

# Online Survey Summary Report

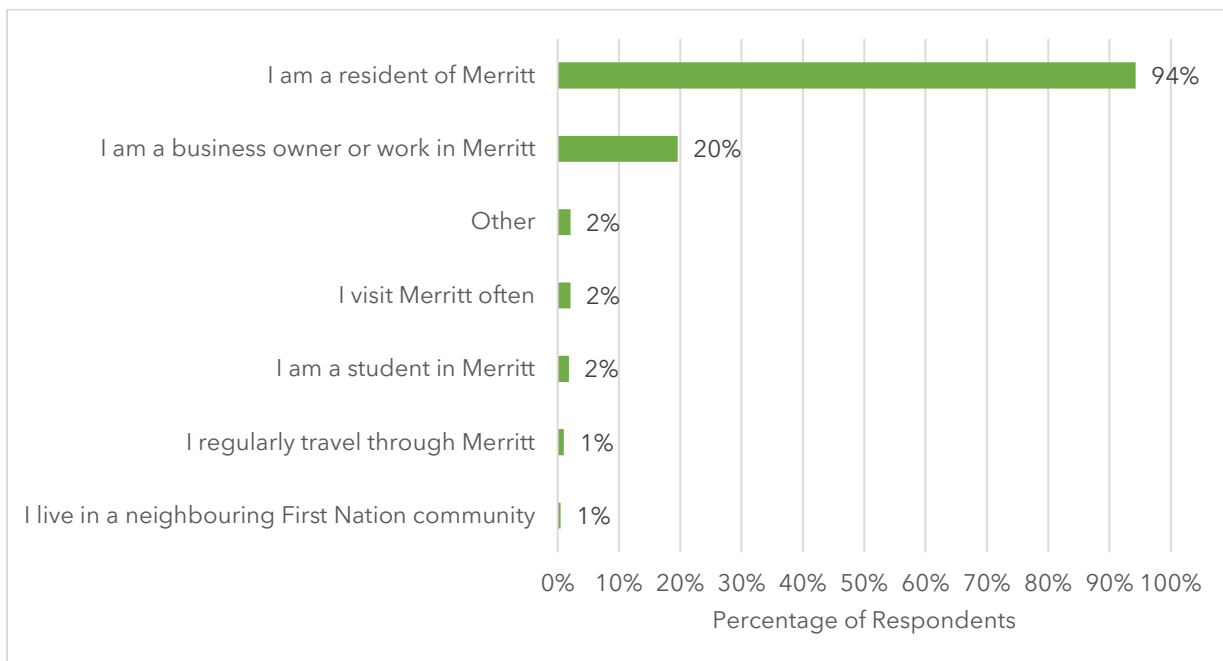
As part of the initial engagement for the City of Merritt North Bench Neighbourhood Development Plan, a survey was made available to community members from August 31, 2020 to September 14, 2020. The purpose of the survey was to gain an understanding on current use of the North Bench by local residents, as well as seek input on potential future land uses. The survey was made available through the City’s website and hard copies were also made available at the Merritt Farmer’s Market.

The survey received a total of 383 responses. Respondents were allowed to skip questions, submit the survey at any point, and pick multiple answers for select questions. Responses from open-ended questions were reviewed and summarized by the themes that emerged. The following sections summarize what was heard from the survey.

## 1.0 Tell Us About Yourself

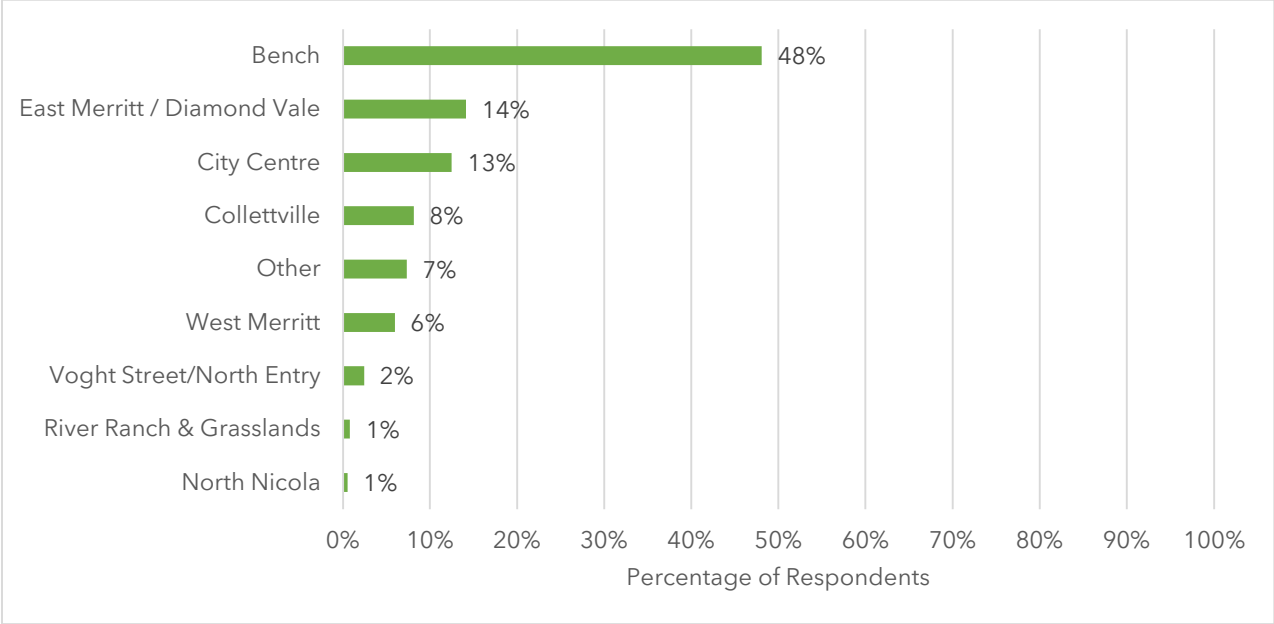
The survey started by asking respondents questions aimed at gaining a better understanding on who was participating in the survey. Almost all respondents were residents of Merritt (94%), with 20% indicating they were businesses owners or worked in Merritt. The majority of the respondents who selected ‘other’ indicated that they lived in Lower Nicola.

*Which best describes you? Please select all that apply.*



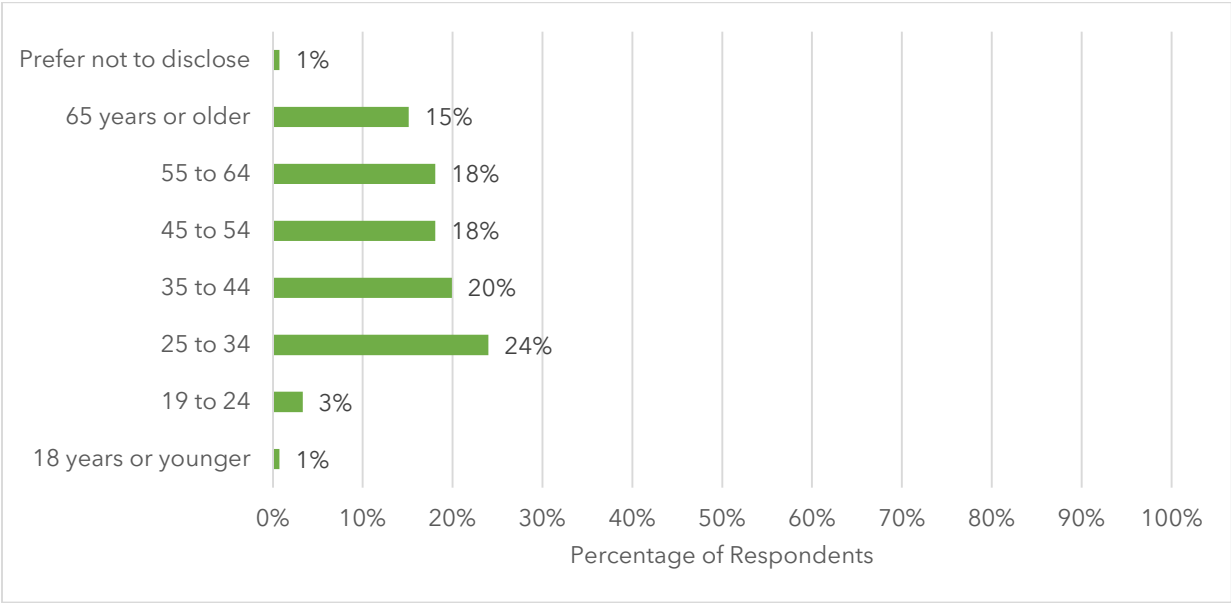
Those that indicated they were residents of Merritt were then asked which neighbourhood they resided in. Nearly half of all respondents (48%) were from the Bench Sector, followed by East Merritt/Diamond Vale (14%) and the City Centre (13%).

*If you are a resident of Merritt, which neighbourhood do you live in?*



While the survey received input from respondents across a wide range of age groups, there was limited participation from individuals 24 years old or younger.

*What is your age?*



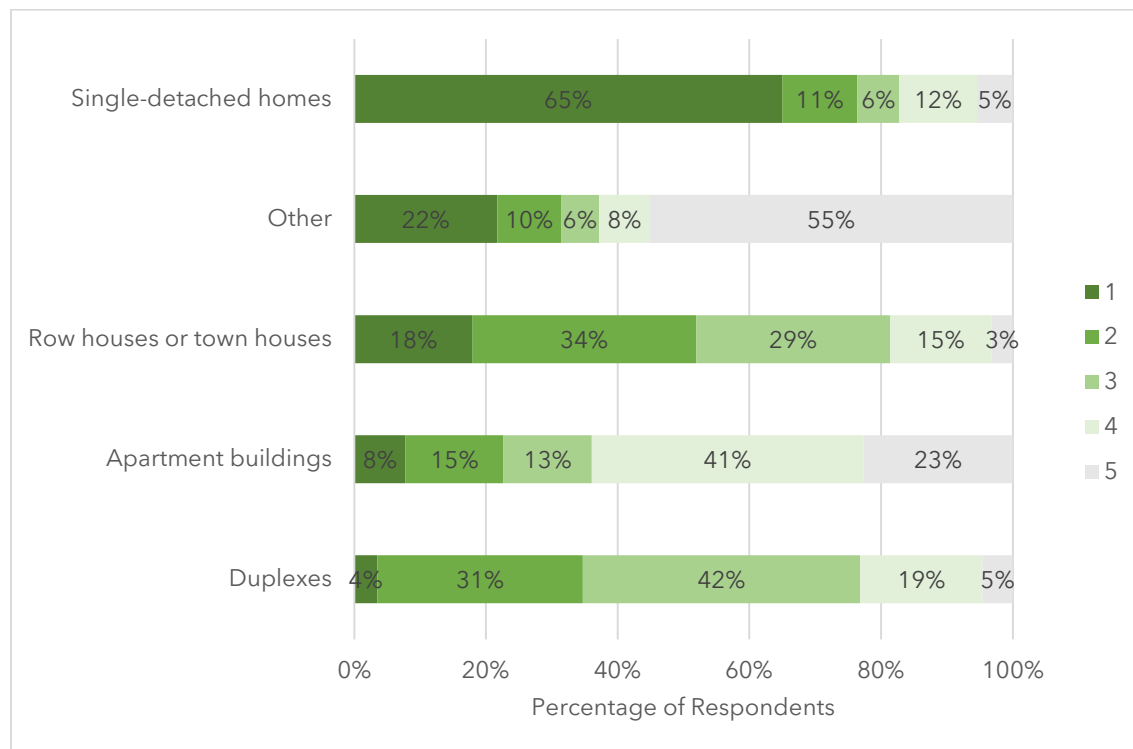
## 2.0 Housing and Development

Respondents were asked questions related to potential residential housing, as well as other forms of future development in the North Bench area.

### Types of Housing

Respondents were provided a list of various housing types/densities and asked to rank their preference for future housing at the North Bench. Single-detached homes were ranked as the most desired housing type (65%). Duplexes, row houses, or town houses were most commonly ranked as the second or third most desired type of housing.

*Please rank the types of housing you would like to see in the North Bench area (1 being the most preferred).*



Themes from respondents that selected 'other' types of housing are summarized below:

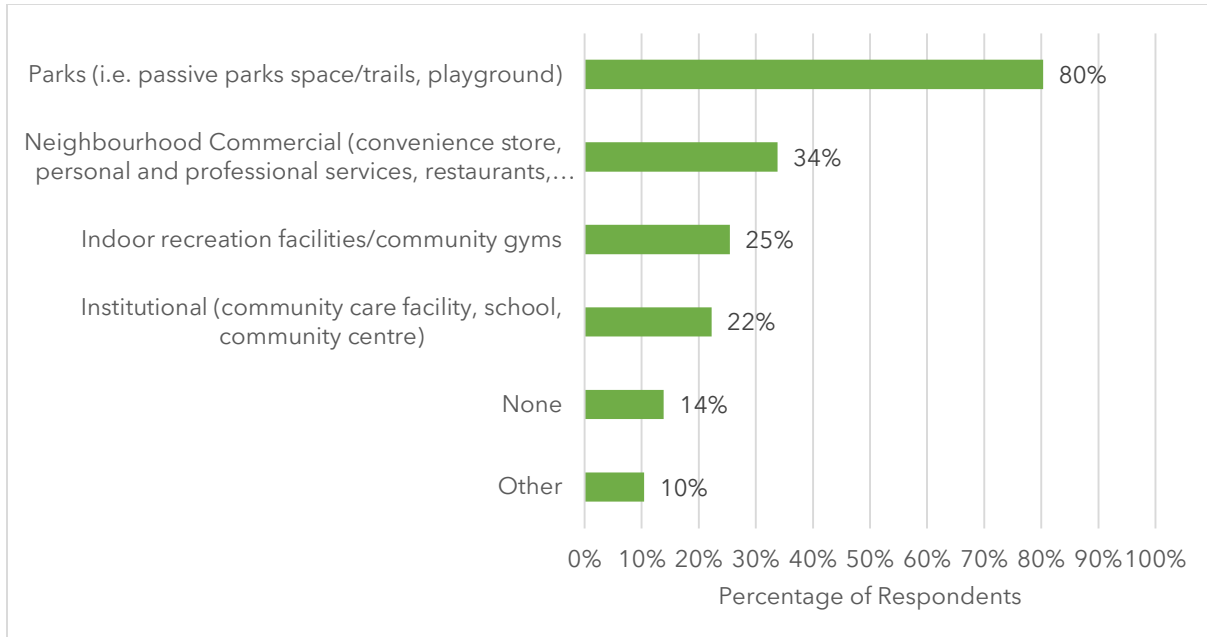
- Affordable housing or low-income housing (10 respondents)
- Tiny homes (8 respondents)
- Senior housing (6 respondents)
- Single-detached homes or mansions on large lots (4 respondents)
- Carriage homes (3 respondents)
- Modular homes (3 respondents)
- Cabins or campground (2 respondents)
- Gated community (2 respondents)
- High-rise apartment (2 respondents)
- Co-op housing
- Condo
- Mixed-use
- Small farms

57 respondents indicated that they do not want to see any housing developed in the area.

## Other Forms of Development

Respondents were asked to identify other forms of development (besides residential housing), they would like to see in a future North Bench neighbourhood. Parks were the most common selection (80%), followed by neighborhood commercial (34%).

*What other development, if any, would you like to see in this area? Please select all that apply.*

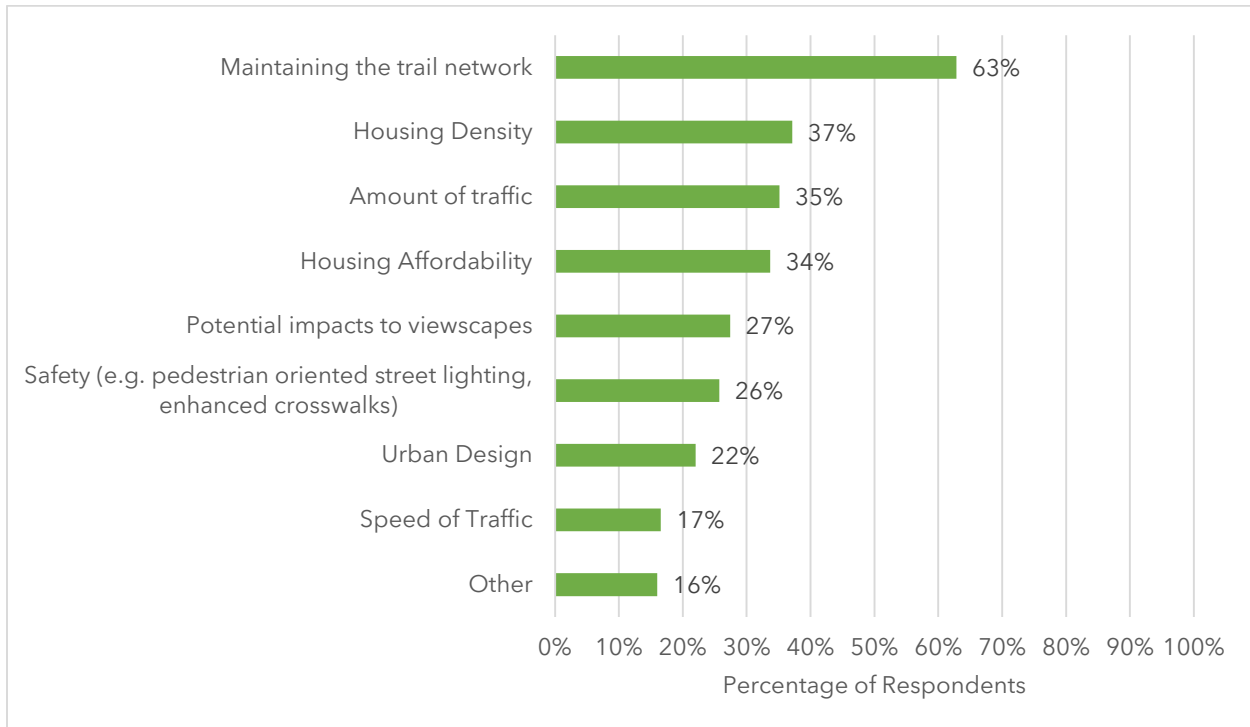


Themes from respondents that selected 'other' are summarized below:

- Nature spaces (e.g. educational botanical garden, nature-based preschool, outdoor amphitheater, bird sanctuary) (4 respondents)
- Mini golf (2 respondents)
- Soccer field (2 respondents)
- Campgrounds (2 respondents)
- Renewable energy facility
- Parking lots to access trails
- Offices
- Dog park

Respondents were provided a list of common concerns related to a potential new neighbourhood development at the North Bench and were asked to identify their top three concerns. Respondents were most concerned about maintaining the current trail network (63%), followed by concerns related to housing density and affordability (37%) and traffic (35%).

*Please select the top three (3) concerns you have regarding development in the North Bench Area.*

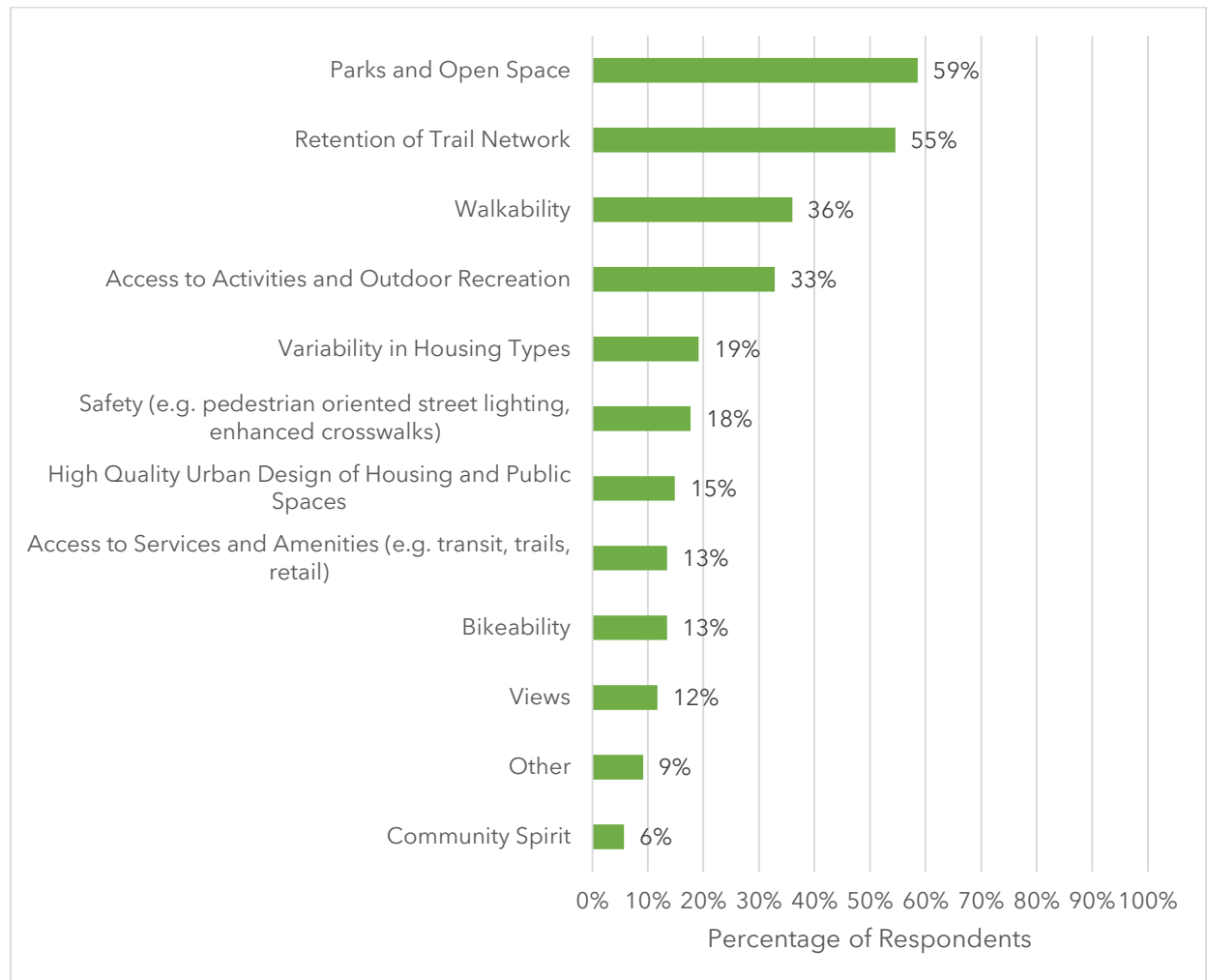


Themes from respondents that selected 'other' are provided below:

- Lack of water pressure / demand for water supply (19 respondents)
- Environmental degradation to natural landscape and encroachment on wildlife habitats (13 respondents)
- Forest fires hazards / wildfire mitigation (3 respondents)
- Affordability of homes (3 respondents)
- Accessibility (2 respondents)
- Lack of jobs and industry
- Lack of nearby medical services
- Organized crime
- Competition of businesses
- Increased motorized vehicle use
- Overcrowded school
- Construction noise

Respondents were provided with a list of land use planning considerations associated with potential development at the North Bench. They were then asked to select the three considerations that they valued most. As shown in the figure below, respondents generally valued considerations associated with outdoor recreation and parks and open space the most. Variability in housing types was also seen as one of the more important aspect to respondents (19%).

*Please select the top three (3) aspects you value regarding a future neighbourhood in the North Bench area.*

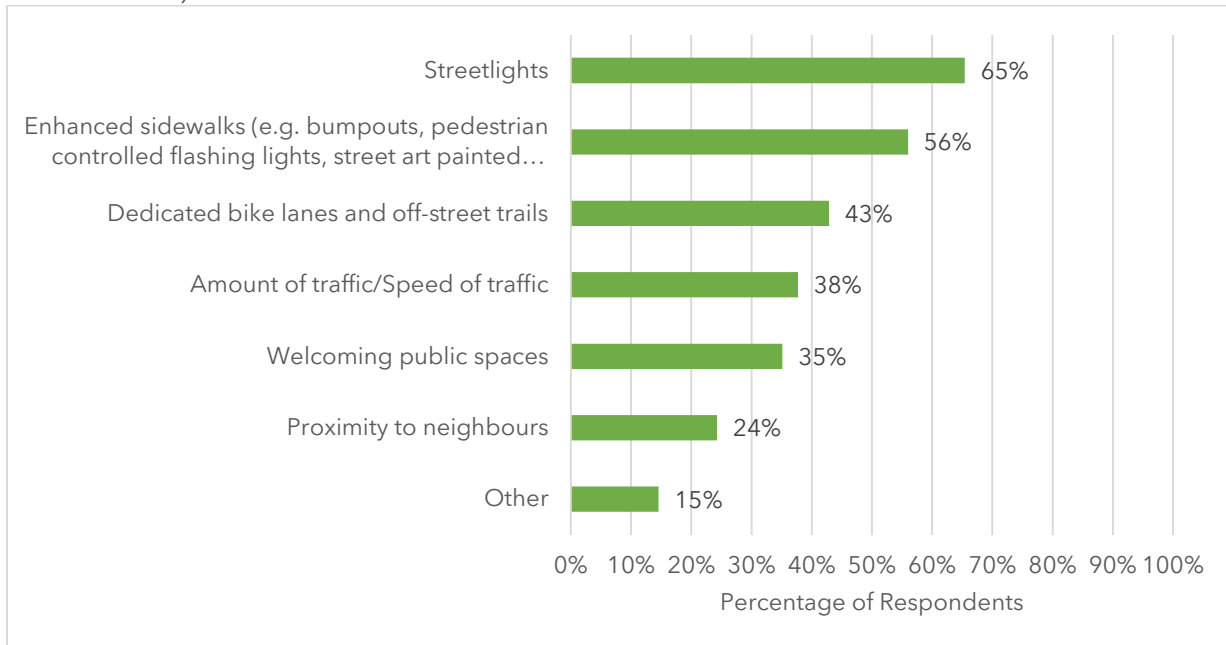


Themes from respondents that selected 'other' are provided below:

- Affordability of housing (5 respondents)
- Privacy and quietness of neighbourhood (3 respondents)
- Clean air and natural landscapes (2 respondents)
- A traffic plan (2 respondents)
- Parking

Public safety and security elements can be promoted through effective urban design. Respondents were provided with a list of safety and security elements and were asked to rank the three that made them feel the most safe. Streetlights (65%), enhanced sidewalks (56%), and dedicated bike lanes and off-street trails (43%) were the top three elements selected. Seven respondents who selected 'other' suggested that increased regular police patrols in the area would be needed. Another respondent commented that owner-occupied housing and local landlords would allow residents to know their neighbours and promote community safety.

*Please select the top 3 elements of a neighbourhood that make you feel the most safe (1 being the safest element).*

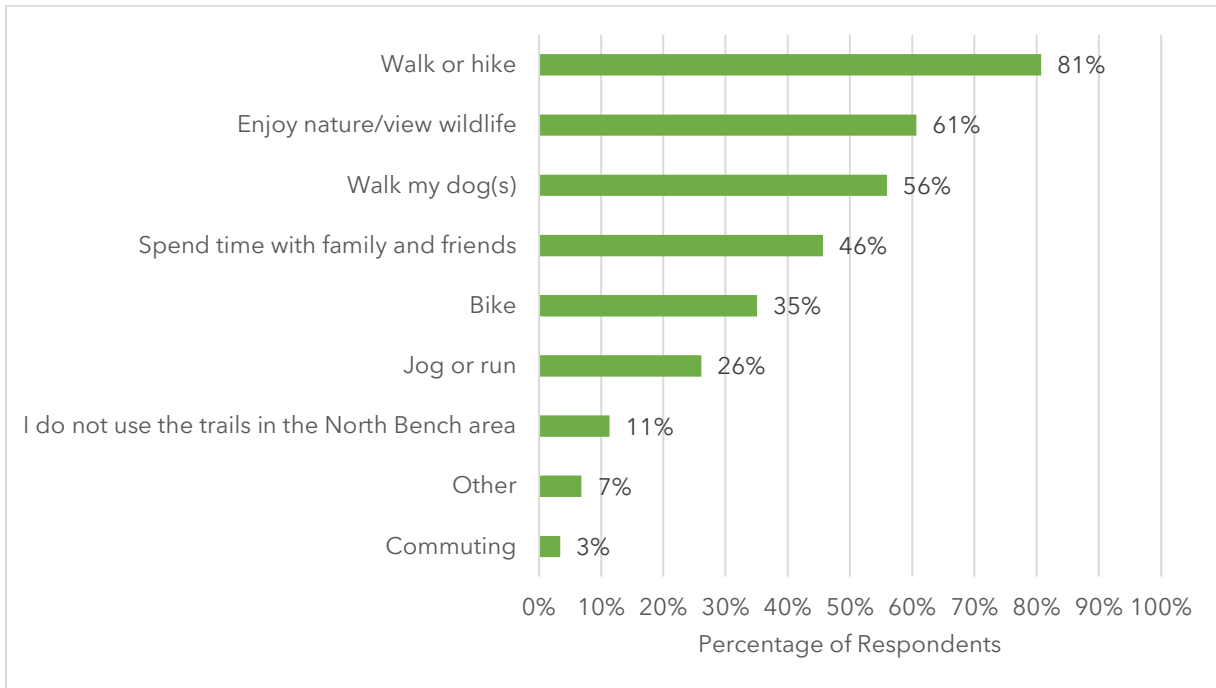


### 3.0 Trails and Recreation

This section of the survey asked respondents about their current and potential future recreational usage in the North Bench area.

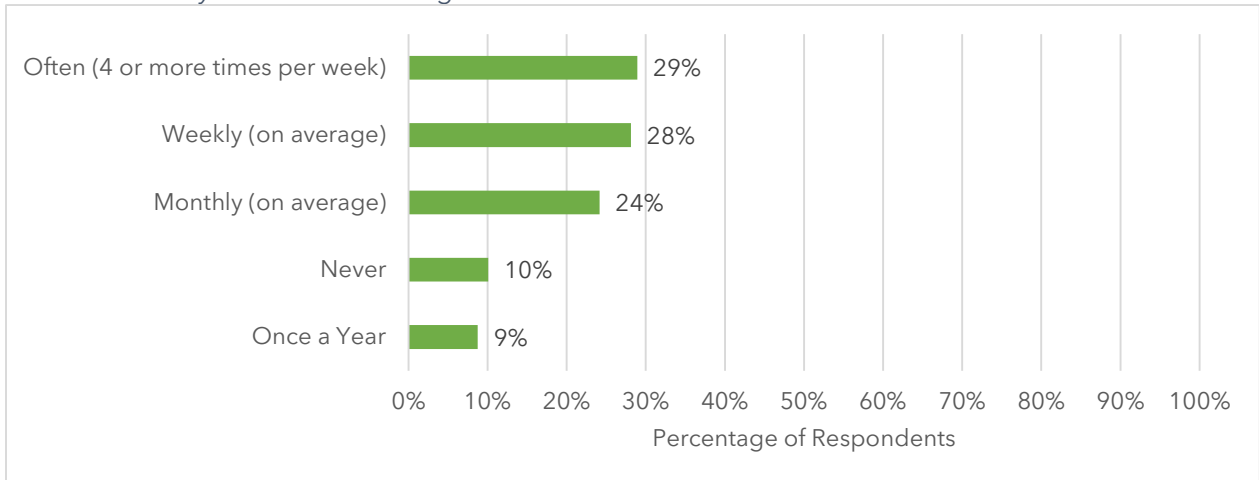
Almost all respondents (81%) indicated that they use trails in the North Bench area to walk or hike. Respondents also use the trails for other activities including; enjoying nature or viewing wildlife (61%), walking their dogs (56%), or spending time with family and friends (46%). A number of respondents that selected 'other' indicated that they use the trails for motorized recreation, including dirt biking or ATVs (18 respondents). Snowshoeing (1 respondent), meditating (1 respondent), and scavenger hunts (1 respondent) were other responses received.

How have you used the existing trails network in the North Bench area? Please select all that apply.



Respondents were also asked how often they use trails in the North Bench area.

How often have you used the existing trails network in the North Bench area?





A disc golf course is being proposed for the upper portions of the planning area. Respondents were asked about their potential usage of such a facility.

*How often do you think you would utilize the disc golf course?*

