

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees and a path. Overlaid on this is a semi-transparent green filter. A network of thin, light green lines, resembling topographic map contour lines, is drawn across the entire image, including the text area.

Burnaby Mountain **Trail Management** **Plan**

What We Heard Report

SEPTEMBER 2024



Acknowledging the unceded homelands of the hə́ŋqəmiḥə́m and Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim speaking Peoples.

The City of Burnaby recognizes that we are on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the hə́ŋqəmiḥə́m and Skwxwú7mesh Sníchim speaking Peoples and are grateful to be on this territory.



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Engagement snapshot

How we informed

6,081

webpage visits



65

posters distributed



100

discussion guides printed



Over

100,000

postcards mailed out



How we engaged

10

attendees across three roundtable discussions



3

interviews



1,305

online survey responses



10

written submissions



113

open house attendees





Introduction

Project timeline

The Burnaby Mountain Trail Management Plan (the Plan) process was initiated in July 2023. In fall 2023, the City completed a literature review, site analysis and photo documentation. City Council received a project update in April 2024, and engagement with the public and interested parties was carried out between May and June 2024. This What We Heard Report summarizes the feedback collected throughout the engagement process.

The project was initiated in July 2023. The planning process will progress in four (4) phases:

Phase 1 | Fall 2023

Literature review, site analysis, and photo documentation

Phase 2 | Spring 2024

Community engagement

WE ARE HERE.

Phase 3 | Fall 2024

Draft Trail Management Plan

Phase 4 | Winter/Spring 2025

Final Trail Management Plan with implementation plan

Background

Burnaby Mountain is a designated conservation area that protects its forests, wildlife, plant and water systems. The City of Burnaby recognizes that the Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area (BMCA), spanning 578-hectares, is an environmentally sensitive area of regional importance, and the recreation service provision is continually evolving.

The conservation area is a site of significance for the Host Nations. The area is also popular with those who enjoy its natural beauty through bird watching, hiking and mountain biking on the 30 kilometre network of recreational trails.

In 2019, an Environmental Conditions Assessment identified the need for a trail management plan for the BMCA. The City of Burnaby is developing a trail management plan for Burnaby Mountain to balance conservation and recreation in this well-loved natural park.

The Plan will assess the inventory and current state of trails and guide future investment for management and improvements. The goal is to review and enhance trail management services while maintaining conservation standards and protecting the habitats and ecosystems in the area.

Engagement objectives

The following objectives were designed to activate trust, collaboration and meaningful engagement with the public:

- Audiences understand the Plan area is a designated conservation area.
- Audiences understand the challenge of managing the conservation area for both conservation and recreation and the need to find a balance between the two.
- The Plan will be informed by a broad spectrum of conservation area users.
- A clear vision for the conservation area will emerge through the engagement process.
- Burnaby will understand how audiences wish to be kept informed and provide feedback.
- A strategy for ongoing communication and feedback will be created.



How we informed



Project webpage

A dedicated project webpage was launched on the City of Burnaby's website and the City's public engagement platform, Your Voice, on May 1, 2024. There were 6,081 visits to the webpage. The webpage featured an overview of the project, details of the opportunities to get involved and the online survey. The webpage also provided an opportunity to ask questions or learn more about the project, through a dedicated email address.



Posters

Posters promoting the open house and online survey were distributed throughout the community.



Postcards

More than 100,000 postcards were mailed out to all homes within Burnaby, inviting community members to share their voice and get involved. The postcards included details of the online survey and open house.



Discussion guides

Discussion guides were distributed throughout the community to raise awareness, encourage people to share their voice and to help prepare them for discussions. The two-page discussion guide included information about the history of Burnaby Mountain, the Plan, questions to consider and ways to get involved.

How we engaged

Engagement for the Plan took place throughout May and June, 2024. A variety of methods were used to engage with all those who have an interest in the BMCA, including government agencies and representatives, community groups and the public.

Online survey

An online survey was publicly available on the project webpage from May 1 to June 2, 2024. The survey was intended to collect a range of feedback on the BMCA, including how often people visit the area, what activities they participate in, in the area and their thoughts on potential changes to the area.

A total of 1,305 surveys were submitted.

Open house

One (1) community open house was held on May 21, 2024, at the Simon Fraser University (SFU) UniverCity Town Square. This event provided the community with an opportunity to learn about the purpose and objectives of the Plan and share their thoughts on different aspects of Burnaby Mountain. There were information boards, interactive feedback boards and mapping activities.

Despite poor weather during the event, a total of 113 people attended, some spending upwards of an hour engaging with the materials.





Roundtable discussions

Eleven community groups and organizations were invited to participate in roundtable discussions. A total of 10 community members representing five community groups attended three discussions.

Roundtable	Organization(s)	Date & time	Attendees
Recreational groups	- Burnaby Mountain Golf Course & Driving Range - Burnaby Outdoor Club - Lotus Sports Club	May 13, 2 – 3:30pm	3
Recreational groups	Burnaby Mountain Biking Association (BMBA)	May 14, 10 – 11:30am	4
Environmental groups	Stoney Creek Environment Committee	May 15, 2 – 3:30pm	3

Each roundtable discussion focused on challenges, opportunities, raising awareness and sharing information, and collaborative decision-making.



Interviews

A total of 13 government agencies and representatives, industry groups and utility providers were invited to share their thoughts through short (25-minute), virtual interviews throughout May and June 2024. Three interviews were held with the following organizations:

Organization (Role)	Date & time
Simon Fraser University (Campus Planning)	May 10, 2024, 11:00 am
Vancouver Port Authority	June 3, 2024, 11:00 am
Corix Utilities	June 26, 2024, 12:00 pm

Indigenous engagement

Host Nations were informed of the project and engaged through a separate, ongoing engagement process.

What we heard

Key themes

Common themes heard across all engagement methods were:



Support for specific user designated trails

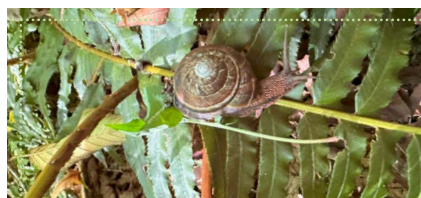
Need for more amenities (washrooms, garbage, water fountains)



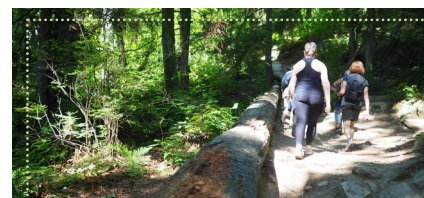
Need for more trail maintenance and improvements



Desire for expanded trail networks



Concern over loss of wildlife and disrupted habitats



Desire for more volunteer and community group involvement



Need for more directional, wayfinding and informational signage



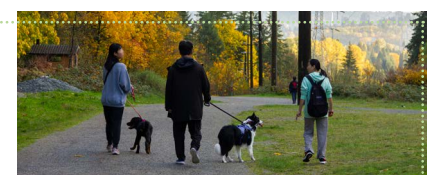
Concerns over damage to soil and vegetation



Desire for more bylaw and rule enforcement



Need to address invasive species



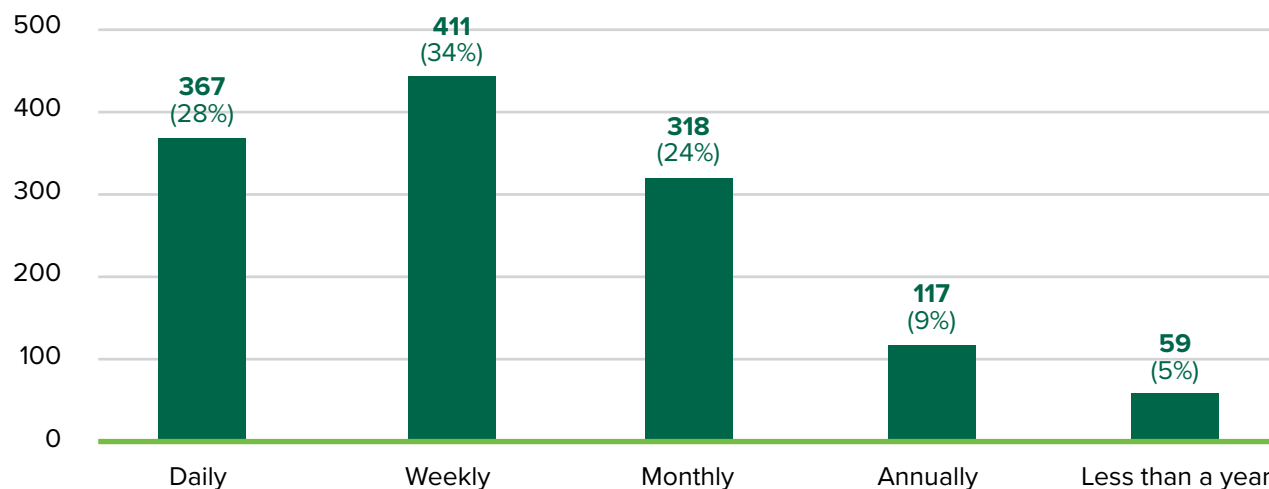
Concerns about off-leash dogs, and the need for more dog friendly areas



Online survey

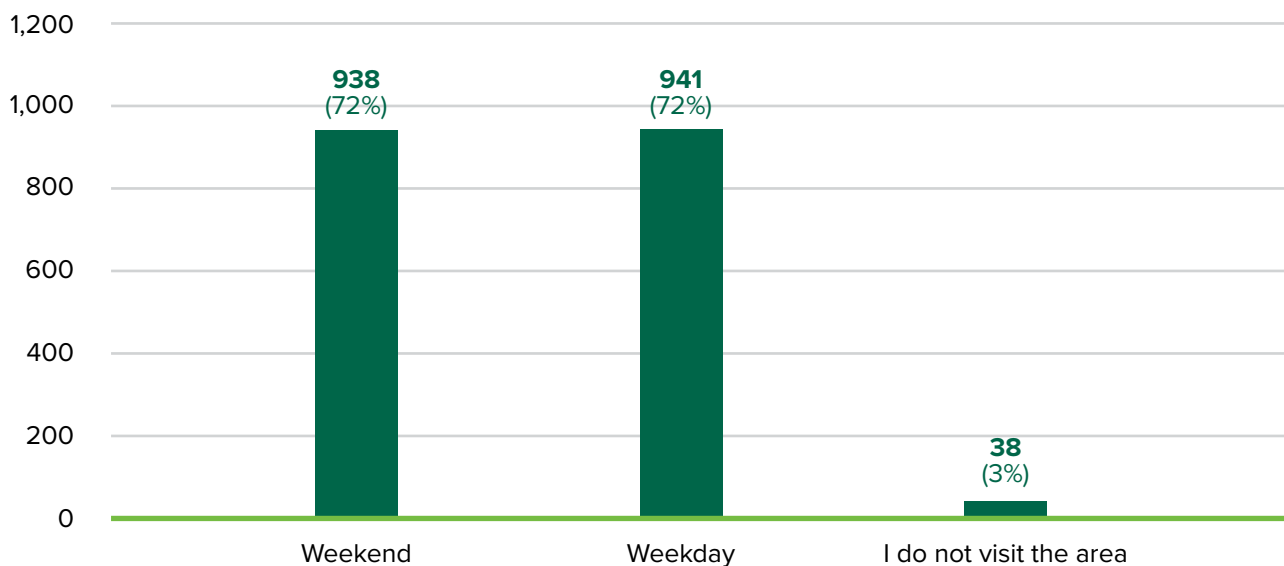
The online survey collected a range of feedback on the BMCA, including how often people visit the area, what activities they participate in in the area, and their thoughts on potential changes to the area. **A total of 1,305 surveys were submitted.** Not every respondent answered every question. Results are presented as the percentage of total survey responses, unless otherwise specified.

Question 1: How often do you visit Burnaby Mountain? (1,302 responses)



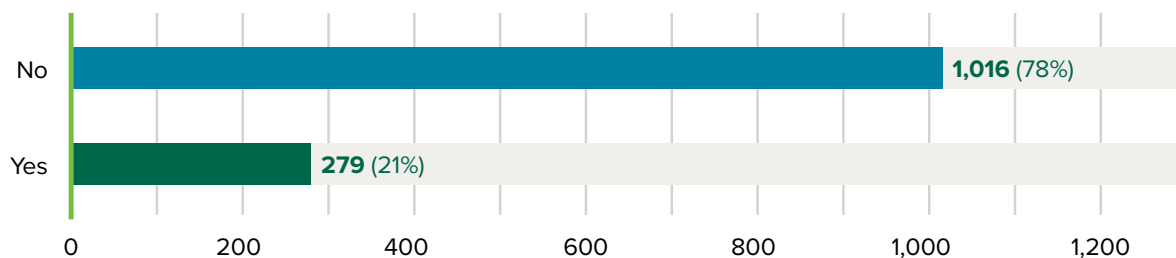
Most survey respondents indicated they visit Burnaby Mountain either weekly (34%), daily (28%), or monthly (24%).

Question 2: When do you typically visit Burnaby Mountain? (Check all that apply.) (1,298 responses)



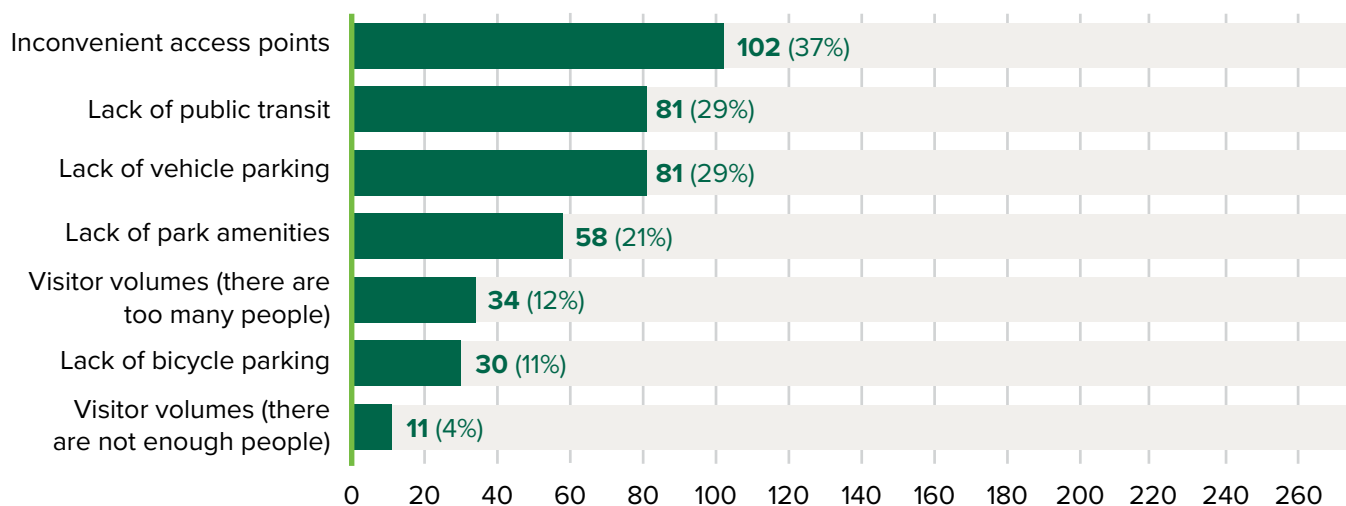
Overall, respondents visit Burnaby Mountain equally on the weekends (72%) and weekdays (72%).

Question 3: Are there barriers for you visiting Burnaby Mountain? (1,295 responses)



When asked about barriers to visiting Burnaby Mountain, 78% of respondents said there were none, while 21% said “there were barriers”.

Question 4: What is preventing you from visiting Burnaby Mountain? (Check all that apply.) (276 responses)

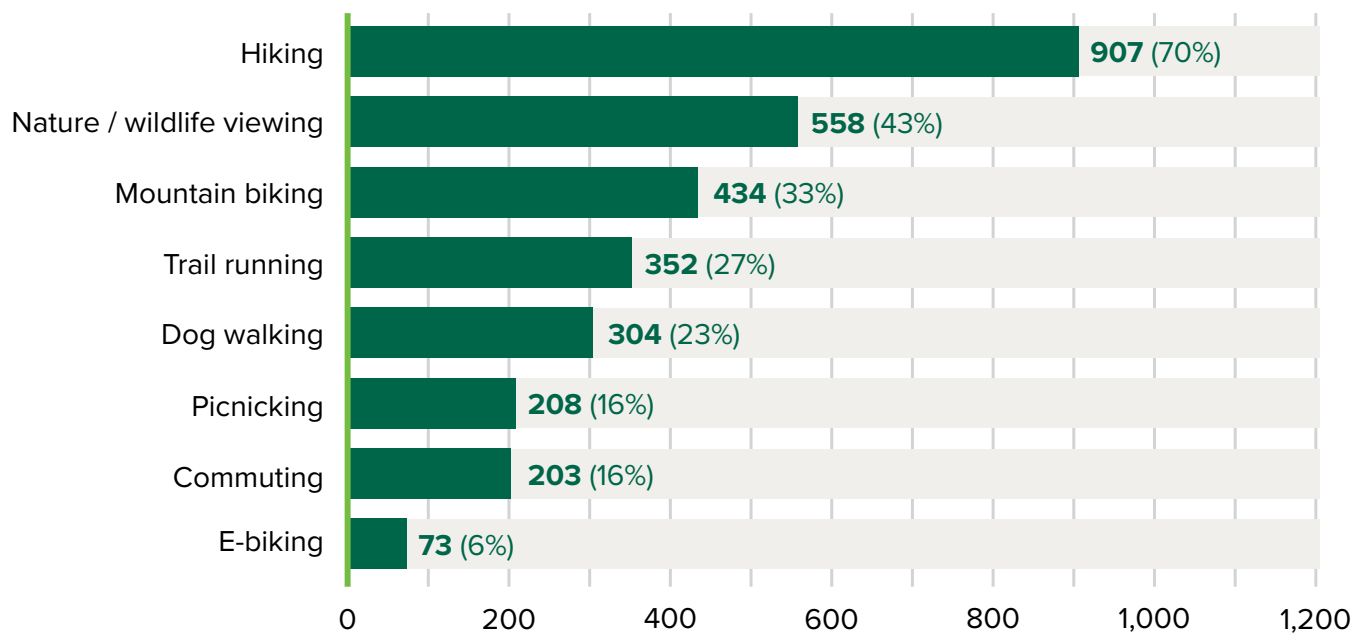


Among respondents who said they did face barriers to visiting Burnaby Mountain, the most common barriers were inconvenient access points (37%), lack of public transit (29%) and lack of vehicle parking (29%).

Common barriers explained by those who selected “other” were:

- Lack of safe pedestrian crossings (20 comments), particularly across Gagliardi Way and from Forest Grove
- Safety concerns (16 comments), including:
 - Trails are unsafe for pedestrians because of bikers (4 comments)
 - Trails are unsafe for bikers (2 comments)
- Lack of dog friendly areas and off-leash dog trails (9 comments)
- Too many off-leash dogs (5 comments)
- Accessibility issues (5 comments), particularly for those with strollers or wheelchairs
- Lack of bike access (4 comments)
- Lack of trail maintenance (4 comments)

**Question 5: What activities do you participate in while visiting Burnaby Mountain?
(Check all that apply.) (1,205 responses)**

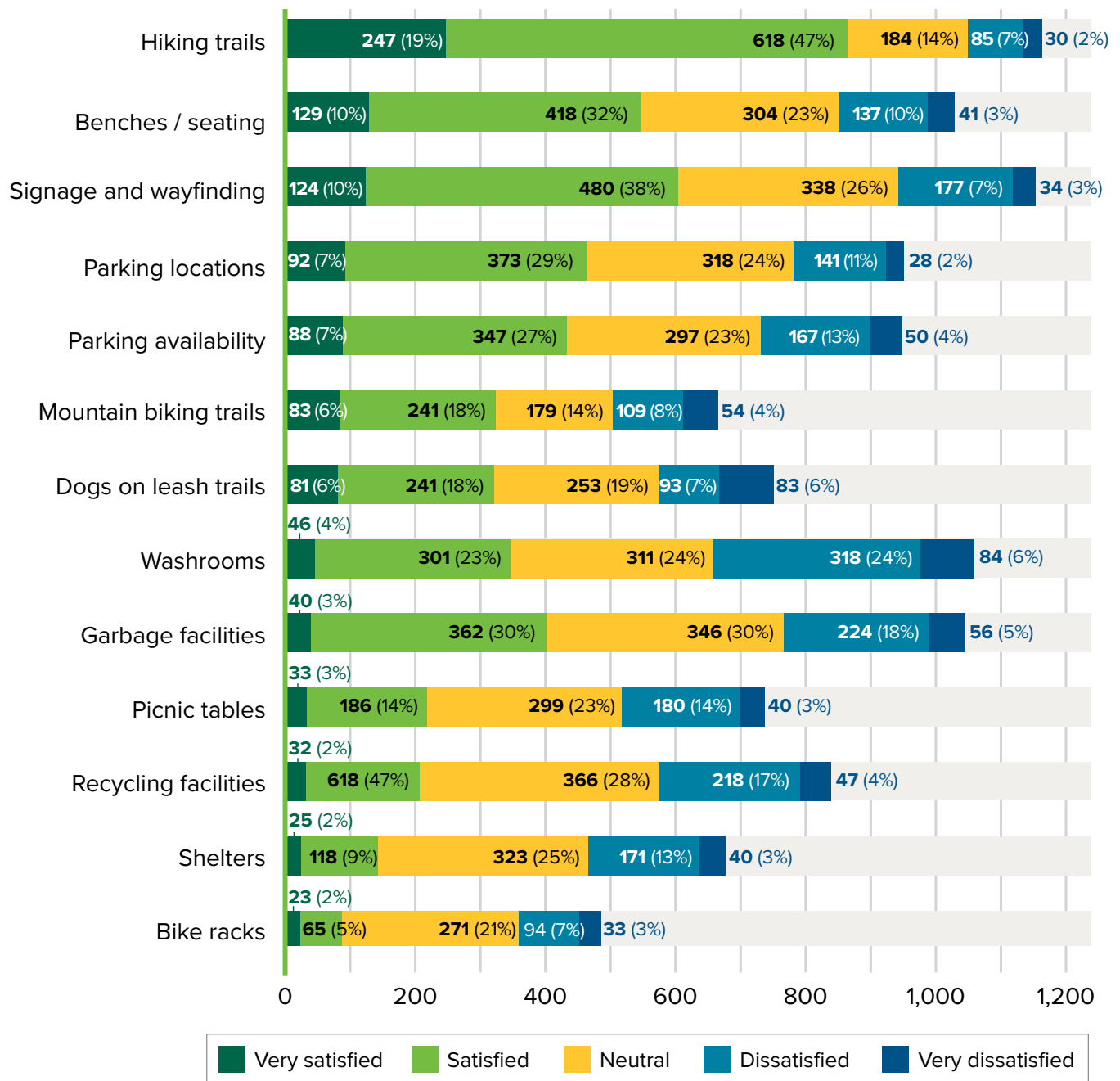


The three most common activities participated in by survey respondents were hiking (70%), nature/wildlife viewing (43%) and mountain biking (33%).

Common activities specified by those who selected “other” were:

- Cycling (15 comments), including:
 - Road cycling (7 comments)
 - Gravel biking (4 comments)
- Walking (10 comments)
- Sightseeing (10 comments)
- Relaxation and mental well-being (5 comments)
- Dining and restaurants (5 comments)

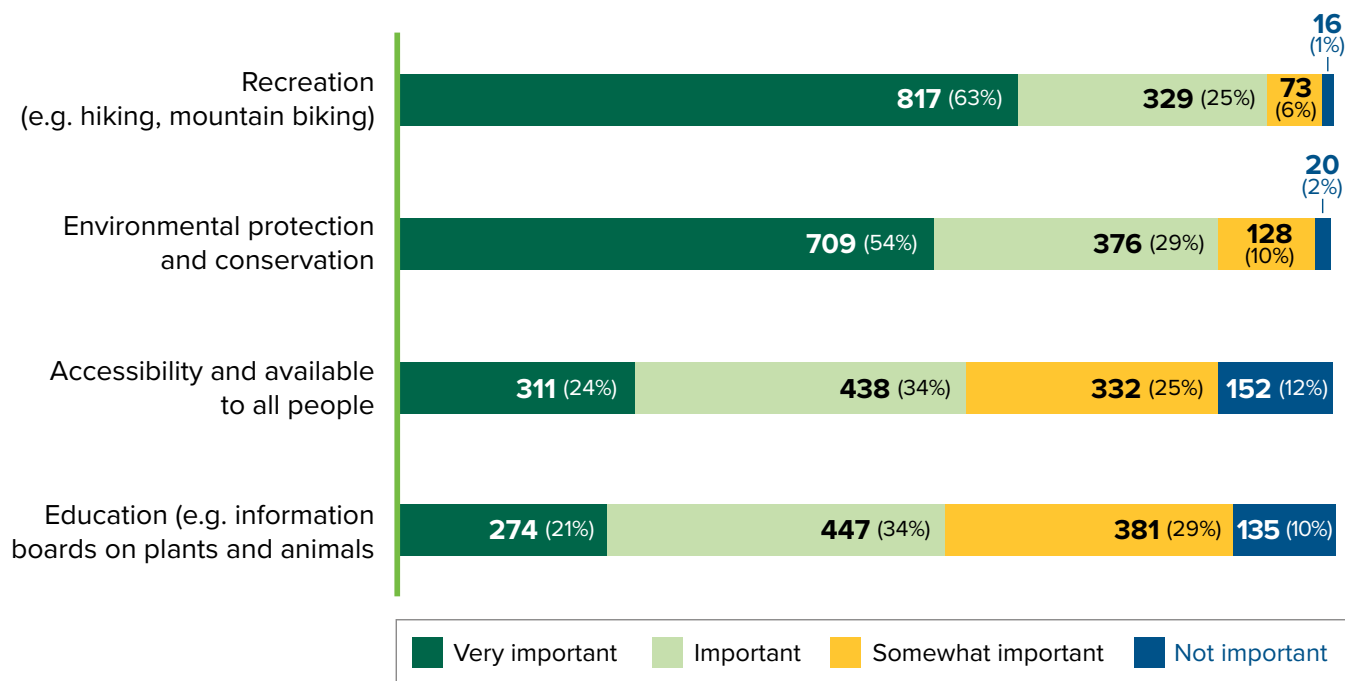
Question 6: Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the amenities you use while visiting Burnaby Mountain. (1,239 responses)



Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with different amenities they use while visiting Burnaby Mountain, from “very satisfied” to “very dissatisfied”. Overall, respondents gave the most positive ratings (“very satisfied” and “satisfied”) to Burnaby Mountain’s hiking trails (66%), signage and wayfinding (48%) and benches/seating (42%).

The amenities receiving the most negative ratings (“dissatisfied” and “very dissatisfied”) were Burnaby Mountain’s washrooms (30%), garbage facilities (21%) and recycling facilities (21%). Results shown exclude those who do not use the amenities.

Question 7: How important are each of the following considerations to you when it comes to planning future amenities on Burnaby Mountain? (1,238 responses)



Survey respondents were asked to indicate the importance of several considerations for planning future amenities on Burnaby Mountain. Overall, recreation (88%) and environmental protection and conservation (83%) were rated as the most important (“very important” and “important”) considerations for future amenities.

Education (37%) and ensuring that amenities are accessible and available to all people (39%) were the least important (“somewhat important” and “not important”) considerations for respondents for future planning.

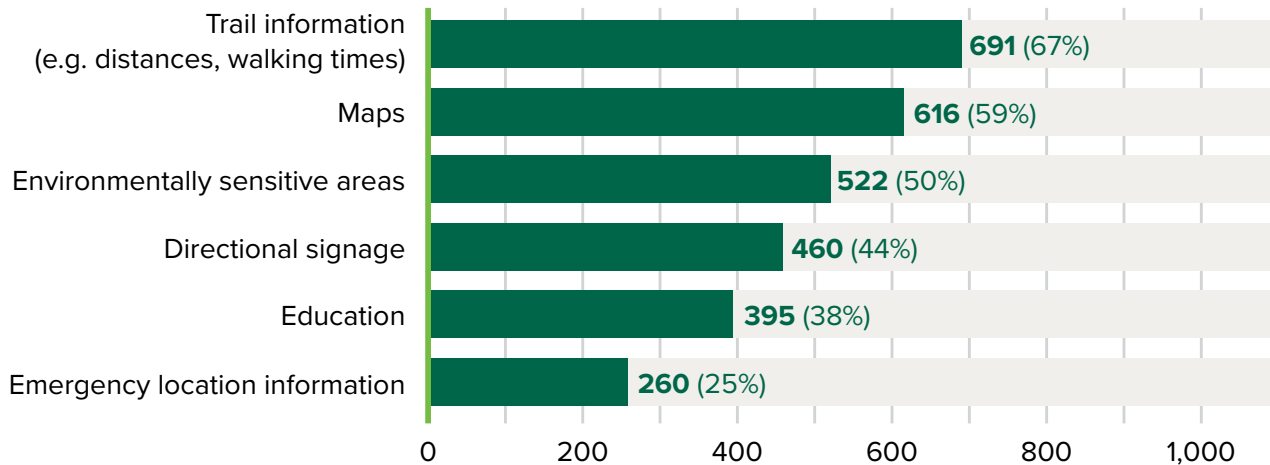
Question 8: Are there any other important considerations you’d like to highlight? (512 responses)

In total, there were 512 responses to this question. When asked if there were any other important considerations, survey respondents highlighted:

- Trail maintenance (66 comments)
- Specific user designated trails (65 comments)
- Improved and increased signage (49 comments)
- Bylaw and rule enforcement (30 comments)
- Dogs:
 - ➔ Concerns over off-leash dogs (39 comments)
 - ➔ Need for dog friendly areas and off-leash dog trails (33 comments)

- Road safety and access (30 comments)
- Bathroom improvements and access (25 comments)
- Need for increased garbage and recycling options along trails (24 comments)
- Need for increased parking access (22 comments)
- Trail safety (18 comments)

Question 9: What type(s) of signage does Burnaby Mountain need more of? (Check all that apply.) (1,091 responses)

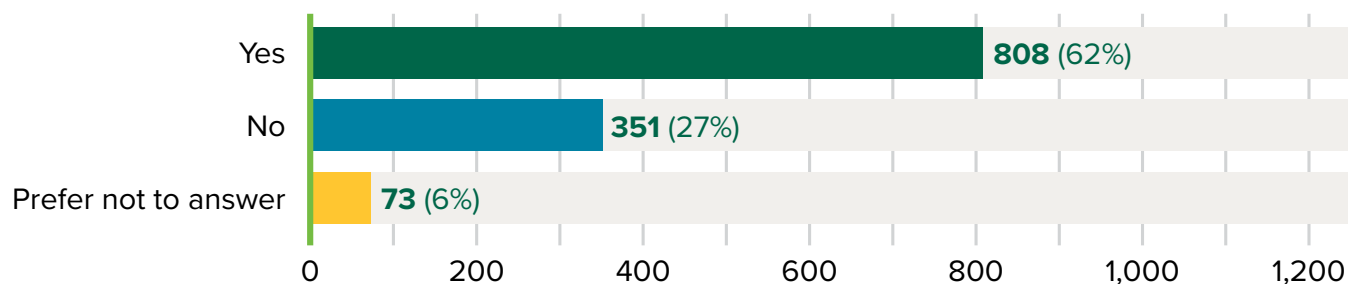


Survey respondents were asked to indicate what types of signage Burnaby Mountain needs more of. Overall, the highest number of respondents indicated that more signage on trail information (67%), maps (59%) and environmentally sensitive areas (50%) is needed.

Common responses among those who selected “other” were:

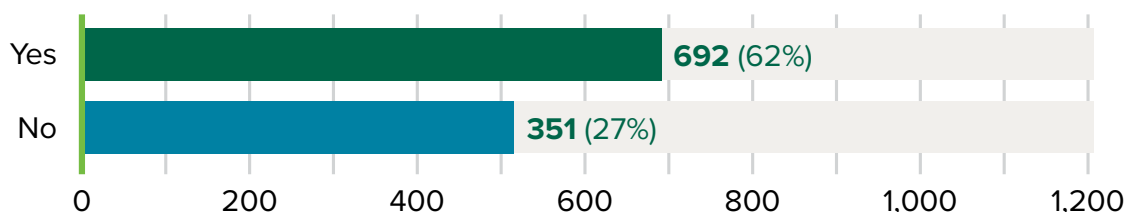
- Trail etiquette signs (18 comments)
- Pets on-leash signs (13 comments)
- No more additional signs are needed (8 comments)
- Fix existing signs (5 comments)
- Bathroom signs (4 comments)
- Speed limit signs on roads (4 comments)
- Wildlife management and safety signs (3 comments)

Question 10: Do you support having specific user designated trails, such as mountain biking only trails? (1,232 responses)



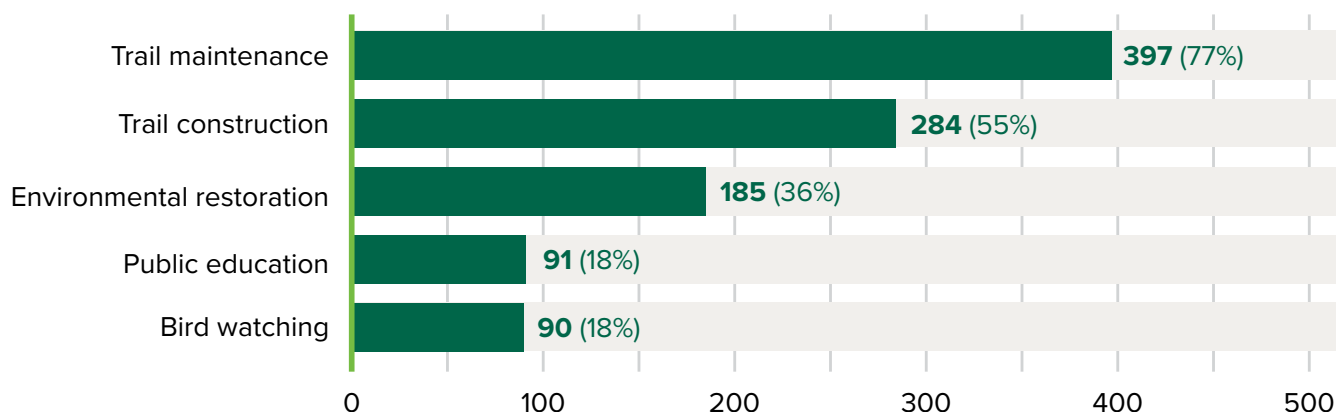
Most survey respondents (62%) indicated they support having separate trails for different user groups.

Question 11: Would you like to volunteer your time to support Burnaby Mountain? (1,207 responses)



Overall, 39% of survey respondents said they would volunteer their time to support Burnaby Mountain, while 53% of respondents said they would not.

Question 12: How would you like to volunteer your time? (Check all that apply.) (514 responses)

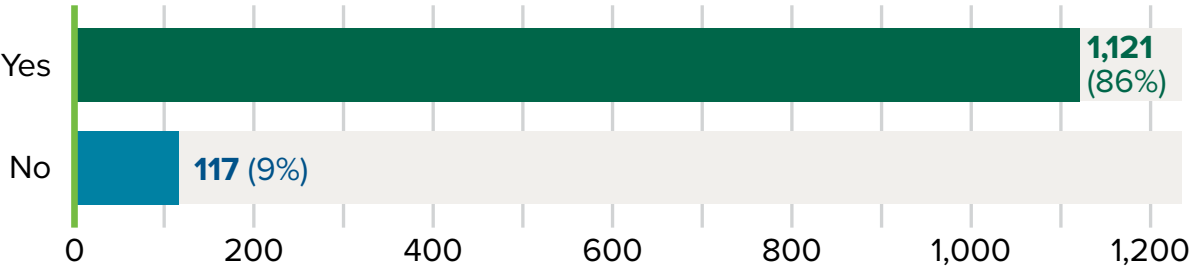


Among respondents who indicated they would volunteer, the three most common ways they would like to volunteer their time were trail maintenance (77%), trail construction (55%) and environmental restoration (36%).

Common responses among those who selected “other” were:

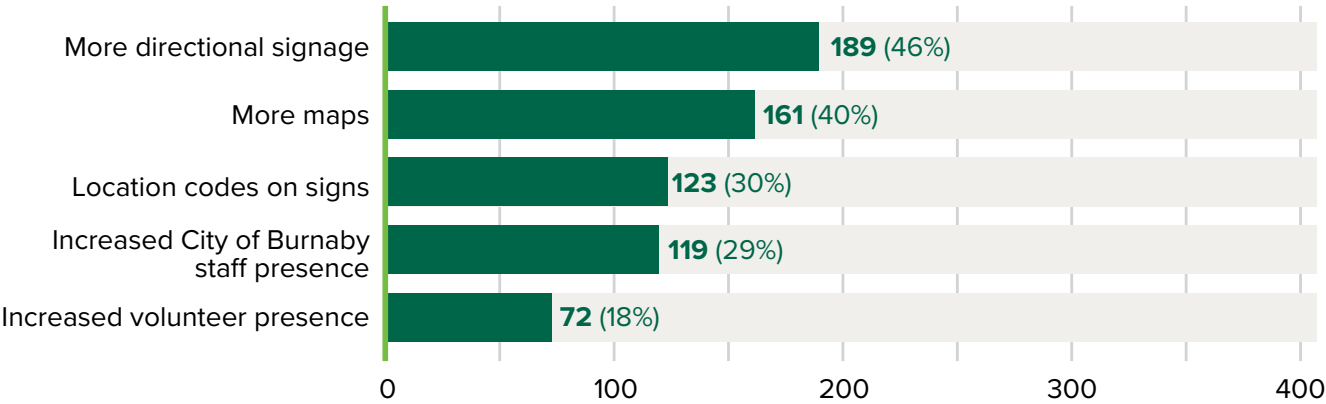
- Environmental monitoring (3 comments)
- Mountain bike trail construction and maintenance (2 comments)
- Park visitor support (1 comment)
- Park cleanup (1 comment)
- Equestrian trail development (1 comment)

Question 13: Do you feel safe visiting Burnaby Mountain? (1,238 responses)



Most survey respondents (86%) indicated they feel safe when visiting Burnaby Mountain.

If not, what would make you feel safer visiting Burnaby Mountain? (Check all that apply.) (407 responses)



Among respondents who indicated they felt unsafe visiting Burnaby Mountain, the top three opportunities for making the area safer were more directional signage (46%), more maps (40%) and location codes on signs (30%).

Common responses among those who selected “other” were:

- Specific user designated trails (11 comments)
- Enforcing off-leash dog rules or designated off-leash dog areas (10 comments)
- Separation from or information about wildlife (9 comments)
- More lighting (5 comments)

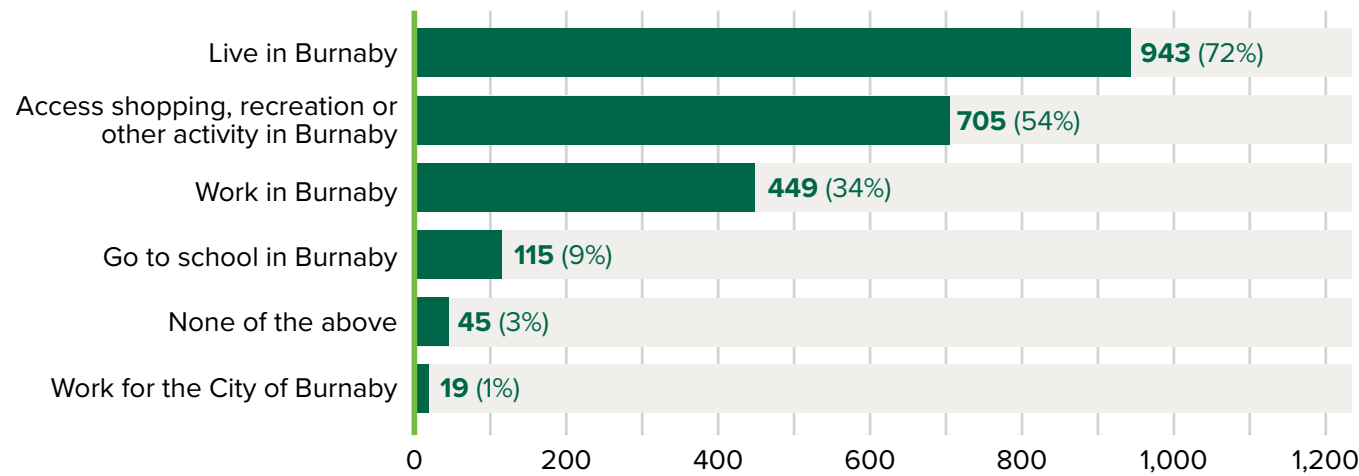
Question 14: What other actions could the City of Burnaby take to improve Burnaby Mountain? (504 responses)

There were 504 responses to this question. Common suggestions for other actions the City of Burnaby could take to improve Burnaby Mountain included:

- More trail maintenance and improvements (77 comments), including drainage and erosion management, resurfacing and more community- or volunteer-led maintenance
- Expand the trail network (60 comments), in particular, provide more mountain bike trails (28 comments)
- Improve and provide more amenities (53 comments), including garbage and recycling, washrooms and water fountains
- Create specific user designated trails (46 comments)
- Increase bylaw and rule enforcement (42 comments), particularly around off-leash dogs (14 comments)
- Improve and increase wayfinding and educational signage (37 comments), including maps and trail markers, wildlife information and trail rules and etiquette
- Make access and safety improvements on surrounding roads (33 comments), including safer pedestrian crossings and traffic calming measures
- Encourage and facilitate more collaboration with community groups (29 comments), particularly the BMBA (20 comments)
- Provide dog-friendly areas, such as off-leash dog trails and parks (24 comments)



Question 15: Do you... (Select all that apply). (1,239 responses)

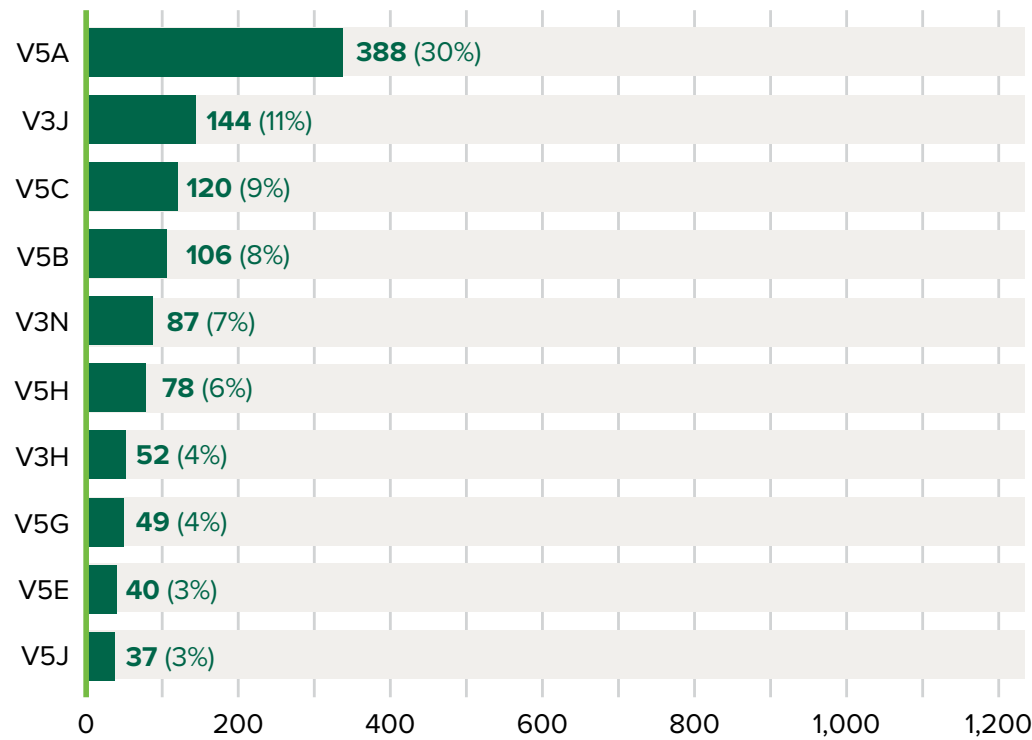


Amongst survey respondents, 72% live in Burnaby, 54% access shopping, recreation, or other activities in Burnaby and 34% work in Burnaby.

Common responses among those who selected “other” were:

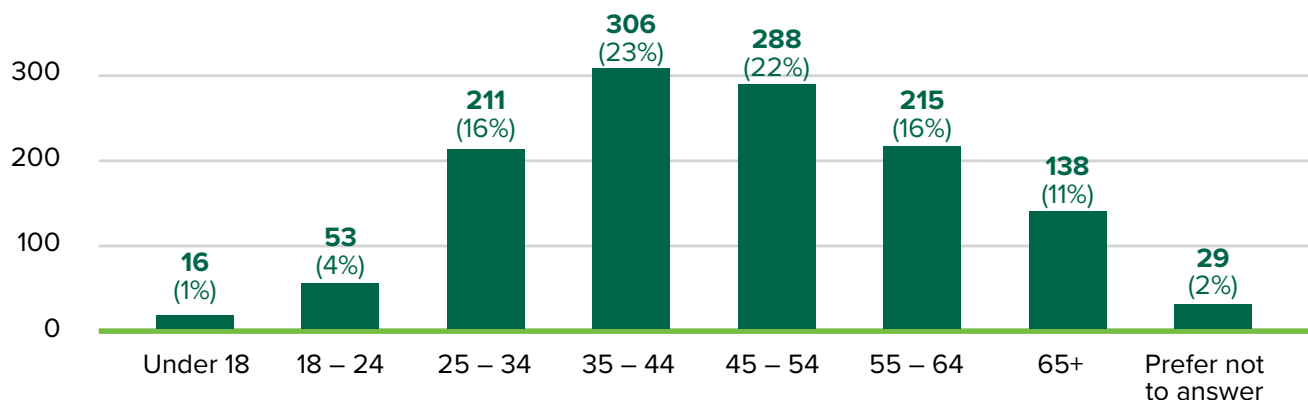
- Live in a neighbouring community (26 comments)
- Previously lived in Burnaby (6 comments)

Question 16: What are the first three (3) digits of your postal code? (1,238 responses)



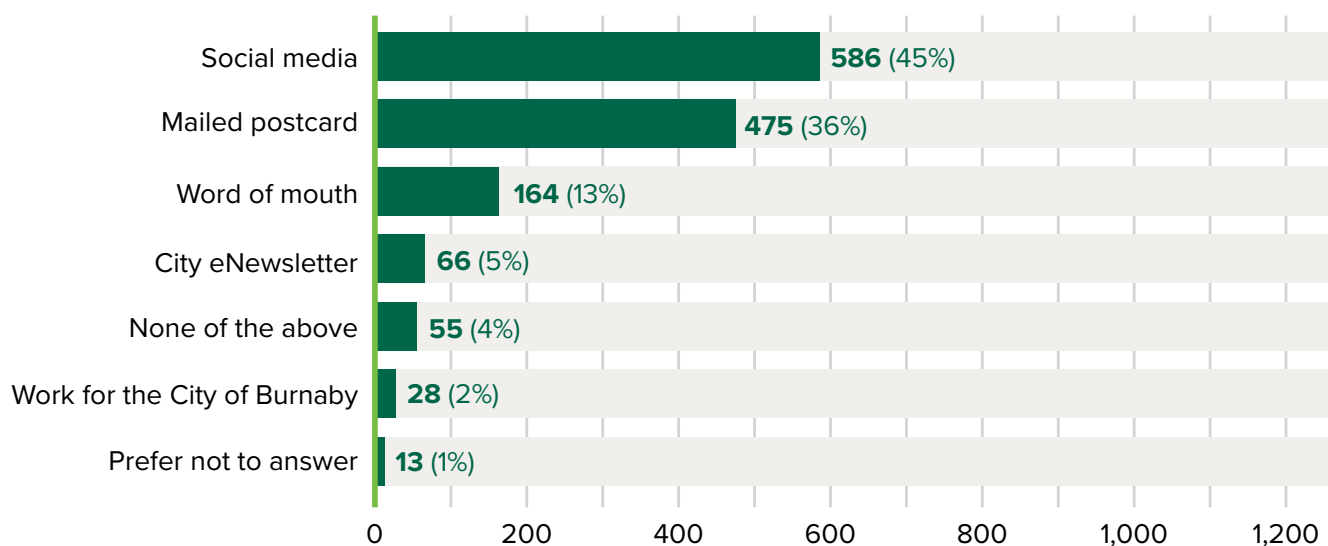
Based on the first three digits of their postal code, most survey respondents live in Burnaby or neighbouring communities. The 10 most common postal codes (shown in the above graph) account for 84% of all survey respondents, and all correspond to different parts of Burnaby, Coquitlam and Port Moody.

Question 17: Please indicate your age group (1,256 responses)



Amongst survey respondents, the four most common age groups were 35-44 (23%), 45-54 (22%), 25-34 (16%) and 55-64 (16%).

Question 18: How did you hear about the survey? (Check all that apply.) (1,269 responses)



The three (3) most common ways survey respondents found out about the survey were social media (45%), mailed postcards (36%) and word of mouth (13%).

Common responses among those who selected “other” were:

- Simon Fraser University (13 comments)
- CBC Radio (11 comments)
- Community or user group association (3 comments)

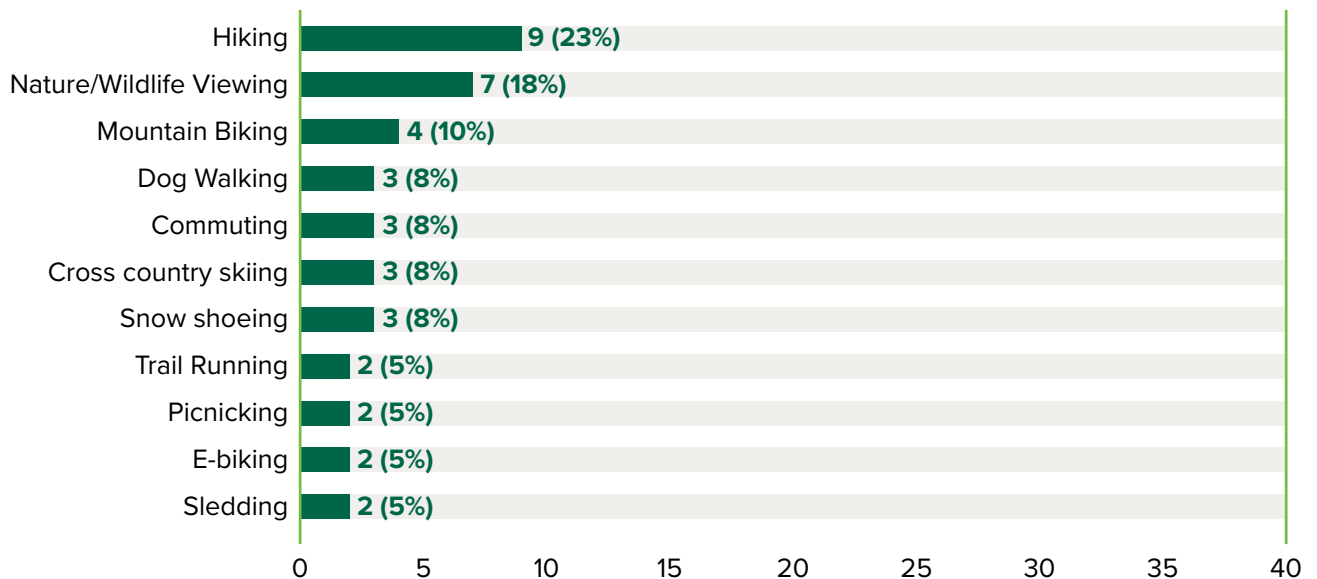


Open house

The open house provided the community with an opportunity to share their thoughts on different aspects of Burnaby Mountain. Feedback collected on the interactive feedback boards and mapping boards is summarized below. **A total of 113 people attended.**

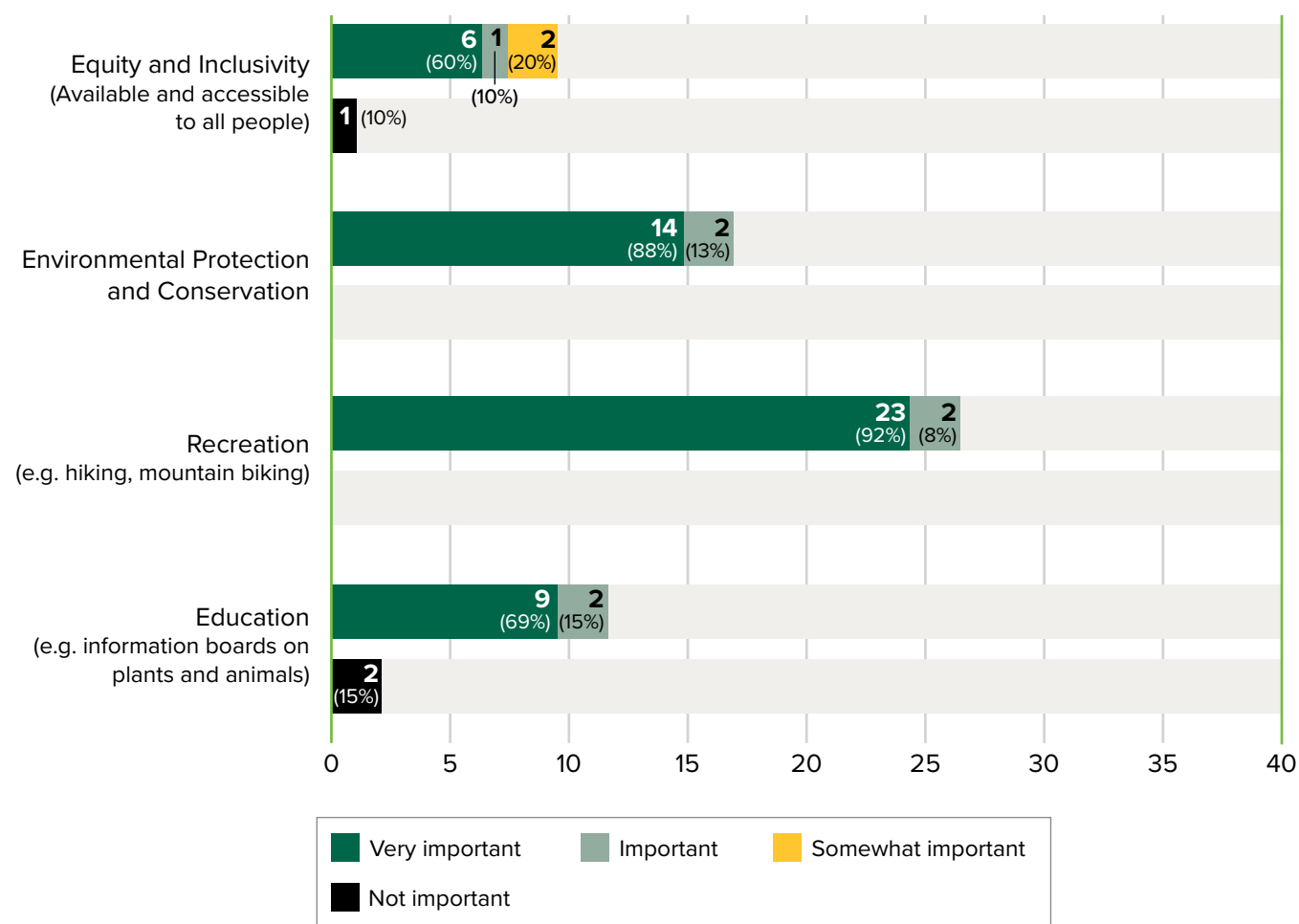
Feedback boards

What activities do you participate in while visiting Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area?



The activities most participated in by attendees were hiking/walking (9 votes, 23%), nature/wildlife viewing (7 votes, 18%) and mountain biking (4 votes, 10%). Hiking, cross-country skiing, snow shoeing and sledding were all activities added to the feedback board by attendees, then supported by other attendees.

How important are each of the following considerations to you when it comes to planning future facilities within the Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area?



Other considerations suggested by attendees as important included:

- Amenities such as washrooms
- Gathering spaces
- Trail maps
- Access to water

Mapping boards

What are your favourite areas of Burnaby Mountain?

Attendees' favourite areas are shown on the map with yellow circles.

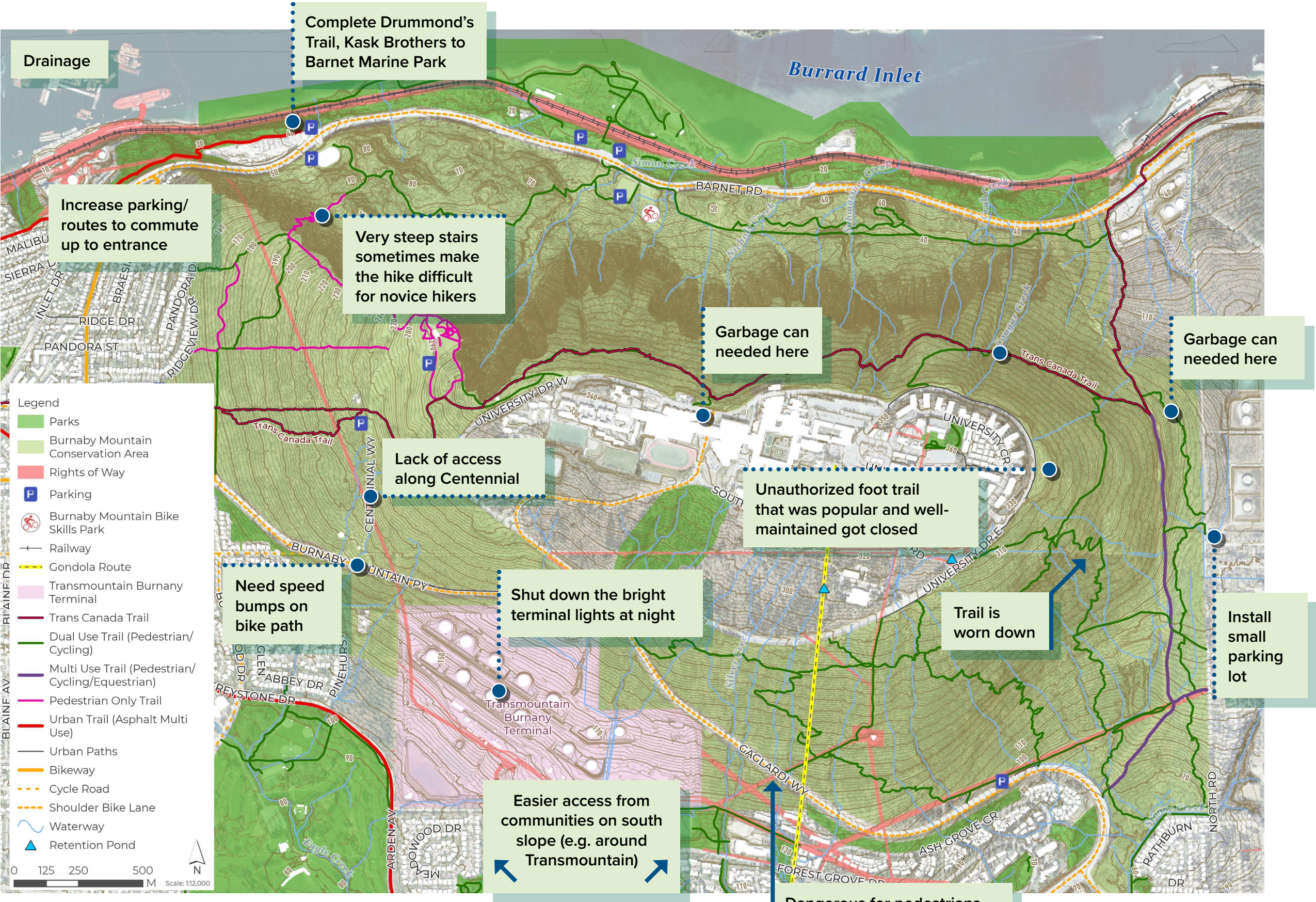
Many attendees indicated that trails around the southeast side of the mountain are their favourite areas, including Lower Snake Trail, Nicole's Trail and Poplar Trail, as shown on the map.

Various points along the Trans-Canada Trail were also indicated as favourites, including a spot towards the eastern end of the trail noted as having a “scenic view”.



Where are there challenges and barriers to access on Burnaby Mountain?

Challenges and barriers to access on Burnaby Mountain highlighted by attendees are shown on the map with blue circles.



Where are there opportunities for new amenities on Burnaby Mountain?

Potential locations for new amenities suggested by attendees, such as washrooms and benches, are shown on the map with blue circles.

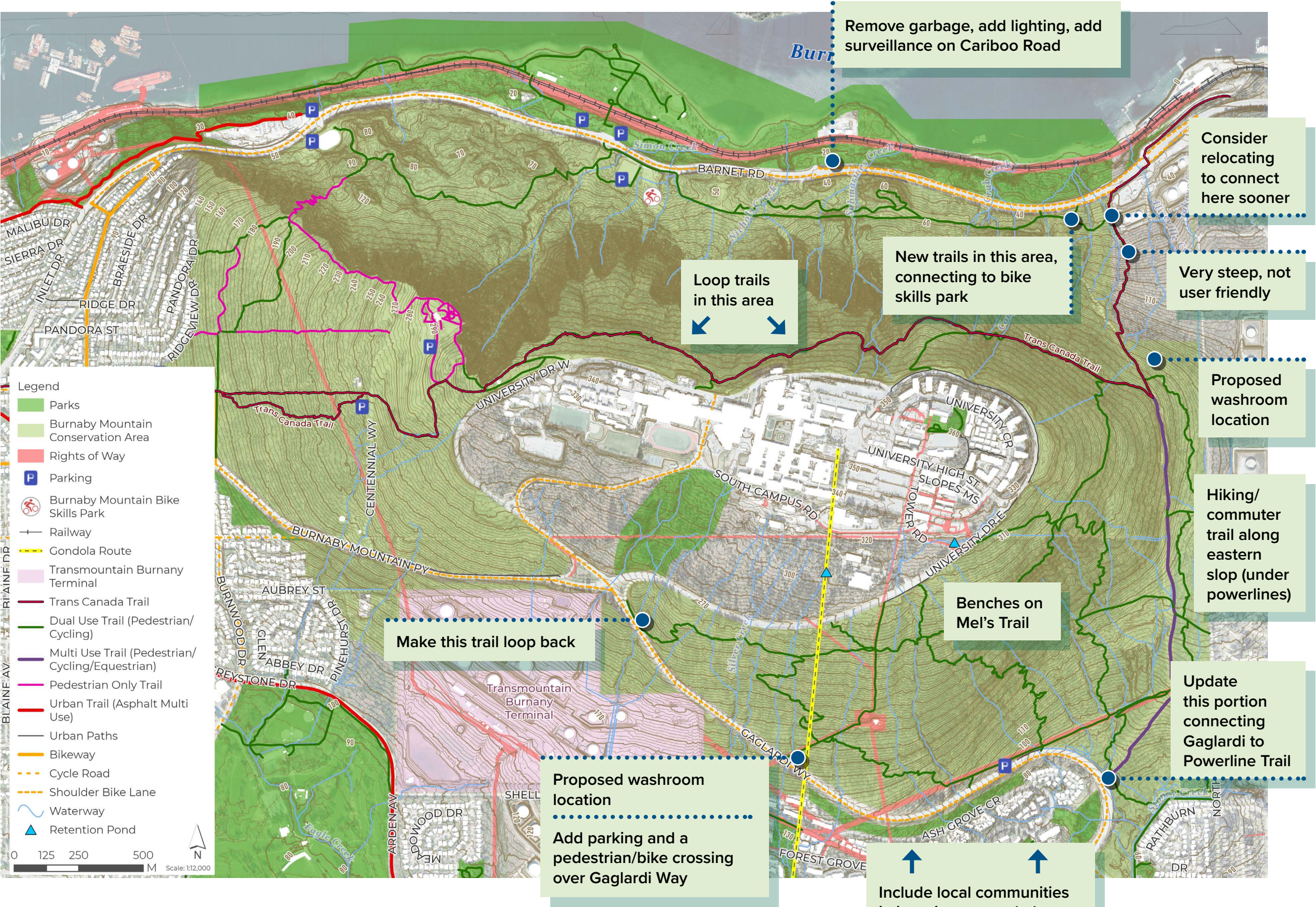
General comments

Need more washrooms and better signage throughout the area so people know where the washrooms are

Dogs are not all bad, many are on leash

Wildfire prevention plan and removal of dead wood is needed

Glad there's a variety of trail difficulties



Comments collected

Facilitators at the open house collected comments through discussion with attendees. Some common topics of discussion were:

- Safety concerns, particularly for children, seniors and runners (6 comments)
- Trail damage and maintenance (6 comments)
- Concerns about off-leash dogs and dogs getting into creeks (5 comments)
- Concerns about loss of wildlife and disrupted habitats (5 comments)
- Concerns about bikers causing damage or creating safety issues (5 comments)
- Support for more trails (4 comments)
- Support for separate trails for different user groups (4 comments)
- Need for more signage (4 comments)





Roundtable discussions

A total of ten community members representing five community groups attended three roundtable discussions. Each roundtable discussion focused on raising awareness, sharing information and discussing challenges and opportunities for collaboration. The key points have been summarized below.

Burnaby Mountain Biking Association (BMBA)

Potential level of involvement/roles for the BMBA

Volunteer work

- Desire to increase volunteer hours and collaborate more, but confusion about liability.
- Desire to participate in all controls put on the mountain – trail maintenance, trail adoption, trail ambassadors, etc.
- Have limited resource of volunteers – need to narrow focus of what they do.
- Volunteer work done during the pandemic was quickly undone – trail maintenance and repair lost to erosion build up.
- BMBA can support the City crew in maintaining all the trails.

Separation of user groups

- Suggest mountain bike only trails and pedestrian only trails, noting this would require a lot of planning.
- BMBA would like to have four designated trails that they could maintain.

Environmental considerations

- BMBA have always been passionate about the environment and are open to ways they can better respect the environment.
- BMBA are open to coordination with stream-keepers.
- Trails that have been decommissioned could be re-routed and improved to be more sustainable and environmentally sound.

Other biking parks

- Bike skills park – BMBA asked to be involved in design. A nice feature, but money would be better spent on trails.
- Dirt jump grounds – should be invited to the table.

Opportunities and challenges

- Concern over hikers cutting corners, removing fencing and not reading/following signage.
- Need bylaw enforcement in the park.
- Expanding trail network – some should be closed, some should be re-opened.
- More effort needed for maintenance.
- Mountain is known as a “beginner” mountain, attracts kids and their parents.

Amenities

- Need more rock steps, handrails and stacked or looped trails for skill progression.
- Need more garbage cans and washrooms.
- Need more signage for users and visitors, and updated information kiosks – route planning, educational (ecosystem, etiquette).
- Suggest information officers onsite. Educating visitors and enforcing rules.

Environmental and recreational groups

Challenges

- E-bikes are doing more damage than regular bikes – compressing soil, damaging fences and wooden stairs.
- Mountain bikes scare and harm wildlife, damage plants and cause erosion.
- North trail is inaccessible for horses.
- Wildlife should be prioritized. Concerns over wildlife corridors being blocked or impacted by trail users. Bears need to reach lakes and creeks.
- Safety concerns over shared trails.

Opportunities

- Protection of trees and streams should be prioritized.
- Opportunity to close sections of the park to fix damage in certain areas.
- Consider horses and horse trek trails as part of Plan.
- Need more separation of user groups to remove safety concerns – more pedestrian only trails. Suggest physical separation, i.e. barriers between trails.
- Improve trail markings along Riverview.
- Introduce permanent signage for invasive species.

Raising awareness and sharing information

- Water source for stoney creek needs to remain unobstructed.
- Some creeks should not be crossed by bikes.
- Information campaigns in the university and nearby schools – teaching students about the area.
- More signage about invasive species, plant knowledge, reminders to not to pick berries or flowers.
- More accessible educational signage, e.g. translated to different languages.
- No smoking in the park, needs more awareness – benches have been removed to deter smokers.

Collaborative decision making

- Environmental groups are firmly against adding more bike trails.
- Wildlife corridors and wildlife-safe areas are being disrupted and need to be prioritised.
- Groups should receive more direct contact, more updates about the Plan and engagement.



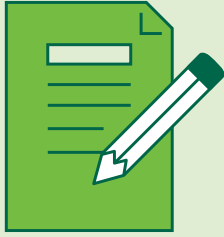


Interviews

Government agencies and representatives, industry groups and utility providers were invited to share their thoughts through short (25-minute), virtual interviews.

Three interviews were held with Simon Fraser University, the Vancouver Port Authority and Corix Utilities. At each interview, the organization's interest and involvement in the BMCA and the Plan was discussed. A high level summary of what we heard through these interviews is provided below.

- Importance of balancing environmental connection and protection
- Need to increase trail network connectivity
- Support for specific user designated trails and trails accessible for all mobility levels
- Need for safe access to and from trails and mountain, particularly across Gagliardi Way
- Need to consider growth and development in neighbouring communities – an increase in users will mean increased impact on trail conditions and the environment
- Importance of working with Host Nations, incorporating culture across the Mountain
- Concerns over invasive species
- Need for more consistent wayfinding signage
- Interest in more engagement and community efforts (e.g. tree planting, environmental cleanup)



Written submissions

The project webpage provided an opportunity to ask questions or learn more about the project, through a dedicated email address. Since the webpage was launched, a total of **ten emails were received**, providing a range of feedback, thoughts and suggestions related to the Trail Management Plan. While the project team has read and considered all feedback, for the purpose of this report, a high-level summary is included below.

- Concern over unauthorized trails, trail conditions, erosion and maintenance
- Need to consider population growth and access to/from nearby developments
- Increase in users will create need for more amenities, and will have greater impact on trail conditions and the environment
- Consider expansion of trail network
- Importance of trails for access to nature
- Importance of wildlife and habitat conservation
- Include more data and information in plan - trail network length, number of visitors
- Need more and updated wayfinding signage, including directional signage to washrooms
- Plan should include wildfire prevention program
- Desire for more engagement opportunities at different venues



Closing comments and next steps

This What We Heard Report will be published on the Burnaby Mountain Trail Management Plan project webpage and associated Your Voice page.

Further engagement will be scheduled during Phase 3.

