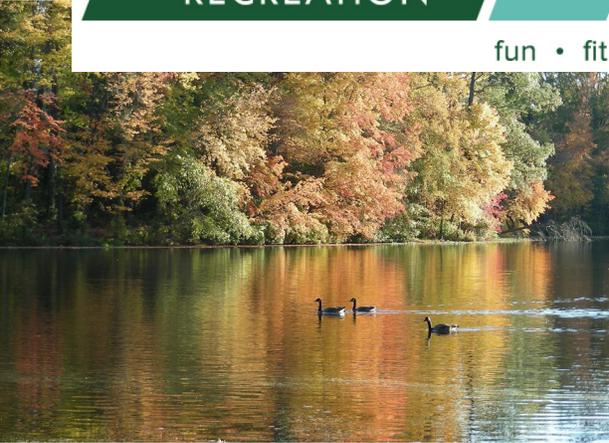


# GREENBELT RECREATION



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## RECREATION AND PARK FACILITIES MASTER PLAN

JANUARY 2019



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Greenbelt’s provision of parks, access to green space, and recreational opportunities has been central to life in the community since the city’s development in the late 1930s. Although the city and region has changed significantly in the past 80 years, recreation and access to parks and green space remains of high importance to residents’ quality of life and is a major focus of city resources. While Greenbelt is a small city, its provision of parks, recreation amenities, and programs, and its number of annual program participants is more in-line with that of municipalities twice or triple its size.

## A. PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

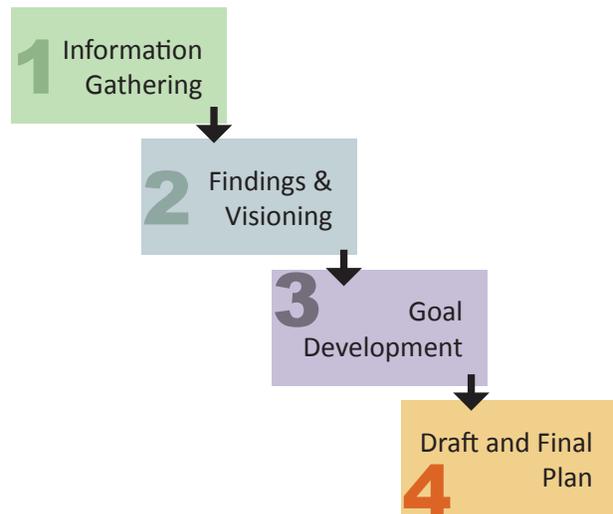
The Greenbelt Recreation and Parks Facilities Master Plan is a tool designed to help the City meet the current and future recreational needs of its growing and diverse population. This document represents the culmination of a 15+ month planning process that assessed the City’s current parks and recreation system, completed a community needs assessment and developed a prioritized action plan to guide the City’s work to improve its recreational assets and services over the next several years.



Image credit: City of Greenbelt

## B. PLANNING PROCESS SUMMARY

The project team, consisting of staff from Greenbelt’s Recreation Department, Public Works Department, the Department of Planning and Community Development, and the consultant team, guided this project through a multi-faceted process to gather and analyze quantitative and qualitative data on issues impacting the provision of municipal parks and recreation amenities and programs in Greenbelt. The collaborative, community-oriented approach leveraged the consultant team’s expertise and the local knowledge and institutional history provided by Greenbelt’s staff and community members.



## C. KEY ISSUES SUMMARY

The Greenbelt community has a lot to celebrate in its parks and recreation system, and just as much to plan for to ensure that the city’s facilities and recreation programs continue to provide high-quality experiences for all ages and abilities into the future. The City’s lands, facilities,

infrastructure, recreation programs, and services directly contribute to community well-being and help make Greenbelt an attractive place to live, work, and play. While the existing park and recreation system is meeting most general needs of the community, this planning process identified key areas to strengthen current service delivery and prepare Greenbelt to continue to meet the recreational needs of its growing population.

Key issues to consider in planning for the future include:

- Close to home, affordable public recreational opportunities are a historic part of the community and remain important today.
- Residents are generally satisfied with existing recreational opportunities but would like the City's parks and facilities to be:
  - Better maintained
  - Offer a wider diversity of programs
  - Connected by bicycle and pedestrian pathways, and be within a short distance from home
- Avenues to better connect with renters and diverse groups within the community is needed.
- An aggressive and proactive long-term management strategy to best maintain the aging and heavy used recreation facilities, including the Community Center and Buddy Attick Park.

## D. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN SUMMARY TABLE

Greenbelt is well positioned to leverage the many strengths of its existing parks and recreation system and catalog of programs and services to ensure that residents continue to have access to diverse and high-quality recreational opportunities. Parks and recreation were central to Greenbelt's original design and remain defining features of the community today. Goals and actions developed through this planning process identified five areas for the city to focus efforts over the next several years to improve parks and recreation service provision. A detailed Goals, Objectives, and Action Table can be found in Section V.

Goal 1: Enhance Organizational and Operational Efficiencies.

Goal 2: Improve Program and Service Delivery throughout the City.

Goal 3: Continue to maintain and improve the quality of Greenbelt's parks and recreation assets.

Goal 4: Enhance the overall level of service provided by Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities, and address access to recreation facilities, programs, and services.

Goal 5: Continue to balance funding needs while keeping City recreation programs and opportunities affordable for everyone.

# I. INTRODUCTION OF THE PLANNING CONTEXT

## A. PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN

The Greenbelt Recreation and Parks Facilities Master Plan is a tool designed to help the City meet the current and future recreational needs of its growing and diverse population. This document represents the culmination of a 15+ month planning process that assessed the City's current parks and recreation system, completed a community needs assessment, and developed a prioritized action plan to guide the City's work to improve its recreational assets and services over the next several years.



*Early aerial photo of Greenbelt (undated)  
Image Credit: Library of Congress*

## B. BRIEF HISTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN GREENBELT

Located approximately 13 miles northeast of the District of Columbia, the City of Greenbelt is one of 27 incorporated municipalities in Prince George's County, Maryland. Greenbelt National Park occupies the majority of land in the southern half of the City, while the northern portion consists of residential and commercial development. In 2016, the City's population was approximately 22,000.

Greenbelt is not a typical American city. Established in 1937 as the federal government's first venture into developing residential housing, it was the first of three "garden cities" to be built by the Roosevelt Administration during the "New Deal" era.<sup>1</sup> In 1997, the original portions of Greenbelt were designated as a National Historic Landmark. The design of the city included residential housing "superblocks" surrounding an art deco-styled central civic, recreation, and business district, with all areas connected by pedestrian pathways. Large tracts of woods and agricultural land surrounded the city, creating a "belt" of green space. The largest remaining tracts of this original green space are now the National Park Service's Greenbelt Park and the USDA's Beltsville Agricultural Research Center campus. Opportunities for recreation, easy access to open space, and walkability were purposefully built into the city since its inception and remain defining features of the community today that are of central importance to residents.

<sup>1</sup> "History of Greenbelt, Maryland," <http://www.greenbeltd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/558>, accessed July 2018

In the 80+ years since Greenbelt welcomed its first residents, the city and region has changed significantly, but the physical and social core of the original planned community have endured. The federal government divested its ownership of Greenbelt, selling its stake to co-ops formed by original residents and transferring public spaces to City ownership. Many of the co-ops exist today and own most of the City's original residential buildings. As the region grew, new neighborhoods, condominiums, and apartment complexes were built in the western and eastern portions of the city in the 1950s – 1980s. Post-World War II development greatly favored the automobile and major regional roads and interstate highways were constructed, including Interstate 95/495 (the Capital Beltway) and the Baltimore Washington Parkway. While important regional transportation corridors, physically, these large roads bisected the city, created major barriers to pedestrians and cyclists and divided Greenbelt into three sections. In 1993, the Greenbelt Metro Station, a regional public transportation hub, was opened and provides subway, commuter train, and bus service connections to regional destinations throughout the Baltimore, Washington D.C., and northern Virginia metropolitan area.

The original portion of the city, commonly referred to as “Historic Greenbelt” and “Old Greenbelt” has influenced the development of other planned communities seeking to create an active civic life. The original art deco community and commercial buildings of the Roosevelt Center area of Greenbelt continue to be the hub of recreation and civic life in the city. For example, the Greenbelt Community Center, which hosts dozens of recreation, fitness, arts, civic meetings, social programs and events, was the city's original elementary school. Next door, at the Aquatics and Fitness Center, the region's first public swimming pool opened in 1939 and remains heavily utilized today. Named in the 1960s after one of the city's first police officers, Buddy Attick Park's man-made lake and surrounding open space was created as a recreational open space when Greenbelt was first developed.



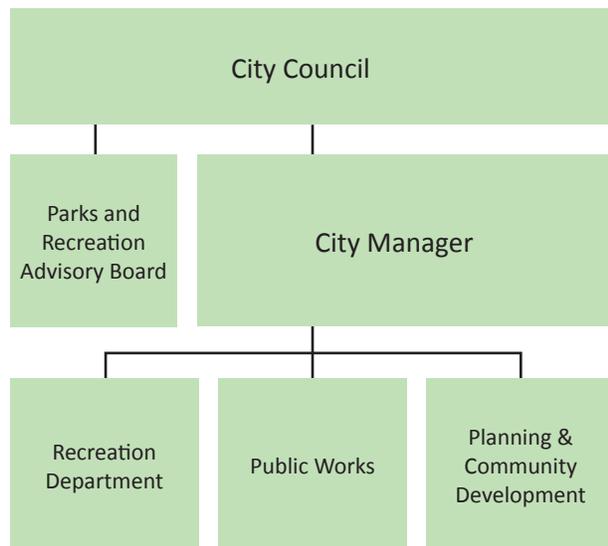
*Greenbelt Community Center  
Image Credit: City of Greenbelt*



*Recreating at Greenbelt's artificial lake circa 1942  
(now Buddy Attick Park)  
Images Credit: Library of Congress*

# C. DEPARTMENTS PROVIDING PARKS AND RECREATION SERVICES

In Greenbelt, the Recreation Department, Public Works Department, and the Department of Planning and Community Development each play a key role in the provision of recreational opportunities for residents. Each department has a defined role in the provision of recreation facilities and programs, with all agencies working together under the direction of the City Council and City Manager, and with guidance from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. In providing the public with recreational opportunities, the departments' roles are generally as follows.



### Recreation Department

- Operates city recreation facilities
- Provides recreation, arts, leisure, and social service programs for all ages and abilities
- Hosts community-wide special events

The mission of the GREENBELT RECREATION DEPARTMENT is to provide recreation programming and facilities which are responsive to the needs of the community, fun, result in self-development through stimulating and satisfying activities, promote wellness and enrich social and cultural experiences.

### Public Works Department

- Maintains park grounds, athletic fields, and recreation amenities
- Assists in developing/improving park facilities
- Provides logistical support for citywide special events

### Department of Planning and Community Development

- Assists in the development of guiding plans and policies
- Leads efforts to pursue grant funding and administers grants awarded
- Reviews development proposals
- Assists in the planning of short and long-term capital improvement programs

While the City is a key provider of public parks and recreation opportunities in Greenbelt, additional local recreation and leisure programs, facilities, and services are provided by the following agencies and organizations.

### Private Local Businesses, Non-Profits and Sports Groups

These include but are not limited to private health clubs and gyms, youth and adult sports leagues, the Old Greenbelt Theater, Greenbelt Arts Center and Greenbelt Museum.



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## Housing Associations, Co-ops and Private Housing Developments

Most of the numerous housing developments in Greenbelt provide a variety of recreation facilities for residents. Many have small gyms/fitness rooms, outdoor sport courts, seasonal outdoor swimming pools, playgrounds and open lawn areas.



*live more, play more*

### Maryland National Capital Park Planning Commission (MNCPPC)

MNCPPC is an award-winning bi-county agency that manages a large portfolio of diverse parks and recreation facilities in Prince George's County and neighboring Montgomery County. MNCPPC Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation also provides year-round recreation, fitness, sports, and enrichment programs for residents of all ages and abilities. MNCPPC also supports the City's provision of recreation, fitness, arts and leisure programs through providing recreation leadership grants.

- Lake Artemesia Natural Area in neighboring College Park is a popular park operated by MNCPPC, Prince George's County Department of Parks and Recreation.
- Within a short drive of Greenbelt, MNCPPC manages numerous other parks, sports complexes, regional trails and specialized recreation facilities including aquatics centers, a field house for indoor track and field sports, and a trap and skeet shooting facility.



### Maryland Department of Natural Resources/ Maryland State Parks

While no state parks or forests are located within Greenbelt, there are several state managed facilities within less than a one-hour drive including Patapsco Valley State Park and Rosaryville State Park. These sites are popular for hiking, biking, picnicking, nature observation and historic interpretation. The Department of Natural Resources also manages multiple parks and recreation grant programs that have benefited Greenbelt including Program Open Space and the Community Parks and Playgrounds program.

### National Park Service

Greenbelt Park is the national park that encompasses most of the southern land area in the City of Greenbelt (1,100 acres). The Park offers miles of wooded trails for hiking and biking, interpretive programs and camping opportunities. The land that is now Greenbelt Park was part of the original "greenbelt" of natural and agricultural lands that surrounded the original portion of the City in the 1930s and 1940s.



*Greenbelt Park*

*Image Credit: National Park Service*

### **USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research Center**

The Research Center property abuts the northern portion of Greenbelt. The site's abundant open space and network of low-traffic roadways and trails are popular with walkers and runners. The Agricultural Research Center site was part of the original "greenbelt" of land that surrounded the City of Greenbelt when it was first developed.



*Beltsville Agricultural Research Center  
Image Credit: USDA*

## **D. STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

From its very beginning, the provision of opportunities for residents to recreate in diverse sports, fitness, leisure and enriching activities has been of central importance to Greenbelt's City Government. Greenbelt has remained true to these roots and continues to build upon its 80+ year legacy of actively engaging residents in fun, healthy, and community building programs, events and activities for all ages and abilities. As reflected in the materials described in Section E: Related Planning Efforts and Integration below, the city regularly seeks and considers information needed to make educated decisions.

## **E. RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS AND INTEGRATION**

This master plan was informed by other existing plans and policies that guide the City of Greenbelt's provision of public services. The Recreation and Parks Facilities Master Plan is

intended to serve a complimentary function to the City's guiding principles and framework. Guiding documents and ongoing planning work of the city that were considered during the creation of the Recreation and Parks Facilities Master Plan included:

- 1992 Buddy Attick Park Master Plan
- 2013 Greenbelt Bus Stop Safety and Accessibility Study Prioritization Memo (Sabra, Wang and Associates, Inc.)
- 2013 Organizational Assessment (Matrix Consulting Group)
- 2013 & 2015 Community Questionnaire Results Reports
- 2014 Economic Development Strategy (Sage Policy Group)
- 2016 Sustainable Land Care Policy
- 2014 City of Greenbelt Pedestrian & Bicyclist Master Plan
- 2016 Greenbelt Competitive & Collaborative Analysis (Hyattsville Community Development Corporation)
- 2017 Senior Mobility and Accessibility Needs and Barriers Study (KFH Group, Inc.)
- Code of the City of Greenbelt
- Greenbelt Station Park site plans
- Greenbelt Lake Dam Repair Project Phase I documents

## **F. METHODOLOGY OF THIS PLANNING PROCESS**

The project team, consisting of staff from Greenbelt's Recreation Department and Department of Planning and Community Development and the consultant team, guided this project through a multi-faceted process to gather and analyze quantitative and qualitative data on issues impacting the provision of municipal parks and recreation amenities and programs in Greenbelt. The collaborative, community-oriented approach leveraged the consultant team's expertise and the local knowledge and institutional history provided by Greenbelt's staff and community members.

## Community Engagement

Members of the community, stakeholders and City staff provided valuable input and feedback regarding their use, satisfaction with, and overall perceptions of the City's existing parks and recreation assets to help inform the development of this plan. Feedback was directly provided to the project team through community member participation in focus group meetings, community meetings, and a citywide survey. Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected from these mixed-methods that helped to identify and corroborate strengths, challenges and opportunities for improving Greenbelt's parks, recreation facilities, arts, programs, and service provision for the public benefit.

## Facility Inventory

A comprehensive inventory of City-managed parks and recreation sites was assembled in 2017. The inventory identifies current City-owned or operated parks, open space areas and recreation facilities. The inventory also includes other key parks or recreation sites in Greenbelt that are not managed by the City government. Some of these sites include Greenbelt Park (National Park Service) and a series of quasi-publicly accessible playgrounds and other recreation amenities managed by private housing communities that provide recreation opportunities for a large number of residents.

## Assessment and Analysis

On-site assessments of eleven of Greenbelt's key park and recreation sites were conducted by the project team's landscape architect and Recreation Department staff. The assessments evaluated the general condition and functionality of key features that support the recreational use of the site, and considered input received from facility users and City staff. In general, the overall condition of most parks and recreation sites evaluated was fair to good. While most parks and recreation amenities were functional, nearly every site could benefit from some level of improvement.

## Needs Assessment

Input and ideas collected throughout the information gathering process served to identify key program, facility and service needs to target for improvement and enhancement.

## Operational and Marketing Analysis

The existing organizational structure, staffing and budgets that support the City's provision of parks, open spaces and recreation services was evaluated to determine how well these resources are functioning. City departments that primarily support local parks and recreation opportunities include the Recreation Department, Department of Planning and Community Development and Public Works Department. For the purposes of this Plan, the operational and marketing analysis focused on the resources of the Recreation Department, the primary recreation facility operator and program provider.

## Recommendations: Goals, Objectives, and Action Plan

Key findings from the master planning process and preliminary recommendations for improving parks and recreational opportunities provided by the City were reviewed with the project team, senior City staff, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and City Council at a public meeting on May 2, 2018. Feedback from this session and additional staff input was utilized to develop the overarching goals, measurable objectives and prescribed actions for Greenbelt to implement to improve the City's parks and recreation system for the benefit of current and future residents. The full goals and action plan are included in **Section V**.

# II. THE GREENBELT COMMUNITY

Residents, and providing them with diverse, high-quality recreation opportunities and enriching experiences are at the heart of the mission of the Greenbelt Recreation Department. The Department has historically done a great job adapting its facilities, programs and services to best meet the sports, fitness and recreational needs of its resident base.

## A. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Understanding the characteristics of the local population is a key component of this planning process and necessary for best ensuring that public recreation facilities and services provided are most suitable for the community. People of different ages, cultures, and social or economic backgrounds have different recreational needs, wants, and abilities to participate. To gain an understanding of the character of Greenbelt’s resident base, the project team reviewed demographics data from multiple sources. Population data from 2000 and 2010 is from the U.S. Census Bureau. The current population estimates cited are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey, City of Greenbelt FY2018 Budget Book and Esri Business Analyst. While their estimates of the City’s current total population differed, these three data sources were consistent in their presentation of the population’s different traits. **Appendix A** includes more detail information regarding Greenbelt’s population, with current estimates based on Esri Business Analyst data.

## Total Current Population

Data sources estimated Greenbelt’s 2017/2018 total population to be approximately 21,000 – 23,000 residents. Total current population estimates ranged from a low of 21,250 residents (Greenbelt FY2018 Budget Book) to a high-end estimate of 24,639 residents (Esri Business Analyst 2017). While total current population estimates were not consistent, data sources illustrated that the City’s population has been growing slowly and steadily since the 2000 Census. Additionally, over the past few years, the large-scale Greenbelt Station residential development has added new housing units and brought new residents into Greenbelt West.

**Greenbelt’s Population is:**

- Steadily Growing
- Young, with a high percentage of youth and young adults
- Racially/Ethnically Diverse
- Well-Educated
- Lower median household income vs. State and County

**Table 1: 2018 Greenbelt Population Snapshot**

Population	21,250
Median Age	33-36 years
Households	10,306
Median Household Income	\$65,531

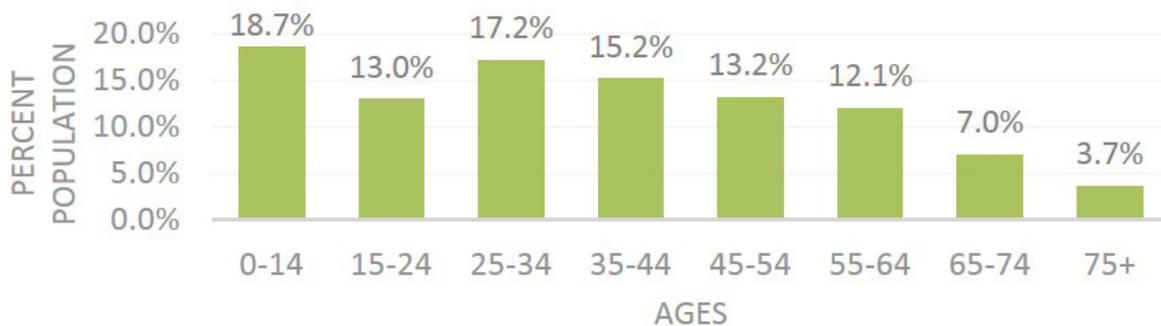
## Key Population Characteristics

Prince George’s County is often cited as one of the largest, and wealthiest majority-minority communities in the United States. Overall, Greenbelt’s population is younger and more diverse than many localities in Maryland, including Prince George’s County. The population density of Greenbelt is estimated to be approximately 5,000 residents per square mile (excluding the area of Greenbelt National Park). This population density is in-line with that of the neighboring communities of College Park and Hyattsville.

### Greenbelt’s Population is Relatively Young and Slowly Growing

Compared with the nation, state and county, the population of Greenbelt is relatively young; with a 2017 median age of approximately 33-34 years. The approximate median age of Greenbelt’s population is younger than that of Prince George’s County (36 years), State of Maryland (39 years) and of the United States (35 years). As illustrated in **Figure 1**, nearly one third (1/3) of Greenbelt residents were 24 years of age or younger.

**Figure 1: 2017 Greenbelt Population Age Cohorts**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

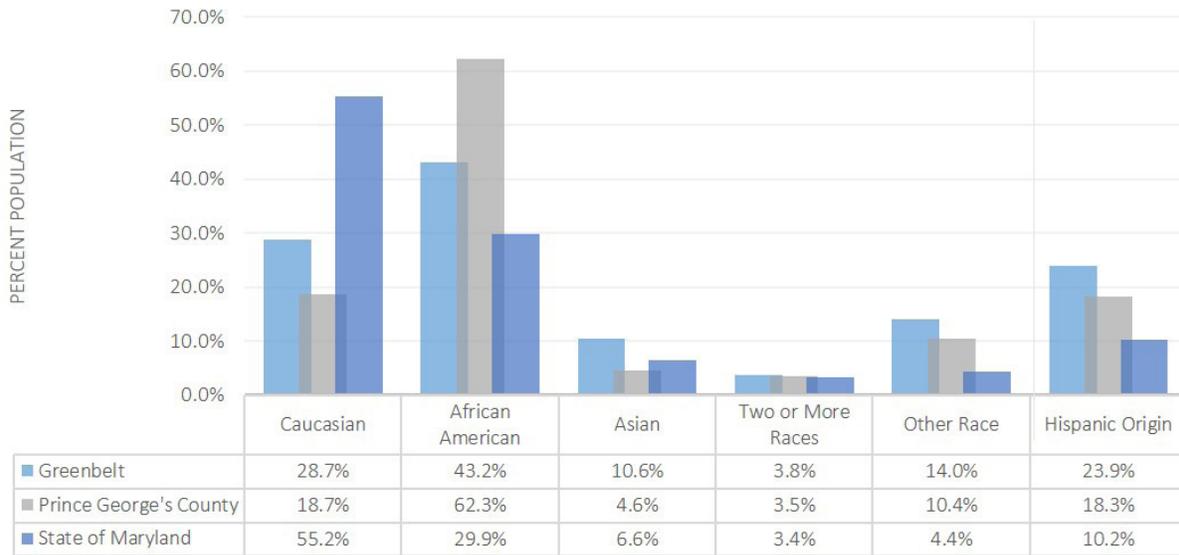


Nearly 19% of Greenbelt residents are under the age of 14.  
Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department

### Greenbelt’s Population is Racially and Culturally Diverse

Greenbelt is a majority-minority community and is racially diverse. The most populous racial group in the City were African Americans (43.2 percent of the population), followed by Caucasians (28.7 percent). Greenbelt’s population is more racially diverse than the populations of Prince George’s County and/or the State of Maryland as illustrated in **Figure 2**.

**Figure 2: 2017 Greenbelt Population Age Cohorts – County/State Comparison**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

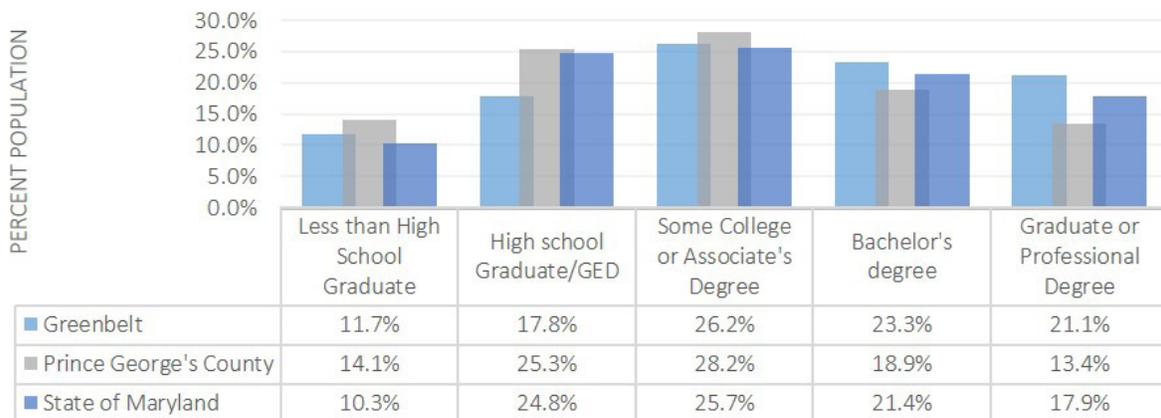
In addition to being racially diverse, nearly one fourth (1/4) of the City’s residents also identify as being of Hispanic origin. The U.S. Census views, tracks, and categorizes Hispanic origin differently than other racial or ethnic identifiers. Hispanic origin is not considered a race unto itself, but is rather viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage or country of birth of a person’s parents or ancestors before arrival in the United States. In the Census, people who identify as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish may be of any race, and their identification

as being of Hispanic origins is tracked separately and in addition to their racial identification (such as Caucasian, African American, etc.).

**Greenbelt has an Educated Population with Modest Household Income**

In comparing the education level of adult (ages 25+) residents of Greenbelt to peers in the County and State, a higher percentage of City residents hold a bachelor’s degree or higher (see **Figure 3**).

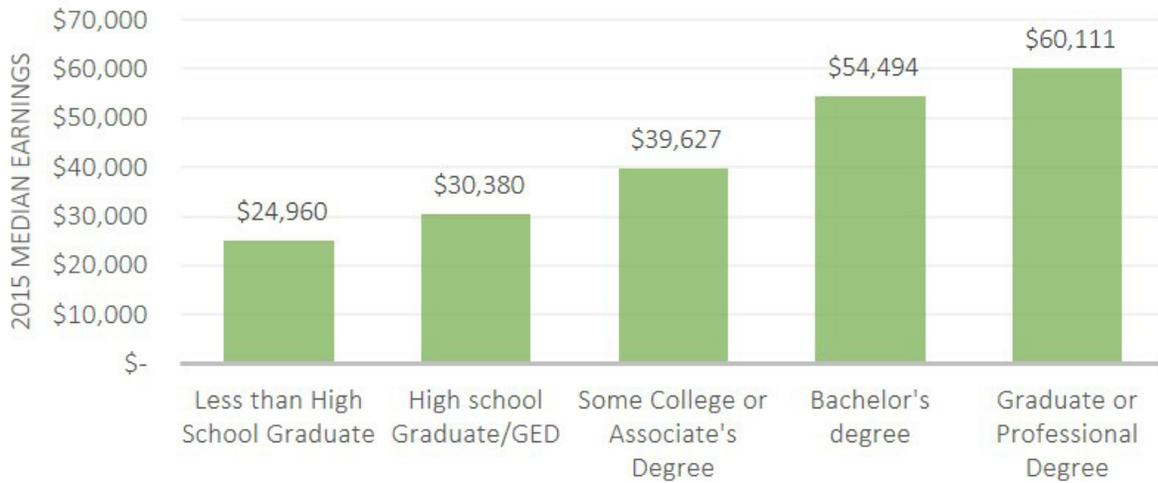
**Figure 3: 2017 Greenbelt Adult (Ages 25+) Education Levels**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

According to a U.S. Census study, education levels had more of an impact on a person’s lifetime earnings than any other demographic factor, such as gender or race.<sup>2</sup> As illustrated in **Figure 4**, this trend holds true with Greenbelt residents.

**Figure 4: Education and Earnings – Greenbelt Adults (Ages 25+)**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

However, despite having a higher percentage of residents with college level educations or higher, Greenbelt’s population tended to have a lower median household income when compared to peers in Prince George’s County and in Maryland (**Figure 5**).

**Figure 5: 2017 Median Household Income Comparison**



Source: Esri Business Analyst

<sup>2</sup> Tiffany Julian and Robert Kominski, “Education and Synthetic Work-Life Earnings Estimates” American Community Survey Reports, US Census Bureau, <http://www.Census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acs-14.pdf>, September 2011.

## Housing and Households in Greenbelt

Housing units in Greenbelt include a large mix of co-ops, condominium complexes, apartment complexes and single-family homes.

Each area of the City is generally defined by a predominance of one residential housing type:

- Greenbelt West is home to Franklin Park, the largest apartment complex in Maryland, and the new Greenbelt Station development, which includes a mix of owner-occupied and rental units.
- Central Greenbelt/Historic Greenbelt is where the City’s original development occurred. Many of the original housing blocks are now owned and operated by a co-op.
- Greenbelt East housing units primarily consist of a mix of condominiums and apartments.

Greenbelt’s supply of residential units generally appears to have grown at a slightly slower pace than the City’s population. As noted in **Table 2**, the average size of households is projected to increase, while vacancy rates are expected to remain relatively stable in the near future.

**Table 2: Greenbelt Housing and Household Statistics**

	2000	2010	2017	2022
Households	9,346	9,747	10,166	10,429
Average Household Size	2.28	2.37	2.42	2.45
Housing Units	10,144	10,433	10,928	11,201
Owner Occupied	42.7%	43.8%	40.3%	39.5%
Renter Occupied	49.4%	49.6%	52.7%	53.6%
Vacant Units	7.9%	6.6%	7.0%	6.9%

Source: Esri Business Analyst

While continued population and housing growth is expected, the number of homeowners in Greenbelt is shrinking, while the number of residents renting homes is increasing.

### Renter-Occupied Housing

2022: 53.6%  
2017: 52.7%  
2010: 49.6%

### Owner-Occupied Housing

2022: 39.5%  
2017: 40.3%  
2010: 43.8%

## The Relevance of Greenbelt’s Population Trends on Public Recreation

Since its very beginning, Greenbelt has made the provision of high quality and enriching recreation, fitness, and leisure activities central to its public service provision model and philosophy. The City has historically been adaptable and placed a great deal of effort into developing great recreation opportunities that cater to all residents, regardless of age, sex, race, or ability. In planning for the future of recreation in Greenbelt, the City will need to continue to recognize and adapt its programming and service provision strategies to meet the needs of the growing and changing population. Based on the key demographic factors reviewed, several challenges the City will need to consider are:

- Renters are generally harder to engage with versus homeowners. They tend to have a lower level of investment in the community, are generally more challenging to reach with information about recreation programs and opportunities, and usually provide less feedback.
- The racial and ethnic diversity in Greenbelt can make it harder for the City to actively and openly communicate with all residents. Overcoming language and cultural barriers is a challenge that curbs relationship building between the City and its residents.
- With median household income in Greenbelt being lower than that in Prince George’s County and statewide, the Recreation Department has, and will need to continue to place a high focus on ensuring recreation programs and services are affordable for residents.

## B. COMMUNITY FEEDBACK ABOUT GREENBELT'S EXISTING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Information, ideas, and opinions from the Greenbelt community were sought to help inform the planning process and gain a better understanding of the recreational needs of residents and user groups. While feedback was welcomed throughout the planning process, the primary means in which public comments were collected was through:

1. Stakeholder Focus Groups
2. Public Meetings
3. City-wide Survey



### Stakeholder Focus Groups and Public Meeting Summary

Members of the Greenbelt community organizations, city staff and advisory board members, and other “stakeholders” in the City’s public recreation system were invited to participate in a series of eight focus group sessions and three public meetings hosted by the project

team on June 19 – 21, 2017. The goal of the focus group sessions was to gather information and feedback from stakeholders regarding the strengths, challenges and opportunities they see with Greenbelt’s parks, recreation facilities, programs and services. A total of 71 community members and city staff signed-in as participants at these meetings. Participants represented a variety of municipal agencies and advisory boards, park and recreation user groups and local civic, social and religious organizations including:

- City Public Works and Recreation Department Staff
- Planning Advisory Board
- Maryland Milestones
- Tree Advisory Board
- Greenbelt Soccer Alliance
- Girl Scout Troop #27 and #23007
- Greenbelt Museum
- Greenbelt Theater
- Green Aces
- Maker’s Space
- Center for Dynamic Community Governance
- Greenbelt Farmer's Market
- Faith-based organizations
- Senior Citizen Advisory Committee
- Community Relations Advisory Board
- Arts Advisory Board
- Greenbelt Tennis Association
- Golden Age Club
- Greenbelt Station residents
- Greenbelt Homes Inc.
- Greenbelt Sity Stars
- Boys and Girls Club
- Park and Recreation Advisory Board
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Board of Elections
- Friends of the New Deal Café
- Forest Preserve Advisory Board
- Labor Day Festival
- Green Team
- Advisory Committee on Education
- Greenbelt Youth Baseball

While participants in the focus group sessions and public meetings provided diverse feedback, several themes and issues surfaced repeatedly during the majority of meetings. These recurring themes are noted in **Figure 6**. A detailed summary of the input received from focus group and public meeting participants is included in **Appendix B**.

As these recurring themes illustrate, meeting participants appreciate Greenbelt’s existing recreation facilities and programs but also see needs for stronger stewardship of the City’s existing parks and recreation facilities and for enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

## City-Wide Survey

In seeking to gain additional perspective and feedback from residents a survey was developed and implemented in late 2017 (September – December). Questions in the survey sought input on participant’s usage of Greenbelt’s recreation facilities and programs, level of satisfaction with existing opportunities, perceived challenges, opportunities and priorities for the future of the City’s parks and recreation system. Community outreach and publicity of the survey was conducted by the Recreation Department and included the posting of flyers in city facilities, publishing of information and notices in the Greenbelt News Review, emails to user groups and civic organizations, emails to participants registered in Recreation Department programs, and sharing of information through social media.

**Figure 6: Recurring Themes about Recreation Opportunities in Greenbelt**



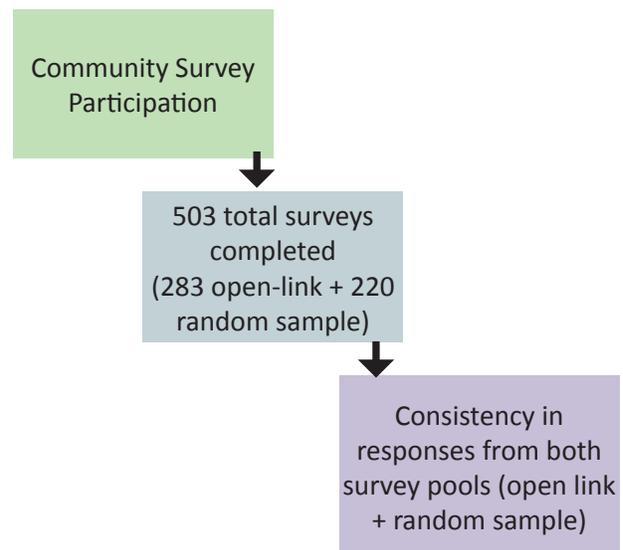
### Statistically-Valid Survey Method

To conduct the statistically-valid survey, a random sampling of city residents was invited to participate. Data collected from this pool of participants was tracked independently of the open-link responses. As the survey was distributed to a random sampling of households, respondents are likely to include a mix of residents that utilize Greenbelt's recreation programs, parks and outdoor areas, and others who may not use any city recreation facilities or services. All residents ultimately support Greenbelt's parks, recreation and open space assets through tax contributions.

To solicit feedback 3,500 postcard survey invitations were mailed to Greenbelt residents at random. The postcards included information about the planning effort, the survey and survey website, and an individualized password for selected residents to use to participate in the survey online. An additional 500 door-hangers with postcard invitations were distributed at random to households within several of the apartment and condominium complexes the Greenbelt East and Greenbelt West neighborhoods. These efforts were further supplemented through in-person intercept surveys that were conducted at one Farmer's Market event in November 2017 and at the Festival of Lights event in December 2018. In total 220 respondents completed random-sample surveys, with a margin of error of +/- 6.57%.

### Public Open-Link Survey Method

A publicly-accessible version of the survey was hosted online in October and November 2017. This second means of administering the survey allowed for any members of the public to submit their feedback regarding Greenbelt's recreation, parks and open space amenities. A total of 283 open-link surveys were completed. Generally, participants in open-link surveys tend to have an interest in local parks and recreation opportunities, many tend to be current or former users of parks, special events, recreation programs or facilities.



The survey was conducted using two primary methods:

1. Statistically-Valid Survey – respondents were randomly selected Greenbelt residents and included a mix of people who use and do not use city parks and recreation amenities.
2. Public Open Link Survey – members of the public were invited to take part in the survey online; respondents self-selected to participate. This response pool is typically comprised of residents who are familiar with the city's parks and recreation offerings.

While two methods were utilized to manage and analyze response data, the same questions were posed to all survey participants.

## Top Ten Findings of the City-Wide Survey Results

Results of the survey provide insight into the general community-wide views of Greenbelt's existing parks and recreation system, programs and services. **Figure 7**, which illustrate key issues and trends in the survey responses. It should be noted that the survey results are one of the multiple tools utilized in this planning process to gain an understanding of key issues and trends that may be impacting the City's provision of parks and recreation services. While valuable, respondent feedback alone does not present a well-rounded view.

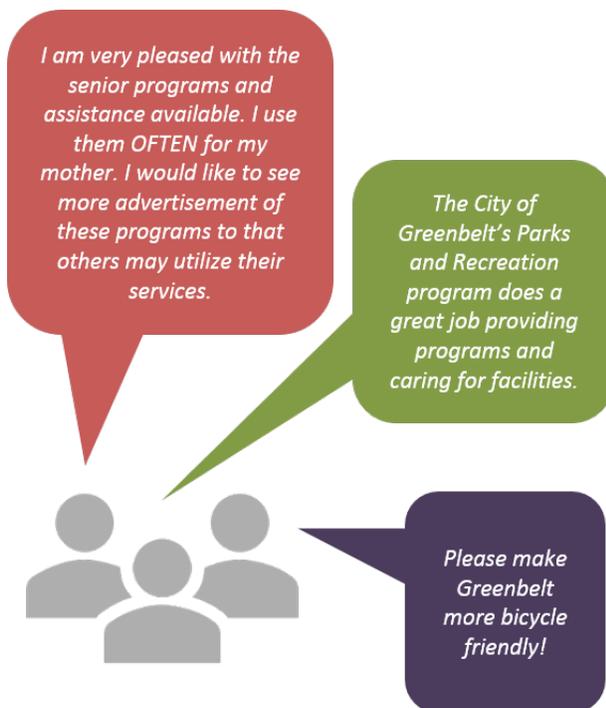


Figure 7: Top Ten Survey Findings

1

Greenbelt respondents are familiar overall with the Recreation Department's offerings. On average, respondents rated their level of familiarity 3.8 out of 5.0 with 66% saying they are familiar and 11% unfamiliar.

2

Respondents to both the invitation and open-link survey are demographically diverse. While over 70% of respondents live in Central Greenbelt, there is a wide array of income profiles, ages, and household statuses.

3

Greenbelt's facilities received high ratings on the degree to which they meet resident needs, despite their importance to the household. Nearly all facilities had over 50% of respondents stating the current facilities were meeting the needs of their household.

4

Programs offered by Greenbelt see a similar trend of meeting the needs of most households. The most important programs for respondents were 1) special events, 2) adult classes, and 3) performing arts. The least important programs were pre-school programs, camps, and sports programs.

5

In comparing the importance of recreation opportunities versus how well current opportunities meet needs, playgrounds and performing arts programs were rated as important but not fully meeting existing needs.

6

In general, increased awareness or communication is listed as the top factor that would lead to increased participation at Greenbelt facilities. Improving the condition/maintenance of existing facilities would also increase participation.

7

Planning for the future, respondents highlighted trail connectivity and open space/natural areas as priorities. These two topics received the most attention and highest rankings for future planning scenarios.

8

For most, increased user fees would not significantly limit their participation. 40% of respondents stated increased fees would not limit their participation, while 34% said it would limit their participation "somewhat."

9

Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents stated Greenbelt's communication was effective, compared to only 12% who said it was not effective. Respondent's preferred avenue to receive information is the Greenbelt News Review and e-mails from the City.

10

Respondents shared high praise for the City and their recreation facilities/programs in their open-ended comments. Many comments highlighted the level of service of staff, cleanliness, and value to the community.

A detailed summary of survey results was presented to the Greenbelt City Council, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and senior City Administration and Recreation Staff at a public meeting in May 2018. A full report of survey results and findings is included in **Appendix C**. An additional supplement to the report that includes all individual written comments provided by respondents has been provided to the Recreation Department as a staff resource document.

### Key Issues and Trends – Focus Group Input + Survey Input

Feedback from survey respondents and focus group participants provided valuable insight into a wide array of issues of concern and ideas for improving public recreation opportunities throughout Greenbelt. In analyzing public input collected through these means, the following key issues in **Figure 8** were developed that represent those topic areas of the most interest to the community:

**Figure 8: Key Issues Summary – All Community Input**

<p>Close to home, affordable public recreation opportunities are a historic part of the community and remain important today.</p>	<p>Residents are generally satisfied with existing recreation opportunities but would like the City's parks and facilities to be: <i>Better maintained</i> <i>Accessible by bike or foot from their homes</i></p>
<p>Means for better connecting with renters and diverse groups within the community is needed.</p>	<p>Planned capital improvements (FY2018) appear to be in-line with wants and needs identified by community input.</p>

# III. WHAT WE HAVE NOW – GREENBELT’S EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES

## A. INVENTORY OF PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

In total, there are approximately 60 sites in Greenbelt that provide some form of publicly-accessible recreation opportunities. These include a mix of recreation amenities owned by county schools, housing co-ops and homeowners’ associations, apartment complexes, MNCPPC/ Prince George’s County Public Schools (Mandan Road sports field) and the National Park Service (Greenbelt Park). Condominium and apartment complexes in Greenbelt are significant providers of recreation amenities for their residents and guests. Many provide seasonal outdoor pools, picnic and social gathering areas, sport courts, and playgrounds. Some have indoor gyms, fitness studios, and multipurpose rooms. While regular use of recreation facilities in housing communities is generally limited to their residents and guests, a large percentage of the city’s population reside in these communities and has access to their recreation opportunities.

Of the 60+ sites in Greenbelt providing residents with opportunities to recreate, the City of Greenbelt operates and manages a portfolio of 38 individual parks, playground sites, open spaces and specialized recreation facilities. A detailed inventory of public recreation sites in Greenbelt is maintained by the Greenbelt Recreation Department. Not included in the inventory are the numerous public parks and recreation facilities located a relatively short distance outside of the city. These include, but are not limited to, the USDA Beltsville Agricultural Research

Major public parks and recreation features include:

### City of Greenbelt Parks and Recreation Facilities

- 38 individual sites
- 515 total acres
- Diverse recreation amenities
- Pedestrian and bicycle paths and trails

### Greenbelt National Park

- 1,100 acres
- Outdoor recreation opportunities

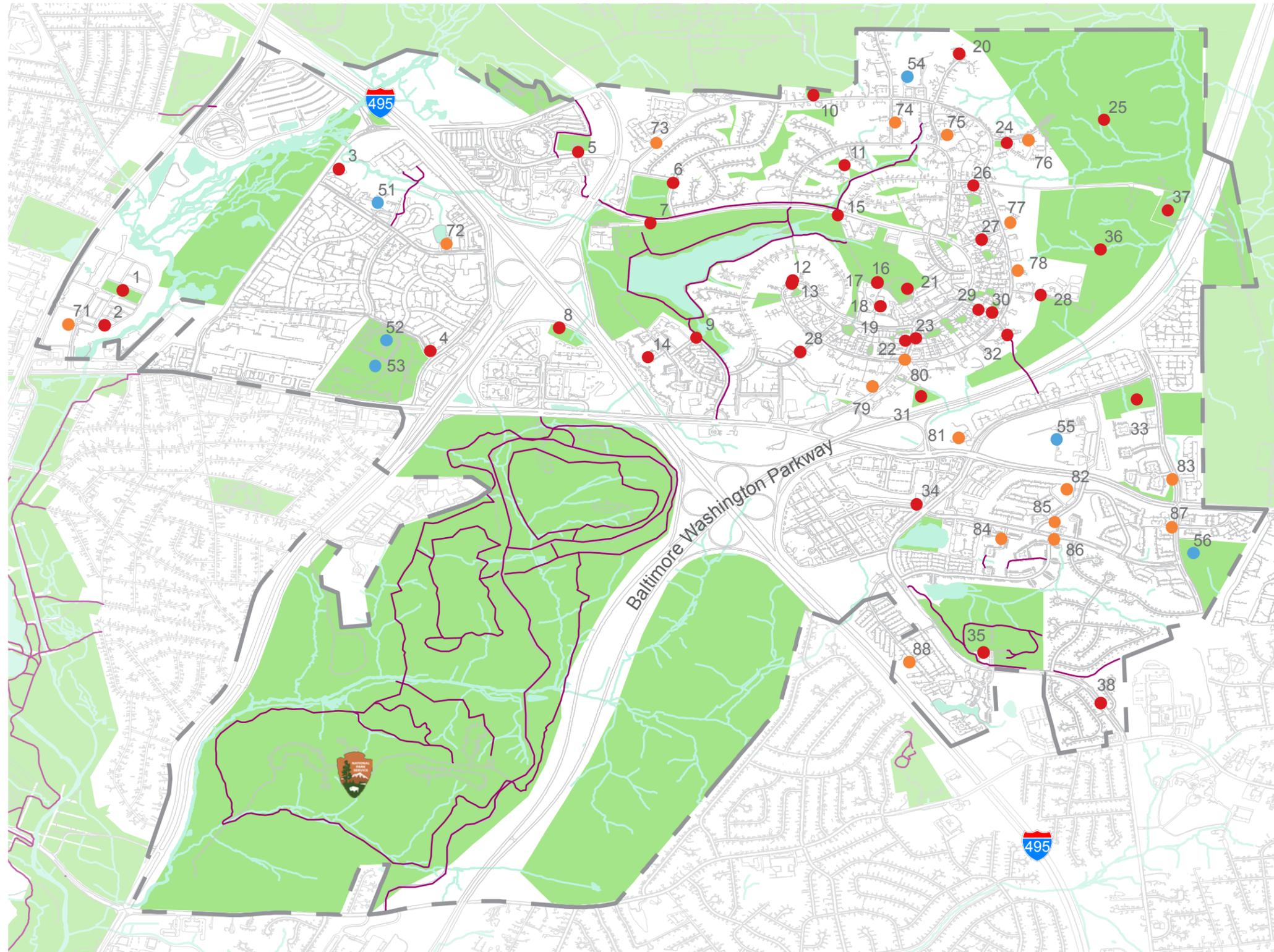
Center grounds, which are popular for walking, running, and biking and multiple nearby parks and recreation facilities operated by MNCPPC/ Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation including Lake Artemesia Natural Area and several indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

## City Parks and Recreation Facilities

While parks and recreation sites managed by the City of Greenbelt are distributed throughout the community, the majority are clustered in Old Greenbelt, in and around the original City Center at Roosevelt Center as illustrated in **Map 1**. Like many small, well established municipalities, Greenbelt strives to maintain and improve its aging infrastructure. The majority of City-managed recreation facilities and amenities are at least several decades old, with several, including the Community Center, dating back to the City’s founding in the late 1930s.

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# RECREATION AND PARK FACILITIES MAP



- **City Facilities:**
  1. Greenbelt Station Park
  2. Greenbelt Station Playground
  3. SHL Recreation Center
  4. Brezewood Drive Playground
  5. City Cemetery
  6. Boxwood Village Park
  7. Buddy Attick Park
  8. Indian Springs Park
  9. Lakecrest Drive Tennis Courts
  10. 73 Court Ridge Playground
  11. Fayette Place Playground
  12. 1 Court Crescent Road Playground
  13. A Block Playground
  14. Belle Point Playground
  15. St. Hugh's Playground
  16. Braden Field Complex
  17. Greenbelt Youth Center
  18. Greenbelt Community Center
  19. Community Center Playground
  20. 15 Court Laurel Hill Playground
  21. Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center
  22. 2 Court Southway Playground
  23. 1 Court Southway Playground
  24. Plateau-Ridge Playground
  25. North Preserve
  26. 2 Court Northway Playground
  27. 2 Court Eastway Playground
  28. Westway Playground
  29. 2 Court Gardenway Playground
  30. 3 Court Gardenway Playground
  31. McDonald Field
  32. 5 Court Gardenway Playground
  33. Greenbriar Park
  34. Greenbelt Dog Park
  35. Schrom Hills Park
  36. South Preserve
  37. Northway Ball Fields
  38. Greenspring Park Playground
- **County Facilities:**
  51. SHL Elementary School
  52. Greenbelt Middle School
  53. Dora Kennedy French Immersion
  54. Greenbelt Elementary School
  55. ERHS
  56. Mandan Fields
- **Private Facilities:**
  71. Verde Apartments
  72. Franklin Park at Greenbelt Station
  73. Lakeside North
  74. 2 Court Research Playground
  75. 2 Court Laurel Hill Playground
  76. 4 Court Plateau Place Playground
  77. 44 Court Ridge Playground
  78. 38 Court Ridge Playground
  79. 8 Court Southway Playground
  80. 7 Court Southway Playground
  81. Greenbriar Condominiums
  82. Windsor Green
  83. Mandan Road Playground
  84. South Ora Court
  85. Frankfort Drive Playground
  86. Ora Glen Drive Playground
  87. Canning Terrace Playground
  88. Hunting Ridge

**Legend:**

-  Existing Trail
-  Greenbelt City Boundary
-  Water
-  Green/Open Space
-  Greenbelt Park (U.S. National Park Service)





The Recreation Department is responsible for the operation and programming of the City’s parks and recreation facilities and Public Works Department is responsible for regular maintenance of grounds and structures. Capital improvement planning for parks and recreation facilities is managed by the Recreation Department, in close collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, City Council and staff leadership team, and staff from the Public Works Department and Department of Planning and Community Development.

For the purposes of this plan, Greenbelt’s parks and recreation areas are generally classified as:

- Playgrounds
- Preserves
- Indoor Recreation Facilities
- Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Sports Facilities

**Playgrounds**

Small playground areas are located around the city. Many are essentially stand-alone recreation sites that include open lawn area and children’s play structures. Some playground sites also include basic infrastructure such a paved pathway, bench or trash receptacle. Playground structures are also included as amenities in several of Greenbelt’s larger park areas including Buddy Attick Lake Park, Schrom Hills Park, Springhill Lake Recreation Center, and at the Community Center. The City independently operates the majority of playgrounds in Greenbelt but also partners with several co-ops and housing communities to manage several stand-alone playgrounds. In the



2 Court Laurel Hill Playground  
Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department

original design of Greenbelt, playgrounds were constructed throughout the residential housing blocks, where parents could collectively keep an eye on the neighborhood children. The City of Greenbelt’s stand-alone playgrounds are located:

- 1 Court Crescent Road
- 1 Court Southway
- 15 Court Laurel Hill
- 2 Court Eastway
- 2 Court Laurel Hill
- 2 Court Northway
- 2 Court Research
- 2 Court Southway
- 3 Court Gardenway
- 38 Court Ridge
- 39 Court Ridge
- 4 Court Plateau Place
- 44 Court Ridge
- A Block
- Belle Point
- Breezewood Drive
- Canning Terrace
- Fayette Place
- Frankfort Drive
- Greenspring Park
- Lastner-Ivy
- Parcel 15
- Plateau-Ridge
- St. Hugh’s
- Westway



A Greenbelt Playground circa 1942  
Image Credit: Library of Congress

### Nature/Forest Preserves

Natural, undeveloped areas within Greenbelt that have been protected for natural resource conservation purposes are known as the City’s “preserves.” These areas are predominantly forested and include some areas of wetlands and are generally free of built infrastructure. At slightly greater than 200 acres, the Greenbelt Forest is the largest preserve. These natural areas provide opportunities for self-directed, natural-resource appropriate recreation including walking, hiking and birding. Preserves in Greenbelt include:

- Belle Point Preserve
- Boxwood Preserve
- Greenbelt Forest Preserve
  - North Woods Tract
  - South Woods Tract
- Sunrise Preserve



Entrance to the Greenbelt Forest Preserve  
Image Credit: [greenbeltforestpreserve.org](http://greenbeltforestpreserve.org)

### Indoor Recreation Facilities

Three of City’s four indoor recreation facilities are located adjacent to one another in the Roosevelt Center area of Old Greenbelt; these include the Community Center, Youth Center and Aquatics and Fitness Center. These three facilities are also located within walking distance of Buddy Attick Park. The Springhill Lake Recreation Center is located on Cherrywood Lane in Greenbelt West. The majority of the Recreation Department’s programs, services and staff are based at these facilities. In addition to their indoor recreation spaces, these facilities also include some outdoor recreation amenities such as playgrounds or sports courts. The diverse programs and unstructured play opportunities offered year-round at Greenbelt’s indoor recreation facilities are highly popular and facilities receive heavy year-round use.

### Greenbelt Aquatics and Fitness Center

The outdoor swimming pool and original bath house at Greenbelt’s Aquatics and Fitness Center first opened in 1939 and continues to host competitive and recreational swimmers today. When it opened nearly 80 years ago, it was the first public swimming pool in the Washington D.C. area. Since that time a modest, low-depth wading pool and mushroom-shaped splash feature were added to the outdoor pool area. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the City renovated the original bath house building and constructed an attached natatorium directly adjacent to the outdoor pool.



Greenbelt’s Aquatic and Fitness Center today (left) and original pool circa 1940 (right)  
Image Credits: Greenbelt Recreation Department (left) and Greenbelt Museum (right)

The present-day Aquatics and Fitness Center amenities include an indoor pool and hot tub, locker rooms, a fully equipped gym and fitness area and support areas for staff and equipment.



*Adult water aerobics at the Aquatics and Fitness Center  
Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department*

The Aquatics and Fitness Center hosts seasonal aquatic programs, activities and open-use time at the outdoor pool and year-round activities and open-use time at the indoor pool. A variety of programs are offered throughout the year including swim lessons for children and adults, lifeguard training courses, and adult aquatic fitness classes including water aerobics and water Zumba. The pools also regularly host local school and club swim team practices and competitions. Public use of the facility is fee-based, with purchase options for annual memberships, single-day use and/or program registration.

### **Greenbelt Community Center**

Since the building first opened in 1937 as the Greenbelt Elementary School, the Community Center has truly served its namesake function. The facility operated primarily as an elementary school (operated by Prince George's County) into the early 1990s, but during that 50+ years it also regularly hosted social and religious functions, community meetings and citywide events. After a new elementary school was opened in 1991, the City renovated the facility for the wider recreation and community services and functions it now houses. The Community Center building is a well-known landmark for its art deco architecture and

series of carved bas-relief panels by the artist Lenore Thomas Straus that depict the preamble of the Constitution.

Since its renovation in the early 1990s the Community Center has become the Recreation Department's largest multipurpose facility and includes a gymnasium, dance studio, visual and ceramic arts studios, senior citizens lounge and service space, classrooms and flexible use spaces. The Community Center hosts dozens of diverse programs and activities throughout the average year, ranging from fitness classes, dances, ceramics, yoga, karate, sign language, history lectures and more. Space and amenities in the Community Center including a gymnasium, arts studios, and commercial kitchen are also available to rent for private functions or special events. An outdoor playground is located adjacent to the building.



*2017 Festival of Lights Arts Fair at the Community Center Gymnasium  
Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department*

In addition to serving community programming and activity needs, the Community Center is also home to the Greenbelt Co-op Nursery School, Greenbelt Adult Care Center, Greenbelt Access Television, the City of Greenbelt Planning and Community Development Department and the Greenbelt News Review, an independent, Citywide newspaper in publication since the City's founding in 1937.



Greenbelt Community Center (top) home to Kinder Camp in 2018 (bottom right) and kindergarten in 1942 (bottom left).

Image Credit: City of Greenbelt (top); Greenbelt Recreation Department (bottom right); Library of Congress (bottom left)



### Greenbelt Youth Center

The Youth Center is located in Old Greenbelt adjacent to the Aquatics and Fitness Center, Community Center, Skate Park and Braden Field Complex. Amenities at the Youth Center include an indoor basketball court/gymnasium, weight room, multipurpose room and game room with ping pong tables, foosball and board games. Health and fitness classes and other activities for children, teens and adults are also offered at the Youth Center throughout the year including children’s summer camps and karate and tai chi for teens and



Camp Pine Tree YOGO variety show performers at the Youth Center

Image Credit: Greenbelt News Review

adults. Space within the facility, including the gym, can be rented for private events such as children’s birthday parties. The Youth Center is open 365 days a year for drop-in use. Entry and use of the Youth Center requires a Greenbelt Recreation Membership ID.

### Springhill Lake Recreation Center

Located adjacent to the densely populated Franklin Park apartment community in Greenbelt East, the Springhill Lake Recreation Center is the City’s only indoor recreation facility outside of the historic City-center. Recreation amenities and opportunities at the Recreation Center are similar to those offered at the Greenbelt Youth Center and include an indoor basketball court/gymnasium, game room with ping pong tables, foosball, board games and television, as well as a ten-station computer lab. Outdoor recreation amenities at the site include a basketball court, playground, Three Sisters Garden, and small club house building. Programs for children, teens and adults are offered at Springhill Lake throughout the year and include fitness, wellness and sports classes. The Center is open 365 days a year for drop-in use by members of the public with a Greenbelt Recreation Membership ID.



Dance Group Program at Springhill Lake  
Image Credit: City of Greenbelt

Over the past several years, the City made major investments in multiple sustainable infrastructure improvement projects at Springhill Lake. Significant improvements were made to the site’s stormwater management systems, including the replacement of the asphalt parking lot and walkways with permeable concrete and porous paver systems.

Cisterns were also added to the building to collect rainwater runoff from the roof. Most recently, in 2018, solar panels were added to the roof of the Recreation Center and are expected to reduce the amount of electrical power the City purchases to operate the facility.

## Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Sports Facilities

### Braden Field Complex

Abutting the Youth Center to the north is the Braden Field Complex. As with many of Greenbelt's park areas, the open field area at Braden was created during the original construction of the City in the late 1930s. Amenities at the site include eight tennis courts, a sand volleyball court and three ballfields. A trail connects the Braden Complex to Buddy Attick Park.

Multiple local leagues regularly use Braden's fields and courts for games and practices for sports including baseball, softball, soccer, tennis and pickleball. Most of the field space and courts at the site include lighting, allowing the amenities to be used into the evening. The Braden Field Complex is also used by the Recreation Department for programs and summer camps, and is open for public use.

### Buddy Attick Park

Buddy Attick Park and its 20+ acre artificial lake and surrounding open space were carefully planned and constructed during the original development of the City in the 1930s. Central to garden City concept that Greenbelt was built upon is the belief that people and families needed regular exposure to the natural environment to live healthy lives. The original park was created to serve this purpose; it was, and remains, an essential piece of community infrastructure necessary that supports the health and wellbeing of residents.

Generations of residents and visitors have connected with nature and enjoyed time spent outdoors at Buddy Attick Park. The Park's central location in the community makes it walkable from multiple residential areas and from the Greenbelt Community Center, Youth Center, Aquatics and Fitness Center and Braden Field. As of 2018, recreation amenities at the park included picnic tables, grills, group picnic grove, benches, playground, basketball court, restroom, open lawn space and forested areas, bandstand, walkways and perimeter trail around the lake.



*Picnicking at Buddy Attick Park 1942  
Image Credit: Library of Congress*



*Fourth of July Celebration 2016 at Buddy Attick Park  
Image Credit: Greenbelt News Review*

The perimeter trail is heavily utilized by all ages of walkers, runners and bicyclists year-round. Picnic facilities are also highly popular for family and social gatherings, with demand frequently exceeding capacity on weekends and weekday evenings during the spring, summer and fall. The park also hosts annual City and civic events such as holiday celebrations, fun-runs and races. No other City park in Greenbelt has a lake, and at Buddy Attick, it is the aesthetic center of the park. While swimming is not allowed, fishing from the shoreline is a popular activity, and is supported through annual fish stocking of the lake by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Although there are no formal launch facilities, canoeing and kayaking are allowed on the lake with a City-issued permit.

While there is no quantified number of annual users, feedback received from community members, city staff input and the consultant's observations indicate that Buddy Attick is the most heavily and frequently utilized park in Greenbelt; and has been for some time. The most active and developed portion of the park is located adjacent to the Public Works facility on Crescent Road. Additionally, a 1992 City completed a master plan for the site which recognized challenges associated with heavy use of the park. The master plan prescribed various operational policies, maintenance practices and capital improvements for enhancing the park's natural features and built infrastructure.

### **Greenbelt Dog Park**

In 1996, Greenbelt opened the first dedicated public dog park in the State of Maryland. The Dog Park is located on Hanover Parkway in Greenbelt West, within close proximity of Schrom Hills Park. Amenities at the site include a fenced-in area for off-leash use, tubes and simple training obstacles and seating. Since opening, the Dog Park has seen consistent year-round usage and its popularity has spurred interest in creating a second public dog park in Greenbelt. According to the Recreation Department, the Dog Park was "established to help promote responsible pet ownership and enhance canine training, behavior and safe exercise opportunities."



*Greenbelt Skate Park*

*Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department*

### **Greenbelt Skate Park**

The 7,000 square foot concrete skate park was built in the early 2000s and includes a ten-foot deep bowl and series of vertical and street elements. The Skate Park is nestled between the Community Center, Aquatics and Fitness Center and the Youth Center. Use of the facility is free but guests are required to obtain a free skate park user pass from the Recreation Department.

### **Greenbriar Park**

This seven-acre wooded park is located on Hanover Parkway and includes a trail, picnic tables and limited parking.



*Entrance to the Dog Park*

*Image Credit: Greenbelt Recreation Department*

### **McDonald Field**

Tucked behind residential buildings on Southway in Old Greenbelt, McDonald Field was opened in 1951. The site includes a single youth baseball field and playground. McDonald Field is the home of Greenbelt Little League baseball.

### **Northway Ballfields**

Built upon the City's former landfill within the Greenbelt Forest Preserve, adjacent to the Baltimore Washington Parkway, are the two side by side Northway ballfields. This site is the furthest removed from residential areas in one of the more isolated locations in the city. Beyond several small bleachers for seating, the only additionally public amenity at Northway is the small observatory managed by the City and Astronomical Society of Greenbelt. The observatory and its telescope were donated to the Astronomical Society in 2001 and observatory constructed in 2007. The Society hosts stargazing parties and events at the observatory every other week. Youth soccer and baseball leagues utilize the Northway fields for practice and games. In addition to its recreational use, the site is utilized by the Greenbelt Public Works Department as a storage and disposal area for bulk unconsolidated construction and landscape materials such as soil, asphalt millings, tree stumps and other debris.

### **Schrom Hills Park**

Located on Hanover Parkway, Schrom Hills Park is the largest developed city park in Greenbelt East. Recreational amenities at Schrom Hills include a baseball and soccer field, basketball court, playground, the Fitness Zone (outdoor fitness station with exercise equipment), covered picnic pavilion with grill, restrooms, small clubhouse building with kitchen, the "Three Sisters" demonstration garden, a central landscaped walkway with benches, and a paved perimeter trail. Several local sports leagues are regular users of the athletic fields, and paths are frequented by walkers and joggers.

There are also two county-designated "champion trees" in the park that are recognized as being among the largest known species of these individual tree types in the Prince George's County.



*Celebratory Opening of the Outdoor Fitness Zone at Schrom Hills Park 2016*

*Image Credit: City of Greenbelt*

The two champion trees, a Lingleaf Pine and a Deodar Cedar with a trunk circumference of nearly ten feet are prominently located adjacent to the central pathway.

## **B. PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES ASSESSMENT**

Existing conditions at eleven selected City parks and recreation facilities were assessed by the project team to gauge the overall quality of existing outdoor recreation amenities and site infrastructure. The consultant team did not conduct formal evaluations of interior recreation spaces, buildings or their associated mechanical systems. Key city staff responsible for the operation and maintenance of indoor recreation facilities as well as past and present capital improvement plans were consulted to gain insight into the general condition of these assets. The assessment utilized a mixed-methods approach to collect and evaluate information regarding the existing conditions at these sites, including:

- On-site inspections and evaluations of outdoor recreation infrastructure at the eleven subject sites by LSG Landscape Architecture in summer 2017.

- User and community input and perceptions of conditions at city parks and recreation facilities.
- User and community input, ideas and levels of satisfaction with existing conditions at city parks and recreation facilities expressed in the results of the master plan survey and public input meetings.
- Consultation with city staff and elected officials.
- Review of past and existing capital improvement plans.
- Review of general grounds and facility maintenance protocols and resources.

The eleven sites evaluated on-site by the landscape architect were:

1. Aquatics and Fitness Center
2. Youth Center
3. Skate Park
4. Braden Field Complex
5. Buddy Attick Park
6. McDonald Field
7. Dog Park
8. Schrom Hills Park
9. Northway Fields
10. Community Center
11. Springhill Lake Recreation Center

In conducting the on-site evaluation, a simple “3-2-1” scoring system was used to rate applicable site features and amenities. Generally, amenities scoring a three would be in great condition with no functional issues; an amenity with a scoring of two is “average or satisfactory” and may be in decent working order, but in need of some minor repair or improvements; and an amenity with a rating of one is in disrepair and in need of significant repair or replacement. Infrastructure and amenities reviewed at each site, as applicable, included landscaping, lighting, drainage, signage, benches and site furnishings, parking areas, sidewalks, trails and paths, athletic fields, sport courts, picnic facilities, and other amenities unique to the individual site.

## Aquatics and Fitness Center Assessment

On-site assessment score: 1.9

The on-site assessment focused on the outdoor pool area adjacent to the natatorium. The assessment did not include the natatorium or indoor aquatics amenities. The outdoor pool, concrete pool deck, site furnishings, perimeter fencing, children’s wading pool, and mushroom shaped spray features look and feel outdated and are heavily worn from years of heavy use. The facility is showing clear signs of its age and wear, as most visibly evidenced in the condition of the concrete pool deck, which is covered in a myriad of different sizes, shapes and colors of concrete patches. While the existing pool and site features are functioning, barring significant investment, the City should expect the operational and repair costs for the outdoor pool area to rise and general condition of the facility to decline as it continues to age and be heavily utilized.

Since the last time the outdoor pool area received any major capital improvement, there have been advances in the designs and materials used to construct public pool areas that are safer, more durable, are more efficient to operate and are more interesting and enjoyable for users. For example, splash pads, spray parks, and interactive fountains have become popular water features in many communities. Public comments in the planning processes noted interest in adding new active features to the outdoor pool area, including spray features and a water slide.

Great things to celebrate about the outdoor pool area:

- **History:** As the first public pool in the region, hundreds of thousands of people, if not many more, have enjoyed Greenbelt’s pool since it first opened nearly 80 years ago and continue to do so today.
- **Utility:** As a piece of public infrastructure, the pool provides opportunities for residents to learn to swim, partake in individual and group fitness activities or competitions in aquatic sports, and is a

popular place for cooling off, having fun and socializing. It's a vehicle and venue that encourages health, wellness and positive social interactions while enjoying the water and sunshine.

- Location and accessibility: The pool's central location in Old Greenbelt make it a walkable destination for many residents. There is ample parking at the site and in the adjacent Roosevelt Center area.
- Unique and popular recreation feature: This is the only public outdoor swimming pool in Greenbelt, and it is a popular recreation amenity.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- Age and overall condition: the current facility and site amenities are in deteriorating condition. Most infrastructure will require repair, renovation or replacement in the near future to continue to function as intended.
- Current and long-term functionality: the existing outdoor pool and associated elements are functioning, but given their age and overall condition, the City should anticipate operational costs to rise as the aging infrastructure continues to be subject to the wear and tear of regular heavy public use. Declines in the quality of recreation amenities typical equate to a corresponding decline in user satisfaction.
- Community Focal Point – The outdoor pool area could be doing so much more to celebrate its prominence in the city's history. Its location is one of the most visible, accessible, and central in the community, and it is surrounded by art deco buildings. Future improvements to the site should consider embracing the surrounding architecture and incorporate design elements that celebrate Greenbelt's history and culture.
- Consider conducting a comprehensive facility study to best map out future capital improvements for the outdoor pool area.

## Youth Center Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.0

Outdoor amenities at the Youth Center that were the focus on the on-site assessment are limited and included the existing short basketball court with abutting rebound wall, benches, bicycle racks landscaping and paved pathways. Generally, these amenities are aged and worn, and could benefit from minor repairs or replacement. Minor drainage challenges and erosion from of the slope adjacent to the basketball court has caused water and sediment damage to the surface of the court. Some small amount of site work and landscaping work could address the root issue damaging the court surface. Once curbed, the court surface should be patched and painted to improve the usability and longevity of the basketball court.

While the structure and interior spaces of the Youth Center were not formally assessed, the interior basketball court, weight room, game room, multifunction spaces, and restrooms all appeared aged, and in some cases, significantly worn. Given the age of the facility and minimal improvements made to it in the last 20+ years, it may be beneficial for a full facility study be completed to determine and prioritize the facility's capital needs.

Great things to celebrate about the Youth Center:

- The indoor facilities are providing key space for recreation programs and camps and participation in drop-in activities in the gymnasium and game room.
- The site's central location in the community make it highly walkable and it is adjacent to other major recreation assets including the Aquatics and Fitness Center and Braden Field.
- While the Community Center is viewed more prominently, the indoor recreation space at the Youth Center is of equal value and serves the same community needs. It's a used and needed space.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- Age and condition: While younger than the neighboring Community Center, the Youth Center is several decades old, and while not formally assessed, the interior facilities appeared well-worn.
- Minor repairs to the outdoor basketball court: grading and stabilization of the slopes adjacent to the court is needed to curb erosion and sediment deposition on the surface of the court. Sediment is abrasive of the court's surfacing and has caused minor damage. The court's surface should be cleaned, patched and painted after the erosion issue is abated.
- Limited functionality and untapped potential: The configuration and condition of indoor recreation spaces at the Youth Center limit its current and future functionality. Space within the facility could likely be better utilized to meet the programming needs of the Recreation Department and community. The City should consider conducting a study of the building to precisely determine needs and prioritize improvements to the space to make it more functional, appealing and architecturally on-theme with the historic art deco buildings surrounding it.

## Skate Park Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.5

The skate park area includes the concrete skate bowls and structures, perimeter fencing adjacent landscaping. The concrete skate structure is approximately ten years old and in relatively good condition. There was evidence of minor surface cracking that had been adequately repaired and expected amount of general wear and tear from a decade of use and exposure to the elements. To keep this specialized amenity in good working condition for its projected 20 to 30 year functional lifespan, a comprehensive maintenance regime should be implemented that follows the manufactures and industry best management practices.

Great things to celebrate about the Skate Park:

- It's a unique feature and recreation amenity that is centrally located.
- The skate park is in good functional condition and appeared free of major defects.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- As the skate park ages, it will likely require a greater degree of maintenance to ensure it remains safe and functional.

## Braden Field Complex Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.25

The recreation amenities and infrastructure at the Braden Field Complex was found to be in good general condition but with several current and near-future challenges:

Athletic fields:

- Turf and infield areas did not appear even in some areas, which can negatively impact playability and long-term durability of the fields.
- Fields are adjacent to a small stream and area is subject to periodic flooding, making the fields unusable when inundated or saturated.
- The 20-year-old field lighting is functional but likely utilizes considerably more energy than modern systems. It is also nearing the end of its functional lifespan.

Sport Courts:

- The basketball court surfacing appeared worn and would benefit from painting.
- Tennis court surfacing and nets show some evidence of wear, but lighting appeared in good condition and is reported to work well.
- The volleyball court appeared in good condition but could benefit from better maintenance.

Input from city staff and Braden users indicated that parking can be inadequate when multiple group activities are ongoing at the same time. There are also no bicycle parking accommodations at Braden. The site is regularly used by several local sports leagues and groups, as well as Greenbelt recreation programs.

Great things to celebrate about the Braden Field Complex:

- The diversity of amenities supports multiple organized and individual sports, fitness and recreation activities on one site.
- The site is centrally located in Greenbelt and is walkable from many areas. The Youth Center is located adjacent to the Complex and a trail connects it to Buddy Attick Park.
- The site hosts multiple sports league programs, summer camps and group activities.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- While functional, the playability of existing sports fields would benefit from improvement. Minor grading to allow for positive drainage and smoothing of ruts and rises in the turf would be positive improvements. The existing, aged field lighting should be replaced with modern fixtures that provide better light and use less energy.
- Parking and storage areas for bicycles should be designated and installed to promote non-vehicular access to the site.
- The basketball court surface should be improved through minor patching and repainting.
- The configuration of the current athletic fields at Braden may not be making the best use of the space. The City should consider conducting a study of the field area to determine if the layout of the fields could be adjusted to maximize the use of the space.

## Buddy Attick Park Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.0

Built as a piece of the City's original infrastructure in the 1930s, Buddy Attick Park has been, and continues to be, central to lives of generations of Greenbelt residents. Based on the project team's observations and consistent reporting from residents, park users, and City staff, Buddy Attick is very likely the most frequently and heavily utilized city park in Greenbelt. The park's central location, aesthetic appeal of the lake, and variety of opportunities to participate in self-directed and/or organized recreation, fitness, and social activities contribute to people's use and appreciation of the site. Originally designed for use by the few thousand early residents of Greenbelt, the park now serves a significantly larger population.

The phrase "the park is being loved to death" was expressed to the project team by community members and city staff, illustrating shared concern for the existing and future condition of infrastructure under sustained, heavy use. The on-site assessment generally validated these concerns, finding that a few amenities were in good shape; however, most were functional but worn and likely under-maintained. Key items of note included:

Great things to celebrate about Buddy Attick Park:

- **History and utility:** As the City's original "central park", generations of residents and visitors have enjoyed walking, playing, socializing and attending events outdoors at the park. The site includes a variety of amenities that support a diversity of uses.
- **Popularity:** The Park has been, and continues to be, a very popular place for people to get outside, enjoy unstructured outdoor activities and appreciate the lake and surrounding landscape. It's a major social gathering spot.
- The playground appeared to be in well-used but in good functional condition.
- The park's central location makes it highly walkable for many residents. There are trail connections to several abutting neighborhoods and to the Braden Field Complex.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- It does not appear that the current level of maintenance at the site is sufficient to abate the high level of wear and tear the grounds and facilities receive through consistent heavy use.
- The 1992 master plan for the park proposed a number of ideas for management and capital improvements that do not appear to have been realized. Many of the key issues addressed in the plan 25+ years ago remain relevant today, but community conditions and recreation trends have evolved since the last master plan was prepared. Given the heavy use of the site and its current conditions and challenges, the City should strongly consider completing a new master plan for Buddy Attick Park.
- Picnic facilities appeared to receive heavy use by groups, but defined areas and amenities specifically for group use are limited. Picnic table quality was inconsistent, but most were in fair to good functional condition.
- Parking at the site is limited. The only on-site parking lot at Crescent Road often fills to capacity. While in functional condition, the parking lot surfacing and other features were in deteriorating condition.
- Signage at the site is limited. The addition of strategically placed wayfinding and interpretive signage could enhance the user experience by identifying and providing information about key site amenities, the parks history and natural features.
- Picnic facilities are inadequate to meet current demand for group use. Consideration should be given to adding covered group picnic pavilions as well as designating and furnishing additional group picnic areas to accommodate existing and future demands for group gatherings and events at Buddy Attick Park.

- While a great functional feature for the site, the existing simple bandstand structure is worn and visually obtrusive in its highly prominent lakeside location. Consideration should be given to removing the existing bandstand, relocating it, and/or replacing it with a movable/ semi-permanent structure or permanent structure that compliments the landscape and celebrates the City's history.

## McDonald Field Assessment

On-site assessment score: 1.5

The overall condition of the single baseball field and associated site amenities was found to be subpar and in need of improvement.

Great things to celebrate about McDonald Field:

- The site is well utilized and is home Greenbelt Little League baseball.
- While this facility is not in the best condition, sports field space in the city for practices and games is a limited commodity that is in high demand.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- Access to the site is through a residential parking area. Vehicle parking at the site is limited and insufficient to meet current needs.
- The baseball field surfaces are worn and uneven. Turf coverage is inconsistent. The playability of the field is negatively impacted by these conditions.
- Benches, dugouts, fencing and signage are old, outdated, and/or in disrepair.
- There is significant opportunity for improvement of this site. While it is serving its function, the current conditions limit the site's overall functionality and utility for the city and can be a limitation on positive user experiences.

## Dog Park Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.25

The Dog Park is essentially a fenced-in, predominantly open turf area for off-leash use, play and socialization space for canines and their owners. Dog-focused amenities at the site are limited to a large plastic tube. Amenities for dog owners are limited to benches and on-street parking.

Great things to celebrate about the Greenbelt Dog Park:

- As a first of its kind in the region, Greenbelt’s dog park continues to function effectively as a basic, enclosed off-leash area for dogs and their owners.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- Consistent use of the single off-leash space has led to inconsistent turf coverage. While expected, there are a number of industry standard best management practices that could be explored and implemented to improve soil health and turf resiliency in the space.
- Similar to playgrounds for people, there are numerous types of recreation and training amenities available specifically for dog parks. The City should consider outfitting the site with additional canine-focused amenities.
- Additional comfort features for people and dogs would benefit the site. Benches, shade and a water source would positively contribute to the user experience.

## Schrom Hills Park Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.75

Conditions of most recreation amenities at Schrom Hills Park were found to be in generally good functional condition, but some are showing their older age. Schrom Hill is the primary recreation facility operated by the City in Greenbelt East.

Great things to celebrate about Schrom Hills Park:

- The park is primarily accessed by automobile. The parking area was found to be in good physical condition and appears to be of sufficient size to support normal use of the park.
- The new outdoor fitness center with multiple pieces of exercise equipment was installed approximately two years ago and includes a shade structure. The fitness center was found to be in excellent condition. The new amenity is reported to be well received by users.
- As the key outdoor recreation site in Greenbelt East, the variety of recreation amenities and multiple uses it accommodates are especially important in this section of the city.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- Consideration should be given to adding lighting to the sports field area to extend the amount of available playing time.
- The picnic pavilion is showing signs of its age but is in functional condition. Consideration should be given to renovate or replace the structure and associated amenities.
- Minor surface cracking was noted on the basketball court. Repair or resurfacing should be considered.

## Northway Fields Assessment

On-site assessment score: 1.0

The Northway Fields site is located in the Greenbelt Forest Preserve at the end of a lengthy gravel road. The onsite assessment found the site to be in generally poor condition. Large portions of the site are used by the City for the bulk storage of unconsolidated construction and landscape materials and debris (excavated materials, asphalt road millings, tree stumps).

Great things to celebrate about Northway Fields:

- The site includes two baseball/softball fields and ample parking.

- The City observatory, a unique feature, is also located on the site.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- The recreational function and purpose of the site appear secondary to its use for the storage of bulk material and debris.
- Field surfaces were found to be uneven and potted, with inconsistent turf coverage. Fencing and backstops were rusted and in disrepair in some areas.
- There are considerable opportunities to improve the use, functionality and aesthetic appeal of this site. For example, with no direct residential neighbors, could the site be renovated to include additional sports fields with lighting? Can the site be better connected by trails and interpretive signage to the Forest Preserve and its natural resources? Should a variety of recreation amenities be developed to allow for multiple uses at the site?

## Community Center Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.5

The on-site assessment of the Community Center focused on the exterior/outdoor recreation amenities and site infrastructure. The interior spaces of the building and operational systems were not formally reviewed and do not factor into the site assessment score. The project team did informally tour the interior of the facility and utilized community meeting room space during the master planning process. Outdoor recreation and support infrastructure at the Community Center was found to be in good functional condition with no major deficiencies.

Great things to celebrate about the Community Center:

- The facility is original to the City and is well-known for its architectural significance and artwork.
- The Community Center has and continues to function as Greenbelt's hub for recreation, arts, cultural, and community programming and events. People of all

ages and abilities can participate in diverse fitness, arts, sports, dance and wellness programs year-round at the facility.

- The central location of the Center and proximity to other major city-owned recreation amenities make it highly walkable for many users.
- A new playground was opened in June 2018 at the Community Center and has been very well received.

Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- There were no major concerns identified with outdoor recreation features and support infrastructure at the Community Center. Paint and masonry on the exterior of the building appears to be in need of repair.
- As the historic facility continues to age and support heavy usage, sustained investment will be necessary to ensure the building remains sound, functional, and capable to serve the community for the foreseeable future.
- There are several non-recreational tenants in the Community Center including the City's Department of Planning and Community Development and space used primarily for storage by local non-profit groups and local access cable network. With space in the building for recreation programming already constrained, the City should evaluate if these spaces would better serve the community if repurposed for recreation programs.

## Springhill Lake Recreation Center Assessment

On-site assessment score: 2.25

The on-site assessment of the Recreation Center focused on the outdoor recreation elements and support infrastructure at the site. Indoor facilities were not formally assessed and were not a factor in the scoring. The indoor amenities at the site were informally reviewed. Generally, the outdoor recreation amenities at the site were found to be in good functional condition.

The most significant concern viewed was the limited quantity of on-site parking.

Great things to celebrate about the Springhill Lake Recreation Center:

- The Recreation Center is the major city-owned recreation site in Greenbelt West and is highly accessible by foot from abutting Franklin Park apartment community. A new paved trail also connects the site to the new residential development at Greenbelt Station.
- Major investments in green infrastructure including replacing the asphalt parking area with a porous paver parking lot system and adding solar panels to the roof of the Center.
- The computer lab is a great unique feature and is reported well utilized.
- A new trail between Cherrywood Lane and Greenbelt Station development provides an increased level of pedestrian and bicycle access from the new residential area to existing sidewalks leading to the Recreation Center.



Concerns with existing conditions and ideas for improvement:

- There is not enough parking on-site.
- Wetlands on and near the site could potentially limit options for developing more robust recreation infrastructure.
- There appeared to be a shared sentiment among city staff and facility users that more should be done to expand the recreational opportunities at Springhill Lake.

- The City should consider conducting a site and facility assessment for the Springhill Lake Recreation Center property to determine what potential exists for additional future development of the site.

## C. CITYWIDE PARK AND RECREATION SYSTEM LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

In reviewing the accessibility of Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities throughout the city, a geospatial analysis was completed using publicly available GIS data. The City's GIS data for parks and recreation was extremely limited and consultant team worked with city staff to create some supplemental data. However, data was not available for relevant features including trail or bike path data. This overall level of service analysis reviewed walkable access to city parks and recreation sites with playgrounds, open space and sports/athletic facilities.

The study area was defined by the city-limits; however, it should be noted that additional public parks and recreation facilities open for Greenbelt residents' use are located nearby in surrounding Prince George's County communities.

The following series of maps illustrate catchment areas around parks and recreation facilities with either playgrounds, open space areas, or sports/athletic amenities. Catchment areas, or buffers radiate from dark to light. Generally, the darker shaded an area, the more walkable it is to the park site with the playground, open space or athletic amenity. Catchment areas were defined to approximate 1/2-mile distance, which equates to a 10-minute walk. This is a common industry standard used by industry groups including the Trust for Public Land.<sup>3</sup> The analysis also considered major barriers to walkability including the Capital Beltway and Baltimore Washington Parkway and

<sup>3</sup> [https://parkscore.tpl.org/Methodology/TPL\\_10MinWalk.pdf](https://parkscore.tpl.org/Methodology/TPL_10MinWalk.pdf); accessed July 2018

other major state roads. Additional barriers to safe and free pedestrian and bicycle movement throughout the city, the most prevalent being crossings of major state roadways including Greenbelt Road and Kenilworth Avenue.

Given the generally small land-size of Greenbelt and historic district that was built with its system of interconnected pathways, most residential areas are within a walkable distance to one or more park or recreation facility with a playground, open space and/or athletic facility.

## Playgrounds

Playgrounds are distributed throughout Greenbelt's residential areas, as illustrated in the Gap Analysis Map: Playgrounds. There is at least one playground located within a short walk of most homes in the city. Greenbelt West is served by three city playgrounds located in residential areas including Greenbelt Station, the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, adjacent to the heavily populated Franklin Park apartment complex, and on Breezewood Drive. In the central portion of the city, the Old Greenbelt neighborhoods are well-served by playgrounds. They are plentiful and generally well-distributed. In Greenbelt East, playgrounds are generally well distributed through residential areas. In northwest Greenbelt, there is a triangular section of the city bounded by the Capital Beltway and Kenilworth Avenue that is not walkable to a city playground. This area of the city includes a commercial office complex and the U.S. District Courthouse. The area directly south of that is another commercial office park, hotel and retail complex.

## Open Spaces

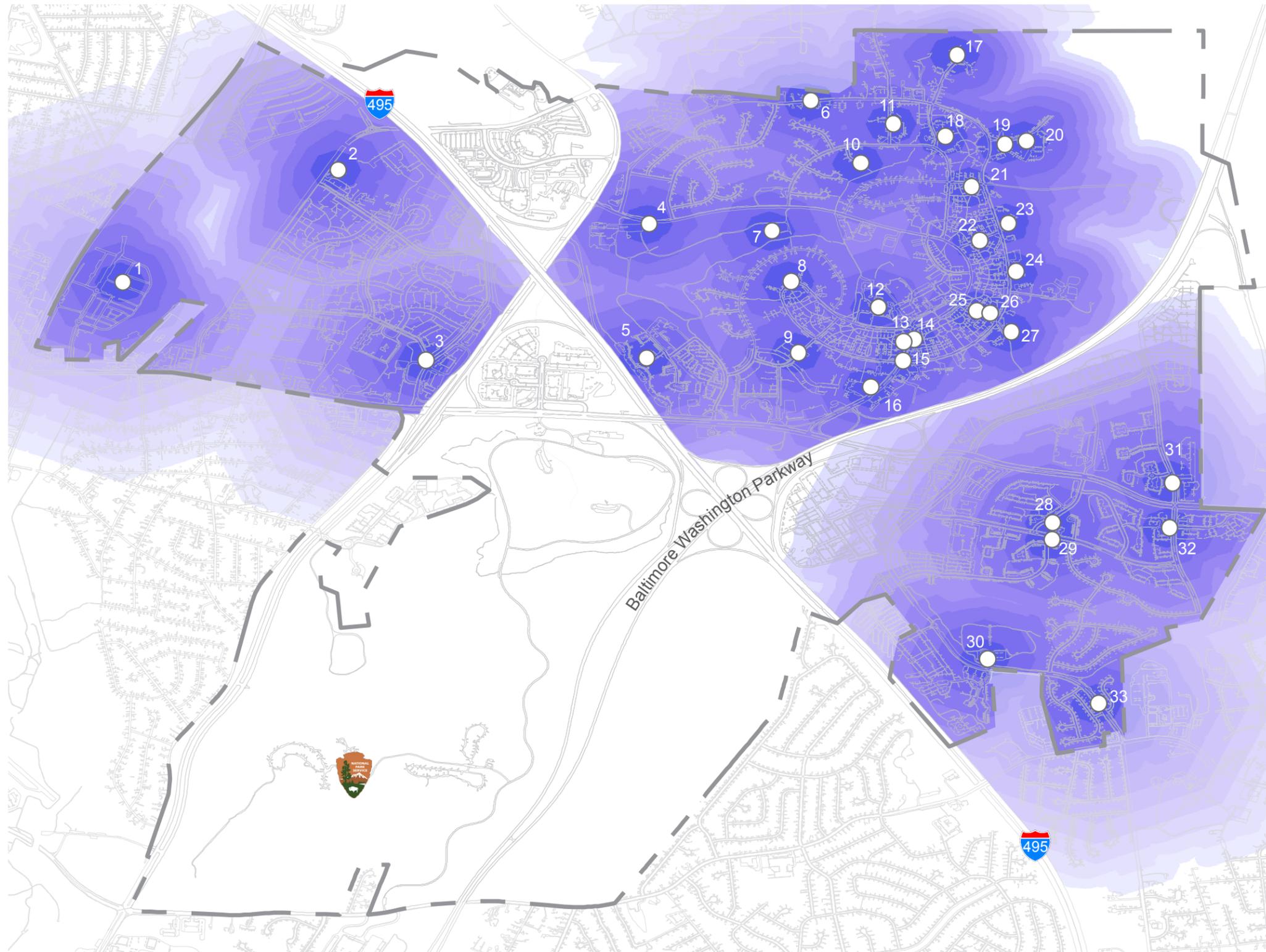
Open space areas are well-distributed throughout the city. The majority of residential areas have access to open space areas within a ten-minute walk. While a portion of Greenbelt East located directly east of Schrom Hills Park appears less-served by open space, this is not accurate and reflects limitations in GIS data. At least a portion of this area can access the eastern most entrance of Schrom Hills Park by a paved pathway at the end of Craddock Road. Additionally, the southern portion

of Old Greenbelt also appears less well served by open spaces. It should be noted that in each part of the city, the major housing developments tend to provide their residents with additional access to open spaces. For example, in the southern Old Greenbelt area, Greenbelt Homes Inc., and Greenridge Apartments each provide space for community garden and trail connections to the Greenbelt Forest Preserve, located a short distance to the north.

## Athletic Amenities

As with playgrounds and open space areas, public sports and athletic amenities were found distributed throughout the city, as illustrated in the Gap Analysis: Athletic Amenities Map. The majority of these facilities are located in Old Greenbelt, with the Youth Center, Braden Field Complex, Aquatics and Fitness Center, and Community Center clustered adjacent to Roosevelt Center. Sites with sports and athletic amenities included in this analysis were those with one or more sports fields, tennis court, basketball court, pool, or similar feature. In Greenbelt West, residents living in the central portions of the Franklin Park community may be at least a ten-minute walk from the nearest sports amenities. In the north-central section of Old Greenbelt, some residents may have a ten-minute walk or greater to the closest sports facility. The Greenbelt Elementary School and its sports field is located in this area and is generally open for public drop-in use outside of school hours. Additionally, Northway Fields are located in the middle of the Forest Preserve and are more than a ten-minute walk from the closest residential neighborhood. In Greenbelt East, residents living at the northern terminus of Mandan Road are also located at least a ten-minute walk from the nearest public sports or athletic amenity.

# GAP ANALYSIS: PLAYGROUNDS

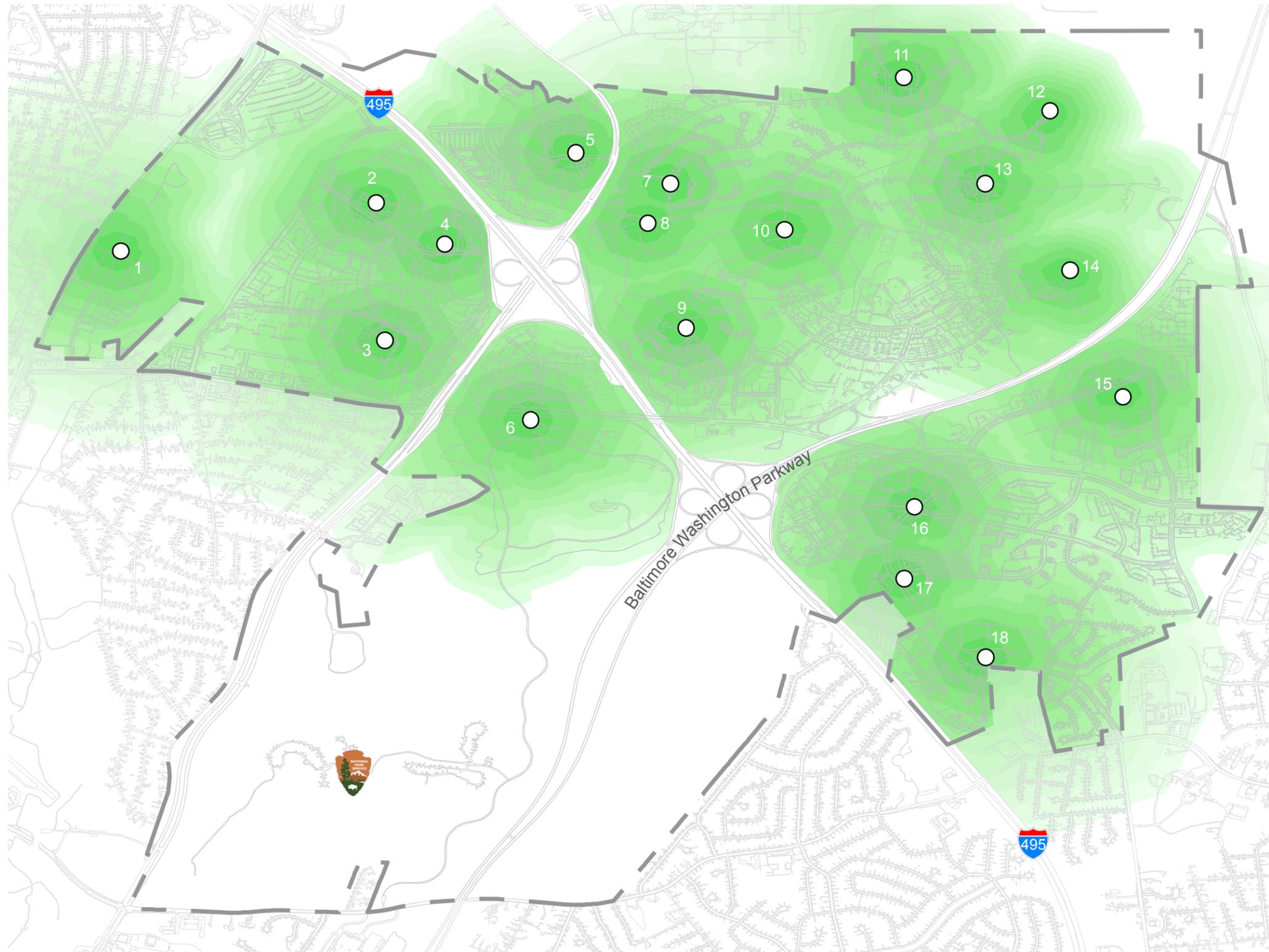


- Playgrounds:**
1. Greenbelt Station Playground
  2. Springhill Lake Park Playground
  3. Breezewood Drive Playground
  4. Buddy Attick Park Playground
  5. Belle Point Playground
  6. 73 Court Ridge Playground
  7. St. Hugh's Playground
  8. 1 Court Crescent Road Playground
  9. Westway Playground
  10. Fayette Place Playground
  11. 2 Court Research Playground
  12. Community Center Playground
  13. 2 Court Southway Playground
  14. 1 Court Southway Playground
  15. 7 Court Southway Playground
  16. 8 Court Southway Playground
  17. 15 Court Laurel Hill Playground
  18. 2 Court Laurel Hill Playground
  19. Plateau-Ridge Playground
  20. 4 Court Plateau Place Playground
  21. 2 Court Northway Playground
  22. 2 Court Eastway Playground
  23. 44 Court Ridge Playground
  24. 38 Court Ridge Playground
  25. 2 Court Gardenway Playground
  26. 3 Court Gardenway Playground
  27. 5 Court Gardenway Playground
  28. Frankfort Drive Playground
  29. Ora Glen Drive Playground
  30. Schrom Hills Park Playground
  31. Mandan Road Playground
  32. Canning Terrace Playground
  33. Greenspring Park Playground

- Legend:**
-  Greenbelt City Boundary
  -  Greenbelt Park (U.S. National Park Service)





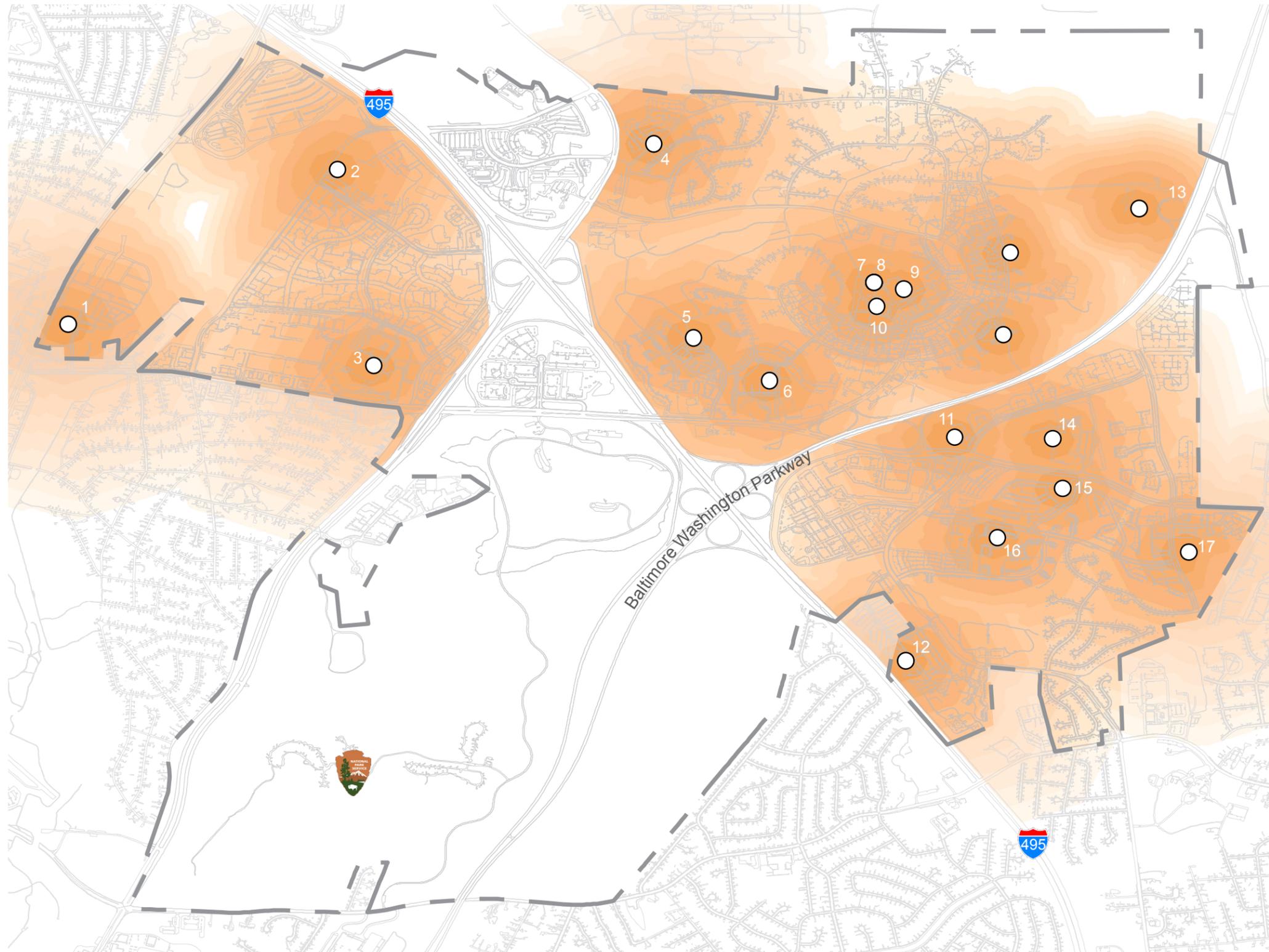


- Open Space:**
1. Greenbelt Station Park
  2. SHL Elementary School
  3. Greenbelt Middle School
  4. Lakeside North
  5. City Cemetary
  6. Greenbelt Park
  7. Boxwood Village Park
  8. Buddy Attick Park (North Entry)
  9. Buddy Attick Park (South Entry)
  10. Buddy Attick Park (East Entry)
  11. Greenbelt Elementary School
  12. North Preserve (North Entry)
  13. North Preserve (West Entry)
  14. South Preserve
  15. Greenbriar Park
  16. Greenbelt Dog Park
  17. Schrom Hills Park (North Entry)
  18. Schrom Hills Park (South Entry)

- Legend:**
- Greenbelt City Boundary
  -  Greenbelt Park (U.S. National Park Service)





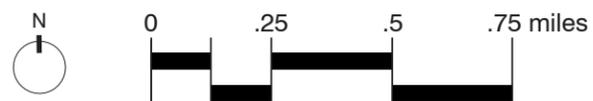


**Sports and Recreation Facilities:**

1. Verde Apartments
2. SHL Recreation Center
3. Dora Kennedy French Immersion
4. Lakeside North
5. Lakecrest Drive Tennis Courts
6. McDonald Field
7. Greenbelt Youth Center
8. Braden Field Complex
9. Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center
10. Greenbelt Community Center
11. Greenbriar Condominiums
12. Hunting Ridge
13. Northway Fields
14. ERHS
15. Windsor Green
16. South Ora Court
17. Mandan Fields

**Legend:**

-  Greenbelt City Boundary
-  Greenbelt Park (U.S. National Park Service)





## D. KEY ISSUES AND FINDINGS: GREENBELT'S EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities provide a high level of service but many are aging and subject to consistent heavy use. In considering the sum of feedback received from the community, city staff and officials, findings of the level of service analysis and review of general conditions of Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities, the following key issues were identified.

These key issues should be considered in planning for the future stewardship of Greenbelt's parks and recreation system to best ensure it continues to serve the public to high level.

- Use of and demand for Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities is strong, which is something to celebrate, but also means infrastructure is subject to high levels of regular wear and tear.
- The majority of Greenbelt's largest and most heavily utilized parks and recreation facilities are also the City's oldest. The baseline maintenance and operational needs and costs of historic buildings and infrastructure is generally greater than that of newer facilities.
- The current maintenance program parks and recreation sites is not sufficient for managing grounds and infrastructure subject to heavy usage or with highly scheduled needs.
- New park space and trails in the Greenbelt Station development in Greenbelt West provide a platform for engaging new residents in city recreation activities. Opportunities to program the space should be considered.
- Indoor and outdoor space for most programs and informal group sports, recreation, arts and leisure activities appear at or nearing capacity at most facilities, especially at times of peak demand. This was most evident at:
  - Buddy Attick Park: Parking, picnic amenities and space for group social gatherings is often at or over capacity every weekend and pleasant weekday evening spring – fall.
  - Community Center: Indoor space appeared to be at or near capacity for all Recreation Department programs and community activities and services.
  - Springhill Lake Recreation Center: Parking capacity at the site is regularly insufficient during times the facility is used by groups.
  - Youth Center: Indoor amenities show clear evidence of years of sustained use. Most amenities appear and feel well-worn.
  - Athletic field space throughout the city is regularly fully permitted or programmed. Demand appears to exceed capacity at high demand times.
- The on-site conditions of recreation and site infrastructure at Northway Fields and McDonald Field was found to be in relatively poor condition. The condition of the outdoor pool facilities at the Aquatics and Fitness Center were found to be in deteriorating condition. There is significant potential for capital improvements at these three locations that would greatly enhance the quality of the user experience.
- Buddy Attick Park needs a new master plan. The site supports consistent heavy use for diverse activities and infrastructure is not in adequate condition to continue to serve the community at a high level.
- Paths and trails in Greenbelt serve both recreation and transportation functions. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and the safe, walkable and bikeable opportunities it provides residents to connect between points of interest within the community without dependence on an automobile is of high value.

- The 2014 Greenbelt Pedestrian & Bicyclist Master Plan provides a detailed assessment of the City’s bike and pedestrian infrastructure and identified 56 location-specific improvements for walkability and 54 location-specific improvements for cycling throughout the city. Greenbelt should continue to implement recommendations of this plan.

## E. RECREATION PROGRAM AND PARK MAINTENANCE ANALYSIS

### Recreation Department Programs and Activities Analysis

The City of Greenbelt offers an array of year-round recreation, fitness, arts and cultural programs, activities and community events for all ages and abilities. These services are primarily provided through the Greenbelt Recreation Department. Regular, recurring maintenance and stewardship of the grounds and built infrastructure at Greenbelt’s parks and outdoor recreation sites is managed by the Public Works Department.

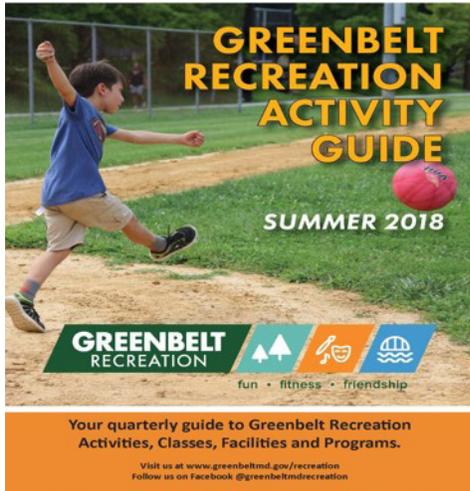
The mission of the GREENBELT RECREATION DEPARTMENT is to provide recreation programming and facilities which are responsive to the needs of the community, fun, result in self-development through stimulating and satisfying activities, promote wellness and enrich social and cultural experiences.

### Analysis of Greenbelt’s Catalog of Existing Recreation Programs and Activities

The Recreation Department operates the City’s sports and recreation facilities and Greenbelt Community Center, and provides a diverse array of recreation, sports, fitness, arts, culture and leisure programs, camps, child and senior care services, special events and community services year-round for residents of all ages and abilities. Structured programs offered by the City are the main driver of use of the Community Center, Aquatics and Fitness Center, Youth Center, and Springhill Lake Recreation Center. Fees generated through program registration are the largest non-tax-based source of funding for the Recreation Department.

Greenbelt prides itself on the quality and diversity of public recreation programs and activities the City offers and purposefully seeks to make participation affordable and financially accessible for all residents. To this end, the City makes all efforts to keep program costs for participants as low as possible and has financial assistance and scholarship programs available to help qualifying individuals or families participate.

The Greenbelt Recreation Activity Guide is the Department’s seasonal catalog of program, activity and event offerings. The Activity Guide is published four times a year and supplemented each spring with the Department’s Spring and Summer Camp Program Guide. While program and activity offerings vary throughout the year, the Recreation Department categorizes offerings as follows:



The Greenbelt Recreation Activity Guide is available online at [www.greenbeltmd.gov/recreation](http://www.greenbeltmd.gov/recreation) or in print at City facilities.

### Events and Exhibitions

Community events, exhibits and activities the Recreation Department provides throughout the year include:

- Art, history and cultural exhibits, talks and film screenings at the Community Center and Greenbelt Theater
- Artful Afternoon and other drop-in arts and crafts activities with the Greenbelt Artist in Residence and other local artists
- Theatrical performances and concerts
- Festival of Lights (winter) and holiday tree lighting
- Greenbelt Farmers Market
- Community races, fun runs, walks and bike rides including the annual Gobble Wobble Thanksgiving 5K race and fun run/walk and Bike to Work Day.
- Holiday and seasonal celebrations and activities including Arbor Day, Earth Day, Labor Day, 4th of July celebration, Fall Fest, National Night Out, Greenbelt Day, New Years and popular underwater Easter egg hunt at the Aquatics and Fitness Center.
- The Pooch Plunge doggie-swim at the Aquatics and Fitness Center outdoor pool.
- Family Fun Nights at the Aquatics and Fitness Center and Summer Skate Series at Springhill Lake Recreation Center

### Preschool Programs

The Recreation Department’s preschool programs and activities are structured for children age five and under. Most preschool programs are based at the Community Center, Youth Center and Braden Field (for outdoor sports and fitness activities). A variety of programs are offered throughout the year for Greenbelt preschoolers including:

- Mom’s Morning Out
- Active Play and Athletics
- Creative Arts
- Dance
- Visual Arts and Music

### Elementary and Middle School Programs

A large number and diversity of classes, activities and programs are offered throughout the year that caters to children and younger teens ranging from age five to sixteen. Most activities are organized for small groups of similarly aged participants. Programs for elementary and middle school aged participants are grouped into the following categories:

- Health and Fitness
- Creative and Visual Arts
- Special Interest
- Dance
- Day/field trips
- Swim lessons
- Camps
- Home School Programs
- Free Fun
- MNCPPC Summer Programs



Kinder Camp 2018  
Image Credit: City of Greenbelt

## Teen and Adult Programs

The Recreation Department's programs and activities for teens and adults are for participants ages 16+. A diverse mix of visual and creative arts classes and activities are offered year-round at the Community Center. An equally diverse array of health, wellness, fitness, sports and outdoor recreation programs are also offered year-round at multiple Greenbelt recreation facilities and parks. City programs that cater to participants ages 16+ are grouped into the following categories:

- Visual Arts
- Ceramics
- Health and Fitness
- Athletics
- Music
- Dance
- Special Interest (cooking, history, etc.)
- Athletics
- Outdoors
- Swim lessons and water exercise

## Senior Classes and Programs

The Senior Game Room and Lounge is located in the Greenbelt Community Center and is open for use by residents over the age of 60 years. Amenities available for open use include tables and chairs for social gatherings, games and activities and a billiards table. Most senior programs are targeted for participants ages 55 and over. Organized recreational activities for seniors include game nights, dance lessons, health, fitness and cooking classes as well as bus trips to activities in the region including theater performances, river cruises and shopping malls. Additional senior services including meal and nutrition assistance programs are also provided by the Recreation Department. Senior programs are generally organized in the following categories:

- Recreation and arts classes
- Seasoned Adults Growing Educationally (SAGE) courses
- Senior Globetrotting (regional bus excursions)
- Senior Center Games
- Swimming and water exercise
- Senior Special Events
- Health and Fitness



*Seniors attending the Greenbelt Concert Band Christmas Show 2017*

*Image Credit: City of Greenbelt*

## Unorganized/Free Play Opportunities

Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities all offer opportunities for open use, outside of structured programs offered by the Recreation Department and local sports leagues. For example, the Youth Center, Community Center, Springhill Lake Recreation Center and Aquatics and Fitness Center have regular dedicated times for drop-in use. Parks, playgrounds, trails and other recreation opportunities outdoors offer a variety of opportunities for participating in individual or group activities like walking, biking, picnicking and social gatherings, fishing, and more.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association, in 2017 the typical park and recreation agency caters to roughly 200,000 users annually, inclusive of program participants and people's estimated open use of their parks.

**Greenbelt is easily serving double to triple this volume of patronage on an annual basis.**

## Recreation Department Program Participation

Participation in all categories of programs, activities, and services offered by the Recreation Department is strong. Multiple programs are highly popular and are reported to fill to capacity a short time after registration opens. Recreation Department data indicates that through programs,

events, and open usage, the City's indoor recreation facilities consistently welcome about 400,000 visitors annually. This figure does not include people's free and open usage of the City's parks and open spaces. Along with operating city recreation programs the Recreation Department coordinates the use of park facilities and sports fields and courts with leagues and groups. Demand for the use of sports fields and courts by local leagues and organizations is strong, as is demand for the use of group picnic facilities for day-long social gatherings. Highlights of the high use of Greenbelt's parks and recreation facilities and registration in Recreation Department programs from the past year include:

- Annual measured attendance at Greenbelt's recreation facilities and programs over the past three years have averaged approximately 416,000. This figure accounts for registered program participants and users of city recreation facilities that have controlled access that allow for usage figures to be tracked. This figure does not account for people who visit the city's free and open public parks, including Buddy Attick Park.
- In FY 2018 the Recreation Department received and processed over 10,000 facility reservation requests.
- In FY 2016 the Recreation Department issued permits to local youth and adult sports groups for the use of the city's sports fields and tennis courts for over 9,000 hours of field/court time. Permitted usage time for these assets has remained consistently strong.
- In response to demand in Greenbelt West, the Recreation Department added two new (and free) after school programs and weekly drop-in volleyball program catering to elementary and middle school age children at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center.
- Most youth summer camp programs filled to capacity in 2017, with demand for multiple programs exceeding capacity.
- The Youth Soccer program introduced 100+ children ages 3-5 to the sport of soccer. This program has been offered

for ten consecutive years and remains popular.

- Approximately 200 people registered to participate in 2017's eleventh annual Thanksgiving Day Gobble Wobble fun run.
- Demand for performing and studio arts classes and programs is strong and rising. In FY18, nearly 90 classes, camps and programs were offered with multiple offerings filling to capacity.
- 254 individuals participated in nine regional bus trips in 2016. Participant evaluations indicated high satisfaction and enjoy with the trips/program.

## Relevant National and Regional Recreation Program Trends

The provision of public parks and recreation services can be influenced by a wide variety of trends, including the desires of different age groups, community values and popularity of a variety of recreational activities and amenities. Several national and regional trends in public recreation appear to be well-represented in Greenbelt, including the following.

### Walking and Biking for Fun, Fitness and Transportation

In many surveys and studies on participation in recreational activities, walking, running, jogging and cycling are nearly universally rated as the most popular activities among youths and adults. Walking, jogging and running are often the most highly participated in recreational activity and cycling often ranks as the second or third most popular activity. These activities are attractive as they require little equipment, or financial investment, to get started, and are open to participation to nearly all segments of the population. For these reasons, participation in these activities are often promoted as a means of spurring physical activity, and increasing public health. The design of a community's infrastructure is directly linked to physical activity – where environments are built with bicyclists and pedestrians in mind, more people bike and walk.

Higher levels of bicycling and walking also coincide with increased bicycle and pedestrian safety and higher levels of physical activity. Increasing bicycling and walking in a community can have a major impact on improving public health and life expectancy. The following trends as well as health and economic indicators are pulled from the Alliance for Biking and Walking's 2012 and 2014 "Benchmarking Reports":

Public health trends related to bicycling and walking include:

- Quantified health benefits of active transportation can outweigh any risks associated with the activities by as much as 77 to 1, and add more years to our lives than are lost from inhaled air pollution and traffic injuries.
- Between 1966 and 2009, the number of children who bicycled or walked to school fell 75%, while the percentage of obese children rose 276%.
- Bicycling to work significantly reduces absenteeism due to illness. Regular bicyclists took 7.4 sick days per year, while non-bicyclists took 8.7 sick days per year.

Economic benefits of bicycling and walking include:

- Bicycling and walking projects create 8–12 jobs per \$1 million spent, compared to just 7 jobs created per \$1 million spent on highway projects.
- Cost benefit analyses show that up to \$11.80 in benefits can be gained for every \$1 invested in bicycling and walking.

National bicycling trends:

- There has been a gradual trend of increasing bicycling and walking to work since 2005.
- Infrastructure to support biking communities is becoming more commonly funded in communities.

- Bike share systems, making bicycles available to the public for low-cost, short-term use, have been sweeping the nation since 2010. Twenty of the most populous U.S. cities have a functional bike share system.

Bicycle-friendly communities have been emerging over the last 10 years. In addition to being a popular recreational activity, cycling has become a desirable, regular mode of transportation as people consider the costs and challenges of commuting by car or public transportation, their desire for better health, and concern for the environment.

### **Fitness and Wellness Programs are Growing**

According to the 2017 "Participation Report" by the Physical Activity Council,<sup>4</sup> over half of each generation participates in fitness sports; with roughly two thirds (2/3) of Millennials and Generation X'ers participating in fitness activities. Generation Z, those generally under the age of 18, participated at higher rates than their older peers in individual, team, and outdoor sports. Baby Boomers participated the least, however, roughly ¼ of this generation participated in individual sports, more than one third (1/3) participated in outdoor sports, and nearly 60 percent participated in fitness sports. **Figure 9** illustrates participation rates by generation .

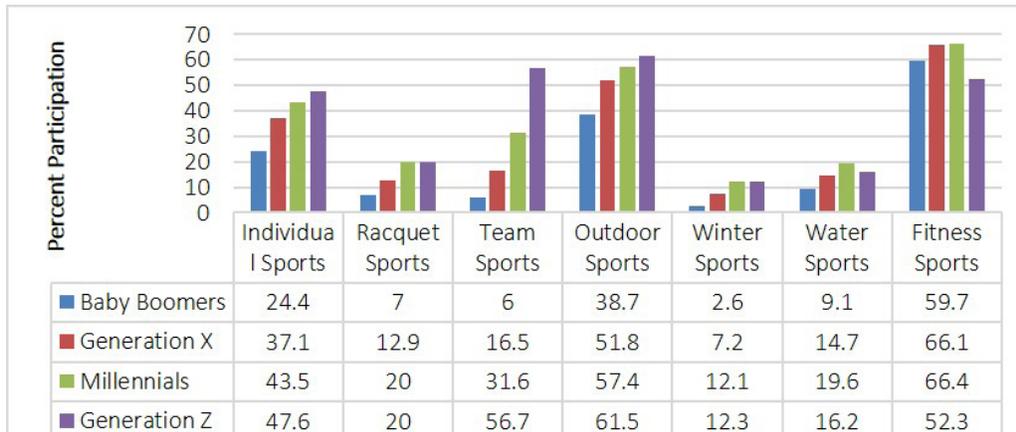
### **Aquatics Center Experiences**

According to the National Sporting Goods Association (NSGA), swimming ranked third nationwide among recreational activities in terms of participation in 2014.<sup>5</sup> Nationally, there is an increasing trend toward indoor leisure and therapeutic pools. Swimming for fitness is the top aspirational activity for inactive individuals in all age groups, according to the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) 2016 "Sports, Fitness and Leisure Activities Topline Participation Report," representing a significant opportunity to engage inactive populations.

<sup>4</sup> 2017 Participation Report," Physical Activity Council, 2017

<sup>5</sup> National Sporting Goods Association, "2014 Participation – Ranked by Total,"

**Figure 9: Fitness Sports Participation Rates by Generation**



Source: *Physical Activity Council 2017 Participation Report*

Aquatic amenities such as splash pads, shallow spray pools, and interactive fountains are becoming increasingly popular attractions in the summer months, and if designed for such, can be converted into ice rinks for the winter months. These features can also be designed to be ADA-compliant, and are often cheaper alternatives to build and maintain than community swimming pools. Trends in the architectural design for splash parks can be found in *Recreation Management* articles in 2014 and 2015.<sup>6</sup>

### Dog Parks

Dog parks are increasingly popular community amenities and have remained among the top planned addition to parks and recreational facilities over the past three years. In fact, the 10 largest cities in the U.S. increased the number of dog parks in their parks system by 34% between 2005 and 2010. Dog parks provide safe spaces for animals to socialize and exercise; and provide the same functions for dog owners as well. These spaces can help build a sense of community and be an attractive community feature for potential new residents or tourists traveling with pets.<sup>7</sup>

In 2014 the National Dog Park Association was established and focused its mission on providing informational resources for establishing and maintaining dog parks. *Recreation Management* magazine<sup>8</sup> suggested that dog parks can serve as a relatively low-cost way to provide an oft-visited a popular community amenity. Dog parks can be as simple as a gated area, or more elaborate with “designed-for-dogs” amenities such as water fountains, agility equipment, and pet wash stations. Even splash pads are being designed for dog parks.

Well-designed dog parks cater to users with design features for their comfort and pleasure. Some parks agencies even also offer creative programming at some dog parks for owners and their dogs.<sup>9</sup> Amenities in a well-designed dog park might include the following:

- Benches, shade and water – for dogs and people
- At least one acre of fenced-in space with adequate drainage
- Double gated entry
- Ample waste stations well-stocked with bags

<sup>6</sup> Dawn Klingensmith “Make a splash: Spraygrounds Get (Even More) Creative,” *Recreation Management*, April 2014 (and April 2015 updates), [http://recmanagement.com/feature\\_print.php?fid=201404fe01](http://recmanagement.com/feature_print.php?fid=201404fe01)

<sup>7</sup> Joe Bush, “Four-Legged-Friendly Parks,” *Recreation Management*, February 2, 2016.

<sup>8</sup> Emily Tipping, “2014 State of the Industry Report, Trends in Parks and Recreation,” *Recreation Management*, June 2014.

<sup>9</sup> Dawn Klingensmith “Gone to the Dogs: Design and Manage an Effective Off-Leash Area,” *Recreation Management*, March 2014, [http://recmanagement.com/feature\\_print.php?fid=201403fe02](http://recmanagement.com/feature_print.php?fid=201403fe02)

- Sandy beaches/sand bunker digging areas
- Custom designed splash pads or water-play feature for dogs
- People-pleasing amenities such as walking trails, water fountains, restroom facilities, picnic tables, and dog wash stations.

### Key Findings – Existing Recreation Programs and Activities

- The Recreation Department does a fantastic job providing a diverse array of year-round programs, classes, events and activities that are inclusive, engaging, enriching and fun for people of ages and abilities.
- The Recreation Department’s ability to create new, high quality programs that cater to the changing recreational preferences of users is vital to ensuring services continue to be desirable and add value to the community. Mid and senior level Department staff are in-tune with current trends and in touch with their user base. Maintaining the staffs’ knowledge base and ability to be nimble in evolving activity offerings will best ensure Recreation Department programs remain relevant and important to users.
- Feedback from program participants indicates strong levels of satisfaction with programs and activities provided by the Recreation Department. People genuinely enjoy and derive value from Greenbelt’s recreation programs, events and activities.
- About one fifth (1/5) (and greater in some cases) of participants in Greenbelt’s recreation programs and users of the Aquatics and Fitness Center are not residents of the City. This is a significant number of the current participant base. Non-resident participants also pay higher fees than City residents to register for programs or gain admission to a facility.

### Park Maintenance Analysis

Regular ongoing maintenance of Greenbelt’s infrastructure including city grounds, parks, streets and sidewalks is managed by the Public Works

Department. The Department provides a full suite of municipal public works services typical of small city.

In addition to providing core maintenance services at parks and recreation facilities, Public Works provides logistical support necessary for Greenbelt to host citywide events and activities and implement capital improvement projects. A detailed summary of Public Works overall parks and recreation-specific service provision role, staffing and budget is provided in **Section F: Organizational and Marketing Analysis** of this chapter.



*“The Public Works Department serves the community by preserving, maintaining and improving the City’s infrastructure and amenities. The Department focuses on providing professional and personal responses to the needs of citizens while maintaining Greenbelt as a unique and satisfying community in which to live and work.”*

*Greenbelt Public Works Department Mission Statement*

### Analysis of Greenbelt’s Existing Park Maintenance Program

The parks, recreation facilities and public spaces in Greenbelt are well loved and heavily used throughout the year which speaks highly to their value as community assets. The age, existing physical conditions, and consistency of use of many these facilities pose significant challenges for maintenance. This analysis focuses on the overall outcomes of Greenbelt’s park and recreation facility maintenance program as reported through community input and through the project team’s review of existing maintenance practices, field observations, and level of service analysis.

## Community Feedback on Park and Recreation Amenity Maintenance Outcomes

Key findings of feedback received through the public engagement process generally indicated a desire for improving maintenance and conditions of core infrastructure and amenities in parks.

- Focus group participants recognized Public Works is tasked with a heavy and diverse workload including the maintaining parks and recreation amenities. People recognize Public Works has a lot to do and that there are limitations to what can be accomplished with existing resources.
- Athletic field user groups indicated that city fields receive inadequate maintenance. Key concerns reported included poor playability/unevenness in turf and infields, patchy turf, irregular and inconsistent mowing schedules, and deteriorated conditions of associated site infrastructure (i.e. dilapidated or unsafe fencing and pot holes in parking lots).
- About half of survey respondents noted that city parks and recreation facilities are meeting their needs, roughly the same amount noted that improving the “condition/maintenance of parks and facilities” would increase their use of Greenbelt’s parks and recreation amenities.

## Project Team Formulation of Key Observations on Parks Maintenance

In formulating the following observations, the project team:

- Considered the community’s feedback regarding existing conditions and levels of maintenance at Greenbelt’s parks and recreation sites.
- Formally reviewed and scored the existing conditions at 11 city park and recreation sites in **Section B: Parks and Recreation Facilities Assessment** of this chapter. This assessment noted challenges with existing conditions and maintenance at multiple facilities.
- Informally reviewed existing conditions at multiple city parks and recreation sites throughout the duration of the project.

- Met with Public Works management and operations staff to gain an understanding of their existing roles, resources, challenges and ideas they have for enhancing the stewardship of Greenbelt’s parks and recreation system.
- Reviewed existing City policies and plans pertaining to the maintenance of parks and recreation amenities.

## Key Observations of the Project Team

- Patterns in input received from park and recreation amenity users and city staff indicated a desire for the outcomes maintenance performed to be more consistent and of higher quality. Respondents indicated that improved conditions at parks and recreation facilities would likely increase their usage.
- The age and heavy use of many of Greenbelt’s parks and recreation sites are challenges for maintenance. Some amenities or infrastructure within the park system may require more robust maintenance to remain in good functional condition, while others already in poor condition may be beyond repair and better suited for replacement.
- Public Works staff strive to be responsive to problems and attentive to the needs of residents.
- There appears to be a lack of written park maintenance standards and protocols to guide the completion of regular, recurring maintenance tasks, serve as a template for training future staff and act as a tool for evaluating performance, outcomes and resource allocation needs over time. Many smaller municipal public works agencies operate in this manner. It is not an uncommon practice, but it is also not a good best management practice.
- Current maintenance needs and practices rely heavily on the institutional knowledge and experience of Public Works staff.

- Training and cross-training of Public Works staff to perform a variety of skilled maintenance tasks would improve the team’s overall ability to achieve better outcomes across the park and recreation system.
  - For example, few staff have received training on industry best management practices for athletic fields or know how to fully prepare a baseball field for a game or tournament play. Consequently, when trained staff are directed to other duties, field maintenance may be deferred which has a negative impact of on the quality of the facility and associated user experiences.
- **Section B: Parks and Recreation Facilities Assessment** of this chapter provides highlights of existing successes and challenges with existing conditions and maintenance at 11 city parks and recreation facilities. The conditions documented in the assessment are generally representative of conditions found by the project team at other sites where conditions were informally reviewed.

### Key Findings – Existing Park Maintenance Program

The outcomes of the City’s investment in park and recreation facility maintenance is evident to users of these amenities. Generally, parks and recreation areas that are in poor condition are less welcoming and provide a lower level of service to the community than a high-quality park or recreation facility. In Greenbelt, parks and recreation are part of the City’s identity and their condition can be viewed as a reflection of how the City views itself.

Greenbelt’s existing system of parks, open space areas and recreation facilities is in adequate physical and functional condition to meet most current needs of residents and users. In this respect, the efforts and hard work of the Public Works Department parks staff deserves recognition. However, when reviewed on a

site-by-site basis, the level of maintenance and overall quality and functionality of infrastructure and amenities at parks and recreation sites is inconsistent. In some cases, the current level of maintenance is simply not adequate to keep up with the wear and tear of heavy use; such as at Buddy Attick Park.

Maintenance of the city’s parks and recreation sites can and should be improved. In seeking to enhance the overall outcomes of the City’s investment in maintaining its public parks and recreation facilities, the following should be considered regarding Greenbelt’s current park and recreation facility maintenance program:

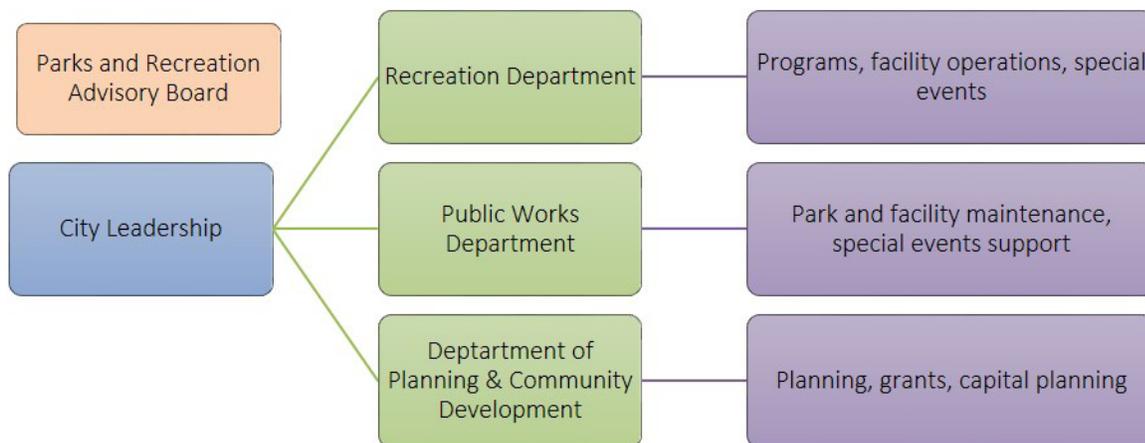
- a) The Public Works Department staff is dedicated to providing high-quality services and takes pride in a job well-done. Levels of training among staff appeared to vary and with few staff cross-trained to complete any/all general maintenance tasks, including somewhat specialized tasks like preparing a ballfield for use. As such, when staff with a needed skill sets unavailable to perform certain tasks, those tasks may not be completed until trained staff has availability.
- b) Cross-training of additional Public Works staff so multiple team members are capable of attending to any park or recreation maintenance need would help fill gaps in service provision and improve Public Works ability to deliver higher-quality outcomes on a more consistent basis. Staff within the Department have strong, diverse skill sets that could be harnessed to develop expanded internal training opportunities. External opportunities for hands-on training in specific aspects of parks and recreation facility maintenance are also available year-round through various public agencies and industry groups including the Maryland Parks and Recreation Association.

- c) The current system of parks and recreation facility maintenance does not appear to follow any written protocol or measurable standards. Most of the knowledge regarding the basic maintenance needs of individual park sites resides with the Public Works staff responsible for completing this work. This leaves the quality of maintenance and long-term stewardship of the city’s parks and recreation assets at risk as staff changes and institutional knowledge is lost over time. The development of basic written maintenance standards and schedules would provide a defined set of teachable and measurable metrics for performing regular maintenance tasks and for determining how work can, or should, adapt to best meet community needs with resources that are available over time.
- d) Tied to item c above, the lack of documented operating protocols and schedules made it impossible for the consultant team to make an educated determination regarding the appropriateness of the City’s current level of staffing dedicated to parks and recreation facility maintenance.
- e) The performance of maintenance work on City managed athletic fields and other group use facilities with scheduled events should be coordinated so that these facilities are consistently presented in the highest quality condition possible for game days, tournaments or other scheduled activities like group picnics. This level of coordination does not currently exist and consequently the facilities are delivered for scheduled group usage in inconsistent conditions. The Recreation Department permits the use of these facilities so such scheduling could likely be coordinated between the two agencies.

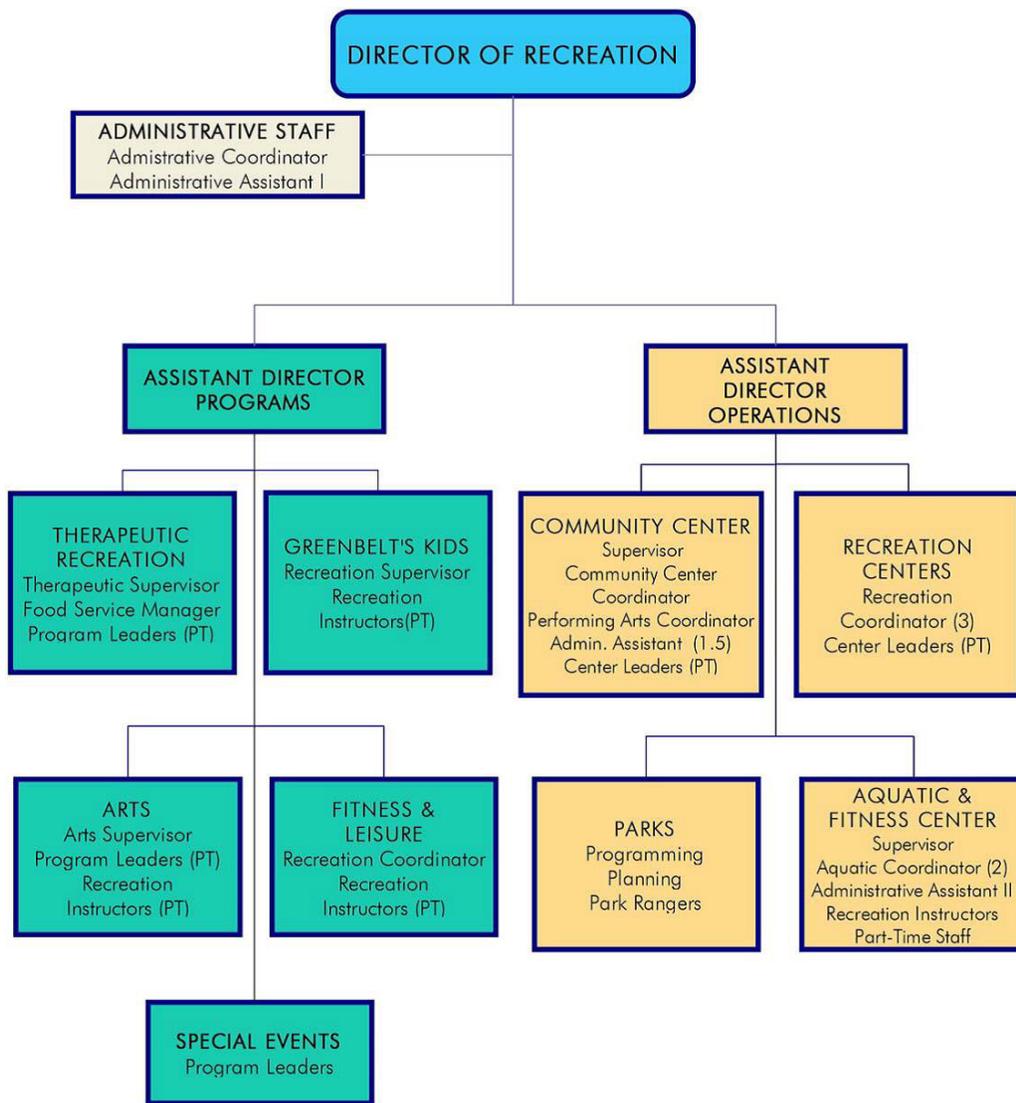
## F. RECREATION DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATIONAL, STAFFING AND MARKETING ANALYSIS

City agencies and entities with primary roles in providing parks and recreation facilities and services to Greenbelt residents are outlined below in **Figure 10**.

**Figure 10: Primary City Entities Supporting Public Recreation**



**Figure 11: Recreation Department Organizational Chart FY2018**



This organizational and marketing analysis focuses on the resources of the Recreation Department. The Recreation Department’s provision of programs and services is managed in consultation and coordination with the City Council, senior leadership and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. Generally, the Department manages regular operations while the Advisory Board, Department Directors and City leadership often focus on broad and long-term issues.

## Recreation Department Current Organization

The Recreation Department is divided into three function areas, administration, operations and programs as illustrated in **Figure 11**. Within the City’s annual budget book, the Department is organized into nine programmatic groups, Recreation Administration, Recreation Centers, Aquatics and Fitness Center, Community Center, Greenbelt’s Kids, Therapeutic Recreation, Fitness and Leisure, Arts and Special Events. This structure appears to be working well overall for the Department.

## Staffing Analysis – Recreation Department

The consultant team reviewed the existing staffing resources of the Recreation Department to determine if the Department has the best mix of staff in the most appropriate focus areas to best support the mission of the Department. The staffing analysis considered information from the following primary sources:

- Community input
- Customer satisfaction ratings and reviews
- Recreation Department Staff Focus Group feedback
- Parks and Recreation Advisory Board input
  
- Interviews with City Council members and leadership staff
- Interviews with Public Works and Planning and Community Development staff
- Volunteer support
- Facility tours and site visits
- Hours of operation
- Last three-years of recreation program catalogs
- Program registration and facility usage data
- Recreation Department organizational chart
- Recreation Department budget

In FY2018 the Recreation Department employed a total of 59.6 full time equivalent employees (FTE). This included a mix of full and part-time administrative staff, facility operations and building maintenance staff, and recreation program and service provision staff. Within the City budget book, the Department's staffing is divided among nine service categories. Work of the Recreation Department to provide Greenbelt with a variety of recreation opportunities is complimented by the efforts of a dedicated pool of volunteers. These members of their community give their time to organize and operate local youth and adult sports leagues and clubs. These groups are regular users of Greenbelt's recreation facilities and work with the Department to schedule use of City amenities.

According to the National Recreation and Park Association's 2018 Agency Performance Review staffing for of park and recreation agencies in communities with a population between 20,000 - 40,000 residents tend to employ between 15- 52 full time equivalent staff (FTE) (the median agency in a community of this size employed about 28 FTE), inclusive of program and parks maintenance staff. Greenbelt has a total of 75.6 FTE dedicated to operating and maintaining city parks and recreation facilities and for providing community programs and services (59.6 FTE in the Recreation Department and 16 FTE in the Public Works Department. Greenbelt employing a greater number of FTE staff for parks and recreation purposes than comparably sized municipalities is not surprising. Compared to similar sized cities, Greenbelt's Recreation Department offers a larger number and array of programs and community services and the Public Works Department is tasked to care for a greater number of acres of parkland per resident.

### Recreation Department FY 2018 Staffing

Recreation Administration: 5.5 FTE  
Recreation Centers: 6.5 FTE  
Aquatic and Fitness Center: 19.3 FTE  
Community Center: 8.5 FTE  
Greenbelt's Kids: 11.9 FTE  
Therapeutic Recreation: 2.7 FTE  
Fitness and Leisure: 1.8 FTE  
Arts: 3 FTE  
Special Events: 0.4 FTE  
**TOTAL RECREATION DEPARTMENT FTEs: 59.6**

## Staffing Considerations – Recreation Department

In considering the organizational and service provision model of Greenbelt's Recreation Department and outcomes noted by City documents, staff and community members, the consultant team believes that first and foremost:

- The Recreation Department's team is doing a fantastic job utilizing available resources to provide a diversity of high-quality recreation programs and community services for the residents

of Greenbelt and non-resident program participants.

- Senior Recreation Department staff have a keen understanding of programmatic and participation trends and how to best adjust staffing and resources levels in response to changing needs.

### Staffing Considerations – Public Works, Parks and Recreation Maintenance

According to Greenbelt’s FY2018 adopted budget, the Public Works Department is staffed by a total of 55.6 full-time equivalent employees (FTE). Of this total, there are 16 FTE positions with specific parks and recreation maintenance roles.

#### FY18 Public Works - Park/Recreation Maintenance Team

Parks - Playgrounds: 6 FTE

Parks - Ballfields and Fixtures: 4 FTE

Parks - Horticulture: 6 FTE

**TOTAL Public Works Park/Recreation Maintenance Staff: 16 FTE**

In seeking to improve the capabilities and outcomes of service provision efforts of Greenbelt’s Recreation Department and Public Works parks and recreation maintenance team the consultant team identified the following key staff-related focus areas for consideration:

- a) Recreation staff do a great job offering a large number of diverse programs, services and activities that meet the core needs of the community and user base without diluting the quality of offerings. Current staffing ratios appear to be meeting existing needs well. Recreation Department staff have a solid understanding of participation and facility usage trends and how to best adjusting staffing levels to meeting changing needs.
- b) The growth of recreation and community activity offerings of the Recreation Department is limited by its current level of staffing and amount of space available for hosting programs. As the

local population continues to grow, the City should expect to see an increase in demand for recreation services. For the Department to grow its service provision capabilities to meet this need, additional staff will be needed.

- c) It is unclear if the current staffing level of park and recreation maintenance positions at the Public Works Department is sufficient to meet current needs. There is a lack of sufficient written guiding standards, schedules or operating procedures to evaluate to determine how well or efficiently staff may be performing park maintenance tasks and identify where resource allocation adjustments may be needed.

## G. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

Parks and the provision of recreation opportunities was purposefully planned and built-into the physical and social structure of Greenbelt. Nearly 80 years later the City has maintained and expanded upon this legacy through adding new parks, recreation features and programs to meet the growing needs of the community.

### Current Circumstances

Funding for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of Greenbelt’s parks, recreation facilities, and programs is divided into two types of programs – regular operations, programming, and maintenance and capital improvements. The majority of the City’s funding for regular parks and recreation operations is appropriated from the general fund.

### Operations Budget for Recreation and Parks

City funding for recreation and parks operations, maintenance and programs is managed by the Recreation Department and Public Works Department. As illustrated in **Table 3**, over the past three fiscal years, Greenbelt’s budget supporting parks and recreation is trending slowly upward.

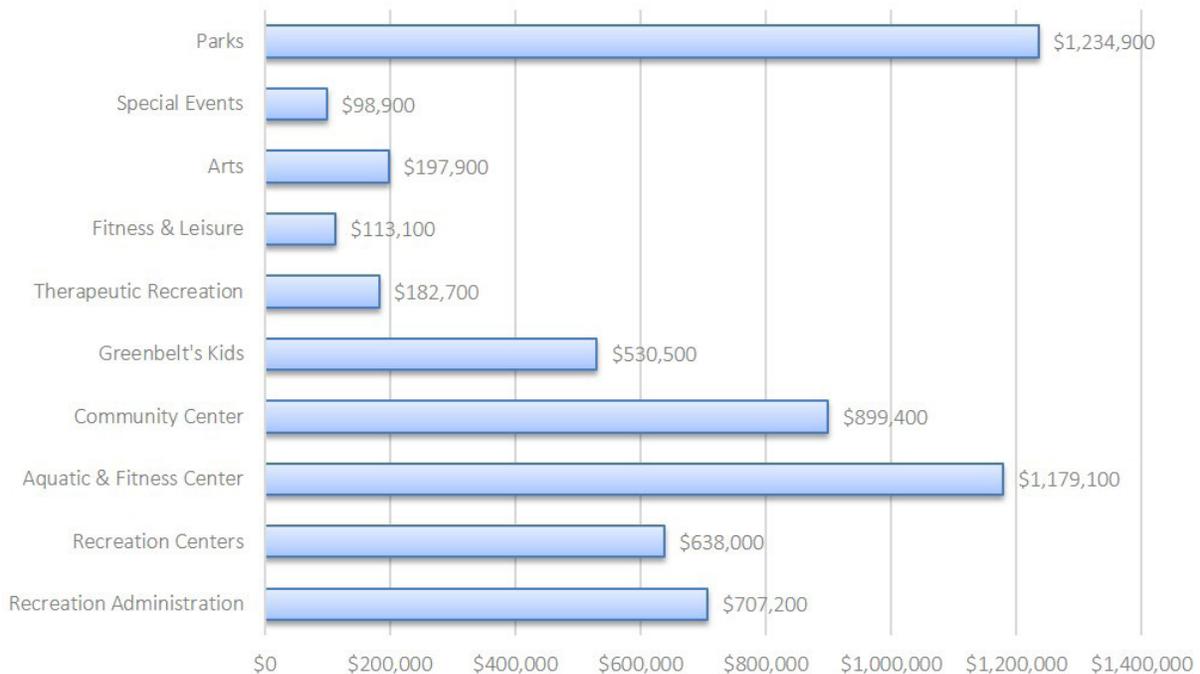
**Figure 12** provides a breakdown of how the City’s current parks and recreation budget is allocated. All budget categories are managed by the Recreation Department with the exception of the “Parks” line item, which funds regular maintenance of Greenbelt’s parks and recreation sites. These funds, which accounted for 21 percent of the City’s recreation and parks budget for 2018, are managed by the Public Works Department.

**Table 3: Greenbelt Recreation and Parks Budget FY2015 – FY2018**

DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	FY 2015 Actual Trans.	FY 2016 Actual Trans.	FY 2017 Adopted Budget	FY 2017 Estimated Trans.	FY 2018 Adopted Budget
Recreation Administration	\$626,336	\$646,295	\$648,500	\$656,800	\$707,200
Recreation Centers	\$582,589	\$608,319	\$588,800	\$635,900	\$638,000
Aquatic & Fitness Center	\$1,051,199	\$1,099,909	\$1,095,000	\$1,154,300	\$1,179,100
Community Center	\$795,117	\$854,762	\$831,200	\$882,100	\$899,400
Greenbelt's Kids	\$337,092	\$462,969	\$447,400	\$494,100	\$530,500
Therapeutic Recreation	\$172,878	\$181,083	\$172,300	\$181,400	\$182,700
Fitness & Leisure	\$105,026	\$113,163	\$105,100	\$110,800	\$113,100
Arts	\$183,392	\$190,805	\$200,500	\$198,700	\$197,900
Special Events	\$176,307	\$177,181	\$171,500	\$185,800	\$98,900
Parks	\$1,105,775	\$1,191,618	\$1,216,800	\$1,150,200	\$1,234,900
Total	\$5,135,711	\$5,526,104	\$5,477,100	\$5,650,100	\$5,781,700

Source: Greenbelt Adopted Budget FY2018

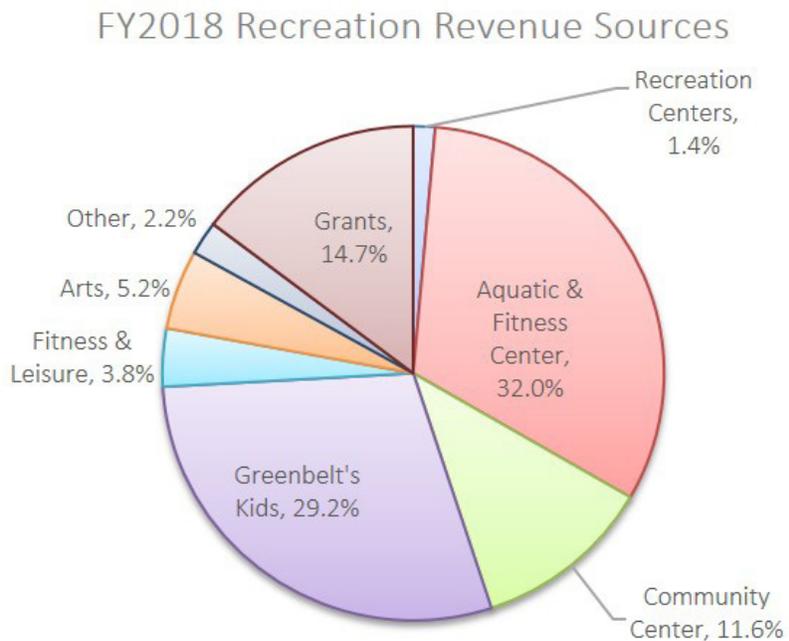
**Figure 12: Greenbelt Recreation and Parks Budget FY2018**



Source: Greenbelt Adopted Budget FY2018

Taxpayer funding of Greenbelt’s parks and recreation system is offset by fees charged to users of programs and recreation facilities. The Recreation Department charges highly competitive fees for most programs offered and for memberships to the Aquatics and Fitness Center. While revenue generation is not the overarching goal of the City’s recreation program offerings, fees charged by the Recreation Department for program registration and use of certain facilities has generated an average of \$1.7 million in income for the City between 2015 and 2018. **Table 4** provides total operating budget, total revenue figures and the percentage of cost recovery achieved. During the time period examined, Greenbelt’s level of cost recovery for recreation programs and services, or the amount of revenue generated viewed as a percentage of the cost (operating budget) of the City’s recreation facility and service provision has remained steady, around 31 percent. Over 61 percent of the Department’s revenue is generated through sales of memberships to the Aquatics and Fitness Center and user fees for aquatics programs and Greenbelt Kids programs. **Figure 13** illustrates the percentage of FY2018 Recreation Department income by revenue source.

**Figure 13: Department Income by Source**



**Table 4: Greenbelt Recreation Budget, Revenue and Cost Recovery**

	Total Operating Budget	Total Revenue	% Cost Recovery
FY 2015 Actual Trans.	\$5,135,711	\$1,665,849	32.4%
FY 2016 Actual Trans.	\$5,526,104	\$1,681,420	30.4%
FY 2017 Adopted Budget	\$5,477,100	\$1,688,200	30.8%
FY 2017 Estimated Trans.	\$5,650,100	\$1,764,600	31.2%
FY 2018 Adopted Budget	\$5,781,700	\$1,820,700	31.5%

Source: Greenbelt Adopted Budget FY2018

In comparing the City's operating budget for parks and recreation and associated revenue generation and level of cost recovery to national averages reported in the National Recreation and Parks Association 2018 Agency Performance Review the following key findings were noted:

- Greenbelt's main funding sources for regular recreation operations, maintenance and programming are the City's general fund and earned revenues from user fees. These are the two key funding sources for most public parks and recreation agencies nationally.
- Greenbelt's parks and recreation operations, maintenance and programming budget and level of revenue generation are both higher than most communities of similar population size nationally. This is reflective of the City's unique history as a planned community that embraced recreation and access parks and greenspaces as core civic values.
  - Greenbelt is more invested in recreation than most communities of similar size. Recreation was built into the City by design and the community has and continues to place a very high value on local recreation opportunities. As a result, the City generally provides more parks, facilities, programs and services and sees higher rates of participation and facility usage than comparable cities.
  - Most of Greenbelt's major recreation facilities are 30-80 years old and are subject to consistently heavy usage. This results in higher operational and maintenance costs when compared to newer, or less heavily utilized facilities.

## Capital Improvement Budget

Greenbelt's capital improvement budget for the next five years is shown in **Table 5**. As illustrated, over the next three years, the city government plans to invest approximately \$800,000 - \$900,000 annually to improve the City's recreation infrastructure. Over the next five years, 56 percent of the citywide capital improvement budget is dedicated to projects that will enhance public recreation opportunities in Greenbelt. Planned enhancements benefiting recreation include pedestrian, bicycle and trail infrastructure improvements, major renovation of the parking lot at Buddy Attick Park, potential creation of a new dog park and purchase of land for parks and open space purposes. In addition to these improvements, the City continues to make annual improvements to existing playground facilities, is continuing its water quality and dam repair program at Greenbelt Lake at Buddy Attick Park, and recently completed major improvements at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center, where solar panels were installed on the roof, parking lot was replaced and major stormwater management improvements were installed. The recent upgrades at Springhill Lake are representative of Greenbelt's commitment to improving the environmental and economic sustainability of its facilities and operations. Over time, these types of infrastructure investments not only pay for themselves, they tend to generate a net benefit to the City through reduced utility costs, and can be great educational/outreach tools when set in visible locations like the Recreation Center with appropriate educational signage.

**Table 5: City of Greenbelt FY2018 – FY2022 Capital Improvement Budget**

Capital Improvement Project Name	Total Cost FY 2018 - FY 2022	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
<i>Pedestrian/Bike Master Plan</i>	\$100,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Bus Shelters/Accessibility Study	\$100,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000
Gateway Signage	\$67,500	\$67,500	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Street Improvements	\$2,071,000	\$471,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000
Miscellaneous Concrete	\$200,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
<i>Greenbrook Trails</i>	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Second Dog Park</i>	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Buddy Attick Park Parking Lot</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Land Acquisition</i>	\$230,000	\$230,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Playground Improvements</i>	\$489,300	\$169,300	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
<i>Buddy Attick Improvements</i>	\$200,000	\$0	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
<i>Greenbelt Lake Water Quality Improvements</i>	\$1,750,000	\$50,000	\$700,000	\$700,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
Regrade Hanover Parkway Swale	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$0
Animal Control Facility	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
<i>Tennis Court Color Coats</i>	\$59,500	\$0	\$32,000	\$27,500	\$0	\$0
Sculpture Repair	\$31,600	\$31,600	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,644,900</b>	<b>\$1,430,400</b>	<b>\$1,347,000</b>	<b>\$1,347,500</b>	<b>\$760,000</b>	<b>\$760,000</b>
<b>Recreation and Parks Focus CIP</b>	<b>\$3,159,800</b>	<b>\$800,300</b>	<b>\$882,000</b>	<b>\$877,500</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>	<b>\$300,000</b>

% CIP for Recreation/Parks 56.0% 55.9% 65.5% 65.1% 39.5% 39.5%

\*Recreation and Parks focused projects are italicized.

For a community the size of Greenbelt, this is a robust capital improvement program with a major emphasis of enhancing the City’s parks and recreation infrastructure. The City’s long-standing dedication to regularly funding improvements that benefit public recreation opportunities for residents and visitors is highly admirable. In addition to the capital improvement budget, Greenbelt also has a building capital reserve fund dedicated for the repair and replacement of major systems in the City’s municipal buildings. The City maintains eleven key buildings with a total of 191,900 square feet of facility space. The Recreation Department’s facilities account for six of the eleven City buildings and for nearly two-thirds of the City’s square footage of facility space. Most of Greenbelt’s buildings are at least several decades old. The 55,000-square-foot Community Center is the City’s largest building and is nearly 80 years old.

Given the age, existing condition and high usage and demand for Greenbelt’s parks and recreation facilities, the City must continue to proactively plan for their long-term stewardship. As identified in the City budget book and through this planning process, while capital improvement needs outweigh available funds, Greenbelt does a good job seeking to dedicate available capital improvement resources for recreation and parks to priority concerns at high-use sites.

## Grants and Outside Funding Sources

Greenbelt has and will continue to set aside funds annually from the City general fund into its capital improvement fund where those funds are used to leverage grant funding from outside sources. Over the past three years, the City has received income from eleven outside sources:

### Federal Grants

- Safe Routes to School

### State and County Grants

- Program Open Space
- Community Parks and Playgrounds
- Maryland Historic Trust
- State Bond Bill
- MSAC

### Miscellaneous

- Chesapeake Bay Trust
- Interest on Investments
- Playground Agreement Payments
- Community Legacy
- Donations/Direct Contributions
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Since 2015, only Maryland's Community Parks and Playgrounds grant program has been a consistent source of outside funding for Greenbelt. The \$459,000 influx of Program Open Space funding received in 2017 was the largest single grant received by the City in the past three years. Most grants received are for specific projects or purposes and are finite in nature. They are not regular sources of income, but rather much needed supplemental sources of funding often necessary for completing a capital improvement project. This is true of the majority of grant programs.

While often viewed as “easy money,” grants and other sources of outside funding are generally anything but that. Pursuing grants is a resource-intensive gamble. Considerable staff time is typically required to prepare grant applications and if/when funding is awarded an even larger investment of staff time is needed to administer the City's use of funds. Greenbelt's resources for pursuing and administering grants is highly limited. The Department of Planning and Community Development presently manages the City's pursuit of grants for recreation and parks purposes in close collaboration with the Recreation Department and Public Works Department. City staff working with grants do so in addition to their normal responsibilities and have done well targeting funding opportunities that have had a high return on investment.

The City's future pursuit of outside funding opportunities, including grants, to improve its parks and recreation system is limited by the lack of resources focused specifically on this area of funding. For Greenbelt to be more competitive and successful in leveraging outside funding, including grants, a centralized strategy and resources are need to lead the effort.



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# IV. KEY ISSUES

The Key Issues Matrix provides a prioritized summary of all of the key issues that surfaced during this planning process. Issues are presented in five categories with quantitative and qualitative tools used to gauge priorities. Key issues are organized into the following categories on the matrix:

- Organizational Enhancement
- Programs and Service Delivery
- Facilities and Amenities
- Level of Service
- Finance

Qualitative assessment tools used to determine the priority of key issues:

- Consultant team expertise
- Input from City staff
- Stakeholder and public input
- Existing documents

Quantifiable planning data and used to determine the priority of key issues:

- Community survey results
- City data sources
- Facility assessment / level of service analysis

Priorities are rated on the matrix according to the following scale, and are noted with the quantitative or qualitative source of the priority rating (consultant team, staff, survey, etc):

- A = priority issue
- B = opportunity for improvement
- C = minor or future issue
- Blank = issue was not addressed

The preliminary recommendations listed for each key issue were developed by the project team with input received from key staff, City Council and leadership staff and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. These preliminary recommendations formed the basis for goals, objectives and actions presented in **Chapter V: Recommendations and Action Plan.**



*GreenPlay staff assisting a box turtle that tried crossing Crescent Road.*

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# V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLANS

When it comes to the provision of public recreation facilities and services, the City of Greenbelt has a lot to celebrate. Parks, recreation, and access to green space were all keystones in the foundation of the City and continue to be central to the lives of Greenbelt residents. Compared to similar sized cities across the country, Greenbelt offers a more robust system of parks and recreation facilities and deeper, more diverse catalog of year-round programs and activities for all ages and abilities.

The success of Greenbelt's current provision of high-quality parks and recreation opportunities should not be understated. The City does a fantastic job working to meet the needs of residents and its recreation and parks user base. As a whole, the community has and continues to place a high value, and strong level of investment on the City's parks and recreation features. While Greenbelt has much to celebrate with its current parks and recreation system, as noted in this study, there are challenges that should be addressed and opportunities to evaluate to best ensure service provision continues to meet the community's needs and expectations.

## A. BROAD RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Greenbelt's parks and recreation system offers a mix of facilities, provides high-quality programs, events and suite of valuable community services that positively contribute to community quality of life. These far-reaching recommendations focus on issues and challenges identified in the planning process on their broadest terms. Overall, Greenbelt is well positioned to continue to provide great programs and engaging recreation, fitness and leisure opportunities for all residents.

- 1) Continue to offer a diverse portfolio of high-quality recreation, fitness and leisure activities and community services for people of all ages and abilities.
- 2) Continue to enhance safe, walkable and bikeable paths and trails in parks and throughout the city are a priority. Locally and nationally, more people want to be able to walk or bike for fitness, leisure or as a transportation option.
- 3) Maintenance of parks and recreation infrastructure will be more effective and consistently achieve better results if it is guided by a set of measurable standards, schedules and shared expectations.
- 4) It is always going to be expensive for the City to operate its aging recreation buildings and park infrastructure. Age and consistent heavy use require significant ongoing investment in maintenance, repairs and renovations to keep such facilities in functional condition.
- 5) The quality of city athletic fields and associated site features are not satisfactorily meeting user needs. Some fields are in relatively good condition, others are in poor condition.
- 6) There are broad segments of the population that are not receiving or understanding information about existing parks and recreation opportunities in the City that are available for them. New means of outreach and relationship building are needed.
- 7) Activating the new park space in the Greenbelt Station neighborhood through programs and activities is an opportunity to engage new residents and develop users and stewards of city parks and recreation services.

# B. ACTION PLAN, COST ESTIMATES AND PRIORITIZATION

The following Goals, Objectives, and Action Items for the recommendations are drawn from the public input, inventory, level of service analysis, findings feedback, and all the information gathered during the master planning process with a primary focus on maintaining, sustaining, and improving Greenbelt’s system of public parks, recreation facilities and programs. All cost estimates are in 2018 figures where applicable. Most estimates are rough, with more precise figures dependent on the extent of the enhancements the City may choose to implement. Not all action items have an associated cost estimate.

Timeframe to complete is designated as:

- Short-term (up to 3 years)
- Mid-Term (4-6 years)
- Long-term (7-10 years)

<b>GOAL 1: ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL AND OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCIES</b>			
<b>Objective 1.1: Enhance regular parks and recreation facility maintenance programs, standards and operational protocols to improve the quality and consistency of the outcomes of maintenance work.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
1.1.a Develop formal, written, measurable, teachable parks and facility maintenance standards. Utilize industry best management practices recommended for specific amenities as a starting point for developing standards. Adopt a regular schedule for predictable, reoccurring maintenance tasks.	None	Staff time	Short-Term
1.1b Train all parks maintenance staff in best management practices.	None	Staff time	Short-Term, then ongoing
1.1.c Regularly assess performance outcomes of park and recreation facility maintenance work and adjust practices to better meet needs and improve results.	None	Staff time	Begin in Short-Term, then ongoing
1.1.d Formalize the operating relationship between Recreation and Public Works regarding park maintenance through a memorandum of understanding.	None	Staff time	Short-Term

1.1 e Set up regular meetings between key Public Works and Recreation Department staff as a mechanism to ensure challenges are addressed and opportunities are leveraged in the best manner possible for city residents. The two agencies need to be closer collaborators to improve the predictability, timeliness and consistency of results of park steward activities.	None	Staff time	Begin in Shorter term, then ongoing
<b>Objective 1.2: Ensure staffing levels of the Recreation and Public Works Departments, parks and recreation maintenance teams are adequate now and into the future. As the local population grows, demand for and use of parks and recreation services will continue to grow. The number of staff and level of their training will need to increase to meet the needs of the growing community without sacrificing the quality of city programs, facilities and services.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
1.2 a Evaluate creating a new “part-time with benefits” employee classification for use in the Recreation Department as a means of attracting and retaining high-quality part-time staff.	None	Dependent upon employee grade/ classification	Short-Term
1.2.b Annually review Recreation Department and Public Works, maintenance team staffing levels to determine if additional staff may be needed to satisfactorily meet current and near-future service provision objectives.	None	Dependent upon increase/decrease in staff levels	Begin in Shorter term, then Annually
1.2.c Develop park maintenance standards as prescribed in Action 1.1.to include metrics to help assess staffing needs (numbers, training) for achieving defined and desired maintenance outcomes.	None	Staff time	Begin in Short-Term, then Annually
<b>Objective 1.3: Better leverage existing relationships and create new connections between the Recreation Department and the community to improve communication and engagement with all segments of the population about local park and recreation opportunities.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
1.3.a Evaluate the potential for existing city boards and committees to actively assist the Recreation Department grow relationships and better provide services to traditionally “hard to reach” segments of the community, especially renters, Hispanic and non-English speaking residents.	None	Staff time	Begin in Short-Term, Reevaluate at least annually

1.3.b Leverage existing relationships with local groups and organizations including sports leagues, Boys and Girls Clubs, schools, cultural and religious organizations, etc., to share information and regularly collect feedback about city recreation amenities and programs. Evaluate the potential for these organizations to assist the Recreation Department to connect with “hard to reach” segments of the local population.	None	Staff time	Begin in Short-Term Reevaluate at least annually.
1.3.c Work with the Greenbelt Station community to develop and implement programs and activities in the new park space in the neighborhood.	Dependent on needs	Dependent on needs	Begin now

<b>GOAL 2: IMPROVE PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY THROUGHOUT THE CITY</b>			
<b>Objective 2.1: Maintain and grow the City’s annual portfolio of recreation programs, services and special events to ensure offerings remain diverse, high-quality, and enriching for users of all ages and abilities.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
2.1.a Continue to provide high-quality recreation, fitness, sports, arts and leisure programs for all ages and abilities.	None	Dependent upon programmatic needs (staffing, material, equipment, etc.)	Ongoing
2.1.b Continue to evaluate, explore and develop new programs and activities in response to participation trends and where demands appear the highest.	Dependent upon programmatic needs of new programs.	Dependent upon programmatic needs (staffing, material, equipment, etc.)	Annually
2.1.c Evaluate the potential for create new, or adding more youth camp programs and arts classes, especially ceramics and performing arts in the near future.	Dependent upon programmatic needs of new programs	Dependent upon programmatic needs (staffing, material, equipment, etc.)	Annually
2.1.d Explore the potential for creating and hosting more community-wide special events.	Dependent on needs of the special event	Staff time	Begin Short-Term, reevaluate at least annually

**Objective 2.2: Seek to provide additional organized recreation programs and activities in neighborhoods outside of Old Greenbelt.**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
2.2.a Explore opportunities to partner and coordinate with apartment complexes and condominium communities to offer city recreation programs or activities at their private properties/facilities. The Franklin Park community should be a priority.	None	Staff time	Ongoing
2.2.b Evaluate the potential for offering a variety of different activities and programs at city parks, playgrounds or other recreation sites outside of Old Greenbelt.	None	Staff time	Mid-Term, then Annually
2.2.c Evaluate the potential for creating a mobile recreation program with portable equipment and instructors that could offer scheduled programs and activities anywhere in Greenbelt. This could be a means of achieving Action 2.2b.	Dependent upon vehicle and equipment	Staff time, vehicle operational costs	Mid-Term
2.2.d Improve the marketing of Greenbelt’s recreation programs and facilities. Better utilize social media and online tools to share information with the community and improve engagement with users. Consider creating a new position in the Recreation Department to lead and manage marketing and outreach.	None	Staff time, marking/social media service costs	Short-Term
2.2.e Increase the ability of the Recreation Department staff to communicate with residents in multiple languages, especially Spanish. Consider providing language training for Recreation Department program leaders and service provision staff who regularly engage with the public; and/or hiring additional multi-lingual staff.	None	Staff time and training program/teacher costs	Evaluate training opportunities in Short-Term. Implement a program by 2020

**GOAL 3: CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF GREENBELT'S PARKS AND RECREATION ASSETS.**

**Objective 3.1: Improve regular maintenance and capital improvement practices to enhance the quality of infrastructure and amenities at parks and recreation sites and user experiences.**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
3.1.a Implement Action 1.1.a to develop and implement park and recreation facility maintenance standards, practices and schedules for regular, reoccurring maintenance tasks.	None	Staff time	Mid-Term
3.1.b Evaluate existing conditions and opportunities for improving the playability of athletic fields managed by the city. Seek to correct minor problems through enhancing basic maintenance practices for these amenities.	None	Staff time and \$5-\$10K annually for additional materials (soil, seed, gravel, etc.)	Mid-Term
3.1.c Consider hiring an outside consultant to prepare park and recreation master plans and site management/ maintenance plans for Buddy Attick Park, Schrom Hills Park, Northway Fields, McDonald Field and Braden Field. Such site-specific plans can help the City improve conditions at these parks and increase their long-term utility and user satisfaction.	\$20-60K per plan; dependent on site. Field sites should be lower end, while larger park sites could be higher dependent on level of needs and detail of plans.	Staff time	Mid to Long-Term
3.2.d Park and recreation site infrastructure determined to be in less than satisfactory condition (scoring less than 2) through the project team's on-site evaluations should be added to the City's near-term capital improvement program. Functionally obsolete recreation amenities and site infrastructure should be repaired or replaced and brought into satisfactory condition to meet community needs.	Outdoor Pool Area: min. \$250-\$500K; Youth Center Outdoor Amenities: \$20-\$30K; Braden Field: \$20-\$75K; Buddy Attick: \$70-\$100K+; McDonald Field: \$50K for necessary repairs, higher to overhaul the site; Northway Fields: \$25K for necessary repairs, higher to overhaul the site; Dog Park: \$10-\$20K;	Staff time	Mid to Long-Term

<p>3.1.e Evaluate creating and funding a new budget reserve account or accounts specifically to be used to repair or replace worn-out or broken recreation amenities and smaller components of park site infrastructure, such as fencing, basketball hoops, nets, benches, signage, etc. Consider the existing Building Capital Reserve Fund as a model for the creation of a similar account to fund minor needs that currently are not adequately addressed through existing maintenance or the capital budget.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Dependent upon city adoption of such a reserve account.</p>	<p>Evaluate in Short-Term. Implement and fund by Mid to Long-Term</p>
<p>3.1.f Seek to leverage sports leagues and other regular user groups as volunteers to help maintain sports fields or another park features they utilize. Develop MOUs to solidify relationships, expectations and agreed upon best management practices to be implemented.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Mid-Term</p>
<p><b>Objective 3.2: Increase the quantity of available indoor space and athletic fields that can be used for hosting recreation programs and activities.</b></p>			
<p><b>Actions</b></p>	<p><b>Capital Cost Estimate</b></p>	<p><b>Operational Budget Impact</b></p>	<p><b>Timeframe to Complete</b></p>
<p>3.2.a Work with the County and local schools to develop partnerships that allow for Greenbelt’s recreation programs to be offered to the community at school indoor gymnasiums or multipurpose spaces and athletic fields on weekends and weeknights (outside of school usage).</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Ongoing, seek pilot program in Mid-Term.</p>
<p>3.2.b Evaluate renovating the Youth Center and reconfiguring interior areas to create more usable program and activity spaces.</p>	<p>Architectural study: \$10-\$20K; Design/ construction cost estimates dependent upon design</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Mid to Long-Term</p>
<p>3.3.c Regularly evaluate the existing use of indoor areas of City recreation facilities, especially the Community Center, to ensure the space is used to its full potential for recreation programs and services.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>Annually</p>

3.3.d Consider relocating existing non-recreation services and uses housed in the Community Center to another location and convert those spaces to meet the programmatic needs of the Recreation Department.	Unclear	Staff time	Long-Term
<b>Objective 3.3: Continue to implement sustainability projects at parks and recreation facilities that are beneficial for the environment and tend to yield long-term operational cost savings.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
3.3.a Continue to develop and implement sustainable building, site design and operational best management practices in Greenbelt's parks and at recreation facilities.	Dependent on individual project requirements and goals	Staff time	Ongoing

**GOAL 4: ENHANCE THE OVERALL LEVEL OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY GREENBELT'S PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES, TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR RESIDENTS FROM ALL AREAS OF THE CITY TO ACCESS RECREATION FACILITIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

<b>Objective 4.1: Continue to expand and enhance Greenbelt's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
4.1.a Continue to regularly implement recommendations of the Greenbelt Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.	\$20-\$30K annually	Staff time	Ongoing
4.1.b Re-evaluate the potential for working with county, state and federal partners to plan and construct pedestrian overpasses or other infrastructure to create safe pedestrian and bicycle routes across major highways that bisect the city and are current barriers to walking and biking.	None	Staff time	Evaluate annually
<b>Objective 4.2: Seek to expand the availability of parks, recreation sites and greenspace in East and West Greenbelt.</b>			
<b>Actions</b>	<b>Capital Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Operational Budget Impact</b>	<b>Timeframe to Complete</b>
4.2.a Continue to explore opportunities to acquire land for new parks or to expand existing parks or recreation sites.	Dependent upon cost of land	Staff time	Ongoing
4.2.b Seek to establish regular, open communication with HOAs, apartment complexes and other residential communities in the city to ensure the recreational needs of residents are understood by the City.	None	Staff time	Ongoing

4.2.c Provide additional programming in East and West Greenbelt. Work with residential communities as outlined in Action 4.3.b to best ensure recreational opportunities to be provided are in-line with the local communities wants and needs.	Dependent upon type and extent of programs to be created/offered	Staff time	Mid to Long-Term
4.2.d Seek to find new and innovative ways for the Recreation Department to engage with people living in rental apartment communities. Consider developing a partnership with the Franklin Park apartment's management team to offer city programs for residents living in their neighborhood.	Dependent upon programs to be offered.	Staff time	Short to Mid-Term

**GOAL 5: CONTINUE TO BALANCE FUNDING NEEDS WHILE KEEPING CITY RECREATION PROGRAMS AND OPPORTUNITIES AFFORDABLE FOR EVERYONE.**

**Objective 5.1: Continue to leverage outside funding sources to supplement the City's investment in parks and recreation.**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
5.1.a Continue to leverage federal, state and county grant programs to help fund capital projects. Continue to utilize programs such as Program Open Space, Community Parks and Playgrounds and MNCPPC leadership grants.	None	Staff time	Ongoing
5.1.b Explore and consider opportunities for new partnership programs to provide public recreation opportunities to residents at a low cost to the City.	None	Staff time	Ongoing. Reevaluate annually
5.1.c Consider developing long-term goals and objectives to guide Greenbelt's efforts to pursue and manage grants and outside funding. Evaluate the potential to create a city-wide grants management position as part of a long-term outside funding strategy.	None	Staff time, potential new staffing cost	Mid to Long-Term

**Objective 5.2: Ensure Greenbelt’s recreation programs, activities and facility use remains affordable for everyone and accessible for any resident who wants to participate.**

Actions	Capital Cost Estimate	Operational Budget Impact	Timeframe to Complete
5.2.a Continue to fund the recreation scholarship program to assist individuals and families participate in Recreation Department programs who may not have otherwise been able to afford the full program fee.	None	\$2,500 annually	Ongoing
5.2.b Evaluate the recreation program and facility user fee structure and cost recovery annually to ensure a comfortable balance between revenue generation and program affordability/accessibility.	None	Staff time	Annually

# APPENDIX A: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

## INTRODUCTION

Gaining a clear understanding of the existing and projected demographic character of the City is an important component of the planning process for the Greenbelt Recreation and Park Facilities Master Plan. Key areas were analyzed to identify current demographic statistics and trends that can impact the planning and provision of public parks and recreation services in Greenbelt. The following characteristics of the County’s population were reviewed in preparation of this Report:

- Existing and projected total population
- Age and gender distribution
- Ethnic/Racial diversity
- Household information
- Educational attainment
- Employment
- State and County Health Ranking

This demographic profile was completed using the most updated information available as of July 2017 from Esri Business Analyst, U.S. Census Bureau, and U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey. Note that data presented for “Prince George’s County includes relevant statistics for Greenbelt. A summary of demographic highlights is noted in **Table 6** below, followed by a more detailed demographic analysis.

**Table 6: Greenbelt General Demographic Profile 2017**

Population	24,639
Median Age	35.7
Households	10,166
Median Household Income	\$65,531

Source: Esri Business Analyst

Key general 2017 demographic comparisons – City, County, and State

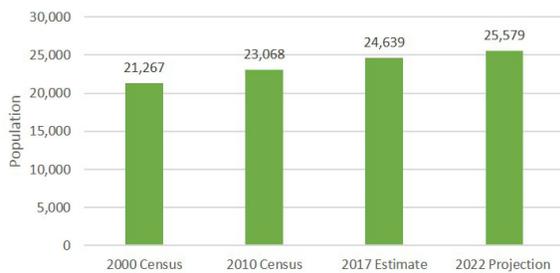
- The median age of Greenbelt residents was 35.7 years, less than the median age for Prince George’s County (36.2), and less than the median age of Maryland residents (39).
- The median household income for Greenbelt residents in 2017 was estimated to be \$65,531, higher than the estimated national median household income of \$56,124. Median household income in Prince George’s County (\$76,909), and the State of Maryland (\$76,754) was estimated to be higher than that of Greenbelt.
- Greenbelt’s estimated population was estimated to five percent fewer males (47 percent) than female (53 percent) residents. The population of Prince George’s County also included a higher percentage of female (52 percent) residents.

## POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

### Population Projections

Although future population growth cannot be predicted with certainty, it is helpful to make growth projections for planning purposes. **Figure 14** contains population figures based on the 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census for Greenbelt, and 2017 population estimate and 2022 projection from Esri Business Analyst.

**Figure 14: Greenbelt Population Growth Trend**



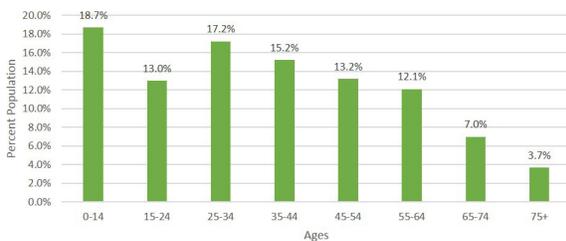
Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

Between the 2000 and 2010 Census period, Greenbelt’s population grew by 9.2 percent. As indicated by the 2017 population estimate and 2022 project, continued strong population growth is anticipated.

## Population Age Distribution

As illustrated in **Figure 15**, Greenbelt’s estimated 2017 population included a high number (nearly 19 percent) of youth ages 14 and under. The median age of City residents, 35.7 years, is slightly lower than the median age in Prince George’s County (36.2 years), and Maryland (39 years).

**Figure 15: Population Age Distribution 2017**



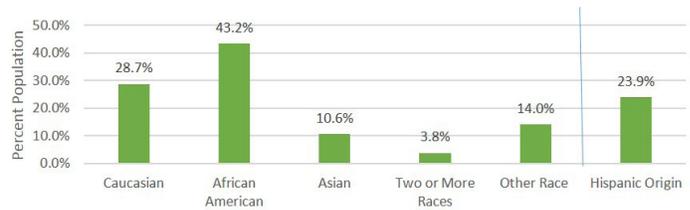
Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

## Race/Ethnicity

Prior to reviewing demographic data pertaining to a population’s racial and ethnic character, it is important to note how the U.S. Census classifies and counts individuals who identify as of Hispanic. The Census notes that Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before arrival in the United

States. In the U.S. Census, people who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race and are included in all of the race categories. All race categories add up to 100 percent of the population, the indication of Hispanic origin is a different view of the population and is not considered a race. **Figure 16** reflects the approximate racial and ethnic composition of Greenbelt’s 2017 population.

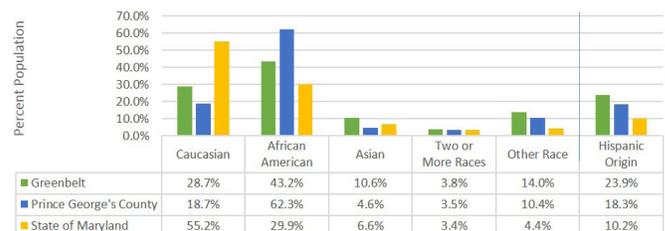
**Figure 16: Racial and Ethnic Character 2017**



Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

As illustrated in **Figure 17**, the most populous racial group in Greenbelt was African American (43.2 percent) followed by Caucasians (28.7 percent). African Americans are the majority racial group in Prince George’s County (62.3 percent), and comprise a slightly less than one third of the State’s population. Greenbelt’s population included a higher percentage of Asian and residents identifying as of an “other” race. Nearly one quarter of the City’s population identified as being of Hispanic Origin. This is higher than the 18 percent of Prince George’s County population, and ten percent of Maryland’s statewide population that identified as being of Hispanic Origin.

**Figure 17: Racial/Ethnic Character 2017 – City, County and State**

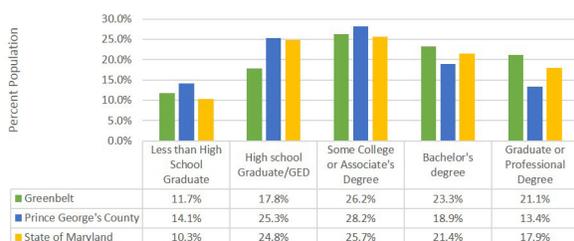


Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

## Educational Attainment

Adults (ages 25+) in Greenbelt have higher levels of education than their counterparts in Prince George’s County and/or State of Maryland. As illustrated in **Figure 18**, over 40 percent of adult residents in Greenbelt had a bachelor’s, graduate, and/or professional degree; compared to 32.3 percent of adults in Prince George’s County, and 39.3 percent of Maryland adults.

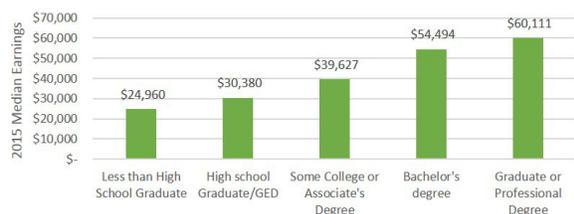
**Figure 18: Educational Attainment 2017 – City, County, and State**



Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

According to a Census study, education levels had more effect on earnings over a 40-year span in the workforce than any other demographic factor, such as gender, race, and ethnic origin. This link between education and earnings appears clearly illustrated in Greenbelt. As Figure 6 shows, Greenbelt residents (age 25+) with higher levels of education had higher annual incomes than those with lower levels of education. In fact, City adults with a high school education earned 56 percent of those with a bachelor’s degree.

**Figure 19: Educational Attainment and Median Earnings of Greenbelt Residents Age 25+**



Source: American Community Survey - 2015

## HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

As reflected in **Table 7**, the total number of households, and housing units in Greenbelt has been, and is projected to continue to increase. Key trends during the time period reviewed include:

- The number of households in the City is projected to increase through 2022.
- The average household size in Greenbelt is anticipated to continue to increase.
- New housing units are expected to continue to be developed.
- Between 2010 and 2022, the rate of homeownership is projected to decrease by over four percent, while during the same period the percentage of renter occupied housing is projected to increase correspondingly. As estimated by Esri, in 2017, the majority (52.7 percent) of housing units in the City were renter occupied.

**Table 7: Greenbelt Housing and Household Statistics**

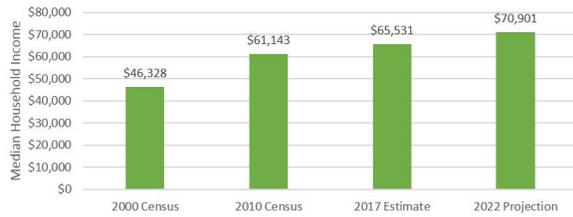
	2000	2010	2017	2022
Households	9,346	9,747	10,166	10,429
Average Household Size	2.28	2.37	2.42	2.45
Housing Units	10,144	10,433	10,928	11,201
Owner Occupied	42.7%	43.8%	40.3%	39.5%
Renter Occupied	49.4%	49.6%	52.7%	53.6%
Vacant Units	7.9%	6.6%	7.0%	6.9%

Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

## Household Income

As illustrated in **Figure 20**, median household income in Greenbelt is projected to continue to increase steadily through 2022. Although a positive trend, the 2017 estimated median household income levels in Prince George’s County and Maryland were each roughly \$11,000 greater, slightly less than \$77,000 each.

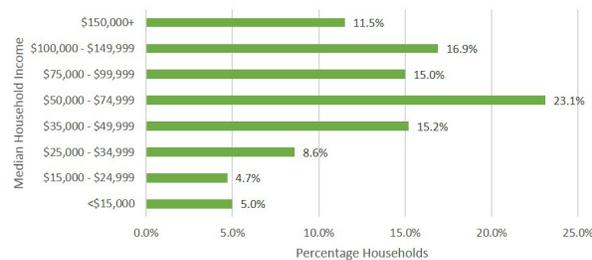
**Figure 20: Greenbelt Median Household Income Growth Trend**



Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

**Figure 21** illustrates the distribution of median household income in Greenbelt in 2017. Nearly one quarter (23.1 percent) of households earned \$50,000 to \$74,999.

**Figure 21: Distribution of Median Household Income in Greenbelt 2017**

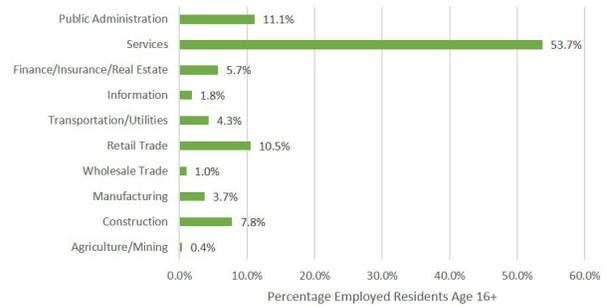


Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

## Employment

As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau and Esri Business Analyst, the total potential working population of Greenbelt includes all residents over the age of 16 years. In 2017 Esri estimated that Greenbelt’s working population totaled 14,620. Of these potential workers, 95.1 percent were employed, while 4.9 percent were unemployed. The 2017 unemployment rate in Greenbelt was less than of Prince George’s County (6.8 percent) and Maryland (5.3 percent).

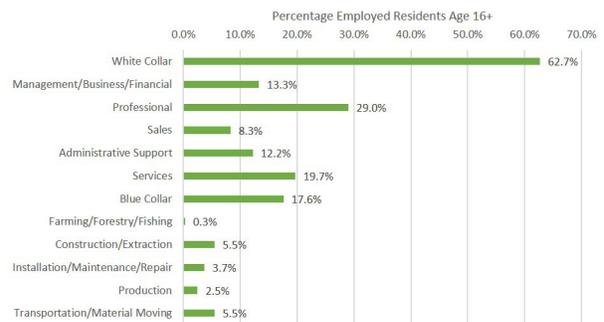
**Figure 22: Employment of Greenbelt Residents by Industry - 2017**



Source: Esri Business Analyst – July 2017

As illustrated in **Figure 23**, the majority (53.7 percent) of working residents of Greenbelt were employed in the services industry. By occupation, Figure 10 notes that the majority (62.7 percent) of working residents were employed in white collar positions. A significant percent of employed residents were also in professional, services, and blue collar occupations.

**Figure 23: Employment of Greenbelt Residents by Occupation - 2017**



Source: American Community Survey

# HEALTH RANKING

The United Health Foundation’s America’s Health Rankings and Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s County Health Rankings and Roadmaps provide annual data on the general health of national, state, and county populations. The health rankings generally represent how healthy the population of a defined area can be perceived based on “how long people live and how healthy people feel while alive,” coupled with ranking factors including healthy behaviors, clinical care, social and economic, and physical environment factors.



The United Health Foundation’s America’s Health Rankings 2016 Annual Report ranked Maryland as the 18th healthiest state nationally. According to the Foundation, Maryland’s health ranking strengths include ready availability of primary care physicians, low prevalence of smoking, and low percentage of children in poverty. Health challenges faced by the state include high levels of air pollution, high violent crime rate, and large disparity in health status by education level. The Health Rankings Annual Reports combined measures of determinants with the resultant health outcomes to produce a comprehensive view of the overall health of each state. Rankings were based on expert review of data from sources including the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Commerce, Education, Justice and Labor; the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; U.S. Census Bureau; American Medical Association; American Dental Association; Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care; Trust for America’s Health; and World Health Organization.

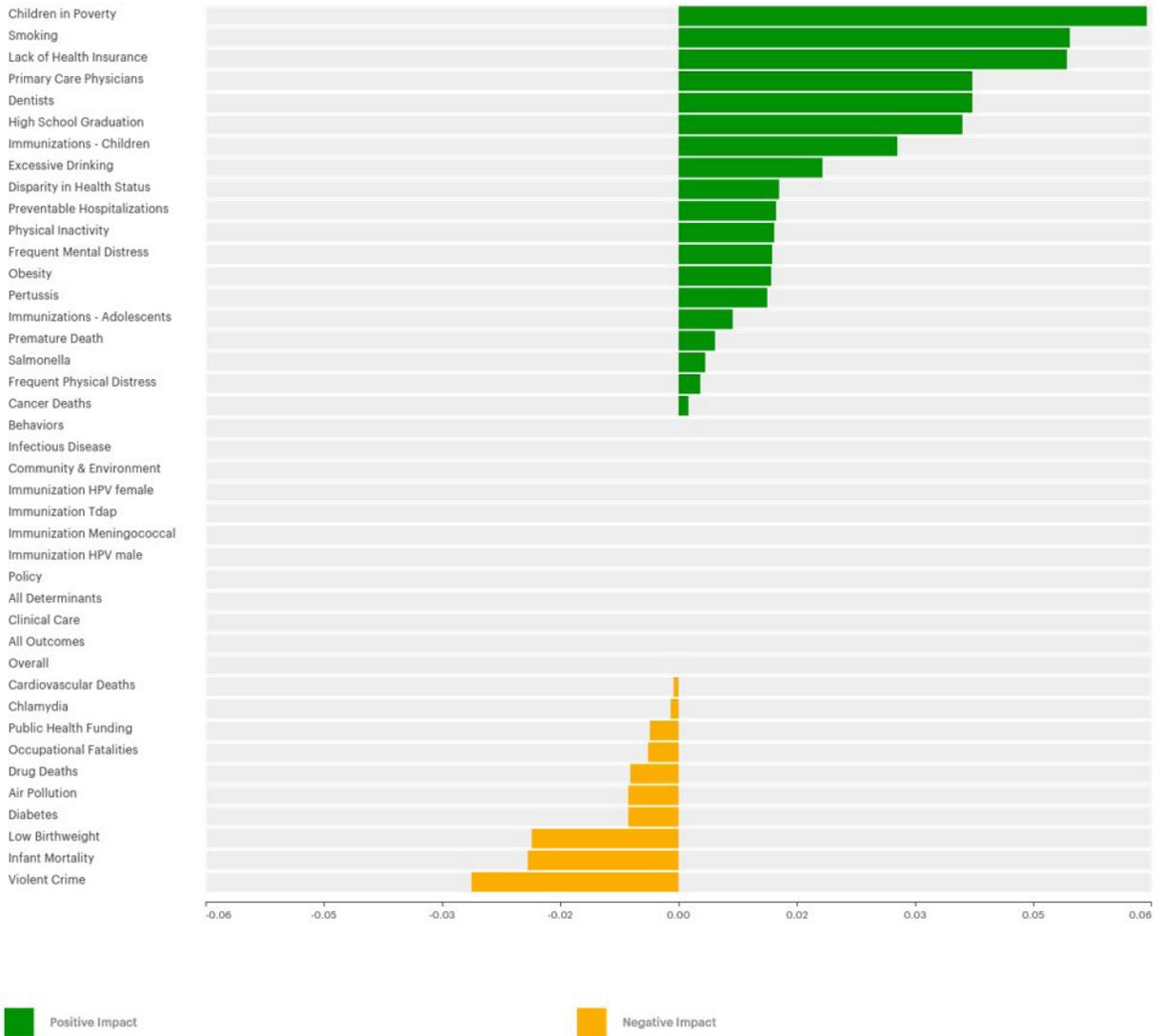
The 2017 County Health Rankings and Roadmaps ranked Prince George’s County 14th of Maryland’s 23 counties and City of Baltimore in terms of health outcomes, a measure that weighs the current length and quality of life of residents, and 16th for health factors, a measure that considers the population’s future health, based on a measure of multiple factors including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors and physical environment.



A Robert Wood Johnson Foundation program



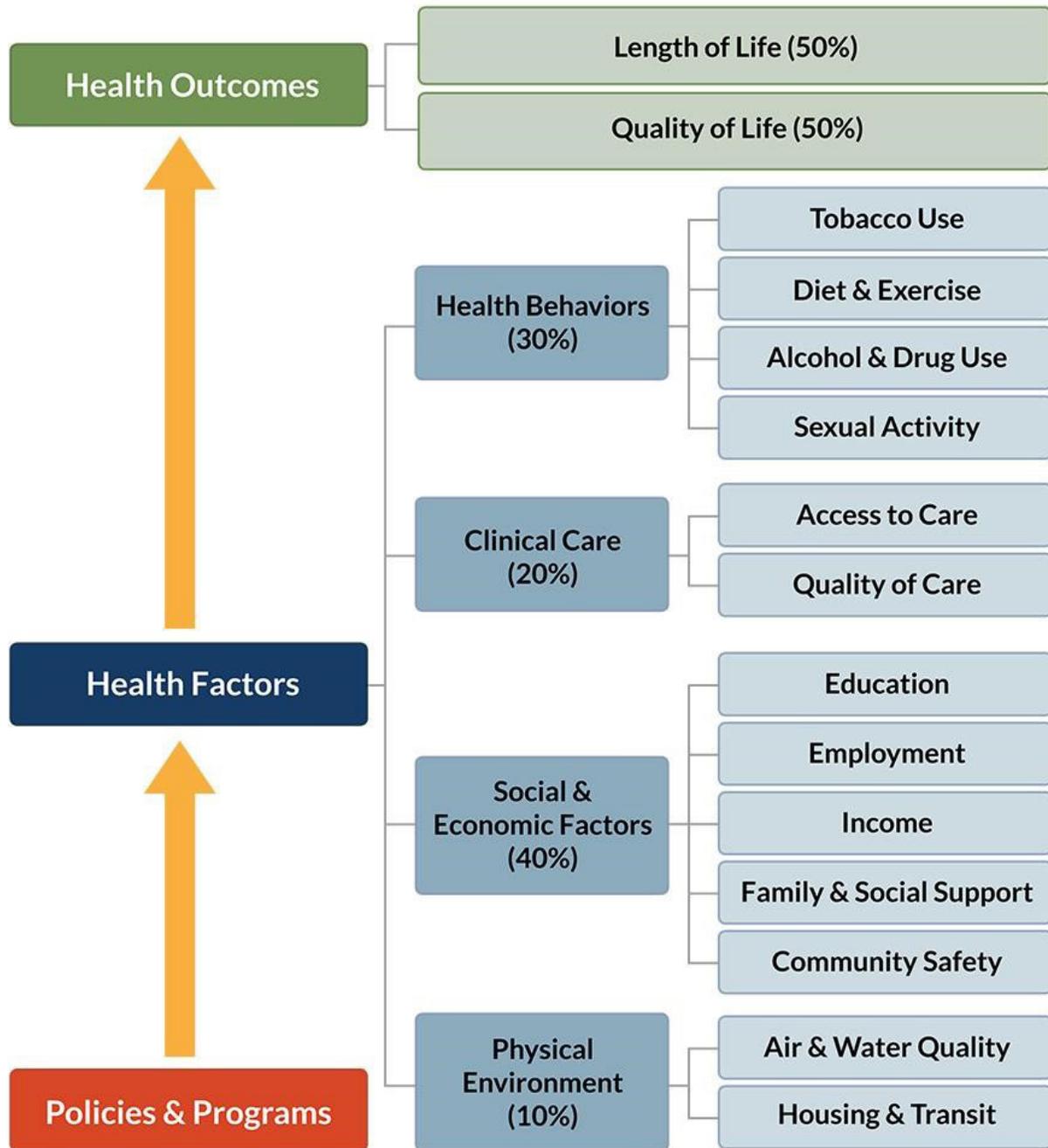
**Core Measures Impact: Maryland, 2016 Annual Report**



**SOURCE:**

- CDC, National Vital Statistics System, 2012-2014
- CDC, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015
- US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2014-2015
- America's Health Rankings Composite Measure, 2016
- US Environmental Protection Agency, 2013-2015
- CDC, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention Atlas, 2014
- CDC, MMWR, Summary of Notifiable Infectious Diseases and Conditions, 2014
- BLS, Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries & Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2012-2014
- Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2015
- US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015
- CDC, National Immunization Survey, 2015
- US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014-2015
- Trust for America's Health, 2014-2015
- Special data request for information on active state licensed physicians provided by Redi-Data, Inc.
- CDC, National Vital Statistics System, 2014
- American Dental Association, 2015
- Dartmouth Atlas of Health Care, 2014
- CDC, National Vital Statistics System, 2013-2014

Figure 24: County Health Rankings Model



County Health Rankings model © 2016 UWPHI

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# APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP AND PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

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**Memo to:** Joe McNeal, Assistant Director of Recreation Operations  
Greg Varda, Assistant Director of Recreation Programs  
Terri Hruby, Assistant Director of Planning  
RRC Associates & LSG Landscape Architecture

**From:** Adam Bossi, Project Manager, GreenPlay, LLC

**Date:** July 7, 2017

**Subject:** Greenbelt Recreation and Park Facilities Master Plan  
Community Information Gathering Sessions - June 2017

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Community information gathering sessions were held in the City of Greenbelt on June 19 – 21, 2017. These sessions consisted of three community meetings, and eight stakeholder focus group sessions. The goal of these sessions was to gather information from community groups/members, staff, and advisory boards regarding the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improving the City's parks, recreation facilities, and programs. Findings from these sessions will inform questions developed for the survey portion of the project. A total 71 community members and city staff signed-in as participants at these meetings. Organizations outside of the City government that were represented included:

- Users/community members
- City Public Works and Recreation Department Staff
- Planning Advisory Board
- Maryland Milestones
- Tree Advisory Board
- Greenbelt Soccer Alliance
- Girl Scout Troop #27 and #23007
- Greenbelt Museum
- Greenbelt Theater
- Green Aces
- Maker's Space
- Center for Dynamic Community Governance
- Greenbelt Farmer's Market
- Faith-based organizations
- Senior Citizen Advisory Committee
- Community Relations Advisory Board
- Arts Advisory Board
- Greenbelt Tennis Association
- Golden Age Club
- Greenbelt Station residents
- Greenbelt Homes Inc.
- Greenbelt City Stars
- Boys and Girls Club
- Planning Advisory Board
- Park and Recreation Advisory Board
- Youth Advisory Committee
- Board of Elections
- Friends of the New Deal Café
- Forest Preserve Advisory Board
- Labor Day Festival
- Greenbelt Homes Incorporated
- Green Team
- Advisory Committee on Education
- Greenbelt Youth Baseball

A summary of responses follows. Responses are not prioritized, but recurring responses/themes are denoted by an asterisk. It should be noted that some participants chose not to respond during the sessions.

#### **Strengths**

- Parks and recreation facilities are welcoming, inclusive, and have a community vibe\*
- Parks and open spaces provide places and opportunities for community members to connect\*
- Two recreation centers in the City\*
- City Parks draw people in from outside of the community\*
- City recreation programs draw people in from outside of the community\*
- Variety of recreation amenities within close proximity
- Recreation Department relies (and supports) volunteer groups and services

- High-quality and diverse spectrum of outdoor recreation assets and natural areas (ex. Greenbelt National Park, forest preserves, Schrom Hills Park, and Buddy Attick Park) \*
- There are opportunities in the City to run/jog, bike, and walk\*
- Centrally located community/recreation “campus” (public complex includes: Community Center, Aquatics and Fitness Center, Youth Center, City Offices, and Roosevelt Center) \*
- Recreation facilities and parks serve as gathering places for people in the community
- Great, dedicated recreation staff \*
- Camp programs are very high quality\*
- Department has a history of providing meeting spaces for civic groups (ex. girl scouts) \*
- Roosevelt Center is heavily supported by the city
- Recognition Group reviews proposals from community organizations and provides small grants for projects
- Family-friendly\*
- Accessible to a wide range of individuals regardless of age, race, socio-economic status, programming desire, or other individual needs\*
- High-level of customer service \*
- Strong word-of-mouth marketing, and social network in the community\*
- Fees are fair/reasonable for the market
- Strong connection to the community’s unique historic character (Roosevelt’s WPA)
- Community Center is a major asset (historically and programmatically) \*
- Recreation Department is willing to evolve and expand\*
- Buddy Attick Park is loved and heavily utilized. Offers diverse recreation opportunities (ex. all ages playground, fishing, picnic, running/walking) \*
- There is a playground “on nearly every block in some parts of the City”\*
- Observatory is a unique city amenity
- Recreation facilities are generally well maintained\*
- New covered fitness-station (Schrom Hills Park) is nice
- Tennis courts are a great amenity
- Aquatics and Fitness Center is heavily used\*
- City provides some financial assistance to offset program costs for residents who may not otherwise be able to afford to participate.
- Great youth sports programs
- Recreation Department develops/maintains partnerships with other providers in the community
- Springhill Lake Community Center is a strong recreation “anchor” for the Franklin Park/Greenbelt Station portion of the City. \*
- Great senior programs – Greenbelt was noted as being a “Naturally Occurring Retirement Community”
- Greenbelt Homes Inc (GHI) Co-op - owns about 1,600 homes, and areas of open space in “old Greenbelt”
  - Remains a vital partner for recreation – existing maintenance partnership/agreements for playgrounds.
  - Maintains trails in co-op open space/woodlands
- Highly diverse community\*
- City recently completed a marketing study to review presence and branding effort
- Playgrounds are being systematically upgraded, and City has generally been successful in leveraging state grant funding to assist in this effort.

#### **Opportunities for Improvement**

- Springhill Lake Recreation Center was perceived to be “not as nice” as the recreation facilities in central Greenbelt (ex. Community Center) \*
- Better connect residents of West Greenbelt to existing City parks and recreation opportunities \*
- Heavily trafficked, high volume roads and highways are major challenges for pedestrians and bicyclists.

- Few people seem to know about the forest preserves.
- Engaging city residents in the Franklin Park apartments has been a long-standing challenge (language, reported high turnover/transient population, location away from central Greenbelt facilities, etc.) \*
- Springhill Rec Center is oriented towards youth programs and provided limited adult recreation opportunities\*
- Re-evaluate marketing strategies\*Improve marketing tactics and communication (ex. brochure is distributed, but lacking the next step to go on and register, small presence on FB and Twitter, concentrate on search-engine optimization, provide open-house weekend promote programs
- Potential new marketing opportunities exist with signage, billboards, kiosks with key information at strategic locations.
- Website/online registration has too many layers; can be difficult for users to navigate \*
- Provide special events in all parts of the community (expand focus outside of central Greenbelt) \*
- Connect clubs and organizations with each other to provide a better service
- City should invest more resources in parks and recreation infrastructure; improve existing facilities and build new ones where most needed. \*
- Existing bicycle and pedestrian paths and trails are disconnected. Walkable and bike-able routes that connect residents to places they live, work, play, and shop, including city parks and recreation facilities, are strongly desired. Opportunities for such appeared highly limited outside of Old Greenbelt\*
- Could expand/support library services like a reading program
- Limited number of athletic fields in the community (rectangles and diamonds) \*
  - Demand may be exceeding supply for fields.
  - Soccer Alliance is going to out of the community to play soccer
  - Missing lights
  - Fields available are over used and under maintained\*
- Recreation program and facility use fee structure confusing for some users, especially new ones.
- Existing program and facility fee structure is purposeful in limiting costs for resident participants. Are there cost-recovery opportunities being missed?
- Fee structure should be re-evaluated (ex. is there too much going on? Is the Department providing access for all residents? Is the membership structure appropriate?) \*
- Limited staff resources in Public Works Parks Division. \*
- Limited recreation program staff. \*
- Space is limited in the area for recreation and community programs\*
- Trying to meet challenges with engaging diverse user groups (ex. provides more interpretation services, assist in meeting the financial challenges, addressing barriers of use) \*
- Existing limited supply and generally poor conditions of athletic fields don't allow the City to host visiting/travelling sports leagues/activities
- Two Northway Ball Fields need to be upgraded (ex. lights, restrooms, field renovation)
- Greenbelt is divided into three distinct, separate areas\*
- Lack of group picnic areas and pavilions – facilities that support group gatherings in parks\*
- Heavy use from non-residents at city recreation facilities and programs; especially at Buddy Attick Park
- Not enough murals, public art, poetry slams/public art events, etc.\*
- Recreation facilities are old and as they continue to age will require continued, consistent maintenance, and capital investment to support high-levels of use and satisfy user expectations. Can they be retrofitted/renovated to meet the needs of the new community? \*
- Facility maintenance process should be re-evaluated – Issues include limited manpower, communication challenges, and managing expectations.
- Community Center operations may conflict (ex. Rental space/income vs. need space to expand programs where demand exceeds space for programs)
- Recreation Department needs to pause and reevaluate appropriate use of all its resources\*

- City directs public works and recreation department resources to support lots of community groups, events, and programs. Is this negatively impacting the quality of city facilities and services?
- There is a playground “on every block” \*
- Adult programs often take programming space and time from the Youth Center
- Parks are congested with some user conflicts reported (aggressive runners/bikers on crowded trails)
- Greenbelt seems to think “we can do it ourselves,” the city could look for partnerships with regional alternative providers for fields or programs\*
- Find amenities that attract young families to Greenbelt
- Evaluate if facilities respond well enough to the community that each serve\*
- Use historical significance of the Community Center to draw more funding (ex. historical grants)
- Develop a “Friends of ...” group
- Make Old Greenbelt a destination
- Missing opportunities in the system to draw outsiders/visitors
- Buddy Attick Park has many opportunities for enhancement – site master plan needs to be revised\*
- Greenbelt-based sports clubs reported regularly traveling and paying for field use outside of the City – limited number and high demand for existing fields, and lower quality fields in the City versus nearby locations.
- Get rid of poured-in-place surfaces on playgrounds – health/environmental concerns
- No artificial turf athletic fields in the City
- Re-evaluate the MOUs w/ communities, County, partners (especially schools), and contractors
- Age of the Community Center presents challenges with facility maintenance
- East Greenbelt may be underserved
- Offerings seem to be centrally located - classes should be offered in other areas throughout
- Many roadways create barriers and challenges to accessing Greenbelt
- 
- Many pathways don't seem to be well maintained\*
- Missing specific music spaces, programming, and opportunities (ex. improves the space/room utilized for practice) \*
- Doesn't have the infrastructure to support larger community events - space, parking, and stages
- Farmer's Market has outgrown its space (ex. No sufficient power supply because the Fire Department will no longer all the use of generators under tents)
- Programs seems to phase out because of lack of expertise (ex. pottery, swimming)
- Chlorine-based pool is causing health issues – evaluate salt-based substitute
- Some programs are behind compared to other providers in the area
- Irrigation at some ball fields isn't working
- Some events are “all hands-on deck” for staff\*
- Lacking the man power and resources – maintenance is going through a big staff transition\*
- Department needs to evaluate usage at Buddy Attick Park
- Braden Field is overused because it has lights and is more centrally located
- Needs to rotate use to accommodate maintenance and upkeep\*

Difficult to build a sense of community around programs because of transient populations and geographic barriers

#### **Activities/Programs/Services that should be enhanced**

- Senior programming – fitness, trips, skill building\*
- Timing and scheduling should be reevaluated\*
- Expand camp for all types, all ages\*
- Continued education on appropriate usage in parks and on pathways
- Fitness programs – new classes and trend, and to all parts of the City\*
- Dance programs\*
- Youth programs\*

- Larger community events\*
- Marketing/communication programs\*
- Teen programming
- Health, wellness, and nutrition programs\*

#### **Improvements at Existing Facilities**

- Bring back the slide to the pool
- Replace the “baby pool” with a fun splash pad at the Aquatics and Fitness Center.
- More back racks - bike repair stations
- Champion 'aging in place' amenities and update with the changing trends in recreation/parks
- Develop fitness playground like Schrom Hills Park at other city parks
- Consolidate pocket parks in Central Greenbelt
- Level athletic fields\*
- Add lights to athletic fields\*
- Have an inspection program in place
- Upgrade Buddy Attick Park – re-plan and redesign\*
- Upgrade pathways infrastructure with GHI\*
- Upgrade/update Springhill Lake Recreation Center
- Update the Community Center/Aquatics and Fitness Center to highlight heritage, but evolve uses\*
- Remove all poured-in-place surfacing
- Identify key connections points on pathways\*
- Upgrade bathrooms and locker rooms at the Community Center\*
- Replace basketball courts in the East Greenbelt
- Upgrade event areas for special events to accommodate power
- Develop Northway Fields for more recreational usage\*
- Fences around community gardens and direct water access

#### **New Services Desired in Greenbelt**

- Night time swimming in the pool
- Fitness classes in East and West Greenbelt
- More programs/classes for adults and seniors
- Bootcamp classes
- Martial arts/kickboxing classes
- Larger music/arts festivals and community events in other areas
- Poetry slams and “active” arts events
- Interpretive signage
- Historical/ educational programming
- Create separations between drivers and bikers
- Additional skill building classes (language, nutrition, woodworking, etc.)

#### **New Amenities Desired in Greenbelt**

- Develop artificial turf field\*
- Develop covered picnic areas in Buddy Attick Park and Schrom Park\*
- Create bike storage and maintenance stations
- Provide more/new community gardens
- Dog park in East Greenbelt\*
- Develop areas for storage
- Develop fitness/multipurpose classrooms\*
- Purchase and develop Lanham BG Club athletic field
- Add concessions at the pool



1021 E. South Boulder Road, Suite N, Louisville, CO 80027-2548 Tel: (303) 439-8369  
Email: [Info@GreenPlayLLC.com](mailto:Info@GreenPlayLLC.com); Web: [www.GreenPlayLLC.com](http://www.GreenPlayLLC.com)

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- Develop splash pad or park at the Aquatics and Fitness Center\*
- Develop destination playground amenities\*
- Develop concert stage/ community gathering space

#### **Best Way for Users to Receive Information**

- Greenbelt Bulletin
- Weekly newsletter (Thursday)
- Internet/ website
- E-mail and other forms of electronic communication
- Social media\*
- Word of mouth\*\*

#### **Key Issues and Values in Greenbelt**

- Unique history of Old Greenbelt - Roosevelt's WPA
- Central Greenbelt is the core of the City
- Greenbelt has a small-town feel, surrounded by larger metro area
- Residents want to be able to walk and bike throughout the community

#### **Other Suggestions for Greenbelt**

- Ensure this master planning process is not done "in a vacuum" – consider other city planning initiatives/programs and those in the region (Prince George's/MNCPPC)
- Reviews plans with the city council early
- Ensure Greenbelt Station is considered
- Consider impact of FBI relocation and site development on city parks/recreation services

#### **Top Parks and Recreation Priorities for Greenbelt**

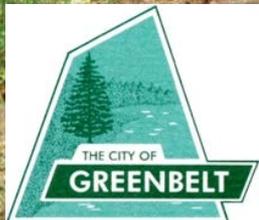
- Improve existing athletic fields, increase supply of athletic fields
- Enhance bike and pedestrian infrastructure—focus on connectivity
- Renovate the pool and aquatics area
- Provide recreation opportunities for citizens outside of the City-center
- Focus on the youth and teens
- Expand the indoor facilities
- Re-plan and design Buddy Attick Park

# APPENDIX C: SURVEY REPORT

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GREENBELT RECREATION AND PARKS  
MASTER PLAN SURVEY  
FINAL RESULTS  
DECEMBER 2017



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## METHODOLOGY & SELECTED FINDINGS



# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on the City of Greenbelt parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs.

This survey research effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist the City in updating their master plan regarding existing and potential future facilities and services.



# METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted using three primary methods:

- 1) an online, invitation-only web survey to further encourage response from those residents within the defined invitation sample,
- 2) Intercept surveys at select event in Greenbelt,
- 3) Door hanger surveys placed on 500 homes in the Greenbelt East and West neighborhoods,

and

- 4) an “open-link” online survey for members of the public who were not part of the invitation sample. The analysis herein primarily focuses on responses from the statistically-valid invitation sample.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Melissa Data Corp., a leading provider of data with emphasis on U.S., Canadian, and international address and phone verification as well as postal software. Use of the Melissa Data list also includes renters in the sample who are frequently missed in other list sources such as utility billing lists.

# METHODOLOGY

In total, 220 invitation surveys were completed through a variety of survey approaches. In addition, 283 open-link surveys were received. The invitation sample includes responses gathered from the online invitation via postcard, intercept surveys at two events (Farmers market and Greenbelt Festival of Lights), as well as door hanger surveys placed in Greenbelt East and West. The margin of error for the invitation sample is +/- 6.57%.

The following results present results in two formats: 1) Invitation (random sample) survey results, and 2) overall results. The overall results are a combination of both invitation and open-link results.



# TOP 10 FINDINGS

1

Greenbelt respondents are familiar overall with the Recreation Department's offerings. On average, respondents rated their level of familiarity 3.8 out of 5.0 with 66% saying they are familiar and 11% unfamiliar.

2

Respondents to both the invitation and open-link survey are demographically diverse. While over 70% of respondents live in Central Greenbelt, there is a wide array of income profiles, ages, and household statuses.

3

Greenbelt's facilities received high ratings on the degree to which they meet resident needs, despite their importance to the household. Nearly all facilities had over 50% of respondents stating the current facilities were meeting the needs of their household.

4

Programs offered by Greenbelt see a similar trend of meeting the needs of most households. The most important programs for respondents were 1) special events, 2) adult classes, and 3) performing arts. The least important programs were pre-school programs, camps, and sports programs.

5

The importance / needs met matrix identifies one program and one facility with high importance, but a lower than average needs met. For facilities, playgrounds were higher in importance than needs met with performing arts seeing a similar trend for programs.



# TOP 10 FINDINGS

6

In general, increased awareness or communication is listed as the top factor that would lead to increased participation at Greenbelt facilities. Improving the condition / maintenance of existing facilities would also increase participation.

7

Planning for the future, respondents highlighted trail connectivity and open space / natural areas as priorities. These two topics received the most attention and highest rankings for future planning scenarios.

8

For most, increased user fees would not significantly limit their participation. 40% of respondents stated increased fees would not limit their participation, while 34% said it would limit their participation "somewhat".

9

66% of respondents stated Greenbelt's communication was effective, compared to only 12% who said it was not effective. Respondent's preferred avenue to receive information is the Greenbelt News Review and e-mails from the city.

10

Respondents shared high praise for the City and their recreation facilities / programs in their open-ended comments. Many comments highlighted the level of service of staff, cleanliness, and value to the community.



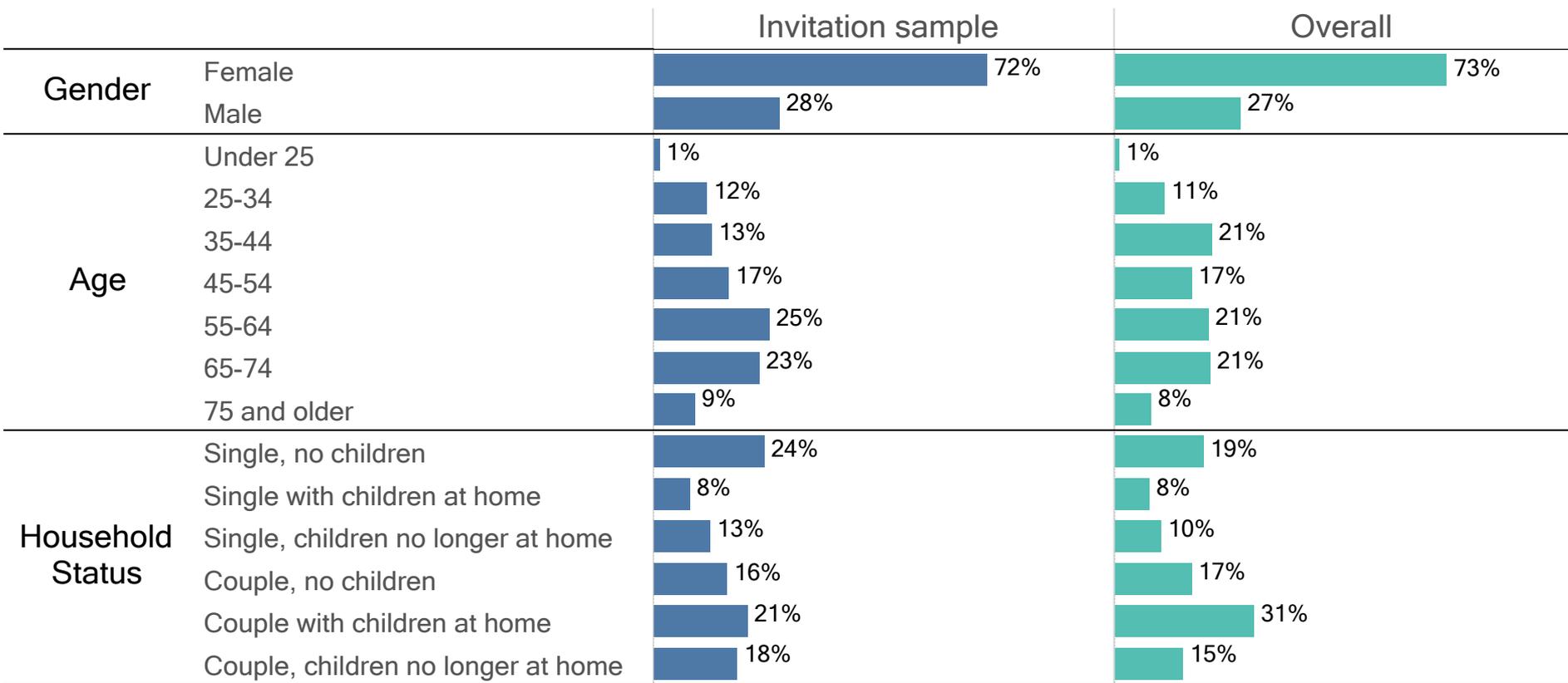
DEMOGRAPHICS



# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Both the invitation and overall sample skews female (72% and 73% respectively). Seventy-four percent of invitation respondents are over age 45. Twenty-six percent are under 35. A total of 29% of invitation and 39% overall live with children in their household. Seventy-one percent of invitation respondents do not have children in their home.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Demographic Profile



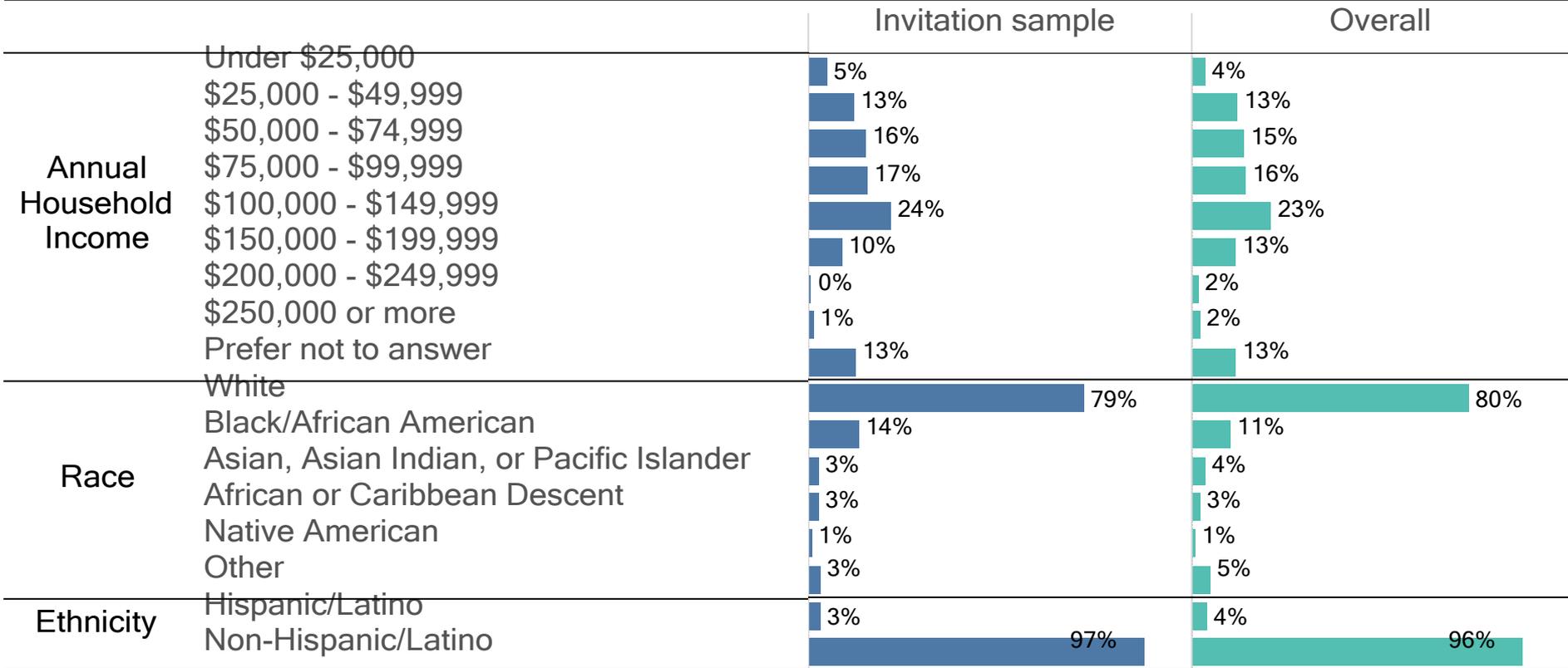
Source: RRC Associates



# DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Fifty-one percent of invitation respondent households earn under \$100,000 annually, with 35% earning over \$100k and 13% preferring not to answer. Seventy-nine percent of invitation respondents identify as White, 14% Black or African American, 3% Asian/Asian Indian/Pacific Islander, 3% African or Caribbean Descent, and 1% Native American. Overall results are similar in demographic profile.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Demographic Profile



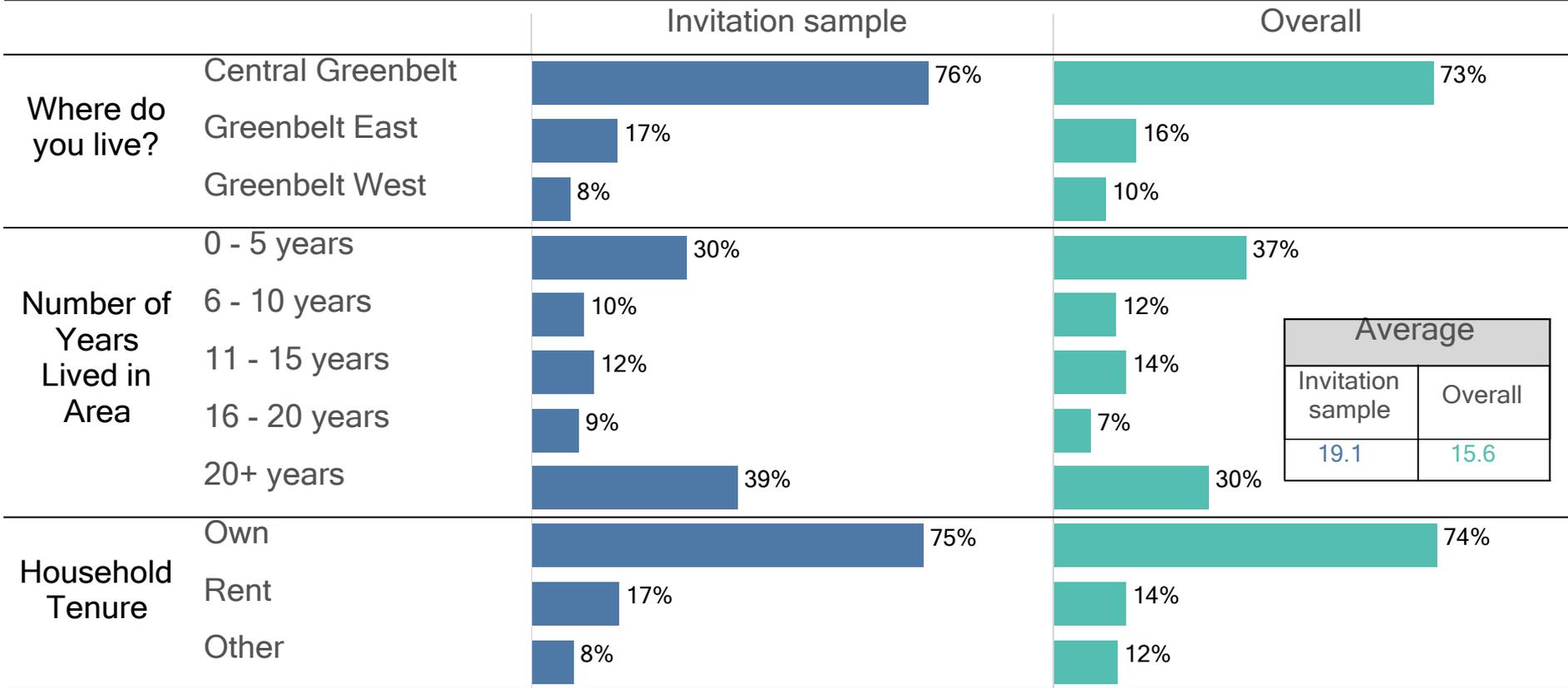
Source: RRC Associates



# RESIDENTIAL PROFILE

Central Greenbelt (76%) is well represented by invitation respondents with Greenbelt East (17%) and Greenbelt West (8%) seeing a smaller representation. On average, invitation respondents have lived in Greenbelt for just over 19 years. That said, 30% of respondents have only lived in Greenbelt for 0-5 years. Seventy-five percent of invitation respondents own their residence, 17% rent, and 8% have other types of

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Residential Profile



Source: RRC Associates

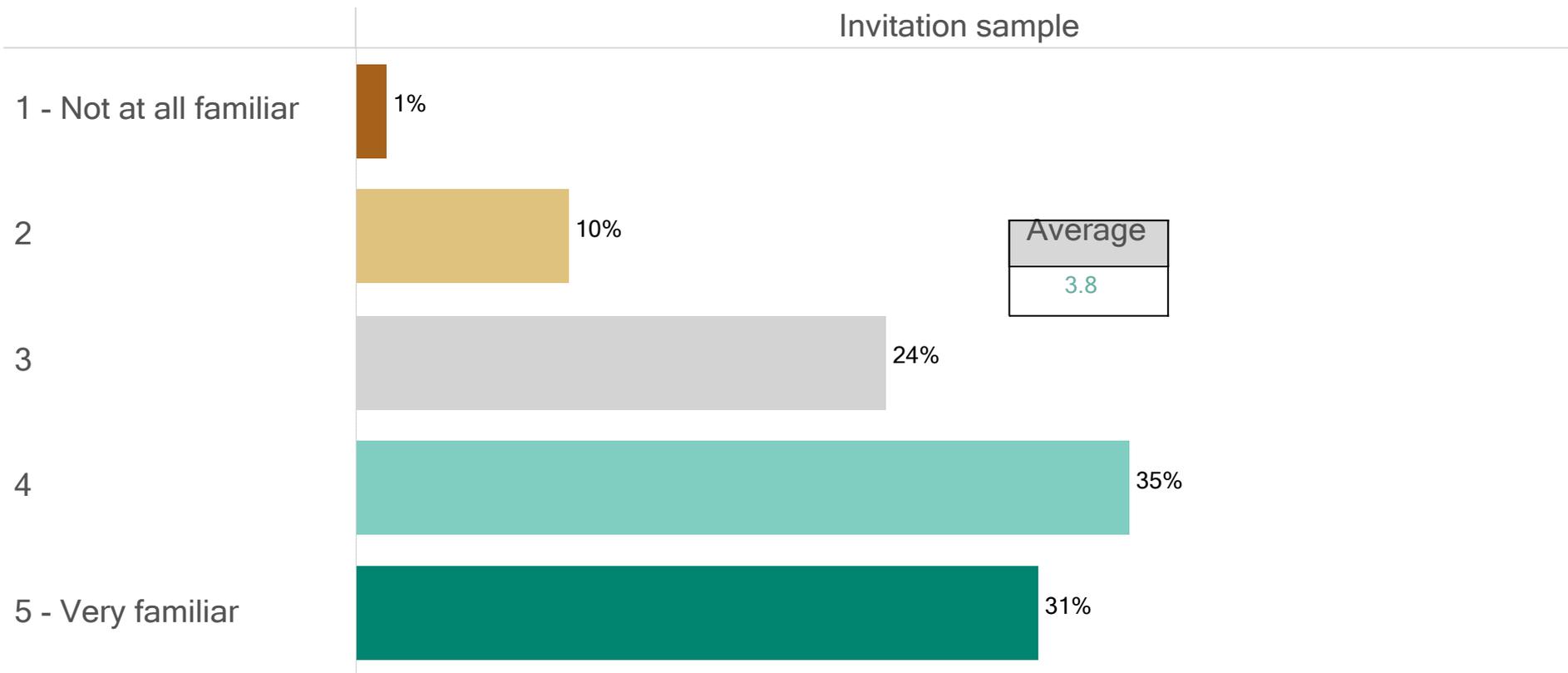


CURRENT USAGE

# USAGE OF PARKS/FACILITIES IN PAST YEAR

A majority of invitation respondents are familiar (rated 4 or 5) with City of Greenbelt parks and recreation offerings (66%) and 11% were unfamiliar (rated 1 or 2). Invitation respondents' average rating on their familiarity with parks and recreation offerings is 3.8 out of 5.0, an above average level of familiarity overall.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Familiarity with Parks & Recreation Offerings



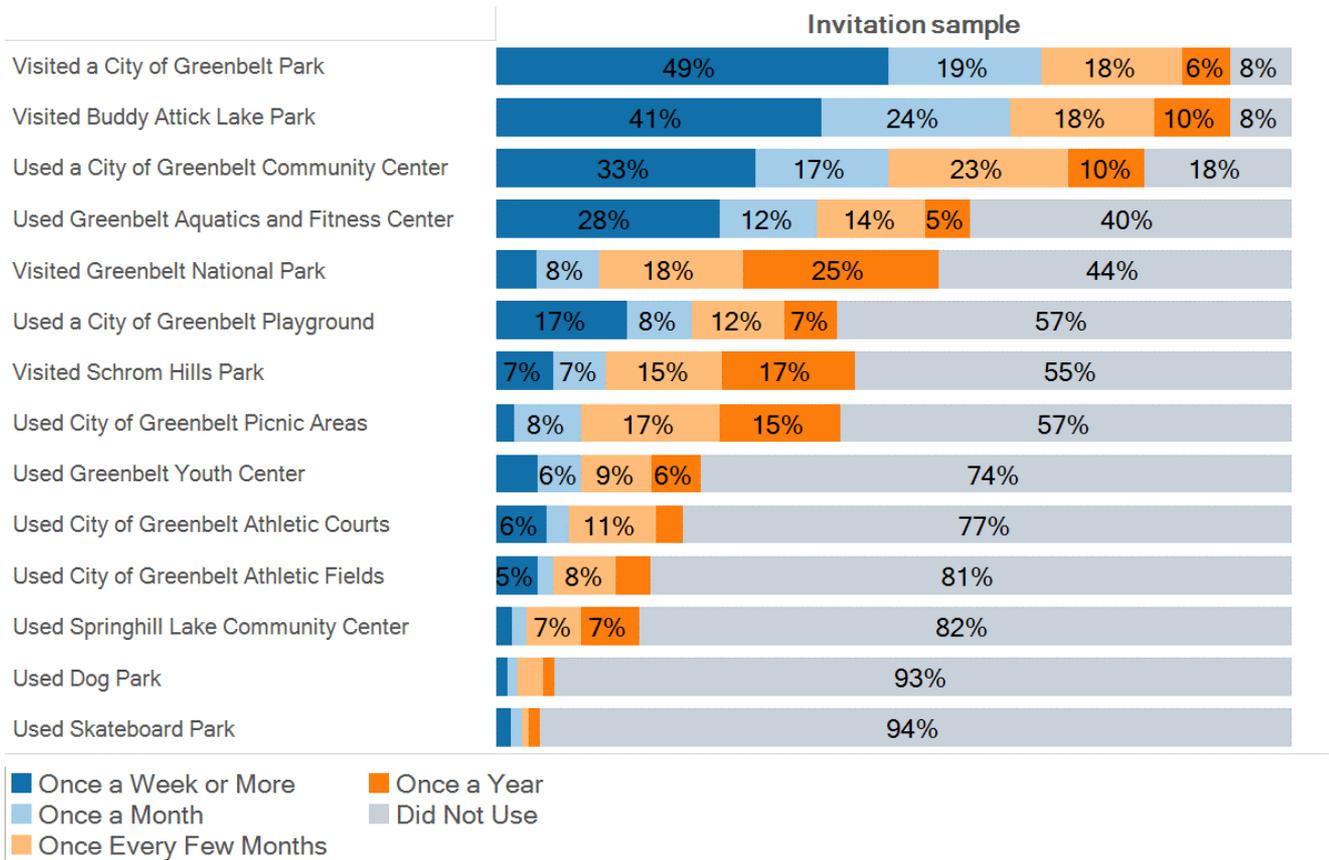
Source: RRC Associates



# USAGE OF PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Invitation respondents visit City of Greenbelt parks (92% used in past year) and Buddy Attick Lake Park (92%), and Greenbelt Community Center (82%) commonly. Forty-nine percent of respondents used a Greenbelt park once a week or more. The skateboard park (6% usage), dog park (7%), and Springhill Lake Community Center (18%) are used least.

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Current Usage of Parks & Recreation Facilities



Source: RRC Associates



# FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE YOU TO VISIT PARKS/FACILITIES

Respondents who had used a City of Greenbelt park/facility/program in the past year were asked to identify the factors that influence them to visit or use that facility. Commonly mentioned factors and a brief summary of responses are illustrated below, along with a selection of verbatim responses from the overall sample. As shown, the diversity in activities, cleanliness, proximity, and professional customer service provided by staff are all important factors. The full listing of responses is provided in the appendix.

## Influential Factors

- Activities for a variety of ages
- Cleanliness
- Feeling of safety
- Programs / classes at the facility
- Close to home/work
- Ease of access/parking
- Dog friendly
- Peaceful location
- Family friendly areas
- Exercise
- Activities for children
- Special events (e.g. farmers market)
- Presence of water/lake

*I love the water, the playground, and trails.*

*I'm a runner and the lake is a great place to run around!*

*Lots of activities related to what I am interested in.*

*Proximity to my home. Most use centers around children's activities.*

*Good selection of activities for all ages.*

*Scenic beauty, close access to my home.*

*The recreational center is an inviting place for my 11 year old son and all of his friends in the community. The place serves as a safe haven with professional that provide a space where kids can be athletic and social.*

*Convenient hours, clean, well maintained, good staff. The GAFC is a godsend for me.*

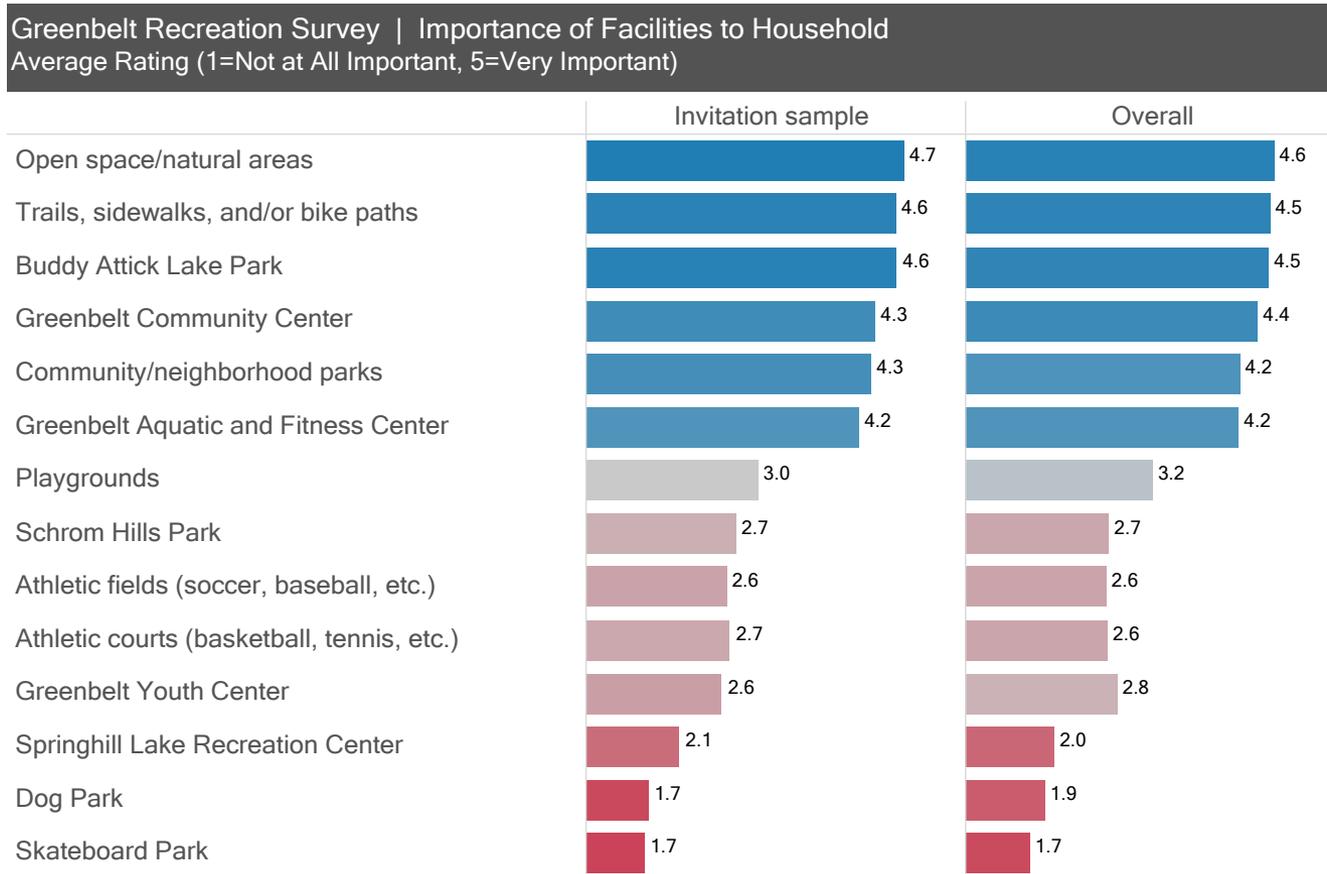


FACILITIES, PROGRAMS, AMENITIES &  
SERVICES



# IMPORTANCE OF EXISTING FACILITIES

When asked how important 15 different existing facilities are to their household, open space/natural areas (4.7), trails/sidewalks/bike paths, and Buddy Attick Lake Park (4.6 each) are most important to invitation respondents. In contrast, the skateboard park (1.7), dog park (1.7), and Springhill Lake Recreation Center (2.1) are least important.

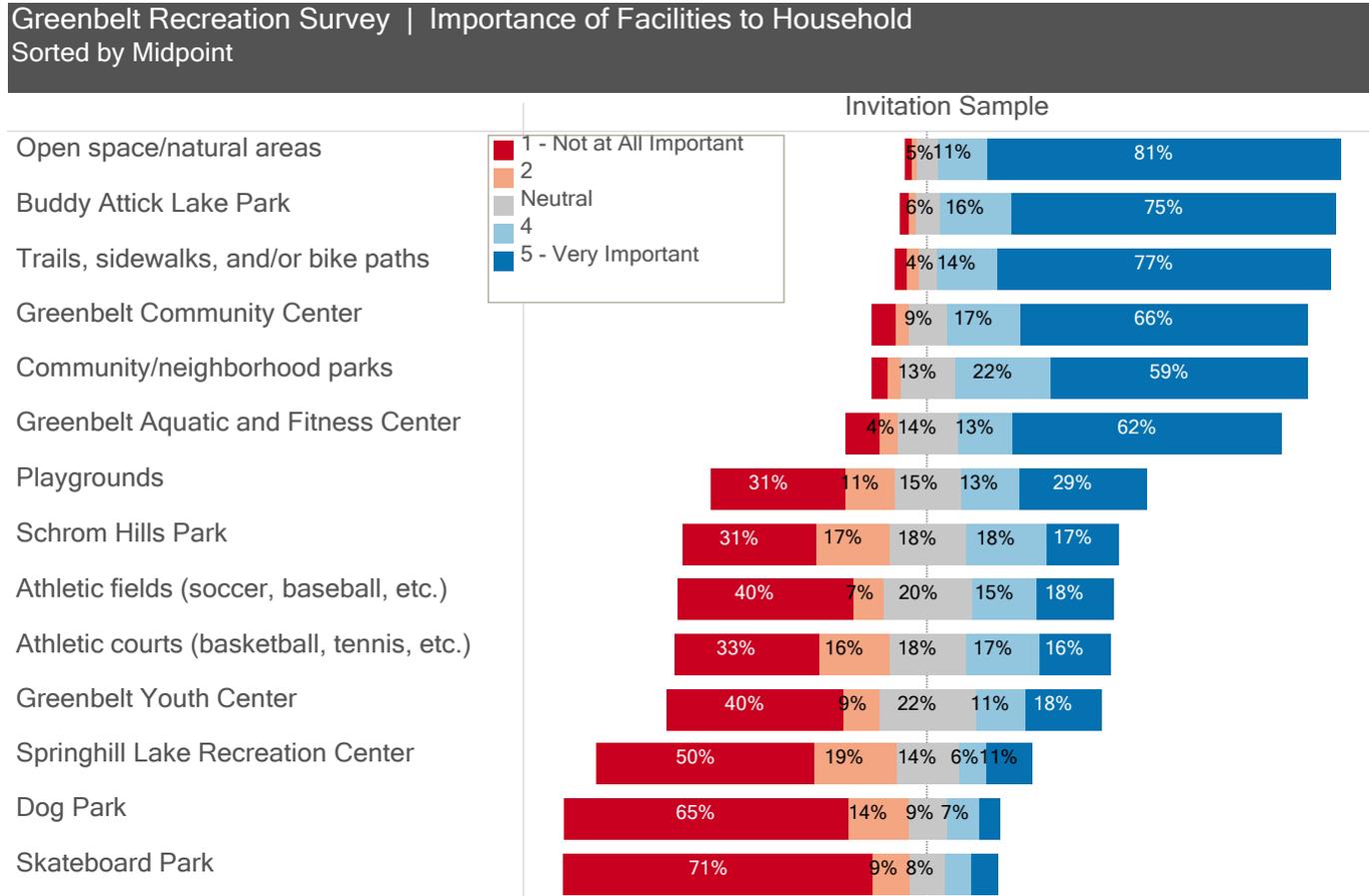


Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE OF EXISTING FACILITIES

Shown another way, open space/natural areas, six facilities garnered over 50% of respondents rating it 4 or 5 in importance (Open space, Buddy Attick Lake Park, Trails/sidewalks/paths, community/neighborhood parks, Greenbelt Community Center, and Greenbelt Aquatic and Fitness Center).

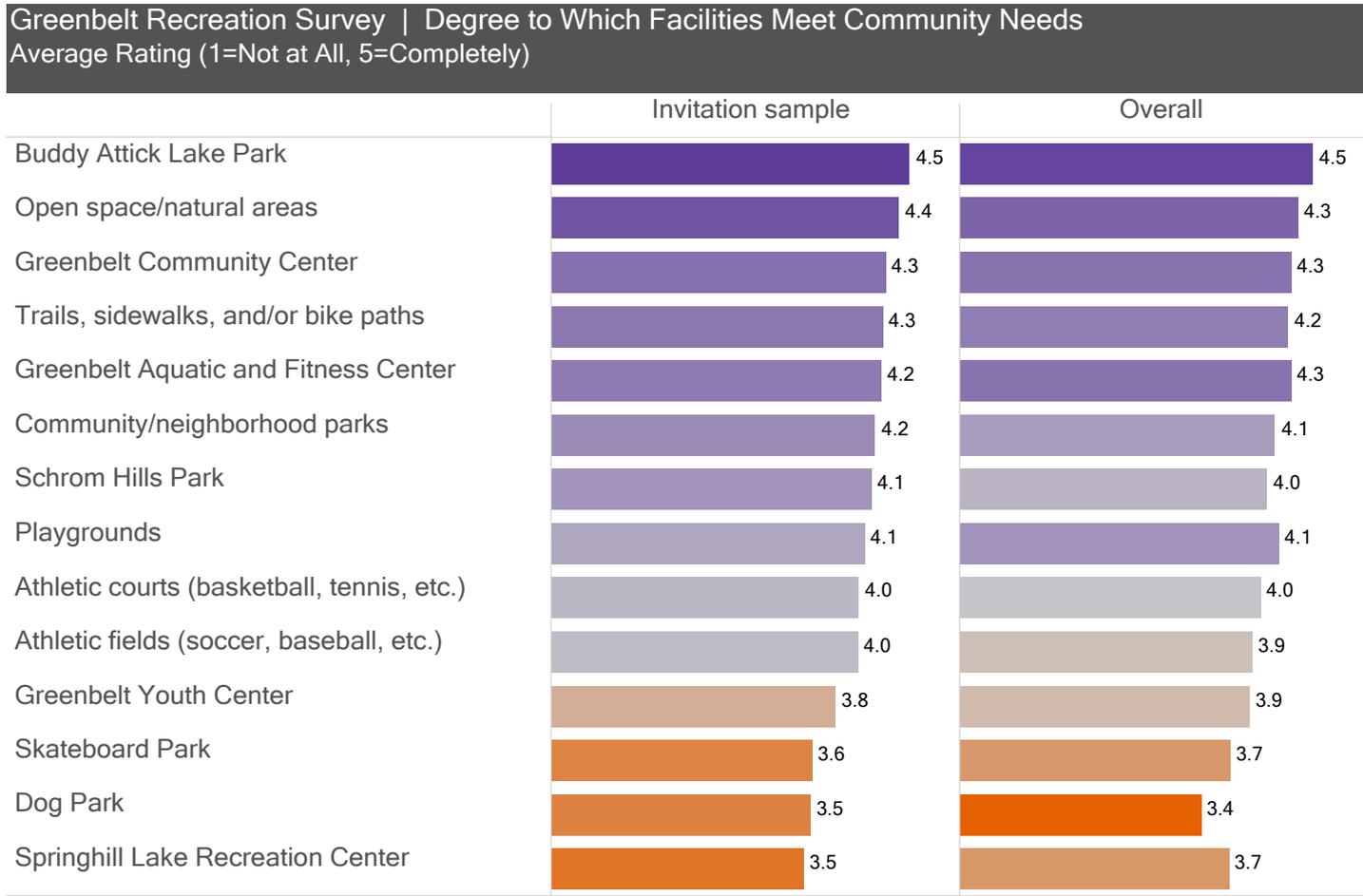


Source: RRC Associates



# LEVEL OF NEEDS MET BY EXISTING FACILITIES

When asked to what extent those same 15 facilities are meeting the needs of the community, average ratings were high. Buddy Attick Lake Park received the highest average rating (4.5) followed by open space/natural areas (4.4), Greenbelt Community Center (4.3), and trails/sidewalks/bike paths (4.3).

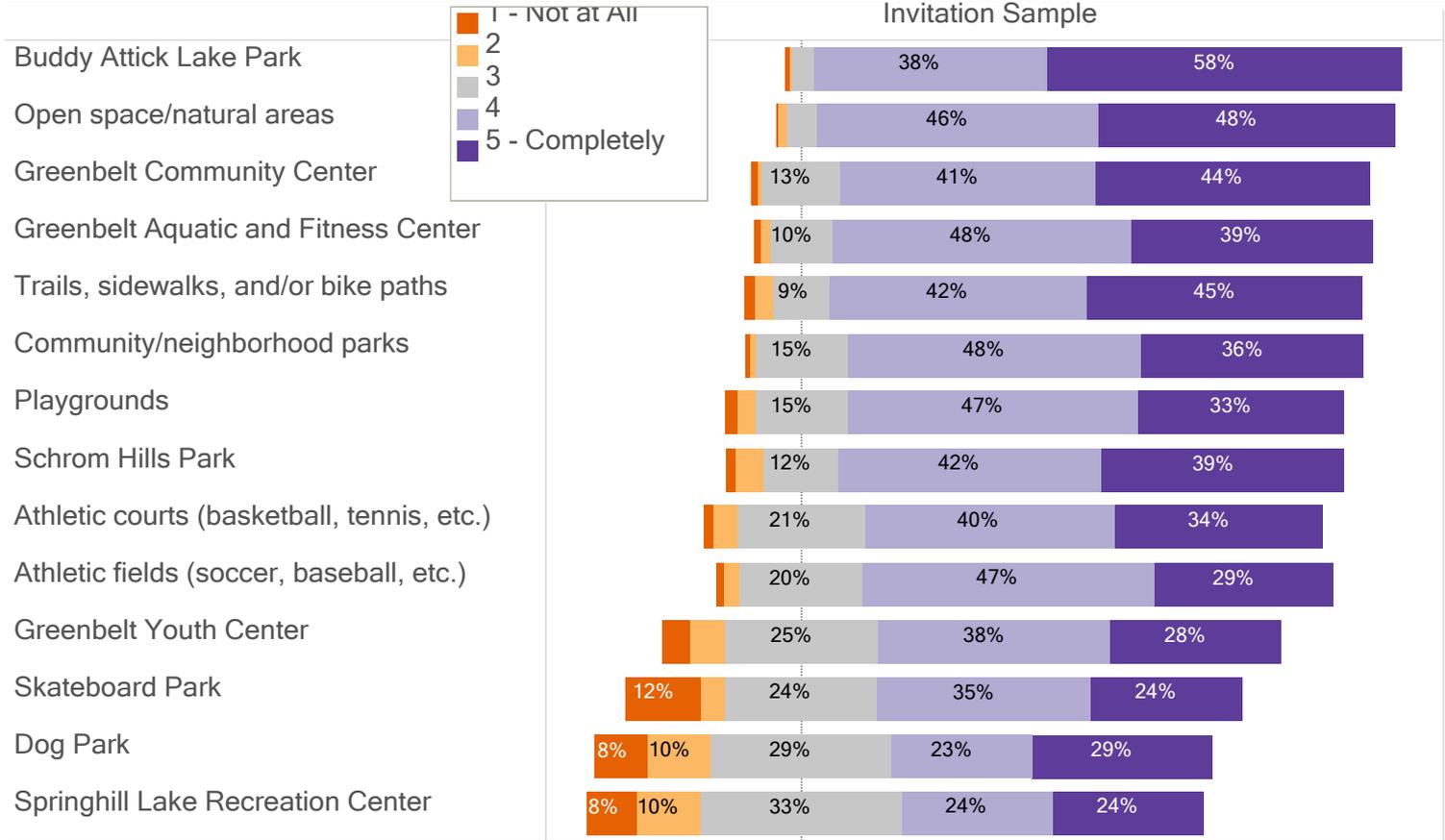


Source: RRC Associates

# LEVEL OF NEEDS MET BY EXISTING FACILITIES

Shown another way, nearly all facilities received over 50% of respondents stating it was meeting the needs of Greenbelt (rated 4 or 5).

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Degree to Which Facilities Meet Community Needs  
Sorted by Midpoint



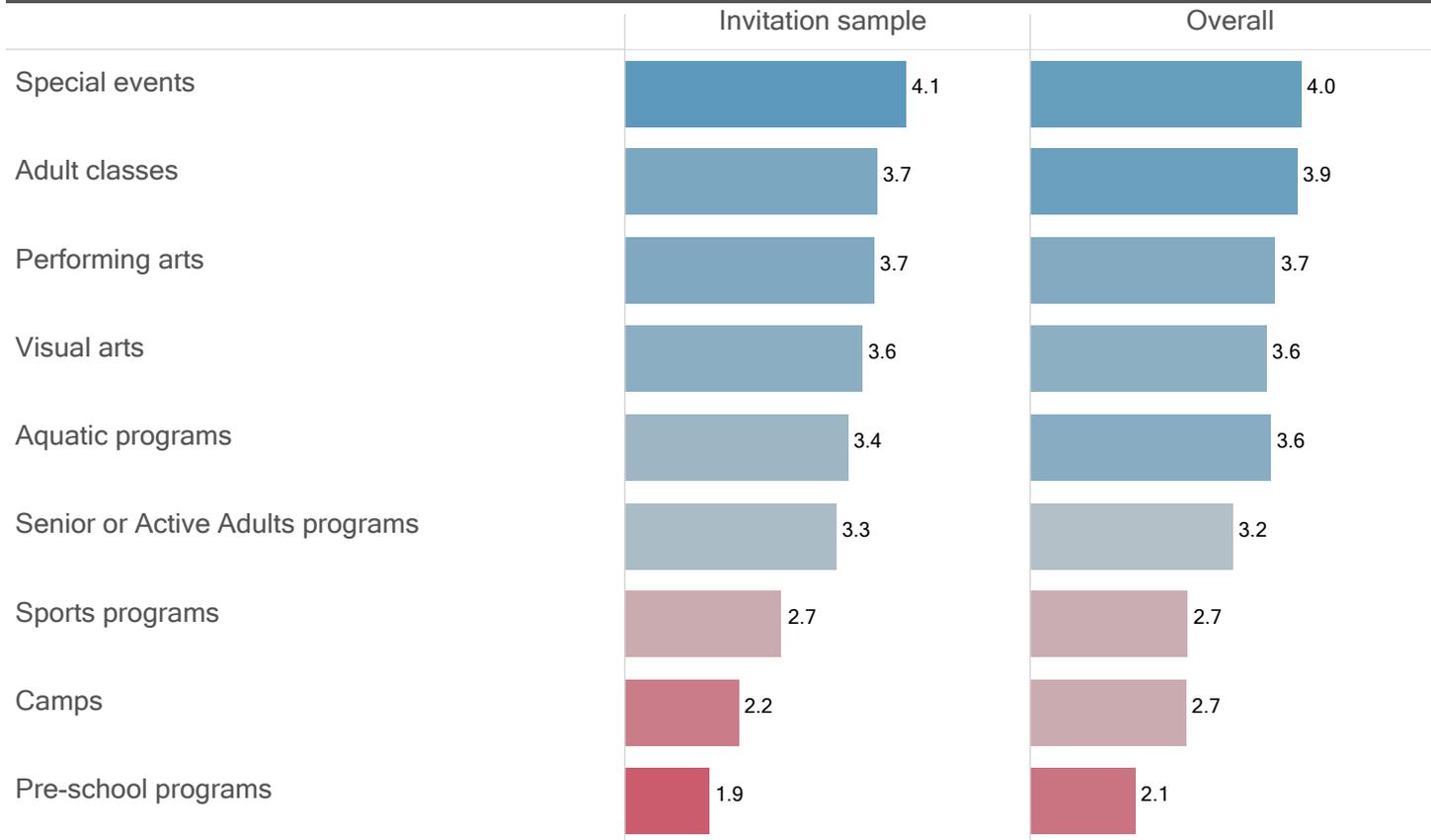
Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

When asked how important 9 different existing facilities are to their household, special events (4.0) led in first place with adult classes (3.7), performing arts (3.7) and visual arts (3.6) following behind. Overall results show a similar trend with slightly higher ratings for adult classes and aquatic programs.

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Importance of Programs to Household  
Average Rating (1=Not at All Important, 5=Very Important)



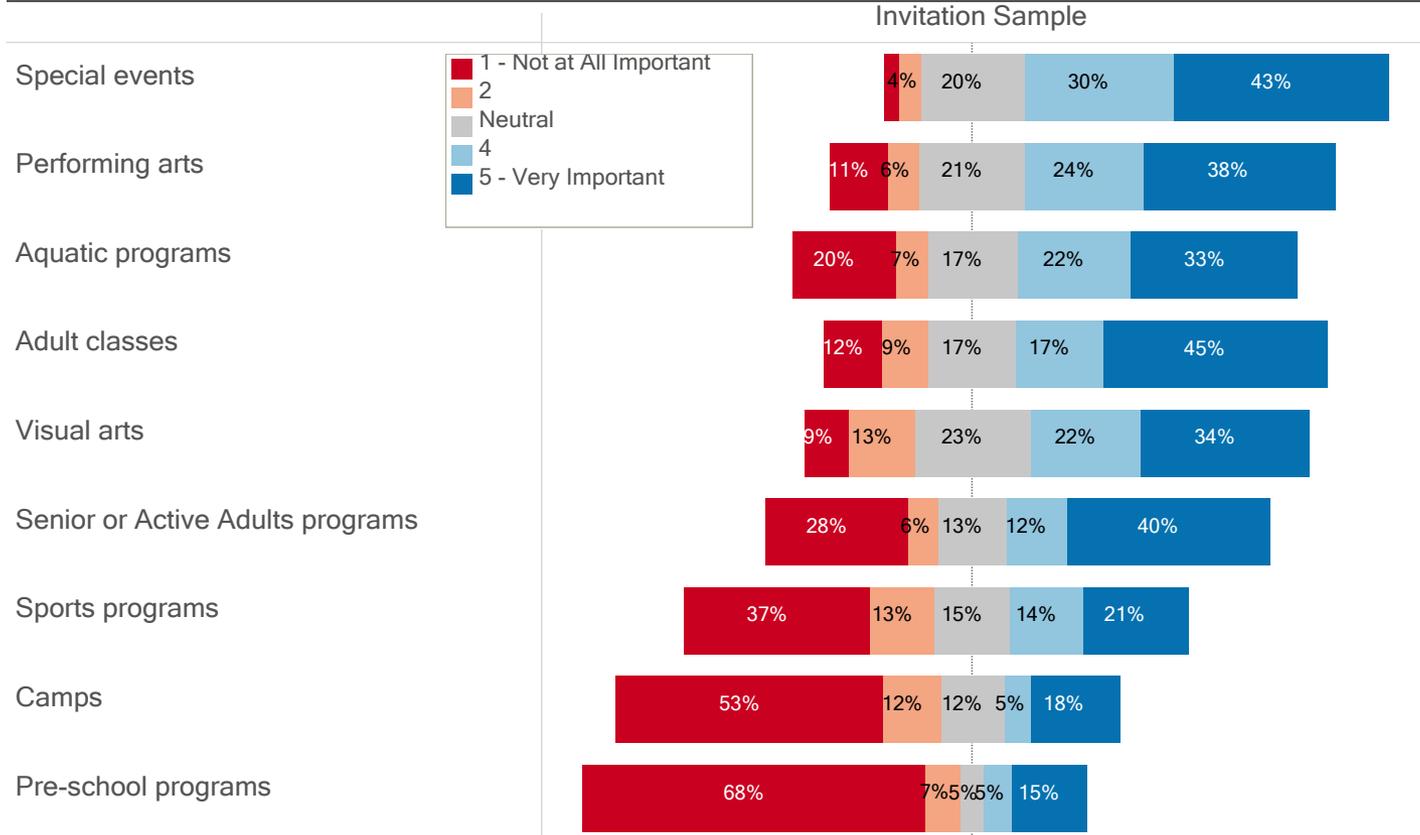
Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE OF EXISTING PROGRAMS

Shown another way, special events, performing arts, adult classes, visual arts, aquatic programs and senior/active adults programs are important (rated 4 or 5) for over 50% of respondents. Pre-school programs, sports programs, and camps are less important and may be favored by only those who have children.

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Importance of Programs to Household  
Sorted by Midpoint

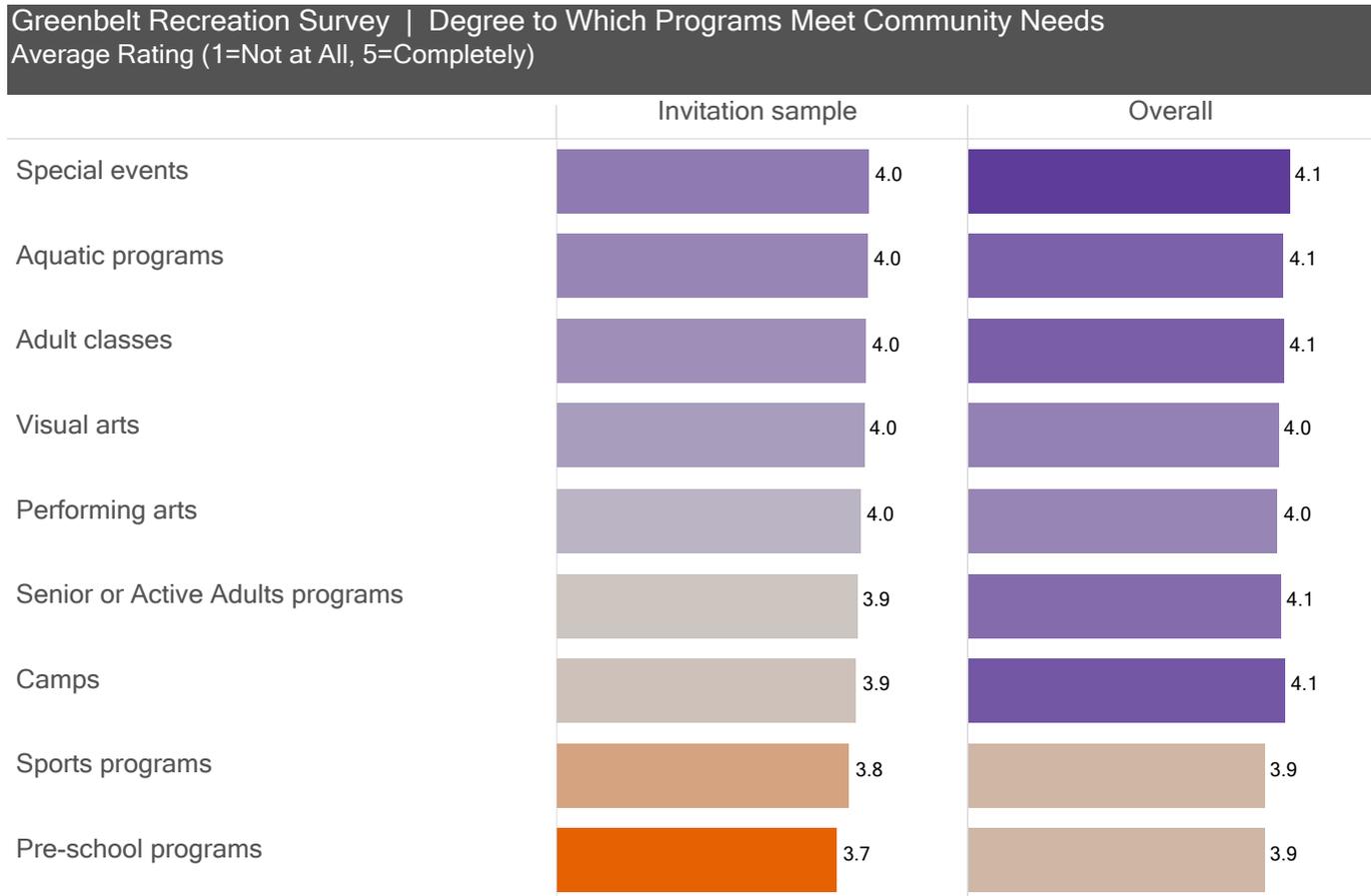


Source: RRC Associates



# LEVEL OF NEEDS MET BY EXISTING PROGRAMS

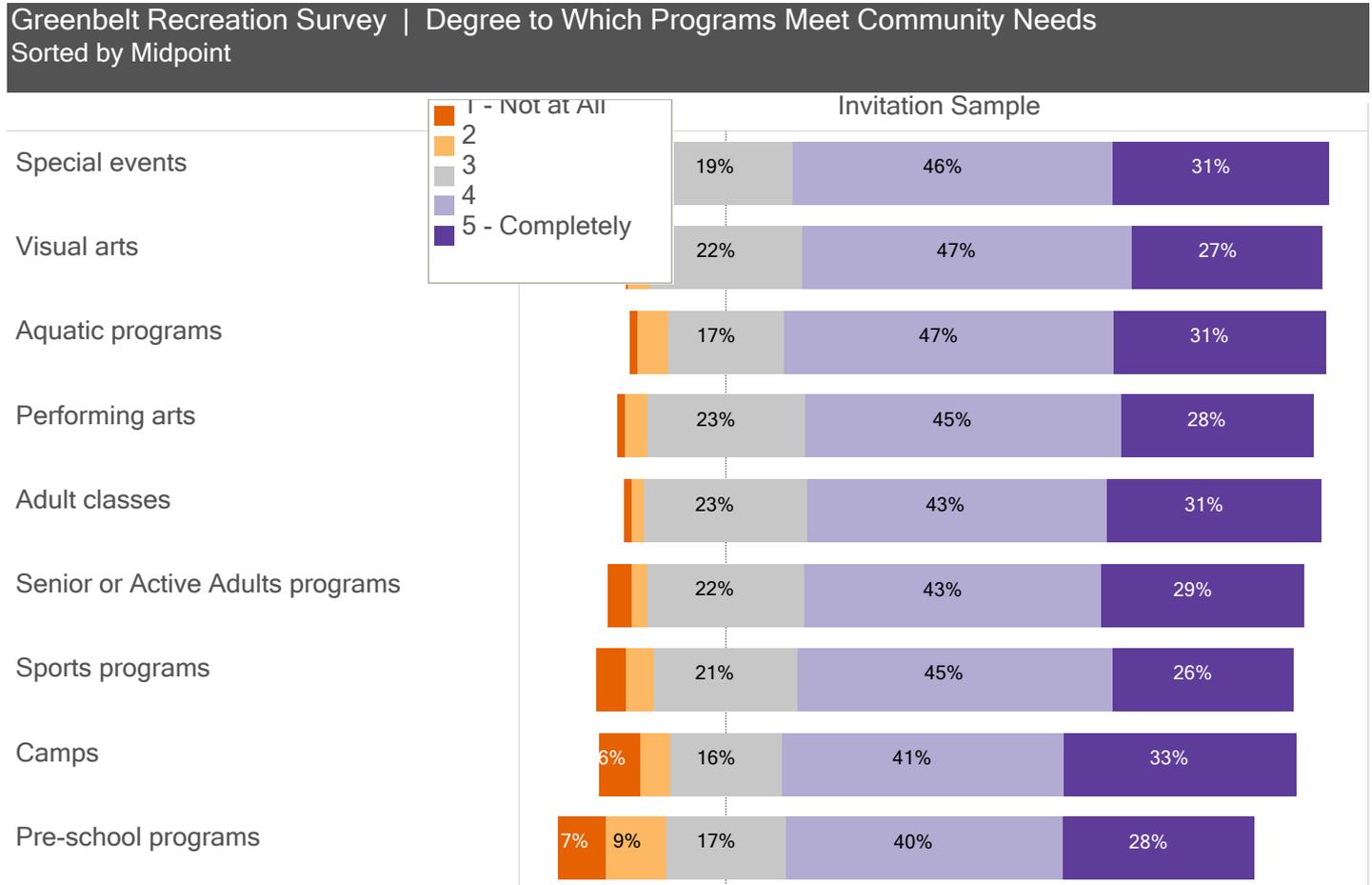
When asked to what extent those same 9 programs are meeting the needs of the community, average ratings were generally high overall. All programs had an average rating between 3.7 and 4.0 overall. Special events, aquatic programs, adult classes, visual arts and performing arts top the list (4.0 each). Overall results were slightly higher for many programs.



Source: RRC Associates

# LEVEL OF NEEDS MET BY EXISTING PROGRAMS

Shown another way, all programs received a higher share of respondents reporting their needs were met (providing a rating of 4 or 5) than not met (providing a rating of 1 or 2). Overall, very few respondents highlighted any program as not meeting needs (under 20% for all).



Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MATRIX

## High Importance/ Low Needs Met

These are key areas for potential improvements. Improving these facilities would likely positively affect the degree to which community needs are met overall.

## High Importance/ High Needs Met

These amenities are important to most respondents and should be maintained in the future, but are less of a priority for improvements as needs are currently being adequately met.

These “niche” facilities have a small but passionate following, so measuring participation when planning for future improvements may prove to be valuable.

## Low Importance/ Low Needs Met

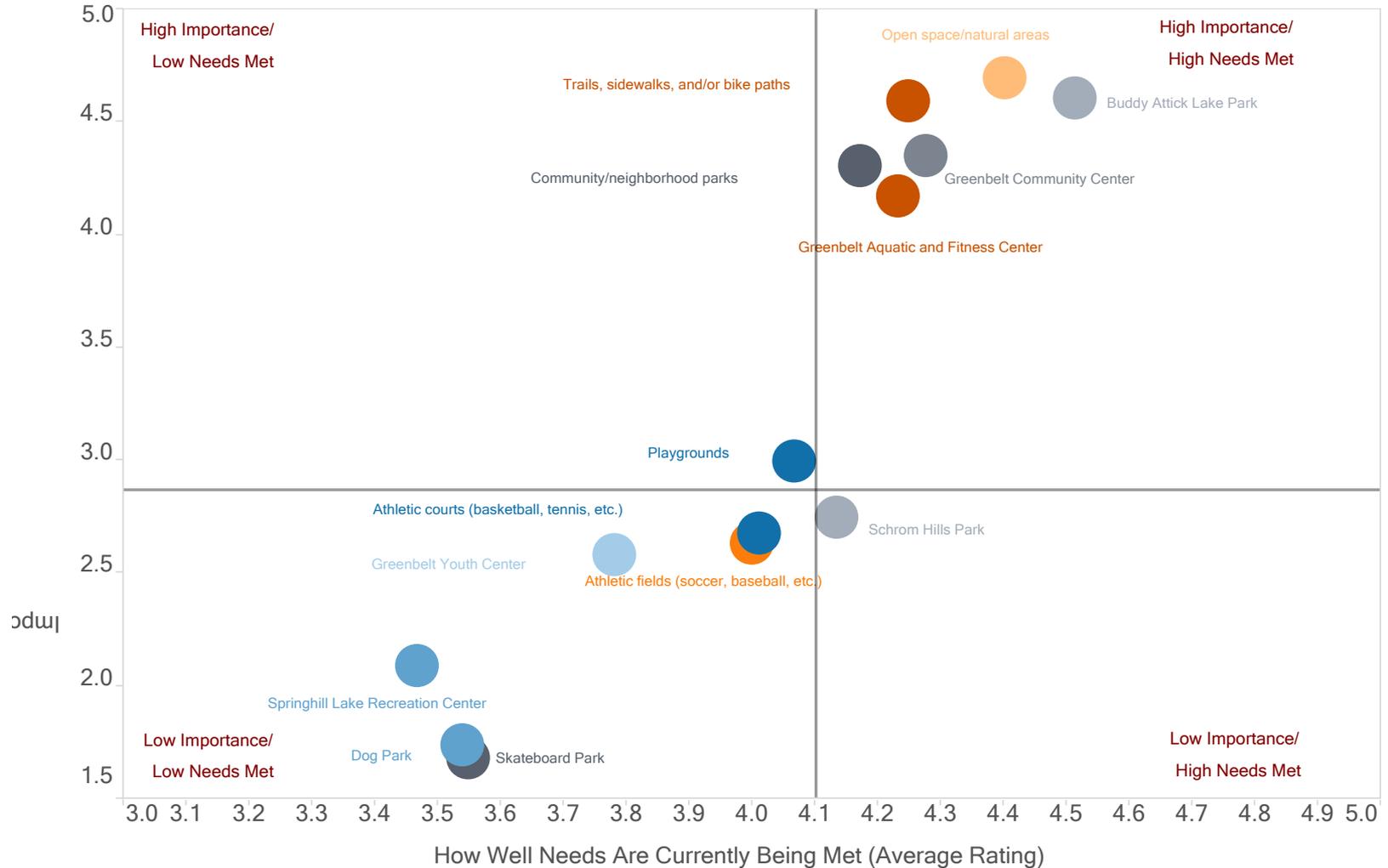
Current levels of support appear to be adequate. Future discussions evaluating whether the resources supporting these facilities outweigh the benefits may be constructive.

## Low Importance/ High Needs Met



# IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MATRIX (FACILITIES)

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Level of Importance vs. Needs Met for Current Facilities

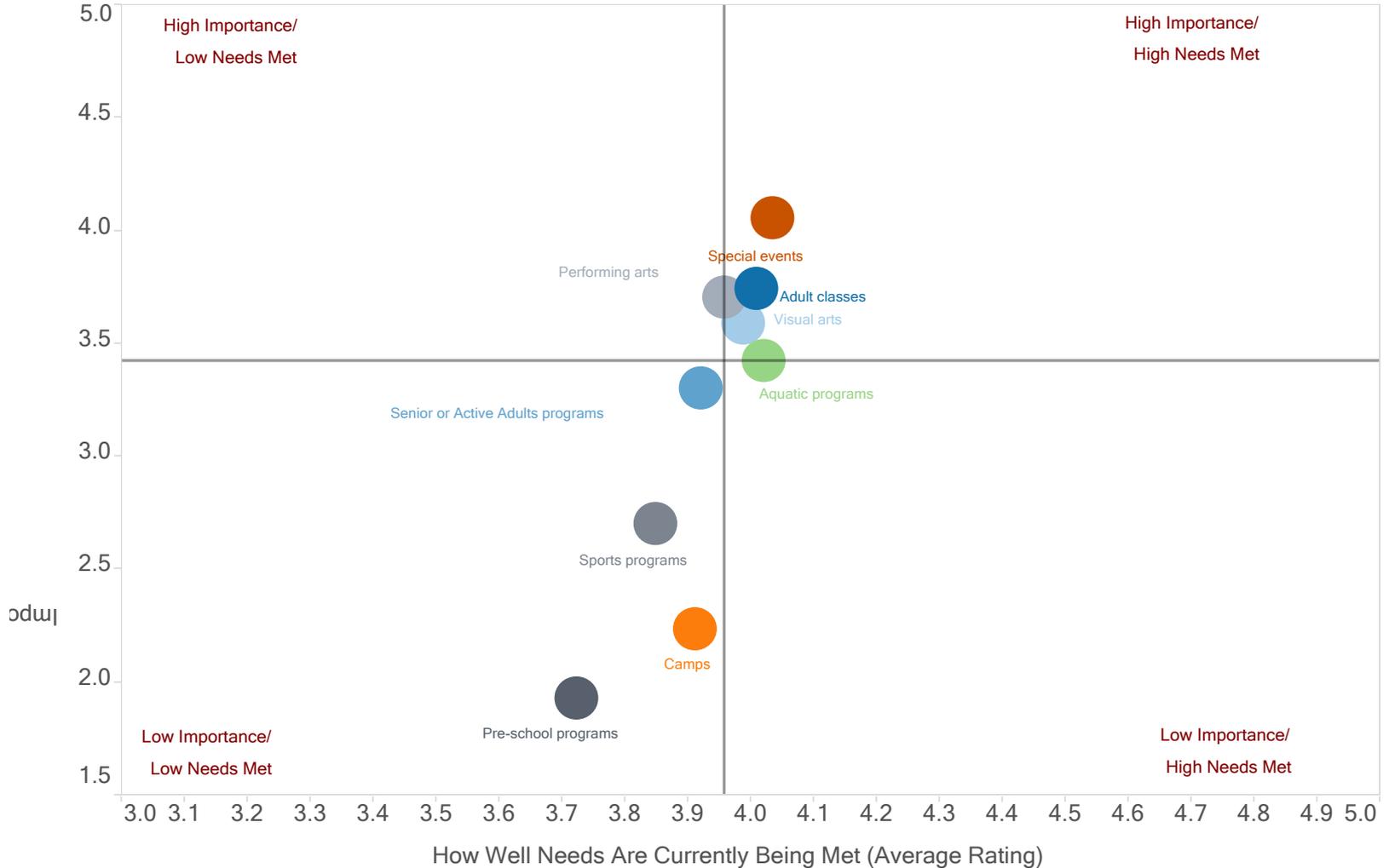


Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MATRIX (PROGRAMS)

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Level of Importance vs. Needs Met for Current Programs

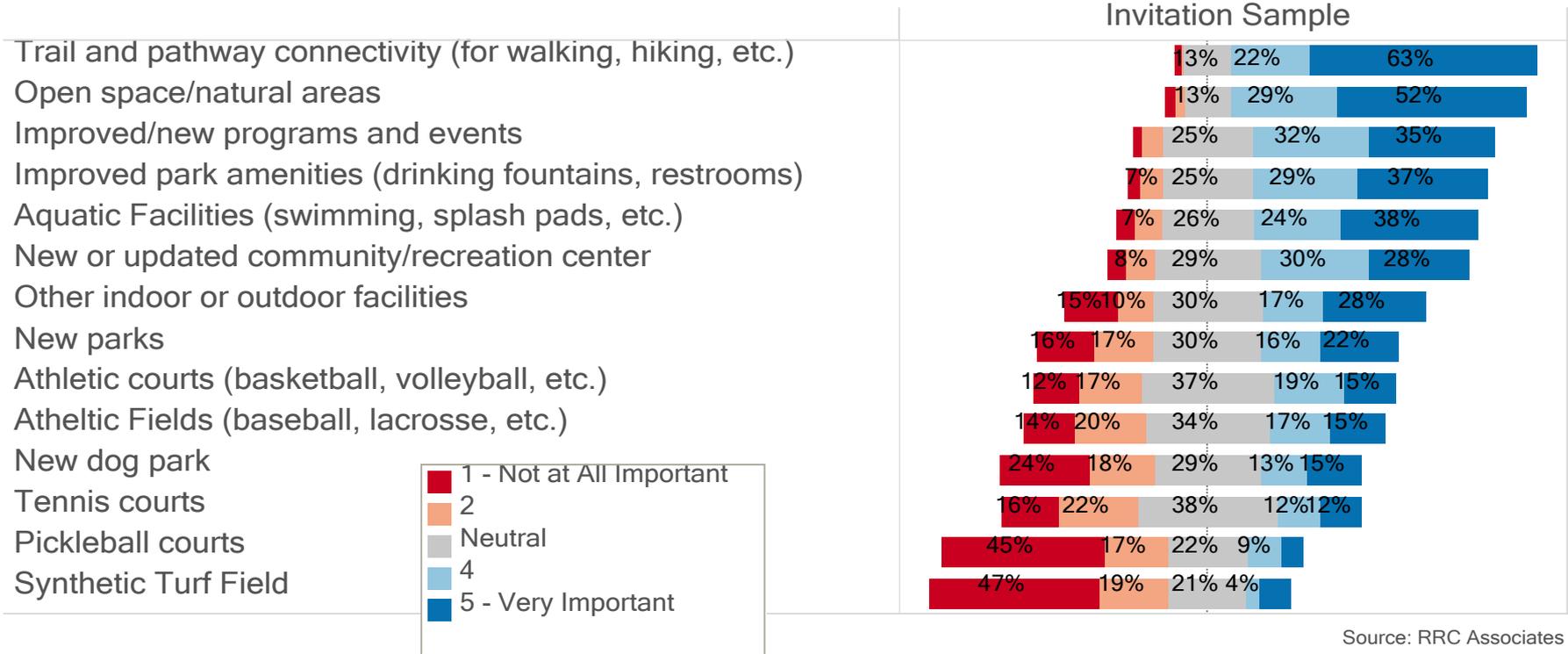


Source: RRC Associates

# IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

Invitation respondents were particularly likely to place importance on trail and pathway connectivity, open space/natural areas, and improved/new programs and events. Meanwhile, respondents placed less importance on a synthetic turf field, pickleball courts, tennis courts, and a new dog park.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities Sorted by Midpoint



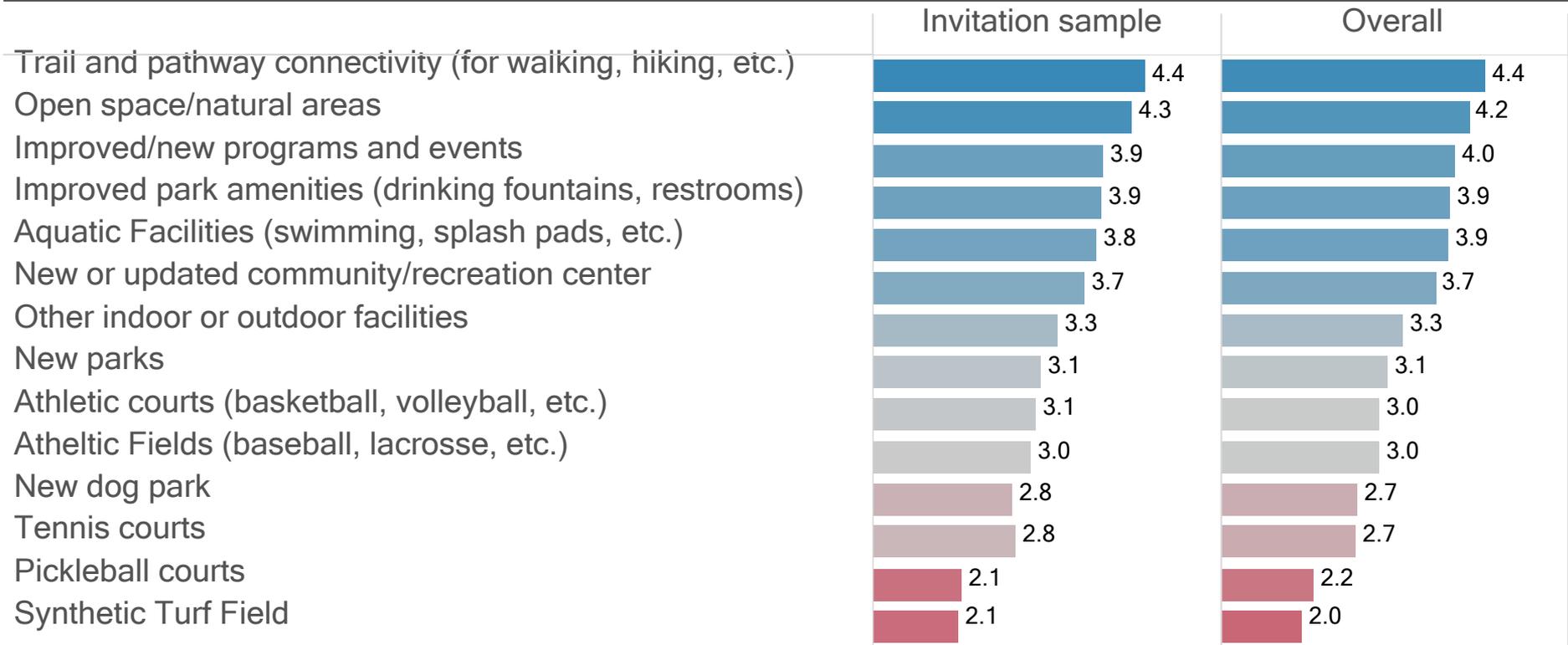
Source: RRC Associates



# IMPORTANCE OF FUTURE FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

Using the average rating, trail and pathway connectivity (4.4) and open space/natural areas (4.3) rated high. Just under were improved/new programs and events, improved park amenities (3.9 each), aquatic facilities (3.8), and new or updated community/recreation center (3.7).

**Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities**  
 Average Rating (1=Not at All Important, 5=Very Important)



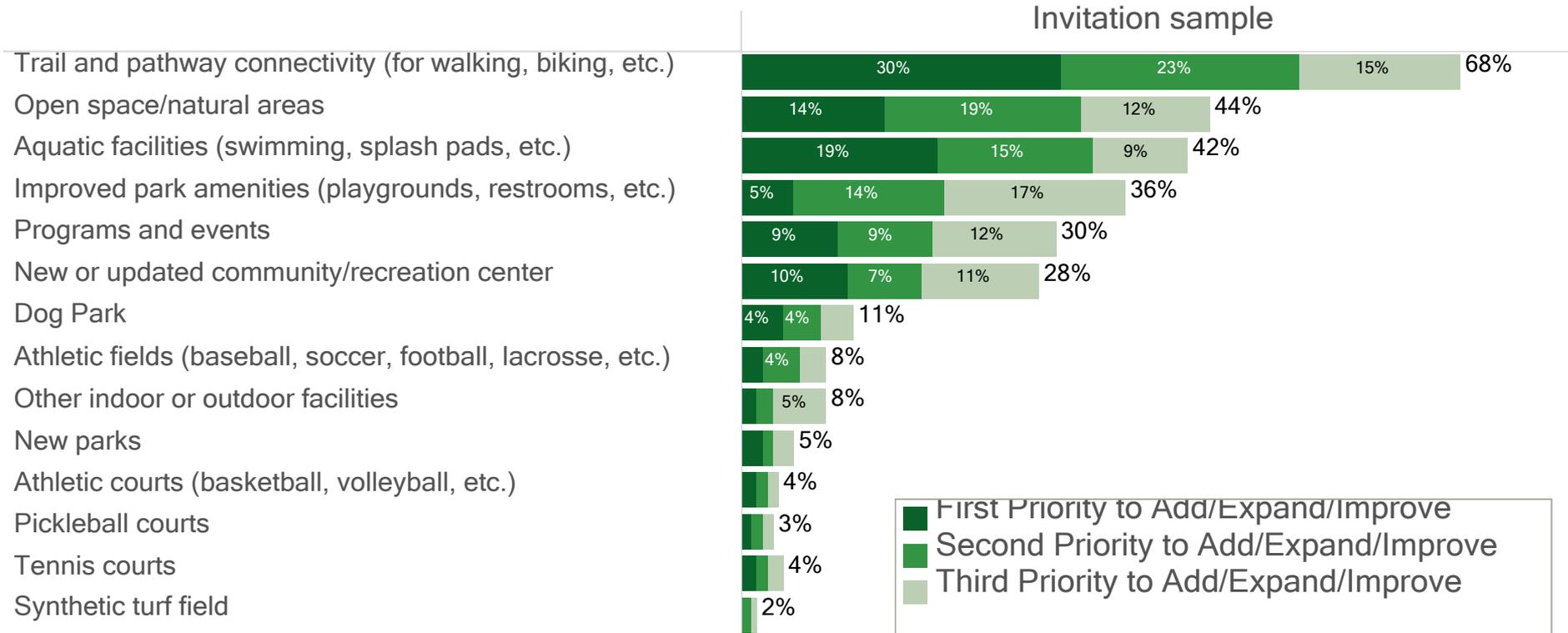
Source: RRC Associates



# PRIORITIES TO ADD, EXPAND, AND IMPROVE

When asked to select their top three priorities for Greenbelt to add/expand/improve, invitation respondents were most likely to report trail and pathway connectivity (30% first priority), aquatic facilities (19% first priority), and open space/natural areas (14% first priority).

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Top Three Highest Priorities to be Added, Expanded, or Improved



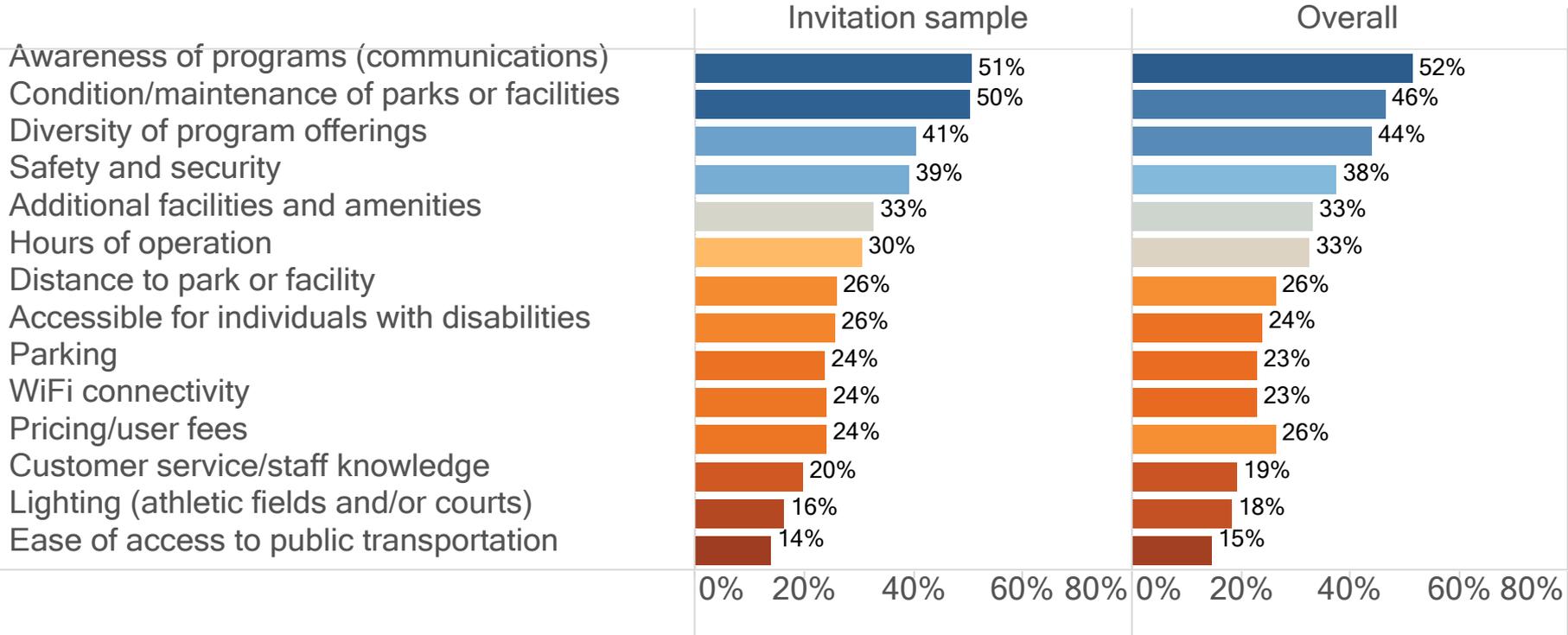
Source: RRC Associates



# FACTORS THAT WOULD INCREASE USAGE

When asked what would increase their usage of Greenbelt facilities, invitation respondents were most likely to choose awareness of programs (communications) (51%) and condition/maintenance of parks or facilities (50%). Respondents were also likely to choose diversity of program offerings (41%), safety and security (39%), and additional facilities/amenities (33%). Overall results were very similar for areas to be addressed.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Most Important Areas that, If Addressed, Would Increase Usage of Facilities



Source: RRC Associates

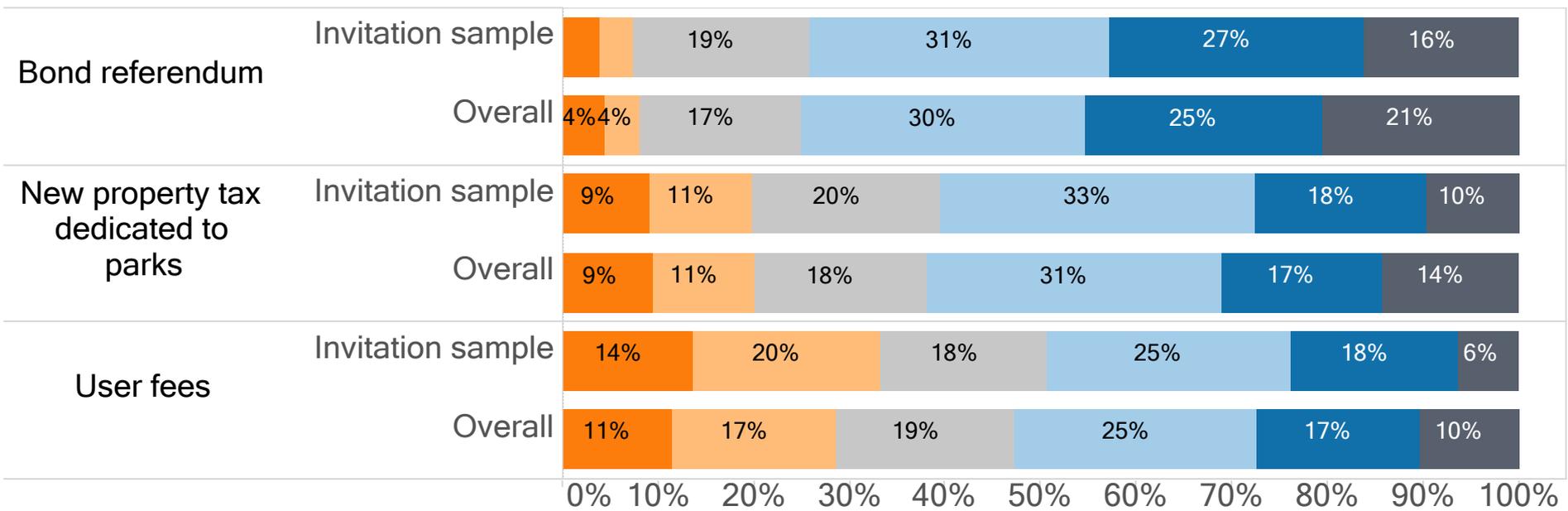


FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEES

# \$ LEVEL OF SUPPORT FOR FUNDING

When asked about increasing existing resources, invitation respondents were most supportive of a bond referendum (58% support) but least likely to support user fees (43% support). In each option, a portion of respondents are uncertain about whether they would support any of the funding options.

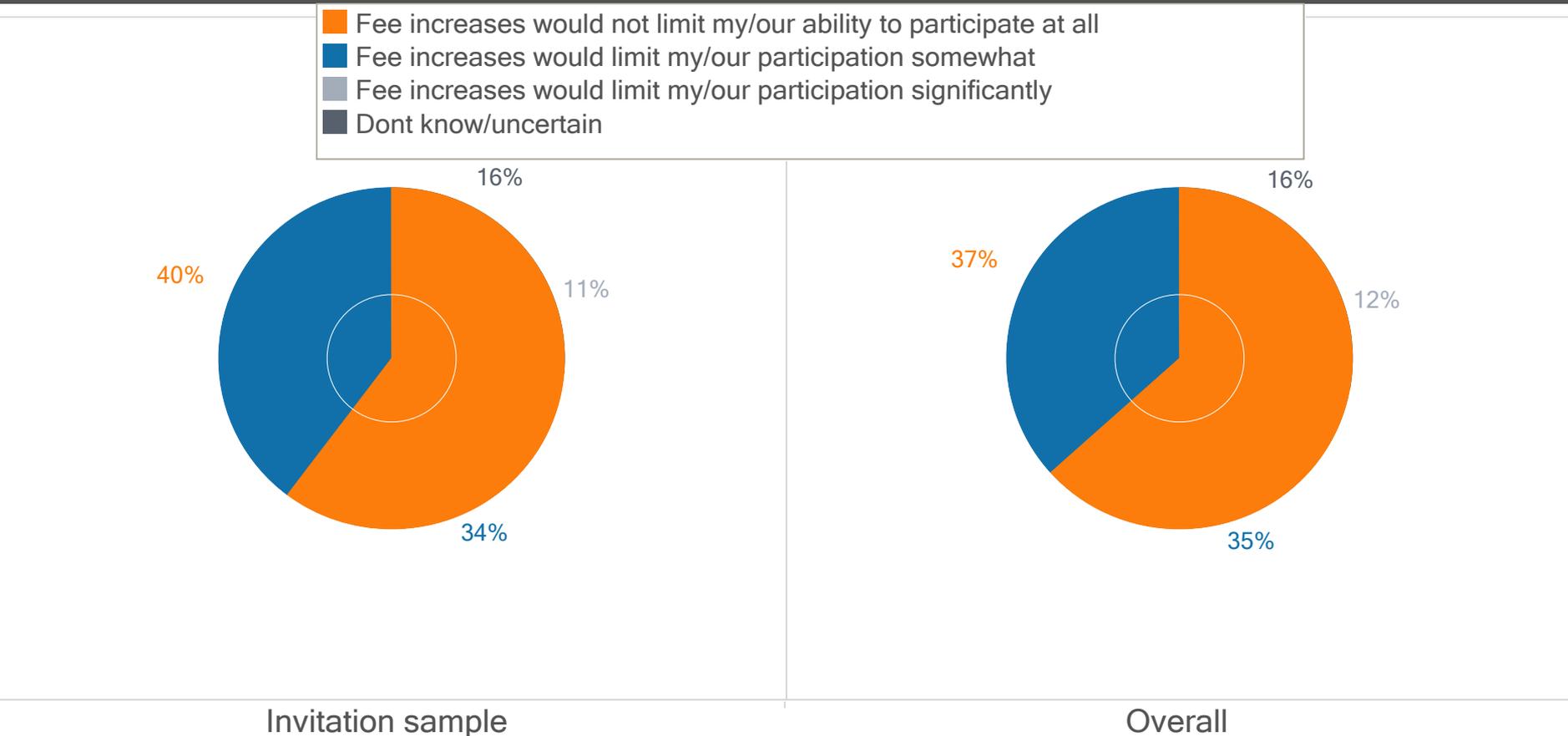
## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Willingness to Support Parks & Recreation Funding Options



# \$ IMPACT OF FEE INCREASES

When asked about whether increased fees would impact participation, 40% of invitation respondents stated it would not limit their participation, with 34% limiting somewhat and 11% limiting significantly. Sixteen percent of respondents stated they were uncertain if a fee increase would change their participation.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Impact of Fee Increases on Parks & Recreation Participation



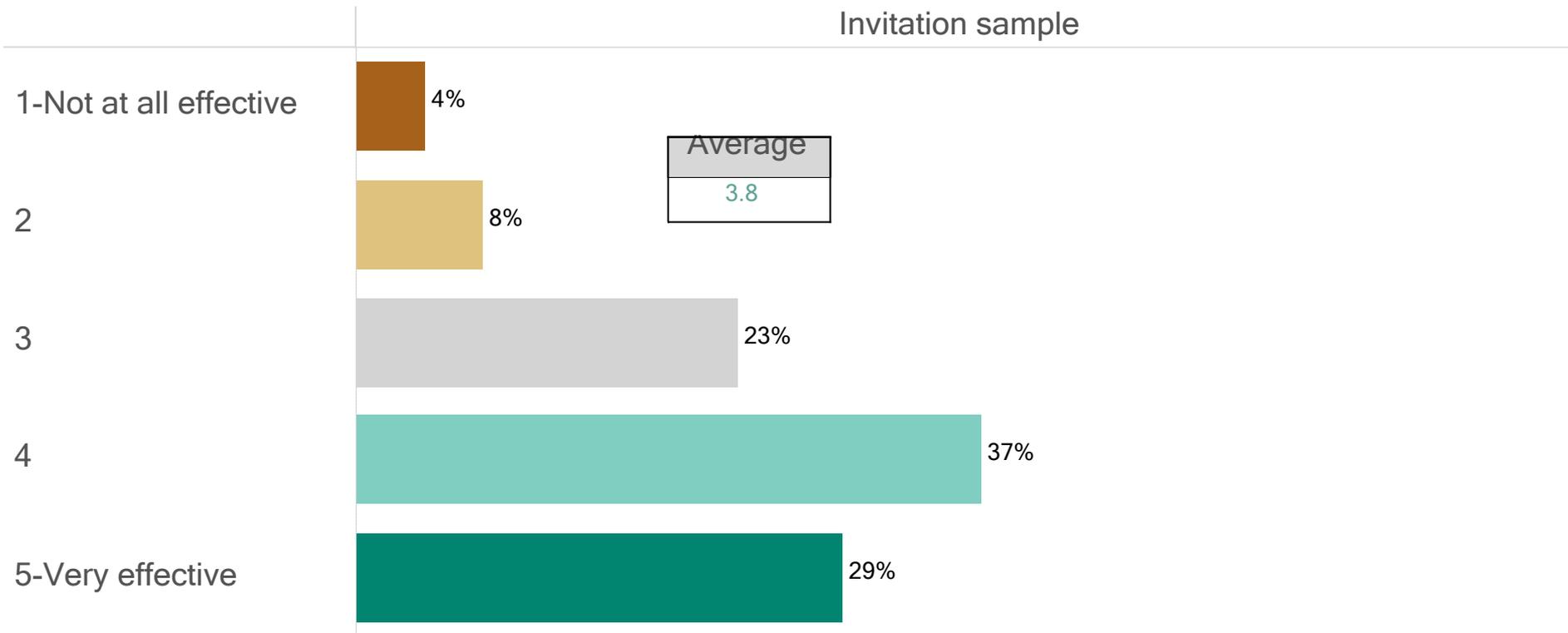


COMMUNICATION

# EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION EFFORTS

Communication effectiveness was rated by Greenbelt invitation respondents on a scale of 1 = “not at all effective” to 5 = “very effective”. On average, respondents rated effectiveness 3.8 out of 5.0. Sixty-six percent of respondents rated the effectiveness 4 or 5. Only 12% of respondents rated the effectiveness as “not effective” (1 or 2).

Greenbelt Recreation Survey | How effective are we at reaching you with information on parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs?



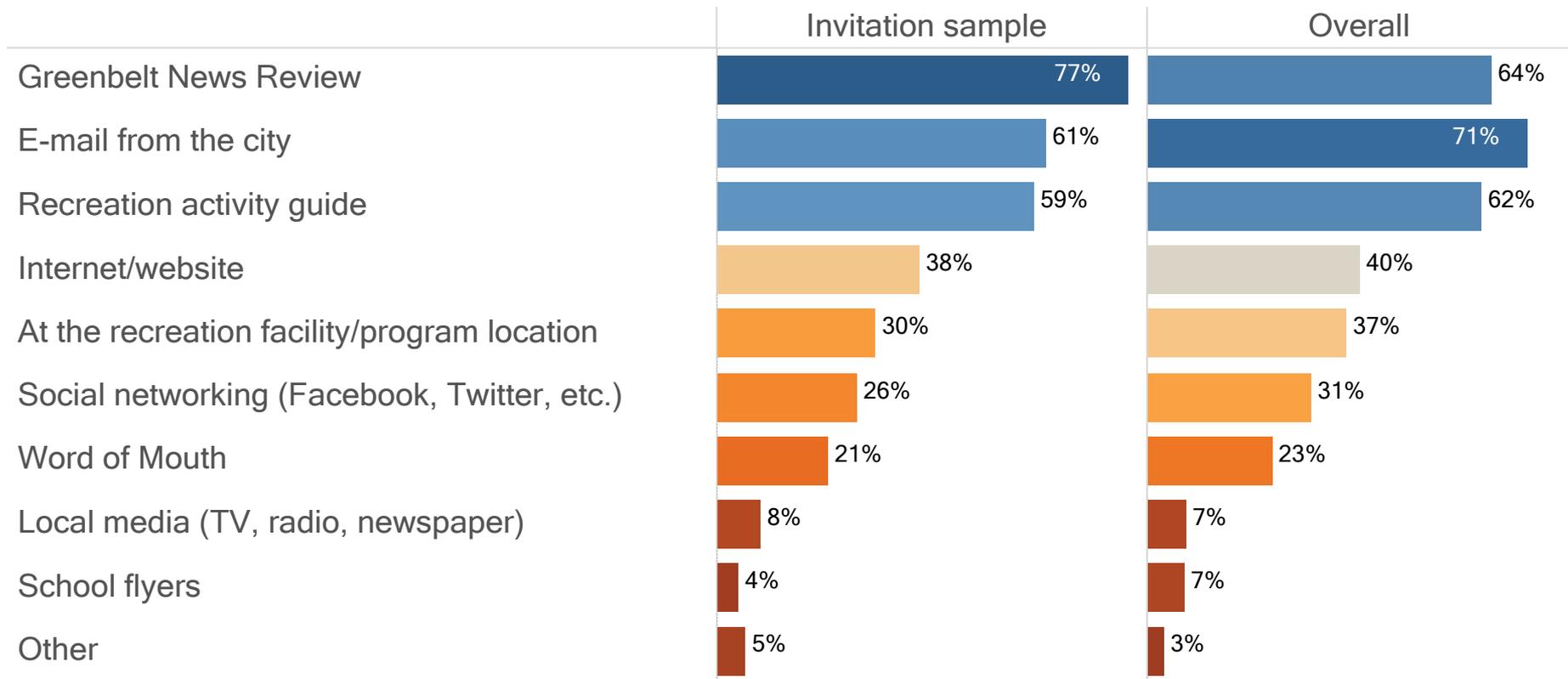
Source: RRC Associates



# BEST WAY TO RECEIVE INFORMATION

Respondents indicated the Greenbelt News Review (77%), emails from the city (61%), and the recreation activity guide (59%) as the best avenues to receive information. In a second tier of responses, Internet/website and at the recreation facility/program location were selected (38% and 30% respectively). Overall responses preferred e-mail over all other communication avenues.

## Greenbelt Recreation Survey | Best Way to Reach You With Parks & Recreation Information



Source: RRC Associates



SUGGESTIONS



# ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

At the end of the survey, respondents were given the opportunity to provide any additional comments or suggestions about parks and recreation facilities and programs in the City of Greenbelt. Themes that came up frequently throughout the survey were again prominent in this comment field, such as more advertisement of programs, high satisfaction with current offerings, and further inclusion of specific amenities to better meet needs (e.g. playground improvements, more classes, increased trail connectivity). A selection of verbatim invitation responses is shown below. The full listing of responses is provided in the appendix.

*The City of Greenbelt's Parks and Recreation program does a great job providing programs and caring for facilities.*

*I am very pleased with the Senior programs and assistance available. I use them OFTEN for my mother. I would like to see more advertisement of these programs to that others may utilize their services.*

*While I can afford to spend money on parks and recreation I don't want to make it unaffordable for the general public. It's important that everyone has access to these resources.*

*Trails need to connect with other Prince George's trails without traveling along or across major roadways. Greenbelt trails need to interconnect without traveling along or across major roadways.*

*Please make Greenbelt more bicycle friendly!*

*The small area of land soon to be seeded to Greenbelt inside of Greenbelt Station that is currently undeveloped would be PERFECT for a dog park or a small splash pad!*

# APPENDIX D: INVENTORY SPREADSHEET

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