



AGENDA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

November 17, 2021, 9:30 AM
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER

Members

Councillor K. Penner, Chair
Councillor R. Pootmans, Vice-Chair
Councillor G-C. Carra
Councillor R. Dhaliwal
Councillor C. Walcott
Councillor T. Wong
Councillor J. Wyness
Mayor J. Gondek, Ex-Officio

SPECIAL NOTES:

*Public are encouraged to follow Council and Committee meetings using the live stream
www.calgary.ca/watchlive*

Public wishing to make a written submission and/or request to speak may do so using the public submission form at the following link: [Public Submission Form](#)

Members may be participating remotely.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. OPENING REMARKS
3. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA
4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
 - 4.1. Minutes of the Community Development Committee, 2021 November 1
5. CONSENT AGENDA
 - 5.1. DEFERRALS AND PROCEDURAL REQUESTS

6. POSTPONED REPORTS
(including related/supplemental reports)

None

7. ITEMS FROM OFFICERS, ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEES

7.1. Alcohol in Parks – Program Update, CD2021-1564

8. ITEMS DIRECTLY TO COMMITTEE

8.1. REFERRED REPORTS
None

8.2. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION
None

9. URGENT BUSINESS

10. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS

10.1. ITEMS FROM OFFICERS, ADMINISTRATION AND COMMITTEES
None

10.2. URGENT BUSINESS

11. BRIEFINGS

11.1. Update on Accessible Taxi Incentive Program, CD2021-1559

12. ADJOURNMENT



MINUTES

IMMEDIATELY UPON THE RECESS OF THE 2021 NOVEMBER 01 ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

**November 1, 2021
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER**

PRESENT: Councillor K. Penner, Chair
Councillor R. Pootmans, Vice-Chair
Councillor G-C. Carra
Councillor R. Dhaliwal (Remote Participation)
Councillor C. Walcott
Councillor T. Wong
Councillor J. Wyness (Remote Participation)

ALSO PRESENT: City Clerk K. Martin
Legislative Advisor J. Palaschuk

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The City Clerk called the Community Development Committee Meeting to order at 11:45 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Councillor Carra, Councillor Dhaliwal, Councillor Penner, Councillor Pootmans, Councillor Walcott, Councillor Wong, and Councillor Wyness.

2. **ELECTION OF CHAIR**

Following nomination procedures, Councillor Penner was elected Chair of the Community Development Committee, by acclamation.

3. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

Following nomination procedures, Councillor Pootmans was elected Vice-Chair of the Community Development Committee, by acclamation.

4. **ADJOURNMENT**

Moved by Councillor Carra

That this meeting adjourn at 11:47 a.m.

MOTION CARRIED

The next Regular Meeting of the Community Development Committee is scheduled to be held on 2021 November 17 at 9:30 a.m.

CONFIRMED BY COMMITTEE ON

CHAIR

CITY CLERK

UNCONFIRMED

Alcohol in Parks – Program Update

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council approve the continuation and expansion of the Alcohol in Parks program.

HIGHLIGHTS

- This report provides the results of the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program (the program) and recommends the program continue with some changes for improvement and expansion.
- *What does this mean to Calgarians?* This program provides additional outdoor opportunities to encourage use of parks and provides a connection to nature and each other.
- *Why does this matter?* The program is particularly important for Calgarians who do not have a backyard to socialize with family and friends for outdoor gatherings, especially when indoor gatherings may not be advisable due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The pilot program demonstrated that participants consumed alcohol responsibly, without public disruptions. The pilot received almost 1,600 bookings plus non-booked use, with only two formal complaints.
- Those who did not agree with implementation of the program did not cite this as a reason to avoid parks. Conversely, participants of the program reported increased use, with 73 per cent visiting parks more often and 76 per cent visiting parks they had not been to before.
- Planned program improvements include the following and can be completed within existing budgets:
 - Reallocate and expand table locations, particularly in areas where Calgarians do not have a private backyard, and allow for quicker and easier booking
 - Designate entire parks, or portions of a park, as picnic sites where alcohol can be consumed
 - Allow alcohol at the winter firepit program in parks
- Through Notice of Motion PFC2021-0618, on 2021 May 10, Council directed Administration to allow for consumption of alcohol at park picnic sites as a pilot in summer 2021, and report back on outcomes no later than 2021 November.
- Strategic Alignment to Council's Citizen Priorities: A city of safe and inspiring neighbourhoods

DISCUSSION

This summer, The City launched a pilot program which allowed alcohol to be consumed at designated picnic tables throughout Calgary. The objective of the program was to provide Calgarians with more outdoor social opportunities during the COVID pandemic when indoor visitors were not permitted, especially for citizens who did not have a backyard to host family or friends outdoors.

Alcohol in Parks - Program Update

The program aligned with the Alberta *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act* (the Act) that allows owners of public parks to designate picnic sites for alcohol consumption. For the purposes of the pilot program picnic tables were used for a controlled pilot. However, larger areas can be declared through the existing Act, by designating an entire park, or portion of, as a large picnic area. (Attachment 2 outlines further details of the current Act.) It should be noted the Government of Alberta recently introduced amendments to the Act through Bill 80, to allow “Entertainment Districts”. This provides municipalities the ability to allow consumption of alcohol in public within a designated area. Preliminary analysis suggests these amendments will not have a bearing on the program, as the proposed expansion can be done within the existing Act. Should Bill 80 pass we will assess the possibilities that those changes would provide, implications for this program including areas outside of Parks, and adjust as required.

From June to September 2021, 58 tables were designated for alcohol consumption throughout community parks in Calgary. To ensure quick implementation, only existing tables not near a playground or on a school site were used based on feedback to avoid child focused areas. Tables in busy regional parks were also avoided in the pilot program to deter crowds during the pandemic.

The pilot program was very successful with 1,556 bookings in addition to first come first served use, and stakeholder engagement showed support for the program. There were very few issues with only two complaints submitted through 311 regarding litter and public urination, and no issues reported by Police, Bylaw or Parks operations. Tables were most popular in high-density communities or areas with multi-family units. Participants indicated the program could be improved if there was an ability to move around (e.g. lawn games or mingling) and less red tape with the booking process.

A significant concern raised by Alberta Health Services (AHS) was that the program could be contrary to Calgary’s Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, approved by Council in March 2021, as AHS felt there was potential that some individuals might feel less welcome in parks where alcohol is permitted and avoid these public spaces (e.g. due to beliefs or recovering from addiction). Research indicated this was not a factor in Calgarians’ choice to visit a park, and the program increased parks visitation overall.

As a result of very positive feedback, coupled with minimal concerns, the program is recommended to continue and expand in response to public demand. Impact of the program on businesses and festivals when health restrictions lift should be monitored as expansion occurs.

For 2022, planned improvements include:

- 1) Designating entire parks or portions of parks as picnic sites where alcohol consumption is allowed, starting with approximately ten parks in summer 2022.
- 2) Creating new single table locations in high-density areas to better serve citizens without a backyard. This may require the purchase of new tables to place in areas away from

Alcohol in Parks - Program Update

playgrounds. Up to 20 new tables could be placed in 2022, which could be done within existing Parks budgets.

- 3) Including some larger bookable picnic sites with many tables in the program, to better create the 'backyard experience'.
- 4) Permitting alcohol at winter firepits in parks to further the Winter City Strategy and encourage outdoor activities in colder months.
- 5) Making the program easier to use by allowing instant booking, improving ability to locate designated tables, and improving the website.

More detailed information on findings, including experiences of other jurisdictions, and future plans are found in Attachment 2.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION (EXTERNAL)

- ☒ Public Engagement was undertaken
- ☐ Public Communication or Engagement was not required
- ☐ Public/Stakeholders were informed
- ☐ Stakeholder dialogue/relations were undertaken

A Citizens' View Panel gauged opinions of the general public, with 1,253 panelists completing the survey. Full results are in Attachment 3. The Citizens' View Panel is sent to a sample of Calgarians who signed up to participate in surveys. This sample is not statistically representative of all Calgarians, since respondents tend to be older and some geographic areas are not well represented. Survey highlights include:

- 65 per cent of respondents support the program and 33 per cent opposed it.
- 36 per cent feel they would use the program if it is available next year.
- 12 per cent felt the program had a negative impact, citing potential exposure to public drunkenness and irresponsible adults, or generally disagreeing with alcohol consumption in parks.

A second survey gathered feedback from Calgarians who directly participated in the program, with 269 people responding. Full results of this survey are in Attachment 4. Results indicated an overall positive experience with the program:

- 92 per cent reported the program enhanced their park experience
- 73 per cent indicated their park visitation increased because of the program
- 66 per cent indicated they used the program because they did not have a backyard
- 45 per cent used transportation other than a motor vehicle to get to the table

Alcohol in Parks - Program Update

IMPLICATIONS

Social

This program provides an opportunity to enjoy the benefits of socializing outdoors. Without the program, the ability to have a beer or glass of wine with a barbeque or picnic is limited to those who have access to a private backyard. This is particularly important during the pandemic as there are less recreational and social options for Calgarians to participate in.

Environmental

This program encouraged citizens to connect with nature, as participants reported they visited parks more because of the program. A connection with nature will develop a sense of advocacy for our Parks and natural areas.

Economic

The program likely has a neutral economic impact. At the beginning of the pilot, some restaurants were concerned the program could lure customers away. However, other businesses started to offer "take away" picnics including a bottle of wine, which could then be taken to a table in the program. Impact to businesses and festivals, should be further assessed as the program grows.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing capital funding - base

The cost of purchasing and installing new tables in 2022 to accommodate need in higher density communities is expected to be less than \$25,000, which can be supported within Parks' existing budget. Further expansion could have future capital cost implications. All other elements of the program will not have a financial impact.

RISK

Program participants have demonstrated that alcohol consumption can occur without significant disruptive behaviour. As such, it is anticipated that the risk of incidents, property damage or bodily injury will continue to be low. Similar to other amenities provided by Calgary Parks such as toboggan hills, playgrounds, etc., in the event of a loss, The City would pursue recourse from the responsible parties and their insurance providers. There remains the possibility that The City may be responsible for property damage or personal injury that may occur.

Having been a very successful pilot with very minimal issues, there is a risk to The City's reputation should the program not be continued.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Summary Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis Act
2. Alcohol in Parks Learnings and Plans for 2022
3. Alcohol in Parks Citizens View Survey Report
4. Alcohol in Parks User Survey Report

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Consult

Summary Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis Act

Current Act as of November 5, 2021

Alcohol may be consumed at designated picnic areas in a public park as per the Alberta Gaming Liquor and Cannabis Act, under Section 89:

89 (1) Except as provided in this Act, no person may use or consume liquor in a public place or any place other than a residence, temporary residence, licensed premises or a place or class of place prescribed in the regulations where liquor may be used or consumed.

(2) Despite subsection (1), a person may consume liquor in a public park in a picnic area designated by the owner or operator of the public park during the hours designated by the owner or operator if a sign is posted that
(a) states that a person may consume liquor in the designated picnic area,
(b) sets out the designated picnic area, and
(c) sets out the hours when liquor may be consumed.

(3) A person must stop consuming liquor in a designated picnic area if a peace officer on reasonable and probable grounds believes that the person is intoxicated, and the peace officer requests that person to stop consuming liquor.

It is important to note that during the program, this legislation restricted alcohol to a designated picnic area. While “picnic area” is not specifically defined in the Act, for the purposes of the initial Calgary pilot program, picnic tables were used.

Designation of Large Park Spaces

Designation of an entire park, or portion of a park, can likely be done within existing legislation as the entire area could be designated as a picnic area where alcohol consumption is permitted.



Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program 2021 Learnings and Plans for 2022

Program Objective

The purpose of the program was to provide Calgarians more outdoor opportunities, particularly during COVID, when indoor gatherings were prohibited. For Calgarians without their own backyard, the program also made it possible for them to socialize with friends and family in-person while drinking alcohol.

The program demonstrated that even without COVID restrictions, parks are essential for those without their own backyards to gather with others. As stated by reporter Marcello Di Cintio in Avenue Magazine, "Intentionally or not, the current regulations discriminate between Calgarians with their own private outdoor space, and those without. The civilized pleasure of enjoying a glass of wine with a picnic, or a cold beer with your barbecue, is the sole privilege of the deck-and-yard crowd."



Program Summary

- 58 tables with 1556 bookings, plus non-booked use
- Only two complaints directly related to the program were reported related to litter and public urination. No concerns from Operation or Enforcement staff
- Tables were most popular in communities with high density, or areas with multi-family units
- Desire expressed by public to allow alcohol while walking around in a park, and not be restricted to picnic tables.
- Frustration with booking system by participants and staff, or being able to find a table that had been booked
- Longer booking times, more flexibility to spill onto grass, and the ability to have room for a few more people is desired

Program Improvements

The program could evolve with citizen demand. In 2022 the following improvements could be addressed:

- Designating entire parks or portions of parks as picnic sites where alcohol consumption is allowed, starting with approximately ten parks in summer 2022.
- Create new table locations in high density areas to better serve citizens without a backyard. This may require purchase of new tables to place in areas away from playgrounds. Up to 20 new tables could be placed in 2022, which could be done within existing Parks budgets.
- Include some larger bookable picnic sites in the program, to better create the 'backyard experience'.
- Permit alcohol at winter firepits to further the Winter City Strategy and encourage outdoor activities in colder months.
- Make the program easier to use by allowing instant booking, improve ability to locate designated tables, and improve the website.

Booking Summary

- 1556 bookings occurred on 56 tables during the pilot, which ran from June 1 to Sept 7. In addition, tables were available on a first-come first-served basis, and that usage was not monitored, including 2 tables not within the booking system
- Bookings initially averaged 200 per week, but dropped in July, possibly due to restrictions being lifted or that the novelty of the program subsided. Bookings dropped again when smoke was prevalent in late July and early August, and rose again near the end of the program
- Tables located near multi-family units (eg apartments) were most popular
- Throughout the summer some tables were added by community request, including:
 - Two tables in Renfrew. One of these is within the Community Association (CA) lease and therefore not bookable, however the CA reports it was heavily used and an integral part of some of their outdoor events this summer.
 - One table in Fairview
 - One at Cliff Bungalow added in late August and therefore was not added to the booking system. However, reports indicate it was well used.
 - An additional table was requested in West Springs at the end of the program, which was not able to be accommodated.
- One table in Elbow Park (EPK252) was removed at a Councillor's request, as the community felt it would attract issues or exacerbate existing concerns



Booking Summary

Ward	Location	# Bookings
1	Cresmont	6
2	Evanston	26
	Sage Hill	18
	Sherwood	5
3	Country Hills	12
	Hidden Valley	9
	Livingston	6
	Panorama Hills	18
4	Dalhousie	14
	Edgemont	43
	Greenview	9
	Highland Park	11
5	Pineridge	4
	Redstone	3
	Skyview Ranch	0
	Taradale	2
	Temple	3
6	Cougar Ridge	5
	Glamorgan	33
	Springbank Hill	5
	Spruce Cliff	3
	West Springs	18
7	Hounsfield Heights	20
	Riley Park	148
	Rotary Park	28
	West Hillhurst (21 St)	64
	West Hillhurst (28 St)	28
	Winston Heights	8

Ward	Location	# Bookings
8	Bankview	34
	Buckmaster Park	47
	Connaught Park	69
	Garrison Green	6
	Richmond RIC700	19
	Richmond RIC851	23
	Scarboro	34
9	Bridgeland	74
	Fairview	15
	Forest Lawn	2
	Inglewood	154
	Manchester	1
	Ogden	3
	Renfrew	7
10	Southview	13
10	Mayland Heights	7
	Vista Heights	0
11	Braeside	20
	Elbow Park EPK252 (removed)	21
	Elbow Park EPK300	110
	Erlton Lindsay Park	180
12	Copperfield	3
	Cranston	21
	McKenzie Towne	70
	Riverbend	15
13	Somerset	3
14	Chaparral	44
	Legacy	12

Total Bookings: 1556



Issues and Concerns

Disruptive Behaviour

- 311 calls to both Parks and Bylaw were monitored. Two complaints were related to the program including
 - One call reported litter and public urination at the site in Evanston
 - One call reported noise, public urination and litter on separate occasions at the site in Hounsfield Heights
- Parks Superintendents reported no issues and were surprised how little operational impact the program had
- Calgary Police reported they had no incidents related to any of the picnic table sites
- Bylaw Services did not experience calls directly related to a site, but two calls were fairly close including:
 - An encampment that needed to be removed four times throughout the summer, at one small neighbourhood park in Spruce Cliff, near a designated picnic table. While the encampment is not assumed to be related to the program, to avoid conflict that table should be avoided in future programs (it also received only 3 bookings)
 - Frequent complaints about a DJ playing music at Buckmaster Park. However it was a different area of the park than the designated table, and may actually be more associated with the firepit program, which was removed during the summer.

Health Concerns

- Alberta Health Services is concerned this initiative may encourage behaviours which lead to addiction. A recent study led by Dr Abdel-Aziz Shahhen, an assistant professor at the U of C's Cumming School of Medicine, found that liver disease-related hospitalization rates in Alberta nearly doubled during the COVID-19 pandemic as Albertans consume more alcohol. According to the study, the hospitalization rate for alcohol hepatitis in Alberta jumped from a pre-pandemic rate of 11.6 patients per 10,000 admissions to 22.1 patients per 10,000 admissions, and the average age of an alcohol hepatitis patients in the province also decreased from 48 to 43 during the pandemic.
- The program may be contrary to the Mental Health Strategy recently approved by Council. It was felt the program may present a risk that some Calgarians who do not consume alcohol (due to age, religious reasons, personal choice, or because they are in recovery from addiction) may feel less welcome in areas where alcohol is permitted and may make choices to avoid these public spaces.
- Feedback received via a public survey in August indicated the program had minimal or no effect on park visitation by those who disagree with the program.

Other Jurisdictions

Edmonton

The City of Edmonton launched a pilot with 47 bookable and non-bookable sites in seven parks this summer, including small sites with only one or two picnic tables, and large sites that could host 100 participants. This pilot continued into October, and experienced only minor issues including:

- Initial confusion about where to drink as participants thought all spaces were designated
- Gatherings that exceeded COVID restrictions early on in the program
- Some litter

Note the issues were the same regardless of size of site.

The City of Edmonton's pilot differed in that only major parks were included. This strategy took advantage of adequate enforcement which already existed in those areas, instead of relying on 311 calls as was done in Calgary. Edmonton officers did provide some warnings and tickets, particularly to educate participants on where they could drink.

Vancouver

A pilot specifically for parks areas was conducted this summer in Vancouver. With different provincial legislation, this pilot was not restricted to picnic areas; instead, sections within 22 different parks were designated to allow public alcohol consumption. Maps indicating designated areas were posted on the website and at the parks. Participants were expected to remain within designated areas but, in practice, they often tended to wander in and out of them. Areas were determined based on various criteria, including 20m distance from playgrounds or schools, and close access to public washrooms.



Like Calgary, Vancouver did not add additional enforcement resources to monitor the program. However, existing staff schedules of Park Rangers were temporarily reconfigured to prioritize monitoring of pilot sites for the duration of the program.

The pilot continued until Oct 11. There have been few public complaints, and some additional litter that has required extra garbage pick-ups. However, it may be worth noting that this past summer, there has been an upsurge in illegal public drinking in popular public spaces well beyond of the designated pilot sites (e.g. Granville Entertainment District), which may be related to ongoing pandemic restrictions.

Other Alberta Municipalities

Both Strathcona and St Alberta also piloted short programs this summer allowing alcohol in parks. Like others they found minor issues.

Alberta Parks

The Alberta Government has designated tables for alcohol consumption in provincial parks since the summer of 2020. Fish Creek Park staff indicated they did experience more litter, but this was attributed to overall increased level of park use rather than alcohol. Calgary Police Services states they did not experience increased calls in the area.

Penticton

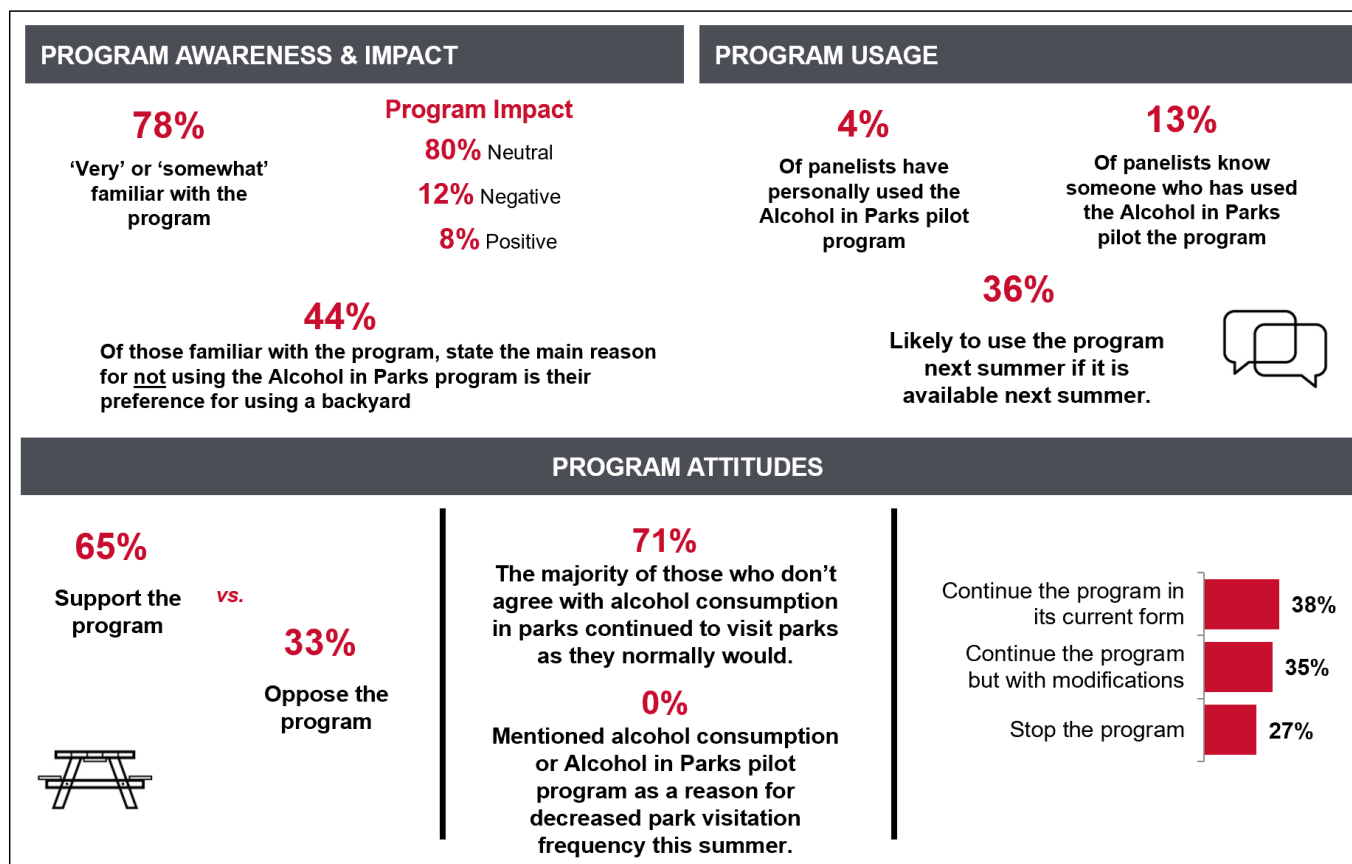
After a successful pilot in 2020, Penticton again approved the consumption of alcohol at seven beach areas in 2021. Penticton is the only municipality in the Okanagan to conduct this type of program.

Public Research and Engagement

Two surveys were conducted by the Corporate Research Team during the pilot period. One was a Citizens' View Panel survey to gauge opinions of the general public, and another was a survey of citizens who participated in the program. In addition to survey activities, feedback was obtained through a social media campaign.

Citizen Panel Survey—General Public

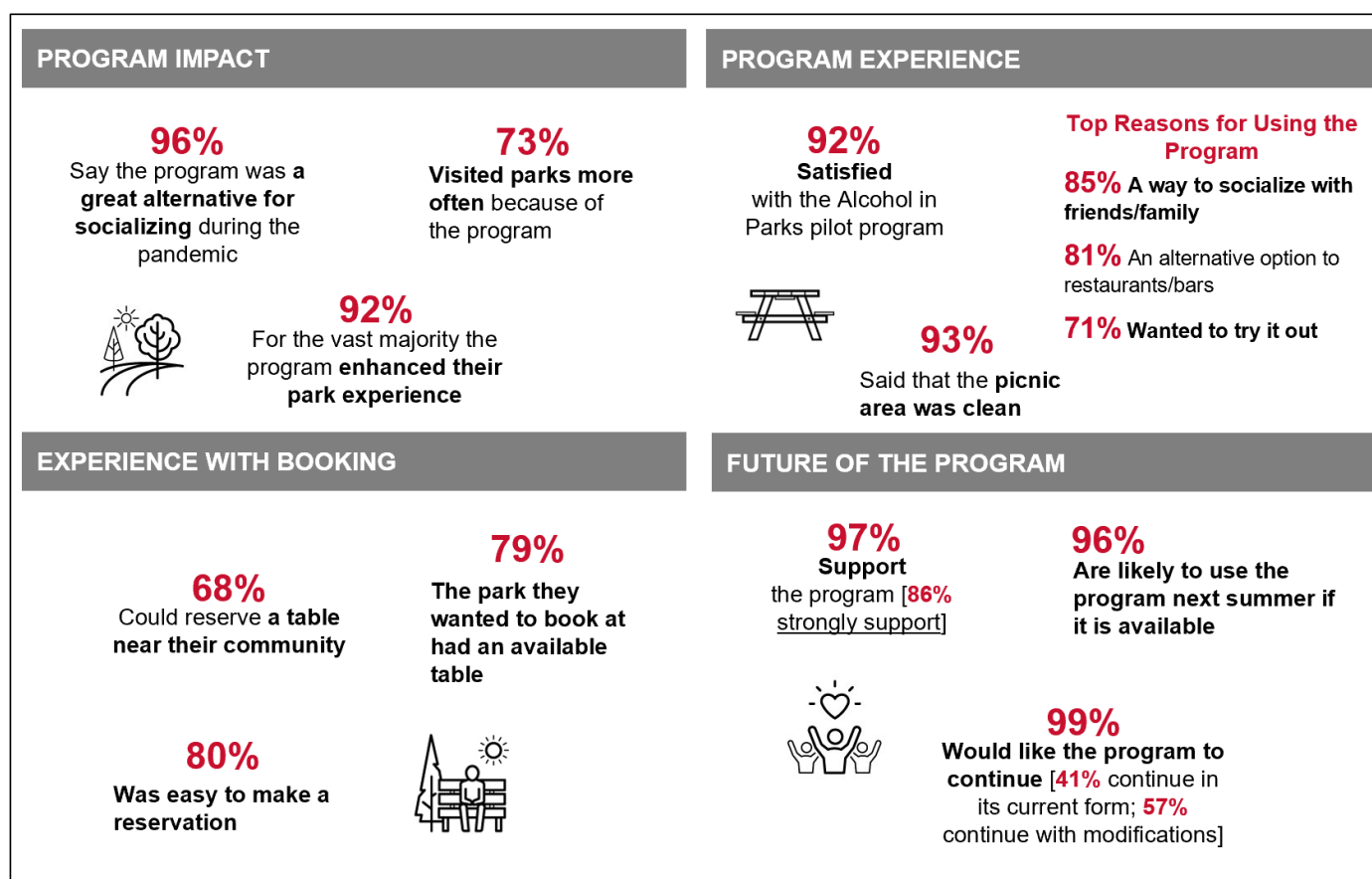
- The survey was sent to 2,783 panelists, with 1,253 completing it (45% completion rate). Survey findings are not considered statistically representative of all Calgarians. In particular, respondents tend to be older and not quite aligned with population quadrant of residence proportions.
- Overall 65% of respondents support the program, and 36% feel they would be likely to use it again next summer, if the program is available.
- Perhaps most telling, 80% of respondents felt the program had a *neutral* impact on their park experiences. This may suggest that this program is like most other programs in that it is valued by some, but otherwise does not affect others.
 - 8% felt the program had a *positive* impact, including enhanced park experience, a way to socialize with family and friends, and appreciated being treated as responsible adults
 - 12% felt the program had a *negative* impact. Reasons for this included potential exposure to public drunkenness and irresponsible adults, or generally disagreeing with alcohol consumption in parks
- Of those respondents who visited parks less frequently during the pandemic, none directly cited the alcohol program as a reason for decreased park visitation. When directly asked, the number of those whose visitation has decreased and who said that they avoided parks, is 24 people in the sample of 1,253 participants.
- Suggested improvements to the program included adding more tables to the program and designate an entire picnic area or park.



Public Research and Engagement

Participant Survey

- The survey was sent to 911 participants, with 269 completing the survey (30% response rate)
- Participant feedback was extremely positive and it was evident that the program is greatly valued by its users
- 96% reported they would use the program next summer if it is available, which indicates there is interest post-COVID
- 73% of participants indicated that their park visitation increased because of the program
- 66% indicated they used the program because they didn't have a backyard to invite friends over
- 45% used transportation other than a motor vehicle. This could potentially increase if more tables were strategically placed, as only 68% could reserve a table near their community
- Requests for program modifications included making booked tables easier to find, having more tables throughout the city, and allowing larger picnic areas to be designated for alcohol consumption..



Social Media

Two social media campaigns had very high reach and interest, with 236,781 impressions on the first, and 214,000 impressions on the second campaign. Comments on posts indicated:

- Concern that 30 tables (initial stage 1 launch) was not enough for a city of this size
- Desire for more tables, particularly in the Beltline
- Desire to walk around a park with a beverage instead of sitting at a table
- Concerns the program would lead to increased litter, disruptive behaviour, and drinking and driving.
- Frustrations with the website and booking process

Program Improvements

Ideally the program would continue to grow and evolve incrementally in response to public demand. This would allow for taking into account the program popularity may diminish as the pandemic and novelty of the program subsides. In addition impact of the program on businesses and festivals when the pandemic subsides should also be taken into consideration before a sudden expansion occurs.

Designate Entire Parks or Portions of Parks

Large areas could be designated as picnic sites allowing citizens to consume alcohol while going for a walk, playing yard games, or enjoying nature. Approximately ten parks could be launched in 2022. Parks and areas would need to be determined but the following parks would be avoided:

- Those with an intense child focus
- Parks where alcohol may conflict with business or festivals
- Major natural areas
- Parks operated by a partner or have a significant partner operation on site
- Culturally significant parks
- Parks with current user conflicts

Many parks would still be able to be used within this criteria such as North Glenmore, Edworthy, West Eau Claire, Stanley Park, Valleyview, or Buckmaster Park to name a few.

Reallocate and Expand Table Locations to meet need

- New sites would be created particularly in high density areas to better serve citizens without a backyard. In some case this may require purchase of new tables.
- In addition to almost 60 tables in the existing program, an additional 20-30 tables could be added in 2022 such as:
 - Designation of more existing tables in parks such as Bridgeland, Connaught, Lindsay Park, Riley Park, Mission
 - Purchase and install new tables in areas currently only with benches such as West Eau Claire or utilize community owned tables at Tomkins Park
 - Allow tables to be installed by community request using a process that outlines criteria such as distance from a playground, near multi-family dwellings and indication of support from the surrounding area



“For those who want to enjoy a quiet drink with a few friends without a crowd and who don’t own or have access to personal outdoor spaces, this is a great option”

- Program participant

Bookable Picnic Sites

- To create more of a backyard experience, it is recommended bookable picnic sites in large regional parks be introduced in summer 2022. These type of sites were successful in Edmonton and it is expected they could also work in Calgary. Parks Superintendents recommend Sandy Beach, Bowness, and Pearce Estates parks should be avoided as they are already very busy and frequently experience user conflicts

Winter Firepits

- To allow citizens to have popular winter-season alcoholic beverages (i.e. special coffees, mulled wine) while embracing the outdoors, the Winter City Strategy has requested that Parks consider allowing alcohol at firepits, to make winter more friendly. A Winter City Survey conducted last winter indicated four in five respondents are supportive of The City allowing some consumption of alcoholic beverages in parks.
- Only firepit locations that are at least 30m from playgrounds would be designated. In addition, only firepits close to picnic tables (eg within 50m) should be designated, in order to comply with the AGLC Act, which currently restricts consumption to a picnic area.



"I strongly hope that this program continues into the colder months - as Calgary often has nice warm spells in fall where this kind of outdoor gathering would be a safer option for those of us unsatisfied with the lack of covid restrictions but still want to see friends" - program participant

Program Logistics

- Continue the program year-round
- Continue booking program for those who want to reserve a table, but also allow for impromptu use with easy and instant bookings and QR codes
- Redesign the website, ensuring good interface with the booking system
- Ensure bookable tables are easier to find
- Allow for longer booking times
- Investigate a marketing program to encourage users to explore different parks



Alcohol in Parks – Citizens' View Online Panel Survey Results

September 07, 2021

Prepared by:

The Corporate Research Team
Customer Service & Communications
The City of Calgary
research@Calgary.ca

Highlights at a Glance

PROGRAM AWARENESS & IMPACT

78%

'Very' or 'somewhat' familiar with the program

Program Impact

80% Neutral

12% Negative

8% Positive

44%

Of those familiar with the program, state the main reason for not using the Alcohol in Parks program is their preference for using a backyard

PROGRAM USAGE

4%

Of panelists have personally used the Alcohol in Parks pilot program

13%

Of panelists know someone who has used the Alcohol in Parks pilot the program

36%

Likely to use the program next summer if it is available next summer.



PROGRAM ATTITUDES

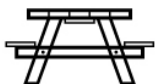
65%

Support the program

vs.

33%

Oppose the program



71%

The majority of those who don't agree with alcohol consumption in parks continued to visit parks as they normally would.

0%

Mentioned alcohol consumption or Alcohol in Parks pilot program as a reason for decreased park visitation frequency this summer.

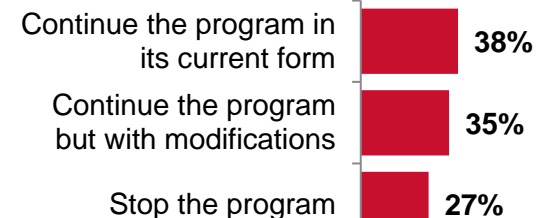


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Background & Methodology

Background

On June 1st, The City launched The Alcohol in Parks pilot program. The pilot program ran from June 1st to September 7th, 2021. This pilot program allowed Calgarians to drink alcohol at select picnic tables in some parks throughout the city. During this pilot, drinking was not permitted in all parks. Calgarians who wished to use the program could reserve designated tables online or use them on a first-come, first-served basis.

On behalf of Calgary Parks, a survey on the topic of the Alcohol in Park pilot program was fielded. The survey measured park visitation patterns, program awareness and usage, and program attitudes.

Methodology

An online survey was conducted with Citizens' View panelists. Citizens' View is an online panel that encourages citizens to participate in shaping City of Calgary programs and services through surveys, discussions, and engagement activities.

The survey was conducted August 10 – 19, 2021 and was sent to all 2,783 panelists, with 1,253 completing the survey (a 45% completion rate).

NOTE: These survey findings are not considered statistically representative of all Calgarians. Due to the composition of the group of panelists who completed the survey, results should be regarded as directional and should not be projected to the larger population without research with a representative sample of citizens.

Compared to the overall population of Calgary, respondents to this survey tend to be older and are not quite aligned with population quadrant of residence proportions.

Detailed Results



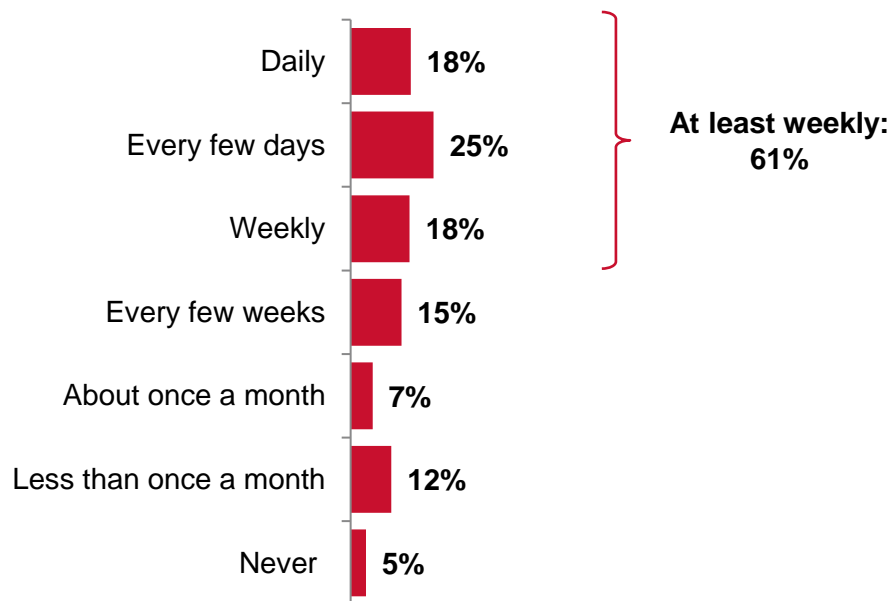
Park Visitation Patterns



Park Visitation Frequency Prior to the Pandemic

One in six (61%) respondents indicated that they had visited parks at least on a weekly basis during the summer prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Only a small minority (5%) said that they had never visited parks.

Park Visitation Frequency During the Summer Prior to the Pandemic



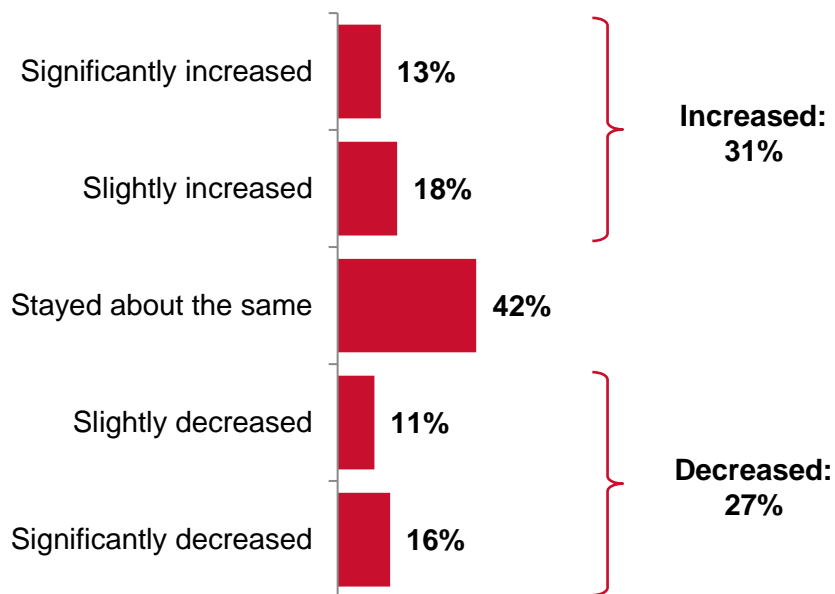
Please think back to the summer prior to the pandemic, meaning the summer of 2019. During the summer prior to the pandemic, approximately how often did you visit the city's parks, including both major parks and smaller community parks?

Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Impact of the Pandemic on Park Visitation

Compared to the summer of 2019, park visitation has stayed the same for two-fifth (42%) of respondents this summer, while one in three respondents indicated that their park visitation has increased (31%) or decreased (27%).

Park Visitation Frequency During the Summer Prior to the Pandemic



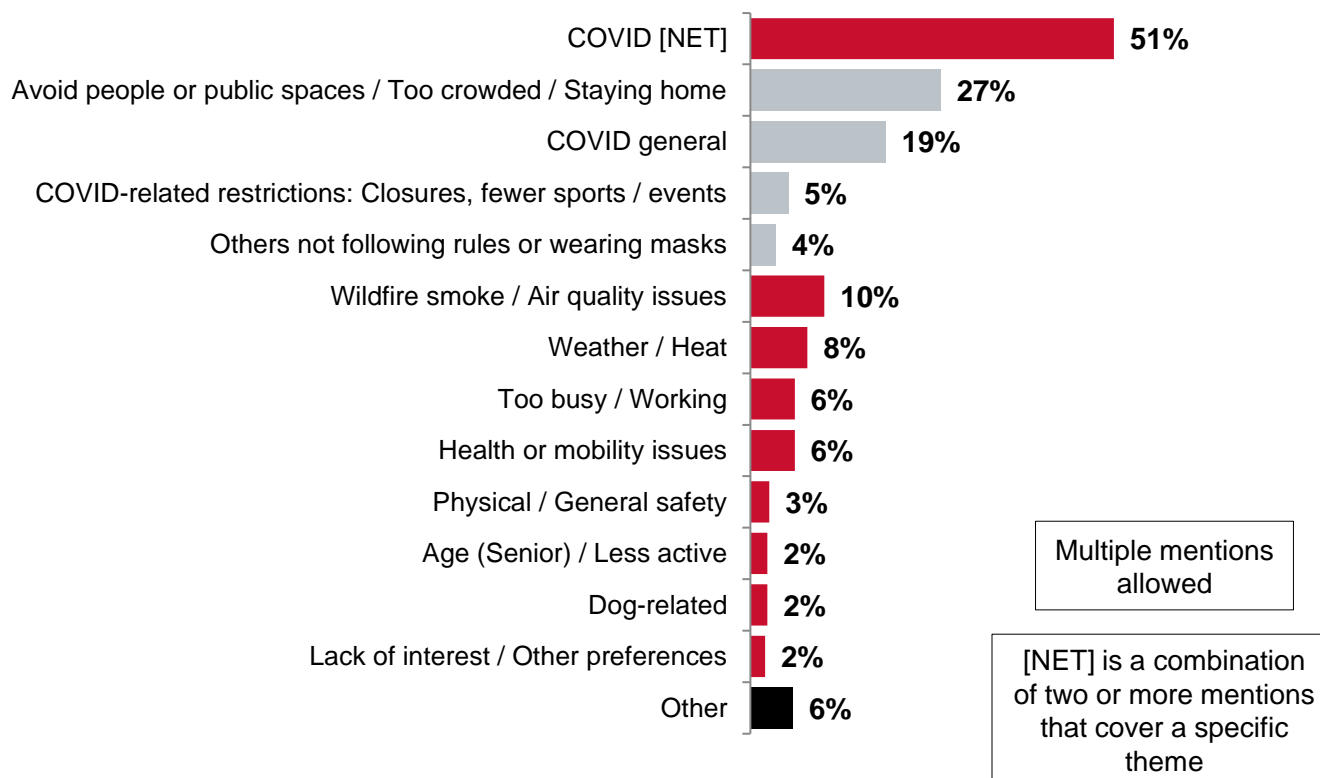
Now, please think about this summer. Compared to the summer of 2019, has your frequency of park visitation this summer...
Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Reasons for Decreased Park Visitation Frequency

Among those who said that their park visitation has decreased this summer as compared to the summer prior to the pandemic, the primary reason was COVID-related (e.g., avoiding people, COVID-related restrictions). No one mentioned alcohol consumption or Alcohol in Parks pilot program as a reason for decreased park visitation frequency.

Reasons for the Decreased Park Visitation Frequency

Among those whose park visitation frequency decreased compared to the summer prior to the pandemic, n = 337



What is the main reason why your park visitation frequency has decreased?

Base: Respondents who indicated that their park visitation frequency decreased compared to the summer prior to the pandemic (n=337)

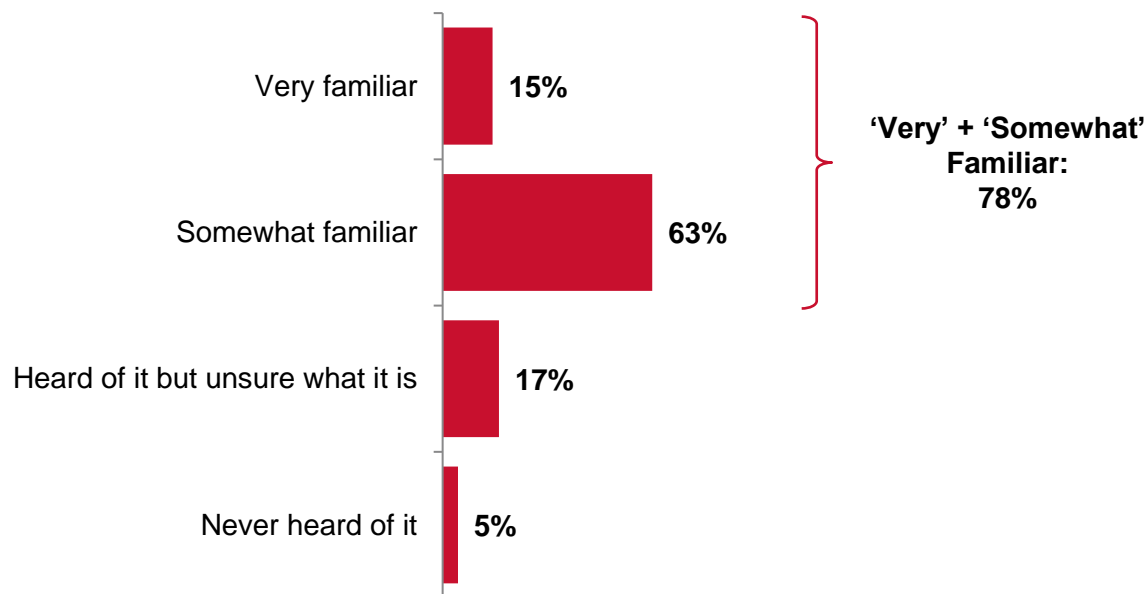
Program Awareness & Usage



Familiarity with the Program

Only a small minority (5%) indicated that they never heard of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program, with the majority of respondents having some level of familiarity with the program (15% 'very familiar'; 63% 'somewhat familiar').

Familiarity with the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program



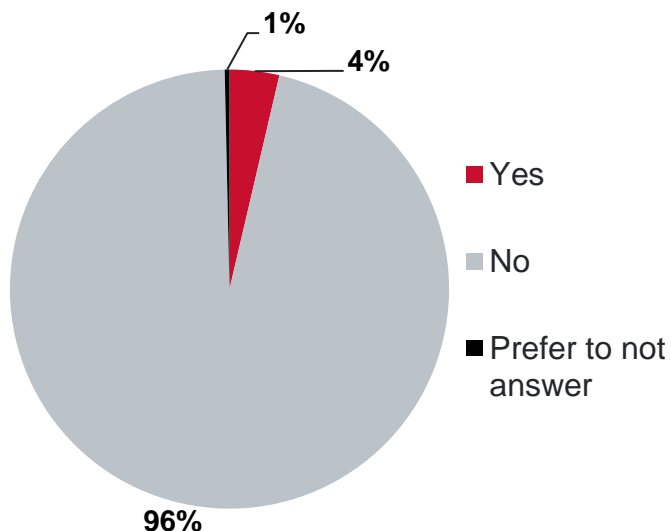
How familiar are you with the Alcohol in Parks pilot program?

Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Program Usage

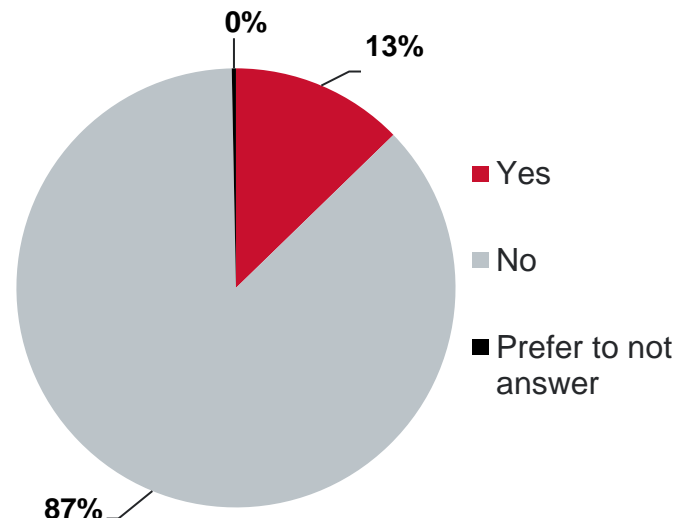
When asked about the Alcohol in Parks pilot program usage among those respondents who had some level of familiarity with the program, only a small minority (4%) indicated that they personally used tables designated for alcohol consumption, while a sizable minority (13%) said that they know someone who used the program.

Used the Program Personally
Among those who are familiar with the program, n=982



Have you personally used tables designated for alcohol consumption? Base: Respondents who are familiar with the pilot program (n=982)

Knew Someone Who Used the Program
Among those who are familiar with the program, n=982

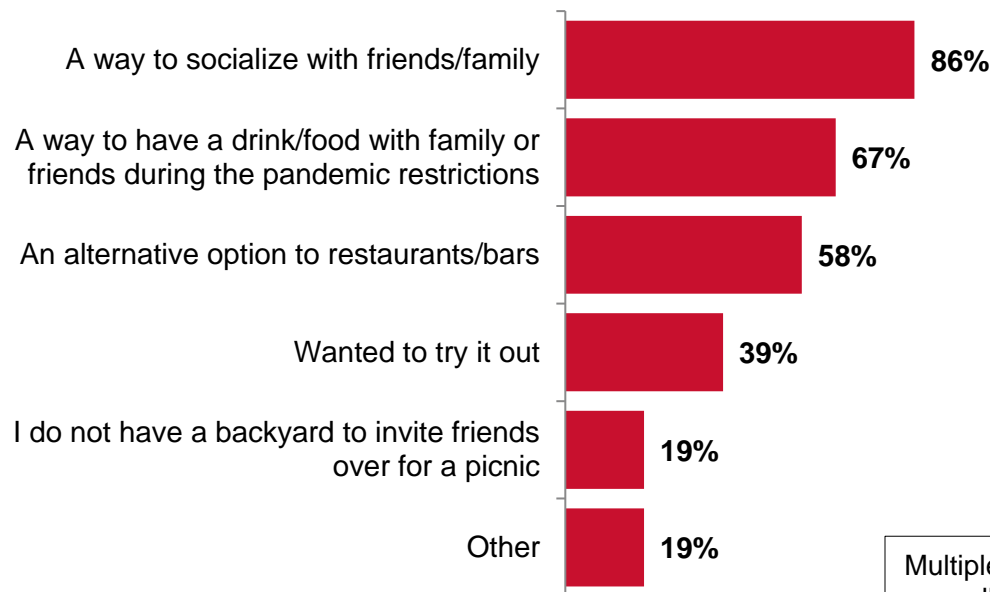


Has someone you know (e.g., friend, family member, co-worker) used tables designated for alcohol consumption as part of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program this summer?
Base: Respondents who are familiar with the pilot program (n=982)

Reasons for Using the Program

Among those who used the pilot program, main reasons for using the Alcohol in Parks pilot program included a way to socialize with friends/family (86%), a way to have a drink during the pandemic (67%), and an alternative to restaurants/bars (58%).

Main Reasons for Using the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program *Among those who used the pilot program, n=36*



Multiple mentions
allowed

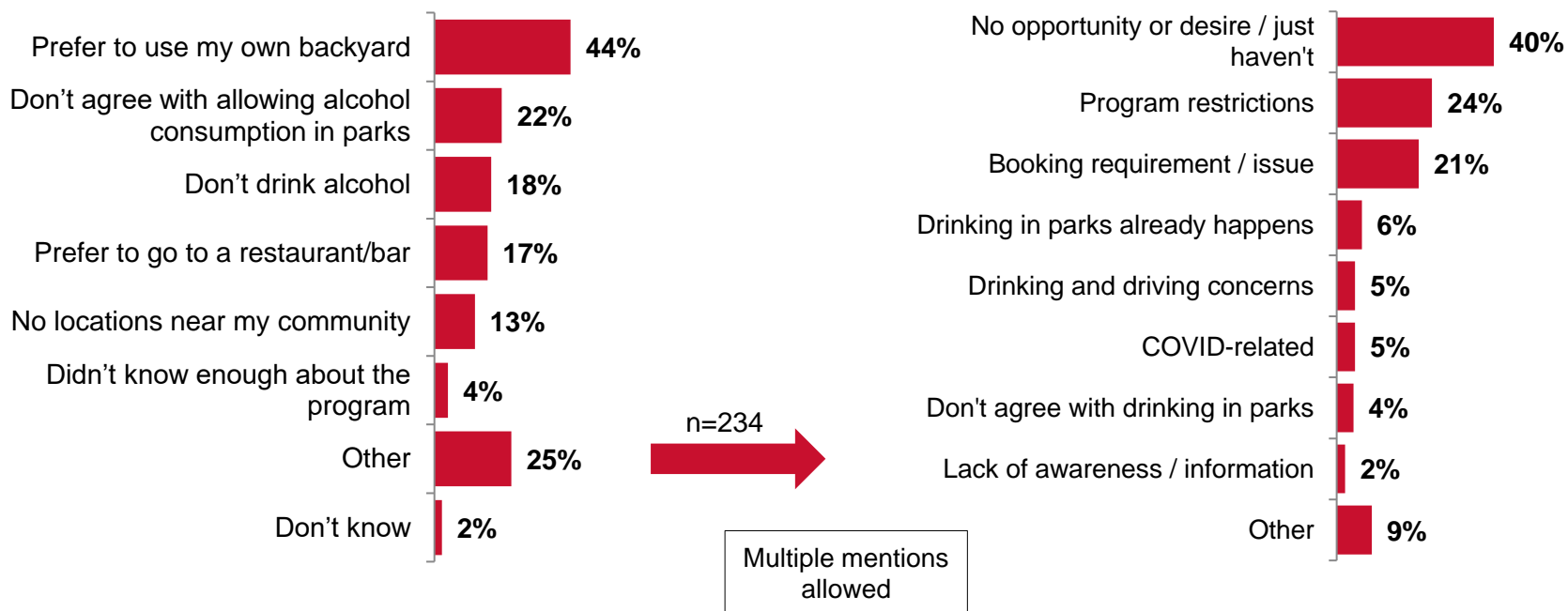
*Caution: small base size; please
interpret results with caution

What are your main reasons for using the Alcohol in Parks pilot program? Please select all that apply.
Base: Respondents who used the Alcohol in Parks pilot program (n=36*)

Reasons for Not Using the Program

Among those who were familiar with the program but didn't use it, the primary reason for not using the program was respondents' preference to use their own backyard (44%). Among those who were familiar with the program but didn't use it, almost one-quarter (22%) indicated that they don't agree with allowing alcohol consumption in parks, and a slightly smaller percentage (18%) said that they don't drink alcohol. A sizeable number of respondents chose 'other' and provided a comment. Among 'other' reasons for not using the program, two-fifths (40%) indicated no opportunity or desire, followed by program restrictions (24%) and booking requirements (21%).

Main Reasons for Not Using the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program Among those who are familiar with but didn't use the Alcohol in Parks pilot program, n=946



What are main reasons for not using the Alcohol in Parks pilot program? Please choose all that apply.

Base: Respondents who are familiar with but didn't use the Alcohol in Parks pilot program (n=946; other, n=234)

Impact on Park Experience For Those Who Don't Agree With Alcohol Consumption in Parks

Among those who don't agree with allowing alcohol consumption in parks, the majority (71%) continued to visit parks as they normally would. Two-fifths (42%) indicated that they would leave the park if they saw people using tables designated for alcohol consumption.

Impact on Park Experience Among those who are familiar with but didn't use the Alcohol in Parks pilot program AND who said that they "Don't agree with allowing alcohol consumption in parks", n=205

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ Prefer not to answer

Agree

I continued to visit the parks I normally do

46%

25%

14%

12%

71%

During my visits to city's parks, I would leave if I saw people using tables designated for alcohol consumption

24%

18%

22%

31%

4%

42%

I planned my outings to avoid parks with tables designated for alcohol consumption

21%

14%

20%

41%

4%

35%

I used city's parks less frequently because of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program

12%

14%

20%

49%

4%

26%

I avoided all parks, even if they did not have designated tables for alcohol consumption, during the pilot program**

9%

16%

19%

54%

24%*

Note: 3% and lower not labelled

*Rounding

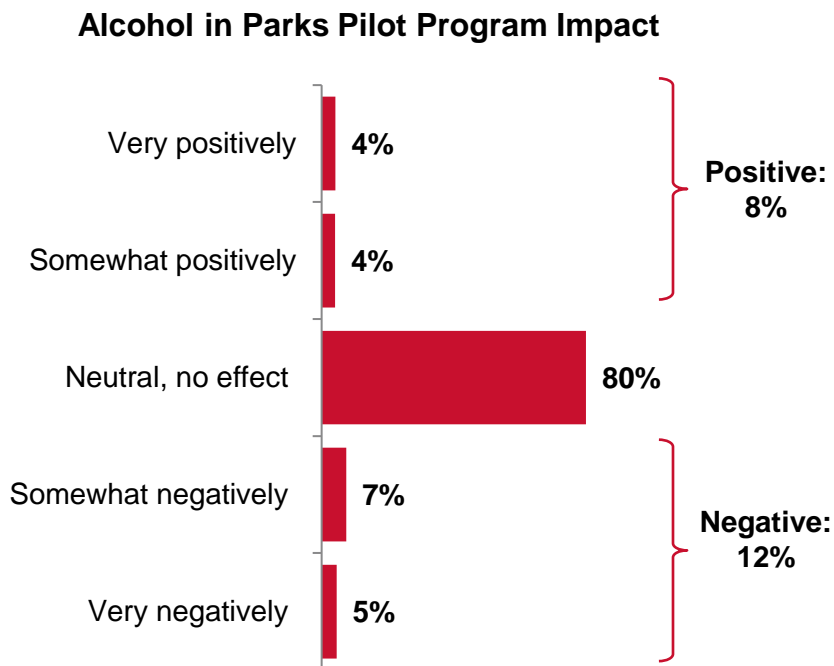
**The statement wording asked about avoiding parks "during" and not "because of" the pilot program. For this reason, we cannot conclude that the program was the main (if any) deterrent of park visitation. We conducted additional post-hoc analysis to understand the extent to which the program might have impacted park visitation. We found that the number of those whose visitation has decreased AND who said that they avoided parks is 24 people in the sample of 1,253 participants who took the survey. This number is a liberal estimation because it is likely that decreased visitation pattern was caused not only (if at all) by the program.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement?

Base: Respondents who are familiar with but didn't use the Alcohol in Parks pilot program AND who said that they 'Don't agree with allowing alcohol consumption in parks' (n=205)

Program Impact

For the majority of respondents (80%), the Alcohol in Parks pilot program had no effect or neutral impact on their park experience. The rest of respondents were split between positive (8%) and negative (12%) program impact.



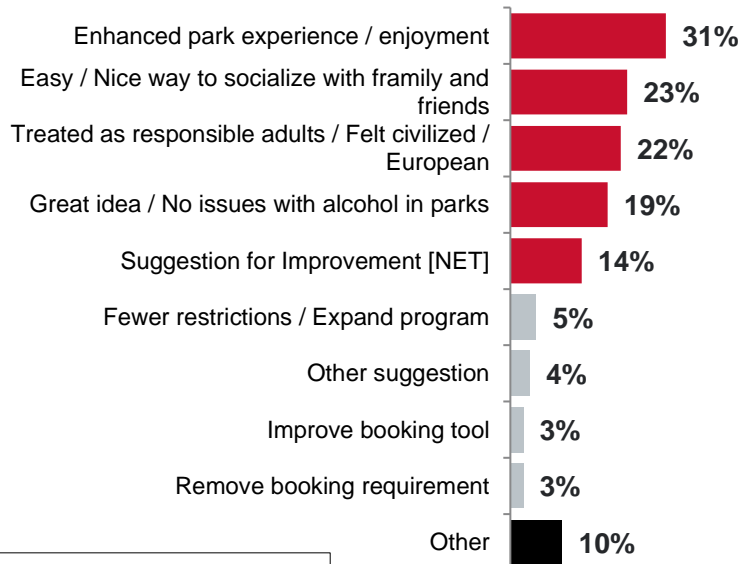
Overall, how did the Alcohol in Parks pilot program affect your park experience?

Base: All respondents (n=940); the base size was adjusted to remove those respondents who indicated 'not applicable' to this question.

Program Impact: Reasons

Among those who indicated positive program impact, top reasons for positive program impact include enhanced park experience (31%), a way of socializing (23%), and feeling of being treated as an adult (22%). Among those who indicated negative program impact, primary reasons include potential exposure to public drunkenness (47%) and disagreeing with alcohol consumption in parks (18%).

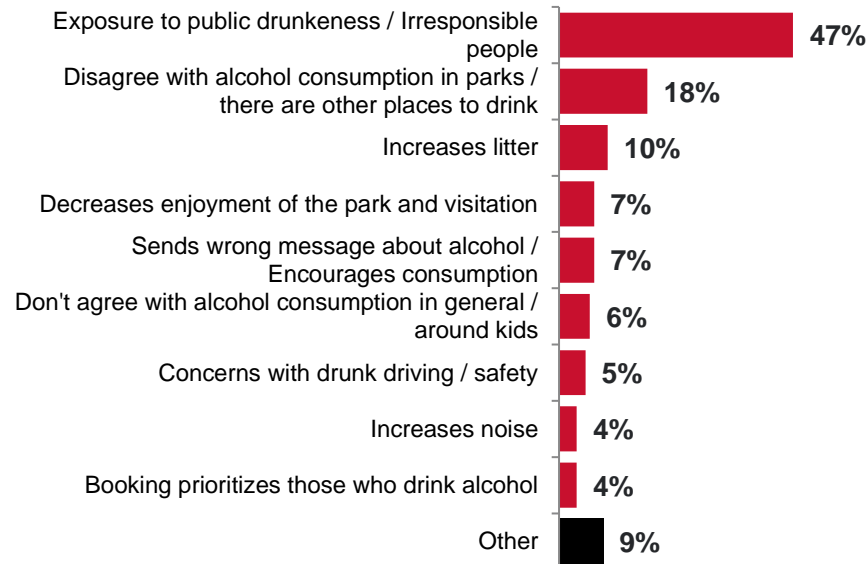
Reasons for Positive Program Impact Among those who indicated positive program impact, n=77



[NET] is a combination of two or more mentions that cover a specific theme

Multiple mentions allowed

Reasons for Negative Program Impact Among those who indicated negative program impact, n=117



You indicated that the Alcohol in Parks pilot program *positively* affected your park experience. Please tell us why.
Base: Respondents who indicated positive program impact (n=77)

You indicated that the Alcohol in Parks pilot program *negatively* affected your park experience. Please tell us why.
Base: Respondents who indicated negative program impact (n=117)

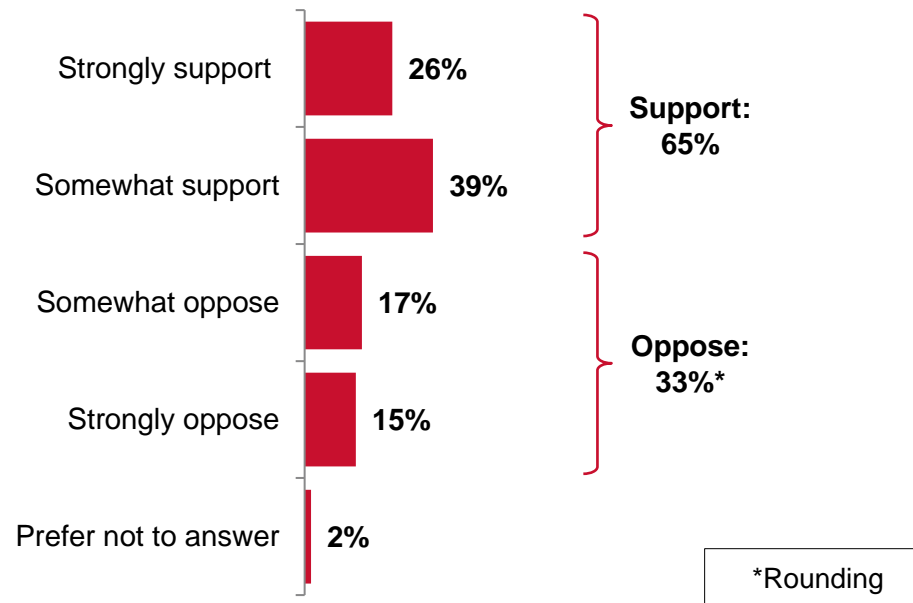
Program Attitudes



Support/Oppose the Program

Almost twice as much respondents support the Alcohol in Parks program (65%) rather than oppose (33%).

Support vs. Oppose the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program

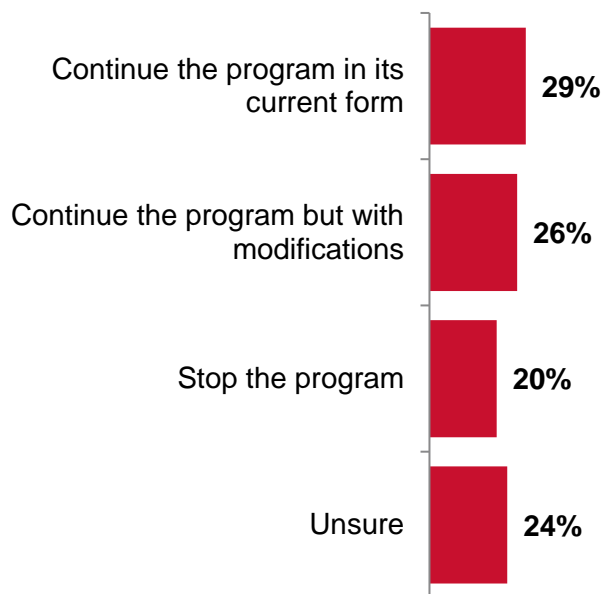


Overall, do you support or oppose the Alcohol in Parks pilot program?
Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Preferences with Regard to Continuing the Program

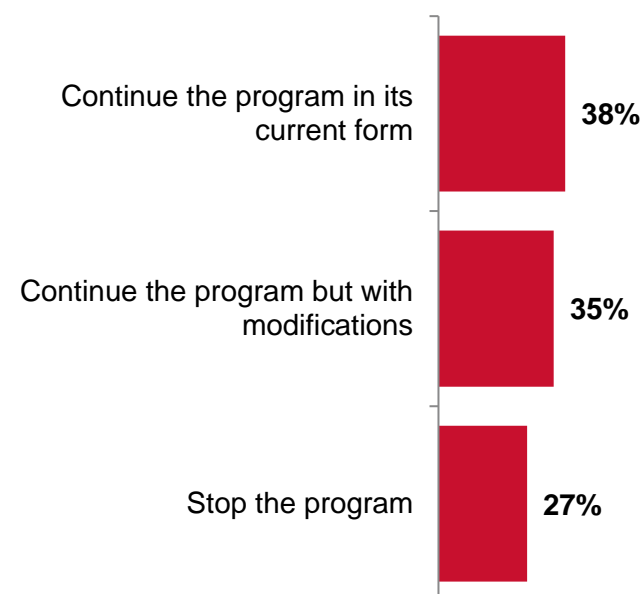
More than one half of respondents would like to continue the program (29% prefer to continue in its current form; 26% want to continue but with modifications). Only one-fifth (20%) indicated that they would like the program to stop, while the rest of respondents (24%) were unsure.

Preferences with Regard to Continuing the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program



In your opinion, The City should...
Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Preferences with Regard to Continuing the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program *Among those who indicated a certain preference*

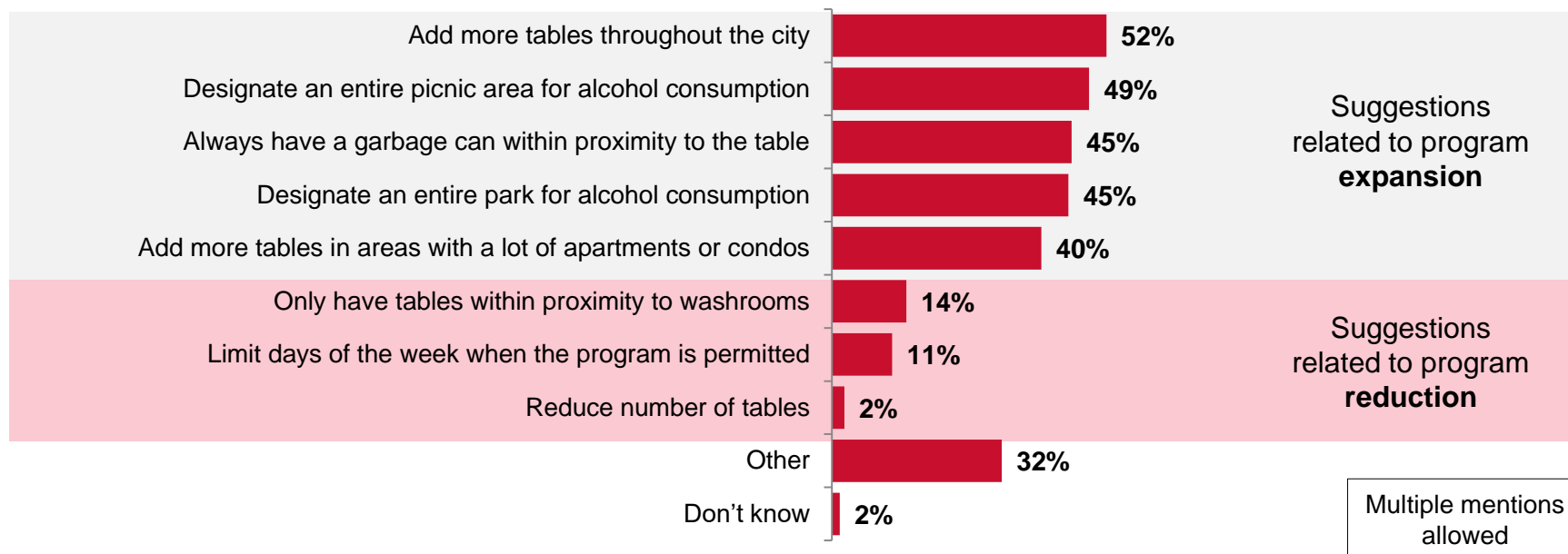


In your opinion, The City should...
Base: Respondents who indicated a certain preference towards continuing or stopping the program (n=952)

Proposed Program Modifications

Among those who prefer to continue the program but with modifications, all top suggestions were related to the proposed program expansion including adding more tables (52%), designating an entire picnic area (49%), designating an entire park (45%), and adding more tables in condo-dense areas.

Proposed Modifications to the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program Among those who prefer to continue the program but with modifications, n=332



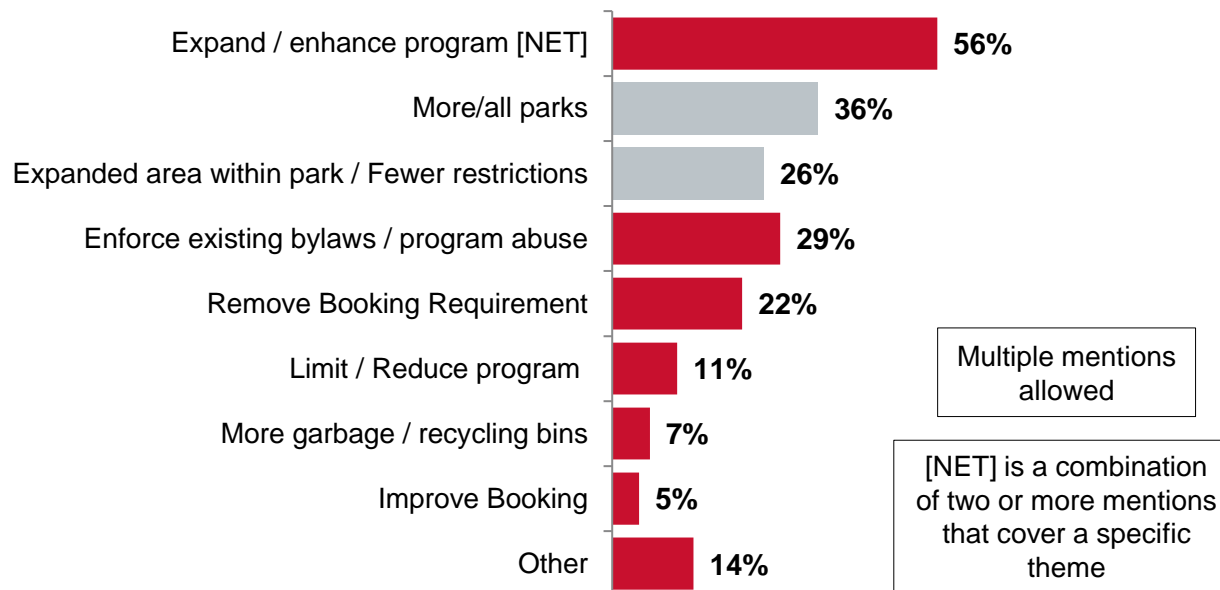
What modification(s) to the Alcohol in Parks program would you recommend? Please select all that apply.
Base: Respondents who prefer to 'continue the program but with modifications' (n=332)

'Other' Proposed Program Modifications

Among respondents who indicated that they would like to see 'other' modifications to the program, the majority (56%) commented about program expansion.

'Other' Proposed Modifications to the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program

Among those who prefer to continue the program but with modifications and proposed 'other' modifications, n=107



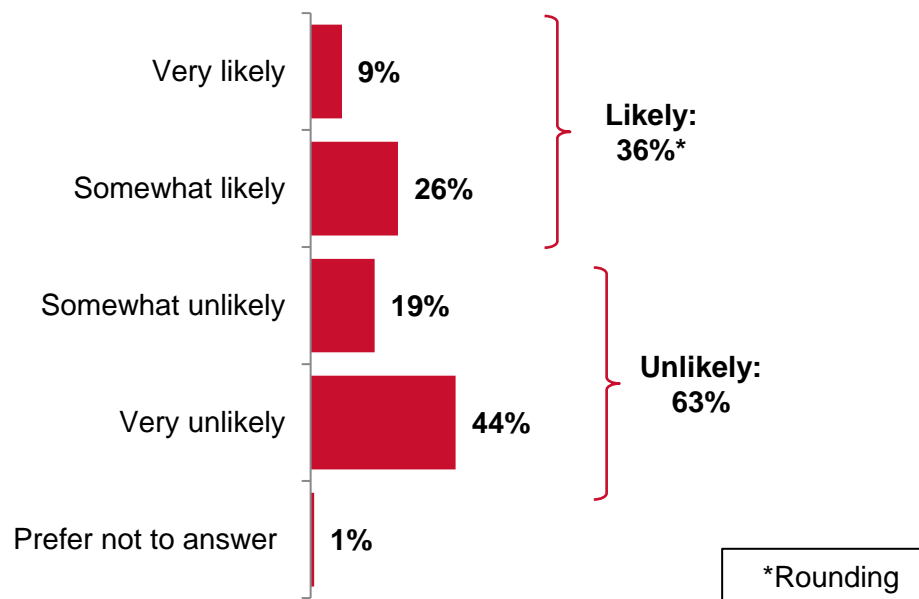
What modification(s) to the Alcohol in Parks program would you recommend? Please select all that apply.

Base: Respondents who prefer to 'continue the program but with modifications' and proposed 'other modifications' (n=107)

Likelihood of Using the Program

One-third (36%) indicated that they are likely to use a designated table for alcohol consumption in parks if the program is available next summer, while the majority (63%) said they are unlikely to use the program.

Likelihood of Using the Alcohol in Parks Program



If this program were available next summer, how likely would you be to use a designated table for alcohol consumption in parks?
Base: All respondents (n=1,253)

Demographics



Gender	
Male	47%
Female	49%
Other	1%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Age	
18 to 24	<1%
25 to 34	6%
35 to 44	14%
45 to 54	17%
55 to 64	27%
65 or 74	26%
75 or older	7%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Quadrant of Residence	
NW	34%
SW	31%
NE	12%
SE	23%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Children in the Household	
Yes	19%
No	80%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Dwelling Type	
Apartment	12%
Townhouse	7%
Single-detached house	68%
Duplex-attached house	6%
Another type of multi-dwelling unit	4%
Other	1%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Have a Backyard	
Yes	82%
No	17%
Prefer not to answer	1%



Contact

The Corporate Research Team
Customer Service & Communications
The City of Calgary
research@Calgary.ca

A wide-angle photograph of the Peace Bridge in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. The bridge's distinctive red, curved steel arches are prominent in the foreground. Beyond the bridge, the Bow River flows towards the downtown skyline, which includes several modern high-rise buildings. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The riverbank on the right is lined with green trees and a rocky shore.

Alcohol in Parks – User Survey Results

September 7, 2021

Prepared by:

The Corporate Research Team
Customer Service & Communications
The City of Calgary
research@Calgary.ca

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Highlights at Glance

PROGRAM IMPACT

96%

Say the program was a **great alternative for socializing** during the pandemic



73%

Visited parks more often because of the program

92%

For the vast majority the program **enhanced their park experience**

PROGRAM EXPERIENCE

92%

Satisfied with the Alcohol in Parks pilot program



93%

Said that the **picnic area was clean**

Top Reasons for Using the Program

85% A way to **socialize with friends/family**

81% An alternative option to restaurants/bars

71% Wanted to try it out

EXPERIENCE WITH BOOKING

68%

Could reserve a **table near their community**

79%

The park they **wanted to book at** had an available table

80%

Was easy to make a reservation



FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

97%

Support the program [**86%** strongly support]



96%

Are likely to use the program next summer if it is available

99%

Would like the program to continue [**41%** continue in its current form; **57%** continue with modifications]

Background & Methodology

Background

On June 1st, The City launched The Alcohol in Parks pilot program. The pilot program ran from June 1st to September 7th, 2021. This pilot program allowed Calgarians to drink alcohol at select picnic tables in some parks throughout the city. During this pilot, drinking was not permitted in all parks. Calgarians who wished to use the program could reserve designated tables online or use them on a first-come, first-served basis.

On behalf of Calgary Parks, a survey on the topic of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program was fielded. The survey measured program usage & frequency, program impact, experience with the program, booking experience, and attitudes toward the program.

Methodology

An online survey was conducted with Calgarians who booked a free picnic table designated for alcohol consumption through The City of Calgary this summer.

The survey was conducted from August 16 to 26, 2021. The survey invitation was sent to 911 Calgarians, with 269 completing the survey (30% response rate).

NOTE: These survey findings are not considered statistically representative of all Calgarians. Due to the composition of the sampling frame (i.e., Calgarians who booked a table designated for alcohol consumption), results should be regarded as directional and should not be projected to the larger population without research with a representative sample of citizens.

Detailed Results

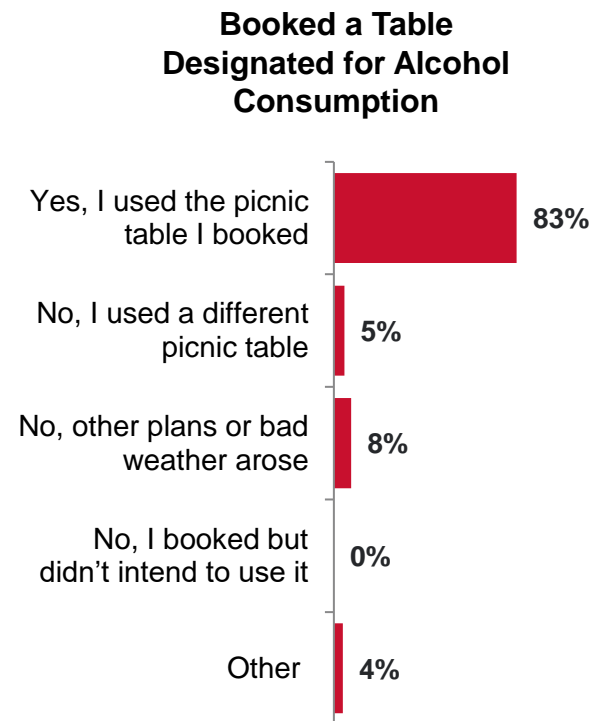
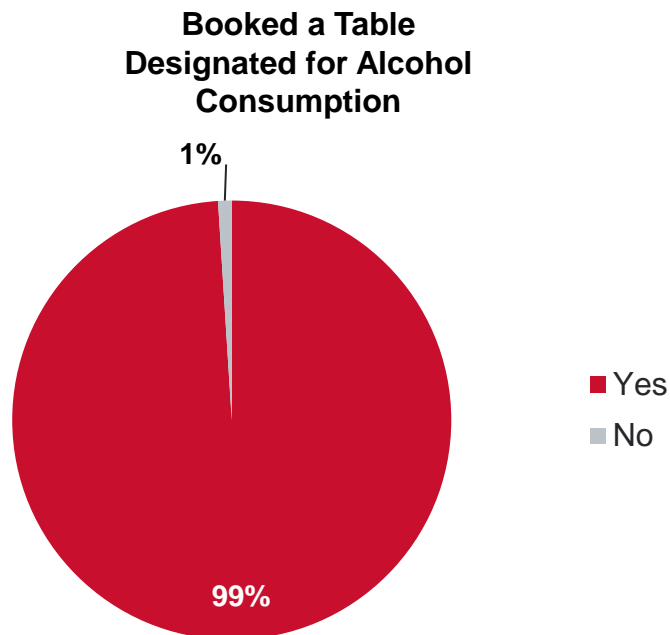


Booking & Table Usage



Booking & Table Usage

The vast majority of respondents (99%) indicated that they booked a table designated for alcohol consumption. Among those who booked a table, more than eight in ten (83%) used the table they booked.



To confirm, did you book a free picnic table designated for alcohol consumption through The City of Calgary this summer?

Base: All respondents (n=269)

After booking the picnic table, did you use the picnic table you booked? If you booked several tables, please think about the most recent one.

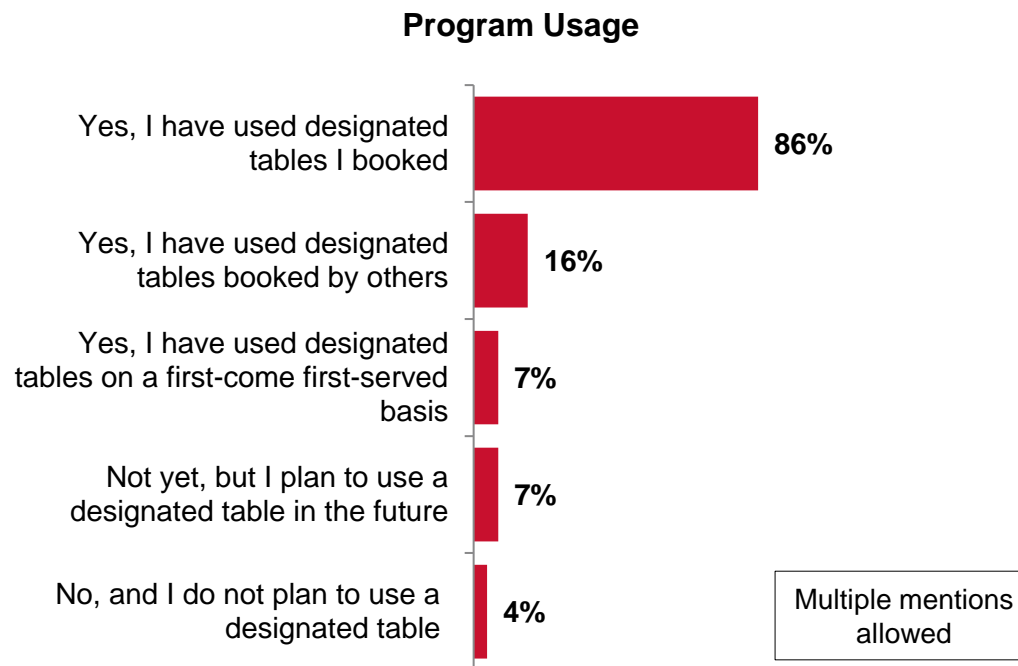
Base: Respondents who booked a table (n=267)

Program Usage & Frequency



Program Usage

The majority (86%) used designated table(s) they booked, and one-sixth (16%) used designated table(s) booked by others. Fewer than one in ten (7%) used designated tables on a first-come first-served basis.

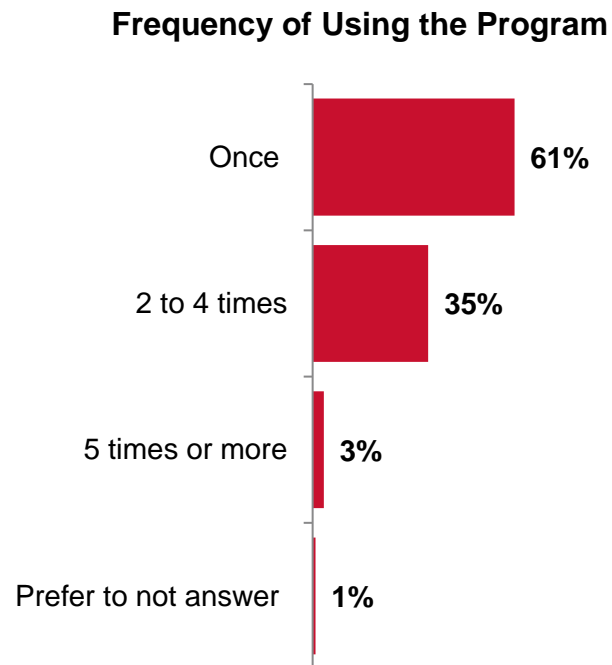


Have you personally used tables designated for alcohol consumption in Calgary's parks this summer? Select all that apply.

Base: All respondents (n=269)

Frequency of Using the Program

Among respondents who used designated tables, more than half (61%) indicated that they used it once this summer. Only a small minority (3%) used a table five times or more this summer.



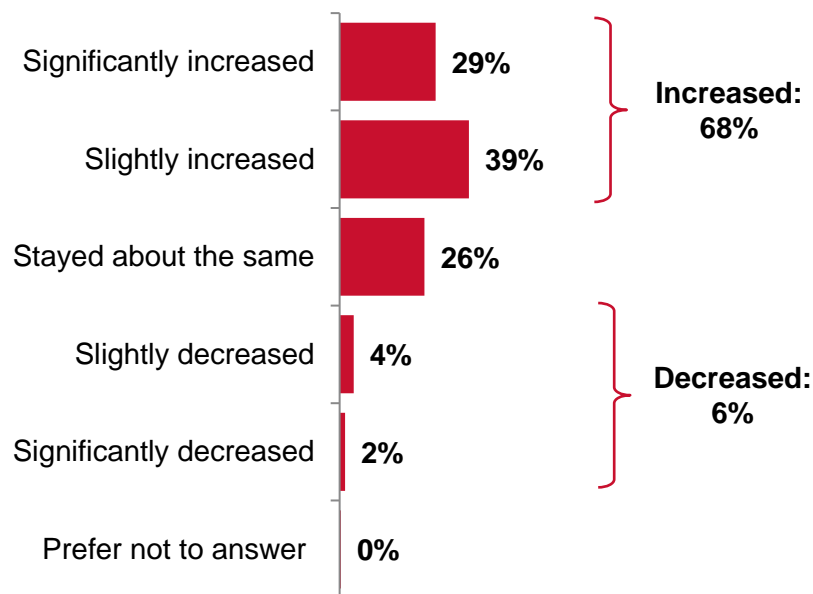
How often have you used tables designated for alcohol consumption this summer?

Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=238)

Park Visitation Frequency

Among those who used designated tables, the majority indicated that compared to the pre-pandemic their park visitation frequency increased (68%) or stayed about the same (26%).

Park Visitation Frequency Compared to the Pre-pandemic Summer

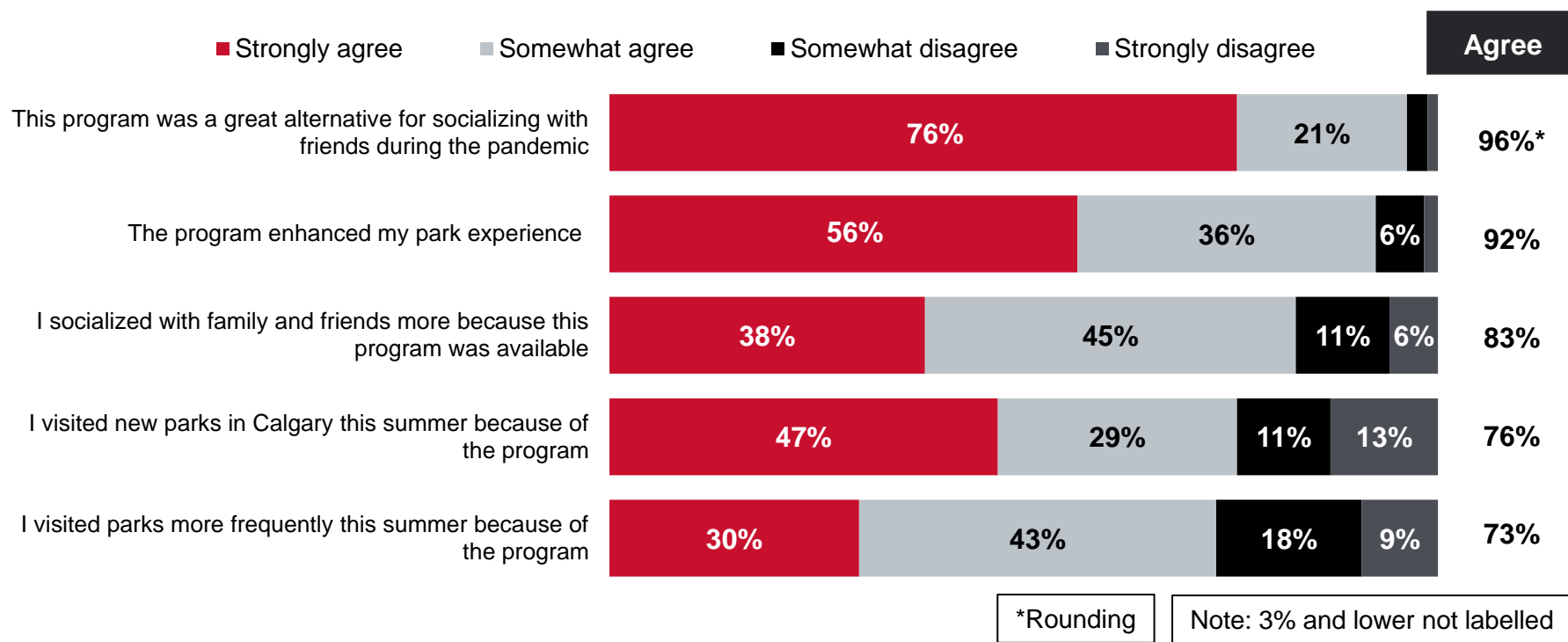


Compared to the summer of 2019, has your frequency of park visitation this summer...
Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=238)

Program Impact on Park Visitation

Impact of the Alcohol in Parks pilot program on park visitation is largely positive. Among those who used designated tables, more than nine in ten agreed that the program was a great alternative for socializing (96%) and that the program enhanced their park experience (92%).

Impact of the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program on Park Visitation



Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Alcohol in Parks pilot program.
Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=239)

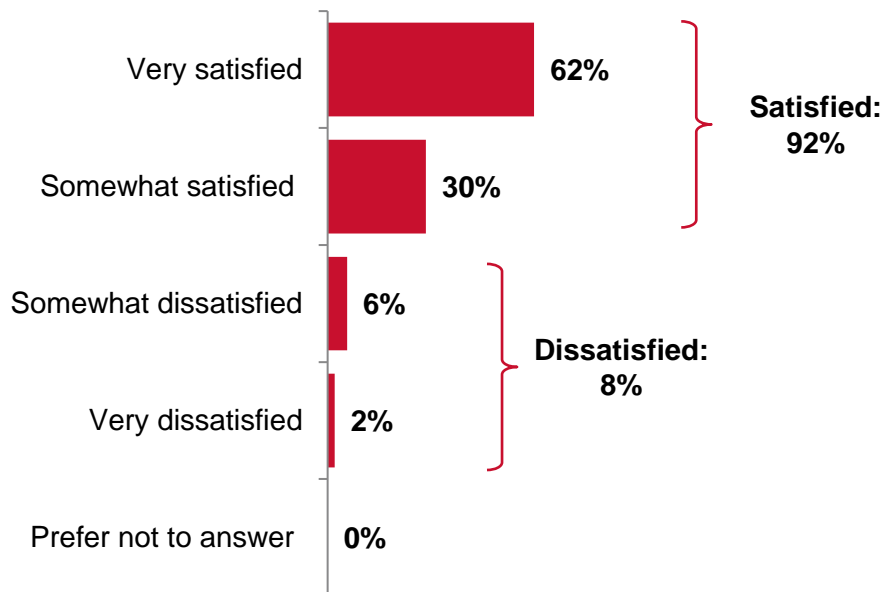
Program Experience



Level of Satisfaction with the Program

Among those who used designated tables, more than nine in ten (92%) are satisfied with the Alcohol in Parks pilot program.

Level of Satisfaction with the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program

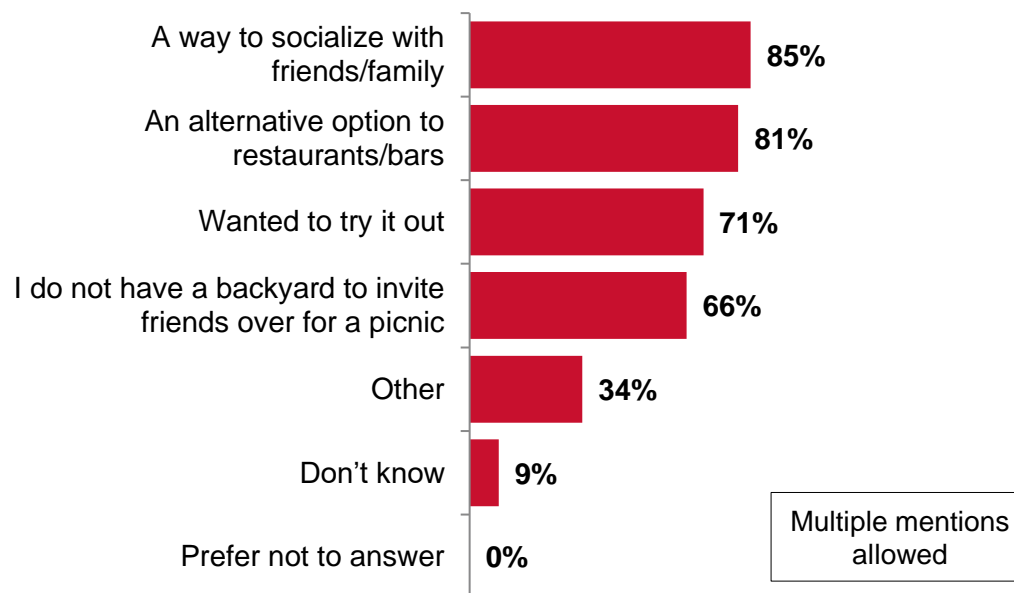


Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your experience using table(s) designated for alcohol consumption?
Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=239)

Reasons for Using the Program

When asked about reasons for using the Alcohol in Parks pilot program, respondents indicated that the program provides a way of socializing with family/friends (85%), offers an alternative option to restaurants/bars (81%), and they wanted to try it out (71%).

Main Reasons for Using the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program



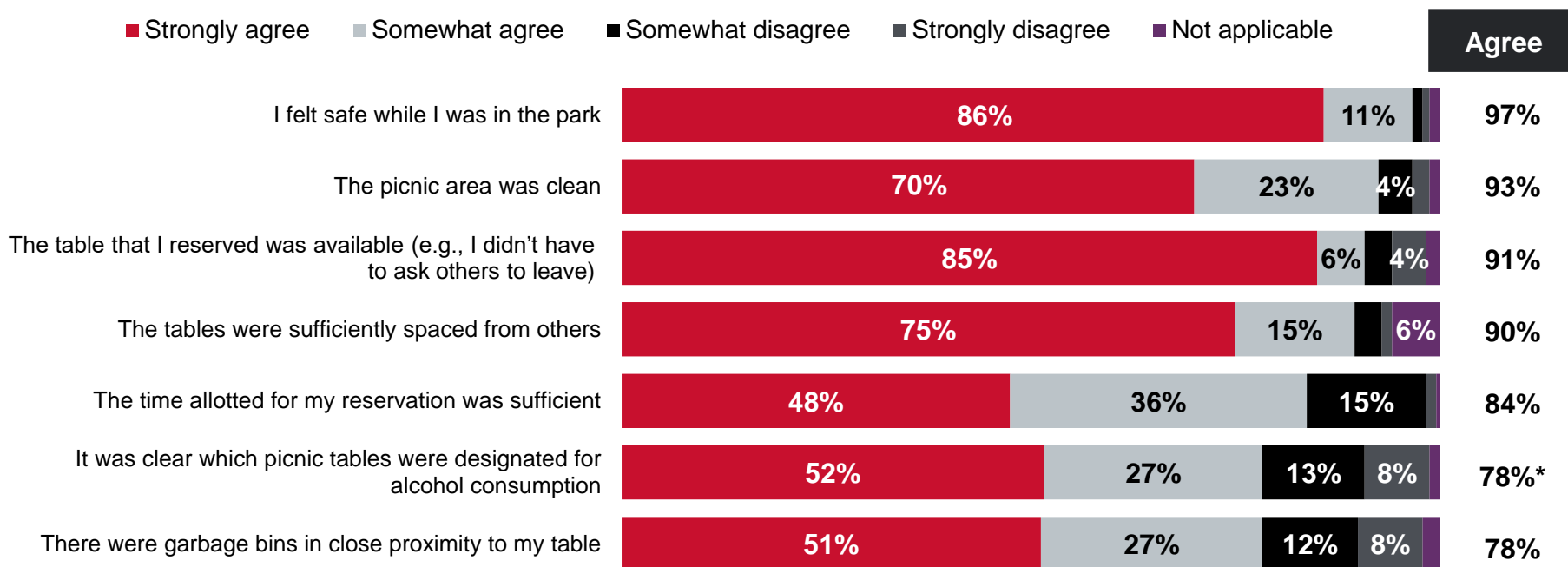
What are your main reasons for using the Alcohol in Parks pilot program? Please select all that apply.

Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=238)

Experience with the Program

Among those who used designated tables, experience with the Alcohol in Parks pilot program was overall positive. More than nine in ten indicated that they felt safe in the park (97%), the picnic area was clean (93%), and the table they reserved was available (91%). Agreement that it was clear which tables were designated for alcohol consumption (78%) and that there were garbage bins in close proximity (78%) is lower, albeit still strong.

Experience with the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program



*Rounding

Note: 3% and lower not labelled

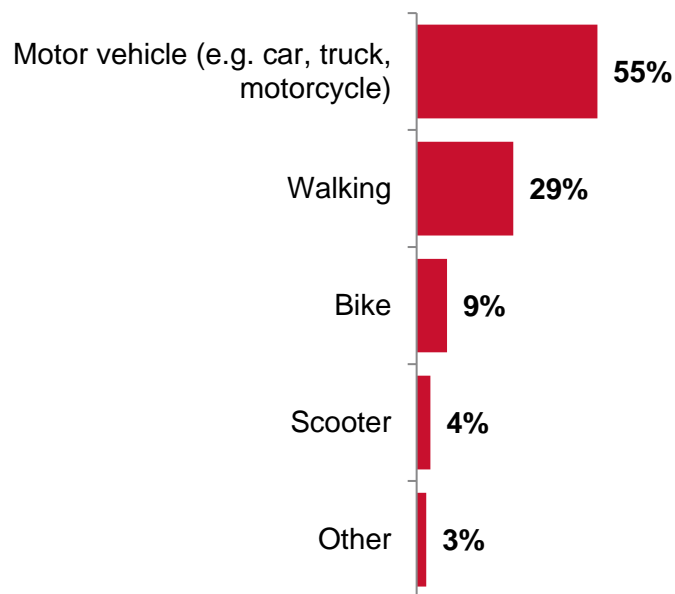
Thinking of your most recent experience using a table designated for alcohol consumption, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=240)

Mode of Transportation

Among those who used designated tables, slightly more than half (55%) indicated that they used a motor vehicle to get to the park, followed by walking (29%) and biking (9%).

Mode of Transportation to the Park



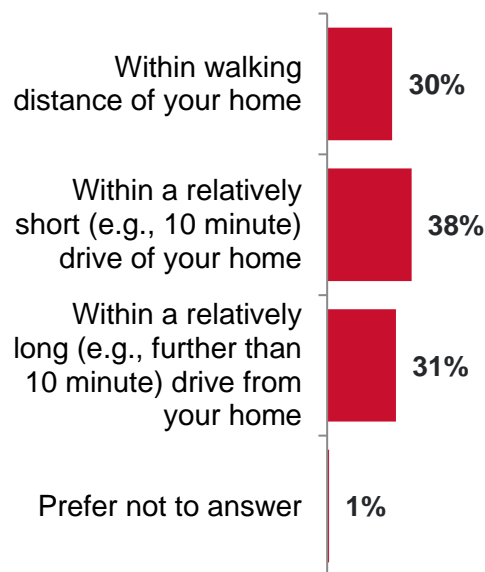
Again, thinking of your most recent experience, how did you get to the park?

Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=240)

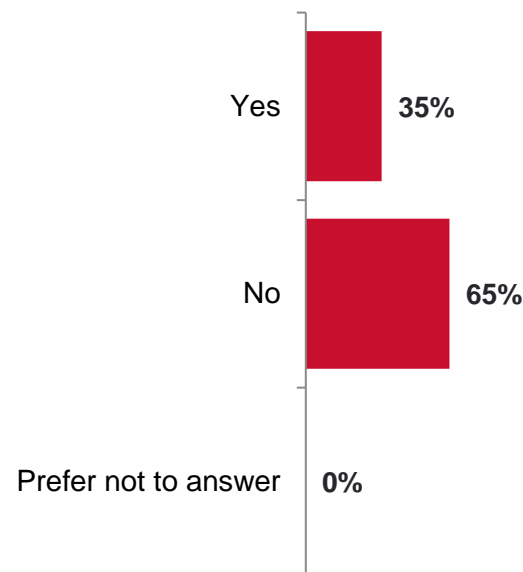
Park Location

When asked about park location, responses were split. Almost four in ten (38%) said that the park was within a relatively short drive, three in ten said that the park was within a relatively long drive, and a similar proportion indicated that the park was within walking distance. For one-third (35%) of respondents that the park was located in their neighborhood.

Park Location



Park Located in the Neighborhood



Was the park you visited...

Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=240)

And, was the park you visited in your community?

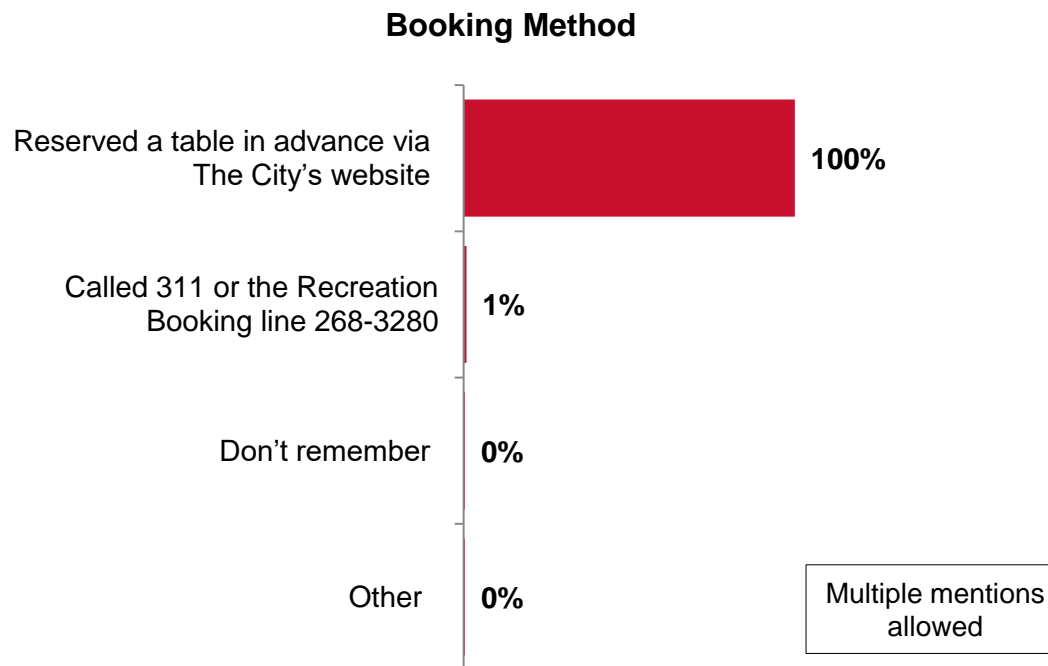
Base: Respondents who used designated tables (n=240)

Experience with Booking



Booking Method

Among the survey respondents, everyone said that they reserved a table in advance via the website. Only a small minority (1%) called 311 or the Recreation Booking line.

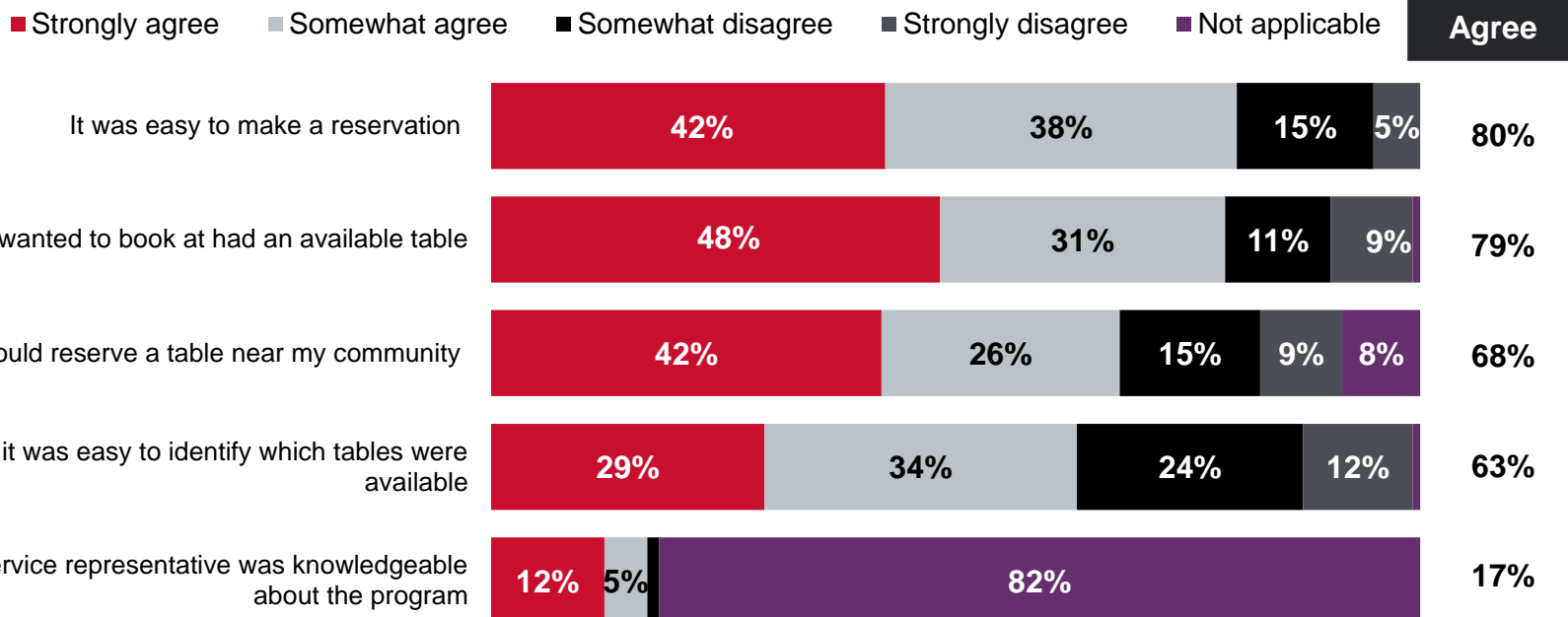


To reserve tables designated for alcohol consumption, which method of booking did you use? Please select all that apply.
Base: Respondents who booked designated tables (n=236)

Experience with Booking a Table

Experience with booking a table is modest. While eight in ten (80%) agree that it was easy to make a reservation, fewer agree that they could reserve a table near their community (68%) or that it was easy to identify which tables were available (63%).

Experience with Booking a Table Designated for Alcohol Consumption



Note: 3% and lower not labelled

Thinking about your experience with reserving a table designated for alcohol consumption, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each question.

Base: Respondents who booked designated tables (n=238)

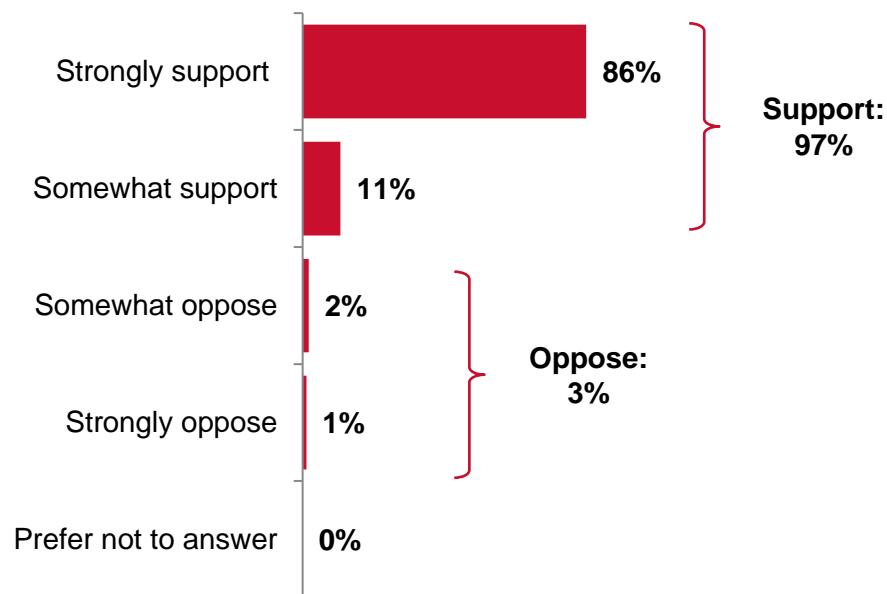
Future of the Program



Support/Oppose the Program

Among survey participants, the vast majority (97%) indicate that they support the Alcohol in Parks pilot program.

Support vs. Oppose the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program

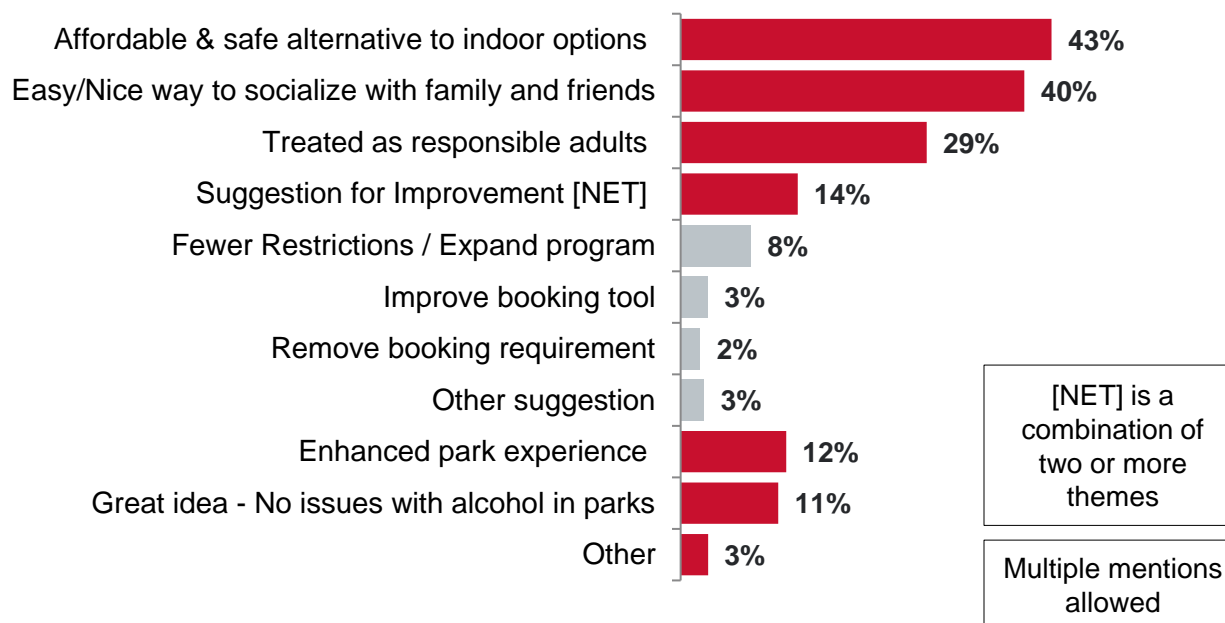


Overall, do you support or oppose the Alcohol in Parks pilot program?
Base: All respondents (n=271)

Reasons for Supporting the Program

Among those who support the program, main reasons for support include the program being an affordable and safe alternative to indoor options (e.g., restaurants/bars; for people who don't have a backyard), easy/nice way to socialize with family and friends, and a feeling of being treated as responsible adults.

Reasons for Supporting the Program



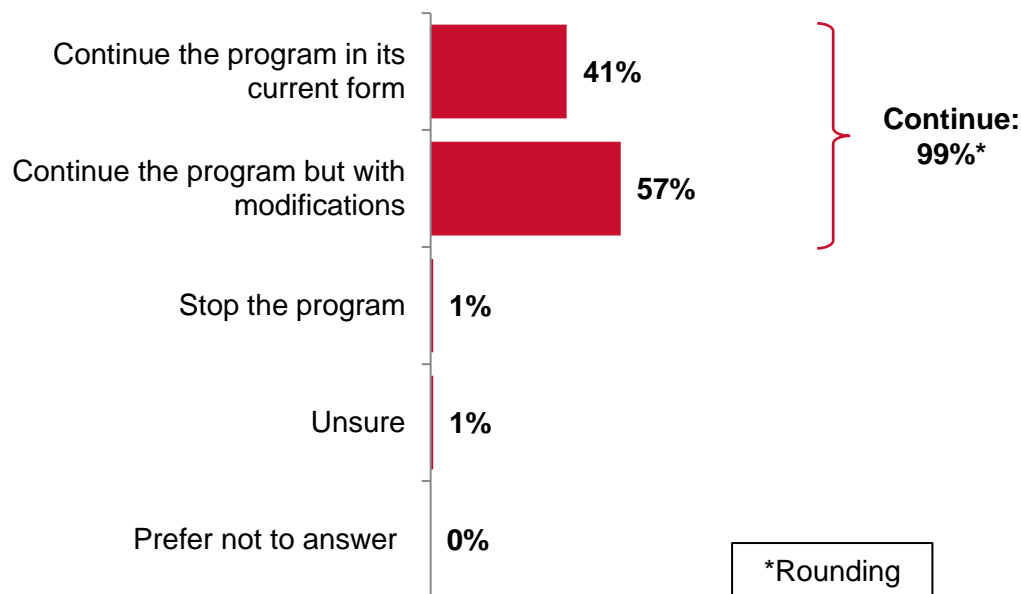
Why to do you support the Alcohol in Parks program?

Base: Respondents who support the program (n=219)

Preferences with Regard to Continuing the Program

When asked about preferences with regard to continuing the Alcohol in Parks pilot program, two-fifths (41%) indicated a preference for continuing the program in its current form, while almost six in ten (57%) would like to continue the program but with modifications.

Preferences with Regard to Continuing the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program



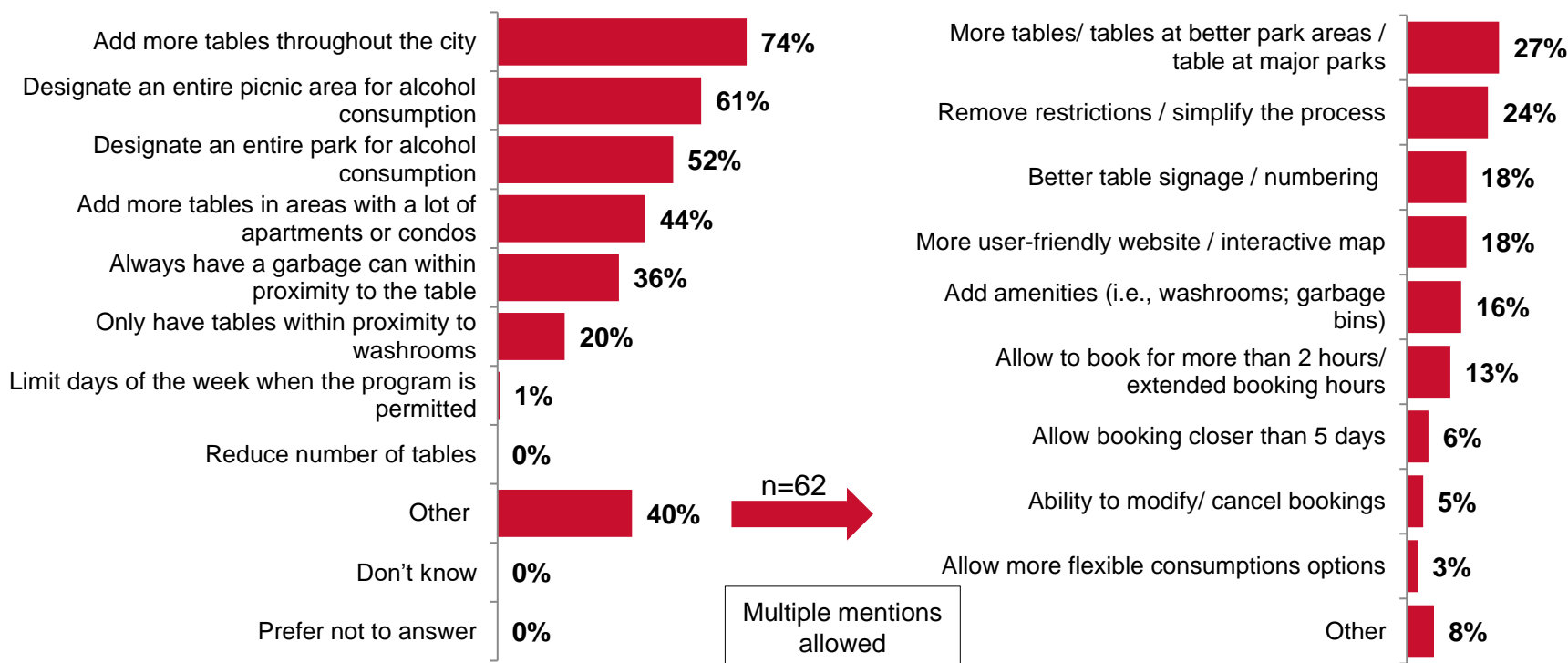
In your opinion, The City should...

Base: All respondents (n=270)

Proposed Program Modifications

Among those who prefer to continue the program but with modifications, respondents indicated that they would like to see more tables throughout the city (74%), designate an entire picnic area (61%), and designate an entire park (52%).

Proposed Modifications to the Alcohol in Parks Pilot Program

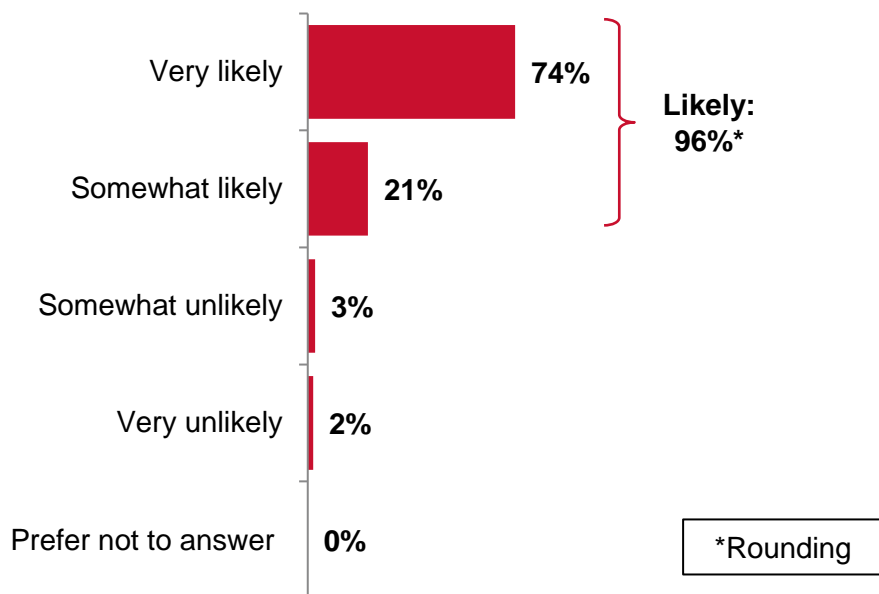


What modification(s) to the Alcohol in Parks program would you recommend? Please select all that apply.
Base: Respondents who prefer to 'continue the program but with modifications' (n=155)

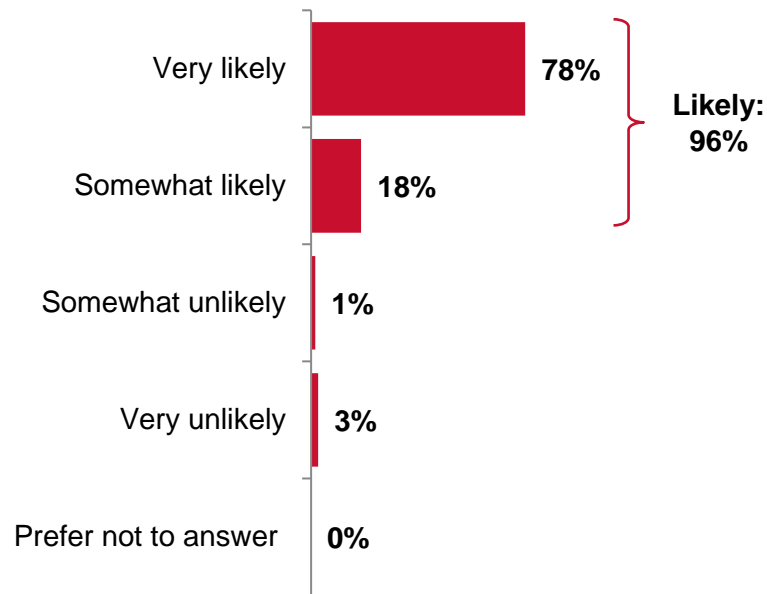
Likelihood of Using/Recommending the Program

Among survey respondents, almost everyone indicated that they would be likely to use the Alcohol in Parks program next summer (96%) and a similar proportion would be likely to recommend the program to their friend or family member (96%).

Likelihood of Using the Alcohol in Parks Program



Likelihood of Recommending the Alcohol in Parks Program



If this program were available next summer, how likely would you be to use a designated table for alcohol consumption in parks?
Base: All respondents (n=270)

If this program were available next summer, how likely would you be to recommend it to your friend or a family member?
Base: All respondents (n=270)

Demographics



Demographics

Gender	
Male	37%
Female	58%
Other	1%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Age	
18 to 24	2%
25 to 34	35%
35 to 44	38%
45 to 54	16%
55 to 64	6%
65 or 74	2%
75 or older	0%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Quadrant of Residence	
NW	34%
SW	33%
NE	11%
SE	18%
Prefer not to answer	4%

Children in the Household	
Yes	35%
No	62%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Dwelling Type	
Apartment	26%
Townhouse	10%
Single-detached house	49%
Duplex-attached house	10%
Another type of multi-dwelling unit	3%
Other	0%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Have a Backyard	
Yes	63%
No	35%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Base: All respondents (n=270)



Contact

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Customer Service & Communications
The City of Calgary
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**Community Services Briefing to
Community Development Committee
2021 November 17**

**ISC:UNRESTRICTED
CD2021-1559**

Update on Accessible Taxi Incentive Program

PURPOSE OF BRIEFING

On 2018 October 15, Council approved changes to the Livery Transport Bylaw 6M2007 to establish an Accessible Taxi Incentive Program for holders of an Accessible Taxi Plate Licence and accessible taxi drivers. This briefing responds to Council's direction to monitor the effectiveness of the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and report back through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services (now called the Community Development Committee) with an update. See Attachment 1 for Previous Council Direction.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

There are two separate Council-directed initiatives that share a common goal of improving accessible taxi service delivery in Calgary.

The Accessible Taxi Incentive Program was implemented on 2019 January 1 to improve on-demand wheelchair accessible taxi service and customer safety while mitigating the higher operating cost of accessible taxis compared to other taxi vehicles. The program provides up to \$5,000 in annual grants and incentives to holders of an Accessible Taxi Plate Licence and accessible taxi drivers who meet the qualifying criteria. It is self-funded by a 10 cent regulatory fee that is included in fares charged to customers for all taxi, accessible taxi and Transportation Network Company trips taken in vehicles licensed to operate in Calgary.

In 2019 December, following direction from Council, Administration launched a pilot of Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles (WAV) Calgary, a centralized dispatch service for on-demand accessible taxis, with the ability to transition the service to a full program if successful. WAV Calgary provides customers with one point of contact to request an accessible taxi and optimizes the accessible fleet by dispatching the closest available vehicle from a pool of drivers affiliated with different taxi companies. In addition to reducing wait times for customers and travel time for drivers, WAV Calgary provides data that is used to evaluate whether Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers have met criteria to receive incentives under the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program.

These two complementary programs work to ensure the viability of the accessible taxi fleet and have served as a model of innovation for jurisdictions across North America since they were launched.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

From the introduction of the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program in 2019 January to the end of 2021 August, almost 33,000 accessible taxi trips have been delivered, representing 0.3 per cent of total taxi trips. The program has provided \$984,255 in grant and incentive payments to eligible members of industry, self-funded by the 10 cent regulatory fee. Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers received the most funding for meeting customer safety and

satisfaction criteria, but qualified for fewer incentives for service delivery criteria around accepting and completing a specified number of accessible trips, possibly due to the reduced demand for taxis as a result of COVID-19. In 2020, there were only 9,141 accessible taxi trips completed, down 57 per cent from 2019.

Administration engaged with Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers in 2021 June (see Attachment 2 for a summary of engagement) and heard that 90 per cent of those surveyed feel that the grants and incentives help offset the higher cost of operating an accessible taxi. The higher cost of purchasing and maintaining an accessible taxi and the longer driving distances to pick-up/drop-off customers in less fuel-efficient vehicles continue to be challenges facing the industry. Despite this, 80 per cent of respondents indicated that they intend to keep driving an accessible taxi in the future.

In addition to offsetting costs for drivers, a key objective of the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program is to improve service for customers. Before Council approved the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and WAV Calgary, many customers expressed frustration about hours-long wait times and uncertainty about taxis arriving when booked. Since the programs launched, the average wait time for an accessible taxi is less than 22 minutes. Administration engaged with customers through the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Calgary Ability Network and heard that 90 per cent of those surveyed feel confident that a taxi will arrive when requested through WAV Calgary, while all those who responded are likely or very likely to continue using the service.

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

Administration completed a full review of the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and will be implementing improvements effective 2022 January 1 within the existing Livery Transport Bylaw framework (see Attachment 3 for a summary). Although most Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers feel the criteria for receiving grants and incentives are easy to understand, some feel that they are overly complicated and fail to recognize that some drivers complete more accessible trips than others and have higher operating costs. To streamline the criteria, funding for the annual grant for Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders will be reallocated to the annual incentive, providing a larger amount at one time and reducing the administrative burden of managing and dispensing two separate payments. Changes are also being made to reduce the overall number of eligibility criteria and remove those that require a specific number of trips to be completed, which may be beyond the driver's control. The total amount of available funding will remain \$5,000 annually to ensure the program continues to encourage the fleet to deliver a high level of service that meets or exceeds customer expectations.

A new per-trip driver incentive will also be introduced to provide funding that is commensurate with the number of accessible trips each driver completes. Through engagement, 82 per cent of Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers felt that a per-trip incentive for every accessible trip completed would help offset the additional costs of running an accessible vehicle. Using funding from the 10 cent regulatory fee, Administration will be introducing a \$10 incentive for every accessible trip completed during the daytime and a \$20 incentive for every trip completed during the nighttime, which is in line with other municipalities across North America with per-trip incentives.

The mechanism for evaluating eligibility for the per-trip driver incentive will be WAV Calgary, which Administration will be transitioning from a pilot to a full program self-funded by the 10 cent regulatory fee. Administration received support from the Advisory Committee on Accessibility for maintaining WAV Calgary as a means of improving equity of accessible on-demand transportation options in Calgary and over 90 per cent of app users have rated the service as four or five stars out of five since it was launched.

NEXT STEPS

Administration is committed to reviewing the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program annually to evaluate how the program is performing and to ensure long-term sustainability. A public awareness campaign for WAV that started in November will continue throughout December using community newsletters, signage and social media to promote the service. Engagement with Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders, drivers and customers will be on-going to ensure The City's accessible taxi initiatives are addressing service gaps and continuing to support Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and drivers in providing safe, efficient and reliable on-demand taxi service to all customers.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Previous Council Direction
2. Attachment 2 – Summary of Engagement
3. Attachment 3 – Summary of Planned Changes to the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program

Previous Council Direction

2018 November

In 2018 November, through One Calgary budget deliberations, Council approved a one-time funding request of \$350K in 2019 and \$350K in 2020 to support a two-year Centralized Dispatch pilot for on-demand wheelchair accessible vehicles.

2018 October 03

CSPS2018-1033

Council approved CPS2018-1033 amending the Livery Transport Bylaw 6M2007 to allow for the implementation of an Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and directed Administration to monitor the effectiveness of the program and report back to Council through the Standing Policy Committee on Community and Protective Services no later than 2021 Q1. Due to the impact of COVID-19 on the livery industry, the report back was deferred to 2021 Q4 to allow additional time to collect data on program effectiveness.

Council also directed Administration to pilot a two-year Centralized Dispatch service for on-demand wheelchair accessible vehicles using a third-party vendor selected through a Request for Proposal process.

2018 March 19

CPS2018-0127

Council approved CPS2018-0127 endorsing a framework for an Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and directed Administration to:

- a) Fund the incentive through a per-trip fee applied to all taxi and Transportation Network Companies trips;
- b) Bring forward amendments to the Livery Transport Bylaw 6M2007 based on this option no later than 2018 Q3.

Summary of Engagement

Accessible Taxi Drivers

Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders and accessible taxi drivers were engaged for feedback on the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and WAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle) Calgary in **2021 June and July**. Due to safety concerns associated with in-person engagement during COVID-19, feedback was collected through a survey which was made available online and in hard copy format. An option to attend a virtual engagement session was also made available upon request. The full What We Heard report can be found [here](#).

A total of 46 out of 85 Accessible Taxi Plate Licence holders/accessible taxi drivers completed the survey (**54 per cent response rate**) and one participant attended a virtual engagement session.

Key feedback collected:

- The grants and incentives offered through Accessible Taxi Incentive Program are helping **reduce the high cost** of operating an accessible taxi however more incentives are needed.
- The program is **easy to understand** but the criteria for receiving funds are overly complicated and fail to recognize that some drivers complete more accessible trips than others and therefore have higher operating costs.
- Receiving a per-trip incentive for every accessible trip completed would help cover additional costs, with \$10 being a suggested amount. A higher per-trip incentive during the nighttime would encourage more drivers to be available for accessible trips during those hours.
- Most drivers are using the WAV Calgary platform to deliver accessible trips and rarely have to refuse a trip.
- Generally, most drivers intend to keep driving accessible taxis in the future, however the most significant challenges include vehicle costs (e.g. purchasing, maintenance and fuel) and longer driving distances to pick-up and drop-off customers.

Taxi Brokers

Taxi brokers were engaged for feedback on the Accessible Taxi Incentive Program and WAV Calgary during engagement for the Livery Transport Bylaw Review. An online survey customized to taxi brokers was open from **2020 November 23 to December 7**. Virtual meetings with the project team were also offered on request.

Responses to surveys were collected from five representatives of taxi brokerages operating in Calgary and virtual meetings were held with representatives of two brokerages.

Key feedback collected:

- **Taxi brokerages have received enough support from The City** in regards to collecting the 10 cent regulatory fee from affiliated drivers and no improvements were suggested.
- WAV Calgary has not increased the number of accessible taxi trips for drivers.
- Generally brokerages would not be impacted if it was mandatory for drivers to log-on to the WAV Calgary platform, however some felt that there is not enough volume for drivers to survive on accessible trips alone.

- Trip volumes are too low to make accessible taxis viable. Much of the business is being taken away by Calgary Transit Access and it is too costly for brokerages to operate as a subcontractor for Calgary Transit Access.

Advisory Committee on Accessibility

Administration engaged with the **Advisory Committee on Accessibility** to provide an update on The City's accessible taxi initiatives and solicit feedback on WAV Calgary on three occasions: **2020 October 15, 2021 February 18 and 2021 October 21**. In addition, a representative of Calgary Community Standards Livery Transport Services attends all monthly Committee meetings to provide an overview of accessible taxi performance and address comments and concerns from Committee members.

Key feedback collected:

- The Advisory Committee on Accessibility recommends transitioning **WAV Calgary** from a pilot to a **full program**.
- WAV Calgary has improved service and **reduced wait times** for customers who use on-demand wheelchair accessible taxis.
- Customers who use the service on a daily basis report that **drivers are often early**.
- There is a need to do further promotion of the service to reduce confusion between private on-demand accessible taxi service and public transit options offered by Calgary Transit Access.

Customers

Customer Ratings on WAV Calgary App

Customers who book accessible taxis through the WAV Calgary app have an opportunity to provide a rating between one and five stars at the end of their trip. Since it was launched in 2019 December, **750 trips** have been rated by WAV Calgary app users and **90 per cent** have been rated as **four or five stars**. Just over five per cent of customers provided additional feedback on their trip with driver conduct being the most frequently identified area for improvement.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

Administration engaged with customers who use wheelchair accessible taxis in **2020 November and December**. Customers were asked to provide feedback on WAV Calgary through an online satisfaction survey that was circulated through the Advisory Committee on Accessibility and the Calgary Ability Network to **120 organizations** that serve individuals who use accessible taxis. The timing of the survey coincided with a public awareness campaign for WAV Calgary that included 21 Bold signs displayed in prominent locations, a social media campaign with customer testimonials and a link to the survey on the WAV Calgary app.

Just under 120 individuals viewed the survey and there were 19 respondents. Administration heard that many customers were unable to use WAV Calgary in 2020 due to COVID-19 closures and public health restrictions, which could have impacted response rates.

Key feedback collected:

- Customers use WAV Calgary to book on-demand trips but also use the service to pre-book trips for a later date/time.
- Most customers have **confidence** that an accessible taxi will arrive in the timeframe provided by WAV Calgary.

- The majority of respondents report wait times of **30 minutes or less** for a taxi to arrive.
- Generally, **customers feel safe** in accessible taxis and are satisfied with the customer service they receive.
- All customers who responded are **likely or highly likely to continue using WAV Calgary** to book accessible taxis in the future.

Summary of Planned Changes to Accessible Taxi Incentive Program (ATIP)

Item	Key Changes (effective 2022 January 1)	Rationale
WAV (Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle) Calgary Centralized Dispatch Service	WAV Calgary will move from the pilot phase to a full program funded by the 10 cent regulatory fee.	<p>Acting on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) and customer feedback, Administration will continue to operate WAV Calgary to improve equity of accessible on-demand transportation options in Calgary.</p> <p>The majority of accessible taxi trips are being booked through WAV Calgary and the platform is also providing data used to determine the amount of incentives that Accessible Taxi Plate License (ATPL) holders and accessible taxi drivers are eligible to receive under ATIP.</p>
New Per-Trip Incentives	<p>In addition to \$5,000 in annual incentives, new per-trip incentives are being introduced to ATIP for every accessible taxi trip completed through the WAV Calgary platform.</p> <p>ATPL holders and accessible taxi drivers will be eligible to receive \$10 for every accessible trip completed during the daytime (4 am-6 pm) and \$20 for every accessible trip completed during the nighttime (6 pm-4 am).</p>	<p>A per-trip incentive will address challenges related to higher fuel costs and longer driving distances for accessible trips that were identified through engagement with ATPL holders and accessible taxi drivers.</p> <p>The higher incentive amount during the nighttime is in line with other municipalities and was suggested by the ACA to incent late hour service when demand is lower but accessible taxis must be available to support the ATIP objective of improving on-demand service to customers.</p>
ATIP Grant – <i>Accessible Taxi Plate Licence (ATPL) holders</i>	The existing \$1,500 annual grant awarded to all individuals with a valid and subsisting ATPL will be reallocated to the annual incentive for ATPL holders.	Administration identified an issue with a small number of ATPL holders receiving the grant without having a vehicle on the road. These individuals met the qualifying criteria by virtue of being ATPL holders but did not deliver accessible taxi trips and incurred no operational expenses. To better meet the ATIP objective of offsetting the higher cost of operating an accessible taxi, funds will be reallocated to the annual ATPL incentive which has eligibility criteria tied to service delivery.

Item	Key Changes (effective 2022 January 1)	Rationale
		Reallocating funding to the annual incentive also streamlines processes for Administration and reduces costs associated with managing and dispersing three separate funds.
ATIP Incentive criteria – <i>Accessible Taxi Plate Licence (ATPL) holders</i>	<p>With funds from the ATPL grant being reallocated to the annual incentive, available funding will be increased from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Criteria to qualify for the ATPL incentives are being reduced from six to the following two:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vehicle on road a minimum of 250 days per year 2. Mechanicals submitted on time 	<p>Administration heard through engagement that the number of payments and criteria were overly complicated. ATPL holders can now expect one larger incentive payment with fewer qualifying criteria which directly support the accessible fleet in meeting the ATIP objective of improving customer service and safety.</p> <p>ATPL holders who drive their own accessible taxi can qualify for up to \$5,000 annually, which amounts to \$50,000 over the life of the vehicle.</p>
ATIP Incentive criteria – <i>Accessible Taxi Drivers</i>	<p>Criteria to qualify for the existing \$2,000 in annual incentives for accessible taxi drivers are being reduced from six to the following three:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Accept all wheelchair accessible trips 2. Daily maintenance of harness/ramps 3. Minimal incidents or customer service complaints 	<p>Criteria will be simplified and those outside of the driver's control, such as having to complete a minimum of four accessible trips per month, will be removed. The remaining criteria will support the accessible fleet in meeting the ATIP objectives of improving customer service, safety and 24/7 on-demand service delivery.</p>
Taxi Brokerage Maintenance Rebate	The rebate which provided up to \$18,000 in annual funding to help brokerages reduce the administrative costs of collecting the 10 cent regulatory fee from drivers will be discontinued.	<p>Prior to ATIP being introduced in 2019, Administration engaged with taxi brokerages and heard that their administrative costs would increase to support the implementation of the program. The rebate was introduced to assist brokerages in developing internal processes for collecting and remitting the regulatory fee to The City. Now that these processes have been established and functional for over two years, the funding from the rebate will be reallocated to other ATIP initiatives that support customers and industry such as continued investment into WAV Calgary as a full City program and new per-trip incentives.</p>

Item	Key Changes (effective 2022 January 1)	Rationale
ATIP Framework	<p>The above changes, as well as more clearly defined procedures for collecting and remitting the per-trip fee to The City will be incorporated into the ATIP Framework.</p> <p>All changes can be made within the existing Livery Transport Bylaw framework and no bylaw amendments are required.</p>	<p>The ATIP Framework document sets out the requirements of ATIP, including the objectives, scope, responsibilities and procedures for implementing and administering the program.</p> <p>Administration identified several opportunities to improve and strengthen the ATIP Framework to more effectively address non-compliance with program requirements and to ensure the program is being administered in a consistent and transparent manner.</p>



November 12, 2021

RE: Letter of support for the Accessible Taxi and WAV program

On behalf of the Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA), we would like to offer our support for the continuation of the Accessible Taxi and WAV program in Calgary. From all reports received, there has been excellent feedback about the 24-hour service availability and the courteous, professional service of the drivers.

We believe city administration has developed a fee structure and incentive program that encourages holders of Accessible Plate Licenses to keep their vehicles on the road while also providing some financial support for operators to maintain their vehicles. It is our view that the self-sustaining nature of the program will allow operators to continue to provide this vital service to Calgarians with disabilities. While usage may have been low at times during the pandemic, we expect more people will use this service as restrictions ease and more programs and services resume in person activities.

About ACA:

The Advisory Committee on Accessibility (ACA) is a city-appointed Committee of Council, primarily consisting of citizens with disabilities and a keen interest in access issues. We advise and make strategic recommendations to Council on important advancements on Access Design Standards for public infrastructure projects, public policy issues impacting accessibility, and initiatives like outdoor patios, accessible play grounds and snow clearing.

Our committee feels that all Calgarians should have equal access to On-Demand travel options and the Accessible Taxi and WAV program make this a reality for users of wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other mobility aids.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Gregory A.B. McKeown".

Chair, Advisory Committee on Accessibility

And,

Christopher Gordon

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Chris Gordon".

Vice-chair, Advisory Committee on Accessibility