Barrie Waterfront Strategic Plan
Public Information Centre #1
Engagement Summary DRAFT

WHAT WE HEARD

May 2022

What did the community have to say about the Barrie Waterfront?

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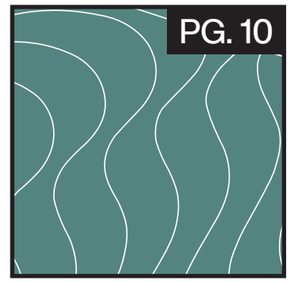
1. Introduction



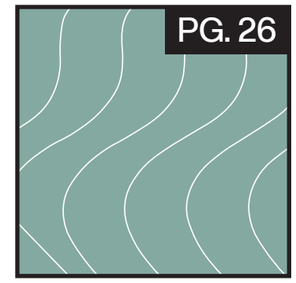
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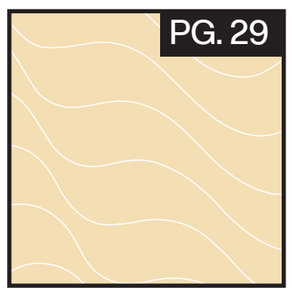
3. Waterfront Use



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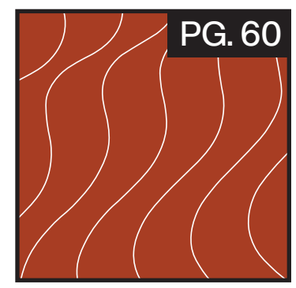
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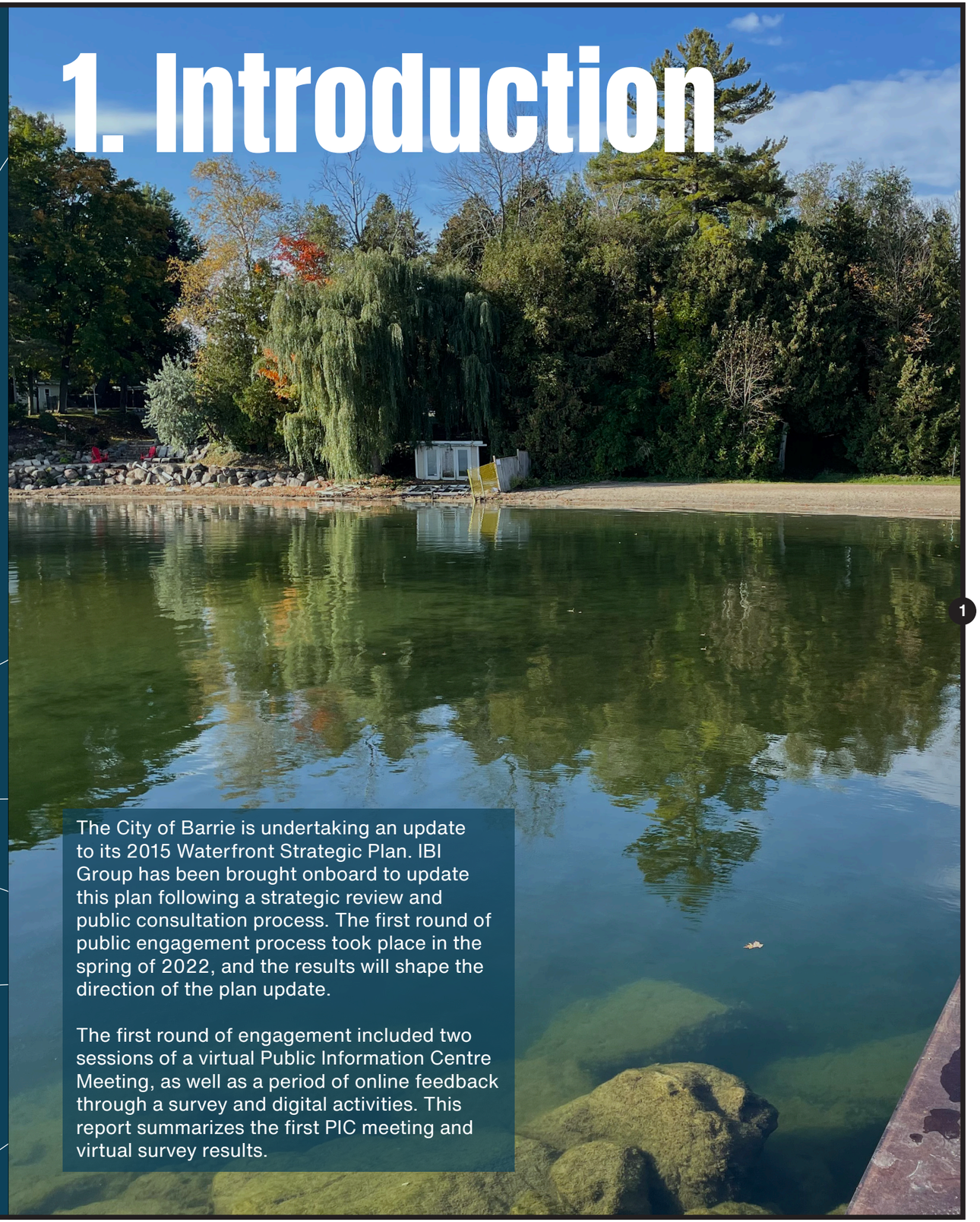


9. Share Your Ideas



10. Next Steps

1. Introduction



The City of Barrie is undertaking an update to its 2015 Waterfront Strategic Plan. IBI Group has been brought onboard to update this plan following a strategic review and public consultation process. The first round of public engagement process took place in the spring of 2022, and the results will shape the direction of the plan update.

The first round of engagement included two sessions of a virtual Public Information Centre Meeting, as well as a period of online feedback through a survey and digital activities. This report summarizes the first PIC meeting and virtual survey results.

Engagement Recap: Public Information Centre Meeting #1

March 24, 2022

2 Sessions:
2:00 – 3:30 PM
6:00 – 7:30 PM

149 Participants

To accommodate the most participants, IBI Group held two sessions of a Zoom PIC, one afternoon and one evening. 149 participants attended between the two sessions.

The project team gave a presentation about the:

- Project purpose,
- Existing design principles,
- The existing strategic plan, and;
- Key objectives.

Voting and prioritization activities were also used to determine:

- Ranking of the existing design principles,
- Ranking of potential new principles

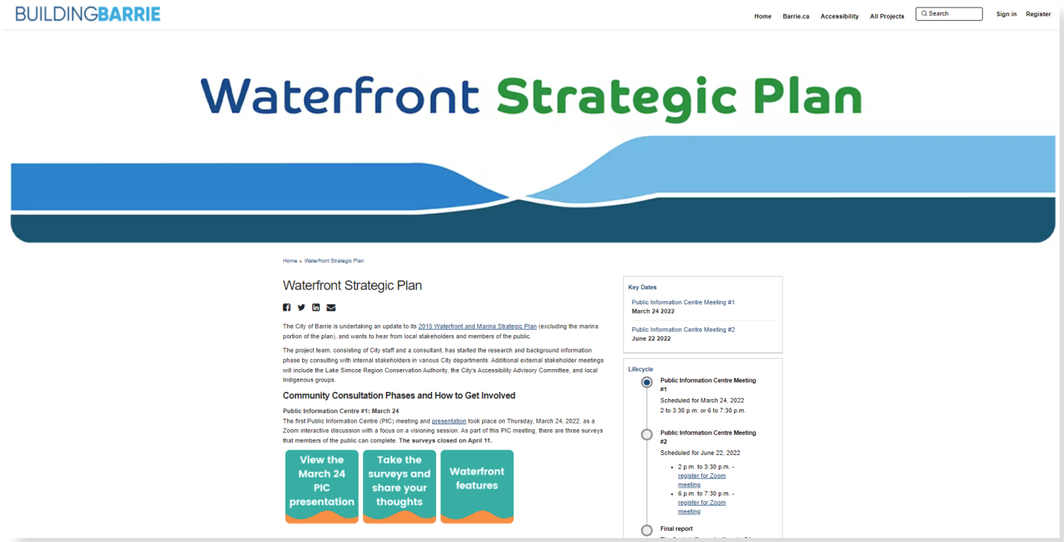
The PIC also used a series of polls to gather information about:

- Participant demographics,
- Relationship to the waterfront,
- Community aspirations for the waterfront.

A final activity used a map to place opportunities & challenges.

Additionally, comments and questions were taken, providing a variety of unstructured feedback.

Engagement Recap: Open Survey



February 16, 2022 - April 11,2022

In addition to the PIC Meetings, a series of surveys were open to the public for input from February 16 – April 11, 2022.

These included the Community Survey, Gains and Pains Survey, and Priorities Survey, as well as an interactive mapping tool to document valued features, challenges, and opportunities.

A “Share Your Ideas” activity was also set up to collect general comments, which were publicly visible.

2. Demographics - PIC Meetings



Participants of the PIC Meetings were polled by Zoom regarding their demographics and relationship to the project. The surveys also gathered information about respondents.

Most participants were Barrie locals and members of the public who live near the waterfront.

PIC Meeting Attendees - General

March 24, 2022

2 Sessions:
2:00 – 3:30 PM
6:00 – 7:30 PM

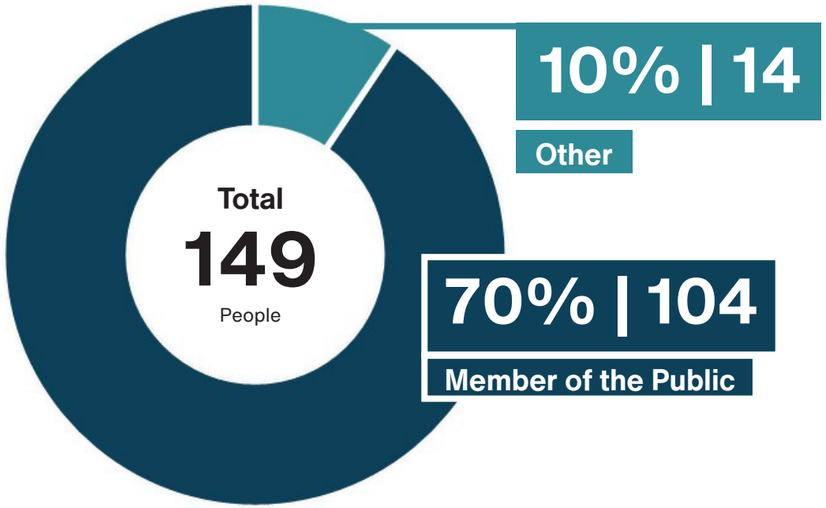
217 Registered
149 Participants

The data below has been aggregated from Zoom attendance reports from both of the PIC meetings, and manually checked for quality control.

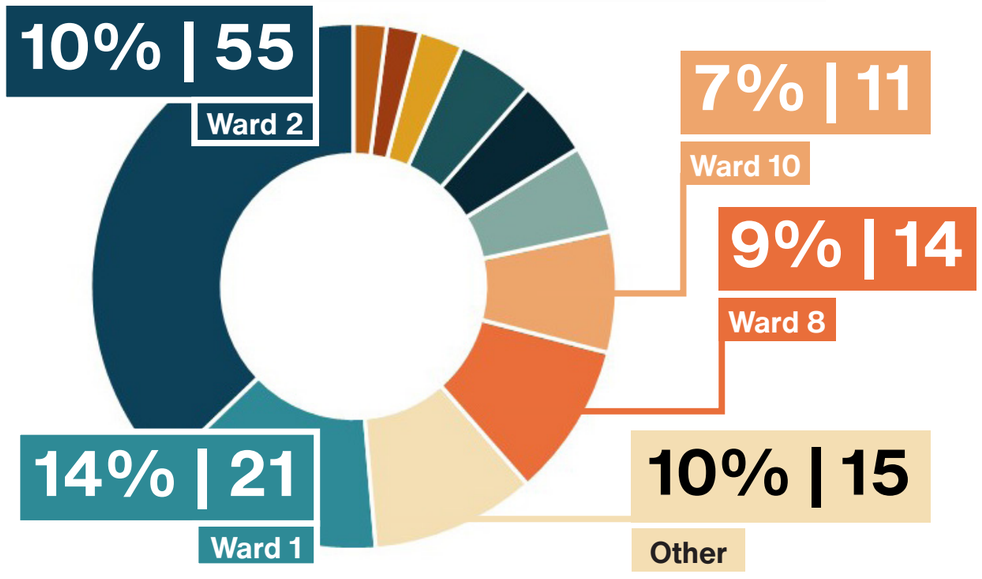
217 people registered to attend one of the two meetings, and 149 people attended.

Of those who attended, 136 (91%) identified themselves as living in Barrie. The remainder were a mix of nearby cities and towns including Markham, Georgina Island, Newmarket, Innisfil, Oro-Medonte, Port Carling, Hillsdale, and Washago.

91% of attendees identified themselves as members of the public, and 14 attendees (9%) identified themselves as “Other.”

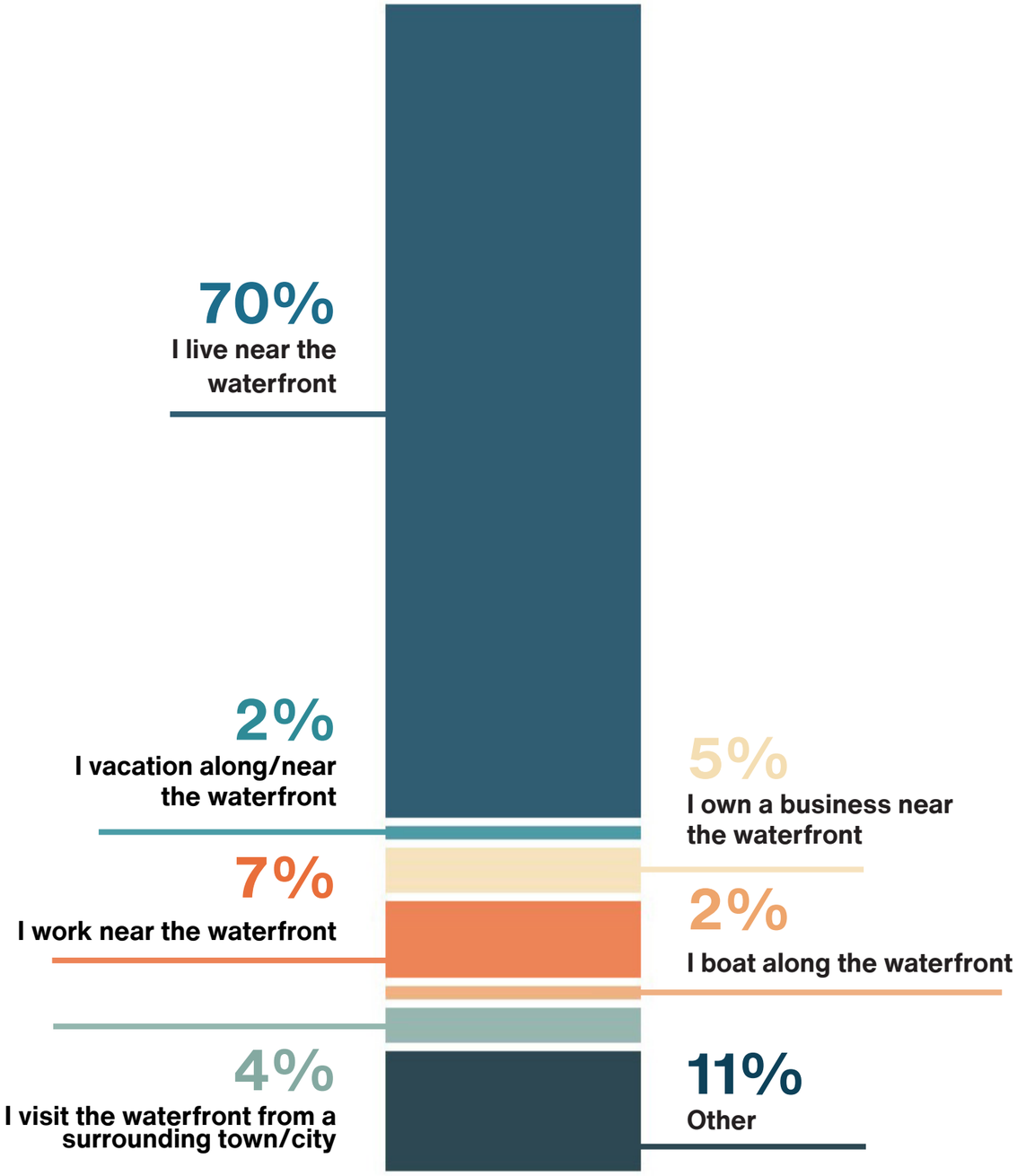


The largest portion of attendees are residents of Ward 2, with 55 participants (37%) self-identifying as residents of Ward 2. This was followed by the second largest portion in Ward 1 with 21 attendees (14%) and Ward 8 was the third largest portion with 14 attendees (9%). 15 people identified themselves as not a resident of Barrie.

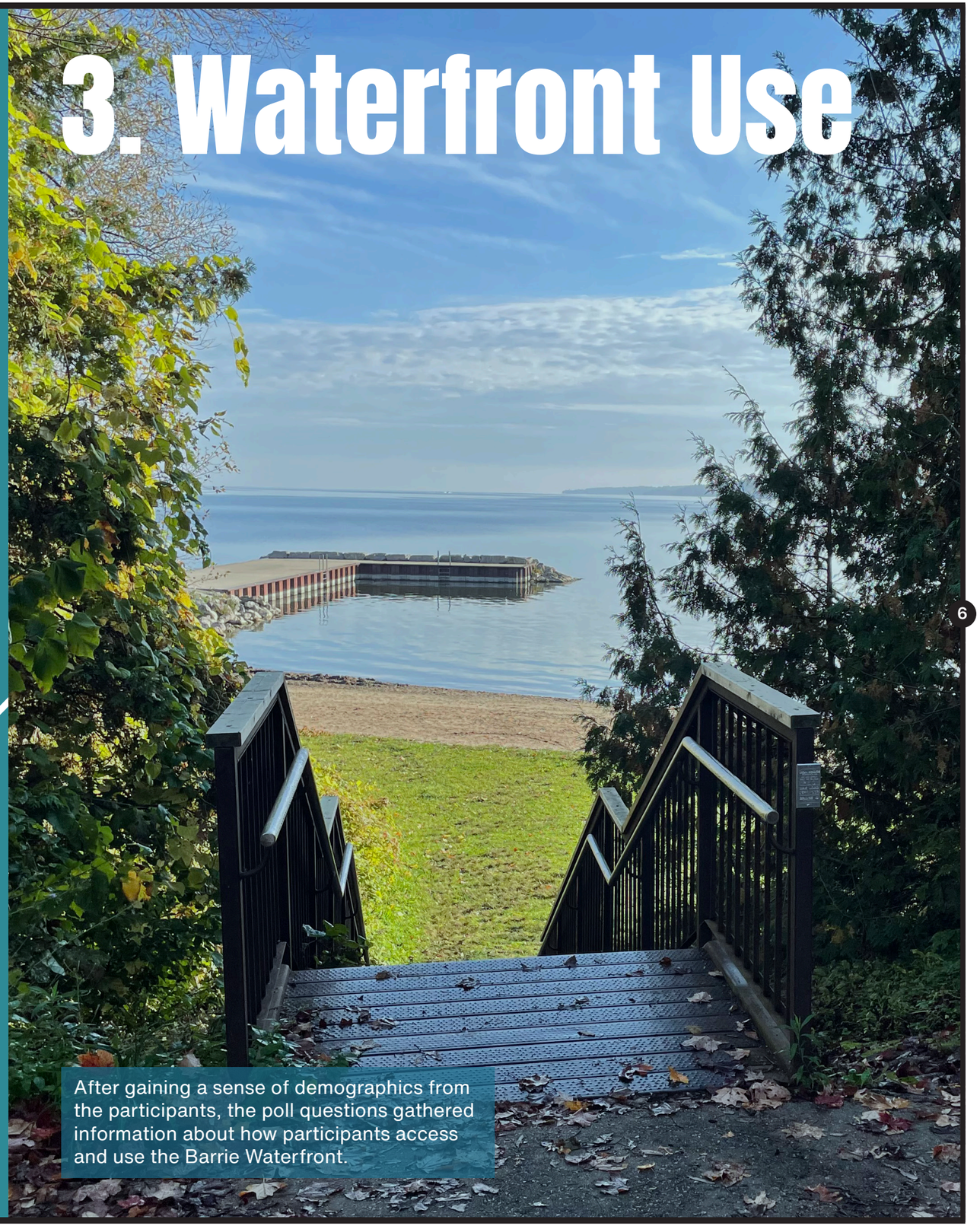


Relationship to Barrie Waterfront

Between both sessions, 112 people responded to the Zoom poll regarding their relationship to the Barrie Waterfront. The majority of respondents (68%) reported that they live near the waterfront.



3. Waterfront Use



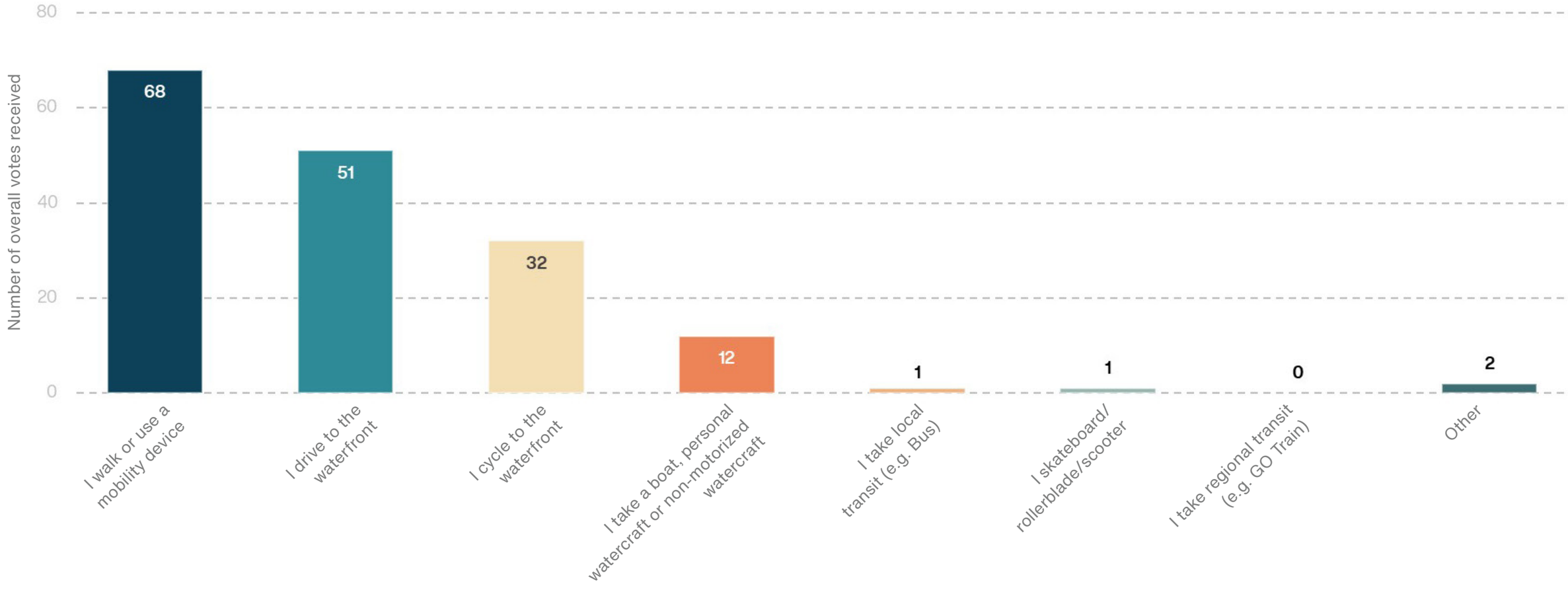
After gaining a sense of demographics from the participants, the poll questions gathered information about how participants access and use the Barrie Waterfront.

Accessing the Waterfront

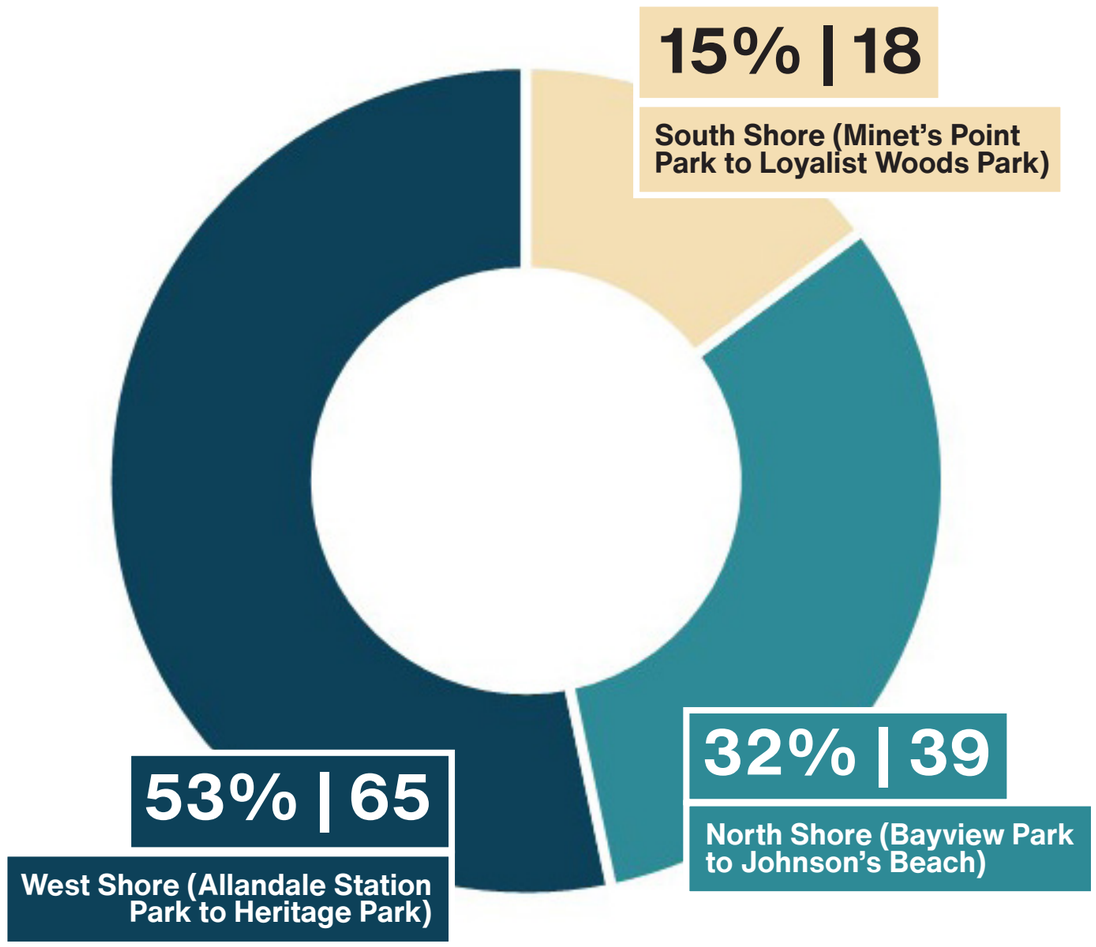
Participants were asked about how they accessed Barrie's waterfront, with the ability to select multiple answers. 103 participants responded, and provided 167 answers for how they access Barrie's waterfront.

Of the 68 respondents who reported that they walk or use a mobility device, half (34) reported that they walk in combination with other methods, such as walking and cycling, walking and driving, or walking and taking a boat.

The majority (66%) of respondents reported that they walk or use a mobility device to access the waterfront, followed by drivers (49%) and cyclists (31%).



Waterfront Areas



In the third poll, most participants reported that they frequent the west (central) shore most often, followed by the north shore and south shore. The west (central) shore was shown to be 65% more popular than the north shore, and 3.5 times more popular than the south shore.

In addition to the Zoom poll, the chat provided more insight into the usage in different areas. A respondent reported that their usage of the different areas changes throughout the year, that the north shore is used more often in winter, and that the west shore is cleared of snow more frequently in winter.

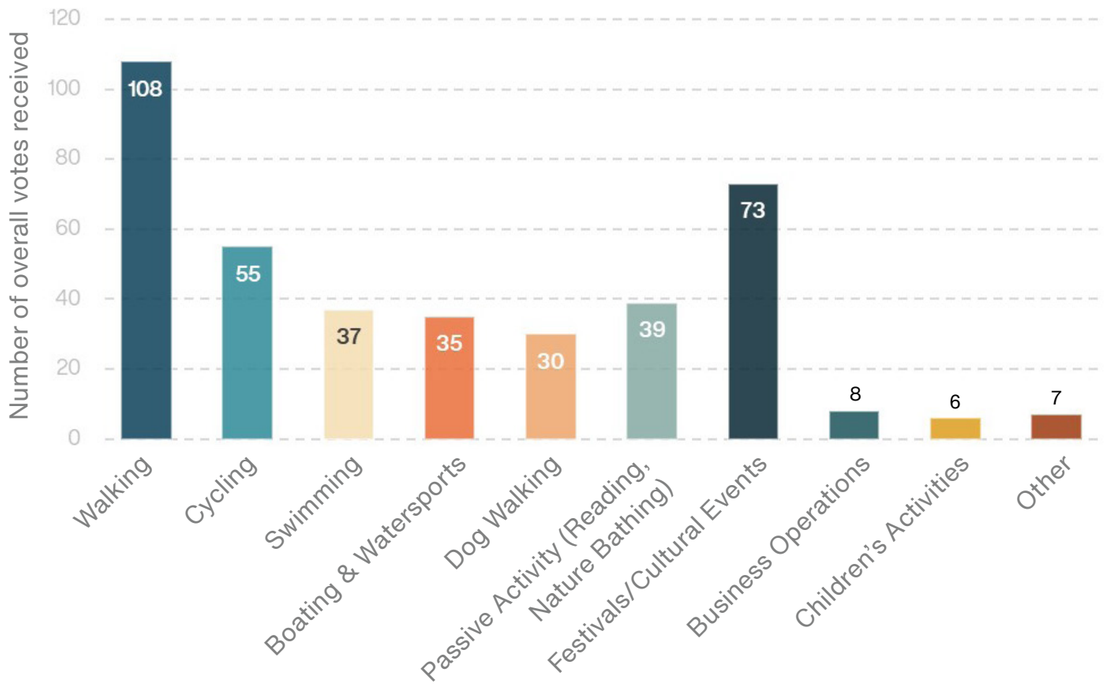
Waterfront Activities - Summer

Waterfront activities were categorized by summer and winter activities, participants could respond with multiple answers about how they use the Barrie Waterfront in each season. For the summer activities category, 120 respondents answered, and each chose between 1-9 activities that they participated in on the Barrie Waterfront, reporting a total of 398 distinct summer activities in total.

85% of respondents reported that they participated in more than one activity on the Barrie Waterfront. Walking was the most popular activity, with 90% of respondents reporting that they walk along the Barrie Waterfront. The second most popular activity reported was Festivals & Cultural Events (60% of respondents), followed by Cycling and Fitness Activities (46% of respondents).

In addition to the poll data, some comments in the Zoom chat also provided more information about how participants use the area in the summer. Additional activities noted by participants in the chat are:

- ↗ Picnics and family gatherings
- ↗ Youth organization meeting place for organized activities
- ↗ Youth sailing program
- ↗ Photography

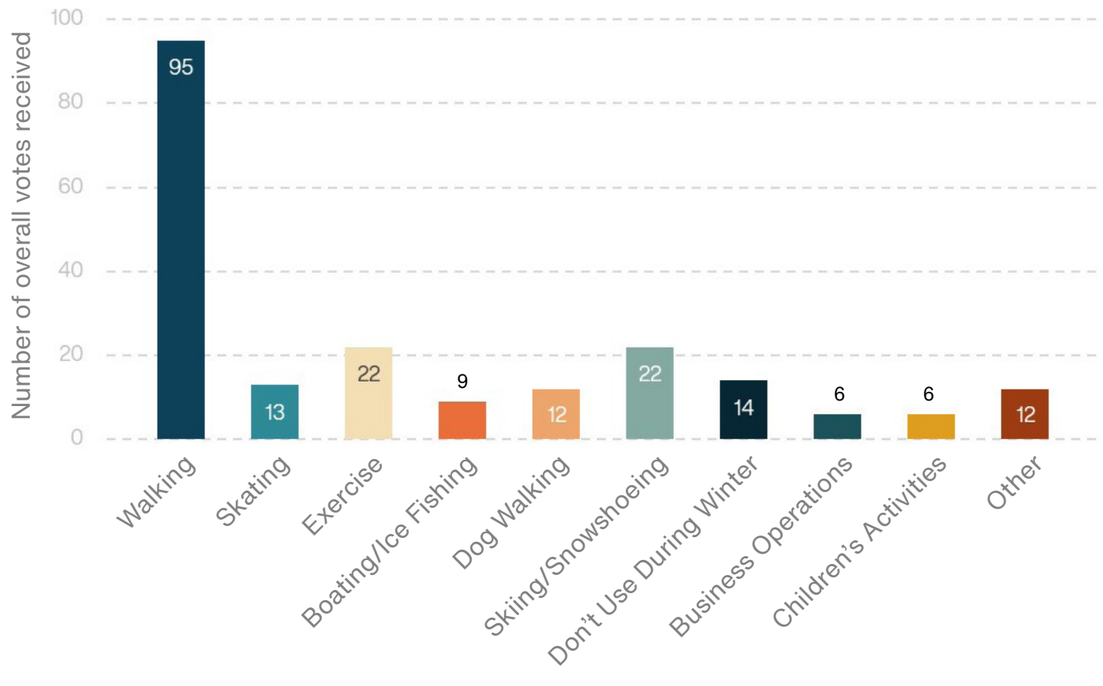


Waterfront Activities - Winter

Slightly fewer participants (115) responded about the winter activities poll. Only 211, or approximately half of the total number of activities were reported in the winter than in the summer. 39% of respondents reported that they participated in only one activity in the winter, significantly more than the 15% of people who participated in only one activity in the summer. As with summer, walking was the most popular activity, but by a much wider margin. This was followed by a tie between exercise (personal fitness, running) and skiing/ snowshoeing, each with 19% of respondents reporting that they participate in these activities.

In addition to the poll data, some comments in the Zoom chat also provided more information about how participants use the area in the winter. Additional activities noted by participants in the chat are:

- ↗ Cycling in the winter
- ↗ Dog walking in the winter
- ↗ Year-round family or group gatherings



4. Community Aspirations



After the polls asking about the participant's demographics and current uses, the questions and activities switched to future-oriented, aspirational exercises to determine what the community's vision is for the Barrie Waterfront.

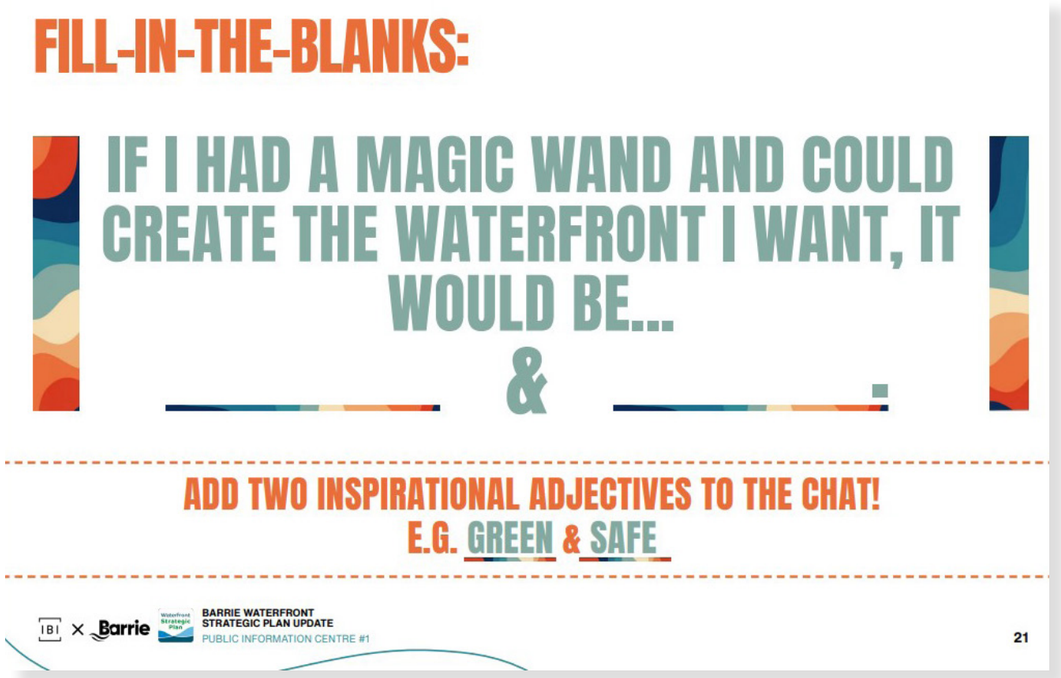
Fill-in-the-Blanks

Over 150 community aspirations were recorded between the two sessions. The most common were:

1. Green
2. Safe
3. Clean
4. Vibrant
5. Accessible
6. Inclusive/ Welcoming
7. Diverse Activities

The “Green” category includes adjectives that reflected a park that is biodiverse, naturalized, sustainable, offers scenic views, and includes trees and plantings.

Other clusters and groupings of adjectives also became apparent, including a desire for arts, culture & high quality design, amenities such as seating and shade, peacefulness and quiet, connectivity, and a desire for retail and restaurant offerings.



WHAT WE HEARD - COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

"Increase biodiversity so there are lots of food sources for our bird and bees"

"Foundation should be clean and safe. Anything and everything can build off of that"

"Keep doing what has been started - wheelchair accessible picnic tables, permanent shade umbrellas, etc."

"Perhaps changing certain areas from time to time"

"Nature oriented with views of water"

"Animated and unique"

"Green and accessible year round."

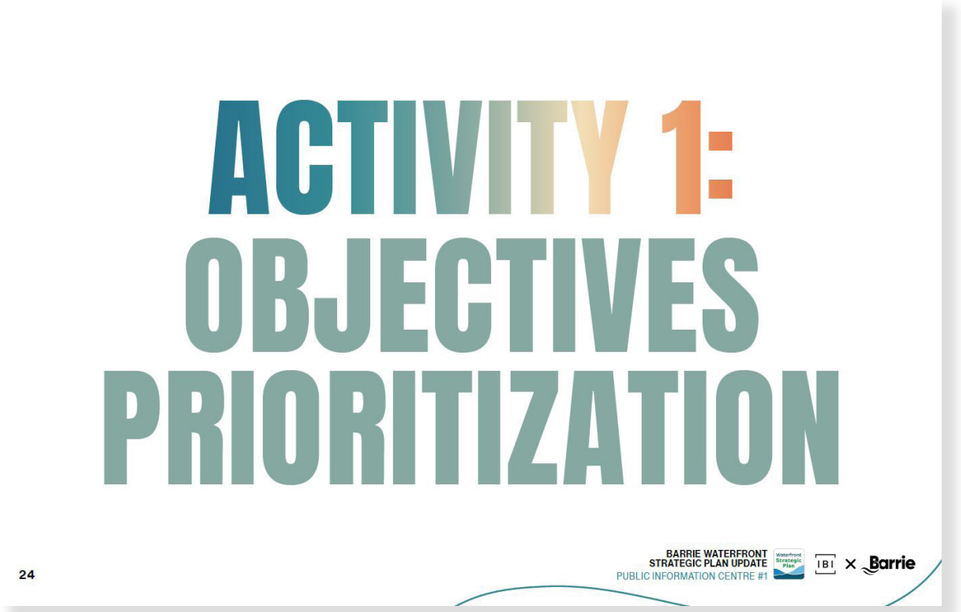
"Clean and safe and inclusive"

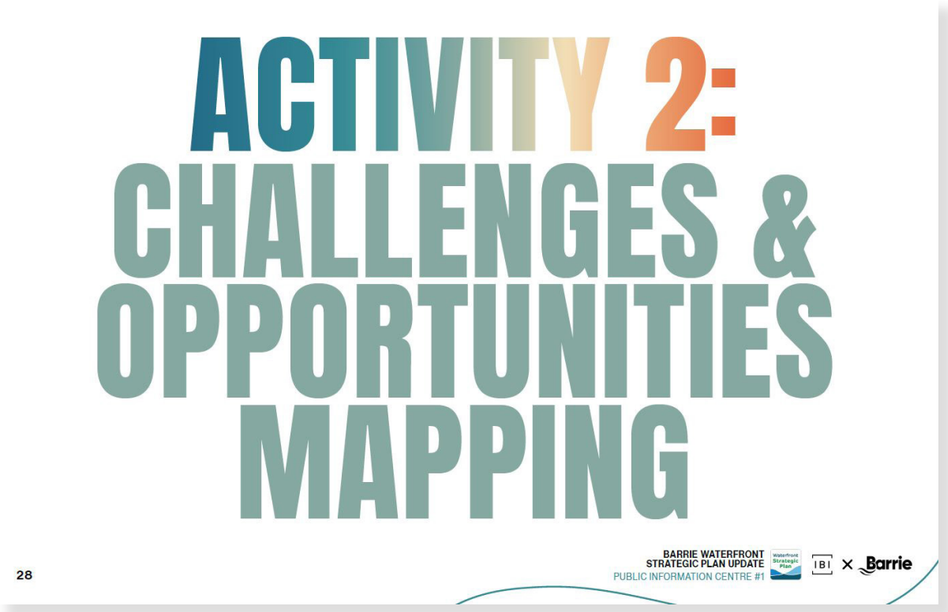
"Welcoming and well used"

Digital Canvas Activities

The workshops continued with two “digital canvas” activities on Mural: an Objectives Prioritization activity using voting with green dots (value) and red dots (not relevant), and a Challenges & Opportunities Mapping exercise. Both activities included participant involvement, either by directly moving and placing dots and game pieces, or by typing in their preferences and having a staff member complete the activity for them.

The results of the two Mural activities can be found here: tinyurl.com/2p8pfn9m and tinyurl.com/mtfsx956





Activity #1: Design Principles

For the first activity included a prioritization of the existing City of Barrie principles, as well as draft new principles.

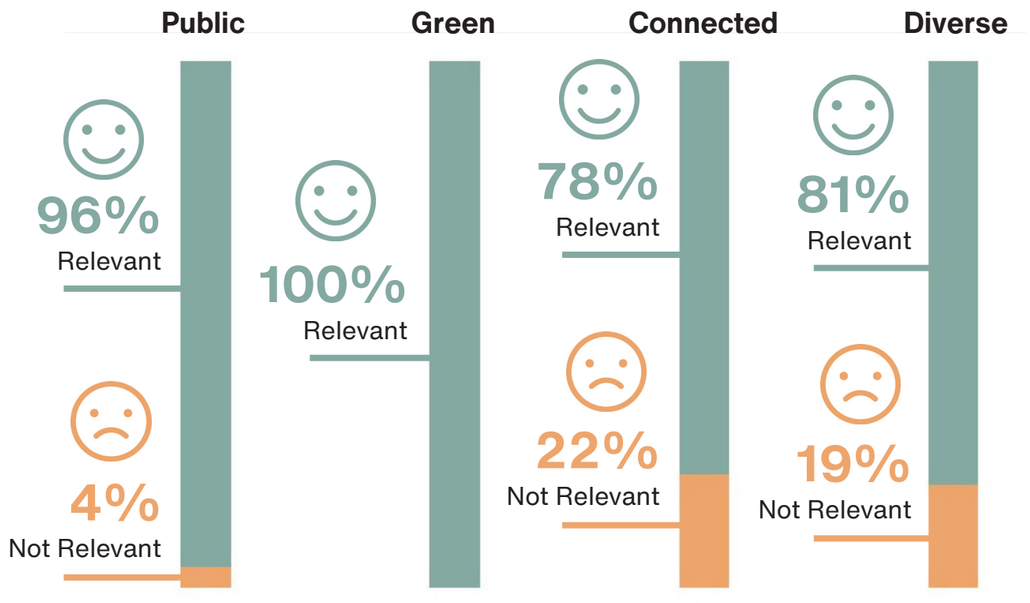
Top Ranked Existing Principles:

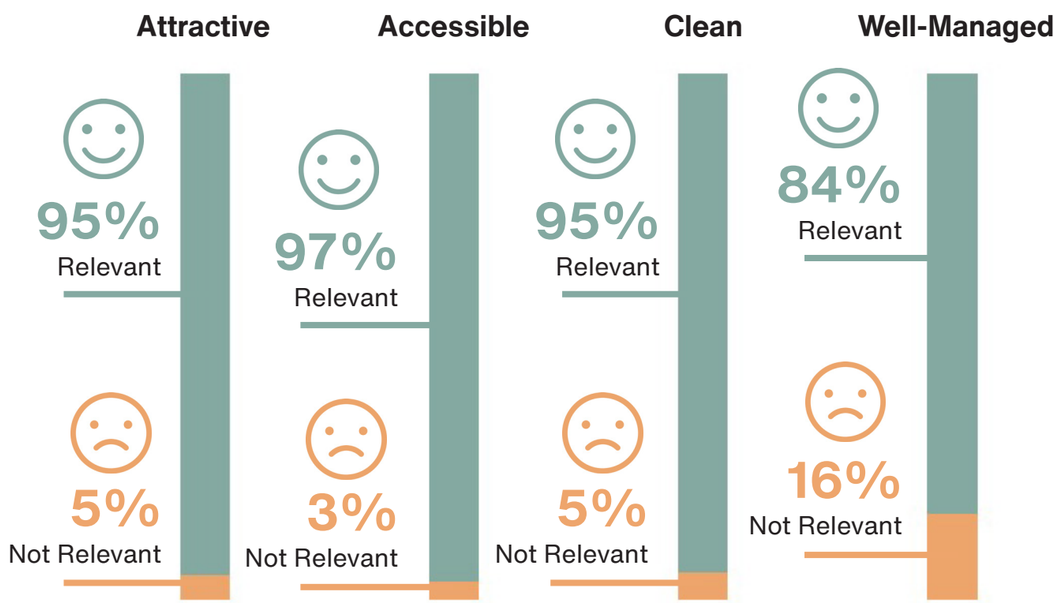
1. Clean
2. Green
3. Connected & Attractive

Existing Principles Ranked Least Relevant:

1. Connected
2. Well-Managed
3. Diverse

When ranking the existing principles, “Clean” was by far the most valued, followed by “Green.” “Connected” and “Attractive” tied for third most valuable, though “Connected” had 11 “Not Relevant” votes, and “Attractive” only had two. The principle with the lowest value by votes was “Public,” though “Diverse” came in second lowest, with seven “Not Relevant” votes.





Activity #1: Design Principles

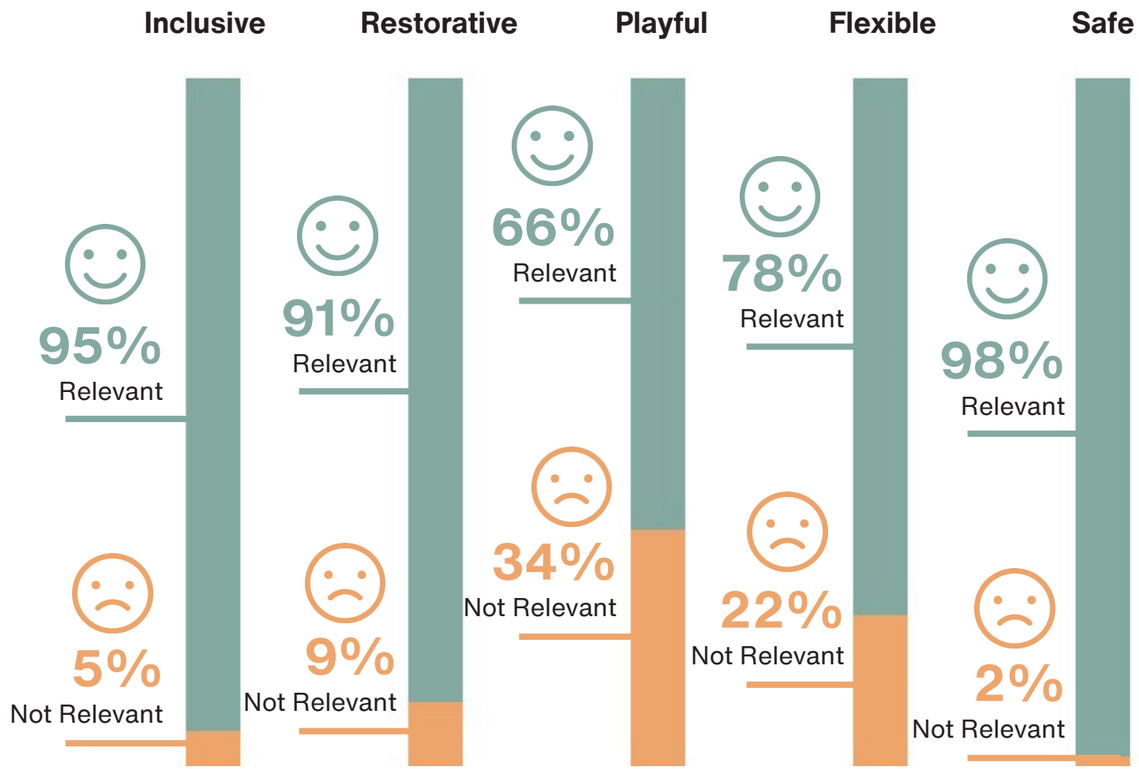
Top Ranked Potential New Principles:

1. Safe
2. Restorative
3. Playful & Flexible

Potential New Principles Ranked Least Relevant:

1. Playful
2. Flexible
3. Restorative

Participants were also asked to prioritize potential new principles. “Safe” received more votes than any other by more than double. The next in order of value were “Restorative”, “Playful”, “Flexible”, and “Inclusive” was ranked last. Two principles appeared to be divisive - 50% as many participants found the principle “Playful” not relevant to them as people who valued it most, and 25% as many participants found “Flexible” not relevant to them as people who valued it most.



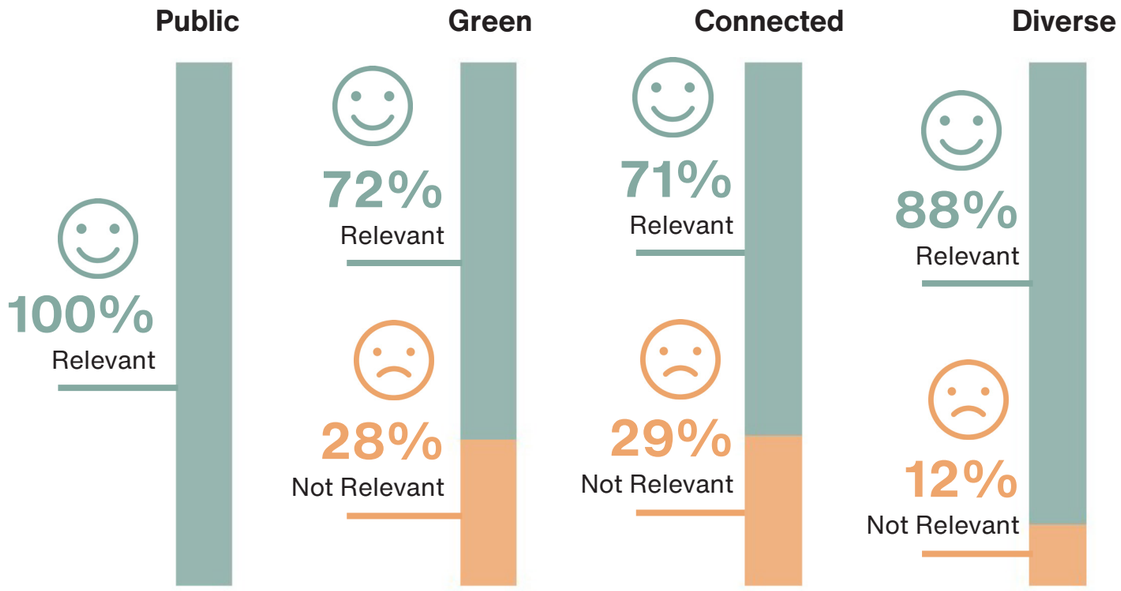
Activity #1: Design Principles

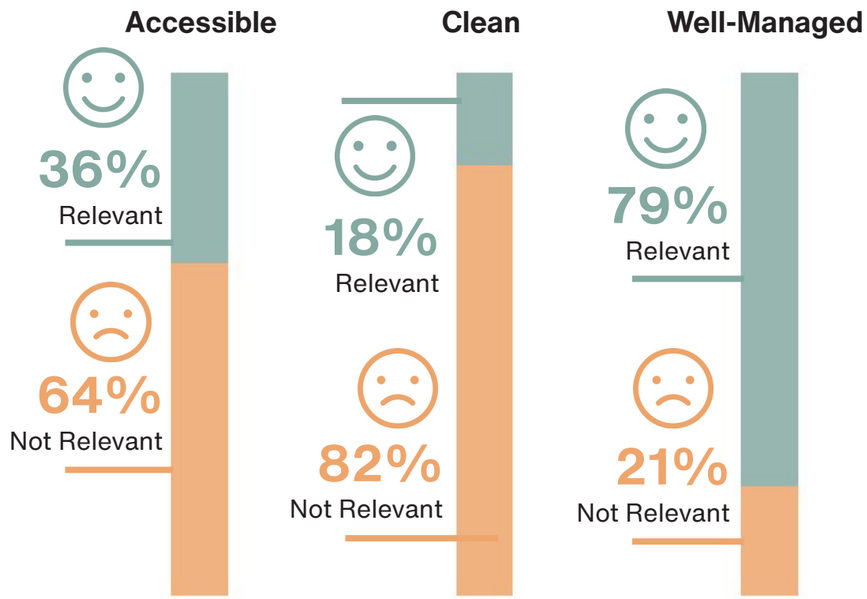
In addition to the predetermined potential new principles, a set of “Community Principles” was created based on the comments and conversations in each of the meeting sessions.

The ranking of these principles showed a strong preference for “Year-Round/ Seasonal,” followed in second place by “Animated/Cultural” then “Age-Friendly,” “Picturesque” and “Family Oriented.” Some Community Principles showed a higher number of “Not Relevant” votes than “Most Valued” votes, including “Affordable” and “Animal Friendly.”

These reflected the adjectives suggested for the community aspirations. In Session 1, the principles presented were:

- ↗ Year-Round/Seasonal
- ↗ Picturesque
- ↗ Family Oriented
- ↗ Age Friendly
- ↗ Animal Friendly
- ↗ Affordable
- ↗ Animated/Cultural





Activity #1: Design Principles

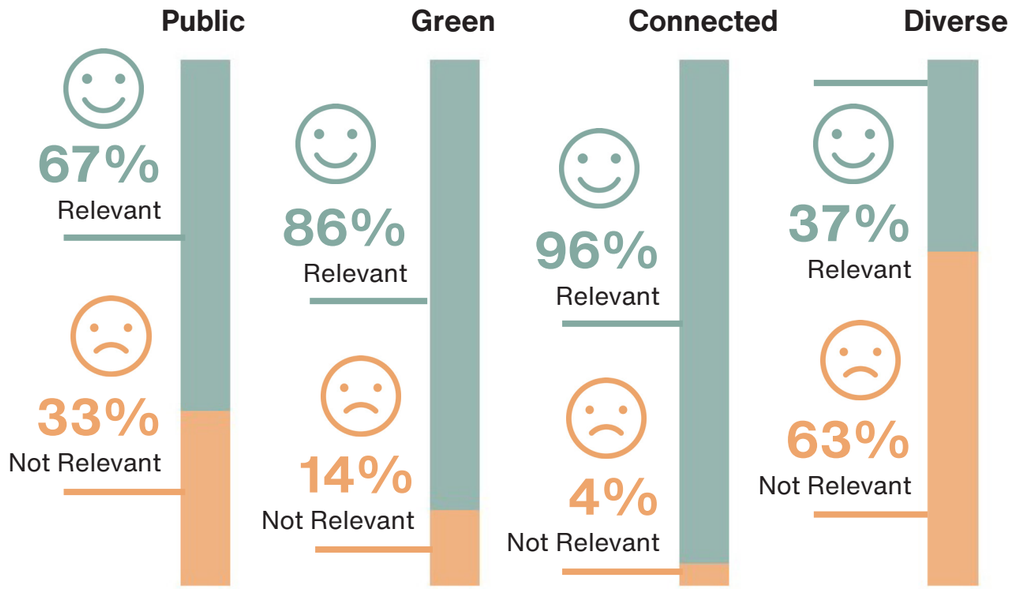
In Session 2, the principles presented were:

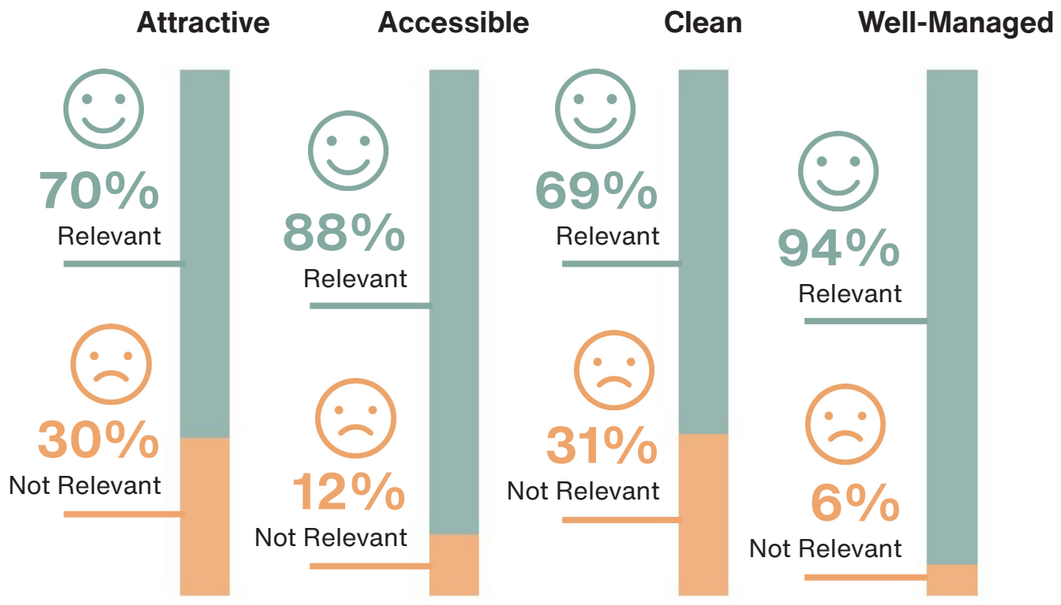
- ↗ Inviting
- ↗ Age-Friendly
- ↗ Naturalized/Pollinators
- ↗ Iconic/World-Class
- ↗ Dog-Friendly
- ↗ All-Seasons
- ↗ Active
- ↗ Scenic/Serene/Quiet

The ranking of these principles showed a strong preference for “Naturalized/ Pollinators,” “Dog Friendly,” “Scenic/ Serene/Quiet,” “All-Seasons” and “Age-Friendly.” Similar amounts of votes for “Value Most” and “Not Relevant” for “Iconic/World-Class” suggests that this principle is polarizing.

Community Principles that aligned between the two sessions were:

- ↗ Year-Round/All Seasons
- ↗ Animal/Dog Friendly
- ↗ Age Friendly
- ↗ Active/Animated





Activity #2: Challenges and Opportunities Insights

The second digital canvas activity and final activity of each session was a map-based Challenges and Opportunities plan. This included a brainstorm of ideas for the Barrie Waterfront space, and opened up a conversation about the ideas and intentions.

Some general comments that were heard from participants that apply outside of the identified activities and areas are:

Opportunities

- Opportunity to improve connectivity between downtown and waterfront
- Opportunity to improve connectivity between destinations along the waterfront
- Opportunity to improve amenities along the waterfront trail including seating comfort and lighting
- Clean, accessible, year-round washrooms are desired
- Opportunity to introduce new accessibility options integrated into waterfront activities, such as a wheelchair ramp into the waterway

Mixed Responses

- A desire both for dog-friendly and dog-free park and beach areas, including off-leash areas
- A desire for both waterfront dining and food options, as well as commercial-free public spaces
- A desire for both conserving the waterfront for Barrie locals and promoting the Barrie waterfront as a regional destination were expressed

Challenges

- Vehicle traffic causes safety, connectivity, and crowding issues
- Protection of Lake Simcoe's water quality from storm run-off and other threats
- Providing enough natural shade and tree cover for beachgoers in the summer
- Lack of protection for pedestrians and walkers
- Noise and safety concerns regarding power boats and jet skis

Ideas

- More non-motorized boat activities and small boat activities
- Amphitheatre along the waterfront (similar to Sudbury's Bell Park)
- Utilizing heritage buildings such as Sea Cadet Place and the train station
- Activities on barges – such as seasonal waterfront dining
- Closing some roads to traffic for pedestrian and cyclist use on weekends
- Interactive QR Code story or history telling of Indigenous History along the shore
- Holiday market
- Observation tower
- Connection to Ole Serendipity for non boat owners
- A splash pad

Activity #2: Challenges and Opportunities Insights

Quotes – What Works Now

"The pathways along the waterfront are kept clear of snow in the winter, which is much appreciated! Many locals use these pathways daily."

"I love all the flowers, the exercise machines that have been installed, the new umbrellas over benches and picnic table."

"Kudos to the Lakeshore park staff! This area is the jewel of Barrie."

Quotes – What Needs Improving in General

"Significant issues with lack of food facilities in most places along the waterfront. Policies that encourage food trucks and small vendors in a variety of areas (rather than licensing a few vendors in the Centennial Beach/Marina area) would be helpful."

"I totally feel that unless you experience the parks in all four seasons you should not be planning. Summer and Winter are very different in the ebb and flow There has been no mention of the Elephant in the room Lakeshore Dr. that is used as a main artery and with the roadway that was installed has created a very dangerous situation for those parking. Ambulance is a concern with the design of the roadway."

"The water treatment plant is essential for the city but it's also an eyesore along the waterfront. One suggestion would be to plant mature coniferous trees along the boulevard in front of the plant. They would also help purify the air."

"The main beach area needs a simple water fountain, and dog/pet water station."

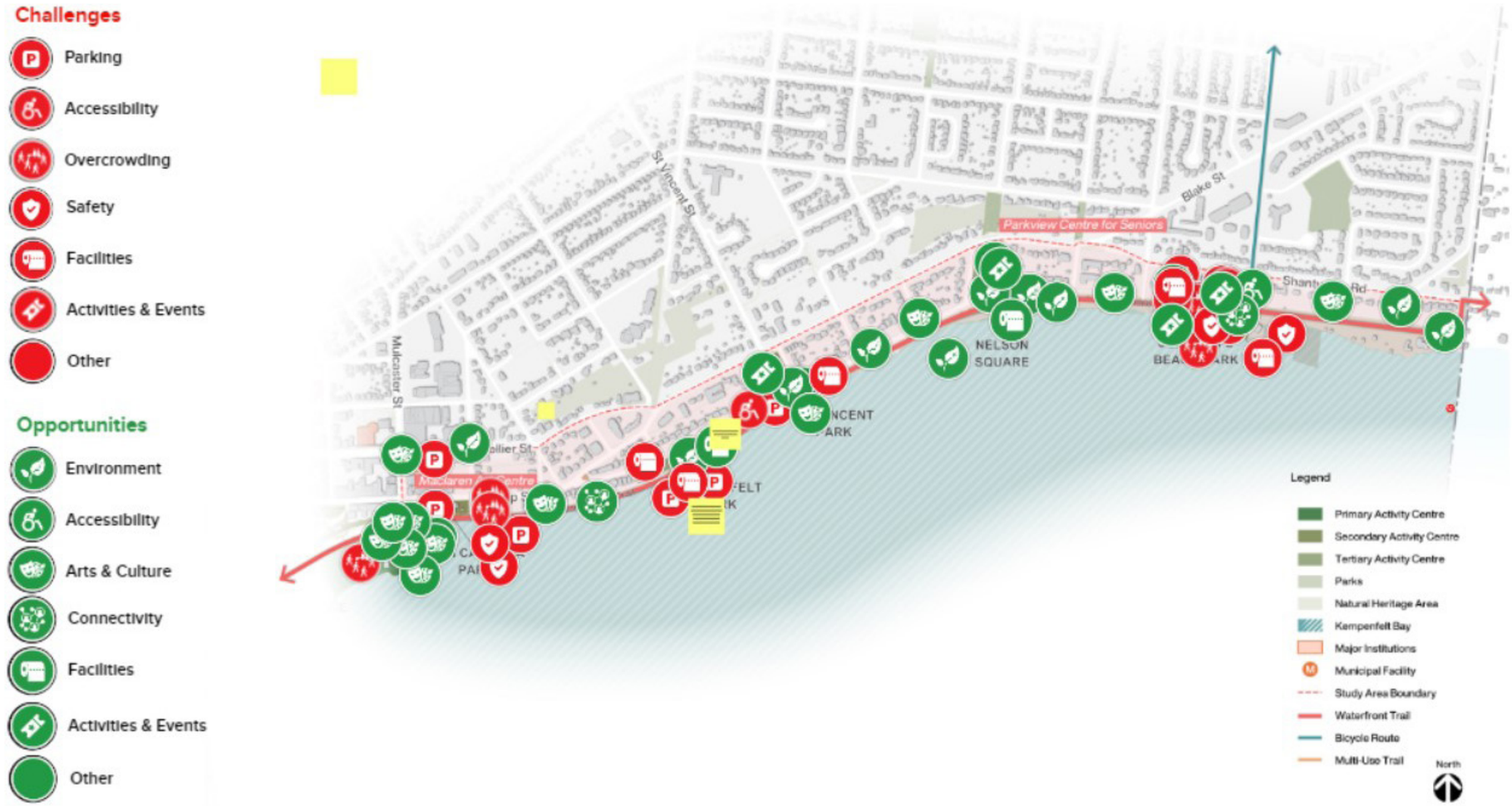
"I think we have to be careful not confuse a waterfront setting with a downtown concept. The major draw of the water is its natural beauty and peacefulness. I think it would be a mistake to overdevelop what is a natural attraction - do we need full service restaurants, entertainment and service centres at every green space of the waterfront? Don't lose site of what draws most people to the water - its NATURAL beauty. We need to improve tree canopy and work on the shoreline in conjunction with Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority. The pollution in the lake and along the shoreline is increasing and partly contributed to by the sheer numbers of people that balloon on our summer weekends. Thank you"

"Some great ideas...and truly look forward to preserving and enabling the waterfront to be part of our Barrie - for all to enjoy in years to come."

"Parks like Tyndall have shifted from essential space for local children to an overflow for the west shore... in what is fundamentally a family area"

Challenges & Opportunities - North Shore

In the North Shore Study Area, the most predominant Challenge flagged was Parking, which was the only issued identified all parks and areas. The next most identified issues were safety and facilities, followed by accessibility and overcrowding. The most issues were identified at Johnson's Beach Park, where overcrowding and parking were most identified. The most common opportunities identified overall were environmental improvements in all areas. Arts & culture and activities & events were the next most commonly identified opportunities on the North Shore, particularly at Sam Cancilla Park, though throughout the entire area as well.



Challenges & Opportunities - North Shore

"Lack of access/stairs/ramps from path to street"

"Can't get to the path without walking through a ditch"

"The parking spaces along Kempenfelt drive is always taken up by out of towners in the summer time weekends, bringing with them their bbq's. There are no parking meters."

"Parking on one side of street only please- both sides creates overcrowding and unfair to residents"

"North Shore at Johnson Beach overcrowding, and unsafe"

"The Tiffin boat launch requires attention on the pier structure. Additionally, signage to indicate "into the water" and "off the water" lanes to avoid confusion and parking snarls while prepping boats for launch and travel."

Challenges

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Overcrowding
- Safety
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other

Opportunities

- Environment
- Accessibility
- Arts & Culture
- Connectivity
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other



Challenges & Opportunities - West Shore

In the West Shore Study Area, the most common challenge identified was safety, particularly at Heritage Park, followed by Overcrowding and Parking, particularly at Centennial Park. Centennial Park was identified with the most challenges overall. The most common opportunity identified was environmental improvements, which were identified in all areas of the West Shore. The second most identified opportunity was arts & culture, which was also prevalent across the West Shore area, particularly concentrating at Spirit Catcher Park, South Shore Park and Centennial Park.

Challenges

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Overcrowding
- Safety
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other

Opportunities

- Environment
- Accessibility
- Arts & Culture
- Connectivity
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other



Challenges & Opportunities - West Shore

"Connect to Farmers Market"

"Lack of food options"

"Lakeshore drive too narrow for on road parking."

"More trees are needed. A few were removed from Centennial Beach and have not been replaced. Watching the people at the beach, they collect under the few trees that are left as the sun is quite hot. those that want sun go to the sand beach."

"Lake water quality for swimming at Centennial Park and Tyndale Park."

"More parking is needed for the west shore. How about opening up parking on Bradford Street since it is not too far from the bay."

Challenges

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Overcrowding
- Safety
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other

Opportunities

- Environment
- Accessibility
- Arts & Culture
- Connectivity
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other



Challenges & Opportunities - South Shore

The least amount of challenges were identified on the South Shore overall. Overcrowding and parking were identified as the most common challenges, particularly at Minet's Point Park and Wilkins and Loyalist Parks. The biggest opportunities identified were environmental improvements at all parks and areas along the South Shore. The Gables Park was identified as having the most opportunities for improvement, including arts & culture, facilities, and connectivity in addition to environmental improvements.

Challenges

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Overcrowding
- Safety
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other

Opportunities

- Environment
- Accessibility
- Arts & Culture
- Connectivity
- Facilities
- Activities & Events



Challenges & Opportunities - South Shore

"Adding bathroom near the parking on hurst or near the beach and picnic pavilion"

Challenges

- Parking
- Accessibility
- Overcrowding
- Safety
- Facilities
- Activities & Events
- Other

Opportunities

- Environment
- Accessibility
- Arts & Culture
- Connectivity
- Facilities
- Activities & Events



5. Online Engagement Surveys



The “Building Barrie” Online Engagement for the Waterfront Strategic Plan, hosted by Bang the Table, was live from February 16 to April 11, 2022. The online engagement included three surveys and one interactive mapping activity.

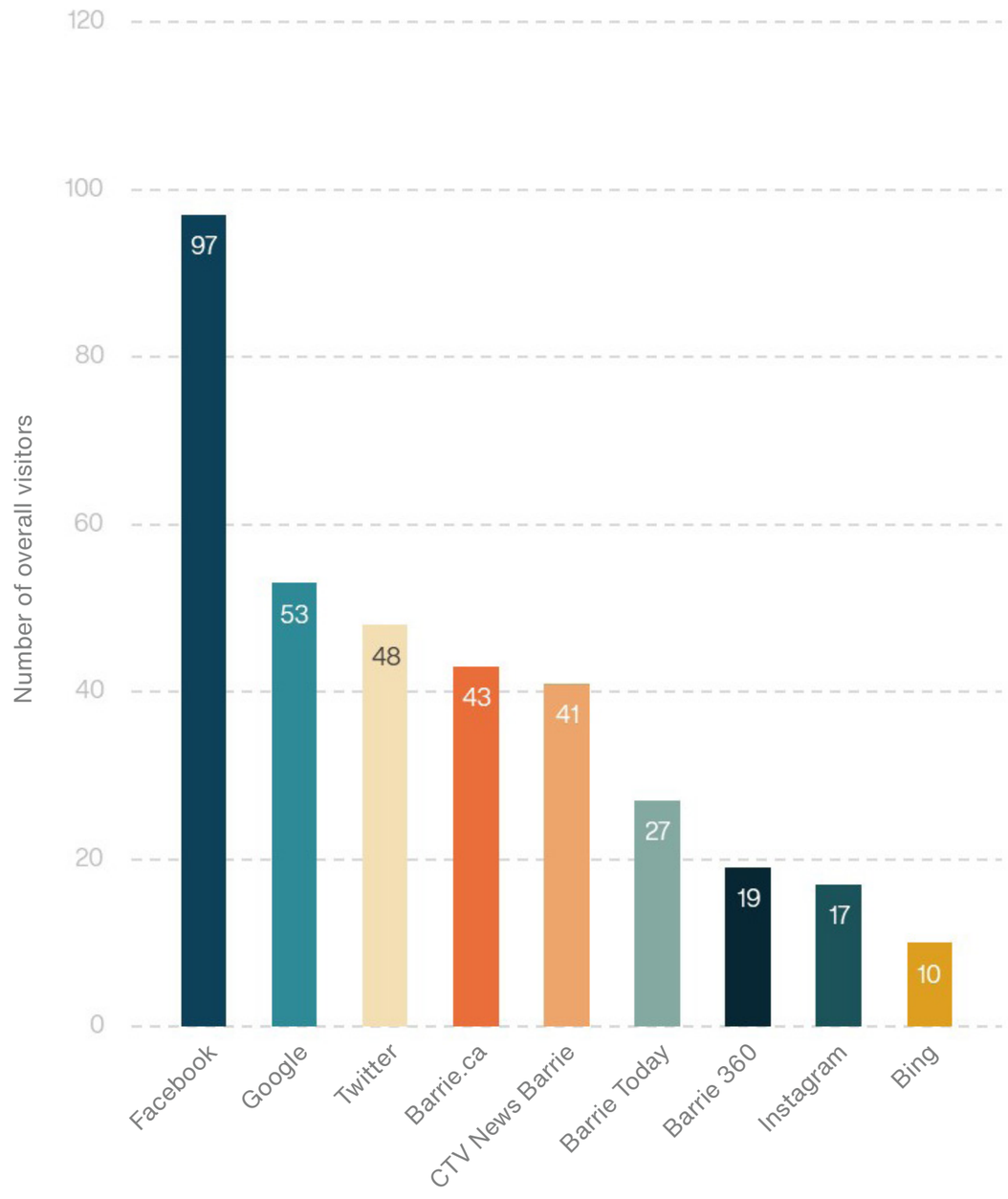
Information was also provided and shared through the digital engagement platform. The PIC Meeting Presentation was downloaded 100 times by 85 visitors.

Overall Summary

In that time, the site saw approximately **1,200 visits.** Of those:

- ↗ **193 (16%)** were "**Engaged Participants**," meaning that they participated in surveys and contributed ideas in the interactive activities;
- ↗ **373 (31%)** were "**Informed Participants**," meaning that they viewed photos, downloaded a document, visited information pages; and,
- ↗ **774 (64%)** were "**Aware Participants**," meaning that they visited at least one page.

Visitors to the online engagement platform were referred from a variety of other websites, most commonly Facebook followed by Google and Twitter.



Survey & Activities Summary

- 151 submissions were made to the three surveys from 93 contributors. The Community Survey received 65 fills, the Priorities Survey received 46 fills, and the Gains and Pains Survey received 34 fills.

- The Community Survey Received 65 fills, the Priorities Survey Received 46 fills, and the Gains and Pains Survey received 34 fills.

- The Valued Features, Challenges and Opportunities Mapping activity was not well used, with only one contributor.

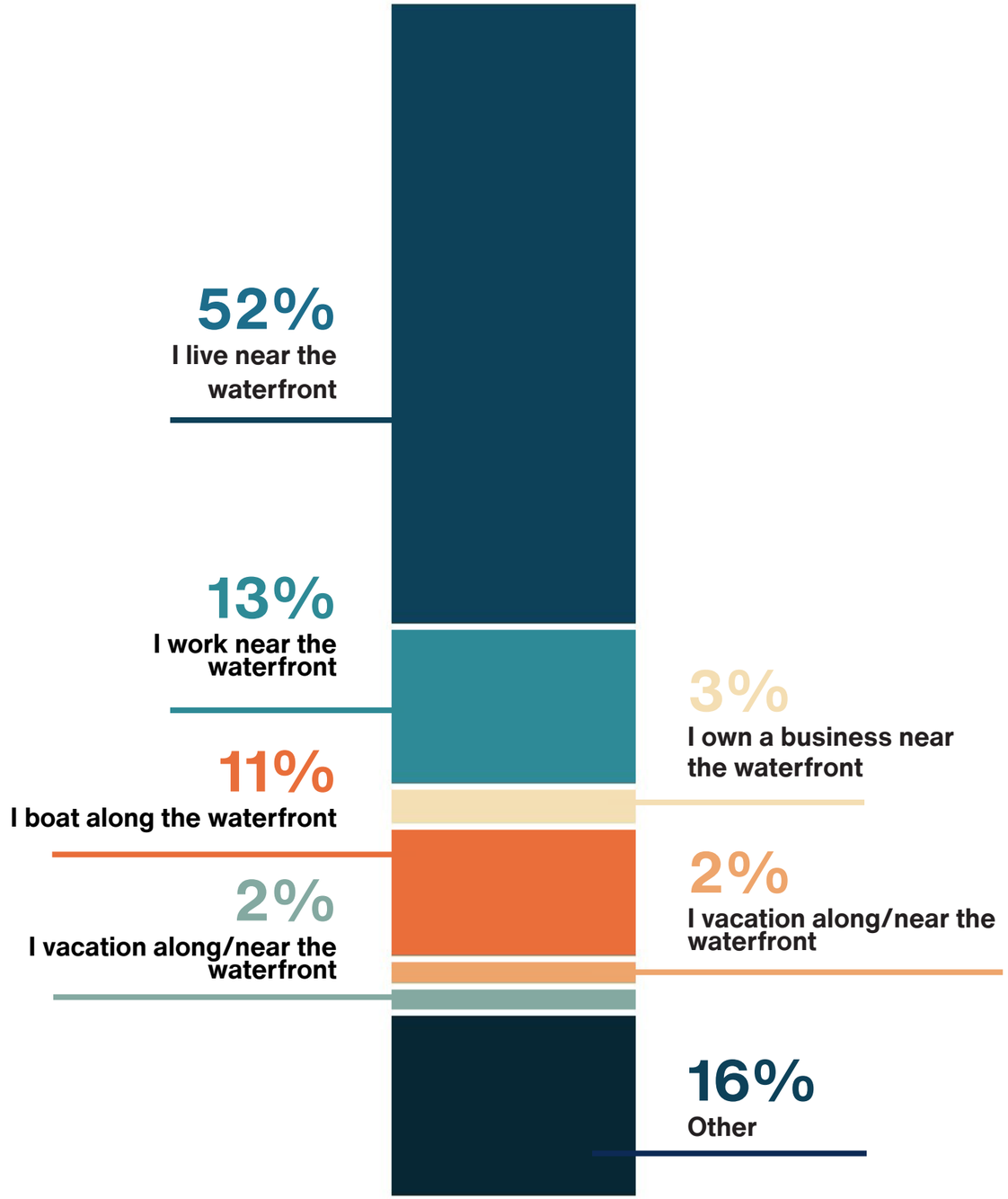
- The “Share Your Ideas” activity received 301 contributions from 109 participants.

6. Online Engagement - Community Survey

The “Community Survey” collected demographic data as well as information about how the community uses Barrie’s Waterfront currently. This reflects the same style of questions asked in the PIC Meeting Zoom Polls.

Relationship to Barrie Waterfront

Of the 65 people who completed the Community Survey, the ages were distributed in all categories from 19 – 75+, with the majority in the 35-44 age category.

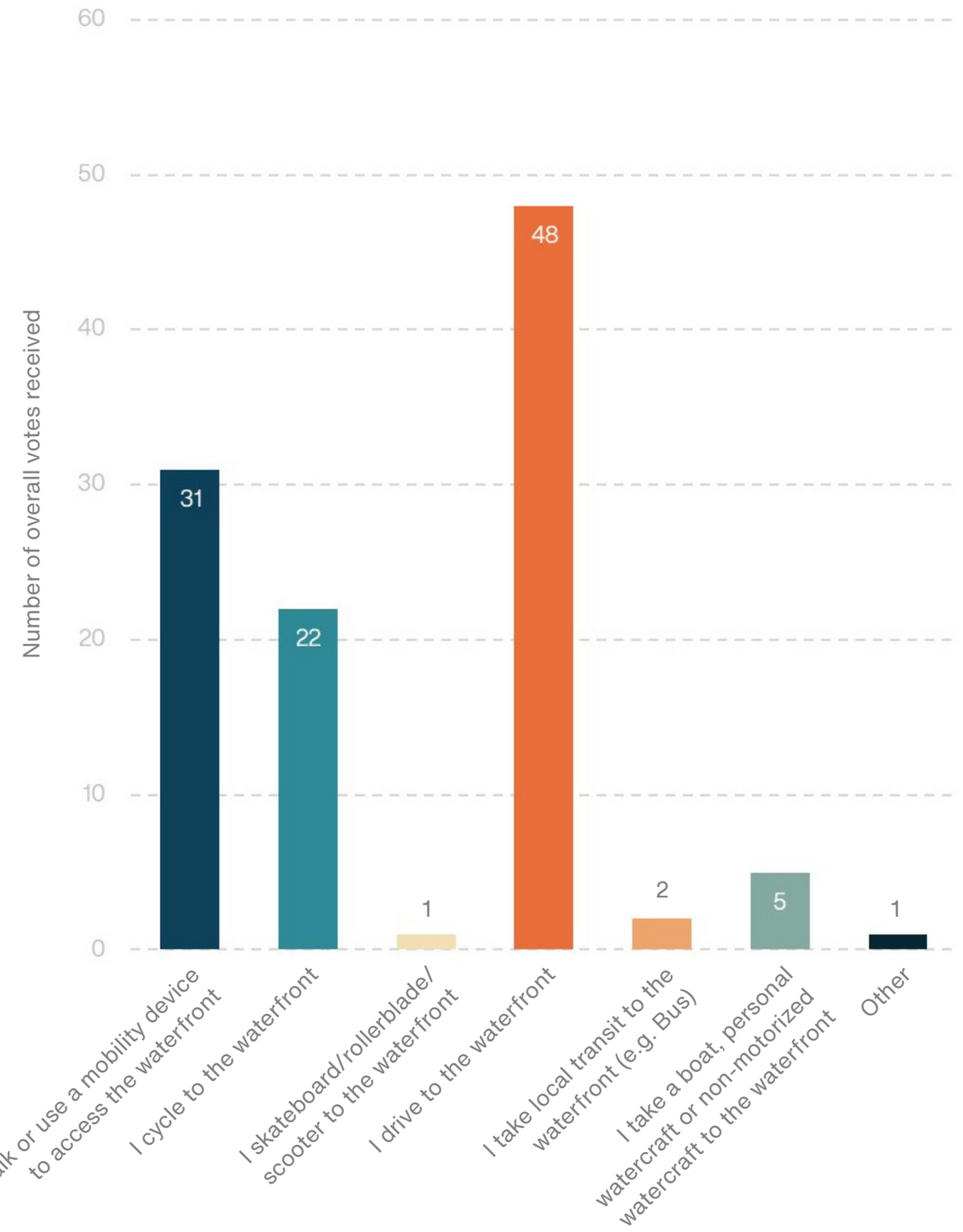


- 72% of respondents identified that they live near the Barrie Waterfront.
- Of the “other” category respondents, the majority (7) responded that they are Barrie residents who live in other areas of the city but who use the Barrie Waterfront.
- Others only stated that they use or frequent the Barrie Waterfront, and one respondent reported that they area a member of the local Rowing Club.

Accessing the Barrie Waterfront

The majority of respondents took several modes to the Barrie Waterfront, including **walking** or **mobility device and driving**, or **cycling and driving.**

The majority of respondents reported that they frequent **Barrie's West Shore** most, North Shore second to most, and South Shore least.



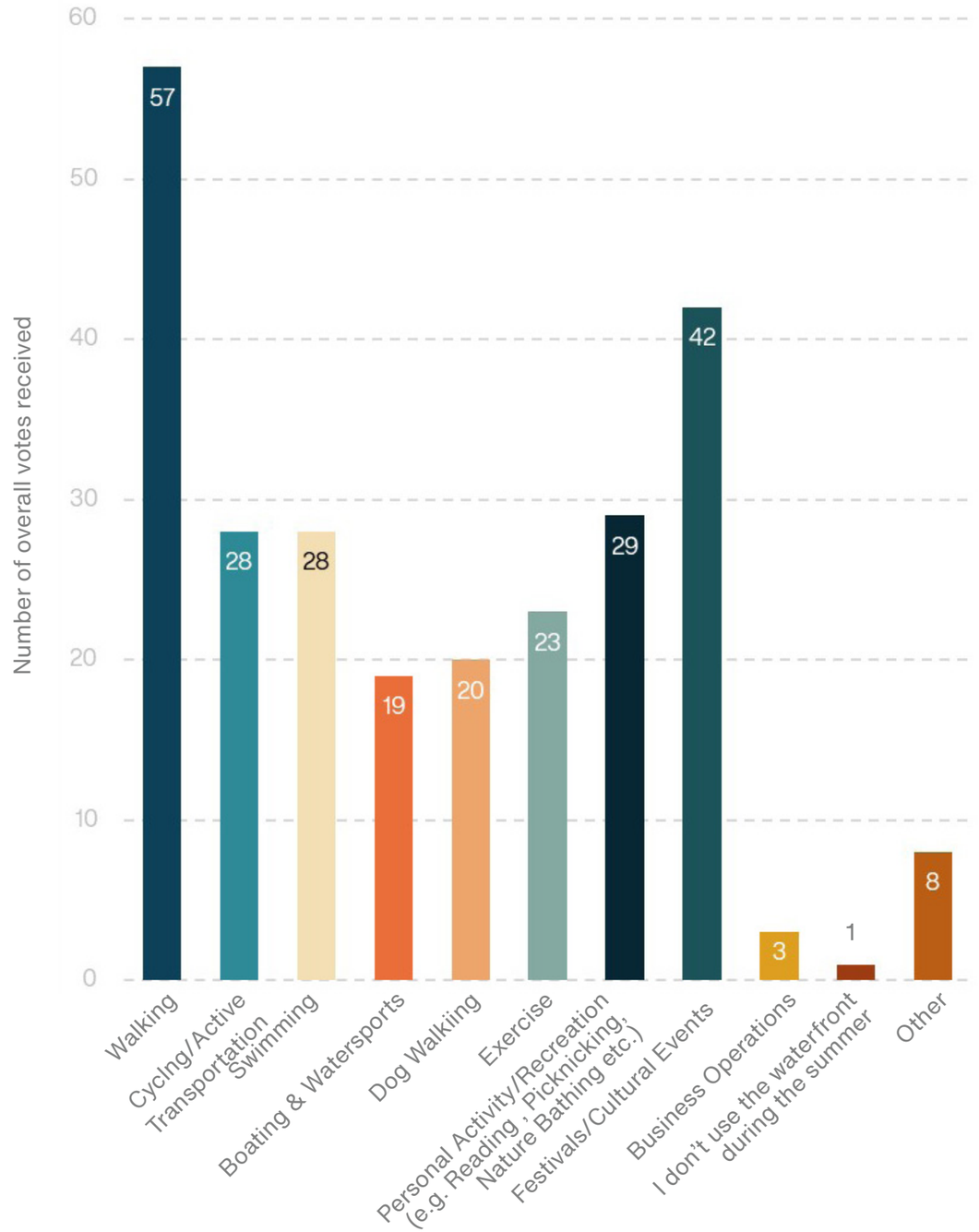
↗ Drive to the waterfront (75%)

↗ Walk or take a mobility device (48%)

↗ Cyclists (34%)

Summer Activities

“Other” activities reported included volunteering to remove invasive species plants, social meetings with friends, meditation, and bringing visitors.



↗ Walking (80%)

↗ Festivals & Cultural Events (65%)

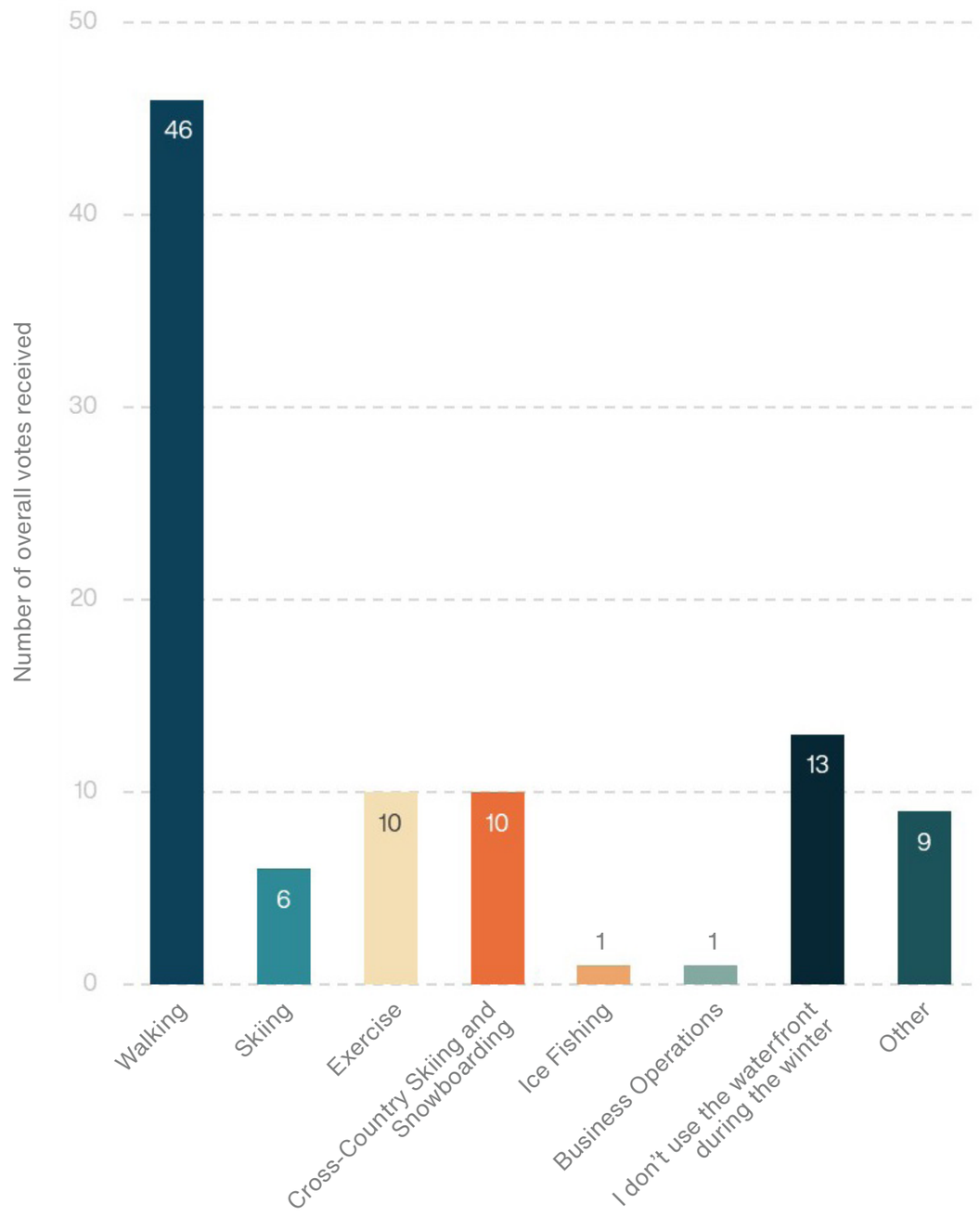
↗ Passive Activities Swimming, Cycling

Winter Activities

Fewer respondents reported that they did several activities during the winter, but common activity pairs included **skating and skiing/ snowshoeing;** and **walking and exercise.**

"Other" winter activities reported include sledding, watching ice huts, walking on the frozen bay, meditating, relaxing in a car, snowmobiling, indoor exercise at the Barrie Rowing Club, and dog walking.

- ↗ Walking (72%)
- ↗ Skiing/Snowshoeing (10%)
- ↗ Exercise (10%)
- ↗ Do not use in winter (13%)



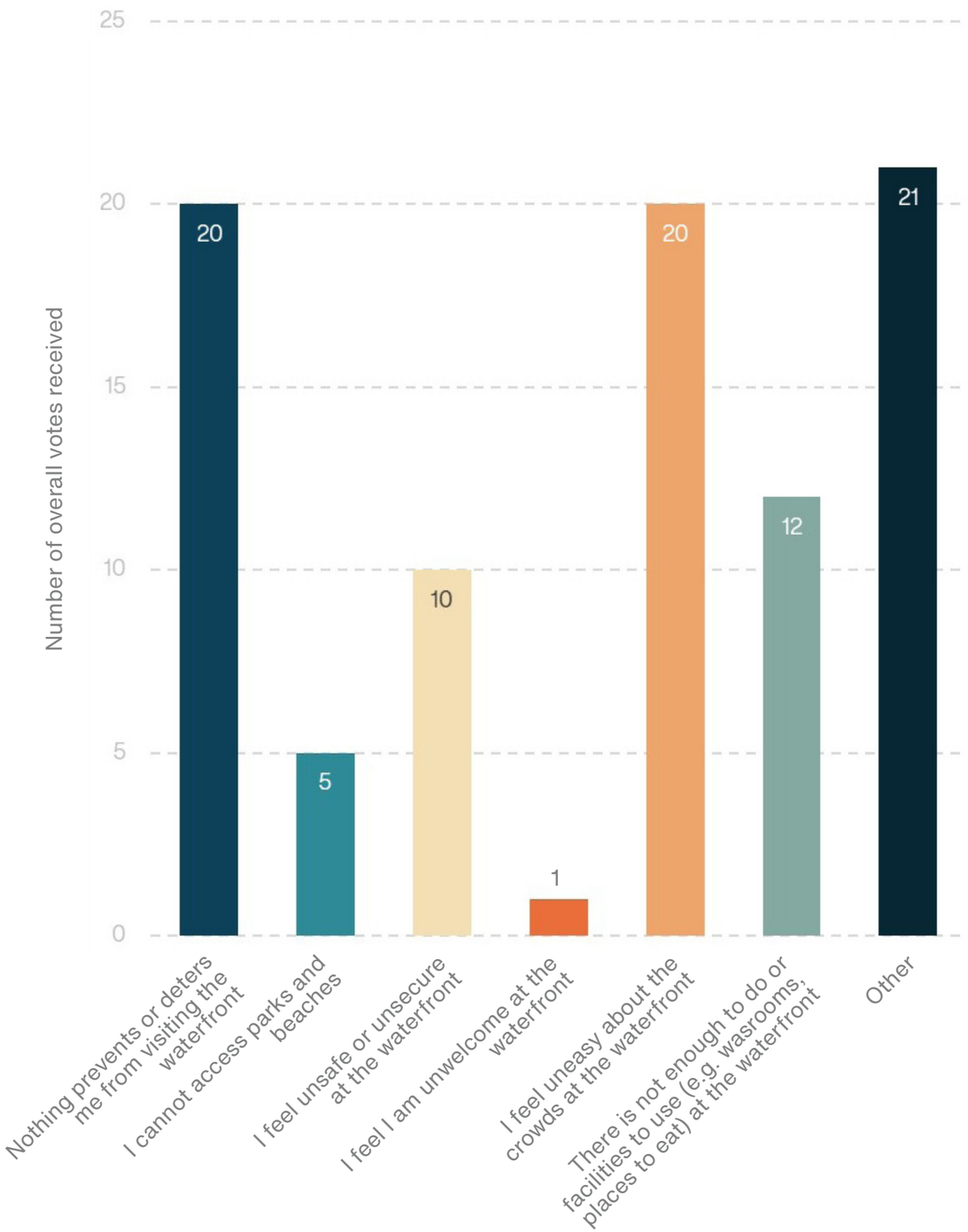
Barriers

41% of respondents reported that they agree or strongly agree that there are no barriers preventing them from enjoying or using the Barrie waterfront, and 20% disagreed to the same statement.

- ↗ Crowding (32%)
- ↗ Lack of activities or facilities (12%)
- ↗ Lack of sense of safety (10%)

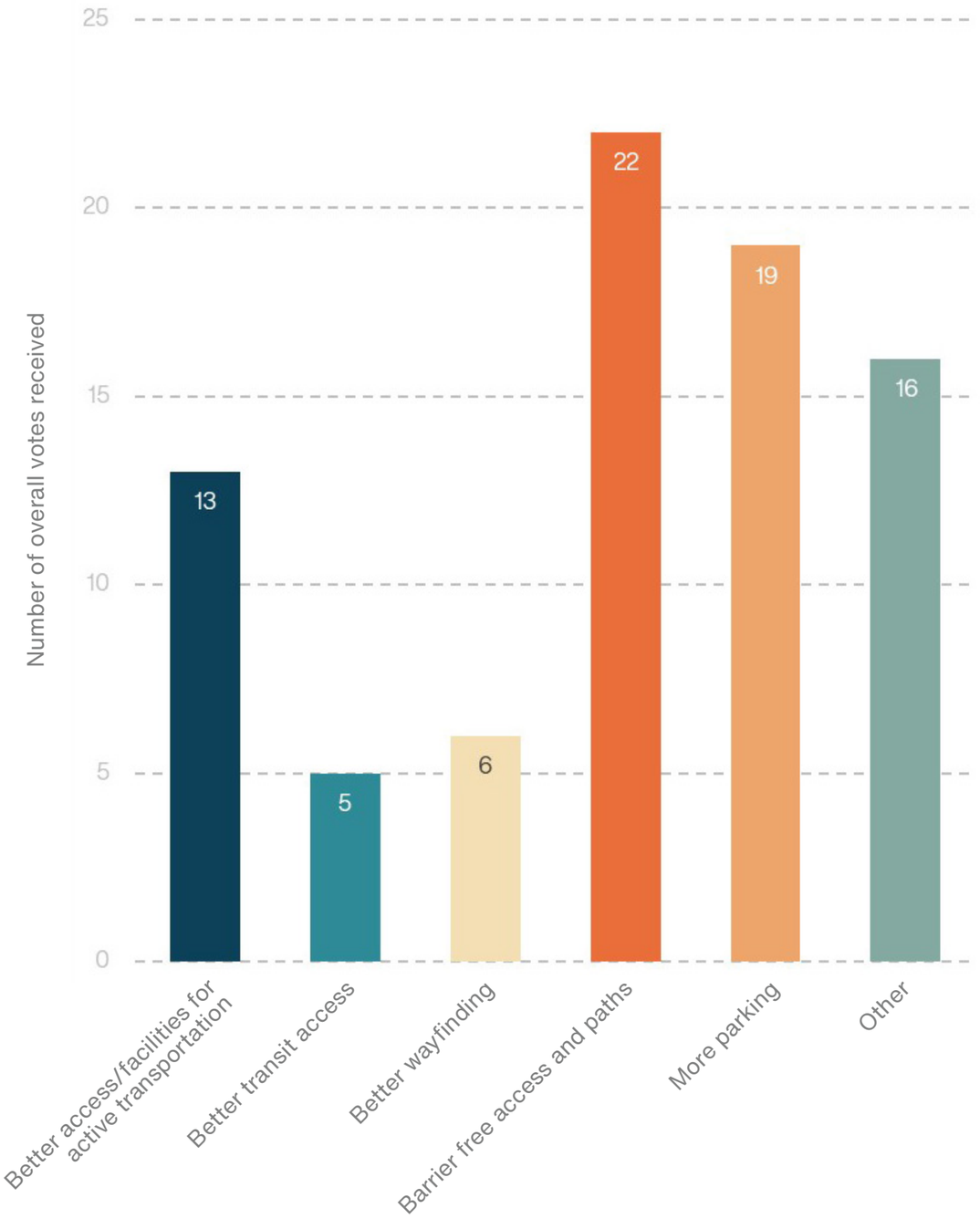
"Other" barriers reported include lack of parking, not dog friendly, issues with cleanliness and maintenance, lack of options for food, noise from vehicles and other park users, limited accessible pedestrian and cyclist connections, lack of wayfinding and path mode signage, food options too expensive, traffic, lack of shade, and lake water quality concerns.

20% of respondents reported that they do not face barriers or deterrents to visiting Barrie's waterfront.



Access Improvements

“Other” ideas for inclusive access reported include more and year-round washroom facilities, a coffee shop, amenity maps, steps or an elevator or funicular from the water’s edge to the path, reducing technology required to participate (smart phones and data for parking apps), path sharing and bicycle speed signage, reducing the cost of parking for customers of beach front businesses, increased curb cuts, safety measures and enforcement on trails, fewer events, and more distributed viewpoints.



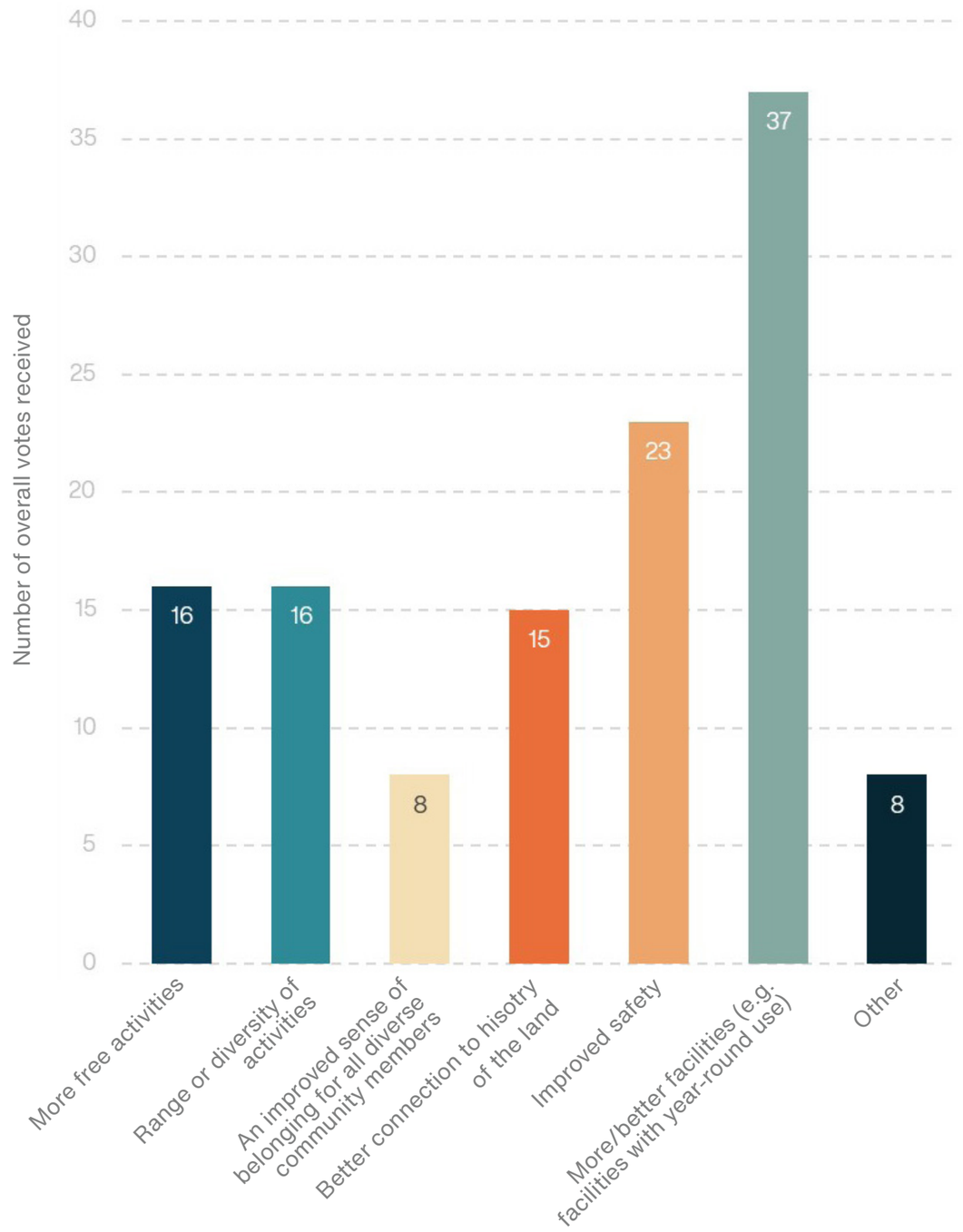
↗ Barrier-free access and paths (40%)

↗ More parking (35%)

↗ Lack of sense of safety (10%)

Inclusivity Improvements

"Other" improvements to make the waterfront feel more inclusive were reported to be more open space, power at outdoor performance pavilions, music performances, photo opportunities (potentially as interactive public art or branding opportunities for Barrie), more dog access, and longer hours for lifeguards on duty in the summer.



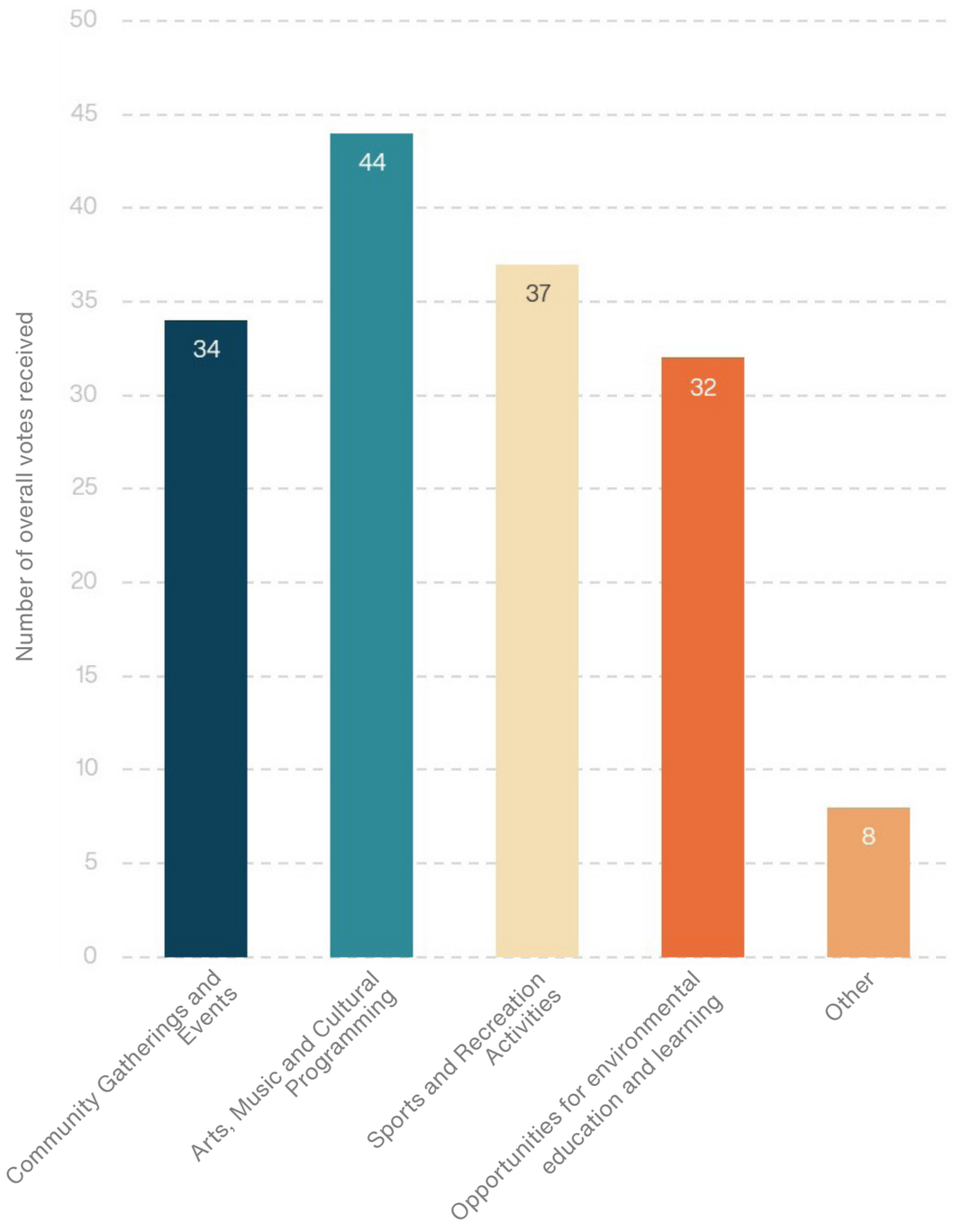
↗ More/better facilities and year-round use (61%)

↗ Improved safety (38%)

↗ More free activities/ more diverse activities (26% each)

New Activities Desired

"Other" new programs and activities that respondents reported that they wanted to see include drop-in yoga and tai-chi, a greater variety of food options, a dog park and more dog amenities including waste receptacles. Several respondents also reported a risk of too many activities that would cause overcrowding, overdevelopment, or overuse of the park.



↗ New program & activities (73%)

↗ Sports and recreation activities (62%)

↗ New community gatherings and events (57%)

Missing Facilities

65.5% of respondents reported that there are currently missing facilities along the waterfront, and 34.5% responded no.

Missing facilities reported include:

Food & Beverage
- ↗ Café
- ↗ Sheltered patio space
- ↗ Ice cream
- ↗ Restaurants
- ↗ Waterfront dining/bar/patio
- ↗ Local restaurants, not franchises
- ↗ Food truck festivals
- ↗ Barbecues on south shore park area
- ↗ Barbecue rental

Washroom
- ↗ a need for showers
- ↗ year-round access
- ↗ cleaner washrooms

Events
- ↗ Concerts
- ↗ Festivals
- ↗ “Feather”
- ↗ Outdoor markets
- ↗ An acoustically designed stage (amphitheatre, weather protected)
- ↗ Dedicated musician areas with power (weather protected)

Amenities
- ↗ Drinking water fountains for people and pets
- ↗ Local business directory map
- ↗ More garbage receptacles
- ↗ More seating, loungers (especially near shade)
- ↗ Cyclist amenities including tool stands
- ↗ More shade (particularly tree shade)
- ↗ A pier
- ↗ New or reconfigured boat launches for small boats, canoes and kite/wind surfers at each shore
- ↗ Meeting spaces for groups in a variety of sizes
- ↗ More gardens
- ↗ Beach chair rental

Activities
- ↗ Bike rental
- ↗ Water sports rental (kayaks, canoes)
- ↗ Sports facilities (tennis courts, baseball fields)

Children’s Play Areas
- ↗ Splash Pad

Dog Facilities
- ↗ Dog friendly beaches
- ↗ Off-leash areas

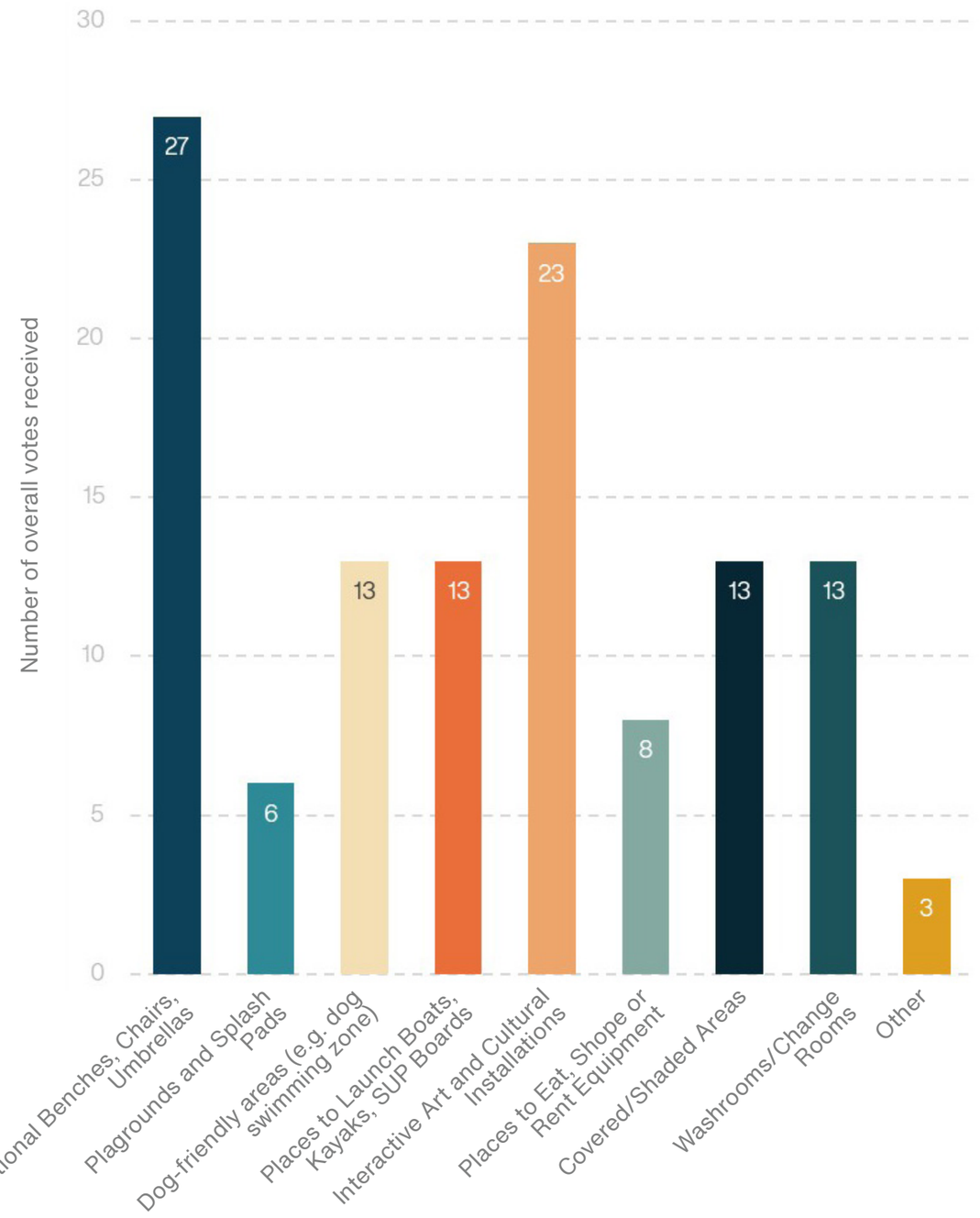
Winter
- ↗ Skating facilities on the frozen lake
- ↗ Winter attractions

Accessibility
- ↗ Continuously paved paths
- ↗ Steps and access paths to the water

Educational
- ↗ Educational information about the environment (pollution, conservation)
- ↗ Educational information about the local plants and animals

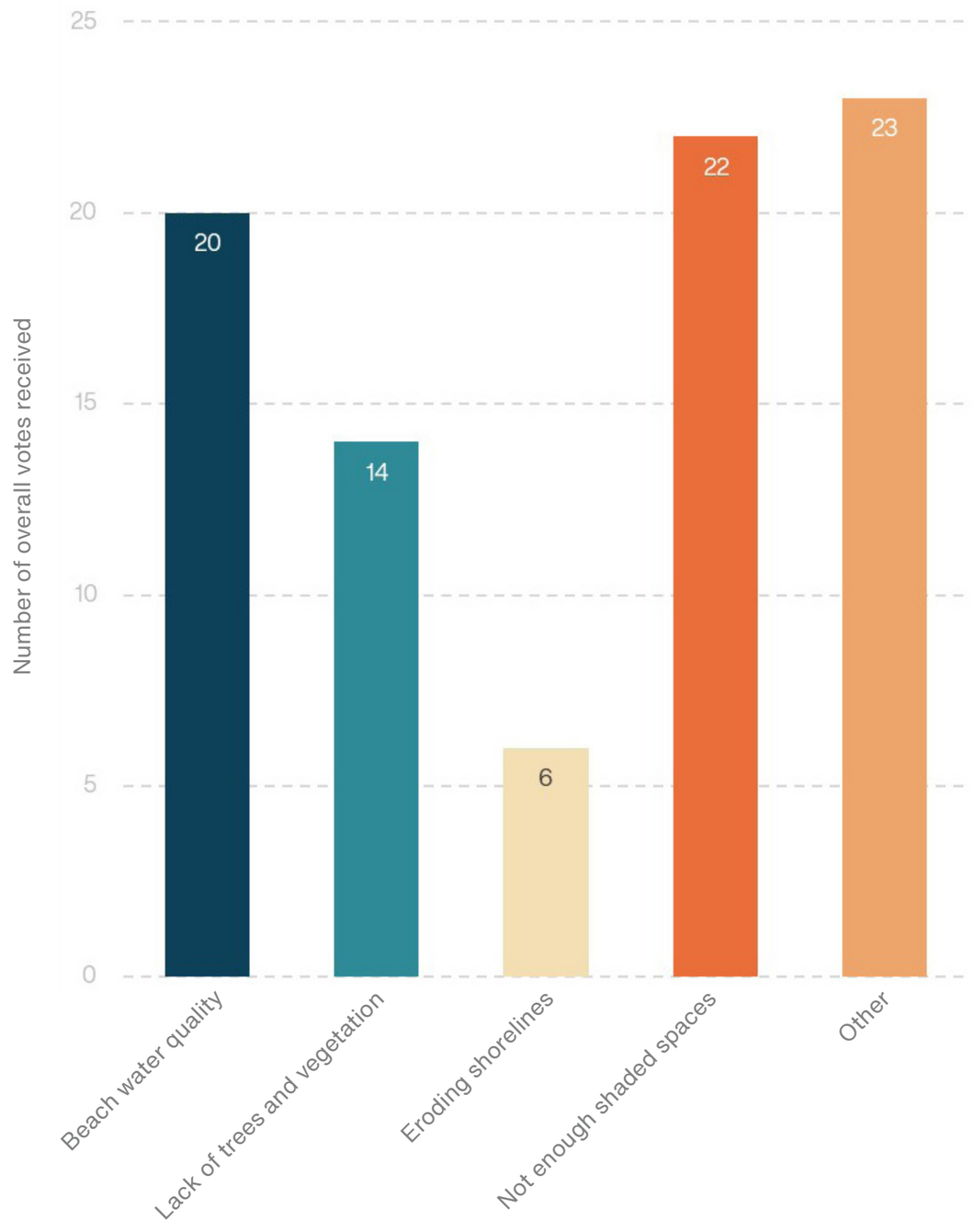
Park Amenities Desired

- ↗ Additional benches, chairs, umbrellas, etc. (44%)
- ↗ Places to eat, shop or rent equipment (41%)
- ↗ The next most popular amenities were tied four ways between places to launch boats, kayaks, SUP boards, etc.; dog-friendly areas; covered/shaded areas; and washrooms/changerooms.



Limits to Using or Enjoying the Waterfront

"Other" things that limited use or enjoyment of the waterfront include shade from surrounding development, parking, crowds, limited beach space, lack of shade, lack of enforcement of rules, unsafe activity from other park users, poor or unsafe driver and cyclist etiquette, unsafe water conditions (due to motor boats), garbage and litter, unpleasant or no scenic views, lack of access points to the water, noise pollution.



↗ Not enough shades spaces (38%)

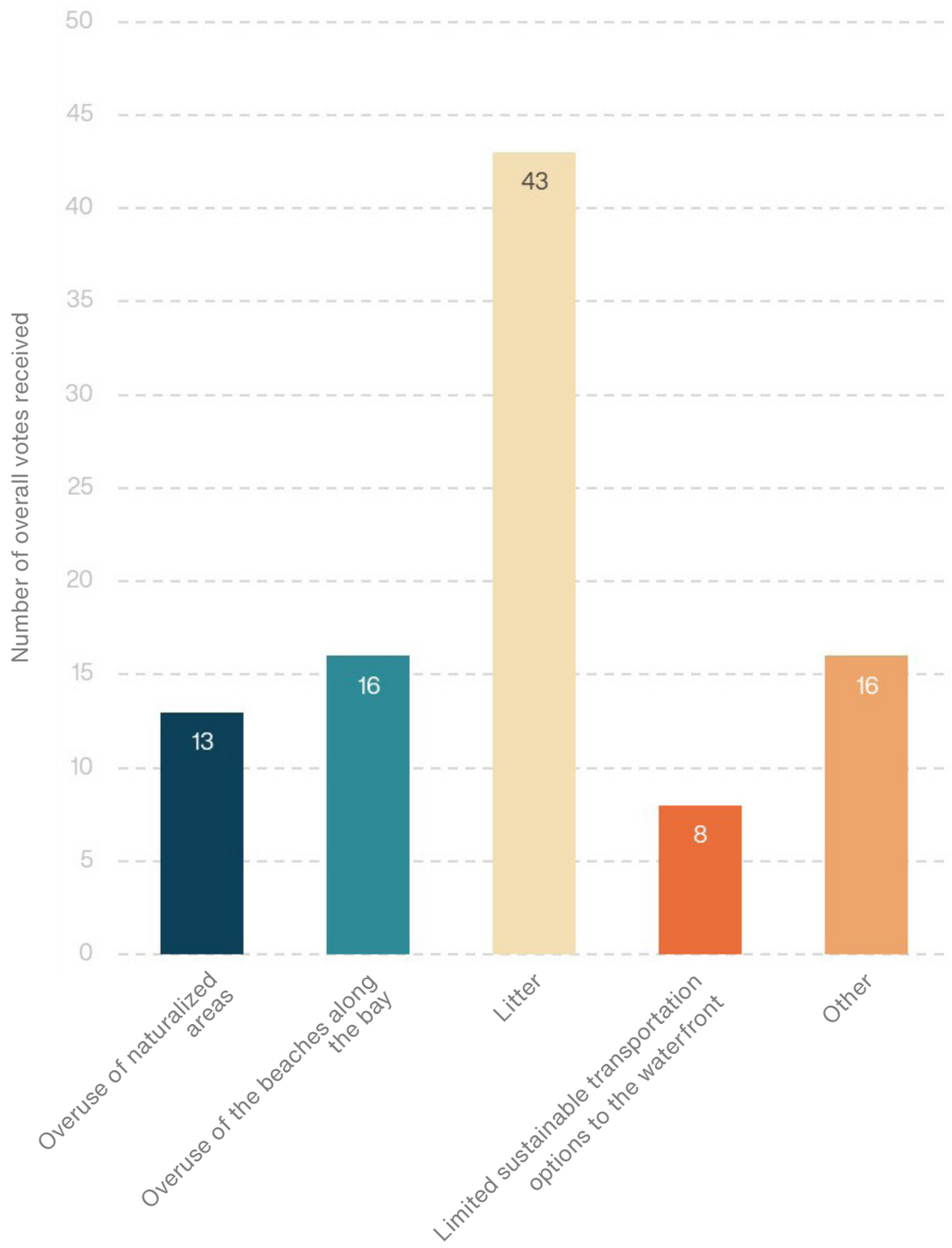
↗ Beach water quality (35%)

↗ Lack of trees and vegetation (57%)

Negative Environmental Impacts

“Other” negative impacts reported included:

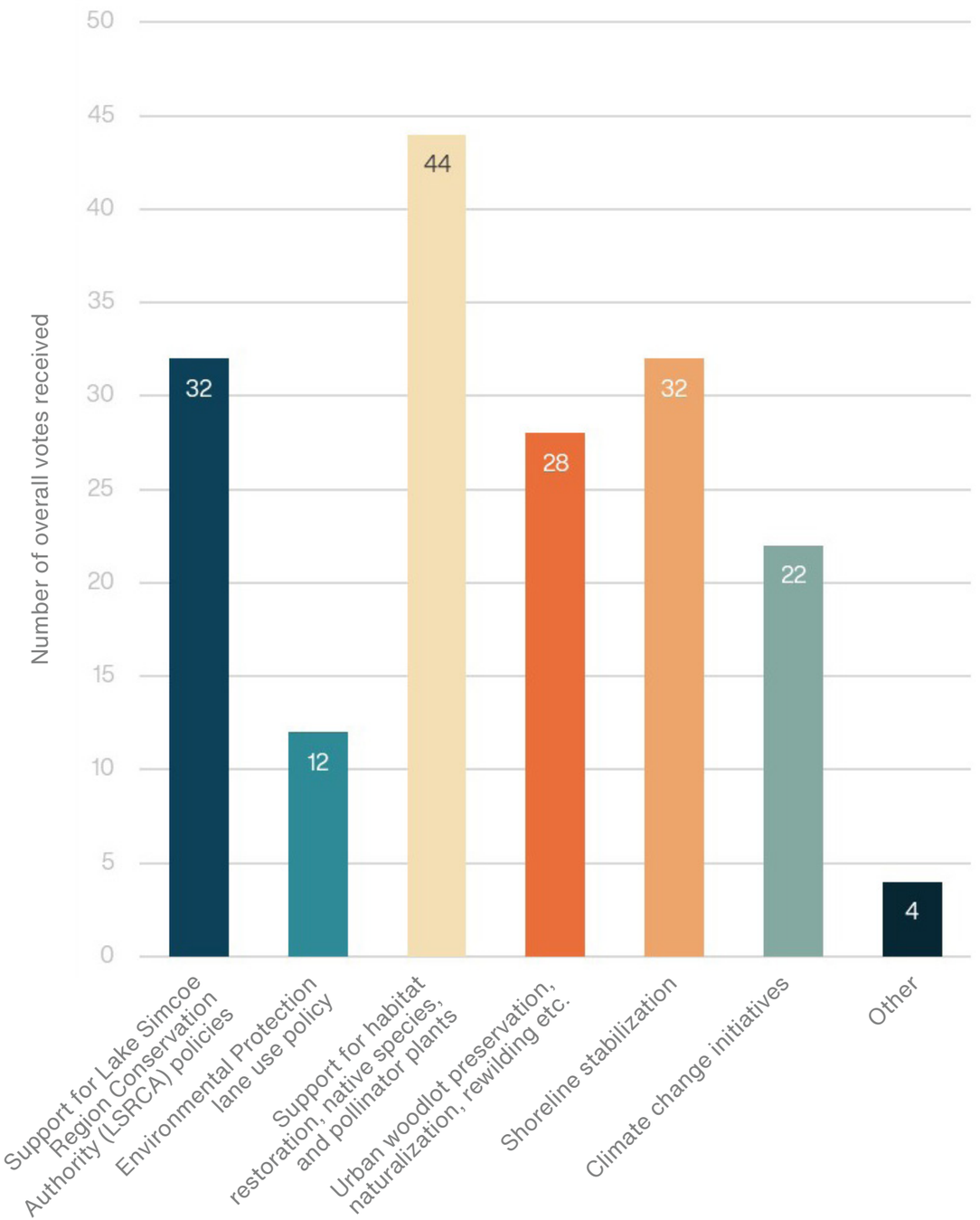
- ↗ Overdevelopment - risk of too many buildings near the waterfront or too much hardscaping
- ↗ Negative impacts on lake water quality that would make it unswimmable or threaten aquatic ecosystem
- ↗ Poor parking and driving etiquette
- ↗ Constant construction
- ↗ Change
- ↗ Noise pollution (from boats, jet skis, downtown)
- ↗ Lack of trail connections causing desire lines and erosion
- ↗ Air quality and smell issues from recycling plant
- ↗ Dog waste
- ↗ Electric trolley system



- ↗ Litter (77%)
- ↗ Overuse of beaches (32%)
- ↗ Overuse of naturalized areas (23%)

Environmental Priorities

"Other" responses included managing invasive species, managing contaminants into the lake water including road salt runoff, and reducing litter.



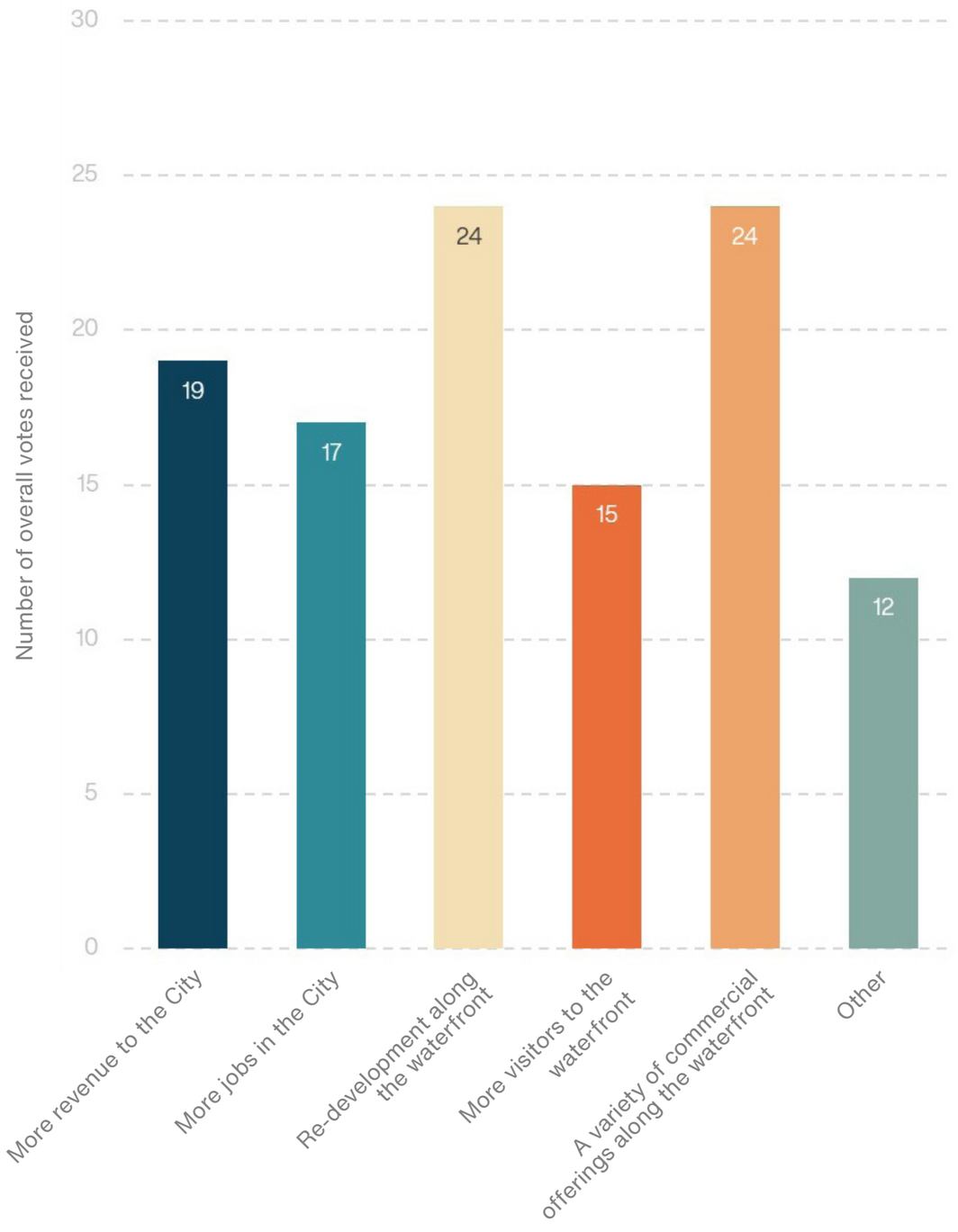
↗ Habitat restoration, native species, and pollinator plants (70%)

↗ Shoreline stabilization (52%)

↗ Support for Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority policies (48%)

Measures of Economic Success

"Other" responses included population growth in the City due to the appeal of the waterfront providing a high quality of life, and City-owned commercial spaces leased to private businesses. Other concerns raised in the responses to this question include ensuring that businesses along the waterfront do not compete with downtown businesses, and not overdeveloping the waterfront.



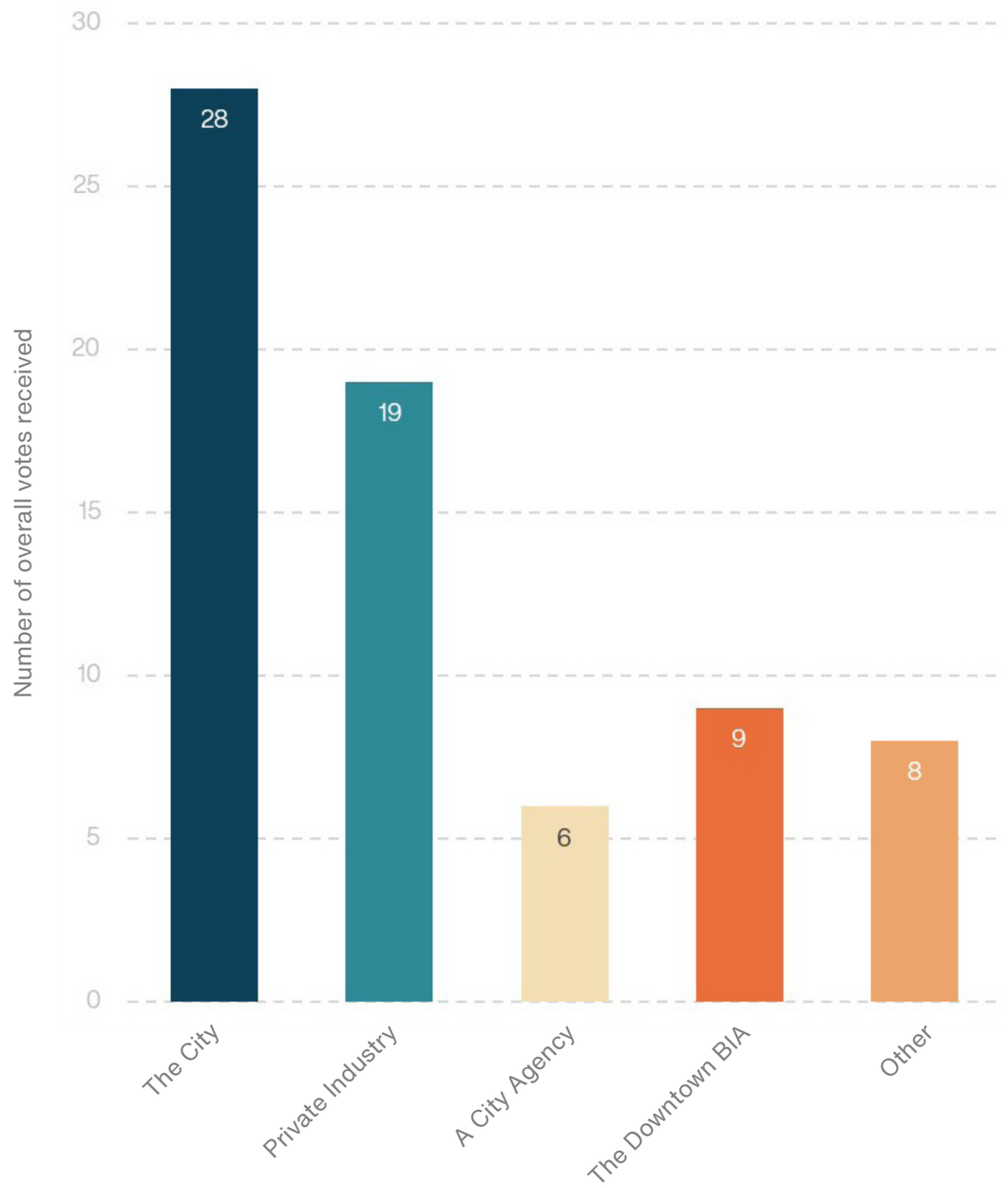
↗ A variety of commercial offerings along the waterfront/ Redevelopment along the waterfront (38% each)

↗ More revenue to the City (30%)

↗ More jobs in the City (27%)

Best Suited to Run New Commercial Offerings

"Other" responses included a combination, and private industry with guidance and regulations set by the City. Other concerns raised in the responses to this question include risk of overdeveloping the waterfront with commercial activity at the loss of community space. Respondents reported that they think the most successful commercial additions will be additional food and beverage offerings (55%), events (42%), and more recreational offerings (34%).



↗ City (45% each)

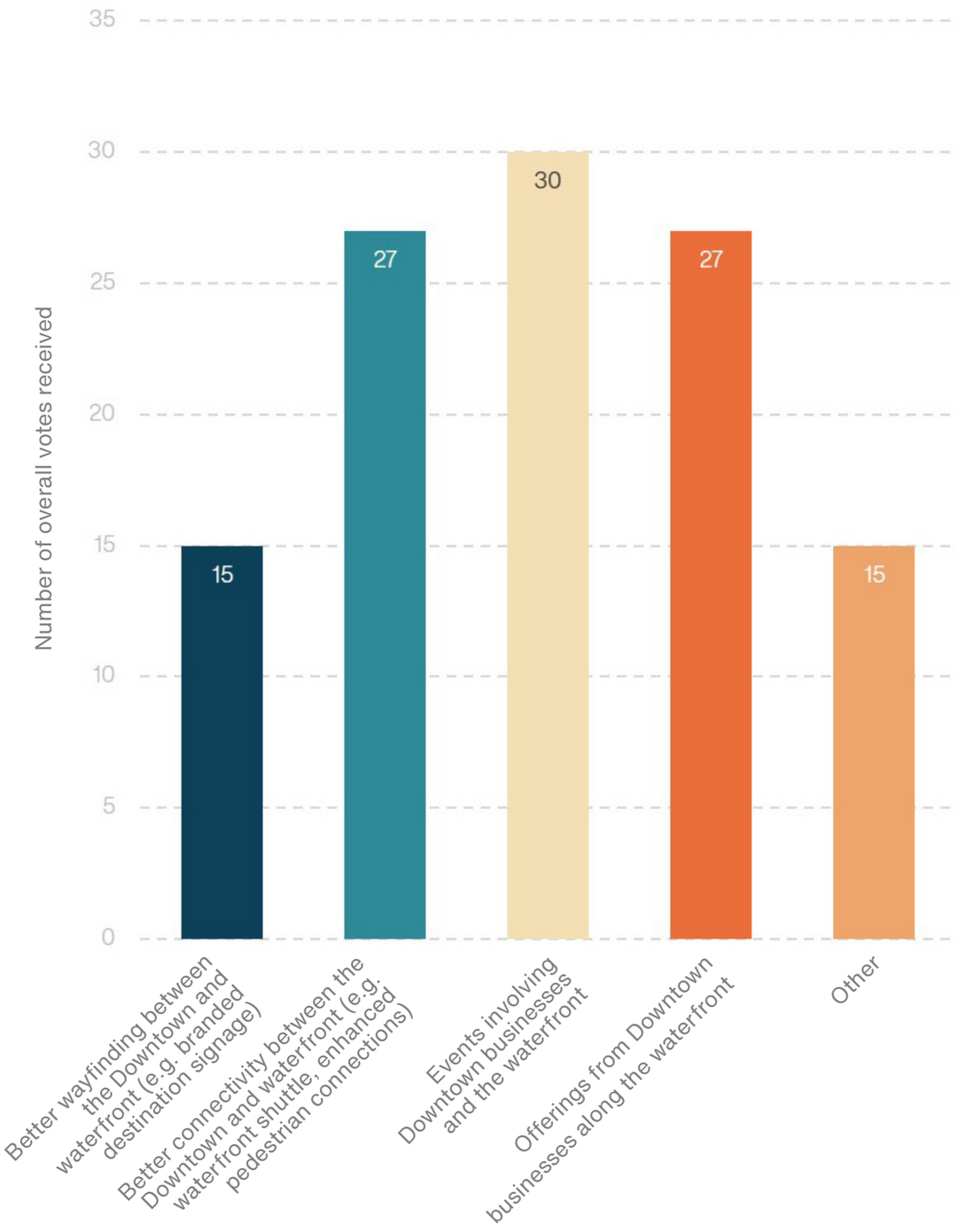
↗ Private industry (30%)

↗ Downtown BIA (14%)

Improvements to the Relationship with Downtown

"Other" improvements reported included improved bicycle trails and shared greenways from neighbourhoods to the waterfront, commercial programs such as coupons or passes, consistent maintenance standards and enforcement of noise by-laws and safety concerns between downtown and the waterfront.

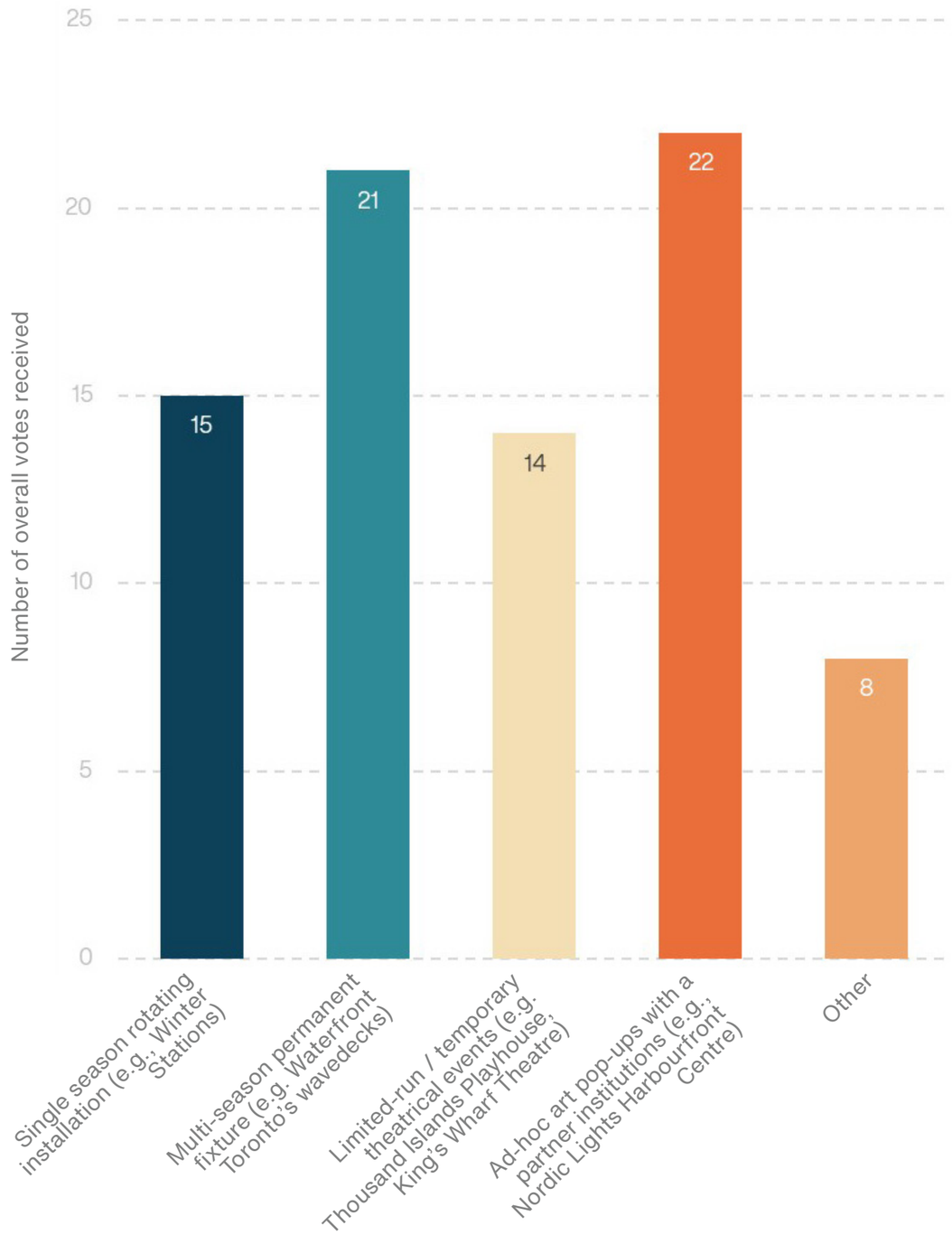
Parking was raised as an issue, including paid parking creating a barrier for shoppers going to downtown businesses, more parking needed at reasonable rates in both areas, reduced parking and hardscape near the waterfront to allow for the waterfront open space to expand towards downtown, or repurposing parking lot space near the waterfront as outdoor dining or public patio space. Concerns raised in the additional comments were the competition between businesses Downtown and the Waterfront and overdevelopment of the waterfront.



- ↗ Events involving Downtown businesses and the waterfront (52%)
- ↗ Better connectivity (e.g waterfront shuttle, enhanced pedestrian connections) (47%)
- ↗ Offerings from downtown businesses along the waterfront (47%)

Public Art Preference

"Other" responses included a combination of the options, featuring local artists, showcasing local musicians through the Barrie Emerging Musicians performance program, or participants who did not support public art on the waterfront.



↗ Ad-hoc art pop-ups with partner institutions (38%)

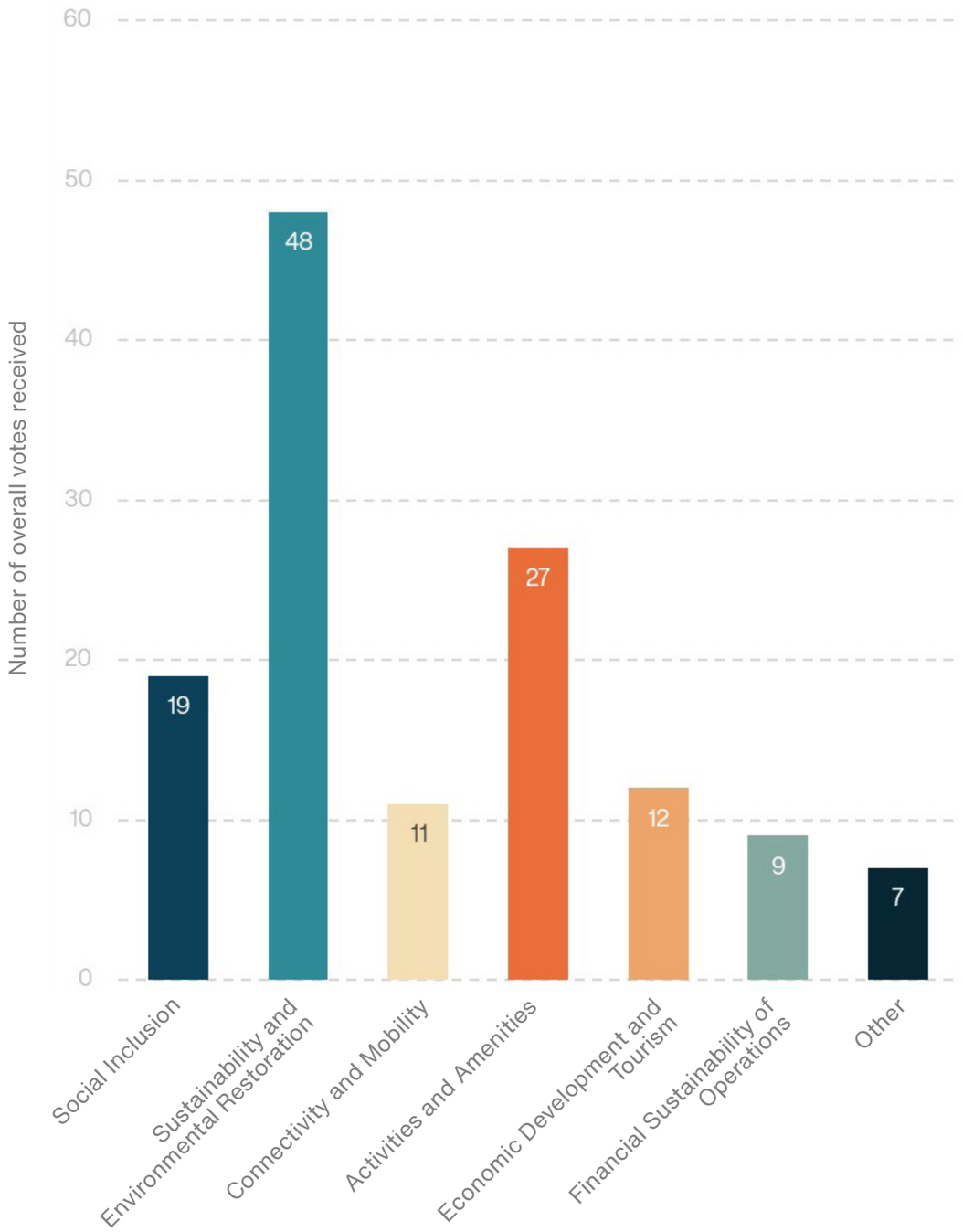
↗ Multi-season permanent fixtures (34%)

↗ Single season rotating installations (25%)

General Priorities

The final survey question before general comments asked respondents about their **priority focus areas** for the Waterfront Strategic Plan.

The number one priority reported was sustainability and environmental restoration with 62% of respondents reporting this, followed by activities and amenities (43.5%), and social inclusion (31%). “Other” priorities reported were primarily safety and enjoyment.



What We Heard - Community Desires

The below quotes capture common themes expressed about what people **love** about the Barrie Waterfront and what they want to see **preserved.**

- ↗ “Would like to see winter use optimized, like light paths along the lake (not just Heritage Park)”
- ↗ “Like the natural feeling of the trails- maintain serenity of nature without the waterfront feeling commercialized. Use as a space to recharge and connect with nature.”
- ↗ “Buildings, temporary structures and/or signage for waterfront businesses would add greatly to the professionalism, safety and appeal of the City’s Waterfront and of the Waterfront businesses.”
- ↗ “The waterfront is beautiful as it is now - perhaps needs better maintenance along the trail...and some culling of dead trees and brush as well as more access to the water.”
- ↗ “Even if our waterfront costs us rather than providing revenue, lets keep up maintaining and carefully developing our cities greatest feature.”
- ↗ “Keep the Barrie waterfront a place for families to enjoy!”

What We Heard - Community Risks

The below quotes capture common themes expressed about what people see as **risks or threats** to the Barrie Waterfront.

- “Any planning for Barrie’s waterfront must not come at a cost for those who already use it. The current users should not be sacrificed in the name of more visitors and money.”
- “I moved here to enjoy the waterfront/lifestyle and due to the litter and lack of rule enforcement, I feel I am paying taxes in a place that I don’t get to enjoy.”
- “We moved to Barrie 6 years ago and used to love the waterfront. It is now far too crowded with visitors for my family to enjoy. You should prioritize citizens of Barrie when creating your plan.”
- “I am very worried about over development at the expense of the environment.”

What We Heard - Ideas

Ideas expressed in the **Community Survey**.

- ↗ “Buskering is a great addition to the Barrie streetscape. May want to also induce traffic to MacLaren, 5 points and bars/restaurants via packages or couponing. Advertise daily events in the downtown via small billboards, free Wifi, interactive monitors.”
- ↗ “The Barrie Emerging Musicians program has been performing pre-COVID since 2018 in all these waterfront locations but the kids have to haul signs and battery packs and more. Let’s make properly designed small spaces for them during this process.”
- ↗ “Move Sea Cadets to south shore to open up for better retail at base of Bayfield street”
- ↗ “I envision Barrie having more cafes along the waterfront including a market.”
- ↗ “Electric tram connecting all parts of the waterfront.”
- ↗ “Could you have a boat lane that would keep powered boaters away from the north and south shore lines to allow to paddle craft (SUP, kayaks and rowing shells)”
- ↗ “Outdoor showers to rinse off the sand before getting dress after a day at the beach.”

Summary

Emerging themes from respondents about **risks or threats** to Barrie's Waterfront were generally:

- ↗ Overdevelopment
- ↗ Overcrowding and use by non-locals
- ↗ Parking and traffic concerns

Overall, emerging themes from respondents about positive and **desirable attributes** for Barrie's Waterfront were generally:

- ↗ A desire for a clean & safe waterfront for all ages
- ↗ A connected waterfront for transit users, pedestrians, and cyclists
- ↗ An accessible waterfront for people of all abilities
- ↗ A waterfront with a healthy environment and ecosystem including water and air quality
- ↗ Year-round activities and facilities

Polarizing points with many varying opinions emerged about the following topics:

- ↗ Parking – whether there should be more or less, whether it should be paid or free
- ↗ Road use – whether there should be more or less space for vehicles and traffic
- ↗ Dogs – whether there should be more, some, or no areas for dogs (dog park, dog beach)
- ↗ Commercial uses – where, when, and how beach front retail and restaurants should be permitted
- ↗ Attractions and events – some respondents reported that they wanted more, others wanted fewer events, attractions, and festivals

7. Online Engagement - Priorities



Participants who completed our “Priorities Survey” identified which goals were important to them.

Priorities

Based on the top ranked design priorities in PIC #1, the community believes the Barrie waterfront should be...

#1



GREEN

Protected, restored and enhanced natural features

#2



CLEAN

Well-maintained waterfront, including facilities

#3



PUBLIC

Public access is prioritized along the shoreline

#4



SAFE

A secure and well integrated waterfront, designed to be comfortably used by all

#5



ACCESSIBLE

Continuous barrier-free access for all

#6



WELL-MANAGED

Effective, financially responsible management of the waterfront

#7



CONNECTED

Enhanced access to the waterfront and continuous trail systems

#8



INCLUSIVE

Inclusive access to high-quality waterfront spaces for all

#9



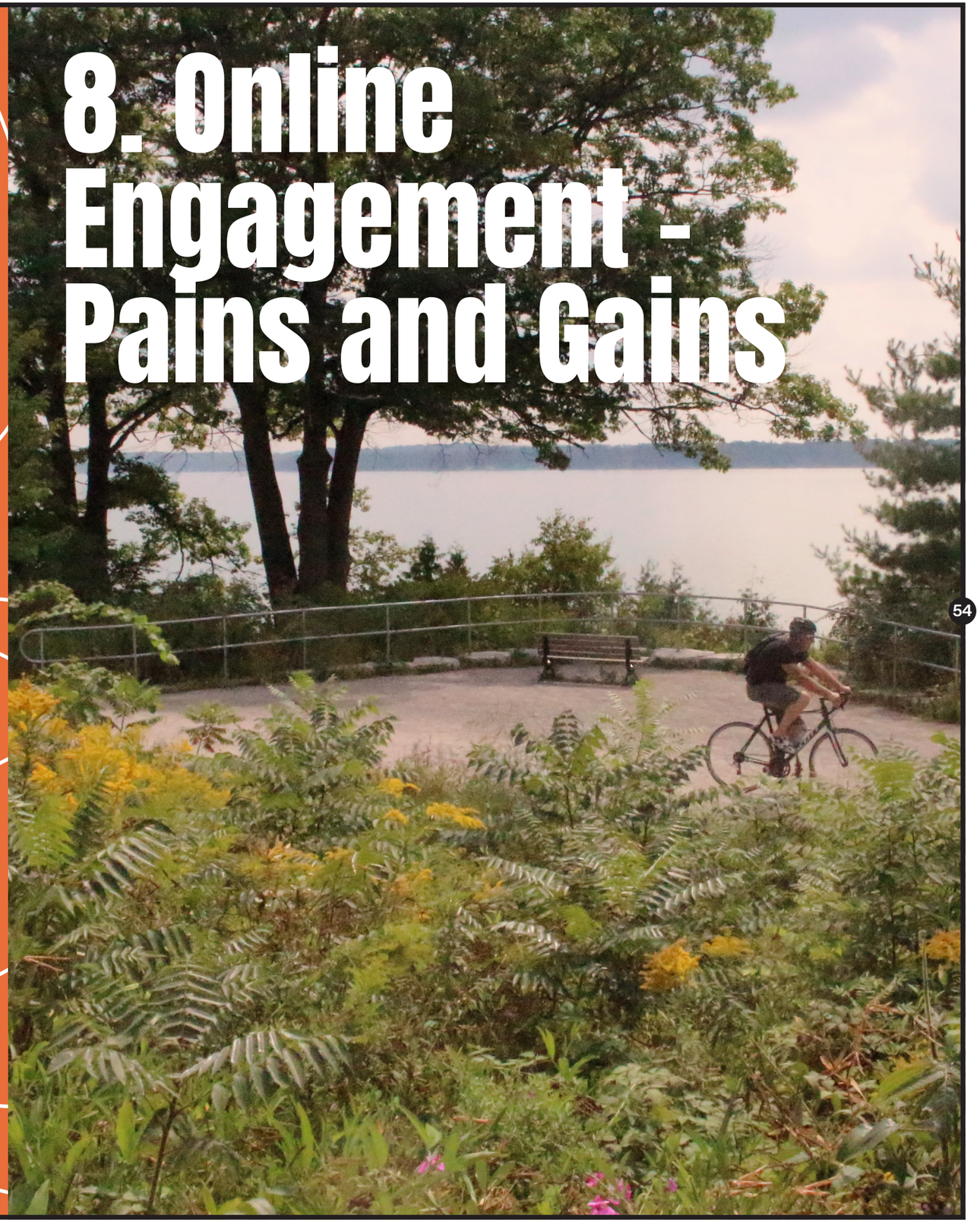
RESTORATIVE

Restoring environmental, community and individual well-being through the waterfront

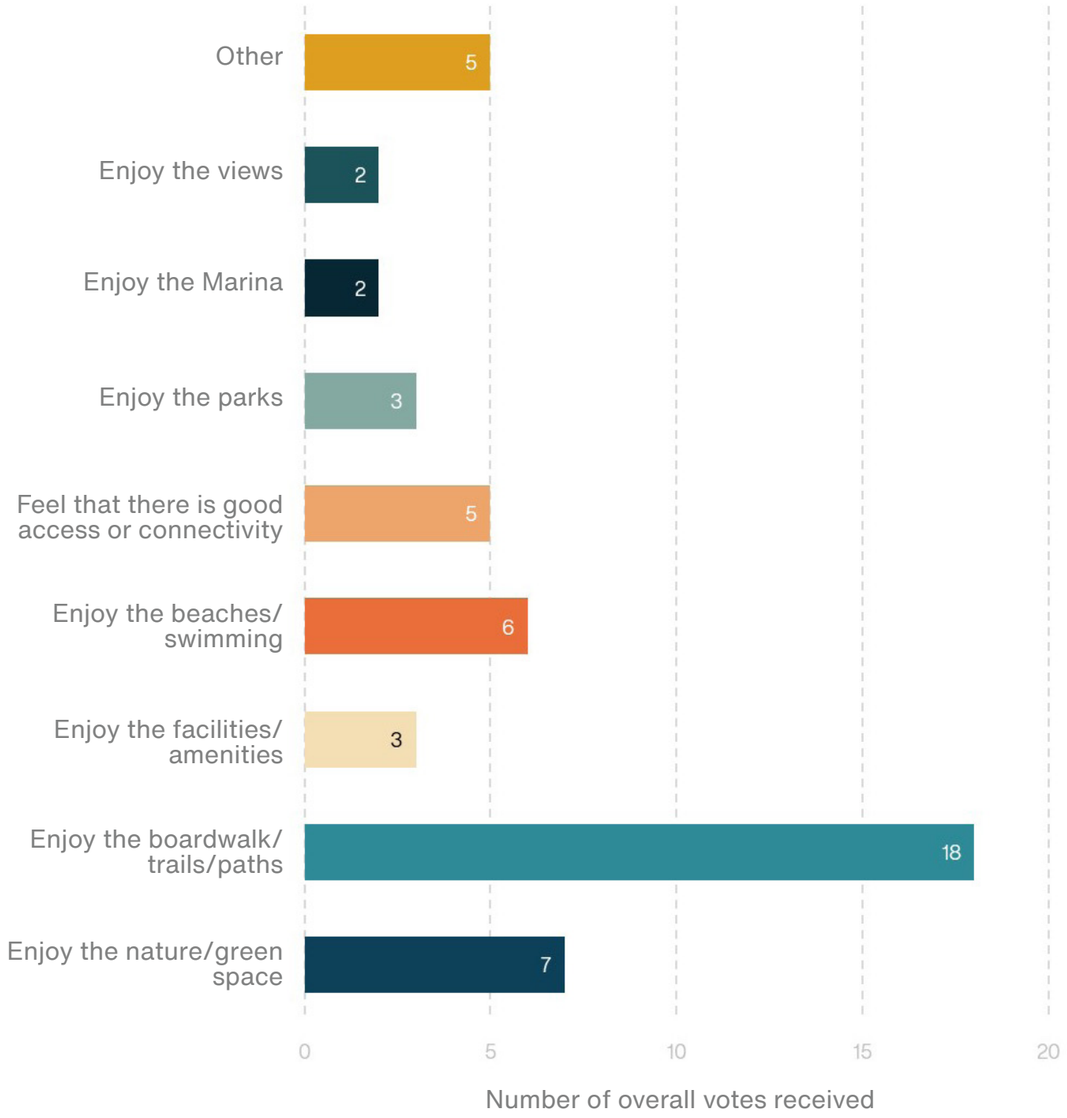
Legend

- Previous WSP Design Priorities
- Proposed, Additional Design Priorities

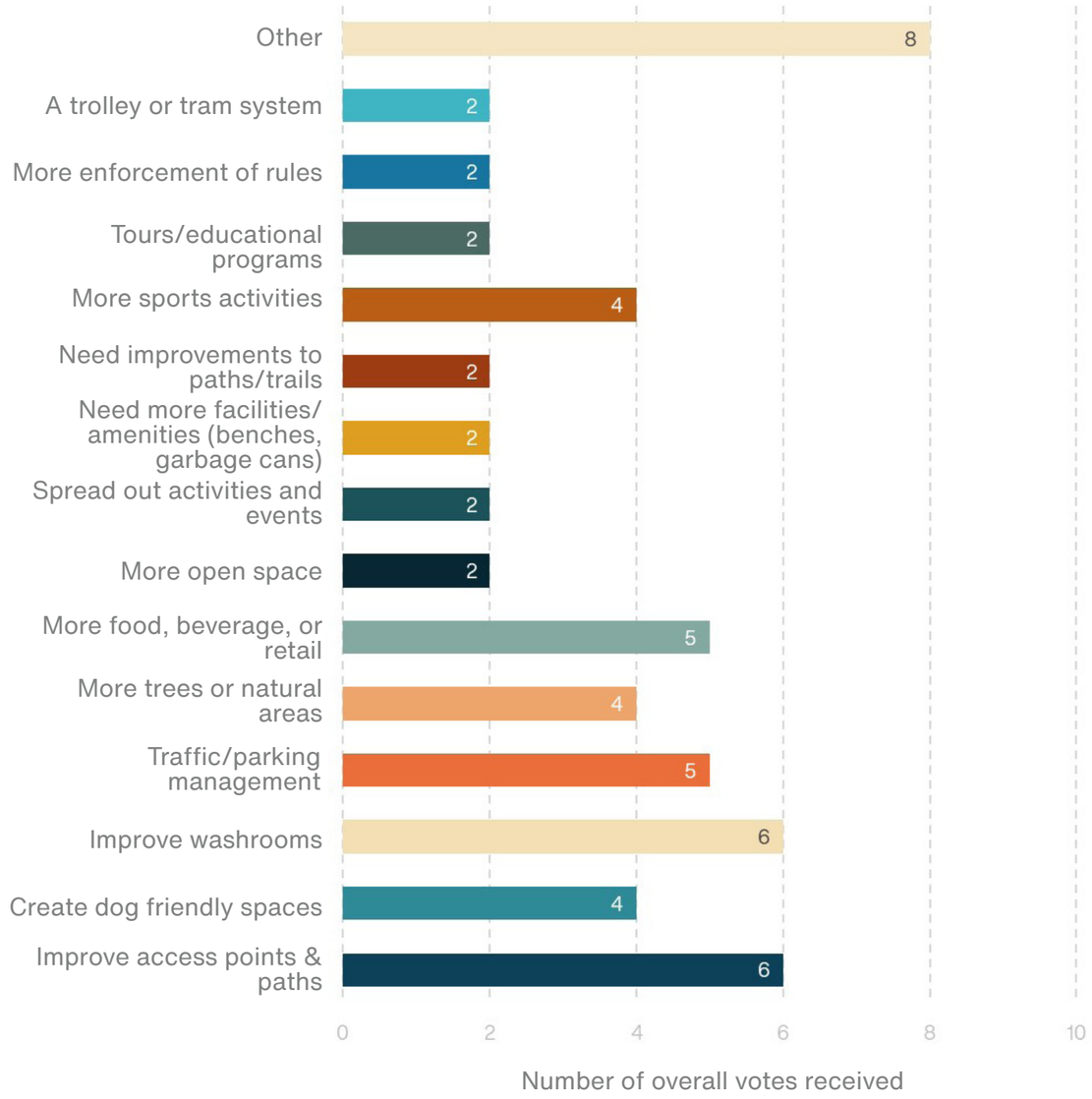
8. Online Engagement - Pains and Gains



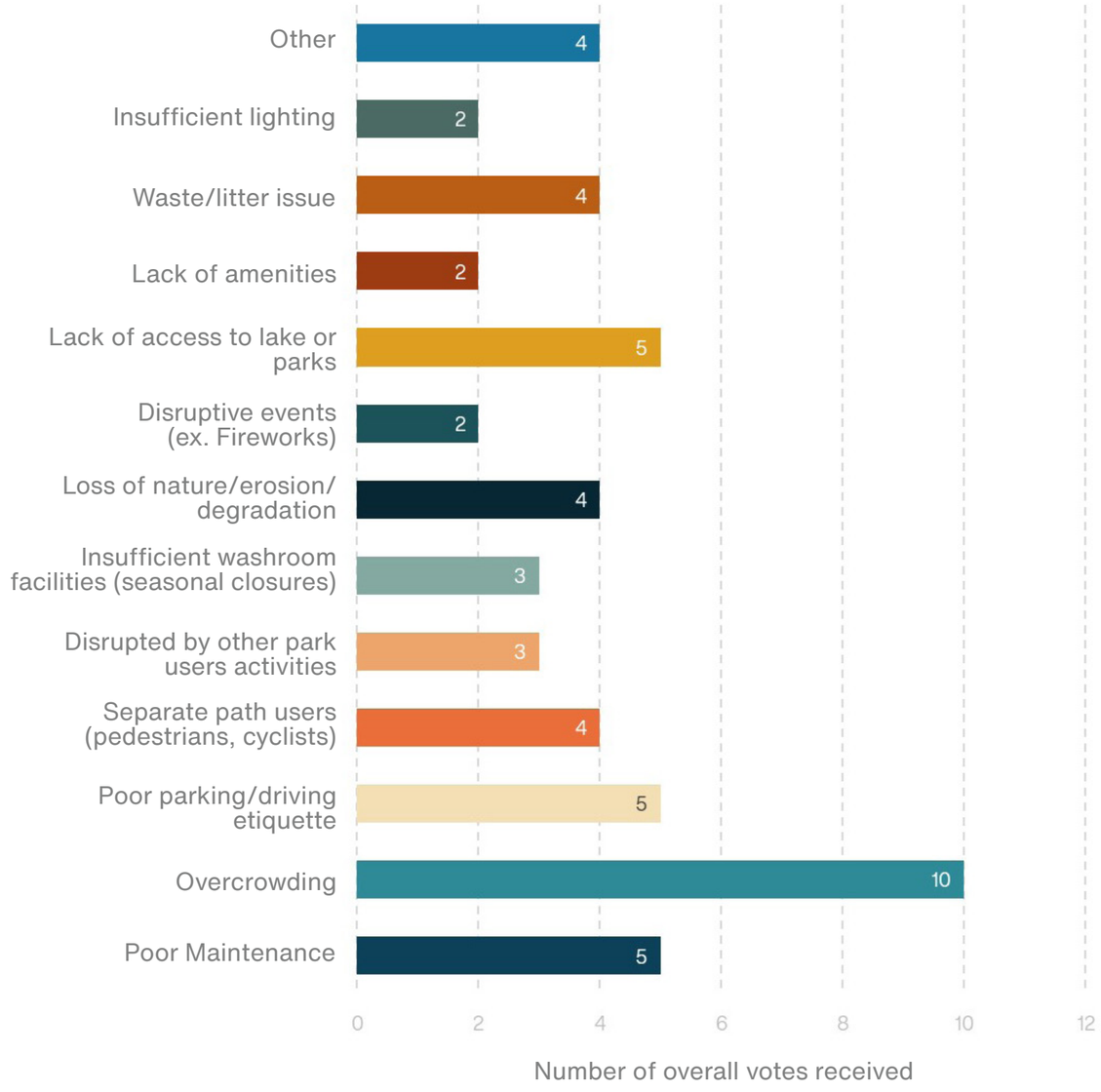
Gains - Now



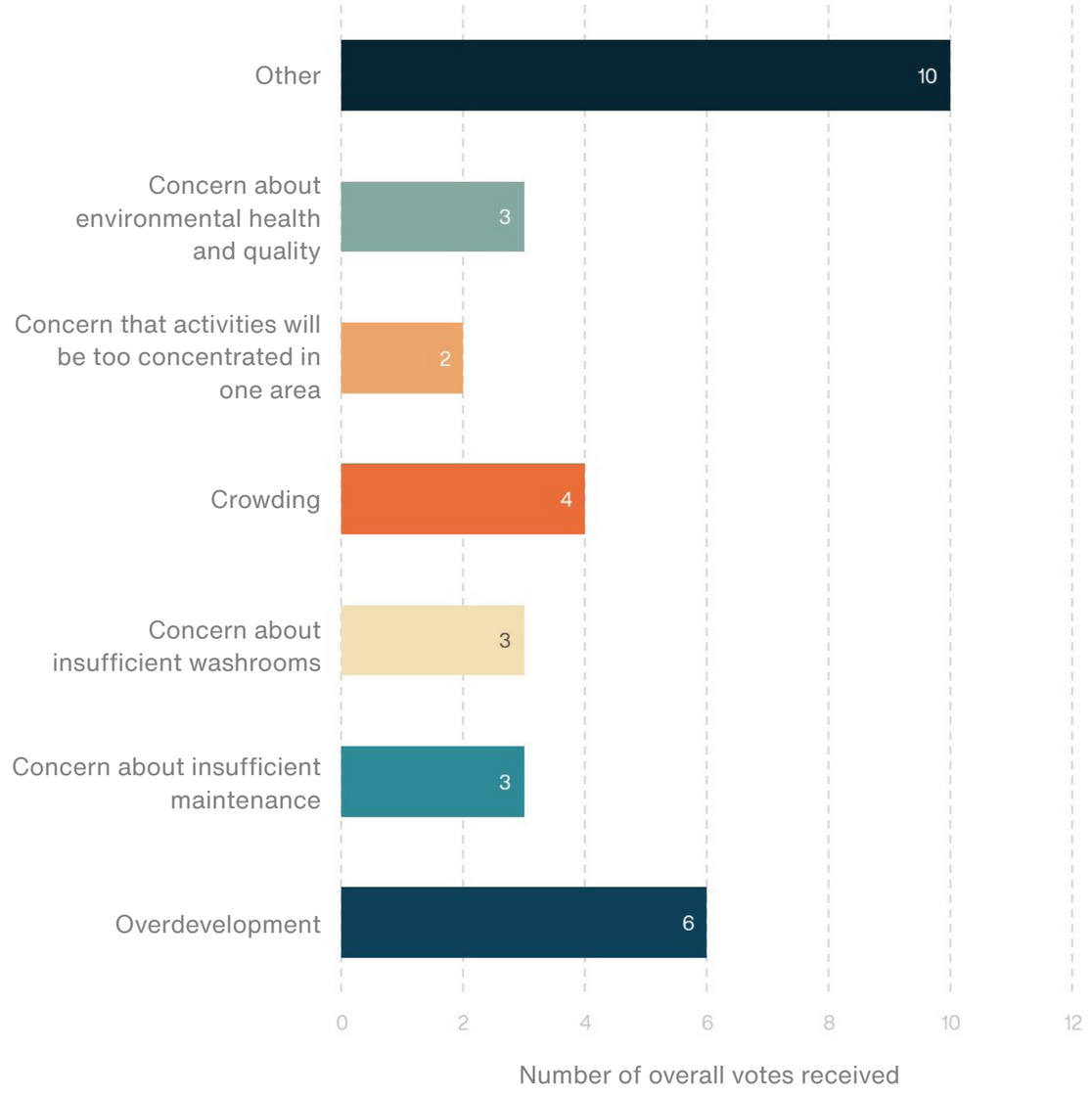
Gains - Next



Pains - Now



Pains - Next



9. Share your Ideas



Relationship to Barrie Waterfront

48 ideas were suggested during the public engagement period, with over **230 votes** supporting participant's favourite ideas.

Common themes for ideas include:

- ↗ Swimming & beach access improvements
- ↗ New or improved sports & activities
- ↗ New or improved vendor and food/beverage service options
- ↗ Support for local artists or musicians
- ↗ Economic and tourism opportunities
- ↗ Ways to improve park use year-round or at night
- ↗ Improvements to waterfront safety and comfort

22 votes ↗	"Add a space for vendors and artists"
11 votes ↗	"Space for musicians to perform together"
17 votes ↗	"Build a pier and a boardwalk along the waterfront."
11 votes ↗	"Add stores, sit in restaurants, Ferris wheel, lights for night walking"
20 votes ↗	"Bring back mini golf to the waterfront. It would provide fun for all, jobs for young people & revenue for the City of Barrie"
9 votes ↗	"Create more/unique opportunities for public swimming in all seasons"

Participant submitted precedent images:



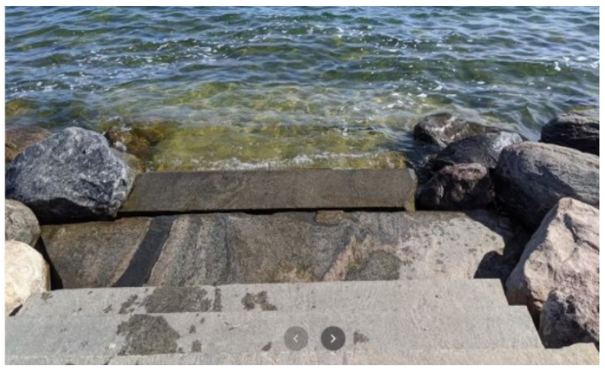
Winter Skating Activity







Suggested New Waterfront Access Points



Water Access Steps



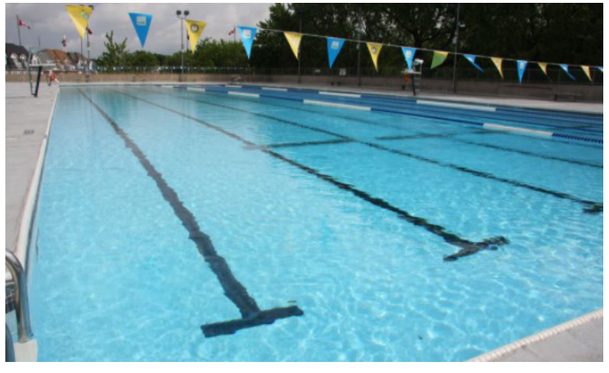
Performance Area



Waterfront Hotel



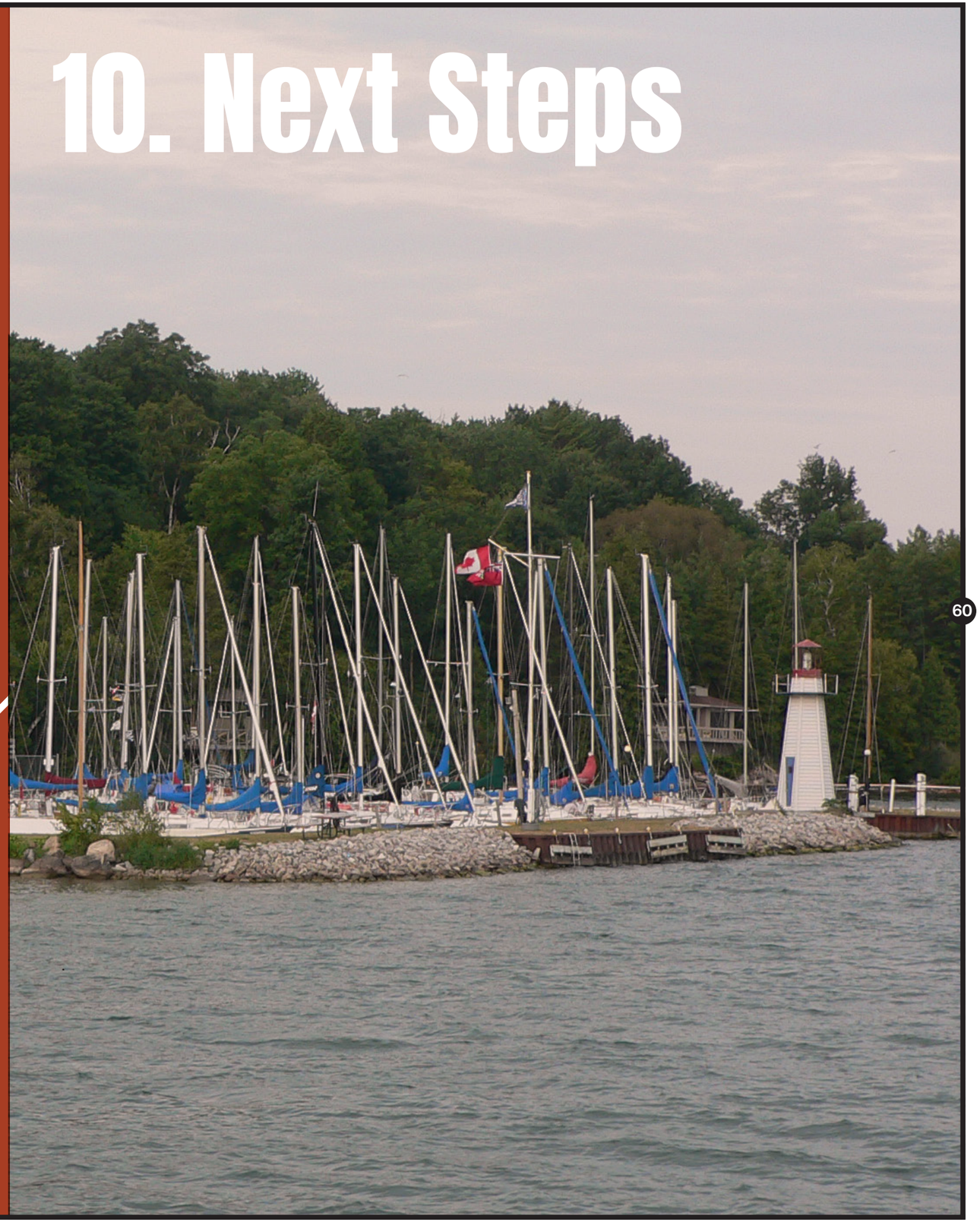
Underwater Park Idea



Public Outdoor Pool/Swimming Ideas



10. Next Steps



Next Steps

1. Further Stakeholder Engagement

The project team will continue to consult with key external stakeholders including Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee, and local Indigenous Groups.

2. Apply What We Heard

This Summary Engagement Report, along with the results of the external stakeholder engagements, will be integrated into the Waterfront Strategic Plan as it is drafted. The directions, values, and preferences of the public will guide and shape the plan as our planning, design, and engineering teams advance the plan and technical components.

3. Draft Plan Review

Once the Waterfront Strategic Plan is drafted, the project team will conduct another round of Public Consultation to review the draft plan. This will inform the final plan and ensure that the plan is community-informed in a way that reflects the values and direction of residents.

The second Public Information Centre Meeting is scheduled for June 22, 2022.

IBI × Barrie

May 2022