

Parks & Open Space Master Plan

Town of
Simsbury
Connecticut
Key Findings Meeting
October 29, 2019

Tom Diehl, CPRP

PROJECT CONSULTANT
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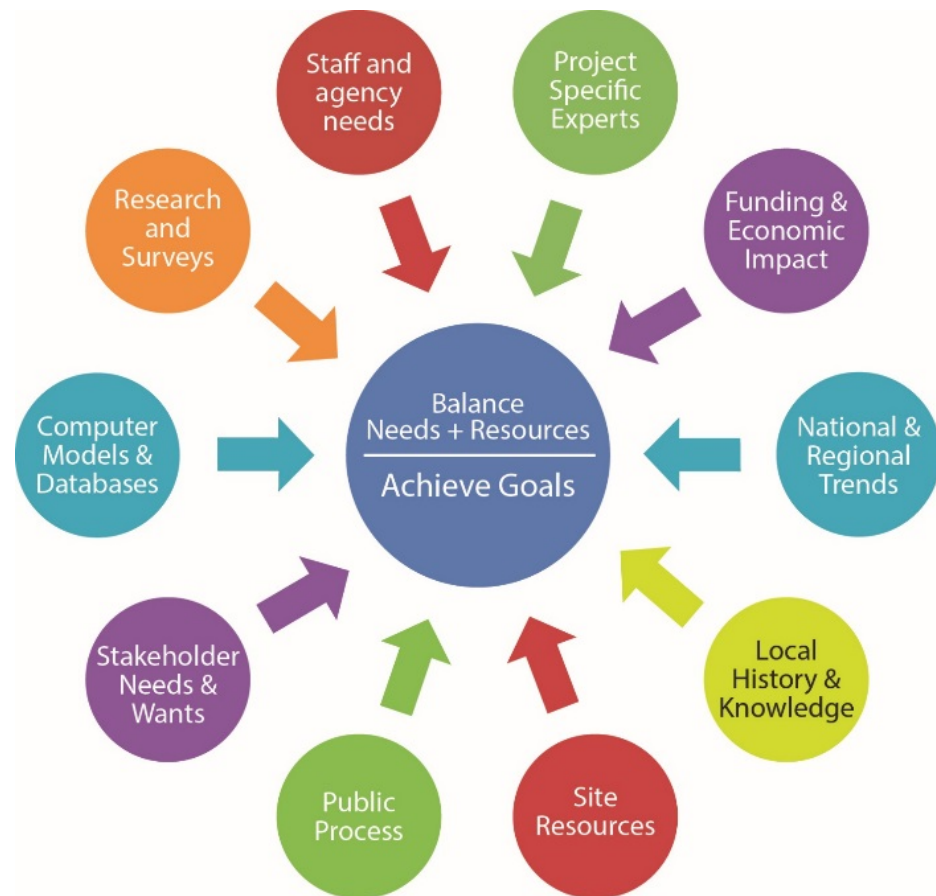
PROJECT LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Meeting Agenda

- Introductions
- Master Planning Process
- Results of Stakeholder Engagement
- Public Input Session
- Demographics
- Trends
- Results of Survey
- Inventory Assessment
- Program Assessment

Project Process

- Conduct a kickoff meeting with staff and key stakeholders to review goals and objectives.
1. Inventory/Assessment
 2. Community Engagement
 - Stakeholder Meetings
 - Public Input Session
 - Survey
 3. Visioning/Draft Master Plan
 4. Financial Plan/Final Master Plan



Stakeholder Interviews/ Focus Group Meetings [JULY]

Public Meeting #1 (Community Input) [JULY]

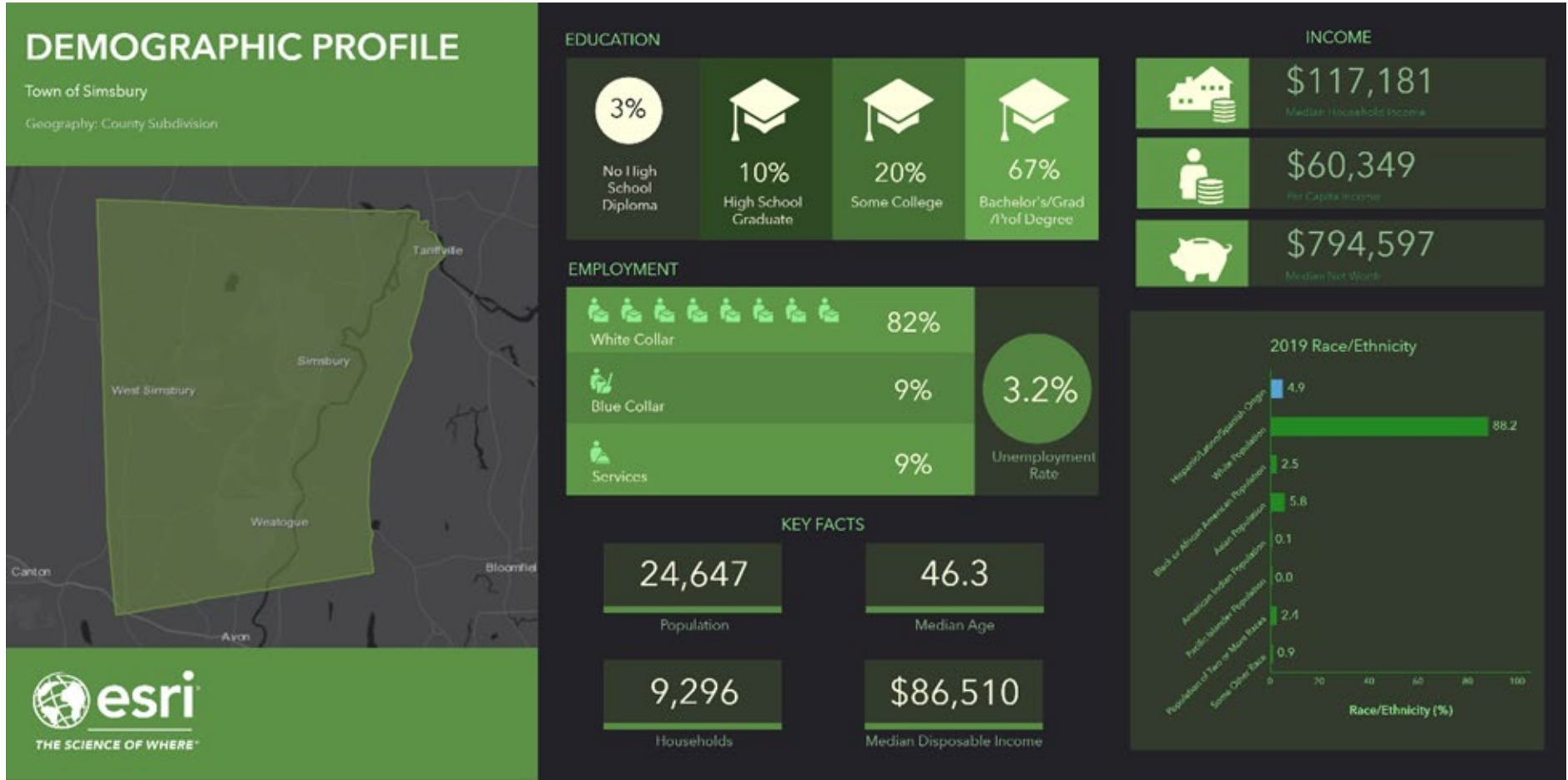
Online Survey [AUG-SEPT-OCT]

Public Meeting #2 (Findings Presentation) [OCT]

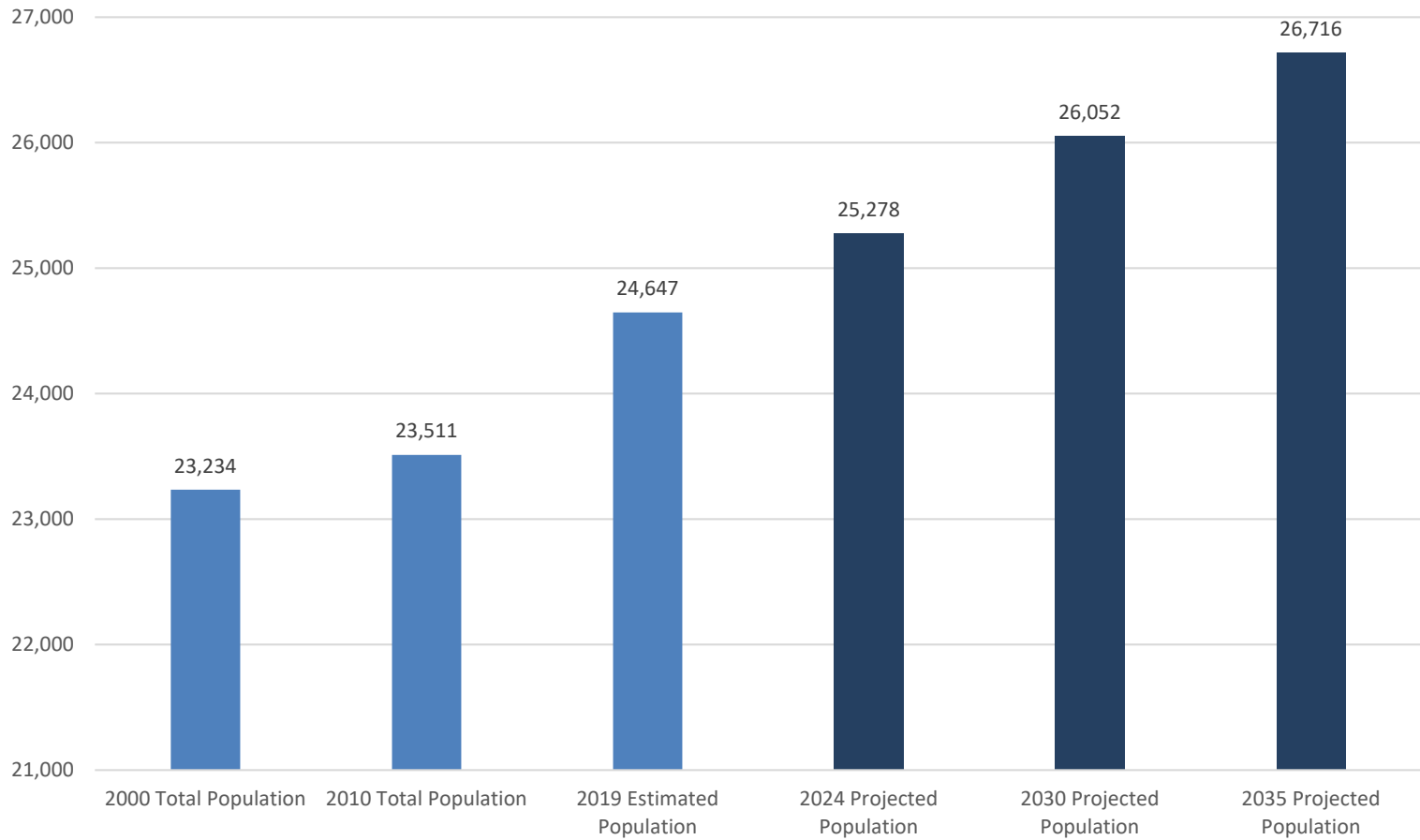
Draft Recommendations Presentation [DEC]

Final Presentation [JAN]

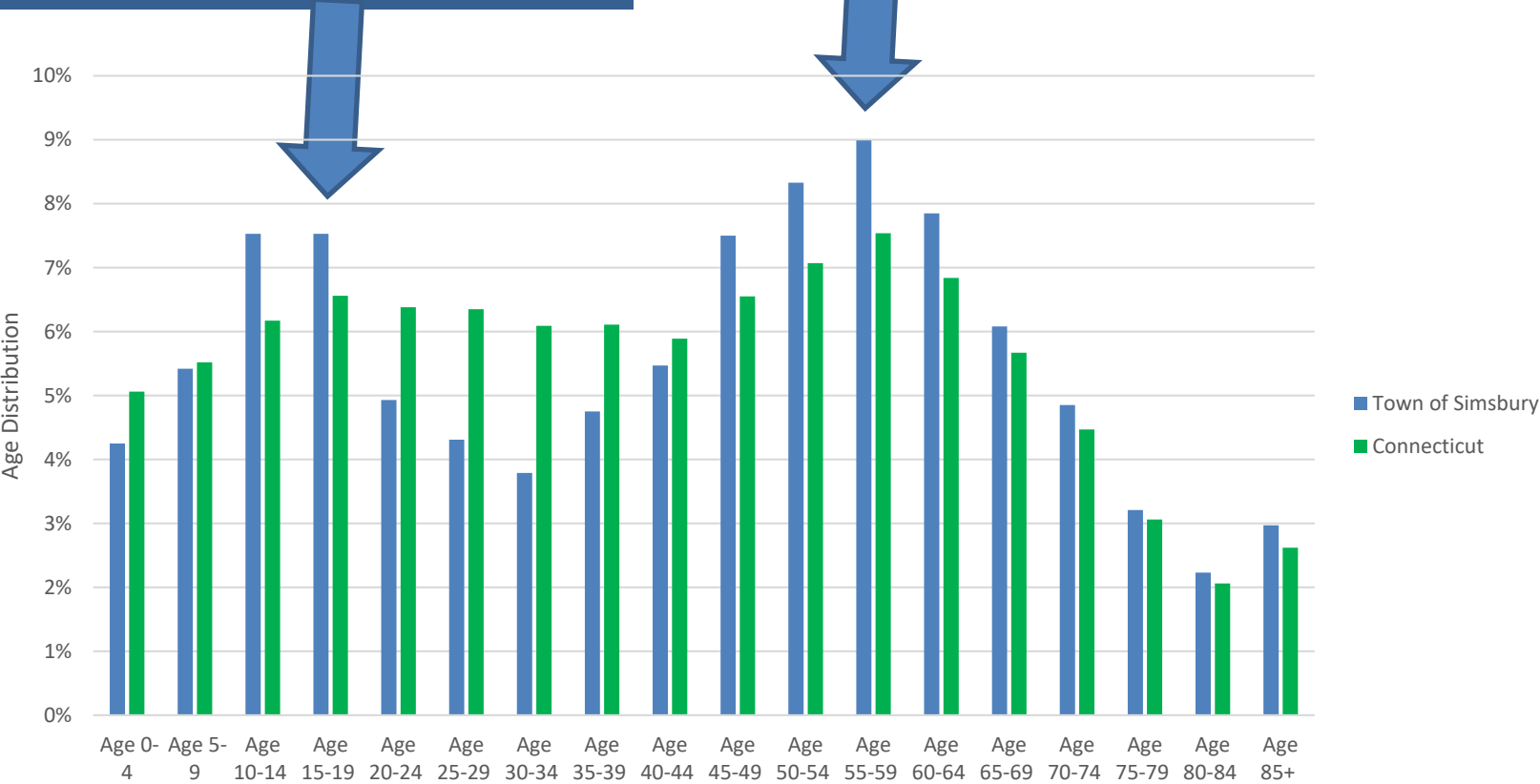
Demographic Profile



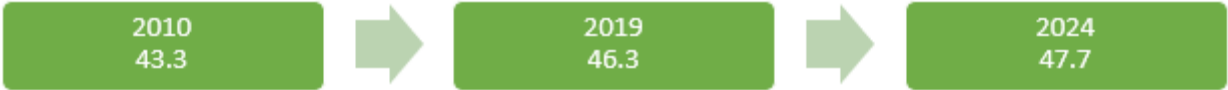
Populations Statistics



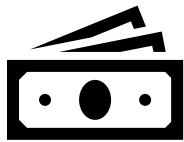
Resident Characteristics



	Town of Simsbury	Connecticut	USA
2019 Female Population (%)	51.26%	51.19%	50.75%
2019 Male Population (%)	48.74%	48.81%	49.25%



Household Data



The median household income in Simsbury in 2019 was \$117,181. This was higher than Hartford County (\$70,111), the State of Connecticut (\$75,402) and the United States (\$60,548). Roughly a quarter of the residents made over \$200,000.



The median home value in the Town of Simsbury is \$332,257, compared to Connecticut (\$273,477) and the United States (\$234,154).



The average household size is 2.62 in the Town of Simsbury, compared to 2.54 in Connecticut, and 2.59 in the United States.

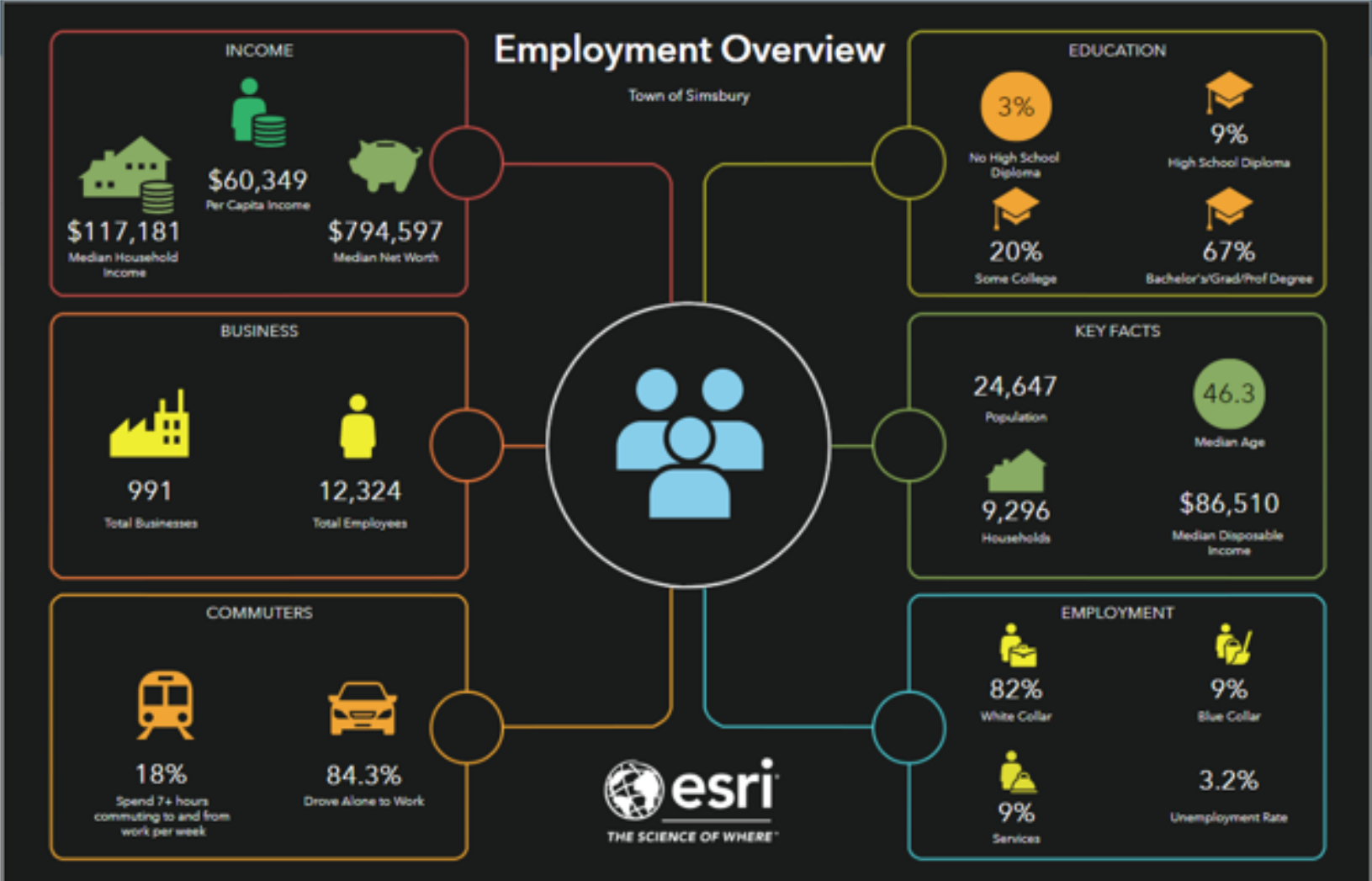


Only 2.62 percent of households in the Town of Simsbury receive food stamps, compared to the rate in the County of 15.16 percent, and the State of Connecticut at approximately 12.41 percent.



Approximately 16.41 percent of residents live with some sort of hearing difficulty, vision difficulty, cognitive difficulty, ambulatory difficulty, self-care difficulty, and/or independent living difficulty. This is lower than the national average (25%).

Employment

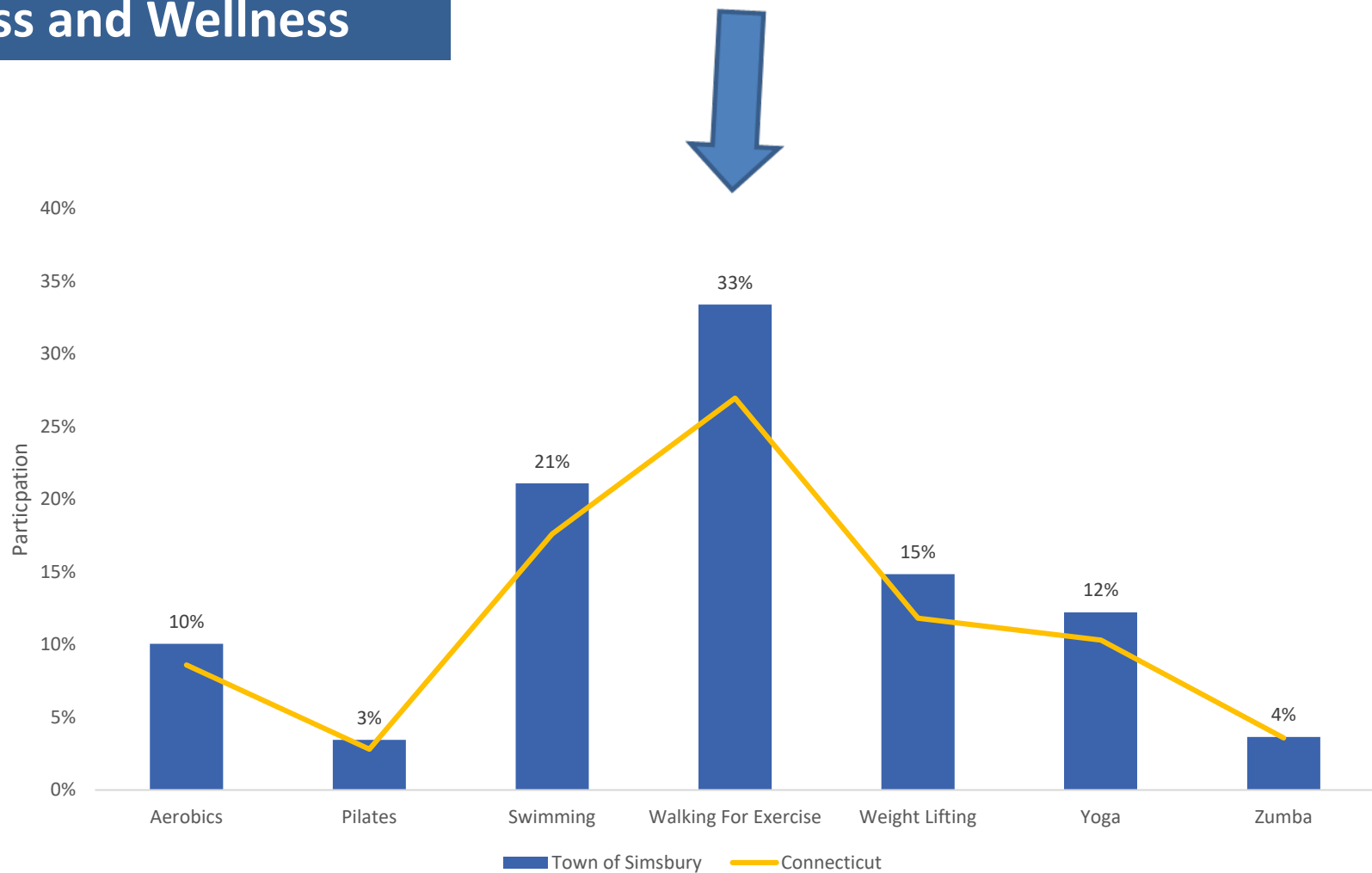


Source: ESRI Business Analyst

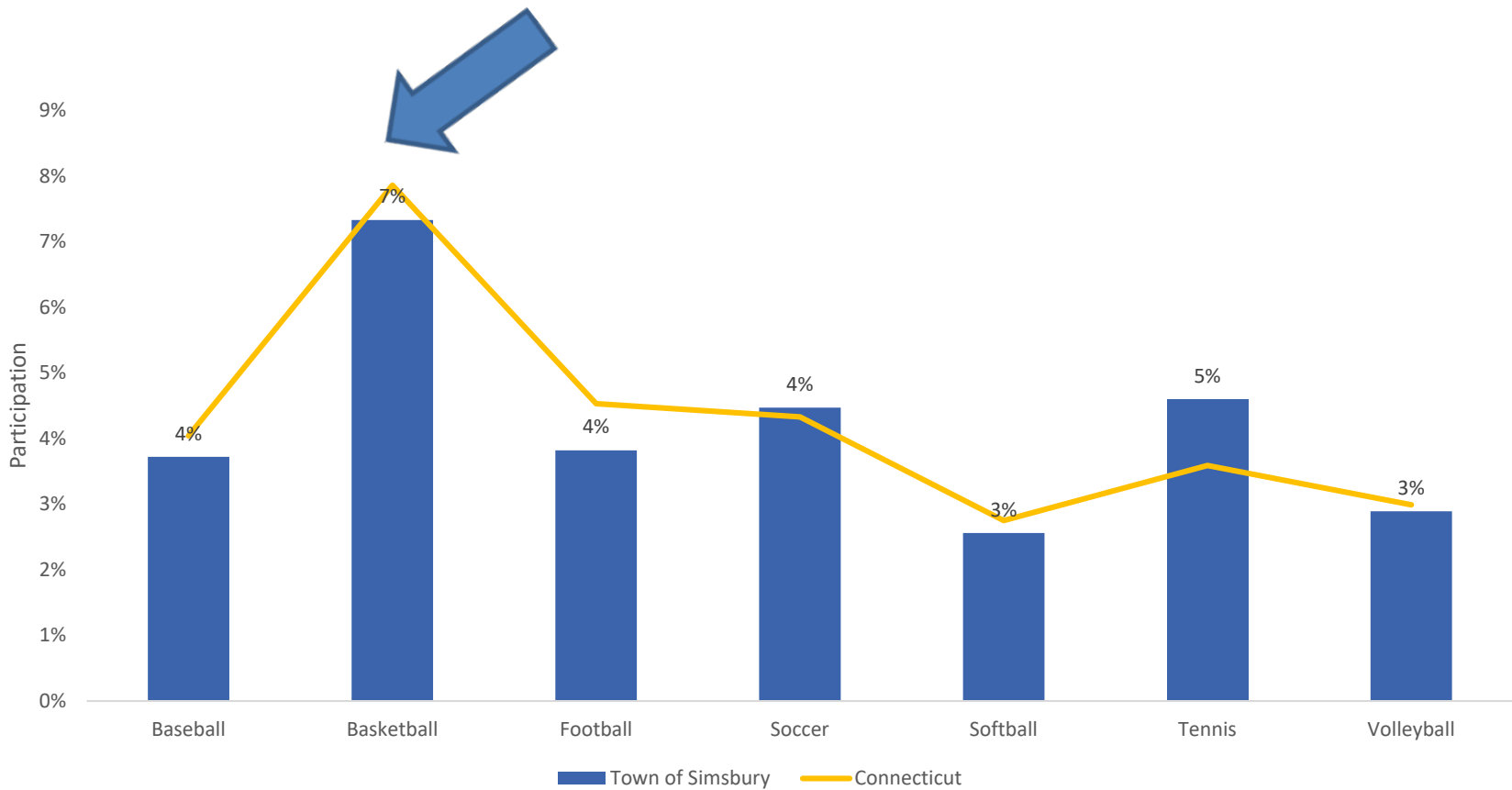
Recreation Expenditures

Variable	Average	Total
Entertainment/Recreation Fees & Admissions	\$1,447.47	\$13,455,658
Membership Fees for Social/Recreation/Civic Clubs	\$493.43	\$4,586,956
Entertainment/Recreation -Sports/Rec/Exercise Equipment	\$384.65	\$3,575,693
Entertainment/RecreationRecreational Vehicles & Fees	\$363.65	\$3,380,460
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$307.08	\$2,854,644
Camp Fees	\$205.19	\$1,907,479
Entertainment/Recreation Toys/Games/Crafts/Hobbies	\$197.19	\$1,833,059
Pet Services	\$130.41	\$1,212,312
Hunting & Fishing Equipment	\$122.39	\$1,137,718
Bicycles	\$53.29	\$495,357
Rental of Boats/Trailers/Campers/RVs	\$42.56	\$395,677
Camping Equipment	\$34.53	\$321,031
Water Sports Equipment	\$14.12	\$131,232
Winter Sports Equipment	\$11.36	\$105,562

Fitness and Wellness

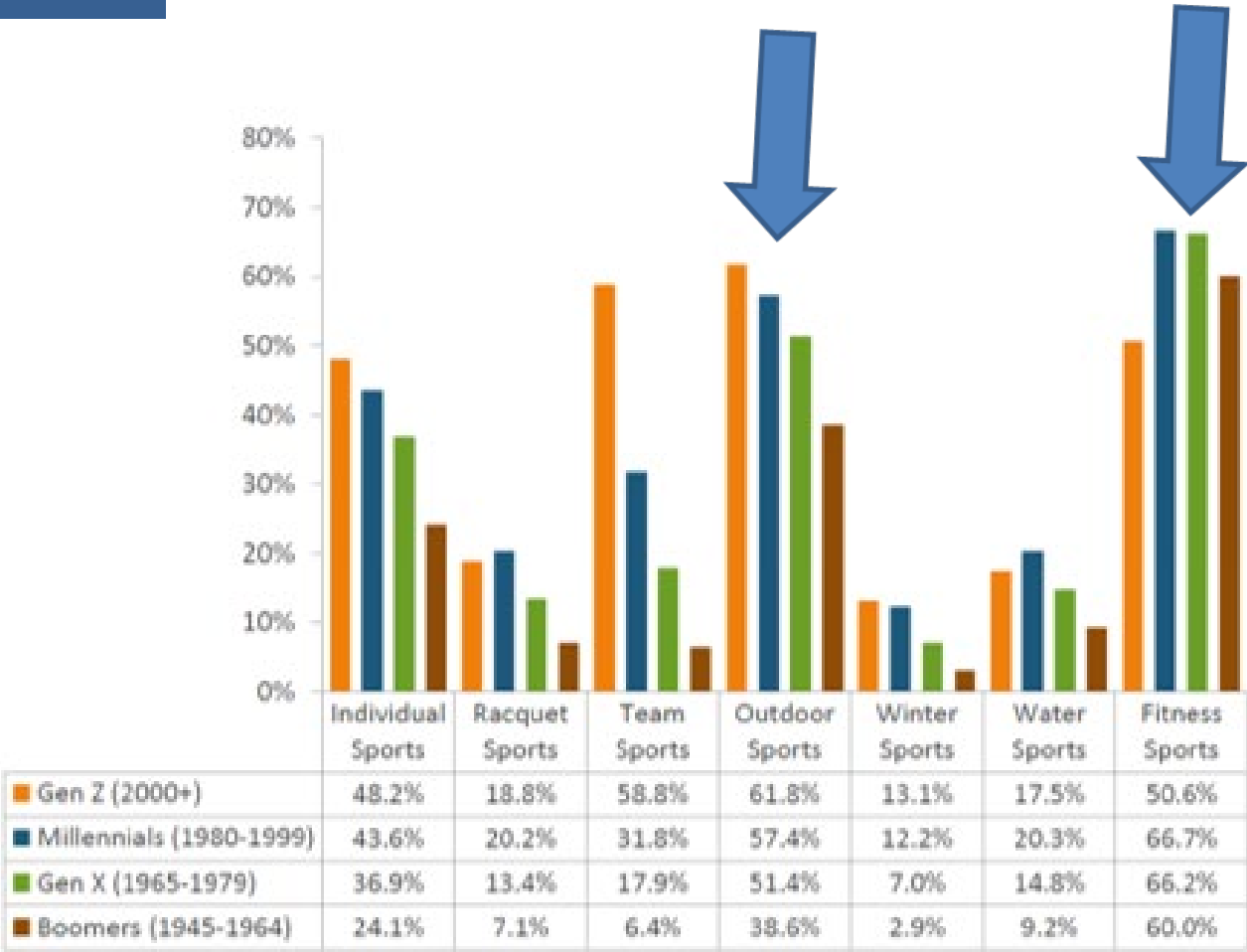


Team Sport Participation



Generational Fitness Trends

- In 2015, over 80% of Gen Z were active, with a quarter being active to a healthy level. Gen Z had the least percentage of inactives.
- Almost half (49%) of all Millennials were involved in high calorie burning activities.
- 48% of Gen X participated at least once a week in an fitness activity/sport.
- The Boomer generation was the least active in 2015, 34% reporting no activity and only 37% involved in high calorie burning exercises.



Source: SFIA Topline Report

Pickleball

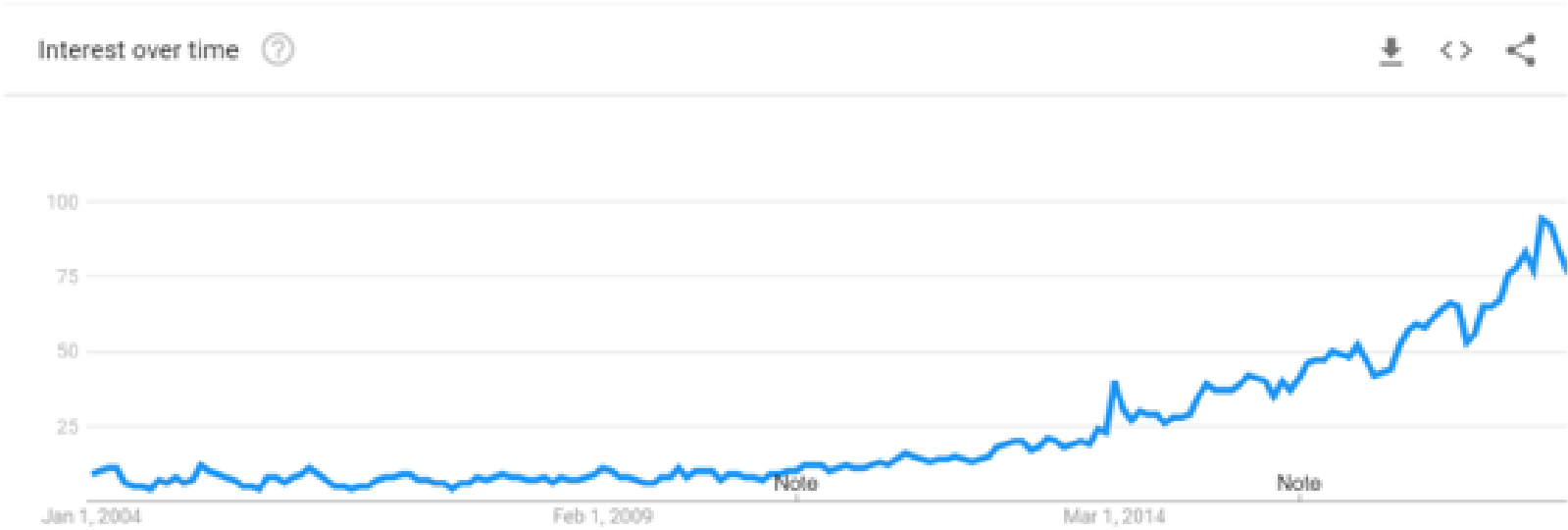
2.815

million players
in the US (2017)

12.3%

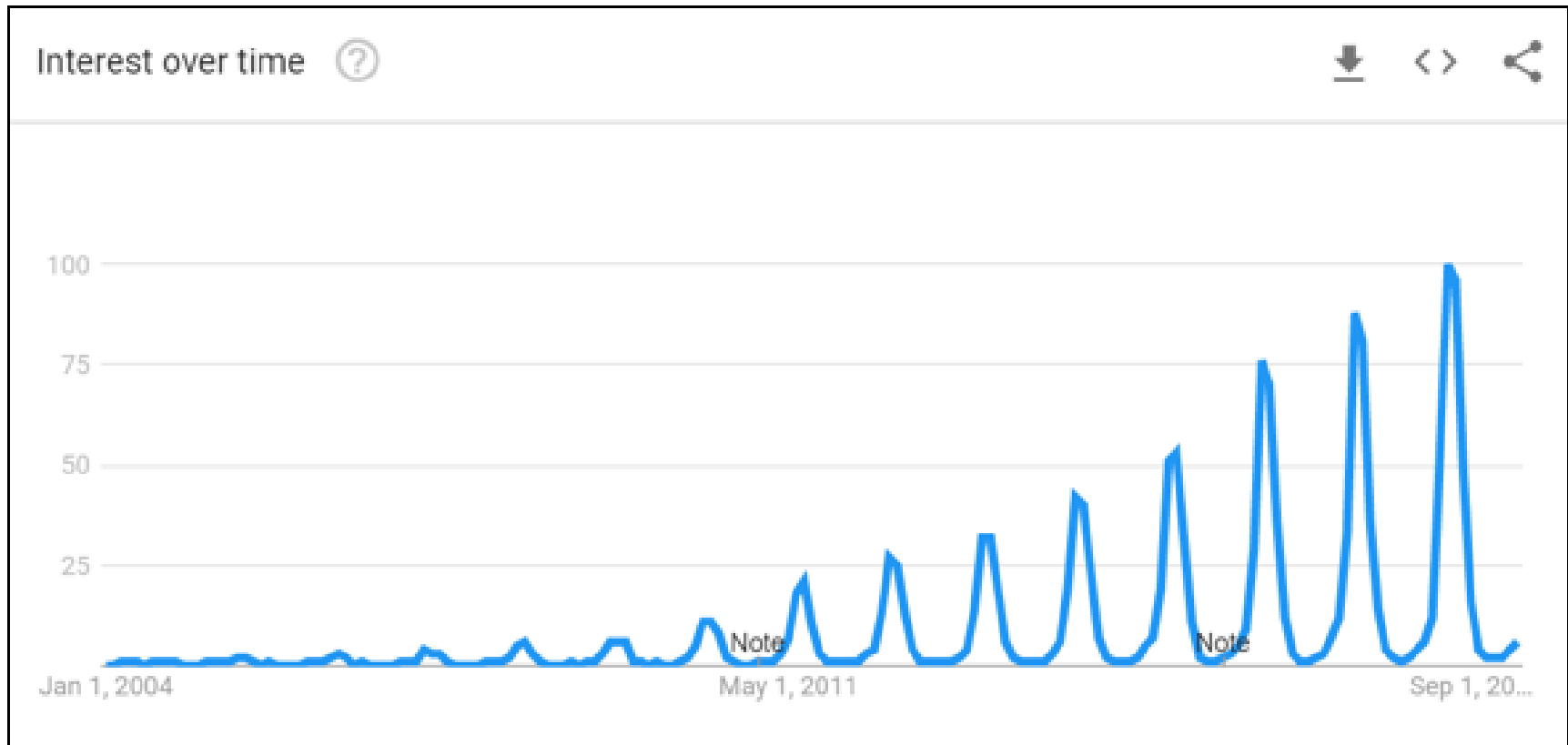
increase since 2016

In 2016: 1.57 million were “Casual” participants who play 1-7 times a year, while 930 thousand were “Core” participants who play 8 or more times a year



Source: SFIA Topline Report

Splashpads



Sports Trends

Water Sport	5 Year Avg. Annual Growth
Stand Up Paddling	↑ 20.2%
Kayaking (whitewater)	↑ 6.0%
Recreational Kayaking	↑ 5.2%
Rafting	↓ -1.4%
Water Skiing	↓ -3.8%
Jet Skiing	↓ -5.0%

Team Sport	5 Year Avg. Annual Change
Rugby	↑ 16.5%
Baseball	↑ 10.4%
Swimming on a Team	↑ 10.1%
Fast Pitch Softball	↓ -2.7%
Touch Football	↓ -3.5%
Ultimate Frisbee	↓ -8.7%

Aerobic Activity	5 Year Avg. Annual Change
High Impact Intensity Training (HIIT)	↑ 9.3%
Cross-Training Style Workouts	↑ 6.6%
Row Machine	↑ 5.8%
Stair Climbing Machine	↑ 5.6%
Aquatic Exercise	↑ 5.0%
Tai Chi	↑ 5.0%
Strength Activity	5 Year Avg. Annual Change
Kettleballs	↑ 7.0%
Individual Sports	5 Year Avg. Annual Change
Triathlon (Off-Road)	↑ 17.1%
Martial Arts	↑ 11.2%
MMA for Fitness	↑ 11.1%
Trail Running	↑ 9.6%
Boxing for Competition	↑ 9.5%
Adventure Racing	↑ 7.3%
Boxing for Fitness	↑ 6.2%
Racquet Sports	5 Year Avg. Annual Change
Cardio Tennis	↑ 9.1%
Pickleball	↑ 8.5%

Source: 2018 Sports, Fitness, and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report, 2012 - 2017

Survey Totals

1019 Total Responses

558 Completed Surveys

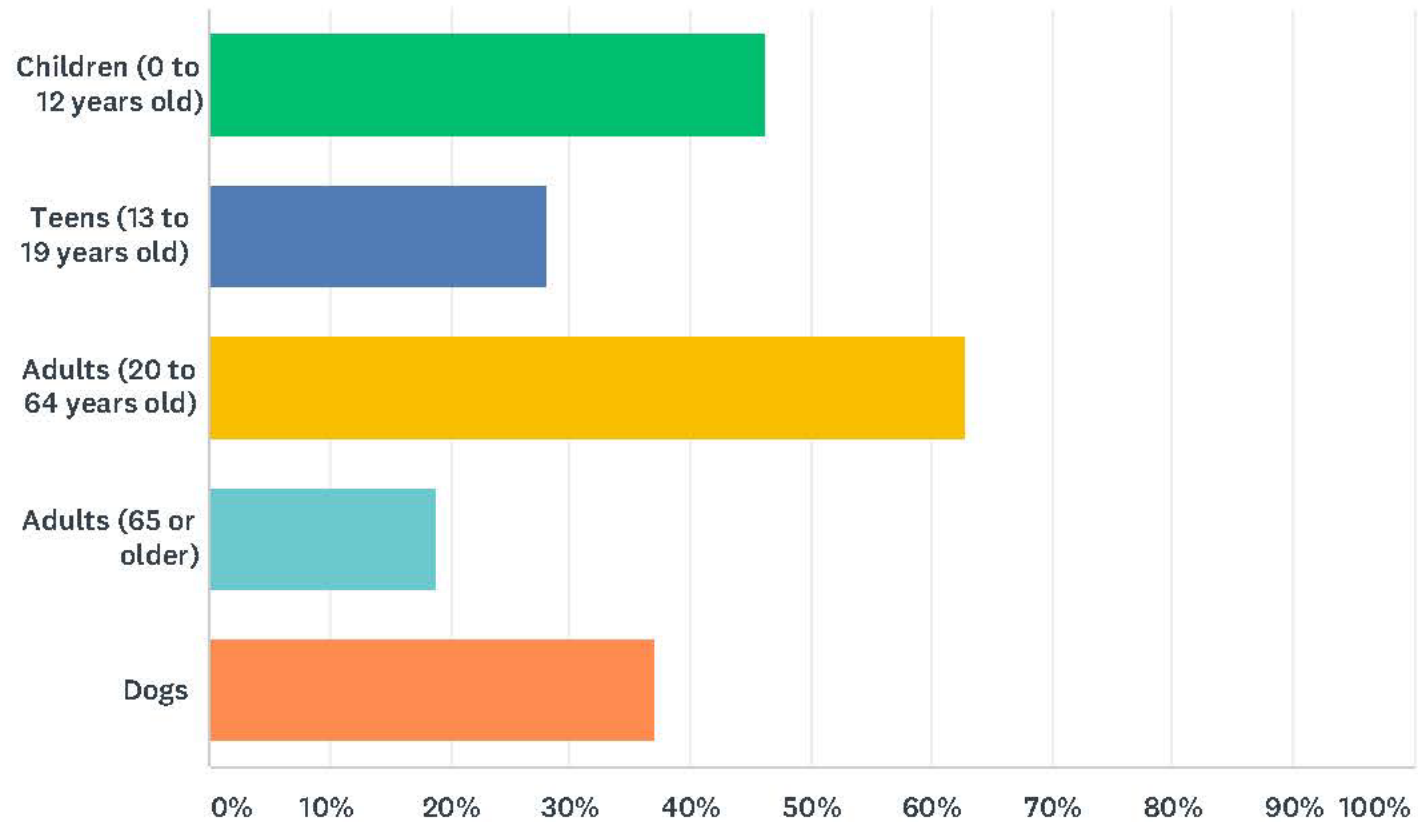
92% of respondents Simsbury Residents

Survey Demographics

94% owned a home in Simsbury
42% lived in Simsbury 20+ years
26% lived in Simsbury 10 – 19 years
15% lived in Simsbury 5 – 9 years
17% lived in Simsbury 0 – 4 years

32% of respondents identified as male
68% of respondents identified as female

Survey Household Composition



Survey Frequency of Use: Town Parks & Open Spaces

MOST FREQUENTLY VISITED:

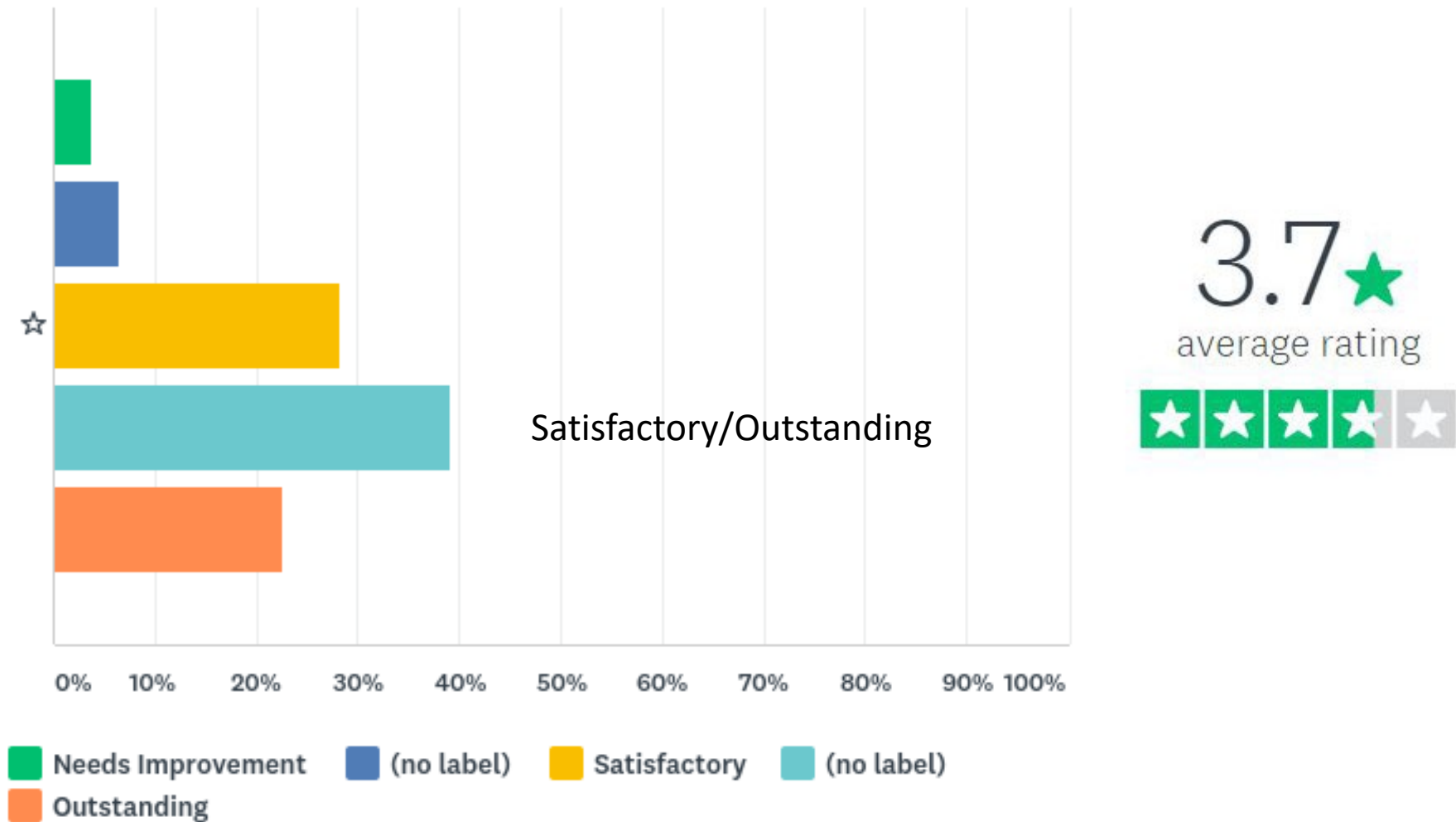
- Simsbury Meadows
- Simsbury Farms
- Curtiss Park
- Flower Bridge
- Memorial Park
- Town Forest

LEAST VISITED:

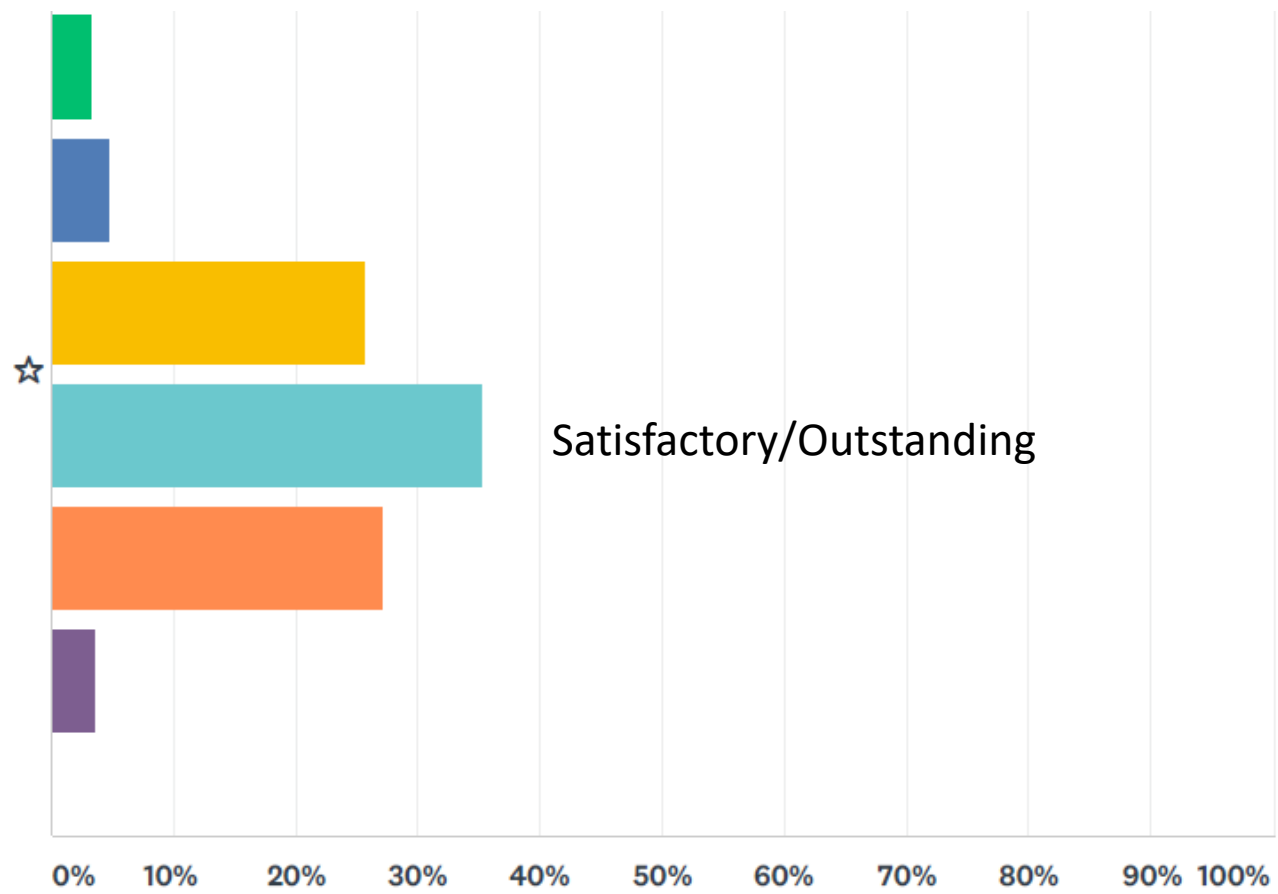
- West Mountain
- Tarriffville Park
- Meadow Pond
- Onion Mountain
- Schultz Park



Survey Quality of Town Parks & Open Spaces

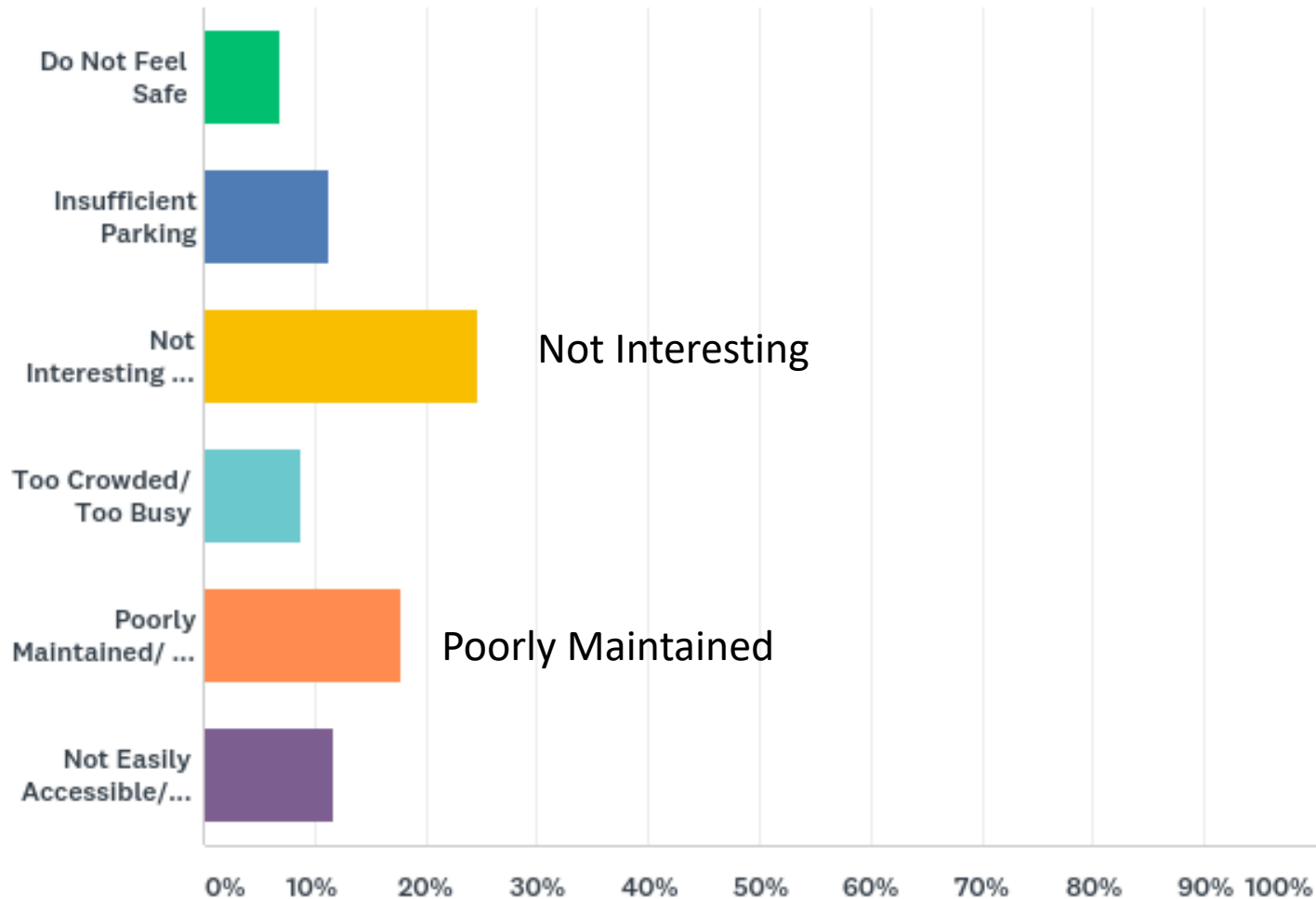


Survey Satisfaction with Town Parks & Open Spaces



- Needs Improvement
- (no label)
- Adequate
- (no label)
- Outstanding
- Unsure/Don't Know

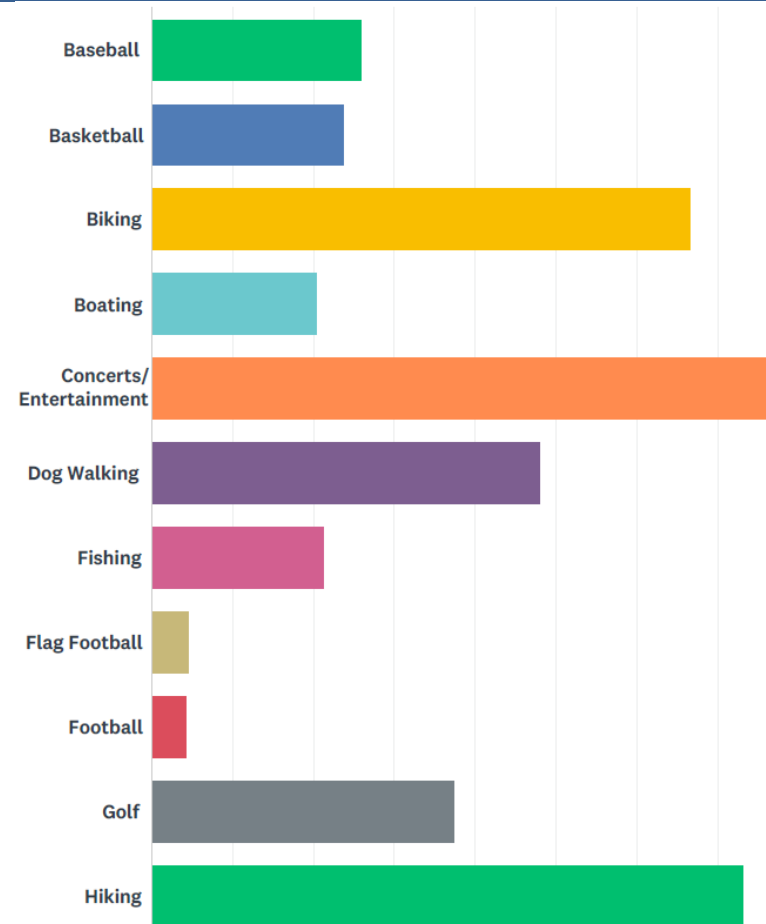
Survey Barriers to use of Town Parks & Open Spaces



Survey Facilities and/or Activities Pursued

Passive Recreation scored the highest

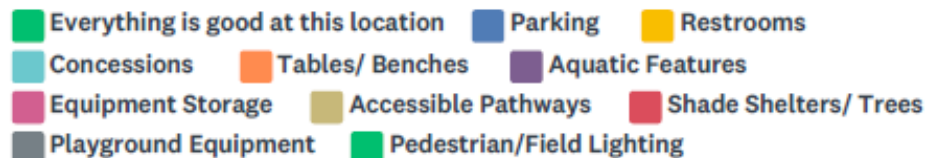
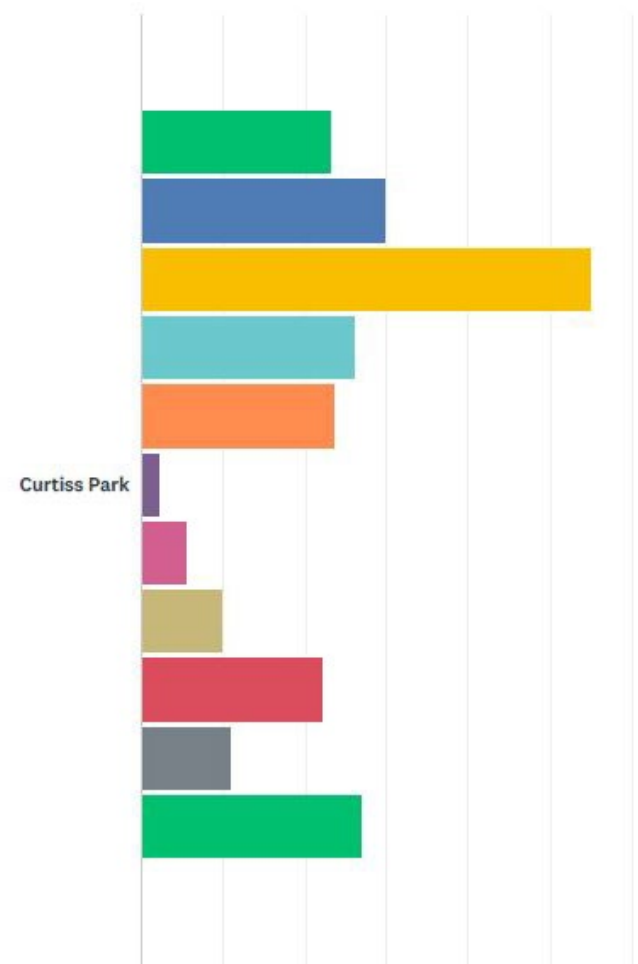
- Followed by:
 - Biking
 - Playgrounds
 - Aquatic activities
 - Hiking
 - Concerts
 - Walking/jogging



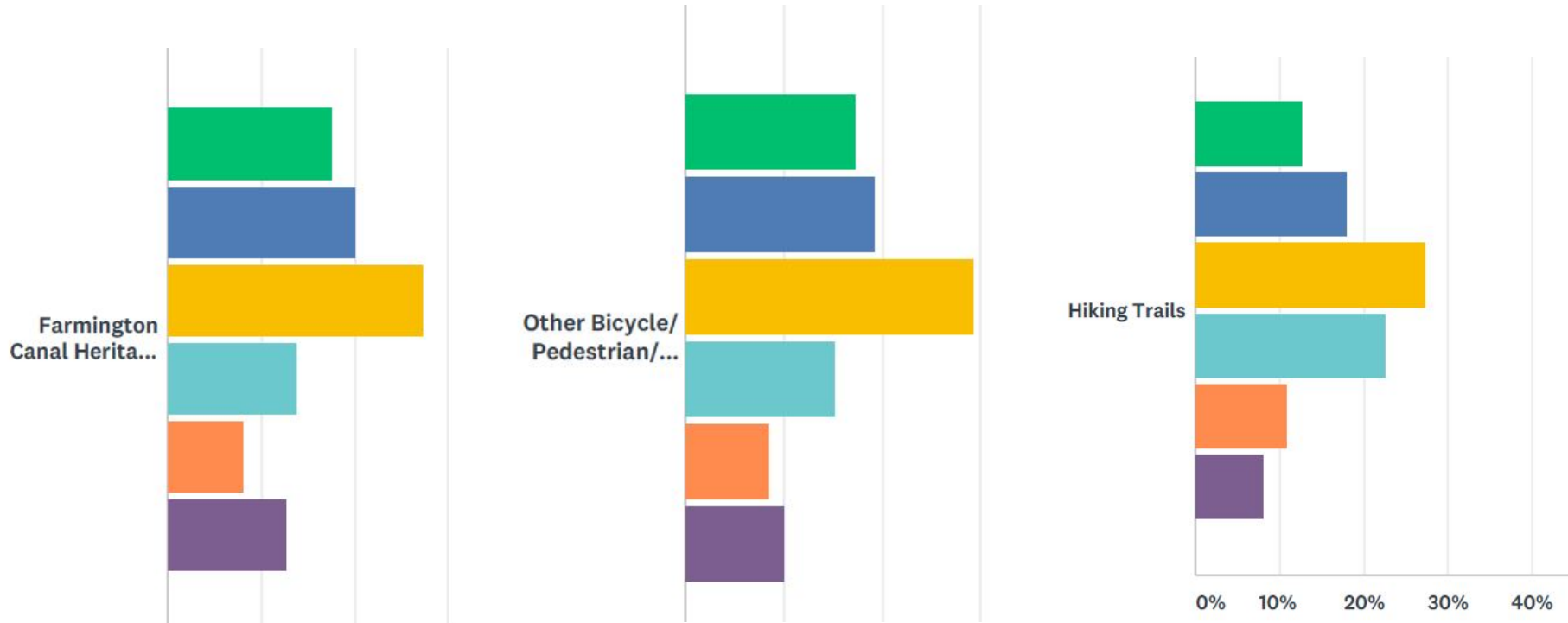
Survey Most Important to Improve or Add

Top Responses

- Everything is fine
- Restrooms
- Tables
- benches



Survey Trails Usage



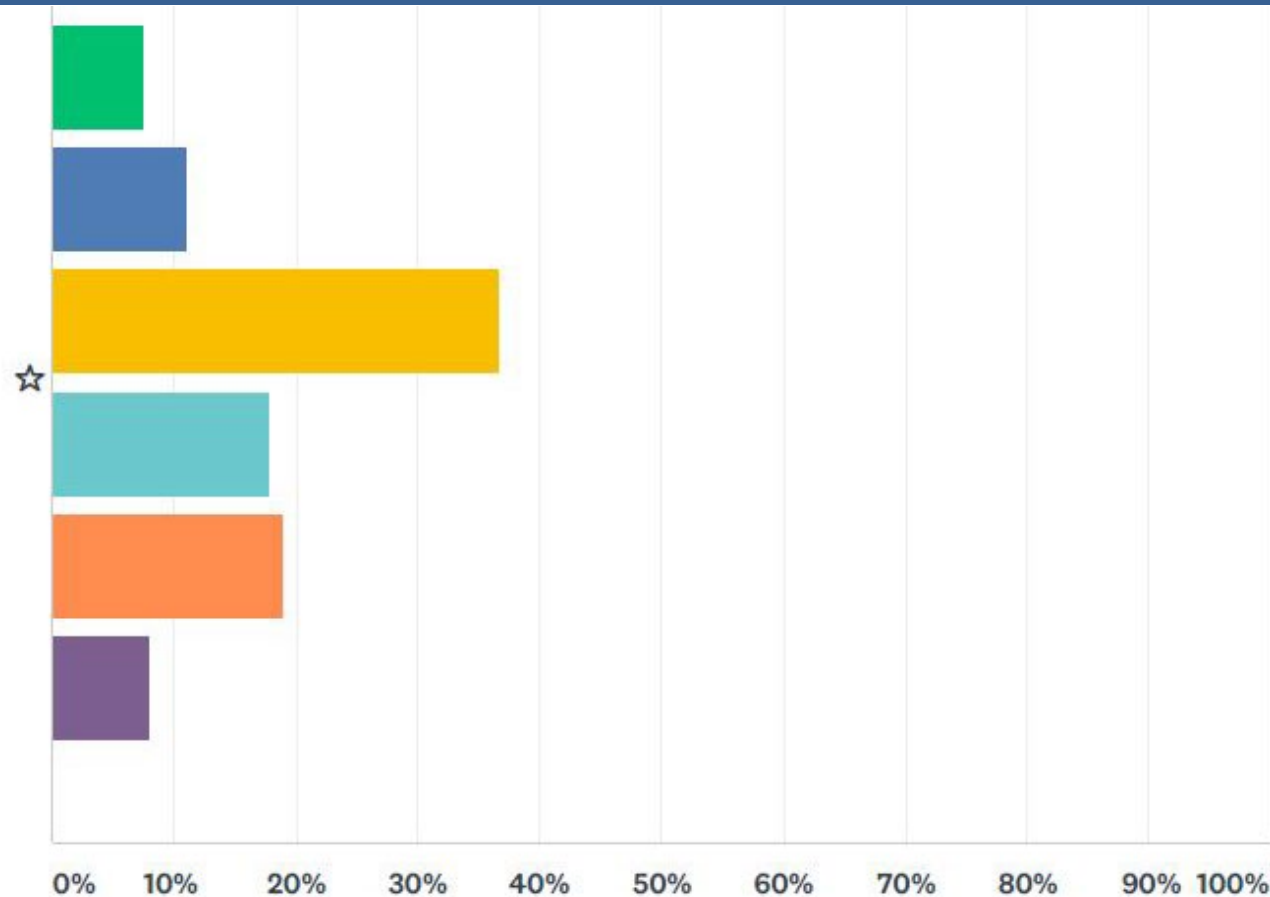
Multiple times per week
Annually Never

Weekly

Monthly

Quarterly

Survey Trails Satisfaction



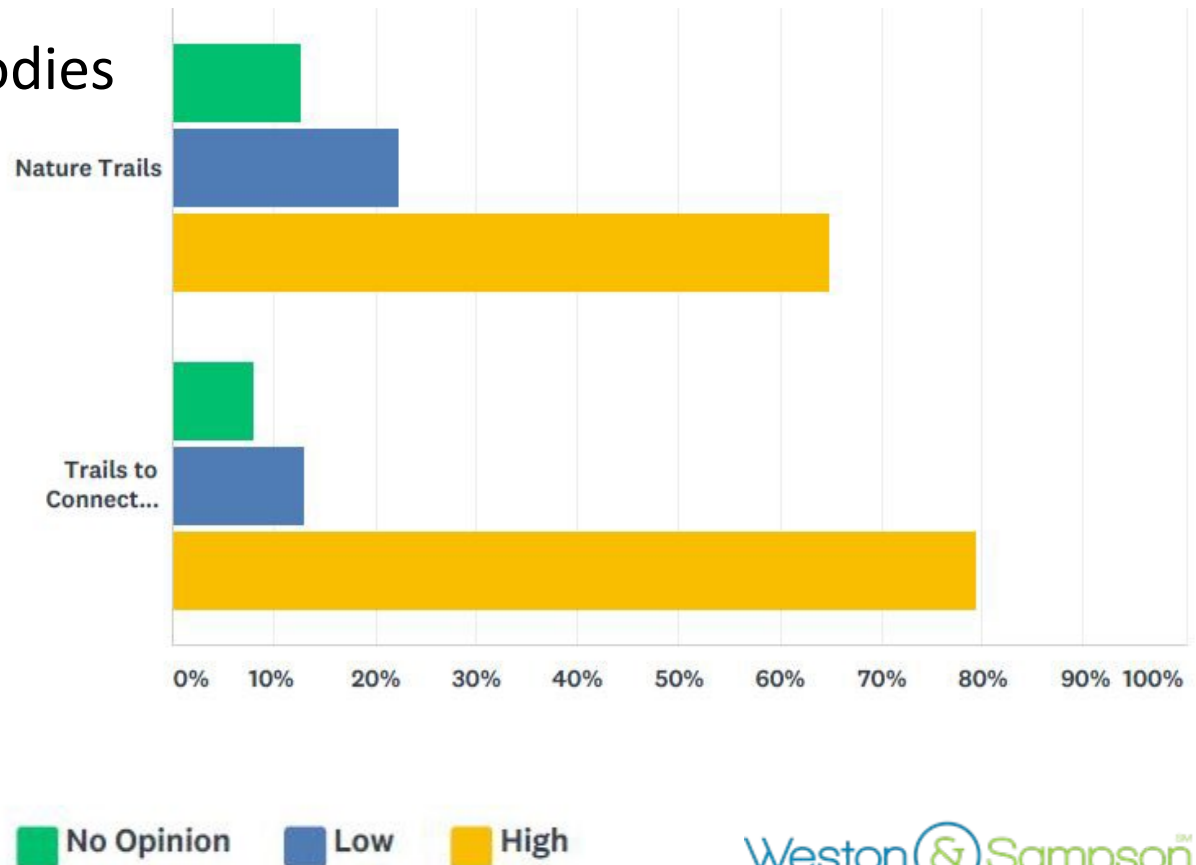
3.3★
average rating



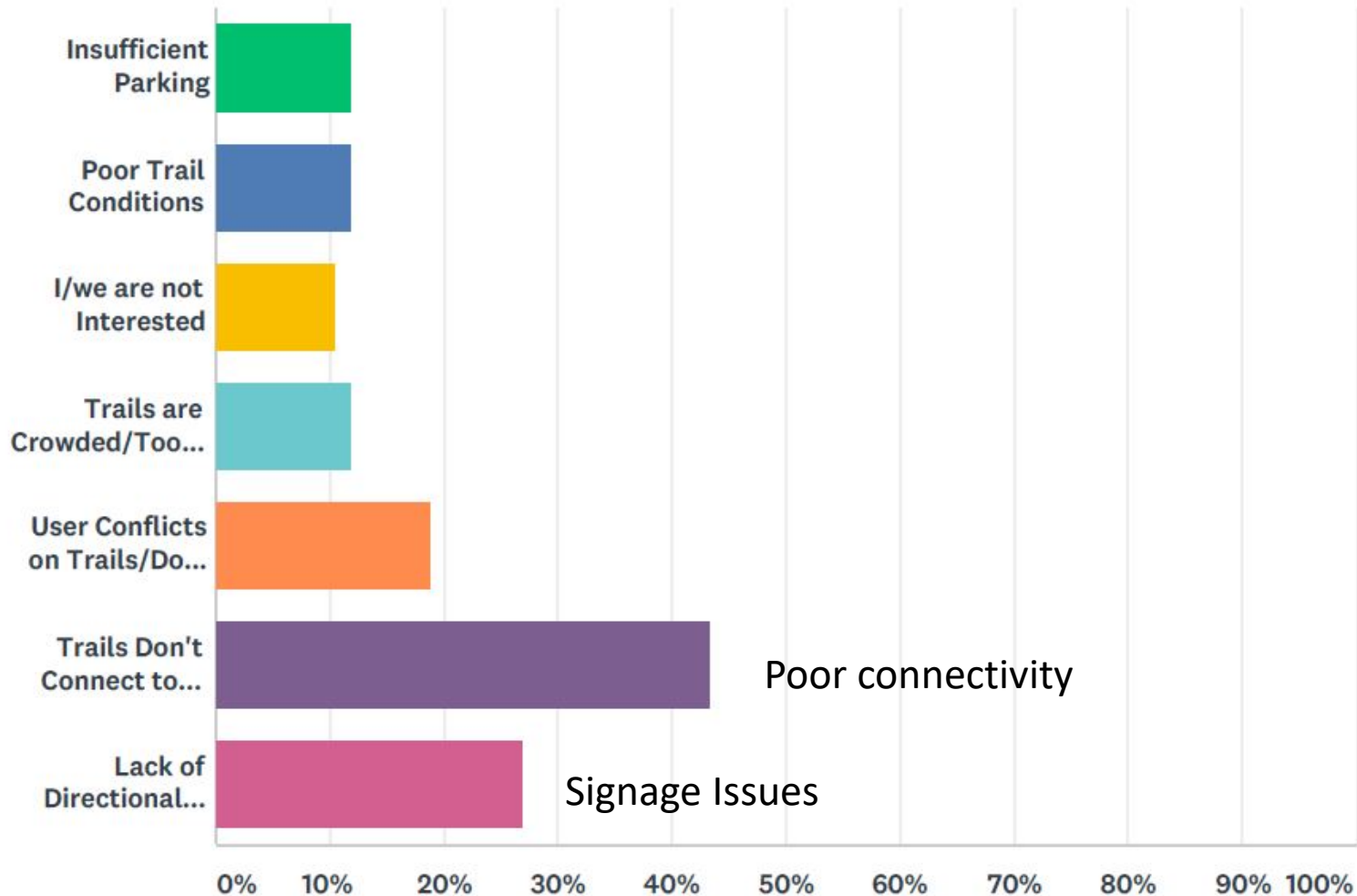
Poor (no label) I'm Happy (no label) Outstanding
Unsure/ Don't Know

Survey Trails Priorities

1. Connect to neighborhoods/resources
2. Nature trails
3. Trails along water bodies



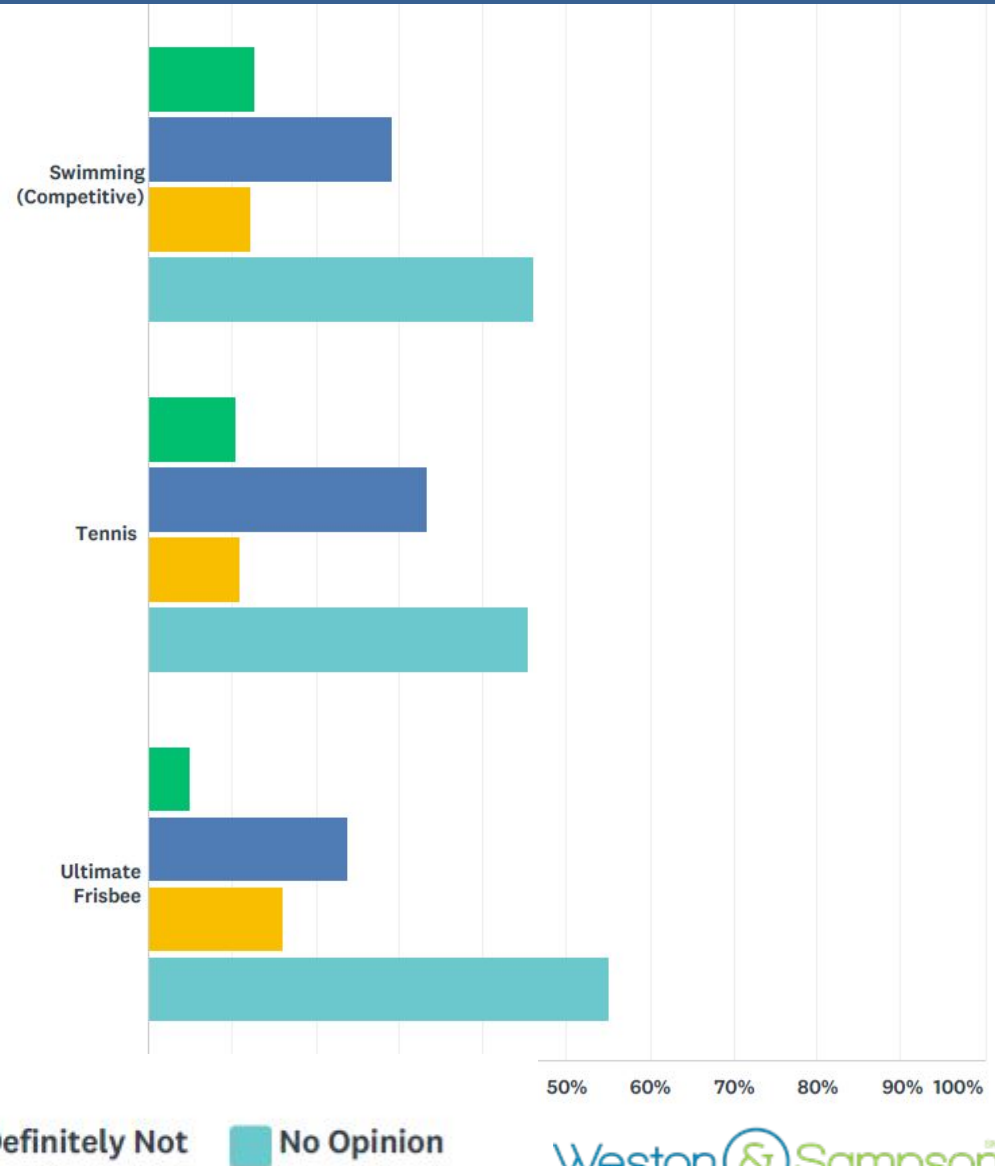
Survey Barriers to Trails Usage



Survey Future Recreational Programs/Activities

Top Reponses

- Soccer
- Cultural
- Baseball
- Lacrosse
- Swimming

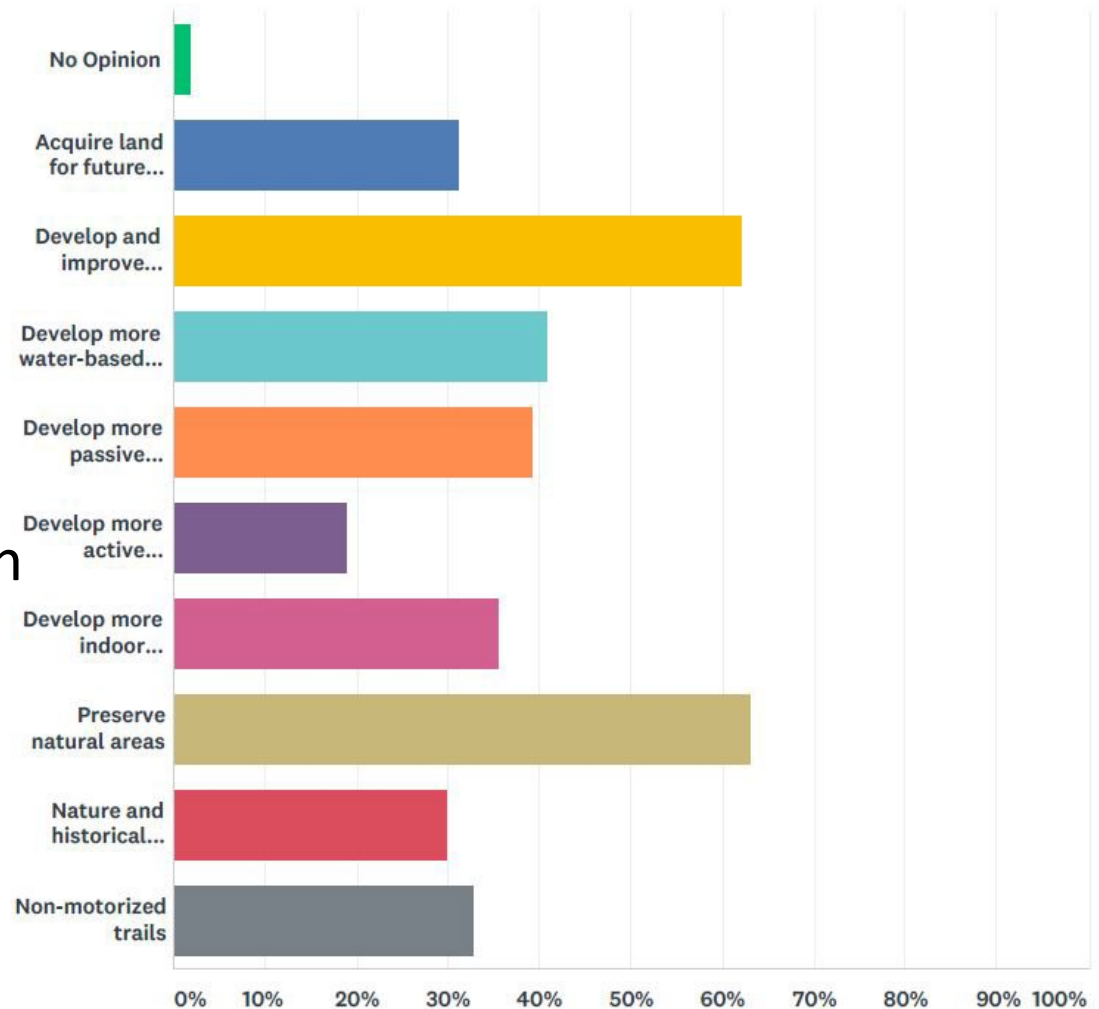


Definitely Likely Definitely Not No Opinion

Survey Park & Open Space Priorities

Top Responses

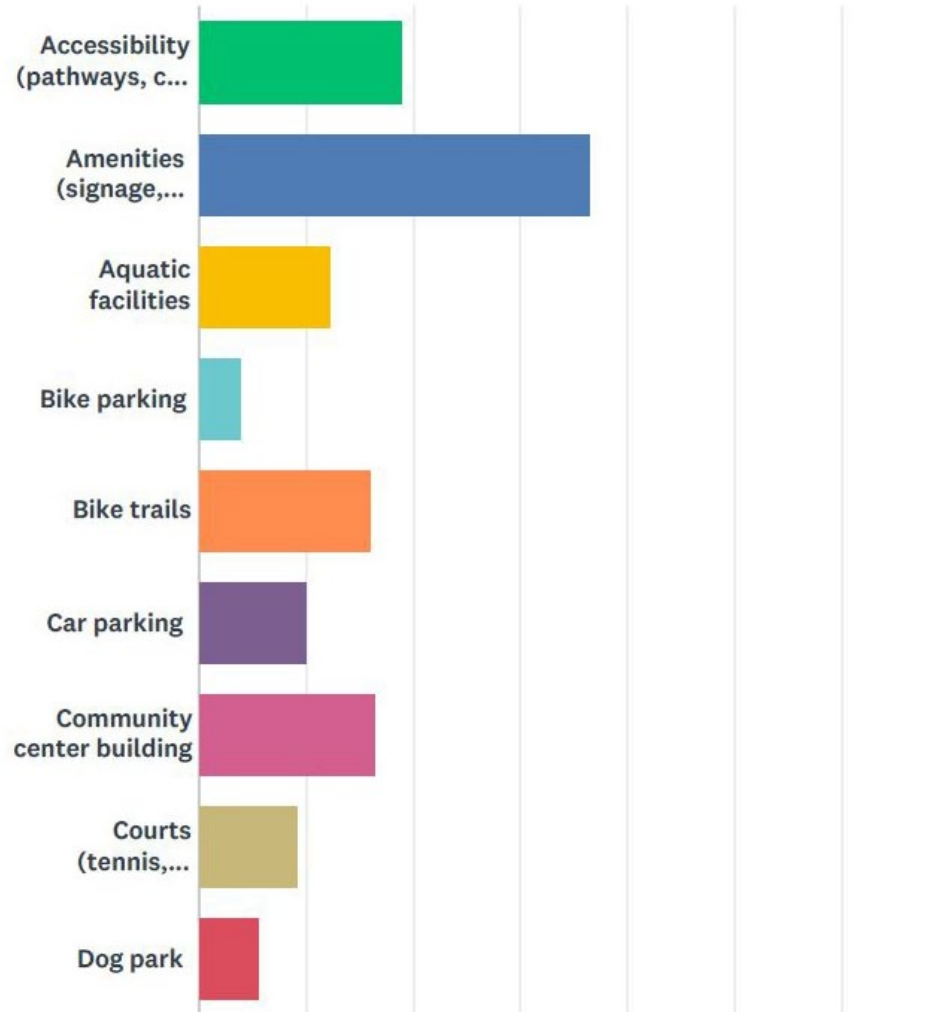
- Preserve natural Areas
- Develop and Improve Existing
- Water-based Recreation
- Passive Recreation Opportunities
- Indoor Recreation



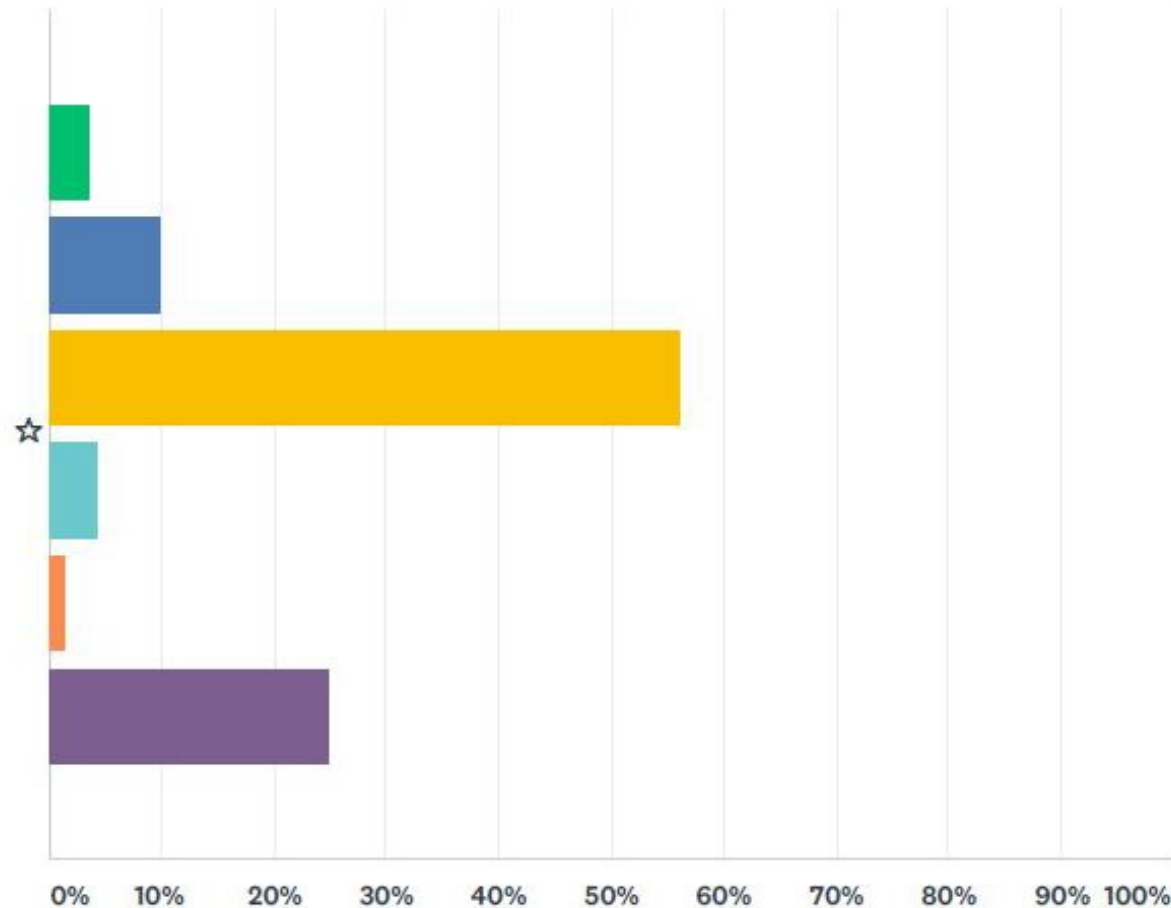
Survey Park & Open Space Improvements

Top Three Priorities

- Public Access to Water Bodies
- Amenities (signage, bathrooms, drinking fountains)
- Lighting/Security



Survey Value of User fees



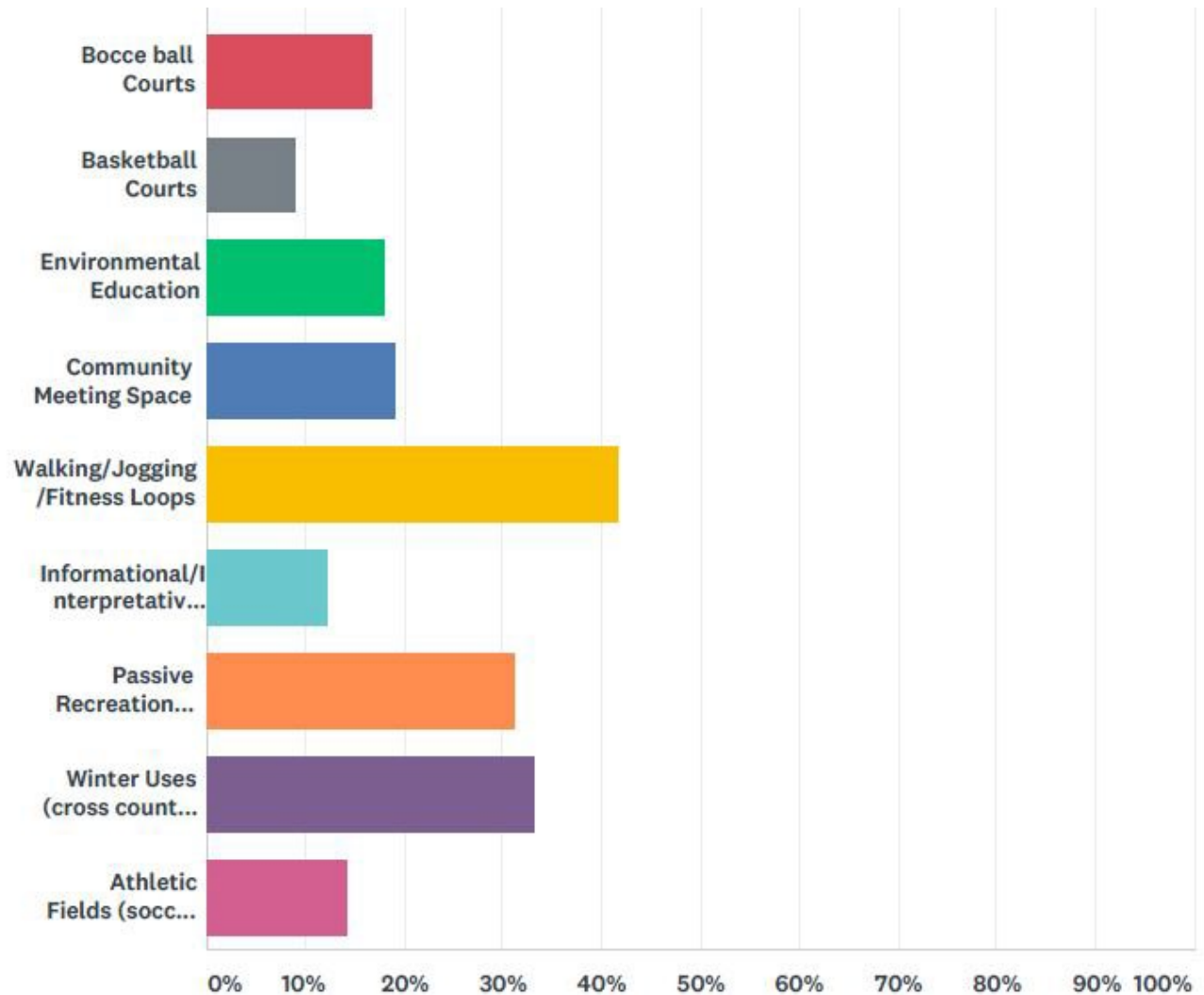
2.9★
average rating



Too High (no label) Just Right (no label) Too Low
No Opinion

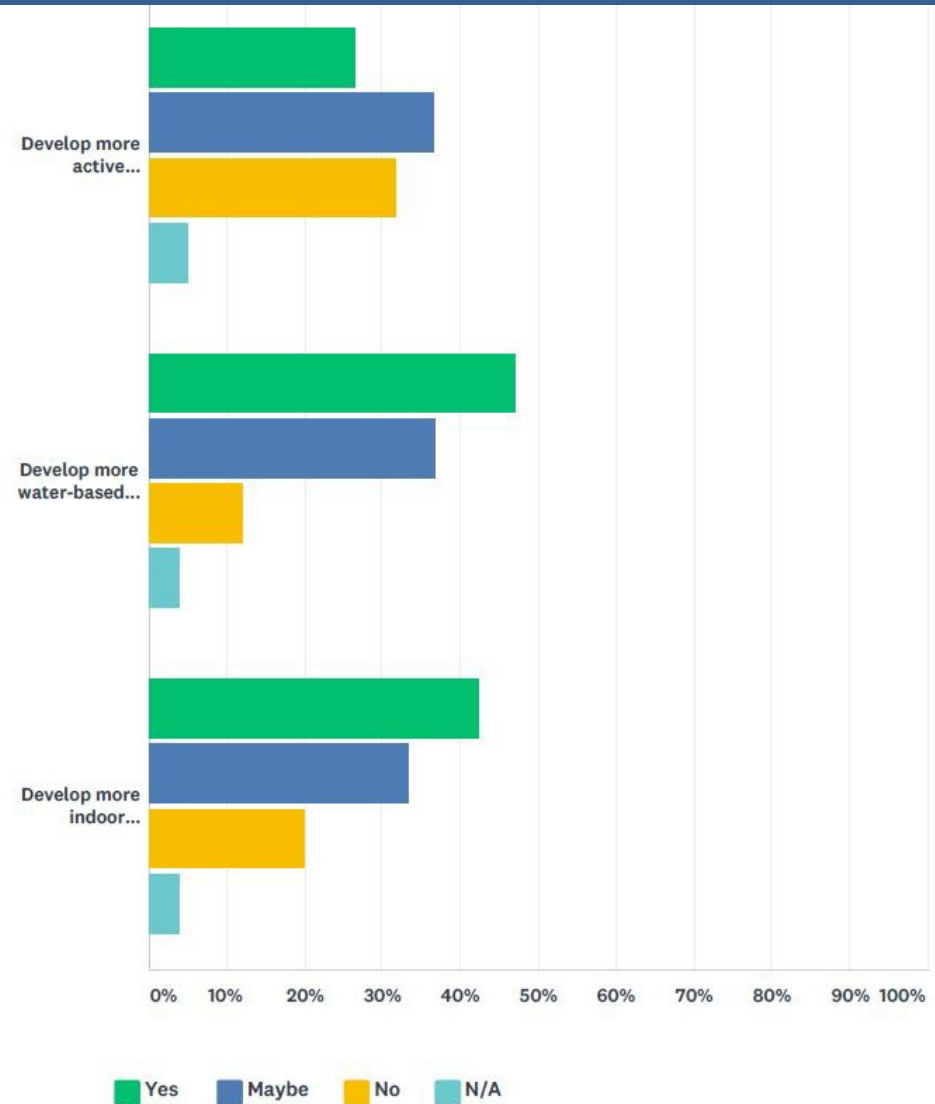
Survey Desired New Recreation Facilities/Amenities

1. Walking/Jogging
2. Splash Pads
3. Winter Use
4. Passive Recreation
5. Community Spaces



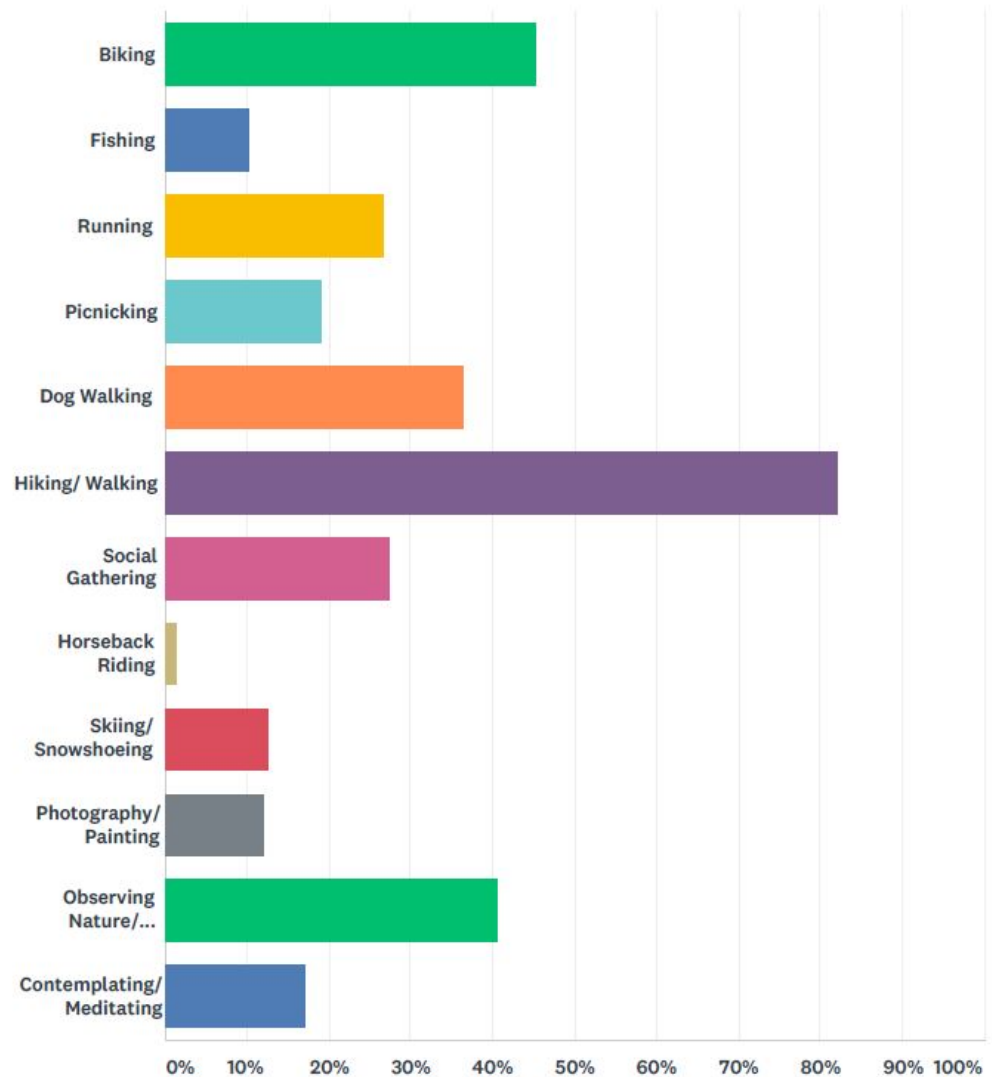
Survey Future Implementation Priorities

1. Preserve Natural Areas
2. Develop/Preserve Existing Facilities



Survey Open Space Activity Participation

1. Hiking
2. Biking
3. Nature Observation



SIMSBURY PARKS

Field Inventories

- Memorial Park (Upper & Lower)
- Simsbury Farms
- Apple Barn
- Orkil Fields
- Curtiss Park
- Town Forest Park
- Town Forest Baseball Fields
- Tarriffville Park
- West Mountain Park
- Meadow Pond
- Memorial Park Pool
- Simsbury Farms Pool
- Schultz Park
- Paw Meadow Dog Park
- Rotary Park Playground
- Simsbury Meadows



PARKS – Active Recreation

Strengths

- Maintenance of facilities
- Facilities for a wide variety of age ranges
- Close to commercial/residential
- Heavily utilized
- Passive & Active possibilities
- Scenic quality
- Excellent facilities
 - Pool
 - Playground
 - Courts
 - Sport fields

Areas of Improvement

- Irrigation/drainage of fields
- Playground updates
- Parking
- Lighting
- MP Pool Upgrades
- Accessibility – pedestrian access
- Accessibility to fields/event spaces
- Skatepark upgrades
- Batting cages
- Bathrooms

PARKS – Passive Recreation

Strengths

- Bicycle networks
- Maintenance of facilities
- Facilities for a wide variety of age ranges
- Beautiful settings
- Ample distribution
- Close to commercial/residential
- Pavilions/Covered gathering spaces
- Ample open lawn for unscripted play

Areas of Improvement

- ADA Accessibility
- Lighting
- Parking
- Drainage concerns
- Facility maintenance
- Waste disposal
- Bathrooms
- Grills
- Sidewalks

SIMSBURY OPEN SPACE

Field Inventories

- Simsbury Farms Local Trails
- Onion Mountain Park
- Ethel Walker Woods
- Iron Horse Blvd. Pathways
- Pinchot Sycamore
- Belden Forest
- Clifdon Dr. Open Space
- Hamden Cir./County Rd.
- Laurel Ln./Great Pond Rd.
- Holkum Dr./Barn Door Hills Rd.
- Town Forest Park Trails
- Chestnut Hill Rd./Madison Ln.
- Owensbrook Road Pathways
- Hearthstone Rd. Firetown Rd.
- Red Stone Dr./Adams Rd.
- Farmington River Trail (Bike)

OPEN SPACE – Large Parcels

Strengths

- Expansive trail networks
- Maintenance of trails
- Beautiful settings
- Close to commercial/residential
- Diversity of flora and fauna
- Old growth forest designation
- Good succession in some forests
- Great meadow opportunities
- Open space available for pollinator habitat establishment
- Some landscape scale connections

Areas of Improvement

- ADA Accessibility
- Wayfinding/reassurance markers on trails
- Parking
- Drainage concerns
- Trail maintenance
- Invasive species
- Sensitive habitats
- Wetland resource protection
- Wildlife conflicts
- Maintenance concerns
- Disease/regeneration

OPEN SPACE – Small Parcels

Strengths

- Bicycle/pedestrian networks
- Maintenance of facilities
- Opportunities for exposure to the outdoors
- Beautiful settings
- Ample distribution
- Close to commercial/residential
- Small settings
- Within residential neighborhoods
- Ease of exercise
- Ease of interaction with neighbors

Areas of Improvement

- Maintenance concerns
- Invasive species proliferation
- Habitat loss (mowing/noise)
- Lack of community participation
- Waste disposal
- Lack of connection to larger resources
- ADA access
- Tree hazards

project schedule

Task	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
<i>Kickoff Meeting</i>	P								
Phase I Inventory									
Phase II Needs Assessment									
<i>Public Engagement</i>	Stake./ Mtgs		Comm. Input Mtg			Findings Presentation		Draft Presentation	
				Online Survey					
Phase III Visioning Draft Master Plan									
Phase IV Financial Plan Final Master Plan									Final Presentation

P = Project Committee Meeting
M = Stakeholder/ Public Meeting

A background image of a lush green park with large, mature trees and a grassy field. The scene is bright and sunny, with a clear sky. The text is overlaid on the image.

Questions?

We Welcome Your Feedback

Parks & Open Space Master Plan

Thank you.

Tom Diehl, CPRP

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