

Community Engagement

APPROACH

The approach to public input for this Plan involved multiple focus group meetings, a large steering committee group, a public open house, online commenting through a Social Pinpoint site, and a statistically valid survey. The kick-off for this project started with a steering committee meeting of 15 people representing a cross section of Manhattan's community. They were consulted many times throughout the project to gather information and share their thoughts on the needs and desires of Manhattan. In November 2023, several different focus group meetings were held in-person with community members and stakeholders in attendance as well as a public open house meeting where residents came to give feedback on their parks. Following these meetings, a statistically valid survey was sent to a random sample of households in Manhattan to engage an even larger population of residents and obtain their feedback on their park and recreation system.

IN-PERSON CONVERSATIONS

Focus Groups

A series of conversations were held over the span of three days and included elected officials, City staff, business owners, key leaders, and other stakeholders. Each focus group was guided by a set list of questions. Approximately 100 different community members participated in these discussions across 14 different focus groups. Responses are shown to the right and on the following page using word clouds and pie charts. The larger a word appears, the more frequently it was used.

Open House

A public open house was held in the fall of 2023, at the Eisenhower Recreation Center. Community members could participate in dot-voting boards for amenities and recreation programs that they would like to see in their park system, leave comments on individual park boards, and "spend" \$100 on different amenities and programs as if they were in charge of the parks and recreation fund. Approximately 40 residents participated in this open house. A second open house was hosted in the spring of 2024 and engaged another 100 people in person. The second open house encouraged community members to fill out an online survey and 390 responses were obtained (See Appendix I for a summary of the results).

What are the **STRENGTHS** of the park system?

Tourism
Reputable
Adaptability
Connected to Community
Communication
People
Demand of Space
Collaboration
Knowledgeable
Passionate

What are the **WEAKNESSES** of the park system?

staffing
equipment
inefficient
interconnection within facilities
redundancy
funding

What are the **OPPORTUNITIES** of the park system?

Pools
Fees Recovering Cost
Updating Facilities
Enhanced Educational Program
Workout Equipment at Rec Centers
Fill peak times
Upgrade Cico

What are the **THREATS** of the park system?

Staffing
Fees Recovering Cost
Unrealistic Expectations
Staff Capacity
Public Perception
Perception of Commission
Funding
Budget

Performance Ratings

Stakeholder and focus group participants were asked to rate the park system on performance categories listed below from 1 to 5 (5 being the best). The results below show the average rating for each category.



ONLINE ENGAGEMENTS

Social Pinpoint Introduction

As part of the engagement for the City of Manhattan Master Plan Study, the consultant team created a Social Pinpoint site. Social Pinpoint is a powerful web-based tool that helps agencies easily gather feedback and insights from stakeholders—including community members, customers, businesses, and employees—through the use of advanced engagement features.

With assistance from City staff, the consultant team customized a Social Pinpoint site for this project that included a survey, an ideas wall, an interactive map, and budget features.

The site opened for comment on November 28, 2023, and closed on January 19, 2024. The site attracted 2,111 stakeholders who completed 209 surveys, submitted 163 budget responses, and provided 75 map and 42 ideas wall comments. This report summarizes community feedback collected via Social Pinpoint.

Budget Results

Community members submitted 163 budget priority responses and were asked to allocate \$100 to the following categories:

- Fund the construction and operations of an indoor pool.
- Continue to expand the pedestrian trail network.
- Maintenance of parks and park facilities.
- Expand youth sports programming.
- Update park amenities.
- Expand the quantity or size of high-demand activities, classes, and programs.
- Provide after-school care programs for children/youth.
- Improve outdoor waterparks.
- Marketing and communication of recreation programs and events.
- Park security.

Figure 2.1 shows the ranking order of the average dollar amount participants allocated for each category.

Ideas Wall

Community members made 42 comments on the ideas wall regarding their opinions, ideas, and feedback on local issues and initiatives. The platform was used to gather feedback regarding programs and activities (representing 26% of the total comments received), outdoor facilities (ball fields, shelters, etc.) (26%), parks and trails (24%), indoor facilities (19%), and other/miscellaneous items (5%). Community members could submit their feedback anonymously and view

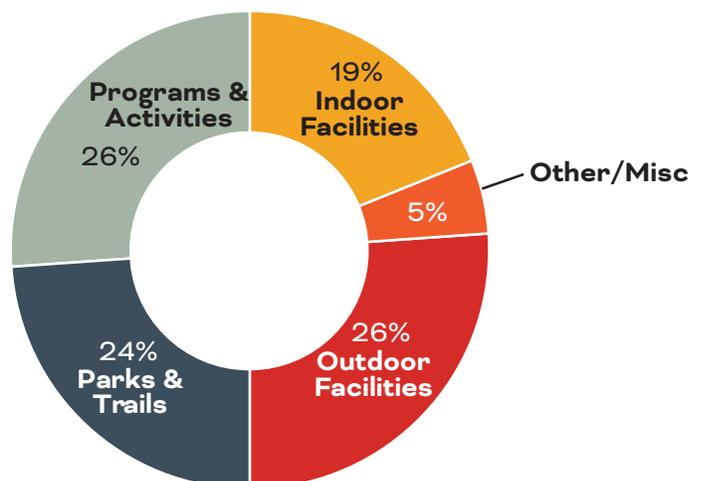
Figure 2.1: Budget Results

Category	Average Dollar Amount
Fund the construction and operations of an indoor pool	\$24.95
Continue to expand the pedestrian trail network	\$13.79
Maintenance of parks and parks facilities	\$13.46
Expand youth sports programming	\$12.02
Update park amenities	\$10.44
Expand the quantity or size of high demand activities, classes, and programs	\$7.91
Provide after school care programs for children/youth	\$7.47
Improve outdoor waterparks	\$4.48
Marketing and communication of recreation programs and events	\$2.91
Park security	\$2.51

other submissions on the platform. Below is a summary of key themes for each category (Figure 2.2).

- Programs & Activities (26%),
- Outdoor Facilities (ballfields, shelters, etc) (26%),
- Parks & Trails (24%),
- Indoor Facilities (19%), and
- Other/Misc (5%).

Figure 2.2: Ideas Wall Comment Topics



Programs & Activities & Outdoor Facilities

Programs and activities and outdoor facilities received the most feedback with 11 comments (26%). One comment, which received the most votes for programs and activities, suggested a partnership between the Manhattan Arts Center and the City. For outdoor facilities, the comment with the most votes was for dedicated pickleball courts. The comments listed below highlight key themes related to programs and activities:

- Events (Outdoor theatre)
- Affordable
- Accessible
- Swim Team
- Aquarium
- More Programs/Classes
- Senior Trips

The comments listed below highlight key themes related to outdoor facilities:

- Additional sports courts
- More ballfields; maintenance of current ballfields
- Accessibility

Parks & Trails

Parks and trails received the second highest response rate with 10 comments (24%). The two suggestions with the most votes were finishing the Manhattan loop to focus more on clearly marked trails and pathways for bikes, as well as developing a trail from Linear Trail to Old Military Trail Road. Additional comments included having sidewalk access, eliminating through traffic where applicable, and creating paths/connectivity for bikes/scooters.

Indoor Facilities

Indoor facilities had eight comments (19%). The suggestion with the most votes was for an indoor aquatic center with low-impact exercise options. There was also a suggestion for more indoor court space; however, most comments regarding indoor facilities centered around an indoor pool.

Other/Misc

The two comments under this category (5%) suggested landscaping the traffic medians coming into town and demolishing Sunset Cemetery and replacing it with a paintball arena/laser tag area.

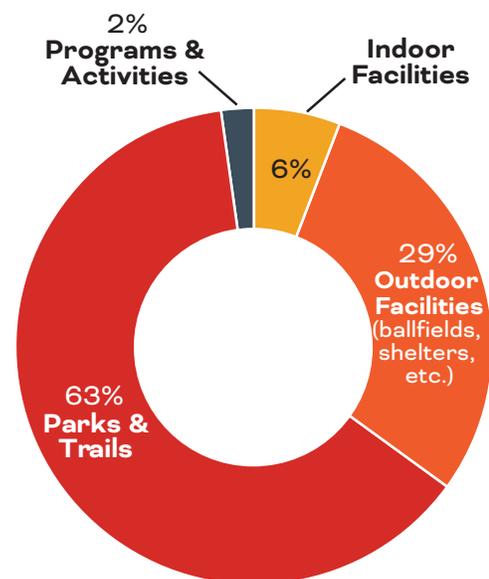
Interpretive Mapping Tool

The interactive mapping tool allowed community members to share suggestions on indoor facilities, outdoor facilities, parks and trails, and programs

and activities within the City. Respondents could pin their comments in their desired locations within City boundaries anonymously and view other submissions on the platform (Figure 2.4).

The mapping tool received 279 site visits and 75 pinned comments across different map layers. The parks and trails category received the most comments (63%), followed by outdoor facilities (29%), indoor facilities (6%), and programs and activities (2%). The information below is broken down by category and park boundaries (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.3: Interactive Mapping Tool Comments



Parks & Trails Suggestions

Community members made 44 comments regarding parks and trails. The suggestion with the greatest number of votes was for a walking connection to the Kansas River with a trail system that connects to other towns and cities along the river. Other suggestions with a significant number of votes included expanding the Linear Trail to connect to other communities/other outdoor recreation sites in the area, and creating an outdoor fitness equipment area. The community would also like to extend the sidewalk to connect Fairmont Park to the Linear Trail for pedestrians and bicyclists, and to leave the River Trail as is.

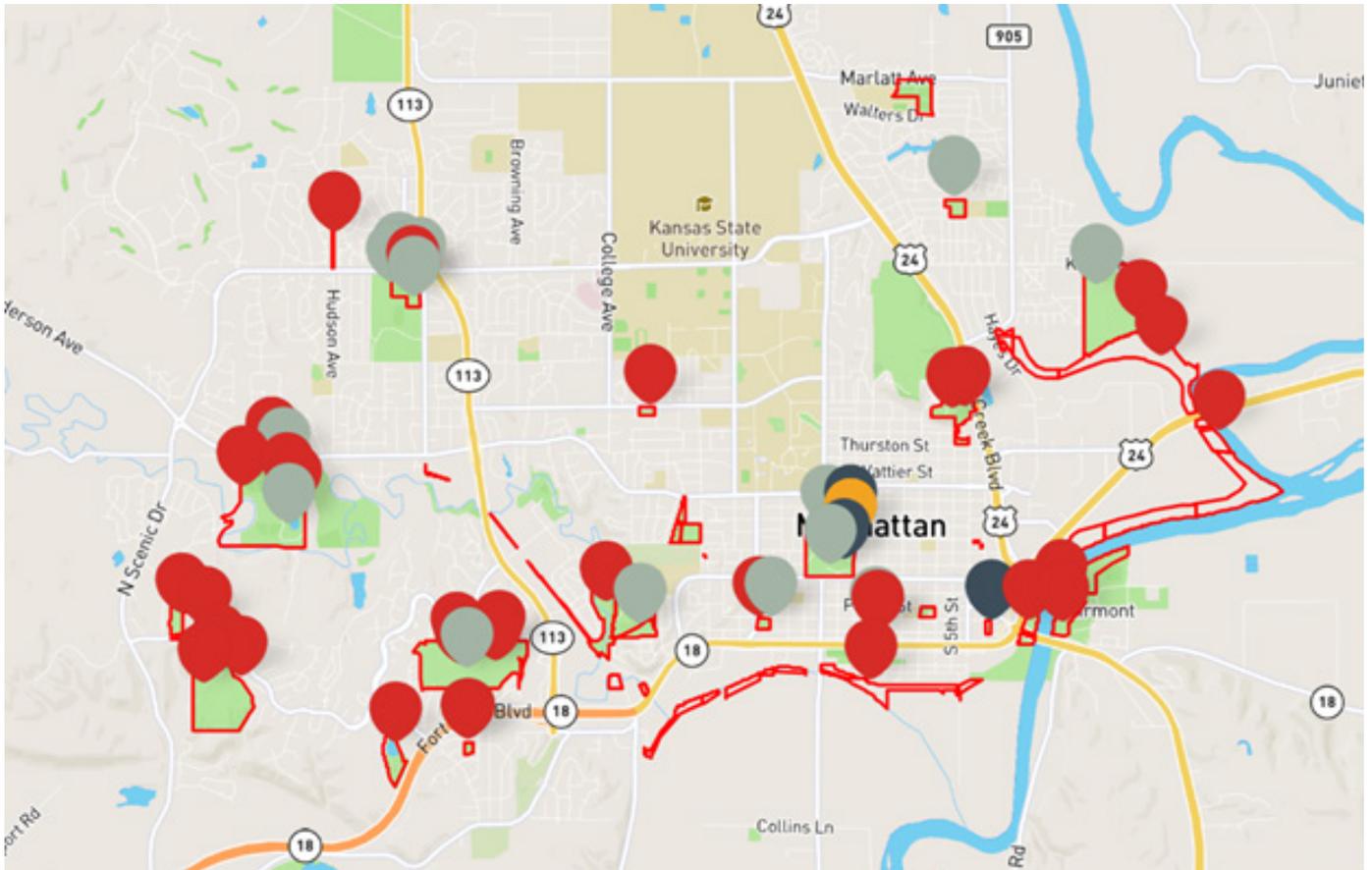
Outdoor Facilities

Outdoor facilities received 23 comments. The comment with the most votes was to add outdoor fitness facilities (bars for pull-ups) within Warner Memorial Park. It was agreed upon that fitness stations at CiCo Park are great and used by many and that City Park could use a dog park.

Comment Types

- Programs & Activities
- Parks & Trails
- Indoor Facilities
- Outdoor Facilities (ballfields, shelters, etc).

Figure 2.4: Social Pinpoint Map



Indoor Facilities

There were seven comments related to indoor facilities. The community agreed an indoor aquatic facility is needed. There was also a suggestion that the Round House in City Park needs improvements.

Survey Results

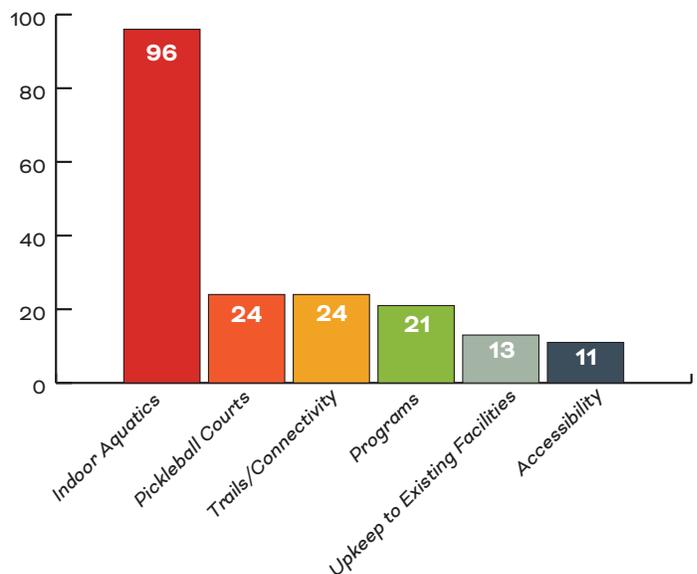
The survey captured the perspectives of 231 respondents. The survey featured 10 questions—including questions about prioritizing recreational amenities and assessing community preferences for funding and facilities—the results of which offer valuable data to help inform future planning and development initiatives. The following section presents survey results.

Question #1

If you could select ONE PRIORITY for the Manhattan Parks and Recreation system, what would it be?

Respondents were asked to prioritize one aspect of the Manhattan Parks and Recreation system. Across

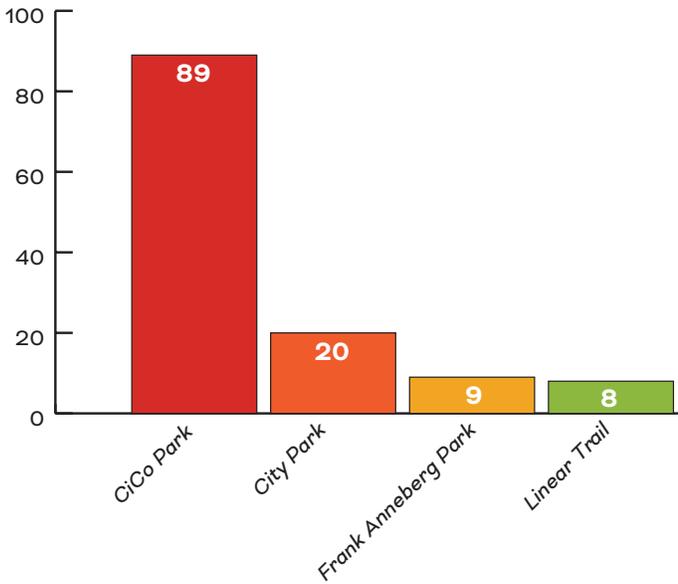
231 respondents, the following four top priorities emerged as follows: 96 individuals prioritized an indoor pool, 24 prioritized both pickleball courts and trails/connectivity and 21 prioritized programs.



Question #2

Which park do you feel is most in need of improvement?

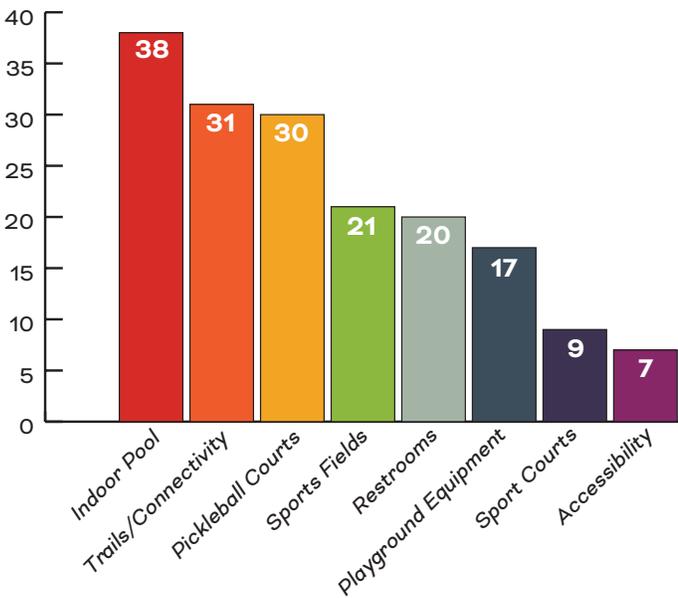
Of the 183 respondents to this question, 89 said CiCo Park needed the most improvement, followed by City Park (20), Anneberg Park (9), and Linear Trail (8).



Question #3

What park amenities are most needed?

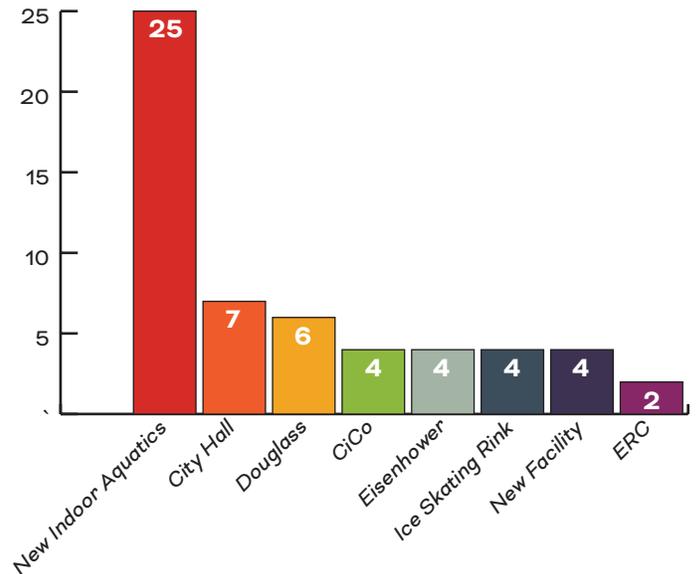
A total of 188 people responded to this question. Indoor pool amenities emerged as the most needed with 38 votes, followed by trails/connectivity (31), pickleball courts (30), and sports fields (21). Playground equipment, sports courts, and accessibility were also identified as needed amenities.



Question #4

Which indoor facility do you feel is most in need of improvement?

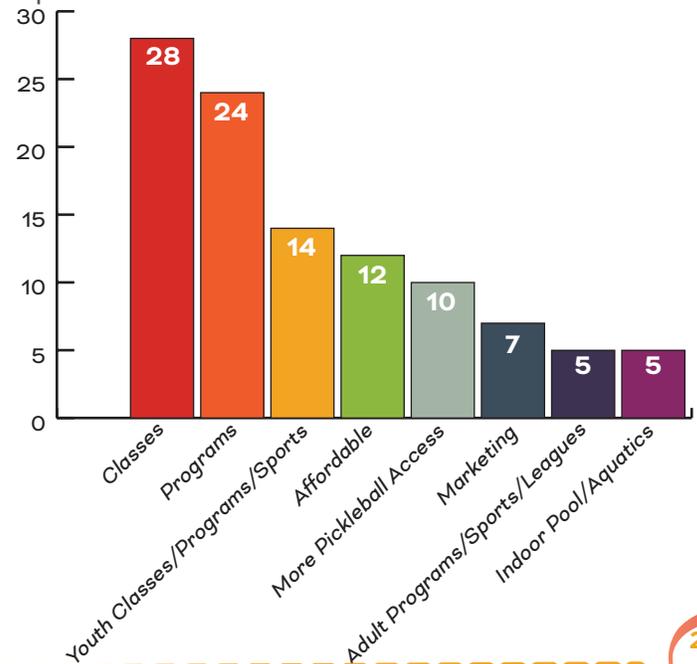
A total of 131 people responded to this question. New indoor aquatics emerged as the most needed with 25 votes, followed by City Hall (7), Douglas (6), and CiCo (4). Additionally, improvements to Eisenhower, the ice-skating rink, new facilities, and Eisenhower Recreation Center (ERC) were also deemed important.



Question #5

If you could change one thing about the recreation programs, activities, or classes offered what would it be?

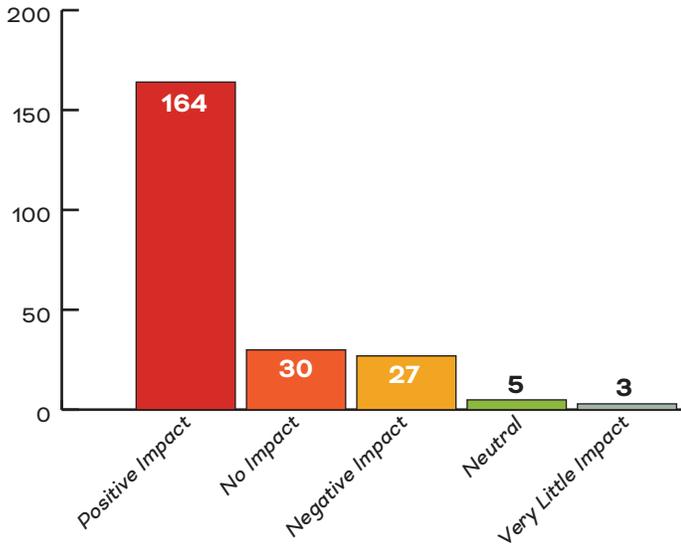
A total of 156 people responded to this question. Respondents primarily would like changes to classes (28), followed by programs (24), youth classes/programs/sports (14), and more affordable recreation programs (12). Respondents were also interested in more access to popular activities like pickleball, marketing, adult programs/sports/leagues, and indoor aquatics



Question #6:

It has been identified that there is a desire for an indoor pool in Manhattan; if built, what impact (whether positive or negative) will that have on your household?

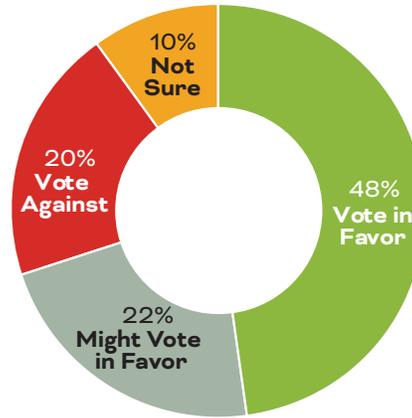
A total of 229 people responded to this question, with 164 indicating that an indoor pool would have a positive impact on their household. In terms of the degree of impact, 30 respondents indicated there would be no impact, 27 said there would be a negative impact, 5 were neutral, and 3 said very little impact.



Question #8

If a voter election was held to determine whether or not to increase sales tax in perpetuity, to specifically fund, operate, and maintain the option you selected in Question 7, how would you vote? (Vote in favor, Might vote in favor, Vote against, Not sure)

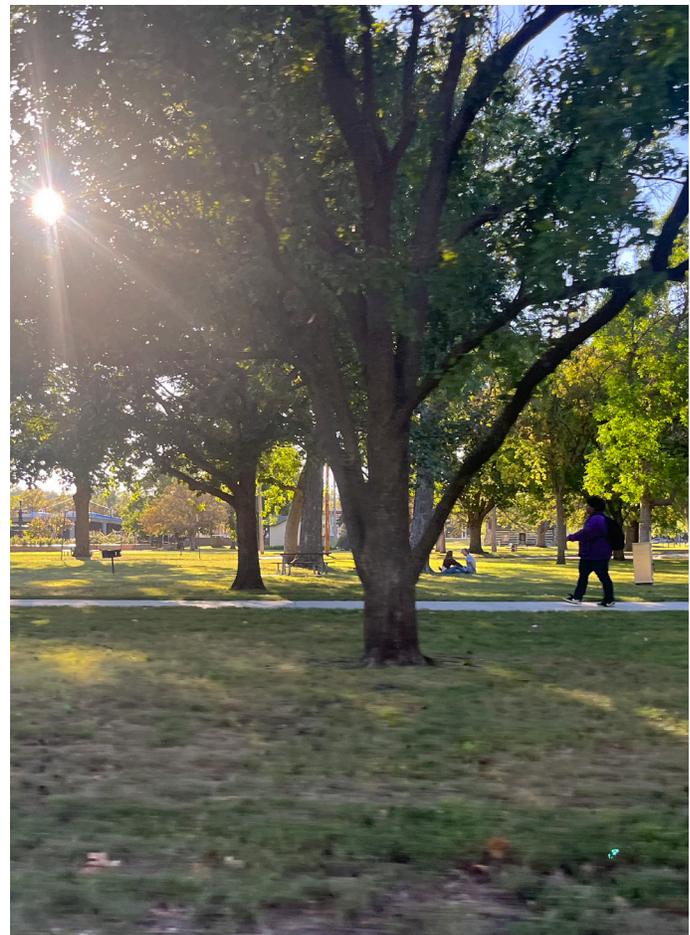
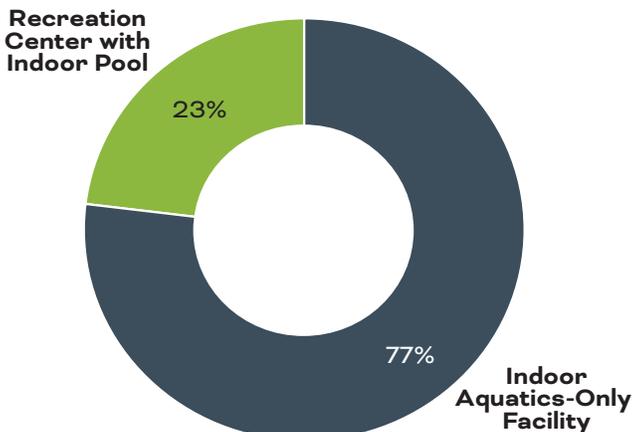
A total of 244 people responded to this question. Most respondents voted in favor (48%) of increasing sales tax in perpetuity to fund, operate, and maintain their selection. This was followed by 22% of voters who might be in favor, 20% who would vote against increasing sales tax, and 10% who are unsure.



Question #7

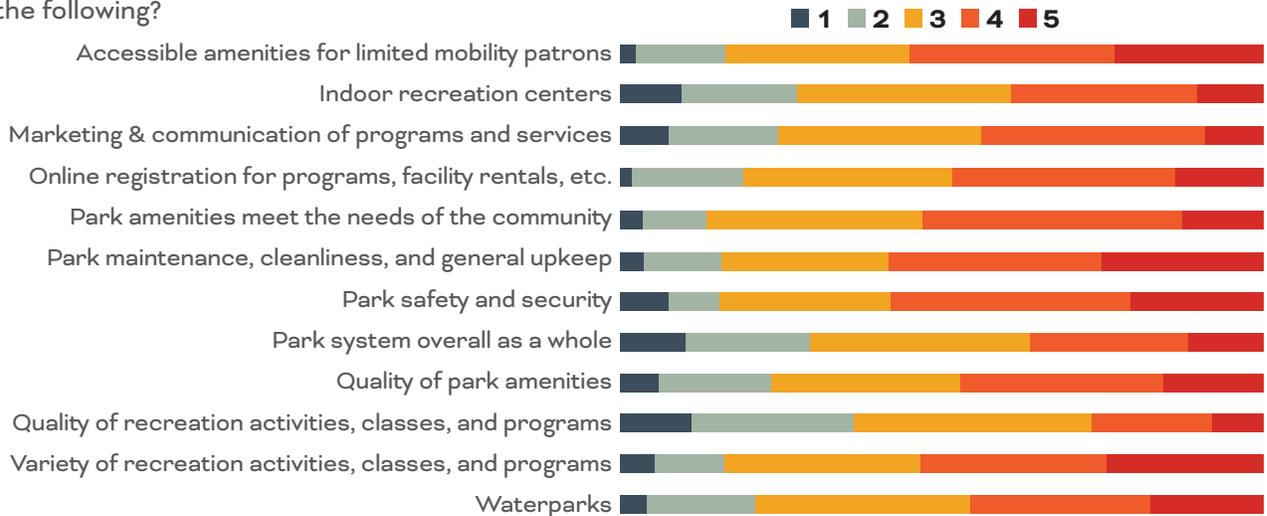
If an indoor pool was built, which of the following scenarios would you prefer to see built? Build a new INDOOR AQUATICS-ONLY FACILITY with modern amenities that meet today's aquatics needs. (This type of facility typically has a larger pool than commonly seen in a recreation center with an indoor pool) or build a new RECREATION CENTER with modern features that meet today's recreation needs including an indoor pool. (This type of facility typically has a smaller pool commonly seen in an indoor aquatics-only facility).

A total of 225 people responded to this question. Building a new indoor aquatic-only facility was favored at 77% over building a new recreation center at 23%.



Question #9

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the best), how would you rate the following?



A total of 229 people responded to this question.

Question #10

Please share any thoughts you have regarding the future of the Manhattan Parks and Recreation System.

Community members made 117 comments regarding the future of the Manhattan Parks and Recreation system. There is great support for initiatives like an indoor aquatics' facility and improved recreational programming. However, there were also concerns about funding, facility maintenance, and the need for increased community engagement.

While many respondents shared a desire for an indoor pool facility, some voiced concern regarding the tax implications of such a project. Below is a summary of the comments regarding an indoor aquatics/pool.

- In favor of an indoor pool (23 mentions): Several community members expressed strong support for the development of an indoor pool facility, citing similar facilities from neighboring communities, including Lawrence and Salina. They emphasized how the pool would benefit the community, such as providing year-round swimming opportunities that include swimming lessons, lap swimming, and recreational activities that promote health, fitness, and quality of life.
- Opposed to an indoor pool (5 mentions): A few respondents voiced concerns about the proposed pool's affordability and tax implications. They suggested the City prioritize improving existing facilities and helping ensure the parks and recreation system remains accessible to all residents without significantly increasing taxes or costs.

Other suggestions included improving the overall quality of recreational amenities in the city, such as parks, playgrounds, programs, and outdoor activities. A summary of these comments is found below:

- Improve safety measures at all parks and Splash Park to help prevent injuries.
- Construct an indoor aquatics facility for year-round use.
- Improve advertising to reach residents and non-residents.
- Find funding alternatives to avoid tax increases, such as corporate sponsorships.
- Work to align tax allocation with park usage needs to address taxation and amenity concerns.
- Create a dedicated sales tax for Parks and Recreation improvements.
- Maintain trails and improve bike paths.
- Address gym space shortage.
- Improve and maintain facilities for a better community experience.
- Ensure equitable access to programs and facilities.
- Enhance community involvement and foster robust program development.
- Support proactive planning and modernization initiatives to meet evolving needs.
- Provide more outdoor pickleball courts and indoor spaces.
- Improve scheduling for fall sporting activities.
- Ensure proper oversight and management at recreation centers.
- Increase shaded areas at playgrounds.
- Expand facilities and diversify programs to match other neighboring agencies, such as those in the City of Wamego, City of St. George, City of Lawrence, City of Olathe, City of Shawnee, City of Salina, and City of Clay Center.

STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY

Purpose

ETC Institute administered a survey for the City of Manhattan Parks and Recreation Department during the winter of 2023. The survey helped to determine park and recreation priorities to aid in the development of this master plan.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of Manhattan. Each survey packet contained a cover letter, a copy of the survey, and a postage-paid return envelope. Residents who received the survey were given the option of returning the survey by mail or completing it online.

After the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute followed up by sending text messages and mailing postcards to encourage participation. The text messages and postcards contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. To prevent people who were not residents of the City of Manhattan from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain a minimum of 400 completed surveys from residents. The goal was met with 438 completed surveys collected. The overall results for the sample of 438 households has a precision of +/-4.6% at the 95% level of confidence. A copy of the full report can be found in Appendix A containing:

- An executive summary of the survey findings
- Charts showing the overall results of the survey
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs
- Benchmarks comparing Manhattan results to National Survey Responses
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey
- Responses from open-ended questions
- A copy of the survey instrument

ETC Institute has developed a Priority Investment Rating (PIR) tool that evaluates the investment that should be placed on the amenity or program that residents give the highest importance. The PIR system was developed to identify the facilities, amenities, and programs that should receive the highest priority for future investment. How to analyze the PIR charts:

High Priority Areas (PIR of 100+). A rating of 100 or above generally indicates there is a relatively high

level of unmet need and residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.

Medium Priority Areas (PIR of 50-99). A rating in this range generally indicates there is a medium to high level of unmet need or a significant percentage of residents generally think it is important to fund improvements in these areas.

Low Priority Areas (PIR <50). A rating in this range generally indicates there is a relatively low level of unmet need and residents do not think it is important to fund improvements in these areas. Improvements may be warranted if the needs of very specialized populations are being targeted.

Outdoor Park Amenities

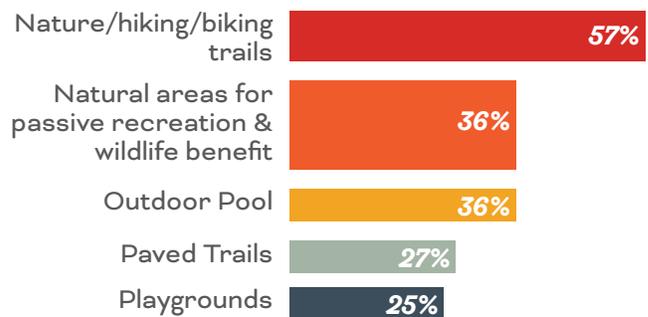
Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 23 park amenities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The five park amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Restrooms
2. Natural areas for passive recreation & wildlife benefits
3. Nature/hiking/biking trails
4. Paved trails
5. Outdoor amphitheater/event space

Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each park amenity, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each amenity. Based on the sum of respondents' top five choices, the most important park amenities to residents were:

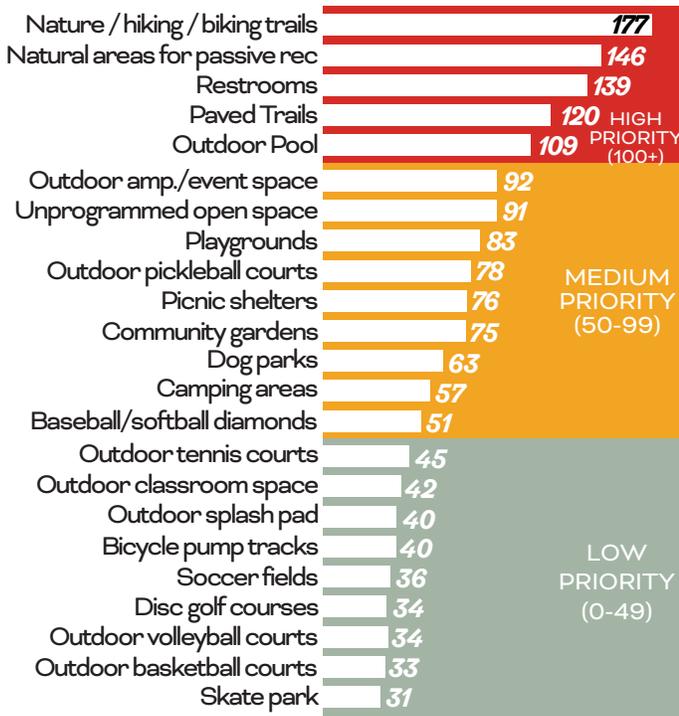


Priorities

Based on the PIR, the following five park amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Nature / hiking / biking trails (PIR=177)
- Natural areas for passive recreation & wildlife benefit (PIR=146)
- Restrooms (PIR=139)
- Paved trails (PIR=120)
- Outdoor Pool (PIR=109)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 23 park amenities that were rated.



Recreation Programs

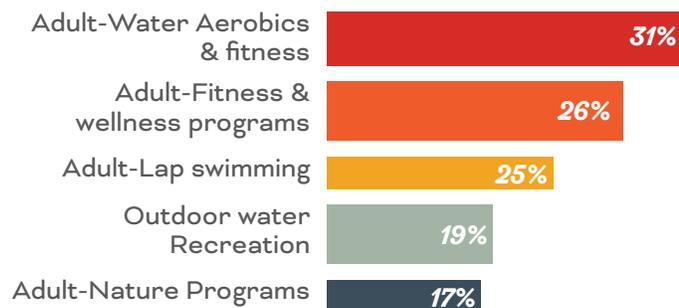
Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 33 recreation programs and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The five recreation programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Adult-Water aerobics & fitness
2. Adult-Fitness & wellness programs
3. Adult-Lap swimming
4. Outdoor water recreation
5. Adult-Nature programs

Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each recreation program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each program. Based on the sum of respondents' top five choices, the most important recreation programs to residents were:

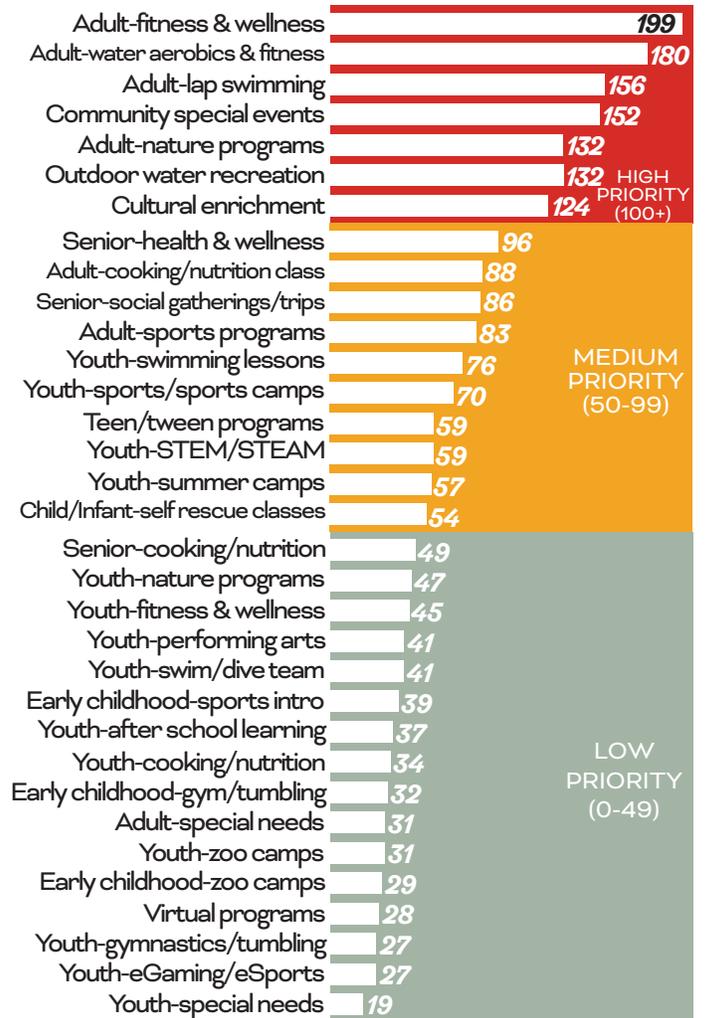


Priorities

Based on the PIR, the following five recreation programs were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Adult - fitness & wellness programs (PIR=199)
- Adult - water aerobics & fitness (PIR=180)
- Adult - lap swimming (PIR=156)
- Community special events (PIR=152)
- Adult - nature programs (PIR=132)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 33 recreation programs that were rated.



Indoor Aquatic Amenities

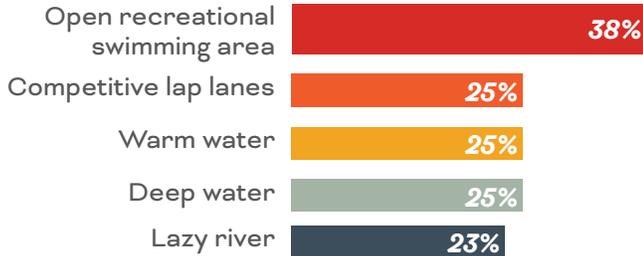
Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 18 indoor aquatic amenities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The five indoor aquatic amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Warm water
2. Open recreational swimming area
3. Competitive lap lanes
4. Deep water
5. Sauna

Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each indoor aquatic amenity, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each amenity. Based on the sum of respondents' top five choices, the most important indoor aquatic amenities to residents were:

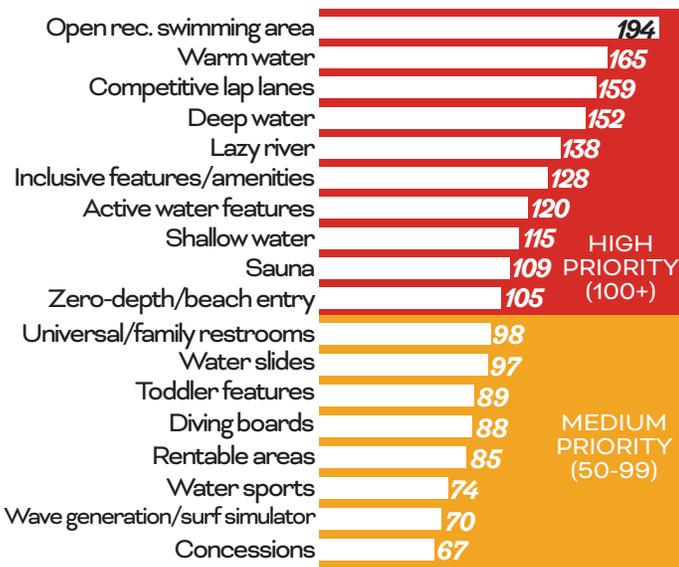


Priorities

Based on the PIR, the following five indoor aquatic amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Open recreational swimming area (PIR=194)
- Warm water (PIR=165)
- Competitive lap lanes (PIR=159)
- Deep water (PIR=152)
- Lazy river (PIR=138)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 18 indoor aquatic amenities that were rated.



Recreation Center Amenities

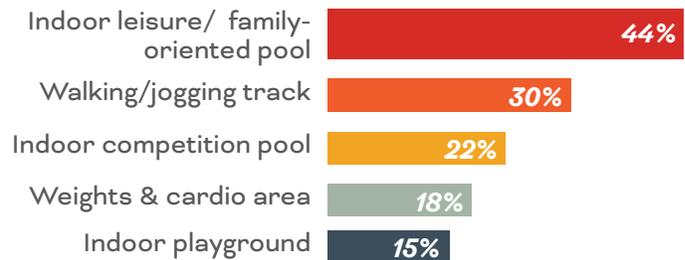
Needs

Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 24 recreation center amenities and to rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. The five recreation center amenities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. Indoor leisure/family-oriented pool
2. Indoor competition pool
3. Weights & cardio fitness area
4. Indoor playground
5. Yoga studio

Importance

In addition to assessing the needs for each recreation center amenity, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each amenity. Based on the sum of respondents' top five choices, the most important recreation center amenities to residents were:

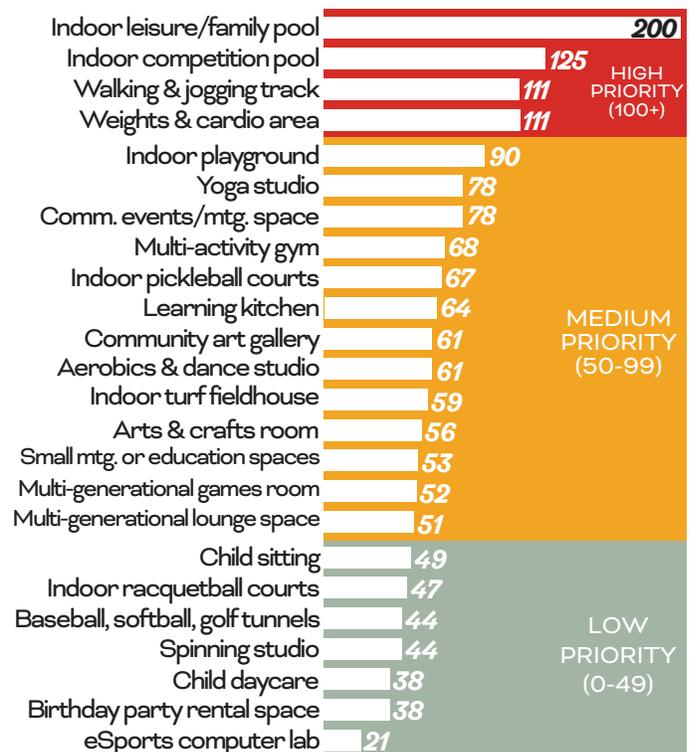


Priorities

Based on the PIR, the following five recreation center amenities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Indoor leisure/family-oriented pool (PIR=200)
- Indoor competition pool (PIR=125)
- Walking & jogging track (PIR=111)
- Weights & cardio fitness area (PIR=111)
- Indoor playground (PIR=90)

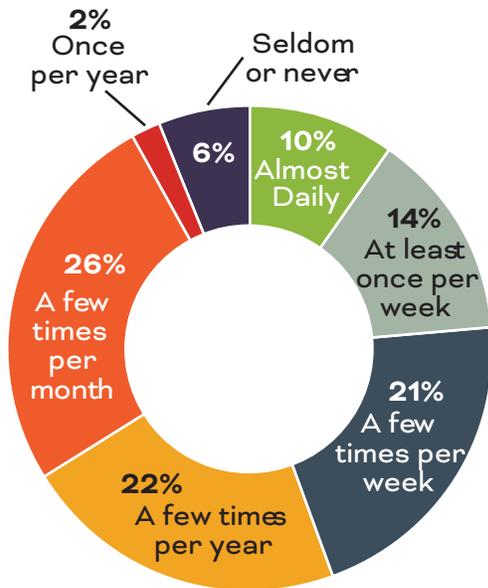
The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 24 recreation center amenities that were rated.



Use, Barriers, and Satisfaction

Frequency of Park & Facility Use

Ninety-four percent (94%) of respondent households indicated they had visited one of Manhattan’s city-owned parks and facilities in the past year. The pie chart below indicates the frequency these households visited Manhattan’s parks and facilities:



Park and Programming Use Barriers

The top three reasons preventing households from using parks or using them more often are:

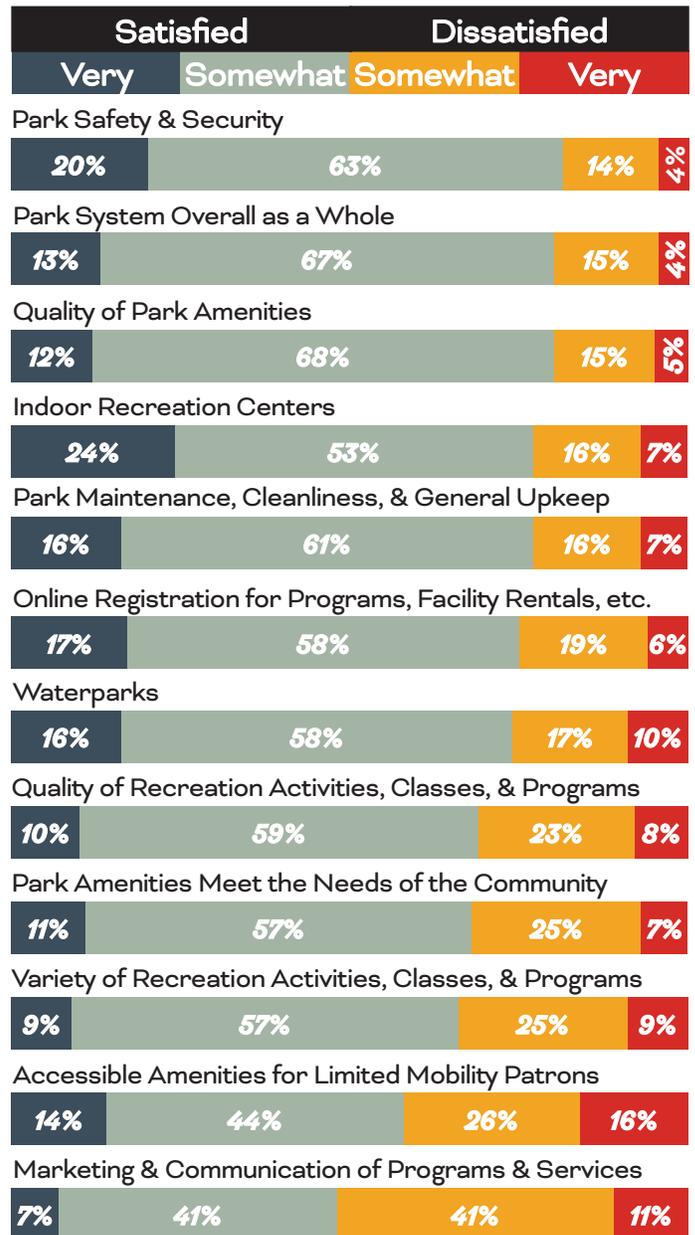
- Not interested/too busy (33%)
- Amenities offered don’t match my interests or needs (31%)
- Condition of amenities (19%)

In addition to park barriers, households were asked to identify what reasons prevent them from using recreation activities, classes, or sports programs more often. The top three reasons are listed below:

- I don’t know what is offered (31%)
- Too busy/not interested (31%)
- Program times are not convenient (24%)

System-wide Satisfaction

More than eighty percent (83%) of the respondents surveyed, who had an opinion, were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with park safety and security. Other aspects of the park system in which residents were “very satisfied” or “satisfied” include: the park system overall as a whole (80%), quality of park amenities (80%), and the indoor recreation centers (77%) with the indoor rec centers having the highest “very satisfied” rating of 24%.



Respondents were asked their level of agreement with the importance of various Parks and Recreation Department priorities over the next 10 years. Ninety-one percent (91%) who had an opinion either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that **updating existing park amenities should be a priority**. Other actions that respondents “strongly agreed” or “agreed” should be priorities include:

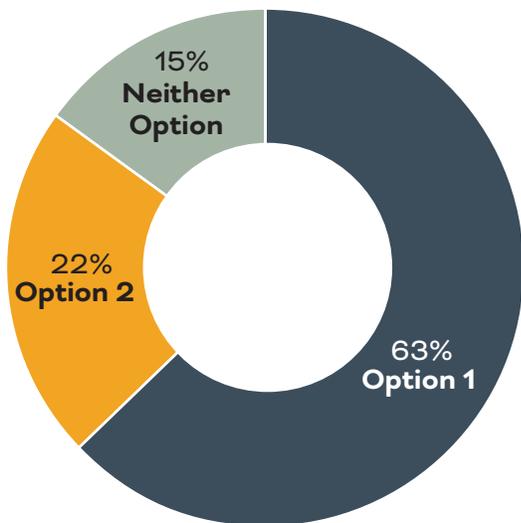
- Focus on quality improvements that consider future needs and growth (91%)
- Continue to expand the trail network with more connections to points of interest (86%)
- Expand the quantity and size for high demand activities, classes, and programs (86%)

Rec Center & Indoor Aquatics Funding

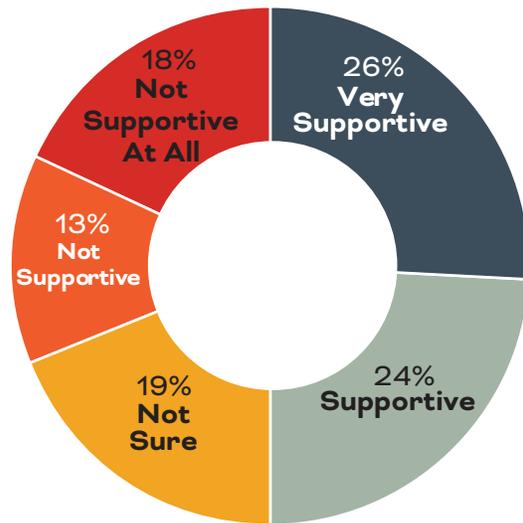
As part of the survey, residents were asked a series of questions about a new recreation center with aquatics or an aquatics-only facility and possible funding options they would be willing to accept and/or help pay for. There are currently 3 outdoor waterparks, 2 splash pads, and 3 recreation centers within Manhattan. Participants were give two options that best fits the needs of their household:

- Option 1 - The City of Manhattan should develop a **new aquatics-only indoor facility** with modern amenities that meets today’s aquatics needs. (This type of facility typically has a larger pool than commonly seen in a recreation center with an indoor pool).
- Option 2 - The City of Manhattan should develop a **new recreation center** with modern features that meets today’s recreation needs **including an indoor pool**. (This type of facility typically has a smaller pool than commonly seen in an indoor aquatics-only facility).

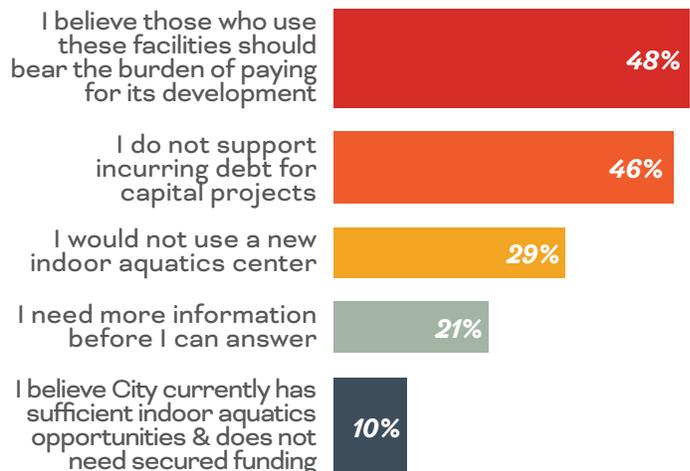
Responses are shown in the pie chart below.



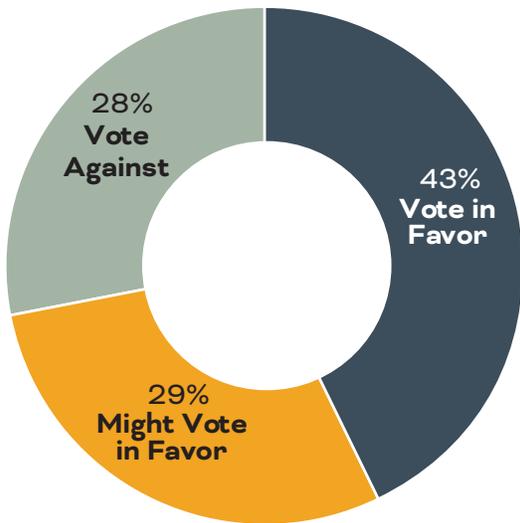
The following charts show how survey respondents would support a sales tax increase for an indoor aquatics-only facility, a new recreation center with indoor aquatics, and their reasons for not supporting a sales tax increase for either type of facility, as well as how they would vote on the funding of these facilities. Half (50%) of the survey participants were supportive of a sales tax increase to fund an indoor aquatics-only facility, 31% of respondents were not supportive, and 19% were “not sure.”



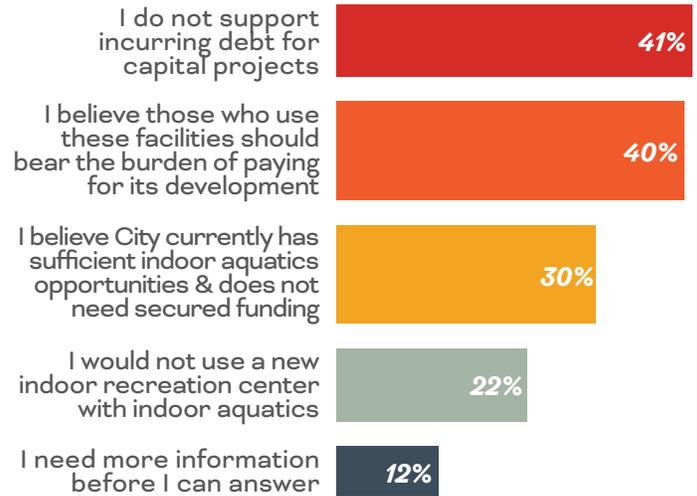
Those who answered “not supportive” or “not supportive at all” were asked to indicate why they answered this way. Those reasons can be found in the chart below .



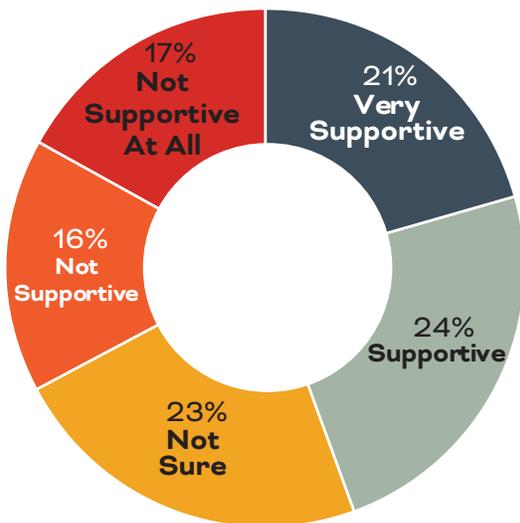
Participants were asked that if a voter election was held to determine whether or not to increase sales tax for an indoor aquatics-only facility, how they would respond as shown below.



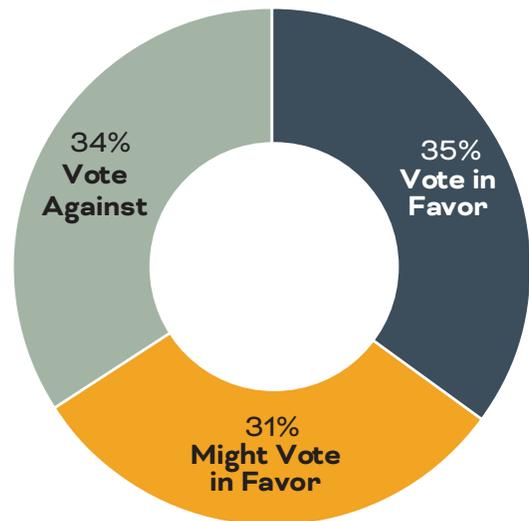
Those who answered “not supportive” or “not supportive at all” were asked to indicate why they answered this way. Those reasons can be found in the chart below.



Less than half (45%) of the survey participants were supportive of a sales tax increase to fund a new recreation center with indoor aquatics, 33% of respondents were not supportive, and 23% were “not sure.”

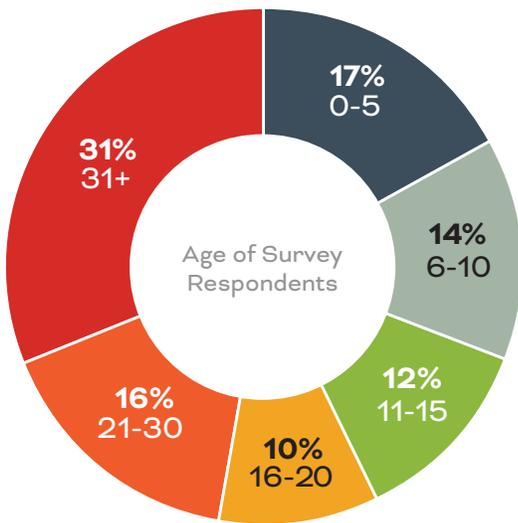


Participants were asked that if a voter election was held to determine whether or not to increase sales tax for a new recreation center with indoor aquatics, how they would respond as shown in the pie chart below.



Demographics

Overall, the demographic makeup of respondents is representative of the City of Manhattan. This suggests that the findings of the survey are generally representative of the community as a whole. The charts below and on the following page illustrate the key demographic backgrounds of respondents, as well as how they compare to the overall demographic makeup of the City.



Age of Respondents Compared to City

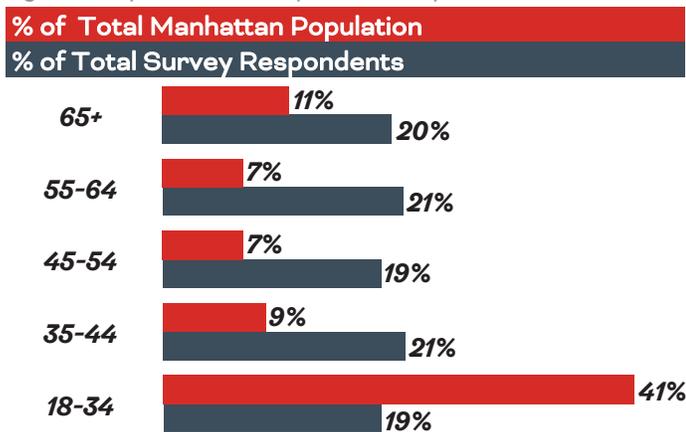
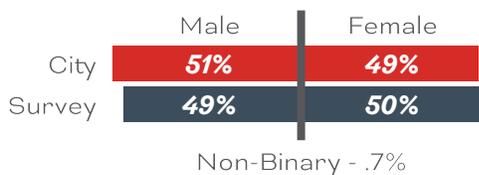
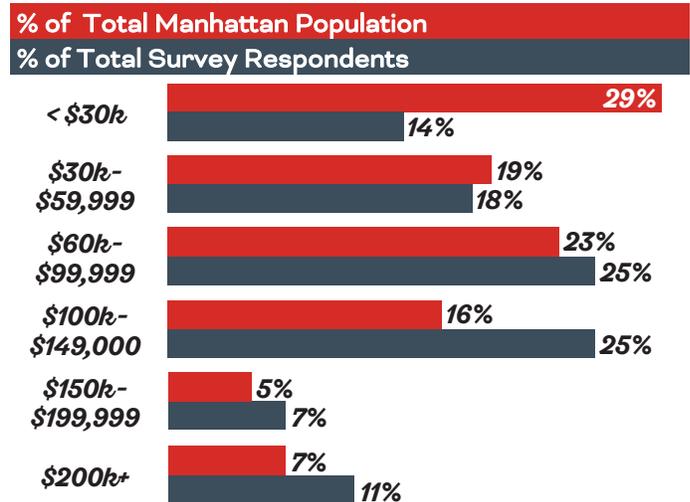


Figure 6.27: Gender of Respondents Compared to City



Income of Respondents Compared to City



CONCLUSION

In-Person Conversations

Between the focus groups, stakeholder group, and open house meeting, approximately 240 people were engaged in the master plan public engagement process. Focus group attendees were asked what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of the Manhattan Park's system. The top SWOT analysis comments are listed here:

- Strengths:
 - people
 - adaptability
- Weaknesses:
 - staffing
 - inefficiency
- Opportunities:
 - updating facilities
 - to fill peak program times
- Threats:
 - public perception and
 - staffing capacity

Sports and programming were found to be the top priority for the entire Manhattan Park's system. Other priorities included City and CiCo Park as the parks which need the most improvement. To improve program services, participants said that the facilities would need improvement as part of serving the community better. Participants also identified amenities they would like offered in the park system that are not already offered: pickleball and a skate park. Focus groups were asked to rate 12 different system performance categories and all of those categories scored 3-4 stars in satisfaction with an overall average of 3.4 stars.

Online Conversations

A total of 2,111 unique participants engaged with the project through the Social Pinpoint site. Given a budget of \$100, website visitors gave the highest monetary allocation to first fund the construction and operation of an indoor pool and second, to expand the pedestrian

trail network. One of the online tools was the “Ideas Wall” with a quarter of those comments pertaining to outdoor facilities, another quarter about programs and activities, and another quarter of participants involved parks and trails. Through those comments, CiCo was determined as the park most needing improvement and an indoor pool as the most needed amenity and the overall system’s top priority. Most comments on the interactive map concerned the parks and trails and should be considered one of the system’s priorities.

Statistically Valid Survey

Needs, Importance, and Priorities

Needs	
Outdoor Park Amenities	Restrooms
Recreation Programs	Adult water aerobics & fitness
Indoor Aquatic Amenities	Warm water
Rec. Center Amenities	Indoor leisure/family-oriented. pool
Importance	
Outdoor Park Amenities	Nature hiking/biking trails
Recreation Programs	Adult water aerobics & fitness
Indoor Aquatic Amenities	Open recreational swimming area
Rec. Center Amenities	Indoor leisure/family-oriented. pool
Priorities	
Outdoor Park Amenities	Nature hiking/biking trails
Recreation Programs	Adult fitness & wellness programs
Indoor Aquatic Amenities	Open recreational swimming area
Rec. Center Amenities	Indoor leisure/family-oriented. pool

Support for Recreation Investments

Respondents were given two options for new recreation facilities, either a new recreation center with an indoor pool, either a new recreation center with an indoor pool or an aquatics-only facility. An aquatics-only facility was preferred by more than half of participants. Funding of this aquatics-only facility through a sales tax increase was supported by half of survey respondents. The highest percentage of those who would not support a sales tax increase were opposed because they believe that it should be funded by only those who would use the facilities. Another half would not support its development because they do not support incurring debt for capital projects. If put to a vote, majority of residents said that they would vote in favor or might vote in favor of increasing the sales tax. From these results, a vote in favor of an increase sales tax to build an aquatics-only facility seems to be fairly agreeable to most Manhattan residents or could possibly be agreeable to a paid membership to use the facilities once it is built as some residents don’t want to pay for something they would not use.

