



Illinois Extension

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Olympia Fields
Park District

OLYMPIA FIELDS PARK DISTRICT

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

**Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism
Office of Recreation and Park Resources (ORPR)
University of Illinois Extension**

Introduction and Purpose of Survey

Obtain input from Olympia Fields Park District Residents on:

- Use of OFPD parks, facilities, events, and programs
- Opinions regarding OFPD operations (e.g., staffing, facility/parks upkeep, programs)
- Understand reasons for not using OFPD parks, facilities, programs, and events
- Assess resident opinions of priorities for capital improvement projects
- Evaluation of programs (e.g., youth, fitness, adult, older adult, special events)
- Assess use and awareness of Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center
- Assess interests in programs and events
- Obtain a demographic profile of users and non-users

Research Methods

- Survey developed collaboratively by UIUC ORPR Staff and OFPD Staff and Board
- Valid and reliable survey questions were used
- All 1,995 OFPD households invited to participate
- Survey postcard mailed twice – 2nd mailing was a reminder mailing
- Survey link & QR code was emailed to current and past participants and shared via signs and social media



Research Methods

- 120 valid responses
- Most responses were from the mailed postcard
- Lower response rate = 92% confidence we have 8% or less error in the results – acceptable per industry standards

Description of Sample: Age and Years Lived in Olympia Fields

- Mean Age of Sample = 57 Years (SD = 15)
 - Ages ranged from 24 years to 92 years old
 - Mean Age of Olympia Fields Residents = 41 Years (US Census, 2020)

This sample is older than the age of Olympia Fields residents

- Years lived in Olympia Fields = 21 Years

Household Size and Gender

- Average Household Size Sample= 2.9
 - Olympia Fields Household Size = 3.3 (US Census, 2020)
- 67% of respondents were female



Ethnicity

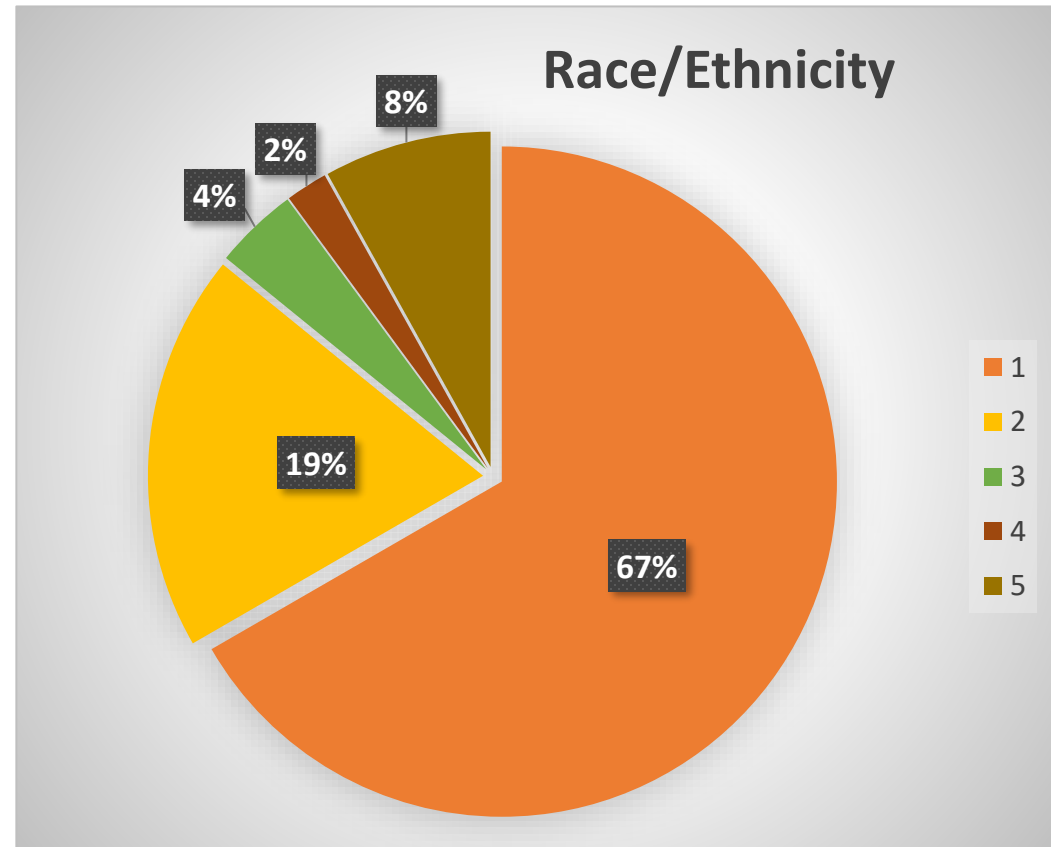
Black 66.3% (59)

White 19.1% (17)

Hispanic 4.5% (4)

Other 2.3% (2)

Prefer not to answer 7.8% (7)

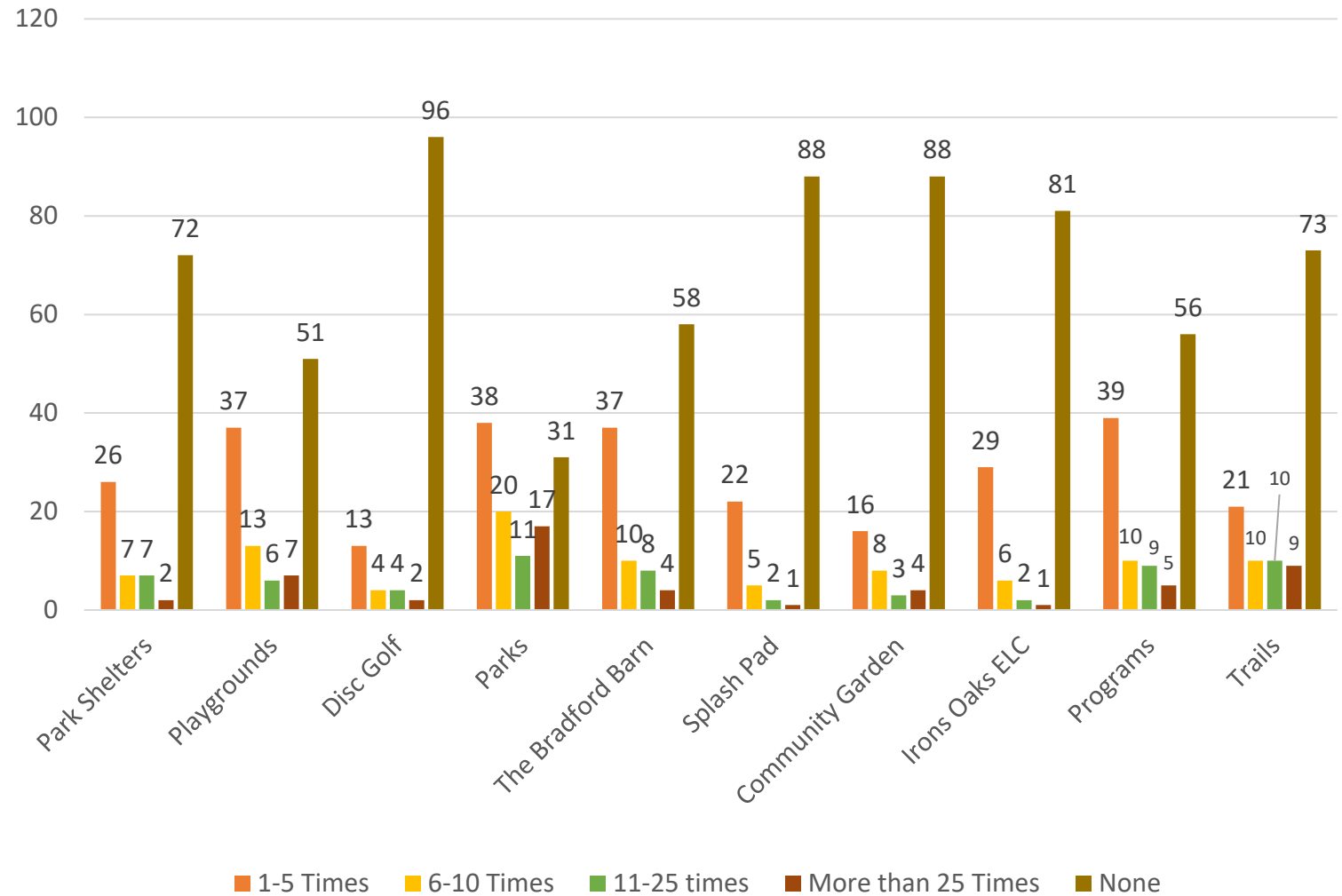


Facility Usage

Parks and trails are used
More often by this
sample:

- 38 use parks 1-5 times per years
- 39 attend programs
- 37 use The Bradford Barn
- 38 use playgrounds
- 26 use park shelters

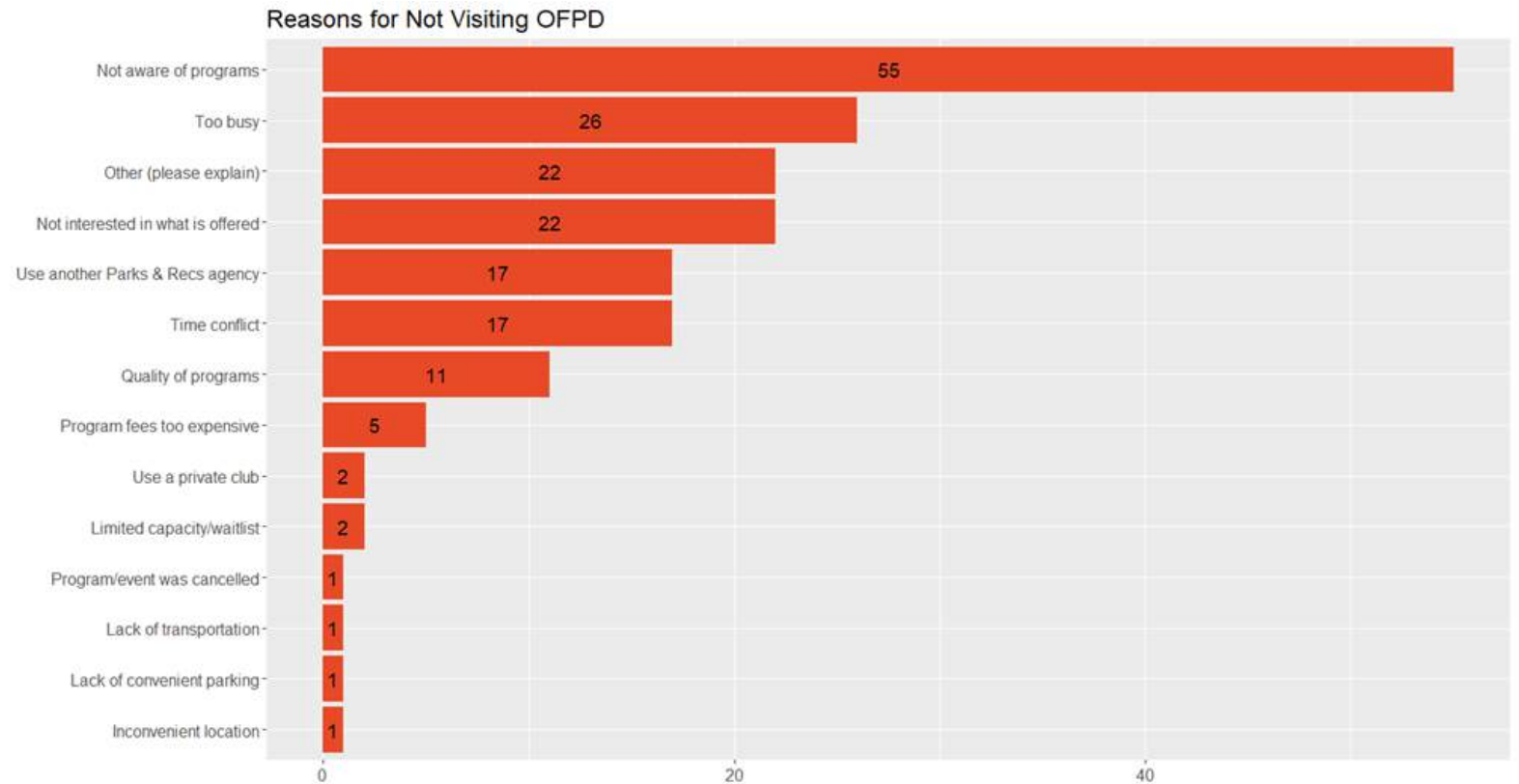
Low participation was reported for Disc Golf, Splash Pad, Community Garden and Irons Oaks



Reasons for Non-Participation

A majority of (n=55) indicated they are “not aware of programs”

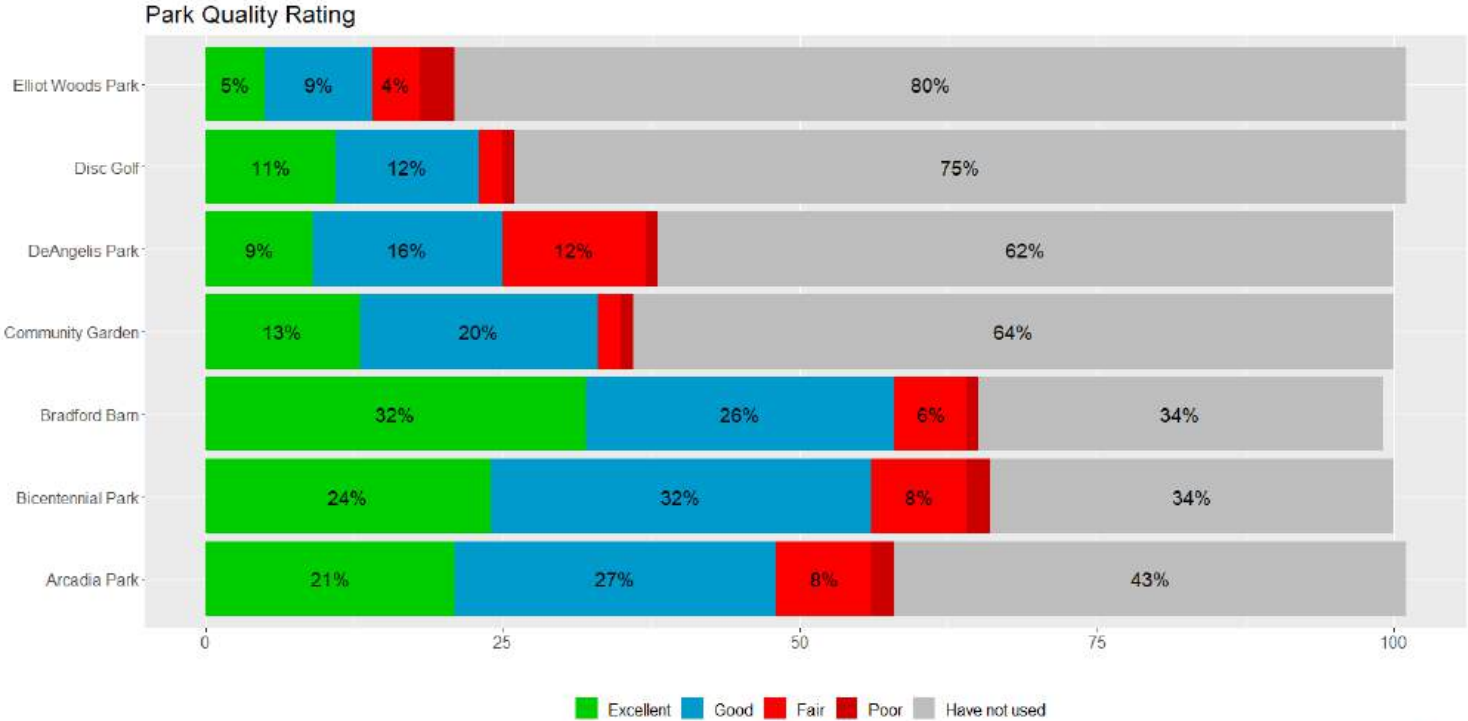
- Additional reasons they don't participate are:
 - Too busy (n=26)
 - Other (n=22; e.g., need for adapted programs for people with disabilities, more walking trails needed, more programs for youth)
 - Not interested (n=22)
 - Use another parks and rec agency (n= 17)
 - Time conflicts (n=17)
 - Program quality (n=11)
 - Program fees too expensive (n=5)



Condition, Upkeep & Cleanliness of Parks & Facilities

Parks and Facilities Rated Favorably:

- Bicentennial Park
- Arcadia Park
- Sergeant Means Park
- Tolentine Park
- Park Shelters
- The Bradford Barn



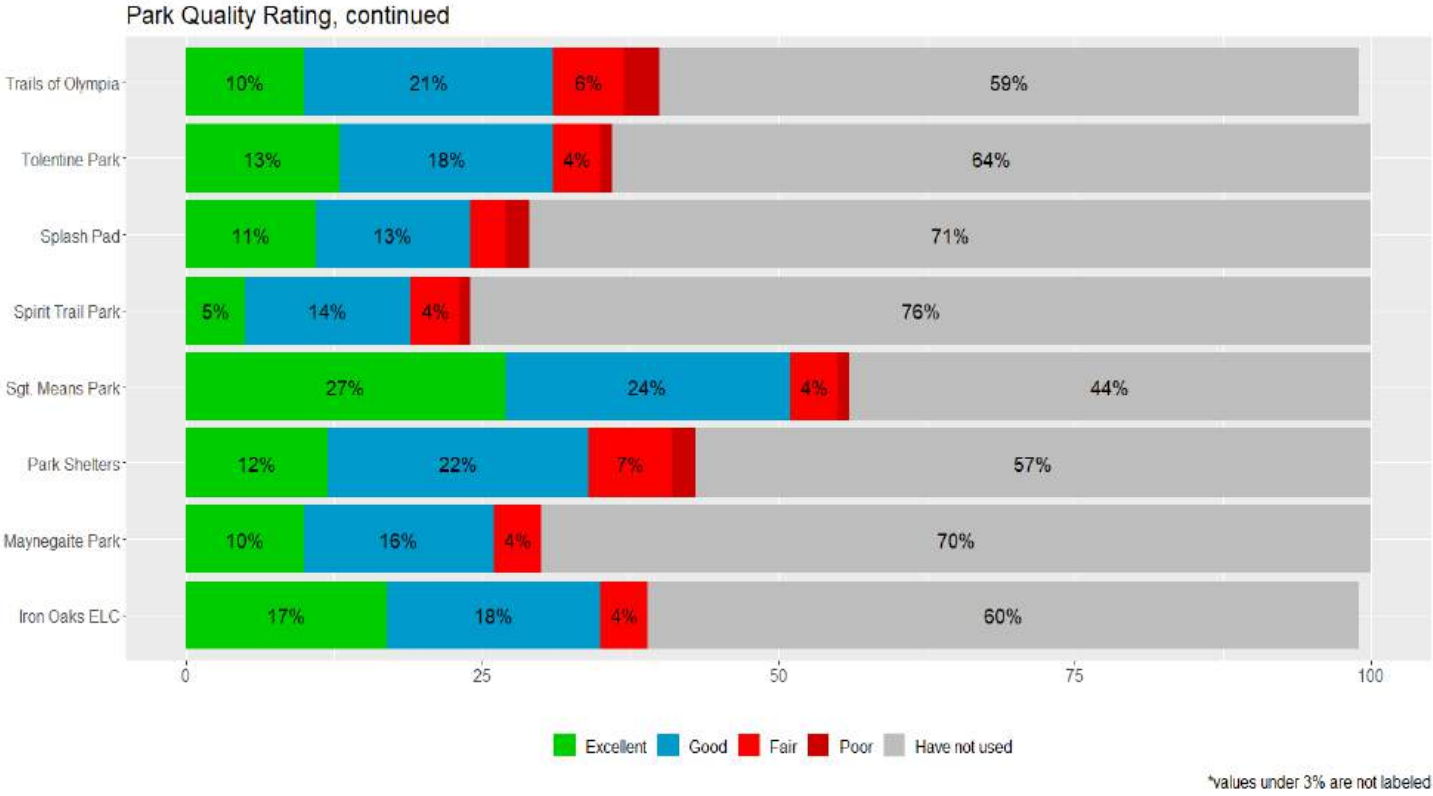
*values under 3% are not labeled

Condition, Upkeep & Cleanliness of Parks & Facilities

Facilities and Parks Rated Lower Include:

- DeAngelis Park
- Trails of Olympia Fields

- However, from between 44% to 80% of respondents indicated they have not used any of these parks or facilities – Thus, results should be interpreted cautiously



Additional Insights about Parks and Facilities

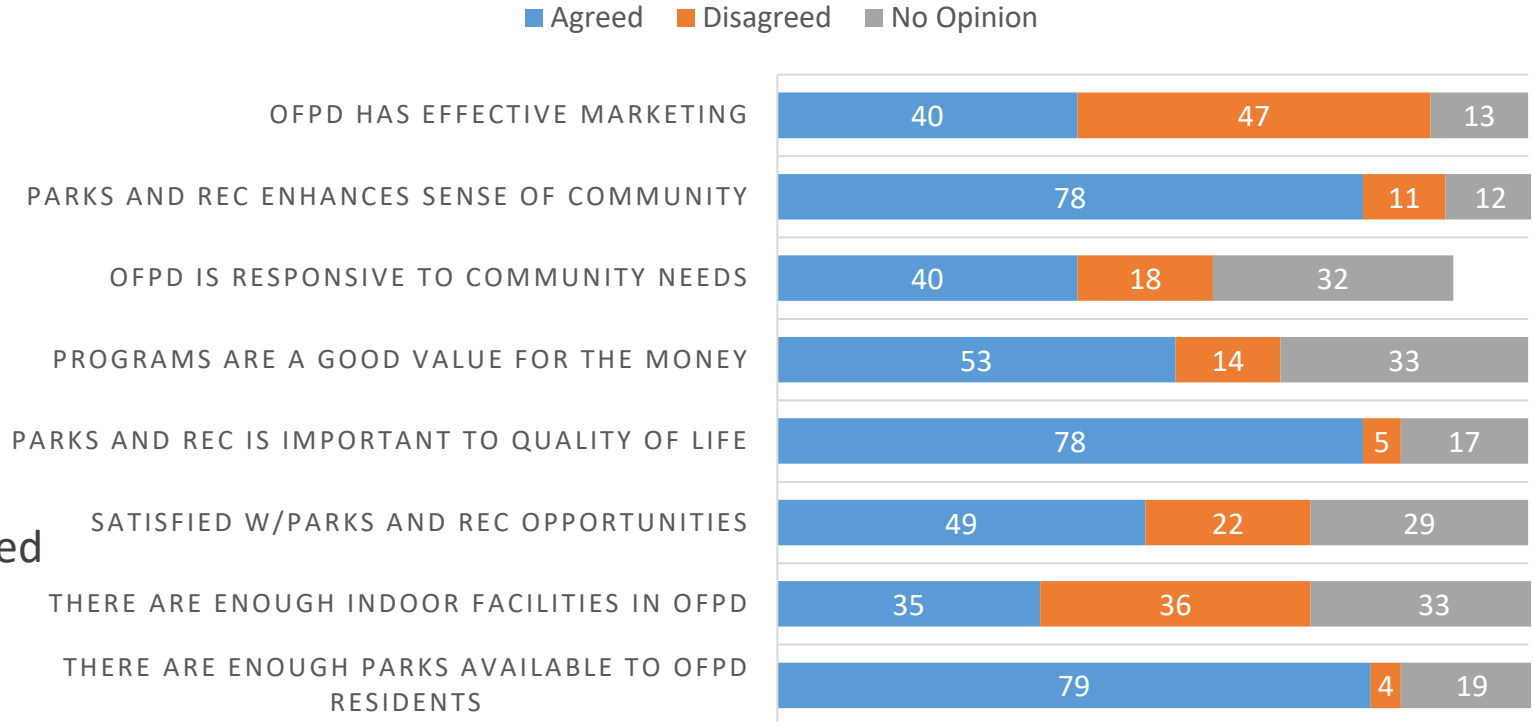
- **Trails Need Maintenance:**
 - Several respondents noted trails need attention (e.g., trails need repaved, low tree branches cleared)
- **Park Updates:**
 - A few respondents mentioned updates are needed at Bicentennial and Arcadia Park
 - Specifically mentioned maintenance of baseball fields



Opinions about Park District Performance

- Almost 80% of respondents agree:
 - Parks and rec is important to quality of life
 - Parks and rec enhances the sense of community
- A majority agree:
 - Programs are a good value and
 - OFPD is responsive to community needs
- 78% agree there are enough parks available
- Respondents are split on the need for indoor facilities
 - 36% agree more indoor facilities are needed
 - 35% disagree more indoor facilities are needed
- Marketing is an area that needs improvement with 47% who disagree that OFPD has effective marketing

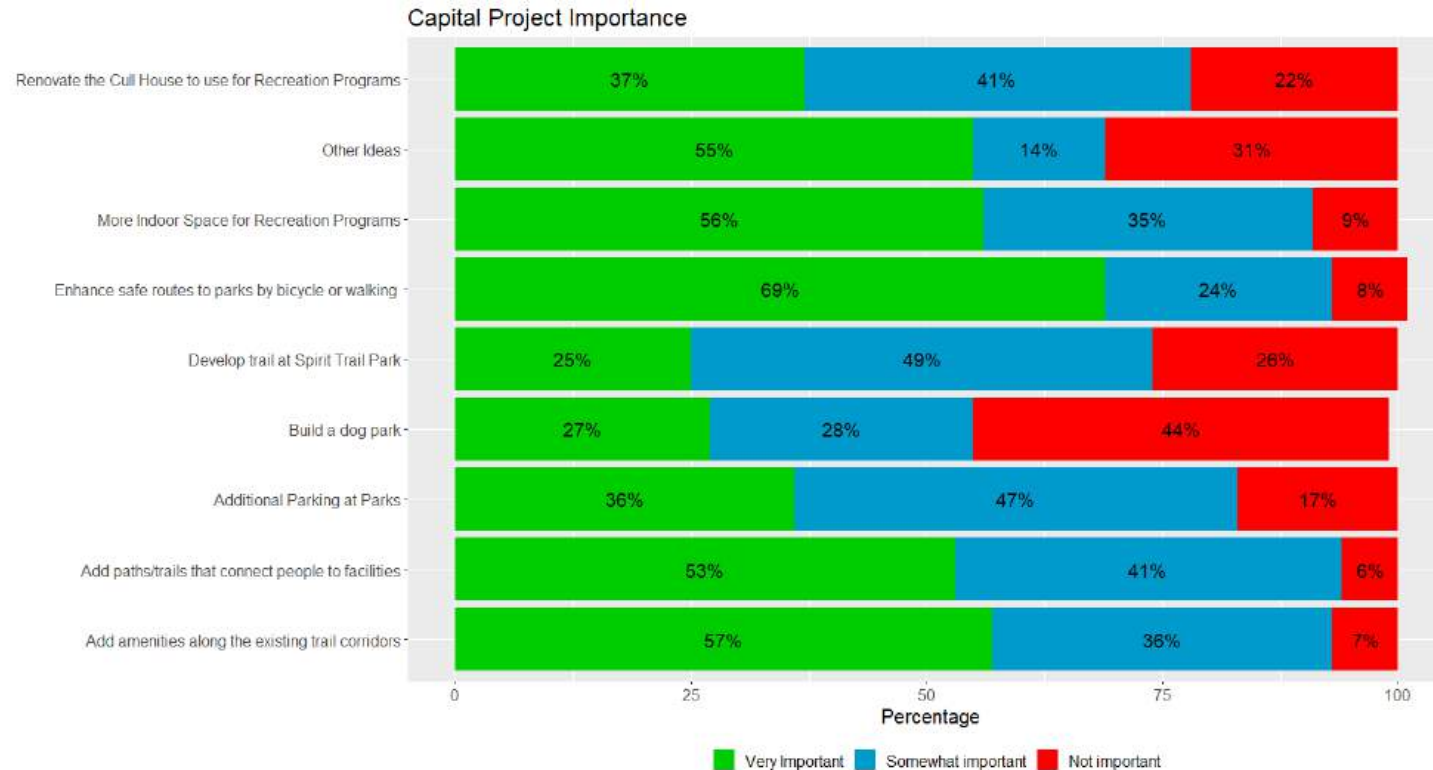
PARK DISTRICT PERFORMANCE (%)



Capital Project Importance

The Initiatives Rated Most Important are:

- Enhance safe routes to parks by biking and walking
- Adding amenities along trail corridors
- More indoor space for recreation
- Renovate Cull House for programs
- More parking at parks
- Other ideas include: Fitness center, recreation center, indoor turf, adapted equipment, and trails

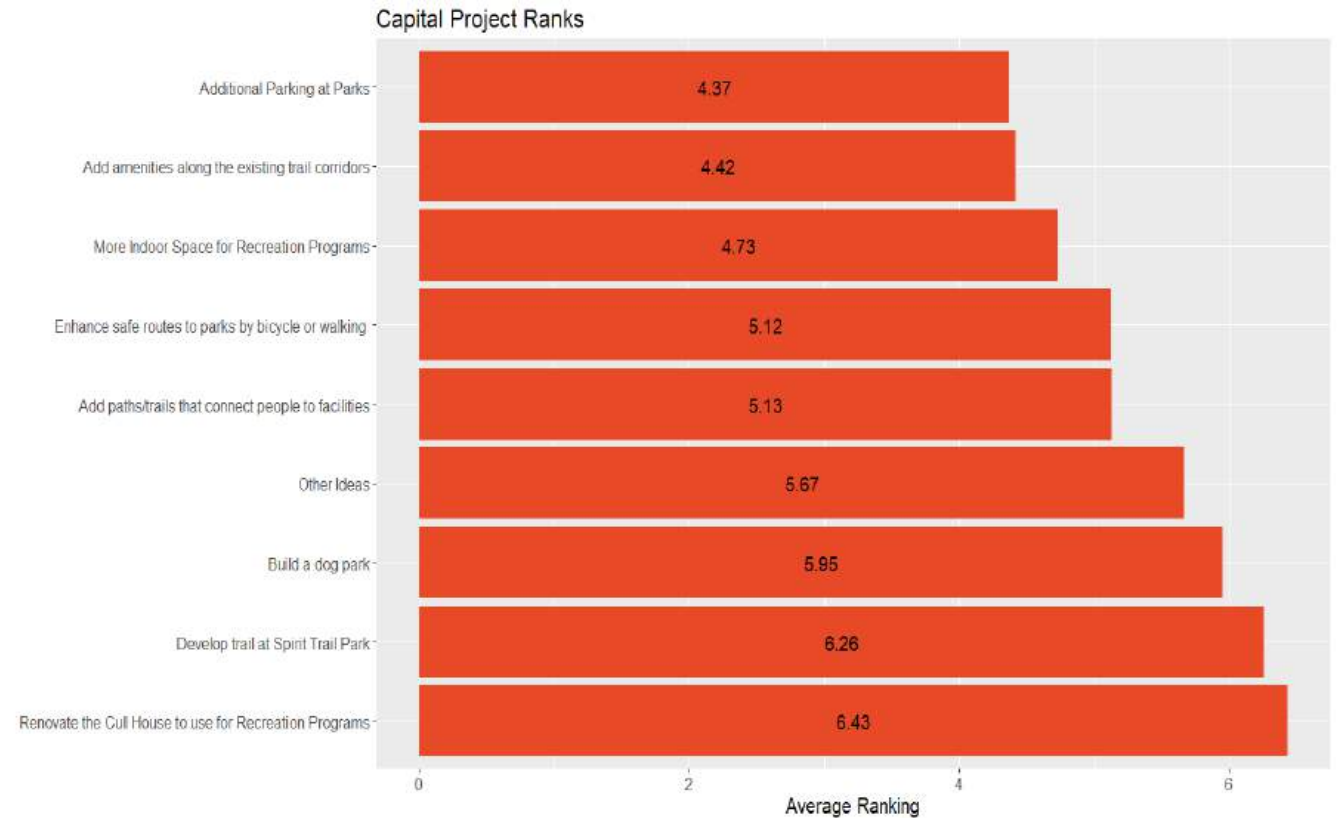


Capital Project Ranking (Ratings Closer to 1 Ranked Higher)

Results closely mirrored the importance ratings for capital projects with:

- Additional parking at parks
- Add amenities along existing trail corridors
- More indoor space for recreation programs

Ranked in the Top 3



Special Event Attendance

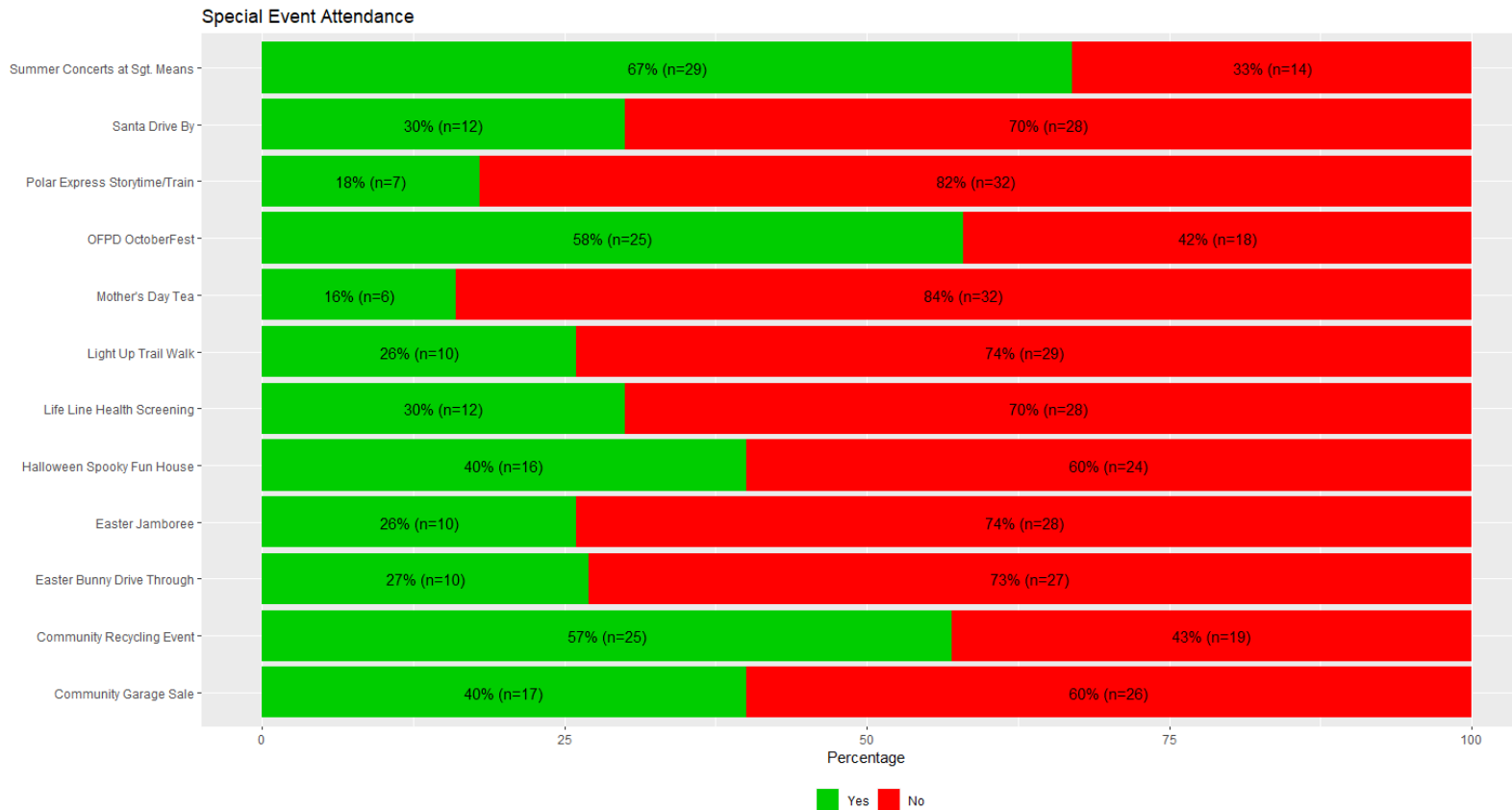
A majority of respondents (between 57% & 67%) have attended:

- Summer Concerts at the Park
- OFPD Octoberfest
- Community Recycling Event

There is also good participation in:

- Community Garage Sale
- Halloween Spooky Fun House

Events such as Santa Drive By, Easter Jamboree, Mother's Day Tea, and Polar Express Storytime/Train were attended by fewer respondents.

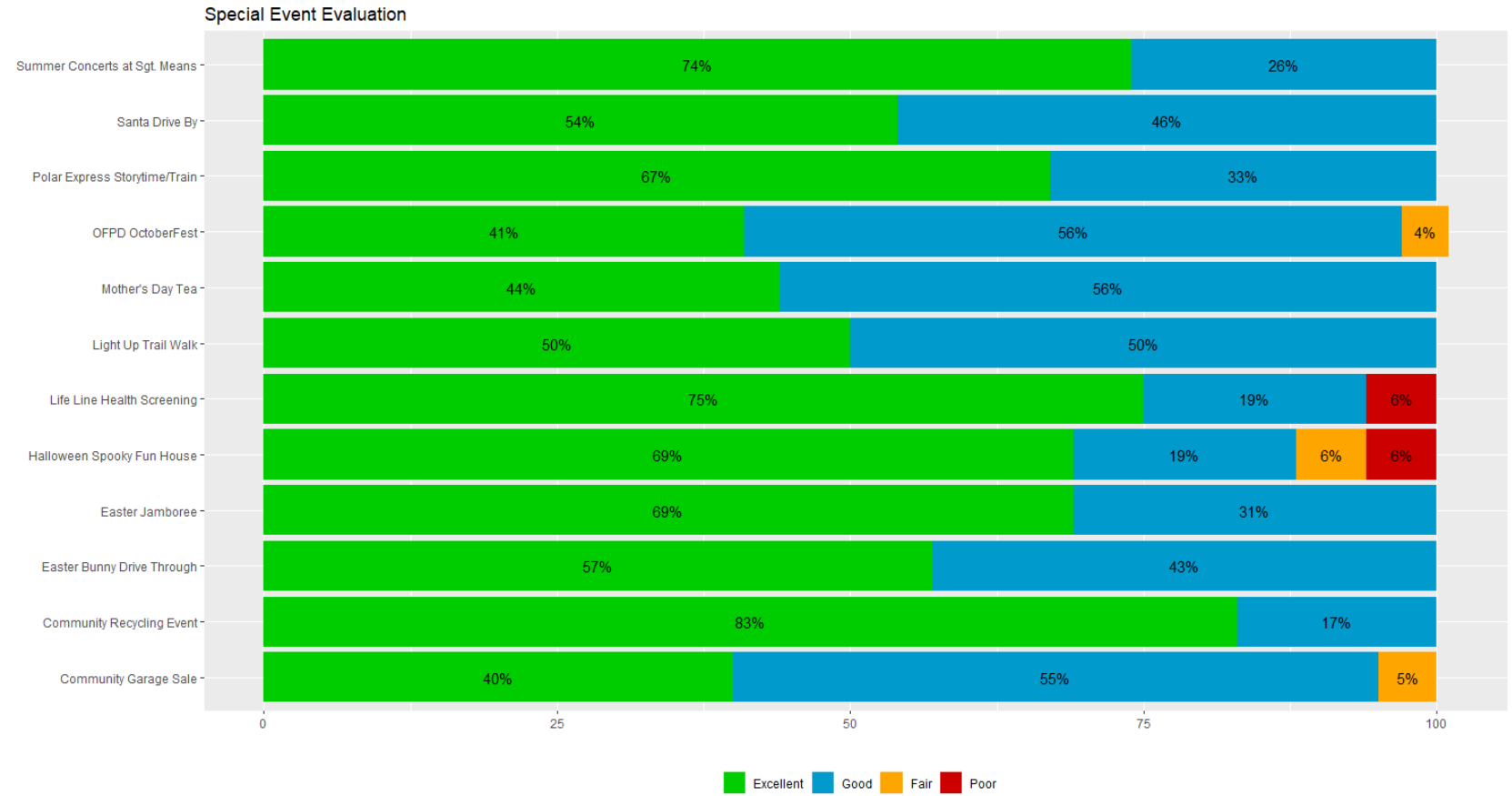


Special Event Evaluation

Special events is an area where the Park District shines!

Overall, special events were rated Very favorably. The highest rated Events were:

- Community Recycling Event
- Summer Concerts
- Lifeline Health Screening
- Polar Express Storytime/Train
- Halloween Spooky fun House
- Easter Jamboree
- Easter Bunny Drive Through

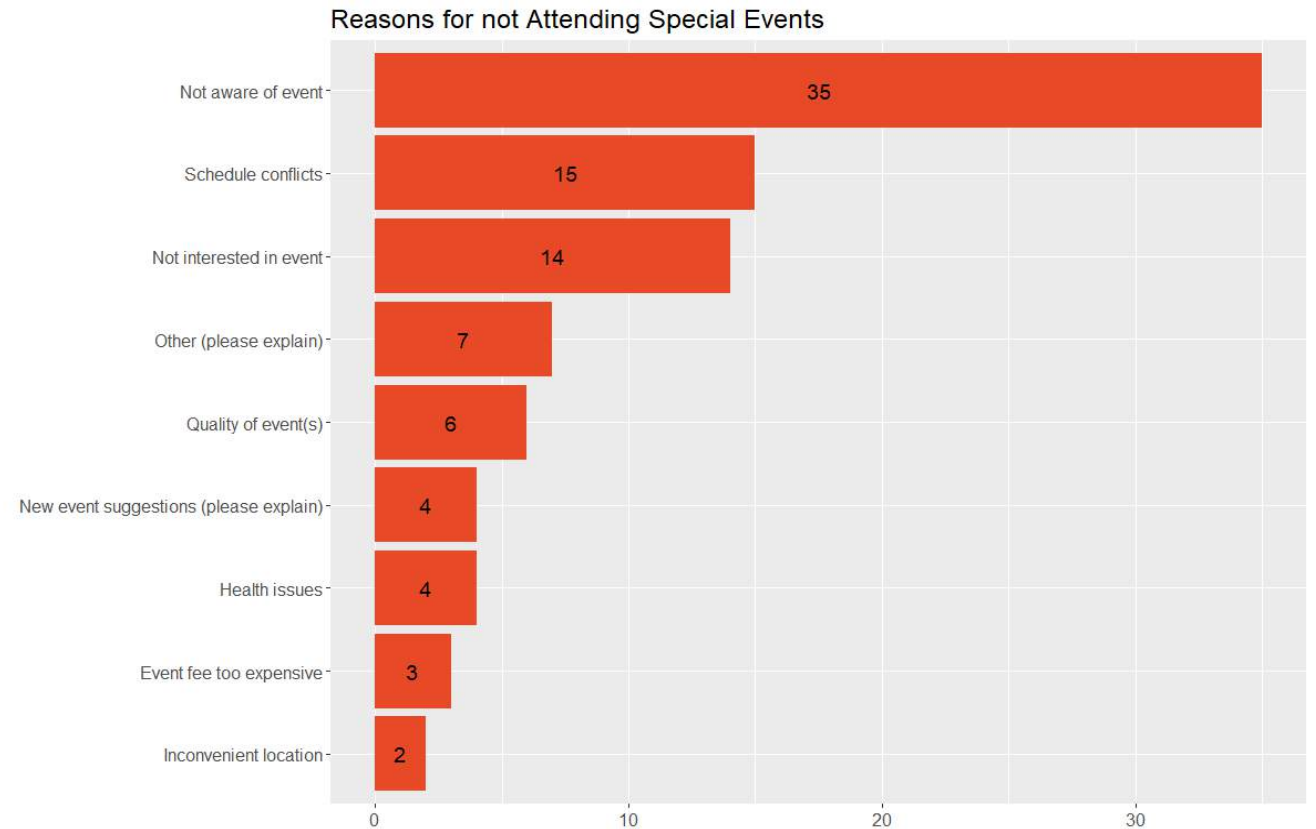


Reasons for missing special events

The top reasons for not attending special events were:

- Not being aware of the event
- Scheduling conflicts
- No interest in the event

- Event suggestions:
 - Food trucks at parks
 - E-bike rentals
 - Arts/crafts fair



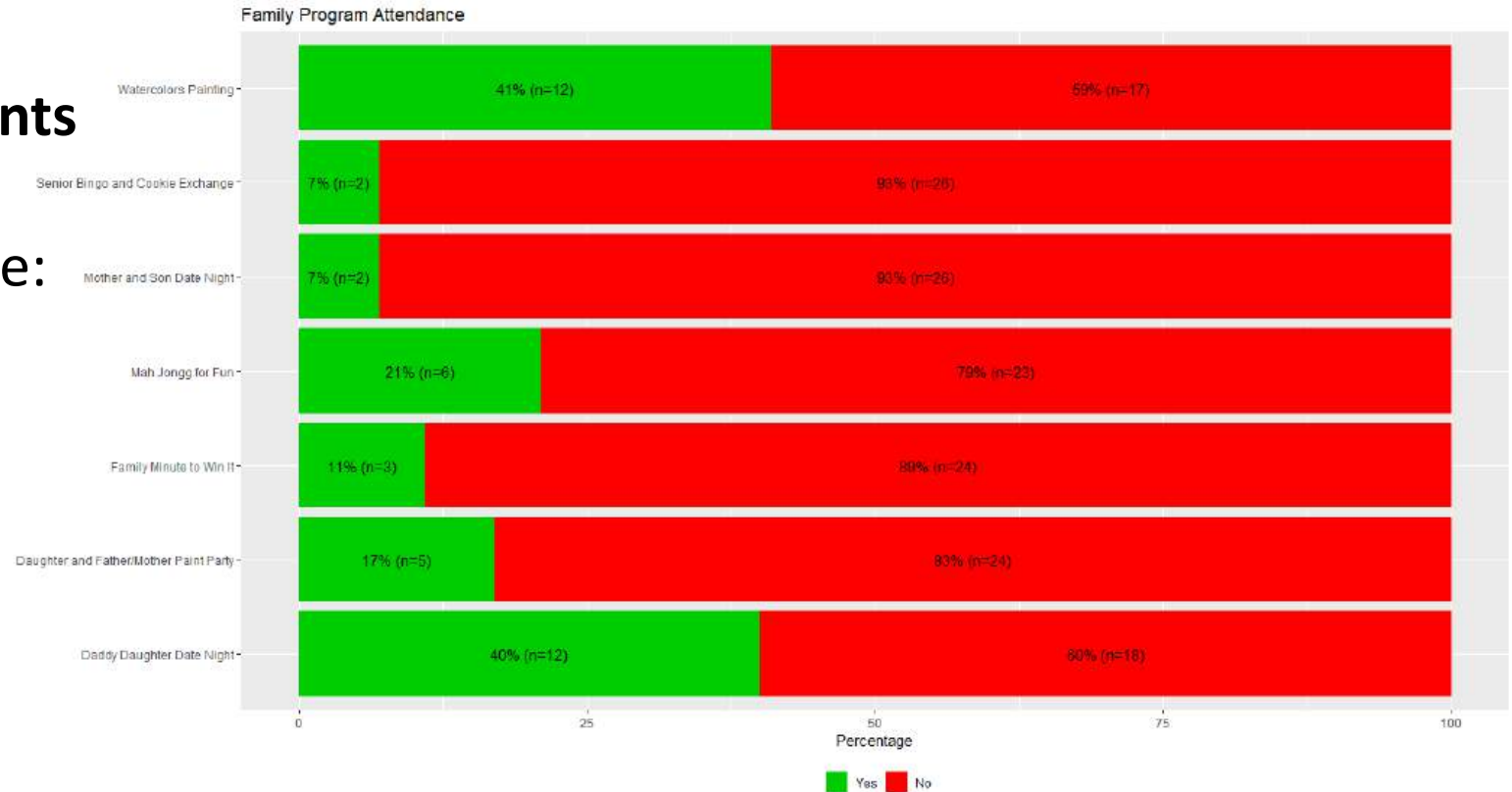
Adult and Family Program Attendance

Overall, relatively few respondents indicated they attended.

The best attended programs were:

- Watercolors Painting
- Daddy Daughter Date Night

Attended most frequently
(n= 12 respondents each)



Program Evaluation

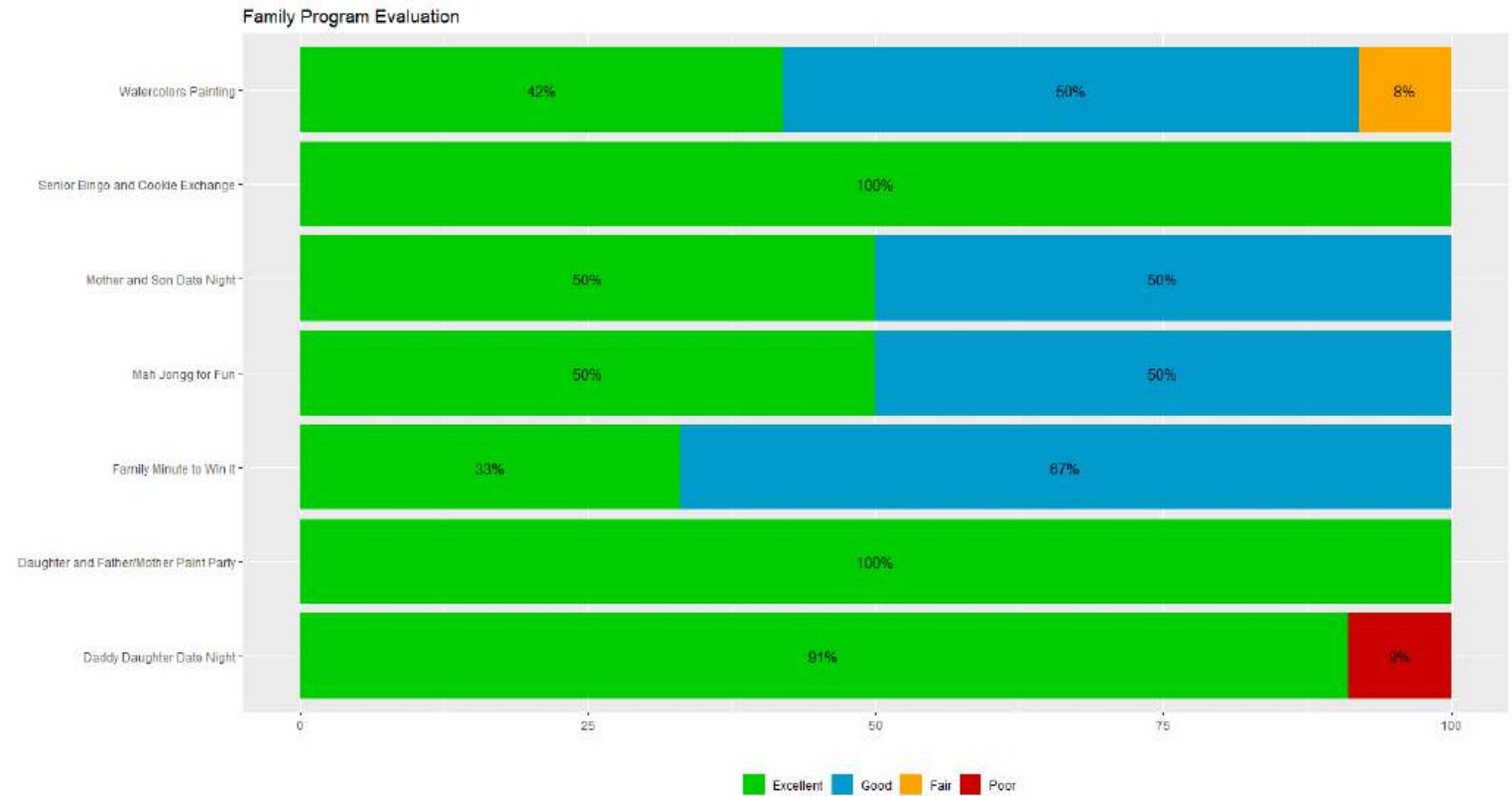
Overall, programs were rated favorably by attendees

91% - 100% of respondents rated

The following programs “excellent”:

- Daughter and Father (Grandparent) Paint Party
- Daddy Daughter Date Night
- Senior Bingo and Cookie Exchange

All programs were well received with a large majority rating them as “excellent” or “good”

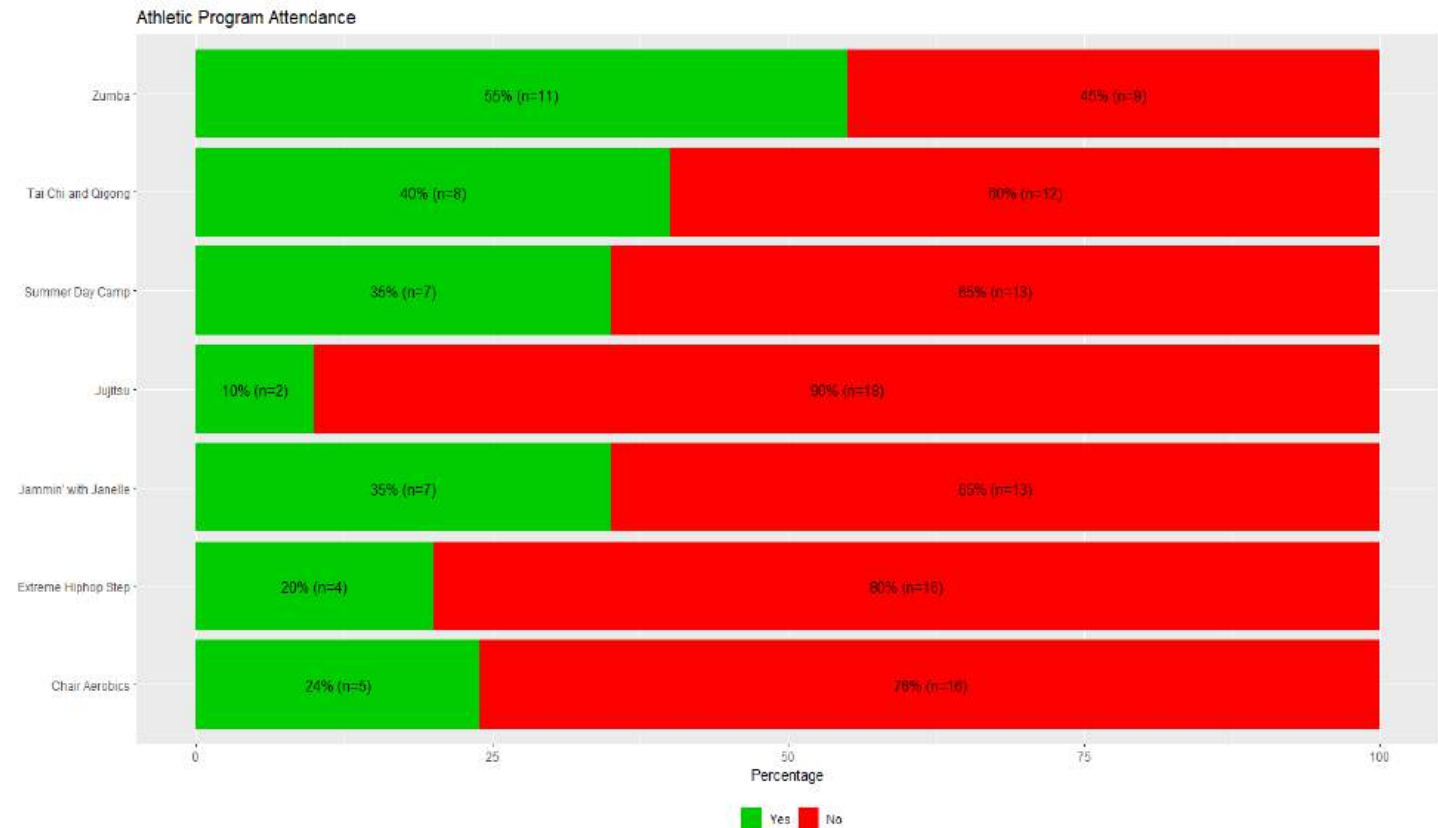


Athletic, Fitness & Summer Camp Program Attendance

The most frequently attended programs were:

- Zumba
- Jammin' with Janelle
- Tai Chi Qigong
- Summer Camps

35% - 55% reported attending one of these four programs

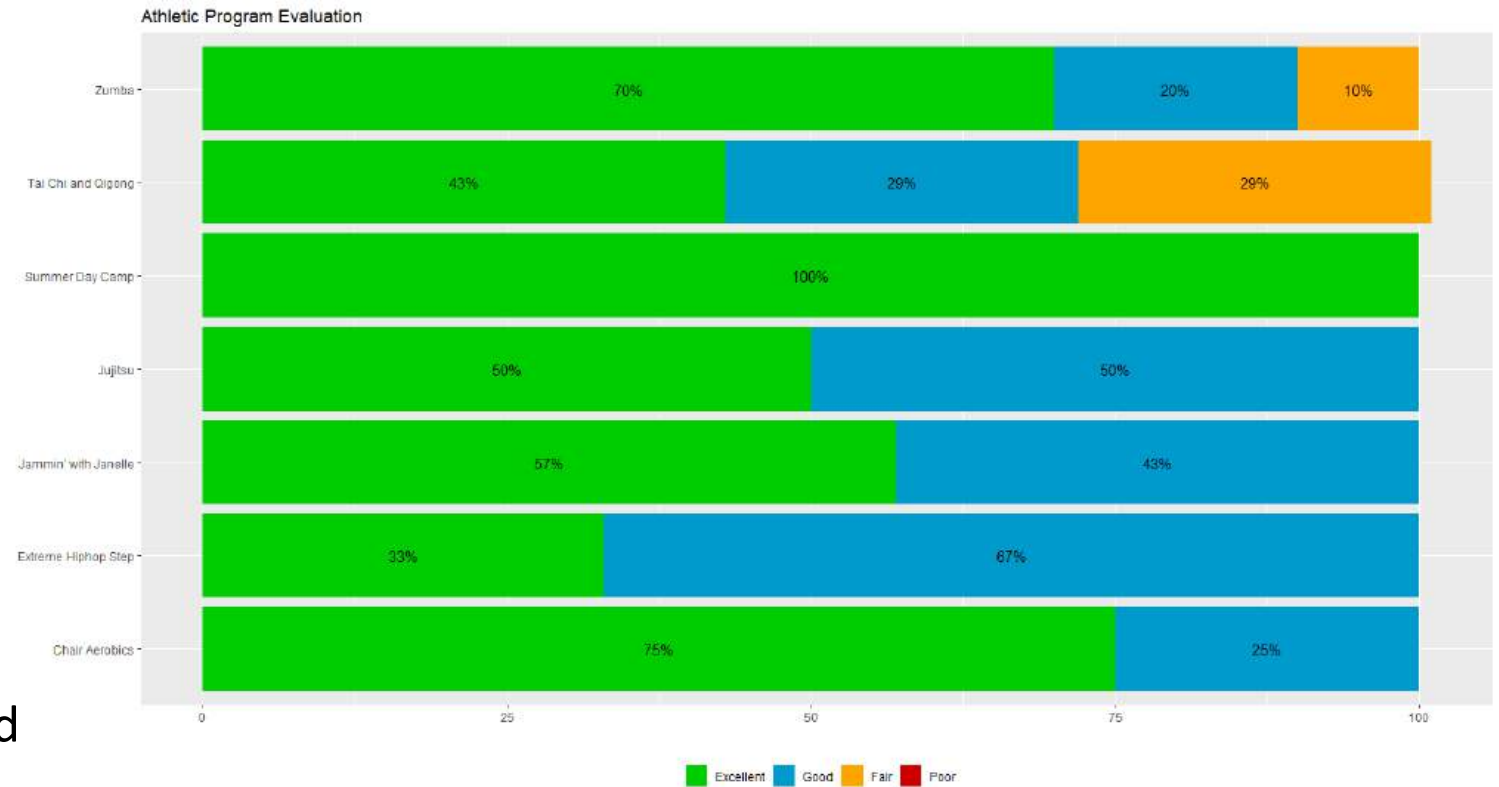


Athletic, Fitness & Summer Camp Program Evaluation

Overall, these programs were Favorably rated, especially:

- Summer Day Camp
- Chair Aerobics
- Zumba
- Jammin' with Janelle
- Jujitsu

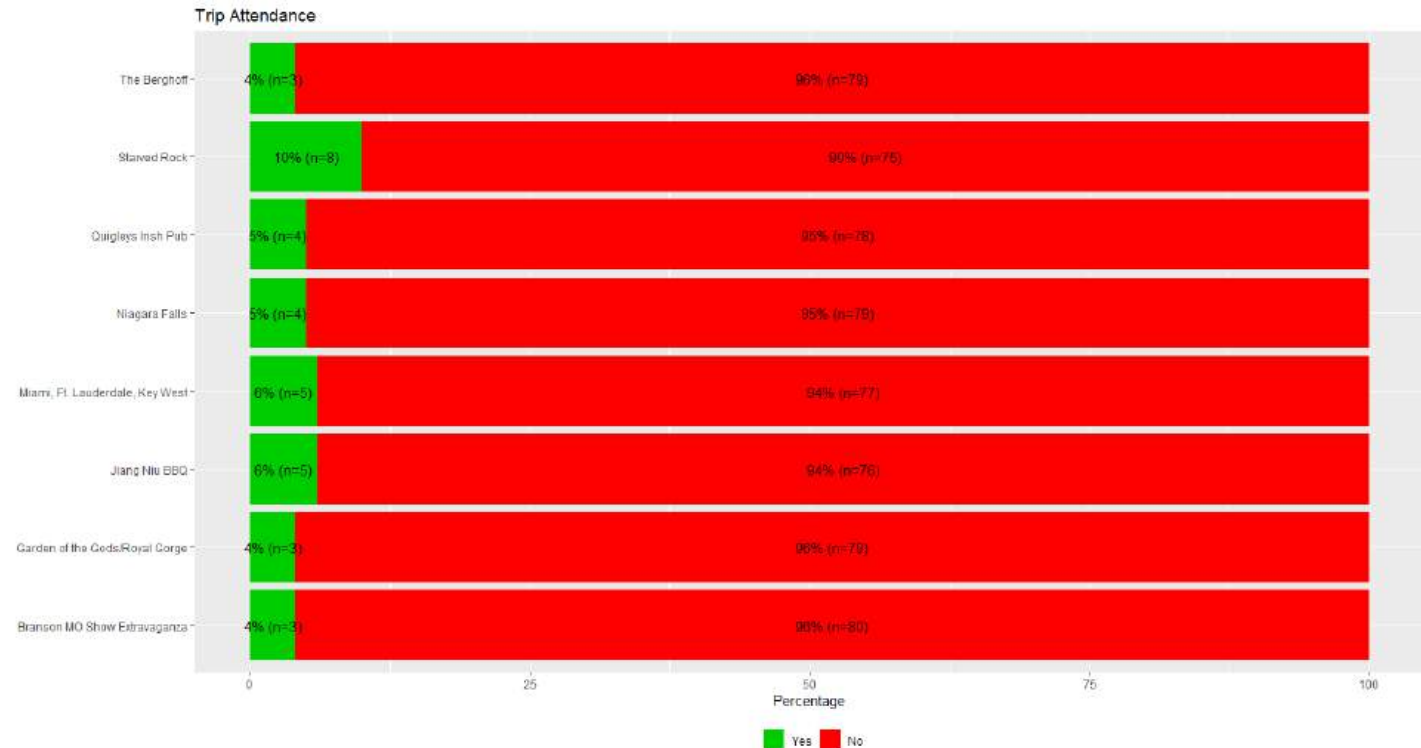
Tai Chi and Qigong and Zumba
Were rated a little lower, with 10% of
Zumba participants indicating Zumba
was “fair” and 29% indicating Tai Chi and
Qigong was “fair”



Trip Attendance

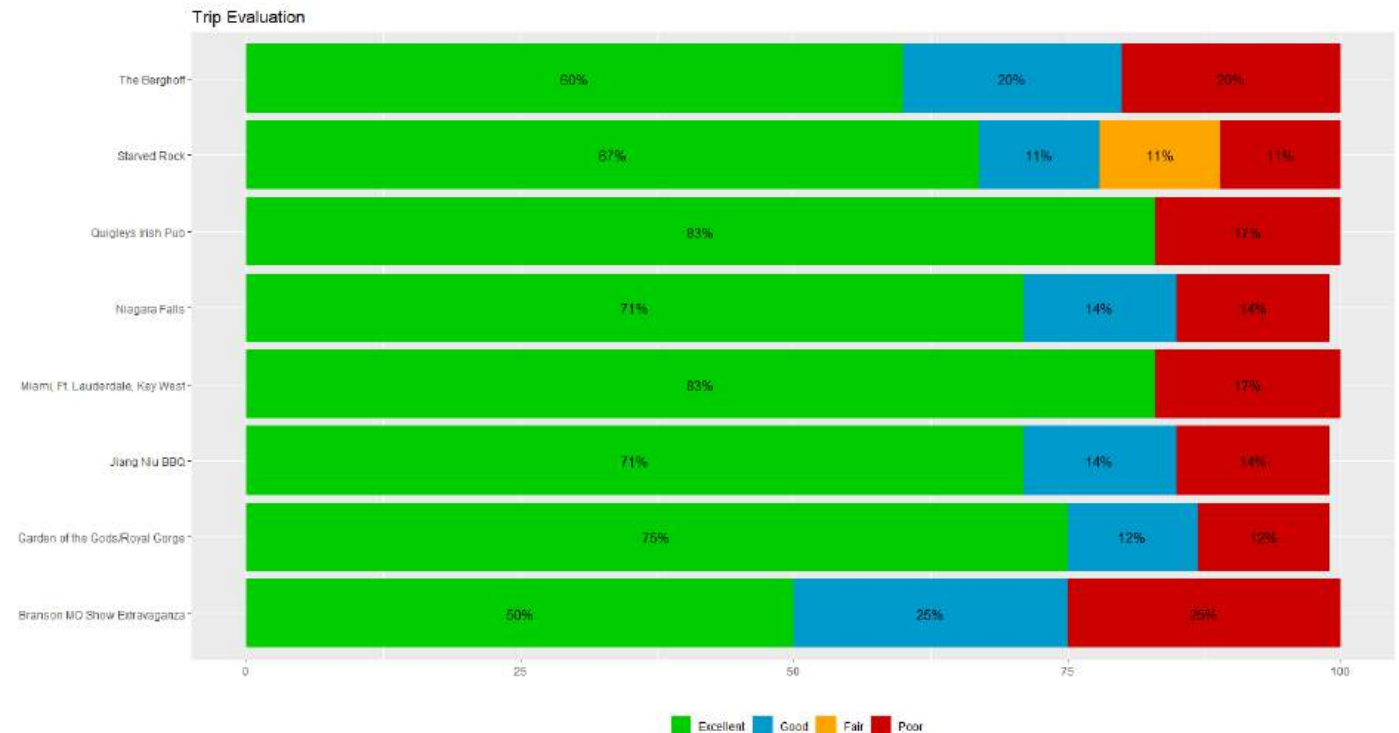
A very small number of respondents indicated they Participated in trips.
Only 4% to 10% went on a trip.

Starved Rock was attended by the most respondents (n=8)



Trip Evaluation

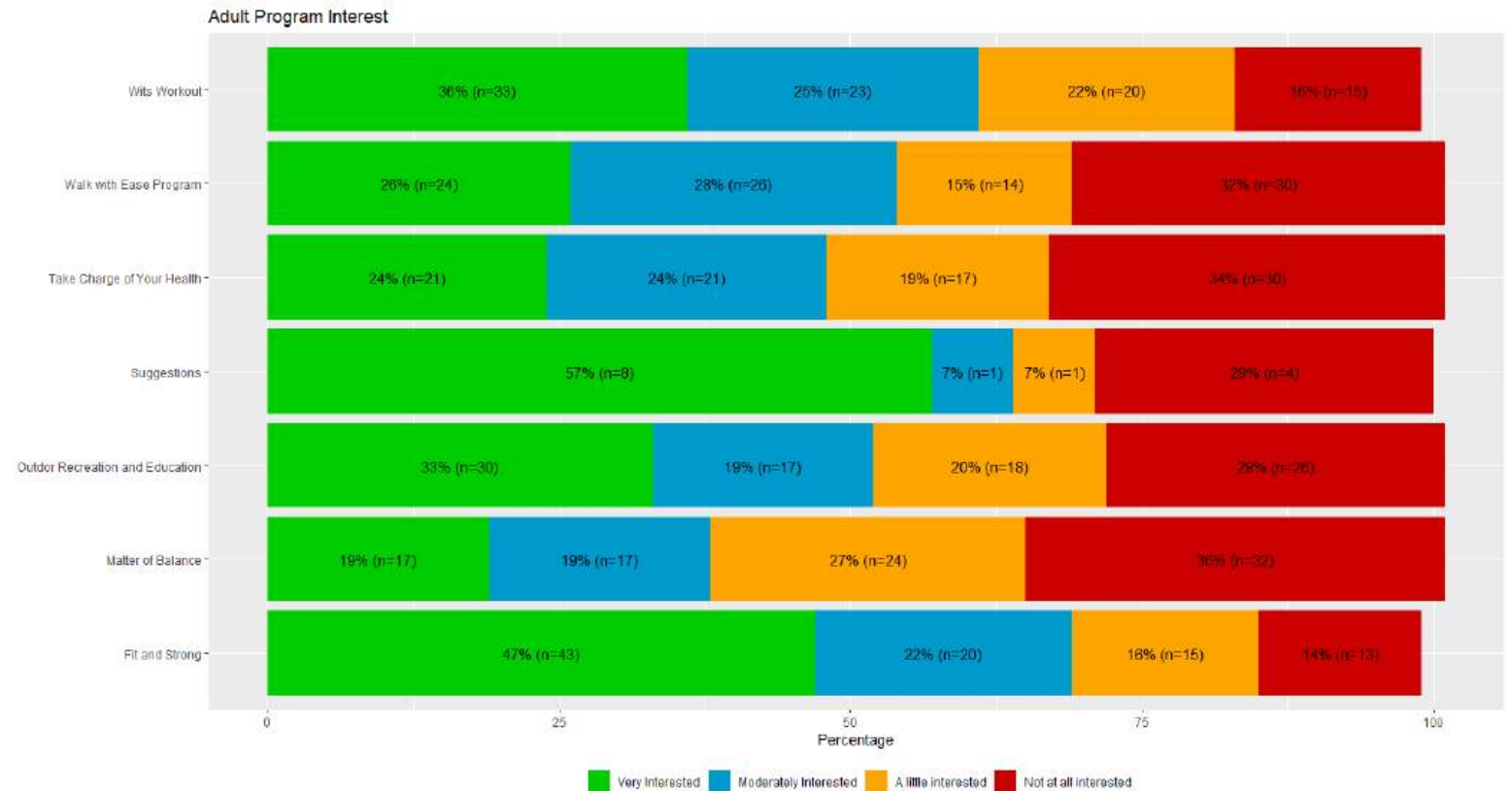
Although trips were generally evaluated favorably by the few respondents who participated, responses were very small with a range of 4-8 responses per trip so results should be interpreted with caution



Adult Program Interest

There is moderate to high interest in the following programs to be added:

- Fit and Strong (Fitness Program)
 - 69% Interested
- Wits Workout (Wellness Program)
 - 61% Interested
- Walk with Ease (Arthritis Wellness)
 - 54% Interested
- Outdoor Recreation and Education
 - 52% Interested



Additional Active Adult Program Suggestions

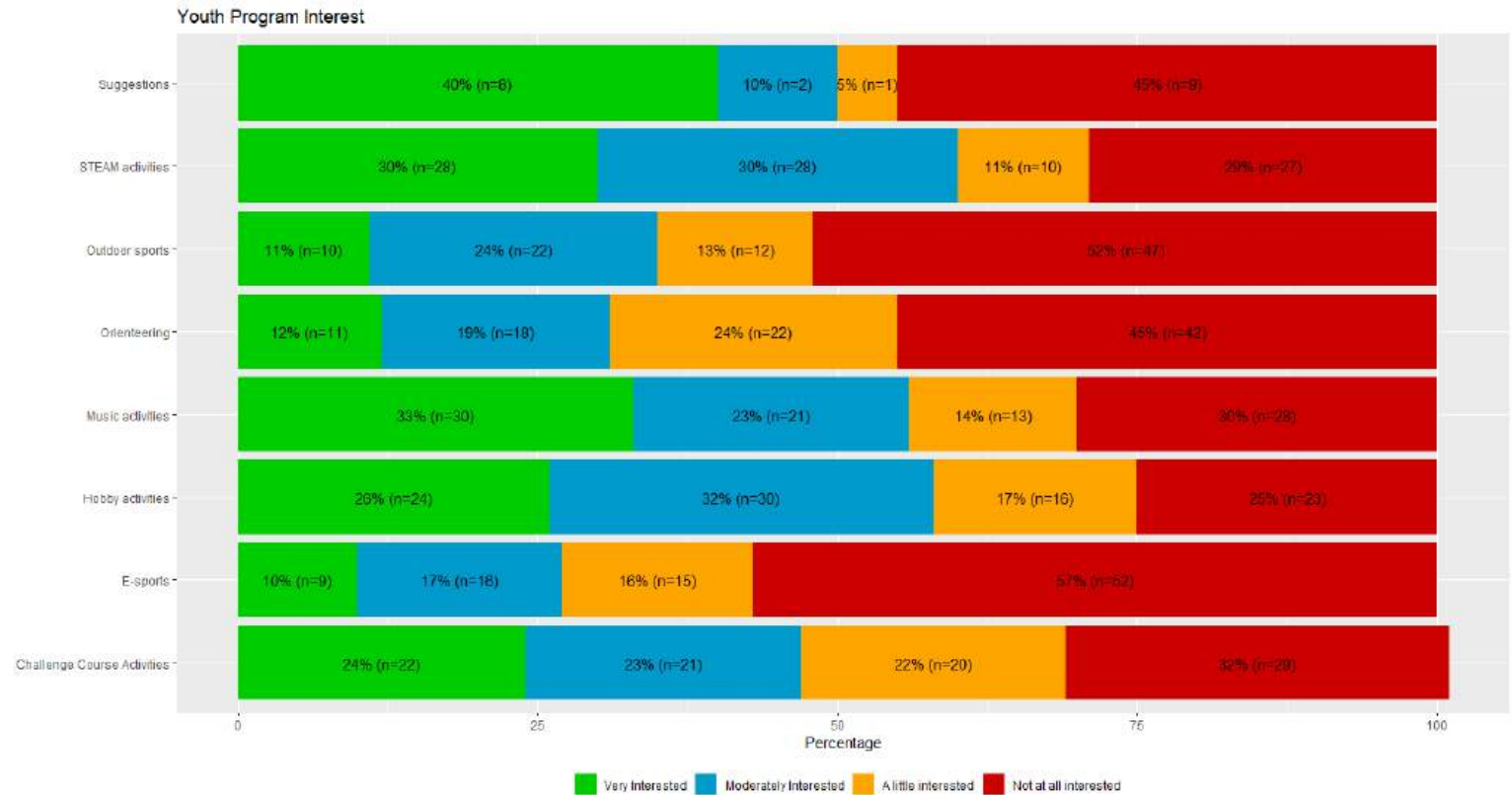
- Social activities
- More fitness activities that are fun
- Adult game / fun nights
- Dance classes
- Swimming
- Kudos for summer concerts!

Youth Program Interest

There is modest to moderate interest in the following youth programs:

- STEAM Activities
 - 60% Interested
- Hobby Activities
 - 58% Interested
- Music Activities
 - 56% Interested
- Challenge Course Activities
 - 47% Interested
- Outdoor Sport Activities
 - 35% Interested

Fewer respondents are interested in E-Sport and orienteering

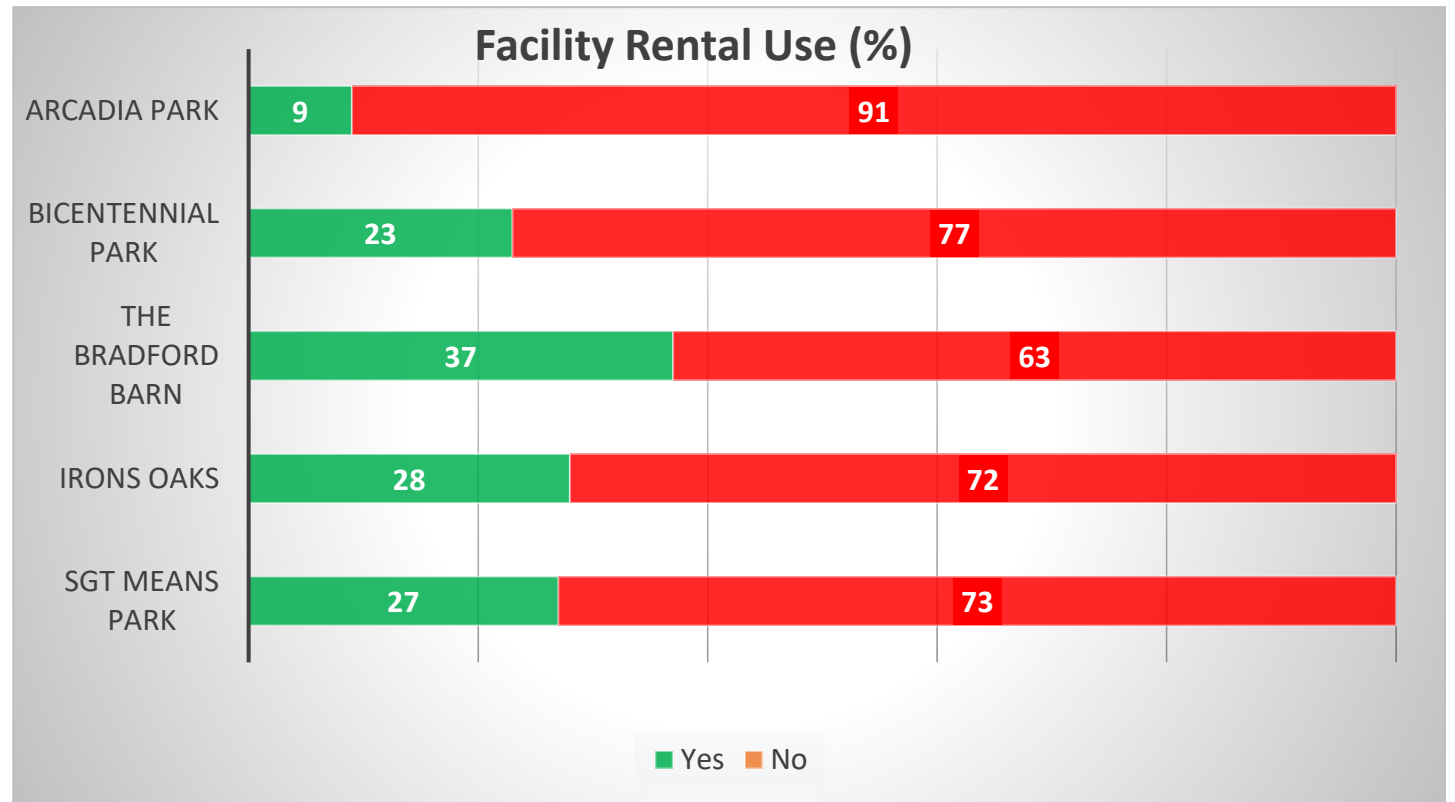


Additional Youth Program Suggestions

- Sports and physical activities such as:
 - Open gyms for various age groups
 - Gymnastics and tumbling
 - Soccer
 - Baseball
 - Dodgeball tournament
- Music and art activities (e.g., guitar, piano)
- STEAM activities (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math)
- Weekend youth activities (where my children can go for several hours on the weekend)

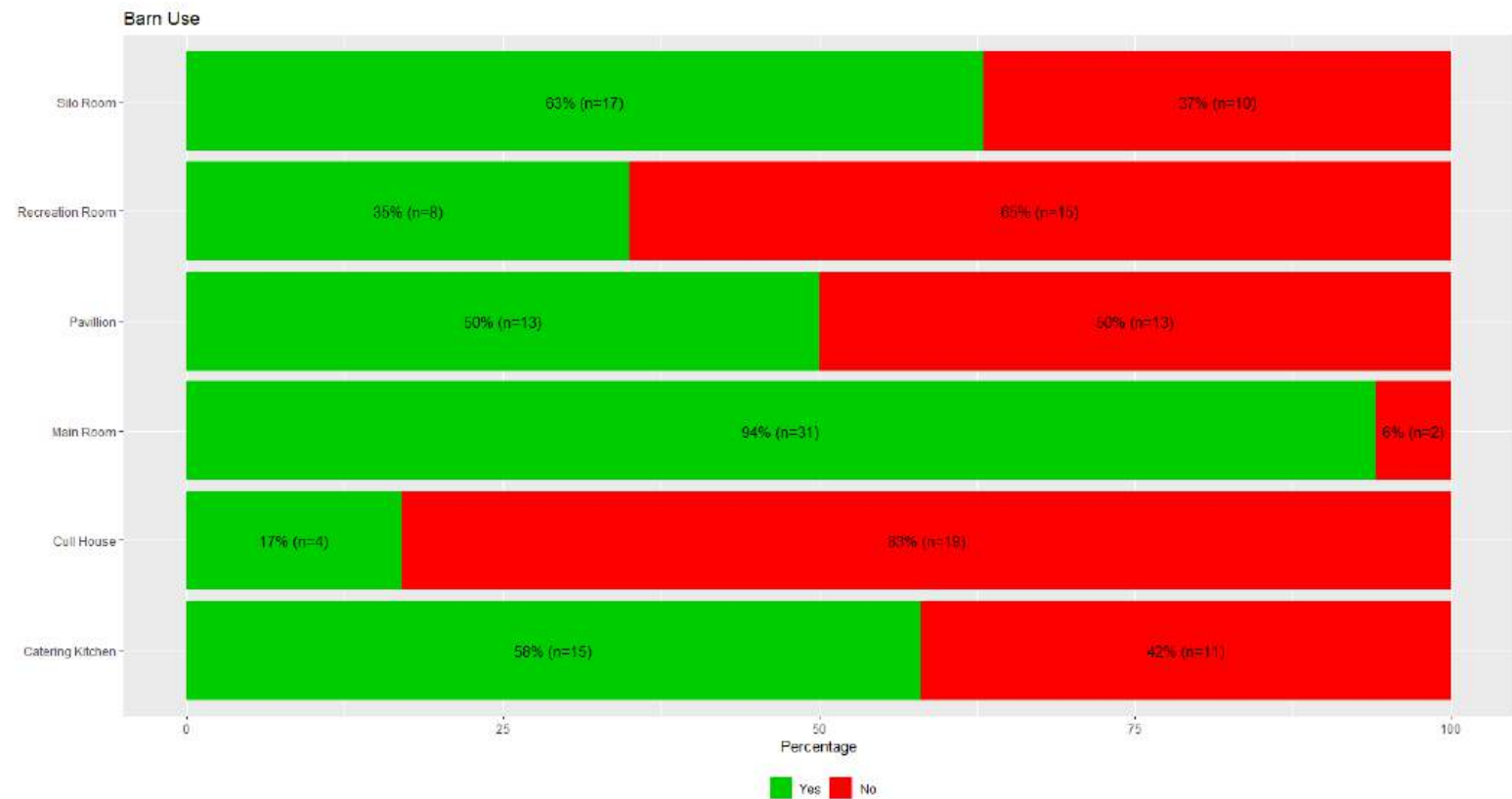
Overall Facility Use for Rentals

- Bradford Barn was utilized by 37%
- Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center was utilized by 29%
- Sgt. Means Park was utilized by 27%
- Bicentennial Park utilized by 23%
- Least utilized for rentals was Arcadia Park (9%)



The Bradford Barn Use

- The Main Room was used by most participants (94%)
- The Silo Room and Catering Kitchen were used frequently (63% and 58% respectively)
- The Pavilion was used by 50% who responded
- The Recreation Room and Cull House were used least

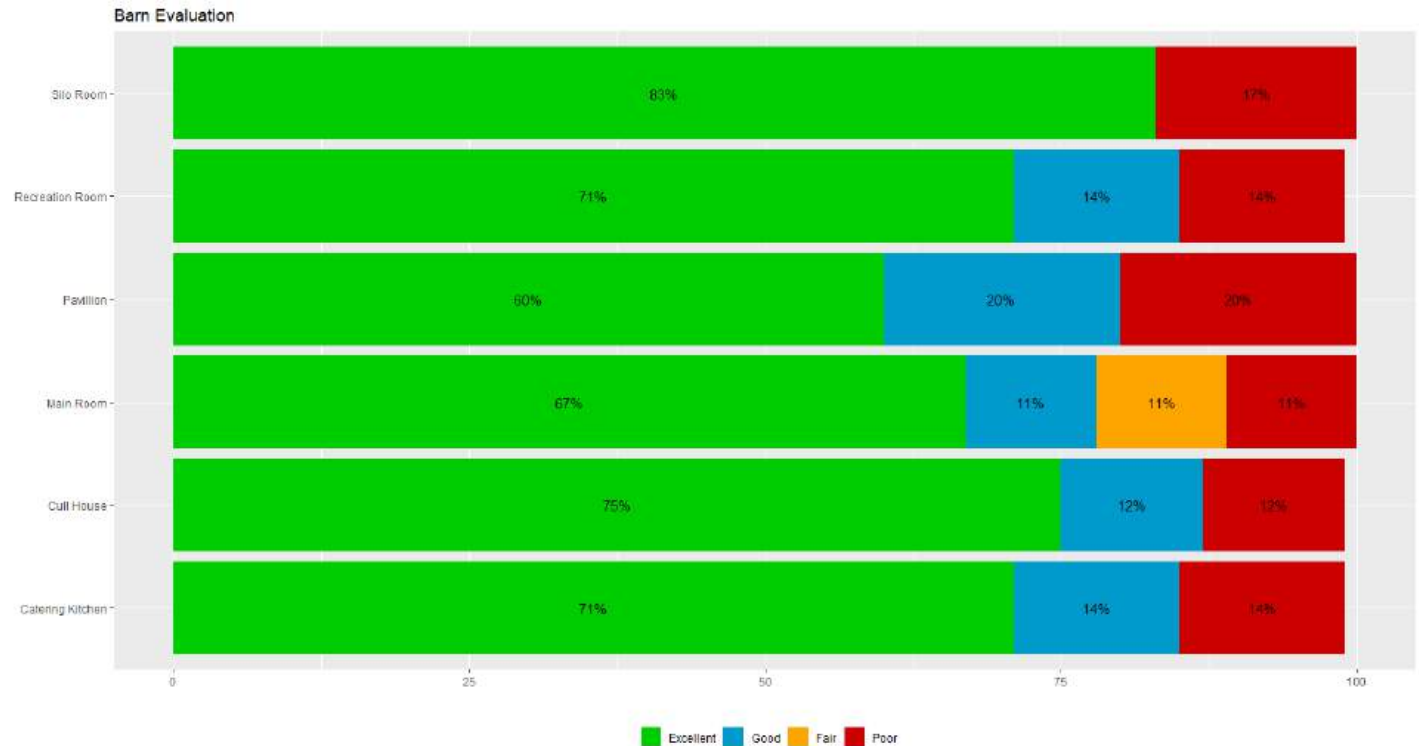


The Bradford Barn Evaluation

All of the facilities within The Bradford Barn were rated positively by 50% to 83% of respondents.

20% of respondents rated the Pavilion as “poor” however that may be due to it being an outdoor venue

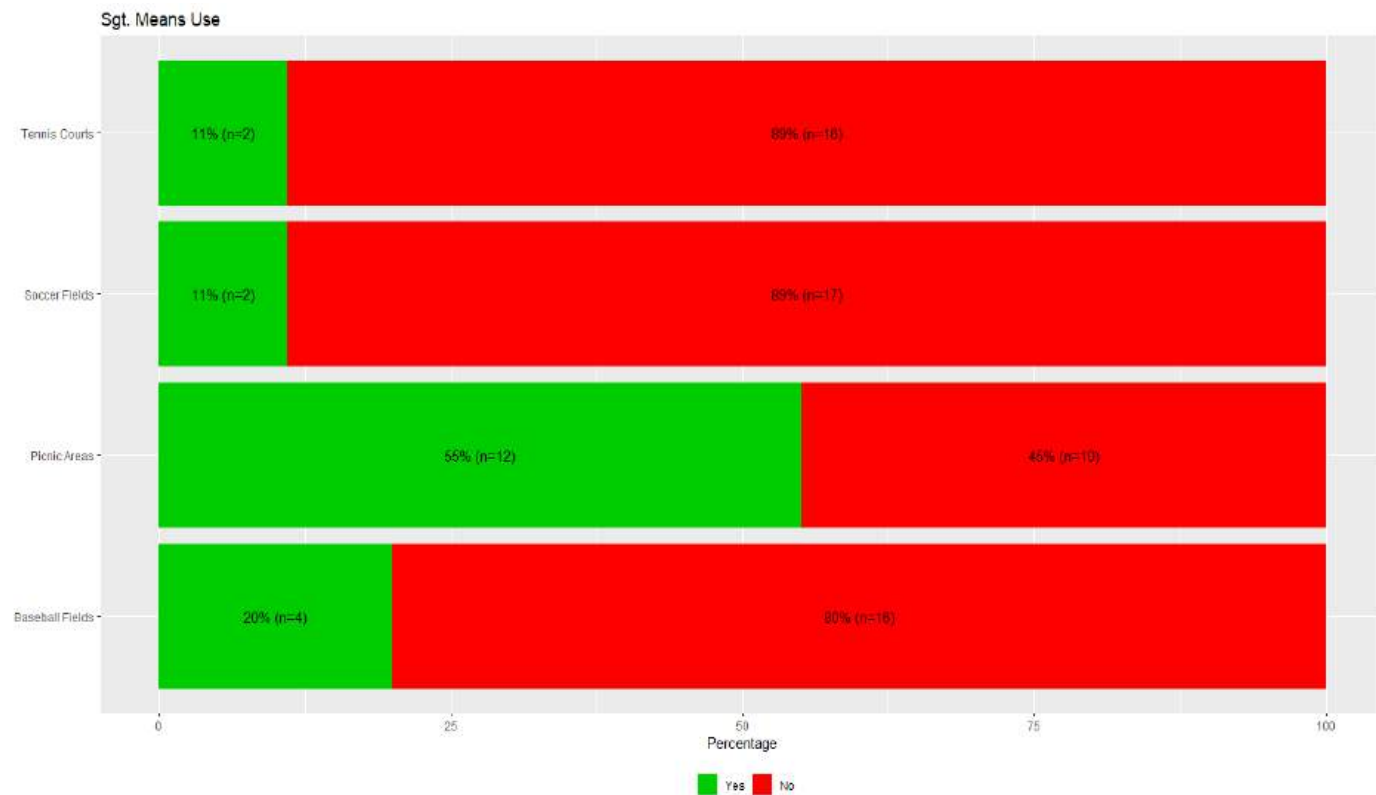
22% rated the Main Room as “fair” or “poor”



Sgt Means Park Rentals

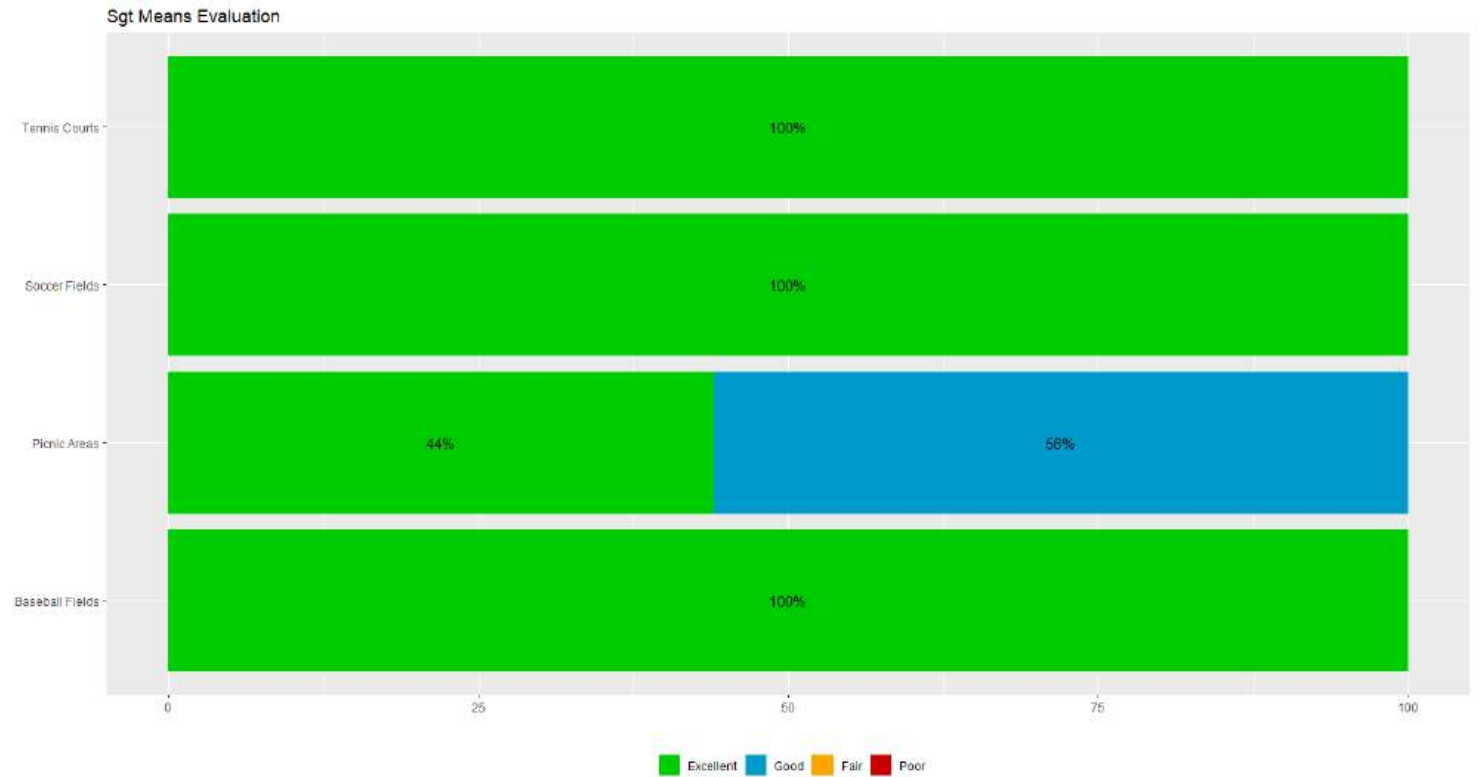
Picnic areas are the most popular rental among respondents with 55% indicating they rented a picnic area

Very few respondents indicated they rented tennis courts, baseball fields, or soccer fields.



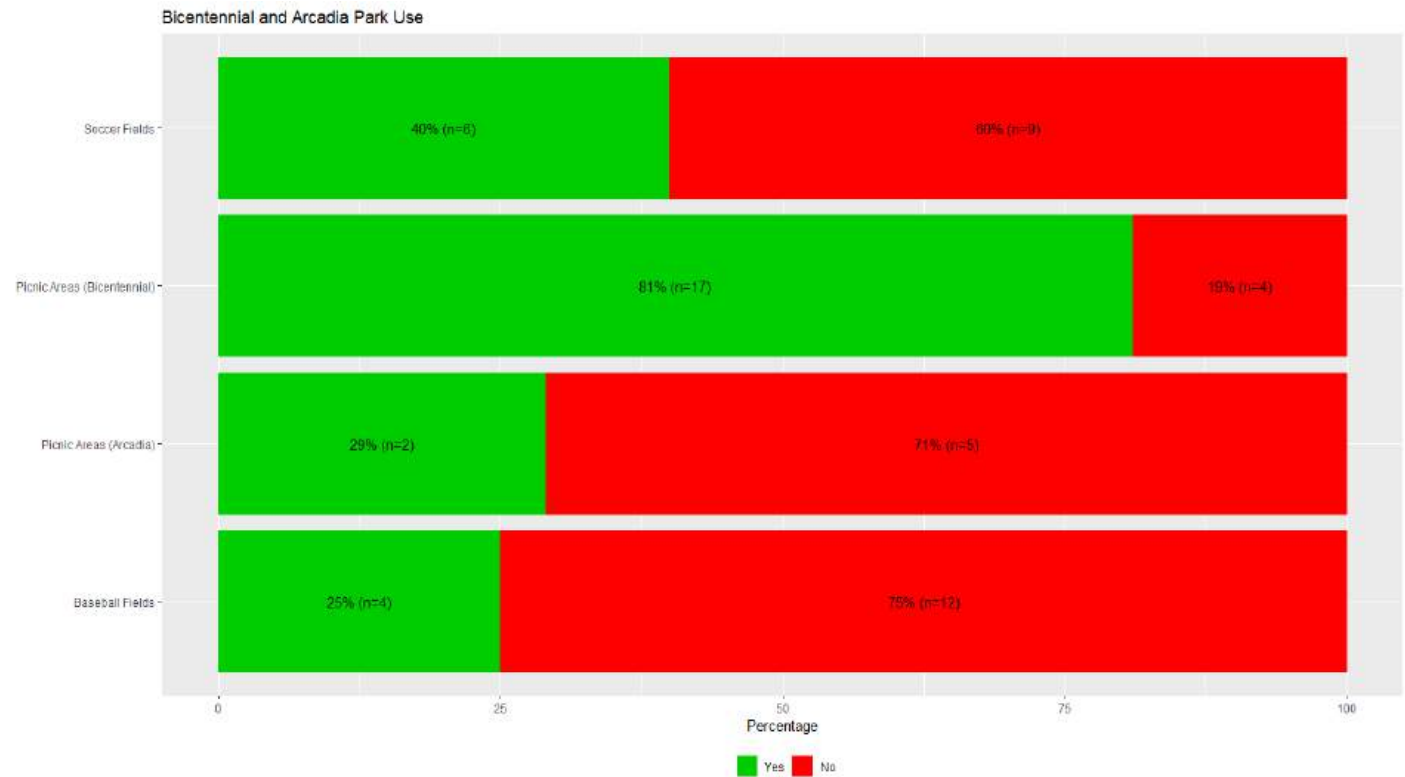
Sgt Means Rental Evaluation

All of the park facilities rented by respondents were rated positively with 100% rating them as “excellent” or “good”



Bicentennial and Arcadia Rentals

- Picnic Areas at Bicentennial Park were rented by the most respondents (81%; n= 17)
- Fewer respondents indicated they rented picnic areas at Arcadia Park, and fewer rented baseball fields and soccer fields at Bicentennial Park

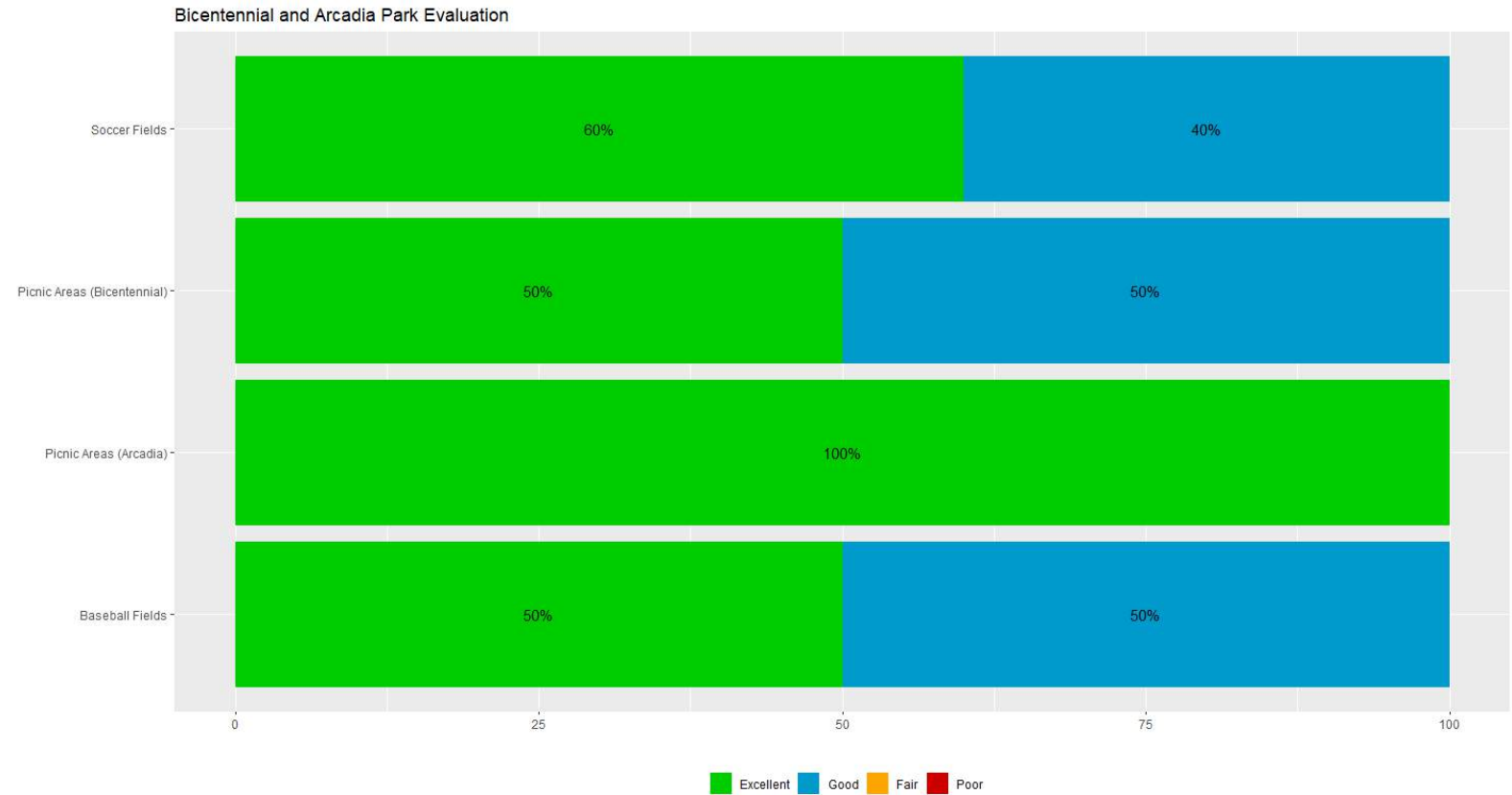


Bicentennial and Arcadia Rental Evaluation

The Picnic Areas at Bicentennial and Arcadia were very favorably evaluated as were:

- Baseball Fields
- Soccer Fields

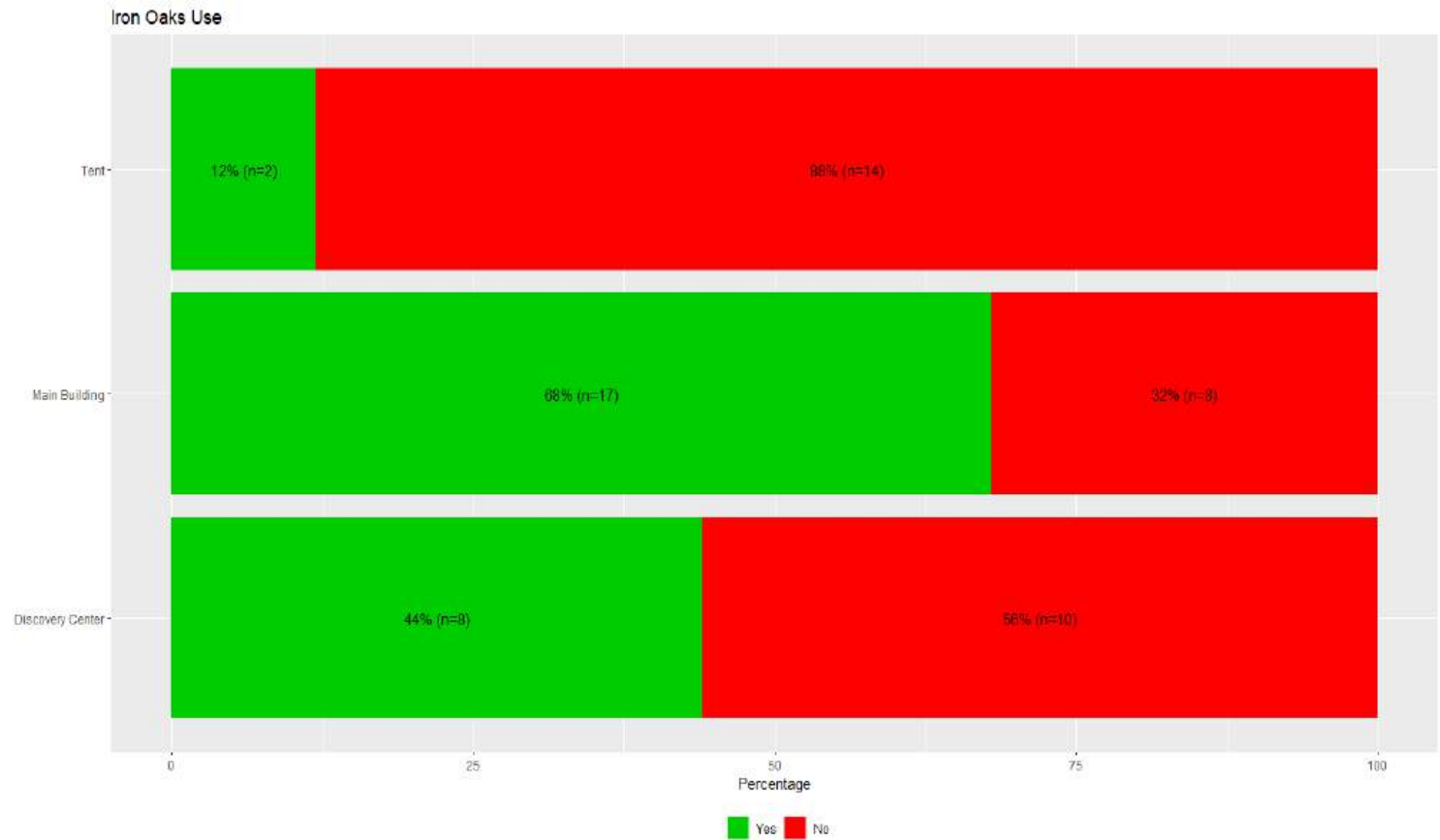
All respondents rated these park facilities as either “excellent” or “good”



Irons Oaks Rentals

Of the respondents who used Irons Oaks for rentals,

- The Main Building was rented most frequently (68%; n=17)
- Discovery Center (44%; n= 8)
- Only two respondents reported they rented the tent

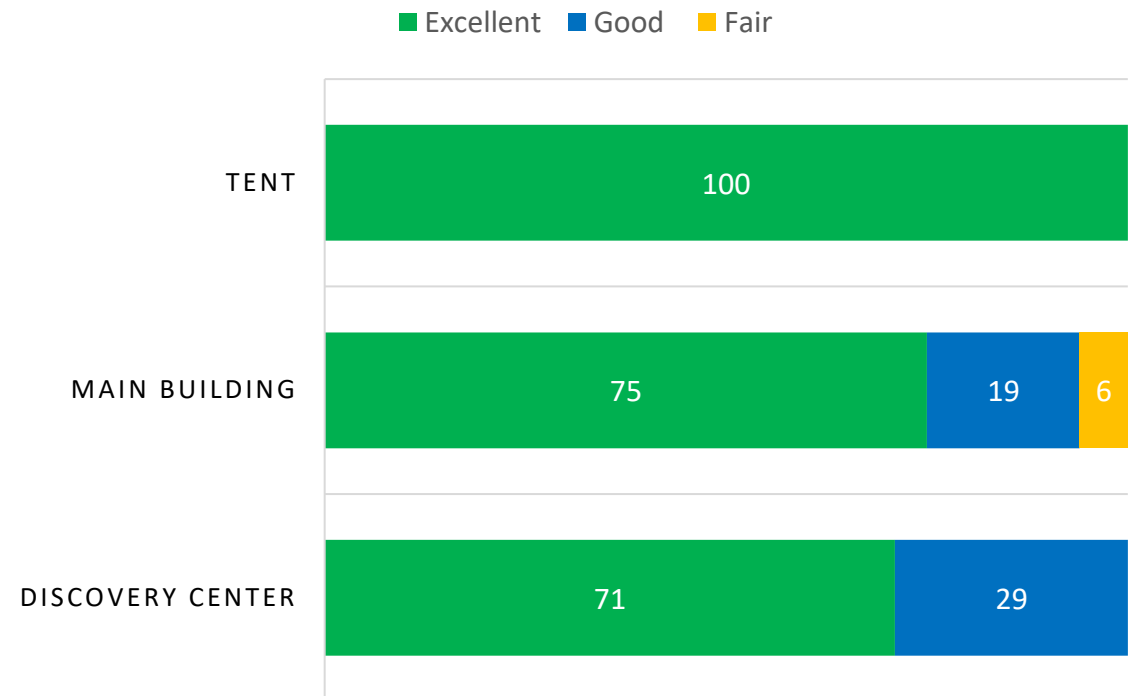


Irons Oaks Rental Evaluation

Of those who rated Irons Oaks facilities...

- All rated the Tent and Discovery Center as “excellent” or “very good”
- The Main Building was also highly rated, but with 6% who rated this facility as “fair”

IRONS OAKS EVALUATION (%)

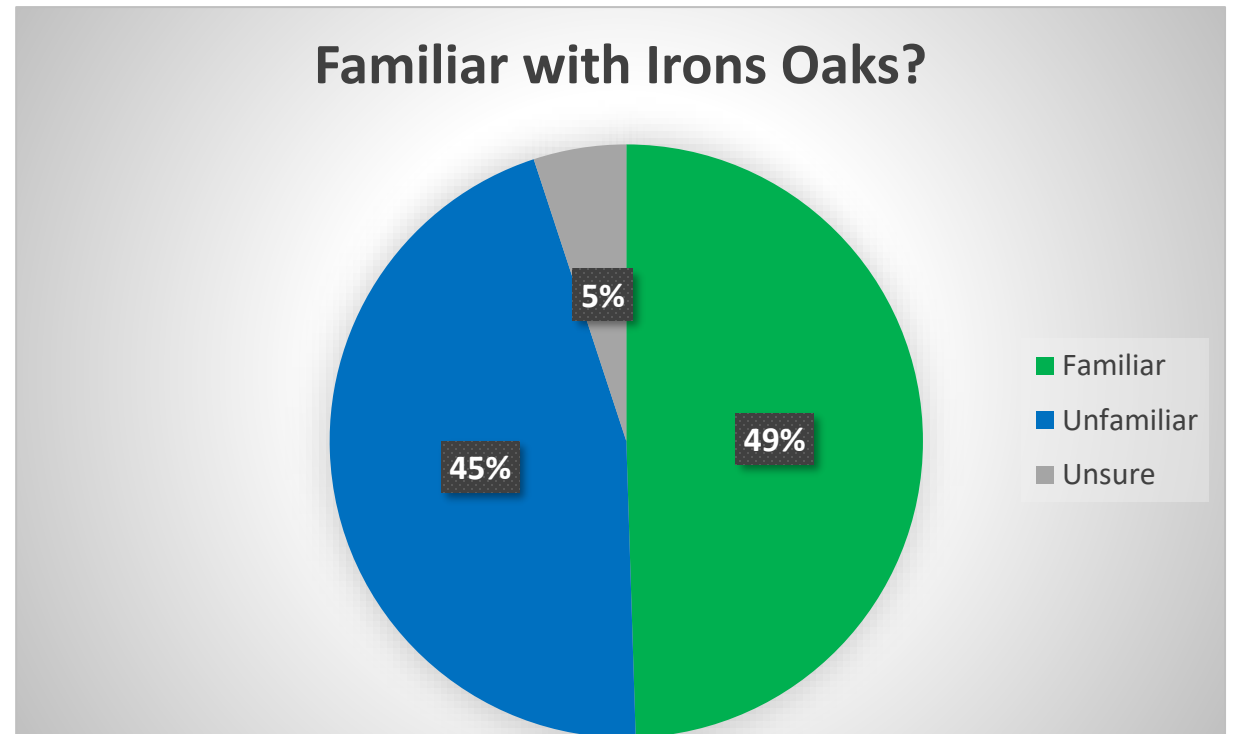


Are You Familiar with Irons Oaks?

The sample was split with 49% (n=46) indicating they are familiar with Irons Oaks

45% (n=42) are unfamiliar with Irons Oaks

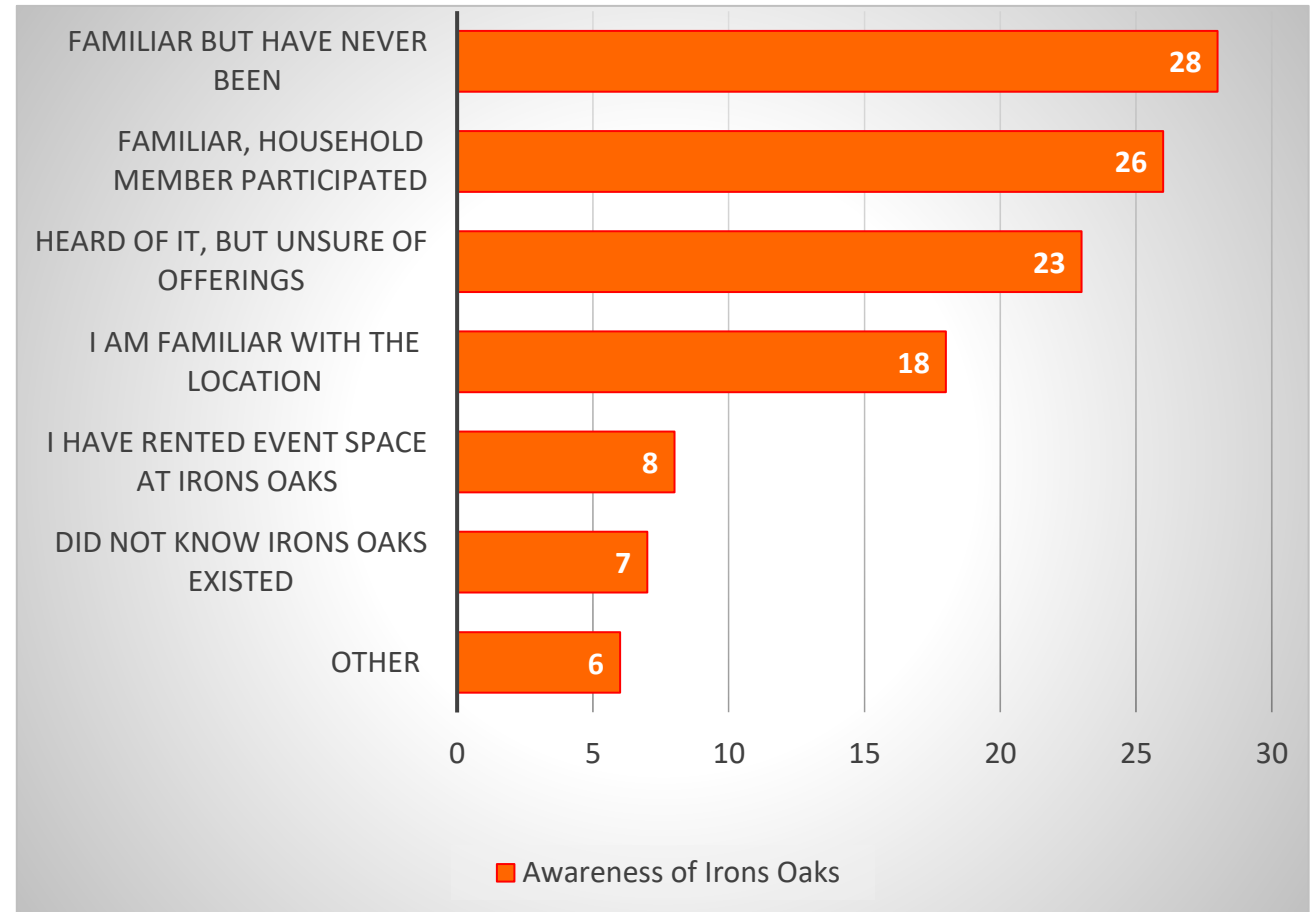
5% (n= 5) are unsure



Awareness of Irons Oaks

- 28 respondents are aware of Irons Oaks but have not visited
- 26 respondents are familiar and someone in their household engaged in a program at Irons Oaks
- 23 respondents heard of Irons Oaks but are unsure of their offerings
- 18 are familiar with Irons Oaks location

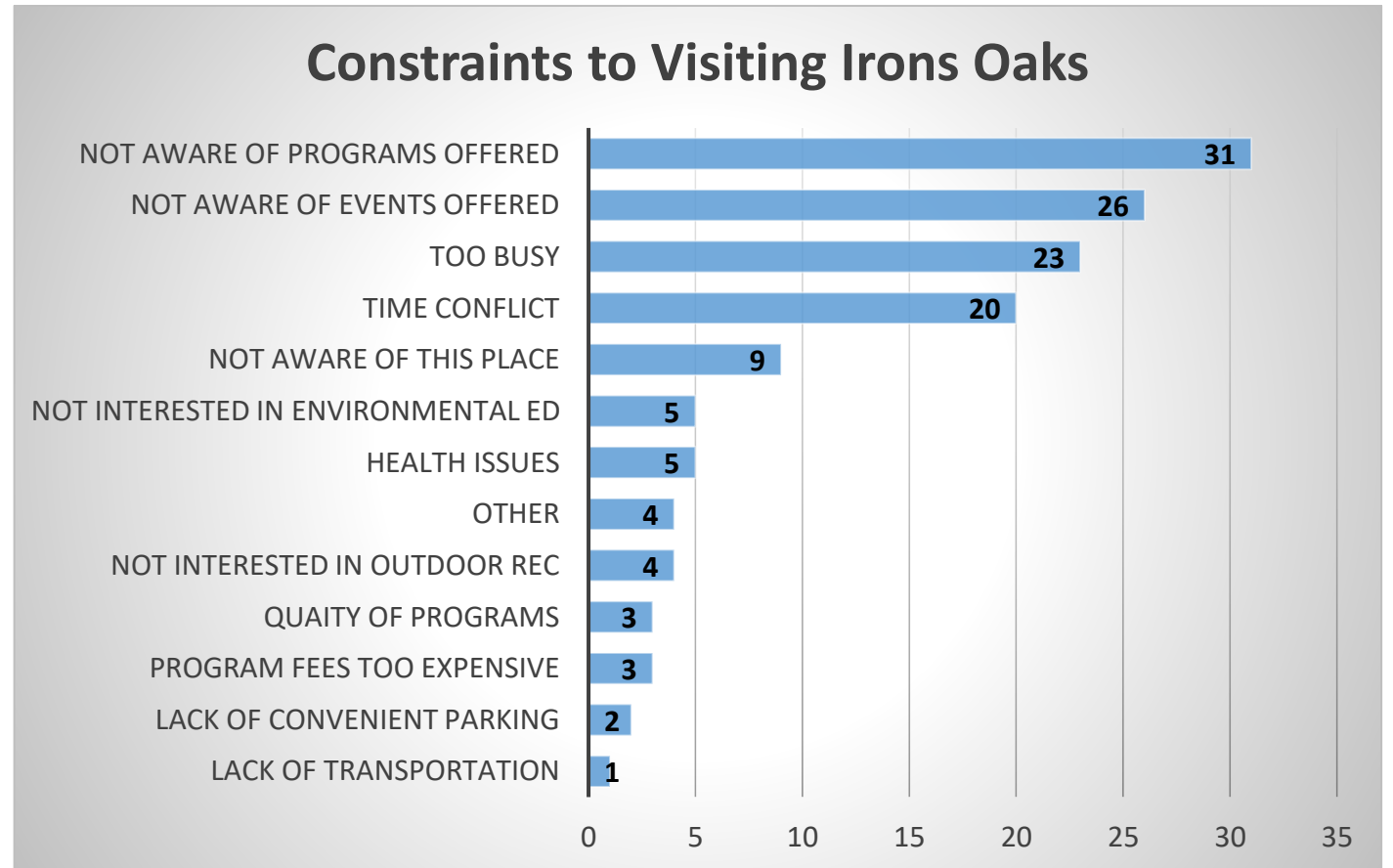
Awareness is relatively high among this sample



Constraints to Visiting Irons Oaks ELC

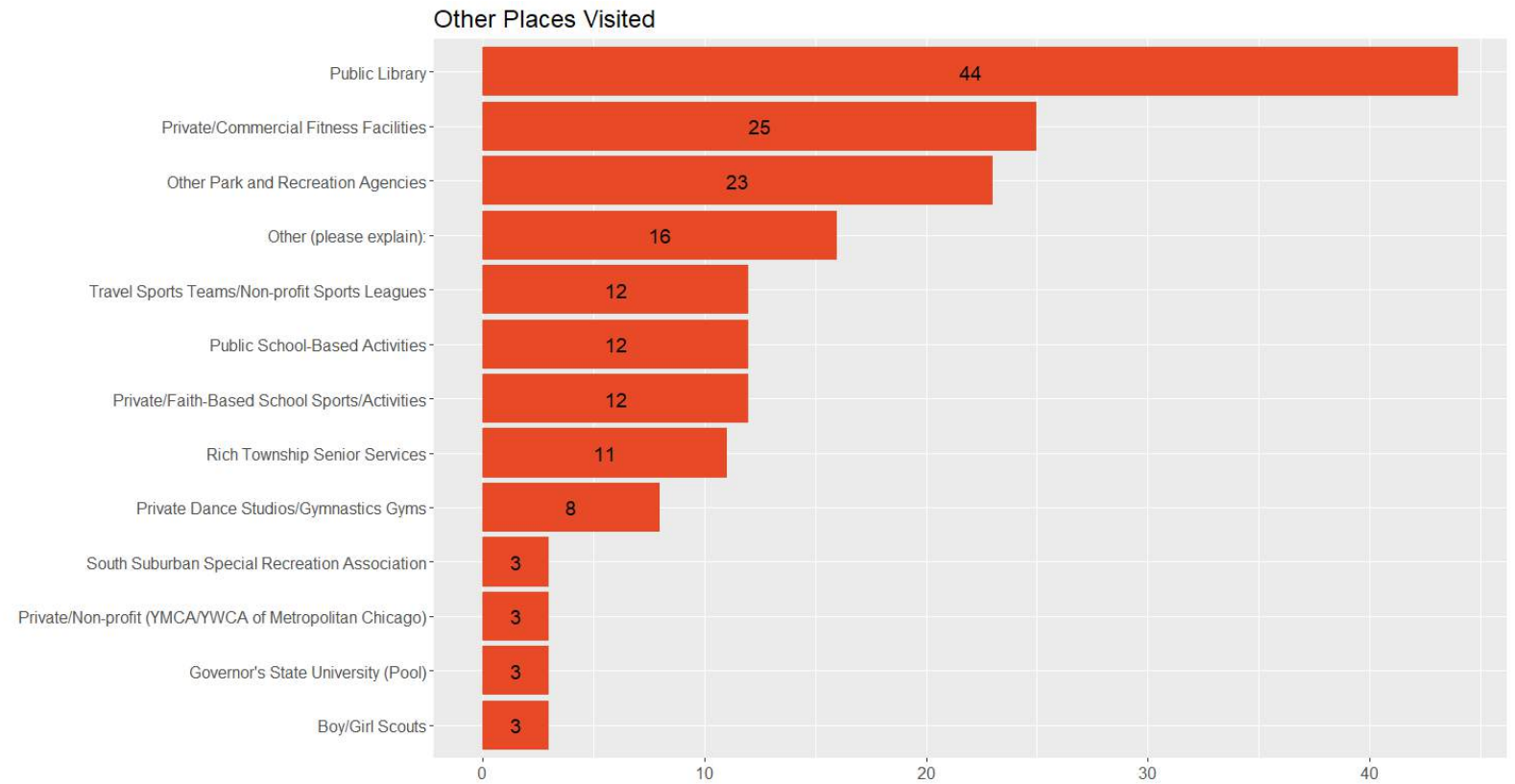
The most commonly reported
Constraint to visiting Irons Oaks
is:

- Unaware of programs (n=31)
- Not aware of events (n=26)
- Too busy (n=23)
- Time conflict (n=20)
- Not aware of this place (n=9)



Other Recreation Sites Visited

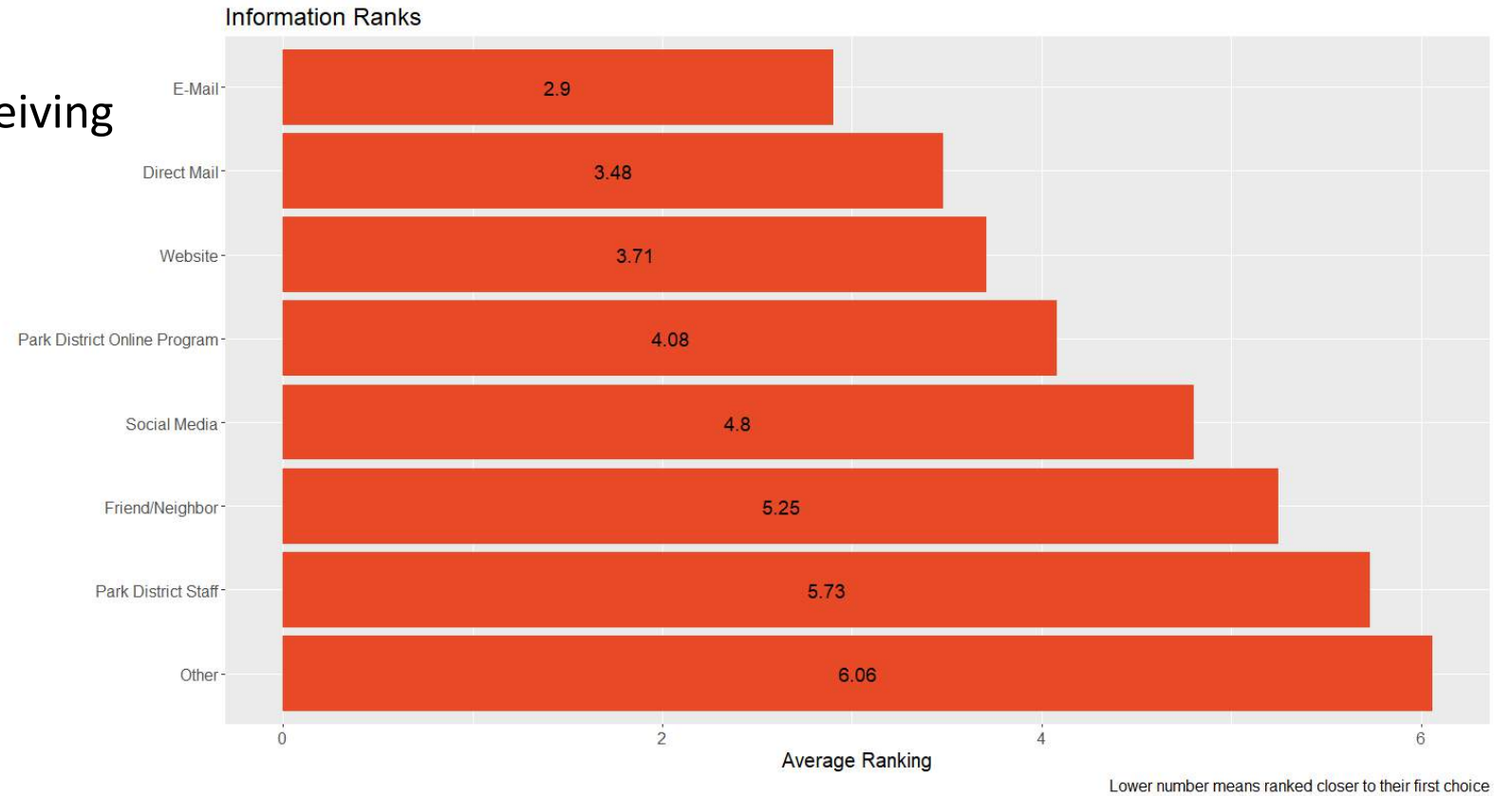
- The Public Library was most frequently visited (n=44)
- Private/commercial fitness facilities (n=25)
- Other park and recreation agencies (n=23)
- Other answers included: Matteson Community Center, Homewood-Flossmor Park District, and private horseback riding



Preferences for Receiving Information about the Park District

The most preferred method of receiving Information is:

- Email
- Direct Mail
- Website
- Park District Online Program
- Social Media



Strengths of the Park District

- Almost 80% of respondents agreed that parks and recreation is important to the quality of life in Olympia Fields and that parks and recreation enhances the sense of community
- Most parks and facilities were rated favorably for condition, upkeep and cleanliness
- Two-thirds agreed that programs are a good value



Strengths of the Park District

- Special events are highly rated and well attended by respondents
- All programs were rated favorably, indicating this is an area the park district excels. In particular, respondents highly rated:
 - Summer Day Camp
 - Fitness Programs (i.e., chair aerobics, Zumba, Jammin' with Janelle)
 - Jujitsu
- The Bradford Barn and Picnic Areas are the most popular facilities for rentals within the OFPD

Capital Project Importance & Rankings: Future Initiatives

The park district should consider prioritizing the following capital projects:

- Add amenities along existing trail corridors (e.g., benches, water fountains)
 - Trails of Olympia were rated lower and some respondents indicated trails need maintenance (e.g., re-paving, tree trimming)
- More parking at parks
- More indoor space for recreation programs
- Enhance safe routes to parks by bicycle or walking
- Renovate the Cull House for programs
 - This is relatively untapped space for programming

Recommendations

- **Active Adult/Senior Programs:** Consider adding:
 - Fitness Programs: Moderately high interest in more health and fitness programs
 - 50% or more are interested in:
 - Fit and Strong (strength, flexibility and walking program)
 - Wits Workout (wellness program focused on 6 factors that affect brain health)
 - Walk with Ease (arthritis management program focused on walking and nutrition)
 - Outdoor recreation and education programs

Recommendations

- **Youth Programs:** Consider adding:
 - STEAM Programs
 - Hobby Programs
 - Music Activities
 - Challenge Course Activities

Utilizing Irons Oaks More for Youth Programs: Utilize Irons Oaks for outdoor adventure programming such:

- Introduction to climbing
- Challenge course program
- Introduction to snow shoeing
- Nature education and outdoor skills
- Bring STEAM and hobby programs to Irons Oaks (space permitting)

Recommendations: Irons Oaks Awareness

- Most respondents are familiar with Irons Oaks
 - Many have not visited themselves
- **Recommendation:**
 - Increase programming at Irons Oaks year round
 - Hobby / special interest
 - Fitness and wellness
 - Outdoor recreation and education
 - Increase the presence of Irons Oaks on OFPD Website
 - Make the link to Irons Oaks easier to find on the website



Recommendations

- Marketing:
 - 47% disagree that OFPD has effective marketing
 - Redesign the park district website
 - Some information is outdated
 - Difficult to find the seasonal program brochure online (for viewing and downloading)
 - Organization and user-friendliness of the website could be improved
 - Continue to grow social media activity and increase your presence on Instagram