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# City of Chandler

## Parks Needs Assessment Survey

### Executive Summary

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#### Overview

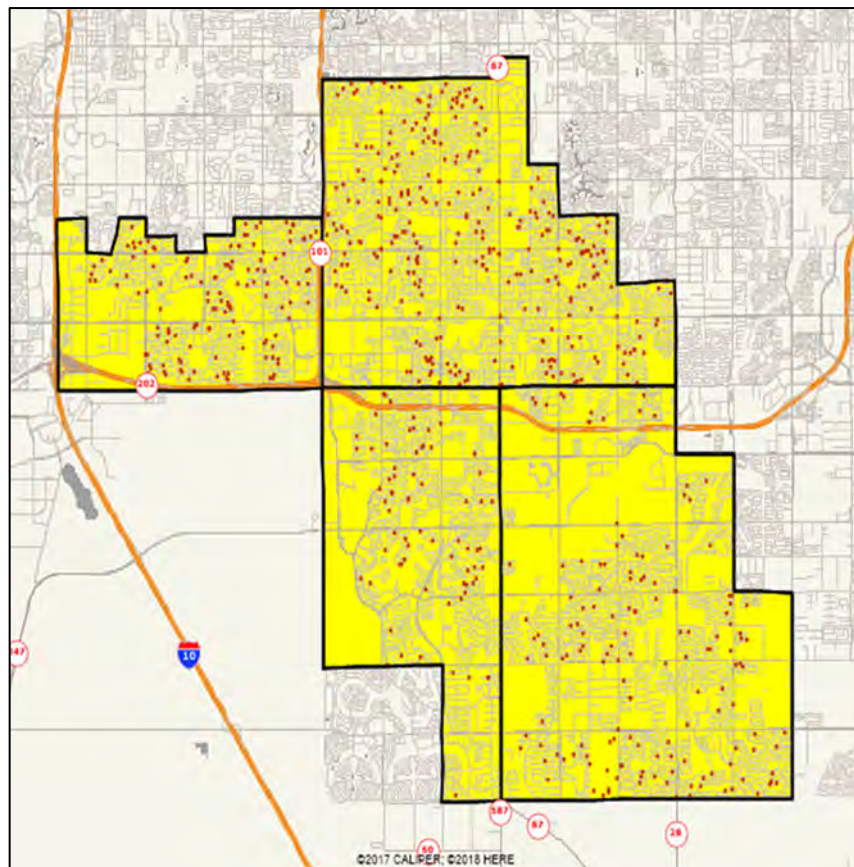
ETC Institute administered a parks and recreation needs assessment in the Spring of 2020 for the City of Chandler. This assessment was administered as part of the City's efforts to develop area parks, facilities, and programs. Information compiled from the assessment will provide key data to set a clear vision for the future. This survey will determine priorities for parks, recreation facilities, program offerings, and special event offerings in the City.

#### Methodology

ETC Institute mailed a survey packet to a random sample of households in Chandler. 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 online at [www.ChandlerParkSurvey.org](http://www.ChandlerParkSurvey.org).

Ten days after the surveys were mailed, ETC Institute sent emails to the households that received the survey to encourage participation. The emails contained a link to the online version of the survey to make it easy for residents to complete the survey. The map to the right shows the location of survey respondents.

To prevent people who were not residents of the City from participating, everyone who completed the survey online was required to enter their home address prior to submitting the survey. ETC



Institute then matched the addresses that were entered online with the addresses that were

originally selected for the random sample. If the address from a survey completed online did not match one of the addresses selected for the sample, the online survey was not counted.

The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 500 residents. The goal was exceeded with a total of 652 residents completing the survey. The overall results for the sample of 652 households have a precision of at least +/-3.8% at the 95% level of confidence.

This report contains the following:

- Charts showing the overall results of the survey (Section 1)
- Benchmarking analysis comparing the City's results to national results (Section 2)
- Priority Investment Rating (PIR) that identifies priorities for facilities and programs (Section 3)
- Tabular data showing the overall results for all questions on the survey (Section 4)
- A copy of the survey instrument (Section 5)

## **Major Findings**

### **City Parks, Trails, and Facilities**

**Overall Satisfaction.** Respondents were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the overall value they/their household receives from the City Parks and Trail System.

- 24% of respondents are very satisfied,
- 57% of respondents are satisfied,
- 17% of respondents are neutral,
- 1% of respondents are dissatisfied, and
- 1% of respondents are very dissatisfied.

**Level of Importance.** Ninety-five percent (95%) of respondents indicated it is very important (61%) and important (34%) for the quality of life in the City that there are high-quality park and trail experiences.

**Level of Satisfaction with the Physical Condition of Parks/Trails.** Respondent households were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the physical condition of the park and trail experiences offered by the City.

- 22% of respondents are very satisfied,
- 58% of respondents are satisfied,
- 15% of respondents are neutral,
- 4% of respondents are dissatisfied, and
- 1% of respondents are very dissatisfied.

**Use and Ratings of Parks/Facilities.** Eighty-eight percent (88%) of respondents indicated they or members of their household had used general park facilities and 49% of respondents used trails during the past 12 months. The type of facilities that rated the highest, based on the sum of

“excellent” and “good” responses among residents *who had an opinion*, were: general parks (85%) and trails (85%).

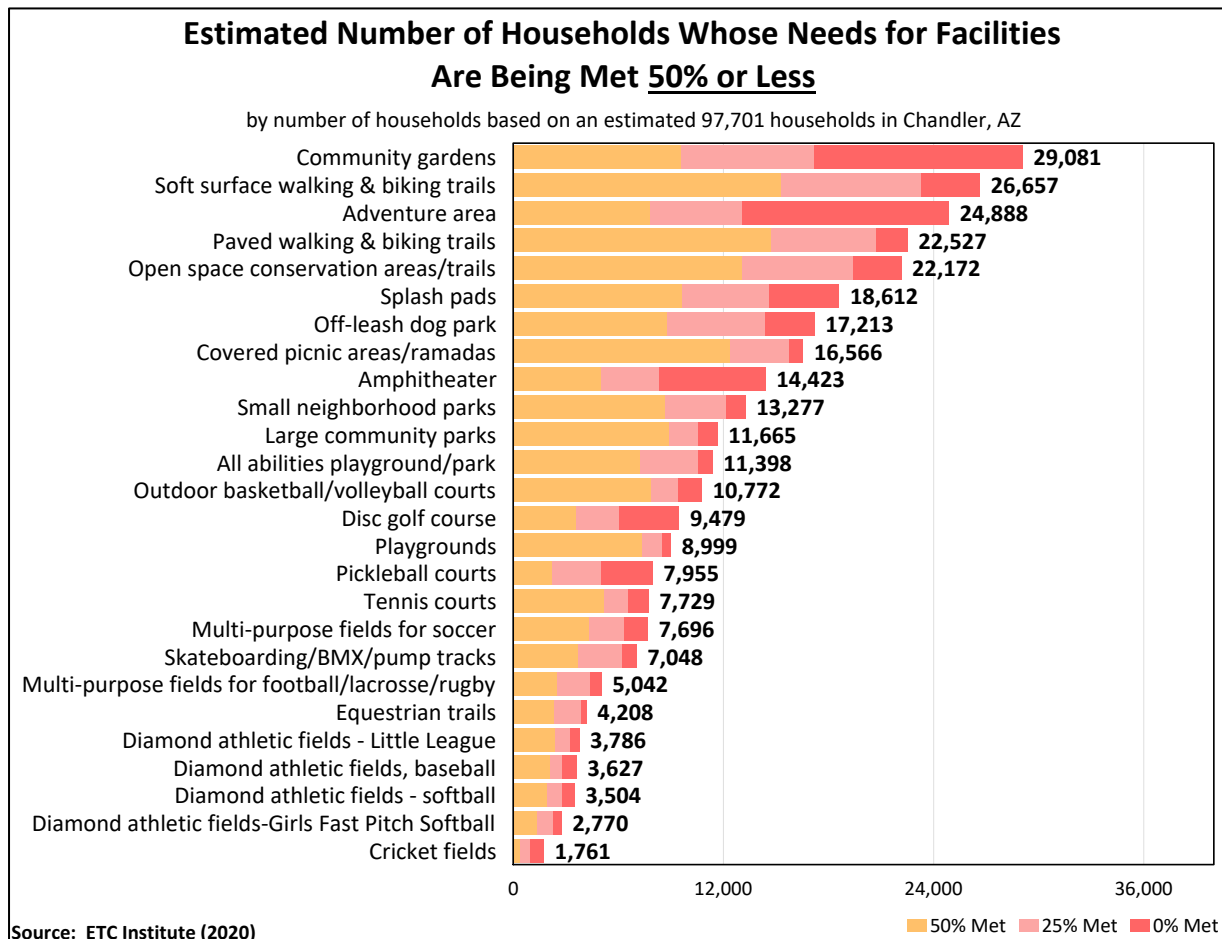
**Potential Barriers to Park/Trail Use.** Respondents were given a list of nine (9) potential reasons they or members of their household have not visited any City parks or trails in the past 12 months. The top three reasons were: not aware of parks or trails locations (13%), use parks/trails in other cities (7%), and too far from residence (5%).

## Facility Needs and Priorities

**Facility Needs.** Respondents were asked to identify if their household had a need for 26 facilities and rate how well their needs for each were currently being met. 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 facilities with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. community gardens – 29,081 households (or 30%),
2. soft surface walking and biking trails – 26,657 households (or 27%),
3. adventure area – 24,888 households (or 25%), and
4. paved walking and biking trails – 22,527 households (or 23%).

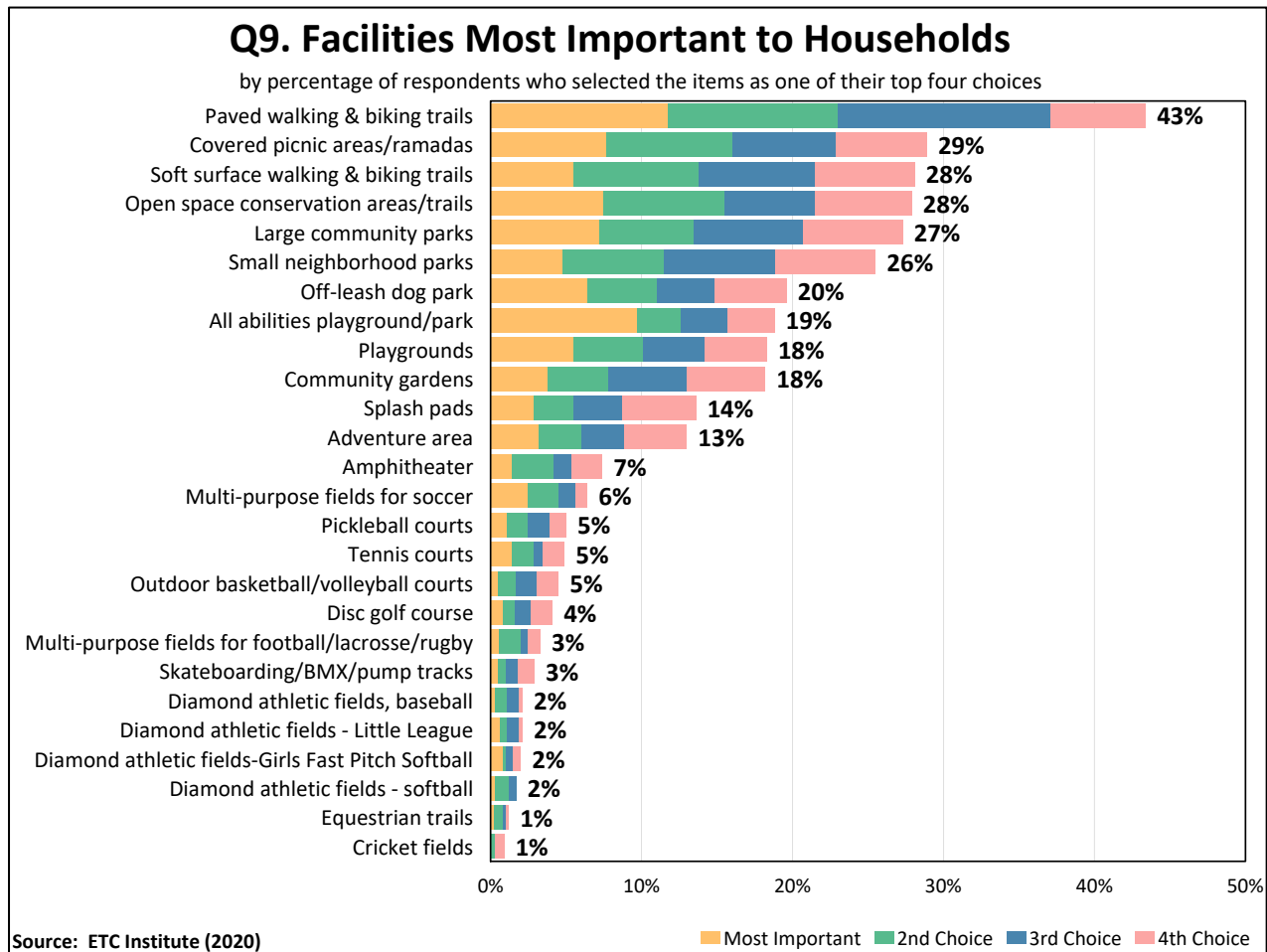
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 26 facilities that were assessed is shown in the table below.



**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. paved walking and biking trails (43%),
2. covered picnic areas/ramadas (29%),
3. soft surface walking and biking trails (28%), and
4. open space conservation areas/trails (28%).

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

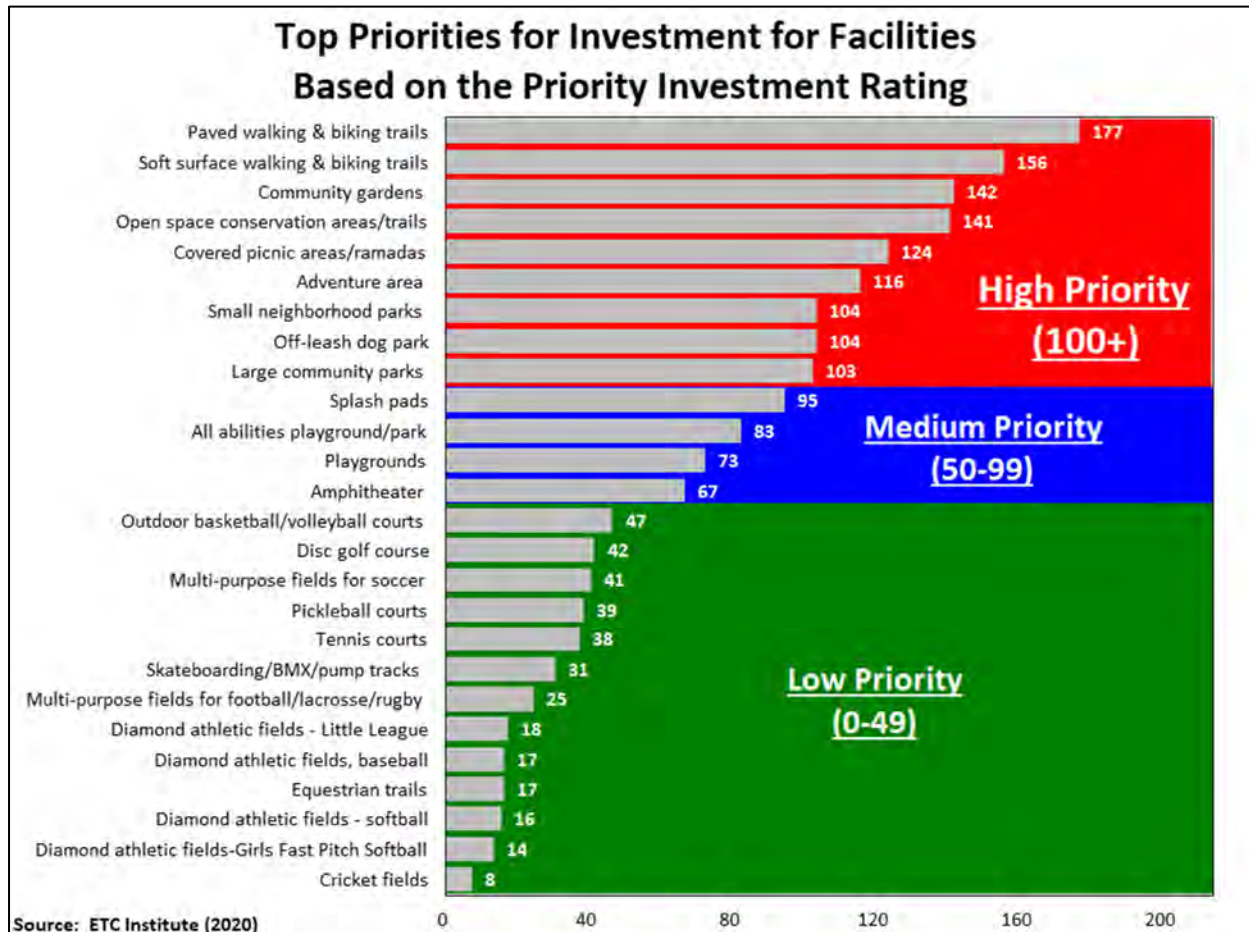


**Priorities for Facility Investments:** The **Priority Investment Rating (PIR)** was developed by ETC Institute to provide organizations with an objective tool for evaluating the priority that should be placed on Parks and Recreation investments. The Priority Investment Rating (PIR) equally weighs (1) the importance that residents place on amenity/program and (2) how many residents have unmet needs for the facility/program. [Details regarding the methodology for this analysis are provided in Section 3 of this report.]

Based the Priority Investment Rating (PIR), the following nine facilities were rated as high priorities for investment:

- Paved walking and biking trails (PIR=177)
- Soft surface walking and biking trails (PIR=156)
- Community gardens (PIR=142)
- Open space conservation areas/trails (PIR=141)
- Covered picnic areas/ramadas (PIR=124)
- Adventure area (PIR=116)
- Small neighborhood parks (PIR=104)
- Off-leash dog park (PIR=104)
- Large community parks (PIR=103)

The graph below shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 26 facilities that were rated.



## Program Needs and Priorities

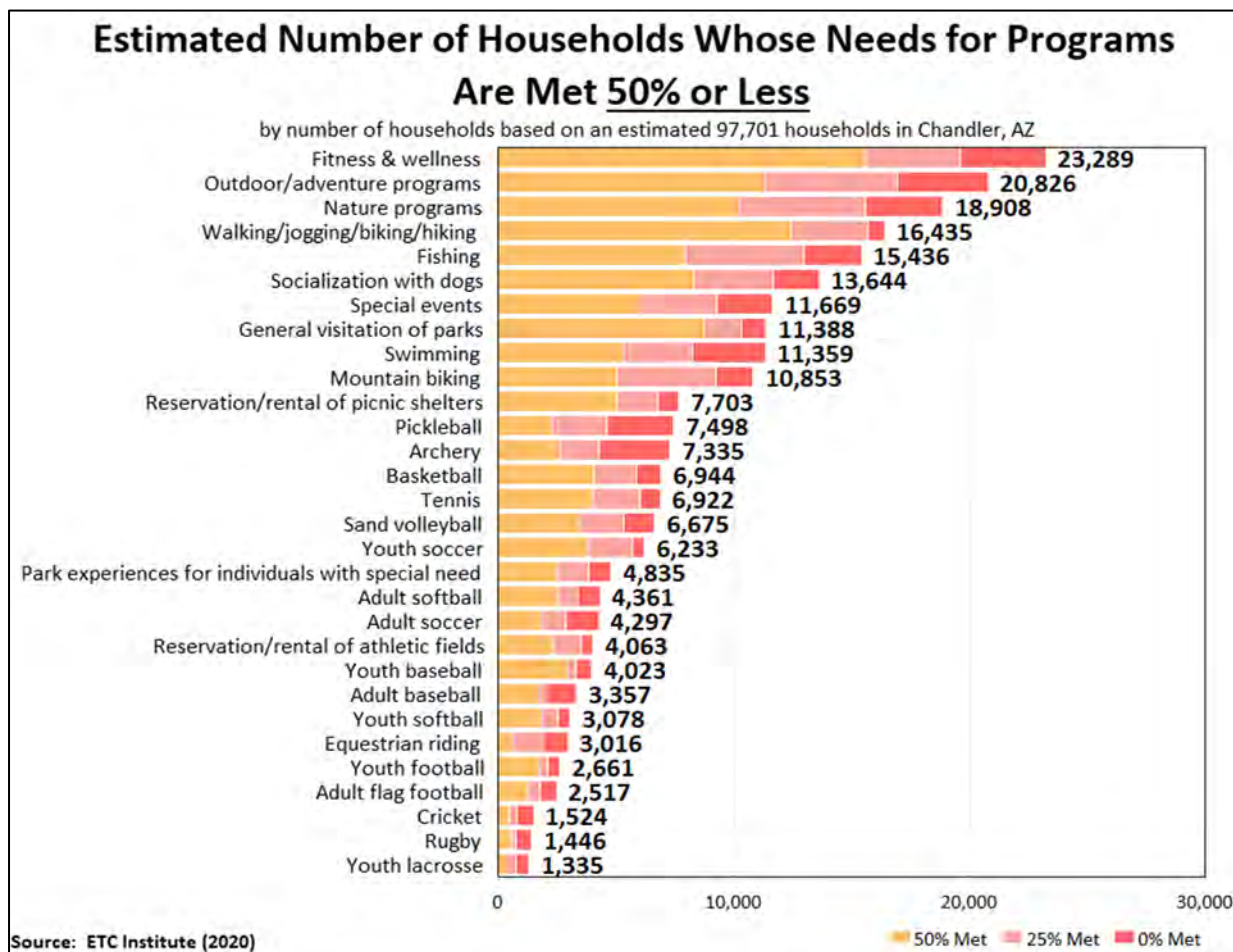
**Program Needs.** Respondents were also asked to identify if their household had a need for 30 programs and rate how well their needs for each program were currently being met. Based on

this analysis, ETC Institute was able to estimate the number of households in the community that had “unmet” needs for each program.

The four recreation programs with the highest percentage of households that have an unmet need were:

1. fitness and wellness – 23,289 households (or 24%),
2. outdoor/adventure programs – 20,826 households (or 21%),
3. nature programs – 18,908 households (or 19%), and
4. walking/jogging/biking/hiking – 16,435 households (or 17%).

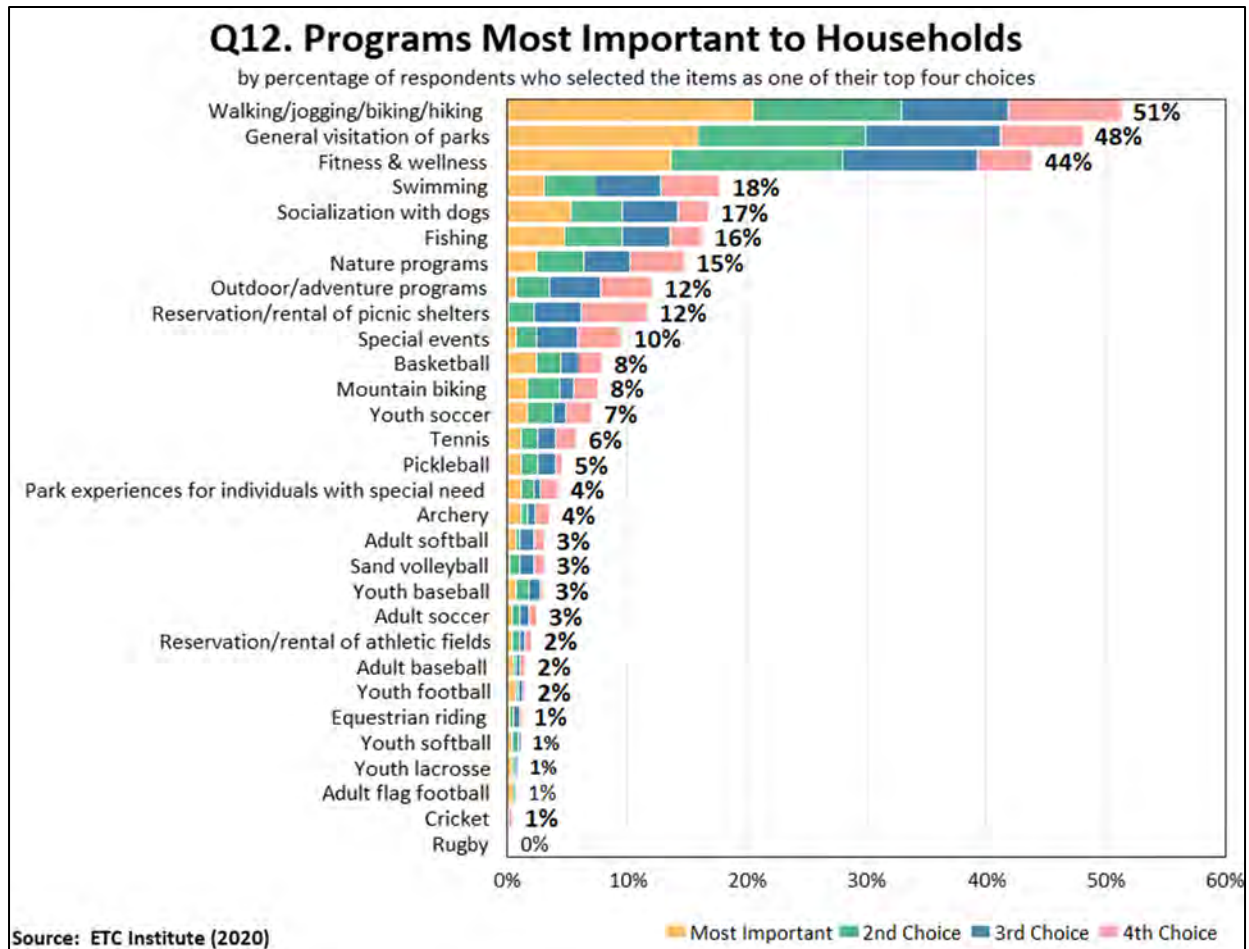
The estimated number of households that have unmet needs for each of the 30 programs that were assessed is shown in the graph below.



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

1. walking/jogging/biking/hiking (51%),
2. general visitation of parks (48%),
3. fitness and wellness (44%), and
4. swimming (18%).

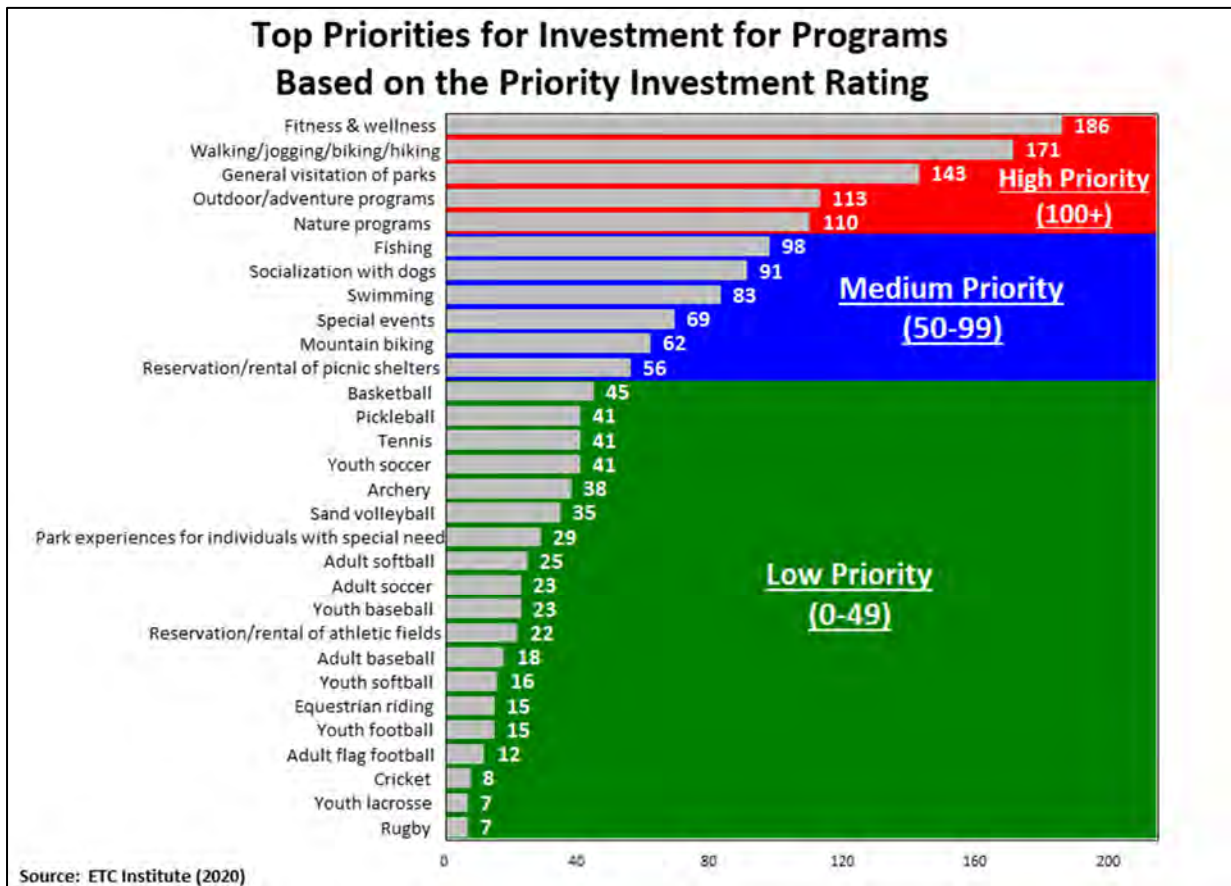
The percentage of residents who selected each program as one of their top four choices is shown in the chart below.



**Priorities for Program Investments.** Based on the priority investment rating (PIR), which was described briefly on Page iv of this Executive Summary and is described in more detail in Section 3 of this report, the following five programs were rated as “high priorities” for investment:

- Fitness and wellness (PIR=186)
- Walking/jogging/biking/hiking (PIR=171)
- General visitation of parks (PIR=143)
- Outdoor/adventure programs (PIR=113)
- Nature programs (PIR=110)

The chart on the next page shows the Priority Investment Rating for each of the 30 programs that were rated.



## Additional Findings

**Potential Upgrades.** The highest levels of support for various actions the City could take to improve park and trail system, based on the sum of “very supportive” and “somewhat supportive” responses among residents *who had an opinion*, were: general repair and increase maintenance of parks (88%), improve existing trail systems (82%), add/expand trails/walking loops in existing parks (81%), and improve restroom facilities in existing parks (80%).

The improvement actions that respondents would be most willing to fund, based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, were: general repair and increase maintenance of parks (48%), improve existing trail systems (31%), add/expand trails/walking loops in existing parks (28%), and improve restroom facilities in existing parks (26%).

**Potential Benefits of City’s Park System.** The highest levels of agreement with the City’s Park system, based on the sum of “strongly agree” and “agree” responses among residents *who had an opinion*, were: makes the City a more desirable place to live (97%), preserves open space and protects environment (94%), and provides clean/aesthetically pleasing landscaping along public streets (92%).

The Parks system benefits that are most important to respondents, based on the sum of respondents’ top four choices, were: improves my physical health and fitness (63%), makes the City a more desirable place to live (57%), preserves open space and protects environment (46%), and increases property value (33%).



**Methods of Learning.** Responding households were asked to indicate all of the ways they learn about City parks and trails.

- 60% indicated they use friends and neighbors
- 48% indicated they use the City website
- 30% indicated they use the activity guide
- 21% indicated they use Facebook

The methods most preferred to be used by responding households, based on the sum of respondents' top three choices, were:

1. the City website (52%),
2. e-mails (38%),
3. activity guide (35%), and
4. Facebook (26%).

**Miscellaneous.** Eighty-six percent (86%) of respondents indicated that they feel that the athletic fields at current locations are easily accessible.

## **Conclusions**

To ensure that the City of Chandler continues to meet the needs and expectations of the community, ETC Institute recommends that the Parks and Recreation Department sustain and/or improve the performance in areas that were identified as “high priorities” by the Priority Investment Rating (PIR). The programs and facilities with the highest PIR ratings are listed below.

### **Facility Priorities**

- Paved walking and biking trails (PIR=177)
- Soft surface walking and biking trails (PIR=156)
- Community gardens (PIR=142)
- Open space conservation areas/trails (PIR=141)
- Covered picnic areas/ramadas (PIR=124)
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### **Program Priorities**

- Fitness and wellness (PIR=186)
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