



TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Jaime Valdez, Interim Neighborhood Services and Public Safety Director

CONTACT: JoAnne Plummer, Parks and Recreation Manager

SUBJECT: Stow Grove Park Survey Results and Considerations for Design Phase

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. Receive a presentation of the results from the Stow Grove Park Survey; and,
- B. Direct staff to prepare conceptual documents for the renovation of the Stow Grove Park, in its entirety, which may be phased for future projects.

BACKGROUND:

In 2015, the Multi-Purpose Field at the north end of Stow Grove Park was identified as needing renovation through the priorities listed in the adopted Recreation Needs Assessment. Understanding that the community values this park, the public outreach efforts launched with a survey asking questions that were inclusive of the entire park, providing information for future phases. The survey was released on Tuesday, October 20th and comments were received through Monday, November 16, 2020. The results of this survey were provided to the Parks and Recreation Commission at their meeting of December 2, 2020.

The initial outreach process resulted in an astonishing community response with over 750 completed surveys received. The data obtained in this process confirmed the community's affinity for this treasured park location. The responses verified that there are many elements of the park in need of improvement and enhancements.

DISCUSSION:

The City's adopted Recreation Needs Assessment identified a lack of available athletic fields for use by youth sports organizations. To address the deficiency, two field renovation projects were identified and placed in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Projects #9074 and #9075 in the City's CIP Budget. These two projects include the northern field at Stow Grove Park (9074) and the multi-purpose field at Evergreen Park (9075).

In addition, the City of Goleta added a new multi-purpose field with the development of Jonny D. Wallis Neighborhood Park and renovated the multi-purpose field behind the Goleta Valley Community Center in 2019.

The field renovation currently planned to improve the existing facility at Stow Grove Park includes new turf, irrigation, replacement and/or improvement of existing amenities, etc. However, since the primary access to Stow Grove Park comes from the parking lot located on North La Patera Lane, additional accessibility improvements will be required. Updating the field has triggered mandated upgrades to the parking lot, including the creation of an accessible pathway from the parking lot to the field, the play features and possibly the restroom facility.

As the results of the survey are analyzed along with other documents, including but not limited to the Parks Master Plan, the Recreation Needs Assessment and the City's ADA Transition Plan, it appears that there are needs to address many of the same features for the remaining areas of the park. An example is the accessibility from the parking lot to the rest of the park. If the focus is on the improvements to the parking lot only for the renovation of the northern field, there may be a need to address the parking lot during the next phase as accessibility is required for the rest of the park as well. In other words, each subsequent project may require additional adjustments to the parking lot.

Staff is requesting the City Council to direct staff to prepare conceptual documents for Stow Grove Park Renovation, for the entire facility, which could be phased for future projects. This process would require the solicitation of Requests for Proposals for a Landscape Architect to develop a conceptual plan to address deficiencies in the entire park, which could be separated into phases for construction as funding becomes available. Once the final conceptual plan is supported by the Parks and Recreation Commission and approved by the City Council, construction documents will be prepared for the phase recommended for improvement. This holistic approach to the park's renovation will allow for a plan to be developed that includes the public's input while also addressing the needs for this facility. Understanding what will be modified in this park, even on a conceptual level, will also allow the City of Goleta the opportunity to explore grants and other funding opportunities for future phases.

It is important to note that many of the survey responses received have requested that the park remain the same - very "natural". The recommendation before the City Council is not to create a brand-new Stow Grove Park but to plan for future accessibility, efficiencies and more that will allow the community, of all abilities, to enjoy this beautiful space for years to come.

The Parks and Recreation Commission discussed this item again at their meeting on March 3, 2021 and expressed unanimous support to move forward with the development of a conceptual plan for Stow Grove Park that will address deficiencies throughout the entire park site. This plan would be created to be phased for current and future park improvement projects.

GOLETA STRATEGIC PLAN:

City-Wide Strategy: 2. Support Community Vitality and Enhanced Recreational Opportunities

Strategic Goal: 2. Support programs that enhance quality of life in the Goleta community such as recreation, public safety, human services, and cultural arts

FISCAL IMPACTS:

The cost to develop a conceptual plan for just the northern field, addressing the associated ADA improvements could cost \$40,000 - \$50,000, while a conceptual plan for the entire park will likely range from \$75,000 - \$100,000. These are just rough estimates from two different landscape architecture firms and amounts are contingent on the number of public meetings, amount of survey work needed, and extent of environmental documents required. At this point, it is not feasible to estimate the costs associated with the creation of construction documents, construction itself or construction management, as those are all directly related to the scope of the project, which is largely undefined at this time.

In the City's Capital Improvement Program, Project #9074 has \$490,000 of approved budget for FY 20/21. Utilizing existing funds to create a conceptual plan for the entire park will require additional appropriation of funds in the future but will eliminate potential wasteful spending redesigning/reconstructing of a space multiple times as future phases are constructed.

ALTERNATIVES:

The Council may choose to move forward only with the development of a conceptual plan for the multi-purpose field and those areas that are necessary to be improved per ADA requirements, proceeding with the project as referenced in the Capital Improvement Program.

Reviewed By:

Legal Review By:

Approved By:


Kristine Schmidt
Assistant City Manager


Michael Jenkins
City Attorney


Michelle Greene
City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Stow Grove Park Survey Results and Recommendations Presentation

ATTACHMENT 1

Stow Grove Park Survey Results Presentation



STOW GROVE PARK SURVEY RESULTS

April 6, 2021

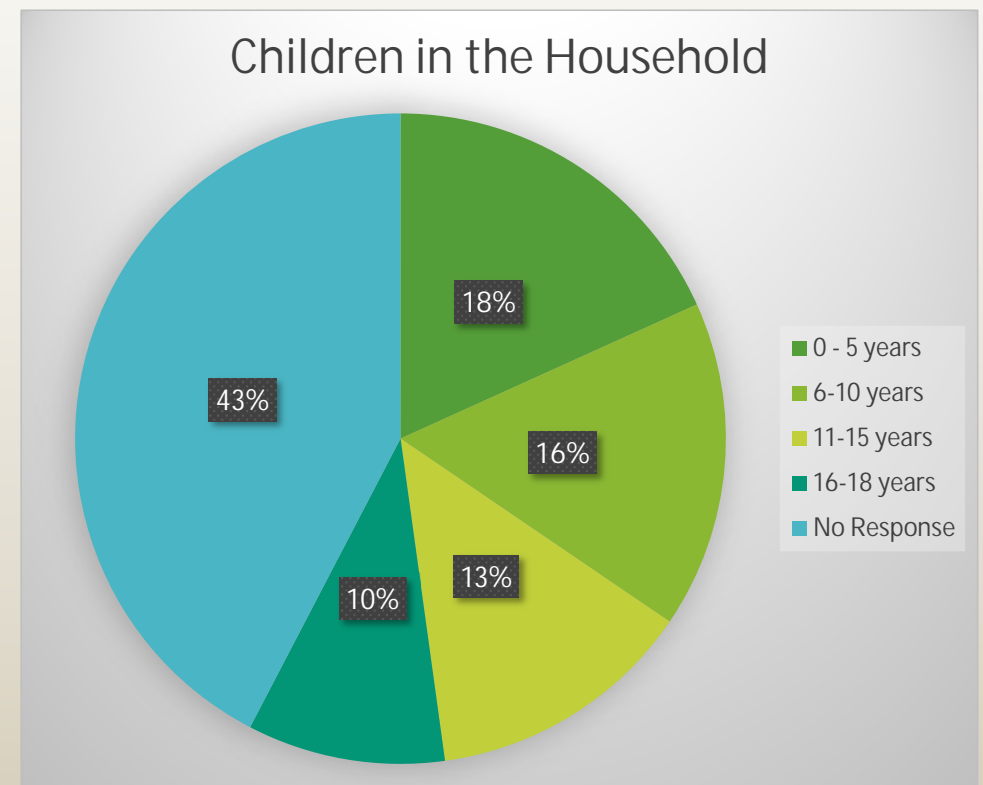
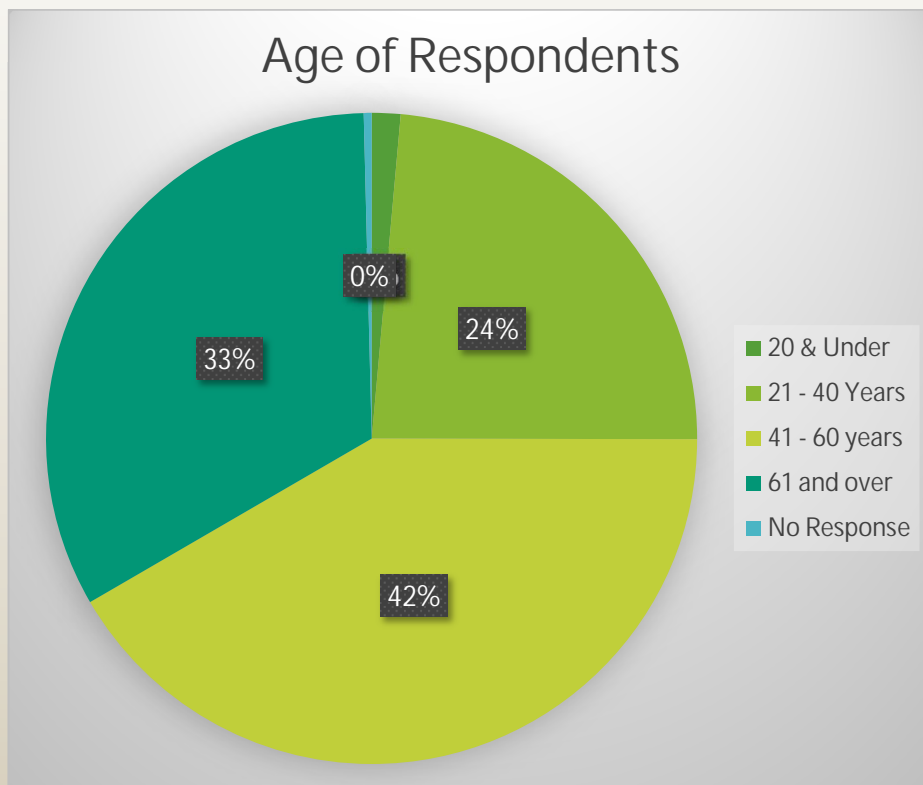
City Council Meeting

Presented by: JoAnne Plummer, Parks and Recreation Manager
Jaime Valdez, Interim Neighborhood Services and Public Safety Director

PURPOSE OF SURVEY

- Gain an understanding of how residents are using Stow Grove Park
- Gather public input on improvements related to the Multi-Purpose Field Project
- Gather public input on the other elements of Stow Grove Park for future improvements

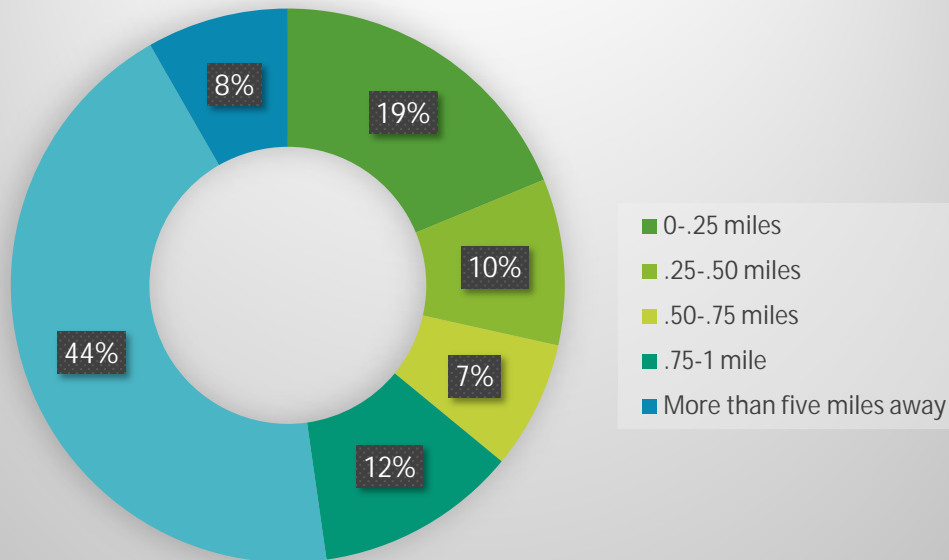
WHO IS USING THE PARK



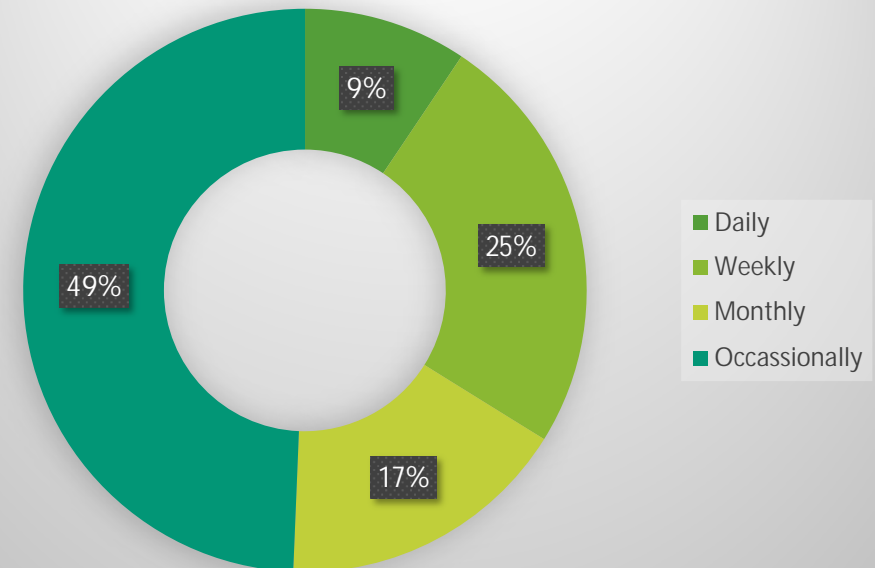
Of those responding to age, 232 were male, 509 were female and 25 chose not to answer

HOW FAR AND HOW OFTEN?

How far do you travel to visit the park?

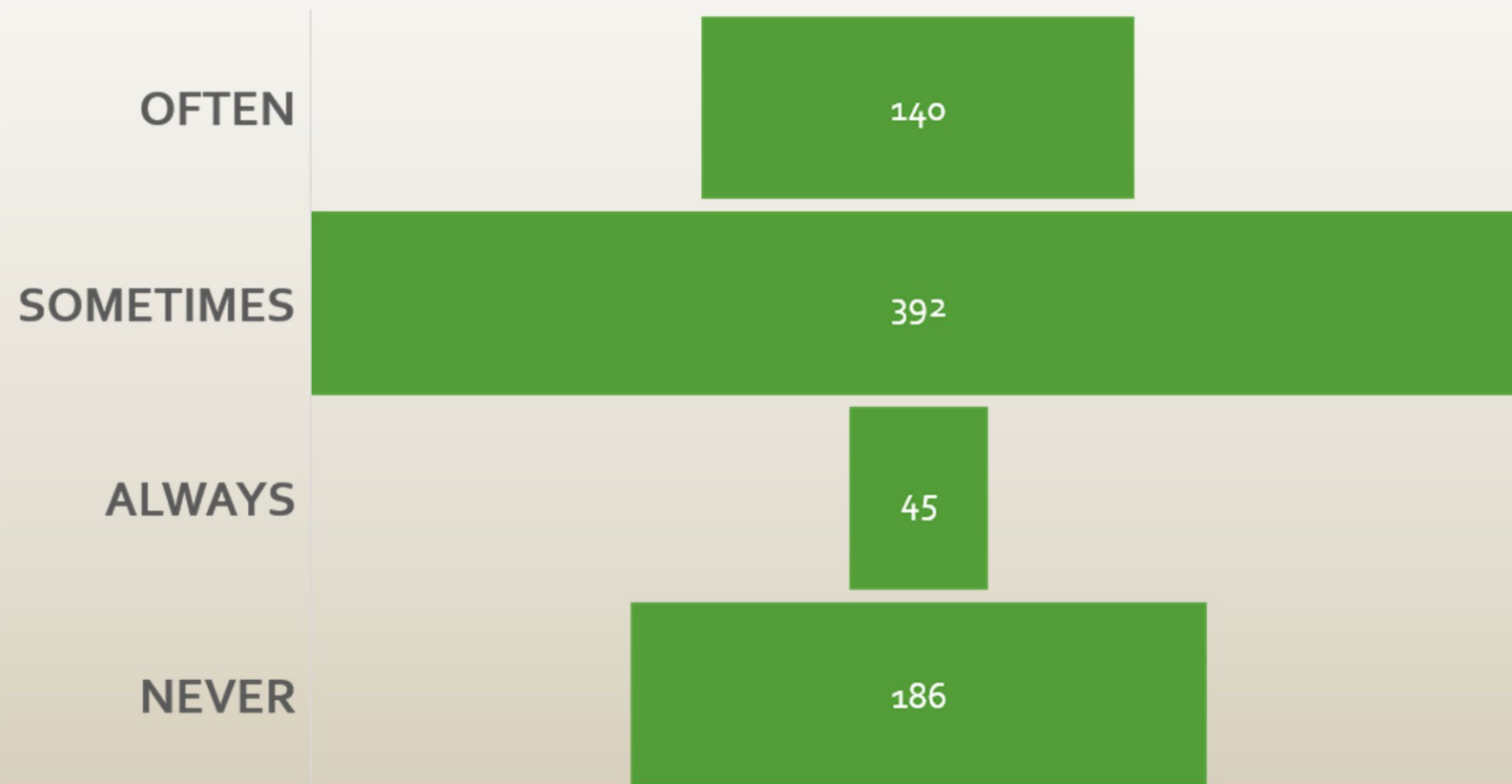


How often do you Visit the Park?

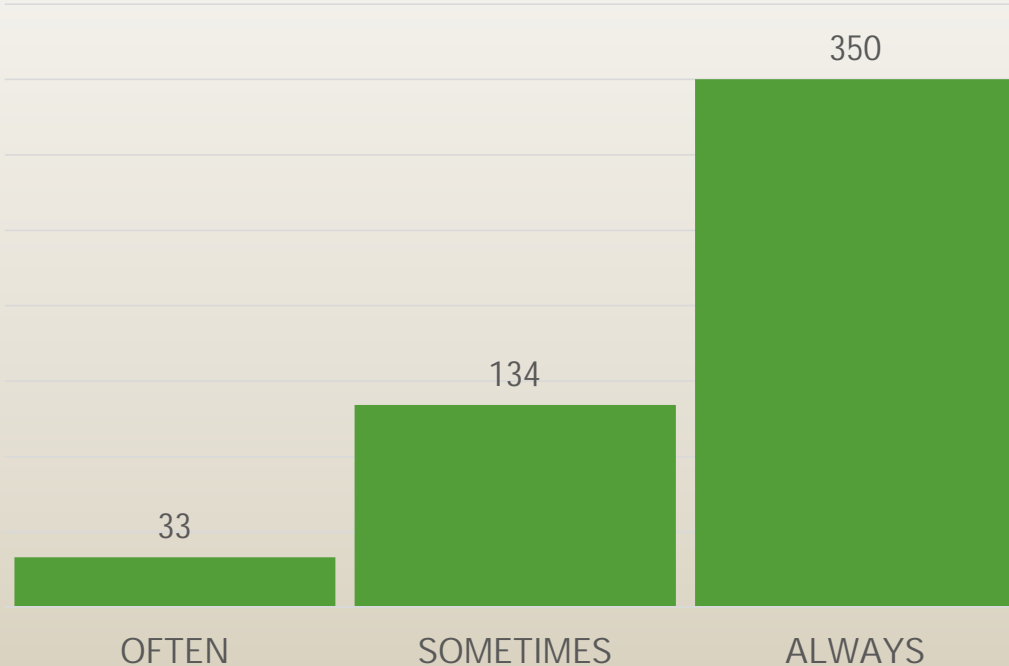


Of those responding 664 were city residents, 99 were no and 4 chose not to answer
186 respondents visit the park alone, while 574 visit with others and 7 chose not to answer

USE OF PARK FOR FITNESS?

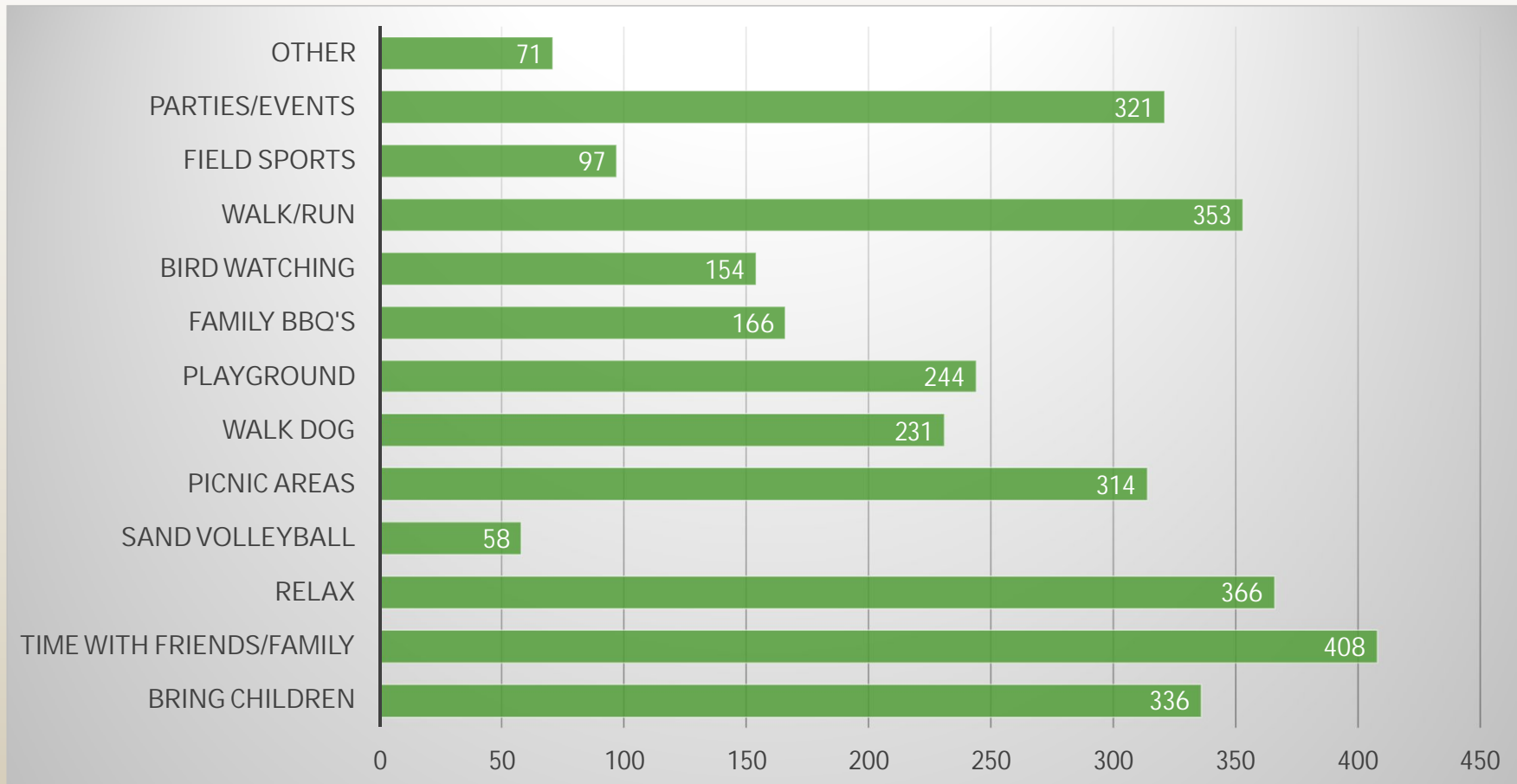


HAVE YOUR CHILDREN PARTICIPATED IN ORGANIZED ACTIVITY?

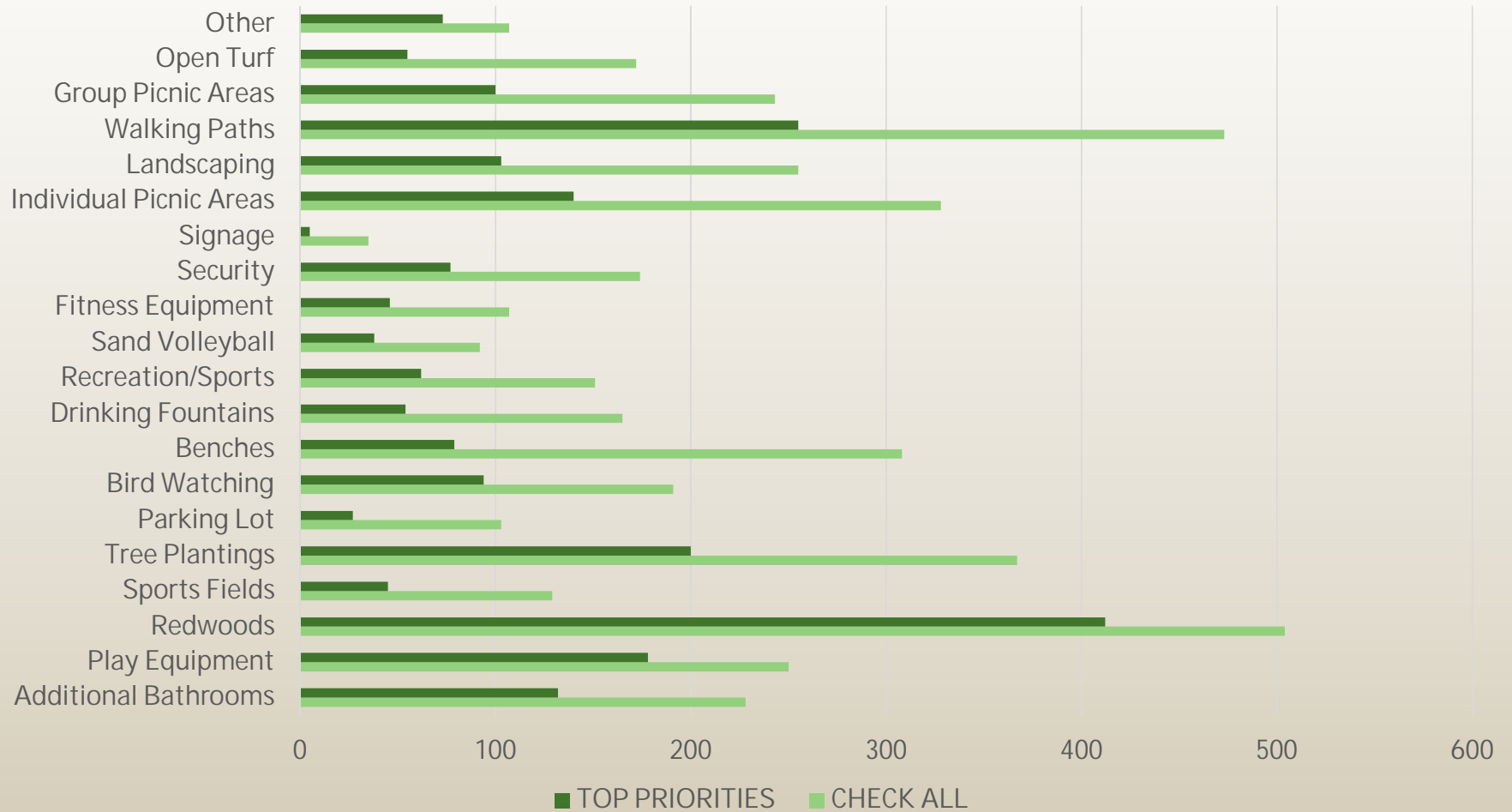


- Volleyball
- Softball
- Soccer
- Baseball
- Walks
- Flag Football
- Karate
- Kickball
- Sports
- Horseshoes
- Girl Scouts
- Boy Scouts
- Karate
- Frisbee
- Yoga
- Runs
- Bird Watching
- Campfire
- Dog Training
- Book Club

WHY STOW PARK?



PRIORITIES



PRIORITIES - Other

Restroom Upgrade
Skate Park
Butterfly Watching
Protecting Redwoods
Old Wooden Fort
Fenced in Dog Park
Community Garden
No Dogs
Campsites
Pickleball Courts
Covered Garbage Cans
More Trees
Small Stage area
Ninja Course
Interesting Plants

More Events
Running Trails
Basketball Courts
More Sports Fields
Horseshoe Pits
A Park Ranger Presence
Paved Walking Path
Keep it Natural
Dog Poop Bags
Gopher Control
Access from Cathedral Oaks
More Native Plants
Tennis Court
Bike Racks
Leave the Park as it is

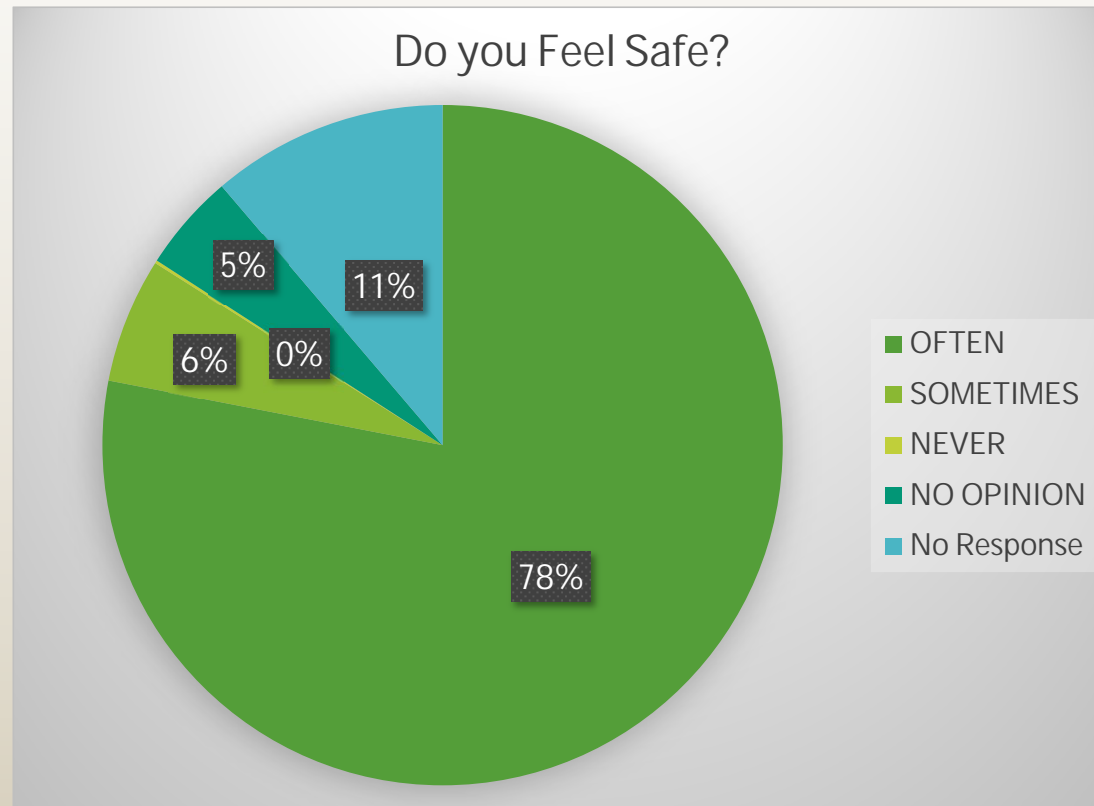
Splash Pad
Keep it as a Neighborhood Park
Frisbee Golf
Community Fruit Orchard
Add Shade over Play Structure
Mirrors in Bathrooms
Water Bottle Refill stations
Natural Sanctuary
Address the House
ADA Paths for Wheelchairs
Additional Parking
Update Play Equipment for Adults
Gardens
More BBQ Areas

PRIORITIES – Choose only 3

Skatepark
Improve Tree Health
Fenced in Off Leash Dog Area
Camp Sites
Accessibility near north end
Pickleball
Cover Exposed Tree Roots
Ninja Course
More Frequent Cleaning
ADA Improvements
Horseshoe Pits
It is Fine as is
More bins for dog poop bags
Basketball Court

Lights
Benches in Natural Shade Area
Gopher Control
Increase Public Safety
Enforce Amplified Noise
Running/Walking Track around perimeter of park
Bike Racks
Keep it Natural
Fencing around playground area
Kid friendly features
Splash Pad
Keep it as a Neighborhood Park
Keep the backstop
Disc Golf

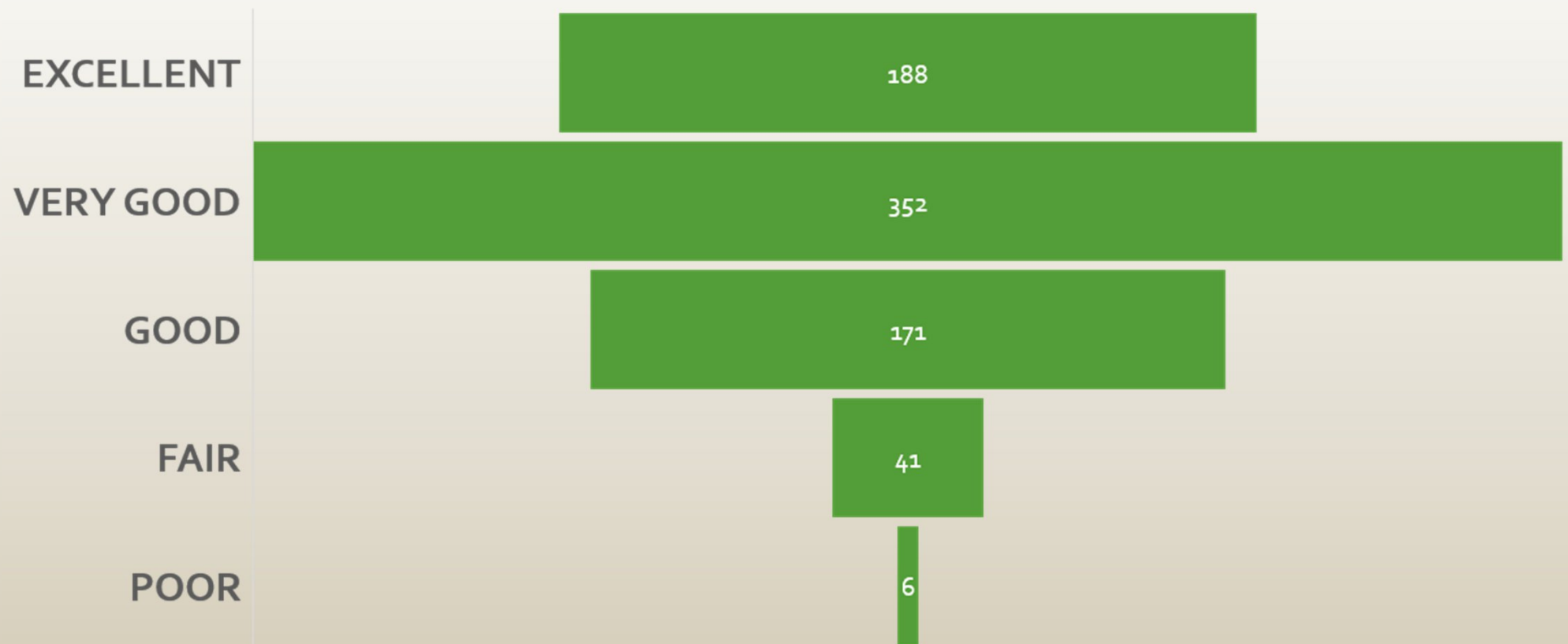
SAFETY IN THE PARK



COMMENTS ABOUT SAFETY

- ❖ Why isn't YES an answer?
- ❖ Great Place Great Neighborhood
- ❖ Always
- ❖ What's to fear?
- ❖ Never Any Fear
- ❖ Clean
- ❖ Relaxing
- ❖ Feels like a local park
- ❖ Friendly
- ❖ Too many off leash dogs
- ❖ Tree Health
- ❖ Sometimes Suspicious Activity
- ❖ Poor Lighting
- ❖ Homeless
- ❖ Some wildlife
- ❖ When empty, it feels spooky
- ❖ Men Hanging Out

OVERALL OPINION OF STOW GROVE PARK





Questions About the Survey or Results?

OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- MOVE FORWARD WITH CURRENT PROJECT SCOPE
- CONSIDER EXPANDING PROJECT SCOPE FOR THE DESIGN PHASE

CURRENT PROJECT SCOPE

- ❖ Renovation of Existing Athletic Field
- ❖ ADA requirements will necessitate improvements to the following:
 - ❖ Small Play area
 - ❖ Parking Lot
 - ❖ Path of Travel
 - ❖ Possibly the Restrooms





REMAINING ITEMS THAT WILL NEED ATTENTION?

- ❖ Ranger House/Service Yard
- ❖ Accessibility improvements to the following:
 - ❖ Playgrounds
 - ❖ Group Picnic Areas
 - ❖ Foot Paths throughout the park
 - ❖ Pedestrian Access
 - ❖ Restroom

EXPANSION OF SCOPE FOR DESIGN

- Solicit Requests for Proposals securing a Landscape Architect Firm to develop a comprehensive conceptual design for the improvements at Stow Grove Park
 - Use the data collected from the surveys
 - Solicit additional public input at design meetings and other public meetings
 - Develop a conceptual design that can be broken into phases, beginning with the field renovation

BENEFITS OF EXPANDED SCOPE

A Comprehensive Conceptual Plan for Stow Grove Park will:

- Provide a plan, with public input, that will address all needs of this facility
- Assurance to the public that the park is valued and as resources are available, phases will be completed
- Understanding what will be at this location allows the opportunity for staff to explore grants and other funding resources for future phases

NO DESIRE TO CREATE A BRAND-NEW STOW GROVE PARK

- Many of the surveys referenced a strong desire to keep the park the same, very natural
- The proposal is not to start from scratch, but to plan for future accessibility, efficiencies and more
- The goal is to allow the community, of all abilities, to enjoy this beautiful space for years to come

COST COMPARISON FOR CONCEPT DESIGN* *

CURRENT SCOPE OF WORK	Redesign of the multi-purpose field to include areas impacted by ADA mandates from the parking lot to the field	\$40,000 - \$50,000*
EXPANDED SCOPE OF WORK	Provide renderings that would redesign the multi-purpose field and other identified deficiencies, which could be phased for future projects	\$75,000 - \$100,000*

*Costs are rough estimates and amounts are contingent on the number of public meetings, amount of survey work and extent of environmental analysis needed

**Current approved project budget is \$490,000 for FY 20/21



Questions ?