WASHINGTON PARK ARBORETUM

Community Survey and Engagement

November 2023

Arboretum Foundation

University of Washington Botanic Gardens
WASHINGTON PARK ARBORETUM

SEVA WORKSHOP

BRV

Project Purpose

1. Gain a deeper understanding of the needs and desires of people currently engaged with Arboretum

2. Engage with members of the wider community who may not be visiting or otherwise engaging to determine their needs and desires

3. Detail needs and desires related to future projects, especially the addition of the 28-acre North End Parcel

Objectives and Key Questions

CURRENT AND FUTURE ARBORETUM USERS

- Who is currently engaging with the Arboretum? How? Who is not currently engaging with the Arboretum?
- What draws existing users to the Arboretum? What would make additional community members want to visit or make existing users want to visit more?
- What does the public value in the Arboretum?
- What is preventing or discouraging non-users from engaging with the Arboretum?

BROADER COMMUNITY CONTEXT

- What are our community's values, needs, and priorities, especially regarding equity and inclusion? How would our community like to see these values reflected by the Arboretum?
- How can the Arboretum appropriately recognize the Coast Salish people as original inhabitants of this land?
- What does the community envision for the future of the new 28-acre parcel at the north end of the Arboretum?

Methods

ONLINE SURVEY
Arboretum
5,024
MAY–AUG

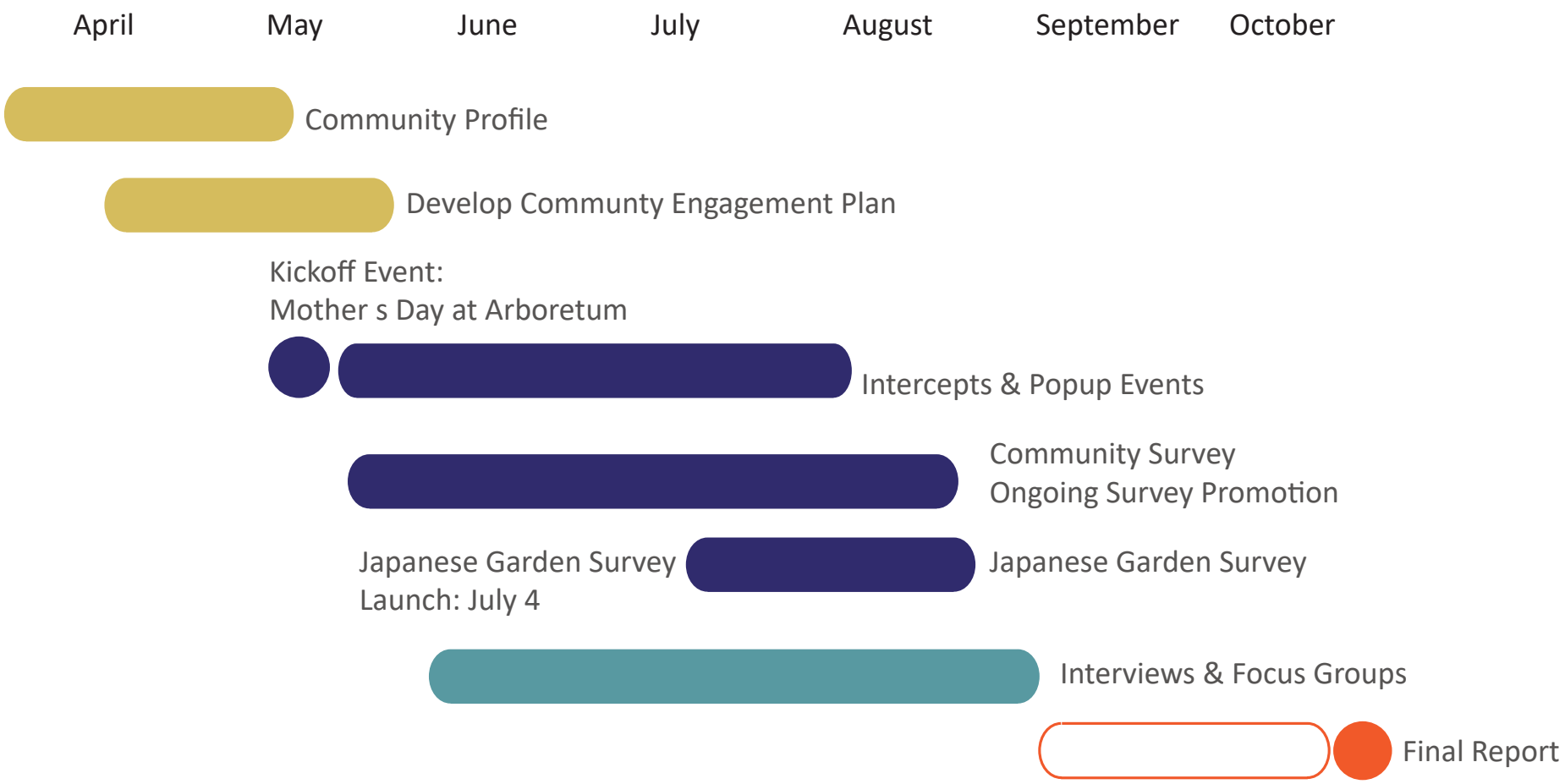
ONLINE SURVEY
Japanese Garden
448
JUL–AUG

INTERCEPT SURVEY
Arboretum + Japanese Garden
546
MAY–AUG

INTERVIEWS
Arboretum + Japanese Garden
13
MAY–AUG

FOCUS GROUPS
Arboretum + Japanese Garden
3
JUL–AUG

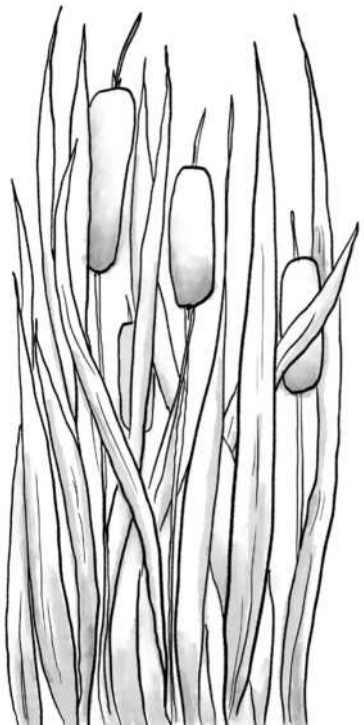
Project Timeline



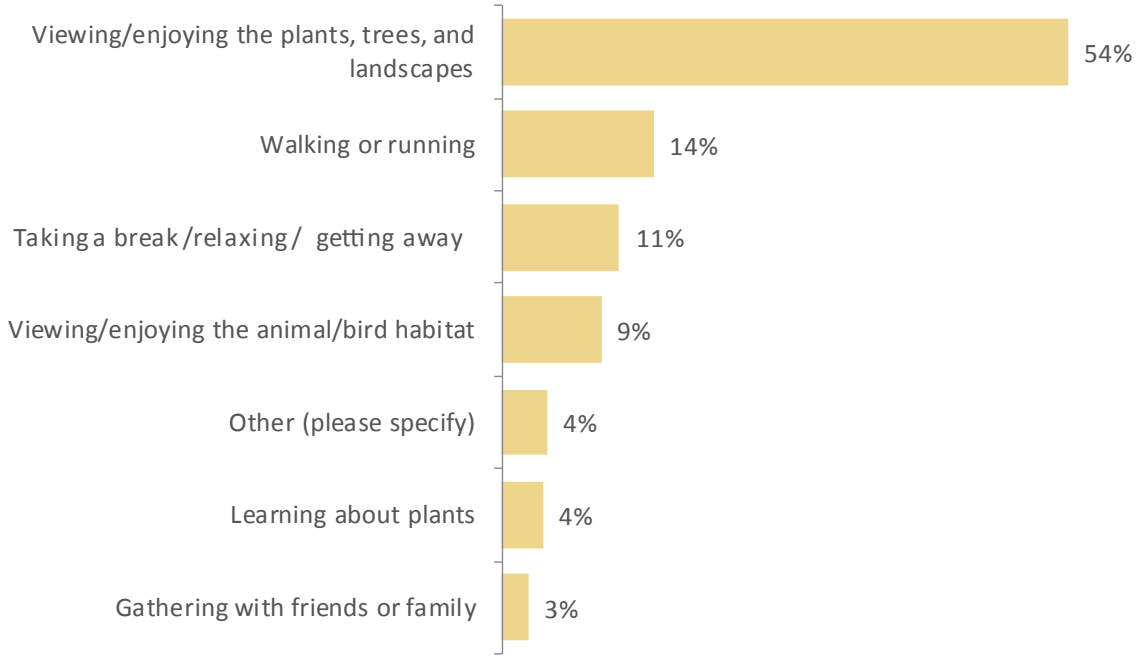
Finding: Current Community

Key takeaways

- The Arboretum is loved and visited by many from throughout the region.
- Arboretum visitors tend to be white, as well as older and wealthier than Seattle's population overall.



What is the primary reason you visit the Arboretum?



Current Community: Barriers to Use

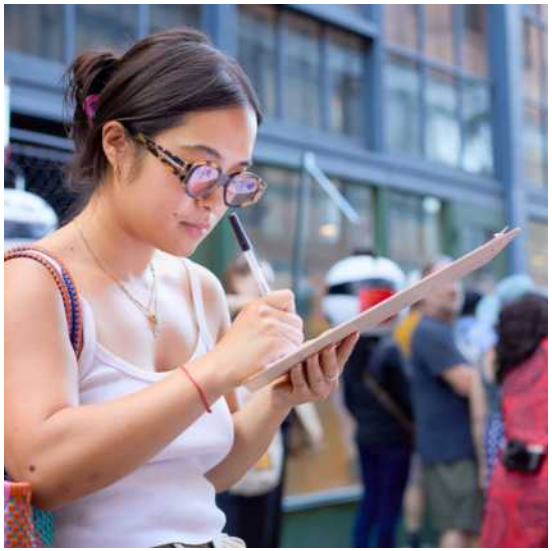
Key takeaways

- Infrequent users' barriers to use are unmet transportation needs and a lack of awareness of the Arboretum's offerings.
- Transportation challenges and time constraints make the Arboretum difficult to visit for those who live farther away.
- When people visit, physical accessibility and inclusion challenges can discourage more frequent or return visits.

Findings: Broadening the Users

Key takeaways

- An inclusive future for the Arboretum requires investing in a sense of belonging for all groups, as well as addressing the practical awareness and transportation barriers they face.
- Exciting programming and expanded facilities and amenities could also broaden the Arboretum's user base.



Findings: Japanese Garden

Key takeaways

- The Seattle Japanese Garden offers an intimate garden experience and Japanese cultural connection within the Arboretum.
- The Japanese Garden attracts more a more diverse user base than the Arboretum as a whole.
- There is interest in a range of new features at the Japanese Garden.

Findings: North End Parcel

Key takeaways

- Ecological health is a top priority for the North End Parcel across all groups.
- Non-users and the broader community were more likely to express interest in active or social features like urban agriculture, performance space, areas to dance and sing, and classrooms/educational facilities.

Recommendations: Arboretum

- Refresh the Foundation's organizational objectives and equity priorities through a joint strategic plan with UW.
- Continue listening to communities.
- Deepen organizational partnerships.
- Prioritize physical access for people with the greatest need, and address transportation barriers.
- Improve diversity among staff, facilitators, educators, and volunteers.
- Develop more active and social programming.
- Encourage visitors to engage with the land and plants, including ethnobotany programming.
- Dedicate space to native plants.

Recommendations: North End Parcel

Community's highest priorities

- Improved wetland habitat (66%)
- Native Washington plants with displays highlighting their cultural importance (59%)
- Waterfront access (49%)
- Meadow or open space (39%)
- Cafe or restaurant (39%)

Recommendations: North End Parcel

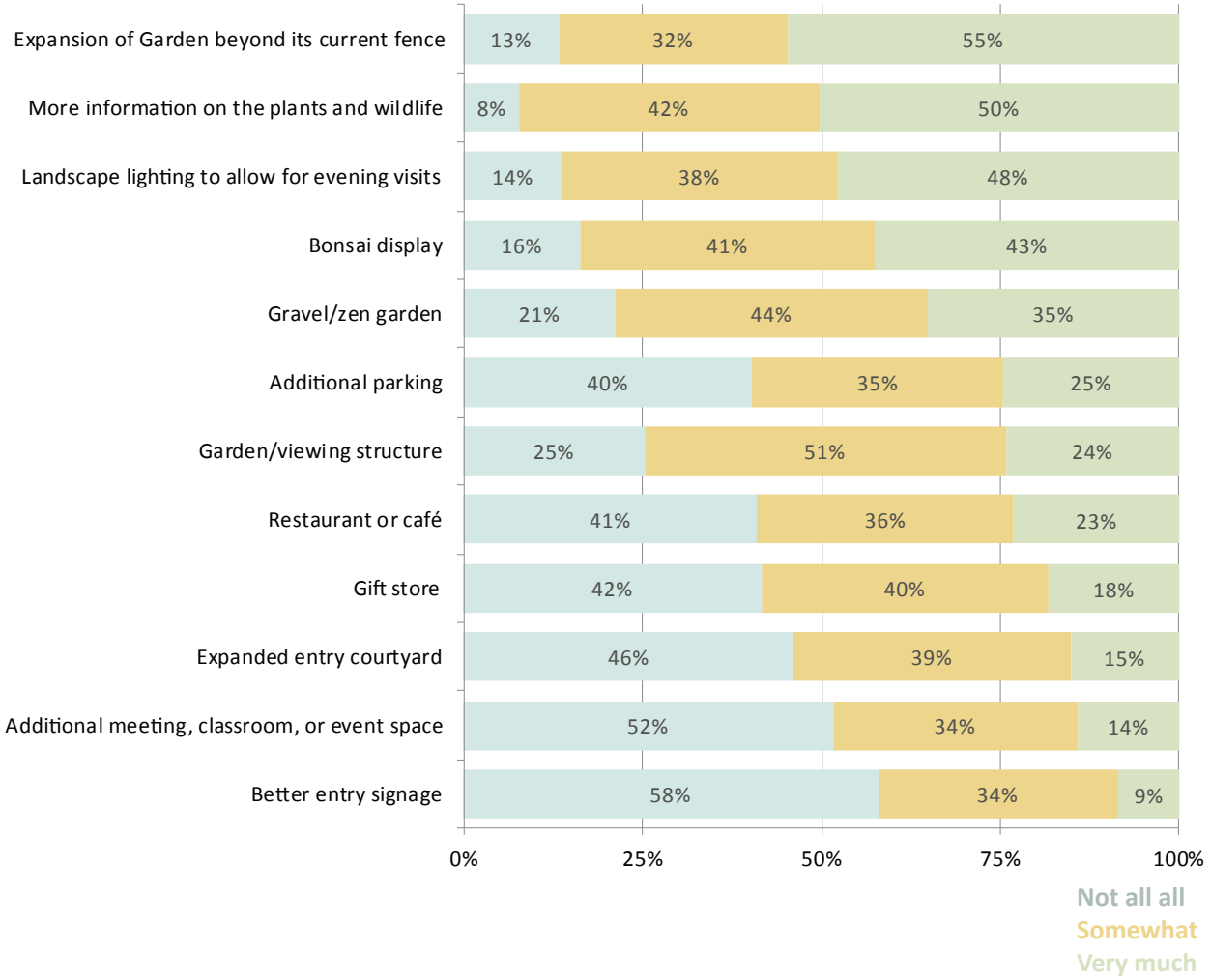
Dream big! The North End Parcel will include trails and expanded plant collections. What else would you like to see?

	All	Users	NonUsers	All BIPOC	Black	Indigenous	Asian	Hispanic
Café or restaurant	39%	38%	**48%**	43%	33%	26%	**50%**	43%
Children s play area	16%	17%	19%	17%	24%	9%	16%	16%
Classrooms or other educational facilities	16%	15%	26%	18%	18%	24%	20%	19%
Performance space	24%	24%	27%	28%	27%	25%	30%	28%
Cultural center or gathering space	27%	27%	35%	35%	30%	39%	34%	35%
Improved wetland habitat	**66%**	**66%**	**67%**	**54%**	35%	**60%**	**59%**	**59%**
Meadow or open space	39%	38%	**50%**	33%	24%	40%	36%	37%
Parking	19%	17%	34%	17%	11%	13%	18%	20%
Picnic areas	27%	26%	41%	31%	18%	25%	36%	34%
Native Washington plants with displays highlighting their cultural importance	**59%**	**59%**	**72%**	**54%**	37%	**66%**	**57%**	**63%**
Public art installations	27%	27%	37%	27%	17%	22%	32%	27%
Urban agriculture	20%	19%	33%	24%	20%	22%	25%	25%
Waterfront access or activity space	**49%**	**49%**	**50%**	**47%**	32%	30%	**54%**	**49%**

Recommendations: Japanese Garden

Strengthen and Expand the Japanese Garden Community

How interested are you in the following features and amenities being added to the Japanese Garden?



Recommendations: Case Studies

Weaving in Cultural Practices and Cultural Education into a Garden through Ethnobotany

CASE STUDY: TOHONO CHUL, TUCSON, AZ

Using Local Partnerships to Bring in New and Diverse Users

CASE STUDY: SALESFORCE PARK, SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The Power of a Well-Integrated Café to Entice New Visitors and Encourage Existing Visitors to Extend Their Stays

CASE STUDY: THE JAPANESE TEA HOUSE IN GOLDEN GATE PARK, SAN FRANCISCO, CA