

# Walter Reed Outdoor Court Project



Engagement #2 Summary : May 25, 2023 - June 22, 2023

October 2023



# Who Participated?

## 1,578 Participants

1,403



### ONLINE FEEDBACK FORM

**1,403 Online  
Feedback Form Responses**

*Through these responses, we  
received 2,111 comments*

175



### OPEN HOUSE

**175 Open house  
attendees**

*684 comments received  
at 7 different stations*

# Participant Segmentation

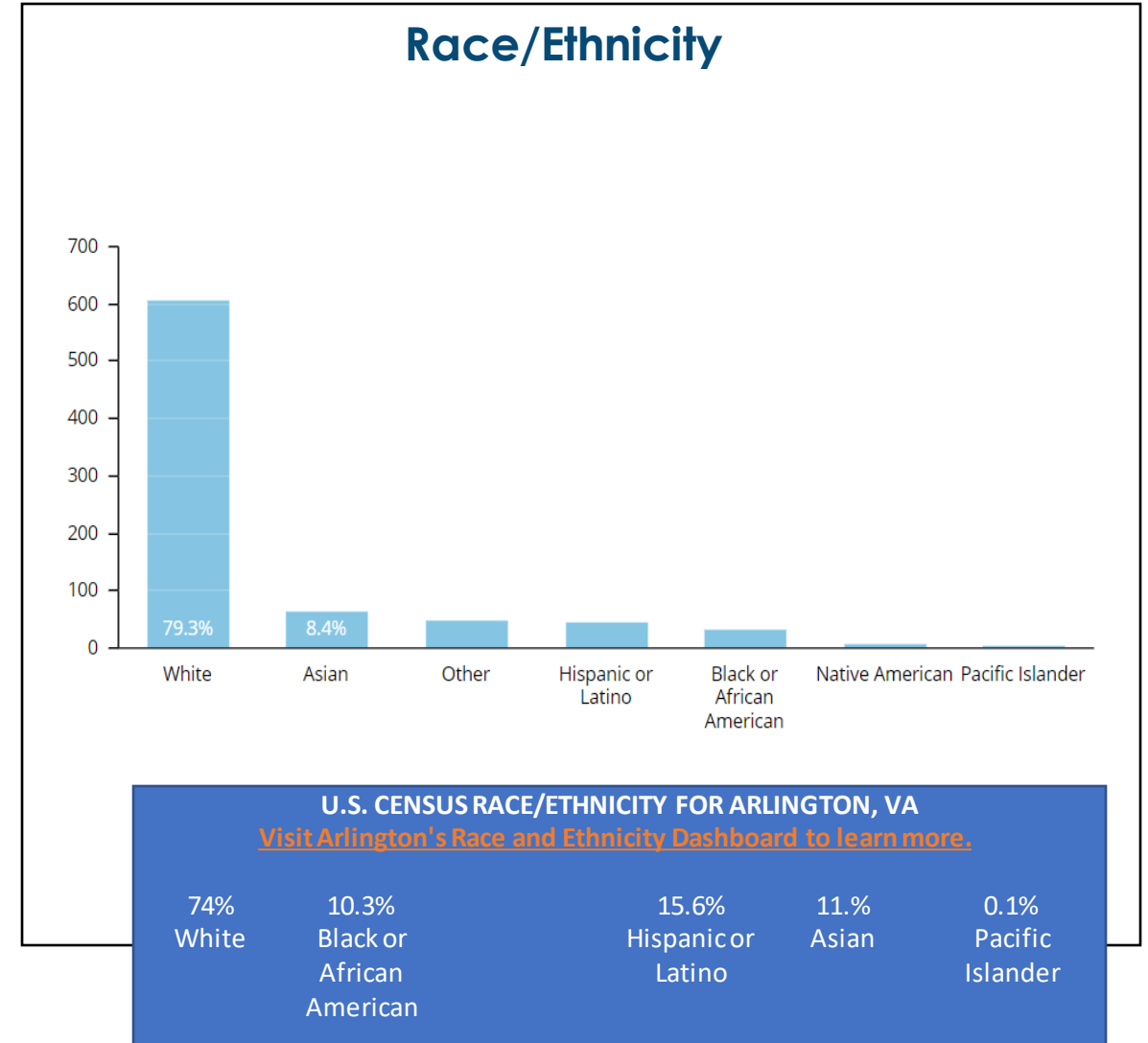
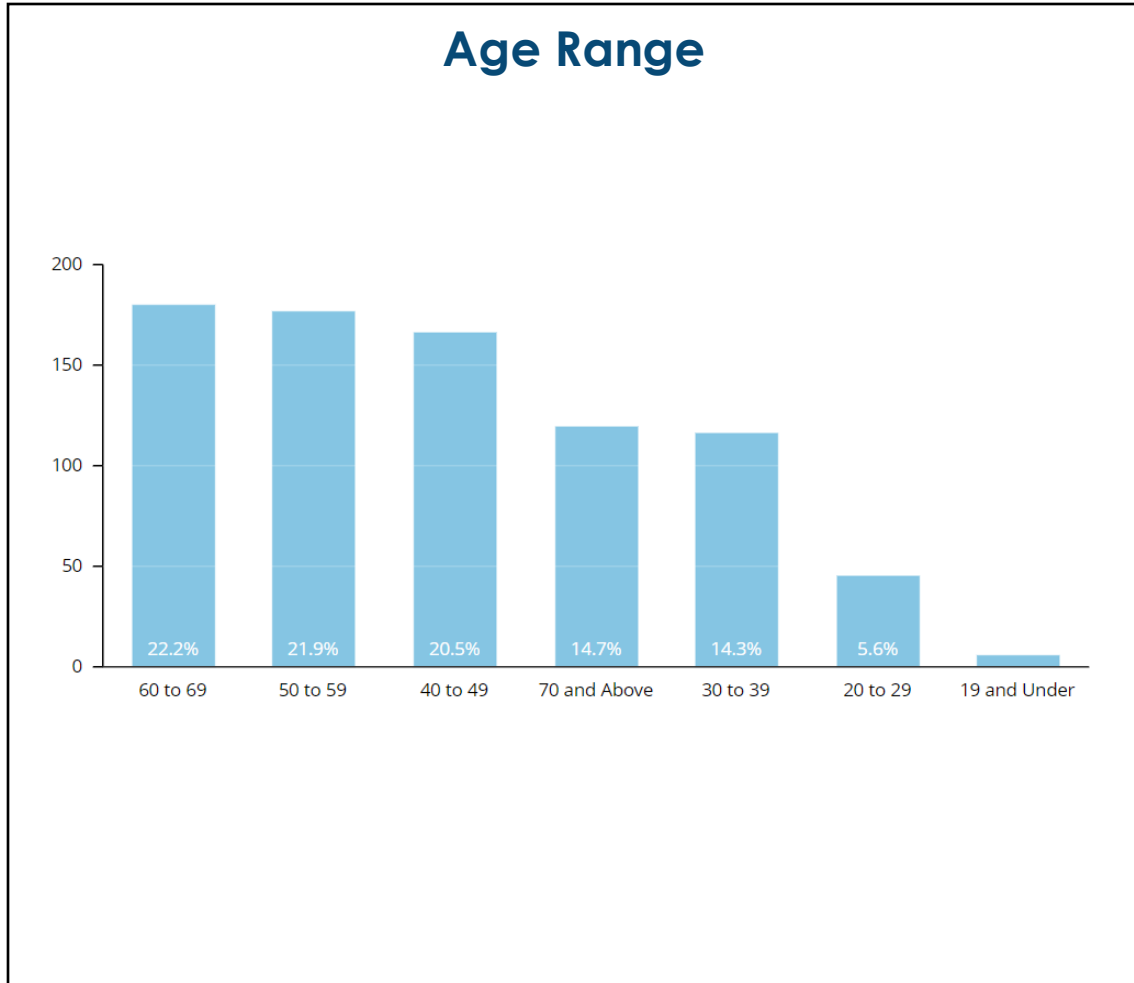
*In this engagement, we received many questionnaire responses from outside of Arlington. This issue was raised by several stakeholders to the project team regarding the promotion of this questionnaire to local and national social media groups.*

*The questionnaire tool that Arlington uses allows the project team to analyze where the respondent completes the questionnaire (including approximate latitude and longitude). The responses to this questionnaire have been filtered to **focus on individual responses from within Arlington as well as a 10-mile boundary beyond Arlington. Of the 1,403 online participants 1,075 were from within this boundary. The results hereafter report based on the 1,075 participants that live, work, or play in Arlington.***



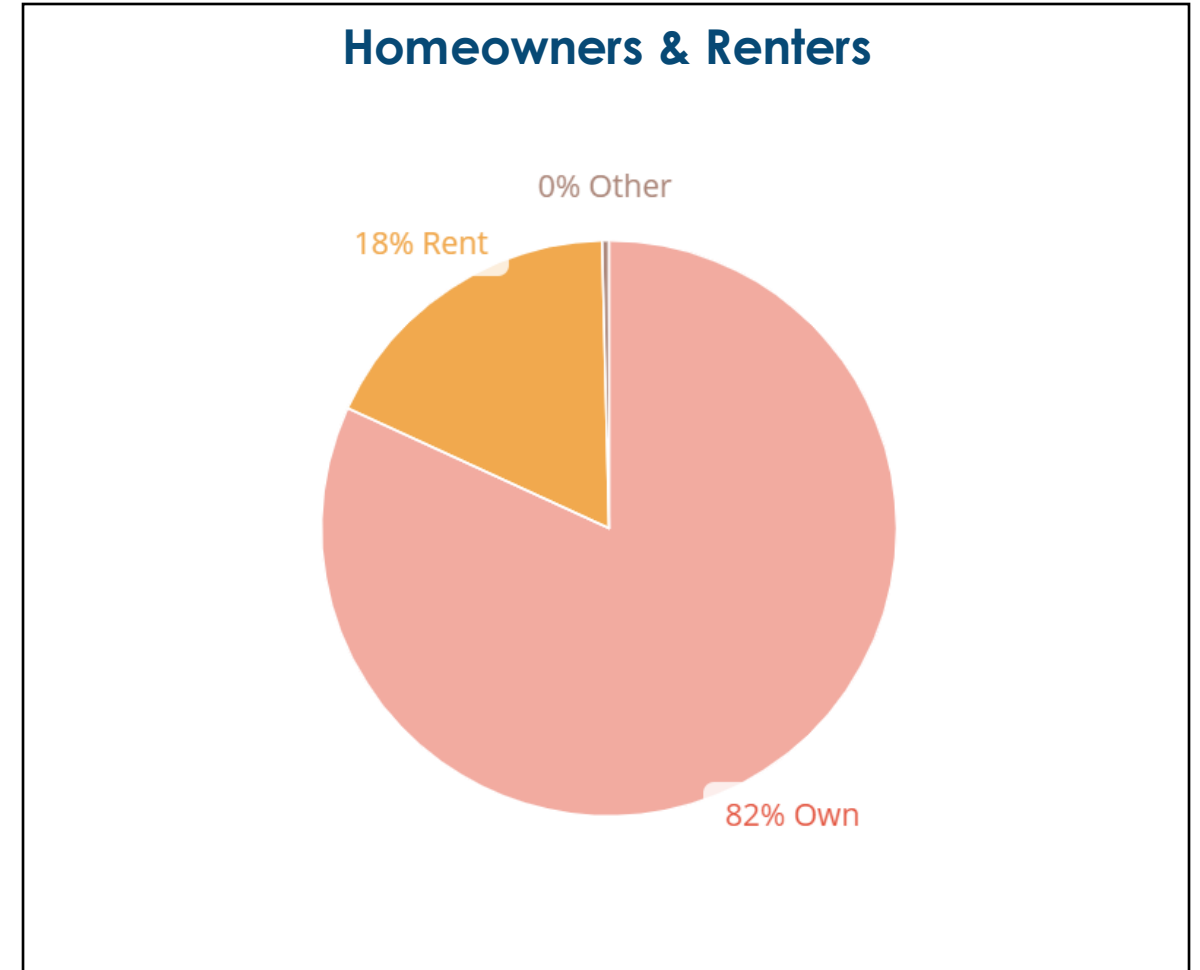
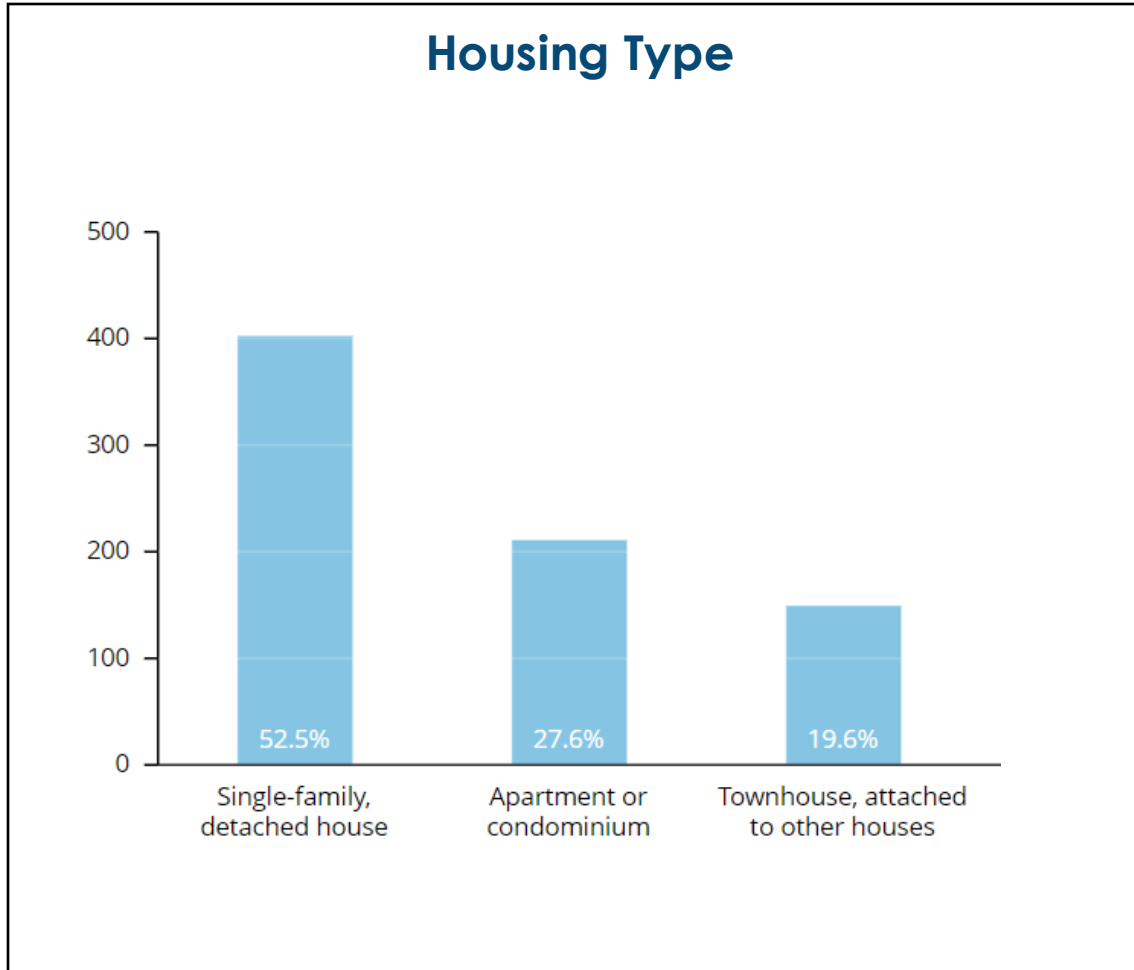
# Who Participated: Online

These response are from the 1,074 participants that live, work, or play within a 10-mile radius of Arlington.



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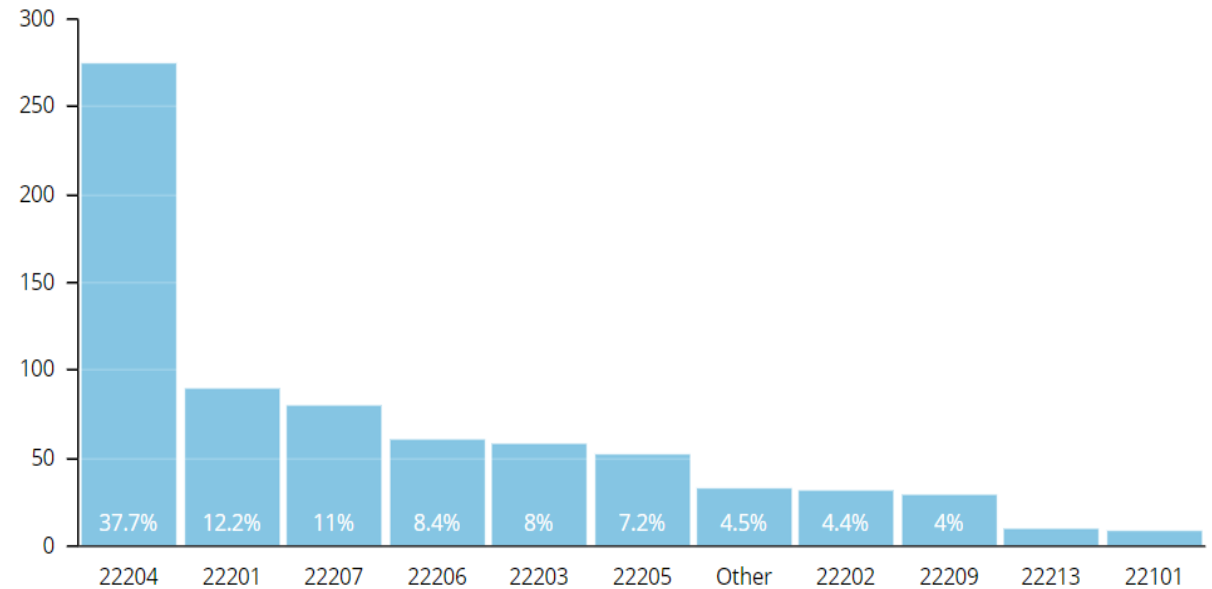
## Neighborhoods

In total, the project team heard from respondents located in **57 out of 62** Arlington civic associations.

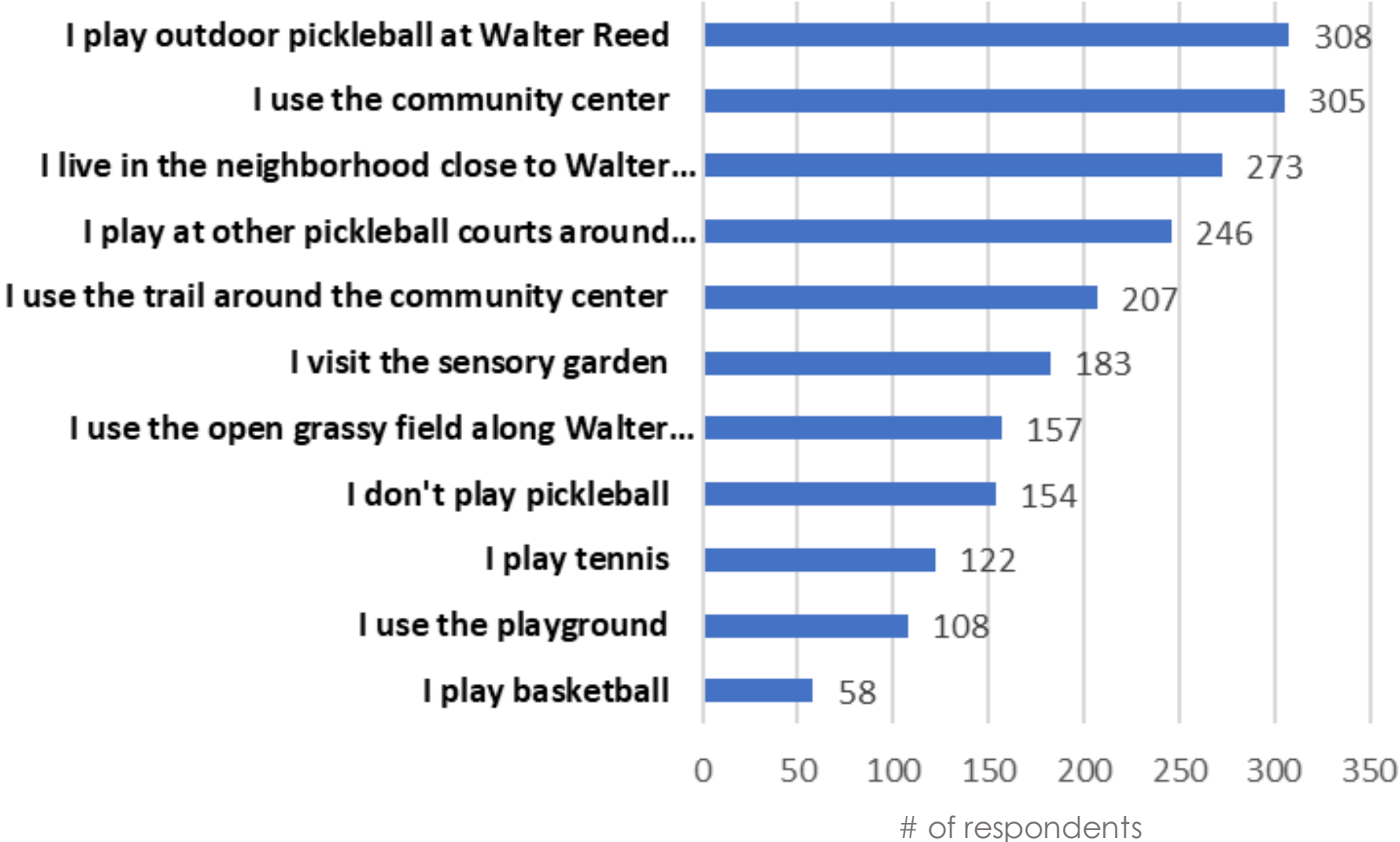
### Top Neighborhood Responses

- Columbia Heights (12%)
- I do not live in Arlington (10%)
- Douglas Park (7%)
- Ballston-Virginia Square (5%)
- Fairlington (5%)

## Zip Code



# How do you use or relate to the Walter Reed Community Center and Park? (select all that apply)

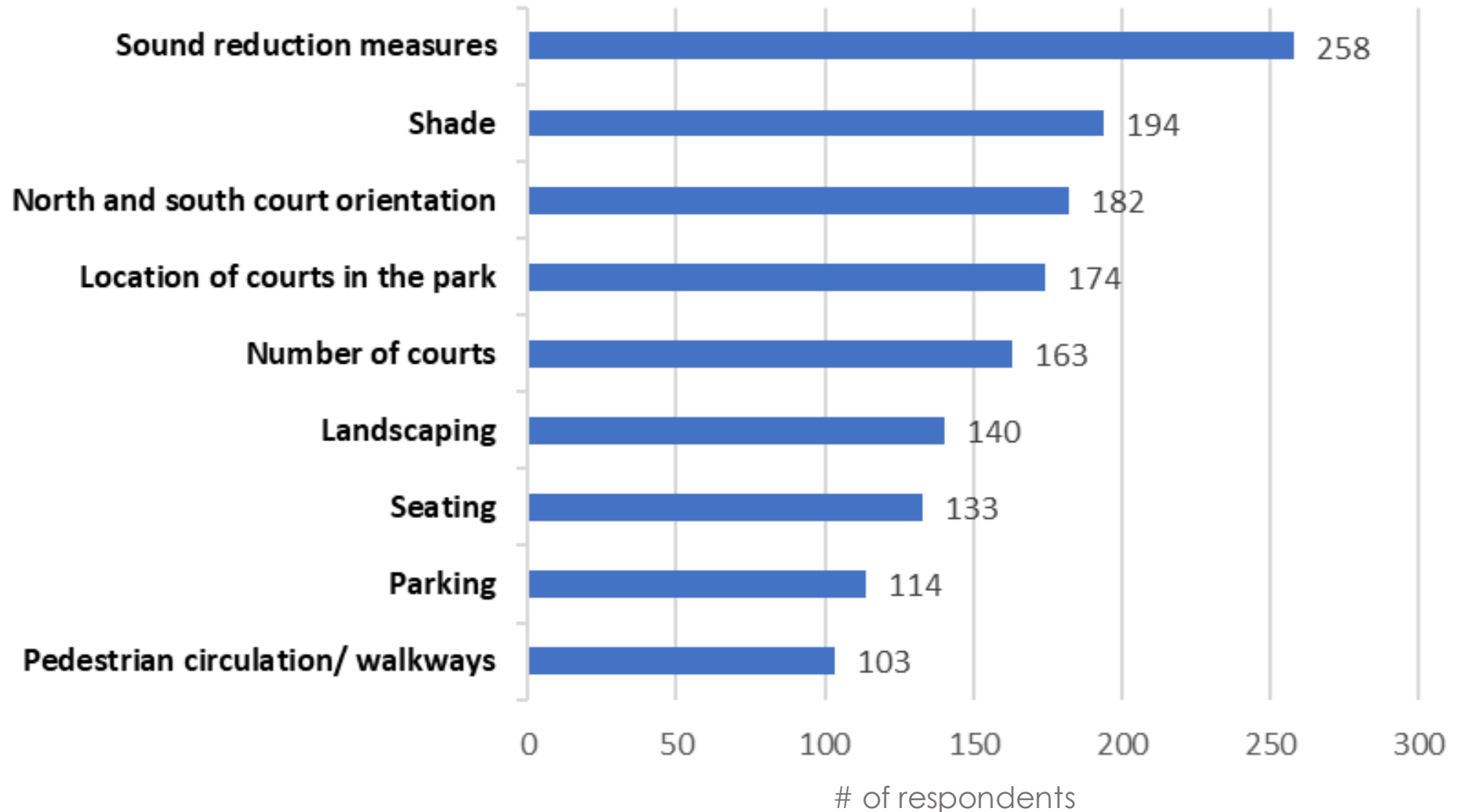


# Feedback on Draft Concept 1

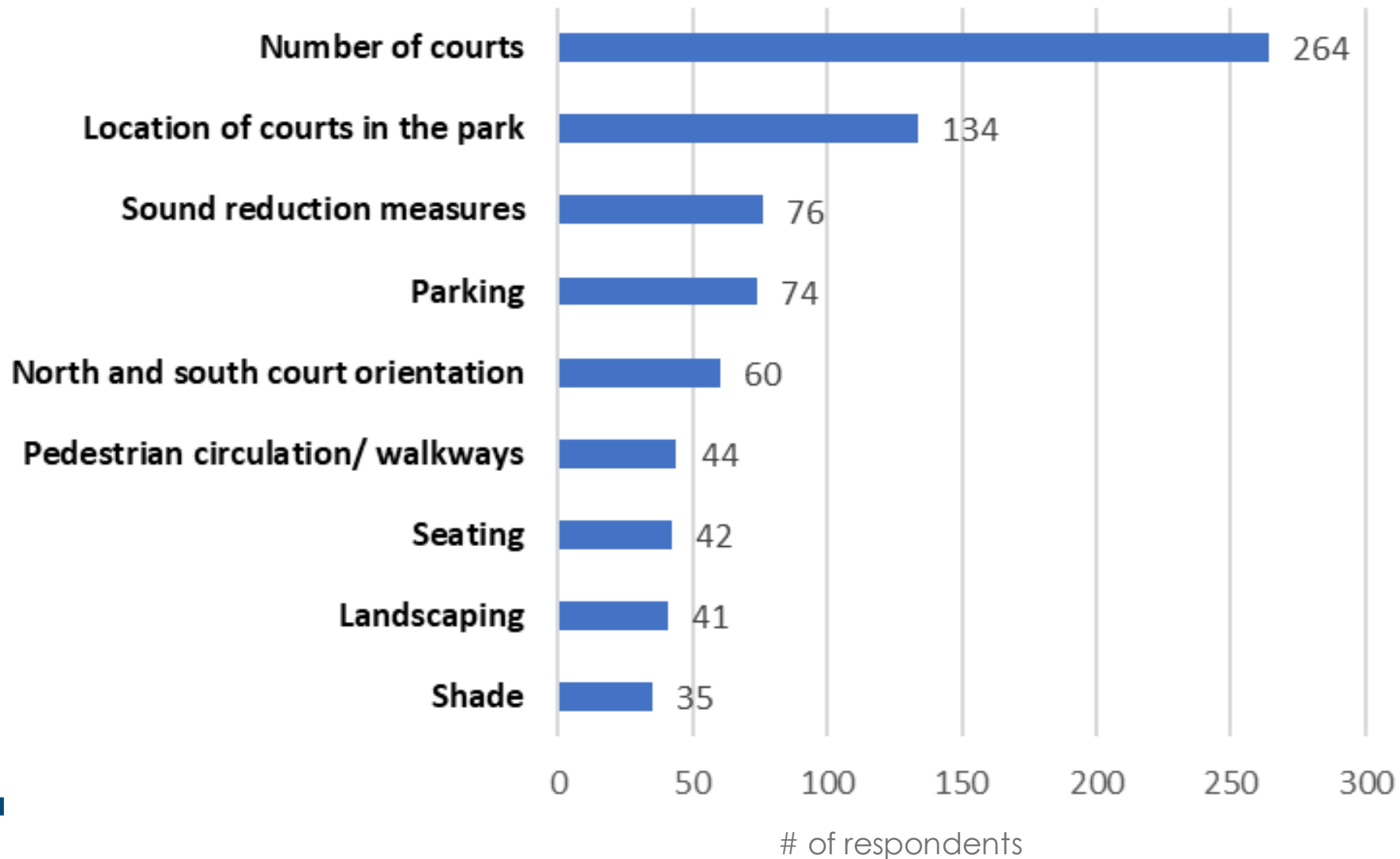




# What do you like about Concept 1? (select all that apply)

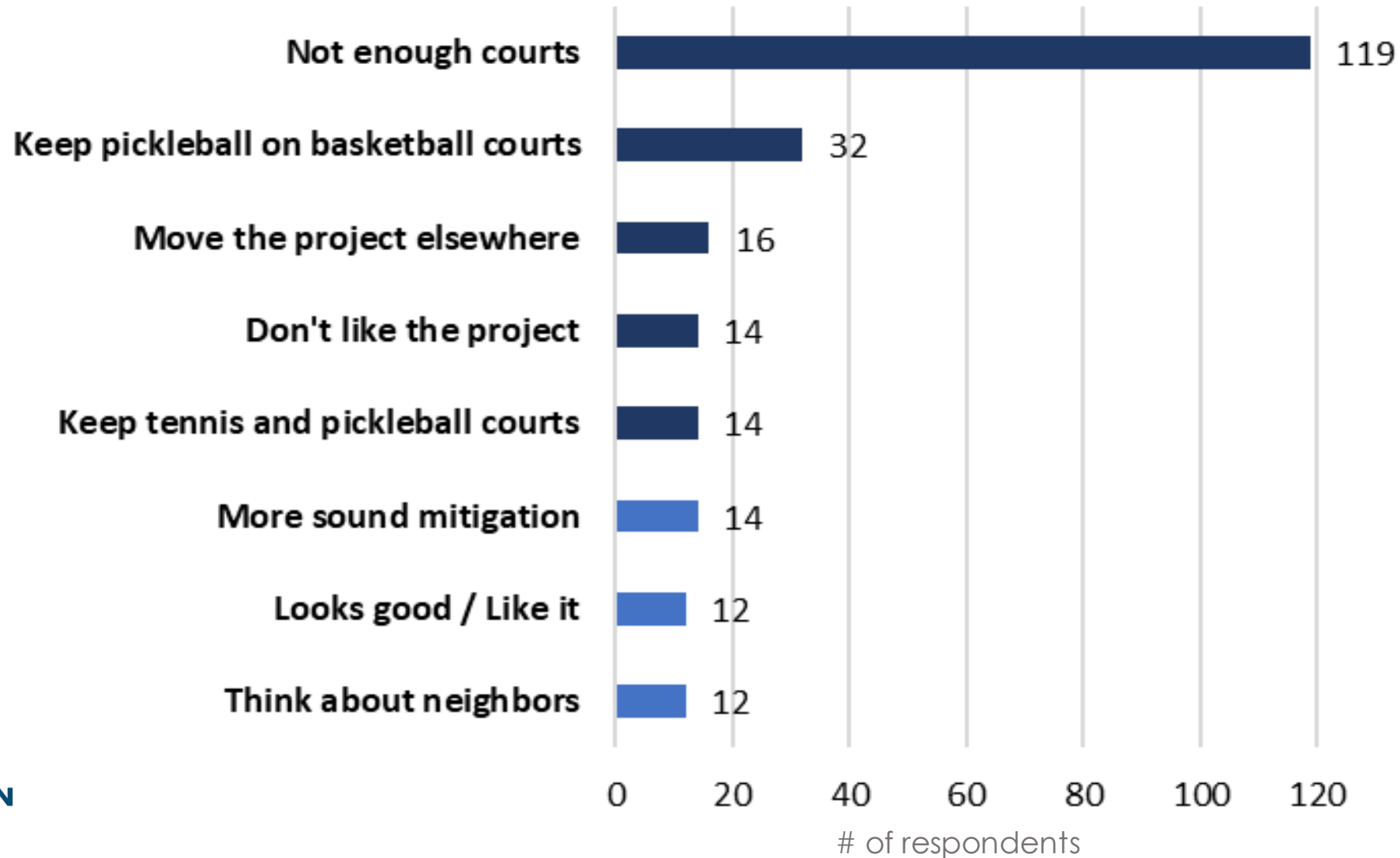


# What do you dislike about Concept 1? (select all that apply)



# Please share any additional thoughts you have related to draft concept 1:

Open-ended comments were quantified by tagging each comment with the topics mentioned



# Continued: Top 5 themes

## Please share any additional thoughts you have related to draft concept 1:

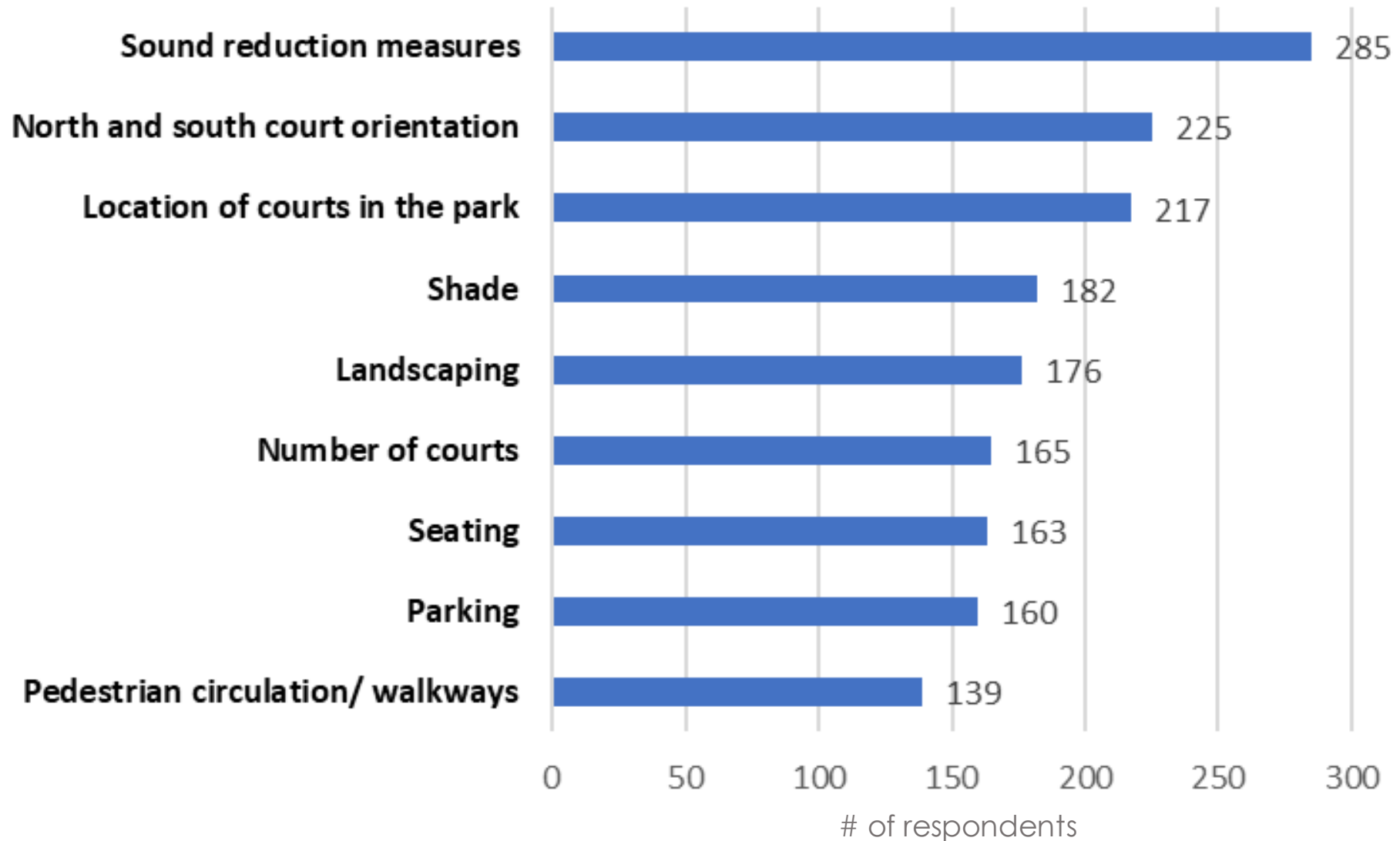
Open-ended comments were quantified by tagging each comment with the topics mentioned

Theme	Not enough courts	Keep pickleball on basketball courts	Move the project elsewhere	Don't like the project	Keep tennis on the pickleball courts
Mentions	119	32	16	14	14
Summary	<p>Many respondents express <b>dissatisfaction with the proposed reduction from nine courts to six</b>, emphasizing that the demand for courts already exceeds the available capacity. They suggest <b>combining elements from both concepts</b> to accommodate the growing pickleball community.</p> <p>The importance of <b>meeting future capacity needs, maintaining community spirit, and avoiding reservations</b> systems is emphasized.</p>	<p>Respondents expressed their <b>desire to maintain the dual-use of the basketball courts</b> for both pickleball and basketball.</p> <p>Many suggested that <b>pickleball could be scheduled for the early morning hours</b> where many feel that the basketball utilization is low, suggesting a coexistence of the two sports in the same venue. Some also highlighted that pickleball games on basketball courts offer <b>varied levels of play compared to only allowing play in concept 1</b>.</p> <p>Other responses stated their <b>inability to play basketball due to the large number of pickleball players</b> on the basketball courts.</p>	<p>The comments express dissatisfaction with the current concept, highlighting concerns about this <b>facility being too small and with excessive time restrictions</b>.</p> <p>The <b>proximity to homes</b> was also raised as a main issue.</p> <p>Suggestions were posed to <b>explore alternative locations</b> as a primary site for an <b>equivalent facility to Bluemont</b> where tennis is played.</p>	<p>These comments reflect a significant number of individuals who are <b>strongly against the proposed pickleball courts</b> at Walter Reed.</p> <p>Many express their dislike and opposition towards the project, emphasizing that they <b>do not want pickleball courts in the park</b>.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the noise, residential proximity, and the perceived ineffectiveness of sound mitigation measures. Some commenters go as far as <b>advocating for the complete cancellation of the courts</b>.</p>	<p>Multiple comments express opposition to converting the existing tennis courts into dedicated pickleball courts.</p> <p>These individuals emphasize the importance of keeping tennis courts and <b>maintaining a diverse range of recreational activities</b> at Walter Reed. They suggest options such as dual-striping the courts or finding a compromise that allows both tennis and pickleball to coexist.</p> <p>Some comment suggest <b>maintaining at least one tennis court</b>.</p>

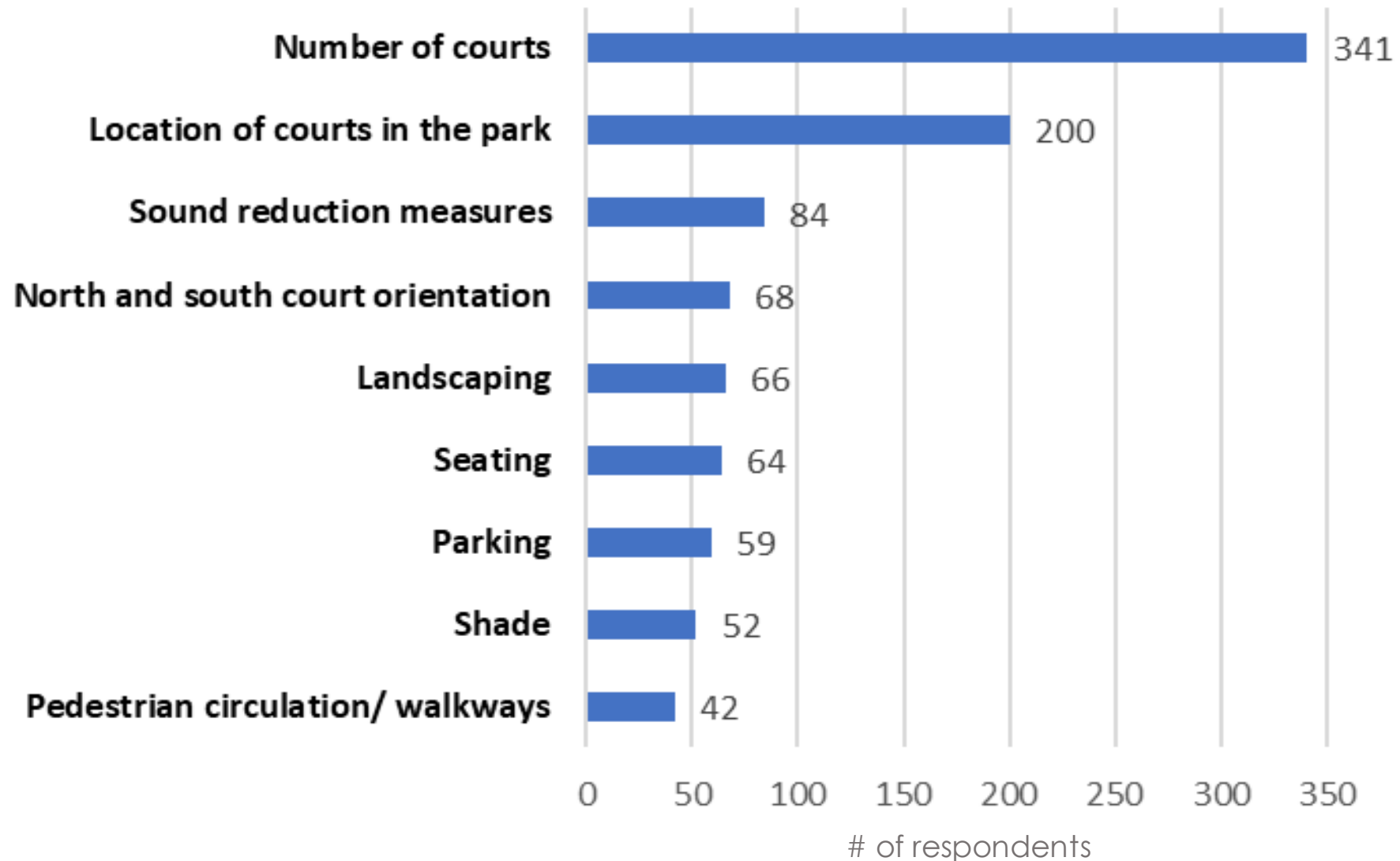
# Feedback on Draft Concept 2



# What do you like about Concept 2? (select all that apply)

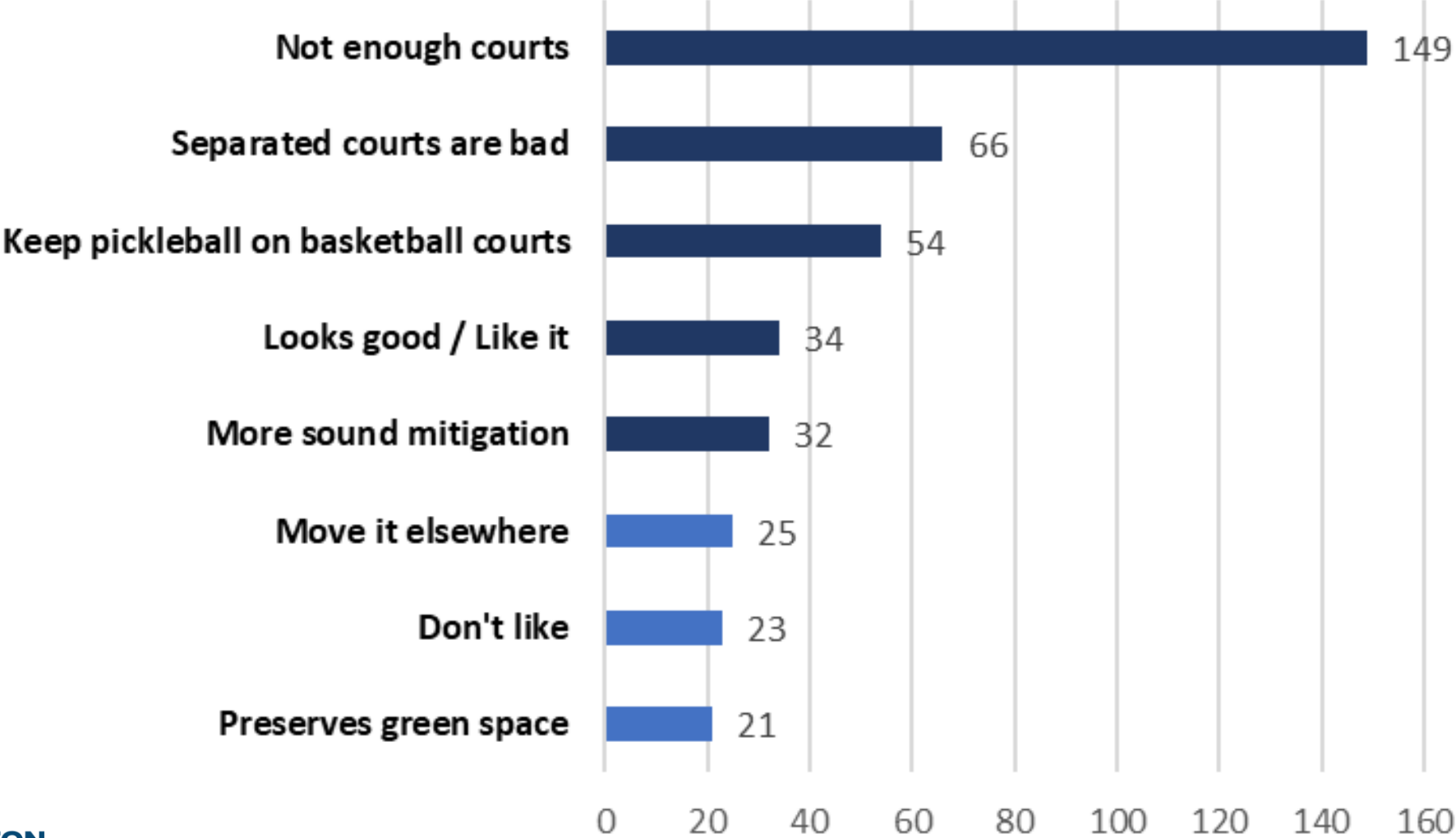


# What do you dislike about Concept 2? (select all that apply)



# Please share any additional thoughts you have related to draft concept 2:

*Open-ended comments were quantified by tagging each comment with the topics mentioned*





# Continued: Top 5 themes

## Please share any additional thoughts you have related to draft concept 2:

Open-ended comments were quantified by tagging each comment with the topics mentioned

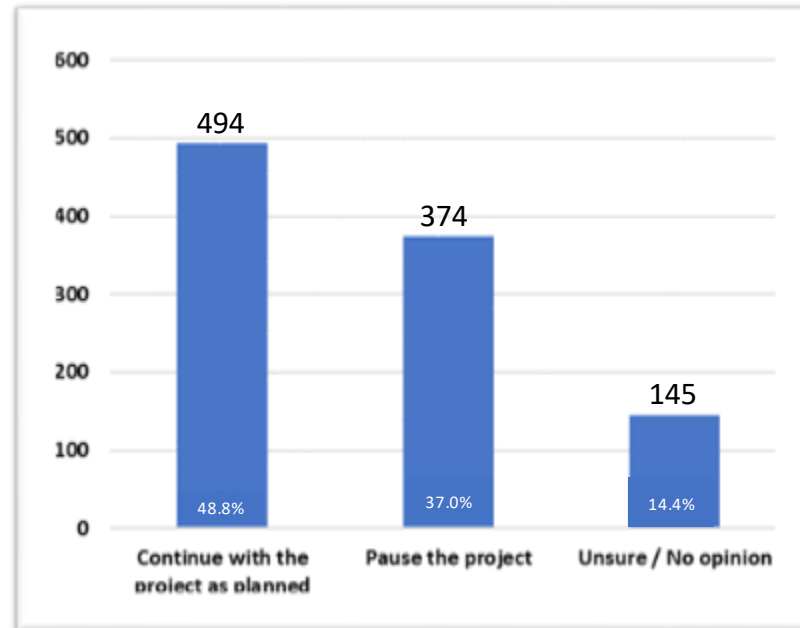
Theme	Not enough courts	Separated courts are bad	Keep pickleball on basketball courts	Looks good / like it	More sound mitigation
Mentions	149	66	54	34	32
Summary	<p>Numerous comments express dissatisfaction with the insufficient number of courts proposed. Sentiments express that <b>more courts are needed to meet the growing demand for pickleball</b> in the community. Many point to current overcrowding and long wait times experienced at Walter Reed, advocating for at least <b>maintaining the current nine courts or increasing the number of courts</b> to accommodate the pickleball community effectively. <b>Reducing the number of courts is seen as a step in the wrong direction.</b></p>	<p>Players express dissatisfaction with the separation of courts in Draft Concept 2. They argue that <b>dividing the courts hinders the social aspect of pickleball and disrupts the flow of play.</b></p> <p>Concerns are raised about managing queues and court availability.</p> <p>Suggestions are offered to <b>keep all courts together for easier rotational play and maintain a consolidated waiting line.</b></p>	<p>Respondents express the desire to <b>keep the pickleball lines on the basketball courts and maintain the drop-in</b> approach for pickleball hours.</p> <p>They emphasize the importance of increased access to pickleball and suggest restoring hours.</p> <p>The need for <b>improvements such as additional seating and more paddle racks</b> are also mentioned. <b>Drop-in play is noted several times as a core element of the pickleball community</b> and what many love so much about the sport.</p>	<p>Some express positive feedback for Concept 2, mentioning that they feel it will provide investment and beautification of the park.</p> <p>They appreciate the <b>design, landscaping, seating, and parking</b> options provided in Concept 2.</p> <p>Additional walkways and circulation to the parking is a plus.</p> <p>The <b>separation of courts and the increased distance from houses are seen as beneficial aspects.</b></p>	<p>Several comments express <b>concerns about the sound mitigation measures</b> in concept 2.</p> <p><b>Some feel that the proposed measures are inadequate and will not effectively reduce the noise</b> impact on nearby homes.</p> <p>There are <b>suggestions for additional sound reduction measures, such as higher perimeter fences</b> or stronger barriers, to address the boundary issues.</p> <p>Some residents believe that the current proposed measures do not sufficiently consider the impact of regular impulsive and continuous sound on the human brain over extended periods.</p>

# What are your thoughts on pausing the Walter Reed Outdoor Pickleball Project?

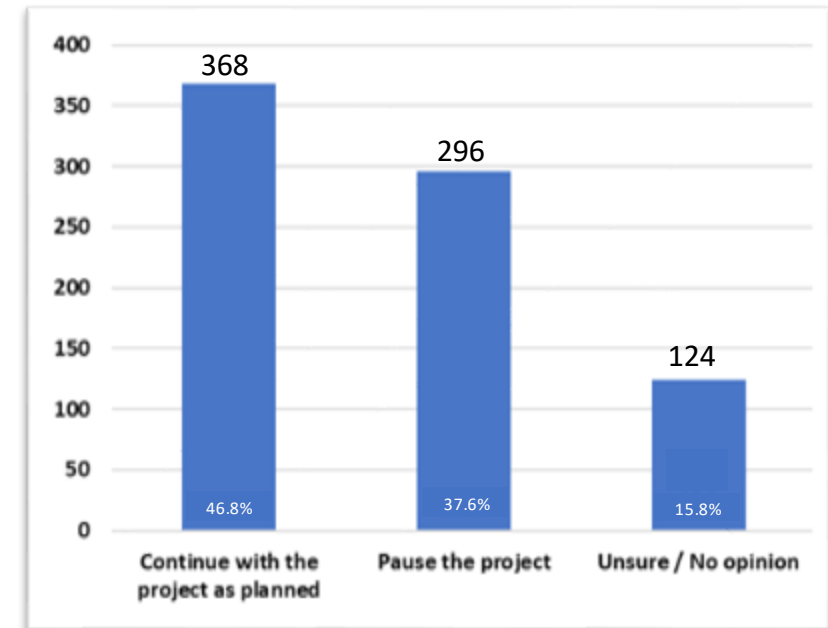
The project team presented two draft concepts that attempt to balance varying interests gathered through community input from more than 1,300 participants in February 2023. However, the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) received a request in a joint letter from pickleball players and neighbors to pause the project. This question attempted to solicit more pointed feedback on this topic.

As noted previously, we received many questionnaire responses from outside of Arlington. The responses to this specific question are broken out to show **all responses** as well as **responses from within Arlington that include a 10-mile boundary beyond Arlington**.

**All responses without a filter for location of participant**  
(1,013 respondents)



**Arlington responses including responses from a 10-mile boundary beyond Arlington**  
(788 respondents)

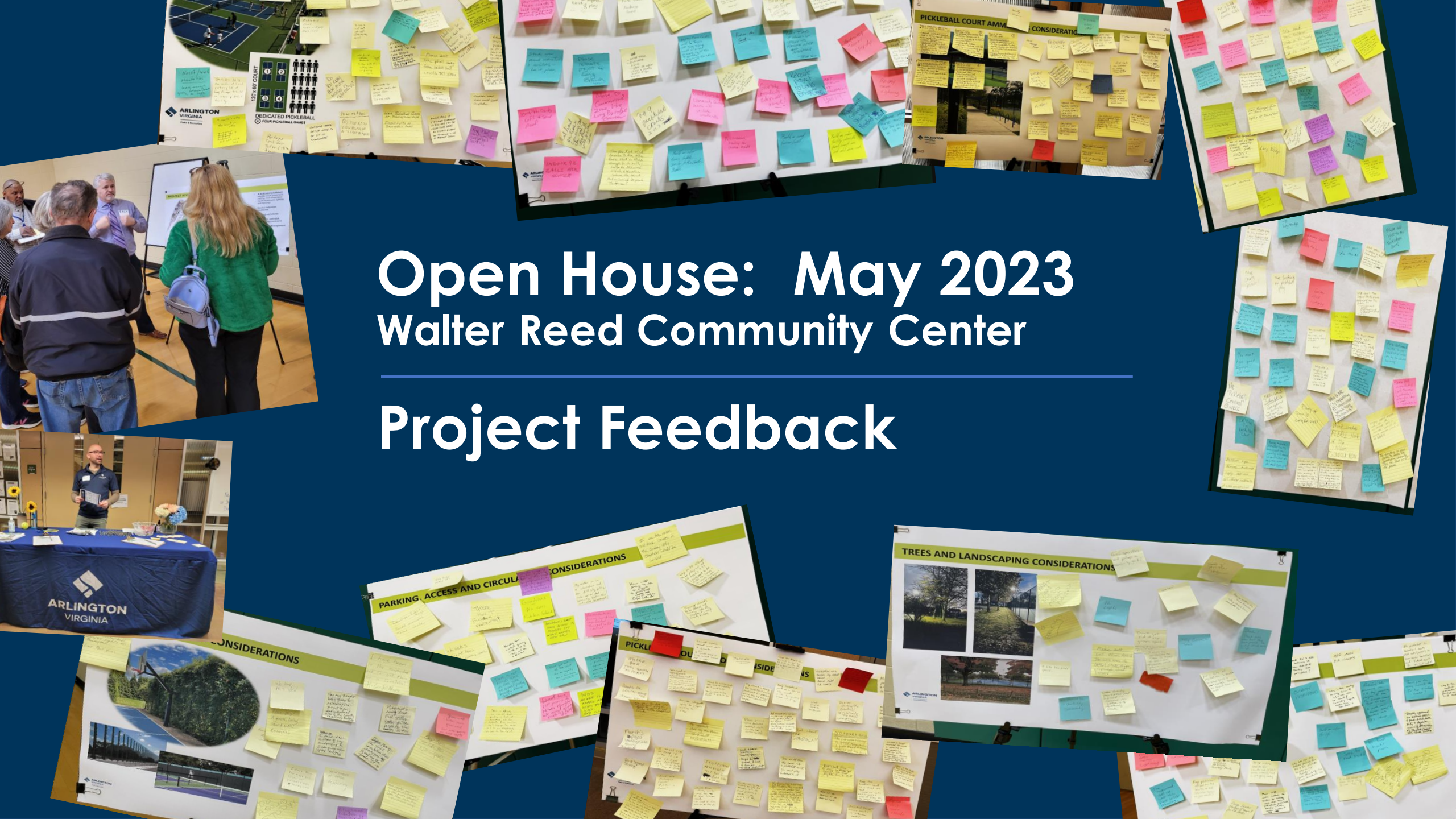


# Open House: May 2023

## Walter Reed Community Center

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# Project Feedback



# Open House : Top Five Comment Among all Stations

Theme	Not Enough Courts	Keep Basketball for Pickleball	Move the Project Elsewhere	Prefer Concept 1	Maximize Sound Mitigation
Mentions	147	79	67	59	41
Summary	<p>Many advocate for nine courts or more. There is a strong demand for more courts noted in the engagement, with suggestions to <b>combine concepts and accommodate additional courts</b>.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about the reduction in court numbers and the need to meet <b>current and future capacity</b>. Commenters emphasize the importance of meeting the growing demand for pickleball and the need for <b>more dedicated courts</b>.</p> <p>Some propose striping other tennis courts for pickleball around the County, which is happening already.</p>	<p>Respondents on this topic advocate for <b>keeping the basketball courts for both pickleball and basketball use</b>. Many respondents asked for early morning pickleball play and noted that there is little demand early in the morning for basketball and that they two sports could co-exist here. Others noted that the pickleball on basketball courts allow for different levels of play between this site and the tennis courts.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about <b>reducing court numbers from 9 to 6</b> and the need for more courts or to simply preserve these multi-use courts.</p> <p>Other respondents noted that they <b>can't play basketball due to the large number of pickleball players</b> at the basketball courts.</p>	<p>Respondents expressed the desire for <b>additional pickleball courts</b> (e.g. 9-12 total courts).</p> <p>Suggestions about <b>alternative locations for the project</b> include Minor Hill, Bluemont Park, Long Bridge, north Arlington, or other <b>non-residential areas</b>.</p> <p>Concerns are raised about noise, parking, and the impact on the neighborhood. Some residents propose <sup>59</sup> striping existing tennis courts for pickleball and utilizing underutilized spaces elsewhere. The idea of a regional pickleball cluster is mentioned several times, as well as the <b>need for a true dedicated flagship facility</b> in a more conducive location.</p>	<p>Concept 1 was preferred by many because it <b>keeps all the courts together, allowing for better socialization</b>, order of play, and fostering a sense of community among players.</p> <p>A <b>better and bigger paddle rack</b> was suggested to support play order as was more seating.</p> <p>Several responses noted that this concept would likely be <b>faster to develop, cost less, and create a more central seating</b> and viewing area.</p>	<p>Both players and neighbors asked for <b>more and better noise reduction measures</b> to address the impact of pickleball on the surrounding neighborhood. Many express concerns about the proposed acoustic fences and their effectiveness in mitigating noise.</p> <p>Suggestions include using <b>higher fences, adding soundproofing materials, and angling the fences to deflect sound back into the courts</b>.</p> <p>Some advocated for acoustical mitigation <b>barriers that surround the courts</b>.</p>

# Open House Comments by Station

<i>Station</i>	<b>Court Layout</b>	<b>Court Amenities</b>	<b>Sound Reduction</b>
<i>Summary</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep 9 courts here</li><li>• Maintain basketball court for pickleball in the morning</li><li>• Preserve green space</li><li>• Keep basketball courts</li><li>• Consider waiting area in the center between courts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shade is good</li><li>• More seating needed</li><li>• Add a water fountain</li><li>• Bigger paddle rack for play order</li><li>• Determine a permanent restroom solution— not a porta-potty.</li><li>• Place an automated external defibrillator at the court</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep original courts, add sound barriers</li><li>• Add sound mitigation now before the project begins</li><li>• Two-story acoustic fence needed</li><li>• Consider requiring quiet balls and paddles</li><li>• More trees and natural buffer</li></ul>

# Open House Comments by Station (Continued)

*Station*

## Trees and Landscaping

## Parking, Access, and Circulation

*Summary*

- Keep existing trees
- Plant more trees
- Preserve existing green space
- Plant natives and pollinators

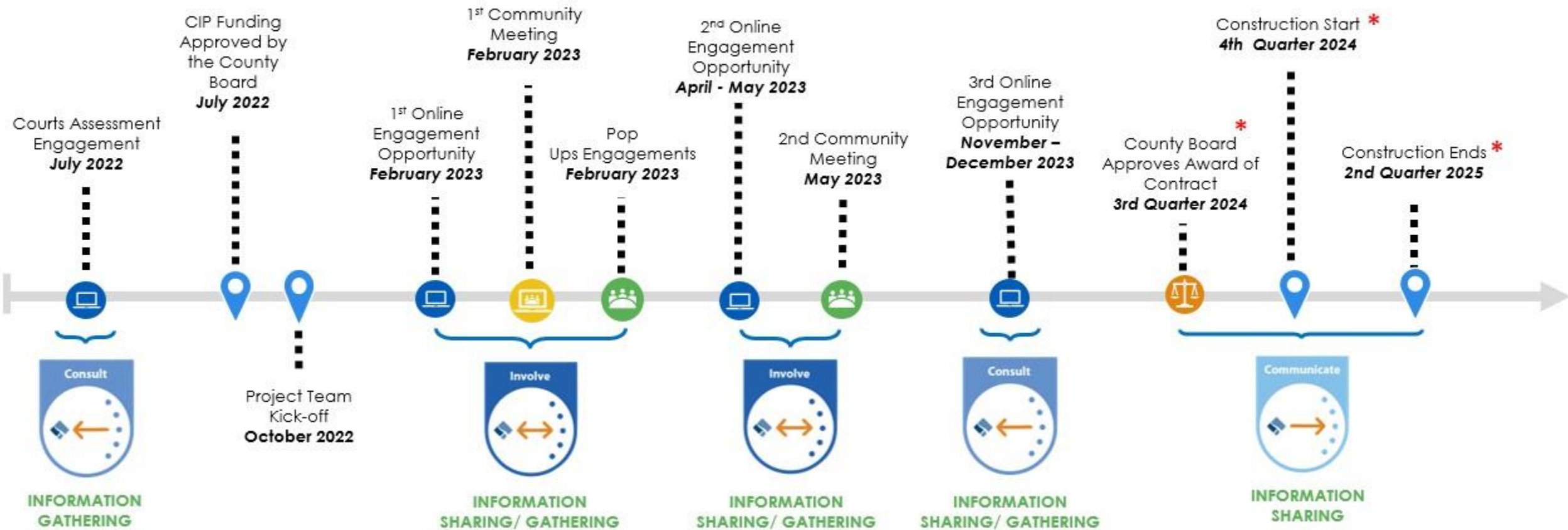
- More parking is needed at WRCC
- Concerns persist over people parking in front of neighbors' homes and driveways
- More handicap spots needed
- Swap the parking and drive lane with the courts to add distance and buffer to neighbors
- Don't allow pickleball on voting days or other events at the WRCC where parking is needed
- Zone the on-street parking

# Walter Reed Outdoor Pickleball Court Project

**Origin:** Public Spaces Master Plan – Action Step 1.4.3  
And Courts Assessment

**Funding:** FY 23-32 Capital Improvement Plan


**Staff Contact:** Bernadette Grullon  
(Bgrullon@arlingtonva.us)



\* Subject to adjustments as necessary



**ARLINGTON VIRGINIA**




**Online Feedback**  
(e.g., questionnaire, feedback form, etc.)



**In-Person Engagement and Pop-Ups**  
(e.g., community meeting, roundtable, tabling, walking/bus tour, deliberative dialogue, etc.)



**Virtual Meeting**  
(e.g., TEAMS, TEAMS live, Zoom, etc.)



**County Board Engagement**  
(e.g., public hearing, Board work session, open door Monday, commission meeting, etc.)



**Key Milestone**