

# voorhees environmental park

## survey review

Student Surveys

June 26, 2012



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# Key Observations

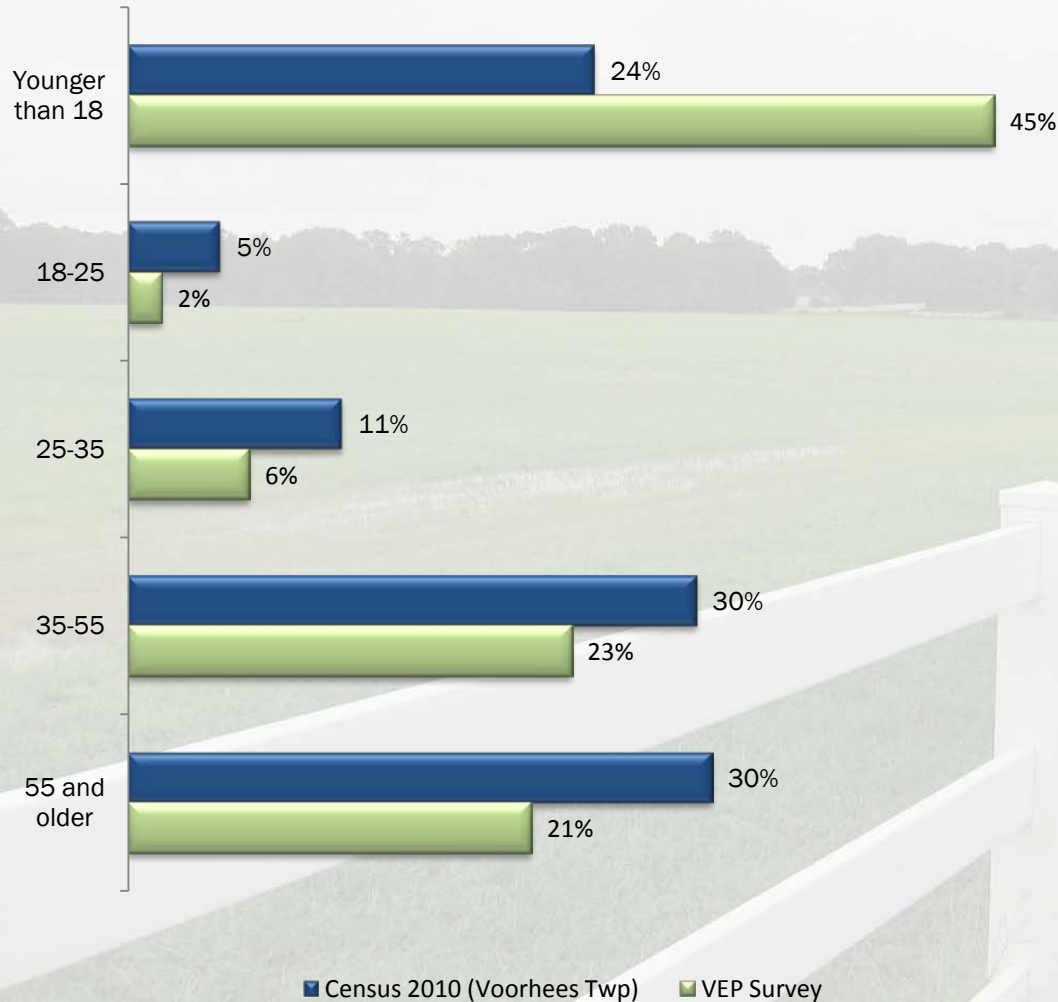
- When student surveys were added, they are overrepresented in results versus the population of Voorhees.
- Students expressed a strong desire for both passive recreation and active recreation.
  - Walking paths, sitting and biking, along with playing ball were desired.
- The reaction to contact with solar was much stronger with students. Over half preferred some contact.
- The car is still an important mode of transportation for students; however, many picture arriving by bicycle.
- Over half of the students feel that Teenage play areas are lacking in Voorhees.

# Voorhees Environmental Park (VEP) Design Option Survey

- School Survey date: May 25, 2012
- 125 students responded to the survey.
  - surveys were manually entered from paper copies
- School survey compliments the survey delivered 3/19/2012 - 5/7/2012 at Voorhees Town Hall and Online through CUES. When comparing surveys, text refers to the 3/9-5/7 survey as “Prior Survey”.
- Questions asked
  - Age, proximity of home and work to VEP, and mode of transportation (check one)
  - Favorite park in Voorhees or nearby community (open ended response)
  - What is lacking in the Voorhees park system (check all that apply)
  - Which activities they see themselves doing in VEP (check all that apply)
  - Which amenities they hope for in VEP (check all that apply)
  - What they like/dislike about the four design proposals (open ended response)

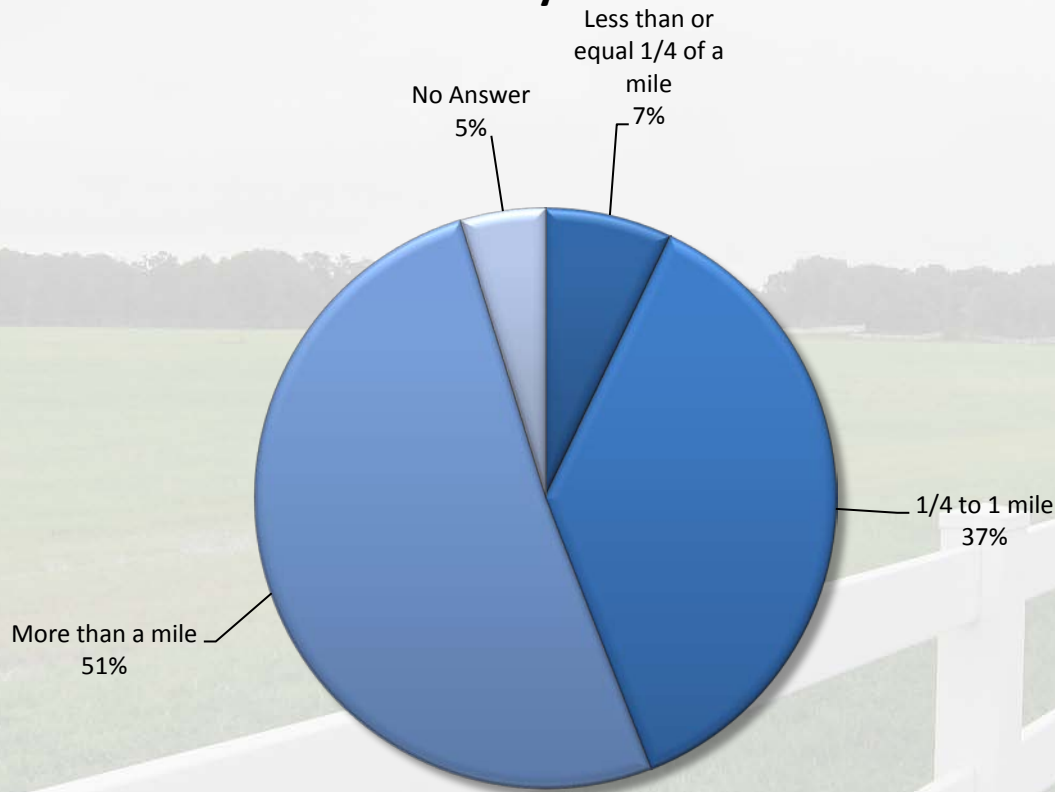


## Voorhees Census Data versus VEP Survey Response



- All Responses to the school survey were from individuals younger than 18.
- When added to the Prior Survey, they make up the largest age segment in the survey and are over-represented in the survey given their proportion of the Voorhees
  - Compared to the 2010 US Census Bureau data for Voorhees Township
  - Note: US. Census – Age classes for the survey’s “younger than 18” include 19 year olds.

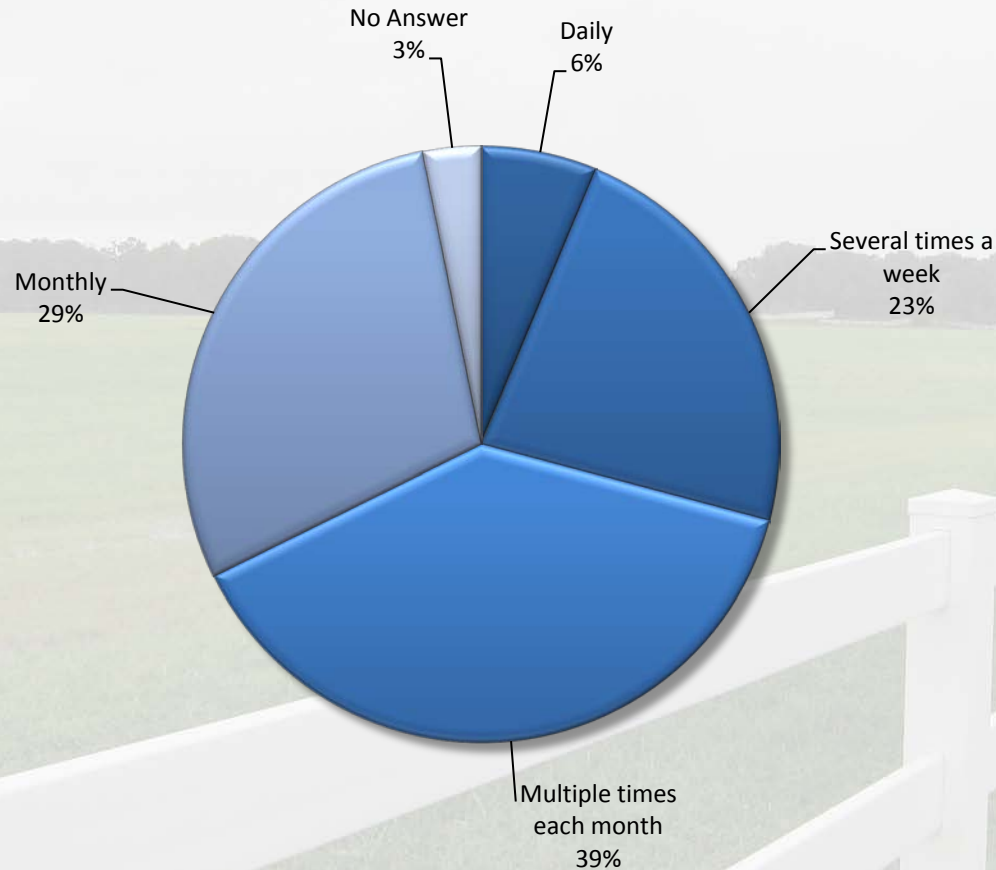
## Proximity to VEP



■ Less than or equal 1/4 of a mile ■ 1/4 to 1 mile ■ More than a mile ■ No Answer

- The majority live over a mile away from VEP
- Only 7% live within a 5-minute walk of VEP
  - Comparison with Prior Survey:
    - Highly Consistent results

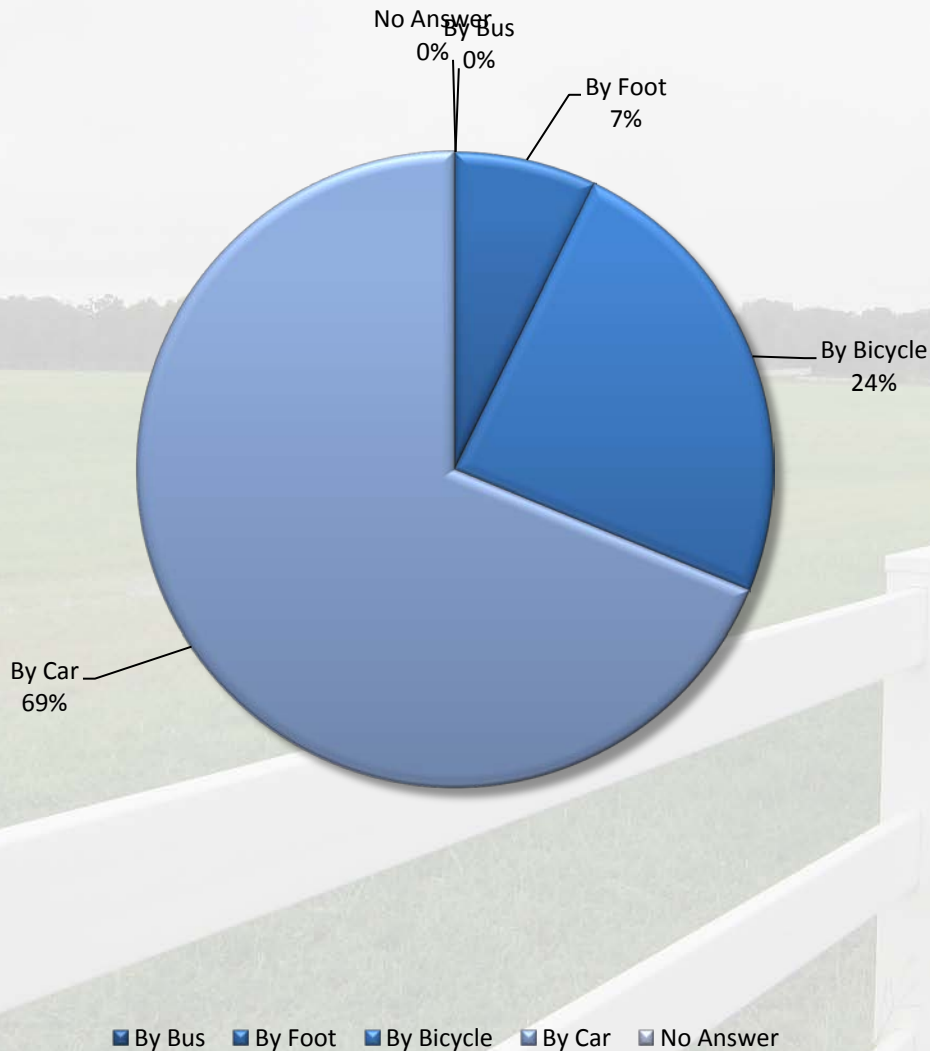
## Estimated Visitation to VEP



■ Daily ■ Several times a week ■ Multiple times each month ■ Monthly ■ No Answer

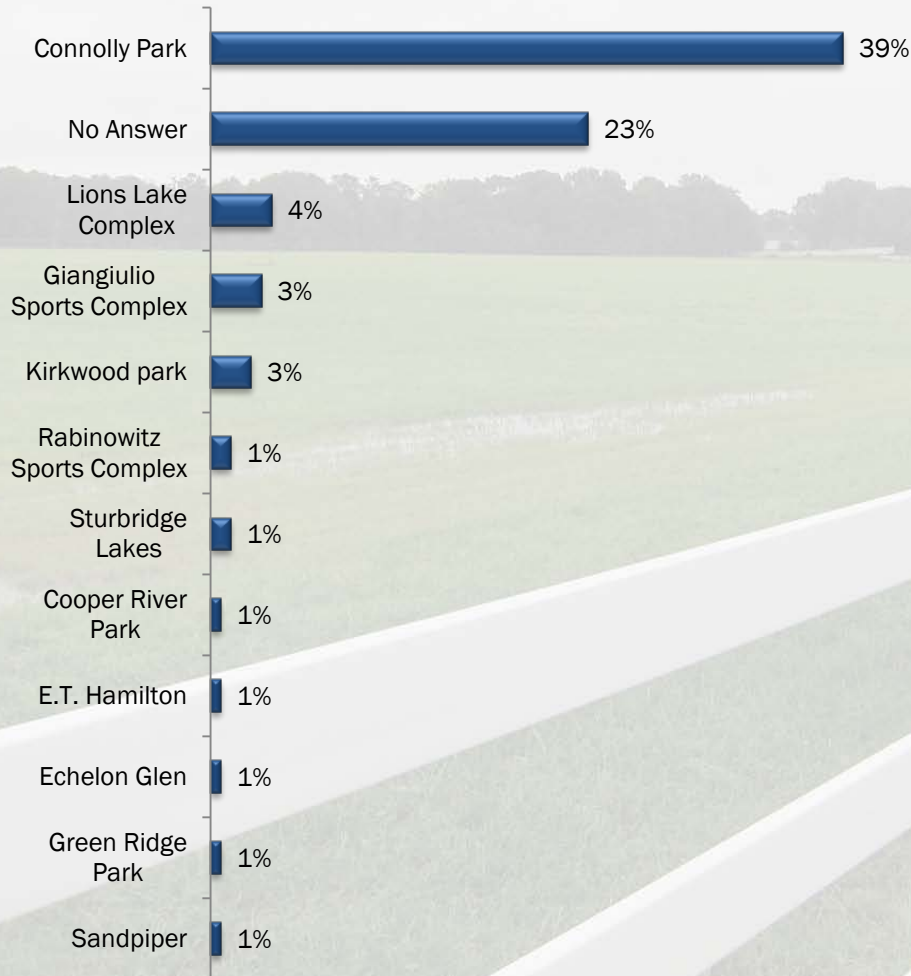
- 6% see themselves visiting VEP daily
- 23% plan to visit several times per week
- The majority plan to visit less frequently (multiple times each month and monthly)
  - Comparison with Prior Survey:
    - Highly Consistent results

## Most Likely Used Mode of Transportation



- The importance of parking should not outweigh the importance of safe bicycle and pedestrian connections, potentially reducing the need to drive to the park.
  - Comparison with Prior Survey:
    - Consistent “By Car” results (69% vs. 62%)
    - “By Bicycle” differs (24% vs. 12%)
    - “By Foot” differs (7% vs. 19%)

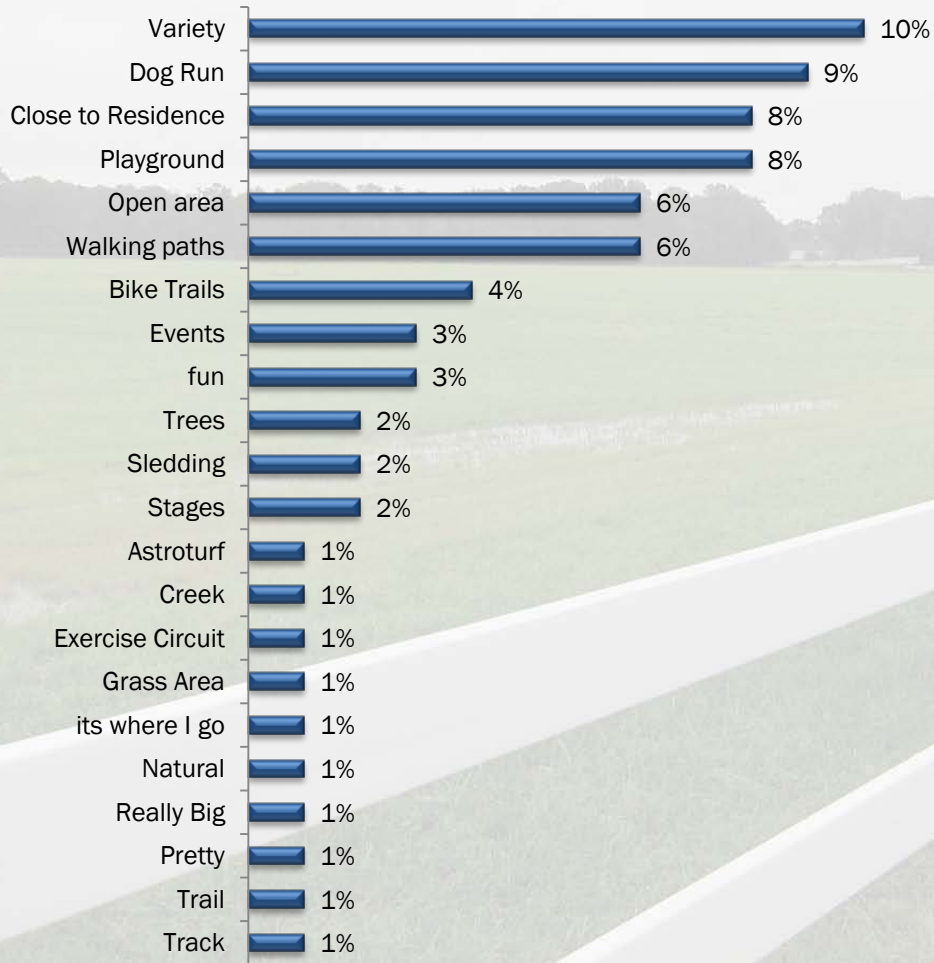
## Favorite Park



- A range of parks were chosen as favorites from both Voorhees and nearby communities
  - 39% favor Connolly Park (vs. 29% in prior survey).
  - Fewer students (23%) than prior survey respondents (43%) selected no answer.
    - May indicate that majority of students have an iconic park or a park that meets their needs while older respondents may not.



## Reasons Given For Favorite Park



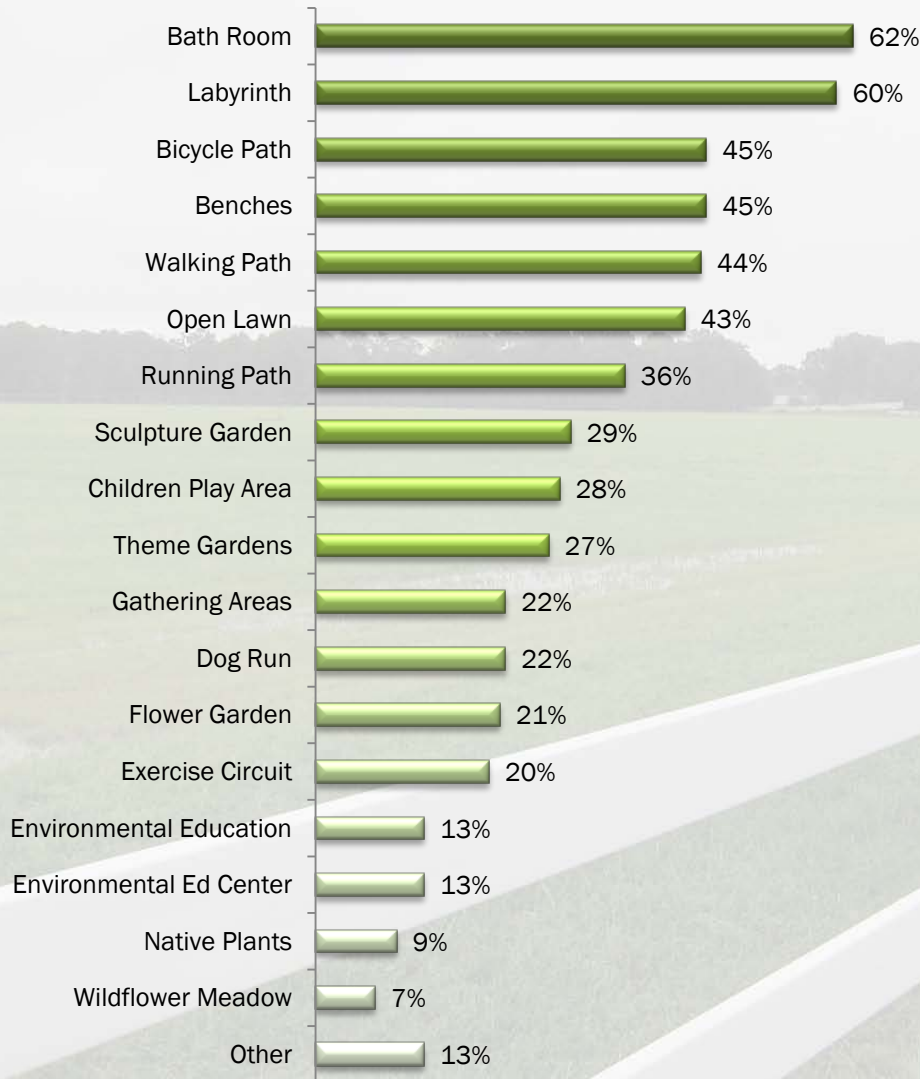
- A wide range of reasons were also specified as to why people choose their favorites
- Top four reasons
  - Variety
  - Dog Runs\*
  - Proximity to Residence
  - Playgrounds\*
- \*Also selected as top reason in prior survey. “Walking paths” was the other

## What is Believed to be Lacking in the Voorhees Park System



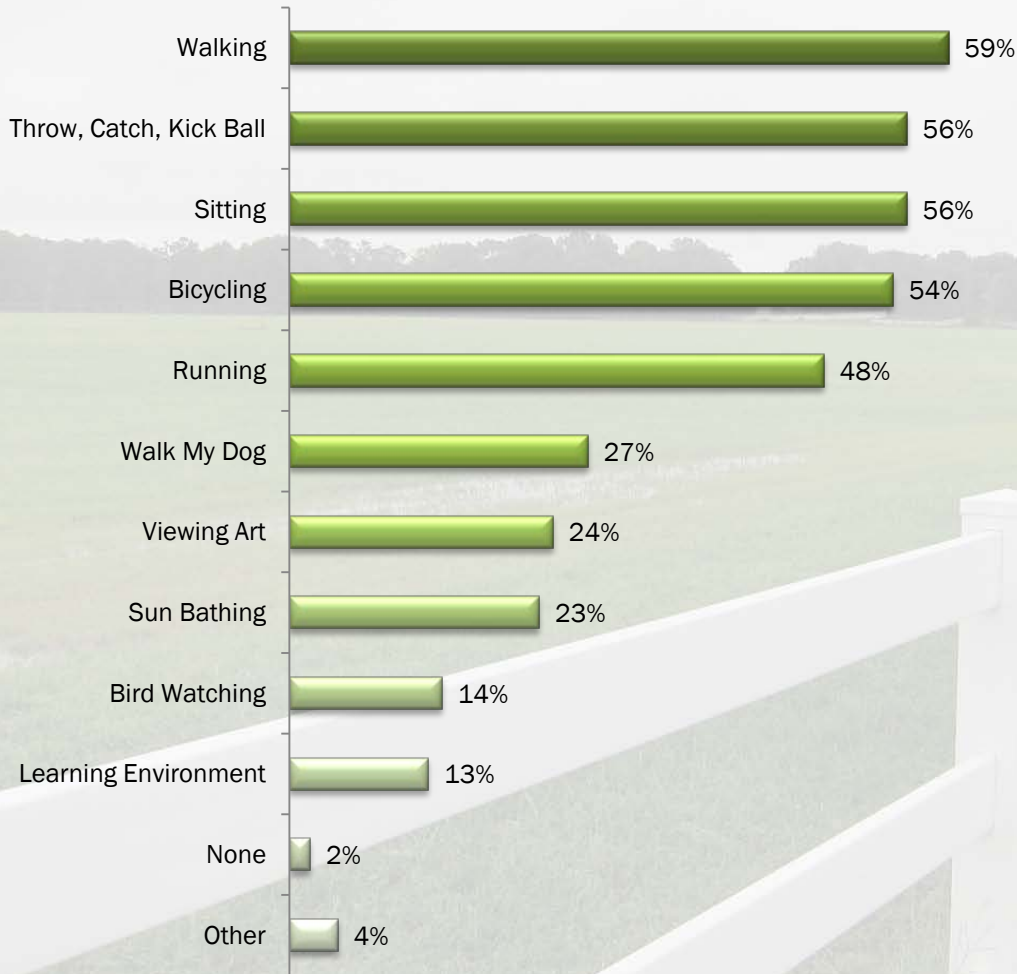
- Teenage Play Areas
- Natural areas
- Picnic areas
- Active Recreation
  - chosen by the largest number of students as amenities lacking in the Voorhees park system
  - Prior Survey chose Natural Areas (33%), Walking Areas (29%), Picnic Areas (26%) & Active Recreation (22%)

## Desired Amenities



- Top 5 Desired Amenities
  - Bathrooms
  - Labyrinth
  - Bicycle Paths
  - Benches
  - Walking Paths
- About 1/3 desire Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.), similar to prior survey
- Compared to prior survey:
  - More students prefer an Open Lawn (43% vs. 35%)
  - Fewer students desire flower gardens (21% vs. 40%)
  - More students prefer Labyrinth (60% vs. 11%)
  - Fewer students desire Environmental Education (13% vs. 17%)

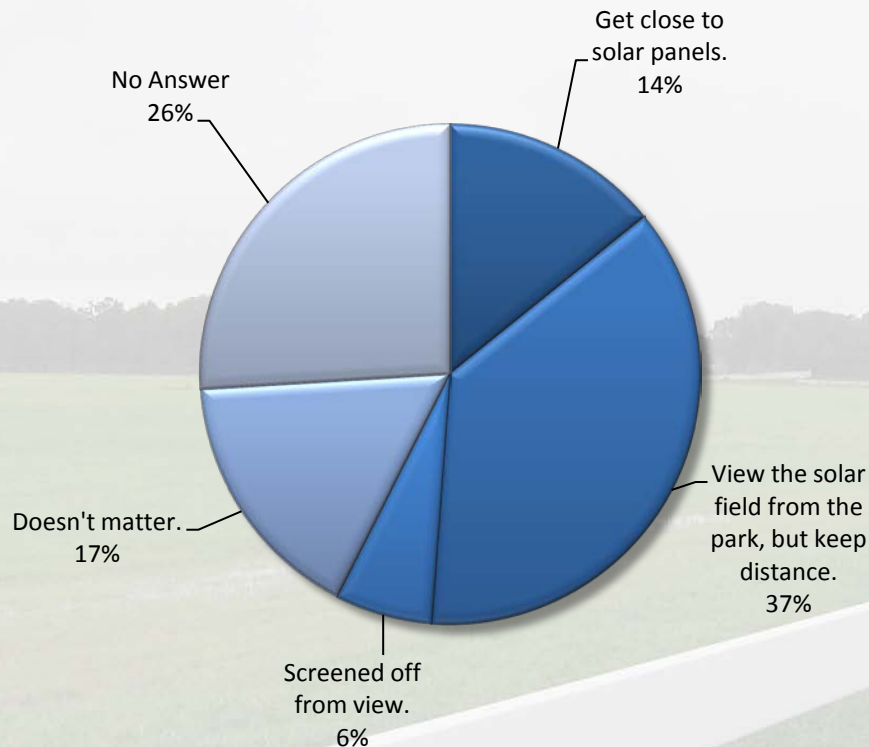
## Anticipated Activities in Voorhees Environmental Park



- Passive Recreation such as walking, sitting and bicycling emerged toward the top of anticipated activities in VEP.
  - 56% of students envisioned active rec. vs. 34% in prior survey.
  - Only about 13% of students mentioned that they envisioned learning about the environment vs. 24% in prior survey.



## Solar Preference



- ☒ Get close to solar panels.
- ☒ View the solar field from the park, but keep distance.
- ☒ Screened off from view.
- ☒ Doesn't matter.
- ☒ No Answer

- Response to the integration of a solar array in the park was mixed.
  - Largest group (37%) said solar should be viewed (vs. 25% in prior).
  - Students had a more defined preference to solar, only 17% said that it did not matter (vs. 34% in prior).
  - Only 6% of students said solar should be screened (vs. 28% of prior survey).
  - 54% felt that some connection (visual/tactile) would be appropriate (vs. 37% in prior)

# Key Observations

- Students expressed a strong desire for both passive recreation as well as envisioning taking part in active recreation.
  - Labyrinth (60%), Bicycle Paths (45%), Benches (45%) Walking paths (44%),
  - Open Lawn was desired by 43% and over half envision playing ball (56%)
  - Approximately 1/3 thought that Natural and Walking areas are lacking in park system.
- The reaction to contact with solar was much stronger with students.
  - 54% preferred some contact/ 37% Visual, 14% want to get close
  - Only 6% wanted them screened off.
  - 17% said it did not matter.
- The car is still an important mode of transportation for students; however, more picture bicycle connectivity as critical.
  - 24% envision riding their bike to the park, 7% will walk
  - 69% will arrive by car

# Key Observations

- Respondents under 18 were overrepresented in student survey.
- 53% of students said that Teenage Play areas are lacking in Voorhees.
- There appeared to be little student demand for an Environmental Education.
  - 13% expressed interest in the environmental education and 13% said they envisioned learning about the environment at the park.
  - Could there be an opportunity to combine “non-traditional” environmental education and teen play areas?
- There was interest in ornamental gardens
  - Over ¼ desired Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.) (27%)
  - Interest in flower gardens (21%), meadows (7%) and native plants (9%) was relatively low.

# Key Differences Student Surveys and Prior Surveys

## Greater than 10% difference in response

### More Students than Prior Survey

- Desire:
  - Labyrinth
  - Bathroom
  - Sculpture Garden
- Envision
  - Playing Ball at Park
  - Running at the Park
- Contact with Solar
  - Visual
- Mode of Transportation
  - Bike to park
- Lacking in Voorhees
  - Teenage Play Areas

### More Prior Survey than Students

- Desire:
  - Walking Paths
  - Benches
  - Flower Gardens
  - Wildflower Meadows
  - Native Plants
  - Bird Watching
- Envision
  - Learning about the Environment at the Park
  - Walking at the Park
  - Bird Watching at the Park
- Contact with Solar
  - Solar screened off
  - Solar contact/view doesn't matter
- Mode of Transportation
  - Walk to the Park
- Lacking in Voorhees
  - Walking areas



# Key Similarities Student Surveys and Prior Surveys

## Less than 10% difference in response

Student and Prior surveys were similar in

- Desire:
  - Bicycle Paths
  - Running Paths
  - Open Lawn
  - Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.)
  - Environmental Education Amenities
  - Children's Play Area
  - Dog Runs
  - Gathering Areas
- Envisioned Activities
  - Sitting
  - Biking
  - Walking Dogs
  - Viewing Art
  - Sun Bathing
- Contact with Solar
  - Getting Close to Solar Panels
- Mode of Transportation
  - Arrive by Car
- Lacking in Voorhees
  - Natural Areas lacking in Voorhees

# Key Observations-Comparisons

## Student Surveys versus Prior Surveys

- Respondents envision passive recreation and active recreation activities.
  - Labyrinth (60%), Walking paths (44%), Benches (45%), Bicycle Paths (45%), Running (36%)
  - Labyrinth (11%), Walking paths (78%), benches (59%), bicycle paths (46%), running (37%)
  - Open Lawn was desired by 43% and over 1/2 envision playing ball (56%)
  - Open Lawn was desired by 35% and over 1/3 envision playing ball (34%)
  - Approximately 1/3 in thought that Natural areas and 14% though walking areas are lacking in town.
  - Approximately 1/3 in thought that Natural areas and 29% though walking areas are lacking in town.

# Key Observations-Comparisons

## Student Surveys versus Prior Surveys

- The reaction to contact with solar was much more opinionated with students.
  - 54% preferred some contact/ 37% Visual, 14% want to get close
  - 37% preferred some contact/ 25% Visual, 12% want to get close
  - 6% wanted them screened off.
  - 28% wanted them screened off.
  - 17% said it did not matter.
  - 34% said it did not matter.

# Key Observations-Comparisons

## Student Surveys versus Prior Surveys

- More students will ride bike. More in the prior survey will walk. Car use is about the same.
  - 24% envision riding bike to the park, 7% will walk
  - 12% envision riding bike to the park, 19% will walk
  - 69% will arrive by car
  - 62% will arrive by car



# Key Observations-Comparisons

## Student Surveys versus Prior Surveys

- 53% said that Teenage Play areas are lacking in Voorhees.
- 11% said that Teenage Play areas are lacking in Voorhees.
- Student demand for an Environmental Education.
  - 13% expressed interest in the environmental education
  - 17% expressed interest in the environmental education
  - 13% said they envisioned learning about the environment at the park.
  - 24% said they envisioned learning about the environment at the park.
- There was interest in ornamental gardens
  - Over  $\frac{1}{4}$  desired Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.) (27%)
  - Almost  $\frac{1}{3}$  desired Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.) (31%)
  - Interest in flower gardens (21%), meadows (7%) and native plants (9%) is low
  - Interest in flower gardens (41%), meadows (25%) and native plants (24%) is higher

## VOORHEES ENVIRONMENTAL PARK EXHIBITION OF FOUR CONCEPTUAL GRADUATE STUDENT DESIGNS



**VOORHEES TOWN HALL**  
2400 Voorhees Town Center  
Voorhees NJ 08043  
**MARCH 19 – APRIL 14, 2012**

The objective of this semester-long design studio in the Rutgers Graduate Program of Landscape Architecture was to develop an integrated concept for open space, commercial use (solar panels) and storm water management that generates innovative solutions with regards to the existing social, economic, ecological situation and active input by the public and major stakeholders.

**VOORHEES  
ENVIRONMENTAL PARK**

# Design Review



## Design Questions

We asked 21 people at the exhibition:

- What did you like?
- What didn't you like?
- Offer Additional Comments







## SUCCESSION BY DESIGN:



### Like Very Much

Pathways (31/125)

Pond (11/125)

### Dislike

No Labels (20/125)

Form/Shapes (18/125)

### Additional Comments

- “The paths are nice, and I like how they go into the forest a little, but there isn't much to do in the land in the middle except sports like soccer or Frisbee”
- “Not enough trees”
- “It does have many things, trees or wildlife, too much grass”
- “Paths could be a little less swervy”



## IN SOLIS PACEM:



### Like Very Much

Great Lawn (25/125)

Pathways (11/125)

Pond (10/125)

### Dislike

Solar Array (15/125)

### Additional Comments

- "The path and trees are great, but it needs more places to just hang out"
- "No skate park"
- "Promenade might be nice but entry into solar field might be too abrupt."
- "I would like a maze"

# INTERLOCK:



## Like Very Much

Pathways (35/125)  
Angular Form (17/125)  
Boardwalk (15/125)  
Labyrinth (12/125)  
Great Lawn (11/125)  
Pond (10/125)

## Dislike

Too Angular (30/125)

## Additional Comments

- "Unique!"
- "Cool"
- "Treehouse, zipline, rock climbing"
- "The trees provide a nice shady area for all sorts of activities and gives a little privacy for people"
- "I would love to see flowers and themes in this park, my favorite design"
- "just not natural looking enough"



Nucleus	Succession By Design	In Solis Pacem	Interlock	
2	2	1	4	asian garden/theme garden
				bird blinds
			15	boardwalk
			1	facilities
1		3		forest/trees
2	3	2	17	form (shape, curves, angles, unique, cool etc.)
8	8	25	11	great lawn
		1		Inviting to all ages
			12	labyrinth
2		1	4	meadow
3				nature
2				overlook
		2		pathway through solar
5	31	11	35	pathways
		1	1	play areas
		1	1	plaza
15	11	10	10	pond
12	3	2	1	pond overlook
		4		promenade
3	8	5	4	solar array
		1	2	solar array gathering
13		1		solar panel overlook
7		7	8	tree coverage

Nucleus	Succession By Design	In Solis Pacem	Interlock	
1		4		activities (not enough)
	2	1		facilities
	5			forest, trees
12	18	2	30	form (shape, curves, angles,etc.)
2	4	4	1	great lawn
	1			kid-friendly activities missing
27	1	1		meadow
	20			no labels
5	2		1	open space
	1	7	5	pathway through solar
5		3	1	pathways
4	4	1	1	pond
		3		promenade
1				radial bosquet
9	5	15	5	solar array
		2		solar array gathering
5				solar overlook
	2	6	2	trees
			1	boardwalk

## OVERALL ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

- “Instead of solar panels in the park, there should be free ones on houses.”
- “I want a labyrinth really bad.”
- “a huge water fountain in the middle of the park, and a stage”
- “public art sculptures, graffiti wall, skate park, horseback riding”
- “artwork display, painting wall, photo center”
- “maybe look like central park or a bee raising farm”
- “concrete paths for scooters/skateboards”
- “big rocks to sit on, trails through the forest”
- “please can we have a skate park”