



Vale Restoration

Community Outreach Report

Spring 2022



Prospect
Park
Alliance

Message from Prospect Park Alliance

For the past 35 years, the non-profit Prospect Park Alliance has partnered with the City to sustain Brooklyn's treasured green space, Prospect Park. Core to the Alliance's mission is preserving and sustaining the park for the community today and for generations to come. This work encompasses restoring its historic landscapes, buildings and vital natural areas, which include Brooklyn's last remaining forest and only lake. Central to this work is the ongoing care of the park's 250 acres of woodlands. Each year we plant thousands of trees, plants and shrubs that provide important habitat for park wildlife, but also contribute to the health and well-being of our community.

The restoration of the Vale in Prospect Park advances this mission. Untouched by restoration for more than 50 years, the Vale is located in the northeast corner of the park, a gateway to the park for east side communities, where the Alliance has undertaken a recent and extensive woodland restoration as well as other improvements, such as the restoration of the Flatbush Avenue perimeter and the creation of two new park entrances. This project will strengthen and enhance the woodland nature of this landscape, while making it more welcoming and accessible for all. The vision for the Vale resulted from two years of community outreach, and we felt it was important to go back to the community for your feedback before we embarked on design. This report shares this feedback and how it is shaping our plans.

James Snow
Interim President

About The Project

Prospect Park Alliance is restoring and enhancing an 8-acre section of the Vale in the heart of the park's 27-acre northeast corner, an important natural area that has been untouched by restoration for more than 50 years. In 2017-18, the Alliance undertook an extensive community outreach effort to create a vision for the Vale, and in 2021, the City of New York allocated \$40 million in capital funding to make this vision a reality.

The Vale restoration transforms two key landscapes: the historic Children's Pool (a decorative water feature) and a former Rose Garden, and also

encompasses an additional 3 acres of woodland restoration that will continue an important pollinator corridor across the park. The restoration of the Children's Pool will bring back historic details while improving the environment through new plantings, bird-friendly features and a stormwater capture system. The former Rose Garden, which features three disused concrete basins, will be transformed into three distinct landscapes that respect the park's historic design while adding greenery and new amenities, including: a pollinator garden and rustic arbor; a children's nature play area; and a lawn with natural seating elements and small building with composting restrooms and a sheltered area for community use.



2022 Community Engagement Process

In Spring 2022, the Alliance embarked on a second community outreach effort to share this vision for the Vale and gather feedback prior to embarking on design. Through a series of engagements, the Alliance collected feedback from thousands of park users that is informing the project as the Alliance now begins on the design.

The goals of the process were to:

- Share back with the community the vision for the Vale, and how it was shaped by the 2017-18 community engagement process; and to
- Gather community feedback on the design concepts.

Engagement Activities

The following are the various engagement activities led by the Alliance during this period, which encompassed more than 2,100 interactions:

Virtual Community Workshop: March 15, 2022: 150 attendees

Traveling Road Show: Brooklyn Public Library Central Library, Major Owens Community Health Center + LeFrak Center at Lakeside: March 28-April 11, 2022

Prospect Park Community Committee: April 5, 2022 - 35 attendees

Ebbets Field Houses Tenant Organization: April 6, 2022 - 30 attendees

Community Board 8 General Meeting: April 14, 2022 - 35 attendees

Friends of Wingate Park: April 20, 2022 - 10 attendees

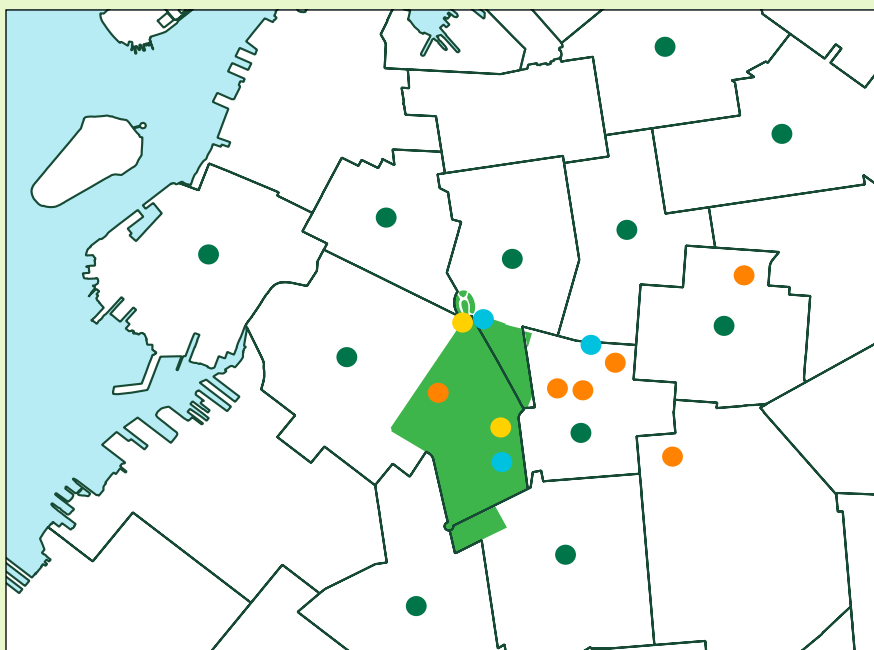
Tabling in the Park (Grand Army Plaza Farmers Market + Audubon Center): April 23, 2022: 30 survey responses

Community Board 9 General Meeting: April 26, 2022 - 52 attendees

Sullivan-Ludlum-Stoddard Neighborhood Association/FLACC: May 25, 2022 - 10 attendees

Online Survey: 365 survey responses

Web Hub: 1,376 website visits



Location of Interactions/Participants by Zip Code

- Workshop + Online Survey
- Traveling Road Show
- Community Meetings
- Tabling

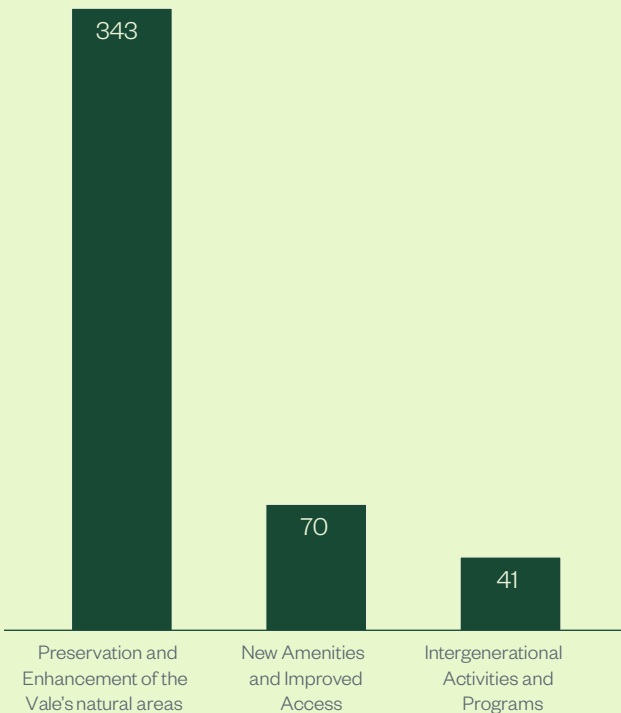
Key Takeaways

The following are the key takeaways from the Spring 2022 Community Outreach:

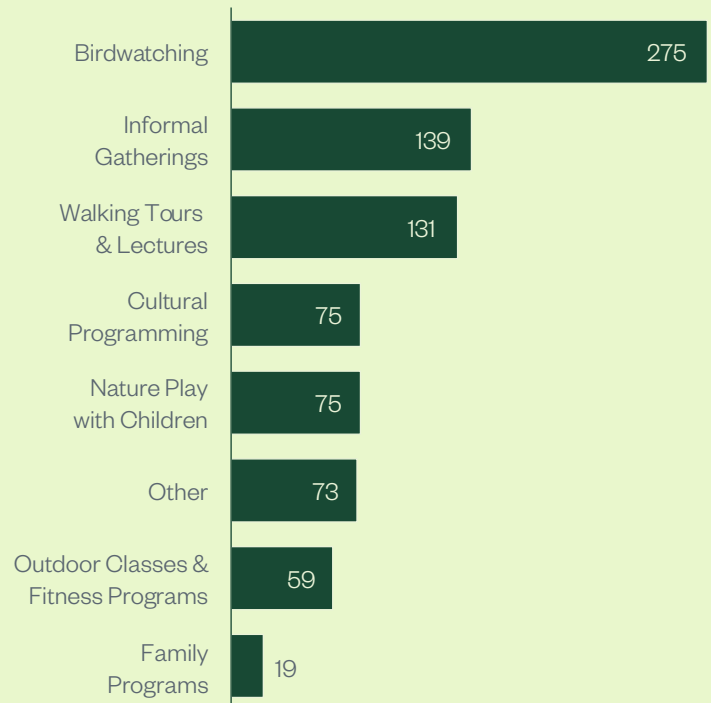
- **Preservation and enhancement of the Vale's natural features** were a high priority for many participants, as well as sustaining the area as a space for quiet reflection and passive recreation.
- **Participants were supportive of adding new amenities** in the area, including restrooms and drinking fountains, and stressed the importance of making the area safer and more accessible, i.e., increased lighting, police call boxes, signage and ADA-accessible pathways.
- **Participants were supportive of enhancing the area with additional trees and plantings**, including a pollinator garden and bird-friendly features, but requested fencing and other design interventions to protect these areas, particularly in terms of the siting and potential spillover of the nature play area.
- **Participants had concerns about the impact of a new building** in this natural area, which is an important bird habitat, including the relative size of the building and the need for interior space for meetings and classes.
- **Participants appreciated a natural seating area** (lawn with stone seating) to replace one of the existing concrete basins, but not as a place for large gatherings or events with amplified sound.

Survey Results

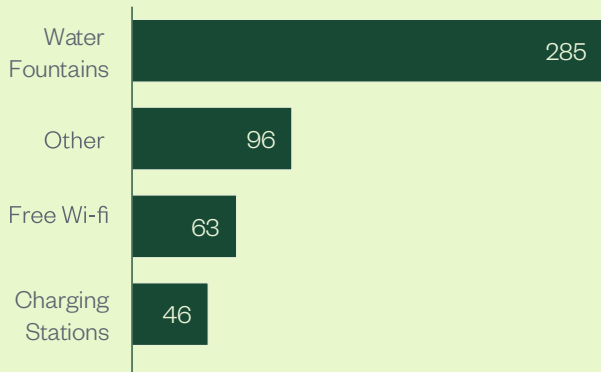
What are you interested in seeing in the restored Vale? (Select all that apply.)



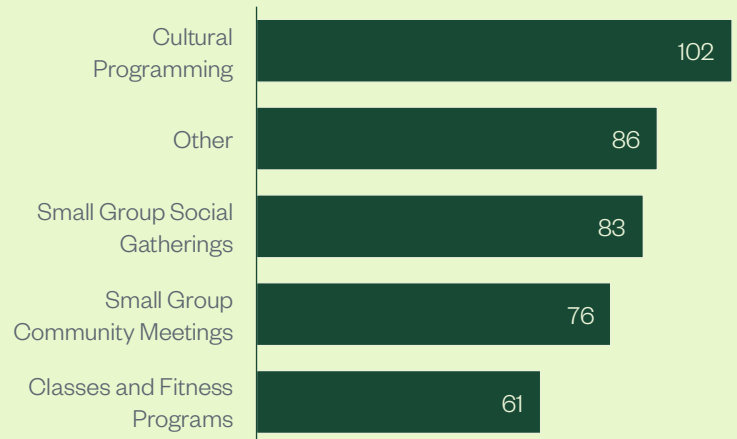
What activities do you imagine enjoying in the Vale? (Select all that apply.)



**What are some amenities you would like to see incorporated within the Vale?
(Select all that apply.)**



What are some of the activities or programs you imagine enjoying at the natural seating area and sheltered space? (Select all that apply.)



How Feedback Is Informing The Plan

PPA deeply values the feedback we have received from the community during this process. In response to community feedback, we have evolved the design concept to incorporate the following:

- **We are keeping the building footprint as small as possible, with an environmentally and bird-friendly design** to provide composting restrooms and a sheltered area for small gatherings, but no longer an interior meeting room. This is in response to concerns about the building size, but also to feedback about the need to maximize the use of the park's existing facilities, and the fact that the nearby Central Library now offers a Civic Commons with meeting space.
- **We will incorporate fencing and strategic design elements** to ensure that the children's nature play area does not spill over onto adjacent landscapes and woodland areas.
- **We are adding an additional 3 acres of woodland restoration** just south of the project site to further strengthen our woodland habitat and connect to the pollinator corridor that extends throughout the park.

Next Steps

Prospect Park Alliance is now embarking on the design of this project, which will follow the NYC Parks design and construction guidelines. Each phase takes approximately one year, although the construction timeline is based on the scope of the project:

- **Design Phase (2022-2023):** Prospect Park Alliance architects and landscape architects draw up the plans for the project, working closely with NYC Parks.
- **Public Design Review (Winter 2023):** the project goes through the public review process, which includes the Public Design and Landmarks Commission.
- **Procurement Phase (2023-2024):** the project goes through a public process to assemble the construction team.
- **Construction Phase (2024-2026):** the project is constructed and opens to the public.

For more information visit prospectpark.org/vale, and sign up for our email list to learn about future updates. Questions? Community@prospectpark.org