



**City of Victoria
Parks Master Plan Workshop**

**Exit Survey
March 17, 2007**

Summary Report

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Background:

On March 17, 2007 approximately 135 citizens attended the City's Parks Master Planning Workshop conducted by the City's Planning Department. Of the 135 people that attended, 95 exit surveys were completed. The following eight questions were asked and this summary is a compilation of their comments.

1. Please list three things about Victoria's Parks System that you value the most:

1. *Accessible Green Spaces (18)*
2. *Parks in general are accessible (14)*
3. *City Parks are well maintained (8)*

A more detailed listing can be found in Appendix I.

2. Please list three things about Victoria's Parks System that you would like to change or improve.

1. *Connect Greenways to all Parks (17)*
2. *Better Manage Invasive Species (7)*
3. *More Downtown Pocket Parks (5) / More Native Species Plants (5)*

An inclusive detailed listing of what people would like to change or improve about Victoria's Parks System can be found in Appendix II.

3. List up to five activities you like to do when you visit Parks.

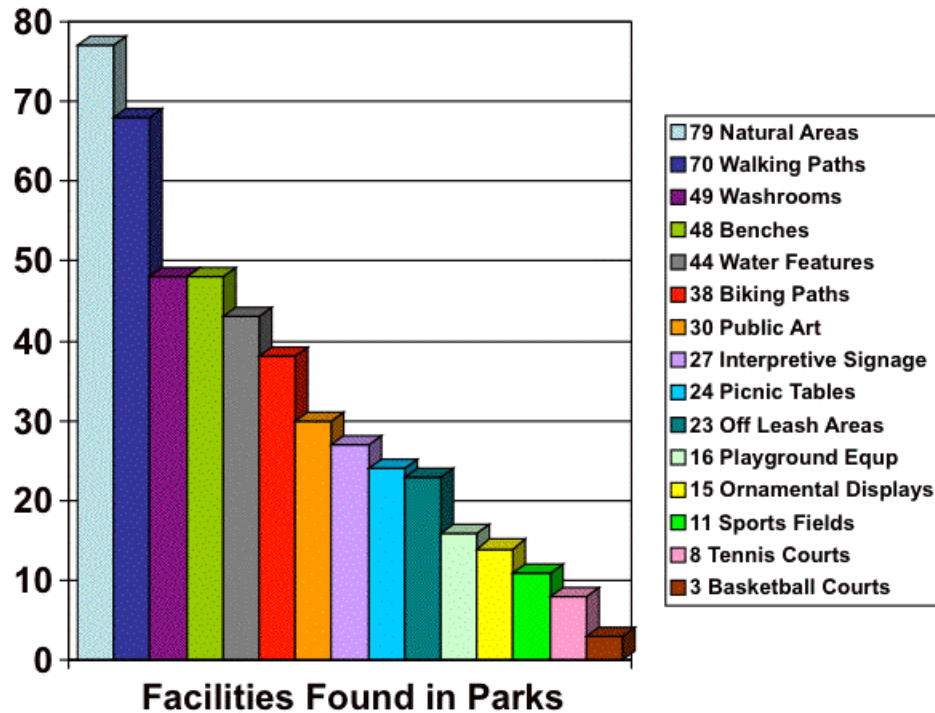
The top five activities are:

1. *Walking (56)*
2. *Observe the Natural Environment (34)*
3. *Solitude – peace and quiet (27)*
4. *Play in a safe environment with kids (22)*
5. *Sit (21)*

An inclusive detailed listing of specific activities mentioned under each category can be found in Appendix III.

4. Please check up to five facilities, typically found in parks, which enhance your visit to the park.

The following graph shows the list of facilities ranked in order of popularity.



Views of the:

29 Ocean

11 Mountains

4 Inner Harbour / 4 Trees or native plants

3 City

2 Gorge

1 Ships, landmarks, outdoors, wildlife, distances, night sky, animals, Juan de Fuca Strait, meadows

Other:

2 Dog Free Zones

2 History (natural and human)

1 mini wilderness areas, more info boards, flora and fauna, softball fields, outdoor swimming pool, community gardens, community events, drinking fountain, industrial artifacts ie, Selkirk and Fleming Beach, marsh areas attached to watercourses, Games, innovative displays and uses, edible plants, sustainable design demos.

5. Is there anything you would like to say that you did not get a chance to say at today's workshop?

General Thanks:

- Thank you it was very well organized and a lot of fun.
- Thank you for the fantastic workshop – it was the best.
- It was a well run workshop
- Thank you to the organizers for doing such a fantastic job. It was a job well done!
- Our group was very energetic and imaginative making me dig deeper. Well Done!
- It was a great free and open discussion.
- It was a worthwhile exercise. The speaker opened my eyes to how public buildings can be part of our park system.

Comments about the Day's Discussion:

- I was hoping for more opportunity to speak about specific parks and ideas regarding improvements
- The people at our table successfully represented all the elements I feel are really important.
- Yes, smaller groups would help in the brainstorming sessions
- No one asked the question of why we don't use our parks instead of asking what we like what we don't like.
- In our own group a proposal was made for "public-private partnerships" and restaurants and other commercial activities in our parks. I strongly oppose the commercialization of our parks as it could ultimately lead to the privatization of public space and unwanted stress on natural areas. I longed for more discussion on Community gardens, extending them to vacant lots and roof tops and the creation of food garden and camas boulevards. Also interpretive signage and teaching about the presence of indigenous people on this beautiful land for thousands of years should be promoted in our parks.
- Some concern that there wasn't much discussion about 'inner city' or downtown core parks but it may not matter.
- I would like to honour Mr. Warren for his contribution to our beautiful boulevards.

Further Suggestions:

- Using parks for bicycle transportation corridors dismays me. I no longer walk in my neighbourhood park because of the danger posed by speeding cyclists.
- Integrate services across plans.
- Amalgamation
- City park maps are inconsistent
- It would be good if there were rewards or incentives for the degree of involvement with planning / assisting the parks projects. Using help with community gardens would have some incentive.
- The Victoria Centre of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada has a light pollution Abatement Committee who would like to contribute to the park planning

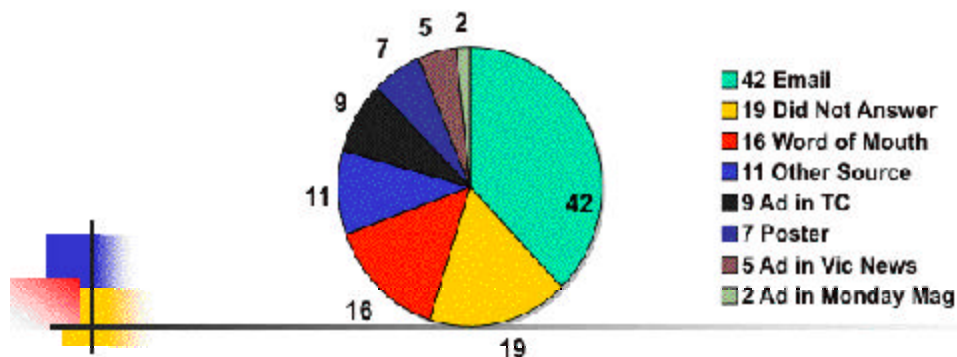
process as it moves long. Please contact: Joe Carr, President at President@victoria.rasc.ca 744-9981

- Some parks dominant: air, other water and the combination of both elements and its equilibrium cause a type of landscaping.
- Victoria needs an outdoor swimming pool. Glad to hear of the harbour front planning process.
- More community involvement for their local parks. Let neighbours beautify their own areas - Plant more trees!
- I would really like to see more off road bike paths in Victoria.
- The harbour all the way from Portage Inlet to 10 Mile point is a migratory bird sanctuary which extends to the high-water mark. MBS regulations do not allow off leash dogs yet Victoria just made some of the parks bordering the sanctuary off-leash parks (ie, Banfield). There needs to be explicit signage at the shoreline.
- Just a reminder that Douglas street offers many insights and suggestions that could be incorporated like closing streets for events, creating beautiful monumental art and water features, bridges that are timeless. Perhaps daylight a stream somewhere...
- Secure the remaining portions of the Inner Harbour for open space / park use.
- Please consider family use first to encourage a stronger civic social fabric.
- Sustainability can never be said loud enough!
- Explore the idea of making View Street a linear park sidewalk vendors, exercise stations and playgrounds eg. Spread out in the little pockets, limit cars.
- Create a linear loop where parks, schools and open areas can be connected. Such as Gonzales Bay through parks and schools to Oak Bay Ave and beyond.
- My pet peeve – “Why do smokers litter?” There is hardly anywhere to sit without being surrounded with cigarette butts! Except the children’s farm which bans smoking.

Suggestions for Future Workshops:

- It would be beneficial to have younger people attend these workshops ie 20 – 35.
- I think all the councilors should have been required to attend this workshop!
- What does the City of Victoria see the vision being?

6. How did you find out about the workshop?



Other Source Includes:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| .CBC Victoria Interview | - Notice From Alison Meyer |
| .Dalles Road Dog Park | - MPP Meeting |
| .Girl Guides | - Social Planning Committee |
| Invitation from City Councilor x 3 | - Victoria Youth Council |
| .James Bay Environment Association | |

7. Have you attended a City sponsored workshop before? Yes or No

Of the 95 surveys received, 37 people have attended a city workshop before, 34 have not and 23 did not answer the question. Of those 36 people who have attended a workshop before, following is a list of issues / topics they attended.

Parks Plan x 6
 Greenways mapping x 4
 Downtown Plan x4
 Recreation renewal x 3
 Various developments x 2

Urban growth, agriculture x 2
 Beacon Hill Park Round Table x2
 Downtown Visionary Session 2020 x 3
 Neighbourhood planning x 2
 Sewage x 2

Alternative transportation and harbour
 Bioengineering
 Bonus Density
 Dockside
 Education
 Gorge Restoration
 Housing
 Invasive species control
 Native Plants

Off Leash Areas
 Policy
 Public art
 Railyards
 Rock Bay Development
 Secondary Suites
 Streetscaping
 Victoria Urban Development Agreement
 Water District, creeks and streams

8. Overall, please tell us how useful you found today's workshop.

Well Organized:

- Superb organization; professional and friendly staff. Thank you for the opportunity.
- Very useful, well organized, and meaningful conversations
- Well organized, I think this workshop was fabulous. It was very well organized and I felt that everyone who attended was able to have a strong voice.
- The workshop was well organized, fun, interactive and had great staff and great participants.
- It's great to plan ahead. The meeting was so well organized equipment and supplies were all there and you kept on schedule. Thank you for the pizza.
- Very useful, well planned informative and inspiring. Great staff.
- Great job guys. Well organized, swift, good pizza, and you squeezed me and others in at the last minute. No one was turned away.
- I was impressed with how everything ran; from table settings to facilitators and time keepers.
- Enriching, extremely well planned and facilitated.
- Very useful and organized. Gave me more ideas on what I would like to see in parks.

Important Public Consultation:

- Very useful; my first attended public consultation process. I found it very informal, allowed for openness and good engagement.
- Very useful, valued chance to have an input.
- Completes community involvement process.
- Very good, I hope you listen.
- Good, lots of public opinion.
- Great, I need more workshops like this to get public input.
- I always appreciate being consulted as a tax payer.
- Amazing, keep it up and keep informing people about what's going on as much as possible try not to close out the process.
- City of Victoria designs excellent workshops to obtain public input. Well done to all the staff involved. Thanks for the opportunity to provide input.
- Excellent; a model for how public consultation should be run.
- 8 out of 10: more community public involvement in the questions.
- Excellent, please use this info to inform your future process, public design and planning committee.
- Excellent and empowering, please use our ideas!
- Ask me again in a few years. I have regrets about having been involved in some past workshops. I hope this one will turn out different.
- I think it met the goal of the meeting.
- Demonstrated the public's involvement interest in valuing and maintaining and increasing park space.
- Informative, better appreciation of other people's needs and wants for parks.
- Diverse group interesting mix of needs and desires for future development.

General Comments:

- It was encouraging to see the large turnout and know how important Victoria's parks are to its citizens. I appreciate that the city is trying to represent its citizens in parks planning process.
- Very useful. Good to mix up in groups to meet new people.
- Very interesting and worthwhile.
- It was a tight schedule but it kept the spirit light and fun. This meeting room however, has very bad acoustics for hearing small groups.
- Very good, very hope filled!
- Great and absolutely positive.
- Look forward to the future park ness of Victoria.
- Very useful, a step towards improving park systems downtown.
- Like the method of brainstorming. Thanks for the lunch.
- Totally great, covers off several facets of my life, work and interests.
- Keep up the good work.
- Great to see some young families represented.
- Excellent job.
- I think it brought Victorians together as parks are gathering places. It was well done. I appreciated the effort of the school children.

Discussion/Materials:

- Excellent many good ideas and discussion items.
- This workshop was good, but felt the same ground was being gone over again.
- I found the workshop useful for myself but I want to see all this input received pushed forward. Workshops are only useful if they info is used properly afterwards.
- Very interesting should provide useful information to City for parks planning
- Very useful; a great informative thought provoking exercise.
- Great use of colour for materials.
- Excellent; I especially enjoyed the presentation.
- I found it very useful and informative.
- I hope it is useful and used by the City and the CRD.
- Inspiring slides. Nice opportunity to brainstorm.
- Time will tell. Hope you are encouraged by what you heard.
- Useful for the exchange of ideas and viewpoints although it will be difficult to distil so much material into useful issues for the parks master plan to address.
- I found the workshop particularly the presentation, thought provoking.
- There were too many visioning exercises, too general, too noisy and fluffy PR that ended with not much accomplished. Quiet people didn't get much chance to speak. I would have preferred to focus on how to implement some of the guest speaker's great points.

Great Facilitators:

- Excellent workshop, Kudos to Steve Barber our facilitator.
- Garry was a great facilitator.
- Great facilitators
- I wish every facilitator didn't go b the same set of exercises, the brainstorming/writing lists on flip charts. Tiresome and limited results.

Appendix I

Please list three things about Victoria's Parks System that you value the most:

Note: The top value under each category has been highlighted for easy identification.

Beacon Hill Park

- **free entrance x 5**
- mixture of native indigenous plants, natural state / protection of pieces of our natural eco-system x4/ attention to significance, **appreciation and emphasis of indigenous native plants and their natural environment ie Garry Oak meadow x 5** / camus bulbs / towering Douglas fir x 2 and majestic Arbutus
- children's petting farm is great / play areas for kids of all ages x 4 / mingle
- access to lower BHP for James Bay residents
- large size of BHP x 3
- pristine grounds x 3, all horticulture / biodiversity and trees
- floral displays and natural areas x 3 / soft paths
- great size / proximity to downtown x 2
- history of the park x 2 / land
- pleasant public facilities
- dark sky views from top of BHP / Dallas Road

City Staff

- **maintenance of parks x 8** / level of care applied to areas x 4
- knowledgeable, caring, approachable, great, committed x 3
- easy to communicate with, cooperative x 2
- good people who respond to our concerns x 2
- thanks to Joe Daly for his care
- community input encouraged x 2/ today's workshop x 2
- pest management control
- commitment to working towards conservation and restoration x2 / comprehensive and integrated interest in making it more effective
- presence of staff in parks / they like what they do and it shows
- community oriented / removal of hazards found in park

Natural Beauty

- **natural and accessible green spaces x18**/ retained remnants of natural environment
- flora and fauna x6 / ornamental displays / hanging baskets / boulevard plantings
- mixed experience, peaceful
- minimum of hard landscaping
- beauty surroundings x6 / vibrant / place to recreate
- plant diversity (native plant sections, and horticultural wonders) x 6/ trees x 2
- no pesticide applications (that I'm aware of)
- streamside corridor parks – Cecelia (too bad about the Victoria section of Bowker)
- phenomenon of vegetation change and how alter the scene of the city is

Natural Visitor Attractions

- Access to the sea, **beaches and mountain views x 7**/ freedom to enjoy
- Water frontage x 5 / public access x 5/ Shoreline areas
- Good places to take visitors, beaches, trails and flowers, green city
- Hill top properties / visitors
- Proximity to downtown x 3
- Moss Rock Park x 2 / Banfield Park / Ross Bay

Parks in General

- **accessible x14** / to dense urban areas x2
- number of parks x 7, variety of uses x8/safety in parks x 2
- passive, active mix
- urban wildlife x 3, urban forest x 3 (as opposed to manicured lawns / flower beds)
- diversity of opportunities of use x4
- benches and rest areas x 4 / protected areas to enjoy the view / peaceful areas for contemplation x 2
- open to the public to enjoy x 2
- sporting opportunities: softball, tennis, quality soccer fields x 3 / neighbourhood fields
- range of activities
- lack of commercialism
- connection to nature / wilderness
- quality materials / construction

Walking

- **walkways along Dallas Road x 7**
- a place to walk in peace x 6 / trails / escape the noise pollution
- off leash areas x4, walk the dog
- pleasant walks in natural settings x 3/ natural cycling rails and routes x 3
- contribution to healthy lifestyle x 2
- allows waterfront from Inner Harbour to Ross Bay accessible to public
- Galloping goose alternative transit x 3 / integration with transportation and other services

Appendix II

What people would like to change or improve about Victoria's Parks System.

Children:

- Wide space for kids to create and be adventurous
- Playground parks need some beauty at entrance/exit ways

Crown Land:

- Protect waterfront property – should not be sold
- Protect Victoria's harbour front from development – be more aggressive with acquiring lands
- Secure more land

Entertainment:

- More activities and events x 4 / Develop space for outdoor events x2
- Youth program and activities / Teen 3 Youth events
- Revisit Luminara / Beacon Hill Charter
- Consider a restaurant in Beacon Hill Park
- Remove the public, token art
- Less large commercial events in the parks
- Spread events over the city, not condensed in one area, hard on grass

Greenways:

- Greenways to connect or link between all parks x 17
- More parks and walkways through the city and neighbourhoods x 4
- Continuity and accessibility of Harbour walkway x3
- Cross town trails for biking which connects to Goose x 3
- Dallas Road walkway extended into multi-use pathway / more walkways
- Accelerated greenways plan
- More natural areas with pockets to create a sense of mystery
- CRD plan communities around parks and greenways

Invasive Species:

- Better manage invasive species x 7

Landscapes:

- More natural water features x 3
- More boulevard trees and greening residential streets x 2
- Remove manicured sterile and boring landscaping, more inspirational and beauty
- Take control of the streetscape development
- Keep the parks natural / don't mix the commercial with the natural
- Restore landscape processes
- Ecological landscape design and perm culture design / design for people and wildlife
- Edible landscapes
- Use plants, landscapes that fit the sites conditions (not necessarily native plants) but those adapted to today's and the future environmental conditions

Lighting:

- Replace the existing lighting in parking lots and adjacent streets with full cutoff fixtures to improve lighting efficiency and stop lighting from spilling to where it is not needed ie inside parks
- Embrace sustainability – solar tubing heating on all buildings / water recycling, solar outdoor lighting

Misc:

- More washrooms x 3 / improve facilities
- Covered picnic areas; incorporate small fire pits in designated eating areas
- More park benches
- Remove in memorial plaques from benches
- More presence of artisans
- Commemorative statues not “modern art”
- Outdoor pool in park
- Electric, hydraulic sprinkling control
- Have more green keepers
- Local community based business opportunities
- Increase wheelchair accessibility
- Low biodiversity
- Politicians need the ability to implement plans without fear of political fallout

Natural Environment:

- native species plants x 5 / more attention to native plantings x 2 / restore native plants x2
- water conservation x 3 / conservation areas with limited access for visitors
- more indigenous and onic planting
- More recycling programs / environmental awareness
- Reduce cultivated look at City parks, keep it more natural x 2
- Less focus on ornamentals
- Want more urban wilderness
- Plant more trees / need more Garry Oaks
- Remove the logs off the coastal areas, they cause erosion and destroy native plants
- Better representation of ecosystems / restore ecosystems / intrusion of humans and pets should be minimal
- Increased sustainability, showcase green systems (solar, wind)

Neighbourhood Parks:

- More green spaces in downtown X3
- More neighbourhood ownership of local parks
- Create a network of neighbourhood multi-use parks
- Ensure that each neighbourhood has a park
- More land in Fernwood
- Expand on what is a park – more planting and greening along neighbourhood streets

Parks in General:

- Community gardens in parks x2
- Improve the spaces and uses within existing parks
- Plans for future uses are thought through ie. Water, demographics
- Add to current park system
- More water front park area
- More park space to meet National standards per capita
- More parks both large and small
- Separate different types of parks / proper designation of park space for future
- Dedicate parks by individual by-laws
- Bylaws ensuring developers reserve percentage of land for green space
- More money spent on public spaces
- Broader and longer term vision
- More money to beautify and bring in services ie Fisherman's Wharf
- Clean up public access
- More mixed use eg. Food servicing in Beacon Hill
- Watch out for industrialization of parks
- Urban planning agenda
- Better use of resources between user groups
- Some parks are over-used – we need more parks and more activity, facilities provided outside of “green” parks.
- Integrate storm water management and alternative transportation into parks plans
- Tree succession planting for both urban boulevards and parks a focus
- Infrastructure maintenance and development of Beacon Hill Park
- Need to change/improve the water front
- Downtown gathering areas becoming our new “parks”
- Larger boulevards and trees

Pocket Parks:

- Downtown pocket parks x 5 / downtown rooftops
- More streets like Brighton where you can walk and come upon a closed street with a pocket park

Pets:

- Free play for dogs and people
- Monitor degree to which use is causing degradation – Dallas Road dog park is a spectacular setting but it is a sea of dirt and imparts on pedestrians
- Revise universal off leash areas and dog related bylaws that require on leash dogs and replace with under effective control of the owner”
- More dog friendly, less limits to dog use
- More off leash areas

Public Input:

- Elected Parks Board x 2 with no politicians
- Community involvement x 2 / with neighbourhood parks
- Educational activities – use for schools or educational centres
- Public consultation isn't happening yet
- Web feedback

- Engage the public more – set up an involvement for ongoing basis
- Remove maintenance yard and police horse barn and money making farm to another location
- Community building projects (art, events, gardening)
- Education opportunities / job training
- Public interaction – planned events
- Unity amongst different groups / jurisdictions
- Regular re-evaluation of funding uses (efficiency and priorities)
- More openness to encourage the growth of people's views
- Need more info regarding union issues – ie what are volunteers not allowed to do
- Increase community education
- Neighbourhood planning
- Improved dialogue with school division and shared facilities
- Integration with other municipalities

Recreation:

- More bike paths x 3 / connecting the parks x2
- More all weather fields x 3 / softball fields
- Priority for parks as green space not sports fields x2
- Review allocation of fields, too many in James Bay
- More cycling and walking paths, more connectivity
- Lack of bike lanes / traffic lights for bike crossings
- Ban cyclists and skate boarders
- No kites in parks
- More focus on 'adventure style playgrounds'

Roads:

- Less through traffic / less roads in parks; walking only
- No parking on grass

Signage:

- More interpretive signage x2 / consistent signage
- Include identifying plants and areas of historical interest
- Better signs to some lesser known parks

Social:

- Better security and protection x 2 / sense of safety
- Reduce homelessness in parks / stop the camping in parks x 2
- More security and policing / enforce by-laws for safer parks
- Set aside parts of strategically located parks especially for homeless with adequate Supervision and guidelines / portable structures such as in Paris
- Anti- camping bylaw
- Better litter control (signs as seen in Australia "do the right thing")

Appendix III

List up to five activities you like to do when you visit Parks.

Entertainment:

- Participate in festivals x 8, concerts in Bandshell
- Art and culture – ie beauty x 6
- Draw and paint x3
- Entertainment, markets, gathering spaces

Exercise:

- Walk x 56 / along beaches, follow trails x 3
- Cycle x 14
- Sports x 11 / recreation / watch cricket
- Run x 5
- Hike x 4
- Fly kite x 3
- Tennis x 3
- Frisbee x 2
- Outdoor swimming x 2
- Climb trees
- Basketball courts
- boating

Interacting with Pets:

- Dog walking x14, off leash x 3, playing with my dog x 3
- Interact with leashed dogs not our own

Natural Environment:

- Enjoy, observe natural environment x 34
- Bird watching x15
- Enjoy the ornamental plantings x 17, plant gazing, azaleas in spring
- Vistas x 10
- Wildflowers x 9
- Gardens x 6, trees x 6,
- Native plants x 4
- Green space x 3
- Enjoy changing of seasons x 3
- Water features x3
- Feed ducks, grow food, fishing, view stars at night, beachcombing

Solitude:

- Relax, enjoy peace and quiet x 27
- Sit x 22 / at water feature, at vista point
- Contemplate x 11/ dream, escape urban pressures x4
- Beside the ocean x 5 / enjoy fresh air x 5
- Sunbathe

Socializing:

- Play in a safe environment with kids x 22 / visit the children's farm x 3, take grandkids exploring x 4
- Interact with people x 15 / meet friends x 3 / family times x 2
- Picnic x 12
- Read a book x 7
- People watch x 5
- Stop for coffee x 4, tea, have lunch x 3
- Listen to good music x 2
- Play tourist with out of town friends x 2
- Take photographs x 2
- Like minded people enjoying the same things, shopping, homework / studying, building