

Avon Park Community Survey

Top Line Report

August 9, 2006

N=203
 Response: Email 24% (n=49); Mail 76% (n=154)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To better understand community residents' opinions about Avon Park (located in Ben Avon, Pennsylvania) and ways to best improve the facilities, a survey was distributed to approximately 800 homes by community volunteers and to 65 email addresses.

The overall finding from this study is that most respondents do not use the park on a frequent basis, primarily because of its current condition and limited accessibility. When asked about potential improvement opportunities, walking/biking loop, restrooms and new playground equipment received the highest marks. Three-fourths (75%) said they were willing to make a financial contribution to help improve the park.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Enter the number of persons in your household in each of the following age groups:

	0 people	1 person	2 persons	3 person	Total # of People
0 – 5 years	74%	16%	9%	1%	76
6 – 10 years	73%	21%	5%	0%	65
11 – 17 years	78%	10%	12%	0%	70
18 – 30 years	77%	13%	9%	1%	66
31 – 64 years	22%	16%	62%	1%	286
65+ years	84%	8%	8%	0%	48
					611

CURRENT USE OF THE PARK

In the past 12 months, members of my household have visited AVON PARK:

- 8% More than once a week
- 8% Once a week or so
- 11% Once a month or so
- 26% A few times
- 43% Very seldom or never
- 3% DK/NR

If you do not use AVON PARK, why not? (use the comment lines on the back if you need more space):

21%	Access is difficult
8%	Facilities in bad shape
6%	No kids
5%	Kids older/gone
3%	Not enough time
3%	Nice parks elsewhere
2%	Limited facilities
9%	Other (e.g., dogs not allowed in park; dogs leave mess in the park; etc.)
43%	DK/NR

Selected Comments:

- Access is difficult.
- Access to the park is difficult unless in a car. -No restrooms -Tennis courts not in great shape. -Existing playground equipment is nice but would be great if expanded for a little older child. -A mister or water source would be nice.
- Because I'm a daily visitor of Accord Park since I love to swim and therefore I'm not good at tennis and I wonder if it would be worth putting much money and improvements in Avon Park. I very seldom see anyone down there and there are never any cars in the parking lot. Maybe they could repair a few holes in the parking lot at Accord. There are many people there everyday and many people swim there on a hot and sunny day.
- Facilities not in very good shape...especially Tennis Courts. Not in an inviting area being that it is located on a busy road.
- I have used it in the past. Around 40 years ago, when the tennis courts were installed.
- I would like to walk to the park, but it's not safe with no sidewalk on Perrysville Ave. Also, I feel somewhat isolated when at the park because no one from the street can see the park. If there were to be someone at the park who was threatening, no one would be able to see or come to my aid. Also, I would prefer a soft rubber surface on the playground as opposed to mulch.
- It is too dangerous to enter the park via vehicle.
- Kids are getting older; used it much more in the past.
- Limited play equipment and the metal slide gets very hot in the sun. It is hard to walk to with 2 young kids. It's not frequented by many other kids and we're usually more likely to find other kids we know at the other local parks.
- Live in Bellevue and also not enough time in the day for me.
- Location, lack of facilities, (tennis court in bad shape) If I must drive I would drive to Emsworth Park do to better playground equipment.
- My teenage son goes to Emsworth Park to play basketball with friends. Avon Park is in poor condition, and I strongly discourage him from walking there—the lack of sidewalk from the top of Perrysville to the park is an ENORMOUS impediment.
- New to the neighborhood.
- No kids; not home much; Tennis courts not in good shape.
- No time. Nothing there for me to do.
- No useful facilities.
- Not a destination.
- Not a safe and easy way for the children to walk to the park.
- Not easily accessible. Not much to do there. No restroom facilities.
- Not practical are safe to get to.

- The deteriorating condition (primarily of the asphalt cracking and splitting) of the tennis courts make it difficult to roller blade and/or partake in any activity as far as it's concerned. The fence surrounding the court is also dangerous as it is lifting up at the bottom. The basketball hoops and asphalt are in poor condition as well.
- The location is too remote. It does not feel safe at all. If we have to drive it makes sense to drive to Emsworth which is nicer and not so secluded.
- The tennis court and basketball courts need updated.
- There are nicer parks such as Emsworth and Ben Avon Heights.
- This area is too isolated and very dangerous to get to.....
- Too far.
- Too far from the house to walk. Not good access from Perrysville Ave.
- Too run down. Too hot. Difficult to access by car.
- Unsafe to walk to along Perrysville.
- We can't take our dog there.
- We can't walk to it even though it's very close to our house.
- We used to use the playground and tennis when both kids were growing up. One is now married and the other is a junior at Avonworth.

I have gone to AVON PARK by (check all that apply):

- 57% Perrysville Avenue driving
- 36% Walnut Road walking/riding a bike/other
- 29% Perrysville Avenue walking/riding a bike/other
- 17% Hiking up the Ben Avon Trail (starts behind the Building Mill)
- 12% Walnut Road driving

My preferred way to get to AVON PARK would be:

- 16% Perrysville walk
- 15% Walk
- 10% Walnut walk
- 6% Perrysville drive
- 6% Access trail (multiple locations)
- 4% Walnut drive
- 3% Drive
- 3% Other
- 37% DK/NR

At AVON PARK, members of my household (check all that apply):

- 50% Use the playground equipment
- 24% Play tennis
- 21% Have a picnic lunch or dinner
- 21% Play basketball
- 29% Other (e.g., place to ride bikes, walk trails, restrooms, etc.)

FUTURE REPAIR/REHABILITATION/CONSTRUCTION

For each of the following amenities, tell us how frequently, over the course of a year, members of your household would likely use the following. Place a check mark in the boxes to the right using the scale of 1 to 4, where 1 is "we would seldom or never use this," 2 is "we would use this a few times a year", 3 is "we might use this once a month or so," and 4 is "we would use this more than once a month."

	All Mean	Families w/Kids 10 & Under (81)	Families w/Teens (43)	Seldom or Never "1"	A few times "2"	Once a month or so "3"	More than once a month "4"	DK/NR
Walking/biking loop	3.1	3.3	3.2	13%	12%	22%	44%	10%
Restrooms	2.7	3.1	3.0	24%	15%	18%	33%	11%
Playground equipment	2.4	3.5	2.3	34%	13%	12%	30%	12%
Picnic facilities	2.2	2.6	2.5	30%	25%	18%	15%	13%
Tennis court	2.1	2.1	2.3	37%	20%	15%	15%	13%
Basketball court	1.9	2.0	2.3	38%	28%	11%	10%	13%
Covered/sheltered sandbox	1.9	2.7	1.3	50%	10%	8%	15%	16%
Volleyball court	1.6	1.7	1.8	47%	23%	7%	5%	17%
Uncovered/open sandbox	1.5	1.9	1.2	62%	10%	5%	5%	17%
Street hockey area	1.3	1.5	1.4	69%	9%	4%	3%	15%

Selected Comments:

- Street hockey seems to be popular 2) Crazy idea, but why not: Wi-Fi. I'll bet that would add to the popularity of the park.
- A better way to walk to the park. A nicer pavilion.
- A bike trail or loop - monthly Community garden - monthly Equipment that could be used for exercise (stations)—monthly Dog park Bocce courts.
- A local public tennis court in good condition would be awesome. I know of several tennis players in area who don't live in BA Hts that would like to have court nearby. Also, walking trails in woods behind pavilion (near creek) might be nice. Many (4-6) trash receptacles would help current trash problem.
- A mist sprayer like the one at Emsworth is nice for kids when it is hot.
- A new water fountain would be a nice addition and would be used as needed.
- Benches to watch birds—once a week.
- Containers for dog poop to be deposited. People bring their dogs there -- why not provide containers for poop?
- Exercise items.
- Green space/open—we would use them often to relax/have picnics/workout.
- I never knew about the walking trail that starts at Building Mill and where it ends. If there was a fund raising to benefit the park, I would donate to Accord, not Avon park.
- Is the area lit? I would use facilities in the evening, if possible. I would also love to have a local picnic pavilion/shelter for rentals.

- Just the playground, for now, as my kids are very little.
- LOVE to see a fenced in dog run - would use it definitely more than once a month. Picnic area w/possibly even a pavilion. Could this area be reserved for parties? Some kind of mini-amphitheater. Grand scheming here - but thinking of possibility of events like storytelling, mini concerts, talent show, zoo visits, etc... Not sure how often or practical this would be? Drinking fountain... Shade!
- More hiking trails would be great - use about once a month. More playground equipment with a nice picnic shelter similar to the park in Emsworth would be very nice. We would use that at least twice a month.
- Occasional picnic when family/friends visit.
- Off leash dog park.
- Picnic area near playground equip-more than once a month more green space-more than once a month water mister-more than once a month more playground equip-more than once a month.
- Picnic Facilities - more than once a month.
- Picnic facilities with restrooms would be great! Perhaps a fountain or water spritzer to cool off in the summer. Would use a biking loop often.
- Picnic lunch or dinner - Once a month.
- Pull-up bars and other exercise-related equipment would be very appreciated.
- Restrooms are essential and updated tennis courts would be great!
- Self-guided nature trail.
- Vending machines.
- You have put a lot of detailed effort into this project and I am most appreciative.

If a fund-raising activity were to be held to benefit AVON PARK, would you consider a donation? This is not a solicitation, we are only gauging the level of community interest.

75% Yes
 15% No
 10% DK/NR

For those specifying an amount, potential investments ranged from \$10-\$250, with the majority being \$25 or \$50.

Please give us any comments you have about AVON PARK that might help to make it a better place for our community.

Selected Comments:

- Think the biggest draw back is the walking accessibility via Perrysville Avenue. Would also like to see some 'organized activities' during the summer months such as a game day, bonfire night, movie night, etc.
- A safe way to access the park from Perrysville Avenue.
- Beautiful, under utilized Park. Consider asking the Police force to advise on safety aspects for vehicular and pedestrian access to the Park.
- Current layout allowing people to park toward back of park near pavilion does not feel safe. Seems like people hide back there - as mother of 3 young children, I have sometimes felt vulnerable or been surprised by people who suddenly appear. Open up top of walking trail to make more visible. Post leash requirements. Request increased police drive-throughs.
- Generally cleaned up, better basketball hoops and court area
- Get rid of it and stop paying Kilbuck or who ever owns the property.....
- I appreciate all the work Mr. Corder and the rest of the Ben Avon Council are doing for the park.

- If possible I would move the park to a more central location within the Boro THAT IS NOT SO SECLUDED!
- It is a nice little park but it just needs some more updates and better signage.
- It seems so isolated, but I suppose not much can be done about that. Better access coupled with better playground equipment would be great. It's a shame that there is no central meeting area for kids and families. Everyone has their own play set in the backyard which is great, but does nothing to promote a sense of community.
- It would be nice to have some community activities there to get people more interested in the park.
- It's a wonderful little park. We very much enjoy the trail.
- I've noticed above that a sandbox is being considered. I believe this may be a waste. The park is not maintained at all now and I find it hard to believe that in the future it will be better kept. A sandbox would be nothing more than a garbage collector and litter box for the local cats. Children can get sick from playing in such dirt. The shelter is also in need of repair. As for a safety concern, there have been many nights I've walked up to the park and have witnessed underage partying due to the lack of police presence and lighting. This is truly an issue that needs addressed.
- One of my big worries has been that the park abruptly runs into the hillside. I'm always afraid one of the kids is going to fall down there or loose their play toys. I also don't like the old metal jungle gym (? - the semi-circular climbing ladder). It makes me nervous when my kids want to go on it.
- Please help make access to the park safer by opening the entrance to Walnut Road to cars. It is very dangerous for small, low-to-the-ground cars to exit from the park onto Perrysville.
- Relocate the park to a more convenient place.
- Summer movies Picnics.
- Tennis and basketball courts are in bad shape and take up too much space. Condense and repair or get rid of them. Access to the park is difficult. Benches under shade trees. Make the trail educational by signs identifying native plants, birds, animals.
- The equipment for children to play and ride is very nice. There is plenty of room to park and also to enjoy the shade and a place to keep cool in the summertime. I don't think that many improvements are really needed.
- The park could serve as a community center and a way to connect the lower and upper portions. The construction and activities should have this in mind.
- Update the facilities as you are trying too.
- We definitely would use the park if pets were permitted to be in the park.
- We live next door to Avon Park, and probably use it the most and see how it is used. The tennis courts get a lot of use, but usually for activities other than tennis. It is popular for bike riding, base ball, kick ball, running etc. It is all nice, because it keeps small children in. If I could ask 2 things, one would be to have an area where kids could ride bikes (bike loop-great idea!) and also only one entrance into the park. If you open Perrysville and walnut rd. there will be too much traffic using it as a cut through.
- You should put another line in about getting involved - I think a lot of people would be interested - also, probably should include a map - it is possible that people don't know where the place is!