

Community Attitude and Interest Survey

Executive Summary of Citizen Survey Results

Overview of the Methodology

The Wheeling Park District conducted a Community Attitude and Interest Survey during June and July of 2005 to help establish priorities for the future development of parks and recreation facilities, programs and services within the community. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the Wheeling Park District and adjacent areas in the Village of Prospect Heights and Buffalo Grove. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with Wheeling Park District officials and residents of the Wheeling Park District in the development of the survey questionnaire. These efforts included a series of stakeholder interviews and focus groups with Wheeling Park District residents and Wheeling Park District officials, plus a public forum for Wheeling Park District residents held over a two (2) day period from April 13, 2005 to April 14, 2005. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

In June of 2005, surveys were mailed to a random sample of 2,003 households in the Wheeling Park District and the adjacent areas. Approximately three days after the surveys were mailed, each household that received a survey received an electronic voice message encouraging them to complete the survey. Additionally, about two weeks after the surveys were mailed, Leisure Vision began contacting households by phone, either to encourage completion of the mailed survey or to administer the survey by phone.

The goal was to obtain at least 500 completed surveys, including at least 425 surveys from residents of the Wheeling Park District. This goal was accomplished, with 516 surveys having been completed, including 442 by Wheeling Park District residents. The results of the random sample of 516 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.3%. The results of the random sample of 442 Park District households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.7%.

This report contains the following eight sections:

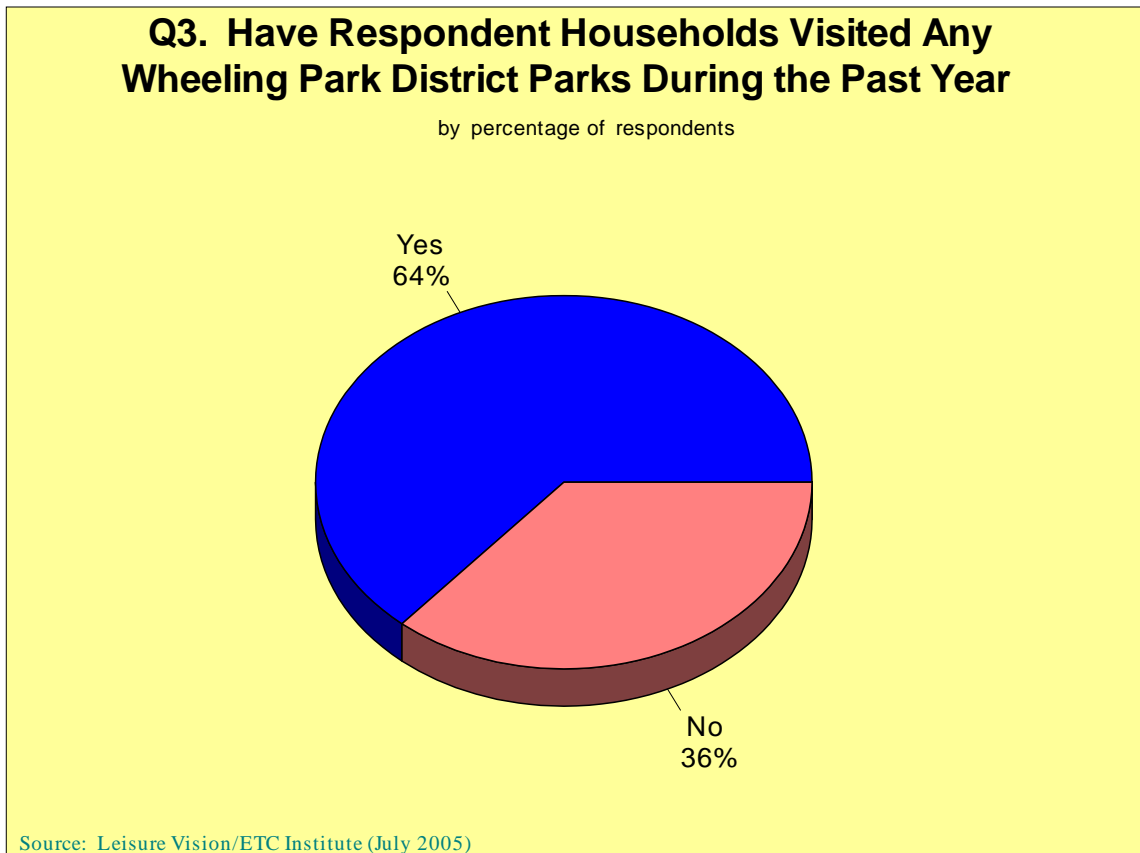
- an executive summary of survey results
- national benchmarks compared to the Wheeling Park District and Importance-Unmet Needs Matrix
- focus group summary report, stakeholder interview report, staff focus group report, and public forum report
- cross-tabular data by gender, household size & household type
- cross-tabular data by park visitation, program participation & satisfaction with the overall value received from the Wheeling Park District
- cross-tabular data by age of respondents, household income & Wheeling Park District residency
- cross-tabular data by Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Ancestry, race & speaking a 2nd language in respondent's home
- a copy of the survey instrument.

Major survey findings are shown on the following pages based on the 442 Park District respondents:

Visitation of Parks During the Past Year

Respondents were asked if they or members of their household have visited any Wheeling Park District parks during the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

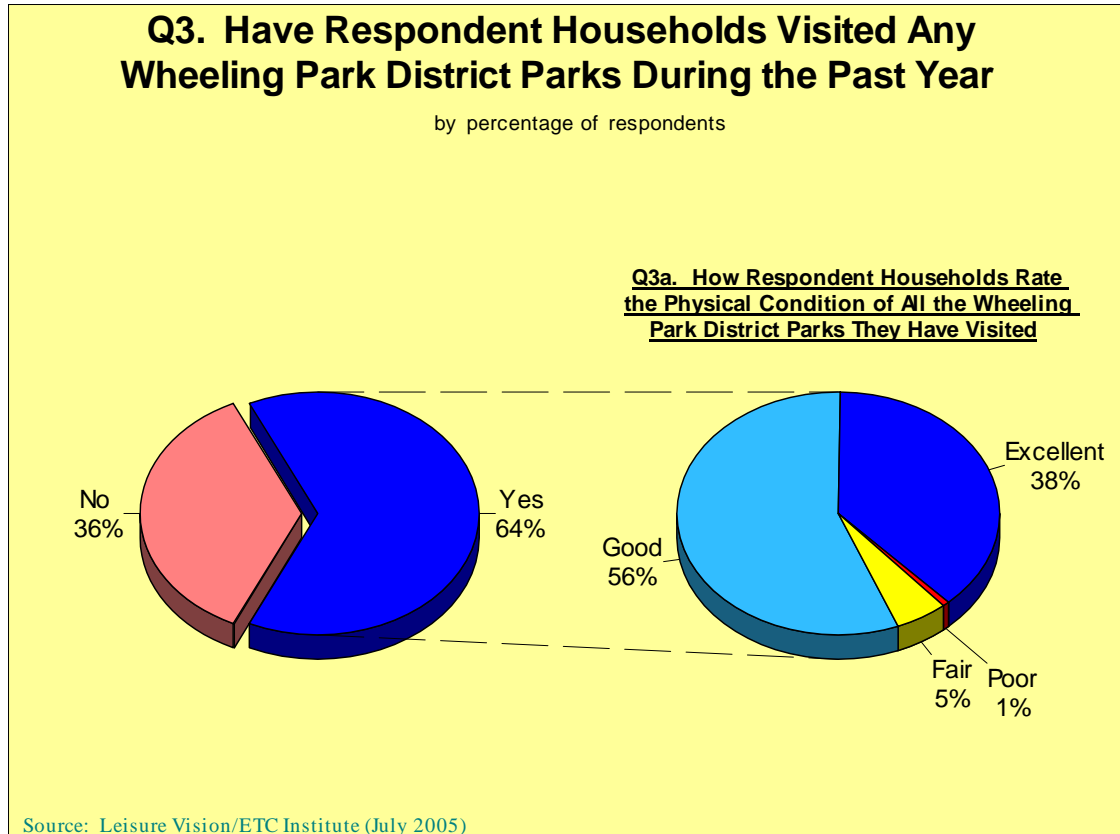
- **Sixty-four percent (64%) of respondent households have visited Wheeling Park District parks during the past year.**



Physical Condition of Parks

Respondent households that have visited Wheeling Park District parks during the past year were asked to rate the physical condition of all the parks they have visited. The following summarizes key findings:

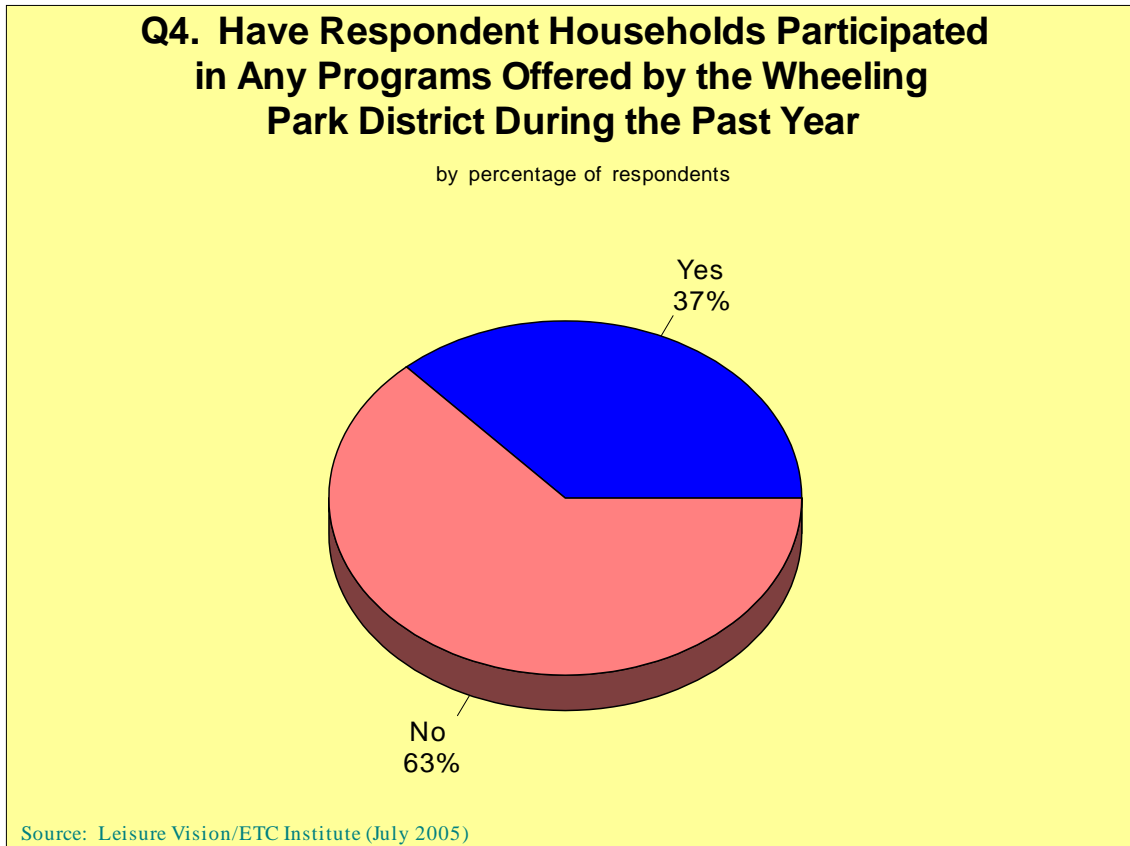
- **Ninety-four percent (94%) of respondent households rated the physical condition of all the Wheeling Park District parks they have visited as either excellent (38%) or good (56%).** An additional 5% of respondents rated the parks as fair, and only 1% rated the parks as poor.



Participation in Wheeling Park District Programs

Respondents were asked if they or other members of their household have participated in any programs offered by the Wheeling Park District during the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

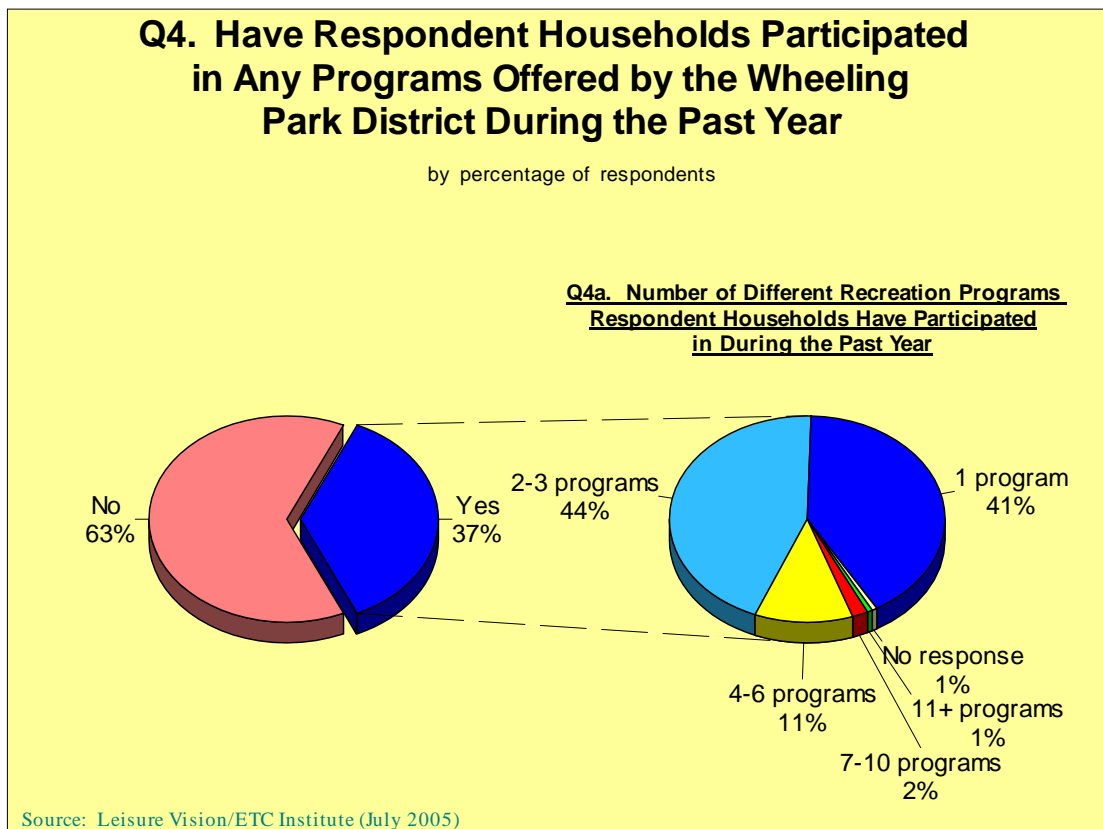
- **Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondent households have participated in programs offered by the Wheeling Park District during the past year.**



Frequency of Visits to Programs

Respondent households that have participated in programs offered by the Wheeling Park District during the past year were asked to indicate the number of different programs they have participated in during that time. The following summarizes key findings:

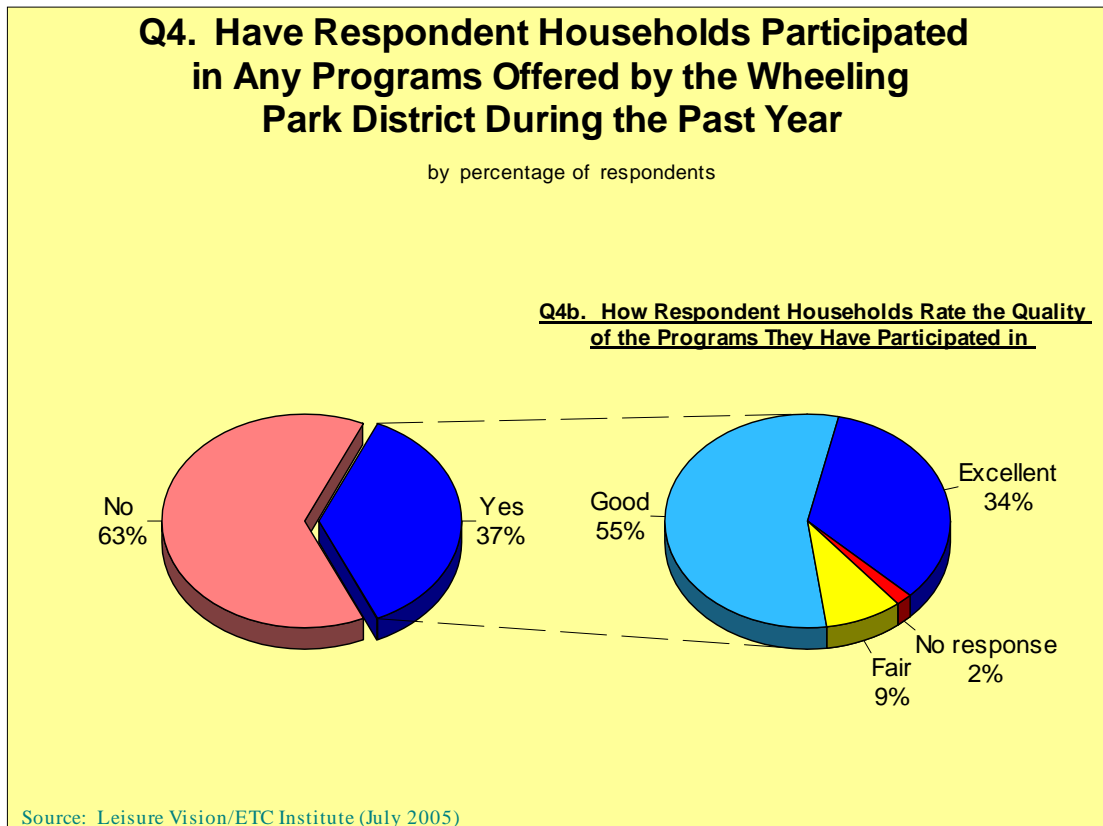
- Forty-four percent (44%) of respondent households that have participated in programs during the past year have participated in 2-3 different programs during that time. In addition, 41% of respondent households have participated in 1 program over the past year, 11% have participated in 4-6 programs, 2% have participated in 7-10 programs, and 1% have participated in 11 or more programs over the past year.



Quality of Wheeling Park District Programs

Respondent households that have participated in programs offered by the Wheeling Park District during the past year were asked to rate the quality of the programs they have participated in. The following summarizes key findings:

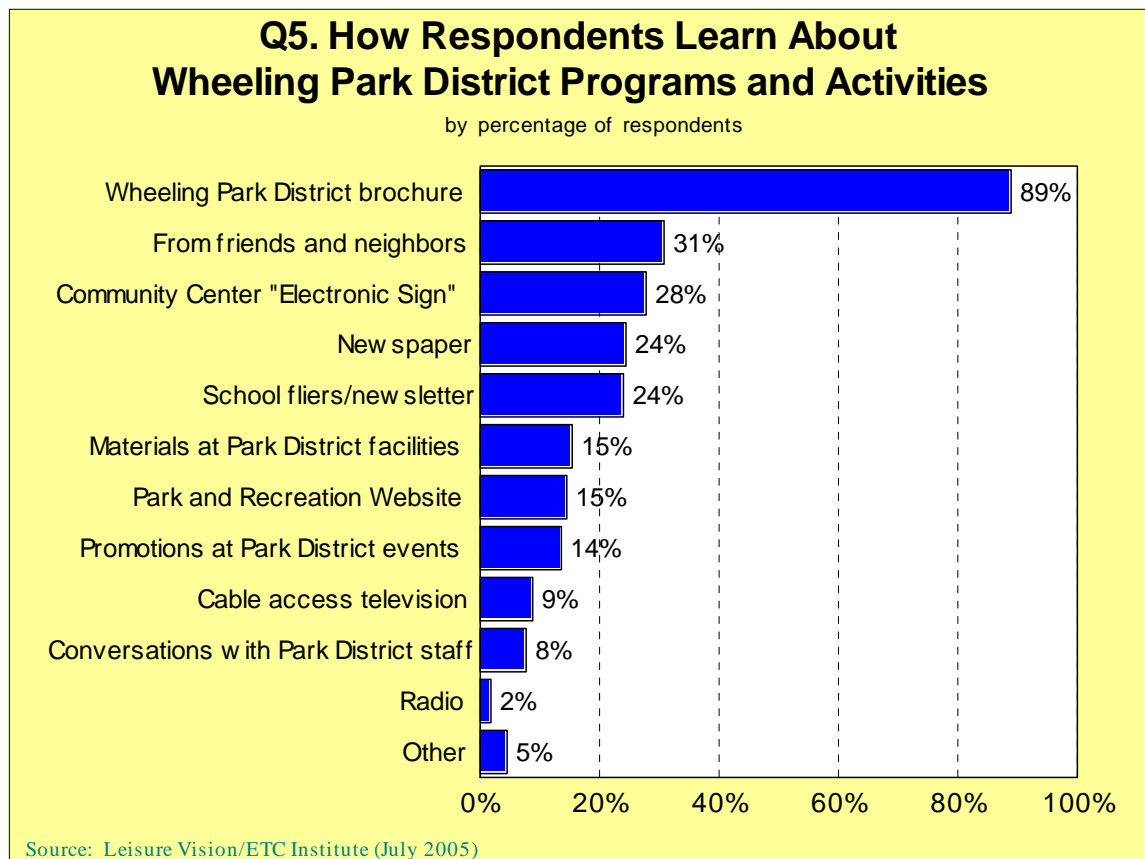
- **Eighty-nine percent (89%) of respondent households rated the quality of programs they have participated in as either excellent (34%) or good (55%).** An additional 9% rated the programs as fair and less than 1% rated the programs as poor. The remaining 2% did not provide a response.



Ways Respondents Learn About Programs and Activities

From a list of 11 options, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ways they learn about Wheeling Park District programs and activities. The following summarizes key findings:

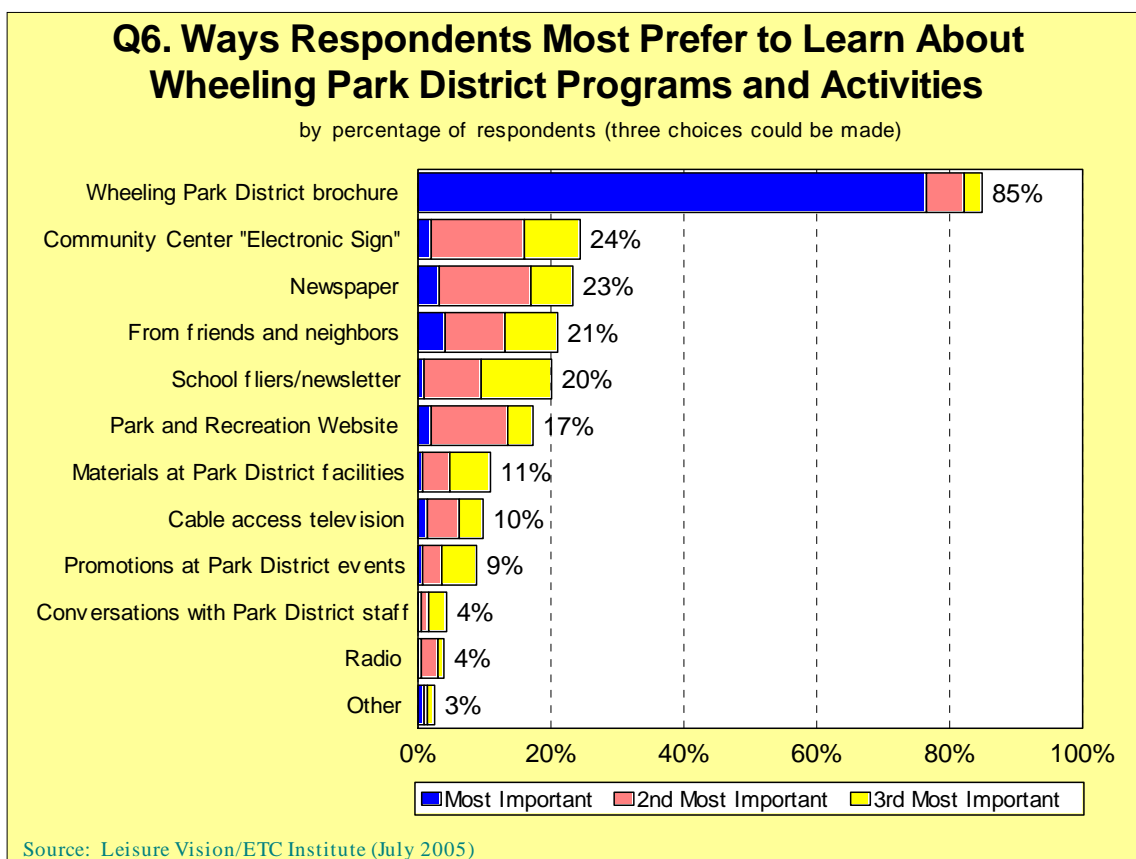
- **The Wheeling Park District brochure (89%) is by a wide margin the most frequently mentioned way that respondents learn about programs and activities.** There are four other ways that over 20% of respondents learn about programs and activities, including: from friends and neighbors (31%), Community Center “Electronic Sign” (28%), newspaper (24%), and school fliers/newsletter (24%).



Ways Respondents Most Prefer to Learn About Programs and Activities

From the list of 11 options, respondents were asked to indicate the three ways they most prefer to learn about Wheeling Park District programs and activities. The following summarizes key findings:

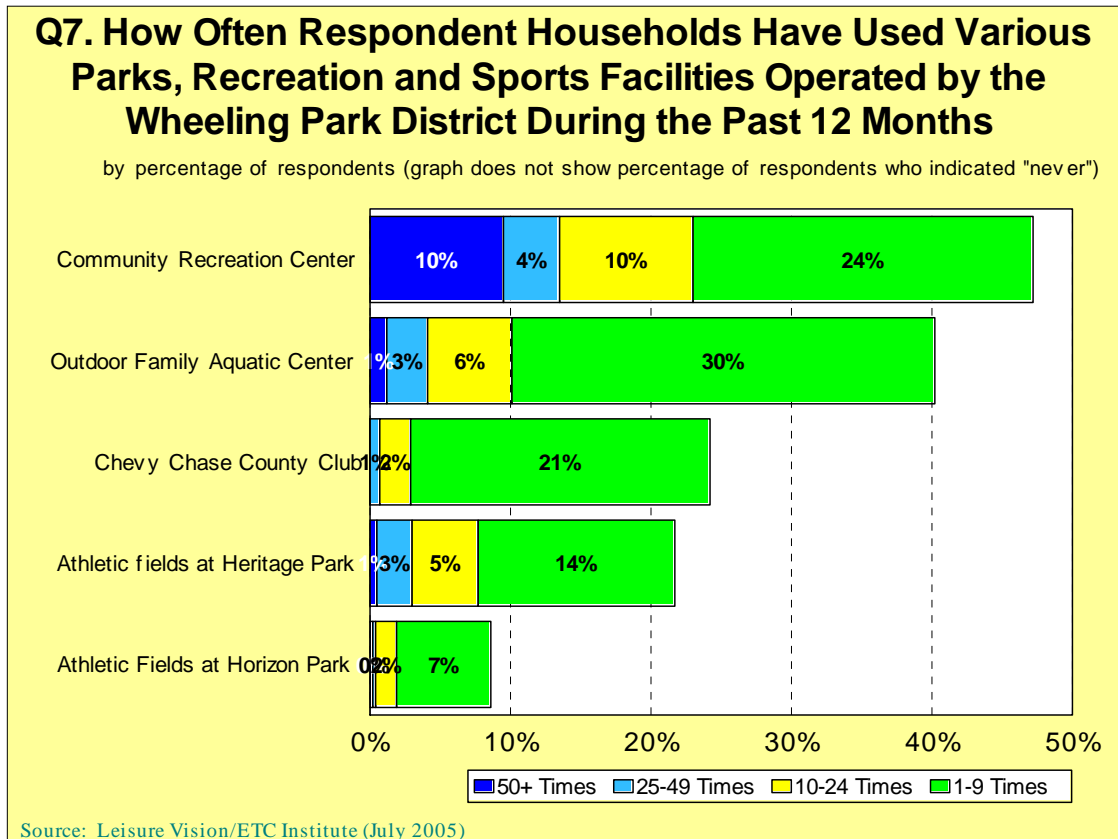
- The Wheeling Park District brochure (85%) had by a wide margin the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the three ways they most prefer to learn about programs and activities.** There are four other ways that at least 20% of respondents selected as one of their three most preferred ways to learn about programs and activities, including: Community Center “Electronic Sign” (24%), newspaper (23%), from friends and neighbors (21%), and school fliers/newsletter (20%). It should also be noted that the Wheeling Park District brochure had by a wide margin the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the way they most prefer to learn about programs/activities.



Frequency of Use of Various Parks, Recreation and Sports Facilities

From a list of five major parks, recreation and sports facilities operated by the Wheeling Park District, respondents were asked to indicate how often they and members of their household have used each of the facilities during the past 12 months. The following summarizes key findings:

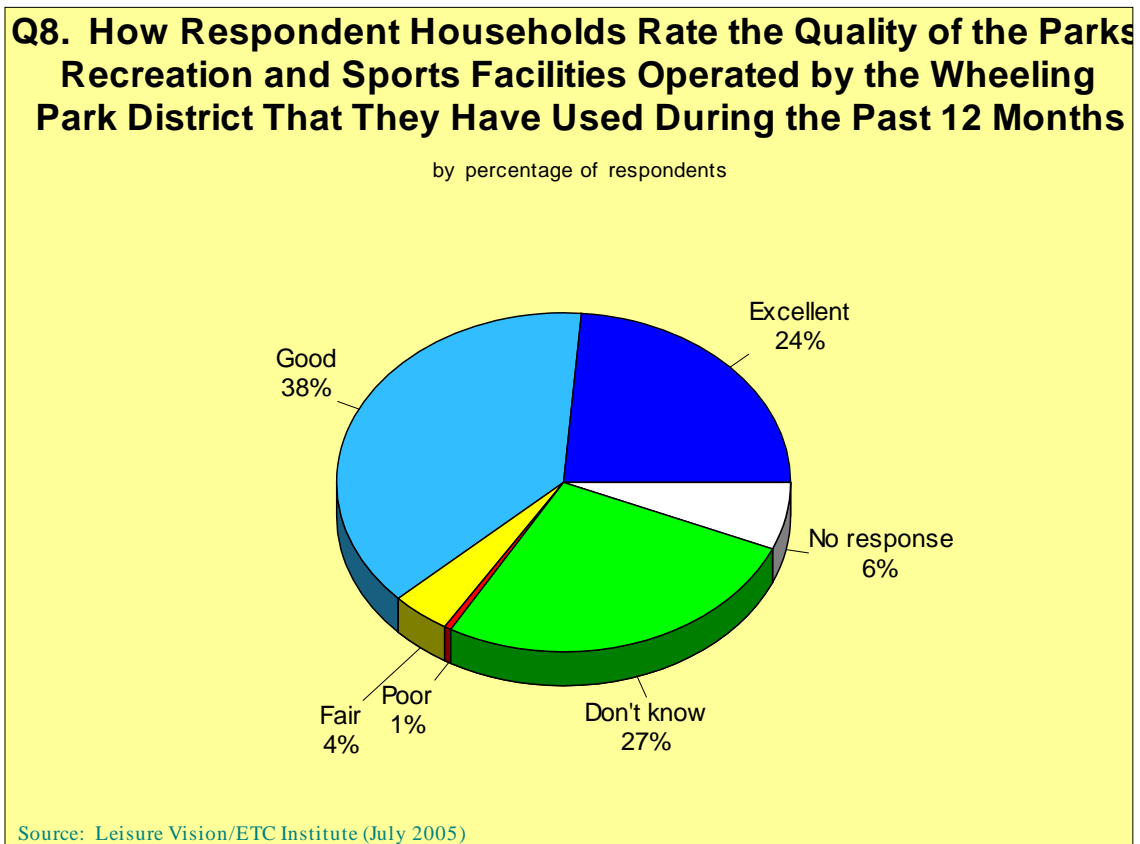
- Community Recreation Center (48%) is the park/facility that has been used by the highest percentage of respondents at least once in the past 12 months.** The Community Recreation Center (24%) is also the park/facility that the highest percentage of respondents have used on a monthly basis during the past 12 months.



Quality of Parks, Recreation and Sports Facilities

Respondent households were asked to rate the overall quality of the major parks, recreation and sports facilities listed in Question #7 they have used during the past 12 months. The following summarizes key findings:

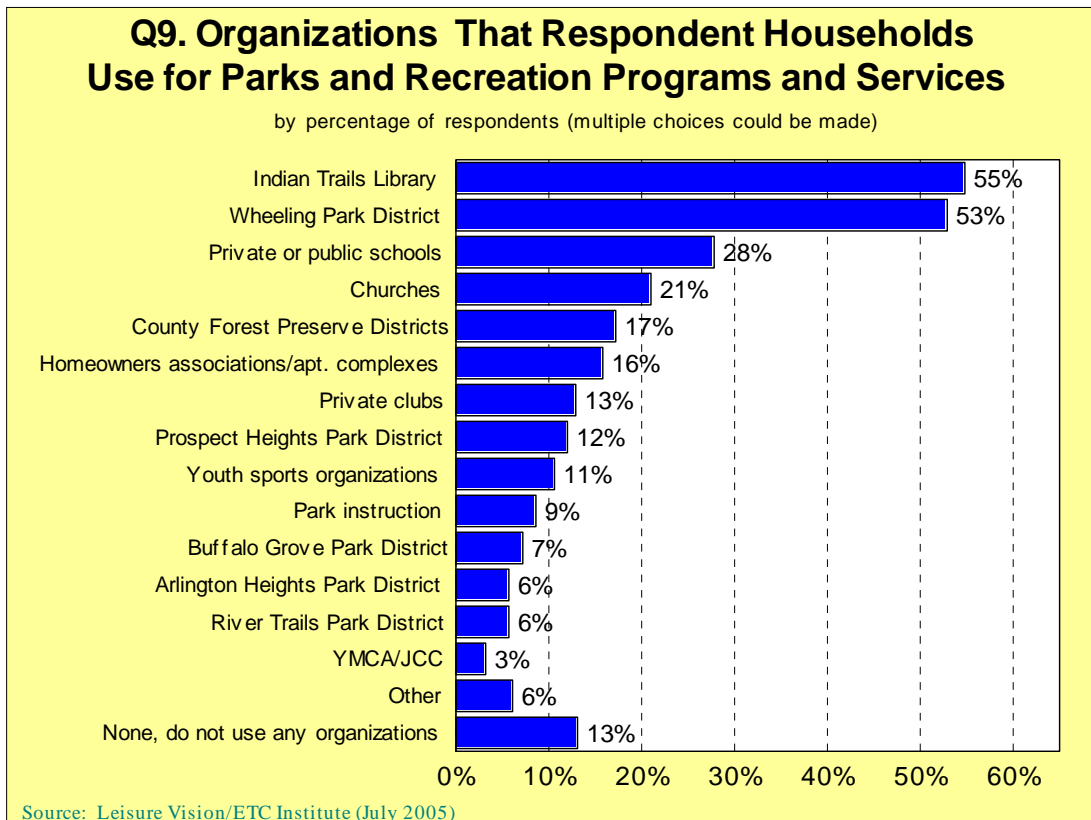
- **Sixty-two percent (62%) of respondent households rated the quality of the parks, recreation, and sports facilities they have used as either excellent (24%) or good (38%).** An additional 4% rated the programs as fair and than 1% rated them as poor. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondents indicated “don’t know” and 6% did not provide a response.



Organizations Used for Parks and Recreation Programs and Services

From a list of 14 options, respondent households were asked to select all of the organizations they use for parks and recreation programs and services. The following summarizes key findings:

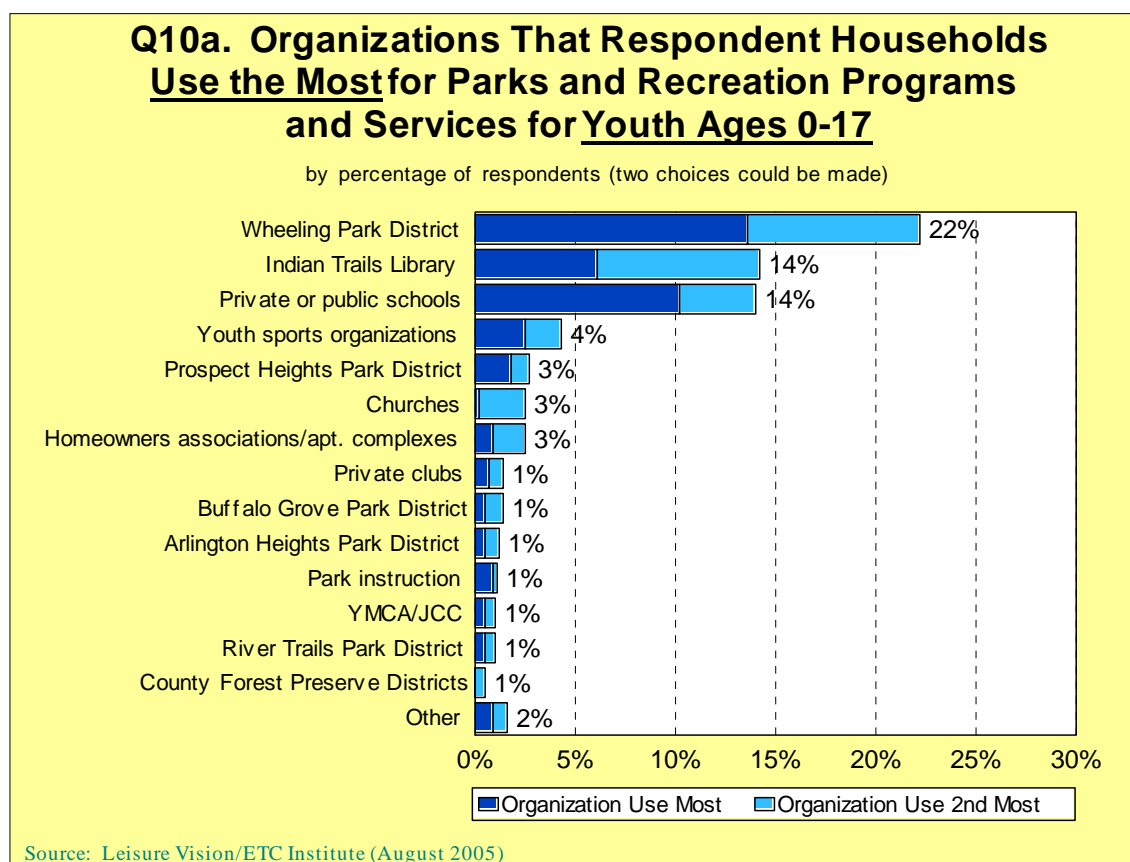
- **The Indian Trails Library (55%) is the organization used by the highest percentage of respondent households.** There are three other organizations used by over 20% of respondent households, including: Wheeling Park District (53%), private or public schools (28%) and churches (21%).



Organizations Used Most for Parks and Recreation Programs and Services for Youth Ages 0-17

From the list of 14 options, respondent households were asked to select the two organizations whose parks and recreation programs and services they use the most for youth ages 0-17. The following summarizes key findings:

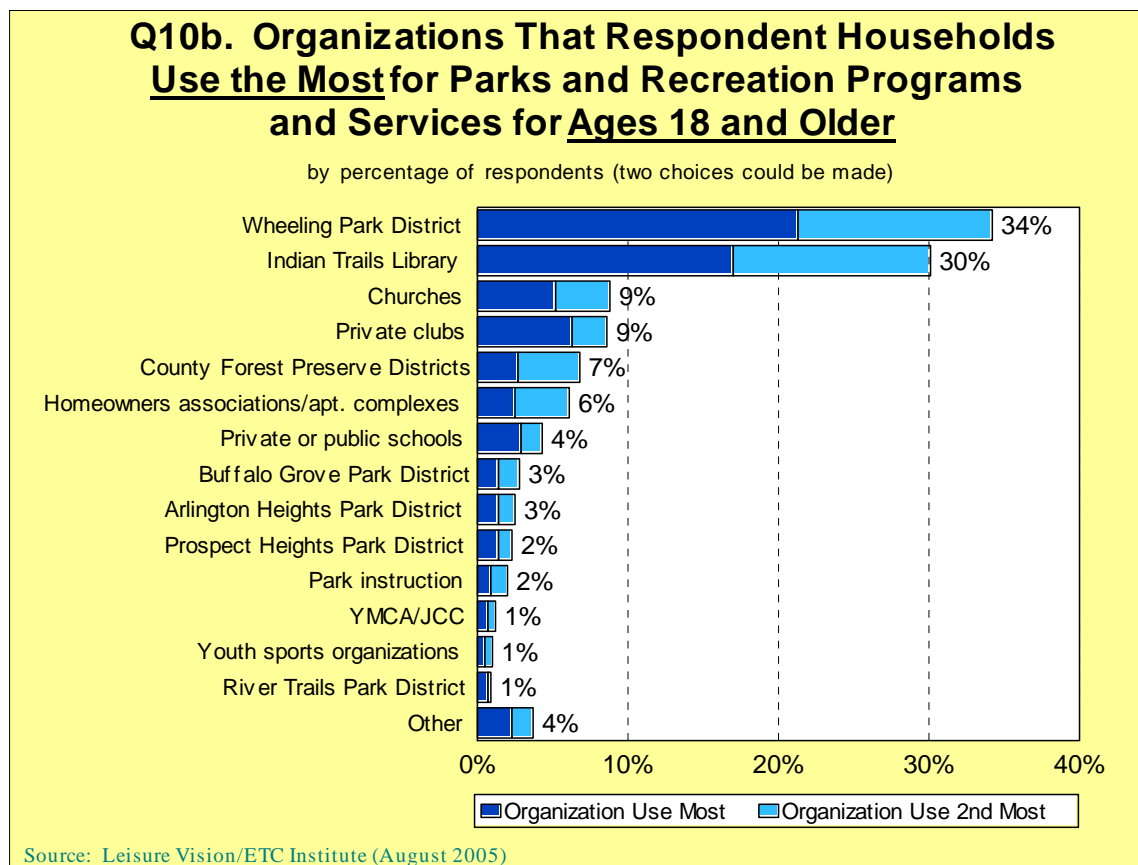
- **The Wheeling Park District (22%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the two organizations they use the most for youth ages 0-17.** There are two other organizations that over 10% of respondents selected as one of the two they use most, including: private or public schools (14%) and Indian Trails Library (14%).



Organizations Used Most for Parks and Recreation Programs and Services for Adults Ages 18+

From the list of 14 options, respondent households were asked to select the two organizations whose parks and recreation programs and services they use the most for adults ages 18 or older. The following summarizes key findings:

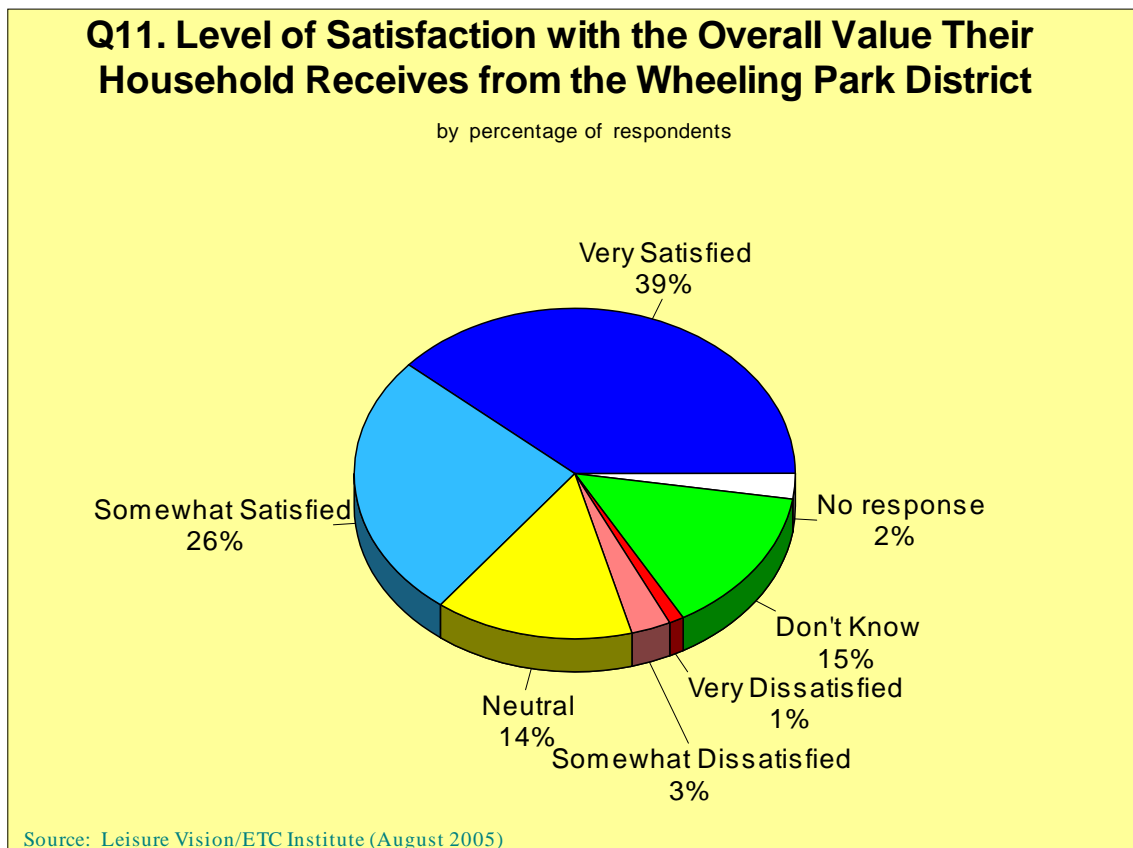
- **The Wheeling Park District (34%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the two organizations they use the most for adults ages 18 or older.** Indian Trails Library (30%) is the other organization that over 10% of respondents use the most for adults ages 18 or older.



Satisfaction with Overall Value Received from the Wheeling Park District

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with the overall value their household receives from the Wheeling Park District. The following summarizes key findings:

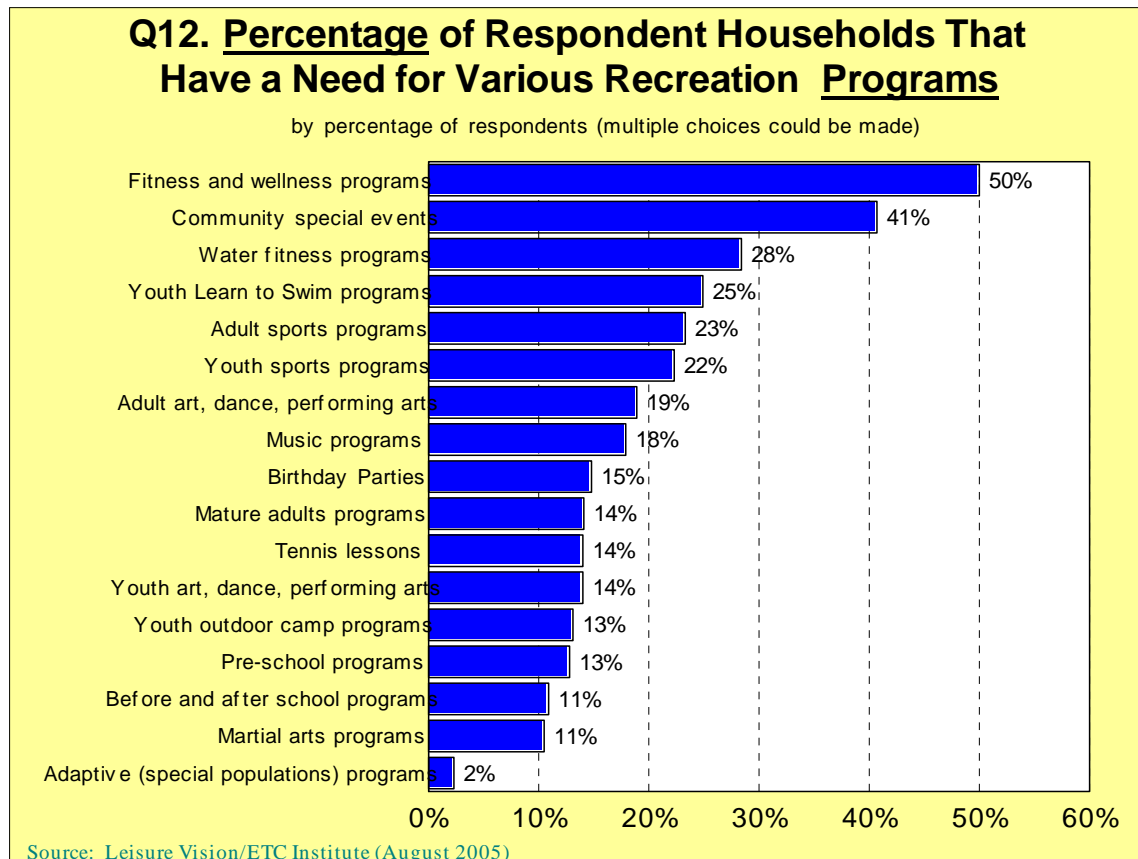
- **Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents indicated being either very satisfied (39%) or somewhat satisfied (26%) with the overall value their household receives from the Wheeling Park District.** In addition, only 4% of respondents indicated being either very dissatisfied (1%) or somewhat dissatisfied (3%) with the overall value their household receives. Fourteen percent (14%) of respondents indicated “neutral” and 15% indicated “don’t know.”



Need for Recreation Programs

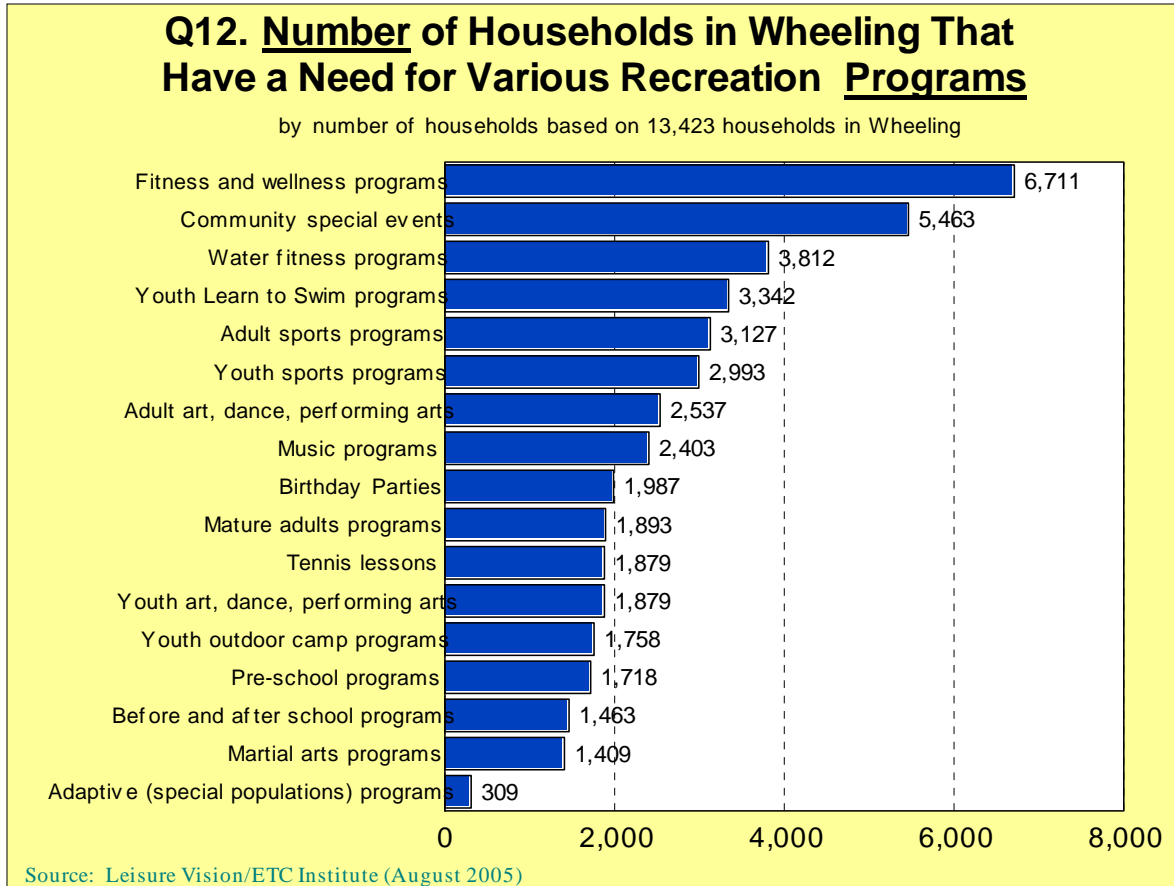
From a list of 17 recreation programs, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Four of the 17 recreation programs had at least 25% of respondent households indicate they have a need for it.** These four programs include: fitness and wellness programs (50%), community special events (41%), water fitness programs (28%), and Youth Learn to Swim programs (25%).



Need For Recreation Programs in Wheeling

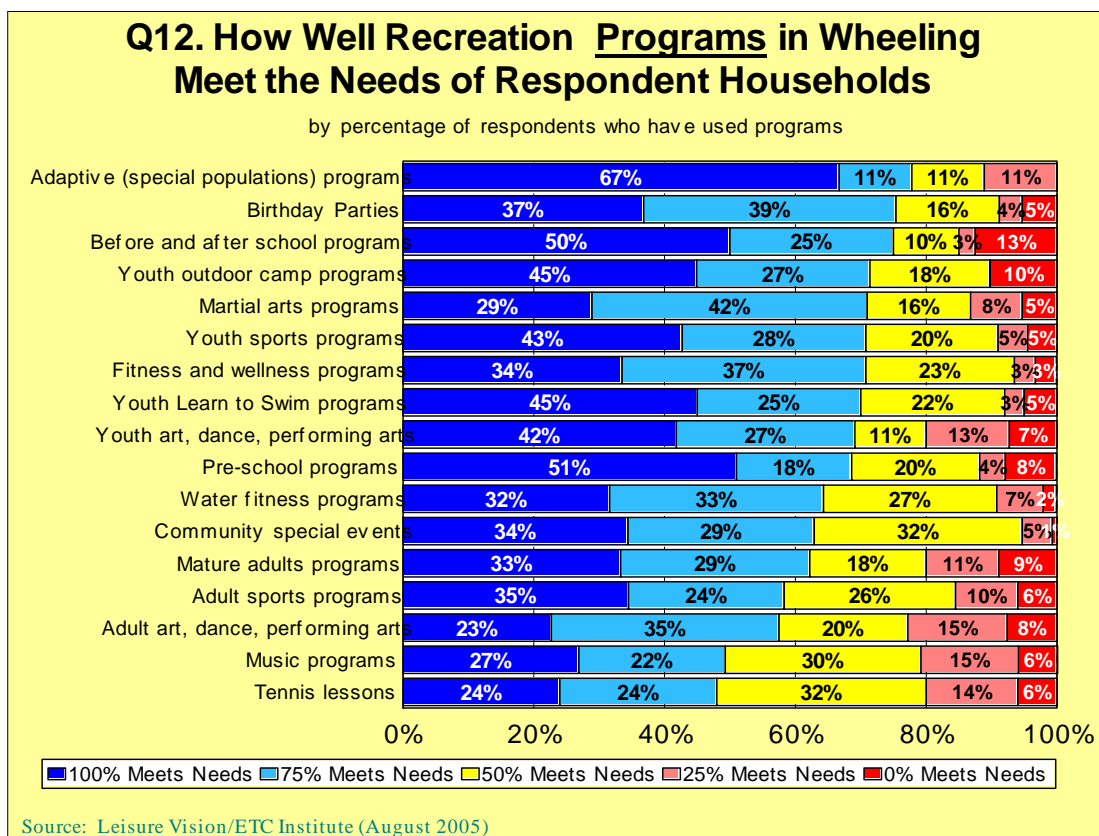
From the list of 17 recreation programs, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The graph below summarizes key findings on the previous page by the number of households having a need for various recreation programs in Wheeling, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



How Well Recreation Programs Meet Needs

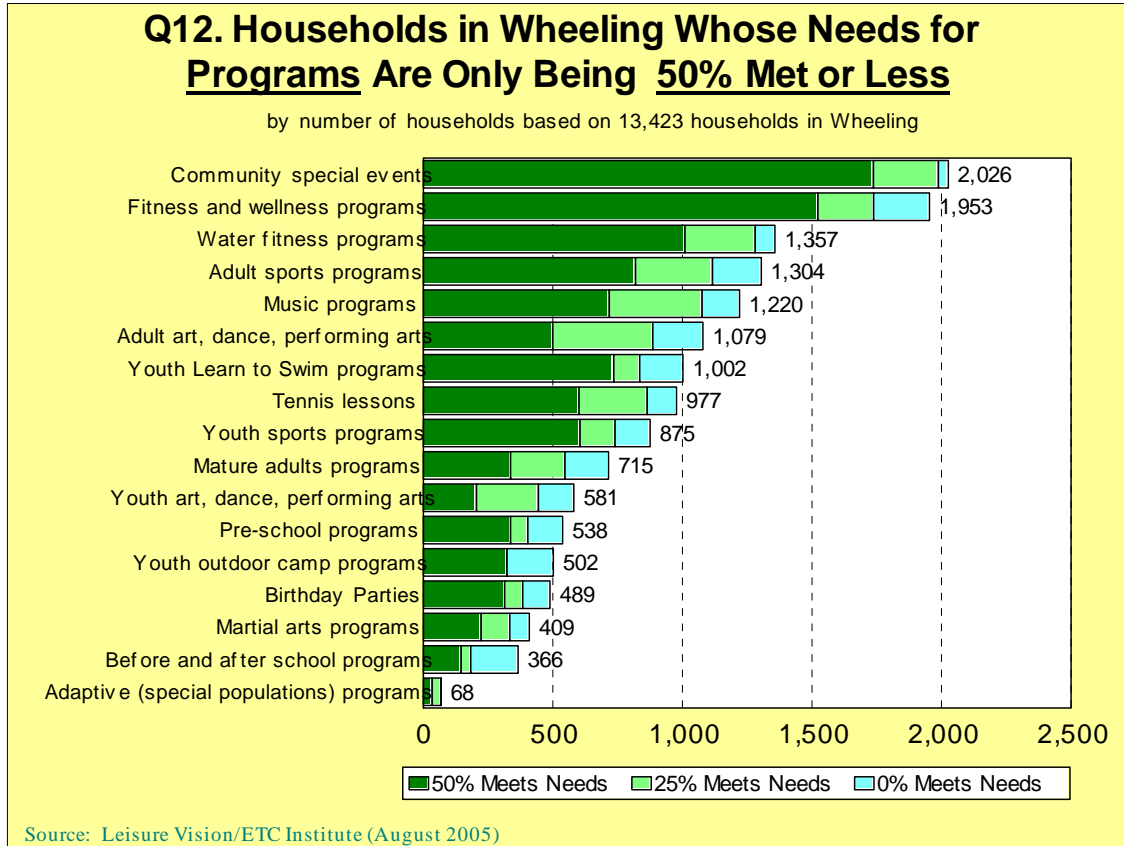
From the list of 17 recreation programs, respondent households that have a need for programs were asked to indicate how well those programs meet their needs. The following summarizes key findings:

- Five of the 17 recreation programs had at least 45% of respondents indicate that the program 100% meets the needs of their household.** These five programs include: adaptive programs (67%), pre-school programs (51%), before and after school programs (50%), youth outdoor camp programs (45%), and Youth Learn to Swim programs (45%). It should also be noted that 16 of the 17 programs had 50% or less of respondent households indicate that their needs are being 100% met by the program.



Households in Wheeling with 50% or Less of their Program Needs Being Met

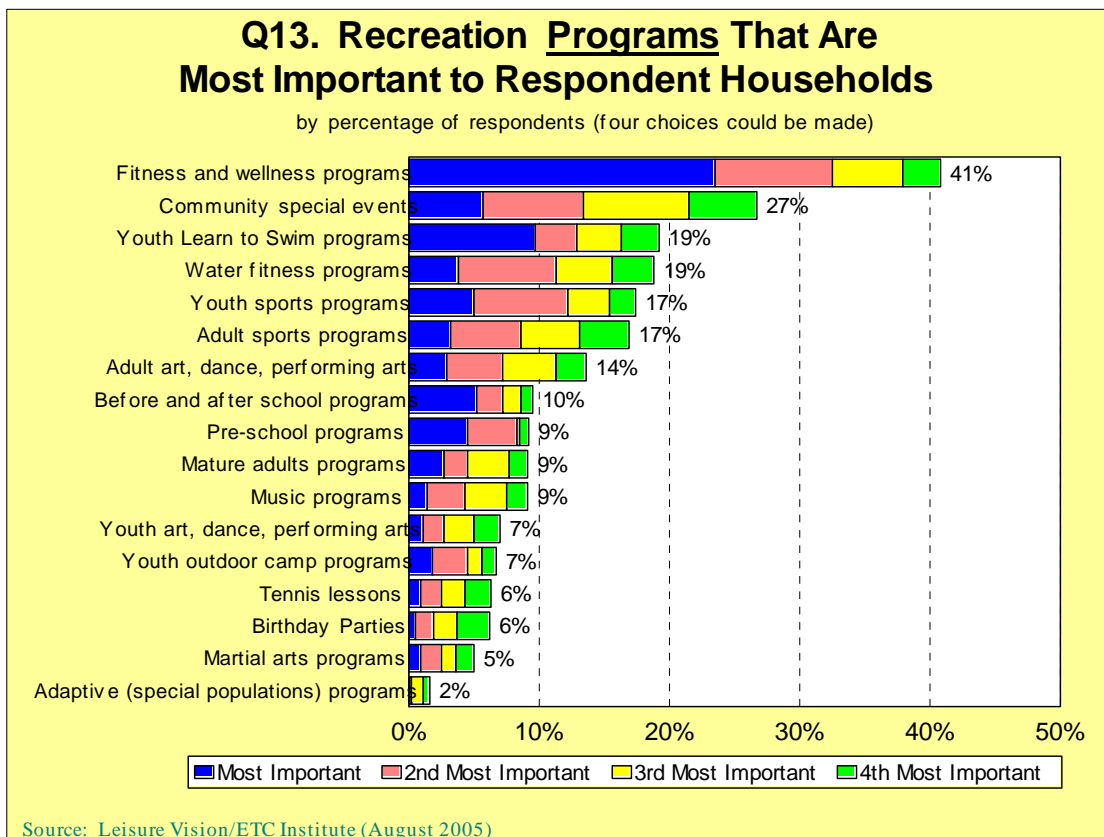
From the list of 17 recreation programs, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those facilities meet their needs. The graph below shows the number of households in Wheeling whose needs for facilities are only being 50% met or less, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



Most Important Recreation Programs

From the list of 17 recreation programs, respondents were asked to select the four that are most important to them and members of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

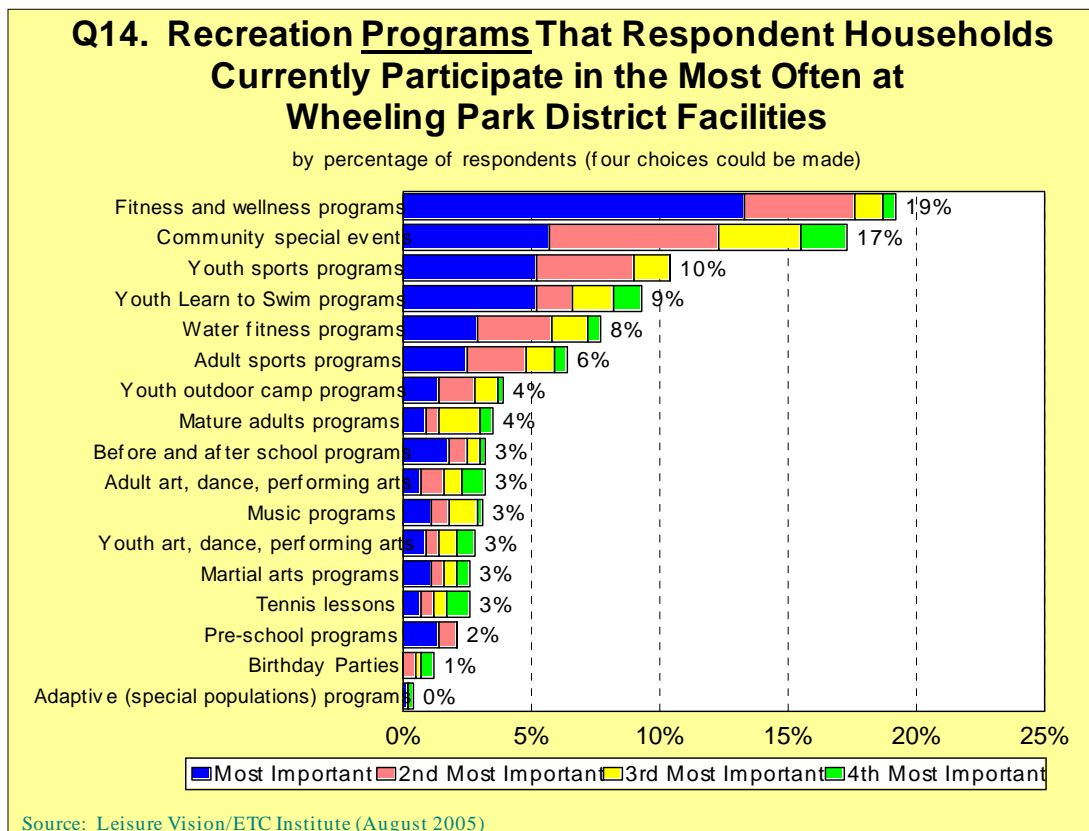
- Fitness and wellness programs (41%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the four most important programs to them and members of their household.** There are five other programs that over 15% of respondents selected as one of the four most important, including: community special events (27%), Youth Learn to Swim programs (19%), water fitness programs (19%), youth sports programs (17%), and adult sports programs (17%). It should also be noted that fitness and wellness programs had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important program.



Recreation Programs Respondents Participate in Most Often at Wheeling Park District Facilities

From the list of 17 recreation programs, respondents were asked to select the four that they and members of their household currently participate in most often at Wheeling Park District facilities. The following summarizes key findings:

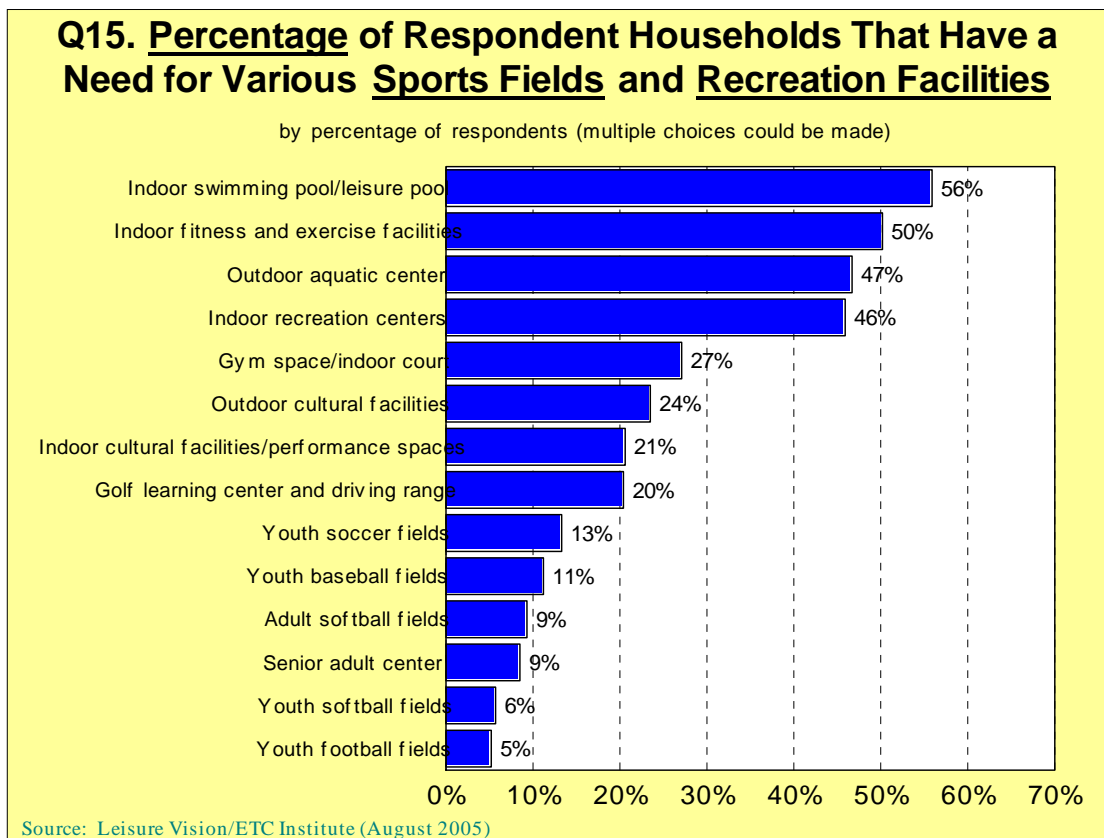
- Fitness and wellness programs (19%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the four programs they currently participate in most often.** There are two other programs that at least 10% of respondents selected as one of the four they currently participate in most often, including: community special events (17%) and youth sports programs (10%). It should also be noted that fitness and wellness programs had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the program they currently participate in most often at Wheeling Park District facilities.



Need for Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities

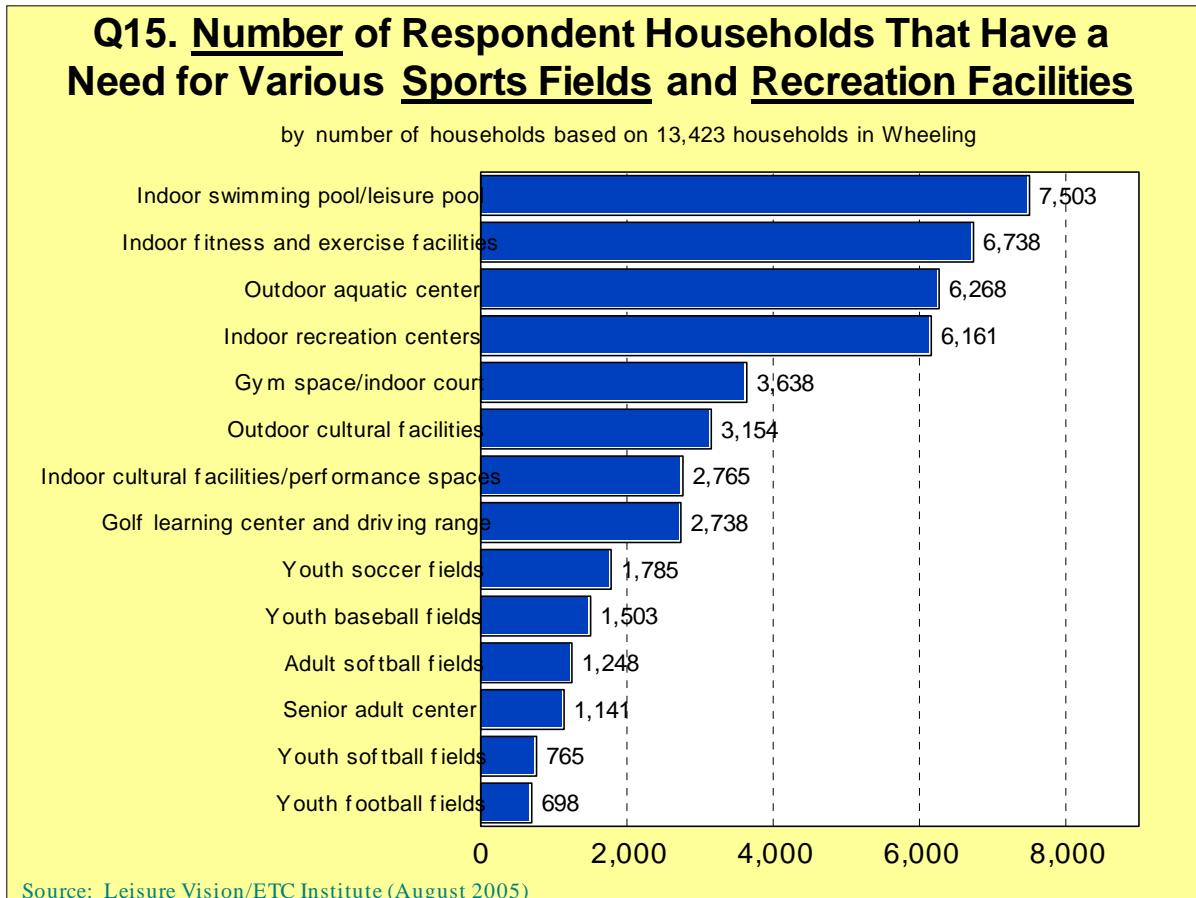
From a list of 14 sports fields and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Four of the 14 fields and facilities had over 45% of respondent households indicate they have a need for it.** These four fields/facilities include: indoor swimming pool/leisure pool (56%), indoor fitness and exercise facilities (50%), outdoor aquatic center (47%), and indoor recreation centers (46%).



Need For Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities in Wheeling

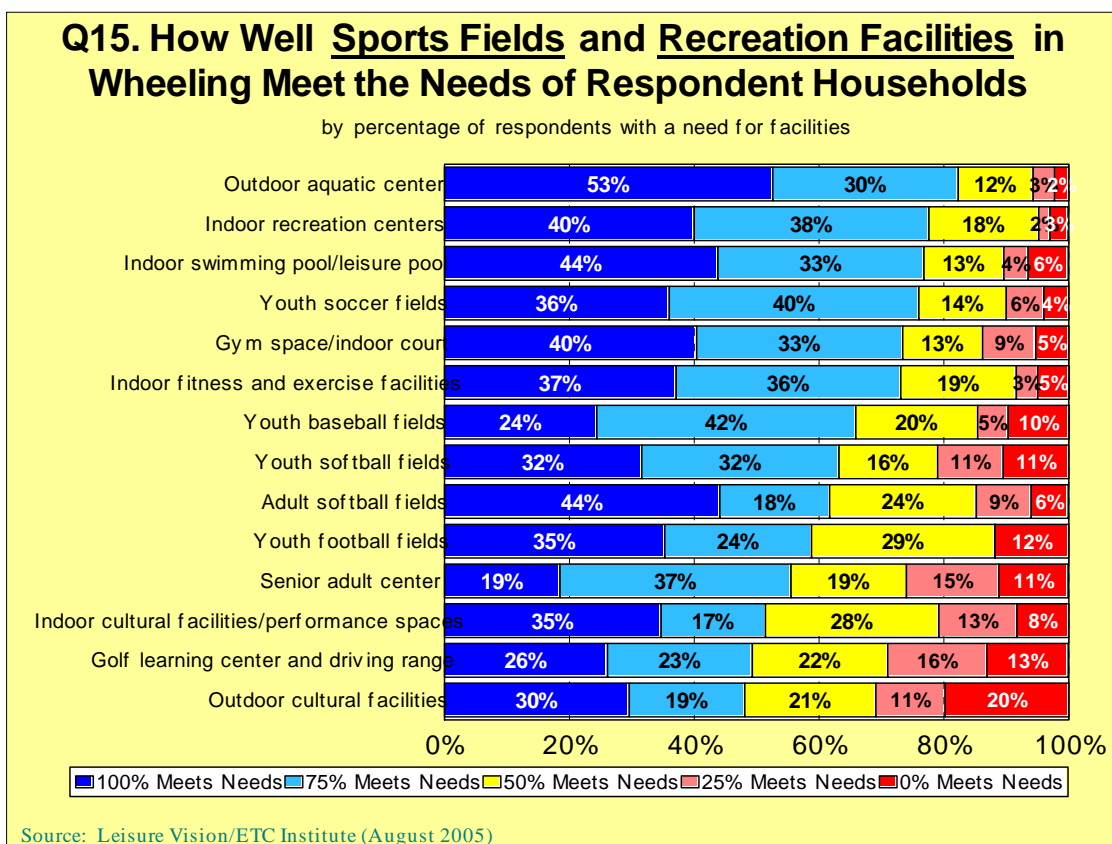
From the list of 14 sports fields and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The graph below summarizes key findings on the previous page by the number of households having a need for various sports fields and recreation facilities in Wheeling, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



How Well Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities Meet Needs

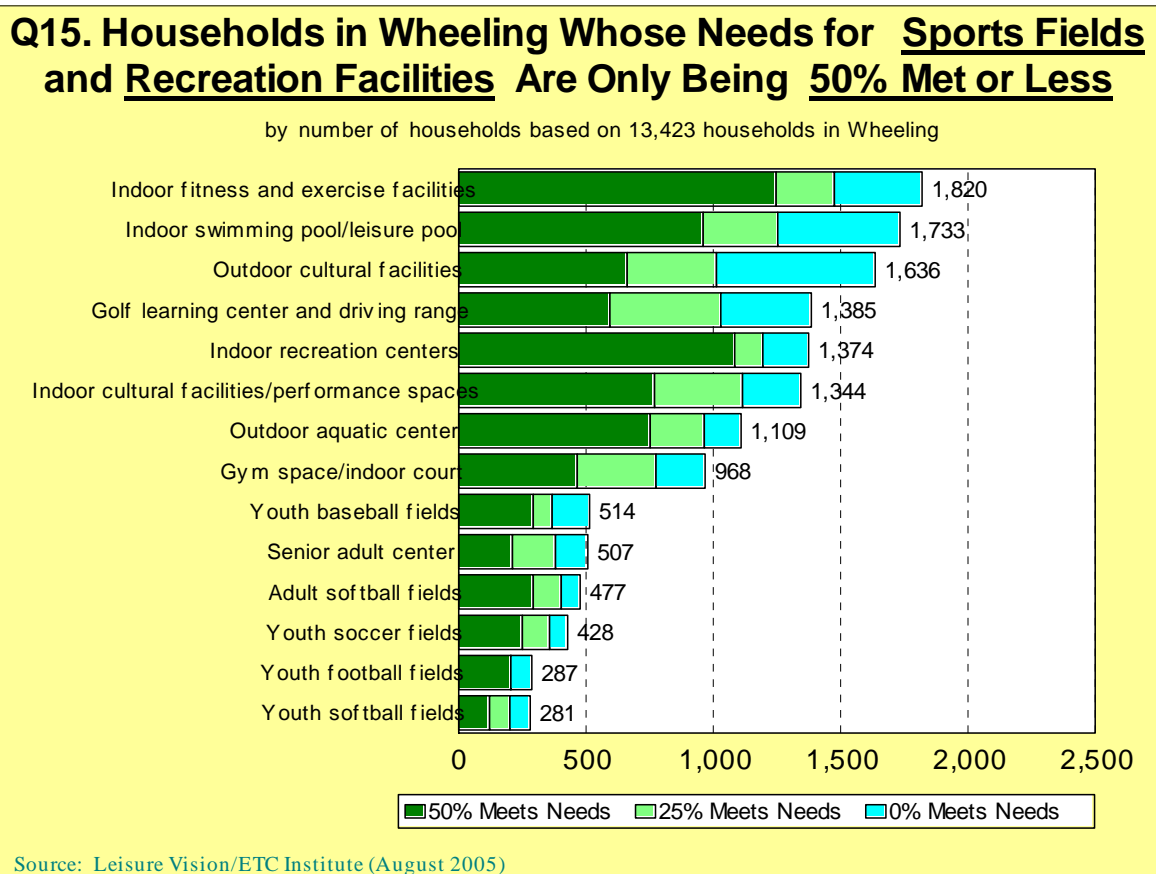
From the list of 14 sports fields and recreation facilities, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those facilities meet their needs. The following summarizes key findings:

- Three of the 14 fields and facilities had over 40% of respondents indicate that the field/facility 100% meets the needs of their household.** These three fields/facilities include: outdoor aquatic center (53%), indoor swimming pool/leisure pool (44%), and adult softball fields (44%). It should also be noted that 13 of the 14 fields/facilities had less than 50% of respondent households indicate that their needs are being 100% met by the field/facility.



Households in Wheeling with 50% or Less of their Sports Field and Recreation Facility Needs Being Met

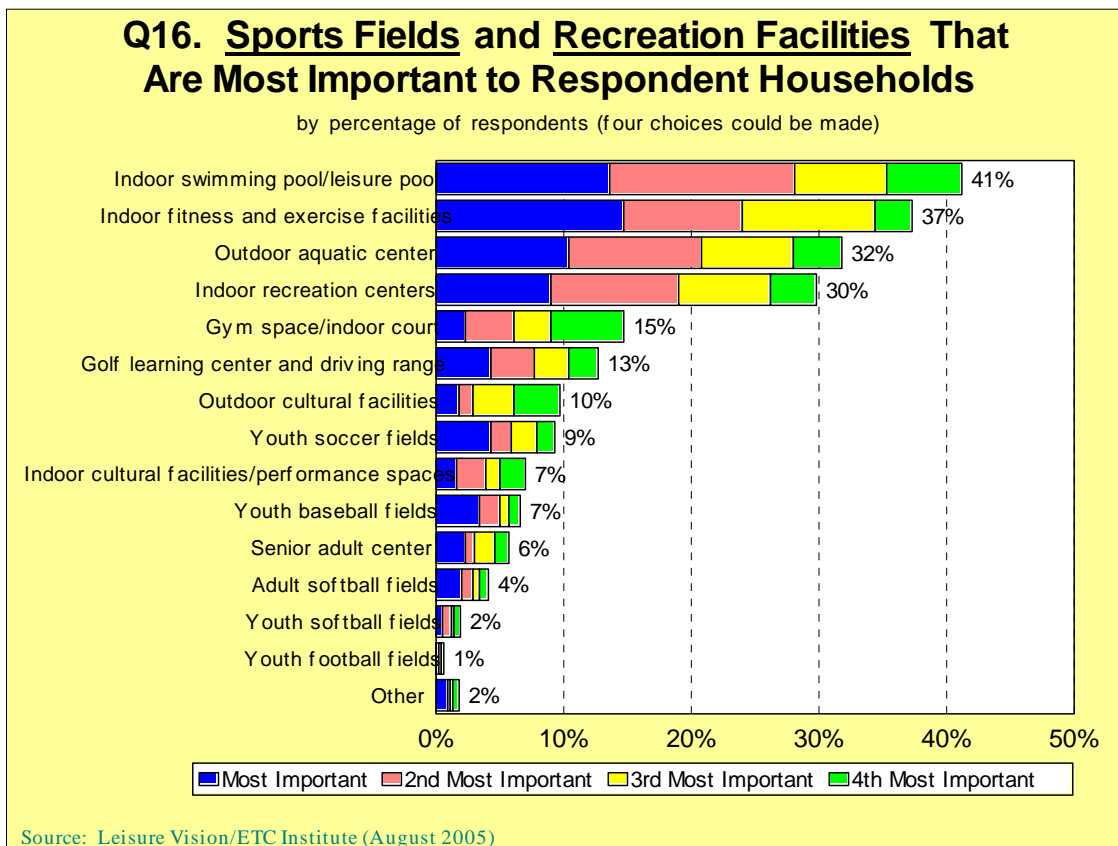
From the list of 14 sports fields and recreation facilities, respondent households that have a need for fields/facilities were asked to indicate how well those fields/facilities meet their needs. The graph below shows the number of households in Wheeling whose needs for fields/facilities are only being 50% met or less, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



Most Important Sports Fields and Recreation Facilities

From the list of 14 sports fields and recreation facilities, respondents were asked to select the four that are most important to them and members of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

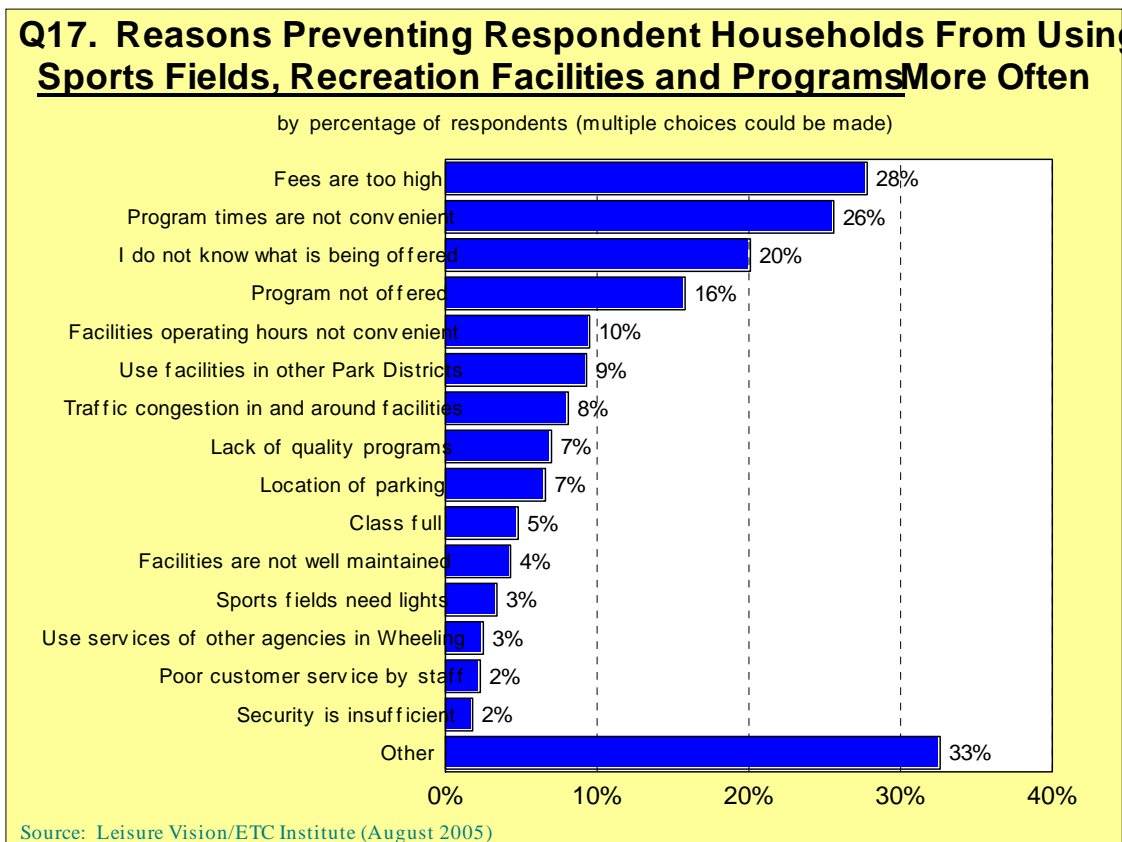
- Indoor swimming pool/leisure pool (41%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the four most important fields/facilities to them and members of their household.** There are three other fields/facilities that at least 30% of respondents selected as one of the four most important, including: indoor fitness and exercise facilities (37%), outdoor aquatic center (32%), and indoor recreation center (30%). It should also be noted that indoor fitness and exercise facilities had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important field/facility.



Reasons Preventing the Use of Sports Fields, Recreation Facilities, and Programs More Often

From a list of 15 reasons, respondents were asked to select all of the ones that prevent them and members of their household from using sports fields, recreation facilities, and programs of the Wheeling Park District more often. The following summarizes key findings:

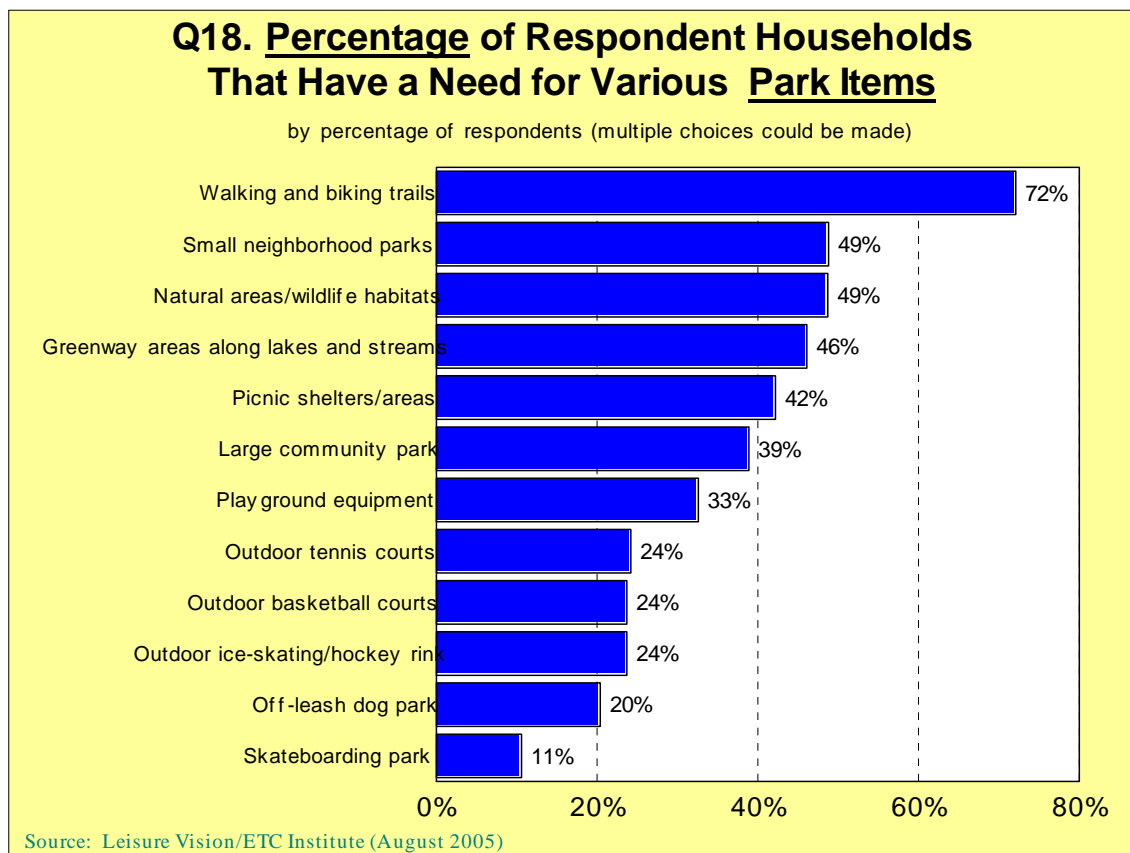
- **“Fees are too high” (28%) is the reason that prevented the highest percentage of respondent households from using sports fields, recreation facilities, and programs of the Wheeling Park District more often.** There are two other reasons that prevented at least 20% of respondents from using sports fields, recreation facilities, and programs more often, including: “program times are not convenient” (26%), and “I do not know what is being offered” (20%). Only 2% of respondents indicated “poor customer service by staff” as a reason for not using sports fields, recreation facilities, and programs more often. It should also be noted that 33% of respondents indicated “other”. The number one reason respondents indicated “other” was that they are too busy/do not have time.



Need for Park Items

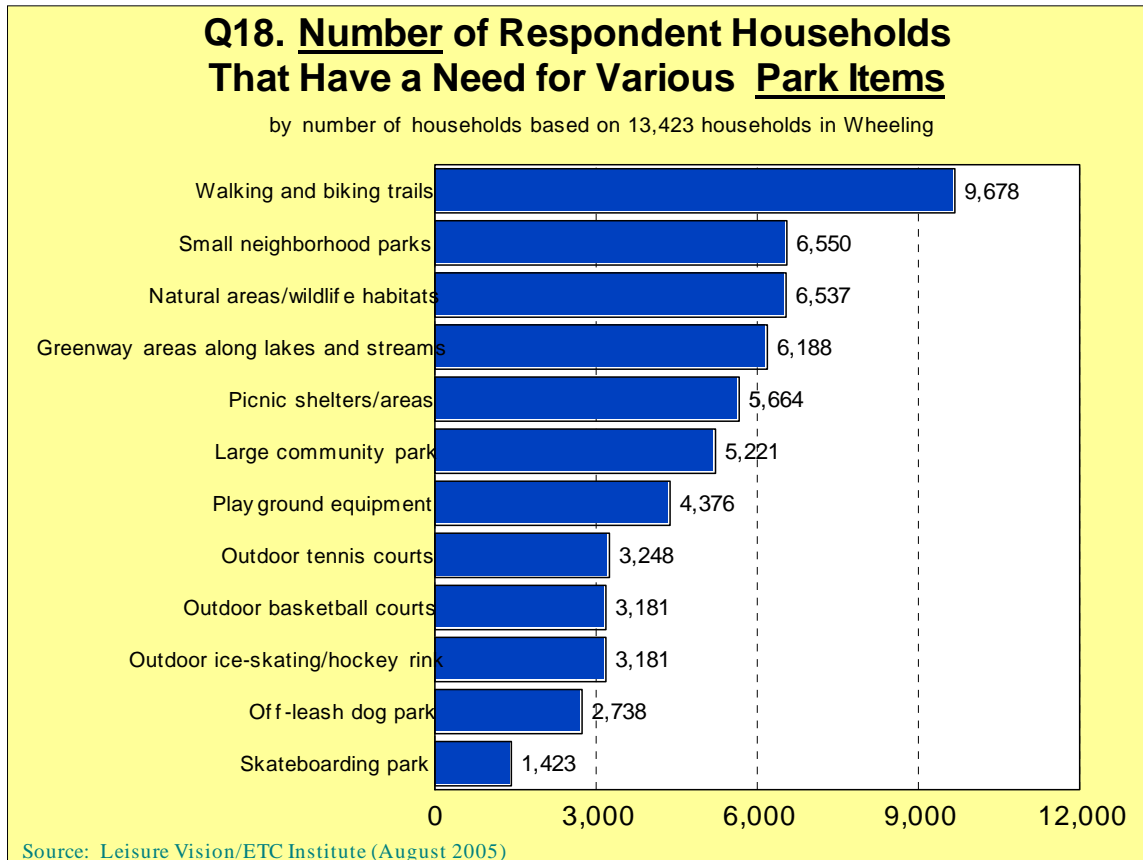
From a list of 12 park items, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Five of the 12 park items had over 40% of respondent households indicate they have a need for it.** These five park items include: walking and biking trails (72%), small neighborhood parks (49%), natural areas/wildlife habitats (49%), greenway areas along lakes and streams (46%), and picnic shelters/areas (42%).



Need For Park Items in Wheeling

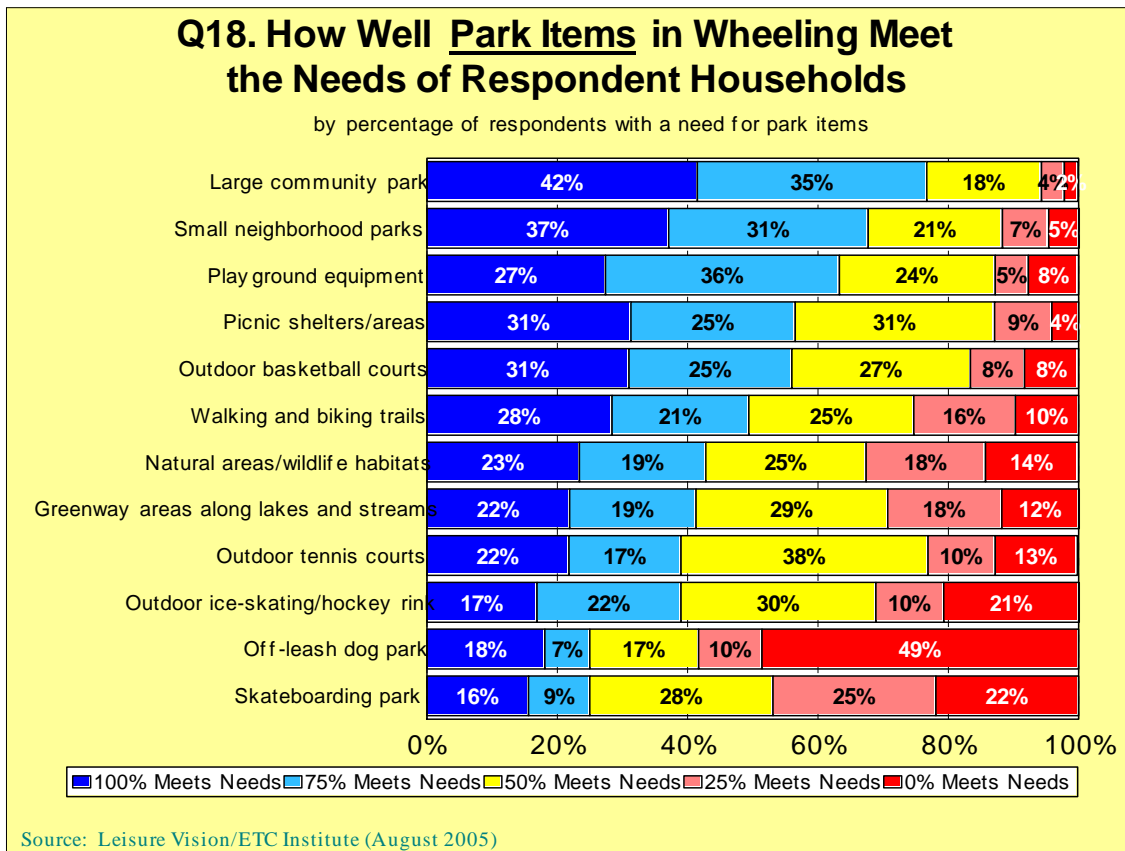
From a list of 12 park items, respondents were asked to indicate which ones they and members of their household have a need for. The graph below summarizes key findings on the previous page by the number of households having a need for various park items in Wheeling, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



How Well Park Items Meet Needs

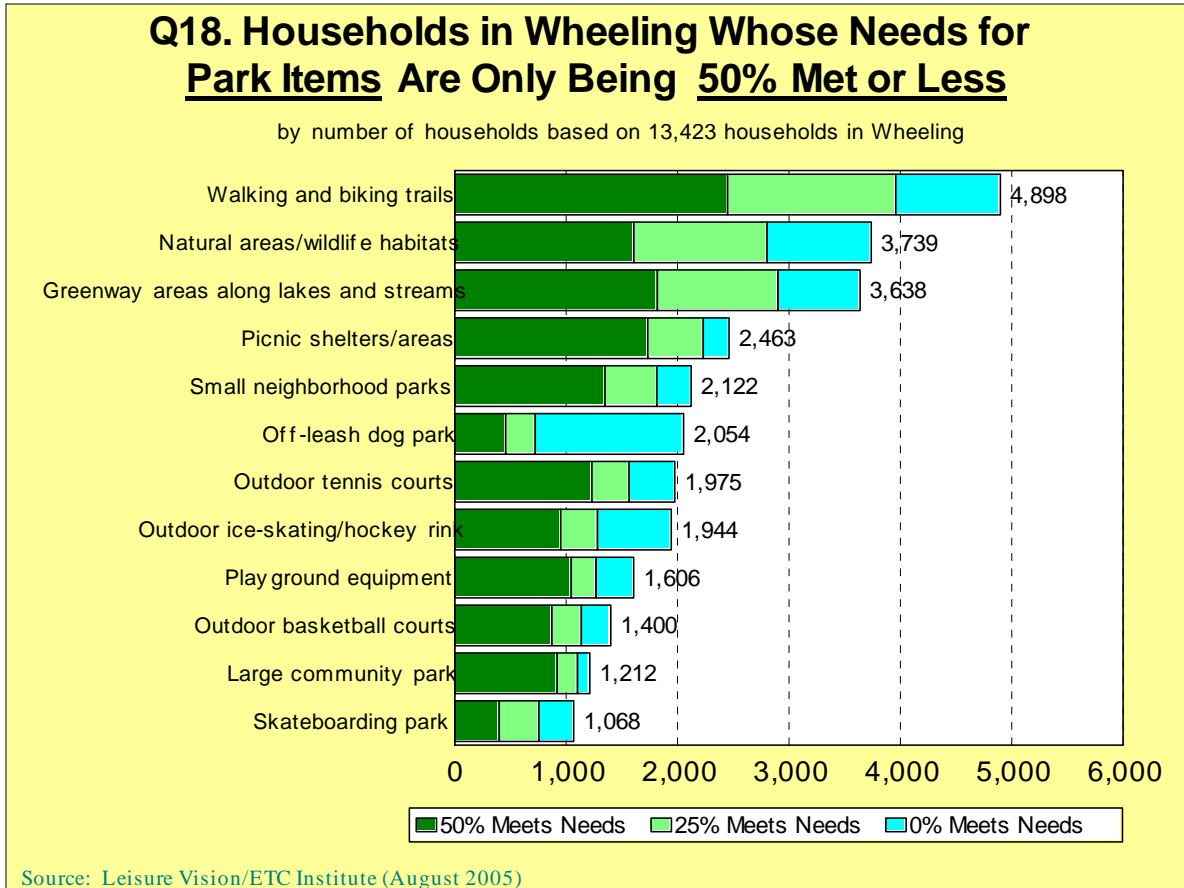
From a list of 12 park items, respondent households that have a need for park items were asked to indicate how well those park items meet their needs. The following summarizes key findings:

- Two of the 12 park items had over 35% of respondents indicate that the park item 100% meets the needs of their household. These two park items include: large community park (42%) and small neighborhood parks (37%). It should also be noted that all 12 park items had less than 50% of respondent households indicate that their needs are being 100% met by the park item.



Households in Wheeling with 50% or Less of their Park Item Needs Being Met

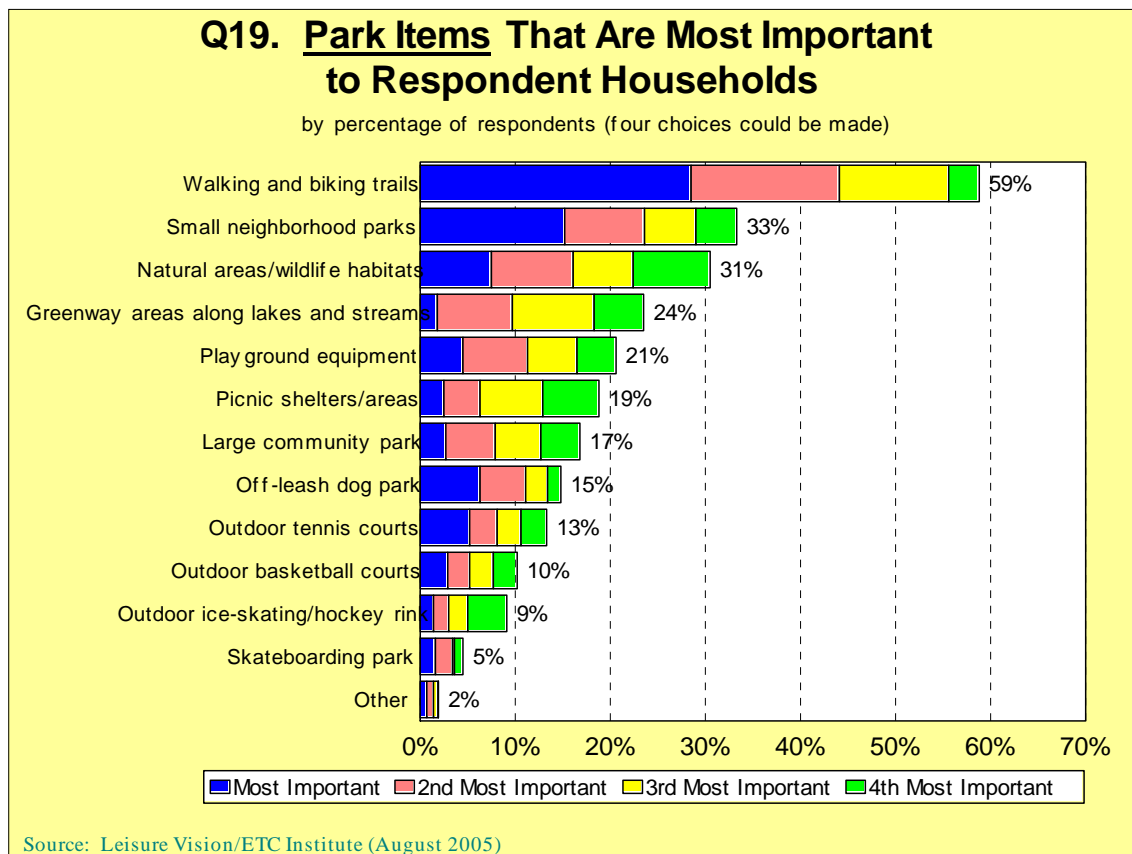
From a list of 12 park items, respondent households that have a need for facilities were asked to indicate how well those park items meet their needs. The graph below shows the number of households in Wheeling whose needs for park items are only being 50% met or less, based on 13,423 households in Wheeling.



Most Important Park Items

From a list of 12 park items, respondents were asked to select the four that are most important to them and members of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

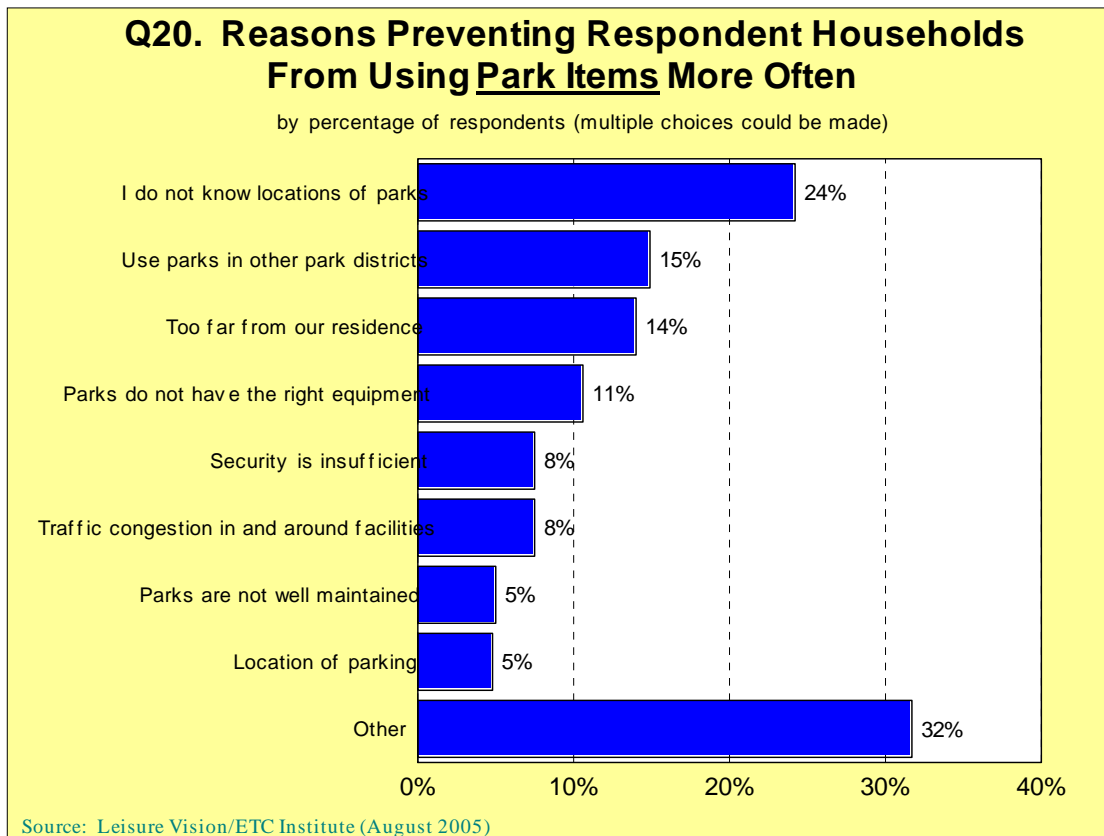
- Walking and biking trails (59%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the four most important park items to them and members of their household.** There are four other park items that over 20% of respondents selected as one of the four most important, including: small neighborhood parks (33%), natural areas/wildlife habitats (31%), greenway areas along lakes and streams (24%), and playground equipment (21%). It should also be noted that walking and biking trails had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the most important park item.



Reasons Preventing the Use of Parks More Often

From a list of eight reasons, respondents were asked to select all of the ones that prevent them and members of their household from using Wheeling Park District parks more often. The following summarizes key findings:

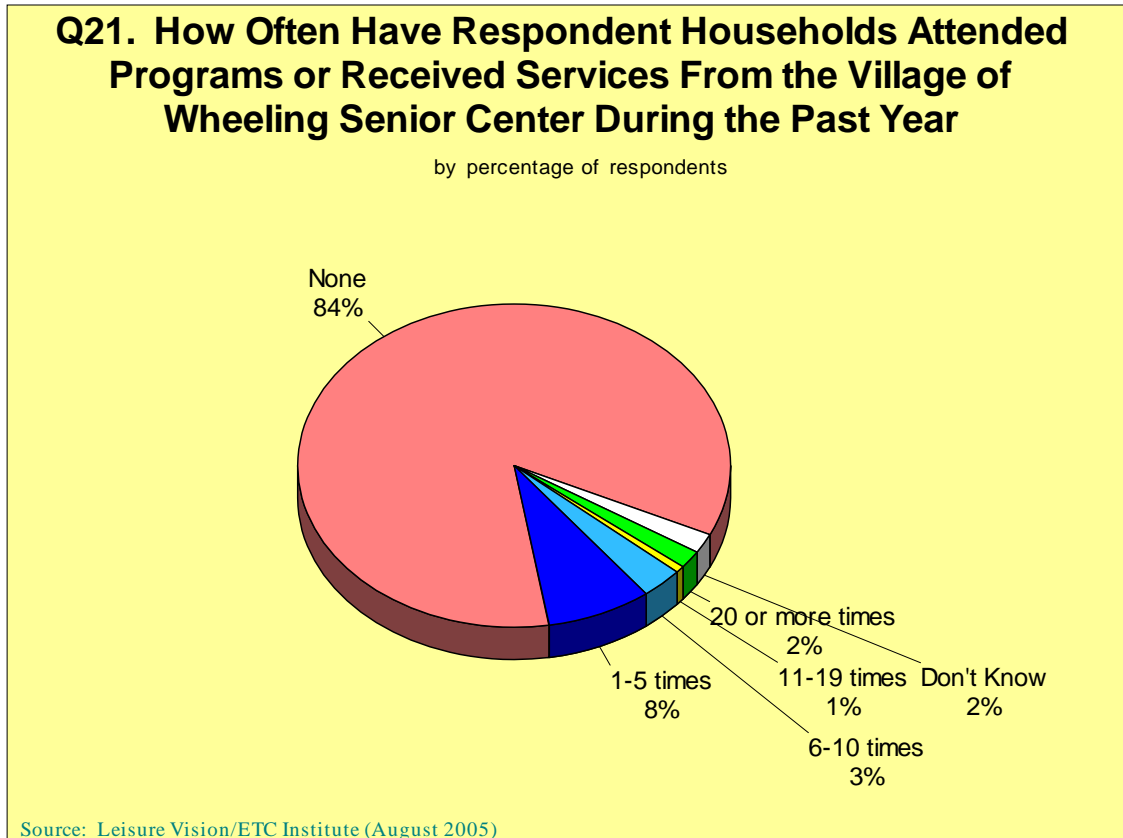
- **“I do not know location of parks” (24%) is the reason that prevented the highest percentage of respondent households from using Wheeling Park District parks more often.** There are two other reasons that prevented over 10% of respondents from using parks more often, including: “use parks in other districts” (15%) and “too far from our residence” (14%). It should also be noted that 32% of respondents indicated “other”. The number one reason respondents indicated “other” was that they are too busy/do not have time.



Frequency of Visits to Parks

Respondent households were asked to indicate how often they have attended programs or received services from the Village of Wheeling Senior Center during the past year. The following summarizes key findings:

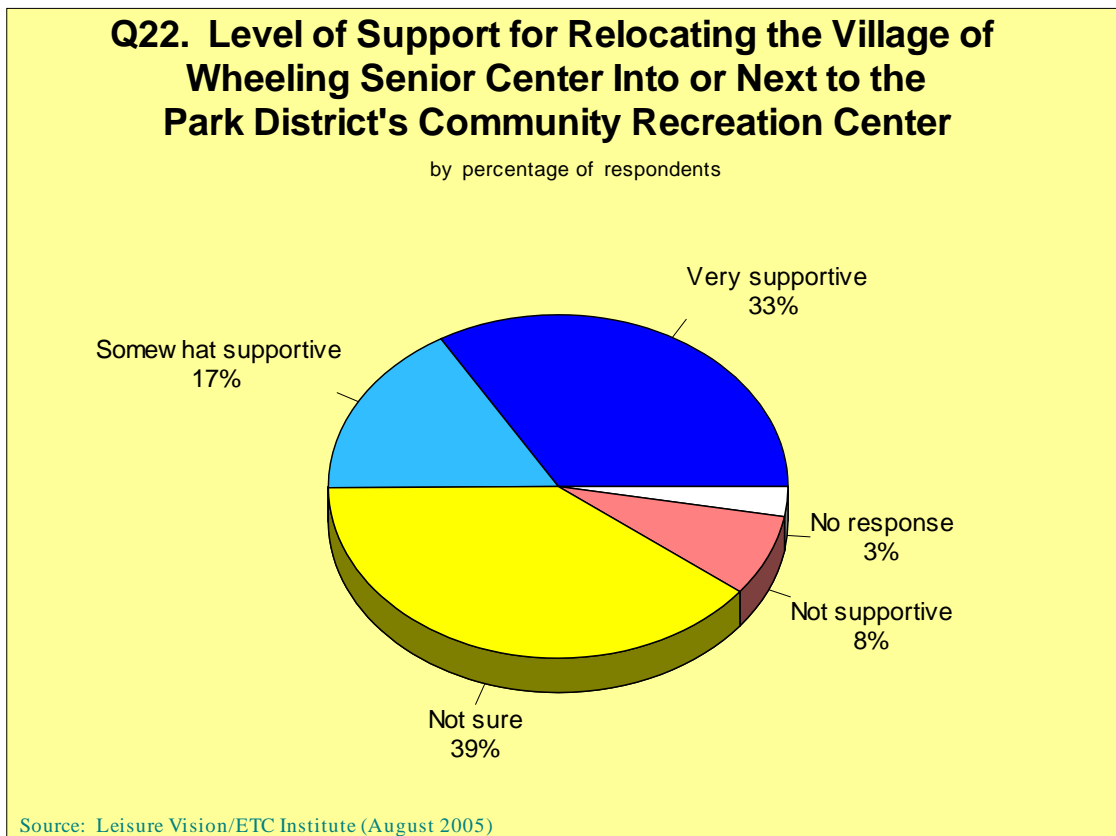
- **Eighty-four percent (84%) of respondent households have not attended programs or received services from the Village of Wheeling Senior Center during the past year.**



Support for Relocating the Village of Wheeling Senior Center

Respondents were asked to indicate how supportive they would be of relocating the Village of Wheeling Senior Center into or next to the Park District's Community Recreation Center. The following summarizes key findings:

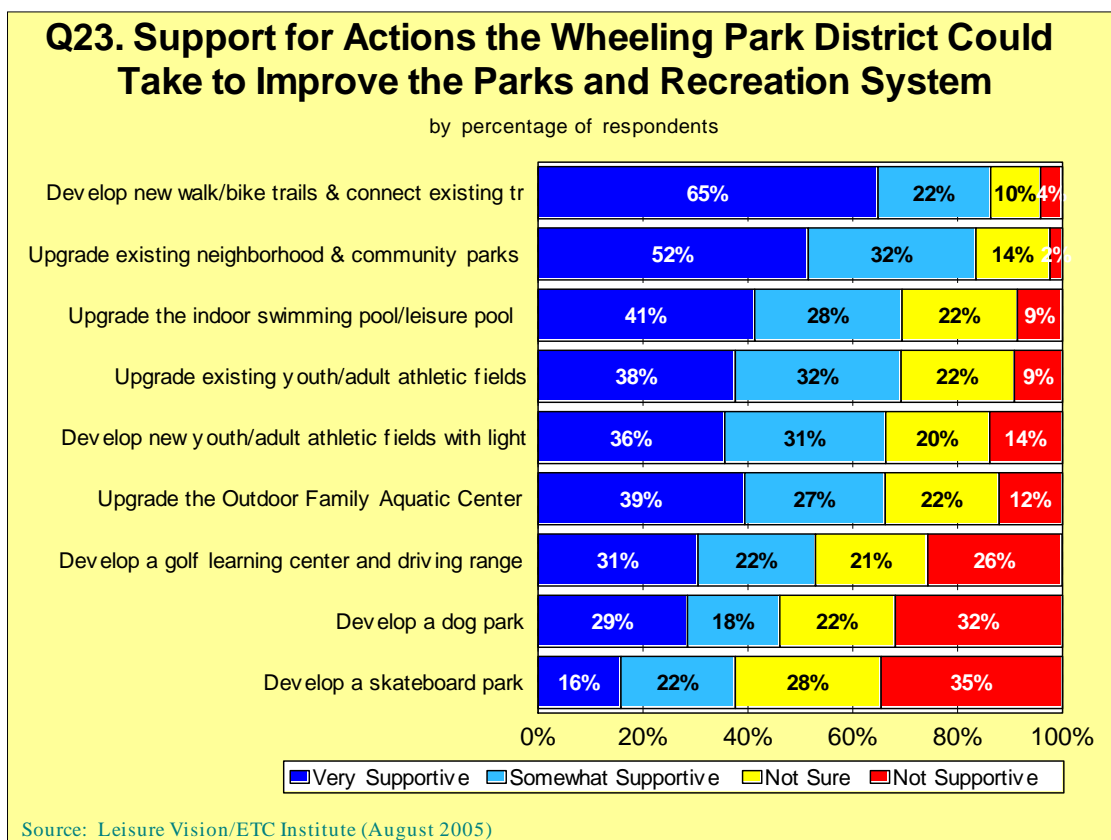
- **Fifty percent (50%) of respondent households indicated being either very supportive (33%) or somewhat supportive (17%) of relocating the Village of Wheeling Senior Center into or next to the Park District's Community Recreation Center.** In addition, 39% of respondents indicated being not sure, 8% of respondents are not supportive, and 3% did not provide a response.



Support for Various Actions to Improve the Parks and Recreation System

From a list of nine actions the Wheeling Park District could take to improve the parks and recreation system, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each action. The following summarizes key findings:

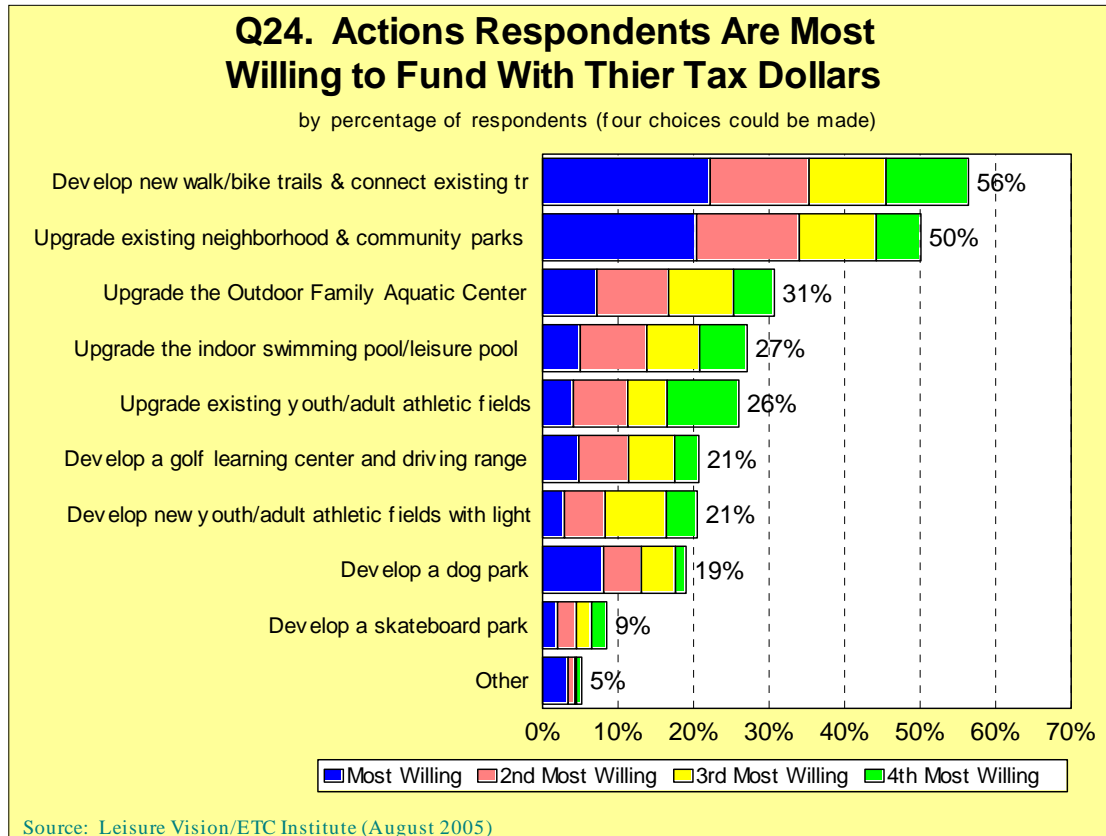
- Two of the nine actions had over 50% of respondents indicate they are very supportive of them.** These two actions include: develop new walking/biking trails and connect existing trails (65%) and upgrade existing neighborhood and community parks (52%). It should also be noted that seven of the nine actions had over 50% of respondents indicate being either very supportive or somewhat supportive of them.



Actions Most Willing to Fund to Improve the Parks and Recreation System

From the list of nine actions the Wheeling Park District could take to improve the parks and recreation system, respondents were asked to select the top four they would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars. The following summarizes key findings:

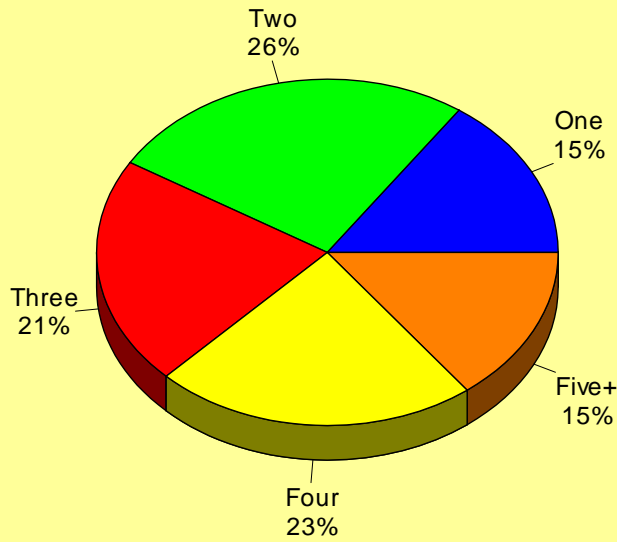
- Develop walking and biking trails and connect existing trails (56%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the four actions they would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars.** There are two other actions that over 30% of respondents selected as one of the four they would be most willing to fund with tax dollars, including: upgrade existing neighborhood and community parks (50%) and upgrade the Outdoor Family Aquatic Center (31%). It should also be noted that develop new walking and biking trails and connect existing trails had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the action they would be most willing to fund with their tax dollars.



Demographics

Q1. Demographics: Number of People in Household

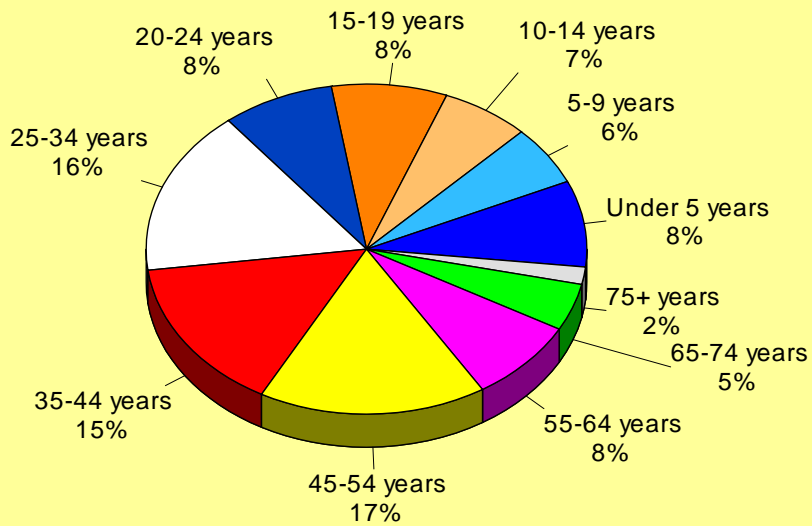
by percentage of respondents



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (July 2005)

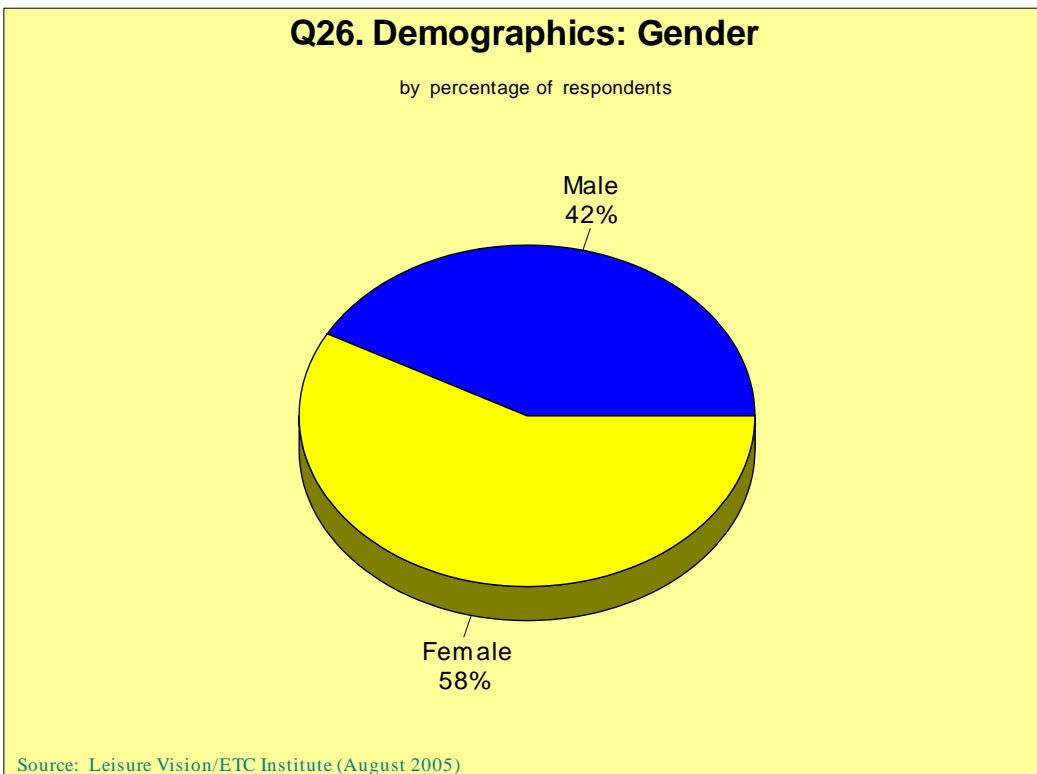
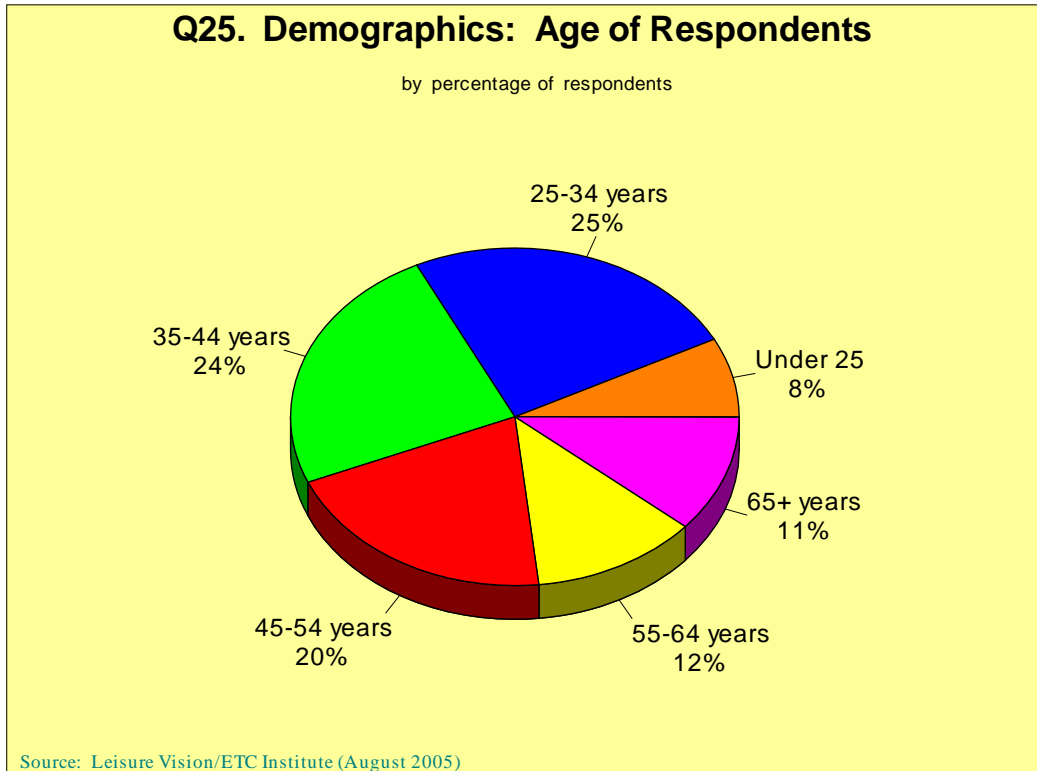
Q2. Demographics: Ages of People in Household

by percentage of household occupants

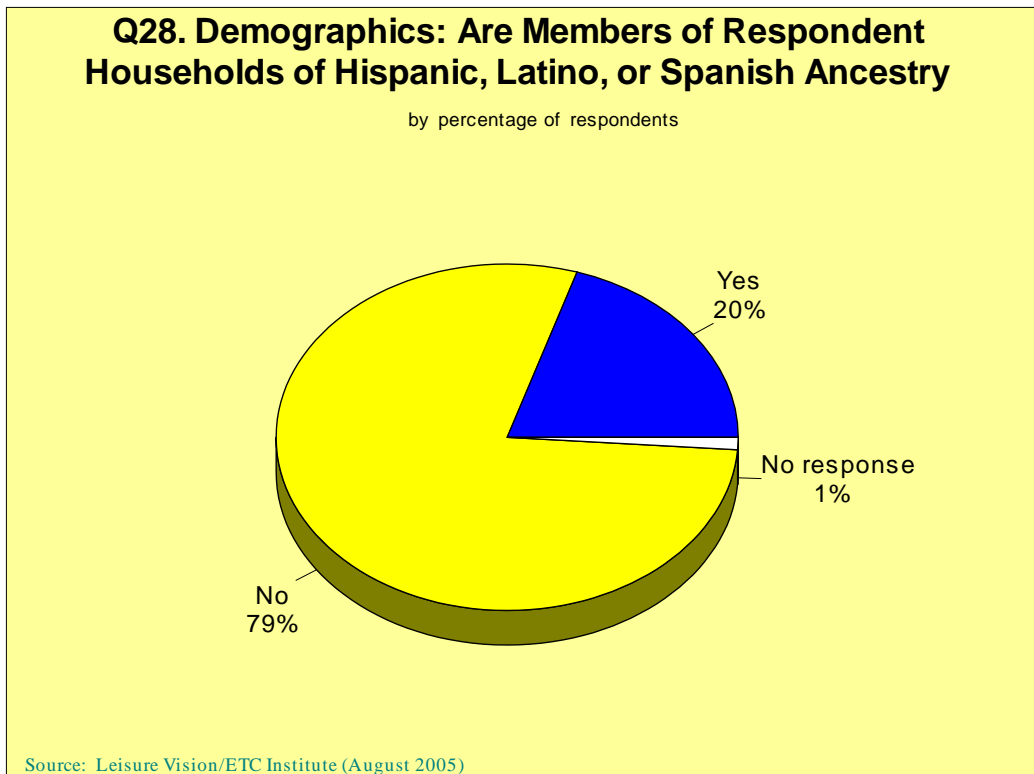
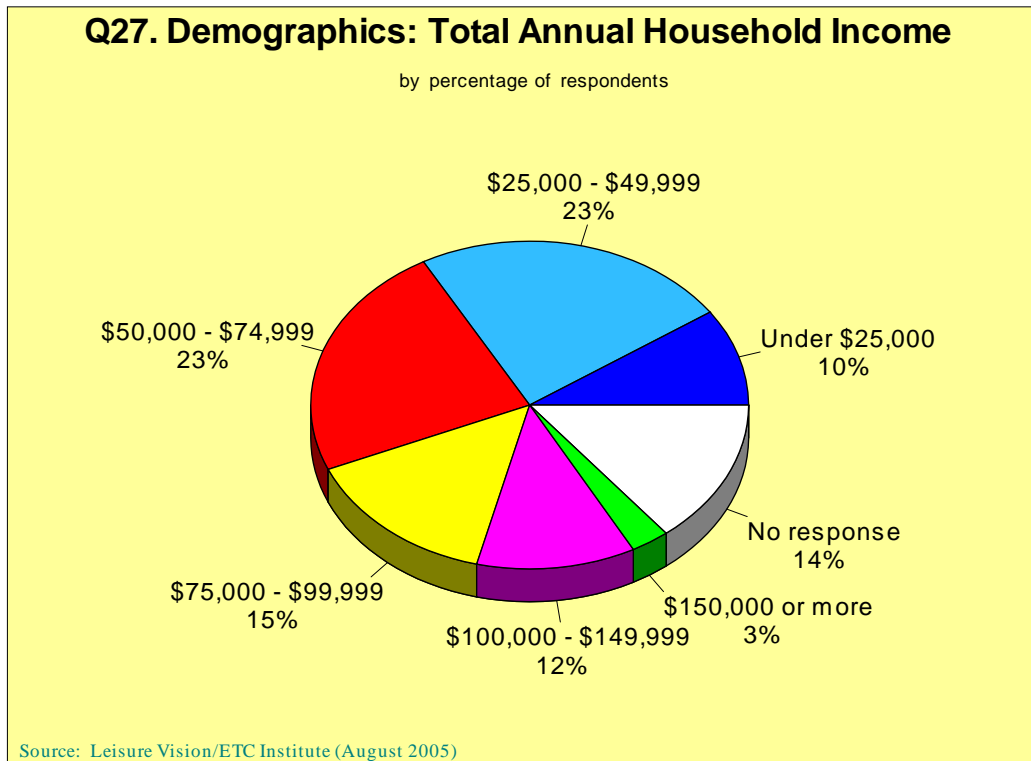


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (July 2005)

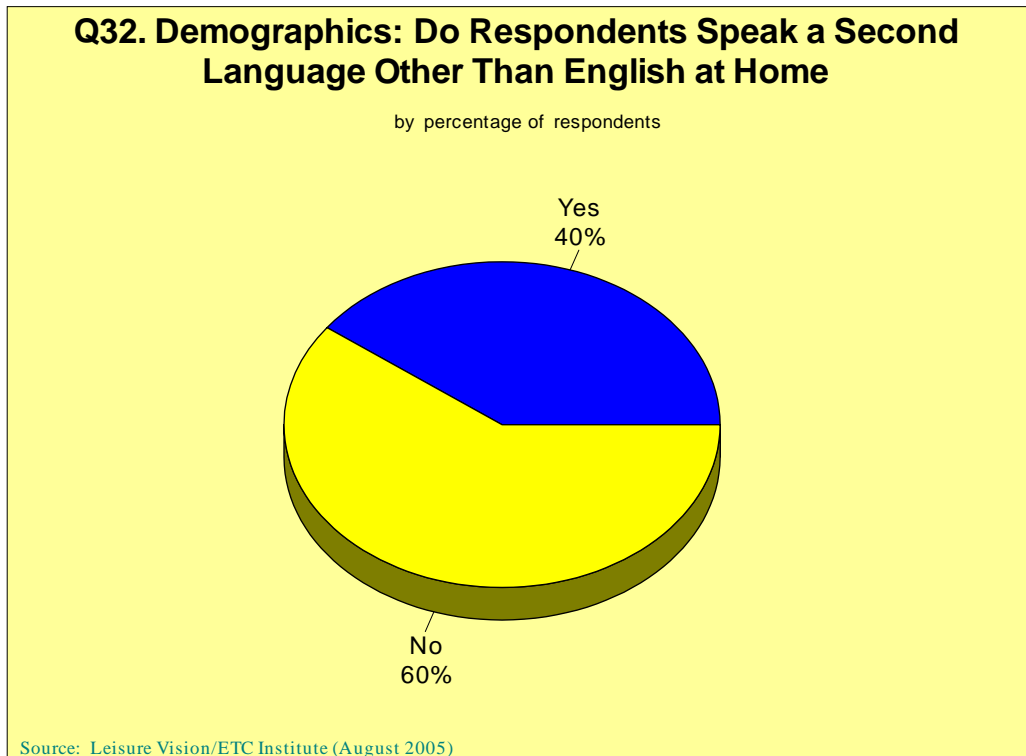
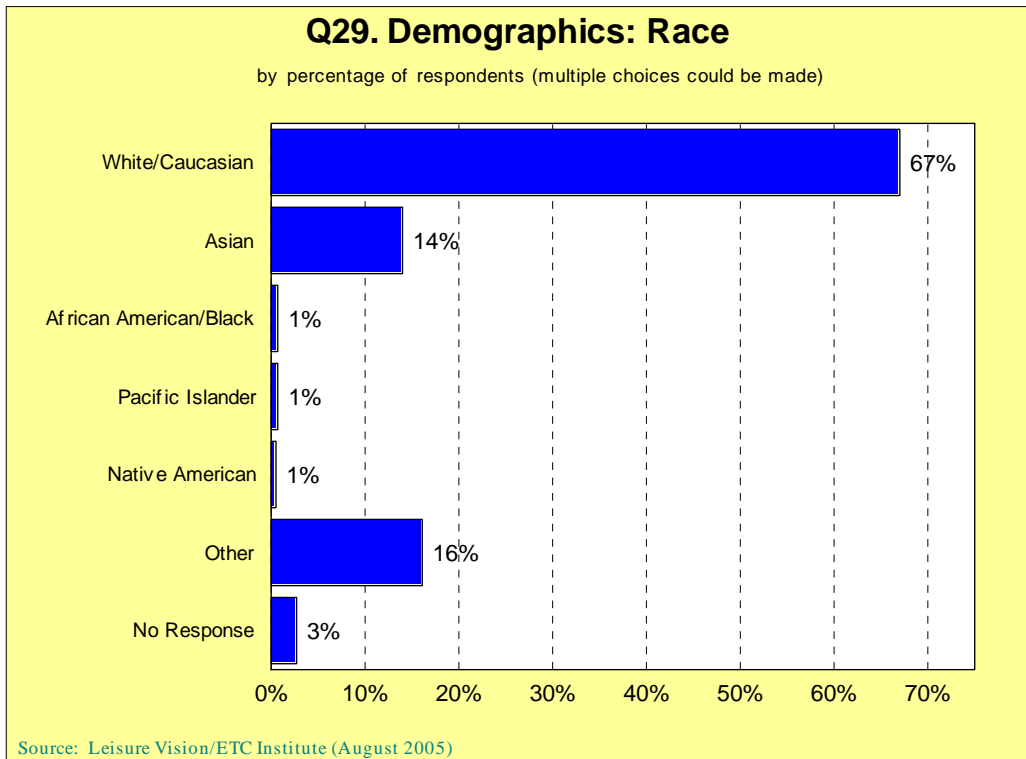
Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)

