
The City of West Sacramento Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Executive Summary

Overview

ETC Institute administered a needs assessment survey for the City of West Sacramento during the fall of 2017. The survey was administered as part of the City's update to the Parks and Open Space Master Plan. The survey and its results will be used to inform the establishment of priorities for improvements to parks and open space, as well as recreation programming.

Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in the City of West Sacramento. 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 on-line at www.WestSacParksCommunitySurvey.org.

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails and placed phone calls to the households that received the survey to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the on-line 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 West Sacramento from participating, everyone who completed the survey on-line was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC Institute then matched the addresses that were entered on-line with the addresses that were originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed on-line did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the on-line survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 375 residents. The goal was exceeded with a total of 381 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 381 households have a precision of at least +/-5% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Charts highlighting the overall results of the survey;
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs from the survey participants;
- Benchmarking analysis comparing the City's survey results to national results; and
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey.

The major findings of the survey are summarized on the following pages.

Facility Use and Ratings

Respondents were asked to indicate if they have used five different types of facilities and rate the condition of the facilities they have used during the past 12 months. Responses include:

- 70% of respondents have used park areas
- 55% have used trails
- 52% have used the Riverfront area
- 43% have used the Recreation Center
- 29% have used the Community Center

The Recreation and Community Centers received the highest percentage of “excellent” and “good” ratings among the five types of facilities respondents were asked to rate. Respondents were least satisfied with the condition of the Riverfront area.

If respondents indicated they had not visited one of the five facilities they were asked to indicate the reasons why. Results include:

- 20% were either not aware of the parks or trails locations
- 18% do not feel safe using parks or trails
- 17% feel the parks and trails offered lack the features their household wants to use
- 26% of respondents who had not visited the Recreation or Community Centers in the past 12 months indicated:
 - They were not aware of the facilities (26%)
 - The classes or membership were too expensive (16%)
 - They lack the features they want to use (15%)
- Respondents who had not visited the Riverfront area indicated:
 - They were not aware of the facility (26%)
 - It lacks the features they want to use (14%)
 - They do not feel safe (14%)

Only 16% of respondents have rented a facility or participated in an event at any City of West Sacramento Parks and Recreation facilities during the past 12 months. The most used facility was the Community Center meeting rooms (34%). Most (81%) of respondents indicated the quality of the rental facilities they have used were either “excellent” (43%) or “good” (38%), no respondents gave “poor” ratings. Although respondents were satisfied with the condition of rental facilities, they indicated they are not likely to rent them again in the future. Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents indicated they were either “not likely” (42%) or “not at all likely” (23%) to rent a facility in the future.

Program and Special Event Participation and Ratings

Fifty percent (50%) of respondents indicated their household has not attended any special events offered by the City of West Sacramento during the past 12 months. The most participated in special event was the Bulky Waste Drop Off Events (29%). Seventy-five percent (75%) of respondents indicated the overall quality of the special events they have participated in was either “excellent” (34%) or “good” (41%). Food events (67%), entertainment (49%), and cultural celebrations (39%) are the three event concepts households are most interested in.

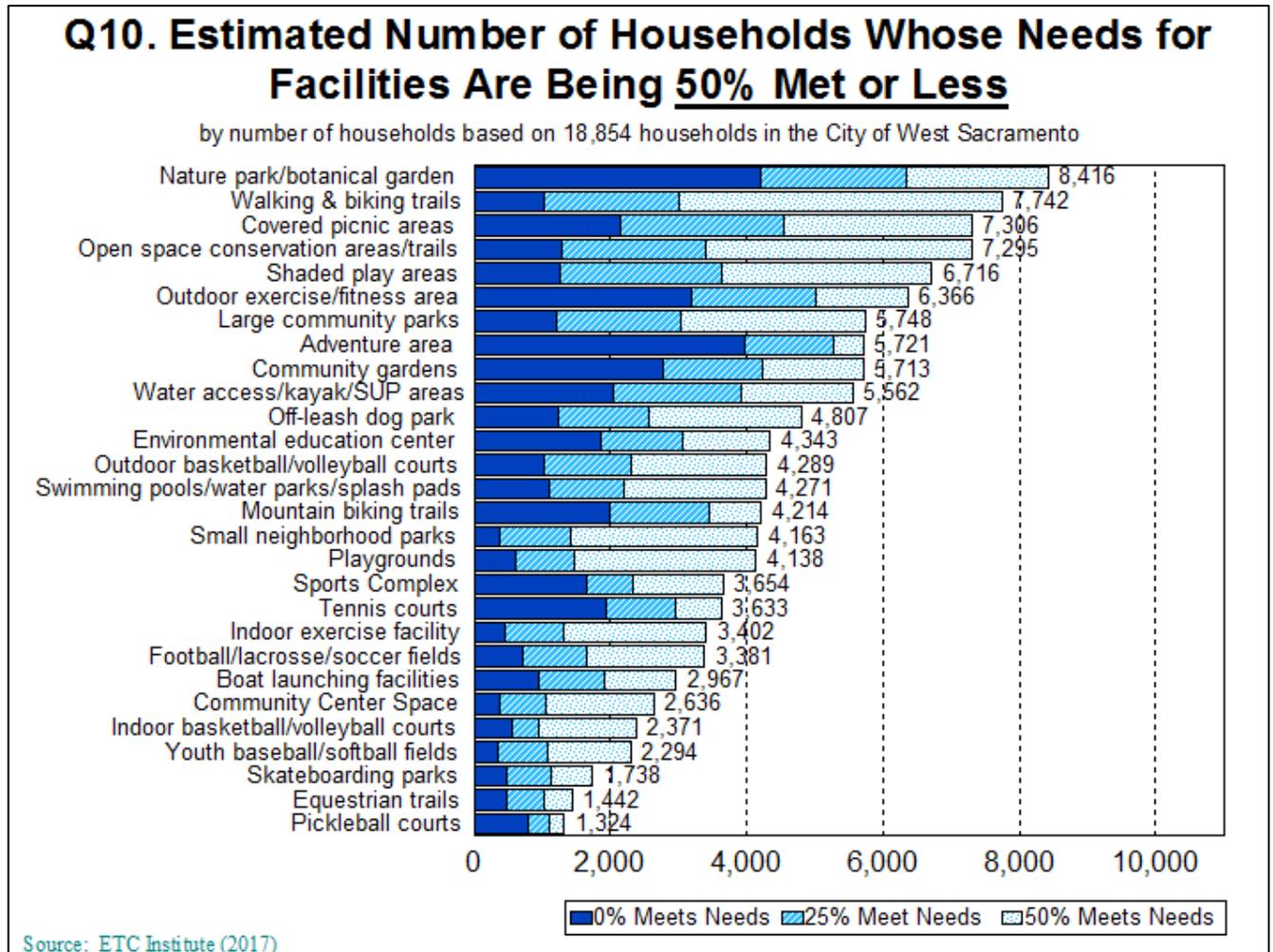
Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents indicated their household has participated in a recreation program offered by the City of West Sacramento during the past 12 months. Exercise and wellness programs (42%) and swim lessons (36%) at the Recreation Center were the most participated in programs during the past 12 months according to survey respondents. Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents indicated the quality of the programs they have participated in are either “excellent” (51%) or “good” (44%). Forty-eight percent (48%) of respondents who have not participated in a program offered by the City of West Sacramento during the past 12 months indicated they did not know what was offered, 43% were too busy or not interested.

Facility Needs and Priorities

Facility Needs: Respondents were asked to identify if their household had an unmet need for 28 recreation facilities and amenities. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had the greatest “unmet” need for various facilities. The four recreation facilities/amenities with the highest percentage of households that indicated an unmet need were:

1. Nature Park/Botanical Garden - 8,416 households (or 45%)
2. Walking and Biking Trails - 7,742 households (or 41%)
3. Covered Picnic Areas – 7,306 households (or 39%)
4. Open Space/Conservation Parks – 7,295 households (or 39%)

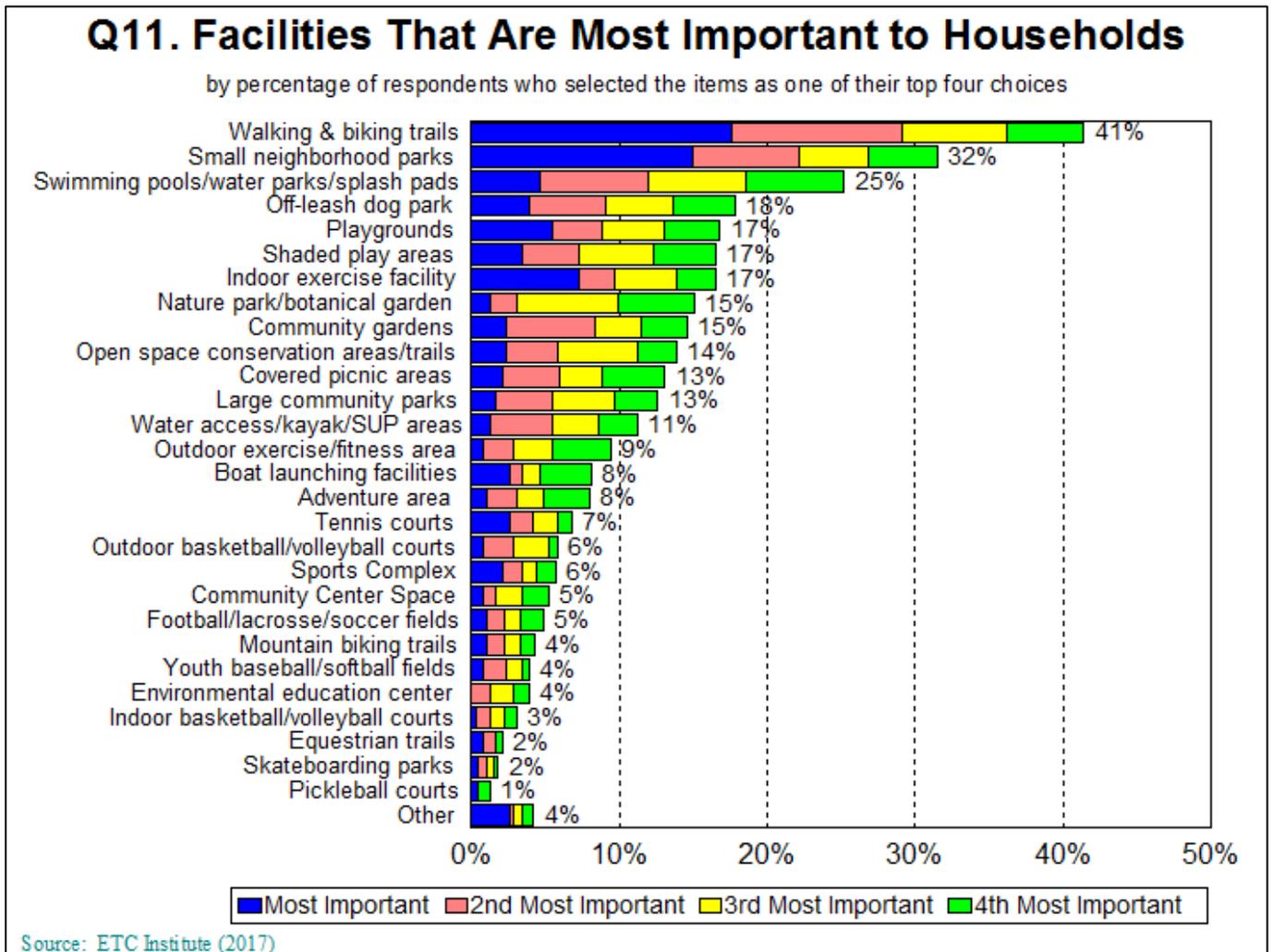
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 28 facilities that were assessed is shown in the chart below.



Facility Importance: In addition to assessing the needs for each facility, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents placed on each facility. Based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, the four most important facilities to residents were:

1. Walking and Biking Trails (41%)
2. Small Neighborhood Parks (32%)
3. Swimming Pools/Water Parks/Splash Pads (25%)
4. Off-Leash Dog Parks (18%)

The percentage of residents who selected each facility as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.

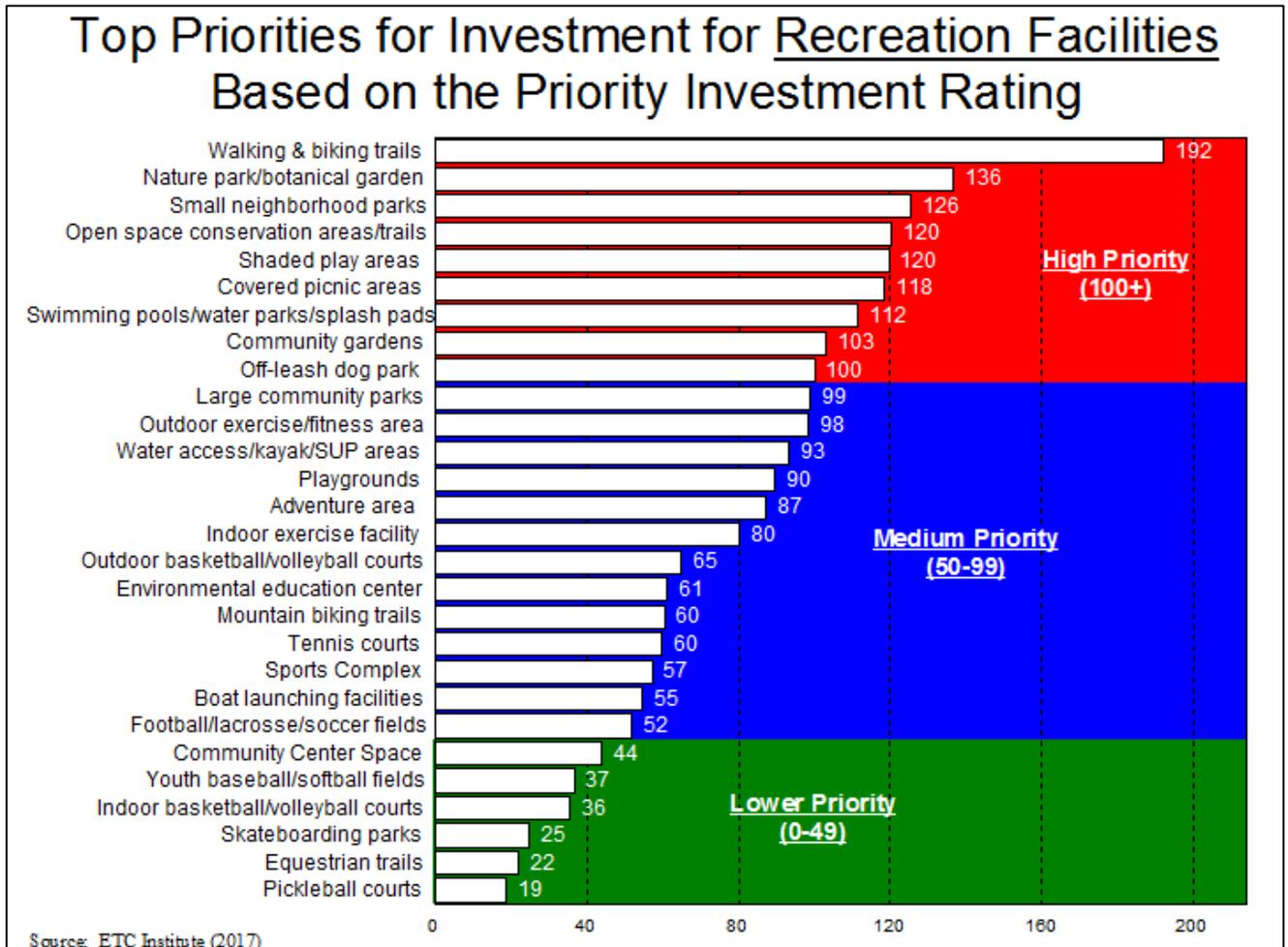


Priorities for Facility Investments: The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on parks and recreation investments. The PIR equally weights: (1) the importance that residents place on facilities; and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility.

Based on the PIR, the following nine facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

1. Walking and biking trails (PIR=192)
2. Nature park/botanical garden (PIR=136)
3. Small neighborhood parks (PIR=126)
4. Open space conservation areas/trails (PIR=120)
5. Shaded play areas (PIR=120)
6. Covered picnic areas (PIR=118)
7. Swimming pools/water parks/splash pads (PIR=112)
8. Community gardens (PIR=103)
9. Off-leash dog park (PIR=100)

The chart below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 28 facilities/amenities that were assessed on the survey.



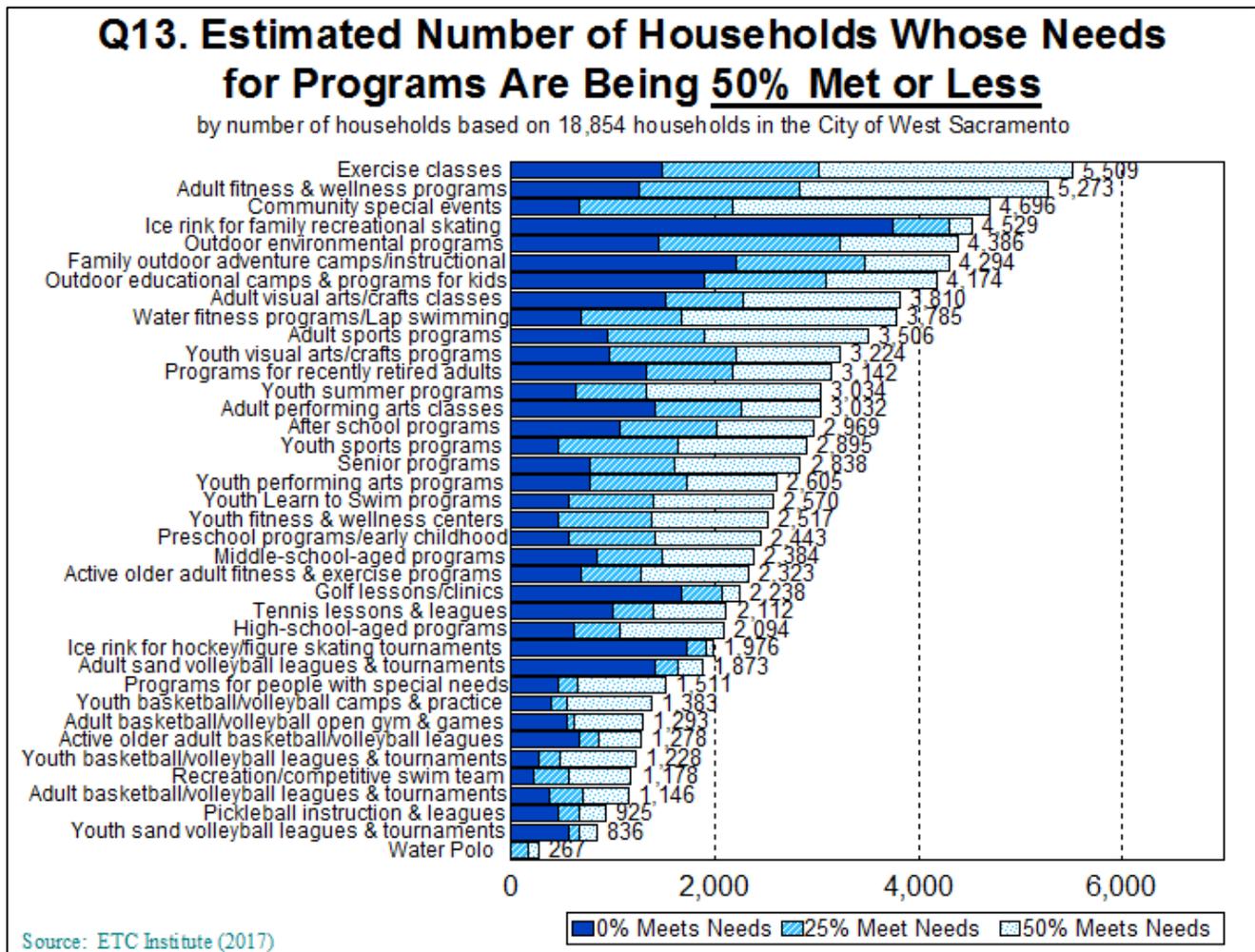
Programming Needs and Priorities

Programming Needs. Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had an unmet need for 38 recreational programs. Based on this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had “unmet” needs for each program.

The four programs with the highest percentage of households that had needs were:

1. Exercise Classes – 5,509 households (or 29%)
2. Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs - 5,273 households (or 28%)
3. Community Special Events – 4,696 households (or 25%)
4. Ice Rink for Family Recreational Skating – 4,529 households (or 24%)

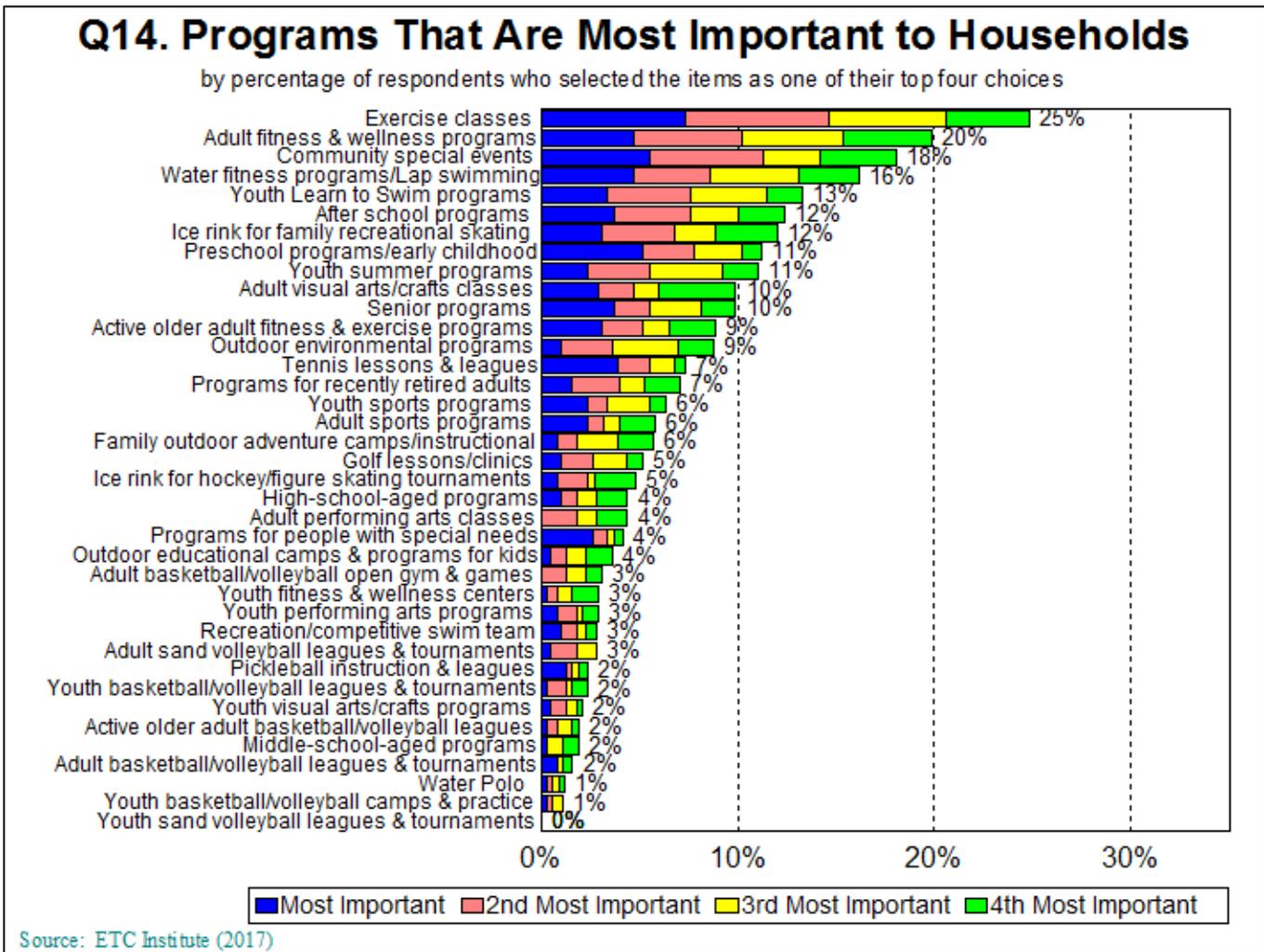
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 38 programs that were assessed is shown in the chart below.



Program Importance. In addition to assessing the needs for each program, ETC Institute also assessed the importance that residents place on each program. Based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, the four most important programs to residents were:

1. Exercise Classes (25%)
2. Adult Fitness and Wellness Programs (20%)
3. Community Special Events (18%), and
4. Water Fitness Programs/Lap Swimming (16%)

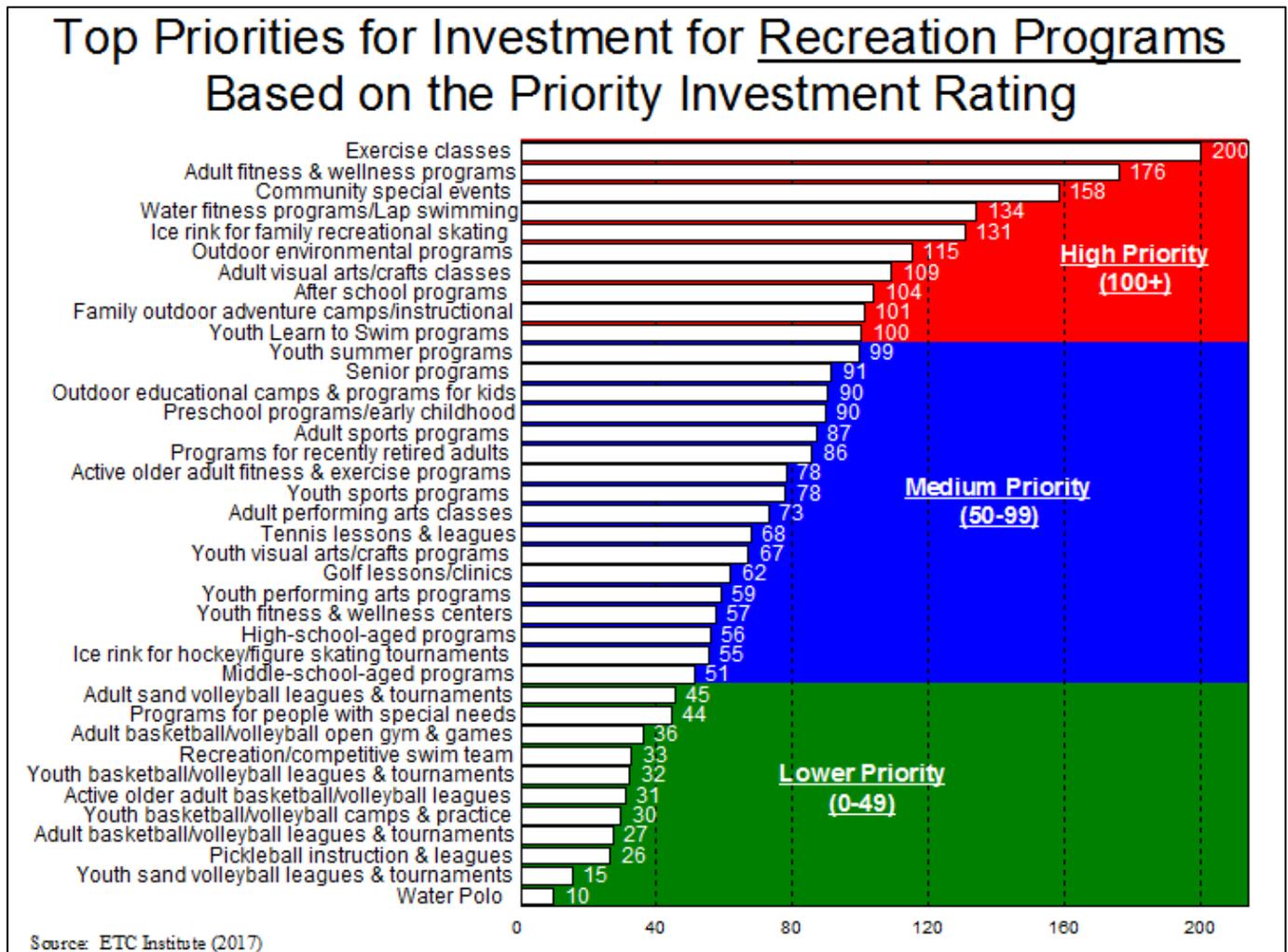
The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.



Priorities for Programming Investments. Based on the PIR described previously, the following 10 programs were rated as “high priorities” for investment:

1. Exercise classes (PIR=200)
2. Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=176)
3. Community special events (PIR=158)
4. Water fitness programs/lap swimming (PIR=134)
5. Ice rink for family recreational skating (PIR=131)
6. Outdoor environmental programs (PIR=115)
7. Adult visual arts/crafts classes (PIR=109)
8. After school programs (PIR=104)
9. Family outdoor adventure camps/instructions (PIR=101)
10. Youth learn to swim programs (PIR=100)

The chart below shows the PIR for each of the 38 programs that were rated.



Support for Actions that Would Improve the Parks, Trails, and Recreation System in the City of West Sacramento

Respondents were asked to indicate which items, from a list of 30, they would most support the City of West Sacramento taking to improve the parks, trails, and recreation system. Based on the sum of “very supportive” and “somewhat supportive” responses the most supported actions were:

1. Repair aging neighborhood parks (80%)
2. Improve existing trail system (75%)
3. Develop new walking/biking trails (72%)
4. Improve existing playgrounds (70%)
5. Add trails/walking loops to existing parks (70%)

Four of the top five most supported items were improvements to existing facilities.

Conclusions

Overall, most respondents (55%) are either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the overall value their household receives from the City of West Sacramento’s Parks and Recreation Department. In order to ensure that the City of West Sacramento continues to meet the needs and expectations of the community, the Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update should consider recommendations that focus on sustaining and/or improving performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” by the PIR. The facilities and programs with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.

Facility Priorities

- Walking and biking trails (PIR=192)
- Nature park/botanical garden (PIR=136)
- Small neighborhood parks (PIR=126)
- Open space conservation areas/trails (PIR=120)
- Shaded play areas (PIR=120)
- Covered picnic areas (PIR=118)
- Swimming pools/water parks/splash pads (PIR=112)
- Community gardens (PIR=103)
- Off-leash dog park (PIR=100)

Programming Priorities

- Exercise Classes (PIR=200)
- Adult fitness and wellness programs (PIR=176)
- Community special events (PIR=158)
- Water fitness programs/lap swimming (PIR=134)
- Ice rink for family recreational skating (PIR=131)
- Outdoor environmental programs (PIR=115)
- Adult visual arts/crafts classes (PIR=109)
- After school programs (PIR=104)
- Family outdoor adventure camps/instructions (PIR=101)
- Youth learn to swim programs (PIR=100)