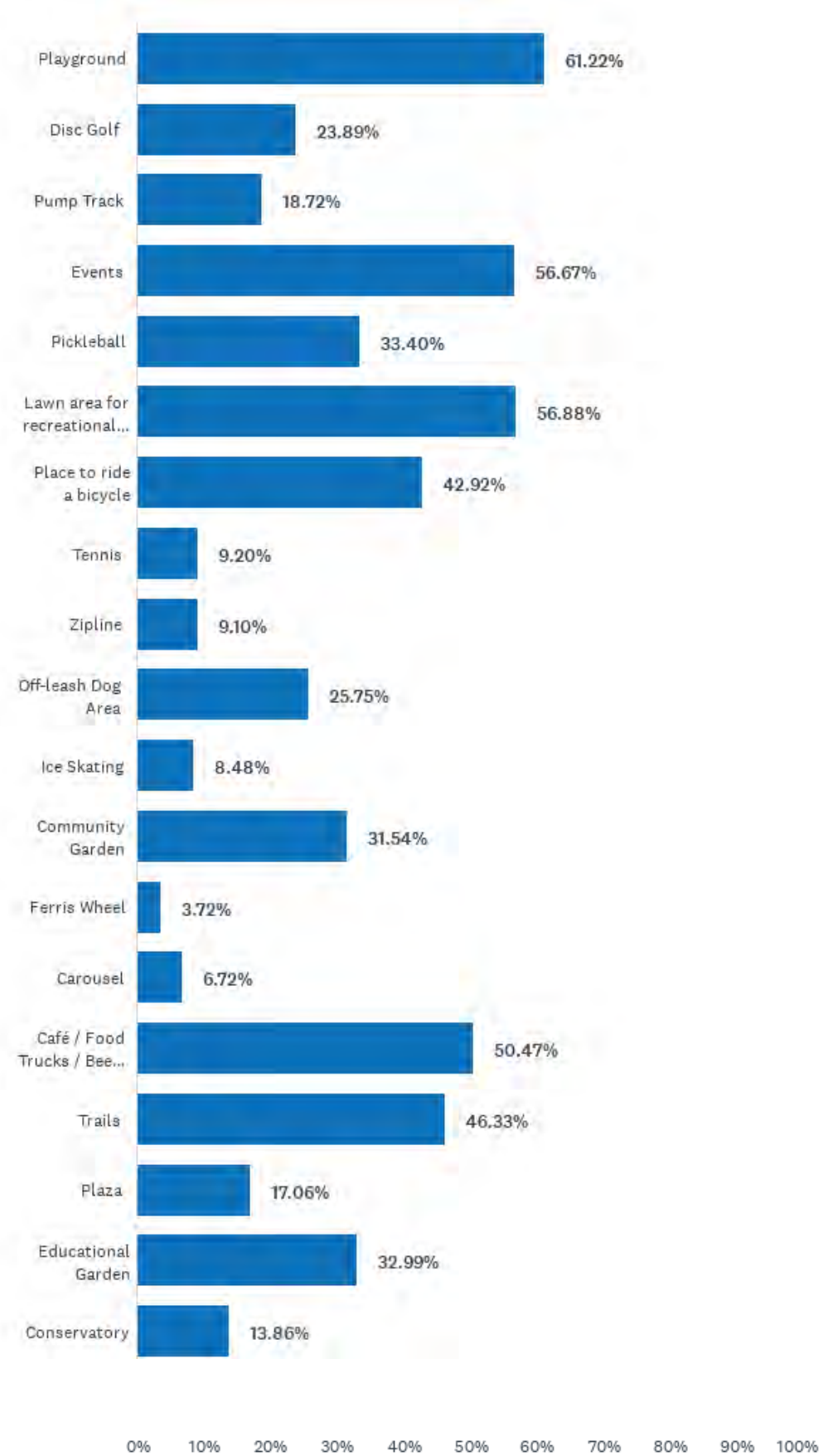
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Events	12.00% 116
Restore as natural area for wildlife habitat and nature trails	27.71% 268
A combination of both	57.50% 556
None of the above	2.79% 27
Total Respondents: 967	

**Question 12: What else should the benchlands be used for?**

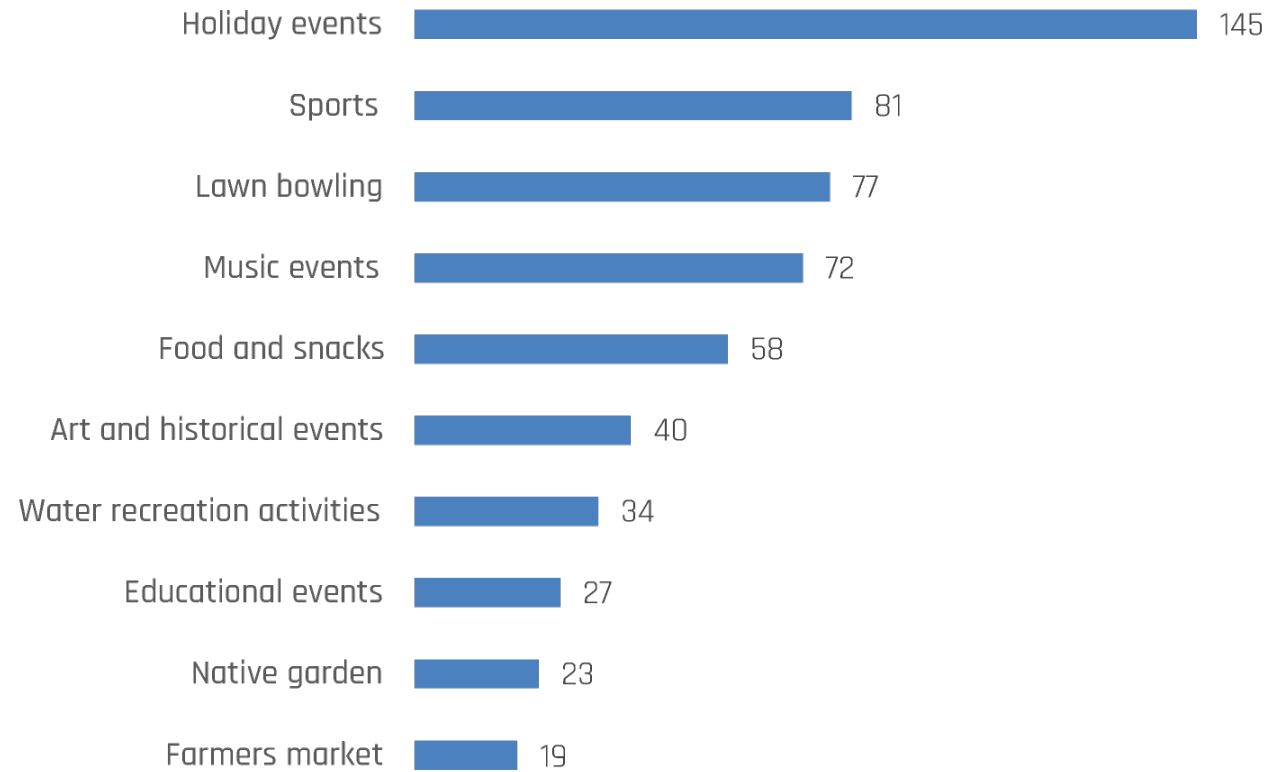


# Q13 Which activities or facilities would you like to see in the park?

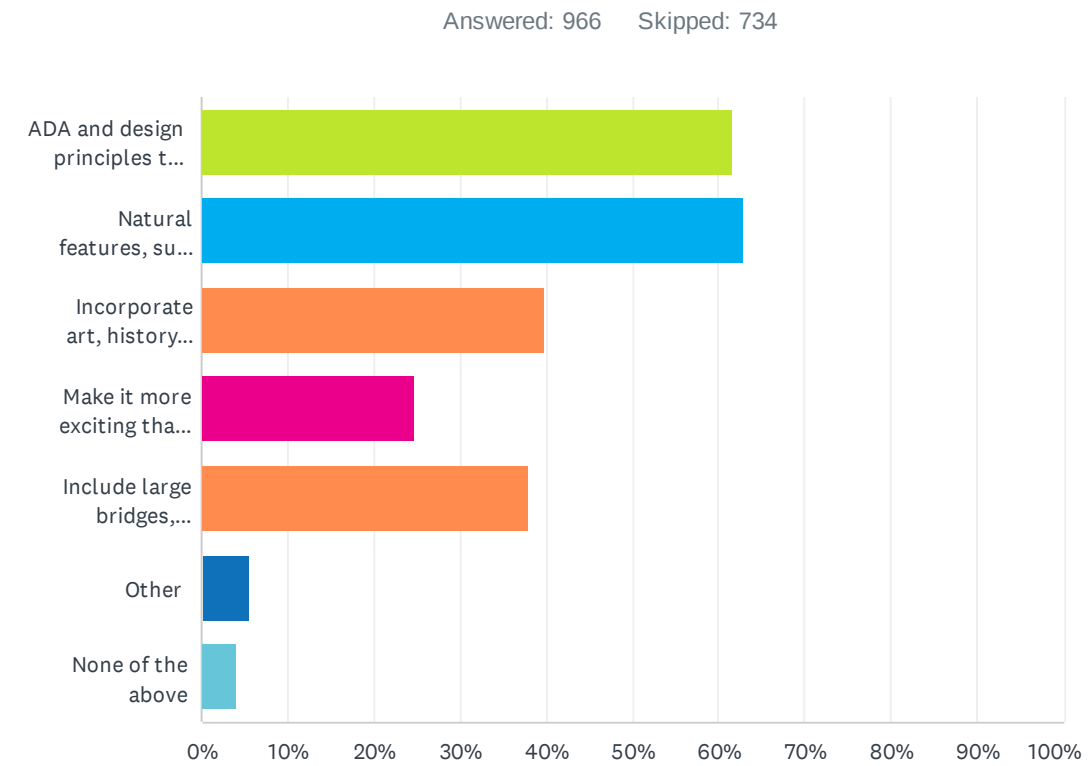
Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



### Question 14: What other activities should be at the park?



### Q15 If you could design the perfect playground at the park, which design features would it include?

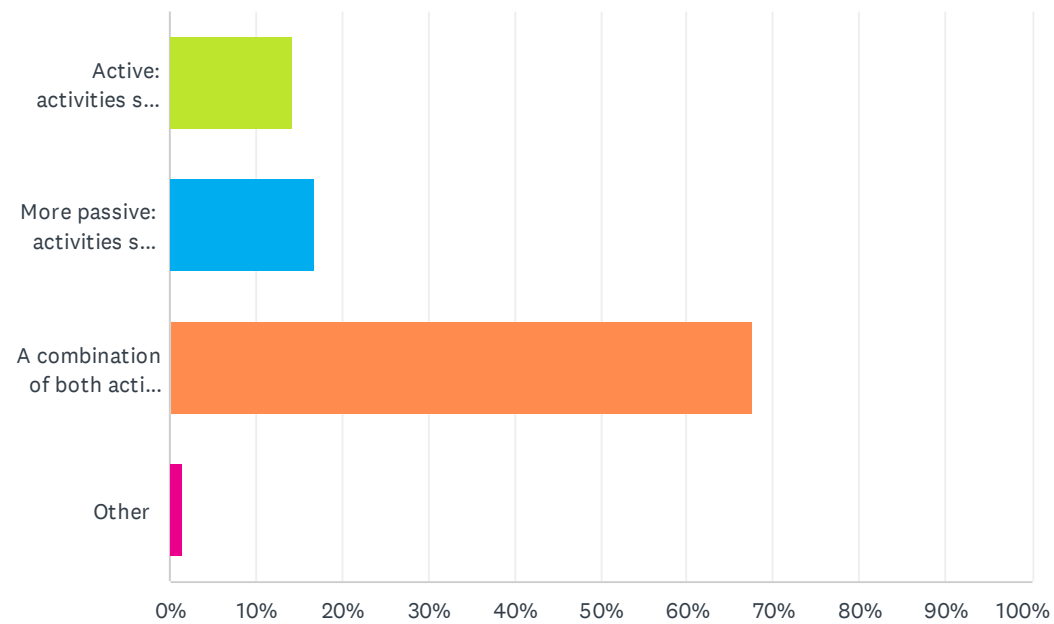


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
ADA and design principles to ensure kids of all ages and abilities can interact and play.	61.70%	596
Natural features, such as rocks and logs to climb.	62.94%	608
Incorporate art, history, or the environment into the design theme.	39.96%	386
Make it more exciting than other playgrounds.	24.64%	238
Include large bridges, towers, slides, small ziplines, climbing features, swings, etc.	37.99%	367
Other	5.49%	53
None of the above	4.04%	39
Total Respondents: 966		

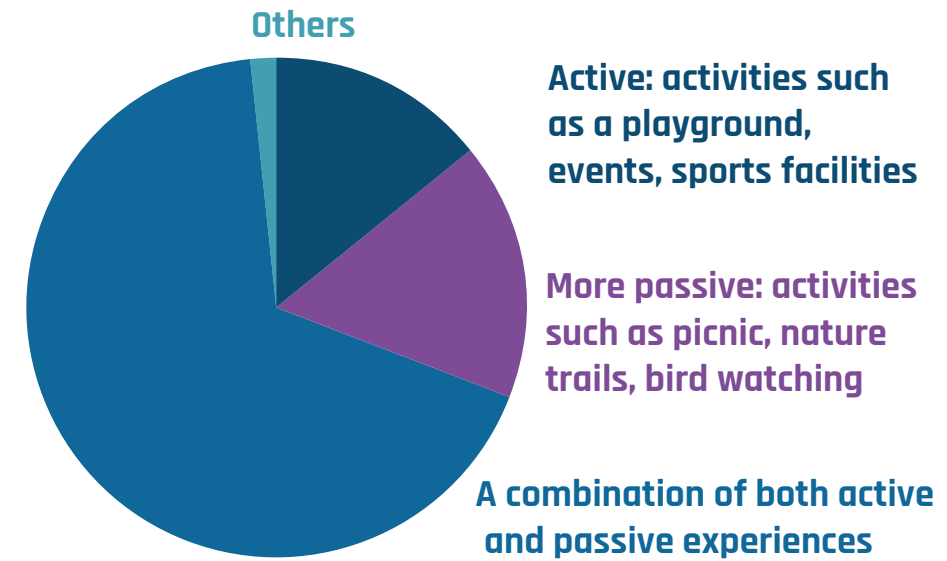


## Q16 What overall experience do you think should be at the park?

Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



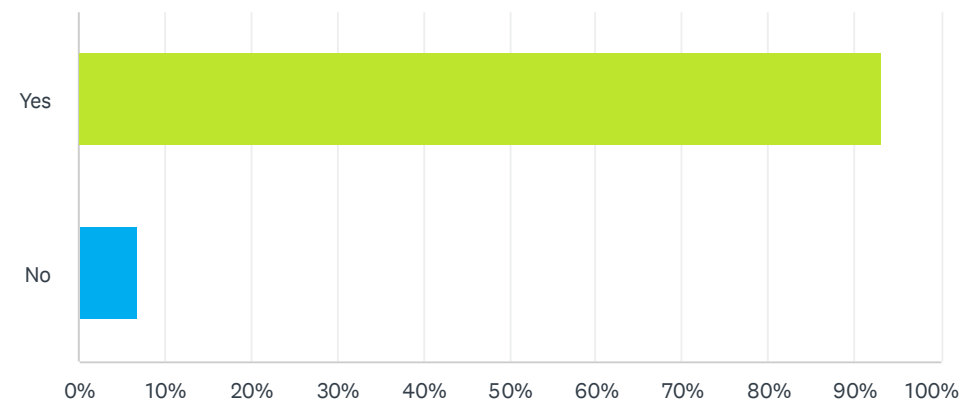
## Overall Park Experience



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Active: activities such as a playground, events, sports facilities	14.27%	138
More passive: activities such as picnic, nature trails, bird watching	16.75%	162
A combination of both active and passive experiences	67.53%	653
Other	1.45%	14
Total Respondents: 967		

### Q17 Would you attend events at the park if there were events of interest?

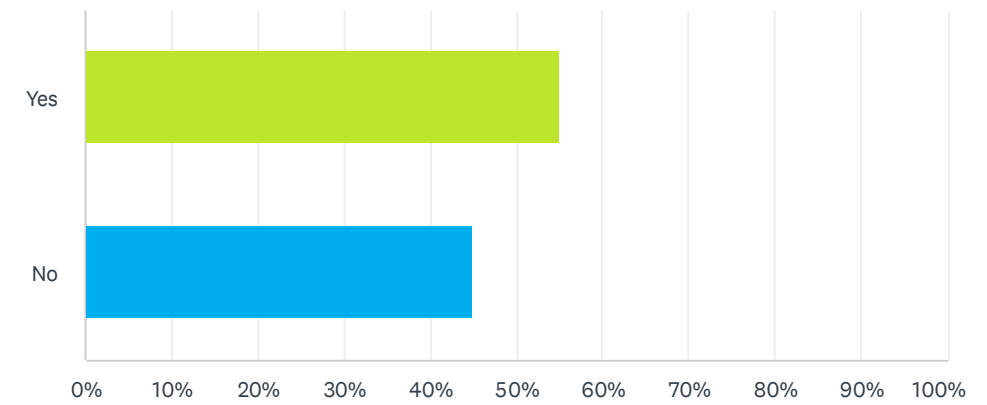
Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	93.07% 900
No	6.93% 67
Total Respondents: 967	

### Q18 Would you use the park more if there were food and beverages sold in the park?

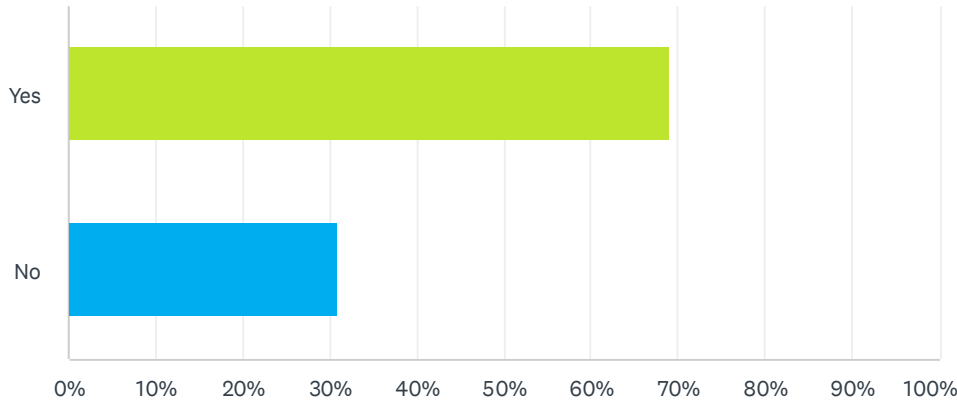
Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	55.02% 532
No	44.98% 435
Total Respondents: 967	

### Q19 Should the park host large events?

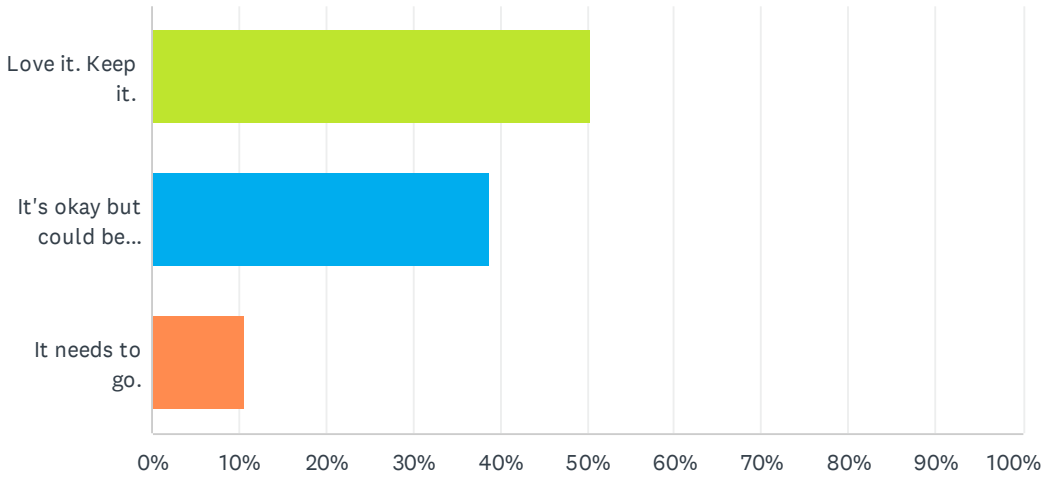
Answered: 967 Skipped: 733



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	69.18% 669
No	30.82% 298
Total Respondents: 967	

### Q20 How do you feel about the pond?

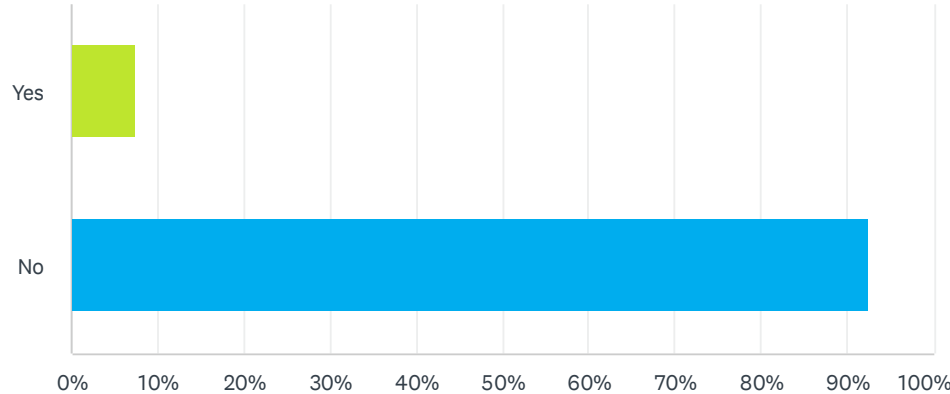
Answered: 966 Skipped: 734



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Love it. Keep it.	50.41% 487
It's okay but could be replaced with another feature if necessary.	38.82% 375
It needs to go.	10.77% 104
Total Respondents: 966	

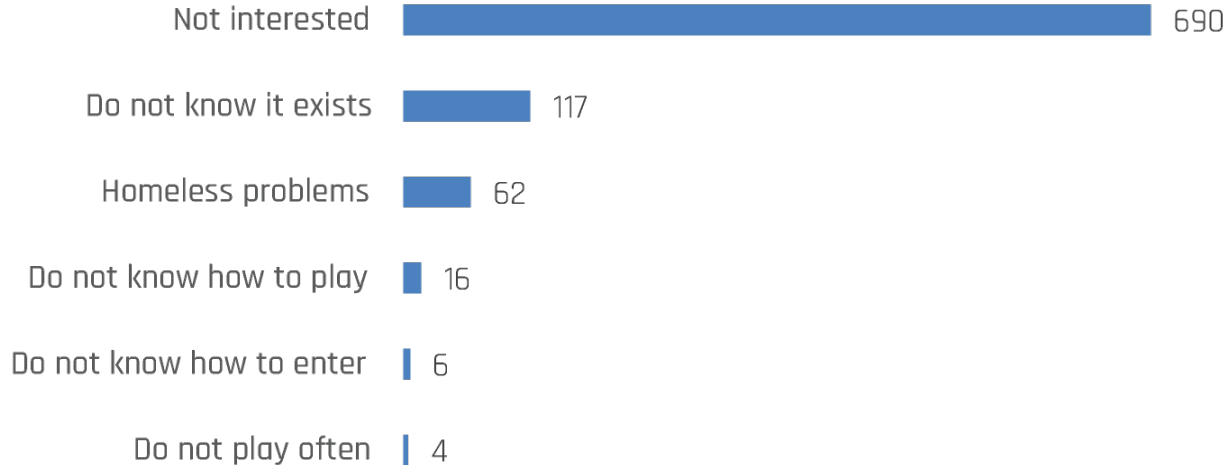
### Q21 Do you use the lawn bowling facility?

Answered: 966 Skipped: 734

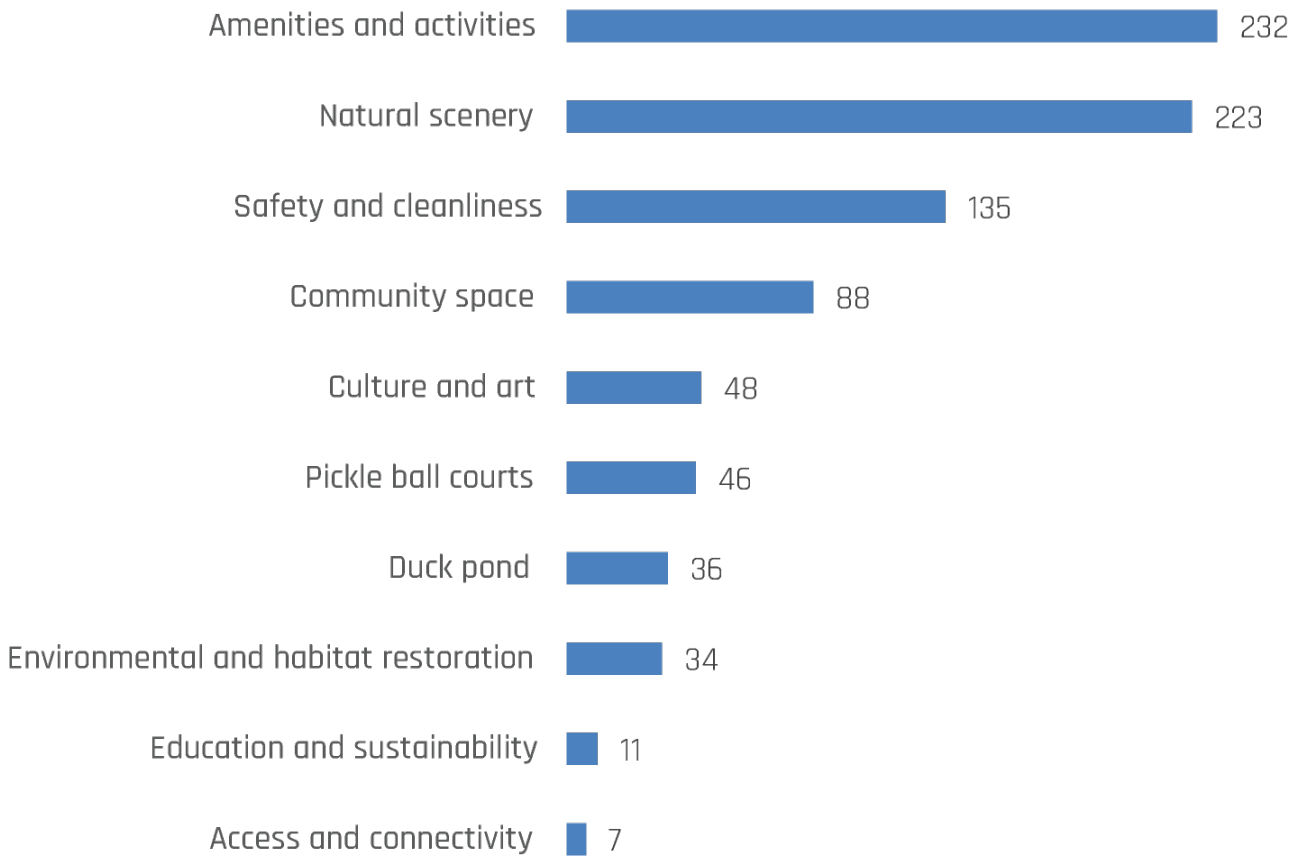


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	7.45%	72
No	92.55%	894
Total Respondents: 966		

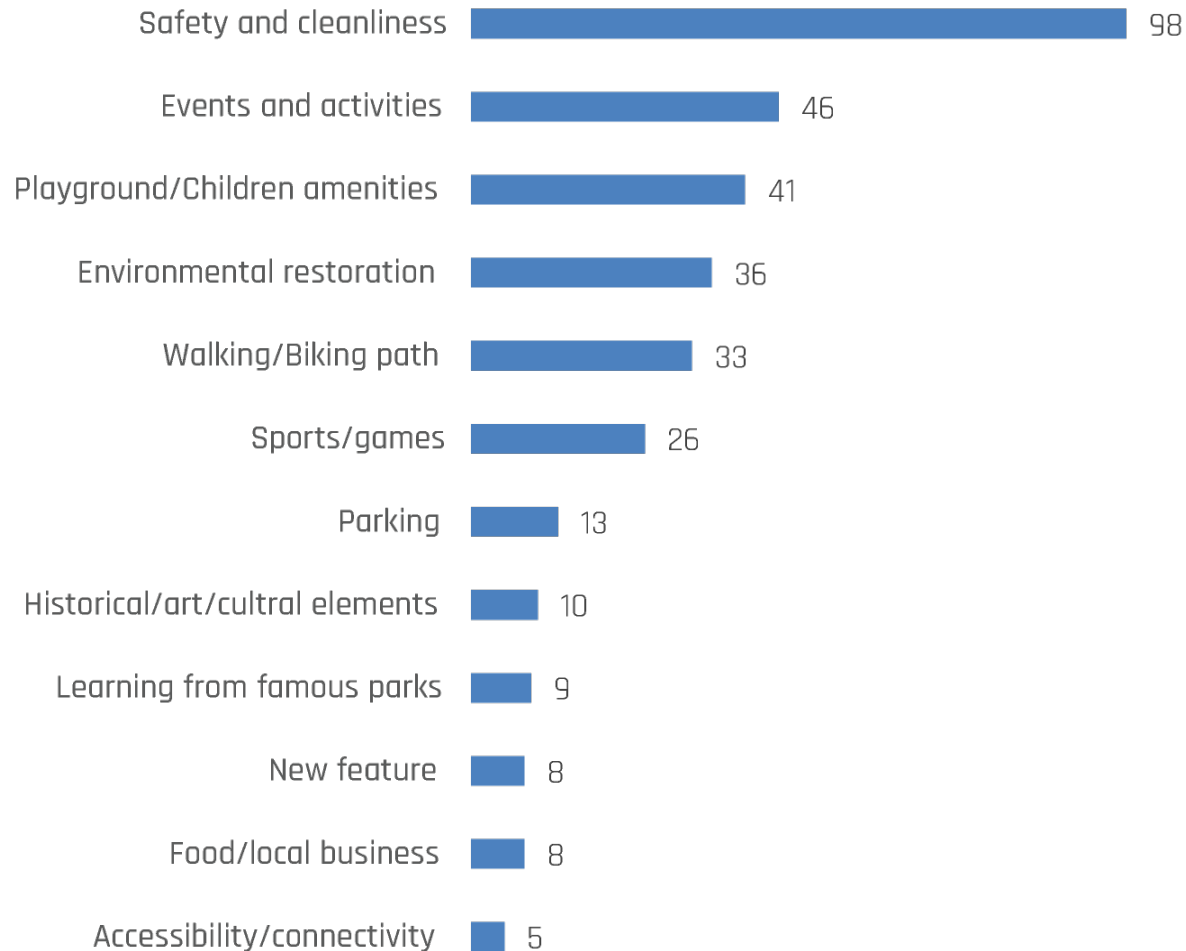
### Question 22: Why do you or don't you use the lawn bowling facility?



**Question 23: Imagine it is 10 years from now (your ideal park is a reality) and you take relatives/friends visiting from out of town to the park. What would you be most excited to show them?**



**Question 24: Have another idea? Tell us your ideas and additional comments here.**









CITY OF SANTA CRUZ  
**ANNUAL PARKS  
RECREATION**