



Crescent Road Master Plan

Phase One Engagement - What we Heard
November 24, 2021



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Contents

Executive Summary	3
Project overview	4
Engagement strategy	5
Engagement approach	6
Communication and outreach	6
Who we heard from	6
What we asked	8
What we heard	11
Common Themes	11
Planning a space with balance	12
Understanding walking, wheeling, traffic circulation, and parking	12
Temporary closure feedback	13
Planning a space for all	13
Detailed charts and verbatim	14
Next steps	14
Summary of Input	15
Tool 1 – Planning A Space With Balance	15
Tool 2 – Understanding Walking, Wheeling, Traffic Circulation, and Parking	23
Tool 3 – Temporary closure feedback	24
Tool 4 – Planning a space for all	25
Participant Evaluations	26



Crescent Road Master Plan

Phase One Engagement - What we Heard

November 24, 2021

Executive Summary

The Crescent Road N.W. Master Plan is intended to guide future investment for the roadway and adjacent park spaces, including Crescent Heights Park and McHugh Bluff, by creating a cohesive vision for a safe, accessible street and public space for all users.

A first phase of public engagement for this project was conducted in August and September of 2021, in order to Listen and Learn from both local and city-wide stakeholders about issues and opportunities related to the space and evaluate potential design interventions.

Online engagement through the City's engagement portal at <https://engage.calgary.ca/crescentroad> saw 3731 visitors through the engagement period with 751 participants contributing 1705 pieces of feedback related to four central question sets:

1. What does the City of Calgary need to know to create a space that balances both reflective and active experiences for users and what future design elements can support that balance?
2. Where do you think that walking and wheeling connections are needed? Where do you see traffic trouble-spots? Where are parking or loading areas important for you?
3. What have you liked about the temporary closure and adaptive lane? What challenges they have had with the temporary closure or adaptive lane?
4. How can The City of Calgary create a special public place that feels welcoming and safe for people of all cultures, ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds?

Feedback from participants indicated that while there is general excitement and support for reimagining and reinvesting in this space, there are sometimes differing positions on the details related to how this should be done.

Some key take-aways from this first round of engagement include:

- While the Crescent Road Master Plan is intended to be a long-term and holistic plan for this area, we understandably see that the temporary closure along Crescent Road has taken up much of the discussion. Comments specific to this closure do still provide useful feedback and context that can help to create a space that is both safe and accessible.
- Many participants acknowledge the wide range of uses that happen in the space – quiet enjoyment, group gatherings, fitness activities, and commuting access – emphasizing that the space should be planned in ways that look to provide specific room for all and minimize conflict between these differing uses.
- Common concerns from any public space engagement, notably social disorder, parking issues, and traffic impacts, are heightened and highlighted due to both their impacts on the directly surrounding community, as well as how they can impact the users of this special place.

Project overview

Crescent Road N.W. is a special public space in our city. It provides access to natural areas, parks, paths and streets with dramatic views of the Bow River, downtown Calgary, and the mountains.

Over the years Crescent Road N.W. and adjacent parks have become popular spaces for recreating, gathering, and celebrating. The popularity of this area comes with several concerns raised by the community: late night disruptive activities, parking issues, vehicle stunting and speeding, heavy fitness use, increased garbage and littering.

The Crescent Road N.W. Master Plan will guide future investment by creating a cohesive vision for a safe, accessible street and public space for all users.

This project intends to:

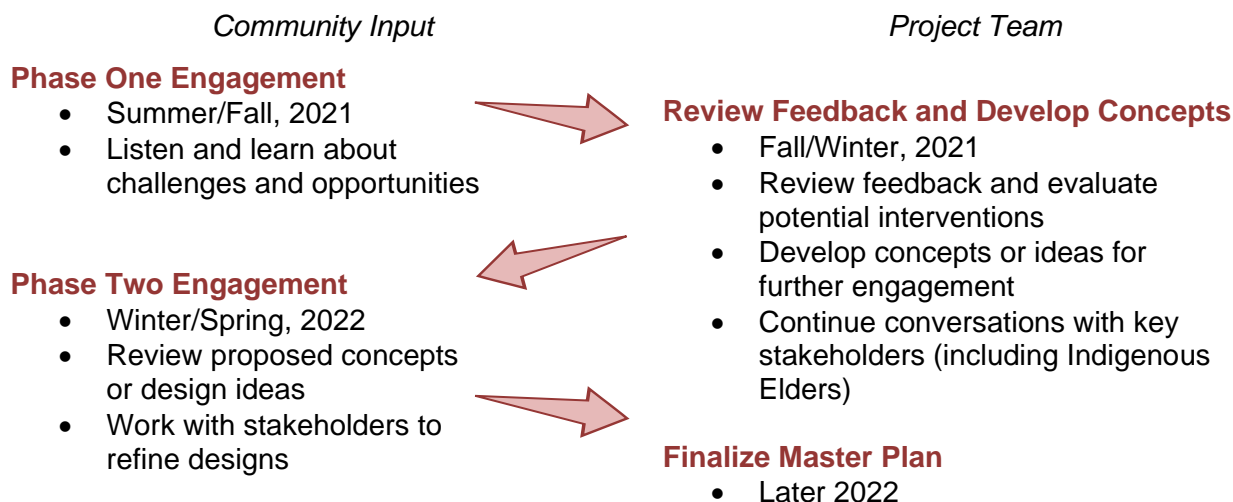
- Amplify this as a special place in Calgary while balancing different uses
- Re-imagine Crescent Road N.W. between 1 St N.W and 6A St N.W. and adjacent parks spaces
- Use a variety of interventions such as expanding park space and traffic calming
- Identify opportunities for placemaking and economic development
- Recommend a long-term design concept and identify short-term investments



Figure 1 - Master Plan Study Area

Engagement strategy

A two-phase engagement approach was developed for the Crescent Road Master Plan, each with corresponding work phases to incorporate stakeholder feedback into project decision-making.



The purpose of the first phase engagement was to introduce the project to the local community and interested city-wide stakeholders, and then to Listen and Learn from their feedback on issues and opportunities related to the space.

Through a project engagement page - <https://engage.calgary.ca/crescentroad> - The City project team shared some of the challenges and opportunities related to this space that had been heard through previous engagement, 311, or community submissions. Engagement questions at this phase were designed to gather more details about some of these challenges and opportunities, as well as to hear suggestions or ideas for solving challenges or building from these opportunities.

Previously Heard Challenges

- Disruptive behavior at night
- High use of fitness and recreation activities
- Poor lighting
- Maintenance and waste collection
- Parking
- Damage to natural environment
- Vehicle traffic going too fast
- Sterile space for strolling

Previously Heard Opportunities

- Iconic views of downtown and Bow River valley
- Better accessibility for people of all ages and abilities
- Reconciliation and historic interpretation
- Seating, picnic tables, places to relax comfortably
- Activating the spaces through commercial opportunities
- Gateway to Crescent Heights
- Connection to future Green Line and Centre Heights Village BIA



Crescent Road Master Plan

Phase One Engagement - What we Heard

November 24, 2021

Engagement approach

Online engagement through the City's engage portal was selected for phase one engagement in order to gather the expected high volume of responses from both local residents and interested city-wide stakeholders. Online surveys, an interactive mapping tool, and a public digital post-it note board were used to garner different types of input focused on different issues.

Pop-up or other types of in-person engagement were considered for this phase of engagement but were not used at this time due to both concerns about social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic response, and because the wide-reaching Listen and Learn approach to engagement in this first phase would not necessarily be improved through in-person or face-to-face activities.

As the Master Plan project progresses, future engagement objectives will shift from understanding issues and ideas to evaluating potential design ideas or even creative problem solving. At this time, face-to-face engagement activities – either virtual or in-person, depending on health and safety guidance – may be used.

Communication and outreach

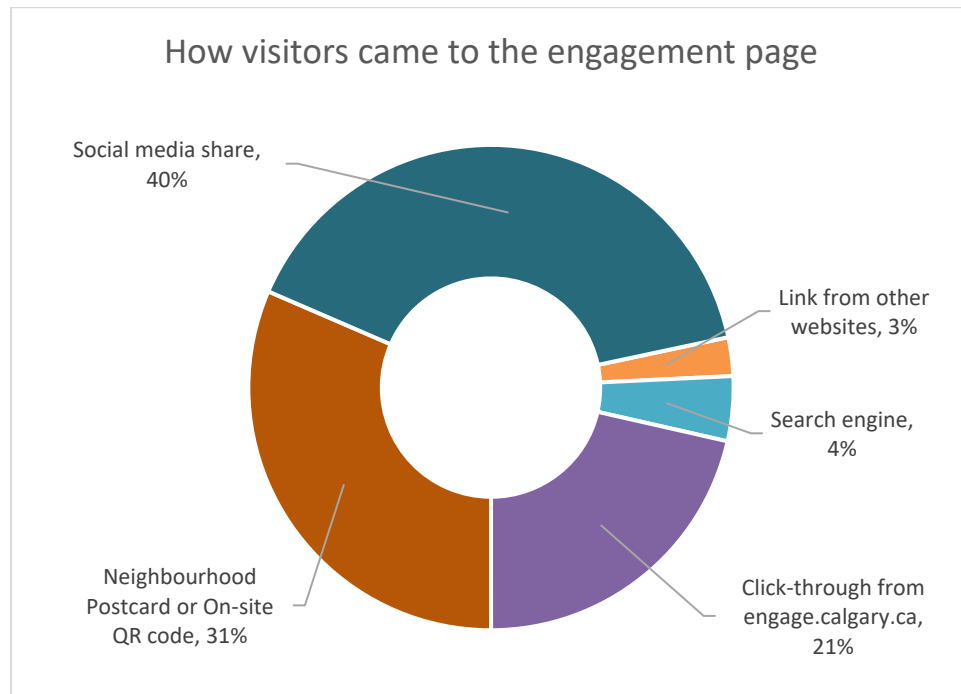
Engagement opportunities were communicated through a combination of community-based and online methods. This included:

- Postcard were mailed to 3867 residences within the project area.
- A large sounding board was placed on-site along Crescent Road with information about the project and a QR code link to take participants to <https://engage.calgary.ca/CrescentRoad>
- On-site signage using smaller A-frames and paper posters were also placed on the walking path along McHugh Bluff, on the stairs and around the Crescent Heights Park to direct park users to the engagement website.
- Bold signs with project information were posted on 10 Street NW near SAIT Way and along Memorial Drive near CPA Lot 59, at the bottom of the hill.
- The City Project team shared information about the upcoming engagement with the Community Associations for both Crescent Heights and Rosedale and asked the CA share that information within their networks.
- The City Project team coordinated a series of social media posts during the engagement period on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
- The City Project team reached out to administration at the adjacent Crescent Heights High School to share information about the project.

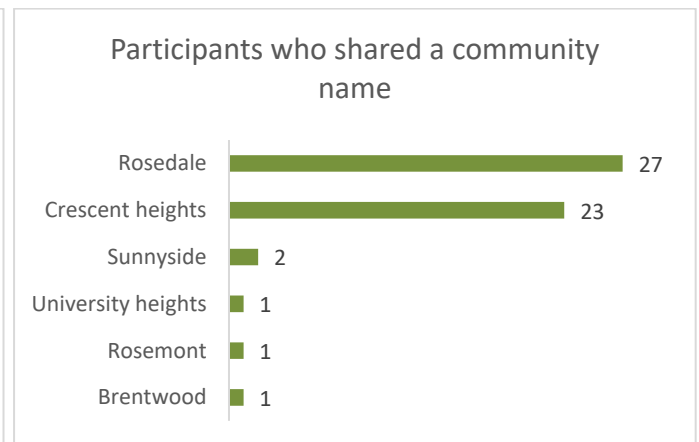
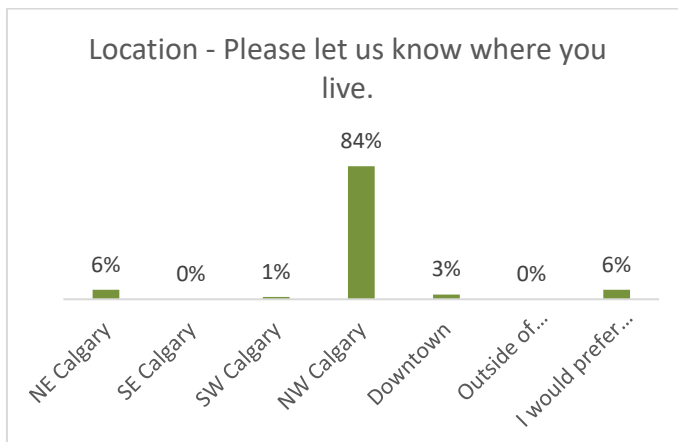
Who we heard from

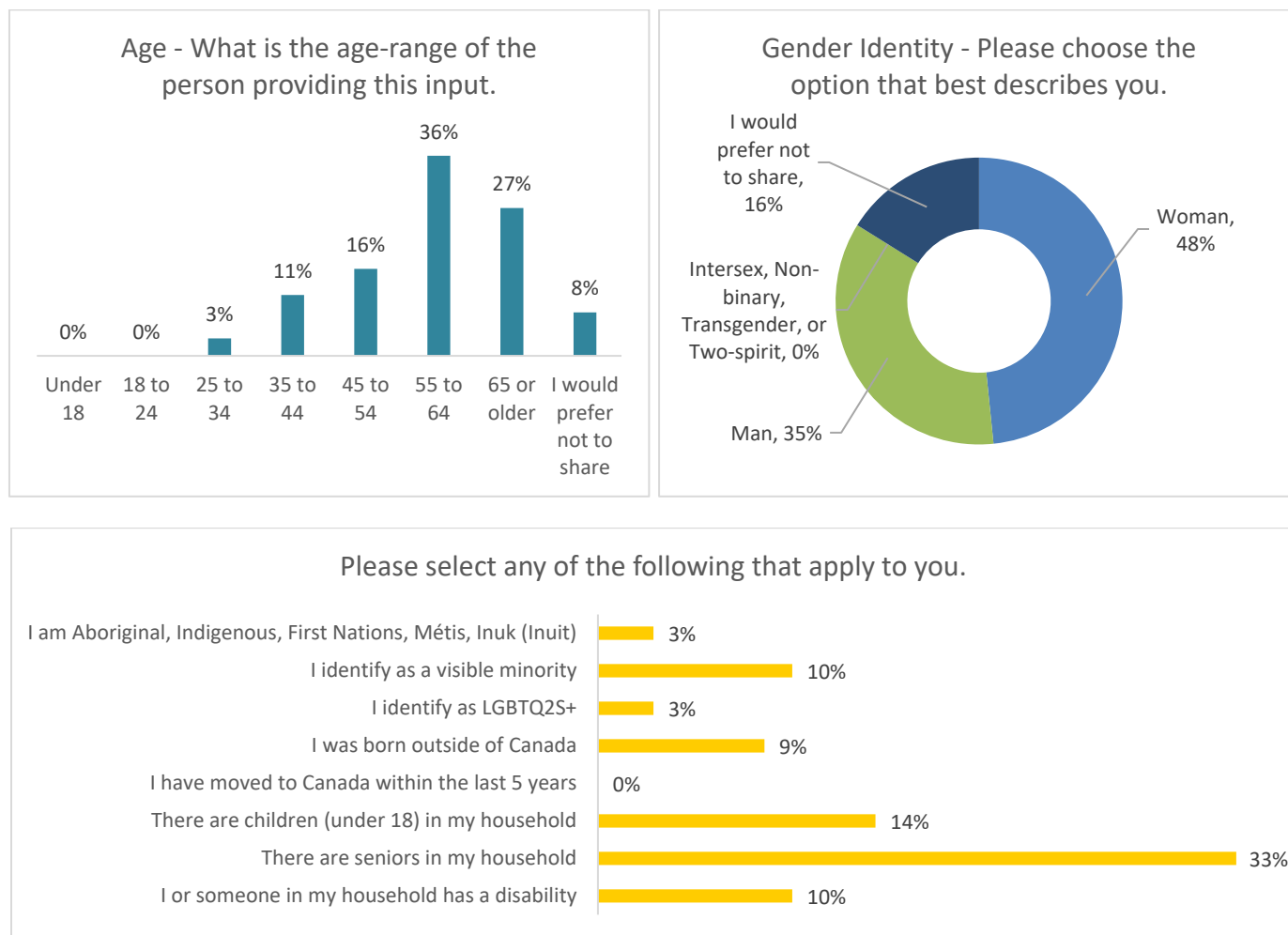
From August 23 to September 13, 2021 the engagement page received 3731 total visits and collected 1,705 unique contributions from 751 active participants using the engagement tools described below. The largest

group of site visitors in that time came via social media sharing (40%), followed by a number who accessed the site using either using the URL on the postcards delivered in the neighbourhood or by scanning the QR code printed on signs posted in the area (31%) and then a number who went first to <https://engage.calgary.ca> and clicked on the project tile on the engage main page (21%).



Of the 700+ active participants, 70 (9%) completed an optional demographic and evaluation survey. Because the demographic questions were not completed by all users, these results should not be interpreted as a complete sample of who participated, but can be a useful snapshot in understanding if any groups, stakeholders, or perspectives are underrepresented and may need to be specifically sought out in future engagement.





What we asked

Participants in the first phase of engagement were asked to provide feedback on four central questions, using the four different methods outlined below. A detailed listing of the specific questions asked with each tool can be found in the Summary of Input section at the end of this document.

1. Planning a space with balance

Central question: What does the City of Calgary need to know to create a space that balances both reflective and active experiences for users?

- Online survey format, responses submitted to project team
- Nine questions, combination of open and closed-ended questions
- Questions were divided into three geographic focus areas within the overall Master Plan area (below).
- 715 responses received

Focus areas:

1. 2 St N.W. to 3 St N.W.
2. South side of Crescent Road N.W.
3. Stairs and Path on McHugh Bluff/fitness area



Figure 2 - Master Plan Focus Areas

2. Understanding walking, wheeling, traffic circulation, and parking

Central question: Where do you think that walking and wheeling connections are needed? Where do you see traffic trouble-spots? Where are parking or loading areas important for you?

- Shared map tool, contributions visible to all site users as well as project team
- Four submission categories: Parking, Traffic, Wheeling or Walking
- 337 contributions

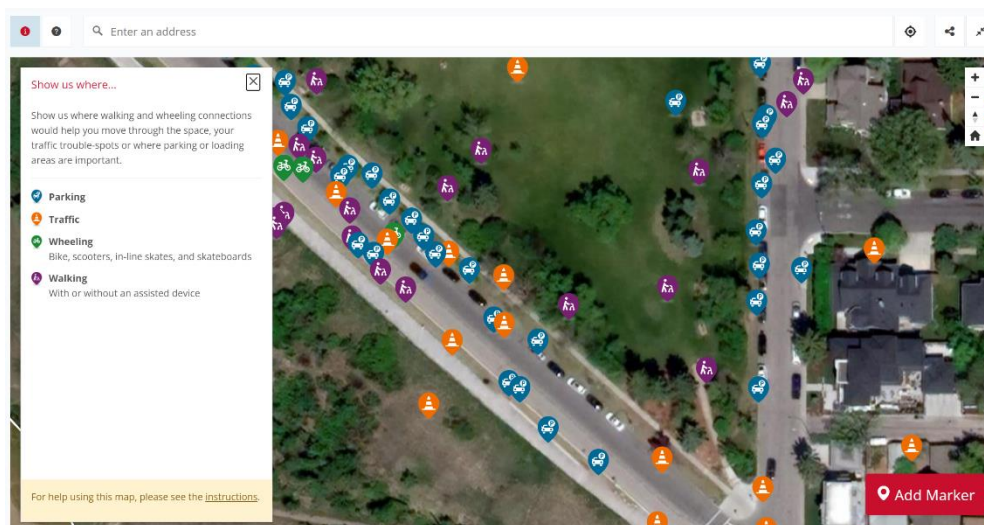


Figure 3 - Mapping Tool Interface

3. Temporary closure feedback

Central question: What you liked about the temporary closure and adaptive lane? What challenges they have had with the temporary closure or adaptive lane?

- Online survey format, responses submitted to project team
- Two open-ended questions
- 297 responses received

4. Planning a space for all

Central question: How can The City of Calgary create a special public place that feels welcoming and safe for people of all cultures, ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds?

- Shared Post-It Note tool, contributions visible to all site users as well as project team
- Two submission categories: What does a Space for all look like for you? What does a space for all look like for others?
- 283 contributions

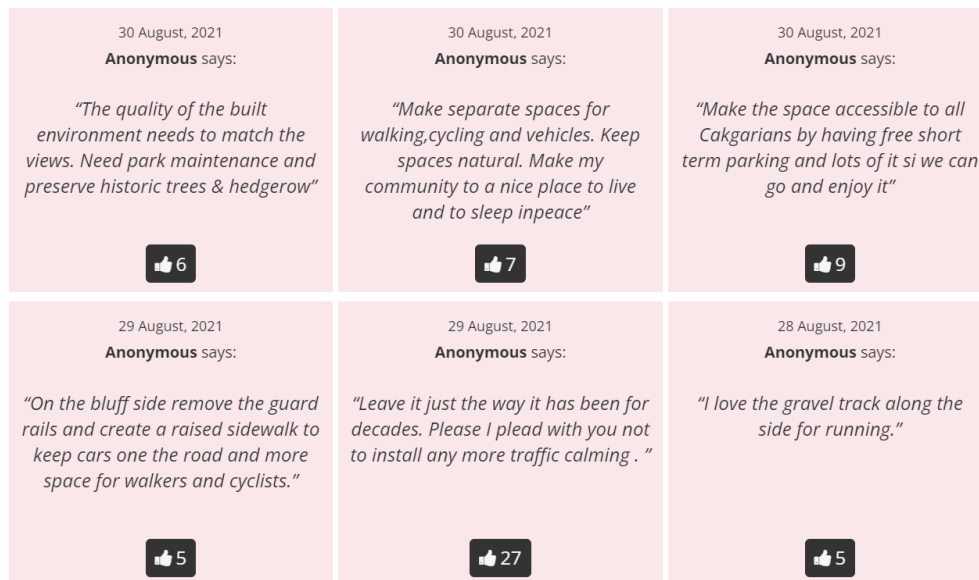


Figure 4 - Post-It Tool Example Comments

What we heard

Common Themes

While each of the different tools focused on slightly different dimensions or aspects of the Master Plan, many common and consistent themes were heard across all of the engagement feedback. These high-level themes confirm many of the core challenges and opportunities that we have heard in the past and suggest some important ideas that may influence the development of the Master Plan moving forward:

- **A desire for this to be a space accessible to all**
 - For many this meant ensuring vehicle access and adequate parking for site users (including specific accessible parking) or the desire to have road access to and around the space. For others, this included comments related to accessible pathways and ease of access for people with limited mobility. The thread that connected many of these comments was the idea that this is a special space that should be able to be enjoyed by all.
- **Support for balancing space between different uses**
 - Many participants stressed the importance of ensuring that this area maintains room for a variety of uses. Quiet enjoyment, group gatherings, fitness activities, and commuting access were all identified as important or desired, with the overall suggestion that the space should be planned to accommodate all and minimize conflict between these differing uses.
- **Concerns about disruptive behaviours and social disorder**
 - Feedback related to excessive noise, social disorder, and disruptive behaviour was heard both in relation to the park spaces, as well as on the adjacent roads. Some participants noted that the temporary road closures had reduced this impact, while others felt that it may have just pushed this concern further back into the surrounding community. This concern was also shared between local residents who felt the impacts at home and also park users who didn't want this behaviour to impact their enjoyment of the space.
- **Concerns about traffic and parking being pushed into the neighbourhood**
 - Similarly, most comments about traffic, speeding, or parking impacts stressed the potential negative impacts to residents either immediately adjacent to the space or further back into the community. However, a sub-set of comments did touch on how traffic and parking in and around the site can impact park users in both positive ways (accessibility), but also negatively (degrading the overall user experience once you are in the space).
- **Importance of maintenance through all seasons**
 - Included general feedback on the importance of maintenance and suggestions for resilient materials, design approaches or operational plans were combined with specific feedback that emphasized designing and maintaining the space for use through all four seasons, including winter.

- **Agreement that this is a special place in Calgary**

- While a small number of participants suggested that nothing needed to be done to improve the space or how it relates to the surrounding community, and a smaller number still were opposed due to concerns that any reinvestment in the space would lead to increased usage, most participants appeared supportive of a thoughtful, balanced approach to reimagining this space for the benefit of local residents and all Calgarians alike.

Planning a space with balance

The survey tool used for these questions allowed us to probe deeper and better understand the community's preferences about interventions that will thoughtfully balance both reflective and active experiences with the adjacent neighbourhood and natural areas.

Active Experiences can include gathering with friends for a meal, watching fireworks, playing games, participating in a fitness class or having your picture taken for a special occasion. We heard support for:

- Accessible picnic benches positioned to enjoy the view
- Expanding the parks space
- Interactive public art
- Providing parking options nearby

Reflective experiences can include pausing to enjoy the view, walking along the bluff, reading a commemorative plaque or observing nature. We heard support for:

- Variety of seating for relaxing
- Natural plantings
- Wider walking paths
- Creating special places to enjoy/frame the view

For the south side of Crescent Road N.W. we heard support for widening the path at busy crossings, permanently separating people walking and wheeling to minimize conflicts, adding more waste and recycling bins and more plantings.

Regarding fitness uses and the McHugh Bluff stairs, participants shared that it would be important for City staff to consider how to manage group fitness uses, explore an additional set of stairs to separate users travelling at different speeds and improved four season maintenance.

Understanding walking, wheeling, traffic circulation, and parking

The mapping tool used for this question allowed for participant feedback to be associated with a specific location or space within the Master Plan area. All of the submitted comments organized into theme groups and pinned to the location they were submitted can be found here:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/2/edit?mid=1I7qFbD9Z0RjLyQKRGFoJx4OeyFM8KDcX&usp=sharing>

Individual comments noted areas where:

- Additional parking was needed or suggested
- Intersection benefit from better intersection control
- Cut-through and short-cutting traffic has increased
- Traffic speed seemed to be an issue or traffic calming could be used
- Walking our wheeling connections would help users access the site
- Physical improvements or maintenance concerns would improve path, sidewalk, or road concerns

Temporary closure feedback

Along with the mapping tool focused on transportation issues, participants were also asked to share what they have liked and what challenges they have had with the temporary closure or adaptive lane.

For likes, comments from participants focused on things that had a positive impact on the overall quality of life in the neighbourhood or for users of the space.

- Less noise and social disorder overall in the neighbourhood
- Improved the overall feel of the area and emphasized the specialness of the space
- Increased safety for walking and cycling, especially for children
- Allowed for more social distancing
- Reduced walking/wheeling conflict on the path or sidewalk

When asked about challenges with the temporary closure or adaptive lane, feedback focused on impacts of the closure on the surrounding neighbourhood and the general feeling that the closure makes the space feel less welcoming or accessible to non-immediately-adjacent residents and seems elitist.

- Increased traffic volumes and speeds on adjacent roads
- Created poor traffic flow / made it hard to access park or homes
- Shift of social disorder / destruction of property onto adjacent streets
- Increase in visitor parking on adjacent community roads
- Lack of parking for visitors reduces accessibility for all
- Specifics related to the adaptive lane (too wide, not wide enough, concern with barriers, etc.)

Planning a space for all

The last question, focused on creating a space for all, was asked using the public-facing post-it note tool to allow for participant feedback to be visible and reviewed by all visitors to the engagement site. Feedback collected with this tool emphasized many of the themes and topics heard in the other engagement activities, including:

- Prioritizing accessibility and ensuring the space is open to all
- Ensuring safety by managing social disorder
- Creating a positive, pedestrian-centric, user experience



Crescent Road Master Plan

Phase One Engagement - What we Heard

November 24, 2021

- Provide infrastructure for activities or usable gathering spaces

Detailed charts and verbatim

- For a detailed summary of all the input that was provided, please see the [Summary of Input](#) section.
- For a verbatim listing of all the input that was provided, please see the separate Verbatim Appendix document available on the [project webpage](#).

Next steps

All verbatim and themed public feedback collected in this engagement phase will be provided to the City Project Team to help inform work on proposed designs. In addition to public feedback, the project team is reviewing data and traffic calming and public space best practices to inform the proposed design. Indigenous engagement is also being planned and conducted through the winter to seek knowledge and guidance from Elders that will contribute to opportunities for commemoration, education and use of this space.

In the second phase of engagement, in early 2022, we will ask for additional engagement feedback to review and improve proposed designs. The designs and recommendations in the completed Crescent Road Master Plan will be presented to Council in Spring/Summer 2022 and if approved, they will set the stage for phased implementation and a final detailed design of the road and adjacent park space.

Summary of Input

Tool 1 – Planning A Space With Balance

Q1 – Within the last two years, which activities have you participated in within the project area?

	Year Round	Spring Summer Fall	Winter	N/A Haven't Participated
Walking	552	130	6	12
Walking or using wheelchair or walker (alone or with someone)	210	67	6	306
Running/Jogging	263	120	1	241
Wheeled (Cycling, scooters, in-line skates, and skateboards)	204	273	2	167
Sat on a bench	367	209	2	91
Ate food in my car	68	37	11	478
Ate food at a bench or picnic table	93	181	2	328
Read a historic plaque	282	119	5	224
Played games or use the beanbags on the street closure	29	85	1	492
Attended an event	77	134	4	388
Watched fireworks	115	270	5	249
Used the stairs to commute	298	108	5	234
Used the stairs for fitness	222	142	1	269
Posed for photos with family or friends	279	122	3	223
Walked a dog	252	55	0	325
Brought visitors to see the view	388	103	2	162
Watched the goats graze	64	362	1	224

Questions 2 to 5 targeted feedback related to focus area 1, the area that includes Crescent Heights Park and the roadway and bluff between 2nd St. N.W. and 3rd St. N.W.

Questions 6 and 7 targeted feedback related to focus area 2, the south side of Crescent Road.

Question 8 targeted feedback related to focus area 3, the stairs and path on McHugh Bluff and areas used for fitness.

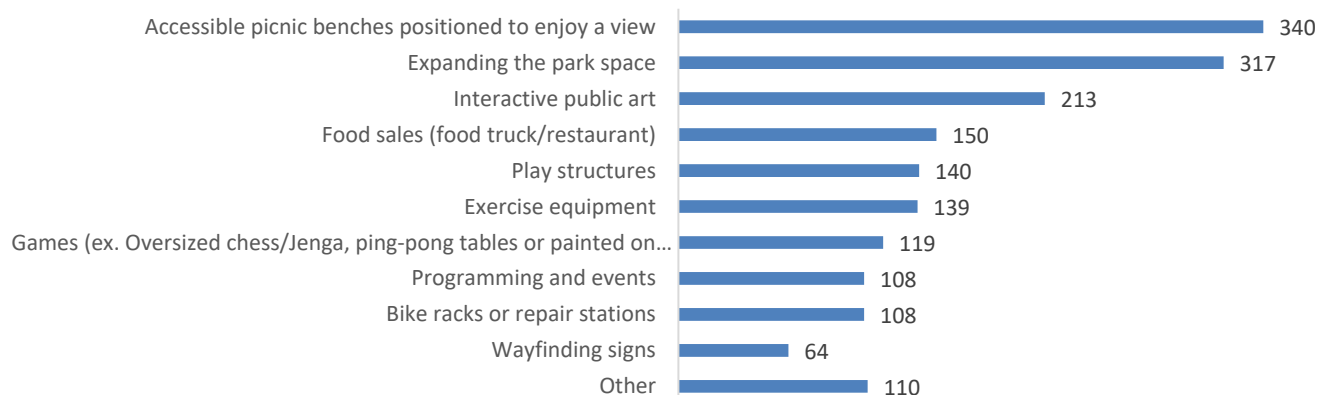
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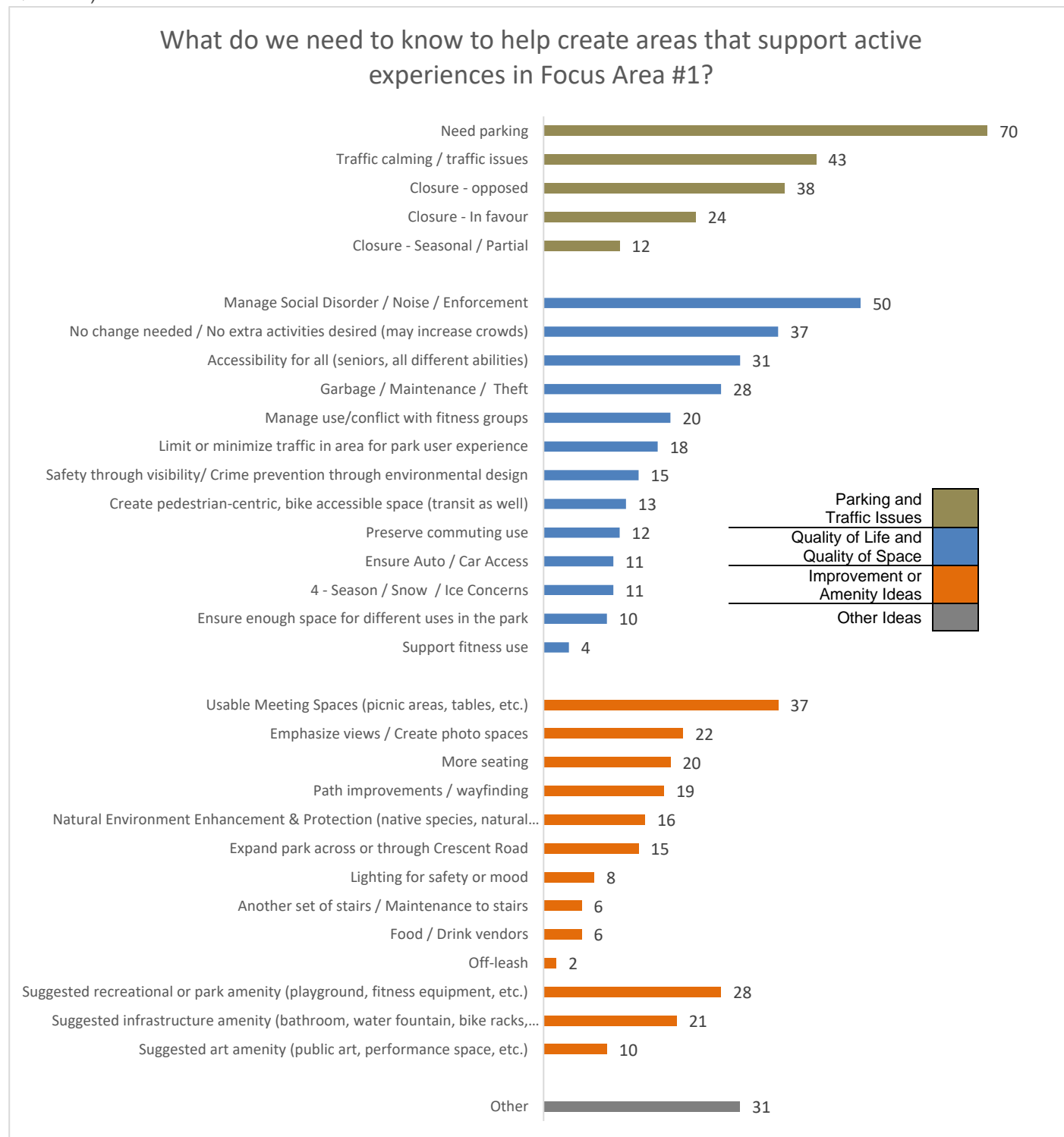


Q2 – Please select your favorite three potential ideas you feel could support active experiences in this area:

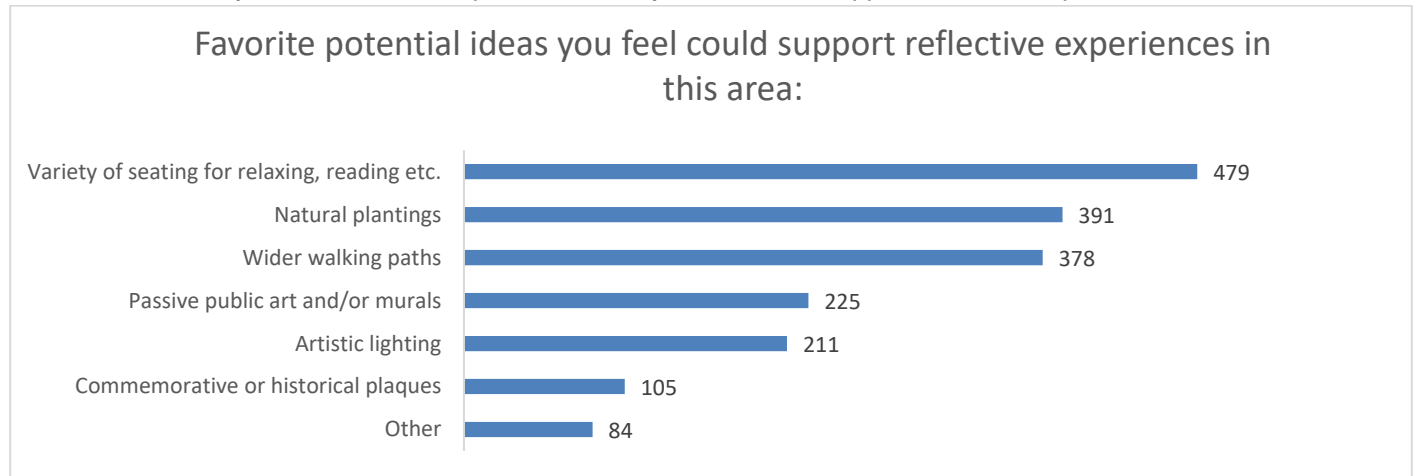
Favorite potential ideas you feel could support active experiences in this area:



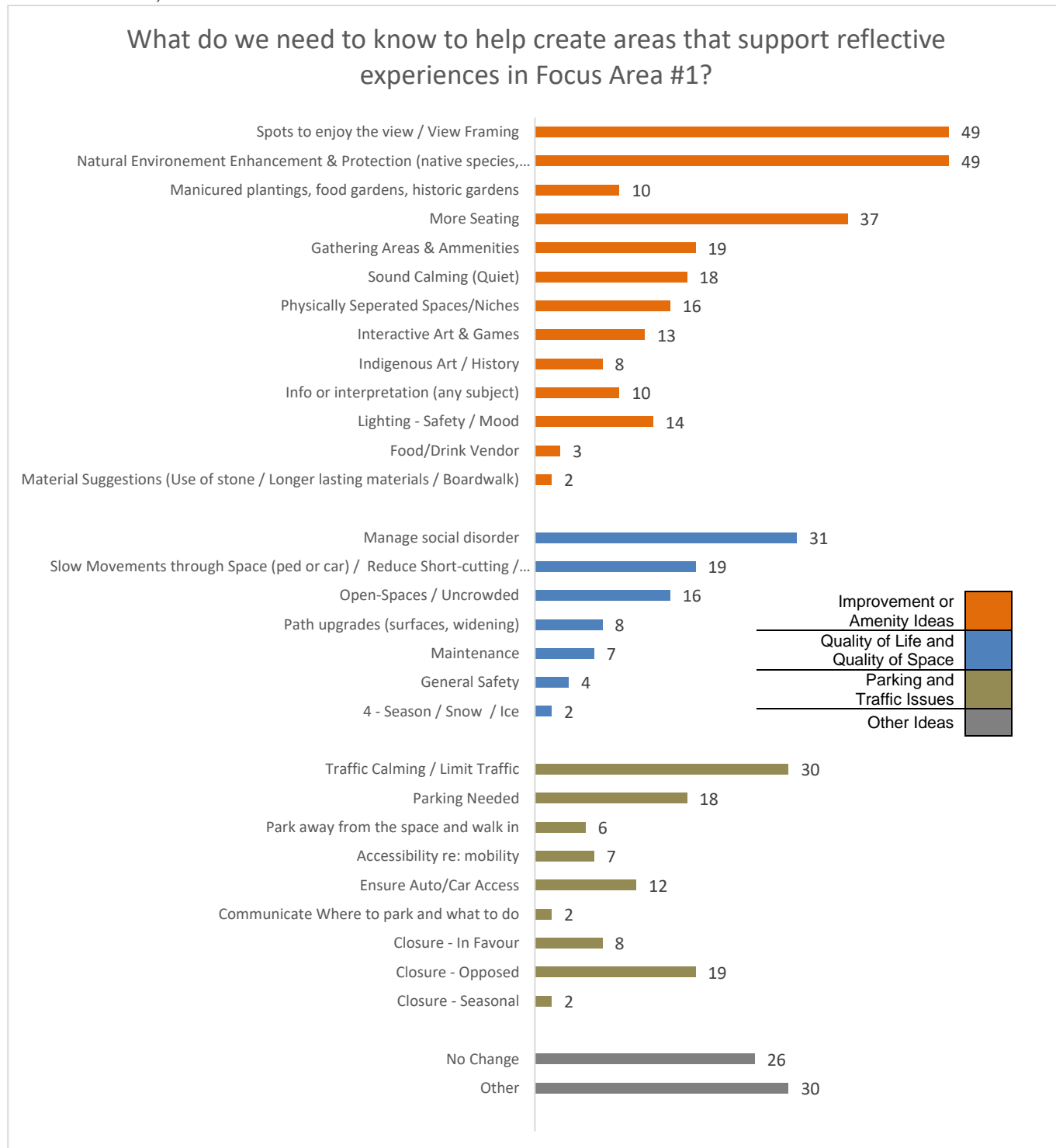
Q3 - What do we need to know to help create areas that support active experiences in Focus Area #1? (Open Ended Question)



Q4 - Please select your favourite three potential ideas you feel could support reflective experiences in this area:



Q5 - What do we need to know to help create areas that support reflective experiences in Focus Area #1? (Open Ended Question)







Crescent Road Master Plan

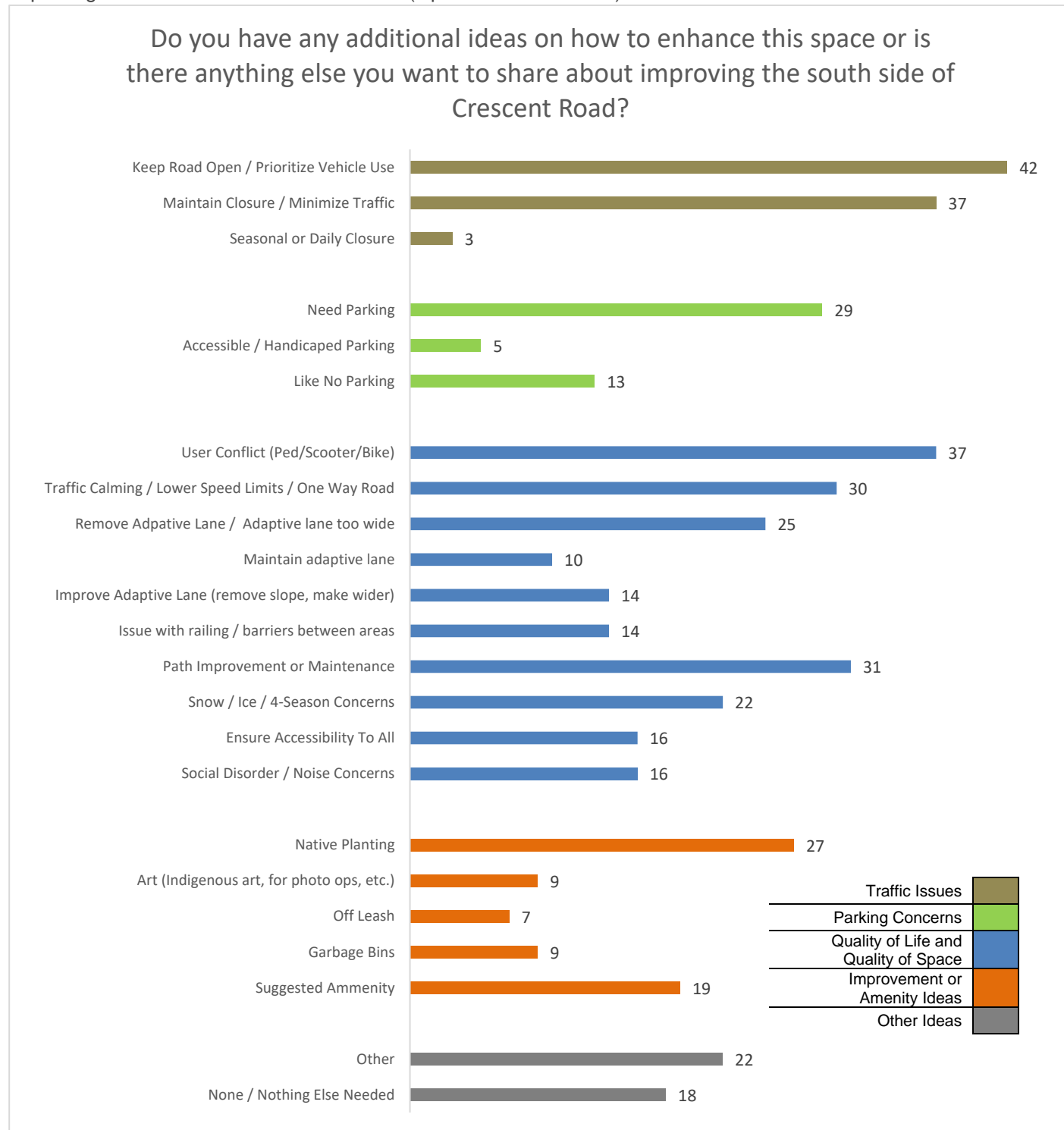
Phase One Engagement - What we Heard

November 24, 2021

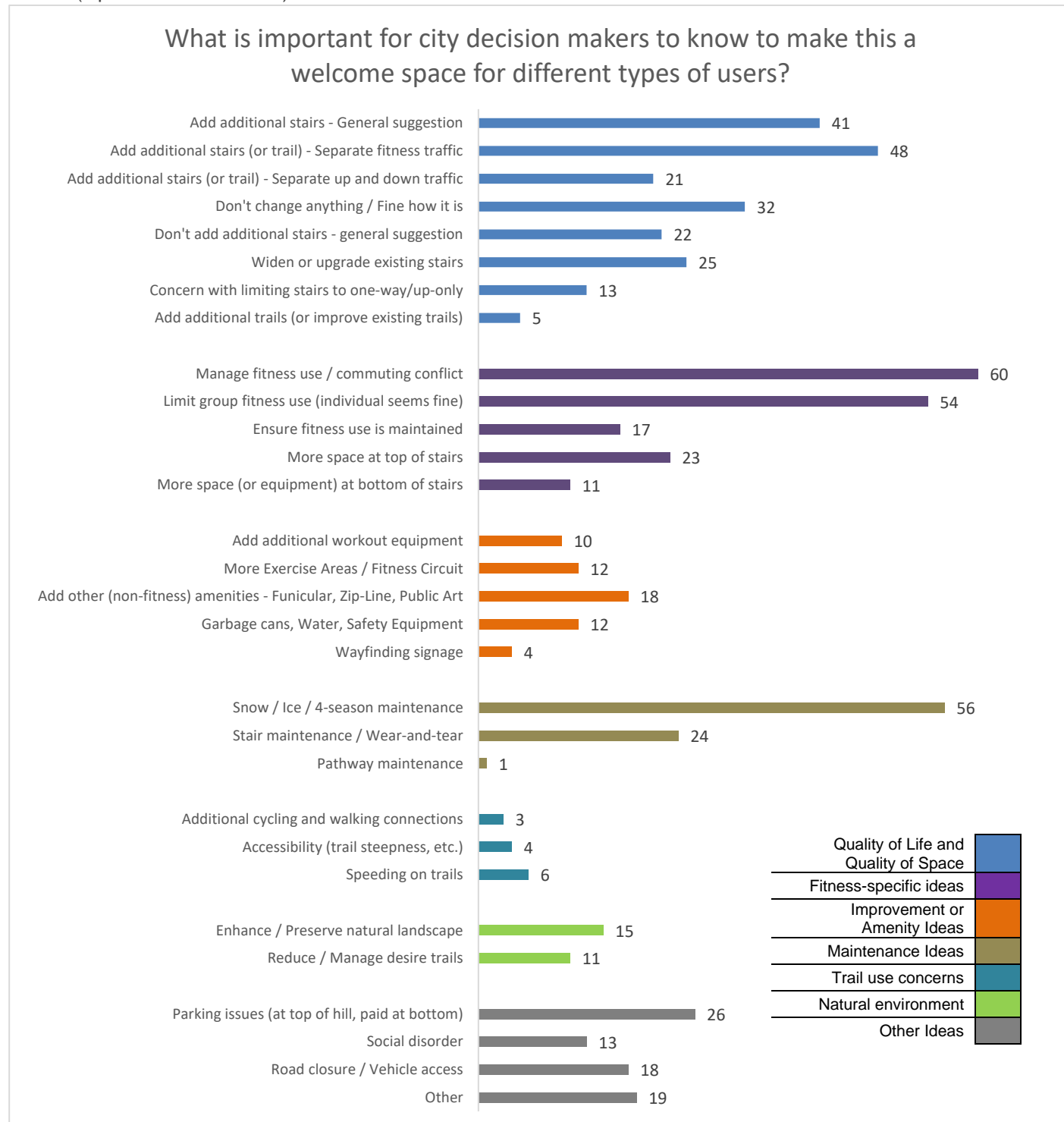
Q6 – How do you feel about the following ideas to enhance the south side of Crescent Road N.W. in the long term?

	 Like it	 Neutral	 Don't like it	 Not sure
Widening the path at busy crossings	459	135	78	19
Separating people walking and wheeling	494	100	86	14
A permanent paved path for people wheeling	447	111	110	24
Maintaining vehicle circulation	292	112	250	41
Providing some parking options	285	133	256	24
Adding more seating	439	190	45	8
Adding more plantings	514	117	43	9
Add more waste and recycling bins	519	141	22	5
Commemorative plaques sharing history	314	289	47	23
Better snow clearing / Maintenance	455	179	21	26
More shaded areas	329	261	79	13
Installing bike racks	294	252	109	26

Q7 – Do you have any additional ideas on how to enhance this space or is there anything else you want to share about improving the south side of Crescent Road? (Open Ended Question)



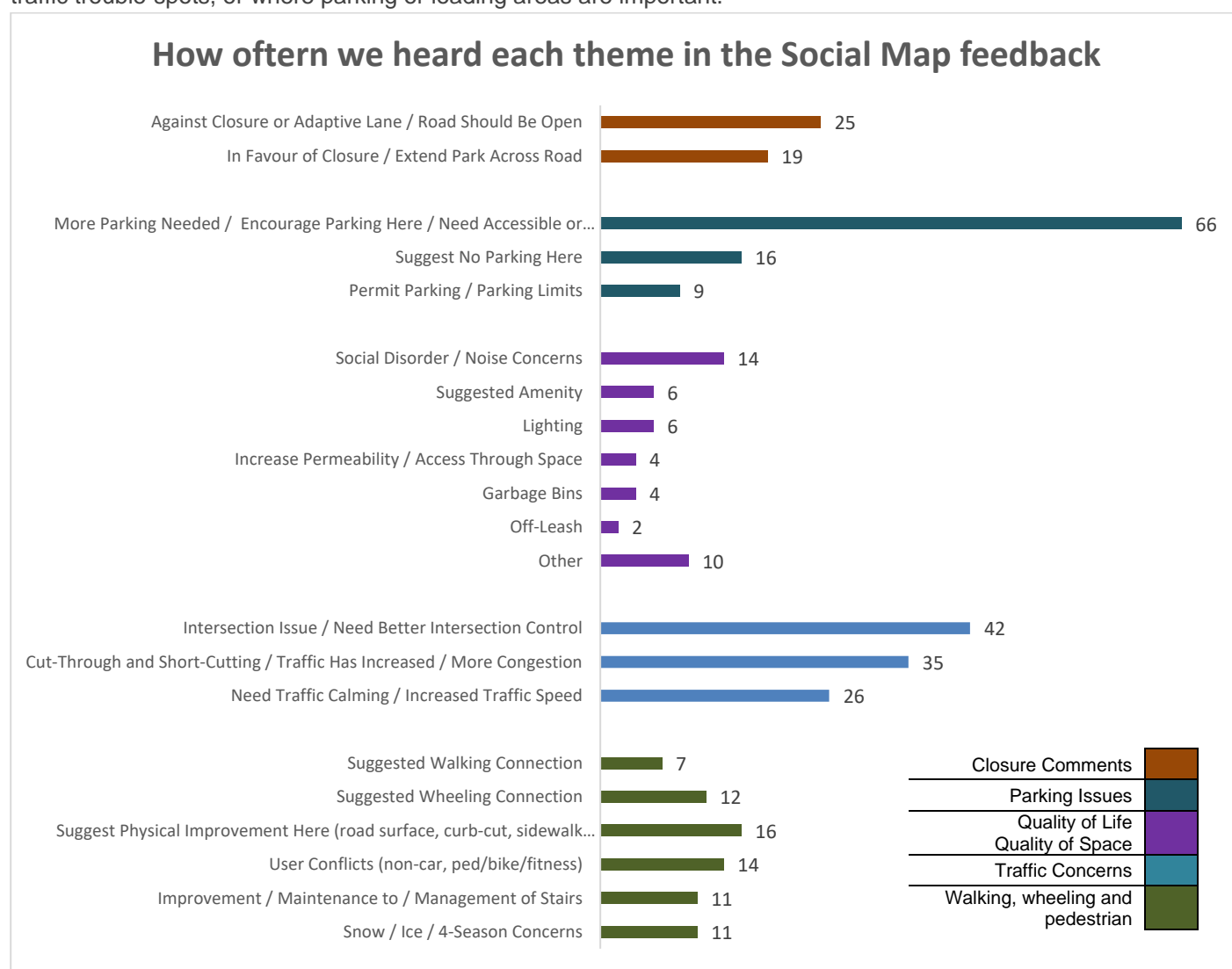
Q8 - What is important for city decision makers to know to make focus area 3 a welcome space for different types of users? (Open Ended Question)



Tool 2 – Understanding Walking, Wheeling, Traffic Circulation, and Parking

One of the goals of the Crescent Road Master Plan will be to provide clear walking and wheeling connections through the project area and to the rest of the network. The City also wants to accommodate local motor vehicle circulation and provide parking or loading options that consider the needs of both local residents and visitors.

Q 1 – Click on Add Marker below to show us where walking and wheeling connections are needed, areas that are traffic trouble-spots, or where parking or loading areas are important.

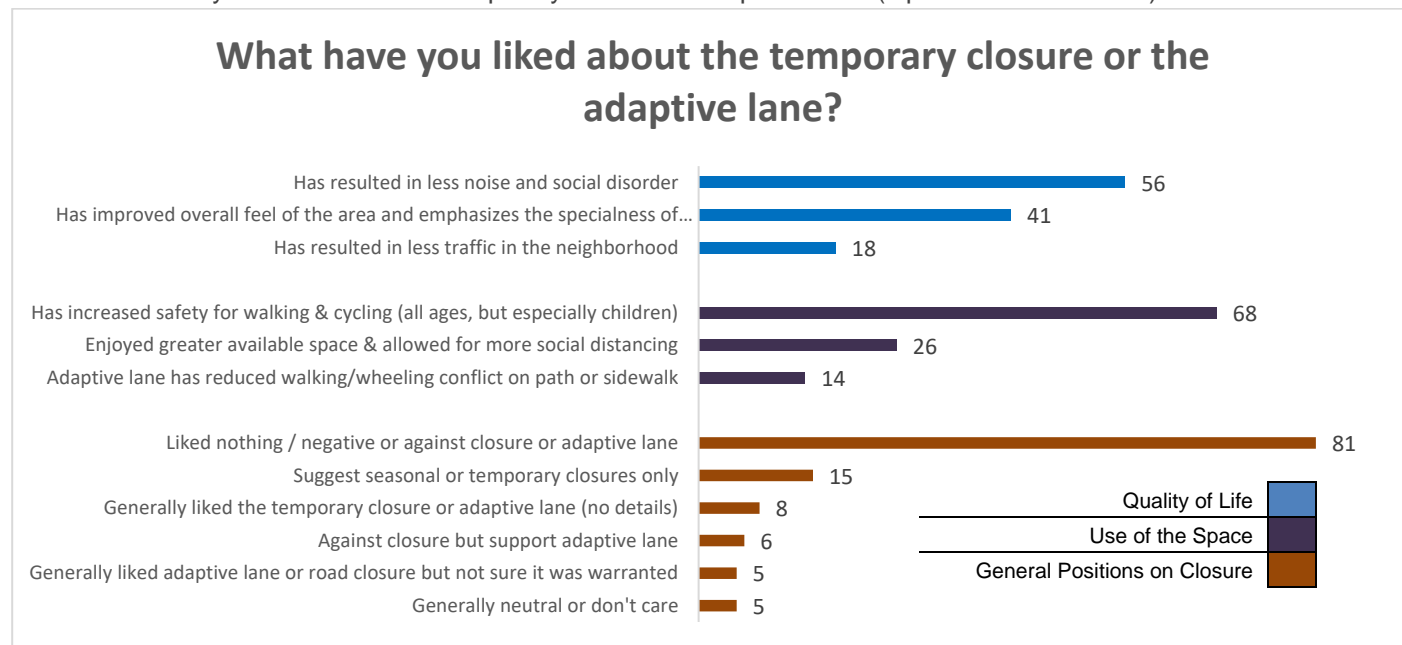


All submitted map comments can be seen in theme groups in the following Google Map.

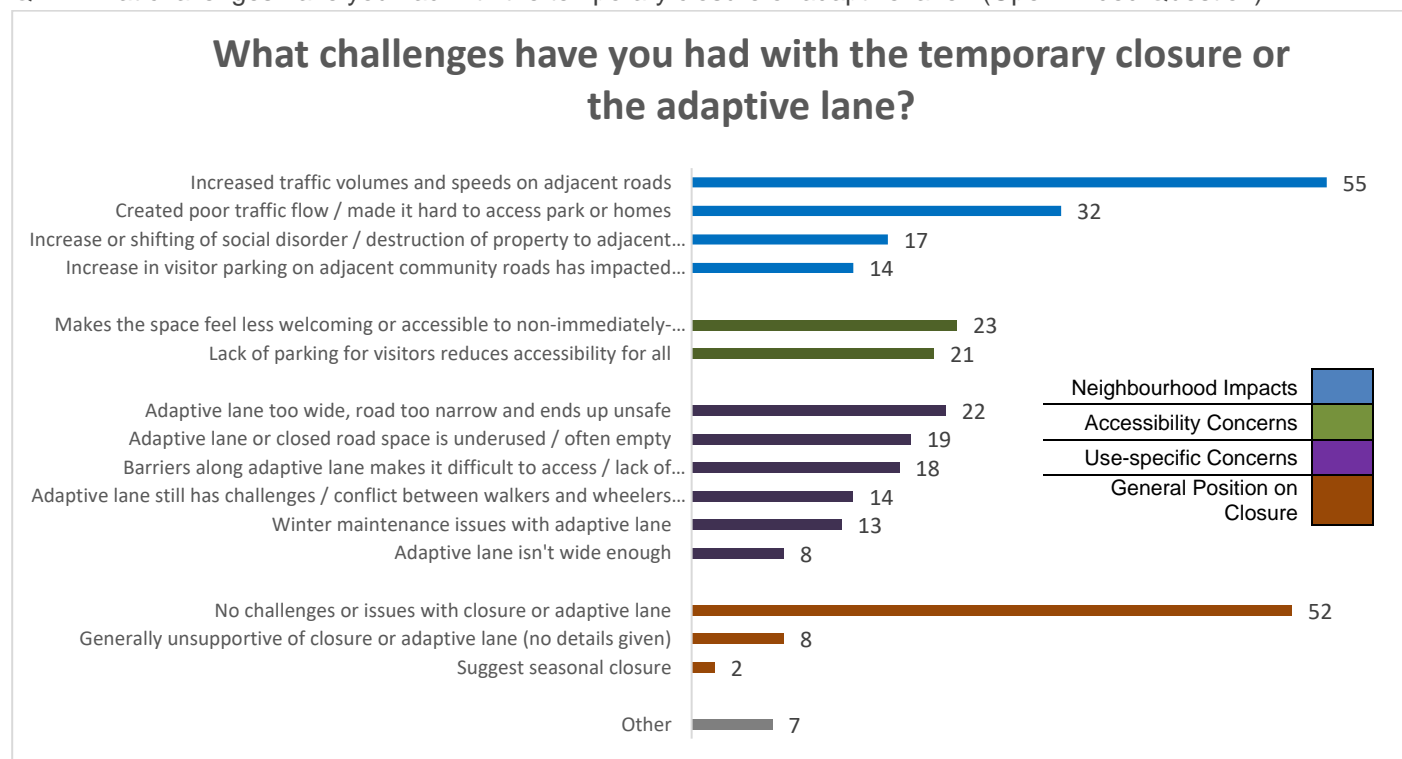
<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/2/edit?mid=1I7qFbD9Z0RjLyQKRGFoJx4OeyFM8KDcX&usp=sharing>

Tool 3 – Temporary closure feedback

Q1 – What have you liked about the temporary closure or adaptive lane? (Open Ended Question)

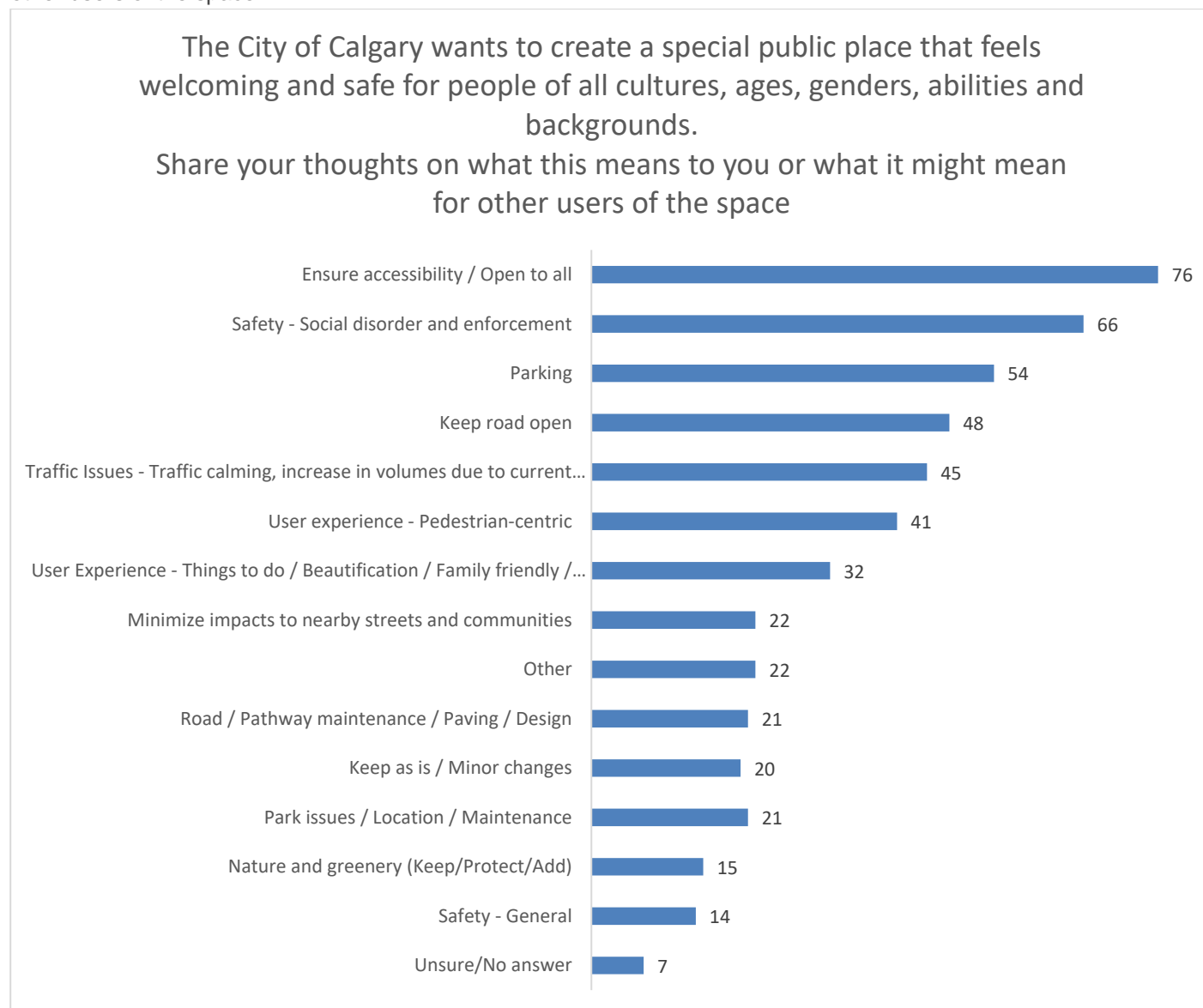


Q2 – What challenges have you had with the temporary closure or adaptive lane? (Open Ended Question)



Tool 4 – Planning a space for all

Q1 –The City of Calgary wants to create a special public place that feels welcoming and safe for people of all cultures, ages, genders, abilities and backgrounds. Share your thoughts on what this means to you or what it might mean for other users of the space?



Participant Evaluations

