



Your Meadowlane Park, Your Watershed

Public Open House 2 and Online Survey Summary
July 2024

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Prepared for the City of Kitchener



Executive Summary

The City of Kitchener is looking for ways to improve water quality and reduce flood risks through stormwater management measures at Meadowlane Park. We are looking for a design solution that:

- Reduces future flood risks
- Protects and improves water quality
- Is technically workable
- Fits into current park uses; and
- Fits within the project budget

By making stormwater facility investments in Meadowlane Park, we will:

- Intercept runoff before it rushes into Sandrock Creek
- Filter the stormwaters before they re-enter the creek
- Slowly release these filtered waters into the creek to prevent erosion
- Reduce the risk of flooding in nearby streets and downstream neighbourhoods

From July 16 to August 15, 2024, The City of Kitchener and Aquafor Beech staff presented the final site design and planting plan drafts. These draft designs reflected input received from the community in Summer 2023, the public open house in November 2023, and the Community Resource Group (CRG).

Community members could share feedback on the draft design by:

- Attending the in-person open house on July 16, 2024,
 - Filling out a written survey
 - Writing comments on sticky notes
 - Writing comments on event passports
 - Verbal discussion with staff
- Completing the online survey on Engage Kitchener between July 16, 2024, to August 15, 2024.
- Emailing the project team directly.

In total, 47 people attended the open house, , and 14 people completed the online survey.

What We Heard

- Participants supported the design elements that capture the park's essence, support wildlife and pollinators, and reserve the natural green space.



- Mount Frederick is an important park amenity for the community year-round. Community members are happy to see Mount Frederick stay.
- Most participants were happy with the draft final design, while some felt the stormwater pond should not be near the school for safety reasons.
- Some participants are concerned with neighbourhood privacy, particularly for homes adjacent to the park.
- Participants would like to see regular maintenance of the pond, space, and plantings once they have been built.
- There are different opinions about fences in the area: A few participants preferred all-around fences, and some opposed any fences. In contrast, others suggest a mix of fenced and unfenced areas.
- Participants supported all-year-round trails to replace unused lawn with an interesting and beneficial community/environmental space.
- Participants like the options for natural seating and would like more.
- Participants were supportive and happy with the proposed planting plan, which included more trees and native plants. There was a request to include native grasses in the planting plan.

More information is included on the following pages.



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Introduction

Background

In 2016, the City of Kitchener Council approved a Stormwater Master Plan. This plan created a strategy to manage stormwater for the next 15 years. This plan identified that only 25% of runoff in the city is managed through stormwater facilities. This means that 75% of untreated runoff from heavy rainfall and snow melt flows into storm sewers. This contributes to contamination of local creeks, erosion, and flooding.

An existing stormwater sewer discharges into Sandrock Creek at the park. This pipe collects stormwater runoff from a significant part of the neighbourhood (**Figure 1**). New stormwater measures would intercept and filter the runoff before it enters the creek. This would reduce downstream flood risks and erosion. Meadowlane Park is a good place to manage stormwater in the area. It meets several technical criteria that cannot be met elsewhere, including:

- The park is larger than 1 hectare.
- The park is public land.
- The park has a stormwater sewer connection greater than 450 millimetres.
- The park is not too steep.
- The park does not have largely treed areas or wetlands.
- The area has the potential to meet water quality criteria.

The Stormwater Master Plan identified initial concepts for projects to be installed throughout the City of Kitchener. Community feedback was gathered through pop-up events in the park in Summer 2023 and a survey. The Community Resource Group (CRG) was formed to give guidance on the project. This input helped the project team develop six design options presented to the community for feedback at an open house on November 8, 2023. Following these community engagement initiatives, Aquafor Beech and the City used feedback to refine the designs.

On June 10, 2024, the draft site plans and planting plans were presented to the Meadowlane Park CRG. Their feedback helped to refine the design and clarify how information would be presented to the rest of the community.

On July 16, 2024, the City held another public open house and online survey available from July 16 to August 15, 2024. The input gathered will help finalize the site design and planting plan.

To help build these projects, the City was awarded nearly \$50 million through the Disaster Mitigation Adaptation Fund from the Government of Canada. This funding enables the City to install needed stormwater measures sooner and at a reduced cost.

Event Purpose

The purpose of the July 16, 2024, public open house was to:

- Provide context of the decisions and background work from the Integrated Stormwater Master Plan.
- Develop a common understanding of the work completed and public engagement to date.
- Share what we heard from the November 2023 open house and online survey that has been incorporated into the draft site plan design and planting plan.
- Share the draft site plan and planting plan for Meadowlane Park for public feedback.
- Outline the engagement and design, process ahead.

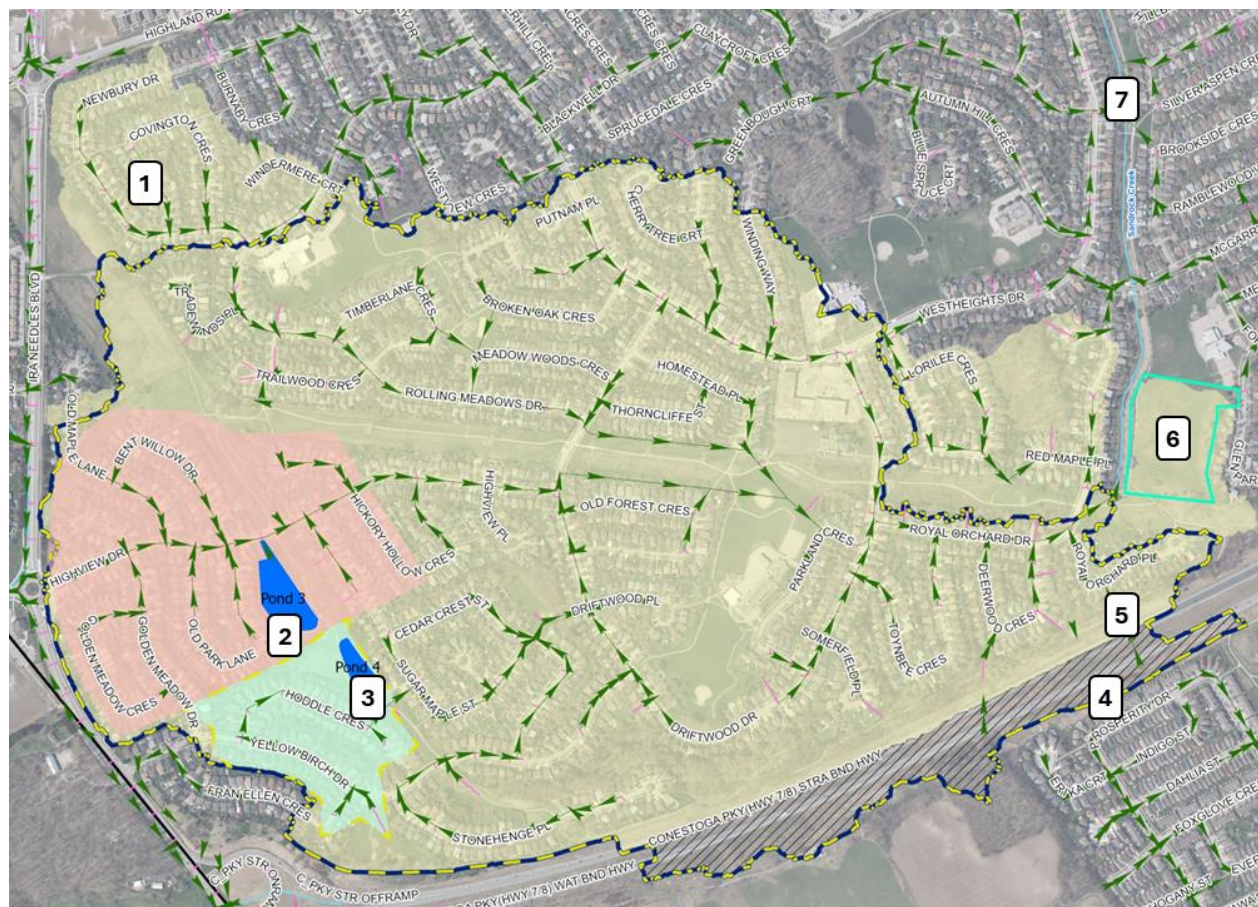


Figure 1. A large area drains to Meadowlane Park. Most of the runoff from this area is not currently treated.

Map Legend

- 1** – Runoff that is in this area will flow into Meadowlane Park.
- 2** – Pond 3 controls flooding from the area shown in pink.
- 3** – Pond 4 improves the quality of the runoff from green area and controls flooding.
- 4** – Runoff from inside the yellow dashed lines does not have any water quality treatment right now.
- 5** – Runoff in the storm sewers inside the blue line will all flow to Meadowlane Park.
- 6** – New stormwater facility is needed at Meadowlane Park to help control downstream flooding runoff and improve water quality in this catchment area.
- 7** – Downstream erosion and risks to infrastructure can be reduced through a new stormwater facility.

What We Heard

Overall, we heard a range of perspectives on the future of Meadowlane Park. Participants highlighted the following things:

- Mount Frederick is an important park amenity for the community year-round. Community members are happy to see Mount Fredrick stay.
- Participants supported the design elements that support wildlife, pollinators, and reserve the natural green space.
- Many participants were happy with the draft design. Some participants feel the stormwater pond should not be near the school for safety reasons.
- Some participants are concerned with neighbourhood privacy.
- Participants would like to see regular maintenance of the pond, space, and plantings after they have been built.
- There are different opinions about fences in the area: A few participants preferred the pond be fully fenced, and some opposed any fences. In contrast, others suggest a mix of fenced and unfenced areas.
- Participants supported winter-maintained trails to replace unused lawn with an interesting and beneficial community/environmental space.
- Participants like the options for natural seating and would like more.
- Participants were supportive and happy with the proposed planting plan, which included more trees and native plants.

Participant Feedback:

The feedback topics of stormwater, trail, planting, pollinators, and other feedback are organized in the following subsections.

Stormwater Management

Comments received from the open house and survey about the stormwater facility indicated:

- Participants liked the amenities presented around the pond.
- Participants liked the safety measures put around the ponds.
- One participant was happy the city was focusing on better drainage and water management.
- Some participants feel the stormwater pond should not be near the school for safety reasons.
- A participant suggested that a life preserver ring be provided to the school.
- Participants want kids to learn to be safe in and at the water.
- A desire for signage to support safety practices in the new park: walking alone, what to do if someone falls in the water, being aware of personal surroundings in forested areas, etc.

Open Space

Comments received from the open house and survey about the open space indicated:

- Many participants were happy with keeping Mount Frederick and the trees. The hill is an important aspect of the community for winter activities.
- Participants supported the design elements that support wildlife, pollinators, and reserve the natural green space.
 - They noted that this will add huge learning opportunities for students.
- Participants were happy that the designs included natural elements.
- A participant was happy to have the hill preserved.
- Participants liked the nature exploration area and lookout designs.

Fences

Comments received from the open house and survey about the fences indicated:

- There are different opinions about fences in the area: A few participants preferred the pond to be fully fenced, and some opposed any fences. In contrast, others suggest a mix of fenced and unfenced areas.
- Participants who want fences prefer post-and-wire fences. In contrast, some participants dislike using the wooden or horizontal wire fence.
- Some participants preferred using planting to buffer the water as a natural fence to limit water access.
- One participant wanted to extend the fence further to deter kids from coming directly from the school.
- A participant wants a fence to close off dangerous parts, such as the creek, which has high running water.
- A participant noted a concern for the potential fence receiving graffiti.

Signage

Comments received from the open house and survey about the signage for the open space indicated:

- Participants suggested adding information around the trail to provide historical information about the neighbourhood. They suggested information such as the reason for Mt. Fredrick's name.
- There is a desire for suggested adding educational signage for edible plants.
- A participant would like to put up signs to inform the people not to use fireworks in the park.

Seating and Gathering Spaces

Comments received from the open house and survey about seating and gathering spaces indicated:

- Participants would like options for picnic areas and tables.
- Participants prefer natural seating.
- Participants wanted more seating and benches for seniors.

- Participants liked the seating and bench designs.

Trails

Comments received from the open house and survey about trails indicated:

- Participants supported the trails that will replace the unused lawn with an interesting and beneficial community/environmental space. They noted that the proposed birch grove would be a nice addition.
- Participants liked how the trail was laid out and tied to existing trails.
- Many participants expressed excitement about the extended year-round winter-maintained trail connection. They suggested using less salt on the paths during the winter.
- Participants like the trail and entrance nodes.
- Participants want to include a pathway to access Glen Park Crescent from the loop around the trail.
- Participants see the sight lines outlined as valuable assets.
- Participants expressed a desire to pave the whole loop to help with accessibility, especially for wheelchair users.

Privacy and Safety

Comments received from the open house and survey about the privacy of the open space indicated:

- Some participants are concerned with neighbourhood privacy. They shared that the privacy of residents' who back on Sandrock Creek is a concern.
- Some participants were concerned that the open space gave too much visibility to adjacent homes. They raised concerns related to safety and privacy.
- Participants suggested considering safety, especially regarding various nuisance behaviours and activities.
- One resident who backed on to Sandrock Creek expressed a desire to keep views open from their property into the park.
- Participants suggested adding a way to provide feedback on the construction process, such as work being done outside the work time, tools being used unsafely, etc. They shared that similar things have happened with other projects in their neighbourhoods.

Maintenance

Comments received from the open house and survey about the maintenance of the open space indicated:

- Participants would like to see regular maintenance after the space has been built.
- Participants suggested adding garbage cans at each entrance, lookouts, and sitting areas.
- Participants appreciated the naturally landscaped areas.

Additional Amenities

Comments received from the open house and survey about the additional amenities for the open space indicated:

- A desire for a sports field to be added.
- A participant suggested that kayaking should be allowed in the area.
- A desire for community chalkboards like in Cherry Park.

Planting Plan

Comments received from the open house and survey about planting plan included:

- Participants supported the proposed planting plan, which included more trees and native plants.
- Participants are concerned with the erosion issues at McGarry Drive on the creek.
- There was a desire to add plants along the pathways that could handle some moderate foot traffic.
- Participants would like proper planting maintenance included. They suggested allocating funds for caring for trees and plants.
- There is an interest in the stewardship of plantings or consideration of garden allotments for neighbouring residents
- Participants were supportive of a variety of plantings around the trails.
- A participant suggested an event on the planting stage to launch the new area. They said this would be an excellent opportunity to build community and feel ownership of the place. They also suggested informing the ward of the project or the event if it were to happen.

Types of plants and trees

Comments received from the open house and survey about the type of plants and trees indicated:

- Participants like the pollinator species but also suggest some tall grass to be planted/left.
- Participants would like to keep trees behind houses.
- Participants would like food forests to be considered.
- A desire to install some larger mature trees for instant shade.
- Participants liked trees for shade and native plants that are low maintenance.
- Participants were generally interested in keeping the fruiting trees, shrubs, and apple trees in the hydro corridor.

Pollinators

Comments received from the open house and survey about pollinators indicated:

- There is a desire for bat boxes or bee hives in the area. They suggested including milkweed for the monarchs and a mason hive for the bees.
- There is a desire for less goldenrod in the pollinator patch.
- Participants would like to expand the pollinator zone.

Other Public Comments:

- Participants suggest considering the changing seasons when designing views and sightlines.
- A participant is concerned with parking around the area. Suggestions were made to restrict street parking during popular winter activity times in winter and on weekends. Parking clogs up the nearby streets and the Meadowlane School parking lot.
 - Participants suggested a strategy to encourage parking planning to accommodate the park.
- Some participants would like to add parking meters on nearby streets to limit car pollution.

Community Engagement Process

Participants generally indicated they were satisfied with the community engagement process. They also generally indicated they were mostly satisfied with the format of the engagement event, ways they could provide feedback, and the meeting time being convenient and accessible.

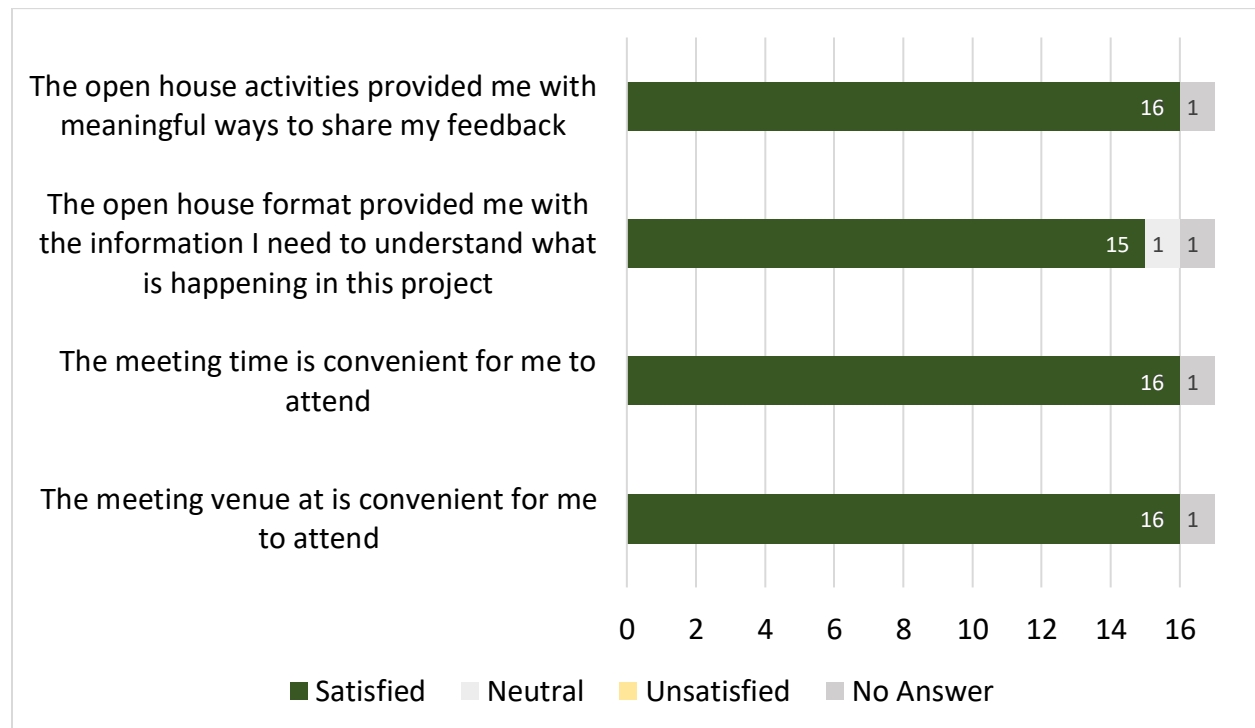


Figure 2. Responses to Open House Passport questions about the open house experience. (n=17)

Participants offered additional feedback on the community engagement process:

- Many participants felt heard about the design of Meadowlane Park, which has incorporated many natural elements, concerns, and wants from the public and neighbours.
- Many participants were excited about the changes and updates that kept key features of the park and wanted them to continue the work.
- Many participants feel that the project is well thought-out and looks good.
- Participants were happy with the activities with the kids
- Many participants were happy with the designs and natural elements of them.
- Participants expressed the importance of this project for the City of Kitchener.
- Participants praised the staff for being knowledgeable during the session, bridging the gap between the diagrams, and understanding them for people.
- Participants felt the work was done carefully with public input, expert consultation, and the CRG. All comments, if provided, felt as being addressed.
- Participant suggested adding more dates and extended hours to comment.

Questions

Questions submitted during this engagement phase were compiled into a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) update on the project [webpage for Meadowlane Park](#). These will continue to be updated throughout the project.

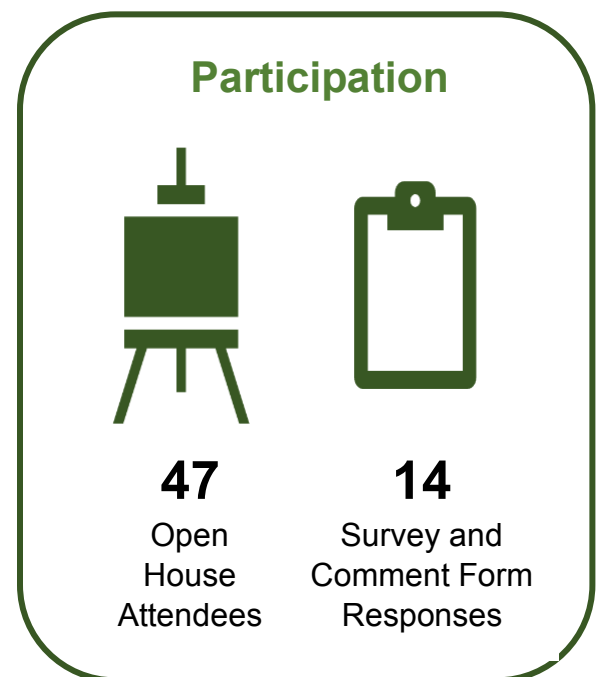
Engagement Opportunity Details

Public Open House

City of Kitchener staff and their consultants Aquafor Beech hosted an in-person open house on July 16, 2024. The open house was from 3 pm to 7 pm and was held at Meadowlane Public School Parking Lot. Attendees could review information about the City's Stormwater Management Master Plan. Staff presented information and listened to feedback. A series of [boards provided information](#) on the design refinement and what was heard before. City and consultant team staff were available to answer questions and listen to feedback.

Throughout the open house, attendees could provide feedback by:

- Placing sticky notes with comments and questions on display boards.
- Completing the Passport Activity.



- Completing an online survey.
- Speaking to project team staff one-on-one.

47 people signed in at the open house. Other participants did not sign in at registration.

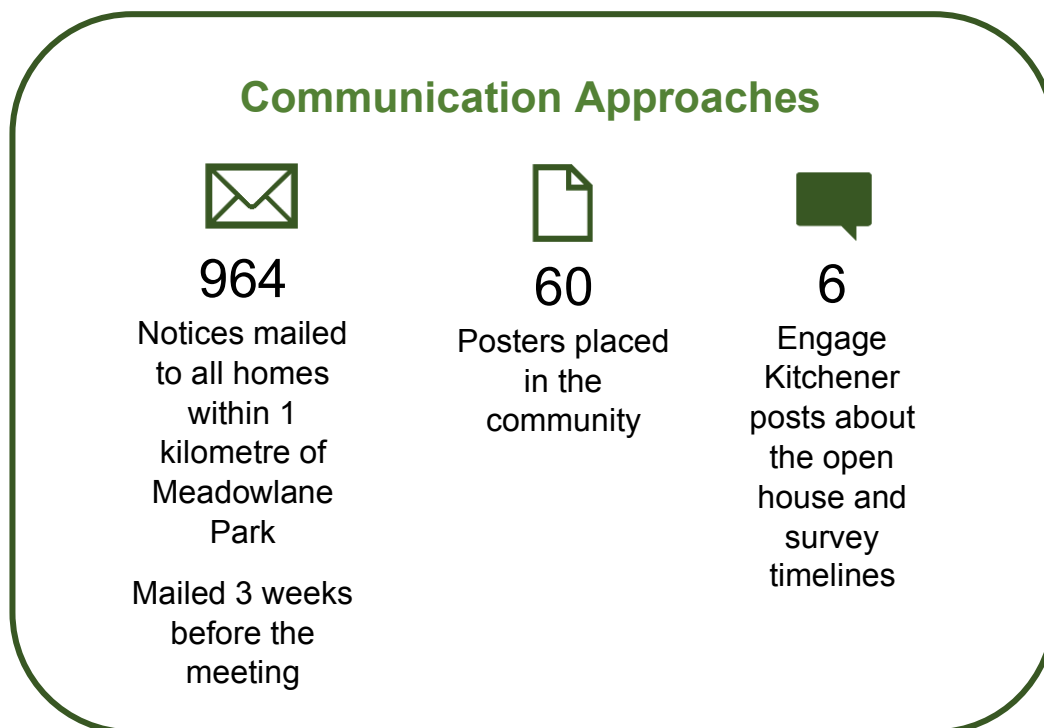
Online Survey

Following the open house, the City published an online survey on the [Your Meadowlane Park, Your Watershed Engagement Kitchener page](#). The survey was available from July 16, 2024, to August 15, 2024

The survey included seven (7) questions to gather feedback and questions about the design options. It also included four (4) optional demographic questions. In total, 17 people submitted Passport Activity at the meeting, and 14 responded to the online survey.

Communication

City of Kitchener staff communicated these engagement opportunities using the following methods:



Next Steps

City staff and their consultants will review the feedback in this summary report to consider it for the finalized design. The Final design will be used to tender the project. The next public meeting will include the hired contractor and showcase the construction details.

Appendix A: Survey Demographics

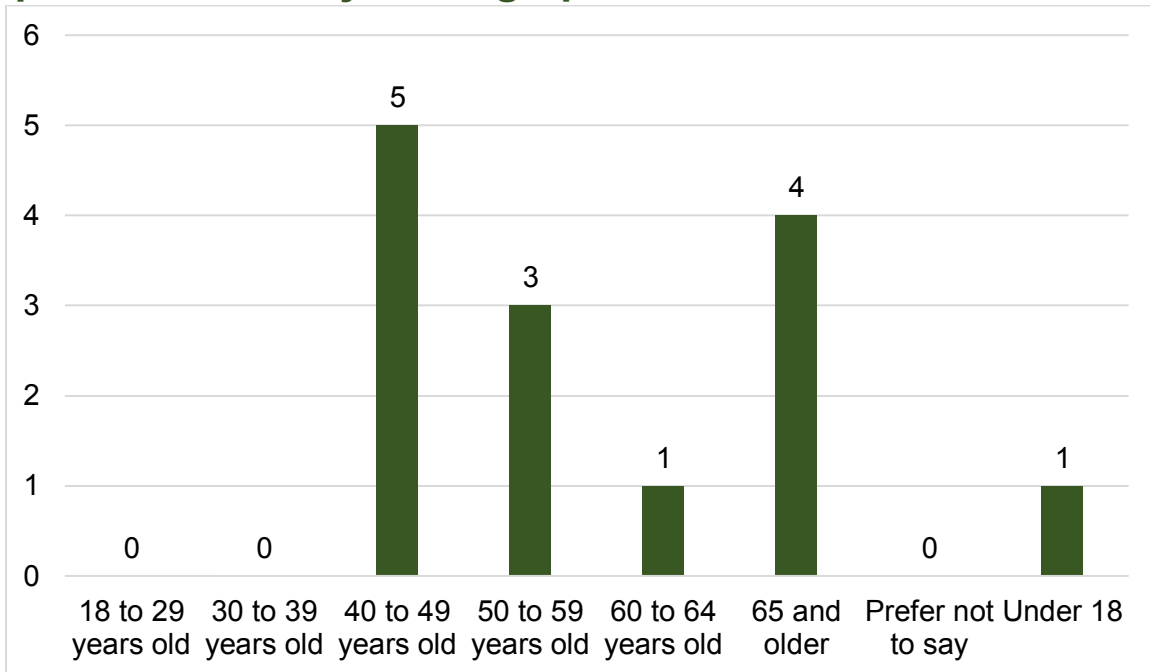


Figure 3. Age of survey participants (n= 14)

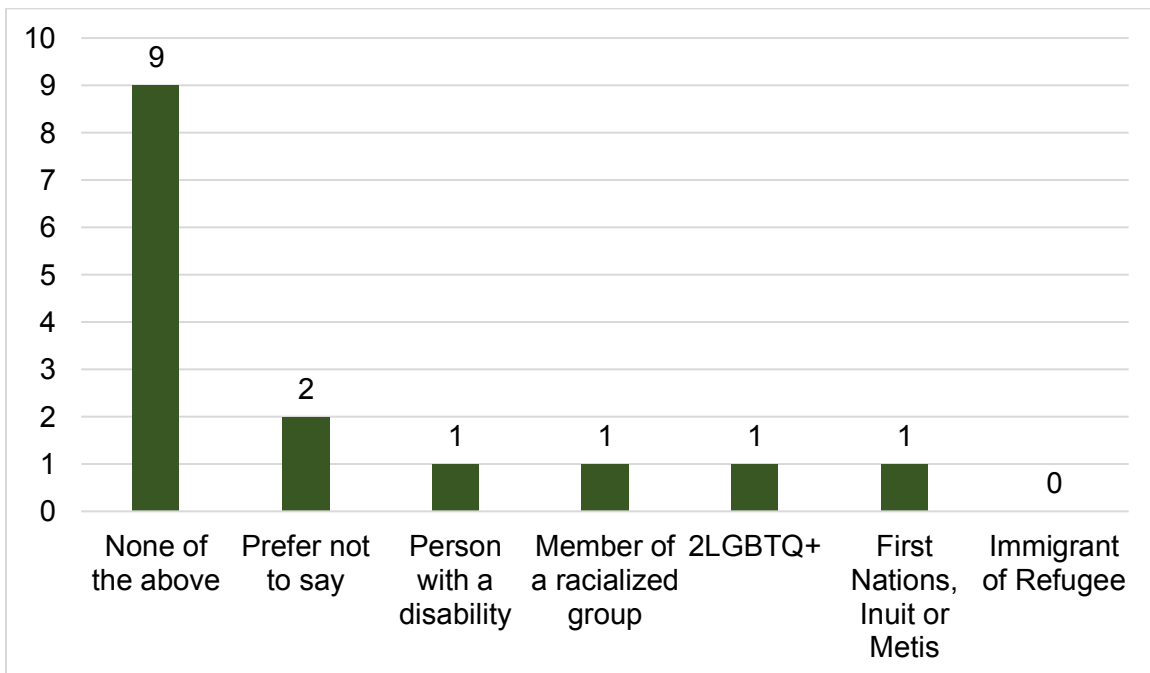


Figure 4. Personal self-identification of survey participants (n=14)

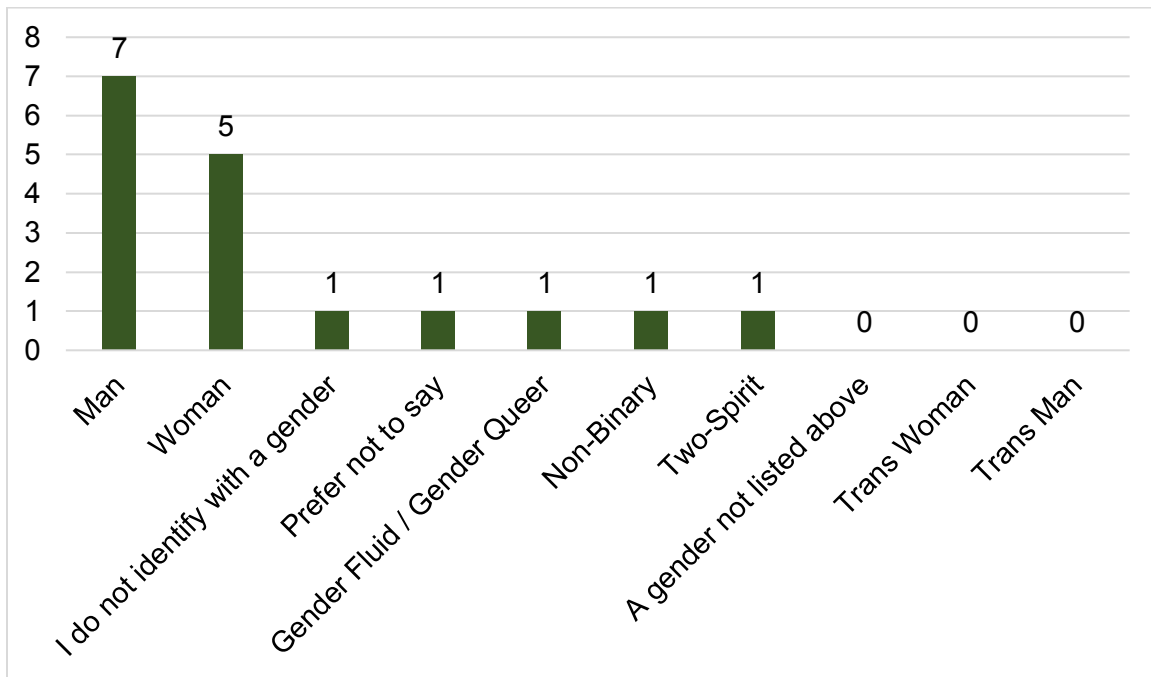


Figure 5. Gender self-identification of survey participants (n=14)

Postal code

In the survey 13 participants out of 14 indicated their postal code from N2N.