Queering Public Parks – What Makes Public Parks Safe and Pleasant for Queer Individuals?

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M12 Bachelor Thesis CRS

202000381: BSc Thesis PSY (2025)

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Date: 24.06.2025

APA: 7th Edition

Abstract

Parks provide numerous benefits for individuals and communities. However, not everyone may be able to experience them. For example, subjective accessibility may be influenced by perceived social cohesion, integration and inclusion within a community. A marginalised group that may benefit considerably from parks' positive effects but may also suffer from societal consequences imposing perceived barriers to park visits is the queer community. Consequently, queer individuals would benefit from inclusive public park designs that take their needs into consideration. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to provide guidelines enabling inclusive park designs by answering the question of: what makes public parks safe and pleasant for queer individuals? To achieve this aim, this study used a questionnaire to assess what queer individuals perceive as a safe and pleasant park and utilize custom made cork stamps for participants to create their ideal park on a piece of paper depicting the outline of the Volkspark in Enschede. Therefore, this study also tested a cost-efficient and low-tech method of data collection. A total of 51 participants were included in the final dataset, of which 23 participants indicated to be queer. The majority of queer participants identified as bisexual. Queer and non-queer participants did not differ significantly in how safe they feel in public parks or in what features make a park safe and pleasant to be in. However, queer and non-queer participants differed in how important they perceived specific features to be. Although time consuming to analysis, the tested method of data-collection proved useful in depicting participants needs.

Queering Public Parks – What Makes Public Parks Safe and Pleasant for Queer Individuals?

As the oldest public park in Enschede, the Volkspark has been created in 1872 with the intention of enabling textile workers and their families to relax in their free time (Stichting Enschede Promotie, 2025a). Since then, it has served as a public space for physical activities including open yoga practices and runs, as well as cultural events such as festivals and fairs (Stichting Enschede Promotie, 2025b, 2025c).

Besides providing a location for events, public parks like the Volkspark may generally fulfil a multitude of important functions. For example, they may enable education and recreation, improve well-being and community development, contribute to culture, heritage and economic growth, and provide a natural environment or simply a means of transportation (Ellis & Schwartz, 2016). Accordingly, people may visit parks for various reasons. The main reasons being the variety of activities a park provides, and its proximity and accessibility (Taylor et al., 2020). For example, people may visit parks to exercise, socialise, play, pray, relax, reduce stress, think, take a break or be in, experience and connect with nature (Dinda & Ghosh, 2021; Maruthaveeran, 2017; Taylor et al., 2020). However, they may also visit a park simply because it is nearby, or it provides a nicer or shorter way to get somewhere else (Maruthaveeran, 2017; Taylor et al., 2020).

Benefits of Public Parks

Not only are public parks places people visit for various events and activities; they also have numerous benefits that may greatly influence individuals' lives and their communities. Specifically, public parks may positively affect physical, mental, social and environmental health (for literature reviews see Cohen et al., 2022; Dobson et al., 2019). For example, both quantitative and qualitative research suggests a positive relationship between park proximity, density, accessibility and higher levels of physical activity (Diez Roux et al., 2007; Eichinger et al., 2015; Griffin et al., 2008; Pretty et al., 2005; Ries et al., 2008; Wendel-Vos et al., 2004). Park proximity may also positively affect mental health, well-being and vitality (Van den Berg et al., 2016; Wood et al., 2017). Furthermore, simply spending time in nature may reduce stress, increase self-reported happiness and lead to greater levels of well-being (Capaldi et al., 2014; Gidlow et al., 2016; James et al., 2015; Roe et al., 2013; White et al., 2019). Additionally, public parks may influence social health as they may positively affect social cohesion and sense of belonging, and enable community attachment and social participation (Baur & Tynon 2010; Graham & Glover 2014; Peters et al., 2010).

Consequently, parks are important public places, people may visit for different reasons and from which they and their communities directly and indirectly experience numerous benefits.

Parks, Public Spaces and Marginalisation

Although public parks provide various benefits, not everyone may be able to experience them. For example, subjective accessibility may be influenced by perceived social cohesion, integration and inclusion within a community (Seaman et al., 2010). Therefore, anti-social behaviour may not only lead to inter-group distress and conflicts but also to perceived barriers hindering people from visiting public parks (Gidlow & Ellis, 2011). Because they are at a higher risk of being discriminated against, marginalised groups may especially perceive such barriers (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2025). For instance, women may avoid parks when going outside at night because of a fear of crime in public spaces (Tandogan & Ilhan, 2016). Women are not the only group altering their behaviour in public spaces. Research suggests hate crime and fear thereof affect individuals of marginalised communities in general (Garratt et la., 2024). Therefore, people of colour and disabled people may also alter their behaviour in public spaces, avoiding certain areas or routes because they fear becoming the victim of crimes motivated by racism or ableism (Banaji et al., 2021; Dunn, 2021; Garratt et al., 2024). Furthermore, marginalisation may not only lead to the avoidance of public spaces, but also to a broader sense of social exclusion. Elderly people and individuals with severe illness, including but not limited to disabled people, are for example facing alienation and isolation because of institutionalisation or societal prejudices (Kourkouta et al., 2015; Prieto-Flores et al., 2011). Another group that may experience discrimination, hate crimes and thereby social exclusion is the LGBTQIA+ or queer community (Earnshaw et al., 2024). Like other marginalised groups, queer individuals may avoid certain public places and perceive barriers to entering public parks. Consequently, queer individuals may be unable to experience the various benefits public parks have to offer.

Queerness, Nature and Public Spaces

While academic literature on queer experiences of public parks and nature in general is rare, several online blogs retell personal accounts and explain how nature may benefit queer individuals. According to these blog entries, natural environments provide a judgement-free space for queer individuals to be themselves and (re)connect with nature and their identity, making them feel more alive without being restricted by others' expectations (Hardt, 2023; Loring, 2024; Redd, 2023). Because of culturally influenced expectations, societal norms and discrimination, queer individuals may not feel the same sense of freedom

and acceptance in urban environments. Additionally, nature seems to be a place for queer people to connect to each other through various outdoor activities (Redd, 2023). Queer individuals describe these forms of community building as a very rewarding experience as it creates safe spaces they struggle to find in urban environments. These personal accounts shared on various online blogs are no isolated incidents and are supported by research. For example, nature connectedness was found to positively correlate with mindfulness, and psychological, social and emotional well-being (Howell et al., 2011). These findings imply greater levels of mindfulness and well-being for individuals with greater levels of nature-connectedness. Moreover, events specifically created for queer individuals, such as pride, may positively affect queer individuals' mental health and well-being by enabling social connectedness and self-expression (Ong et al., 2025; Tinlin-Dixon et al., 2024). Consequently, the idea that queer individuals may greatly benefit from nature and inclusive communities is not only a personal experience, but also supported by research. Therefore, both nature and inclusive communities may provide important safe spaces which positively affect queer individuals' well-being.

Unfortunately, queer individuals are missing these important safe spaces in urban environments and are additionally facing adversities non-queer people may usually not encounter. For example, according to the minority stress theory queer individuals may experience higher levels of social stress relating to stigmatisation and discrimination (Frost & Meyer, 2023). These higher levels of stress may lead to lower levels of health compared to non-queer individuals and be either distal or proximal processes. According to the theory, distal stressors are caused by third-parties, while proximal stressors are caused by socialisation processes. (Meyer, 2003, as cited in Frost & Meyer, 2023). Distal stressors may include structural discrimination such as cultural norms and laws (Hatzenbuehler, 2016; van der Toorn et al., 2020), inequity in healthcare (Medina-Martínez et al., 2021), poverty and other chronic stressors (Frost et al., 2019), and microaggressions (Nadal et al., 2016). Proximal stressors may include the internalisation of stigmata (Williams et la., 2023), the expectation of rejection (Douglass et al., 2020) and the concealment of identity as a means of self-protection (Pachankis et al., 2020). Consequently, queer individuals do not only miss safe spaces in urban environments, they may also experience numerous sources of distress due to their identities and may experience a greater risk for mental disorder, substance abuse and suicide (Hong et la., 2011; King et la., 2008; Plöderl et al., 2013). Conclusively, nature provides a safe space queer individuals are missing in urban environments. Because of their various benefits and natural elements, public parks may pose an opportunity to create safe

spaces for queer individuals in urban environments.

Queering Public Parks Through Citizen Science

Ultimately, queer individuals may benefit from natural environments, inclusive communities and therefore public parks. However, queer individuals may experience numerous sources of distress due to discrimination which may create barriers hindering them from visiting and enjoying public parks. Therefore, queer individuals would profit from inclusive public park designs (National Recreation and Park Association, n.d.). To be able to create such designs, it is imperative to understand the characteristics that make public parks safe and pleasant for queer individuals to be in. A method that may be useful to understand queer individuals' perspectives and needs is citizen science. To do citizen science means to include citizens into the research process to generate new scientific insights and potentially change policies (European Citizen Science Association, n.d.). If done right, it has the potential of empowering communities and creating public spaces that are more inclusive. Accordingly, inclusive public park designs may be created by involving queer individuals into the process, giving them the opportunity to design what they perceive as the ideal public park that is both safe and pleasant to be in.

The Present Study

Conclusively, queer individuals may benefit from visiting public parks but may face barriers and may therefore benefit from inclusive public park designs that take their needs into consideration. Therefore, the aim of this study is to provide guidelines enabling inclusive park designs by answering the question of: what makes public parks safe and pleasant for queer individuals? To create these guidelines, it is crucial to include queer individuals in the process, which can be done by using citizen science. Consequently, in addition to using a questionnaire, this study will incorporate a more indirect and playful approach; utilizing custom made stamps for queer individuals to create their ideal park on a piece of paper depicting the outline of the Volkspark. Therefore, in addition to exploring queer individuals' needs though citizen science, this study will test a cost-efficient and low-tech method of data collection.

Methods[1]

Participants

A total of 51 participants were included in the final dataset, of which 41 were female (M_{age} = 25, *SD* = 9.54), 8 were male (M_{age} = 24.4, *SD* = 3.3) and 2 were non-binary (M_{age} = 23, *SD* = 0). Twenty-three (45.1%) participants indicated to be queer, while 28 (54.9 %) did not. The majority of queer participants identified as bisexual (n = 12, 47.8%), other participants identified as gay (n = 5, 21.7%), queer (n = 4, 17.4%), questioning (n = 2, 8.7%) or asexual and biromantic (n = 1, 4.3%). Most participants were German (n = 33) or Dutch (n = 8), whereas 6 participants had a different nationality and 4 had a dual citizenship. Moreover, 27 participants had at least obtained a high-school or an equivalent diploma, 14 had a university degree and 8 had finished vocational school, the remaining participant did not provide information about their highest educational degree. Forty (64.6%) participants were students of which 7 (17.5%) had an additional job, 9 (17.5%) participants had a different profession and 1 (2%) was unemployed. The remaining participant did not provide information about their profession.

We recruited participants through the SONA system, an online recruitment tool of the University of Twente. Additionally, we recruited participants through word of mouth by asking friends, family, fellow students, and friends or colleagues of friends for their participation. We distributed flyers (see Appendix B) through a queer meeting point in Münster and a café frequently visited by students in Enschede. Moreover, we handed out flyers through the student associations of psychology, communication science and the queer community, as well as through the queer university network Th!nk with Pride. Besides university related resources, we contacted public officials, queer organisations, associations and networks around Münster and Enschede.

We included a participant in the final dataset when they fulfilled the following requirements; being at least 18 years of age, giving informed consent and having sufficient knowledge of the English, German or Dutch language. We had to exclude one participant because they did not compete the questionnaire or used the stamps to create their park. Ethical approval for the study was granted by the University of Twente Ethics Committee with the number 250236.

[1] This thesis was written within a greater project in which we collected and analysed data of different groups (queer individuals, non-European and elderly people). However, a comparison was outside the scope of this thesis and therefore the focus remains on queer individuals.

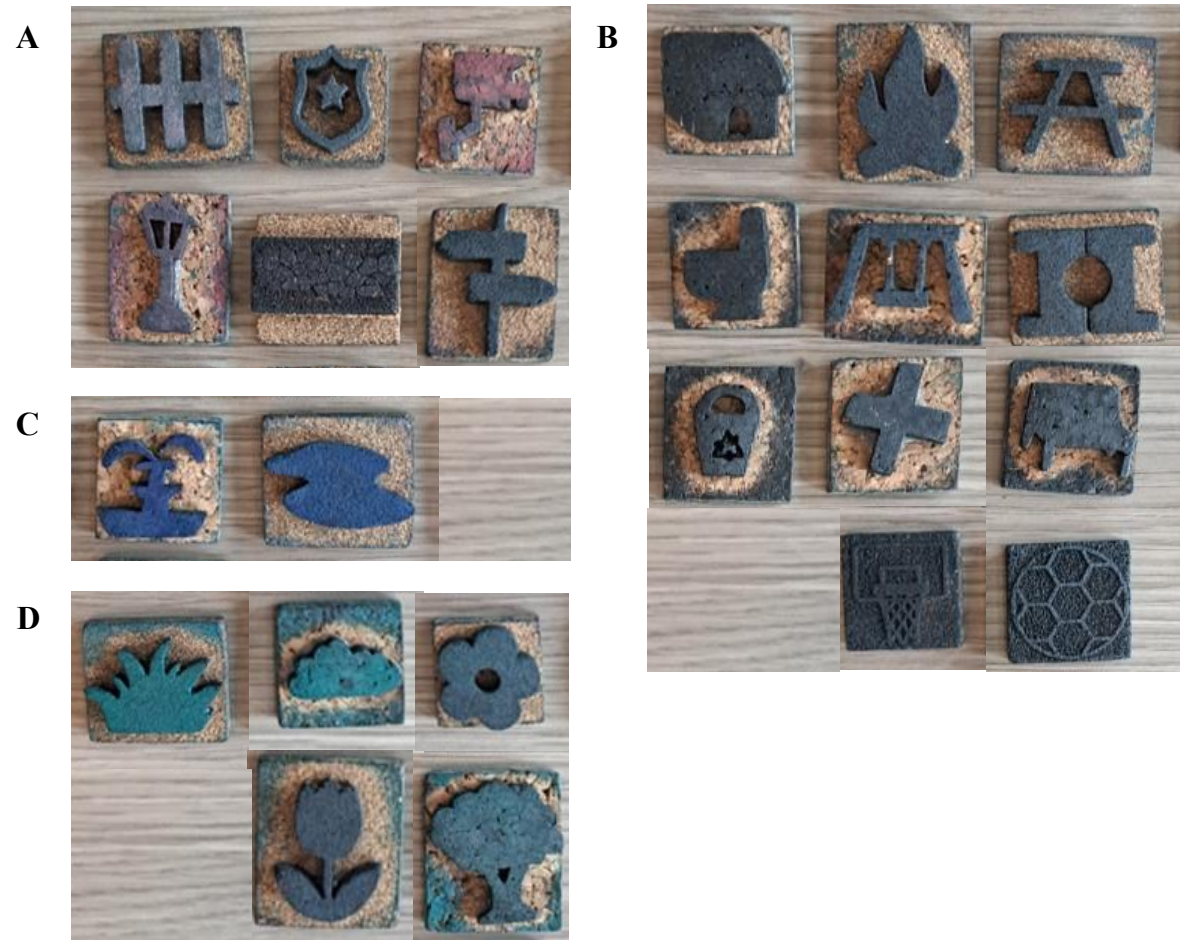
Materials

Park Design. We administered the study on a double-sided A3 piece of paper. Participants designed their ideal park on the front and filled in a questionnaire on the back side of the paper. Because we gathered data in three different languages, we used three different versions of the paper; a Dutch version, a German version, and an English version (see Appendix C). The front side of each version showed the outline of Enschede Volkspark. We filled in the outline with white leaving a blank space in the shape of the park for participants to design their ideal park on. As the background for the outline, we used a screenshot from Google Maps (n.d.) depicting the streets surrounding the real park. Above the outline, we placed two textboxes, one with the name of the park and the other with instructions for the participants.

Stamps. To design their parks, we provided participants with stamps made out of cork and pencils (see Figure 1). We made the stamps by firstly searching the internet for images and vectors of outlines of different park features (e.g., trees, benches, water fountains, streetlights, etc.). Secondly, we cut these outlines into cork with a laser cutter at the Design Lab of the University of Twente. Thirdly, we glued the various shapes onto small cork quadrilaterals. The quadrilaterals messed either 3.5cm by 3.5cm or 3.5cm by 4cm, depending on the shapes' sizes. We sanded the edges of these cork pieces by hand because the laser cutter darkened the cork and participants would have gotten their hands dirty. Additionally, we sanded the surfaces of the shapes to make the stamps more visible on the paper. Because they were too delicate, we had to engrave three outlines instead of cutting them (path, football and basketball). The pencils and stamp pad colours we used in this study were black, green, blue, and red. We assigned meaning to the stamp colours to make data analysis easier. We used green for vegetation features, blue for water features, red for safety features, and black for the remaining stamps.

Figure 1

Cork Stamps



Note. Read from left to right, (A) Safety Measures: first row: fence, police or security and surveillance camera, second row: streetlight, path and signpost, (B) Amenities: first row: café or shop, barbecue and picnic table, second row: toilette, swings and football field, third row: trashcan, cross and bench, fourth row: basketball net and football, (C) Water Features: fountain and lake, (D) Greenery: first row: grass, bush and generic flower, second row: tulip and tree, a full set also included smaller versions of the tulip, generic flower, grass, fence, signpost and barbecue.

Questionnaire. The back side of the A3 paper contained a questionnaire we designed for this study that entailed 7 sections and a total of 23 questions (see Appendix D).

Informed Consent. The first section entailed 3 questions regarding participants understanding of their rights within the study and the usage of their data.

Demographics. The second section entailed 7 open questions about participants' age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality or nationalities, highest education, job and the time they had lived in Europe.

Park Visitor Profile. The third section entailed a total of 9 questions regarding participants' habits. Specifically, we asked participants' whether they lived close to any park and how often they visited, on average, a park in a month. Additionally, we asked them about their usual company and activities when visiting a park, if they have a pet they like to bring and how the time of day mattered with regards to their experience. Furthermore, we also asked participants whether they knew the Volkspark, how often they visited and how close they lived to it.

Perception of Safety. The fourth section entailed 3 questions. One open question regarding what aspects participants thought make a park safe and a r anking question entailing 20 numbered park features (e.g., benches, trees and surveillance cameras) for participants to rank from most to least important regarding their perceptions of park safety.[2] Participants ranked these items by writing down the items' numbers in order of their importance. And finally, a five-point likert scale about participants' perceived level of safety when visiting a park.

Perception of Pleasantness. The sixth section entailed 2 questions. One open question regarding what aspects participants thought make a park pleasant and a ranking question entailing 20 numbered park features (e.g., benches, trees and surveillance cameras) for participants to rank from most to least important regarding their perceptions of park pleasantness (see Footnote 2). Participants ranked these items by writing down the items' numbers in order of their importance.

Additional Questions. The seventh section entailed 2 open questions. The first question gave participant an opportunity to comment on the study or their park design. The second question regarded participants' wish for additional stamps.

Design & Procedure

Before participants took part in this study, we explained the questionnaire and the park design concerned people's perception of safety and pleasantness of public parks. We informed them about the study's design and procedure, asked if they had any questions and assured confidentiality.

After participants gave informed consent, they answered questions about their

[2] Both ranking questions entailed the same items.

demographics. The demographic questionnaire was followed by questions relating to participants' park usage, habits, proximity to parks and questions of their perception of safety and pleasantness of parks. While participants answered the items, they were able to ask us questions about them. Once participants completed the questionnaire, we instructed them to flip the A3 paper and gave them the stamps, stamp pads and pencils to create their ideal park. We reminded participants the park should be their ideal park they perceived as both safe and pleasant to be in. Furthermore, we told them they were free use any of the stamps and to draw additional elements with pencils. We also asked participants to use specific colours for different stamps (blue = water features, green = vegetation features, red = safety features, black = remaining stamps). Participants could ask us questions about any aspect of the stamps and their designs. We did not give participants a time limit to finish the questionnaire or their park design. After designing their ideal park, participants had the opportunity to write a comment on their park design or the study, and to note what kinds of stamps they would have liked in addition to those we provided.

Data Analysis

Since we gathered the data on paper, we needed to digitalise it before we were able to perform any analysis. We used Microsoft Excel to digitalise the quantitative data and Word to digitalise the qualitative data. To digitalise the park designs, we scanned them by using multifunctional printers on the University of Twente's campus. We exported the quantitative dataset into RStudio to analyse it. We used RStudio to calculate descriptive statistics, run a Wilcoxon rang sum test and calculate Glass rank biserial correlation coefficient. To analyse the qualitative data, we created tables per open question in Word. Each table entailed the direct quote per participant, from which we derived themes and topics to create an inductive coding scheme for each open question. Then, we imported the data into ATLAS.ti and used the codes to deductively code participants answers. After coding participants' answers, we created new tables per coding scheme and wrote down how often we found a specific code per group (queer vs. non-queer). Finally, we condensed the coding schemes when appropriate and joined some of the codes. To analyse the park designs, we visualised participants' agreement for different park features with QGIS. We added participants' park designs as vector layers and created a shapefile layer to assign ids to each park feature that was the same (e.g., 15 for trees). Additionally, we assigned participant numbers to all park features placed by the same participant. We visualised the ids as different coloured dots. To mark the paths, we used the same method but visualised them as lines. On the basis of grouping shapes by ids and participant group (queer vs. non-queer), we were able to let the program create different

kinds of maps. Specifically, we used heatmaps, comparison maps and density maps, to compare not only between groups but also between park features.

Results

Park Visitors' Profile

General Park Proximity and Visits in a Month.[3] Forty-five (88.24%) participants agreed to live close to any park. Some participants wrote down a range for their general park visits in a month; to calculate the mean and standard deviation, the average of their range was calculated. Other participants stated to visit parks almost every day, it was estimated they would visit a park on average 25 times in a month. In total 50 Participants reported to visit parks at least once in a month and at most almost every day, one participant reported to visit parks less than once a month ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 5.90$).

The Volkspark. Thirty-two participants (62.75%) knew the Volkspark in Enschede and 14 (27.45%) participants reported to visit the Volkspark between one and four times in a month ($M = 1.49$, $SD = 0.95$) (see Footnote 3). Participants answered the question on how close they lived differently, some in the duration it would take them to get to the Volkspark using different types of transportation (foot, bike, car, train or bus) and others in kilometres. To get a better understanding, participants' answers were categorised into "very close", "close", "far" and "very far". Participants were categorised as living very close if they needed less than 10 minutes for transportation, close if they needed more than 10 but less than 30 minutes, far if they needed at least an hour but no more than 2 hours and very far if they needed more than 2 hours. Of 51 participants 9 (17.65%) lived very close, 18 (35.28%) close, 18 (35.28%) far and 6 (11.75%) very far.

Company in Parks. Out of all participants, 8 (15.69%) reported to have a pet they like to bring to the park. Moreover, 51 participants reported to visit parks either alone, in company, or both in company and alone (see Appendix E). Regardless of sexual orientation, participants reported to be mostly accompanied (58.82%). However, queer participants reported more often to visit parks by themselves (34.78%), than non-queer participants (10.71%), whereas non-queer participants reported more often to visit parks both in company and by themselves (21.43%), than queer participants (13.04%). Of the 14 participants who specified who they would visit a park with, 12 reported to be accompanied by "friends", a "close friend" or a "female friend", others were accompanied by their family, their significant

[3] The first two paragraphs are meant to provide the reader with more information on the sample and were not used for further analysis; therefore, not differentiation between queer and non-queer participants was made.

other or their dog (see Appendix E).

Activities in Parks. Fifty-one participants described different activities they would do when visiting a park. Based on their answers, themes were derived to create an inductive coding scheme. The coding scheme Activities (see Appendix E) consists of four main codes: Social Interactions, Physical Activities, Individual Recreation and Relaxation. When comparing the number of codes found in queer and non-queer participants' answers, there seems to be no great difference for any of the activities, indicating individuals do the same activities when visiting parks regardless of their sexual orientation.

Social Interactions. The main code Social Interactions entails five subcodes: Chatting, Eating & Drinking, Meeting Friends, Playing Games and Visiting & Hosting Events. When visiting a park, participants said they "just talk to someone" or "mostly [sit] there together with friends in the sun and just [talk]". They "maybe [snack] and [drink] together", "have a picnic with friends", barbecue or simply eat lunch with their friends. Other participants said they would "meet up with friends" when visiting a park, play outdoor or card games, visit playgrounds, "let a kite fly" or "play with [their] parents' dog". Two participants said they visit concerts, "[watch a] movie, some parks have car watching", celebrate birthdays or celebrate with their colleagues.

Physical Activities. The main code Physical Activities consists of two subcodes: Exercising and Strolling. When visiting a park some participants would "prefer to go […] for a run", bike, play volleyball or roller blade. Other would "sometimes just walk there", "just walk and talk to someone" or "[walk] with pets".

Individual Recreation. The main code Individual Recreation entails five subcodes: Creating, Learning, Listening, Observing and Reading. Participants said when visiting a park, they "take pictures", "write about nature or reflect on life and its experiences", journal or study. They "listen to music", audiobooks, meditations or "all the sounds". Additionally, they "like to observe the nature", "special trees and animals", including dogs. One participant said they "just sit on chair and see sunset" and another participant reported to enjoy peoplewatching. Participants also said they "sit on a bench and read".

Relaxation. The main code Relaxation consists of two subcodes: Enjoying Nature and Resting. Participants reported to "enjoy the nature/quite" or sunbath when visiting a park. They "sit and relax", either on a blanket, bench, chair or the grass. They also "lay on a blanket" and "do nothing" or "relax with friends".

The Importance of the Time of Day. The coding scheme Time of Day entails three main codes: Time of Day Matters, Time of Day does not Matter and More Important than

Time of Day (see Appendix E). These codes were created based on participants' answers. When comparing the number of codes found in queer and non-queer participants' answers there seems to be no great difference. These results indicate the time of day mattered equally to all participants, regardless of their sexual orientation.

Time of Day Matters. The main code Time of Day Matters consists of five sub codes: Annoying Crowds, Creepy & Dangerous Nights, Golden Sunset, Notable Differences and Pleasant Daylight. Most participants agreed the time of day mattered regarding their park experience. Some participants said "it's annoying to go during the prime afternoon hours because there the most people visit a park", one participant said they "don't like the times when all the dog people walk their dogs, they are too friendly and will try to talk" while another participant explained they would go in the morning to avoid crowds and walk their dog. A lot of queer and non-queer female participants expressed that "after dark, a park represents something creepy/dangerous to [them] because of potential assaults/attacks and [they] would not seek it out" because "in the dark it feels scary" and uncomfortable especially without company. One queer female participant said she likes "the park both at day and night but for safety reasons [she] usually avoids visiting at night". Another queer female participant said she does not "feel safe in a park if it's not daytime because [she] read crimes in parks often happen at night/early morning hours". Additionally, some female participants expressed a concrete fear of being attacked and overpowered by men or meeting "rather strange people" when visiting a park at night.

While female participants regardless of sexual orientation, expressed a fear of dark parks, male participants mostly reported to prefer daytime because they felt safer and "there are more people who could help you and you have a better overview of your surroundings". Although most participants reported safety concerns, some focused on pleasantness. Three participants expressed a preference for sunsets "because it is pretty" and "the vibe is better". Quite a few participants said "it feels cozy during the day" and they "prefer to be there when the sun is shining" to enjoy its warmth. Two participants said they enjoyed the presence of others during the day and one participant liked to visit parks in the morning to hear the birds sing. Three participants said that the time-of-day matters "as the atmosphere changes and the activities there also change" but did not explain what that meant to them.

Time of Day does not Matter. The main code Time of Day does not Matter has no subcodes. Four participants said the time of day "doesn't really matter".

More Important than Time of Day. The main code More Important than Time of Day has only one subcode: Weather. One participant expressed "it depends mostly on the season

and the daily weather conditions" if they visit a park.

Perception of Park Safety

General Feelings of Safety. To estimate how safe participants generally feel in parks, their scores of the likert-scale were summed up per group and the means calculated. Queer identifying participants reported to feel on average somewhat safe ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 0.78$). Participants who did not identify as queer also reported to feel on average somewhat safe, although their mean was slightly higher ($M = 4$, $SD = 0.77$). A Wilcoxon rang-sum test was run to test for a significant difference. The result was non-significant (Wilcoxon W = 356, $p = .47$). Due to ties the exact p-value could not be calculated, however queer participants seem to have no different perception of their safety in public parks than non-queer participants.

Park Features Increasing Safety Perception. The coding scheme Park Features Increasing Perceived Safety describes what participants thought makes a park feel safe and consists of seven main codes: Visibility, Park Design, Maintenance, Social Presence, Subjective Experience, Park Location and Safety Measures (see Table 1). These codes were derived by searching participants' answers for themes and creating an inductive coding scheme. When comparing the number of codes found in queer and non-queer participants' answers, there seems to be no great difference in any park feature, indicating individuals perceive parks with these features as safe regardless of their sexual orientation.

Visibility. The main code visibility entails two subcodes: Amount & Quality of Light and Overview. Participants reported to feel safe in a park when there is "enough" and "good lighting", especially in the evening or at night. Some participants expressed a preference for daylight. Additionally, participants felt safe when a park has "no dark corners", they have a clear view of their surroundings, the park is not much contorted and consists of "areas that can be well overlooked". The later shows a connection between visibility and park design, more precisely spatial layout.

Park Desing. The main code Park Design consists of five subcodes: Amenities, Nature, Paths and Spatial Layout. Some participants reported to like it "when the park maybe has a playground since it feels safer", participants also mentioned open sport facilities and food services would increase their perception of safety. Furthermore, participants felt safer when a park has "open spaces where you are able to observe a lot of water, animals [and] green places" such as "lots of trees and flowers". Moreover, paths were important when it came to participants' perception of safety. They preferred "designated" and "public paths" that are wide, clean, and not overgrown and do not "lead pass dense vegetation" where one cannot get lost and has a "good [and] clear overview of paths". Besides amenities, nature and

paths, participants described how a park's spatial layout may increase their feelings of safety. Participants reported to feel safer in a park with "open" and "much space", "when it feels open" and "there is enough space for everyone". One female participant clearly stated she felt safer in parks that do not have "many corners/hiding places where a person could hide".

Maintenance. The main code Maintenance entails two subcodes: Clean & Tidy and Reputation. Participants reported to "feel safe when [the park] looks tidy and beautiful", "when there are no drugs or rubbish distributions", "the park is new" and has "bright colours". One participant stated the park's reputation would be important for their perception of safety.

Social Presence. The main code Social Presence consists of three subcodes: Free Animals, No Dealers or Drugged People and Positive People. Participants felt safe if they saw "animals without leash or ducks" or were accompanied by their dog. They also felt safer if there were "no creepy or drunk person", "no consumption of hard drugs" and "no dealers". While participants experienced the presence of some people as a safety threat, they expressed feeling safer "when it is somewhat busy", "children [are] playing with their parent", "people [are] having a good time (laughing)", and visitors are of different nationalities, age groups and genders. They also felt safer if "people look friendly", were not judgemental and "there are many people that could help if something happened".

Subjective Experience. The main code Subjective Experience entails two subcodes: Feelings of Control and Peaceful Atmosphere. One participant said they felt safer when they "don't get surprised" and another expressed to "feel safe when [they] feel like [they] have control and are able to defend [themselves]". Other participants reported to feel safe when the atmosphere is calm, the "volume is low", there is no "loud bawling" and "people seem comfortable".

Park Location. The main code park location has no subcodes. Participants felt safe when a park "gives an impression of being in a safe and protected environment", is "close to houses where [they] could go if [they] need help" and is "ideally in the city" but "not in proximity to the train station".

Safety Measures. The main code Safety Measures consists of five subcodes: Cameras, Clear Signage, Emergency Telephone, Many Exits and Security/Police. A few participants felt safe if a park has "surveillance cameras in case of problematic cases/situations", "clear signs for directions", "many exits", an "emergency telephone" and if they "see police officers or people who are controlling the park".

Table 1

Coding Scheme Park Features Increasing Perceived Safety

Main Code	Subcode	Queer	Non-Queer
Visibility	Light	21	19
	Overview	5	5
Total		26	24
Park Design	Amenities	1	2
	Nature	1	8
	Paths	11	4
	Spatial Layout	8	12
Total		21	26
Maintenance	Clean & Tidy	10	16
	Reputation		1
Total		10	17
Social Presence	Positive People	15	14
	Free Animals	2	3
	No Dealers or Drugged People	4	1
Total		21	18
Subjective Experience	Peaceful Atmosphere	4	
	Feelings of Control	1	2
Total		5	2
Park Location		1	6
Total		1	6
Safety Measures	Cameras	1	1
	Clear Signage	2	0
	Emergency Telephone	1	0
	Many Exits	0	2
	Security/Police	1	2
Total		5	4

Relative Importance of Different Park Features for Safety. To get a first impression of how important participants perceived different park features to be, the lowest, highest and mean rank, and the standard deviation per item and group were calculated (see Appendix F). However, these values did not provide a good idea of group differences. Therefore, a Wilcoxon rang sum test was run to look for significant differences between queer and non-queer participants and a Glass rank biserial correlation with a confident interval of 95% for the effect size calculated (see Table 2). While there might not be a great difference between groups in regards to which park features make them feel safe, several significant p-values imply queer and non-queer participants differ in how important they perceive different park features to be.

Safety Measures. A Wilcoxon rang sum test revealed a significant difference in participants' ranking for accessible and clearly-marked walking paths (p <.001), camera surveillance (p <.001), open spaces (p = .003), presence of security or police (p <.001) and streetlights (p <.001). Queer participants ranked surveillance cameras (r_{rb} = -.214) and presence of security or police (r_{rb} = -.48) significantly lower and accessible and clearly marked walking paths (r_{rb} = .24), open spaces (r_{rb} = .107) and streetlights (.134) significantly higher compared to non-queer participants. These results suggest queer participants experience camera surveillance and presence of security or police as less important for their safety than non-queer participants. Furthermore, queer participants seemed to find accessible and clearly marked walking paths, open spaces and streetlights more important for their safety compared to non-queer participants.

Amenities. A Wilcoxon rang sum test revealed a significant difference in participants' ranking for benches and communal seating areas (p = .007), pet friendly places (p < .001), playgrounds for children and families (p < .001), public infrastructure (p = .003) and rain shelters (p < .001). Queer participants ranked public infrastructure (r_{rb} = -.109) and rain shelters (r_{rb} = -.194) significantly lower and benches and communal seating areas (r_{rb} = .102), pet friendly places (r_{rb} = .364) and playgrounds for children and families (r_{rb} = .279) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results imply queer participants experience public infrastructure and rain shelters as less important when it comes to their safety than non-queer participants. Moreover, compared to non-queer participants, queer participants find benches and communal seating areas, pet friendly places and playgrounds for children and families more important features for a park to feel safe.

Maintenance. A Wilcoxon rank sum test revealed a significant difference in participants' ranking for maintenance of park infrastructure (p > .001) and trash cans (p =

.001). Queer participants ranked maintenance of park infrastructure (r_{rb} = .214) and trash cans (r_{rb} = .121) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results suggest queer participants did find maintenance more important for a park to feel safe compared to non-queer participants.

Nature. A Wilcoxon rank sum test revealed significant differences in decorative elements (p > .001), forests and trees (p > .001) and water elements (p > .001). Queer participants ranked decorative elements significantly lower (r_{rb} = -.144), and forests and trees (r_{rb} = .28) and water features (r_{rb} = .225) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results imply, compared to non-queer individuals, queer participant find decorative elements less important, and trees and forest and water features more important for a park to feel safe.

Table 2

Wilcoxon Rang Sum Test, Effect Size, Range and Mean Safety Ranking

Feature	WilcoxonW *p*	Correlation	Mean Queer	Mean Non-Queer
		Safety Measures		
Accessible and Clearly-Marked Walking Paths	145800 <.001	.24 [.162, .319]	1-17 6.14(4.69)	1-18 6.82(3.48)
Camera Surveillance	96800 <.001	-.214 [-.28, -.147]	2-20 9.68(6.38)	1-20 7.86(7.09)
Clearly Marked Exits	127600 .796	-.009 [-.077, .061]	1-15 5.39(3.56)	2-19 5.75(4.29)
Open Spaces	142600 .003	.107 [.041, .177]	1-13 5.39(3.28)	1-19 6.5(4.57)
Presence of Security or Police	61200 <.001	-.48 [-.54, -.412]	1-20 12.29(6.37)	1-20 6.29(6.85)
Streetlights	146000 <.001	.134 [.069, .202]	1-13 2.7(2.73)	1-9 2.93(2.27)
		Amenities		
Benches and Communal Seating Areas	123400 .007	.102 [.026, .176]	2-19 10.55(4.27)	5-19 11.46(3.38)
Inclusive Public Bathrooms	111000 .813	-.0008 [-.08, .062]	3-20 11.75(5.12)	4-20 11.71(4.75)

Pet Friendly Places	152800	.364	3-20	7-20
	<.001	[.293, .426]	11.7(4.33)	14.39(3.49)
Playground for Children and Families	150400	.279	4-19	2-17
	<.001	[.207, .344]	9.67(4.02)	11.6(4.09)
Public Infrastructure	104800	-.109	2-16	1-16
	.003	[-.186, -.027]	9.24(4.53)	8.25(3.28)
Rain Shelters	94800	-.194	7-20	5-20
	<.001	[-.262, -.118]	14.38(3.88)	12.82(4.72)
Recreational Areas	126800	.029	5-20	3-18
	.425	[-.041, .109]	12.5(4.18)	12.75(4.08)
Shops or Cafés	134200	.041	3-20	2-20
	.247	[-.033, .113]	9.6(5.4)	9.64(4.34)
Maintenance				
Maintenance of Park Infrastructure	149600	.214	1-15	1-18
	<.001	[.146, .286]	6.32(4.14)	7.64(4.04)
Trash Cans	125600	.121	1-20	4-20
	.001	[.036, .198]	11.8(5.76)	13.43(4.23)
Vegetation Density	104200	-.069	1-20	5-20
	.064	[-.149, .01]	14.2(6.05)	14.25(4.5)
Nature				
Decorative Elements	105400	-.144	6-20	3-20
	<.001	[-.21, -.074]	15.18(3.6)	14(4.59)
Forests and Trees	143400	.28	7-20	5-20
	<.001	[.203, .352]	14.35(4.2)	16.46(3.22)
Water Elements	140600	.255	5-19	3-20
	<.001	[.188, .327]	14.65(3.89)	15.75(4.67)

Note. For a better overview significant park features are coloured: red means queer participants ranked them higher, violet means non-queer participants ranked them higher.

Perception of Park Pleasantness

Park Features Increasing Pleasantness. The coding scheme Park Features Increasing Perceived Pleasantness describes what participants thought makes a park feel pleasant and consists of six main codes: Nature, Park Design, Maintenance, Social Presence, Subjective Experience and Park Role (see Table 3). This coding scheme was created inductively by searching participants' answers for themes. When comparing the number of codes found in queer and non-queer participants' answers, there seems to be no great difference for any feature, indicating individuals perceive parks with these features as pleasant regardless of their sexual orientation.

Nature. The main code Nature consists of seven subcodes: Air & Smell, Botanical Garden, Generally Mentioned, Greenery, Sounds, Sunlight and Water. Some participants said they liked the "feeling of freshness", "fresh air" and "smell of grass" in parks. One participant reported they liked parks with botanical gardens and a few participants mentioned they liked the nature but did not specify. Most participants said they liked "elements of greenery" for example meadows, flowers, bushes and trees. Some of the participants specified they like it "especially when there is a variety of different plants/animas", others said they "like it when there are nice flowers/plants". A few participants mentioned to find "nature sounds like birds, wind, water" pleasant but not "traffic noise". A few participants mentioned they like to have a "lot of sunlight" in parks. Other participants said they preferred to have "water spots" for example ponds, lakes, rivers, water fountains, waterfalls and wells.

Park Design. The main code Park Design entails five subcodes: Amenities, Animal-Friendly, Paths, Seating & Rest Areas and Spatial Layout. Participants preferred "tidy playgrounds", sport facilities, "frequent lights", "public toilettes" and food services. They liked a park that "provides an environment where animals can live without being disturbed by people", is bee-friendly and allows to bring dogs. Moreover, they like interesting "little hidden paths" that are "shaded". One participant expressed to like different types of paths for bikes, skates and pedestrians. Most participants agreed on liking seating and reast areas in parks. For example, "enough shaded places", "private places" "benches, areas to hang out", "loungers", "barbecue spots", "opportunities to picnic/spend time" and "grass patches to lie in". Participants said they liked "varied spaces", "big, open green spaces" and expressed a need for "enough space", an "open design" and a desire for having big parks providing "something for everyone: children, families, elderly people" and "small spaces for groups to spend time".

Maintenance. The main code Maintenance consist of two subcodes: Clean & Tidy and Restrictions. Participants said they liked a park "when the nature is taken care of but it does not seem too artificial" and it is clean and tidy. One participant said they do not like too many restrictions in parks and another said they liked that "it's a third place, so it's free".

Social Presence. The main code Social Presence entails three subcodes: Animals, No Dealers and Positive People. Quite a few participants reported to like "birds and other animals" in parks, like ducks, turtles and "dogs running around". One participant said they do not find it pleasant to have dealers around. Five participants liked to have people around "who maybe have a nice mood, enjoy their time alone or in groups", but also families, people walking their dogs, people of all ages and friendly people.

Subjective Experience. The main code Subjective Experience consist of two subcodes: Beauty and peaceful Atmosphere. Participants said they enjoy a park if "the park is pretty", has "nice views/environment" is colourful and displays art. They also prefer a peaceful and quiet atmosphere, "and everything is relaxed". One participant said they "like the atmosphere that other people build within the park"

Park Role. The main code Park Role entails three subcodes: Escape & Retreat, Place for Activities and Place to socialise. Participants said they "like being engaged with the nature", enjoy "the calming effect" parks have and that "you have the chance to enjoy nature easily" even in the city. Furthermore, they liked parks because of "the amount of stuff you are able to do there", for example going for a stroll, having a picnic, visiting events or exercising in groups. Lastly, participants enjoyed parks as a place to socialise where "you can go with friends or on your own" and have the "opportunity to have a picnic/spend time" with others.

Table 3

Coding Scheme Park Features Increasing Perceived Pleasantness

Main Code	Subcode	Queer	Non-Queer
Nature	Air & Smell	1	3
	Botanical Garden	1	0
	Generally Mentioned	4	1
	Greenery	23	36
	Sounds	4	0
	Sunlight	3	4
	Water	14	14
Total		50	58
Park Design	Amenities	7	7
	Animal-Friendly	1	6
	Paths	4	5
	Seating & Rest Areas	16	16
	Spatial Layout	4	11
Total		32	45
Maintenance	Clean & Tidy	3	6
	Restrictions	2	0
Total		5	6

Social Presence	Animals	9	8
	No Dealers	1	0
	Positive People	2	2
Total		12	10
Subjective Experience	Beauty	4	5
	Peaceful Atmosphere	4	4
Total		8	9
Park Role	Escape & Retreat	2	3
	Place for Activities	7	5
	Place to Socialise	2	1
Total		11	9

Relative Importance of Park Features for Pleasantness. To get a first impression of how important participants perceived different park features to be, the lowest, highest and mean rank, and the standard deviation per item and group were calculated (Appendix F). However, these values did not provide a good idea of group differences. Therefore, a Wilcoxon rang sum test was run to look for significant differences between queer and non-queer participants and a Glass rank biserial correlation with a confident interval of 95% for the effect size calculated (see Table 4). While there might not be a great difference between groups in regards to which features make them like a park, several significant p-values imply queer and non-queer participants seemed to differ in how important they perceive different park features to be.

Safety Measures. A Wilcoxon rang sum test revealed significant differences in participants' ranking of camera surveillance ($p < .001$), clearly marked exits ($p < .001$), open spaces ($p < .001$), presence of security or police ($p < .001$) and streetlights ($p < .001$). Queer participants ranked camera surveillance ($r_{rb} = -.148$), clearly marked exits ($r_{rb} = -.229$), presence of security or police ($r_{rb} = -.209$) and streetlights ($r_{rb} = -.236$) significantly lower and open spaces ($r_{rb} = .188$) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results suggest queer participants perceived camera surveillance, clearly marked exits, presence of

security and police and streetlights as less important for a park to feel pleasant. However, they thought accessible and clearly marked walking paths and open spaces were more important for a pleasant park compared to non-queer participants.

Amenities. A Wilcoxon rang sum test revealed significant differences in participants' ranking of benches and communal seating areas (p = .013), inclusive public bathrooms (p = < .001), public infrastructure (p < .001), rain shelters (p = .041), recreational areas (p = .003) and shops or cafés (p = .003). Queer participants ranked benches and communal seating areas (r_{rb} = -.09), public infrastructure (r_{rb} = -.264) and shops or cafés (r_{rb} = -.111) significantly lower and inclusive public bathrooms (r_{rb} = .196), recreational areas (r_{rb} = .109) and rain shelters (r_{rb} = .076) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results imply, compared to non-queer participants, queer participants find benches and communal seating areas, public infrastructure and shops or cafés less important for a park to be pleasant. Furthermore, compared to non-queer participants, queer-participants thought inclusive public bathrooms, and recreational areas are more important for a park to be pleasant.

Maintenance. A Wilcoxon rang sum test revealed significant differences in participants' ranking of trash cans (p = .002) and vegetation density (p < .001). Queer participants ranked trash cans (r_{rb} = .114), and vegetation density (r_{rb} = .406), significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results suggest queer participants find park maintenance more important for a park to feel pleasant then non-queer participants.

Nature. A Wilcoxon rang test revealed significant differences in participants' ranking of forests and trees (p < .001) and water features (p < .001). Queer participants ranked water elements (r_{rb} = -.136) significantly lower and forests and trees (r_{rb} = .133) significantly higher than non-queer participants. These results imply, compared to each other, queer participants prefer parks with forests and trees, and non-queer participants prefer parks with water elements.

Table 4

Wilcoxon Rang Sum Test, Effect Size, Range and Mean Quality of Life Ranking

Park Feature	WilcoxonW *p*	Correlation	Mean Queer	Mean Non-Queer
		Safety Measures		
Accessible and Clearly-Marked Walking Paths	122200 .825	-.008 [-.085, 0.066]	1-20 9.5(5.37)	1-18 9.64(5.7)
Camera Surveillance	95400 <.001	-.148 [-.223, -.073]	1-20 17(4.82)	1-20 16.54(4.59)
Clearly Marked Exits	86400 <.001	-.229 [-.3, -.155]	7-20 15.6(3.4)	5-19 14.46(3.57)
Open Spaces	146400 <.001	.188 [.119, .259]	1-18 6.05(4)	1-20 7.71(5.17)
Presence of Security or Police	93000 <.001	-.209 [-.27, -.138]	2-20 17.34(4.72)	2-20 16.36(5.05)
Streetlights	85600 <.001	-.236 [-.316, -.161]	3-18 10.85(4.86)	2-16 8.79(3.87)
		Amenities		
Benches and Communal Seating Areas	117200 .013	-.09 [-.162, -.019]	1-13 6.57(3.73)	1-13 5.93(3.52)
Inclusive Public Bathrooms	134000 <.001	.196 [.116, .28]	2-18 9.8(5.33)	3-18 11.36(4.62)
Pet Friendly Places	110400 .703	-.014 [-.092, .063]	3-17 11.8(4.38)	2-20 12.29(4.68)
Playground for Children and Families	117000 .891	-.075 [-.075, .065]	1-20 10.24(4.91)	2-20 10.29(5.39)
Public Infrastructure	86600 <.001	-.264 [-.335, -.202]	5-20 13.05(4.06)	4-20 13.71(4.06)
Rain Shelters	120600 .041	.076 [0.001, 0.15]	9-17 13.6(2.68)	4-20 13.71(4.06)
Recreational Areas	130400 .003	.109 [.036, .187]	1-20 10.57(5.56)	2-20 11.68(5.24)
Shops or Cafés	104600 .003	-.111 [-.184 -.035]	3-20 13.48(4.69)	3-20 12.79(4.62)
		Maintenance		
Maintenance of Park Infrastructure	128000 .288	.039 [-.036, .108]	1-18 8.18(5.05)	1-18 8.5(4.67)
Trash Cans	131000 .002	.114 [0.039, .186]	1-18 7.81(4.39)	1-17 8.54(4.17)

Vegetation Density	165400 <.001	.406 [.344, .468]	1-18 7.81(4.98)	2-20 11.93(5.76)
		Nature		
Decorative Elements	113200 .314	-.037 [-.113, .034]	1-19 8.1(5.63)	1-19 7.5(5.26)
Forests and Trees	139600 <.001	.133 [.067, .203]	1-17 4.5(4.45)	1-19 5.79(5.15)
Water Elements	106400 <.001	-.136 [-.207, -.065]	1-18 6.95(5.72)	1-20 5.39(4.58)

Note. For a better overview significant park features were coloured: red means queer participants ranked them higher, violet means non-queer participants ranked them higher.

Participants' Park Designs

Choice of Park Features. Queer and non-queer participants did not differ greatly in their choice of park features and how often they placed each feature (see Table 5). The only differences being in their choice in security measures. Less queer than non-queer participants placed police or security in their parks. Additionally, non-queer people that placed security or police in their parks placed on average twice as many compared to queer participants. Although almost the same number of queer and non-queer participants placed surveillance cameras, non-queer participants placed on average more cameras in their ideal park than queer participants. While non-queer participants placed on average more police or security and surveillance cameras, queer participants incorporated on average more exits and entrances into their ideal park.

Safety measures, amenities and natural elements placed most often by both queer and non-queer participants were streetlights, communal seating areas and greenery. Across categories and groups, the park features most often placed were natural elements (animals, greenery, insect hotels, tropical house and water features).

These results suggest queer and non-queer participant's ideal parks do not differ greatly from each other. Both groups prefer parks with lights, communal seating areas and greenery or nature in general. However, queer participants seem to prefer parks with less police or security and surveillance cameras, and more exits and entrances than non-queer participant.

Table 5

Participants Use of Stamps

Category	Park Feature	Queer	Non-Queer
Safety Measures	Exits and Entrances	96/20(17.05%)	60/18(8.93%)
	Fences	117/10(20.78%)	128/8(19.05%)
	Paths	16/16(2.84%)	13/13(1.93%)
	Bridges	3/3(0.53%)	2/2(0.3%)
	Police or Security	11/8(1.95%)	37/16(5.51%)
	Signposts	55/15(9.77%)	71/20(10.57%)
	Streetlights	230/23(40.85%)	278/26(41.37%)
	Surveillance Cameras	35/12(9.41%)	83/17(12.35%)
Total		563/23(31.54%)	672/28(28.67%)
Amenities	Communal Seating Areas	144/23(61.54%)	187/27(53.74%)
	Boats	0	1/1(0.29%)
	Cafés/Shops/Restaurants	12/9(5.13%)	27/19(7.76%)
	Dog Parks	2/2(0.85%)	2/2(0.57%)
	Drinking Fountain	0	1/1(0.29%)
	Parking	3/1(1.28%)	6/2(1.72%)
	Playgrounds	25/20(10.68%)	36/22(10.34%)
	Public Bathrooms	33/18(14.1%)	59/25(16.95%)
	Sport Facilities	15/11(6.41%)	29/17(8.33%)
Total		234/23(13.11%)	348/28(14.85%)
Maintenance	Trashcans	56/13(3.14%)	119/18(5.08%)
Nature	Animals	2/1(0.21%)	4/2(0.33%)
	Greenery	763/23(81.87%)	1021/28(84.73%)
	Insect Hotels	0	1/1(0.08%)
	Tropical House	1/1(0.11%)	0
	Water Features	166/23(17.81%)	179/28(14.85%)
Total		932/23(52.21%)	1205/28(51.41%)
All Features		1785/23(43.23%)	2344/28(56.77%)

Note. For park features, the first number shows how often a feature was placed and the second how many participants placed it. The percentages indicate how often a feature was placed relative to all features of the same category. The same is depicted for categories, the first number is the sum of all features within the category, the second how many participants placed at least one feature within that category. The percentages indicate how often features from that category were placed relative to all features. For a better overview some rows were coloured, features placed more often by queer participants were coloured red and features placed more often by non-queer participants violet. Features that were placed most often within a category regardless of group identity were coloured green, so was the category that

made up most features paced.

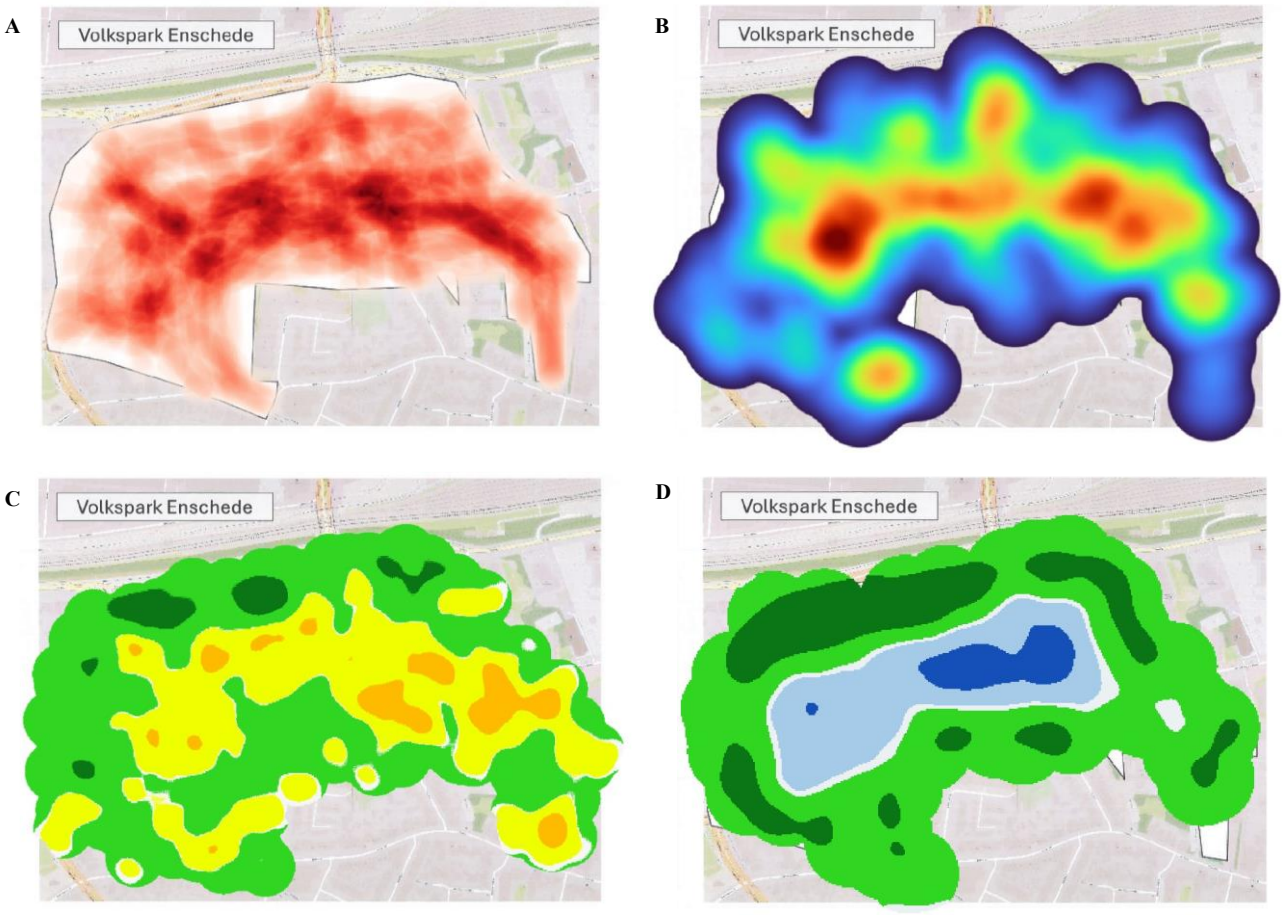
Placement of Park Features. A comparison between specific park features placed by queer and non-queer participants yielded no great difference, implying queer and non-queer participants did no only like the same park features but also agreed upon where to place them. To analyse these placements line density maps (paths), heatmaps (trees, water features and signposts) and comparison maps (lights vs. trees and water features vs. trees) were used.

The majority of participants who placed paths, drew them from the lower right side, through the middle, to the lower left side of the park (see figure 2a). The placement of signposts (see figure 2b) is similar to the placement of paths. Moreover, when comparing the placement of lights to the placement of trees, participants tended to place more lights and less trees where they also placed paths (see figure 2c). This pattern of tree placement did not only emerge when comparing trees with lights. A comparison between trees and water features shows participants prefer to have trees at the outskirts and water features in the middle of their park (see figure 2d). These are the same locations participants generally tended to place trees and water features (see Appendix G). Other Park features did not show great patterns, either because they were placed throughput the park or because only a few participants placed them.

These results suggest regardless of identifying as queer or not, participants want to walk through the middle of the park, they want to see and know where they are going and they prefer walking alongside some kind of water feature. Additionally, while they like to have trees in their parks they prefer them to not be in the middle but rather the outskirts of parks.

Figure 2

Placement of Paths, Signposts, *Streetlights*, Water Features and Trees



Note. (A) Paths density: the darker the colour the greater the density of paths and the agreement between participants, (B) Heatmap of signposts: warmer colours represent greater, while cooler colours represent less placement of signposts, (C) Comparison map of lights and trees: green colours represent trees while yellow and orange colours represent lights and (D) Comparison map of trees and water features: green colours represent trees while blue colours represent water features, the darker the colour the more often a park features was placed, white means there is only a little to no difference in placement.

Discussion

Summary of Results

Overall, queer participants did not differ much from non-queer participants. Queer participants felt as safe in public parks as non-queer participants and named similar features, when asked what made a park feel safe and pleasant. The park features named most often were nature for pleasantness and visibility for safety. Accordingly, the majority of participants preferred to visit parks in daylight for safety reasons. There was only one obvious difference between participants' descriptions of a safe and a pleasant park. When naming paths, participants wanted wide and clear paths for safety, but small and hidden paths for pleasantness.

An analysis of participants' park designs revealed similar themes. For most park features participants did not differ much in how often and where they placed a feature. From all safety measures, streetlights were placed most often. Additionally, half of all park features participants placed were natural elements. When designing their parks, participants drew paths mostly through the middle of the park. Which is where they also tended to place most signposts and more lights in comparison to trees. The majority of trees were placed at the outskirts of the park while water features were mostly placed in the middle. The only difference between queer and non-queer participants' designs was their usage of safety measures. Queer participants tended to place more exits and entries but less cameras and police or security compared to non-queer participants.

Interestingly queer and non-queer participants also differed in how important they thought specific features were. Regarding safety, queer participants found nature and safety measures more important than non-queer participants. However, they ranked camera surveillance and presence of security or police lower compared to non-queer participants. In regards to pleasantness queer participants ranked most safety measures lower than non-queer participants. Furthermore, queer participants ranked features contributing to maintenance higher for both safety and pleasantness.

In conclusion, queer and non-queer individuals may not differ much in what they perceive as a safe and pleasant park. According to the results, they want to have an overview of their surroundings to feel safe; they want to see and know where they are going. Additionally, they want natural elements like greenery and water feature for a park to be pleasant. However, queer and non-queer individuals may differ in what kinds of safety measures they want parks to have. Queer individuals may prefer a park with more entries and exits but less surveillance by both cameras and police or security.

Support for Previous Research

Although not the objective of this thesis, some of the results support previous research. Participants named different roles they liked about parks; they offer a possibility to escape the city and connect to nature, they are places to do a lot of different activities and places to socialise. Among others, these park roles were found in previous research (David Ellis & Ryan Schwartz, 2016). Additionally, participants listed activities they liked to do when visiting a park that were similar in theme. They liked to socialise, exercise, engage in individual recreational activities or rest. All of these park activities had already been discovered in previous research (Dinda & Ghosh, 2021; Maruthaveeran, 2017; Taylor et al., 2020). However, unlike previous research suggests participants did not report to use parks as a means of transportation, which might have been because the question was about what participants liked to do when visiting a park, not what they liked to use parks for.

Theoretical Implications – How Queer Individuals do (not) Differ

Since academic literature on queer individuals and public parks is rare, this thesis is a meaningful contribution to the understanding of queer individuals' perspectives and needs. Especially, because previous research did not focus on what makes parks safe and pleasant for queer individuals to be in. The results of this thesis suggest there are no great differences in what park features people of different sexual orientation find safe and pleasant. However, they may find these features to be of different importance based on their experiences and identity.

Overall, the data suggests the most important features for a safe and pleasant park are visibility and nature. Participants reported visibility would be important to them for a park to feel safe. This sentiment is in line with previous research which suggests lighting is especially important in urban areas with unkempt greenery (Rahm et al., 2021). Therefore, lighting may be especially important in public parks with more greenery. Furthermore, participants found nature to be important for a park to be pleasant. Participants may have felt this way because they may visit parks to take a break and escape the city. Previous research has shown that nature has several beneficial effects, such as evoking positive emotions, reducing stress and increasing self-reported happiness and well-being (Ballew & Omoto, 2018; Capaldi et al., 2014; Franco et al., 2017; Gidlow et al., 2016; James et al., 2015; Roe et al., 2013; White et al., 2019) People visiting parks may do so for their positive effects which make natural elements important features for a park to be pleasant.

Although Meyer's (as cited in Frost & Meyer, 2023) minority stress theory suggests queer people may experience more stress in public spaces and might therefore feel less safe

compared to non-queer individuals, queer participants did not feel more or less safe in public parks than non-queer participants. An explanation may be the places of data collection. The data was collected in the Netherlands and Germany, both countries advocate for the legal equality and protection of queer individuals (Federal Foreign Office, 2023; Government of the Netherlands, n.d.). This legal protection may have influenced participants' safety perception of public spaces.

While queer and non-queer participants did not differ greatly in what they perceived to make a park safe, they differed in how important they perceived specific features to be. Queer participants rated more safety measures higher compared to non-queer-participants. This difference may have been because queer people are more likely to become the victim of a violent crime (Meyer & Flores, 2025) which may cause a greater need for safety measures for a park to feel safe. However, queer participants ranked camera surveillance and presence police and security lower compared to non-queer participants. Although queer people are more likely to ask the police for help, they are also more likely stopped by the police and less likely to call the police in the future (Luhur et al., 2021). These tendencies indicate queer people may trust the police less than non-queer people and may therefore not perceive camera surveillance and presence of police and security as park features increasing safety. The missing trust in surveillance by cameras and police or security may stem from a structural discrimination of queer individuals (Hatzenbuehler, 2016; van der Toorn et al., 2020).

Furthermore, queer participants ranked amenities that might imply the presence of other visitors as more important (benches and communal seating areas, pet friendly places and playgrounds for families and children) then non-queer participants. Queer participants may have ranked these features higher because they tend to visit parks more often by themselves compared to non-queer participants which might cause a higher need for other visitors to be present for a park to feel safe (Loewen et al., 1993).

Moreover, queer participants ranked maintenance and nature as more important. Previous research and theory suggest natural elements may lower fears and smaller offences like vandalism may lead to greater offences (Maskaly & Boggess, 2014; Navarette-Hernandez & Afarin, 2023). Both nature and maintenance may therefore be more important to queer individuals than to non-queer individuals as they are at greater risk to becoming the victim of a serious crime (Meyer & Flores, 2025).

In regards to pleasantness, queer and non-queer participants did not show much difference for nature but for safety measures and maintenance. Queer participants ranked safety measures lower and maintenance higher compared to non-queer participants. Queer

participants may have ranked safety measures as less important than non-queer participants because they are exposed to unsafe situations and threats more often than non-queer participants (Meyer, 2003, as cited in Frost & Meyer, 2023; Meyer & Flores, 2025). The higher frequency of threats may cause queer individuals to be hypervigilant, expecting a certain baseline level of risk (Rostosky et al., 2021). Consequently, queer participants may have thought something else like park maintenance to be more important than safety measurements for a park to feel pleasant as they are used to dealing with unsafe situations more often, making them accustomed to them and not expecting otherwise.

Conclusively, despite queer individuals not feeling less safe in public parks than non-queer individuals, they might still distrust safety measures that are dependent on institutional structures (e.g., cameras, police officers or security guards) and prefer safety measures that are more dependent on an individual level (visibility, coping with fears through nature, maintenance or presence of other individuals). This distrust may stem from a structural discrimination queer individuals are more or less used to and shows that despite governmental efforts, queer individuals are still facing challenges non-queer individuals may not face. Even if this discrepancy is not always visible at first glance.

Practical Implications

The findings of this thesis do not only hold meaningful contributions to the research community. These findings may also serve as a basis to create inclusive park designs, making public parks more accessible to everybody, regardless of sexual orientation. Specifically, to be safe and pleasant public parks need to include greenery, water elements and lights. When considering other safety measures than streetlights, officials should keep in mind societal structures that may influence the perceived efficacy of cameras and police officers or security guards. To be more inclusive, a park should not only relay on safety measures based in institutional structures but incorporate other safety measures as well. Regarding the layout, landscape architects should make sure park visitors are able to understand and see where they are going. The results recommend to place trees at the outskirts of parks and paths on the inside, ensuring a more open design and a better overview of the surroundings. In addition to the low vegetation density in the centre, professionals should place signposts alongside paths to ensure park visitor are able to orient themselves. These guidelines may be especially important for the Volkspark as its outline was used to gather the data.

Additionally, other researchers may profit from the method used to gather data. The cork stamps and park designs printed on paper are a low-tech method with no language barrier to collect data everywhere a researcher can go with everyone they meet. Moreover,

this method is cost-efficient and several participants may be able to take part in the study at the same time saving researchers a lot of money and time. Because this method is low-tech another benefit may be that it can be used with people who are not good as using technology or do not have access to it. Furthermore, the results suggest this method may work in combination with other methods resulting in a holistic view of people's needs and even reflecting how societal structures may influence individuals. However, the creation of stamps from scratch and the visual analysis of participants' park designs may take a lot of time and patience. Therefore, this type of method is not suitable for projects that are limited in time or that include over 50 participants. Researchers conducted such projects may need to adapt the data analysis first and develop a method that allows for more computer-based analysation.

Limitations

The results suggest there are no great differences between queer and non-queer individuals in regards to what they perceive to be safe and pleasant parks. However, the sample may not represent the queer community as a whole as it consists mainly of cis bisexual individuals and only a very few non-binary people. Therefore, trans and other genderqueer people, as well as people on the asexual and aromantic spectrum are underrepresented. Additionally, the study may not say anything about people who are not monogamous and only very little about homosexual individuals. These groups may have different needs and consequently a different view on what makes a park feel safe and pleasant to be in (Fassinger & Arseneau, 2007).

Another limitation are the ranking questions. Participants found these difficult to answer and said they would sort some of the features randomly as they may have not been very important. Additionally, participants may have interpreted items differently or expected items to influence safety and pleasantness differently. For example, vegetation density may have been interpreted to mean either low or high density. Consequently, participants may have been different in their ranking because they were influenced by confounding variables that could not be taken into account.

Moreover, results may have been influenced by participants' use of stamps. Some participants placed only one stamp to represent several items of the same group. For example, participants may have placed only one tree or flower to represent a forest or flower field. One participant specifically noted their park design included streetlights next to paths in regular intervals although they only placed a few streetlights next to paths.

Future Research

When replicating this study, future researchers should include more stamps.

Participants specifically requested stamps representing the presence of animals, people and bikes, exits and entrances, big signs or maps for orientation, (petting) zoos, dog parks or pet-playgrounds, waterfall, artistic sculptures or art in general, and one stamp to represent all sorts of sports, not only football and basketball. Moreover, other stamps may be created and used that represent a group of items rather than one single item. For example, a stamp representing a small forest instead of a single tree. Another aspect of this study to improve are the ranking questions. Maybe a solution could be to decrease the number of items and create tables to write the rank next to the item. Additionally, the items may need to be defined more clearly. For example, instead of vegetation density, the item could be high vegetation density.

Future researchers may also create park maps based on the findings of this thesis and ask a comparable group of people which park layouts they do (not) find pleasant and safe, and why they do so. It may be interesting to explore whether queer participants prefer parks with less cameras and police officers or security guards.

Moreover, to understand if other individuals of the queer community have a different perspective on safe and pleasant parks, future research should expand the diversity of the sample for a comparison. Future research should not only diversify the sample in regards to sexual orientation and gender. A group of people that may yield different results are individuals beyond the academic field as the differences within queer and non-queer groups may only be small if most participants have an academic background and may therefore be part of the same social class.

Lastly, future research may compare safety increasing to safety threatening features, and pleasantness increasing to pleasantness threatening features, this might give a better understanding of whether to increase safety one must sacrifices pleasantness and vice versa. It might be especially interesting to explore whether queer participants not only prefer parks with less cameras and police officers or security guards, but also if their presents may threaten queer individuals' feelings of safety.

Conclusion

This thesis' aim was to provide guidelines for the creation of inclusive parks by answering the question: what makes public parks safe and pleasant for queer individuals to be in? Based on participants' answers and park designs, queer people may not differ greatly from non-queer individuals in what they like about public parks and what makes them feel safe. However, they may differ on how important they perceive a specific park feature to be for a park to be pleasant and safe. To feel safe, queer people perceive safety measures as more important, but security cameras and presence of police and security as less important than

non-queer individuals. Furthermore, queer individuals ranked amenities that may suggest a greater presence of other visitors, park maintenance and natural elements higher than non-queer participants. These differences may have been because queer individuals are more likely to become victims of violent crimes and are therefore more concerned with their safety than non-queer individuals (Meyer, 2003, as cited in Frost & Meyer, 2023; Meyer & Flores, 2025). Although queer individuals may be more concerned with their safety, they ranked surveillance cameras and presence of police and security lower, which may be due to a distrust in the police (Luhur et al., 2021). In regards to pleasantness, queer participants ranked safety measures lower and park maintenance higher. This difference may be because queer individuals experience higher levels of vigilance and are more accustomed to unsafe situations to the extent that they do expect a certain baseline level of risk, even for places they experience as pleasant (Rostosky et al., 2021). The differences between queer and non-queer individuals imply that despite governmental effort, queer individuals may face challenges non-queer individuals may usually not face.

Despite its limitations, this study demonstrates the need for urban planning processes that actively include queer voices to ensure inclusive designs when creating public spaces such as parks. Moreover, it shows that queer and non-queer individuals may not differ greatly from each other but face different societal and structural challenges that need to be accounted for. Besides theoretical implications, this study also provides design guidelines for how to create public parks that are both safe and pleasant to be in and demonstrates the usefulness of stamps and paper as a low-tech and language-independent tool for data collection.

Nonetheless, it is important to understand that this sample cannot represent all queer individuals. Especially, since it was not representative of the queer community as a whole. Therefore, future research should focus on collecting the opinions of queer individuals that are for example trans, genderqueer, asexual, aromantic and/or not-monogamous as they may have different needs in regards to safe and pleasant parks.

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Appendix A

AI Statement

During the preparation of this work, I used ChatGPT to help me with my R code and brainstorm names for my inductive coding scheme. After using this tool, I thoroughly reviewed and edited the content as needed, taking full responsibility for the final outcome.

Appendix B

Figure B1

Flyer English Version

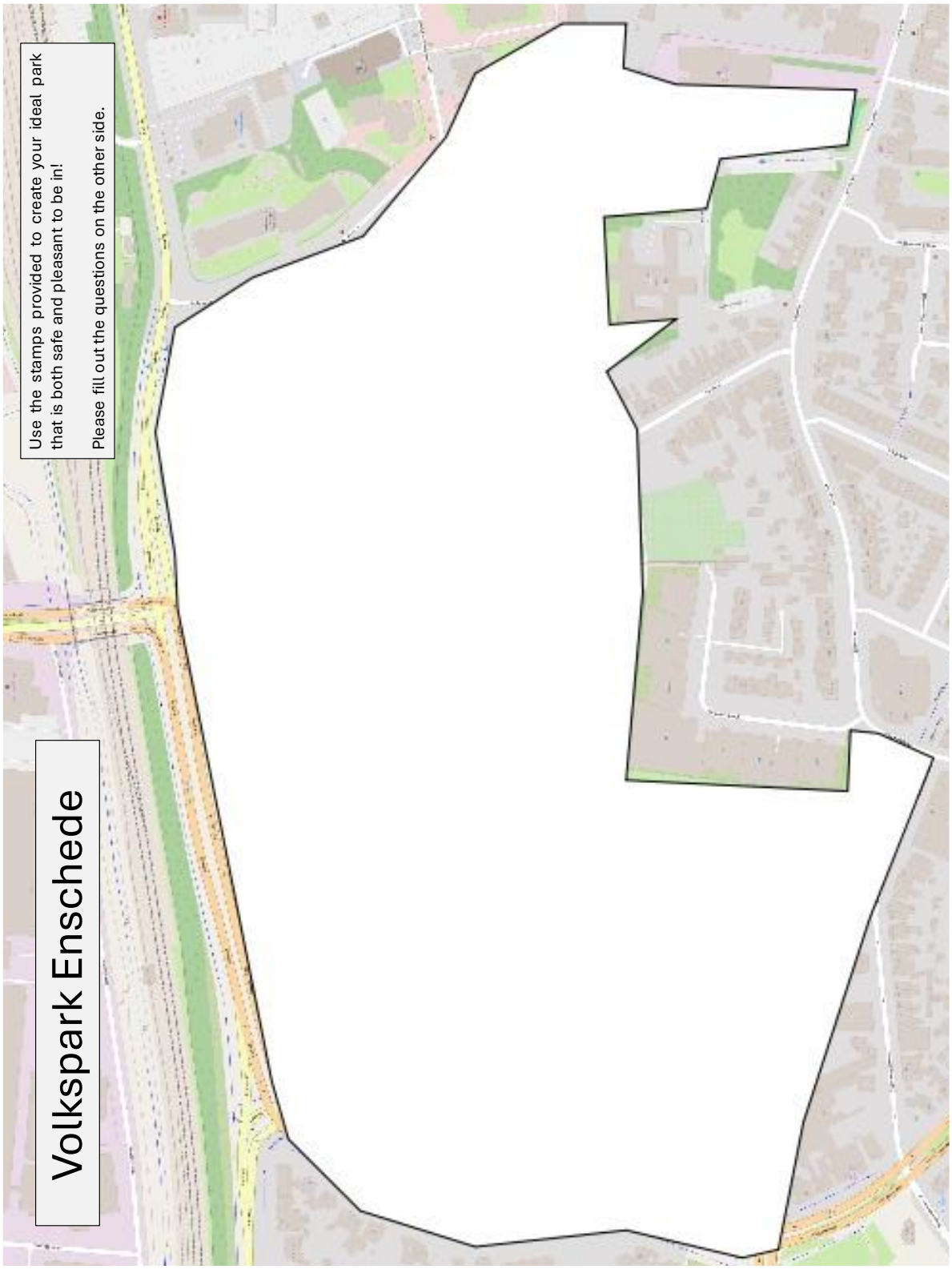
Figure B2

Flyer German Version

Appendix C

Figure C1

Park Design English Version Front



Please tick the appropriate boxes

I understand the study information read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. ☐

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason. ☐

I understand that taking part in the study involves filling in a survey questionnaire and that the information I provide will be used for research purposes and a report to the municipality of Enschede. ☐

Please give written consent (yes or no): Date

_____ _____

If you have any other questions or remarks, feel free to reach out to me or my fellow researchers:

Prisca Koppelaar (p.m.a.koppelaar@student.utwente.nl)
Marie Sophie Feldmann (m.s.feldmann@student.utwente.nl)
Erin McCulloh (e.m.mcculloch@student.utwente.nl)

Please answer these questions:

Age?
Gender?
Highest Education?
Nationality(ies)?
Sexual Orientation?
Job?
Time lived in Europe?

When do you feel safe in a park? What makes a park feel safe?

What aspects make you like a park/what do you enjoy about parks?

When you go to the park, do you usually go alone or are you accompanied by somebody?

Do you have a pet you like to take to the park with you?

How often do you visit, on average, a park in general in a month?

Does the time-of-day matter with regards to your experience in the park? If so, why?

What kind of activities do you typically engage in when in a park? What do you do?

Do you live in the proximity to any park?

Do you know the Volkspark in Enschede?

How often do you visit the Volkspark in Enschede in a month?

How close do you live to the Volkspark in Enschede?

In general, how safe do you feel in public parks?

Totally unsafe ( ) Somewhat unsafe ( ) Undecided ( ) Somewhat safe ( ) Totally safe ( )

Rank from most to least important. What features of a park contribute the most to your perception of the quality of life?

Rank from most to least important. What features of a park contribute the most to your perception of safety and security?

(1) Inclusive public bathrooms
(2) Camera surveillance
(3) Maintenance of park infrastructure
(4) Presence of security or police
(5) Street lamps
(6) Clearly marked exits
(7) Vegetation density
(8) Open spaces
(9) Playground for children and families
(10) Recreational areas
(e.g., outdoor gym or football pitch)
(11) Benches and communal seating areas
(e.g., also incl. BBQ spots)
(12) Pet friendly places
(13) Decorative elements
(e.g., flower gardens & insect hotels)
(14) Water features
(e.g., lakes, fountains, small rivers)
(15) Forests and Trees
(16) Accessible and clearly-marked walking paths
(e.g., also passable for wheelchairs or strollers)
(17) Trash cans
(18) Shops or Cafés
(19) Rain shelters
(20) Public Infrastructure
(e.g., parking for bikes or cars, public transportation access)

Do you have any comments regarding the study or your park design?

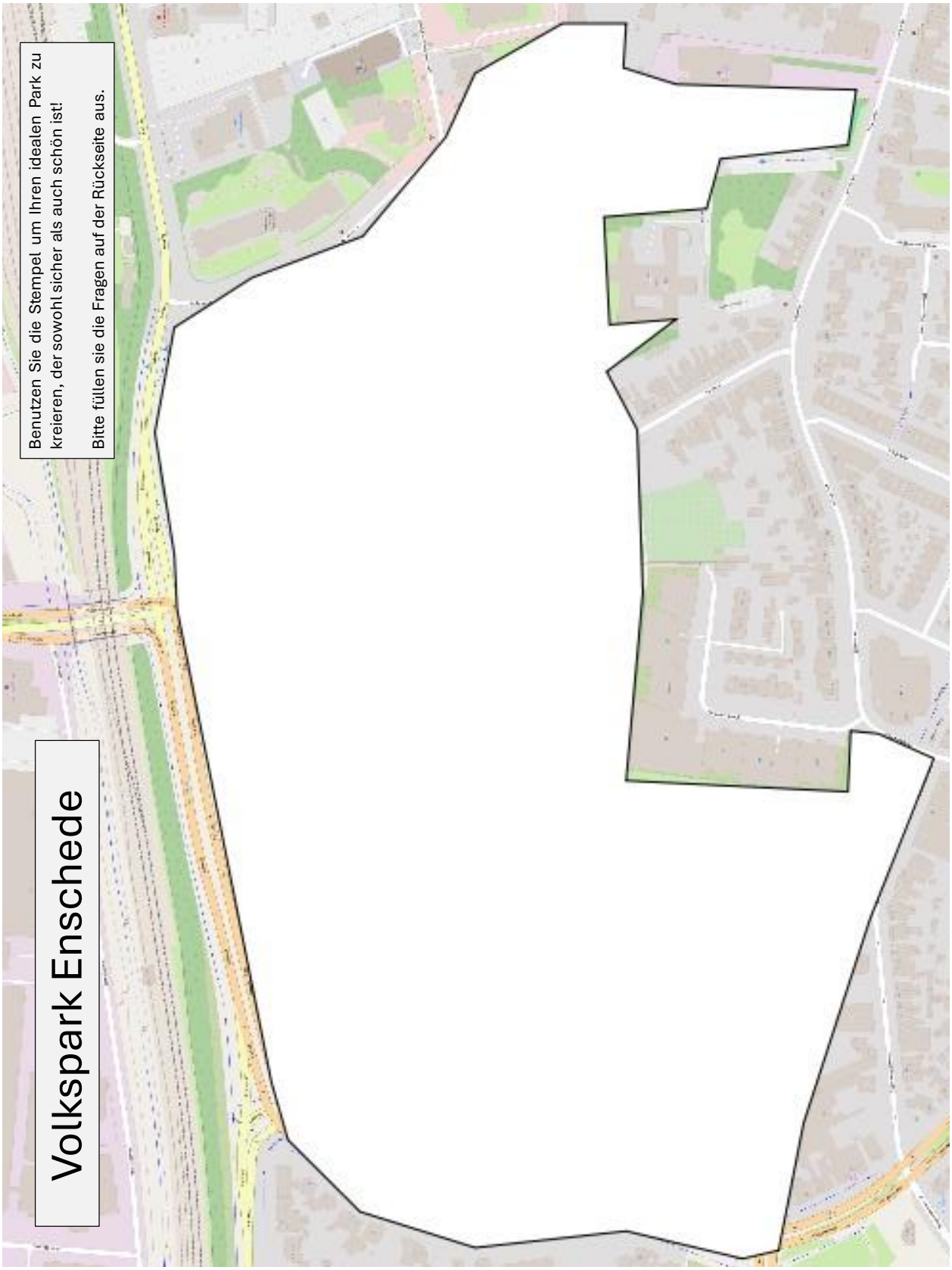
Were there any stamps you would have liked to have in addition to the ones we gave you?

Figure C2

Park Design English Version Back

Figure C3

Park Design German Version Front



Bitte kreuzen Sie die passenden Kästchen an

Ich verstehe die mir vorgelesenen Informationen zur Studie. Ich konnte Fragen zur Studie stellen und meine Fragen wurden zu meiner Zufriedenheit beantwortet. ☐

Ich gebe mein freiwilliges Einverständnis an dieser Studie teilzunehmen, und verstehe, dass ich Antworten verweigern und jederzeit aus der Studie austreten darf, ohne einen Grund nennen zu müssen. ☐

Ich verstehe, dass eine Teilnahme an der Studie das Ausfüllen eines Fragebogens beinhaltet, und dass die von mir geteilten Informationen für Recherchezwecke und einen Bericht für das Rathaus der Stadt Enschede benutzt werden. ☐

Bitte bestätigen Sie Ihr Einverständnis schriftlich (Ja oder Nein): Datum:

_____ _____

Wenn Sie zusätzliche Fragen oder Anmerkungen haben, kontaktieren Sie bitte mich, oder eine meiner Kolleginnen:
Prisca Koppelaar (p.m.a.koppelaar@student.utwente.nl)
Marie Sophie Feldmann: (m.s.feldmann@student.utwente.nl)
Erin McCulloh (e.m.mcculloch@student.utwente.nl)

Bitte beantworten Sie diese Fragen:

Alter?

Gender?

Höchster Bildungsgrad?

Nationalität(en)?

Sexuelle Orientierung?

Beruf?

Gelebte Zeit in Europa?

Wann fühlen Sie Sich in einem Park sicher?/Was trägt dazu bei, dass ein Park sich sicher anfühlt?

Welche Aspekte tragen dazu bei, dass Sie einen Park mögen?/Was mögen Sie an Parks?

Wenn Sie zu einem Park gehen, gehen Sie dann normalerweise alleine, oder werden Sie von jemandem begleitet?

Haben Sie ein Haustier, das Sie gerne mit in den Park nehmen?

Wie oft besuchen Sie, durchschnittlich, einen Park im Monat?

Ist die Tageszeit wichtig in Bezug auf Ihr Parkerlebnis? Wenn ja, wieso?

Was für Aktivitäten gehen Sie normalerweise nach, wenn Sie in einem Park sind? Was machen Sie?

Wohnen Sie in der Nähe irgendeines Parks?

Kennen Sie den Volkspark in Enschede?

Wie oft besuchen Sie den Volkspark in Enschede in einem Monat?

Wie nah wohnen Sie am Volkspark in Enschede?

Im Allgemeinen, wie sicher fühlen Sie Sich in öffentlichen Parks?

Absolut unsicher () Ein wenig unsicher () Unentschieden () Ein wenig sicher () Absolut sicher ()

Ordnen Sie vom Wichtigsten zum Unwichtigsten. Welche Merkmale eines Parks tragen am meisten zu Ihrer Wahrnehmung von Lebensqualität bei?

Ordnen Sie vom Wichtigsten zum Unwichtigsten. Welche Merkmale eines Parks tragen am meisten zu Ihrer Wahrnehmung von Sicherheit und Geborgenheit bei?

(1) Inklusive öffentliche Toiletten
(2) Kameraüberwachung
(3) Instandhaltung der Parkinfrastruktur
(4) Anwesenheit von Sicherheitsdienst oder Polizei
(5) Straßenlaternen
(6) Deutlich markierte Ausgänge
(7) Bepflanzungsdichte
(8) Freiflächen
(9) Spielplätze für Kinder und Familien
(10) Freizeitbereiche
(z. B. Outdoor-Fitnessstudio oder Fußballplatz)
(11) Bänke und Gemeinschaftssitzplätze
(z. B. auch inkl. Grillplätze)
(12) Haustierfreundliche Orte
(13) Dekorationselemente
(z. B. Blumengärten & Insektenhotels)
(14) Wasserelemente
(z. B. Seen, Brunnen, kleine Flüsse)
(15) Wälder und Bäume
(16) Barrierefreie und deutlich gekennzeichnete Gehwege
(z. B. auch für Rollstühle oder Kinderwagen befahrbar)
(17) Mülleimer
(18) Geschäfte und Cafés
(19) Regenüberdachungen
(20) Öffentliche Infrastruktur
(z. B. Parkplätze für Fahrräder oder Autos, Zugang zu öffentlichen Verkehrsmitteln)

Haben Sie Kommentare zu der Studie oder Ihrem Parkdesign?

Gab es Stempel, die Sie zusätzlich hätten haben wollen?

Figure C4

Park Design German Version Back

Figure C5

Park Design Dutch Version Front

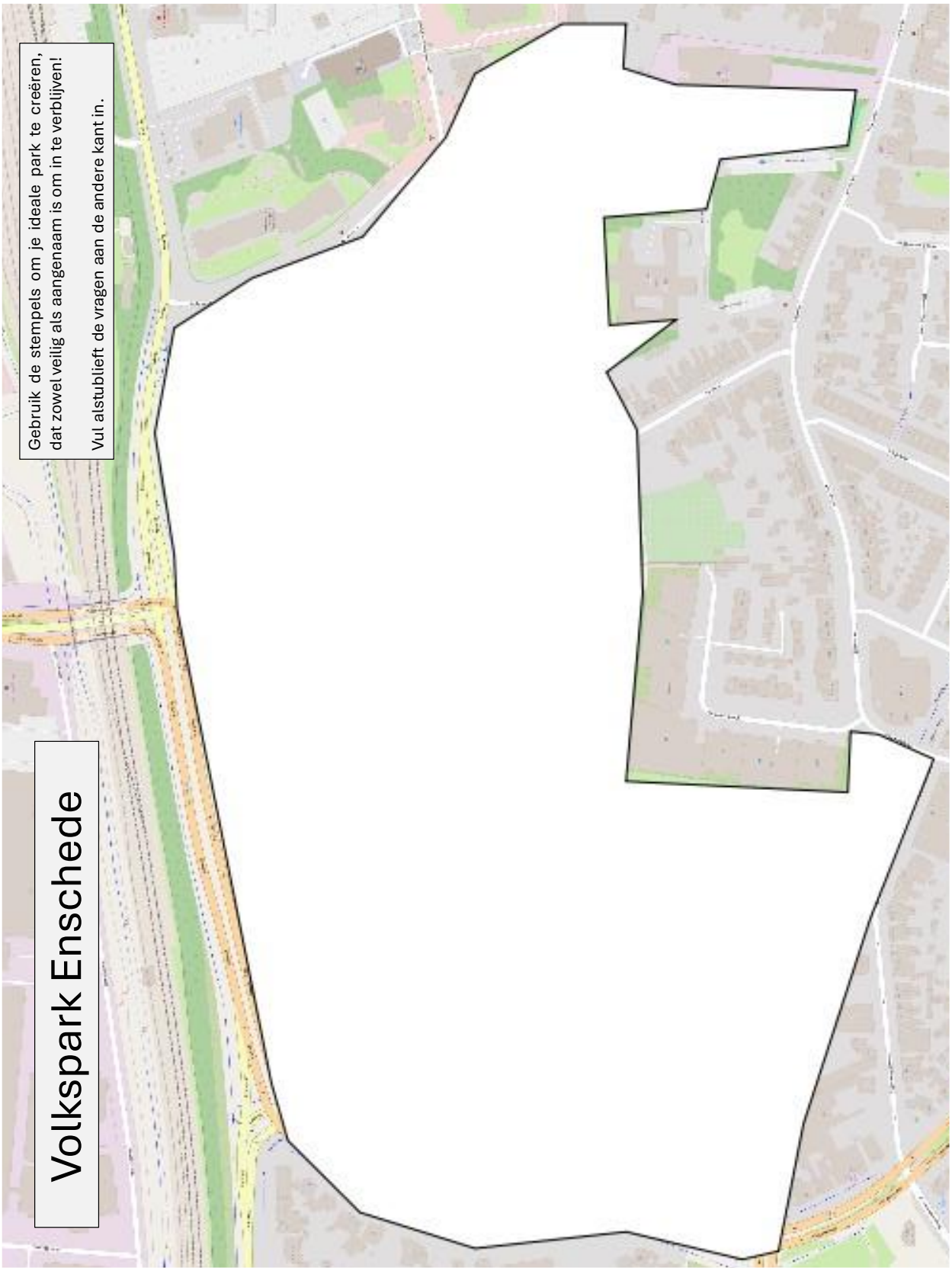


Figure C6

Park Design Dutch Version Front

Vink alstublieft de juiste vakjes aan

Ik begrijp de studie -informatie die mij is voorgelezen. Ik heb vragen kunnen stellen over het onderzoek en mijn vragen zijn naar mijn tevredenheid beantwoord. ☐

Ik geef vrijwillig toestemming om deel te nemen aan dit onderzoek en begrijp dat ik op elk moment kan weigeren om vragen te beantwoorden en me uit het onderzoek kan terugtrekken, zonder dat ik hiervoor een reden hoef op te geven. ☐

Ik begrijp dat deelname aan het onderzoek het invullen van een vragenlijst inhoudt en dat de door mij verstrekte informatie zal worden gebruikt voor onderzoeksdoeleinden en een rapportage aan de gemeente Enschede. ☐

Ik stem toe (ja of nee): Datum:
_____ _____

Als u nog andere vragen of opmerkingen heeft, neem dan gerust contact met mij of mijn collega-onderzoekers:
Prisca Koppelaar (p.m.a.koppelaar@student.utwente.nl)
Marie Feldmann: (m.s.feldmann@student.utwente.nl)
Erin McCulloh (e.m.mcculloch@student.utwente.nl)

Beantwoord deze vragen alstublieft:

Leeftijd? Seksuele oriëntatie?

Gender? Beroep?

Hoogst behaalde diploma? Hoelang woont u in Europa?

Nationaliteit(en)?

Wanneer voelt u zich veilig in een park? Wat maakt dat een park veilig aanvoelt?

Welke aspecten van een park vindt u leuk? Wat vindt u aangenaam aan een park?

Wanneer u naar een park gaat, gaat u eerder alleen of gaat er iemand met u mee?

Heeft u een huisdier dat u meeneemt naar het park?

Hoe vaak gaat u gemiddeld naar een park per maand?

Maakt het voor uw belevenis uit welk deel van de dag u een park bezoekt? Zo ja, waarom?

Wat voor activiteiten doet u normaliter als u in een park bent?

Woont u in de buurt van een park?

Kent u het Volkspark in Enschede?

Hoe vaak gaat u gemiddeld naar het Volkspark in Enschede per maand?

Hoe dichtbij woont u bij het Volkspark in Enschede?

Hoe veilig voelt u zich in het algemeen in openbare parken? (Selecteer er één)

Totaal onveilig () enigszins onveilig () Onbeslist () enigszins veilig () Helemaal veilig ()

Rangschik van meest naar minst belangrijk. Welke kenmerken van een park dragen het meest bij aan uw beleving van veiligheid?

Rangschik van meest belangrijk naar minst belangrijk. Welke kenmerken van een park dragen het meest bij aan uw beleving van welzijn?

(1) Inclusieve openbare toiletten
(2) Camerabewaking
(3) Onderhoud van park infrastructuur
(4) Aanwezigheid van beveiliging of politie
(5) Straatlantarens
(6) Duidelijk gemarkeerde uitgangen
(7) Vegetatiedichtheid
(8) Open ruimtes
(9) Speeltuin voor kinderen en families
(10) Recreatiegebieden (bijvoorbeeld een 'outdoor gym' of voetbalveld)
(11) Banken en gemeenschappelijke zitplekken (o.a. ook incl. BBQ-plekken)
(12) Huisdiervriendelijke plekken
(13) Decoratieve elementen (bijvoorbeeld bloemenperken & insectenhotels)
(14) Water elementen (bijvoorbeeld meren, fonteinen, kleine rivieren)
(15) Bossen en bomen
(16) Toegankelijke en duidelijk gemarkeerde wandelpaden (bijvoorbeeld ook begaanbaar voor rolstoelen of kinderwagens)
(17) Vuilnisbakken
(18) Winkels of cafés
(19) Schuilplaatsen voor de regen
(20) Openbare infrastructuur (bijvoorbeeld parkeergelegenheid voor fietsen of auto's, toegang tot openbaar vervoer)

Heeft u nog vragen of opmerkingen over de studie of uw parkontwerp?

Zijn er stempels die u graag had willen hebben naast de stempels die wij u hebben gegeven?

Appendix D

Informed Consent

Please tick the appropriate boxes

I understand the study information read to me. I have been able to ask questions about the study and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.

I understand that taking part in the study involves filling in a survey questionnaire and that the information I provide will be used for research purposes and a report to the municipality of Enschede.

Please give written consent (yes or no): Date

_____ _____

If you have any other questions or remarks, feel free to reach out to me or my fellow researchers:

Prisca Koppelaar (p.m.a.koppelaar@student.utwente.nl)

Marie Sophie Feldmann (m.s.feldmann@student.utwente.nl)

Erin McCulloh (e.m.mcculloch@student.utwente.nl)

Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer these questions:

Age?

Gender?

Highest Education?

Nationality(ies)?

Sexual Orientation?

Job?

Time Lived in Europe?

Park Visitor Profile Questions

When you go to the park, do you usually go alone or are you accompanied by somebody?

Do you have a pet you like to take to the park with you?

How often do you visit, on average, a park in general in a month?

Does the time-of-day matter with regards to your experience in the park? If so, why?

What kind of activities do you typically engage in when in a park? What do you do?

Do you live in the proximity to any park?

Do you know the Volkspark in Enschede?

How often do you visit the Volkspark in Enschede in a month?

How close do you live to the Volkspark in Enschede?

Perception of Safety Questions

When do you feel safe in a park? What makes a park feel safe?

In general, how safe do you feel in public parks?

Totally unsafe ( ) Somewhat unsafe ( ) Undecided ( ) Somewhat safe ( ) Totally safe ( )

Rank from most to least important. What features of a park contribute the most to your perception of safety and security?

(1) Inclusive public bathrooms

(2) Camera surveillance

(3) Maintenance of park infrastructure

(4) Presence of security or police

(5) Street lamps

(6) Clearly marked exits

(7) Vegetation density

(8) Open spaces

(9) Playground for children and families

(10) Recreational areas

(e.g., outdoor gym or football pitch)

(11) Benches and communal seating areas

(e.g., also incl. BBQ spots)

(12) Pet friendly places

(13) Decorative elements

(e.g., flower gardens & insect hotels)

(14) Water features

(e.g., lakes, fountains, small rivers)

(15) Forests and Trees

(16) Accessible and clearly-marked walking paths (e.g., also passable for wheelchairs or strollers)

(17) Trash cans

(18) Shops or Cafés

(19) Rain shelters

(20) Public Infrastructure

(e.g., parking for bikes or cars, public transportation access)

Perception of Pleasantness Questions

What aspects make you like a park/what do you enjoy about parks?

Rank from most to least important. What features of a park contribute the most to your perception of the quality of life?

(1) Inclusive public bathrooms

(2) Camera surveillance

(3) Maintenance of park infrastructure

(4) Presence of security or police

(5) Street lamps

(6) Clearly marked exits

(7) Vegetation density

(8) Open spaces

(9) Playground for children and families

(10) Recreational areas

(e.g., outdoor gym or football pitch)

(11) Benches and communal seating areas

(e.g., also incl. BBQ spots)

(12) Pet friendly places

(13) Decorative elements

(e.g., flower gardens & insect hotels)

(14) Water features

(e.g., lakes, fountains, small rivers)

(15) Forests and Trees

(16) Accessible and clearly-marked walking paths (e.g., also passable for wheelchairs or strollers)

(17) Trash cans

(18) Shops or Cafés

(19) Rain shelters

(20) Public Infrastructure

(e.g., parking for bikes or cars, public transportation access)

Additional Questions

Do you have any comments regarding the study or your park design?

Were there any stamps you would have liked to have in addition to the ones we gave you?

Appendix E

Additional Tables – Coding Schemes

Table E1

Coding Scheme Numbers of (Un)Accompanied Visitors

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants	Non-Queer Participants
Alone	Only	4	2
	Usually	4	1
Total		8	3
In Company	Only	6	4
	Usually	6	14
Total		12	18
50/50		3	6

Table E2

Coding Scheme Types of Company

Subcode	Queer Participants	Non-Queer Participants
Friend(s)	2	10
Family		3
Significant Other		2
Dog	1	
Total	3	15

Table E3

Coding Scheme Activities

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants	Non-Queer Participants
Social Interactions	Chatting	2	5
	Eating & Drinking	15	20

	Meeting Friends	10	7
	Playing Games	7	5
	Visiting & Hosting Events		4
Total		34	41
Physical Activities	Exercising	5	7
	Strolling	19	24
Total		24	31
Individual Recreation	Creating	3	
	Listening	4	4
	Observing	4	8
	Reading	9	1
	Learning	3	1
Total		23	14
Relaxation	Enjoying Nature	4	4
	Resting	14	9
Total		18	13

Table E4

Coding Scheme Time of Day

Main Code	Subcode	Queer	Non-Queer
Time of day Matters	Annoying Crowds	3	2
	Creepy & Dangerous Nights	19	21
	Golden Sunset	2	1
	Notable Differences	3	1
	Pleasant Daylight	3	12
Total		30	37
Time of Day does not Matter		2	2
Total		2	2
More Important	Weather	2	

than Time of Day	
Total	2

Additional Tables – Coding Schemes by Sexual Orientation and Gender

Table E5

Coding Scheme Numbers of (Un)Accompanied Visitors

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Alone	Only	3		1	2	
	Usually	2	2			1
Total		5	2	1	2	1
In Company	Only	4	2		2	2
	Usually	5		1	13	1
Total		9	2	1	15	3
50/50		3			6	

Table E6

Coding Scheme Type of Types of Company

Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
	Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Friend(s)	2			9	1
Family				3	
Significant Other				2	
Dog	1				
Total	3			14	1

Table E7

Coding Scheme Activities

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male

Social Interactions	Chatting	2			5	
	Eating & Drinking	14	1		16	4
	Meeting Friends	9	1		7	
	Playing Games	4	2	1	4	1
	Visiting & Hosting Events				4	
Total		29	4	1	36	5
Physical Activities	Exercising	4	1		7	
	Strolling	14	3	2	21	3
Total		18	4	2	28	3
Individual Recreation	Creating	1	1	1		
	Listening	4			3	1
	Observing	3	1		7	1
	Reading	8		1		1
	Learning	1	2		1	
Total		17	4	2	11	3
Relaxation	Enjoying Nature	2	2		4	
	Resting	8	5	1	6	3
Total		10	7	1	10	3

Table E8

Coding Scheme Time of Day

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Time of day Matters	Annoying Crowds	3			2	
	Creepy & Dangerous Nights	16	1	2	17	4
	Golden Sunset	2				1
	Notable Differences	1	1	1	1	
	Pleasant Daylight	3			10	2
Total		25	2	3	28	7

Time of Day does not Matter		2	2
Total		2	2
More Important than Time of Day	Weather	2	
Total		2	

Table E9

Coding Scheme Perceived Safety

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Visibility	Light	13	5	3	15	4
	Overview	4	1		3	2
Total		17	6	3	18	6
Park Design	Amenities	1			2	
	Nature	1			8	
	Paths	7	2	2	4	
	Spatial Layout	5	3		12	
Total		14	5	2	26	
Maintenance	Clean & Tidy	6	1	3	14	2
	Reputation					1
Total		6	1	3	14	3
Social Presence	Positive People	12	2	1	12	2
	Free Animals	2			3	
	No Dealers or Drugged People	2		2	1	
Total		14	2	3	16	2
Subjective Experience	Peaceful Atmosphere	3		1		
	Feelings of Control		1		2	
Total		3	1	1	2	
Park Location		1			3	3

Total		1			3	3
Safety Measures	Cameras	1			1	
	Clear Signage		2			
	Emergency Telephone	1				
	Many Exits				2	
	Security/Police	1			2	
Total		3	2		4	

Table E10

Coding Scheme Perceived Pleasantness

Main Code	Subcode	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Nature	Air & Smell	1			3	
	Botanical Garden	1				
	Generally Mentioned	3		1		1
	Greenery	19	3	1	33	3
	Sounds	2	2			
	Sunlight	2	1		4	
	Water	8	4	2	13	1
Total		36	10	4	53	5
Park Design	Amenities	6	1		7	
	Animal-Friendly	1			5	1
	Paths	3	1		5	
	Seating & Rest Areas	13	3		15	1
	Spatial Layout	2	2		9	2
Total		25	7		41	4
Maintenance	Clean & Tidy	3			6	
	Restrictions		1	1		
Total		3	1	1	6	4
Social Presence	Animals	9			7	1
	No Dealers	1				

	Positive People	2			2	
Total		12			9	1
Subjective Experience	Beauty	4			3	2
	Peaceful Atmosphere	2	1	1	3	1
Total		6	1	1	6	3
Park Role	Escape & Retreat			2	3	
	Place for Activities	6	1		3	2
	Place to Socialise			2	1	
Total		6	1	4	7	2

Appendix F

Additional Tables – Range, Mean and Standard Deviation by Sexual Orientation and Gender

Table F1

Range, Mean and SD of Safety Ranking

Category	Feature	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Safety Measures	Accessible and Clearly-Marked Walking Paths (e.g., also passable for wheelchairs or Strollers)	1-17 5.7(4.6)	2-14 6(4.8)	7-13 10(3)	1-18 6.5(3.4)	5-14 9(3.4)
	Camera Surveillance	2-20 9.3(6.7)	5-20 11.5(6)	5-13 9(4)	1-20 7.8(7)	2-20 8(7.4)
	Clearly Marked Exits	1-15 5.3(3.4)	2-13 6.3(4.4)	2-7 4.5(2.5)	2-19 5.8(4.5)	3-9 5.8(2.8)
	Open Spaces	1-13 4.9(3.1)	1-9 5.5(3.2)	8-11 9.5(1.5)	1-19 6(4.8)	7-10 9(1.2)
	Presence of Security or Police	1-20 12.8(6.7)	6-8 7.5(0.9)	16-20 18(2)	1-20 6.4(6.7)	1-19 5.8(7.7)
	Streetlights	1-13 3.2(3)	1-2 1.3(0.4)	1 1(0)	1-9 3(2.4)	1-4 2.8(1.3)
Amenities	Benches and Communal Seating Areas (e.g., also inlc. BBQ spots)	2-19 10.2(4.8)	7-15 11.3(2.9)	11-12 11.5(0.5)	5-19 11(3.2)	11-18 14.5(3)
	Inclusive Public Bathrooms	4-20 12.1(4.9)	3-19 12.5(5.9)	6-9 7.5(1.5)	4-19 11.4(4.4)	4-20 13.8(6)
	Pet Friendly Places	3-20 11.7(4.6)	4-13 10.3(3.7)	14-15 14.5(0.5)	7-20 14.5(3.3)	7-19 13.5(4.3)

	Playground for Children and Families	4-19 10.7(4)	4-10 7.3(2.4)	4-10 7(3)	2-17 11.9(3.9)	5-17 9.8(4.6)
	Public Infrastructure (e.g., parking for bikes or cars, public transportation access)	2-16 9.8(4.3)	3-15 7.3(4.6)	4-14 9(5)	4-16 8.5(3)	1-12 6.8(3.98)
	Rain Shelters	7-20 13.5(3.9)	11-19 16(3)	17-19 18(1)	5-20 12.8(4.8)	6-17 12.8(4.2)
	Recreational Areas (e.g., Outdoor gym, or football pitch)	5-20 13.4(4.3)	10-14 11.8(1.5)	5-9 7(2)	3-18 12.6(4.2)	11-18 13.8(3)
	Shops or Cafés	3-20 10.2(5.9)	4-10 8.3(2.5)	3-12 7.5(4.6)	2-20 9.5-4.3	5-16 10.5(4.3)
Maintenance	Maintenance of Park Infrastructure	1-15 6.7(4.5)	2-9 6(2.6)	2-6 4(2)	1-18 8(4)	3-9 5(2.5)
	Trash Cans	1-20 12.6(5.8)	5-16 12(4.6)	3-8 5.5(2.5)	4-20 13.9(4.1)	4-14 10.8(4)
	Vegetation Density	1-20 12.9(6.5)	17-20 18.3(1)	10-20 15(5)	5-20 14.6(4.4)	6-17 12(4.7)
Nature	Decorative Elements (e.g., flower garden & insect hotels)	6-20 15(4.1)	13-18 15.5(1.8)	15-16 15(0.5)	3-20 14(4.8)	11-18 13.5(2.7)
	Forests & Trees	7-20 12.6(3.8)	16-20 18.5(1.7)	18 18(0)	5-20 16.2(3.3)	15-20 18.3(2)
	Water Elements (e.g., lakes, fountains, small rivers)	5-19 13.4(3.9)	14-19 17.3(2)	17-19 18(1)	3-20 15.9(4.5)	6-19 15(5.4)

Table F2

Range, Mean and SD of Quality of Life Ranking

Category	Feature	Queer Participants			Non-Queer Participants	
		Female	Male	Non-Binary	Female	Male
Safety Measures	Accessible and Clearly-Marked Walking Paths (e.g., also passable for wheelchairs or Strollers)	1-20 9.6(5.5)	7-19 11.3(4.7)	4-6 5(1)	1-18 9.8(5.9)	2-13 9(4.2)
	Camera Surveillance	1-20 16.2(5.6)	18-20 18.8(0.8)	19 19(0)	1-20 16.3(4.9)	16-20 17.8(1.8)
	Clearly Marked Exits	7-18 15.2(3.7)	14-20 17.3(2.2)	13-17 15(2)	5-18 14.2(3.7)	13-19 16(2.6)
	Open Spaces	2-12 5.9(2.8)	2-18 6.5(6.7)	1-11 6(5.1)	1-20 7.9(5.5)	4-9 6.8(2.3)
	Presence of Security or Police	2-20 16.7(5.4)	16-20 18.3(1.5)	20 20(0)	2-20 16.2(5.4)	15-20 17.3(1.8)
	Streetlights	3-17 9.4(4.7)	9-18 14.5(3.5)	12-16 14(2)	2-16 9.3(3.8)	2-8 5.5(2.6)
Amenities	Benches and Communal Seating Areas (e.g., also inlc. BBQ spots)	1-13 6.4(3.8)	2-12 6(3.8)	8-10 9(1)	1-12 5.8(3.5)	3-13 6.8(3.8)
	Inclusive Public Bathrooms	2-16 7.9(4.6)	13-18 15.5(1.8)	6-18 12(6.1)	3-18 10.9(4.4)	6-18 14(4.8)
	Pet Friendly Places	3-17 12.2(4.3)	4-12 8.5(3.6)	15-16 15.5(0.5)	2-20 12.3(4.9)	7-16 12.3(3.4)
	Playground for Children and Families	1-20 10.3(5.3)	7-18 10.8(4.4)	7-10 8.5(1.5)	2-20 10.1(5.4)	4-18 11.5(5.4)
	Public Infrastructure (e.g., parking for bikes or cars, public transportation access)	5-20 12.9(4.6)	11-16 14(1.9)	11-13 12(1)	1-20 11.3(5.2)	1-15 8(5)
	Rain Shelters	9-17 13.4(2.7)	10-17 14.3(3)	12-15 13.5(1.5)	4-20 14.3(3.7)	6-16 10.5(4.6)
	Recreational Areas (e.g., Outdoor gym, or football pitch)	1-20 11.4(5.6)	1-18 8.5(6.1)	8-9 8.5(0.5)	2-19 11.2(5.1)	7-20 14.5(5.3)

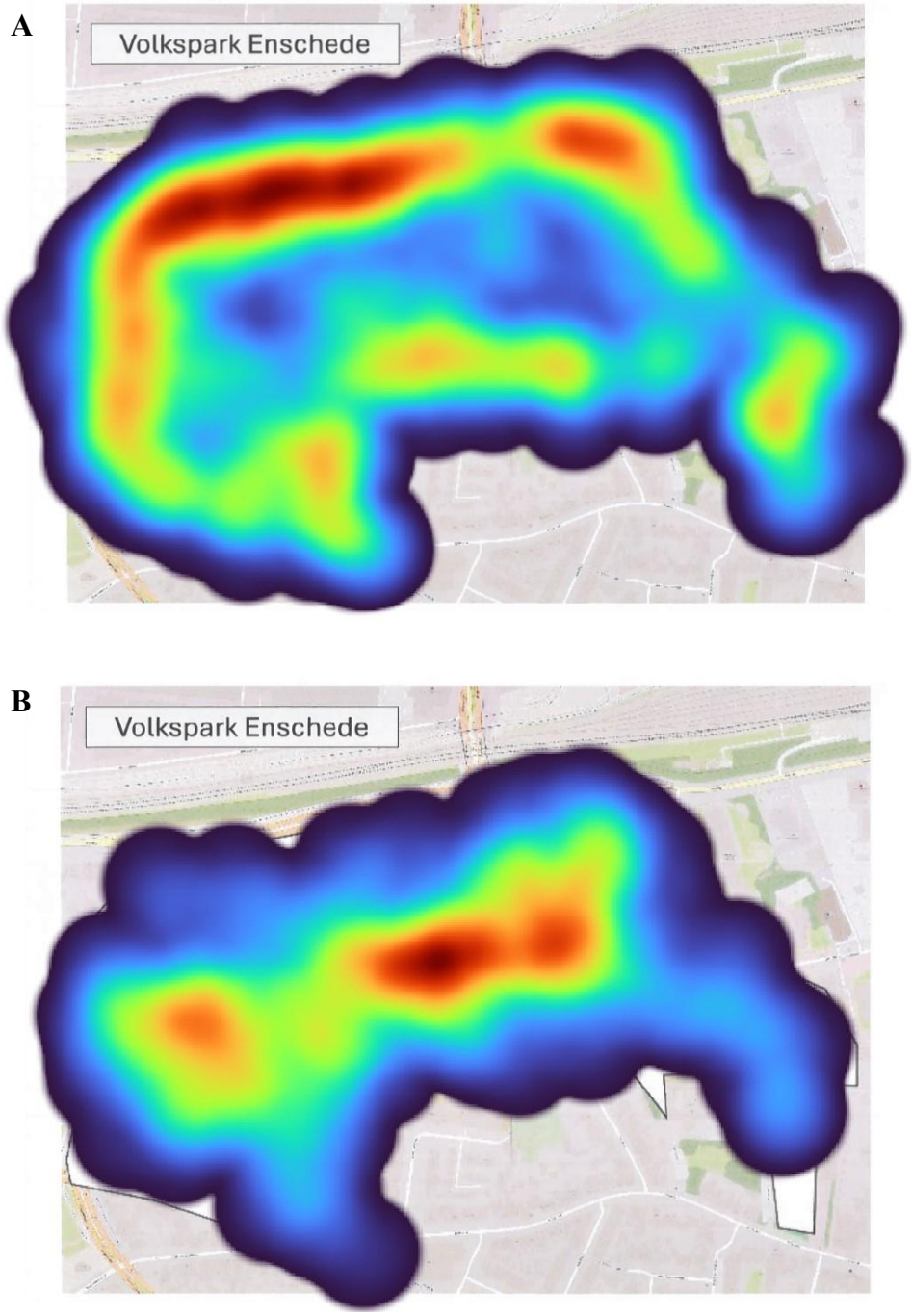
	Shops or Cafés	3-20 13.3(5.2)	9-18 13(3.3)	14-18 16(2)	3-20 13.4(4.6)	5-13 9(2.9)
Maintenance	Maintenance of Park Infrastructure	1-17 7.3(4.7)	5-18 12.8(4.9)	4-9 6.5(2.5)	1-18 8.4(4.7)	2-12 9.3(4.2)
	Trash Cans	1-14 7.9(4.2)	5-18 9(5.4)	5 5(0)	1-17 8.6(4.2)	1-11 8.3(4.2)
	Vegetation Density	1-15 7.1(4.3)	1-18 10.3(6.1)	3-14 8.5(5.6)	2-20 11.6(5.5)	3-20 14(6.8)
Nature	Decorative Elements (e.g., flower garden & insect hotels)	2-19 9.1(5.4)	1-3 2.5(0.9)	7-17 12(5.1)	1-19 7.7(5)	2-17 6.3(6.3)
	Forests & Trees	1-17 4.8(4.8)	1-10 4.75(3.6)	1-2 1.5(0.5)	1-19 5.1(4.8)	4-18 9.8(5.2)
	Water Elements (e.g., lakes, fountains, small rivers)	1-18 7.9(6.3)	3-9 5.3(2.3)	2-3 2.5(0.5)	1-20 5.7(4.7)	1-8 3.8(3)

Appendix G

Additional Heatmaps

Figure G1

Heatmaps of Trees and Water Features



Note. (A) Heatmap of Trees, (B) Heatmap of Water Features, the warmer the colour the greater the placement of trees/water features.