

Raleigh Street Pop-Up Park – Engagement Summary Report



Executive Summary

There is significant support for the permanent retention of the Raleigh Street Pop-Up Park from almost all the 207 members of the community who responded.

The impact on car parking was the primarily reason given by the less than 5% who opposed retention. But even when specifically asked to consider loss of parking, support for retention remained overwhelming.

Respondents acknowledged the area was highly valued by the community and families especially to play and socialise and noted the bench seats, basketball court, planter-boxes and grassed area were all valued and well-used.

They also identified opportunities for further upgrades and additions – specifically in relation to expansion and quality of the basketball courts and skateboarding area – which they felt would further enhance its existing value to the community.

Background

The Raleigh Street Pop-up Park was established on the existing car park during the pandemic to provide a flexible space for residents of Footscray, many of whom do not have private open space or easy access to a local park for outdoor recreation, to remain active during restrictions. At the time the car park area was also under-utilised as a result of working from home provisions.

When it was proposed back in 2020, 85.2% of respondents indicated they would use the space.

While COVID remains prevalent, with restrictions lifted and workers returning to the office, Council sought to confirm the appetite the permanent retention of the pop-up park over its return to car parking.

Methodology

Face-to-face and online activities were hosted over a three week period from 9th May to 30 May, 2022.

This included two scheduled in-person conversations on site – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – with a survey utilising a range of options from multiple choice, ranking and short answer questions both around permanency and features the community would continue to support or might want modified.

A blog, on-site corflutes and socials were used to support reach. 67% of the traffic generated to the project page was in response to the social media posts.

Date	Post	Post Impressions	Post Reach	Engagement	Reactions	Comments	Link Clicks	Shares
May 19	Raleigh Street Pop-Up Park reminder that online survey is closing on the weekend	4,199	4,061	222	16	11	27	2

May 11	Your City Your Voice link	7,201	6,987	626	74	27	105	11
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Findings

There were just shy of 400 views of the project page (394) of whom 52.54% or 207 provided responses. 134 downloaded the concept design.

Only four members attended the face-to-face session – potentially impacted by weather and timing (the morning session started at 9 and the afternoon session ended at 4 which is outside working hours for commuters.)

Face-to-face

The four attendees noted:

- The popularity of the basketball half court and grass
- Younger children use the perimeter track, while older children and young adults favour the basketball half court.
- Because the gravel at the base of the skate ramp makes it for a difficult transition for skateboarders, they tend to avoid – using other part of the park and car park instead
- Trees are popular and the community appreciated the retention of the existing trees.

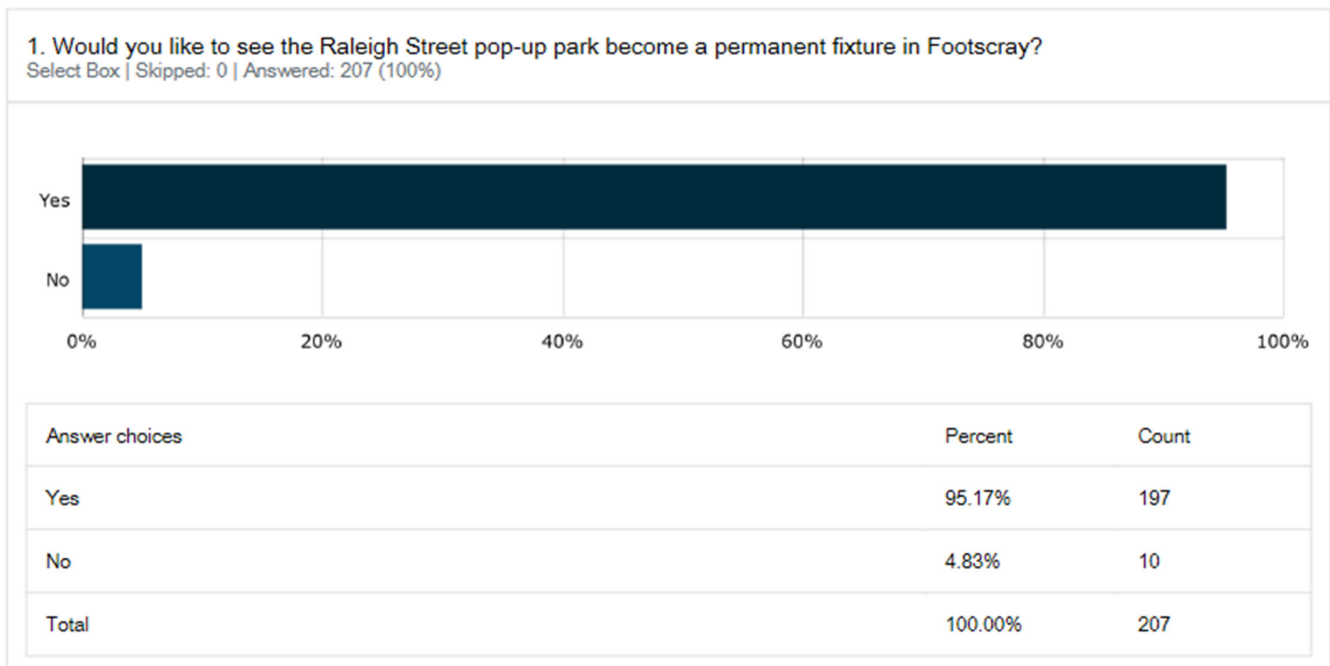
Survey

Questions sought to understand whether the community would like to retain the pop-up park, what features were well used, the ones they would like retained, and any improvements they might like to see.

Question 1: Would you like to see the Raleigh Street pop-up park become a permanent fixture in Footscray?

95.17% or 197 respondents said yes.

4.83% (10) said no.



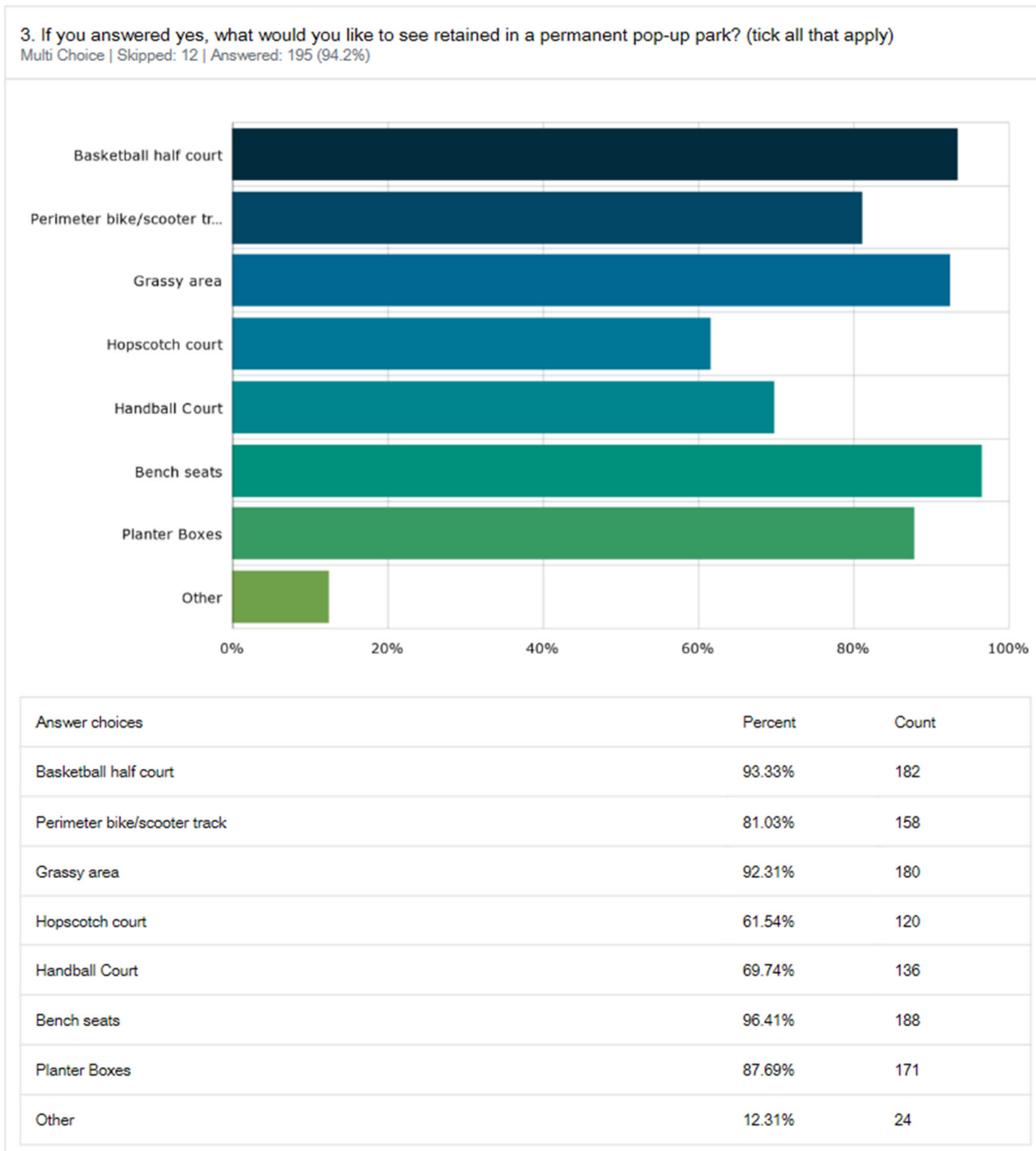
Question 2: If you answered no, please share your reasons.

This was a free text option with respondents arguing the Pop-up Park, which they noted was under-utilised, was taking away valuable parking spaces. These comments are detailed in the appendices.

Question 3: If you answered yes, what would you like to see retained in a permanent pop-up park? (Tick all that apply)

The retention of the bench seats was the highest scoring element with **96.41% or (188)**.

This was followed closely by the basketball half court **93.33% (182)** and the grassy area **92.31% (180)**.



The 24 'other' responses have been included in the table below.

Theme	No. of responses
Table tennis / ping pong tables	10
Exercise station	5
Picnic tables	2
Spine ramp	1
More play equipment	1
Skate curb	1
Nice landscaping	1
Shade	1
Vegetable garden	1
Small scooter bumps	1
Graffiti wall	1
Native trees	1
BBQ area	1
Water bubbler / fountain / dog water bowl	1
Real grass	1
Swings / slide / monkey bars	1

Question 4: How would you feel if the Pop-up Park was not only retained, but was potentially bigger?

89.9% (186) of the 207 who responded to the survey answered this question positively.

- Positive responses – **92.47% (172)**
- Neutral responses – 4.30% (8)
- Negative responses – 3.23% (6)

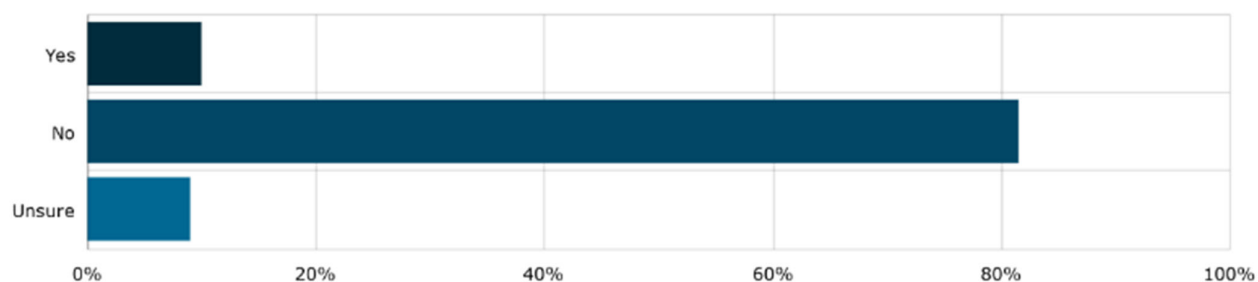
Three comments recorded in Question 3 suggested a small increase might be warranted to accommodate additional features. Nine respondents specifically noted on this question, however, that It was already big enough and they felt adjustments to the layout could accommodate the improvements without increasing the size.

Question 5: Whether you support the retention of the Pop-up Park or not, would the loss of car parking concern you?

Just under 10% of the 204 who answered this question, **9.8% (20)** were concerned at the loss of car parking and another **8.82% (18)** were unsure. **81.37% (166)** did not consider the loss of car parking to be a concern.

5. Whether you support the retention of the Pop-up Park or not, would the loss of car parking concern you?

Select Box | Skipped: 3 | Answered: 204 (98.6%)



Answer choices	Percent	Count
Yes	9.80%	20
No	81.37%	166
Unsure	8.82%	18
Total	100.00%	204

Question 6: Do you have any other comments?

97 respondents provided comments - **64.95% (63)** reinforcing additional support for the retention of the park and **6.19% (6)** reiterating concerns around loss of parking. Additionally comments related to the amenity and are themed below.

Theme	No. of responses
Additional support for retention of the park	63
More shade / shelter	6
Real grass / permanent trees / plants	6
Better basketball court surface / larger basketball court area	6
Parking concerns	6
Water / drinking fountain	3
Smoother surfaces / skate park improvements	3
Toilet facilities	2
Noise reduction / security	2
BBQ facilities	1

Appendix:

Question 2: Short Answer Responses for those who selected 'NO'.

- The skate park section is essentially unusable by skateboarders due to poor design. Footscray deserves to have a professionally built concrete skate park like many of the surrounding suburbs.*
- While I wouldn't mind if this park becomes permanent I am not really sure how many people are using it. It tends to look empty every time I drive by. The real issues in central Footscray are the anti-social behaviour in Maddern Square and what older youths might do in our hood. I would like to see some serious investment in Maddern Square where a permanent outdoor park is created for older skaters who could potentially tip the balance of the anti-social behaviour and reclaim this essential piece of real estate.*

3. *Council should be looking at different areas and properly designed spaces. You put a skate ramp that was unusable and little other facilities.*
4. *There is very little free all day parking near Footscray and Middle Footscray stations. Footscray is a big suburb and not everyone can get to the station without driving there (I have kids at school so can't drop them off and then bus to the station as the time would take too long on either side of the commute. The car park is full now after 9 and people unfortunately are expected back in the city offices. I like the idea of the pop up park but maybe somewhere where it will be better utilised (I rarely see many people using it).*
5. *We need the existing car park as it was prior to the pop up initiative. It's already an inconvenience as it is. Park doesn't seem to be well utilised for the various days of the weeks/times I've walked past there. A loss of 30 car spaces means 30 more people who have to try to find - and, more than likely - pay to park their cars. This proposal is yet another example where Council is disregarding the needs of rate paying residents who want to be able to drive around and/or park in the local municipality.*
6. *There's already extremely limited free parking available in Footscray and half was taken by this park. With people returning back to work it would benefit more people by returning it to a car pack so those who aren't financially stable enough for paid parking can stop getting parking fines every day.*
7. *All day parking is not readily available anywhere else in Footscray. Perhaps the park could be incorporated, but just made slightly smaller*
8. *The ramp features are not very good. My kids are good with the scooter but didn't like them. Their scooters scraped on the curves. And the metal was slippery when wet. The approaches were awkward too, they couldn't turn fast enough or not enough space to get speed.*
9. *Parking spaces are needed*
10. *I park in what remains of the Raleigh St carpark multiple times during the week in order to get to work, and the park is completely vacant most of the time. The only time I ever see it used it is by a lone adult male playing basketball. There are never any children there after school (when I leave in the afternoon), no one sitting at the tables, just no one there at all. I don't believe the very small use the park gets justifies the removal of 30 free carparks in a suburb that struggles for parking availability.*