

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions
- Public Meetings #3 and #4 Recap
- Updated Survey Results
- Draft Vision Statement and Goals
- Draft Recommendations
- Park Master Site Plans - Drafts
- Next Steps



Project Committee

Laura Ballek Cole	Mayor's Office
Rebecca Kiss	COA Board of Recreation
Nancy Wilt	COA Board of Recreation
Dave Snyder	COA Board of Recreation
Candida Affa	City Council
CeCe Gerlach	City Council, Parks & Recreation Committee Chair
Natalie Santos	City Council
Christian Brown	COA Shade Tree Commission and Planning Commission
Tony Hanna	Resident
Carol Robb	Volunteer
Darren Benson Jr	Allentown A's (AYOUTH)
Shaniqua Leak / Rashard Wilkerson	H.D.Y.A. (AYOUTH)
Kevin Ervin / Marlon Thomas	East Side Youth Center (AYOUTH)
Jessica French / Peter Allen	Mountainville Memorial Association (AYOUTH)
Kim Schaffer	Community Bike Works

ALLENTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION
DEPARTMENT – 610.437.7757

Mandy Tolino, CPRP, Director
Mandy.Tolino@allentownpa.gov

Lucinda Wright, Deputy Director
Lucinda.Wright@allentownpa.gov

Bryne Heffner-Bair, Project Coordinator
Bryne.Heffner@allentownpa.gov



Committee, continued...

Scott Slingerland	CAT Lehigh Valley
Simon Moore / Ruffian Tittmann	Parknership
Rosaria Stoops	Friends of Allentown Parks
Rick Daugherty	Lehigh Valley Active Life
Leslie Billowitch / Neil Novak	Lehigh Valley Road Runners
Ana Tiburcio / Randy Atiyeh	Allentown School District
Janet Roth	Trexler Trust
John Leonard	COA Police
Efrain Agosto	COA Fire
Julio Guridy	Allentown Housing Authority
Becky Bradley, AICP	Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Christian Martinez	Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Scott Greenly	Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Susan Myerov	Lehigh Valley Planning Commission
Liz Rosencrans / Brit Kondravy	D&L Heritage Corridor

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Committee, continued.....

Darian Colbert	Cohesion
Shannon Fugate	Allentown Arts Commission
Andrew Atiyeh	KNT Basketball
Kyle Edwards	A True L.O.V.E. Story
Daniel Bosket	Community Action Development Allentown
Samantha Shaak	Leonard Parker Pool Institute for Health
Flor and Robert Velez	Puertorrican Culture Preservation
Carmen Bell / Jose Rivera	United Way of Greater Lehigh Valley
Fatima Nabavian	Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living
Marci Klinger	Lehigh Valley Disc Club
Christina DiPierro	Valley Youth House
Abigail Goldfarb	Conference of Churches

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Bryne.Heffner@allentownpa.gov



Project Team

SIMONE COLLINS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE – 610.239.7601

Pankaj Jobanputra, AICP, Project Manager

pjobanputra@simonecollins.com

Anita Nardone, PE, Stormwater Analyst

anardone@simonecollins.com

Robert Gladfelter, RLA, ASLA

Project LA, Natural Resources Analyst

rgladfelter@simonecollins.com

Toby Levin, RLA, ASLA, Staff LA

tlevin@simonecollins.com

Jordan Upadhyay, Staff LA

jupadhyay@simonecollins.com

William Collins, RLA, Principal

wcollins@simonecollins.com



CERTIFIED PARK & RECREATION
PROFESSIONALS

Derek Dureka, CPRP

derekdureka@gmail.com

Kathleen Muller, CPRP

muller.recreation@gmail.com

Parks and Recreation Team

Mandy Tolino, Director of Parks and Recreation
mandy.tolino@allentownpa.gov

Lucinda Wright, Deputy Director of Parks and Recreation
lucinda.wright@allentownpa.gov

Bryne Heffner-Bair, Project Coordinator
bryne.heffner@allentownpa.gov

Chris Hendricks, Recreation Manager
chris.hendricks@allentownpa.gov

Priscilla Reyes, Special Events Manager
priscilla.reyes@allentownpa.gov

Christian Bianco, Parks Superintendent
christian.bianco@allentownpa.gov





Public Meeting #3 Recap

2/26/25

Review of Public Meeting #3

East Breakout Group ideas

- The East Side is generally not bike-friendly. Roads and waterways divide the neighborhoods, so trail connections to neighborhoods and across bridges are important.
- Parks could use additional wayfinding signage on streets so they are easier to find.
- Requested amenities include open (grass) fields, grouped swinging chairs, and additional sand volleyball courts.
- Canal Park needs additional signage, improved parking, and security.



Review of Public Meeting #3

West Breakout Group ideas

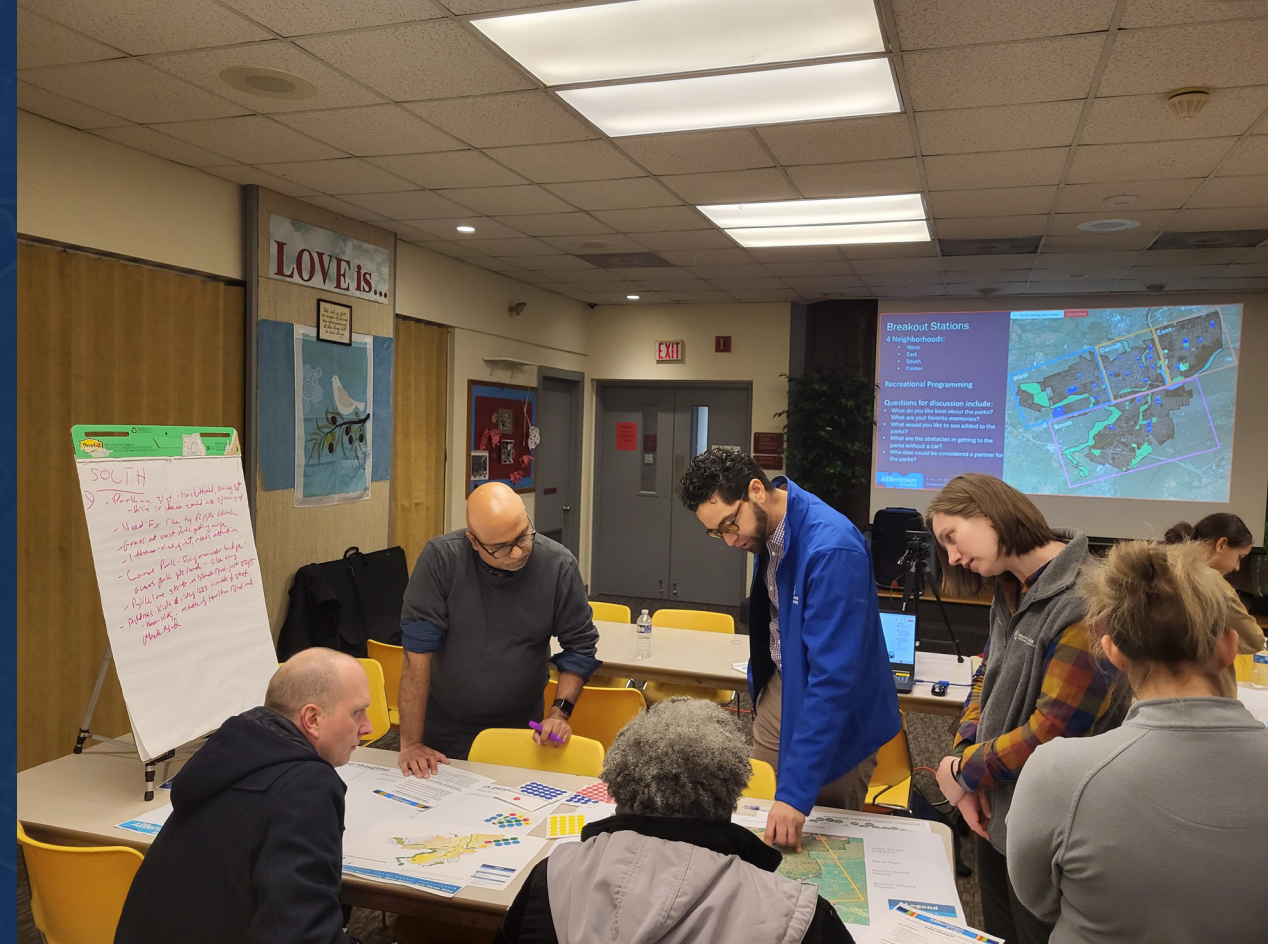
- Tilghman St. is very busy and difficult to cross on foot or bike.
- Lehigh Parkway WPA elements have not been adequately maintained.
- The canopy in West Park is in decline and needs additional tree planting to maintain it.
- Valania Park is a nice park now that it has been renovated.



Review of Public Meeting #3

South Breakout Group ideas

- Cyclists use Mack Blvd. and Hamilton Blvd. unsafely, and practice riding at Trout Creek. There is need for bicycle amenities for them to use.
- Trout Creek needs additional sidewalks and benches.
- Mack Blvd. bike lane should connect to other bike amenities.
- Bucky Boyle and South Mountain Reservoir need additional signage.



Review of Public Meeting #3

Center Breakout Group ideas

- Arts Park could use additional programming.
- Parks should have welcoming entrances with limited parking in entrance areas.
- Lighting, signage, crosswalks, and dog waste bag stations were requested throughout the park system.
- The visual appeal of parks is important.
- Could the city's waterways be used to create partnerships?



Review of Public Meeting #3

Programming Breakout Group ideas

- Participants would like more environmental education, including outdoor classrooms in the parks.
- Pavilions can help foster a sense of community and provide shade.
- Pools are important to the community. Children need to learn how to swim.
- A Park Passport Program could encourage residents to visit different parks and try new programs.
- Amenities for individuals on the Autism Spectrum are very desirable.



Review of Public Meeting #3

Online Breakout Group ideas

- Participants would like to have more events and more community groups in the parks, particularly events for youth.
- Pavilions could be used as community hubs.
- Neighborhood organizations could provide parks ambassadors to facilitate a sense of community ownership of parks.

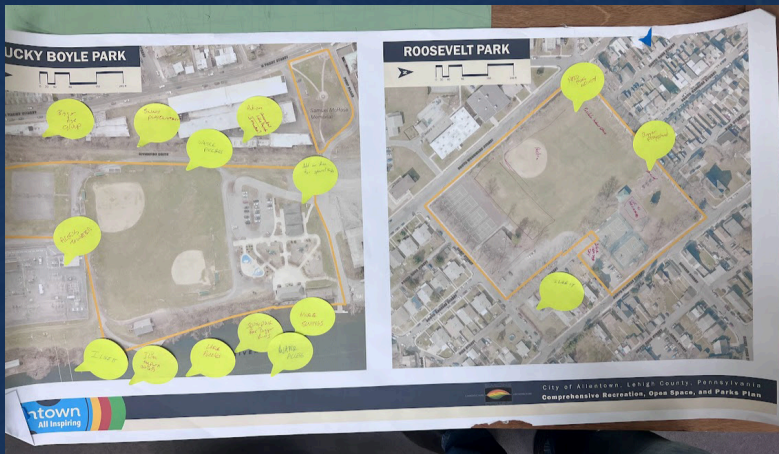
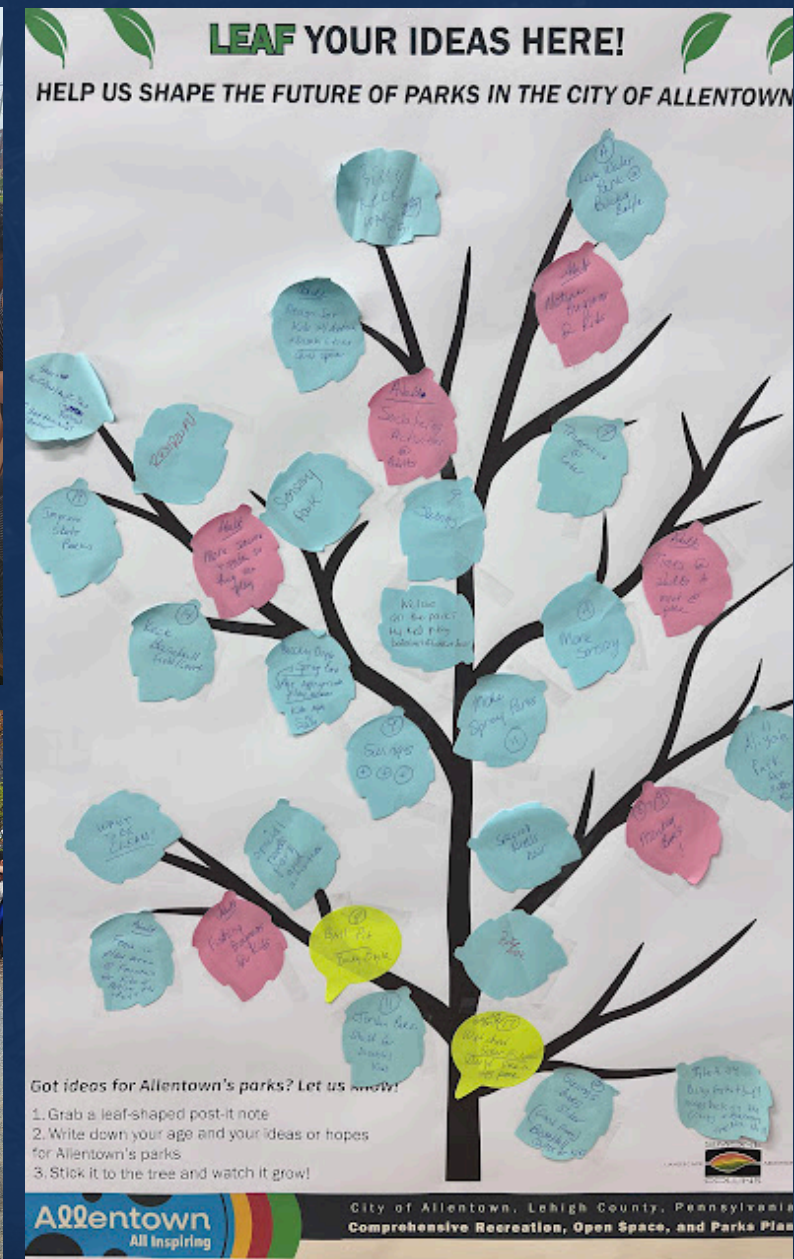


Bucky Boyle Egg Hunt 4/19/25
Earth Day at Cedar Beach 4/26/25

Bucky Boyle Easter Egg Hunt

Ran by Allentown A's

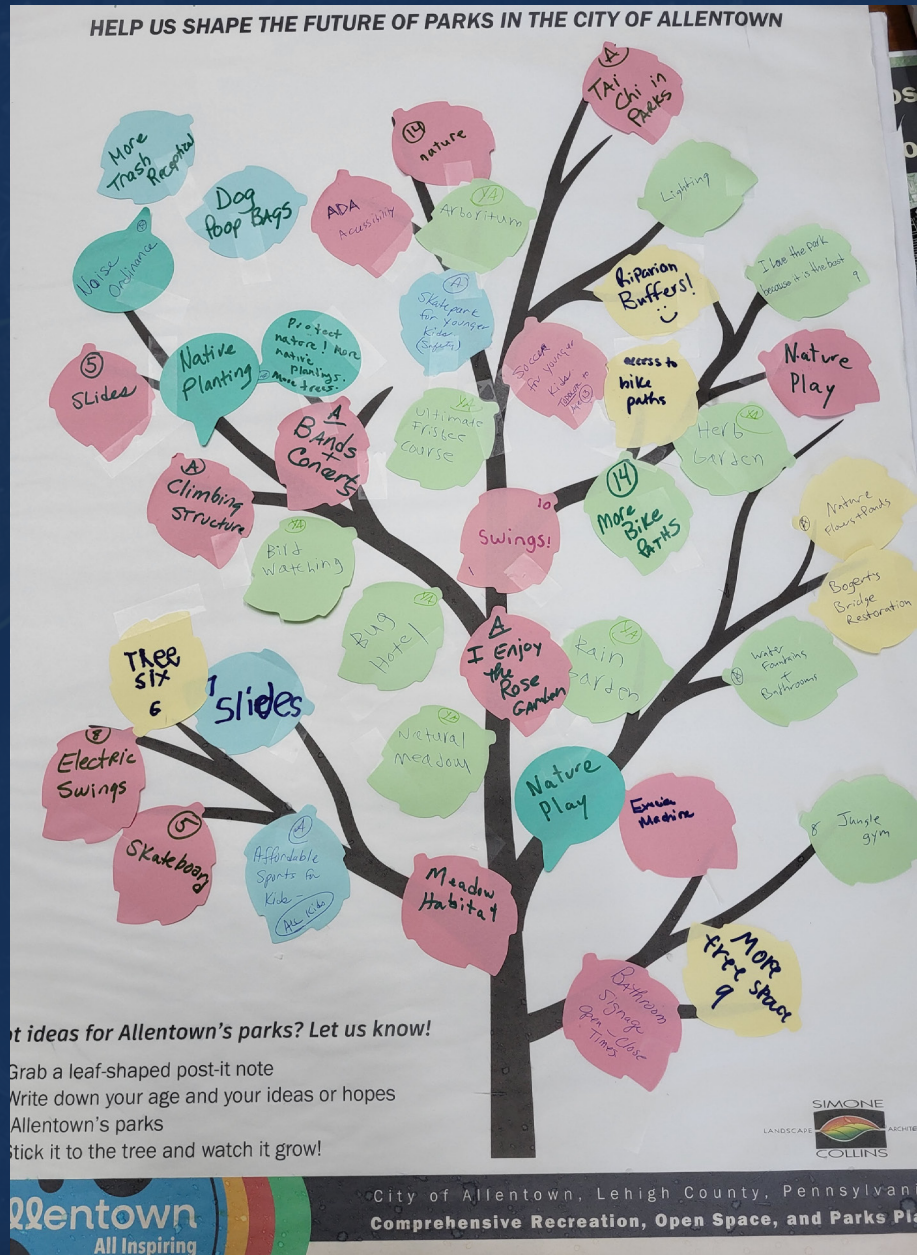
- Leaf Your Ideas tree for programming
- All 3 parks for master planning
- 200 - 300 attendees



Earth Day at Cedar Beach

Allentown Department of Recycling

- Leaf Your Ideas tree for programming
- All 3 parks for master planning
- 200+ attendees





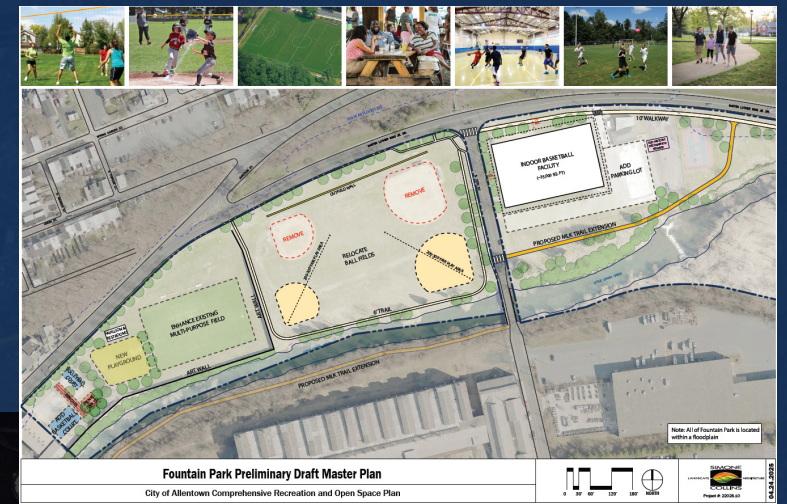
Public Meeting #4 Recap

4/30/25

Review of Public Meeting #4

Fountain Park Ideas

- Amphitheater
- Urban forestry / Food forestry
- Lantern festival
- Benches / Lighting
- Acknowledge past community leaders
- Community garden
- Programming with Davinci Science Center
- Waterfront pier and fishing and seating along Creek
- Colorful crosswalks and traffic calming at 10th and MLK Dr.



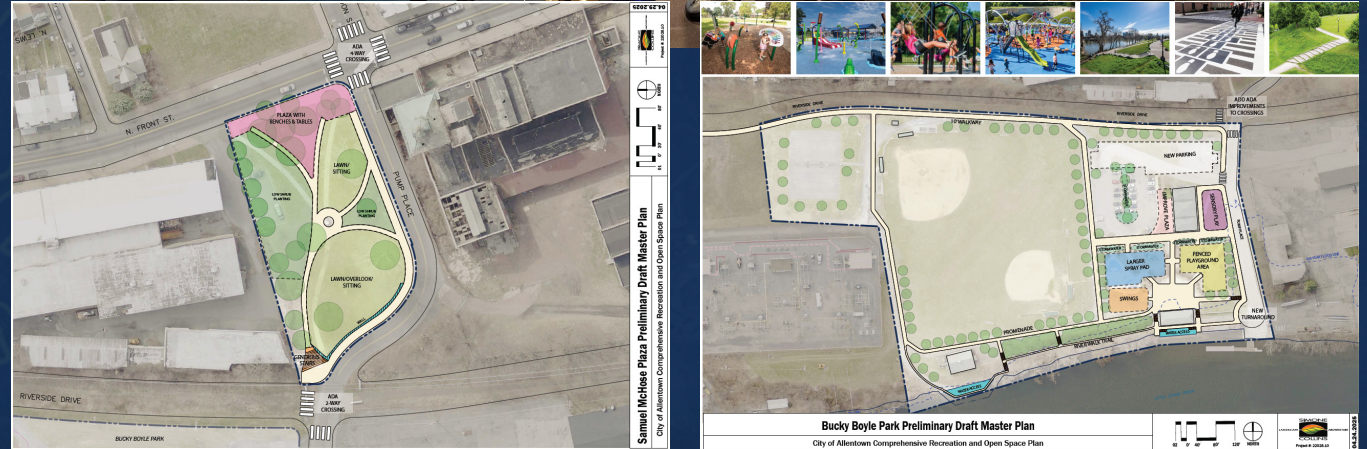
Review of Public Meeting #4

Bucky Boyle Park Ideas

- Restrooms – needed and have them open year-round
- Create riverside access / River walk trail
- Benches
- Lights in parking lot

McHose Plaza Ideas

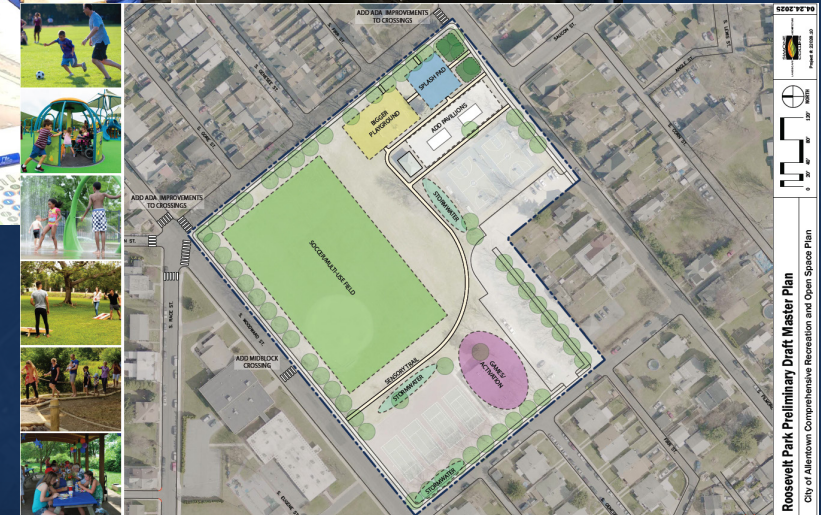
- Native plants
- Plaza with benches and tables
- Speed controls on Riverside Dr. and Front St.



Review of Public Meeting #4

Roosevelt Park Ideas

- U.S. Map where proposed pavilions are
- Additional seating by field
- Lighting that doesn't disrupt residents
- Fence in area by tennis courts
- Plantings / shade along sensory trail
- Pollinator garden
- Bike racks
- Activate triangle at Race and Woodward



Review of Public Meeting #4

Other Park Ideas

- Union Terrace
 - More programming in amphitheater
- West Park
 - Maintain historic property as arboretum
- Andre Reed Park
 - Pavilion by pool/playground
 - Picnic tables
 - Renovate tennis courts



Review of Public Meeting #4

Other General Park Ideas

- More community gardens
- Additional police presence or security in parks
- Currently no open space west of 15th St. and north of Tilghman St. (other than Muhlenberg Elementary)





Public Opinion Survey Results

Public Opinion Survey



<https://qrco.de/allentownrecplansurvey>

<https://qrco.de/allentownrecreacionencuesta>



City of Allentown Open Space & Recreation Plan

Survey Introduction

Thank you for your interest in assisting with the planning of the City of Allentown's Park system, recreation programming, and open space needs. Over the next year, the City will develop a Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, which will serve the following purposes:

- Determine growth opportunities for the parks and recreation system.
- Evaluate the city's management of its recreation programs and facilities.
- Establish goals and objectives for the city and its Parks and Recreation Department.
- Identify the steps needed to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan.

In addition, the City is also developing separate master site plans for Bucky Boyle Park, Fountain Park and Roosevelt Park.

This opinion survey is a vital part of the planning process and will take **approximately 15 minutes to complete**. The survey asks residents to consider existing strengths and future opportunities for the City's parks, recreation, and open space needs. The survey will be available until July 31, 2025.

Residents will also have the opportunity to provide feedback at several public meetings to be held during the course of the planning process. Please check the City's website and notices for meeting dates.

Speak up for Allentown Parks and get a \$5 Gift Card courtesy of the Allentown Parknership! Share your email address at the end of the survey to claim your reward. Already taken the survey but still want a gift card? Feel free to take it again and add your email address this time.

Gifts cards include Amazon, Target, Walmart and many more! This is a limited time offer while supplies last.

Thank you for your time and participation!

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

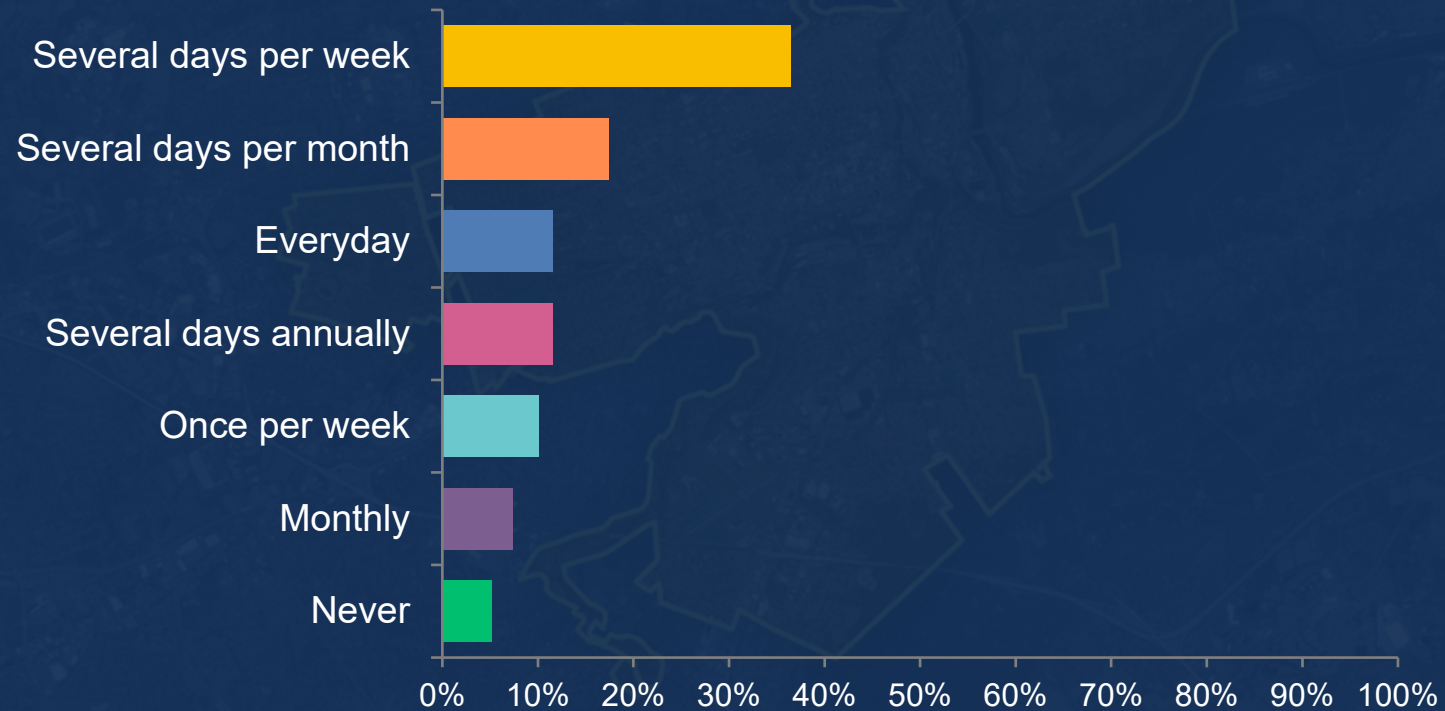
- **748** responses to date (459 responses since 3/1/25)
 - 706 English language survey
 - 42 Spanish language survey
- **32%** reside in Zip Code 18104
 - Parks include: Allentown Golf Course, Cedar Creek Parkway, Cedar Beach Park, Daddona Lake and Terrace Park, Rose Gardens, Trexler Memorial Park
- **21%** in 18103
 - Parks include: Roosevelt Park, Alton Park Playlot, Lehigh Parkway, Mack Pool, Percy Ruhe Park, South Mountain Reservoir
- **21%** in 18102
 - Parks include: Bucky Boyle Park, Fountain Park, Franklin Park, Jackson St. Community Park, Jordan Meadows, Old Fairgrounds Playground/5th St. Spray Park, Stevens Park, West Park
- **53%** of respondents have lived in their communities for 20+ years



Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q1: Generally, how often do people in your household visit parks in the City of Allentown?

Answered: 747 Skipped: 1



Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q2: If you answered 'Never' in Question 1, what are the primary reasons that you DO NOT visit parks in the City of Allentown? Select all that apply.

Answered: 163 Skipped: 585



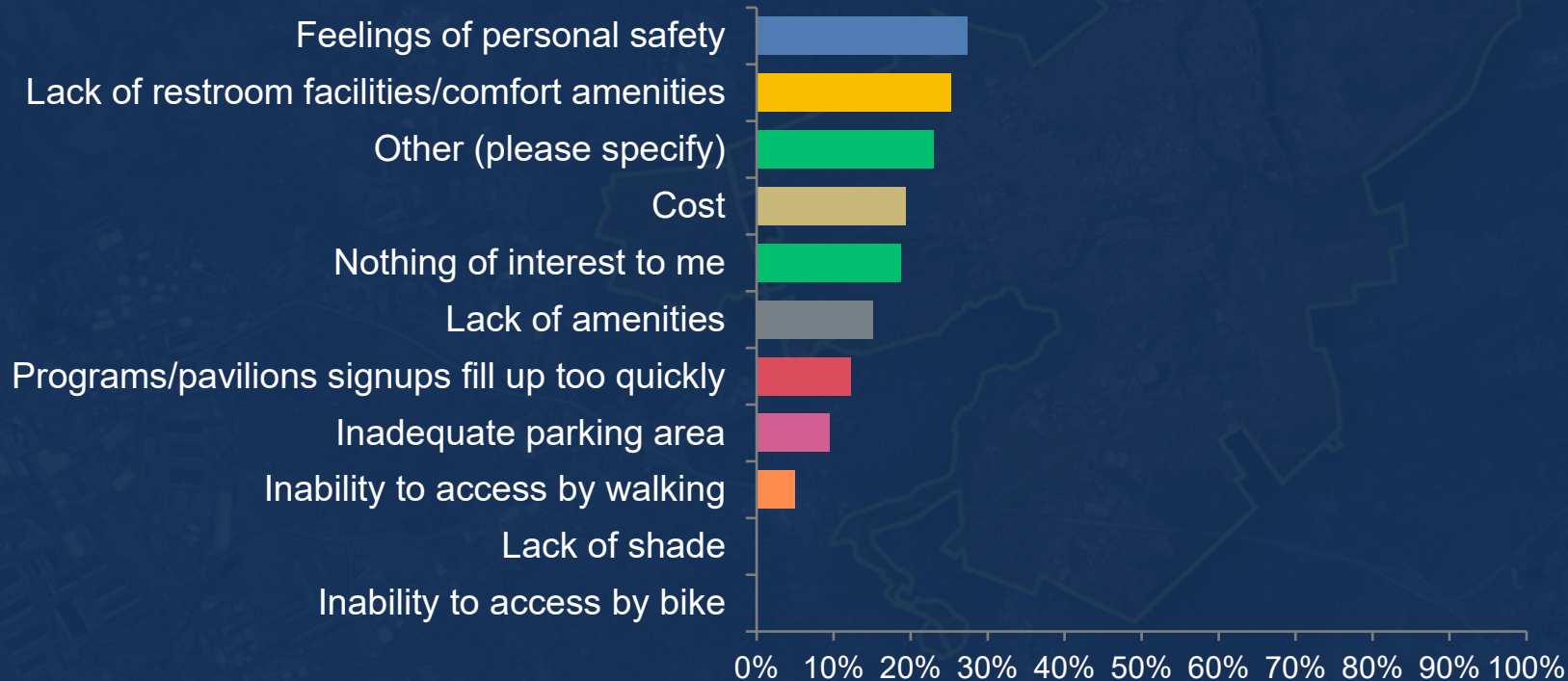
Other responses include:

- “Just [doesn’t] feel safe for my daughter to play there”
- “High grass near the water”
- Distance from home
- Lack of accessible amenities
- Lack of bike trails to get to the parks.
- Unclean

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q3: If you answered 'Never' in Question 1 (How often do people in your household visit parks in the City of Allentown?), what are the primary reasons that you DO NOT participate in Allentown programs or rent facilities in the City of Allentown? Select all that apply.

Answered: 139 Skipped: 609



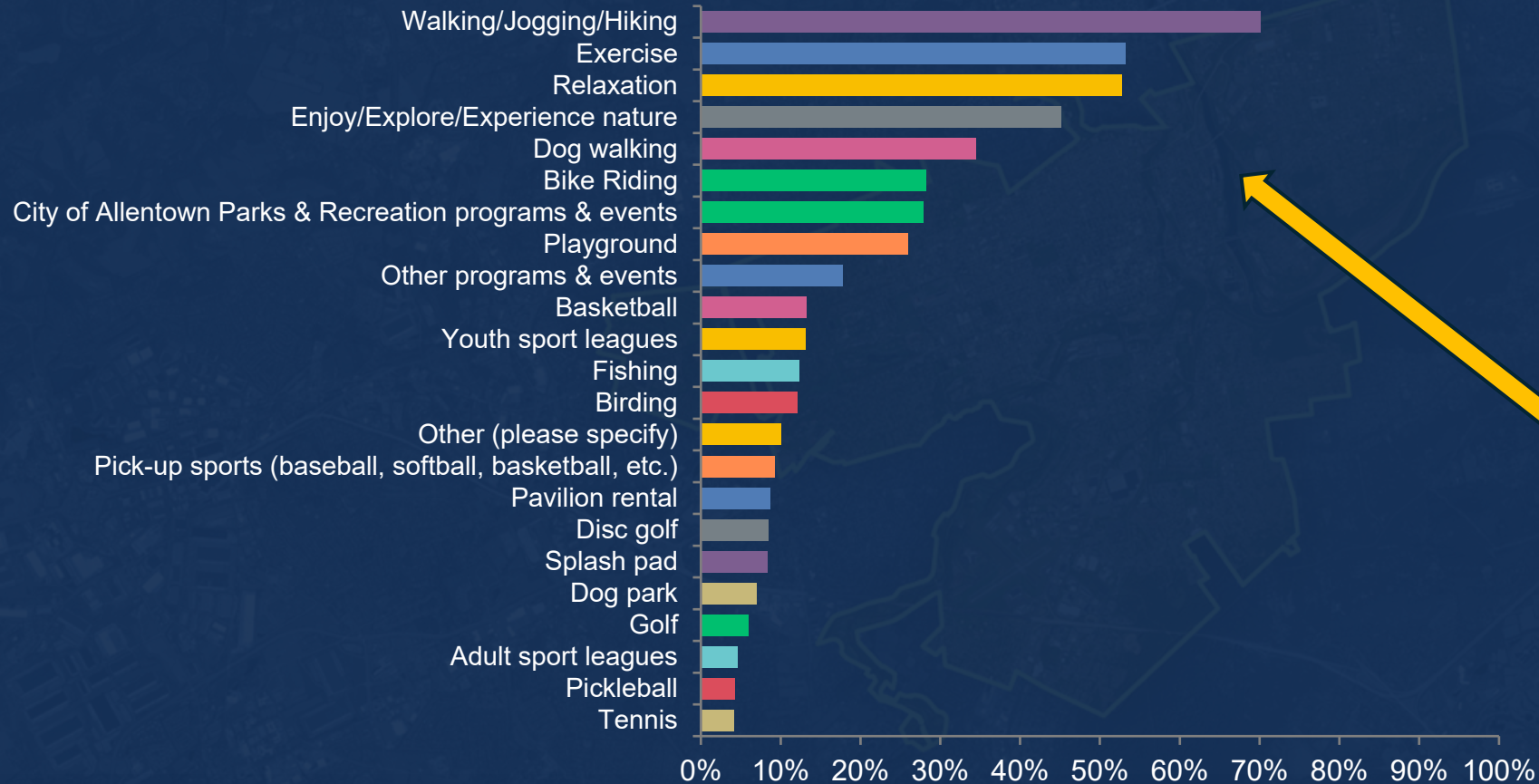
Other responses include:

- *“Not wheelchair friendly with flat and stable surfaces and access”*
- *“Too far to drive”*
- *Lack of knowledge of events*
- *Noise*

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q5: For what purpose(s) do people in your household visit park/recreation sites in the City of Allentown? Select all that apply.

Answered: 635 Skipped: 113



Other responses include:

- Concerts, seasonal and holiday events
- Art Spaces
- Cedar Beach Pool / Swimming
- Fresh air
- No interest. Reason: safety

Top 5 Responses

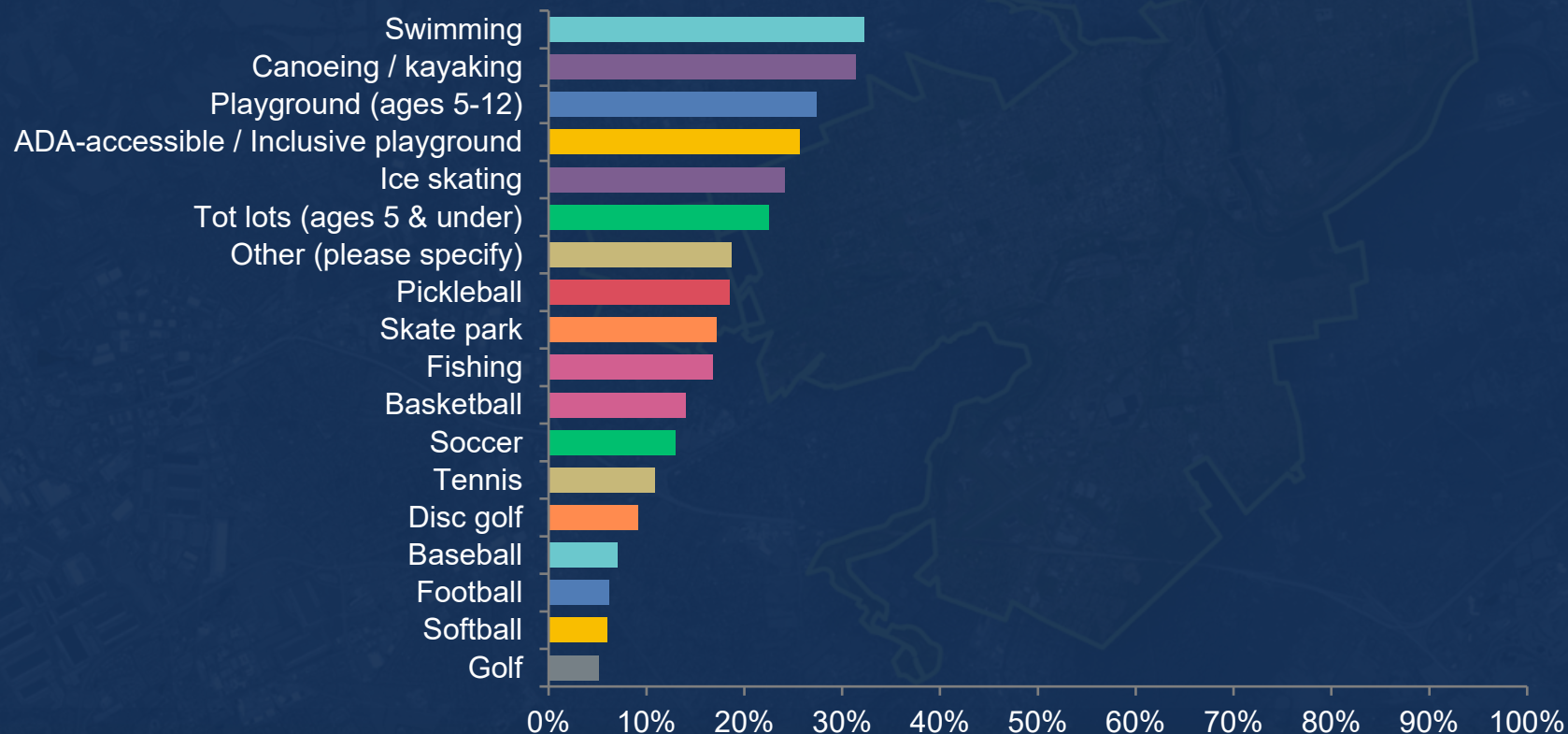
1. Walking/Jogging/Hiking
2. Exercise
3. Relaxation
4. Enjoy/Explore/Experience nature
5. Dog walking

27% said they visit for Parks & Recreation programs and events

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q11: Do you believe the City of Allentown needs more active recreational facilities? Select all that apply.

Answered: 472 Skipped: 276



Other responses include:

- Senior activities / programming
- Accessible/inclusive playground
- Indoor community space
- Environmental restoration
- Roller skating
- Trails

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q12: Do you believe that the City of Allentown needs more passive types of activity options? Passive recreational activities are more leisurely and do not require strenuous physical activity. Select all that apply.

Answered: 534 Skipped: 214



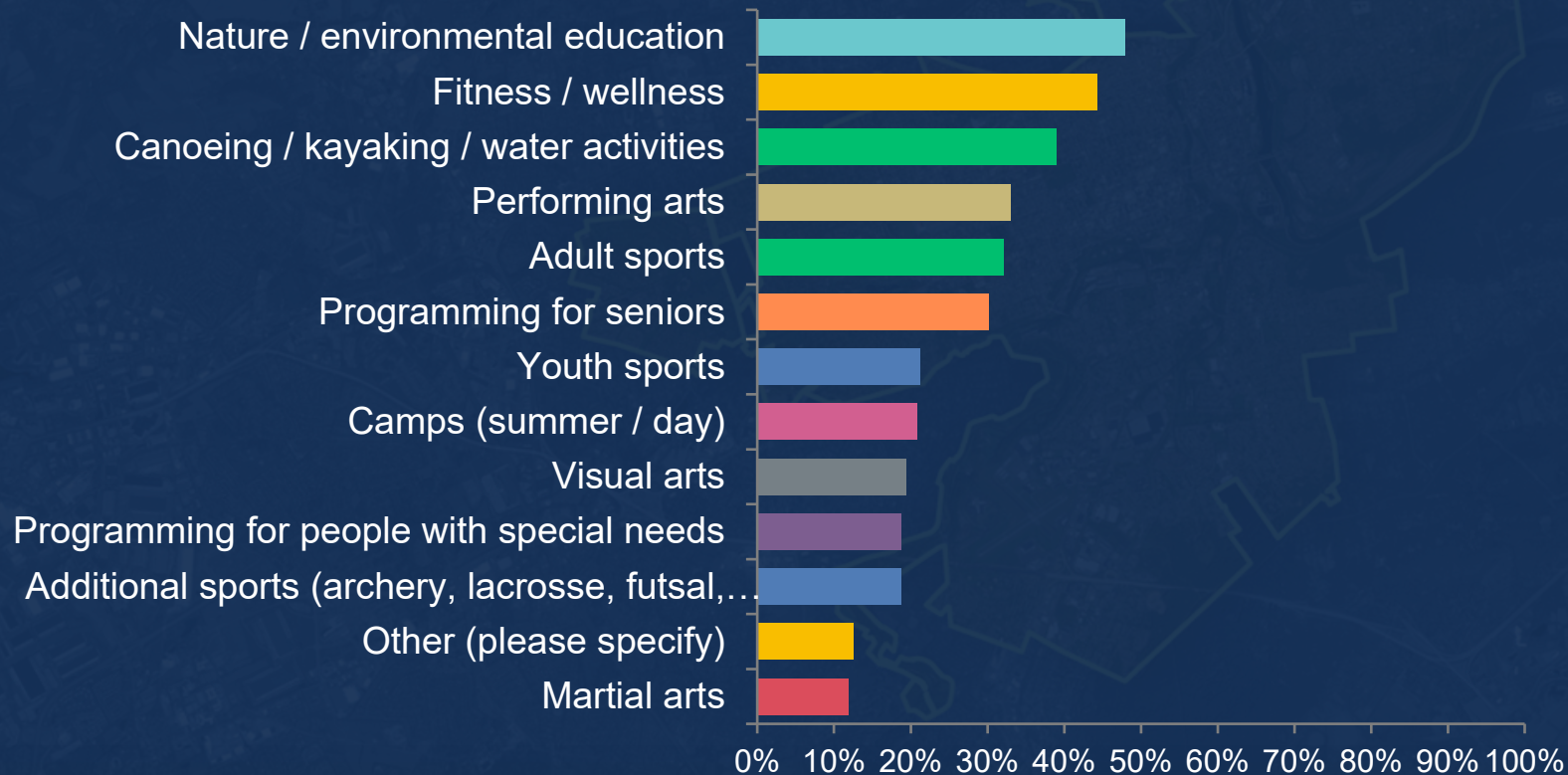
Other responses include:

- More shade
- More seating
- ADA-accessible trails
- Community gardens

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q14: What additional programming opportunities would you like to see introduced in the City of Allentown Parks & Recreation System?

Answered: 495 Skipped: 253



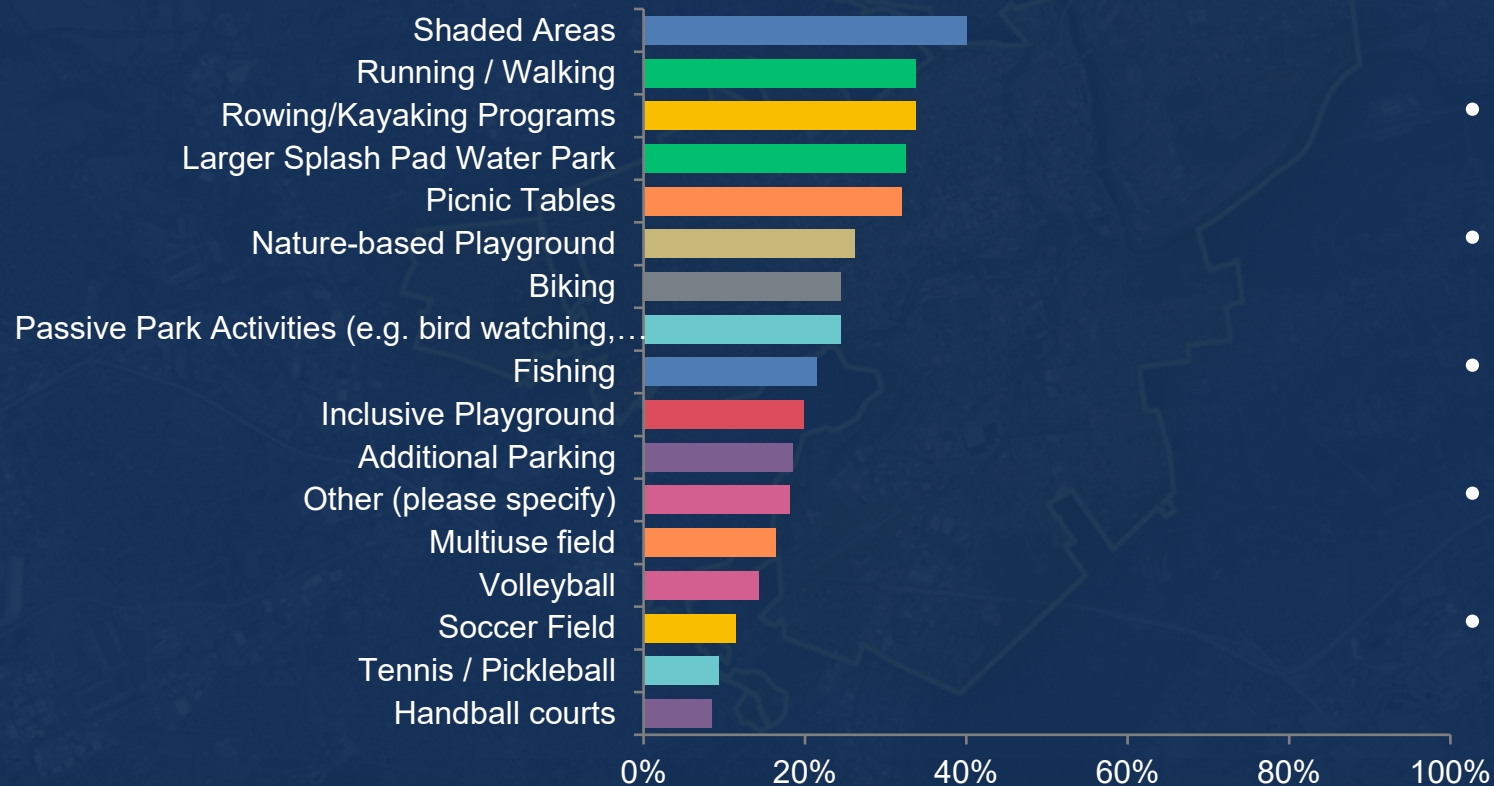
Other responses include:

- *“More things offered on the East side of Allentown.”*
- Concerts and amateur musicians
- Ice skating/hockey
- Programs for young kids

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q20: What types of facilities or activities would you like to see available at Bucky Boyle Park?

Answered: 237 Skipped: 511



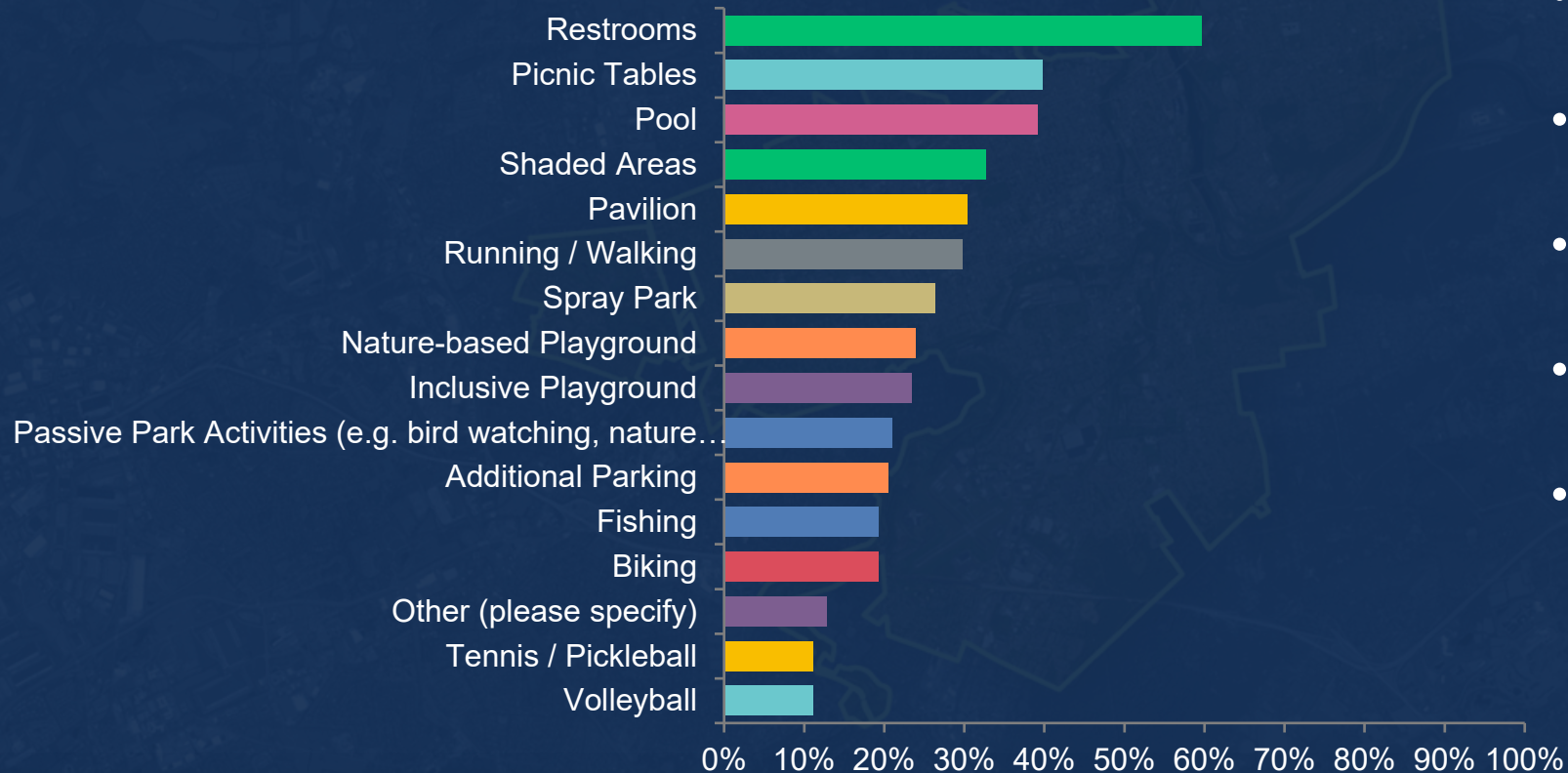
Other responses include:

- Restrooms
- Nature education
- Security
- Pickleball
- Dog park
- Lighting

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q24: What types of facilities or activities would you like to see available at Fountain Park?

Answered: 171 Skipped: 577



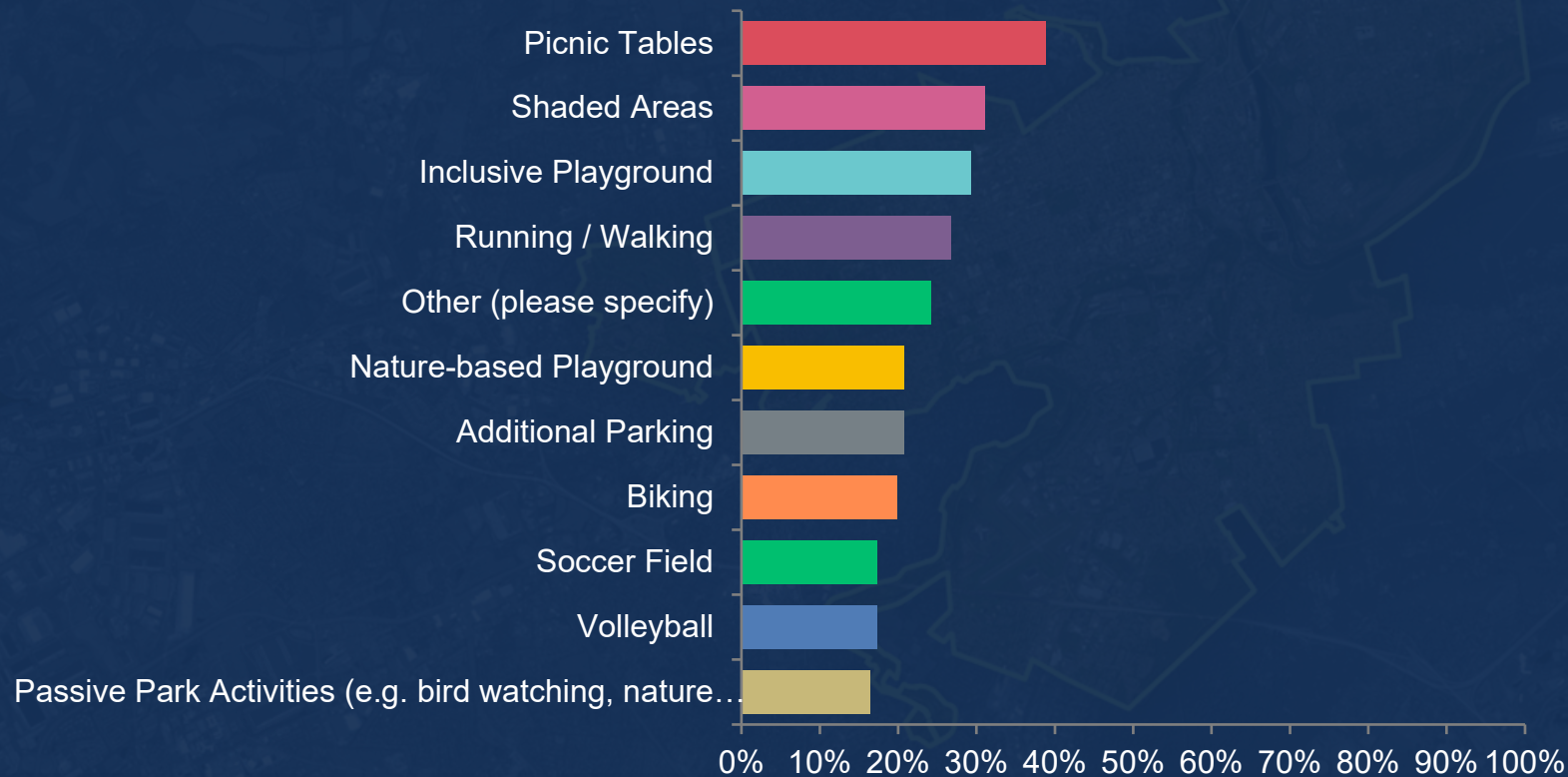
Other responses include:

- Indoor facility
- Lighting
- Sand park
- Safer parking
- Gardening

Public Opinion Survey Preliminary Results

Q28: What types of facilities or activities would you like to see available at Roosevelt Park?

Answered: 116 Skipped: 632



Other responses include:

- 3D walkable map of U.S.
- Pavilion
- Safety
- Pickleball
- Yoga
- Tennis
- Demolition of pool house



Draft Vision and Goals

Draft Vision Statement

*“Position Allentown to continue to be Our “City in a park” and enhance the **quality, connectivity and accessibility** of the City’s valuable recreational, open space and environmental resources to **meet current and future demand** for recreational activity and programming.”*



Draft Goals

Goal 1: Safety & Access

- Envision modern, safe and accessible City parks

Goal 2: Neighborhoods

- Link parks to neighborhoods via safe pedestrian and bike routes

Goal 3: Facilities

- Pursue multi-functional infrastructure improvements

Goal 4: Programs

- Continue recreation programming excellence

Draft Goals

Goal 5: Ecology

- Protect and promote the natural resources

Goal 6: Open Space

- Increase availability and access

Goal 7: Management

- Continue to deliver efficient and sustainable P&R management, maintenance and administration

Goal 8: Governance

- Develop policies and ordinances that support recreation needs

Goal 9: Finance

- Identify strategies to create funding partnerships



Draft Recommendations

Draft Recommendations

Programming

- Allentown Parks & Recreation needs its own indoor sports courts and facilities.
- Decisions must be made regarding the status and future of the currently closed outdoor swimming pools. This must be conducted through an equity lens.
- Swim Lessons, prioritizing children from historically underserved communities, are a necessary first step in addressing equity issues. This will build an essential foundation for future engagement in water sports such as canoeing and kayaking.
- Universal Design should guide all future park and program plans.
- ADA Accessibility.
- Spaces for residents of all ages who have sensory issues or are on the Autism Spectrum.
- Programming for Seniors (55+) is strongly desired and needed.
- There is tremendous interest in and potential for strengthening and developing Neighborhood Parks Groups.

Draft Recommendations

Programming

- Respect for the historic context, as well as historic structures, must be incorporated into the plan.
- Review the summer camp/playground program. There are revered traditions to be preserved, yet new ideas are sought. Explore the possibilities!
- There is an overarching need for formalized policies and procedures to govern special events and programming.
- Consider partnerships with relevant agencies and initiatives
 - Parknership
 - Blue Zones
 - Lehigh Valley Health Systems
 - Other Groups
 - Environmental Groups
 - Sports Organizations
 - Arts Organizations

Health & Wellness Agencies
Social Service Agencies

Draft Recommendations

General / Administration

- Improve communication so that all necessary employees are aware of decisions that have been made (park closure, free day at the pool, event cancelled, event scheduled, etc.).
- Create a formal bi-annual review process of department policies to ensure they are current and being followed.
- Admin, Parks, & Recreation all need to be documenting processes and procedures to ensure seamless transition between existing and new staff upon resignation, retirement, reassignment.
- Institute regular full-time and permanent part-time staff evaluations.

Rentals

- Review fee schedule and policies regarding park amenity rentals and ensure expenses are being covered, especially by non-City groups.

Draft Recommendations

Parks

- New facility/shop absolutely needed.
- Simplifying the hiring process (especially for seasonal staff) - this may require addressing efficiency issues with the City's HR practices.
- Expand and empower park patrol program for weekend and evening eyes on the parks - set high expectation for what this staff should be doing.
- Need additional staff resources.
- Reducing need for maintenance when capital projects are constructed should be a top priority.

Staffing

- Create a new position or reassign an existing position to coordinate volunteer efforts (individuals and groups) and remain in regular contact with all of the P&R partners.
 - This position could also be responsible for developing a department-run, regional volunteer program. This could improve department/park engagement and streamline/direct efforts where most needed in the City.

Park Master Site Plans - DRAFTS

Roosevelt Park

Improvements include:

- More visual street crossings for traffic calming
- Remove baseball field for full size soccer field
- Add pathways, benches, pollinator gardens, and shade trees
- Place splashpad in area of old pool house
- Increase size of playground and make it a universal play area
- Add tree alley with tables for seating
- Community garden area with drop off from the parking lot



Bucky Boyle Park

Recent improvements :

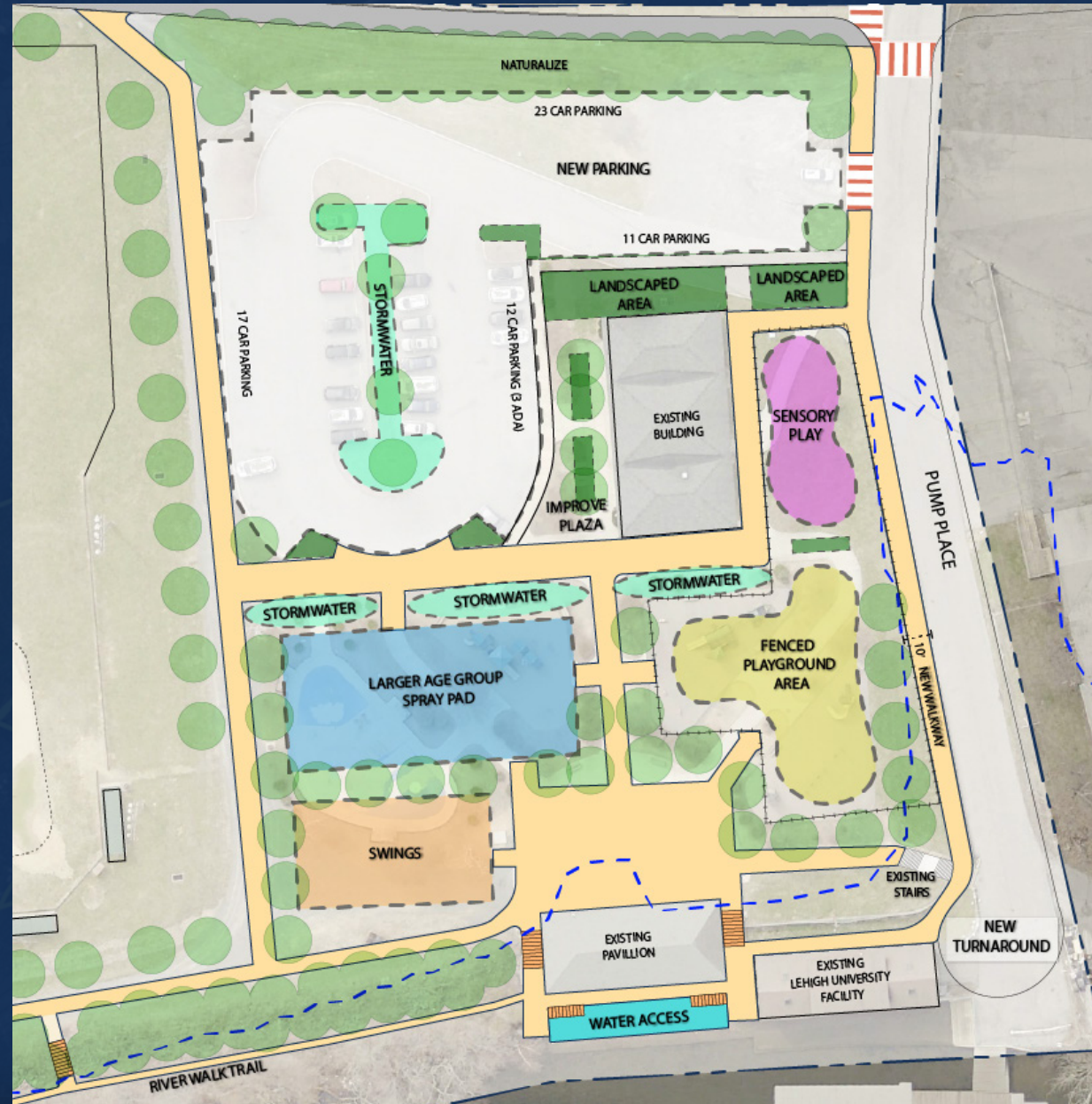
- Basketball courts resurfaced
- New LED lighting
- Benches
- And new water fountain with water bottle refill



Bucky Boyle Park

Improvements include:

- Larger defined parking area
- Larger spray pad to incorporate larger age group
- Two play areas – one for sensory play
- Larger swing area – everyone wants more swings
- Water trail – water access
- Larger perimeter trail



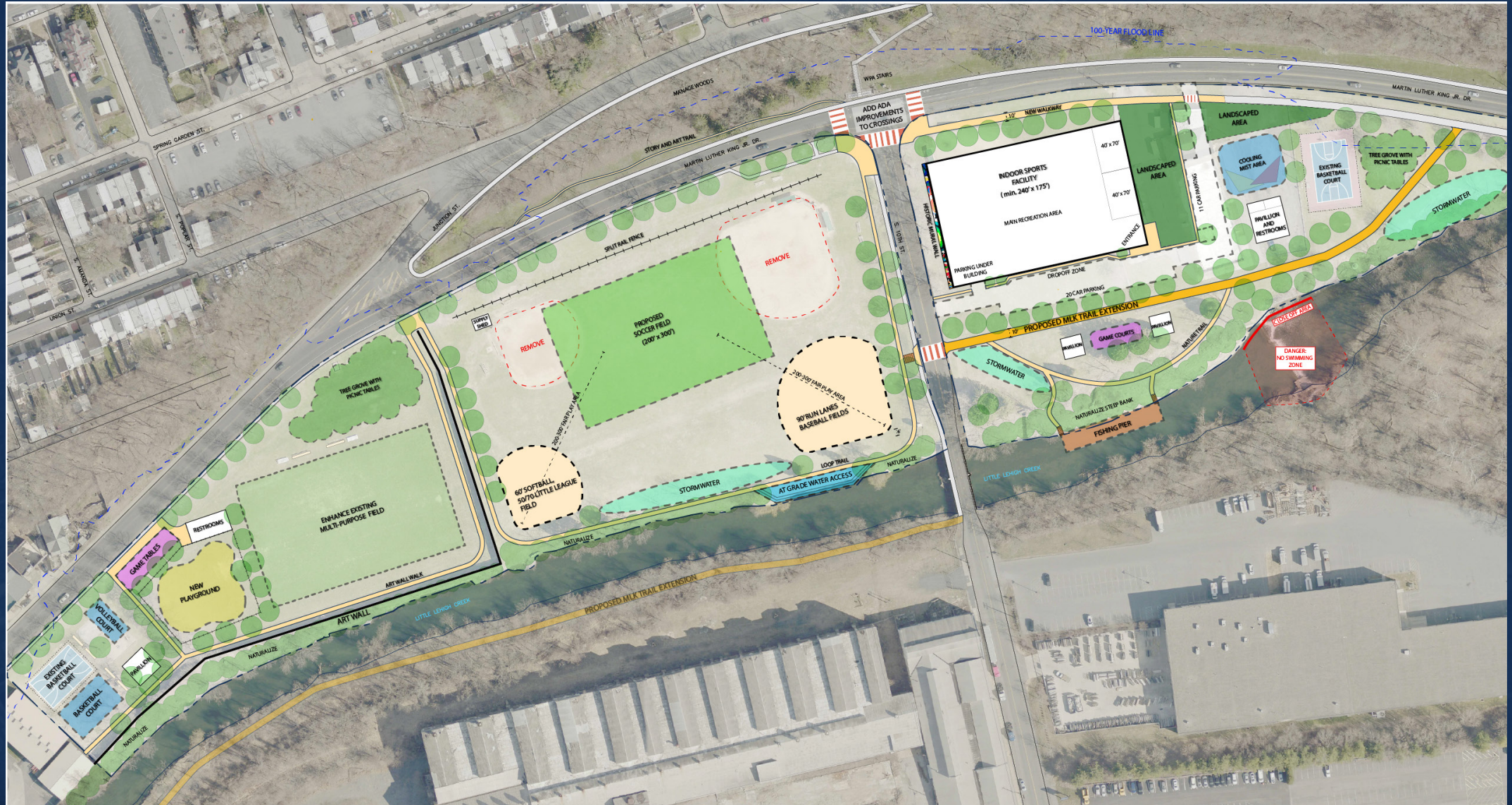
McHose Plaza

Improvements include:

- More visual street crossings for traffic calming
- Keep existing monuments
- Benches and tables for seating
- Lawn areas surrounded by shade trees
- Sidewalk to allow safe ADA access to bottom of park and cross over to Bucky Boyle
- Passive space to serve as the entrance to the waterfront from the 1st and 6th Ward neighborhoods



Fountain Park



Fountain Park

East side :

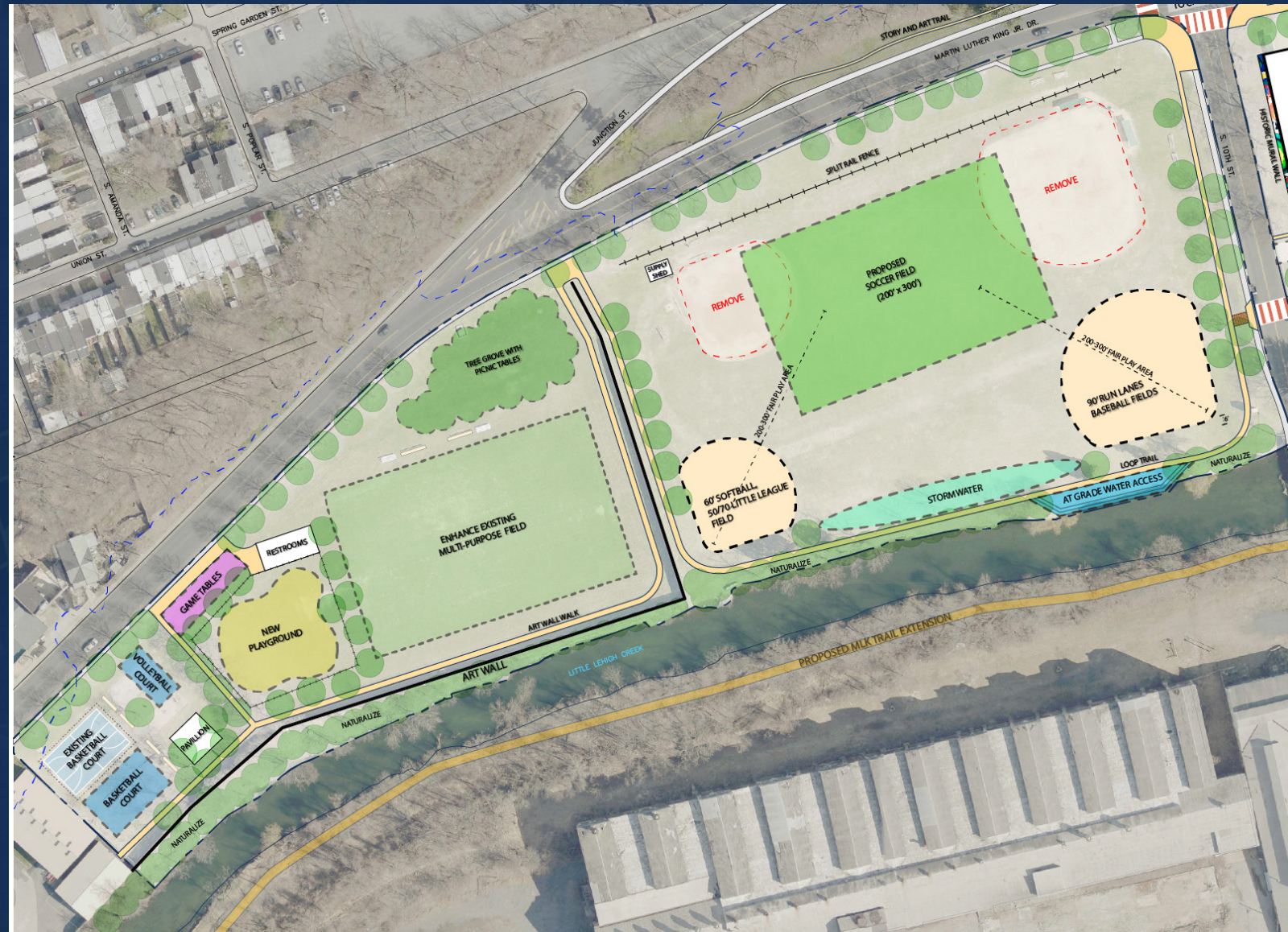
- Enhance street crossing with landings
- Remove pool to add indoor facility with parking garage
- Add controlled stream access for safety – include fishing pier
- Includes proposed MLK trail extension
- Other amenities include: pavilions, cooling mist station with shade, more trees, restrooms, mural wall, nature trail, parking



Fountain Park

West side :

- Move fields for DCNR preference
- Add controlled stream access for safety – at grade access, use art to help define water conditions
- Add more paths – art walk
- Other amenities include: pavilions, new playground area, game tables, 2nd basketball court, new volleyball area, restrooms, more trees and shade, use existing concrete wall for local artwork, Story trail north of MLK Drive
- Add LANTA Stop





Next Steps

Project Schedule

Meeting Type	Date	Time
Committee Meeting #1	Wednesday, September 25, 2024	7pm-9pm
Public Meeting #1	Wednesday, November 13, 2024	6pm-8pm
Committee Meeting #2	Monday, December 9, 2024	7pm-9pm
Public Meeting #2	Wednesday, January 8, 2025	6pm-8pm
Committee Meeting #3	Wednesday, January 22, 2025	7pm-9pm
Public Meeting #3	Wednesday, February 26, 2025	6pm-8pm
Engagement for Master Planned Parks <i>Easter Egg Hunt at Bucky Boyle Park</i>	Saturday April 19, 2025	
Engagement for Master Planned Parks <i>Earth Day Celebration at Cedar Beach Park</i>	Saturday April 26, 2025	
Public Meeting #4	Wednesday, April 30, 2025	6pm-8pm
Key Person Interviews (20)	TBD	TBD
Committee Meeting #4	Wednesday, May 14, 2025	7pm-9pm
Committee Meeting #5	Wednesday, June 11, 2025	7pm-9pm
Online Public Opinion Survey	October 2024 – July 2025	
Public Meeting #5 <i>Fearless Fire Co.</i>	Wednesday, June 25, 2025	6pm-8pm
Committee Meeting #6	Wednesday, September 10, 2025	7pm-9pm
City Council Meeting (to Adopt Plan – TBD)	October 2025	
City Staff Meetings	Estimated 1 per month	Virtual

NEXT

Next Steps - Simone Collins team

- Finish Key Person Interviews (1 left)
- Refine Park Master Site Plans
- Draft narrative report
- Refine draft recommendations and start on order of magnitude cost estimates



Thank You!

SIMONE COLLINS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE – 610.239.7601

Pankaj Jobanputra, AICP, Project Manager
pjobanputra@simonecollins.com

Anita Nardone, PE, Stormwater Analysis
anardone@simonecollins.com

Robert Gladfelter, RLA, ASLA, Project LA, Natural Resources Analysis
rgladfelter@simonecollins.com

Toby Levin, RLA, ASLA, Staff LA
tlevin@simonecollins.com

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jupadhyay@simonecollins.com

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wcollins@simonecollins.com

