

All For One, Fun For All!

Bethlehem's Parks & Recreation Master Plan

Town of Bethlehem, New York Parks & Recreation Master Plan Findings Presentation March 26, 2015



GREENPLAY LLC

*The Leading Edge In Parks, Recreation
And Open Space Consulting*

Weston & Sampson®

Agenda

- ❑ **Process**
- ❑ **Demographics**
- ❑ **Survey Results**
- ❑ **Level of Service**
- ❑ **Key Issues**
- ❑ **Reoccurring Themes**
- ❑ **Preliminary Recommendations**
- ❑ **Q & A**



Process

- ❑ **Start-up – November 13, 2014**
- ❑ **Community Input – January 14-15, 2015**
 - ❑ **Focus Groups**
 - ❑ **Stakeholder Meeting**
 - ❑ **MindMixer**
 - ❑ **Survey – Conducted by FRIENDS of Parks & Recreation**
- ❑ **Inventory – November - March**
- ❑ **Level of Service Analysis – November - March**
- ❑ **Operational & Marketing Analysis – March 2015**
 - ❑ **Program & Other Service Provider Analysis**
 - ❑ **Organizational Analysis**
- ❑ **Findings Presentation – March 26, 2015**
- ❑ **Visioning Workshop – March 27, 2015**
- ❑ **Draft Plan & Presentation – June 10, 2015**
- ❑ **Final Plan & Presentation – September 9, 2015**

Focus Group Summary

Meetings held January 14-15, 2015

145 participants in

11 Focus & Stakeholder Groups

1 Public Forum



Strengths

- **Maintenance of facilities**
- **Programming options**
- **Variety of amenities & programs**
- **Dog park**
- **Response to requests**
- **Good website**
- **Marketing and promotions**
- **Aquatics**
- **Walking/fitness trails**
- **Conservation of green space**

Additional Programs or Activities

- **Outdoor/nature based education/programming**
- **Music in parks**
- **Arts in parks**
- **Allow dogs in parks**
- **Family festivals celebrating heritage**
- **Programs for teens/tweens**
- **Off road/Mountain biking**
- **Disc golf**
- **Pickleball**
- **Adult learn to swim**
- **Bike share**
- **Tennis league**
- **Kayaking**
- **Off hours programming**
- **Unstructured outdoor recreational space**
- **Balance between passive and active uses**

Overall Quality of Existing Parks & Recreation Facilities

- **EXCELLENT** **3.8%**
- **VERY GOOD** **55.6%**
- **GOOD** **32.7%**
- **FAIR** **7.9%**
- **POOR** **0%**



Overall Quality of Maintenance of Parks & Recreation Facilities

- **EXCELLENT** **32.4%**
- **VERY GOOD** **52.1%**
- **GOOD** **15.5%**
- **FAIR** **0%**
- **POOR** **0%**



Improvements To Existing Facilities

- **Playground at Elm Ave Park replaced and maintained**
- **Pool building/locker room**
- **Family restrooms at pool**
- **Accessibility to parks - ADA**
- **Teen: Places to go**
- **Parking**
- **Henry Hudson Park headwall repair**
- **Canoe and kayak ramps**
- **Drainage issues**
- **Shade/shelters**
- **Seating areas at the parks**
- **Parking at dog park**
- **Trails maintenance**
- **Restrooms**

New Facilities/Amenities

- **Walking/biking trails**
- **Connectivity between neighborhood and parks**
- **Amphitheater/performance venue**
- **Dog parks**
- **Community center**
- **Greenspace acquisition**
- **Mountain biking trails**
- **Pickleball courts**
- **Adaptive playground / Special needs**
- **Restrooms at parks**
- **Field & court lights**
- **Community gardens**
- **Disc golf course**

Top Priorities

- **Connectivity: non-motorized transportation**
- **Update current facilities**
- **Dog parks**
- **Arts in the park**
- **Passive areas**
- **Community center design**
- **Plantings and landscaping**
- **Fiscally sustainable**
- **Unifying the community**

Demographics

Population projections for Bethlehem, New York

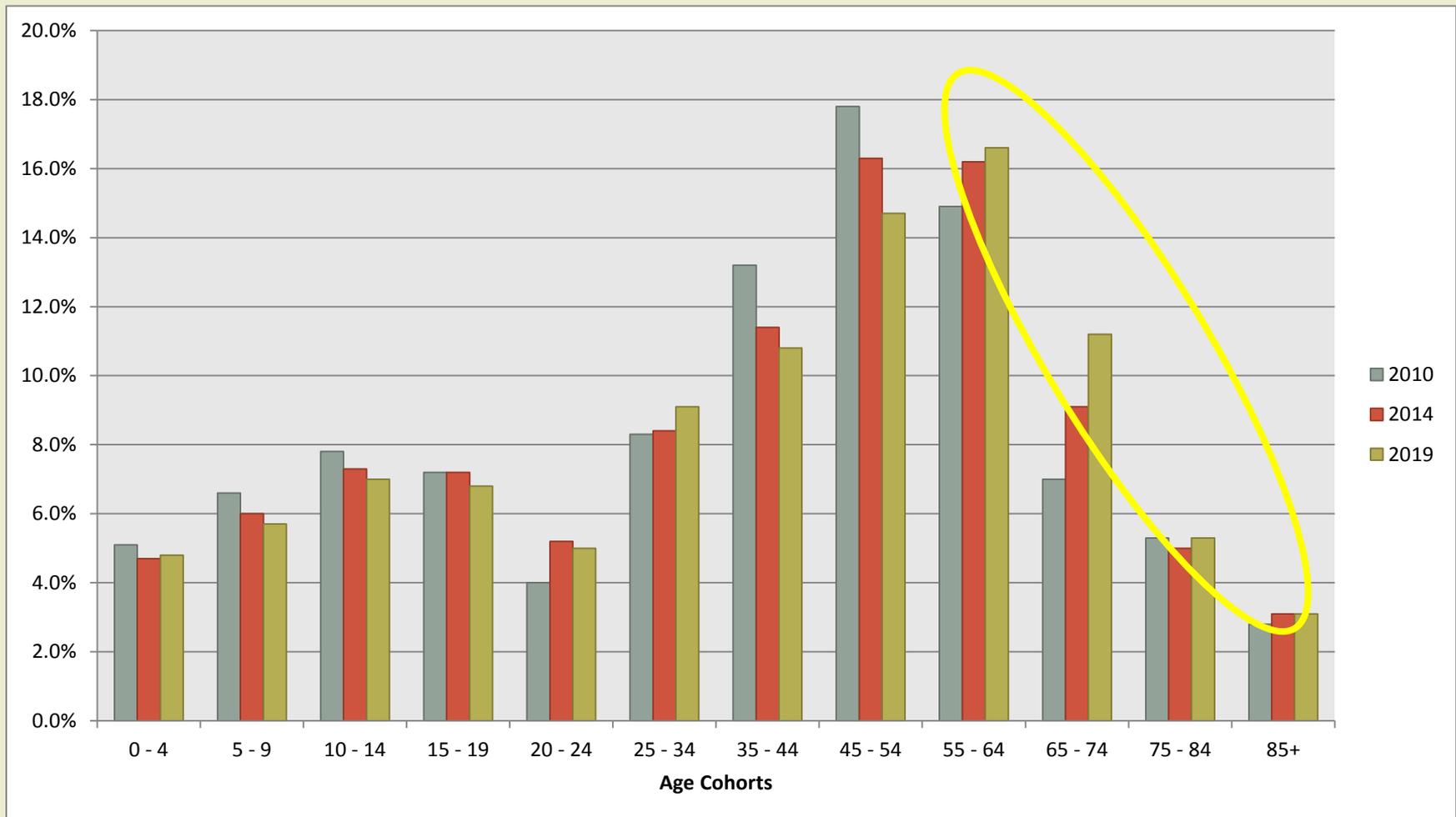
Actual, Estimated and Projected Population	
2000 Population	31,295
2010 Population	33,623
2014 Estimated	34,110
2019 Projected	34,713
2024 Projected *	35,325

Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census; Esri Business Information Solutions 2014 Demographic and Income Profile.

**GreenPlay, LLC, calculated the 2024 projected population based on Esri's projected 2014–2019 annual growth rate of .35% for Bethlehem.*

Demographics

Bethlehem Age Distribution, 2010, 2014, and 2019 (projected)



Demographics

Bethlehem Housing Statistics 2000, 2010, 2014, and 2019 (projected)

	2000	2010	2014	2019
Total housing units	12,456	14,015	14,195	14,473
Percent owner occupied	73.2%	72.0%	71.9%	71.5%
Percent renter occupied	24.0%	24.0%	25.0%	25.5%
<i>Percent vacant</i>	<i>2.8%</i>	<i>4.1%</i>	<i>3.1%</i>	<i>2.9%</i>

Source: 2010 U.S. Census; 2014 estimates and 2019 forecasts provided by Esri Business Information Solutions.

Survey

Methodology

Survey Methods

- 1) Developed by the FRIENDS of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation
 - 2) Distributed through the FRIENDS website using SurveyMonkey
 - 3) Summary report written by the FRIENDS
- Conducted over a 3 month period: May – July 2014
 - Final sample size was 345, exceeding the goal of 300
 - Survey results represent the opinions of those who chose to participate.

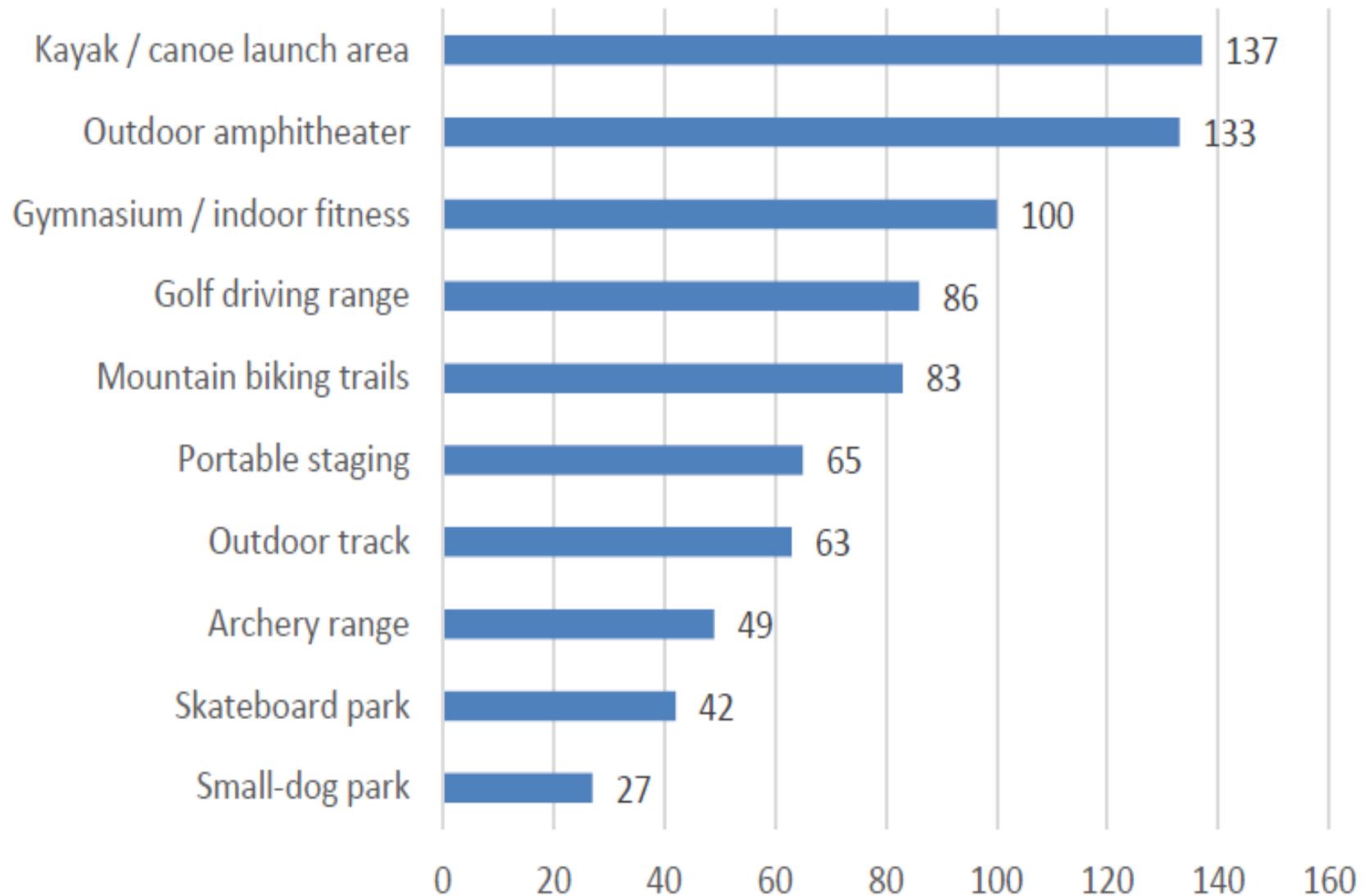


Survey Results

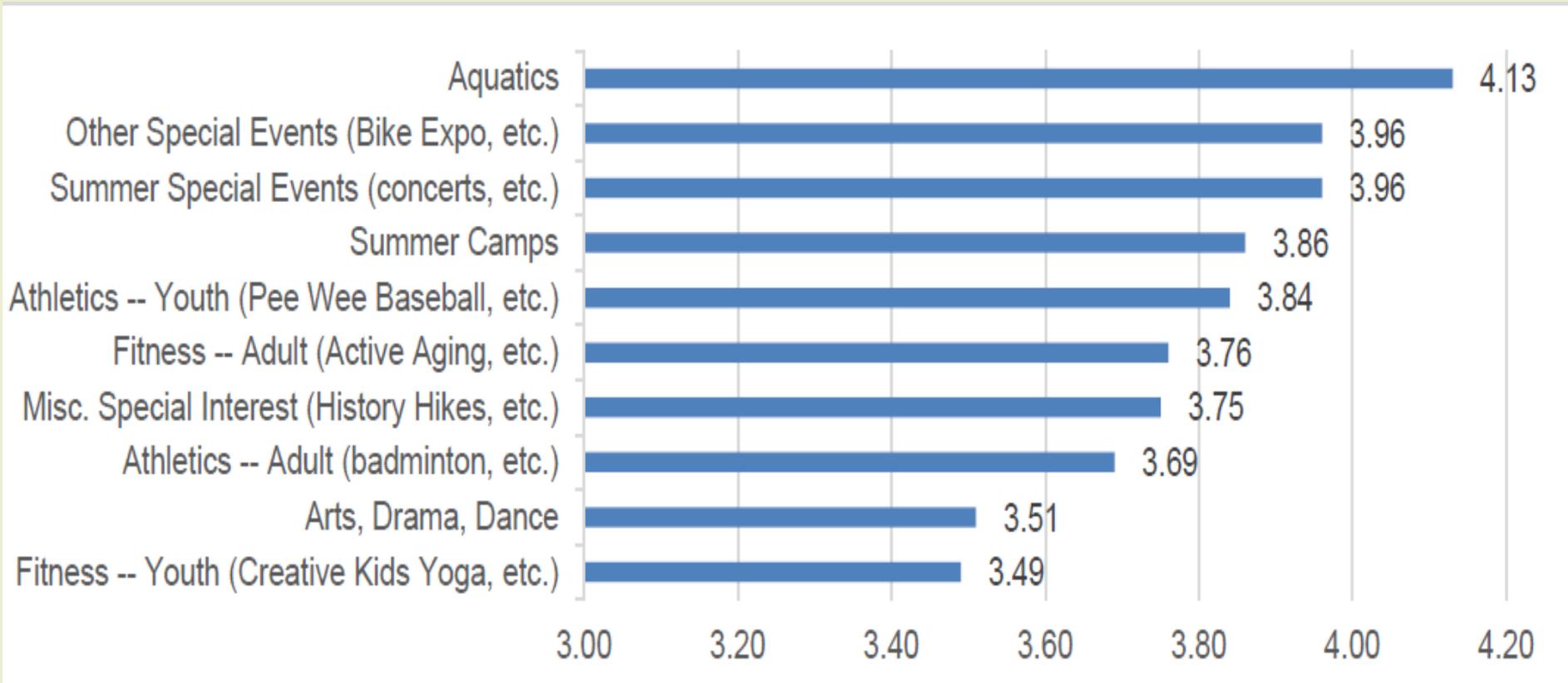
The 2014 Parks and Recreation Survey focused on six specific areas:

- Town Park Facilities**
- Recreational Activities & You**
- Staying Informed**
- The Value of Our Parks**
- Spending on Parks**
- Friends of Bethlehem Parks and Recreation**

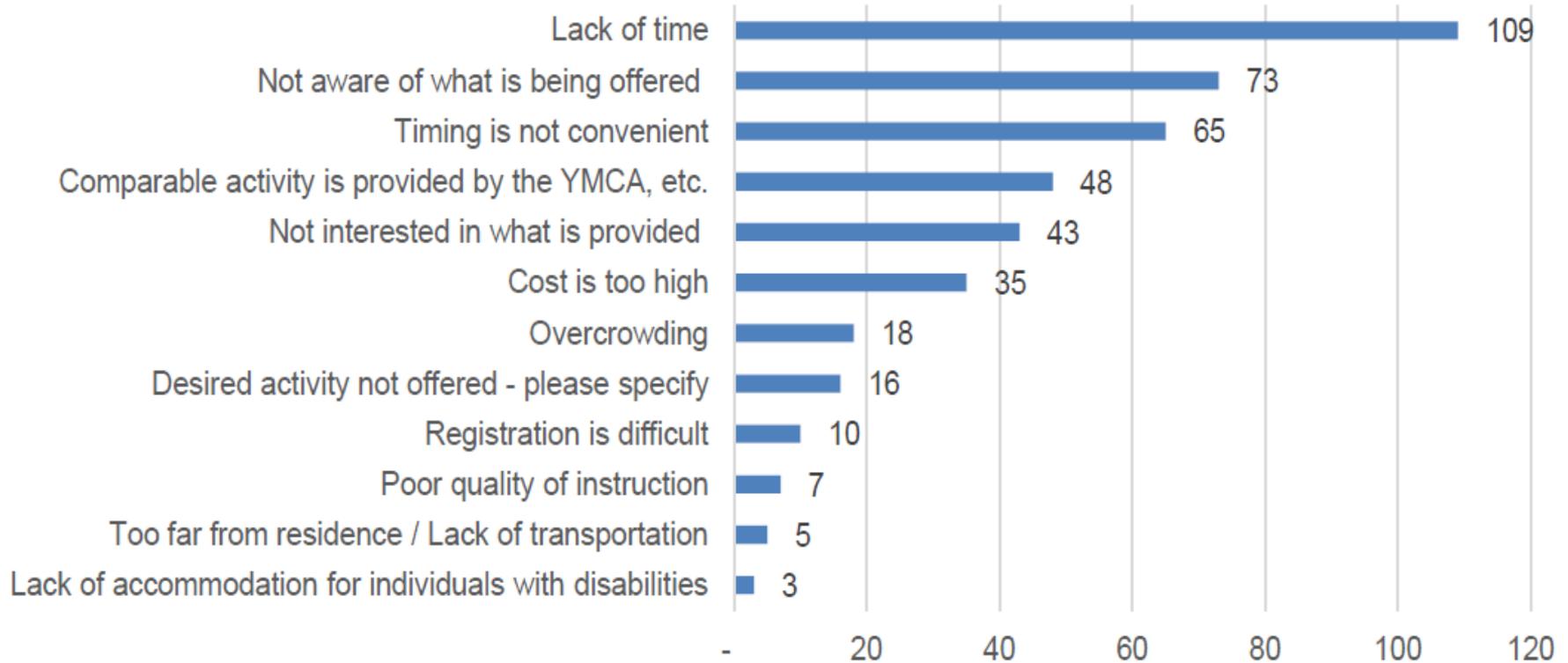
Type of facility you would like to see added?



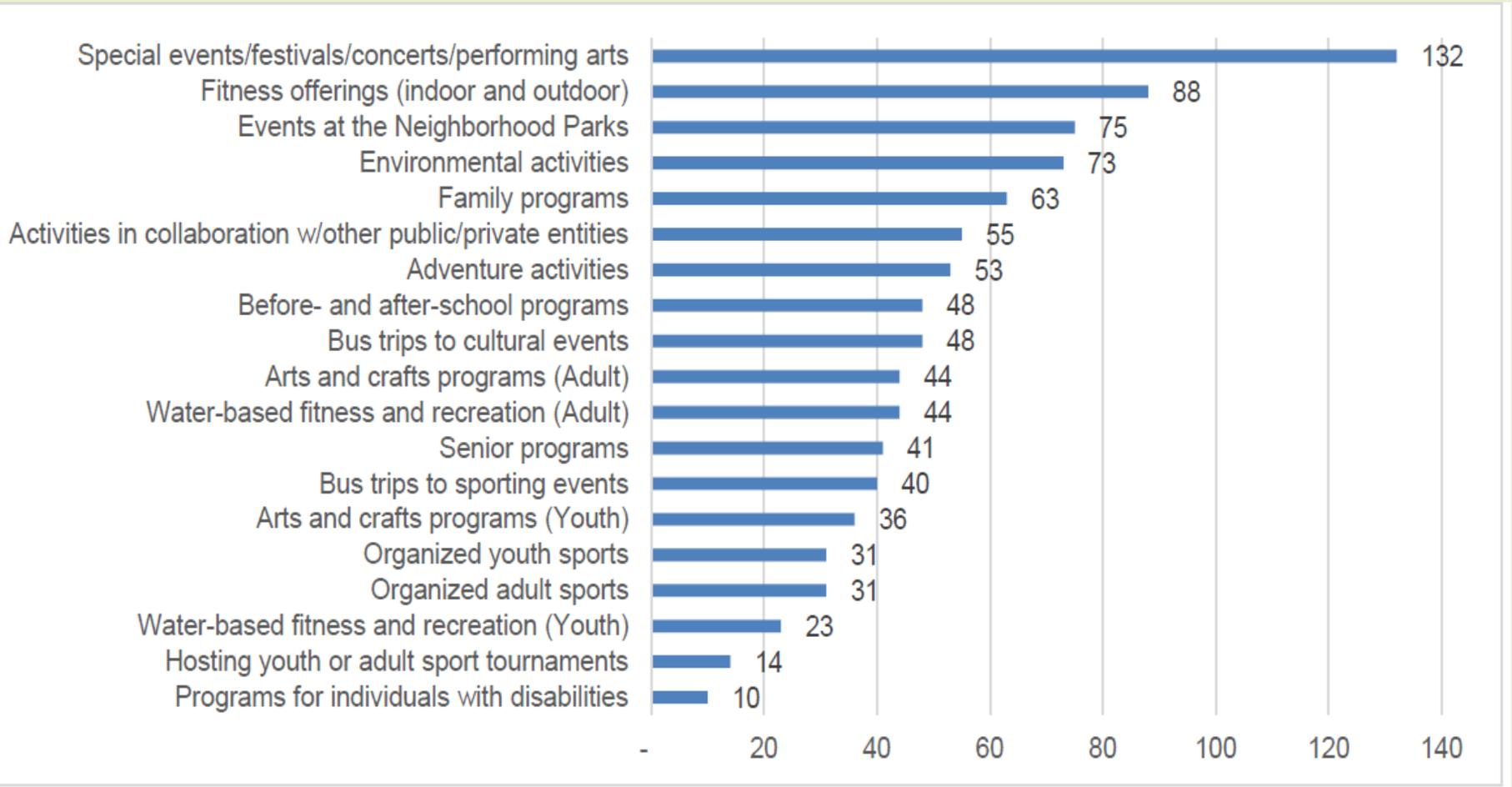
Satisfaction level with Town recreational activities



Barriers to your participation in Town recreational activities

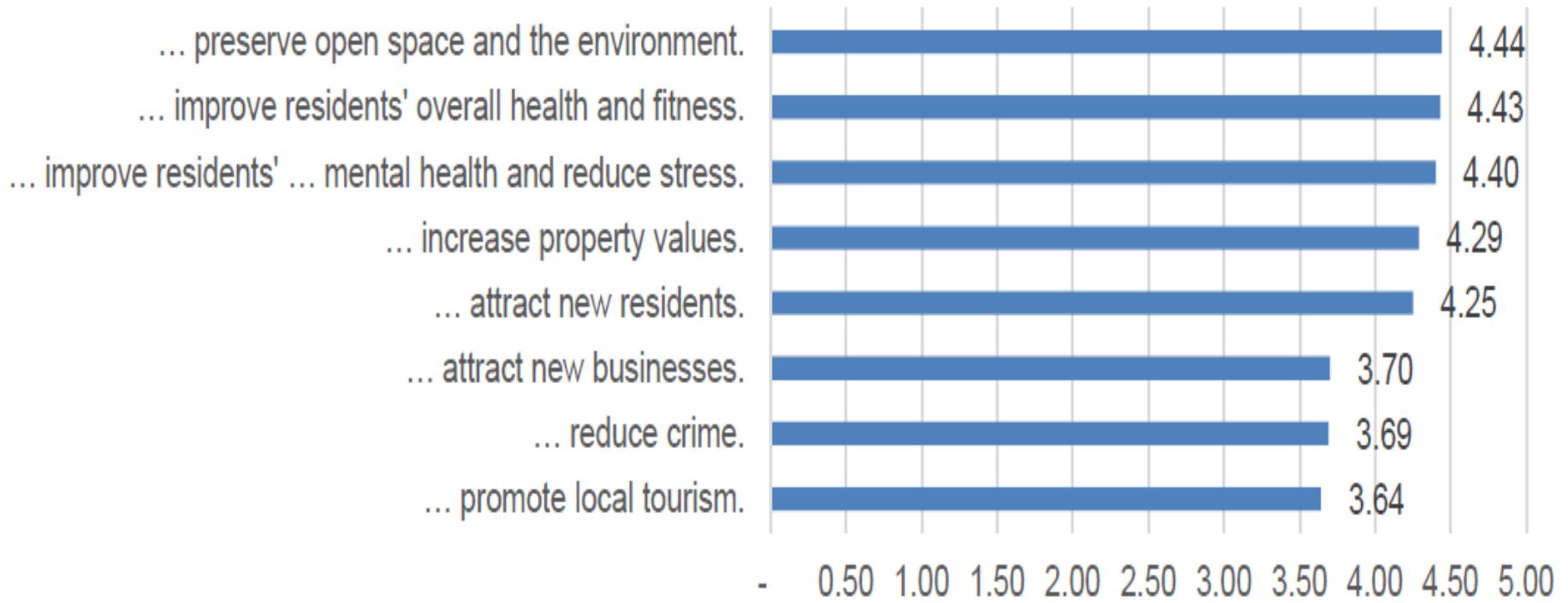


Recreational activities for which you would like to see more offerings



Value of municipal parks and recreational activities

Complete the sentence “Municipal parks and recreation programs ...”



If you had an additional \$100 TO INVEST in the parks and recreation system, where would you allocate those funds?





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

MindMixer Overview



MindMixer is an online community engagement tool designed to supplement existing outreach (public meetings, focus groups, etc.) through web and mobile dialogue.



Broaden the outreach. Extend the conversation. Measure results with real-time data throughout the project.



Generate high quality real-time input without adding additional burdens to staff.

Working in more than **150 communities** nationally!

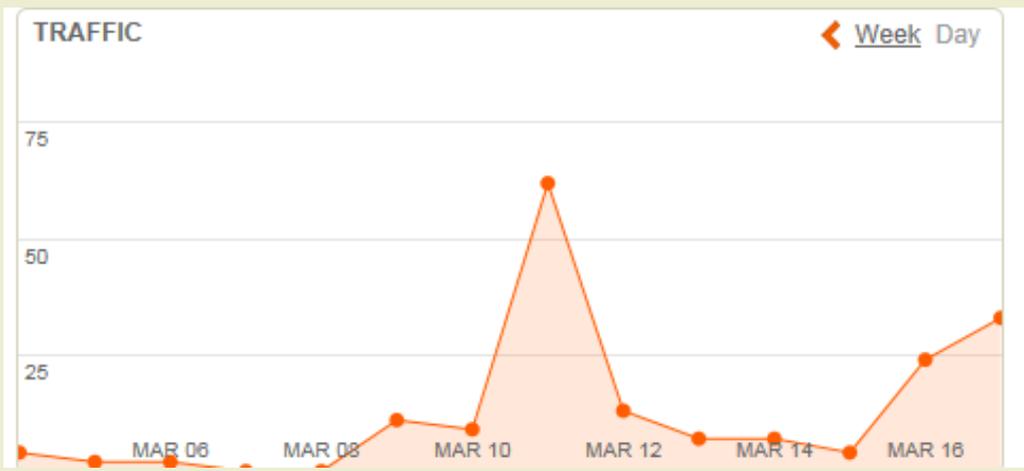


<http://bethlehemparks.mindmixer.com/>



Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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TOTAL TRAFFIC

Unique Visitors

564

Page Views

2,486

Participants

TOTAL

51
Participants

GENDER

60% Male
40% Female

AGE

Age Group	Percentage
14-17	0%
18-24	0%
25-34	0%
35-44	50%
45-54	0%
55-64	25%
65+	25%

POSTAL CODE

Postal Code	Percentage
12054	66.7%
12077	11.8%
12159	9.8%
12158	7.8%
12067	2%
12186	2%



Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

Engagement

DETAILS

9

Total Topics



5

Open



4

Closed

ACTIVITY

287

Interactions

21

Comments

7

Shares



Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

Topic: Moving from Good to Great

If you were the Parks and Recreation Director, what three things you would do to move the department from good to great?

Ideas 23 Comments 6 Idea Statuses 0

Top Ideas

connect spaces with bike paths, rail trails, etc. 17 Stars
Linda G45 | Jan 28, 2015 0 Comments

to add live shows in the summer at the elm ave park 12 Stars
alan L6 | Jan 31, 2015 0 Comments

Put more emphasis on fall, winter & spring activities. 10 Stars
Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015 0 Comments

Add a large park by the river 8 Stars
Ryan C41 | Feb 03, 2015 1 Comment

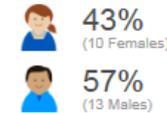
Have more programs for non-sports people. 8 Stars
John V40 | Jan 29, 2015 0 Comments

42% of people participated

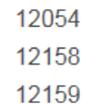
(25 of 59 total participants)

39% More than your average and 7% Less than the MindMixer average

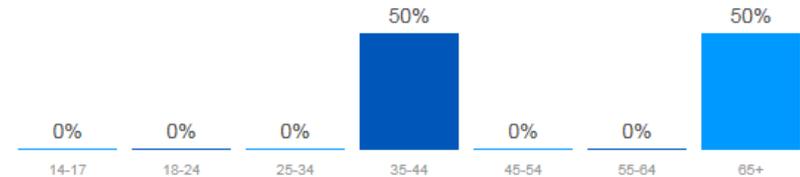
Gender Breakdown



Top Postal Codes



Age Breakdown





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

Topic: New Facilities

What are the top three priorities for new facilities in Bethlehem for parks and recreation?

Ideas	17	Comments	5	Idea Statuses	0
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Top Ideas

Canoe/kayak launch

Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015

14 Stars

1 Comment

Community center; offerings for the "non" athlete, all ages

Rebecca H40 | Jan 28, 2015

14 Stars

1 Comment

Walking, running, biking trail at Elm Avenue Park

Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015

13 Stars

0 Comments

Performing arts venue

Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015

12 Stars

0 Comments

Mountain biking trails

Ryan C41 | Feb 03, 2015

12 Stars

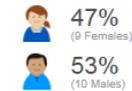
0 Comments

34% of people participated

(21 of 61 total participants)

11% More than your average and 19% Less than the MindMixer average

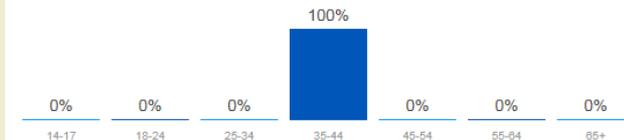
Gender Breakdown



Top Postal Codes

12054
12158
12159

Age Breakdown





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

Topic: New Programs for Parks and Recreation

What three programs should Bethlehem Parks and Recreation look to offer that they currently are not offering?

Ideas	13	Comments	5	Idea Statuses	0
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Top Ideas

"non" athletic; community garden;

Rebecca H40 | Jan 28, 2015

11 Stars
1 Comment

Outdoor yoga or tai chi

Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015

11 Stars
0 Comments

Performing arts programs

Joan G8 | Jan 27, 2015

10 Stars
0 Comments

Outdoor education, nature programs, energy conservation

paul T23 | Jan 28, 2015

9 Stars
0 Comments

Arts, more shade trees, a longer walking path.

John V40 | Jan 29, 2015

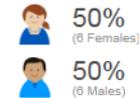
9 Stars
0 Comments

21% of people participated

(13 of 61 total participants)

32% Less than your average and 50% Less than the MindMixer average

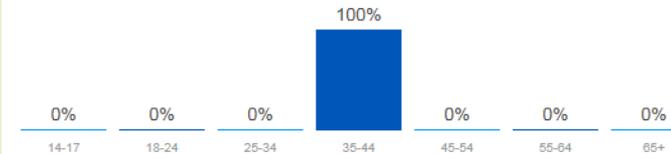
Gender Breakdown



Top Postal Codes

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12159

Age Breakdown





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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Topic: What can I do if I don't play sports?

What are the three top non-sports activities you would like to see Bethlehem Parks and Recreation offer?

Ideas 10 Comments 1 Idea Statuses 0

Top Ideas

Performing arts, community garden, walking trails 6 Stars
Joan G8 | Feb 12, 2015 0 Comments

Arts, Music, Community Center 3 Stars
Brian D53 | Feb 24, 2015 1 Comment

A stage for a concert series, a shady section with benches, 3 Stars
John V40 | Feb 12, 2015 0 Comments

Summer concert series, shady area with benches, walking path 3 Stars
John V40 | Feb 13, 2015 0 Comments

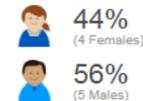
Dog walking trails - Plays - Concerts 3 Stars
Elaine W6 | Feb 15, 2015 0 Comments

16% of people participated

(10 of 61 total participants)

47% Less than your average and 62% Less than the MindMixer average

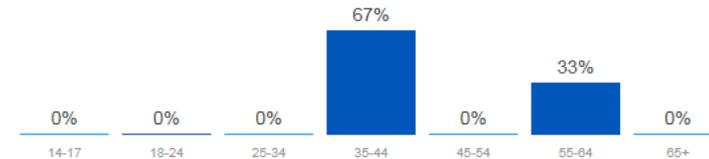
Gender Breakdown



Top Postal Codes

12054
12158
12186

Age Breakdown





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

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Topic: Elements of a great Community Center.

If the Town were to consider building a community center, what are the elements you would want to have in it?

Ideas **14** Comments **0** Idea Statuses **0**

Top Ideas

Make it a net energy zero building, with teaching tools. 7 Stars
0 Comments
William R30 | Feb 15, 2015

kitchen, meeting rooms, stage 5 Stars
0 Comments
Rebecca H40 | Feb 18, 2015

Gymnasium, Fitness Class room, stage, kitchen, teen center 3 Stars
0 Comments
Nan L2 | Feb 19, 2015

The basics should include multi-purpose rooms, stage, & kitchen 3 Stars
0 Comments
Joan G8 | Feb 12, 2015

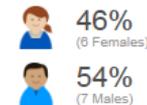
A community room for groups and residents. 3 Stars
0 Comments
John V40 | Feb 13, 2015

25% of people participated

(15 of 61 total participants)

21% Less than your average and **42% Less** than the MindMixer average

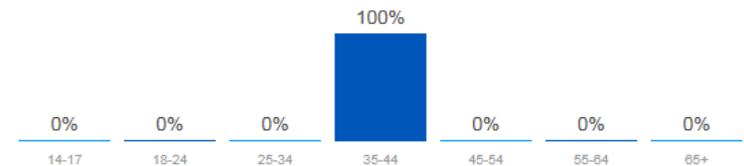
Gender Breakdown



Top Postal Codes

12054
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12159

Age Breakdown





Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Share your ideas. Be heard. Build a better community.

Welcome to Bethlehem Parks and Recreation Master Plan's Management Dashboard

Create and manage the **Topics** in your project.

Topics

Create New Topic

Select From Topic Library

TITLE		DATE	TYPE		
How do you get to the park?	Embed Widget	Mar 13 - Apr 10, 2015	Idea Submission	<input type="checkbox"/> Featured	Edit
Dogs in public parks	Embed Widget	Mar 11 - Apr 10, 2015	Instant Poll	<input type="checkbox"/> Featured	Edit
What size Dog Park do we need?	Embed Widget	Apr 03 - May 01, 2015	Instant Poll	<input type="checkbox"/> Featured	Edit
Fitness equipment on the Fit Trail	Embed Widget	Mar 30 - Apr 24, 2015	Instant Poll	<input type="checkbox"/> Featured	Edit

FIGURE X
Town of Bethlehem, New York

DRAFT 02-27-2015

Town Parks Map



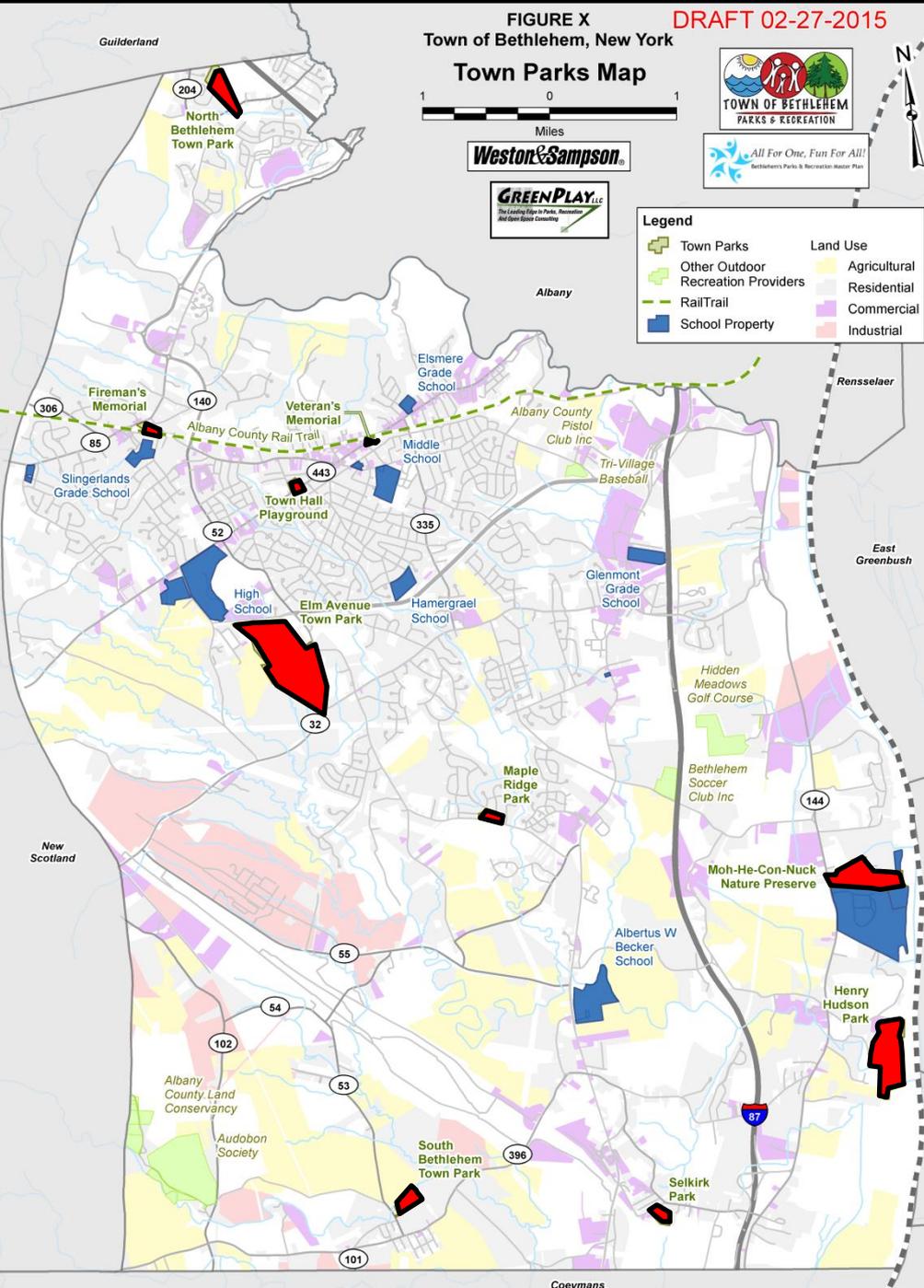
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- Legend**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Town Parks | Land Use |
| Other Outdoor Recreation Providers | Agricultural |
| Rail Trail | Residential |
| School Property | Commercial |
| | Industrial |



Inventory



Inventory

Consultants & Staff completed fall 2014 inventory of all indoor and outdoor facilities

- Elm Avenue Park
 - Athletic Fields
 - Playground
 - Maintenance Facility
 - Office Building
 - Pool Complex
- Firefighters Memorial Park
- Henry Hudson Park
- Town Hall Playground & Ballfield
- Maple Ridge Park
- Moh-He-Con-Nuck Nature Preserve
- North Bethlehem Park
- Selkirk Park
- South Bethlehem Park
- Veterans Memorial Park

Inventory Summary

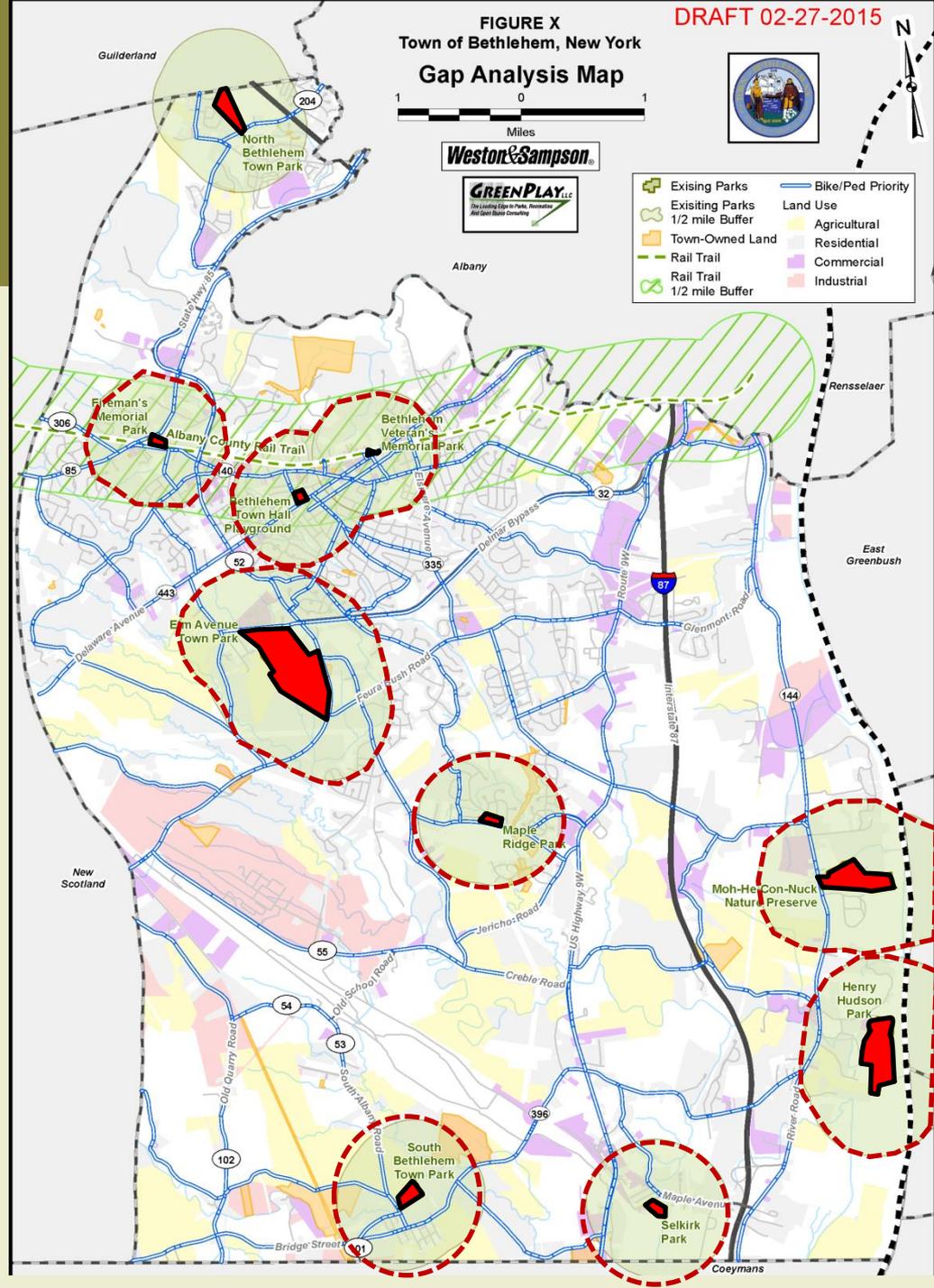
- ❑ **Several parks** need site furnishings to be replaced/repared (benches, bike racks, picnic tables)
- ❑ More can be done to **take advantage of the Henry Hudson Park & repair shoreline**
- ❑ **ADA accessibility** is limited in some parks (overall audit)
- ❑ Elm Avenue Park field/court upgrades
 - Playground upgrades/replacement
 - Pool Marcite replacement/repairs
 - Office building: interior/lighting upgrades
 - Maintenance buildings: replaced/major repairs
- ❑ North Bethlehem Park establishment of trails
- ❑ Maple Ridge Park repair trails

Inventory Summary

- ❑ Most Parks are in excellent condition, maintenance is generally great but a few locations have aged significantly
- ❑ Elm Avenue Park pools, playground & maintenance structures need major repairs, upgrades or replacements.
- ❑ Noted high quality sports turf in most parks
- ❑ Non-sports turf areas deserve some attention to help with drainage and erosion

Level of Service Analysis

- ❑ Well distributed recreational opportunities
- ❑ Gaps within service throughout Town
- ❑ Access primarily by automobile; major pedestrian barriers
- ❑ Most park areas are relatively small compared to Elm Avenue, Henry Hudson & Moh-He-Con-Nuck



Preliminary Recommendations

- ❑ Develop and implement a plan to renovate the Elm Avenue Park Pool Complex
 - Accommodate the needs all patrons
 - Overall facility improvements
- ❑ ADA transition plan must be developed & implemented
- ❑ Develop and implement design/maintenance standards
 - Native landscape/non-turf areas
 - Shade structures
 - Fit Trail
 - Basketball/volleyball courts
 - Playground
- ❑ Develop and implement a system of individual park master plans for aging existing parks & expand recreational types
 - Take advantage of the terrain, climate & water opportunities to become an outdoor adventure sports destination with X-country skiing, hiking, trail running, mountain biking, SUP, canoe/kayaking, etc.

Reoccurring Themes

- Maintain what we have
- Improve Elm Avenue Park Pool Complex
- Trails for fitness, walking and biking
- Connectivity to neighborhoods and parks
- Wellness, fitness, special needs programming
- Art and cultural programs and events
- Teen, youth, senior, family programming

Reoccurring Themes

- Explore design and construction of a new recreation center at Elm Avenue Park
- Explore redesign and upgrades to Elm Avenue Park
- River access & Henry Hudson Park
- Equitable user fees and usage policies
- Explore opportunities to allow dogs in parks
- Explore expanding parks and open space
- Explore developing a mountain bike “park”

Thank You For Your Time and Interest!



Weston&Sampson®

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