

Sustaining growth. Strengthening communities.

# Victoria Park Master Plan

## Community Engagement – Summary Report

### June 2015





# Summary Report

Sustaining growth. Strengthening communities.

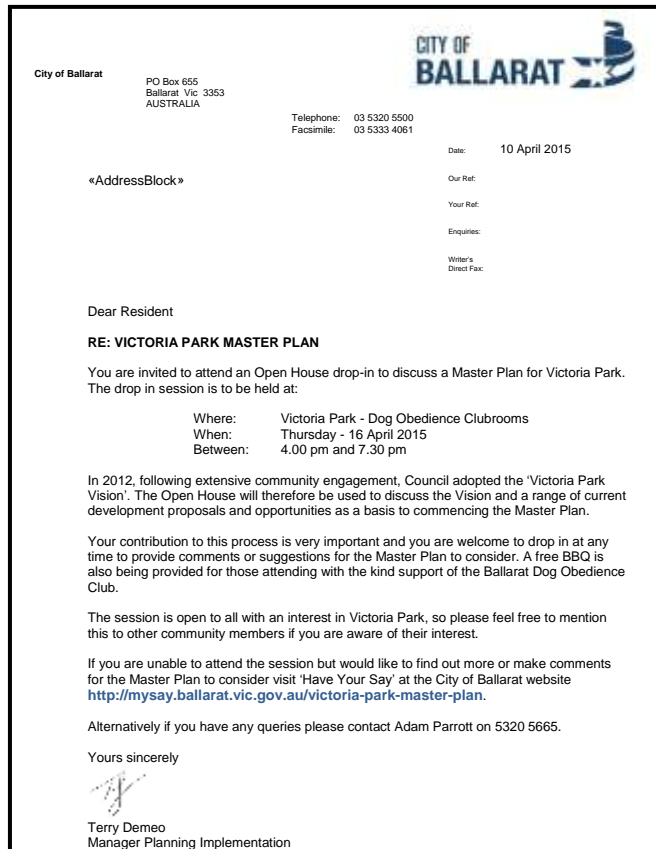


This report provides a summary of the community engagement process conducted during April to May 2015 for the Victoria Park Master Plan.

The community feedback will be considered in the development of the Draft Master Plan however this report does not analyse the data or make specific recommendations.

# Community Engagement

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The community engagement process commenced by sending over 1200 letters to surrounding residents, schools, tenants and key stakeholder groups inviting them to attend an Open House at the Ballarat Dog Obedience Clubrooms in Victoria Park on Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup>.

A free bbq was provided in partnership with the Ballarat Dog Obedience Club and attendees were invited to come along and discuss their issues and share their ideas to assist Council with the development of the Draft Master Plan.



# Open House – Drop In Session

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The 'Open House Drop In Session' was run by Council staff from Planning Implementation, Community Engagement, Parks and Gardens, Recreation and Infrastructure. It was attended by approximately 250 people. Different themes were placed around the room. Attendees were encouraged to view the 2012 Victoria Park Vision and to move around, talk to Council staff, share ideas and thoughts, make comments on plans, and fill in survey forms for the Park.



# Open House - The Vision

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The Victoria Park Vision was adopted by Council in 2012 following a community engagement process which included: interviews with 20 stakeholder groups, the completion of over 250 questionnaires and 120 park surveys, 3 workshop sessions, 2 walk 'n' talk sessions and 23 written submissions.

This represented the most extensive and significant community engagement process ever undertaken for a Park in Ballarat.

The principles from the Vision were therefore displayed at the Open House to form the basis of discussions for the commencement of the Draft Master Plan



# The Vision

## Access



- Access to and within the Park will be suitable for people of all ages and abilities.
- At some times, access may be restricted for specific uses to allow for special activities or events.

## Activation and Use



- Families, individuals and groups will be encouraged to use the Park year round for a wide range of activities.
- Multiple activities take place in shared spaces at all times, days and seasons.
- The Park will be able to host major events in a natural open space setting.



## Circulation and Entrances



- Traffic management measures will minimise vehicle impacts for pedestrians, cyclists and Park users.
- Safe and good quality pathways will improve circulation and movement through the Park.
- Entrances into the Park will be standardised to create a park identity and sense of arrival.
- Provision of appropriate car parking areas.

## Connections



- Victoria Park will be well connected to Lake Wendouree and other local open space in central Ballarat.
- Linkages for walking and cycling will connect with Victoria Park where possible.
- Safe road crossings will improve the connection to Victoria Park for the local community.

# The Vision

## Information and Promotion



- The Park will be well promoted to the whole community through signage and media.
- The heritage and environmental significance of the Park will be interpreted for all Park users and the community to learn and understand the qualities of Victoria Park.

## Infrastructure



- Facilities that are required to support open space activities in the Park will be provided to a high quality.
- Built development in the Park will be minimised to ensure that the open space qualities of the Park are preserved.



# The Vision

## Landscape



- The Park will be preserved as an environmental and sustainable green space.
- The trees and avenues will be preserved and enhanced, maximising shade, amenity, windbreak and separation of Park areas.
- The native grasslands will be preserved, well maintained and interpreted.

## Safety



- Victoria Park will be safe and comfortable and space that people want to spend time in.
- Public safety will be improved by minimising vehicle impacts and seeking to improve visibility and passive surveillance.
- Activation of spaces in the Park will improve confidence in the safety of Victoria Park.

# Open House - Comments



Stations were set up around the clubrooms with topics relating to 9 different subject areas. Most stations were manned by Council officers to answer questions and listen to attendee's ideas and comments. Attendees were encouraged to record their comments on sticky notes and place them on maps relating to that subject area.



The following notes provide a summary of the sticky notes relating to that subject matter. They are not word for word translations as comments were often similar, just worded slightly differently. This is a summary of the content and the different ideas and statements, and is not a tally of support for or against any particular ideas or potential projects.



## Recreation Uses & Facilities, Walking and Cycling Paths

### Recreation Uses and Facilities

- Existing recreation facilities are fine as is
- Upgrade cricket grounds to include turf wickets and irrigated outfield
- Quality of turf for sport should be improved
- Provide facilities for junior sports hub
- Archery club would like to be located at Vic Park, preferably in the south west corner and could run championships with suitable area
- No archery, leave as open space without fencing
- Redevelop velodrome as active recreation facility for bikes, skatepark etc
- Large soft surfaced multi-purpose stadium in Pony Club area
- Make velodrome into BMX track
- Adult fitness structures and stations would be good
- Short range golf area would be good

### Cycling

- Cycling requires traffic management
- A dedicated cycling criterion circuit using roads or off road trails if possible

### Walking Tracks

- Develop more walking tracks to create loops and interconnecting existing paths and features throughout the park
- More walking and tracks, particularly in the south west corner
- Have walking tracks that run adjacent to existing roads
- Improve quality of running track as becomes soft after rain
- More pedestrian entrances into the Park (eg off Gillies St) accessible for prams and bikes
- Open drains next to walking tracks are dangerous
- Join Winter Street walking track in to the Park at the Winter Street entrance

### Other

- Dogs 'off leash areas' are not clear, make some parts 'on lead only', provide more dog poo bag dispensers
- Dog park area should be fenced





## Park Amenities, Toilets, BBQ's, Picnic Facilities

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to comment on what improvements they would like to see made to park amenities, such as toilets, BBQ's, picnic facilities, rubbish bins and seating.

### Toilets

- Need more toilets spread through the park that are safe and well lit
- New toilets need to consider proximity for use by cricket players
- Don't need more toilets, just maintain existing
- Toilets are needed at the southern end
- Toilets at clubrooms should be made accessible to public
- Toilets and BBQ needed at end of Poplar Avenue near existing playground and shelter

### Rubbish

- More rubbish bins around the park and park boundaries
- Provide dog waste bags and bins
- Don't put bins near BBQ's in case dog poo bags are put in them

### Drinking Fountains

- Need more drinking fountains and taps on Victrack for joggers and cyclists
- Put water stations around the running track like at Lake Wendouree

### Seating

- More seats along walking tracks and seats generally

### Lighting

- Lighting around outside
- Lighting for walking tracks should be solar

### BBQ's

- New rotunda with BBQ's similar to Lake Wendouree
- Maintain the character of the Park but add proper facilities such as BBQ's and toilets

### Other

- Playground near Eyre Street doesn't encourage 'together play'
- Increase family activity areas
- More small parks for local use



## Potential Events Space

This station identified an area in the south west corner of Victoria Park and the adjoining Saleyards site (east of Gillies Street) as a 'Potential Events Space'; potentially providing for a new events facility and relocated showgrounds.

### Generally in Support

- Yes to Showgrounds, put them where the sheep paddocks are and make them multi-use for various clubs
- Bring them on and make them multi use
- Great location for a central Ballarat events facility with opportunities for exhibitions and events which would be good for music festivals and bring events to Ballarat
- Potential location for events facility in SW corner of park occupied by sheep holding yards is great and means no net loss of existing park but could still be integrated into park with public access
- Ballarat is missing out on events to other regions as we don't have good indoor and outdoor events and exhibitions spaces
- An events facility means more events for Ballarat to support the local community, the local economy and local businesses
- Looking forward to see new showgrounds and events facility as will have positive impact on the area and help more people enjoy the beautiful/natural amenities of the park
- Could help to take events away from other parts of City where they have a detrimental impact (ie North Gardens)
- Potential location is good but need a plan to comment on
- Pony Club and showgrounds could share some facilities for events



### Generally Opposed

- Showgrounds not necessary anywhere in the Park
- No to showgrounds and events, its a park and Ballarat needs more 'green lungs'
- Leave showgrounds where they are or use John Valves site or somewhere else on urban fringe of Ballarat for new showgrounds
- Victoria Park is a great natural asset, urban forest, and open parkland
- Put archery club in the south west corner instead
- Keep showgrounds away from residential areas or not in the Park at all
- Showground rubbish would blow all over the Park
- Leave area as parkland but install new walking trails and wetlands
- Events space is too vague, no developments or commercial developments
- Showgrounds would compromise the original intention of parkland
- Vic Park will be well used in 50 to 100 years as population grows so keep park as open space with no fences
- Showgrounds are crass for such a lovely park, keep as park
- Events will restrict park access to parts of the parkland and be used by people with the most money to pay

### Other

- Main buildings and car parks best on Saleyards site with green events spaces in Victoria Park
- Archery in this space could bring State and National championships
- Parking outside the Park could be an issue
- Fencing heights and public access could be an issue
- Public should not be locked out of Pony Club or events space

# Open House-Comments

## History, Interpretation & Signage

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to comment on what they felt was important about Victoria Park's history, how it should be interpreted and signage in general.

- Provide directional signage to key destinations and features around the Park
- Signage about historical car and motorbike racing events would be good
- Signage showing maps and diagrams and text about historical development of Park and WW Two occupations with billeting of American troops
- Speed signage required
- Put in interpretive panels telling the history of the Park
- Need directional signage on Military Drive to the Dog Obedience Clubrooms
- Promote interpretation/value of native grasslands, not always neat but have high bio-diversity
- Any signage additions would be good
- Keep native vegetation as a historical reference to future generations

## Inclusive Regional Playground

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to see the plans for the new inclusive regional playground and to comment on them.

### Generally in Support

- Children's Park is a great idea and great design-go for it
- Good idea to encourage young families to use green spaces away from car dangers
- Playground Ok but no more development
- Incorporate adult fitness station
- Would be beneficial but keep it natural without bright plastic
- Keep it simple, not too developed
- Put plenty of seats around for the elderly
- Fantastic idea but had no input and wasn't consulted
- Only flat area for kids to play, keep plenty of open areas for grass

### Other

- May impact on parking for schools drop offs and pick ups, can it be moved elsewhere
- Love the playground but smaller playgrounds spread around the Park make more sense Don't need another playground, already has one at front of Park and at Lake
- Would be better to upgrade existing 2 playgrounds in park than build a new one, use bio-degradable wood, not plastics
- Put in useable exercise structure instead





## Community Pavilion Redevelopment

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to comment on architectural concepts that were developed in 2010 by Council and representatives of the three tenant clubs for the redevelopment of the existing clubrooms as a shared space and community pavilion.

### Generally in Support

- Support proposal for increased community space for activities
- Good but must fit in to park environment and include bbq's and toilets
- Modern facilities can co-exist whilst predicting the heritage values
- Could facilitate a number of tenants/reception centres
- Build it large enough for junior sporting hub/country week cricket
- Construct a building with a vision beyond 2025
- Would be good for public functions increased community use and events
- Multi use is very important. Who else can be bought in as tenants?
- It's OK if it replaces the existing building
- Toilets need refurbishing and should be accessible to outside park users
- Don't skimp on size, flexible space needs to be maximised
- Demolish all existing structures and start new with a sustainable bldg design for shared use of existing clubs
- Happy to redevelop but should blend into park in design and colour

### Generally Opposed

- No more building in Victoria Park, leave open green space
- Community gather more in the Park grounds than any building
- Building layout does not provide for BDOC members with dogs
- Leave the dog club as it is, utilise existing facilities
- BDOC needs more storage area for equipment, office, its own kitchen and own inside areas for dog sports and training
- Clubrooms are owned by the BDOC, land is not, leave them alone
- Put new building further south near Latrobe Street
- Leave clubrooms for individual use as they look after their own areas and shared spaces means no ownership and are not practical
- Keep current shared buildings at current location but add new facilities at far end if required

### Other

- It is a basic and ugly design, it should be more ornamental and contemporary using sustainable building techniques
- Provide new toilets here, not elsewhere in the Park
- Shade shelter and seating is required for spectators
- More consultation with Dog Club is required



## Entrances, Roads and Traffic Management

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to comment on existing entrances and traffic issues and to make suggestions for improving them.

### Entrances

- Introduce new entrances and traffic calming, including south east corner
- Need improved traffic management at Sturt and Russell entrance, Sturt and Gillies Street corner, Plane and cedar Drive and Eyre street entrance
- Provide new entrance into Gillies Street near clubrooms and Napier Street for more direct access to Ballart West and consider closing Pine Avenue
- Upgrade existing entrances but do not install more
- Closure of some entrances and roads for cycling in summer is frustrating
- Access is still available to most entrances during cycling events

### Traffic Management

- Consider closing the Park at night between dusk and dawn
- Park is used by some groups and clubs at nights so don't close it
- Slow traffic with speed humps, bollards or other traffic calming measures
- 5 way intersection is dangerous and needs roundabout
- Limit thru access, and cut out rabbit runs through the Park
- Upgrade Pine and Poplar Avenue through to Eyre and Napier Streets
- Road closures are not always clear during events
- Some road surfaces and roadside drainage is in poor condition

### Other

- Provide sealed and designated parking areas
- Close Winter Street and re-open Gillies when Saleyards move
- Timing of Link Road is critical to reduce traffic in Gillies Street south
- Provide a tunnel under Sturt Street to link Victoria Park to the Lake
- Drains at Plane Avenue and fire access track need clearing
- Improve pedestrian access across Russell Street to Park
- Car hoons are destroying the Park at great expense
- Strange parked cars with people in them make me feel unsafe
- Link Park to Lucas via the old railway line
- Resurface road between Pine Avenue and Elm to Polar Avenue
- Return Gillies Street to 60km as dangerous turning into Park



## Trees, Grasslands, Wetlands and Landscape

This station provided an opportunity for attendees to provide comment on the landscape of Victoria Park and particularly its trees, grasslands, wetlands and lakes.

### Landscape

- Leave the Park as it is, essentially open/undeveloped spaces
- Retain the natural beauty
- Keep relatively unchanged but maintain current maintenance program
- Forbears set aside as green area, 'Lungs of the City, keep it that way

### Native Grasslands

- Retain indigenous vegetation
- Manage grasslands better
- Native grass areas don't get used so retain cleared areas as parkland
- Native grasslands are a rubbish dump
- Grasslands should be burnt every two years
- Don't burn the grasses as it will kill wildlife

### Wetlands and Lakes

- Have longer grass near lakes to protect them
- Build a wetland walk in the south west corner
- Enhance and enlarge existing lakes
- Provide vegetation around wetlands for native birds and wildlife

### Trees

- Exotic trees and avenues are historically significant and should be retained and enhanced
- Need a tree replacement program as many trees are getting old
- Plant more trees for shade, not buildings
- Cut down pine trees in Russell Street and replace with natives
- Leave pine trees as they add their own character to the Park
- Danger of loss of Cypress trees grove
- Get rid of Oaks and Pines and plant more indigenous trees to attract birds
- Plant more native trees in future planting projects
- Identify and increase Oak varieties throughout Park

### Other

- More wetlands, native plants and nature reserve
- Open up area along walking track near Pony Club so it feels safer
- Another sensory garden and community garden
- Park won't get used if unmaintained





## General Comments

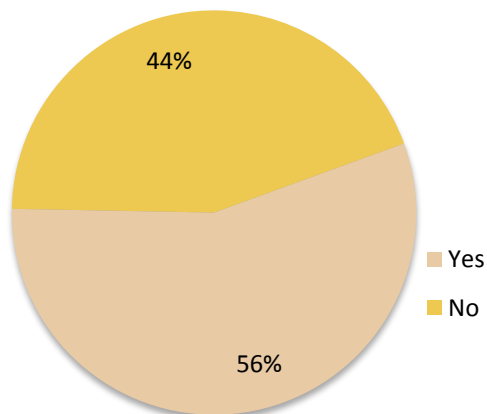
General comments are a summary of the comments received at the Open House that relate to Victoria Park but do not clearly relate to any of the stations or topics identified on the evening

- Lake precinct is a fine example of what Victoria Park could be
- Coffee shop on Sturt Street end of Park would be good
- Don't put coffee shop in Park as nearby roadhouse provides coffee
- Good spot for Tourist Information Centre with caravan parking
- Trams should be reintroduced from Sturt Street to new Tourism Information to info centre in Park
- Security is a big issue. People need to feel safe walking their dogs alone
- Leave the Park as it is, there is nothing wrong with it.
- Love Victoria Park, the serenity and peaceful enclave within a City
- No commercial areas
- Special area for future generations to enjoy a peaceful lifestyle, an escape from urban life without fences

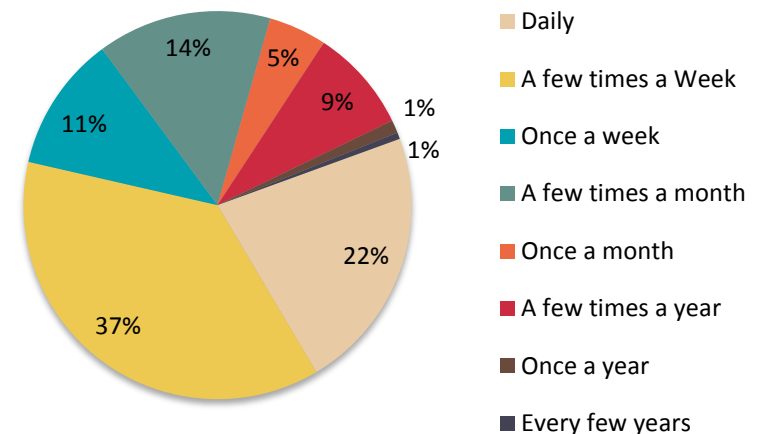


Survey forms were distributed on the night and through Council's website. 190 surveys were completed during the engagement period. The data and comments have been summarised on the following slides.

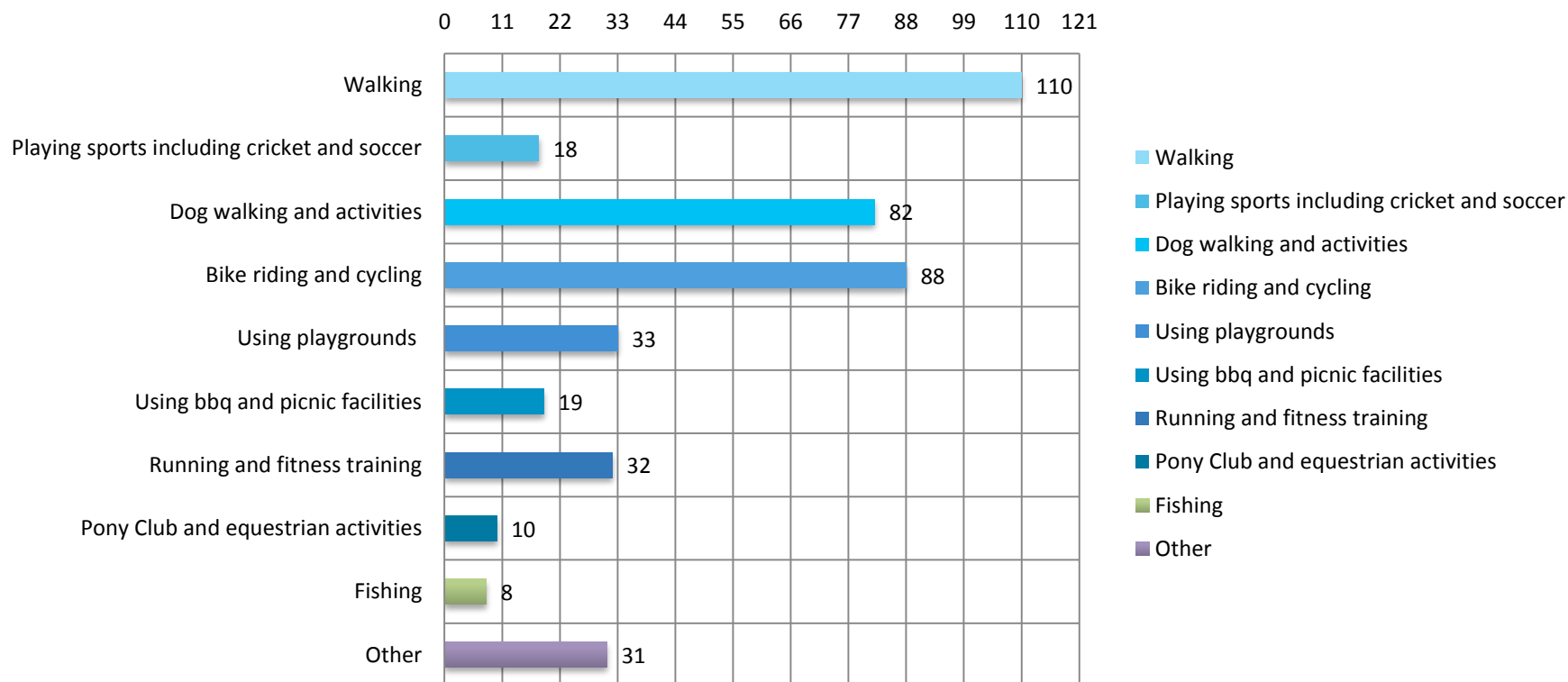
Question 1 asked 'Are you a member of an Organisation or Club that uses or would like to use Victoria Park ?'



Question 4 asked 'How often do you visit or use Victoria Park?'

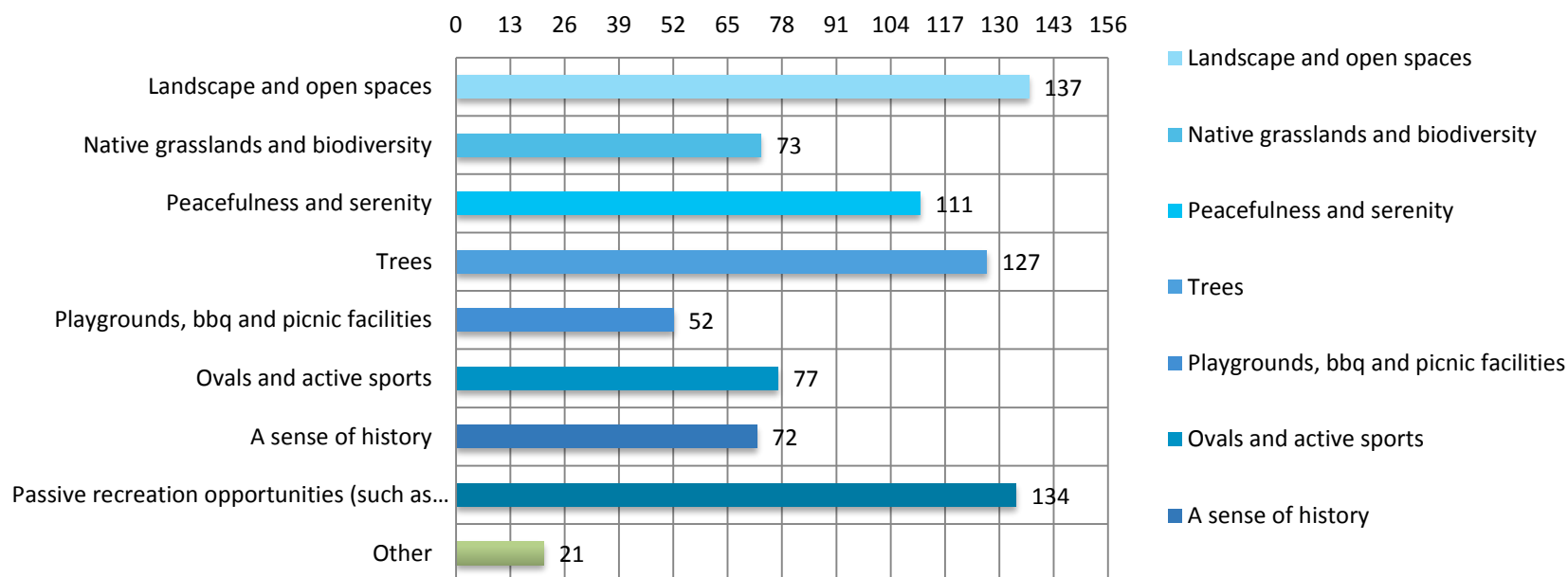


## Question 5 asked 'What are Your Main Activities at Victoria Park?'



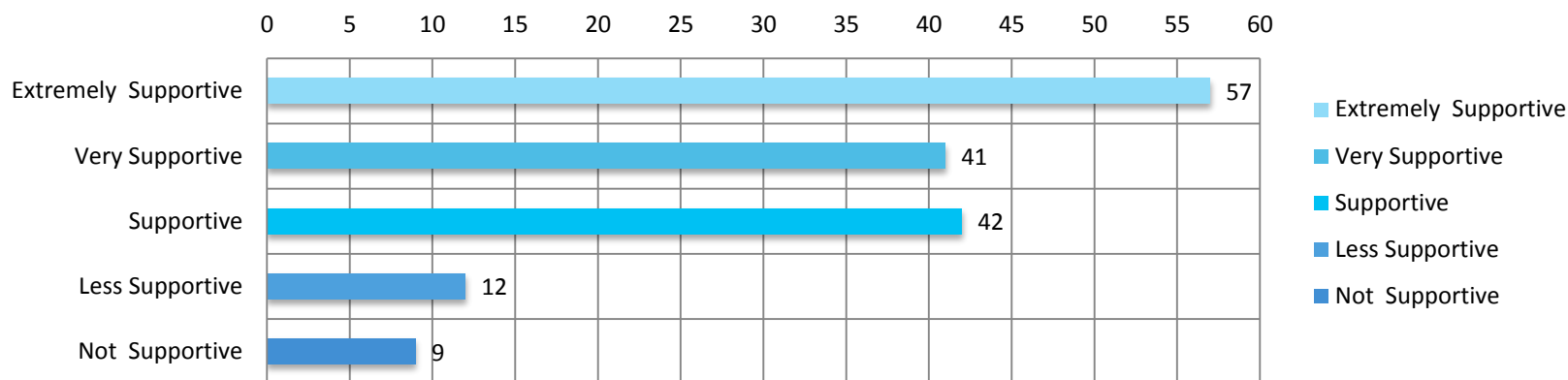


## Question 8 asked 'What are your favourite things about Victoria Park?'

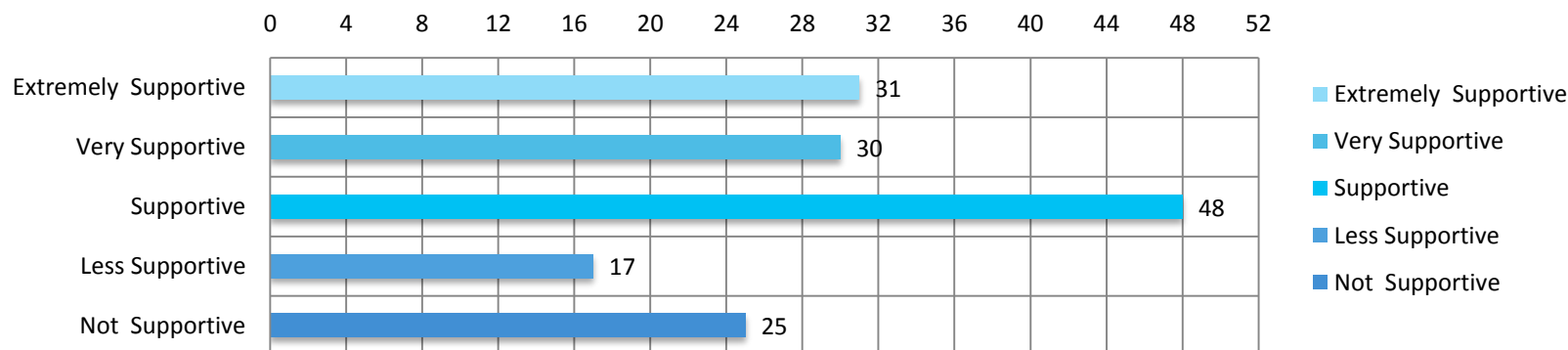


Question 11 &12 asked people to identify their level of support for some development ideas

## The Inclusive Regional Playground

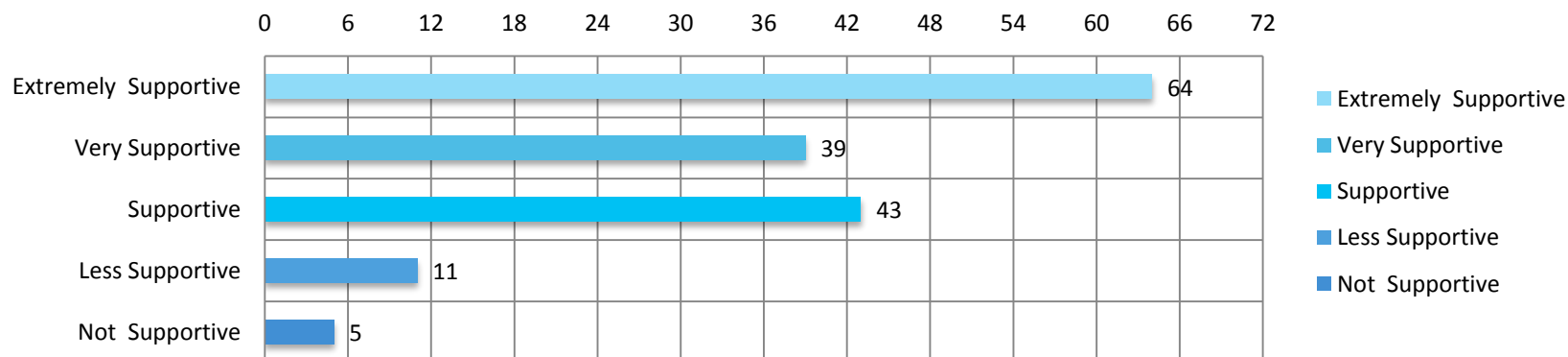


## A redeveloped Community Pavilion

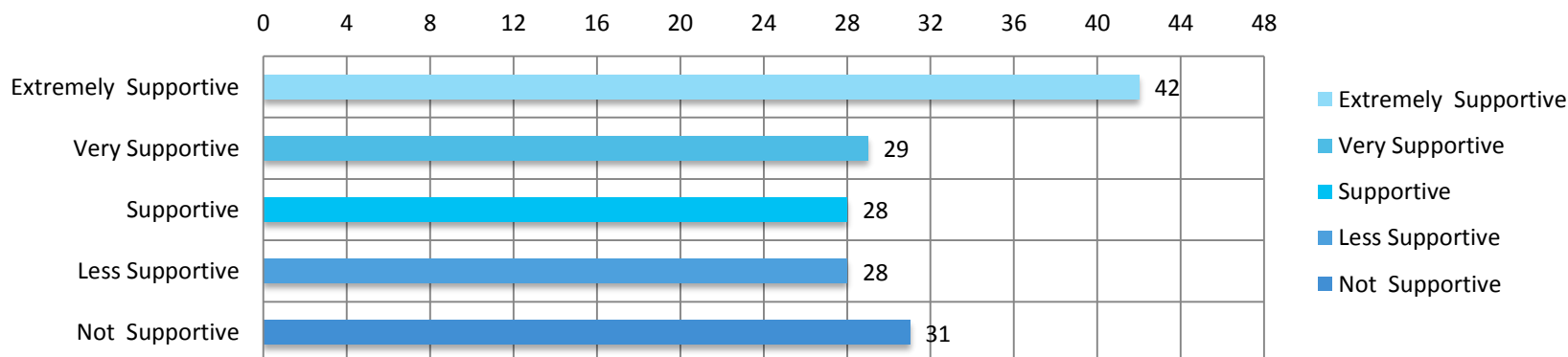


# Survey Forms

## More public toilets, bbq's, picnic facilities



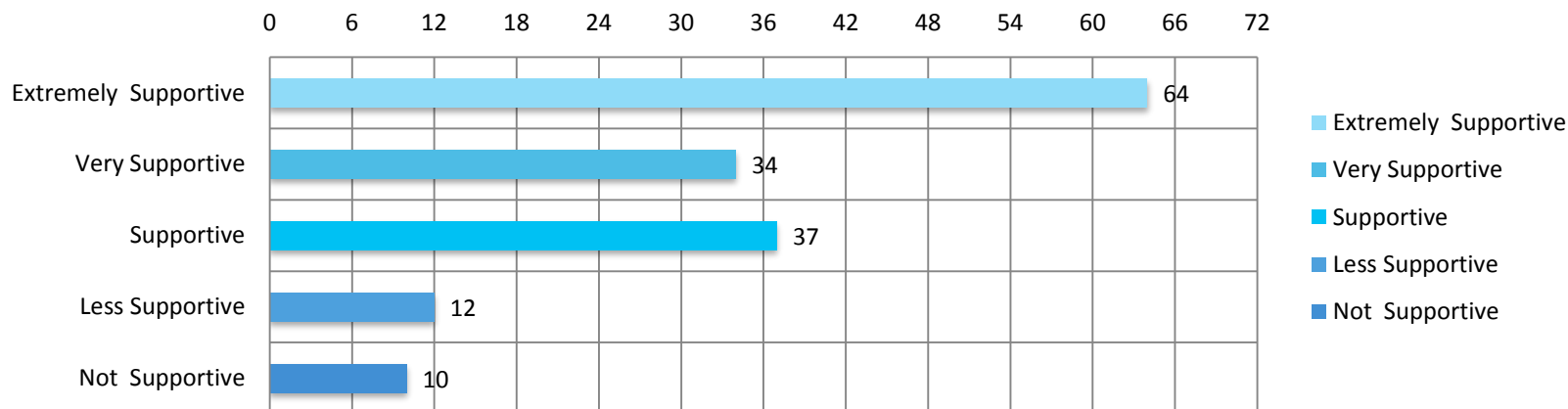
## Increased events within the Park



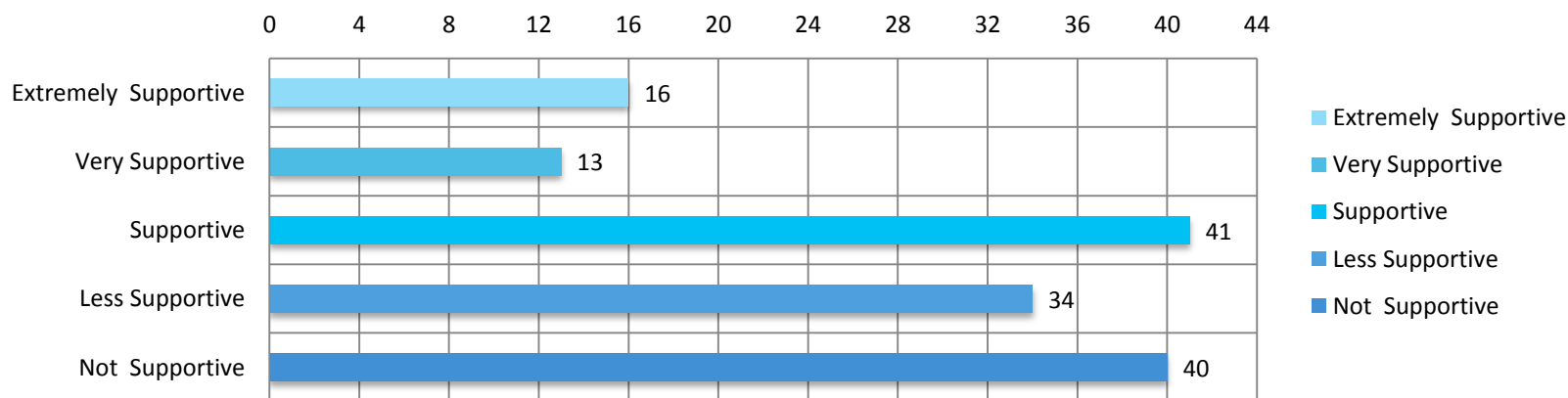


# Survey Forms

## More walking and bike paths

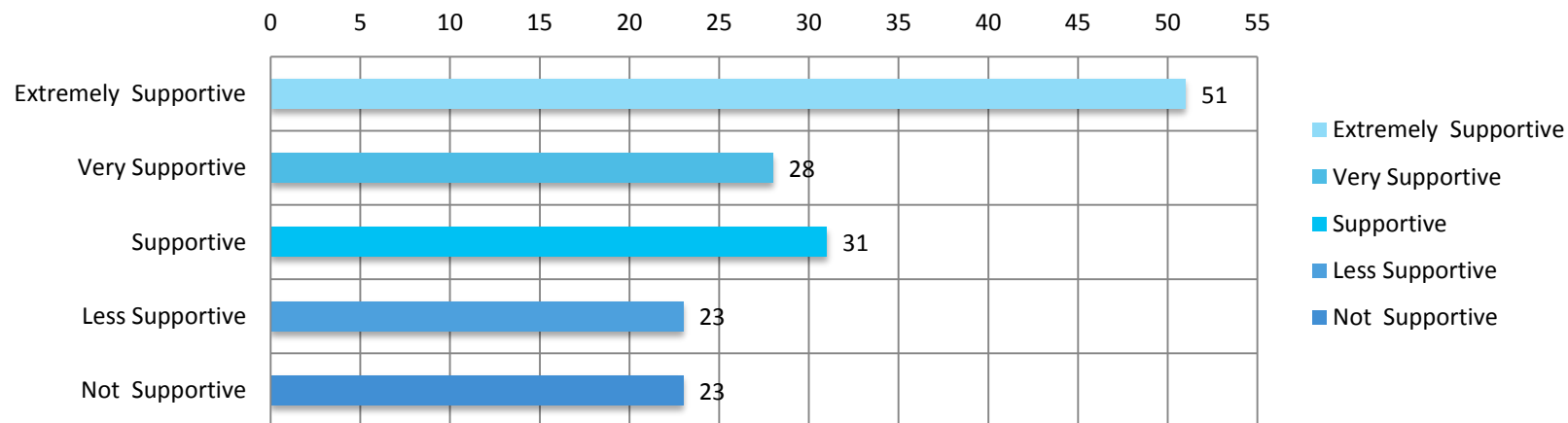


## A lookout at Mt Holled-Smith

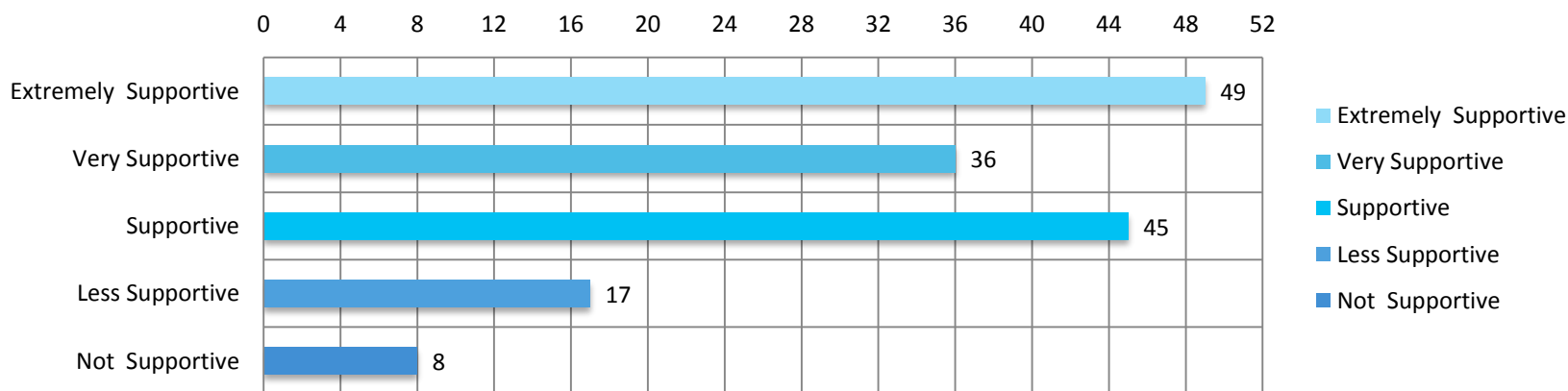


# Survey Forms

## New entrances and improved traffic management



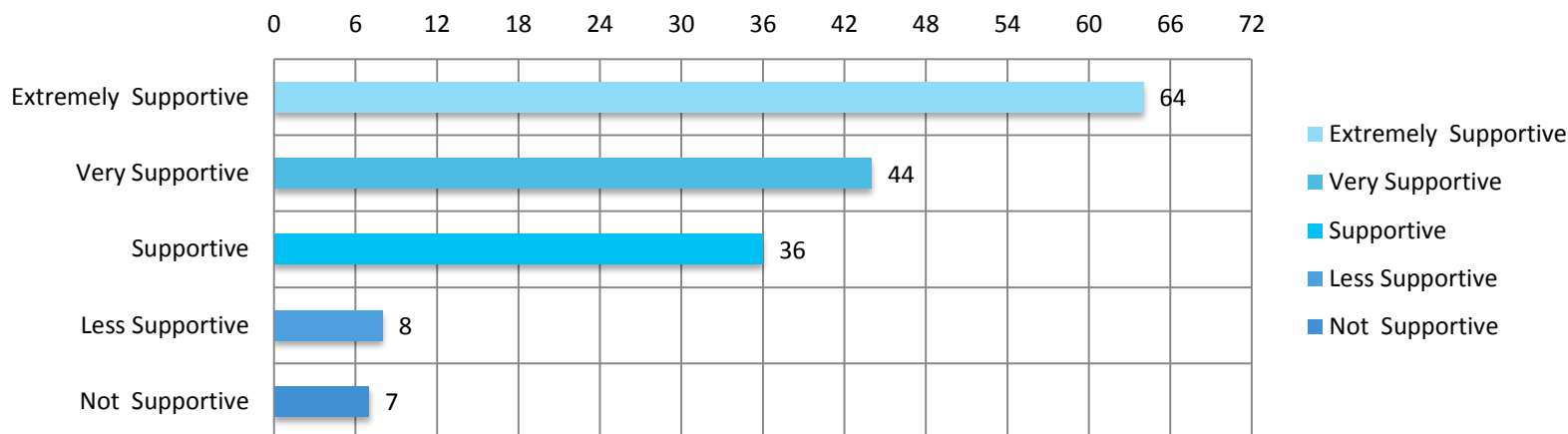
## Improved ovals and recreation facilities



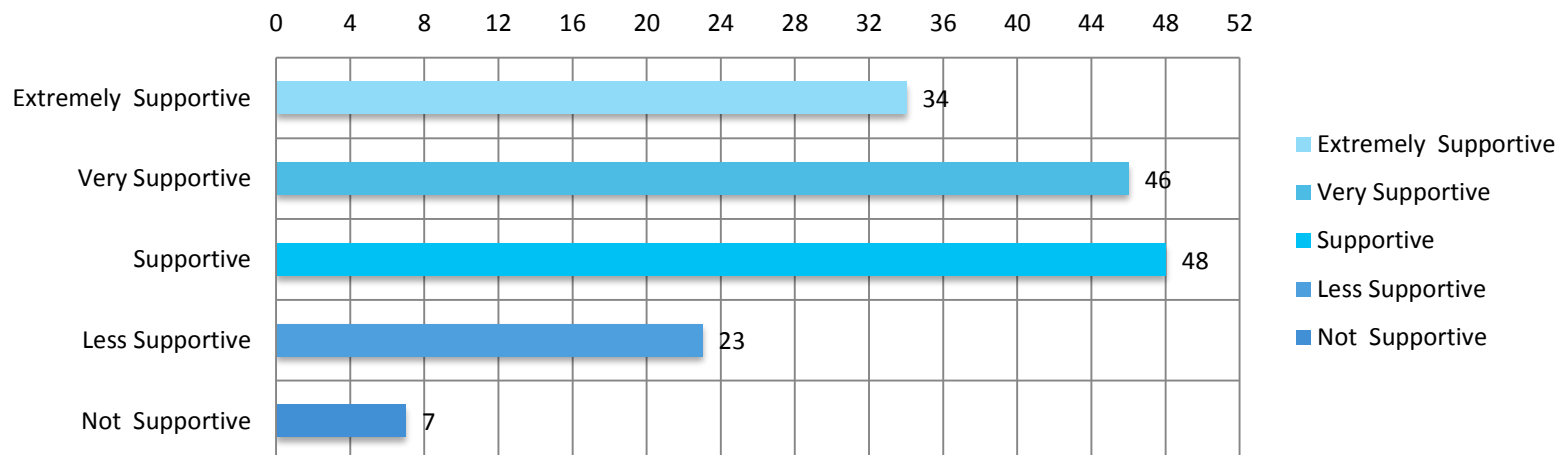
# Survey Forms

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## More tree planting and improved management



## Improved historical signage and interpretation

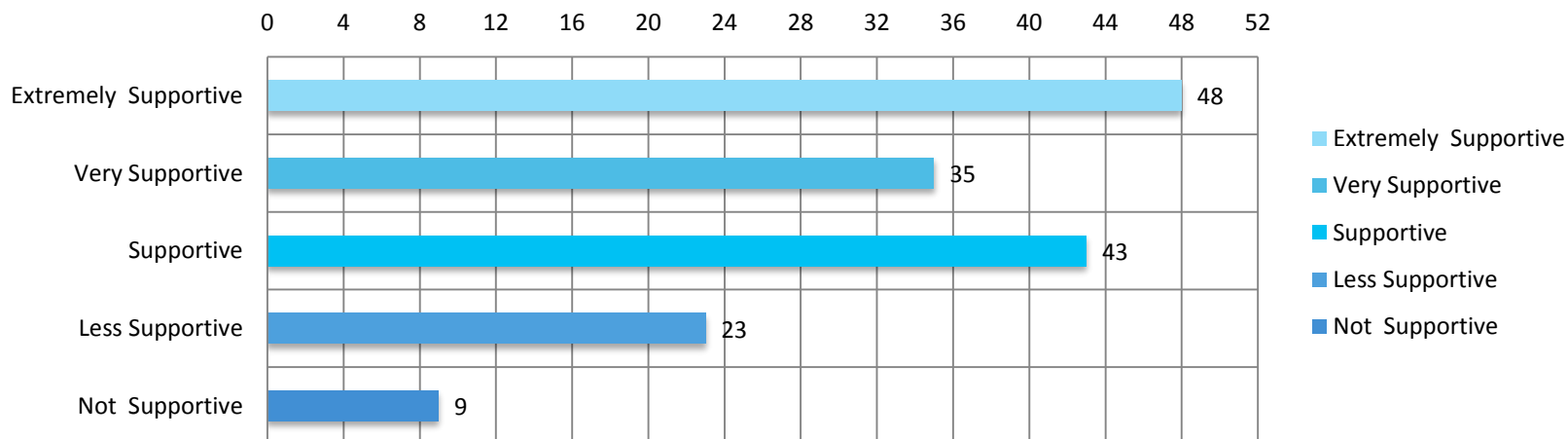




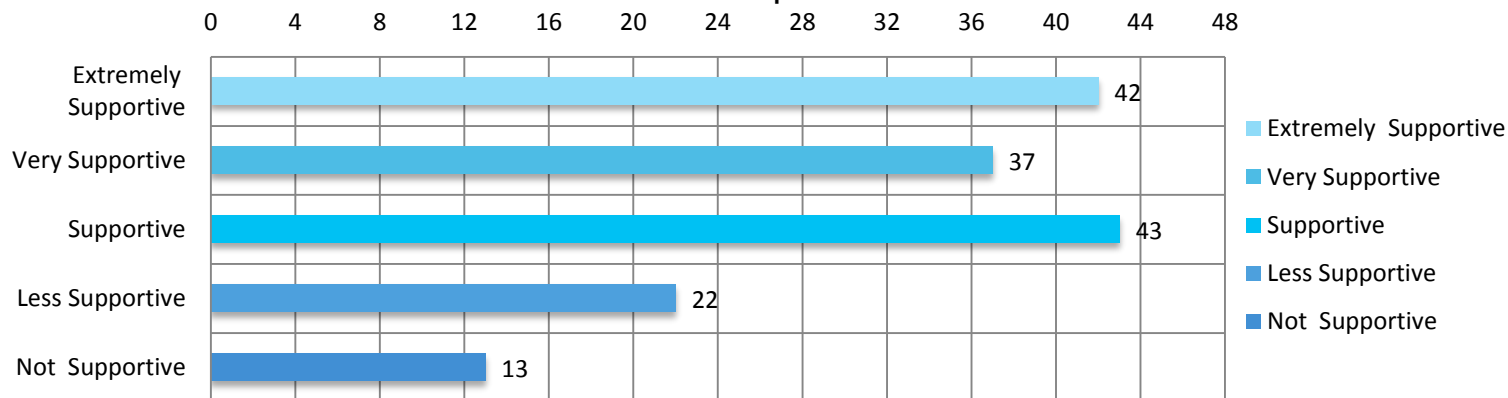
# Survey Forms

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## Improved biodiversity and native grasslands



## New wetlands and improved water bodies



## Question 10 asked ‘What do you LIKE about Victoria Park?’

*The most common or interesting responses from all surveys have been summarised and included.*

- Open spaces, expanse, size
- Sense of tranquillity, peacefulness, freedom, escape
- Trees, avenues and established vegetation
- Central urban location
- Diversity of multi-functional spaces and opportunities
- Sporting ovals and facilities for clubs
- Family friendly, area for everyone
- Informal landscapes
- Dog exercising, people walking dogs
- Recent works to improve visibility and safety
- Not over developed or commercialised
- Green space – lungs for the City
- Water areas
- Nature, wilderness and bio-diversity
- Lack of buildings, infrastructure and development
- Walking paths and bike tracks and trails
- Historical aspects
- Native grasslands and native vegetation
- Criterium circuit and cycling events
- Activities and events, place where things can happen
- Multiple entry points and accessibility
- Horse riding and equestrian precinct
- Balance of passive and active recreation areas
- Just having it
- The noise of cricket in summer
- Exercise opportunities



## Question 11 asked 'What do you NOT LIKE about Victoria Park?'

*The most common or interesting responses from all surveys have been summarised and included.*

- Lack of toilet facilities
- Unirrigated sports ovals and limitations on use
- Sub-standard clubrooms in Military Drive
- Lack of training and sportsground lighting
- Poor maintenance levels
- Lack of quality facilities, amenities and shelter
- Poor and variable road and path surfaces
- Wasted and underutilised spaces
- Lack of maps and signage
- Lack of access through Pony Club grounds
- Lack of playgrounds, shelter, bbq facilities, seating, drinking fountains
- Anti social behaviour and illegal activity
- Speeding cars and dodgy parked cars
- Long grass, scruffiness and unkempt look
- Rubbish, dog poo and lack of rubbish bins
- Nothing
- Lack of lighting and after dark atmosphere
- Traffic, road safety, use of roads for short cuts
- Dumped lake weed
- Lack of native grassland management
- Cypress trees past their best
- Unsealed road (Plane Avenue)
- Poor surface of criterium track
- The idea of over-development or showgrounds being there



## Question 12 asked “What improvements or changes would you like to see at Victoria Park?”

*The most common or interesting responses from all surveys have been summarised and included.*

- More tree planting, greening and native vegetation
- Better management of trees, native grasslands, and ovals
- Reduced impact and speed of cars and car access
- Hub for recreation with more active uses and fitness stations
- Improved lighting in general
- Upgrade some ovals with irrigation and training lighting
- Improved walking track with all-weather surfaces
- More public toilets, bbq's and picnic facilities
- An events facility with showgrounds
- More rubbish, recycling bins and dog poo bag dispensers
- Improved interpretation and directional signage
- New wetlands, larger water bodies and improved bio-diversity
- Sealed car parks, improved road surfaces, drainage and traffic management
- Improved Pony Club facilities
- Better sporting and leisure facilities
- Improved and more amenities, toilets and change rooms
- Improved criterium circuit for cycling
- More events, concerts and music festivals
- Nothing, I like it as it is
- Redeveloped sports pavilion in Military Drive
- No showgrounds, commercial, or intrusive development
- Shared and multi-functional use of buildings
- Better security with higher presence of ranger/police
- Indoor area for dog training and fenced off dog park
- A home for archery
- Footbridge to link to Lake Wendouree





# Submissions & Interviews

Six detailed submissions were received from residents and stakeholders including:

- A local resident
- Ballarat Environment Network
- Ballarat Dog Obedience Club
- Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club
- Victoria Park Football Club
- Wendouree Archery Club

Interviews were also conducted with other known recreational stakeholder groups to ensure their ideas and issues could be considered within the Draft Master Plan including:

▶ Ballarat Association Schools	▶ Ballarat Sebastopol Cycling Club
▶ Ballarat Cricket Association	▶ Ballarat Triathlon Club
▶ Ballarat Dog Obedience Club	▶ Lucas Cricket Club
▶ Ballarat Fly Fishers	▶ Sport Climbing Victoria
▶ Ballarat Football League	▶ St Patrick's School
▶ Ballarat Pony Club & Friends of Ballarat Eventing Association	▶ Victoria Park Soccer Club
▶ Ballarat Regional Athletics Centre	▶ Wendouree Archery Club

Information gathered from these submissions and interviews will be considered in developing the Draft Master Plan.



# Victoria Park Master Plan

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WHERE TO FROM HERE!

Thankyou for your submissions and comments received during the Community Engagement period. Your input will be considered and used to help inform the development of the Draft Master Plan. You will have further opportunities to comment on the Master Plan before it is finalised and presented to Council. The following timelines are indicative of the process to complete the Master Plan

June	Preparation of Draft Master Plan
July	Presentation of Draft Master Plan to Council
July-August	Public exhibition and feedback on Draft Master Plan
September	Amend and present Final Master Plan to Council for endorsement



# Victoria Park

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