

# COMMUNITY SURVEY FOR THE PARK DISTRICT OF OAK PARK

AUGUST 2019

*aQity Research & Insights*

*Evanston, IL*

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## Research Methods

- These findings are based on a random sample of n=618 households within the PDOP boundaries.
- Data collection was between April 23 through June 29, 2019. The survey was sent by USPS to a sample of households within the District boundaries; follow-up reminder postcards were also sent to the non-respondents to encourage their participation. Both mailings include options to complete the survey by mail, online, or phone.



- For those completing the online survey, the average survey length was approximately 15 minutes.
  - This respondent sample was weighted to align with updated US Census data for Oak Park (by region, gender, age, and race/ethnicity). Note that after weighting by these demographics, our sample is slightly under-representative of:
    - Renters (31% of survey respondents, vs. 38% from Census data);
    - Households without children (61% of survey respondents, vs. 68% from Census data).
- This may represent some overlap (e.g., renters without children). A large number of mailed survey and postcard reminders were returned as undeliverable to multifamily units (apartments and condos), so vacancies or tenant mobility likely explain the lower response rate from these residences.
- Assuming no sample bias, the margin of error is +/- 3.9% (at the 95% confidence level) \*.

\* In addition to sampling error, question wording, respondent error, and practical difficulties in conducting surveys may introduce error or bias in any opinion poll.

## Methods: Sample Demographics

(weighted to reflect US Census data for Oak Park)

### Gender\*

Male	48%
Female	51%
Prefer to self-describe	1%

### Age\*

<35	20%
35-44	21%
45-54	22%
55-64	19%
65+	18%
<i>Mean (years)</i>	<i>50</i>

### Children in Household

Yes	39%
No	61%

### Length of Residence in Area

< 5 yrs.	25%
5-14 yrs.	29%
15-24 yrs.	18%
25-34	12%
35+ yrs.	16%
<i>Mean (years)</i>	<i>16.9</i>

### Ethnicity\*

White	75%
Hispanic	6%
Asian	4%
Black/African American	18%
Other	3%

### Household Income

<\$50,000	12%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	11%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	16%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	20%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	16%
\$200,000+	25%
(refused)	20%

### Own/Rent Status

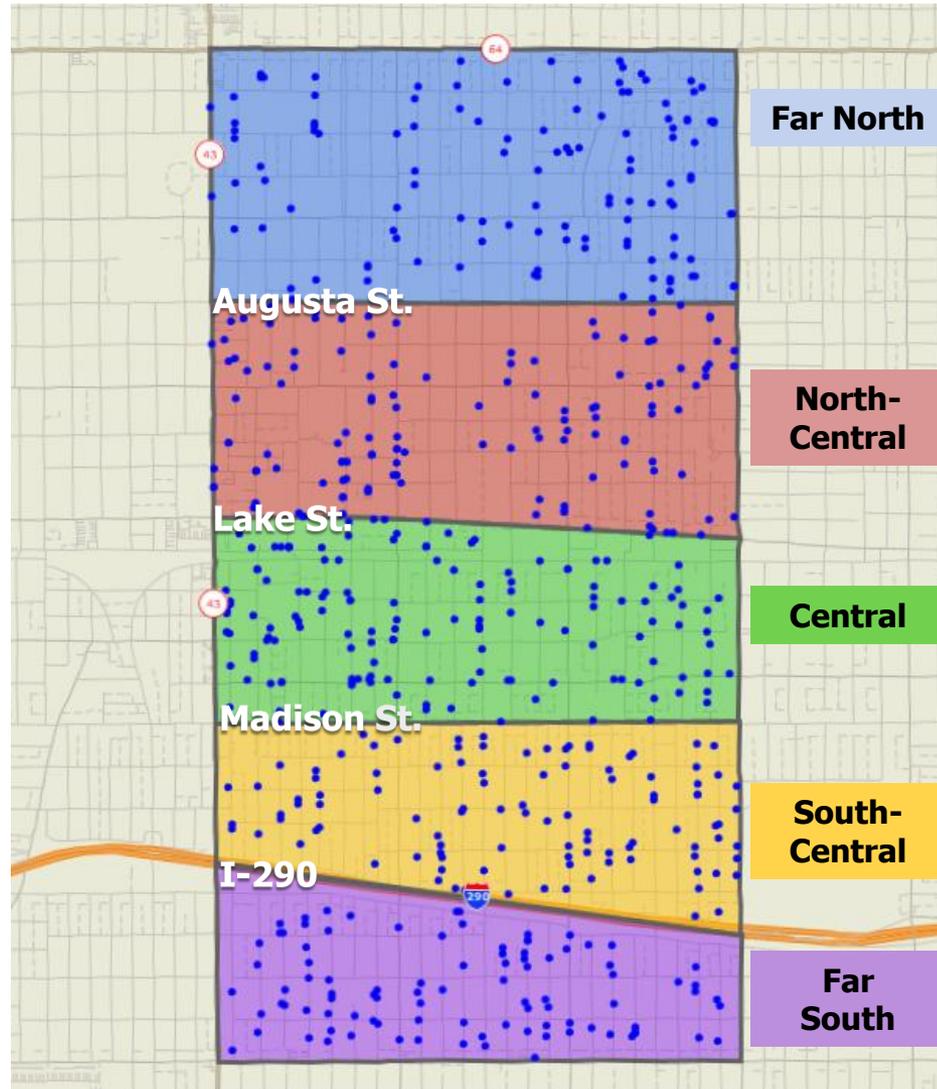
Own current residence	69%
Rent current residence	31%

### Type of Residence

Apartment	20%
Condo	11%
Townhouse	5%
Single-family house	64%

## Methods: Regional Distribution of Survey Respondents (n=618)

Regions*	
Far North	22%
North-Central	20
Central	17
South-Central	16
Far South	25



\*Weighted to 2017 Census data.

# Executive Summary: Key Findings

## Overall Opinions: Park District of Oak Park

### Respondents Hold the PDOP In Very High Esteem

- On a zero through ten rating scale, the PDOP receives a very positive average score of 8.2. It has a better than 20:1 favorable-to-unfavorable ratings ratio. < pg. 20 >
  - Just over half of Oak Park residents (51%) give the highest esteem ratings to the District (scores of 9+). Another 26% are very positive, and 13% are somewhat positive.
  - By comparison, only 4% are dissatisfied with the District overall, and 6% are neutral (no strong opinion either way).
  - The highest ratings tend to come from younger adults (under age 45) and the newest Oak Park residents (moved here within the past 5 years). Both white and African American residents give higher than average scores. < pg. 21 >
  - Lower than average scores (albeit still very positive, averaging 7.1 or higher on a 0-10 scale) come from older adults (ages 55+), Asian American households, and lower income residents (under \$50K).
  - These ratings are consistent by region and among homeowners vs. renters.
- These PDOP ratings are significantly higher than comparable benchmarks among parks and recreation agencies statewide, and among the districts in the immediate vicinity of Oak Park. < pg. 22 >
- Among other local agencies servicing Oak Park residents, only the Public Library receives higher ratings than the PDOP. Its average rating of 9.1 (on the zero through ten scale) is one of the highest that aQity Research has ever seen. < pg. 20 >
  - The Village, local school districts, and Oak Park Township all receive positive ratings as well (between 7.1 and 7.5 on average), though roughly half of the respondents are unfamiliar with the Township and local school districts.

## Overall Opinions: PDOP Strengths

### A Majority Cite Both PDOP Programs and Its Parks/Facilities as Strengths

- When asked what they like most about the PDOP and what represents its strengths, the most frequent open-ended responses are: *< pp. 23-26 >*
  - Its programs and events, cited by 63% of those responding. Most often, they value the variety of offerings, as well as youth programming in particular.
  - Its parks and facilities (a close second at 58%), especially with the overall maintenance and upkeep of these properties.
- Among those offering responses, nearly one in five (18%) feel the Park District staff and overall administration are positives, usually seen as professional, helpful, communicating well, and offering innovative and new programming/activities.

### Three-Fifths Offer Weaknesses or Improvements for the PDOP

- Dislikes concerning the PDOP are more varied. The most frequent include: *< pp. 27-32 >*
  - Overall staff and/or management issues (39%), usually general spending and anti-tax concerns (e.g., keep taxes low, cut waste, consolidate) and/or spending on recent improvements. Other feedback is more scattered, including more/better outreach (8%), improved program and facility staff (6%), and better organization at specific PDOP facilities or activities (6%).
  - Accessibility issues rank second (29%), with most citing difficulties registering for programs (e.g., slots fill up too quickly, confusing online portal) or the need for expanded hours and scheduling at specific facilities (RCRC, GRC).
  - Added/Improved programming (17%), with about equal numbers seeking more options for adult and youth activities.
  - Additional facilities (20%), mostly an indoor pool (10% overall).
  - Seventeen percent volunteer that PDOP fees are the biggest negative.

## Overall Opinions: Overall PDOP Value

### Respondents Feel the District Represents a Very Good Value Overall

- On average, residents believe that about 8% of their property taxes go to the PDOP, higher than the District's actual share of 4.6%. < pg. 33 >
- When informed that the PDOP's share is 4.6% of property taxes, and considering the programs, parks, facilities and services that the District provides, residents rate the overall value as "very good" (8.0 average score on a 0-10 scale). < pg. 34 >
  - This is far higher than benchmark value ratings for parks agencies statewide (from 2013) and from nearby communities, most of which average in the 6.5 to 6.7 range. < pg. 35 >
- The District receives its highest value scores from younger and newer residents, women, those in the far South region, and white residents. < pg. 34 >
- While some give lower value ratings, it is important to note that no segment feels the PDOP represents a poor value. All groups give average ratings of 6.7 or higher (with the lowest value coming from non-PDOP users/visitors).
  - Others offering lower value scores include men, North-Central residents, older adults (ages 55+), lower income households, and non-white respondents. All give average value ratings of 7.4 or higher (still considered "good").

## Overall Opinions: PDOP Park and Facility Usage

**Nine in Ten (92%)  
Report Using or Visiting  
a PDOP Park or Facility  
in the Past Year**

- A majority report that at least one household member recently visited Scoville Park (59%) or the Oak Park Conservatory (52%) in the past year.
  - Both locations draw largely from all subgroups, though Scoville Park users are more likely to include condo owners, Asian American and Hispanic households.
  - By comparison, the Oak Park Conservatory draws disproportionately from the Far South region, as well as among homeowners and those with children.
- The next tier of top PDOP park and facility destinations include:
  - Rehm Park (44%) and Rehm Pool (37%), especially among Asian and Hispanic households, and Far South residents;
  - Austin Gardens (42%), with higher than average usage among white households, lower income residents, and those in the North-Central area;
  - Ridgeland Common Rec Complex (39%) and Pool (31%), especially among Far North residents, Hispanic households, and those with children.
- The remaining parks and facilities are all mentioned by fewer residents, with the top destinations being Taylor Park (33%) and Fox Park (31%).
- Of the facilities mentioned, Scoville Park appears to draw evenly from all parts of Oak Park. All other PDOP facilities tend to attract visitors from specific regions more than average.

< pp. 37-38 >

< pg. 39 >

## Overall Opinions: Satisfaction with PDOP Parks, Facilities

### The Vast Majority of PDOP Park and Facility Users are Very Satisfied With These Properties

- Among recent visitors to District parks and facilities, a majority (56%+) are completely satisfied with the overall experience at these destinations along with the upkeep, safety, accessibility, and staff service. < pg. 41 >
- Consistently, these attributes receive average satisfaction scores of 8.3 or higher (on a 0-10 scale). Overall safety receives the highest satisfaction overall, with 62% “completely satisfied” (and only 2% “dissatisfied”).
  - In a separate question, a few residents (n=7) express safety concerns and/or lack of patrols at Scoville Park. This appears to be the only PDOP location that generates perceived safety issues. < pp. 43 >
- Even those giving lower than average ratings still express strong satisfaction with PDOP parks and facilities on these attributes. No segment gives an average rating lower than a 7.2 overall (still very positive). < pp. 42 >
- Among the relatively few who express dissatisfaction with specific parks or facilities, the top concerns include: < pp. 43-44 >
  - Ridgeland Common Rec Complex (mostly complaints about limited parking; additional comments are very scattered);
  - Rehm Pool (better maintenance, improved/more bathrooms, too busy/needs a longer season);
  - Austin Gardens (better maintenance, fix the fence, better/more events);
  - Gymnastics and Rec Center (not enough parking);
  - Barrie Park (flooding issues, more updates/cleanup).

## Overall Opinions: Reasons for Non-Usage, And Opinions of PDOP Programs/Events

### Non-Users of PDOP Parks and Facilities Usually Find Them Less Relevant (e.g., among “Empty Nesters”)

- The relatively few non-users/non-visitors to local parks and facilities (n=37 overall) most often attribute their non-usage to not having children in the household (n=15) or simply having a busy lifestyle and not enough leisure time (n=13). < pg. 45 >
- Another n=8 are unaware of what the PDOP has to offer, and as many (n=8) are simply not interested or not very active. Only two residents cite the PDOP fees or costs as a reason for non-usage.

### PDOP Programs and Events Receive Equally Strong Satisfaction Scores as the Parks and Facilities

- A majority of residents report attending PDOP events in the past year (65%, most often summer concerts and Day In Our Village) and/or participate in its programs (55%, usually youth-related activities). < pg. 55 >
- On average, they give the programs an average 8.4 satisfaction rating, and an 8.5 to PDOP special events (both considered very positive). At least half are completely satisfied with both programs and events; no more than 2% are dissatisfied. < pg. 56 >
  - The few offering suggestions or concerns usually cite specific events (n=17), usually movie nights, summer concerts, or Days in our Village. This feedback is very scattered (e.g., more movies, more music diversity, more parking, etc.). < pg. 58 >
  - Nearly as many (n=16) express concerns about program instructors or staff, especially for youth activities (more consistency, more professional, etc.)
  - Ten residents are unhappy with program registration, mostly the portal and activities filling up too quickly. Only n=5 are unhappy with program costs/fees.
- Residents are most likely to seek additional active adult programming, especially for ages 55+ (a variety of sports/athletics/fitness programs) as well as for those ages 30-44 (a mix of sports and fitness along with specific interest programs/courses). < pp. 58-61 >

## Overall Opinions: Indoor Facility Needs Assessment

### Close to Half of Residents Express a Need or Interest in a Fitness Center, Indoor Pool, and Indoor Track

- Overall, 46% are interested in a fitness center, and 43% express a need or interest in an indoor pool. Both appeal to younger adults and households with children. *< pp. 47-49 >*
  - The highest income households are especially interested in an indoor pool, as are Asian American residents and those in the Far North and Far South regions.
  - One in three (33%) express similar interest in an indoor pool with lap lanes, especially older residents (ages 45 to 64) and higher income adults.
- An indoor track is of interest to 39% overall, particularly among older residents (ages 55-64) and African American households.
- About one in five (22%) are interested in or seek gym space (especially younger adults, those with children, African American households, and high income residents).
  - The other indoor amenities tested (pickleball court, warm water therapy pool) are in less demand overall.
- When determining current availability/accessibility to these amenities, the demand for a fitness center, indoor pool, and indoor track represent the biggest “gaps”. These are on the cusp of being considered “high priority” unmet needs. *< pg. 51 >*
  - Among those interested in these features, a relatively small number feel these needs are currently being met currently (36% or less). This means that at least 64% feel there is a gap to fill.
- When asked which one indoor amenity should represent a top priority for the PDOP, about equal numbers select an indoor open pool (27%) or a fitness center (26%). In this context, an indoor track is deemed less important (13%), followed closely by gym space (10%). *< pp. 52-53 >*

## Overall Opinions: Potential Community Recreation Center

**By a Roughly 4:1 Margin, Residents Feel A Rec Center Is Needed in Oak Park, and Support Its Construction Without a Tax Increase**

- Overall, 80% feel that a rec center that includes gym space, a fitness center, and an indoor pool (including open swim, lap lanes, and warm water therapy pool) is needed in the community.
  - Half of these residents (41%) feel this way strongly.
- When informed that this facility will be available not only to all Oak Park households, but will provide free open gym space for middle school and high school children in a safe after-school environment, nearly the same percentage (82%) feel this represents a need.
  - Those who strongly feel this way increases to 52% upon hearing this statement.
- Finally, when asked if they support or oppose the construction of a new community rec center knowing that the capital expense would be covered by grants and private donations, 85% express support (41% strongly), with only 15% opposed.
  - A majority of all subgroups express support for this proposal.
  - Lower levels of support tend to come from the oldest residents (ages 55+), long-term Oak Park residents (35+ years), those without children, and lower income households.
- Overall, those who most strongly support this proposal tend to be women, those age 35 to 54, and the highest income residents.
- The key group will be the not strong supporters, who tend to include men, townhouse dwellers, and white residents.

< pg. 64 >

< pg. 65 >

## Overall Opinions: Reasons for Community Rec Center Support/Opposition

### Supporters Most Often Feel This Facility Will Address an Unmet Need in the Community

- Among supporters, nearly half (47%) say a new rec center will provide the community with the year-round indoor fitness and pool facilities that Oak Park currently lacks. < pp. 67-70 >
- One in four (24%) specifically cite the need for a facility that offers after-school programs for older children, and another 14% favor that this facility will provide options for all Oak Park residents (including lower income families, seniors, etc.).
- Other top reasons for supporting this facility include:
  - Providing the public indoor pool that the community currently lacks (12%);
  - A more affordable option to residents than existing fitness facilities (11%);
  - Improved quality of life and making Oak Park more attractive to current and potential residents (9%).
- While ten percent support this plan because the funding does not require a property tax increase, another 4% express skepticism that taxes will not go up somehow.

### The Few Opponents Mostly Feel That a Rec Center is Unnecessary, and/or Suspect That Property Taxes Will Still Go Up To Pay For It

- Overall, 61% feel that the area already has enough fitness options available (private health clubs, school facilities, neighboring communities, etc.), and that the new facility does not represent a need. < pp. 71-74 >
  - Similarly, 24% feel there are bigger priorities elsewhere (e.g., maintaining existing PDOP parks and facilities, addressing other local community needs with property tax dollars, etc.).
- One in three (34%) opponents are dubious as to whether property taxes will eventually go up. Another 13% are concerned that user fees will go up (or be too high) to cover the ongoing maintenance cost of the new facility.

## Overall Opinions: Rec Center Priorities and Donations

### An Indoor Pool Represents the Biggest Need

- Among those interested in indoor pool facilities (57% overall), an open swim area and lap lanes represent the top priorities (65% and 63%, respectively). A warm water therapy pool is a priority among 31%.
  - Households with children, Hispanic and Asian American residents, apartment dwellers, and high income households voice the strongest support for an indoor pool.
- A fitness facility ranks a close second in terms of priorities (51%), especially among lower- to middle-income residents.
- Forty-four percent include an indoor track as a top priority. This feature is especially important to older residents, townhouse dwellers, and those in the middle income ranges (\$50K-\$99.9K).
- One third (33%) feel a gym should be a priority, especially middle age adults (ages 45-54).

< pp. 77-78 >

### While Most Support the Rec Center, Only the "Strong" Supporters Appear Willing to Donate Toward Its Construction

- Overall, 61% say they are likely to donate to help raise funds for the rec center's construction costs, but only 21% are "very likely" to do so.
- Among the "strong" supporters, nearly half (44%) are "very likely" to donate.
  - This likelihood drops off sharply among the not strong supporters (only 7% of whom are "very likely" to donate).
  - In fact, nearly half of the not strong supporters (45%) are unwilling to donate toward the construction costs.

< pp. 75-76 >

## Overall Opinions: District Communications and Final Comments

### The Printed Program Guide is By Far The Most Widely Used and Preferred Source of PDOP Information

- More than two-thirds (69%) go to the District program guide when seeking Park District information (especially residents ages 35-44). It tends to be the preferred source of information among women, Hispanic households, and homeowners. *< pp. 80-83 >*
- The PDOP website is mentioned far less often at 37%. In fact, residents are more likely to get District information from the Village's FYI Newsletter (58%).
  - The PDOP website tends to be used more often by women and by Asian American residents.
  - The FYI Newsletter is cited most often by oldest and longest term Oak Park residents. Renters are more likely to prefer the FYI newsletter more often (26%) than homeowners (16%).
- Exterior banners on PDOP facility fencing are cited about as often (36%) as the District website (and mostly among the youngest and newest Oak Park residents).
- Other District information sources include:
  - E-newsletters (21%, especially among women, Hispanic and African American residents);
  - Postcards (19%, primarily newer residents and condo owners);
  - PDOP social media (16%, almost exclusively by recent PDOP visitors/users).
- Roughly two in five residents (39%) are familiar with the District's Scholarship program. Awareness is highest among PDOP users, homeowners, and the highest income residents. The vast majority of renters, lower income residents, and non-users are unfamiliar. *< pg. 84 >*

## Overall Opinions: Final Comments

**Roughly One in Three Respondents Offered Final Comments or Suggestions for the PDOP**

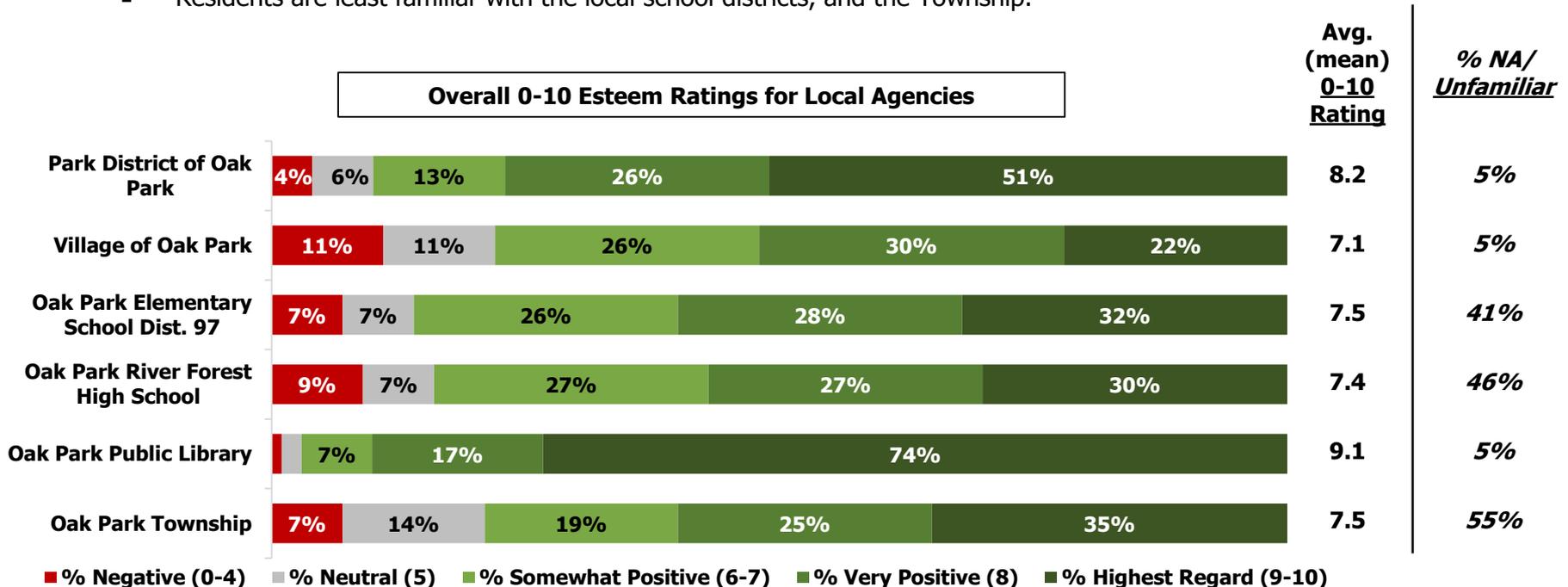
- Most often, these concern:
  - Complete satisfaction with the District (33%) -- e.g., “keep doing what you’re doing”;
  - Improved and/or expanded programming (19%) for a variety of groups (working adults, seniors, teens, residents who have mobility challenges, etc.);
  - More or better facilities (13%), with many echoing the need for a rec center and/or indoor pool specifically.
- The remaining suggestions were more scattered and covered feedback provided earlier in the survey (e.g., coordinate more with other groups/agencies, expanded access/hours to facilities, improved website and registration portal, etc.).

< pg. 86-89 >

# I. Overall Opinions of the Park District of Oak Park (PDOP)

## Oak Park residents hold the PDOP in very high esteem, with a majority giving the highest approval ratings (on a 0-10 scale).

- Nine in ten respondents (90%) gave positive esteem ratings overall for the PDOP, vs. only 4% who are dissatisfied (a nearly 23:1 favorable-to-unfavorable ratio). The remaining 6% gave neutral scores (no strong opinions either way).
  - The PDOP is also very well known, with only 5% unable to offer an opinion due to unfamiliarity.
- Only the Oak Park Public Library receives higher ratings, with 74% holding it in the highest regard. The remaining local agencies tested receive lower (albeit still positive) ratings between 7.1 and 7.5, on average.
  - Residents are least familiar with the local school districts, and the Township.



## The PDOP receives its strongest ratings from younger and newer Oak Park residents, along with those reporting higher household incomes.

- Older and less affluent households tend to give lower scores, though these ratings are still very positive (7.1 or higher).
- While the sample size is small, Asian households give lower esteem ratings not only to the PDOP, but also to the school districts and the Township.

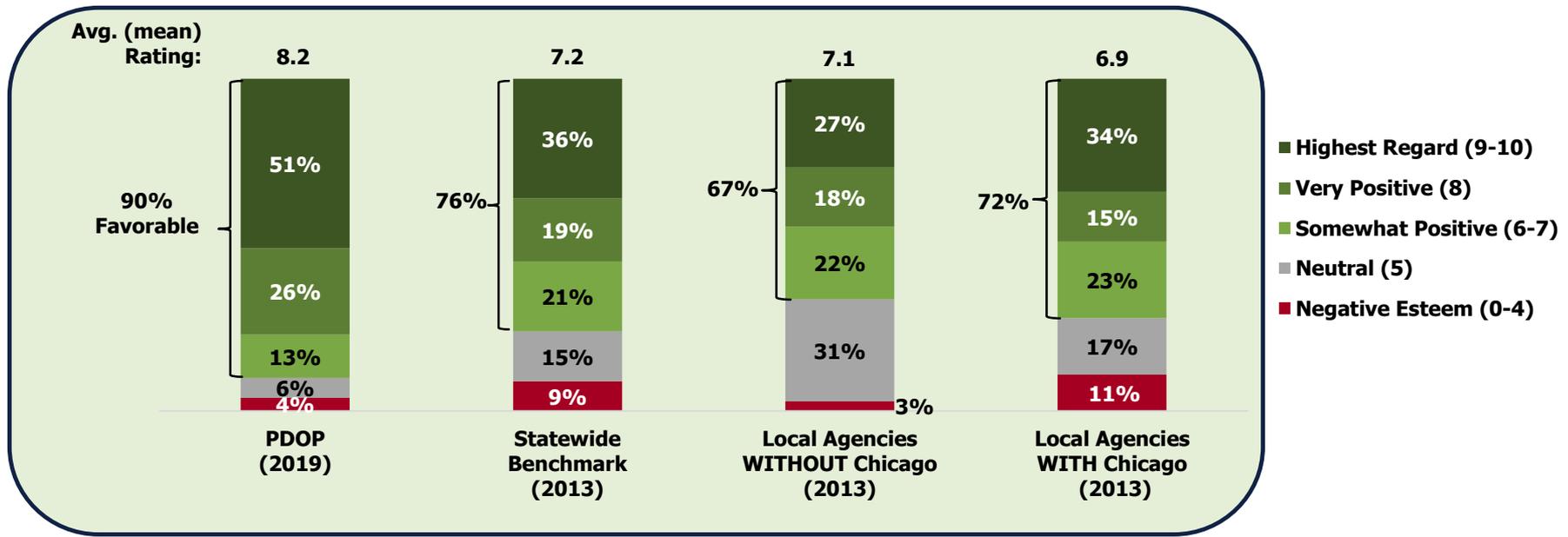
### Differences by Subgroups: Overall Esteem Ratings

	Overall Avg. Rating (0-10)	Lower Esteem	Higher Esteem
<b>Park District of Oak Park</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (7.9), 65+ (7.7)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (7.7)</li> <li>- Asian households (7.1)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 18-34 (8.9), 35-44 (8.5)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (8.7)</li> <li>- White (8.3) and African American HHs (8.3)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199K (8.7)</li> </ul>
<b>Village of Oak Park</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 65+ (6.8)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 15+ yrs. (6.8)</li> <li>- Non-PD users (6.5)</li> <li>- Single family homes (6.9)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 35-44 (7.4)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (7.8)</li> <li>- PD users (7.2)</li> <li>- Townhouse dwellers (7.8)</li> </ul>
<b>Elementary School District 97</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asian households (7.3)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (6.5)</li> <li>- Non-PD users (5.9)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hispanic households (8.3)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199K (8.3)</li> <li>- PD users (7.7)</li> </ul>
<b>Oak Park River Forest High School</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Asian households (6.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- African American (7.7) and Hispanic households (7.6)</li> </ul>
<b>Oak Park Public Library</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.8), 65+ (8.90)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (8.8)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (8.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (9.3)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199K (9.5)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (9.4)</li> </ul>
<b>Oak Park Township</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (7.1)</li> <li>- Ages 18-34 (7.2)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (7.0)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.0), \$50K-\$74.9K (6.8)</li> <li>- North-Central region (6.9)</li> <li>- Asian households (6.5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (7.9)</li> <li>- Ages 65+ (7.8)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (7.9)</li> <li>- HH income \$100K-\$149.9K (8.0)</li> <li>- Far South region (8.0)</li> <li>- African American and Hispanic households (7.8)</li> </ul>

## The PDOP's strong esteem ratings are significantly higher across all relevant benchmarks.

- The District's average rating of 8.2 is at least a full point higher than the average scores for park agencies statewide, and in the immediate area (regardless of whether the Chicago Park District is included).
- This difference is attributed to the PDOP's very high numbers at the "top" of the 0-10 scale, with just over half (52%) giving ratings of 9 or 10 (compared to no more than 36% across the other benchmarks).

**PDOP Esteem Compared to Other Park Agency Benchmarks**

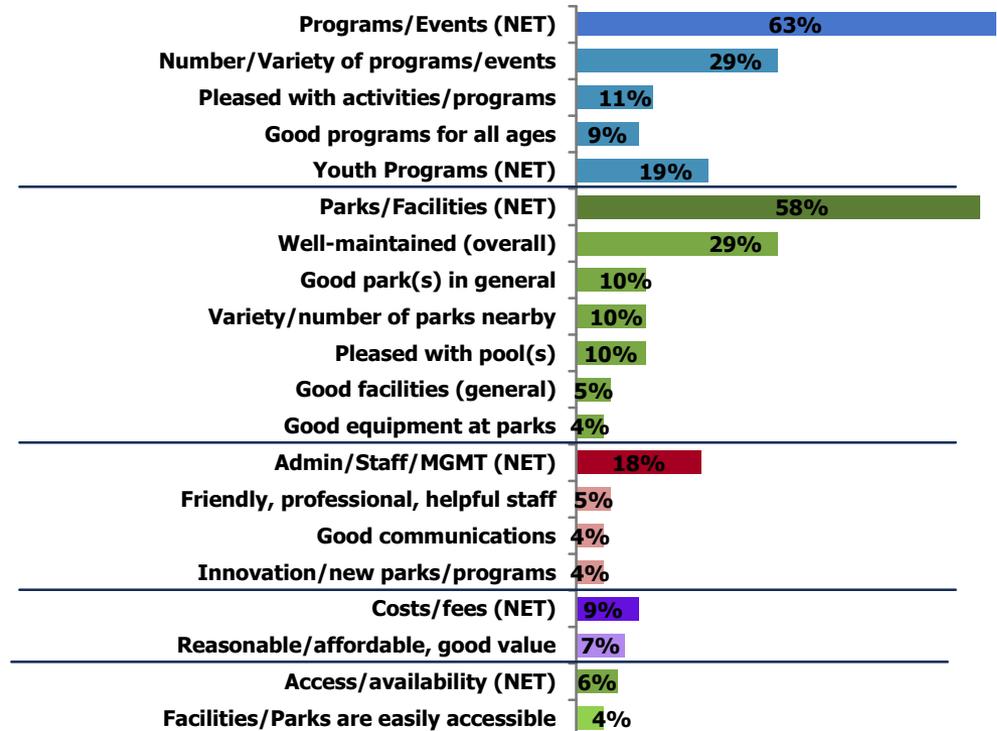


Q2. Please rate your overall opinion of the Park District on a 0-10 scale (0=completely dislike, 5=neutral, 10=highest regard).

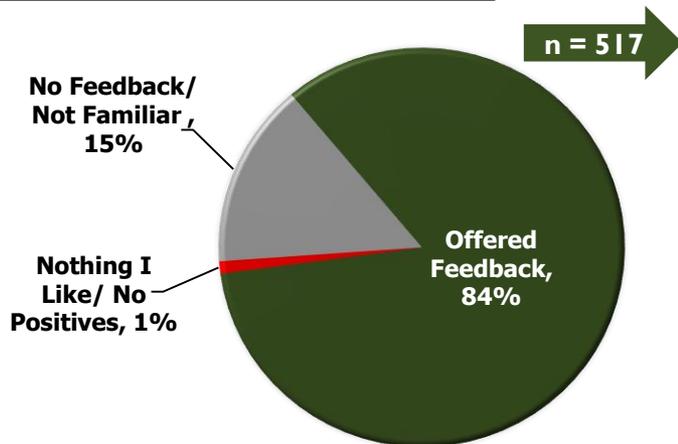
**Most residents offer something they like best about the PDOP, with nearly two thirds citing District programs. Parks and facilities are a close second.**

- More specifically, respondents value the variety of programs and events that District provides, especially youth programs.
- The parks and facilities are most often recognized as being kept in good shape and well maintained. One in ten respondents value the number and variety of parks, and as many cite the pools among the positives for the PDOP.
- About one in five residents value the District staff and administration (helpful, communicates well, good program ideas).

**Top Strengths (open-ended)**



**Feedback on Park District of Oak Park Strengths?**



## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Strengths

### **Programs/Events (63%):**

*"A variety of programs for a variety of people."*

*"Great programs. Very good and varied course offerings."*

*"Diversity of programs/ depth of programming."*

*"I like that it has a variety of programs that range from arts and crafts, to sports. It covers all areas of interests that families have."*

*"Great variety of programs for all ages."*

*"I like that you offer a variety of programming. You focus on individual growths/interests and family ones too."*

*"Lots of activities for children and families."*

*"Lots of programs kids and adults like. Variety of programs."*

*"PDOP offers a wide range of activities across demographic groups. I believe that PDOP is the premier governmental body in our community."*

*"Offers a great deal of activities and opportunities for all members of the community."*

*"PDOP provides programs for every lifestyle, age, and season. They are inclusive of all types of residents. I also like the investment they make in their infrastructure and ensure their facilities are top notch."*

*"A wide variety of programs for kids to choose from! Good prices and nice facilities."*

*"Class offerings for kids is impressive."*

*"I love the kids programming. Everything we have tried has been high quality, super fun and developmentally appropriate. The staff is highly trained and we haven't tried anything we don't like."*

### **Parks (29%):**

*"Great parks in a variety of neighborhoods."*

*"Love all the parks throughout Oak Park."*

*"Maintaining a beautiful park system."*

*"Parks are nice and plentiful."*

*"The number of well-maintained and unique parks throughout the village."*

*"There are plentiful parks and they are extremely well kept and very nice."*

*"I like the number of parks distributed throughout the community."*

*"Many different nearby parks. A lot of variety."*

*"It maintains the parks very well, walks cleared when it snows, tends to the trees, cuts the grass. Offers a variety of sized parks and experiences for every age group such as tennis courts, play equipment, seating if you just want to sit and enjoy nature. Introduces new things, like the senior citizen exercise equipment on Randolph. No matter where you live, you can walk to a park."*

*"Maintains several parks throughout the Village, offering variety among them--some have sports fields, some have playgrounds, and some have just beautiful nature."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Strengths (cont'd)

### **Facilities (21%):**

*"I like the multitude of high level of facilities that it makes available to the public. PDOP constantly keeps the facilities operating at a high level and proactively makes capital improvements."*

*"Nice facilities, good maintenance, good variety of facilities for all ages, friendly staff."*

*"Multiple parks and pools. Wide range of class offerings."*

*"The availability of 2 public pools."*

*"Ridgeland swimming pool for lap swim in the summer. Most certainly the BEST offering from the Park District for me."*

*"Multiple swimming pools available over the summer."*

*"The outdoor pools and pool programming: swim lessons for kids and multiple lap times for adults."*

*"Two 50-meter outdoor pools! Ridgeland and Rehm are a big part of what keeps me here paying these taxes (I know the park district isn't the tax hog!)"*

*Also, my husband is grateful for the additional pickleball courts. I appreciate your care not to increase taxes."*

*"The community centers are located well in each neighborhood."*

*"Great facilities, including the parks and GRC."*

*"It maintains its green space and buildings quite well. It provides room not just for team sports, but also for all age sports. The tennis courts are particularly valuable for all age recreation. The conservatory and Cheney Mansion are beautiful. We're really excited that the Park District has taken ownership of the Dole Learning Center and will do very much needed maintenance/update of the Center. We love that PDOP will work closely with the Library."*

### **Administrators/Staff/Management (14%):**

*"Employees are all very professional, responsive and friendly."*

*"The classes are well organized and the personnel is always nice and professional."*

*"The offerings are quite good and I find staff to be responsive and helpful when I have a question. I receive good service when interacting with the Village. I also consider the programs to be good value for the money."*

*"The park district staff are very nice and professional."*

*"Very friendly staff."*

*"I appreciate the quarterly catalogue and the variety of options available for adults without children."*

*"I most like the Park District's breath of programming and communication about the programming. The parks are spectacular."*

*"Keeps people updated on park events and locations, with friendly reminders on best practices."*

*"The park district communicates very well when there is a change to a program. My experience with swim lessons was so great, especially for changes due to weather."*

*"Notifies the community of what is going on and programming available on a quarterly basis making it super easy to get involved."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Strengths (cont'd)

### **Costs/Fees (9%):**

*"Great affordable programming."*

*"I love how they work with organizations to help fund capitol improvements of parks and facilities that benefit all organizations and bring down the cost for the park district (aka my taxes)."*

*"Interesting programs at affordable cost; what more can I ask really."*

*"I'm grateful for the diversity in programs offered and their affordability."*

*"Provides low cost exercise and other classes for seniors."*

*"I consider the programs to be good value for the money."*

*"There is such a variety of things to get involved with and many things are free or very affordable."*

*"Lots of free programming."*

### **Access/Availability (6%):**

*"I love how many parks there are- one in walking distance wherever you live. They are well-maintained and the layout and landscaping are very appealing."*

*"Accessible programming for ppl of all ages and abilities. As a working parent, it is very important to have reliable, safe, engaging programming for my children during the summer, especially. Our parks are beautiful and accessible. Proximity to parks and quality of the schools were the primary reasons for us to choose Oak Park, 17 years ago, when we decided to settle our family here."*

*"Providing accessibility to all residents. Large variety of programs and camps. High quality, well maintained parks."*

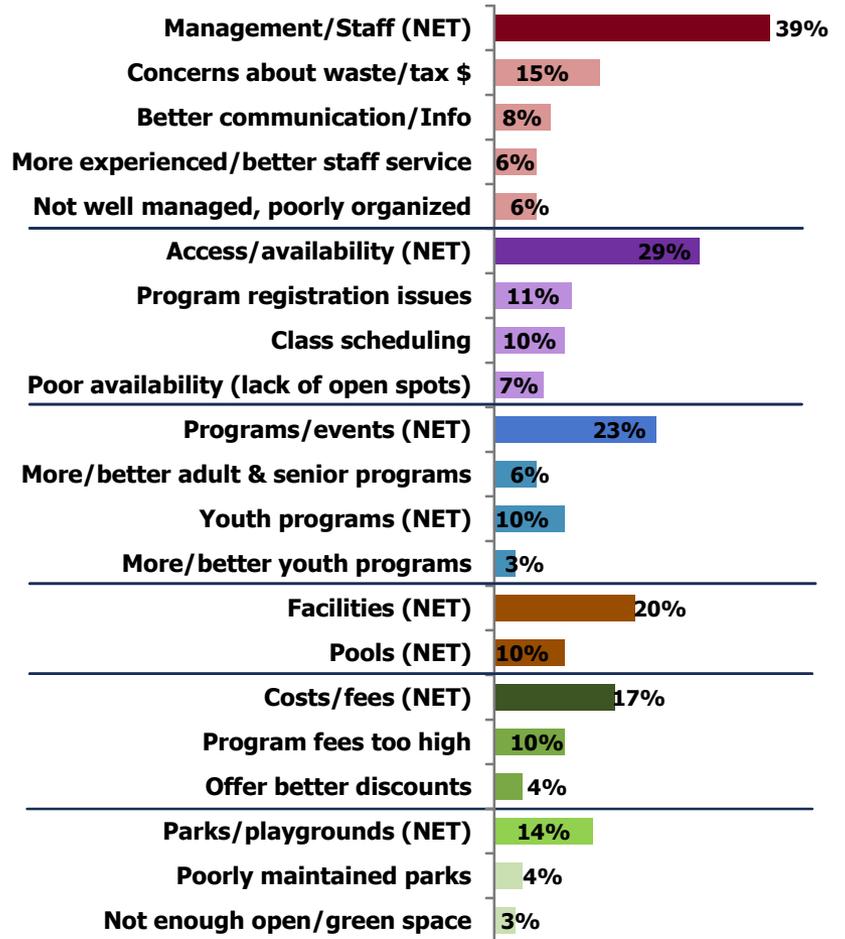
*"There are a lot of parks which is nice because one is close to pretty much everyone."*

*"There is at least one nice park very close by no matter where you live."*

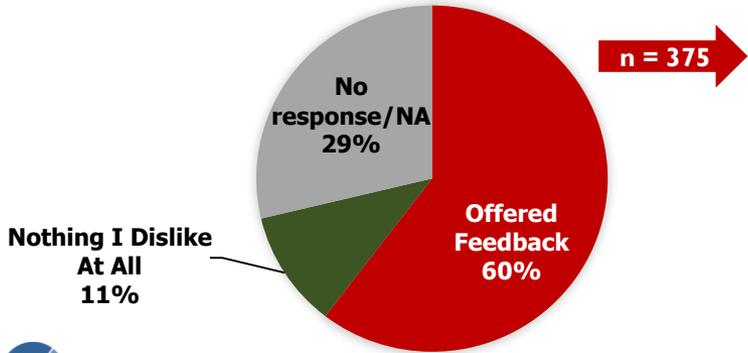
**Note that only 60% could offer a negative or dislike for the PDOP. Those who do offer a range of issues or concerns.**

- Most often, 39% of these respondents express concerns about District spending and/or property taxes in general. The rest offer less frequent concerns (e.g., need for better communication/information, better service, etc.).
- About one in three express accessibility issues, mostly related to programming (difficulty with registration, limited or inconvenient scheduling, etc.).
- On a related note, 23% offer suggestions for improved programming, especially expanded youth programs and/or added fitness opportunities.
- Those most concerned about PDOP facilities (20%) most often cite the need for year round/indoor pool options.
- Slightly fewer express concerns about PDOP fees or costs (17%), or the parks in general (14%).

**Top Weaknesses/Improvement Opportunities (open-ended)**



**Weaknesses/Improvements Sought From Park District of Oak Park**



## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Weaknesses

### Management/Staff (39%):

*"I don't like to see them spend money for the sake of spending/wasting taxpayer's money. For example, the new logo, rebranding of vehicles, new park signage is not a wise use of taxpayer's money."*

*"Expensive - taxes overall are far too high."*

*"I like the idea of consolidating agencies within Oak Park. We are being priced out of the area with real estate tax levies."*

*"I'd like to see more efforts to save money and reduce the tax burden."*

*"Seems like we are paying for a lot of buildings and expensive updates."*

*"Spends way too much tax payer money."*

*"Taxes are my #1 issue. I would like to see us focus on shaving down some of the bells and whistles - retain what's best. Bureaucracy costs money and it becomes entrenched and only grows. Find ways to cut it down so that we can get our property taxes under control and continue to attract good young people to our community."*

*"I think in the attempts to keep the parks fresh and current, there may be some overspending/unnecessary improvements."*

*"Better communication of park events and activities."*

*"I was not so much aware about the park district - living here now for one year. Thus may be make more advertisement about the facilities, especially when new people move into Oak Park."*

*"More specific outreach to underrepresented groups and minorities."*

*"Online system and communication relating to classes feels very antiquated."*

*"Counselors and their supervisors don't do enough to take care of facilities used over the summer ... classrooms always a wreck after summer sports camps."*

*"Staffing of programs could be better. We attended summer camp (Adventure Week) and it was poorly staffed along with the pee-wee soccer. Teachers were more interested in chatting among themselves and not the kids."*

*"When my kids were young, there was a director for each park. These directors took pride in "their" Park, much like a principal of a school. It was nice for the kids to have someone that they knew around all of the time. Now it just seems to be staffed by part time employees who don't have any interest in the park or the kids."*

*"Managing/training/coaching volunteer coaches, particularly for ice hockey & basketball."*

*"Programs are sometimes hit or miss. We've had great programs for the kids, but also very disorganized sports or cooking camps."*

*"The concession stand at Rehm - ungodly long lines, very inefficient. Need a new system."*

*"The planning and management of "recreational" facilities like Ridgeland Common and the GRC. The GRC is wildly over-priced, unfriendly, and very elitist."*

*"With the abundance of offerings, some aren't executed as well as others."*

*"Their distribution of their magazine which end up either being recycled or landfill, I live in a multi unit condo. Dozens of these magazines lay outside for weeks until I take the initiative and gather them up for recycling."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Weaknesses (cont'd)

### Access/Availability (29%):

*"Certain classes can be extremely difficult to sign up for."*

*"Continuity and consistency seem to be a struggle for the District. Signing up for classes or activities is one challenge, varying between programs that can be accessed only in person with an agent, vs. others only accessed via an on line system and vs. those that give you the choice, but with very clunky software."*

*"I find the enrollment system difficult to use and outdated. I'm glad my kids are old enough that I no longer have to sign up for summer camps!"*

*"I think online registration is still kind of a pain, it's frustrating when certain programs don't fill up enough and get cancelled and I think, for youth sports, the weather notification/makeup game/practice situation is terrible and inconsistent."*

*"Its website is somewhat difficult to use for registering for programs/outings."*

*"Online portal is difficult to navigate and use to select and pay for activities."*

*"Registration is too competitive."*

*"Registration website is terrible and difficult to use."*

*"The registration site is very complex (lots of visual clutter), and I would not want to navigate it on my phone."*

*"The registration system for camps can be very frustrating and anxiety provoking."*

*"Accommodate more folks on waitlists. Cancel fewer programs."*

*"Could offer additional quantity of classes for some of the more popular classes... particularly kids summer camps. They often fill up quickly and the waiting list doesn't pan out."*

*"I wish PDOP could offer more working mom friendly hours for programming."*

*"I wish there were more fitness options closer to where we live in SE Oak Park."*

*"Some buildings are in use during the day and ordinary people cannot access them."*

*"There are very few activities for pre-school aged children that are available on weekends or weekday evenings. This makes it nearly impossible for families with working parents to participate. The registration process also leaves a lot to be desired. When registering for gymnastics, it's almost impossible to register online and actually get a spot. I had to resort to driving to the GRC and registering in person."*

*"Caters mostly to the northside residents of Oak Park, Park District classes and seasonal activities are more limited/held in fewer convenient locations."*

*"I dislike that it is so hard to get into the gymnastics classes because it fills so quickly. The main thing I dislike though is that the GRC preschool playtime open gym times are not convenient. It should be the weekends times during the school year and the weekday times during the summer. This would make most sense for parents."*

*"Adult programming especially with regards to work out classes. For example I wanted to take the TRX class [at GRC] but it was only offered during the day and during the week when most people work."*

*"The RCRC schedule is wonky... it seems you'd repeat things twice a week so someone could find a class they like and attend more than once a week."*

*"The class times are not always suitable for working parents. Specifically gymnastic classes."*

*"More open pool time in the summer at Ridgeland. Opens late and closes early in the season."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Weaknesses (cont'd)

### Programs/Events (23%):

*"I wish there were more adult options."*

*"More diverse maker type community classes for adults (most are seniors and kids)."*

*"Not enough program days/times that are geared towards working adults."*

*"Programming for new residents to meet others. Adult professionals that do not have a lot of time but would like to meet other adults."*

*"I don't dislike anything, but what is there for me after my children grow up? Would love more adult programs, more park events."*

*"It would be nice to have more adult programming that isn't necessarily for seniors."*

*"Set up mostly for kids and families with kids."*

*"There are not enough interesting programs for adults, other than sports/exercise. And the sports that the Park District offers are not as worthwhile or challenging as programs that other entities offer."*

*"Have more senior or adult programs."*

*"I don't see much for me as an adult in their programming. I don't swim, or skateboard."*

*"Don't really relate to the classes that much anymore. Need classes appropriate for seniors 55-70 . E.g., Yoga."*

*"I think it could do a whole lot better programming for seniors."*

*"The Active Adults programs seems to be limited this year, with somewhat mediocre day trips."*

*"Provide more extensive and broader programs for seniors. For example, compared with other park districts, its trips for seniors are rather parochial and uninteresting."*

*"Kids activities are usually the same day, so is difficult to pick more than one for them."*

*"Programs for young children are primarily during the day on weekdays. Full-time working parents want to take their young children to classes on the weekend."*

*"Could have more variety of things to do for kids of different ages."*

*"More classes for early childhood and more availability of times."*

*"I'm not sure. What I see missing in our village is an opportunity for children to enter sports at a later age. If a child did not get started at a very early age but wants to start a sport for fun later, there doesn't seem to be an entry."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Weaknesses (cont'd)

### Facilities (20%):

*"Could use more modern facilities in order to hold more classes."*

*"Maintenance and upkeep of buildings should be more timely. It is unpleasant trying to exercise at Dole Library building when the HVAC system is so out of sync with need."*

*"The quality and care of sports fields is abysmal. You go to any other park district in Chicagoland and you find well manicured fields and baseball diamonds that are cared for daily. The park does little to nothing to care for fields and continues to use the amount of use as a red herring instead of actually putting forth effort to care for them. The youth leagues that play on them invest far more time, without making our tax dollars disappear, taking care of fields."*

*"I think we need a facility that allows kids to play ball sports indoors during the winter. I wish we had more basketball courts for kids to play freely for more hours a day."*

*"It would be great if there were more dedicated spaces for fitness, or a facility that offered studios, track, or workout machines/free weights."*

*"Pool locker rooms could be cleaner, pools could be more welcoming to tweens, and it would be nice if there was a park district workout facility/gym and a welcoming community center with ping pong tables, etc."*

*"No indoor swimming facilities. Expanding ownership of property but not materially expanding recreational activity."*

*"Better pool hours. Wish the Ridgeland renovation had considered a dome so the pool could be used year round. Would be good for park district and high school to pool resources to build a year round pool for students and the community."*

*"Indoor pool and a fitness center would be amazing."*

*"Love to see some bigger ideas come to light like year round pool and/or community center."*

*"Dislike the amount of tax dollars, no coordination with the schools, I would like a full blown rec center with exercise equipment, a pool (that could be a partnership with the high school) personal trainers, group classes."*

*"While the district responds to community needs, it also lacks leadership to do what is best or convince the community to see the longer term benefits of certain projects. The failure to make the Ridgeland Common pool a year round pool to me showed a complete lack of park district leadership that caved to a vocal minority of Oak Parkers."*

## Sample Verbatims: PDOP Weaknesses (cont'd)

### Costs/Fees (17%):

*"The price of programming is higher than in other neighboring communities, and that is sometimes a hardship or a deterrent to involvement for us."*

*"Cost of programming."*

*"Pool fees are a little on the high side compared to nearby park districts."*

*"Prices for classes are high, sometimes higher than private companies that have other advantages."*

*"The fees for many programs are cost-prohibitive. At more than \$15 per game or practice for my kids to play soccer (in addition to property taxes), I'd rather just have them play pick-up games. We've also found the cost/benefit of park district swim lessons wasn't worth it."*

*"Some other classes are expensive. For example, the kids summer camps are significantly higher than surrounding communities."*

*"The cost of classes, programming and pool passes is outrageous considering the amount of money we pay in property taxes every year."*

*"Make summer programs more affordable and accessible for African American children."*

*"Need to provide means-tested fees for low income families to encourage a broader range of participation."*

*"Prices are too high for seniors. Should have a senior discount."*

*"Too expensive! Residents should have lower prices to use the facilities since we already contribute in our taxes."*

### Parks/Playgrounds (14%):

*"Pick up garbage in parks more frequently."*

*"There is too much concrete in all the parks--it's sad; why did the weeping willows get removed? Scoville Park used to be lush, with lots of shade, where is the GREEN space?"*

*"Terrible maintenance of flowers, trees and grass. Control weeds."*

*"The upkeep of some of the parks, specifically Taylor Park is dreadfully lacking. The weeds have taken over. The pickle ball court lines would be easier to see if they were in color instead of black."*

*"The way the park is maintained. Too many weeds Not a large variety of trees, not mowing enough. The park is unattractive feel it brings down the value of my home."*

*"The weeds in the lawns REALLY NEED ATTENTION. Occasionally the trash cans overflow and smell bad. The homeless are a real issue in Scoville Park."*

*"I wish Oak Park had more open space."*

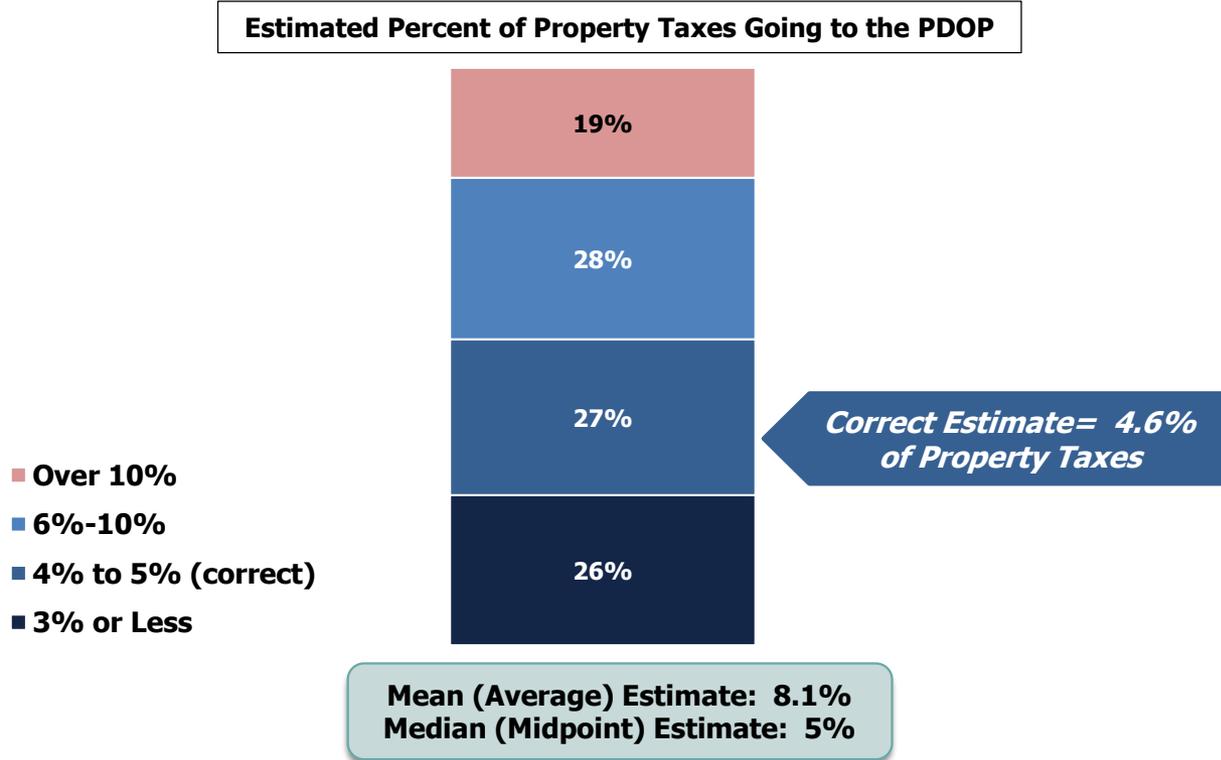
*"I would say fight for keeping those spaces open and calming. I'm not happy with all the high rise buildings popping up, especially around the park areas. Those are little islands to get away from that city feel but it seems like that appeal is losing. We need more green spaces, less concrete and glass."*

*"We'd like to see more natural, native elements in the parks."*

*"Wish there were more green space in the village."*

## Oak Park residents generally have a good idea of the PDOP's share of their property taxes.

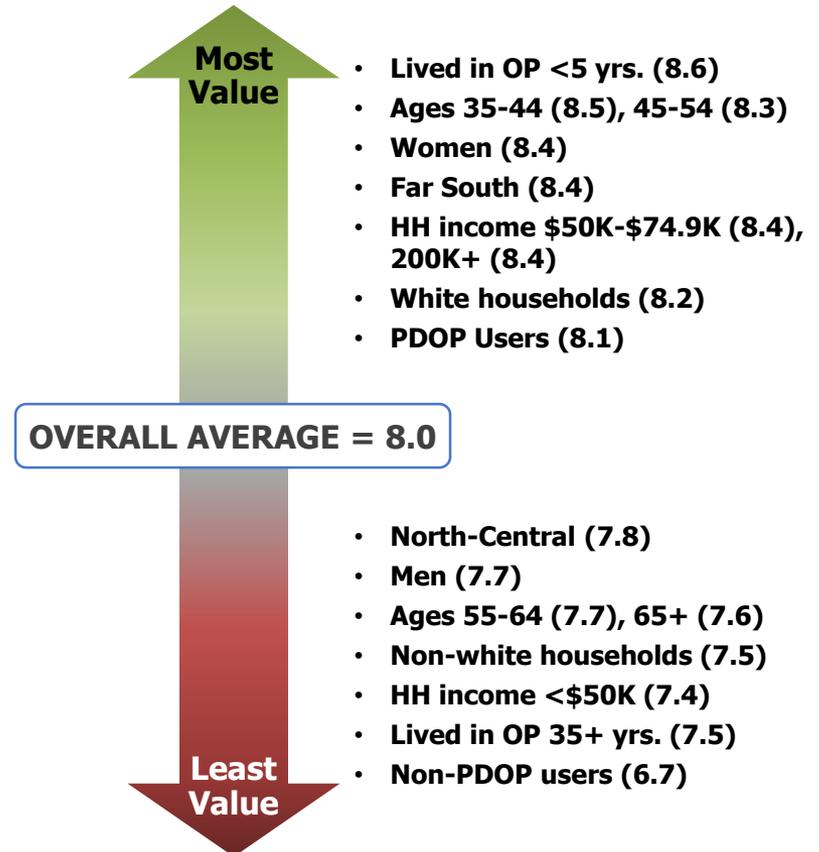
- One in four (27%) estimated almost exactly that the District's share of property taxes is between 4% and 5%. Its actual share is 4.6%.
- Nearly half (48%) think it is higher than 5%, and one in four believe it is lower than 4%. As a result, the average (mean) estimate is 8.1%, but the median (midpoint) estimate is very close to reality at 5%.



**When informed that the PDOP represents 4.6% of one’s property taxes, residents feel that this represents a very good value for all that the District provides.**

- On a 0-10 value scale, the PDOP receives an average rating of 8.0, which translates into a very good value overall.
- As with the overall esteem ratings, younger and newer residents, along with those reporting the highest incomes, tend to rate the PDOP’s value strongest relative to it’s share of property taxes.
  - Similarly, women, those in the Far South region, and recent users/visitors of PDOP parks and properties give the District higher value scores.
- Lower ratings tend to come from men, older and long-term residents, lower income households, and ethnic minorities. However, the ratings from these groups are still relatively strong (7.3 or higher on average, representing a “good” value overall).
- The only segment that feels the value is only “slightly good” are the relatively few non-users of PDOP parks and facilities (6.7 average value rating).

**Significant Differences: Value of Property Taxes to PDOP**



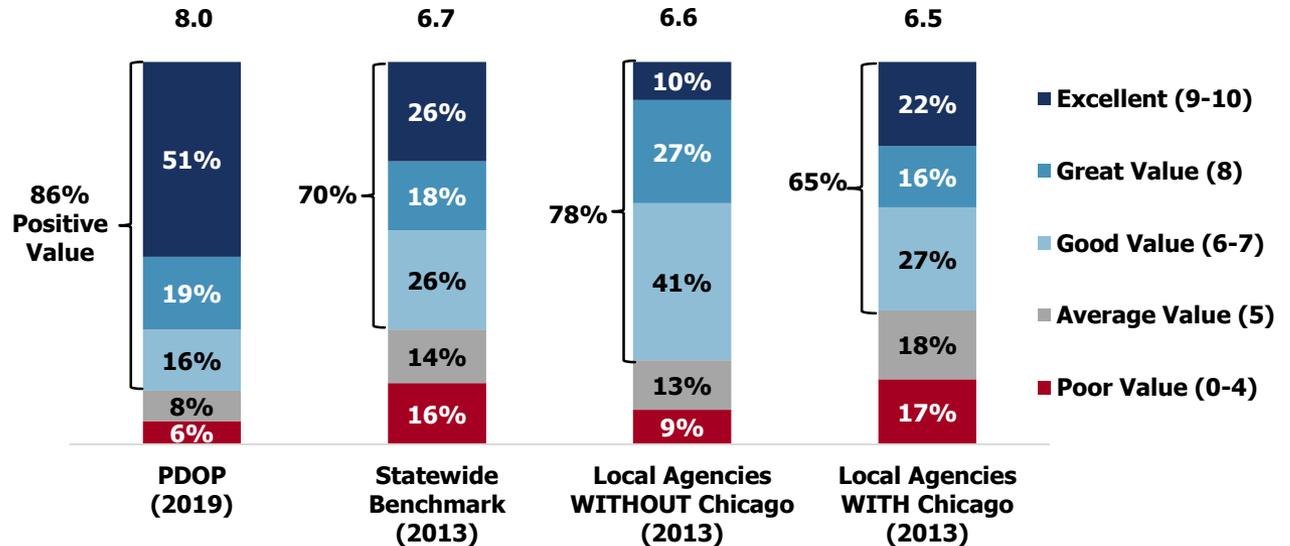
## The PDOP's value ratings far exceed those given for other parks agencies.

- At least twice as many Oak Park residents feel their parks agency represents an excellent value (51%) compared to any of the statewide or neighboring agency benchmarks.
- Note that only 6% of PDOP households feel the District represents a "poor" value, well below comparable sentiments for other agencies in the aggregated benchmarks.

**Perceived Value of PDOP Relative to Property Tax Share**

**Avg. (mean) Rating:**

*Q24. About 4.6% of your property taxes goes to the Park District of Oak Park. Thinking about the programs, parks, facilities, and services that the Park District provides, please rate the overall value that it represents to you given its share of property taxes.*



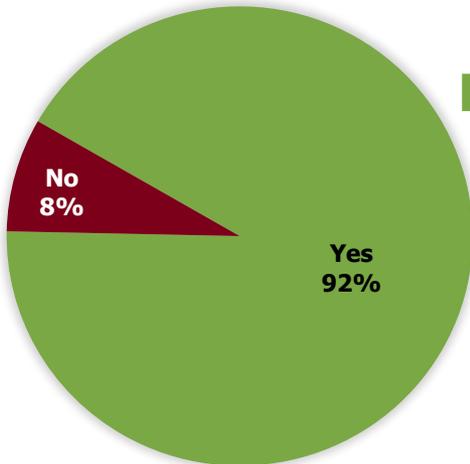
\* The 2013 Local Agency Benchmarks include suburban agencies in Berwyn, Cicero, Elmwood Park, Forest Park, Maywood, Melrose Park, North Riverside, River Forest, River Grove, Riverside. Separate local benchmarks are reported above with and without the Chicago Park District ratings included. The 2013 Statewide benchmark referenced a 2% share of property taxes.

## II. PDOP Park and Facility Usage

## Most households report that they have used or visited at least one PDOP park or facility in the past year.

- Scoville Park and the Conservatory are cited most often, by just over half of all respondents. The next “tier” of widely used parks and facilities include Rehm Park and Pool, Austin Gardens, and Ridgeland Common Rec Complex (with slightly lower visits to the Ridgeland Common Pool).

**Used or Visited a PDOP Park or Facility in Past 12 Months?**



**n = 567**

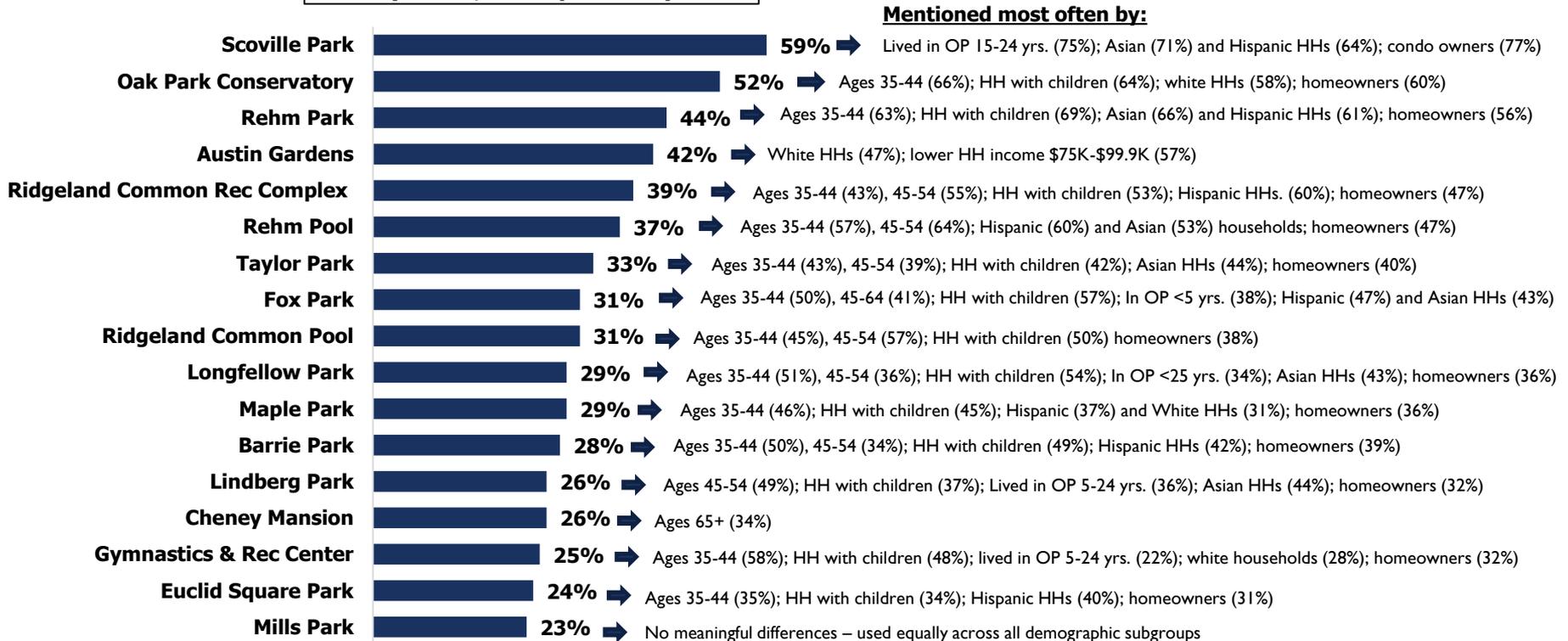
Visited or Used Facility/Park in Past 12 Months	% Reporting (n=567)	% All Respondents (n=618)
Scoville Park	62%	59%
Oak Park Conservatory	55%	52%
Rehm Park	47%	44%
Austin Gardens	46%	42%
Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex	42%	39%
Rehm Pool	40%	37%
Taylor Park	36%	33%
Fox Park	34%	31%
Ridgeland Common Pool	34%	31%
Longfellow Park	32%	29%
Maple Park	32%	29%
Barrie Park	31%	28%
Lindberg Park	29%	26%
Cheney Mansion	29%	26%
Gymnastics & Recreation Center	28%	25%
Euclid Square Park	27%	24%
Mills Park	26%	23%
Pleasant Home	24%	21%
Field Park	24%	21%

Other PDOP parks/facilities (<17% each, most often: Carroll Park; Paul Hruby Ice Arena; Andersen Park; Austin Gardens Environmental Center; Fox Center; Stevenson Park)

## Residents between the ages of 35 to 54, and households with children, tend to report visiting almost all of the top PDOP parks and facilities.

- Hispanic and Asian households also tend to be frequent users across multiple destinations. Older residents are more likely to go to the Cheney Mansion, and (perhaps) Scoville Park and Austin Gardens (no meaningful difference by age, meaning older residents visit about as often as younger adults).

**PDOP Parks/Facilities Recently Visited  
(n=618; all respondents)**



## Scoville Park, Austin Gardens, and Cheney Mansion tend to draw about evenly across all Oak Park neighborhoods. Visits to other parks and facilities are more localized.

- This is especially true of Euclid Square Park and Maple Park, which draw primarily from Far South households. Similarly, about half of those going to Taylor Park or Lindberg Park live in the Far North region.

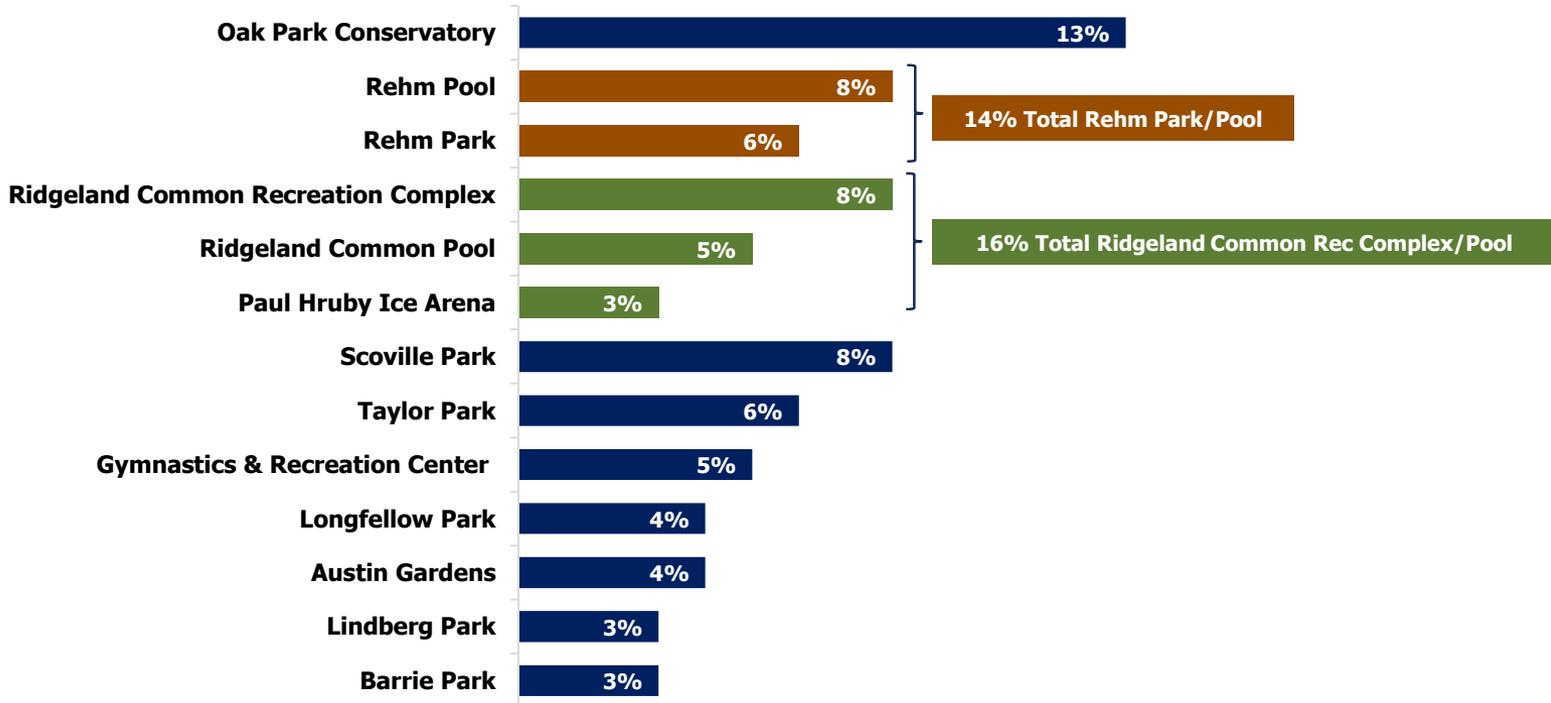
Region (overall row %):	Far North (22%)	N-Central (20%)	Central (17%)	S-Central (16%)	Far South (25%)	(=100%)
Scoville Park	21%	22	17	16	24	= 100%
Oak Park Conservatory	19%	13	12	21	<b>35</b>	= 100%
Rehm Park	19%	9	9	19	<b>44</b>	= 100%
Austin Gardens	19%	<b>25</b>	19	16	21	= 100%
Ridgeland Common Rec Complex	<b>28%</b>	15	12	18	27	= 100%
Rehm Pool	22%	10	9	21	<b>38</b>	= 100%
Taylor Park	<b>50%</b>	20	7	10	13	= 100%
Fox Park	18%	6	14	<b>27</b>	<b>35</b>	= 100%
Ridgeland Common Pool	<b>30%</b>	13	10	22	25	= 100%
Longfellow Park	16%	8	12	<b>31</b>	<b>33</b>	= 100%
Maple Park	12%	5	8	18	<b>57</b>	= 100%
Barrie Park	18%	4	5	<b>23</b>	<b>50</b>	= 100%
Lindberg Park	<b>49%</b>	15	9	10	17	= 100%
Cheney Mansion	21%	<b>26</b>	20	12	21	=100%
Gymnastics & Recreation Center	<b>28%</b>	12	8	20	<b>32</b>	=100%
Euclid Square Park	13%	4	4	15	<b>64</b>	=100%
Mills Park	12%	16	<b>28</b>	15	29	=100%

 Higher than average response by region

**In terms of frequency of visits or usage, the top destinations are Ridgeland Common Rec Complex, Rehm Park/Pool, and the Conservatory.**

- All are cited with about equal frequency as the park or facility their household uses most often.
- Note that while more households said they had visited Scoville Park in the past year (see page 38), it ranks just below these top three destinations in terms of “frequency” of visits (meaning Scoville Park is simply used more sporadically).

**Top Responses: Most Frequently Visited PDOP Parks/Facilities  
(n=539 recent park/facility users)**



## Recent users of PDOP parks and facilities are extremely satisfied across all attributes.

- A clear majority (at least 56%) are completely satisfied with the parks and facilities their household has visited in terms of the overall experience, the physical conditions, safety, accessibility and service from PDOP staff.
- Safety receives the highest scores, and no more than 4% express dissatisfaction with any attribute.
- Note that many of these average ratings are higher than the District’s overall average esteem score of 8.2. This means that its parks and facilities are even more highly regarded than the agency in general.

**Satisfaction with PDOP Parks and Facilities**  
(n=579 recent users/visitors who responded)

**Avg. (mean)  
0-10 Rating**



■ % Dissatisfied (0-4) ■ % Neutral (5) ■ % Somewhat Satisfied (6-7) ■ % Very Satisfied (8) ■ % Completely Satisfied (9-10)

## No subgroup is unhappy with the parks and facilities.

- While lower ratings tend to come from older/long-term residents, those without children, and lower income households, no segment gives a lower rating than 7.2 for any attribute (still very positive).
  - This rating of 7.2 comes from lower income households when rating accessibility at local parks or facilities

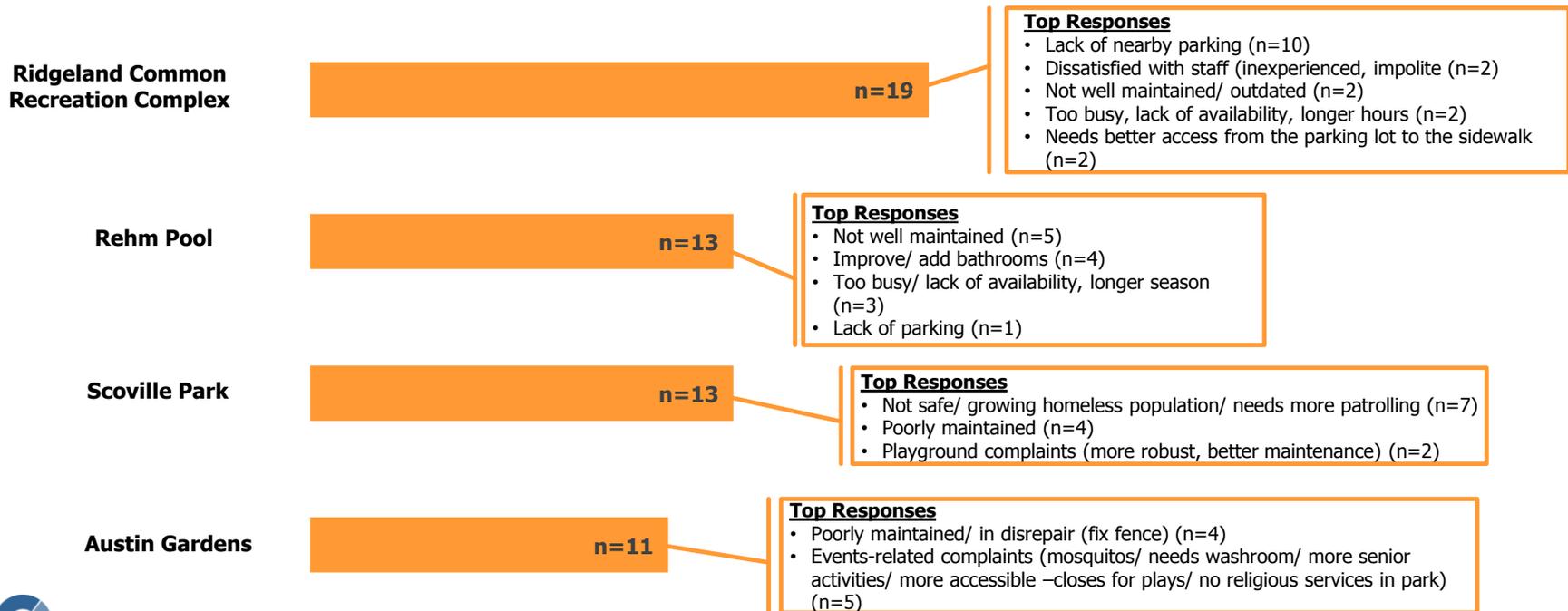
### Differences by Subgroups: Satisfaction with PDOP Parks/Facilities

	Overall Avg. Rating (0-10)	Lower Satisfaction	Higher Satisfaction
<b>Overall experience</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (8.5)</li> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.2), 65+ (8.4)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 15-34 yrs. (8.4), 35+ yrs. (8.3)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.7)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (8.8)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (9.0), 35-44 (8.9)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (9.1)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (9.1), \$150K-\$199.9K (8.9)</li> </ul>
<b>Cleanliness, maintenance and upkeep</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.1)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 15-24 yrs. (8.2), 35+ yrs. (8.2)</li> <li>- Single family houses (8.4)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (9.1), 35-44 (8.8)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (9.0)</li> <li>- Condo residents (9.1)</li> </ul>
<b>Overall safety</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (8.6)</li> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.3)</li> <li>- 35+ yrs. in OP (8.3)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (8.0)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children in HH (8.9)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (9.1), 35-44 (8.9)</li> <li>- &lt;5 yrs. in OP (9.2)</li> <li>- HH Income \$50K-\$74.9K (9.1), \$150K+ (8.9)</li> </ul>
<b>Overall access (parking, paths, entrances)</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.2), 65+ (8.1)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (8.1)</li> <li>- Asian households (7.7)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (9.1)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (9.0)</li> <li>- White households (8.6)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (9.1)</li> </ul>
<b>Service provided by Park District staff</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (8.1)</li> <li>- Ages 45+ (8.1)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 15-24 yrs. (8.1), 35+ yrs. (7.8)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;50K (7.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (8.6)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (8.9), 35-44 (8.7)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (8.9)</li> <li>- HH income \$75K-\$99.9K (8.6), 150K-\$199.9K (8.8)</li> </ul>

## A few specific parks and facilities received negative feedback from recent users or visitors.

- The Ridgeland Common Rec Complex was cited most often, with limited parking being the biggest issue by far. All other comments were very scattered (less frequency).
- Those expressing dissatisfaction with Rehm Pool tend to mention the level of maintenance and the bathroom facilities most often.
- Scoville Park is the only property that registers safety concerns, followed by general maintenance issues.
- Better maintenance is the top concern among those unhappy with Austin Gardens, followed by a few issues regarding event-related concerns.

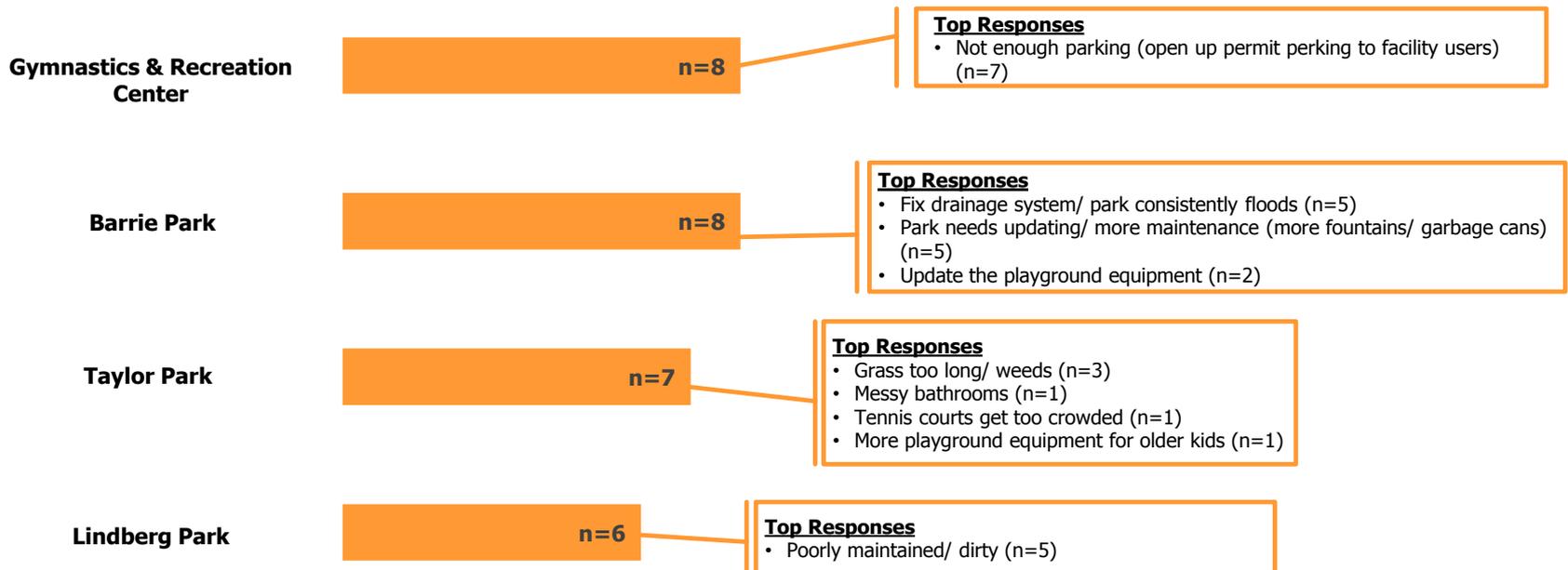
### Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Parks or Facilities (top responses, unweighted n of cases)



## The remaining parks and facilities registering dissatisfaction are cited less often.

- Flooding is a concern at Barrie Park, along with perceptions of improved maintenance in general (also cited by a few for Taylor and Lindberg Parks).

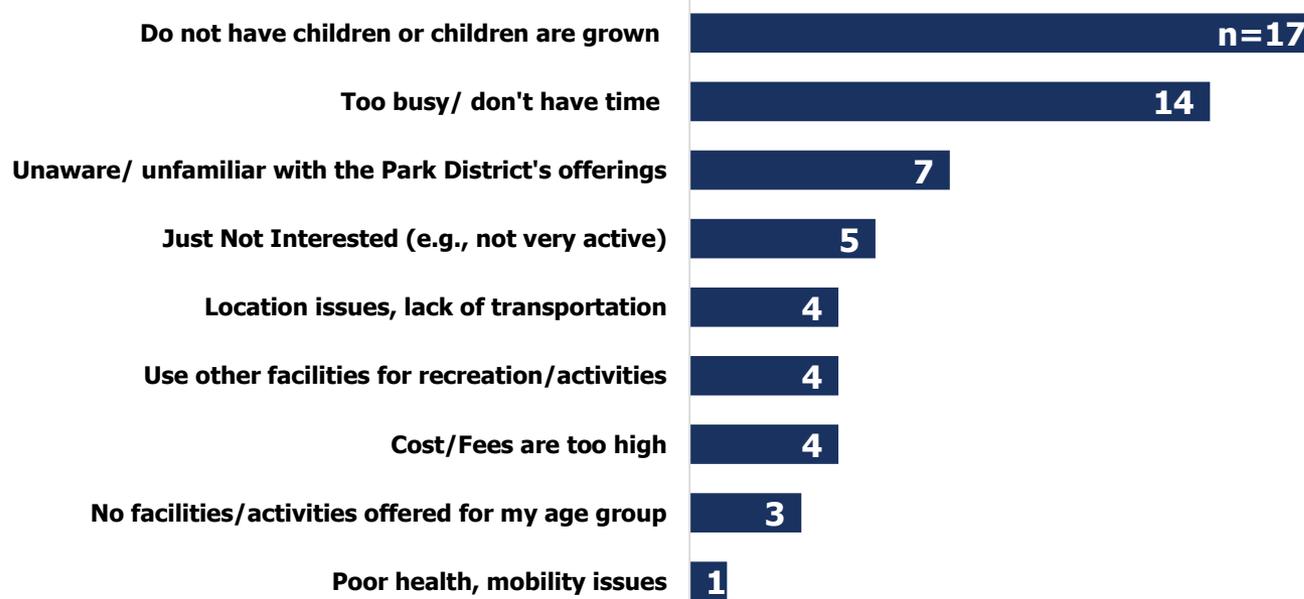
### Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Parks or Facilities, cont'd (top responses, unweighted n of cases)



**The 5% who identify as non-users/non-visitors of PDOP parks or facilities usually report not having children or free time as barriers.**

- Over half (n=17 of 32) said not having children under 18, meaning they perceive the parks as being relevant only to children or younger families. This impression represents an opportunity for the PDOP to address.
- About as many (n=14) said they're simply too busy, and similarly n=8 are not interested in parks or recreation in general.
- Note that n=7 non-users said they remain unfamiliar with what the PDOP offers.
- Only four respondents said their non-usage is due to the costs or fees at PDOP facilities (not much of a barrier).

**Top Reasons (n of cases): Not Using PDOP Parks/Facilities in Past Year (n=32)**



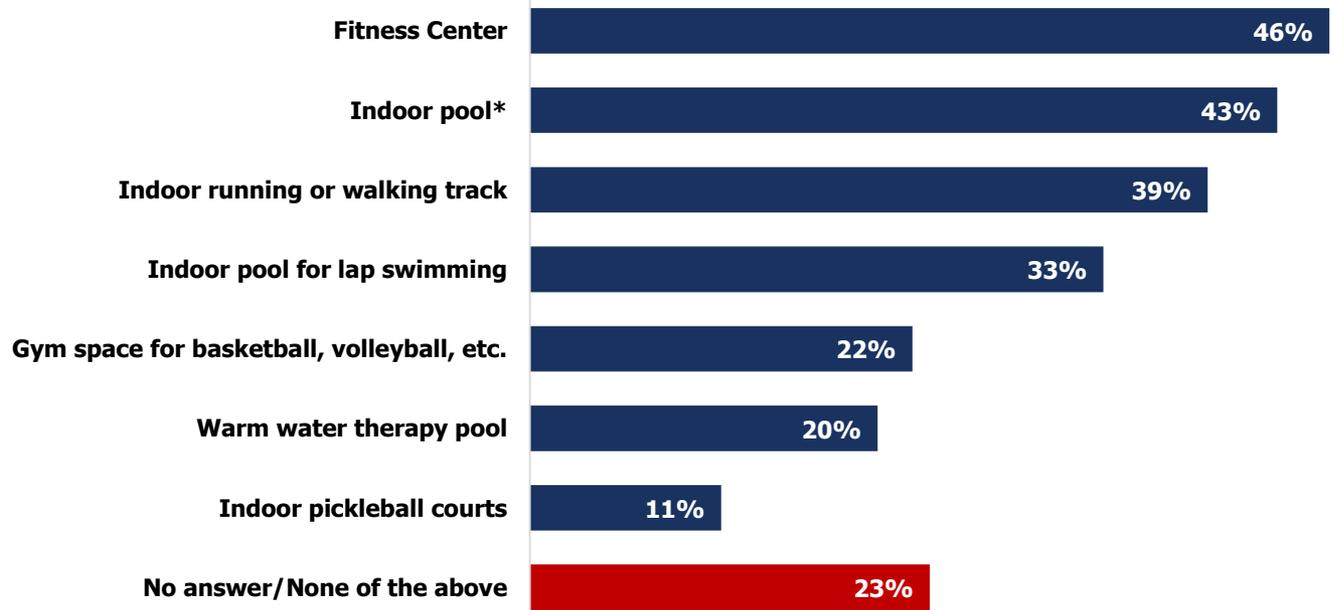
Q11. (IF NO PDOP PARK/FACILITY USED OR VISITED): Why haven't you used/visited a PDOP facility or park recently? (multiple responses)

### III. Levels of Interest and Unmet Needs Among Indoor Recreational Facilities

**Among the indoor facilities tested, just under half of PDOP households express a need, interest, or current usage of a fitness center or indoor pool.**

- These two options represented the highest level of interest or demand. The next two amenities of interest were an indoor track (39% are interested/express a need) or indoor lap pool (33%).
- The remaining indoor facilities are of interest to about one in five respondents – gym space (22%) and a warm water therapy pool (20%) – or fewer (pickleball courts at 11%).
- Note that one in four respondents feel “none” of these amenities are of interest or needed.

**Indoor Recreational Facilities of Interest/Need Among Residents (% “Yes”)  
(n=618)**



Q12. Below, please indicate if you or any household member uses or has a need or interest in the following indoor recreational facilities.

\* For recreation, swimming lessons, open play, etc.

## Residents with children clearly value both an indoor open pool, fitness center, and gym space more than average. Older adults are more interested in a lap pool and/or indoor track.

- Note that interest tends to generally be stronger among the highest income respondents, with the exception of a fitness center (which garners stronger response from those reporting incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000).

	Overall (n=618)	Most Likely to Express Interest/Need/Use
<b>Fitness Center</b>	<b>46%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HH with children (54%, vs. 41% of those without)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (53%), 45-54 (60%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (52%)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (61%), \$75K-\$99.9K (58%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Pool *</b>	<b>43%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (48%, vs. 38% of men)</li> <li>- HH with children (66%, vs. 28% of those without)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (62%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (51%)</li> <li>- Far-North (52%) and Far-South (49%) residents</li> <li>- Asian households (61%)</li> <li>- HH income \$100K-\$149.9K (52%), \$150K-\$199.9K (56%), \$200K+ (52%)</li> <li>- Single family houses (47%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Running or Walking Track</b>	<b>39%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (47%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 25-34 yrs. (51%)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199.9K (42%), \$200k+ (43%)</li> <li>- African American households (55%)</li> <li>- Far-North region (47%)</li> <li>- Single family homes (43%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Pool for Lap Swimming</b>	<b>33%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (37%), 55-64 (41%)</li> <li>- South-Central region (45%)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K+ (39%)</li> <li>- Asian (43%) and Hispanic (41%) households</li> </ul>
<b>Gym space</b>	<b>22%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HH with children (33%, vs. 15% of those without)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (30%), 35-44 (32%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (31%)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199.9K (33%), \$200K+ (28%)</li> <li>- African American households (35%)</li> </ul>

## Interest/Need for Indoor facilities (cont'd)

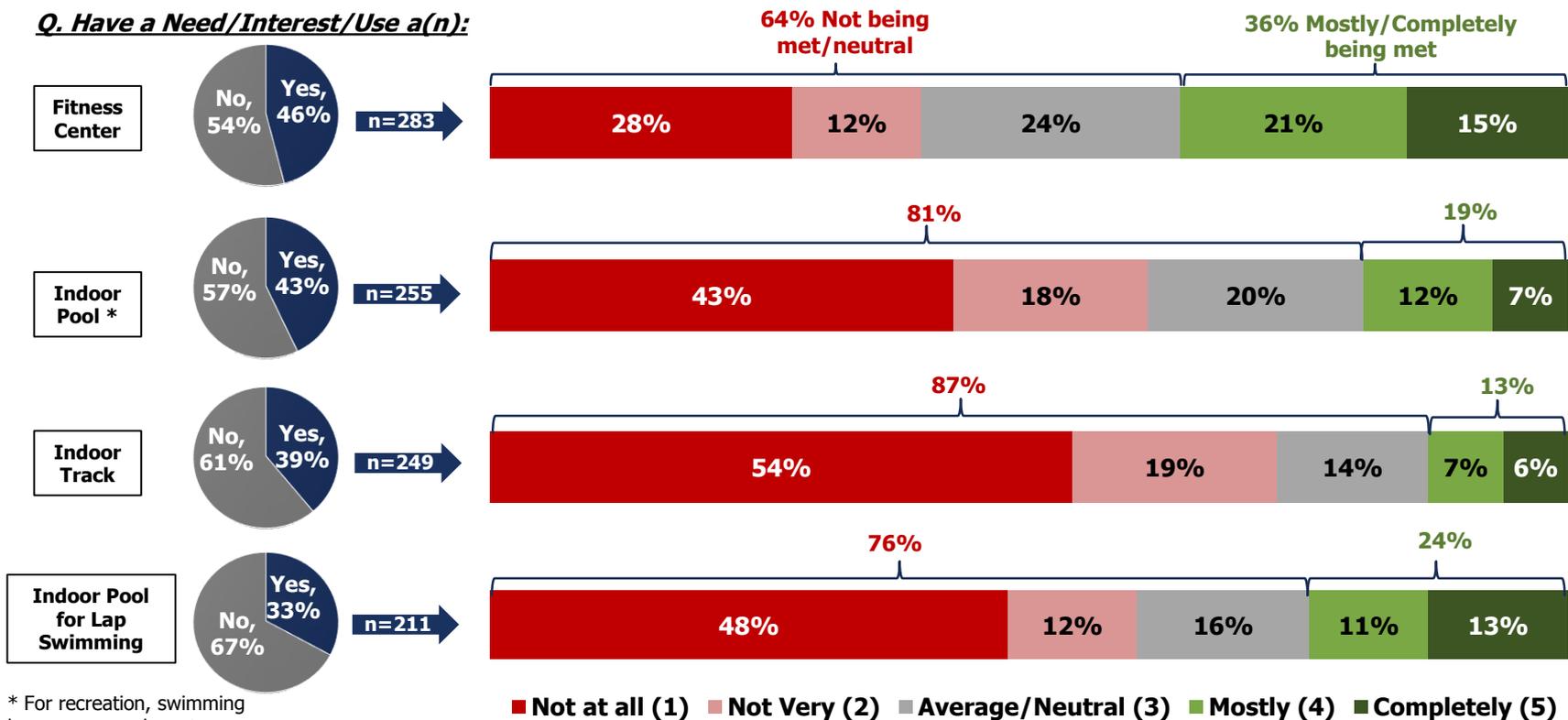
- Half of the lowest income households (47%) feel that none of these amenities are of interest or need.
- Both the youngest and oldest adults also tended to feel this way more than average.

	Overall (n=618)	Most Likely to Express Interest/Need/Use
<b>Warm Water Therapy Pool</b>	<b>20%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (24%)</li> <li>- Ages 44-64 (30%), 65+ (26%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (34%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Pickleball Courts</b>	<b>11%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (16%, vs. 6% of men)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (19%)</li> </ul>
<b>None Are Priorities</b>	<b>23%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (30%, vs. 13% of those with children)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (34%) and ages 65+ (33%)</li> <li>- HH income under \$50K (47%)</li> </ul>

## Relatively few respondents feel that the indoor facilities in highest demand are currently available in the community.

- Roughly a third (36%) of those interested or needing fitness centers feel that this need is mostly/completely being met already. This means that 64% perceive a "gap" (including 40% saying their need is not met at all or very well).
- The other top amenities (indoor open pool and lap lanes, and an indoor track) are considered even bigger gaps, with roughly half saying these needs are not being met at all currently – either by the park district or other providers.

### Q. Have a Need/Interest/Use a(n):

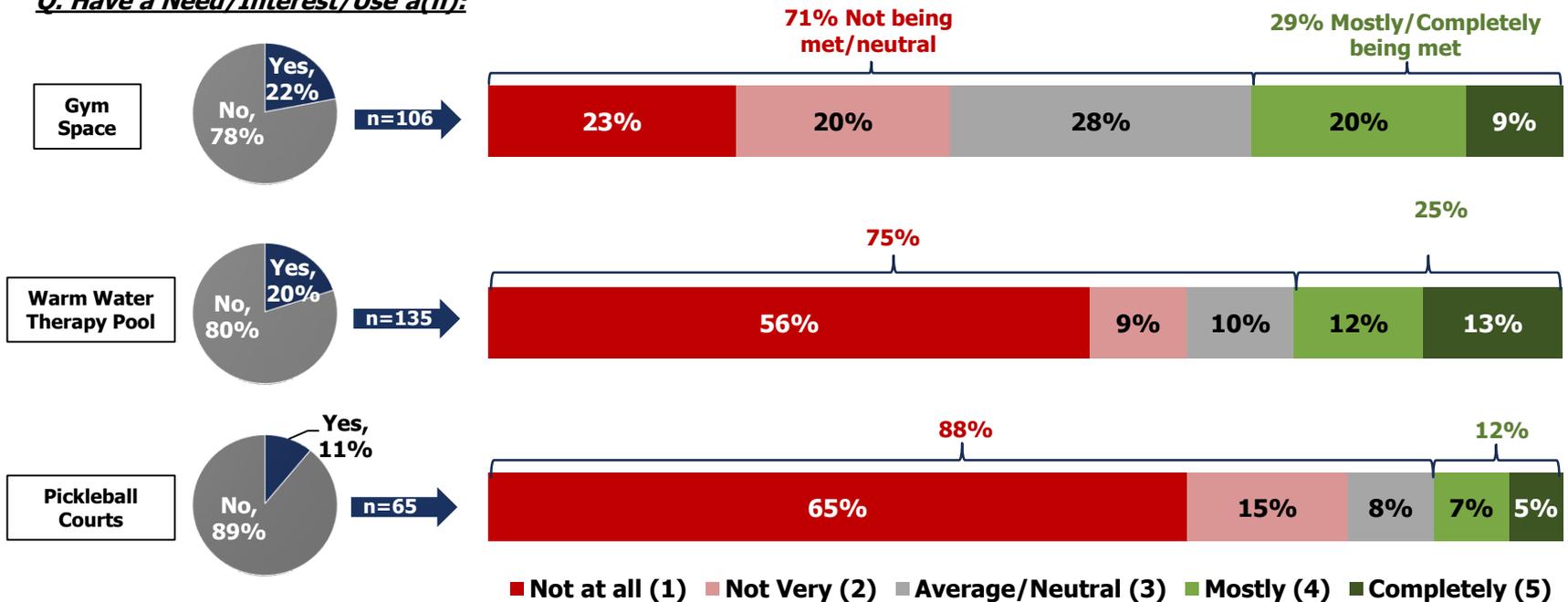


\* For recreation, swimming lessons, open play, etc.

**Similarly, at least 71% of those interested in gym courts, therapy pools, or indoor pickleball do not feel these facilities are at least somewhat available.**

- Nearly half (43%) of those who are interested in gym courts feel their needs are not being met very well if at all. This feeling is even more prevalent among those interested in using a warm water therapy pool and/or pickleball courts (which register lower levels of demand overall).

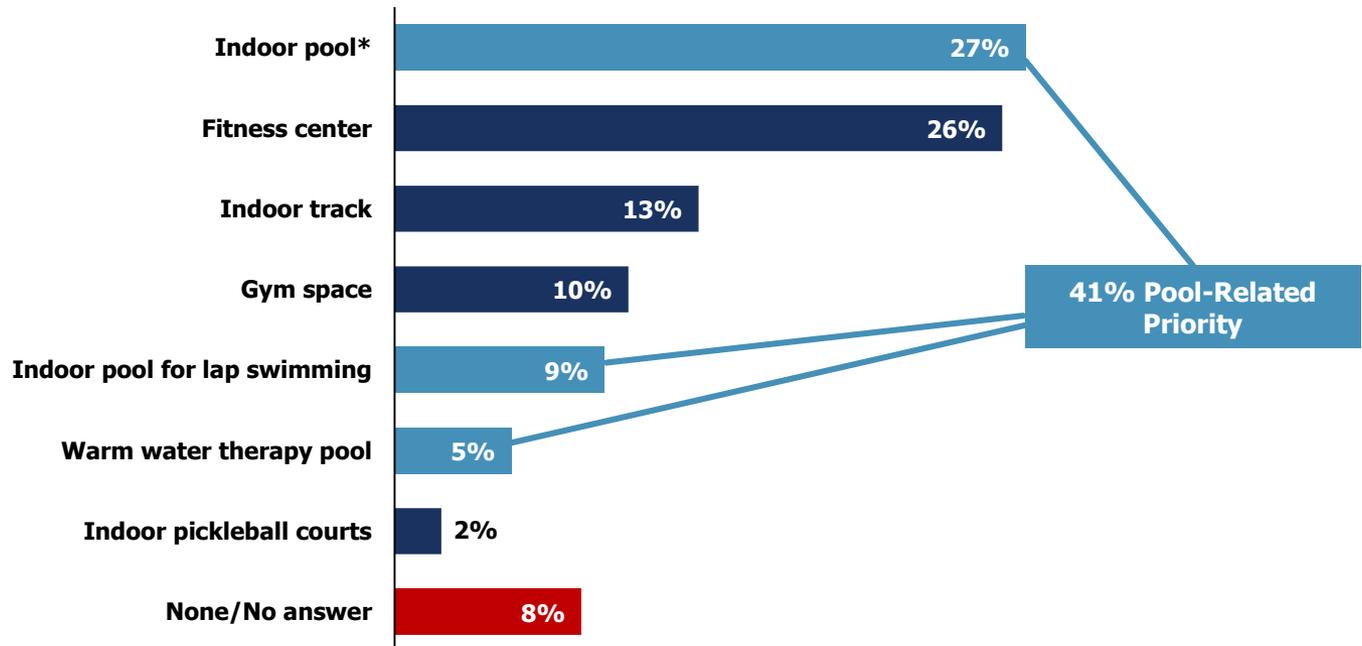
***Q. Have a Need/Interest/Use a(n):***



**When respondents are asked to identify the one indoor facility that represents a top priority for the PDOP, they divide between an indoor open pool and a fitness center.**

- However, those interested in any indoor water facility – open pool, lap lanes, therapy pool – the combined responses register four out of ten respondents (41%).
- After a pool and fitness center, an indoor track and gym space rank further down.
- Note that in this question, only 8% feel that none of these amenities represent a priority for the District (meaning most were able to identify at least one need).

**Top Priority: Most Important Indoor Facility/Amenity For PDOP To Provide/Add/Improve (n=618)**



Q13. Of those indoor recreation facilities, which one do you think should be a top priority for the Park District of Oak Park to provide?

\* For recreation, swimming lessons, open play, etc.

## Women and households with children are most interested in an indoor open pool as a top priority, while middle-age residents tend to favor a fitness center.

- Note that the youngest and newer Oak Park residents tend to be divided between wanting gym space, or citing none of these improvements as a top priority. Conversely, the oldest adults are more likely to seek a warm water therapy pool.
- Others who do not identify anything as a priority tend to include those without children, renters, and residents in the Central or North-Central parts of the village. African Americans also feel this way more than average.

### Differences by Subgroups: Top Indoor Priority

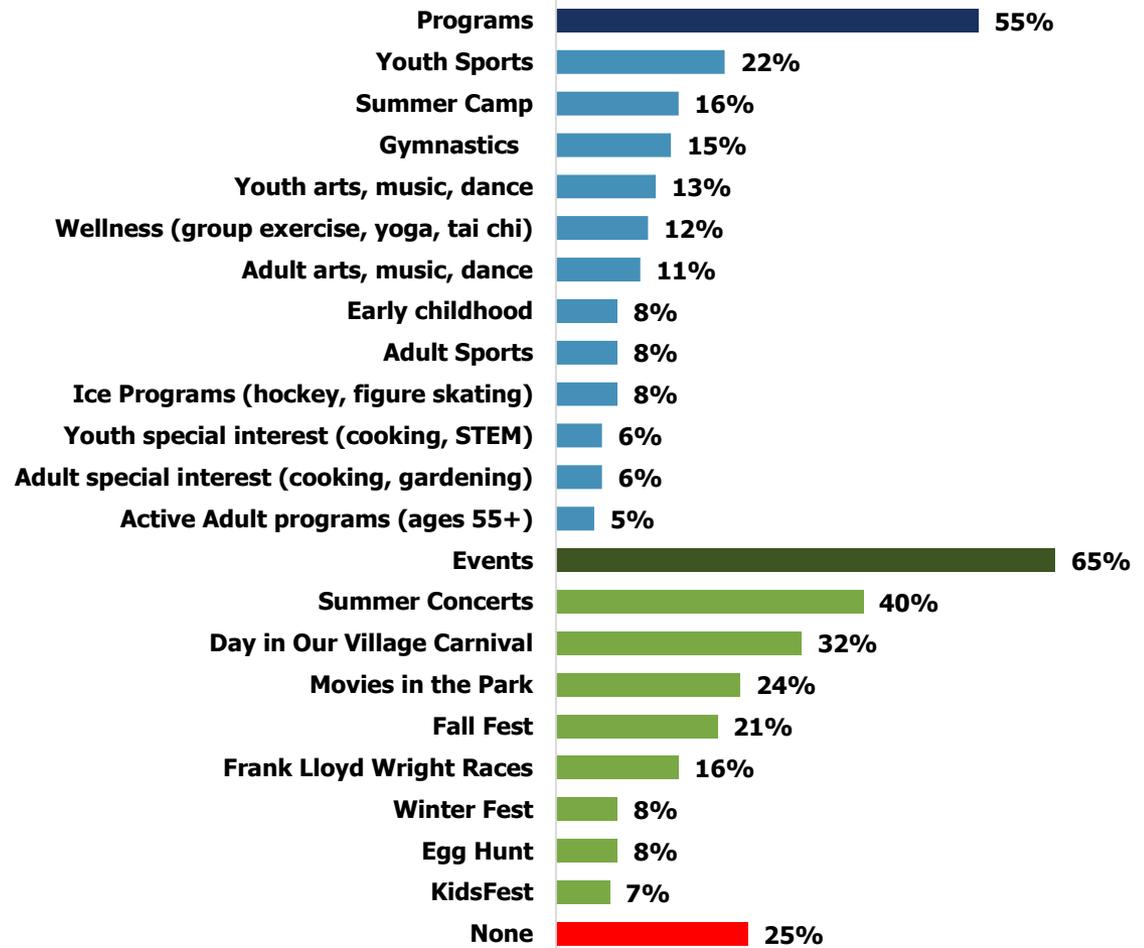
	Overall	Most Likely to Express Interest/Need/Use
<b>Indoor Pool *</b>	<b>27%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (34%, vs. 21% of men)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (42%), 45-54 (36%)</li> <li>- HH with children (41%, vs. 18% of those without)</li> <li>- Asian households (50%)</li> <li>- Single family houses (29%)</li> </ul>
<b>Fitness Center</b>	<b>26%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (36%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Running or Walking Track</b>	<b>13%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- White households (16%)</li> <li>- Current PDOP user (14%, vs. 6% of non-users)</li> </ul>
<b>Gym Space</b>	<b>10%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (18%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (19%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Pool for Lap Swimming</b>	<b>9%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (18%)</li> </ul>
<b>Warm Water Therapy Pool</b>	<b>5%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55+ (10%)</li> <li>- HH without children (8%, vs. 1% of those with)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Pickleball Courts</b>	<b>1%</b>	<i>&lt;no meaningful differences, too few cases&gt;</i>
<b>No Answer/None Are Priorities tennis</b>	<b>7%</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (18%); Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (12%)</li> <li>- HH without children (11%, vs. 2% of those with)</li> <li>- Non-PDOP users (35%, vs. 5% of users)</li> <li>- African American households (21%)</li> <li>- Renters (16%) and apartment dwellers (20%)</li> <li>- North-Central (17%) and Central (14%) regions</li> </ul>

## IV. PDOP Program and Event Participation

**Nearly two-thirds of respondents report attending a PDOP event in the past year (usually summer concerts), and over half have participated in District programs.**

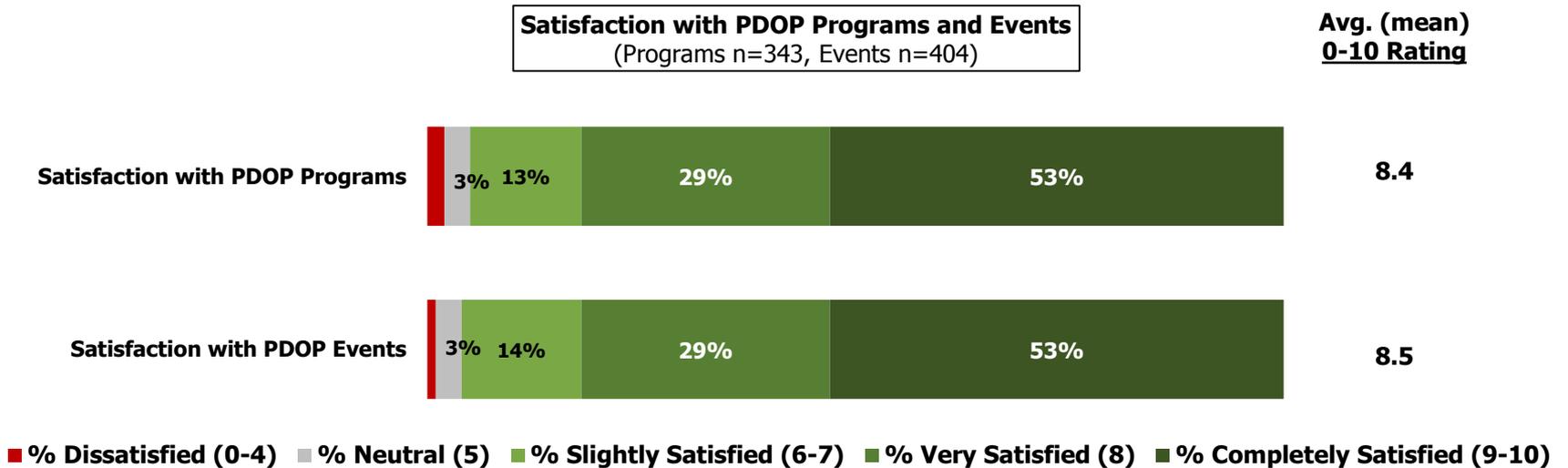
- Note that the program participation is more heavily concentrated on youth activities (sports, summer camp, gymnastics, arts programs).
- The top adult programs are wellness-related at 12% overall, followed closely by adult arts programming at 11%.
- One in four respondents (25%) report no program or event participation from their household. These tend to be:
  - Households without children (33% report no participation);
  - The oldest (35% of ages 65+) and youngest adults (36% of those under 35);
  - Central region (38%);
  - Renters (37%), especially apartment dwellers (44%);
  - Lower income households (46% of those earning under \$50K, and 36% of those making \$50K-\$99K).

**Participation in PDOP Programs/Events  
(n=618; all respondents)**



**Among those familiar with PDOP programs and events, virtually all are at least somewhat satisfied with each.**

- As with the parks and facilities ratings, at least half are extremely satisfied, and virtually no one express dissatisfaction.



## No one is unhappy with the PDOP programs and events.

- The lowest average rating given by any subgroup is a 7.6, which is still considered very positive on a 0-10 scale.
- Consistent with earlier esteem and satisfaction trends, younger adults and those reporting mid- to upper incomes tend to be the most satisfied. Older residents, households without children, and lower-income adults tend to give less positive scores.

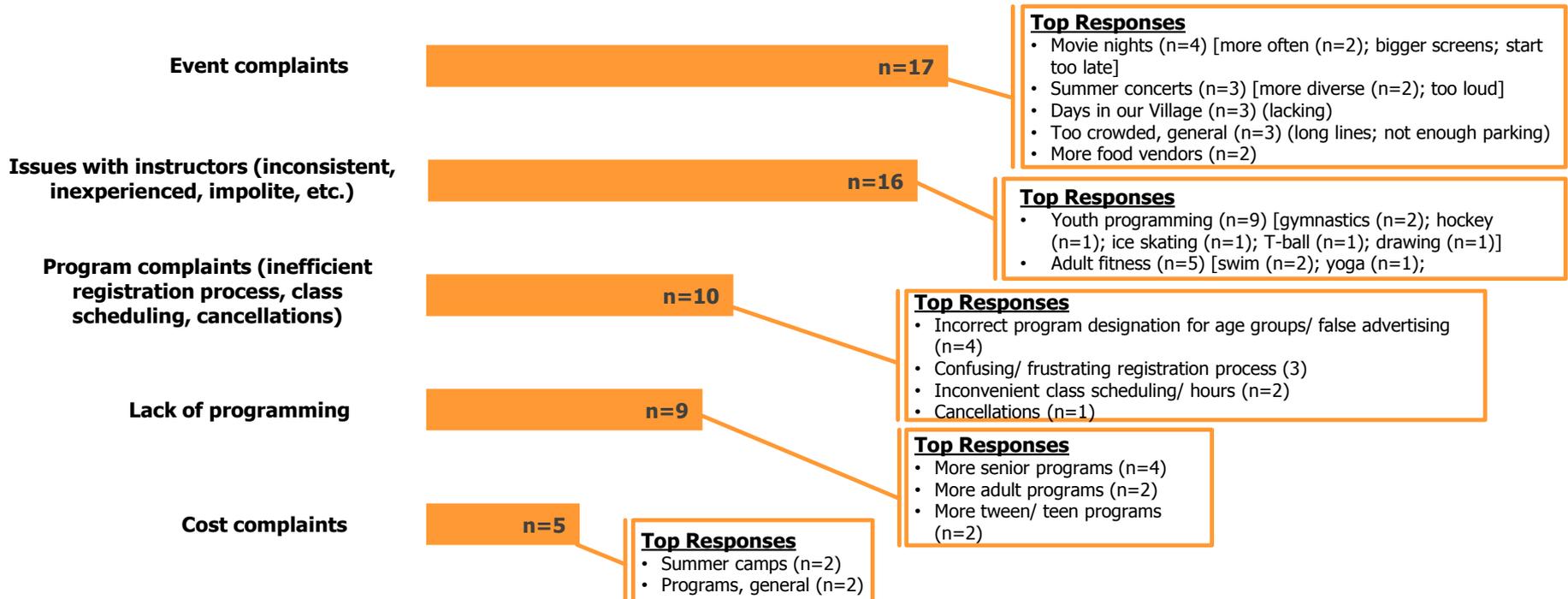
### Differences by Subgroups: Satisfaction with PDOP Parks/Facilities

	Overall Avg. Rating (0-10)	Lower Satisfaction	Higher Satisfaction
<b>PDOP Programs Overall</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 65+ (8.1)</li> <li>- Non-Central residents, both north and south (8.3)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 35-44 (8.6)</li> <li>- Central residents (9.0)</li> <li>- HH income \$75K-\$99K (8.8)</li> </ul>
<b>PDOP Events Overall</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (8.3)</li> <li>- Ages 55-64 (8.3), 65+ (8.1)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (8.1)</li> <li>- Asian HHs (7.6)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (7.6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 35-44 (8.8)</li> <li>- HH with children (8.6)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (8.8)</li> <li>- White HHs (8.6)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K+ (8.6)</li> </ul>

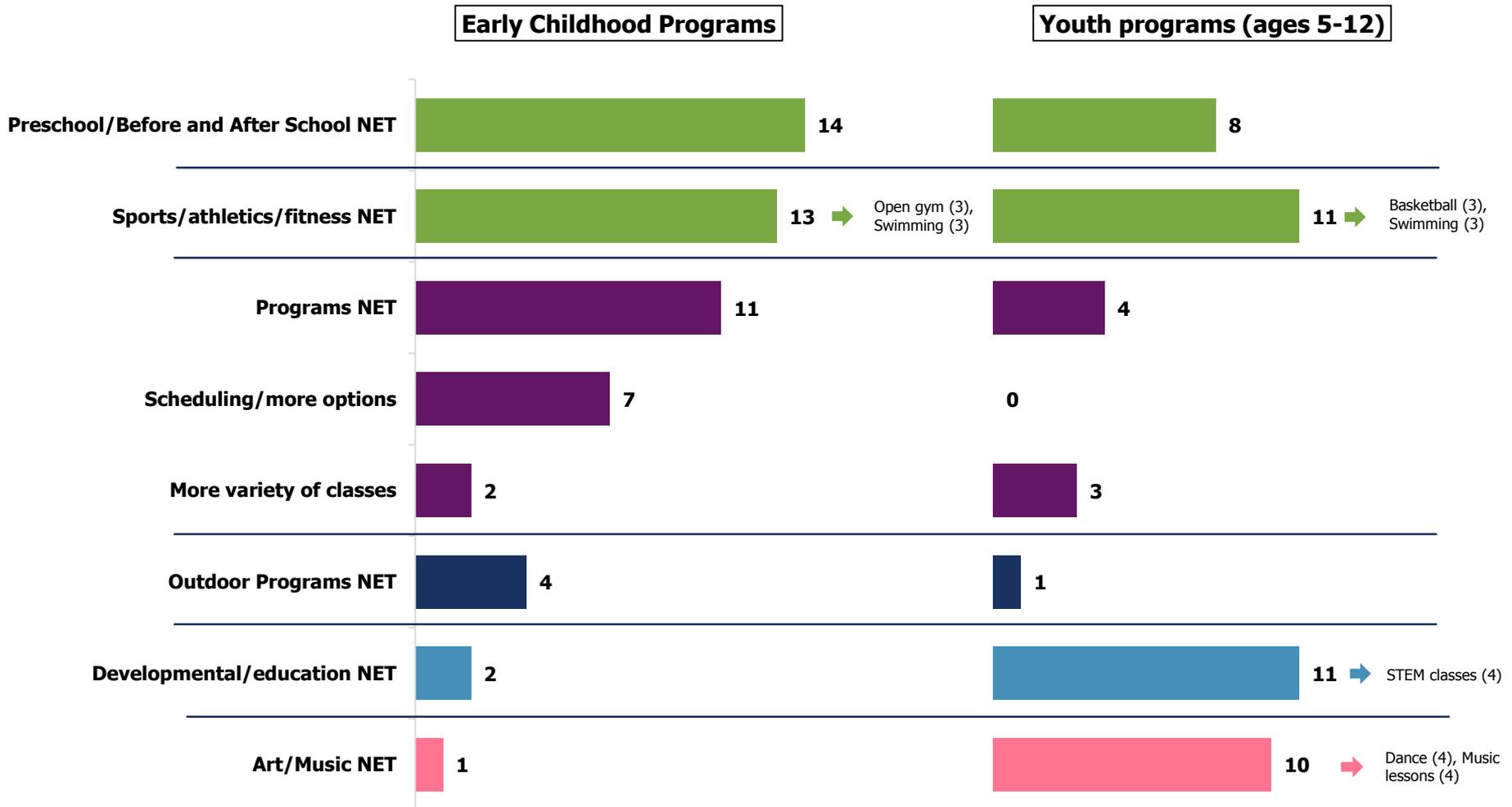
## Relatively few offer complaints regarding District programs or events.

- The top concerns are for PDOP events, many of which come from respondents who want to see elements of these events expanded (e.g., more movie nights, more diverse music at summer concerts, broader food options).
- Program instructors receive a few criticisms across a variety of programs, mostly around inconsistency, level of experience, politeness, etc.
- Note that relatively few express concerns about program or event fees.

### Reasons for Dissatisfaction with Programs or Events (top responses, unweighted n of cases)



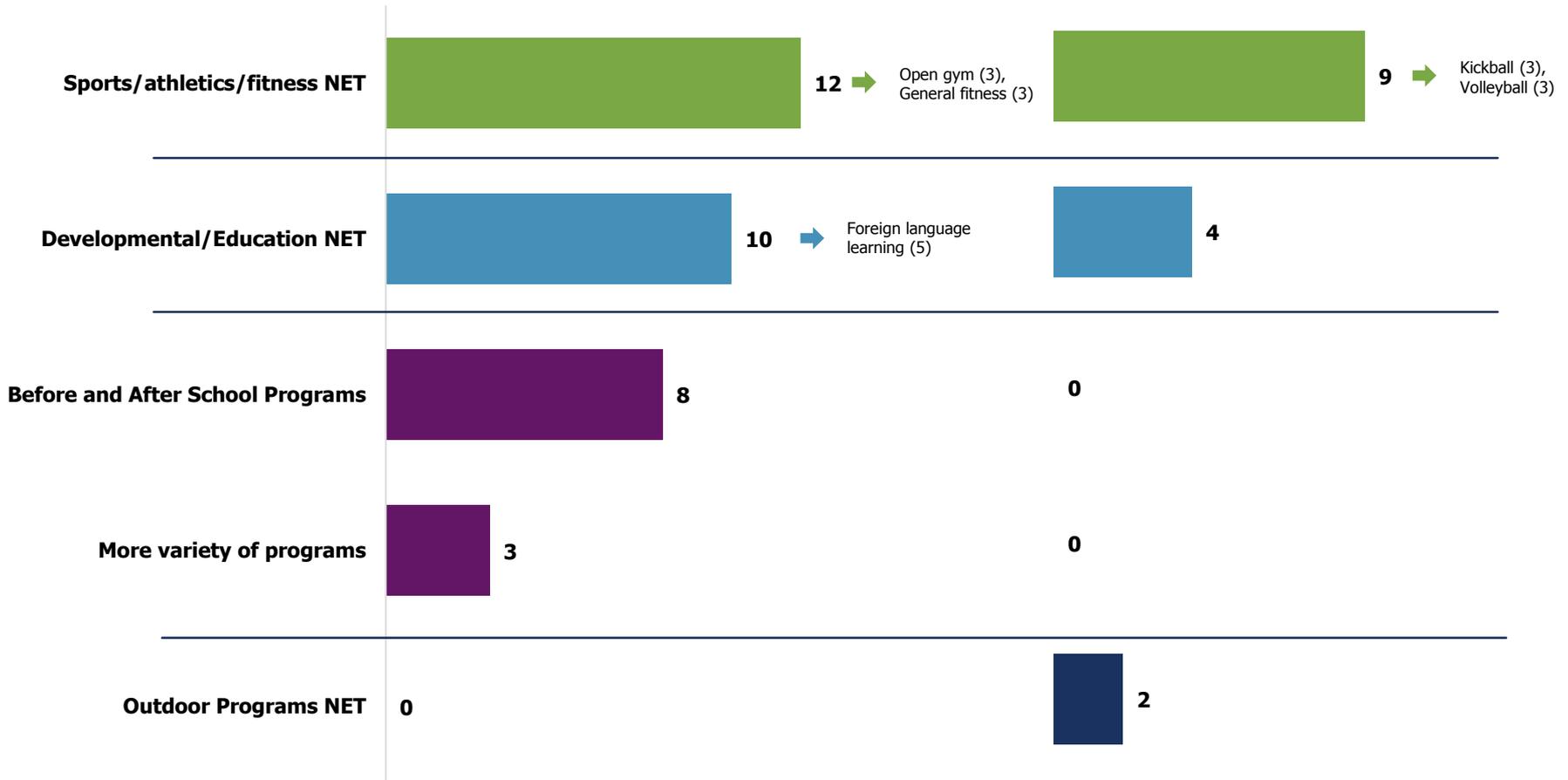
**Suggested program ideas for younger youth tends to center around more athletics and preschool or before-/after-school activities. More developmental and educational programming, along with arts activities, are also cited for younger school-age children.**



**For older children, sports and athletics again dominate the suggestions for additional programming. Suggestions for added educational and before-/after-school activities diminish for older children.**

**Teen programs (ages 13-18)**

**Young adult programs 19-29**



**Added adult programming of interest focuses on more sports and fitness options, especially among older adults. Note that specific special interests (usually language classes, cultural activities) are often cited as well.**

**Adult programs (ages 30-44)**

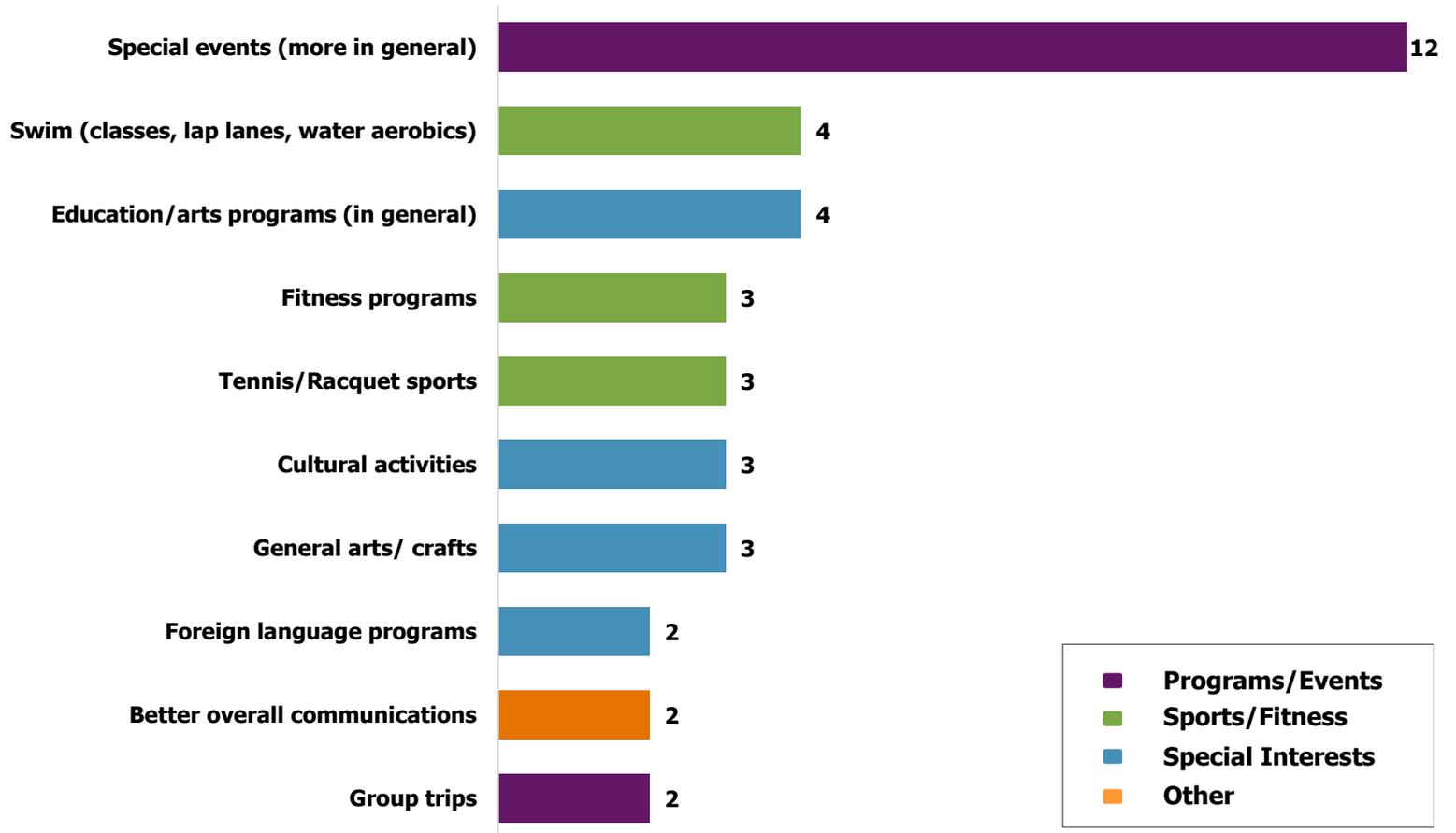
**Adult programs (ages 45-54)**

**Active adult (ages 55+)**



**A few comments for added programming were offered which were not age-specific.**

**Other programs or special events**

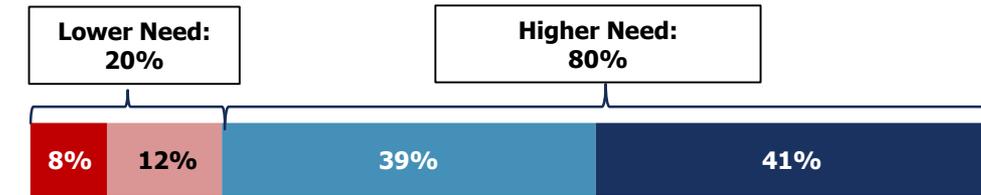


## V. Opinions Regarding Potential PDOP Recreation Center

## At least four in five respondents feel that a community rec center is needed in Oak Park, and support its construction via grants and donations.

- When first described, 41% feel this facility represents a “significant need” in the community. This opinion increases to 54% when informed that it would in part provide after-school gym use and activities for middle-/high-school children.
- When informed that the facility will be funded with grants and donations (and not with a tax increase), respondents are in support by more than a 5:1 margin (though much of this support is “not strong” at 44%, vs. 41% “strong”).

The PDOP is considering the construction of a community recreation Center featuring gymnasium space, a fitness center, an indoor walking/jogging track, and an indoor pool which includes a water play area, lanes for lap swimming, and a warm water therapy pool. In general, would you say that this type of facility represents:

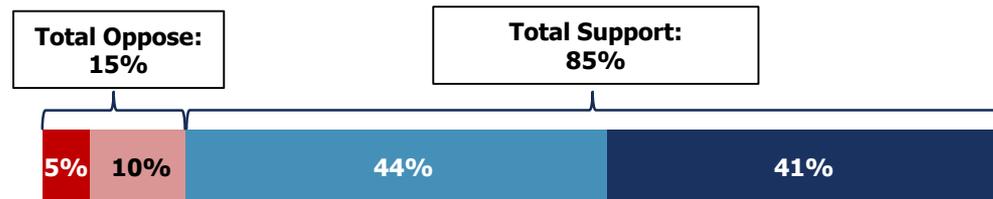


While this facility would provide recreational opportunities for all Oak Park residents, it will also provide middle- and high-school students with free open gym and activities in a safe place after school. Knowing this, would you say that this facility represents:



■ Not at All a Need      ■ Not Much of a Need  
■ Somewhat of a Need      ■ Significant Need in the Community

To pay for the construction of a new community recreation center, the Park District will seek grants and private donations as part of a fundraising campaign (instead of seeking a property tax increase). How much do you support or oppose building a community recreation center as described earlier?



■ Strongly Oppose      ■ Oppose      ■ Support      ■ Strongly Support

## As age increases, the perceived need for an indoor rec center decreases.

- Similarly, the sense of need decreases along with household income (greater need among more affluent residents, less need among lower income households).
- Note that roughly one in four men, non-children households, ages 55+, and long-term Oak Park residents feel a rec center is not necessary across both arguments tested.

Statements/Descriptions Regarding Proposed Rec Center	Not Much/Not At All A Need in the Community	Somewhat of a Need	Significant Need
<b>The PDOP is considering the construction of a community recreation Center featuring gymnasium space, a fitness center, an indoor walking/jogging track, and an indoor pool which includes a water play area, lanes for lap swimming, and a warm water therapy pool. In general, would you say that this type of facility represents:</b>	<b>20% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (25%)</li> <li>- No children in HH (26%)</li> <li>- PDOP non-users (41%)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (30%), 55 to 64 (24%), 65+ (27%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (27%)</li> <li>- North-Central (31%)</li> <li>- Condo residents (31%)</li> <li>- Renters (26%)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (55%)</li> </ul>	<b>39% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (45%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (48%)</li> <li>- Central (44%) and Far South regions (43%)</li> <li>- White households (42%)</li> <li>- Townhouse dwellers (62%)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199.9K (56%)</li> </ul>	<b>41% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (46%)</li> <li>- HH with children (50%)</li> <li>- PDOP users (43%)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (48%)</li> <li>- Central (44%) and Far South regions (43%)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (53%), \$75K-\$99.9K (48%), \$200K+ (52%)</li> </ul>
	<b>18% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (24%)</li> <li>- No children in HH (24%)</li> <li>- Non-PDOP users (38%)</li> <li>- Ages 55+ (27%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (26%)</li> <li>- North-Central residents (25%)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (40%)</li> </ul>	<b>28% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children in HH (32%)</li> <li>- Hispanic (35%) and white residents (31%)</li> </ul>	<b>54% Overall</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Women (60%)</li> <li>- HH with children (69%)</li> <li>- PDOP users (55%)</li> <li>- Ages 35-54 (64%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (62%)</li> <li>- HH income \$200K+ (67%)</li> </ul>
<b>While this facility would provide recreational opportunities for all Oak Park residents, it will also provide middle- and high-school students with free open gym and activities in a safe place after school. Knowing this, would you say that this facility represents:</b>			

## A plurality (44%) say they support this proposed rec center “not strongly”, with nearly as many registering as “strong” supporters.

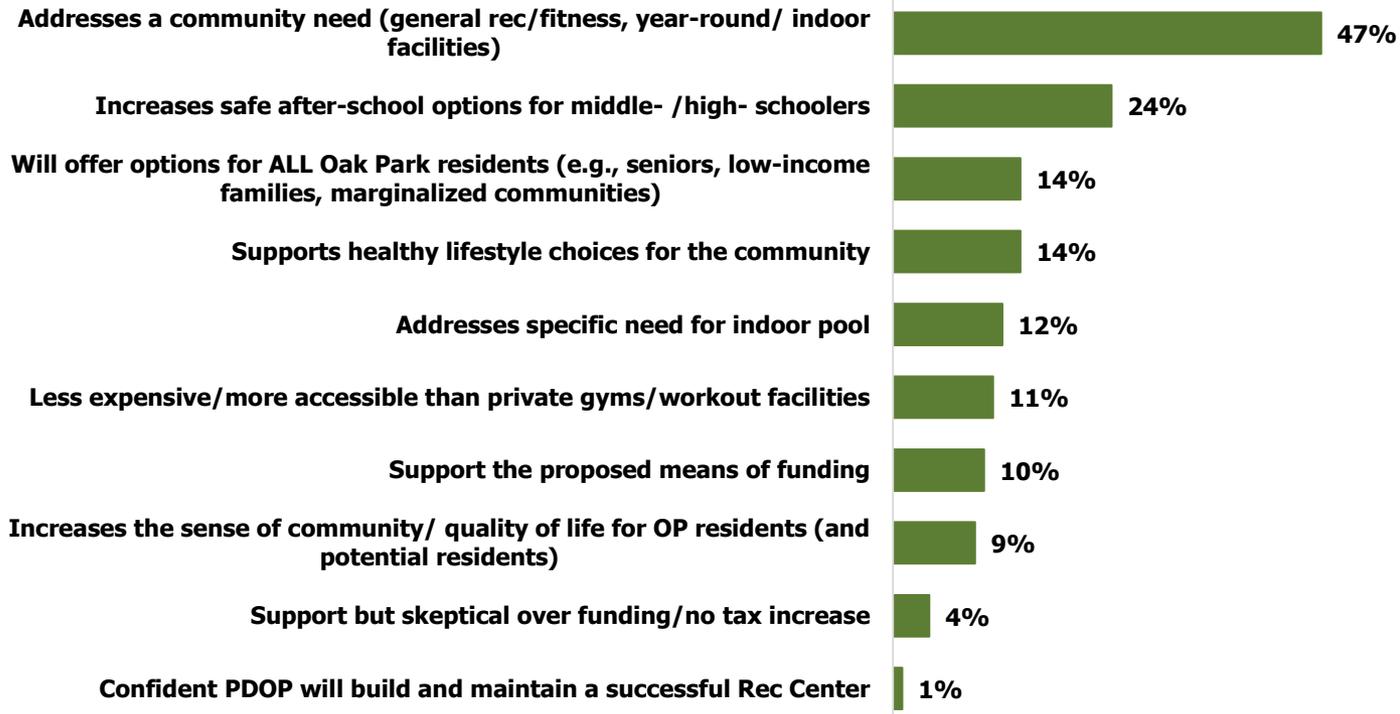
- Consistent with early findings, younger households with children, those with the highest incomes, and women tend to be the strongest supporters.
- Men are more likely to be “not strong” supporters, along with white residents overall.
- While a majority support the concept (strongly or not strongly) based on this description (68% or more across all subgroups), the opposition tends to be stronger than average among lower income households, both the youngest and oldest residents, those without children, and African American households.

Support/Oppose Rec Center	Strongly Oppose + Oppose	Not Strongly Support	Strongly Support
	<b>15% Overall</b>	<b>44% Overall</b>	<b>41% Overall</b>
<b>To pay for the construction of a new community recreation center, the Park District will seek grants and private donations as part of a fund-raising campaign (instead of seeking a property tax increase). How much do you support or oppose building a community recreation center as described earlier?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (18%)</li> <li>- Non-PDOP users (25%)</li> <li>- Under age 35 (24%), 65+ (23%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (19%)</li> <li>- African American households (20%)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (32%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Men (48%)</li> <li>- White households (48%)</li> <li>- Townhouse dwellers (63%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- HH with children (50%)</li> <li>- Women (45%)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (56%), 45-54 (50%)</li> <li>- HH income \$200K+ (50%)</li> </ul>

**Supporters of a recreation center most often cite the community-wide need for this facility, with one in four especially wanting it for teen activities.**

- Other reasons for support target specific reasons or themes, such as health equity across all segments of the community (14%), and the need to promote healthy activities and behaviors (14%).
- About one in ten (11%) recognize that a PDOP facility will likely be less expensive than other fitness options nearby.

**Why do you SUPPORT this proposed Recreation Center?  
(n=492)**



## Sample Verbatims: Support for Rec Center

### **Addresses a community need (general rec/fitness, year-round/ indoor facilities) (47%):**

*"All of the facilities listed are exactly what I want. I have to join 3-4 different gyms/programs to meet my needs for exercise (yoga center, park district classes, YMCA membership and park district lap swim in the summer). It's too expensive!!! I look at other towns and am jealous of the amazing facilities they have for swimming."*

*"The fact that this facility does not exist is really a gaping hole in my estimation. It would serve a public need that is not met at all now that the option of using the Concordia pool has been unavailable for years, it has the potential to serve residents of all ages, and is sorely needed by the student swimmers in the area."*

*"Because Oak Park/Chicago has 9 months of the year that are NOT summer!!!! It is great to have parks and outdoor pools, but for the majority of the year, our climate does not support us using those outdoor options. Indoor facilities offer a healthy option for children and adults alike to stay active year round."*

*"I feel this is a basic facility that a village with a park district should have. There should be a hub for the park district where one could go for classes, recreation, sign up. Rural communities with a much smaller tax base manage to have this, and I found it surprising that Oak Park didn't have a community center."*

*"An indoor rec center is important to provide indoor activities for kids and adults of all ages to stay active during our long, cold winters and rainy days. Stay healthy and out of trouble."*

*"I think a facility such as this is necessary for youth, seniors and residents with mobility issues who still want/need some form of recreational activity in an unintimidating environment."*

*"An indoor recreational center is absolutely necessary. During our long winter months walking or running is almost impossible."*

*"Because I feel it meets a need in the community, because I can see how my family would benefit from and use the facility, and how it would support the families of Oak Park."*

*"Not only would this recreation center provide residents with the activities that are lacking in Oak Park, especially in the Fall, Winter and Spring, but it would be a common space for residents to come together. "*

*"Oak park needs a place for year round use. It will be a great, single place to play and gather."*

*"The community needs a place that can be used year round and that will provide fitness services for all ages. Having an indoor pool would be a big improvement for our town."*

*"The overall goals/purpose of the facility would fill a need and it would be nice if it didn't impact property taxes."*

*"Our residents of all ages need this...our families, our teens, our seniors, would all benefit from the ability to have this facility in our community. I think for the property taxes we pay we deserve to have this in the community and would make our community more attractive to renters and homeowners, it would be wonderful to have this happen."*

*"People of Oak Park often have to go to other communities for this purpose. Forest Park has a nice new facility, many people in Oak Park use the River Forest Community Center frequently. Both youth and adult sports programs are always short on space or looking to other communities for a place to play."*

## Sample Verbatims: Support for Rec Center (cont'd)

### **Increases safe after-school options for middle- /high- schoolers (24%):**

*"A center with a combination of facilities is a great idea: it is very practical. I particularly like the fact that it would be open to middle and high school students."*

*"I firmly believe that the neighborhood should provide activities for the kids."*

*"I think kids and the community could always use more free or low-cost spaces to spend their free time, especially if it's not going to come out of increased property taxes."*

*"We need more places for our teens to play and relax with supervision by caring adults."*

*"I would like a facility that I could personally enjoy utilizing, and we desperately need a place and activities for teens after school to alleviate some of the burden on the library."*

*"Teens need a safe space during after school hours to keep them safe and out of trouble."*

*"Providing teenagers with healthy activities is good for them and good for the community; good preventative health for them and positive alternatives to unhealthy or risky temptations that could harm them and the community."*

*"Kids always need a place to go after school. I support it if there are private funds to build it."*

*"A safe place for older kids to go after school would satisfy a definite need in this community."*

*"Having a safe place and activities for kids is important to keep them from finding other alternative activities."*

*"High school and middle school students need an indoor space for recreation and socialization."*

*"Important for mid/high schoolers to have a safe place where they can hangout after school (plus the need for an additional pool)."*

*"It seems like a good idea for young teens, pre-teens to have safe places for after-school fitness activities."*

*"It would be a great addition to the village, and a much needed safe space for young people."*

*"Provide a chance for the younger generation to engage in a positive activity!"*

*"Particularly the argument that middle and high school youth would have less expensive options, and options for individual free play not constrained by needing to only be in team sports."*

*"Recreational spaces for kids should be a priority, particularly outside of school hours."*

*"Students need a place to go after school for positive programs. Inter-generational opportunities are important, too, especially to promote equality."*

## Sample Verbatims: Support for Rec Center (cont'd)

### **Will offer options for ALL Oak Park residents (e.g., seniors, low-income families, marginalized communities) (14%):**

*"Although it's nice to have access to corporate fitness clubs such as FFC and other private fitness spaces, It would be nice to have a space that is for the public and community at large. I think an indoor pool space would be lovely and well serve the community including those who desire to take lessons or swim laps year round. Also, it would be nice to have a space that would welcome students and give them a space and outlet during the cold weather months."*

*"Despite a number of private, for-profit fitness centers in Oak Park, there isn't a general, affordable and modern facility accessible to a broad population."*

*"Gym and fitness center options are far too expensive. A dedicated community space that has these options would be a huge addition to the community and of great help to families and residents who can't afford other fitness center options. Very highly support this proposal."*

*"I support it only if it is affordable for all Oak Parkers."*

*"I think it would be beneficial for the community. If the fitness facilities were better I think more people would use them. Community/recreation centers provide and foster a strong sense of community which is very positive."*

*"If done properly, it should give residents an opportunity to maintain a healthy lifestyle, engage with other community members, and allow the entire family to enjoy the space together all at a reasonable price."*

### **Supports healthy lifestyle choices for the community (14%):**

*"I would like it to be easier for Oak Park residents of all incomes to be physically active."*

*"Wider access to affordable fitness programs can result in a healthier populace, leading to lower health care costs and heightened productivity."*

*"Provide safe place for children. To fight obesity in children and adults. Health and social benefits for senior citizens."*

*"Physical activity is important for overall health from youth to senior years. The earlier a person is exposed & engaged in recreational activities it'll encourage them to maintain a healthy lifestyle in their later years."*

*"It would give residents an opportunity to participate in physical activity, which would have health benefits."*

*"It will benefit the health and safety of the entire community."*

*"Fitness equals a healthy and happy community. Swimming and other recreational activities promote wellbeing and a sense of community. We need a facility here in Oak Park!"*

*"Indoor facilities, especially for winter are needed and can greatly improve the health of the community."*

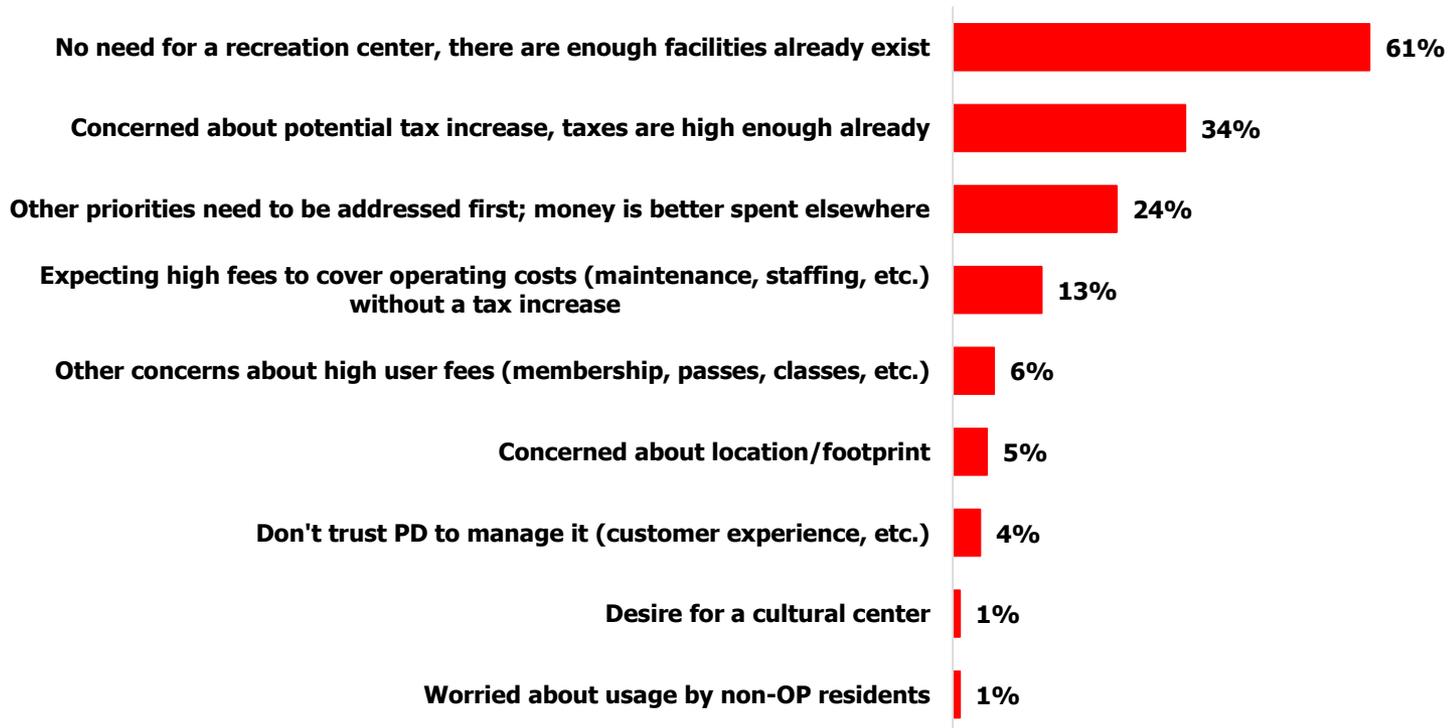
*"Health and wellness facilities are very important to the overall well being of the community."*

*"Child obesity is a public health crisis - getting kids off their screens and engaged in healthy activity is big need."*

**Among the relatively few opponents, most simply feel that a rec center is not needed (61%) and/or that other priorities should be addressed (24%).**

- Note that 34% of opponents are skeptical about taxes with a new facility (34%), and others cite concerns about high user fees in general (6%) or to cover the ongoing maintenance of a new facility (13%).

**Why do you OPPOSE this proposed Recreation Center?  
(n=78)**



## Sample Verbatims: Opposition to Rec Center

### **No need for a recreation center, there are enough facilities already exist (61%):**

*"Duplicates other facilities around! Keep up your current facilities! Anyway Forest Park has a new Rec Center!"*

*"I don't believe there is a great need for this sort of facility in Oak Park. We live in a 5 square mile village, there are no shortage of gyms, yoga studios, spin studios, etc. We have a YMCA as well as the FFC and are near several other "full-service" gyms. We have ample basketball, soccer, baseball, and tennis courts/fields. There are marked crosswalks at virtually every intersection. My only hesitation is that there are certainly a portion of our residents who can't afford to frequent these places who may benefit from access through the park district. However, I would need to see some sort of proof that these are the citizens who would be served by this complex, as I very much doubt that they are."*

*"Don't think it is needed. Improve the parks instead."*

*"What's the need? We have a gym center and the Stevenson Center. Not sure what need you are trying to meet."*

*"I don't see myself or my family using it. There are existing options available."*

*"I feel there are other comparable facilities in the area already providing these services."*

*"Duplicates services provided by YMCA and high school. Doesn't the gymnastic center have a gymnasium for children?"*

*"I have a feeling we have some under-utilized facilities already. E.g., Dole doesn't seem to be used as much as it could. Maybe some adult classes moved there to free up space for youths. I DON'T think one facility where seniors, adults, teens and youths all would be invited is a very good idea. At least, explore and present the other options."*

*"Oak Park has enough facilities and swimming pools. The Park district does not need to get suckered into helping build another pool for the High School!"*

*"I just don't think it's needed. If there is a need for safe after-school activities, let the schools provide it and/or use existing Park District facilities. There's an indoor pool and gym at the YMCA. Most middle to upper class Oak Parkers already belong to a fitness club. Why duplicate what already exists? Even if you don't need to increase our taxes, you may destabilize tax-paying private providers. Why duplicate what they're already offering? If you want to provide recreational opportunities for those who can't afford private clubs, why not subsidize memberships?"*

*"I would be opposed because it is a duplication of services already provided in the community. The YMCA provides these services, as well as the high school & Fenwick has a pool, and we have the gymnastics center. Do not duplicate services! Continue what you are doing and do it well!"*

*"It sounds like a solution looking for a problem. There are many outlets for working out and other activities in the area."*

*"There isn't a clear need."*

*"This is a town with more than enough facilities."*

*"This is not a core government service and is excessive. In addition, this facility would directly compete with private section facilities which offer the same thing."*

## Sample Verbatims: Opposition to Rec Center (cont'd)

### Concerned about potential tax increase, taxes are high enough already (34%):

*"A community center would be an asset to the Village; however, our taxes are already too high and used for too many families from outside the Village. Children in the community already have school facilities to use for recreational purposes. And, unless you can guarantee that facilities would only be used to the benefit of Oak Park residents, we would not support building new facilities."*

*"Property taxes are out of control. I've spoken to folks with high incomes (\$200K + a year) who wanted to move to Oak Park and then picked other communities because of our outrageous taxes. We need to do something to bring these down to keep our community healthy in the long run."*

*"As a senior citizen on a limited/fixed income, the idea of an increase in property taxes to pay for this recreation is frightening. As much as I value such a project, if having to help pay for it would jeopardize my ability to afford to remain in my own home, I would have serious reservations about it."*

*"As my tax bill for my home is close to \$25,000 per year (5 fold increase over time) and I cannot think of another facility that the community needs. Many people in the USA grow up without a swimming pool for the students. Cover the Ridgeland Pool if there is a need for a pool for the high school."*

*"If it could be built without raising taxes I would support it - I just don't trust it could happen without raising already oppressive taxes."*

*"It is not needed. Eventually some costs will have tax implications. The PD is doing a great job with the existing facilities so don't mess up by adding an unneeded one. It will take a potentially taxable property off the tax rolls."*

*"Our taxes are insane and to waste residents hard earned money for frivolous ideas like this is offensive."*

*"Our taxes are too high now! All facilities need to be manned, maintained and periodically upgraded. There are private companies ready, willing and able to provide these kinds of facilities if they didn't have to compete against publicly subsidized facilities."*

*"Property taxes in Oak Park are so high that I must scrape the bottom of my fixed income bucket to pay them. It is doubtful that I will be able to stay in my Oak Park home much longer because the taxes are so high. I am generally opposed to ANYTHING that will increase property taxes."*

*"There's already the Y, private gyms and similar resources in the community this would be duplicative of. Long term financial stability and upkeep would fall as an additional tax burden on Homeowners who already have high taxes."*

*"The racial achievement gap in education needs to be the highest investment priority in the Village. Regardless of how construction is funded, ongoing maintenance and operations will undoubtedly be funded by property tax. Any tax increases will force more low income families and families of color out of Oak Park. So, PDOP funds would be better spent as they have been spent, on the ongoing and continuous improvement of programs and facilities."*

## Sample Verbatims: Opposition to Rec Center (cont'd)

### **Other priorities need to be addressed first; money is better spent elsewhere (24%):**

*"I think the Village has plenty of facilities for park and fitness activities. Even with private donations, a new facility is not needed and will use up valuable space and resources. Any additional funds should be used towards maintaining current facilities."*

*"Money would be better spent maintaining existing facilities."*

*"The high school should be upgraded first."*

*"This community has GOT to rein in expenses. No matter what the taxes have got to brought under control and we have to live within our means by separating needs and wants. I will be forces out of my home soon if the taxes continue on the same trajectory as they have been."*

*"PDOP is far too focused on erecting facilities. You're stockpiling reserves to build your next fantasy project instead of minimizing the fees you charge for children's sports programs and camps and/or should further minimize the collective tax burden."*

*"Creating such a facility reduces the extremely limited park land availability for nature appreciation. Too much stress is placed on structured activity and too little on self-directed activities, especially for over-scheduled children."*

### **Expecting high fees to cover operating costs (maintenance, staffing, etc.) without a tax increase (13%):**

*"Financial burden on the community both to build and to maintain."*

*"The facility may (possibly) be built without local tax support, but it can not operate without local tax support. Maintaining and maximizing use of current facilities is preferable."*

*"Unless it was totally 100% paid for outside of taxpayer dollars (including ongoing maintenance, etc.), I don't feel the need would justify it."*

*"Will always have an impact on taxes; even if it could be built totally off the tax rolls, it would need to be staffed and have supervisors all of whom would be on the tax system; how many hours open? utility costs, etc. would be paid for by taxes. Oak Park has the highest tax burden in the county -- of course that's not the PD's fault, but the burden for older folk is still there."*

*"With what we pay in taxes the programs and pool passes should be cheaper for residents and more costly for non-residents. There has never been a big enough difference to justify all the taxes we pay. The outdoor pool(s) are almost impossible to swim laps in, but for the few times we can the cost of the pool pass makes it a bad investment. I expect the same will be true of this new center."*

*"How would facilities maintenance be paid? Usage fees could be very high. Likely the location where it would be built would take property off the property tax rolls."*

**Three in five said they are willing to donate to help cover the rec center’s construction costs, though much of this intention is “soft”.**

- Twice as many (40%) are only “somewhat” likely to donate as those “very” likely to do so (21%).
- Willingness to donate is strongest among those who can most afford to do so, namely higher income households and homeowners. Residents in the Central part of Oak Park also tend to be willing to contribute.
- Those without children in the household are least likely to donate, along with lower income adults and apartment/condo residents.

**Willingness to Donate to Raise Funds for New Rec Center  
(n=614)**



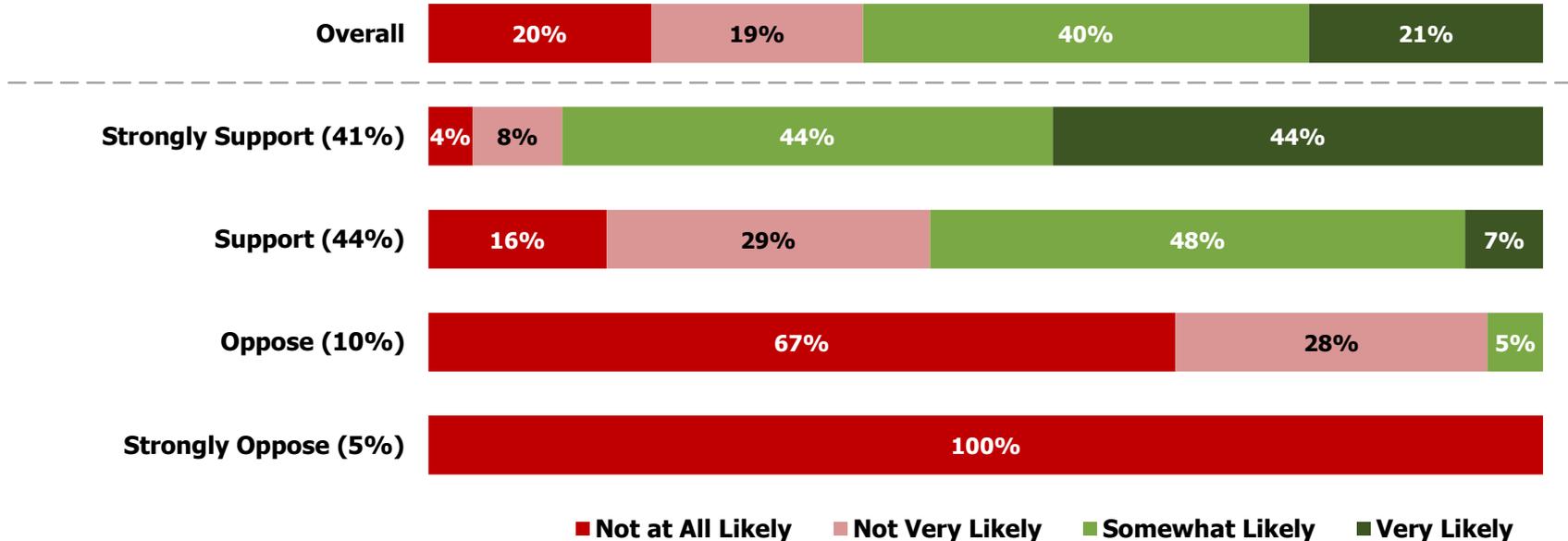
**Especially:**

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (29%) or 55+ (27%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 35+ yrs. (28%)</li> <li>- No children in HH (25%)</li> <li>- HH income &lt;\$50K (45%)</li> <li>- N-Central region (31%)</li> <li>- Apartment (26%) and condo dwellers (27%)</li> </ul> | <p>↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No children in HH (23%)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (26%); \$100K-\$149.9K (23%), \$150K-\$199.9K (27%)</li> <li>- Hispanic HHs (40%)</li> <li>- S-Central (25%) and Far South regions (24%)</li> </ul> | <p>↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 35-44 (53%)</li> <li>- HH with children (51%)</li> <li>- HH income \$150K-\$199.9K (50%), \$200K+ (55%)</li> <li>- Homeowners (45%)</li> <li>- Central (43%), S-Central (44%), and Far South regions (46%)</li> </ul> | <p>↓</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (32%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-24 yrs. (27%)</li> <li>- HH income \$200K+ (28%)</li> <li>- Far-N (27%) and Central regions (25%)</li> </ul> |
|--|--|--|--|

**Even among the “strong” supporters of the described rec center, much of the willingness to donate is “soft”.**

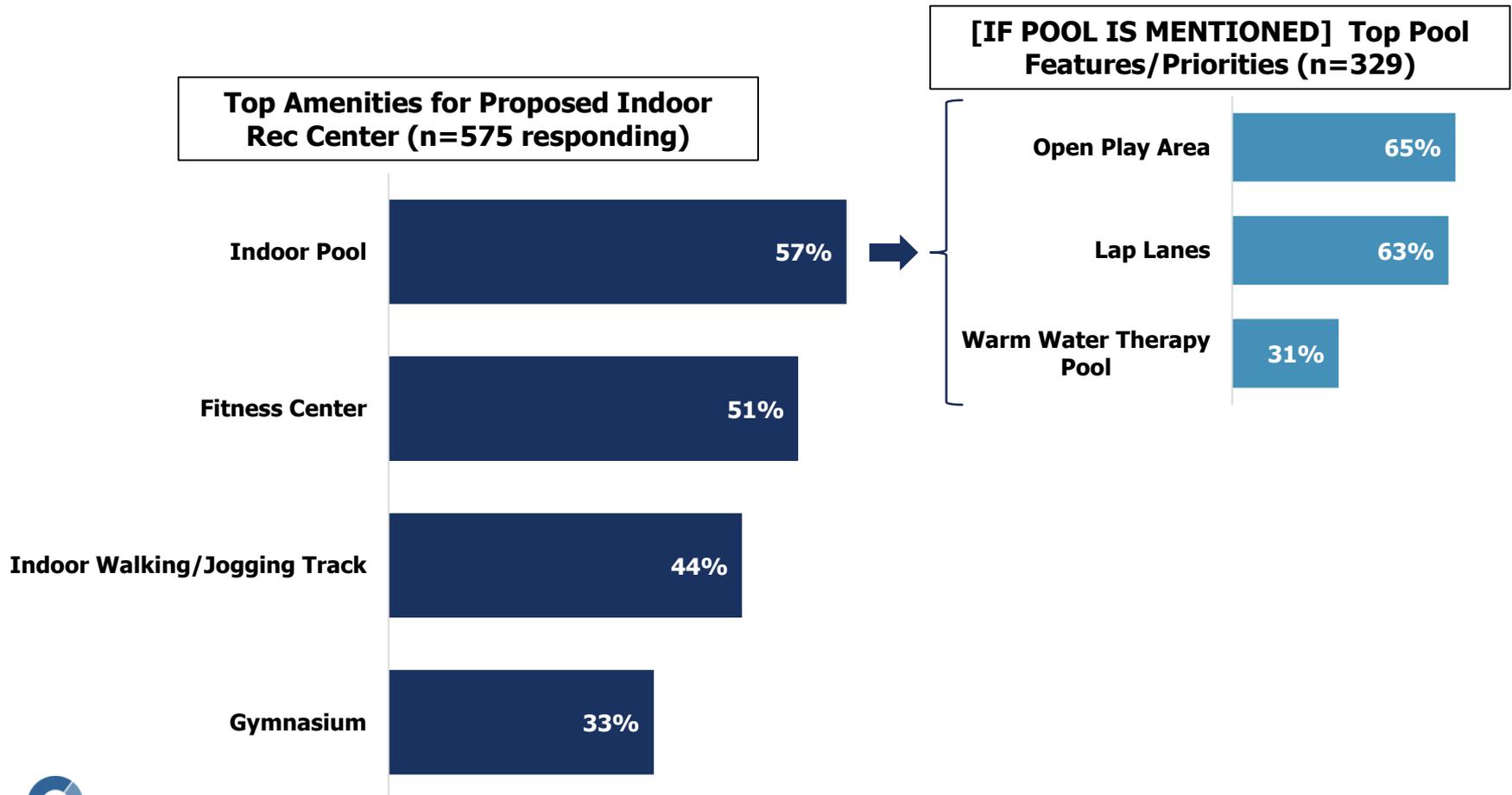
- Many of the “not strong” supporters (45%) are unlikely to contribute to help pay for the construction of this facility.

**Rec Center Supporters and Opponents: Willingness to Donate to Raise Funds for Construction (n=614)**



**When asked which indoor amenities in the rec center description are most important, at least half again cite the indoor pool (especially an open swim area and lap lanes) along with a fitness center.**

- In this context, an indoor track was also identified by 44% as a priority.



19. Which of these amenities or features do you consider to be priorities for a new community recreation center (regardless of your support or opposition)?

## There are clear priority differences by age and certain socio-economic characteristics.

- Some form of indoor water facility is a priority among those with children, apartment dwellers, and mid- to high-income households. But specific pool features have different levels of appeal to specific segments:
  - Older adults seek a lap pool and/or warm water therapy pool, whereas the open pool is a top priority among younger/newer residents, those with children, and African American households.
  - The apartment and townhouse residents are drawn more to lap lanes and a warm water therapy pool.
- Younger residents with mid-range incomes continue to place top priority on a fitness center, while an indoor track appeals most to older/long-term residents. Gym space tends to be a top choice among middle-age and higher income adults.

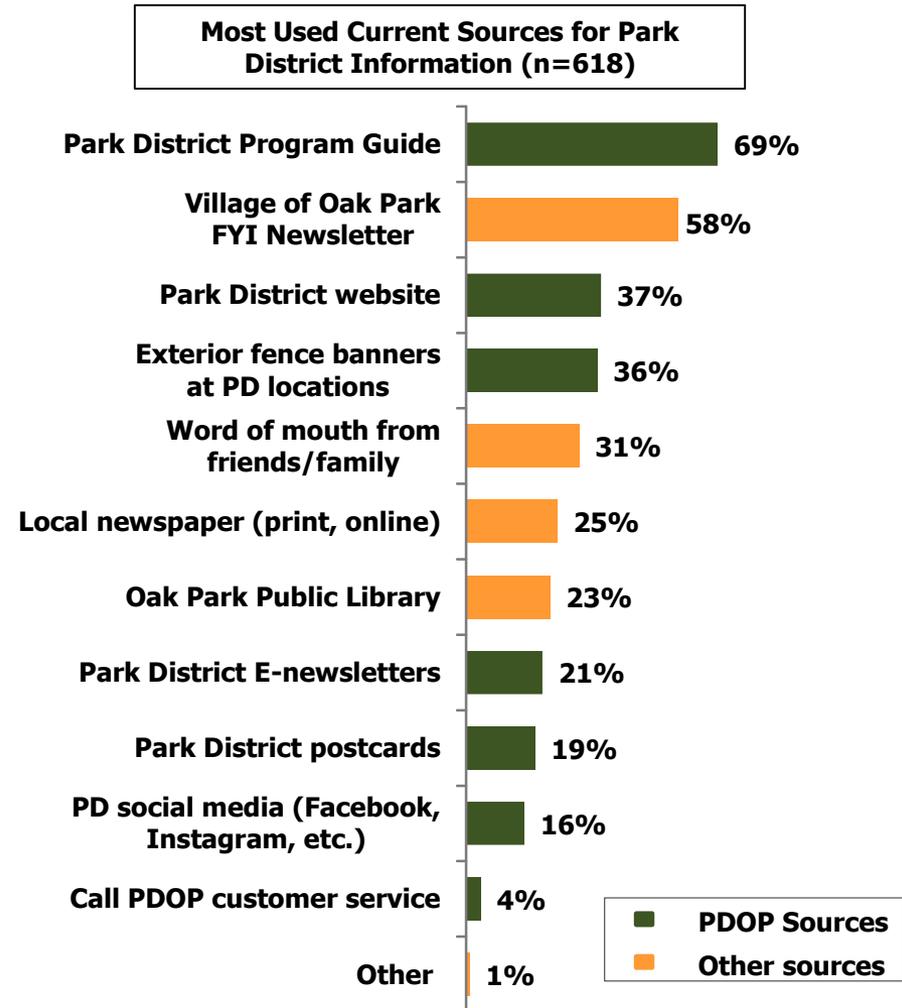
### Differences by Subgroups: Priorities for Rec Center Amenities

Rec Center Amenities	Most Interested/Highest Priority	Pool Amenities	Most Interested/Highest Priority	
<b>Indoor Pool (57% Overall)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children in HH (67%)</li> <li>- Ages 35-44 (63%), 45-54 (66%)</li> <li>- Hispanic (78%) and Asian (79%) HHs</li> <li>- Apartment dwellers (66%)</li> <li>- HH Income \$100K-\$149.9K (66%), \$200K+ (65%)</li> </ul>	<b>Open Play Area (65%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 55 (74%)</li> <li>- Women (71%, vs. 57% of men)</li> <li>- Children in HH (75%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP &lt;5 yrs. (70%), 5-14 yrs. (81%)</li> <li>- African American HHs (78%)</li> </ul>	
<b>Fitness Center (51%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Under age 35 (59%), 45-54 (55%)</li> <li>- Central region (62%)</li> <li>- HH income \$50K-\$74.9K (66%), \$75K-\$99.9K (62%)</li> </ul>		<b>Lap Lanes (63%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 55-64 (78%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 25-34 yrs. (82%)</li> <li>- N-Central region (74%)</li> <li>- Townhouse dwellers (89%)</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Walking/Jogging Track (44%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (50%), 65+ (54%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-14 yrs. (51%), 35+ yrs. (49%)</li> <li>- Townhouse dwellers (63%)</li> <li>- HH income \$75K-\$99.9K (66%)</li> </ul>			<b>Warm Water Therapy Pool (31%)</b>
<b>Gymnasium (33%)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ages 45-54 (48%)</li> <li>- Lived in OP 5-24 yrs. (41%)</li> <li>- HH income \$75K-\$99.9K (37%), \$150K-\$199.9K (50%)</li> </ul>			

## VI. PDOP Communications

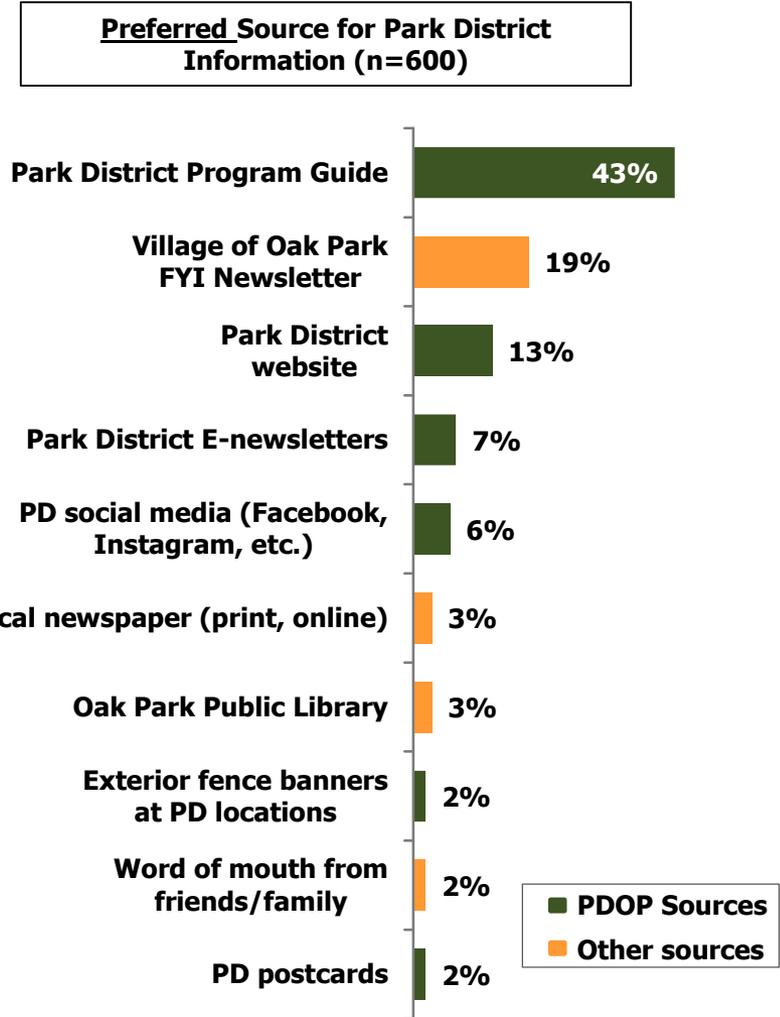
**When seeking information about PDOP events, programs or facilities, the printed program guide is the top source, followed closely by the Village newsletter.**

- With the exception of non-PDOP visitors or users, a majority of all segments refer to the program guide to get Park District information. This is especially true among those with children and adults age 35-44.
- The Village FYI Newsletter is most often used by older adults (ages 55+) and long-term residents (lived in Oak Park 35+ years).
- The PDOP website ranks third overall and is especially used by women (43%, vs. 30% of men), residents aged 35-54, and Asian households.
- Nearly as many (36%) cite the District’s fence banners as a source of information (especially the newest/youngest Oak Park residents).
- The next top PDOP channels cited are:
  - District E-newsletters (especially among women, PD users, Hispanic and African American households);
  - Postcards (mostly newest residents less than 5 years in Oak Park, condo dwellers);
  - Social Media (almost exclusively PD users).



**When asked for their most preferred PDOP information source, the program guide is clearly the “go-to” option.**

- The Program Guide is especially the top choice among:
  - Women (49%, vs. 37% of men);
  - Hispanic households (64%);
  - Homeowners (49%).
  
- Those relying most on the Village FYI newsletter tend to represent a completely different profile, namely:
  - Men (24%, vs. 15% of women)
  - Both the youngest (25% of those under 35) and oldest residents (24% of those 55-64, and 29% of those 65+);
  - Long-term residents, 35+ years in OP (31%);
  - African American households (24%);
  - Renters (26%, vs. 16% of homeowners), and apartment dwellers (31%);
  - Those without children (25%).
  
- The PDOP website tends to be most preferred by:
  - Ages 35-54 (10%) and those with children (11%);
  - HHs earning \$150K-\$199.9K (12%).
  
- Those favoring social media tend to represent a similar profile as those favoring the website:
  - Children in the HH (18%);
  - Ages 45-54 (21%);
  - HH incomes of \$150K+ (20%).



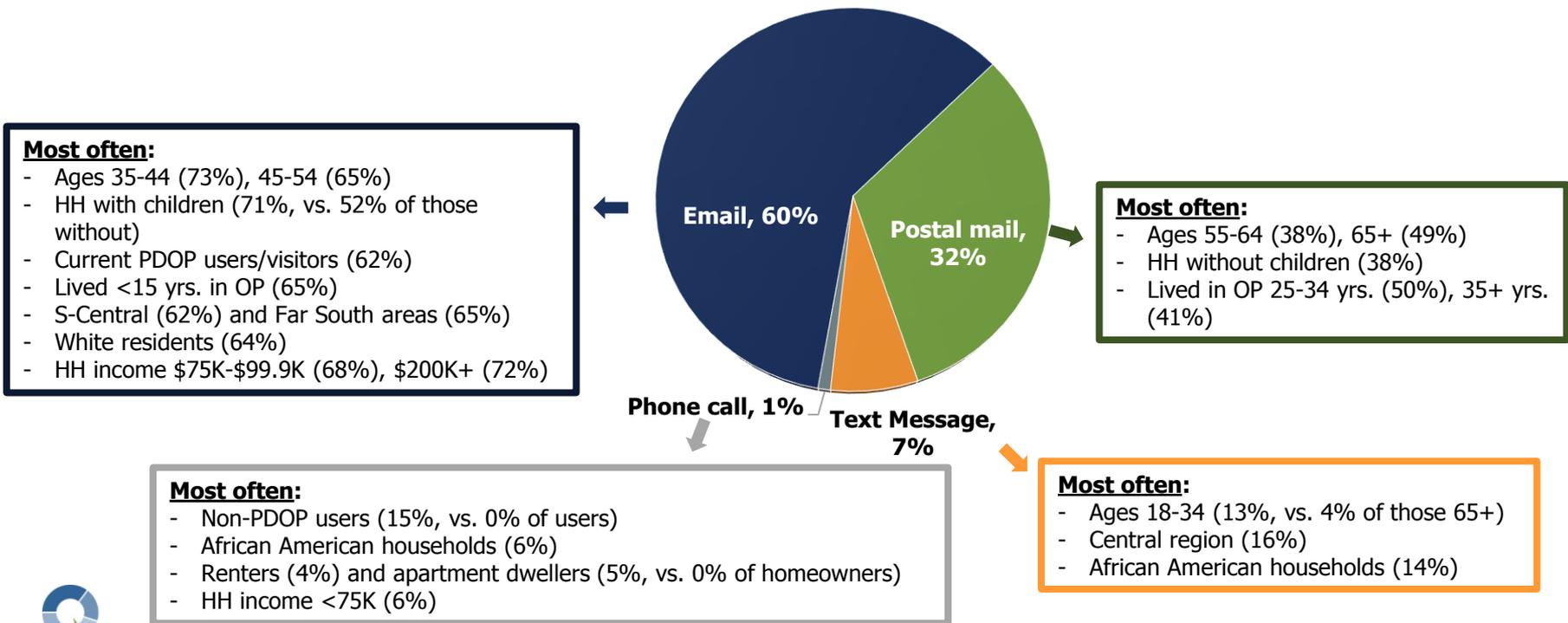
## Preferred PDOP Information Channels (cont'd)

- While the remaining communications channels are cited less often, each appeals slightly more to very specific groups in the community.
- Older residents tend to be among those most likely to cite preferring local newspapers (11% of those age 65+, vs. 3% overall) or the Public Library (5% of those age 55+, vs. 0% of those under age 45) when seeking PDOP information.
- Outdoor fence banners tend to be preferred most by renters (6%, vs. 1% of homeowners) and those in condos (11%, vs. 2% overall).
- Lower income residents are slightly more inclined to most prefer getting PDOP information from:
  - Word of mouth (mentioned by 10% of those earning under \$50K, vs. 2% overall);
  - PDOP postcards (5% of those earning \$50K-\$74.9K, vs. 1% overall).

**The previous findings identified how respondents seek information about the PDOP. The survey also tested how they want the PDOP to reach out to them.**

- Most (60%) prefer getting emails from the district. These respondents reflect the profiles of those who are the most avid PDOP users and participants (ages 35-54, with children).
- One in three adults prefer getting information via USPS, especially nearly half of the older and long-term village residents, and those without children.
- Eight percent prefer text messaging, including small percentages of younger adults and African Americans.

**Preferred Outreach from PDOP (n=598)**



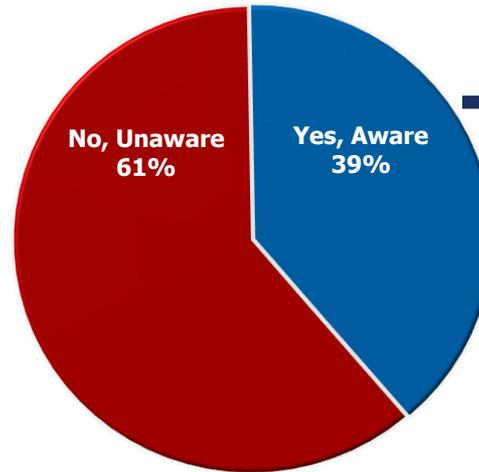
## Three in five are unaware of the District’s needs-based scholarship and discount program for low-income residents.

- Those most familiar report the highest incomes and tend to be homeowners, along with more “regular” Park District users (women, ages 35-54, those with children).
- Ironically, awareness is much lower among the types of residents who would qualify for these discounts, namely lower income households. Continued education opportunities also exist more with non-PDOP users, the newest residents and renters, men, and those without children (low awareness).

**Awareness of PDOP’s Scholarship Program**  
(n=615)

### **Least Aware:**

- Men (69% “no”)
- HH without children (72%)
- Non-PDOP users (87%)
- Under age 35 (71%)
- Lived in OP <5 yrs. (69%)
- North-Central (73%) and Central (73%) regions
- Renters (76%)
- Apartment (80%) and condo dwellers (74%)
- HH income <\$50K (73%), \$50K-\$74.9K (85%), \$75K-\$99K (69%)



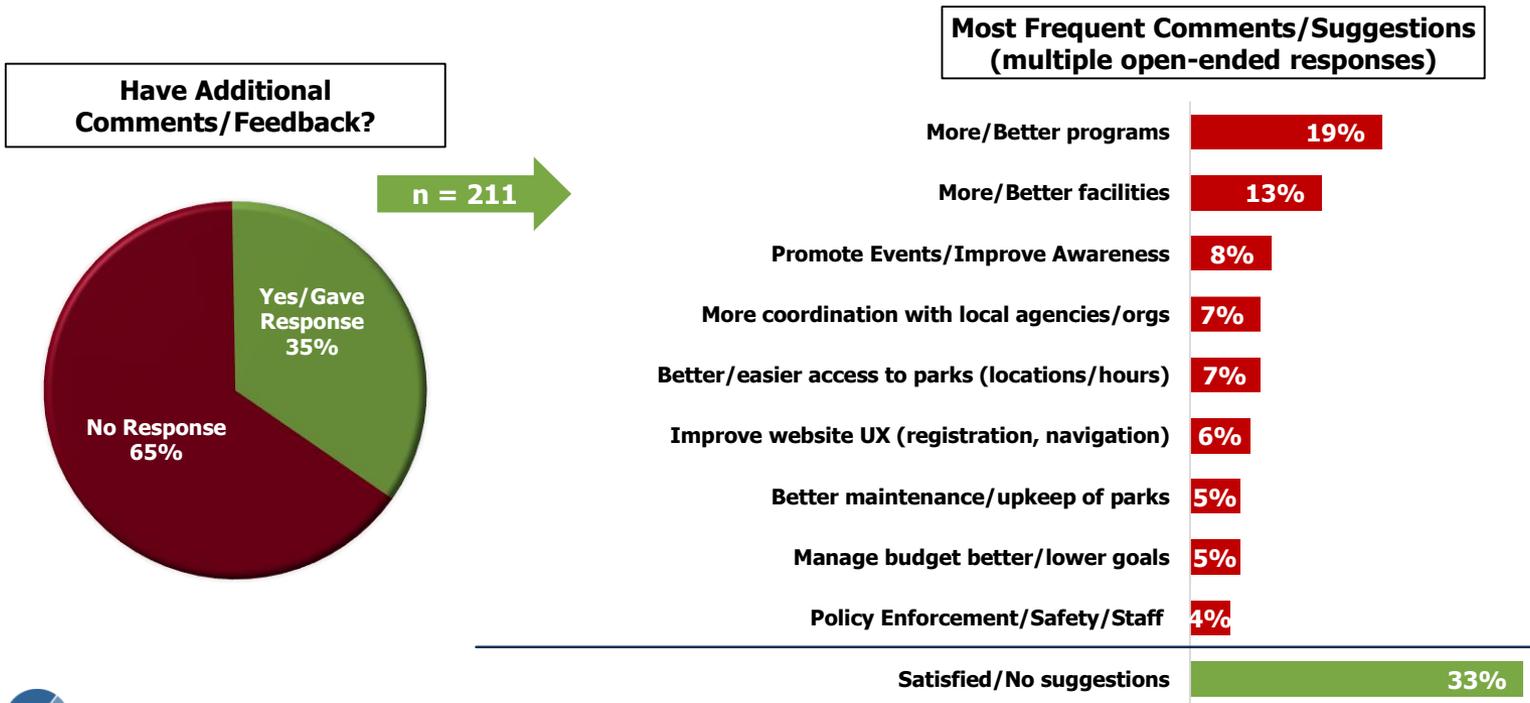
### **Most Aware:**

- Women (45% “yes”)
- HH with children (55%)
- PDOP users (41%)
- Ages 35-54 (46%)
- South-Central (54%) and Far North regions (43%)
- Homeowners (45%), single family houses (48%)
- HH income \$150K-\$199.9K (44%), \$200K+ (53%)

## VII. Final Comments/Suggestions

**About one-third offered final comments at the end of the survey, most often suggestions that the PDOP keep doing what it's doing (no changes sought).**

- The most frequently cited suggestions echo previous survey comments, namely:
  - Expanded and/or improved programming for working adults, seniors, teens, and those with mobility issues (19%);
  - Improved/new facilities including support for a potential Rec Center and the need for an indoor pool (13%);
  - Stronger promotion and information about the District, its events, etc. (8%);
  - More coordination with local agencies, organization and private business, e.g. eliminating redundant offerings, partnering with schools to bring the community an indoor pool facility (7%).



## Sample Verbatims: Final Comments

### **More/Better programs (19%):**

*"I don't know how to use the park district right now. I'm too young for senior activities but pay for a gym to get the flexibility we need to workout (including swimming) around our work and school schedules."*

*"Offer more classes for early childhood and offer more fitness classes in the early AM time for working adults."*

*"More imaginative programs for seniors."*

*"It would be great if teens had opportunities to apply for summer jobs in person and/or there are training and volunteer programs to offer teens a way to get ready to work. Would love to see "ready to work" programs. AND, hire 15 year-olds."*

*"Provide more programs for those with mobility issues."*

### **More/Better facilities (13%):**

*"Upgrade fitness equipment, mats etc. consistently throughout the Village, provide more classes/alternate locations in the south/central part of the Village."*

*"I'm proud of our parks. We need to provide a facility for our rising teens and tweens to play ball inside during the winter. This is a service not only for our children, but also for children in our neighboring communities."*

*"Not sure if this pertains to the PDOP, but we've been frustrated with the state of disrepair in the Dole Library building. The wheelchair accessible button doesn't work, the elevator was broken for a long time, and the heat is often overwhelming during transitional seasons."*

*"Keep up the great work and please convince the village to build the recreational center to benefit the community and students with an indoor enclosed pool and fitness center to allow affordable access to fitness and healthy lifestyles."*

*"I'm super excited about the possibility for a new center with the above mentioned facilities without raising it taxes- if that were the case, I wouldn't want it. I think it will take a good program to excellent!"*

### **Promote events/Improve awareness (8%):**

*"Do more marketing to get your programs better known in the community."*

*"I still don't know about half of the things the Park District has. I only see stuff in passing and really don't know what there is to offer. Many things I see at Ridgeland Common but I can't get there that frequently. I would like to see more things around me."*

*"Maybe just more detailed info on events, maybe online. Since we are new to the area, we aren't totally sure what happens at some."*

*"More specific and targeted information being sent, more info available at events like Farmers Markets, etc."*

*"The communication could be better. I didn't know about the Park District's punch card program until a friend told me. Also, I didn't get an email notifying me when Polar Bear passes were available. I'm not sure if there's a regular e-newsletter, but I'd like one."*

## Sample Verbatims: Final Comments (cont'd)

### **More coordination with local agencies/organizations/private businesses (7%)**

*"All agencies should work together instead of separately."*

*"Collaborate with OPRF to get an indoor pool. Keep up the good work. I am proud of my park district!"*

*"Cooperate with tax saving strategies to consolidate with other agencies."*

*"Figure out how to partner with school district to meet needs of the community me schools (indoor pool)."*

*"Please work with the schools and village (and sports leagues) to be more efficient."*

### **Better/Easier access to parks (locations/hours) (7%):**

*"Haven't been able to utilize park district much because activities were not accessible for disabled family member."*

*"Longer season for lap swim at Ridgeland. Those of us who do not drive and live in central OP cannot access Rehm. It doesn't have the public transportation that Ridgeland has!"*

*"Make the ecology center in Austin Gardens more accessible."*

*"Maybe "trial" classes, or classes on Sunday."*

*"I would need classes in the evenings and weekends, and I would need them to be affordable."*

### **Improve website (UX, registration, navigation) (6%)**

*"I find the website can be difficult in terms of finding something specific, that I 'know' is there, I just can't find it in the website or the search engine."*

*"I now prefer to receive the seasonal paper PDOP program ONLY because it is very difficult to search programs online. If there would be an online tool that allowed to make selections based on age, day of the week, etc. I would definitely prefer not to receive a paper brochure because of environmental concerns."*

*"Improve PDOP site navigation; improve calendar without sending it via email."*

*"Invest into the stability and mobile device-friendly features of your online services."*

*"Website for registering needs to be improved. It takes four of five times of negotiating the website before a registration takes. Also, registration online has to occur several days before the class, so this results in in person registration. This doesn't make a lot of sense."*

## Sample Verbatims: Final Comments (cont'd)

### **Better maintenance/upkeep of parks (5%):**

*"Snow plowing side walks would be wonderful. It's my understanding Forest Park has found a way."*

*"Those banners on the fences are really unsightly. The parks are generally attractive spaces and the banners really detract from that."*

*"Provide and maintain recycling waste bins in more locations in each park and facility."*

*"Set garbage cans AWAY from park benches! They STINK!"*

*"Check on the parks."*

*"The budget should contain enough to maintain the parks."*

### **Manage budget more effectively/lower goals (5%):**

*"Be more careful with how you spend."*

*"Continue to do what you do well! Forget about adding a rec center and running the risk of extending yourself too far as well as raising the cost of everything either through taxes and fees."*

*"Hold down administrative and marketing costs."*

*"I'd be in favor of scaling back on the amount of events as a cost cutting measure."*

*"Just use the tax money wisely and make it count."*

*"Spend my taxes wisely. Don't find ways to spend the entire budget so your following budget stays the same."*

### **Policy Enforcement/Safety/Staff (4%):**

*"Please enforce your dogs on a leash policy, this actually goes for the whole of Oak Park."*

*"Enforce dog leash ordinance. Create a task force to pick up after dogs. Enforce all dog ordinances."*

*"Support safe bike paths in Oak ark and surrounding suburbs."*

*"Greater presence of park district employees at the parks. This is not a safety concern, but just have someone around overseeing things, showing an interest in the neighborhood kids and organizing spur of the moment activities. That's what it was like for my children. It's not like that for my grandchildren."*

*"Could training better to the personal and insist to be polite when somebody ask questions. If they do not know the answer look out for manager."*

# Appendices: Topline Summary


**2019 Community Survey: Topline Results**

*Based on n=618 responses*  
*Dates of Data Collection: 4/23 through 6/29*  
*Weighted to Census Data for Oak Park by Region, Age, Gender, and Race/Ethnicity.*

**1. How long have you lived in Oak Park?**

Less than 5 years	25%
5 - 14 years	29%
15 - 24 years	18%
25-34 years	12%
35+ years	16%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>16.9 years</b>

(Base n=614)

**2. Please rate your overall opinion of each agency below. If you are not familiar enough to give a rating, just select "Unfamiliar".**

A. Village of Oak Park	
Highest regard (9-10)	22%
Very positive (8)	30%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	26%
Neutral (5)	11%
Negative (0-4)	11%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>7.1</b>
Unfamiliar*	5%

(Base n=592)

B. Oak Park Elementary School Dist. 97	
Highest regard (9-10)	32%
Very positive (8)	28%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	26%
Neutral (5)	7%
Negative (0-4)	7%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>7.5</b>
Unfamiliar*	41%

(Base n=453)

C. Oak Park River Forest High School	
Highest regard (9-10)	30%
Very positive (8)	27%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	27%
Neutral (5)	7%
Negative (0-4)	9%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>7.4</b>
Unfamiliar*	46%

(Base n=442)

**2. (continued) Please rate your overall opinion of each agency below. If you are not familiar enough to give a rating, just select "Unfamiliar".**

D. Park District of Oak Park	
Highest regard (9-10)	51%
Very positive (8)	26%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	13%
Neutral (5)	6%
Negative (0-4)	4%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.2</b>
Unfamiliar*	5%

(Base n=589)

E. Oak Park Public Library	
Highest regard (9-10)	74%
Very positive (8)	17%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	7%
Neutral (5)	1%
Negative (0-4)	1%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>9.1</b>
Unfamiliar*	5%

(Base n=596)

F. Oak Park Township	
Highest regard (9-10)	35%
Very positive (8)	25%
Somewhat positive (6-7)	19%
Neutral (5)	14%
Negative (0-4)	7%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>7.4</b>
Unfamiliar*	55%

(Base n=433)

**3. What do you like most about the Park District of Oak Park, or what does it do well?**

*Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.*

**4. What do you dislike most about the Park District of Oak Park, or what could it do better?**

*Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.*

**5. What percent of your property taxes do you think goes to the Park District of Oak Park?**

0-3%	26%
<b>4-5% (correct response)</b>	<b>27%</b>
6-10%	28%
Over 10%	19%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.1% of taxes</b>
<b>Median (midpoint)</b>	<b>5.0% of taxes</b>

*(Base n=609)*
**6. Are you aware of the Park District's scholarship program, which provides financial assistance to low income residents/families of all ages to make PDOP programs and facilities available to all?**

<b>Yes</b>	39%
<b>No</b>	61%

*(Base n=615)*
**7. Below is a list of Park District of Oak Park facilities and parks. Please read through the entire list and indicate which one(s) you or others in your household have used or visited in the past 12 months. (multiple responses, base n=618)**

PARKS	
Scoville Park	59%
Rehm Park	44%
Austin Gardens	42%
Taylor Park	33%
Fox Park	31%
Longfellow Park	29%
Maple Park	29%
Barrie Park	28%
Lindberg Park	26%
Euclid Square Park	24%
Mills Park	23%
Field Park	21%
Carroll Park	16%
Andersen Park	15%
Stevenson Park	12%
Randolph Park	7%
Wenonah Park	3%
<b>Did not visit any parks/facilities</b>	<b>8%</b>

FACILITIES	
Oak Park Conservatory	52%
Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex	39%
Rehm Pool	37%
Ridgeland Common Pool	31%
Cheney Mansion	26%
Gymnastics & Recreation Center	25%
Pleasant Home	21%
Paul Hruby Ice Arena	15%
Austin Gardens Environmental Center	13%
Fox Center	12%
Longfellow Center	9%
Stevenson Center	8%
Barrie Center	7%
Carroll Center	5%
Andersen Center	5%
Field Center	5%
Hedges Administrative Center	4%

**8. Which park or facility do you use most often? (single response)**

PARKS	
Scoville Park	8%
Rehm Park	6%
Taylor Park	6%
Longfellow Park	4%
Austin Gardens	4%
Lindberg Park	3%
Barrie Park	3%
Mills Park	2%
Maple Park	2%
Field Park	2%
Randolph Park	2%
Carroll Park	2%
Euclid Square Park	2%
Stevenson Park	1%
Andersen Park	1%
Fox Park	1%
Wenonah Park	0%

*(Base n=539)*

FACILITIES	
Oak Park Conservatory	13%
Rehm Pool	8%
Ridgeland Common Recreation Complex	8%
Ridgeland Common Pool	5%
Gymnastics & Recreation Center	5%
Paul Hruby Ice Arena	3%
Cheney Mansion	2%
Pleasant Home	1%
Austin Gardens Environmental Center	1%
Fox Center	1%
Andersen Center	1%
Barrie Center	1%
Longfellow Center	1%
Field Center	1%
Stevenson Center	0%
Hedges Administrative Center	0%
Carroll Center	-

9. Thinking about the parks and facilities that you visited, rate your satisfaction with each of the following:

A. Overall experience	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	60%
Very satisfied (8)	25%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	10%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	4%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	1%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.6</b>

(Base n=579)

B. Overall cleanliness, maintenance, and upkeep	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	58%
Very satisfied (8)	23%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	15%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	2%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	2%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.5</b>

(Base n=579)

C. Overall safety	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	62%
Very satisfied (8)	23%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	10%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	4%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	1%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.7</b>

(Base n=580)

D. Overall access (parking, paths, entrances)	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	62%
Very satisfied (8)	18%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	13%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	3%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	4%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.5</b>

(Base n=580)

E. Overall service provided by Park District staff	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	56%
Very satisfied (8)	22%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	14%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	5%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	3%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.3</b>

(Base n=578)

10. If you are dissatisfied with any Park District of Oak Park facility or park, which one(s) and why?

Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.

11. [IF NON-USER/NON-VISITOR TO PDOP PARKS/FACILITIES]: Which of the following reasons explain why you have not visited/used a Park District of Oak Park facility or park recently? Select all that apply.

Do not have children or children are grown	n=17
Too busy/Don't have time	14
Unaware of/Unfamiliar with the Park District and/or its parks and facilities	7
Just not interested - e.g., not very active	5
Use other facilities for recreation/activities	4
Cost/Fees are too high	4
Location issues, lack of transportation	4
No facilities or activities offered for my age group	3
Poor health, mobility issues	1
Dislike the Park District, had a bad experience	0
Inconvenient scheduling/hours of operation	0
Unable to find child care in order to participate	0
Poor quality/condition of the park facilities	0
Other reason (please specify)	4

(Base n=32)

12A. [ALL RESPONDENTS]: Please indicate if you or any household member uses or has a need or interest in the following indoor recreational facilities. (% "Yes" for each)

A. Indoor pool for general recreation, swimming lessons, open play, etc.	43%
B. Fitness center	46%
C. Warm water therapy pool	20%
D. Indoor pool for lap swimming	33%
E. Indoor pickleball courts	11%
F. Gym space for basketball, volleyball, etc.	22%
G. Indoor running or walking track	39%
H. None of the above	23%

(Base n=618)

12B. [FOR EACH, IF "YES"]: On a scale of 1 to 5, please select how well each of those needs or interests are being met – whether they are provided by the Park District of Oak Park or any other source.

A. Indoor pool for general recreation, lessons, open play, etc.	
Completely (5)	7%
Somewhat (4)	12%
Average (3)	20%
Not very (2)	18%
Not at all (1)	43%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>2.2</b>

(Base n=255)

B. Fitness center	
Completely (5)	15%
Somewhat (4)	21%
Average (3)	24%
Not very (2)	12%
Not at all (1)	28%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>2.8</b>

(Base n=283)

C. Warm water therapy pool	
Completely (5)	13%
Somewhat (4)	12%
Average (3)	10%
Not very (2)	9%
Not at all (1)	56%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>2.2</b>

(Base n=135)

D. Indoor pool for lap swimming	
Completely (5)	13%
Somewhat (4)	11%
Average (3)	16%
Not very (2)	12%
Not at all (1)	48%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>2.3</b>

(Base n=211)

E. Indoor pickleball courts	
Completely (5)	5%
Somewhat (4)	7%
Average (3)	8%
Not very (2)	15%
Not at all (1)	65%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>1.7</b>

(Base n=65)

F. Gym space for basketball, volleyball, etc.	
Completely (5)	9%
Somewhat (4)	20%
Average (3)	28%
Not very (2)	20%
Not at all (1)	23%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>2.7</b>

(Base n=106)

G. Indoor running or walking track	
Completely (5)	6%
Somewhat (4)	7%
Average (3)	14%
Not very (2)	19%
Not at all (1)	54%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>1.9</b>

(Base n=249)

13. Of those indoor recreation facilities, which one do you think should be a top priority for the Park District of Oak Park to provide?

A. Indoor pool for general recreation, swimming lessons, open play, etc.	27%
B. Fitness center	26
C. Warm water therapy pool	5
D. Indoor pool for lap swimming	9
E. Indoor pickleball courts	2
F. Gym space for basketball, volleyball, etc.	10
G. Indoor running or walking track	13
H. None/No Answer	8

(Base n=618)

14. The Park District of Oak Park is considering the construction of a community recreation center featuring gymnasium space, a fitness center, an indoor walking/jogging track, and an indoor pool which includes a water play area, lanes for lap swimming, and a warm water therapy pool.

In general, would you say that this type of facility represents:

A significant need in the community	41%
Somewhat of a need	39%
Not much of a need	12%
Not at all a need	8%

(Base n=614)

15. While this facility would provide recreational opportunities for all Oak Park residents, it will also provide middle- and high-school students with free open gym and activities in a safe place after school. Knowing this, would you say that this type of facility represents:

A significant need in the community	54%
Somewhat of a need	28%
Not much of a need	11%
Not at all a need	7%

(Base n=613)

16. To pay for the construction of a new community recreation center, the Park District will seek grants and private donations as part of a fund-raising campaign (instead of seeking a property tax increase). How much do you support or oppose building a community recreation center as described earlier?

Strongly support	41%
Support	44%
Oppose	10%
Strongly oppose	5%

(Base n=612)

17. Why do you (oppose/support) this proposed recreation center? Please be as specific as possible.

Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.

18. How likely is it that you/your household would donate to this fund-raising campaign?

Very likely	21%
Somewhat likely	40%
Not very likely	19%
Not at all likely	20%

(Base n=614)

19A. Which of these amenities or features do you consider to be priorities for a new community recreation center (regardless of your support or opposition)? Select all that apply.

Gymnasium	33%
Fitness Center	57%
Indoor pool	51%
Indoor walking/jogging track	44%

(Base n=575)

19B. What pool features are most important? Select all that apply.

Lap lanes	63%
Open play area	65%
Warm water therapy pool	31%

(Base n=329)

20. Please indicate if you or any household member (or visiting guest) has participated in any of the following Park District of Oak Park programs or events below in the past 12 months.

PROGRAMS	
Youth sports programs	22%
Summer camp	16%
Gymnastics programs	15%
Youth cultural arts, music, dance programs	13%
Wellness programs (group exercise, yoga, tai chi, etc.)	12%
Adult cultural arts and dance programs	11%
Ice programs (hockey, figure skating)	8%
Adult sports programs	8%
Early childhood programs	8%
Adult special interest programs (cooking, gardening)	6%
Youth special interest programs (cooking, STEM)	6%
Active Adult programs (ages 55+)	5%
Afterschool Clubhouse program	3%
Other programs	2%

EVENTS	
Summer concerts	40%
Day In Our Village Summer Carnival	32%
Movies in the Park	24%
Fall Fest	21%
Frank Lloyd Wright Races	16%
Winter Fest	8%
Egg Hunt	8%
KidsFest	7%
Fright at Night	3%
Other events	4%
Did not participate in any programs/events	25%

(Base n=618)

21. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the PODP programs/ events you participated in?

A. Programs overall	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	53%
Very satisfied (8)	29%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	13%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	3%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	2%
Mean (average)	8.4

(Base n=343)

B. Events overall	
Extremely satisfied (9-10)	53%
Very satisfied (8)	29%
Somewhat satisfied (6-7)	14%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (5)	3%
Dissatisfied (0-4)	1%
Mean (average)	8.5

(Base n=404)

22. If you are dissatisfied with any program(s) or event(s), indicate which one(s) and why.

*Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.*

23. Are there any specific program(s) or event(s) that you'd like the Park District of Oak Park to offer? If so, list them below.

*Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.*

24. About 4.6% of your property taxes goes to the Park District of Oak Park. Thinking about the programs, parks, facilities, and services that the Park District provides, please rate the overall value that it represents given its share of property taxes.

Excellent value (9-10)	51%
Great value (8)	19%
Good value (6-7)	16%
Average (5)	8%
Poor value (0-4)	6%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>8.0</b>

(Base n=613)

25. Please select the ways in which you learn about the Park District of Oak Park and its programs, parks, facilities, or services. *Select all that apply.*

Park District E-newsletters	21%
Park District website	37%
Call Park District customer service	4%
Park District printed program guide	69%
Park District social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	16%
Park District postcards	19%
Exterior fence banners at Park District locations	36%
Local newspaper (print or online)	25%
Village of Oak Park FYI newsletter	58%
Rely on word of mouth from family, friends, or neighbors	31%
Oak Park Public Library (visit, website, or phone call)	23%
Other source	1%

(Base n=618)

26. Which is your most preferred source when learning about the Park District of Oak Park?

Park District E-newsletters	7%
Park District website	13%
Call Park District customer service	0%
Park District printed program guide	43%
Park District social media (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	6%
Park District postcards	1%
Exterior fence banners at Park District locations	2%
Local newspaper (print or online)	3%
Village of Oak Park FYI newsletter	19%
Rely on word of mouth from family, friends, or neighbors	2%
Oak Park Public Library (visit, website, or phone call)	3%
Other source (please specify):	0%

(Base n=600)

27. Finally, any comments or suggestions on what the Park District of Oak Park can improve or do differently to serve your household better? Please be specific.

*Results for open-ended questions will be included in the final report.*

28. Age (In what year were you born?)

18-34	20%
35-44	21%
45-54	22%
55-64	19%
65+	19%
<b>Mean (average)</b>	<b>50 years old</b>

(Base n=617)

29. Please indicate the gender you identify with:

Male	48%
Female	51%
Prefer to self-describe	1%

(Base n=617)

**30. Including yourself, how many people...**

A. ... live in your household?	
One	19%
Two	28%
Three	20%
Four or more	33%

*(Base n=601)*

B. ... are younger than age 18?	
None	61%
One	11%
Two	22%
Three or more	6%

*(Base n=618)*

C. ... are 65 or older?	
None	80%
One	11%
Two	9%

*(Base n=474)*
**31. Do you own or rent your current residence?**

Rent	31%
Own	69%

*(Base n=618)*
**32. Is your current residence an apartment, a condominium, a townhouse, or a single-family house?**

Apartment	20%
Condo	11%
Townhouse	5%
Single-family house	64%

*(Base n=616)*
**33. Which of the following identifies your ethnicity? Select all that apply.**

White/Caucasian	75%
Black/African American	18%
Hispanic/Latino/Spanish	6%
Asian	4%
Other (please specify)	3%

*(Base n=602)*
**34. What is the preferred way for the Park District to communicate events or updates to you?**

Email	60%
Postal mail	32%
Text message	7%
Phone call	1%

*(Base n=589)*
**35. Last year, what was your total household income, before taxes?**

Less than \$35,000	6%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	6%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	11%
\$75,000 to \$99,000	16%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	20%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	16%
\$200,000 or more	25%
Prefer not to answer	20%

*(Base n=474)*