



2013 Park Survey Results/Trends

August 2013

Introduction

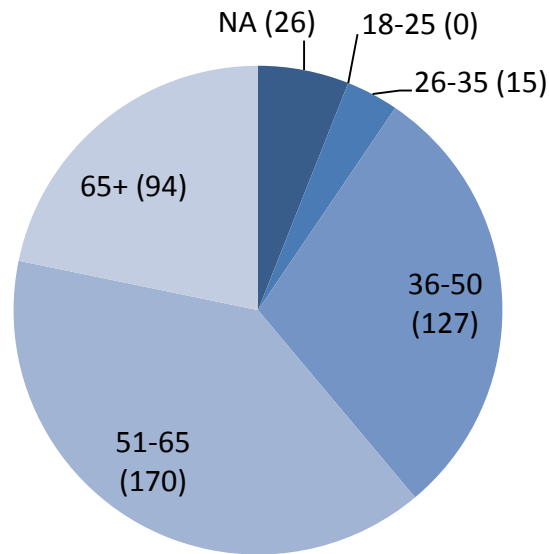
A park survey was mailed to 3,203 homes in Lake Elmo on June 14, 2013.

432 surveys were completed and returned.

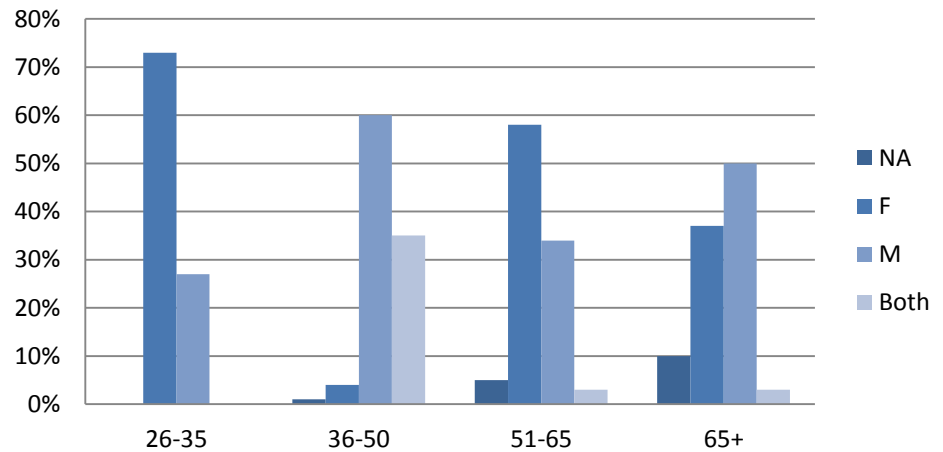
Demographics

- The most common (39%, 170 responses) age group was 51-65.
 - 60 % of those responses were female.

No. of Responses by Age



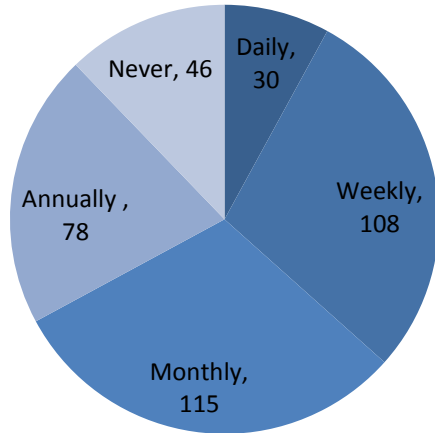
Gender by Age Group



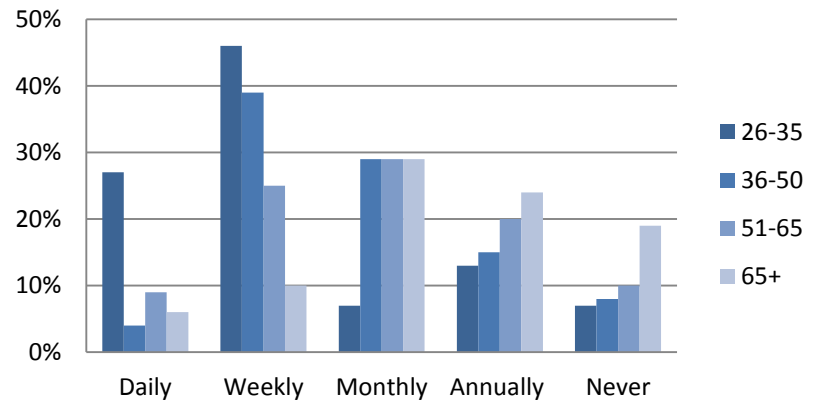
Current Park Use

Fifty-nine percent (59%) of overall park users visit city parks on a weekly or monthly basis. Park users between the ages of 26 to 50 use parks more frequently than users aged 51+. The primary reason that taxpayers do not use city parks lack of interest or time. Other reasons are cited below.

Average Park Visits



Avg. Park Visits by Age Group

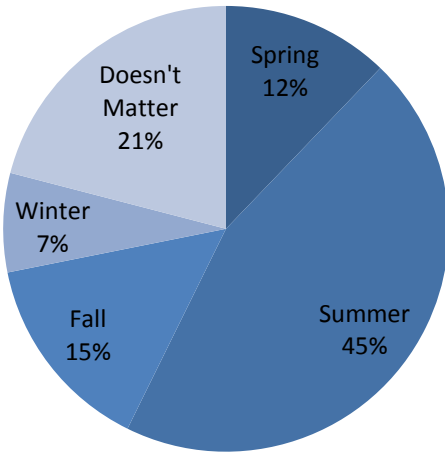


Reasons for Not Using City Parks	No. of Responses	Reasons for Not Using City Parks	No. of Responses
No Interest/Time	10	Don't know where they are	5
Only use Park Reserve	8	Other	5
Kids Outgrew	6		

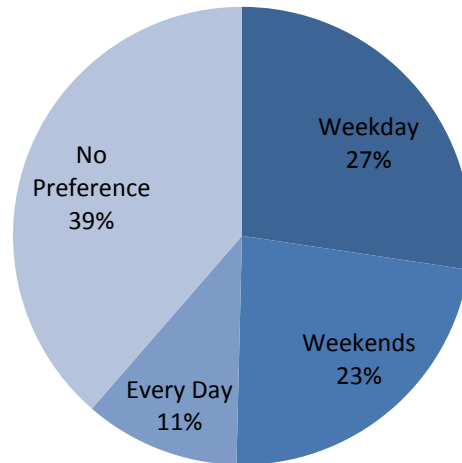
Current Park Use

Summer is the most popular season to visit parks. The majority of park users have no preference when they visit the parks, and users frequent the parks most in the afternoon.

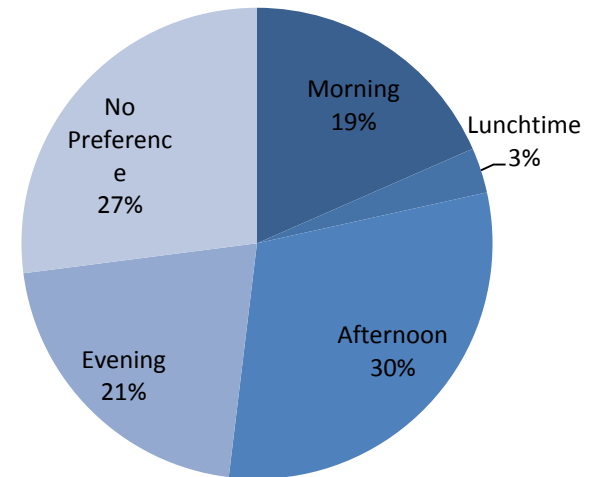
Visits by Season



Visits by Day



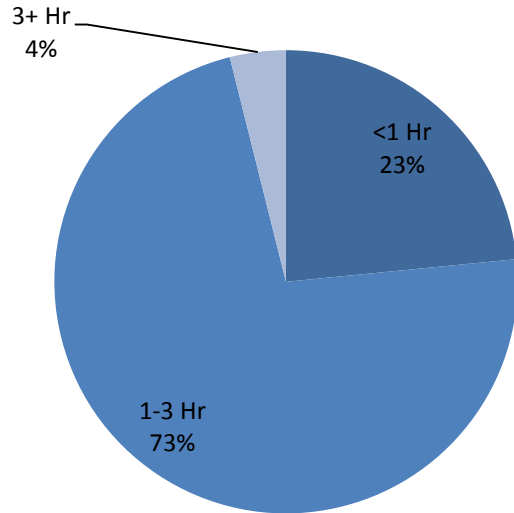
Visits by Time



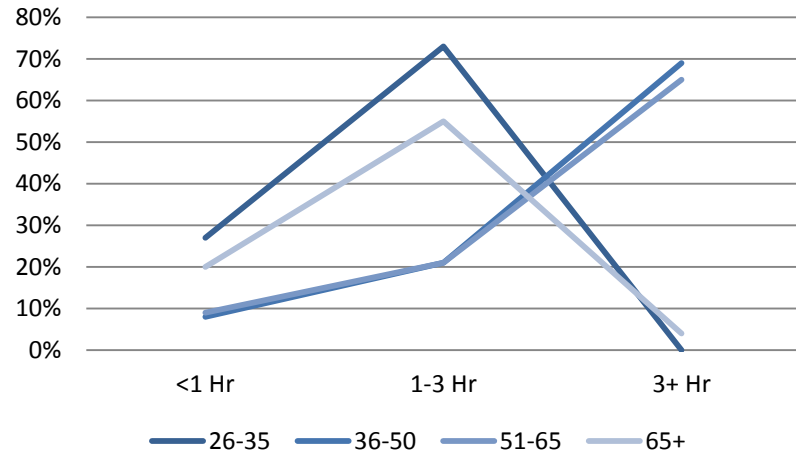
Current Park Use

Overall, 73% of park users spend between one to three hours per park visit. Visitors between age 36 to 65 typically spend 3 or more hours per visit, where users between the ages of 26 to 35 and age 65+ typically spend 1 to 3 hours per park visit.

Time per Park Visit



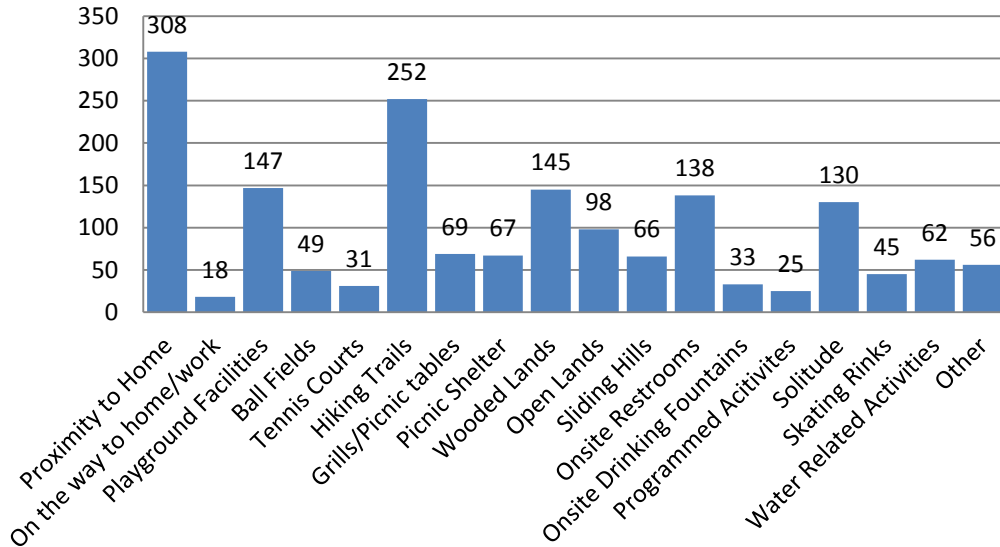
Time Spent by Age



Current Park Use

Proximity to home is the most important factor for taxpayers choosing which park to visit. Trails, playground facilities, trails, and wooded lands are also important factors. The ranking of importance varies by age group, as noted in the chart to the lower right.

Important Park Factors

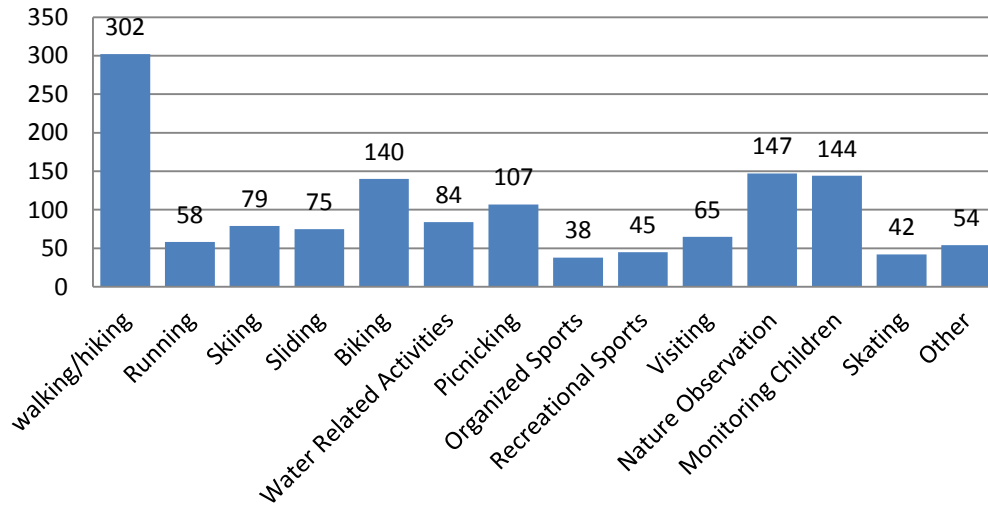


26-35	
Proximity to home	16%
Playground Facilities	15%
Hiking Trails/Restroom	8%
36-50	
Proximity to Home	18%
Hiking Trails	12%
Playground Facilities	10%
51-65	
Proximity to Home	18%
Hiking Trails	16%
Wooded Lands	10%
65+	
Proximity to Home	18%
Hiking Trails	16%
Wooded Lands	11%

Current Park Use

Overall, walking and hiking is the most popular park activity engaged in by taxpayers. Biking, nature observation, and monitoring children are also frequent activities, which vary in priority slightly among age groups.

Park Activities

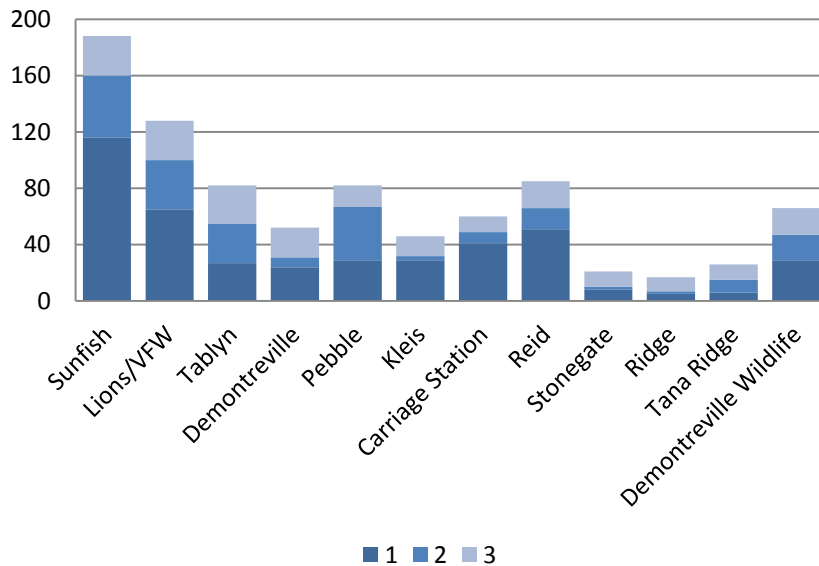


26-35	
Monitoring Children	16%
Walking/Hiking	15%
Biking	13%
36-50	
Walking/Hiking	18%
Biking	10%
Monitoring Children	9%
51-65	
Walking/Hiking	25%
Nature Observation	12%
Biking	10%
65+	
Walking/Hiking	24%
Nature Observation	17%
Monitoring Children	13%

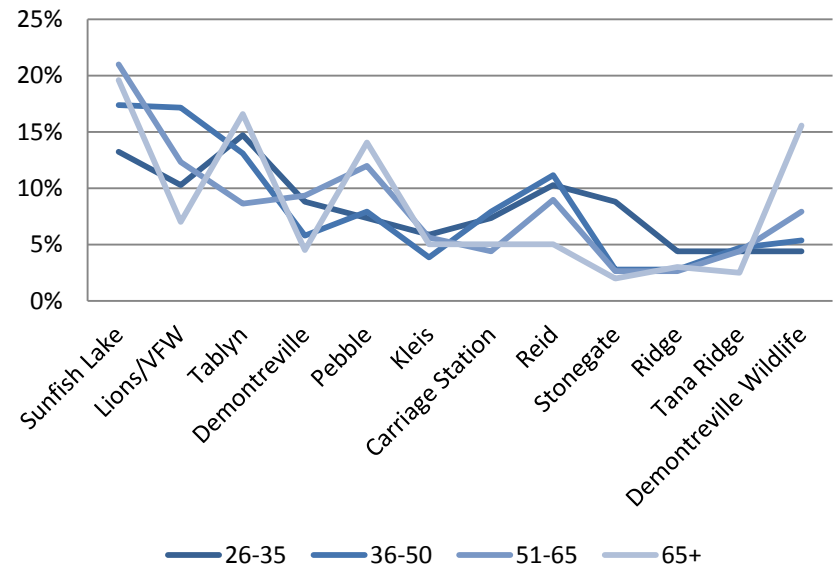
Current Park Use

Residents were asked to rank their preferred/most commonly used city parks from 1 to 3, with 1 being the most frequently visited. Sunfish Lake Park is the most popular park overall, followed by Lions Park. When broken down by age, Tablyn Park ranks in popularity for 26 to 36 year olds.

Primary Park Use



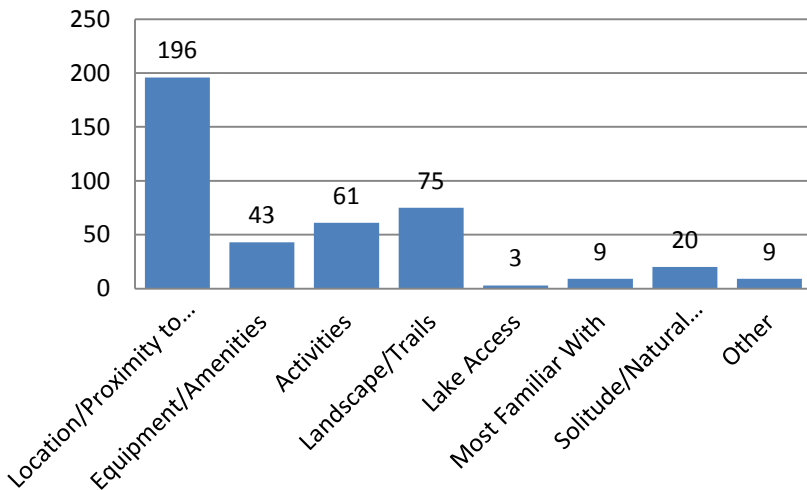
Primary Park Use by Age



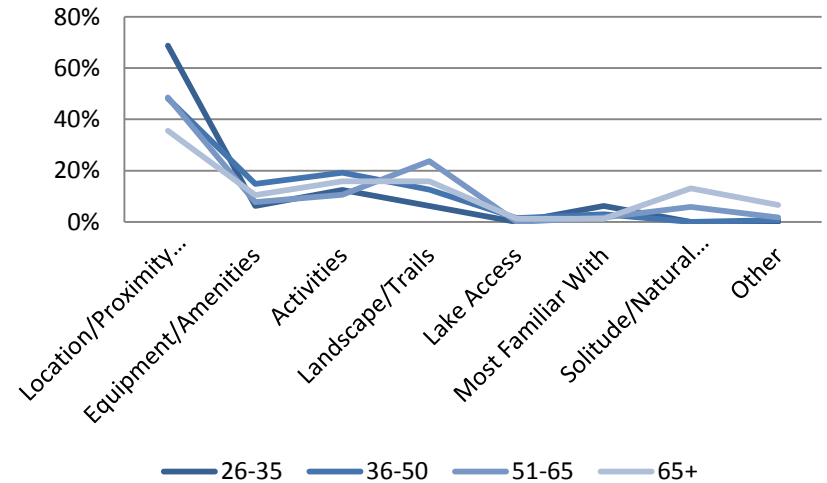
Current Park Use

The leading factor for park choice is location and proximity to home. The importance of location decreases slightly as the age of park user increases.

Factors in Favor of Parks



Factors in Favor of Parks by Age

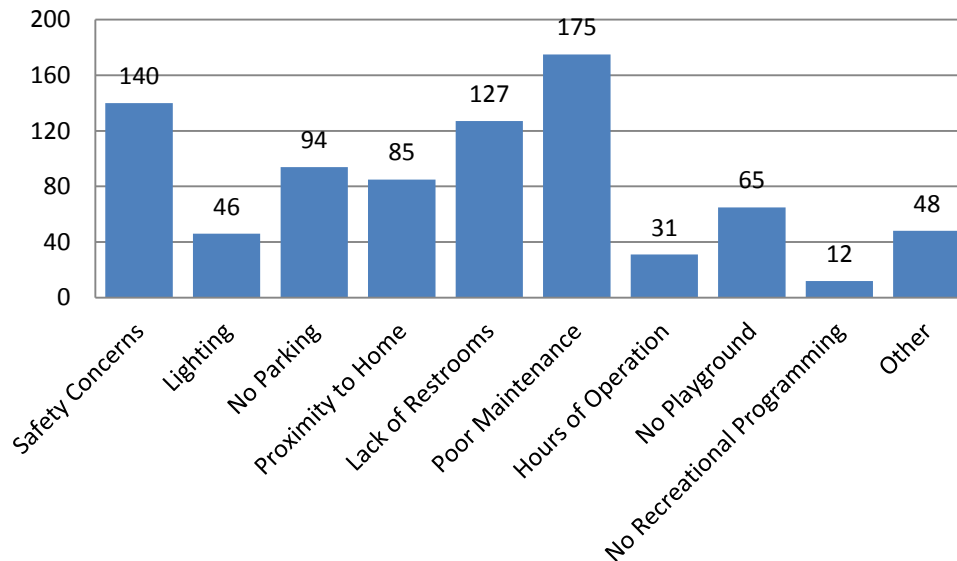


Current Park Use

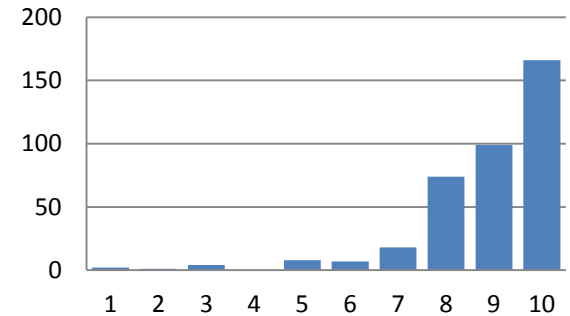
Poor maintenance ranked as the primary reason discouraging taxpayers from using city parks. Safety concerns and lack of restrooms were also leading factors. Other factors include unleashed dogs, and lack of time.

Overall, taxpayers consider the safety of city parks to be high, and signage and maintenance mediocre.

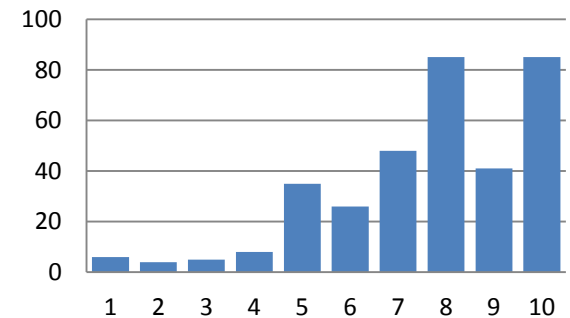
Factors Discouraging Use of City Parks



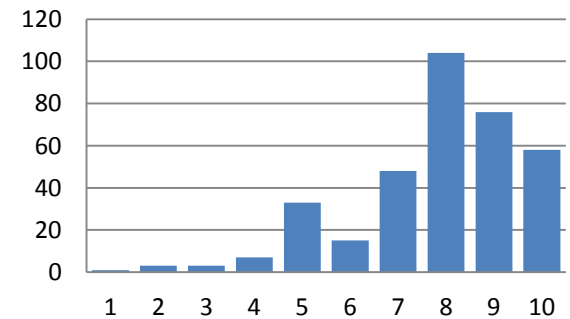
Park Safety



Park Signage



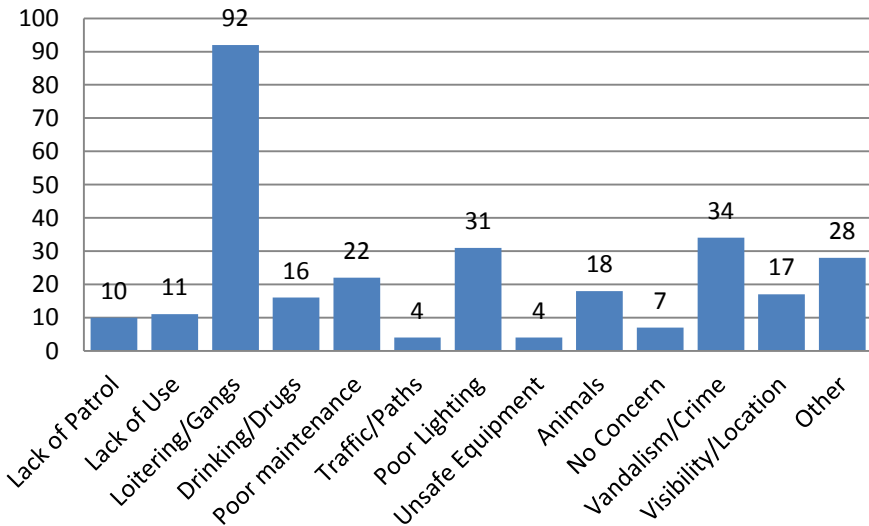
Park Maintenance



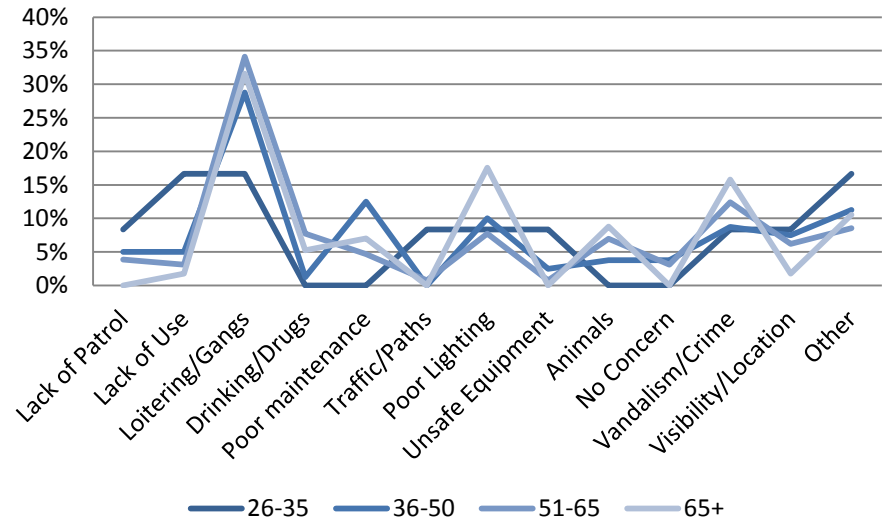
Park Conditions

Loitering or gang activity is the primary factor that would make taxpayers feel unsafe using city parks. Factors in the other category include after hours activities, high-speed vehicles, and use of parks by non-residents.

Park Safety Concerns



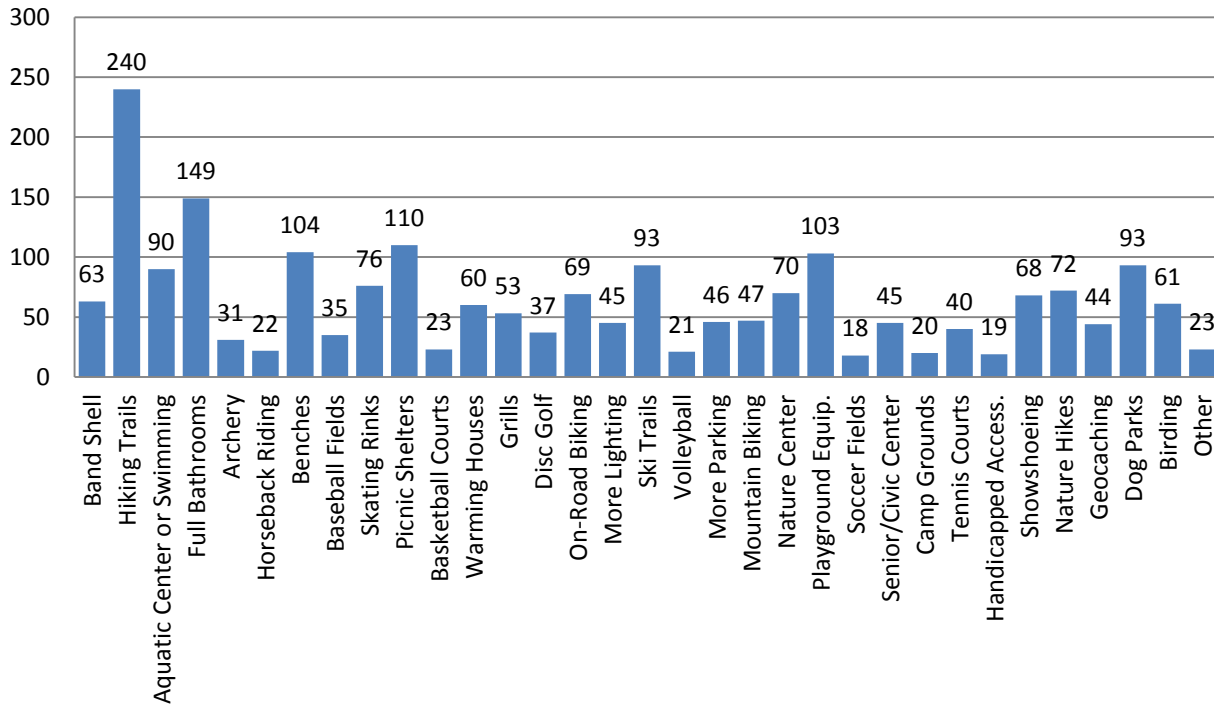
Park Safety Concerns by Age



Future Park Needs

Hiking trails are high priority for all age groups, when considering future addition of park amenities. The top three amenity needs per age group are listed at right.

Future Needs



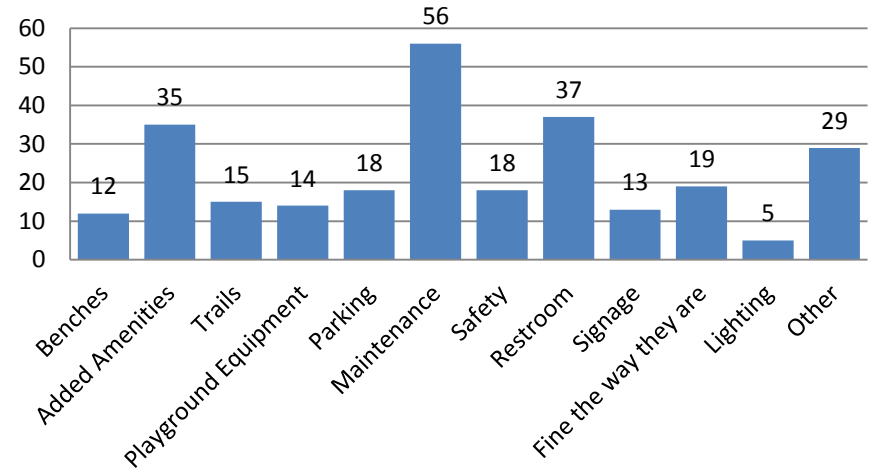
26-35	
Playground Equipment	11%
Hiking Trails	10%
Aquatic Center/Swimming	9%
36-50	
Hiking Trails	9%
Aquatic Center/Swimming	8%
Full Bathrooms	8%
51-65	
Hiking Trails	13%
Full Bathrooms	6%
Benches/Shelters	6%
65+	
Hiking Trails	13%
Full Bathrooms	7%
Birding	7%

Future Park Needs

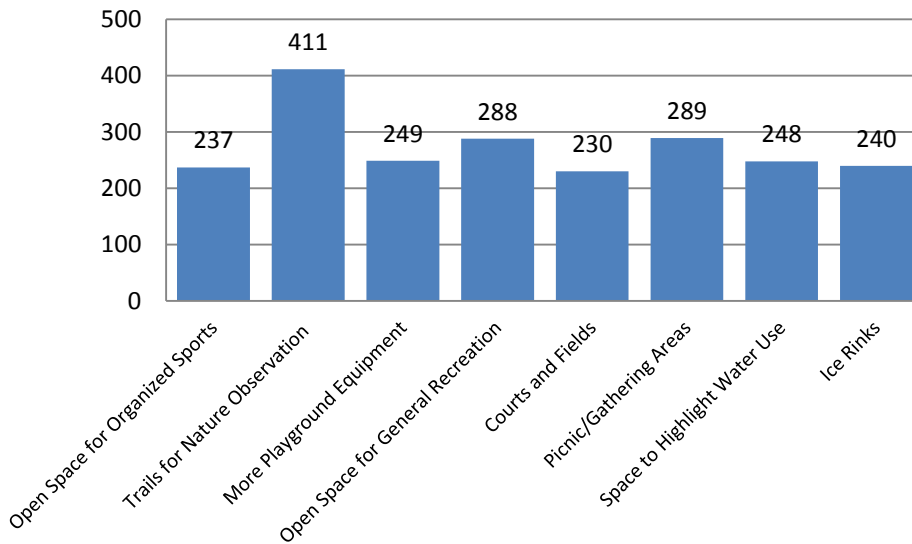
When asked about desired park improvements, maintenance was the number one request. This was followed by restrooms and additional amenities (ie. Picnic tables, and shelters).

When discussing the future development of parks, there is a strong taxpayer desire to develop trails for nature observation. Picnic areas and open space also rank high as desired park land use.

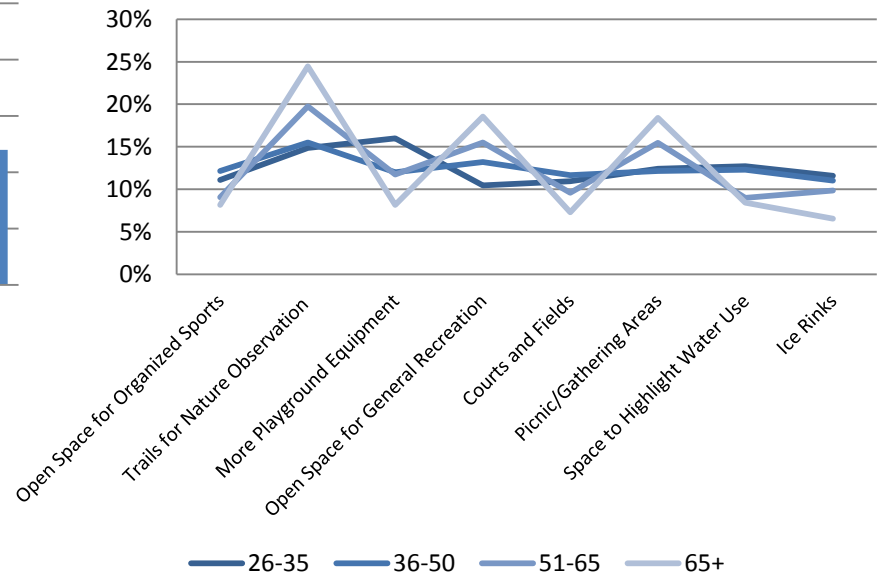
Desired Park Improvements



Future Park Land Development



Park Land Development by Age

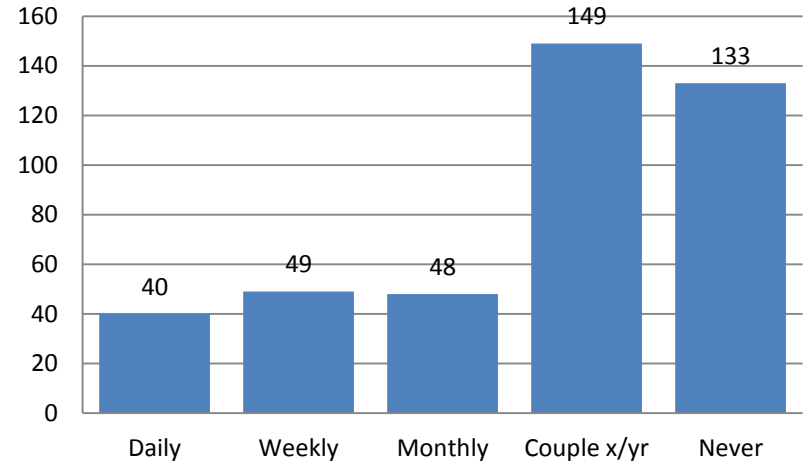


City Lake Use

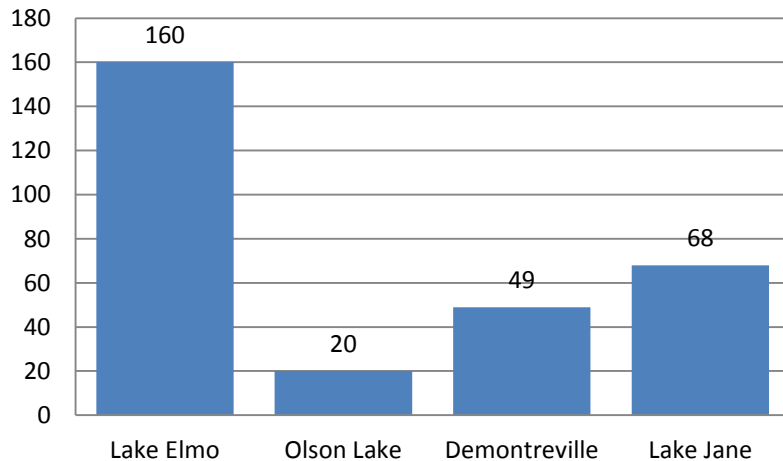
Out of the taxpayers who responded to the lake use question, most use city lakes a couple times per year, if at all. Taxpayers between the ages 26 to 35 are more likely to use the lakes more frequently.

Lake Elmo is the most heavily used lakes, as indicated by a 54% response rate.

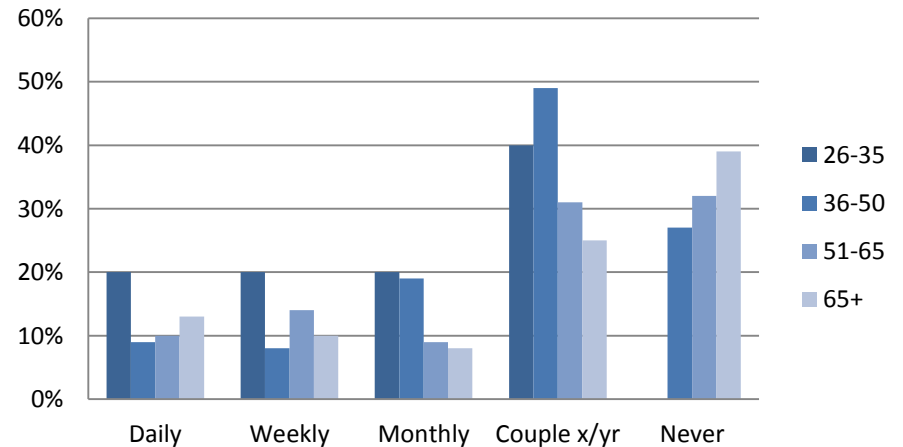
City Lake Use



Lake Preference



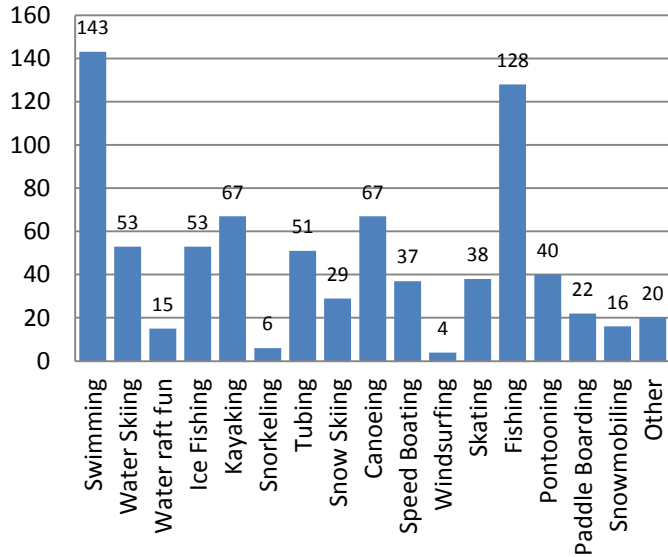
City Lake Use by Age



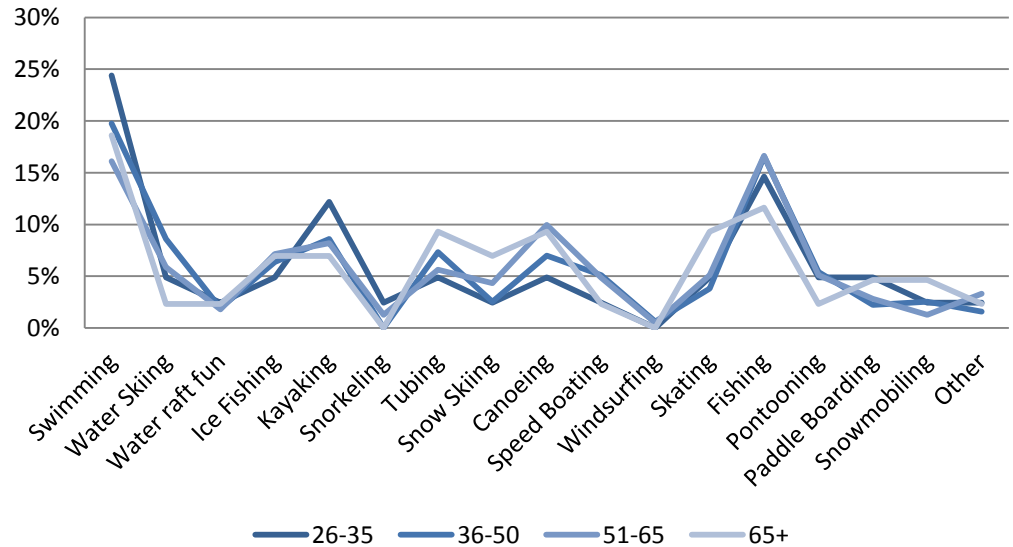
City Lake Use

The primary activities enjoyed by taxpayers on city lakes are swimming and fishing. Kayaking and canoeing follow as other popular lake activities.

Lake Activities



Lake Activities by Age



City Lake Use

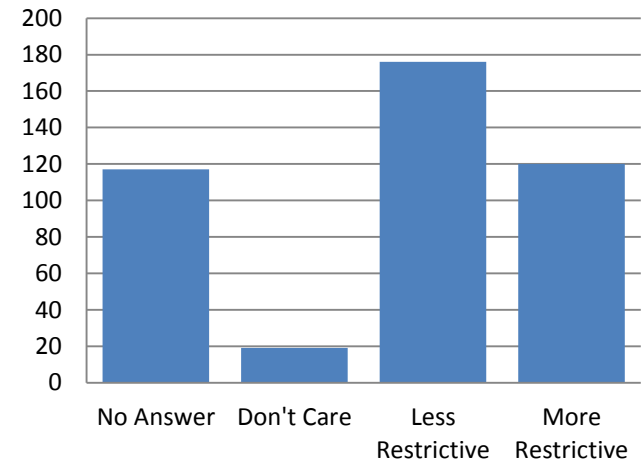
Out of 432 Surveys received, the breakdown for answers to “When do you think that users should be allowed to use watercraft on the lakes on weekdays?” is:

- No answer given: 117 (27%)
- Don't care: 19 (4%)
- Before Noon (less restrictive): 176 (41%)
- After Noon (more restrictive): 120 (28%)

This includes 'yes' answers as less restrictive (before noon) and 'no' answers as more restrictive (after noon)

- Of the 176 that answered wake before noon:
- 144 (82%) cited wake hours beginning at 9 am or earlier
- 32 (18%) cited wake hours beginning between 9 am to noon

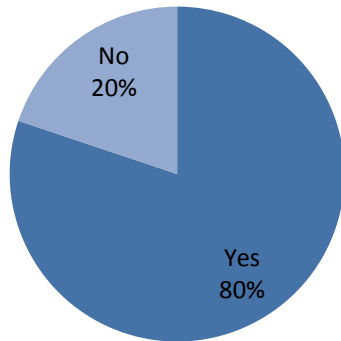
Wake Restrictions



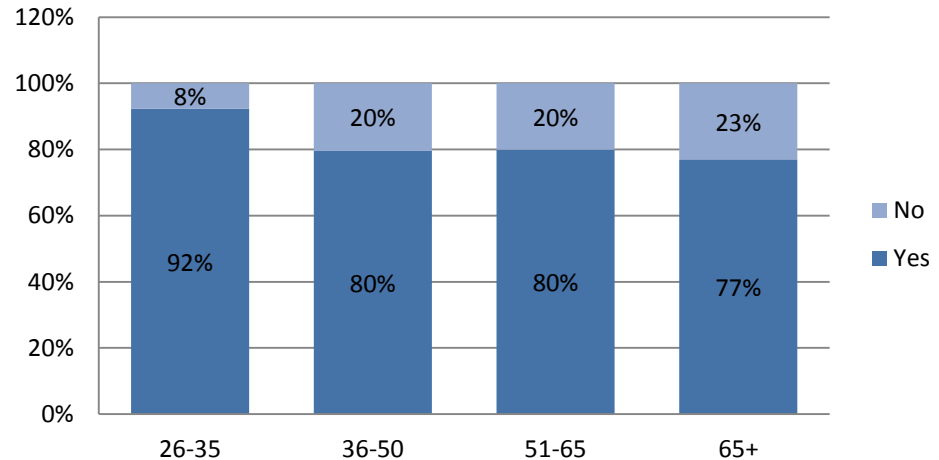
Trails & Connectivity

Eighty percent (80%) of taxpayers are in favor of the city developing a trail system that connects neighborhoods, parks, downtown and schools. This desire is shared evenly among age groups, with slightly more interest among 26 to 35 year olds.

Favor of Trail System



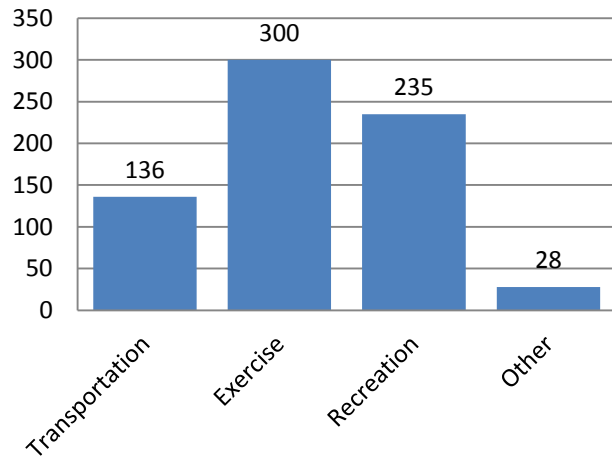
Favor of Trail System by Age



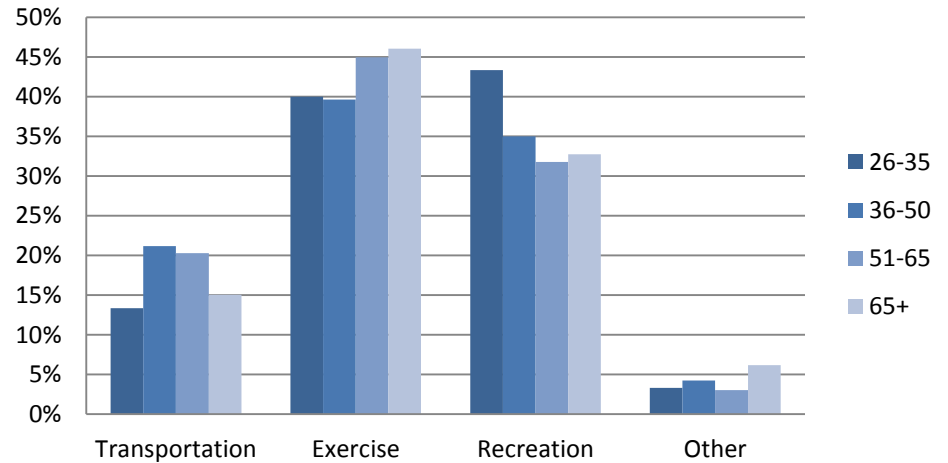
Trails & Connectivity

The majority of respondents are interested in a trail system for exercise and recreation purposes. Taxpayers between ages 26 to 35 are more likely to use trails for recreation, while residents age 65+ are more likely to use trails to get exercise.

Trail Use



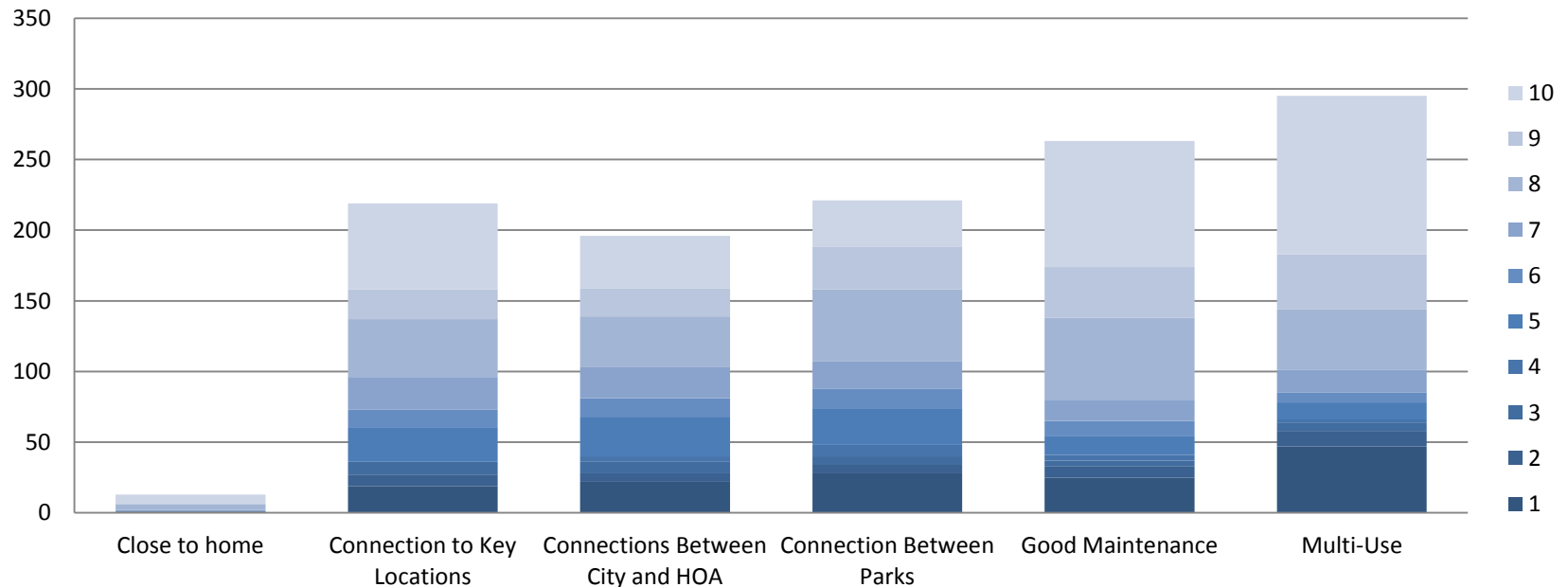
Trail Use by Age



Trails & Connectivity

Respondents were asked to rate important trail factors from 1-10 (10 being most important). The results indicate that multi-use trails and good maintenance are the most commonly indicated concerns and most frequently ranked most important as well.

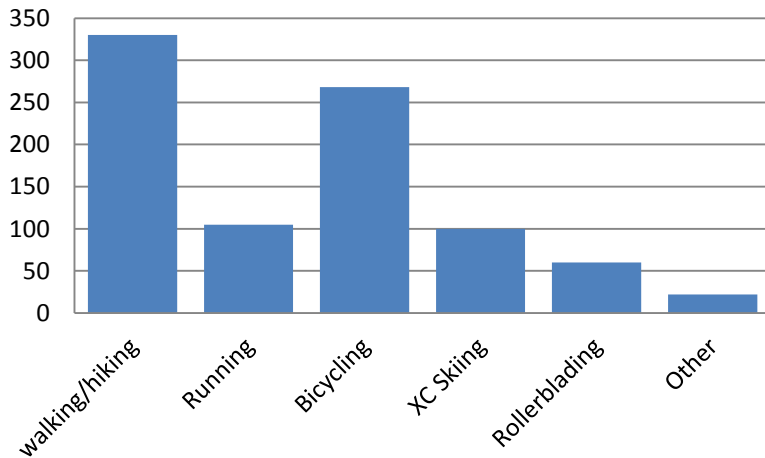
Important Trail Factors



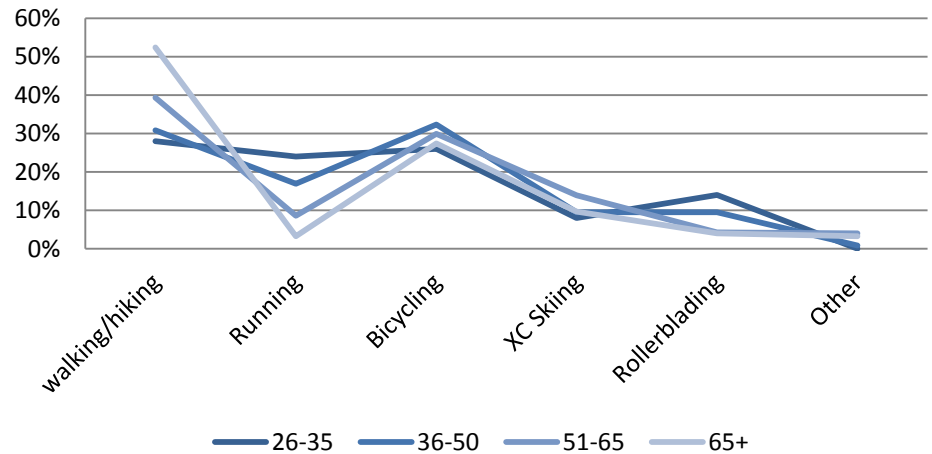
Trails & Connectivity

The most popular uses for city trails are walking/hiking, and biking. Trail users between the ages of 26 to 35 are more likely to engage in more vigorous activity like running and rollerblading, whereas the primary activity choice for users age 65+ is walking and hiking.

Trail Activities

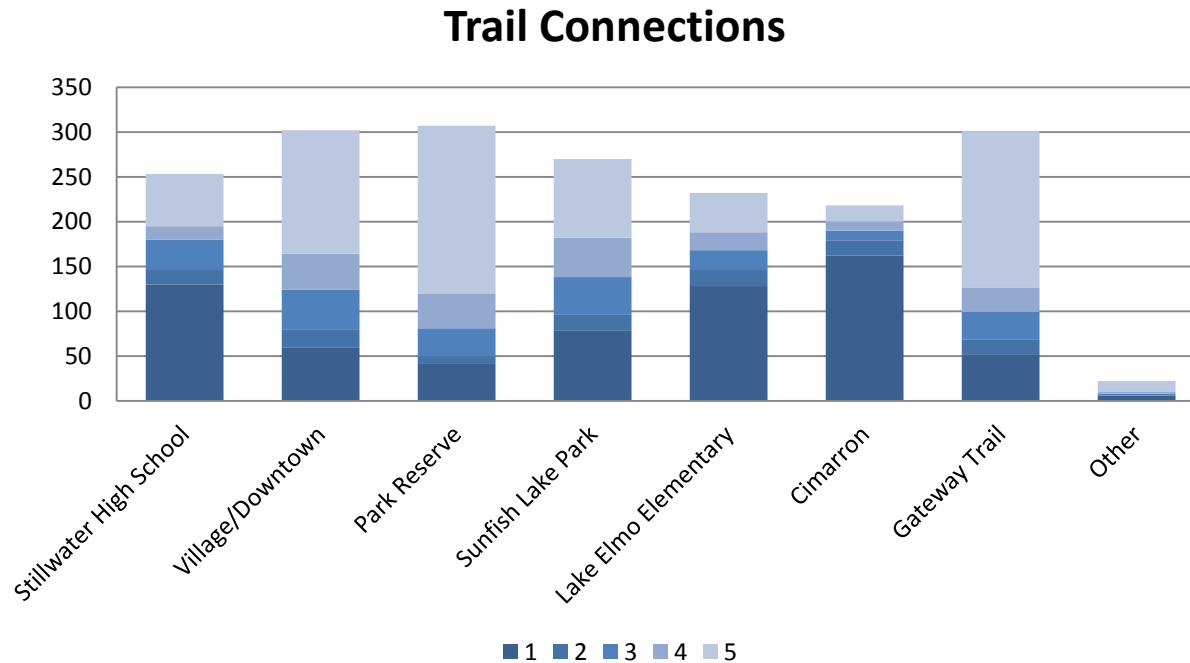


Trail Activities by Age



Trails & Connectivity

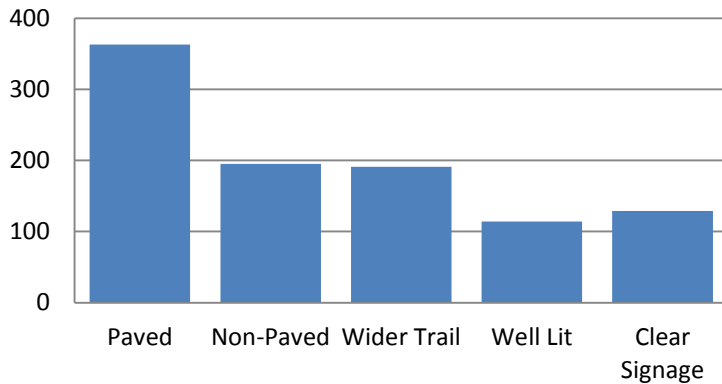
Respondents were asked to rate destinations for trail connections from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important. As indicated by the results below, the Lake Elmo Park Reserve, Gateway Trail, and the Old Village/Downtown area were most frequently indicated. The Park Reserve and Gateway Trail received the highest rankings in terms of importance.



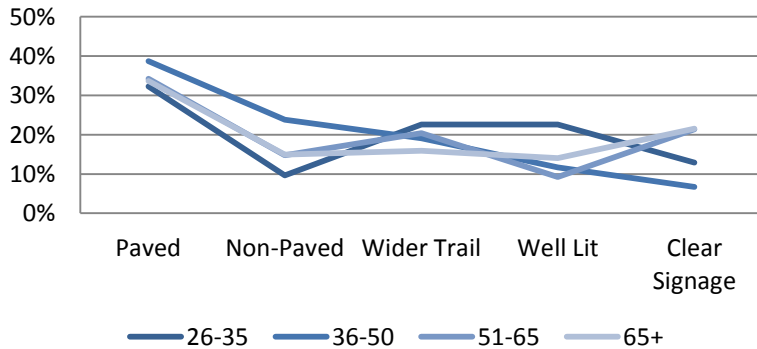
Trails & Connectivity

Survey respondents indicated that they would like to see more paved trails. The most common factors discouraging the use of trails include safety and poor maintenance.

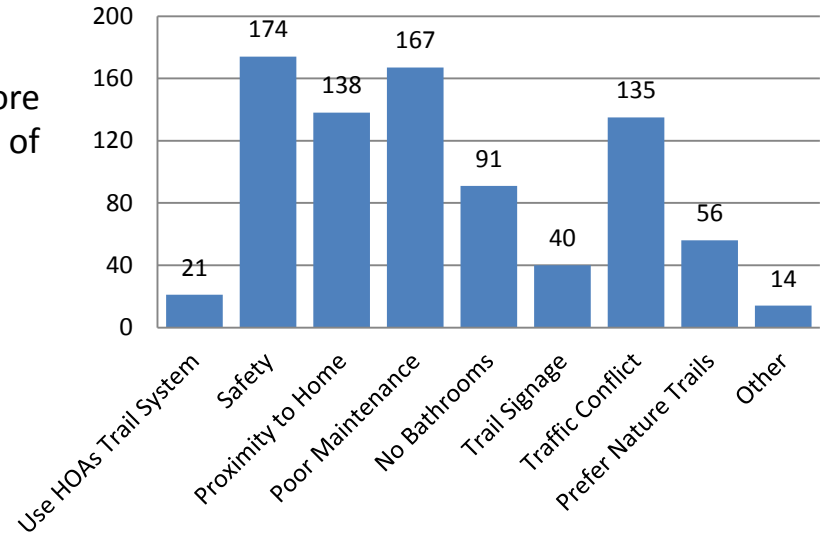
Trail Feature Preference



Trail Feature Preference by Age



Factors Discouraging Trail Use



Factors Discouraging Trail Use by Age

