



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

---

<b>To:</b>	Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee	<b>Date:</b>	November 19, 2021
<b>From:</b>	Todd Gross Director, Parks Services	<b>File:</b>	06-2345-20-01/2021- Vol 01
<b>Re:</b>	<b>Community Gardens Public Consultation Results Update and Next Steps</b>		

---

### Staff Recommendation

That, as described in the staff report, "Community Gardens Public Consultation Results Update and Next Steps," dated November 19, 2021, from the Director, Parks Services, the following locations:

1. Geal Road at Williams Road;
2. Between Williams and Steveston Hwy, adjacent to Hollymount Gate; and
3. Railway Avenue, North of Steveston Highway;

be approved as community garden sites along the Railway Greenway and construction of these new community gardens commence once public input has been considered and included, as appropriate, into site specific design.

Todd Gross  
Director, Parks Services  
(604-247-4942)

Att. 7

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO	



## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

At the July 2021 Park, Recreation and Cultural Services (PRCS) Committee meeting, the report titled “Community Gardens Referral Response,” dated July 2, 2021, from the Director, Parks Services, was discussed and received for information. The report indicated that staff intended to conduct a City-wide public consultation process from August to September 2021 on the benefits and desired locations of future community gardens as Council has indicated that construction of additional community gardens is a priority. The consultation also focused on specific potential community garden locations along the Railway Greenway.

As the consultation is now complete, the purpose of this report is to provide a synopsis of the findings of the public consultation process and seek approval for the locations of future community gardens along the Railway Greenway and describe the next steps relative to their development.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

*2.3 Increase emphasis on local food systems, urban agriculture and organic farming.*

*2.4 Increase opportunities that encourage daily access to nature and open spaces and that allow the community to make more sustainable choices.*

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

*4.2 Ensure infrastructure meets changing community needs, current trends and best practices.*

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #8 An Engaged and Informed Community:

*Ensure that the citizenry of Richmond is well-informed and engaged about City business and decision-making.*

### **Analysis**

#### **Background**

Currently, the demand for community gardens in Richmond is high. The waitlist, which is managed by Urban Bounty (UB) on behalf of the City, sits at over 680. While the City is working with UB to reduce the waitlist by constructing additional plots, staff continue to identify viable locations for future sites on public land.

In Spring 2021, the City of Richmond launched the 2021 “Capital Project Highlights” via its virtual Let’s Talk Richmond (LTR) portal. This online platform highlighted proposed



community gardens at Garden City Lands, an expansion of the existing Cook School Community Park community garden and along the Railway Greenway south of Branscombe House. During this online public consultation period, a number of residents from Birchwood Estates that back onto Branscombe House contacted Parks staff regarding the City-wide Community Gardens project. The residents noted concerns regarding the proximity of the proposed garden in relation to their private property, as well as the perceived lack of consultation with the community. These concerns were brought to the attention of Council. Subsequent to this, discussions occurred at PRCS meetings in June and July, 2021 resulting in staff receiving direction to conduct a public consultation process. This report discusses the results of that City-wide consultation process.

#### Let's Talk Richmond Public Consultation: Summary of Results

Public consultation was conducted through the Let's Talk Richmond portal between August 23 and September 12, 2021. The purpose of the public consultation process was to better understand residents' level of support for the community gardens program on a City-wide basis as well as to identify the level of support for sites along the Railway Greenway corridor. Additional information was included providing residents background information about community gardens in general. Residents were notified of the survey via several means:

1. Site signage along the Railway Greenway;
2. Postcard notices sent to 995 individual addresses (residences and businesses) within 100 meters of the Railway Greenway corridor;
3. Social media; and
4. An email notification to all LTR registrants (approximately 8,000 subscribers).

The LTR web page included the following material:

1. An introduction and outline of the public consultation to visitors;
2. A downloadable document providing background about community gardens in the City of Richmond entitled 'Community Gardens in Richmond';
3. A 'Community Garden Proposed Locations' document identifying ten potential community garden sites along the Railway Greenway (Attachment 1);
4. The Report to Committee re: Community Gardens Referral Response, dated July 2, 2021; and,
5. A survey requesting residents provide their input about community gardens in Richmond, including questions gauging their overall support of the program, which neighbourhood they live in, any concerns they might have about community gardens and whether or not they are currently or will be community gardeners (Attachment 2).

As a result of this process, the City received significant feedback from the community. Nearly 600 people visited the web page. Of those, 320 filled out a survey and one hardcopy of a completed survey was returned directly to staff.



The following is a summary of responses to the survey:

- 87% of respondents strongly support or support community gardens in Richmond with 6% opposed or strongly-opposed;
- Over 84% of respondents are already or would like to be community gardeners;
- 80% strongly support or support a community garden located in their neighbourhood (that is, the area the respondent identified where they lived e.g., Steveston or Hamilton) with just over 12% opposed or strongly opposed;
- Of the total respondents, 36% live within 400 meters of the Railway Greenway;
- 75% of respondents strongly support or support locating community gardens along the Railway Corridor with 13% opposed or strongly opposed; and,
- Of the overall respondents by neighbourhood, 46% indicated they lived in Steveston, 9% in Seafair, 7.5% in Broadmoor and 6% in Thompson.

For additional information and a detailed graphic representation of the survey results, please see Attachment 3.

#### Railway Greenway Garden Sites

In November 2012, a Report to Council titled “Railway Corridor Greenway - Phase 1 Implementation Plan” summarized the results of a public consultation process which requested public input on the design and programming of the proposed Railway Greenway. In the report, Council was provided information including the potential programming elements along the Greenway, including community gardens (Attachment 4). Three locations were identified for community gardens:

1. Between Blundell and Francis Roads adjacent to Colbeck Road;
2. Between Williams and Steveston Hwy, adjacent to Hollymount Gate; and,
3. South of Branscombe House at the McMath Greenway.

The Greenway plan was endorsed to proceed to construction at the November 2012 Council meeting. To date, while none of these sites have been developed for community gardens, other elements of the Plan such as natural area plantings, seeding, tree planting, orchards and meadow areas, and the Railway Granville Bike Park have been implemented along the Railway Greenway.

In the intervening years, demand for community garden space has risen. Community gardens, as a proposed programmatic element along the Railway Greenway is consistent with the 2012 Council endorsed Implementation Plan.

As part of the LTR consultation process, Attachment 1 presented ten potential community garden sites along the Railway Greenway including the three identified in the 2012 Plan. Based on staff review of the survey feedback, review of the 2012 Railway Corridor Greenway - Phase 1 Implementation Plan and specific site design drivers such as available space and proximity to



available parking and site services, staff propose to proceed with additional consultation and construction for the following specific locations:

1. Geal Road at Williams Road, 10-15 plots (Attachment 5);
2. Between Williams and Steveston Hwy, adjacent to Hollymount Gate, 45-60 plots (Attachment 6); and
3. Railway Avenue, North of Steveston Highway, 30-40 plots (Attachment 7).

#### Public Consultation and Construction Process

For the sites proposed along the Railway Greenway, additional consultation will occur which will include the steps listed below. Construction will only proceed once staff have addressed resident concerns to the greatest extent possible (as much as budgets, site planning considerations and scope of work) can accommodate. Throughout the process, staff will endeavor to incorporate resident feedback while remaining consistent with Council's direction to provide more opportunities for residents to access community garden plots in their neighbourhood.

1. Site signage: Signage will be erected at each site indicating that the site is a future community garden project. Signage will detail the approximate number of proposed plots, general size and location of the garden and other pertinent site features. Staff contact information for additional project related details will also be included;
2. Conceptual Site Plan Distribution: Staff will distribute conceptual site plans to local residents within the immediate area of the proposed project;
3. Design Input: Based on the level and content of resident feedback, staff will incorporate resident feedback as feasible into the design. Incorporation of feedback will also be contingent on project budgets and balancing the needs of end users with local residents; and
4. Site Meeting: Based on the level of resident feedback in Step 3, staff will meet with residents to address any site specific concerns. If staff receive minimal feedback, a site meeting may not be required.

This same consultation process will occur for the development of any future new community garden sites elsewhere in the City. For pre-existing or expansion garden sites (for example, Cook Community Gardens or Terra Nova), basic site signage will be erected to notify residents of an upcoming project and construction.

#### Railway Greenway Community Garden Site Design Considerations

All proposed Railway Greenway community garden sites will have a minimum 10 meter (30 feet) setback between the community garden fence enclosure and the fence line of adjacent private properties.



The estimated number of community garden beds proposed in the attached conceptual designs (Attachments 5 to 7) are based on the standard community garden plot sizes of 10 ft. x 20 ft. (200 sq. ft.) or 8 ft. x 10 ft. (80 sq. ft.). The two size options provide layout flexibility to maximize the efficient use of the space while allowing for comfortable spacing between beds. The final number of beds will be determined through consultation with Urban Bounty, the community and staff configuring the beds for maximum efficiency and convenience.

#### Future City-wide Garden Sites

Apart from the sites identified along the Railway Greenway, staff will work to construct more community gardens throughout the City. Additional future potential City-wide sites include Riverport Waterfront; the Gilbert Lands along South Dike; King George Park; Paulik Park; Terra Nova Rural Park; Alexandra Neighbourhood Park and Greenway; Garratt Community Garden; and McCallan Neighbourhood Park. Some of these locations may be expansion projects on existing community gardens, while others will be new community gardens.

#### **Financial Impact**

Capital funding to implement the proposed consultation and construction of the recommended sites has been previously approved and no additional funding is required at this time.

#### **Conclusion**

Following Council's direction, staff will continue to work with Urban Bounty and residents to construct more community gardens. With the conclusion of the City-wide community garden public consultation process, where residents indicated strong support for constructing more community gardens, staff will proceed with consultation and construction of new community gardens at three sites along the Railway Corridor. Staff will identify the most suitable site-specific design solution while addressing the extensive City-wide waitlist for new community garden plots. Staff will continue to provide Council updates throughout the process.



Alexander Kurnicki  
Manager, Parks Programs  
(604-276-4099)

- Att. 1: Railway Greenway: Potential Community Garden Sites, August 23, 2021  
2: Form - Community Gardens in Richmond Survey  
3: Let's Talk Richmond: Summary Report for August 23 to September 12, 2021  
4: Railway Avenue Greenway Community Workshop Display Boards 2012  
5: Railway Greenway Corridor Contemplated Community Garden Site Study - Site 1: Geal Road at Williams Road  
6: Railway Greenway Corridor Contemplated Community Garden Site Study - Site 2: Between Williams and Steveston Hwy, adjacent to Hollymount Gate  
7: Railway Greenway Corridor Contemplated Community Garden Site Study - Site 3: North of Steveston Hwy





All sites shown are CONCEPTUAL and for the purposes of this public consultation process only. Should a specific site be considered at a future date for construction, further public consultation and Council approval will occur prior to construction.

Site 1: Blundell Road to Colbeck Road



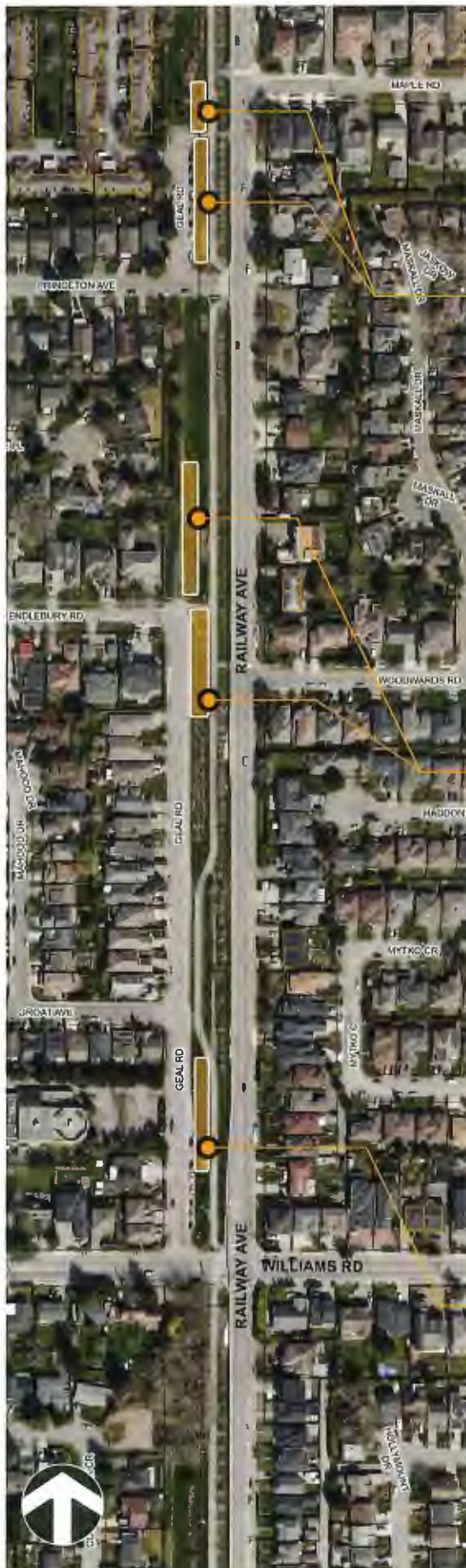
Site 2: South of Colbeck Road, north of Francis Road



Site 3: Francis Road and Railway Avenue







All sites shown are CONCEPTUAL and for the purposes of this public consultation process only. Should a specific site be considered at a future date for construction, further public consultation and Council approval will occur prior to construction.

Site 4: Geal Road at Princeton Avenue



Site 5: Geal Road at Pendlebury Road and Woodward Road



Site 6: Geal Road at Williams Road







All sites shown are **CONCEPTUAL** and for the purposes of this public consultation process **only**. Should a **specific** site be considered at a future date for construction, further public consultation and Council approval will occur prior to construction.

Site 7: Mid-block, south of Williams Road



Site 8: 10000 block Railway Avenue



Site 9: Branscombe House





6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

**PRCS - 41**



i) I can take a bus to my plot: ☐ Yes ☐ No

j) If I can take the bus but don't, it is because: \_\_\_\_\_

4. I am currently on the waitlist for the following community garden location(s): \_\_\_\_\_

5. I feel the following about a community garden being located in my neighbourhood:

☐ Strongly support ☐ Support ☐ Neutral ☐ Oppose ☐ Strongly oppose

6. At my place of residence, I have access to garden space to grow food:

☐ Yes [If YES, proceed to Question 7]

☐ No [If NO, proceed to Question 8]

7. I have access to garden space at my place of residence, and I have chosen to become a community garden member because: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If I had the power and authority to locate a community garden anywhere in Richmond on City-owned park land, I would place it: [Rank as many options as you wish, with 1 being the top of your list and 11 being the bottom of your list.]

\_\_\_\_\_ Any available public land

\_\_\_\_\_ Sports fields

\_\_\_\_\_ Near schools

\_\_\_\_\_ Under utilized park space

\_\_\_\_\_ In more rural locations

\_\_\_\_\_ Close to transit

\_\_\_\_\_ Close to available car parking

\_\_\_\_\_ Close to the wait-listed individuals' places of residence

\_\_\_\_\_ Expand existing community garden sites only

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not support further expansion

\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know; need more information

9. The reason I selected my first choice in the previous question is because: \_\_\_\_\_

10. I suggest the following other location(s) for potential community gardens: \_\_\_\_\_



---

## The Railway Greenway Corridor

City Council has directed City staff to build more community gardens throughout the city to address the waitlist demand for new garden sites. That said, a significant proportion of those on the current community garden waitlist live in Steveston and neighbourhoods west of No. 3 Road.

Railway Greenway is greenspace with a large proportion of open space currently underutilized and available for opportunity. The greenway runs from the Fraser River's Middle Arm at the north to the Steveston neighbourhood at the south end.

While some areas have public facilities such as the Railway Granville Bike Park, seating areas and naturalized and tree planting areas, the rest of the greenway remains open turf and/or vegetated areas. Much of the greenway backs onto neighbouring residents such as individual homes, medium density townhomes or low-rise apartment buildings.

**Please review the three attached maps before answering the following questions related specifically to the Railway Greenway corridor.**

11. I am an area resident living within 500 metres of the Railway Greenway:

☐ Yes

☐ No

12. My level of support for locating more community garden plots along the Railway Greenway is:

☐ Strongly support

☐ Support

☐ Neutral

☐ Oppose

☐ Strongly oppose

---

## Demographic Questions

13. I live in the neighbourhood of:

☐ Blundell

☐ Broadmoor

☐ Bridgeport

☐ City Centre

☐ East Cambie

☐ East Richmond

☐ Fraser Lands

☐ Gilmore

☐ Hamilton

☐ Sea Island

☐ Seafair

☐ Shellmont

☐ Steveston

☐ Thompson

☐ West Cambie

14. I heard about this engagement via: (check all that apply)

☐ Email from LetsTalkRichmond.ca

☐ Visiting LetsTalkRichmond.ca website

☐ Visiting richmond.ca website

☐ Postcard mailed to my residence

☐ City's social media channels (Facebook, Twitter or Instagram)

☐ Signage along the Railway Greenway or at other Community Garden locations

☐ Poster at my local Community Centre

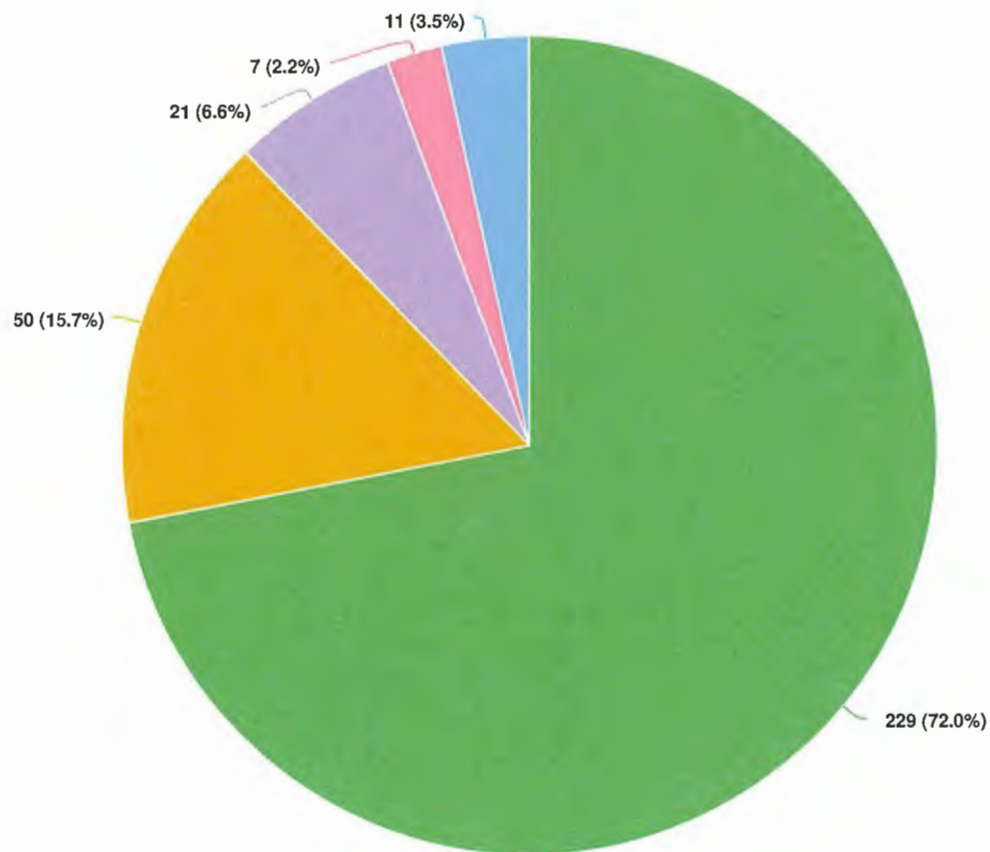
☐ Word of mouth



## ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

### Community Gardens in Richmond

Overall, this describes my support for community gardens in Richmond:



#### Question options

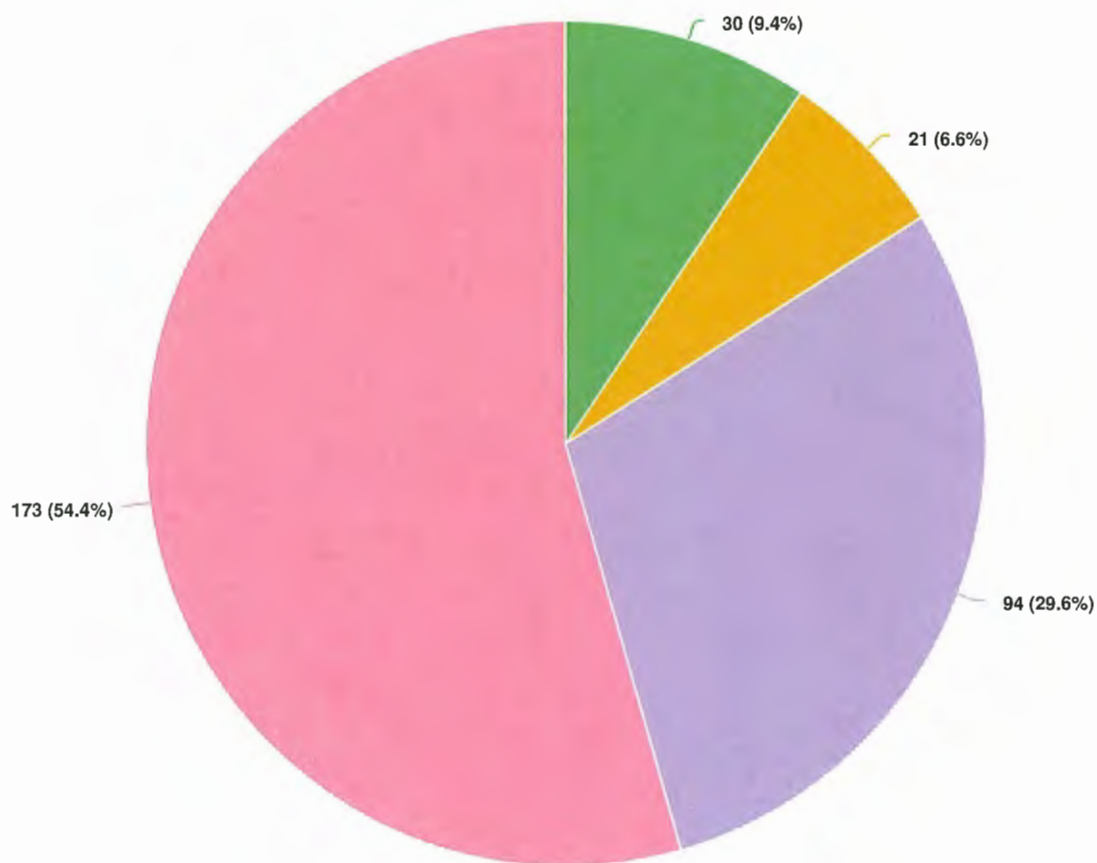
● Strongly support   ● Support   ● Neutral   ● Oppose   ● Strongly oppose

*Optional question (318 response(s), 2 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



I am: (please select ONE answer)



**Question options**

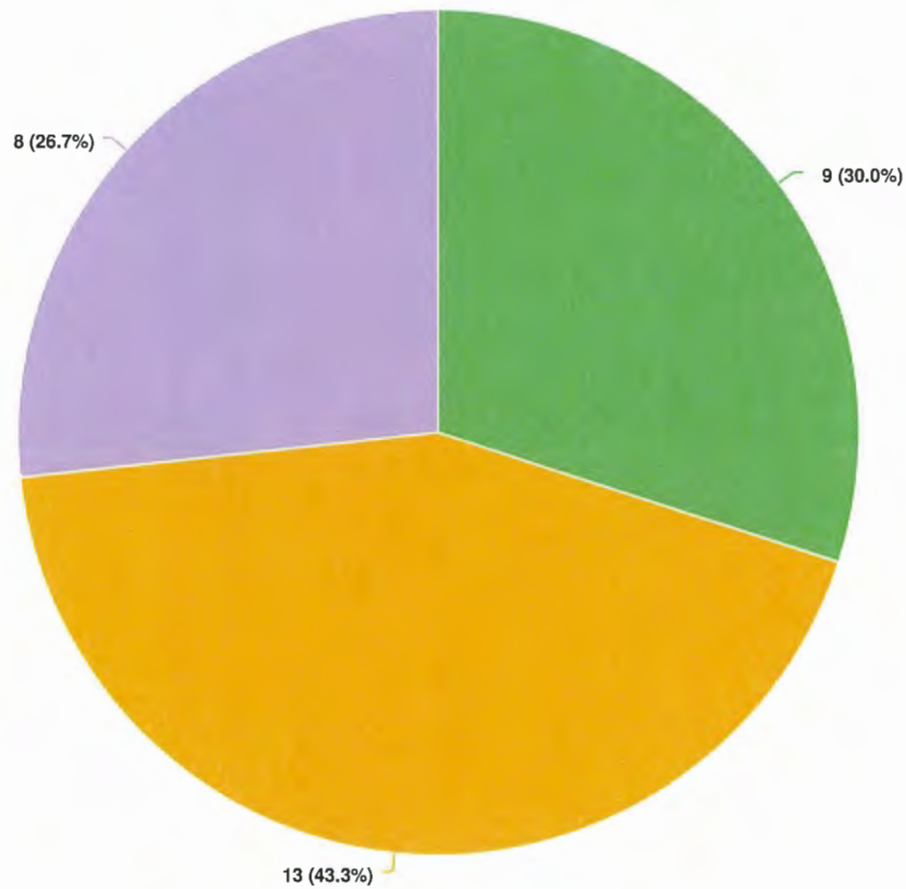
- Currently a member of a community garden in Richmond
- Currently on the waitlist for a community garden plot
- Am considering becoming a member in the near future
- Am not considering becoming a member

Optional question (318 response(s), 2 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question



I usually get to my garden plot by:



**Question options**

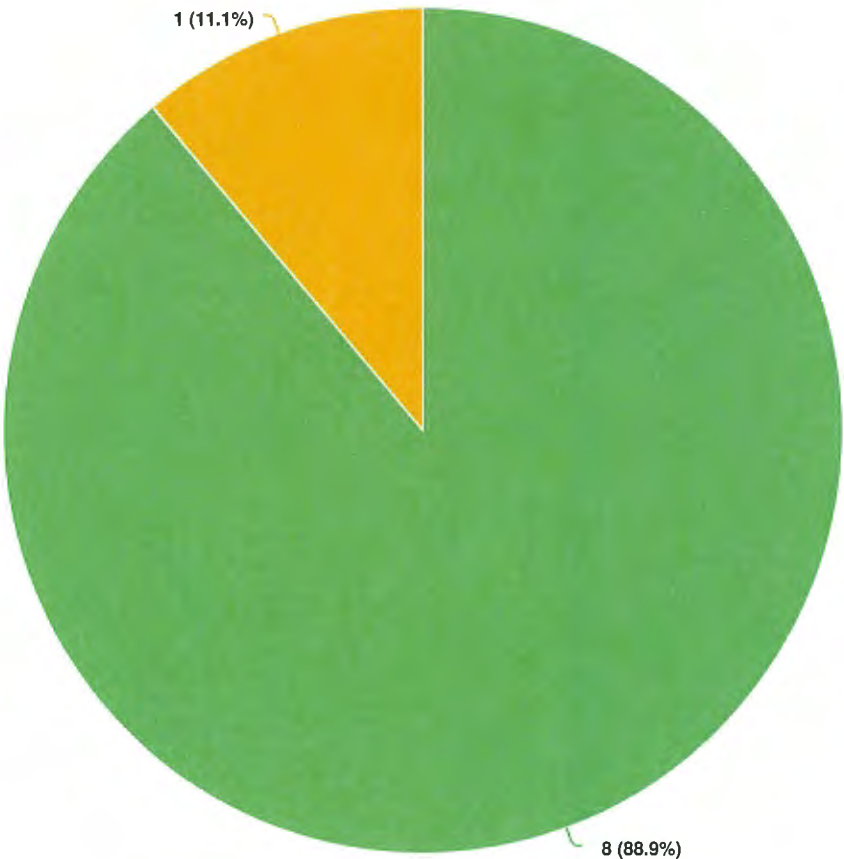
● Driving ● Walking ● Riding a bike

*Optional question (30 response(s), 290 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



Parking is available near my community garden:



Question options

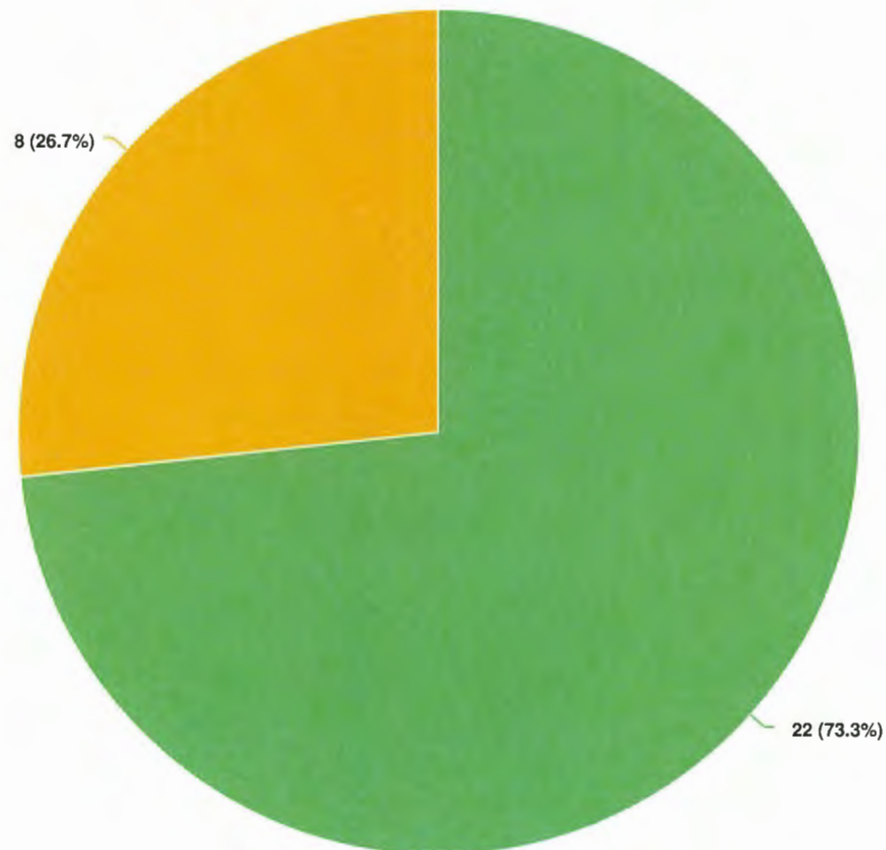
☒ Yes ☐ No

Optional question (9 response(s), 311 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question



I can walk to my plot:



**Question options**

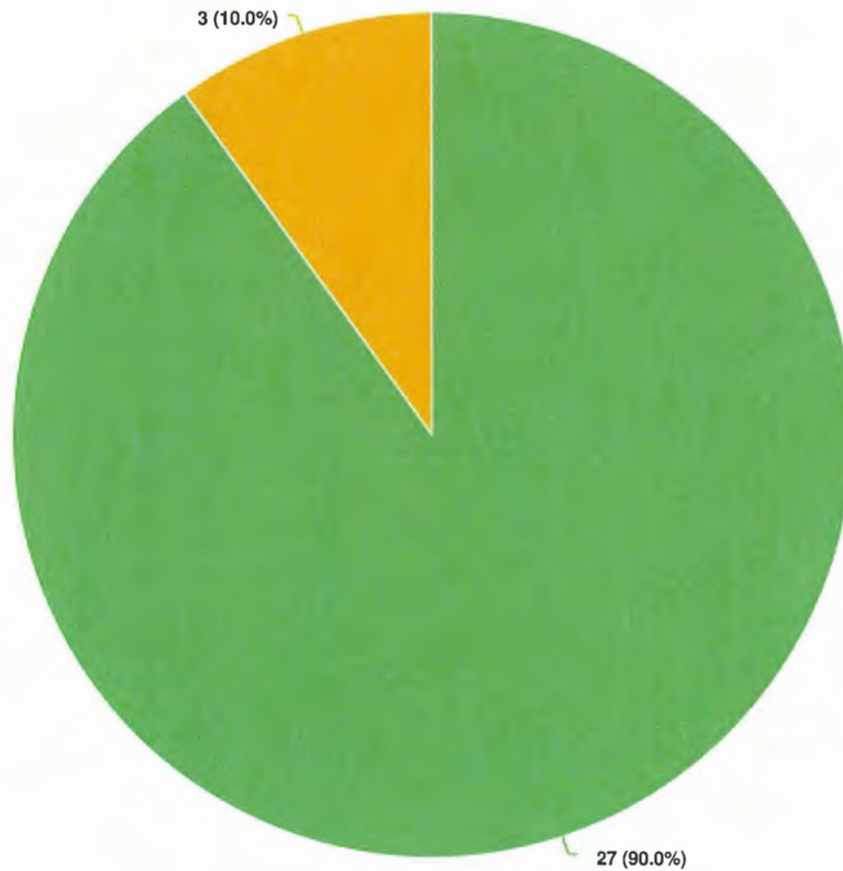
● Yes ● No

*Optional question (30 response(s), 290 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



**I can ride a bike to my plot:**



**Question options**

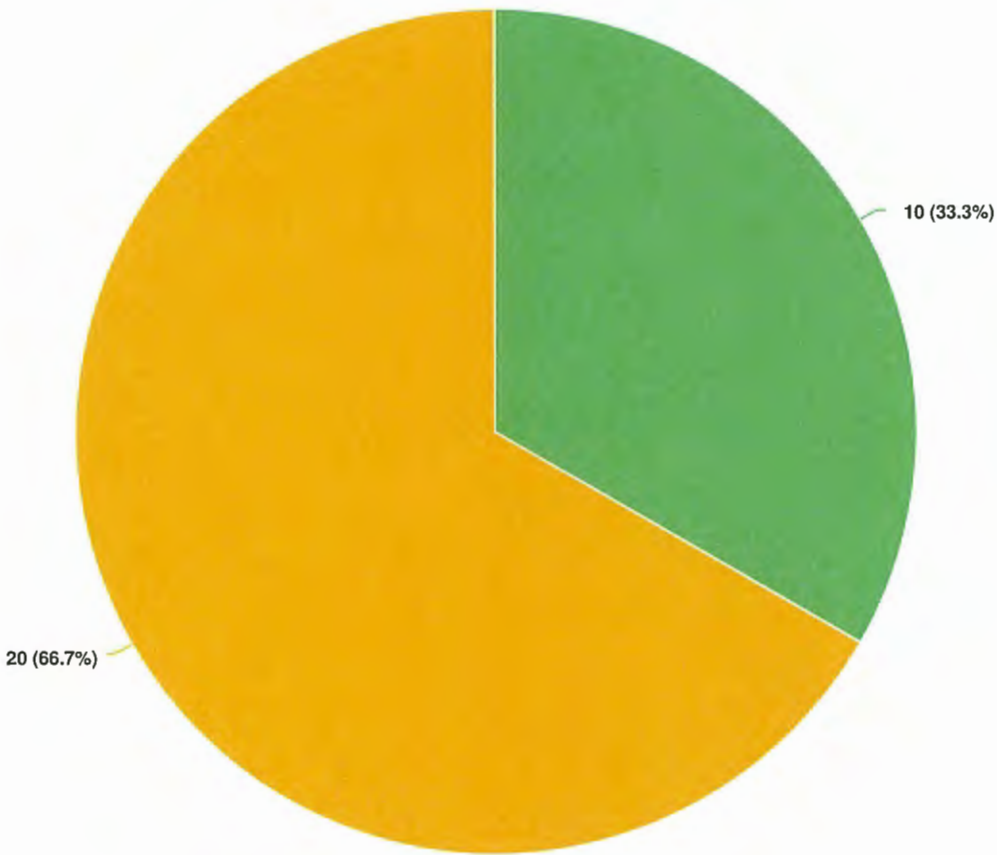
● Yes ● No

*Optional question (30 response(s), 290 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



I can take the bus to my plot:



**Question options**

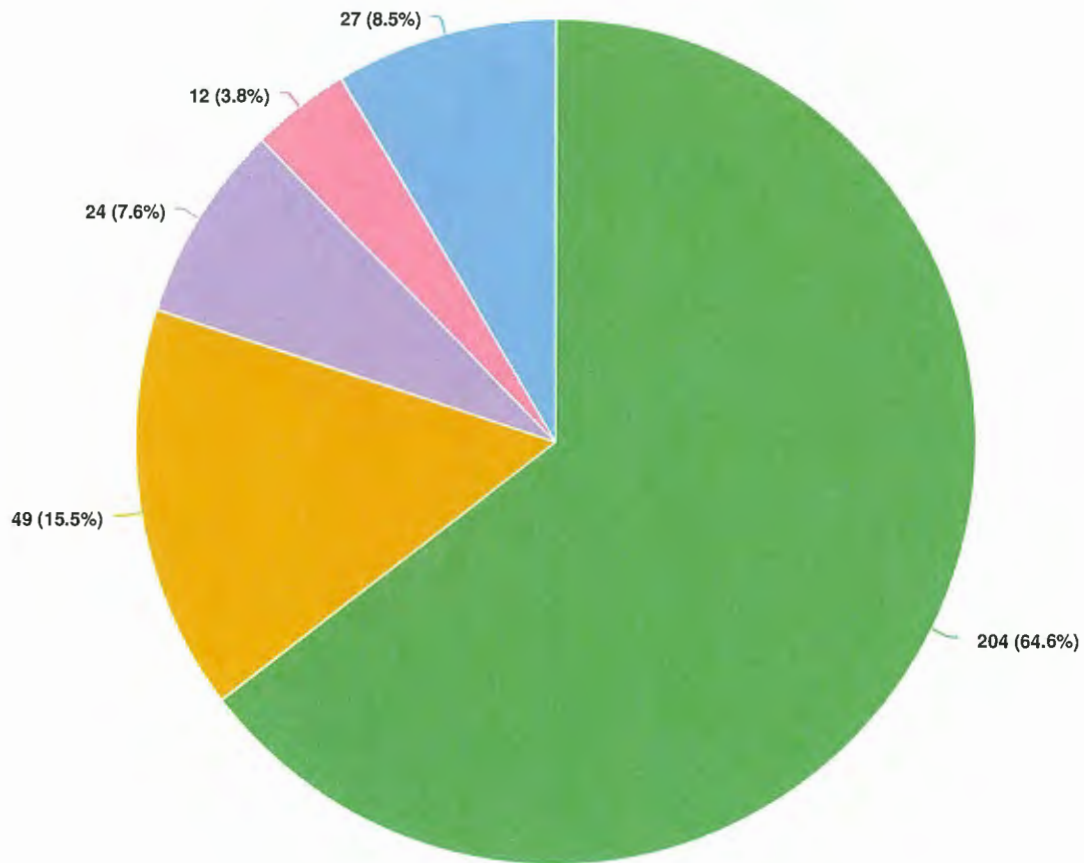
☒ Yes ☐ No

*Optional question (30 response(s), 290 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



I feel the following about a community garden being located in my neighbourhood:



**Question options**

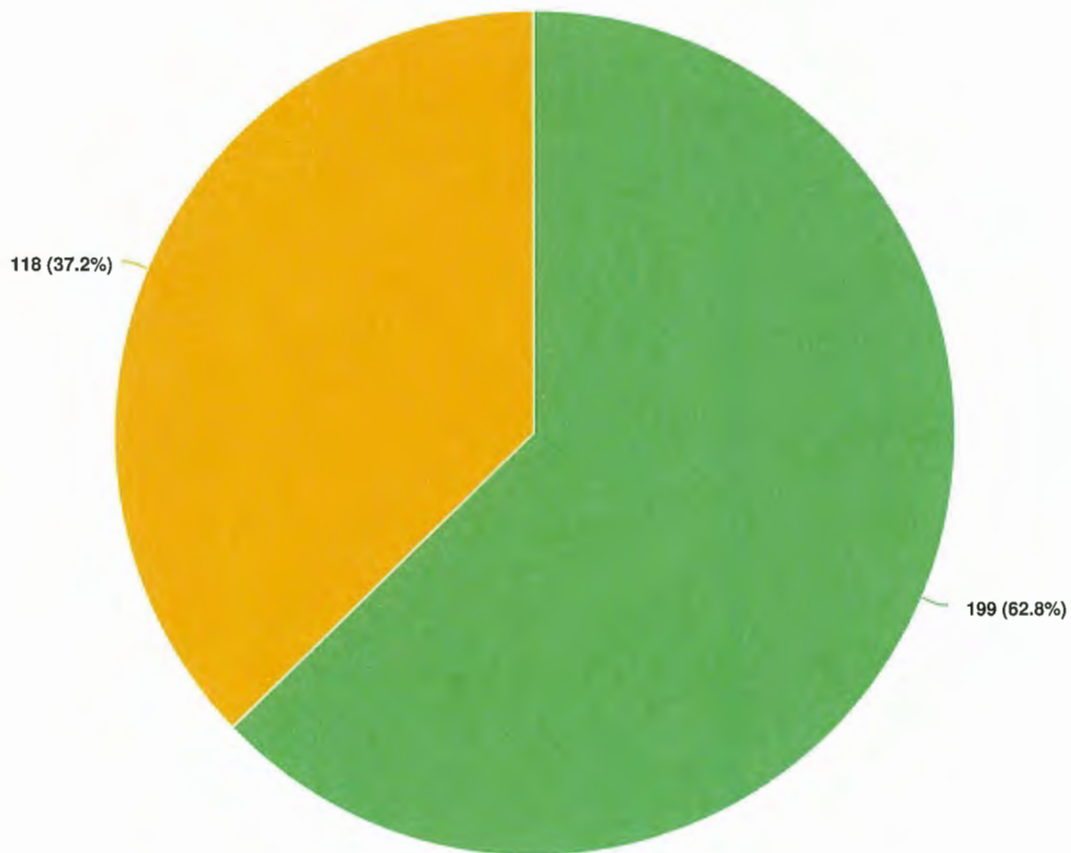
● Strongly support ● Support ● Neutral ● Oppose ● Strongly oppose

Optional question (316 response(s), 4 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question



At my place of residence, I have access to garden space to grow food:



**Question options**

☒ Yes ☐ No

*Optional question (317 response(s), 3 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



**If I had the power and authority to locate a community garden anywhere in Richmond on City-owned park land, I would place it: [Rank at least 3 options and up to 11, with 1 being the top of your list and 11 being the bottom of your list.]**

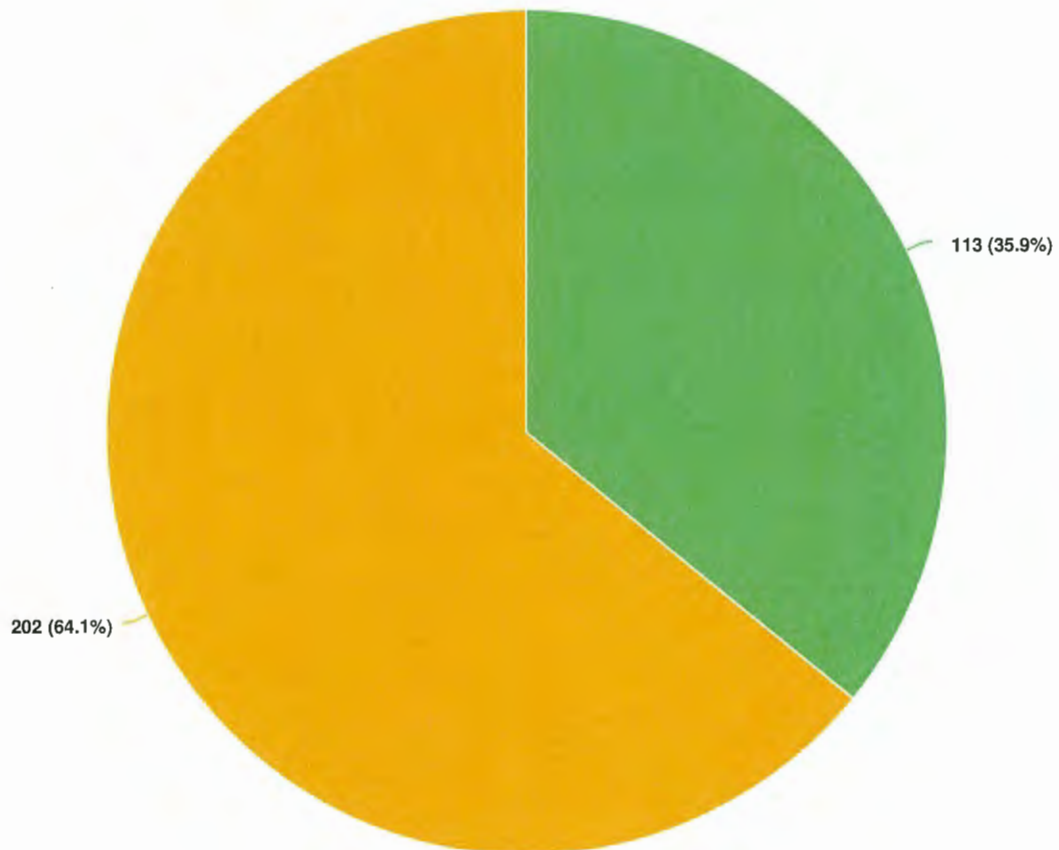
OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Under utilized park space	2.42
Any available public land	2.93
Near schools	3.16
Close to the wait-listed individuals' places of residence	3.54
Close to transit	3.84
Close to available car parking	4.25
In more rural areas	4.30
Expand existing community garden sites only	5.45
Sports fields	5.95
Don't know; need more information	7.79
Do not support further expansion of the program	8.14

*Optional question (317 response(s), 3 skipped)*

*Question type: Ranking Question*



I am an area resident living within 500 metres of the Railway Greenway:



**Question options**

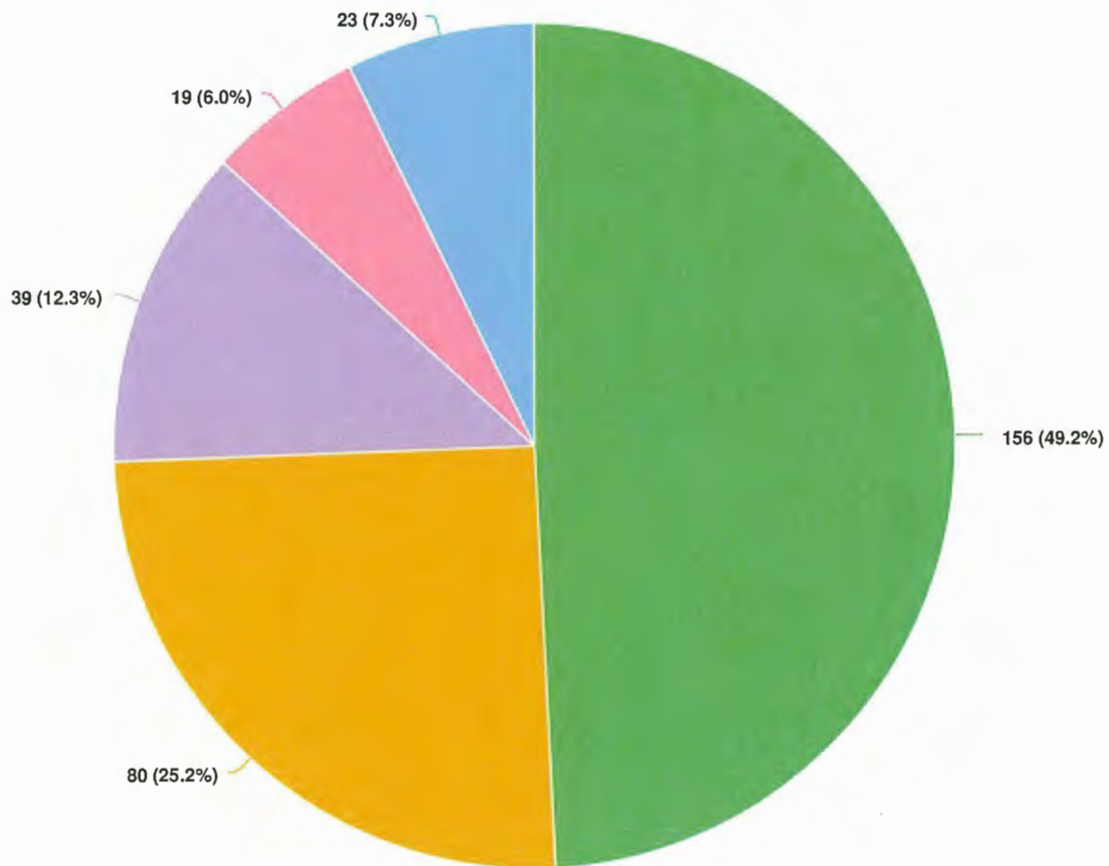
☒ Yes ☐ No

*Optional question (315 response(s), 5 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



**My level of support for locating more community garden plots along the Railway Greenway is:**



**Question options**

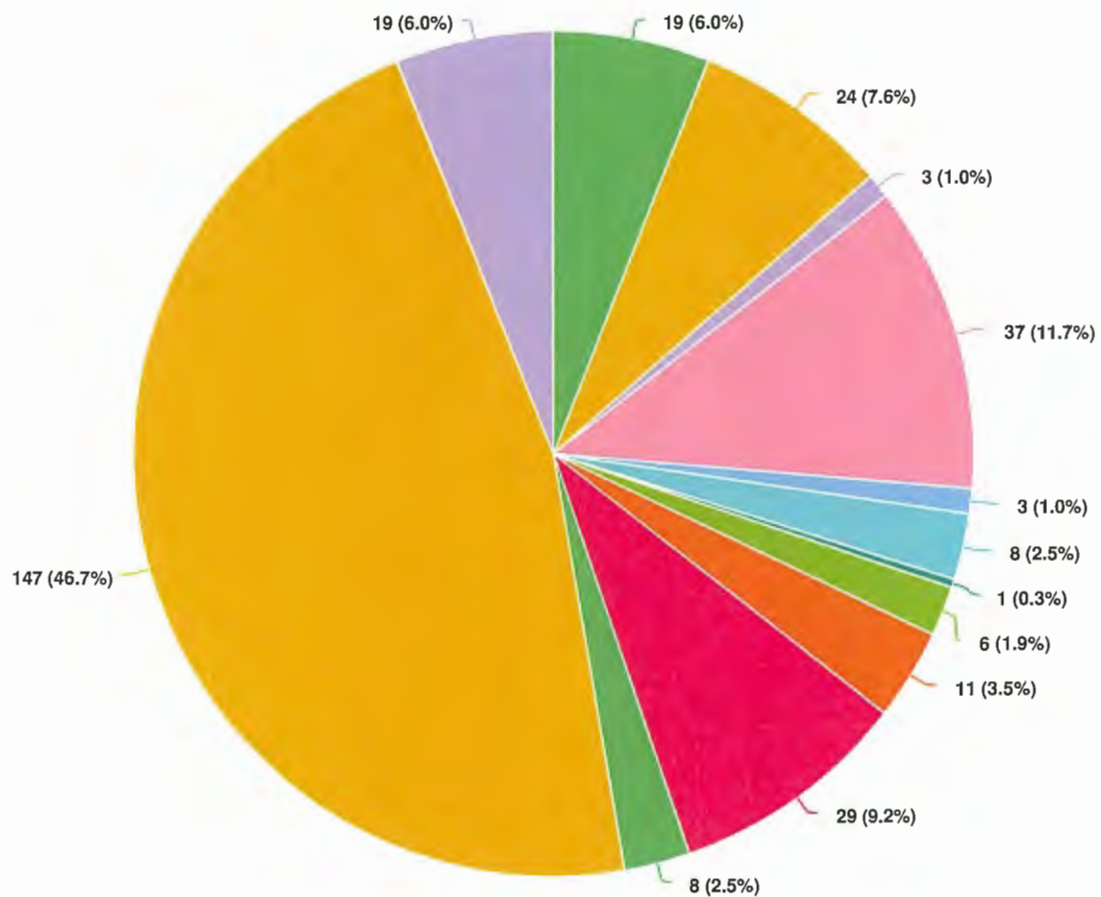
● Strongly support ● Support ● Neutral ● Opposed ● Strongly

*Optional question (317 response(s), 3 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*



I live in the neighbourhood of:



Question options

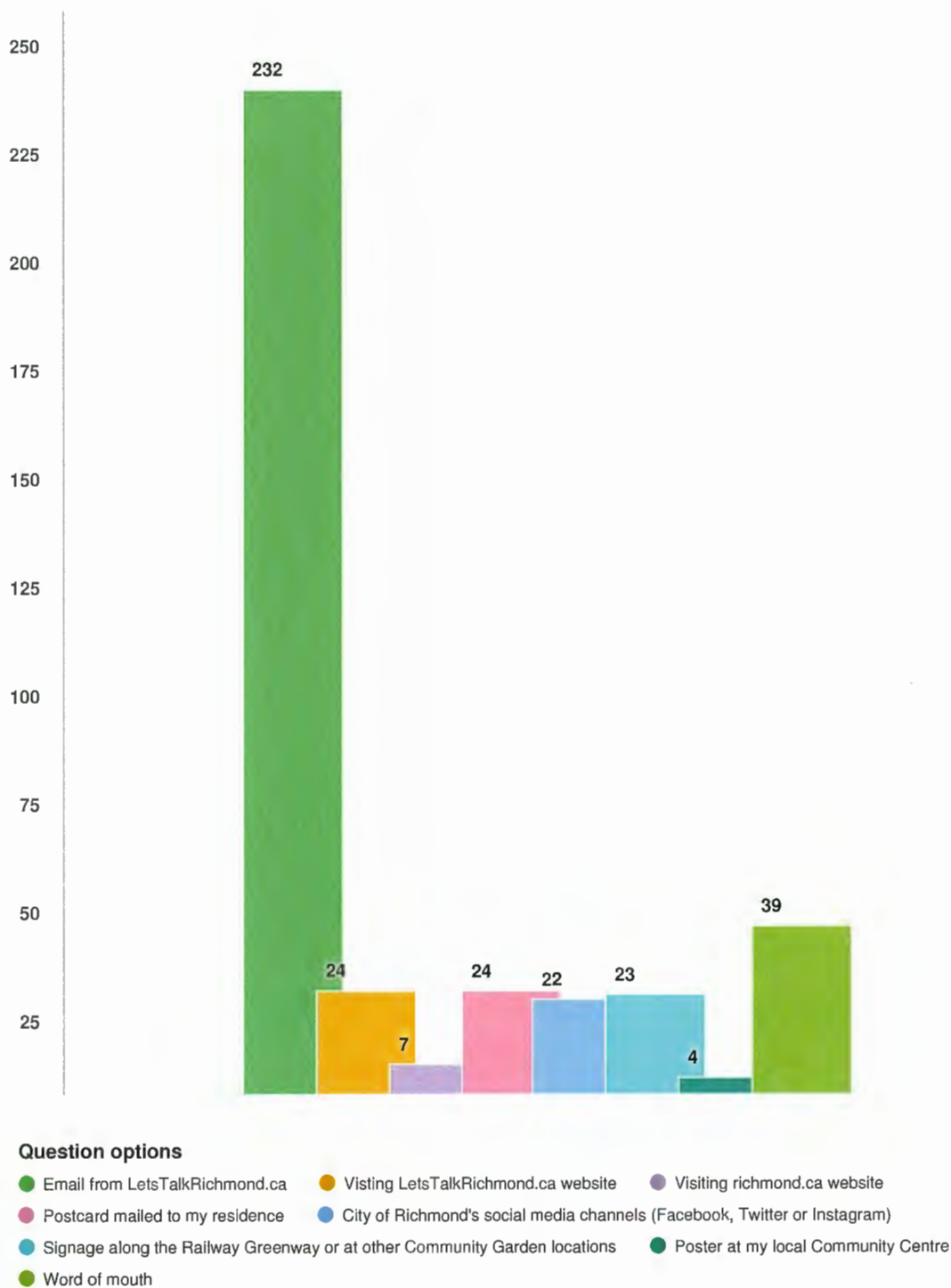
Blundell   Broadmoor   Bridgeport   City Centre   East Cambie   East Richmond   Gilmore  
Hamilton   Sea Island   Seafair   Shellmont   Steveston   Thompson

Optional question (315 response(s), 5 skipped)

Question type: Radio Button Question



I heard about this engagement via: (check all that apply)

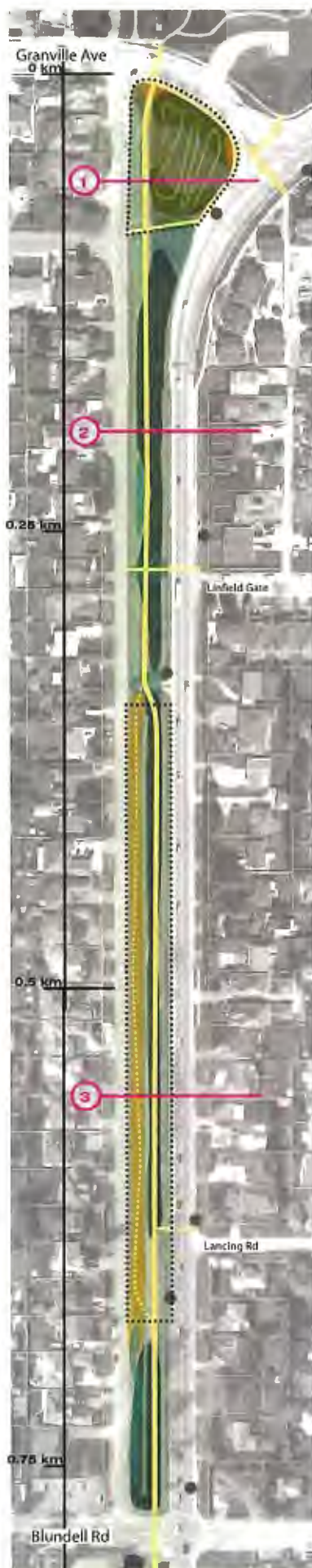


Optional question (314 response(s), 6 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question



## STUDY AREA ONE - Granville to Blundell



Suggested  
program:



Other program possibilities:




The unique area, surrounded by roadways, is a large space compared to the rest of the gateway. Located adjacent to Thompson Community Centre, an active use such as a bike tennis park would be a good fit since the site is already busy and would complement the active program at the community centre. With sight lines from Granville Ave. and Railway Ave., there is an opportunity for a prominent piece of public art to act as a beacon and gateway to the proposed gateway.

Section  
Scale 1:100



This is a narrow area along the greenway lacking additional space for program. Ecological landscape improvements is suggested as the best use of this space. A grove wetland or meadow would provide both attractive scenery for users of the trail as well as wildlife habitat.

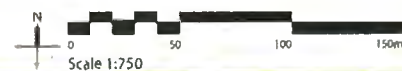


2 Section  
Scale 1:100

The section highlights a narrow area on the corridor adjacent to McClellan Road. An ecological program would work well, providing both wildlife habitat and a buffer from the road. A light recreation program would also work well within the meadow or grove.



**3** Section  
Scale 1:100





# STUDY AREA TWO - Blundell to Francis

Suggested program:

Other program possibilities:

Grove

Seating

Art / Signage

Meadow



A narrow section just south of Blundell Road, this area suggests use as a tree buffer to vehicular traffic. It is also an excellent location for wayfinding signage and/or seating.

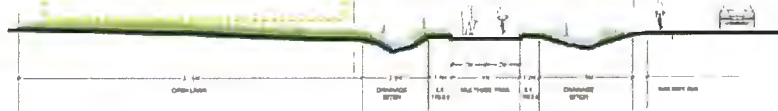


4 Section  
Scale 1:100

Community Garden



This long stretch of the corridor adjacent to the Cherry Tree Townhomes is a great place for a more broad program such as community gardens. Multi-family housing and established footpaths indicate an opportunity for a public gathering place with strong connections to neighbourhood schools, parks and community centres.



5 Section  
Scale 1:100

Light Recreation

Wetland



Orchard

Dog Park

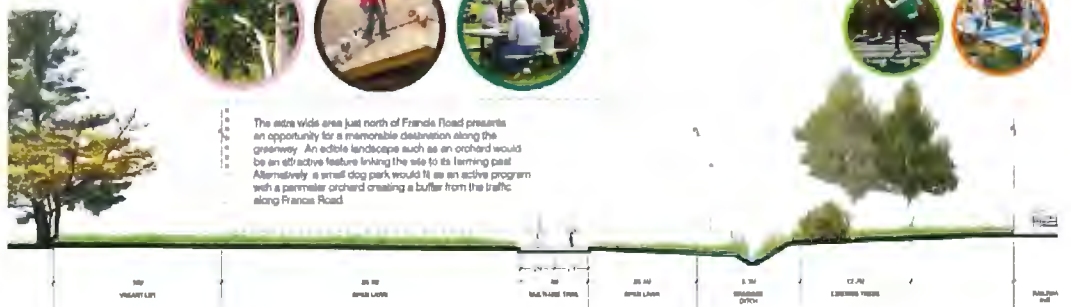
Seating

Light Recreation

Art / Signage



The side wide area just north of Francis Road presents an opportunity for a memorable destination along the greenway. An edible landscape such as an orchard would be an attractive feature linking the site to its farming past. Alternatively, a small dog park would fit as an active program with a perimeter orchard creating a buffer from the traffic along Francis Road.



6 Section  
Scale 1:100





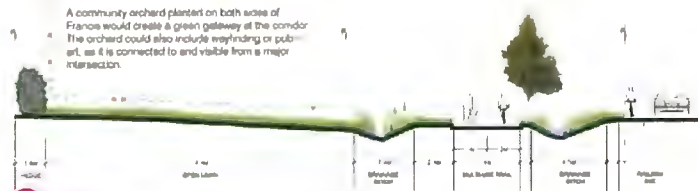
# STUDY AREA THREE - Francis to Williams

Suggested program:

Orchard Art / Signage



A community orchard planted on both sides of Francis would create a green gateway at the corridor. The orchard could also include wayfinding or public art, as it is connected to and visible from a major intersection.



7 Section Scale 1:100

Other program possibilities:

Grove

Seating



Wetland



This section illustrates constrained stretches of the Railway Corridor that cannot contain more than the trail and seating ditches. An ecological program would act as a buffer from the road on either side, improve wildlife habitat and create a more interesting journey for trail users.



8 Section Scale 1:100

Market

Seating

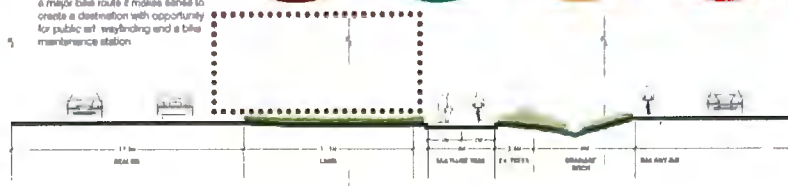
Art / Signage

Facilities

Light Recreation

Meadow

The area just north of Williams Road has a railway on the West side of the greenway. Geal Road could be programmed to occasionally host events such as small markets and food trucks. Since Williams Road is a major bike route it makes sense to create a destination with opportunity for public art, wayfinding and a bike maintenance station.



9 Section Scale 1:100





# STUDY AREA FOUR - Williams to Steveston HWY

Suggested program:

Grove

Seating

Other program possibilities:

Meadow

Light Recreation

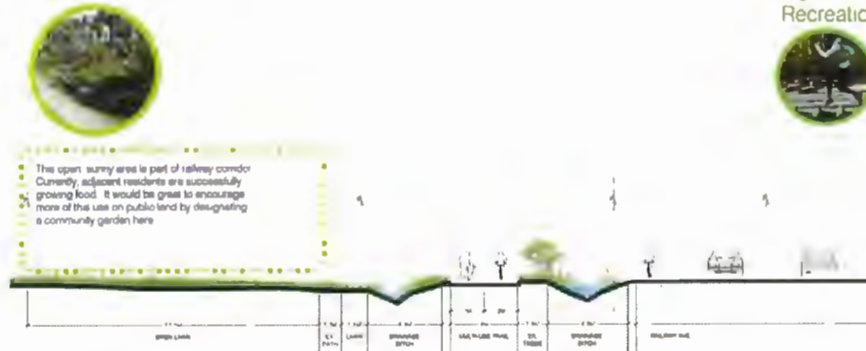


10 Section  
Scale 1:100

Community Garden

Light Recreation

Meadow



11 Section  
Scale 1:100

Facilities

Art / Signage

Seating

Brencombe House is a significant historic building and may be a destination on the Greenway. This location will provide a separate accessible public washroom and may also have other facilities such as a drinking fountain or bike repair station. The possibilities for heritage interpretation through signage and public art are many.



12 Section  
Scale 1:100

N

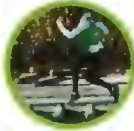




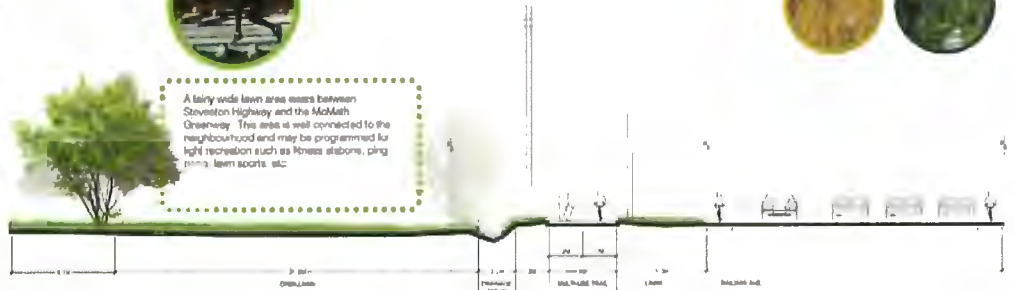
# STUDY AREA FIVE - Steveston HWY to Moncton

Suggested program:

Light Recreation



A fairly wide lawn area exists between Steveston Highway and the McMath Greenway. This area is well connected to the neighbourhood and may be programmed for light recreation such as fitness stations, ping pong, lawn sports, etc.



13 Section  
Scale 1:100

Other program possibilities:

Meadow

Grove



Light Recreation

Seating

Art / Signage



The connection to the McMath Greenway should be a well defined node along the route. This is an opportunity for wayfinding signage as well as meeting place and active perimeter programming.



14 Section  
Scale 1:100

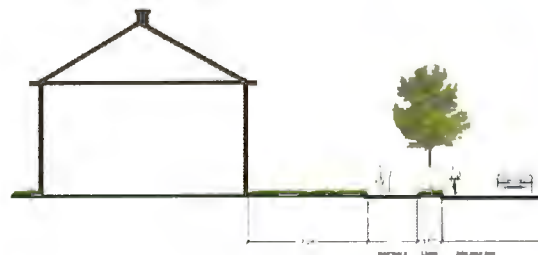
Art / Signage

Dog Park



14 Section  
Scale 1:100

An existing shared pedestrian and cyclist trail that follows the old rail wye through Steveston Park to the corner of No. 1 Road and Moncton Street. A tram building is currently under construction that will house the interurban rail car #1220. The trail is a relic of the tram infrastructure and an important connector from the Railway Greenway to the Steveston Community Centre and new tram building.

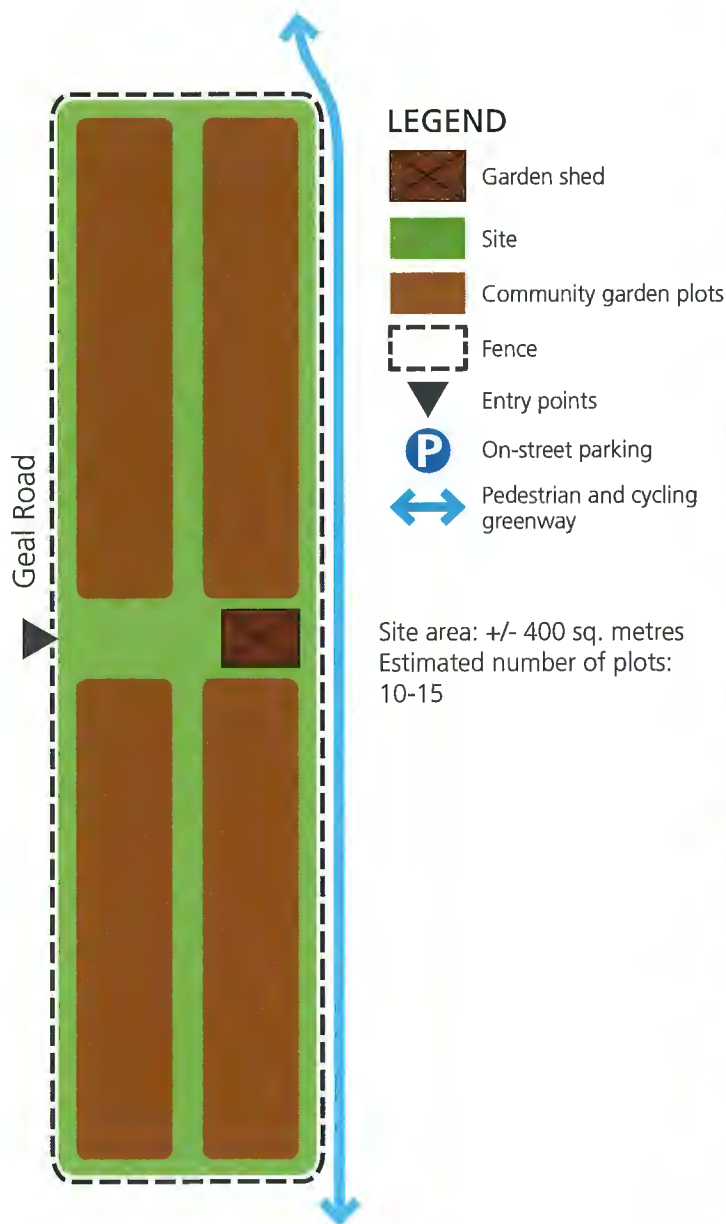


15 Section  
Scale 1:100

Between Garry Street and Moncton there is no longer a rail bed for the greenway. The greenway will continue and connect to the Britannia Heritage Shipyard and the Riverfront. Bicycles traffic will either transfer to the bike lane on the roadway or use the existing extra wide sidewalk to continue south.

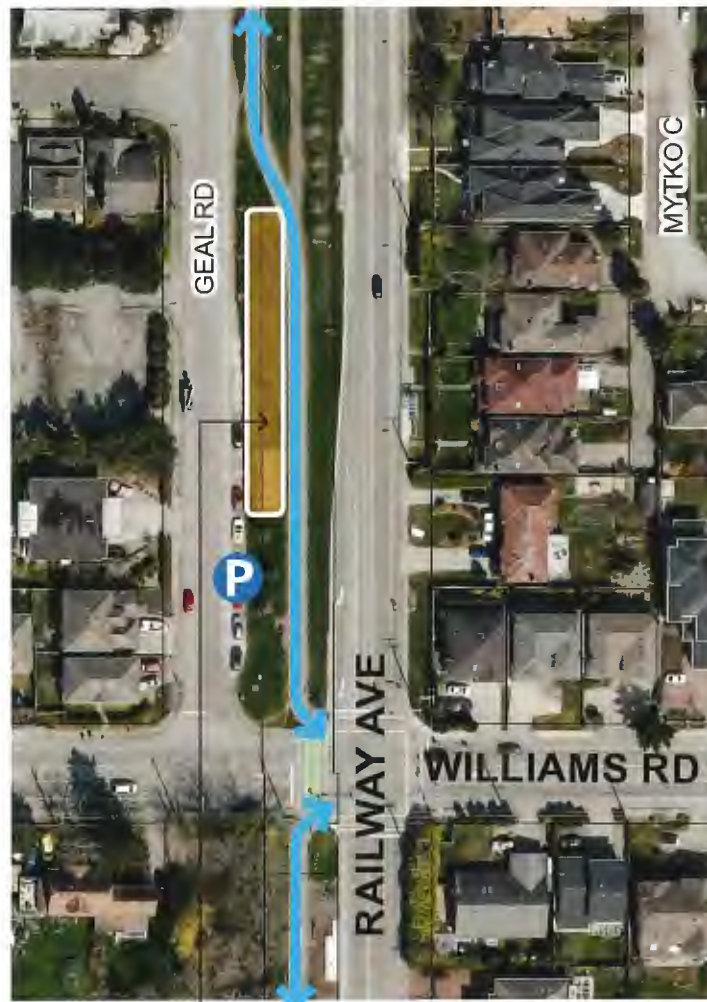




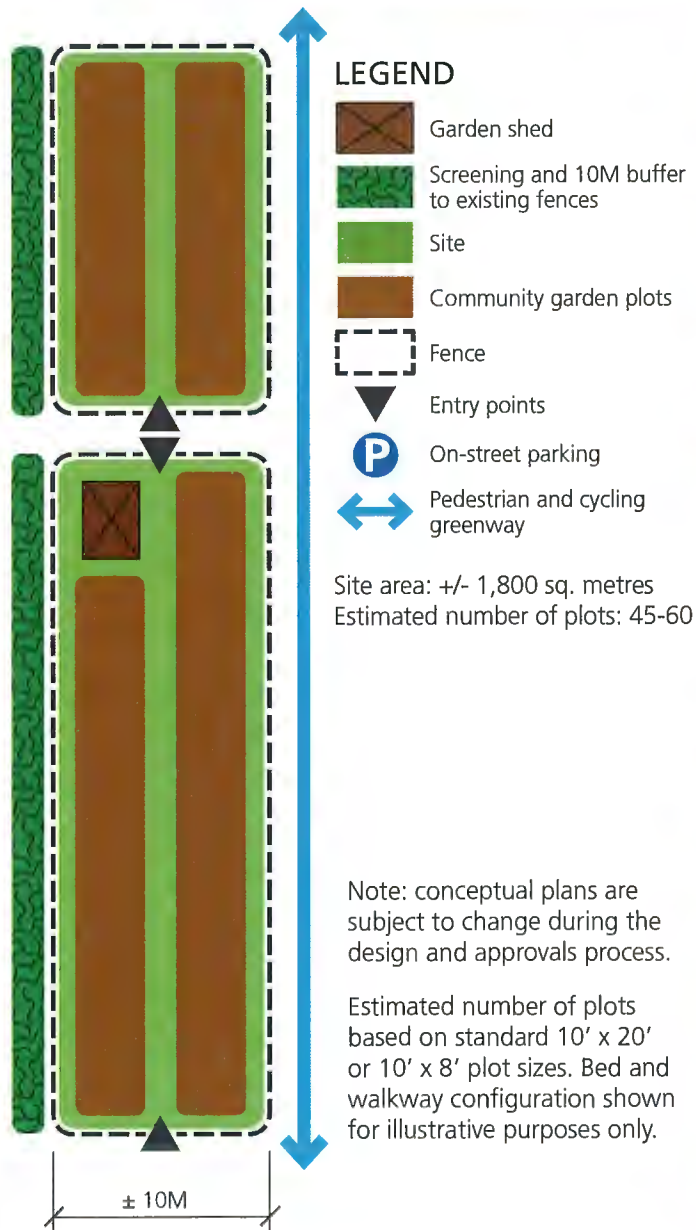


Note: conceptual plans are subject to change during the design and approvals process.

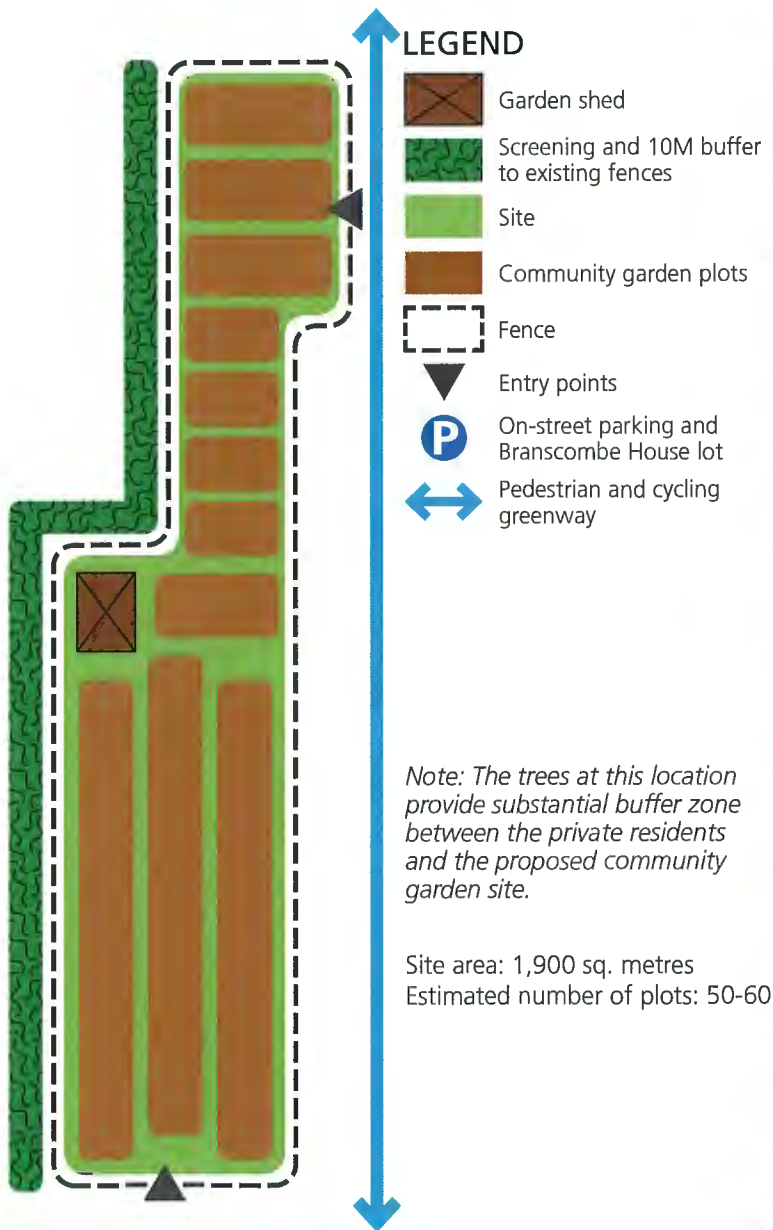
Estimated number of plots based on standard 10' x 20' or 10' x 8' plot sizes. Bed and walkway configuration shown for illustrative purposes only.











Note: conceptual plans are subject to change during the design and approvals process.

Estimated number of plots based on standard 10' x 20' or 10' x 8' plot sizes. Bed and walkway configuration shown for illustrative purposes only.