

NOTICE

A meeting of the City of Evansville Park and Recreation Board will be held on the date and time stated below. Notice is further given that members of the City Council and Historic Preservation Commission may be in attendance. Requests for persons with disabilities who need assistance to participate in this meeting should be made by calling City Hall at (608)-882-2266 with as much notice as possible.

City of Evansville Park and Recreation Board
Regular Meeting
City Hall, 31 S Madison St., Evansville, WI 53536
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 6:00 pm

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Motion to Approve Agenda
4. Motion to Waive the Reading of the Minutes from December 16, 2025 meeting and Approve them as Printed
5. Civility Reminder
6. Citizen Appearances
7. New Business
 - A. Discussion on 2026 City Youth Baseball Leagues
8. Park's Report
 - A. General Park Updates
 - B. Adopt-A-Park Updates
9. Old Business
 - A. Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan Update
10. Upcoming Meetings
 - A. Tuesday, February 17, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.
 - B. 2026: March 17, April 21 @ 6:30 p.m. (conflict with Common Council Re-organization), May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15
11. Adjourn

--Matt Poock, Chair of Park & Recreation Board

City of Evansville **Park and Recreation Board**
Regular Meeting
City Hall, 31 S Madison St., Evansville, WI 53536
Tuesday, December 16, 2025 6:00 pm

MINUTES

1. Call to Order: Pooock called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call:

Members	Present/Absent	Others Present
Alderperson Erika Stuart	P	Scott Kriebs, Municipal Services Director
Sue Merritt	P	Ray Anderson, Parks' Custodian
Lyman Fuson	P	
Chad Sigl (arrived 6:04 p.m)	P	
Chair, Matt Pooock	P	
Kris Evans	P	
Sam Wallace	P	

3. Motion to Approve Agenda by Merritt, seconded by Fuson. Motion passed 7-0.

4. Motion to Waive the Reading of the Minutes from November 18, 2025 meeting and Approve them as Printed by Sigl, seconded by Merritt. Motion passed 7-0.

5. Civility Reminder: Pooock issued a reminder to be respectful of others.

6. Citizen Appearances: None

7. New Business: None

8. Park's Report: Anderson hasn't closed the park completely for the winter. There has been some ice fisherman out on the ice.

A. Adopt-A-Park Updates: Anderson reported that one sign had been missed in putting the signs away for the winter, but it will be grabbed tomorrow.

B. Aquatic Center Updates: The roof was replaced right before Thanksgiving.

C. Discussion on Winter Park Closure of Leonard Leota Park: Evans will be continuing to monitor the ice depth to open the ice skating.

9. Old Business

A. Park and Outdoor Recreation Plan Update: Survey has closed and will be waiting for the results.

10. Upcoming Meetings

A. Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

B. 2026: January 20, February 17, March 17, April 21 (conflict with Common Council Re-organization), May 19, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15

11. Adjourn: Pooock adjourned the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Year	Coach Pitch (6-9y/o)	T-Ball (4-6y/o)	Program Total
2025	28	64	92
2024	59	64	123
2023	66	77	143
2022	69	82	151
2021	86	63	149
2020	0	0	0
2019	109	59	168
2018	106	90	196

3 Teams Coach Pitch, 5 Teams T-Ball

6 Teams each Coach Pitch, T-Ball

CANCELLED DUE TO COVID

City of Evansville – Survey Analysis

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Background

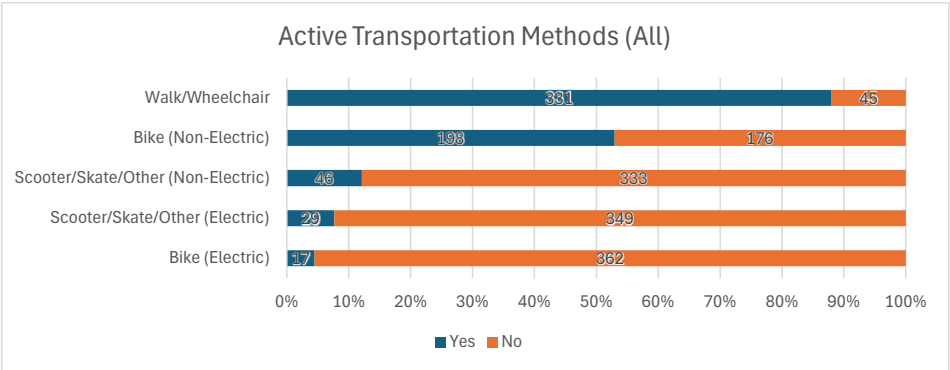
As part of the **Parks and Active Transportation Plan**, the City of Evansville conducted a public survey from 30 September to 16 November 2025. The survey gathered a total of 379 submissions over the response period. City staff distributed the survey via signage positioned in parks and City property, social media, City Hall postings, City website postings, public meetings and forums, and newspaper press releases.

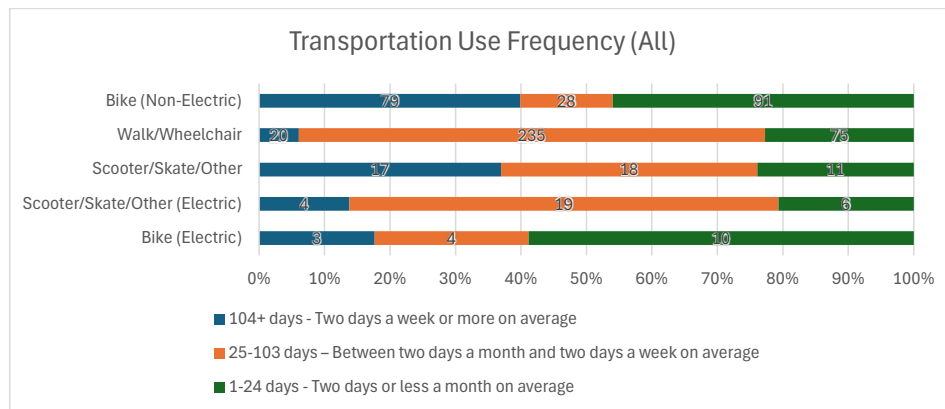
The survey asked respondents about their transportation methods, including transportation mode, use frequency, and objectives. It gathered concerns about walking and bicycling which may discourage those activities. Additionally, the survey asked respondents about electric-assisted devices, such as electric bikes and scooters, to help gauge community interest in them and understand decisions in their use.

The parks section of the survey asked respondents about the parks they use, the frequency with which they visit the parks, and the activities in which they participate. Furthermore, the survey asked about satisfaction with the parks and desires for the future of Evansville’s park system.

Survey Summary

Active Transportation Summary

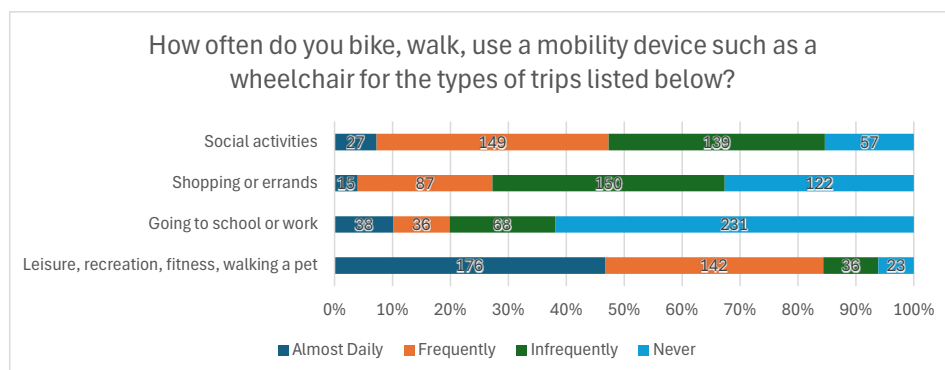




Survey responses indicate that the Evansville community regularly participates in active transportation methods. Most respondents (88%) walk or wheelchair a few blocks or more, with 62% reporting doing so at least two days a week. Over half (53%) of respondents reported riding a bicycle; most riders (46%) reported using their bicycles twice per month or more, and 7% of riders report using their bicycle at least twice per week. Only 4% of respondents answered that they have an electric bike; of those people, 59% responded that they ride it at least twice a month, while 24% reported riding at least twice per week.

While only 12% of respondents reported using non-electric scooters, skateboards, or roller skates, those who are riders use their devices frequently; most users (39%) reported riding twice a week or more. This observation is even more pronounced in the smaller number (8%) of respondents who reported riding electric scooters, skateboards, and e-mobility devices; 66% of those people reported using their devices at least twice per week.

Responses indicate that Evansville residents are active. Eighty-five percent of respondents report using active transportation methods for leisure, recreation, fitness, or walking a pet frequently or almost daily;



while only 6% of respondents reported never doing so. Furthermore, most respondents (85%) in

Evansville use active transportation for social activities at some point, and 47% of respondents do so frequently or almost daily. However, a majority of respondents do NOT often use these methods for necessary trips such as shopping and commuting. Active modes of transportation were reported as “infrequent” or “never” by 73% of respondents for errands or shopping, and by 80% of respondents for going to school or work.

When asked about their concerns with walking or using a mobility device, the most frequently reported response (34%) was regarding the lack of lighting in the early or late hours. The condition of sidewalks and trails, and the lack of connections between them, gathered similar response frequencies (34% and 32%, respectively). (Although 30% of respondents reported they did not have any concerns, over 25% of those who selected that response proceeded to identify additional concerns; an adjusted response rate is approximately 22% that did not have additional concerns.)

Many respondents (32%, adjusted) indicated they did not have any concerns with biking. Concerns about biking included not feeling safe near fast-moving traffic (30%), not enough bike paths/routes (28%), poor pavement conditions (27%), and a lack of connection between bike paths/routes (26%).

Parks Survey Summary

The greatest number of respondents (37%) indicated that Evansville’s park and recreation programs are of very high importance to them, and 27% responded that they were of high importance. Another 26% rated them as being moderately important, and only 11% of respondents indicated they were of low or very low importance. Additionally, 78% of respondents use the parks at least monthly, and 24% do so nearly every day.

The most popular activity at the parks is walking – 95% of respondents claimed to have walked in the parks in the past year. The next most popular activities were swimming at the Aquatic Center (59%), community events (55%), and dog walking (50%). Bicycling (45%), using playground equipment (40%) and using the splash pad (37%) were also among widely popular activities.

Based on this survey, Leonard Leota Park is the most visited park in Evansville by a large margin – 96% of respondents indicated they had visited it in the last year. The second and third most popular parks are Larson Acres Park (70%) and the Evansville Aquatic Center (67%).

While Evansville’s parks are popular, few respondents rated their facilities and programs as “excellent.” Only Evansville Aquatic Center received a majority “excellent” rating. Larson Acres Park, Veteran’s Memorial Spraypad, and Leonard Leota Park gathered a majority “good” rating, and all others were rated as “average.” Additionally, Evansville Dog Park, Franklin Park, and Brzenzinski Park gathered a larger amount of “below average” and “poor” votes than other parks.

Respondents rated Evansville Parks as “good” overall, as well as on appearance and safety. However, both cleanliness and maintenance were rated as “average” Relatively few respondents rated the overall park system as “below average” or “poor” on any specific category.

The survey asked respondents about desires for future park programming. Four of the top five answers were event-based activities, including park festivals (67%), music events (61%), “Art in the Park” events

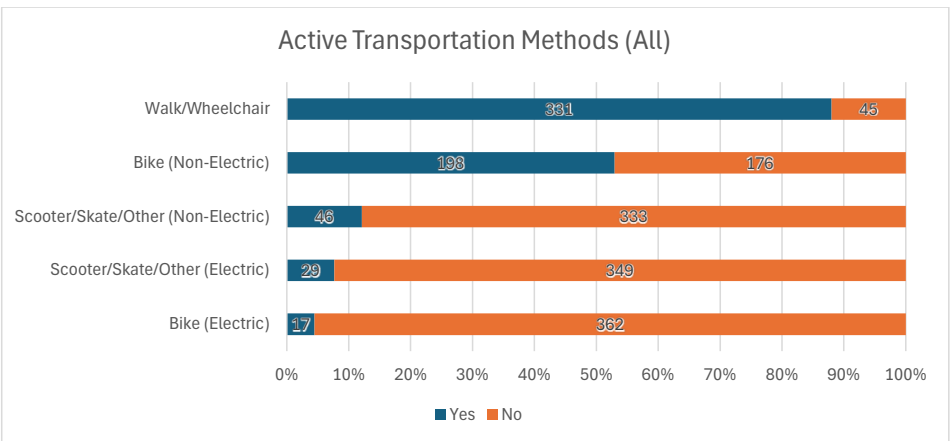
(41%), and fitness events (34%). Walking and biking paths were the second most requested addition (64%), while ice skating and canoeing/kayaking were also popular seasonal activities at 34% for both.

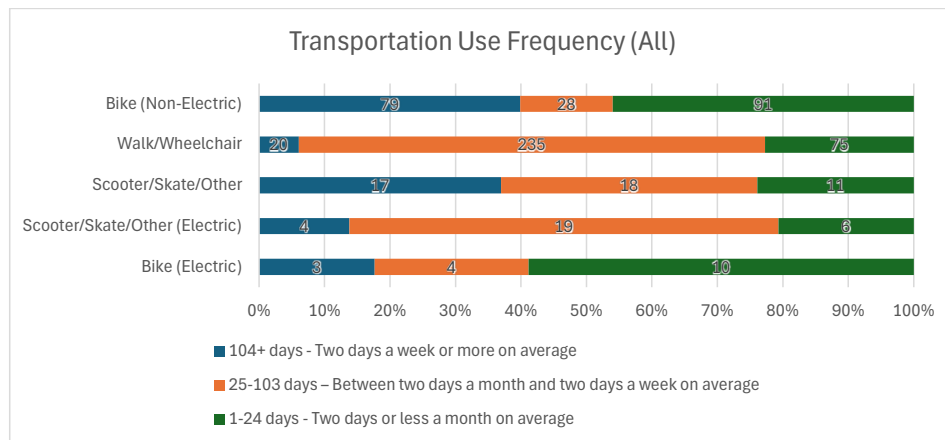
Full Survey Results

Transportation Methods

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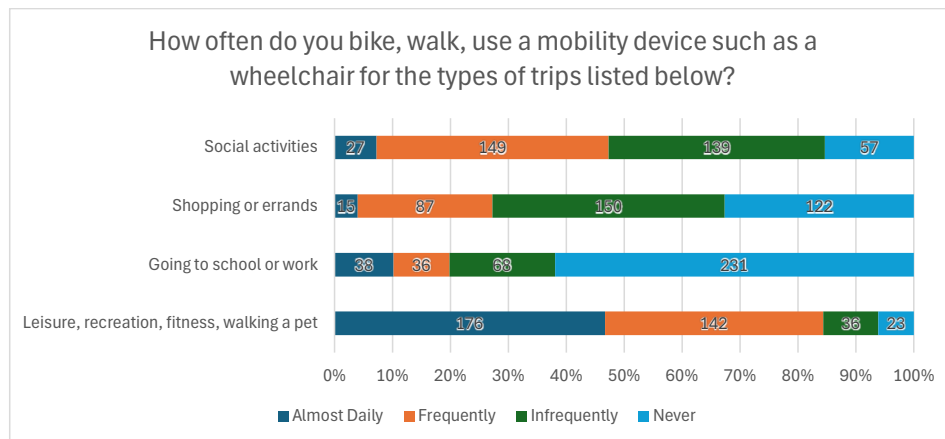
While only 12% of respondents reported using non-electric scooters, skateboards, or roller skates, those who are riders use their devices frequently; most users (39%) reported riding twice a week or more. This observation is even more pronounced in the smaller number (8%) of respondents who reported riding electric scooters, skateboards, and e-mobility devices; 66% of those people reported using their devices at least twice per week.





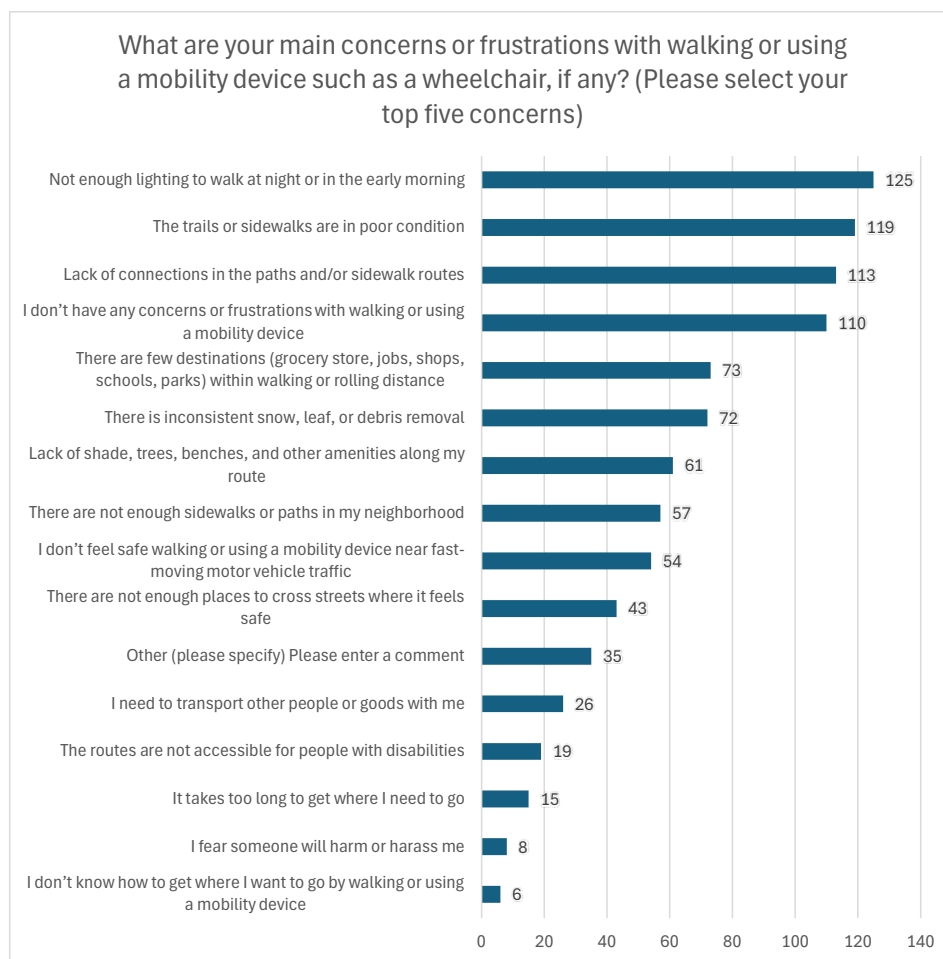
Transportation Use

Responses indicate that Evansville residents are active. Eighty-five percent of respondents report using active transportation methods for leisure, recreation, fitness, or walking a pet frequently or almost daily; while only 6% of respondents reported never doing so. Furthermore, most respondents (85%) in Evansville use active transportation for social activities at some point, and 47% of respondents do so frequently or almost daily. However, a majority of respondents do NOT often use these methods for necessary trips such as shopping and commuting. Active modes of transportation were reported as “infrequent” or “never” by 73% of respondents for errands or shopping, and by 80% of respondents for going to school or work.



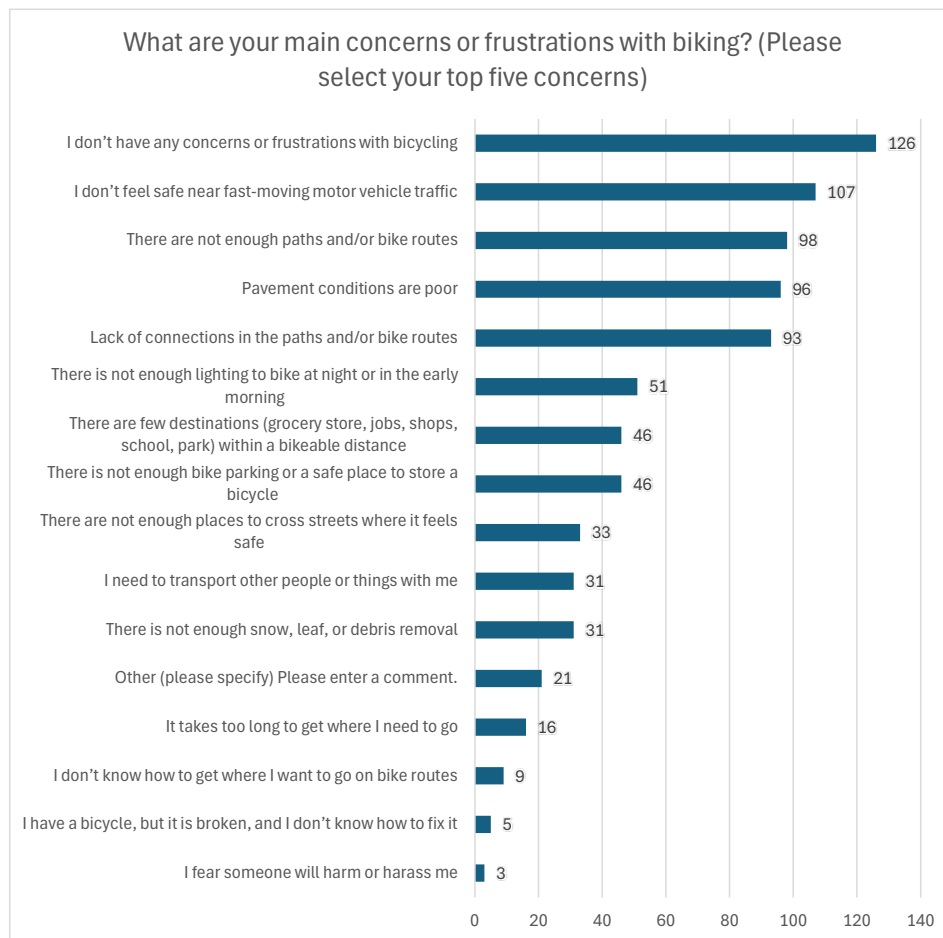
Walking Concerns

When asked about their concerns with walking or using a mobility device, the most frequently reported response (34%) was regarding the lack of lighting in the early or late hours. The condition of sidewalks and trails, and the lack of connections between them, gathered similar response frequencies (32% and 31%, respectively). (Although 30% of respondents reported they did not have any concerns, over 25% of those who selected that response proceeded to identify additional concerns; an adjusted response rate is approximately 22% that did not have additional concerns.)



Biking Concerns

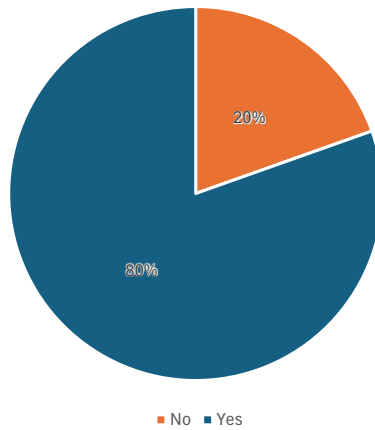
Many respondents (32%, adjusted) indicated they did not have any concerns with biking. Concerns about biking included not feeling safe near fast-moving traffic (30%), not enough bike paths/routes (28%), poor pavement conditions (27%), and a lack of connection between bike paths/routes (26%).



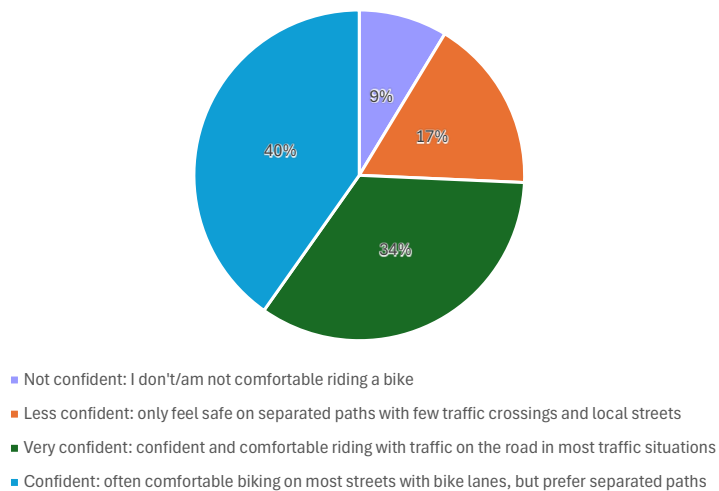
Bicycle Use

Most respondents (80%) own a bike, and 40% are confident riding in most streets with bike lanes but they prefer separated bike paths. About a third of residents rated themselves as very confident and comfortable riding in most traffic conditions.

Do you own a bicycle?



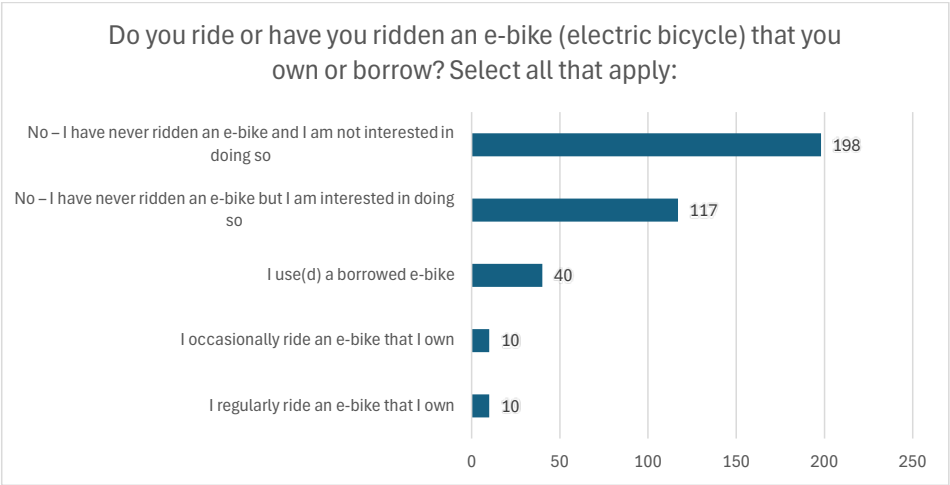
How would you describe your bicycling comfort level?

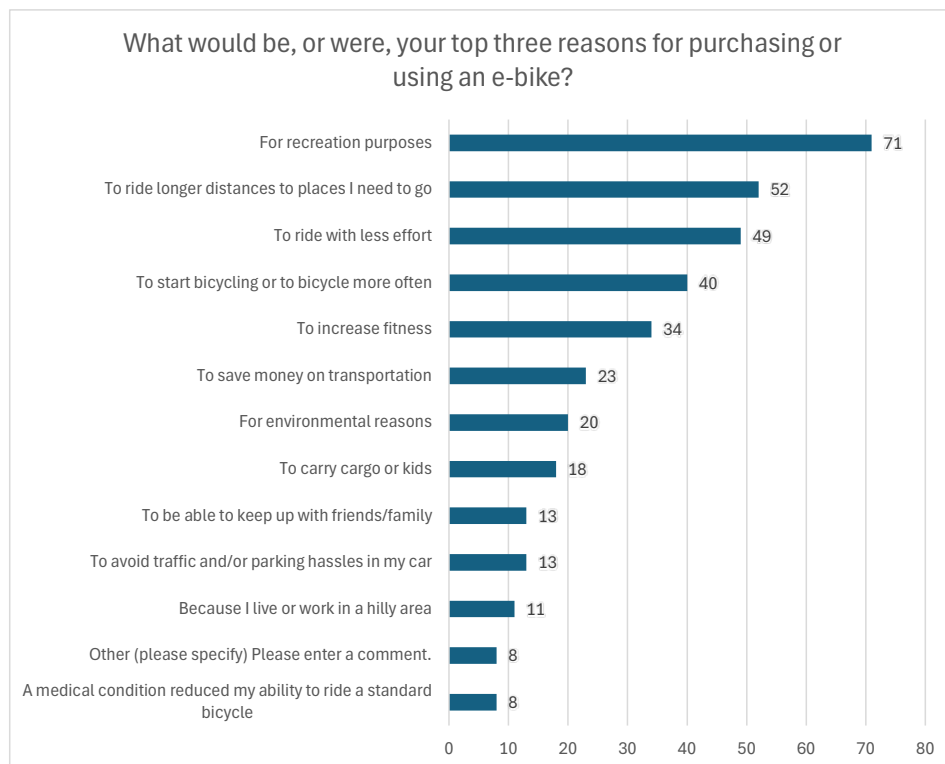
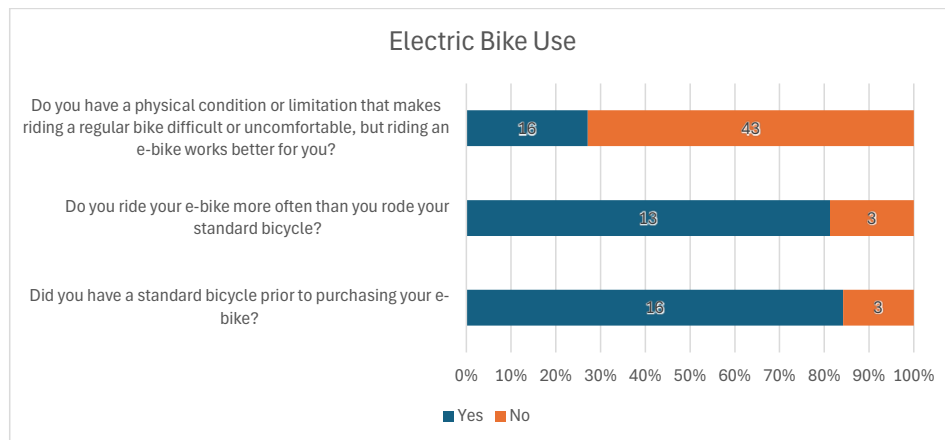


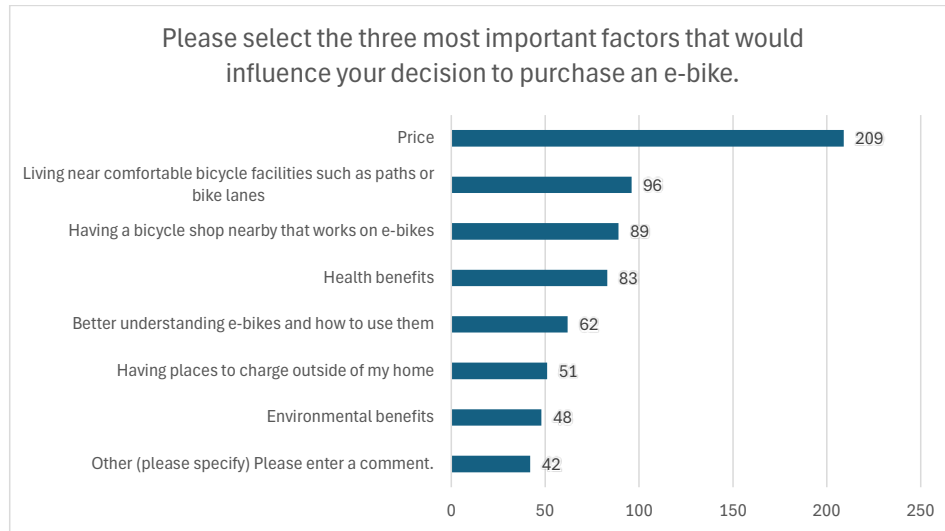
Electric Bicycle Use

Only 6% of respondents own an e-bike, while 11% have used one in the past, and 31% are interested in trying an e-bike. Most respondents (53%) have not ridden an e-bike and are not interested in doing so. Of those 20 respondents who reported owning e-bikes, most (84%) owned a standard bike prior to that purchase, and 81% say they use their e-bike more often than they had used their standard bike. A sizable minority (27%) of e-bike owners have a condition that makes e-bikes easier to ride than non-assisted bicycles.

Respondents indicated that the greatest reasons for purchasing an e-bike are for recreation (47%), to ride longer distances (34%), and to ride with less effort (32%). The factors that would have the greatest influence on their purchase decision is price (72%), living near comfortable bicycle facilities like bike lanes and paths (33%), and for health benefits (29%).



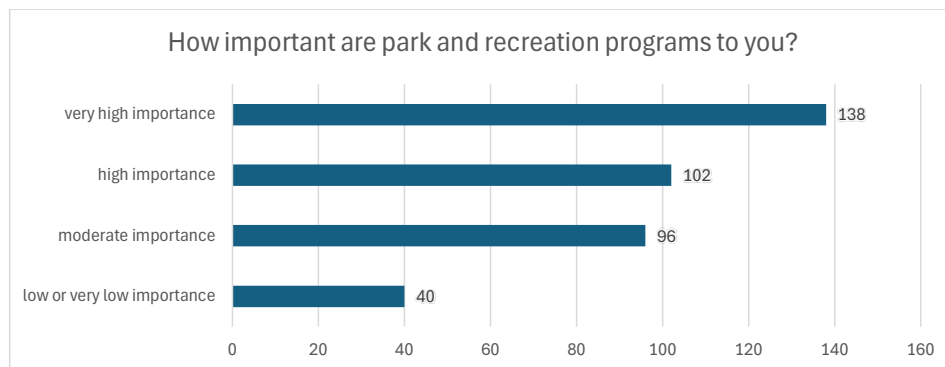


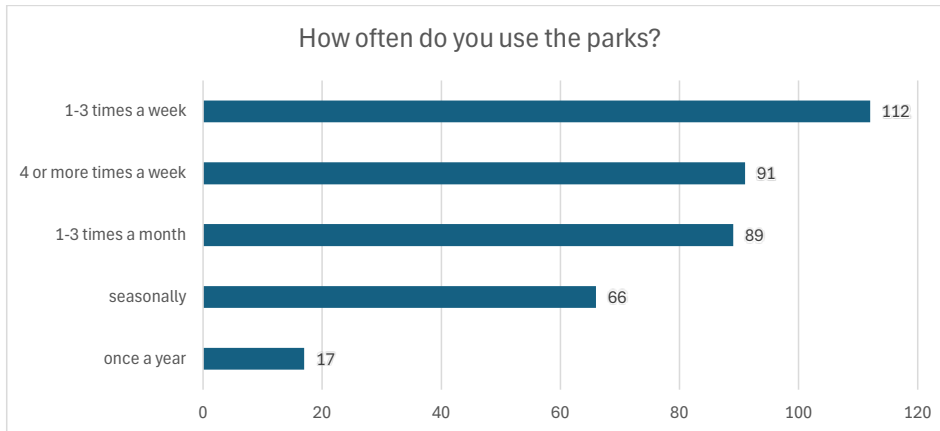


Park Use

The greatest number of respondents (37%) indicated that Evansville's park and recreation programs are of *very high* importance to them, and 27% responded that they were of *high* importance. Another 26% rated them as being moderately important, and only 11% of respondents indicated they were of *low or very low* importance. Additionally, 78% of respondents use the parks at least monthly, and 24% do so nearly every day.

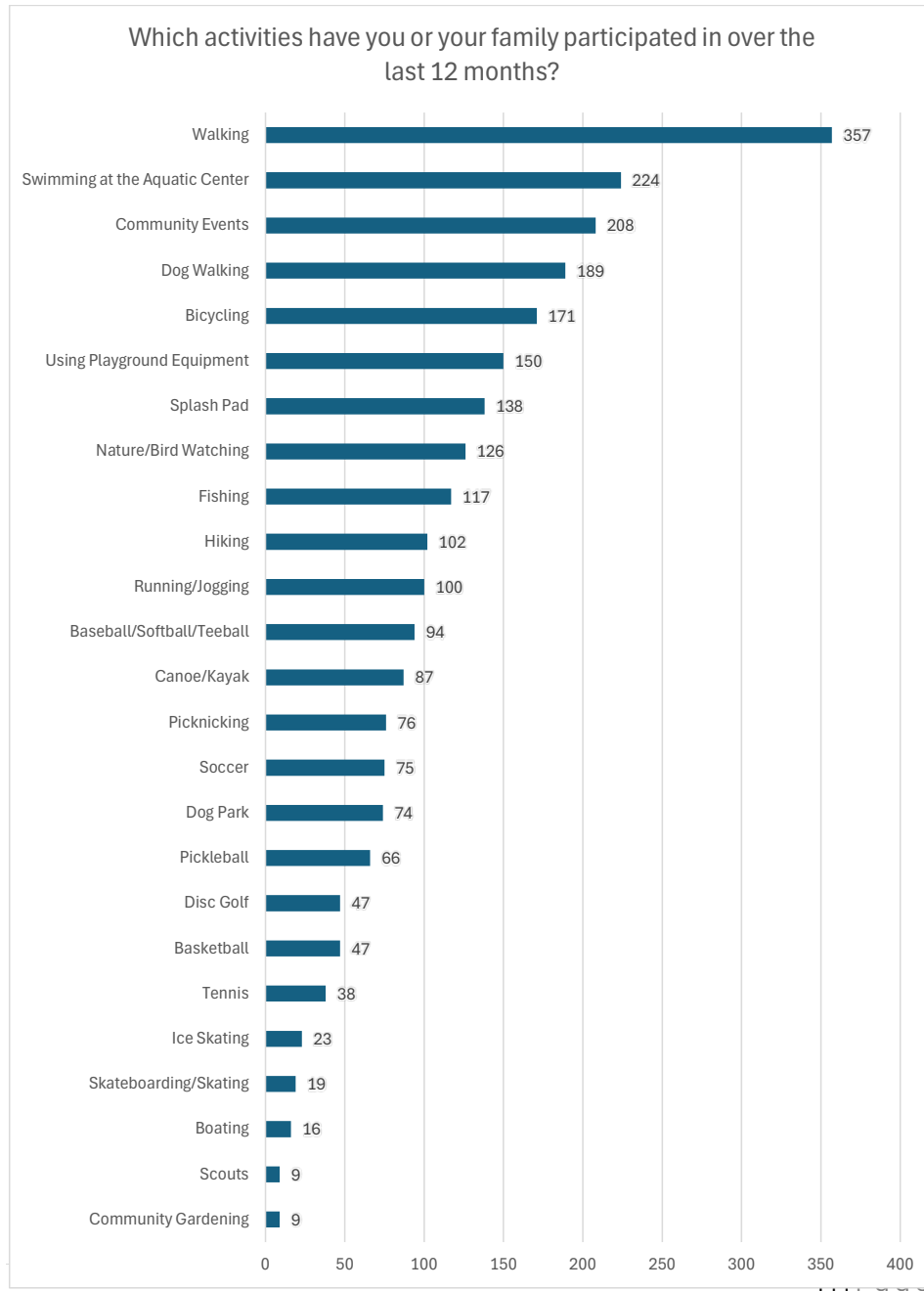
Commented [JV1]: Based on the graph these were reversed - I changed the text to match the graph.

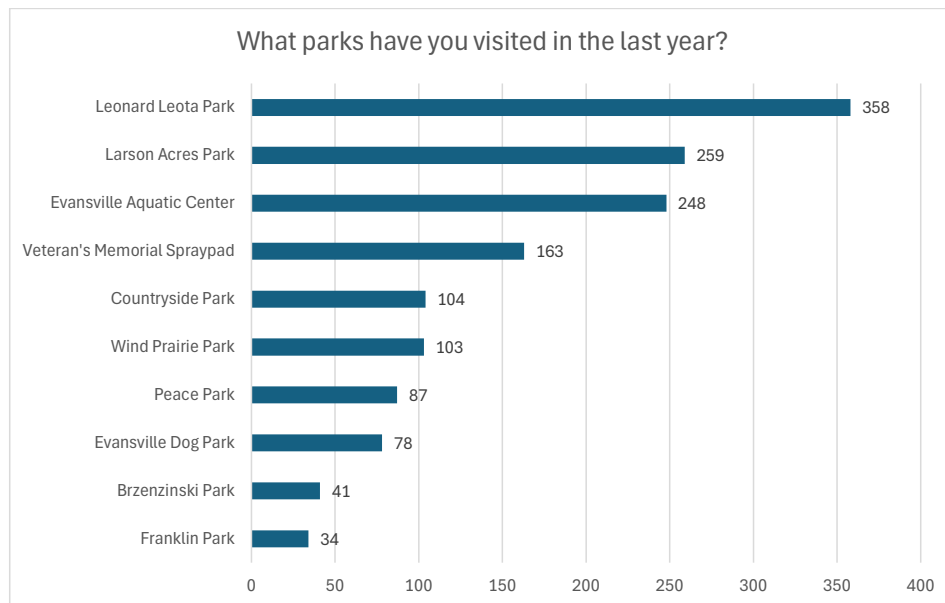




The most popular activity at the parks is walking – 95% of respondents claimed to have walked in the parks in the past year. The next most popular activities were swimming at the Aquatic Center (59%), community events (55%), and dog walking (50%). Bicycling (45%), using playground equipment (40%) and using the splash pad (37%) were also among widely popular activities.

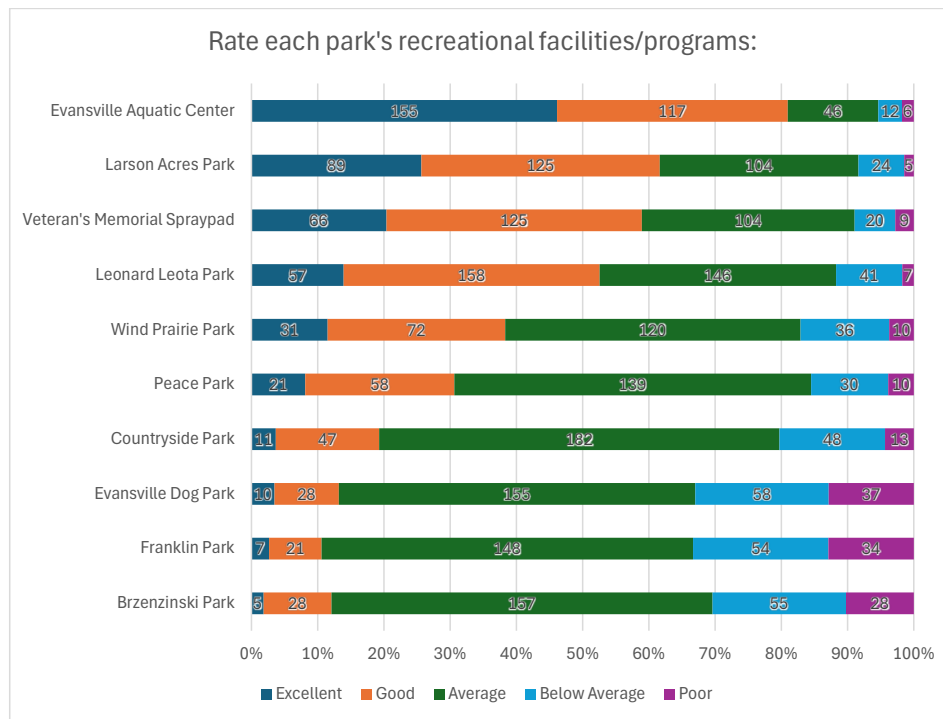
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Park Quality (Individual Parks)

While Evansville's parks are popular, few respondents rated their facilities and programs as "excellent." Only Evansville Aquatic Center received a majority "excellent" rating. Larson Acres Park, Veteran's Memorial Spraypad, and Leonard Leota Park gathered a majority "good" rating, and all others were rated as "average." Additionally, Evansville Dog Park, Franklin Park, and Brzenzinski Park gathered a larger amount of "below average" and "poor" votes than other parks.



Open Response: Please enter any additional comments or concerns about the quality of individual parks in the box below.

The text responses to this question were reviewed by CARPC staff. The following summary was generated by Chat GPT and edited to more accurately reflect the survey responses.

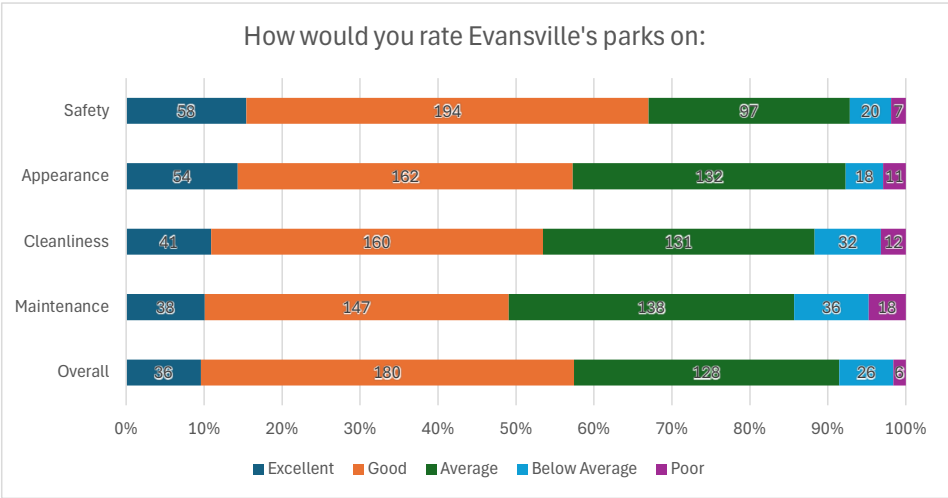
Survey respondents expressed strong appreciation for Evansville's parks and recognize their importance to community life, particularly flagship spaces such as Lake Leota and natural areas like Wind Prairie Park. At the same time, the most consistent message is **concern about the condition, safety, and upkeep of existing facilities**. Many residents feel that basic maintenance has not kept pace with community expectations.

Playgrounds, bathrooms, athletic fields, the dog park, and the Lake Leota skatepark were cited most frequently as needing attention. Comments emphasize outdated or damaged playground equipment, disliked sand surfacing, poorly maintained or poorly lit bathrooms, underutilized or locked ballfields, and

an aging skatepark that is viewed as unsafe. While opinions on overall spending vary, there is broad agreement that **reinvestment in current assets should be prioritized before adding new facilities**. Residents also highlighted the need for improved connectivity, accessibility, and communication. Requests include better trails and sidewalks, clearer signage and wayfinding, enforcement of park rules (particularly leash laws), and expanded or better-communicated programming. Overall, feedback reflects a desire for clearer priorities, visible improvements, and consistent maintenance to protect the long-term value of the park system.

Park Quality (Overall Park System)

A majority of respondents rated Evansville Parks as “good” or “excellent” overall and on most specific aspects. The park system’s highest scores are for safety and lowest for maintenance, though even on maintenance only 12% rated the system as “below average” or “poor”.



Open Response: Please enter any additional comments or concerns about the overall quality of Evansville parks in the box below.

The text responses to this question were reviewed by CARPC staff. The following summary was generated by Chat GPT and edited to more accurately reflect the survey responses.

Survey respondents generally value Evansville’s park system and recognize its positive impact on quality of life, particularly flagship parks such as Lake Leota, Larson Acres, and Wind Prairie. Many residents describe these parks as community assets and note that recent investments—especially at Larson Acres and trail improvements at Lake Leota—have been successful.

*Safety and usability concerns also emerged. Residents cited vandalism, poor lighting (particularly at Lake Leota after dark), off-leash dogs, uneven or unsafe surfaces, and the deteriorated skatepark as issues affecting comfort and safety. Many respondents expressed interest in better connectivity through walking and biking paths, improved signage and wayfinding, increased tree planting and shade, and expanded programming. Opinions on funding remain mixed, but there is broad agreement that **consistent maintenance, clearer priorities, and targeted reinvestment** would significantly improve overall park quality.*

Open Response: What do you love most about Evansville parks?



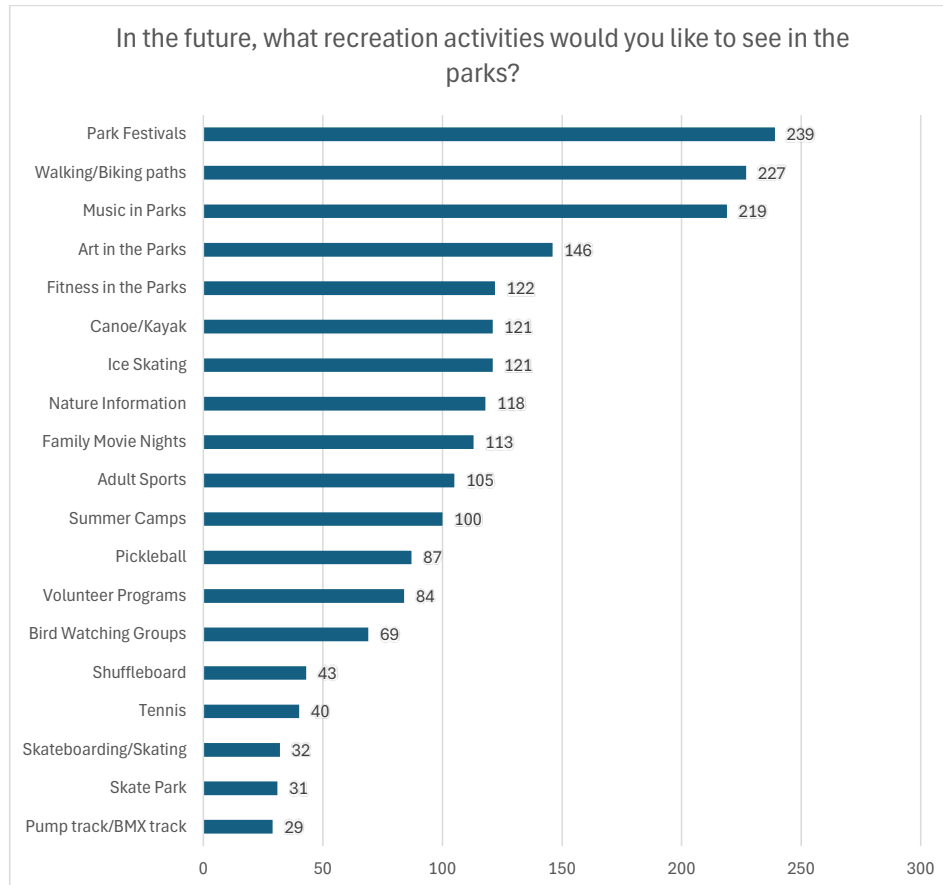
Survey respondents overwhelmingly expressed pride in Evansville's parks and emphasized their importance to daily life, community identity, and overall quality of life. Many residents described the park system as exceptional for a community of Evansville's size, with Lake Leota repeatedly identified as a signature destination and a defining feature of the city.

*The most frequently cited strengths are **natural beauty, accessibility, and variety**. Residents value mature trees, the lake and creek, wildlife, prairies, and scenic walking and biking paths that can be enjoyed year-round. Parks are appreciated for being well distributed across town, walkable from many homes, and offering diverse experiences—from quiet nature observation to active recreation, sports, and family play.*

Community use and shared experiences are also central to what residents value. Respondents highlighted festivals, fishing, disc golf, the aquatic center, playgrounds, and informal gatherings as key benefits. Many noted that parks are places where people of all ages connect with neighbors, relax, and spend time outdoors without needing to spend money. Even critical comments were often framed as a desire to protect and improve parks that residents already care deeply about.

Future Programming

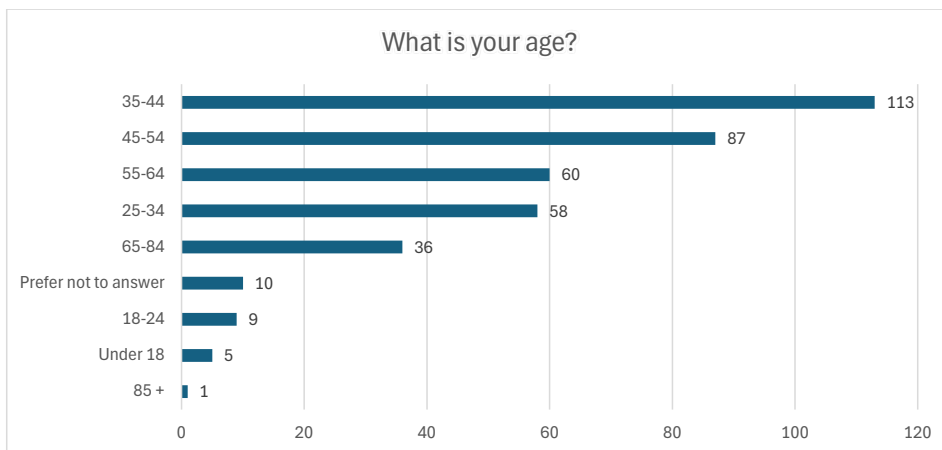
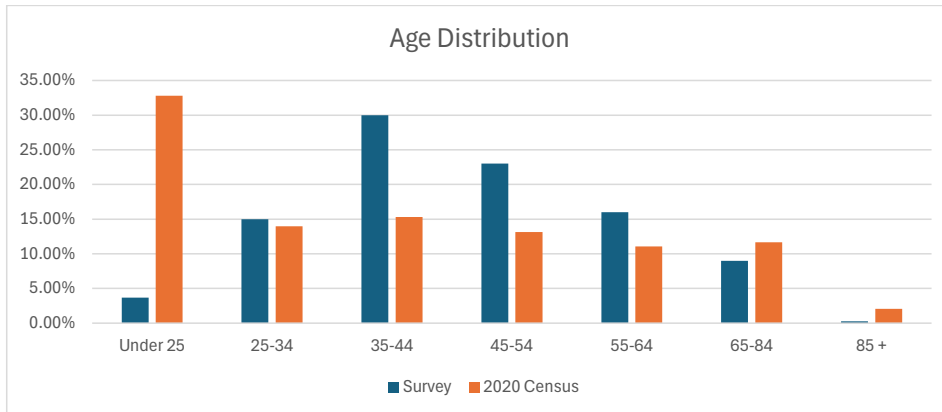
The survey asked respondents about desires for future park programming. Four of the top five answers were event-based activities, including park festivals (67%), music events (61%), “Art in the Park” events (41%), and fitness events (34%). Walking and biking paths were the second most requested addition (64%), while ice skating and canoeing/kayaking were also popular seasonal activities at 34% for both.



Demographics

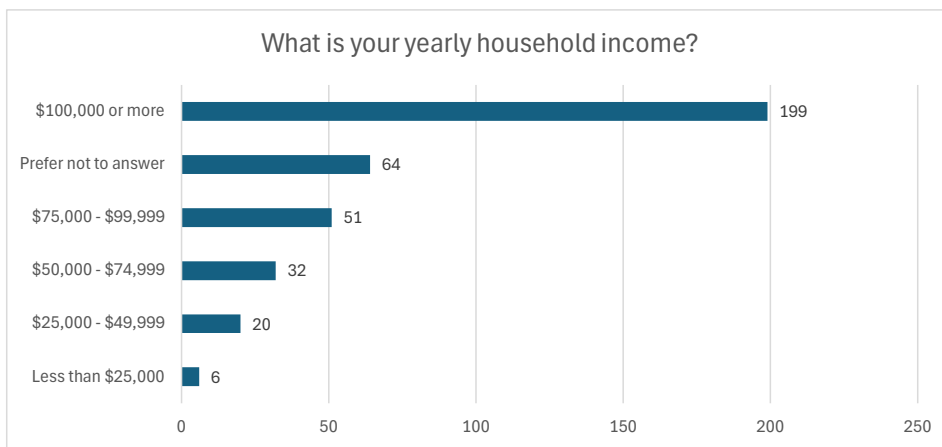
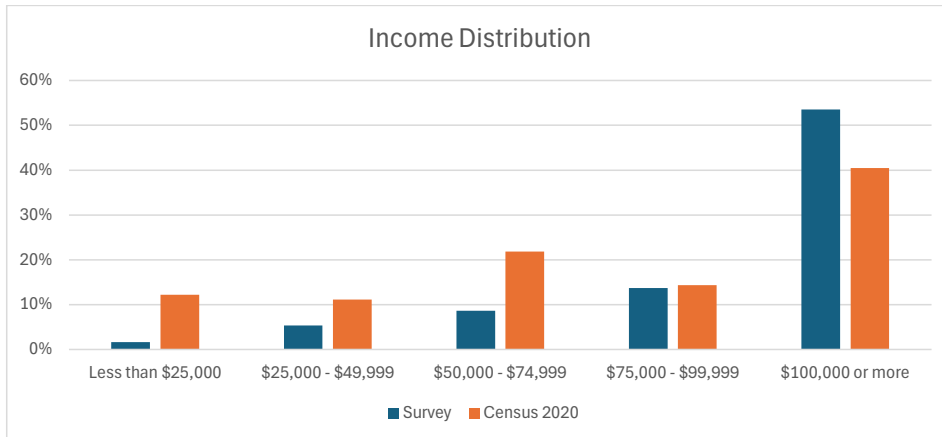
Age

The greatest number of respondents (30%) were in the 35 to 44 year-old age bracket, while the second and third most represented age brackets were 45 to 54 (23%) and 55 to 64 (16%). Respondents represented every age demographic; however, below age 25 and above age 65 were underrepresented, while ages between 35 and 64 were overrepresented. Ages 25 to 34 were only about one percent greater than 2020 Census proportions.



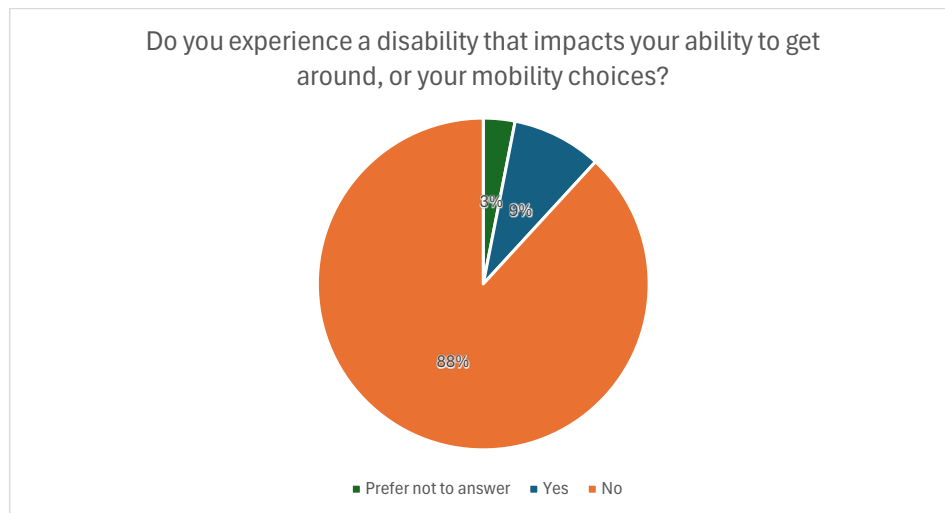
Income

The income profile of survey respondents is skewed higher than the 2020 Census data, reflecting the facts that the census data is 5 years out of date and the survey respondents include a disproportionate percentage of residents in their prime earning years (35-64).

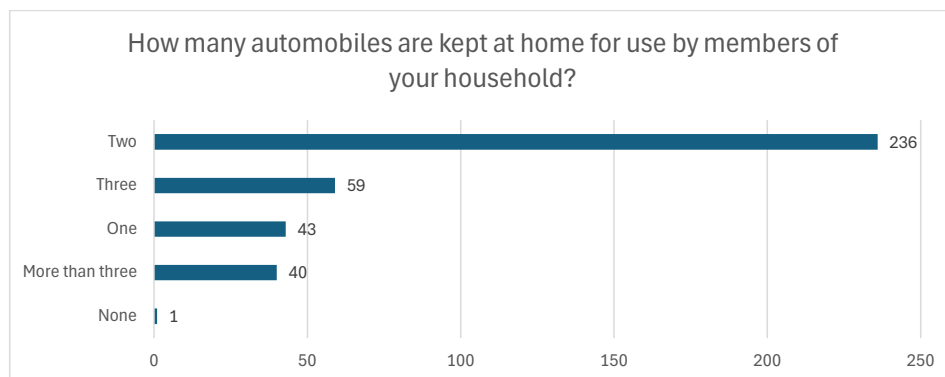


Transportation Demographics

Approximately 9% of respondents experience a disability that affects their mobility, and 3% declined to disclose their ability. Most respondents (88%) answered that they do not experience such a disability.



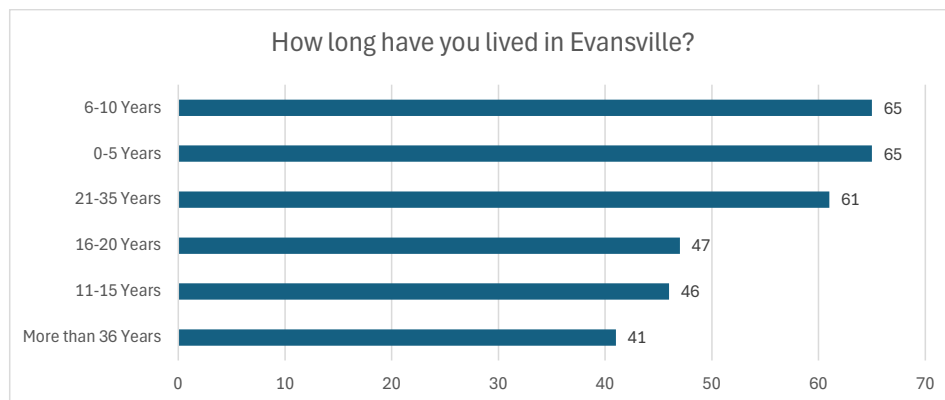
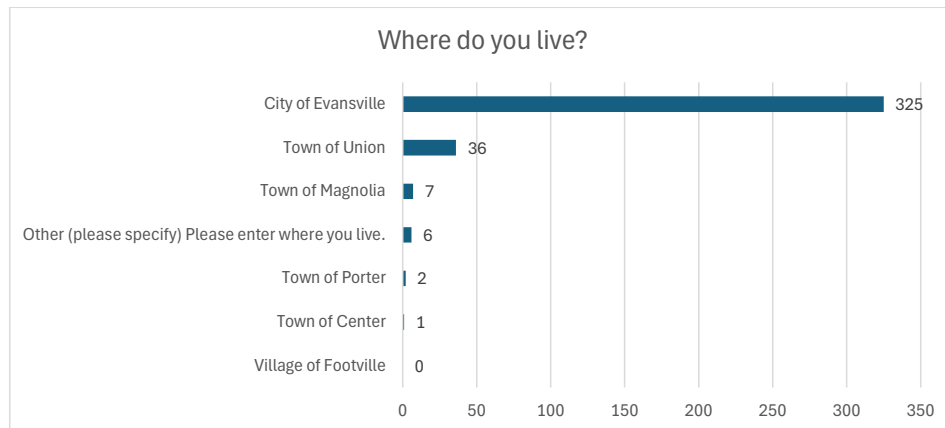
Most respondents (62%) had two cars available to their household, while 16% had three. Households with more than three cars or only one car each comprise 11% of respondents. Only one respondent indicated that their household did not have a car.



Location

Most respondents (86%) indicated that they live in Evansville, while another 10% live in the Town of Union. Fewer than 5% of respondents live in the Towns of Magnolia, Porter, Center, or elsewhere. Of those respondents who live in Evansville, 20% have resided there for less than five years, and another 20% of respondents have lived in Evansville for between 5-10 years. Another 19% of respondents have lived in Evansville for between 21-35 years, a fifteen-year period, while 14% of respondents lived in the

City for 11-15 years and another 14% between 16-20 years. Those who have lived in Evansville for over 36+ years had the smallest response rate of 13%.

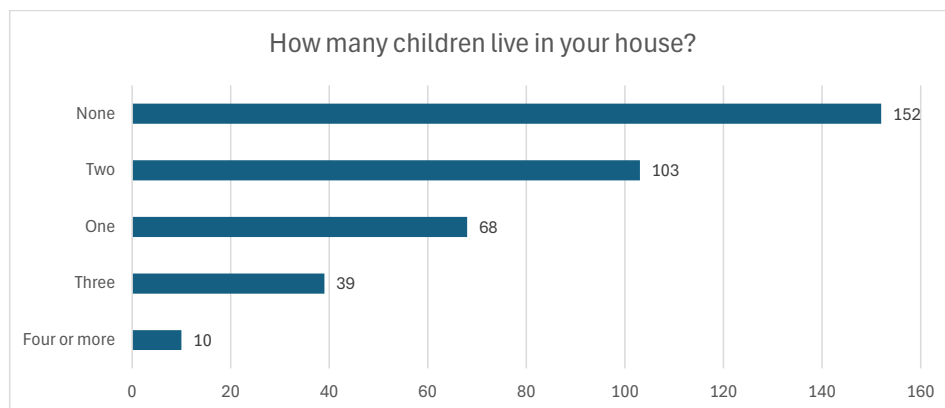
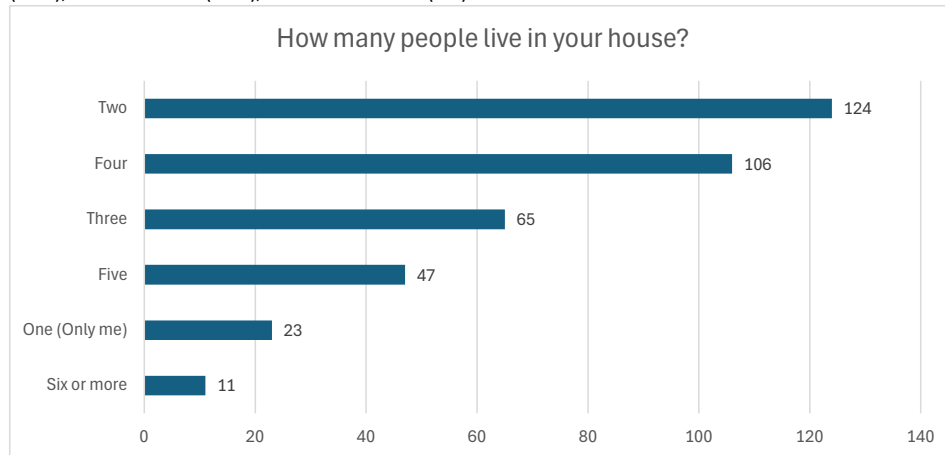


Household Characteristics

One-third of respondents indicated they have two people living in their household, and 28% have four people; 17% of respondents have three people, 13% have five people, and 3% have six or more people. Another 6% of respondents live alone.

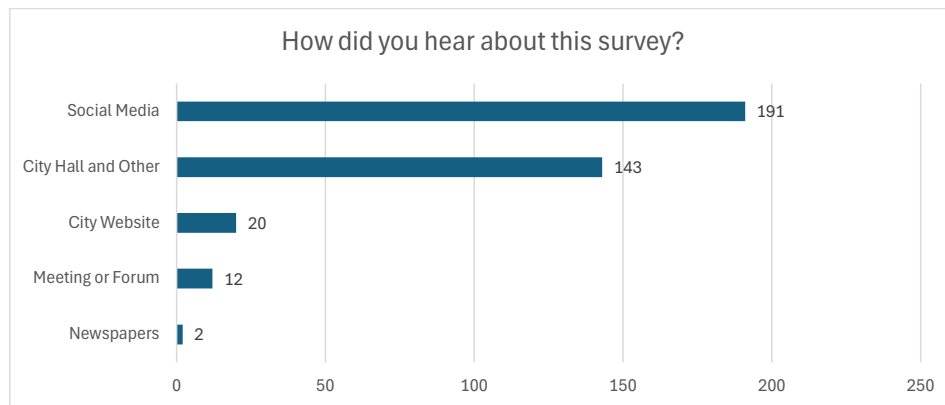
Most respondents (59%) have at least one child in their home. However, a large minority (41%) have no children at home. The second most common response was two children (28%), followed by one child

(18%), three children (10%), and four or more (3%).



Survey Distribution:

The majority of respondents (52%) heard about the survey via social media, and a large number from City Hall or other sources (39%). Relatively few respondents selected that they heard about the survey from the City website (5%), meetings or forums (3%), or newspapers (1%).



Final Thoughts

Open Response: Please enter any additional comments or concerns about transportation, parks, or recreation in the box below.

The text responses to this question were reviewed by CARPC staff. The following summary was generated by Chat GPT and edited to more accurately reflect the survey responses.

*In the closing comments, respondents largely focused on **practical, action-oriented improvements** rather than new major expansions. The most common requests emphasize building a safer, more connected community through **better walking/biking infrastructure**, along with stronger attention to **accessibility, maintenance, and safety**. Many residents want the city to prioritize fixing and completing existing routes (sidewalk gaps, uneven bricks, lighting, snow removal) and to ensure new developments meet bike/path commitments.*

*A second cluster of feedback centers on **better activation and management of existing park assets**: more programming (especially for adults and teens), stronger coordination for events and tournaments, and improved communications/leadership (calls for a full-time Parks & Rec/Recreation Director or more active committee). Lake Leota-specific ideas appear frequently—kayak launch/rentals, benches, winter access, fishing support, and reopening or repurposing the park store (snacks, games, party room, rentals). Several comments also reiterate priorities from earlier sections: skatepark renovation, sand-free playground surfacing, field improvements, and better dog park conditions.*

*Finally, respondents again show **mixed views on spending and taxes**. Some urge restraint and oppose further investment, while others explicitly support targeted spending—especially on maintenance, safety, accessibility, and trail connections—arguing that high use and tax levels warrant visible upkeep and service quality.*