

# City of Laredo

Citizen Preferences  
about Parks and  
Recreation: A Report  
Commissioned by PPS

Brian K. Collins and  
Hyun J. Kim



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY



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## Executive Summary

The Earl Survey Research Laboratory at Texas Tech University completed interviews with 535 persons across the eight council districts of the City of Laredo about municipal parks and recreation amenities. The cooperation rate was 71.7 percent and the sample was generally representative of Laredo. Key findings follow:

- ◆ Respondents generally learn about parks and recreation from personal observation and cable TV.
- ◆ Respondents use city parks and open spaces more than other amenities. Patterns of usage and participation are generally consistent across council districts.
- ◆ On average, respondents rated their satisfaction with parks and recreation at 4.73 on a 7-point scale.
- ◆ Respondent assessments of the quality of amenities varies by district. Citywide assessments show athletic leagues and community centers at the high end and boxing gyms and trails at the lower end. District #4, #5, #6 and #7 are consistently below the citywide mean quality rating.
- ◆ Respondents perceive their local parks to be safe, but there is no consensus about the safety of visiting parks at night. District #2, #6, and #7 express the most concern about park safety at night.
- ◆ Respondents perceive parks and recreation amenities to be beneficial to the community. Activities for youth and all ages provide the highest rated benefits resulting from parks and recreation amenities.
- ◆ Respondents believe that there are too few amenities. Extreme sports parks, disc golf areas, and youth programs/camps top the list. However, respondents find additional parks, green spaces, and more programs/activities to be the most important additional amenities.
- ◆ We used survey responses to develop a model of respondent willingness-to-pay for additional amenities. On average, households in Laredo are willing to pay an additional \$73.72 a year for new amenities. However, there is no consensus about reducing current services to pay for new amenities.

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## **Introduction**

This report supports the planning activities of Pemberton Professional Services as commissioned by the City of Laredo. We describe findings from a telephone survey in three sections. The first section presents evaluations of existing parks and recreation facilities and activities. The second section presents information about attitudes towards parks and recreation in general, and priorities for additional development. The final section presents information about willingness-to-pay for parks and recreation services and attitudes toward budgetary constraints. Appendices provide more detailed discussions of methodologies.

We obtained information about resident attitudes and preferences from a randomly sampled survey of adults (>18 years) from the City of Laredo. More specifically, we randomly sampled respondents from eight different sub-populations, i.e. the council districts. This approach yielded a sample size of 535 complete interviews with no fewer than 65 responses per district. Another 23 partial interviews were conducted. Thus, this sampling design provides two confidence intervals for estimations. At the citywide level, this sample provides a confidence interval of +/- 4.23 percent. At the district level, this sample provides a confidence interval of +/- 12.13 percent. Both intervals are calculated using the number of adults in Laredo. In sum, inferences at the citywide level are stronger than those at the district level, but valid district comparisons can still be made. Additional information about the sampling process, cooperation rates, and response rates are discussed in Appendix A.

Important demographic and other characteristics of the population are presented in Appendix A. The sample is generally representative of Laredo, but there is an over-representation of females. Under-representation of Spanish speakers is a common problem in many surveys, but we conducted 40 percent of all interviews in Spanish to mitigate this problem.

## **Evaluation of Existing Parks and Recreation**

The following sections report how residents learn about parks and recreation, use parks or participate in recreation services, and evaluate satisfaction, quality, and safety of parks and recreation in Laredo. We discuss both citywide and district findings for each.

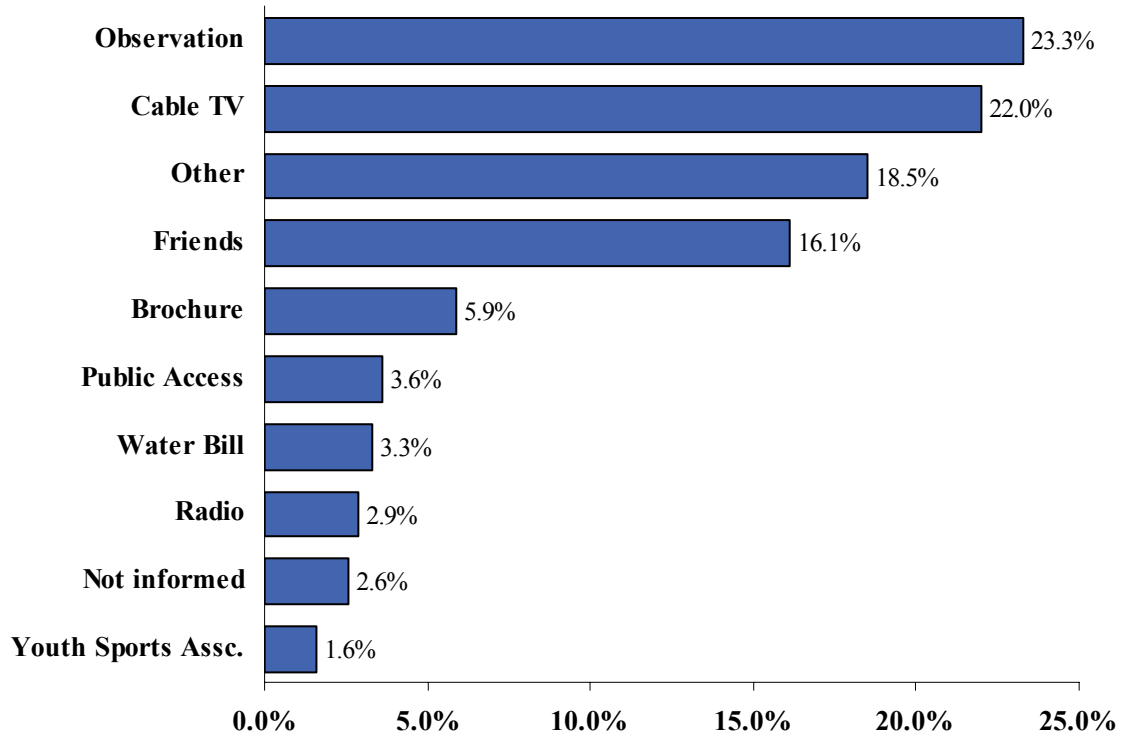
### *Sources of Information about Parks and Recreation*

Figure 1 illustrates the source from which respondents obtain information about parks and recreation. Print media are typically low, but television and personal networks and observations are more frequently mentioned.

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**Figure 1. Where did you learn about Laredo parks and recreation programs?**

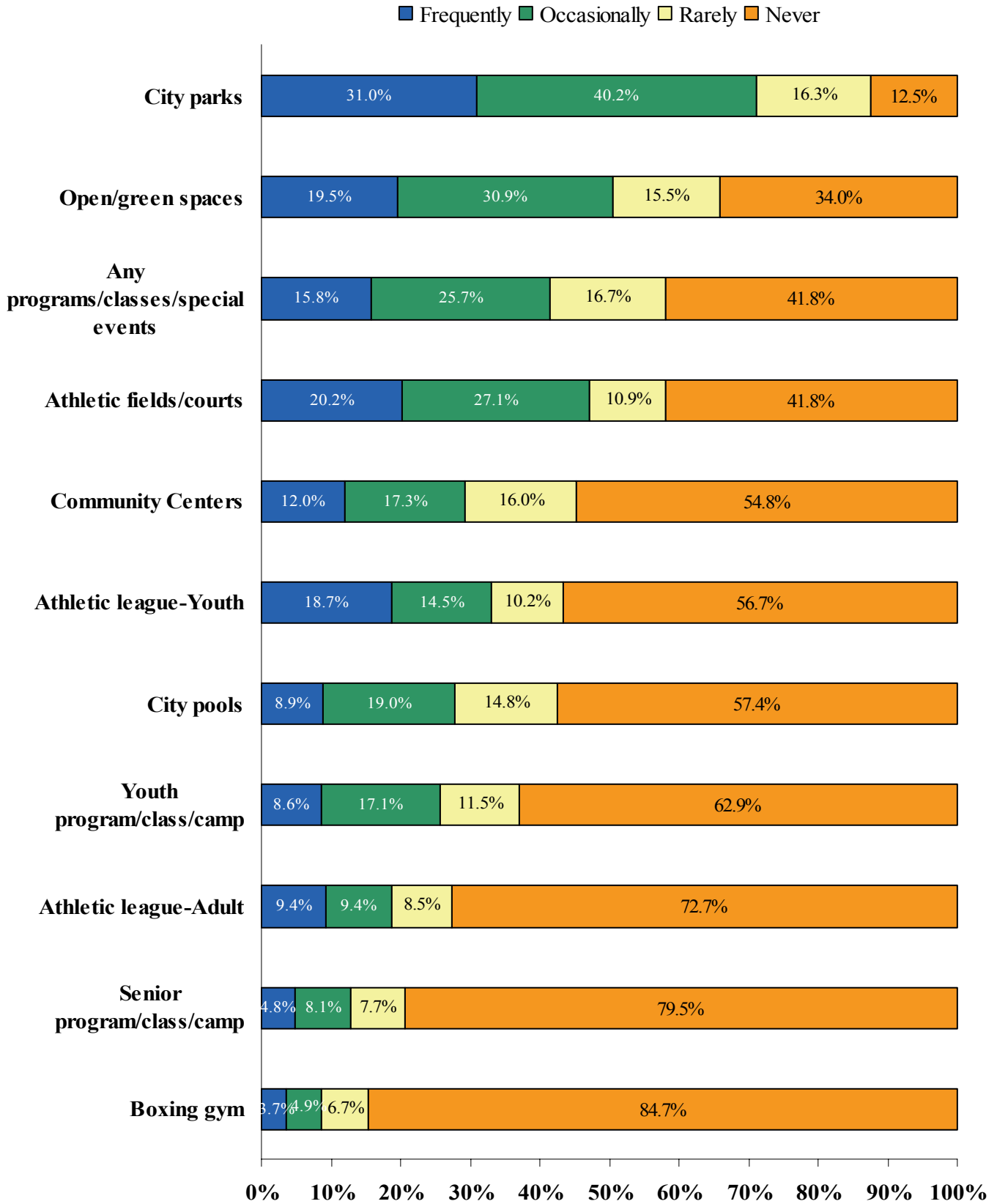
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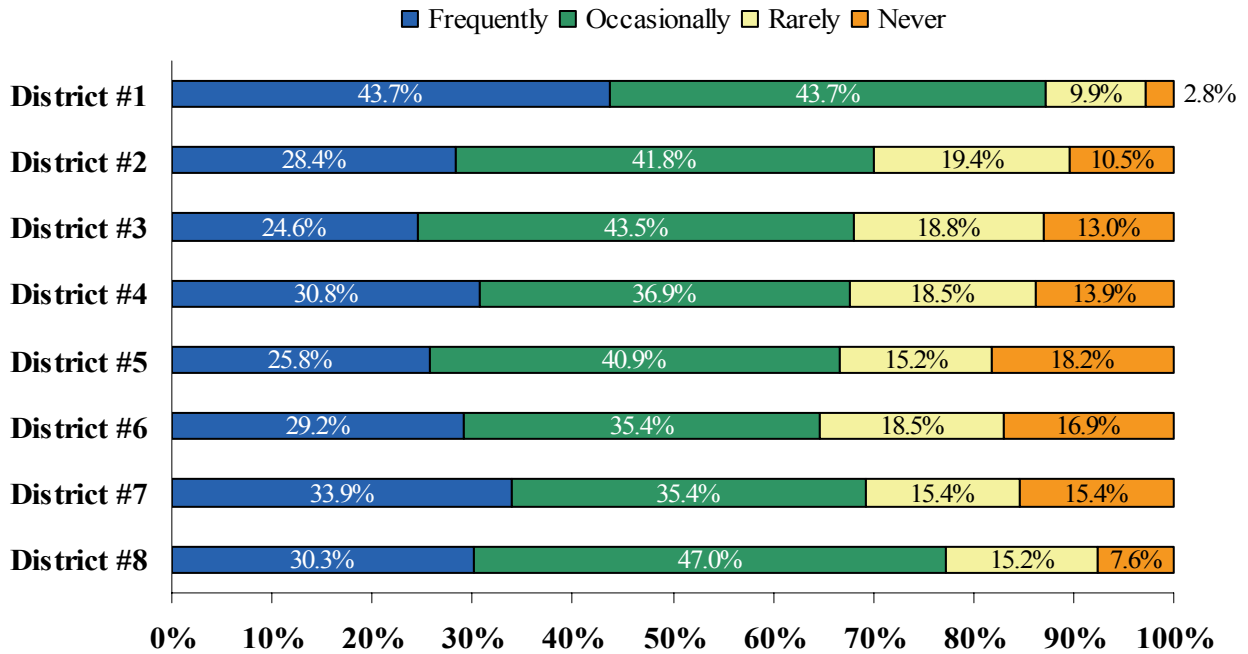
*Participation and Usage Patterns*

Figure 2 presents citywide information about usage and participation patterns. The responses are sorted so that the most frequently used parks, facilities, or programs are listed at the top of the chart. A finding consistent throughout the report is that city parks and open green spaces are highly valued and used by residents. Figures 3-13 show the frequency of usage for each type of facility or program by council district. Usage patterns are generally consistent across council districts with one exception. District #5 uses youth classes, programs, and camps at a statistically significant lower frequency.

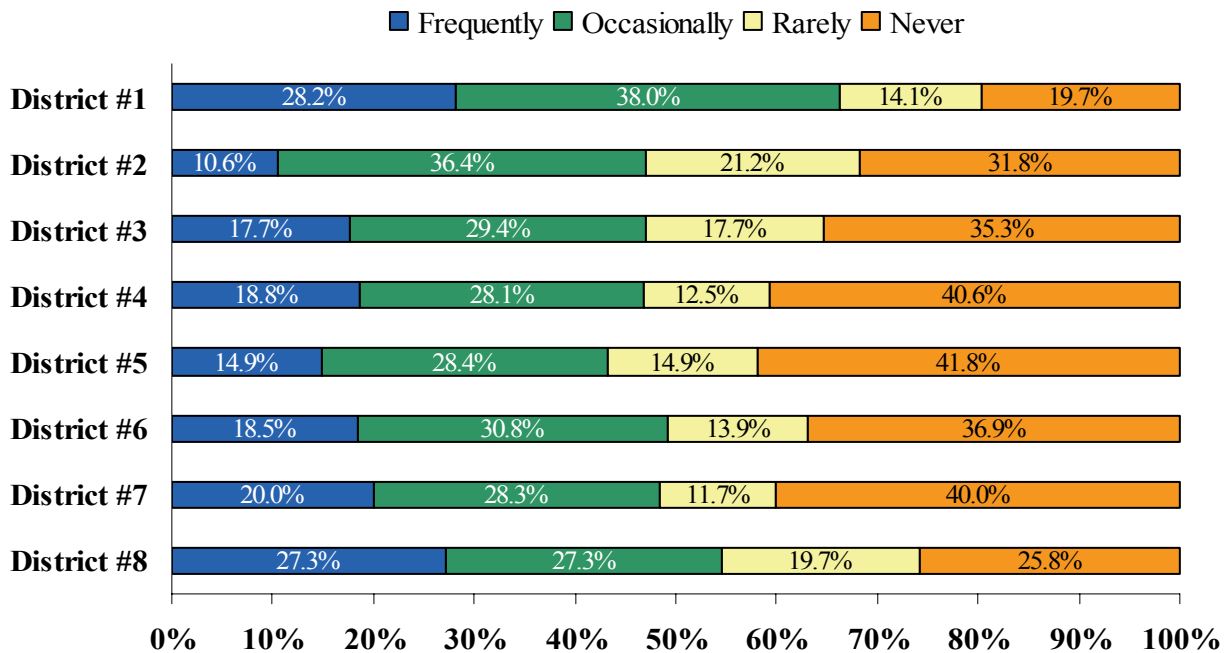
**Figure 2. Frequency of Participation and Usage by Amenity (Citywide Responses).**



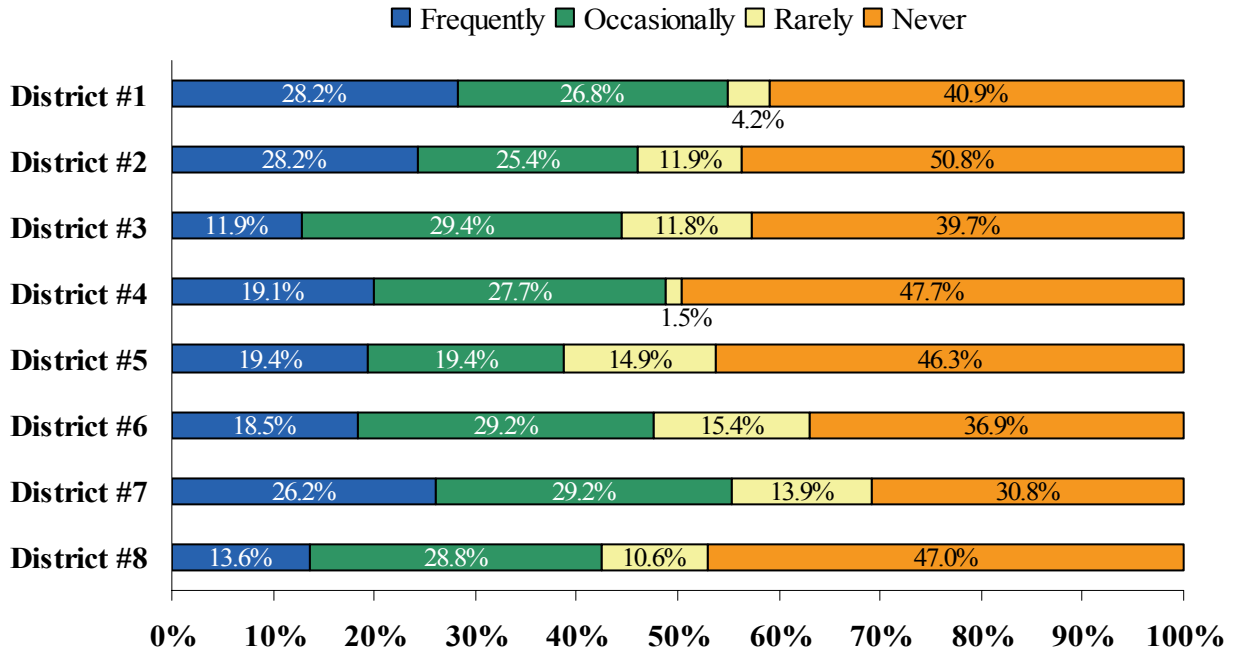
**Figure 3. Frequency of Participation and Usage-City Parks.**



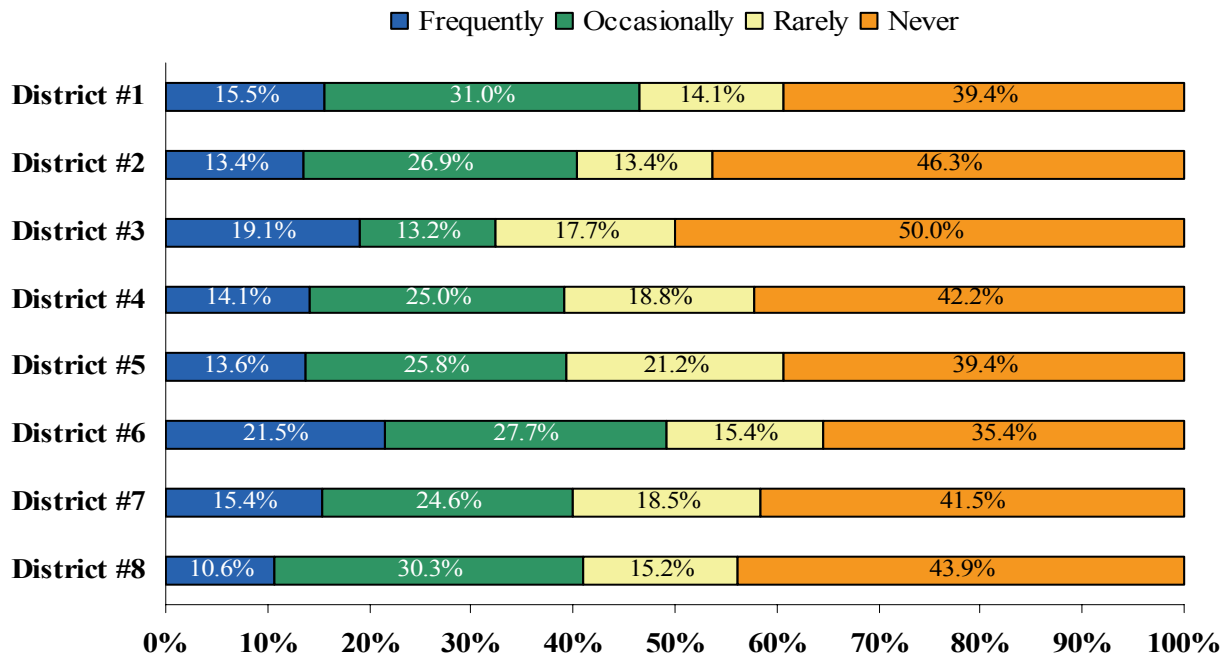
**Figure 4. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Open/Green Spaces.**



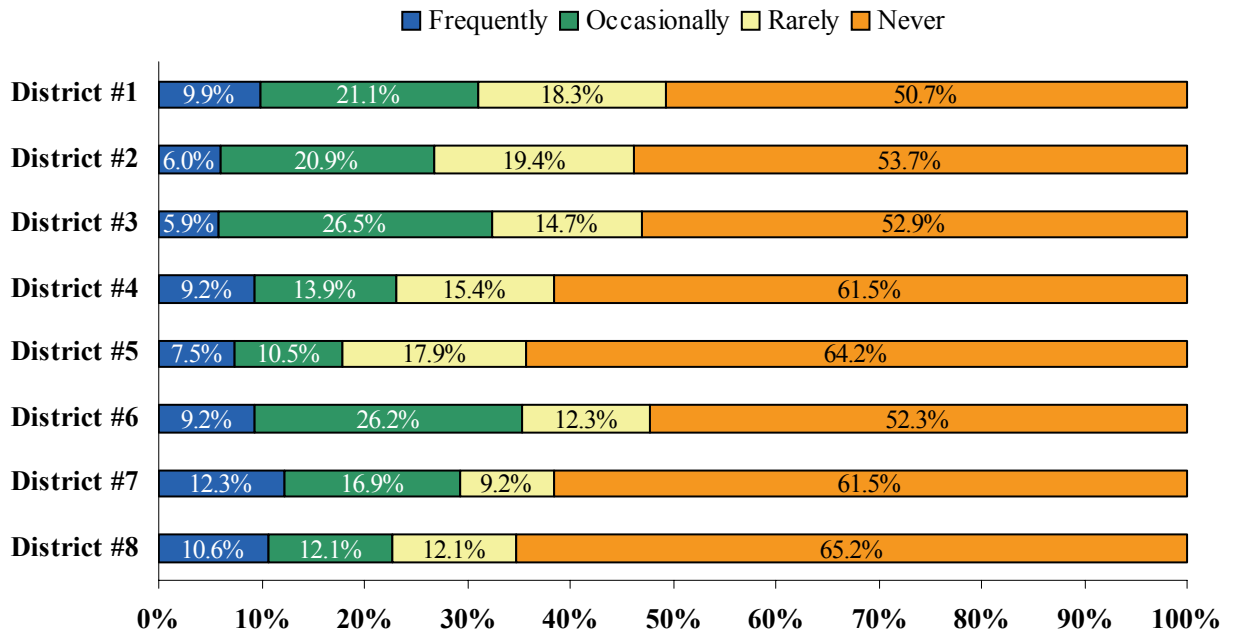
**Figure 5. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Athletic Fields/Courts.**



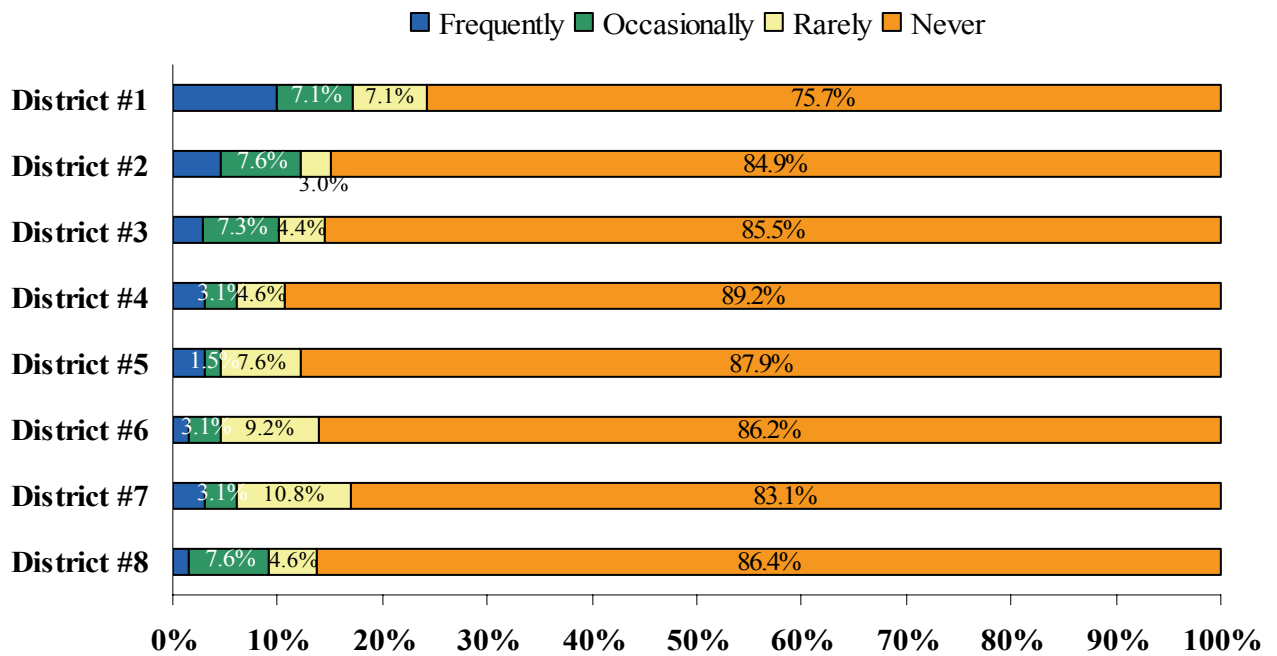
**Figure 6. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Programs/Classes/Events.**



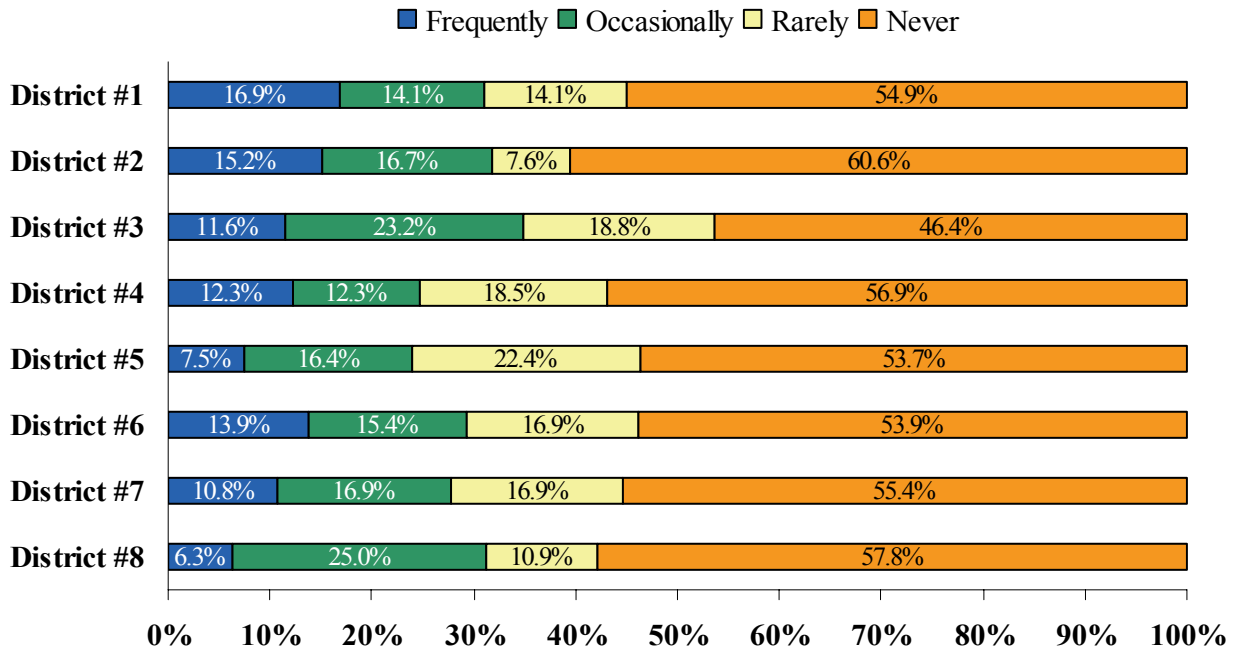
**Figure 7. Frequency of Participation and Usage-City Pools.**



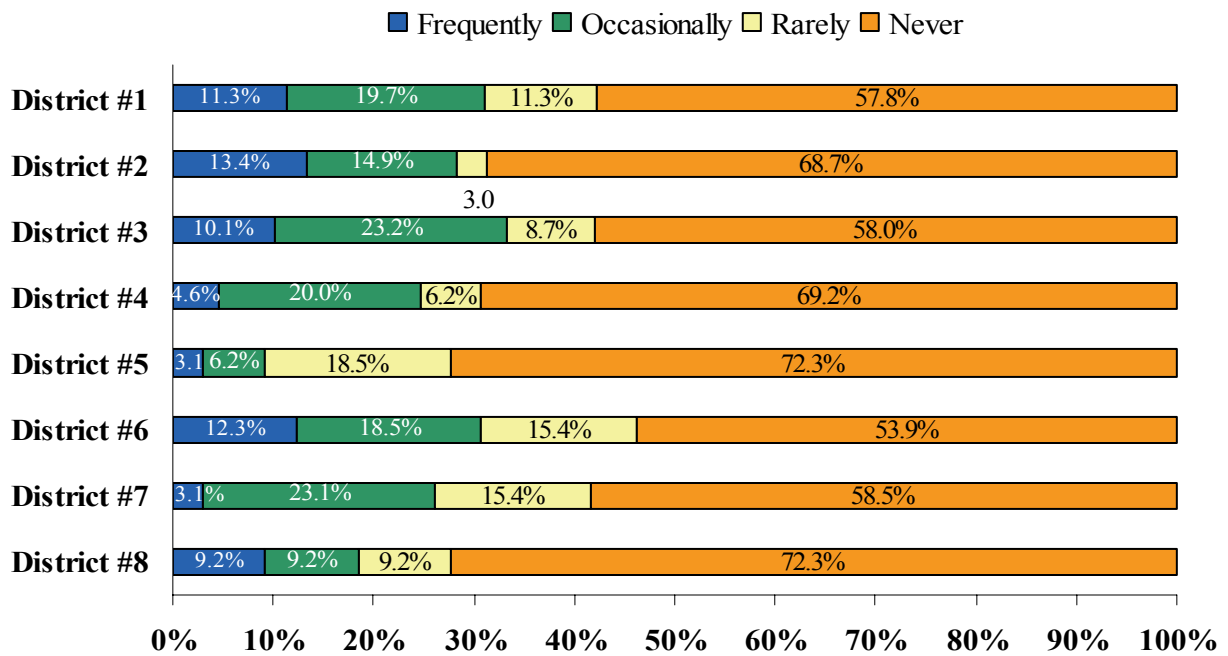
**Figure 8. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Boxing Gym.**



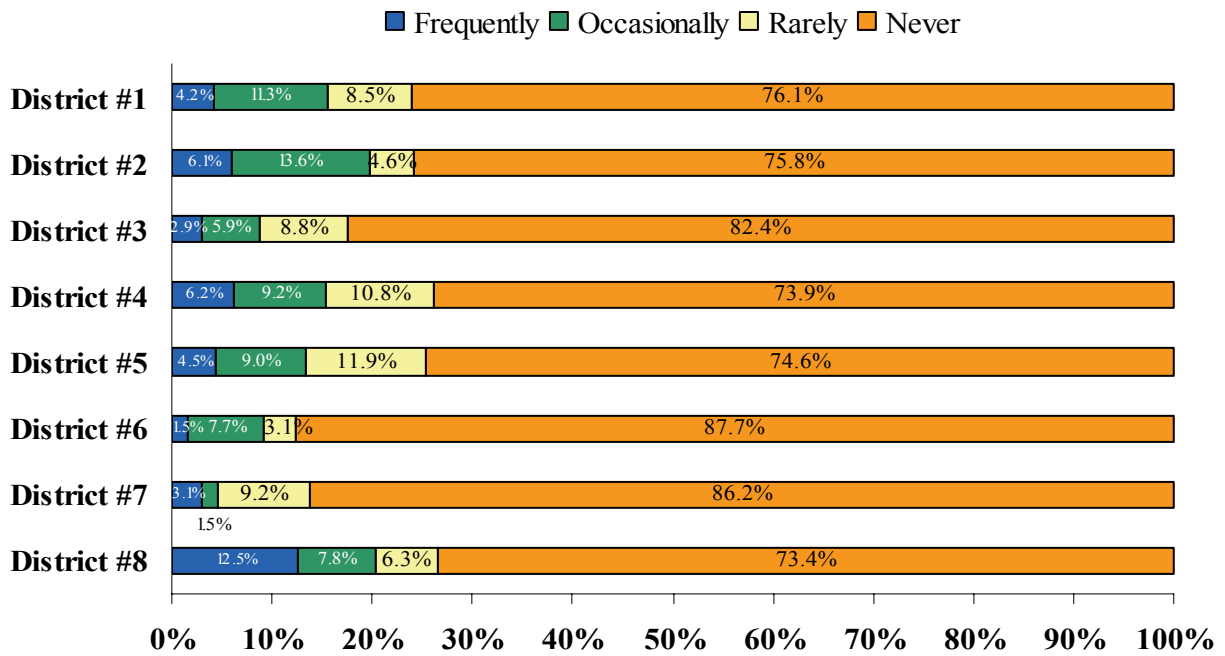
**Figure 9. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Community Centers.**



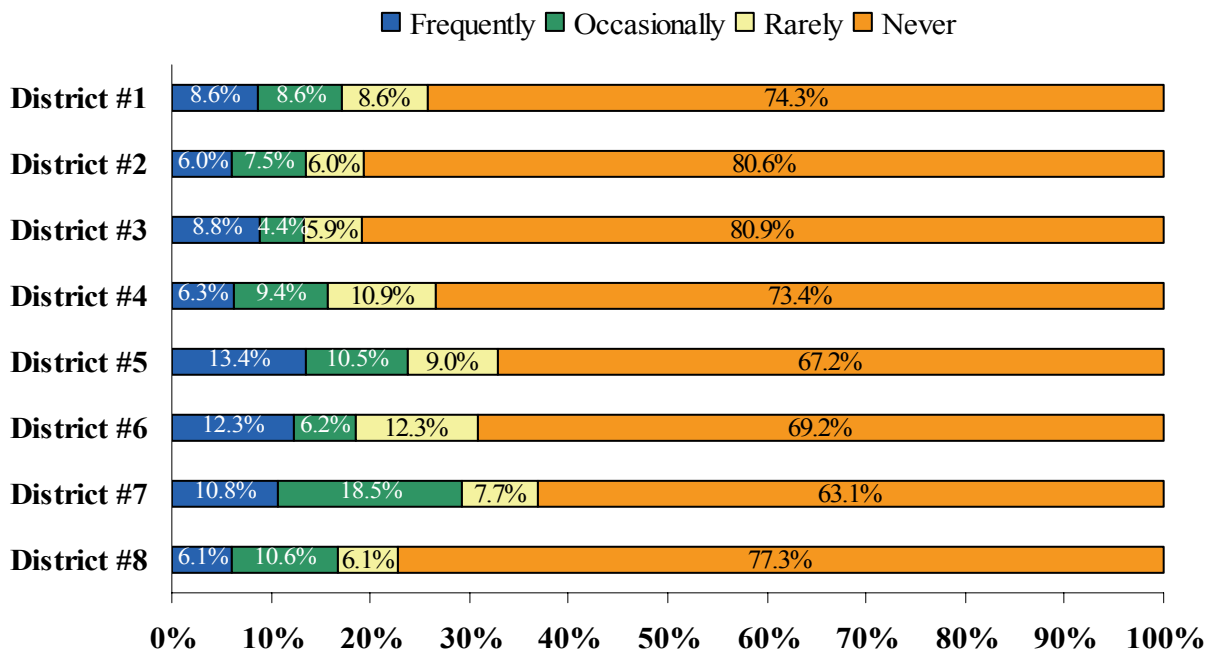
**Figure 10. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Youth Classes/Programs/Camps.**



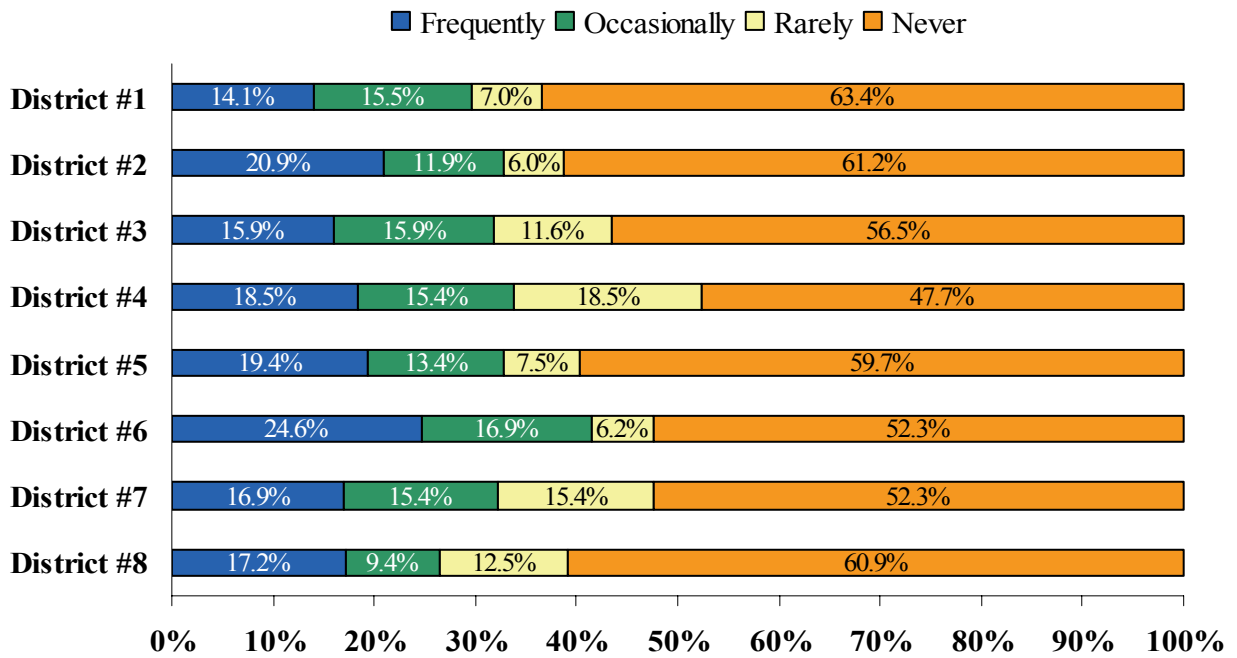
**Figure 11. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Senior Classes/Programs/Activities.**



**Figure 12. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Adult Athletic Leagues.**



**Figure 13. Frequency of Participation and Usage-Youth Athletic Leagues.**



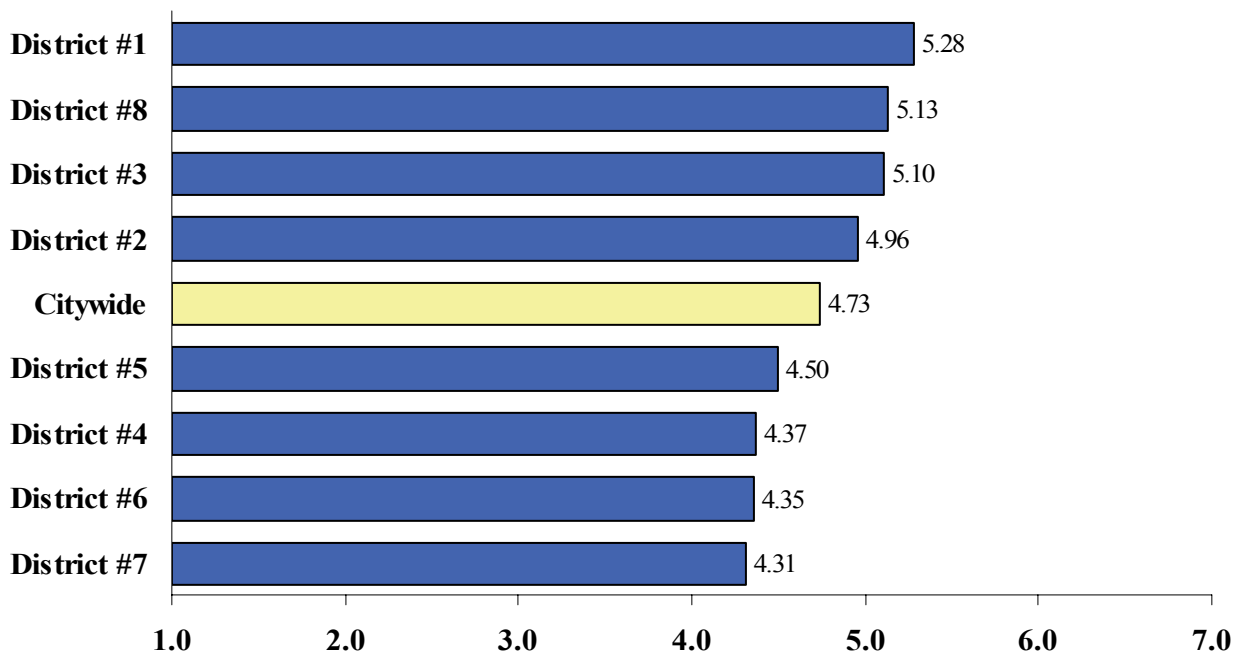
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## Satisfaction Ratings

Respondents were asked to rate their *overall* satisfaction with Laredo parks and recreation using a seven-point scale where one means very dissatisfied and seven means very satisfied. Figure 14 displays the mean satisfaction rating for each council district and the city. The mean satisfaction rating for the entire city is somewhat low relative to ratings from similar cities that the authors have surveyed. Districts #1, #3, and #8 have a statistically significant higher rating than the citywide mean. District #7 has a statistically significant lower rating than the citywide mean.

**Figure 14. Satisfaction with Parks and Recreation (7=very satisfied).**

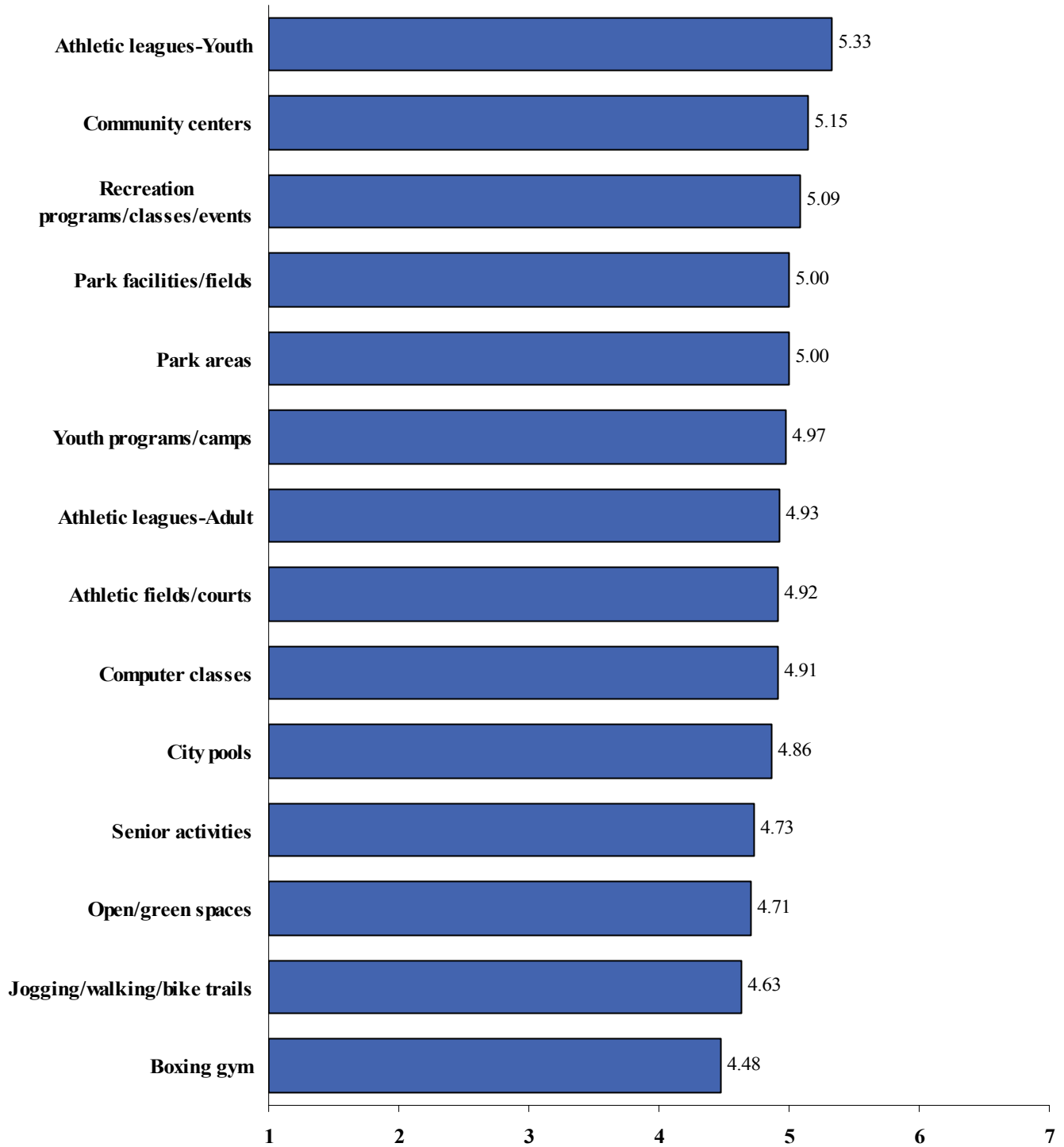
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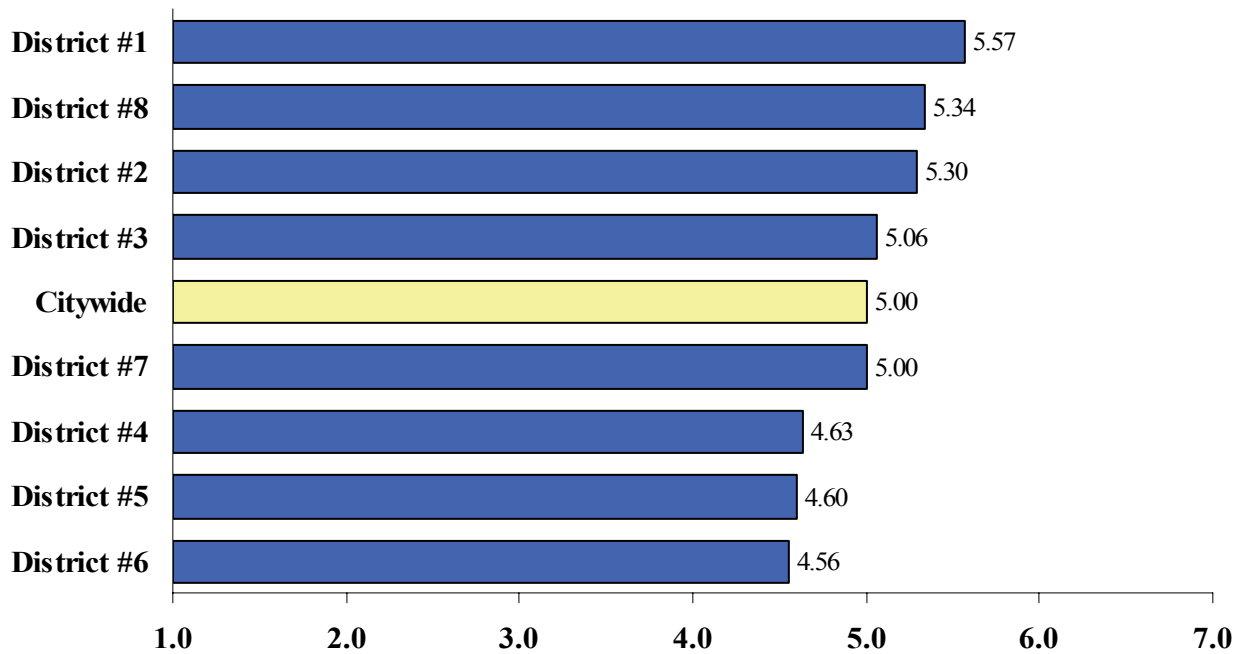
## Quality Ratings

Respondents also assessed the quality of 14 parks and recreation amenities using a seven-point scale where one means very low quality and seven means very high quality. Figure 15 shows each amenity ranked from highest quality assessment to lowest for the entire city. Figures 16-29 show the mean citywide quality rating in comparison to the mean rating from each council district. Each of these figures ranks the districts from highest mean quality rating to lowest mean quality rating. These figures show that District #4, #5, #6, and #7 have mean quality ratings consistently below the citywide average, and District #5 and #6 are consistently at the bottom of the quality rankings.

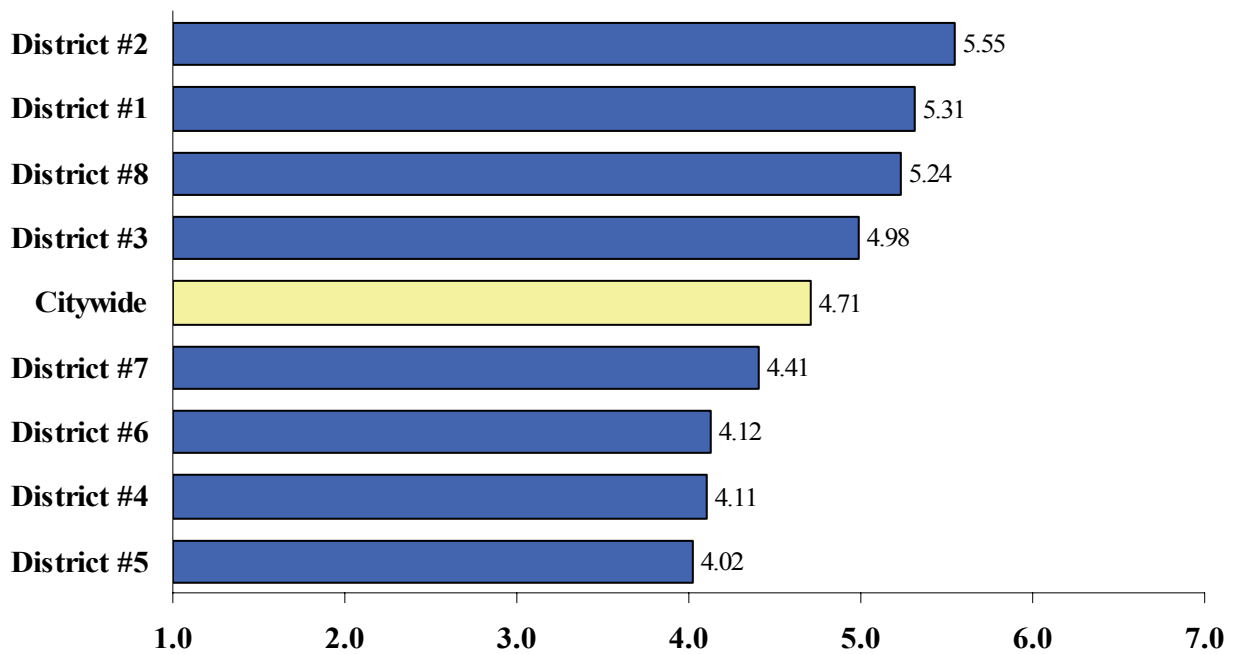
**Figure 15. Mean Quality Ratings for Amenities—Citywide (7=high quality).**



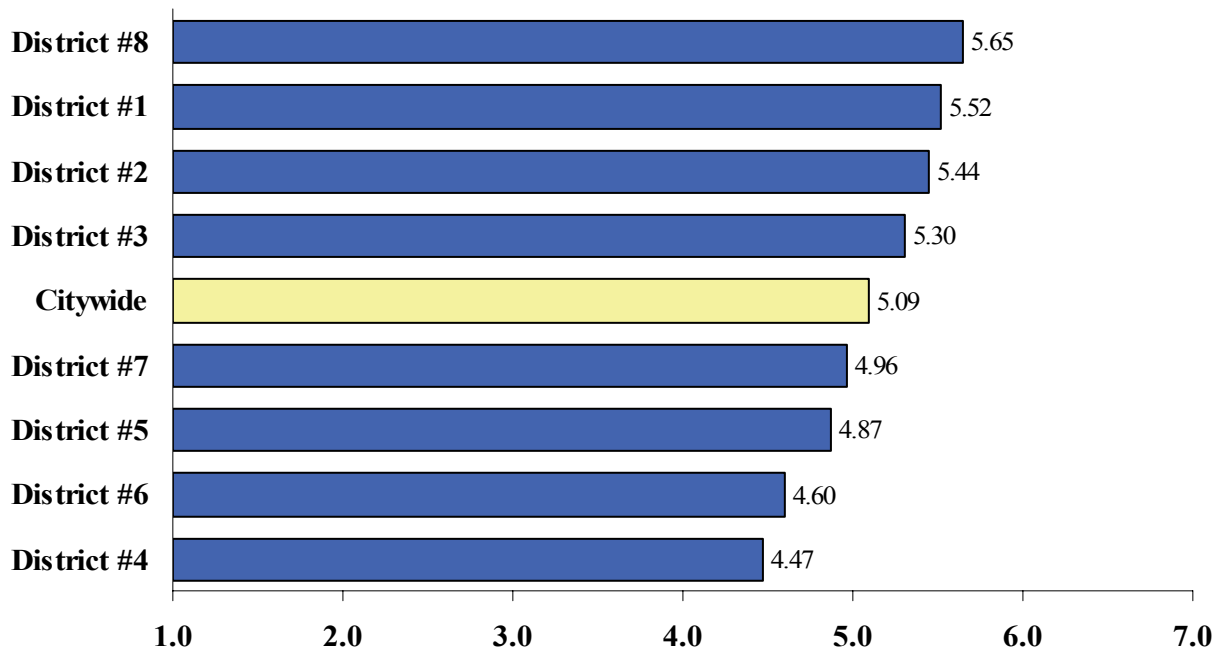
**Figure 16. Mean Quality Ratings for Park Areas by District (7=high quality).**



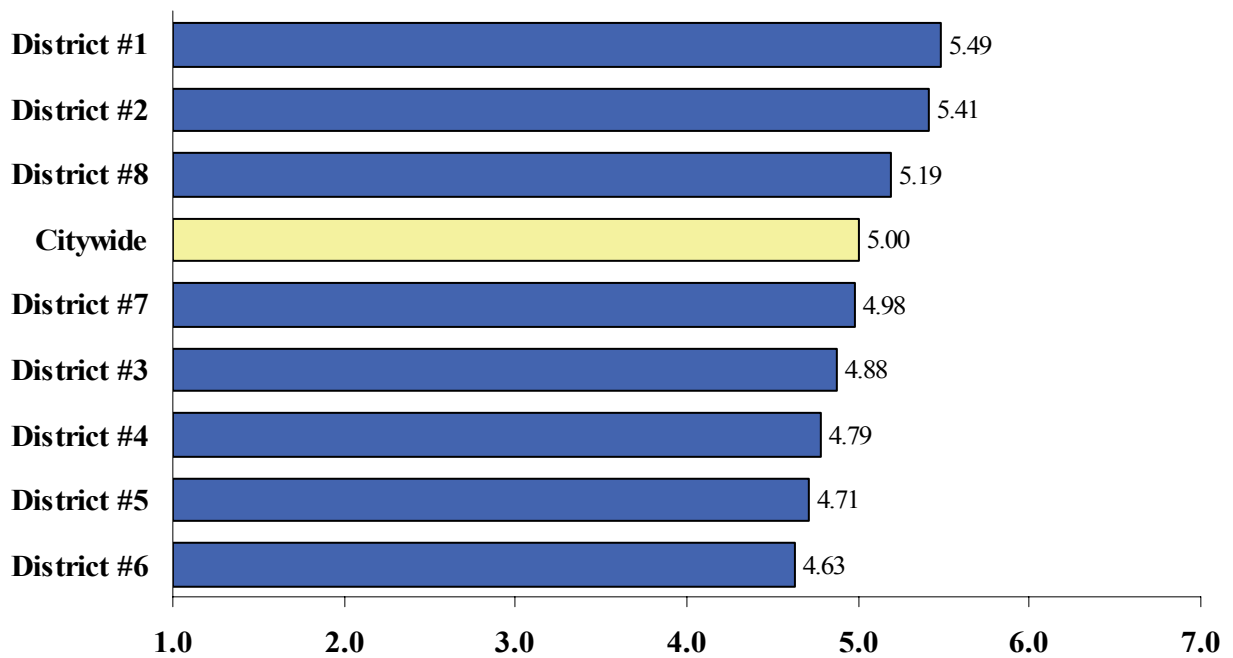
**Figure 17. Mean Quality Ratings for Open/Green Spaces by District (7=high quality).**



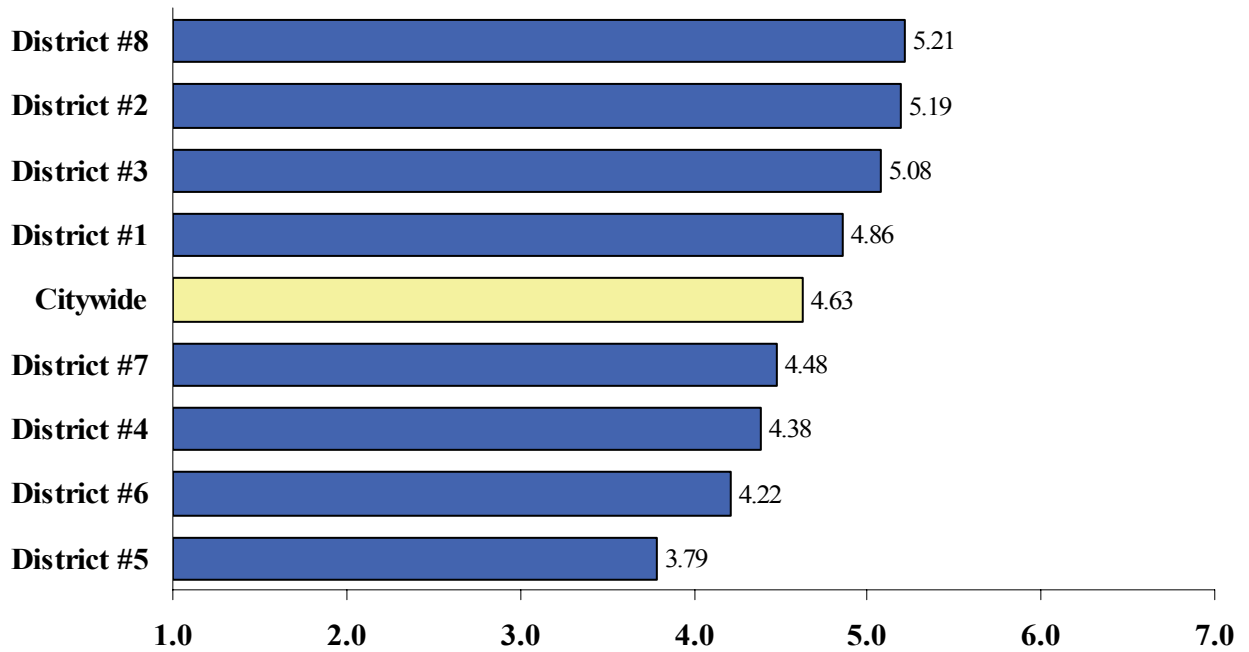
**Figure 18. Mean Quality Ratings for Programs/Classes/Events by District (7=high quality).**



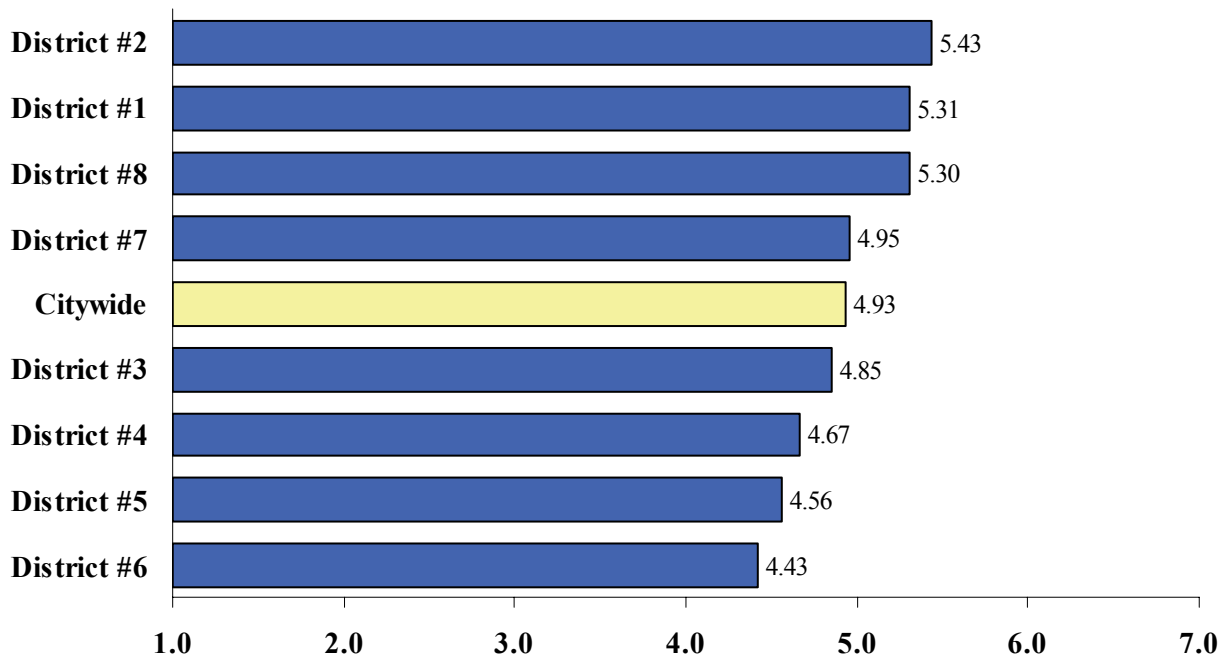
**Figure 19. Mean Quality Ratings for Facilities/Fields at Parks by District (7=high quality).**



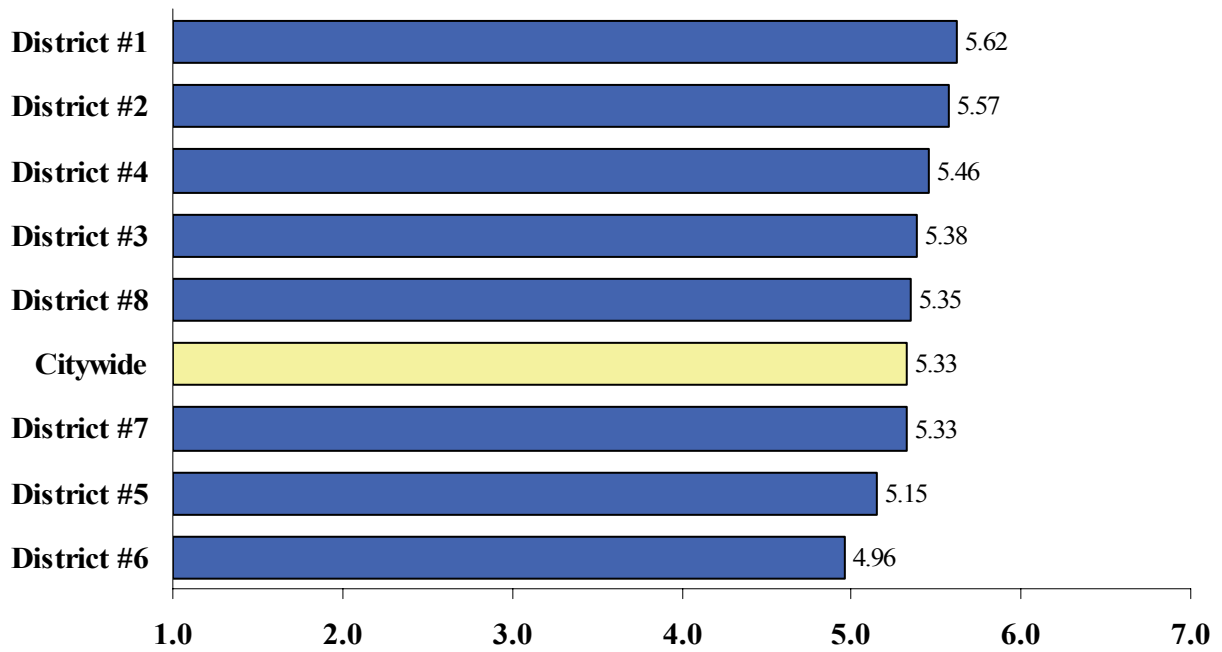
**Figure 20. Mean Quality Ratings for Jogging/Walking/Biking Trails by District (7=high quality).**



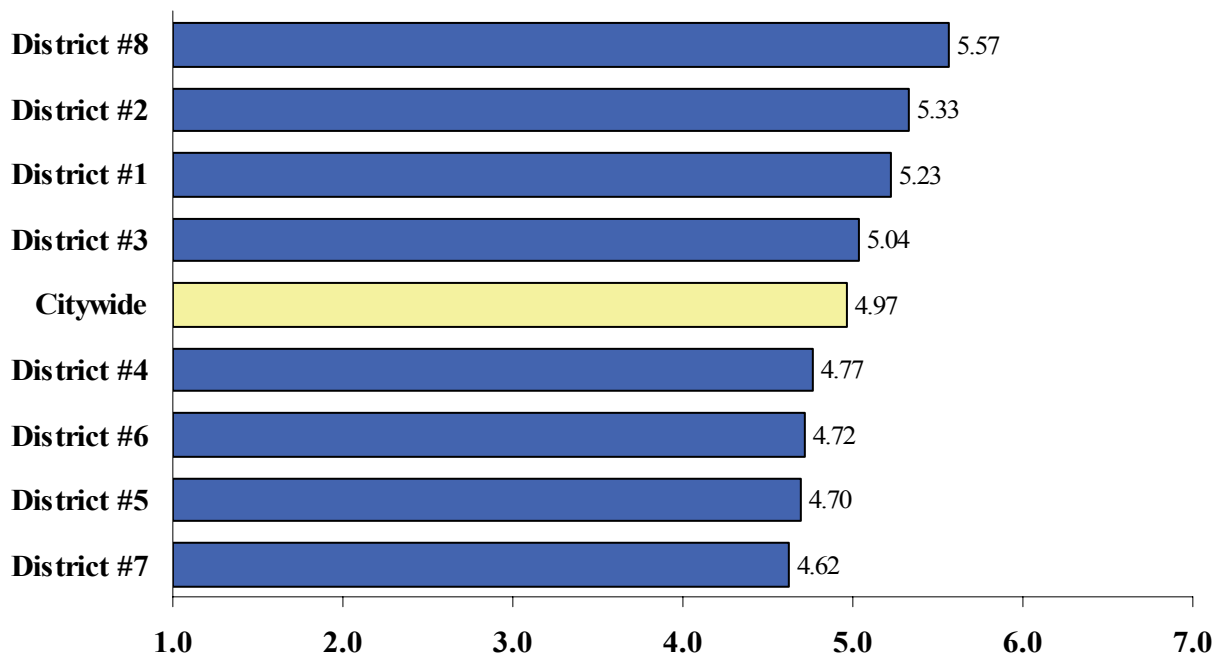
**Figure 21. Mean Quality Ratings for Adult Athletic Leagues by District (7=high quality).**



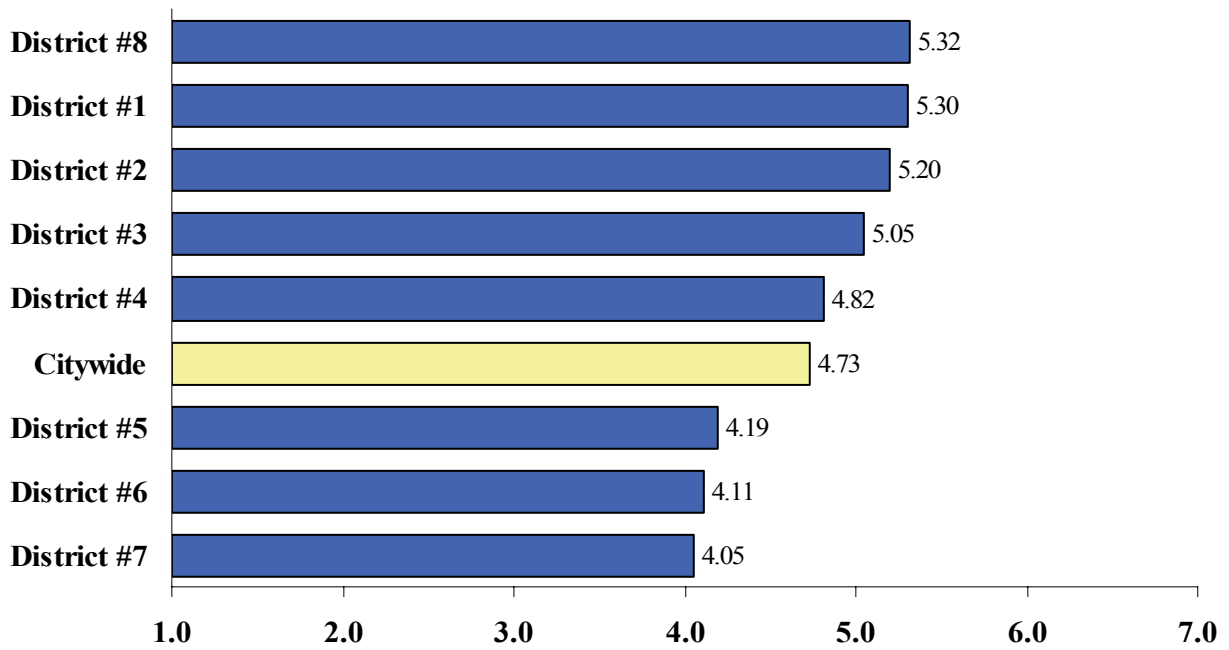
**Figure 22. Mean Quality Ratings for Youth Athletic Leagues by District (7=high quality).**



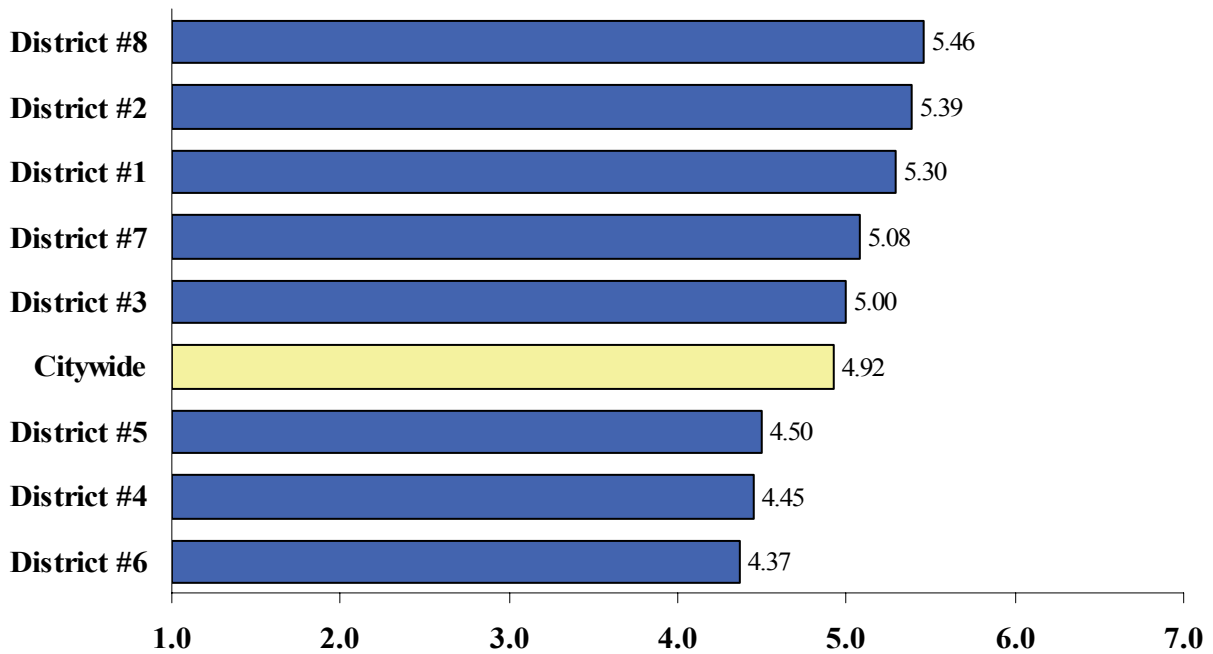
**Figure 23. Mean Quality Ratings for Youth Program/Camps by District (7=high quality).**



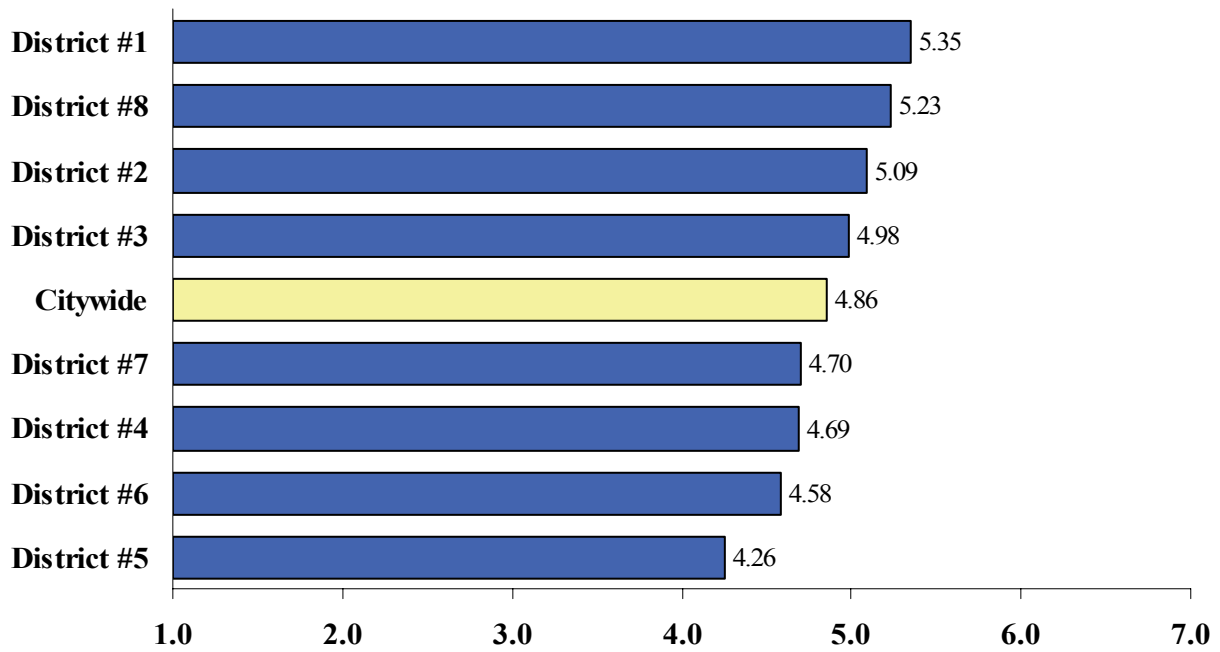
**Figure 24. Mean Quality Ratings for Senior Activities by District (7=high quality).**



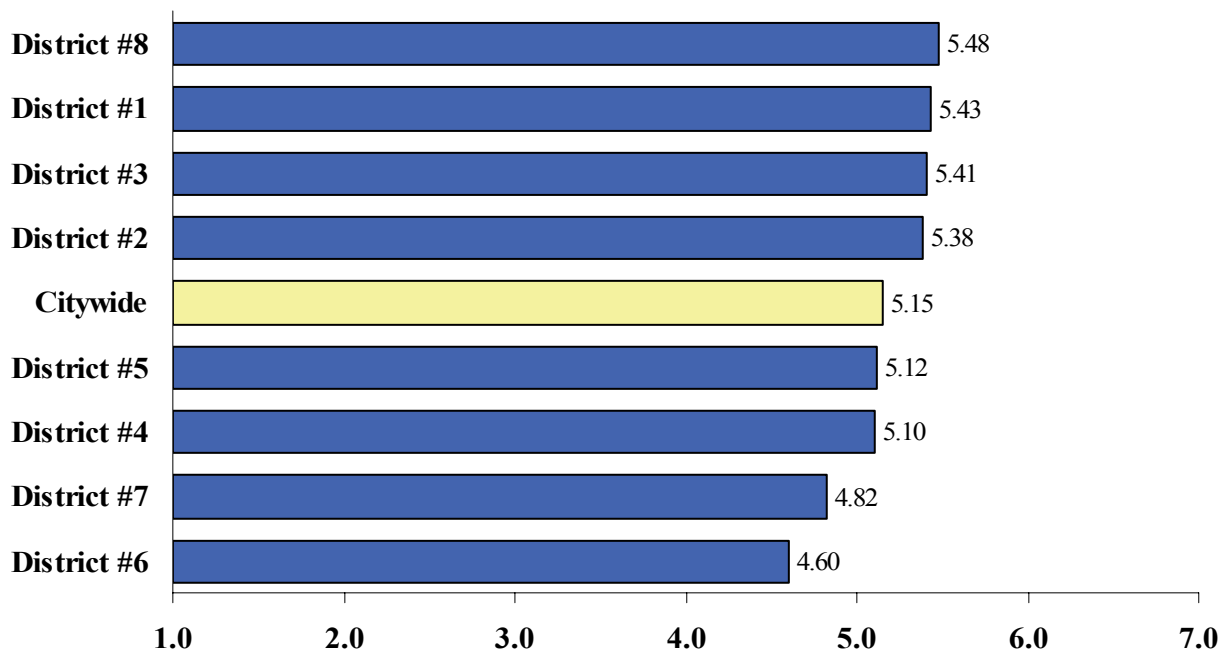
**Figure 25. Mean Quality Ratings for Athletic Fields/Courts by District (7=high quality).**



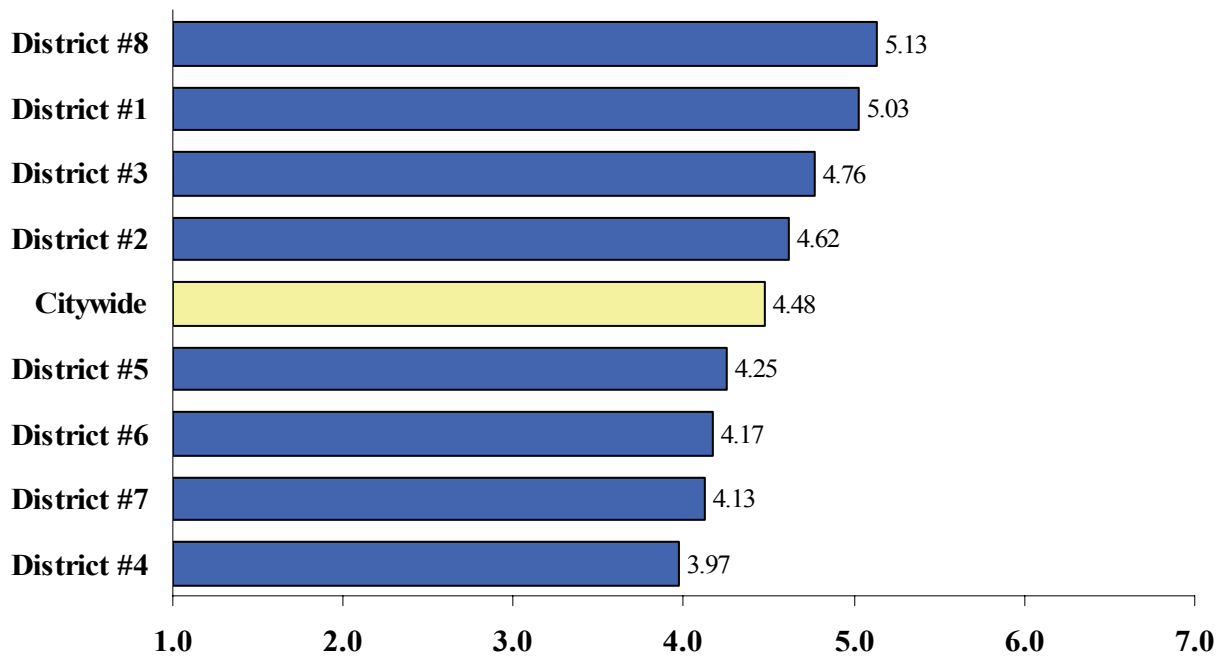
**Figure 26. Mean Quality Ratings for City Pools by District (7=high quality).**



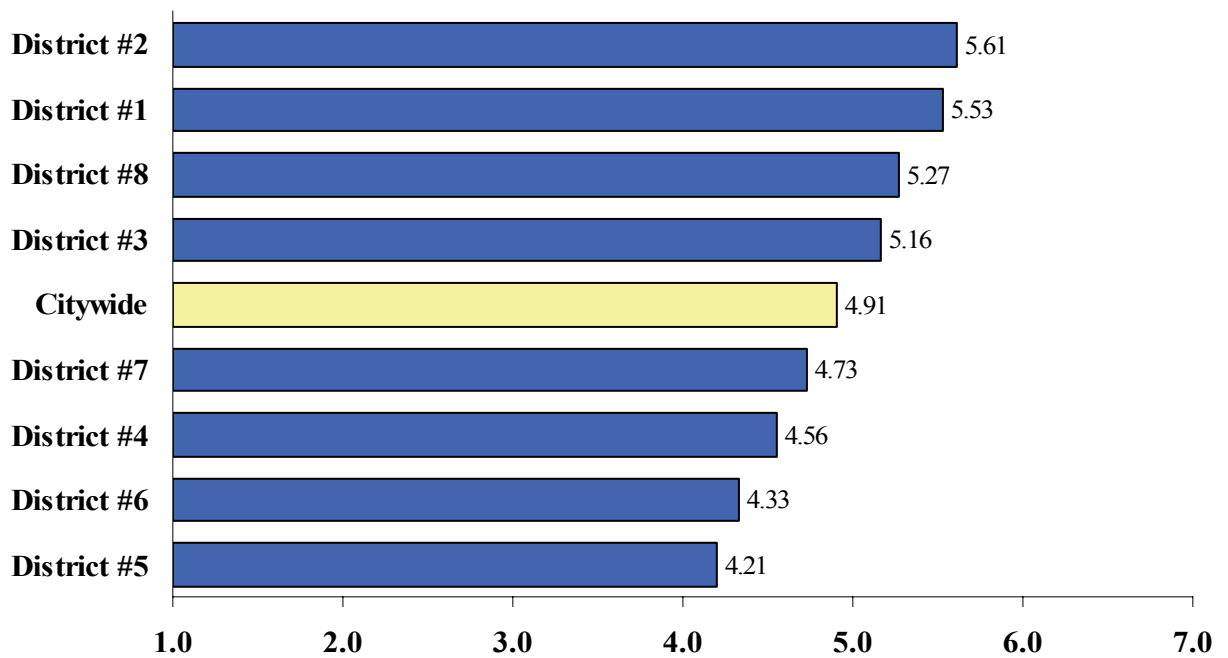
**Figure 27. Mean Quality Ratings for Community Centers by District (7=high quality).**



**Figure 28. Mean Quality Ratings for Boxing Gym by District (7=high quality).**



**Figure 29. Mean Quality Ratings for Computer Classes by District (7=high quality).**

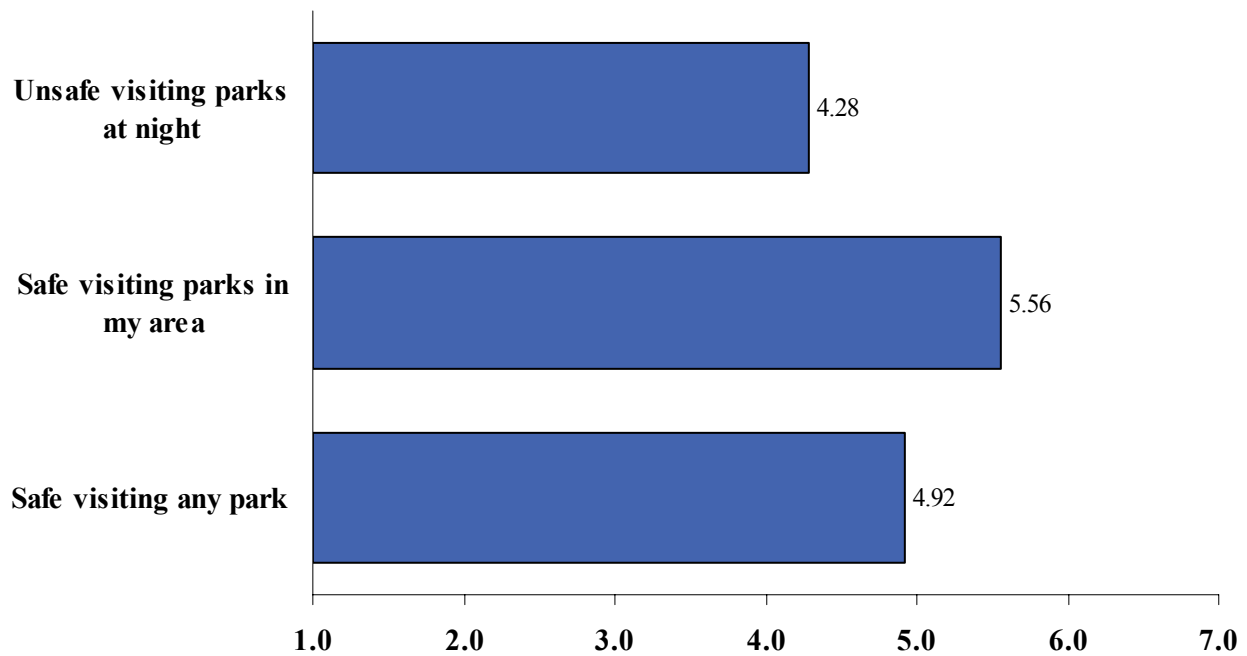


## Park Safety Ratings

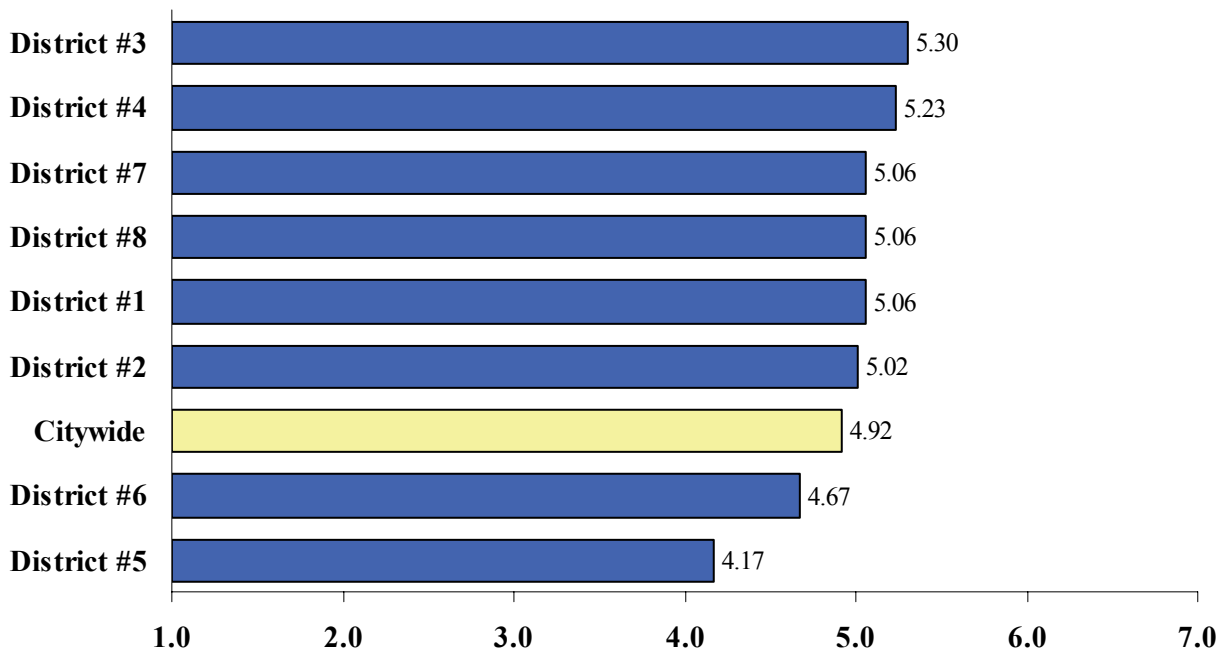
Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with three statements regarding safety in Laredo parks. The citywide mean responses are in Figure 30. Respondents used a seven-point scale with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree. Scores near the four-point area indicate a lack of consensus. The ratings are presented in Figures 31-33 as mean scores for the city and in comparison to each council district. About 51 percent of respondents citywide agreed (rating>4) with the statement that they felt unsafe visiting parks at night. Two-thirds of this group could not identify a specific park that made them feel most unsafe. However, the five parks most often identified as unsafe at night include the following:

- Three Points Park and Pool (7.2%)
- Bruni Plaza (4.4%)
- Benavides Park (2.7%)
- Santa Fe Park (2.0%)
- Azteca Park (1.8%)

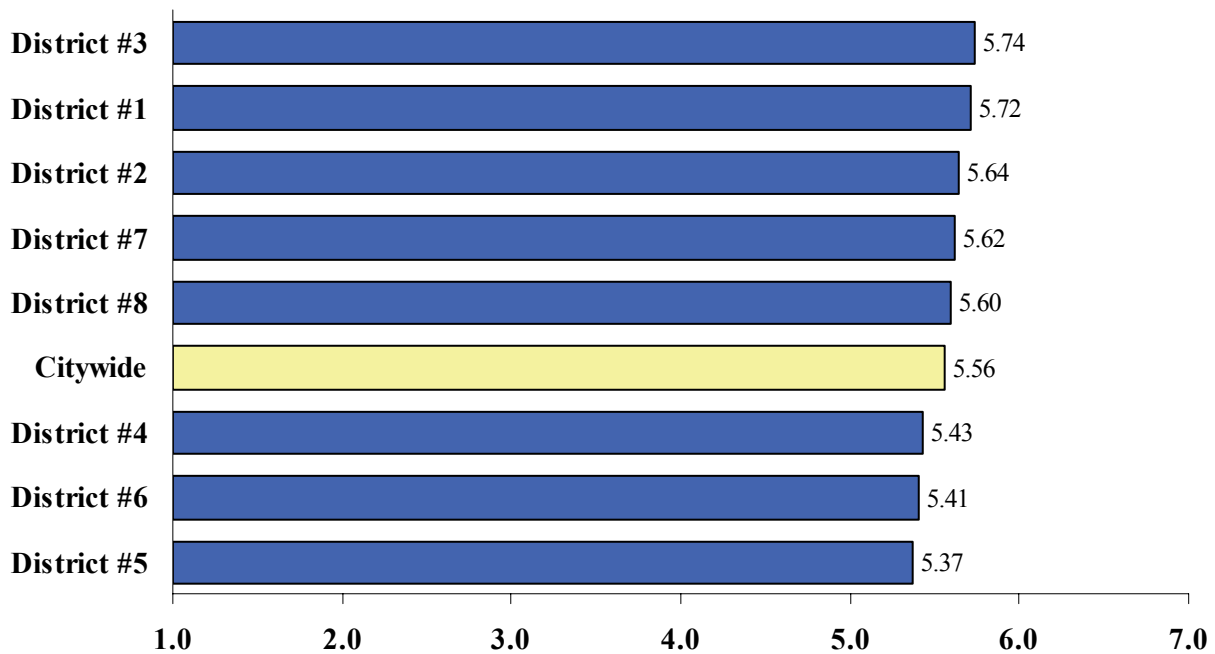
**Figure 30. Agreement with Statements about Park Safety (7=strongly agree).**



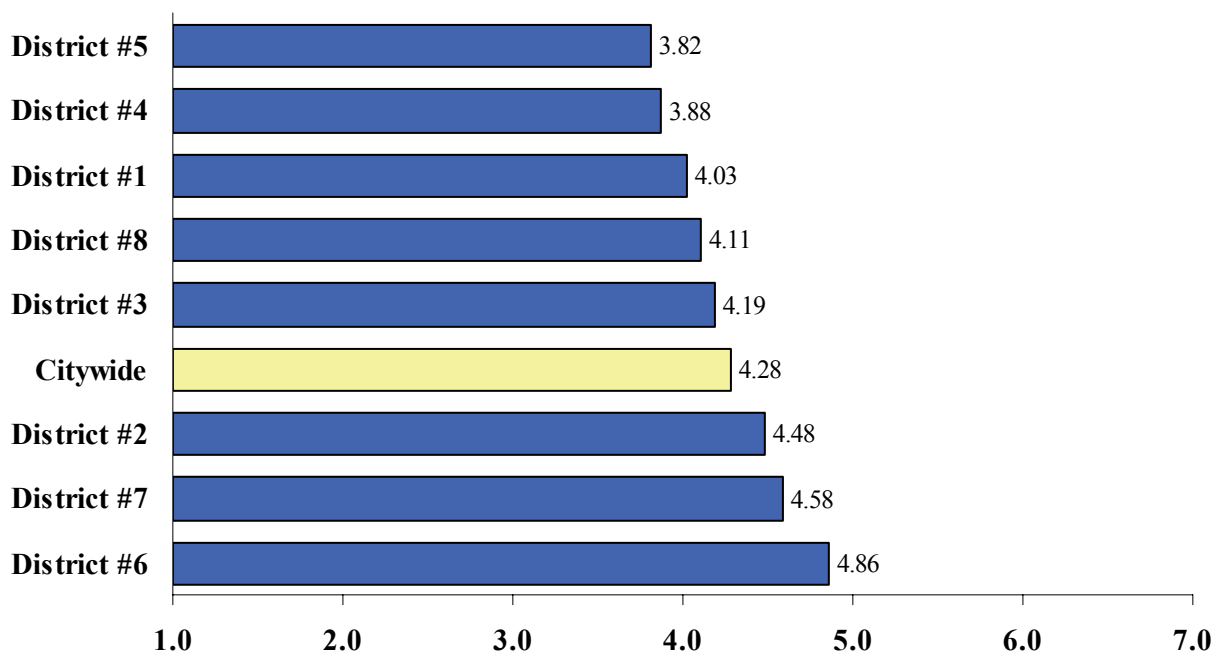
**Figure 31. Agreement with Statement that Respondent “feels safe visiting any park” (7=strongly agree).**



**Figure 32. Agreement with Statement that Respondent “feels safe visiting parks in my area” (7=strongly agree).**



**Figure 33. Agreement with Statement that Respondent “feels unsafe visiting parks at night” (7=strongly agree).**



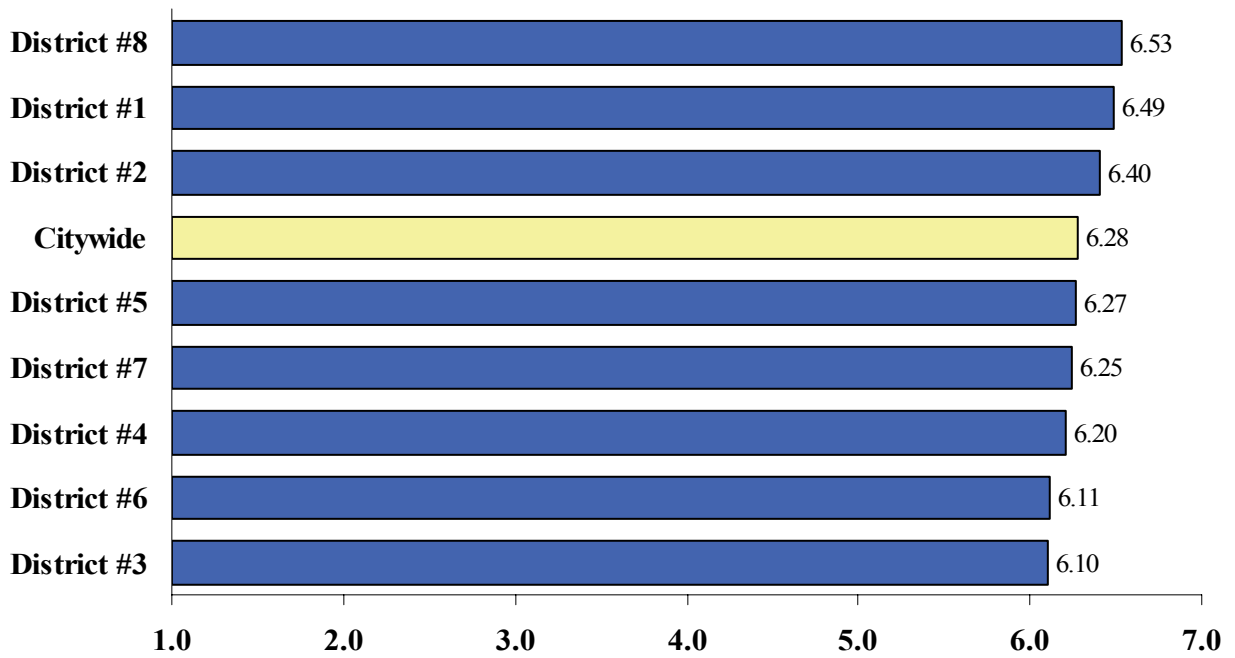
### **Characteristics and Preferences for Additional Amenities**

This section describes respondent attitudes toward the park and recreation amenities in general and provides information about respondent preferences regarding future development.

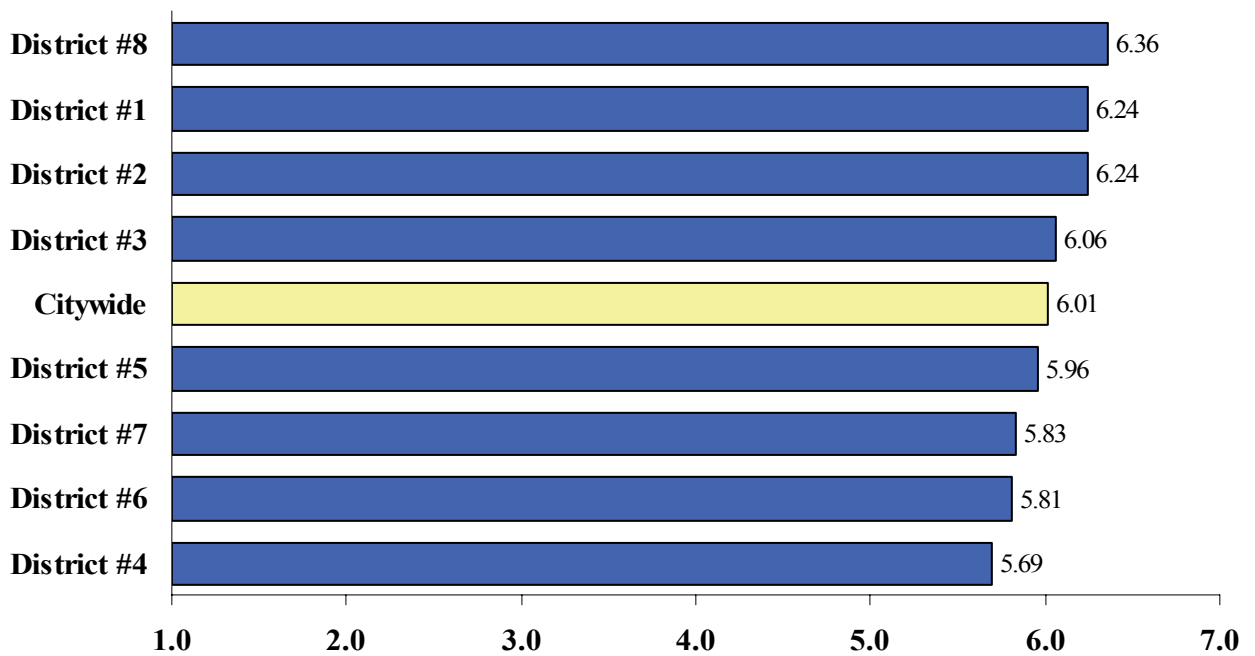
#### *Perceived Benefits and Costs of Parks and Recreation Amenities*

Municipal parks and recreation amenities are generally viewed as an intrinsic benefit to the community, but some residents may be concerned about unintentional costs associated with new parks or recreational activities (like littering for example). Using a seven-point scale with one meaning strongly disagree and seven meaning strongly agree, respondents were asked about potentially positive and negative effects of parks and recreation amenities. Figures 34-42 show the mean agreement scores for each district and the city. The data show strong agreement that parks and recreation amenities have positive effects on the community and disagreement the position that parks and recreation amenities produce negative effects.

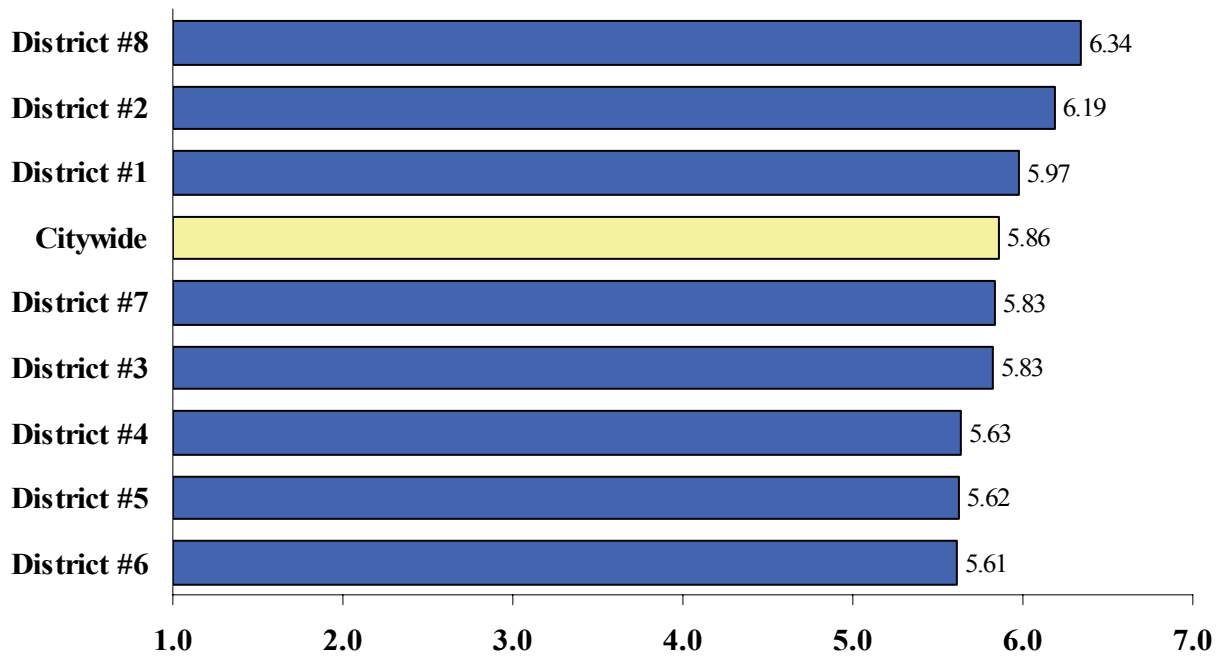
**Figure 34. Agreement with statement that parks “improve overall health” (7=strongly agree).**



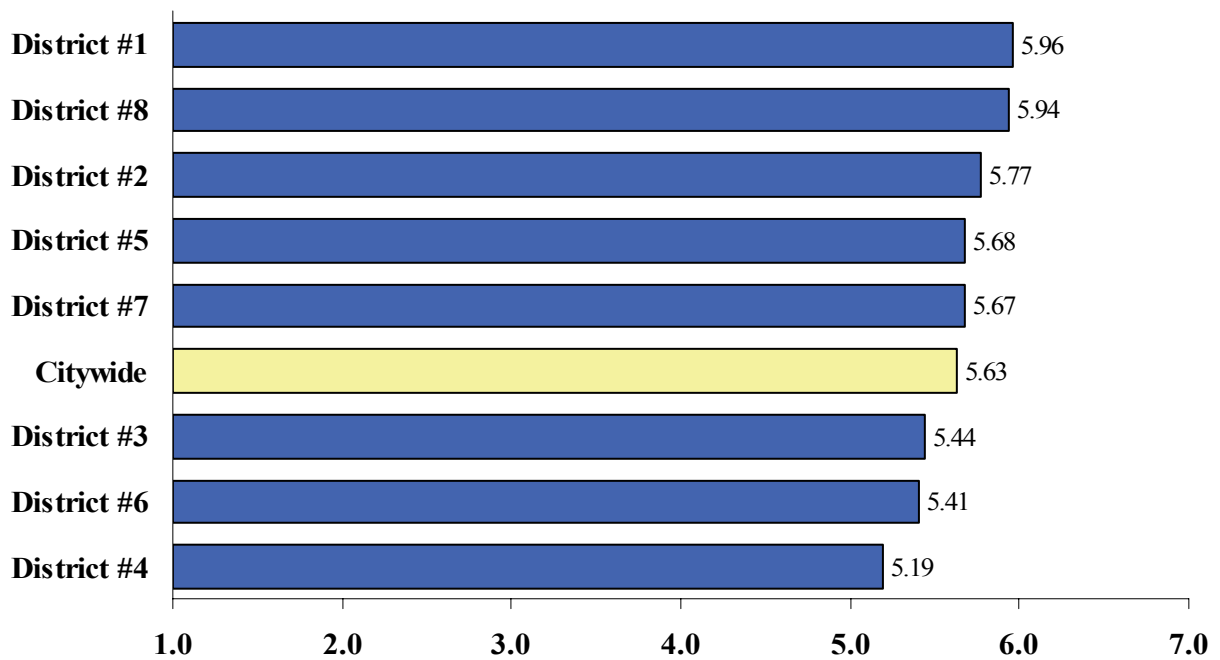
**Figure 35. Agreement with statement that parks “improve social relationships” (7=strongly agree).**



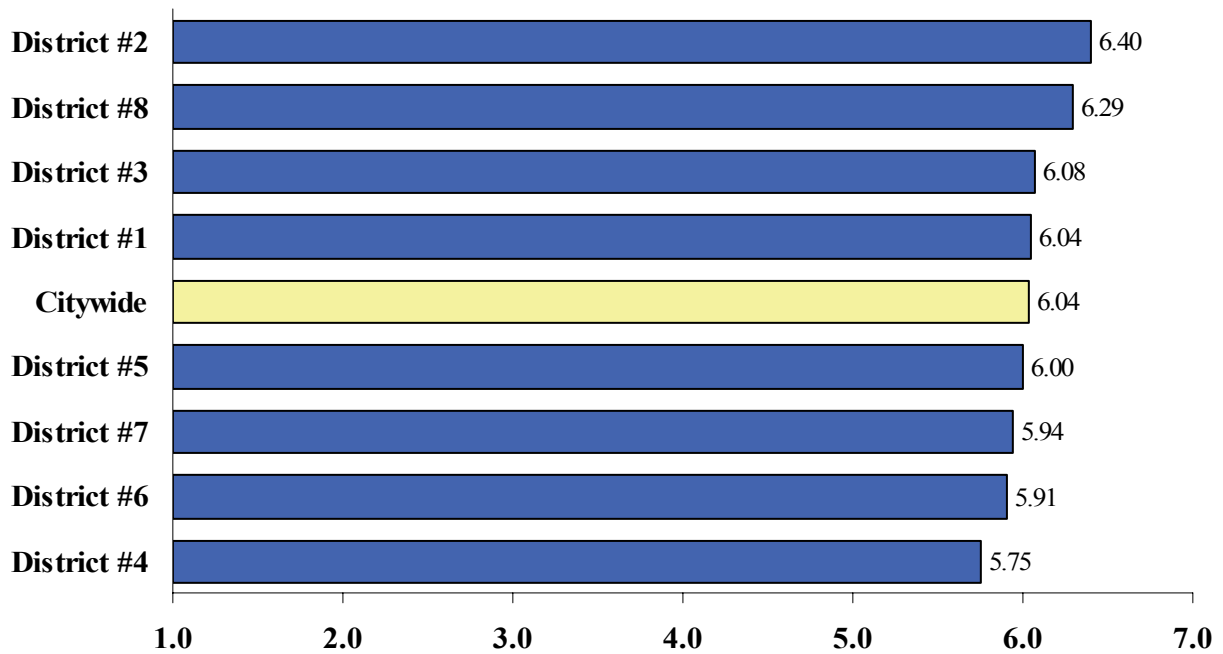
**Figure 36. Agreement with statement that parks “improves spiritual wellness” (7=strongly agree).**



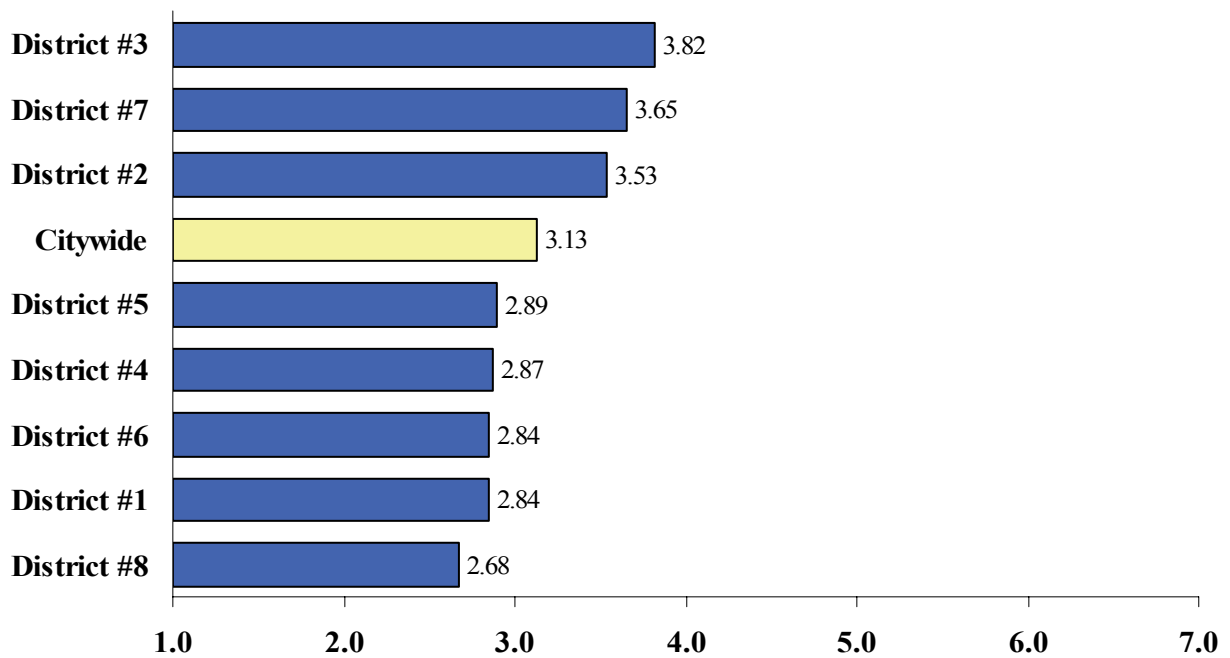
**Figure 37. Agreement with statement that parks “improves the economy” (7=strongly agree).**



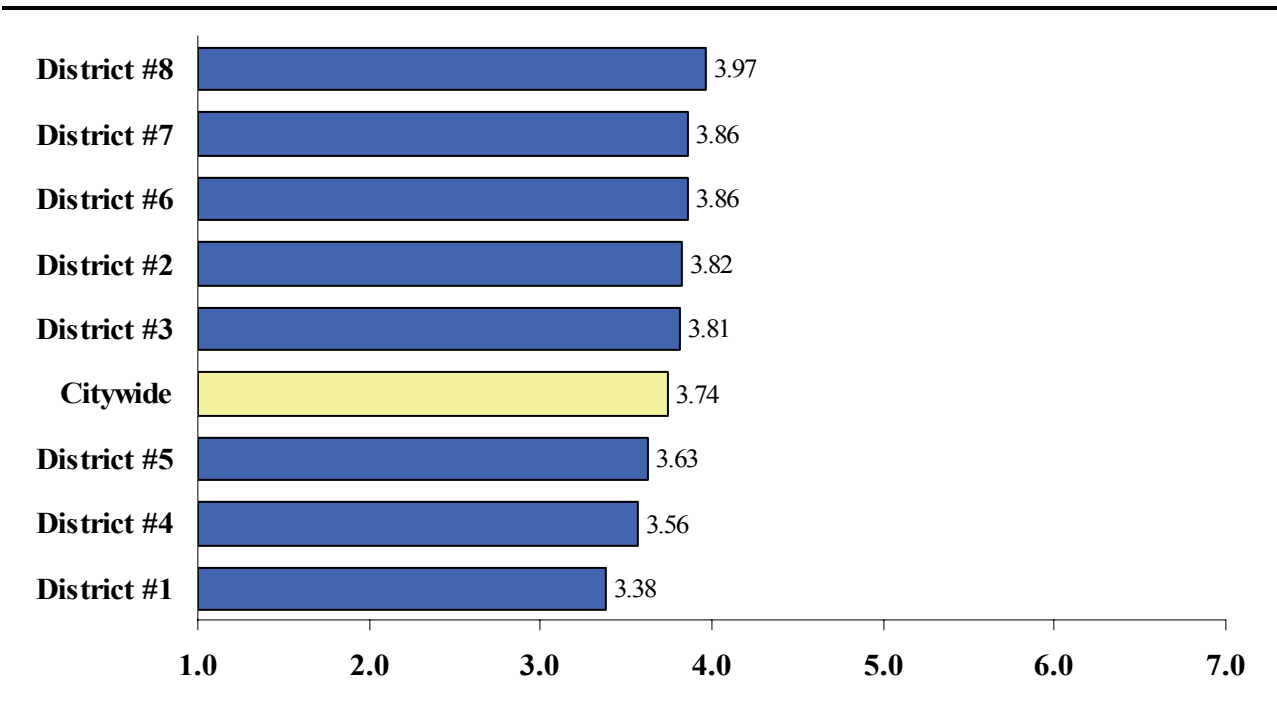
**Figure 38. Agreement with statement that parks “improves environment” (7=strongly agree).**



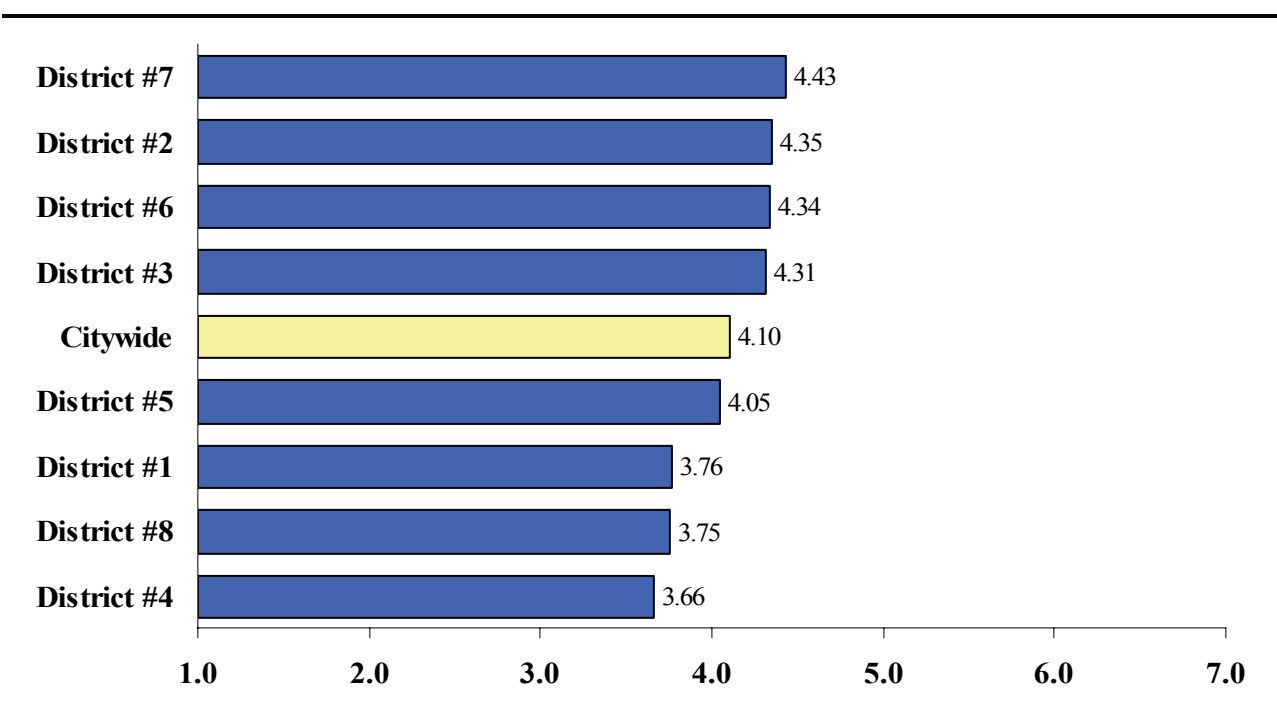
**Figure 39. Agreement with statement that parks “are unnecessary tax burden” (7=strongly agree).**



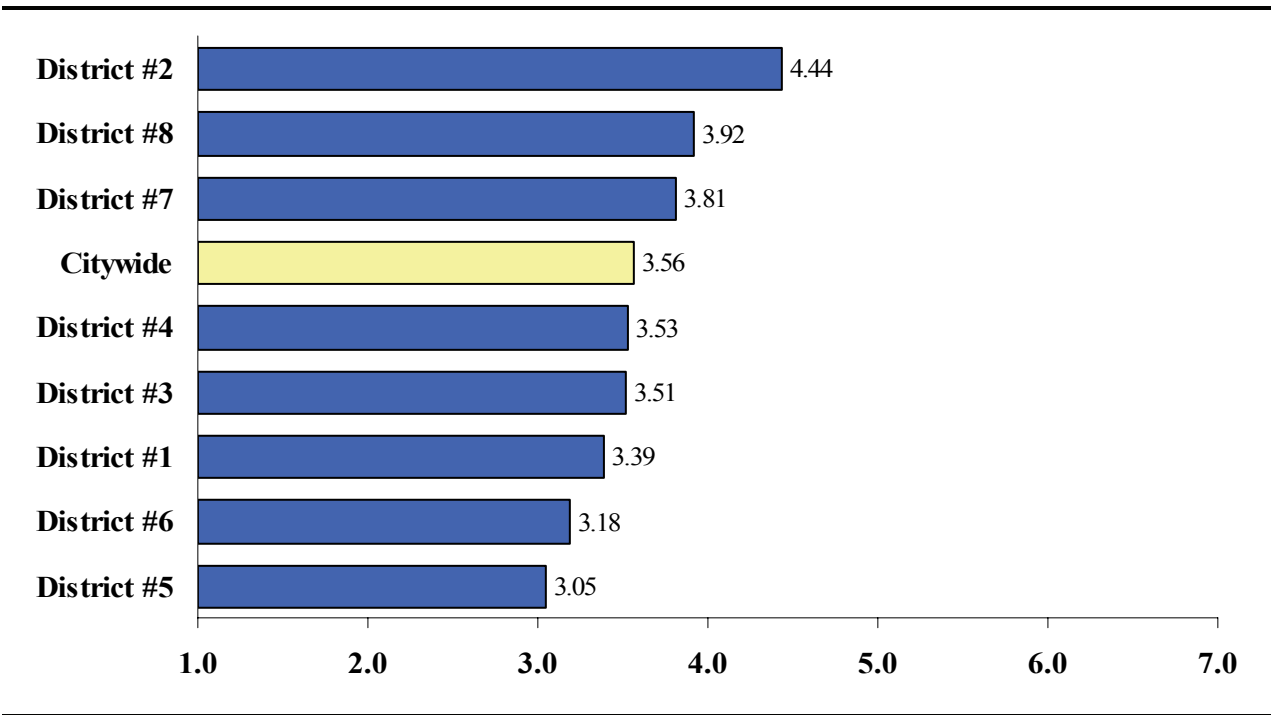
**Figure 40. Agreement with statement that parks “create/attract unsafe conditions” (7=strongly agree).**



**Figure 41. Agreement with statement that parks “increase littering” (7=strongly agree).**



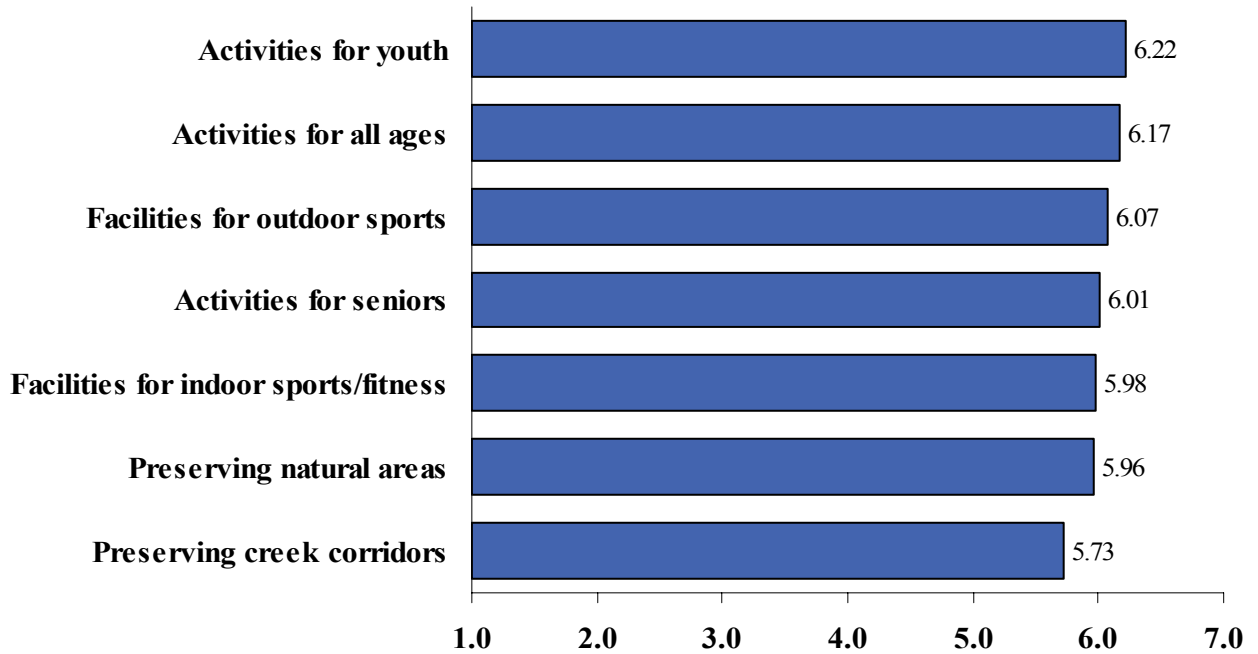
**Figure 42. Agreement with statement that parks “attract undesirable animals/birds” (7=strongly agree).**



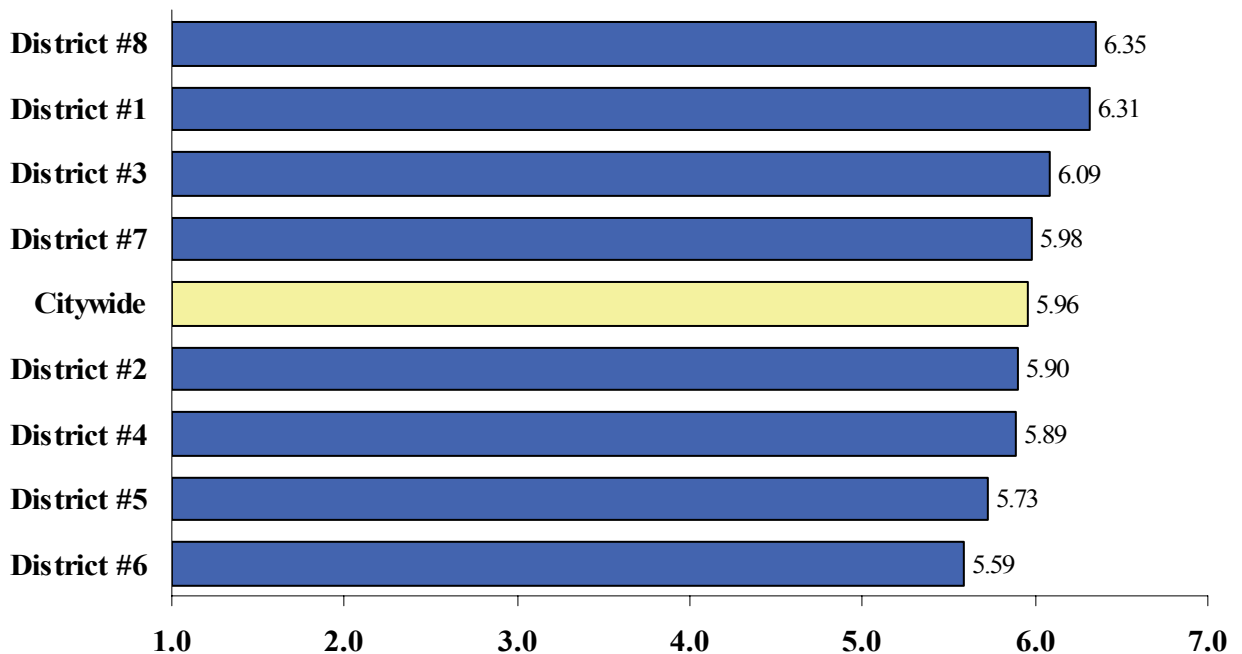
### *Importance of Parks and Recreation Benefits*

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of seven key benefits to these municipal amenities using a seven-point scale where one means not at all important and seven means very important. A citywide summary ranking of importance is presented in Figure 43, and the mean scores for each district and citywide respondents are presented in Figures 44-50. All benefits were recognized as important, but District #5 and #6 consistently rated each benefit as less important than the citywide mean.

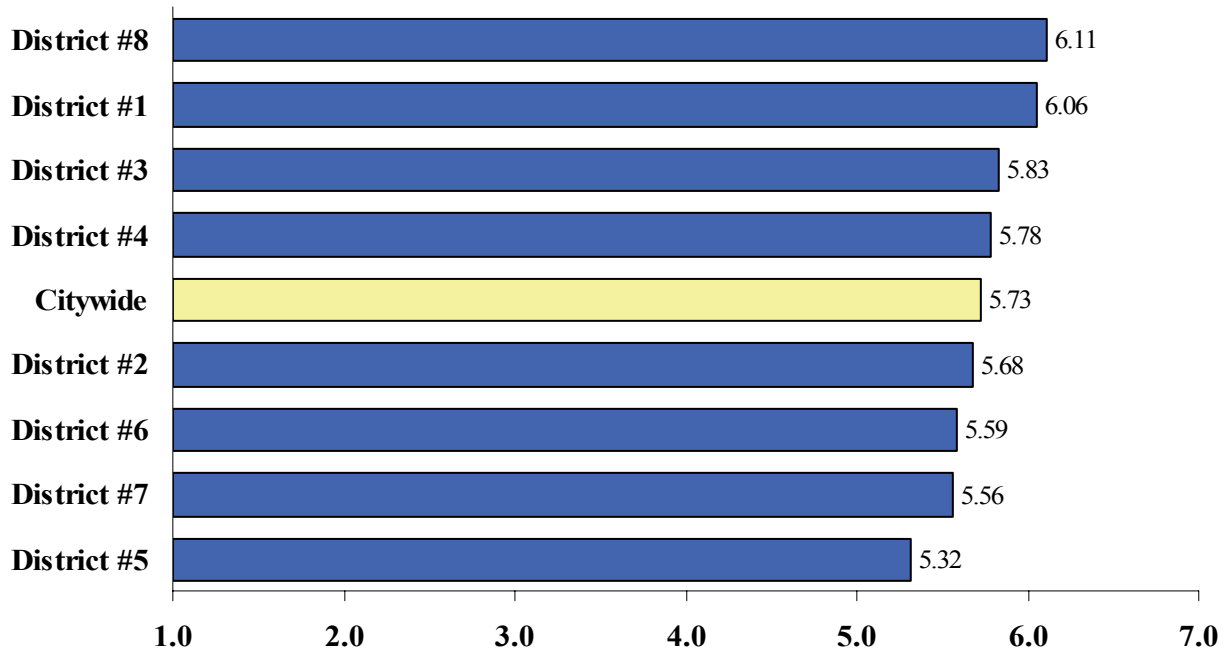
**Figure 43. Mean Importance of Benefits Associated with all Parks and Recreation—Citywide (7=very important).**



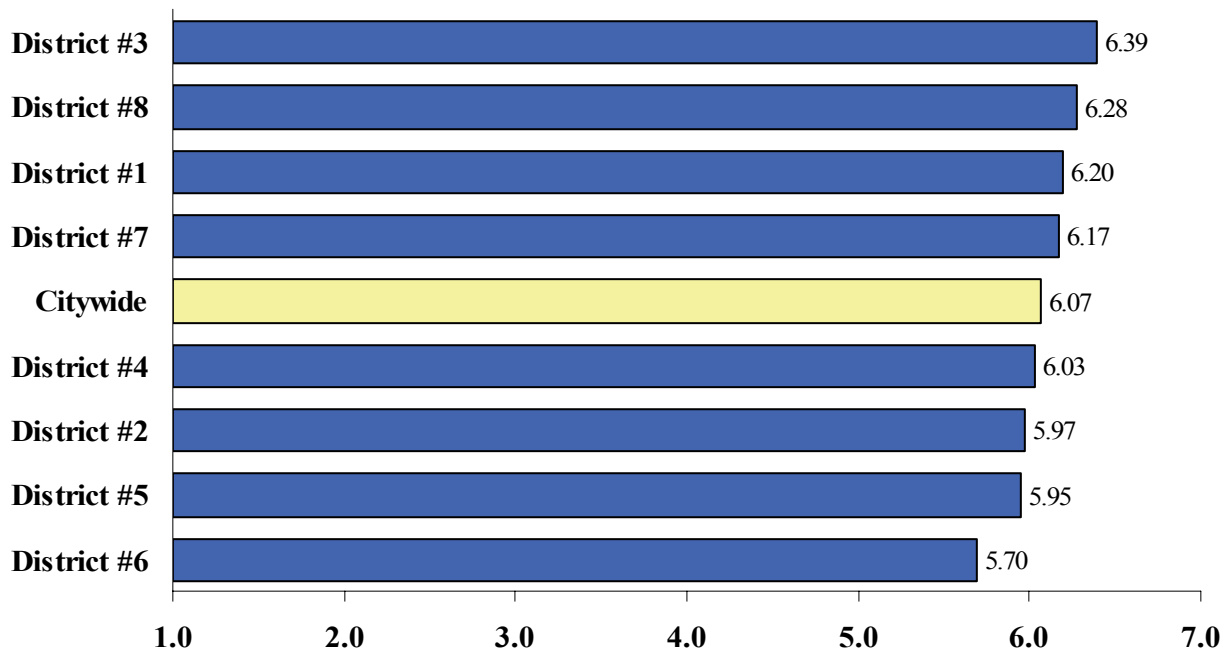
**Figure 44. Mean Importance of “preserving natural areas/open spaces” (7=very important).**



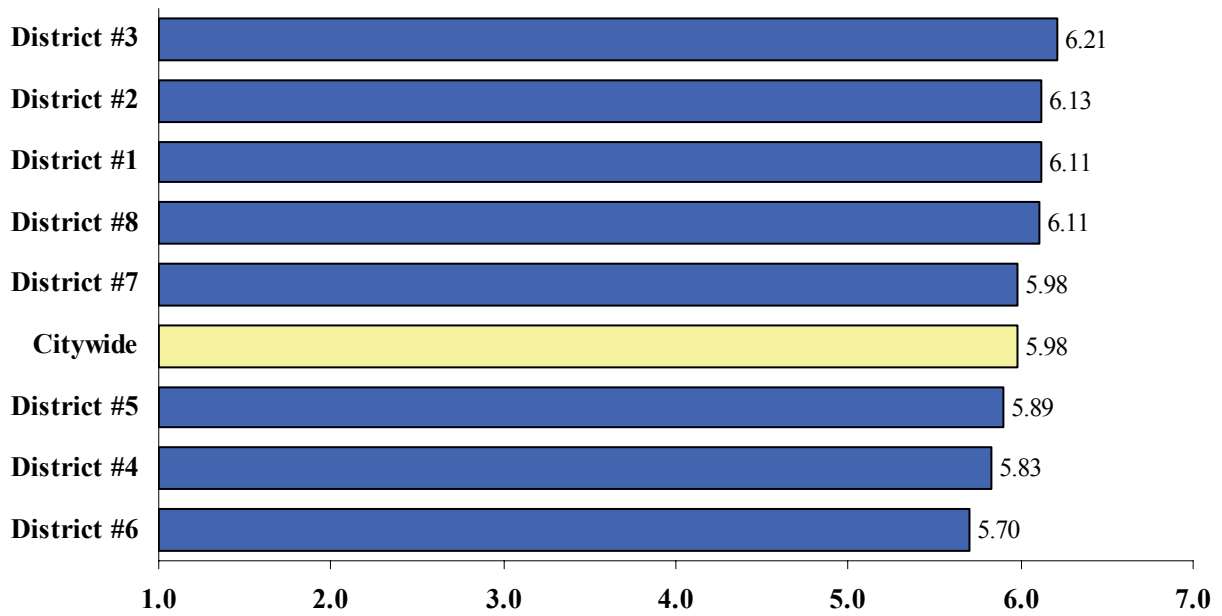
**Figure 45. Mean Importance of “preserving natural creek corridors” (7=very important).**



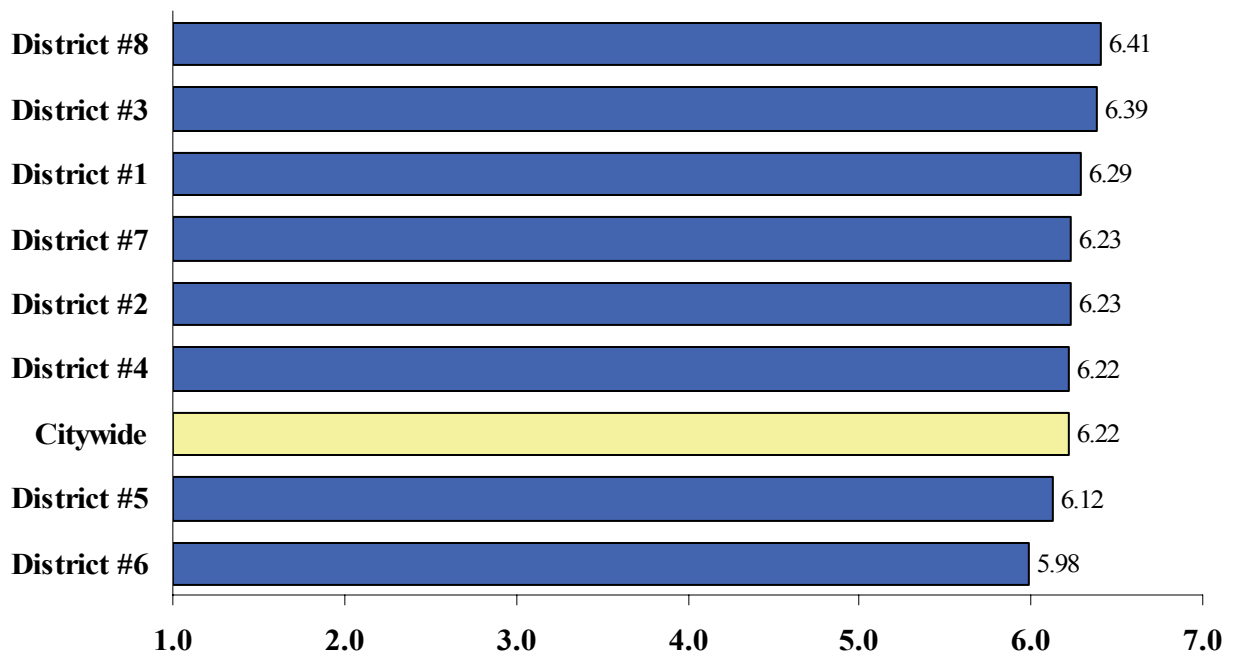
**Figure 46. Mean Importance of “facilities for outdoor sports” (7=very important).**



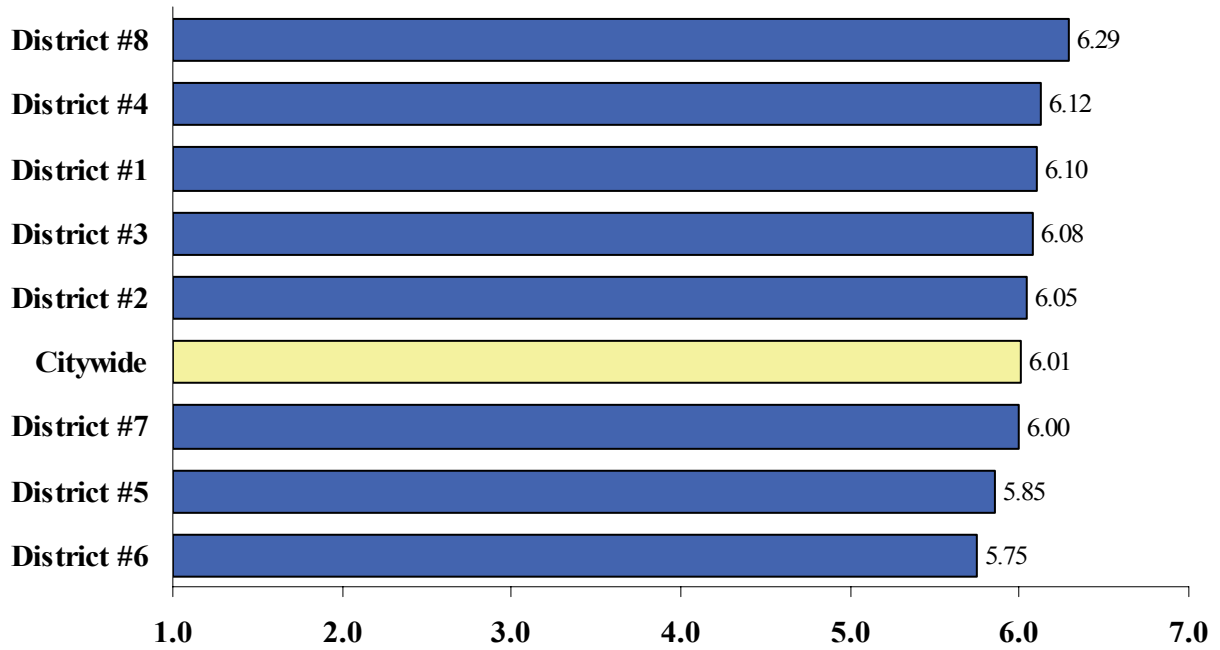
**Figure 47. Mean Importance of “facilities for indoor recreation/fitness” (7=very important).**



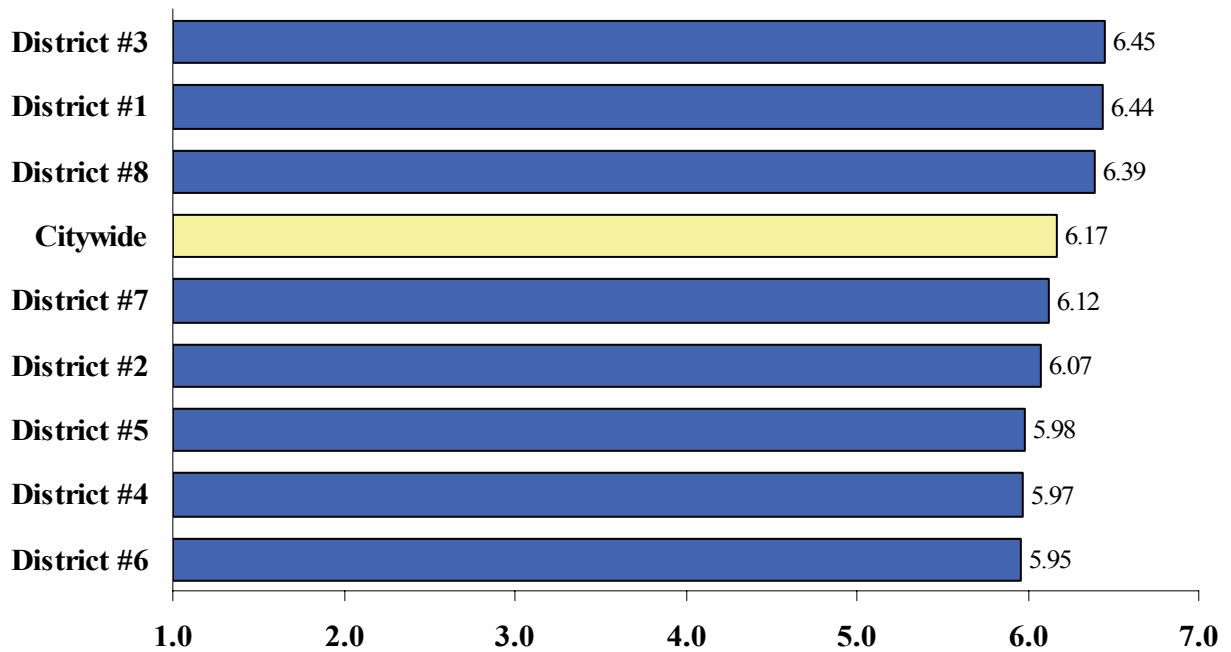
**Figure 48. Mean Importance of “youth/teen activities” (7=very important).**



**Figure 49. Mean Importance of “senior activities” (7=very important).**



**Figure 50. Mean Importance of “activities for all ages/families” (7=very important).**

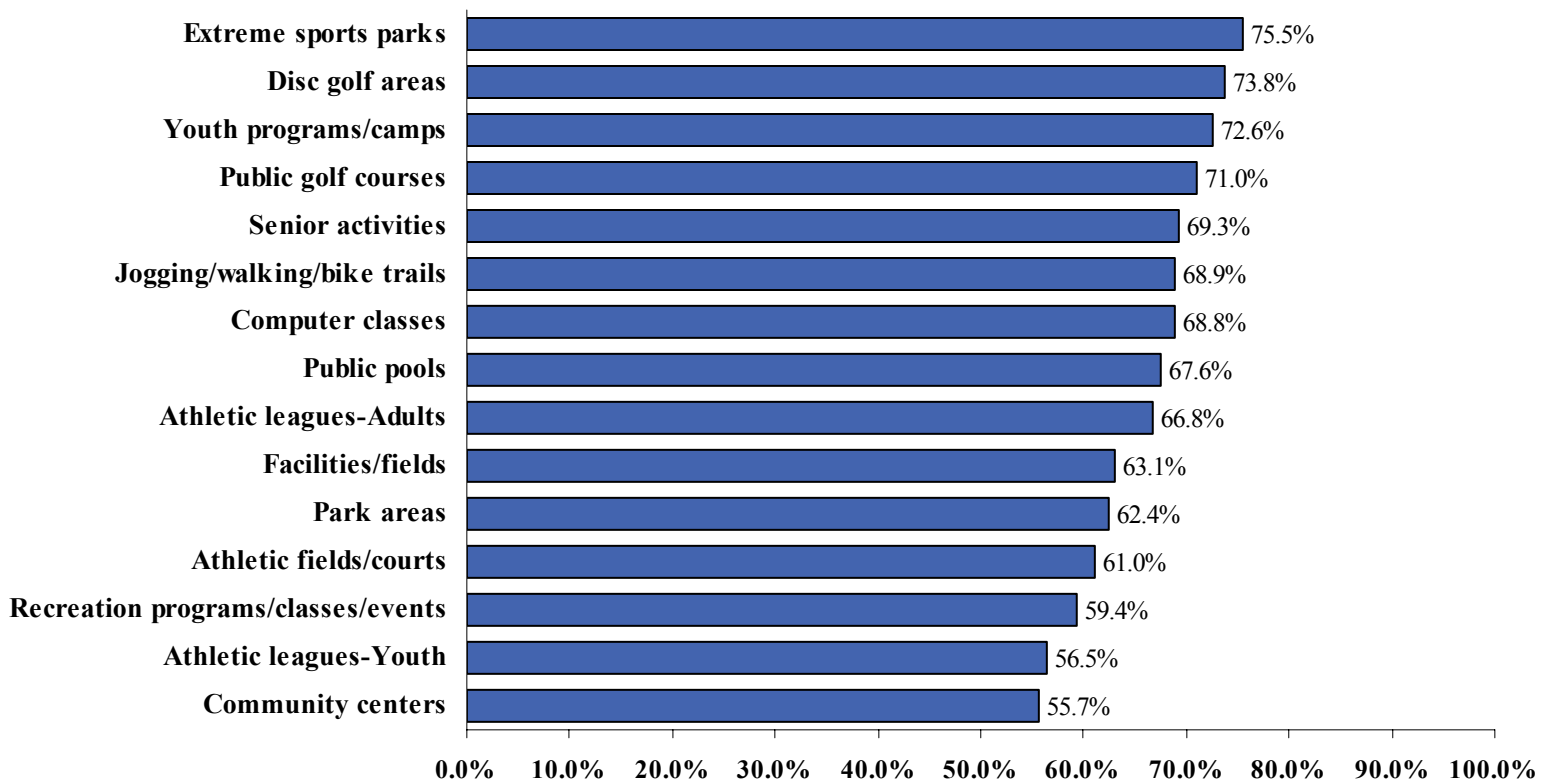


## Priorities for Additional Development

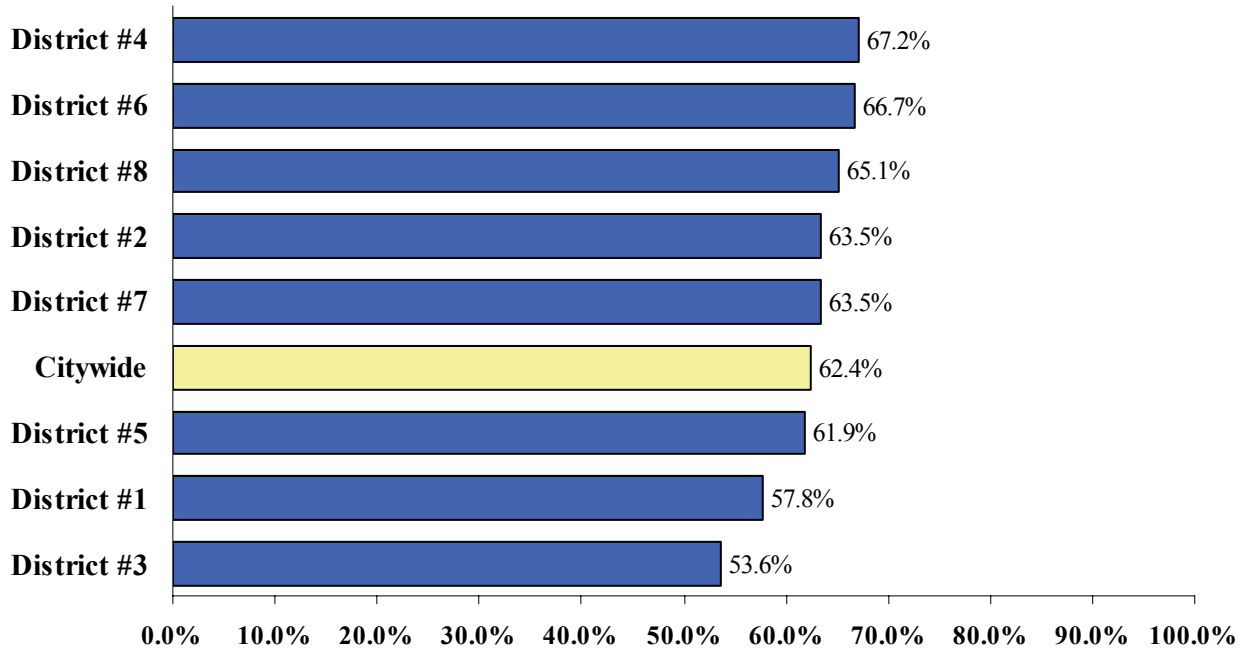
It is always difficult to assess resident demand for public amenities because it is easy for them to express desire for more of all amenities when cost is not an issue. However, it is possible to identify relative preferences among amenities. We asked respondents two sets of questions to illicit such relative preferences.

**Supply Gaps.** The first set of questions identified 15 amenities and asked respondents whether Laredo provided “too few”, “too many” or “about the right amount.” As the percentage of respondents indicating “too few” increases, the gap between current provision and desired provision increases, which is one indicator of resident preferences. Figure 51 provides a citywide ranking of the amenities by the percentage of respondents selecting the “too few” response. Figures 52-66 show the percentage of “too few” respondents by district and the city. Each chart ranks districts from highest percentage to lowest. Substantial variation across districts and amenities provides useful insight into district-based preferences.

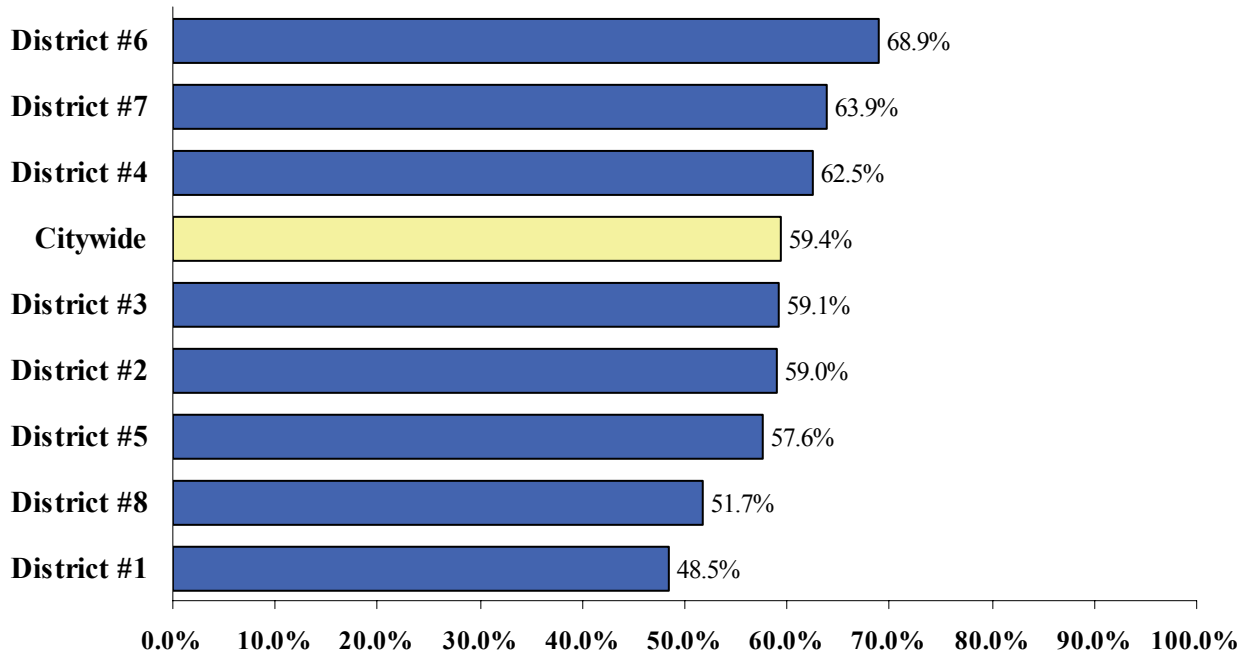
**Figure 51. Citywide Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” of the following amenities**



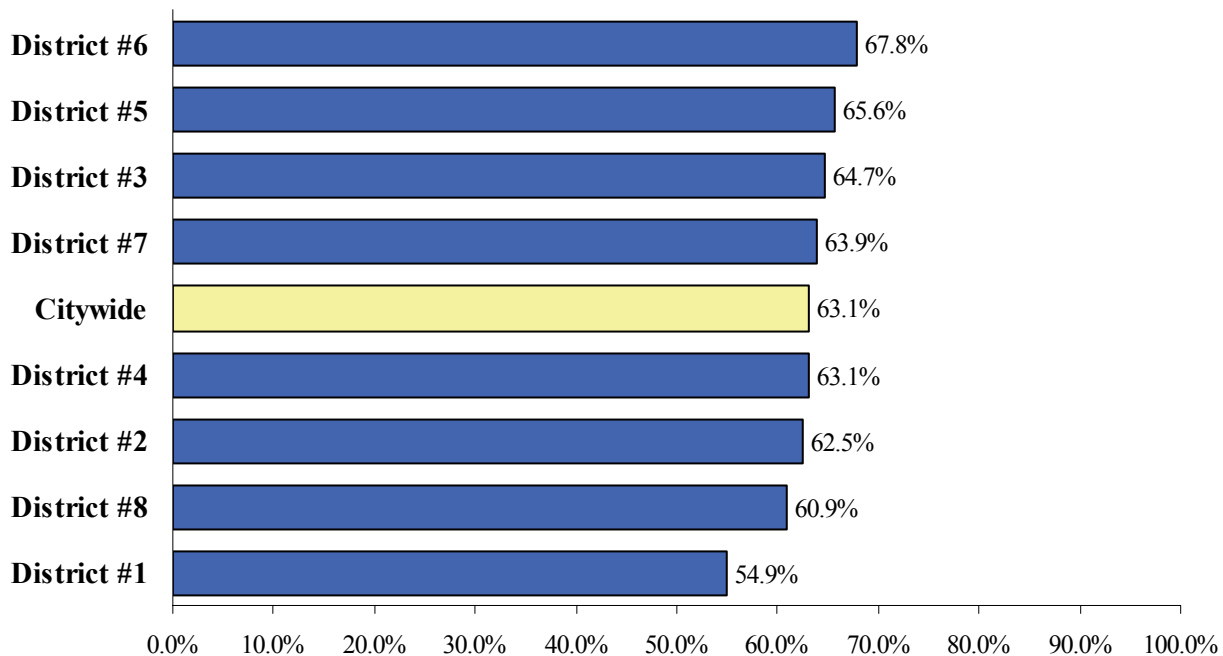
**Figure 52. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Park Areas**



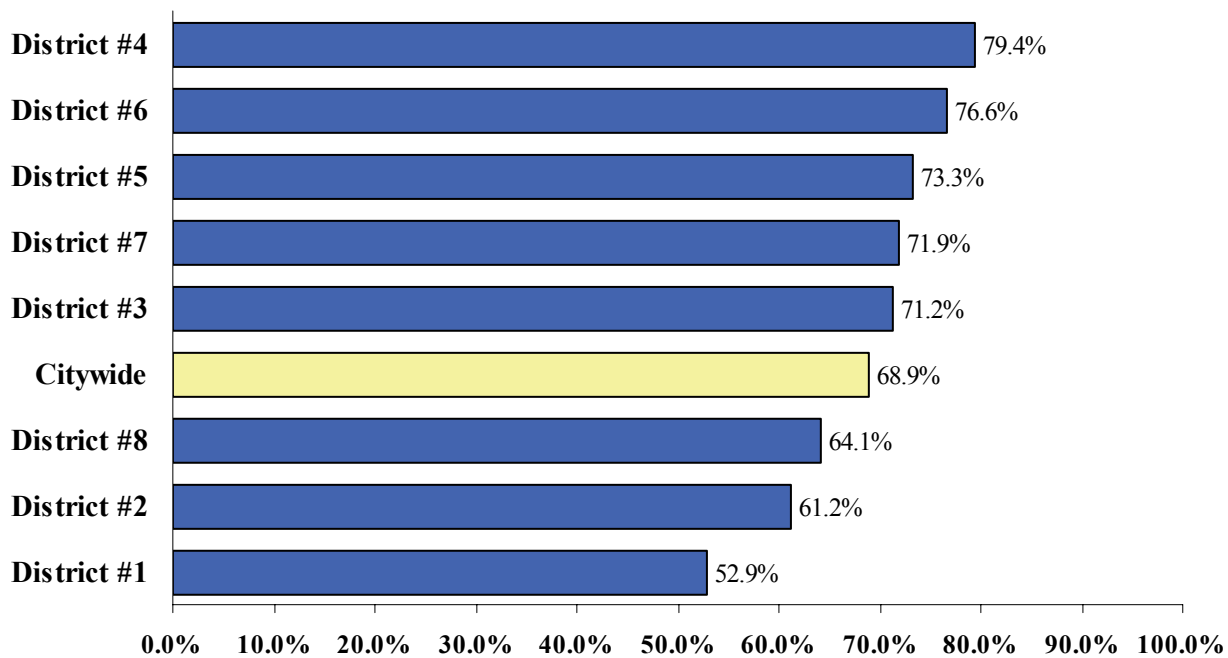
**Figure 53. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Programs/Classes/Events**



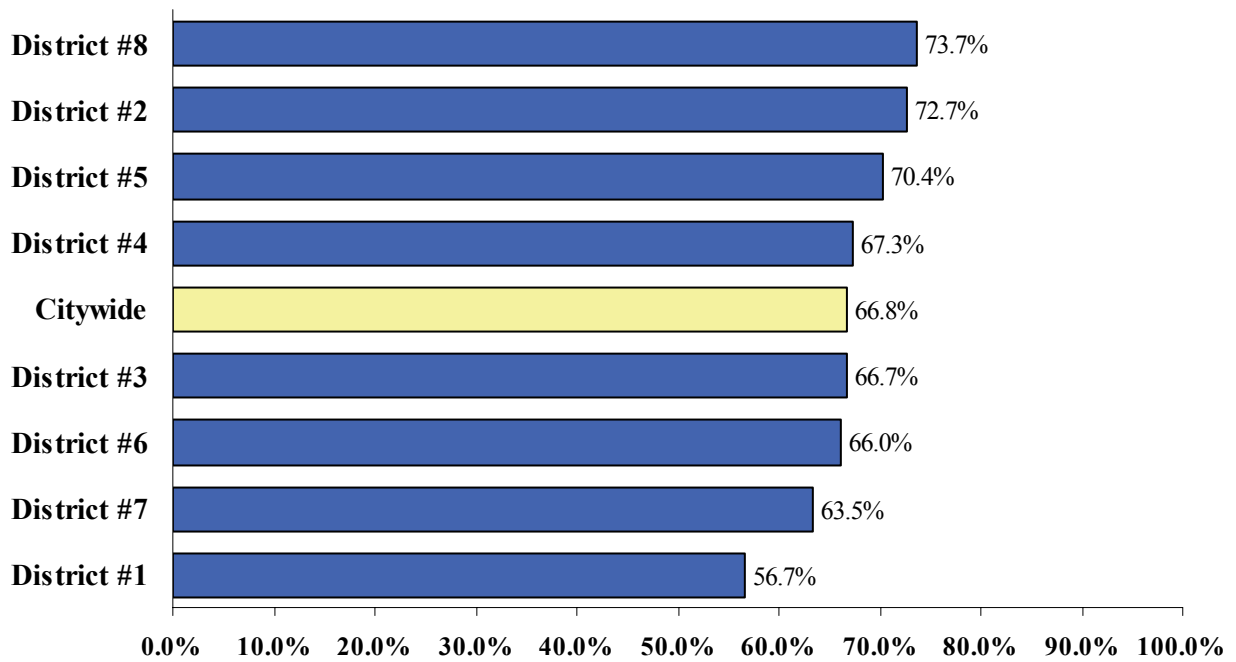
**Figure 54. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Facilities/Fields at Parks**



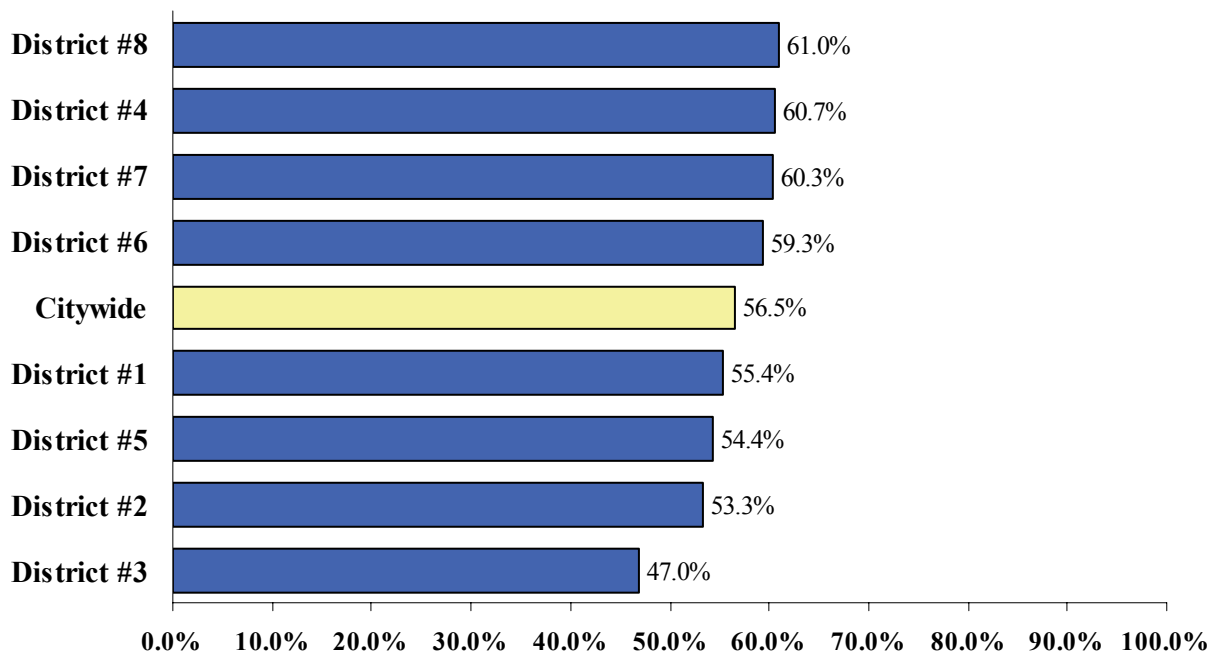
**Figure 55. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Jogging/walking/biking Trails.**



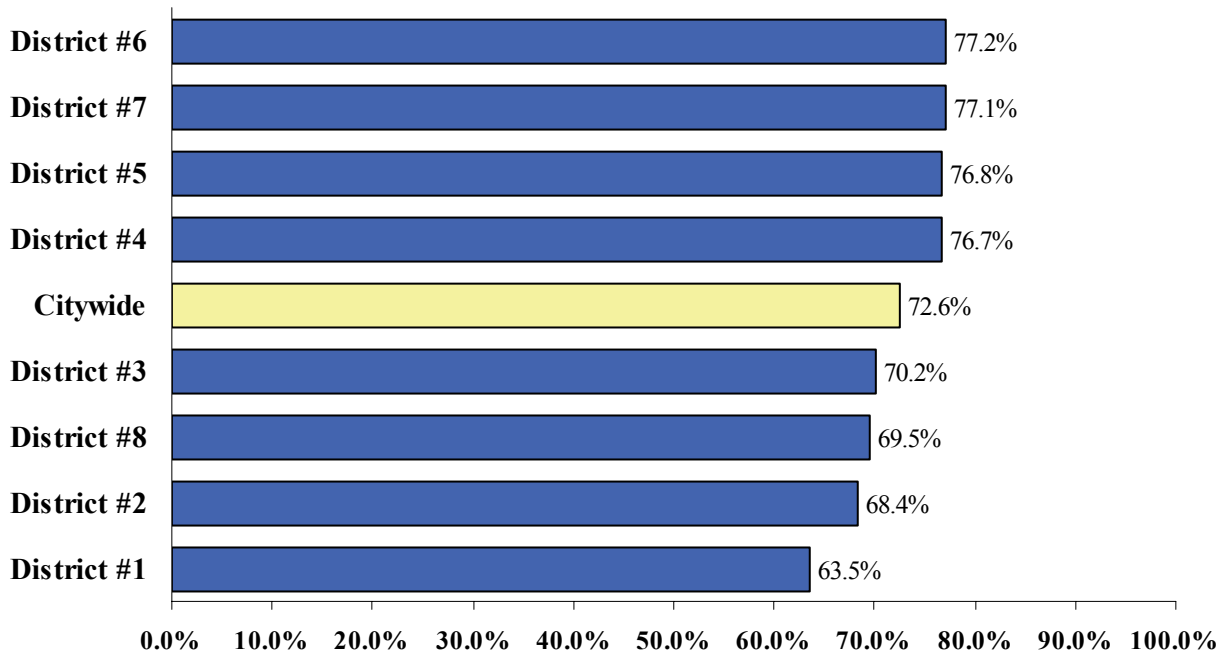
**Figure 56. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Adult Athletic Leagues**



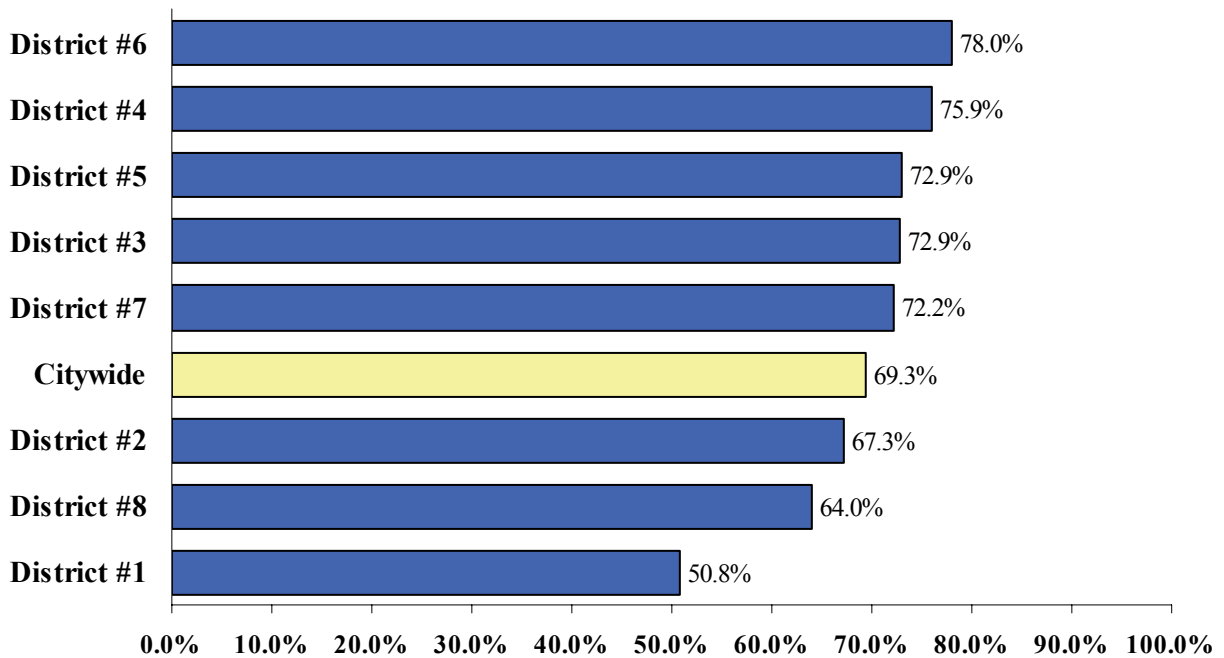
**Figure 57. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Youth Athletic Leagues.**



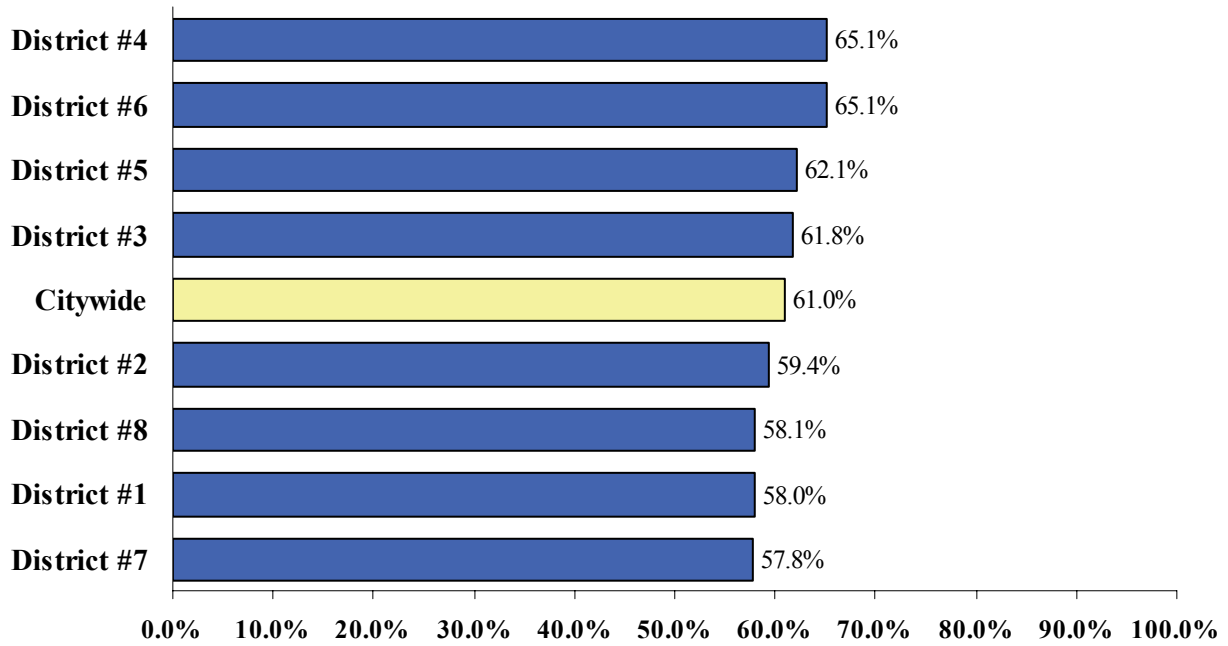
**Figure 58. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Youth Programs/camps.**



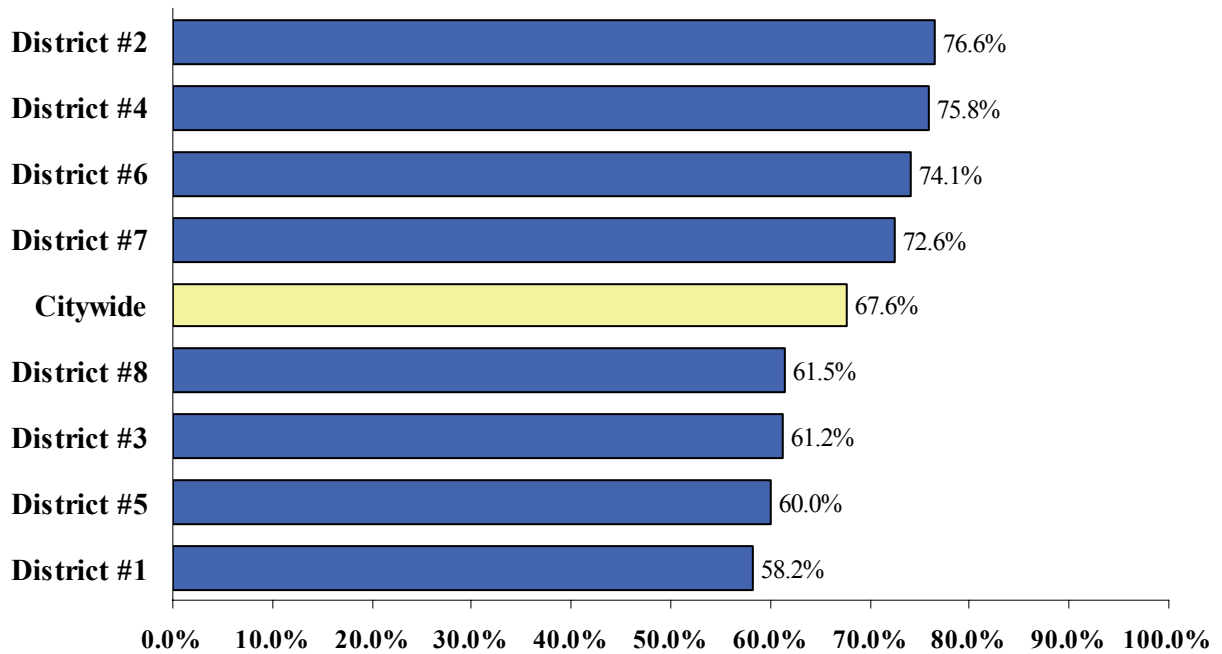
**Figure 59. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Senior Activities.**



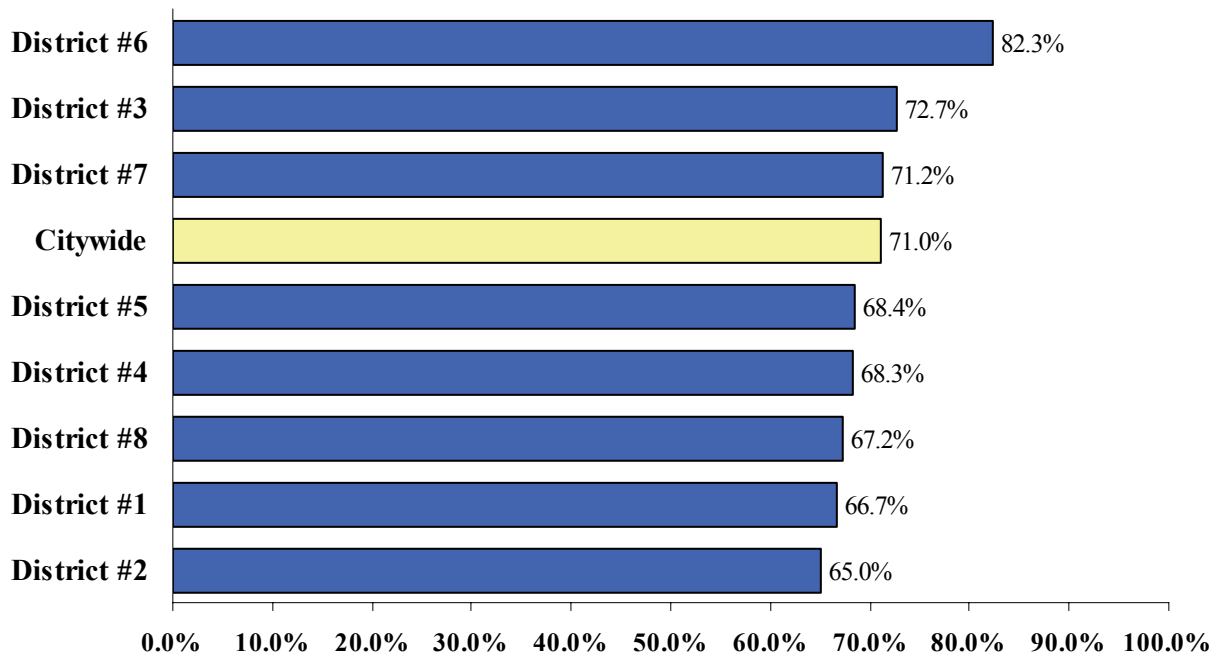
**Figure 60. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Athletic Fields/courts.**



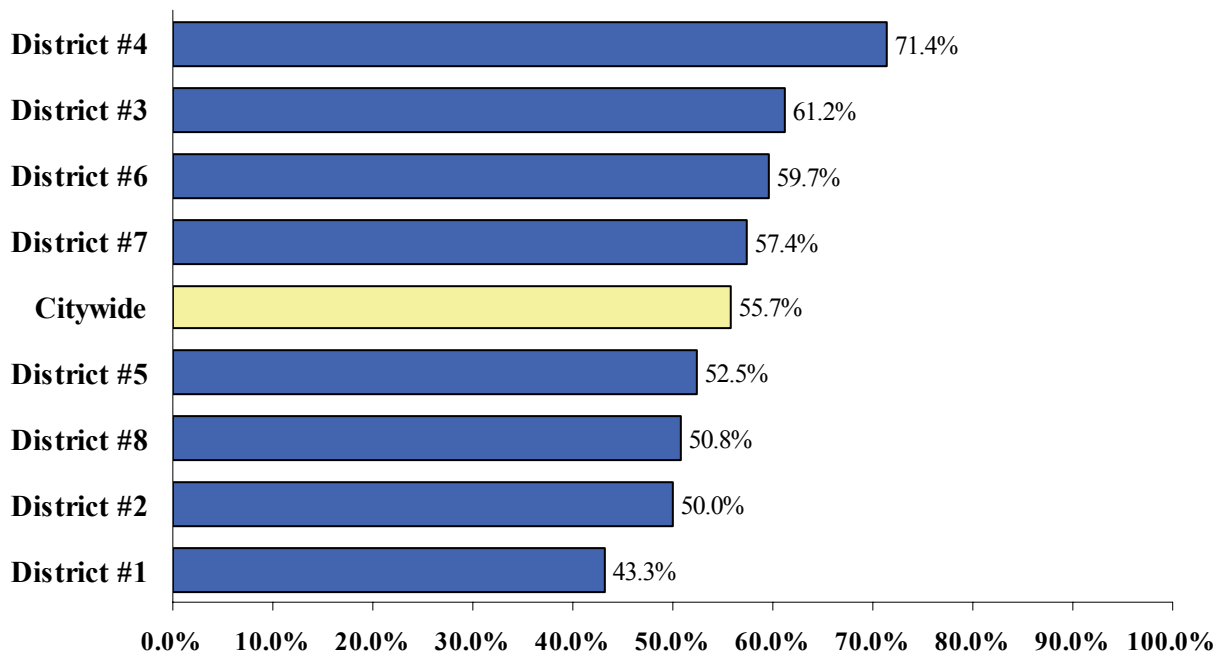
**Figure 61. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Public Pools.**



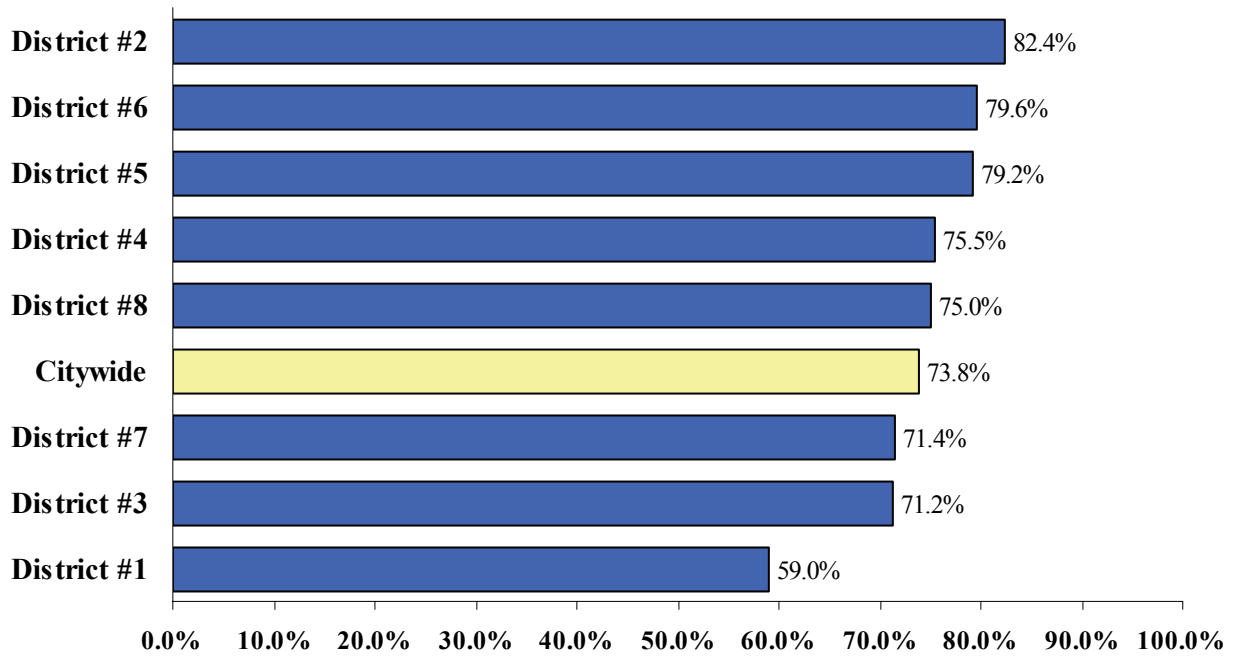
**Figure 62. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Public Golf Courses.**



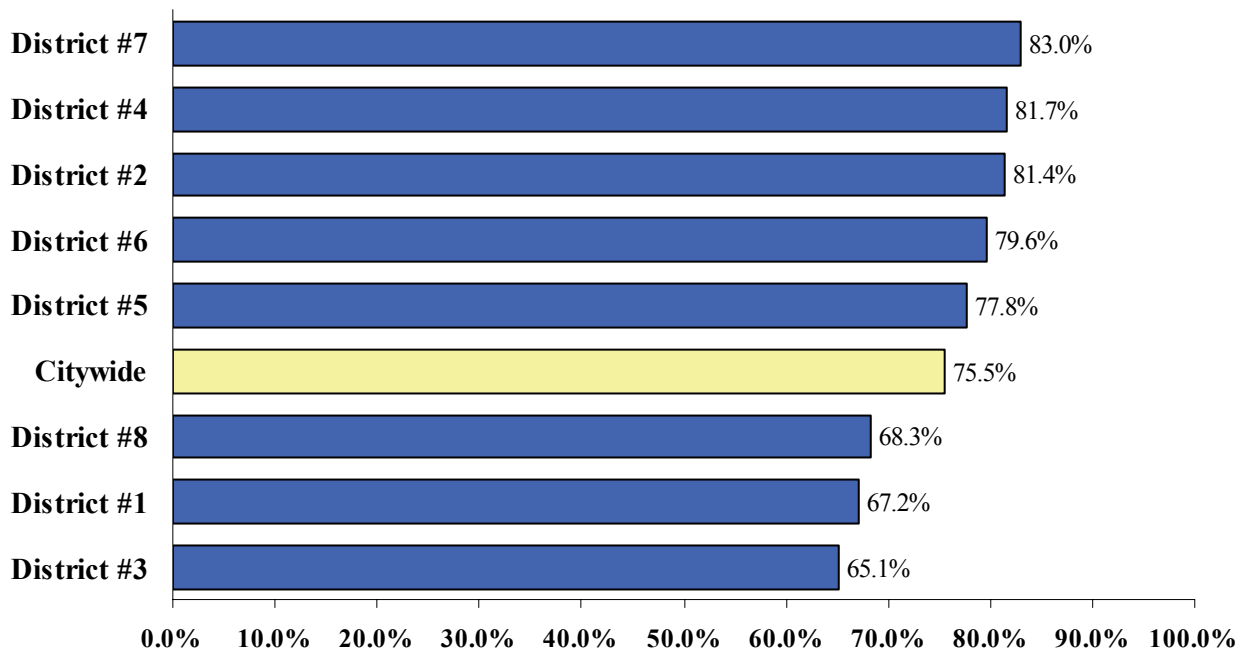
**Figure 63. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Community Centers.**



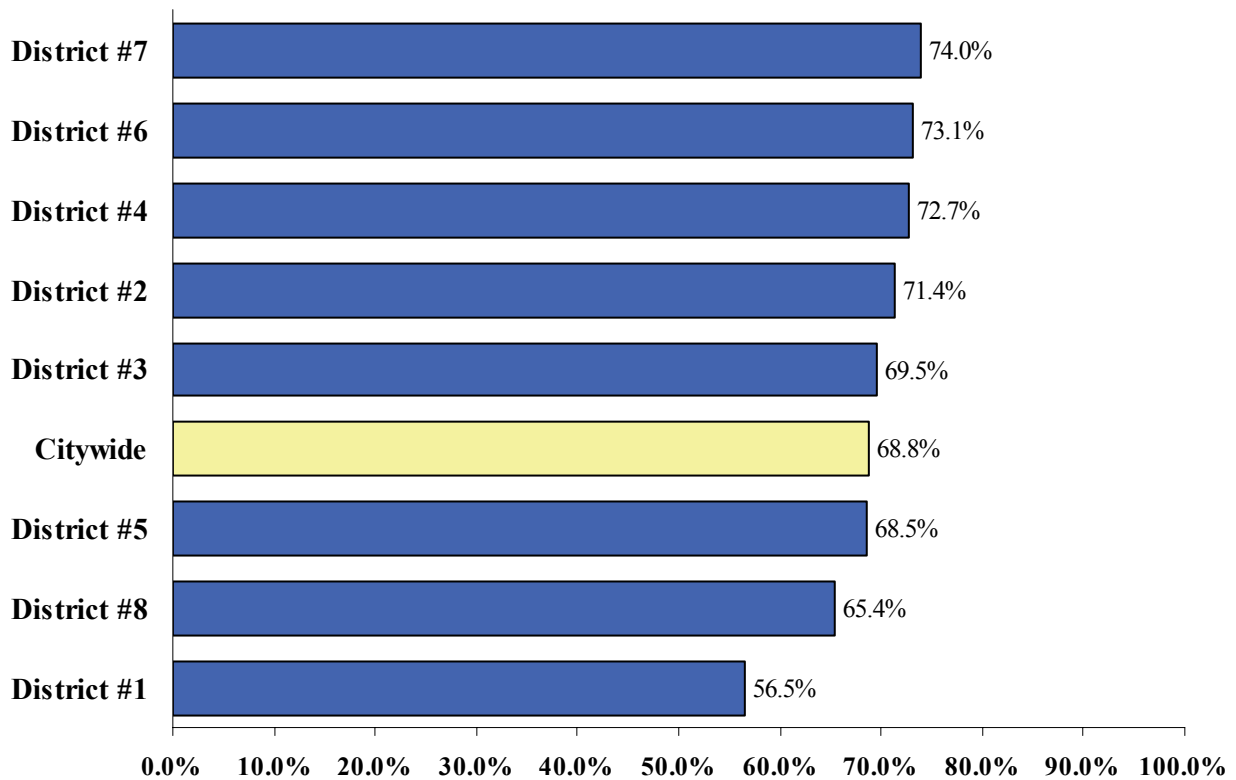
**Figure 64. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Disc Golf Courses.**



**Figure 65. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Extreme Sports Parks.**

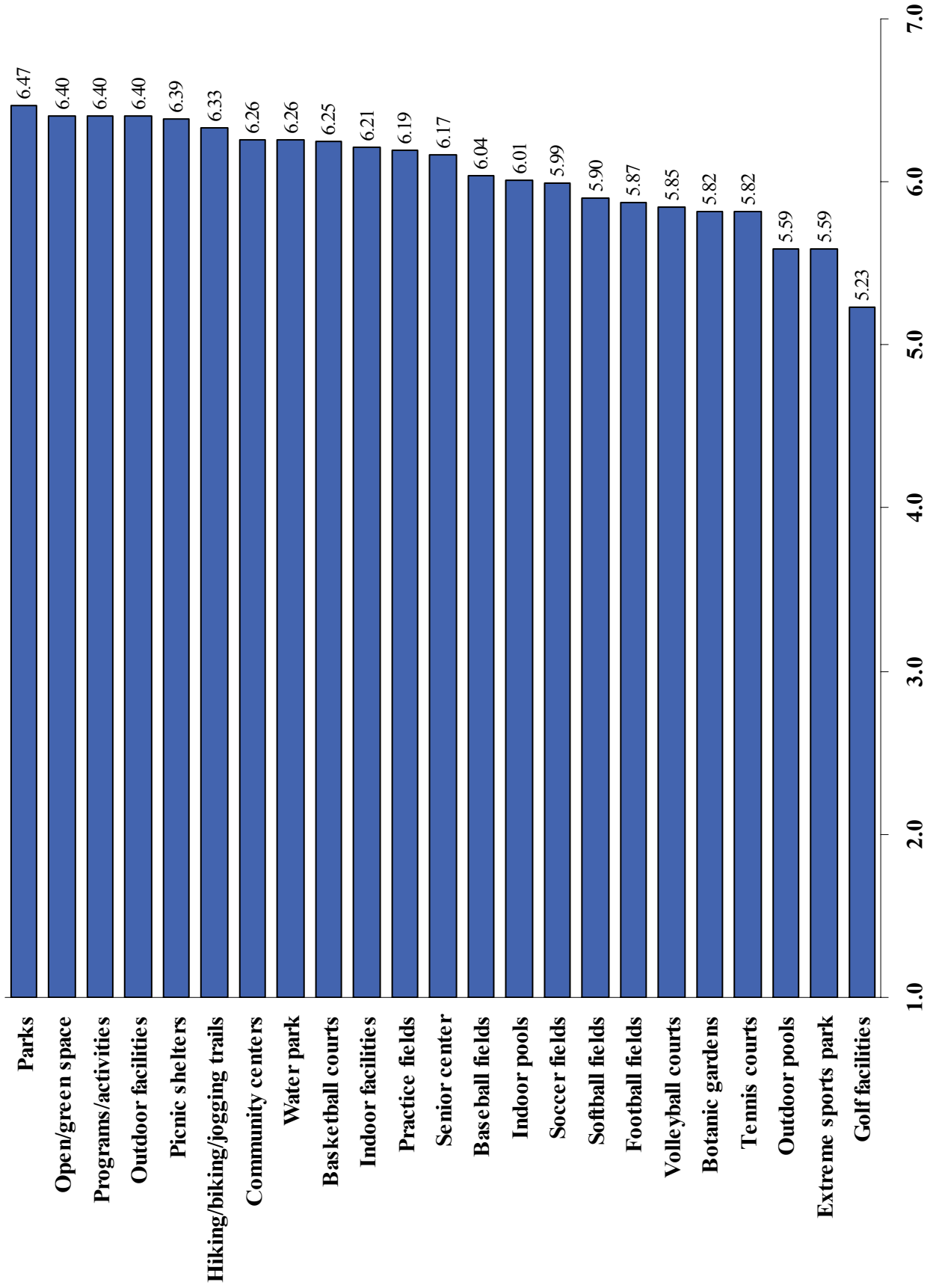


**Figure 66. Percentage Responding that there are “Too Few” Computer Classes.**

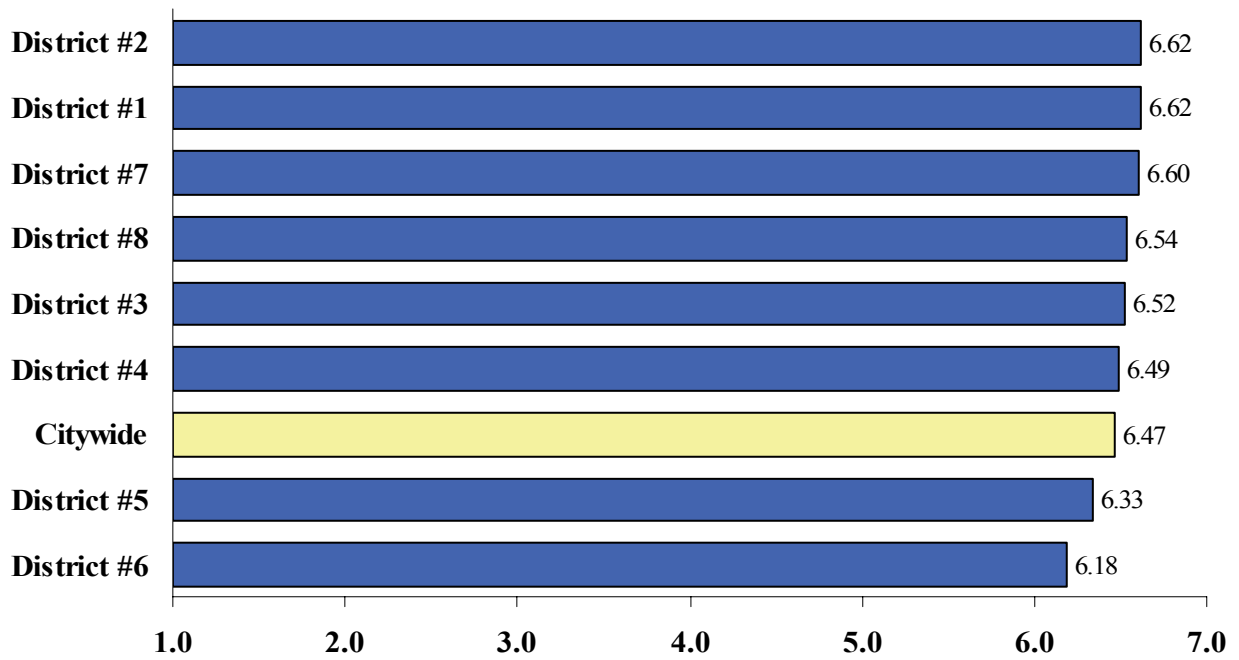


**Additional Amenities.** A second set of questions asked respondents about the importance of having new (additional) amenities in 23 categories. This question provides a means of assessing relative preferences among a set of amenities by focusing upon what new or additional amenities that respondents want. The two sets of questions are related and essentially act as two sides of the same coin. The “too few” question essentially requires a retrospective evaluation about whether there is a sufficient supply right now. The “importance” question is more prospective in nature. Both are useful in identifying existing and potential future gaps in supply. Respondents used a seven-point scale where one means “not at all important” and seven means “very important.” Figure 67 shows the citywide ranking of desired new amenities by mean importance score. Figures 68-90 show the mean importance score by council district. All amenities show high importance scores, but there is significant variation by district which indicates different preference structures for each council district.

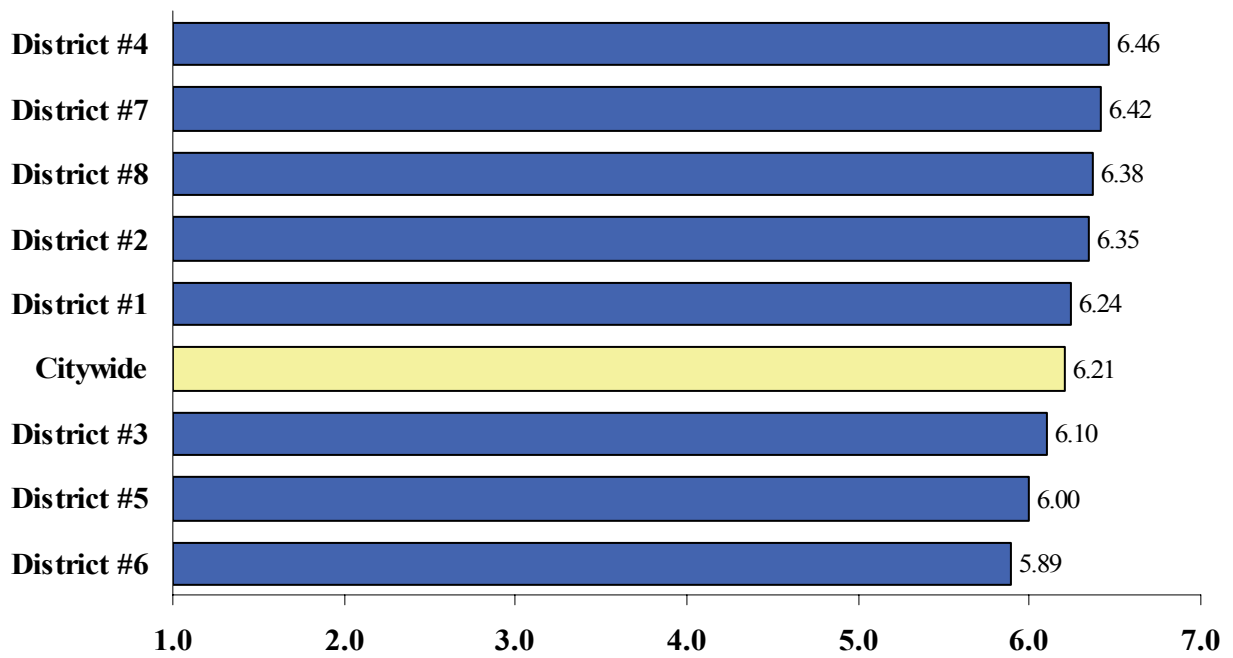
**Figure 67. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Amenities, Citywide.**



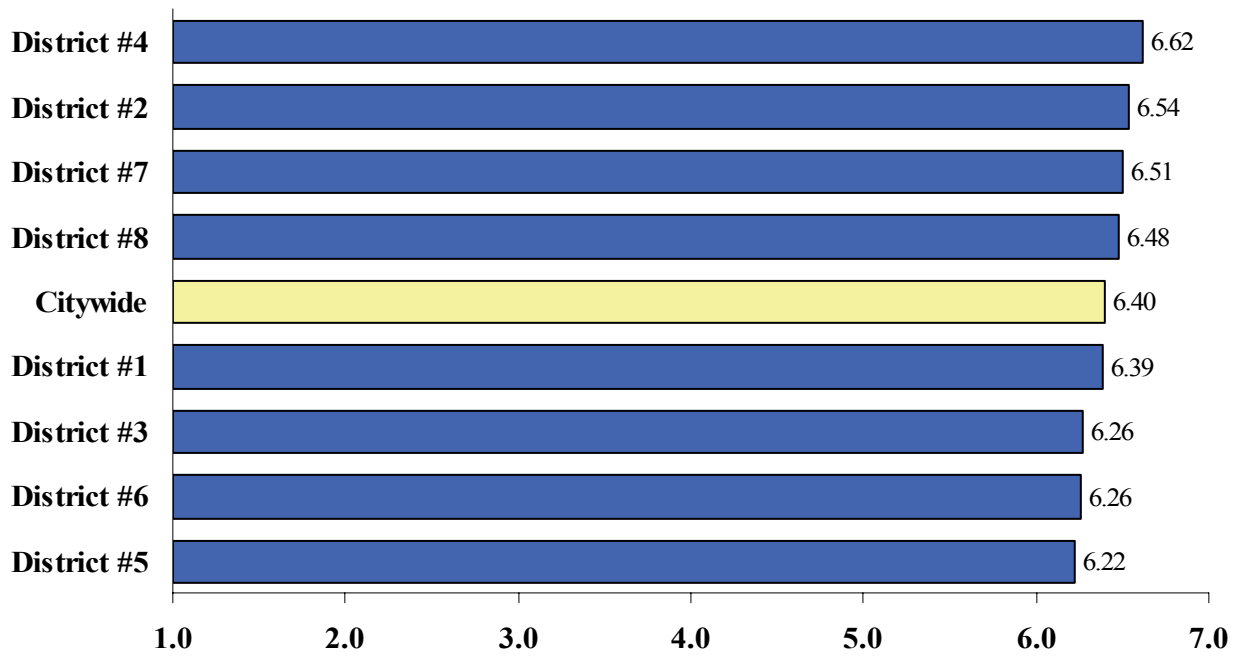
**Figure 68. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Parks.**



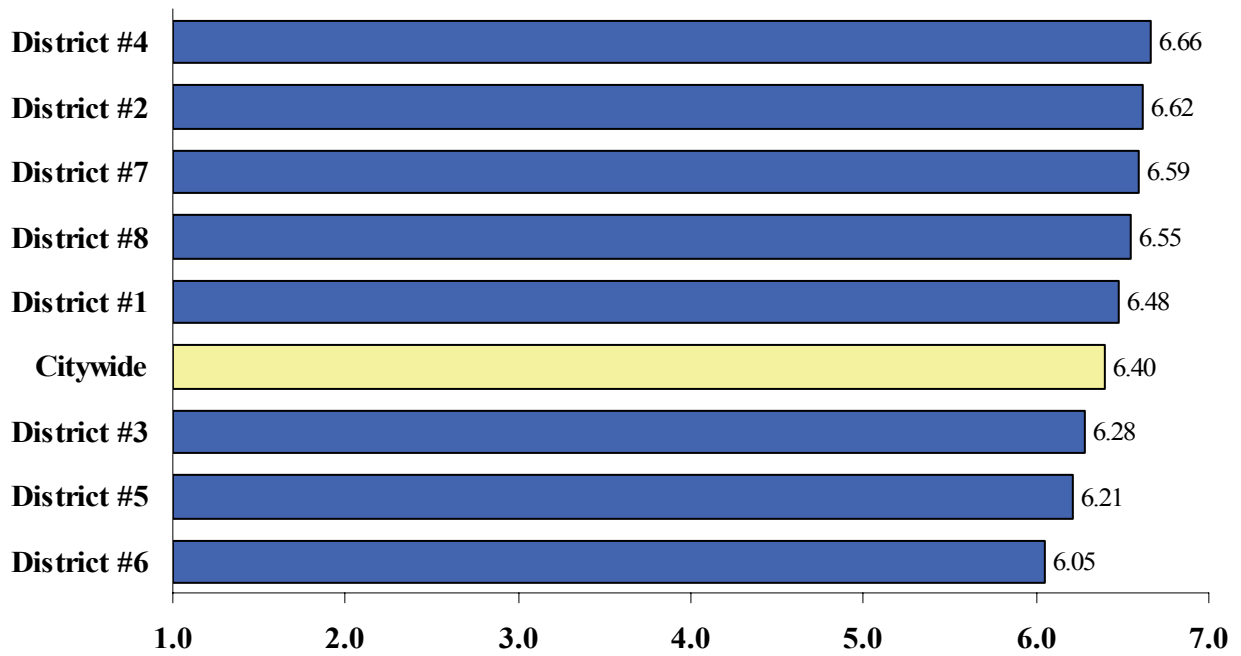
**Figure 69. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Facilities for Indoor Recreation.**



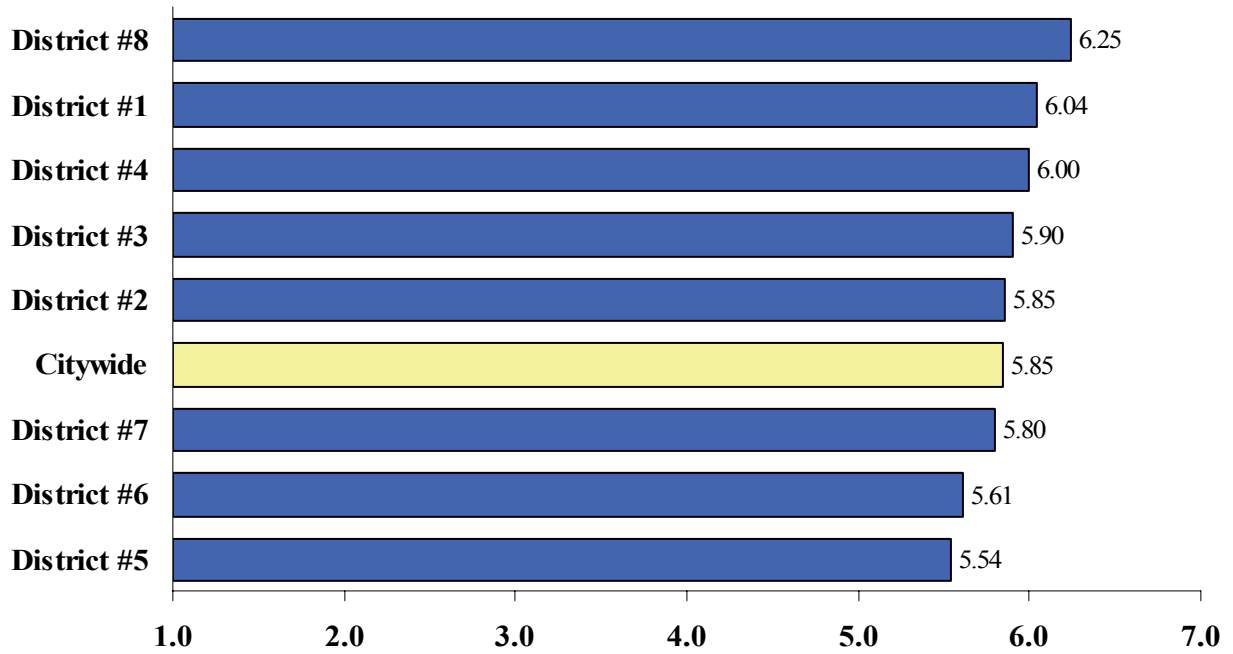
**Figure 70. Mean Importance of Obtaining Facilities for Outdoor Recreation.**



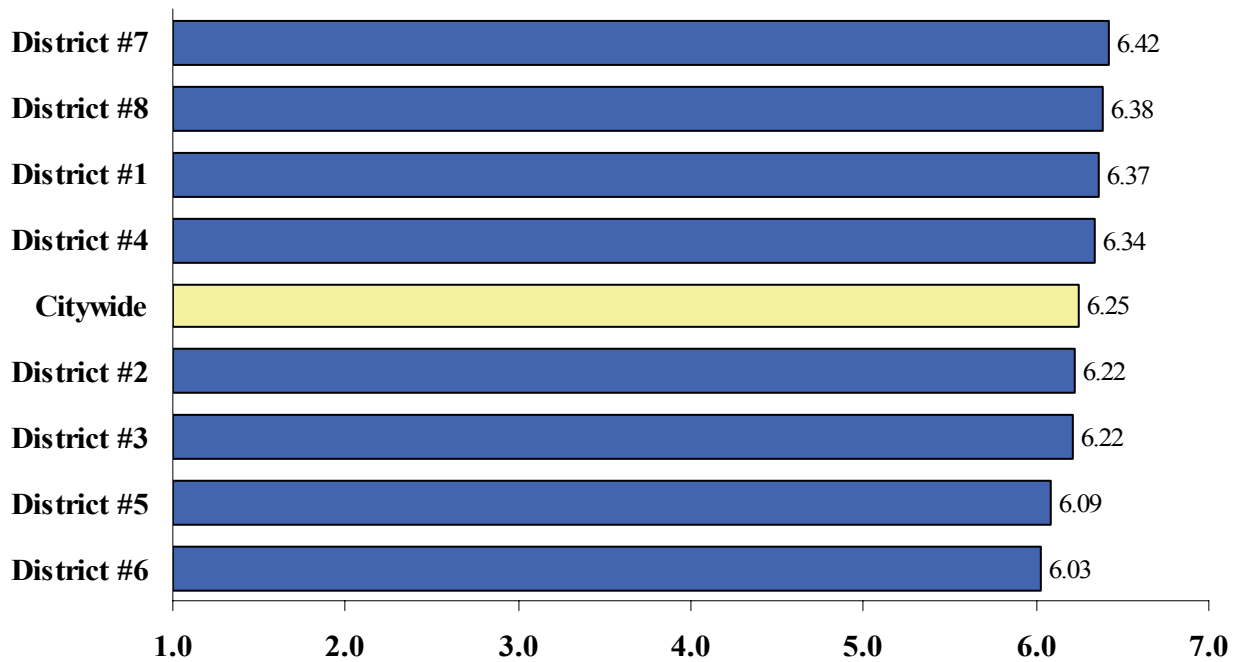
**Figure 71. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Programs and Activities.**



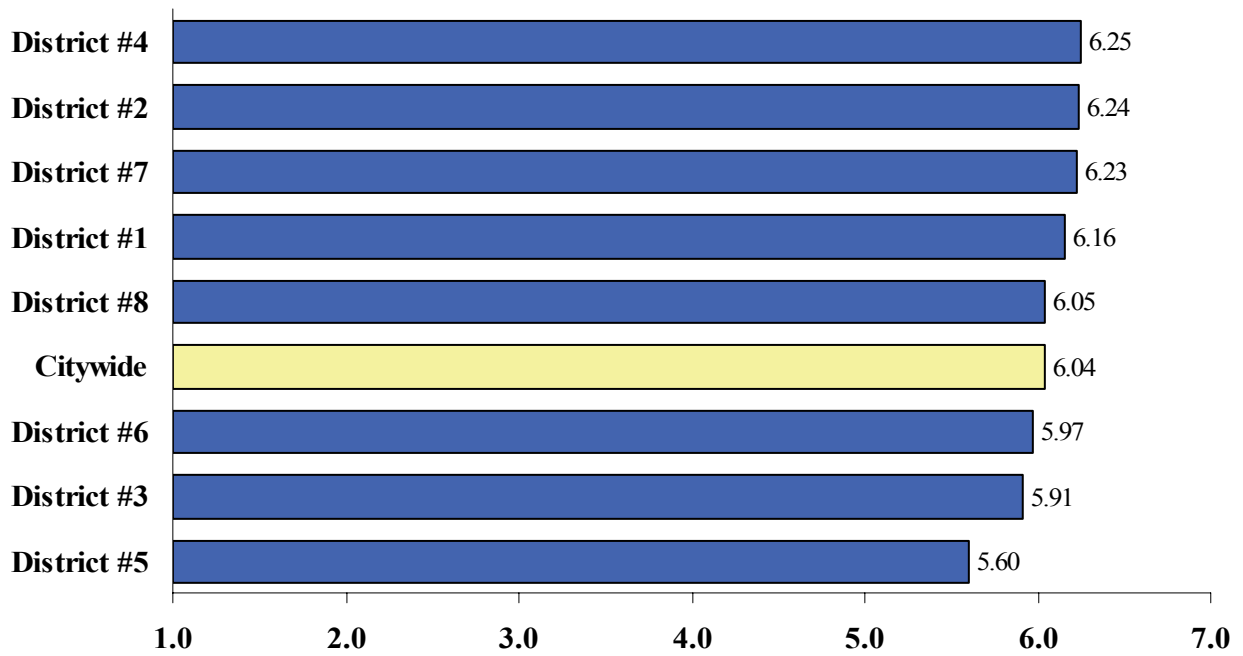
**Figure 72. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Volleyball Courts.**



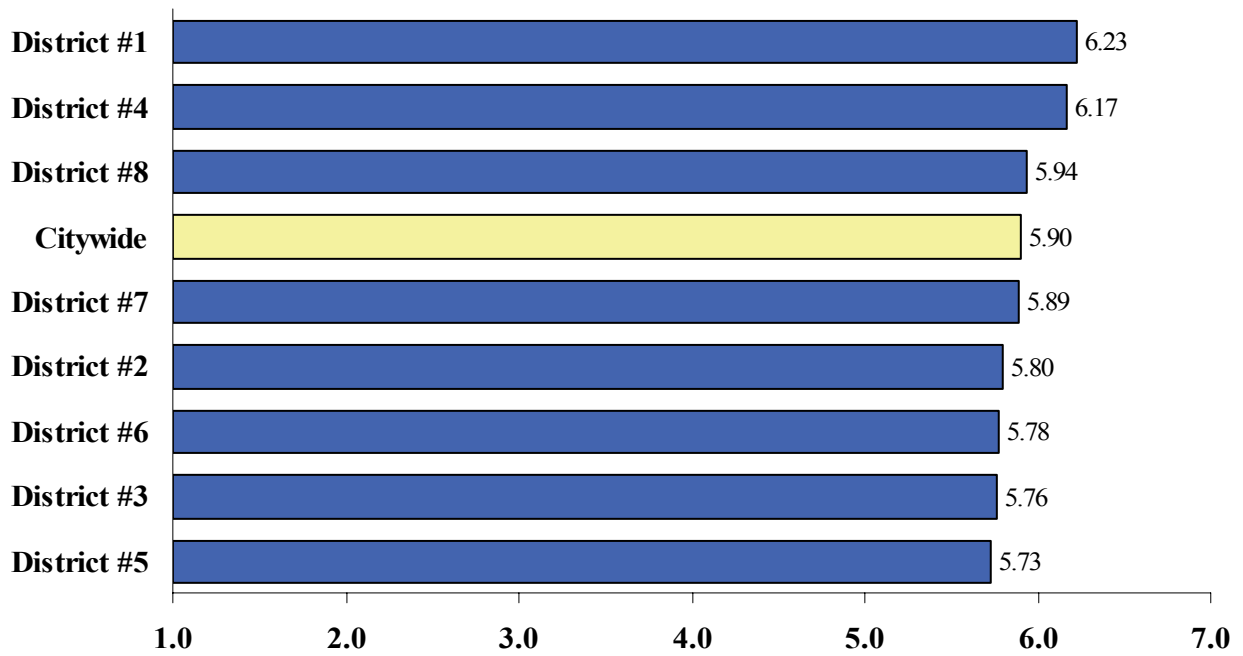
**Figure 73. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Basketball Courts.**



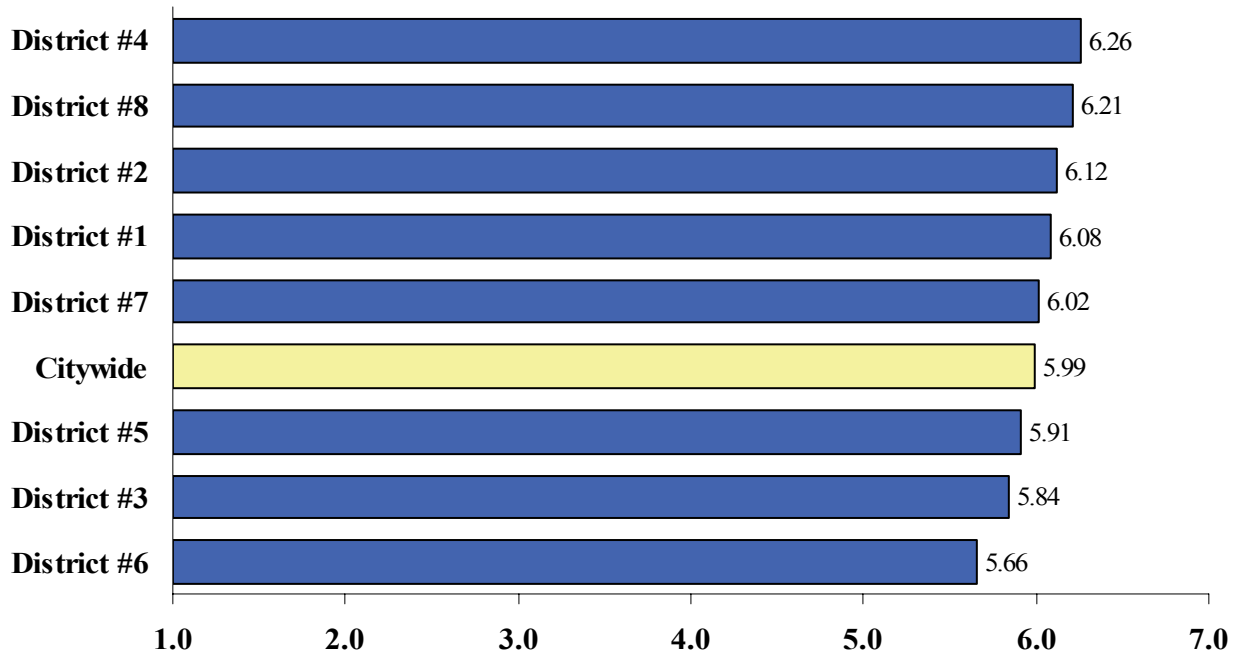
**Figure 74. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Baseball Fields.**



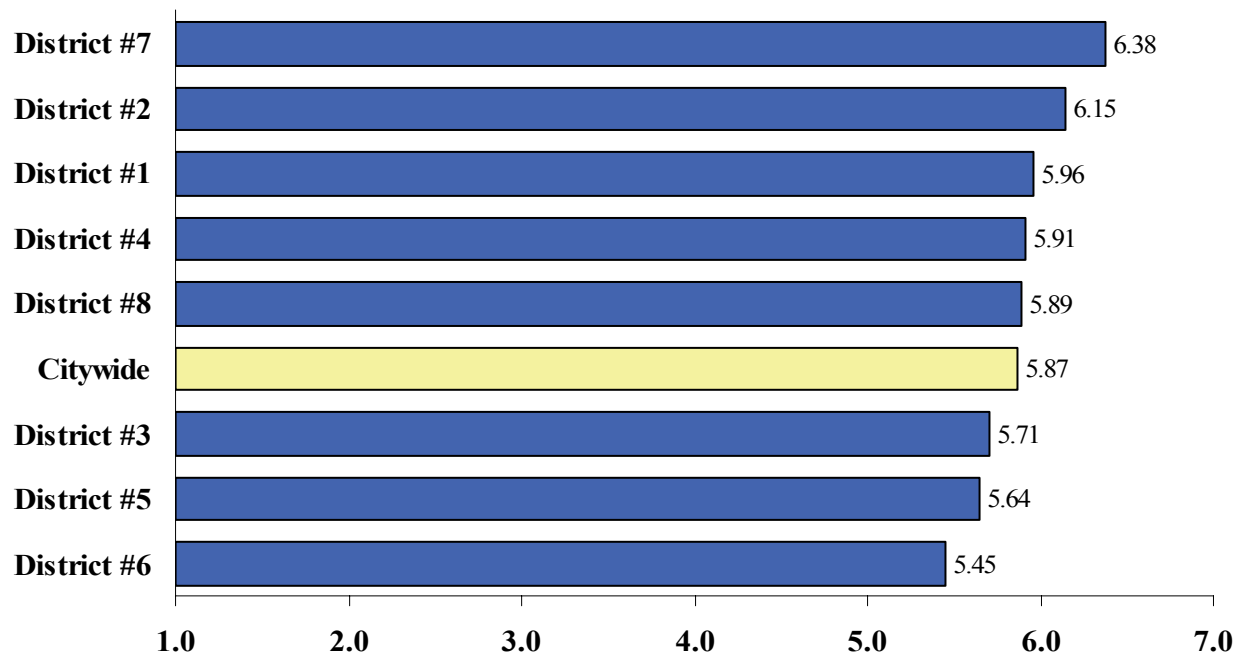
**Figure 75. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Softball Fields.**



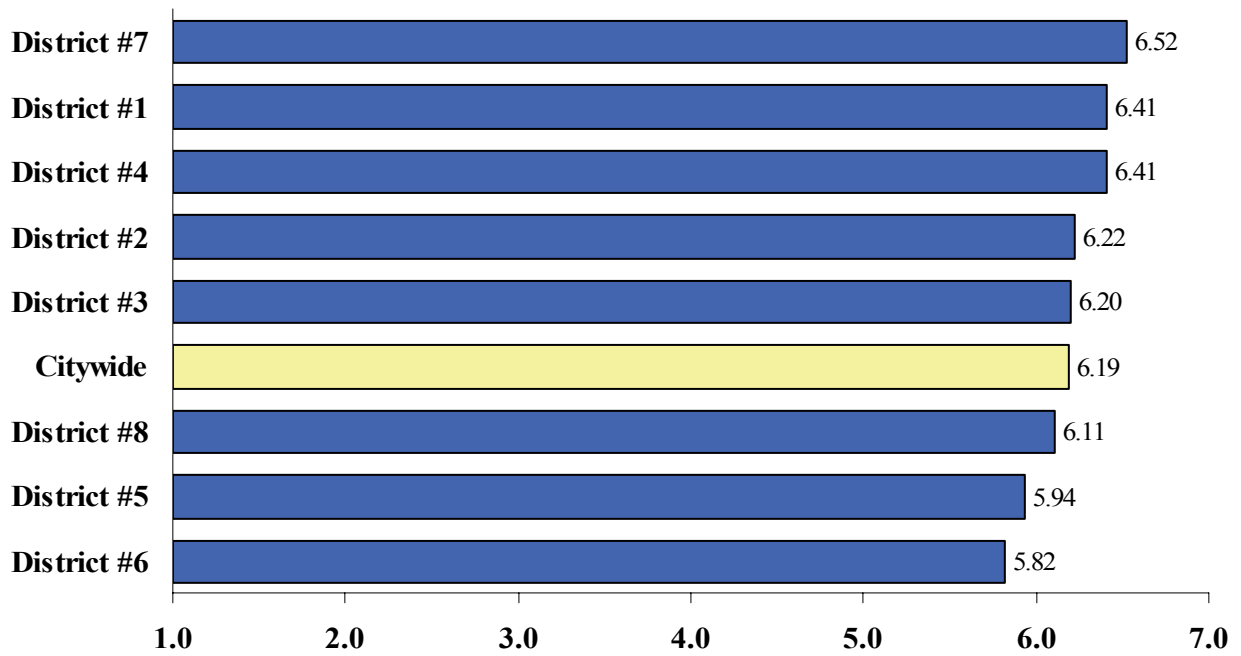
**Figure 76. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Soccer Fields.**



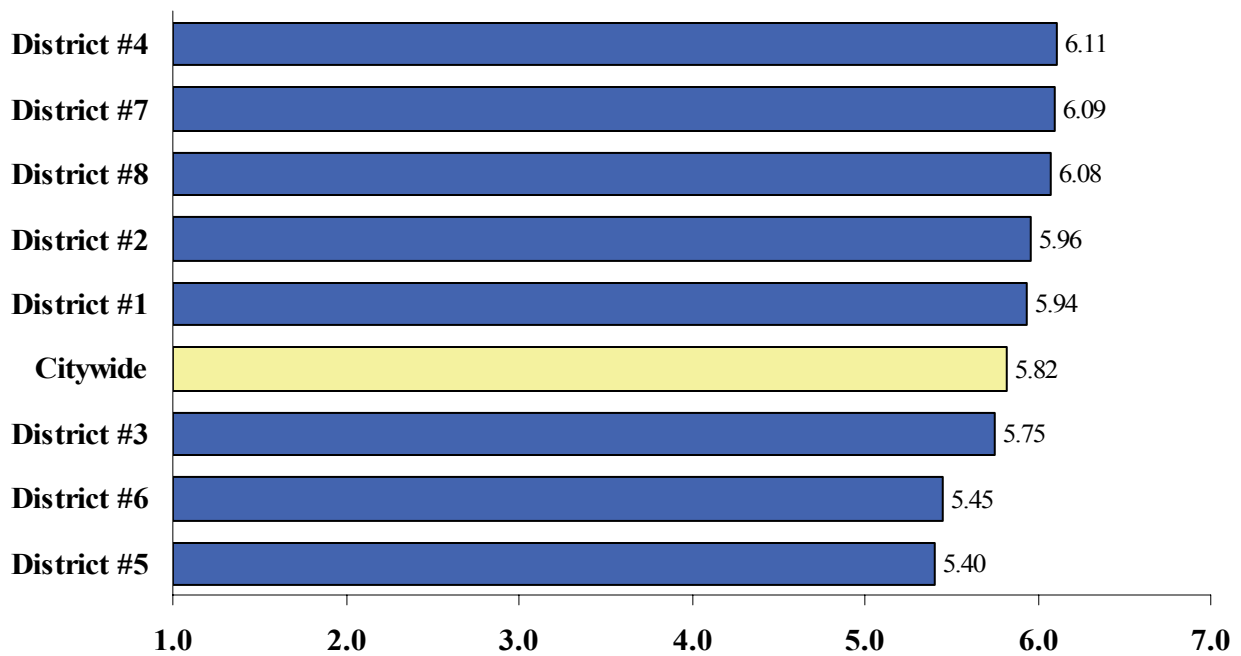
**Figure 77. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Football Fields.**



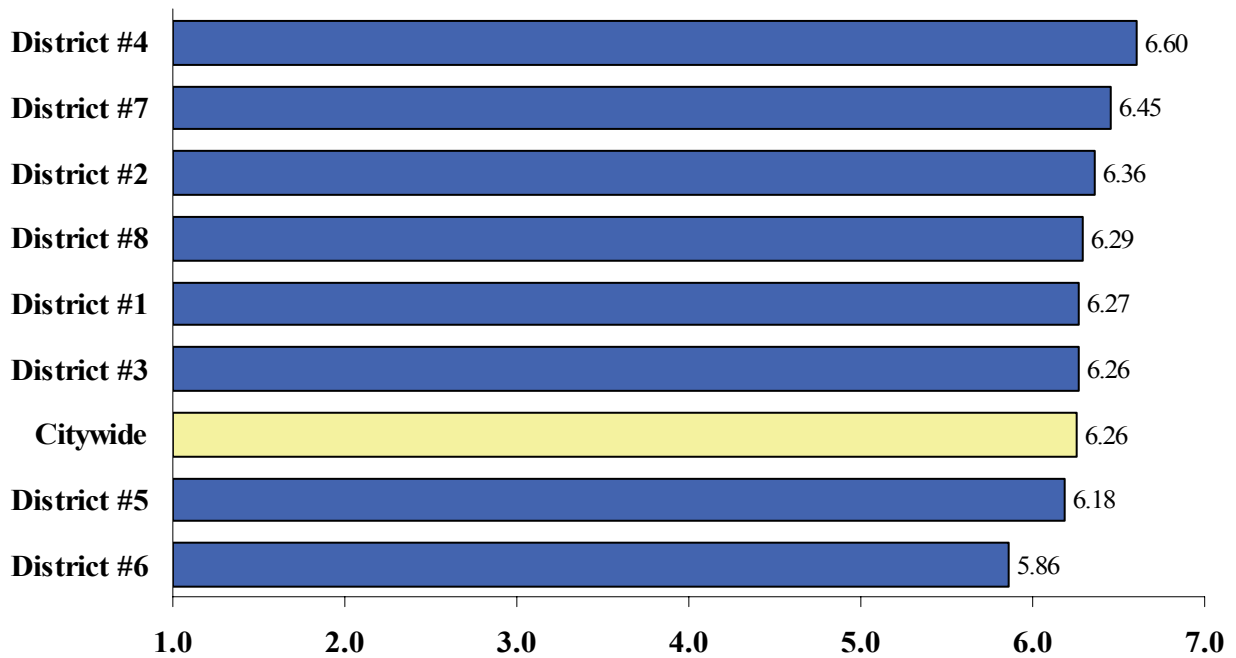
**Figure 78. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Practice Athletic Fields.**



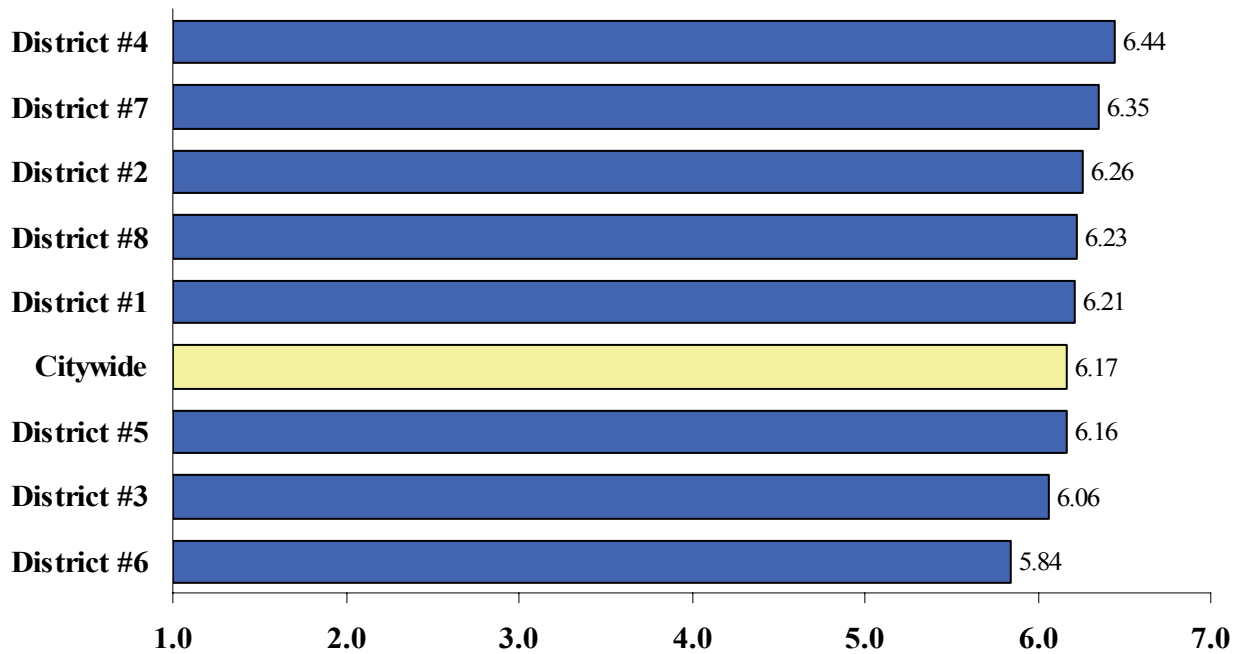
**Figure 79. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Tennis Courts.**



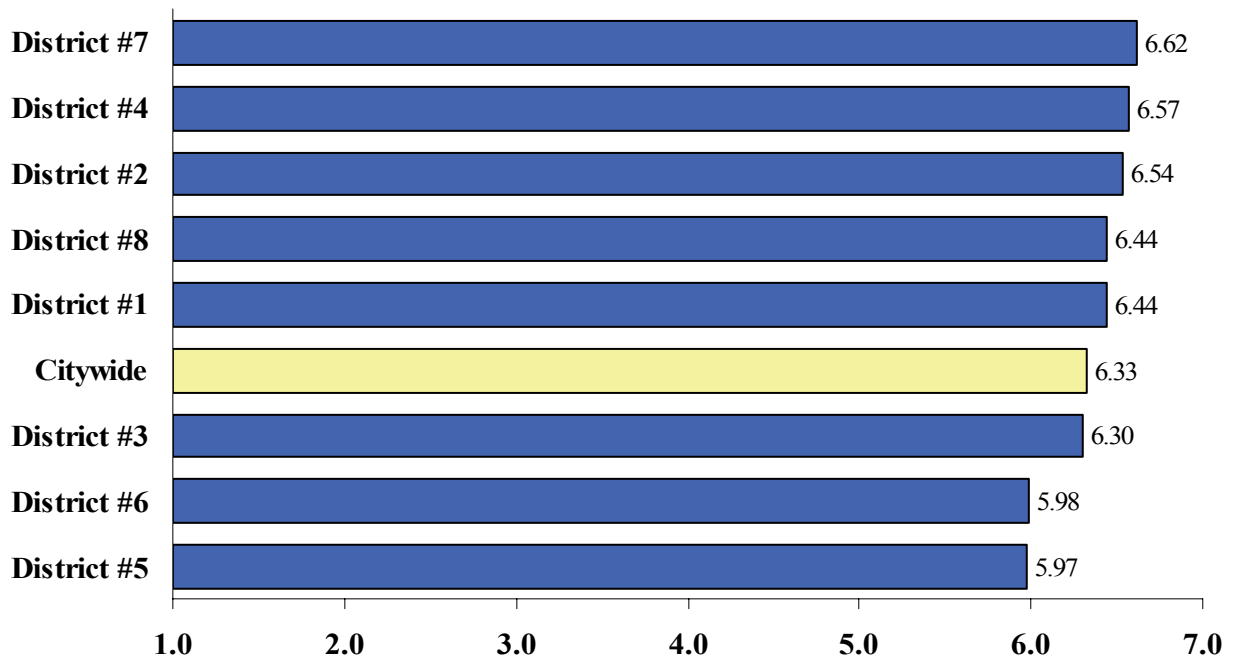
**Figure 80. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Water Park.**



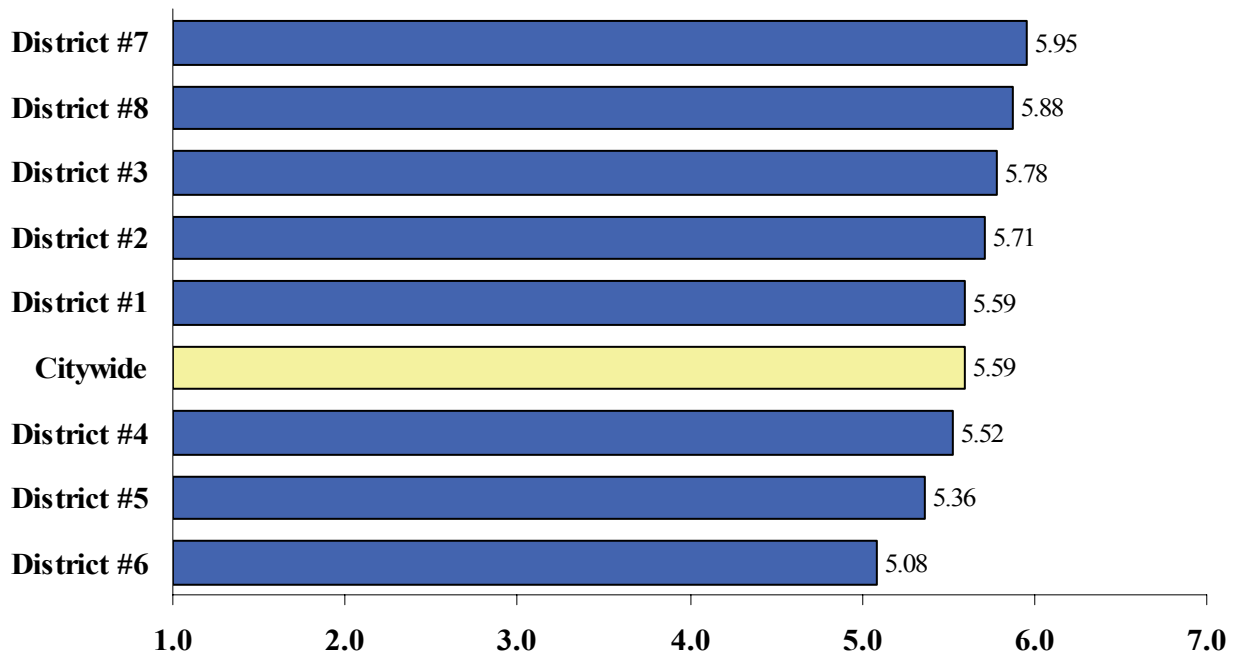
**Figure 81. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Senior Center.**



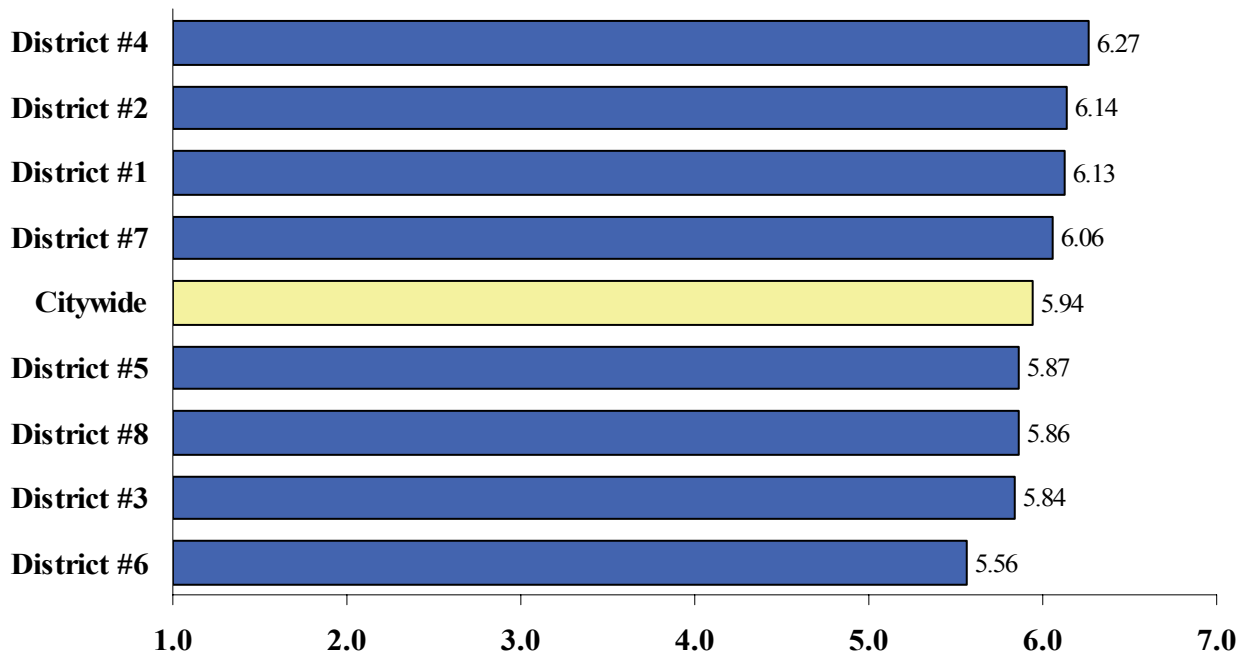
**Figure 82. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Hiking/biking/jogging Trails.**



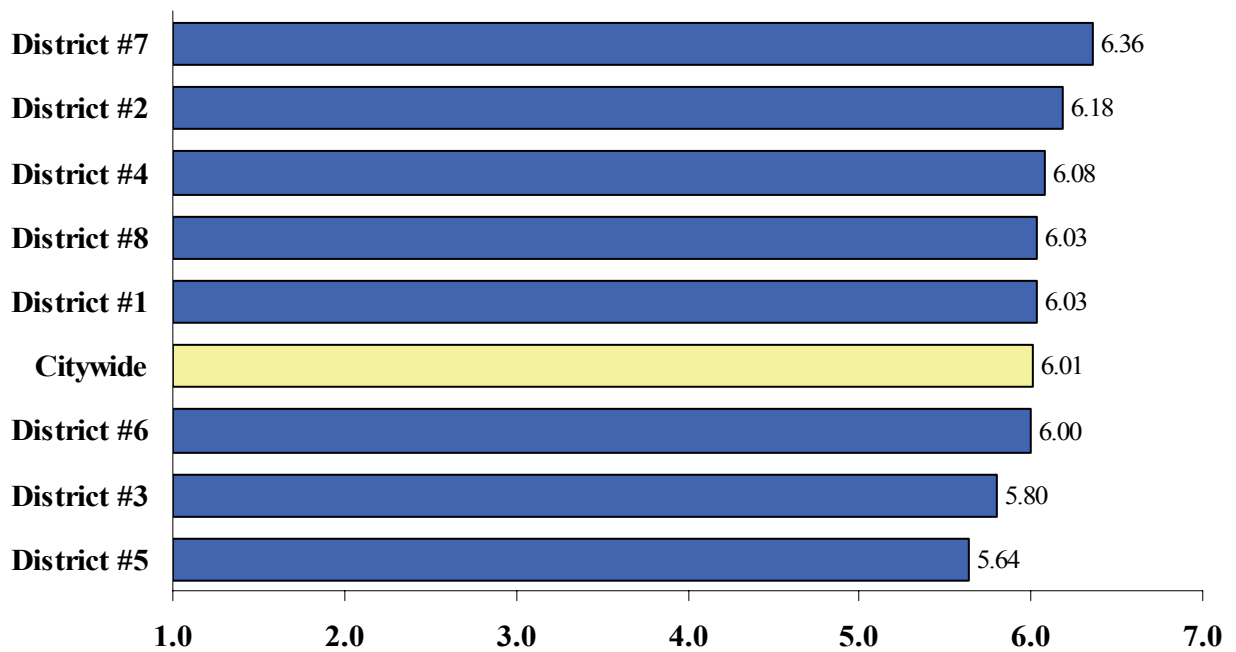
**Figure 83. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Extreme Sports/skateboarding Parks.**



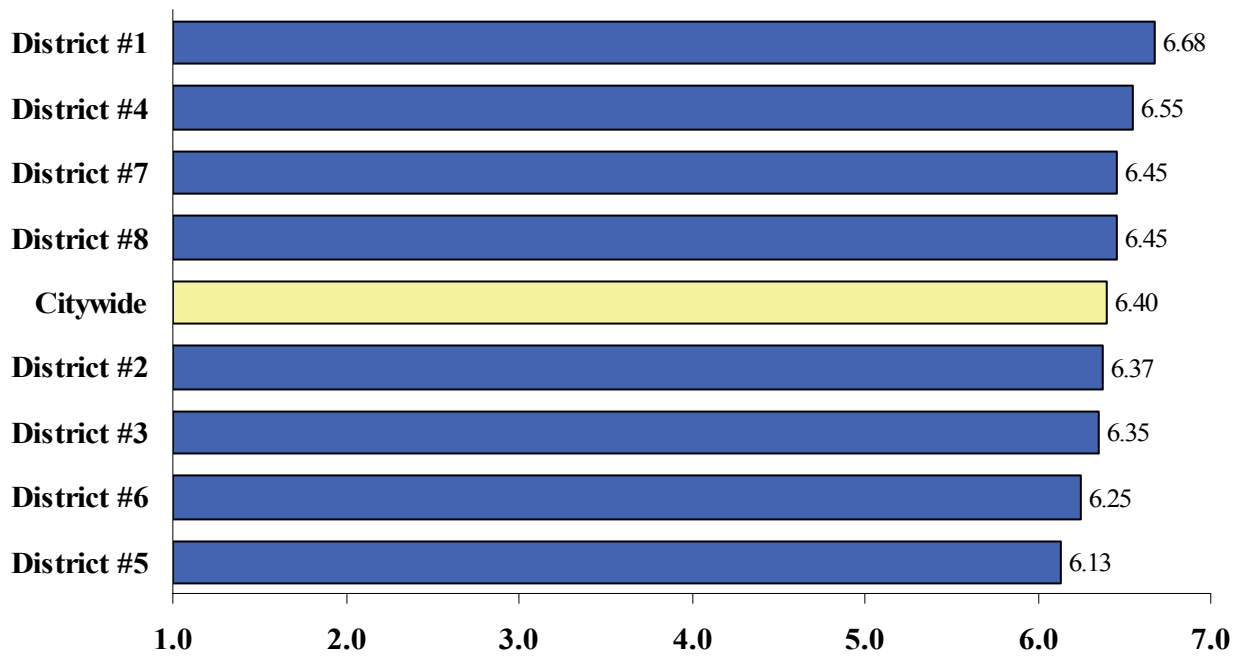
**Figure 84. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Outdoor Pools.**



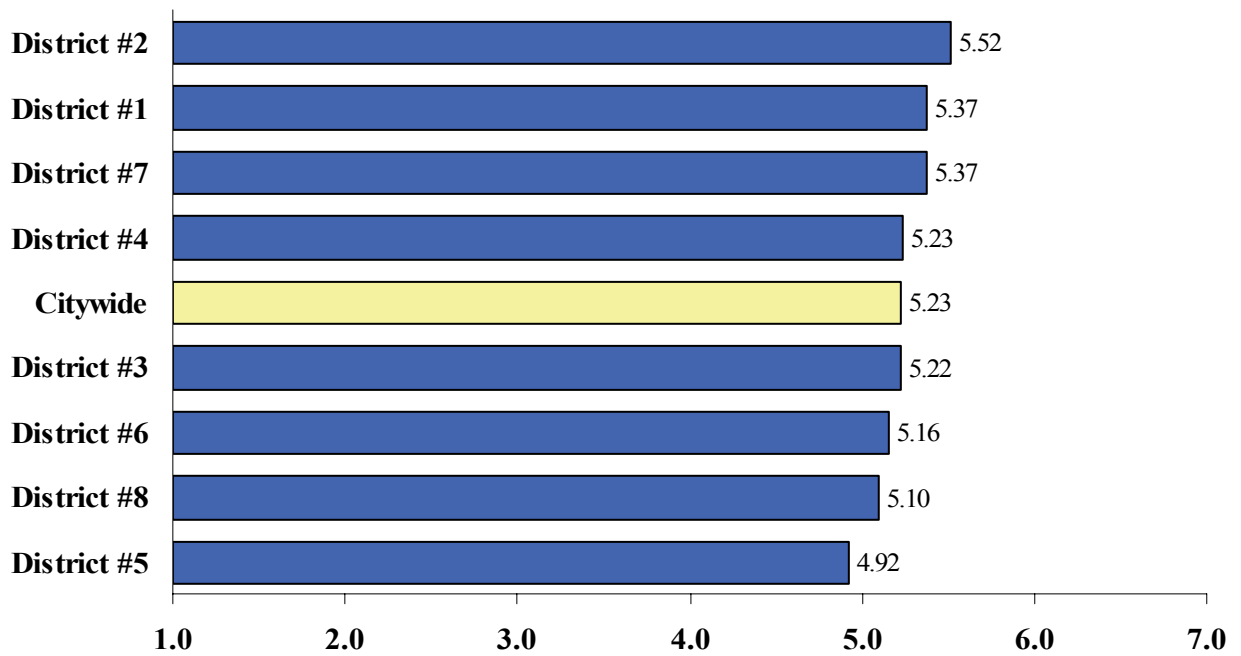
**Figure 85. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Indoor Pools.**



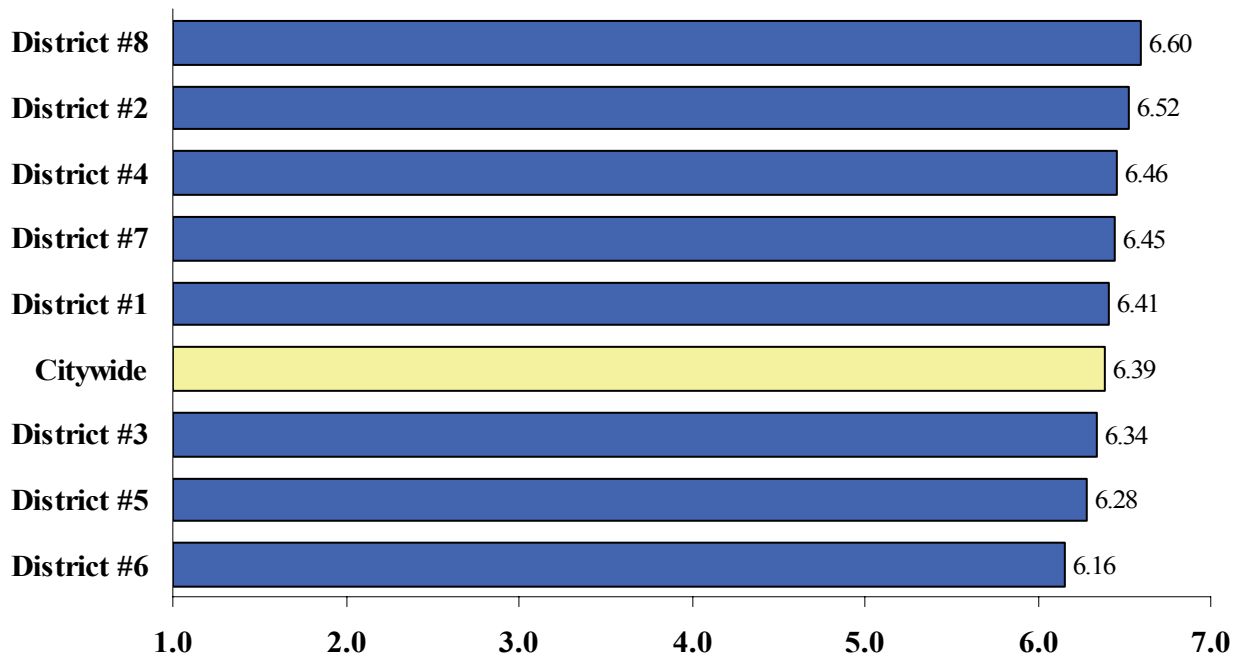
**Figure 86. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Open/green Spaces.**



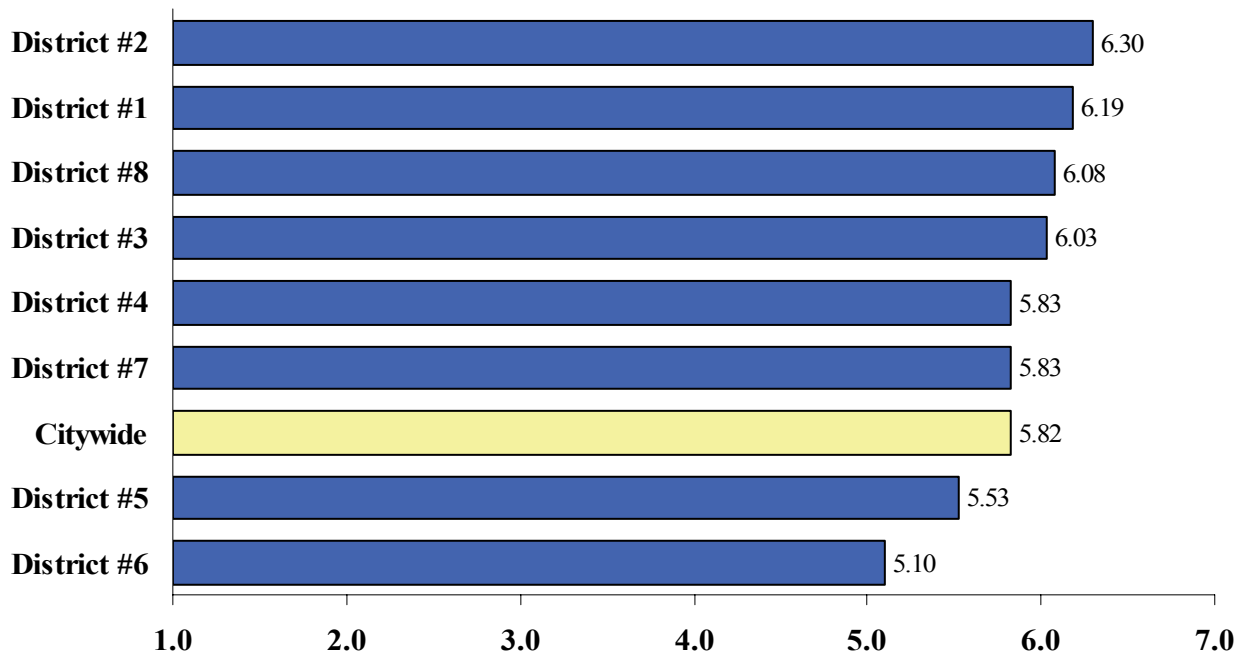
**Figure 87. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Golf Courses.**



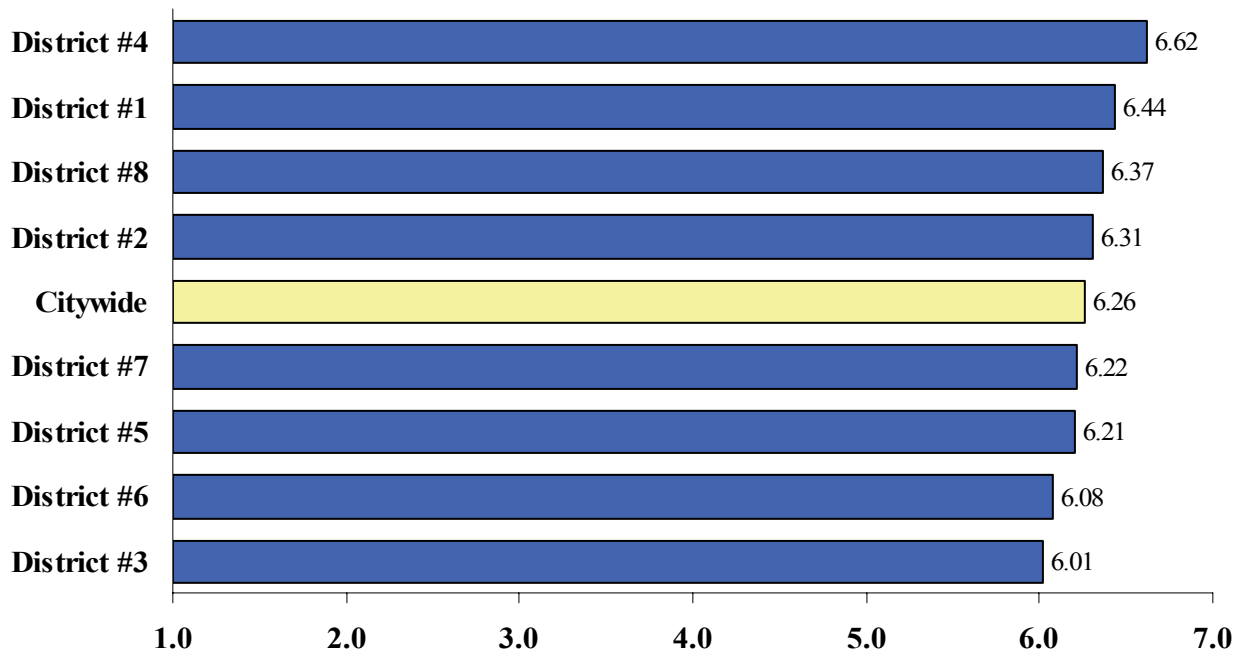
**Figure 88. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Picnic Shelters.**



**Figure 89. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Botanic/flower Gardens.**



**Figure 90. Mean Importance of Obtaining New Community Centers.**

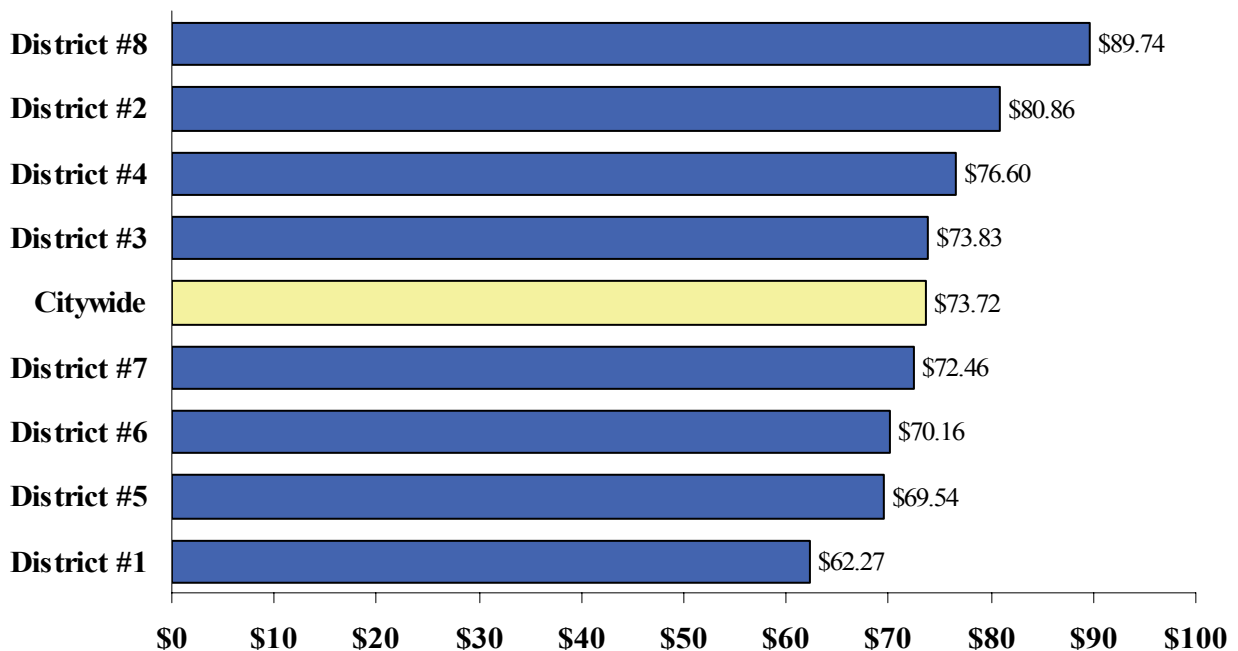


## Financial Resources and Budgetary Constraints

As previously mentioned, it is difficult to estimate the intensity of respondent preferences for new amenities because responding to survey questions is not the same as purchasing goods and services. Yet, the City of Laredo must pay for any additional amenities. We report an estimated mean willingness-to-pay for new additional amenities and preferences for budgetary responses to demand for new amenities.

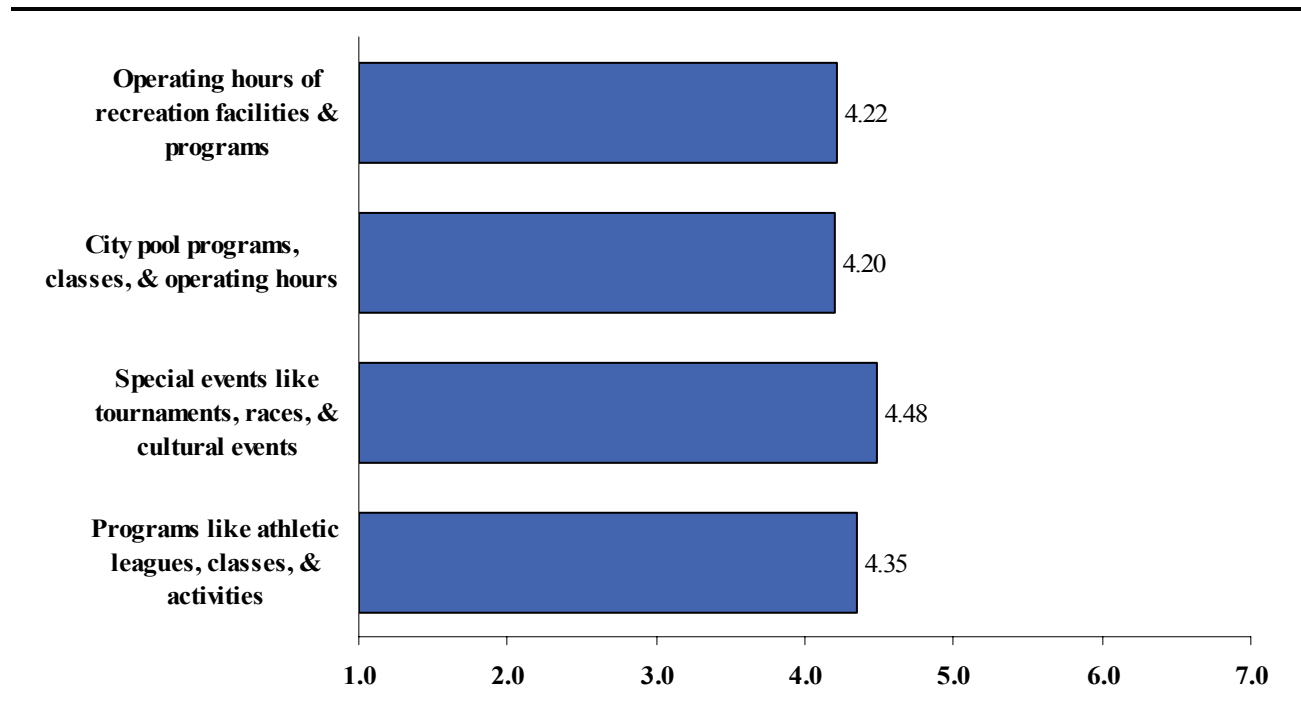
First, we use a contingent valuation approach to estimate a mean willingness-to-pay. This approach is superior to traditional questions that select an arbitrary class of dollar contributions without assessing the validity of responses. We present respondents with a realistic scenario regarding bond elections for new park and recreation amenities. Respondents then receive a vote yes/vote no question for one of 28 randomly selected dollar amounts (\$1-\$300). Using this information, we model respondent willingness-to-pay as a function of the dollar amount in the question. We find that as the dollar amounts increase, respondents are less likely to vote for the bond, which is the expected response. We then take the model and calculate an average willingness-to-pay. In this context, the mean willingness-to-pay for additional amenities is \$73.72. If we assume that each respondent represents a single household, then residents across the city should be willing to support about \$4.15 million in additional amenities. It should be noted, that our model does not differentiate likely voters from residents. Likely voters in a real bond election are likely to have different preferences than the residents at large. Figure 91 shows the mean willingness-to-pay by district. Variation among districts may indicate differences in the *intensity* of preference for additional amenities or *income effects* that are associated with differences in council districts.

**Figure 91. Mean Willingness-To-Pay for New Parks and Recreation.**

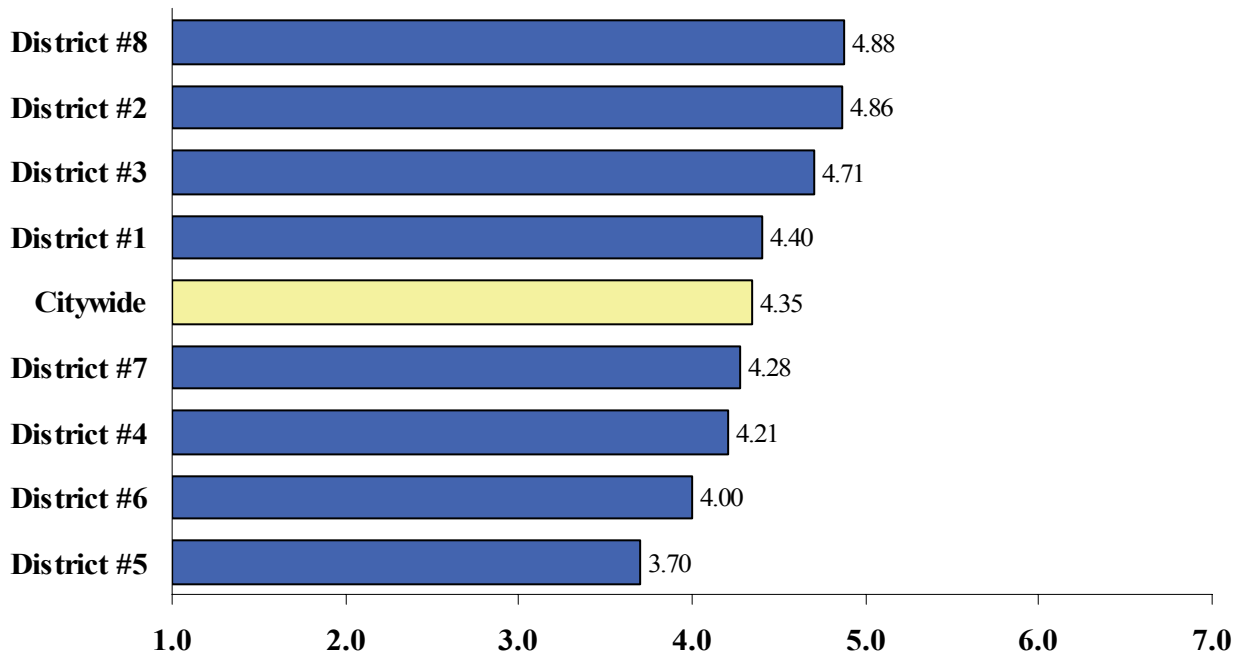


The second set of questions regarding the financing of new amenities asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with various budget tradeoffs. More specifically, we asked respondents whether they agreed with four proposed reductions in parks and recreation services that could be used to offset costs associated with new amenities. Figures 90 shows the citywide responses, and Figures 91-96 show the mean responses (seven-point scale where one means strongly disagree and seven means strongly agree) by district for each proposed tradeoff. The average responses are all around four, which strongly suggests that there is no consensus on these options.

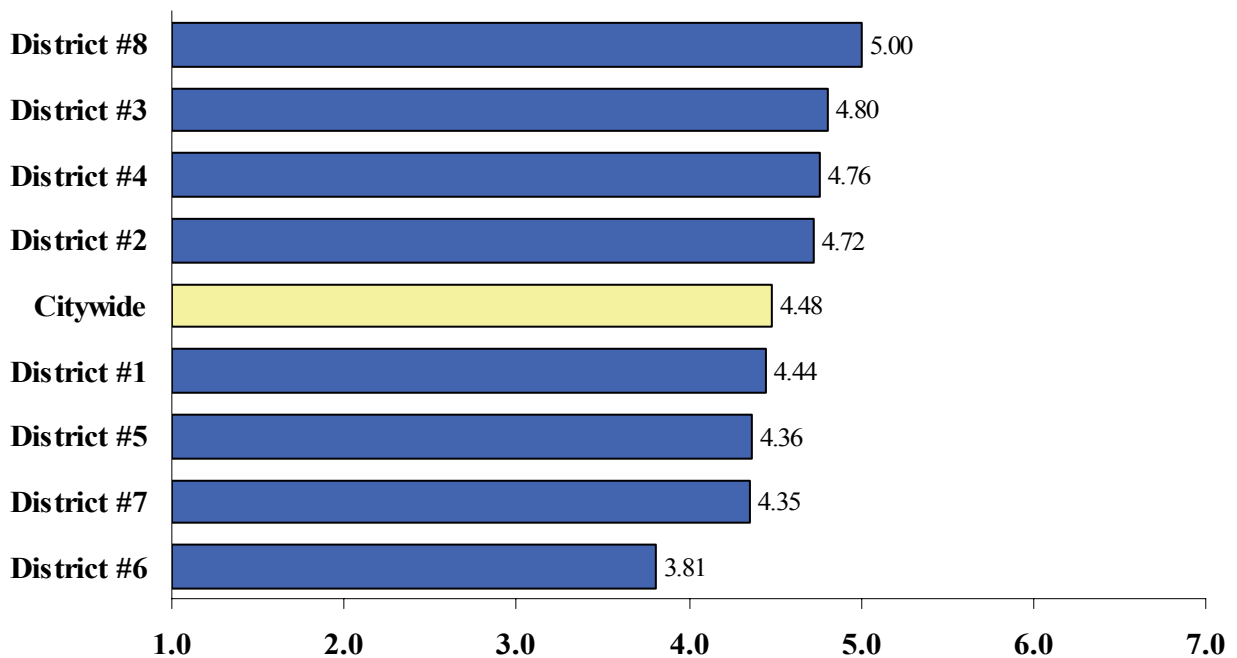
**Figure 92. Mean Agreement with Willingness-to-Reduce Services to Pay for New Amenities, Citywide.**



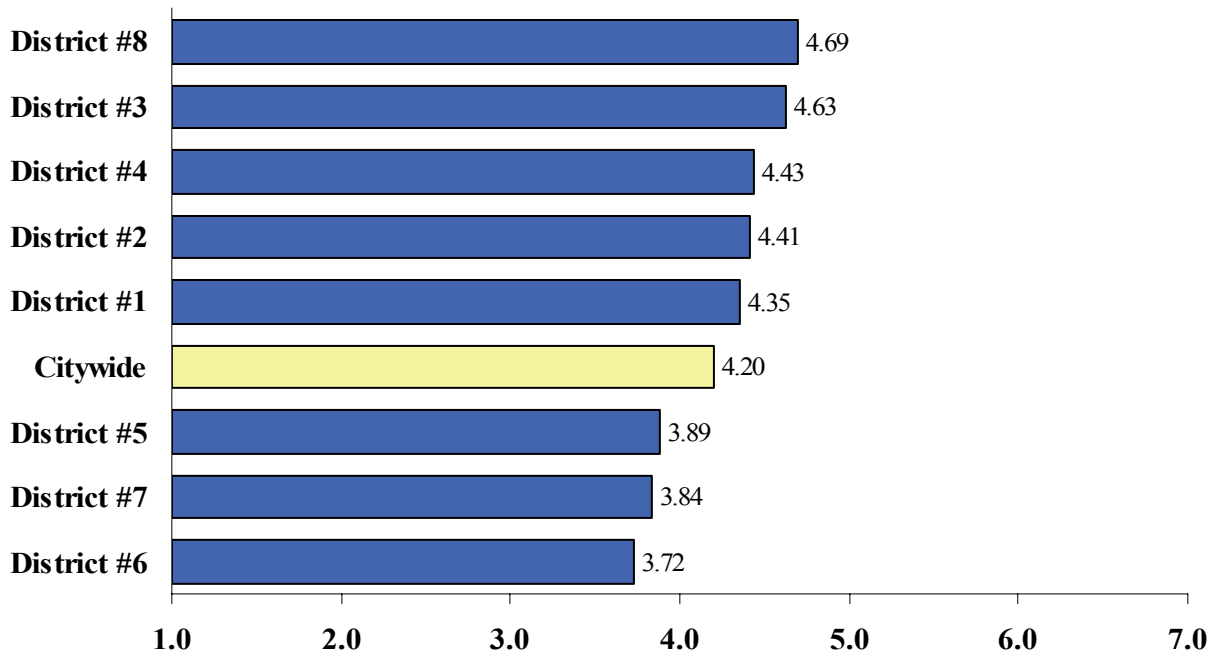
**Figure 93. Mean Agreement with Willingness-to-Reduce “...programs like athletic leagues, classes, and activities” (7=strongly agree).**



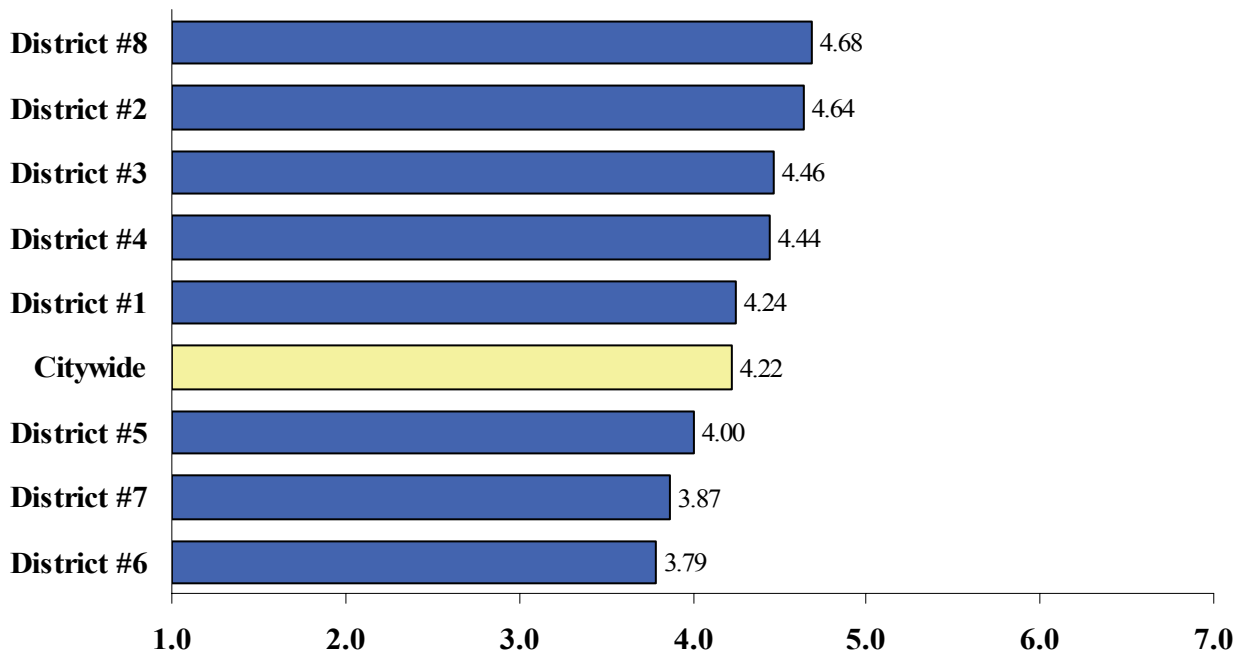
**Figure 94. Mean Agreement with Willingness-to-Reduce “...special events like tournaments, races, and cultural events” (7=strongly agree).**



**Figure 95. Mean Agreement with Willingness-to-Reduce “...city pool programs, classes, and operating hours” (7=strongly agree)**



**Figure 96. Mean Agreement with Willingness-to-Reduce “...operating hours of existing facilities and programs” (7=strongly agree)**



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## **Conclusion and Disclaimer**

The findings of this report should be read within the limitations of standard survey research. Respondents from Laredo clearly indicated a desire to have additional parks and recreation amenities, but those preferences vary across council districts. There is a willingness-to-pay for additional amenities, but there is no consensus about reducing current services to pay for new amenities.

This report does not represent academic research and the role of the authors is limited to consulting for Pemberton Professional Services (PPS) in service to the City of Laredo, Texas. The authors assisted in the design of the questionnaire and tabulation of results. This report is written to assist in the interpretation of survey results to be used in the planning processes of the City of Laredo. The authors' efforts to assist PPS and the City of Laredo in no way reflect any official or other position of the Texas Tech University at large or Department of Political Science in particular.

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## Appendix A: Survey Methodology

The survey interviewing commenced on February 20th, 2007 and ended March 17th, 2007. The average length of the interview was 16.6 minutes for the 60 percent of interviews conducted in English and 20.8 minutes for the 40 percent conducted in Spanish.

A completed interview was obtained for 535 households. The overall cooperation rate (complete interviews/completes + refusals) was 71.7 percent. Put another way, a completed interview was obtained with more than two-thirds of the households where a potential respondent was contacted. The overall response rate (completed interviews / total valid sample size) was 15.3 percent. In other words, an interview was obtained from 15.3 percent of the valid sample, and the rest were cases in which a respondent could not be reached to complete an interview, such as a scheduling conflict. This situation arose frequently with our Spanish interviews because our protocol asked respondents if they wanted to conduct the survey in Spanish. If so, we then scheduled a time for the interview. In many cases, the scheduled time did not produce a contact. Moreover, the survey project required a minimum number of responses per district. Some districts required more sample to obtain the minimum number of complete interviews. In sum, the cooperation rate of the survey is the better indicator of willingness to participate in the process. Table A1 shows the cooperation and response rates by district.

**Table A1. Cooperation and Response Rates by District.**

	Cooperation (%)	Response (%)	Total Calls
District #1	78.9	14.0	507
District #2	74.4	14.7	456
District #3	86.3	16.2	426
District #4	75.6	19.6	332
District #5	55.4	15.0	447
District #6	81.3	20.3	320
District #7	54.6	13.7	474
District #8	69.5	14.8	446

Typically a survey yields a final data set that is not an exact representation of the larger population from which the sample was drawn. Most of this is due to differing rates of response from demographic groups. In this case, the sample over-represents women, but this should not overly influence inferences from the survey. Although each council district has similar population, the sampling process reveals that some districts have more households/telephones than others. For this reason, we applied post-stratification weights to account for differences in the districts. Table A2-A3 provide additional information about sample characteristics.

**Table A2. Demographics of Sample**

	(%)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	41.8
Female	58.2
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Age</b>	
18-24	10.5
25-34	24.2
35-44	21.0
45-54	17.6
55-64	11.8
65+	15.0
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Race</b>	
White	4.9
Hispanic	92.7
African-American	0.3
Asian	0.2
Native American	0.2
Other	1.7
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Income</b>	
< \$20,000	33.2
\$20,000 to \$30,000	16.1
\$31,000 to \$50,000	16.5
\$51,000 to \$75,000	13.5
\$76,000 to \$100,000	9.5
> \$100,000	11.2
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Education</b>	
< High School	20.5
High School / GED	24.6
Some College	28.1
Bachelor's Degree	18.2
Graduate	7.8
	<u>~100.0</u>

**Table A3. Residential Characteristics of Sample**

	(%)
<b>Home Ownership</b>	
Rent	25.9
Own	74.1
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Length of Residence</b>	
< 1 year	1.4
1 - 5 years	10.3
6 - 10 years	11.3
> 10 years	77.0
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>District</b>	
District #1	13.3
District #2	12.5
District #3	12.9
District #4	12.2
District #5	12.5
District #6	12.2
District #7	12.2
District #8	12.3
	<u>~100.0</u>
<b>Family Composition*</b>	
No children	35.1
Children < 5 years old	53.4
Children b/tw 6 & 12	63.7
Children b/tw 13 & 18	47.8

\* These percentages do not aggregate to 100 because families can belong to multiple categories.

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## Appendix B: Survey Instrument

### Question q1

First, how many years have you lived in Laredo?

- 0 Less than one year
- 1 1 -5 years
- 2 6 - 10 years
- 3 More than 10 years
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

### Question q2

Now I am going to read several different kinds of leisure and recreational activities provided by the city of Laredo. For each one, I'd like you to tell me if you or members of your household use the facilities or participate in that activity frequently, occasionally, rarely, or never.

- 2\_1 Visiting city parks
- 2\_2 Visiting city open/green spaces
- 2\_3 Using athletic fields and courts
- 2\_4 Attending program, classes, or special events
- 2\_5 Using citypools
- 2\_6 Using the Boxing Gym
- 2\_7 Going to community centers for activities, programs or classes
- 2\_8 Participating in youth classes, programs, or camps
- 2\_9 Participating in senior citizen classes, programs, or activities
- 2\_10 Participating in athletic leagues for adults
- 2\_11 Participating in athletic leagues for children

- 1 Frequently
- 2 Occasionally
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

### Question q3

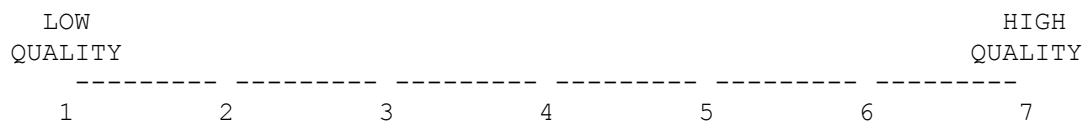
Using a scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 7 is very satisfied, how satisfied are you with parks and recreation in Laredo?

- VERY DISSATISFIED VERY SATISFIED
- 
- 1                    2                    3                    4                    5                    6                    7
- 8 DON'T KNOW  
9 REFUSED

Question q4

Now, consider your recent experiences with Laredo parks and recreation programs and facilities. How would you rate the quality of the following, using a scale where 1 means very low quality and 7 means very high quality.

- 4\_1 Park areas
- 4\_2 Open/green spaces
- 4\_3 Recreation programs, classes, or special events
- 4\_4 Facilities and fields at parks
- 4\_5 Jogging, walking, or bicycle trails
- 4\_6 Athletic leagues for adults
- 4\_7 Athletic leagues for children
- 4\_8 Youth programs or camps
- 4\_9 Senior citizen activities
- 4\_10 Athletic fields and courts
- 4\_11 City pools
- 4\_12 Community centers
- 4\_13 Boxing Gym
- 4\_14 Computer classes

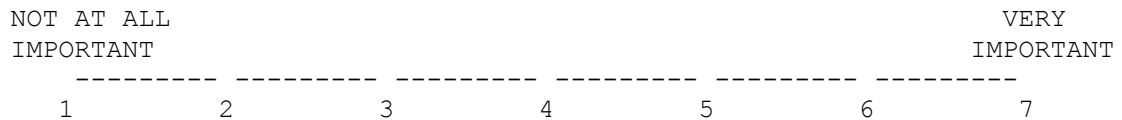


8 DON'T KNOW  
9 REFUSED

Question q5

The city of Laredo provides many parks and recreation activities. Please rate the importance of each using a scale where 1 means not at all important and 7 means very important.

- 5\_1 Preserving natural areas and open spaces in the city
- 5\_2 Preserving natural creek corridors
- 5\_3 Providing facilities for outdoor sports programs
- 5\_4 Providing facilities for indoor recreation an fitness activities
- 5\_5 Providing activities for youth and teens
- 5\_6 Provide activities for senior citizens
- 5\_7 Providing activities for all ages and families



8 DON'T KNOW  
9 REFUSED

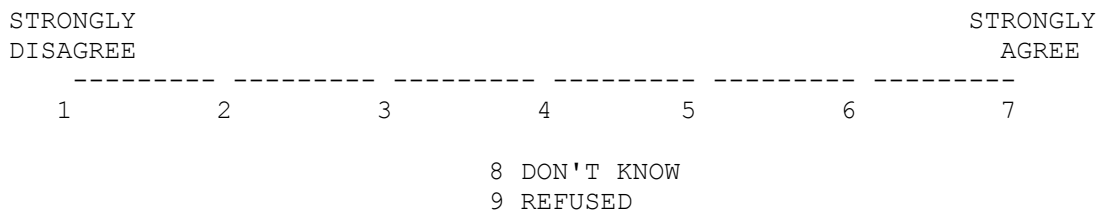


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Question q8a

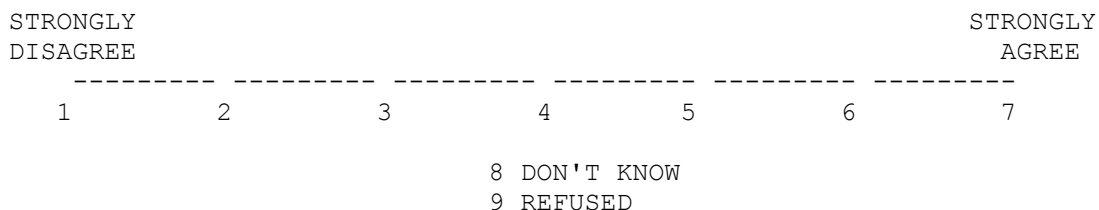
Now I would like to ask whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the safety of parks in the City. Please use a scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. How much do you agree or disagree that:

I would feel safe visiting any city park



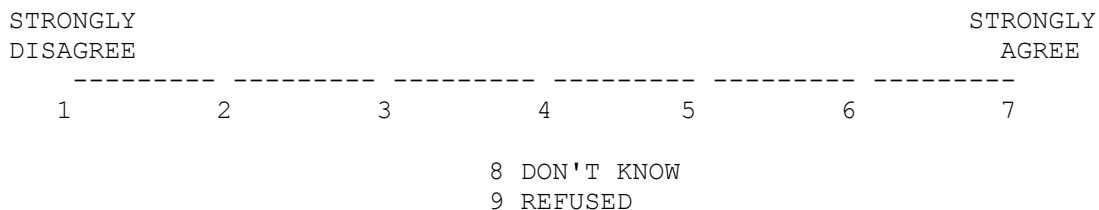
Question q8b

I feel safe visiting the parks in my area of town



Question q8c

I feel unsafe visiting parks at night.



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Question q9

2.) Which park makes you feel most unsafe? (OPEN-ENDED. CODE FROM LIST

- 1 Respondent could not name park
- 2 Interviewer could not identify park
- 3 Al King Little League Park
- 4 Aldo Tatangelo Walkway
- 5 Azteca Park
- 6 Base Community Complex
- 7 Benavides Park
- 8 Bruni Plaza
- 9 Blas Castaneda Park/Hillside Park
- 10 Canizales Park
- 11 Chaparral Park
- 12 Circle Drive Park
- 13 Civic Center Pool
- 14 Community Baseball Fields
- 15 Cruz Little League Field
- 16 Del Mar Community Park
- 17 Dryden Park
- 18 East Central Park
- 19 Garcia-Vela Park
- 20 Jarvis Plaza
- 21 La Ladrillera Park
- 22 Las Brisas Park
- 23 Las Palmas Park Trail
- 24 Los Dos Laredos Park
- 25 Lyon Street Skate Park
- 26 Market Street Complex
- 27 Noon Lions Park
- 28 Ochoa Sanchez Park
- 29 Santa Fe Park
- 30 Santa Rita Park
- 31 Scott Street Park
- 32 Seven Flags Park
- 33 San Agustin Plaza
- 34 St. Peter's Plaza
- 35 Taylor Street Park
- 36 Three Points Park and Pool
- 37 Toddler Park
- 38 Villa del Sol Park
- 39 Zacate Creek Park
- 40 Zacata Linear Park

88 DON'T KNOW

99 REFUSED

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Question q10

Would you say that there are too few, about the right amount, or too many of the following?

- 10\_1 Park areas
- 10\_2 Recreation programs, classes, or special events
- 10\_3 Facilities and fields at the parks
- 10\_4 Jogging, walking, and bicycle trails
- 10\_5 Athletic leagues for adults
- 10\_6 Athletic leagues for children
- 10\_7 Youth programs or camps
- 10\_8 Senior citizen activities
- 10\_9 Athletic fields and courts
- 10\_10 Public pools
- 10\_11 Public golf courses
- 10\_12 Community centers
- 10\_13 Disc golf areas
- 10\_14 Extreme sports parks
- 10\_15 Computer classes

- 1 Too few
- 2 About the right amount
- 3 Too many

- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question Q11

Now I would like to ask about the importance of having new (additional) parks and recreation services in Laredo. Using a scale where 1 means not at all important and 7 means very important, how important is it to have

- 11\_1 New parks and open green spaces
- 11\_2 New facilities for indoor recreation
- 11\_3 New facilities for outdoor recreation
- 11\_4 New programs and activities
- 11\_5 Volleyball courts
- 11\_6 Basketball courts
- 11\_7 Baseball fields
- 11\_8 Softball fields
- 11\_9 Soccer fields
- 11\_10 Football fields
- 11\_11 Practice athletic fields
- 11\_12 Tennis courts
- 11\_13 Water park
- 11\_14 Senior center
- 11\_15 Hiking/biking/jogging trails
- 11\_16 Skateboard/Extreme sports park

- 
- 11\_17 Outdoor pools
  - 11\_18 Indoor pools
  - 11\_19 Open/green spaces
  - 11\_20 Golf courses/driving ranges
  - 11\_21 Picnic shelters
  - 11\_22 Botanic/flower gardens
  - 11\_23 Community recreation centers

NOT AT ALL  
 IMPORTANT

-----

1            2            3            4            5            6            7

8 DON'T KNOW  
 9 REFUSED

Question q12

Imagine that a bond election was on the ballot in the next Laredo election. Money from the bonds would be used to pay for additional parks and recreation facilities and services. It would cost your household total of \$\_\_\_\_\_ in additional property taxes each year to pay for these additions. Remember, the funds could only be used for additional parks and recreation. How would you vote for this proposal?

- 12\_1 \$1-5
- 12\_2 \$5-10
- 12\_3 \$10-15
- 12\_4 \$15-20
- 12\_5 \$20-25
- 12\_6 \$25-30
- 12\_7 \$30-35
- 12\_8 \$35-40
- 12\_9 \$40-45
- 12\_10 \$45-50
- 12\_11 \$50-55
- 12\_12 \$55-60
- 12\_13 \$60-65
- 12\_14 \$65-70
- 12\_15 \$70-75
- 12\_16 \$75-80
- 12\_17 \$80-85
- 12\_18 \$85-90
- 12\_19 \$90-95
- 12\_20 \$95-100
- 12\_21 \$125

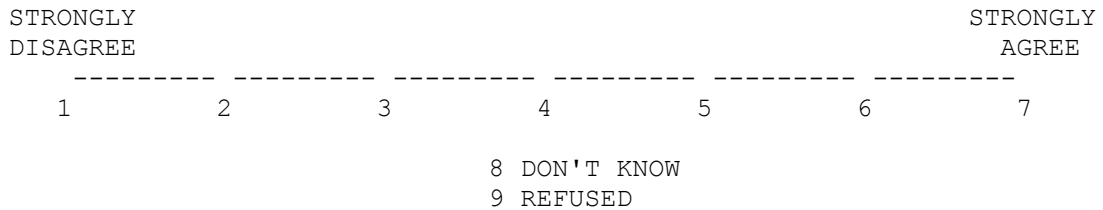
12\_22 \$150  
12\_23 \$175  
12\_24 \$200  
12\_25 \$225  
12\_26 \$250  
12\_27 \$275  
12\_28 \$300

- 1 Yes/In favor
- 2 No
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question q13a

If the city of Laredo must balance the budget without increasing taxes, it may have to choose between the development of new parks and recreation and reducing existing parks and recreation services. Please use a scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. How much do you agree or disagree that:

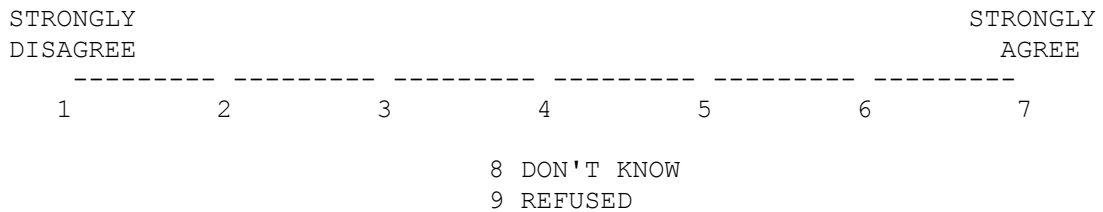
New park facilities are worth reductions in recreation programs like athletic leagues, classes, and activities.



Question q13b

If the city of Laredo must balance the budget without increasing taxes, it may have to choose between the development of new parks and recreation and reducing existing parks and recreation services. Please use a scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. How much do you agree or disagree that:

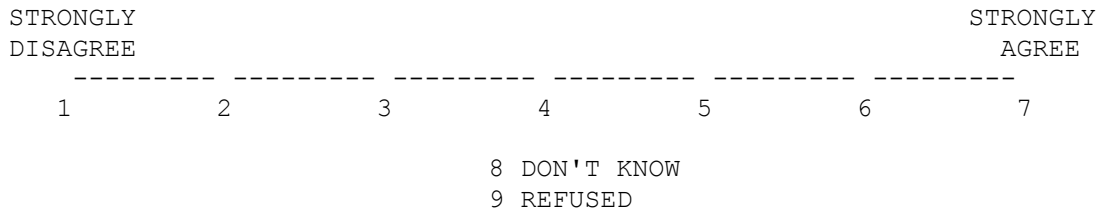
New park facilities are worth reductions in special events like tournaments, races, and cultural events.



Question q13c

If the city of Laredo must balance the budget without increasing taxes, it may have to choose between the development of new parks and recreation and reducing existing parks and recreation services. Please use a scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. How much do you agree or disagree that:

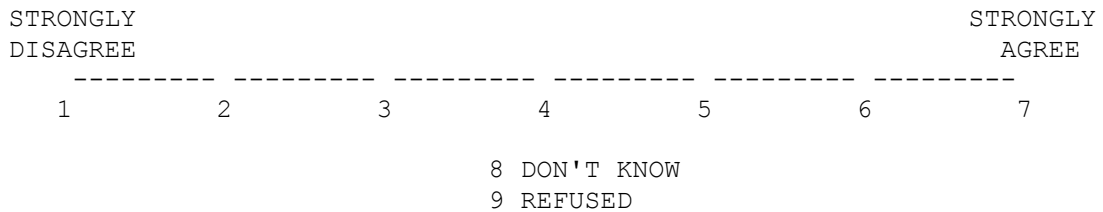
New park facilities are worth reductions in city pool programs, classes or operating hours.



Question q13d

If the city of Laredo must balance the budget without increasing taxes, it may have to choose between the development of new parks and recreation and reducing existing parks and recreation services. Please use a scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. How much do you agree or disagree that:

New park facilities are worth reductions in the operating hours of existing recreational facilities and programs.



Question q14

Finally, I have just a few questions about you.

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How many children under age 18 currently live in your home?

ENTER NUMBER:

98 DON'T KNOW

99 REFUSED

Question q14a

Are any of these children age 5 years old or younger?

1 Yes

2 No

8 DON'T KNOW

9 REFUSED

Question q14b

Are any of these children between the ages of 6 and 12?

1 Yes

2 No

8 DON'T KNOW

9 REFUSED

Question q14c

Are any of these children between the ages of 13 and 18?

1 Yes

2 No

8 DON'T KNOW

9 REFUSED

Question q15

Do you rent or own your residence?

1 Rent

2 Own

8 DK

9 REFUSED

Question q16

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 
- 1 Less than 9th grade
  - 2 9th to 12th grade, no diploma
  - 3 High school graduate
  - 4 Some college, no degree
  - 5 Associate degree
  - 6 Bachelor's degree (B.A., B.S., R.N.)
  - 7 Graduate or professional degree (M.A., M.S., Ph.D., M.D.)
  - 9 REFUSED

Question q17

What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself to be?

READ CATEGORIES IF NECESSARY

- 1 White (Caucasian)
- 2 Hispanic/Latino
- 3 Black or African-American
- 4 Asian
- 5 American Indian or Alaska Native
- 6 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- 7 OTHER
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question q17a

Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question q18

In what year were you born?

- ENTER YEAR: 19
- 99 REFUSED

Question q19

Is your total household income less than \$20,000, or is it \$20,000 or more?

- 1 Less than \$20,000
- 2 \$20,000 or more
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question q19a

I am going to mention a number of income categories. When I

---

mention the category that describes your total family income in the last 12 months, please stop me.

READ CATEGORIES

- 1 Under 5 thousand
- 2 6 to 10 thousand
- 3 11 to 15 thousand
- 4 16 to 20 thousand
- 8 DON'T KNOW
- 9 REFUSED

Question q19b

I am going to mention a number of income categories. When I mention the category that describes your total family income in the last 12 months, please stop me.

READ CATEGORIES

- 1 20 to 25 thousand
- 2 26 to 30 thousand
- 3 31 to 40 thousand
- 4 41 to 50 thousand
- 5 51 to 60 thousand
- 6 61 to 75 thousand
- 7 76 to 100 thousand
- 8 More than 100 thousand
- 98 DON'T KNOW
- 99 REFUSED

Question q21

RECORD RESPONDENT'S GENDER

- 1 MALE
- 2 FEMALE

Time

Time to complete interview(in minutes)

Zipcode

Respondent's zip code (from sample)

District

Respondent's city council district (from sample)

parkspro

Recoded variable. This variable indicates a respondent's willingness to pay in question 12. To be used in combination with proamt.

proamt

Recoded variable. This variable indicates the amount a respondent was asked whether he/she was willing to pay for parks. To be used in combination with parkspro.