



City of Prescott Parks Master Plan Needs Assessment Report

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Introduction

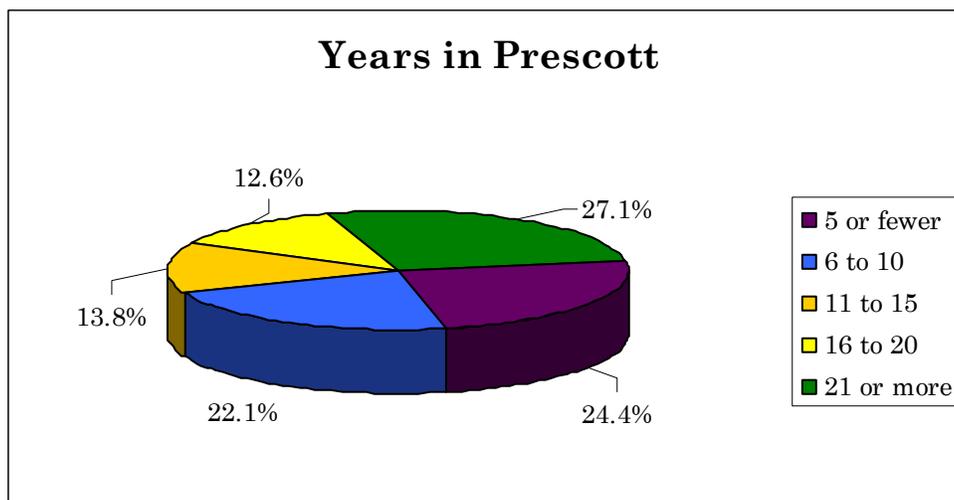
A Needs Assessment survey was conducted to measure opinions and attitudes from Prescott residents about parks and recreation programs, facilities, and activities. The findings of the Needs Assessment survey will be used to help guide the development of the City of Prescott’s 10-year Parks Master Plan. A random sample direct mail survey was conducted, in which a four-page survey was mailed to 4,000 households in Prescott during the week of January 15, 2007. The City of Prescott supplied the sample for this survey. Four hundred surveys were tabulated achieving a margin of error of plus or minus 4.7 percent with 95 percent confidence as noted in Table 1.

Table 1 – Overall Survey Response Rate and Margin of Error at a 95% Confidence Interval			
Number Surveyed	Tabulated Responses	Response Rate	95% Confidence
4000	400	10.0%	4.7%

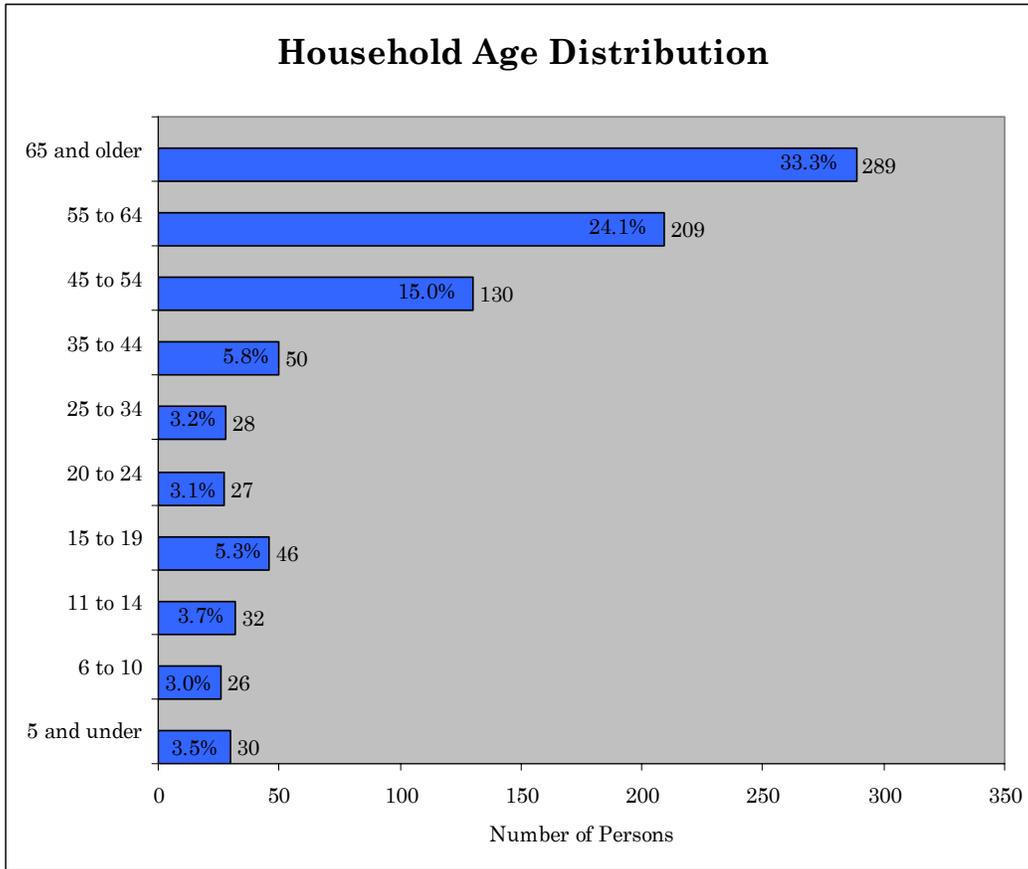
The survey instrument is included within this report as Appendix A. Following is a summary of the most important findings of the assessment with the key aspects in graphs. Responses from open ended questions are also included in the Appendix.

Respondent Profile

A total of 400 surveys were tabulated achieving a 10 percent response rate. Nearly 40 percent of the survey respondents have lived in Prescott 16 years or more, with nearly 47 percent having moved to Prescott within the last ten years.



The majority of the survey respondents (57.4 percent) were 55 years of age or older, with a third over the age of 65. Only 27.6 percent were less than 45 years of age.



The distribution of the survey respondent by age does not reflect the demographics of the community based on the 2000 Census, as can be seen in Table 2. As noted earlier, 57.4 percent of the respondents were 55 years of age and older compared to 40.2 percent of the total population, which that age group actually comprises.

Table 2 – Prescott Population by Age		
	U.S. Census (2000)	Survey
15 and younger	12.7%	10.1%
15 to 19	6.7%	5.3%
20 to 24	7.6%	3.1%
25 to 34	8.1%	3.2%
35 to 44	10.8%	5.8%
45 to 54	13.9%	15.0%
55 to 64	13.4%	24.1%
65 and older	26.8%	33.3%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000; Needs Assessment Survey results

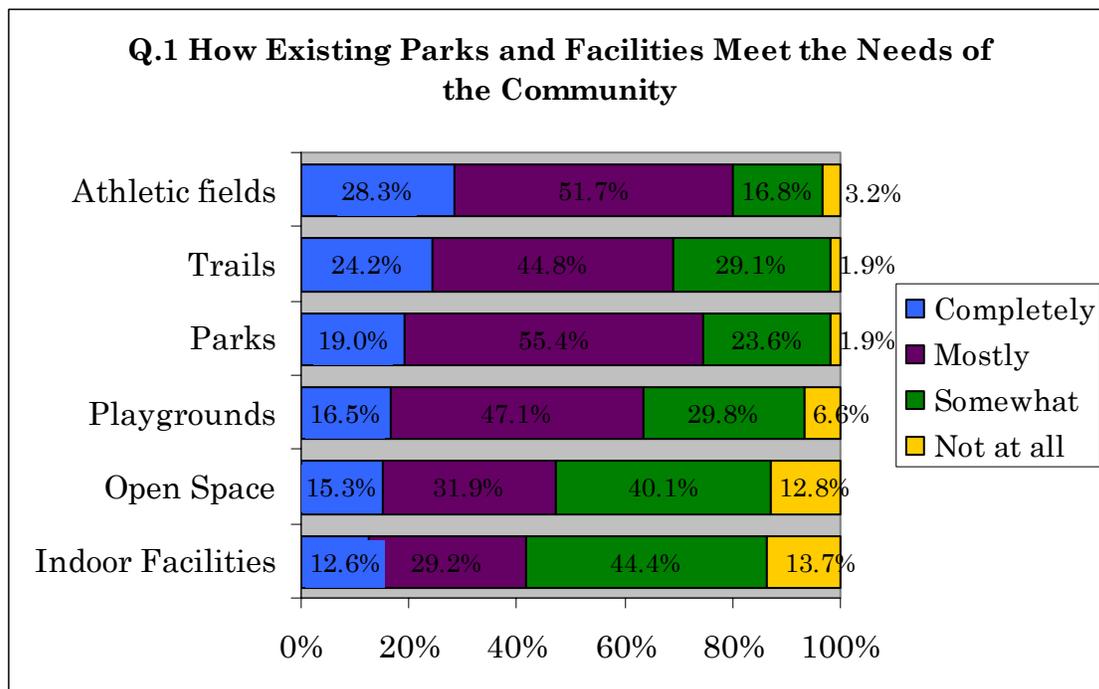
Research Findings

The survey was designed with questions to ascertain the use of existing parks, programs, and facilities. It also queried the respondent as to which programs and facilities they would support with respect to the allocation of funding and methods of funding.

Overall Assessment

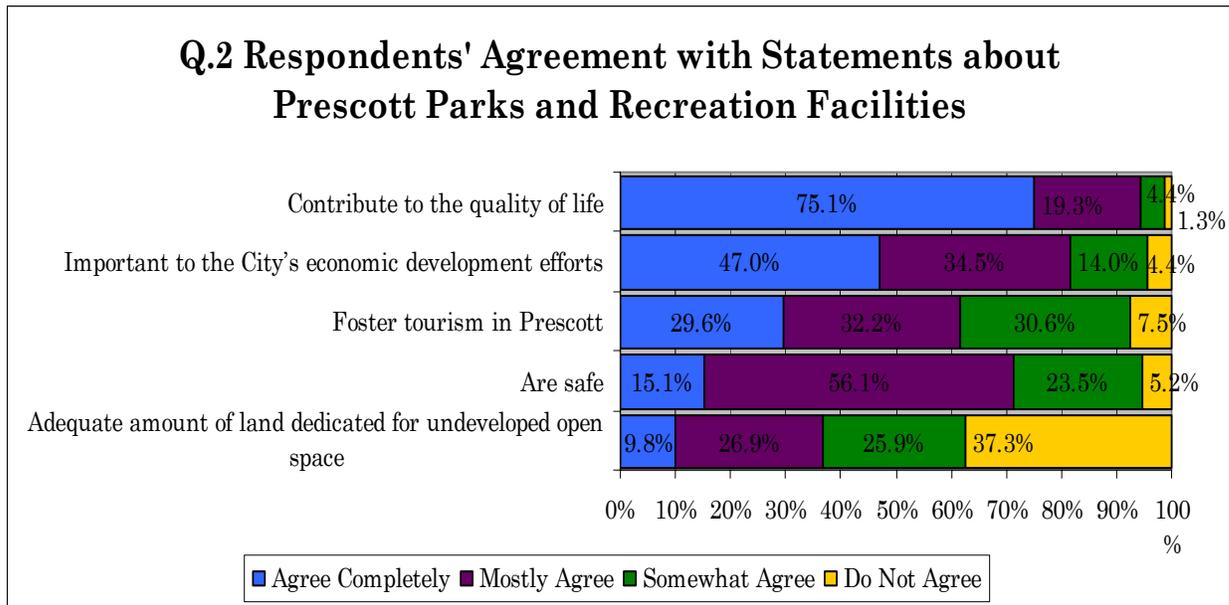
The first question asked respondents to assess how current parks, facilities, and open space are meeting the community’s needs.

- 80 percent said existing athletic fields completely or mostly meet the current community needs. Nearly 70 percent said trails either completely or mostly met the community needs, and 74.4 percent said parks completely or mostly meet the community needs.
- The majority of the respondents indicated that open space and indoor facilities somewhat or not at all met their needs.



Question two asked survey respondents to agree or disagree with statements regarding existing facilities.

- 94.4 percent of respondents mostly or completely agreed that Prescott’s Parks and Recreation facilities contribute to the quality of life, 4.4 percent did not agree. Roughly 71 percent mostly or completely agreed that the parks and facilities are safe, with 5.2 percent disagreeing.
- 81.6 percent mostly or completely agreed that parks and recreation facilities are important to the city’s economic development efforts. Only 4.4 percent did not agree.
- Most respondents (61.8 percent) mostly or completely agreed that Prescott’s parks and recreation facilities foster tourism, while only 7.5 percent disagreed.
- While 36.7 percent mostly or completely believe that the City has an adequate amount of land dedicated to undeveloped open space, approximately 37 percent do not believe this to be the case.

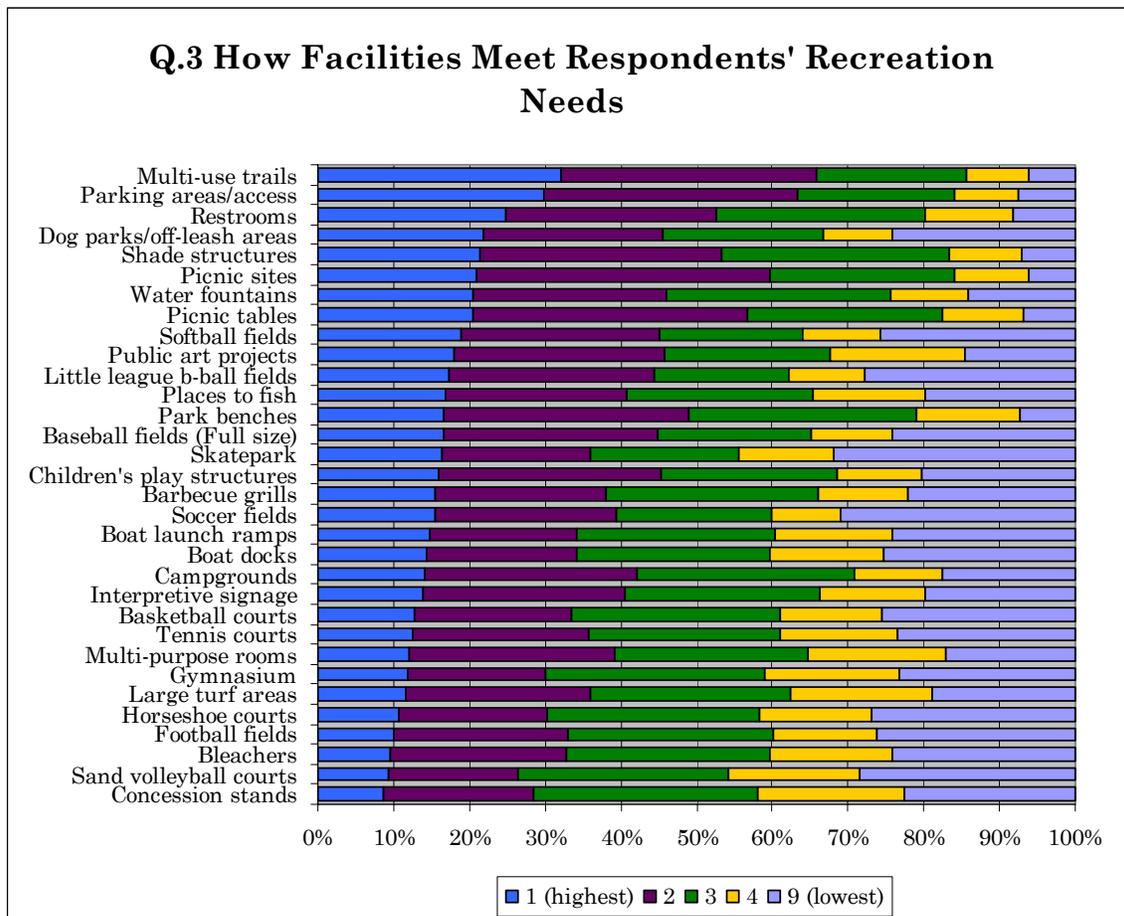


Use of Existing Parks, Facilities, Programs, and Activities

Questions three, four and five asked respondents to rate how existing parks, facilities, programs, and activities currently meet their needs.

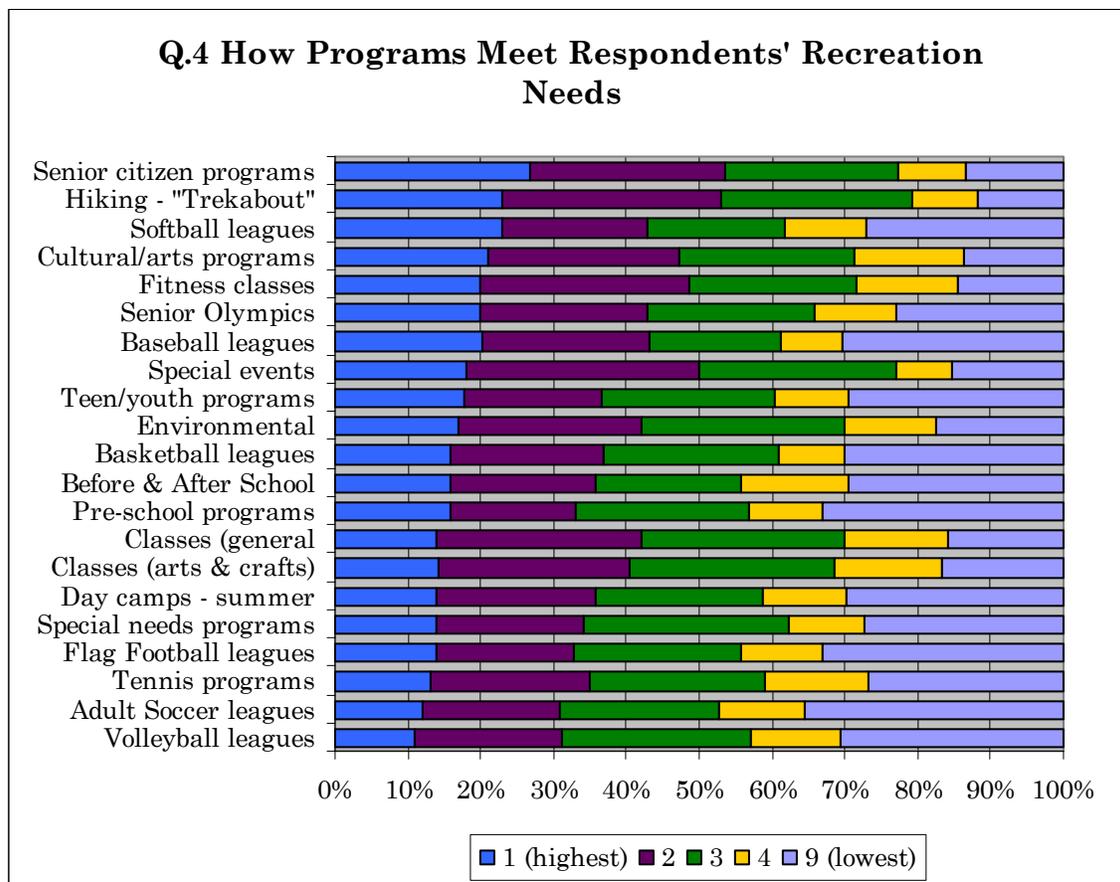
Question three pertained to existing facilities:

- Among those facilities that respondents rated the highest in regards to meeting their recreation needs were multi-use trails (32.3 percent), off-leash areas (21.8 percent), and picnic sites (21.0 percent). Parking areas (29.8 percent), restrooms (24.9 percent), and shade structures (21.5 percent) also received high marks.
- The facilities that received the lowest ratings, with more than 25 percent of respondents giving these facilities the lowest possible score, included the skate park (32 percent), sand volleyball courts (28.4 percent), soccer fields (31.1 percent), little-league baseball fields (27.8 percent), horseshoe courts (26.8 percent), and football fields (26.3 percent).



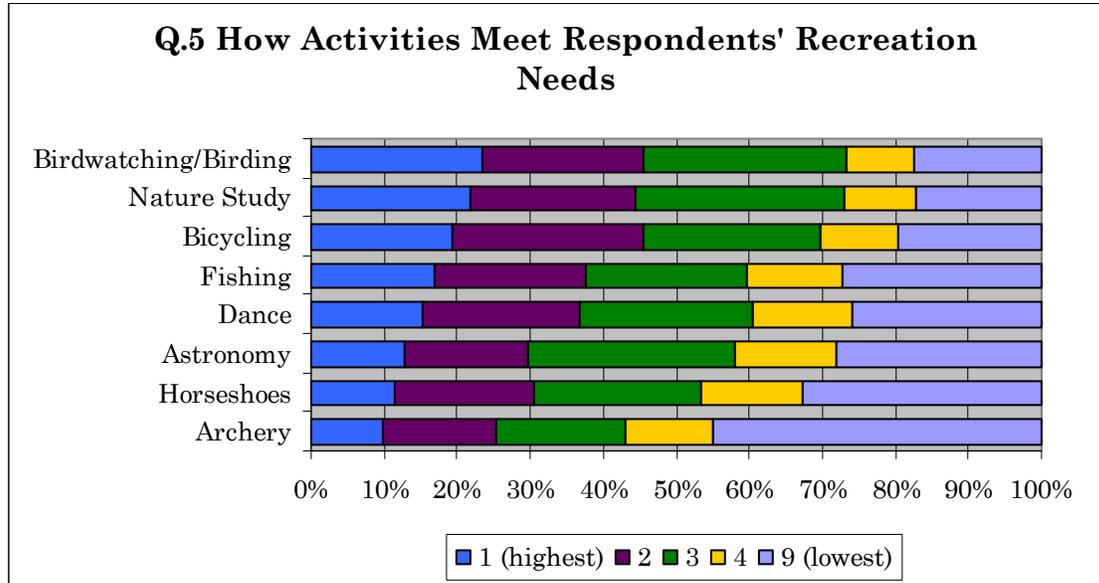
Question four related to Prescott's existing programs:

- Senior Citizen programs (26.6 percent), hiking programs (23.1 percent), and softball leagues (23.3 percent) were rated the highest among programs for meeting respondents' recreation needs, with roughly 50 percent of respondents giving those programs either the highest or second highest rating.
- Volleyball leagues, adult soccer leagues, flag football leagues, and pre-school programs led those programs that received the lowest marks, with more than 30 percent of respondents giving those programs the lowest rating.



Question five concerned the activities that Prescott currently offers:

- Of the activities respondents were asked to rate, approximately 45 percent of respondents gave bird watching, nature study, and bicycling the highest or second highest score in rating how the activities meet their recreation needs.
- Forty-five percent of respondents gave archery and horseshoes (32.7%) the lowest possible rating.

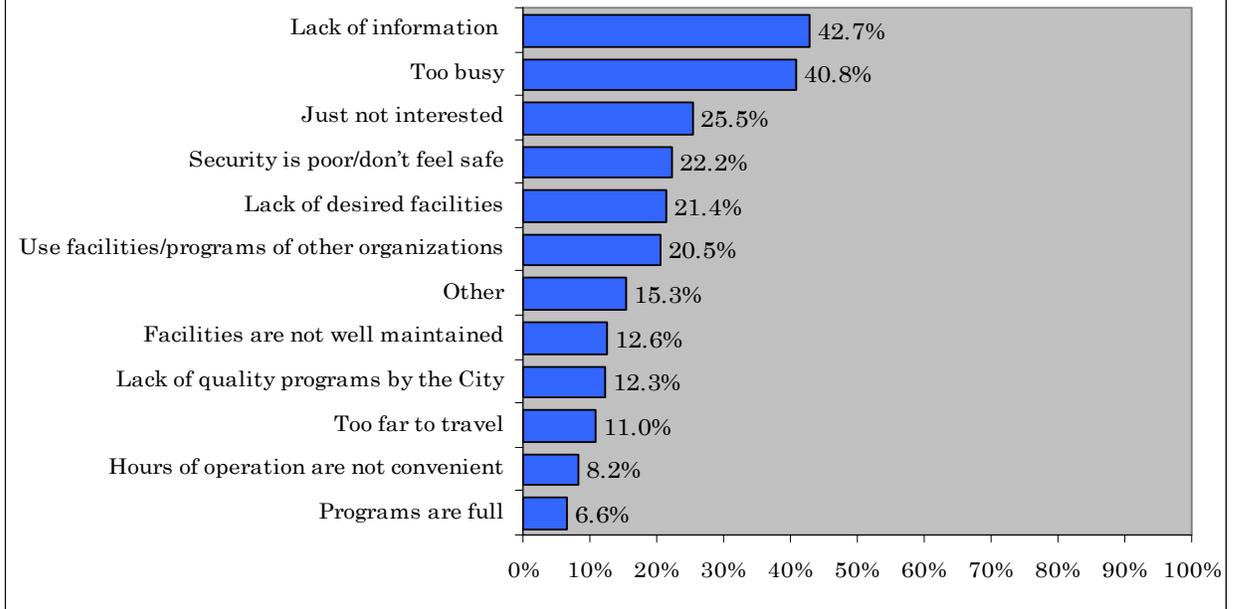


Why Respondents Don't Use Prescott Parks and Facilities

Question 6 asked respondents to identify the reasons that they do not use Prescott's parks and recreation facilities more often. Multiple answers were allowed.

- The most popular reasons persons stated for not using the parks and facilities were "lack of information," "too busy," and "just not interested," with at least 25 percent of respondents marking each of those as a reason they do not use parks and facilities more often. Safety (22.2 percent), a lack of desired facilities (21.4 percent), and because they use facilities provided by other organizations (20.5 percent) were next highest on the list.
- Fifteen percent of residents marked "other" as a reason that they do not use Prescott parks and facilities more often. When asked to list that "other" reason, approximately one third (of the 15.3 percent) listed age or health as the reason, and approximately one third cited specific maintenance concerns.
- The remaining one third stated various "other" reasons including the lack of a desired facility, fees at certain facilities, or the lack of handicapped-accessible trails.

Q.6 Top Reasons Respondents and their Families Do Not Use Parks and Facilities More Frequently by Percentage of Respondents (Multiple Selections Could be Chosen)

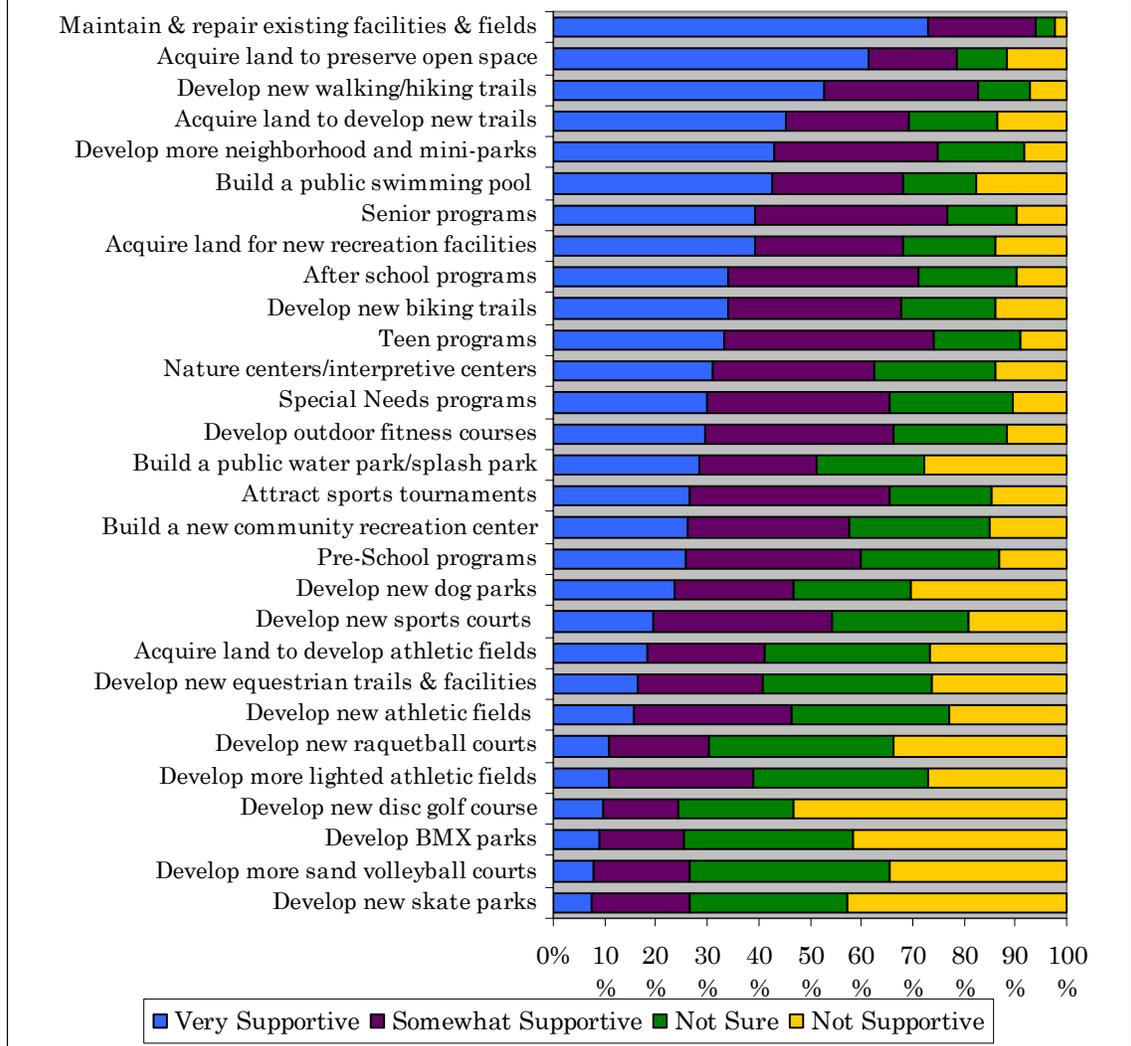


Allocation of Funding

For this question, respondents were given a list of 29 possible facilities and programs and were asked to rate how supportive they are of allocating funding to each option.

- Nearly 95 percent of the respondents indicated that they were very supportive or somewhat supportive of maintaining and repairing existing parks facilities and athletic fields.
- Other top choices that respondents indicated they were very supportive or somewhat supportive of were acquiring land to preserve open space (78.8 percent) and developing new walking / hiking trails (82.6 percent).

Q.7 Choices For the Allocation of City Resources

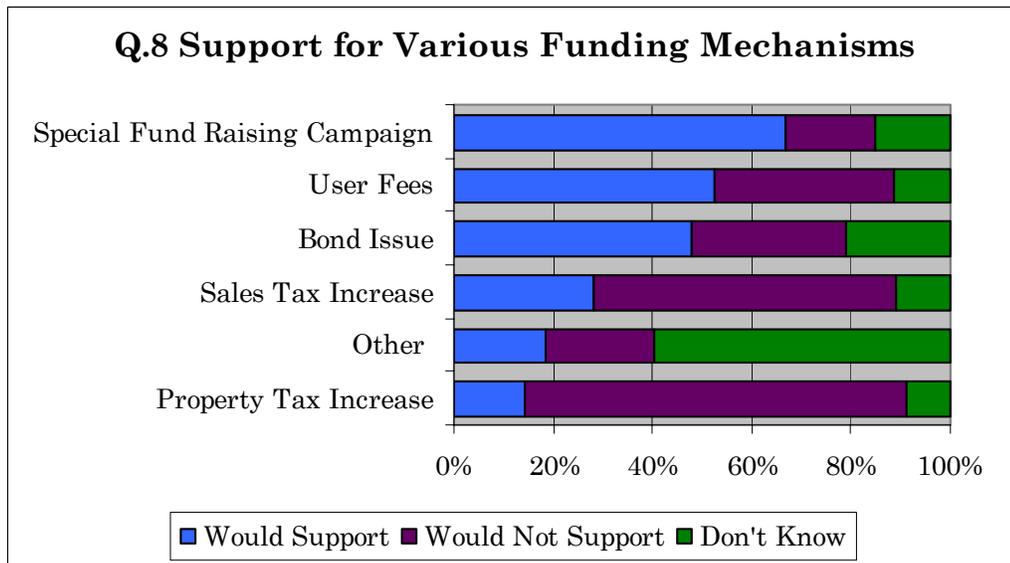


- Of the same list, 53.4 percent of respondents were not at all supportive of spending money to develop a new disc golf course; similarly, 42.5 percent did not support allocating funds to develop a new skate park and 41.5 percent did not support developing a new BMX park.
- Other choices that received little support were developing more sand volleyball courts (34.5 percent were not at all supportive), developing new racquetball courts (33.6 percent), or developing more lighted athletic fields (26.8 percent).

Funding Mechanisms

Question eight asked respondents to rate which of various funding methods they would support.

- 66.9 percent of the respondents said they would support a special fund raising campaign followed by user fees (47.7%).
- Opposition to a few of the funding options was considerably high, with 75 percent of respondents not supporting a property tax increase and 60.7 percent would not support a sales tax increase.
- 36.4 percent of respondents said they would not support the idea of user fees, and 31.3 percent opposed a bond issue.
- Few respondents wrote an “other” suggestion. Ideas included funding by a city lottery or by grants, gifts, and donations. Other suggestions were to earmark money from bed taxes to parks or to use mini-risk prisoners to maintain parks and facilities.



Appendix A - Survey

The City of Prescott Parks, Recreation and Library Department is updating its Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Your input is very important to help determine the needs relating to current and future parks, facilities and programs. Postage is pre-paid - just tape the survey closed and mail it before February 1, 2007. We greatly appreciate your time and effort!

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT PARKS, OPEN SPACE, AND FACILITIES

1. Overall, how well do you feel that the parks, playgrounds, open space, trails, and athletic fields are meeting the needs of the community? (Circle the corresponding number)

	<u>Completely</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Somewhat</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
A. Parks	1	2	3	9
B. Playgrounds	1	2	3	9
C. Open space	1	2	3	9
D. Trails	1	2	3	9
E. Athletic fields	1	2	3	9
F. Indoor Facilities	1	2	3	9

2. Do you agree with the following statements? (Circle the corresponding number)

	<u>Agree Completely</u>	<u>Mostly Agree</u>	<u>Somewhat Agree</u>	<u>Do Not Agree</u>
A. Prescott has an adequate amount of land dedicated for undeveloped open space.	1	2	3	9
B. Parks and recreational facilities foster tourism in Prescott.	1	2	3	9
C. Parks and recreational facilities are important to the City's economic development efforts.	1	2	3	9
D. Parks and recreation facilities contribute to the quality of life	1	2	3	9
E. Prescott parks and facilities are safe.	1	2	3	9

USE OF EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

3. Please rank the following facilities and how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number).

	<u>Highest</u>				<u>Lowest</u>
A. Barbecue grills	1	2	3	4	9
B. Baseball fields (Little League)	1	2	3	4	9
C. Baseball fields (Full size)	1	2	3	4	9
D. Basketball courts	1	2	3	4	9
E. Bleachers	1	2	3	4	9
F. Boat docks	1	2	3	4	9
G. Boat launch ramps	1	2	3	4	9
H. Campgrounds	1	2	3	4	9
I. Children's play structures	1	2	3	4	9
J. Concession stands	1	2	3	4	9
K. Dog Park – off-leash areas	1	2	3	4	9
L. Football fields	1	2	3	4	9
M. Gymnasium	1	2	3	4	9
N. Horseshoe courts	1	2	3	4	9
O. Interpretive signage	1	2	3	4	9
P. Large turf areas	1	2	3	4	9
Q. Multi-purpose meeting rooms	1	2	3	4	9
R. Park benches	1	2	3	4	9
S. Picnic sites	1	2	3	4	9
T. Picnic tables	1	2	3	4	9
U. Places to fish	1	2	3	4	9
V. Public art projects	1	2	3	4	9
W. Ramadas – shade structures	1	2	3	4	9
X. Restrooms	1	2	3	4	9

Y. Sand volleyball courts	1	2	3	4	9
Z. Skatepark	1	2	3	4	9

Questions #3 Continued: Please rank the following facilities and how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number).

	Highest				Lowest
AA. Soccer fields	1	2	3	4	9
BB. Softball fields	1	2	3	4	9
CC. Tennis courts	1	2	3	4	9
DD. Water fountains	1	2	3	4	9
EE. Multi-use trails	1	2	3	4	9
FF. Parking areas/access	1	2	3	4	9

4. Please rate the following City of Prescott programs and how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number).

	Highest				Lowest
A. Baseball leagues	1	2	3	4	9
B. Basketball leagues	1	2	3	4	9
C. Flag Football leagues	1	2	3	4	9
D. Adult Soccer leagues	1	2	3	4	9
E. Softball leagues	1	2	3	4	9
F. Tennis programs	1	2	3	4	9
G. Volleyball leagues	1	2	3	4	9
H. Before & After School programs	1	2	3	4	9
I. Classes (general education/skills)	1	2	3	4	9
J. Classes (arts & crafts)	1	2	3	4	9
K. Cultural/arts programs	1	2	3	4	9
L. Day camps - summer & school breaks	1	2	3	4	9
M. Environmental education	1	2	3	4	9
N. Fitness classes	1	2	3	4	9
O. Hiking - "Trekabout"	1	2	3	4	9
P. Senior citizen programs	1	2	3	4	9
Q. Senior Olympics	1	2	3	4	9
R. Special needs programs	1	2	3	4	9
S. Special events	1	2	3	4	9
T. Teen/youth programs	1	2	3	4	9
U. Pre-school programs	1	2	3	4	9

5. Please rate the following activities and how they meet your recreation needs. (Circle the corresponding number).

	Highest				Lowest
A. Archery	1	2	3	4	9
B. Astronomy	1	2	3	4	9
C. Bicycling	1	2	3	4	9
D. Birdwatching/Birding	1	2	3	4	9
D. Dance	1	2	3	4	9
E. Fishing	1	2	3	4	9
F. Horseshoes	1	2	3	4	9
G. Nature Study	1	2	3	4	9

6. Please check all of the reasons that you and your family members don't use the City of Prescott parks and facilities more frequently.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. Hours of operation are not convenient | <input type="checkbox"/> G. Lack of desired facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. Too far to travel | <input type="checkbox"/> H. Just not interested |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. Facilities are not well maintained | <input type="checkbox"/> I. Use facilities/programs provided by other organizations |

- _____ D. Lack of quality programs by the City
- _____ E. Too busy
- _____ F. Programs are full

- _____ J. Lack of information about programs and facilities
- _____ K. Security is poor/don't feel safe
- _____ L. Other: _____

ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES

7. Tell us how supportive you are for allocating city resources to the following: (Circle the corresponding number)

	<u>Very Supportive</u>	<u>Somewhat Supportive</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>	<u>Not Supportive</u>
A. Maintain & repair existing park facilities & athletic fields	1	2	3	9
B. Attract sports tournaments	1	2	3	9
C. Build a public swimming pool	1	2	3	9
D. Build a public water park/splash park/spray park	1	2	3	9
E. Build a new community recreation center	1	2	3	9
F. Develop new skate parks	1	2	3	9
G. Develop BMX parks	1	2	3	9
H. Develop new dog parks	1	2	3	9
I. Develop more mini-parks and neighborhood parks	1	2	3	9
J. Develop outdoor fitness courses	1	2	3	9
K. Acquire land to develop new recreation facilities	1	2	3	9
L. Develop new athletic fields (i.e., baseball, football, softball, soccer)	1	2	3	9
M. Develop new sports courts (i.e., basketball, tennis, volleyball)	1	2	3	9
N. Develop new disc golf course				
O. Develop more lighted athletic fields	1	2	3	9
P. Acquire land to develop athletic fields	1	2	3	9
Q. Develop new biking trails	1	2	3	9
R. Develop new walking/hiking trails	1	2	3	9
S. Develop new equestrian trails & facilities	1	2	3	9
T. Acquire land to develop new trails	1	2	3	9
U. Nature centers/interpretive centers	1	2	3	9
V. Acquire land to preserve open space	1	2	3	9
W. Teen programs	1	2	3	9
X. After school programs	1	2	3	9
Y. Pre-School programs	1	2	3	9
Z. Special Needs programs	1	2	3	9
AA. Senior programs	1	2	3	9
BB. Develop more sand volleyball courts	1	2	3	9
CC. Develop new racquetball courts	1	2	3	9

8. Which of the following funding mechanisms would your family be willing to support for additional facilities and activities?

	<u>Would Support</u>	<u>Would Not Support</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
A. Sales Tax Increase	1	2	9
B. Bond Issue	1	2	9
C. Special Fund Raising Campaign	1	2	9
D. User Fees	1	2	9
E. Property Tax Increase	1	2	9
F. Other _____	1	2	9

ABOUT YOU:

9. How many years have you lived in Prescott? Check the appropriate box.

_____	Less than 1	_____	5	_____	9	_____	13	_____	17	_____	21
_____	2	_____	6	_____	10	_____	14	_____	18	_____	22
_____	3	_____	7	_____	11	_____	15	_____	19	_____	23
_____	4	_____	8	_____	12	_____	16	_____	20	_____	Greater than 24

10. How many members of your household, including yourself, are between the ages of:

_____	5 and under	_____	15 to 19	_____	35 to 44	_____	65 and older
_____	6 to 10	_____	20 to 24	_____	45 to 54		
_____	11 to 14	_____	25 to 34	_____	55 to 64		

Appendix B - Comments

Question 6 Comments

Fifty-seven persons responded to the “other” portion of question six, listing a reason why they and their families do not use Prescott’s parks and facilities more frequently. Some of the answers written in the “other” space restated reasons already listed, but of those that did not reiterate a reason already stated, age or health was a frequent response (20 responses) as well as specific maintenance requests (18 responses).

Some of those maintenance-specific responses follow:

- Need more lights
- Need more senior and handicapped access to easy trails
- Trails don’t connect
- No swimming in lakes
- Some city parks are homeless campgrounds
- Benches needed on walking trails
- LaGuardia Bridge Lake water terrible quality

Eight responses cited “fees” as a reason, including:

- Parking fees
- Many programs / classes cost too much
- Park rental rates too high for small groups (1–20)

Seven persons stated a desired facility such as:

- Lack of tennis courts
- No aquatic facility
- No grass areas for dogs off leash

Some of the other responses included:

- Too many tourists
- Programs and facilities too sports-oriented
- Not sports people

Question 8 Comments

Not many respondents wrote a suggestion for another means of funding additional activities and facilities. Nineteen persons wrote in the “other” space, but less than half of those answers were funding ideas. Five persons said the city should use already-allocated funding, and seven comments dealt with the idea of user fees. Some people specified that they would only support user fees for certain programs, classes, parking, etc., or that they would only support a low user fee.

Three respondents suggested using grants, gifts, and donations for additional funding. Other suggestions were:

- Earmark money from cell towers on city prop. for parks; earmark money from rental/bed taxes to parks
- City lottery
- Increase impact fees to the level recommended on impact fee study
- Use mini-risk prisoners to maintain city parks/facilities. Other counties and cities in AZ use them for all parks, trails, etc.

Other Comments

While there was not a space for other comments, many people wrote comments in the margins of their surveys or attached a note with comments. Some of those comments follow:

- we need more multi-purpose rooms, park benches, picnic sites, and picnic tables
- definitely need more dog parks
- please make a place where we can do lawn bowling
- Do not use city money to attract, subsidize a minor league baseball team!
- Parks and rec needs to expand its vision of community needs to include arts education and events on a regular basis. The sports box is much too small, and sports facilities serve a very limited group at high cost in capital and maintenance. Arts programs and events bring more tourism dollars and build community.
- Need more park benches at courthouse. Concession stands are nasty. We have enough disc golf courses.
- lack of good weight room at new senior center
- The new boat ramp at Watson is too short
- Need more dog park areas on south side of town. I love the parks and trails here and use them as often as I can. Day festivals in park with nice music and food are great. Would like to see more jazz/new age outdoor concerts
- Keep open space in Prescott. Want more hiking trails and biking trails. Want more neighborhood parks and playground equipment. Outdoors is a very important quality living in Prescott.
- We are mostly interested in seeing the hiking areas well maintained with hours that allow us to hike after work. The parking areas often close too early
- Install new clay surface on all softball fields, especially on pioneer park and heritage park fields
- Need completed trails along Granite Creek
- While I do support user fees, is it possible to have a "free grace" day 1X a week for those who cannot pay? (Such as free wed. parking at Watson Lake --similar to the National Forest?)
- We need an ice rink
- 1) Prescott needs bigger parks (like the size of Granite Creek Park) in shaded areas of town, South Prescott. More open space and trails in the forest! 2) I'd love to see a dog park in south Prescott 3) how about a place where kids can air soft or play paintball 4) Obviously there is a safety concern at Granite Creek Park; I won't let my kids use the bathroom alone 5) The skate park needs an attendant; drugs & alcohol are a problem there
- No mention of swimming. Build an indoor and outdoor swimming facility
- Indoor and Outdoor pool!
- Acquire land for open space, not to develop. Lots of dogs here. Develop programs for low income seniors
- There is a need for senior citizens in the outlying areas of the city to have closer activity centers. The downtown adult center is too far away for those living in the western and northern parts of Prescott
- Greenway trails unsafe. Granite Park big drugs problem. Trails need to be better marked
- Newer residents need info
- We are concerned about the "homeless" domination at Granite Creek Park
- Granite Creek Park is very unsafe
- New adult center too far to travel; lack of public swim pool
- we need more smaller neighborhood parks (1.5-2 acres); urban bike trail system connecting parks; lake to swim in with kids- Goldwater would be a good choice

- we need accessible open space! Also, team up with the farmer's market to provide a permanent venue for local farmers, artisans, and producers. We need to attract people to the parks with these types of events. Purchase large tracts of land within the city for multi-use parks, open space, interpretive centers, etc. Reclaim our parks from the drifters and drunks that currently make them unappealing.
- need more basketball and volleyball courts
- need a dog park on the south side
- Prescott needs "ecotourism" - litter education conservation programs - environmental and interpretation programs - wildlife and native species awareness. More trails and open space - neighborhood parks
- Need an auditorium for music groups and shows. Also, parks equipped for music concerts
- City should prioritize building public sidewalks. Taylor Hicks school yard has an adjacent ball field that could be developed. Need more trails and sidewalks
- need multi-use trails from various neighborhoods to downtown
- kids need more free athletic fields, tennis courts, basketball
- We thoroughly enjoy the trails--some of them are not well-marked but we haven't been lost yet
- Our facilities are not taken advantage of. For example: Goldwater and Watson and Willow Lake are well developed and need "people" participation
- need more multi-purpose rooms, picnic sites, ramadas, and park benches. The skate park is rowdy-no supervision
- need more off-street, non-motorized trails-better connected. Could also use more small, neighborhood-based parks (play structures and small open areas). More public art!! More preserved open spaces. I honestly have not heard about classes offered; I would like to know more!
- Prescott lakes need more development, especially Watson. Dock needs boat bumpers and more mooring cleats. More picnic facilities needed in area of dock. Beaches near dock need improvement
- I am a full time sailor and many of my friends from other cities in AZ would like to come sail here, but lakes are not supportive