



# WASATCH HOLLOW PARK

## Engagement Report 2022



## Background

In 2016, Salt Lake City conducted a one-year pilot for off-leash hours in Wasatch Hollow Park. Following a positive pilot, City Council formally adopted the Park as a location for an area of time-designated off-leash hours. Over the past several months, Salt Lake City Public Lands received feedback on current park conditions and off-leash hours. As a result, Public Lands launched a survey designed to understand the general sentiment regarding the current off-leash hours and to help inform future decisions about park usage and activities. Public Lands worked close with Wasatch Hollow Community Council to develop the survey.

## Engagement Approach

### Engagement Goals:

- Understand the community's sentiment about the park and off-leash hours
- Identify how to improve the park and activities that residents would like to see
- Use feedback to inform future decisions about park use

### Engagement Methods:

- Salt Lake City Public Lands provided the survey to Wasatch Hollow Community Council for distribution on August 12, 2022.
- The survey was shared through SLC Public Lands' social media accounts on August 18, 2022. The Twitter post was reshared by Salt Lake City Government. A Facebook reminder of the survey was reposted on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.
- SLC Public Lands staff also placed yard signs with the QR code of the survey around Wasatch Hollow Park.
- The survey was announced at the Salt Lake City Council meeting on August 16<sup>th</sup> and made available on the Salt Lake City feedback page. The last day to submit responses to the survey was September 2, 2022.

**SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS**

TAKE THE SURVEY

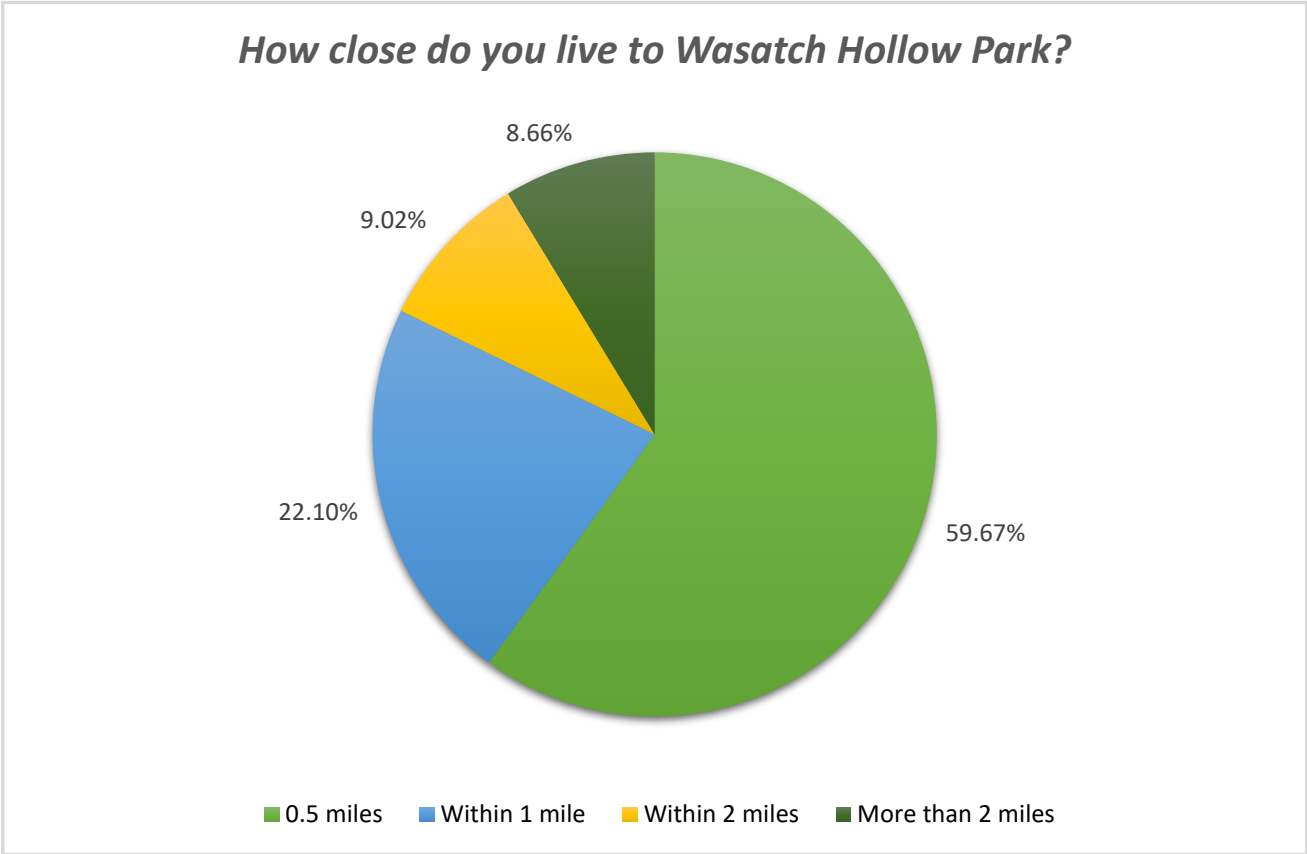
OR VISIT  
[SLCPARKS.COM](https://www.slcparks.com)

Salt Lake City Public Lands is looking to learn more about current and desired activities at Wasatch Hollow Park, particularly around off-leash dogs. Take the survey to weigh in!

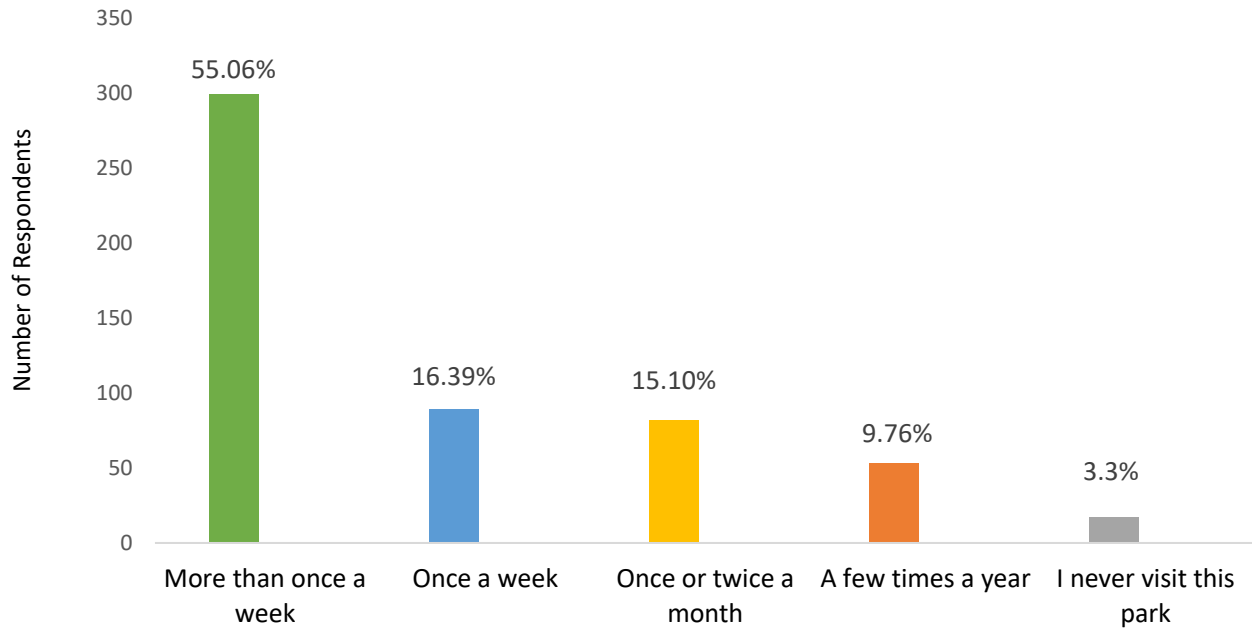
 **Public Lands**  
Parks | Trails & Natural Lands | Urban Forestry | Golf

# Overview of Survey Respondents

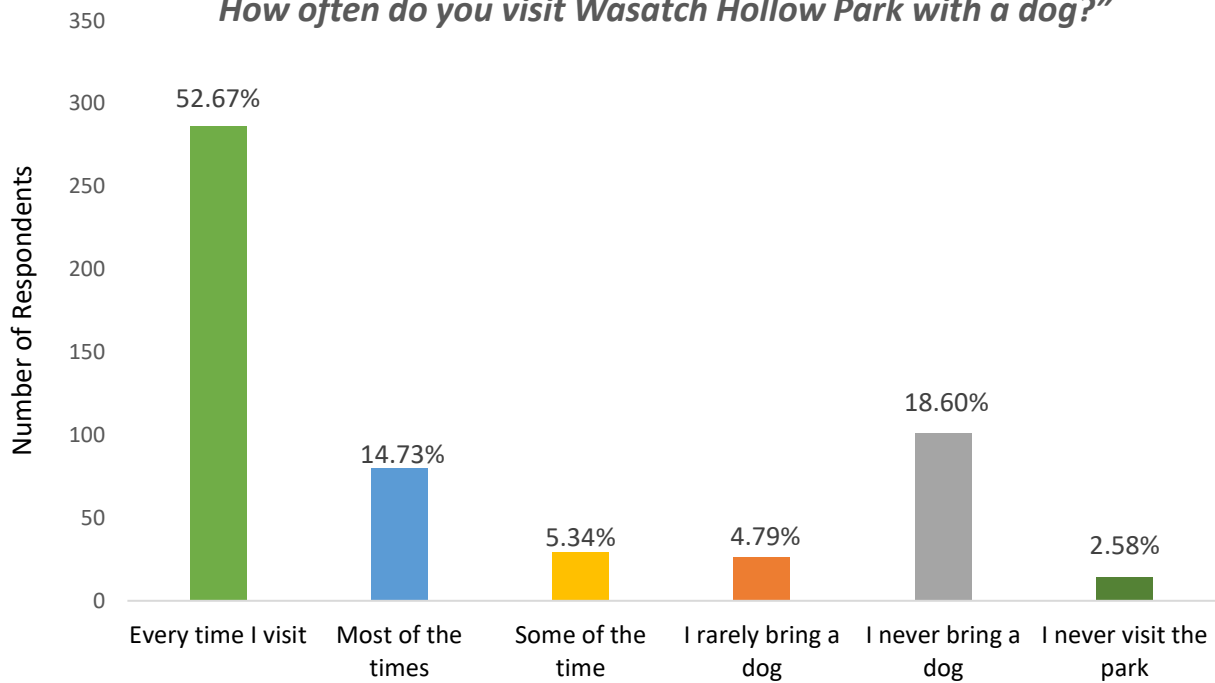
A total of 543 surveys were submitted from August 18, 2022, to September 2, 2022. **Over half of survey respondents live within 0.5 miles of Wasatch Hollow Park** and the second largest group of respondents live within one mile. Over half of survey participants visit the park more than once a week, and **most participants bring a dog every time they visit the park**. Participants that do not visit the park stated that they either do not visit because the park has become **unkept and crowded**, or they were unaware that the park existed.



### How often do you visit Wasatch Hollow Park?

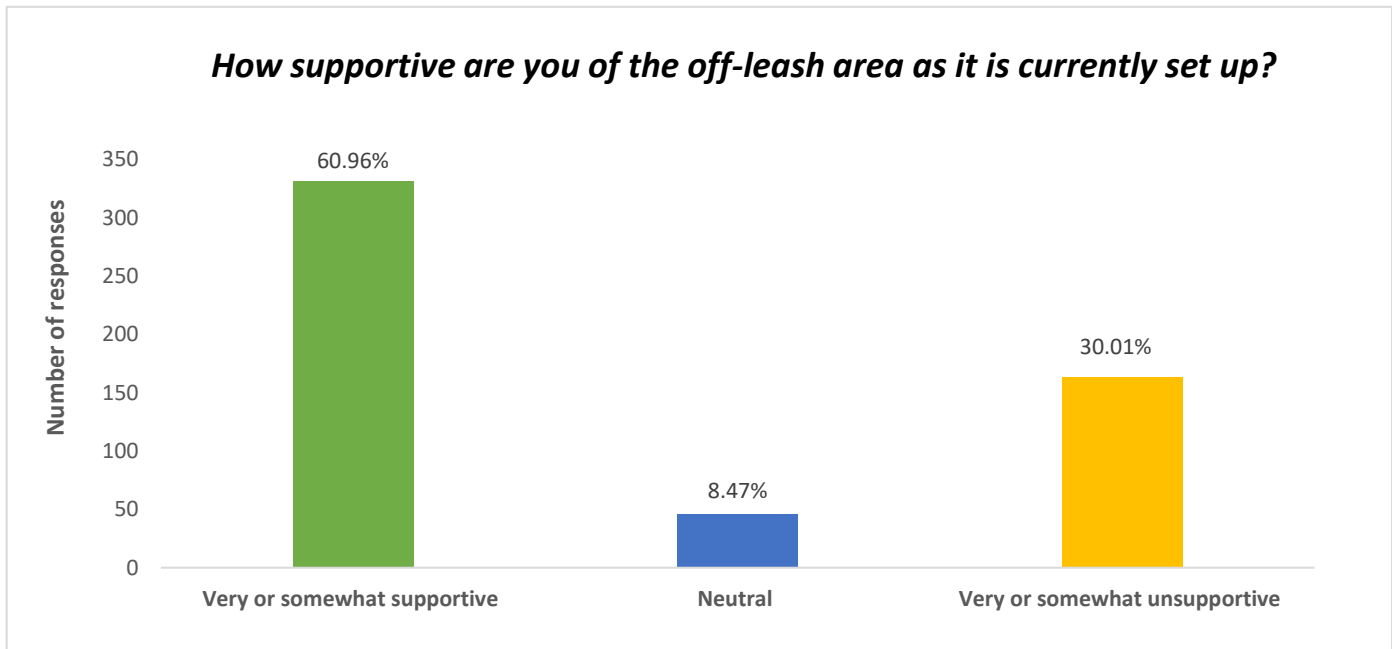


### How often do you visit Wasatch Hollow Park with a dog?"



## Survey Response Summary

Survey results revealed that a majority of respondents were aware of the posted hours and the designated off-leash area for dogs, while 10% reported they were unaware or had been misinformed about the restrictions on the park. **In total, 60.96% of individuals indicated they were either very supportive or somewhat supportive of the current conditions of the off-leash area, whereas 30.01% of individuals are very unsupportive or somewhat unsupportive of the conditions of the off-leash area.** This indicates there is very strong support for the time limited off-leash dog space in Wasatch Hollow Park.



Many individuals supporting the off-leash mentioned that the park was one of the few local parks where their dogs could be off-leash. The off-leash area has helped individuals create a sense of community and has been essential in socializing their dogs. People in support of off-leash hours also expressed they would like to see the hours extended, especially since there is such high use of the off-leash area. Users in support of the off-leash dog area believe the park would be better maintained if the off-leash area was fenced but worry the space will be reduced when it already feels crowded at times.

One respondent in support of the off-leash area stated:

*There are so few places in Salt Lake that offer shaded, green spaces for dogs and their families. This park is an example of an area that makes Salt Lake a desirable place to live. This park has created community.*

Individuals unsupportive of the off-leash area acknowledge how dogs need a space to run free but do not feel that dog owners respect the areas that prohibit off-leash dogs. Respondents against the off-leash hours express that dogs will run into the playground, sidewalks, and trails making it difficult to engage in other activities. Additionally, unsupportive users believe that the quality of the park has decreased from dog owners failing to clean up after dogs and the grass being unkept due to overuse of dog activity. Unsupportive users also provided stories of witnessing or being personally involved in an attack by an off-leash dog. Many of these respondents indicated a desire to remove off-leash hours entirely.

An unsupportive respondent stated:

*While I don't have a dog, I think it is nice for them to have an off-leash opportunity. However, the hours are not often observed, in my observations, as I typically always see off-leash dogs during on-leash hours. And, when I pass through the off-leash hours, I try to be respectful and give dogs the right of way, but it can be a challenge to walk on the sidewalk.*

### **Actions Respondents Support**

**The most supported strategy for improving the current conditions of the off-leash hours was improved signage.** Participants expressed that the existing signage is not very visible, and the text is too small to read the rules. Individuals also believe there should be more placement of signs with the rules around the park. Since the launch of the survey, new and more user-friendly signage has been installed on site.

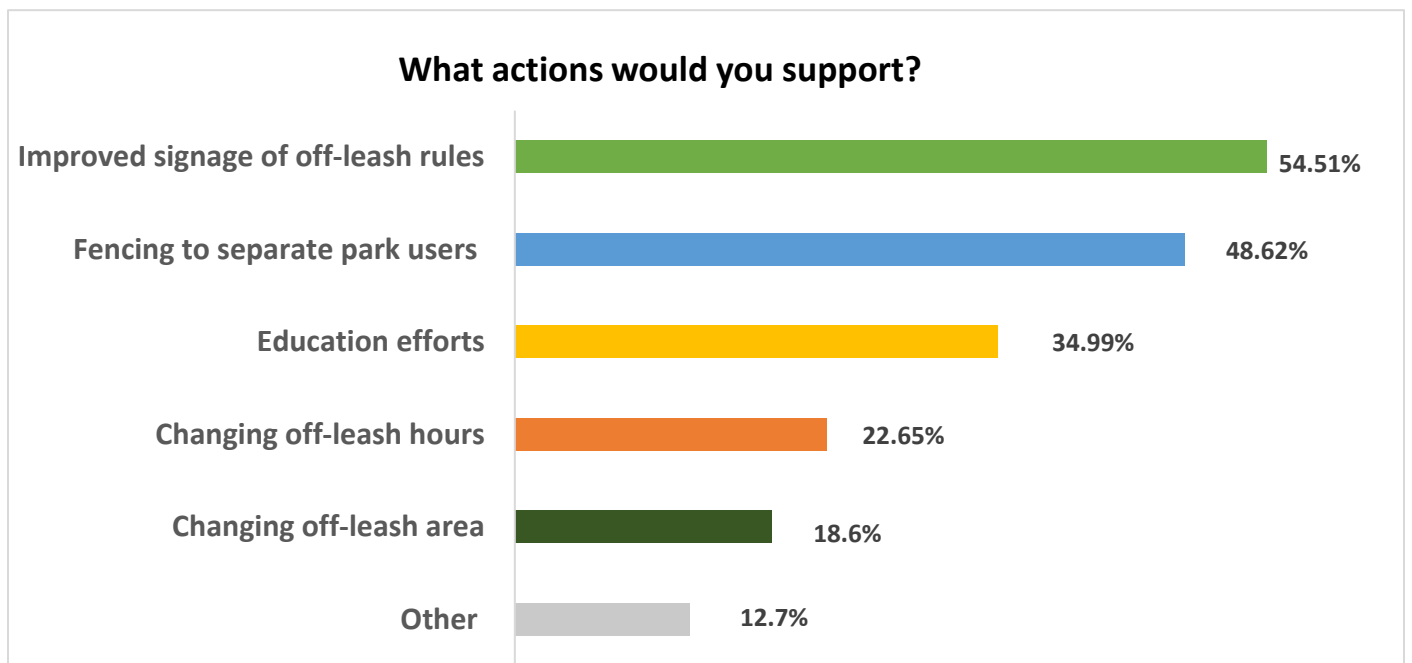
The second most supported strategy was some type of fencing to separate park users. **Respondents believe that having a clear distinction of the boundary lines could help enforce rules and minimize off-leash dogs going to restricted areas.** However, fencing should not minimize the current space for dogs. Additionally, there is some concern about how fencing would impact the natural feel of the space.

Around one third of survey respondents were supportive of educational efforts. Participants stated that having a park ranger to teach individuals about park rules and best practices could help enforce the rules. **Respondents believe that park users need to be educated about off-leash hours, existing boundaries, and how to maintain the dog park**

Another effort that was largely supported by the community is to increase off-leash hours. Participants expressed that the main reason people visit the park is to take their dogs to the

park. **Users believe that the park would be less crowded and better maintained if off-leash hours were extended or available all the time.** Survey respondents also reported that making dog poop bags available would encourage dog owners to clean up after their pets and keep the park cleaner.

In the “Other” option, many respondents indicated enforcement would be a valuable action to ensure better. Moreover, general comments revealed that park users would like to see more benches, picnic tables, and drinking fountains for both dogs and people. Participants stated that these features would improve the quality of the park and accommodate various groups that visit.



## Next Steps

Public Lands closed the survey on September 2<sup>nd</sup> and is continuing to digest the responses we received. The planning team will be exploring opportunities to get feedback on the new off-leash signage which was installed the week of August 29<sup>th</sup>. Further, we are considering additional signage on the south side of the park. Fencing was indicated to have high support among all survey respondents, so Public Lands will be evaluating fencing options to better mitigate existing conflict. Overall, the survey has provided valuable insight into the sentiment towards the space, and we will be working with our parks team and community members to determine positive steps forward for Wasatch Hollow Park.