

# City of Littleton Parks, Recreation & Trails Master Plan Survey Final Results

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# ***Table of Contents***

<b>INTRODUCTION &amp; METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CURRENT USE OF PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Knowledge of/Familiarity with Parks and Recreation Opportunities .....	5
Most Frequently Used Facilities/Amenities in Littleton.....	6
Most Frequently Used Facilities/Amenities Outside Littleton .....	7
Public Facilities/Parks .....	7
Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational/Fitness Facilities .....	8
Reasons for Limited Usage of Parks & Recreation Facilities.....	10
Quality of Current Littleton Facilities and Programs.....	11
Importance of Facilities to Household .....	12
Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities .....	15
Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Facilities .....	18
Importance of Programs to Household.....	20
Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs .....	23
Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Programs .....	26
Repurposing Amenities.....	28
Transportation to Facilities .....	29
<b>FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Most Important Factors that Would Increase Use of Facilities .....	30
<b>COMMUNICATION .....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEES.....</b>	<b>32</b>
Impact of Fee Increases.....	32
Allocation of Funding.....	33
<b>DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INVITATION &amp; OPEN-LINK SAMPLES.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>35</b>
Importance of Parks and Recreation Amenities to Household.....	35
Facilities .....	35
Programs.....	35
Most Important Factors that Would Increase Use of Facilities .....	40
Allocation of Funding.....	43
<b>ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS .....</b>	<b>46</b>

# ***Table of Figures***

Figure 1: Demographic Profile .....	3
Figure 2: Residential Profile .....	4
Figure 3: Familiarity with Local Recreation Opportunities .....	5
Figure 4: Top Three Parks & Recreation Facilities/Amenities Used in the City of Littleton .....	6
Figure 5: Usage of Public Facilities and Parks Outside of Littleton.....	7
Figure 6: Frequency of Usage of Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational Facilities Outside Littleton.....	8
Figure 7: Top Three Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational Facilities Used Outside of Littleton	9
Figure 8: Are you willing to pay to have these types of amenities/programs located closer to your home or work? .....	9
Figure 9: Ratings of Littleton Facilities and Programs .....	11
Figure 10: Importance of Littleton Facilities.....	13
Figure 11: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating .....	14
Figure 12: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Facilities.....	16
Figure 13: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Facilities – Average Rating .....	17
Figure 14: Current Facilities – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix.....	19
Figure 15: Importance of Littleton Programs .....	21
Figure 16: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating .....	22
Figure 17: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Programs .....	24
Figure 18: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Programs – Average Rating .....	25
Figure 19: Current Programs – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix .....	27
Figure 20: Are there any parks and recreation amenities currently available in Littleton that should be considered for different uses (“repurposed”)? .....	28
Figure 21: Typical and Most Preferred Mode of Travel to Facilities .....	29
Figure 22: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities .....	30
Figure 23: Best Method for Reaching You .....	31
Figure 24: Newspapers Most Frequently Used .....	32
Figure 25: Potential Impact of Fee Increases on Current Level of Participation .....	32
Figure 26: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount .....	33
Figure 27: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating .....	36
Figure 28: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating .....	37
Figure 29: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating .....	38
Figure 30: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating .....	39
Figure 31: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities .....	41
Figure 32: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities .....	42
Figure 33: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount .....	44
Figure 34: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount .....	45

## INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on City of Littleton and South Suburban Park and Recreation District parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. This survey research effort and subsequent analyses were designed to assist the City of Littleton in updating the City's Parks, Recreation, and Trails Master Plan for existing and future enhancements, facilities, and services.

The survey was conducted using three primary methods: 1) a mail-back survey, 2) an online, invitation-only web survey to further encourage response from those residents already within the defined invitation sample, and 3) 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 invitation sample. However, open-link responses are additionally analyzed and discussed in a separate section of the report, highlighting differences and similarities between the invitation sample and the open-link responses.

The primary list source used for the mailing was a third party list purchased from Gravis Marketing, a political marketing agency that specializes in polling and surveys. Gravis provides consumer lists for U.S. addresses as well as automated robocalls. The Gravis list included renters in addition to homeowners, and residents who are not registered to vote in addition to registered voters.

A total of approximately 3,600 surveys were mailed to a random sample of Littleton residents in November 2015. After accounting for undeliverable addresses (361 total), approximately 3,200 survey mailings were delivered and 404 responses were received, resulting in a fairly high response rate of 12.6 percent. The margin of error for the 404 statistically valid responses is approximately +/- 4.9 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response<sup>1</sup>. The open-link survey received an additional 288 responses.

The underlying data were weighted by age to ensure appropriate representation of Littleton residents across different demographic cohorts in the sample. Using the 2013 U.S. Census American Community Survey five-year estimates, the age distribution within the invitation respondent sample was matched to the 2013 demographic profile of the City of Littleton.

Due to variable response rates by some segments of the population, the underlying results, while weighted to best match the overall demographics of residents of Littleton, may not be completely representative of some sub-groups of the population.

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<sup>1</sup> For the total invitation sample size of 404, margin of error is +/- 4.9 percent calculated for questions at 50% response (if the response for a particular question is "50%"—the standard way to generalize margin of error is to state the larger margin, which occurs for responses at 50%). Note that the margin of error is different for every single question response on the survey depending on the resultant sample sizes, proportion of responses, and number of answer categories for each question. Comparison of differences in the data between various segments, therefore, should take into consideration these factors. As a general comment, it is sometimes more appropriate to focus attention on the general trends and patterns in the data rather than on the individual percentages.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the report details the respondent demographics and household profile of the invitation and open-link samples. By comparing these two sample groups, we are able to understand contrasting response patterns for various questions on the survey. The demographic profiles of response are portrayed in Figure 1 below.

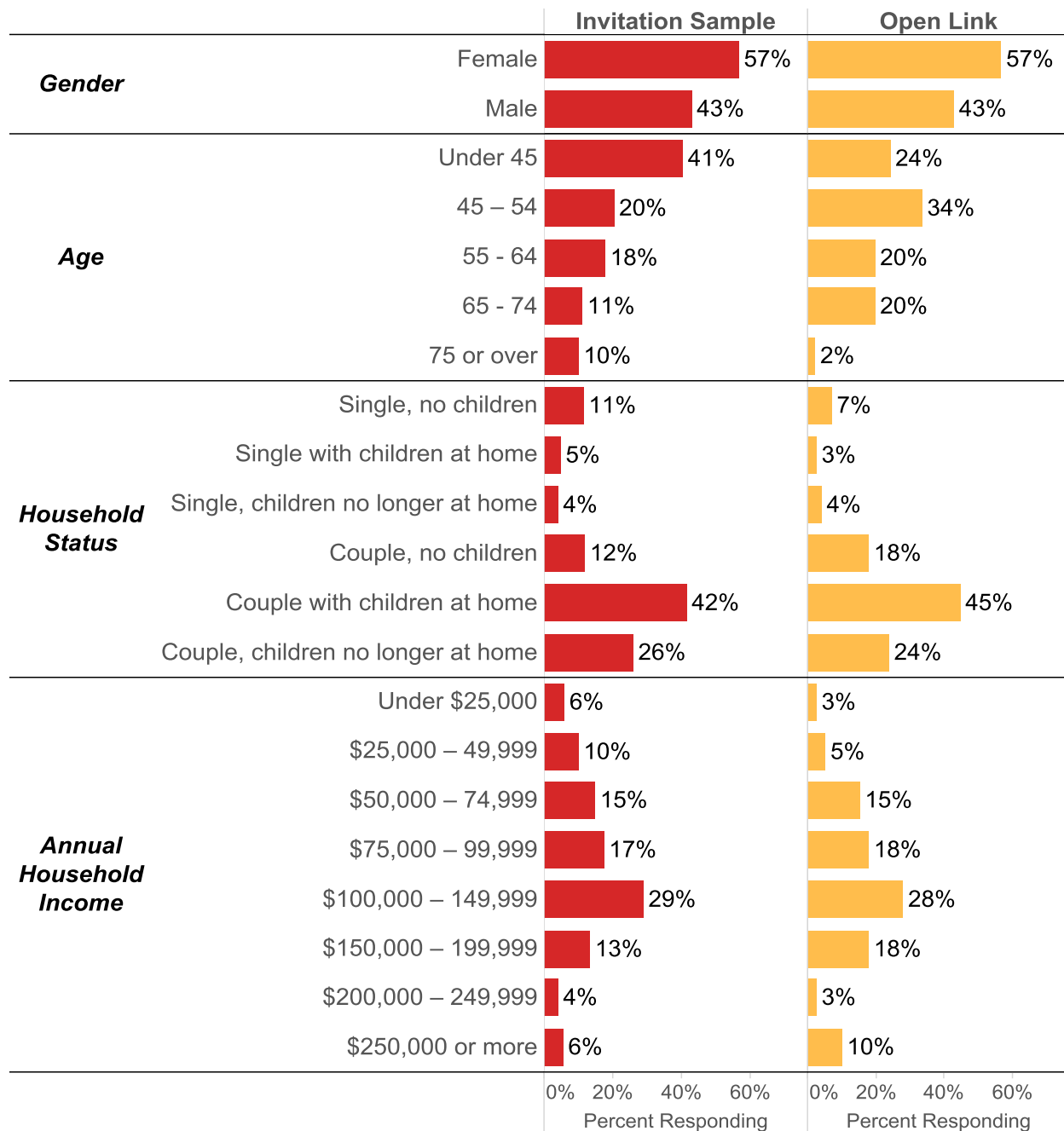
- Gender. Slightly over half (57 percent) of both invitation and open-link respondents are female, while the other 43 percent are male.
- Age. Two in five invitation sample respondents are under age 45 (41 percent), while a smaller share of open-link respondents falls within this age category (24 percent). Thirty-eight percent of invitation respondents are between the ages of 45 and 64, and 21 percent are age 65 or older. The open-link sample had stronger representation from respondents age 45 to 64 (53 percent).
- Household Profile. Almost half of invitation sample respondents live with children at home (47 percent), while an additional 30 percent are empty nesters, 12 percent are couples without children, and 11 percent are singles without children. The open-link sample had a generally similar household profile.

A majority of both invitation respondents (80 percent) and open-link respondents (86 percent) reported being in a couple.

- Household Income. Slightly under half of both invitation (48 percent) and open-link households (41 percent) report household incomes under \$100,000 annually. Forty-two percent of invitation respondents reported household earnings of between \$100,000 and \$199,999 each year, and 10 percent make over \$200,000 a year.
- Ethnicity/Race. Ninety-seven percent of invitation sample respondents identified themselves as white, 1 percent identified themselves as Asian/Asian Indian/Pacific Islander, 1 percent identified themselves as African-American, and 2 percent identified themselves as belonging to some other race. The open-link sample was slightly more racially diverse, with 94 percent identifying themselves as white.

Four percent of invitation respondents and two percent of open-link respondents identified themselves as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Figure 1: Demographic Profile

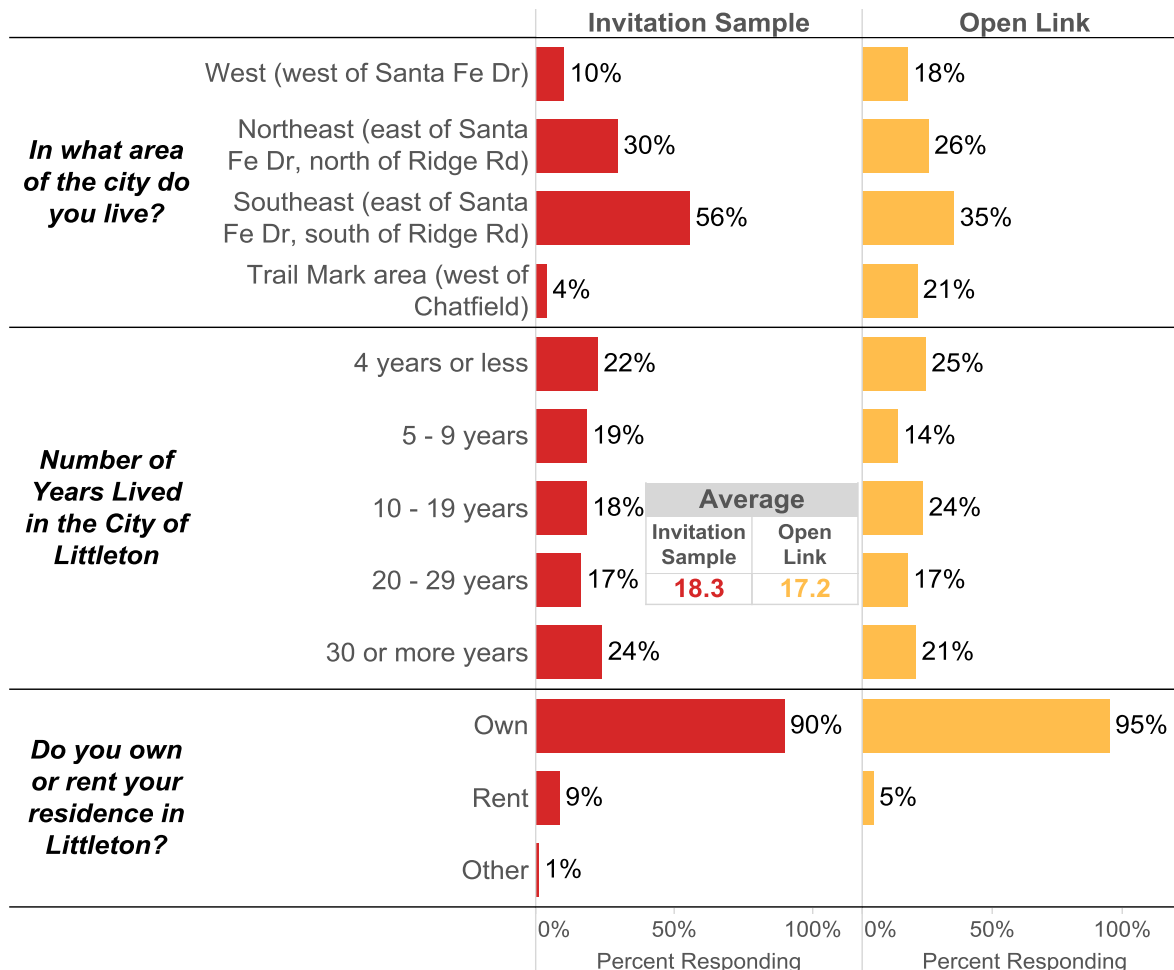


- Area of Residence. Over half of invitation sample respondents live in the southeast area of Littleton, east of Santa Fe Drive and south of Ridge Road (56 percent). Thirty percent live in the northeast or north of Ridge Road, and 10 percent live west of Santa Fe Drive. An additional four percent live in the TrailMark area. The open link had a more even split by

neighborhood, with 35 percent from the southeast area, 26 percent from the northeast, 18 percent from the west, and 21 percent from TrailMark.

- **Years in the Littleton Area.** Invitation respondents have generally lived in Littleton for a long period of time, with 41 percent having lived there for twenty or more years and an average length of 18.3 years. Open link respondents are typically slightly newer to the area, with an average of 17.2 years lived in Littleton.
- **Own or Rent.** A majority of both invitation respondents (90 percent) and open-link respondents (95 percent) indicated that they own their residence in Littleton.
- **Voter Registration.** Almost all respondents in both samples are registered to vote in the City of Littleton (94 percent invitation, 96 percent open link).
- **Household Need for ADA-Accessible Facilities.** Six percent of the invitation sample and five percent of the open-link sample indicated that their household has a need for ADA-accessible facilities.

Figure 2: Residential Profile



## CURRENT USE OF PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

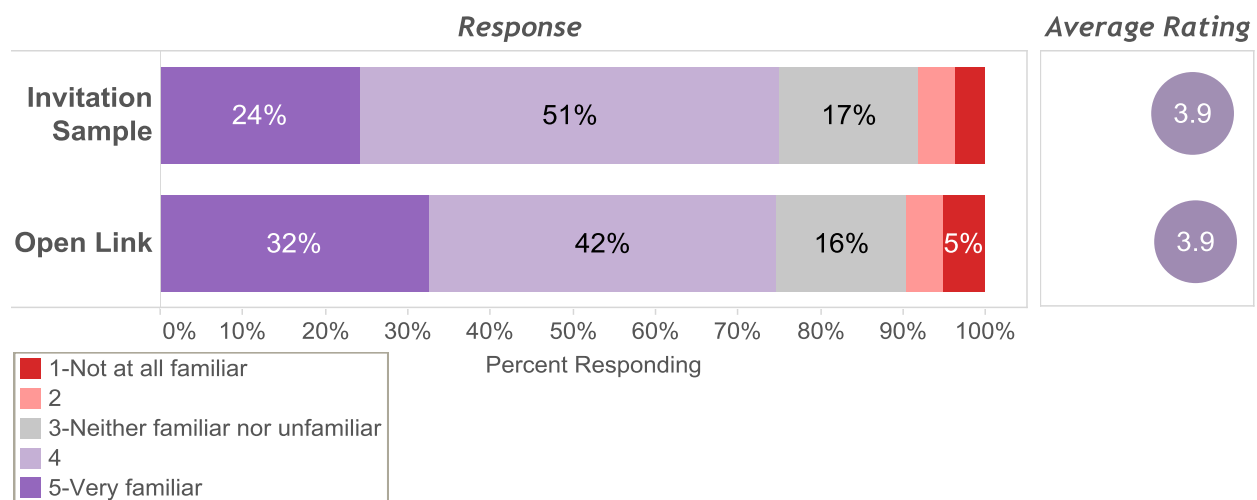
The remainder of the report explores the findings from the invitation sample. Open-link sample results are portrayed in the graphs alongside invitation sample results; however, in an effort to focus on the statistically valid sample, only the invitation sample is discussed in the text accompanying these graphs. Differences between the two sample sources are discussed in a later section of the report.

This section outlines the survey findings regarding current usage of programs and facilities, within the City of Littleton as well as outside of the city. First, respondents were asked to list the facilities they use most and identify the frequency with which they use these facilities. Then, they were asked to rate the importance of various current facilities and programs to their household and indicate the degree to which each of these facilities and programs meets community needs. Finally, they were asked about “repurposing” facilities and about transportation to and from the facilities. The results from each of these questions are discussed in turn below.

### Knowledge of/Familiarity with Parks and Recreation Opportunities

Respondents were asked to rate their level of familiarity with current parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services provided in Littleton on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all familiar” and 5 means “very familiar.” Familiarity ratings were generally high, with three in four invitation respondents (75 percent) indicating that they are familiar with the local amenities (providing a “4 or “5” rating) and an average rating of 3.9.

Figure 3: Familiarity with Local Recreation Opportunities



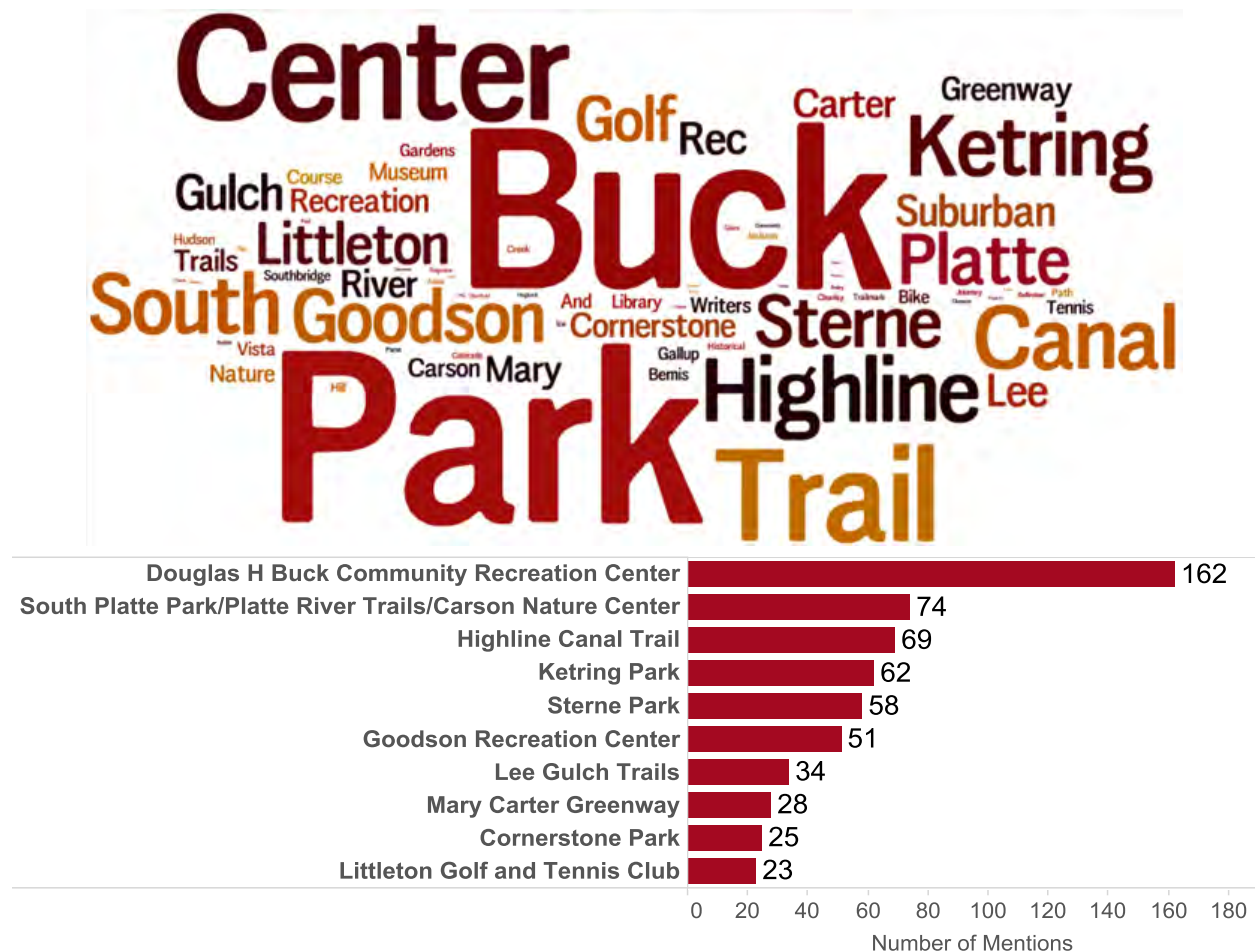


## Most Frequently Used Facilities/Amenities in Littleton

Respondents were prompted to list the three parks and recreation facilities and amenities in the City of Littleton that their household most often uses. Figure 4 is a “word cloud” illustrating the invitation sample responses received, with more prominent words representing words that were mentioned more frequently by respondents. The word cloud is accompanied by a graph summarizing the word counts of the ten top facilities identified.

As shown, the Buck Recreation Center is the most frequently used facility among invitation respondents, with 162 mentions. Following distantly is the South Platte Park/Platte River Trails/Carson Nature Center (74 mentions), the Highline Canal Trail (69 mentions), Ketring Park (62 mentions), and Sterne Park (58 mentions).

Figure 4: Top Three Parks & Recreation Facilities/Amenities Used in the City of Littleton



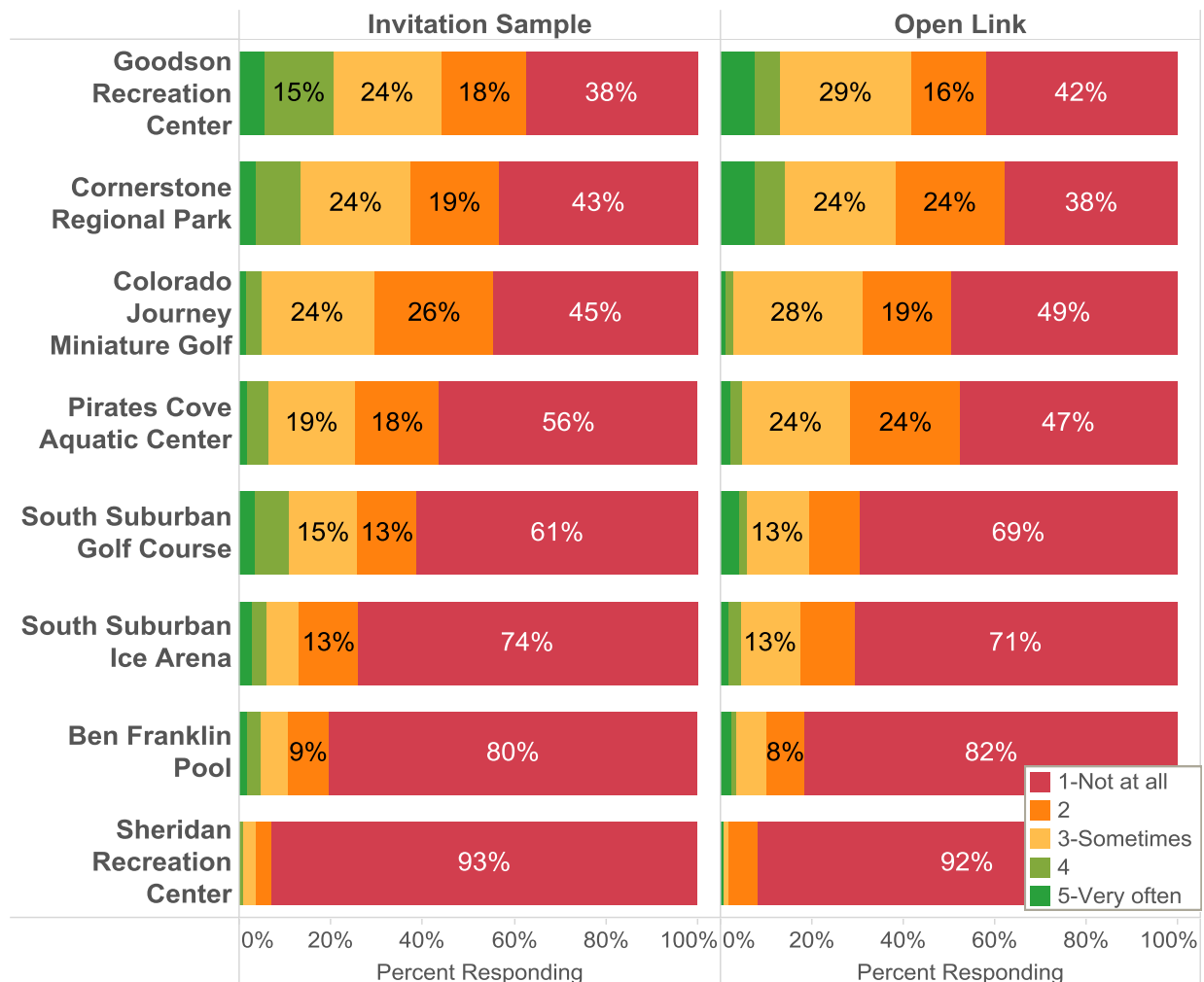
## Most Frequently Used Facilities/Amenities Outside Littleton

Respondents were asked to identify both public and private recreational facilities that they commonly utilize located outside of Littleton city limits. The findings regarding usage of public facilities are discussed first, followed by the results on private facilities.

### Public Facilities/Parks

Respondents were provided a list of public facilities and parks outside the City of Littleton and were asked to rate the frequency of their usage on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 meaning “not at all” and 5 meaning “very often.” Usage of outside public facilities was relatively low among invitation respondents, with a majority of respondents providing a “1” rating for many of the facilities (indicating that they do not use the facilities). However, respondents indicated that they do use a few facilities, including the Goodson Recreation Center (62 percent of those who answered said they use it), Cornerstone Regional Park (57 percent) and Colorado Journey Miniature Golf (55 percent).

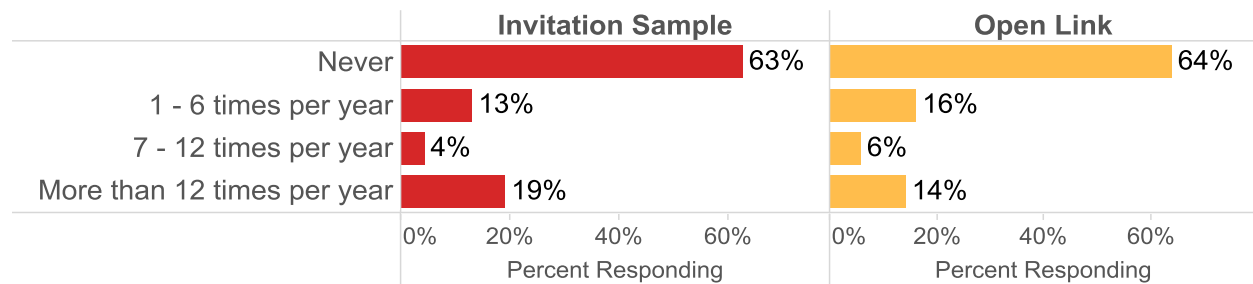
Figure 5: Usage of Public Facilities and Parks Outside of Littleton



### Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational/Fitness Facilities

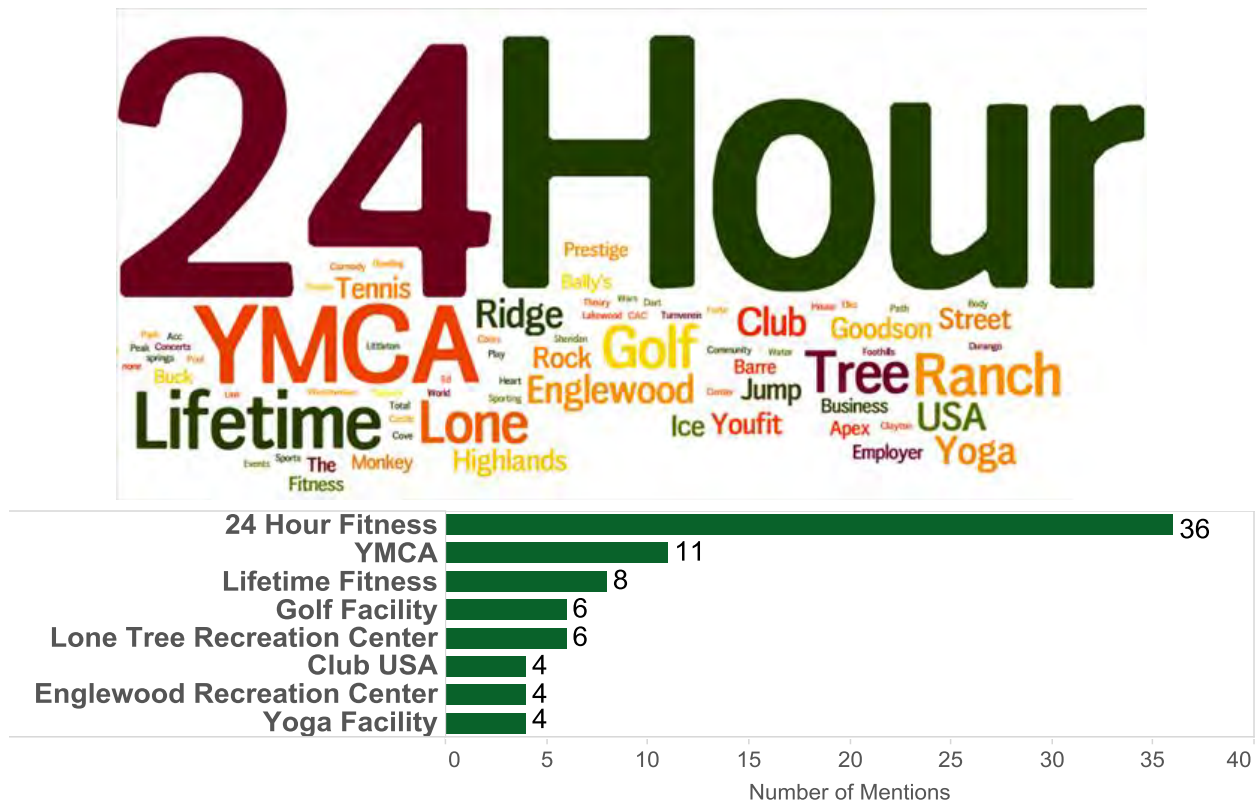
After an examination of the public facilities used, respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they use privately-operated indoor recreational or fitness facilities outside of Littleton and then identify specific facilities that they use. Similar to the low usage noted in public facilities, privately-operated recreational facilities are not commonly used, with 63 percent of invitation respondents indicating that they do not use privately-operated indoor facilities outside Littleton. However, approximately one in five respondents (19 percent) indicated that they use these facilities more than once a month.

**Figure 6: Frequency of Usage of Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational Facilities Outside Littleton**



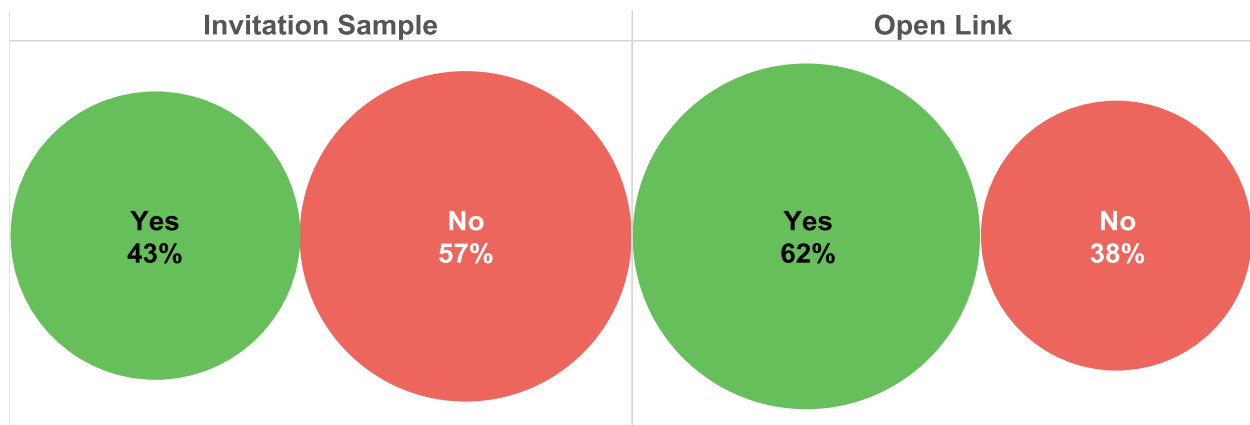
Respondents were then asked to list up to three privately-operated indoor recreational and fitness facilities outside of Littleton that they use. Figure 7 depicts a word cloud of responses as well as a count of the facilities mentioned. The top privately-operated facility used outside of Littleton by far was 24-Hour Fitness, with 36 mentions in the comments. Following were the YMCA (11 mentions), Lifetime Fitness (8 mentions), a golf facility (6 mentions), and the Lone Tree Recreation Center (6 mentions).

**Figure 7: Top Three Privately-Operated Indoor Recreational Facilities Used Outside of Littleton**



A follow-up question asked respondents whether or not they would be willing to pay to have these types of recreational amenities and programs located closer to their home or work. Under half of invitation respondents (43 percent) indicated that they would be willing to pay for closer amenities.

**Figure 8: Are you willing to pay to have these types of amenities/programs located closer to your home or work?**



## Reasons for Limited Usage of Parks & Recreation Facilities

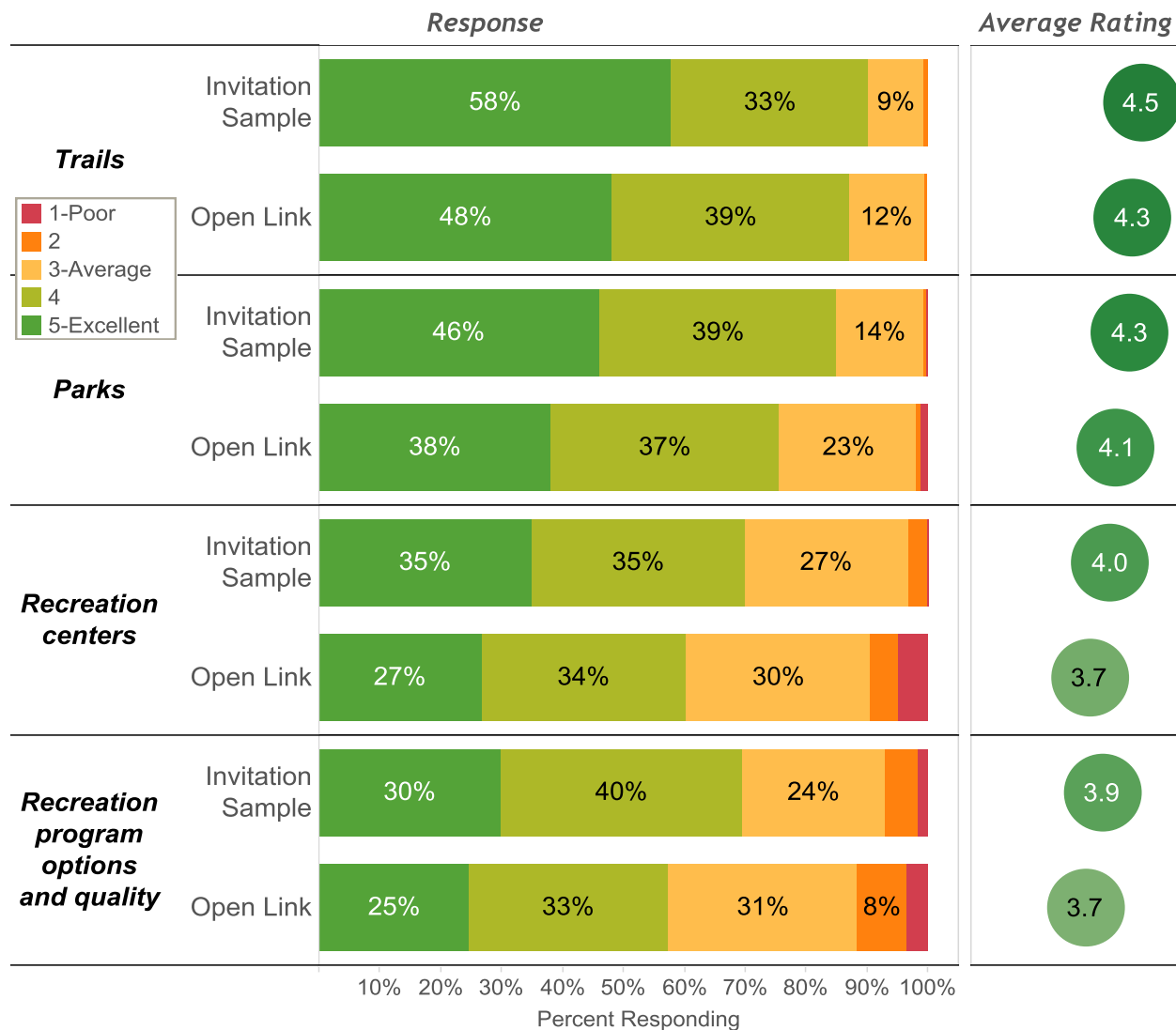
An open-ended question asked respondents, “In a few words, if you aren’t using parks and recreation facilities in Littleton as frequently as you would like, why not?” Below is a random sampling of verbatim comments received from invitation respondents. Though the comments should be read in their entirety for a thorough understanding, a few themes emerge from a summary analysis. Invitation respondents most frequently identified a lack of time as their primary reason for not using parks and recreation facilities as frequently as they would like to, followed by the cost, the distance or inconvenient location, and the lack of facilities that they desire.

- *“A lot of times, I forget they are there and get busy golfing at other facilities.”*
- *“Cost-prohibitive to lower income families. Not sure if scholarships or financial assistance is available.”*
- *“Getting older and children no longer at home”*
- *“I use local parks near my home. The recreational facilities are not near my home.”*
- *“Lifetime Fitness offers more fitness equipment/classes”*
- *“Low income”*
- *“Not as close to my home”*
- *“Not open enough hours”*
- *“Rec facilities are more expensive than private”*
- *“There is no local park close to my home. Runyon Elementary is the closest playground and it is very uninteresting to my children (very dated) and there is nowhere for adults to sit and keep watch that is in the shade.”*
- *“Time conflict with work”*
- *“Too far out of Trailmark”*
- *“Used them more when our children were at home will start to use them again now that we have grandchildren. The locations are currently not handy to work and home for us.”*
- *“We would like to see more large outdoor pools in our area. I live in the Overlook and there is nothing close by.”*
- *“Work schedule”*

## Quality of Current Littleton Facilities and Programs

Respondents rated the quality of current facilities and programs in Littleton on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “poor” and 5 is “excellent.” All items were rated quite highly by invitation respondents. Trails received the highest average rating (4.5) and largest share of respondents identifying it as a high quality amenity (providing a 4 or 5 response, 90 percent). Parks (average rating 4.3), recreation centers (4.0), and recreation program options and quality (3.9) were also rated highly.

Figure 9: Ratings of Littleton Facilities and Programs



## Importance of Facilities to Household

Respondents rated the importance of facilities in Littleton to their households on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important.” The percentage of invitation respondents providing each rating for each facility is illustrated in Figure 10. Light and dark blue segments represent “4” and “5” responses (indicating the respondent feels the facility is important), while dark and light red responses represent “1” and “2” responses (indicating the respondent feels the facility is unimportant). The facilities are sorted by their midpoint rating. Figure 11 depicts the average importance rating provided by invitation respondents for each facility. The highest average ratings and largest shares of “4” and “5” responses were given for the following facilities:

- Trails for walking/running (average rating 4.7; 92 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Parks (4.6 average; 93 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Trails for biking (4.3 average; 81 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Improved park amenities (4.3 average; 83 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation centers (4.2 average; 78 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Shade structures in parks (4.0 average; 70 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic facilities (3.9 average; 67 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Playgrounds (3.8 average; 67 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Picnic shelters (3.7 average; 61 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Multipurpose space (3.7 average; 57 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Indoor gym space (3.5 average; 52 percent rated 4 or 5)

A second tier of facilities that were rated as somewhat less important include athletic fields (average rating 3.3), ball fields (3.1), outdoor athletic fields and courts (3.1), and lights for outdoor athletic facilities (3.0).

A handful of facilities were identified as relatively unimportant to invitation respondents, receiving a larger share of respondents providing a “1” and “2” rating than the share providing a “4” or “5” rating. These facilities include fishing ponds, splash pads, dog parks, a golf course (each 2.9), tennis courts, exercise stations along trails in parks (each 2.8), outdoor basketball courts (2.7), disc golf (2.3), and pickleball courts (1.9). These facilities are generally less important to the majority of respondents.

**Figure 10: Importance of Littleton Facilities**  
**Invitation Sample Only**

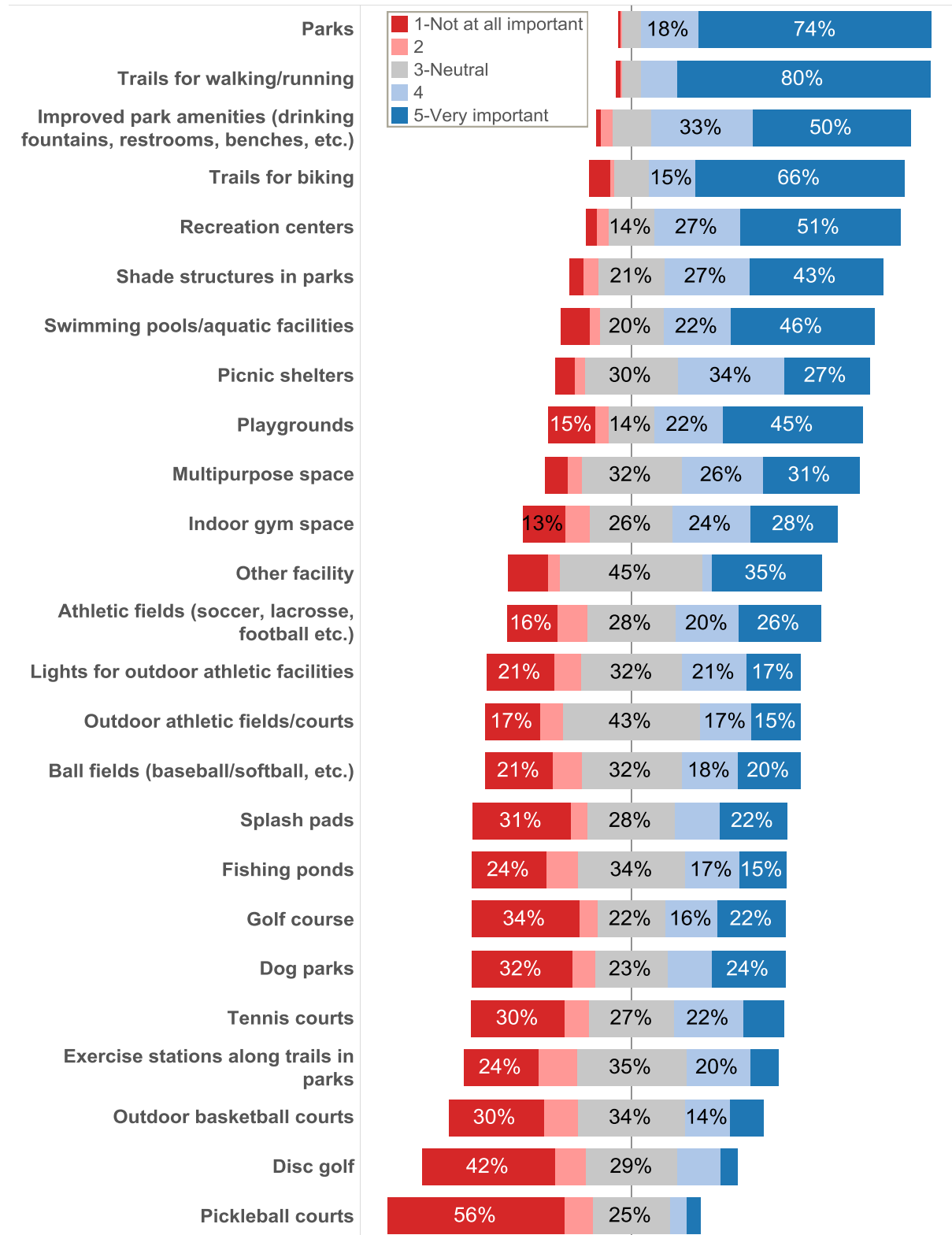
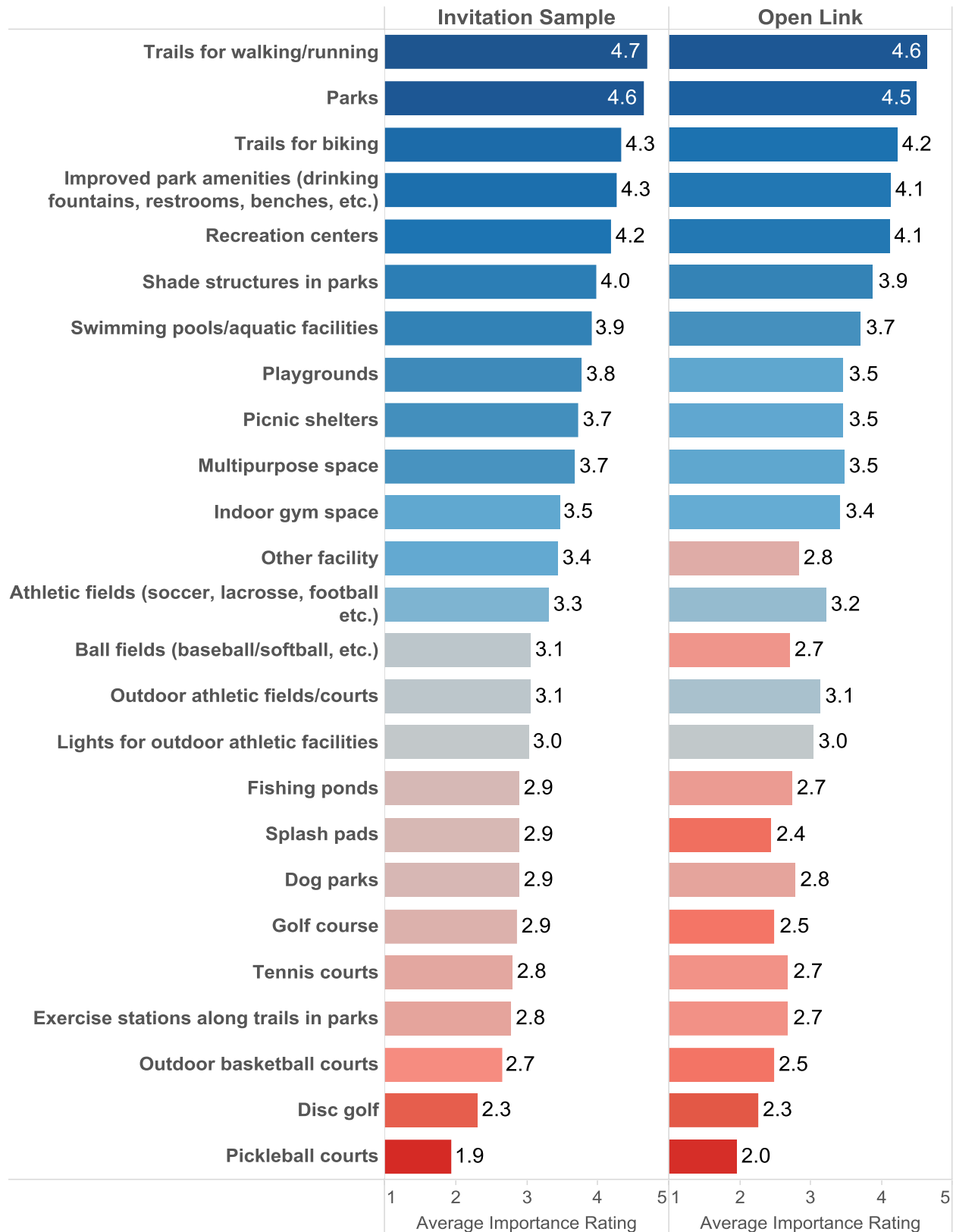




Figure 11: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating



## Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities

Using the same list of facilities, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel their community's needs are currently being met by each Littleton facility on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not at all" and 5 means "completely." Figure 12 shows the percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating, and these facilities are again sorted by their midpoint rating. The light and dark green portions are representative of "4" and "5" ratings (indicating that the respondent feels the community's needs are adequately met), and the dark and light red portions are representative of "1" and "2" ratings (indicating the respondent does not feel the community's needs are met). Figure 13 depicts average "needs-met" ratings. Overall, invitation respondents indicated that Littleton's needs are generally well met by current facilities. Almost all facilities received high average ratings and high proportions of "4" and "5" ratings among invitation respondents:

- Trails for walking/running (average rating 4.3; 86 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Trails for biking (4.3 average; 85 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Parks (4.2 average; 86 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Athletic fields (4.1 average; 75 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Recreation centers (4.1 average; 76 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Ball fields (4.0 average; 72 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Playgrounds (4.0 average; 74 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Golf course (3.9 average; 73 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Picnic shelters (3.8 average; 64 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor athletic fields/courts (3.8 average; 63 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Indoor gym space (3.8 average; 60 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Multipurpose space (3.8 average; 60 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swimming pools/aquatic facilities (3.7 average; 61 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Lights for outdoor athletic facilities (3.7 average; 60 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Shade structures in parks (3.7 average; 55 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Tennis courts (3.7 average; 57 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Dog parks (3.5 average; 51 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor basketball courts (3.5 average; 49 percent rated 4 or 5)

Several facilities received somewhat lower needs-met ratings. These facilities include improved park amenities (average rating 3.4), pickleball courts (3.4), fishing ponds, disc golf (each 3.3), splash pads (3.2), and exercise stations along trails in parks (3.0).

Figure 12: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Facilities

Invitation Sample Only

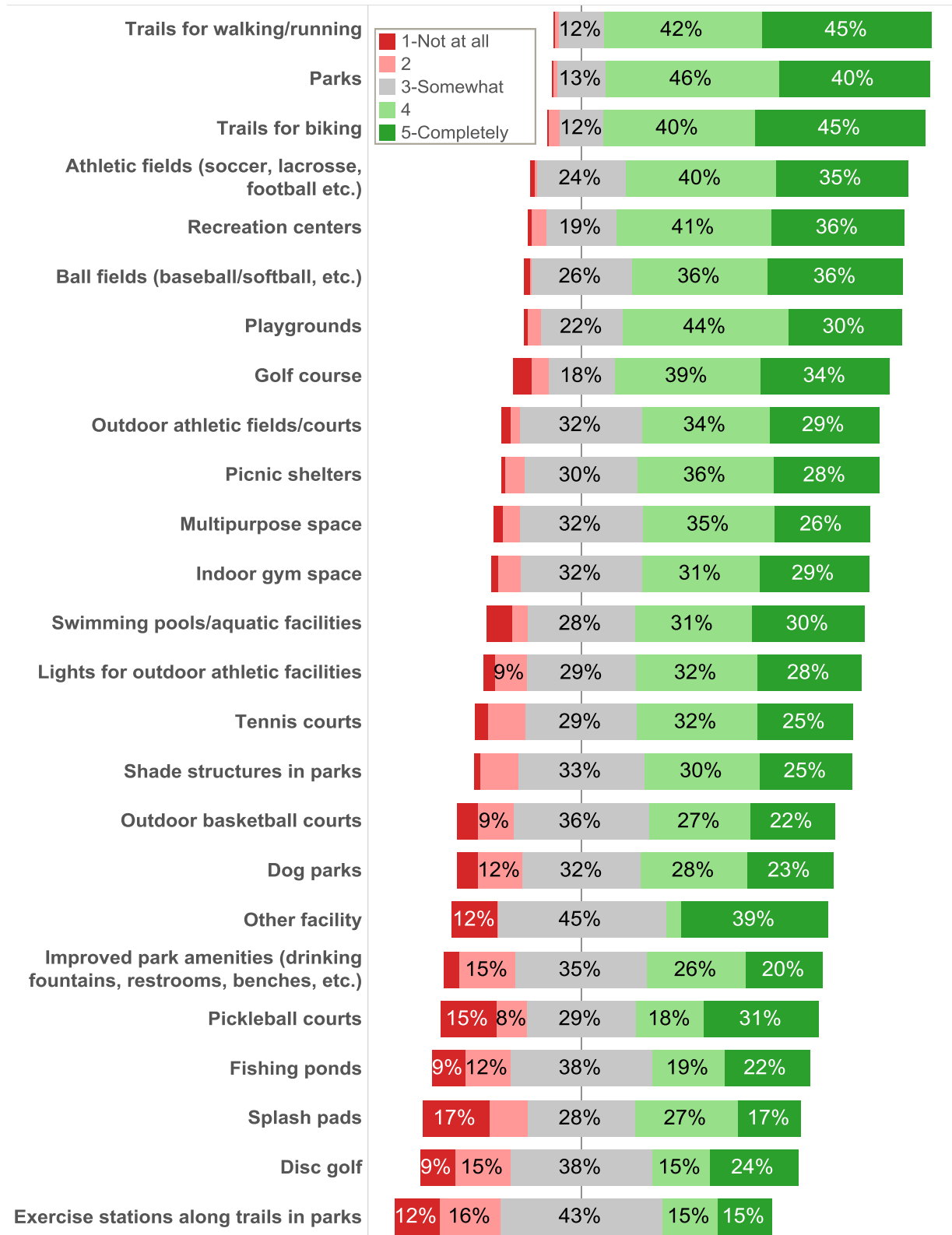
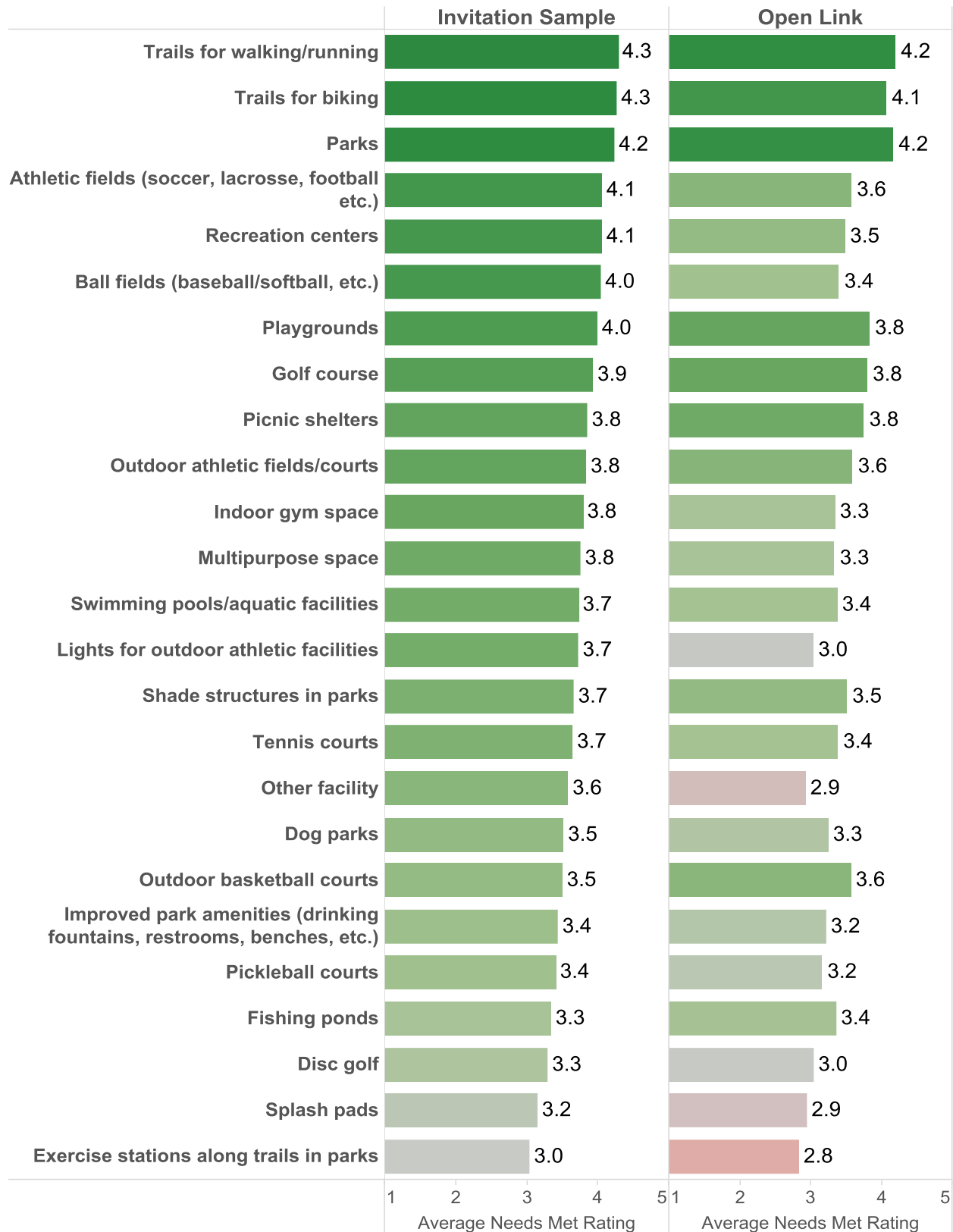


Figure 13: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Facilities – Average Rating



## Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Facilities

Plotting and comparing the facility ratings for level of importance and degree to which community needs are being met using an “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix is a useful exercise. Ratings are displayed in the matrix in Figure 14 using the midpoints for both questions to divide responses into four quadrants. The Importance scale midpoint was 3.2 (the median importance rating across all facilities); the Needs-Met midpoint was 3.7.

The upper right quadrant portrays facilities that have a high level of importance to respondents and are also meeting community needs adequately. These facilities are generally not in need of immediate improvement as needs are currently being met, but should be priorities for maintenance in the future as they are highly important to residents:

- Walking/running trails
- Parks
- Biking trails
- Recreation centers
- Playgrounds
- Picnic shelters
- Multipurpose space
- Indoor gym space
- Athletic fields

Facilities located in the upper left quadrant are also highly important but are not meeting community needs as well, suggesting that these are good candidates for potential improvements. Enhancements to these facilities may boost the degree to which respondents feel needs are met:

- Improved park amenities
- Swimming pools/aquatics
- Shade structures

Depicted in the lower right quadrant are facilities that are less important to most respondents, but are meeting community needs adequately. Evaluations of whether the resources supporting these facilities outweigh the benefits may be warranted:

- Ball fields
- Outdoor fields/courts
- Golf course

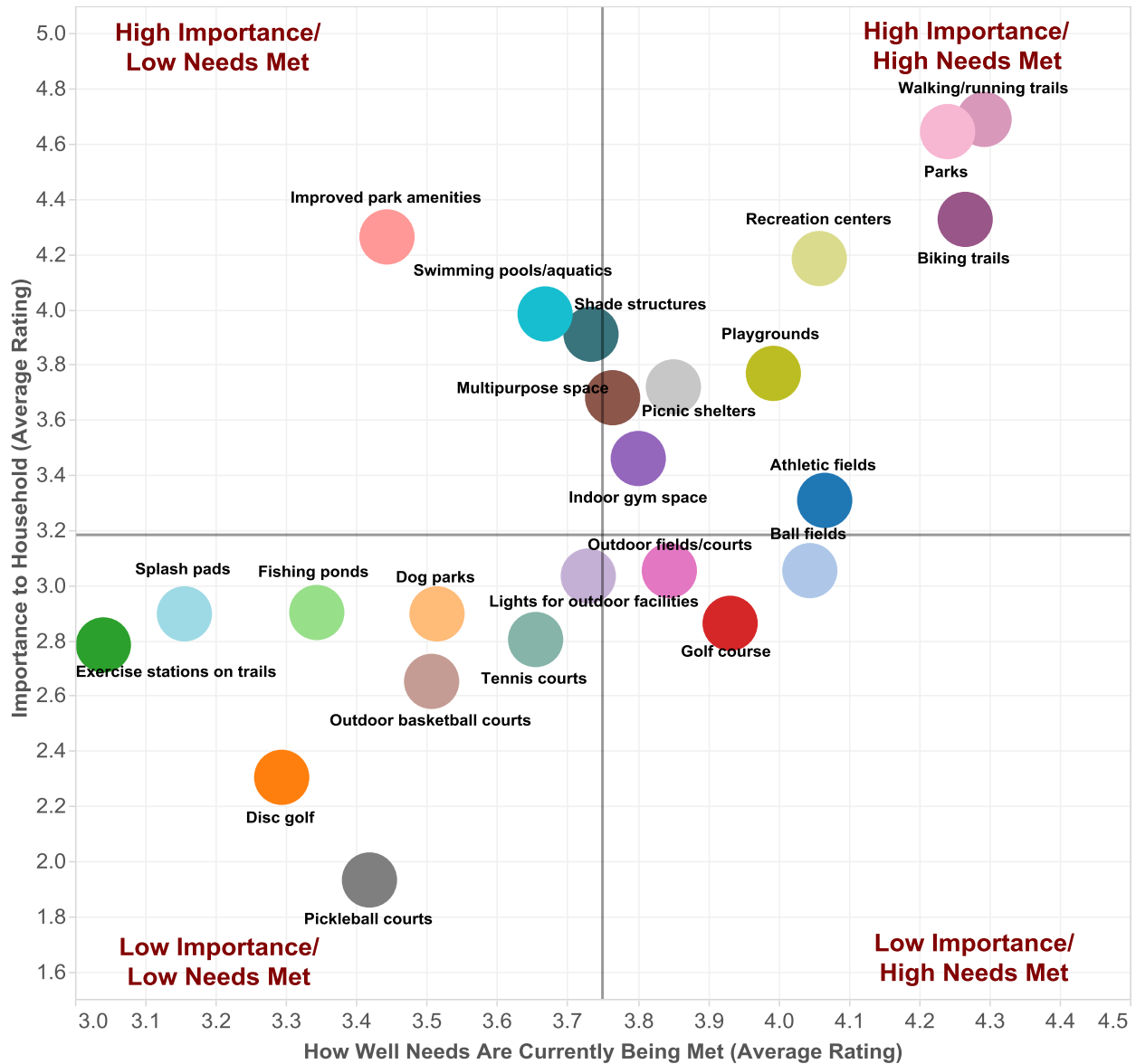
Finally, facilities found in the lower left quadrant are not meeting community needs well but are also important to a smaller number of households. These facilities, deemed “niche” amenities, generally have a small but passionate following, so measuring participation may be beneficial:

- Lights for outdoor facilities
- Dog parks

- Fishing ponds
- Splash pads
- Exercise stations along trails
- Tennis courts
- Outdoor basketball courts
- Disc golf
- Pickleball courts

Figure 14: Current Facilities – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix

Invitation Sample Only



## Importance of Programs to Household

Similarly, respondents rated the importance of programs in Littleton to their households on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important.” Figure 15 depicts the percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating for each program, with light and dark blue illustrating “4” and “5” responses (indicating the program is important) and dark and light red illustrating “1” and “2” responses (indicating the program is not important). Each program is then sorted amongst the others based on its midpoint rating. Figure 16 shows average importance ratings among invitation respondents for each program. The programs that received the highest average ratings and greatest proportions of “4” and “5” ratings include:

- Community events (average rating 4.2; 80 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Fitness and wellness programs (3.9 average; 67 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Nature programs (3.6 average; 55 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swim lessons/aquatic programs (3.6 average; 59 percent rated 4 or 5)

Programs with slightly lower ratings include volunteer opportunities, performing arts programs, outdoor adventure programs, arts programs (average rating 3.4 each), youth sports, youth programs (each 3.3), family/intergenerational programs, adult/senior programs (each 3.1), and adult/senior sports (3.0).

Cooking/enrichment classes (2.9) and adaptive recreation programs (2.8) received the lowest ratings, with a greater proportion of respondents indicating that these programs are unimportant than the proportion who indicated that they are important.

**Figure 15: Importance of Littleton Programs**  
Invitation Sample Only

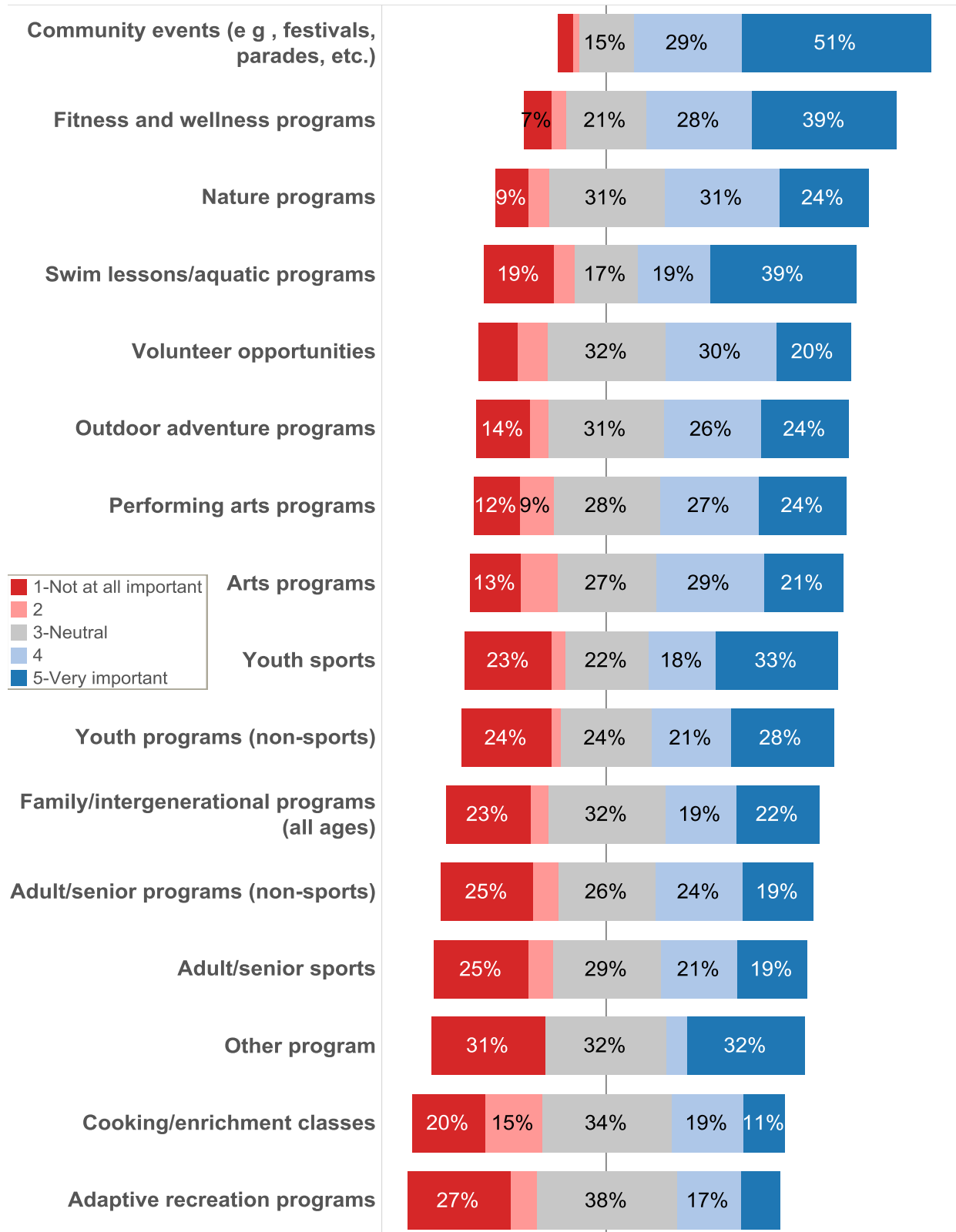
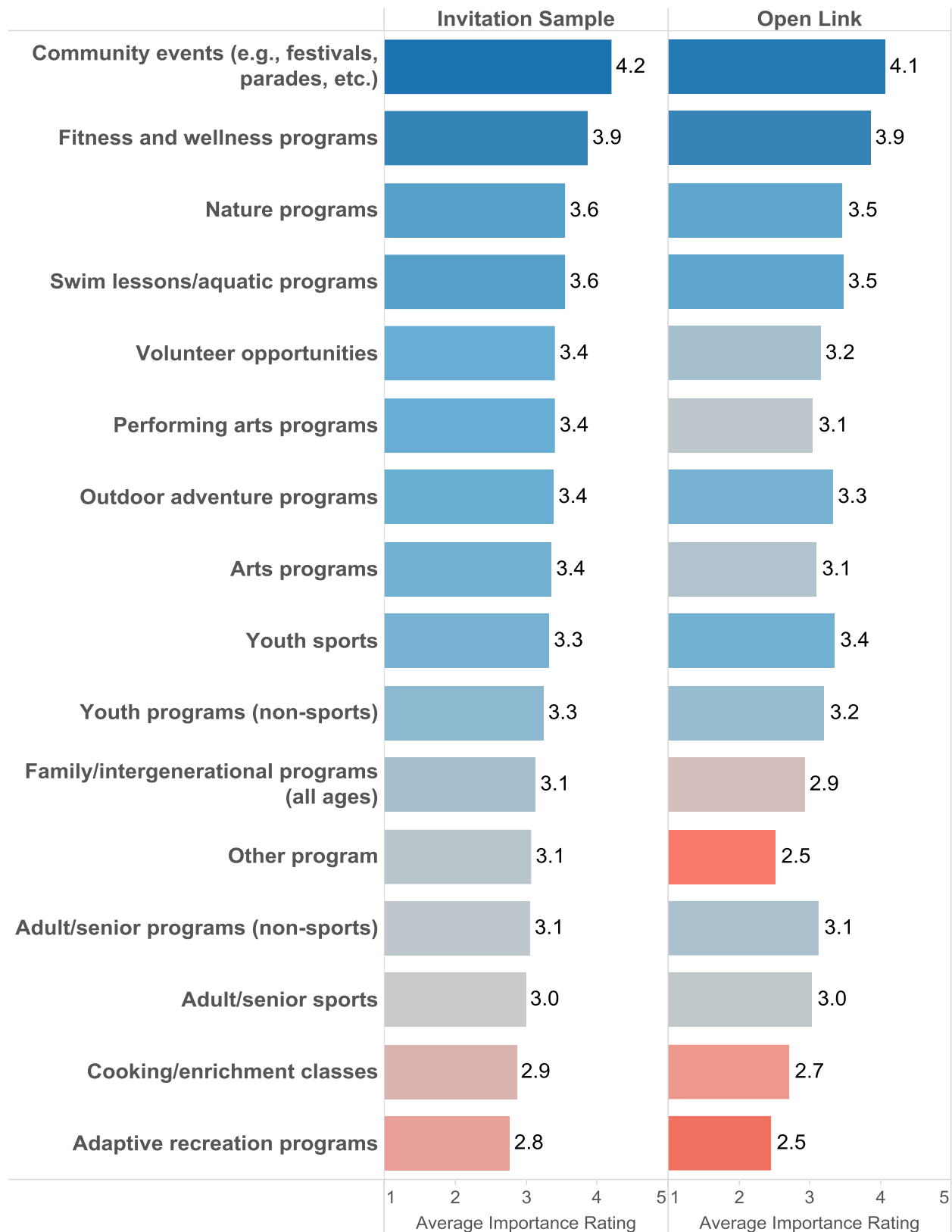




Figure 16: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating



## Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs

Using the same list, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel the community's needs are met by current programs in Littleton on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means "not at all" and 5 means "completely." Figure 17 illustrates the percentage of invitation respondents providing each rating. The light and dark green colored segments in the graph represent "4" and "5" responses respectively (indicating community needs are met), while the dark and light red colored segments represent "1" and "2" responses respectively (indicating community needs are unmet). Programs are sorted by their needs-met midpoint rating, and a summary of average ratings for each item is presented in Figure 18. Almost all programs received high average ratings and large shares of "4" or "5" responses from invitation respondents, including:

- Community events (average rating 4.2; 81 percent provided a 4 or 5 rating)
- Youth sports (3.9 average; 64 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Swim lessons/aquatic programs (3.8 average; 62 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adult/senior sports (3.8 average; 58 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Youth programs (3.7 average; 63 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Nature programs (3.7 average; 62 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adult/senior programs (3.7 average; 62 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Fitness and wellness programs (3.7 average; 59 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Volunteer opportunities (3.6 average; 56 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Performing arts programs (3.6 average; 56 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Outdoor adventure programs (3.5 average; 51 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Arts programs (3.5 average; 47 percent rated 4 or 5)
- Adaptive recreation programs (3.5 average; 47 percent rated 4 or 5)

A couple of programs received somewhat lower ratings, including family/intergenerational programs and cooking/enrichment programs (average rating 3.4). Though these average needs-met ratings are still fairly high on an objective basis, they are lower relative to the other programs, revealing areas that may be most in need of prioritization for future parks and recreation enhancements.

Figure 17: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Programs

Invitation Sample Only

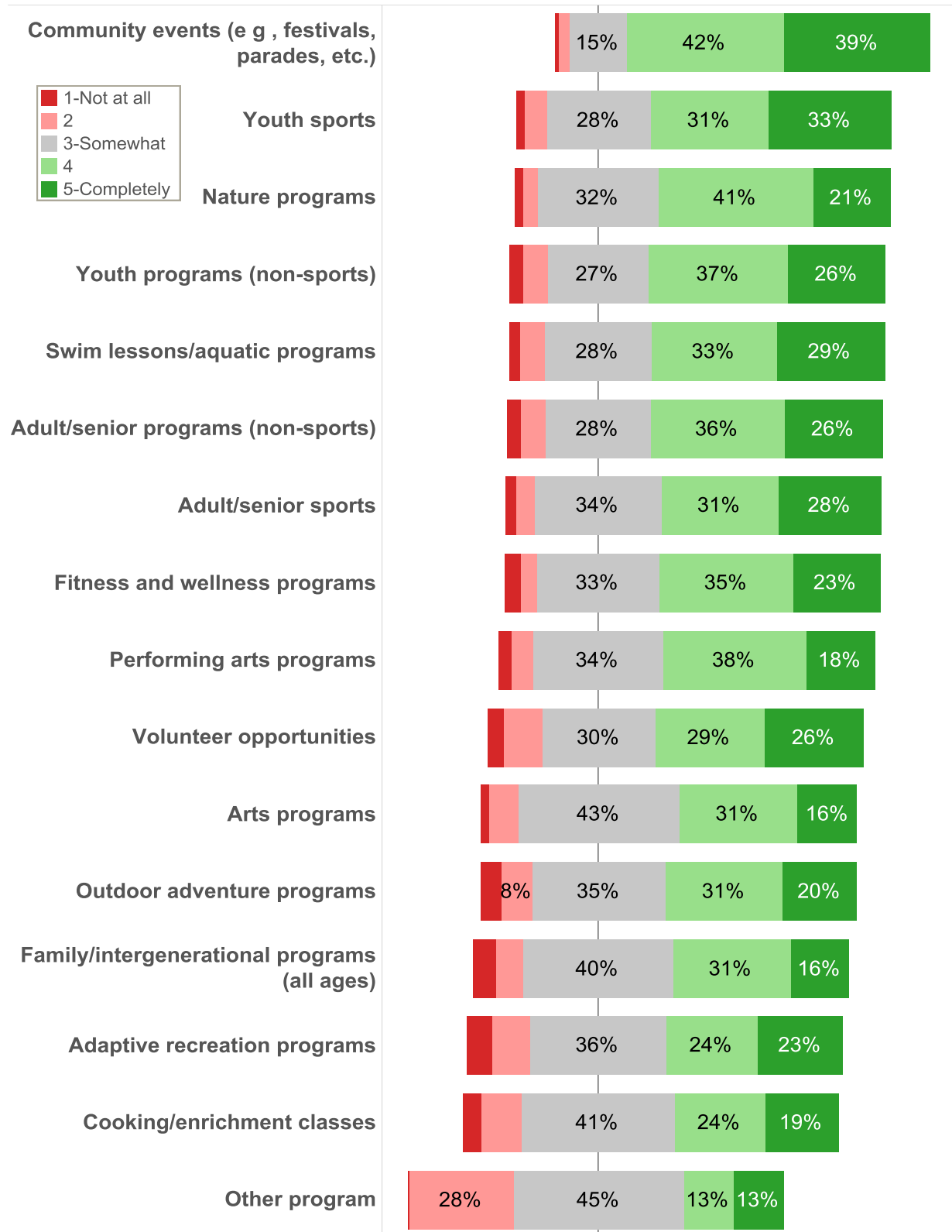
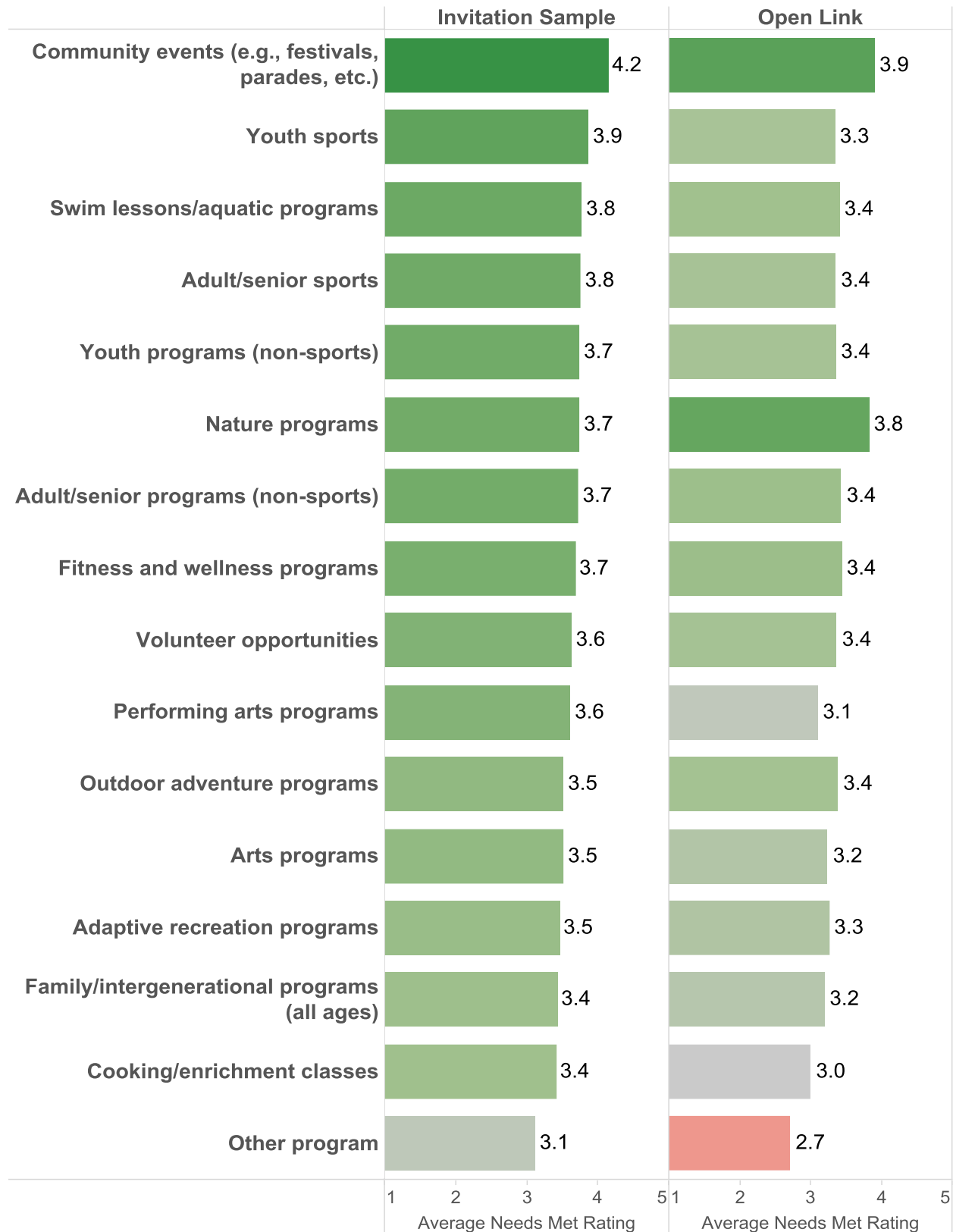


Figure 18: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Littleton Programs – Average Rating



## Importance vs. Needs-Met Matrix – Current Programs

Another “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix allows a similar comparison of programs based on level of importance and degree to which community needs are being met. Scores are illustrated in the matrix on the following page by using the mid-points for both questions to divide the grid into four quadrants. The Importance scale midpoint was 3.4 (the median importance rating across all programs); the Needs-Met scale midpoint was 3.7.

Illustrated in the upper right quadrant are programs that are highly important to respondent households and are also perceived to be meeting the needs of the community well. These programs are less of a priority for immediate improvements as community needs are currently being met, but should be maintained as they are important to residents:

- Community events
- Nature programs
- Swim lessons/aquatic programs
- Fitness and wellness programs (on the cusp of low needs met)

Programs displayed in the upper left quadrant are perceived as important by respondents but have a lower level of meeting community needs. To boost the degree to which residents feel their needs are met by programs overall, it may be advantageous to consider these programs for future improvements and enhancements:

- Volunteer opportunities
- Performing arts programs
- Outdoor adventure programs
- Arts programs (on the cusp of low importance)

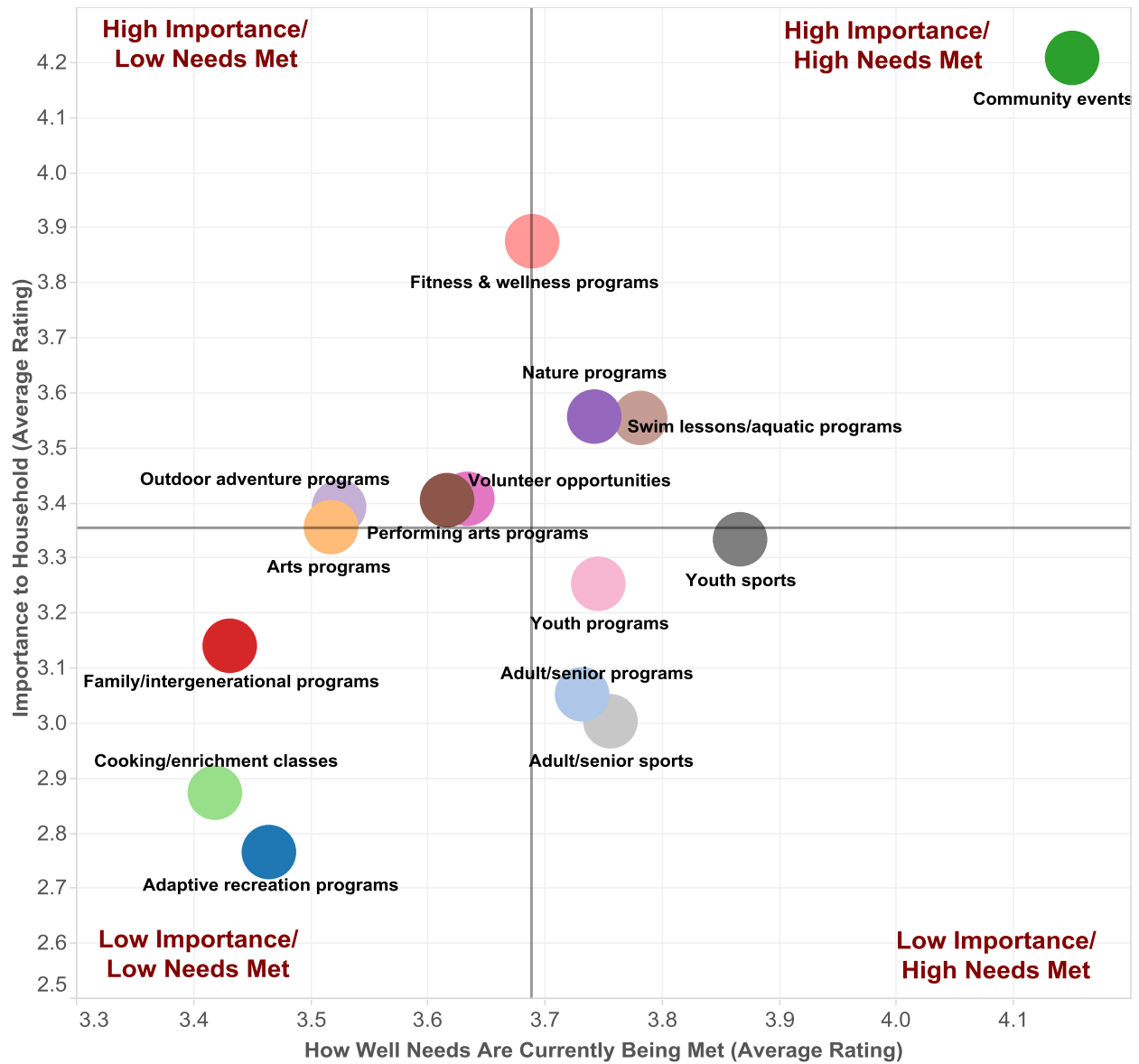
The lower right quadrant shows programs with a lower level of importance, but a relatively greater degree to which community needs are being met. An evaluation of the resources allocated towards these programs may be valuable to ensure funding is spent in the best way possible:

- Youth sports
- Youth programs
- Adult/senior programs
- Adult/senior sports

Lastly, programs in the lower left quadrant are not meeting community needs well even though they are only important to a small portion of the community. These “niche” programs should be monitored in the future to evaluate overall community usage and subsequent satisfaction:

- Family/intergenerational programs
- Cooking/enrichment classes
- Adaptive recreation programs

Figure 19: Current Programs – Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix  
Invitation Sample Only

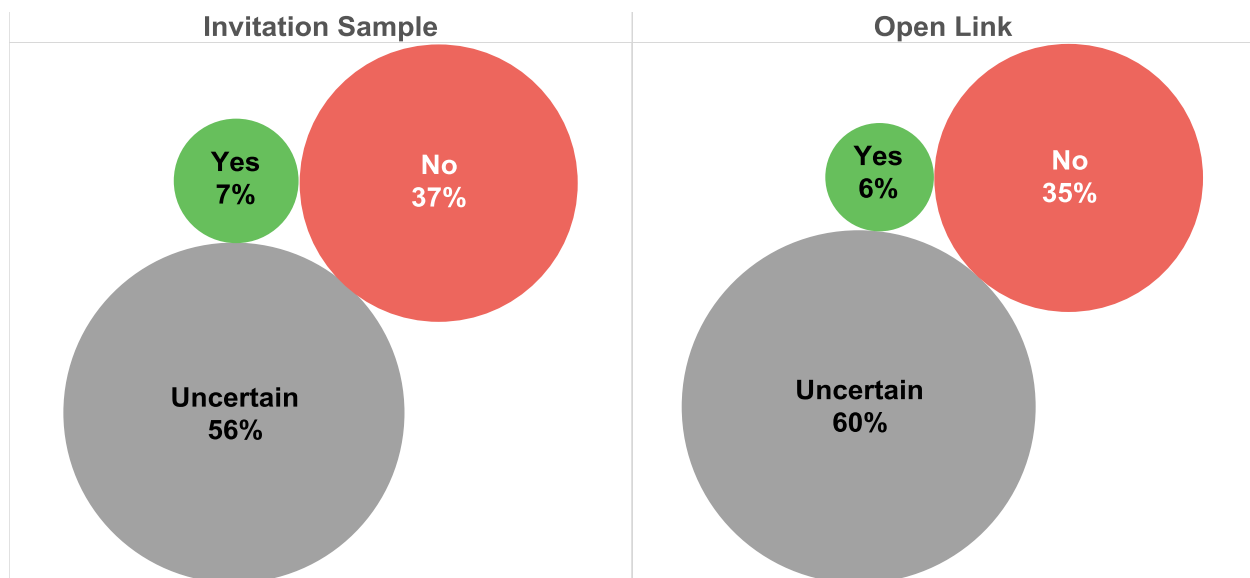


## Repurposing Amenities

Respondents were also asked a question about whether any current parks and recreation amenities in Littleton should be considered for different uses, or “repurposed,” in the next three to five years. Among invitation sample respondents, over half were uncertain (56 percent), while 37 percent said no and 7 percent indicated that there are facilities that should be repurposed.

Those who answered “yes” were asked a follow-up question about which specific facilities should be repurposed and how. Invitation respondents listed a diverse array of facilities to repurpose, including the Southbridge Pool, Ketrington Park, and a variety of other facilities, commenting mainly on a desire for additional parking and updated amenities.

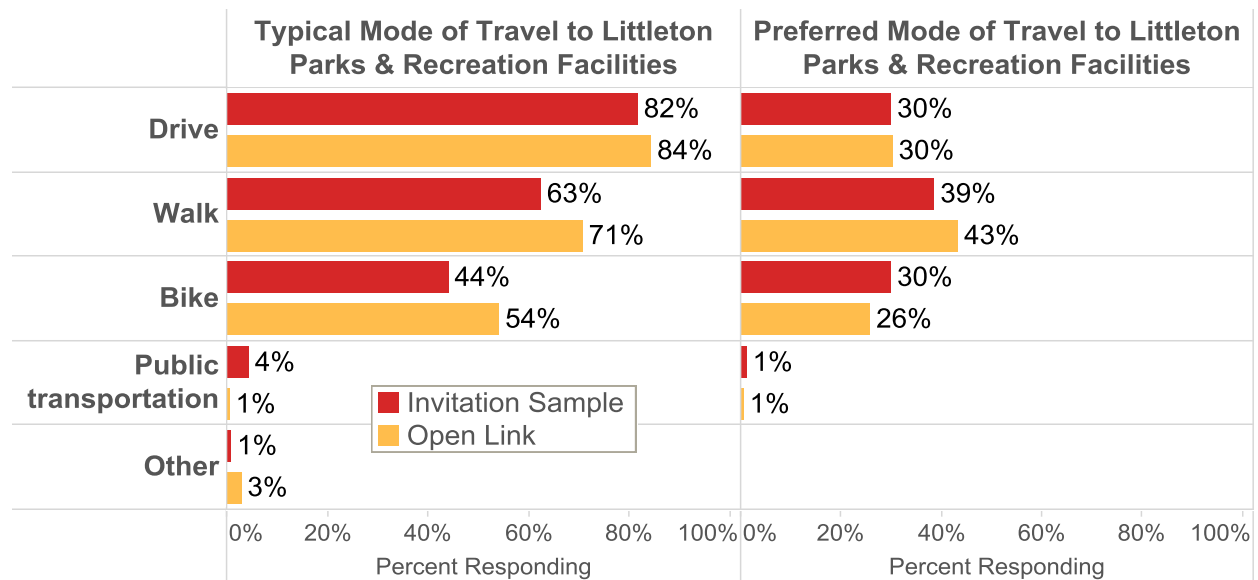
**Figure 20: Are there any parks and recreation amenities currently available in Littleton that should be considered for different uses (“repurposed”)?**



## Transportation to Facilities

A final question in this section of the survey asked respondents to identify their typical and most preferred mode of transport for traveling to parks and recreation facilities in Littleton. As is shown in Figure 21, invitation respondents reported that driving is their most typical mode of travel to the facilities (82 percent), followed by walking (63 percent), biking (44 percent), and public transportation (4 percent). When asked about their single most preferred method of transportation, the largest proportion of invitation respondents selected walking (39 percent), followed by driving and biking (each 30 percent).

**Figure 21: Typical and Most Preferred Mode of Travel to Facilities**





## FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES

### Most Important Factors that Would Increase Use of Facilities

Respondents selected the three most important factors that, if addressed by the City of Littleton, would increase their use of parks and recreation facilities. Figure 22 below illustrates the most important areas selected by invitation respondents, led by awareness of programs (33 percent) and followed by additional facilities and amenities (29 percent), more moderate pricing/user fees (28 percent), promoting healthy/active lifestyles (23 percent), family-oriented activities (18 percent), condition/maintenance of parks (17 percent), and quality of equipment (15 percent).

Figure 22: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities



## COMMUNICATION

A section of the survey had respondents identify the best way to reach them with information on City of Littleton and SSPR parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. Invitation sample respondents were most likely to select the SSPR Recreation Activity Guide mailing (56 percent). Mentioned somewhat less frequently as preferred sources were the local media/newspapers (42 percent), the Littleton Report (36 percent), and the SSPR website (26 percent), with a variety of additional sources identified by progressively smaller shares of respondents. Those who preferred local media/newspapers most often selected *Independent* (65 percent).

Strong differences were noted between the invitation sample responses and open-link sample responses for this question. Social networking, City of Littleton email, and the City of Littleton website were cited much more frequently as best communication methods among open-link respondents than invitation respondents. This perhaps reflects the fact that open-link respondents may have been informed about the survey via City of Littleton or SSPR social networking profiles that they already follow or via a City of Littleton email.

Figure 23: Best Method for Reaching You

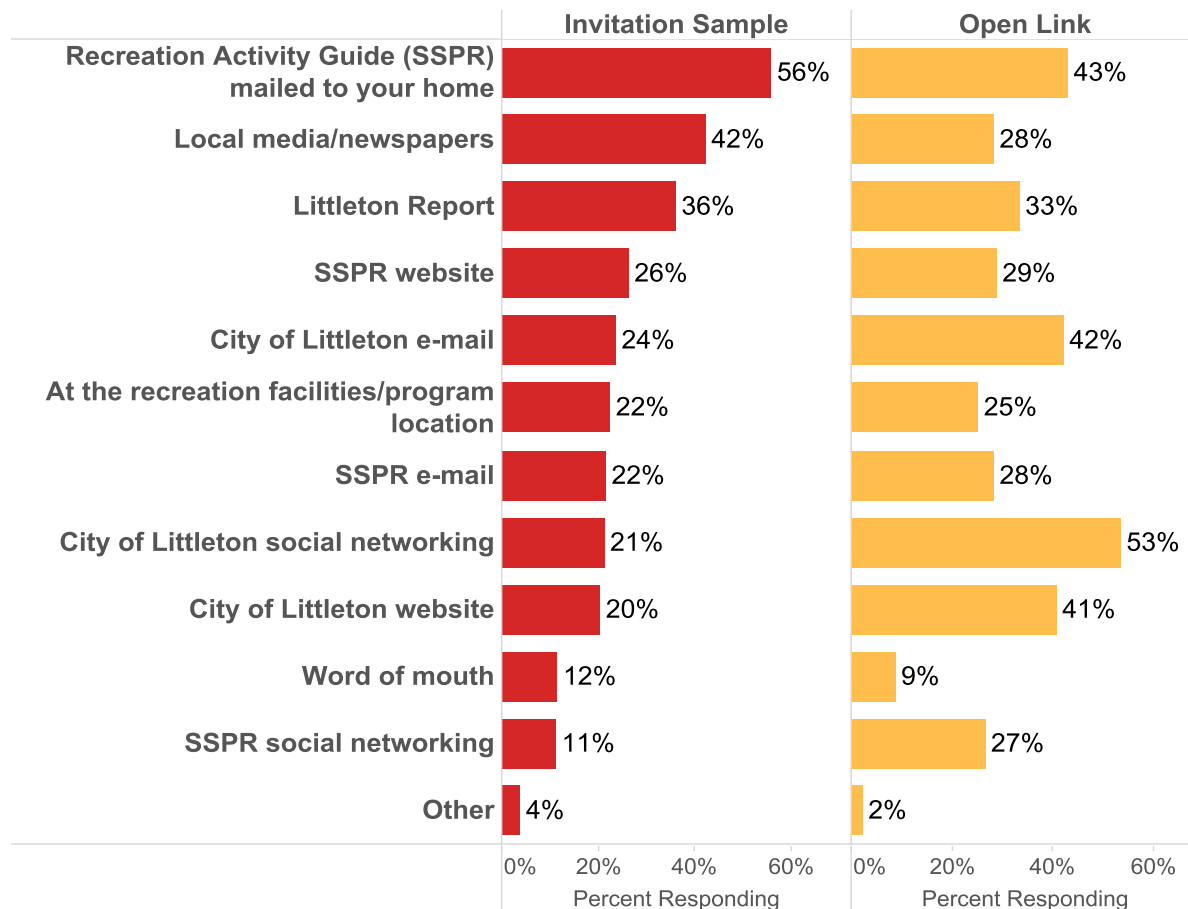
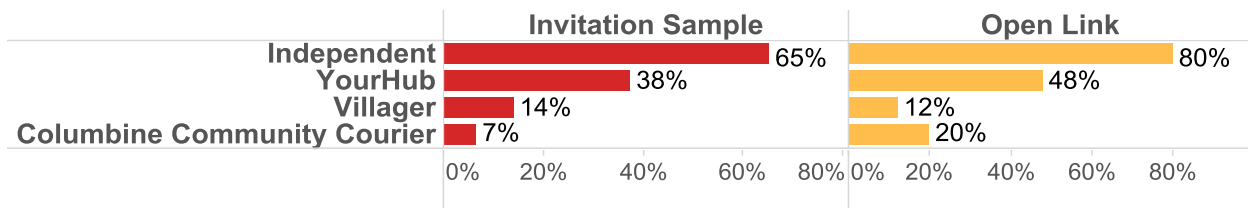


Figure 24: Newspapers Most Frequently Used



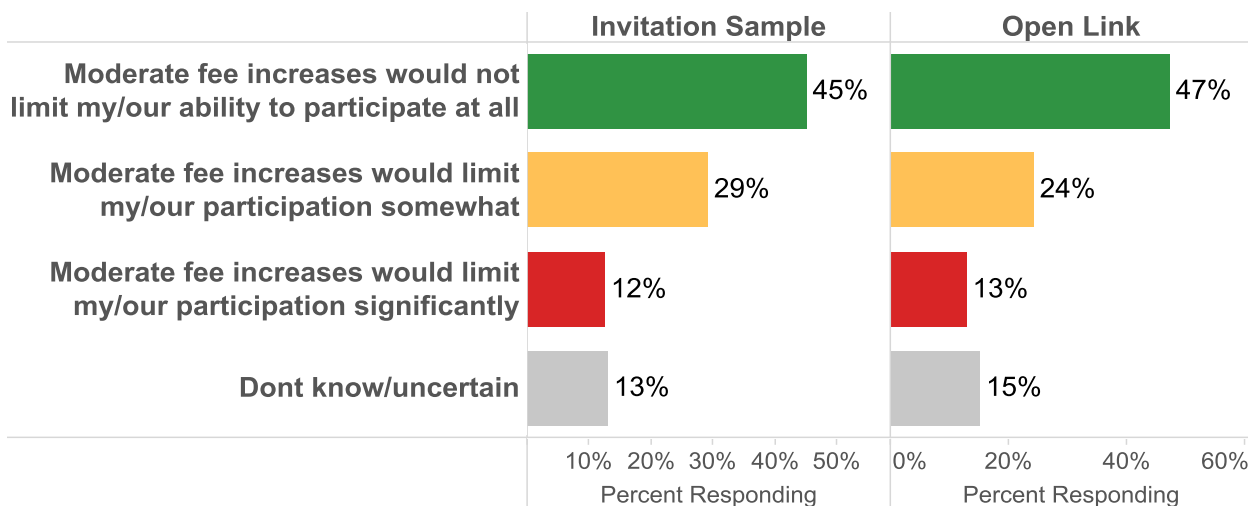
## FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEES

In a final section of the survey, respondents answered questions about their opinions on the financial aspects of their relationship with parks and recreation in the City of Littleton. These questions include an evaluation of the impact of potential fee increases on level of participation and an allocation of future funding towards various amenities. The results from each of these questions are detailed below.

### Impact of Fee Increases

Respondents were asked what impact, if any, fee increases would have on their current level of participation in programs, services, or use of facilities. Slightly under half of invitation respondents believed that moderate fee increases would not limit their ability to participate (45 percent). Twenty-nine percent said fee increases would have a minor impact on their participation, and 12 percent said it would limit their participation significantly. Thirteen percent of respondents were uncertain how a fee increase would impact their participation levels.

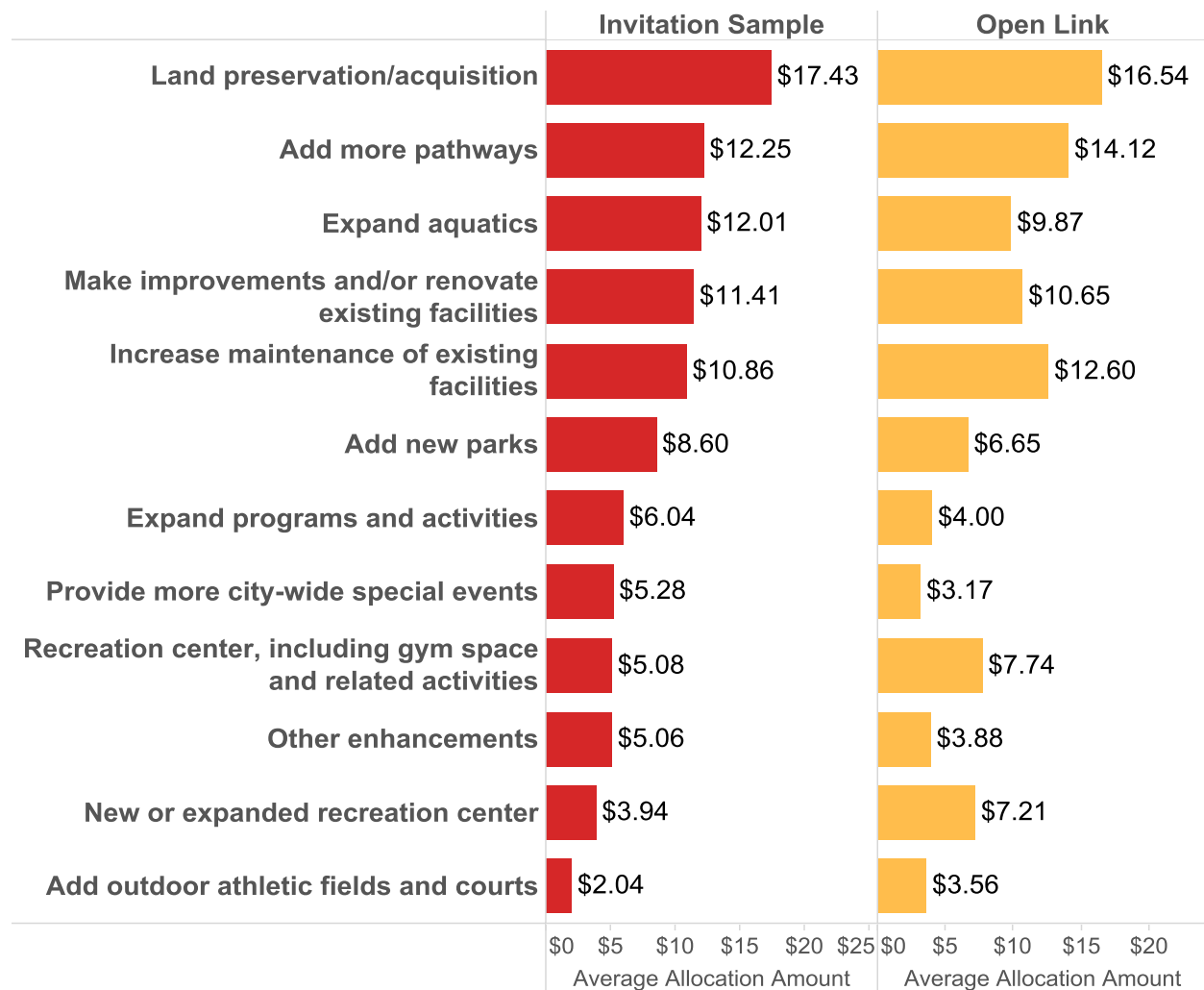
Figure 25: Potential Impact of Fee Increases on Current Level of Participation



## Allocation of Funding

Lastly, respondents were asked, “If you had \$100 to spend on parks and recreation facilities, services, and/or programs, how would you allocate that \$100 across the following categories?” and were provided with a list of eleven potential categories for funding. Figure 26 depicts the average amount allocated to each item among invitation respondents. Land preservation/acquisition is the top priority by far, with \$17.43 allocated towards it on average. Other areas with considerable allocations from respondents include adding more pathways (\$12.25 on average), expanding aquatics (\$12.01), improving/renovating existing facilities (\$11.41), and increasing maintenance of existing facilities (\$10.86).

**Figure 26: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount**



## DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INVITATION & OPEN-LINK SAMPLES

Open-link responses were generally very similar to invitation sample responses across most topics. However, some minor differences were noted between the two samples. These differences may be attributed to a somewhat different respondent profile, as the proportion of the open-link sample living in TrailMark was very high. This section discusses some of the interesting findings in the open-link sample relative to the invitation sample.

- Greater willingness to pay for closer facilities. Compared to invitation respondents, open-link respondents were much more likely to indicate that they would be willing to pay to have parks and recreation amenities located closer to their home or work.
- Lower quality ratings provided for current offerings. Average quality ratings for Littleton parks, trails, recreation centers, and programs were slightly lower among open-link respondents than invitation sample respondents.
- Importance and Needs-Met ratings similar or slightly lower for current offerings. For both the listed facilities and the listed programs, open-link respondents typically rated the importance to their household and degree to which community needs are met similarly or slightly lower than invitation respondents did.
- Motivators for increased usage differ. The two sample types identified different factors that would motivate them to increase their utilization of Littleton parks and recreation facilities in the future. Open-link respondents were more likely to select promoting healthy/active lifestyles and condition/maintenance of parks than invitation respondents. Meanwhile, invitation respondents indicated a greater preference for heightened awareness of programs and volunteer opportunities.
- Social networking is top communication method. While only a small share of invitation respondents selected social networking as the best way to reach them with parks and recreation information, a majority of open-link respondents chose it. Open-link respondents were also more likely to choose City of Littleton emails and the City of Littleton website as the best form of communication. In contrast, invitation sample respondents had a greater likelihood of choosing the SSPR Recreation Activity and local media/newspapers. Clearly, the open-link respondents are more technologically engaged.
- Financial choices similar, though allocation amounts differ. Invitation and open-link respondents would respond similarly to future fee increases. However, their average allocation amounts towards various offerings were slightly different. Open-link respondents allocated greater sums towards a new or expanded recreation center and recreation center enhancements, while invitation respondents put more money towards expanding aquatics.

## SEGMENTATION ANALYSIS

Results were segmented by respondent age and location of residence within Littleton to further explore the underlying data. Selected findings from this analysis are illustrated and discussed in this section. To boost small sample sizes among certain segments and as a result of their similar response patterns overall, the invitation sample and open-link sample responses have been combined in this segmentation analysis.

A few survey questions are examined by these two groupings. The first is the average importance ratings of parks and recreation facilities and programs, followed by the top three factors that would increase parks and recreation use and the average allocation amount of funding towards various amenities. Each of these questions is discussed in turn below.

### Importance of Parks and Recreation Amenities to Household

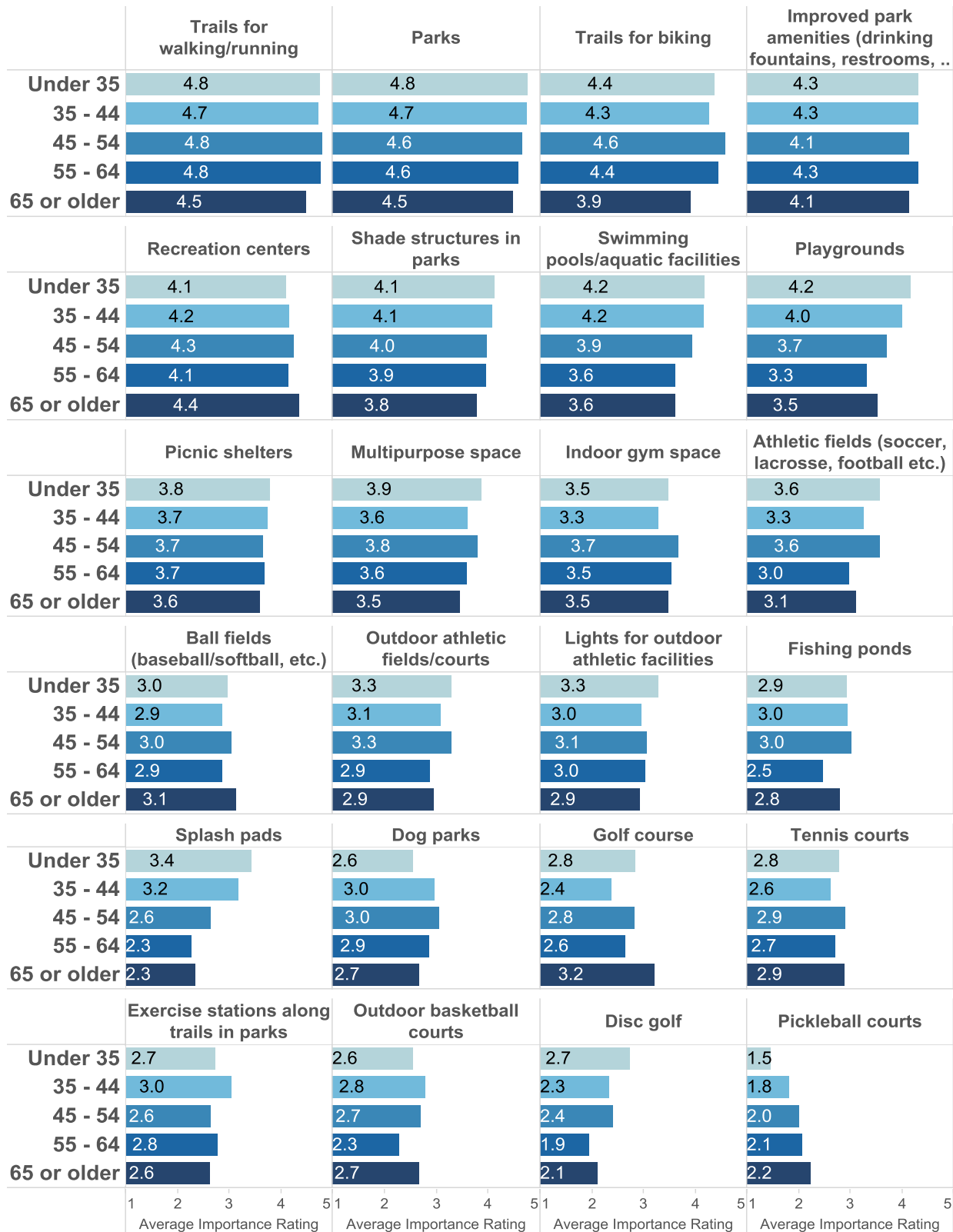
#### Facilities

- By Respondent Age. Younger respondents provided higher importance ratings on average to shade structures in parks, swimming pools/aquatic facilities, playgrounds, splash pads, and disc golf than their older counterparts. Meanwhile, older respondents were more likely to feel that recreation centers and pickleball courts are important.
- By Location of Residence. Respondents living in the west section of Littleton provided the highest average importance ratings compared to the other regions for fishing ponds and disc golf, while respondents in the northeastern area were most likely to feel that recreation centers, swimming pools/aquatic facilities, and indoor gym space are important. Playgrounds were rated highest by respondents living in the southeast area.

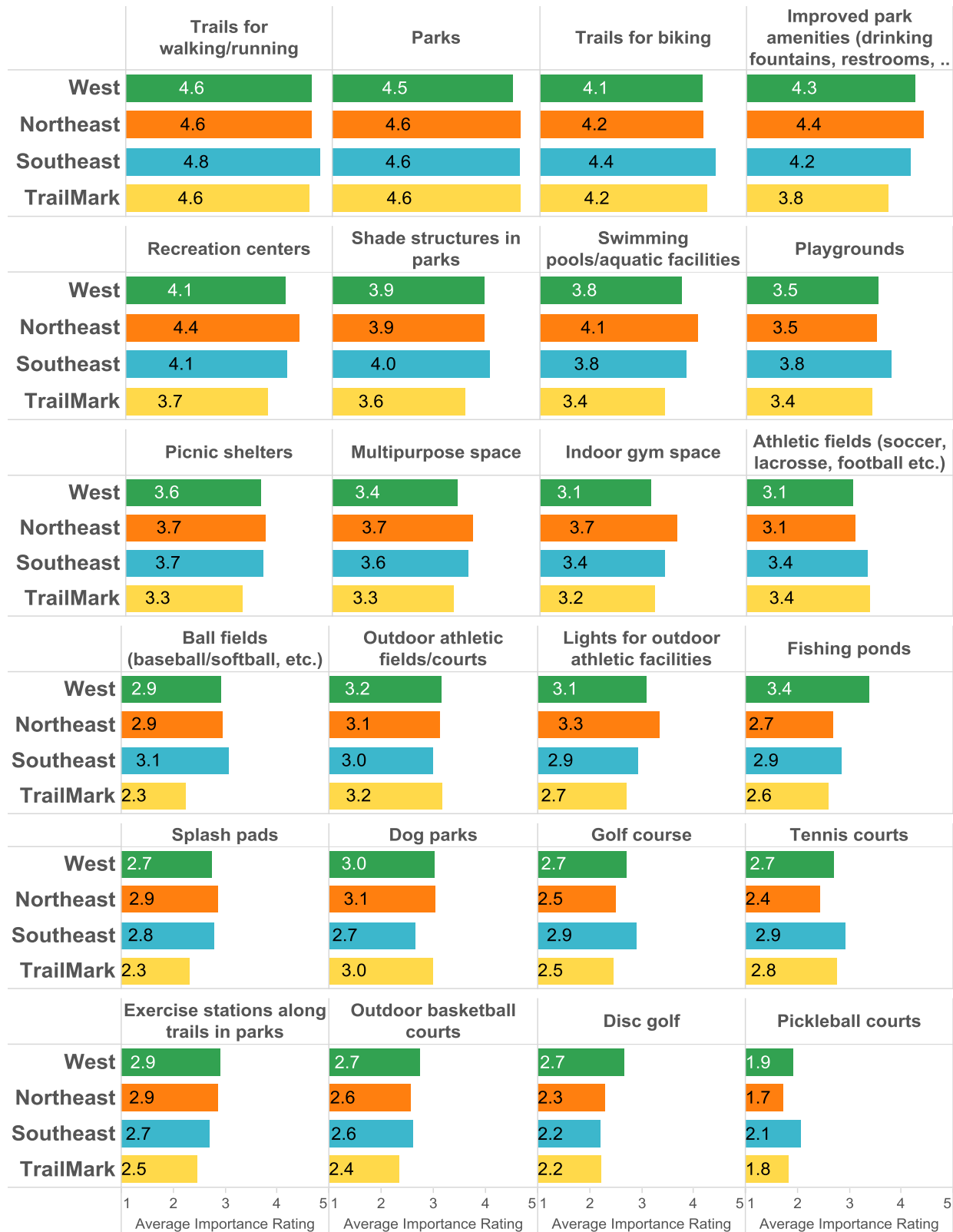
#### Programs

- By Respondent Age. Community events, swim lessons/aquatic programs, youth sports, youth programs, and cooking/enrichment programs had higher average importance ratings among younger respondents than older respondents. This is logical given the high proportion of families in the younger age segments. Older respondents, on the other hand and not surprisingly, placed greater importance on adult/senior programs and adult/senior sports.
- By Location of Residence. Program importance ratings were generally similar by area, though there were some differences by residence location. Western region residents rated family/intergenerational programs, adult/senior programs, and adult/senior sports as most important, likely reflective of the somewhat older age profile in this respondent group. Respondents living in the southeast area find fitness and wellness programs more important than respondents in the other areas, while TrailMark residents generally feel that youth sports are particularly important.

**Figure 27: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating**  
**By Respondent Age**

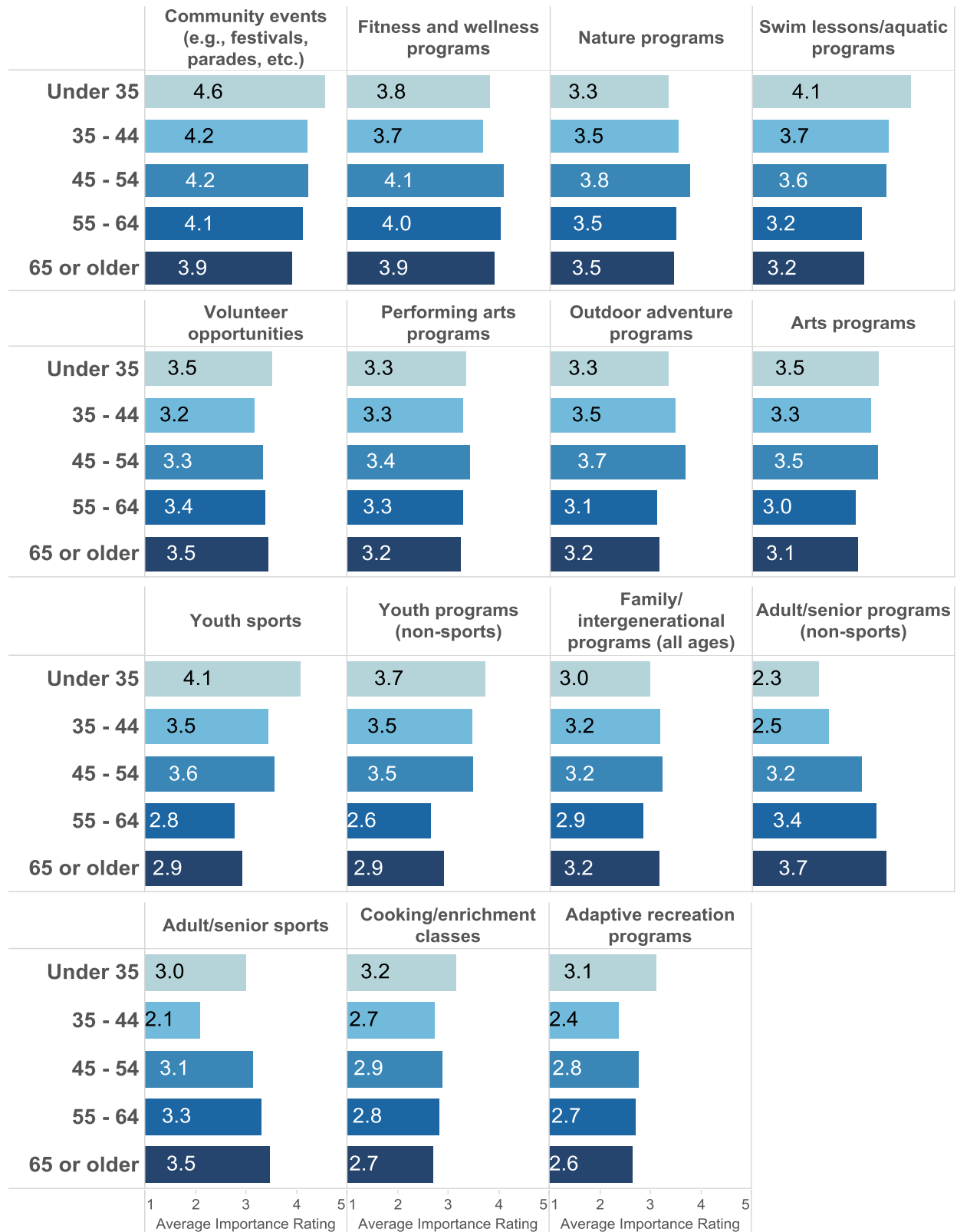


**Figure 28: Importance of Littleton Facilities – Average Rating**  
**By Location of Residence**





**Figure 29: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating  
By Respondent Age**



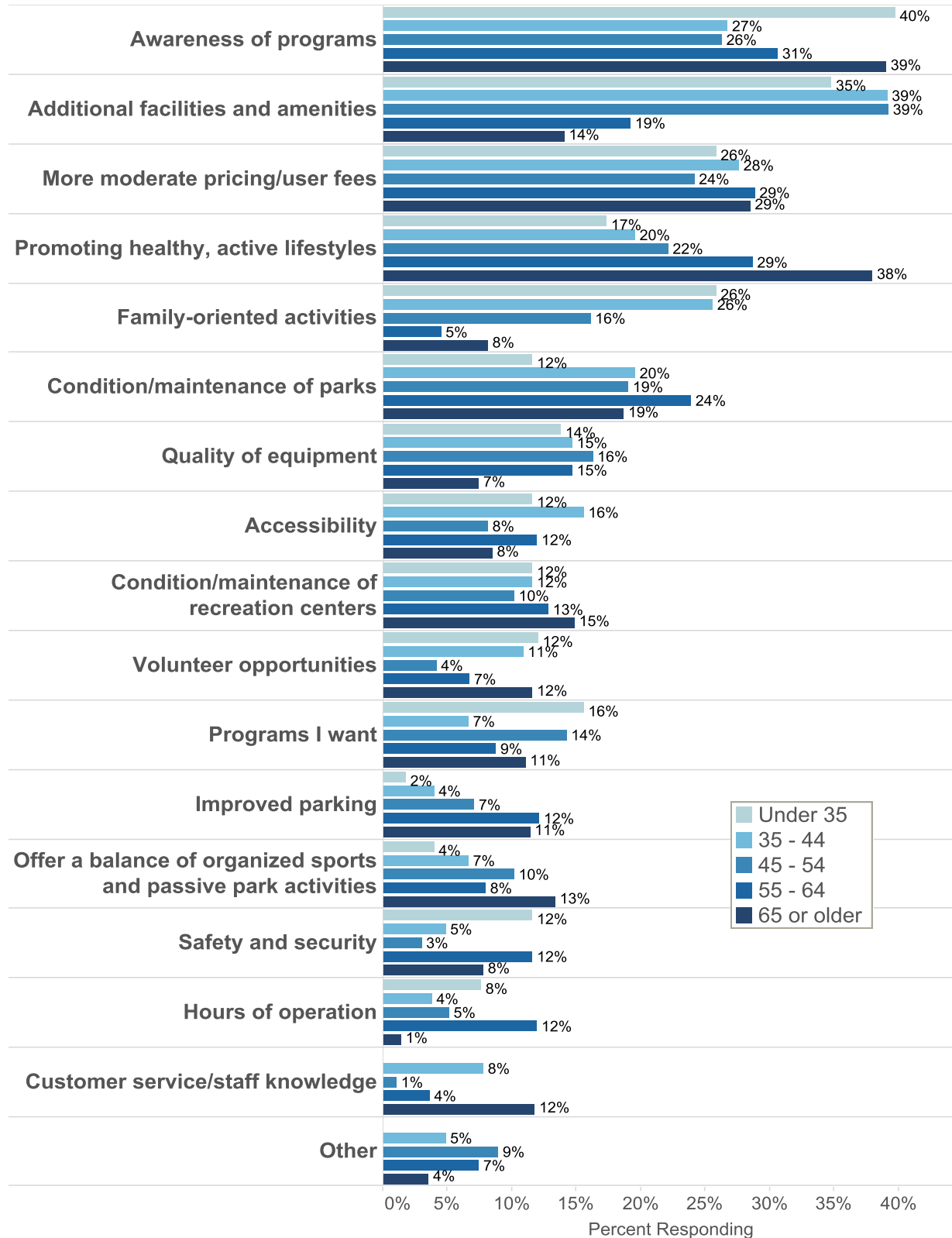
**Figure 30: Importance of Littleton Programs – Average Rating  
By Location of Residence**



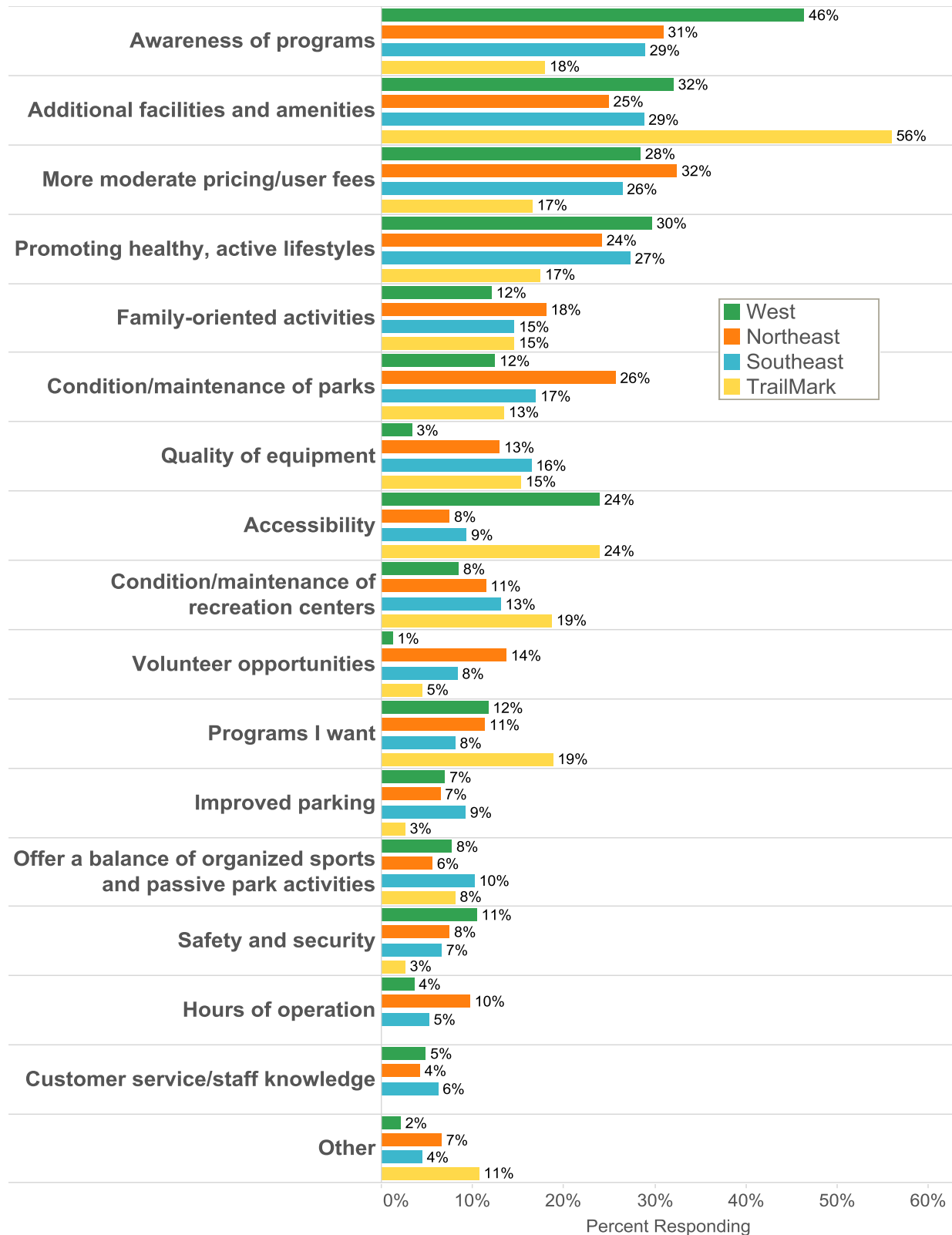
## Most Important Factors that Would Increase Use of Facilities

- By Respondent Age. Younger respondents felt, to a greater degree than older respondents, that additional facilities and amenities and family-oriented activities would boost their use of Littleton parks and recreation facilities and programs. Older respondents were more likely to select promoting healthy/active lifestyle, condition/maintenance of parks, improved parking, and a balance of organized sports and passive park activities as factors that would increase their utilization of the amenities. The differences in response by age groups might be used to refine communications and outreach in Littleton. For example, the idea that “promoting healthy active lifestyles” resonates with older age groups, or that the need for greater awareness was cited by youngest and oldest respondents, should be noted.
- By Location of Residence. Respondents with homes in western Littleton chose awareness of programs more often than respondents from any other area; those living in the northeast region of the city were particularly likely to indicate that improved condition/maintenance of the parks and hours of operation would increase their usage. Meanwhile, respondents living in the TrailMark subdivision were most likely to indicate that additional facilities and amenities, condition/maintenance of recreation centers, and “programs I want” would encourage them to use the facilities more if addressed by Littleton.

Figure 31: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities  
By Respondent Age



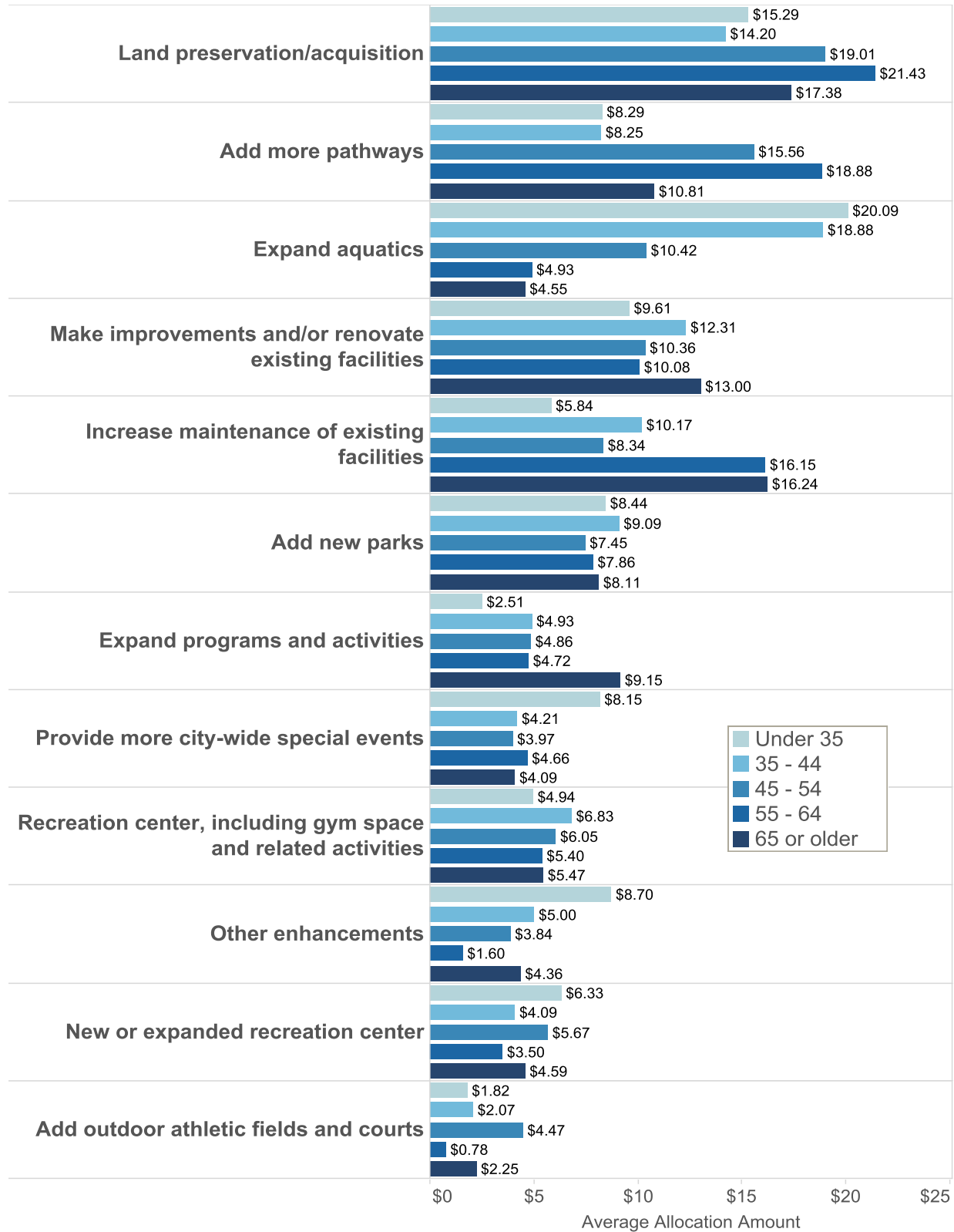
**Figure 32: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Littleton Facilities**  
By Location of Residence



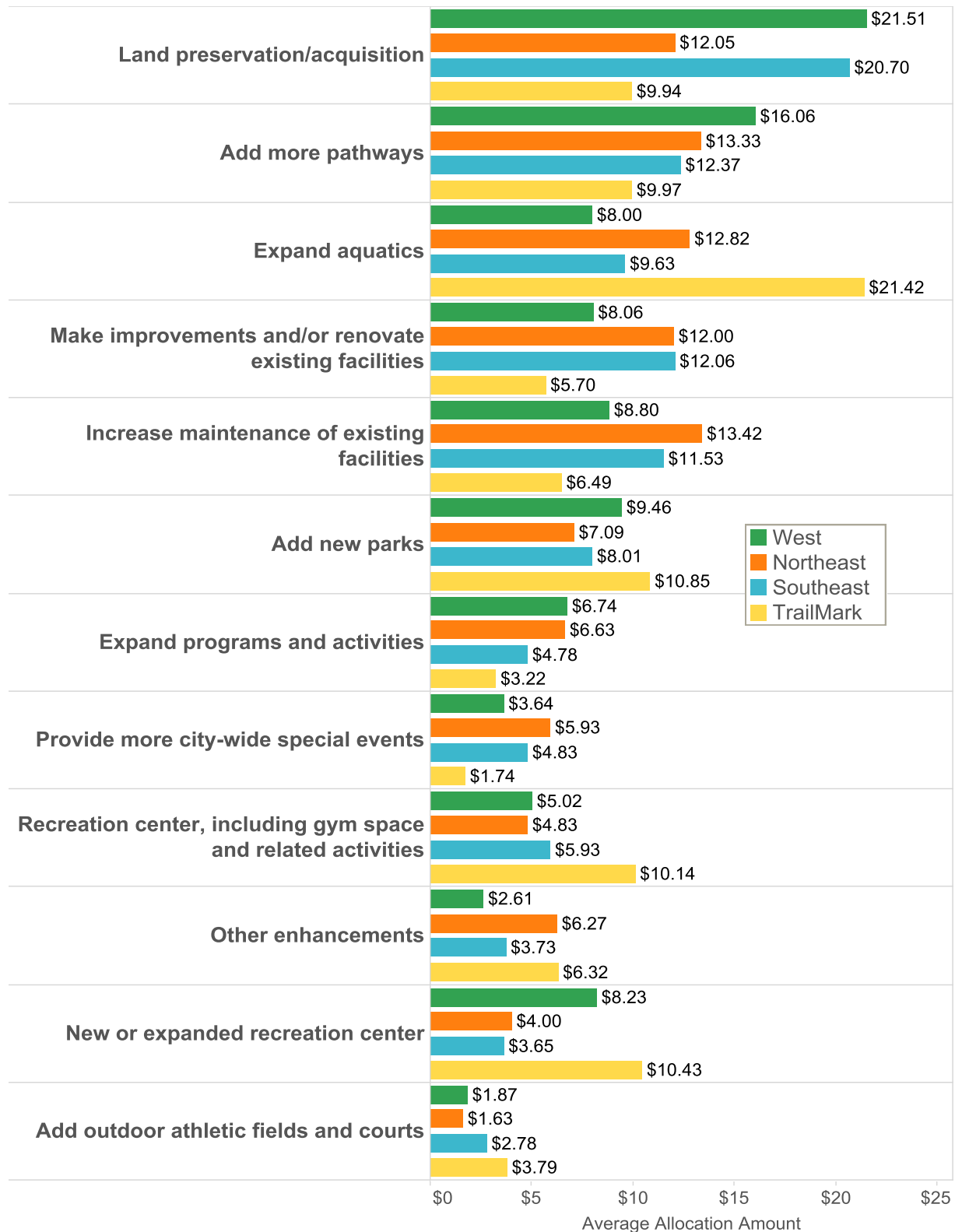
## Allocation of Funding

- By Respondent Age. Average allocation amounts of potential future funding varied considerably by respondent age. In the survey exercise, older respondents typically allocated more funding towards land preservation/acquisition, increasing the maintenance of existing facilities, and expanding programs and activities. Respondents younger in age put more money towards expanding aquatics and promoting more city-wide special events.
- By Location of Residence. Similarly, allocation of resources differed by location of residence. Residents of western Littleton allocated more towards adding more pathways than respondents from all other regions. Northeastern Littleton residents allocated a greater sum of money towards increasing maintenance of existing facilities. TrailMark residents differed considerably on this question, giving the most resources to expanding aquatics, adding new parks, recreation center enhancements, a new or expanded recreation center, and adding outdoor athletic fields and courts.

**Figure 33: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount  
By Respondent Age**



**Figure 34: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount  
By Location of Residence**





## ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

At the end of the survey, respondents were offered an opportunity to provide any additional comments or suggestions to help the City of Littleton and SSPR better serve the needs of the community. Comments are provided as an appendix section and should be read in their entirety in order to grasp the full depth of respondents' opinions. However, some common themes emerge from the responses. These themes are highlighted below, with verbatim comments from both invitation and open-link respondents provided to further illustrate each theme.

### ***Improve, maintain, and expand existing facilities.***

- *"Focus on maintaining the existing parks, trails and facilities."*
- *"I think continued improvement/expansion of existing parks and facilities would be the best way forward"*
- *"Keep maintaining our unique natural flood plain park, SPP, and enhance it when possible. Treasure all our parks and trails - they are an economic and health asset to Littleton."*
- *"Keep up improvements with Platte River Trail"*
- *"Littleton is a great place to call home - but just needs to add more resources to maintaining current facilities and retail spaces"*
- *"Maintain the open spaces and trails."*
- *"Open bathrooms at parks year-round"*
- *"Preserve what Littleton has."*
- *"Recreation facilities are limited in gym space. It is tough for small kids to practice basketball among all the adult males."*
- *"Restrooms along Highline Canal"*
- *"Restrooms/shade structures. We will choose the park we are going to based on if it has a bathroom and ample shade."*
- *"Some parks have dog watering stations at the water fountains. I would like to see more of these."*
- *"There is an outdoor pool in Southbridge neighborhood that needs extensive repairs/improvements. If these are made it could be used by many surrounding neighborhoods."*
- *"Upkeep in current parks is paramount for our community. Several of our lamp posts are beginning to rust away and need maintenance, for example."*

***Expand trails network and increase connectivity between existing trails.***

- *“Better bicycle access to downtown Littleton. If you want to ride to a park and back, bicycling facilities are good. If you want to go to town or get some groceries, horrid. Tend to drive a couple of miles instead of biking due to safety.”*
- *“Connect the Lee Gulch Trail to the Centennial (470) Trail, including safe passage across or under County Line Road.”*
- *“Improve pedestrian/bike access along Santa Fe”*
- *“Love community trail - can it be extended on Cornerstone Park end?”*
- *“Recreation trail is needed to connect Platte Canyon Rd. to existing trail Eagle Watch Trail in S. Platte Park behind new apartment buildings. Along north side of reservoir.”*
- *“Use bike path frequently. More bike paths, lanes. Keep up the good work!”*
- *“Would love to be able to more easily access Highline Canal trails without crossing major roadways”*

***Focus on providing services to TrailMark residents; improvements could foster a sense of community and respond to perceived needs as indicated by the survey results.***

- *“I believe there are many things you can do in TrailMark without adding a pool to add value to our neighborhood. Disc golf, parkour around the park, etc.”*
- *“It would be nice to have a facility closer to TrailMark, and possibly add small recreational things that add value to the neighborhood, but at the same time, do not take away from its natural surroundings.”*
- *“Outdoor Pool in TrailMark!”*
- *“Please find solutions to better serve TrailMark. We are underserved and overpaying for what we can reasonably use. Please help!”*
- *“Please get a pool and community center with a small rec component to TrailMark...there is nothing here for families with children, but there is a sense of community missing because there is no place to meet for book clubs, wine nights, cooking classes, kid art classes, etc. Our community can't build a SENSE of community without a place to go!”*
- *“We have little beyond parks in Trailmark. It would be nice if Littleton provided us with more or gave up our subdivision to a group that cares.”*

***Preserve open space and protect wildlife.***

- *"If all the open space is developed, Littleton will no longer be desirable. That'll equal no tax base which equals death of the city. Buy all the available land."*
- *"Keep your eye on the need for 'open space' and do not let developers swallow up this city's main attraction, which is the access to quality parks, open space and trail systems!! We are very active middle aged (close to 'senior' status) and have several grandchildren we want to see have all of this available to enjoy as we have had. Thank you!"*
- *"The paths are causing wildlife issues that never existed in the past and we have lived in this house for 45 years (and of course the traffic on Prince St.)"*
- *"Whatever you do, don't develop those areas suitable for birds, wildlife, nature study, such as in South Platte Park. We don't need more soccer fields and such if it means destroying "wild" areas."*

***Expand program offerings and times.***

- *"I have recently noticed more community and free activities in Castle Rock and have found myself going to Castle Rock for these events. Would like to see more of these types of events here in Littleton."*
- *"It would be nice to think about programs that involve planting trees and learning about indigenous Colorado wildlife"*
- *"More teen programs would be great."*
- *"Possibly 24 hour facilities and earlier classes at Buck Center (or later/earlier hours, expanded weekend hours)"*
- *"Sunday classes at Buck - power hour and yoga"*

**Keep up the good work.**

- *"At age 94 my activities are limited. Thank you for wonderful years in this beautiful city."*
- *"I am blessed to live in a community with wonderful public parks and trails. Thanks to all who support them"*
- *"I appreciate the benefits we have by the Littleton/South Suburban cooperative effort. I am sure it is more than if Littleton tried to go it alone. It does seem that walks are cleared fairly well after storms, which I appreciate greatly."*
- *"I feel lucky to live here; we partially moved here because of park system"*
- *"I love all the indoor and outdoor facilities that I use, particularly the trails, and believe they are important to our community"*
- *"I think Littleton is doing a good job with existing facilities compared to other parts of metro Denver area. Always room to improve but I love living here as it is. Thanks for caring about our opinions."*
- *"I think the South Suburban Parks and Recreation District does an amazing job and is a big part of the reason that we make Littleton Home. Thanks you for your continued efforts to improve."*
- *"I use and love lots of your facilities, trails and programs! Great job."*
- *"Keep up your good work!"*
- *"Littleton does an excellent job in my opinion"*
- *"Love the park system and trails in Littleton"*
- *"Our family feels that Littleton's park and recreation facilities are exceptional and completely fulfill the needs of our community"*
- *"Overall I believe South Suburban & Littleton have one of the best parks & recreation systems in the country - it really adds to our quality of life and the enjoyment of our home town."*
- *"SSPR does an excellent job with the city's parks, trails & open space areas. Let SSPR continue doing what they are already doing."*
- *"The parks in our city are great!"*
- *"We love the Littleton facilities. Keep improving!"*
- *"You do a good job - keep it up"*