

MILWAUKIE PARK DEVELOPMENT PROJECT: BALFOUR PARK

COMMUNITY EVENT #3 OUTREACH SUMMARY



Prepared for

City of Milwaukie



Prepared by

JLA Public Involvement

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Introduction

For the last phase of the City of Milwaukie's Parks Engagement Project, the City conducted an online survey and in-person event for Balfour Park in October 2022. Participants could learn about the Balfour Park redesign project, learn about the revised designs, and provide feedback on the final concept.

Overall Participation and Notification

The project team developed an **online survey** and hosted an **in-person event** to gather community feedback. The online survey was open from October 6 – 19, 2022. There were **73 visitors** to Engage Milwaukie and **45 responses** to the online survey.

Twenty-one (21) people attended the in-person event, held on October 13th, with 18 people (including three children) attending in-person and 3 people attending virtually over Zoom. At the event, the City and consultant team shared information about the final concept for Balfour Park and how feedback from the summer outreach was incorporated. Those who participated has an opportunity to ask questions and provide input through a written survey. The City received **14 written surveys**.

The online survey and written survey had similar questions. A **total of 59 people responded to the survey** either online or in written form.

Community members were informed about the event through the following:

- Mailers were sent out to the 97222 Zip code and the city's Urban Growth Boundary. Past participants from focus groups or city boards who live outside this area also received postcards. Postcards included information on Scott Park, Balfour Park, and Bowman-Brae Park meetings.
- Additional postcards were distributed to local businesses, city buildings, and the Ledding Library. Lake Road and Ardenwald NDAs also distributed postcards.
- Social Media posts to Facebook pages.
- An article in the local Pilot newsletter introducing the parks project.
- Posts on the project website.
- Text message was sent to all Hillside Manor residents through their internal communication system with the assistance of Clackamas County Housing Authority.
- Emails to Engage Milwaukie users and the project email list.

Feedback Themes

Several themes emerged from the online and in-person feedback. The **majority of respondents felt the final concept meets community needs** and provides something for all age groups.

People were split on whether they liked the community gardens and water feature or not, with many saying they were excited about the community garden, while others expressed trepidation about the management and maintenance of the garden, as well as the impact the garden may have on the park (e.g., some were concerned the existing tree would be removed to accommodate the garden, fertilizer run-off, peacocks eating the plants, etc.).

Similarly, some respondents were excited about the water feature, while others were worried about the cost to maintain the water feature and/or that it would bring too many people to the park. Many people mentioned that they liked the addition of **more trees, shaded areas, and native plantings**.

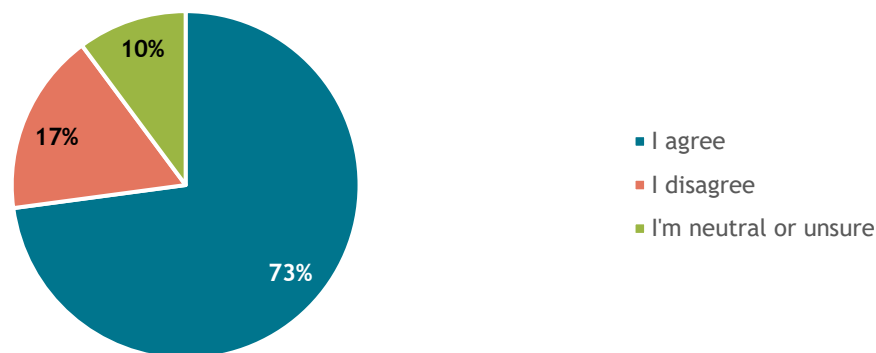
People also mentioned that they would like to see **more picnic tables and benches added**, as well as a public restroom. Concerns generally revolved around the maintenance of the lawn area and other features being added to the park (i.e., cost, who would maintain the features, etc.).

Combined Online and In-Person Survey Responses

Participants were given the opportunity to answer a series of questions related to the final concept for Balfour Park. Feedback from both the online survey and in-person event (which included a feedback form) has been combined and is summarized below.

1. Does the final concept meet your needs?

The majority of respondents agreed that the final concept design for Balfour Park meets their needs.



2. Please explain the answer you selected for Question 1.

Those who indicated that the final concept met their needs, many said that they felt the **concept balanced the interests and concerns of all community members** and that it provides something for people of all ages. Others stated that they liked the community garden, the water feature, play area, and picnic area. Many respondents also liked that the park kept the natural elements of the park and that trees were being added to the park.

Of those who did not feel the park met their needs, many were **concerned about the community garden and water feature**. There was concern about maintenance of community garden and the possible removal of the existing tree (or if not removed, that it would hinder sun access to the garden). Others felt that the garden should be fenced to keep the peacocks out. Some people felt that the water feature would bring too many people to the park and was not appropriate for Balfour Park. Several people were concerned that dogs would overrun the space, while others were concerned that there would not be enough space for their dogs and **would like to see more open space** at the park. (Please note that, current city code requires dogs to be on lease and many participants in focus groups expressed their concerns with unleashed dogs).

Others mentioned the **for a public bathroom, more seating, picnic tables, play equipment, and bike parking.**

3. Please rank the following park amenities in the order of your preference (1 indicates highest preference and 7 lowest preference). The following park amenities will be included in the designs: walking trails, open lawn, benches, picnic tables, native plantings, proposed trees, stormwater garden, bike racks, trash facilities.

Respondents ranked **picnic shelters** the highest in terms of preference. This was followed by **swings** and **community gardens**.

Amenity Ranked 1 to 7	Average Rank Lower score indicates higher preference
Picnic Shelter	3.12
Swings	3.85
Community Gardens	3.97
Log Play	4.07
Embankment Slide	4.09
Drinking Fountain	4.24
Water Feature	4.59

4. What do you like least about the final design?

While many people said that they liked the final design as-is, many people mentioned things they are concerned about or suggestions they have for Balfour Park.

Of the things people liked least about the final design, the **community garden and water feature** were mentioned the most. People were concerned about the maintenance of the garden, it's location near the street, and existing peacocks eating food grown in the garden. For the water feature, some felt that it was an unnecessary expense, may pose safety concerns (if it gets slipper), while others felt it should be larger and closer to the play area.

Others were concerned about the **lack of public restrooms and parking** and said that **additional trash bins were needed** for people to dispose of dog waste and trash. Other concerns included:

- Need for more picnic tables and benches.
- Maintenance of the lawn (cost, who would take care of it, etc.).
- Embankments and swale may limit people's movements into other areas of the park.
- Lack of variation in pathway surface.
- Would like the pathway to be looped.
- Not enough space for dogs.
- Play area should be larger and be fenced for safety.
- Need a second drinking fountain.
- Need more trees and shade.

- Possible removal of the Sitka spruce.
- Loss of the sledding area.

5. Planning for the park is nearly complete. Do you have any final things to share with us or questions about the park construction?

People expressed similar concerns and suggestions to what was shared in response to the previous questions. Additional concerns and suggestions mentioned in this open text question included:

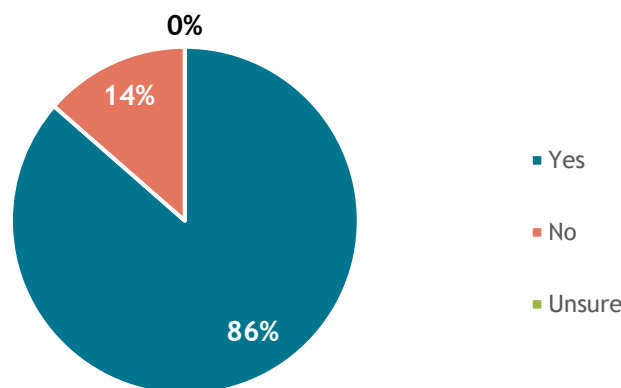
- Potential impact **climate change** may have on the park.
- Impact of the improvements on **nearby property owners**.
- Impact on **Johnson Creek watershed**.
- Create **safe sidewalk access** to the park from SE 32nd Ave.
- **Hire union trades people** to construct the improvements.
- **Keep the park as natural as possible** and minimize impact to existing trees and wildlife.
- **Rename the park** to “Peacock Park” or consult with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde.
- **Move the shelter closer to the lawn** so that it could double as a performance stage.
- While some feel that **lighting at the park** will make the park safer, others were worried that it will encourage people to stay after the park closes.

People would like more information about the size of lawn and the water feature. Respondents had the following questions:

- Will there be sidewalk improvements for the entire block or only in front of the park?
- How are the peacocks going to be incorporated or taken into consideration for the park?
- What is the approximate construction duration (from start to finish)?
- Will people not in the neighborhood be able to use the community garden?
- Was public art considered?

6. Have you participated in Milwaukie planning events before? (i.e., surveys, online or in-person open house, etc.)

The majority of respondents (86%) said that they have participated in Milwaukie planning events before.

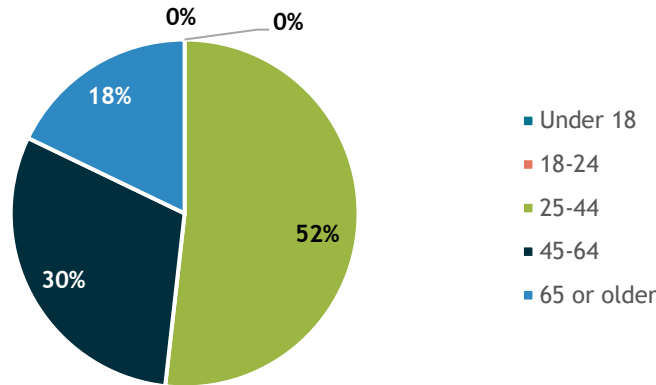


DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION

There were optional demographic questions on both the written and online surveys. Below are the results from those who provided answers to these questions.

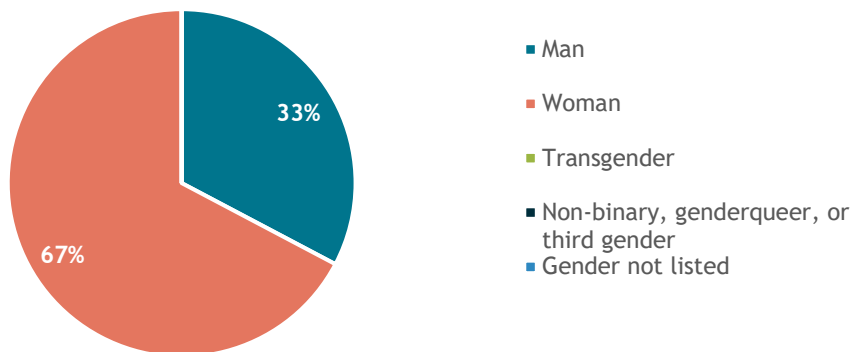
Age

The majority of participants were in the age range of **25 to 44 (52%)**, followed by 45 to 64-year-olds (30%). Respondents under 18 years of age were underrepresented in the survey participation when compared to the proportion of Milwaukie residents under 18 (25%).



Gender

The majority of the participants **identified as women (67%)** and a third (33%) identified as men.

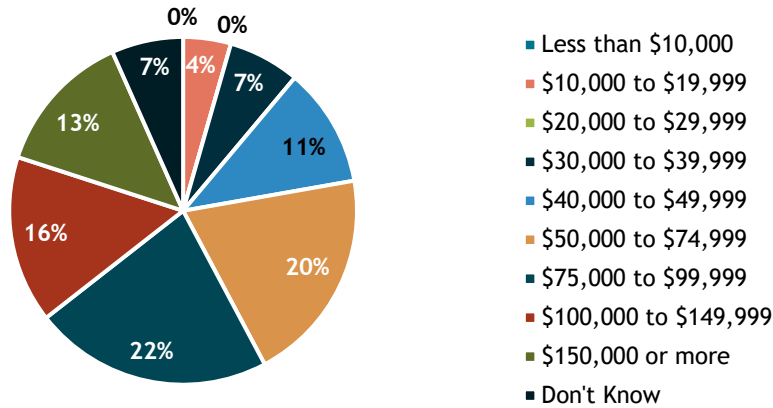


Race/Ethnicity

The majority of respondents (52) indicated that they identify as white (94.2%). One (1) person identified as Asian or Asian American. Two (2) respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino/a/x, which is proportionately lower than the amount of people who identify as Hispanic living in the City of Milwaukie (10%).

Income

The majority of people responding have an annual income of **\$50,000 or more (71%)**, which is higher than the proportion of Milwaukie households making over \$50,000 (62%). About a third of respondents have a total annual household income below \$50,000 or don't know.

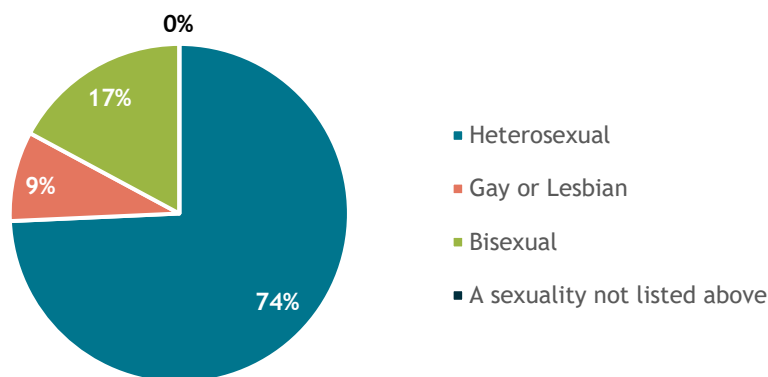


Language

Of those responding **41 people indicated English** as their primary language. Two (2) people indicated Spanish, and one (1) person said their language was not listed.

Sexual Orientation

Most respondents identify as **heterosexual (74%)**, with some identifying as bisexual (17%), and gay or lesbian (9%). *Note: This question was only asked in the online survey.*

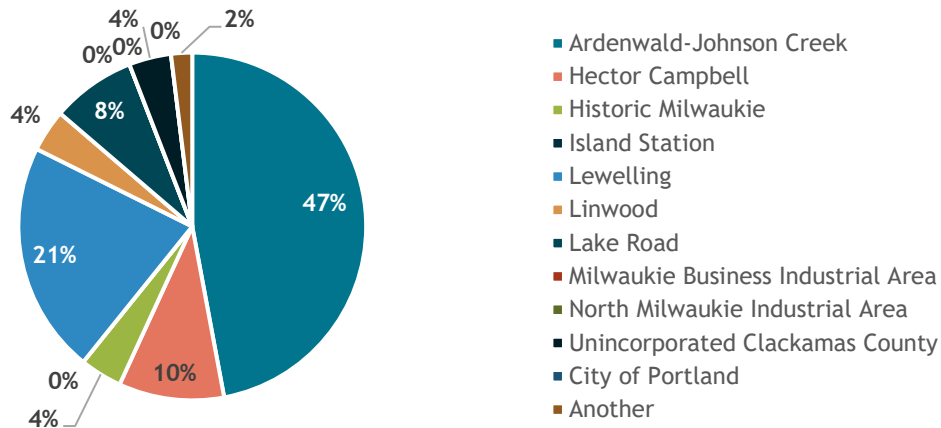


People Living with a Disability

Three people answered this question. One person said that they have a Mobility or other physical disability(s), another said that they have a hearing disability, and one other person said that they would prefer not to disclose this information. *Note: This question was only asked in the print survey.*

Neighborhood

The majority of respondents indicated that they live or work in the **Ardenwald-Johnson Creek neighborhood (47%)**. Lewelling was another prominent area for participation.



What is your connection to Milwaukie?

The vast majority of respondents **live and/or own a home in Milwaukie**. Some work or own a business in the city. *Note: This question was only asked in the online survey.*