Community Interest and Opinion Survey

Park & Recreation Commission
September 19, 2017

Prepared by National Research Center Inc.
Survey Methods

2,400 households

262 completed surveys (11%)

6.1% Margin of Error

Results weighted
Arts, culture and recreation will flourish in Alexandria, with a network of accessible parks and public open spaces and activities that are accessible to residents of all ages
Household Participation

Parks
- 2011: 85%
- 2013: 82%
- 2015: 85%
- 2017: 84%

Programs or Events
- 2011: 46%
- 2013: 48%
- 2015: 52%
- 2017: 50%

- Class or Program: 22%
- Special Event: 38%
over 8 in 10 users rated parks, classes/programs or special events as Excellent or Good
Household Satisfaction

Parks
- 2011: 86%
- 2013: 85%
- 2015: 84%
- 2017: 86%

Programs or Events
- 2011: 90%
- 2013: 93%
- 2015: 90%
- 2017: 89%

Class or Program: 85%
Special Event: 93%
The community will have equal and ready access to opportunities that promote mental and physical well-being and a happy, active lifestyle.
RPCA Benefit

- Improved health & well-being: 93%
- Increased quality of life: 93%
- Increased connectedness to community: 92%

strongly or somewhat agree
Barriers to Using RPCA Programs

- Don’t know what is being offered
- Don’t know locations of facilities
Other Ratings
over 8 in 10 who had interacted with RPCA staff rated interactions as Excellent or Good
over 8 in 10 rate appearance and condition of public spaces as Excellent or Good
Awareness of Alexandria’s Public Art Program

- Very aware: 4%
- Somewhat aware: 27%
- Not aware: 69%
Information Sources Used

- Friends & neighbors: 33%
- City of Alexandria Website: 29%
- Recreation brochure/program guide: 27%
- Newspaper: 24%
- Neighborhood/civic newsletters: 19%
- City Newsletter (E-News): 15%
Engaging with RPCA

Provide feedback through additional surveys
- Very likely: 40%
- Somewhat likely: 46%
- Not at all likely: 14%

Communicate directly with staff
- Very likely: 24%
- Somewhat likely: 45%
- Not at all likely: 31%

Provide comments and feedback through social media
- Very likely: 24%
- Somewhat likely: 39%
- Not at all likely: 37%

Attend web-based public meeting
- Very likely: 14%
- Somewhat likely: 41%
- Not at all likely: 46%

Attend public meetings or focus group discussions
- Very likely: 11%
- Somewhat likely: 42%
- Not at all likely: 47%

Attend a board or commission meeting
- Very likely: 9%
- Somewhat likely: 42%
- Not at all likely: 49%

Join a board or commission
- Very likely: 8%
- Somewhat likely: 31%
- Not at all likely: 61%

Attend a telephone town hall
- Very likely: 9%
- Somewhat likely: 24%
- Not at all likely: 67%

Percent of Respondents
Household Need and Importance for Programs and Facilities
Programs: Household Need

- Cultural special events: 64%
- Adult fitness and wellness programs: 56%
- Volunteer/community projects: 44%
- Walking/biking groups: 41%
- Lap swimming: 39%
Programs: Household Unmet Need

Youth open play
- 11% met
- 11% met
- 19% met
- 37% met
- 22% unmet

Adult day and weekend travel programs
- 19% met
- 2% met
- 26% met
- 16% met
- 36% unmet

Adult martial arts programs
- 17% met
- 6% met
- 28% met
- 12% met
- 36% unmet

Adult open play
- 9% met
- 14% met
- 30% met
- 20% met
- 27% unmet

Youth fitness and wellness programs
- 15% met
- 24% met
- 11% met
- 3% met
- 46% unmet

Percent of Respondent Households
Programs: Importance

- Cultural special events: 23%
- Walking/biking groups: 22%
- Volunteer/community projects: 22%
- Adult cooking programs: 19%
- Adult fitness and wellness: 16%
Programs: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance

Lower Priorities
lower importance/higher unmet need

- Adult day and weekend travel...
- Adult martial arts programs
- Youth fitness and wellness...
- Adult continuing education programs
- Programs for preschool age
- Multi-generational programs
- Youth nature programs/environmental education
- Youth sports classes
- Adult organized sports programs
- Programs for people with disabilities
- School break camps
- Programs for older adults
- Programs for teens
- Before and after school care programs
- Youth technology programs

Top Priorities
higher importance/higher unmet need

- Adult open play
- Youth open play
- Youth learn to swim instruction
- Lap swimming
- Adult learn to swim instruction
- Tennis lessons and leagues
- Adult technology programs
- Adult nature programs/environmental education
- Wellness programs
- Adult fitness and wellness programs
- Cultural special events
- Walking/biking groups
- Adult cooking programs
- Volunteer/community projects

Continued Emphasis
higher importance/lower unmet need
Programs: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance

Lower Priorities
lower importance/higher unmet need

Adult day and weekend travel programs
Adult martial arts programs
Youth fitness and wellness programs
Youth cooking programs
Adult continuing education programs
Programs for preschool age
Multi-generational programs
Youth nature programs/environmental education
Youth sports classes
Adult organized sports programs
Programs for people with disabilities
Tennis lessons and leagues
Programs with your pets
Athletic special events
Youth creative and performing arts
School break camps
Programs for teens
Before and after school care programs
Youth technology programs

Top Priorities
higher importance/higher unmet need

Adult open play
Youth learn to swim instruction
Lap swimming
Cultural special events
Walking/biking groups
Volunteer/community projects
Adult cooking programs
Adult fitness programs
Adult nature programs/environmental education
Adult technology programs

Continued Emphasis
higher importance/lower unmet need

Unmet Need
Programs: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance

Lower Priorities
lower importance/higher unmet need

- Adult day and weekend travel
- Adult martial arts programs
- Youth fitness and wellness
- Adult continuing education programs
- Programs for preschool age
- Multi-generational programs

- Youth nature programs/environmental education
- Youth sports classes
- Adult organized sports programs
- Programs for people with disabilities
- Youth creative and performing arts
- School break camps
- Programs for teens

- Programs for older adults
- Before and after school care programs

Adult open play
- Adult learn to swim instruction
- Lap swimming
- Adult technology programs
- Adult nature programs/environmental education
- Adult fitness and wellness programs
- Adult cooking programs
- Volunteer/community projects
- Cultural special events
- Walking/biking groups

Top Priorities
higher importance/higher unmet need

- Youth open play
- Youth learn to swim instruction
- Lap swimming
- Youth technology programs
- Adult open play
- Adult learn to swim instruction
- Tennis lessons and leagues
- Adult technology programs
- Adult nature programs/environmental education
- Adult fitness and wellness programs

Continued Emphasis
higher importance/lower unmet need
Programs: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance

**Top Priorities**
higher importance/higher unmet need

- Youth open play
- Adult open play
- Youth learn to swim instruction
- Lap swimming
- Adult technology programs
- Cultural special events
Programs: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance
Top Priorities: Higher Importance, Higher Unmet Need

➢ Cultural special events,
➢ Adult open play,
➢ Lap swimming,
➢ Adult technology programs, and
➢ Youth learn to swim instruction.
Facilities: Household Need

- Walking paths: 89%
- Farmers' Markets: 77%
- Natural areas and wildlife habitats: 71%
- Biking trails: 62%
- Outdoor running/walking track: 61%
Facilities: Household Unmet Need

Indoor gym space

Indoor exercise and fitness facilities

Picnic shelters/areas

Off-leash dog areas

Gymnastics room

Percent of Respondent Households

100% Met | 75% Met | 50% Met | 25% Met | 0% Met
Facilities: Importance

- Farmers' Markets: 31%
- Walking paths: 28%
- Biking trails: 21%
- Outdoor track: 13%
- Indoor pools: 12%
Facilities: Plotting Unmet Need & Importance
Top Priorities: Higher Importance, Higher Unmet Need

➢ Biking trails,
➢ Outdoor running/walking track,
➢ Indoor pools,
➢ River/stream activities,
➢ Playgrounds, and
➢ Outdoor public art.
Trade-Offs and Budget Priorities
Parks should...

- Have active uses for organized sports and paid programs through user fees
  - 7%

- Have passive uses that are open to the whole community (open lawns, forested areas, trails, picnic areas, etc.)
  - 93%
I go to parks and recreation facilities...

To see familiar faces/meet people  

19%

For quiet relaxation or individual uses

81%
When considering potential budget reductions, the Parks and Recreation Department should...

- Eliminate some, maintain others at current levels: 45%
- Keep all, maintain at lower levels: 55%
How would you allocate $100 among each of the following parks and recreation?

- Improve parks and outdoor recreational facilities and fields: $41
- Improve indoor recreational facilities: $22
- Develop new indoor recreational facilities: $15
- Acquisition of additional parkland and open space: $22
QUESTIONS?
THANK YOU!

Erin Caldwell
Director of Research
National Research Center
Household Participation - NCS

- **Parks**
  - 85% (2011)
  - 82% (2013)
  - 85% (2015)
  - 84% (2017)

- **Events**
  - Special Event: 38% (2017)
  - City-sponsored Event: 56% (2016)
  - Recreation centers: 52% (2017)
  - 45% (2017)
Household Satisfaction - NCS

Parks
- 86% (2011)
- 84% (2013)
- 85% (2015)
- 86% (2017)

Recreation centers or facilities
- 83% (2016)
- 73% (2017)
Household Satisfaction - NCS

Programs
- 85% 2017
- 84% 2016
- 73% 2017

Class or Program
- 85% 2017

Recreation programs
- 84% 2016
- 73% 2017

Special Events
- 85% 2017

Any special events
- 84% 2016
- 73% 2017

City-sponsored special events
Community Opportunities - NCS

Recreational Opportunities
- 2016: 79%
- 2017: 72%

Fitness Opportunities
- 2016: 74%
- 2017: 72%

Opportunities to attend cultural/arts/music activities
- 2016: 74%
- 2017: 74%
Participation in Healthy Activities - NCS

Eat at least 5 portions of fruits and vegetables a day
- 2016: 83%
- 2017: 85%

Participate in moderate or vigorous physical activity
- 2016: 74%
- 2017: 72%

Always, usually or sometimes