

# LAWRENCE-MITTY PARK AND TRAIL MASTER PLAN

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY REPORT

### Visioning Phase

City of Cupertino - June 2022

### INTRODUCTION

The desire for a new park and trail extension along Lawrence Expressway near Mitty Avenue (Lawrence-Mitty) began 20 years ago. The City of Cupertino has considered the acquisition, annexation, and development of a neighborhood park on the eastern side of the City since 2002. In July 2020, the City Council approved the purchase of the Lawrence-Mitty 7.83-acre site from the Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Department. The site is in transition from being within the jurisdiction, city limits, and urban service area of the City of San Jose to the City of Cupertino. In April of 2022 the Local Agency Formation Commission of Santa Clara County (LAFCO) approved the City's request for annexation. The City of Cupertino has hired a design consultant, MIG, to provide site analysis, gather public input to inform community-driven design alternatives, and arrive at a preferred, implementable master plan for the site.



The community engagement effort was planned to ensure that the goals and ideas from the neighborhood and potential users are incorporated into the design of the Lawrence-Mitty Park & Trail Master Plan.

The visioning phase of this process included five primary components:

- **Pop-Up Events at:**
  - Bunny Run 5K – April 16<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
  - Saturday Soccer at Creekside Park – May 7<sup>th</sup>, 10am to noon
- **Virtual Community Meeting** – April 27<sup>th</sup>, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
- **Lawrence-Mitty Community Site Tour** – April 30<sup>th</sup>, 10 a.m. to noon
- **Online Survey** – Open from April 4<sup>th</sup> - May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022

The following is a brief description of each event and a synthesis of ideas and priorities that emerged from this engagement effort.

## POP-UP EVENTS

The City of Cupertino and MIG hosted two pop-up events, designed to meet the users where they are and encourage input from community members who are not as likely to attend a public/zoom meeting.

### Bunny Run 5k Pop-Up

April 16, 8:00 a.m. to 11 a.m.

The first event took place at the Bunny Run 5K event at Civic Center Plaza. The weather was rainy, but we received input from at least 30 enthusiastic runners and their supporters.



### Saturday Soccer Pop-Up At Creekside Park

May 7, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The second pop-up and final community visioning event took place during Saturday soccer games at Creekside Park, and we spoke with about 30 community members.

At each event, Site Analysis and Project Overview boards were shared, and residents were encouraged to add their specific comments to the boards using post-it notes. In some cases, Cupertino/MIG staff listened and recorded their comments. The goals of the pop-up event were to inform the community of the project, provide an opportunity for questions, elicit input on desired park amenities, and continue to build a list of interested community members for the upcoming review of the alternatives. A project factsheet was also distributed which included project background, timeline, funding information, and a QR code directing users to the City's Engage Cupertino website to take the online survey or find out more about the project. The fact sheet and larger images of the comment boards can be found in the Appendix.



## Summary of Pop-Up Input

At these events residents were asked to consider two questions:

1. What kinds of recreation opportunities would you like to see in east Cupertino?
2. What are you looking forward to most at the future Lawrence-Mitty Park?

Below are general takeaways from the input provided by the community during the pop-ups:

- Recreation opportunities participants would like to see in east Cupertino:
  - Running and bike trail, connecting to the larger trail network
  - Walking trails separated from biking
  - Picnic tables, benches, gazebo
  - Play features – nature play, Play for older kids, Inclusive play
  - Big climbing wall
  - Exercise bars
  - Basketball, soccer, tennis
  - Skateboard Park
  - Open grass area
  - Mini amphitheater for teen music/performance
- Environmental elements residents would like to enjoy:
  - More shade trees and native plants, with plant identification
  - Botanical and/or meditation garden
  - Ways to look over the creek
  - Nature trails
- Additional amenities residents would like to have in the new park and extended trail:
  - Sound wall
  - Restroom and drinking fountain
  - More lighting on the trail to improve safety
  - Dog park (fenced)
  - Access for safety
  - Parking or bus shuttle from Civic Center

## VIRTUAL COMMUNITY MEETING

April 27, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The City of Cupertino and MIG hosted a community virtual meeting, inviting residents through email and a mailer. The meeting was hosted on Zoom on a Wednesday evening. About 15 participants joined the meeting to learn more about the future park site and the ongoing project.



To begin, project managers from Cupertino and MIG presented a project overview and opportunities & constraints for the site. Participants had the opportunity to engage on a series of poll questions using the digital tool Mentimeter to provide their feedback. In the Q&A portion, participants were encouraged to ask questions and share their ideas about what they would like to see included in the new park site. Input gathered during the virtual meeting and Q&A are summarized below. In addition to the virtual meeting, the project team received several

comments from the community through the *Engage Cupertino* website, which is incorporated below.

## Summary of Virtual Community Meeting Input

Below is a summary of key responses from the **polling questions** asked during the virtual meeting.

- 2/3 of polling participants live in the Rancho Rinconada neighborhood
- Only one had children under 18 in their household
- Saratoga Creek trail use by participants varied from “most days” to “once or a few times a year”
- When asked what their favorite park is, participants mentioned Fremont Older three times. Also listed were Blackberry Farm, Sanborn Park, Sterling Barnhart, and the undeveloped creek bed.
- Favorite outdoor recreation activities included walking, hiking, communing with nature, dog walking, and mountain biking.
- The things participants would like to see in the new park include:
  - *Comfort features*: Picnic area; covered picnic tables; tables and benches
  - *Recreation features*: Skateboard park; play structure; off leash dog area
  - *Natural features*: Habitat restoration; opportunity to see, hear, smell animals and plants, and rippling water (when it's there); year-round Saratoga Creek water; native plants
  - Access to Doyle Ave. (2)
  - Sound barrier at the open section
  - Murals on a sound wall, possibly through a partnership with schools or community organizations
  - Consider how the homeless will use the park and prevent camping in the creek bed where it is not safe for people in rainstorms
- When asked what they would do to improve the existing trail, participants responded:
  - Add lighting (2)
  - Extend the sound wall
  - More trees and shade areas
  - Benches and exercise features
  - Make the creek visible

The screenshot shows a poll interface with the title "What is one thing you would like to see in the new park?". Below the title, there is a grid of nine text boxes containing suggestions. The suggestions are: "Sound barrier", "picnicking area", "tables and benches", "Skateboard park", "Opportunity to see, hear, smell animals and plants and rippling water (when it's there)", "Habitat restoration", "Covered picnic table", "play structure and dog unleashed area", and "Year round Saratoga creek water". At the bottom left of the poll is the Cupertino logo, and at the bottom right is the M I G logo.

Sound barrier	picnicking area	tables and benches
Skateboard park	Opportunity to see, hear, smell animals and plants and rippling water (when it's there)	Habitat restoration
Covered picnic table	play structure and dog unleashed area	Year round Saratoga creek water

In the last half hour of the meeting, the City of Cupertino and MIG had an open **Q&A session** with the community. Topics explored in the Q&A period were:

- Connection to Stevens Creek Blvd



- Safety/Visibility concerns
- Importance of habitat restoration, creek health, and wildlife protection
- Access limitations
- Housing option, encampment concerns

## LAWRENCE-MITTY COMMUNITY SITE TOUR

April 30, 10 a.m. to noon

The City of Cupertino and MIG hosted a Community Site Tour on Saturday April 30th, from 10am to noon. The purpose of this event was twofold. First, this event provided an opportunity for the community to visit the site that will become the new park. Second, this was another opportunity to gather feedback from residents on a range of issues from their thoughts and concerns about the trail, the access points, and their overall experience and comfort within the site.

Throughout the event Cupertino and MIG staff spoke to about 60-70 participants who were eager to set foot on the site which is normally fenced off and off-limited to residents. We saw a range of residents from families with young children and teenagers, seniors, bikers, and dog owners take part in the event. Cupertino and MIG staff were available to respond to questions and provide information at a Welcome Station at Sterling Barnhart Park and at each of the four (4) stations throughout the site (see site map below for station locations).



Residents who attended the event were given a Site Tour Handout with information about the four stations they could engage with during the event. Using this handout, residents went on a self-guided tour from station to station. Each station had boards informing the community about the project opportunities and existing site conditions and challenges. Additional Question boards were provided to encourage discussion and for users to add their specific comments using post-it notes. A project factsheet was also distributed which included project background, timeline, funding information, and a QR code directing users to Cupertino's website to take the online survey or find out more about the project.



## Summary of Site Tour Community Input

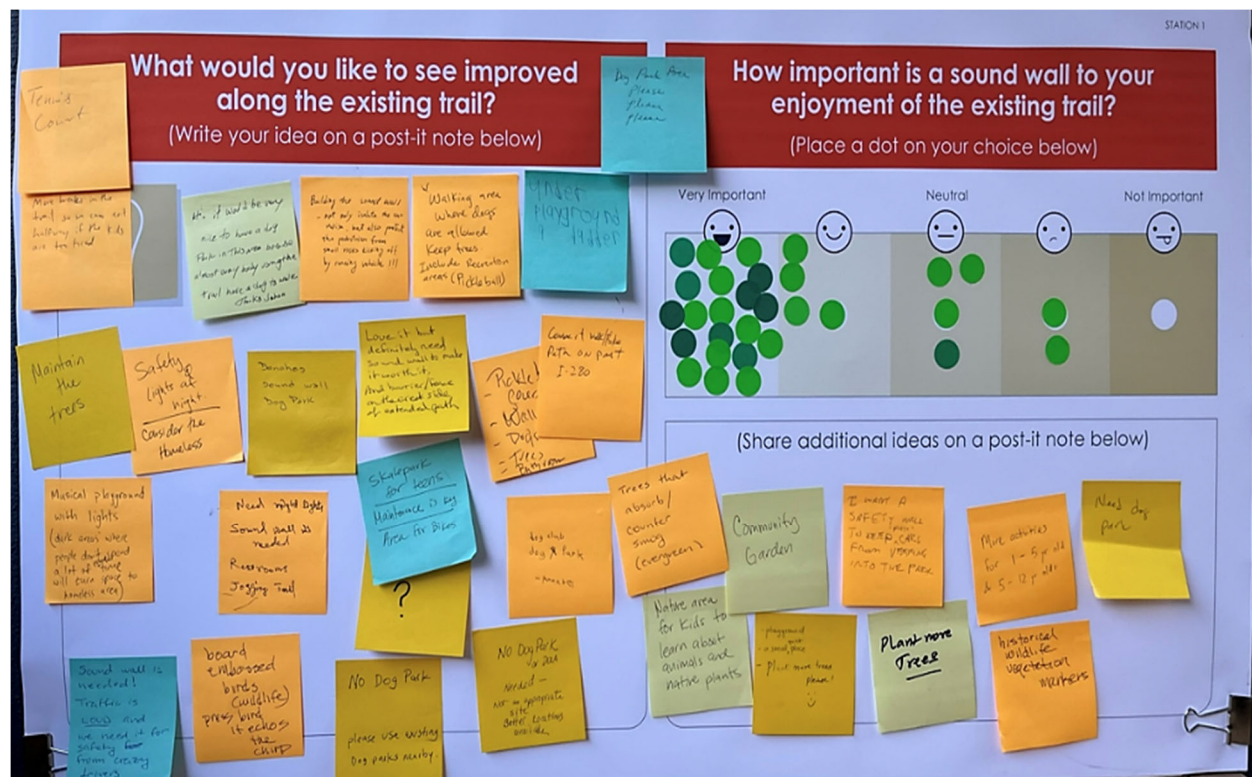
Below is a summary of the input received during the Community Site Tour event.

### Welcome Station

Located at Sterling Barnhart Park, this station provided participants with materials & handouts needed to participate in the site tour. There was a Project Overview poster on display to orient residents as they approached the site.

### Station 1: Existing Trail

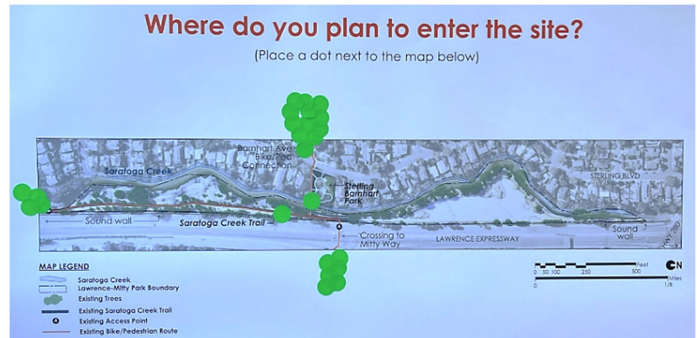
This station focused on the existing trail, asking participants about their comfort level with the noise along the current trail and what they would like to improve. Participants were given dot stickers to vote on a questions related to the sound wall. Most respondents stated that the sound was "very important" to their enjoyment of the existing trail.





## Station 2: Circulation

At this station we asked residents how they would plan to arrive at Lawrence-Mitty park and had participants place dots on a map (left below) showing where they would enter once the park was opened.



The majority of the participants shared that they would arrive at the park from the Rancho Rinconada neighborhood, while another portion of them would arrive from the Lawrence Expressway and Mitty crosswalk. Majority of respondents stated they plan to walk, run, or bike to the site.

## Station 3: New Park Possibilities

At this station residents were asked to share ideas for the large open space and share how comfortable they were being in close proximity to the Expressway. As shown by their blue dot stickers, more residents stated that they felt "least comfortable" at this specific location in the site. In their additional comments residents shared that they would like to see a sound wall along the site edge, not only to reduce noise, but for safety reasons as well.



#### Station 4: Saratoga Creek

Here residents were asked to share what they would like to see in the new park, specifically next to the creek. Because this is the point furthest away from the Lawrence Expressway, participants also shared their comfort level was improved, considering the noise levels. The input provided at this station included wanting to see nature walking trails, creek access, a history timeline, or exercise machines. A few residents mentioned ideas for a dog park as well.

## ONLINE SURVEY

April 4 – May 23

An online survey was developed to expand outreach into the community. It included a variety of question types designed to understand the community's priorities for the future park and trail improvements at the Lawrence-Mitty site. The bulk of the survey concentrated on desired recreation experiences for the new park and existing trail section. In addition, participants were asked to provide anonymous information about themselves, including if they live within walking distance of Lawrence-Mitty Park, how often they use the Saratoga Creek Trail, and what neighborhood they reside in.

Over the course of approximately seven weeks, between April 4 and May 23, 2022, the survey captured 563 responses. Outreach and marketing of the survey was conducted via mailer, email, and social media by the City of Cupertino. In addition, a link to the survey was included in the project flyer, which was posted at the library. Refer to the appendix for full versions these materials. The survey was also promoted at pop-up events, a site tour, and virtual community meeting.

**CITY OF  
CUPERTINO**

ENGLISH

### WELCOME!

**We want to hear your ideas for an all new park at the Lawrence-Mitty site!**

The survey will take about 10-15 minutes. For ages 12 and under, parents are encouraged to help their children complete the survey. This survey is also available in Simplified Chinese and Hindi. Please select your language from the menu in the top right corner.

我们想了解您在 Lawrence-Mitty 选址上建造一个全新的公园的想法！完成本次调查大约需要 10-15 分钟。对于未满 12 岁的孩子，我们鼓励父母帮助他们完成调查。这份调查也提供中文和印地语版本。请从右上角的菜单中选择您的语言。

हम लॉरेन्स-मिट्टी साइट पर एक बिल्कुल नए पार्क के लिए आपकी राय जानना चाहते हैं। सर्वेक्षण में लगभग 10-15 मिनट का समय लगेगा। 12 साल और उससे कम उम्र के माता-पिता को अपने बच्चों को सर्वेक्षण पूरा करने में मदद करने के लिए प्रोत्साहित किया जाता है। यह सर्वे मंदारिन और हिंदी में भी उपलब्ध है। कृपया ऊपरी दाएं कोने में मेनू से अपनी भाषा चुनें।



1 / 8

100%

Next



## Summary of Online Survey Community Input

Below is a summary of responses for each question in the survey.<sup>1</sup>

Q1. Which of the following topics are most important to you?  
(Select all that apply.)

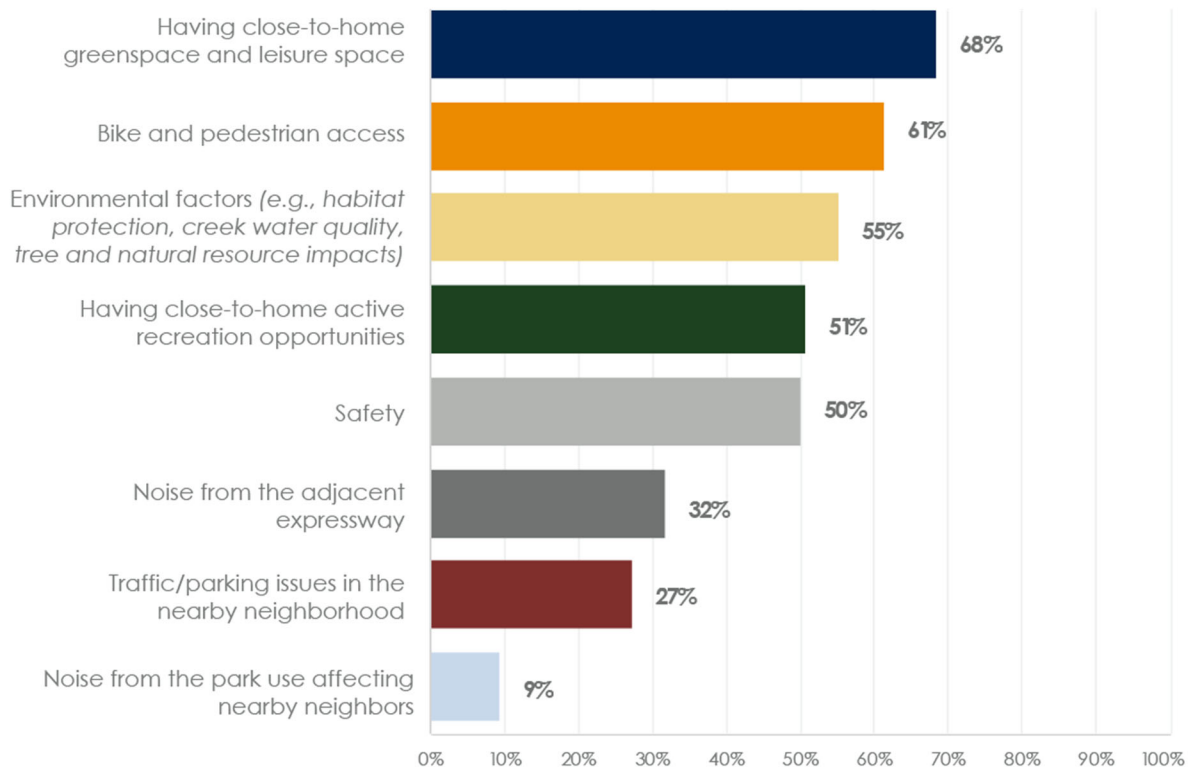


Figure 1: n = 555 respondents

The graph above shows the issues of most importance to the community. For those that listed 'Other' the word cloud below shows the weight of responses from the community with larger text signifying more of those responses. Participants noted:

- Protection of established trees along the Creek
- Native plants and enhanced habitat for wildlife
- Homeless encampments
- Dog access
- Serving as many users as possible
- Inclusion of input from Indigenous communities
- Outdoor education opportunities
- Air pollution

<sup>1</sup> For each question, a letter "n" is provided to identify the number of respondents to that individual question (note, participants were not required to answer every question). This number is the basis of the percentages shown. The value for "n" varies for each question since respondents could skip questions when taking the survey. Also, some questions allowed participants to select two or more answer choices, resulting in total counts greater than the number of respondents and total percentages greater than 100%, in some instances.

**Other (please specify)**



Figure 2: Other (please specify), n = 61 respondents, see the Appendix for full responses

Q2. What type of recreation and park experiences do you and your family want to see more of in East Cupertino?



Figure 3: n = 368 respondents, see the Appendix for full responses

The community would like the new park to emphasize bike trails, walking trails, nature, and play. Amenities should be family-friendly and connect people with nature. Input on dog access came from both sides, but the majority of comments were pro-dog access (11% of all comments) vs. anti-dog access (2% of all comments).







#### Q4. Recreation Features that I'd most like to see: (Select your top 3)

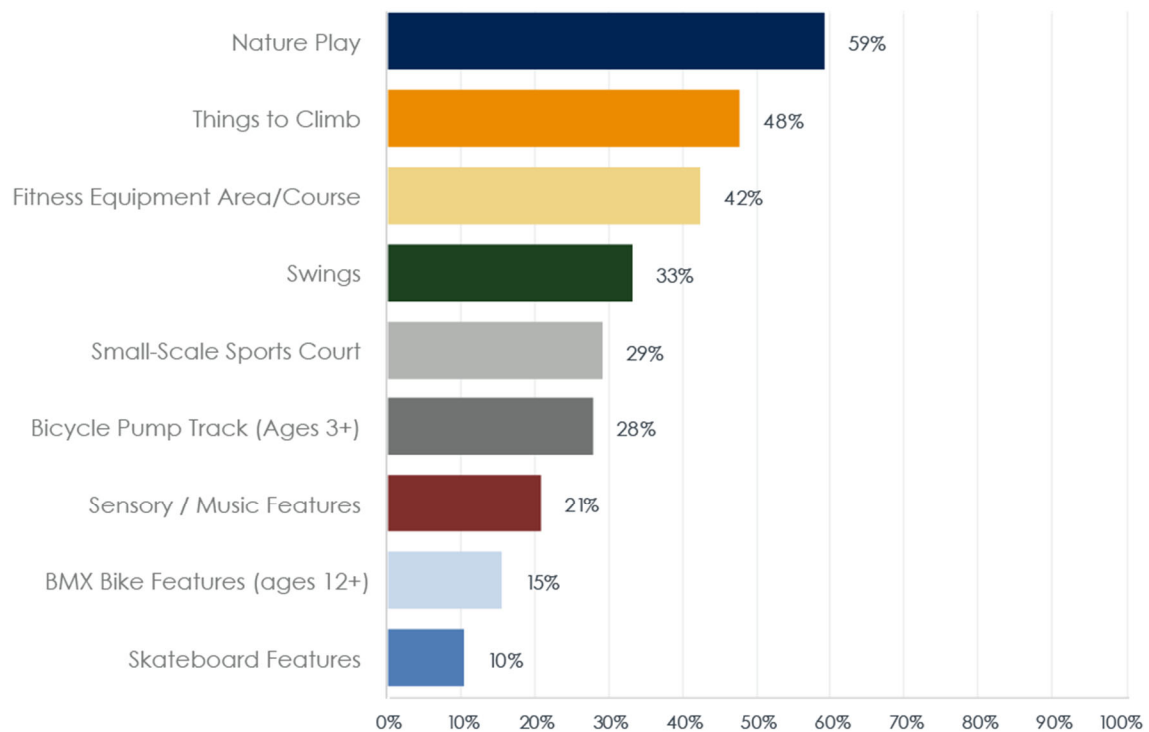


Figure 5: n = 441 respondents

Nature play, things to climb, and fitness equipment were the top three recreation choices, followed by swings, small-scale sports courts, and a bicycle pump track for younger kids.

Q5. Wildlife, Nature, and Education Features that I'd most like to see:  
(Choose your top 3)

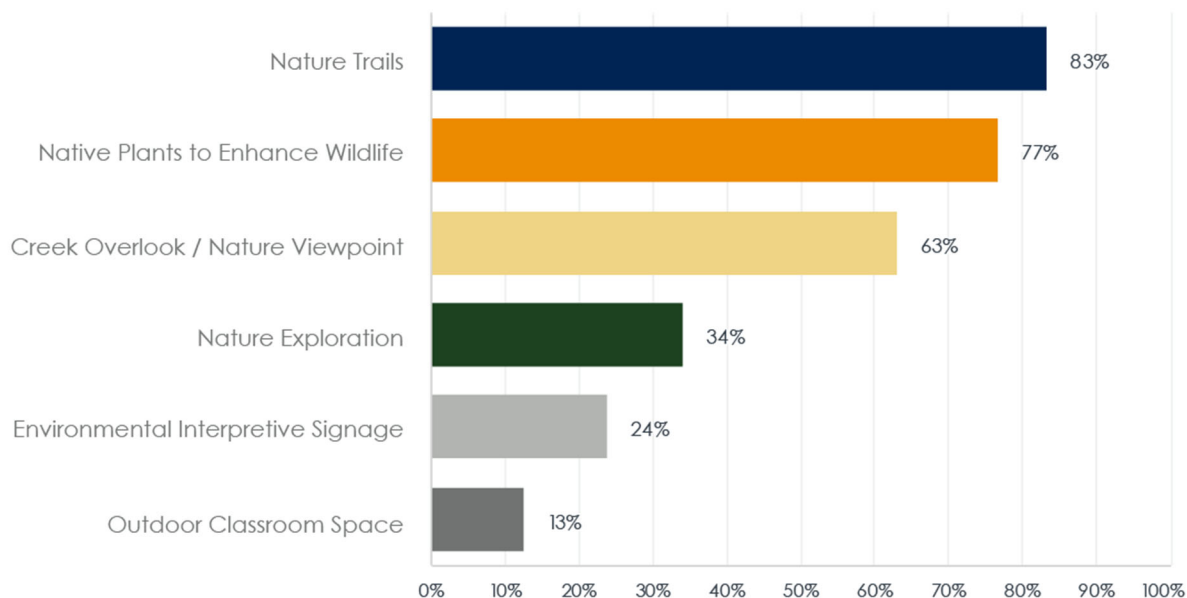


Figure 6: n = 479 respondents

The top three features chosen by the community were Nature Trails, Native Plants to Enhance Wildlife, and Creek Overlook/Nature viewpoint.

Q6. Community and Comfort Features that I'd most like to see:  
(Choose your top 3)

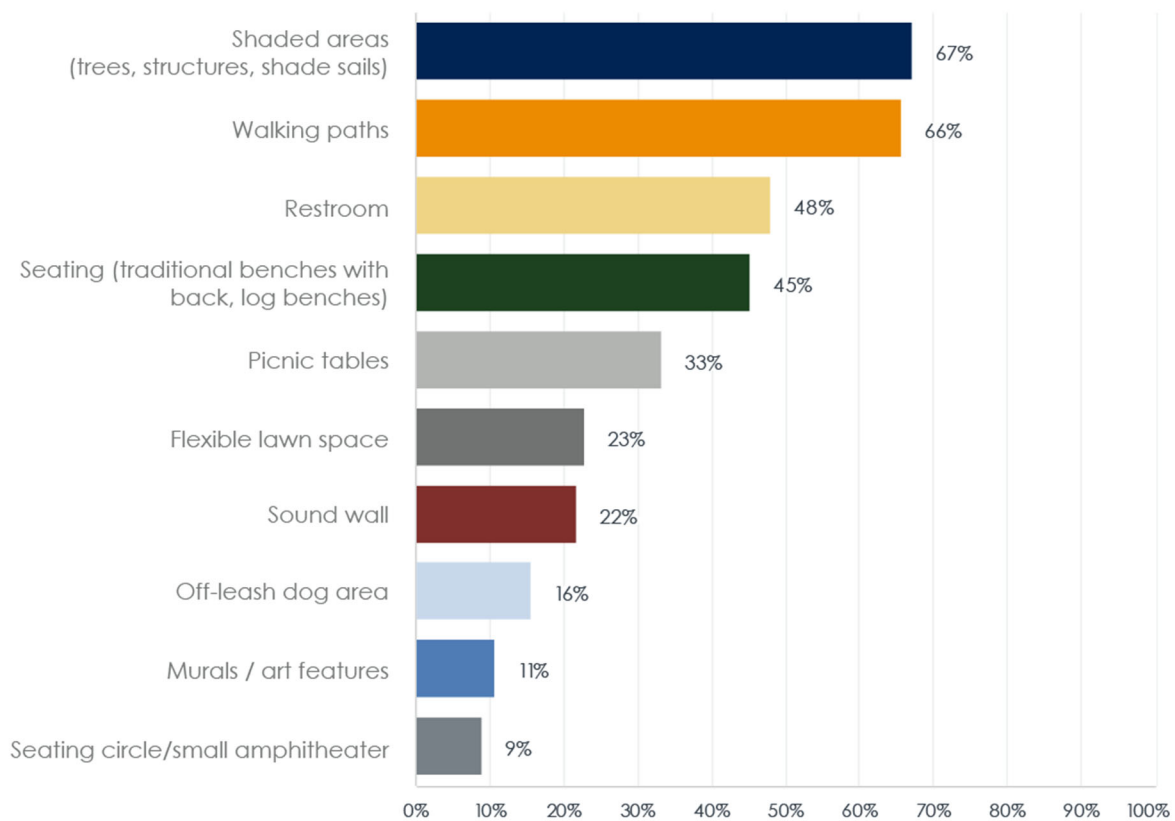


Figure 7: n = 495 respondents

Q7. What is your top priority for what you want to see in the new park? (Choose One)

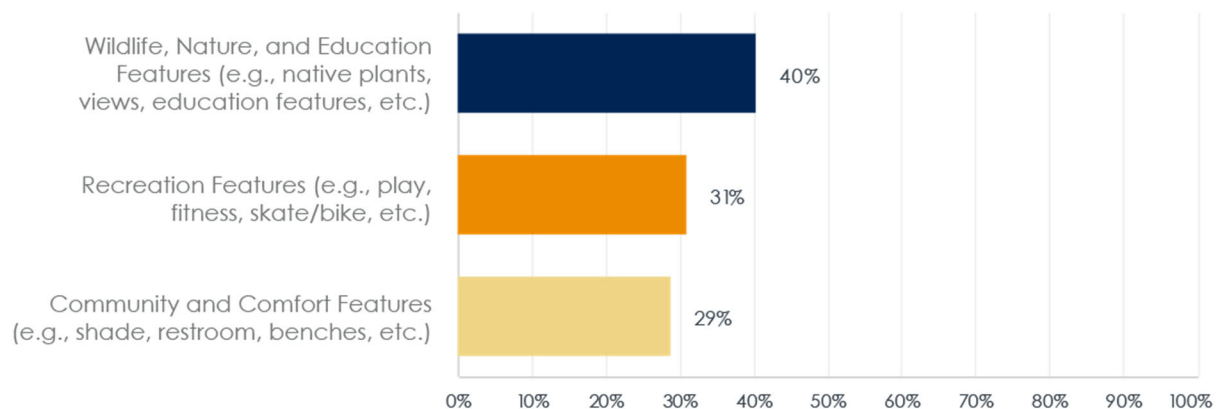


Figure 8: n = 499 respondents



Q8. Do you have any other thoughts about the site or future park that you'd like to share?



Figure 9: n = 195 respondents, see the Appendix for full responses

The word cloud above shows the weight of responses from the community with larger text signifying more of those responses. More detail from participants is noted below:

- Recreation features:
  - If you can create a mix of the three options you listed-- small area for recreational, preserving nature and connecting the areas with comfort features that will be amazing.
  - Play that encourages creativity, provides risk taking and is integrated with nature
  - Play for older kids (for those beyond Sterling Barnhart)



- Water play fountains
- Climbing wall
- BMX or pump track works well here because of vehicle access challenges
- Community garden
- Frisbee golf
- Skateboard park
- Natural theme for the park:
  - Keep it natural with nature and trees the primary focus
  - There are lots of urban parks around Cupertino already, especially near the city center areas and San Jose. This is a great opportunity to make our parks look less urban and more natural.
  - This can be an excellent place for both exercise and for a strip of native plants and animals. Like a taste of McClellan near the big road.
  - Integrate smart, energy saving tech and solar design
  - Be mindful of the animal inhabitants and create something that works with nature.
  - Lighting doesn't work with animals
- Access/Circulation:
  - Connectivity to great trail networks is important to reduce driving
  - Connect the park to the North to Calvert or Stevens Creek, concern over dead end
  - Some prefer a wider bike path so bikers can get around 3 walkers together
  - Consider student safety for those riding to Mitty High
  - Safer crossing at Mitty Way
  - Safer crossing at Bollinger--get rid of the pork chop islands
- Additional notes:
  - Restroom: Many say restrooms are a must; lack of restrooms at Sterling Barnhart causes some families to avoid it. A few have too many safety and homeless concerns to support adding a restroom.
  - Amenities to keep area clean: Dog poop bag dispensers, garbage cans
  - Safety Ideas: Call buttons/emergency phones, security cameras, safety lighting, fence at top of creek bank, park ranger on duty
  - Provide a public bike air pump
  - Sound wall that fits in – with murals or vines

Q9. Do you have any ideas about the area's local culture, history, art, or surroundings, that you think could be integrated into the design?



Figure 10: n = 134 respondents, see Appendix X for full responses

The word cloud above shows the most repeated word responses as the largest words. Below is more detail on some of the ideas generated by the community:

- Acknowledge the Native American culture that lived in the area
- History of the creek, and plants and animals native to the area
- Northern California native plants and trees
- The watershed – how is the creek fed, where does the water go
- Timeline mural showing the development of Cupertino and local land history-- Ohlone, ranches, orchards

- Signage/mural of all the ways this piece of land had been used over the last 500 years
- Expand on the current theme of bike/walk trail
- Hold a youth art competition and feature student artwork related to environmental solutions and nature
- Let the Fine Arts Commission be an active participant in the art and interpretive signage aspects of the design project

#### Q10. Currently, I use the Saratoga Creek Trail for... (Check all that apply)

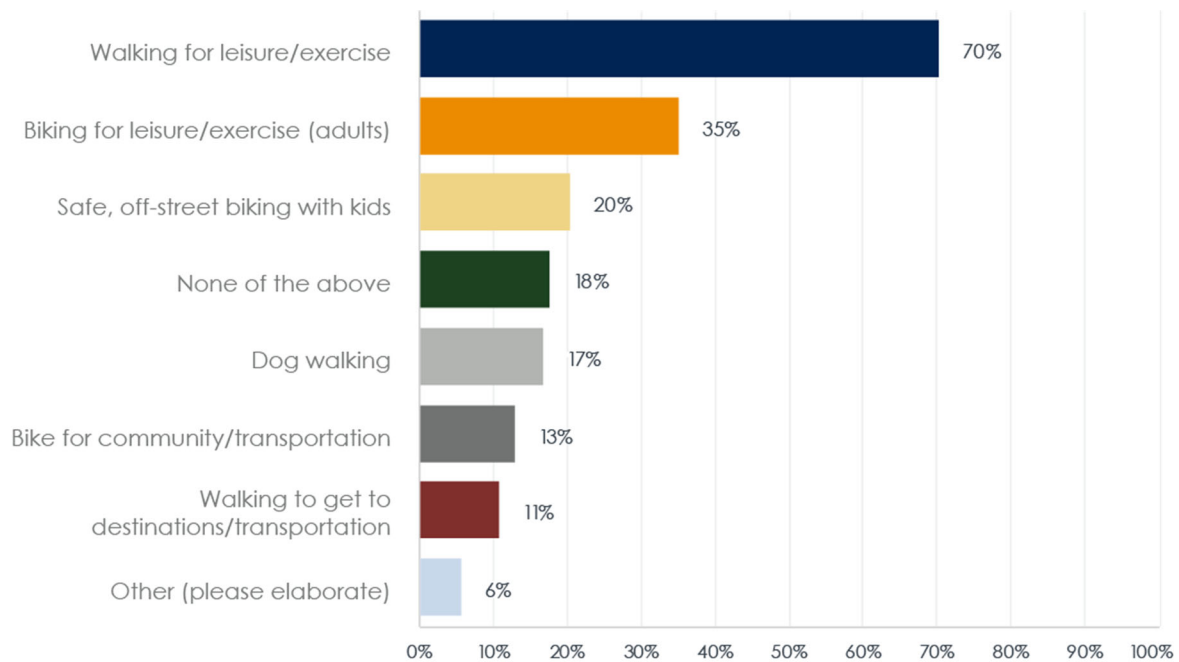


Figure 11: n = 480 respondents

For those that selected 'Other,' participants noted:

- Birding and nature exploration
- Like to sit on bench and watch wildlife
- Safe green space very close to home
- Watching the creek when it rains
- Creek play
- Running
- Of all the uses, the most important is the safe, off-street biking with kids.

Q11. On average, I use the Saratoga Creek Trail... (Choose the best response)

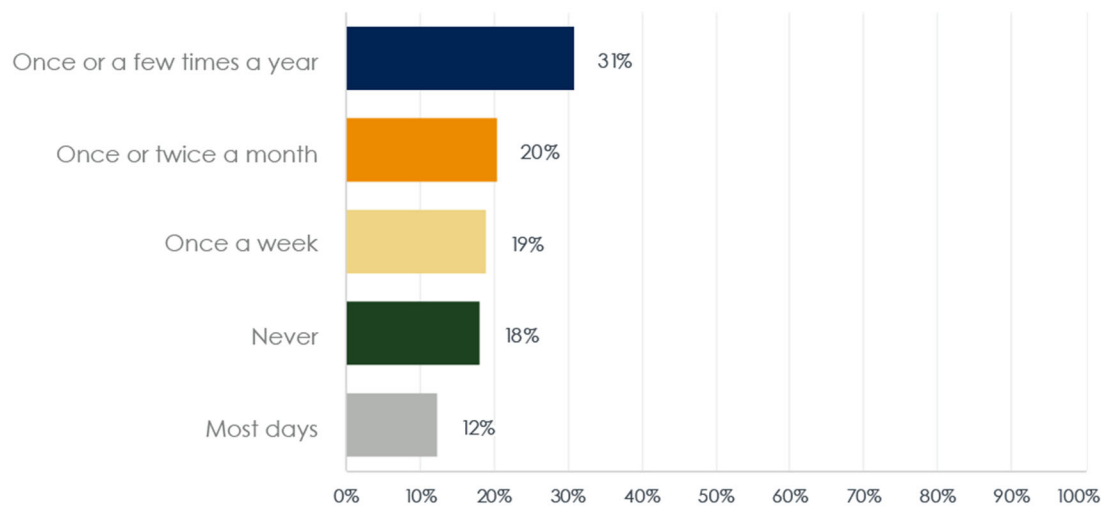


Figure 12: n = 479 respondents

Q12. I would use Saratoga Creek Trail more in the future if the trail... (Check all that apply)

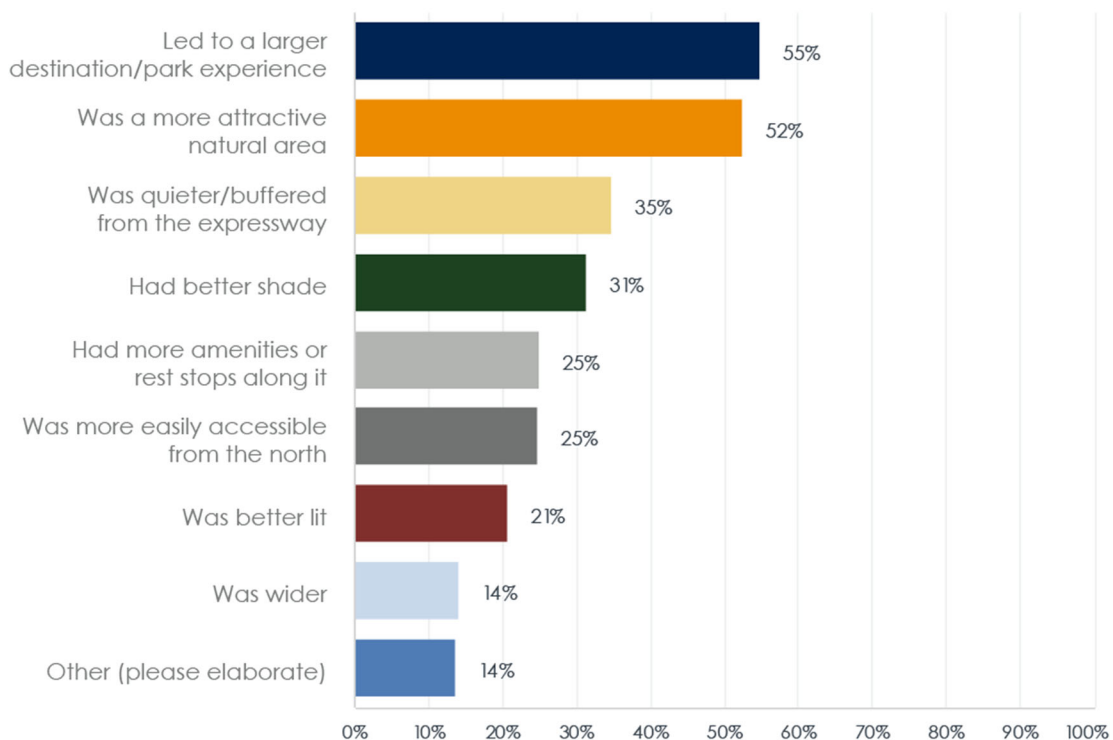


Figure 13: n = 454 respondents

For those that listed 'Other,' some key things that would lead to more trail use are:



- A destination/park experience
- Attractive natural area
- Quieter, buffered from road
- Shaded

Q13. If I could add features to the existing trail, they would be... (Check all that apply)

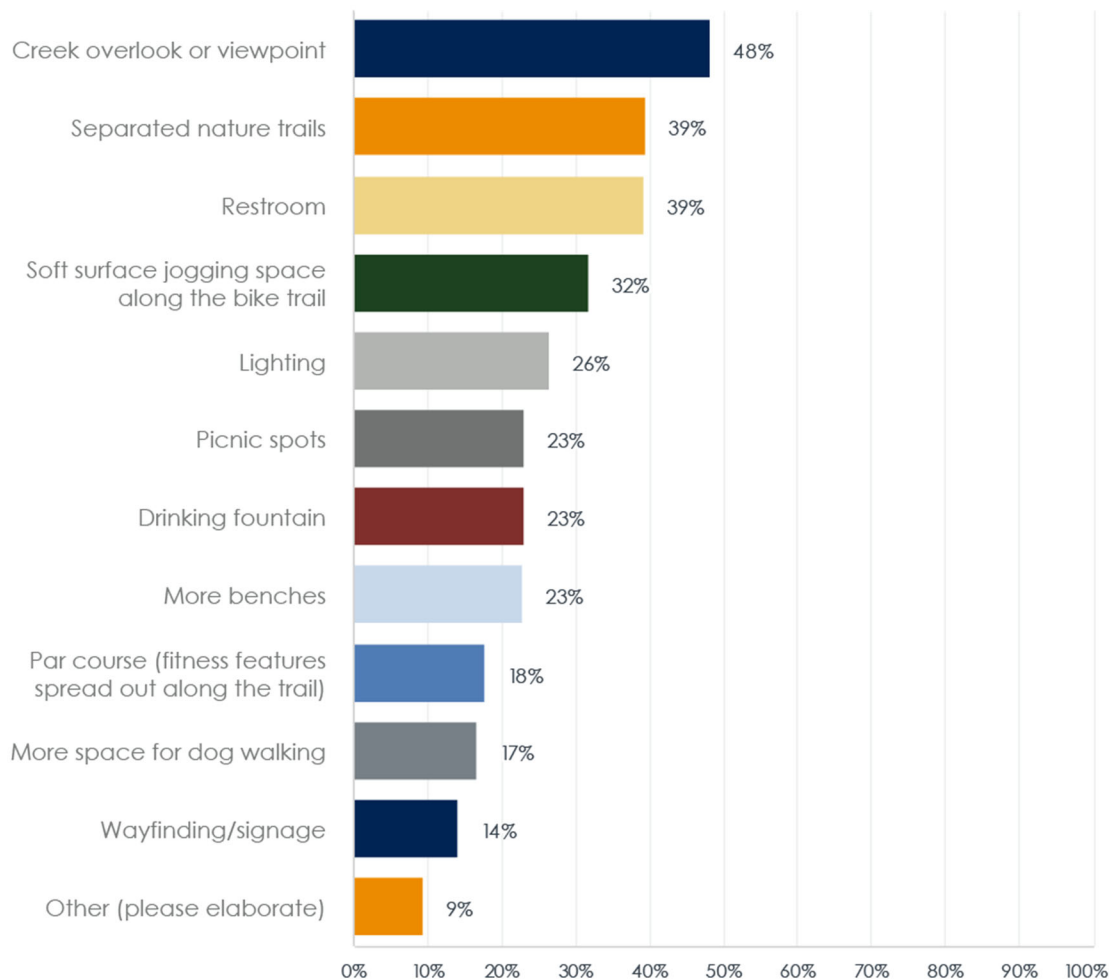


Figure 14: n = 434 respondents

For those that listed 'Other,' some suggested additions to the trail are:

- Creek overlook, viewpoint
- Separated nature/soft trails
- Restroom

Q14. My other thoughts/ideas about the trail:



Figure 15: n = 86 respondents, see the Appendix for full responses

The word cloud above shows the more repeated suggestions larger. Most suggestions have been captured in previous summary, with this additional detail from the community below:

- Expansion of the trail to the north is needed
- This is a great opportunity for habitat restoration in a busy area!
- Any safety related outdoor lighting must not adversely impact nature (e.g., bird migration, nocturnal creatures such as moths, bats, etc.)

- Given the proximity to Lawrence freeway, which cannot be changed, a lot of activities listed above, like picnic area, sports, are not practical. A walking or hiking trail shared for biking will be ideal.

## About Survey Participants

- More than 84% of respondents are residents of Cupertino
- 30% of respondents live in the Rancho Rinconada neighborhood
- 60% of respondents have children
- Half of respondents (50%) live close enough to walk (in 10-minutes) or bike (in 5-minutes) to Lawrence-Mitty Park.

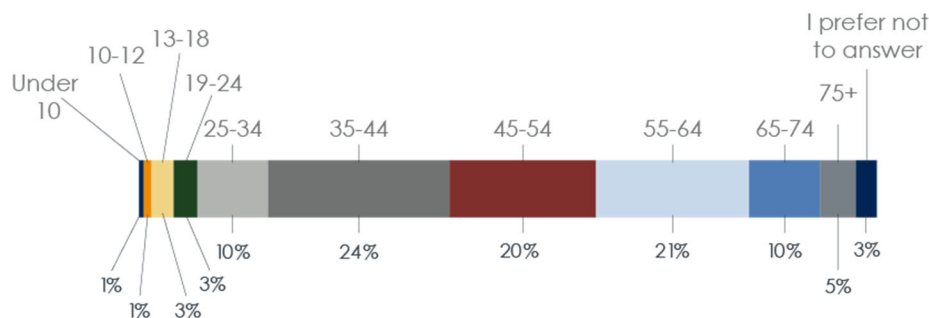


Figure 16: Age range of respondents (above)



Figure 17: "Do you live within a 10-minute walk or 5-minute bike ride (approximately 1/2 mile) from the park site or current trail?" (above)

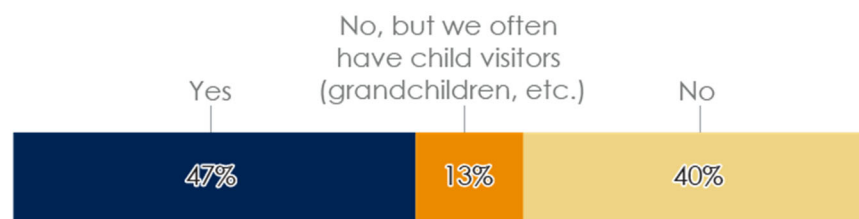


Figure 18: "Do you have children under the age of 18 in your household?" (above)



## EMERGING GOALS & THEMES

The information gathered from the engagement efforts by the City of Cupertino and MIG has provided important insights and an understanding for the goals that the community desires for the Lawrence-Mitty Park & Trail Master Plan. In summary, to meet community needs and expectations for the new park and trail extension the focus for the site design should include:

- Wildlife, nature, and education features
- A variety of features to appeal to all ages
- Bike trail extension from Mitty Way to the large open space area
- Bike trail connection to the north
- Separated walking paths
- Play Features - Nature play and play elements for older kids
- Comfort features: restrooms, seating
- Reduction of onsite noise levels
- Considerations for site safety
- Shade trees and native plants for habitat enhancement
- Dogs in the park

## NEXT STEPS

The feedback received during this first visioning phase of the process will be used to develop design concepts for the park and trail master plan. These concepts will be presented to the community for feedback through multiple avenues to arrive at a final, preferred design.

## APPENDICES

- A. Project Fact Sheet
- B. Project Flyer
- C. Project Post Card
- D. Online Survey Results (Survey Monkey)
  - a. \*Translated open ended responses to be added
- E. In-Person Community Input Images & Materials
  - a. Pop-up Event #1
  - b. Site Tour
  - c. Pop-up Event #2
- F. Virtual Community Meeting
- G. Engage Cupertino Comments/Questions to Date