



Parks & Recreation Commission

October 14, 2021

2 Survey #2 Highlights

- Designed in coordination with staff and Park & Recreation Commission
- August 23rd – September 17th
- Mailed to 2,500 randomized addresses
- 505 responses (20% response rate)
- Online survey available to entire community (824 responses)
- Survey datasets kept separated



City of Mercer Island

2021 Community Survey on Parks and Recreation

Dear Mercer Island Resident:

The City of Mercer Island began updating the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan in early 2020. The PROS Plan will help inform parks and recreation priorities for the next 6 to 10 years. Work on the PROS Plan was suspended in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and resumed in early 2021. For more information on the PROS Plan, please visit the Mercer Island Let's Talk page (<https://letstalk.mercergov.org/miprosplan>).

In early 2020, the City facilitated a community survey on parks and recreation and now is conducting a second PROS Plan survey to better understand local priorities for improvements to the parks system. We understand that COVID-19 may have impacted your ability to visit parks and trails this past year. We ask that you consider the future orientation of the parks plan as you evaluate needs and priorities for the parks and recreation system. Your opinions are important to the City.

You can return the survey in the reply-ready envelope provided or with this QR code:



1,329 completed surveys!

How often do you visit or use Mercer Island Parks & Recreation facilities (parks, trails, etc.)?

- ☐ A few times over the year
- ☐ Do not visit facilities / parks / open space
- ☐ Don't know

How satisfied are you with Mercer Island Parks & Recreation facilities, parks, trails

- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Very dissatisfied
- ☐ Don't know

3. How has the COVID-19 Pandemic impacted your use of Mercer Island parks, trails and open space?

- ☐ Use increased during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ☐ Use decreased during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- ☐ Use was about the same during the COVID-19 Pandemic

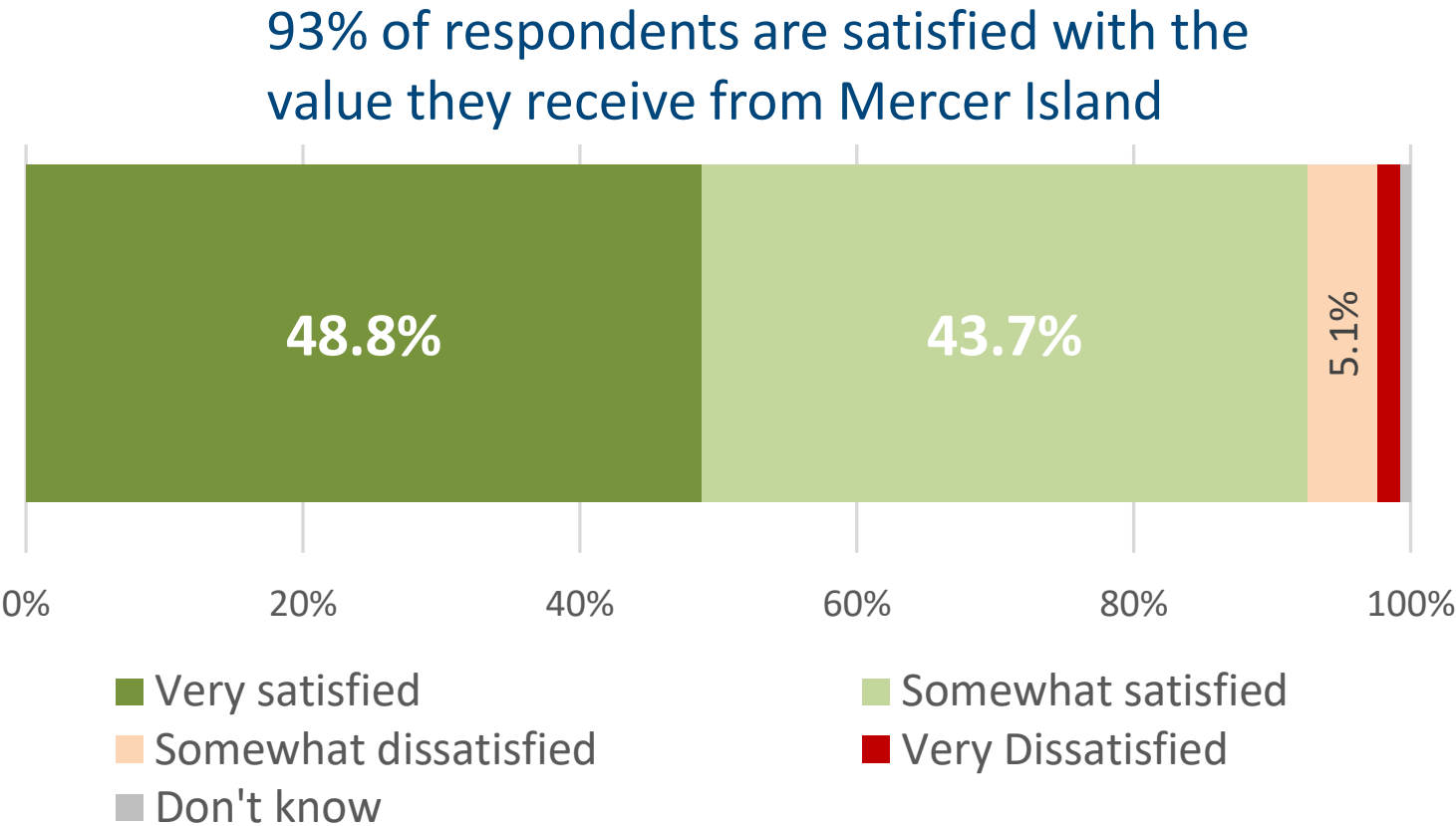
4. What do you think are the most needed improvements to the current City of Mercer Island parks system, including trails and open space areas? Select UP TO 3 items. (Responses with more than three items selected will not be recorded.)

- ☐ Improve or expand picnic shelters / picnic areas
- ☐ Improve or expand parking options for water and trail access areas
- ☐ Improve restroom facilities / expand availability of restroom facilities
- ☐ Improve universal access / ADA access at park facilities, including playground upgrades
- ☐ Repair or upgrade waterfront areas, including docks and beaches
- ☐ Upgrade athletic fields for improved playability, diverse usage and access
- ☐ Connect gaps in the trail system to create a complete trail network
- ☐ Upgrade / replace the skate park
- ☐ Expand maintenance and restoration of open space and natural areas
- ☐ None of the above are needed improvements
- ☐ Other: _____

Survey #2 Highlights

Satisfaction

Level of satisfaction in parks & recreation is same as in 2020 survey

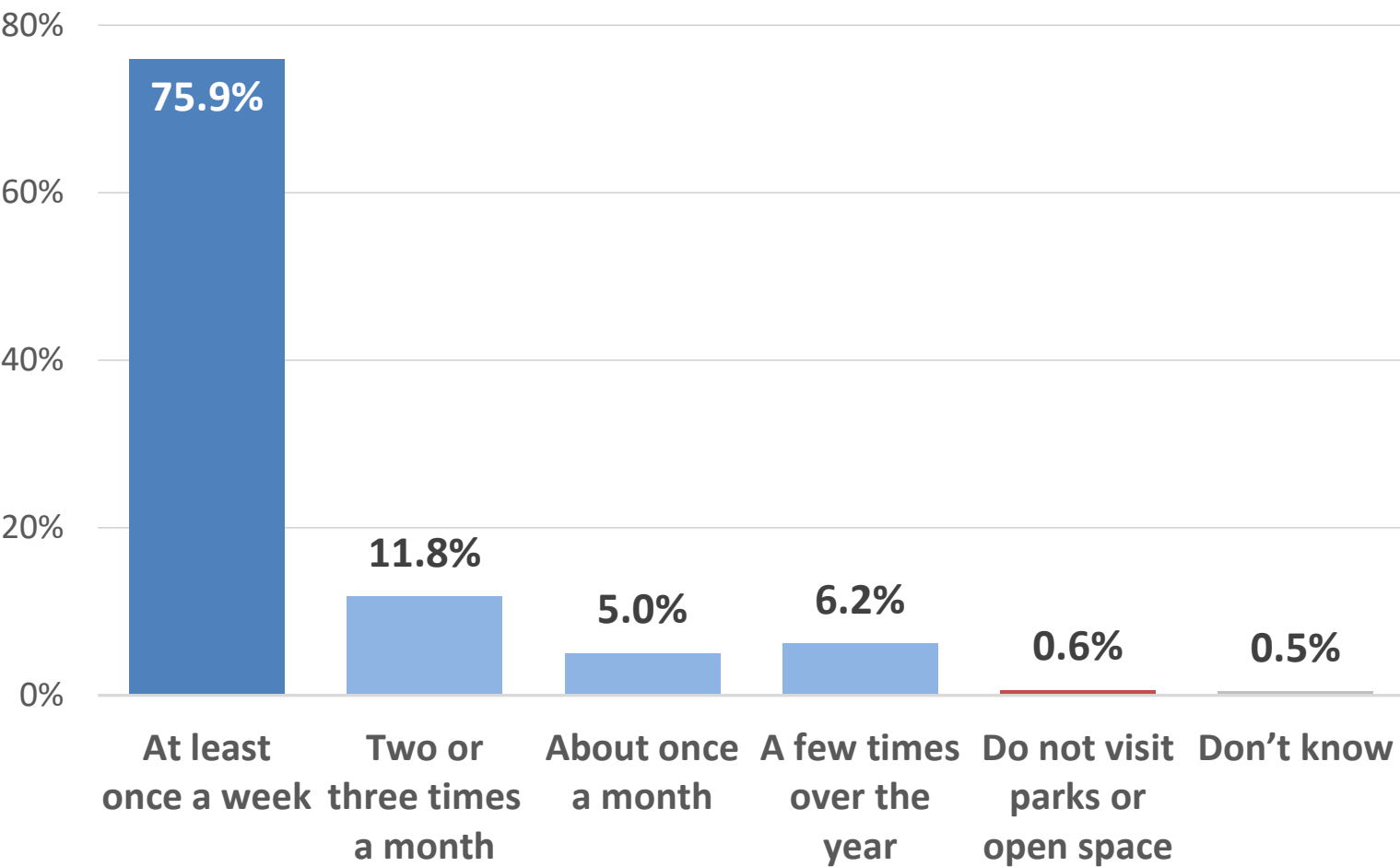


Survey #2 Highlights

Visitation

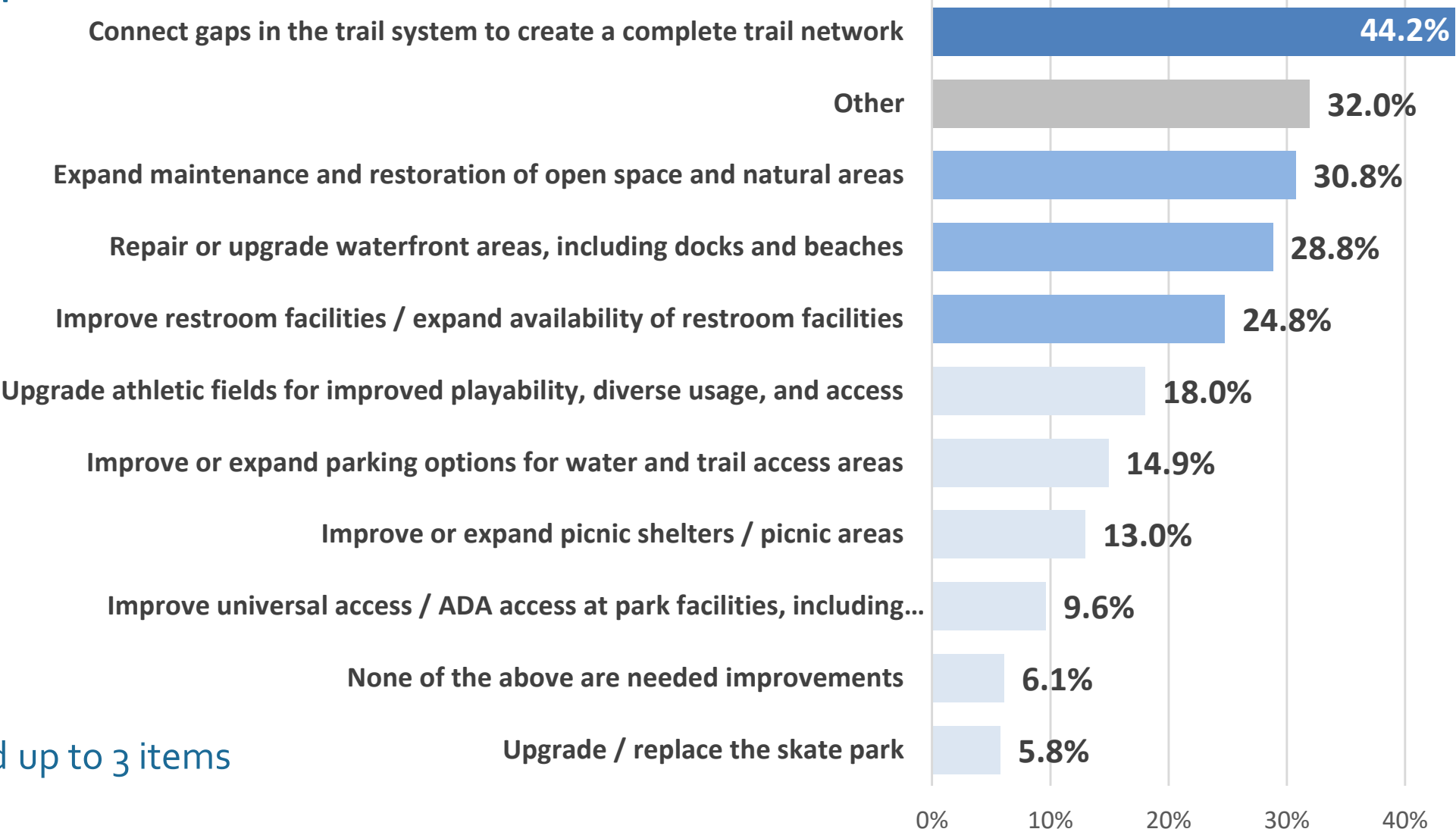
- ↗ **51% - Usage increased**
- ↔ **31% - Usage stayed same**
- ↘ **18% - Usage decreased**

- Nearly identical between mail & online-only surveys
- 95% monthly usage (2020) vs. 93% monthly usage (2021)



Survey #2 Highlights

Most Needed Improvements



* Respondents selected up to 3 items

Survey #2 Highlights

Most Needed Improvements

‘Other’ includes:

- Add pickleball courts; convert tennis and/or basketball courts to pickleball
- Enhance maintenance, to include playground replacements, trail maintenance, pathway repaving and invasive plant management
- Off-leash dog management and leash law enforcement
- Enhanced trash management, such as adding more trash cans and more frequent waste hauling
- Security and safety management, including managing for homeless encampments

Survey #2 Highlights

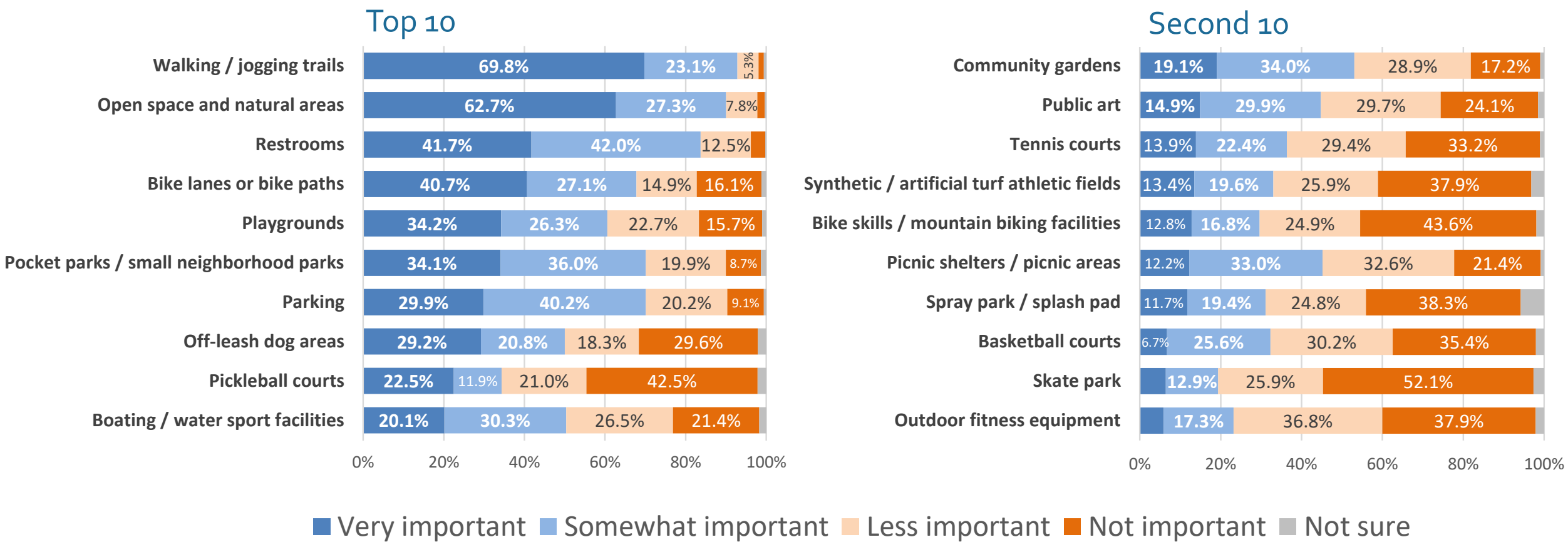
Most Needed Improvements

1. Connect gaps in the trail system to create a complete trail network
2. Repair or upgrade waterfront areas, including docks and beaches
3. Expand maintenance and restoration of open space and natural areas
4. Improve restroom facilities / expand availability of restroom facilities



Survey #2 Highlights

Important Recreational Amenities

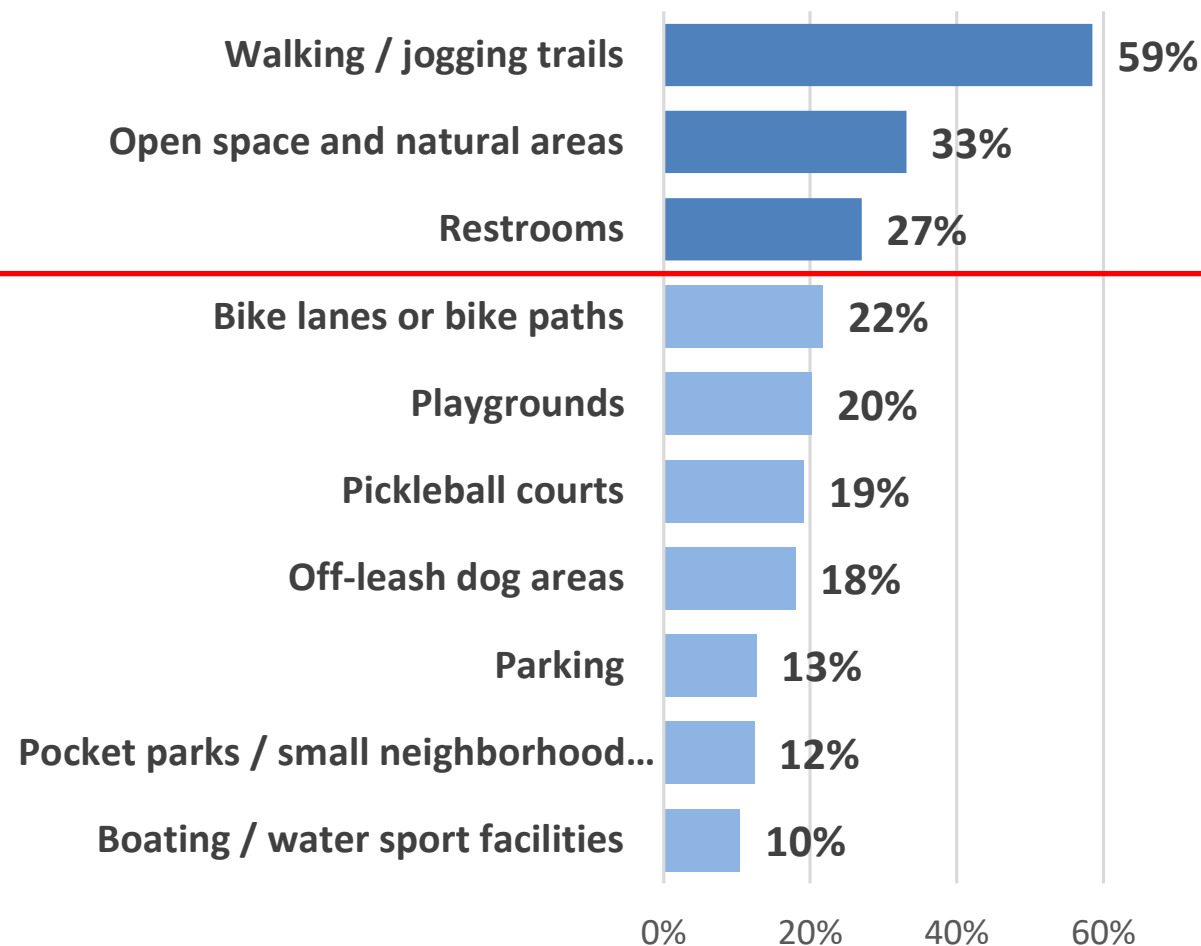


Survey #2 Highlights

Important Recreational Amenities (Select top 3)

Top 3

- Top 3 same as full list
- Top 10 same as full list
- Pickleball interest outpaced any other field or court sport facility by at least 2X



Survey #2 Highlights

High Interest Water-oriented Options



Kayak / paddleboard rentals or other watercraft rentals

Water-oriented summer camps (sailing, kayaking, etc.)

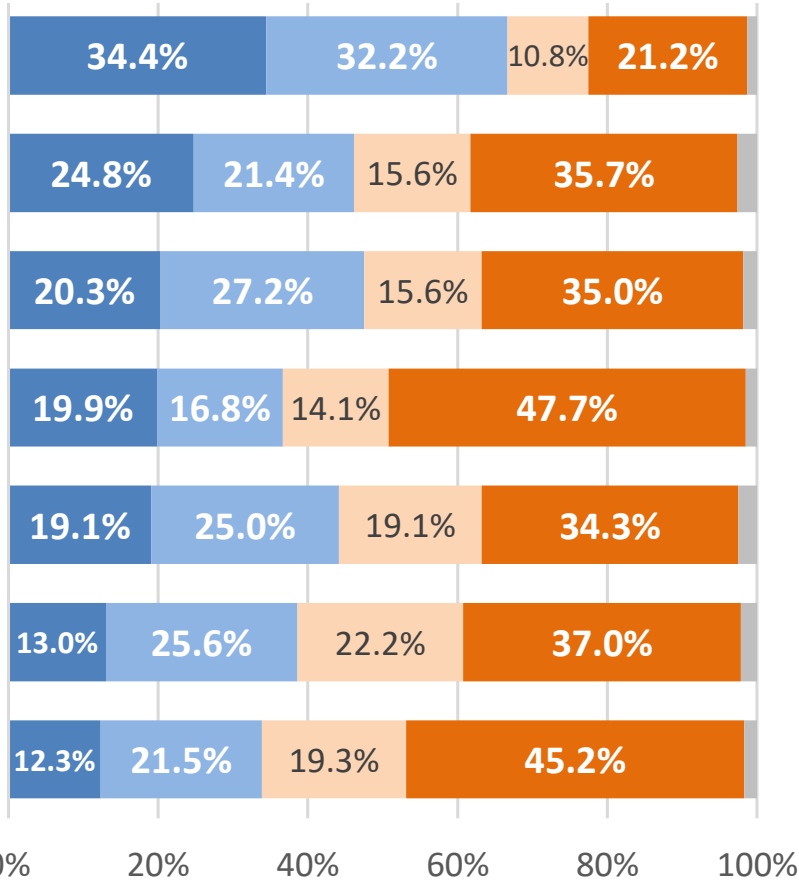
Sailing classes

Swimming lessons

Rowing or crew programs

Water-oriented special events such as dragon boat races, sailing races, etc.

Fishing programs (classes, casting practice, derbies)



■ Very interested ■ Somewhat interested ■ Less interested ■ Not interested ■ Not sure

Survey #2 Highlights

High Interest Recreation Programs

- Water: boating & swimming
- Youth: sports, summer, after-school camps
- Fitness
- Arts

Boating programs (sailing, kayaking or paddle boarding)

Youth sports / athletics programs and camps

Swimming & water safety (classes or for fitness)

Performing arts (music, dance or theater)

Fitness programs (yoga, aerobics or sports training)

Youth after-school programs or summer day camps

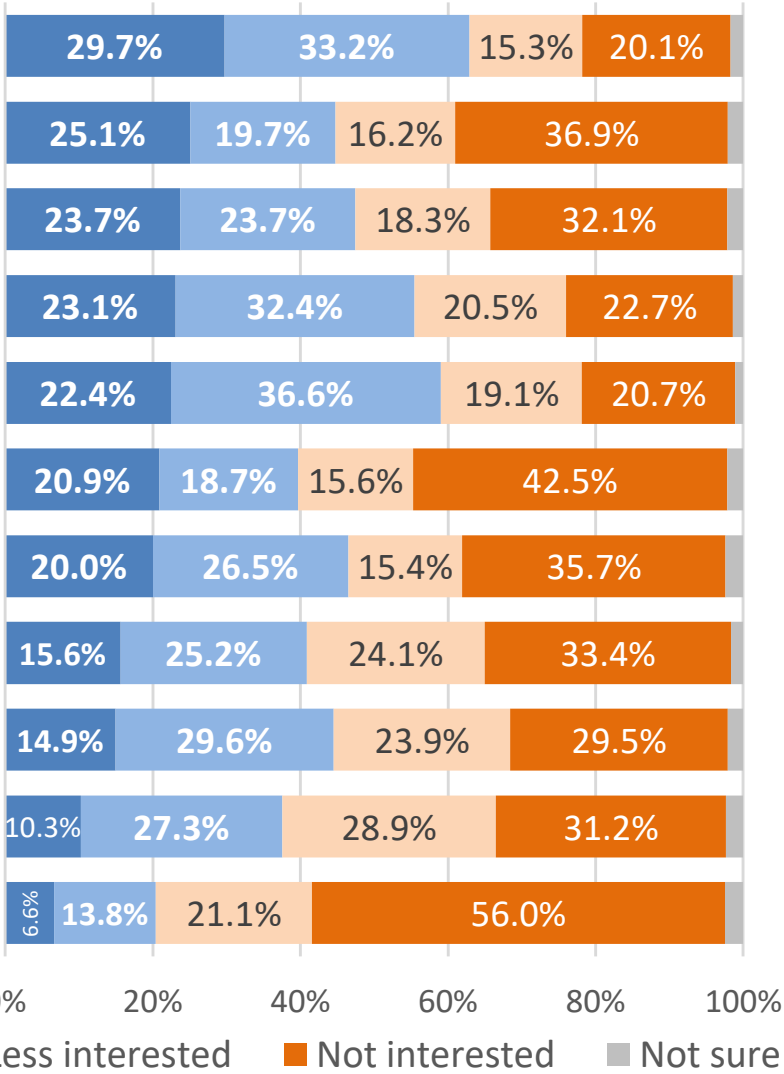
Programs for adults 55+ (drop-in activities, trips)

Arts & crafts programs

Outdoor classes (fishing, environmental or orienteering)

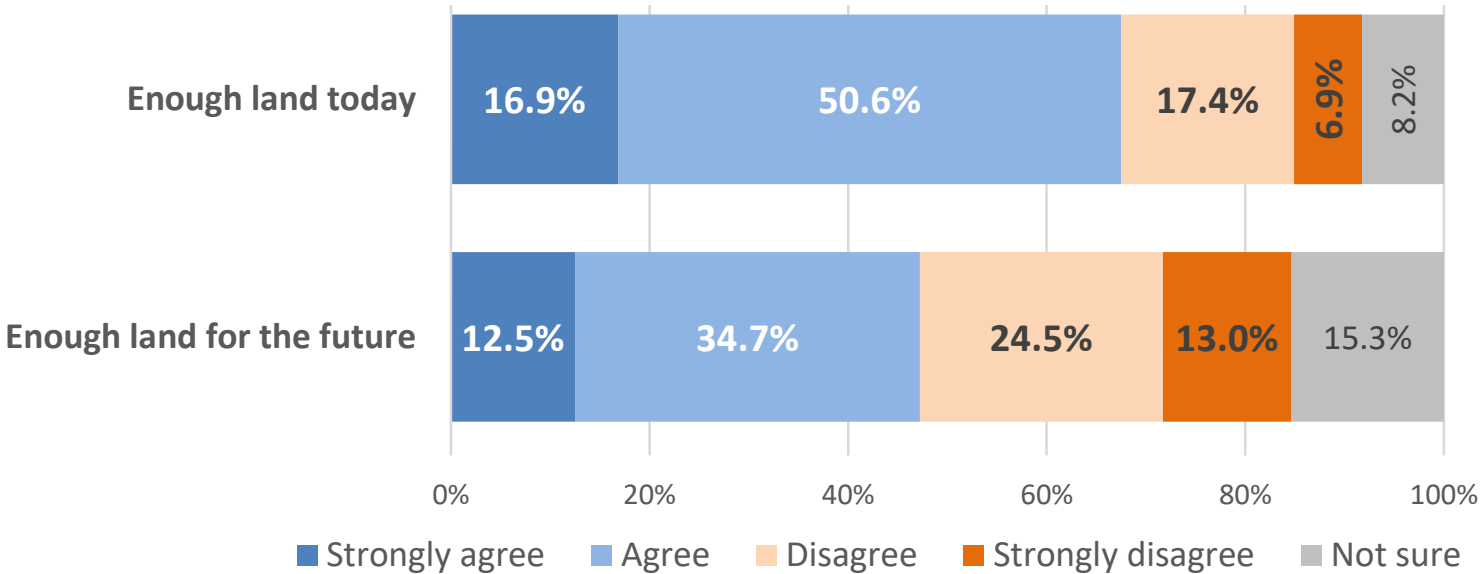
Educational classes (technology, safety or health)

Computers, gaming or e-sports



Survey #2 Highlights

Is There Enough Parkland Today and in Future?

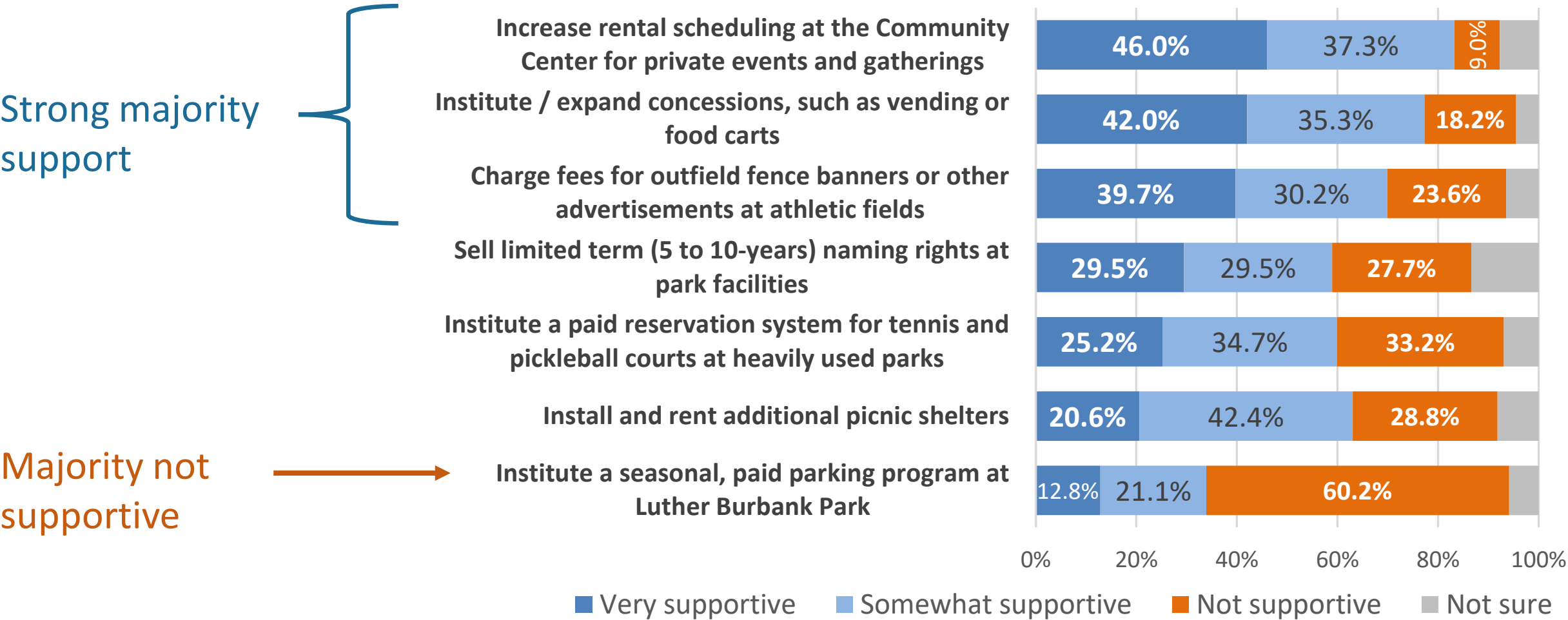


Forced Ranking for Acquisitions:

1. Preserve habitat and open space areas (can include walking / jogging trails)
2. New or expanded waterfront access
3. Active recreation such as athletic fields and playgrounds
4. Pocket parks or small neighborhood parks
5. Indoor recreation facilities, like gyms

Survey #2 Highlights

Support for Revenue Options



Survey #2 Highlights

The 'One' Improvement Residents Would Make

Write-in responses:

- Improve maintenance of existing parks, trails, and open space
- Create more trail connections and linkages
- Provide pickleball
- Acquire additional open space
- Provide additional beach or waterfront access
- Provide more/larger playgrounds, splash pads and restrooms
- Replace the Luther Burbank Park dock
- Provide additional off-leash parks and trails, and enforce leash laws
- Upgrade sport fields

Public Feedback Take-Aways

Waterfront Infrastructure

- Consistent, strong support for replacing docks & piers
- Top 3 improvement / 86% important public meeting
- Aligns with sentiment to ‘maintain what you have’
- Interest in improved & additional waterfront access, including street ends, and for water-oriented programming

Parks & Open Space

- Openness toward providing a variety of recreational opportunities (e.g., pickleball, splash pad)
- Playground renovations & replacements, to include inclusive play
- Address concerns about bike skills area
- Address concerns about leash law enforcement

Trails & Paths

- Improve maintenance of existing trails
- Create more trail connections and coordinate with planning for right-of-way linkages
- Signage, wayfinding

User Convenience & Support Amenities

- Upgrade / expand restrooms
- More, larger, different playgrounds
- Concessions for kayak, boat, SUP rentals
- Signage, wayfinding

Discussion



Capital Planning

Guided by community input

Guided by known physical needs or deficiencies

Guided by adopted site master planning efforts

Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)

- 6-year project list
- Reasonably funded
- First two years of CIP adopted into City Budget
- Needed for grant applications
- Informs Park Impact Fee rates

Capital Facilities Plan (CFP)

- 20-year project list
- Includes creating new facilities or new additions to current
- Informs long view of financial needs / impacts
- May inform Park Impact Fee rates

Capital Planning

Considerations

- ‘Soft costs’ included, such as planning, design, engineering, permitting, project management and inflation escalation
- Deferral of known maintenance, renovation or repair projects results in higher future costs
- Forced or planned decommissioning of in- or over-water infrastructure may result in non-replacement, future permitting uncertainty & very high cost

Examples

- Some do’s and don’ts

Status Update

Plan Document Development

October

Draft Plan Content

- Introduction
- Community Profile / Demographics
- Community Outreach
- Classifications & Inventory
- Recreation
- Appendices

In-Progress Content

- Goals & Objectives
- Capital Plan

November

Draft Plan Content

- Open Space & Conservation
- Parks & Active Use Areas
- Trails
- Operations & Stewardship

In-Progress Content

- Goals & Objectives
- Capital Plan
- Implementation

December

Draft Plan Content

- Goals & Objectives
- Capital Plan
- Implementation

Draft PROS Plan composite for final review

* Plan structure guided by RCO requirements