

ST. JOHN'S

University Area Neighbourhood Plan

Phase 2 Engagement
What We Heard Report
June 2025



Table of Contents

Project Overview	3
Engagement Approach	4
How We Engaged	5
Key Themes	8
Public Engagement Findings	10
Vision, Objectives, & Strategies	11
Website Quick Poll	17
Land Use	18
Mobility	20
Parks & Recreation	27
Community Activations	29
Survey Demographics	31
Interested Parties Summary	33
Indigenous Engagement	35
Next Steps	37

Project Overview

The City of St. John's is developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the University Area. The Neighbourhood Plan will set out a clear vision for land use, transportation, open space, and growth in the area.

This plan will be shaped by the existing policies of the Envision St. John's Municipal Plan, analysis of local conditions, and engagement with the neighbourhood and wider community. To be successful, the vision and plan for the University Area must be grounded in an understanding of the unique characteristics of the community. The plan will incorporate the needs and desires of the people who live, work, and play in this neighbourhood.

The University Area Neighbourhood Plan is being completed at the same time as the Neighbourhood Plan for Cowan Heights, and engagement phases are occurring at the same time.

The project involves two main phases of public engagement prior to the release of a draft plan. This is the What We Heard Report for the second phase of engagement. Following this, a draft of the Neighbourhood Plan will be released publicly in fall 2025 for review and consideration by Council.



Figure 1. University Area Neighbourhood Plan Boundary



Phase 1 Engagement

Fall 2024



Phase 2 Engagement

Spring 2025



Draft Plan Release

Fall 2025

Engagement Approach

The Phase 2 Engagement took place between April 23 and May 25, 2025. This was the second opportunity residents, businesses, and other interested parties had to provide input on the University Area and Cowan Heights Neighbourhood Plans. The focus of this engagement for the University Area was to gather feedback on the emerging land use, mobility, parks, and public realm strategies proposed for the neighbourhood and to provide input on neighbourhood priority action items.

In this phase, we asked for feedback on:

- A draft neighbourhood vision and objectives for the University Area
- The overall neighbourhood strategy

After the first two topics, participants were given the option to complete additional detailed questions about:

- Land use directions about intensification areas and proposed land use changes
- Mobility direction
- Parks direction
- Community activation ideas and prioritization

The following section provides the findings from the online survey, project website, and virtual and in-person public events. Online and in-person results have been combined in the following qualitative summaries, however the graphs and statistics reflect online survey and website responses only.

The online survey was divided into a short form and optional long form survey:

Short form: Neighbourhood Vision, Objectives, and Neighbourhood Strategy



Optional long form sections: Land Use, Mobility, Parks, Community Activation
Demographics.

Due to this, there are more responses for the short form than the long form sections. Quantitative questions are presented in percentage of participants per question. The total number of people who completed or skipped the question, out of the 289 total surveys, is noted below each graph.






How We Engaged

A variety of methods were used to promote the project and collect feedback from the public and a diverse range of interested parties. Tactics included online engagement, in-person engagement, and a range of outreach and communications tactics. The following pages provide additional details about each of these components, including the number of participants who engaged.






Online Engagement

Activity	Description	Outputs
 Online Public Survey	The online survey was available on EngageStJohns.ca from April 23 to May 25, 2025. Hardcopies were available upon request.	309 responses
 Virtual Information Session	One online information session was hosted for University Area on Wednesday, April 30, 2025.	8 registered 0 attendees

In-Person Engagement

Activity	Description	Outputs
 Focus Group Sessions	<p>Four Focus Group sessions were hosted jointly for both Neighbourhood Plans:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 6 Business Drop-in • May 7 Social & Cultural Focus Group • May 8 General Focus Group • May 13 Council Committees 	<p>1 business</p> <p>7 organizations</p> <p>3 Council Committees</p>
 Interviews	<p>One-on-one interviews were held with a range of interested parties for both Neighbourhood Plans. Some were in person and some virtual.</p>	<p>6 organizations</p>
 First Light Lunch	<p>The project team hosted a lunch with First Light staff on May 8 to discuss Indigenous perspectives on both Neighbourhood Plan areas.</p>	<p>7 First Light staff participants</p>
 Open House	<p>An open house took place on May 8, 2025 from 5 - 8 p.m. at the St. John's Community Market (245 Freshwater Road) for the University Area Neighbourhood.</p>	<p>42 participants</p>
 Pop-Ups	<p>Two popup events were held for both neighbourhoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 10, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Farmers' Market • May 9, from 12 p.m. - 2 p.m. at the Memorial University Student Centre 	<p>130+ interactions</p>

Outreach & Communications

	Activity	Description	Outputs
	Project Website	EngageStJohns.ca was available for the duration of the engagement and included information about events, how to get involved, and all survey and map links. The project page also linked to the Cowan Heights project page.	1,259 page visits
	Email List	Four email updates were sent to EngageStJohns.ca subscribers on April 22, May 5, May 9, and May 14.	<p>April 22: 4126 people - open rate 63.2%</p> <p>May 5: 4139 people - open rate 60.2%</p> <p>May 9: 4081 people - open rate 57.3%</p> <p>May 14: 4089 people - open rate 58.7%</p>
	Coffee Sleeves	Coffee sleeves were distributed at one coffee shop in each of the two neighbourhoods with the QR code and link to the engagement website.	300 coffee sleeves
	Media Release	A media release was shared with the local media and posted to the City's website on April 22, 2025. The release was also sent to subscribers via email.	1 release
	Social Media	The City of St. John's posted on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn throughout the engagement phase from April 23 to May 25, 2025.	<p>Link clicks: 1,284</p> <p>Impressions: 86,559</p> <p>Unique reach: 23,787</p>

Key Themes

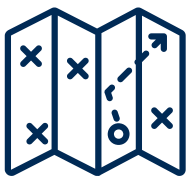
Several key takeaways were identified from the feedback received across all in-person and online engagement activities, including all audiences. While all feedback received will help inform the final neighbourhood plan, these main takeaways represent the most significant findings from this phase of engagement, and are summarized by engagement topic below.



Vision & Objectives

The Vision and Objectives were generally well-supported, although suggestions for how both could be more directly connected to the University Area were expressed. A focus on ensuring the Vision and Objectives are relevant and recognizably unique to the University Area would help to improve their overall support.

Transit, green space, and connection to MUN were all prevailing themes heard throughout discussions related to the Vision and Objectives during Phase 2 engagement. At the same time, it was made clear that greater emphasis should also be placed on the neighbourhoods within the University Area. While the institutional anchors of MUN and the Health Sciences Centre are important aspects of the University Area identity and vibrancy, they should not overshadow the residential communities that make up the “neighbourhood” part of the University Area Neighbourhood.



Strategies

The seven strategies proposed for the University Area were all well-supported by respondents, although some were more contentious than others. Recommendations to improve parks connectivity, safe crossings of Prince Philip Drive, and to invest in new shared-use path infrastructure along Newtown Road were all received very favourably. By contrast, recommendations around fostering a growth corridor along Elizabeth Avenue and supporting more mixed use development along Freshwater Road were more coolly received by some respondents. While these two strategies were both still supported by the majority of respondents, these findings indicate that careful consideration for how these are both sensitively and considerately implemented must be made in the draft plan.



Land Use

All land use recommendations were well-supported by respondents, with no recommendation receiving less than two-thirds support. Despite this, further consideration should be given to the specific recommendations the plan will make for implementing these land use changes to ensure that they consider some of the concerns and interests expressed by participants during Phase 2 engagement.

In particular, sensitivities around how and where different types of housing and mixed use developments are supported along Freshwater Road and Elizabeth Avenue should be made to ensure that future growth and change is respectful to existing community contexts while still able to provide greater residential and commercial opportunities throughout the neighbourhood.



Mobility

Generally, respondents supported the Newtown Road shared-use path and approved of converting the road for one-way vehicular traffic to support this goal. Pedestrians identified improved connections to parks as their greatest priority, particularly to Kelly's Brook Park, Wishingwell Park, and Pippy Park, while winter snow-clearing improvements also ranked highly as an area of improvements. For transit users, improved seating, lighting, and shelters for bus stops were identified as priority improvements.



Parks

Respondents are excited by opportunities to see more activities and events happening in their parks, but there were clear priorities. While many active uses were identified as being supported, sports such as disc golf and pickleball were less preferred. Nature-based activities, playgrounds, and programming for children and youth were highly regarded.



Community Activation

All community activations brought forward to the public were well-received and had substantial community buy-in. Commentary focused more around getting to work to make them happen than about whether they were the right ideas or not.

Public Engagement Findings

The following section provides the findings from the online survey and public events. The feedback is organized into the following sections:

The online survey was divided into a short form and optional long form survey.

- Short form: Neighbourhood Vision, Objectives, and Neighbourhood Strategy
- Optional long form sections: Land Use, Mobility, Parks, Community Activation
- Demographics

Online and in-person results have been combined in the following qualitative summaries, however the graphs and statistics reflect online survey responses only. Due to this, there are more responses for the short form than the long form sections. Quantitative questions are presented in percentage of participants per question. The total number of people who completed or skipped the question is noted below each graph.



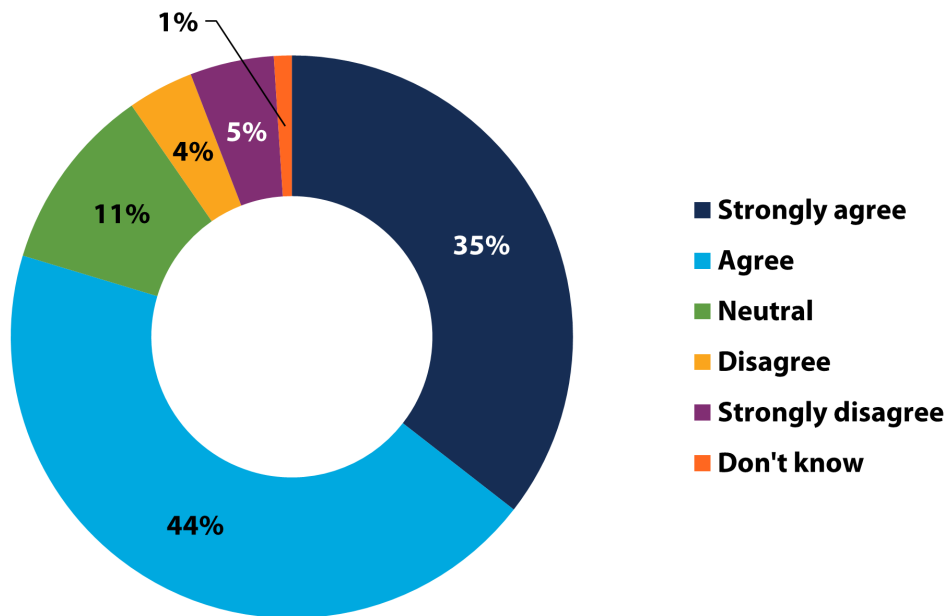
Vision, Objectives, & Strategies

118
comments

Vision

The first series of questions asked respondents about their level of agreement with the draft vision, the objectives set out for the plan, and the strategies used to accomplish this.

What is your level of agreement with the draft vision?



Percentage of Participants (290 completed / 19 skipped)

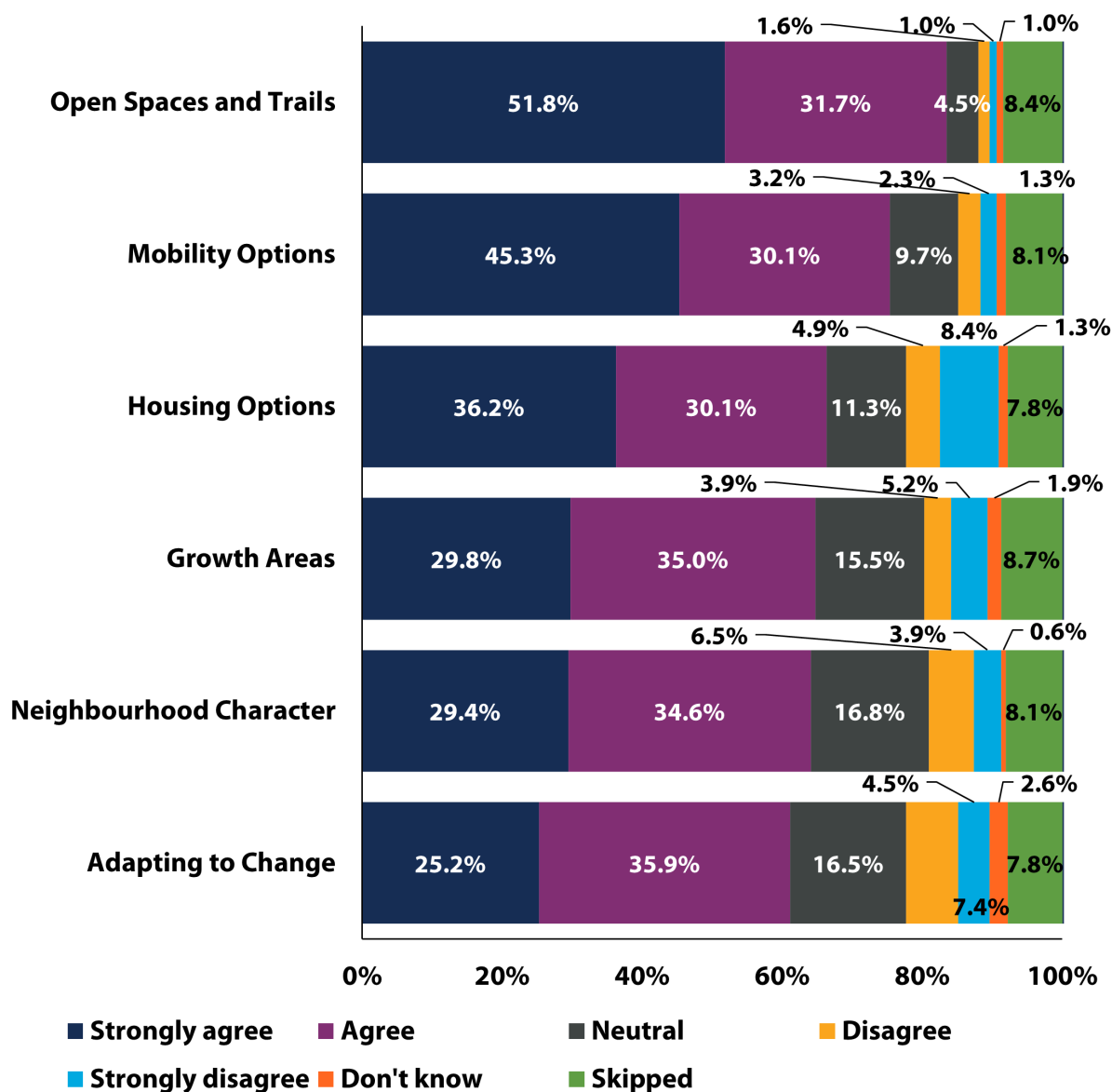
The level of agreement with the draft vision was generally favourable, with 79 percent of participants selecting agree or strongly agree with the proposed vision and around 9 percent selecting disagree or strongly disagree. However, 11 percent were neutral towards the draft vision.

Despite the large majority of support, comments shared about how the Vision could be improved included:

- Providing **more focus on the neighbourhood** aspect to balance the focus on MUN and the Health Sciences Centre;
- Clarifying **what is meant by diverse housing choice**;
- Strengthening the **emphasis on what makes the University Area special** so it does not feel like an ambiguous statement that could apply anywhere.

Objectives

What is your level of agreement with the following objectives?



Percentage of Participants (283 completed / 26 skipped)

The Open Spaces and Trails objective reached the highest level of support, with 84 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing and less than 3 percent total disagreeing. Housing Options was slightly more contentious, with roughly 13 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with that objective. Despite this, all objectives were generally quite supported, with no option receiving less than 50 percent agree or strongly agree support.

Objectives

Is there anything you would change or improve in the draft objectives?

114
comments

An overall theme in the comments was a focus on housing, with contrasting opinions on whether more housing and different types of housing were needed in the University Area or not. Almost one in three comments on the objectives discussed housing in some capacity, with many respondents concerned more housing could irreparably change the neighbourhood they love and call home. Others argued housing is more needed than ever, as increasing housing costs are pricing residents out of their homes, and the types of housing they can afford are not being built.

Several additional themes included:

Transportation: All methods of transportation were highly discussed, from issues finding parking on and near campus, to challenges accessing the bus, to concerns around sidewalk clearing in the winter months. Most respondents discussed topics such as the need to introduce residential parking permits, a desire to see more transit access off campus, and appreciation for the new Elizabeth Avenue shared-use path, while a minority of respondents expressed concern around the shared use path.

Memorial University (MUN): There was recognition that MUN is a key driver of activity and vibrancy in the community, but also a concern that more focus needs to be placed on the community outside of the university campus itself. Integration and connection between the neighbourhood, both physically (i.e. pathways, roads, parking, etc.) and socially (i.e. feeling more welcome on campus, inviting local residents to university events, etc.), were also seen as areas where further improvements could be made.

Green Space: There were comments encouraging further investment and improvements in existing trails and pathways throughout the University Area. Respondents also expressed concern about tree canopy, and ensuring that adequate greenspaces are retained with new developments to maintain the University Area's attractiveness.

Neighbourhood Strategy

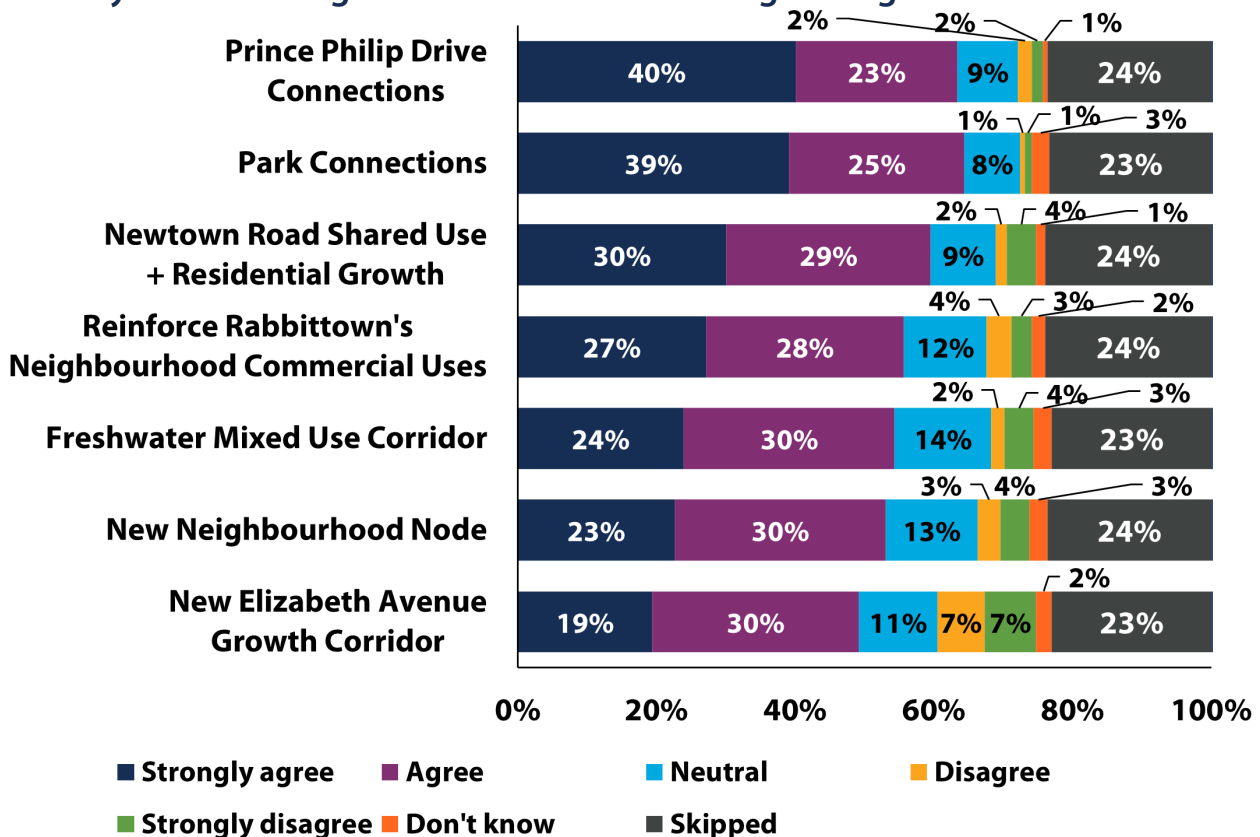
The Neighbourhood Strategy was the main concept engaged on in Phase 2. It was the primary information shared at the smaller in-person popup and focus group sessions. The Strategy included seven preliminary neighbourhood strategies.

Roughly one in four respondents skipped this question (23 percent). Calculated across those who did respond, majority support was expressed for all seven strategies.

Greater parks connections to Kelly's Brook Park and Pippy Park was the most supported strategy (64 percent agree or strongly agree), with safer connections across Prince Philip Drive receiving only slightly less support (63 percent agree or strongly agree).

The New Elizabeth Growth Corridor was the most contentious strategy, with 14 percent disagreeing or strongly disagreeing compared to 49 percent agreeing or strongly agreeing. This was the only strategy that exceeded 7 percent total disagreement, indicating broadly that the proposed strategies are well-aligned with community perceptions on what key initiatives the University Area Neighbourhood Plan should focus on.

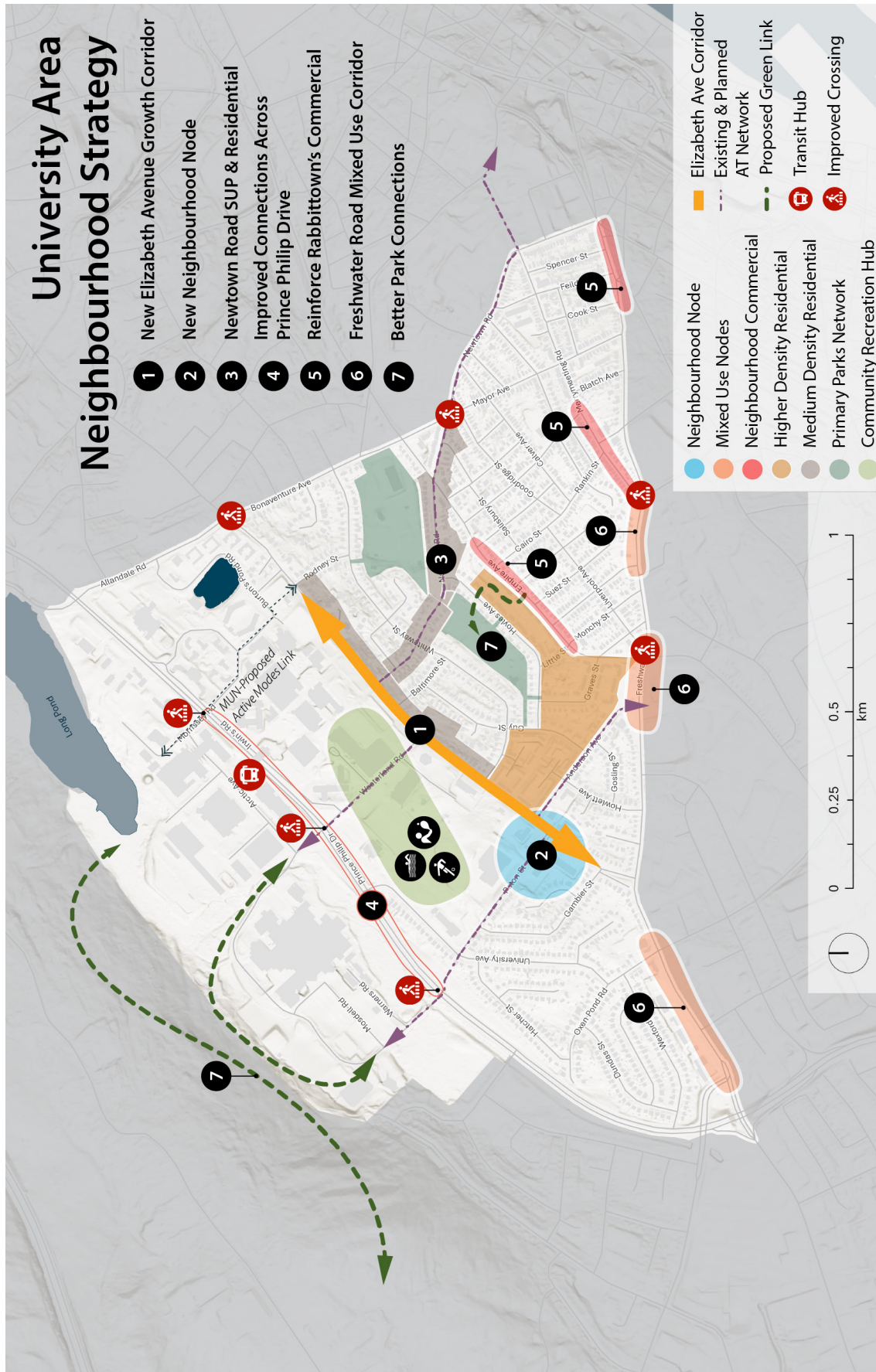
What is your level of agreement with the following strategies?



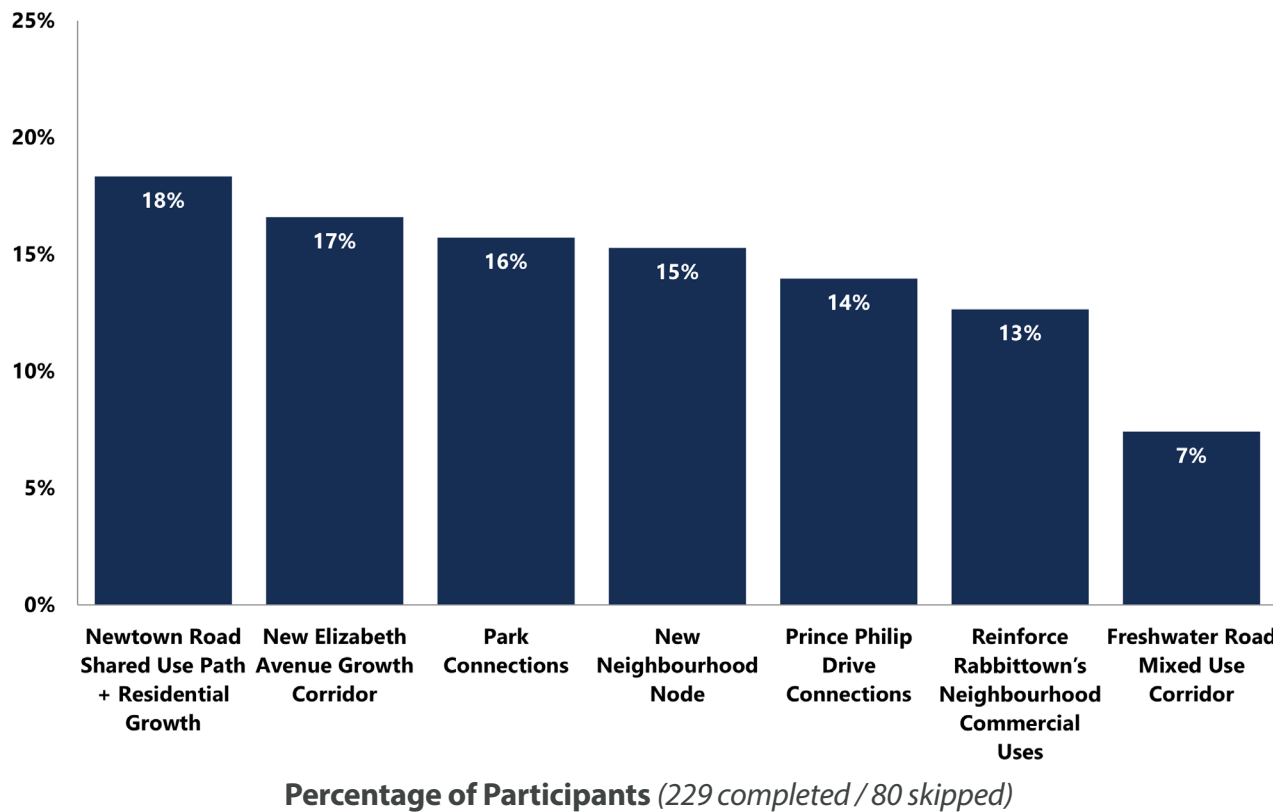
Percentage of Participants (238 completed / 71 skipped)

University Area Neighbourhood Strategy

- 1 New Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor
- 2 New Neighbourhood Node
- 3 Newtown Road SUP & Residential
- 4 Improved Connections Across Prince Philip Drive
- 5 Reinforce Rabbittown's Commercial
- 6 Freshwater Road Mixed Use Corridor
- 7 Better Park Connections



Of these strategies, which one do you think will have the most positive impact on the neighbourhood? Choose your top choice.



No individual strategy received a stand-out level of support relative to any others, with all receiving below 20 percent. Only the Freshwater Road Mixed Use Corridor received a substantially lower level of support, indicating it was felt to have less of a positive impact.

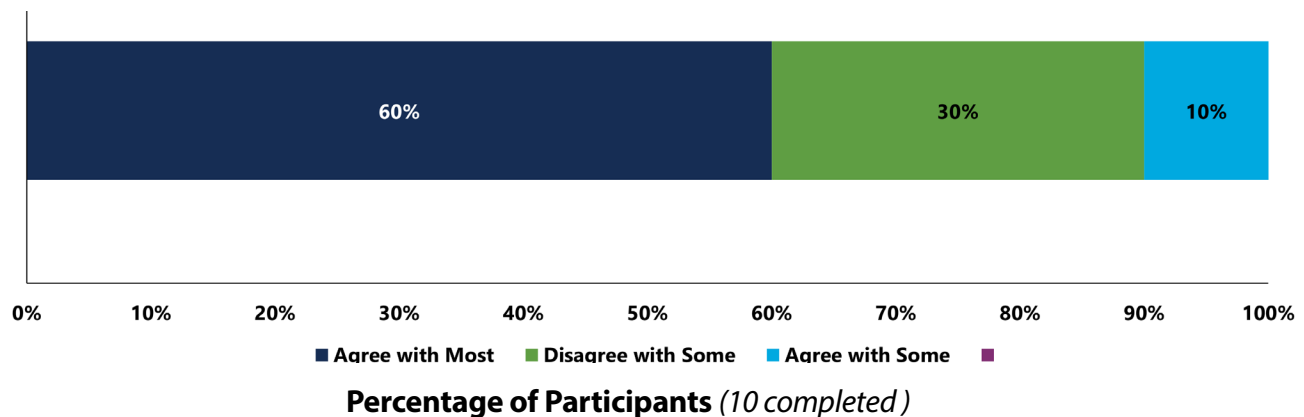
The Newtown Road Shared-Use Path and Residential Growth option had the highest support from participants, with roughly one in five respondents selecting it as the most positively impactful. This was closely followed by the New Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor and Park Connections. The New Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor is noteworthy for the level of belief in its positive impact given that it was the most contentious of the seven strategies in the previous question.

Website Quick Poll

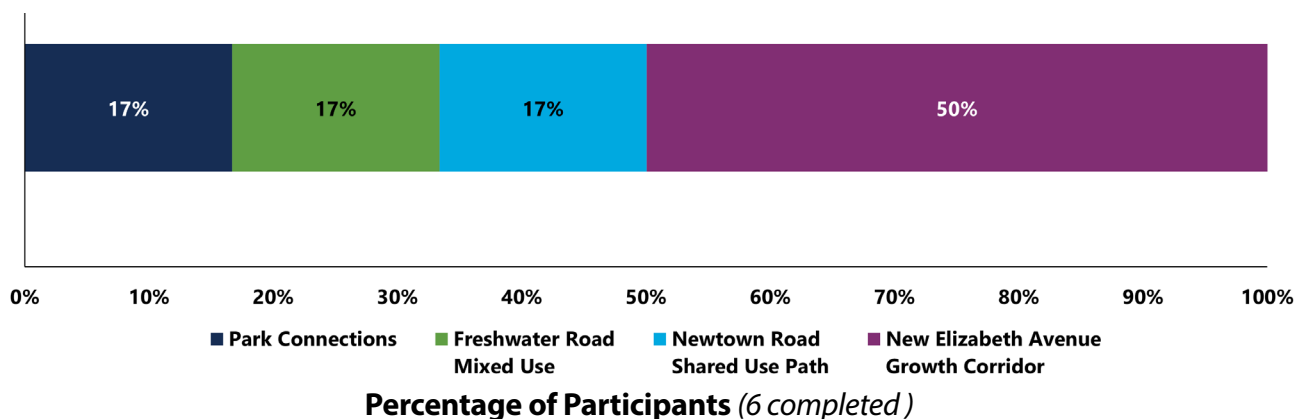
16
responses

In addition to the full online survey, three questions were posted on the project website for feedback about the Neighbourhood Strategy. Although response numbers were low, there was general support for all strategies. The Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor received the highest support.

What do you think of the key strategies proposed on the map for the University Area?



Of the strategies listed above, which one do you think would have the most positive impact on the neighbourhood?



In addition to the strategies above, are there other small improvements, programs, or upgrades that would positively impact the neighbourhood?

- A neighbourhood gym
- More places with seating and tables in parks and green spaces
- More bike racks in more accessible and high visibility areas
- More garbage cans throughout the entire area to cut down on litter and improve pest control

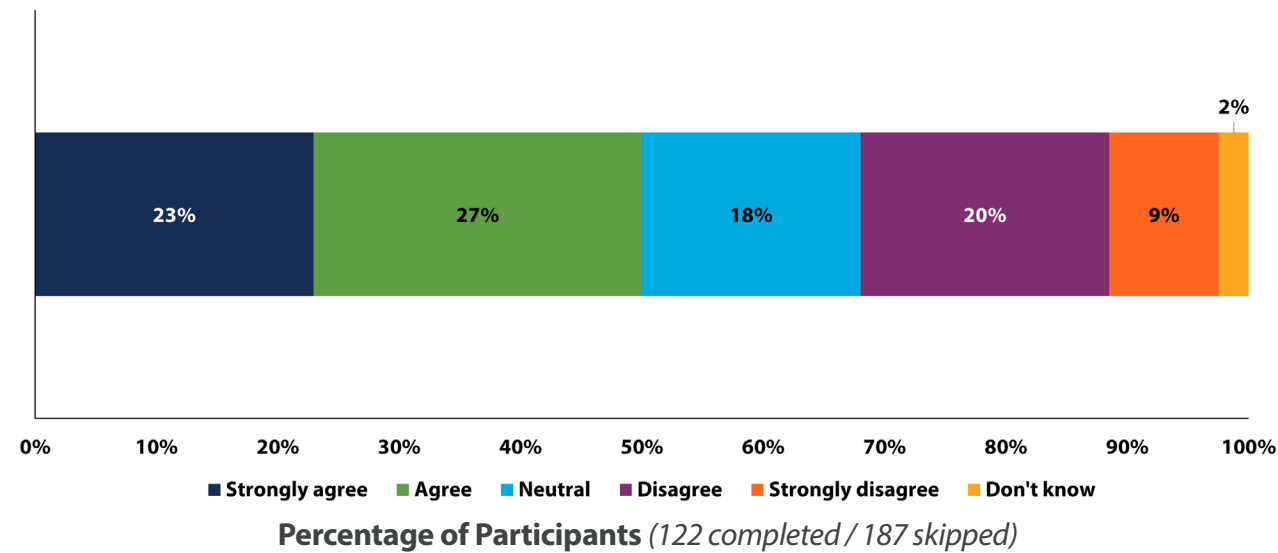
Land Use

In this section participants were asked about intensification areas in the University Area and about proposed zoning changes to support the proposed Neighbourhood Strategy.

About 50 percent of participants agreed an intensification area in the University Area was not necessary. An additional 18 percent indicated a neutral perspective on the matter, with another 2 percent indicating they did not know.

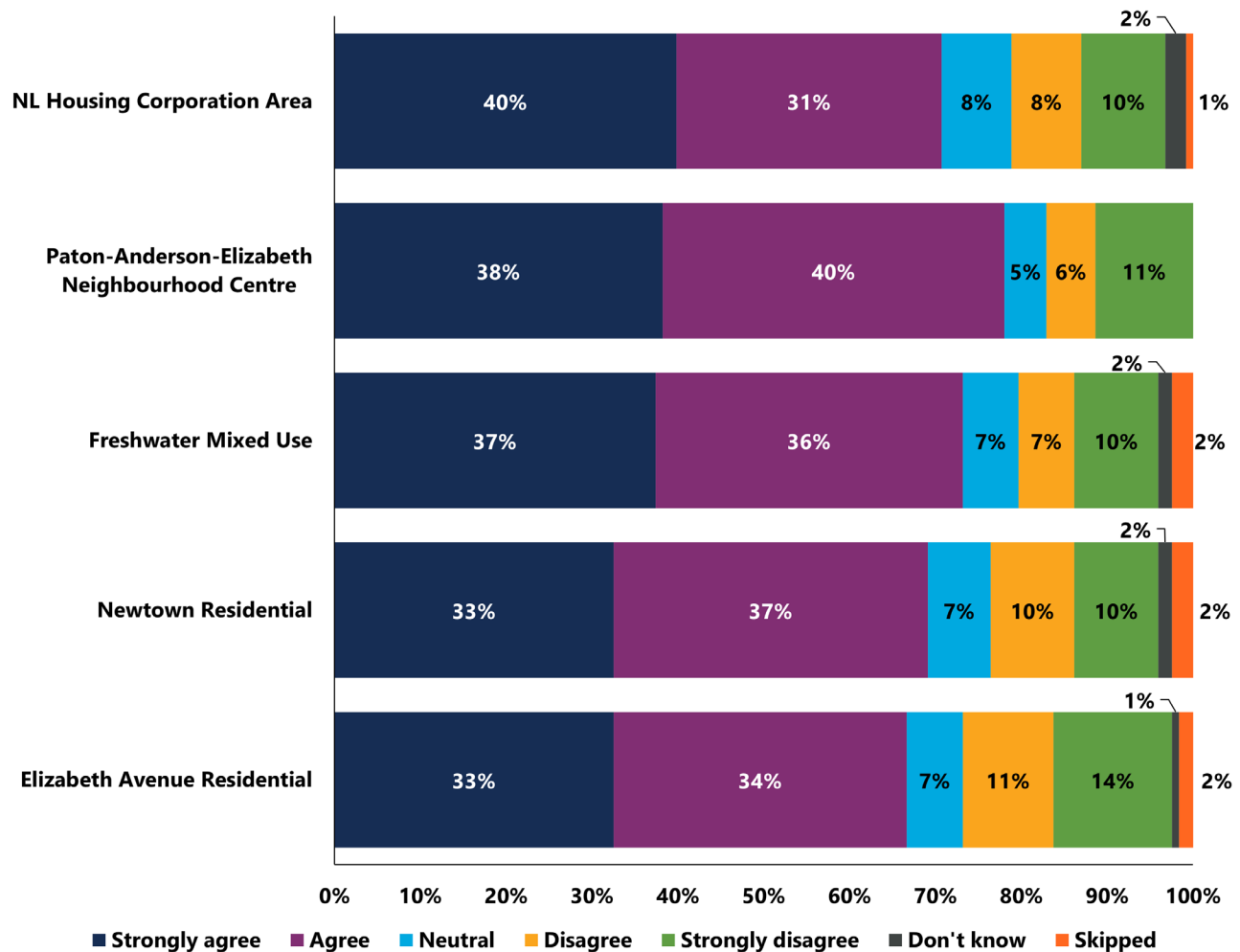
All of the proposed zoning changes received over two-thirds agree or strongly agree responses (greater than 66 percent). Of the proposed zoning changes, the proposal to create the Elizabeth Avenue - Paton Street - Anderson Road Neighbourhood Centre had the greatest level of support, with almost four-in-five respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the proposal.

What is your level of agreement with the decision to not include a new Intensification Area in the University Area?



A significant number of participants skipped this question, and those who did respond had generally mixed perspectives on the recommendation. While 50 percent expressed approval, roughly 30 percent disagreed with this position, one of the stronger levels of disagreement expressed throughout the survey. However, a substantial amount of people (20 percent) remained neutral or did not know how to respond, suggesting the question may not have been easy to understand or answer.

What is your level of agreement with the recommended zoning changes?



Percentage of Participants (123 completed / 186 skipped)

Participants were generally supportive of all proposed zoning changes. Across all recommendations, an average approval rating of 71 percent was expressed, with the Paton-Anderson-Elizabeth Neighbourhood Centre highest at 78 percent and the Elizabeth Avenue Residential lowest at a still highly-supported 67 percent.

The highest rate of disagreement was expressed towards Elizabeth Avenue Residential and Newtown Residential, with 25 percent and 20 percent opposed respectively.

Mobility

50
comments

The mobility section focused on the prioritization of improvements at intersections, implementing a shared-use path along Newtown Road, the transit hub, and along trails.

Which intersections should be prioritized for improvements? Rank from highest priority to lowest priority.

1st	Prince Philip Drive and Westerland Road / Clinch Crescent
2nd	Prince Philip Drive and Clinch Crescent
3rd	Elizabeth Avenue and Bonaventure Avenue
4th	Newtown Road, Mayor Avenue, and Goodridge Street
5th	Prince Philip Drive and Morrissey Road
6th	Freshwater Road, Merrymeeting Road, and Adams Avenue
7th	Freshwater Road and Anderson Avenue

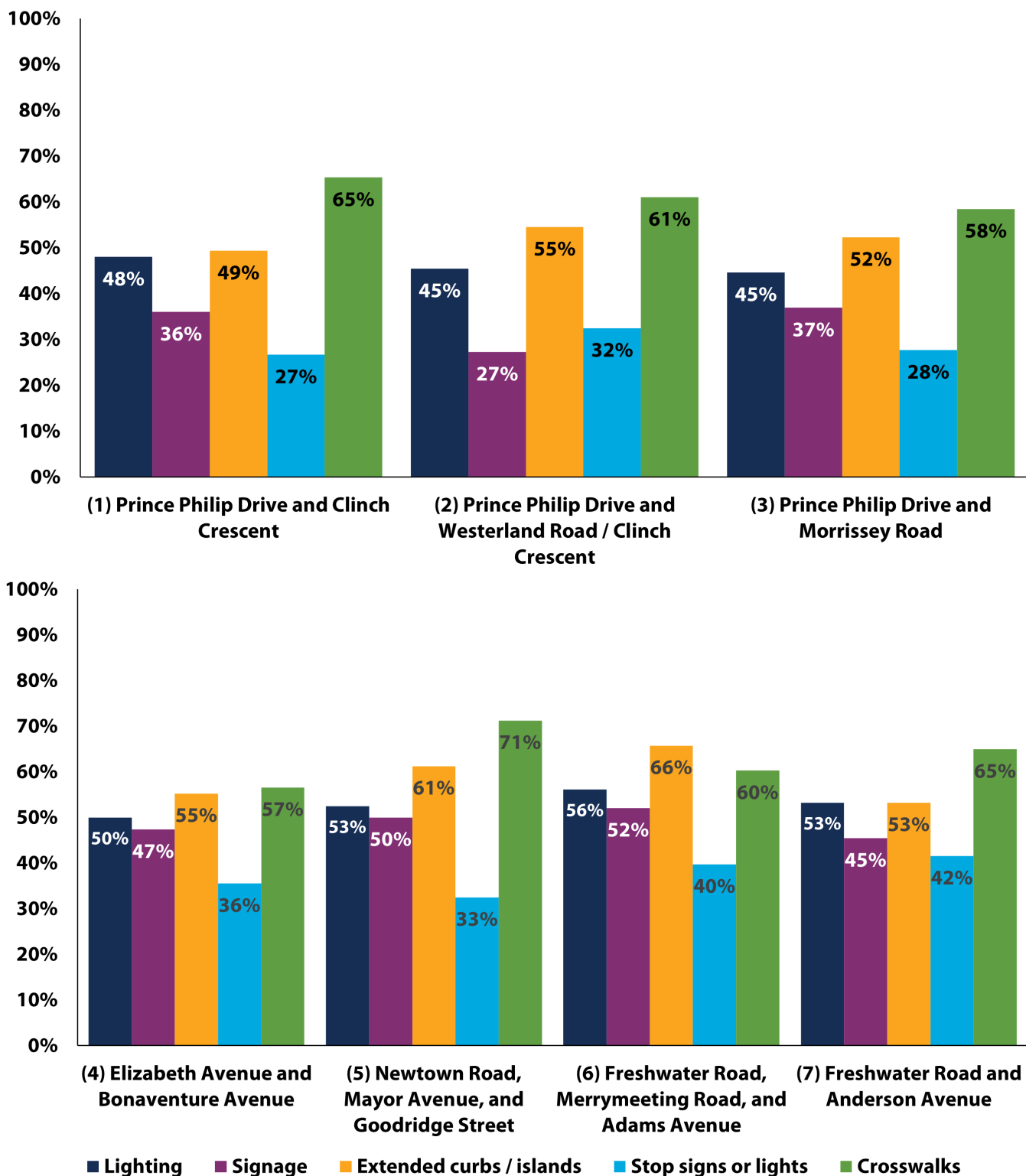
Percentage of Participants (109 completed / 200 skipped)

Participants were asked to rank the intersections from highest to lowest priority. Prince Philip Drive at Westerland Road / Clinch Crescent and Prince Philip Drive at Clinch Crescent were identified as the two top priority intersections for improvements.

The Newtown Road, Mayor Avenue, and Goodridge Street intersection as well as the Elizabeth Avenue and Bonaventure Avenue intersections were third- and fourth-highest priority intersections for improvements, while the remaining three intersections ranked substantially lower as priorities.

The lowest ranking intersection overall was Freshwater Road and Anderson Avenue, which was ranked the lowest priority by over two in five respondents.

At each of these intersections, what do you think needs to be improved?



Percentage of Participants (95 completed / 214 skipped)

At each of these intersections, what do you think needs to be improved? (continued)

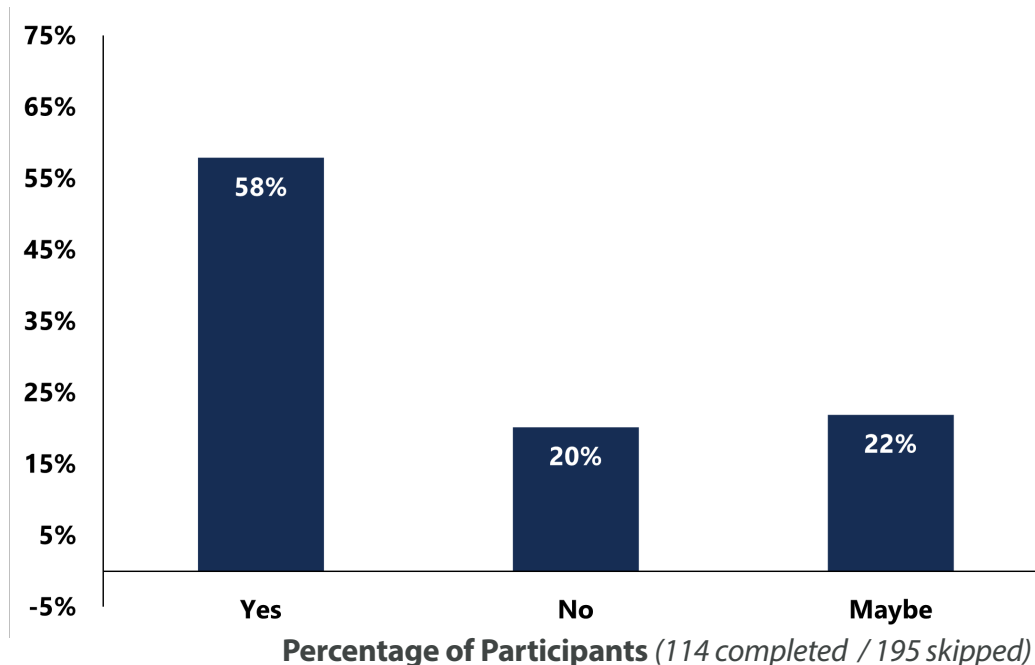
26
comments

Crosswalks were by far considered the element in most need of improvement by participants in nearly every location. Only at Freshwater Road, Merrymeeting Road, and Adams Avenue did extended curbs / islands rank higher than crosswalk improvements.

Nonetheless, extended curbs or islands were also a popular choice overall, consistently scoring second place amongst all locations. The third most popular choice was for lighting, which had an average selection rate of 50 percent, meaning half of all respondents identified lighting as a necessary improvement.

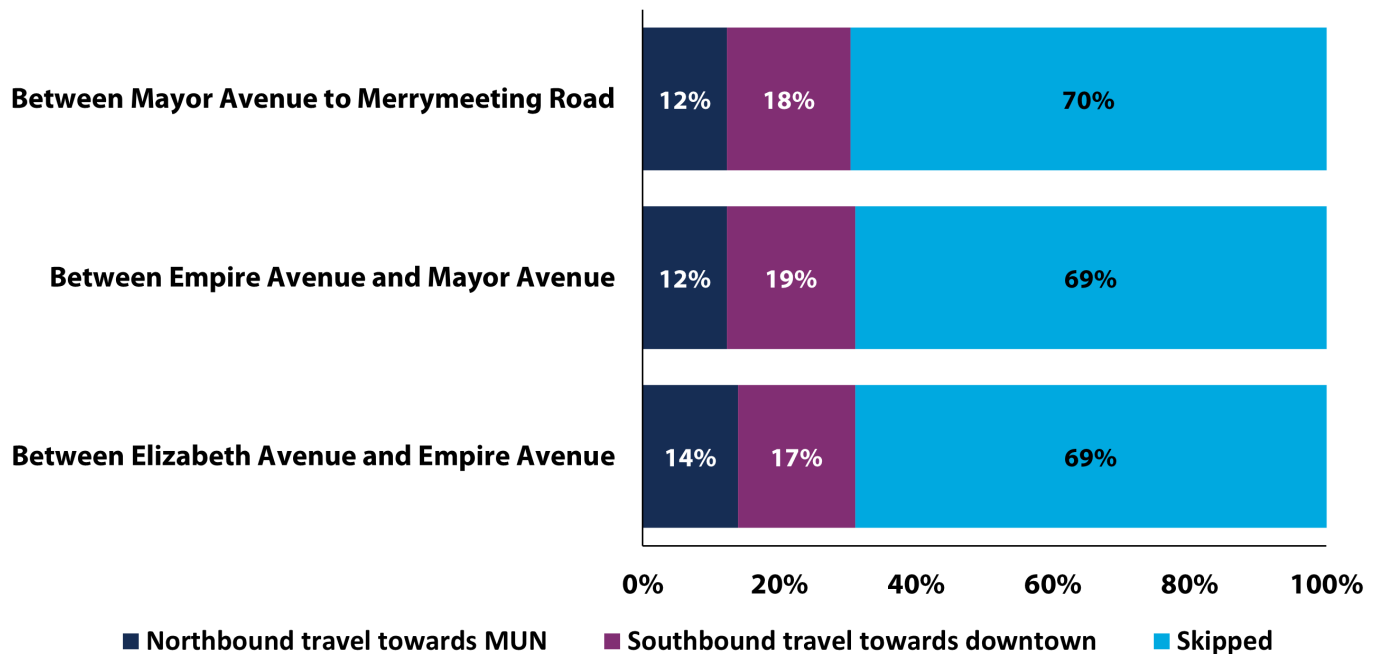
Signage scored much lower, with an average selection rate of 42 percent, while stop signs or stop lights were the most unpopular opinion, resonating with only slightly more than one-third of respondents (34 percent).

Would you support one-way traffic circulation on Newtown Road to accommodate a shared-use path?



Participants were generally in favour of supporting one-way traffic on Newtown Road to accommodate a shared-use-path, with almost three in five respondents supporting this idea (58 percent). Only one in five people responded that they were not in favour of this proposal (20 percent), with an additional 22 percent indicating they could support such a proposal.

Newtown One-Way Direction



Percentage of Participants (114 completed / 195 skipped)

In order to accommodate a shared-use path, it may be necessary to change Newtown Road to a one-way street for car travel. When asked about which way vehicle traffic should move along Newtown Road across specific stretches of the road, opinions were mixed.

Overwhelmingly, respondents skipped this question, but among those who did respond, there was no clear consensus as to the appropriate direction of travel. Across all three stretches of Newtown, southbound travel was more favoured than northbound, but this was consistent by relatively small margins, with southbound travel never receiving more than 7 percentage points greater support than northbound.

**How would you prioritize the following transit hub improvements?
Rank from highest to lowest priority.**

28
comments

1st	Better shelters
2nd	Better lighting
3rd	Better seating
4th	Better crossings to the transit island
5th	Better transit signage
6th	Washroom access
7th	More security presence

(97 completed / 212 skipped)

Participants were asked to rank the improvements from highest to lowest priority. Better shelters was identified as the highest priority transit hub improvement, with over 50 percent of total respondents identifying it as their top priority improvement - no other option received more than 13 percent selection as top priority.

Other improvements identified by respondents:

- There needs to be more bus hubs
- More frequent buses
- More reliable buses
- More connectivity outside of the MUN hub would help the neighbourhood use transit more
- Move the hub to the south side of MUN
- Run express buses from downtown to MUN along Newtown Road
- People should always have places to wait indoors for buses
- Simplify suburban routes and prioritize express routes
- Heated shelters

Which trail improvements should be prioritized for the University Area? Rank from highest to lowest priority.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 1st | Connections from Rabbittown to Kelly's Brook Park and Lion's Park |
| 2nd | Connections to Wishingwell Park and the Community Market |
| 3rd | Connections to Pippy Park across Prince Phillip Drive |
| 4th | Wayfinding to neighbourhood parks (signage/trail markers) |
| 5th | Paving more trails through parks (e.g. like shared-use paths) |
| 6th | Washroom access |
| 7th | Wayfinding to Pippy Park (signage/trail markers) |

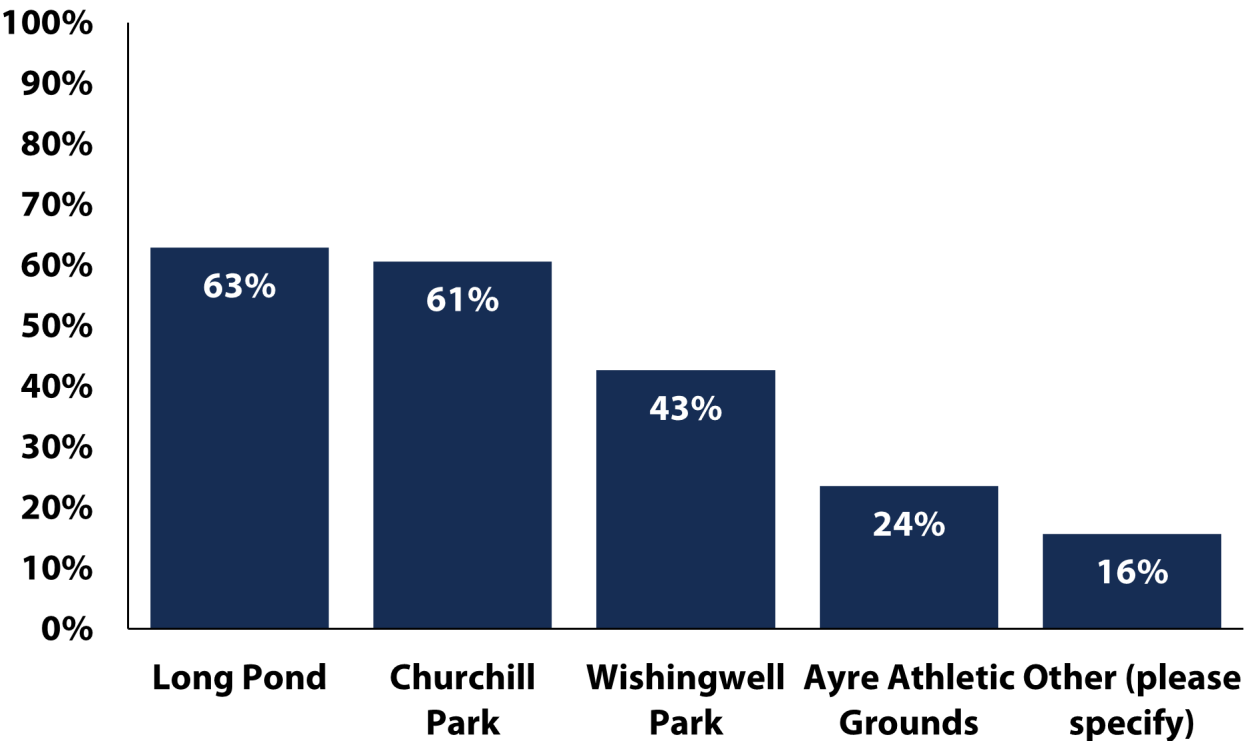
(103 completed / 206 skipped)

Respondents were asked to rank trail improvements by highest to lowest priority. Connections from Rabbittown to Kelly's Brook Park and Lions Park were considered the highest priority for improvements, and all options discussing connections between specific locations were in the top three priorities. Wayfinding to Pippy Park via signage or trail markers was the least prioritized suggestion.

General suggestions such as wayfinding to neighbourhood parks using signage or trail markers, and paving more trails through parks such as through shared-use paths, were close in their overall ranking.

Are there any other parks and trail connections that should be prioritized as part of the neighbourhood plan? Select all that apply.

14
comments



Percentage of Participants (89 completed / 220 skipped)

Participants identified Long Pond and Churchill Park almost equally as priority focus areas for the Neighbourhood Plan, although Long Pond exceeded Churchill Park’s popularity by 2 percentage points. Other parks garnered substantially less interest, with Wishingwell Park and Ayre Athletic Grounds scoring at 43 percent and 24 percent support respectively. Some alternative suggestions were provided, and are summarized in the additional comments below.

Additional comment themes:

- Additional entrances to Ayre Athletic Grounds would be excellent.
- Add a small park for children at the old Booth School site.
- There are no parks in the centre of Rabbittown right now - finding some way to help provide or create more park space here would be nice.
- Parks need to be more accessible by transit
- Better connections over to Confederation
- Pippy Park Campground should be easier to get to from this area.

Parks & Recreation

The parks and recreation section focused on prioritizing investment recommendations for Kelly’s Brook Park and Lions Park, as well as identifying key opportunities to collaborate with and leverage public interest in community-led park activations.

What amenities would you like to see added to, or improved in Kelly’s Brook Park and Lions Park?

1st	Naturalized areas/trees
2nd	Community gardens
3rd	Off-leash dog area(s)
4th	Playgrounds
5th	Pickleball courts
6th	Disc golf course

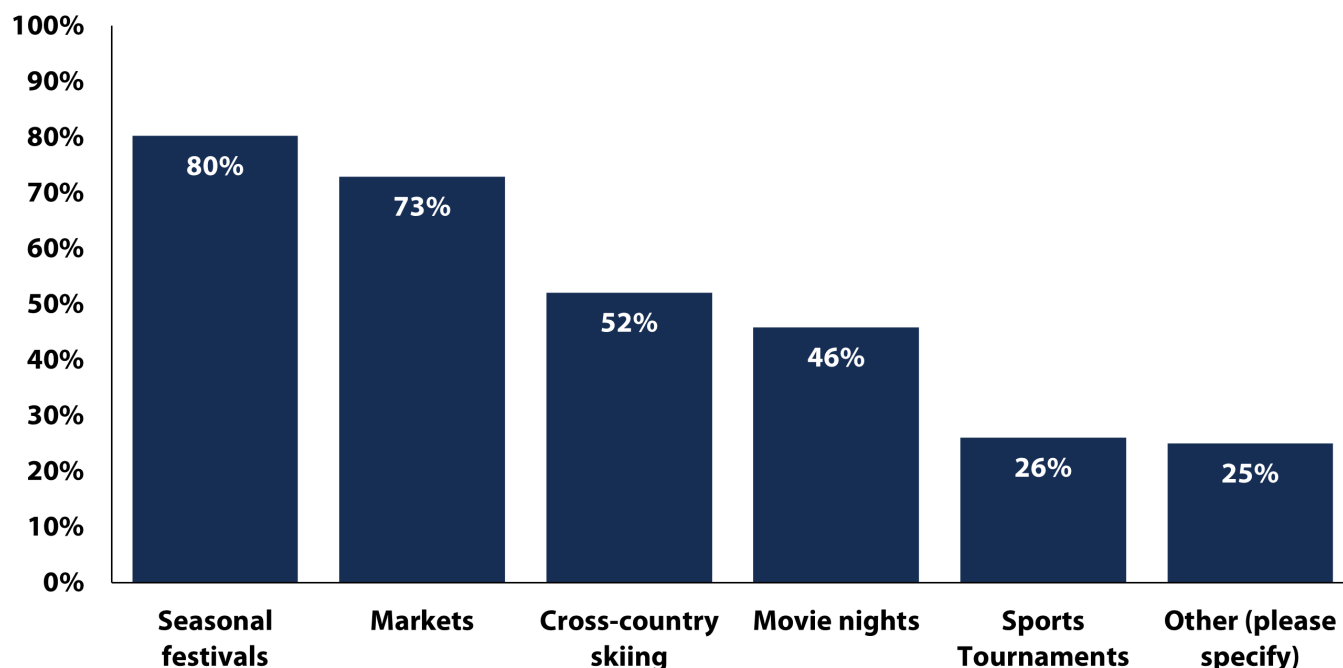
(212 completed / 97 skipped)

Participants were asked to rank the amenities from highest to lowest priority. Respondents expressed the most interest in adding ecological infrastructure to Kelly’s Brook Park and Lions Park by creating naturalized areas or trees, as well as community gardens. These two options were ranked consistently higher than any others, while off-leash dog areas and playgrounds were identified as consistent middle-priority improvements.

Pickleball courts and disc golf courses were the lowest scoring improvements, indicating little demand for adding these amenities to the existing parks in the University Area.

If community groups were provided opportunities and support to help run activities in the University Area's parks, what kinds of programming would you like to see?

24
comments



(96 completed / 213 skipped)

Seasonal festivals were the most popular option amongst participants, with 4 in 5 participants expressing interest in this activity. Around 3 in 4 people were interested in having markets hosted in the park, whereas around half of the survey population expressed interest in cross-country skiing and movie nights. Sports tournaments were the least popular, with 1 in 4 participants expressing interest in the proposed event.

Several other recommendations for park uses were made by respondents, and they are summarized below.

Additional identified park activities:

- Roller skating facilities
- Food truck festivals
- Seasonal outdoor rinks
- Exercise equipment
- Park clean-ups
- Coordinated neighbourhood-wide garage sales
- Yoga and Thai chi
- Snowshoeing
- Bike park
- Outdoor theatre performances
- Sensory gardens
- More accessible washrooms
- Arts events
- After-school and summer kids programming

Community Activations

What is your level of support for the following community activation ideas?

While around 70 percent of overall survey participants chose to skip this question, participating respondents expressed support for the community activation ideas that were proposed in the survey (shown on the following page). Opposition to these ideas amongst those who did respond was limited, never reaching more than 2 percent for all participants.

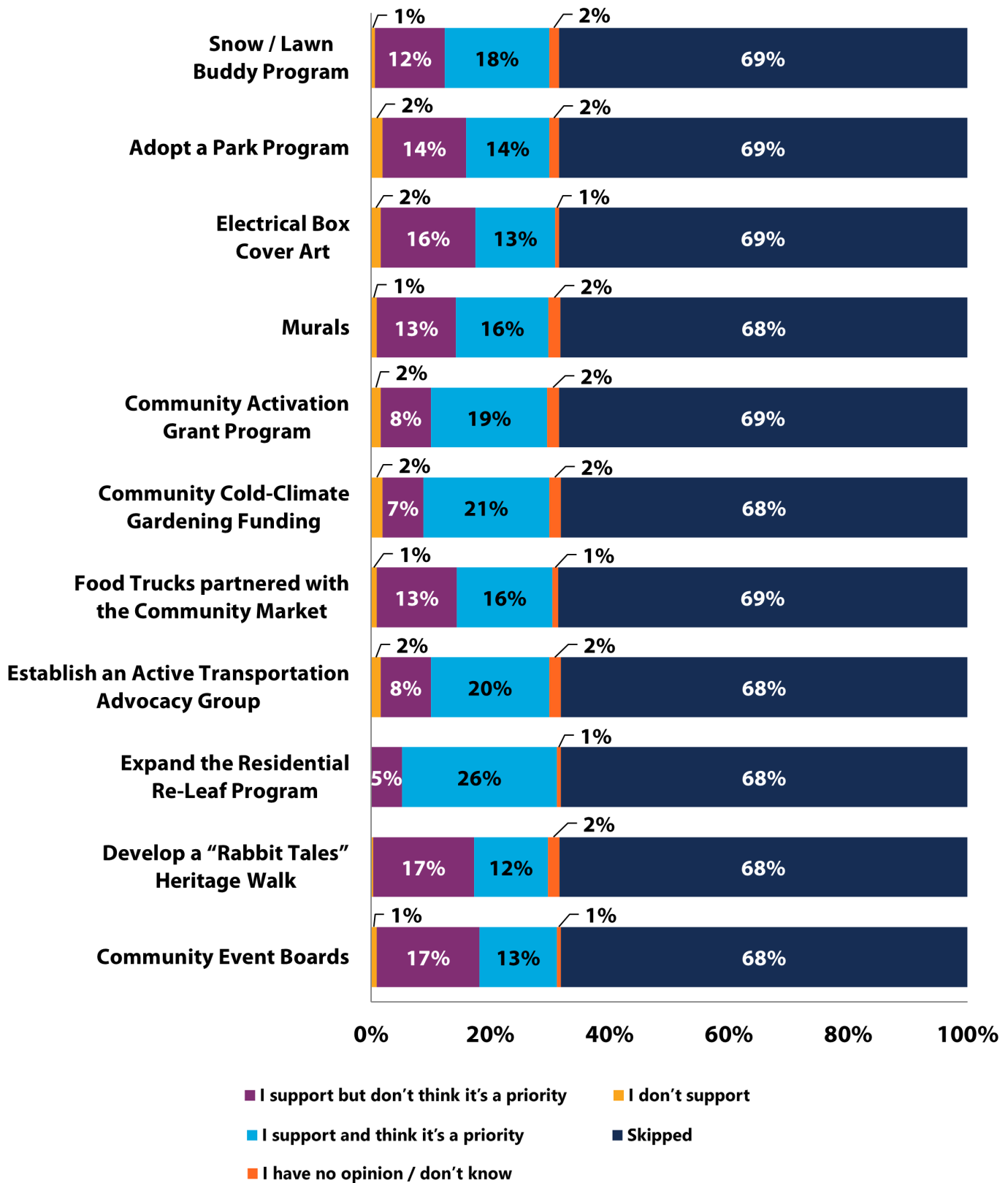
34
comments

The most supported activation idea was to expand the Residential Re-Leaf Program, prioritizing tree planting along newly reconstructed roads. This option had 31 percent of support, with 26 percent of respondents regarding this action as a priority. The popularity of ideas ranged between 27 percent and 31 percent of responses, showing consistent support for the suggested answers.

Additional ideas:

- Public art installations
- Sidewalk art days
- Bonfire and BBQ fundraisers
- Historic walk events
- Library pop-ups in the parks
- Nuit blanche style community art festivals
- Building naturalized, non-paved trails through the trees
- Celebrating the local history not just in Rabbittown but in all of the neighbourhood
- Community-led gardens
- Free outdoor class series
- Summer concert series
- Dedicated times for horticulturalists to teach urban gardening
- More garbage clean-ups
- Holiday light-up events

What is your level of support for the following community activation ideas?

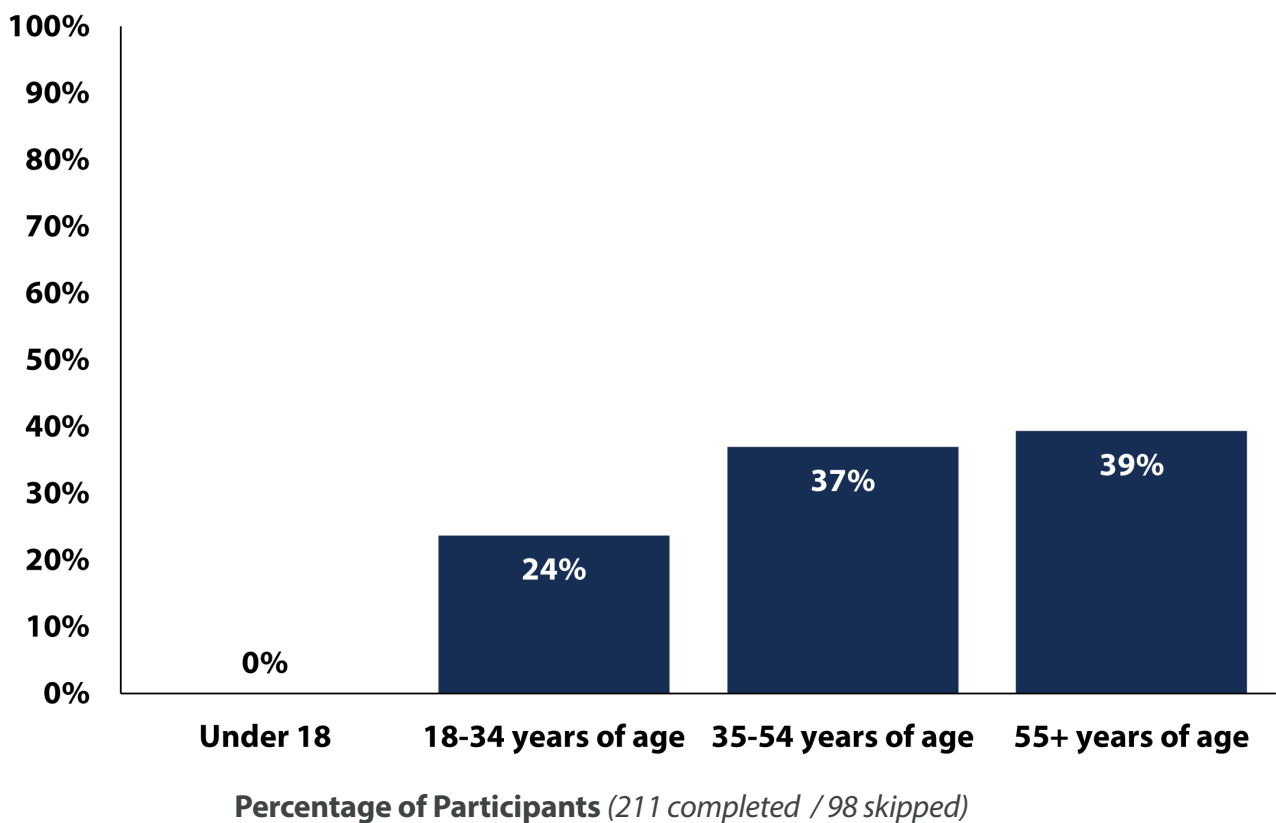


Percentage of Participants (98 completed / 211 skipped)

Survey Demographics

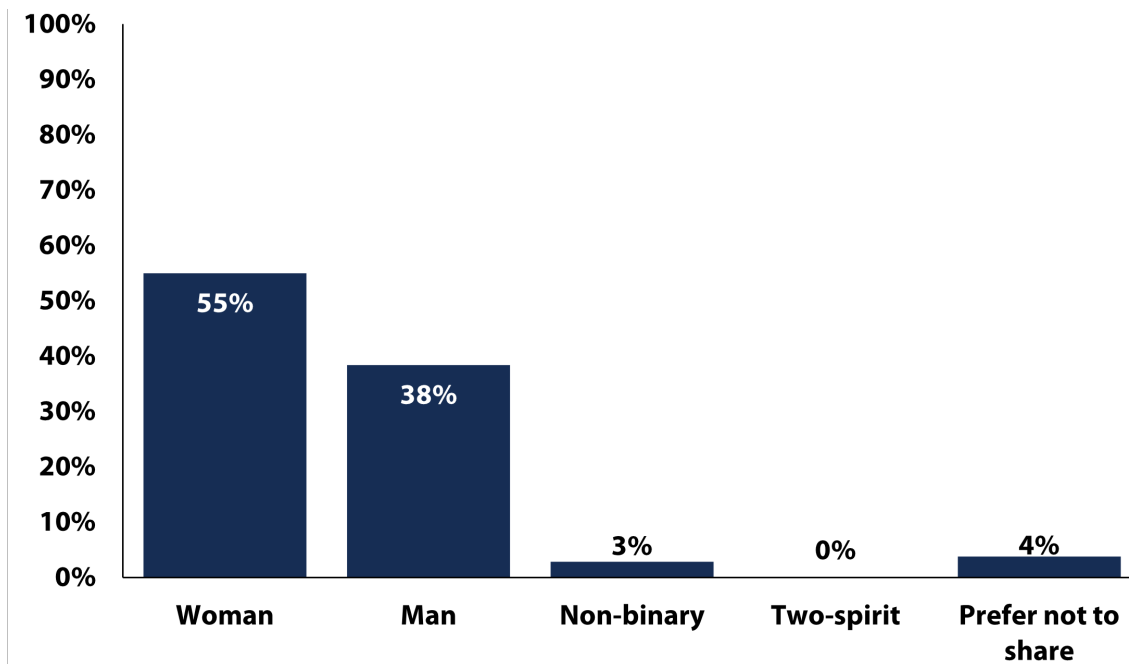
The following demographics information is drawn from the survey results. Respondents were asked to share their demographic information if they were willing. Demographic data helps the project team to better understand who respondents were and to ensure the voices of the whole community are being reflected in engagement.

What is your age bracket?



The survey found that 78 percent of survey respondents were at least 35 years of age, with respondents split between 35-54 years of age and 55+ years of age. 1 in 4 people identified as younger adults, being of 18-34 years of age. No individuals who completed the survey identified as being under 18.

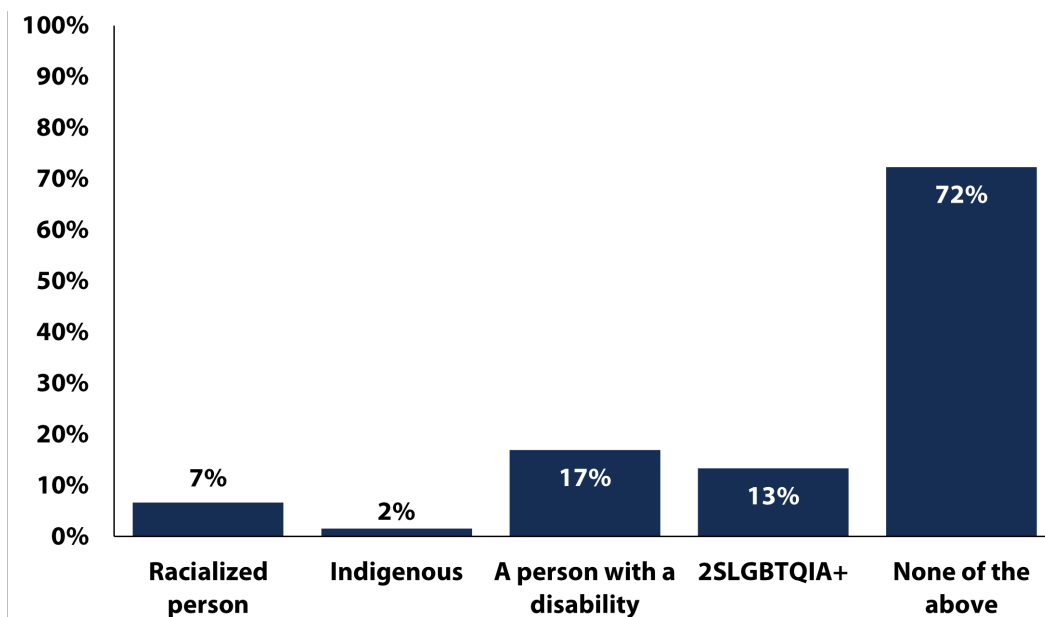
How do you identify?



Percentage of Participants (211 completed / 98 skipped)

The majority of participating respondents in this question were women at 55 percent, followed by men at 38 percent. While 3 percent identified as non-binary and 4 percent preferred not to share, this data represents only two-thirds of the total survey population.

Do you identify as any of the following?



Percentage of Participants (195 completed / 114 skipped)

In addition to the presented options, some participants also identified as Black, Mixed Race, and as a senior citizen.

Interested Parties Summary

In addition to the broad public engagement opportunities, the project team met with various community organizations and groups representing different interests in both the University Area and Cowan Heights. A general overview presentation was provided to groups about the proposed Neighbourhood Strategy for each Neighbourhood, then participants were asked to provide feedback on the recommendations from their organization's perspective.

The following groups participated in Phase 2 engagement:

Council Committees	Organizations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sustainable & Active Mobility Advisory CommitteeBuilding Safer Communities Steering CommitteeSeniors' Advisory Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Royal Newfoundland ConstabularyPickleball NLNL HydroNL HealthNL Public LibrariesMemorial UniversityNewfoundland and Labrador HousingC.A. Pippy Park Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">MetrobusSt. John's Women's CentreOrdinary SpokesSt. John's Farmers' MarketSt. James United ChurchFood First NL

The following summary provides an overview of the key themes across all of the focus groups and interviews.

Enabling Different Types of Housing

Many participants across workshops, one-on-ones, and focus group sessions identified a need for more housing generally across St. John's as well as a specific need for smaller-unit housing in the University Area. Enabling the development of more one- and two-bedroom units was a key priority for many interested parties, and for a variety of different people. Young professionals, students, new Canadians, and single-parent households are all in need of more affordable, smaller housing

options than is currently the prevailing norm across most of the City, and the University Area's unique location next to many jobs and community services makes it a highly desirable location for all of these groups to seek housing.

The Elizabeth Avenue Growth Corridor, Newtown Road Residential, Freshwater Road Mixed Use Corridor, and the Neighbourhood Centre were all recognized and supported by most participants as a key piece in the puzzle of delivering more types of housing for changing market demand in not just the University Area, but the city as a whole.

Supporting Local Commercial & Groceries

A desire to help local businesses and shop-owners succeed was an identified theme across many different groups. Creating multiple opportunities for smaller-scale businesses to launch and succeed, creating more jobs in the University Area and keeping commercial dollars in Newfoundland and Labrador was stressed as an important role for the neighbourhood plan to help play.

The Neighbourhood Centre and Freshwater Mixed Use Corridor in particular were identified as key opportunities to help deliver increased density that can in turn support more commercial uses. The Neighbourhood Centre in particular has the ability to support a mix of commercial scales, potentially even a smaller-format grocery store at some point in the future if enough growth is concentrated in that area.

Enabling Access to Community Resources

The University Area is rich with access to many cherished community resources, and there is no shortage of institutional uses such as MUN or the A.C. Hunter Public Library nearby that are helping to serve the community. Despite this, not all organizations and agencies operating in the University Area feel they are as visible and accessible to the public as they would like to be. Using the neighbourhood plan as a tool to further promote and amplify their existence and the work they are doing can help to provide greater community benefit for all.

Moving Around Safely

There was a recognition that the University Area features one of the highest rates of walkers and bikers in the province. Because of this, interested parties believed it was very important to invest in and promote the development of additional infrastructure to support active transportation. The Newtown Road shared-use path was widely supported, as were investments in accessibility to parks and safely crossing major roads such as Freshwater Road and Prince Philip Drive.

Indigenous Engagement

The project team met for a second time with staff members from First Light to share a meal and reflect on learnings from the first conversation and how they have been incorporated into the draft Neighbourhood Strategies. The session started with a brief overview of the Neighbourhood Strategy for each neighbourhood, then led into a discussion about the proposed recommendations and if they respond to Indigenous Community needs effectively.

The key themes from the conversation were about the value of Indigenous representation in public spaces, opportunities for additional recreation and programming, and housing and mobility needs.

The project team committed to having an ongoing dialogue with First Light staff as the Neighbourhood Plans are finalized.

Indigenous Representation

The project team heard from First Light staff that there is currently very little representation of Indigenous culture in the Province. Other places and cities do this much better through public art and naming. There are many opportunities within neighbourhoods to increase representation, especially through public art and naming.

From a University Area perspective, new opportunities tied to capital projects such as future shared-use paths and park upgrades could be leveraged to help increase Indigenous representation and visibility. Other community activation opportunities, especially those that are intended to help tell the unique stories and histories of the University Area's communities, could also provide opportunities for enhancing Indigenous representation.

Indigenous Spaces

Finding opportunities for introducing Indigenous spaces into the University Area above and beyond representation was an important concept shared by First Light staff. This included opportunities for incorporating Indigenous gardens, plantings, or spaces for reflection into existing or new parks.

Housing

First Light staff were supportive of the focus on increasing the provision of smaller and more affordable housing units, particularly around areas with existing community services and supports.

Transit

Consistent with the first time the project team spoke with First Light, existing transit infrastructure was identified as a challenge. While the Neighbourhood Plans cannot directly influence Metrobus service, opportunities for increasing amenities around transit hubs and at bus stops generally were identified as priorities. First Light staff also identified challenges with the indirect nature of bus routes to the University Area from some parts of the city. For some of their clientele, taking the bus from where they live to the University Area can often take as long as walking would.

Mobility

Support for expanding the shared-use path network was expressed, particularly for the Newtown Road connection between Downtown and MUN. This particular path was identified as being important for helping not just Indigenous people but all residents more safely access these two key destinations.



Next Steps

Thank you everyone who participated in this engagement. The findings from this phase of engagement will inform the creation of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan will be released publicly in fall 2025 prior to being presented to Council.

Project updates and information will continue to be posted to the project website at engagestjohns.ca/university-area-neighbourhood-plan.



**Help us plan the future
of the University Area**





ST. JOHN'S