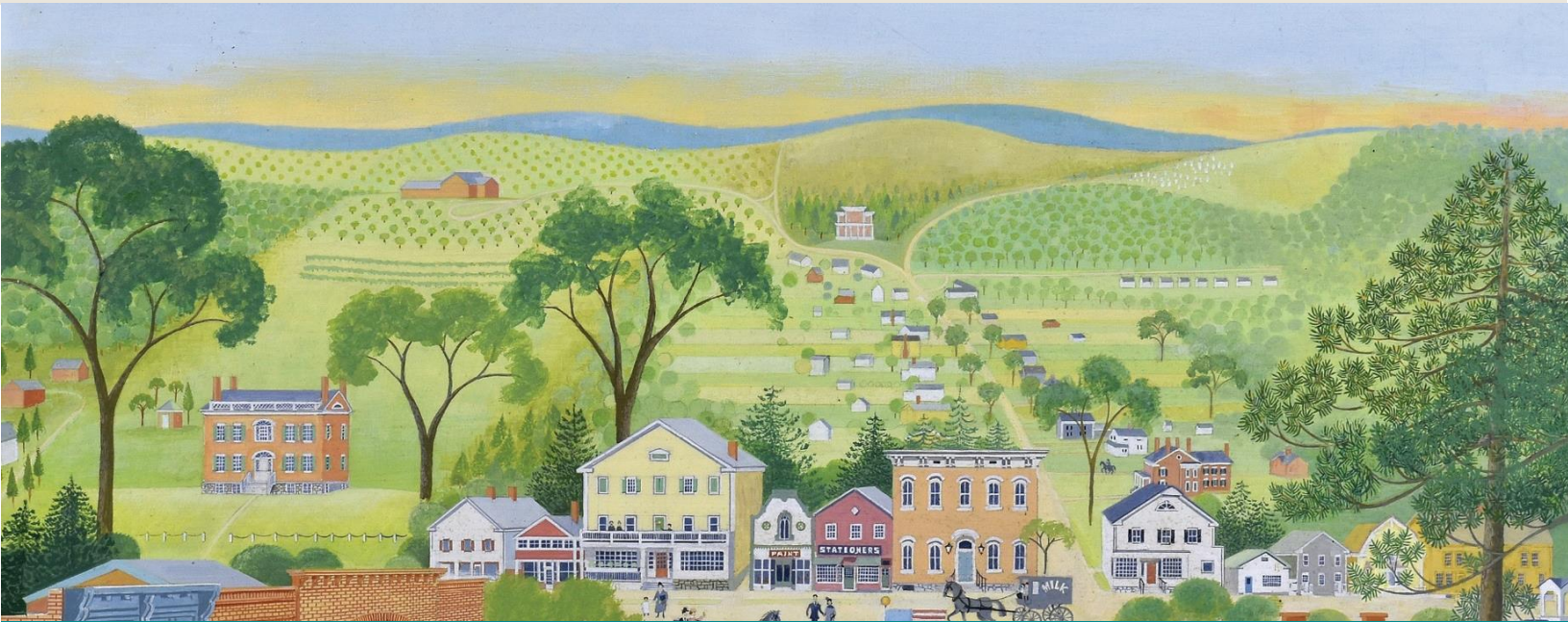




Village of Kinderhook

Birthplace of our 8th President Martin Van Buren



Parks & Services Survey

February 2023

PREPARED BY:

J. Mark Browne, Village Trustee
Dorene M. Weir, Village Trustee
Village Parks Survey Committee

PREPARED FOR:

Village of Kinderhook

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Cover Art, “Kinderhook Village Green” by Alan Foster
Courtesy of Private Collection

VILLAGE OF KINDERHOOK PARKS & SERVICES SURVEY

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

Dear Residents,

Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our recent Parks and Services Survey. Your input directly impacts our decisions on how to best serve our community.

A special 'thank you' to all who worked on the survey: Trustees Dorene Weir and Mark Browne, Kristy Silvia, Jennifer Ose-MacDonald, Alan Applebaum, Fay Antalek, Warren Applegate, Andrew Pellettieri and Jessica Berner.

Thank you again for your participation and please continue to let us know how we can better serve you.

Sincerely,

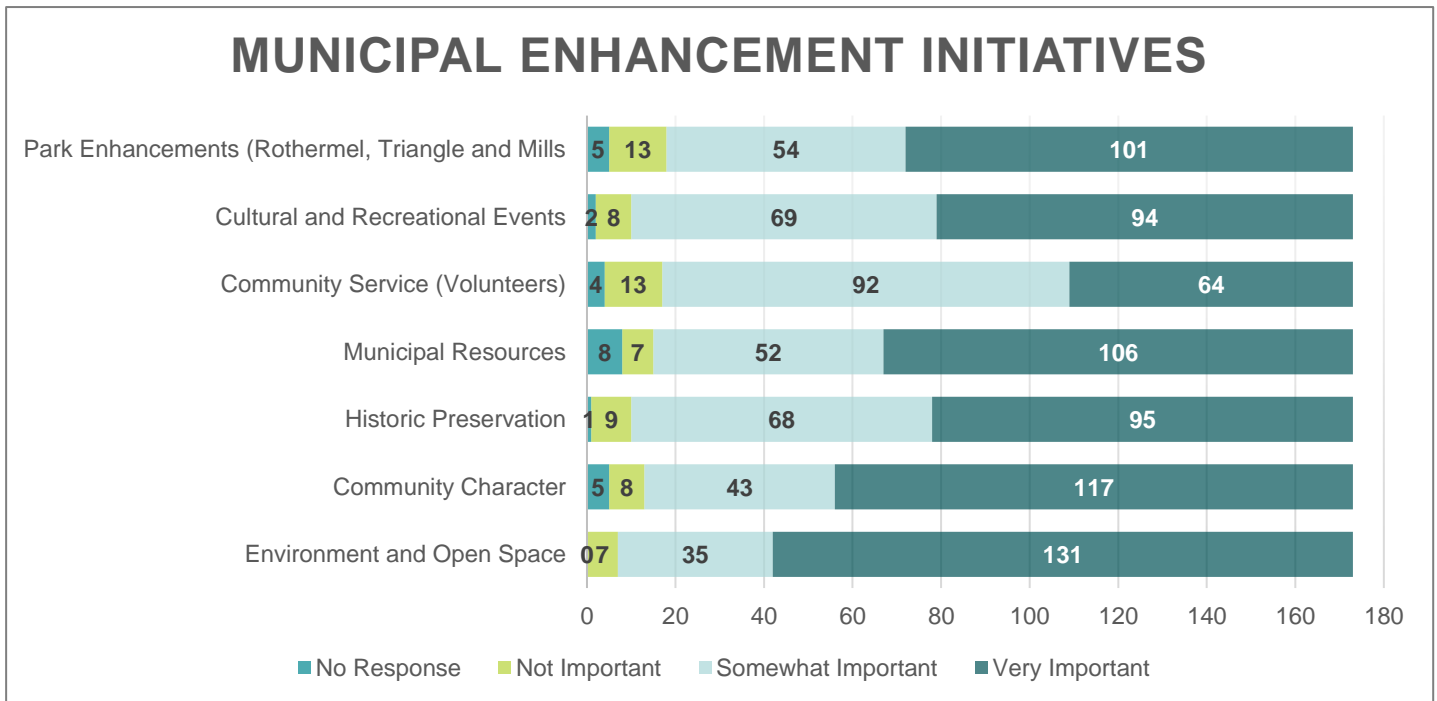
Mike Abrams, Mayor

Village of Kinderhook

Question 1

The items below were identified previously in the Village Comprehensive Plan as features that should be enhanced. Please indicate the importance of each of the following initiatives, using the scale below. The list below is in no particular order.

Responses



Summary

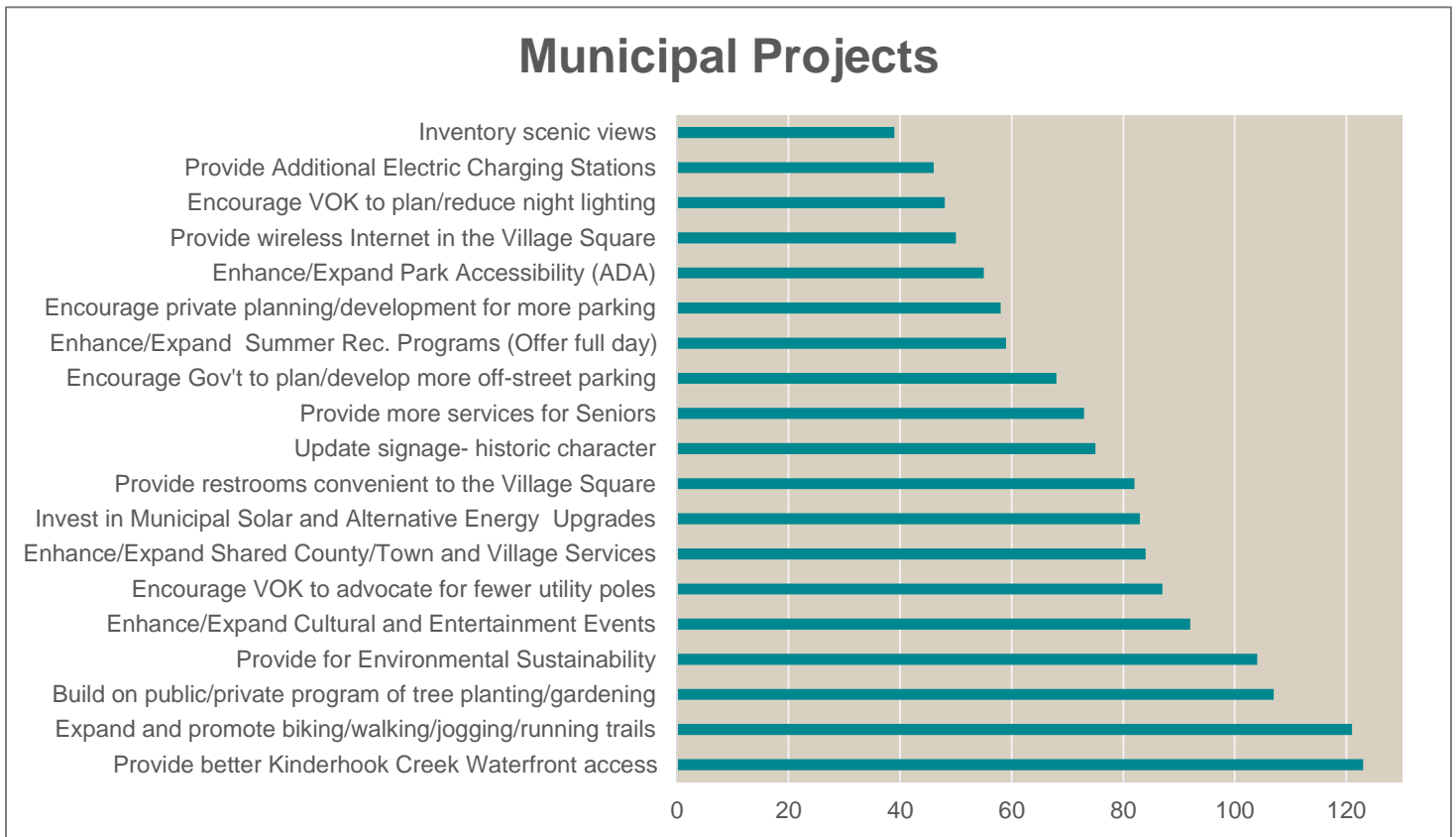
The vast majority of responders felt that the listed services were at least somewhat important.

The greatest level of importance (very important) was placed on enhancement of environment and open space, followed by enhancing community character and then enhancing municipal resources.

Question 2

The items below were identified previously in the Village Comprehensive Plan as features that should be enhanced. Please indicate the importance of each of the following initiatives, using the scale below. The list below is in no particular order.

Responses



Summary

Of the various listed options, the following 4 courses of action had the greatest amount of support for the Village Leadership to focus on and pursue:

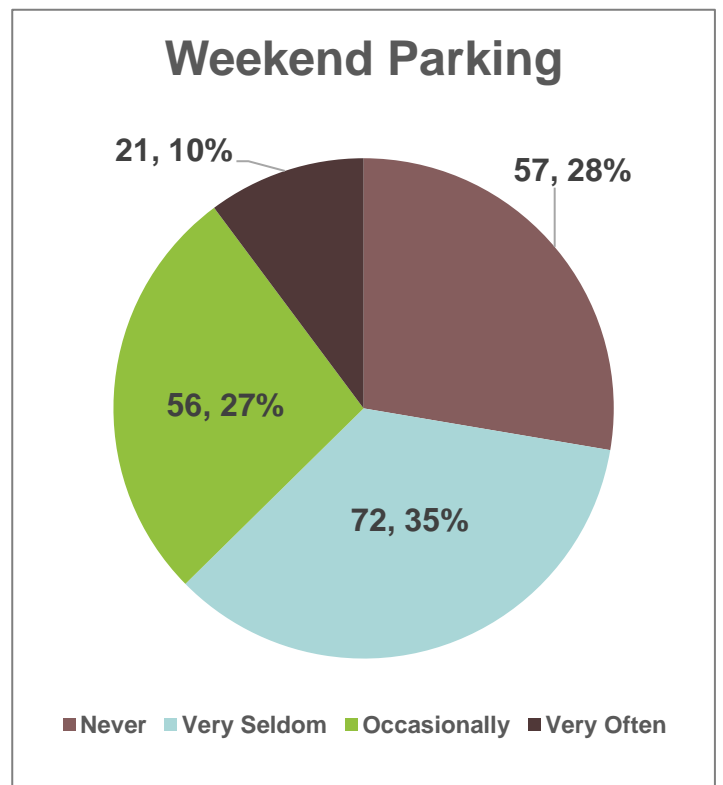
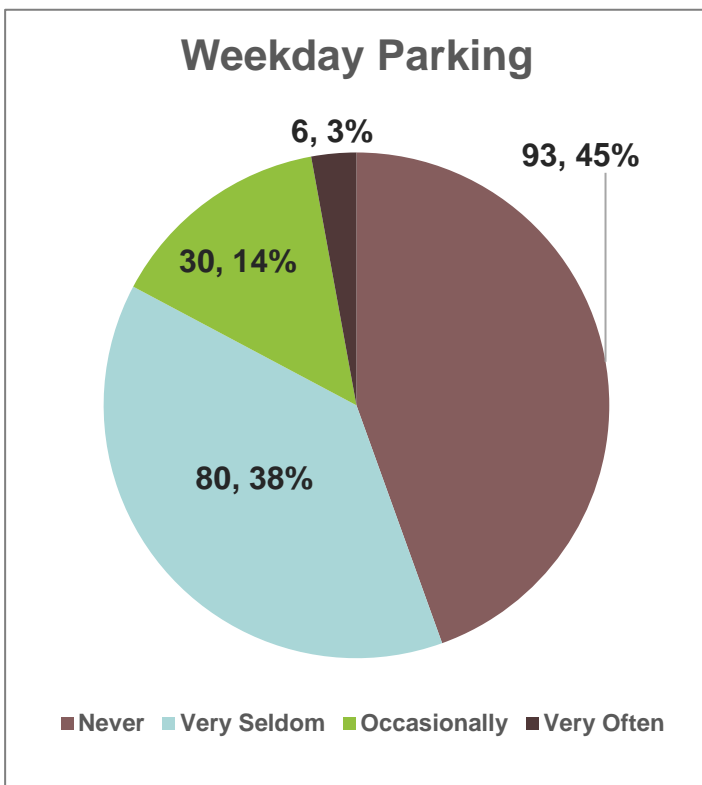
- Provide better Kinderhook Creek waterfront access (60%)
- Expand and promote biking, walking, jogging, running areas and hiking trails (59%)
- Build on public/private program of street tree planting and gardening (52%)
- Provide environmental sustainability (51%)

Question 3

Have you experienced a problem finding parking when you want to shop or seek services in the Village Square area?

*Never *Very Seldom *Occasionally *Very Often

Responses



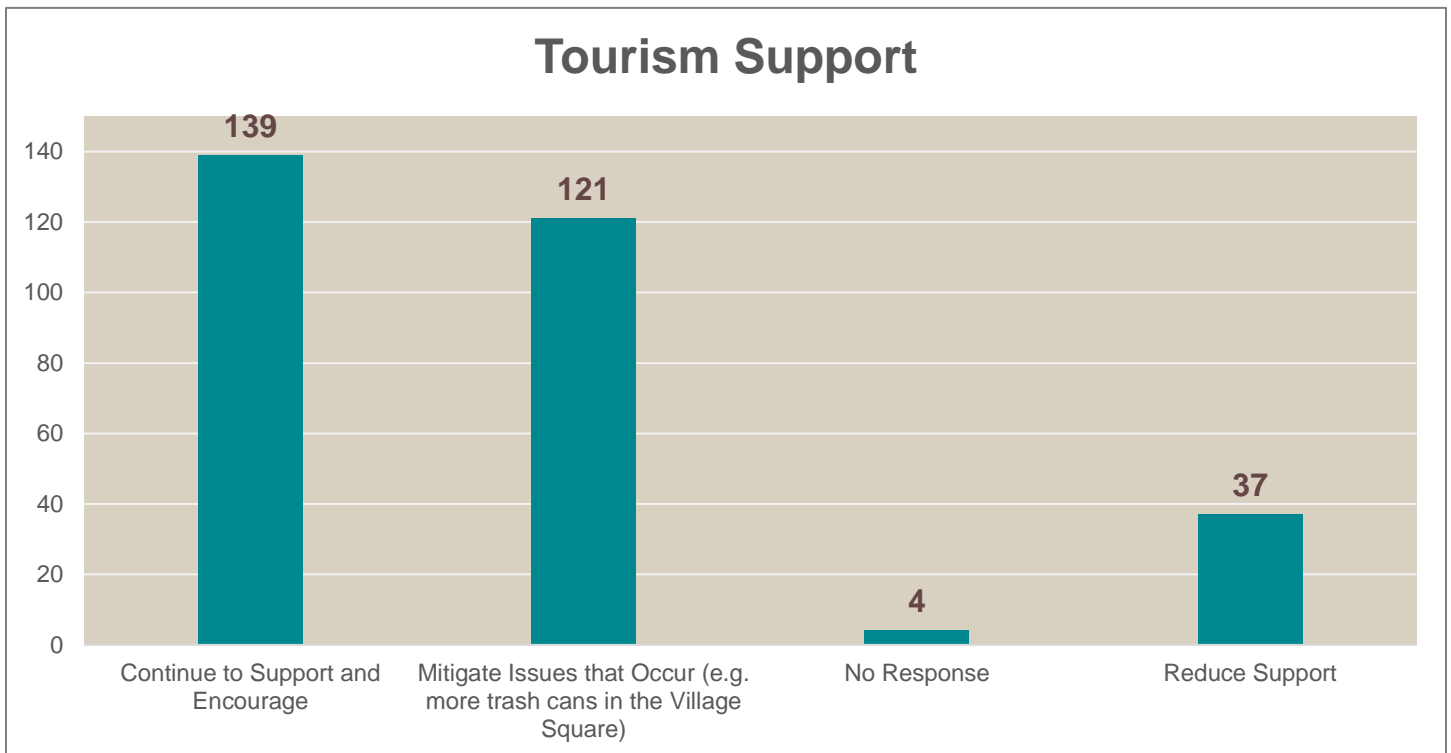
Summary

Parking is not considered a significant issue to address at this time. The majority of participants rarely or never experience parking problems around the Village Square, although when it does occur, it is most often on weekends versus weekdays.

Question 4

How would you like to see the Village respond to the current trend of the Village becoming a destination for tourists and visitors, especially on weekends? Check all that apply.

Responses



Summary

A substantive majority of respondents, 68%, would like the Village to continue to support/encourage tourism and weekend visitors. 59% say the Village should mitigate issues that might occur such as providing more trash cans in the Village Square.

Only 18% favor reducing support of tourism/visitors.

Question 5

Please indicate which of the following services from the Village government you find to be satisfactory. Check as many as apply.

Responses



...question 5 continued

Summary

The Village services **most often** noted as being satisfactory are:

- Leaf pickup (85%)
- Snow removal (70%)
- Hours of Village Office operations (67%)

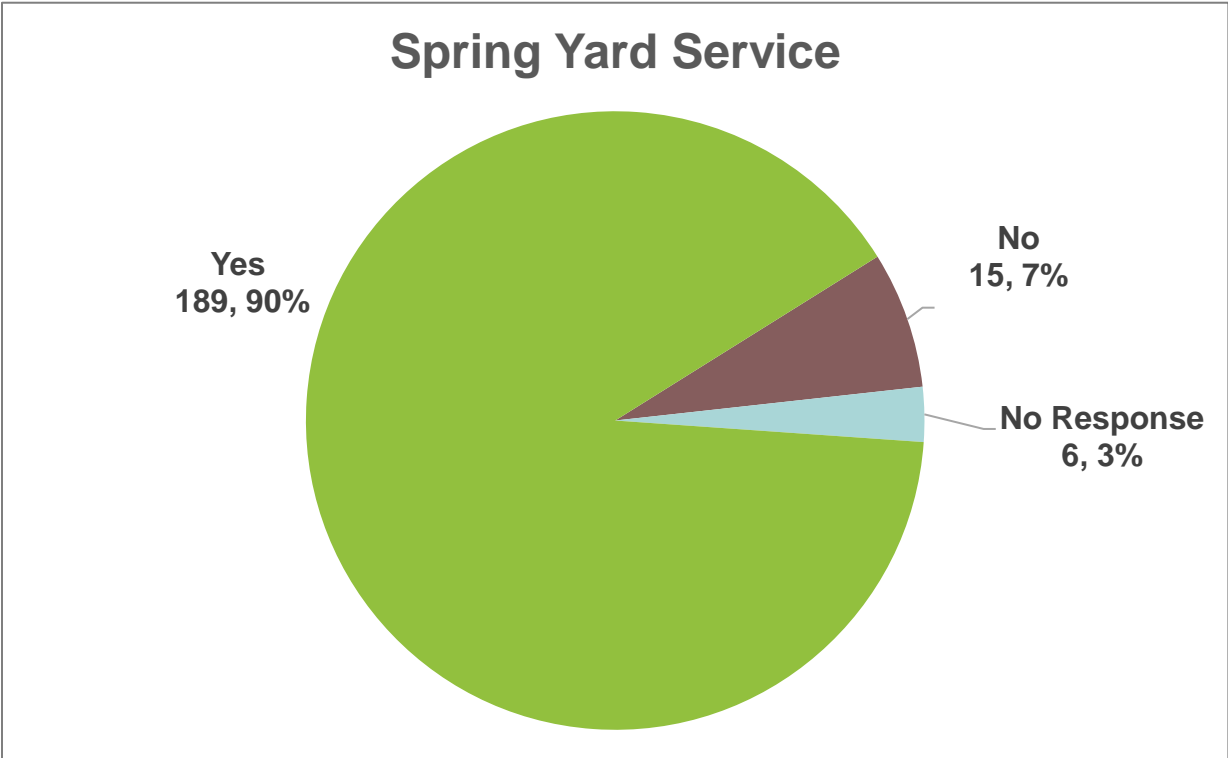
The Village services **least often** noted as being satisfactory are:

- Planning/zoning board (27%)
- Building permit process (25%)
- Code Enforcement (21%)

Question 6

Would you be in favor of the Village providing one or two weeks of service conducted in the Spring, covering Yard Waste Removal (sticks and branches no more than 4” in diameter and no more than 6’ in length)?

Responses



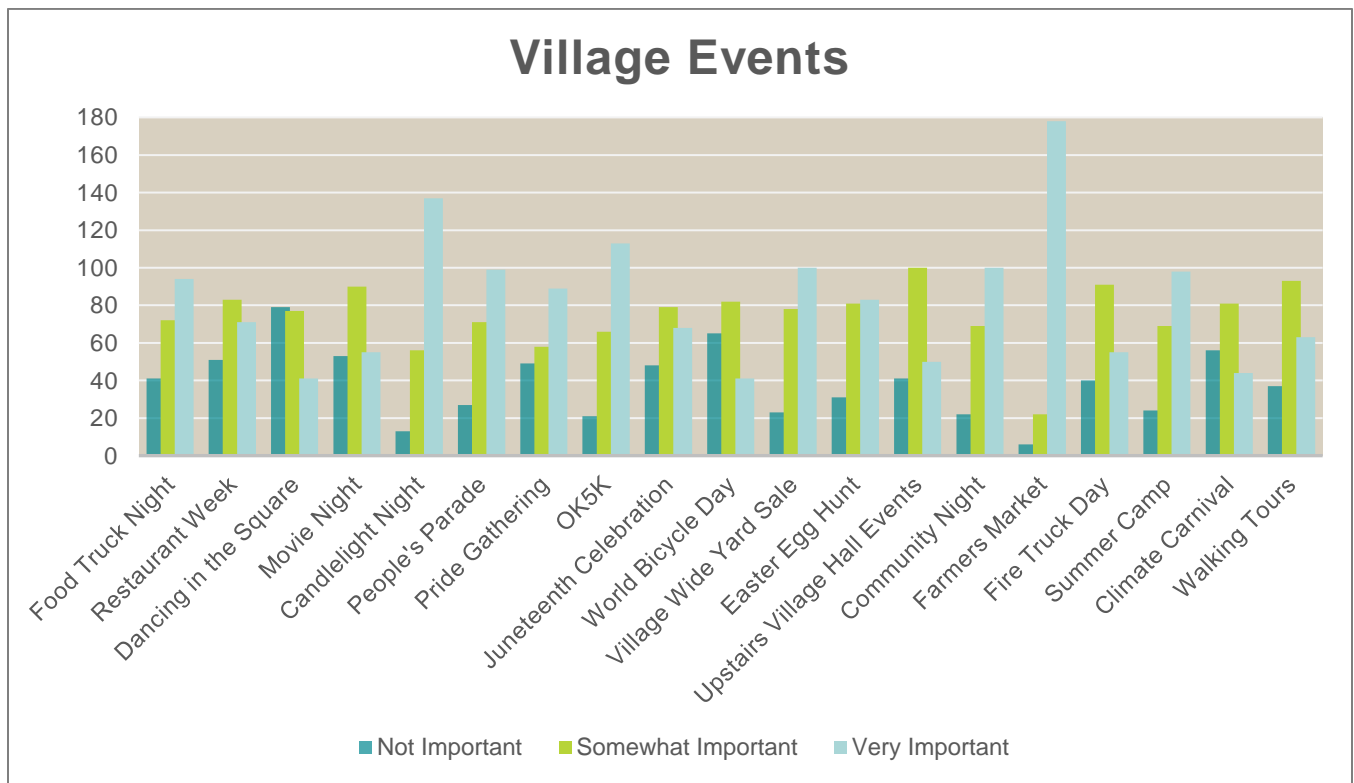
Summary

There is overwhelming support for providing spring yard waste removal services (90%).

Question 7

The Village conducts and supports multiple events each year for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. Please rate the importance of each of the following events to you using the below scale.

Responses



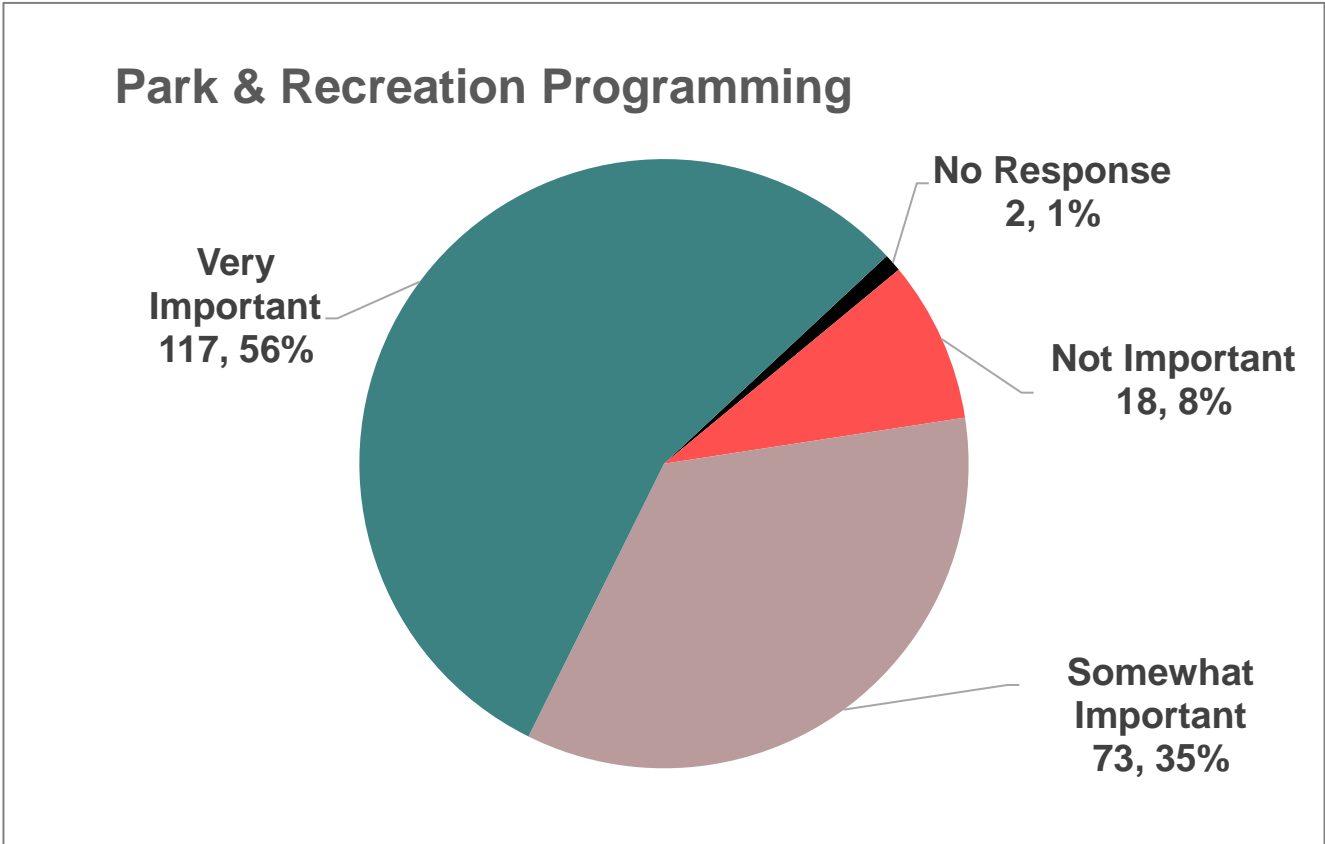
Summary

It is essential that the Village continue to support the Farmers' Market and Candlelight Night.

Question 8

How important are park and recreation programs to your overall quality of life in the Village of Kinderhook?

Responses



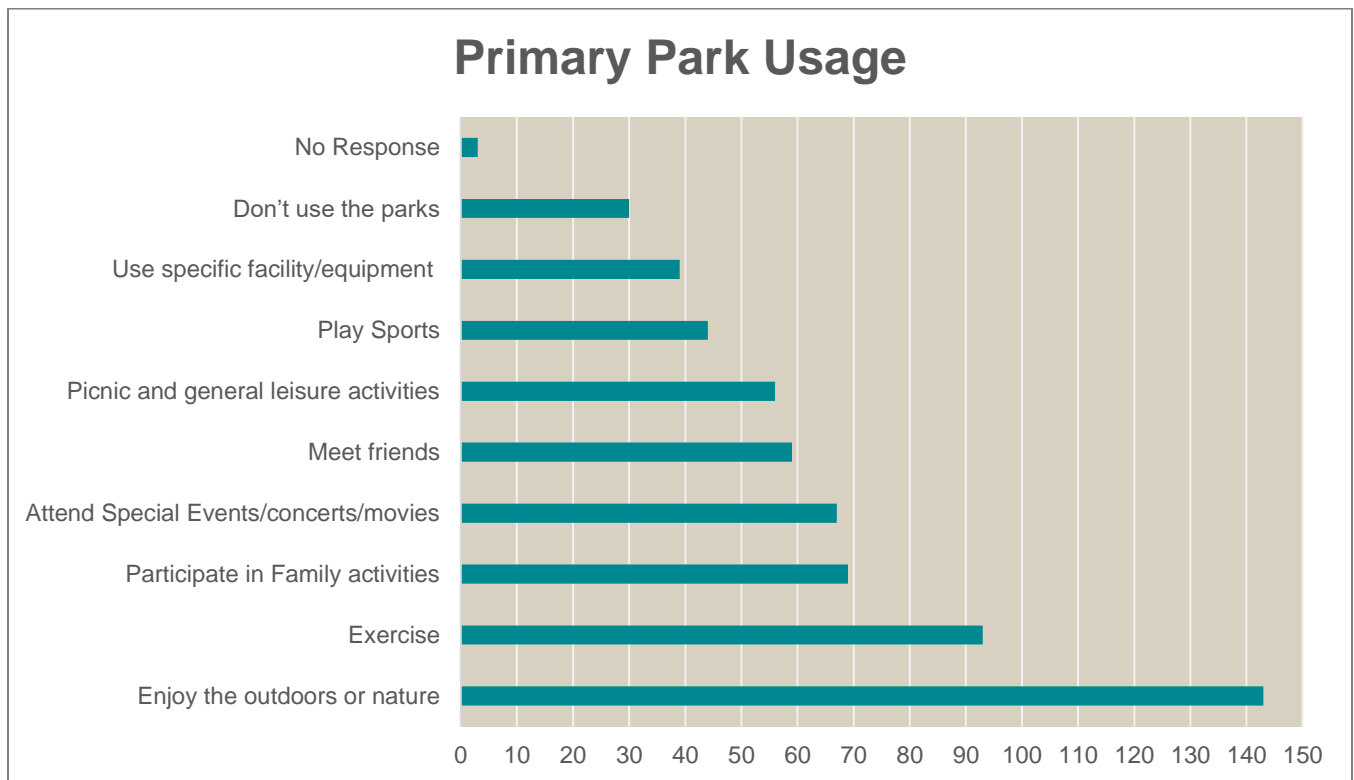
Summary

Park and recreation programs are generally considered very important to the overall quality of life in the Village. Most residents consider these programs at least somewhat important.

Question 9

What are the primary reasons you use Rothermel and Mills Park? Please check as many reasons as apply.

Responses



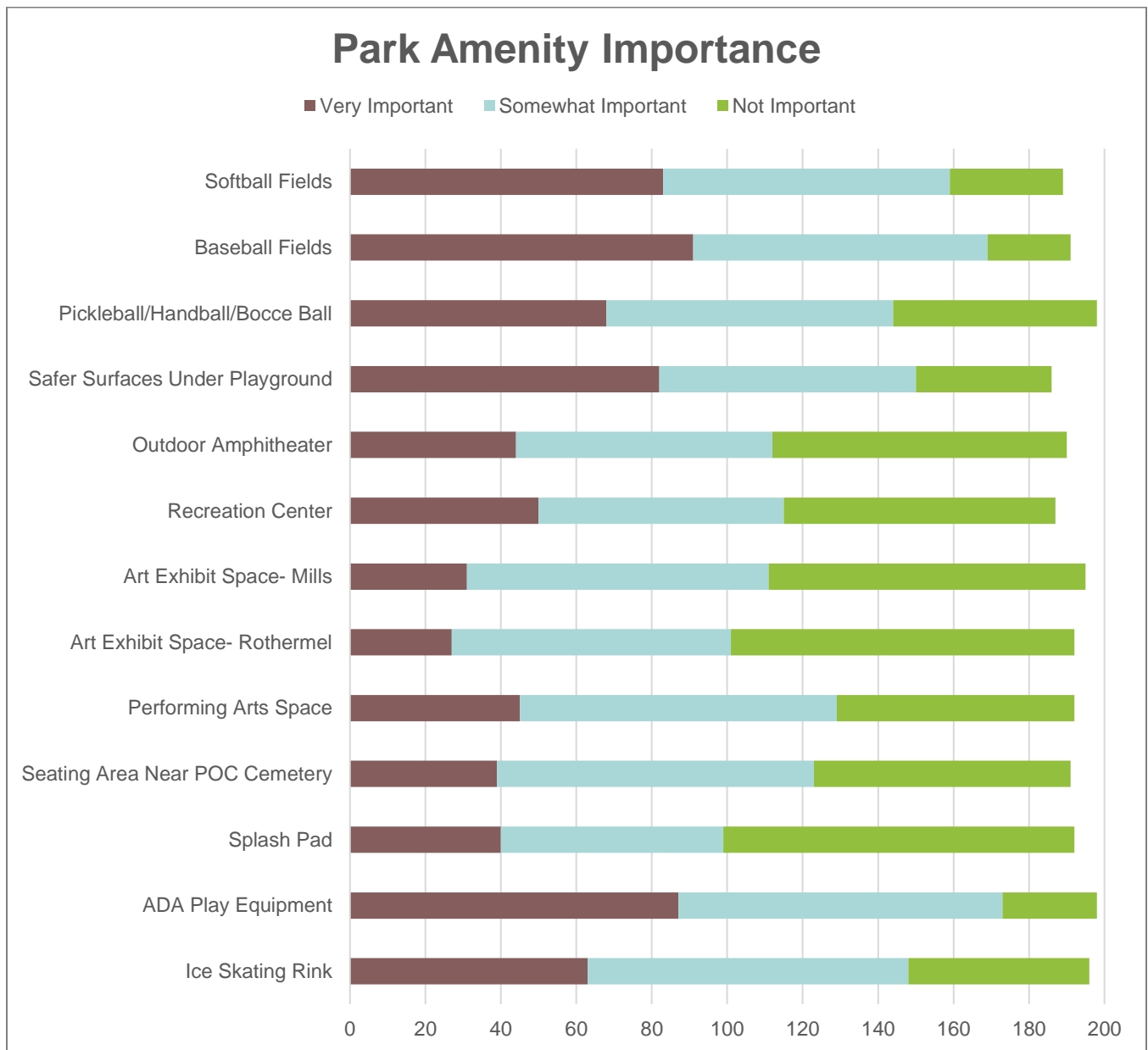
Summary

Most respondents make use of Rothermel and Mills Park (only 14% report not using them), especially to enjoy the outdoors or nature.

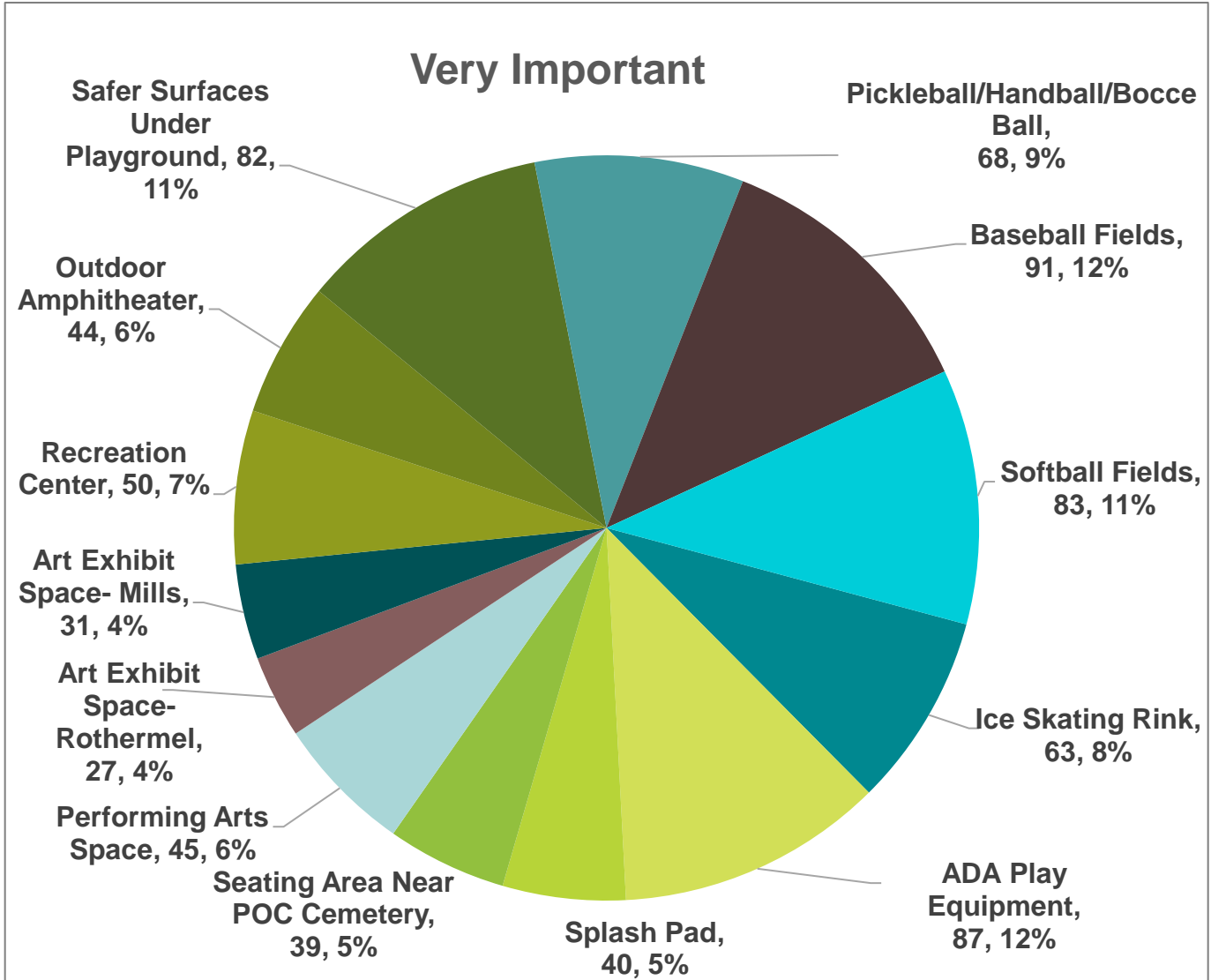
Question 10

Please indicate how important you think it is for the Village to provide the following amenities at our parks. Mark each amenity as one of “Very Important”, “Somewhat Important”, “Somewhat Important” or “Not Important.”

Responses



...question 10 continued



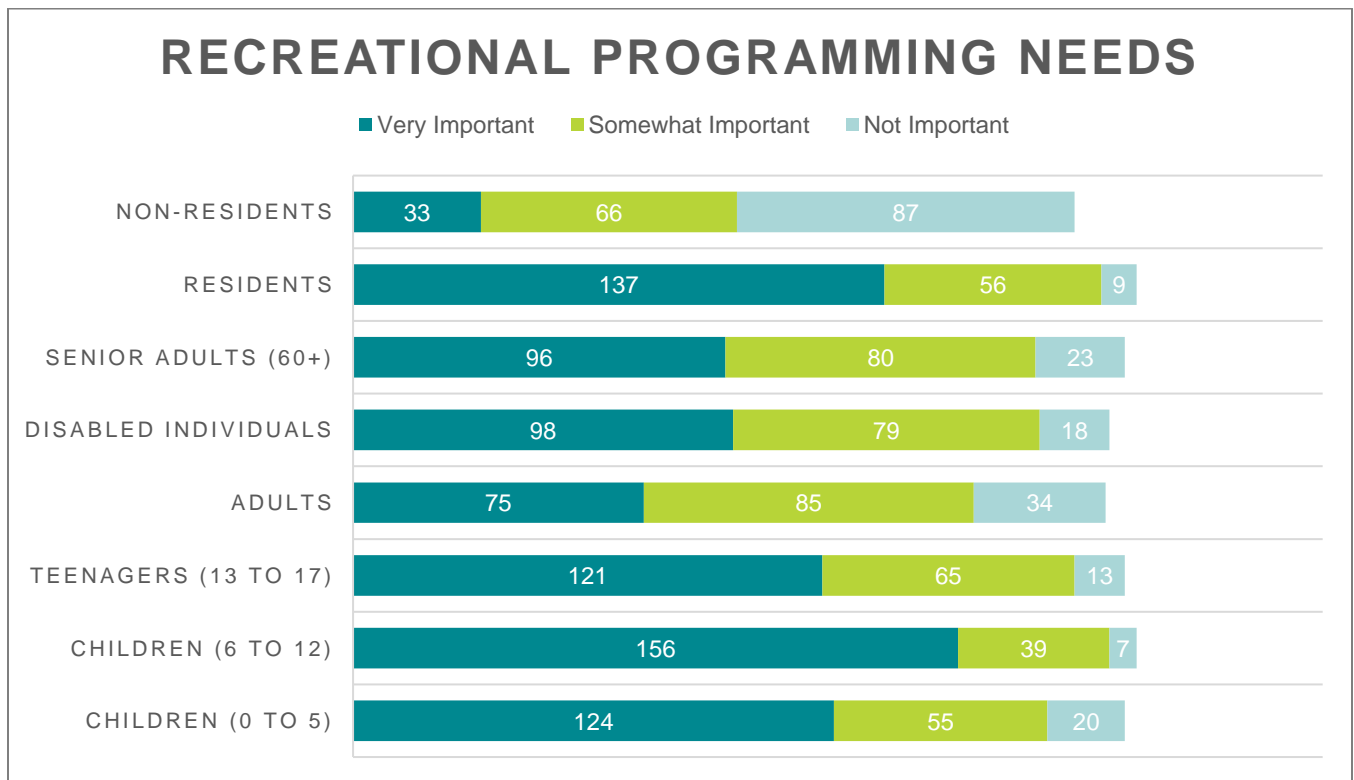
Summary

Respondents felt most strongly in support of the existing Baseball Fields and the addition of ADA Play Equipment, Safer Playground Surfaces and Softball Fields. The strongest negative sentiment was for the addition of a Splash Pad and Art Exhibit Spaces.

Question 11

Please rate how important you think it is for the Village to provide recreational programs for each of the below populations.

Responses



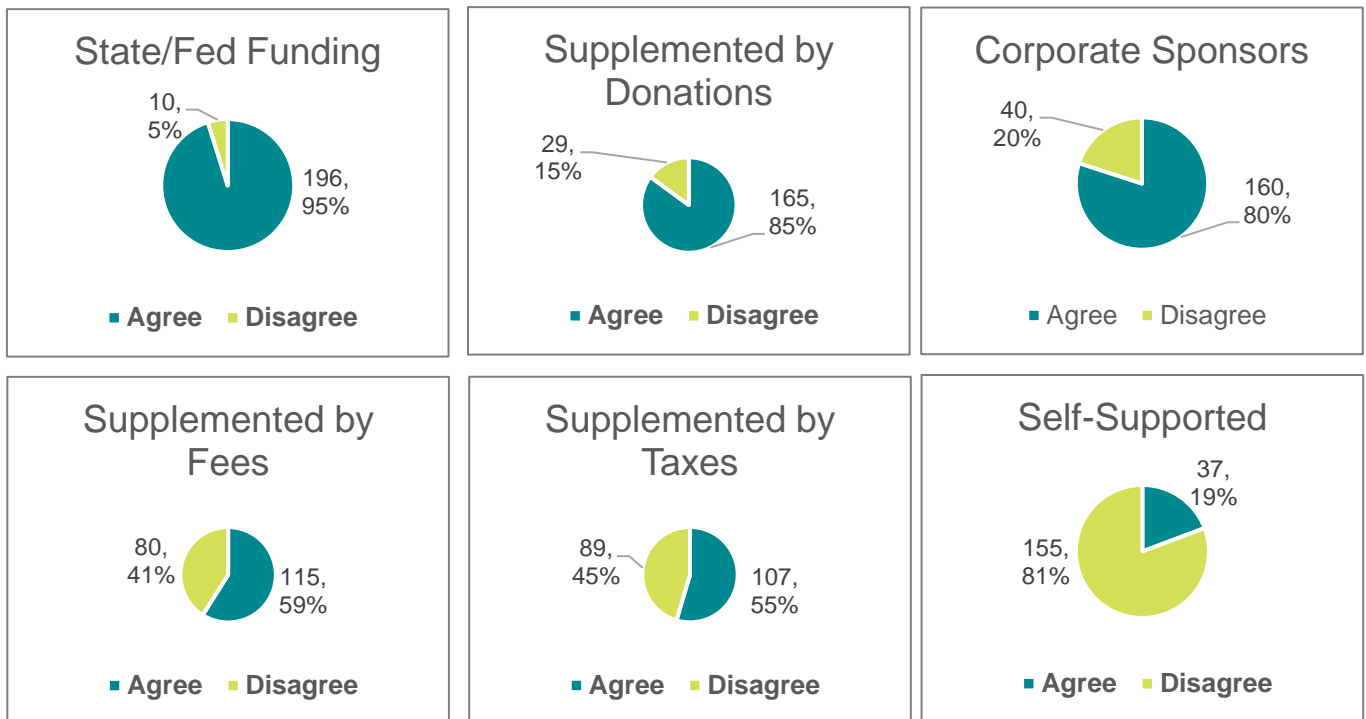
Summary

Respondents felt most strongly in support of providing recreational programs for children of all ages, followed by residents in general. Only one third of respondents felt strongly about providing programming designed for non-residents.

Question 12

Please indicate the extent to which you **agree** or **disagree** with each option as a source of funding for park programs.

Responses



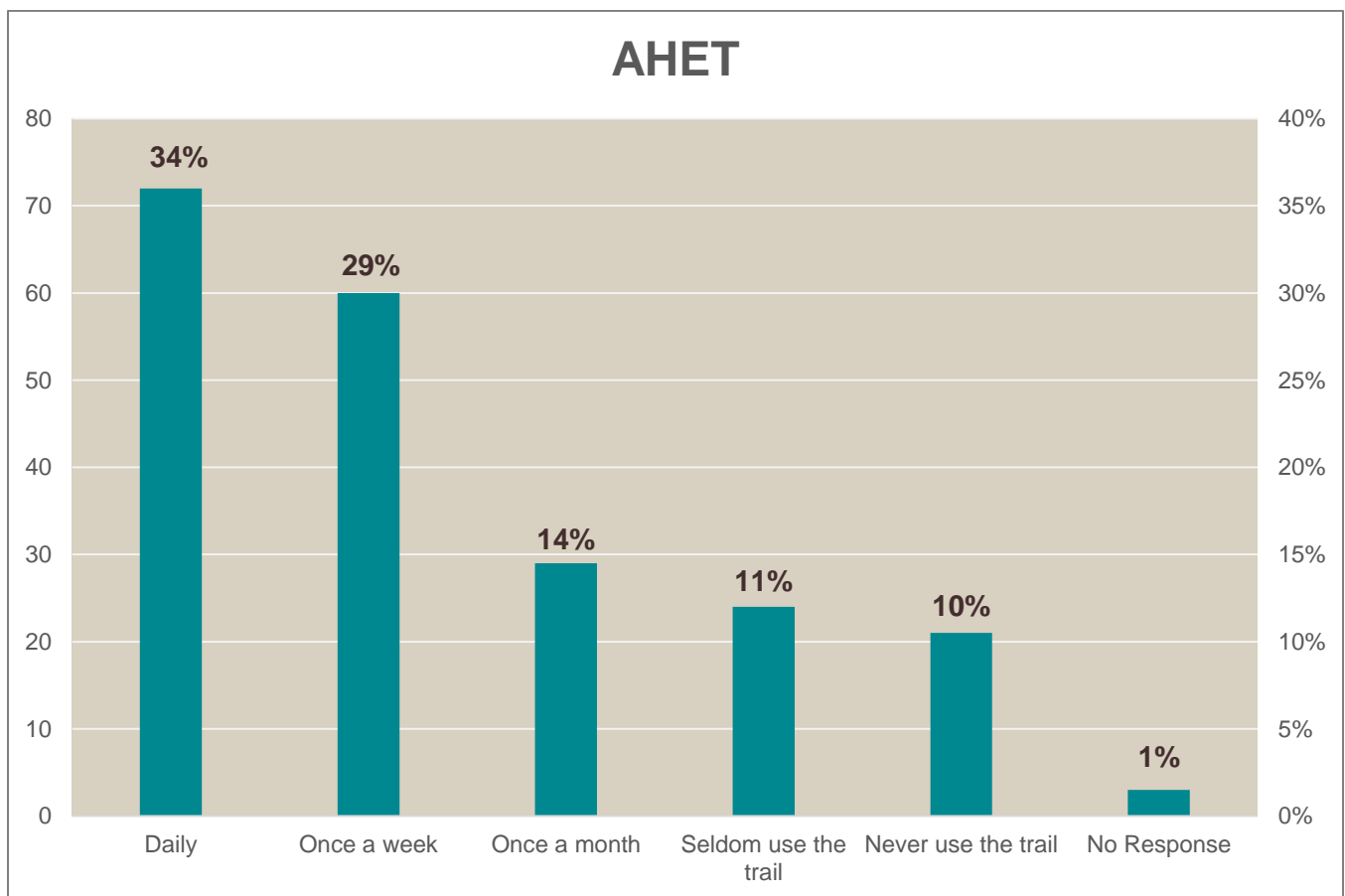
Summary

Respondents generally agree with all possible funding sources with the exception of requiring programs to be entirely self-supporting through user fees.

Question 13

AHET is considered by many to be a highly valued and well-used resource for residents within the Village. Walking and bicycling have been reported as the most common activities. What is the frequency of your use of AHET?

Responses



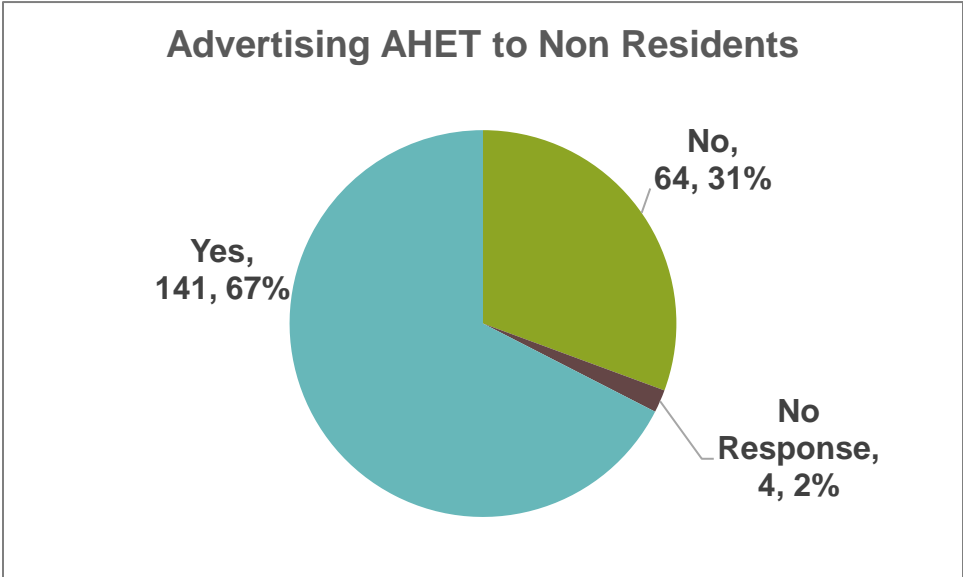
Summary

Over half of the respondents reported using AHET once a week or more often. Fewer than 22% say they seldom or never use the trail.

Question 14

Do you think it is important to do more to connect non-resident users of AHET with restaurant and retail destinations within the Village?

Responses



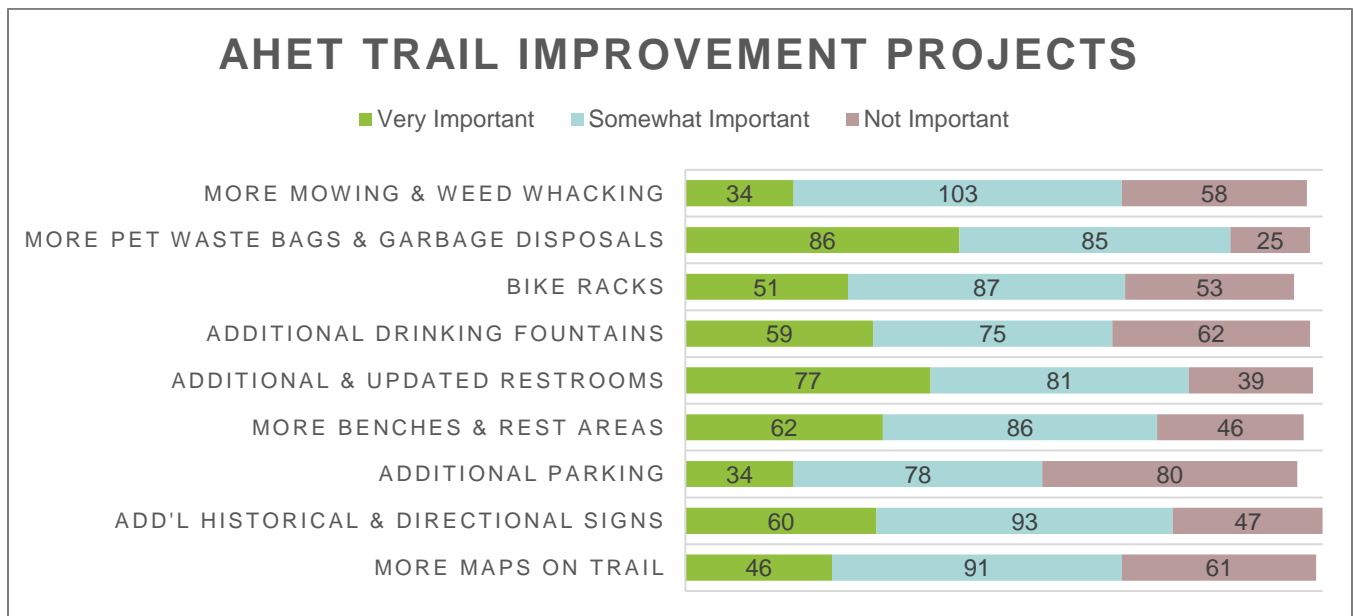
Summary

Nearly 7 in 10 respondents think it's important to do more to connect non-resident users of AHET to Village restaurants and destinations.

Question 15

The Village Trail Manager wants to focus on possible improvements aligned with resident requests. Please indicate the level of importance Village Leadership should put on each of the possible Electric Trail improvements listed below.

Responses



Summary

Among a series of possible AHET improvement projects, the options most aligned with positive respondent sentiment include:

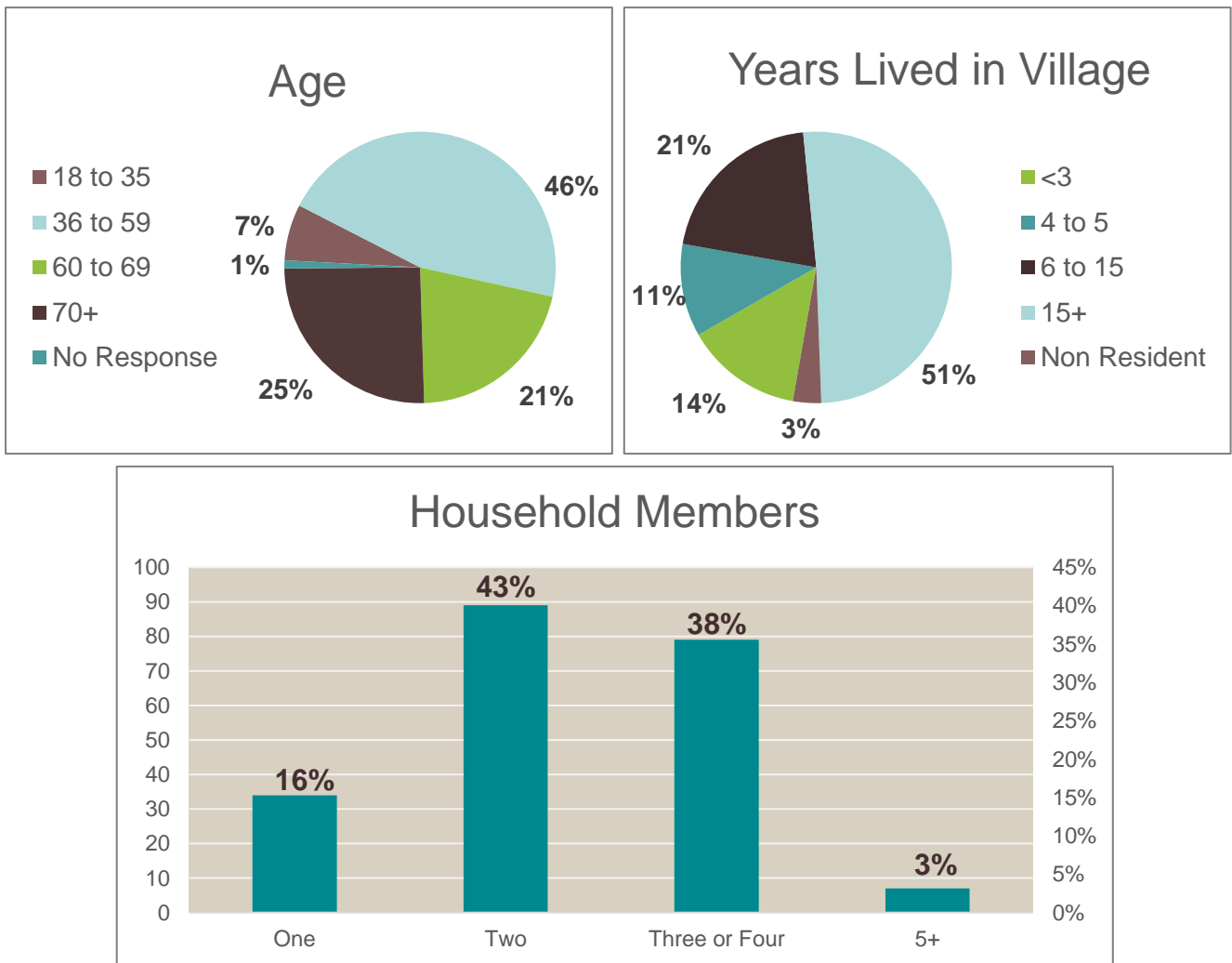
- More pet waste bags and garbage disposals
- Additional and updated restrooms

Additional parking and increased mowing and weed whacking are the least desired improvement projects.

Question 16

A series of questions captured respondent demographics.

Responses



Summary

Roughly half of respondents have lived in the Village for at least 15 years and have between 2 and 4 household members. There was a reasonably good representation by age groups although as might be anticipated, there were the fewest responses from those under 36 years of age.

Comments & “Other” Responses

Select questions offered respondents the ability to provide a written comment in a blank text field or following the selection of the “Other” response option. Below are all such comments exclusive of any directed towards individual Village staff members or which were deemed derogatory or otherwise inappropriate.

Comments: Question 1

[The items below were identified previously in the Village Comprehensive Plan as features that should be enhanced. Please indicate the importance of each of the following initiatives, using the scale below. The list below is in no particular order. Other - (Please specify in the text field below)]

Ecological management 15-acres "Vly"

Really should not be building or maintaining playgrounds atop a slave burial ground.

Just sayin'

Pet friendly and fenced off-leash areas for dogs should be added to Rothermel Park

Greater attention to natural environment sustainability and promoting clean energy initiatives.

Very impressed with look and maintenance of Kinderhook's public open spaces

Please leave park alone we don't need any new buildings at the park with the

added forever cost attached to them, also I don't feel the villages job is to entertain the taxpayer.

Important: supporting local businesses, attracting tourism to them, community events that target adults

Please create a pickleball court or use existing tennis court but put down pickleball lines. Thank you.

The first question is rigged to include an overarching category... environment. What does environment mean? Does it mean reducing carbon footprint? Does it mean increased electric charging stations? This needs clarification as I am not interested in the aforementioned topics but I am interested in open spaces. Please don't lump the two together to engineer a response which would seem to support outlandish unnecessary "environmental" initiatives.

Please clarify Village Playground in Centerfield?

Traffic and speeding controls on local streets.

Not sure what community character means in this context

Create affordable housing and encourage racial/ethnic diversity

Pickleball courts

Ease of home renovation without harassment of building inspector.

Sidewalks next to Consolidated Communications and on Church Street next to Kinderhook Reformed Church are being used daily and are in a terrible condition.

Several people have fallen because of it. Please make this a priority.

The village is catering to the NYC folks. How about good old fashioned block party.

Our street had one this year and it was amazing ! We don't feel welcome at the newest establishments

1. Underground Power lines! 2. If a business is bought, within a certain time frame (say 2 years) it must be a functioning, open business.

Bike racks

I also find the upkeep of the bike lane that runs parallel with Broad St. to be important and it is often not cleaned of weeds, runoff and debris. I can't help up but surrounding towns -Valatie and Chatham don't have an issue in keeping their bike lanes maintained.

Parking for ease of access to shops

Williams Street needs to be repaved

Programs for adults

Focus should be on basic municipal services

It depends on what "Park Enhancements" are being considered.

Historic Preservation-But not at the expense of access for disabled people.

Park should remain as it is. Place two small signs at each side of the access to the the AHET parking lot to direct trail users from to the People of Color Cemetery.

Benches, similar to those along the trail could be placed at the triangle.

Comments: Question 2

[The items below were identified previously in the Village Comprehensive Plan as features that should be enhanced. Please indicate the importance of each of the following initiatives, using the scale below. The list below is in no particular order. Other - (Please specify in the text field below)]

Ban enormous tank trucks filled with excrement from Albany Avenue. They stink.. but that's not the real problem, they drive at a helkish, dangerous speed on my residential street and endanger lives. And make HUGE amounts of noise.

Plan for street and water system maintenance, maximize alternative budget revenues such as grants

Reduced night lighting makes no sense!

Make downtown core car free + completely re-route 9 around the village

Add a Village Dog Park to Rothermel Park

Provide public water fountain in the Village Square to reduce the use of single use plastic bottles. Install recycling cans in the Village Square

A village dog park would be nice

About five years back, the village took the time and expense to change its streetlights for enhancing nighttime vehicle and pedestrian travel, but they are very intrusive into homes close to lighting fixtures. Not sure if there is anything more that can be done in this area, but for the record, it's very harsh and hard light.

More public trash cans in the village square

Do everything possible to retain rural and historic character and do not suburbanize the village and the playground.

Insure sufficient supply of water, upgrade all areas of system as needed.

Reduce the destructive mineral content in the village water supply

The Mills Park private planting initiative is a disaster. While there are, at times, lovely flowers to behold, most of the time it is a glorified weed patch.

There is a minimum of open space (view shed) within the Village limits. It should be preserved, especially in Rothermal park.

Bury electric and cable.

As above, promote diversity and create affordable housing units

Fix sidewalks on properties where money hasn't been spent in long time periods and require urgent attention

Updated playground equipment; better use of Rothermel park between fields and playground. A splash pad would be ideal.

Would like to see more businesses in the village without the Historical Society prohibiting growth

Restrict heavy truck traffic on side street in village square

Speeding abatement, stop AirBnB

Include Pickleball courts at Rothermel Park

Put power lines underground. the benefits economically and aesthetically will be substantial.

Compensation for property value loss for homes along the AHET

Make businesses in the village more handicap accessible

Sewer services for all village residents.

Complete sidewalks in all village limits

Explore any options for underground electrical (wires, transformers, etc.) utilities.

Create speed bumps for cross thru streets like Williams St,
Develop programs/guidance for turning lawn areas into natural habitat and
promoting programs like "No Mow May" (see <https://beecityusa.org/no-mow-may/>)
to protect pollinators; install shades on lamps to protect nocturnal wildlife and
reduce light pollution
Provide snow removal on sidewalks for senior citizens.
Parking for disabled. Fewer street lights.
Historic street lighting.
Upgrade village streetlights to LED. Hookup village to Valatie Sewer System.

Comments: Question 5

[Please indicate which of the following services from the Village government you find to be satisfactory. Check as many as apply. Other – (Please specify in the text field below and/or provide clarification to a response above)]

Leaf pickup is great but those dwelling in Kinderhook town also have brush pickup times. That is a huge advantage.

Based on the current level of staffing, the village generally provides good public service in my opinion. If residents want more services, then provide enough staff to get the job done.

Those left unchecked only due to lack of knowledge in this area

Unchecked items do not necessarily represent dissatisfaction, but having little or no personal dealings in those areas.

Have had limited experience interacting with Village commissions and boards.

Also, regarding Village website, I recently was looking online for info about Candlelight Night, which I could not find readily, but did come across detailed information on Valatie's Winter Walk event. It would be nice to have similar online promotions like Valatie's.

I hope the Village will do everything possible to preserve and retain our historic character and will not just become a tourist destination.

I have not checked areas that I have not had experience with.

We have not had any experience with village officials so can't comment.

Leaf pickup has been terrible this fall. No leaves picked up for 2 weeks.

You all are working very hard but the website is abysmal. There are many of us who could volunteer to do a revamp in a day if you put out the ask

I have not used all services

I'm in the neutral / "I don't know" category re: the satisfactoriness of many of the services listed above, to be honest. Website and communications needs a lot of work, however.

Many sidewalks throughout much of the village should be put in the budget for restoration.

Too many sidewalks have uneven walking surface areas and although many have been shaved down, they should really be replaced.

Better access to meetings via Zoom. Updated website to make finding information more easily located.

Unchecked items are simply items I don't have experience with, so unchecked does not mean unsatisfactory

Building permits and code enforcement are too strict/difficult to work with

Biggest gripe is lack of law enforcement ensuring speed limits are followed throughout Kinderhook and Valatie (especially Main Street) and pedestrian cross walks. It's embarrassing to have my family over to visit, walk them through the beautiful area and see an abundance of inconsiderate drivers speed up rather than stop for you at cross walks. Seems like the police around here are often times non-existent.

There's been multiple times where I've attempted to visit a Kinderhook employee during their office hours to find they weren't there, they hadn't updated their hours or provided any other notification that they had modified their hours. I generally

have to take personal time from work to visit within office hours so this has been a little frustrating.

Some of the stop signs/traffic infrastructure makes no sense (i.e., three stop signs from Berkshire to Catskill view dr - just put one stop sign on Berkshire).

Rothermel Park: please add some soccer nets- even if not a full field. There's three baseball diamonds- let's get some other sports going at the park!

People not picking up their dogs feces on the trail. I don't have a good solution with this other than employing a team to collect feces for a week and then stick said collected feces in that persons house/apartment. I can't stand this and can't believe our local residents don't care. I think more signage and public announcements may be helpful to help these residents get the picture.

Too much salt on the roads. We need to encourage commerce to Village & town.

The process for getting a building permit should be easier. And if an extra 50 dollars is access for a final review then it should occur. We have had three building permits and the final review never happened but we paid the extra fee

I've only been here 6 months so I don't know about the snow stuff yet

I do not think code violations are being acted upon.

*Reduce speed of traffic thru the village - this is an extremely important safety issue

There is such little representation from village officials. it should not be difficult to talk to the Mayor in a village of 1200. Also closing the village office on Fridays but giving the employees a 30-40% raise is ridiculous.

People moved here because they liked it. Now they have to change everything?

Why?

It would've been great to have a satisfied, somewhat satisfied, not satisfied option

for this section like above.

I find village officials supportive and reachable, but the village hours are not ideal for the working person.

Enforce Truck traffic to local delivery 9H and 66 can Handel tractor trailers the GPS off ramping onto 9 south from 9h at Ambulance garage to get to Hudson is having an effect on the local houses and quality of village lifestyle

Junk day in spring and fall

If we promote more outside visitors we need to create an infrastructure that will support that in an aesthetic manner—not lining the streets with port a pottys or cooping green space for parking lots.

Didn't check some areas due to unfamiliarity

Some of the answers that I left unchecked are services that I haven't utilized so I cannot speak to them.

Building inspector should make village businesses ADA compliant. The bagel shop, former Hut, Diad and The School could easily become accessible.

Village office should be open at least one night a week.

Comments: Question 7

[The Village conducts and supports multiple events each year for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. Please rate the importance of each of the following events to you using the below scale. Please suggest an event in the text field below if not indicated above]

Environment Day (June 5)

VERY IMPORTANT: Fyfe and Drum. Every June. I miss it, it's one of the best things about living in Kinderhook.. it connects us to our history through the arts ... please please bring it back every summer. The sounds of the flutes from the field is one of life's great gifts.

Ghent band concerts, David Smith's concert in the village

Better advance notice via email for Village Wide Yard Sales

I'm old and alone so none of this is important to me a

Earth Day Clean-Up Event

Drum and bugle events like they use to have.

How about one or two annual town meetings to hear in person citizens concerns?

I have not experienced the unrated events

Library events - very important

Fall Festival

Any event is good for the village

Halloween was not mentioned but is a fantastic event

Bring back food truck night! Almost all the events currently are centered around families and children, there are little to no events to enjoy in the square to promote

businesses and bring fun into the village.

More village garage sale dates. Maybe once a month during summer.

Block party. Park picnic party. Bonfire nights.

Pot Lick Summer Supper in the Square, Neighbor Meet and Greet, Suppers on the Green

It would be wonderful if the farmers market had a longer season

BRING BACK FOOD TRUCK NIGHT OH MY GOSH.

What is Climate Carnival?

This is a misleading question. Many events are not village-sponsored.

This isn't an event suggestion but a service request, since there is seasonal services like leaf pickup why not have sidewalk snow removal, at least in high traffic areas along Albany, Broad, Hudson and Chatham streets. With the county plows filling in the sidewalks, help from the village would support keeping the sidewalks safe since there is a lot more foot traffic in the areas mentioned before.

Senior Ball

Craft fair?

Events at the Library

Farmers Market should be moved to playground or behind the House of History.

Too congested.

VILLAGE OF KINDERHOOK

PO Box 325

6 Chatham Street

Kinderhook, NY 12106

(518) 758-9882

okvillagehall@villageofkinderhook.org

VILLAGE LEADERSHIP

Mike Abrams, Mayor

David Flaherty, Deputy Mayor

Dorene M. Weir, Trustee

James Mark Browne, Trustee

Susan Patterson, Trustee



Village of
Kinderhook

Birthplace of our 8th President Martin Van Buren