

# Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage one

- Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report



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## 1. Introduction

This report provides an overview of community and stakeholder activities, consultation and feedback that occurred in relation to the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One report, undertaken from 10 November 2019 to 26 January 2020.

## 2. Background

Council owns and operates two 18-hole golf courses in Maroondah, being Dorset and Ringwood Golf, collectively known as Maroondah Golf. Both facilities cover approximately 80 hectares (approximately 198 acres) of Maroondah's open space.

With new trends emerging for social golf participation in Maroondah, and with competition golf remaining steady, Council engaged WellPlayed Golf Business Consultancy to undertake Stage One of the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review. The aim of the Review was to further understand the changing landscape and opportunities, to ensure that golf within Maroondah remains sustainable into the future.

Stage One of the Review included detailed site assessments of both Ringwood and Dorset Golf, an in-depth analysis of current performance and an analysis of golf market insights and industry trends more broadly. Consultation with key user groups, Council Officers and the community was also undertaken during this stage.

WellPlayed Consultancy prepared a detailed report (Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage one report) for Council which identified both challenges and opportunities for the future of golf in Maroondah. The report highlighted two strategic directions for Council to consider:

### 1) Improving Sustainable Performance:

- Marketing and Promotion
- Green fees and pricing
- Maroondah Leisure membership
- Golf course drainage improvements
- Golf retail
- Finance

### 2) Building Contemporary Experiences:

- New short-format golf course
- New driving range
- New premium mini-golf
- New golf pavilion and precinct
- New virtual golf lounge

Dorset and Ringwood Golf courses are highly regarded, not only for their contribution to our open space, but also for the positive health and wellbeing benefits they provide to our community. To further understand the views of our community in relation to the WellPlayed Stage One Report, Council undertook an extensive period of consultation with key stakeholders and the community from 10 November 2019 to the 26 January 2020.

### 3. Consultation objectives:

Overarching objectives were designed to ensure that the engagement would:

- Provide opportunity for key user groups and the broader community to share their views on the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One Report
- Determine the level of support from key users and the community in relation to a range of contemporary golf elements and sport and recreation opportunities.
- Provide opportunities for participation in Council decision making processes
- Ensure that Council facilities continue to meet the needs of the community

### 4. Engagement approach:

To ensure Council, stakeholders and the local community were informed of consultation on the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One Report, a range of communications tools and techniques were used to promote the consultation and to seek feedback.

A mix of qualitative and quantitative processes were used to gauge the level of support on proposed key elements identified in the stage one report. Surveys, community drop-in sessions and meetings with key users and residents, were provided to ensure the views of our community were captured.

The consultation was promoted via:

- Letter box drop to residents in the immediate vicinity of Ringwood and Dorset Golf Courses
- Distribution of Your Say Maroondah postcards at Ringwood and Dorset Golf, and Civic Offices at Croydon, Braeside Avenue and Realm
- Posters and A-frame signage at both facilities
- Your Say Maroondah Consultation portal
- Maroondah Festival - Café Consult precinct
- Emails to existing user groups, and Council data bases
- Corporate TV Screens at Civic Office Braeside Avenue, Croydon Library and Realm
- Maroondah City Council Social Media platforms - Facebook and Twitter
- Eastern FM radio
- Maroondah in focus Newsletter
- Media articles

### 5. Methodology

#### Café Consult

As part of the 2019 Maroondah Festival, Council's Café Consult Precinct provided the community with an opportunity to provide feedback on the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One report.

Maroondah Festival is Councils premier annual community event attracting 30,000 people.

Café Consult located centrally at the Festival, enabled members of the public to view information on the project, proposed contemporary elements and sport and recreation opportunities, in an accessible, interactive and informative way.

Visitors to the Café Consult Precinct could talk to Council Officers about the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review and provide their feedback by participating in an interactive voting activity. The activity involved selecting a token indicating their level of support and placing it against the proposed key element being considered.

Hard copy surveys and general feedback forms were available for visitors to complete. Your Say Maroondah postcards were also provided for people who preferred to participate in the consultation on-line, at their convenience.

Approximately 400 people visited the Café Consult marquee.



### Drop-in sessions

During the consultation period Council held six drop-in sessions at the following locations:

- Ringwood Town Square - 26 November 2019
- Dorset Golf Course - 27 November 2019
- Croydon Town Square - 28 November 2019
- Dorset Golf Course - 30 November 2019
- Ringwood Golf Course - 1 December
- Ringwood Golf Course - 2 September

These sessions provided the golfing community and broader Maroondah Community with an opportunity to speak to Councillor Officers and to share their views on the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One Report. Hard copy surveys and the interactive voting activity were also available to gauge their level of support on the proposed contemporary elements and sporting and recreation opportunities.

Approximately 350 community members attended the drop-in sessions.

## Your Say Maroondah - Online Consultation Portal

A dedicated project page for the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review was developed enabling community and key users to access information and provide feedback online.

The project page provided access to the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One Report and details on the process that Council was undertaking for the review. An on-line feedback form allowed people to provide their views and indicate their level of support for the proposed contemporary elements and sporting and recreation opportunities.

Throughout the consultation phase over 4,100 community members visited the Your Say Maroondah project page. A total of 1,125 submissions were received.

### Digital engagement

A range of digital engagement channels were used to promote the consultation and to encourage feedback, including:

#### Email

- Email to 8,617 Maroondah Leisure members
- Email to key user and community groups as per Council existing data bases

#### Social Media

- Social media campaign
- Tweets via the Maroondah City Council Twitter account
- Facebook updates via the Maroondah City Council Facebook page

Throughout the consultation phase Council received 53 submission via email.

### Social Media engagement

A social media engagement campaign, consisting of paid and organic posts and events, was used throughout the consultation period, targeting Maroondah Facebook and Twitter social media users.

The social media campaign reached 24,076 Facebook users and 2,612 Twitter users, and had an overall engagement, including likes, shares, website clicks and comments of over 2,900.



#### City of Maroondah @CityofMaroondah

What does the future of golf in Maroondah look like? Whether you're an avid golfer or not, we want to hear from you! Tell us your thoughts on the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review, Stage Two report by 26 January! <http://yoursay.maroondah.vic.gov.au/Maroondah-golf> #maroondahgolf2019 #yoursay [pic.twitter.com/LfeAVWuh83](https://pic.twitter.com/LfeAVWuh83)

## Raising public awareness

In December 2019 a feature article promoting the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review consultation was included in the Maroondah Infocus newsletter. The publication is delivered to 45,000 homes across the municipality.

The consultation was also featured on Eastern FM, with Mayor of the day, Councillor Rob Steane, promoting the project and consultation with listeners. Other avenues to promote the consultation opportunities included:

- Media articles - provided on the Maroondah City Council Corporate website
- A4 postcards distributed to approximately 4000 residents across the municipality
- Community Information Bulletin mailed directly to 1,322 residents in close proximity to Dorset Golf and 700 residents in close proximity to Ringwood Golf
- On-site information boards (Dorset and Ringwood Golf)

## 6. Summary of consultation feedback

### Overall results:

A total of 1,125 submissions were received online and in hardcopy

53 submissions were received via email

4 petitions were received containing 76, 207, 371 and 67 signatures

### Key themes - what respondents like about Ringwood and Dorset Golf

- Respondents were supportive of Café improvements/expansion
- Ringwood and Dorset Golf courses are viewed as among the best in Victoria
- Recent upgrades and maintenance of the facilities has been excellent
- Both courses provide valuable open space for the community
- Both courses support healthy, active ageing for senior members of the community
- Golf provides substantial health and wellbeing benefits to participants

### Key themes - what respondents were concerned about

- Changes to either course would have negative impacts to the health and wellbeing of seniors
- Senior members of the community will be disadvantaged - a loss of social connection
- That the stage one report did not reflect the true picture of golf participation at both courses
- Changes to existing facilities would see members would go elsewhere to play

- Loss of open space for Maroondah
- Impacts to wildlife and habitat
- Mini golf and virtual golf are already over represented in Maroondah
- Driving range has been a feature at Dorset Golf previously
- Sports such as Soccer and Basketball are over represented in Maroondah
- Proposed changes would result in traffic congestion for local streets
- Council should maintain two 18-hole golf courses

#### Key themes - what respondents suggested to improve golf in Maroondah.

- Implement an on-line booking system
- Improve parking and local traffic management at existing courses
- Redevelop parts of the courses for water sensitive and urban design elements
- Explore other locations in Maroondah to expand basketball and soccer

## 7. Conclusion

This report provides a succinct consolidated summary of the key themes identified throughout the stakeholder and community engagement process undertaken from 10 November 2019 to 26 January 2020 and will further inform the next stage of the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review.

Community feedback indicated:

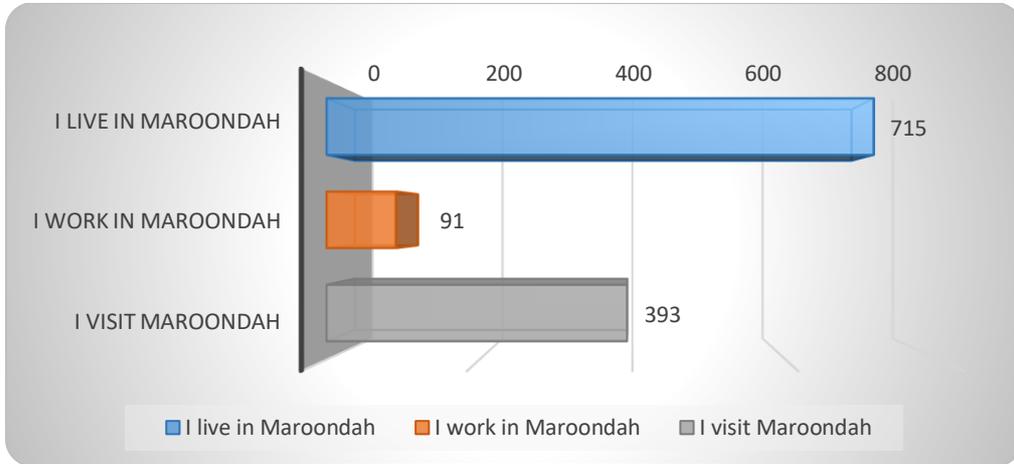
- A level of support for Café improvements
- That most of the proposed contemporary elements were not supported
- Multipurpose function rooms and space for community scored closely in the levels of support as compared to other proposed key elements.
- Changes to golf to accommodate growing demands in basketball, soccer and/or other sports was not supported, based on the impact on the courses.



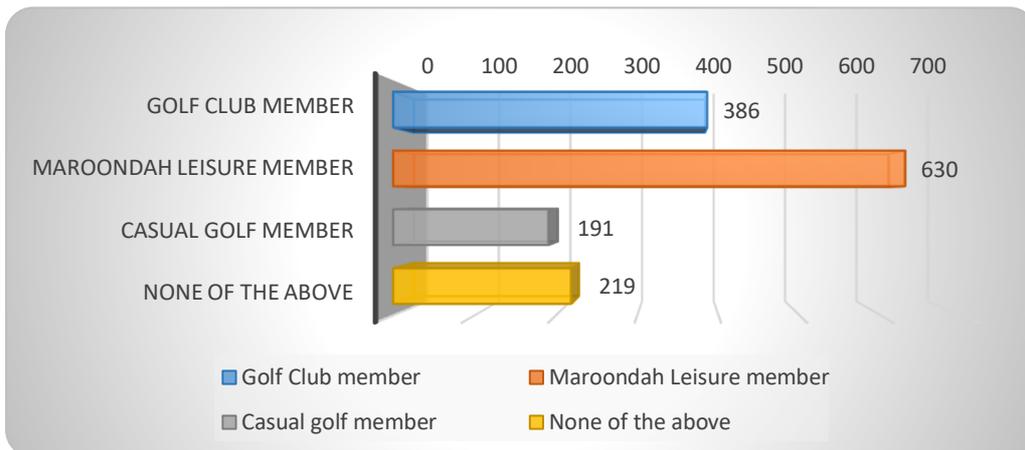
## APPENDIX A - Survey results:

Community consultation undertaken for Stage One of the Maroondah Golf Strategic Review included the following survey questions.

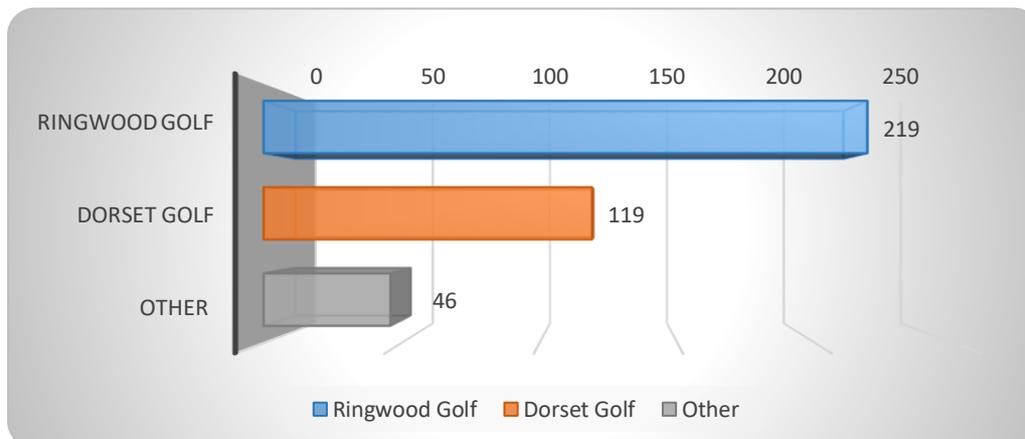
**Q1. Which of the following best describes you?**



**Q2. Are you a?**



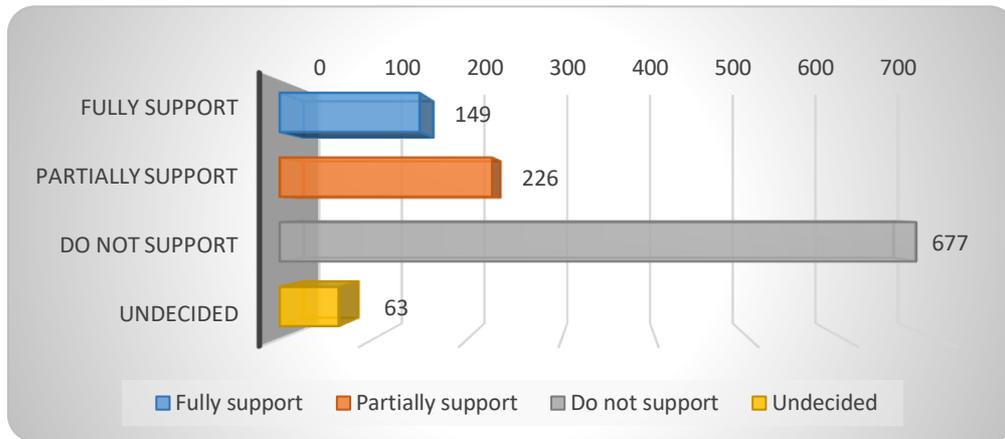
**Q3. What club are you a member of?**



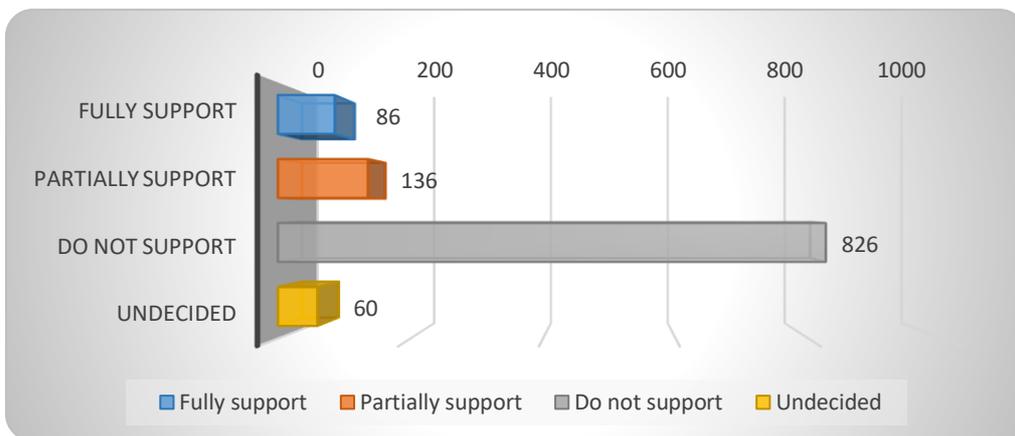
## Survey results continued:

**Q: To what extent do you support the following key proposed elements?**

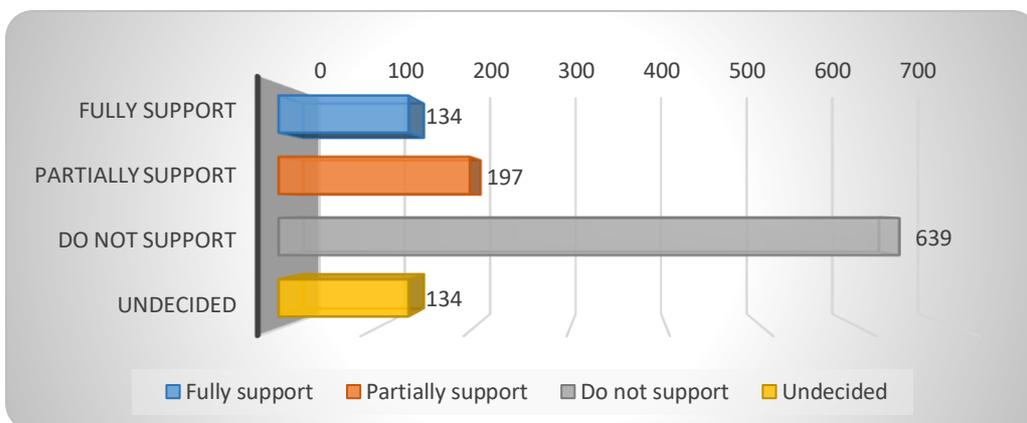
### Mini Golf



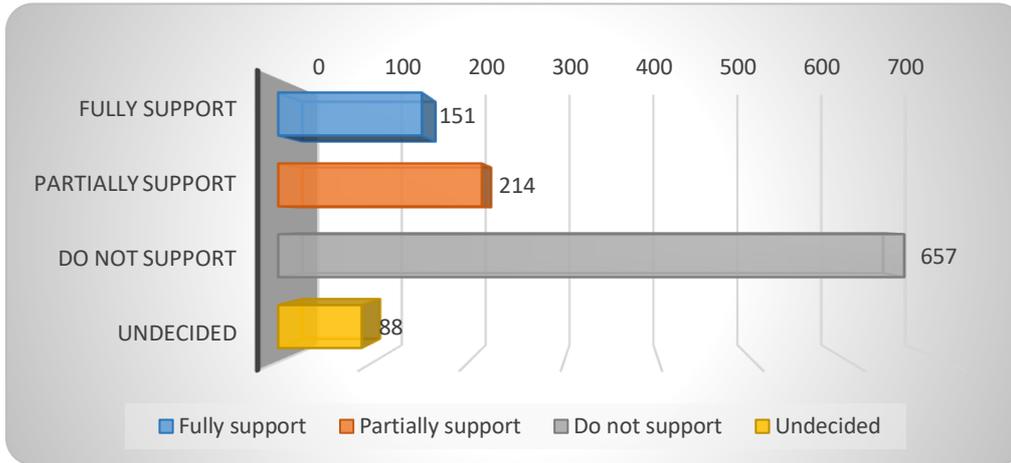
### Driving Range



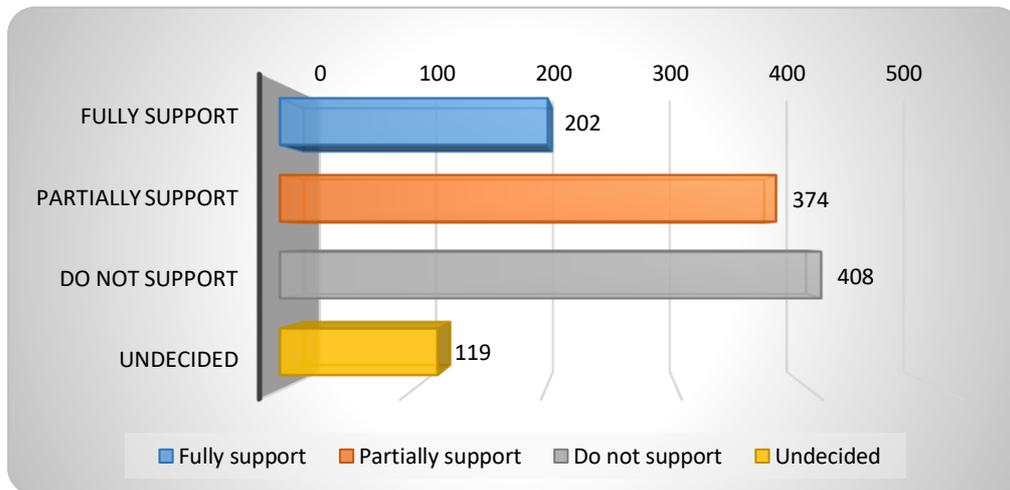
### Virtual Golf



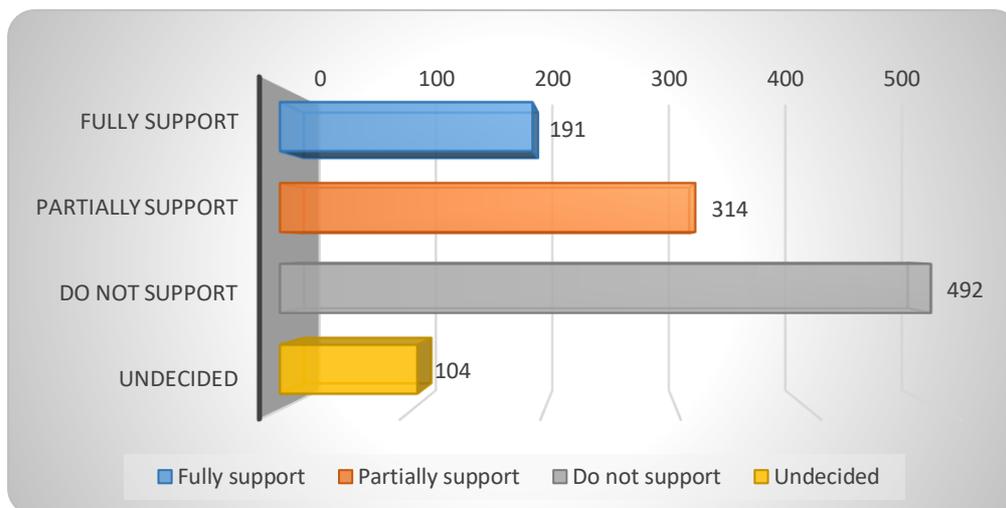
## Playground



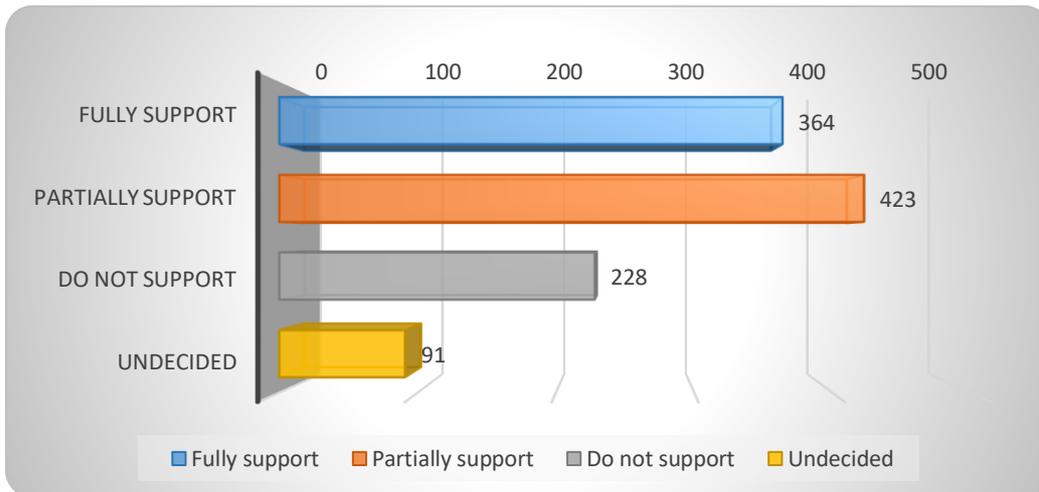
## Multipurpose Function Rooms



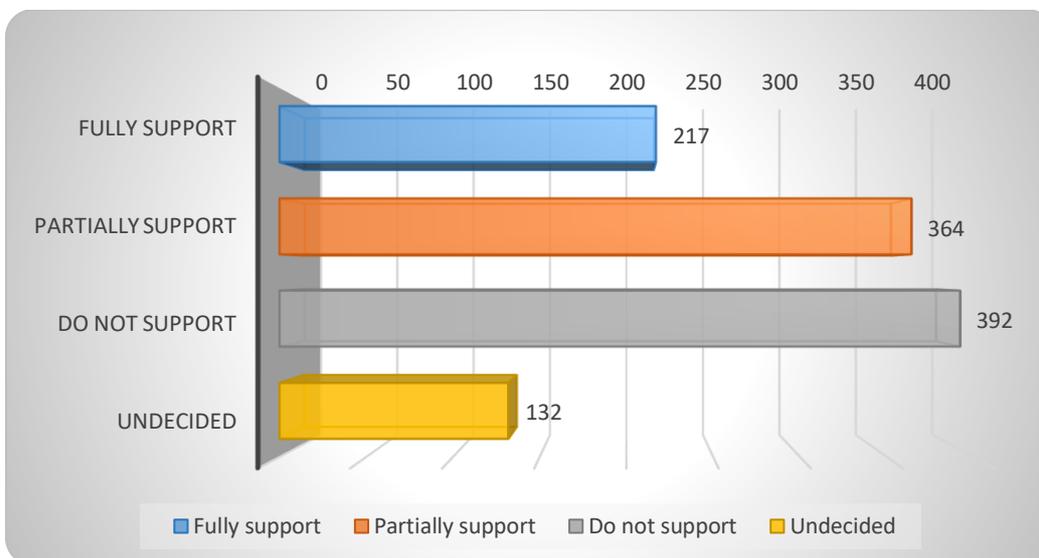
## Multipurpose space for community/groups



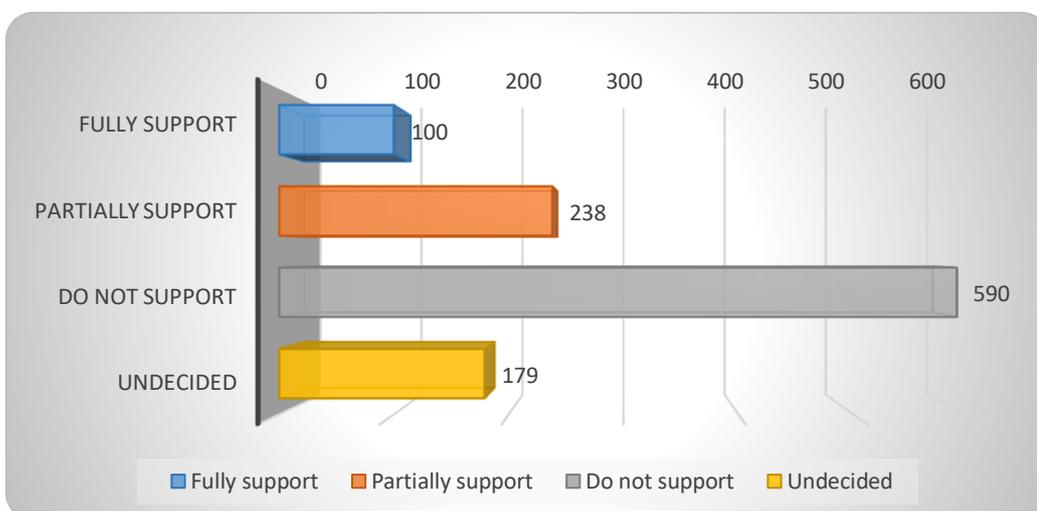
## Café Improvements



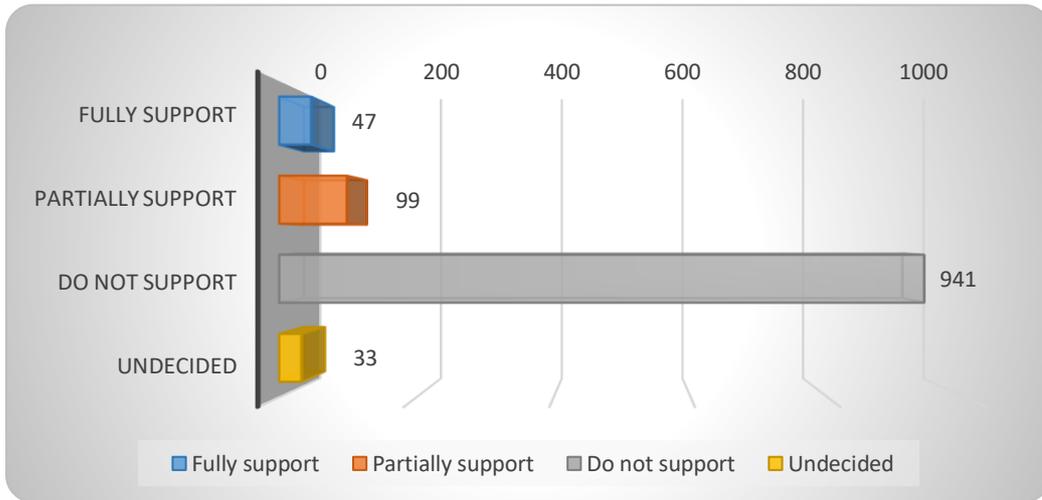
## Expanded Golf Retail



## Complementary retail business opportunity



## Growing demand for Basketball



## Growing demand for soccer and/or other sports

