

A photograph of a green, spiky plant in the foreground with a dense forest in the background. The plant has several upright, hairy stems with large, pointed leaves. One of the stems features a cluster of small, light-colored flowers. The background is a lush, green forest with many trees and bushes.

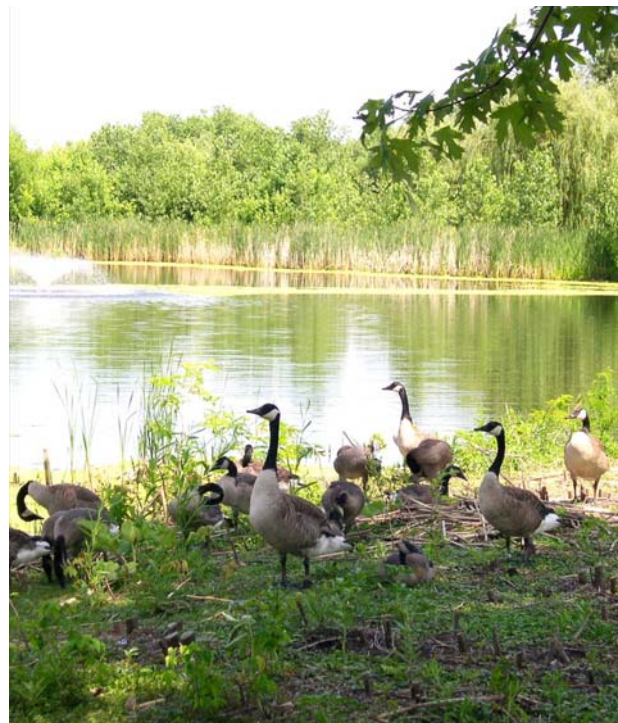
4 Community Process

COMMUNITY PROCESS

The success of a public agency depends on the support of those who are served by the agency; whether their interests are general in nature or specific elements in which they are involved. The Addison Park District has offered a variety of ways to engage the community, including the general public and stakeholders who collaborate with or have a vested interest in the District. APD has solicited the views and needs of many individuals and groups in developing a future plan for the District, and continues to hold a series of neighborhood meetings to discuss the parks and programs with local constituents. The vision that comes from this involvement provides the basis for many of the goals and objectives in this Comprehensive Plan; which will act to guide the District over the next five years and beyond. Representatives of key focus groups, stakeholders and members of the public participated in a series of meetings and interviews to gather their observations of the District and information specific to their needs. The APD staff and Board members were also interviewed to gain an understanding of the District from within, as well as their vision and goals for the future. These meetings and interviews provided meaningful input to the planning process, and were used to help develop a Community Survey that was later used to gain a scientific understanding of the interests and needs of the community.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The general public was given a variety of opportunities to provide input to APD during the planning process. A community workshop, held at the NESDRA conference room at the Centennial Rec Center was a means of providing the public with an open forum where they could express their views and needs. On a few occasions during the on-site assessments of the parks, informal discussions with park users took place. A Community Survey was conducted, with 1,500 surveys sent to random households within the borders of the Addison Park District. Just under 21% of the survey recipients responded. An analysis of the survey results is included herein. The survey was also made available to individuals who wished to share their views, with these results not included in the scientific sampling of the random survey. A description of the findings from these processes is presented below.



PUBLIC WORKSHOP

A public workshop was held to solicit input from the general public. This workshop was held on Tuesday evening, December 15th with eleven (11) individuals participating in the workshop. These workshops were advertised in local media, on the APD web-site and at a variety of APD and community facilities. Because the sample size is small and the participants in this type forum are generally residents who come due to their specific interests in parks and recreation activities in their community, these types of workshops are not considered to be scientific in their results, but rather offer an exploratory way to gauge public opinion. A 'Comment Form' was also available for the participants to fill out, with six (6) individuals providing additional feedback in this manner.

At the workshop, a presentation was made that focused on describing the planning process being undertaken and reviewing some of the results from the Community Survey. Following this presentation, the participants were given an opportunity to express their views and provide their comments on the future needs and direction of APD. Comments/findings from this meeting and the comment forms include:

GENERAL

- Safety nets over/behind spectator seating and dugouts should be considered where multiple ball fields are in use at the same time
- Bathrooms at Family Aquatic Center are embarrassingly bad
- Winter program brochure arrived 2-3 weeks after programs had started, with some single-session programs already done
- Resident price break on Club Fitness memberships
- Lower costs for families
- Acquire land as it is available
- Public perception of the District is based on inconsistent services and promises in the past.

PROGRAM REQUESTS

- Dodgeball
- Cooking for children
- Crafts for children
- Aerobics & fitness classes outside Club Fitness where membership is required
- Archery
- Speed/agility training for young children (schedule to work as a complementary program to football)
- Youth baseball league schedule conflicts with too many other things in the community and needs to be rescheduled for better accessibility

- More summer activities/events
- More non-sports programs

PARKS & FACILITIES

- Multi-sport Indoor Facility
 - Field-house type
 - Soccer
 - Volleyball
 - Low maintenance/Low utility
 - Private sector partnership
- Lighting in parks is needed
- Bicycle trails linking other trails and amenities
- New outdoor pool/aquatic center
- Upgrade and maintain existing buildings

The condition of Family Aquatic Center was a major focus of discussion amongst members of the public. A variety of solutions were presented, with the bottom line that a new pool facility is needed in Addison. Community Rec Center conditions, upgrades to parks, and maintenance of parks and facilities were each major topics of discussion. Many of the comments made by the public are similar to survey responses and to comments from the stakeholders and focus groups, showing that there are consistent perceptions, concerns and needs in the community.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Addison Park District conducted a Community Survey during the fall of 2009 that consisted of sixteen (16) questions intended to understand the interests and opinions of residents regarding the District. On September 22nd, the survey was mailed to 1,500 District households; approximately 12% of the total households in the District. The 1,500 households were selected at random by a third party not involved in the APD comprehensive planning process to ensure a completely random selection. Within a few days after the surveys were mailed, each household receiving a survey was called utilizing an electronic voice message that encouraged recipients to complete the survey. After a few weeks of survey returns, phone calls were initiated to remind survey recipients to complete the survey or to have the recipients respond to the questions verbally over the phone. This was done in order to increase the response rate and ensure that the goal of 300 survey returns was met. Of the 1,500 households selected, 312 chose to participate. With a response rate of nearly 21%, APD exceeded its goal of 20% returns. The 312 returns translate to a statistical margin of error of $\pm 5.5\%$ at a confidence level of 95%.

The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the District. Survey questions were prepared based on a number of influencing factors, including topics developed during stakeholder meetings, staff information needs, Park Board interests and current trends in park and recreation planning. There were questions that determined the demographic mix of the respondents, questions that ascertained current use of park facilities and programs by respondents and questions that asked the respondents to present and prioritize their interests in future APD facilities/programs/services. Several questions allowed an 'other' response that presented an opportunity for respondents to provide answers not included in the optional answers given. This, along with a general question asking for 'additional comments', provided a forum for respondents to give open input to APD.

Many of the questions pertaining to current use and future preferences contained the option of providing a response that was understood to mean that the respondent had no first-hand knowledge to be able to formulate a measured response, or had no opinion regarding the question. In presenting the survey results, those responses that provide a measurable response to a specific question are used to show qualitative and quantitative answers to the questions. Where appropriate, the percentages of non-measurable responses are presented for clarification purposes.

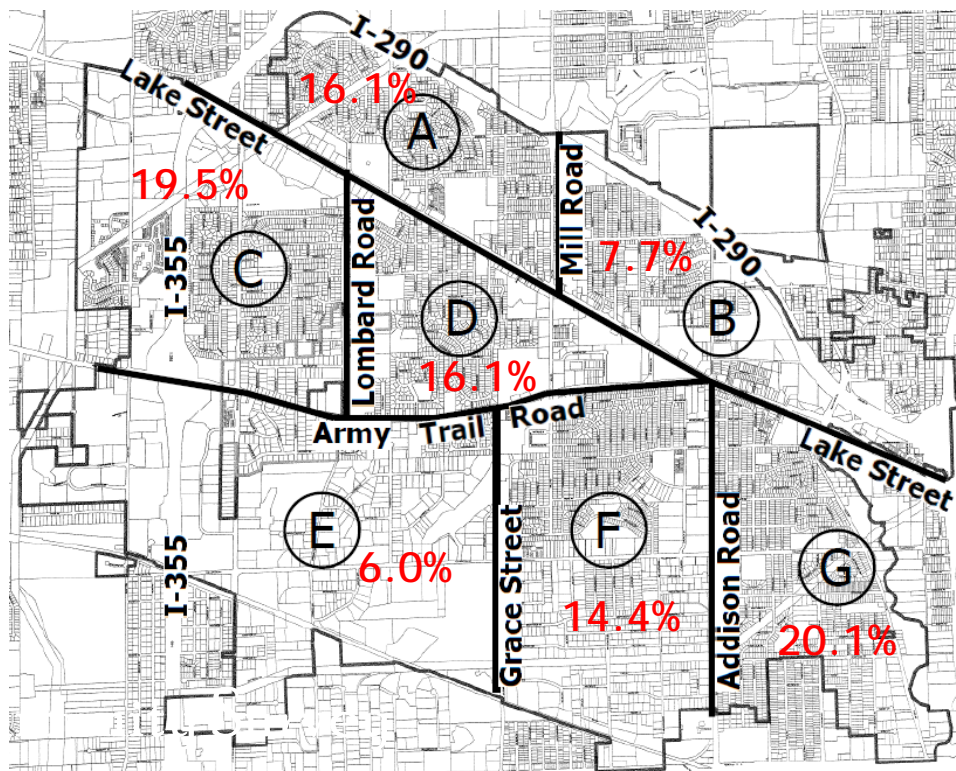
A copy of the survey instrument, as distributed to the public, additional comments written into the survey and responses to 'Other' category questions can be found in Appendix B.

DEMOGRAPHICS

1. Referencing the adjacent Addison Park District map, in which area do you reside?

The location of respondents helps develop an understanding of how the opinions of Park District programs and facilities might differ from one region of the community to another, and how needs might vary by region as well. For the purposes of this question the District was divided into seven (7) geographic areas utilizing major roadways as the division lines. Lake Street (U.S. Route 20) and Army Trail Road are the east-west routes used to define the areas, while Lombard Road, Mill Road, Grace Street and Addison Road are the north-south routes that were used.

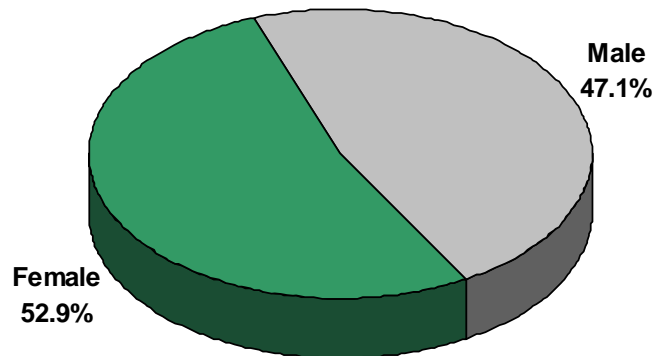
When answers to questions are similar from one region to another, this illustrates that the respondents tend to look at the District offerings as a whole rather than through focusing on the area in which they live. In general, the survey respondents showed consistent satisfaction and support of the Park District. Questions pertaining to specific facilities garnered the most polarized responses, especially from those respondents living in the area where the facility is located. The number shown in red is the percentage of survey respondents from each area of the community.



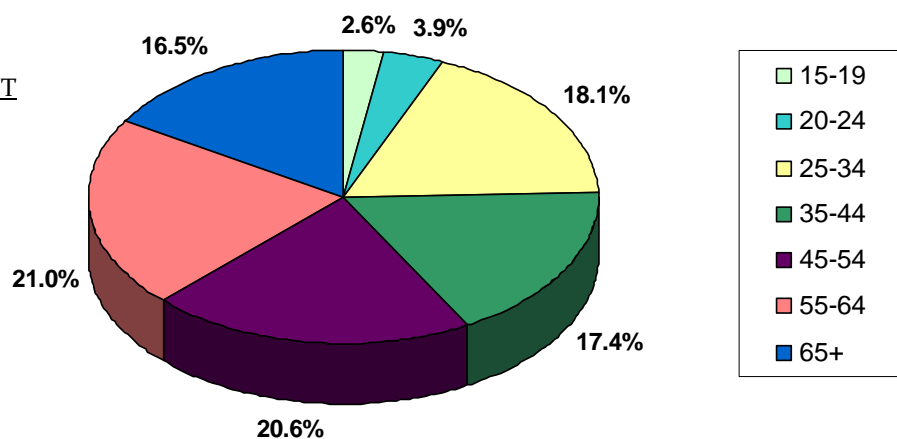
2. What is the age and gender of the person filling out the survey?

The age and gender of respondents is important in understanding the types of user participating in the survey, their current use of APD facilities and their interests for future facilities and programs. With 56% of those surveyed falling into the 25-54 age bracket, it is likely that family use of APD facilities and programs is well-represented. While in this economic time no specific age bracket reflects a willingness to offer significant support of any initiatives that require funding, respondents representing family interests generally expressed more support to upgrade facilities and acquire additional park land. Older respondents, some on fixed incomes, are less willing to support additional funding that comes with a price tag. In looking at the percentage of respondents in the 55-64 bracket and the 45-54 bracket, it is clear that the tail end of the baby boom generation may cause a future need to expand on facilities and programs that appeal to the active adult crowd.

GENDER OF SURVEY RESPONDENT



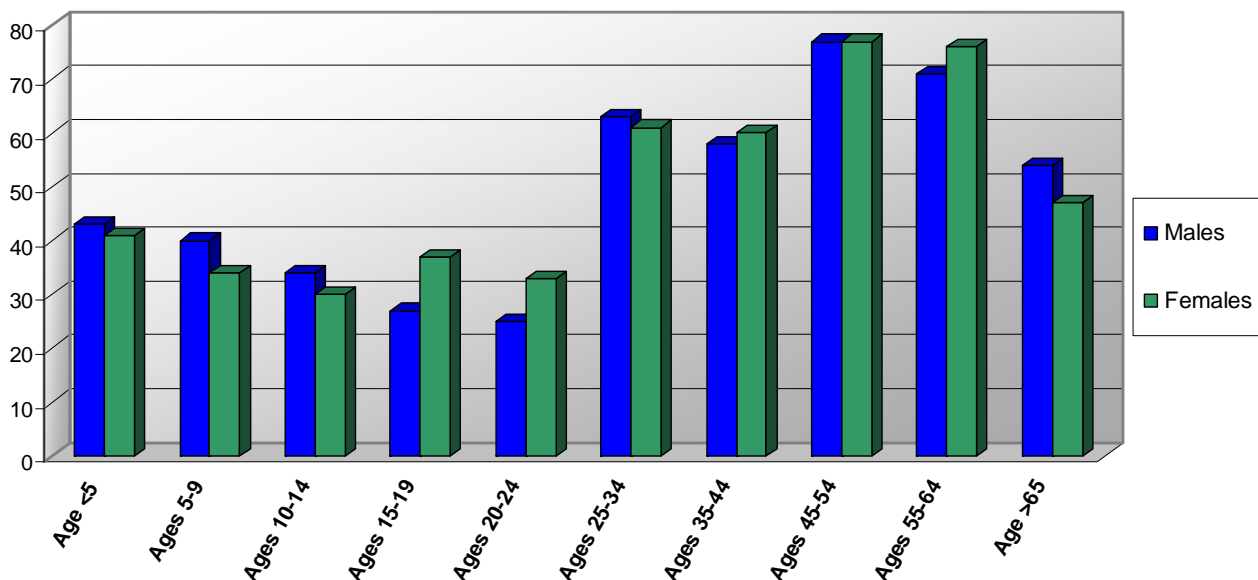
AGE OF SURVEY RESPONDENT



3. Please indicate the number of people in your home in each age and gender group.

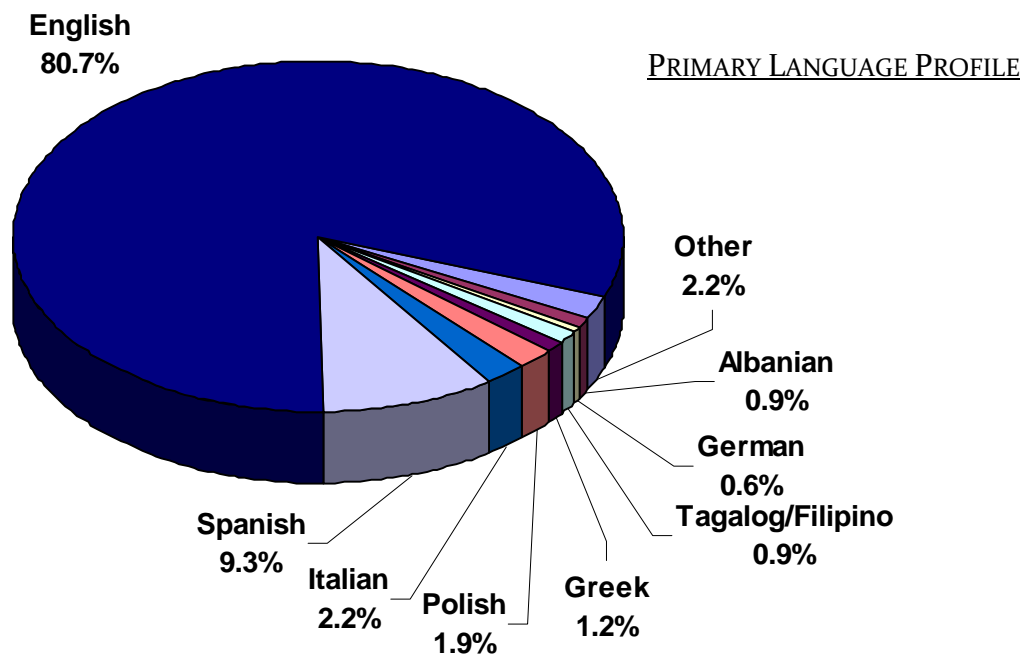
This provides a look at the household demographics being represented by the respondent to the survey, and combined with Question 2, provides a look at the typical family unit represented by each respondent. Approximately 36% of the households responding have school-aged children, though this is actually less than the overall estimated demographic for the community. Because the 25-34 and 35-44 age brackets are actual highest population age groups in Addison, it may be that younger families are not quite as well represented in the survey as families with slightly older parents and children. But the family unit represented by this survey coupled with the demographic profile for the entire community makes it clear that APD has a large number of families whose recreational needs will continue to play a large role in determining APD program and facilities needs.

HOUSEHOLD AGE & GENDER PROFILE



4. What is the primary language spoken in your home?

The vast majority responding that English is the primary language spoken does not match the U.S. Census profile for Addison residents. It also does not match information provided by the school districts. The 2000 Census identifies that 45.2% of Addison residents speak some language at home other than English. Addison Trail High School has seen upwards of 55% of their students who speak something other than English at home. The response received to this question could mean a variety of things. The person filling out the survey may speak English well enough to answer the question in the manner in which it was. The respondent may live in a household where both English and some other language are spoken interchangeably. It could also mean that the survey respondents do not truly represent the demographic of the community. But given the geographic locations of the respondents, it is very likely to be a combination of these elements. As such, the survey should be considered valid, but further ongoing public feedback should be garnered over time to ensure that the needs of the diverse population are being met.

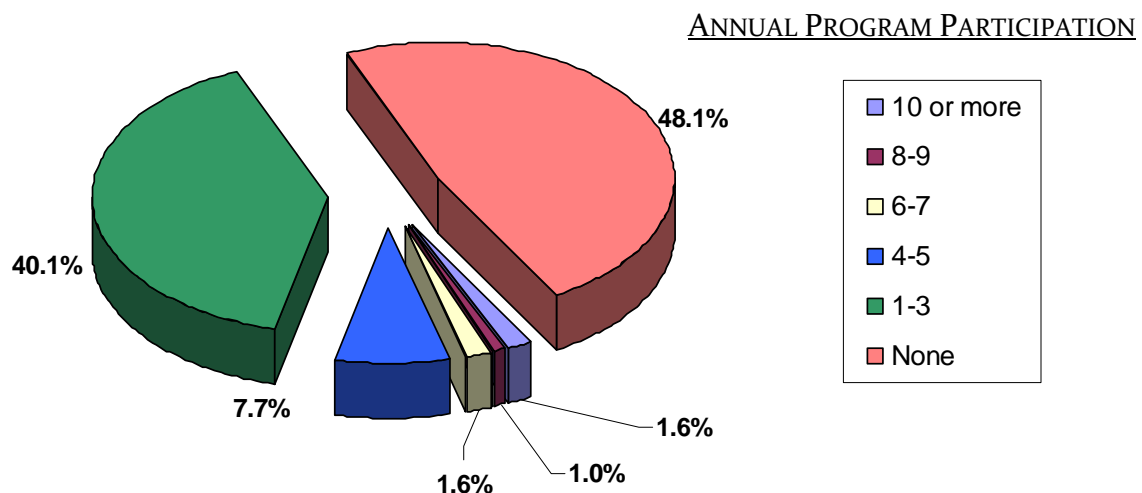


PARK & PROGRAM USE

5. How many recreation programs offered by the Addison Park District have you or members of your household participated in during the past year?

A little over half of all respondents and their families participate in some type of APD programming in any given year, with 12% participating in 4 or more programs per year. These numbers illustrate the importance of APD programming to the community, and show that many residents have developed high levels of active participation with APD. Of those not participating in APD programming, a substantial number simply do not have enough free time to allow participation (see Question 7). It should be noted, however, that a number of respondents 65 years of age and older also do not participate; with age, transportation/access, costs and ADA accessibility cited as reasons for non-participation.

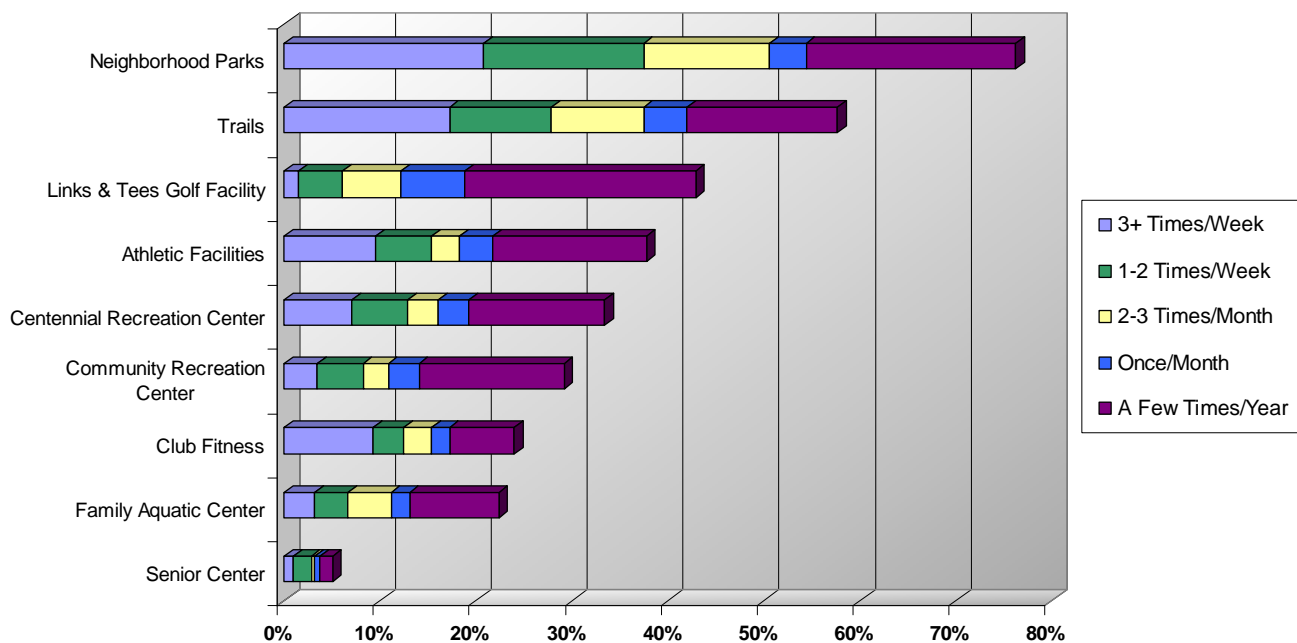
The highest levels of program participation came from those in the northwest part of the District where Centennial Rec Center/Club Fitness are located. Nearly 65% of the respondents in households north of Lake Street and west of Mill Road (Area A on Question 1) participated in some kind of programs, while 60% participated of those living within the Lake/Lombard/Army Trail triangle (Area D on Question 1). Conversely, the area that has the lowest program use is the northwest sector north of Lake Street and east of Mill Road (Area B on Question 1), where less than 35% have participated in APD programs. What is especially troublesome about this statistic is that this is the area where Community Rec Center is located.



6. On average, during normal operation seasons, how often do you and members of your household use the following Addison Park District parks and facilities?

Neighborhood parks are visited at least a few times each year by 76% of the respondents, and more than twice per month by at least 50%. Trails are used by over 57% of the respondents; a number that will likely climb higher as the Salt Creek Greenway becomes more widely known. Given its focus on one type of sport - golf - Links & Tees annual use rate of 43% is very high. The athletic facility use is significant due, in part, to the number of sports teams utilizing the fields each year, with 22% of the respondent households using the facilities on a monthly basis. One interesting comparison is that twice as many respondents use Centennial Rec Center three or more times per week when compared to Community Rec Center. Yet when looking at the other responses, both rec centers are used by a similar number. Club Fitness is used monthly by 17% of the respondents, a number that seems low when compared to similar facilities in other area park districts. The Senior Center is used annually by just over 5% of the respondents; a number that is low considering that over 16% of the surveys were completed by individuals over 65 years of age.

PARK & FACILITY USE



Looking at how geographic location and age affect the use of parks and facilities yields results both obvious and interesting. Here are some of the cross-tabulations that are most applicable:

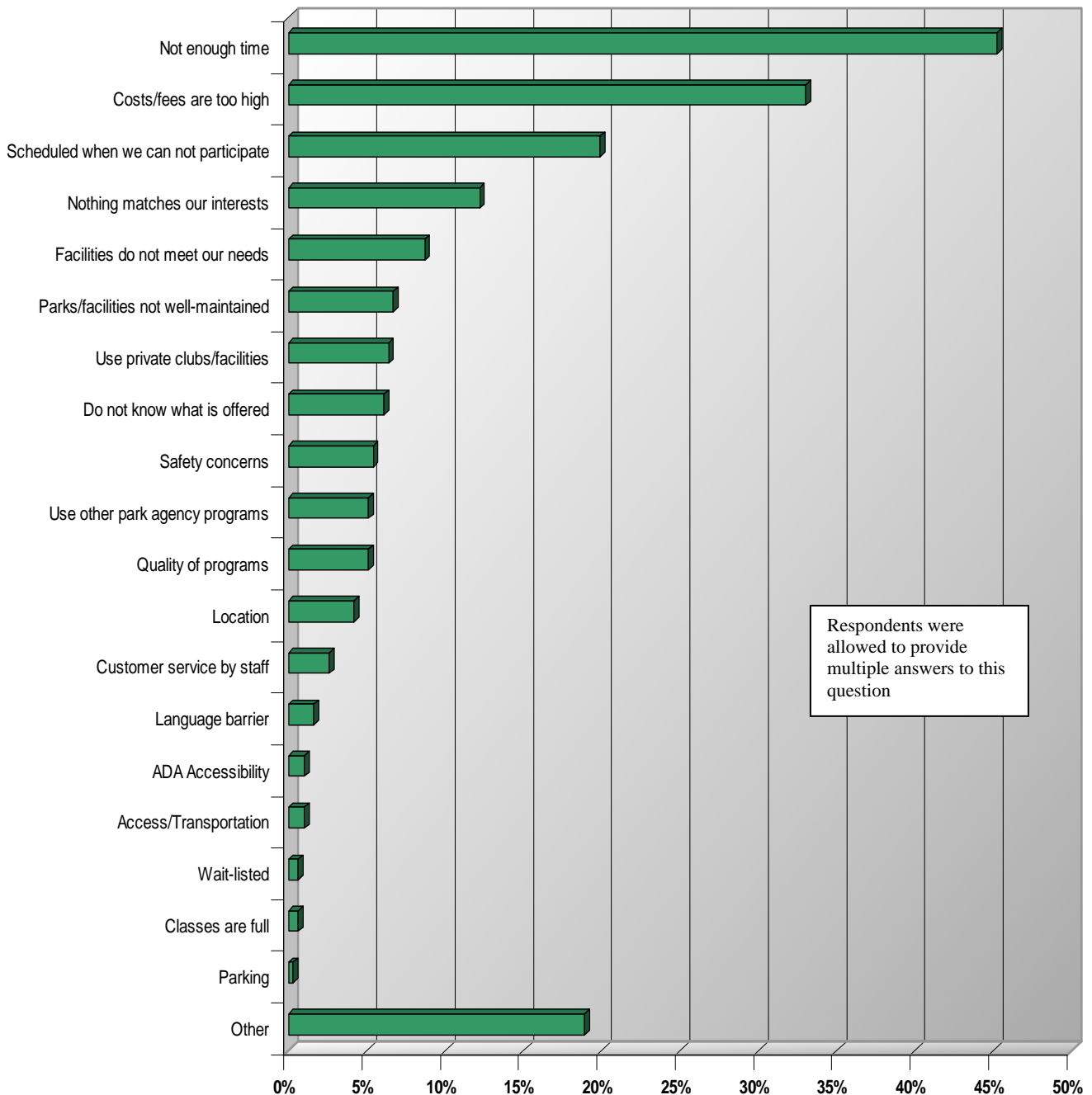
- Respondents in the southwest (Area E on Question 1) use the neighborhood parks the least; likely because the only park in the area is Nike Park.
- The area where people most use their parks are in the northeast (Area B on Question 1), where over 56% of the respondents visit their neighborhood parks at least weekly. This is particularly interesting since this is the area where the fewest participate in APD programs.
- Younger adults, especially those with school-age children, use the parks significantly more than any other age group responding to the survey.
- The number of park visits decreases with each age category. This is not unusual as adults tend to use the parks less as children grow.
- Geographic use of the trails is fairly consistent throughout the District, with the one variable those living in the southwest part of the community (Area E on Question 1) where Nike Park is the only localized neighborhood park.
- Adults are the most avid trail users, with trails being one of the more highly-used amenities by the over 65 group.
- The Links & Tees Golf Facility is most-used by those respondents living in the northwest (Area A on Question 1) and the southwest (Area E on Question 1), with 2/3 of the respondents enjoying Links & Tees at least a few times each year.
- Men and women respondents tend to use Links & Tees almost equally, and it is enjoyed fairly equally by all age groups.
- 83% of those respondents in the northeast (Area B on Question 1) never using the athletic facilities. This is interesting because nine of the District's 21 ball fields are located in this area, with five at Community Park, two at Oak Knoll, one at Tamara and one at Byron.
- Households with children under 10 years of age represent the highest users of athletic fields, with over 40% using these facilities monthly.
- Respondents living closest to the Centennial Rec Center use the facility the most. An average of 40% of the respondents from the entire northwest area of Addison (Areas A, C, & D on Question 1) use the facility annually, with 15% using the facility monthly.
- Respondents living in the area directly surrounding Community Rec Center (Area B on Question 1) use the facility the least, with over 82% never using the facility.
- Family Aquatic Center draws similar numbers from the entire community, but those living in the area directly surrounding Community Rec Center (Area B on Question 1) use the pool the least consistently.
- Family Aquatic Center draws families with young children the most often, and decreases in use with age.
- The Senior Center draws fairly consistent numbers from all areas of the community.
- Respondents living closest to Club Fitness use the facility the most. An average of 12% of the respondents from the entire northwest area of Addison (Areas A, C, & D on Question 1) use the facility more than three times per week.
- Club Fitness attracts users from all age groups responding to the survey.

7. What are the reasons that you and members of your household do not use your parks and facilities, or participate in programs offered by APD, more often?

The overwhelming response to this question was a simple lack of time to enjoy the parks, which is the typical response to this question. Costs and fees associated with programs was the second most cited reason, especially for families. Issues dealing with the schedule of programs ranked the third highest reason for non-participation, an issue that was heard from other sources as well. Responses to this question looked to be relatively similar regardless of whether respondents were frequent users of parks or rarely/never use the parks.

Age-related reasons were not significant as respondents 65+ years in age answered similarly to all other age groups. Two reasons given that garnered only about a 5% response rate but are very important deal with safety and with the loss of patronage to other park districts or private recreation providers. Interestingly enough, the safety concern is a geographical one to some extent. Respondents in the northwest (Area A on Question 1), expressed no safety concerns whatsoever, while for respondents in the west and south northwest (Areas C, E & F on Question 1) the response averaged over 10%. The patronage to other agencies/organizations is further explored in the next question.

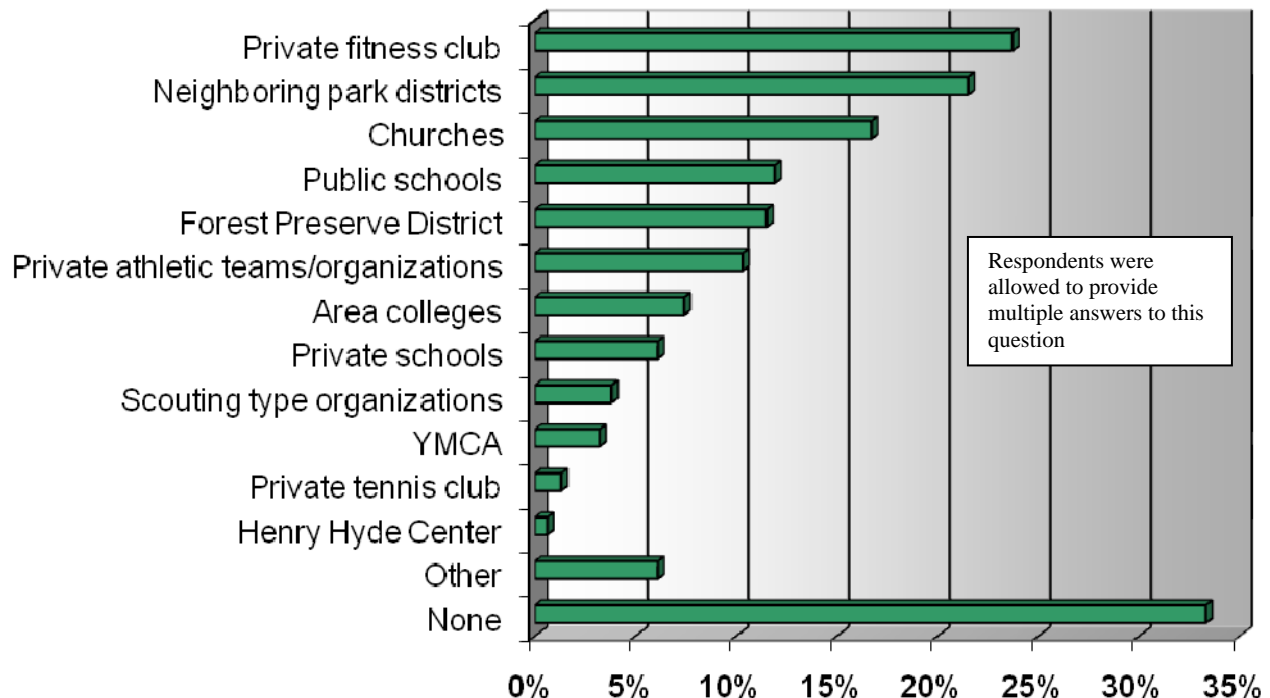
REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING



8. Do you or members of your household regularly participate in recreation activities offered by any of the following organizations?

Fully 2/3 of the respondents identified other agencies and organizations that they frequent either in addition to or in lieu of APD facilities and programs. Though a little over 6% of the respondents listed 'other' responses, nearly all of those given easily fit into one of the categories of response that were supplied (i.e. specific private fitness clubs were named as well as specific private athletic organizations). While many individuals and families participate in school and church programs or belong to organizations that complement APD, the number of possible APD patrons utilizing other park districts, private clubs or other 'competing' entities is something that APD needs to consider in determining ways to bring those residents back into the APD family.

USE OF ALTERNATIVE RECREATION SUPPLIERS

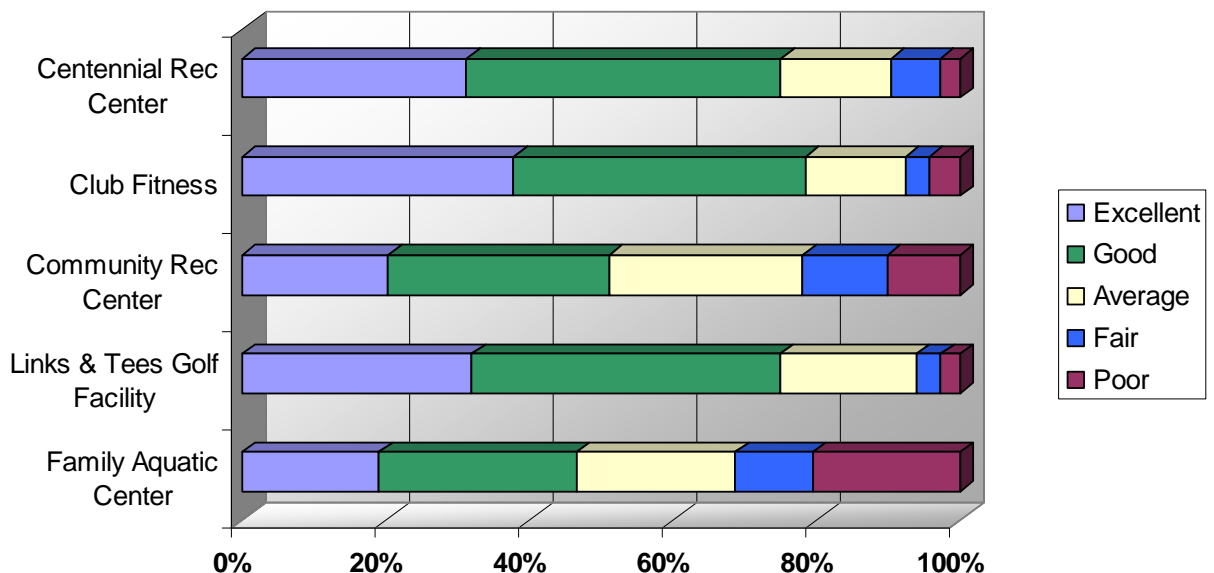


9. Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the Addison Park District for those areas in which you are familiar.

FACILITIES

Respondents' satisfaction with facilities is generally very good, with the Centennial Rec Center, Club Fitness and Links & Tees each garnering over 75% 'Excellent' and 'Good'. Community Rec Center received a combined 'Excellent/Good' response of 51%, while the Family Aquatic Center had a positive response by 47.6%. Both of those responses could be considered higher than expected given comments in other forums and responses to other survey questions. Respondents living in the areas adjacent to Family Aquatic Center (Area B on Question 1), gave the facility its worst marks. But those same respondents gave Community Rec Center 75% 'Good' and 25% 'Average'; better than responses from any other areas of the community.

SATISFACTION WITH FACILITIES

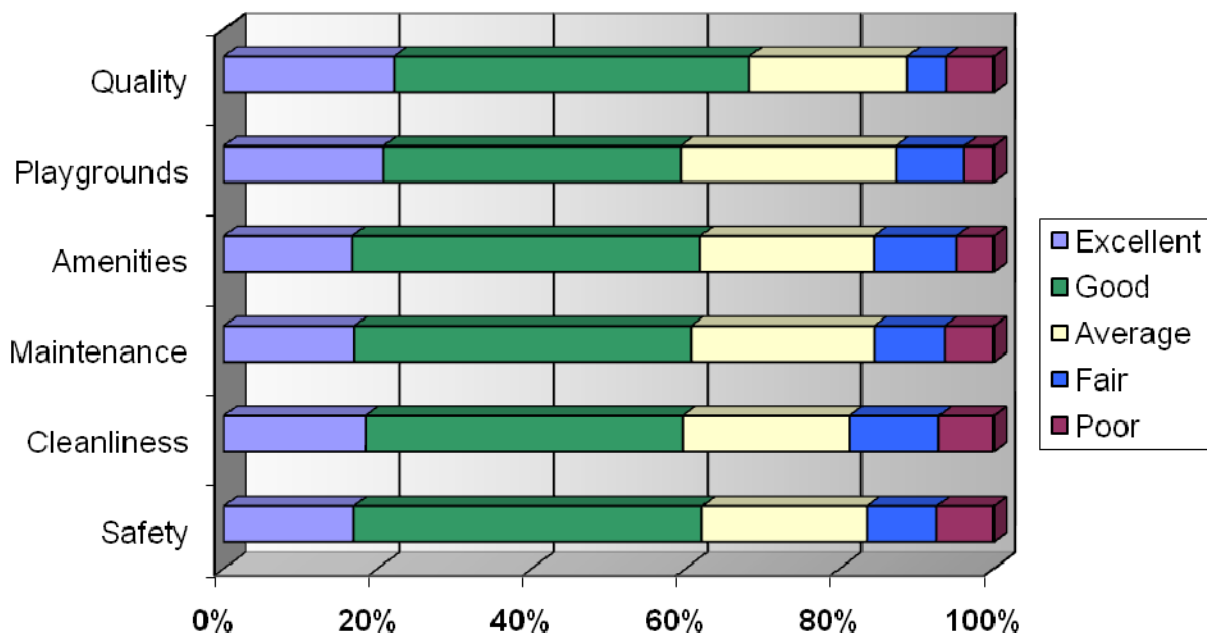


PARKS

Survey respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the Parks, with most categories receiving combined 'Excellent/Good' ratings over 60% positive. The quality of parks received the highest 'Excellent' rating and 'Excellent/Good' combined, with 22% and 68% respectively. Cleanliness of the parks received the lowest marks, though still just under the 60% positive mark. Safety received the most 'Poor' scores, with 8.3% of the respondents feeling that the parks lack adequate safety.

Comparing geographic location of respondents with park satisfaction, there is consistent satisfaction level throughout the District with most of the categories. The quality of parks was considered highest in the west and central (Areas C & D on Question 1). In a departure from the safety concern expressed in Question 7, there was somewhat of a geographical shift in which areas thought safety was a concern, with the southeast part of the community (Areas F & G on Question 1) expressing a concern here.

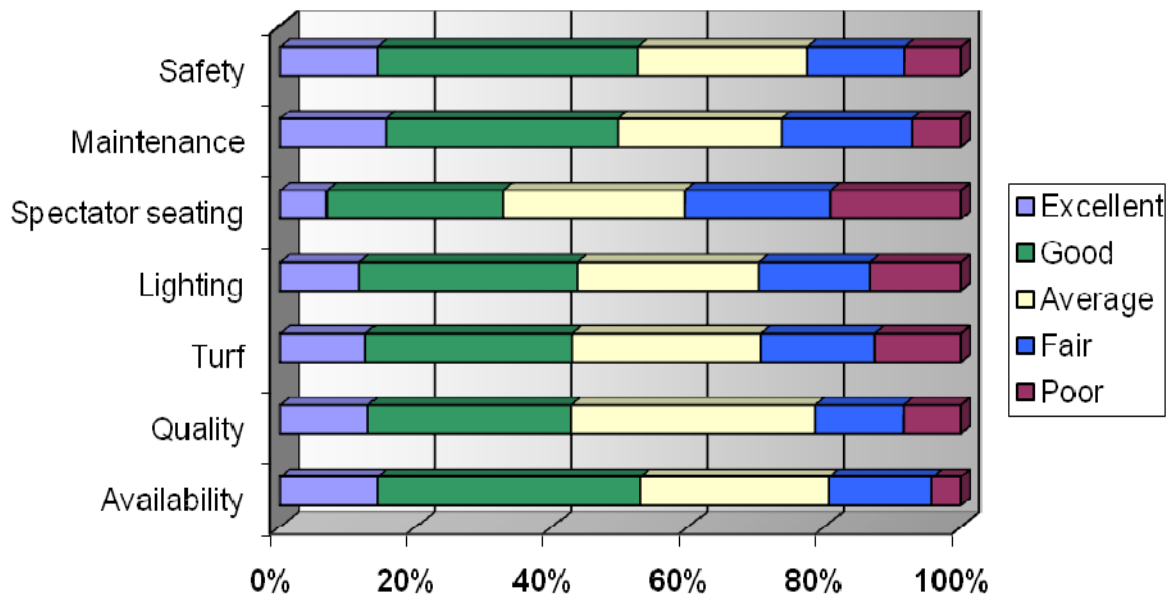
SATISFACTION WITH PARKS



ATHLETIC FIELDS

The overall satisfaction level with the athletic fields is generally positive, with the highest number of respondents in each category giving a 'Good' rating. Only Spectator Seating received less than a combined 40% 'Excellent/Good' response, and also received the highest number of 'Fair/Poor' responses. The Turf condition rating is relatively high considering the clover/grass mix that exists on many of the fields. One interesting cross-tabulation finding is that those rating the quality of the fields lowest overall are respondents from the western area (Area C on Question 1), where some of the best fields in the APD system are located.

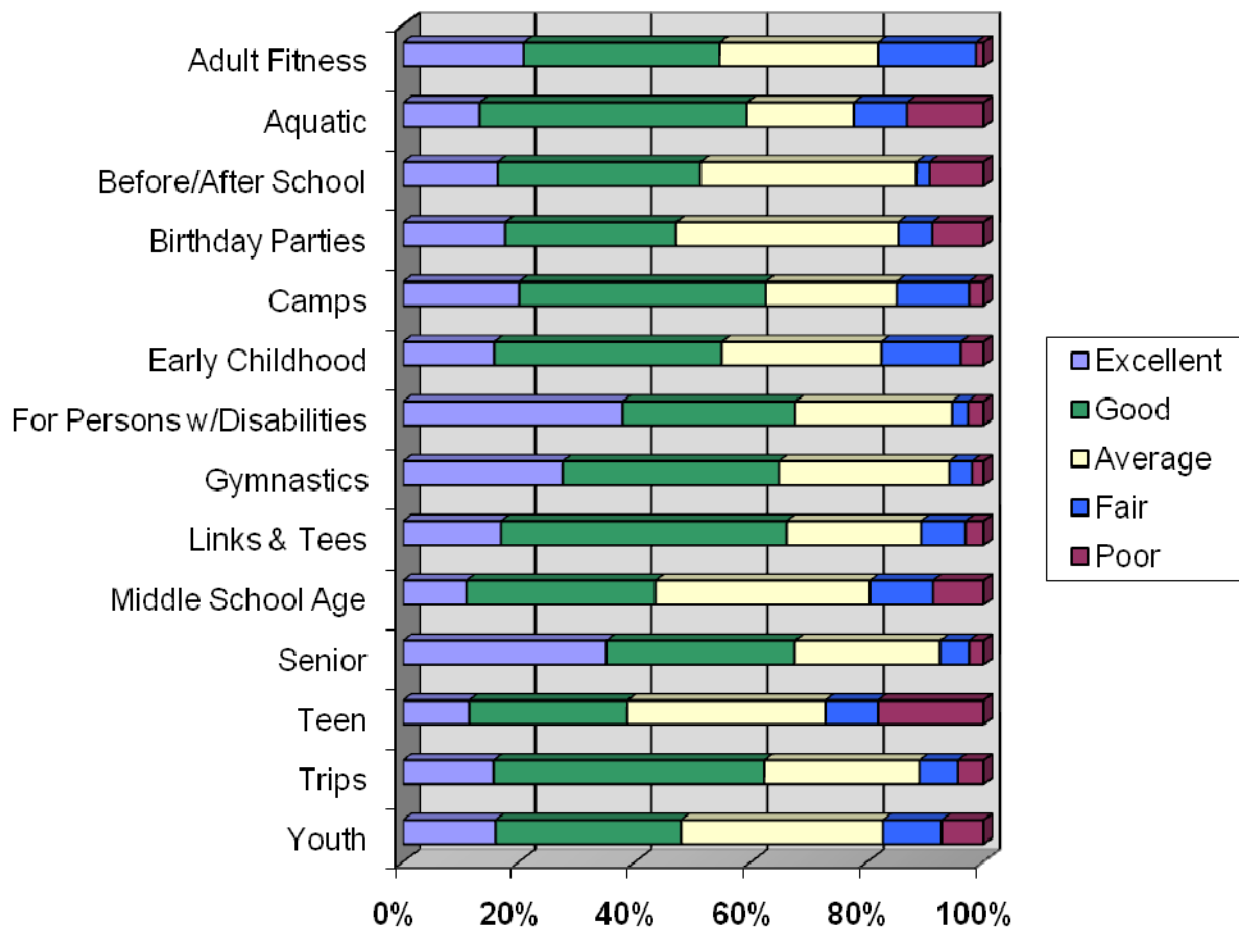
SATISFACTION WITH ATHLETIC FIELDS



PROGRAMS

Programs for Seniors and for People with Disabilities received both the highest level of 'Excellent' responses and the highest level of combined 'Excellent/Good' responses, with both program groups garnering 67.5% marks. Links & Tees programs, Gymnastics and Trips each received positive responses from over 62% of the respondents. Four program groups fell below the 50% positive response rate, including Youth programs at 47.8%, Birthday Parties at 47%, Middle School Age programs at 43.5% and Teen programs at 38.7%. Teen programs received the highest percentage of 'Poor' responses with 18.2% of the respondents feeling that these programs are inadequate.

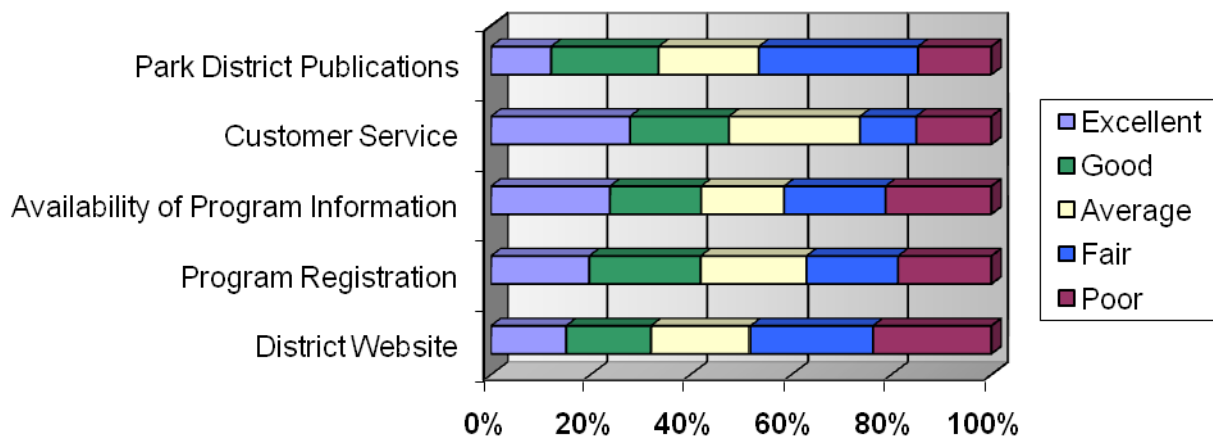
SATISFACTION WITH PROGRAMS



COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

Addison Park District communications services receive very high marks from respondents, with four of the five communications means receiving nearly 70% 'Excellent/Good' responses. The APD Website received the lowest response in this category, but still had a positive response rate of nearly 62%. The lowest ratings on the website came from the youngest respondents; those likely more technically inclined and interested in more interactive formats.

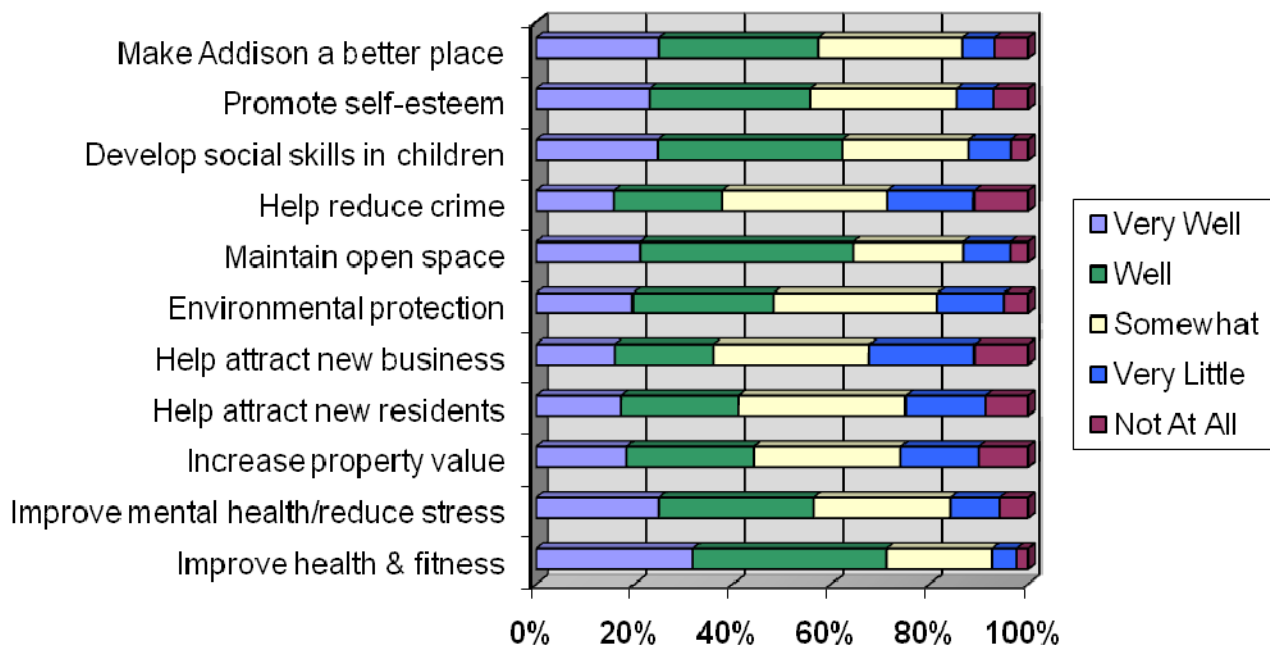
SATISFACTION WITH COMMUNICATIONS



10. Parks, open space and recreation opportunities are known to provide numerous benefits to individuals and to the community. How well do you believe these benefits are being provided to you and to the Addison community by the Addison Park District?

This question was prepared to help bring the benefits of parks and recreation to the attention of the survey respondents, and provide APD with community perception about APD's ability to provide these benefits to the community. As might be expected, Improving Health & Fitness received the most positive results with over 71% believing that APD provides this benefit 'Very Well/Well'. Maintaining Open Space and Developing Social Skills each received over 60% positive responses as well. Helping to Attract New Business, Helping Reduce Crime and Increasing Property Values garnered the fewest 'Very Well/Well' responses, each getting a rating of under 45%. That Increasing Property Values received this lower score is interesting given that this is one of the main benefits of parks and recreation nationwide. It should be noted that when all the positive response options are combined ('Very Well/Well/Somewhat'), all eleven categories received positive responses from over 2/3 of the respondents, with seven of the categories receiving over 80% positive ratings.

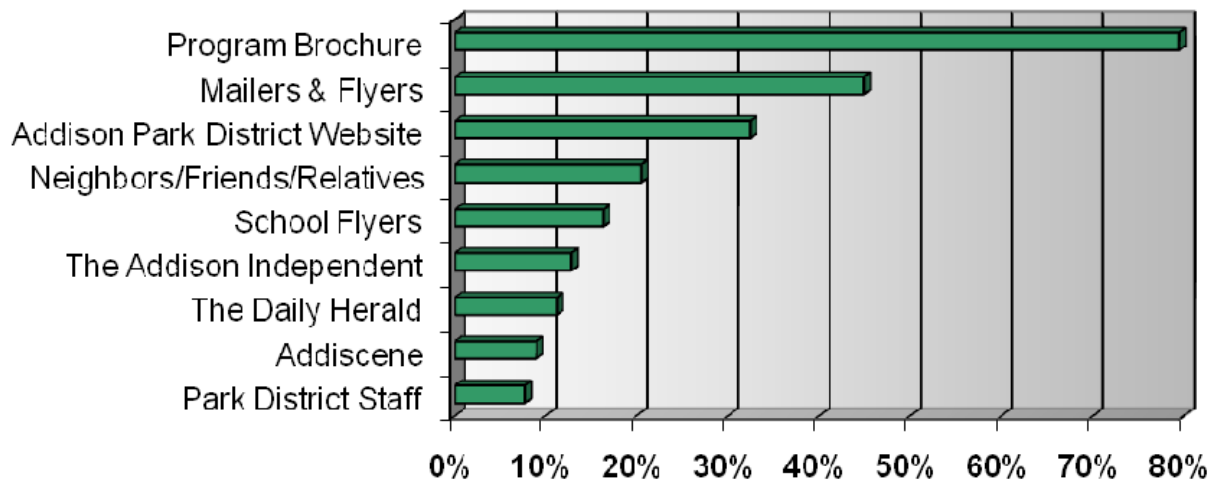
BENEFITS PROVIDED BY APD



11. What are the best resources for providing you with information regarding the Addison Park District and its programs/services?

The Program Brochure that is mailed out three times each year is by far the way most respondents hear about APD programs, parks and services, with almost 80% naming this as a primary resource. Mailers and flyers are the second best resource for reaching residents, showing that the U.S. Postal Service is still an important supplier of services to Addison residents. The District's website garnered less than 1/3 of the responses, which aligns with the low response to the website in Question 9. The word-of-mouth category, relying on Neighbors, Friends & Relatives, with a 20% response, is relatively high and may be an opportunity for the District to further its use of Facebook and Twitter in getting information out to the public. In general these responses show that printed material is still important for getting information to the residents, but that other high-tech options may be available for further utilization.

INFORMATION RESOURCES



FUTURE PLANNING

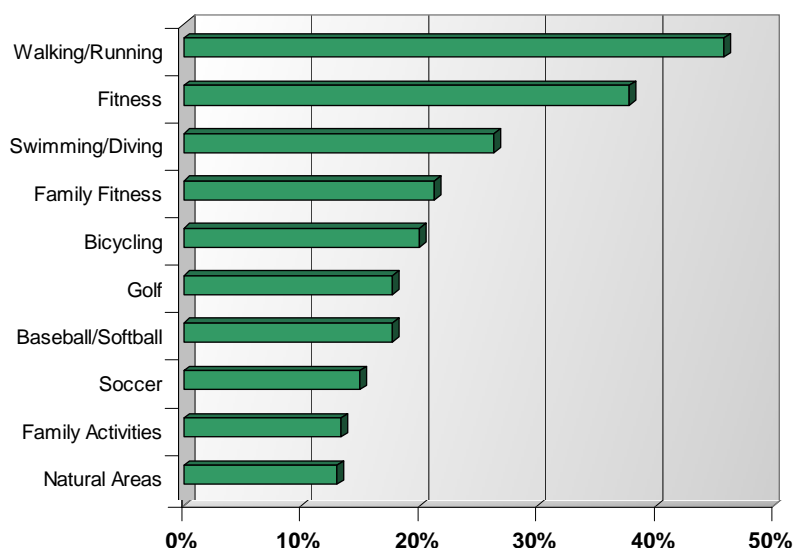
12. When considering recreation and facility needs over the next five years, what do you think will be most important for members of your household?

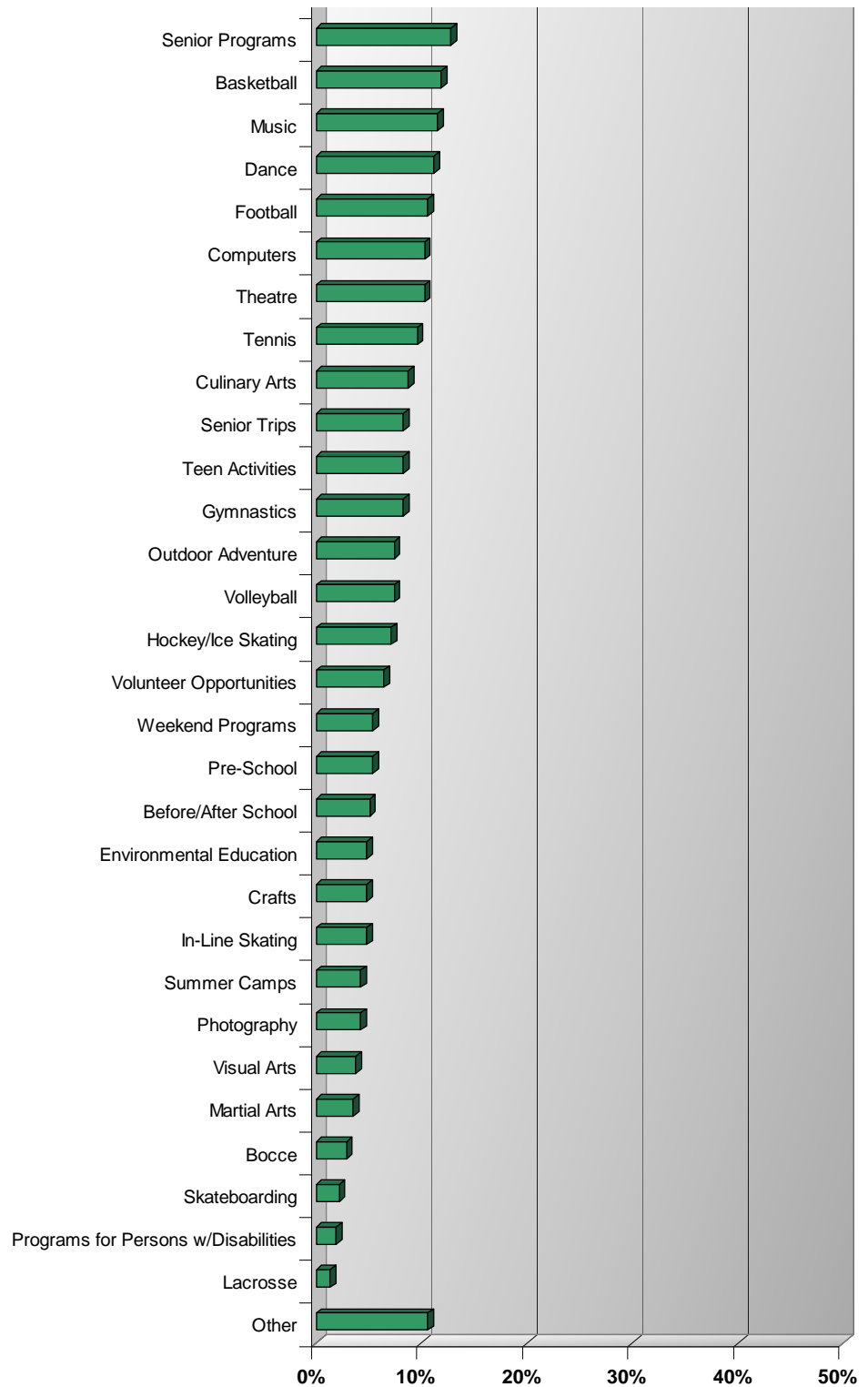
Running/Walking, Fitness and Swimming garnered the most responses to this question, which is similar to responses in other regional communities. The eight top responses are all sports and fitness related, showing that active uses will continue to be of great importance. Nine of the next twelve responses are much more passive in nature, with several of them related to various types of performing arts.

While many amenities/activities like volleyball, skateboarding, lacrosse and bocce did not receive overwhelming response, many activities like these attract a significant patronage once the amenities are provided. Volleyball and Lacrosse are sports that are gaining more interest in schools, while activities like bocce provide an easy way to keep the senior population active and outside.

The lower rated needs of Pre-School, Before/After School and Summer Camps reflects the idea that the respondents to this survey may represent somewhat older family units than the Addison demographics show are present in the community. The Addison Park District's future plans must recognize increasing number of families with children as well as a growing senior population. These demographics are represented well in the responses to this question, as are concerns about maintaining current facilities and making sure that there is open space for residents to enjoy.

FUTURE NEEDS

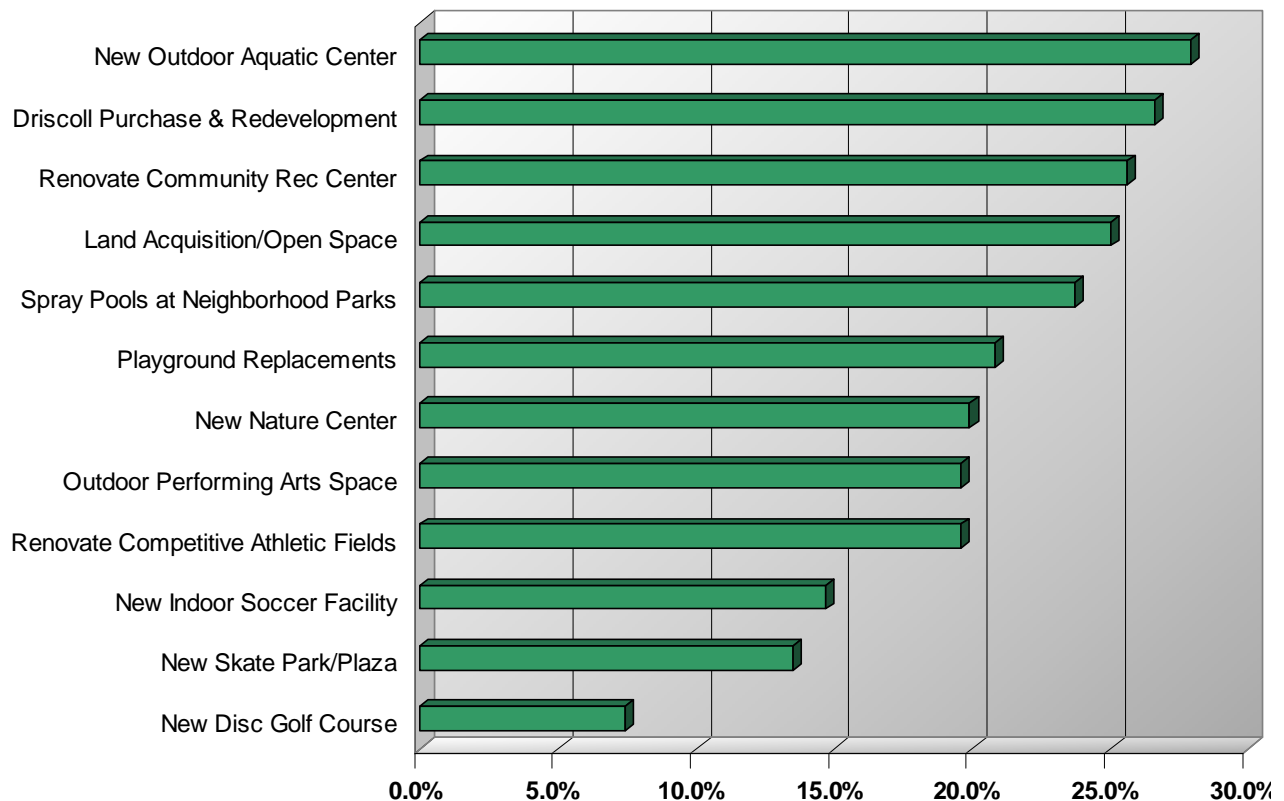




13. When considering your needs and interests for the future, which Addison Park District initiatives are you most interested in supporting?

It is not surprising that a new Aquatic Center, renovation of Community Rec Center and acquisition of property, including Driscoll High School, top this list. Family Aquatic Center and Community Rec Center received some of the lowest quality ratings in Question 9, and have been criticized in other venues during the public process for this plan. What needs to be considered is that none of the initiatives listed received overwhelming support; a sign of our current economy and of a general resistance to anything that might raise taxes. It should also be noted that each of these items may occur at some point in the future, though some may be well beyond the current planning period. Some of the items that received fewer votes, like an Outdoor Performing Arts Space or a Disc Golf Course, may be developed much sooner simply because they are less costly and. In some cases simply built; with great returns possible with use. And playgrounds are on a scheduled replacement that provides up to date and safe facilities for the children using them.

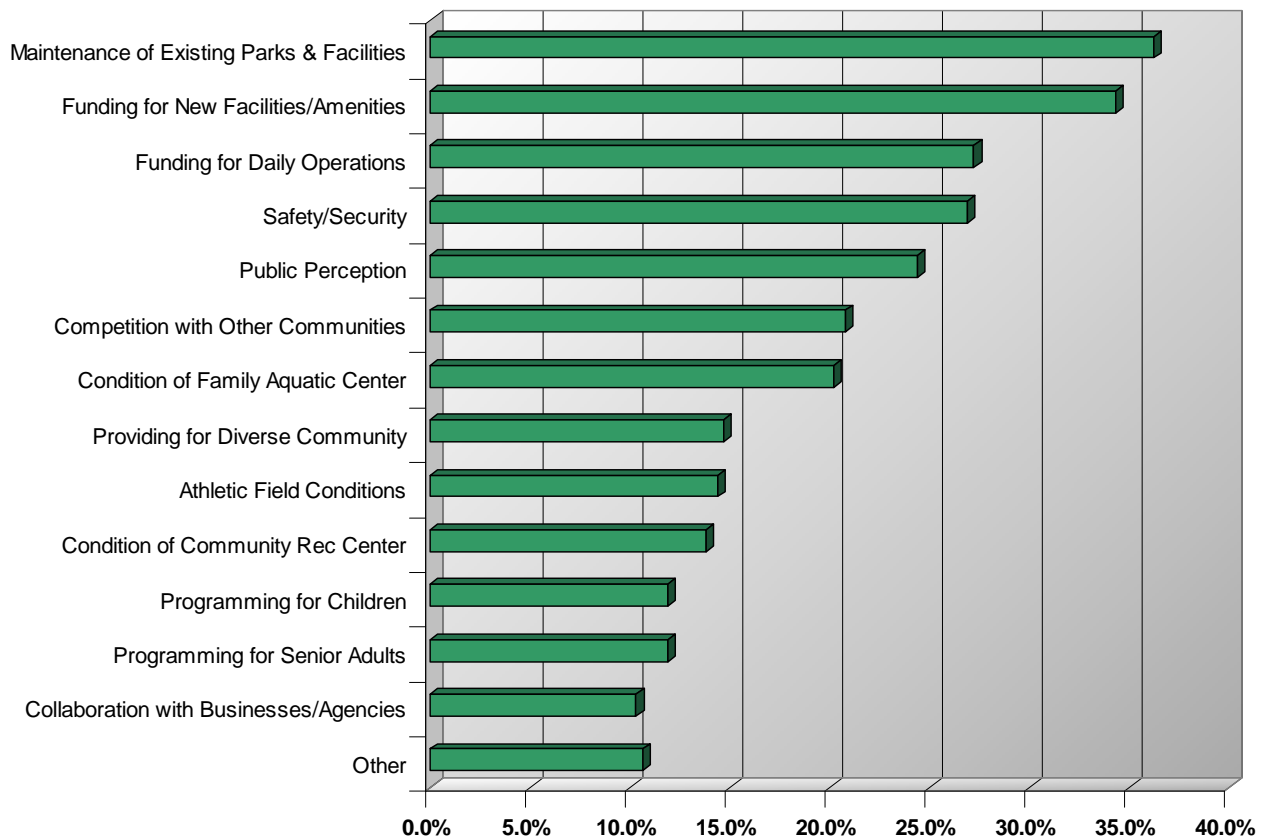
FUTURE SUPPORT



14. What do you feel are the biggest challenges facing the Addison Park District?

The Addison Park District's challenges have been identified consistently in each of the public processes that have been utilized. Keeping up with maintaining existing parks and facilities is a very high priority item that requires funding and personnel. Funding, both for new facilities and for daily operations, are the next biggest challenges, as the State's funding formulas and limited grant monies make even maintenance of parks and facilities difficult. It is interesting that Safety/Security is the fourth biggest challenge amongst survey respondents, though in other questions where safety was presented it garnered significantly less attention. The Perception challenge is an issue, as APD has a positive, diverse and significant presence in the community, yet many residents are unaware of the District's activities, with some still focusing on issues from years past. Each of the challenges listed will need to be addressed in a pro-active manner in order to provide continued quality services to the residents of the District.

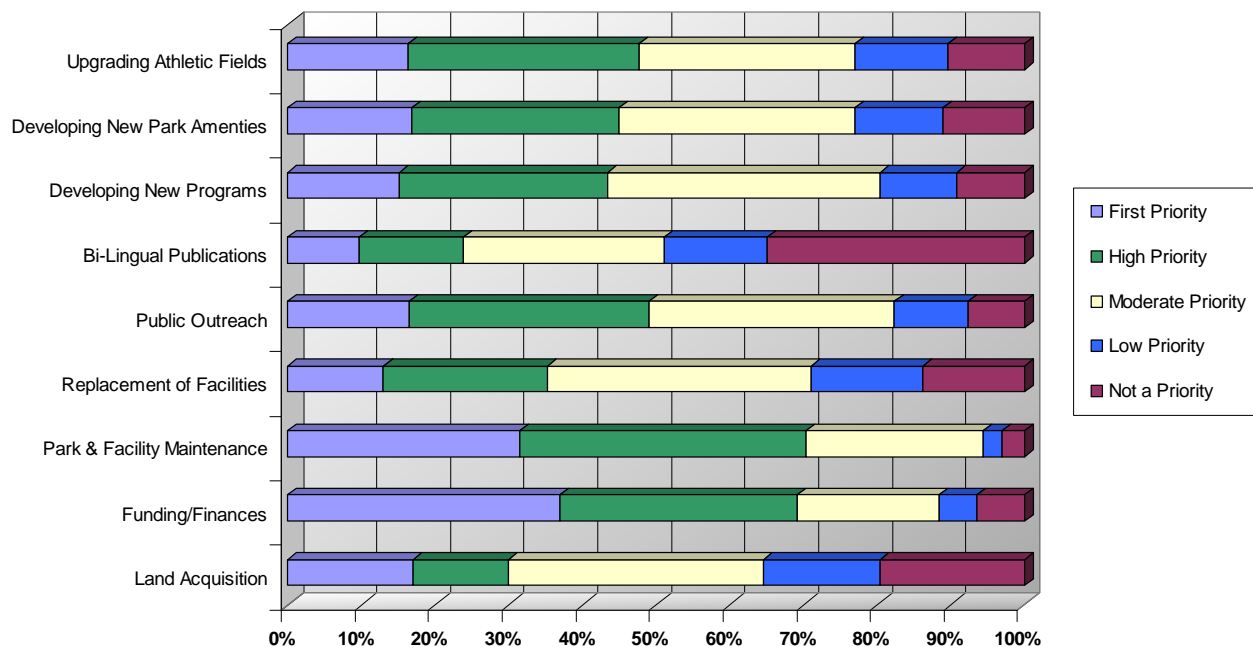
FUTURE CHALLENGES



15. When planning for the future, how should the Addison Park District prioritize each of the following areas?

The responses to this question follow directly those to the previous question, with Park & Facility Maintenance and Funding clearly being the highest priorities with approximately 70% of respondents calling them 'First' or 'High' priorities. These two categories were highly rated priorities at all age ranges, but it was those respondents from the northeast (Area B on Question 1), centered on Community Park, who gave Park and Facility Maintenance the highest priority marks. Public Outreach scored third, which plays into the misperception that APD lacks involvement in the community. Upgrading Athletic Fields, Developing New Park Amenities and Developing New Programs all had similar priority responses. As expected, older respondents had the least interest in these three categories. In a turnaround from responses to previous questions, Land Acquisition was prioritized low here, with only 30% giving it a 'First' or 'High' priority level.

PRIORITIZATION



16. Please use the space below to provide any additional comments regarding the Addison Park District that will assist in planning for the future.

Approximately 74 additional comments were presented by survey respondents. These vary from general accolades or concerns to comments about very specific elements. The comments received are presented in Appendix B.

STAKEHOLDER MEETING OVERVIEW

A series of stakeholder and user group meetings were organized to gain insight into the relationships between the Addison Park District, other public agencies serving the community, users of APD facilities, partners in programming and special events, or other groups representing interests in parks and recreation. These meetings, held on July 16-17, 2009, provide an understanding of the collaborative nature of the relationships and how they can be strengthened in the future. During the meetings participants were asked about the working relationship of their agency or organization with the APD. Questions were asked regarding the strengths and weaknesses of APD, the challenges faced by APD, the general quality of APD and opinions as to APD's role in the community at large. Some questions were asked of certain groups or individuals who have specific knowledge that is of value to the future planning for APD. The organizations represented include:

- Village of Addison
- Addison Police Department
- Addison Fire Department
- Addison Public Works
- Addison Trail High School
- School District #4
- School District #88
- Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
- Addison Rec Club
- Addison Frogs Swim & Dive Team
- Athletico
- Addison Center for the Arts
- Oxford Bank
- Rotary Club
- APD Facility Users
 - Active Adults
 - Club Fitness
 - Links & Tees
 - Pre-school
- Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association
- APD Board
- APD Citizen Advisory Committee
- APD Foundation
- APD Staff

The individuals participating in the focus group meetings presented a relatively diverse look at the Addison Park District and provided valuable feedback that contributes to the numerous recommendations relative to parks, facilities, programs, partnerships and communications. There were interesting insights and discussions of issues that affect APD and the community as a whole. Questions that were asked of all groups garnered responses that were quite diverse from one group to another, as perceptions and attitudes differ. Some of the key findings, by topic, are as follows:

IMPORTANT FUNCTIONS OF THE ADDISON PARK DISTRICT

- Open space
- Fitness opportunities
- Add value to the community
- Sports opportunities
- Program not offered elsewhere
- Giving children something to do
- Aquatic venues
- Providing activities for active adults
- Golf

Adding value to the community is a known benefit of parks and recreation. People not directly involved in parks and recreation understand this benefit is a very positive statement about APD. This knowledge led to a question on the survey to determine the public's understanding of the benefits of parks and recreation. From children's programs to those for active adults, APD provides an important function in providing lifelong learning and recreational activities to the community.

IMAGE IN THE COMMUNITY

- APD needs to sell itself even more
 - A perceived lack of presence
 - Old issues/perceptions still linger
 - Rec Club has higher profile
- Recent changes have been very positive
 - Better collaboration & listening
- Good programs
- Great golf facility
- Nice playgrounds
- Poor athletic fields

The District has become much more involved in community activities over the past three or four years. Neighborhood meetings to discuss parks and programs, collaboration with other public agencies, active involvement in professional organizations, representation on local committees and membership in a variety of local organizations are ongoing ways in which APD is involved. Yet the perception that there is a lack of APD presence still exists.

CHALLENGES FACING THE DISTRICT

- Funding
 - Capital
 - Operations
- Park & facility maintenance
- Athletic fields condition/maintenance
- Public perception
- Outside competition
- Condition of facilities
 - Pool
 - Community Rec Center
- Ethnic diversity
- Safety/vandalism
- Diversity of programs
- Partnerships/collaboration needs
- Community pride/neighborhood differences
- Marketing itself

Funding, and maintenance of parks and facilities, was brought up by virtually every group as ongoing challenges as the ability of the District to adequately fund the general operations of the District are critical. Losing constituents to outside competition from private recreation providers and other regional park districts is a challenge that will require capital improvements to enhance the facilities and changes to programming and marketing to further educate the public about the District's offerings. Ethnic diversity in Addison is most obvious in the schools, where upwards of 60% of the student population is Latino, and pockets of residents from Albania, Italy, India, Poland and other ethnic backgrounds are evident.

NEEDS

- More program variety
 - Instructional
 - Exploratory
 - Sports programs at an early age

- More face to face time with other agencies
 - Common issues
 - Common goals
 - Early project planning
 - Program development
 - Collaborative opportunities
- Better security at parks
 - On-site presence/Ambassador program
 - Lighting/landscape modifications
- Environmental education
 - Collaboration w/schools
 - Collaboration w/FPDDPC

As the District continues its efforts to be involved in a variety of community activities, greater awareness of these efforts will become evident and greater collaboration with other agencies and business partners will come. Several references were made to expanded program offerings that can make APD programs more accessible. The Addison Police Department has been working with the District to improve safety in the parks; making recommendations for park modifications that will create a secure environment for park users.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Advertise programs that need participants in order to not cancel at last minute
- Nurture relationship with Rec Club through positive discussions/comments
- APD representation on Addison Center for the Arts
- Discuss greater partnering opportunities with existing business partners
- Talk to schools about more joint venture opportunities; both programs & facilities
- Get groups together more often to talk, even if there are no issues



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS DETAIL

During each stakeholder meeting, a series of questions were asked, and the attendees were asked to provide a rating where applicable and comments. The following provides detailed responses and comments within each stakeholder group.

PROGRAM USER GROUPS

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores 3,3.5,4,4,4,3,3.5. Average score: 3.5

Comments

- Senior programs are great
- Grand Children like Itasca Pool better than APD Pool
- Too many programs get cancelled - go to Itasca because their programs run/better offering
- Links-N-Tees is great - much better than it used to be
- Golf club House maintenance is better -water fountains/plumbing

2. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how would you rate the quality of the parks and why?

Park Scores 5,5,5,4,4,3.5,4 Average score: 4.3

Comments

- Centennial Park is great - walking paths/tennis courts and soccer fields
- Upgrades to the parks over the years has been wonderful
- Parks are well maintained
- Ice skating in the winter
- Good improvements

Facility Scores 5,5,2.5,2.5,4,4,3.5 Average score:3.7

Comments

- Fitness center is great for adults
- Links-N-Tees is wonderful
- Community Center needs updating
- Community Center building is old

3. What do participants like best about the current programs/services APD provides?

Comments

- Senior programs
- Jr. Golf program
- New golf balls every year at the driving range
- Variety of programs
- Making improvements - better instructors and they stay around
- Like the programs
- Survey used by the pre-school program is a good idea

4. What participants like least about the current programs/services APD provides?

Comments

- Programs that get cancelled
- Aquatic inconsistency
- Summer program access for families with both parents working
- Pre-school needs more "meat" to the curriculum and less play
- Cost of programs can get expensive - mostly pre-school

5. How good of job has APD done in partnering with your organization?

Comments

- Good with Jr. Golf
- Fields are not kept up
- Major water problems with the fields

7. What can APD do to improve the quality of services and why?

Comments

- Centennial and Links-N-Tees are good examples of what can be done
- Community Center needs renovation
- Cleaning of the Fitness Center is lacking
- Layout of the Community Center is confusing
- Feel APD has "lost" the East side of town

8. Are there other services or facilities you feel should be developed by the APD?

Comments

- Outdoor pool at Centennial
- Needs a new pool/water park to replace our existing pool
- APD should buy Driscoll School

9. What do you feel are the principal funding sources of revenue that should be considered for financing APD projects?

Comments

- Funding gap with capital, keeping facilities clean and updating facilities

10. What are the most important issues facing the APD?

Comments

- Funding issues/sources
- Existing pool
- Classrooms at the fitness Center
- Multi-purpose room at the Community Center
- Bleachers are dirty
- Community Center is an embarrassment
- Centennial Camp - 30 kids, Community Center Camp - 7 kids. Reflects how people feel.
- Renovation of the community Center
- Safety issues on the East side
- Language issues
- APD primarily appeal to West side
- Competition with Henry Hyde and affordability of programs

11. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are models providers that APD should compare itself?

Comments

- Elmhurst
- Itasca
- Carol Stream
- Bensenville
- Elk Grove

STAFF GROUP

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think APD is perceived by the public?

Scores 3,4,4,4,4,4,4,3,3,3,3.5,3,4,3,3.5 Average score 3.35

Comments

- Senior services are well supports
- Younger people are aware and engaged
- Dance/Swim and Dive teams would score high
- High School programs are lacking
- Perception is that people think APD is run well.
- People have concerns with the cost for programming
- People think the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing
- APD serves many people with the variety of programs

2. What are the most important issues facing APD?

Comments

- Program cancellation causes frustration by our customers
- Internally financial cap is limiting - we have to be smart with our budgeting
- Capital infusion
- Communication - keeping people informed
- Ethnicity changes in the population - we need to learn how to communicate with the Latino population
- Updating facilities
- Legislative involvement for infrastructure needs to avoid referendums

3. What are the strengths of APD?

Comments

- Staff resources and stability
- Customer service
- Intergovernmental relationships
- Volunteer numbers
- Handling complaints
- Professionalism
- Disability opportunities
- Facilities
- Internal training program
- Park system - diversity of 24 park locations

4. What are the weaknesses of APD?

Comments

- Customer service
- Passing information along
- Location of the admin office e
- Communication - who to go to for what

- Lack of staff resources - maintenance
- Funding/sponsorship dollars

5. What are the important actions you hope to accomplish through the master plan process?

Comments

- Increased awareness
- Developing a priority - revisit and set each year
- Getting the most bang for our buck
- Pointing out areas of improvement/needs
- Expand disability programs
- Strategic planning

6. Are there other services or facilities you feel should be developed by the APD?

Comments

- Special population programs/accessibility
- Reaching/offering more Latino programs
- New pool - indoor
- Updating existing facilities - no family change rooms
- New gym floor but did not replace bleachers
- Soccer fields
- Indoor field house
- Update the Golf Club House
- Teen Center or computer lap/café
- Gaming opportunities
- Outreach methods - e-blasts
- More AM programming space at Centennial

7. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are model providers that APD should compare itself?

Comments

- Bartlett
- Carol Stream
- Itasca

8. What are the biggest funding gaps?

Comments

- User groups should be paying more fees
- Capital improvement list

9. What do you feel are the principal funding sources of revenue that should be considered for financing APD projects?

Comments

- State government
- Relief from tax cap would be nice
- Use of master plan for funding/funding strategies
- Naming rights
- Quality programs
- Analyze constituent base - understand who the community is

BUSINESS GROUP

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores 5,4,3,3 Average score 3.75

Comments

- Very visible in the community
- Enrollment is going down
- Hearing negative comments from patients (Dr. Office). Fees too high, APD taxes are too high and program being cut/cancelled
- Members have a different opinion than non-members
- Missing Latino population - no effort to reach out
- Supervisor staff not responsive/not user friendly. Some compare the APD to the Post Office

2. What are the most important issues facing the community?

Comments

- Marketing to the community
- People are against any type of referendum
- Hispanic community
- Communication - people don't know what's going on with the Board and Board doesn't reach out to the residents
- Youth are teaching their parents English
- Replacing the outdoor pool

3. What are the most important functions provided by APD and why?

Comments

- Senior programs
- Aquatics
- Fitness Center
- Partnership with business community - use APD to generate traffic
- Golf
- Mini Golf is too expensive - underutilized
- Pre-school /after school programs

4. What collaboration efforts currently exist between the business community and APD? And how good of a job has APD done in partnering with the business community?

Scores 3, 4, 3.5, 3.5 Average score: 3.5

Comments

- Multi-cultural events left the Community Center
- Publicity through the Senior Club
- A representative for the APD is not on the Arts Board -why?
- After school program - Army Trials

5. What is one way APD could further develop or improve the way they work with the business community?

Comments

- Most partnerships ideas come from the Athletico - not the APD.
- Why doesn't APD initiate so group feels more of a partner than a renter - communication
- Other Park Districts in the area are reaching out to Athletico to conduct health fairs - why isn't APD one of them?
- Bring business leaders/art Center Director to APD Board Meeting to reach out

6. Do your organizations have any programs in place for partnering in a manner that could benefit APD and the community?

Comments

- Health Fairs
- Bring guest to Board Meetings - ask for input and do not get defensive
- There should be regular contact with groups to see how APD could improve services or help the organizations.

7. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are model providers that APD should compare itself?

Comments

- Itasca
- Elmhurst
- Bloomingdale
- Elk Grove
- Carol Stream
- Bensenville

8. What can APD do to improve the quality of services and why?

Comments

- Better relationship with Rec. Club - long standing issues that need to be overcome.
- Rec. Club/APD competition - issues seem to be growing. There is a big difference between rec. and traveling/competitive programs in the area.
- No minorities in the Rec. Club
- Rec. Club is a Park District group and APD should serve everyone the same - including the Rec Club.
- Funding gap
- Not use mulching mowers because they leave clumps of grass on the fields
- Field maintenance and prep is a point of contention with APD
- Ponds are neglected and in bad shape - Army Trail and Lake Park manor

ATHLETIC GROUPS

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores 3,3 Average score 3

Comments

- Hear more negative than positive in the community
- Hear about communication problems
- Parent's perception fester negativity through the groups.

2. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how would you rate the quality of the Parks and why?

Park Scores 3,3 Average score 3

Comments

- Play ground are good - field perception is poor
- Fields are getting better every year. Communication between the clubs and APD occur daily and the Clubs are spending money to help the District maintain the fields.

Recreation Facility scores 4,4 Average score 4

Comments

- Gyms are great

3. How good of a job has APD done in partnering with your organization?

Comments

- Great job with the swim team
- New person running the pool has been great
- Good communication between the Rec. Board and APD - system is in place

4. What is one way APD could improve the way they work with your organization?

Comments

- Holding more public meetings
- News letter
- District is doing a better job CAC is a good example
- Too many programs cancelled
- Don't forget about the kids with programming

5. What can APD do to improve the quality of services?

Comments

- People don't realize what APD does - "Their marketing sucks"
- Need to market where the kids are - schools
- Need more rest room facilities in the parks

6. Are there other services or facilities you feel should be developed by the APD?

Comments

- Indoor pool
- New bath house and deck
- Golf course for kids - 9 hole course
- Outdoor sand volleyball courts

7. What participants like best about the current programs/services APD offer?

Comments

- Swimming pool and high dive
- Golf dome
- Club Fitness
- Winter swim lessons

8. What participants like least about the current programs/services APD provides?

Comments

- Club Fitness is NOT family oriented
- More open gym time
- Communication and marketing
- Putter's peak is too expensive

9. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are model providers that APD should compare itself?

Comments

- Bensenville
- Itasca
- Lombard

10. What are the most important issues facing APD?

Comments

- Negative image in the community
- Only two groups showed up for the focus group meeting - that should tell you something about the image
- More family focus
- Gym basement gets flooded
- Pool needs work
- No outdoor running track - track at the school is locked up.
- Netting needed at the ballpark to protect park users
- Hole in left field has been there all year

APD BOARD, CAC AND FOUNDATION

1. Why did you decide to get involved with APD?

Comments

- Rec. Club experience
- Giving back to community
- Started as a part time APD employee
- Member of senior group
- Passion

2. What are the most important issues facing APD?

Comments

- Size of Business Park versus money the District gets
- Cost of operating is going up
- Pool is outdated - starting to cost more/money pit
- Maintaining infrastructure
- Diversity of community
- Finding new sources of revenue
- Prioritize the problems - what comes first?
- Competition with surrounding communities and access to other facilities

3. What are the most important functions provided by APD?

Comments

- Open space - more people in the parks
- Programs for residents
- Wellness/fitness - personal training is emerging
- Quality of life issues
- Trail linkage - Salt Creek to Prairie Path

4. What are the important actions you hope to accomplish through the master plan process?

Comments

- What citizens want - they will establish the priority
- Attraction of pool
- Prioritizing how APD spends money

5. What are the biggest gaps in financing?

Comments

- Tax cap - APD is at the ceiling
- Pool loses money creating a money pit

6. What do you feel are the principle funding sources of revenue that should be considered for financing APD projects?

Comments

- 70% of funding coming from residents and 30% from the state. This is reversed from what it used to be.
- Corporate sponsorship/naming rights
- Elmhurst Hospital?

7. What can APD do to improve the quality of services?

Comments

- Quality of fields
- Swimming pool renovation/replacement

8. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores 4,3.5,4,5,2,4,3 Average score 3.75

9. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how would you rate the quality of parks and why?

Scores: 4,4,4,4,4,4 Average score 4

10. Are there other services or facilities you feel should be developed by the APD?

Comments

- Indoor Pool
- Field House
- Batting Cages
- Health Center similar to Bloomingdale.

11. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are model providers that APD should compare itself?

Comment

- Bloomingdale
- Lombard
- Elmhurst
- Addison is surrounded by NRPA Gold Medal winners

12. How do you characterize the communications between your groups?

Comments

- Strong with Foundation
- Strong between groups
- Disconnect between the Park Board and the Public
- Communication with the Rec. Clubs - most complaints are from coaches that then trickle down to the players/parents.

13. How about communications with APD staff?

Comments

- Feel Mark has made big improvements

MUNICIPAL GROUP

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores: 2,2,4,2.5 Average score: 2.6

Comments

- Rec Club is strong and they run the sports programs for kids
- Lost last referendum - not based on money but image
- APD not getting fields ready - mowing and raking lacking
- Allowed water slides to deteriorate before taking them down - water park is below standards
- Rec Club supported the Schools but not APD at the last election

2. What are the most important issues facing APD?

Comments

- Maintaining Parks
- Community involvement - grass roots
- District is better today than 5 years ago
- Funding is an issue - especially for maintenance
- Getting more involved in programs would improve relationship with residents - like senior programs
- You can't show up two months before the election - must sell the benefits sooner

3. Are there any general, or specific, public safety issues that the Park District needs to address?

Comments

- Police can't patrol the Parks - APD needs to pay attention
- Issues/problems - beer cans, vandalism, graffiti
- Better lighting and take out some of the landscaping materials
- Report what is going on
- Who checks the Parks?

4. What are the most important functions provided by APD?

Comments

- Field Maintenance
- Open space/parks
- Programs for kids and seniors
- Facilities
- Centennial is great.

5. How good of a job has APD done in partnering with your agency?

Comments

- APD is cooperative
- Neighborhood resource center - support for crime prevention
- Senior Center for crime prevention
- Eagle Eye watch program
- Senior/Village/APD
- Cooperative with Public Works since Mark/Noel started.

6. What is one way APD could improve the way they work with your agency?

Comments

- Park security - park patrol

7. Are there regular meetings between the Village Administration, Planning, Police, Park District, Library and the School District to discuss common problems and common goals?

Comments

- Inter-governmental groups with elected officials meet quarterly
- Village Administrator and Police meet with APD
- School and APD have worked at joint ventures
- Relationship is much better than it was before.

8. What do you feel are the principal funding sources of revenue that should be considered for financing APD projects?

Comments

- Is there stimulus money available?
- Water Park but the Chicago area is saturated with facilities
- No development occurring
- Tax rate is reasonable but not adequate for meeting the District's needs

9. What can APD do to improve the quality of services?

Comment

- Maintenance

10. Are there other services or facilities you feel should be developed by APD?

Comments

- Developers building regional sports centers for soccer/lacrosse/basketball - should District be looking at this trend?
- Extreme sports is growing
- Water Parks are over-saturated in the market
- Town Center Park - smaller version of Millennium Park/attractions
- Golf is over-saturated
- Park Ranger program

11. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how would you rate the quality of the Parks and why?

Scores 3,3,3 Average score 3

Comments

- Really nice parks but also some so-so parks
- Centennial is great
- Maintenance is an issue that needs to be addressed
- Improvements under the current APD Administration
- Parks only get mowed - no weed control

12. How often does the Village update its Comprehensive Plan? Does the Village Comp Plan address parks and open spaces?

Comment

- Yes, last updated in 1992
- Strategic Plan developed in 2007

13. Does the Village own any open space property?

Comments

- Limited room for growth - in-fill only
- Perhaps adding more land as a result of the new FEMA study
- Golf course project scheduled for development

14. We will be doing some benchmarking to other communities. Are there communities that you feel are model providers the APD should compare itself?

Comments

- Elk Grove
- Carol Stream
- Lombard

SCHOOL/LIBRARY/FPDDPC GROUP

1 On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rating, how strong do you think the image of APD is in the community?

Scores: 2,4,2.5, 2.5,2,2,2

Average score: 2.4

Comments

- Lack of athletic programs and quality of programs
- Accessibility
- Lack diversity
- No contact regionally with APD
- Rec Club provides good programs - community would react positively

2. What are the most important issues facing APD?

Comments

- Fields that are well maintained/safe
- Pools that are clean/safe/accessibile
- Up to date fields
- Affordable programs for different cultures
- Latino population doesn't know that APD exists
- More IGA's
- Park programs are not reaching out to other groups/demographics
- Is the Park District changing with the times?

3. What are the most important functions provided by APD?

Comment

- Open restrooms and clean
- Maintaining turf
- Place for kids to play - create programs
- Sports programs at an early age - exploratory activities
- More programs like "Tuesday Afternoon" at the Schools by running through the APD - way to get kids exposed.

4. How good of a job has APD done in partnering with your agency?

Comment

- Eight years ago the pool was built without any discussions with the School District. Scholl's can't use the pool because it is too small.
- When High School approaches APD they get good cooperation/support
- Bigger issue don't always get communicated
- Individual project communication is good but inconsistent on an on-going basis.

5. What collaborative efforts currently exist between your agencies and APD?

Comments

- High School gym
- Salt Creek Trail
- Community diversity efforts
- Summer camp
- After school program

6. What is one way APD could improve the way they work with your agency?

Comments

- Communication - hosting meetings and being proactive instead of reactive
- Deliberate planning
- There is a disconnect between what community wants and what they are given
- Educational partnership with schools
- Sending out information in multiple languages

7. Are the schools utilized for after-school events and programs?

Comments

- Schools are filled depending on the time of year
- Rec. Club/Cowboy Cheer leading on a regular basis
- Expand school facilities to meet the changing demands
- Classroom space is available

8. Are teens adequately provided space and programs that appeal to their needs?

Comments

- No intramural program - coordinated efforts to help fill the gap is needed
- No teen involvement with planning events
- Programs don't fill because spontaneous works better than planned with teens
- Social aspect versus sports
- Midnight Basketball

9. Are there gaps in your programs that APD could help fill?

Comments

- Intramural type programs
- Younger "intro" opportunities for sports
- Youth camps
- Open gym
- Rope course training - Schools go to Bensenville

10. What can APD do to improve the quality of services?

Comments

- Face to face with agencies/people
- Planning cooperatively with other agencies
- Face to face instead of Board meetings
- Not hearing what people want then making changes
- Face to face with users
- Programs that APD run lack quality - too many programs cancelled

11. Do your agencies have any coming plans for facilities or programs that might provide opportunities for collaborating with APD?

Comments

- Field house
- Field upgrades
- Catholic School is closing - APD interest in fields?

