



**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**PUBLIC WORKS**  
*Environmental Services, LAS*

<b>DATE PREPARED:</b>	June 21, 2019
<b>SUBJECT/ PROJECT:</b>	Central Park, Park Program Clarifications
<b>PROJECT ADDRESS:</b>	171 Bay Street North, Hamilton Ontario (Ward 02)
<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	Louise Thomassin, Landscape Architectural Services

**BACKGROUND**

In response to the online survey submitted to the City of Hamilton's Landscape Architectural Services Section on June 03, 2019 by the Central Neighbourhood Association (CNA) the following clarifications are provided and itemized by Survey Question number.

**CNA QUESTION 1:** The Central Park Plan Designates the removal of the tennis courts to be replaced by two enclosed dog parks (small and large). Do you support this plan?

**CITY RESPONSE:**

The design programme is determined by the recommendations in the Outdoor Recreation Study prepared by the City of Hamilton's Recreation Planning Staff and the public consultation process in 2015 that was held at the onset of the design process prior detailed design (see point 5 under the Response to General Comments Section for the public consultation process breakdown).

The goal of the Outdoor Recreation Study is to enable the City of Hamilton strategically invest in park amenities to address service gaps, changing demands and facility renewals. The full report can be found online at: <http://www2.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/36E454FA-454E-49E5-B9F9-D914FF883F2B/0/OutdoorRecreationStudy.pdf>

The Outdoor Recreation Study gathered data by: analyzing demographic characteristics and participation trends, conducting a comprehensive park observation exercise, municipal benchmarking and conducting a public and stakeholder consultation program.

The Study recommended the following for Central Park:

- Remove tennis courts at Central Park

The reasons for the recommendation are due to the low utilization, low ranking based on the household survey and neighbourhood over-supply in Lower Hamilton based on distribution targets. A detailed breakdown is provided below and more information can be found within the Outdoor Recreation Study (page 143):

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- Distribution Target and Condition:
  - A 2.0km service radius is the distribution target for Tennis Courts City-wide and is used to evaluate the needs of specific communities.
  - Within Lower Hamilton there is an overlapping service radius for public tennis courts.
    - Benetto Recreation Centre has 1 public court in good condition, Victoria Park has 3 public courts in good condition, Central Park has 2 public courts in poor condition
  - Due to the distribution overlap in Lower Hamilton and the poor condition of the courts identified at Central Park as compared to the good condition of the courts at the two overlapping sites it is recommended to replace the courts at Central Park with a more appropriate use.
  
- Trends, Best Practices and Benchmarking:
  - Interest in tennis has varied; after peaking in the 1970's, participation in tennis slowly declined. A study prepared by Tennis Canada indicated that tennis participation for Ontario in 2007 is at 5.8%, though it did slightly increase between 2003 and 2007 from 5.0% to 5.8%.
  - Benchmarking from several communities reveal that:
    - Most municipalities are building only very small number of tennis courts, if at all
    - Many courts in municipalities deemed as surplus are being converted into multi-purpose pads that can accommodate ball hockey, basketball and skateboarding
  - Utilization: in lower Hamilton public courts were being used 33% of the time (average of six visits per amenity in the summer of 2009).
    - For comparison this utilization average is lower than amenities planned for the Central Park redevelopment (e.g. basketball is 35%, playgrounds are 81%, spray pads are 40%)
  
- Ranking and City-wide Needs Assessment:
  - Tennis ranked 18<sup>th</sup> out of 26 facility types based on the household survey conducted and ranks behind playgrounds, spray pads, leash fee dog parks, basketball, multi-use courts and sports fields.
  - The low priority given to tennis courts though the household survey coupled with the low utilization rate observed suggests that the City as a whole has more tennis courts than it currently needs.
  - City-wide the provision of tennis courts will be focused in areas that are undersupplied and/or new growth areas; City-wide the removal of tennis courts will occur where service radius supply overlaps (e.g. Central Park, Globe Park).

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The Outdoor Recreation Study discusses a strategy for the implementation of dog parks based on distribution targets, the household survey ranking and demographics. In short the Outdoor Recreation Study provides the following background information and recommends the strategies for dog park implementation (refer also to page 184 of the Outdoor Recreation Study):

- Background:
  - Dog parks provide fenced facilities where residents have the opportunity to exercise their dogs off-leash within a controlled environment without being in contravention of municipal by-laws. They further help to keep our parks clean and reduce conflict between site users.
  
- Distribution:
  - Most of the city's free running dog areas are grouped together in and around West Hamilton/ Dundas area. Using a 2.0km radius to assess the distribution of leash free parks, it is apparent that several major gaps exist includes in Flamborough (2), Hamilton mountain, **Lower Hamilton (2)** and lower Stoney creek. Over time as more leash free parks are established, it would be reasonable to reduce this service radius to a level that allows for greater 'walk-to-access.
  - It is recommended that the City continue to work towards its goal of establishing at least one leash free running area or fenced in dog park per ward.
    - Note: the only fenced in dog park within Ward 2 is along the rail trail and thus Ward 2 is below the distribution service target.
  
- Ranking and Demand:
  - The City's current leash free parks are well utilized, and public input suggests that there is a desire for more areas to be established in Hamilton. 36% of household survey respondents support additional spending on leash free parks, ranking them 13<sup>th</sup> out of 26 facility types.
  - Demand for leash free parks is most notable in denser urban environments where private backyards are smaller and apartment buildings are more prevalent. **Lower Hamilton is our best example of this and contains the highest density of apartments.**

**CNA QUESTION 2:** Would you like to see a revised Central Park Plan that would include one tennis court and one dog park?

**CITY RESPONSE:**

See response above response to explain the reason the tennis courts were removed from the Central Park Redevelopment design program and why the provision was made for a fenced in dog area.

The size of the dog enclosure areas and the decision to provide two separate areas are based on best practice design standards and are summarized below:

- Separation:
  - Current best practices in dog park design recommend the provision of two separated areas; one for small and older/sick dogs and another for big dogs. The City of Hamilton will be implanting a policy to have future dog parks designed to this standard in urban cores or where space limits the sizes of the dog enclosure areas.
  - The reason for the separated areas is to reduce stress for dogs and ensure that dogs can concentrate on socializing with a group of dogs suited to their size and temperament in separated fenced in areas.
  
- Sizing:
  - There are minimum sizing requirements that must be achieved for both small and old/sick dog enclosed areas and large dog areas. Removing one enclosed area is not an option as it would otherwise be in contradiction to the minimum size requirements for urban dog parks.

There are additional best practice design standards that the dog enclosure in Central Park abides to (e.g. fencing heights, materials, entries/ exits size and location etc), but are not listed within this document.

**CNA QUESTION 3:** The Central Park Plan designates a community garden in the south-west corner of the park. Do you support this placement?

**CITY RESPONSE:**

The placement of the community garden was selected for the following reasons:

- Sun is provided continuously to the majority of the area throughout the day
- The grade is level in this area and there are no drainage or accessibility concerns
- Rear yard access for the one resident who has a gate can be maintained. Gate access from rear yards is not supported by the City and no new rear yard gate accesses will be permitted.
- There are two cul-de-sacs in proximity to the community garden that are connected by level walkway accesses and can be used for short-term material and supply drop-offs if required.
- The community garden is located away from most active uses within the park and reduces potential conflicts between user groups.
- As part of the park redesign the community garden will be equipped with a small shed, four (4) accessible beds located on a concrete pad, a double gate access, hose bibs and a water supply.

The City of Hamilton Community Gardener Coordinator's Role:

- The City of Hamilton's Community Gardener Coordinator has continued demand in Lower Hamilton for community gardens. The Community Garden Coordinator will work with interested residents to sign a maintenance agreement once the redevelopment is

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nearing completion. The site will be completely capped with clean fill, however future gardeners will still be required to install all gardens in raised beds.

**CNA QUESTION 4:** The Central Park Plan will result in the loss of mature trees particularly in the area of access as Bay and Mulberry Streets. Would you like to see a remediation of land that would result in saving areas of the mature landscape?

**CITY RESPONSE:**

The root systems of trees are located predominantly within the first 150mm-450mm (6-18 inches) of soil where nutrients and water are abundant and tree roots extend beyond the tree's drip line. Due to the remediation works, the grades up to and into the trees canopy will be impacted up to 1m below grade or raised up to 1m above grade. These grade changes and the necessary removal of existing soil will severely impact the existing trees' abilities to grow and saving trees subject to such root loss will pose future health and safety risks as the trees decline in health and begin to show symptoms such as limb fall.

Of the existing trees only 20% are native species and since the original tree inventory was completed in 2015 there has been continued decline in health requiring the City to remove many of the evergreens and complete rows of deciduous species.

The City will be striving to save trees along the perimeter of the property if the remediation requirements allow and the trees will not pose a future safety and health risk. Trees within the interior of the park will need to be removed however.

As part of the redesign a total of 60 new trees are being planted. The new trees are located to ensure sightlines are maintained throughout the park and species with high, lighter canopies are selected for safety. More than 60% of the new trees being planted are native species and all the species do well in urban conditions.

**CNA QUESTION 5:** The Central Park Plan does not include additional park lighting. Would you like to see additional lighting dispersed throughout the park?

**CITY RESPONSE:**

There are six (6) existing lights within the park scattered along the pathway leading from Caroline Street on the southern edge of the site, near the parking lot and near the play structure. This does not include any lights associated with the cul-de-sac's or rights-of-way's.

The City will be installing the following lights as part of the redevelopment:

- A total of eleven (11) new lights evenly distributed along the pathway that connects Caroline Street at the South and North ends of the site and the pathway that connects Mulberry Street and Harriet Street
- One (1) spotlight at the dog park
- One (1) light under the sun shelter located adjacent to the spray pad/ playground area
- One (1) light in the community garden shed

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Note: this does not include any lights that will be installed for the new cul-de-sac's.

As per City park standards all lights will be LED to improve on energy efficiencies, will be on a timer scheduled to shut off at 11pm and the fixtures selected direct light downward to limit light pollution.

**CITY RESPONSE TO GENERAL COMMENTS APPENDED TO THE SURVEY:**

1. Will there be parking?
  - There is an existing parking lot located within the park boundary. The entrance to the parking lot is located off Bay Street North. The parking lot will be resurfaced and will contain nine (9) regular parking stalls for park users, one (1) accessible parking stall for park users and three (3) regular by-permit parking stalls for local residents.
2. Will dogs have a drinking fountain too?
  - Yes, the proposed drinking fountain that will be located near the dog facility at Central Park will have a water bottle filler, a pet fountain (i.e. dog bowl) and a standard drinking fountain.
3. What is a Multi-Purpose Court?
  - The multi-purpose court accommodates ball hockey and basketball.
4. Will Caroline Street be connected?
  - There are no plans to connect the two ends of Caroline Street with a road.
5. Install Skateboard Park.
  - The City of Hamilton completed a citywide Skateboard Study in 2017 and identified five (5) priority sites in Hamilton to build new skate parks. The sites were identified with input from the public through a public consultation process. Central Park was not identified as a priority site to receive a skate park and the inclusion of skate facilities will not be considered at this time. More information can be found online at: <https://www.hamilton.ca/parks-recreation/creating-new-parks/skateboard-park-study>
  - Skateboard Parks near Central Park:
    - Beasley Park, located at 96 Mary Street in Ward 2 less than 1km away from Central Park had an existing skate park that was redeveloped in 2018. The construction cost to redevelop the park was \$1.3M dollars; the skate park portion (not including removals) was approximately \$403,600.00 of the total construction cost.
6. What was the design process and community outreach?
  - Central Park was identified in the 2014 Barton-Tiffany Urban Design Study for redevelopment. Since then at least six (6) community outreach events and public consultations occurred. All events are advertised within the local community via mail-outs and within the broader community via newspaper ads, social media and targeted outreach to specific community organizations. Each event occurred at a different life cycle of the design process and the event, date and reason for engagement are listed below:

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- A Public Consultation was held on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 at the onset of the design process. This Public Consultation was held to gather ideas and gain feedback on the types of amenities residents would like at Central Park. The amenities requested at this Public Consultation included: a playground, a multi-use court with hockey, a spray pad, open space to accommodate a mini soccer field, lighting, a shade structure, a central node with seating, community gardens and a dog park.
- At the onset of the design process a targeted outreach was facilitated on September 24, 2015 asking a classroom of Hess Street Students to redesign Central Park. The models were unveiled at Limeridge Mall on June 10, 2015 and held on display at the Evergreen City Works Centre. The amenities requested by students included: an outdoor classroom, a basketball court, a pavilion area and a tai-chi garden.
- The design proceeded based on feedback from residents, the City's Internal staff and the Outdoor Recreation Study. Construction of the park needed to be delayed due to the investigative works required to formulate a remediation strategy. Due to the delay follow up Public Consultations and meetings with stakeholders were held to provide progress updates. Progress updates include, but are not limited to as staff did attend Central Neighbourhood Association meetings etc.:
  - February 8, 2017: outreach by the City of Hamilton's Planning Section to the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board.
  - October 26, 2017: Waterfront Development staff and Landscape Architectural Services staff attended the West Harbour Community Conversation to provide an update.
  - April 10, 2018: a Public Consultation was held for Central Park to provide an update. Additional Feedback was taken at this time however the design program was set. City staff did update the plan to accommodate the lighting request.

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:**

- Plan Render showing new lighting, features, shading, etc.
- Recreation Memorandum
- Online survey prepared by the CNA and submitted to the City of Hamilton

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Hamilton

Recreation Division  
Healthy & Safe Communities

# Memorandum

**Date:** June 24 2019

**To:** Louise Thomassin, Landscape Architect – Landscape Architectural Services

**From:** Sarah Cellini, Senior Recreation Planner, Healthy & Safe Communities

**Subject: Recreation Comments – Central Park Court Amenities**

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Recreation Planning staff were asked to provide a comments with respect to removal of the court amenities as part of the Central Park redevelopment project.

## **Previous Recreation Comments Submitted to LAS**

In 2015, Recreation provided comments on a draft concept plan for the Central Park redevelopment project.

The following amenities were identified to LAS as a priority:

- playground
- basketball/multi-use
- shade structure, washroom, water station and storage for the supie program
- walking path
- spray pad
- tai chi and outdoor fitness areas supported by Rec staff

Rec also identified the need for public input on the following amenities:

- multi-use courts with tennis
- open green space

LAS staff have engaged the public on the proposed program for Central Park and have received negative feedback with respect to the removal of the tennis courts.

## **Outdoor Study (2011) Recommendation**

Be advised that the Outdoor Study (2011) recommended the following:

*Due to poor condition, low utilization, and neighbourhood over-supply, removal of public tennis courts at Central Park (3 courts) should be considered, with in-demand recreation amenities taking their place.*

## **Hard Surface Court Study and Observation Project Considerations**

Since 2015's Recreation Comments to LAS, Recreation has undertaken a Hard Surface Court Study and a Field Monitor Project, which included hard surfaced court participant counts at various times during weekday evenings and weekend afternoons.

### *Court Study – Passive Engagement Survey*

The Passive Engagement Survey was part of the Phase 2 component of the Court Study which consisted of signage at hard surfaced court amenities across the City of Hamilton with exception of a few parks under construction or planned construction beginning in 2018. Unfortunately, Central Park was excluded from the passive engagement as Recreation was informed that construction was planned for Summer 2018. As such, the survey signage was not installed at the park as part of the passive engagement component of the Court Study.

However, as part of Phase 1 of the Court Study the consultant team provided a site condition assessment for all court amenities across the City. In 2017, Central Park's two tennis courts and one basketball court were assessed as follows:

Courts in fair but playable condition. Fencing showing significant signs of age-rusting; stretching. Tennis surface has open cracks, grass and ponding requiring repair. Both courts require fencing to be monitored for repair. Basketball nets to be replaced.

### *Field Monitor Project*

Recreation identified the need for more data to support decision making regarding need for existing and proposed recreation facilities. Staff hired for this project were provided with a list of parks to observe if participants (with a booking or not) are using a particular amenity. Observation data gathered was analyzed to inform a number of projects, including the Diamond/Field Conversion project and the Field Allocation policy project. The field monitor project was completed in 2015, 2016 and 2018 and information pertaining to Central Park is included below:

2015 - Central Park's court area (including basketball and tennis courts) were visited seven times throughout the summer months. Out of the seven visits, only three visits recorded an average of 6 participants playing basketball, while for tennis only two out of the seven visits recorded an average of 2 participants.

2016 – Central Park's courts were visited twice and one observance was made with 5 participants under the age of 18 using the basketball amenity. No participants were recorded using the tennis amenity.

2018 - Central Park was excluded from the Field Monitor Project as Recreation was informed of construction planned for Summer 2018. As such, the field monitors were not scheduled to observe the park for participants.

## **Surrounding Hard Surfaced Court Amenities Available**

There are four Parks within a 1.5km radius of Central Park that offer a variety of hard surfaced court amenities:

- 1) Victoria Park – three public tennis courts, one multi-purpose or rebound wall, one ball hockey court and one full basketball court
- 2) McLaren Park – one multi-purpose or rebound wall
- 3) HAAA Park – two half basketball courts and eight private tennis courts
- 4) Bennetto Park – one full basketball court and one public tennis court

There is an existing service area overlap for tennis courts, which is why the outdoor study identified the recommendation to remove tennis courts in favour of other amenities.

### **Recommendation**

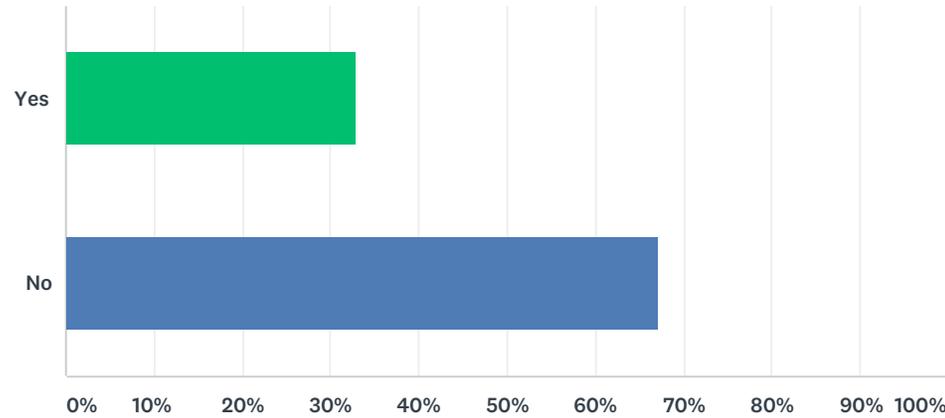
Recreation recommends that a multi-purpose court (i.e. basketball and ball hockey) be developed as part of the Central Park redevelopment project.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at extension 3859.

cc. Dawn Walton, Manager, Business Support

# Q1 The Central Park Plan designates the removal of the tennis courts to be replaced by two enclosed dog parks (small and large). Do you support this plan?

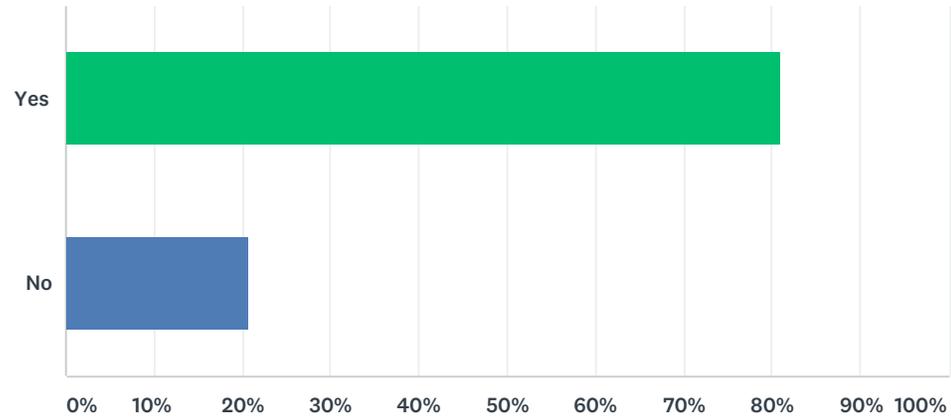
Answered: 61 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	32.79%	20
No	67.21%	41
Total Respondents: 61		

## Q2 Would you like to see a revised Central Park Plan that would include one tennis court and one dog park?

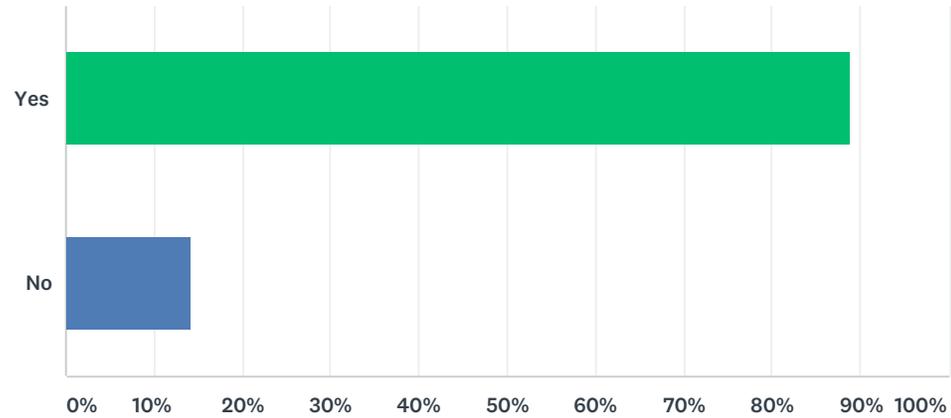
Answered: 63 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	80.95%	51
No	20.63%	13
Total Respondents: 63		

### Q3 The Central Park Plan designates a community garden in the south-west corner of the park. Do you support this placement?

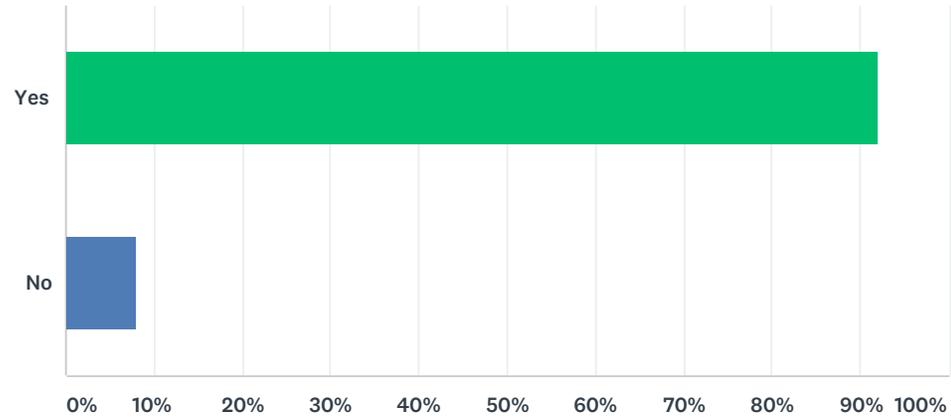
Answered: 63 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	88.89%	56
No	14.29%	9
Total Respondents: 63		

Q4 The Central Park Plan will result in the loss of mature trees particularly in the area of access at Bay and Mulberry streets. Would you like to see a remediation of land that would result in saving areas of the mature landscape?

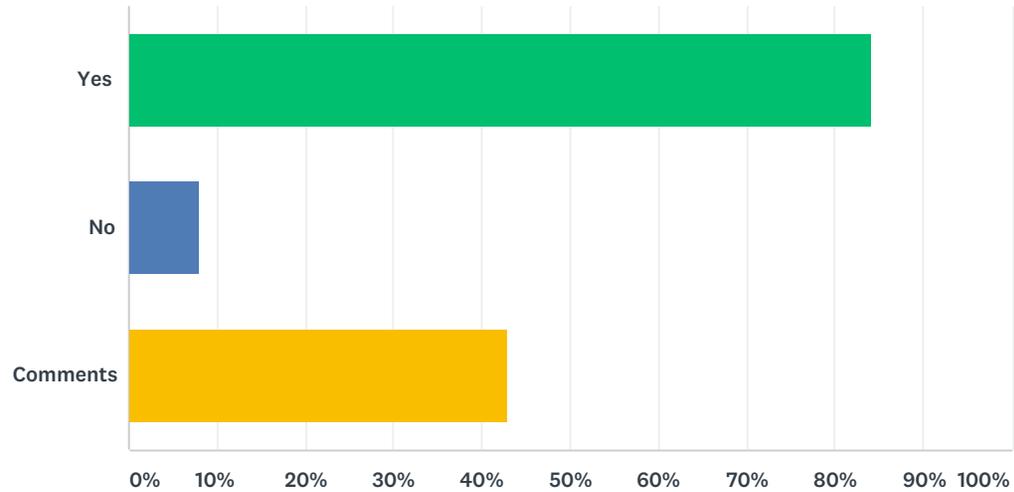
Answered: 63 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	92.06% 58
No	7.94% 5
Total Respondents: 63	

### Q5 The Central Park Plan does not include additional park lighting. Would you like to see additional lighting dispersed throughout the park?

Answered: 63 Skipped: 0



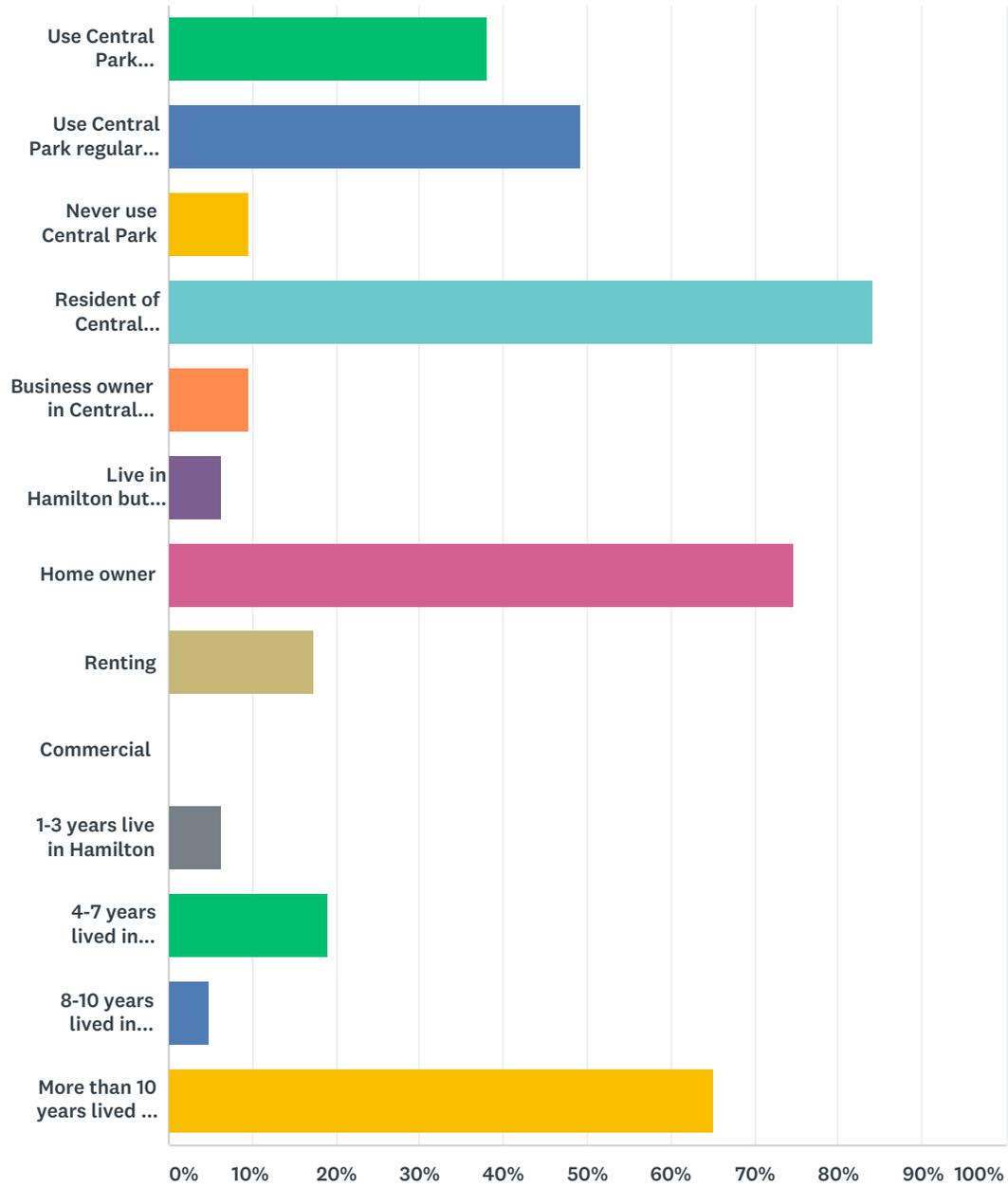
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	84.13%	53
No	7.94%	5
Comments	42.86%	27
Total Respondents: 63		

**Q6 Our neighbourhood is undergoing significant changes and we would like to provide you with an opportunity to make your opinion count. Please let us know if you wish to participate in future surveys. If so please enter your first name and e-mail in the Comments box**

Answered: 60 Skipped: 3

## Q7 Please tell us a little more about you - check all that apply

Answered: 63 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
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## Central Park Re-Development

SurveyMonkey

Use Central Park occasionally (less than once a week)	38.10%	24
Use Central Park regularly (more than once a week)	49.21%	31
Never use Central Park	9.52%	6
Resident of Central Neighbourhood	84.13%	53
Business owner in Central Neighbourhood	9.52%	6
Live in Hamilton but outside of Central Neighbourhood	6.35%	4
Home owner	74.60%	47
Renting	17.46%	11
Commercial	0.00%	0
1-3 years live in Hamilton	6.35%	4
4-7 years lived in Hamilton	19.05%	12
8-10 years lived in Hamilton	4.76%	3
More than 10 years lived in Hamilton	65.08%	41
Total Respondents: 63		