

# voorhees environmental park

## survey review

may 25, 2012



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# Key Observations

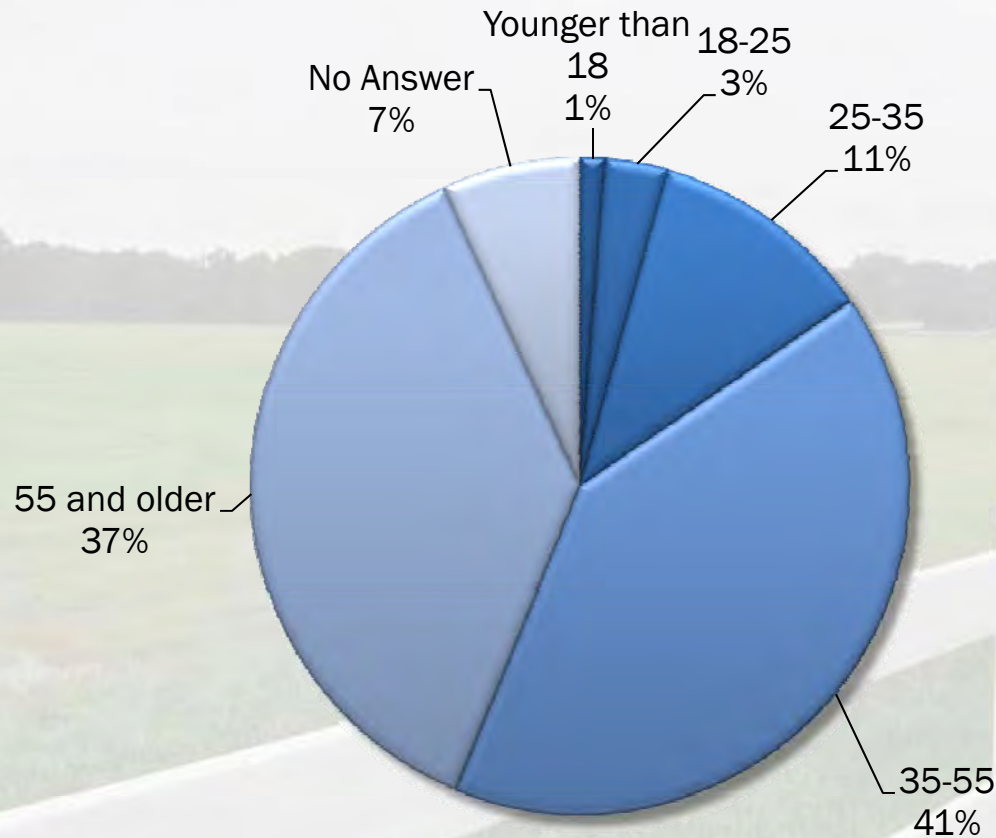
- Respondents under 25 were underrepresented. Those over 35 were overrepresented in survey results.
- Respondents expressed a strong desire for passive recreation.
  - Walking paths, benches, bicycle paths, and running paths along with natural areas
- The reaction to contact with solar differed slightly by age group. The majority of people preferred some connection with the solar array.
- The car is an important mode of transportation; however, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is critical.

# Voorhees Environmental Park (VEP) Design Option Survey

- Survey dates: 3/19/2012 - 5/7/2012
- 160 people responded to the survey.
  - 145 Online, 25 surveys were manually entered from paper copies
- 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)



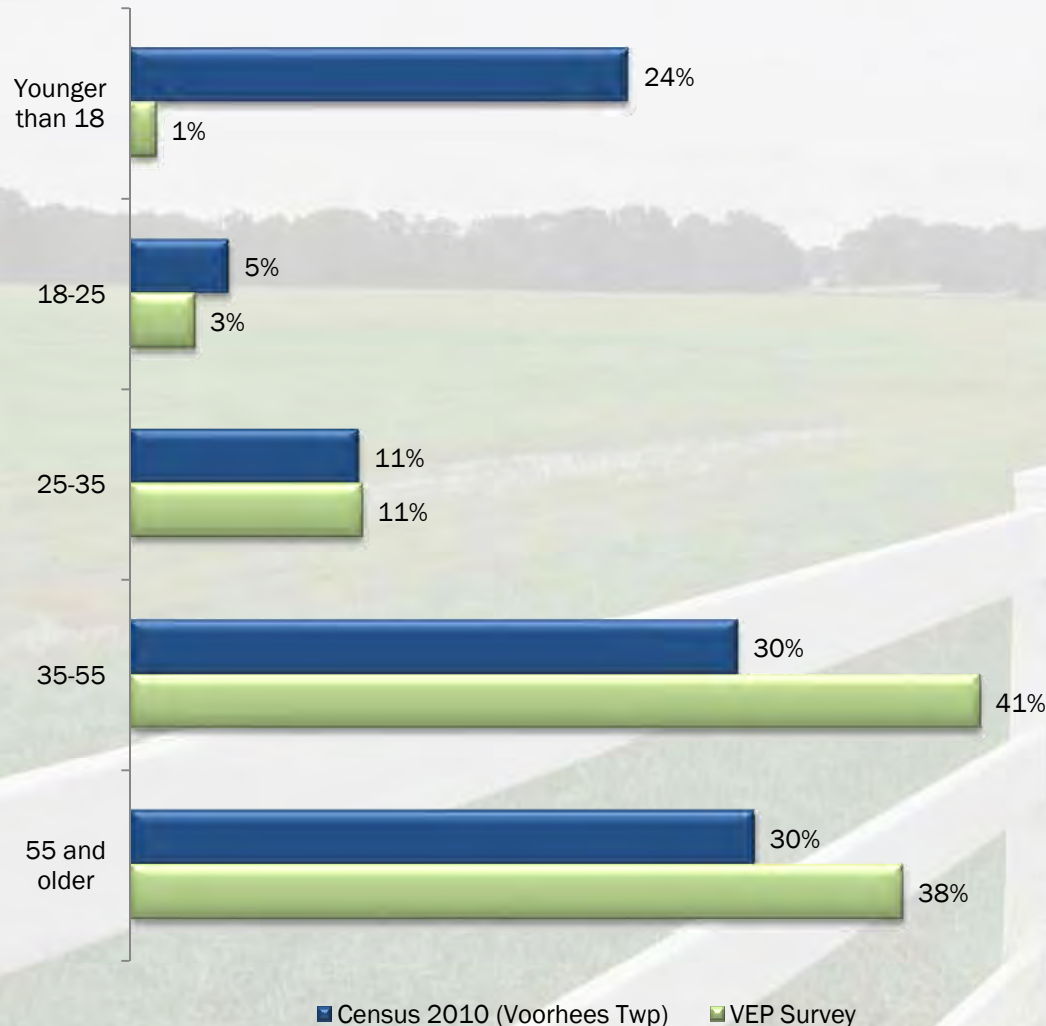
## Age



- The majority (41%) of responses were from individuals aged 33-55, followed by individuals aged 55+ (37%)
- 15% were under 35

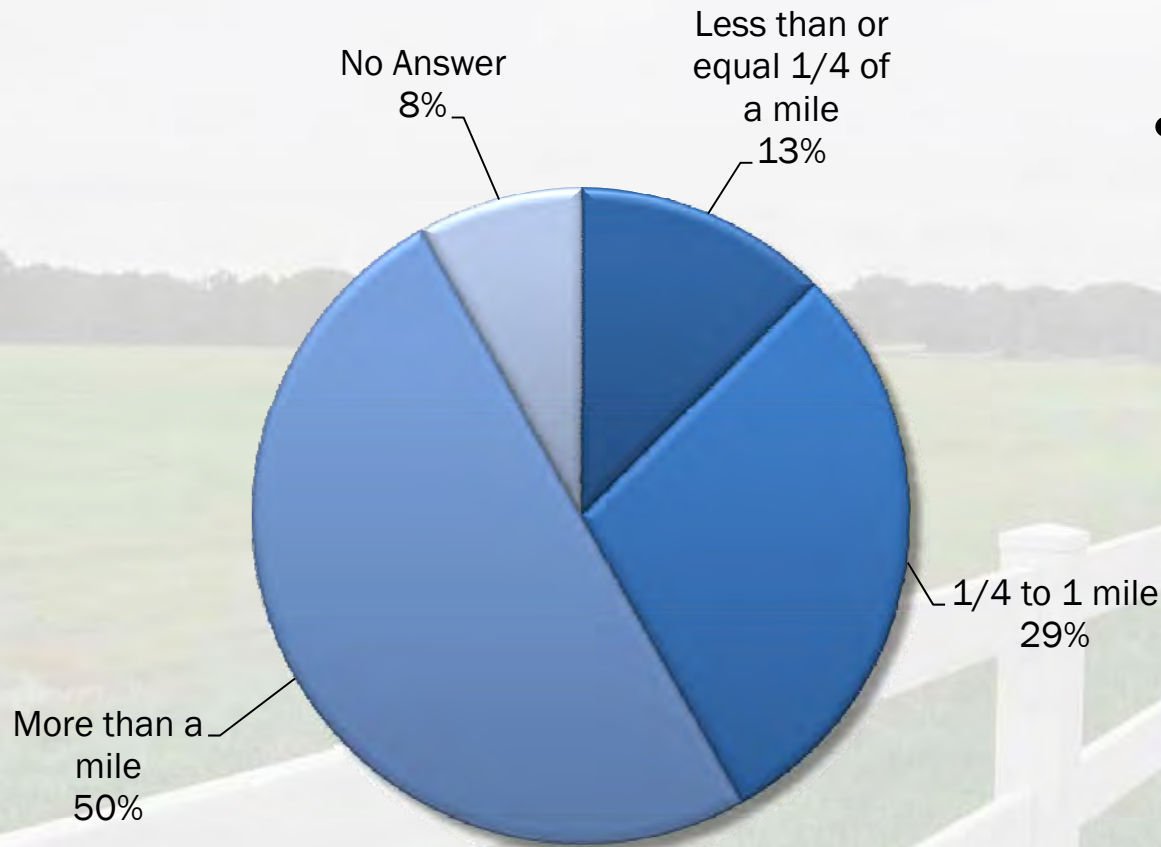
■ Younger than 18 ■ 18-25 ■ 25-35 ■ 35-55 ■ 55 and older ■ No Answer

## Voorhees Census Data versus VEP Survey Response



- People ages 35 and up were over represented in the survey
  - Compared to the 2010 US Census Bureau data for Voorhees Township
- People aged younger than 18 were extremely under represented
  - Note: US. Census – Age classes for the survey’s “younger than 18” include 19 year olds.

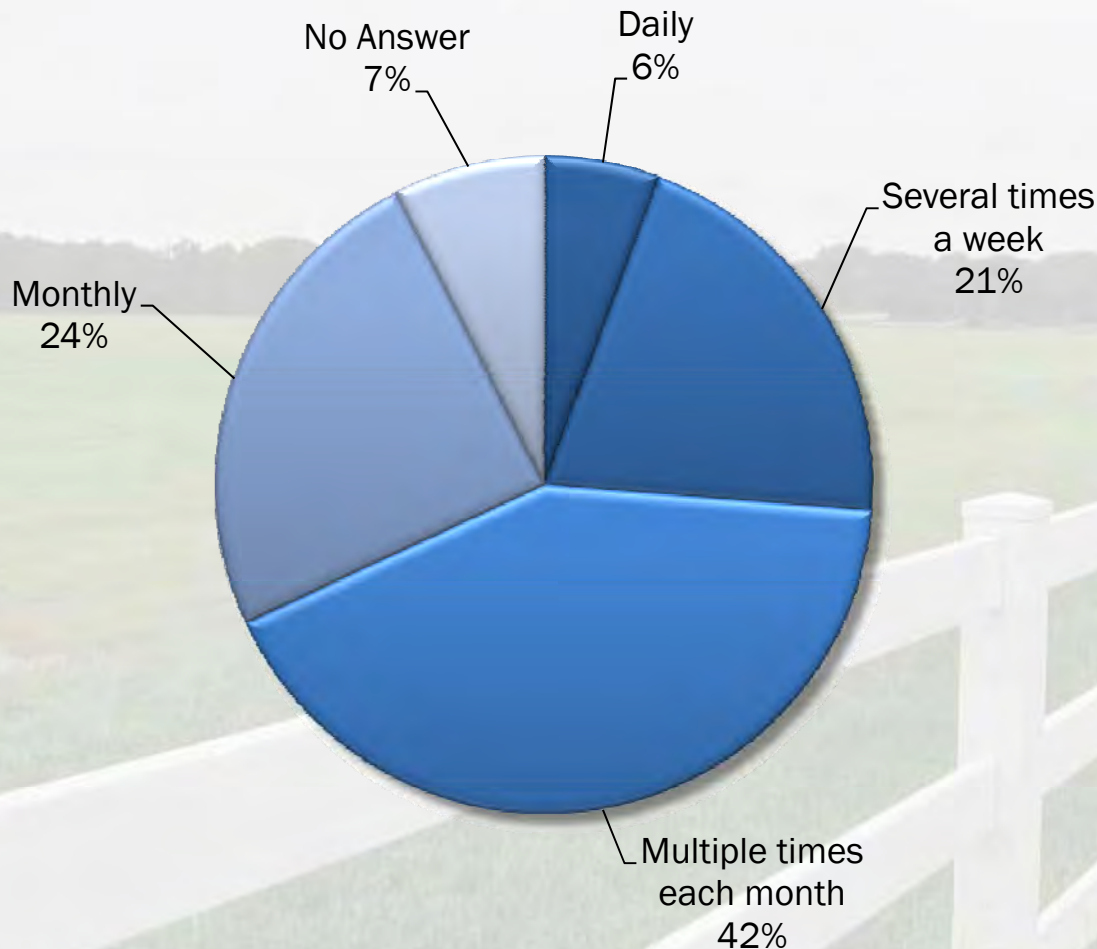
## Proximity of VEP to Home



- A nearly equal mix of people that live over a mile and people that live under a mile, responded to the survey
  - 50% of respondents live more than a mile from VEP
  - Only about 13% live within a 5-minute walk ( $\frac{1}{4}$  mile) of VEP

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

## Estimated Visitation to VEP

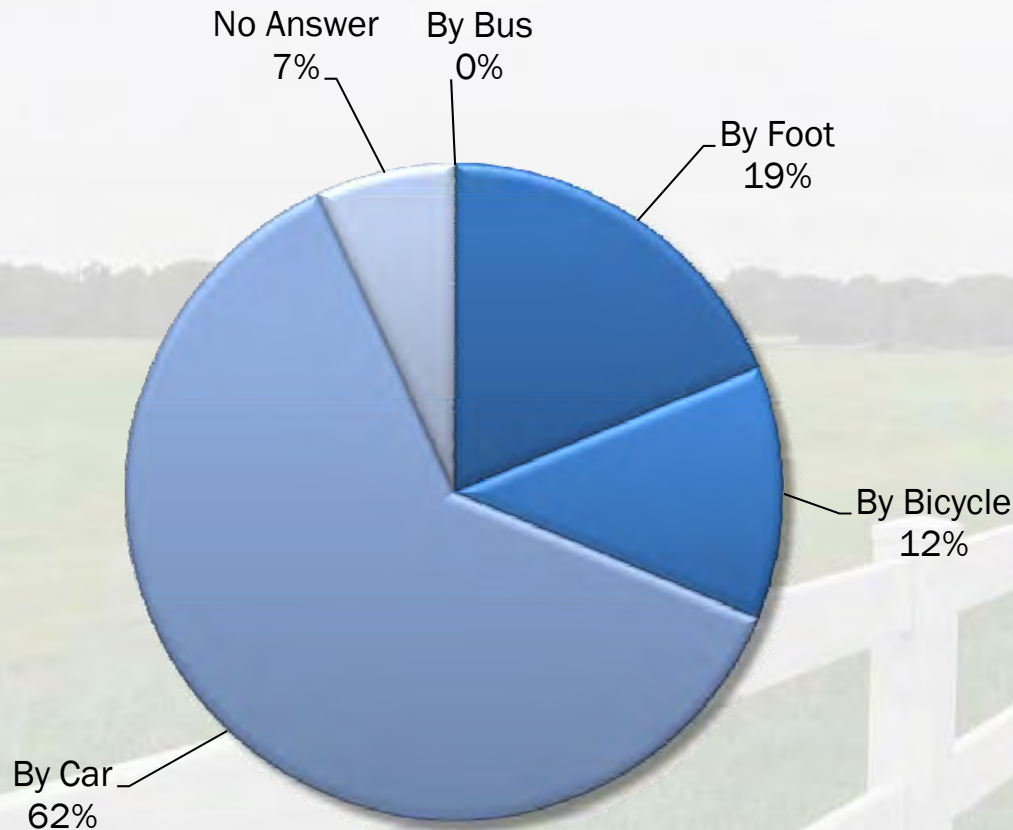


- 6% see themselves visiting VEP daily
- 21% plan to visit several times per week
- The majority plan to visit less frequently (multiple times each month and monthly)

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



## Most Likely Used Mode of Transportation

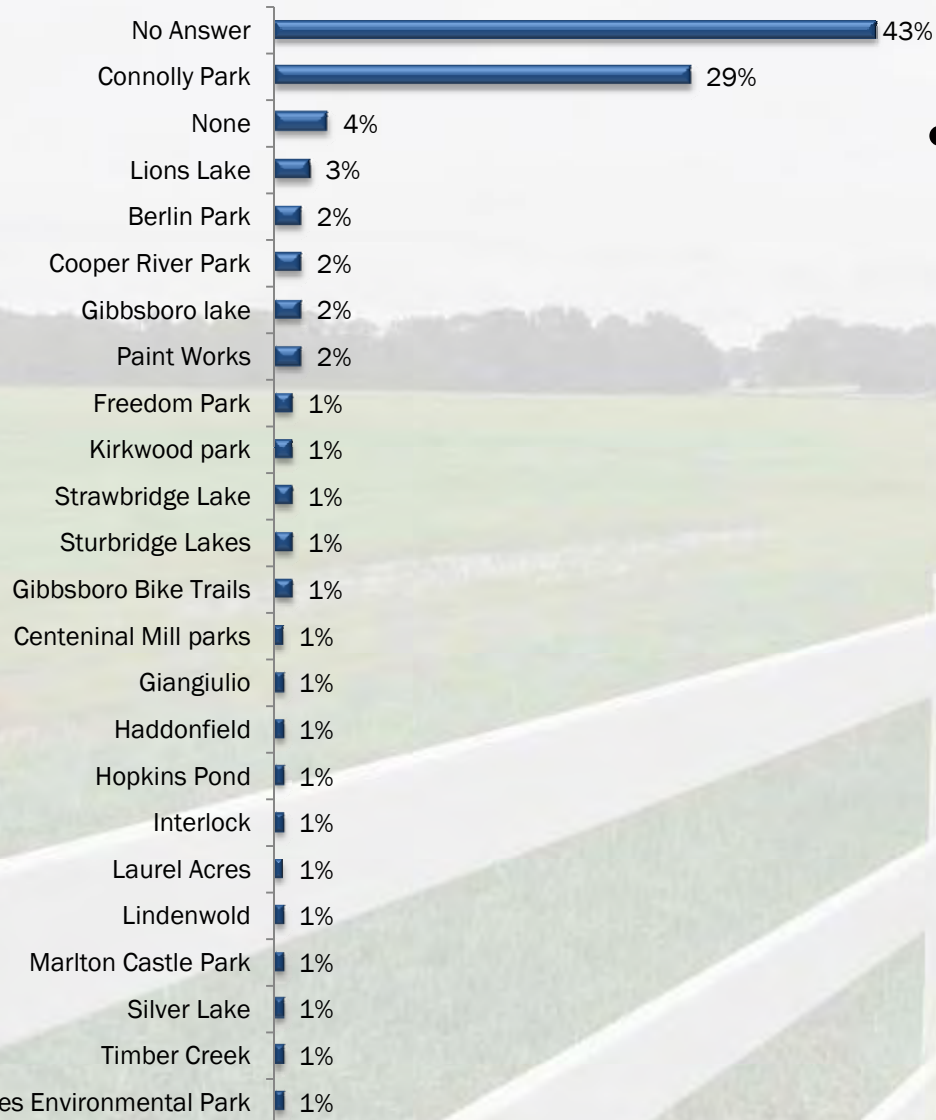


- The importance of parking should not outweigh the importance of safe bicycle and pedestrian connections, potentially reducing the need to drive to the park.
  - Over 30% see themselves travelling without a car
    - 19% would walk
    - 12% would travel by bicycle.

■ By Bus ■ By Foot ■ By Bicycle ■ By Car ■ No Answer

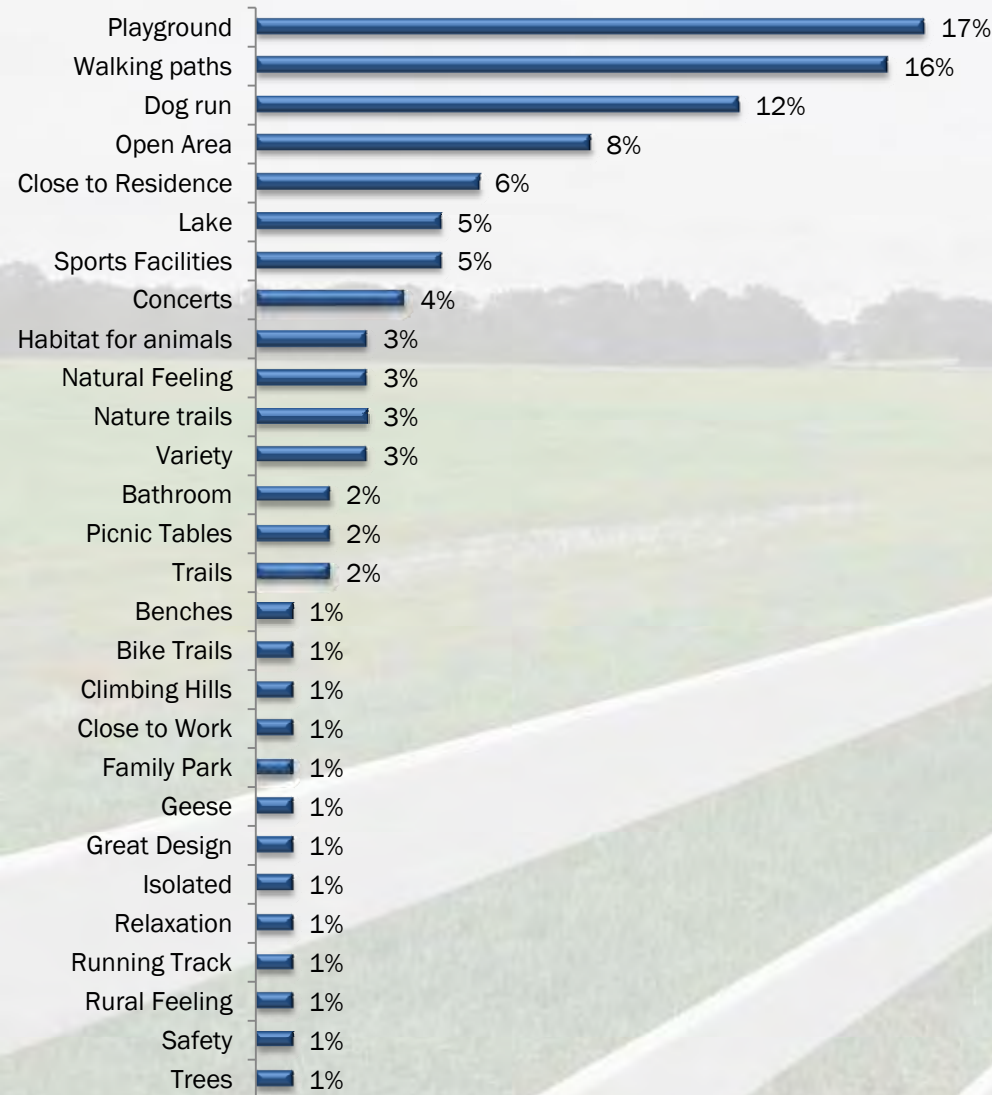


## Favorite Park



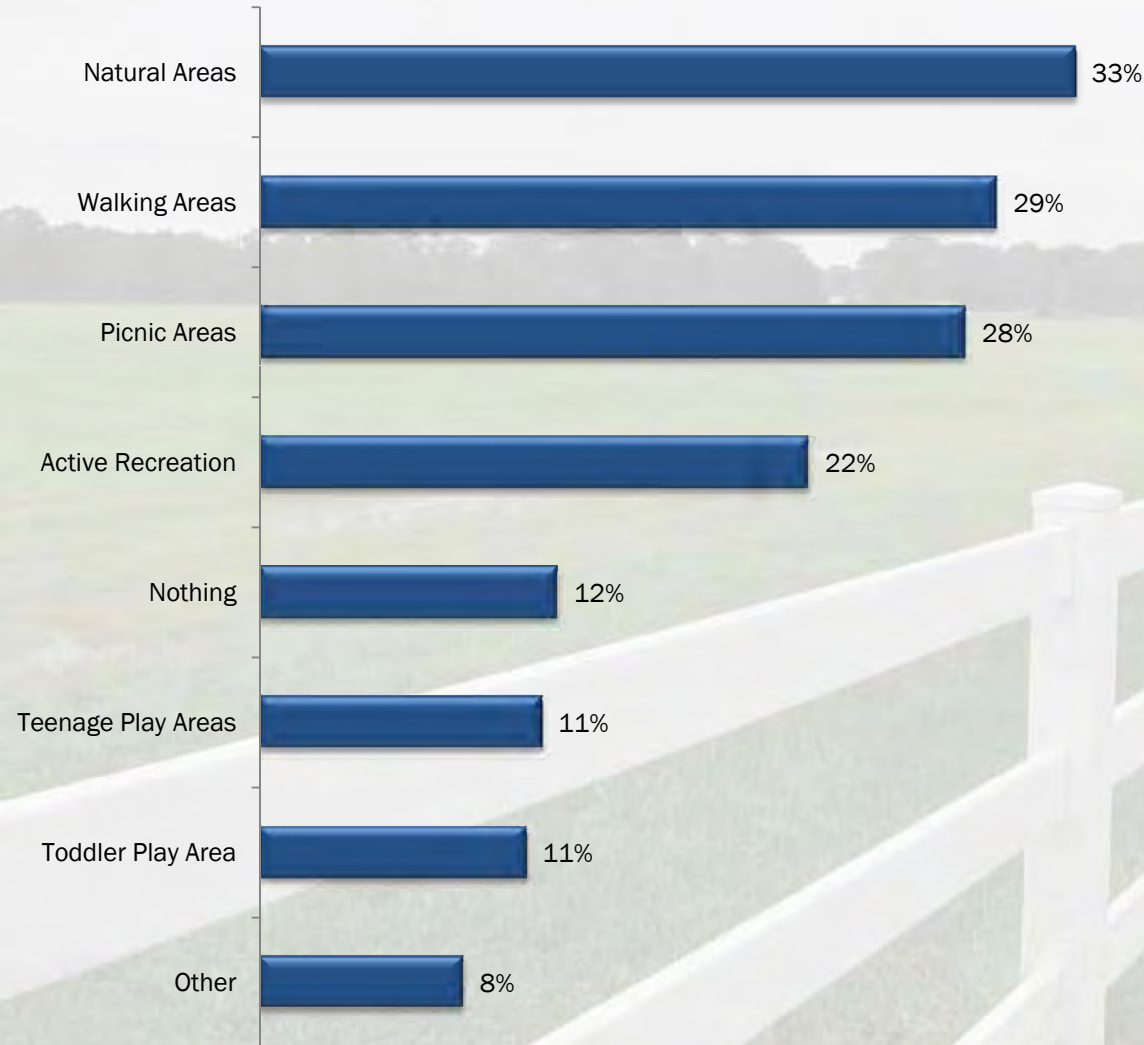
- A range of parks were chosen as favorites from both Voorhees and nearby communities
  - 43% didn't list a favorite park indicating to us there are a large number of people who may still desire an iconic park or different park needs that are not being offered
  - Connolly Park is favored by a third of the respondents.

## Reasons Given For Favorite Park



- A wide range of reasons were also specified as to why people choose their favorites
- Top three reasons
  - Playground
  - Walking paths
  - Dog run

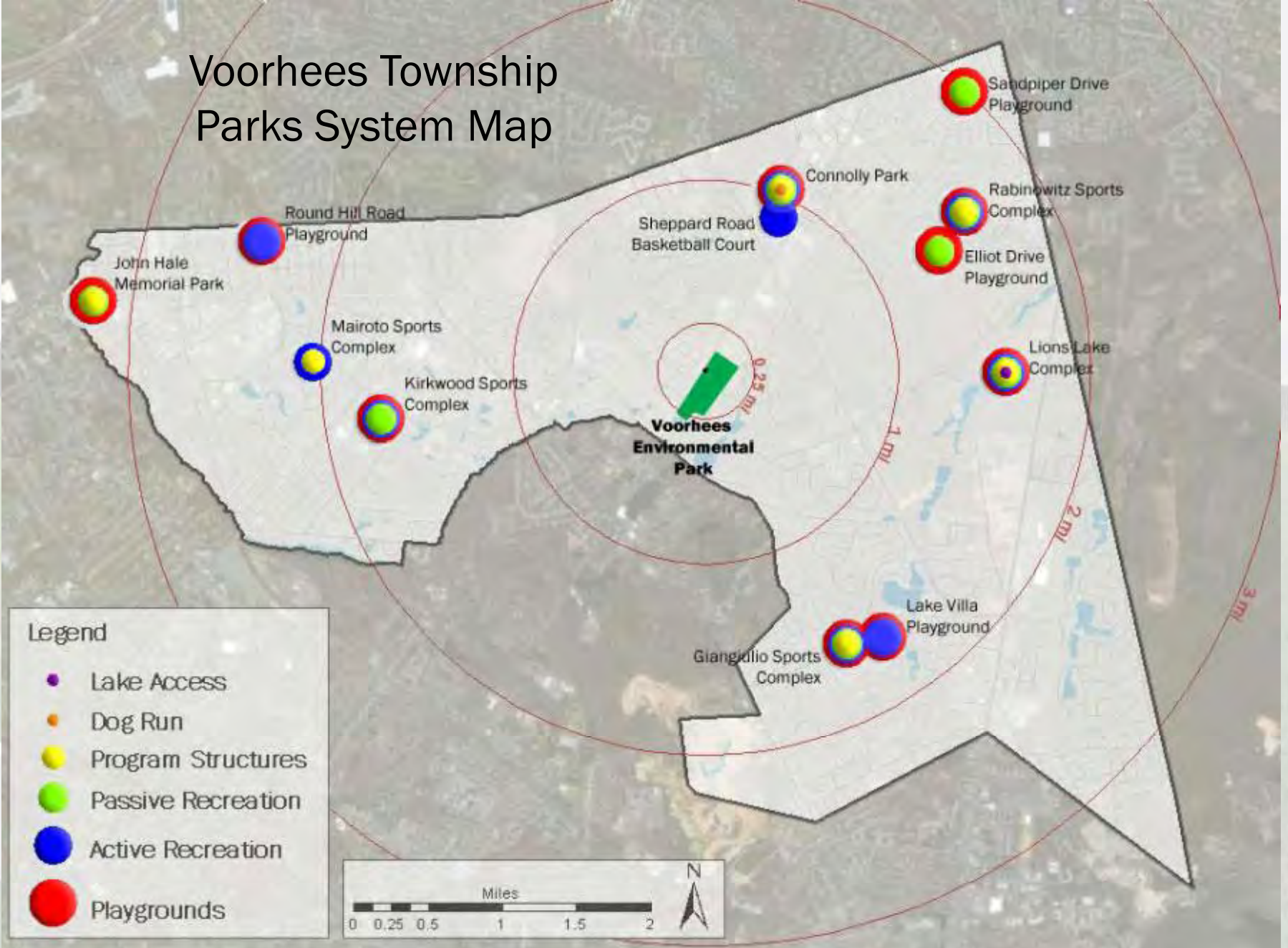
## What is Believed to be Lacking in the Voorhees Park System



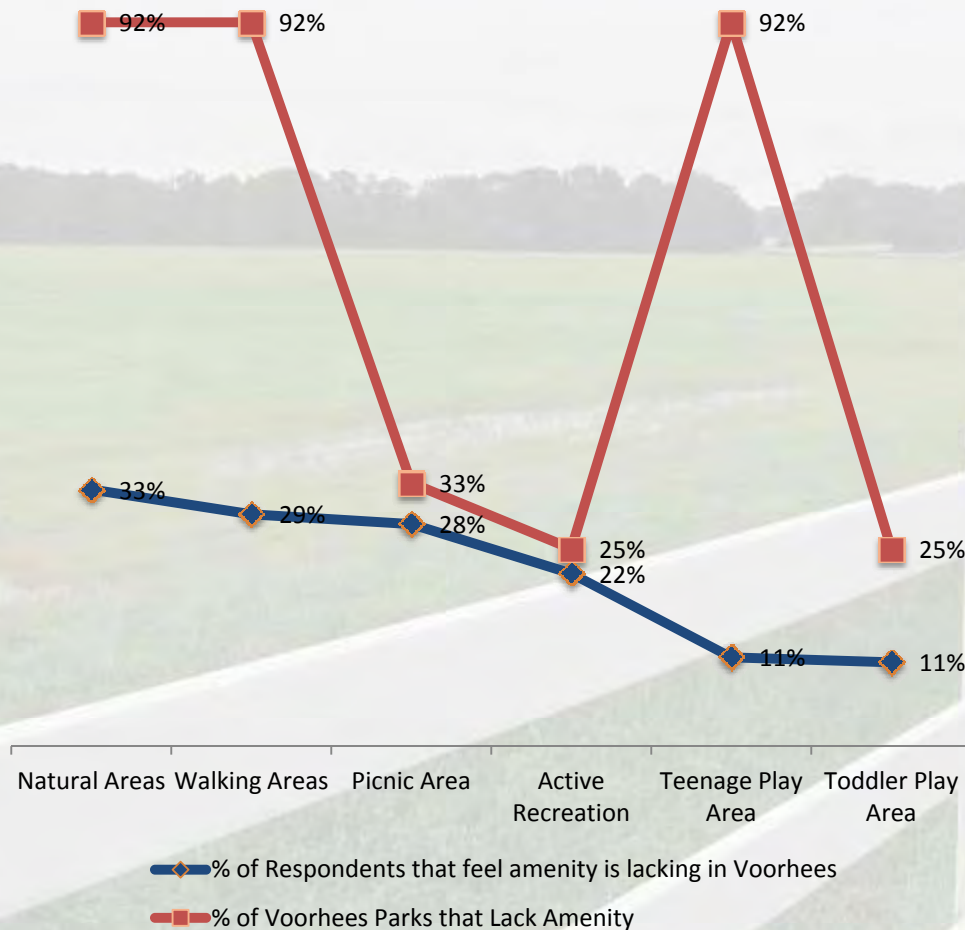
- Natural areas
- Walking areas
- Picnic areas
- Active recreation
  - chosen by the largest number of people as amenities lacking in the Voorhees park system



# Voorhees Township Parks System Map

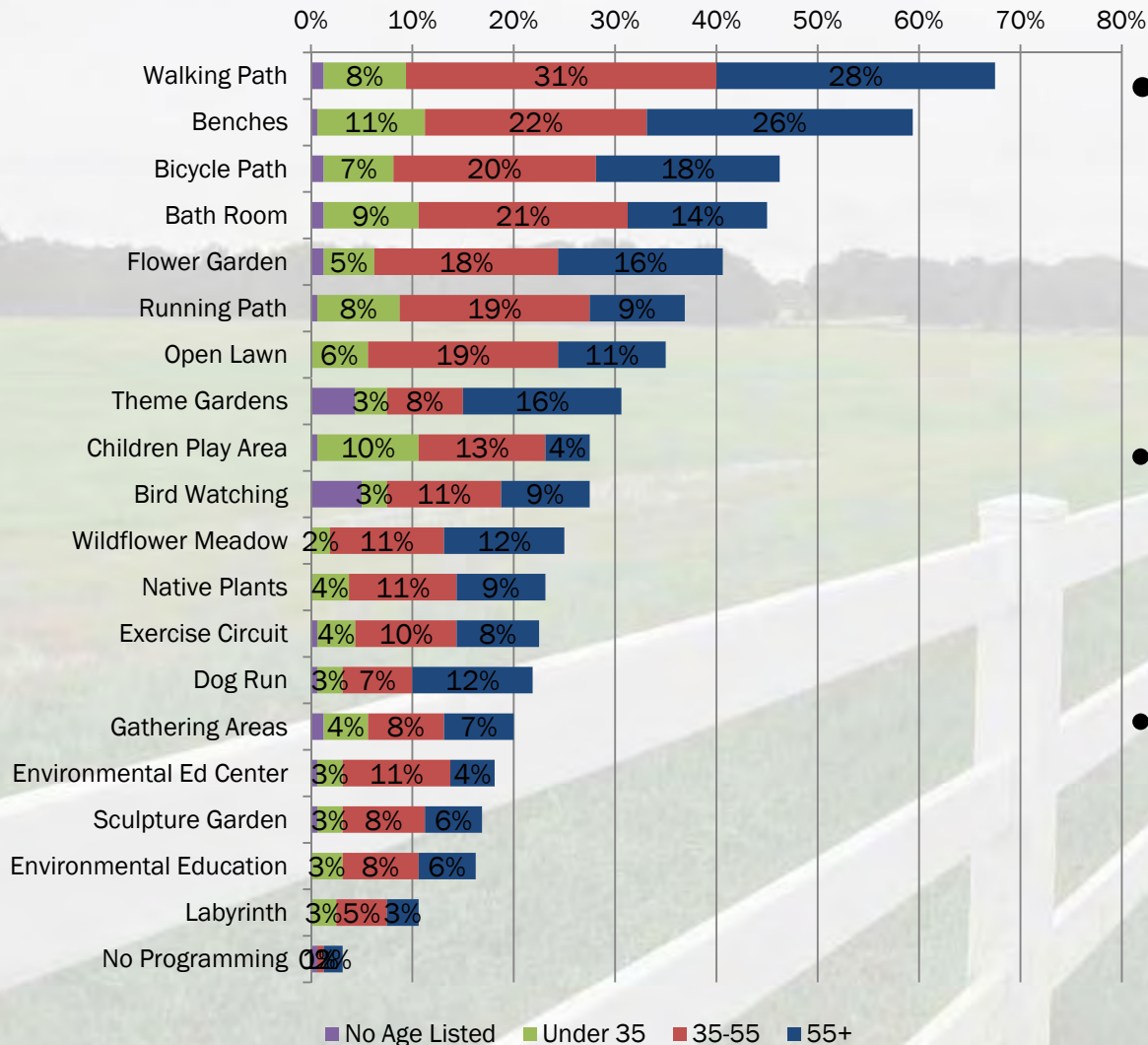


## What is Lacking vs. Parks that Lack Amenity



- According to amenities listed on the Voorhees Township Website, 92% of parks lack Natural Areas and Walking Areas.
  - 1/3 of survey respondents also felt these amenities were lacking.
- About 1/4 of respondents also felt picnic areas and active areas are lacking in Voorhees.
  - The township website shows that the majority of parks do offer these amenities.

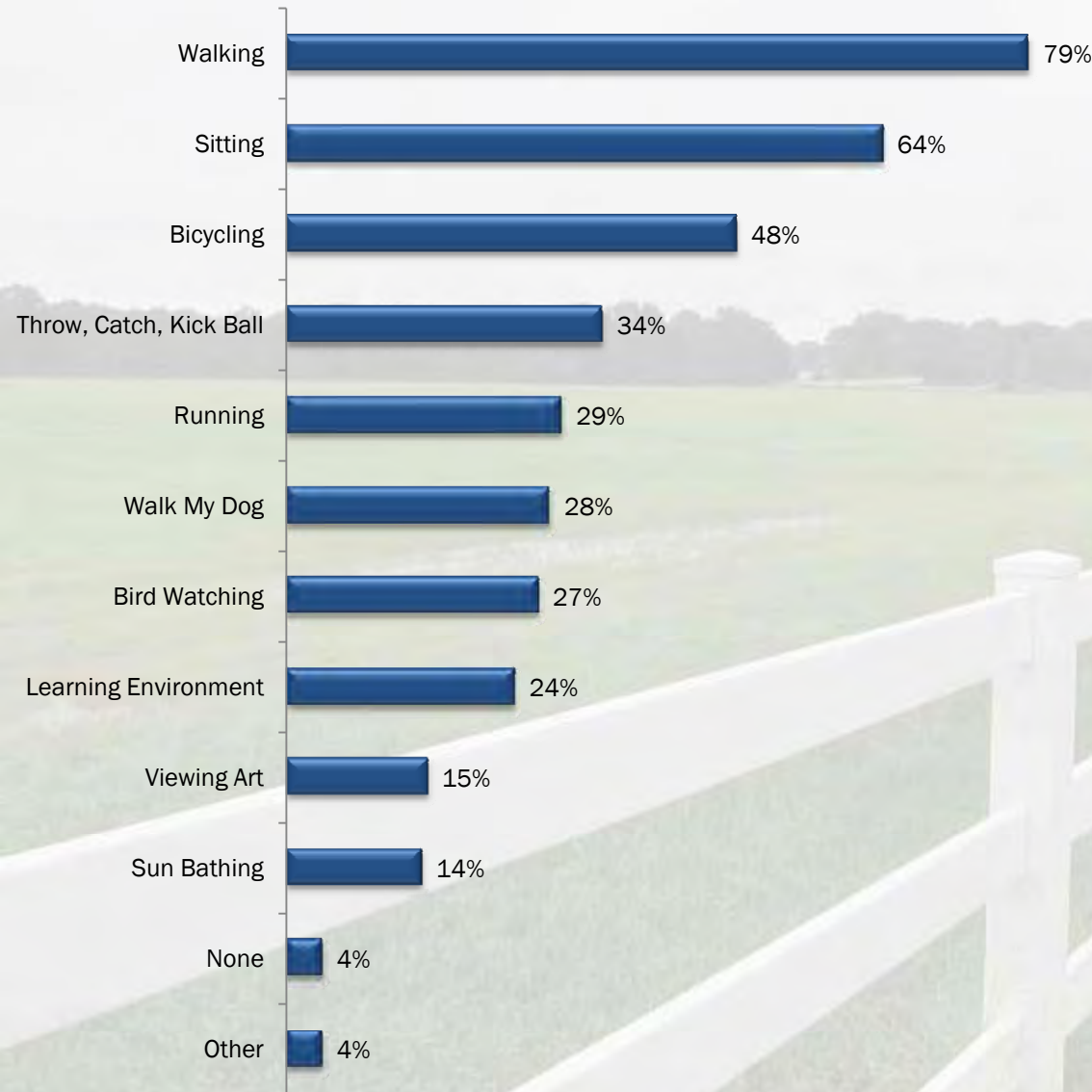
## Desired Amenities by Age Group



- Top Desired Amenities
  - Walking Paths
  - Benches
  - Bicycle Paths
  - Bathrooms
- Flower Gardens and Running Paths were also desired by approximately 40% of respondents.
- About 1/3 desire Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.), the majority of that 1/3 over 55.



## Anticipated Activities in the Voorhees Environmental Park



- Passive Recreation such as walking, sitting and bicycling emerged as the top three anticipated activities in Voorhees Environmental Park.

- Only about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of people mentioned that they envisioned learning about the environment

## Solar Preference By Age



- Response to the integration of a solar array in the park was mixed.
  - Approximately 34% of the respondents checked that the interaction between solar and the park did not matter.
  - 15% of 55+ felt that the solar array should be screened from view.
  - 37% felt that some connection (visual/tactile) would be appropriate

# Key Observations

- Respondents expressed a strong desire for passive recreation.
  - Walking paths (78%), benches (59%), bicycle paths (46%) and running paths (37%)
  - Approximately 1/3 thought that Natural and Walking areas are lacking in park system.
- The reaction to contact with the solar array differed slightly by age group.
  - A larger proportion of respondents under 55 preferred some connection with the solar array than those that are 55+.
  - 37% of all respondents felt that some connection (visual/tactile) would be appropriate. 28% felt it should be screened off. 34% said it did not matter
- The car is an important mode of transportation; however, pedestrian and bicycle connectivity is critical.
  - While the majority of people will drive, just over 1/3 state they will be without a car at VEP.



# Key Observations

- Respondents under 25 were underrepresented in the survey. Those over 35 were overrepresented in survey results.
- There appeared to be little public demand for an Environmental Education Center.
  - About 18% of the respondents expressed interest in the center and 25% said they envisioned learning about the environment at the park.
- There was interest in ornamental gardens
  - Theme Gardens (Asian Gardens, etc.) demand was lower than expected (31%)
  - Interest in flower gardens was relatively high (41%)

## 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





# NUCLEUS





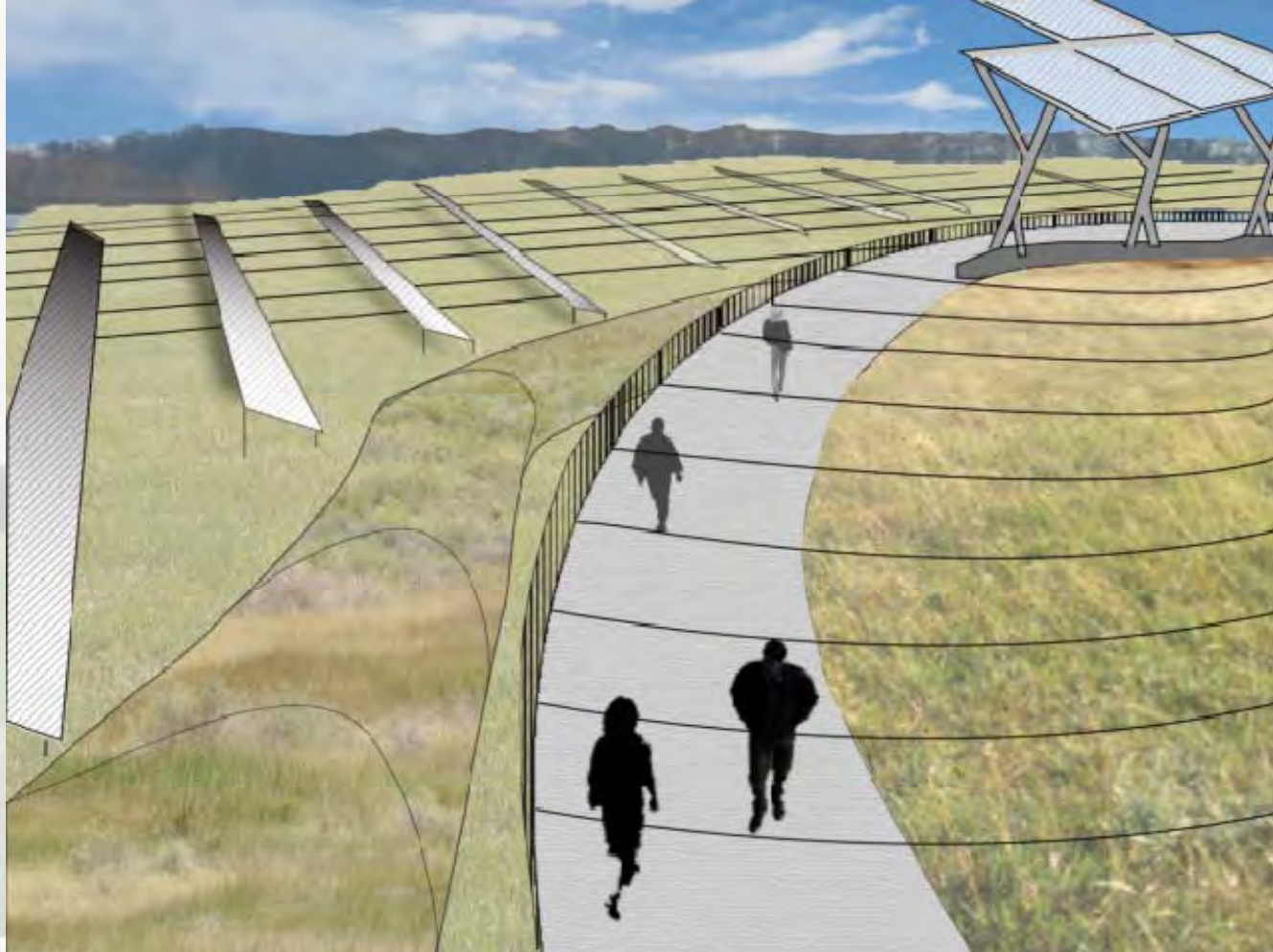
## NUCLEUS: Like Very Much

Pond Concept (7/21)

Solar Overlook (6/21)

Overall “Back to Nature” concept (6/21)





## NUCLEUS: Dislike

Too much Open Space (4/21)

Path System (3/21)

Solar Overlook (3/21)

No Access to Pond (2/21)





## NUCLEUS: Additional Comments

- “I love the pond overlook, but would also like to be able to get down to walk around the pond.”
- “My favorite for integrating solar field”
- “Not enough variety of experience as you walk around the park.”



# SUCCESSION BY DESIGN





## **SUCCESSION BY DESIGN: Like Very Much**

Pathways (4/21)

Floating Wetlands (3/21)

Pond Overlook Concept (2/21)

Stormwater Management Plan (2/21)

Walkway through Meadow (2/21)





## SUCCESSION BY DESIGN: Dislike

Tennis Courts (3/21)

Too much space for Solar Panels (2/21)

Open Space (2/21)



## SUCCESSION BY DESIGN: Additional Comments

- “parking lot & tennis courts require additional & long term maintenance costs”
- “My ideal park: flowing lines of meadow, water plants of Succession; Interlock boardwalk around a Succession meadow with pond access of Interlock; pond/panel overlook of Nucleus”
- “wish you had more integration of rest space within the solar park”





# IN SOLIS PACEM





## **IN SOLIS PACEM: Like Very Much**

Asian Pond (8/21)

Promenade (5/21)

Walking Trails (2/21)

Integration of Solar Park (2/21)

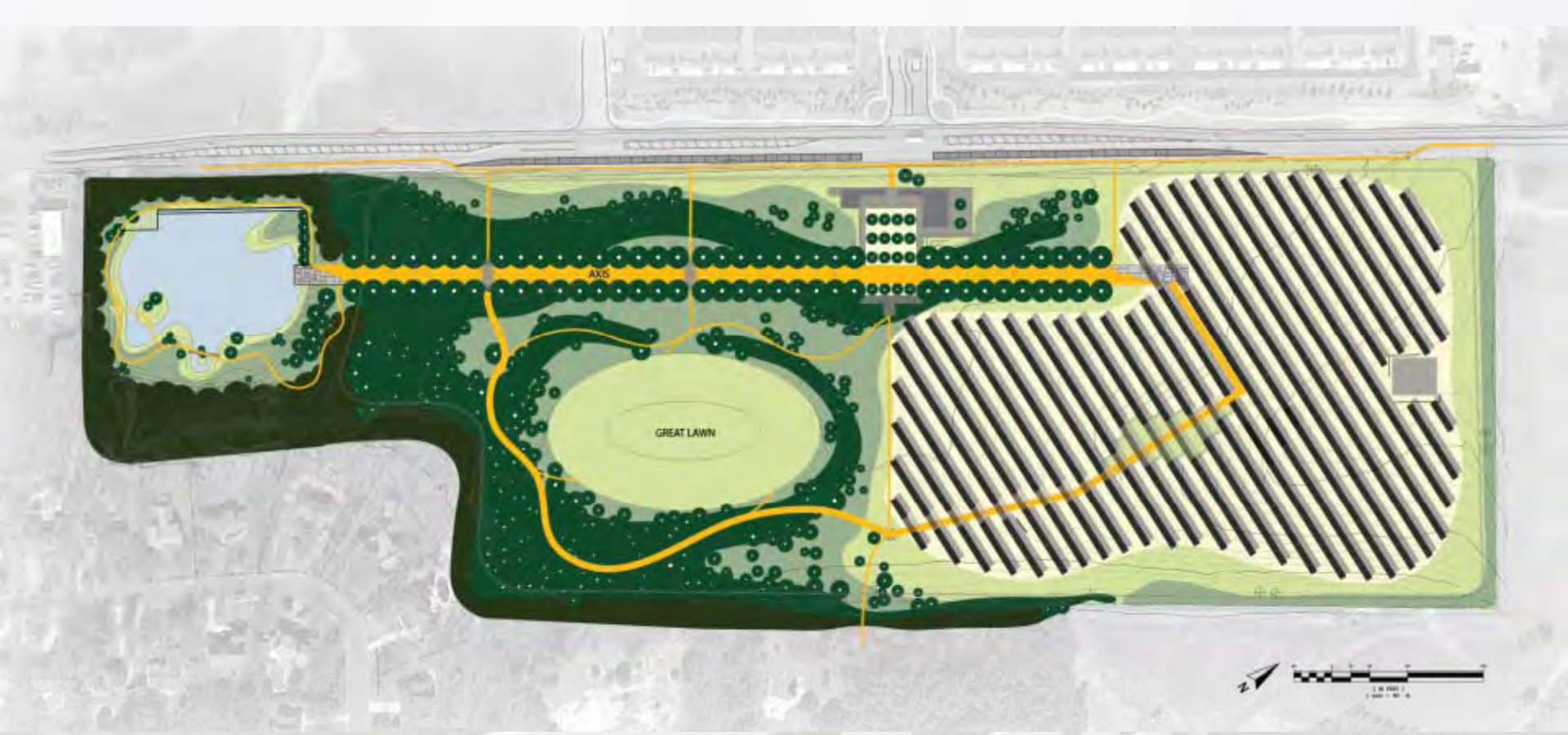
Floating Islands (2/21)



## IN SOLIS PACEM: Dislike

- Parking on Centennial (6/21)
- Solar Field Area (4/21)
- Lack of Green Space (3/21)
- Promenade (1/21)





## IN SOLIS PACEM: Additional Comments

- “This design was my favorite and mixes public gathering spaces such as the great lawn and promenade with quieter trail spaces. Some adds like the boardwalk around the lake from Interlock would be nice.”
- “Need to see interior of park from road. Want less solar area.”
- “Promenade might be nice but entry into solar field might be too abrupt.”





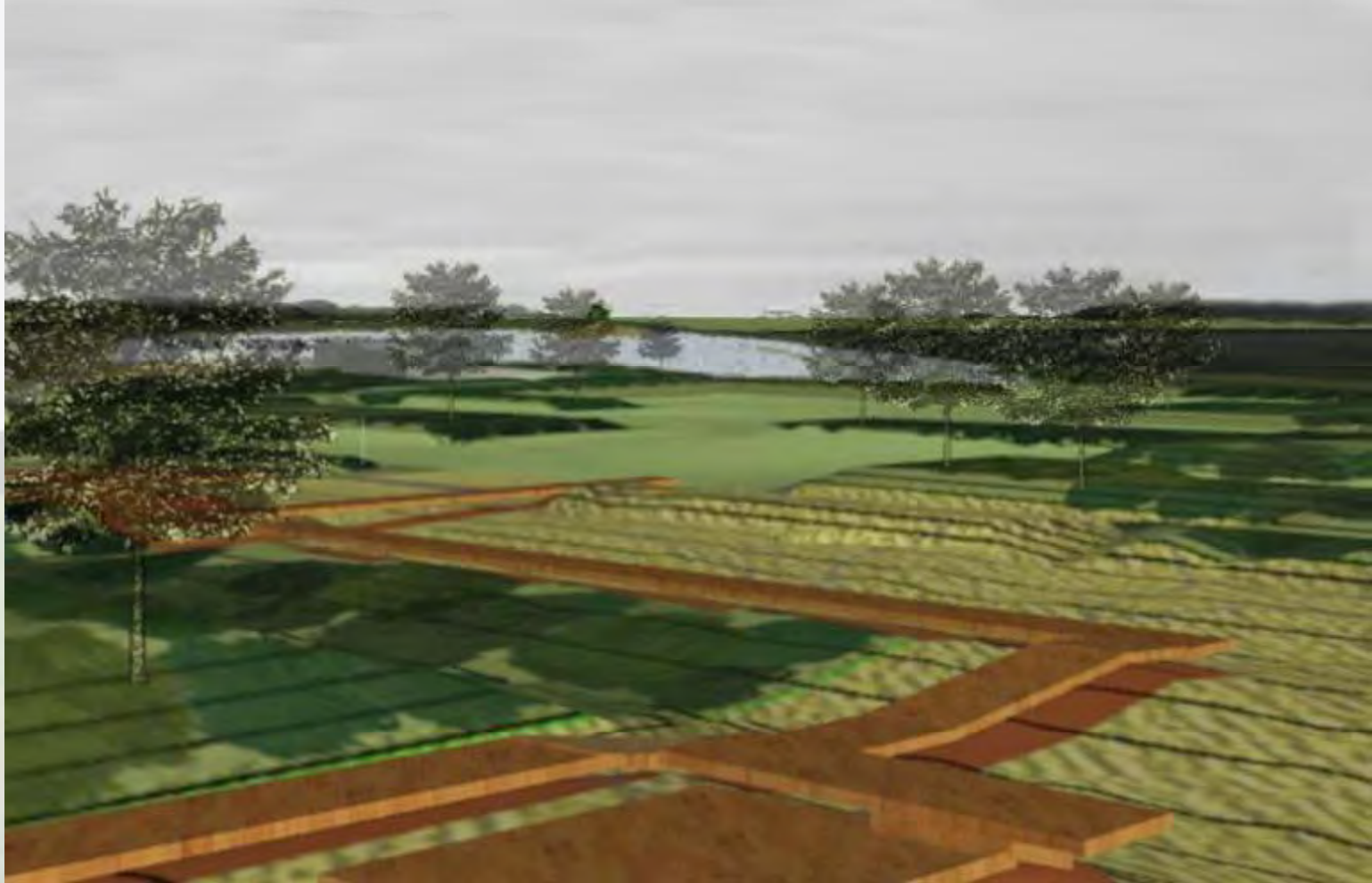
# INTERLOCK



## INTERLOCK: Like Very Much

- Boardwalk (10/21)
- Solar Panel Parking (6/21)
- Trail System (6/21)
- Variety of Uses (5/21)
- Access from Centennial (5/21)
- Meadow Space (4/21)
- Tree Coverage (3/21)
- Less Use of Fill (3/21)





## INTERLOCK: Dislike

Too Angular (8/21)

Solar Array (2/21)

Café (1/21)

Deck Around Pond (1/21)





## INTERLOCK: Additional Comments

- “This one seems the most practical and parts of the design could be implemented very quickly and cost effectively”
- “I like the parking spaces w/solar panels in a few spots; good opportunity for large sponsorship dollars: ex: Electric car charging parking spot: powered by the sun, brought to you by Chevy Volt”
- “It's a cool design, but not good for watching your kids play”
- “Use this as a base, and merge ideas from other into it.”

Nucleus	Succession By Design	In Solis Pacem	Interlock	
7	2	8		Pond Overlook
	4	2	6	Path System
	3	2	1	Floating Wetlands
	2		4	Meadow
6				Back to Nature Concept
				Solar Overlook
6	2	2		Integration of Solar Stormwater Mgmt
			10	Boardwalk
			6	Solar Panel Parking
				Promenade
		5	Variety of Uses	
			Access from Centennial	
			3	Tree Coverage
			3	Less Use of Fill

Nucleus	Succession By Design	In Solis Pacem	Interlock	
4	2	4	2	Solar Array
	2			Too Much Open Space
			8	Too Angular
		6		Parking on Centennial
		3		Lack of Green Space
				Solar Overlook
				Path System
		3		Tennis Courts
				No Pond Access
				Deck Around Pond
3				Promenade
3				Café
2		1		



## OVERALL ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

"I would like to thank everyone involved in this project. Voorhees residents desperately need a park that can serve as a place to learn about and meditate on the beauty and wonder of nature."

"The entire area should be leased out to a solar provider with revenues directed back to Voorhees township. Voorhees does not need another park but it does need a new source of income."

"Voorhees has many parks for active recreation and lots of protected open space, but it is not accessible to the public. I see this park as place that is a quiet place to walk bike or run."

"We would very much like wildflower meadows with boardwalk paths all around and the boardwalk access to the pond. Habitat creation very important to us. ADA accessible with boardwalk (vs. gravel)."

"Please consider the needs of the small animals & birds when considering the final design. Would like to share the space with them, not exclude them."

"Lets get this up and running before I drop dead!"