

# City of Bridgeport

## Plan of Conservation and Development

### Open Space Thematic Meeting

#### Discovery Museum

6PM, Tuesday, August 28, 2018

---



On August 28, 2018, the City of Bridgeport Master Plan of Conservation and Development project team held their first thematic meeting related to open space, open space planning and the parks system. The purpose of this meeting was to review best practices for open space planning, identify relevant priorities from the meeting attendees, and identify strengths, issues and new ideas for improving the parks system. Seventeen (17) members of the public were in attendance.

The project team began the meeting by introducing the Master Plan and clarifying how open space planning relates to the larger picture of the Plan. Horsley-Witten, subconsultants to the Master Planning effort, presented on best practices learned from work in other similar cities. Following the presentation, the meeting attendees were given clickers to vote in real-time on interactive survey questions that helped to identify the group's priorities relevant to Bridgeport's parks and open spaces (results below). Attendees broke out into groups to identify the strengths, challenges, and new ideas for reforming and improving Bridgeport's parks and open space system (summarized below).

#### **Breakout Session Notes**

The statements below are a summary of the opinions expressed by meeting attendees. The statements do not necessarily reflect City policy or objective facts.

#### Strengths of Bridgeport's Open Space System:

- Olmsted legacy fortifies Bridgeport's nickname as Park City
- Waterfront access and seaside has potential for connecting neighborhoods
- Pleasure beach and Remington Woods
- North side of Bridgeport has more than 40% tree coverage
- Potential properties for new neighborhood parks
- Wildlife in parks and near neighborhoods
- Improved water quality and prevalence of fish species
- Programming such as Arts Fest, Farmers Markets, and Downtown Thursdays
- Cleanliness of downtown parks
- Pedestrian and public transit access to parks is good

- Parks and green spaces have rich history
- Parks have capability to host special events, especially larger-scale events
- Zoo in Bridgeport is impressive
- Diversity of park types
- Picnic and gathering areas
- New parks are still developing
- Pieces of a bike trail are already in place
- Seaside Park's Bandshell is an important community amenity
- Urban and community farms
- Fishing access

#### Issues and Challenges with Bridgeport's Open Space System:

- South side of Bridgeport has less than 6% tree coverage which produces inequity between the North and South
- Increase connectivity through private property owner maintenance and reduced street trees
- East End is neglected
- Budget is too low to cover park maintenance and improvements
- Need more community involvement and community investment in parks
- Need more partnerships with non-profits to program and fund parks
- No places for kids to bike safely
- Park maintenance is a problem, specifically Beardsley Park
- Management of pet waste in parks, on sidewalks and in neighborhoods
- Lighting is needed to increase safety in the neighborhood parks
- Smaller parks get less attention in terms of maintenance and programming
- Lack of amenities in many of the parks
- Need more programming and activation of the parks and open spaces
- When large cultural events happen at Seaside, the park is often closed to other visitors
- Lack of bike lanes connecting to parks
- Swimming pool
- Improve water quality
- Improve waterfront access
- Re-open beach houses
- Equitable distribution of amenities inside park
- Permitting process is difficult to navigate
- Need more activity options at Beardsley Park with enough parking for the events
- Territorial barriers prevent people from exploring all parks and neighborhoods
- Awareness of available amenities varies
- Loss of the Blue Fish team negatively impacted recreation of Bridgeport
- Pleasure Beach needs more educational components
- Seaside Park needs basketball courts
- Parks are underutilized

#### Ideas for Improving Bridgeport's Open Space System:

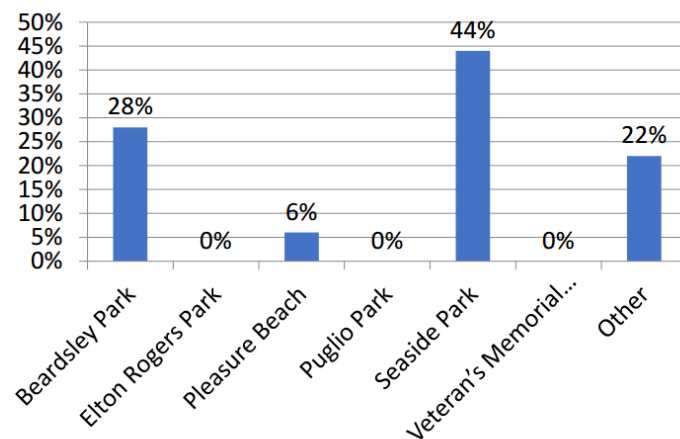
- Turn open space into bike recreation space

- Plan for urban forestry management
- Increased and improved access to Pleasure Beach
- Increase active programming with focus on youth in parks
- Create “Friends of” group for parks
- Work with NRZ’s to create programming ideas
- Standardize park branding and built materials
- Convert unused open space into parks
- Ask developers to add percentages to developing open space
- Create a designated park for recreational vehicles so people do not use them in the streets
- Utilize more art in the parks to connect neighborhoods
- Create programming similar to Shakespeare in the Park
- Have movie nights in the parks
- Need more collaboration between city and relevant organizations
- Need night activities for youth, such as midnight basketball
- Incentivize beautification projects with youth
- Create activities for parks with the Health Department
- Create a food truck strip in the parks
- Promote Bridgeport’s history through the parks, for example, Little Liberia

## Interactive Survey Results

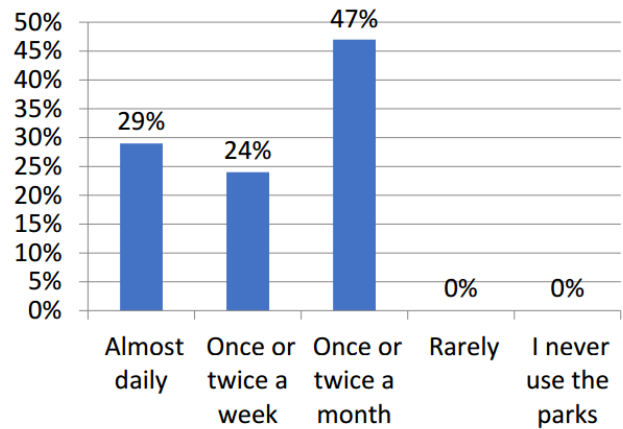
### What parks do you use the most?

1. Beardsley Park
2. Elton Rogers Park
3. Pleasure Beach
4. Puglio Park
5. Seaside Park
6. Veteran’s Memorial Park
7. Other



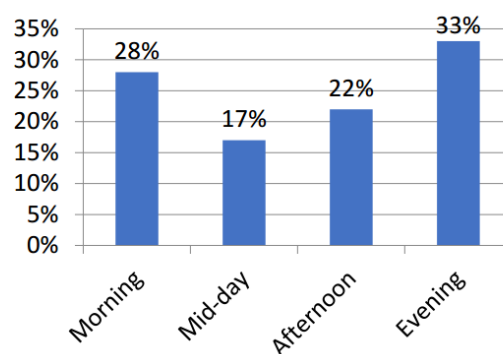
## How often do you use the parks?

1. Almost daily
2. Once or twice a week
3. Once or twice a month
4. Rarely
5. I never use the parks



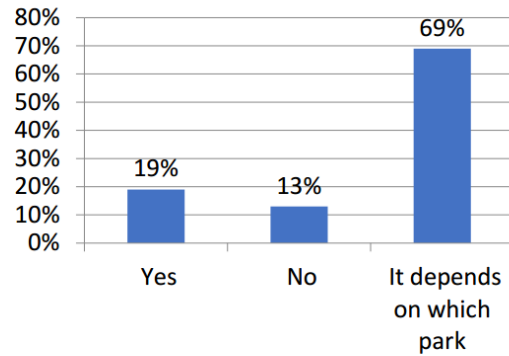
## What hours do you typically use the parks?

1. Morning
2. Mid-day
3. Afternoon
4. Evening



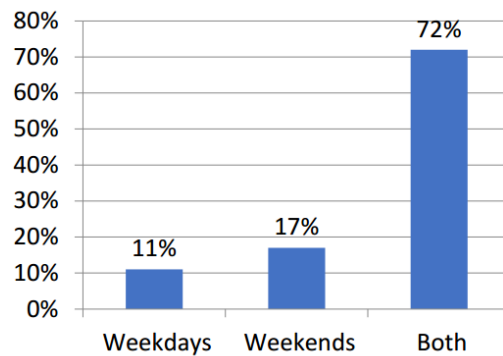
## Should park hours be expanded?

1. Yes
2. No
3. It depends on which park



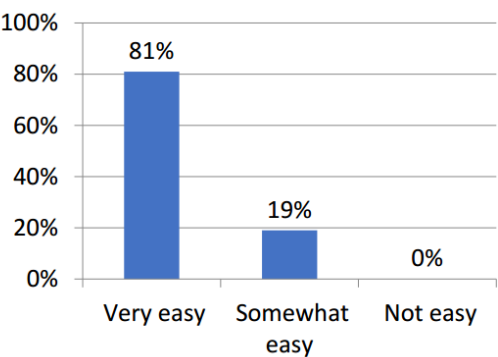
## What days do you typically use the parks?

1. Weekdays
2. Weekends
3. Both



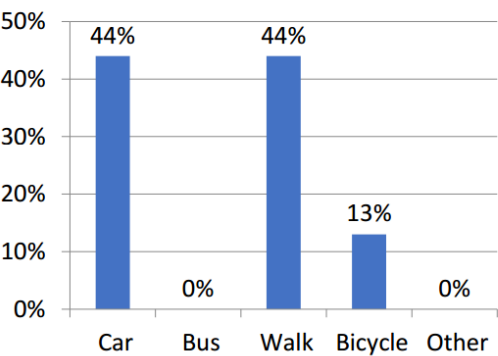
# How easy is it for you to get to the parks?

- 1. Very easy
- 2. Somewhat easy
- 3. Not easy



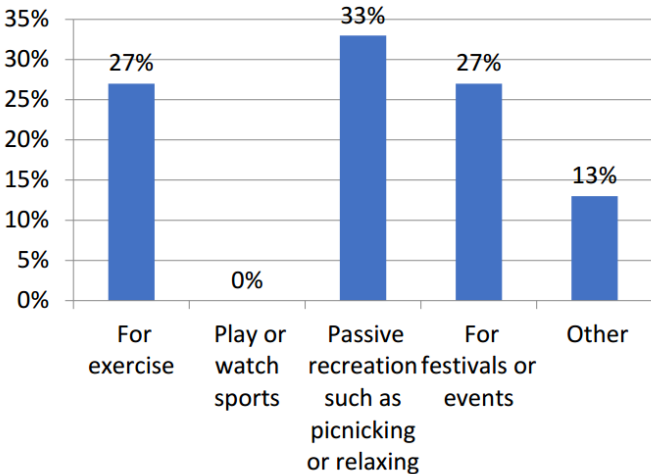
# How do you usually get to the parks?

- 1. Car
- 2. Bus
- 3. Walk
- 4. Bicycle
- 5. Other



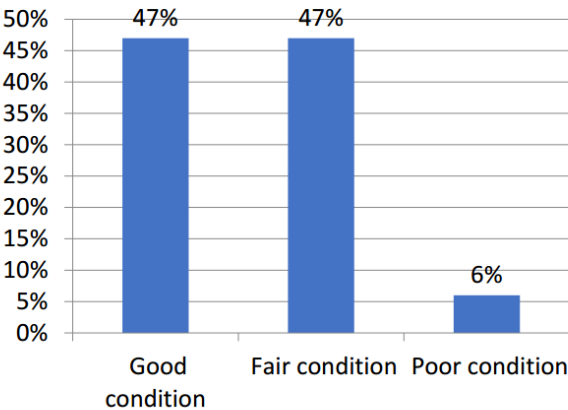
# How do you typically use the parks?

- 1. For exercise
- 2. Play or watch sports
- 3. Passive recreation such as picnicking or relaxing
- 4. For festivals or events
- 5. Other



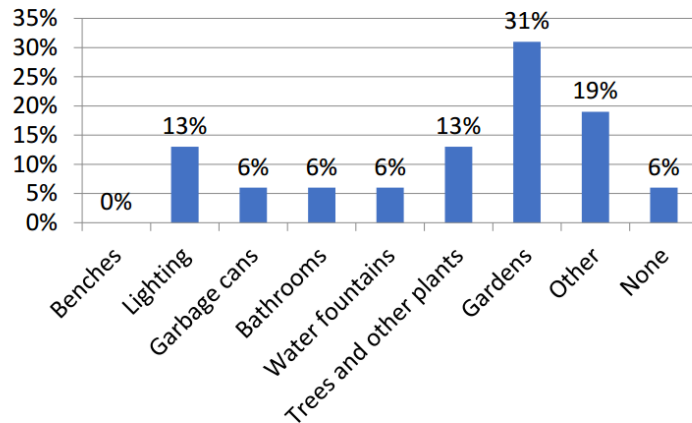
# How would you rate the condition of the parks?

- 1. Good condition
- 2. Fair condition
- 3. Poor condition



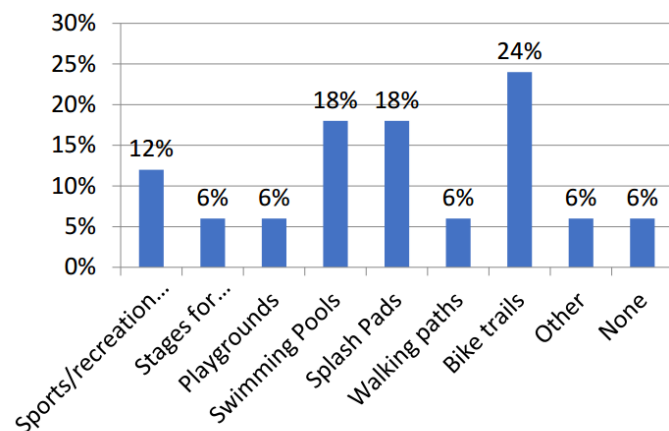
## What amenity is most needed in the parks?

1. Benches
2. Lighting
3. Garbage cans
4. Bathrooms
5. Water fountains
6. Trees and other plants
7. Gardens
8. Other
9. None



## What type of park facility is most needed in the parks?

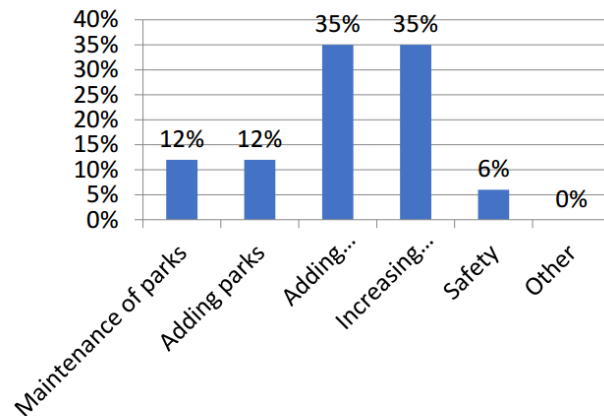
1. Sports/recreation fields
2. Stages for performances
3. Playgrounds
4. Swimming Pools
5. Splash Pads
6. Walking paths
7. Bike trails
8. Other
9. None





## What should the City's top priority be regarding the parks?

1. Maintenance of parks
2. Adding parks
3. Adding trails/greenways
4. Increasing recreation programs/ services
5. Safety
6. Other



---

### **Project Team**

- Lynn Haig – City of Bridgeport
- Dean Mack – City of Bridgeport
- Francisco Gomes – FHI
- Zainab Kazmi – FHI
- Nate Kelly – Horsley-Witten
- Craig Pereira – Horsley-Witten