

City of Dunwoody Parks & Recreation Master Planning Citizen Survey Results

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Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY	1
SUMMARY OF SELECTED FINDINGS	2
DEMOGRAPHICS	4
CURRENT FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS	7
Knowledge of Parks and Recreation Opportunities.....	7
Facilities	8
Programs	15
Specific Dunwoody Facilities and Programs	22
PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS	23
VALUES AND VISION	29
FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES	33
Most Important Areas that Would Increase Use of Facilities.....	33
Future Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve	34
COMMUNICATION	42
FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEEES	43
ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS	52
A COMPARISON TO THE OPEN LINK SAMPLE	56

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Demographic Profile (Questions 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 27)	5
Figure 2 : Residential Profile (Questions 1, 2, and 23)	6
Figure 3: Familiarity with Local Parks and Recreation Opportunities (Question 3)	7
Figure 4: Importance of Facilities (Question 5a -Facilities).....	10
Figure 5: Importance of Facilities (Question 5a - Facilities).....	11
Figure 6: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities (Question 5b - Facilities)	12
Figure 7: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities (Question 5b - Facilities)	13
Figure 8: Current Facilities Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix (Question 5a and 5b - Facilities) .	14
Figure 9: Importance of Programs (Question 5a – Programs).....	17
Figure 10: Importance of Programs (Question 5a – Programs).....	18
Figure 11: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs (Question 5b – Programs)	19
Figure 12: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs (Question 5b -Programs)	20
Figure 13: Current Programs Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix (Question 5a and 5b – Programs)	21
Figure 14: Specific Facilities and Program Importance (Question 6)	22
Figure 15: Household Need for Programs (Question 7).....	24
Figure 16: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8).....	25
Figure 17: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8).....	26
Figure 18: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8).....	27
Figure 19: Other Facilities Utilized for Programmed Activities (Question 9)	28
Figure 20: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4).....	30
Figure 21: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4).....	31
Figure 22: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4).....	32
Figure 23: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Facilities (Question 10)	33
Figure 24: Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities (Question 11)	36
Figure 25: Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities (Question 11)	37
Figure 26: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)	38
Figure 27: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)	39
Figure 28: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)	40
Figure 29: Best Method for Reaching You (Question 18)	42
Figure 30: Willingness to Support Funding Mechanisms for Parks and Recreation Improvements	45
Figure 31: Potential Impact of Fee Increases on Current Level of Participation (Question 15)....	45
Figure 32: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17).....	46
Figure 33: Willingness to Support Funding Mechanisms for Parks and Recreation Improvements	47
Figure 34: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17).....	48
Figure 35: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17) (by Presence of Children in the Household)	49
Figure 36: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17).....	50
Figure 37: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17).....	51

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to gather public feedback on Dunwoody parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs. This survey research effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist the City of Dunwoody in planning for capital improvements and to better understand community needs.

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 that provide a statistically valid sample. Analysis by additional segments is included where differences were apparent and omitted where trends were similar to the overall sample. The open link responses are additionally analyzed and discussed in a separate section of the report, highlighting differences from the invitation sample.

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

A total of 3,000 surveys were mailed to a random sample of Dunwoody residents in March 2016. After accounting for undeliverable addresses (15 total), 2,985 survey mailings were delivered and approximately 661 responses were received, resulting in an excellent response rate of 22 percent. The margin of error for the 661 statistically valid responses is approximately +/- 3.8 percentage points calculated for questions at 50% response¹. Additionally, the open link survey received 962 responses. The survey responses were gathered from March 17, 2016 to April 18, 2016.

The underlying data were weighted by age and race to ensure appropriate representation of Dunwoody residents across different demographic cohorts in the sample. Using the U.S. Census Bureau 2014 American Community Survey five-year estimates, the age and race distribution within the invitation respondent sample was matched to the 2014 demographic profile of the City of Dunwoody.

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

¹ For the total invitation sample size of 661, margin of error is +/- 3.8 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.

SUMMARY OF SELECTED FINDINGS

This section provides a brief overview of some of the key findings in the survey with a primary focus on the statistically valid invitation sample.

- Values and Vision. The top areas that invitation sample respondents most want focus for improvement include maintenance of parks and facilities (68 percent), safety and security (48 percent), pathway connectivity (39 percent), and community-wide special events (28 percent).
- Future Facilities, Amenities, and Services. Pathways and trails were rated as a top priority for future investment by 39 percent of respondents, followed by improved park amenities (33 percent), open pavilion for concerts/performances (29 percent), outdoor athletic fields/courts (26 percent), and theatre/performing arts center (26 percent).
- Brooks Run Park. In open-ended comments, respondents most often suggested that the top priority for new amenities or improvements at Brook Run Park are athletic fields (including baseball and soccer fields), and adding an amphitheater/pavilion for concerts and shows. Adding and maintaining bathrooms as well as connecting and expanding the trails in the park are priorities, as well. Respondents also indicated support for more lights and more parking, and to add a recreation center/indoor complex for activities.
- Programs and Special Events. A large majority of respondents expressed a need or desire for both community events (83 percent) and fitness and wellness programs (62 percent). In terms of top priorities for improvement or addition, community events remained the most selected option (63 percent), followed by youth athletic leagues (25 percent), fitness and wellness programs (24 percent), and nature programs (24 percent).
- Most Important Areas That Would Increase Use of Facilities. Additional facilities and amenities was the top area that could increase utilization of facilities (47 percent), followed by awareness of programs/communications (44 percent), programs I want (43 percent), condition/maintenance of parks or buildings (42 percent), and safety and security (34 percent).
- Financial Choices/Funding Mechanisms. Support for various potential funding mechanisms to construct new parks and recreation facilities and other improvements is rather limited (other than support for private donations and user fees). A bond referendum has the greatest support with 47 percent “probably” or “definitely” supporting such an initiative. A new dedicated sales tax has 44 percent support, followed by a general property tax mill levy (33 percent) and a new dedicated property tax (26 percent probably or definitely support).

- Likely Vote on Bond Referendum. In a related question, asked specifically how they would vote if a bond referendum related to funding parks and recreation improvements were to appear on a future ballot, 55 percent would “definitely” (18 percent) or “probably” (37 percent) vote yes.
- Impact of Fee Increases. Over half (55 percent) responded that moderate user fee increases would not limit their ability to participate.
- Allocation of Funds to Parks and Recreation Facilities. When given the opportunity to allocate a hypothetical \$100 to parks and recreation facilities, respondents allocated the largest amount of funding toward improving, renovating, or maintaining existing park facilities with an average allocation of \$26. This was followed by an average allocation of \$20 for additional pathways/trails and an average of \$14 for adding outdoor athletic fields and courts.

DEMOGRAPHICS

This section of the report details the respondent and household demographics of the invitation and open link samples. By understanding the characteristics of these two sample groups, we are in a better position to understand response patterns for various questions on the survey.

- Gender. The invitation sample had more female respondents than male respondents, with 56 percent female and 44 percent male. The gender distribution in the open link sample was similar (60 percent female, 40 percent male).
- Age. Fourteen percent of invitation sample respondents were under 35 years of age, 36 percent were between 35 and 44, 17 percent were between 45 and 54, and the remaining 33 percent were 55 years of age or older. In comparison, the open link sample had fewer respondents between 35 and 44 and a larger cohort of respondents aged 45-64.
- Household Profile. Over half (53 percent) of invitation respondents reported that they live in a household with children, while 64 percent of open link respondents do.
- Household Income. Survey respondents are quite affluent. Over half of invitation sample respondents reported earning over \$150,000 annually (52 percent). Thirty-six percent reported an annual household income between \$75,000 and \$149,999 and only 11 percent reported an annual household income of less than \$75,000. The open link sample had a relatively similar distribution, with 59 percent having incomes over \$150,000.
- Ethnicity/Race. As a result of the weighting process, 71 percent of invitation respondents identify themselves as white, 8 percent as African American, 15 percent as Asian, and 8 percent as some other race. In addition, 10 percent indicated that they are of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. The open link sample is less diverse, with 94 percent identifying themselves as white.
- Years in Dunwoody. Invitation respondents are typically long-time residents of Dunwoody, with 50 percent having lived in the City for eleven or more years. The average was 14.9 years for the invitation sample and 16.9 years for the open link sample.
- Own or Rent. A large majority of respondents in both samples own their household (99 percent invitation, 96 percent open link).

Figure 1: Demographic Profile (Questions 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 27)

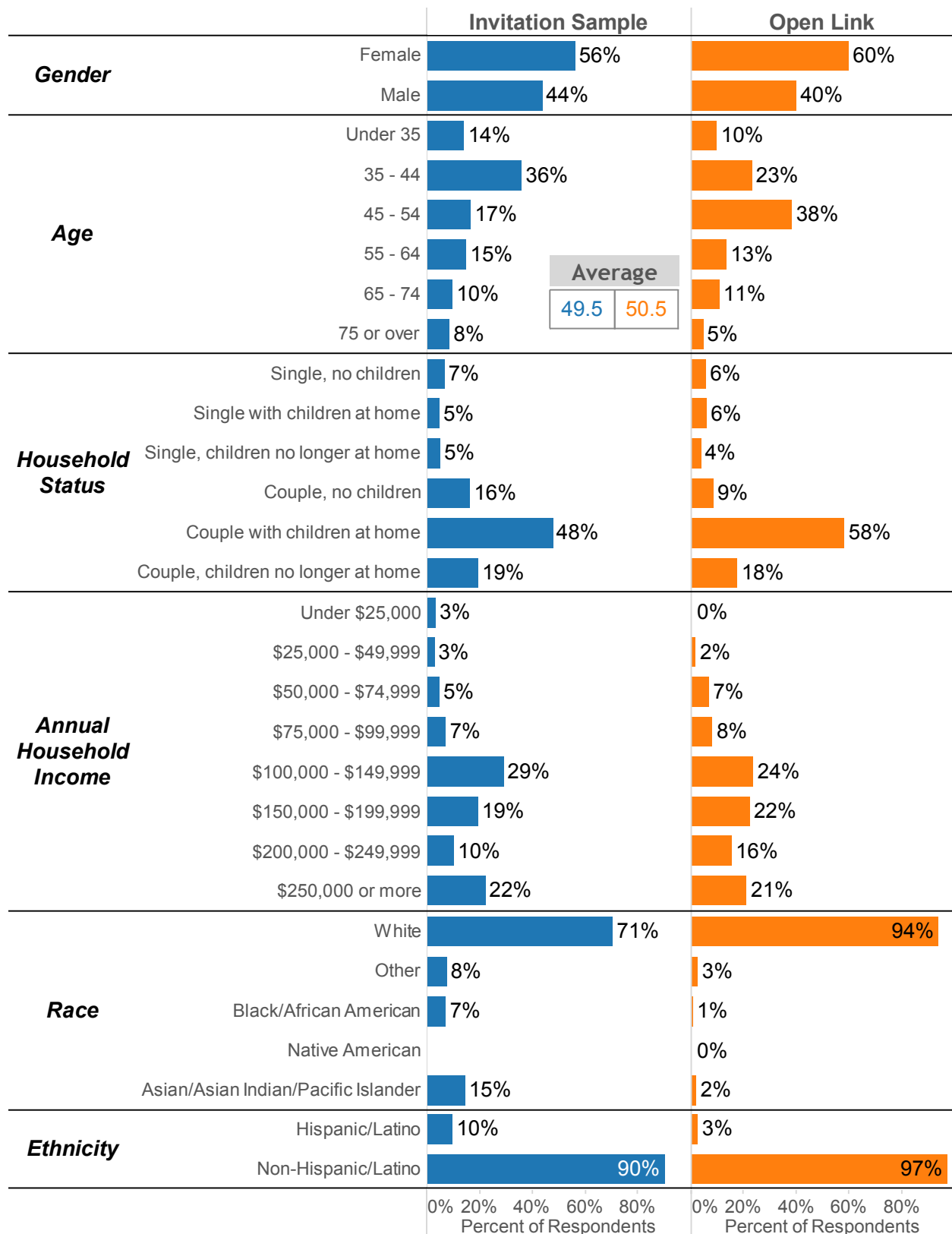
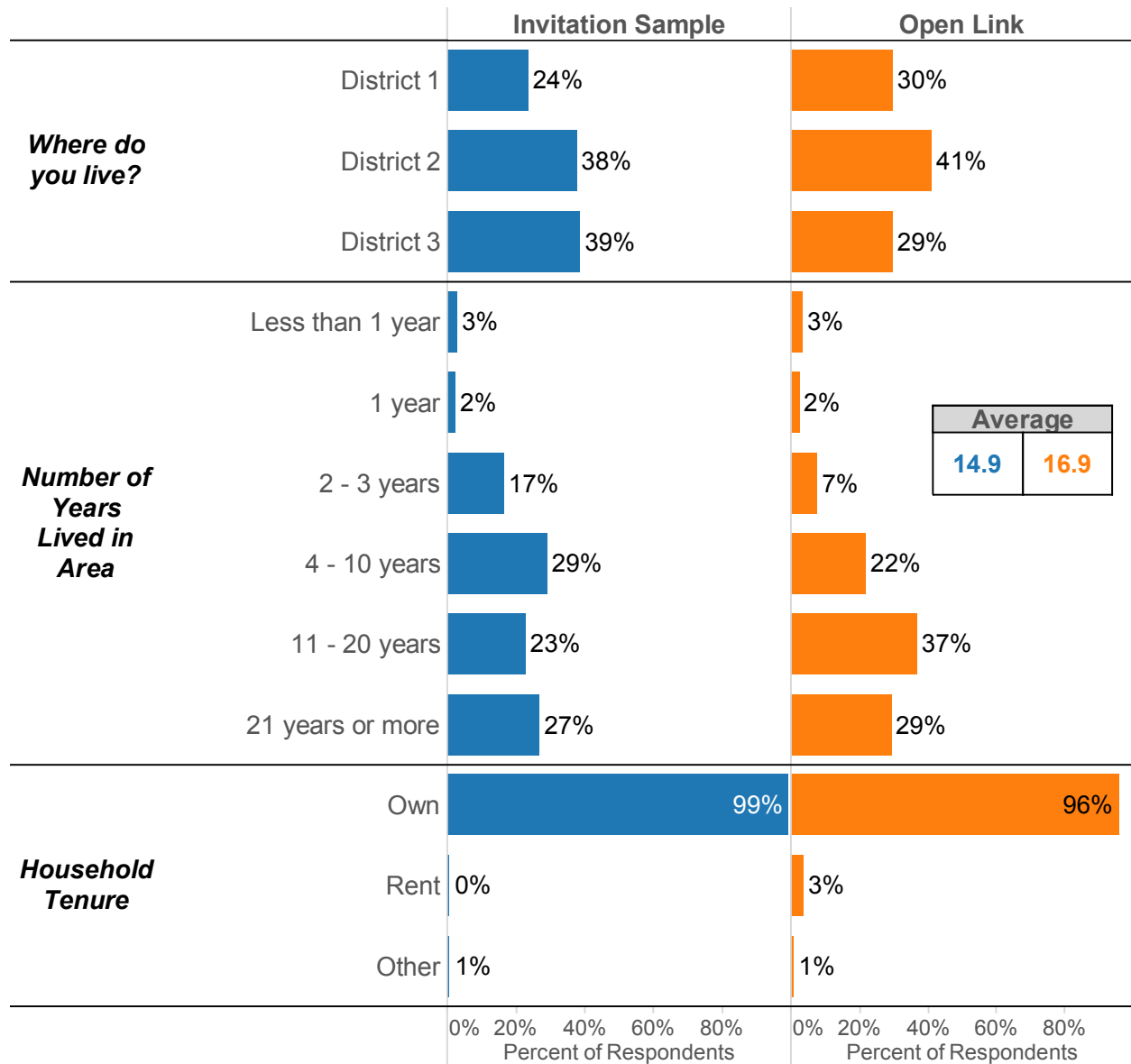


Figure 2 : Residential Profile (Questions 1, 2, and 23)

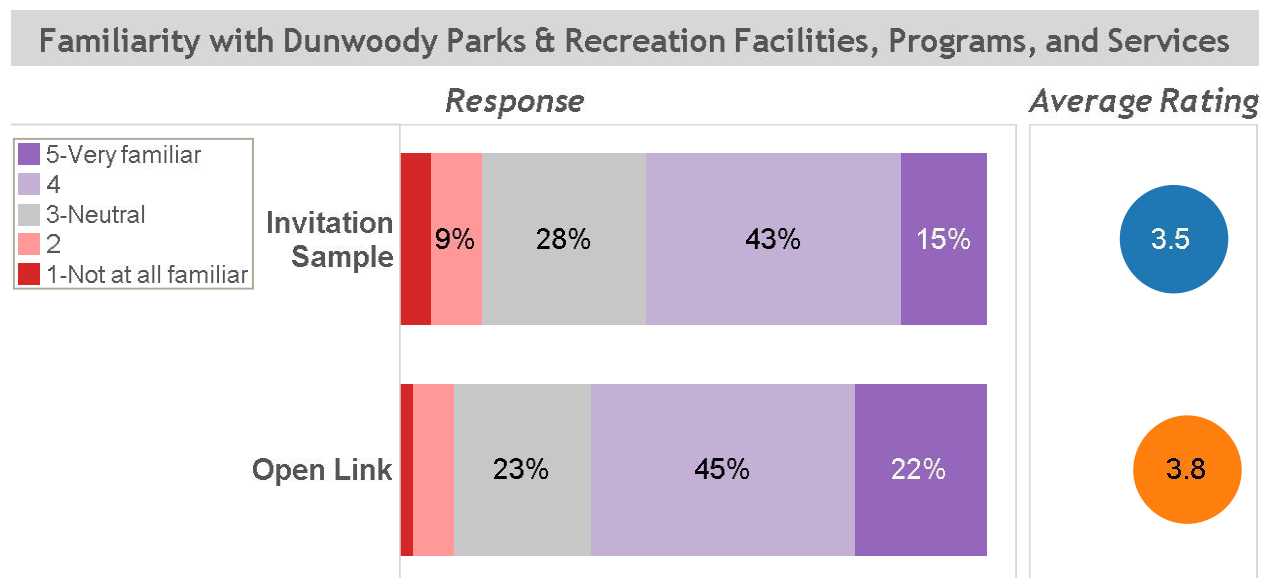


CURRENT FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS

Knowledge of Parks and Recreation Opportunities

Knowledge/Familiarity with Current Parks and Recreation Offerings. Respondents were also asked to rate their level of familiarity with current parks, recreation, and cultural facilities, programs and services on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all familiar” and 5 means “very familiar.” Fifty-eight percent of invitation sample respondents indicating that they are familiar with Dunwoody parks and recreation offerings (providing a “4” or “5” rating) for a 3.5 average rating.

Figure 3: Familiarity with Local Parks and Recreation Opportunities (Question 3)



Facilities

Importance of Facilities to Household. Respondents rated the importance of Dunwoody parks and recreation facilities to their households on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important.” Figure 4 to follow illustrates the responses for each facility with facilities then sorted by their midpoint rating. Figure 5 depicts the average importance rating provided by invitation respondents for each facility.

The amenity rated as most important was trails and pathways with an average importance rating of 4.5 and 89 percent of respondents providing a 4 or 5 rating. This was followed by the nature center (4.1 average rating, 79 percent rated 4 or 5), playgrounds (4.0 average rating, 74 percent rated 4 or 5), and picnic shelters (3.7 average rating, 63 percent rated 4 or 5). Out of the 12 facilities provided to rate, only dog parks and skate parks were not rated as important with an average importance rating of 2.7 and 2.0 respectively.

Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities. Using the same list of facilities, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel these facilities are meeting the community’s needs on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “completely.” Figure 6 shows the percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating for each facility, and the facilities are again sorted by their midpoint needs met rating. Figure 7 immediately after depicts average ratings.

Respondents provided the highest needs-met ratings for the nature center (average rating of 4.1, 79 percent provided a “4” or “5” rating), playgrounds (4.0 average, 75 percent rated 4 or 5), dog parks (3.8 average, 63 percent rated 4 or 5), and skate parks (3.8 average, 65 percent rated 4 or 5). On the lower end of the scale of not meeting community needs as well were outdoor courts (rating of 3.0), athletic fields (3.1), and event pavilions (3.1).

Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix – Current Facilities. To better illustrate areas for future facility improvements, the “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix shown in Figure 8 compares the level of importance and the degree to which community needs are being met for each facility. The matrix is sectioned into four quadrants using the midpoints for both questions. The Importance scale midpoint was 3.4 (the median importance rating across all programs), and the Needs-Met midpoint was 3.3.

The upper right quadrant depicts facilities that have high importance to households in Dunwoody and also adequately meet community needs. As these facilities are important to most respondents, they should be monitored and maintained in coming years but are less of a priority for immediate improvements as needs are currently being met:

- Trails and pathways
- Nature Center
- Playgrounds
- Picnic Shelters (on the cusp of low needs met)

Facilities located in the upper left quadrant have a high level of importance but a lower level of needs being met, indicating that these are potential areas for enhancements. Improving these facilities would likely positively affect the degree to which community needs are met overall:

- Cultural Arts Center (borderline low in needs met)
- Athletic Fields

Shown in the lower right quadrant are facilities that are less important to most households and are meeting the needs of the community well. Future discussions evaluating whether the resources supporting these facilities outweigh the benefits may be constructive:

- Dog Parks
- Skate Parks

Finally, facilities found in the lower left quadrant do not meet community needs well but are also important to fewer in the community. Deemed “niche” facilities, these amenities may have a small but passionate following, so measurements of participation in discussions of future improvements may prove to be valuable:

- Community Gardens (borderline high in needs met)
- Historical Sites (on the cusp of high importance)
- Event Pavilions (on the cusp of high importance)
- Outdoor Courts

Figure 4: Importance of Facilities (Question 5a -Facilities)
Invitation Sample Only

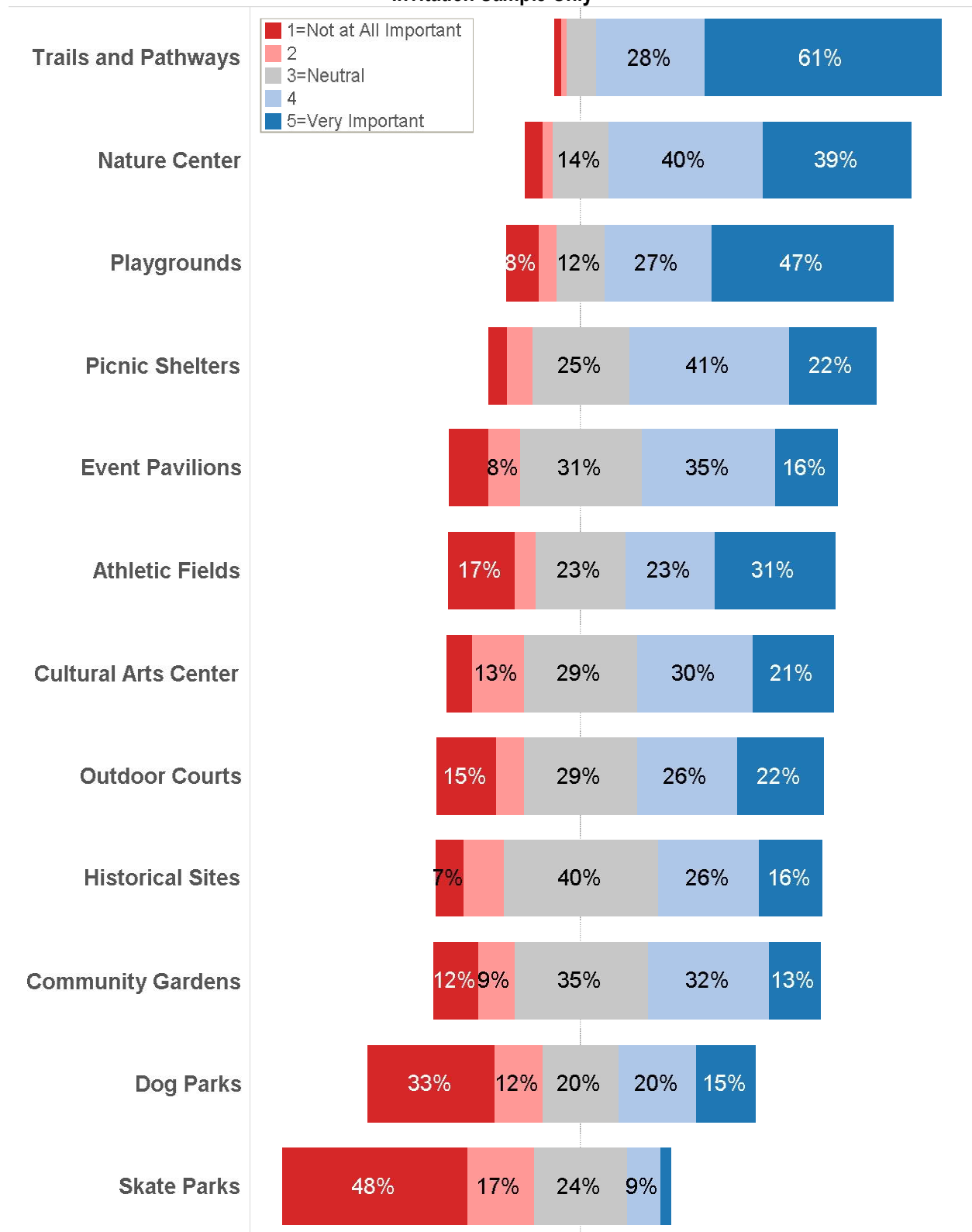


Figure 5: Importance of Facilities (Question 5a - Facilities)
(Average Rating)

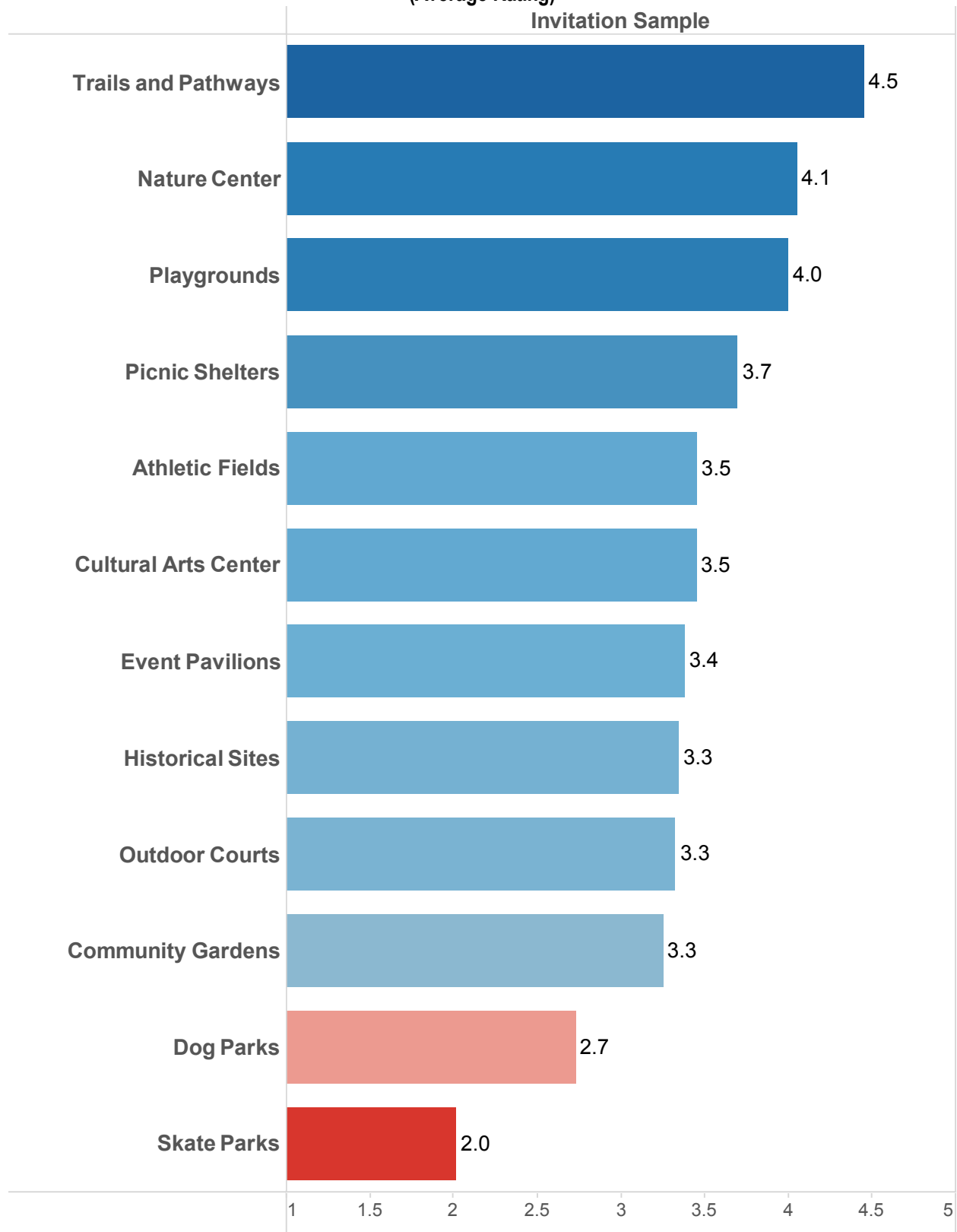


Figure 6: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities (Question 5b - Facilities)
Invitation Sample Only

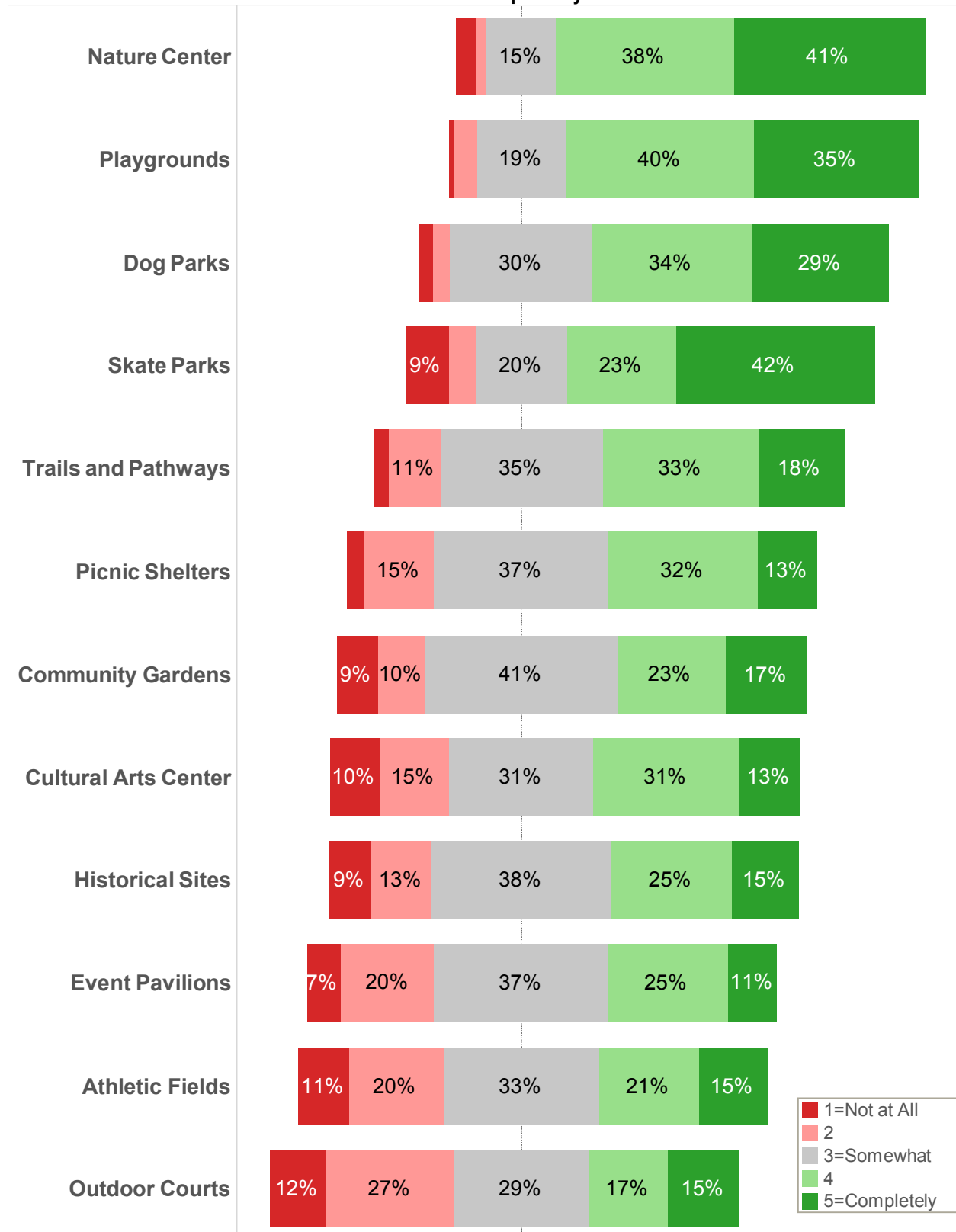


Figure 7: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities (Question 5b - Facilities)
(Average Rating)

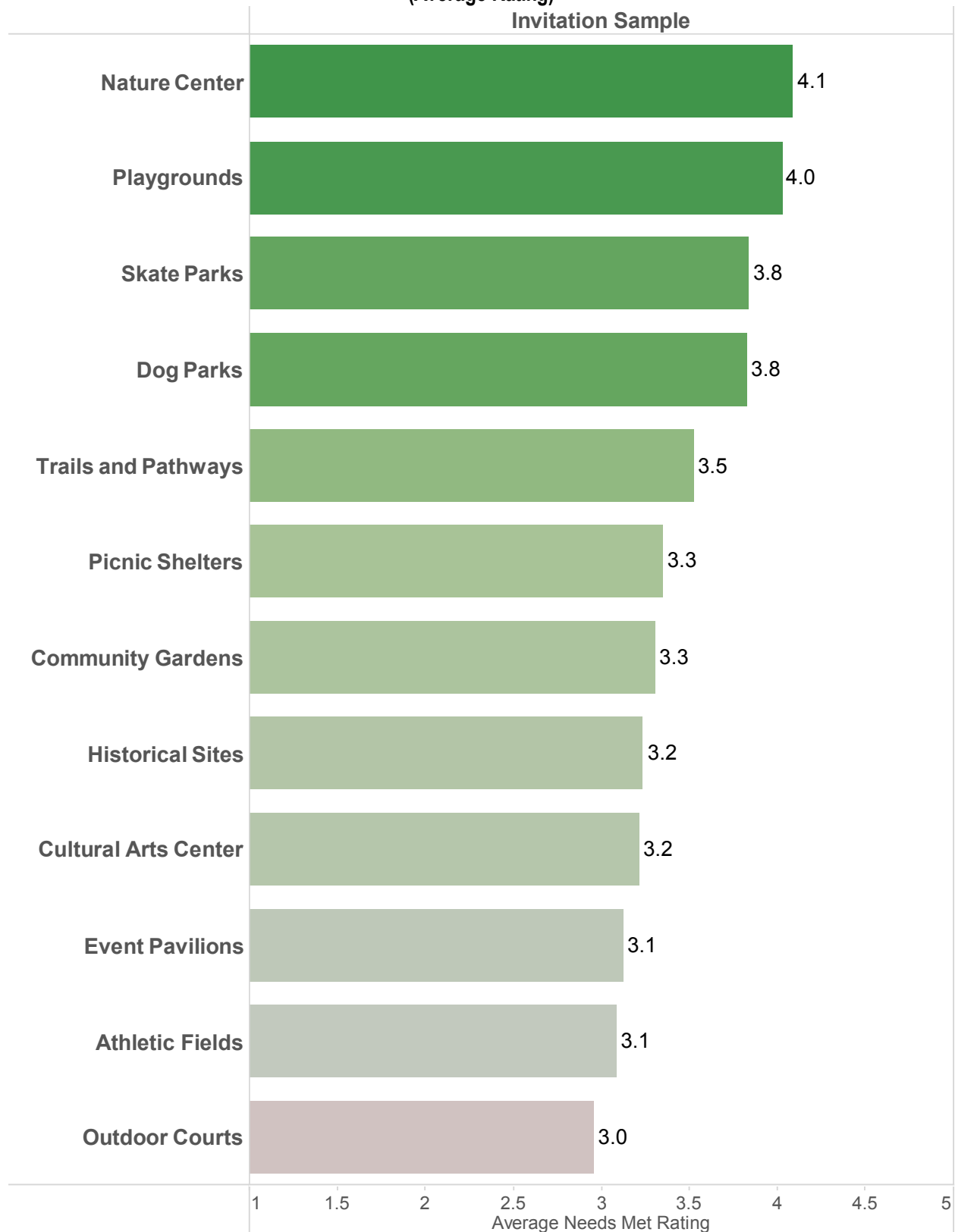
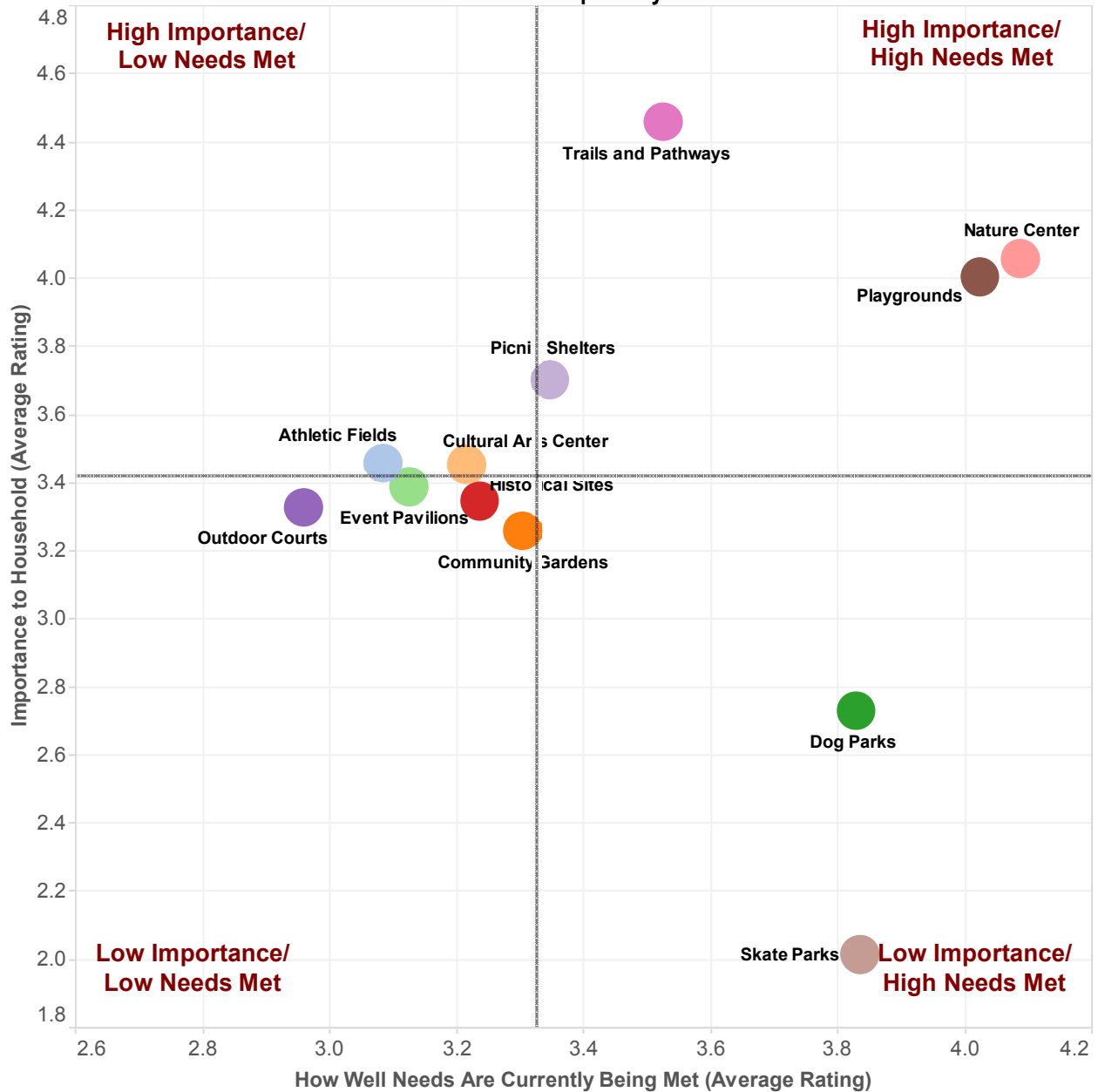


Figure 8: Current Facilities Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix (Question 5a and 5b - Facilities)
Invitation Sample Only



Programs

Importance of Programs to Household. Similarly, respondents rated the importance of Dunwoody parks, recreation, and cultural programs to their households on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “not at all important” and 5 is “very important.” Figure 9 to follow depicts the percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating, and each program is then sorted amongst the others based on its midpoint rating. Figure 10 shows average importance ratings among invitation respondents for each program.

Respondents provided relatively strong importance ratings for most of the ten listed programs. The programs with the highest ratings were community events such as festivals, parades and concerts (4.1 average rating, 80 percent rated 4 or 5) followed by special events (3.7 average, 63 percent rated 4 or 5). Youth sports, youth education programs, and wellness/health/yoga all received an average importance rating of 3.5. Two programs, teen and senior programs received average rating below 3.0.

Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs. Using the same list, respondents also rated the degree to which they feel these programs are meeting the community’s needs on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “completely.” Figure 11 shows the percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating for each program, and the facilities are sorted by their needs-met midpoint rating. A summary of average ratings for each item is presented in Figure 12.

Respondents provided more moderate ratings when evaluating the degree to which community needs are currently being met by programs. Community events (festivals, concerts, etc.) were identified as best meeting needs with an average rating of 3.7 and 58 percent of respondents rating a 4 or 5. Special events were rated 3.4 on average, and youth sports and senior programs were both rated 3.2 on average. Wellness/Health/Yoga received a below average rating of 2.8.

Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix – Current Programs. Another “Importance vs. Needs-Met” matrix allows a similar comparison of programs based on the level of importance and degree to which community needs are being met. Scores are illustrated in the matrix in Figure 13 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 midpoint was 3.1.

Programs located in the upper right quadrant are identified as having a high level of importance and are also perceived to be meeting community needs adequately. While improvements are less of an immediate priority for these programs, they are important to monitor so that community satisfaction stays strong:

- Special events
- Community events
- Youth Sports

Depicted in the upper left quadrant are programs that are generally important to households but are not fully meeting the needs of the community. Therefore, enhancing or expanding these programs may boost the degree to which respondents feel their overall community needs are being met:

- Wellness/health/yoga programs (borderline low in importance)
- Youth education programs (borderline low in importance)

The programs in the lower right quadrant are less important to most respondents and are also currently meeting the needs of the community. Current levels of support appear to be adequate, so future resource allocation discussions should consider community needs:

- Youth enrichment programs (on the cusp of high importance)
- Senior programs

Finally, lower left quadrant programs have a low level of meeting community needs even though they are only important to a smaller group of households. These “niche” programs are typically not critical for the satisfaction of the whole community, but should be monitored to understand whether or not improvements would be constructive:

- Adult enrichment/education programs
- Adult education programs
- Teen programs

Figure 9: Importance of Programs (Question 5a – Programs)
Invitation Sample Only

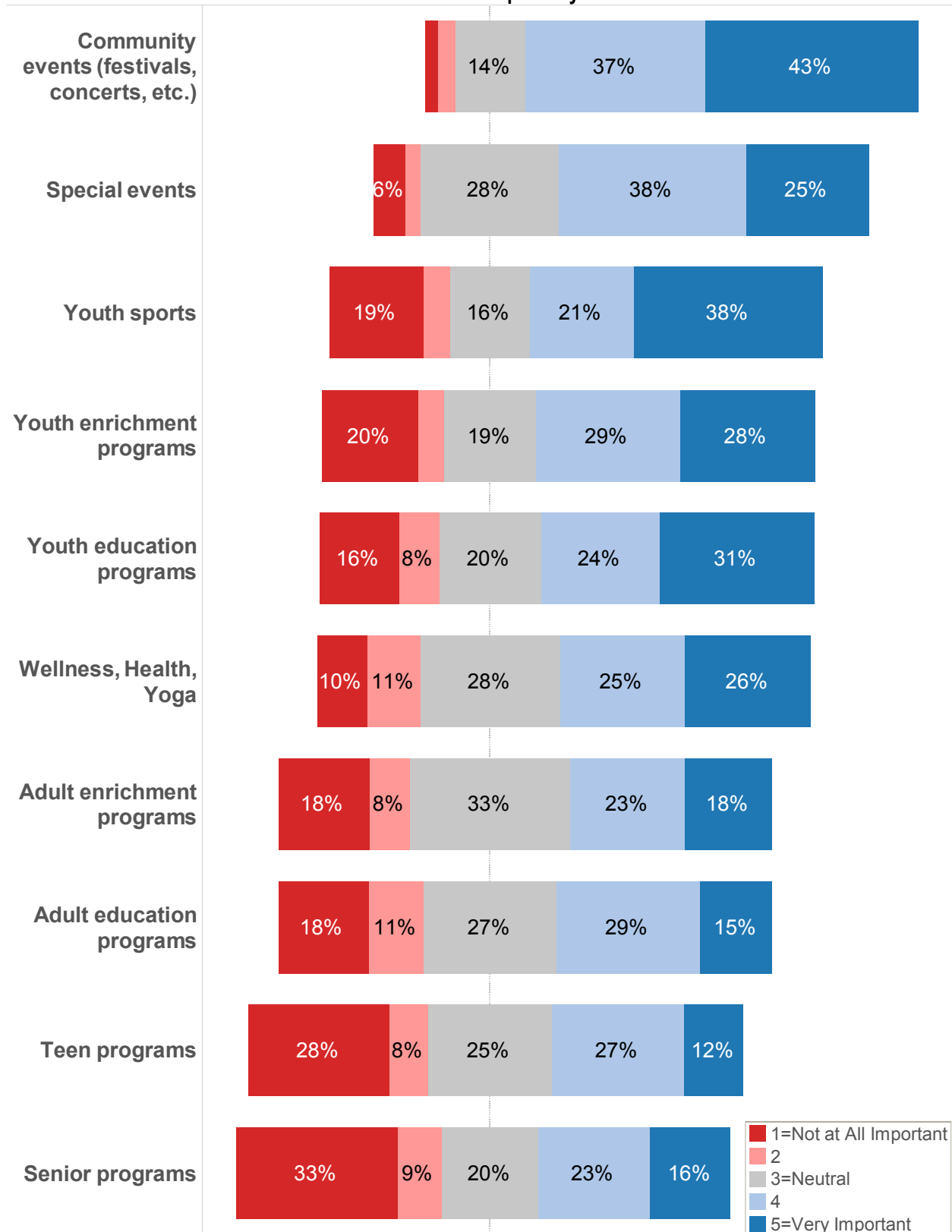


Figure 10: Importance of Programs (Question 5a – Programs)
(Average Rating)

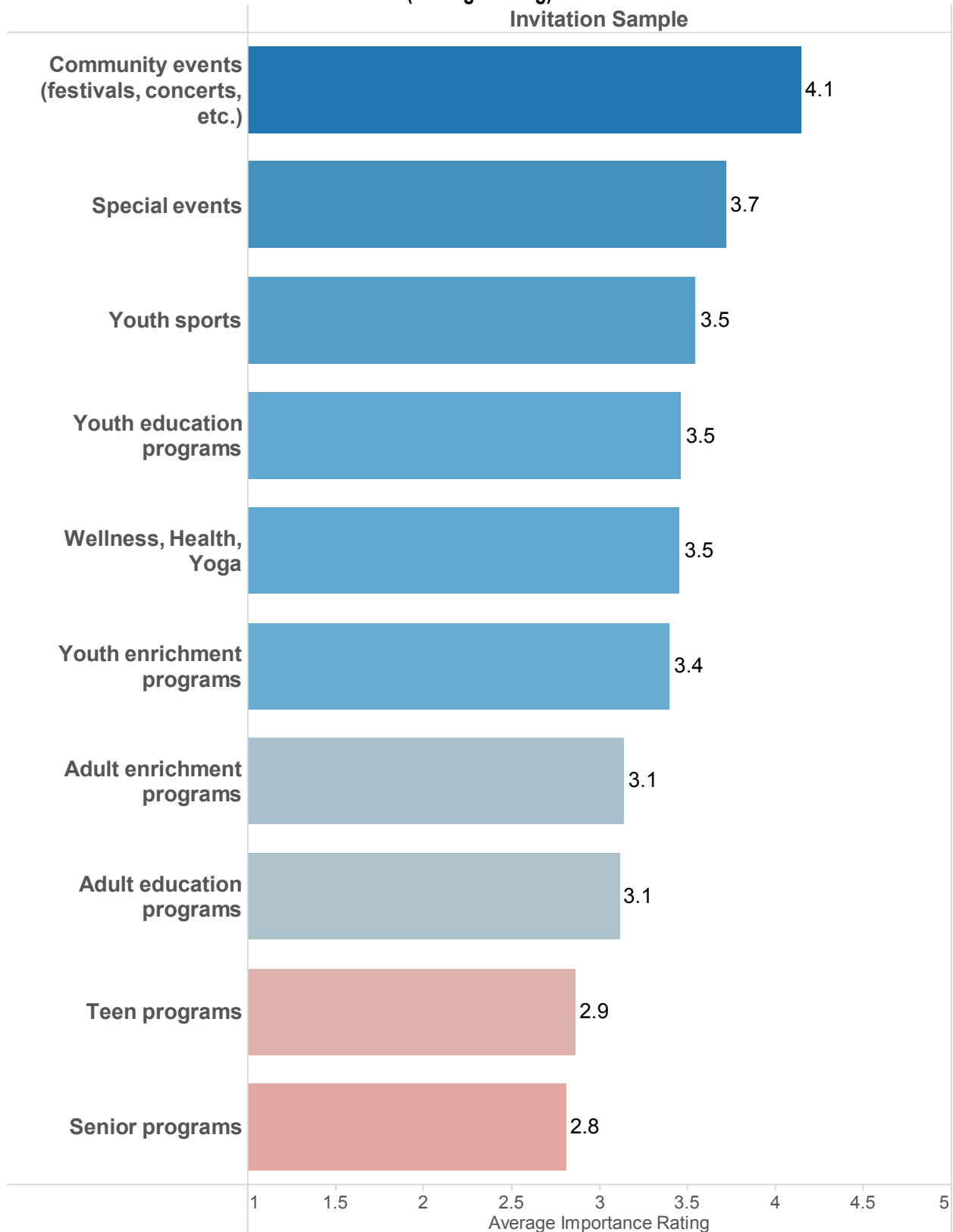


Figure 11: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs (Question 5b – Programs)
Invitation Sample Only

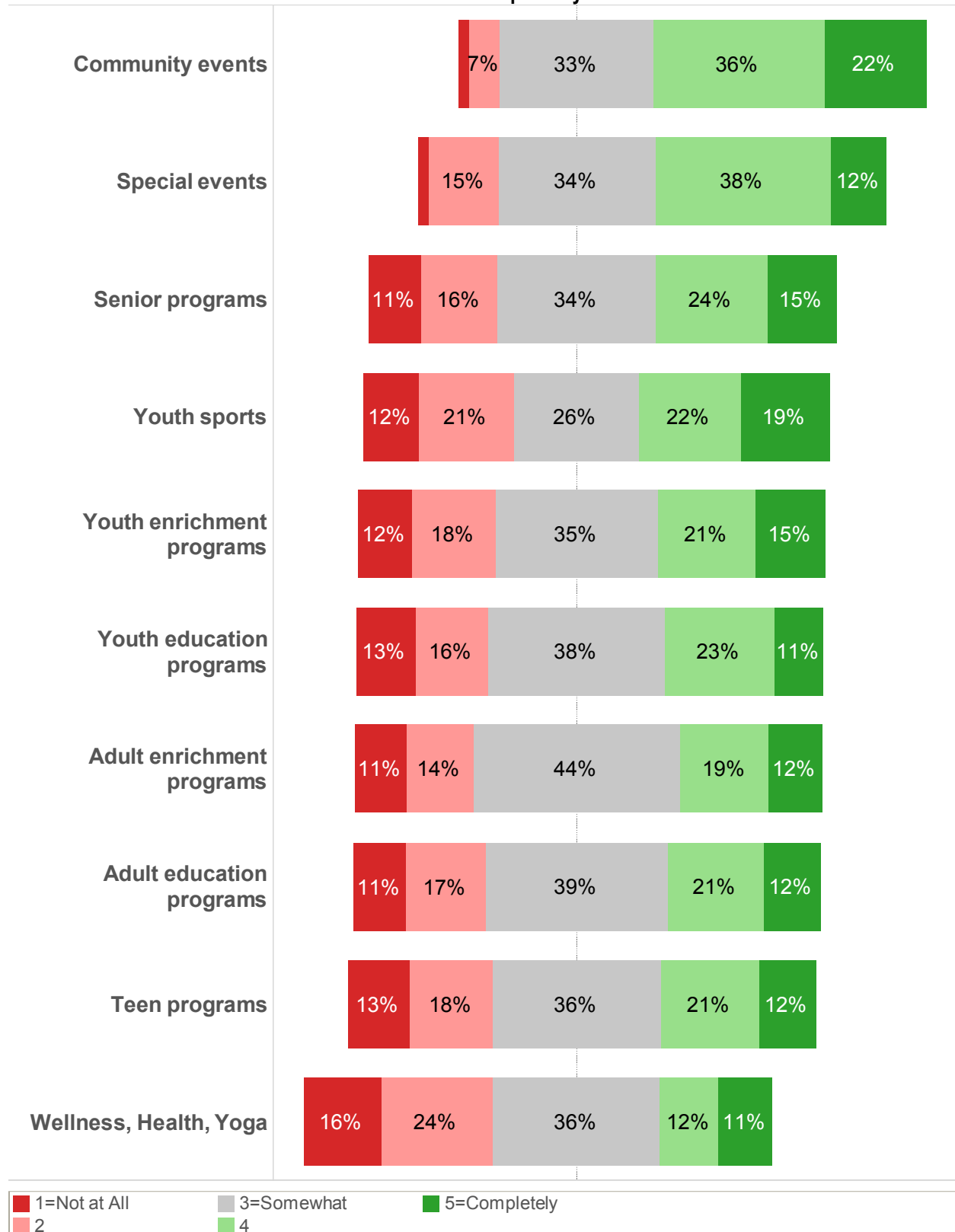


Figure 12: Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Programs (Question 5b -Programs)
(Average Rating)

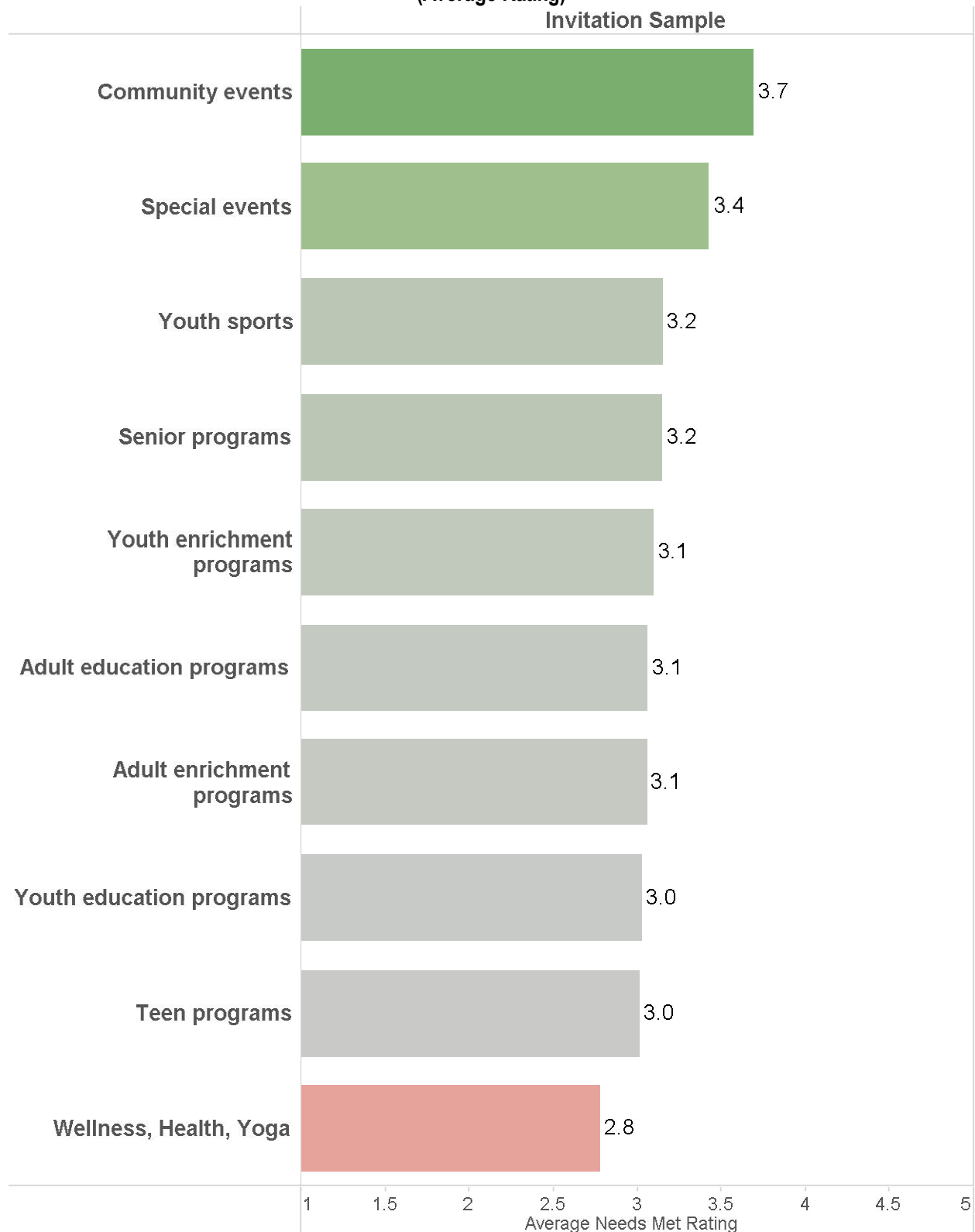
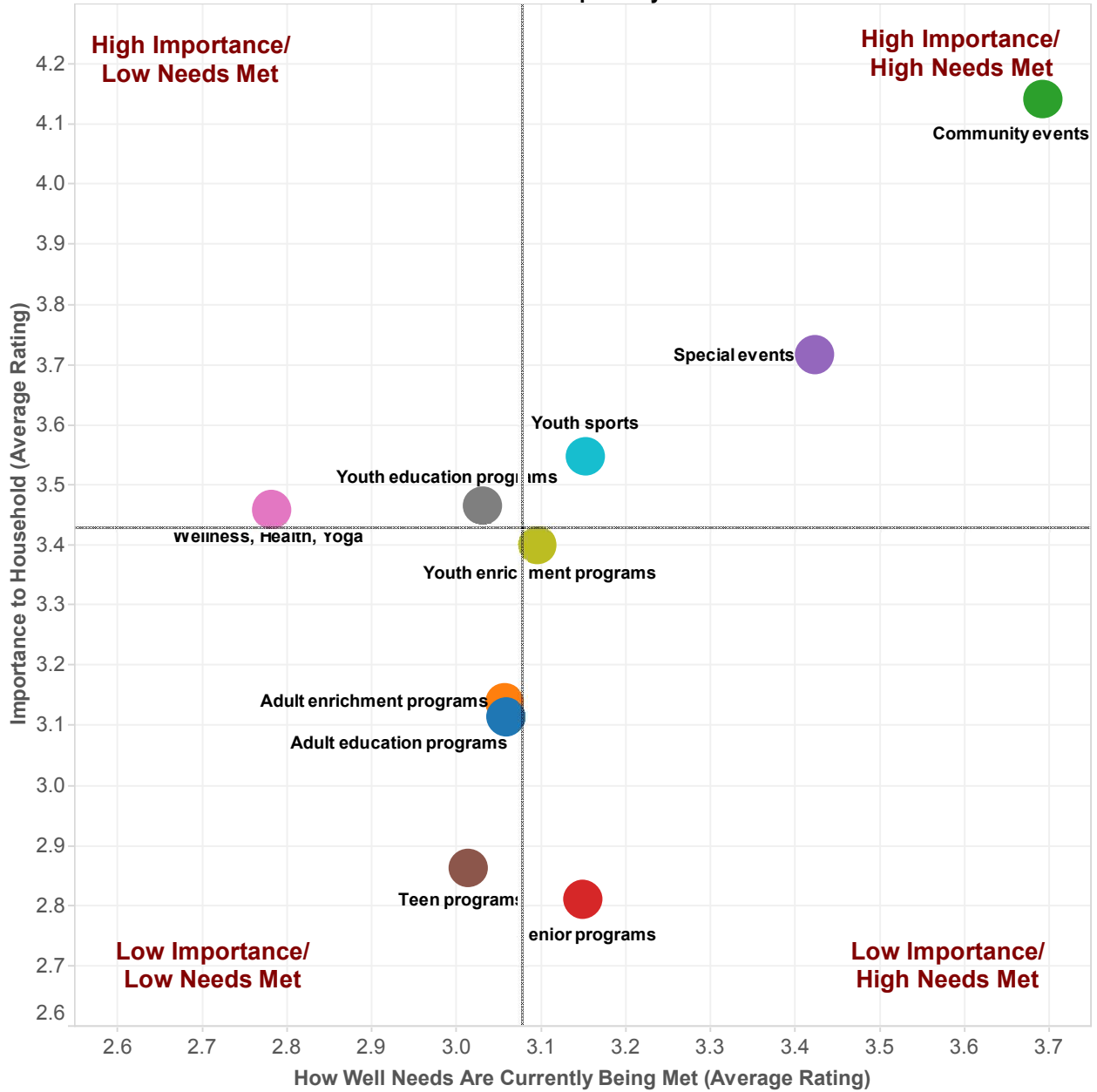


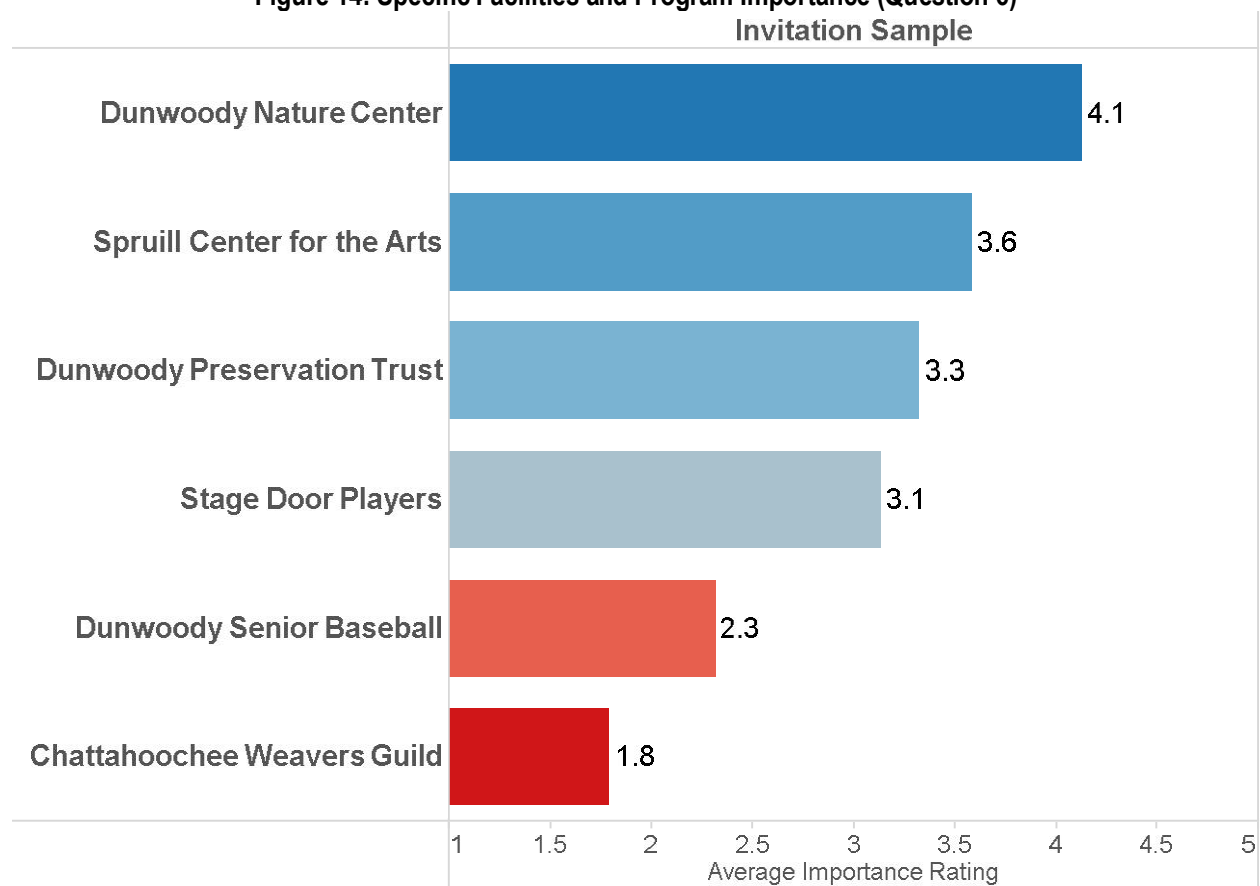
Figure 13: Current Programs Importance vs. Needs Met Matrix (Question 5a and 5b – Programs)
 Invitation Sample Only



Specific Dunwoody Facilities and Programs

Respondents were asked the importance of an additional 6 specific facilities and programs in Dunwoody. Figure 14 shows the Dunwoody Nature Center as the top facility of importance with an average rating of 4.1 and 77 percent respondents rating it a 4 or 5. The Spruill Center for the Arts and the Dunwoody Preservation Trust were also high in importance with average ratings of 3.6 and 3.3 respectively. Two programs were lower in importance; the Dunwoody Senior Baseball program had an average rating of 2.3 and 55 percent of respondents rating it a 1 or 2 and the Chattahoochee Weavers Guild with an average rating of 1.8 and 68 percent responding with a 1 or 2.

Figure 14: Specific Facilities and Program Importance (Question 6)



PROGRAMS, ACTIVITIES, AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Respondents were given a list of 20 programs and activities and asked to identify all of the options in which their family currently participates or would like to participate. Figure 155 shows the total response for each program while Figure 16 shows the percent of respondents ranking each program as their first, second, and third priorities to be added, expanded, or improved.

A large majority of households indicated a need or desire for both community events (83 percent) and fitness and wellness programs (62 percent). This was followed by nature programs (61 percent), outdoor recreation programs (59 percent), and cultural programs (57 percent).

In addition, respondents were asked to select their first, second, and third priority programs from the list of 20 programs. Community events remained the most selected option with 63 percent of respondents ranking this in their top three priorities (36 percent ranked it as their first priority, 15 percent ranked it as their second priority, and 12 percent ranked it as their third priority). Athletic leagues-youth were ranked as a top priority by 25 percent of respondents, and both fitness and wellness programs and nature programs were top priorities for 24 percent of respondents.

Invitation responses for household program priorities were also analyzed by age (Figure 17) and by household income (Figure 18).

- **By Age.** Those under the age of 35 highly value swim lessons/aquatic programs and family programs, while those between the ages 35 and 55 focused on athletic leagues, summer camps and after school programs. Respondents over the age of 55 had a strong desire for adult enrichment programs (32 percent) senior programs (31 percent), cultural programs (31 percent) and art programs (22 percent).
- **By Household Income.** Top areas of focus varied considerably depending on household income. Significant differences of focus occurred between youth athletic leagues and with fitness and wellness programs. Those respondents below a household income of \$100,000 were most likely to focus on fitness and wellness (41-49 percent), as compared to 18-21 percent among households with incomes above \$100,000. In addition, households less than \$100,000 also focused on adult enrichment, senior and cultural programs, while respondent households above \$100,000 also highly value youth athletic leagues, nature and outdoor recreational programs.

Park Facilities Utilized: A variety of park facilities are utilized for programmed activities, including area churches, area YMCA, Blackburn and Morgan Falls parks, MJCC, Murphy Chandler Park, and other park facilities. Fifty-one percent of respondents utilize area churches followed by 42 percent using the MJCC and 27 percent using Murphy Chandler park (Figure 19).

Figure 15: Household Need for Programs (Question 7)

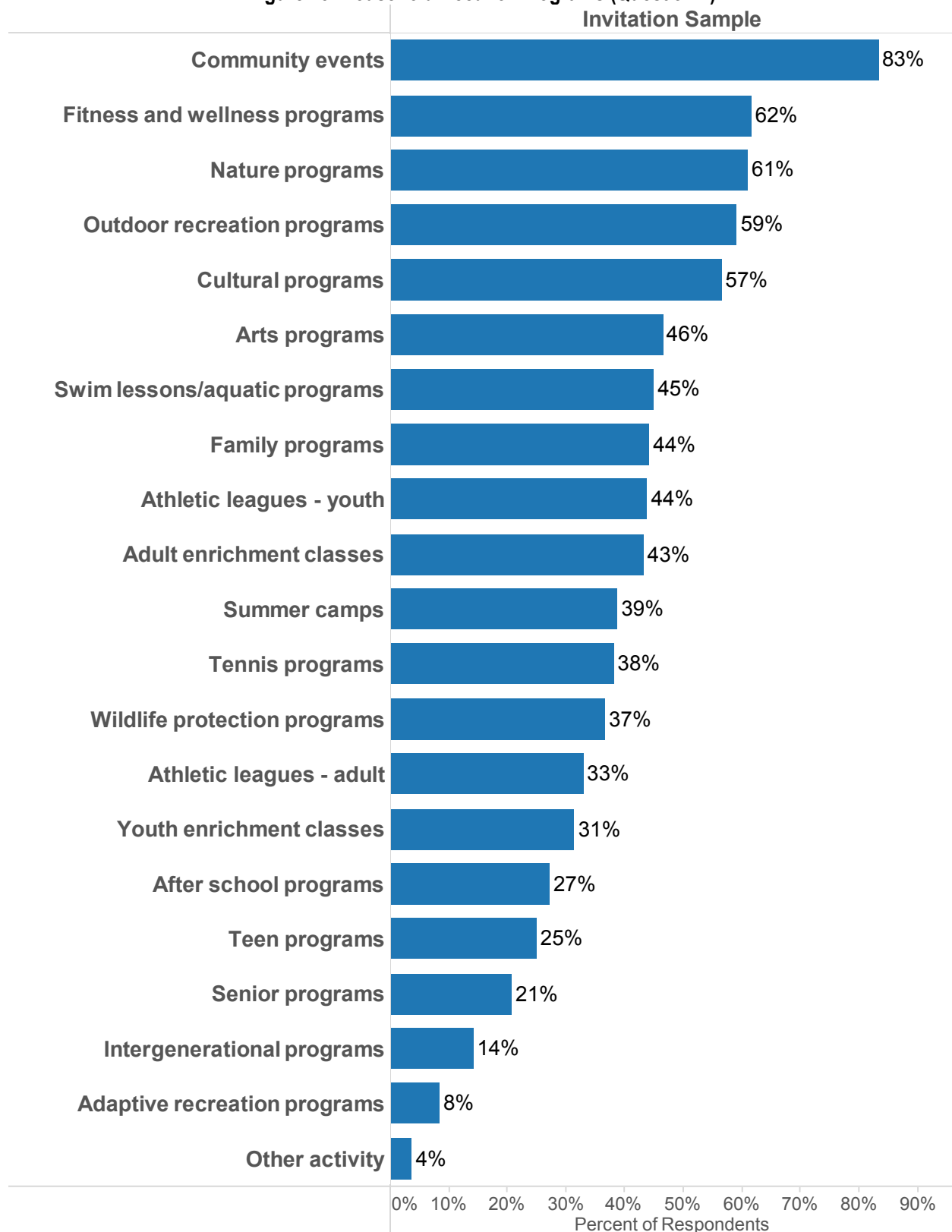
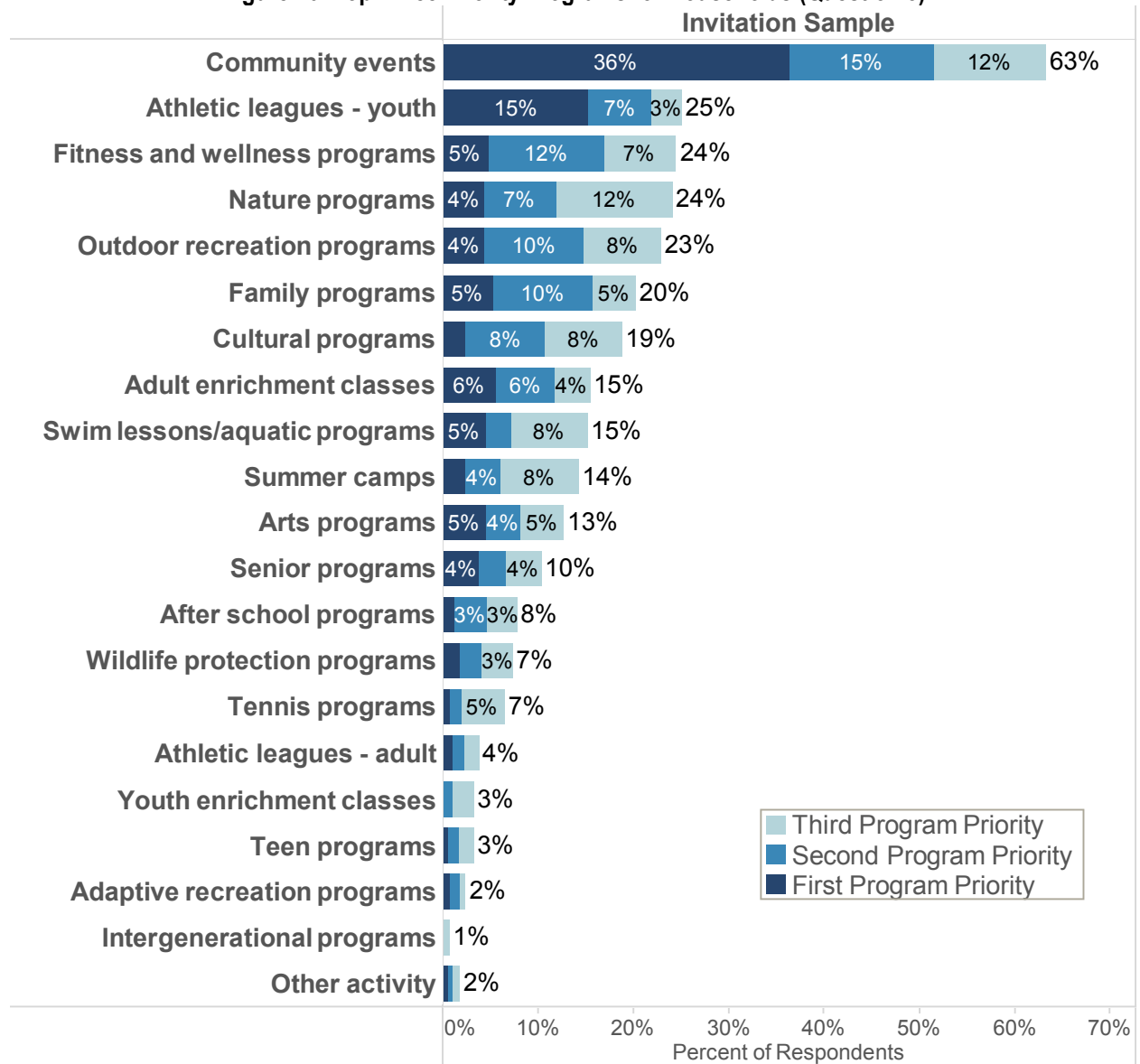
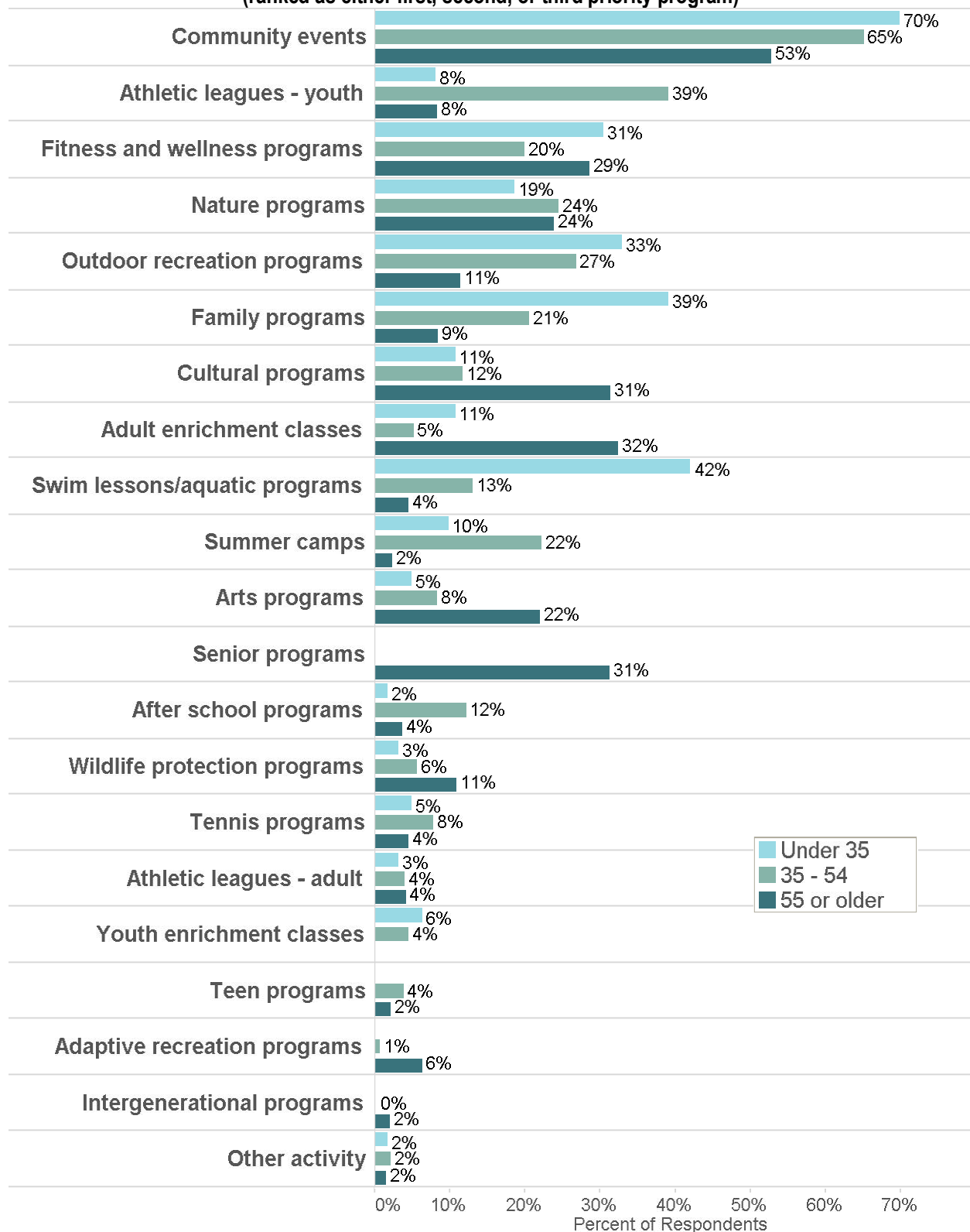


Figure 16: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8)



**Figure 17: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8)
(by Age)**
(ranked as either first, second, or third priority program)



**Figure 18: Top Three Priority Programs for Households (Question 8)
(by Household Income)
(ranked as either first, second, or third priority program)**

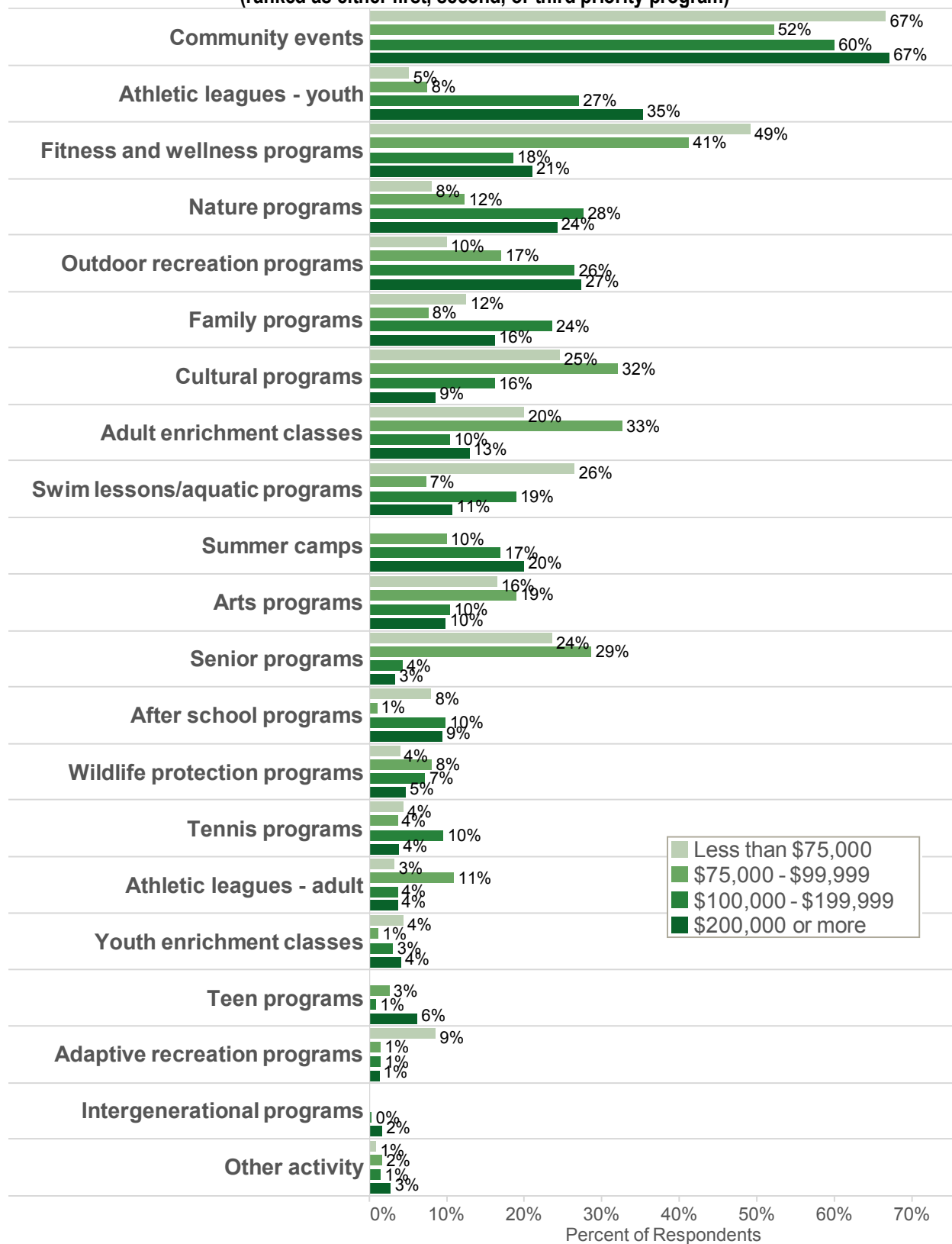
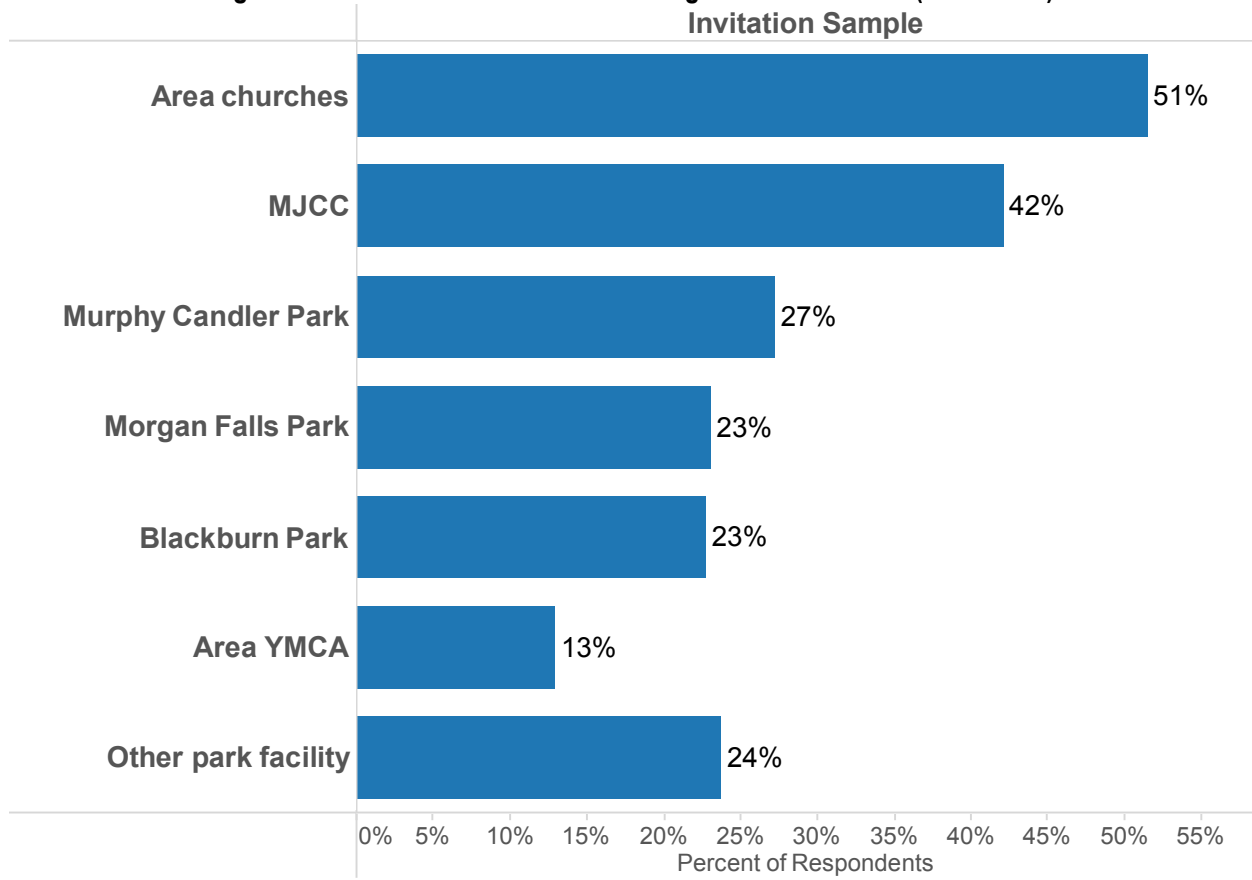


Figure 19: Other Facilities Utilized for Programmed Activities (Question 9)



VALUES AND VISION

Respondents were asked to identify the top three community values or issues that Dunwoody should focus on improving from a list of fourteen potential areas. Figure 2020 illustrates the share of respondents who chose each of the items as one of their top three priorities in aggregate.

As shown, the area that invitation sample respondents most want focused on are maintenance of parks and facilities (68 percent). Maintenance of parks and facility also received the highest percent of respondents selecting this as their number one priority (21 percent). Other top areas of focus for improvement include safety and security in parks (48 percent), pathway connectivity (39 percent), and community-wide special events (28 percent).

Invitation responses were also analyzed by age (Figure 21) and area of residence (Figure 22):

- **By Age.** Households under the age of 35 were comparatively more likely to focus on safety and security in parks and pathway connectivity, while those between ages 35 and 54 listed family oriented activities and developing new parks in underserved areas as top priorities. Respondents over the age of 55 tend to focus on land preservation and accessibility as areas to improve.
- **By Area of Residence.** There were only slight differences in areas of focus based on which district the respondent lives, with maintenance a top priority in all three districts. In District 1, community-wide special events were mentioned more frequently along with pathway connectivity and land preservation/acquisition.

District 2 values developing new parks in underserved areas and pathway connectivity. District 2 also focused on safety and security in parks and family oriented activities.

District 3 respondents were especially likely to mention maintenance of parks and facilities. Safety and security is also an issue, along with land preservation and developing programs for all ages.

Figure 20: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4)
(selected as first, second, or third priority)

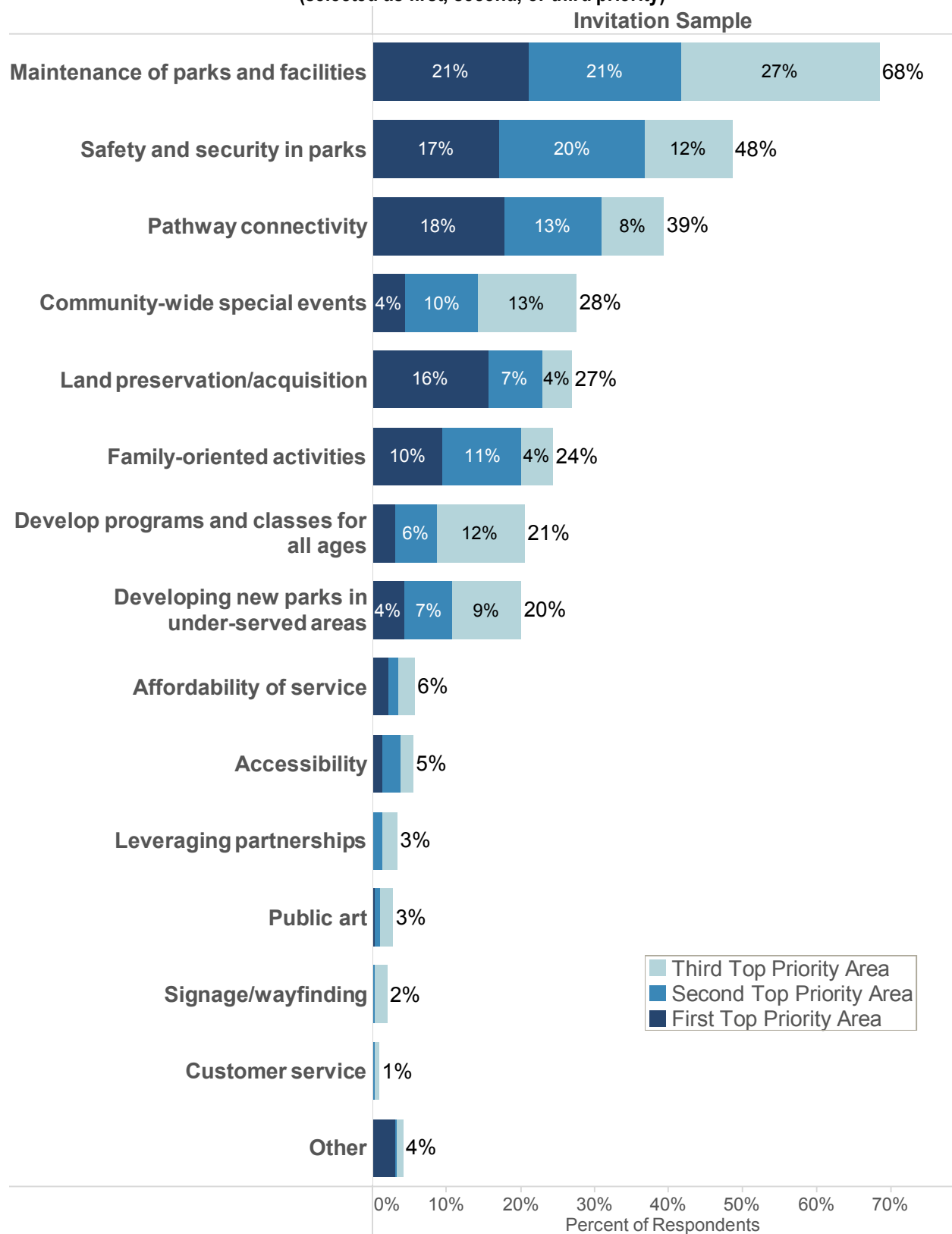


Figure 21: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4)
(by Age)
(selected as first, second, or third priority)

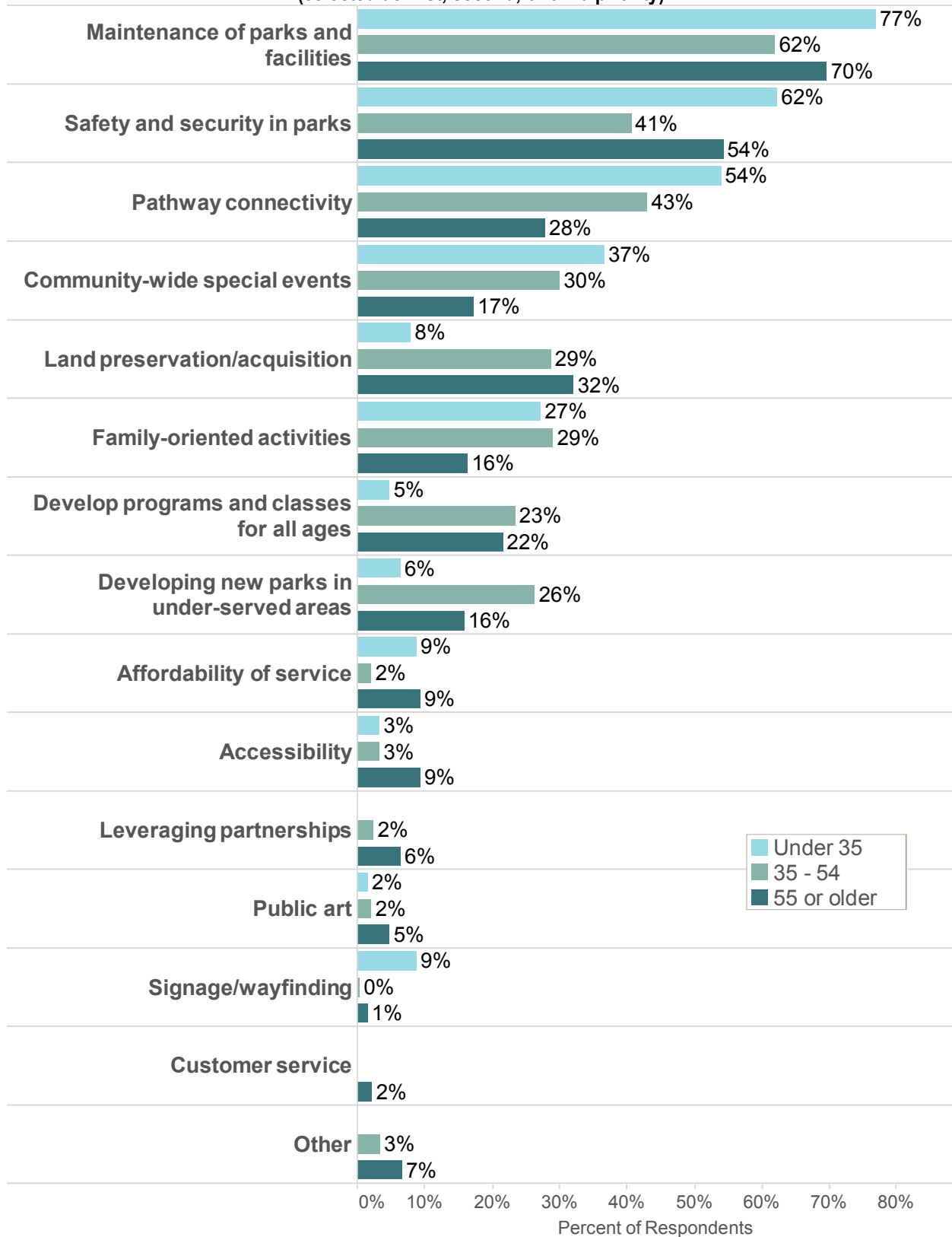
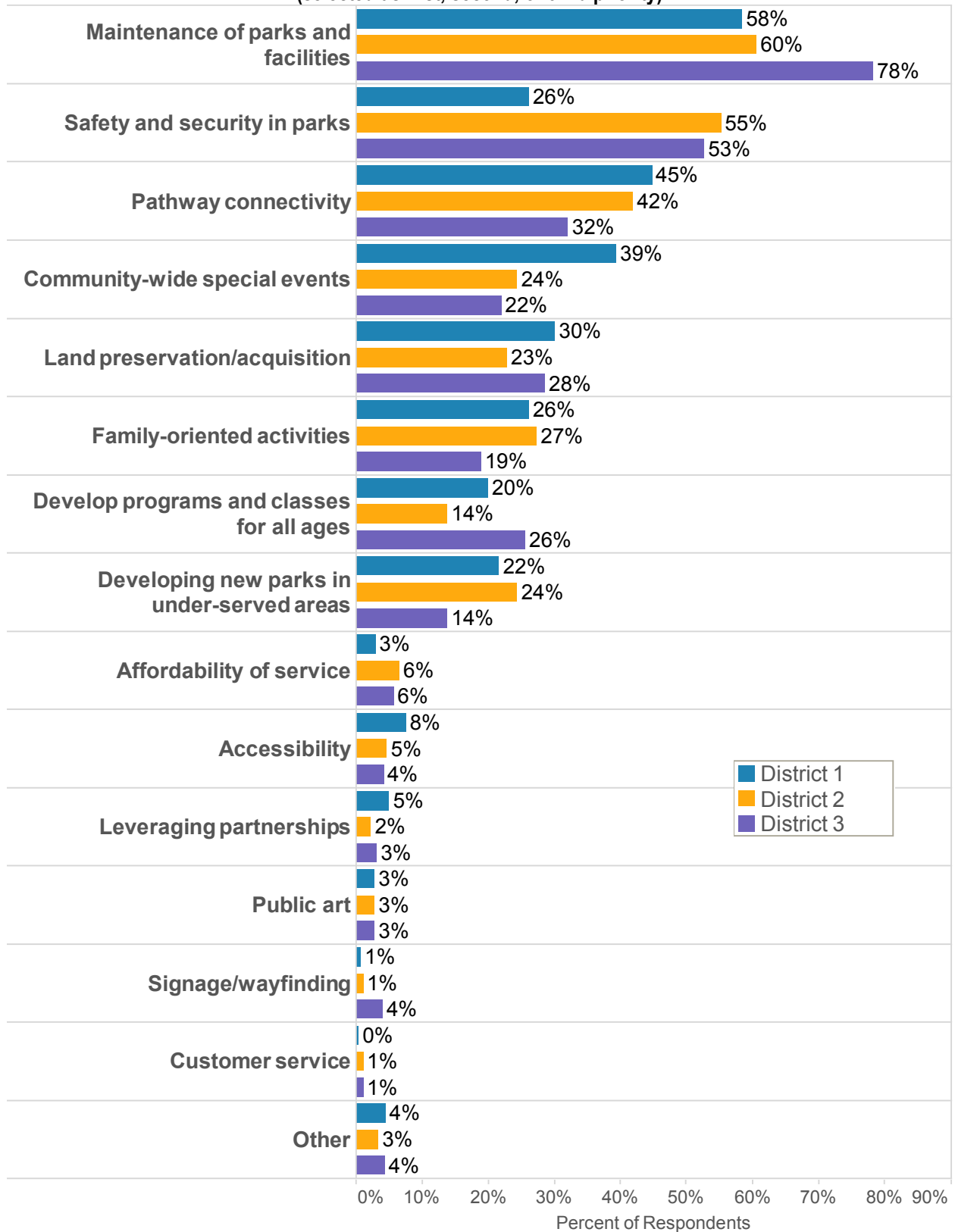


Figure 22: Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4)
(by Area of Residence)
(selected as first, second, or third priority)

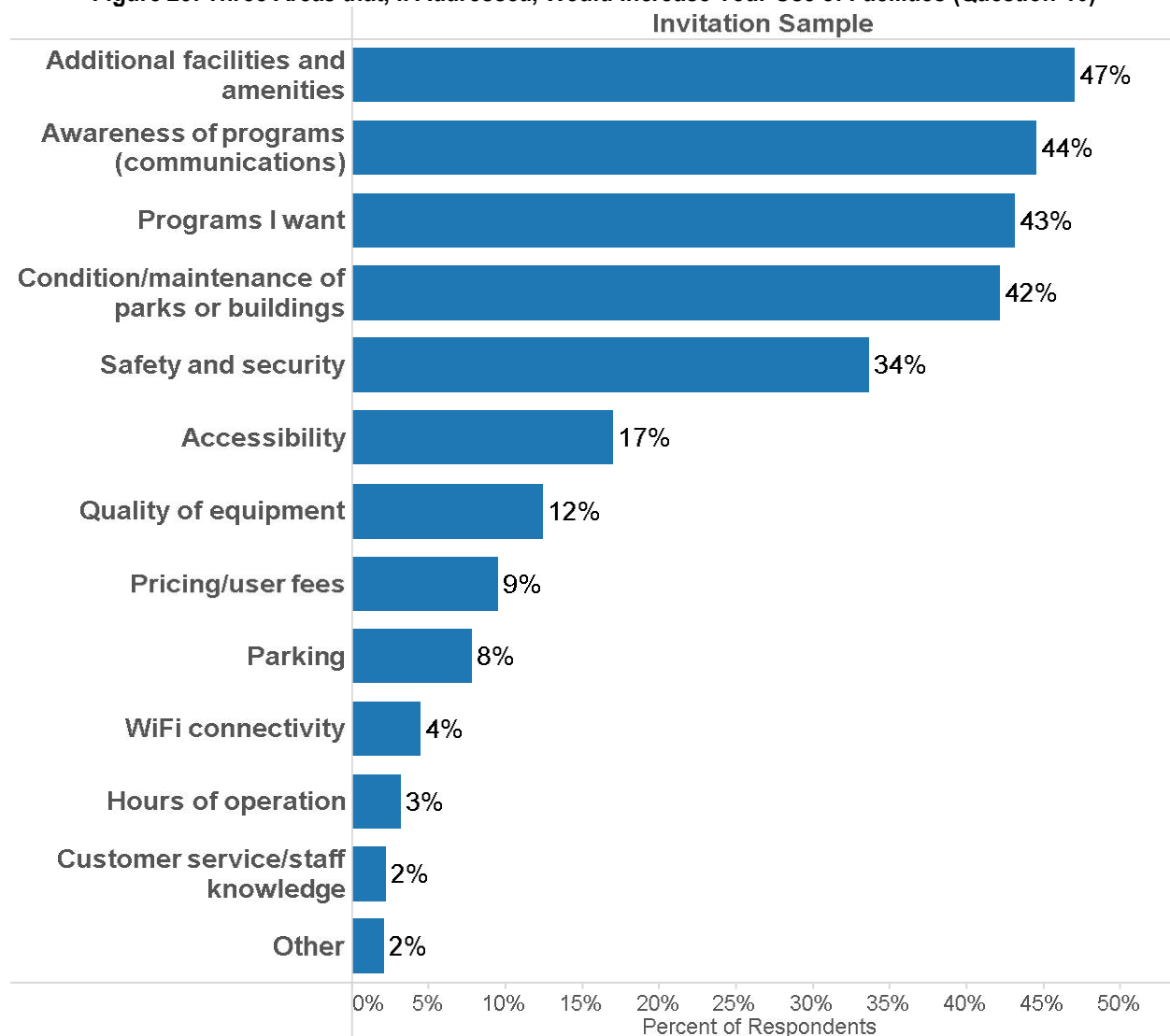


FUTURE FACILITIES, AMENITIES, AND SERVICES

Most Important Areas that Would Increase Use of Facilities

Respondents selected the three most important areas that, if addressed by Dunwoody, would increase their use of public parks and recreation facilities. As shown in Figure 23 below, additional facilities and amenities was the top area that could increase utilization of facilities (47 percent). Awareness of programs (communications) was selected by 44 percent of respondents, programs I want was selected by 43 percent of respondents, condition/maintenance of parks or buildings was selected by 42 percent, and safety and security was mentioned by 34 percent of respondents. Few respondents selected customer service/staff knowledge (2 percent), Wi-Fi connectivity (4 percent), hours of operation (3 percent), indicating that these areas are not barriers for participation and/or are already adequately provided.

Figure 23: Three Areas that, if Addressed, Would Increase Your Use of Facilities (Question 10)



Future Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve

Respondents were provided a list of eighteen indoor and outdoor facilities and asked to rate the importance of adding, expanding, or improving those facilities over the next 5-10 years. They were also asked to select their top three priorities to be added, expanded, or improved upon in Dunwoody. This section discusses the findings from these two questions.

Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Future Facilities. On a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 means “not at all important” and 5 means “very important,” respondents rated the importance of adding, expanding, or improving the eighteen potential future facilities over the next five to ten years in Dunwoody. The percentage of invitation respondents selecting each rating is depicted in Figure 24 to follow where facilities are sorted by their midpoint importance rating. The average importance rating for each item is shown in Figure 25.

The highest importance was given to improving park amenities (4.0 average, 74 percent of respondents rating a 4 or 5) and pathways and trails (4.0 average, 69 percent of respondents rating a 4 or 5). This was followed by the open pavilion for concerts/performances (3.7 average), lights for outdoor athletic facilities and playgrounds (3.6 average each), and outdoor athletic fields/courts (3.5 average). Disc golf, volleyball courts, and sand volleyball were the only options to be rated, on average, as somewhat unimportant. In addition, other suggestions (3.0 average rating) consisted of write in comments in which most respondents expressed need to add or improve a basketball gym and a pool.

Top Three Priorities to Add, Expand, or Improve. Using the same list of facilities, respondents chose their first, second, and third priorities for the most important future facilities to their households. Figure 26 illustrates the percentage of invitation respondents who selected each facility as their first, second, and third priority, ranked by the combined total to show prioritization of the facility overall.

Pathways and trails and improved park amenities again topped the list. Pathways and trails were rated as a top priority by 39 percent of respondents (18 percent first priority, 11 percent second priority, 10 percent third priority), and improved park amenities were a priority for 33 percent of respondents (7 percent first priority, 10 percent second priority, 15 percent third priority). An open pavilion was given priority by 29 percent of respondents, theatre/performing arts center and outdoor athletic fields/courts each by 26 percent.

Invitation responses were also analyzed by age (Figure 27) and presence of children in the household (Figure 28):

- By Age. Along with improved park amenities and pathways and trails, households under the age of 35 focused on adding, expanding or improving an outdoor pool and splash pads. Along with trails, those respondents between ages 35 and 54 significantly prioritized outdoor athletic fields/courts and indoor sport facilities and residents over the age of 55 focused on theater/performing arts center, the open pavilion, and senior center as priorities (but also trails and park amenities, similar to other age groups).
- By Presence of Children. When segmented by the presence of children, households with children favored playgrounds, outdoor athletic fields/courts, new community/recreation center, indoor sports facilities and splash pads. Those respondents without children present focused on theater/performing arts center, a senior center, exercise stations along trails in parks and improved park amenities as likely priorities.

Figure 24: Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities (Question 11)
Invitation Sample Only

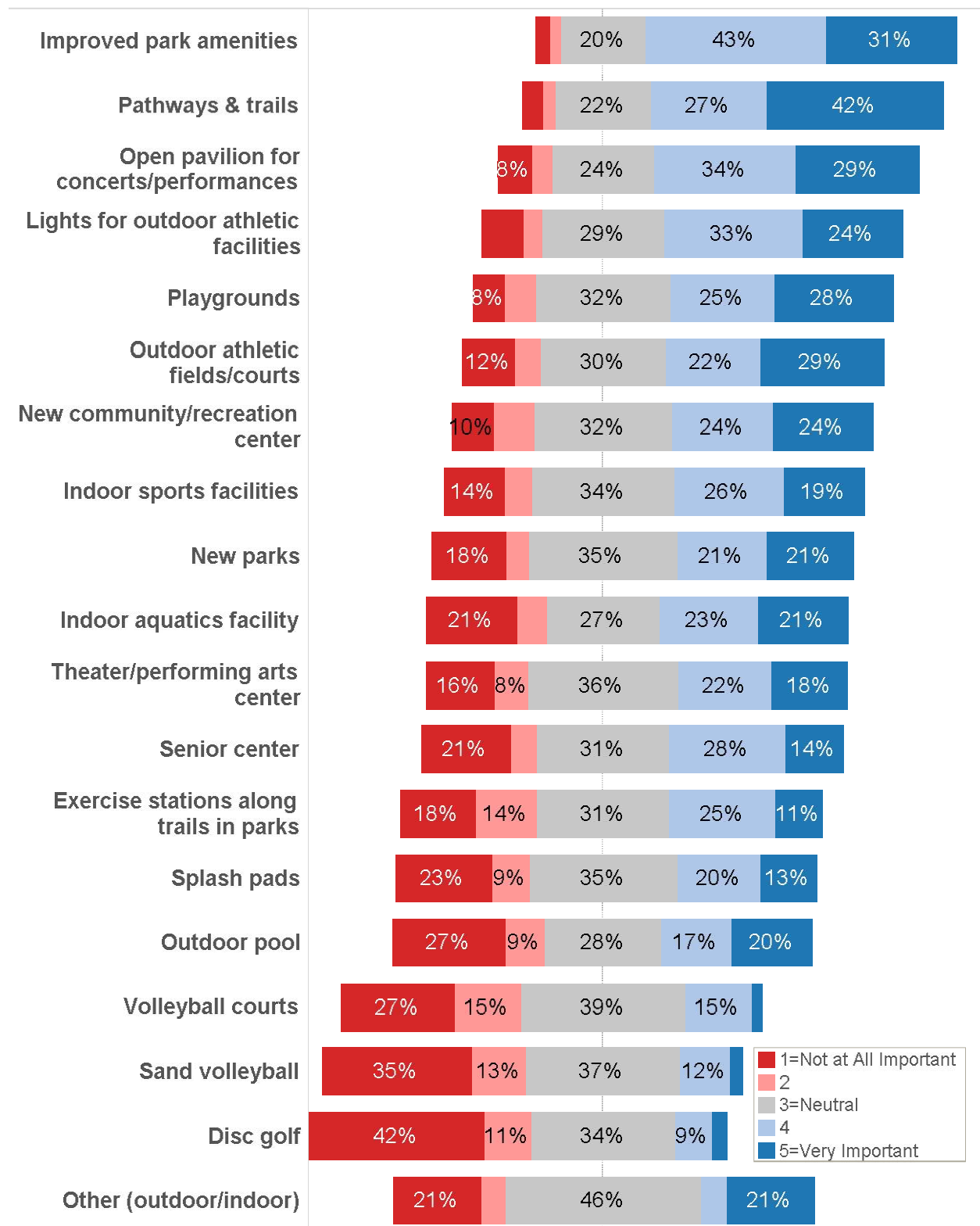


Figure 25: Importance of Adding, Expanding, or Improving Facilities (Question 11)
(Average Rating)

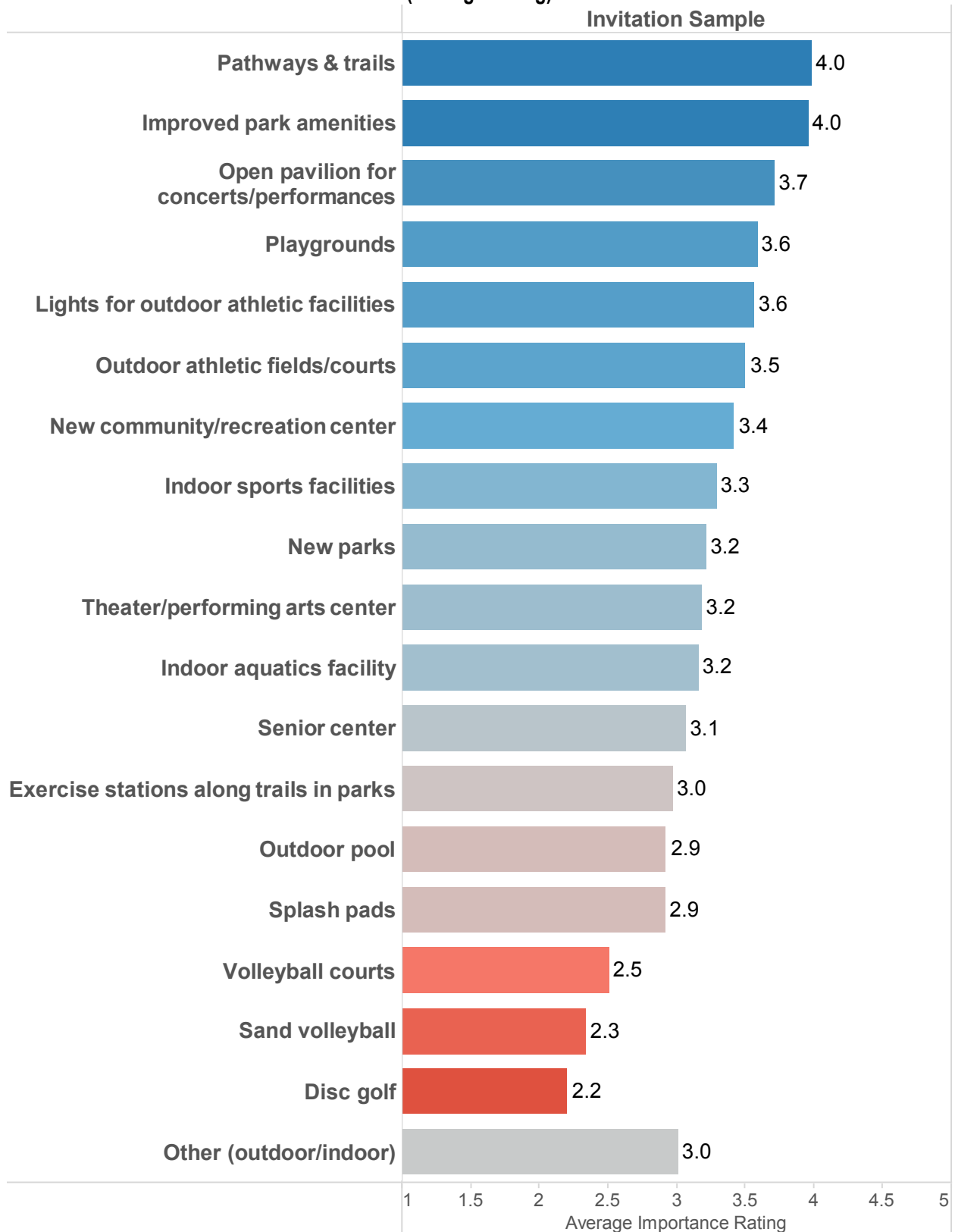


Figure 26: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)

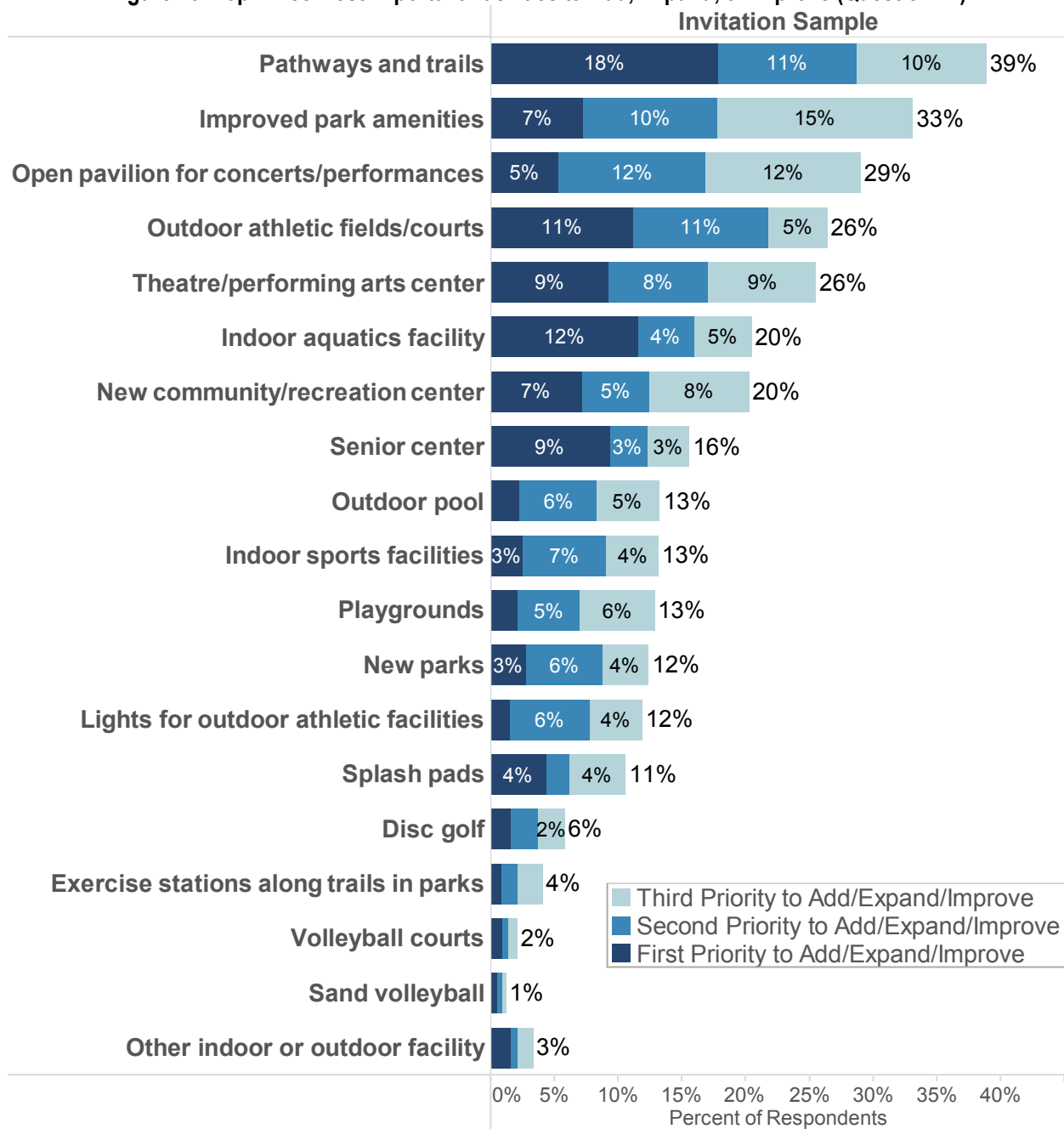


Figure 27: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)
(by Age)

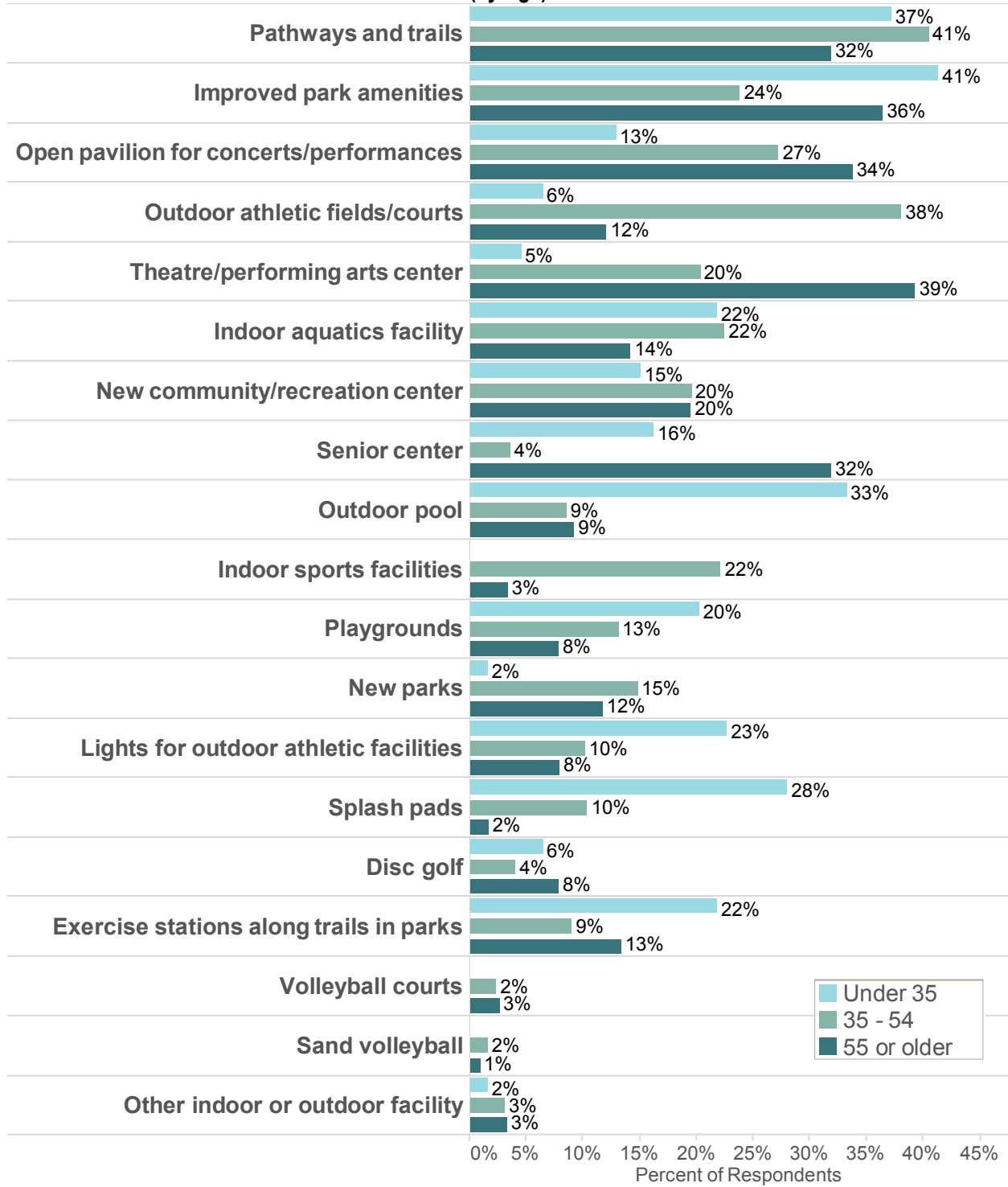
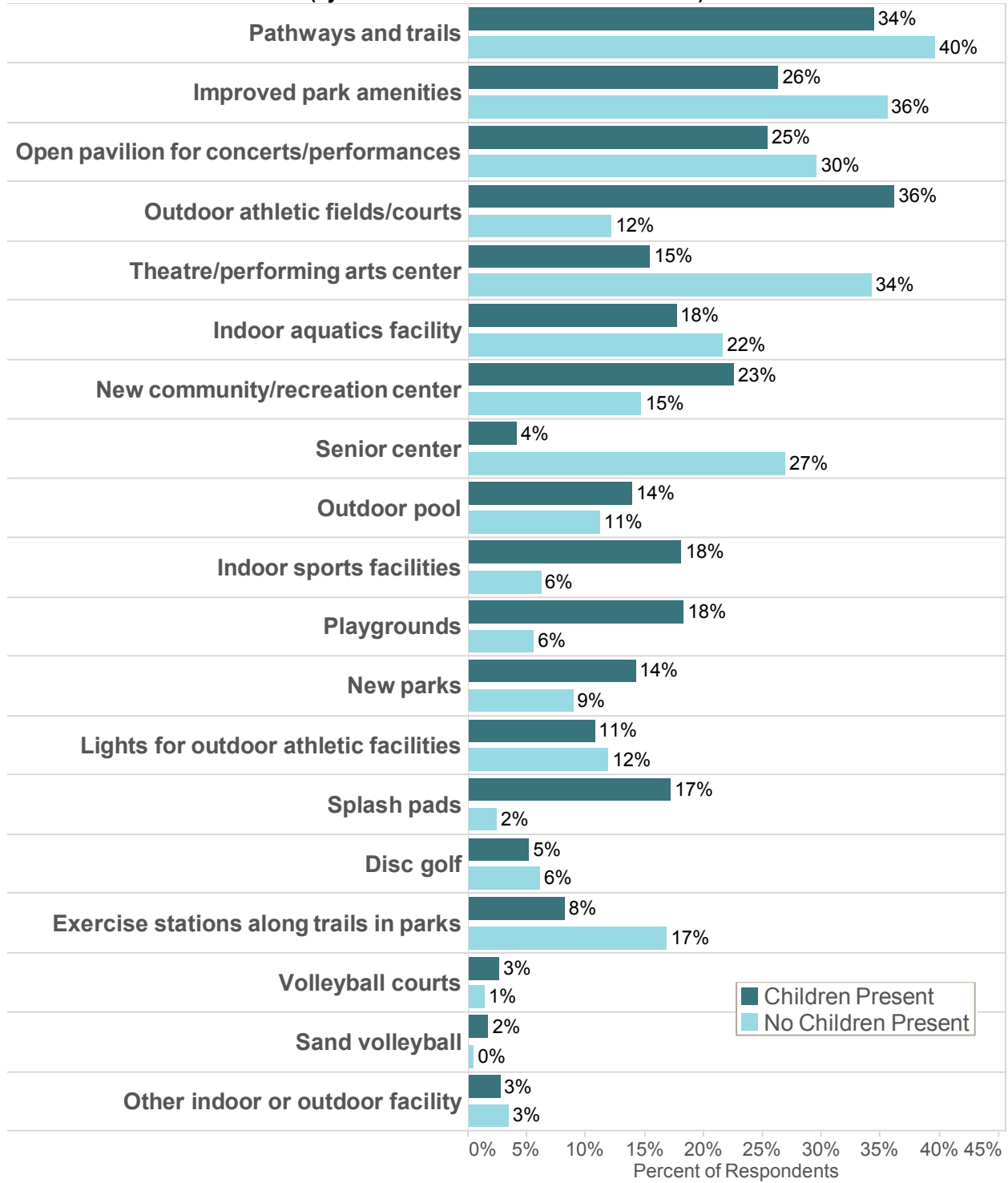


Figure 28: Top Three Most Important Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve (Question 12)
(by Presence of Children in the Household)



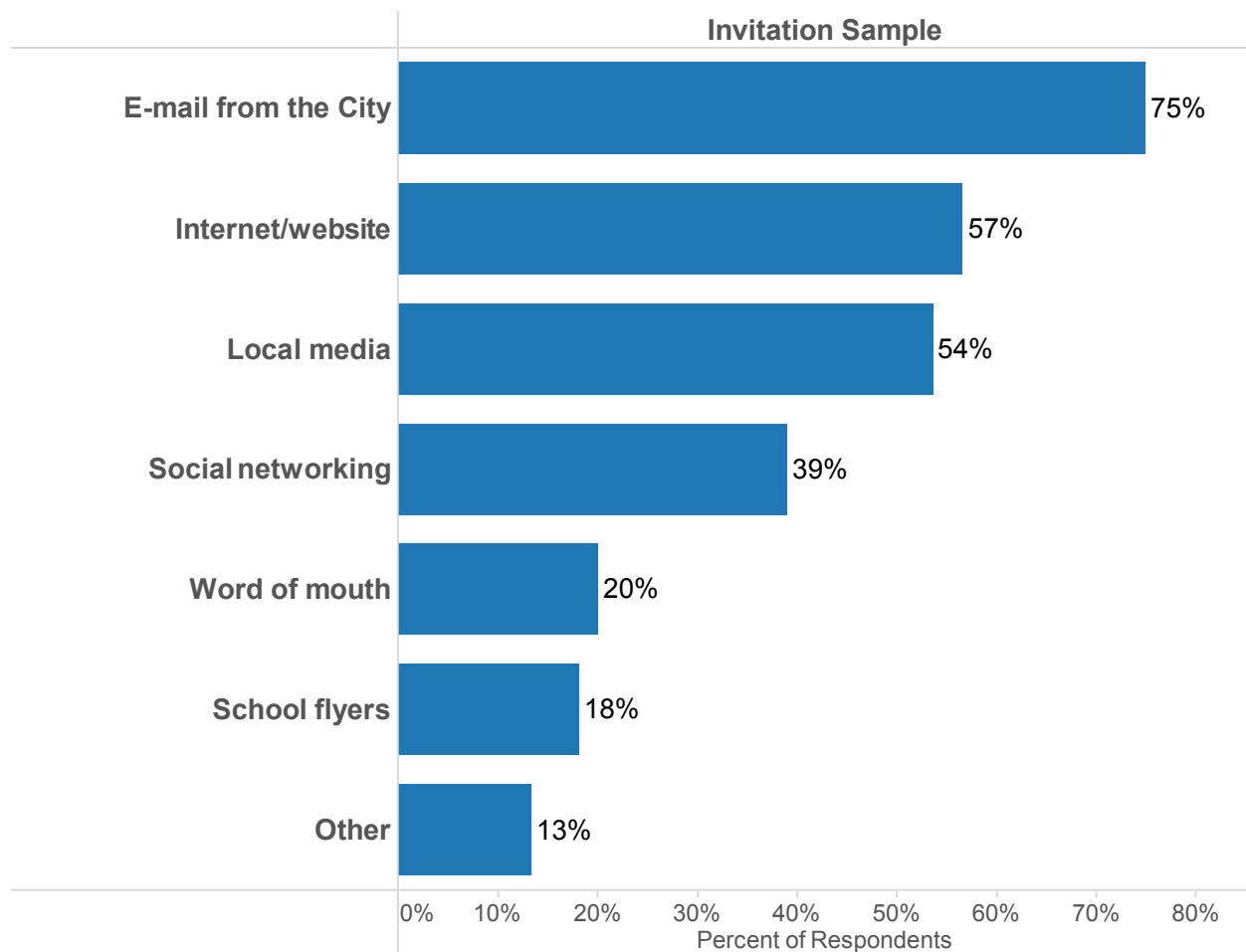
Top Three Priorities for New Amenities or Improvements to Brook Run Park. Dunwoody respondents were given the opportunity to share their top three priorities for Brook Run Park improvements or additions. This was an open-ended question with a wide range of responses. An appendix is included with this report that provides the complete set of responses, and these comments should be viewed in their entirety to understand the full range of responses.

A few themes did emerge from the comments provided to this question. Respondents most often suggested that the top priority for new amenities or improvements to existing amenities at Brook Run Park are athletic fields including baseball and soccer fields, and adding an amphitheater/pavilion for concerts and shows. Respondents commented that adding and maintaining the bathrooms as well as connecting and expanding the trails in Brook Run Park were priorities, as well. Respondents also indicated support for more lights and more parking, and to add a recreation center/indoor complex for activities.

COMMUNICATION

When asked to identify best methods of communication for receiving information about parks and recreation offerings, respondents were most likely to select email from the City (75 percent). This was followed by the internet/website (57 percent), local media (54 percent), and social networks (39 percent).

Figure 29: Best Method for Reaching You (Question 18)



FINANCIAL CHOICES/FEEES

In a final section of the survey, respondents answered questions about hypothetical financial choices. These questions included an evaluation of willingness to support potential funding mechanisms, the impact of potential fee increases on participation, and funding allocation choices. The results from each of these questions are detailed below.

Support of Various Funding Mechanisms. It was explained in the questionnaire that The City of Dunwoody receives taxes and grants to build parks, recreation and tourism facilities, and trails. Additional funds are required for the operations and maintenance of new facilities. User fees, grants, and donations offset some costs. In order to construct a community center, theater/performing arts center, new trails, add restrooms, or make other improvements to parks and recreation facilities, additional capital funds will be needed.

A question was then asked of respondents to gauge how willing they would be to support six different funding mechanisms to provide the necessary funds for these improvements. Each option was evaluated on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is “definitely not support” and 5 is “definitely support” (Figure 30). Invitation sample respondents indicated that their support was strongest for private donations (average rating 4.5, 87 percent provided a “4” or “5” rating), followed by user fees (3.5 average, 57 percent rated 4 or 5), then a bond referendum (3.3 average rating and 47 percent rated 4 or 5). A new dedicated sales tax (average rating 3.0, 44 percent 4 or 5 rating), general property tax mill levy (2.6 average rating, 33 percent 4 or 5 rating), and a new dedicated property tax (2.4 average, 26 percent 4 or 5 rating) received the lowest support, with a larger share of respondents providing “1” or “2” ratings (indicating unwillingness to support) than “4” or “5” ratings (indicating willingness to support).

Invitation responses for this question were also analyzed by household income (Figure 33). As might be expected, support for all of the potential funding mechanisms generally increases as income levels increase (lower levels of support among lower income groups).

Likely Vote on Bond Referendum. In a related question, asked specifically how they would vote if a bond referendum related to funding parks and recreation improvements were to appear on a future ballot, 55 percent would “definitely” (18 percent) or “probably” (37 percent) vote yes.

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. Over half of invitation respondents believed that moderate fee increases would not limit their ability to participate (55 percent). Of those who expected fee increases to impact participation, 17 percent said it would somewhat limit their participation while 7 percent said it would significantly limit their participation. An additional 21 percent said they were uncertain.

Allocation of Funds to Parks and Recreation Facilities. Lastly, respondents were given the opportunity to allocate a hypothetical \$100 across parks and recreation facilities, services and programs using \$5 increment. They were provided six potential categories for funding, and Figure 3232 depicts the average amount allocated to each category. Overall, invitation respondents allocated the largest amount of funding toward improving, renovating, and/or maintaining existing park facilities with an average allocation of \$26 out of \$100. Adding pathways/trails received an average allocation of \$20 and adding outdoor athletic fields and courts allocated an average of \$14.

Invitation responses for this question were also analyzed by age (Figure 34), by presence of children in the household (Figure 35) by household income (Figure 36), and by area of residence (Figure 37).

- By Age. Respondents over the age of 55 allocated the most money to improvements, renovations, and/or maintenance (\$36 average allocation), more than the other age groups. Those between the ages of 35 and 54 were most likely to support and allocate money to add more pathways and trails allocating about \$22. Respondents under the age of 35 were more likely than older respondents to allocate more towards an indoor sports complex and to city-wide special events (\$13 and \$14 average allocations respectively), although parks improvements and trails were top priorities among this group as well.
- By Presence of Children. Respondents with and without children were comparable. Both groups of residents would allocate the most money to making improvements and/or maintenance of existing park facilities (\$22 and \$30 respectively). Both allocated similar amounts to adding pathways and trails (\$19-\$21). In addition, respondents with children would allocate an additional \$19 on average to add outdoor athletic fields and courts (vs. \$9 among respondents without children).
- By Household Income. Households less than \$100,000 in income would significantly allocate more money to make improvements and or renovate and maintain existing park facilities than those households over \$100,000 (\$33-\$37). In contrast, those households over \$100,000 in income are more willing to allocate funds to add pathways and trails and outdoor athletic facilities and courts.
- By Area of Residence. There were no significant differences in allocations between respondents living in different districts. All three districts would allocate the largest amount to making improvements and or renovating and maintaining existing park facilities. District 1 would allocate \$24 and both District 2 and 3 would allocate \$26. The next largest allocation is adding more pathways and trails with District 1 allocating \$19, District 2 allocating \$23 and District 3 allocating \$18.

Figure 30: Willingness to Support Funding Mechanisms for Parks and Recreation Improvements (Question 14)

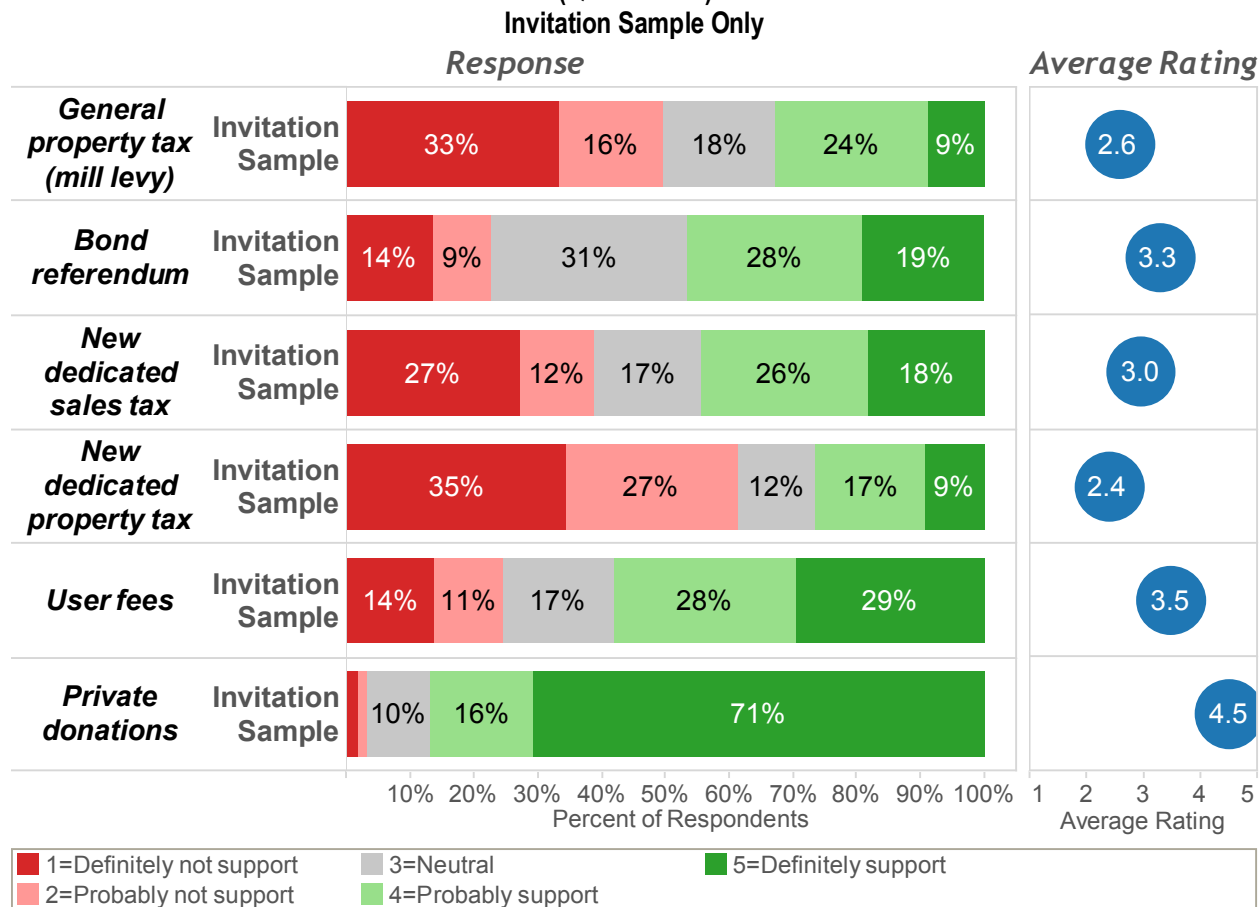
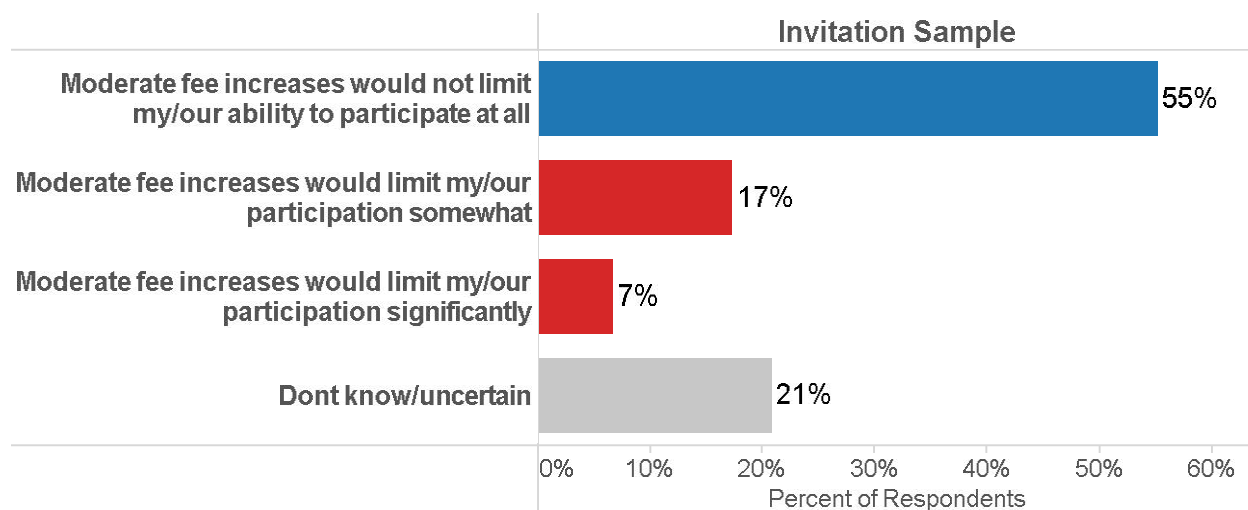


Figure 31: Potential Impact of Fee Increases on Current Level of Participation (Question 15)



**Figure 32: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17)
(Average Allocation)**

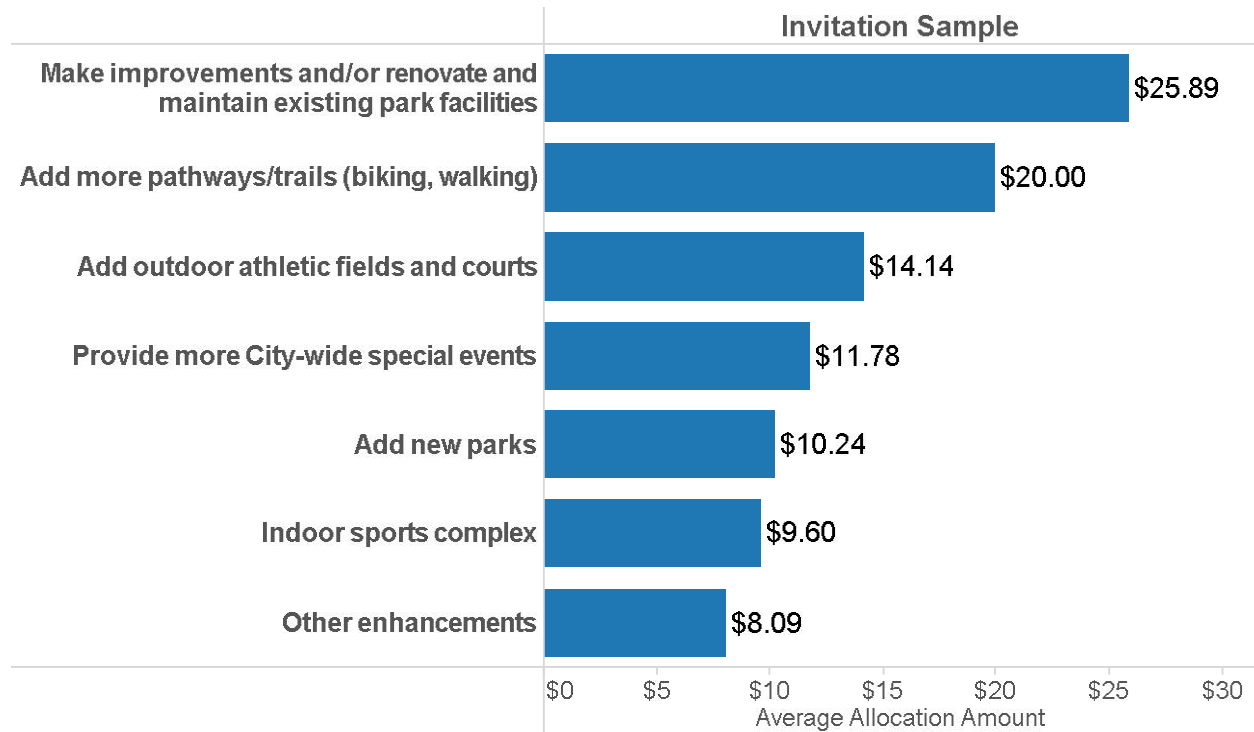
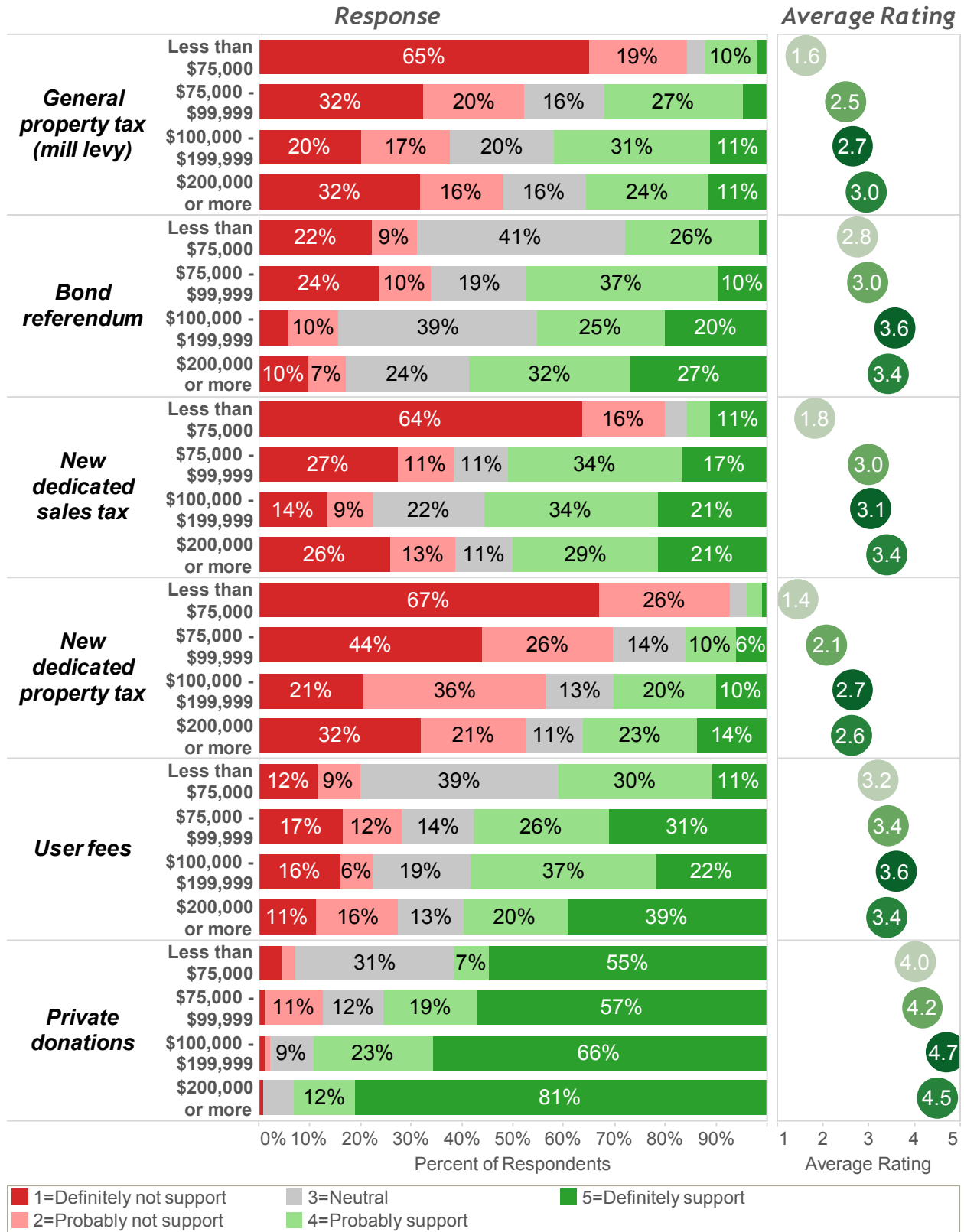
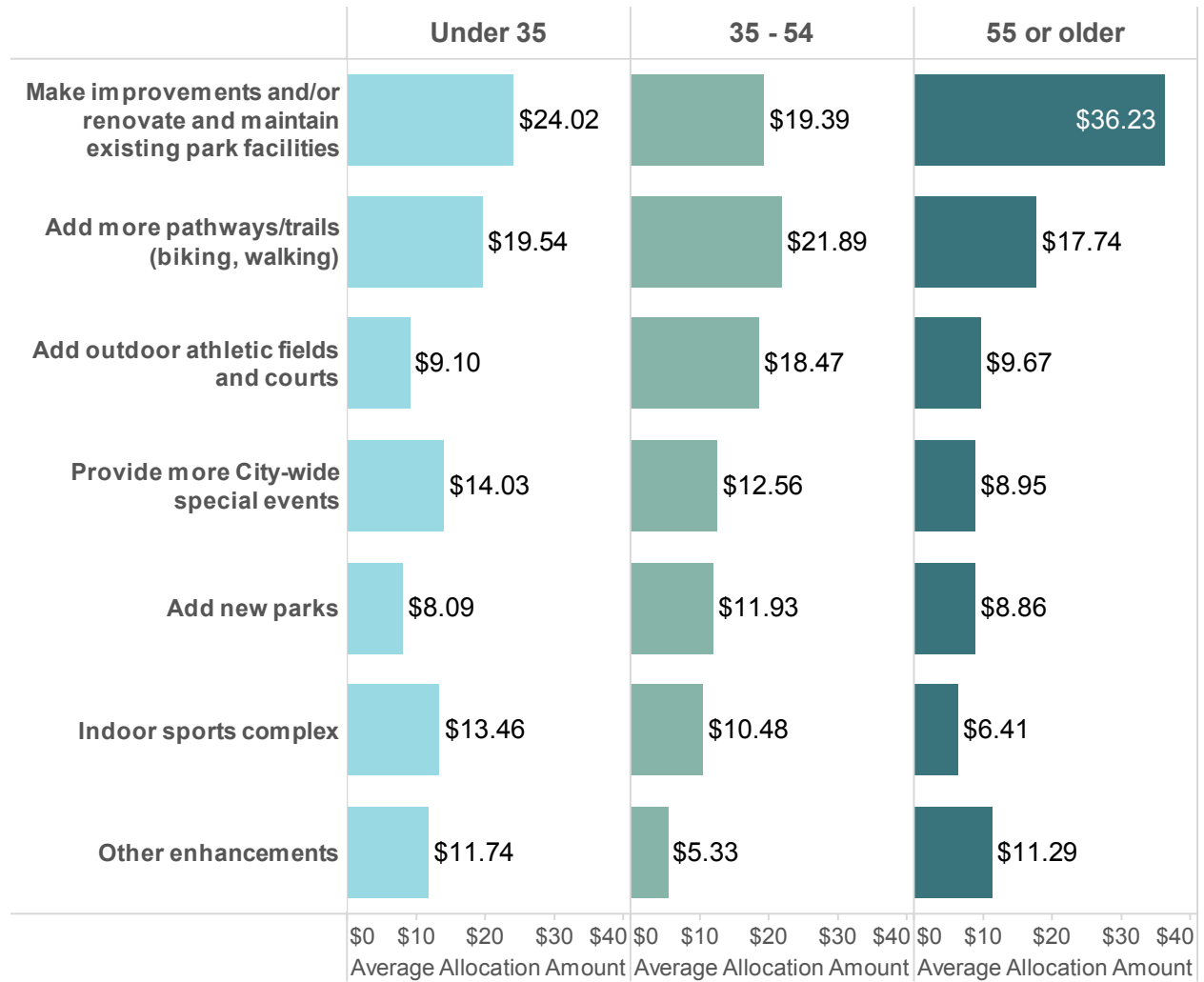


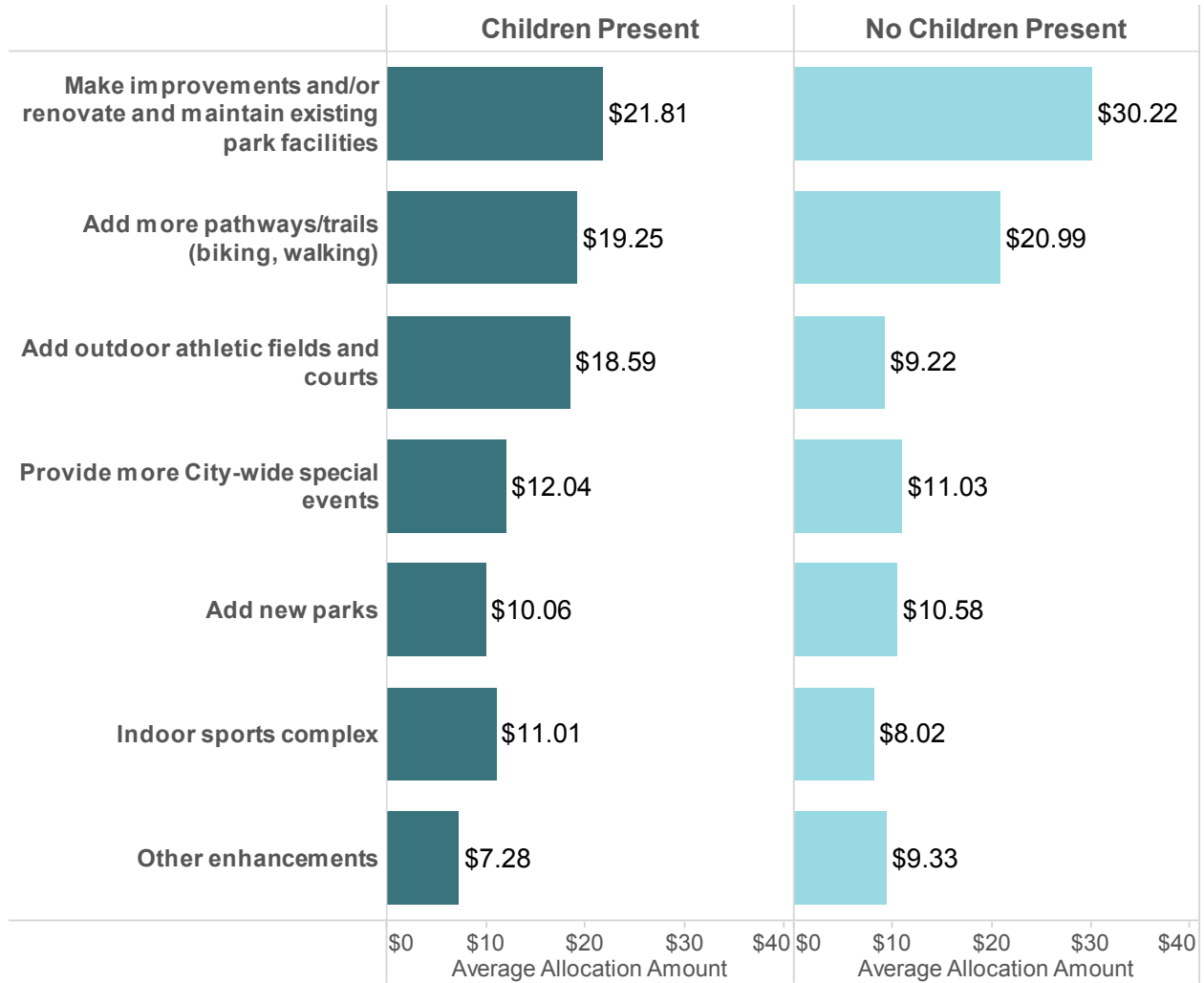
Figure 33: Willingness to Support Funding Mechanisms for Parks and Recreation Improvements (Question 17) (by Household Income)



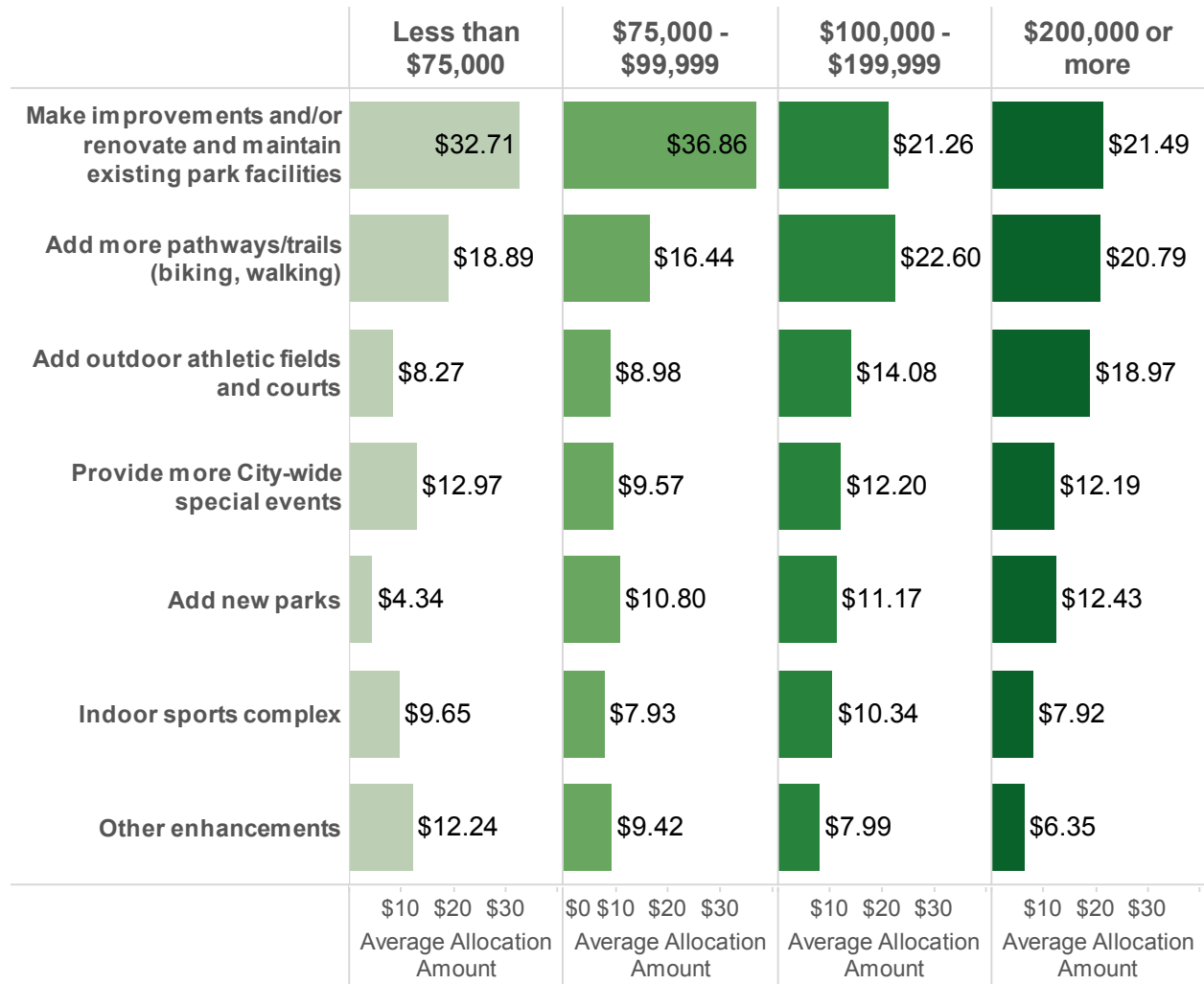
**Figure 34: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17)
(by Age)
(Average Allocation)**



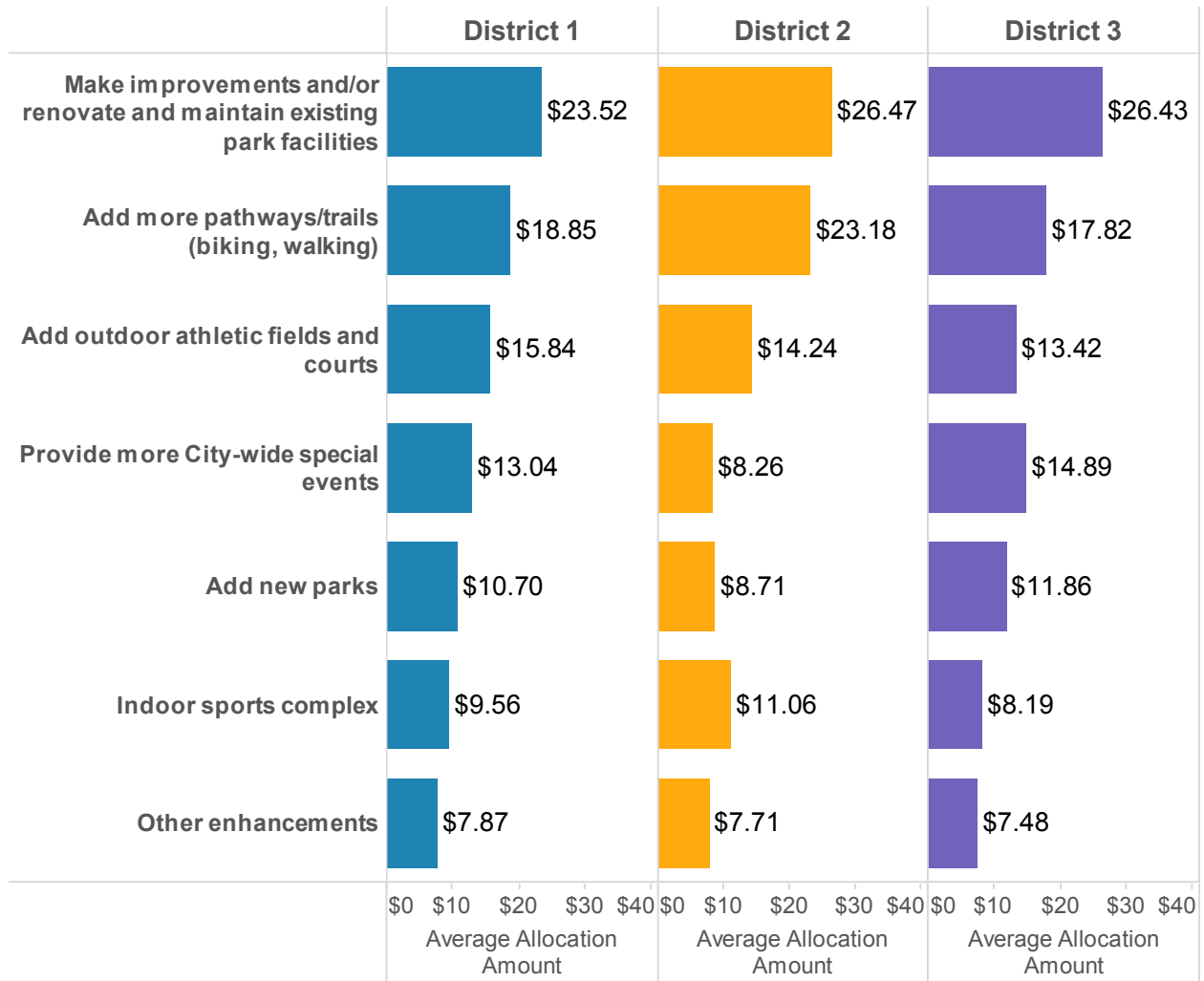
**Figure 35: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17)
(by Presence of Children in the Household)
(Average Allocation)**



**Figure 36: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17)
(by Household Income)
(Average Allocation)**



**Figure 37: Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs (Question 17)
(by Area of Residence)
(Average Allocation)**



ADDITIONAL OPEN-ENDED COMMENTS

At the end of the survey, respondents were offered an opportunity to provide any additional comments or suggestions to help Dunwoody better serve the needs of their household and the community. Comments are provided as an appendix section and should be read in their entirety in order to grasp the full breadth and depth of opinions. Some comments from the invitation sample are provided below for illustration and are grouped by common themes:

Additional facilities, including athletic fields and recreation center, and gymnastics gym:

- It would be great to have a flagship sports center and athletic field complex - similar to the MJCC but run by the City of Dunwoody. The fact that everyone goes to other cities and/or churches to play sports is okay, but it would be nice to have those people and activities stay in Dunwoody.
- Parents are tired of driving to Brookhaven, Sandy Springs, and Alpharetta for their children's sports. Gymnastics is particularly hard to find. An indoor gym would be wonderful.
- I mentioned soccer fields several times. Dunwoody & GA are big soccer areas. Our current facilities are terrible. If we put turf fields on the old Chamblee Charter School location (sitting empty), such as the ones at Hammond Park, the City could pay for fields by renting to the local clubs and leagues (as Hammond does). There is very little maintenance on turf fields.
- More lacrosse field space and add an indoor aquatic facility please.
- More fields. Set priority for use of fields to Dunwoody resident/tax payers versus out of Dunwoody guests.
- Indoor tennis courts!
- We would really like to see children, youth, and adult sport programs and leagues offered in our community. We would love to see soccer fields developed for this purpose! We are excited to see how our park will continue to grow and develop in the future!!
- Field space, field space, field space! Thank you!
- Youth Recreation!!! Would love to stay in Dunwoody for youth sports instead of going to Sandy Springs or Brookhaven.
- We need a sports complex with ball fields, pool, etc.

Connectivity of trails, bike lanes and multi-use lanes:

- Connectivity (paved and natural trails) is most critical as this will spur other development over time. Also, trails are a must because biking and walking on roads (even in bike lanes) is just too dangerous given our careless driving culture.
- To get to the parks, we should have paved multi-use trails along existing roads. Paved multi-use trails are more beneficial than bike lanes or sidewalks -- bike lanes are too dangerous for children because they are too close to the busy traffic. Sidewalks are not good for skates or bike.
- Connect path and greenway through Dunwoody, add more bike lanes, make it safe to run on sidewalks without getting hit by cars.
- We LOVE the new trails! So much fun to have the family ride bikes to eat and play.
- I think that more multi-use trails would be highly valued and heavily used by young people and young families moving into Dunwoody (who don't seem to be as vocal as retirees, who have more free time).
- Continue adding trails and bike lanes in Dunwoody so they all connect.
- Thank you soooo much for constructing, and continuing to connect, the trail way. How fantastic will it be in the future when one may be able to bike or walk to events, work, and shopping.

Financial comments, concerns for Brook Run Park, and suggestions:

- I do not support using City of Dunwoody money to renovate the Brook Run buildings for a performing arts center.
- I do not think we should waste money or the limited space within Brook Run Park for active use with a theater. I have made this view clear to my representative on the council.
- Do not spend one penny on the Brook Run theater. It's in the wrong place.
- Stop wasting money.
- Don't start raising taxes. There are a lot of churches, temples, MJCCA in the area that provide the services and need the membership to prosper - don't compromise those organizations by taking away from their programs.
- As a city, don't need to take on the expense required to renovate and maintain the old Brook Run Theater.
- If we find the need for fees, tax-paying residents should be charged at a lower rate than non-tax-paying residents. I.e. soccer/softball registrations, arts and cultural programs admissions/registrations.
- My family pays a large amount of money to the City of Sandy Springs to use their facilities. I would rather pay that to the City of Dunwoody.
- Please do not spend city dollars to renovate the buildings at Brooke Run. People do not attend stage doors players because of the facility. The need is not there. And with Sandy Springs, building an amphitheater (we should have first) we will be competing for the same dollars. I also feel not having lacrosse fields is hurting us. It is the fastest growing sport and same as baseball, our kids have to go elsewhere. Thanks.
- Regarding Funding - focus on growing the tax base by bringing in new business and prioritize the spending to include Parks or don't add them.
- Occupancy fee for all those who live in apartments that use our facilities but don't pay a dime in taxes.
- Manage costs and avoid tax increases.
- Do not be so quick to tear down the Brook Run Theater. This facility is a treasure and studies show that it should be restored. There is a need and support for that need. Support the Brook Run Conservancy's effort in restoring the facility. \$1.5 million of the negotiated \$4 million settlement with DeKalb should be used to restore the building.

Upkeep and safety and maintenance:

- I love our city - Make sure it is kept clean!
- Safety, security and maintenance (cleaning, etc.) are the most important things to me regarding the parks in Dunwoody.
- Please maintain and upgrade what we have already, avoid major new expenditures. Thx.
- Suggest City take over maintenance of the library from the County--They don't do any.
- Focus on maintaining what we have. Address other issues such as overgrown grass and weeds along sidewalks which are rarely addressed. Trees that are crudely cut back for power lines should be removed rather than butchered.
- BEFORE WE BEGIN NEW PROJECTS, WE NEED TO MAINTAIN WHAT WE HAVE.

Improve Communication and information:

- Need enhanced website for park information. Cannot even find an adequate map of the trail at Brooke Run on site.
- Listen to the citizens.
- Newspaper communications are good.
- More information of how arrangements (and perhaps fee info) for use of facilities are accomplished. More timely and informative information on what is planned for parks - for example, fencing has been erected around the large open area in Brook Run beyond the Community Garden area -why was this necessary? Will any attempt be made to control the use of drones in this area, we consider the chance of being injured by one of these item a strong possibility, especially drones flown by on board cameras and monitors worn on the operators face.
- More promotion. I hardly know about the parks in Dunwoody and have lived here a long time.
- Keep the website up to date.
- Use cheaper between mail and TV/radio.
- Advertise the parks in the Dunwoody Crier to make residents aware of what's available. Some parks I have never heard of before looking them up.
- Services are not well published. Local signage is a good way to reach the community.

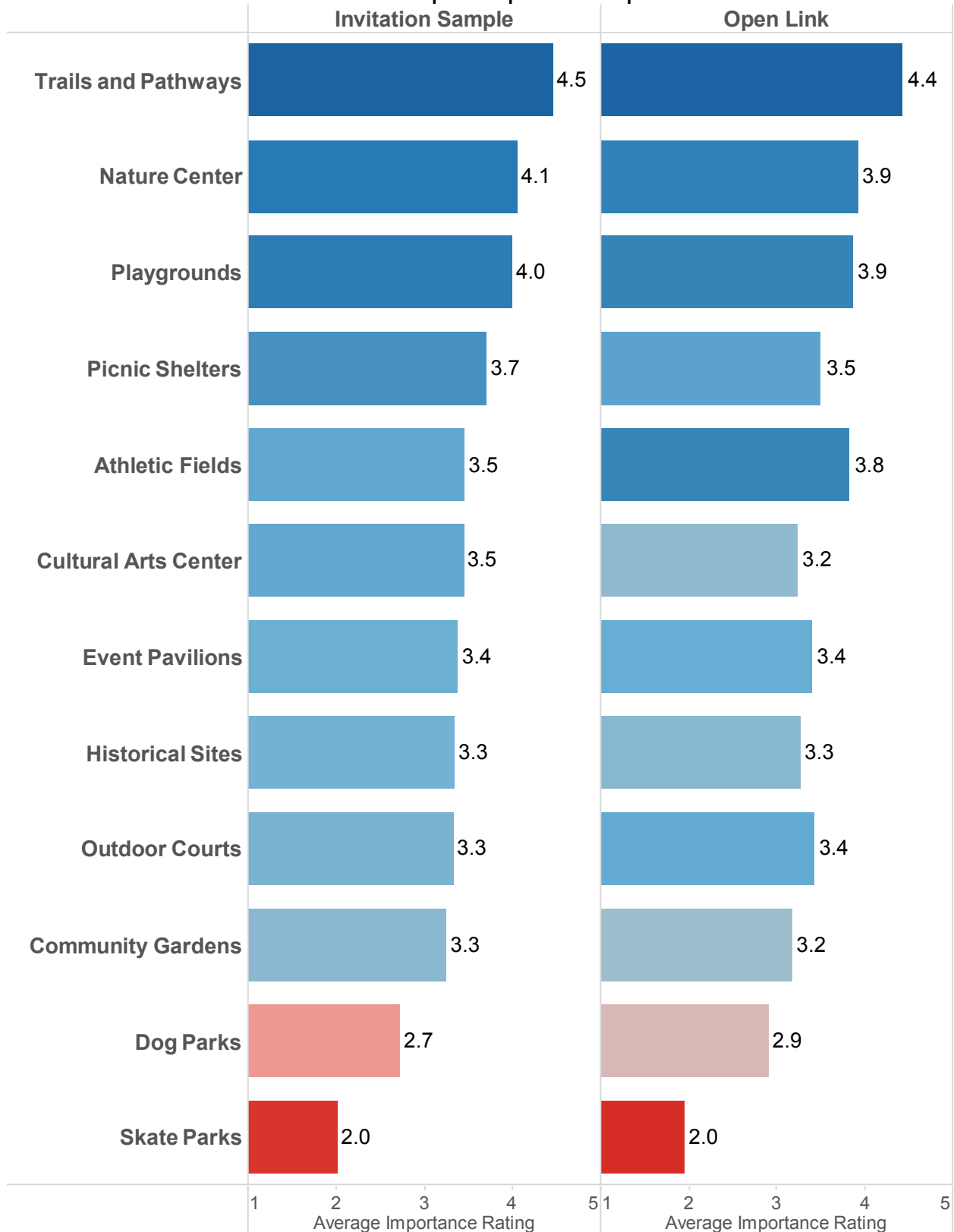
A COMPARISON TO THE OPEN LINK SAMPLE

The responses gathered in the open link survey were generally similar to the invitation sample responses across most topics. This section will discuss some areas of difference and interest between the two samples. Selected graphical illustrations follow to show further detailed comparison. The demographic profile is overall similar, though the open link is less diverse (94 percent white), slightly older (average age of 50.5), and includes slightly more renters (3 percent).

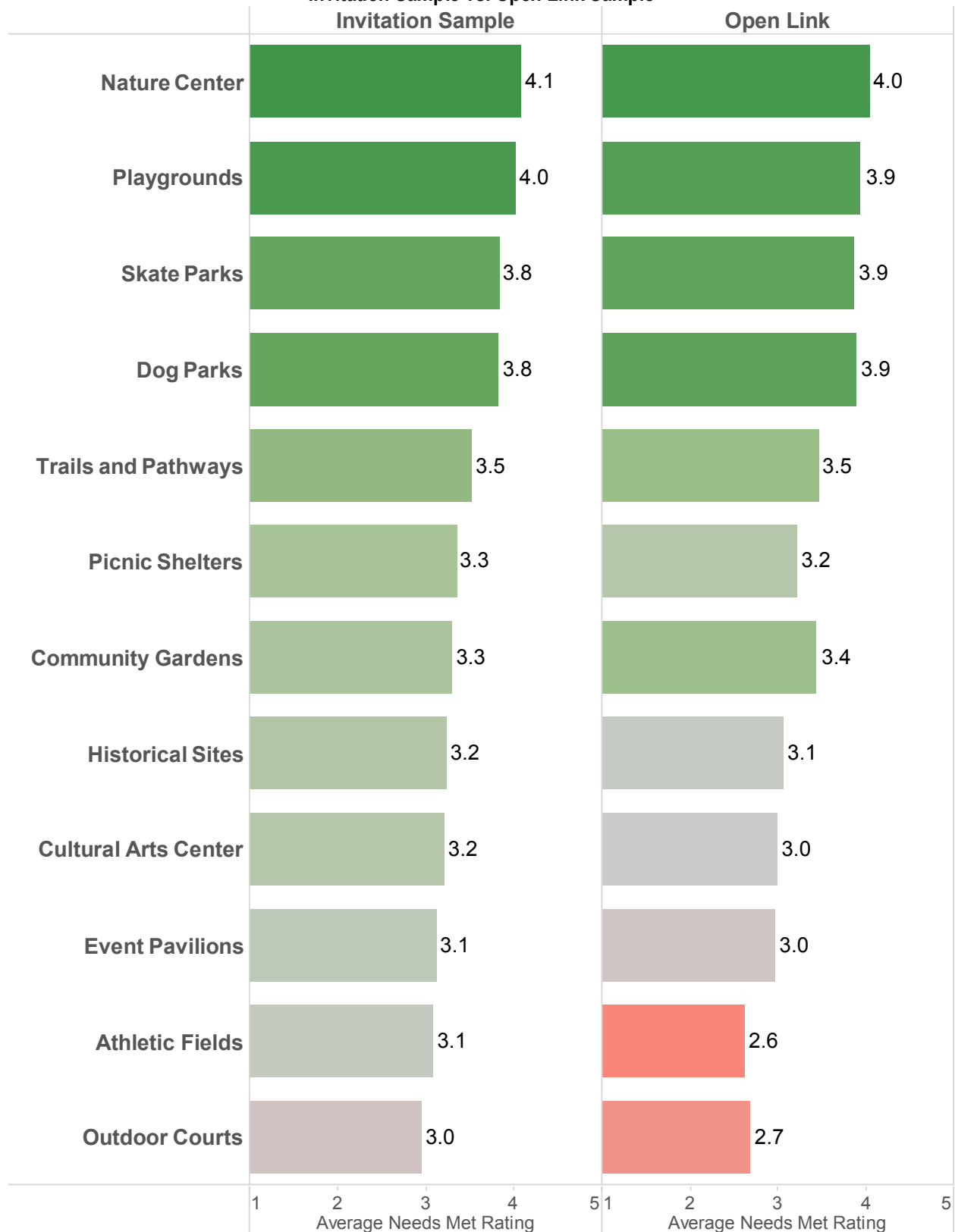
- Current Facilities and Programs. Open link respondents rated many facilities as slightly less important than the invitation respondents, though the overall rankings were very similar. One facility, athletic fields, shows higher support to open link respondents with an average rating of 3.8 compared to the invitation sample average at 3.5. Open link respondents also felt that the athletic fields and outdoor courts were less adequately meeting community needs (2.6 vs. 3.1). Programs were also rated slightly higher in importance but lower on meeting community needs overall compared to the invitation sample, with many programs being rated as not meeting community needs overall (most rated 2.3 to 2.7 on average). The open link survey sample often sees higher intensity in responses since these respondents are usually more interested and involved in parks and recreation opportunities.
- Values and Vision. Similar to the invitation sample, open link respondents rated maintenance of parks as a top priority for Dunwoody to focus on (65 percent rating as a first, second, or third priority), followed by developing programs and classes for all (37 percent). Community-wide special events (36 percent) and developing new parks in under-served areas (30 percent) were also important to open link respondents.
- Future Facilities, Amenities, and Services. The overall prioritization of which facilities to add or improve upon was fairly similar. Improved pathways and trails ranked as most important for both the open link and invitation with samples reporting a 4.3 and 4.1 average importance ratings respectively. Improved park amenities ranked second in importance for both groups (4.0-4.1).
- Financial Choices/Fees. Open link respondents were similar or just slightly more supportive than invitation respondents for each of the potential funding mechanisms tested in the survey. In particular, open link respondents support a bond referendum slightly more with 58 percent “probably” or “definitely” likely to support (3.5 average rating).

When given the opportunity to allocate funds across a variety of facilities, services, and programs, the open link respondents allocated an average of \$22 for improving, renovating, and maintaining park facilities. This was followed by an average allocation of \$20 for adding outdoor athletic fields and courts.

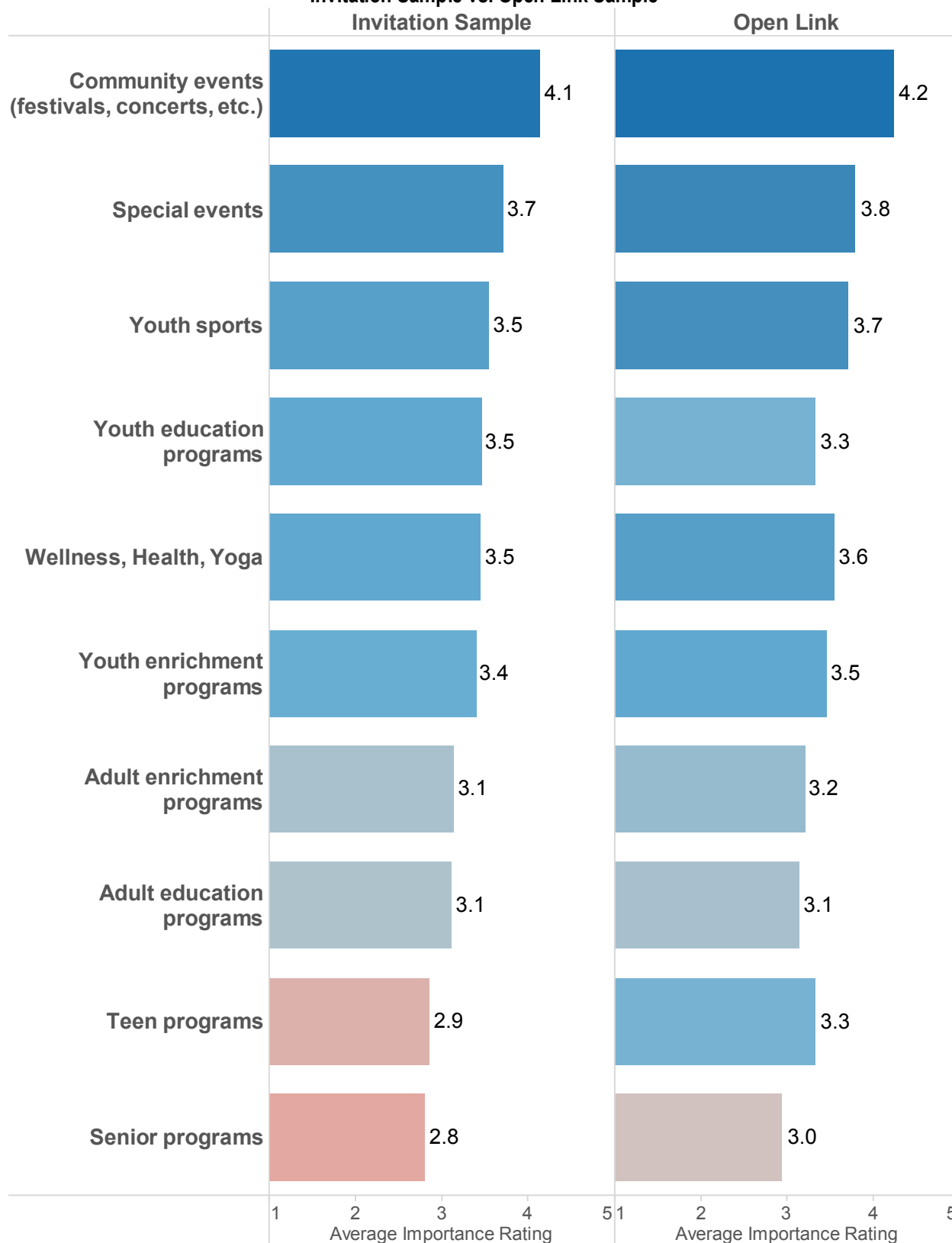
Importance of Facilities – Average Rating (Question 5a -Facilities)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



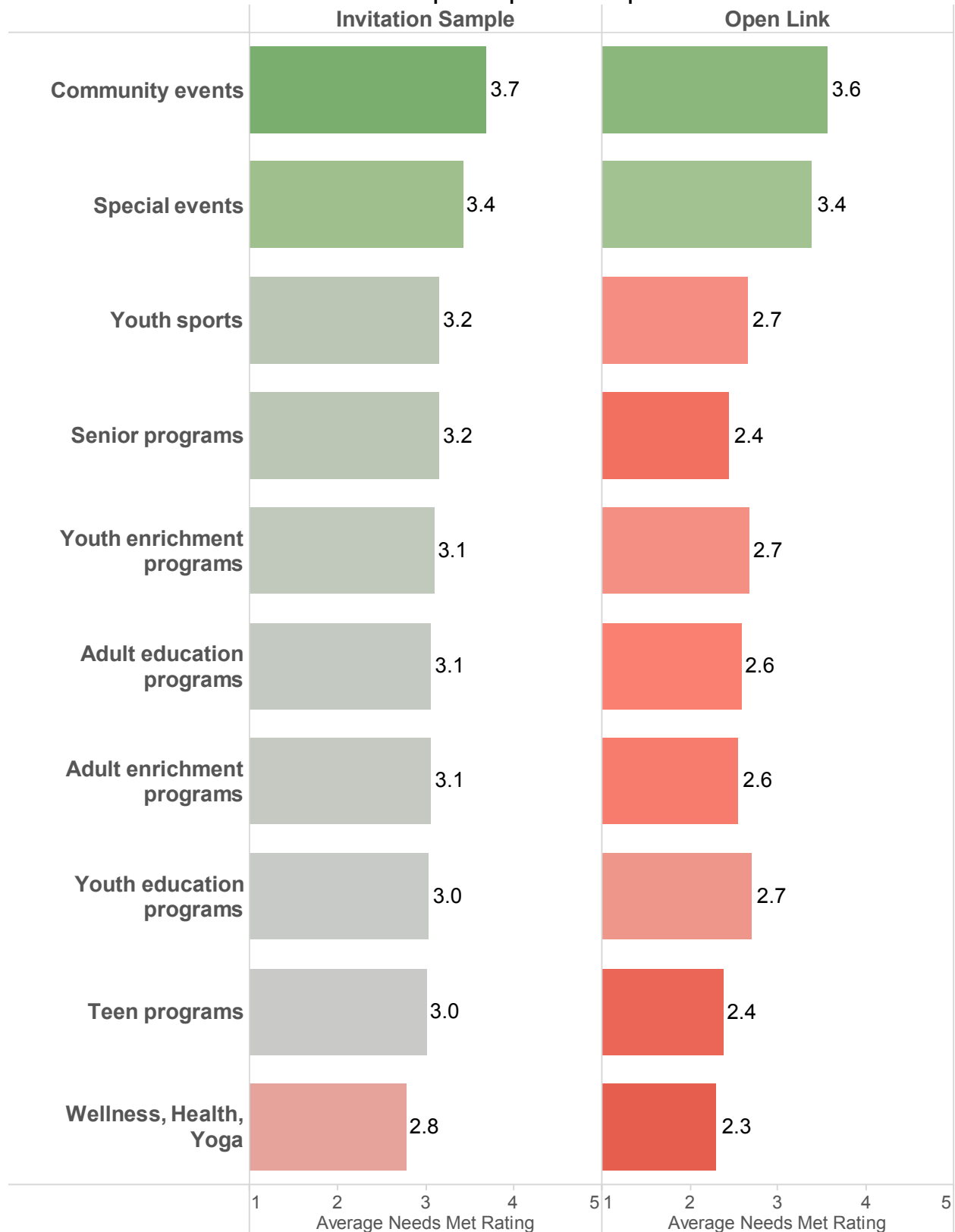
Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities – Average Rating (Question 5b - Facilities)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



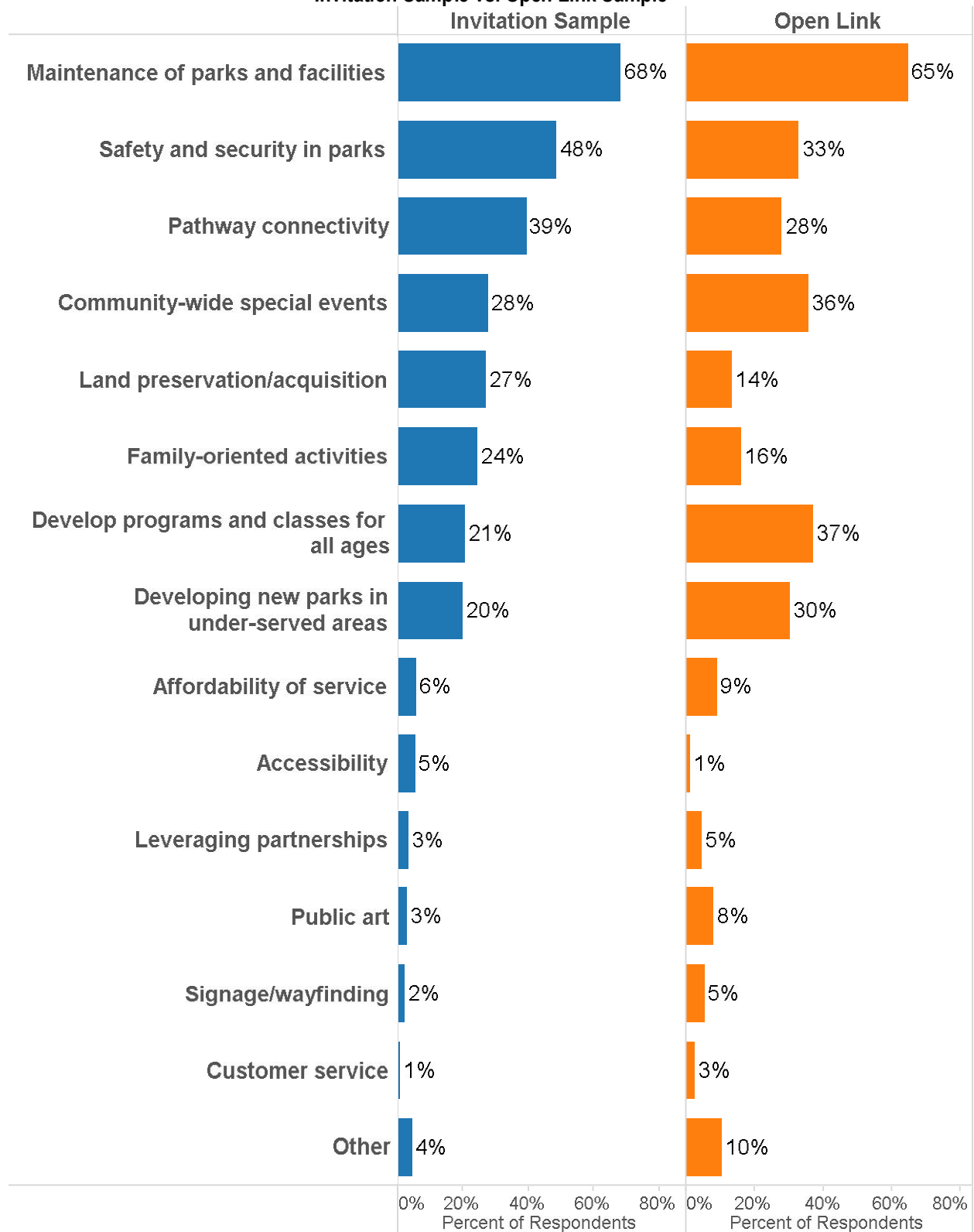
Importance of Programs – Average Rating (Question 5a – Programs)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



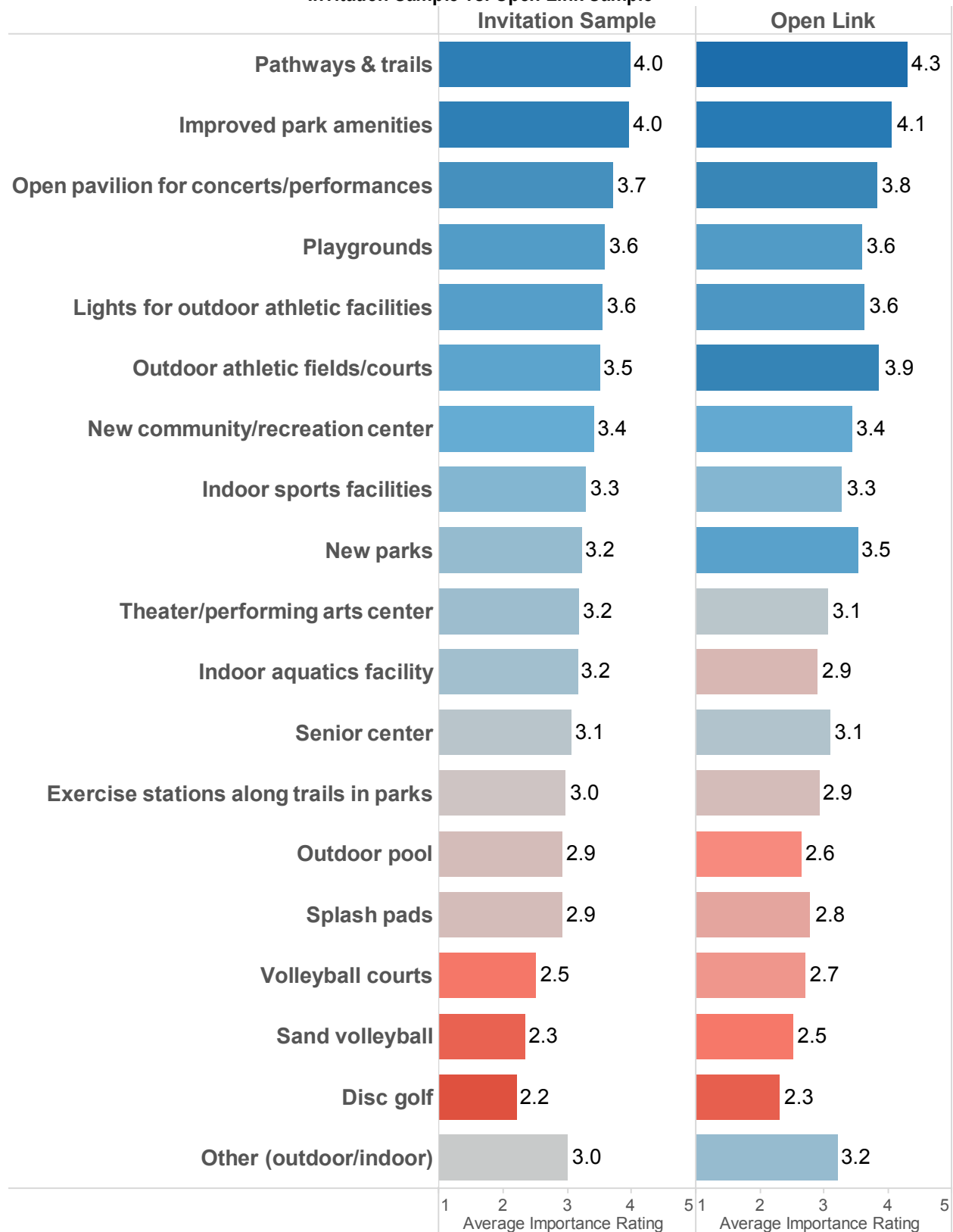
Degree to Which Community Needs Are Met by Facilities – Average Rating (Question 5b – Programs)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



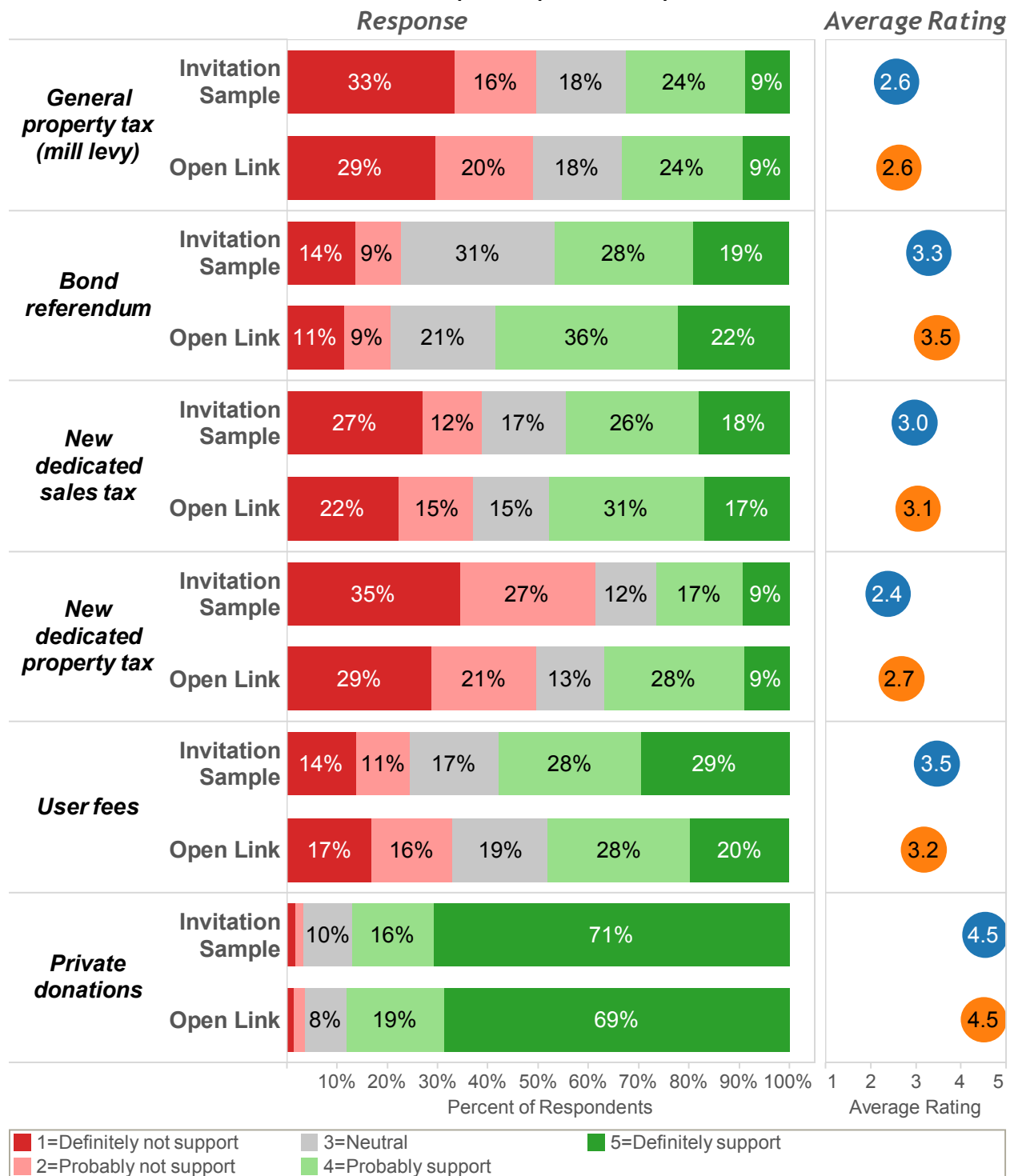
Top Three Areas to Focus on Improving (Question 4)
 (selected as first, second, or third priority)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



**Facilities to Add, Expand, or Improve – Average Rating (Question 11)
Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample**



Willingness to Support Increases in Real Estate Taxes (Question 14)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample



Allocation of Funding Towards Facilities/Services/Programs – Average Allocation Amount (Question 17)
 Invitation Sample vs. Open Link Sample

