



Community Engagement Summary

June 25, 2025



Public Engagement

3 PUBLIC MEETINGS



05/19/25, 7pm

Board of Supervisors' Meeting

August 2025, date TBD

TBD

10/20/25, 7pm

Venue TBD

3 POP-UP EVENTS



05/17/25, 9am to 1 pm

Easton Farmer's Market

7/10/25, 5-8pm

Pizza Party at Mill Race Park

8/14/25

Palmer Community Days

2 SURVEYS



Survey #1

5/17/25 to 6/22/25

Survey #2

10/19/25 to 11/16/25

PRESS & SOCIAL MEDIA



Palmer Autumn 2025 Newsletter

Facebook & Social Media

Lehigh Valley Live & Lehigh Valley News

Project Goals

Communicate

History

Communicate local historical &
cultural significance

Support

Co

Demonstrat
support trail

Protect & Restore

Ecology

Protect habitat &
enhance resilience

Create Resilien

Hydro

Mitigate flooding

Connection

exemplary accessibility,
system changes

Enhance

Activity

Update facilities,
multi-user recreation experience

Technology

Pop-up #1 Responses

Easton Farmer's Market
05/17/25, 9am to 1 pm

"Connect Palmer
Trail to KSAT!"

"Recycling bins"

"Options for
experiences along the
trail"

"More Pennsylvania
natives"

"Signage"

"More trash cans"

"Hammocks!"

"Riding bikes"

"Education about
plant life"

"Skip rocks"

“Add more shade”

“Better connectivity”

“Pull-up bars +
monkey bars”

“Increase creek
habitat!”

“Coffee cart”

“More greenway”






“Fish habitat!”

“PA native plants”

“Bike maintenance
stations”

“Connect to
Plainfield”

“Brighter signage for
bike crossings”

-  Communicate History
-  Support Connection
-  Enhance Activity
-  Protect & Restore Ecology
-  Create Resilient Hydrology

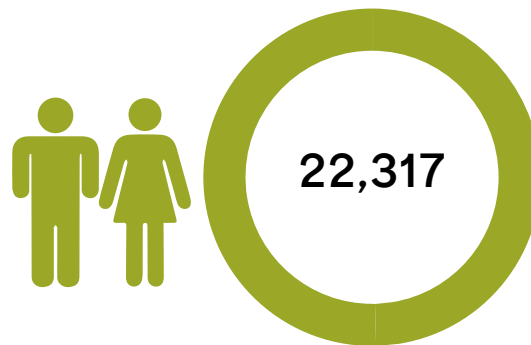
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

452 Responses

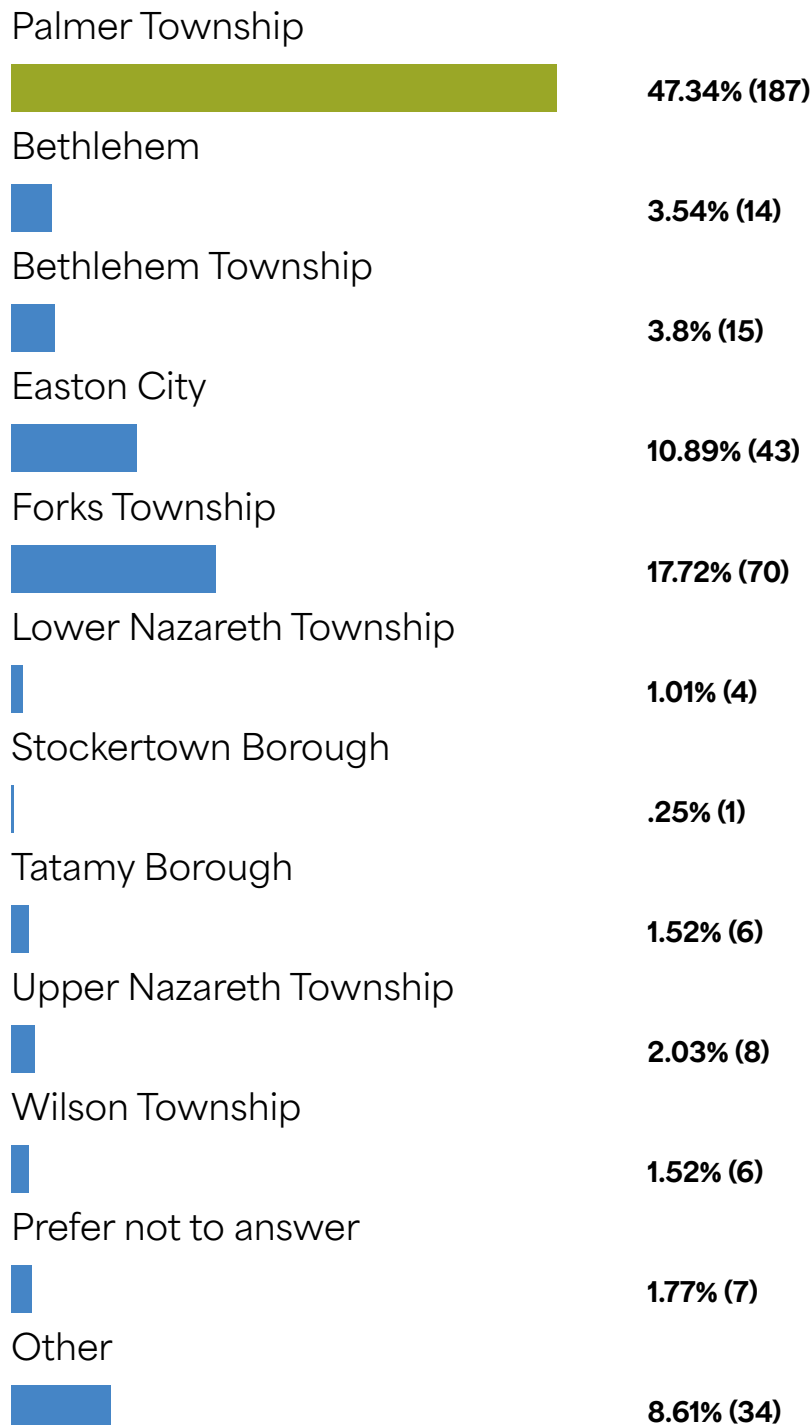
Goal: 200-300 total
(including at least 100 Palmer residents)

PALMER TOWNSHIP POPULATION*



*U.S. CENSUS BUREAU. 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING.

Where Respondents Live



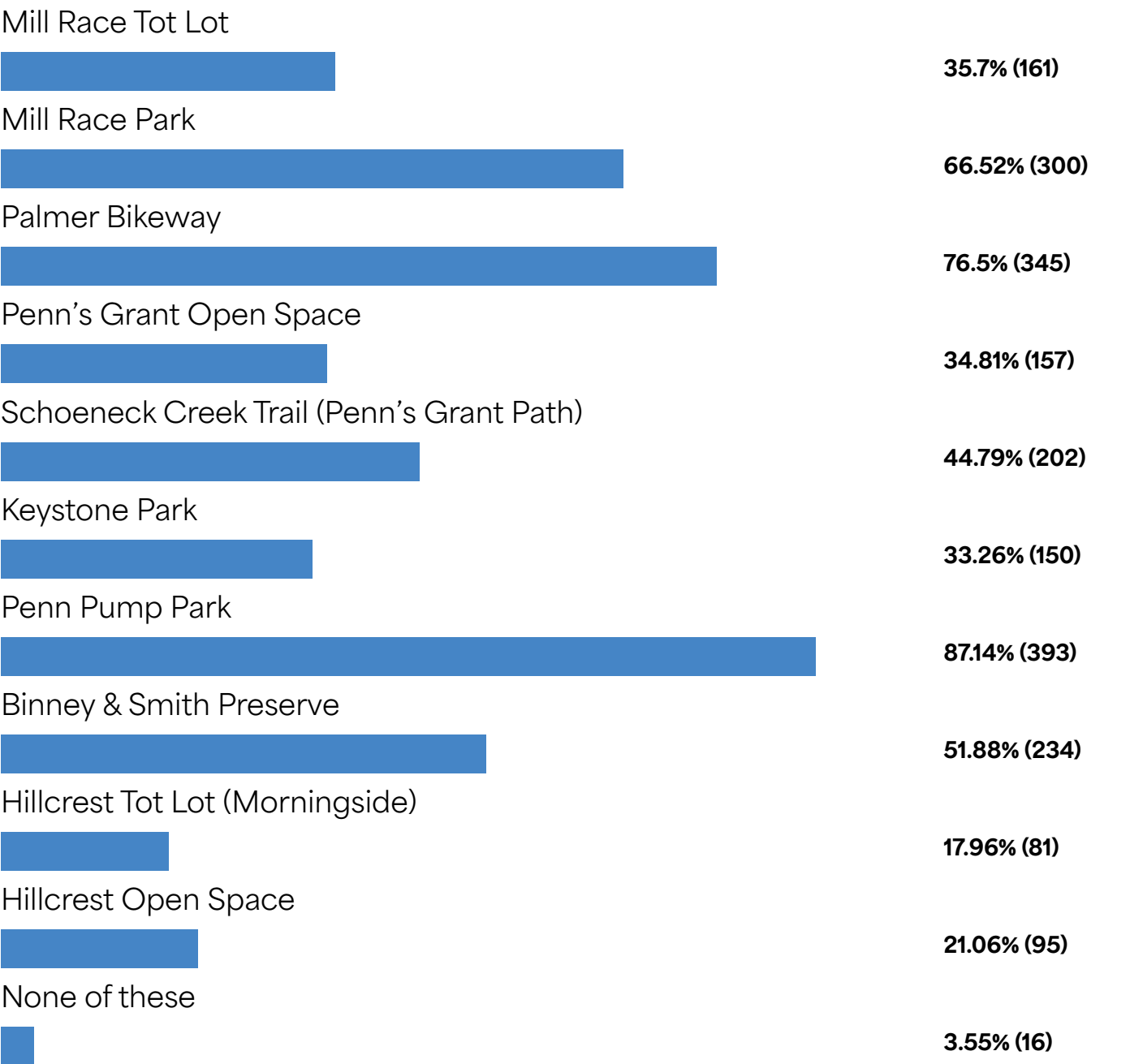
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q1: Which of the following parks & trails within the Bushkill Creek Greenway have you visited? (Select all that apply.)

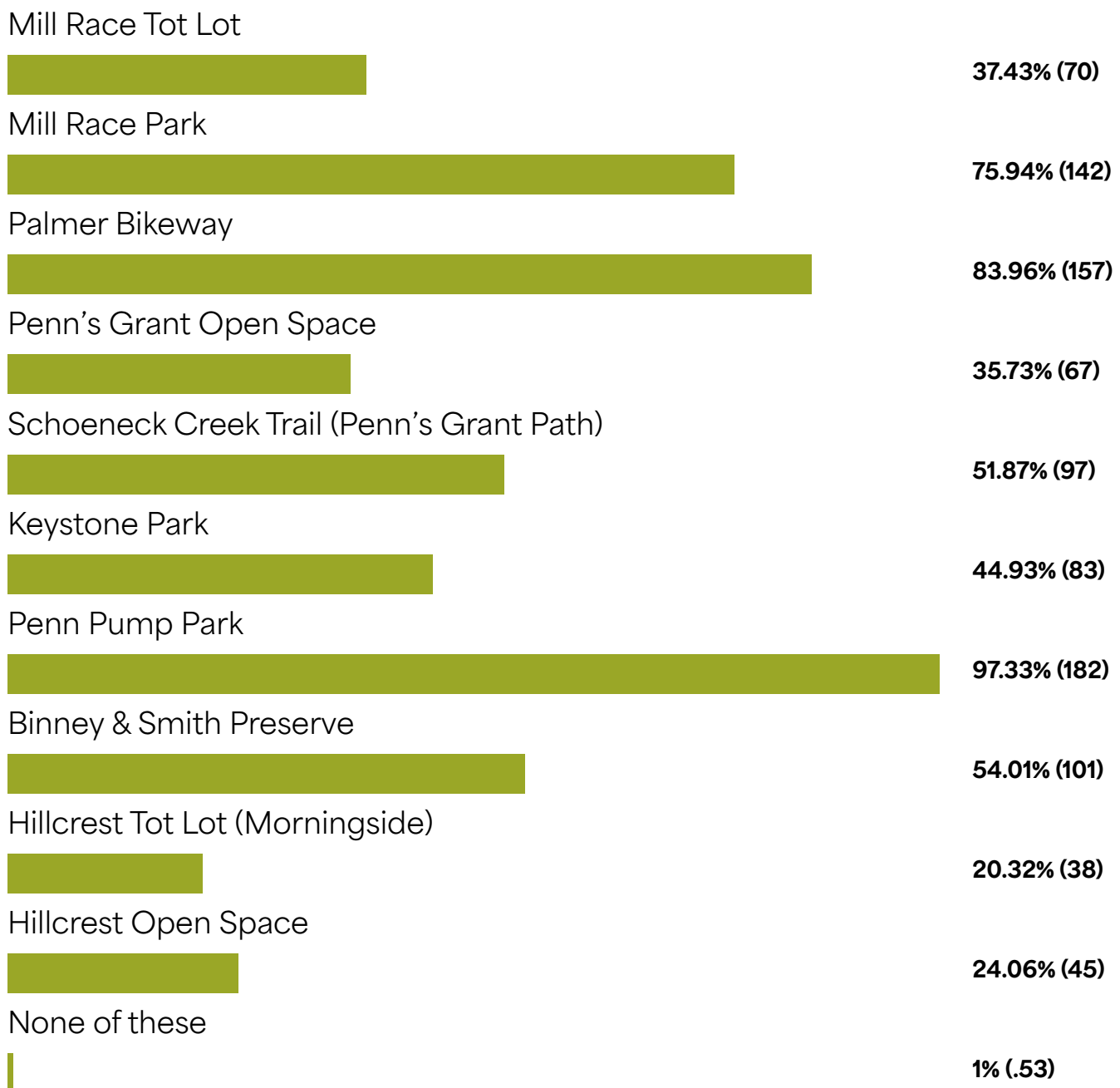
451 total responses (1 skipped)

All responses



187 Palmer Township responses (0 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only



Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q2: When you visit a park or trail on the Bushkill Creek Greenway, how do you usually get there?

443 total responses (9 skipped)

All responses



187 Palmer Township responses (0 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only



Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q3: On a scale of 1-5, how **safe & welcome** do you feel while using the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

433 total responses (19 skipped)

All responses



4.0 / 5.0

Average Rating

186 Palmer Township responses (1 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only



4.1 / 5.0

Average Rating

Survey #1 Results

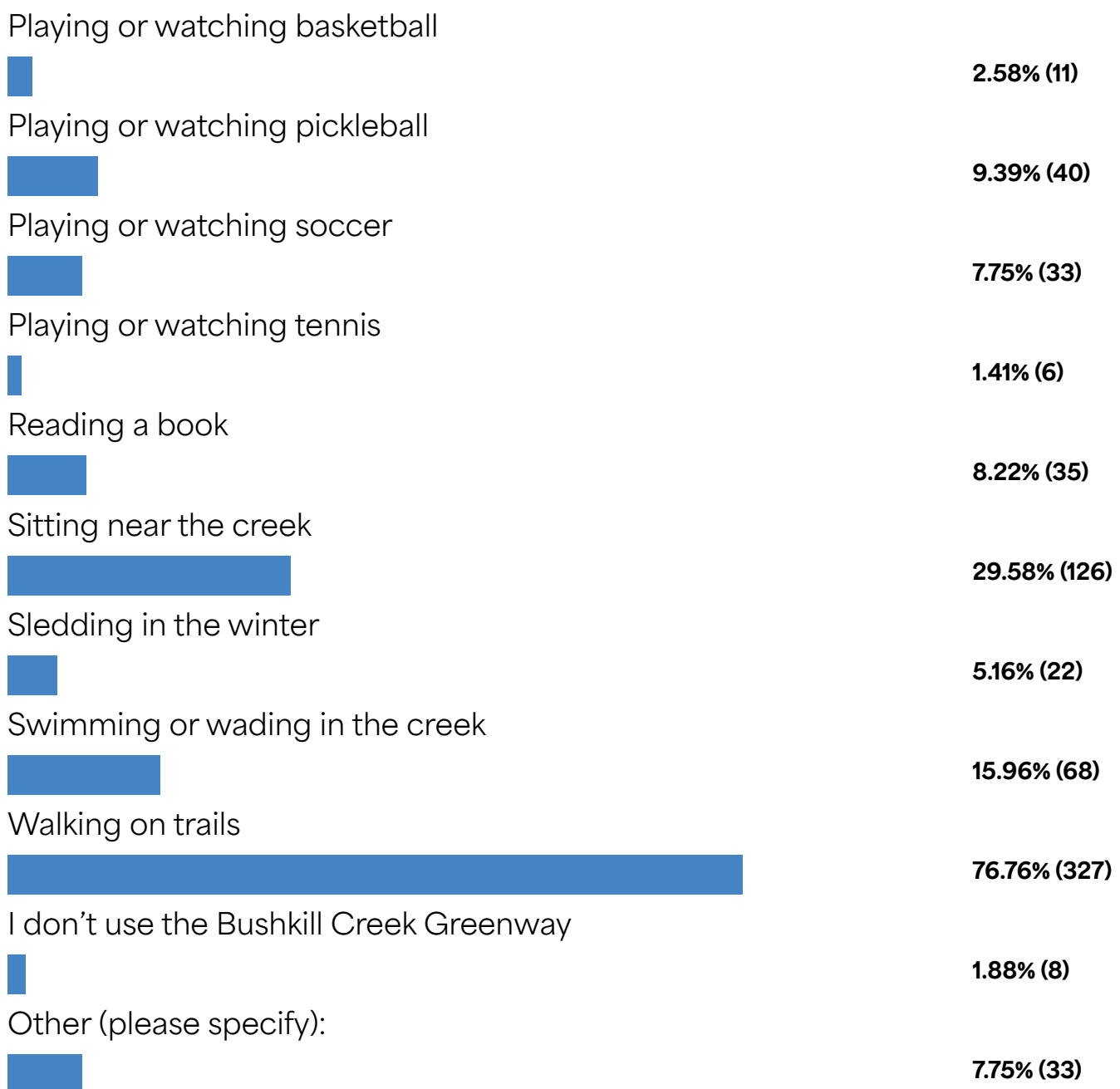
May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q4: How do you or members of your household **currently spend time** along the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

426 total responses (26 skipped)

All responses

Biking on trails	49.06% (209)
Fishing in the creek	25.59% (109)
Gathering with family & friends	18.08% (77)
Geocaching	1.64% (7)
Learning about creek ecology	7.04% (30)
Observing wildlife	51.64% (220)
Participating in trout stocking events	4.46% (19)
People-watching	18.31% (78)
Picnic or grilling	7.98% (34)
Playing on the playgrounds	19.01% (81)
Playing or watching baseball / softball	2.35% (10)



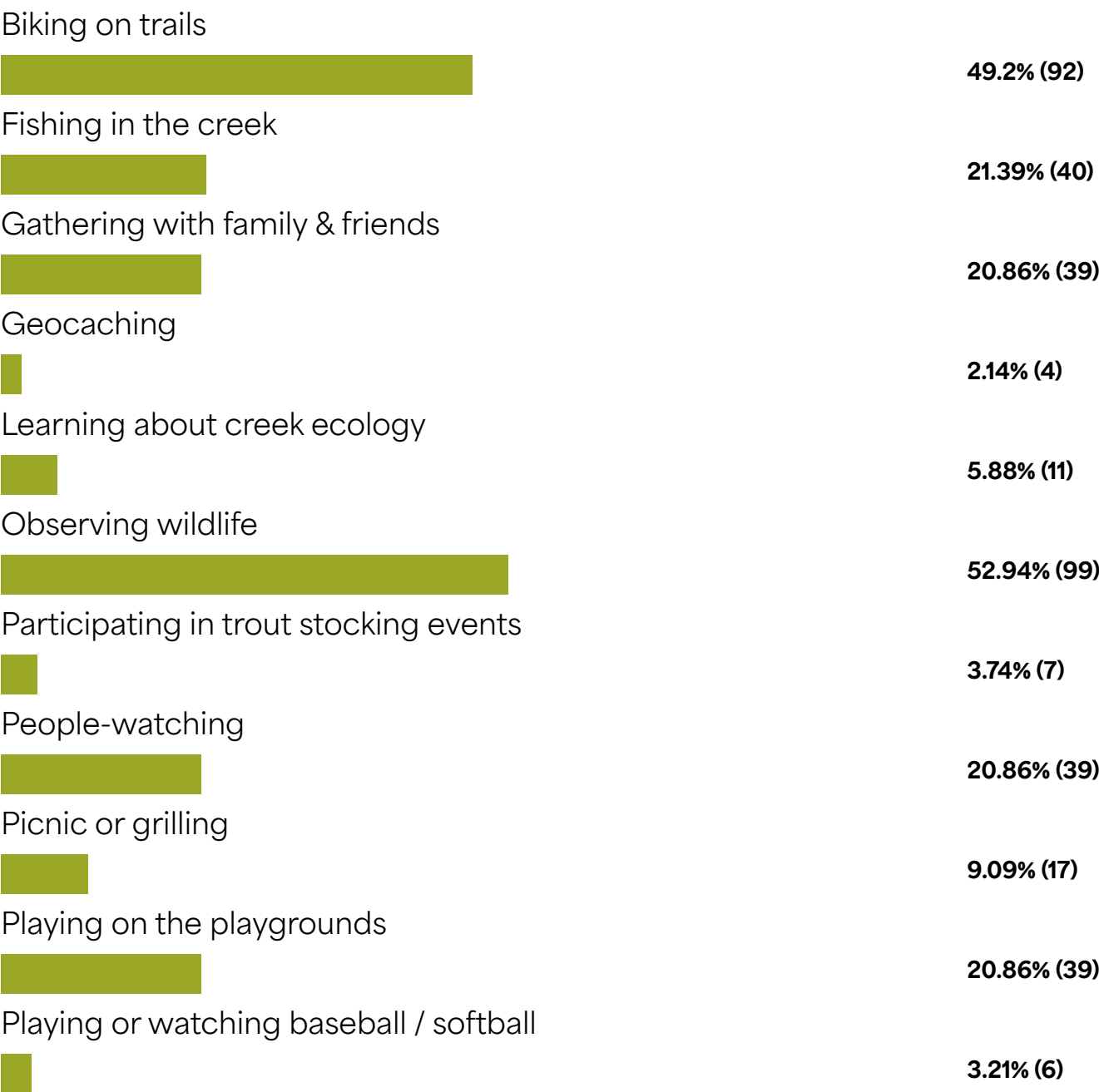
Survey #1 Results

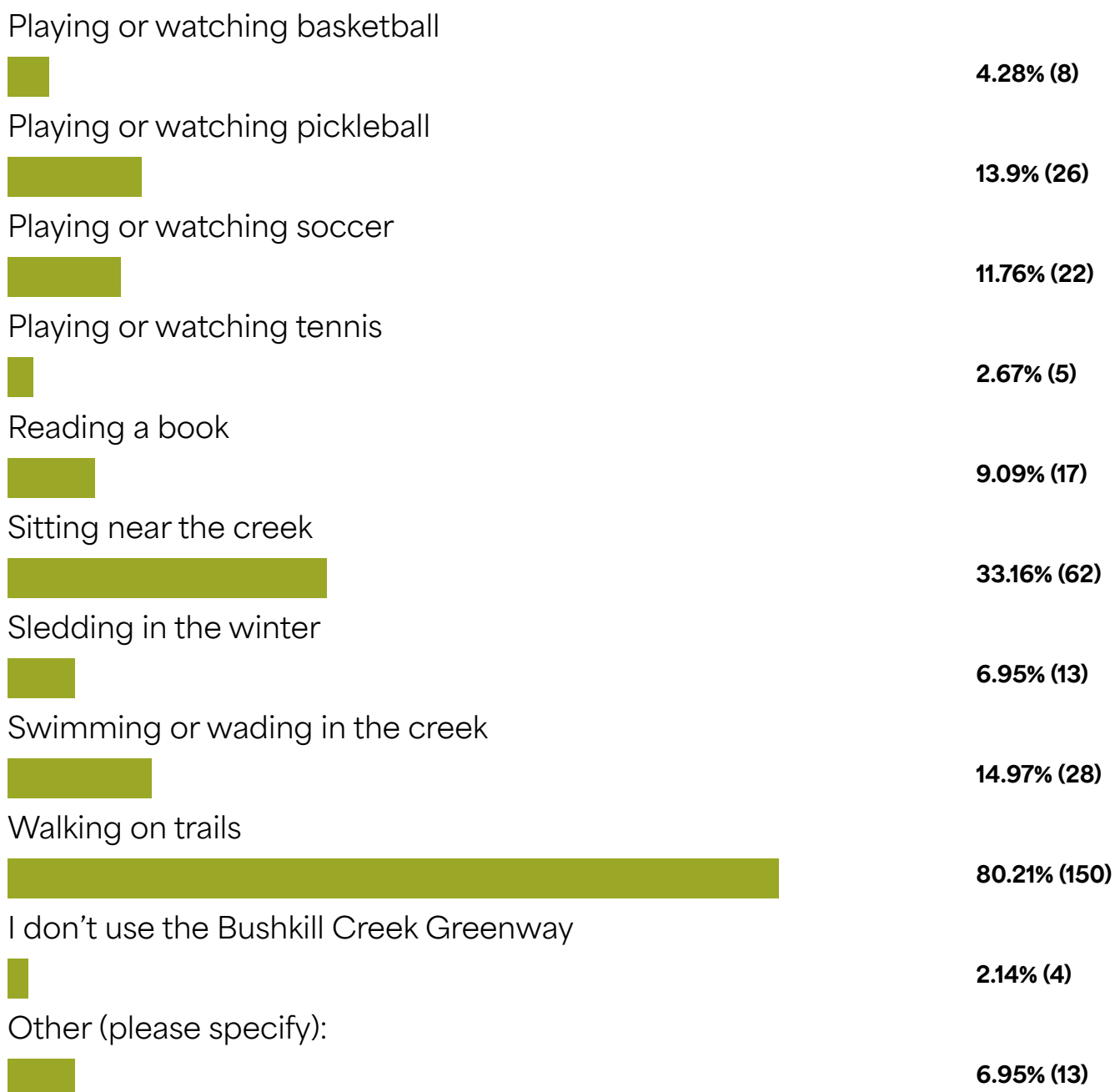
May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q4: How do you or members of your household **currently spend time** along the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

187 Palmer Township responses (0 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only





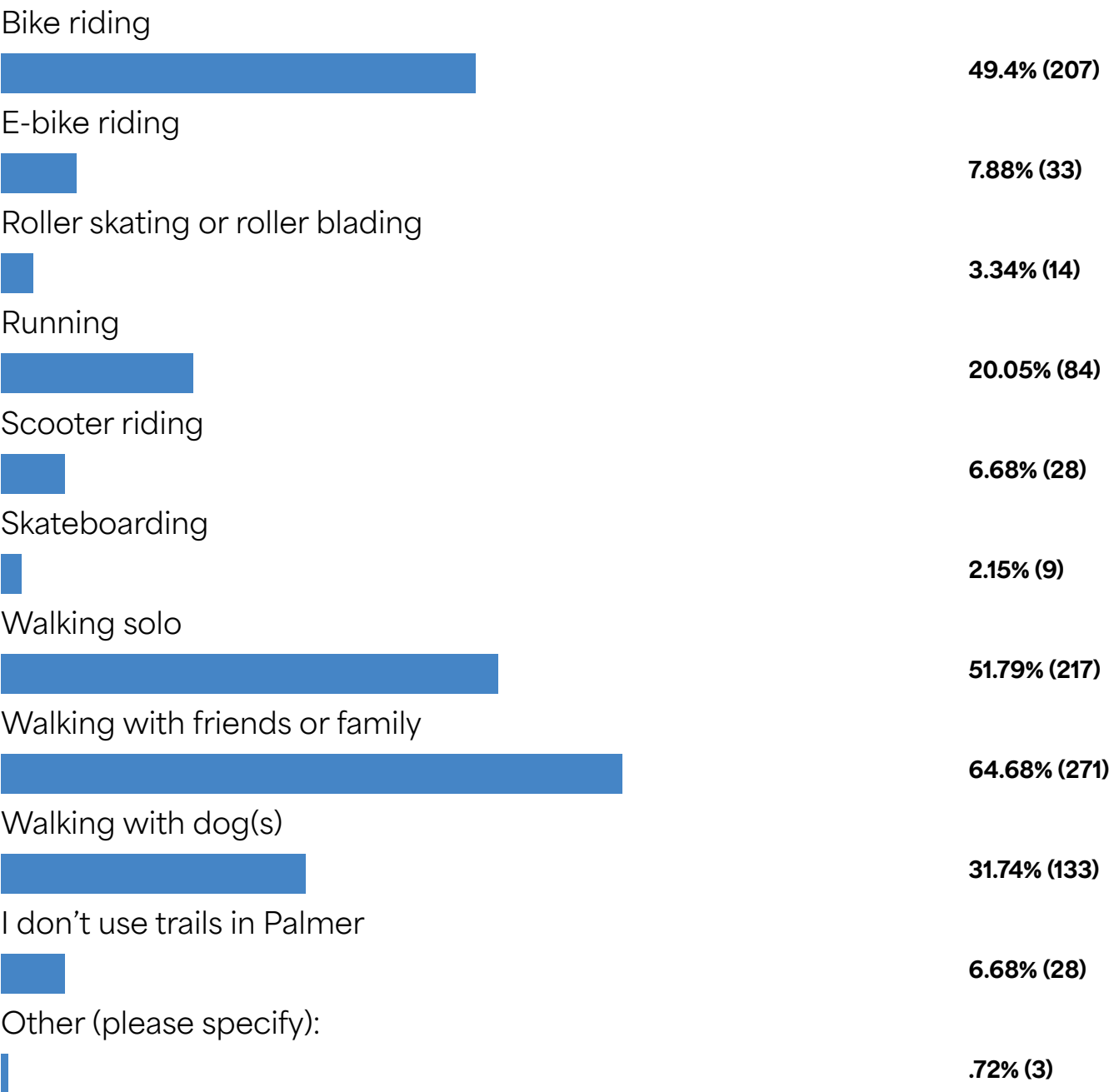
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q5: How do you or members of your household **currently use trails in Palmer? Select all that apply.**

419 total responses (33 skipped)

All responses



185 Palmer Township responses (2 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Bike riding	50.27% (93)
E-bike riding	9.73% (18)
Roller skating or roller blading	2.7% (5)
Running	19.46% (36)
Scooter riding	7.03% (13)
Skateboarding	1.62% (3)
Walking solo	54.59% (101)
Walking with friends or family	72.43% (134)
Walking with dog(s)	38.92% (72)
I don't use trails in Palmer	5.41% (10)
Other (please specify):	0% (0)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q6: To enhance visitation, which offerings should be added to the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.

396 total responses (56 skipped)

All responses

Bike rentals	18.69% (74)
Ecological education (trout, mussels, bird-watching, etc.)	39.9% (158)
Fishing derbies or fishing lessons	18.94% (75)
Foraging & plant identification walks	34.85% (138)
Games (quoits, frisbee golf, ping pong, etc.)	18.43% (73)
Markets	21.72% (86)
Outdoor classroom / amphitheater	21.72% (86)
Pavilions for gatherings / picnics	23.74% (94)
Play, adventure or zip line course	13.13% (52)
Play, ADA accessible	12.63% (50)
Play, Nature-based	27.02% (107)

Play, Sensory or tactile water/sand play



14.65% (58)

Stage for music performances



23.23% (92)

Yoga or Tai-Chi classes



21.97% (87)

Other (please specify):



13.89% (55)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q6: To enhance visitation, which offerings should be added to the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.

176 Palmer Township responses (11 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Bike rentals	16.48% (29)
Ecological education (trout, mussels, bird-watching, etc.)	39.77% (70)
Fishing derbies or fishing lessons	17.61% (31)
Foraging & plant identification walks	36.36% (64)
Games (quoits, frisbee golf, ping pong, etc.)	18.75% (33)
Markets	25.57% (45)
Outdoor classroom / amphitheater	22.73% (40)
Pavilions for gatherings / picnics	26.7% (47)
Play, adventure or zip line course	13.07% (23)
Play, ADA accessible	14.2% (25)
Play, Nature-based	26.7% (47)

Play, Sensory or tactile water/sand play



14.77% (26)

Stage for music performances



25% (44)

Yoga or Tai-Chi classes



27.84% (49)

Other (please specify):



10.23% (18)

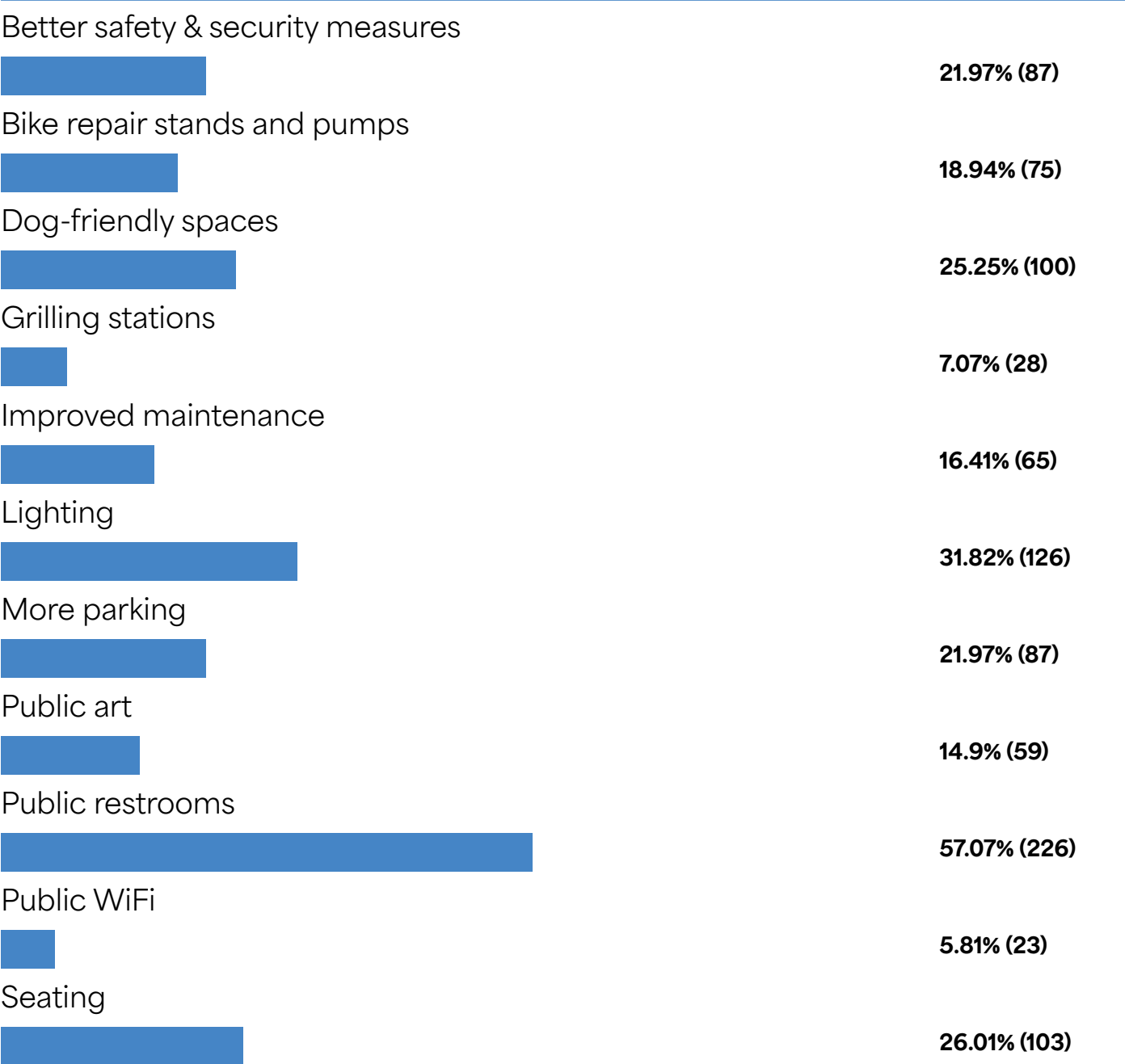
Survey #1 Results

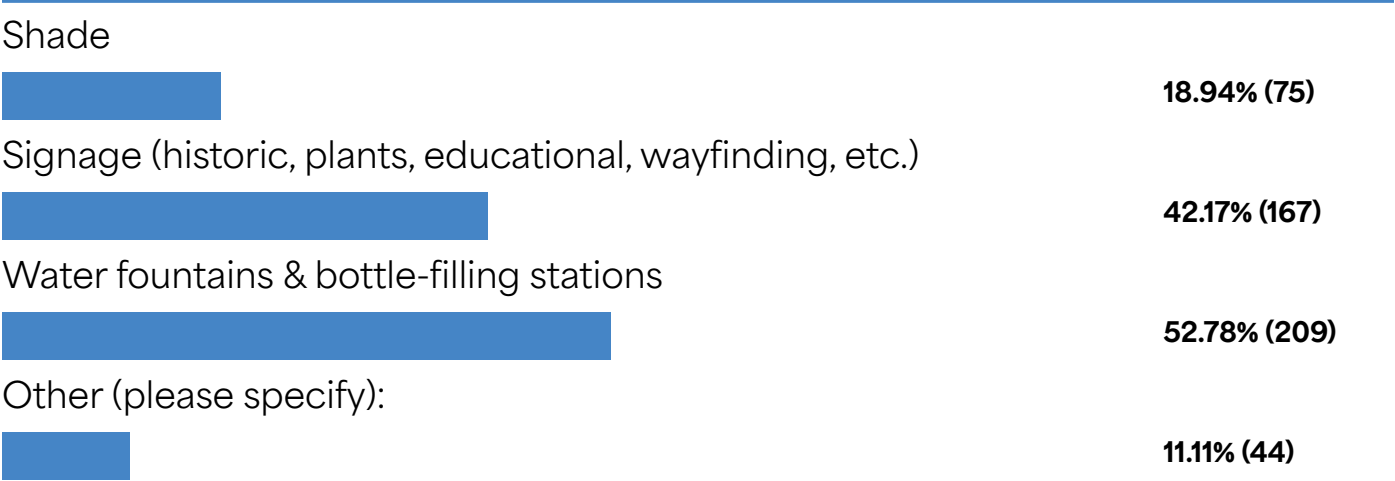
May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q7: To enhance amenities & safety, which elements should be improved or added to the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.

396 total responses (56 skipped)

All responses





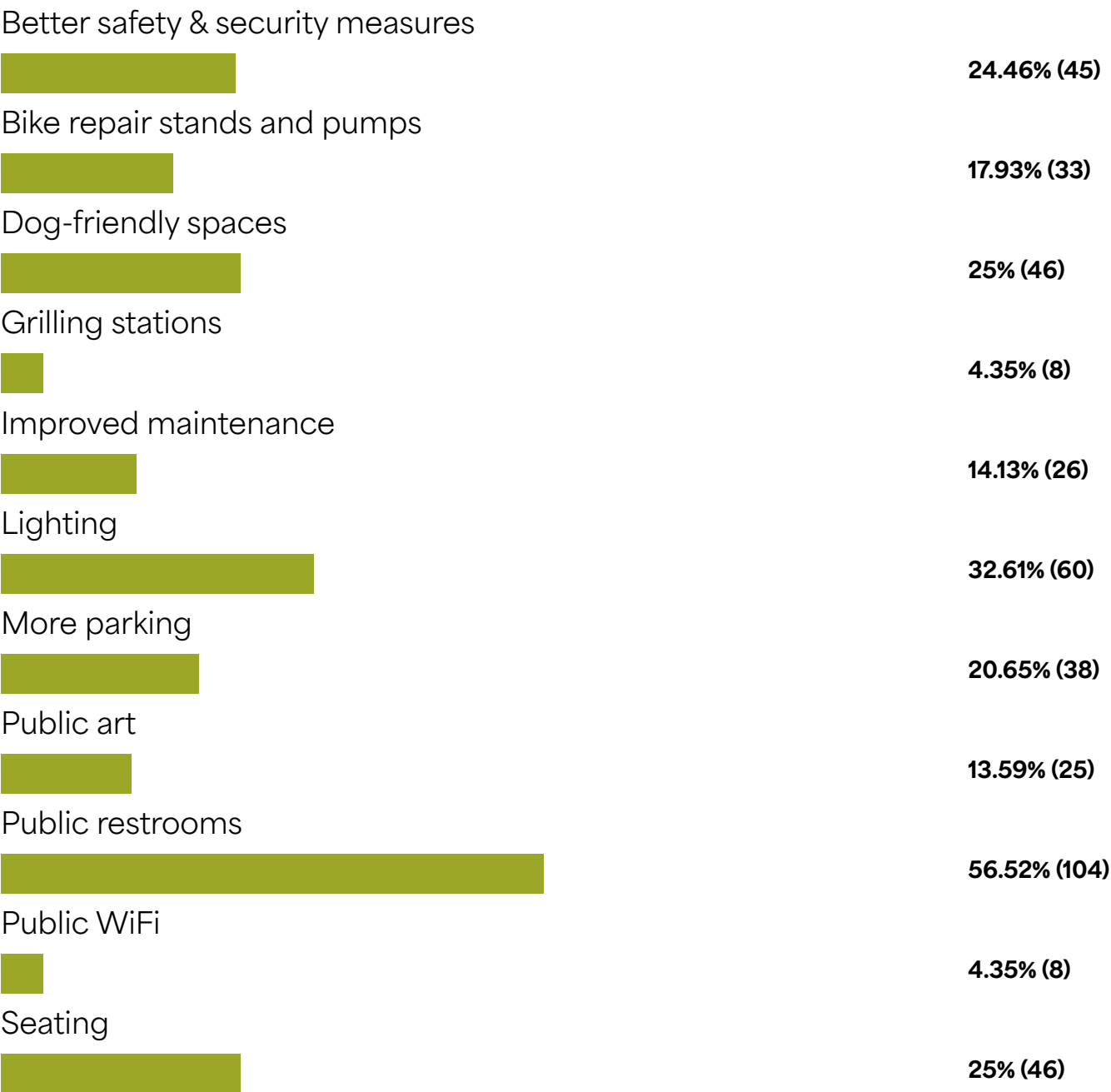
Survey #1 Results

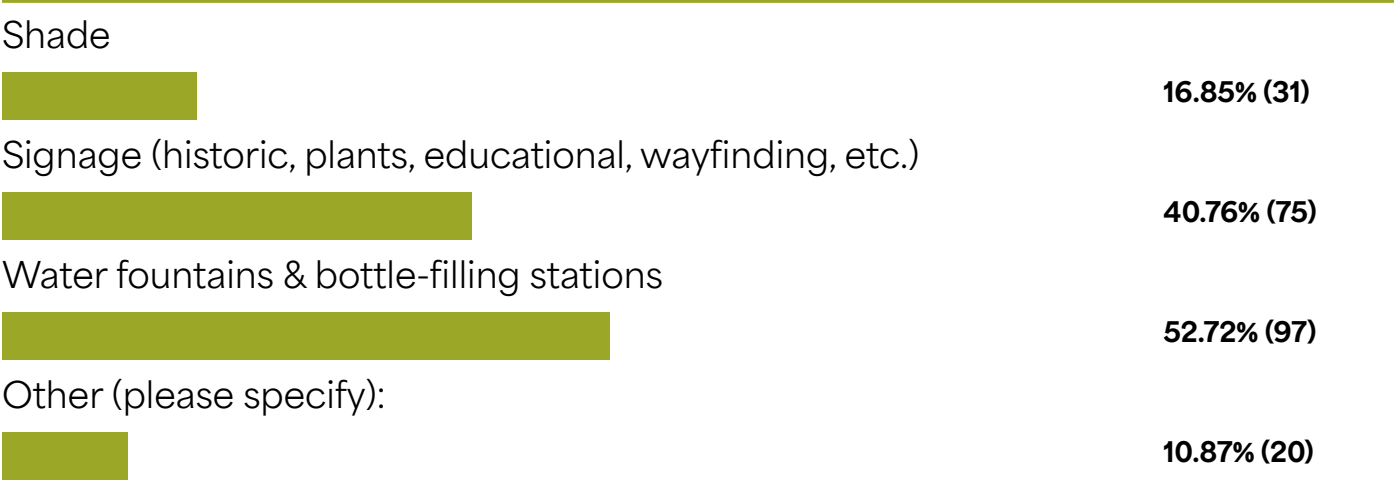
May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q7: To enhance amenities & safety, which elements should be improved or added to the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.

184 Palmer Township responses (3 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only





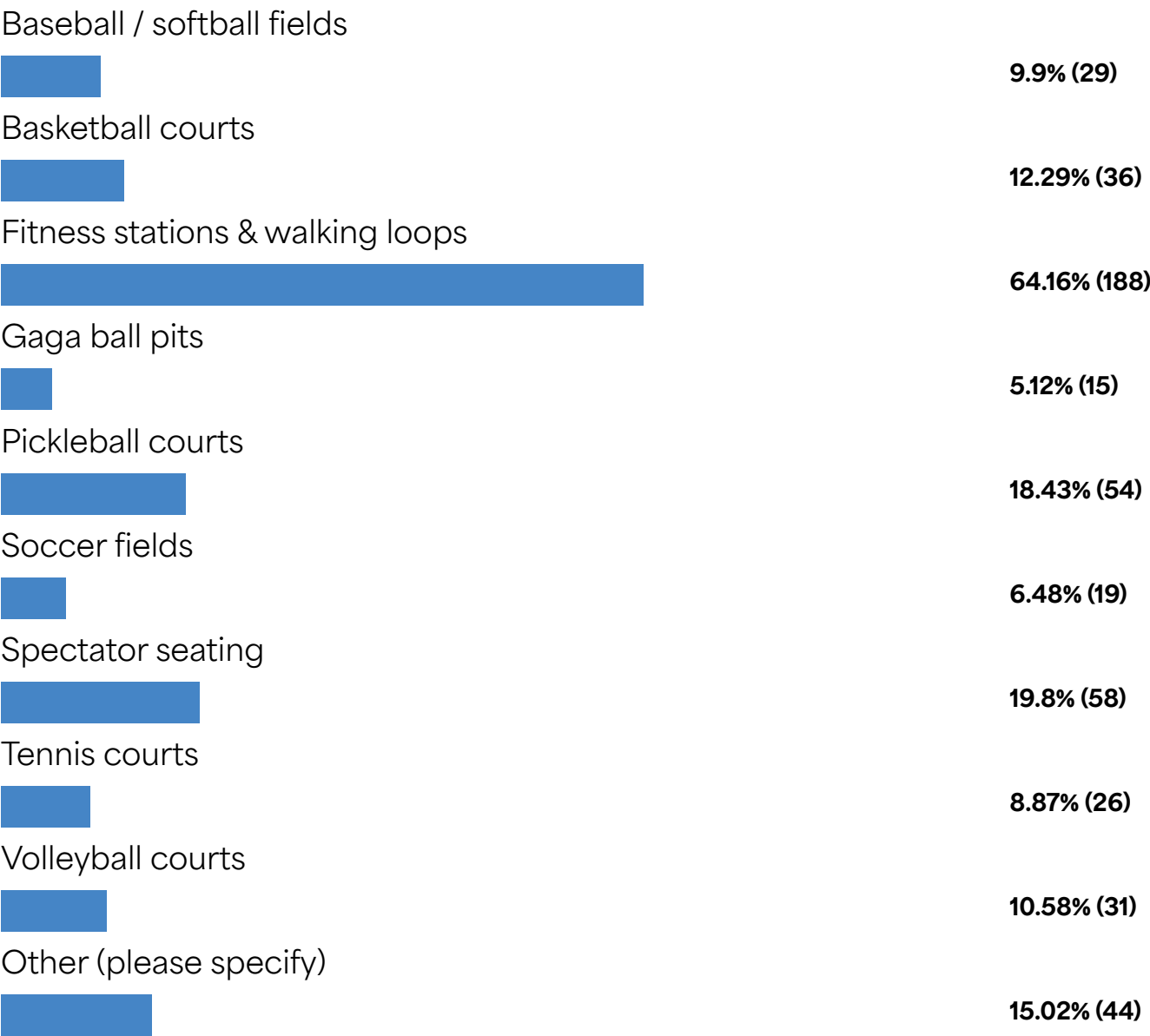
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q8: To enhance sports & fitness, which recreational elements should be improved or added to the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.











293 total responses (159 skipped)

All responses



141 Palmer Township responses (46 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Baseball / softball fields		7.09% (10)
Basketball courts		13.48% (19)
Fitness stations & walking loops		64.54% (91)
Gaga ball pits		7.09% (10)
Pickleball courts		15.6% (22)
Soccer fields		7.8% (11)
Spectator seating		22.7% (32)
Tennis courts		9.93% (14)
Volleyball courts		8.51% (12)
Other (please specify)		11.35% (16)

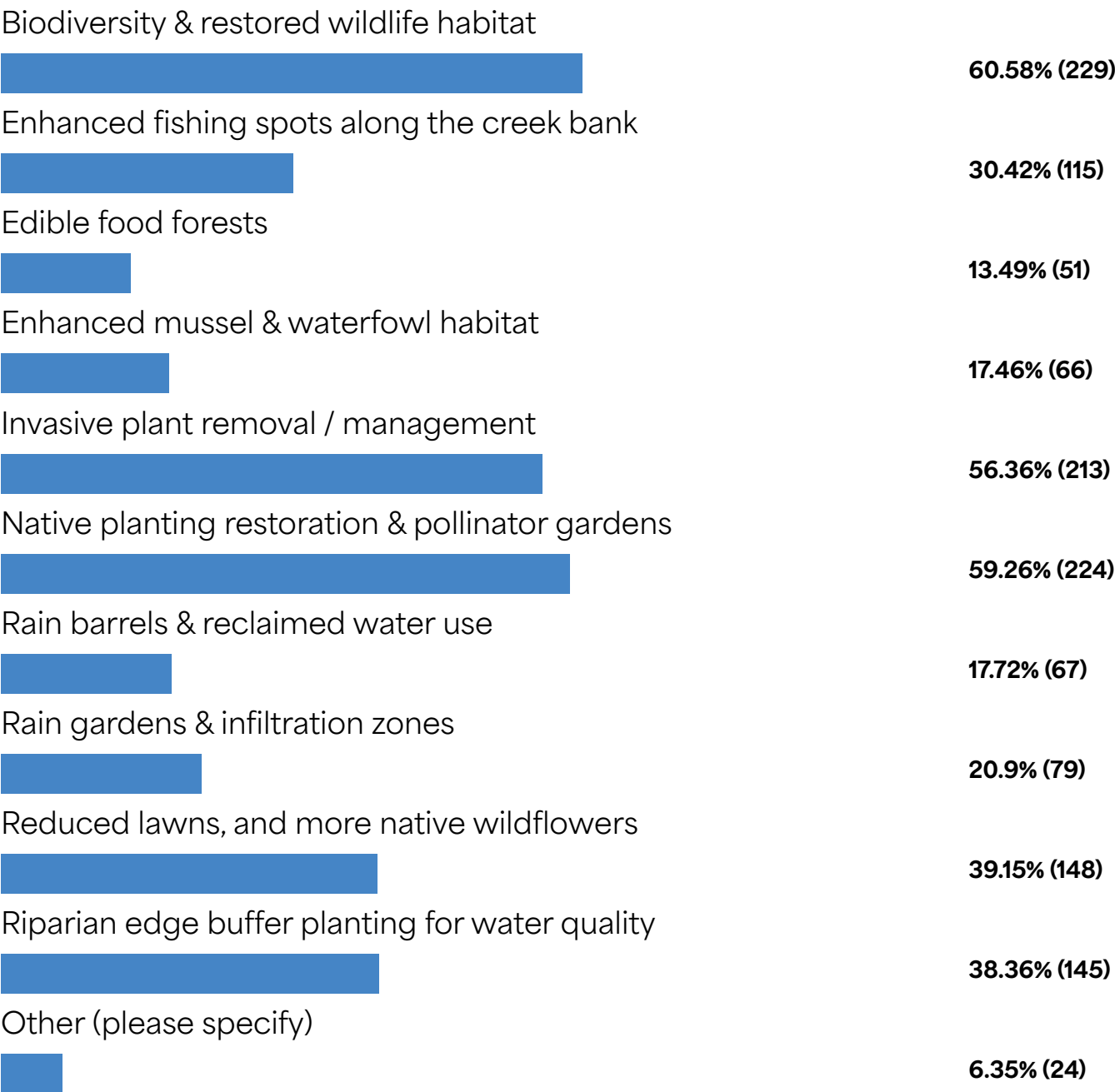
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q9: To enhance ecology, what should be added or improved in the Bushkill Creek Greenway? Choose up to 3.

378 total responses (74 skipped)

All responses



173 Palmer Township responses (14 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Biodiversity & restored wildlife habitat	53.38% (101)
Enhanced fishing spots along the creek bank	31.79% (55)
Edible food forests	13.87% (24)
Enhanced mussel & waterfowl habitat	16.18% (28)
Invasive plant removal / management	53.76% (93)
Native planting restoration & pollinator gardens	57.8% (100)
Rain barrels & reclaimed water use	17.34% (30)
Rain gardens & infiltration zones	21.97% (38)
Reduced lawns, and more native wildflowers	36.42% (63)
Riparian edge buffer planting for water quality	34.68% (60)
Other (please specify)	4.62% (8)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q10: How important is it to you for Palmer Township to invest in **ecological restoration** and conservation of natural lands?

398 total responses (54 skipped)

All responses



2.7 / 3.0

Average Rating

183 Palmer Township responses (4 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Very Important



74.32% (136)

Somewhat Important



22.4% (41)

Not at All Important



3.28% (6)



2.7 / 3.0

Average Rating

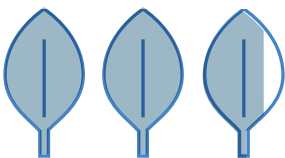
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q11: How important is it to you for Palmer Township to plan for potential **impacts of climate change** (such as flooding, habitat loss, extreme heat, etc)?

397 total responses (55 skipped)

All responses

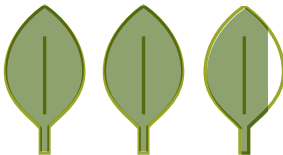


2.7 / 3.0

Average Rating

183 Palmer Township responses (4 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only



2.7 / 3.0

Average Rating

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q12: Are there any **local organizations** you would like to see Palmer Township partner with to offer events or classes within the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

131 total responses (321 skipped)

All responses: Organizations named & number of mentions

- Action Wheels Bike Shop (2)
- Animal Defenders Lehigh Valley (1)
- Arbor Day Foundation (1)
- Audubon Society (4)
- Banana Factory (1)
- Borough of Tatamy (1)
- Boy Scouts (2)
- **Bushkill Stream Conservancy (14)**
- CAT-Coalition for Appropriate Transportation (1)
- City of Easton (2)
- Delaware Riverkeeper Network (1)
- D&L Trail (1)
- Ducks Unlimited (1)
- Earth Stewards of Palmer (1)
- Easton Environmental Advisory Council (1)
- Edge Of The Woods Plant Nursery (1)
- Forks of the Delaware (2)
- Forks Township (3)
- Girl Scouts (3)
- Jacobsburg Environmental Center (1)
- Kellyn Foundation (1)
- Kettle Creek Environmental Center (1)
- **Lafayette College (10)**
- Lehigh Valley Kayak and Canoe Club (1)
- Lehigh Valley Watershed Coalition (1)
- Lenape / Delaware Tribes (1)
- Libraries (2)
- LVHN (2)
- MOMS Club of Easton (1)
- Northampton County (1)
- Northampton County Community College (2)
- Northampton County Conservation District (1)
- **Nurture Nature Center (23)**
- Palmer BIP (1)
- Palmer Environmental Steering Committee (1)
- Penn State University (including Penn State Extension) (2)
- ProJeCt of Easton (1)
- ReWild Outdoors (1)
- Schools / School District (4)
- Shanthi Project (1)

-
- Sierra Club (3)
 - State Theatre (1)
 - St. Luke's (1)
 - The Valley Om (1)
 - **Trout Unlimited (29)**
 - Valley Mountain Bikers (2)
 - West Ward Community Initiative (1)
 - West Ward Market (1)
 - **Wildlands Conservancy (14)**
 - YMCA (1)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q12: Are there any **local organizations** you would like to see Palmer Township partner with to offer events or classes within the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

60 Palmer Township responses (127 skipped)

Palmer residents only: Organizations named & number of mentions

- Arbor Day Foundation (1)
- Audubon Society (1)
- Banana Factory (1)
- Boy Scouts (2)
- **Bushkill Stream Conservancy (5)**
- City of Easton (1)
- Earth Stewards of Palmer (1)
- Forks of the Delaware (1)
- Forks Township (1)
- Girl Scouts (3)
- Kellyn Foundation (1)
- Lafayette College (3)
- Lehigh Valley Kayak and Canoe Club (1)
- Libraries (1)
- LVHN (1)
- Northampton County Community College (2)
- **Nurture Nature Center (14)**
- Palmer BIP (1)
- Palmer Environmental Steering Committee (1)
- Penn State University (including Penn State Extension) (2)
- ProJeCt of Easton (1)
- Schools / School District (4)
- Shanthi Project (1)
- Sierra Club (1)
- State Theatre (1)
- St. Luke's (1)
- The Valley Om (1)
- **Trout Unlimited (10)**
- Valley Mountain Bikers (1)
- **Wildlands Conservancy (8)**
- YMCA (1)

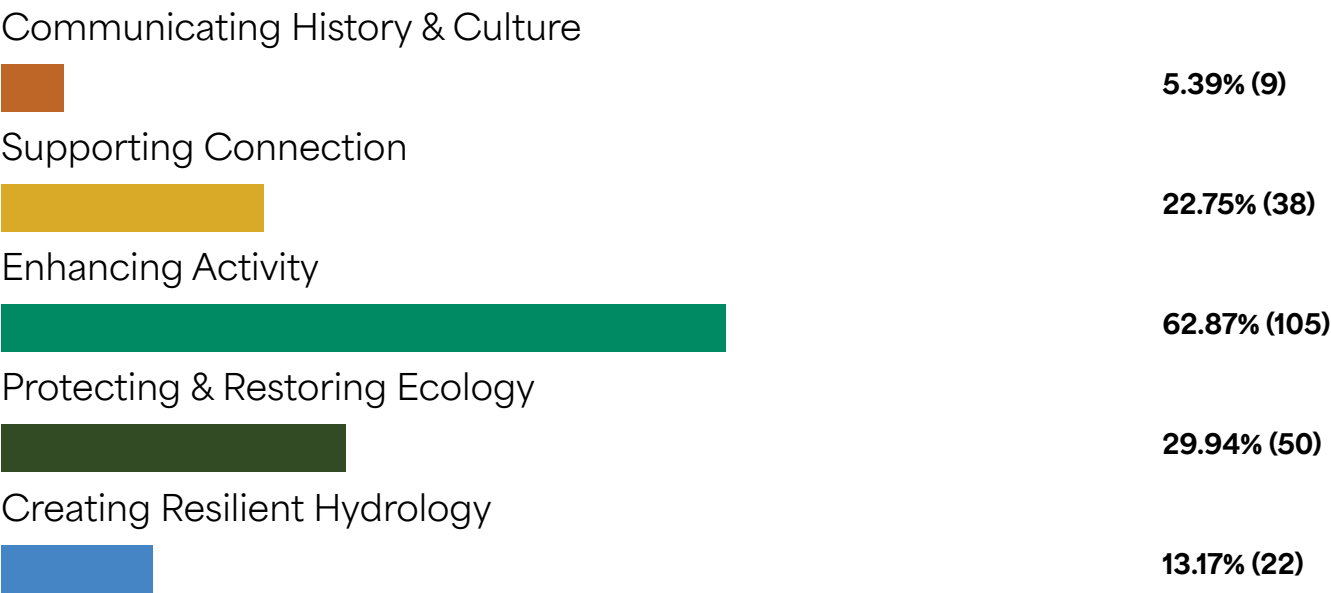
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q13: What **other ideas** do you have for improving the Bushkill Creek Greenway?

167 total responses (285 skipped)

All responses: Mentions categorized by concern

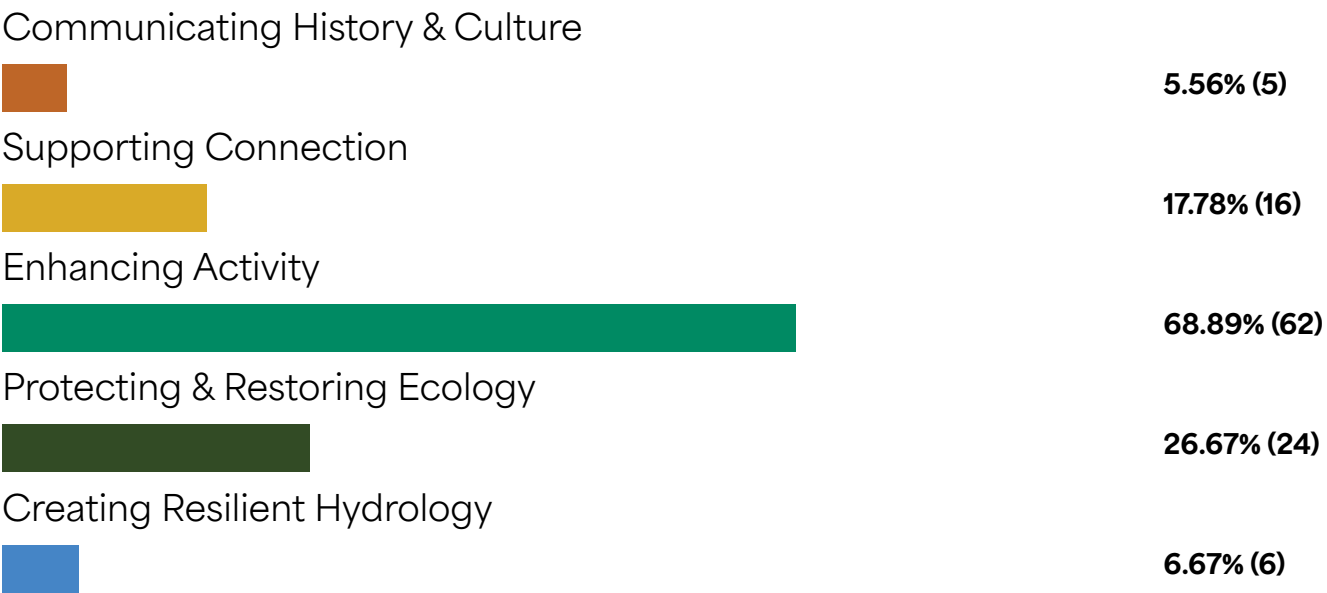


Word cloud: All responses



90 Palmer Township responses (97 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only: Mentions categorized by concern



Word cloud: Palmer Township responses only

signage Palmer
creek path walking way
areas trail bike
dogs better
people parks keep
Greenway bike path
Penn Pump dam Penn Pump Park



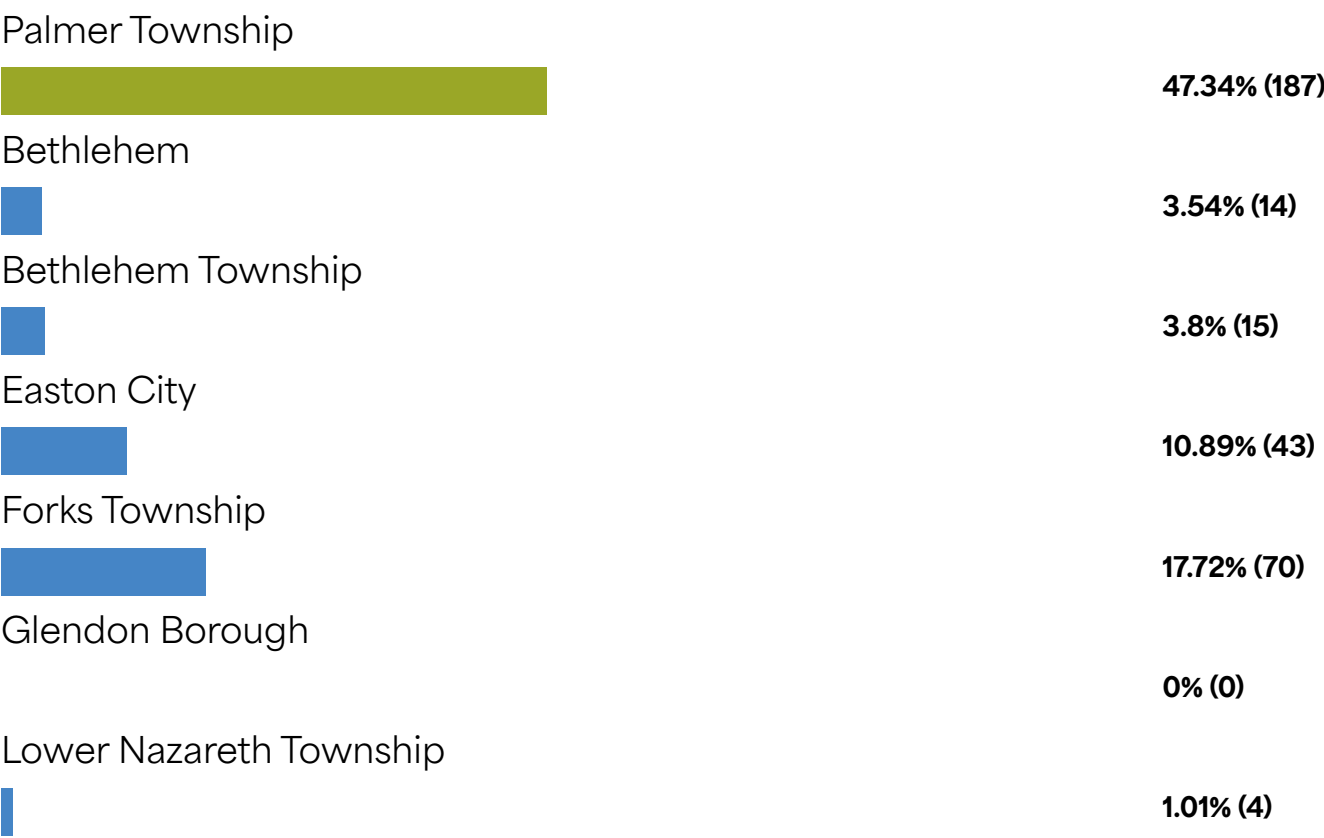
Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q14: Where do you live?

395 total responses (57 skipped)

All responses



Stockertown Borough

 .25% (1)

Tatamy Borough

 1.52% (6)

Upper Nazareth Township

 2.03% (8)


Wilson Township

 1.52% (6)

Prefer not to answer

 1.77% (7)

Other (please specify)

 8.61% (34)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q15: What is your age?

392 total responses (60 skipped)

All responses

<18



1.28% (5)

18-24



3.32% (13)

25-35



12.5% (49)

36-45



15.31% (60)

46-55



12.24% (48)

56-65



22.93% (90)

66+



30.61% (120)

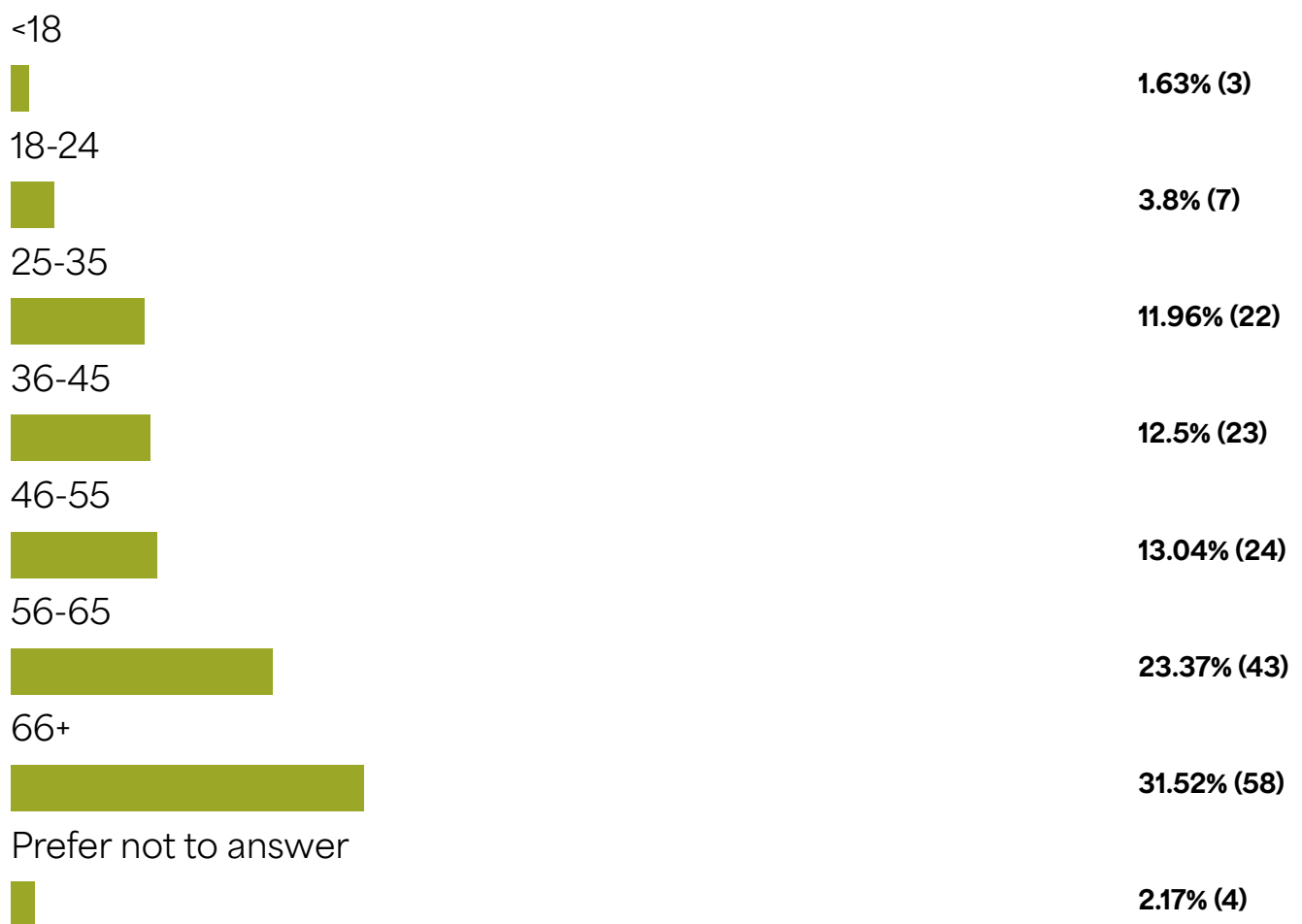
Prefer not to answer



1.79% (7)

184 Palmer Township responses (3 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only



Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q16: Are there children under the age of 18 living in your household?

395 total responses (57 skipped)

All responses

Yes



25.32% (100)

No



71.9% (284)

Prefer not to answer



2.78% (11)

186 Palmer Township responses (1 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Yes



26.34% (49)

No



71.51% (133)

Prefer not to answer



2.15% (4)

Survey #1 Results

May 17, 2025-June 22, 2025

Q17: Last question! Would you like to receive email updates about this plan & future stewardship opportunities for the Bushkill Greenway?

393 total responses (59 skipped)

All responses

Yes



No, thank you



183 Palmer Township responses (4 skipped)

Palmer Township residents only

Yes	
	44.26% (81)
No, thank you	
	55.74% (102)

Key People Interviews

April 28, 2025

Dave Dumpel

Palmer Township Athletic Association

Dave Dumpel is President of the Palmer Township Athletic Association (PTAA), a nonprofit youth sports organization serving more than 1,500 children annually. While PTAA operates independently from the Township, it uses public parks through a formal agreement and plays a critical role in seasonal field use and recreational programming. PTAA runs several youth sports programs, with heaviest participation in spring and fall. Dumpel shared insights into usage patterns at Mill Race and Keystone Parks, identified infrastructure challenges and field maintenance needs, and expressed support for future improvements, particularly those addressing accessibility, restrooms, and field conditions.

Dumpel shared that soccer dominates use of Mill Race and Keystone Parks, with games occurring weekends and weekday evenings, particularly in spring and fall. Keystone is used for younger age groups, while Mill Race supports older teams, though field sizes are a challenge at both parks. PTAA formerly hosted tournaments drawing 7,000–8,000 attendees over a weekend.

Field Conditions & Infrastructure

- Keystone Park lacks regulation soccer field; Mill Race has multiple fields, but layout & turf quality are limiting factors
- Mill Race has compacted soils & “squishy” areas from overuse and flooding
- Potholes and uneven surfaces persist at Keystone; fields likely need full renovation
- Only one set of bleachers remains (at Mill Race); designated spectator seating areas needed to reduce sideline conflicts

Restrooms & Concessions

- Permanent restrooms closed until mid-April; 1-2 porta-potties available when permanent restrooms are closed. PTAA supplements 15–20 more for tournaments
- ADA-accessible restroom upgrades needed at Mill Race in particular
- Concession stand at Mill Race would be helpful; Keystone is too small to justify

Accessibility & Shade

- Neither Mill Race nor Keystone offers accessible paths to restrooms or seating; limited mobility spectators often remain in parking lots due to lack of access
- Shade needed at Mill Race; Keystone has moderate shade but benefits from coverage during summer

Flooding & Environmental Conditions

- Mill Race frequently floods & past events rendered fields unusable for entire season; Keystone is less impacted by flooding
- Environmental nuisances include spring midges, geese, and dog waste

April 29, 2025

Dan McKinney

Palmer Township, Department of
Parks & Recreation

Dan McKinney is Director of is Palmer Township's Department of Parks & Recreation, where he oversees recreational programming, park rentals, and community events. The Department has 4 full-time and 4 part-time staff, with an additional 60+ seasonal hires focused mostly on the pool and summer camp. While day-to-day park maintenance falls to the Department of Public Works, McKinney and his team play a central role in shaping how residents engage with Greenway parks—particularly Mill Race, Keystone, and Penn Pump. He discussed extensive seasonal programming, high public demand for park use, and significant challenges with flooding. He also described the accessibility of the Township's parks, and emphasized the need for continued investment in ensuring accessible paths to amenities within parks as well as toward creating truly inclusive playgrounds. He also emphasized the value of clear signage, adaptive infrastructure, and practical, community-driven improvements over grand-scale transformations. To that end, McKinney encouraged the addition of accessible, low-maintenance infrastructure rather than elaborate features that might be vulnerable to flood damage.

Recreation & Programming

- Mill Race heavily used for soccer, pickleball, and trail access; Penn Pump most popular for general recreation and rentals
- Penn Pump pavilion is rented every weekend during summer by Palmer residents; rentals fill up early each year
- Programming (eg. Summer camp) at Chrin Center draws strong participation
- Township does not host revenue-generating events but is open to creative programming led by external partners
- Open to environmental youth education programs led by partners; Palmer does not have staff capacity to deliver

Park Access & Rules

- Penn Pump weekend use managed by staff 7am–3pm to monitor access and verify reservations
- Alcohol permitted in park contributes to its popularity; no plans to change policy
- Usage guidelines are vague, especially around water access; confusion over whether Township or PA Fish & Boat Commission has jurisdiction
- Clearer signage is needed to manage expectations and improve safety

Environmental Impacts & Climate

- Major flooding occurs every 2–3 years & results in submersion of park amenities, including restrooms and benches
- Recovery includes significant cleanup & equipment replacement

Key People Interviews

May 1, 2025

Donna Asure & Rachel Sulzbach

Forks Township

In Forks Township, Donna Asure is the Township Manager and Rachel Sulzbach is Director of Parks and Recreation. They expressed openness to collaboration and ongoing communication. The conversation focused on Lions Park, the Township's primary point of access to the Bushkill Creek, and touched on key issues including flooding, maintenance limitations, and past challenges with meadow restoration and dam jurisdiction.

Lions Park

- Lions Park is the Township's only formal access point to Creek; other pull-offs or informal access points are unsanctioned
- Park is managed mainly as passive recreation with basic mowing & weed control; lacks restrooms and rental facilities
- Overcrowding in summer has led to installation of gates & fencing to prevent late-night use & unauthorized gathering
- Park frequently floods (including Springhouse), even with light rainfall & cleanup efforts often result in park closures

Meadow & Landscape Management

- Native meadow was previously established at Lions Park but eventually mowed due to overgrown sumac & poison hemlock, which led to complaints
- Maintenance was discontinued due to limited resources & expertise in native plants
- Forks may be open to a meadow concept if adequate maintenance support and funding were in place

Infrastructure & Safety

- Bushkill Drive is a PennDOT road; Forks does not have jurisdiction to implement improvements (eg. crosswalks, or flashing signs) without PennDOT approval
- Forks is not aware of any access easements or deed restrictions within Lions Park that would affect planning

May 8, 2025

Kent Baird

Palmer Township, Department
of Community & Economic
Development

Kent Baird is the Director of Palmer Township's Department of Community & Economic Development. Baird oversees long-range planning, communications, and grant coordination to promote quality of life through open space, trails, and environmental protection. He also serves as Palmer's liaison to The LINK trail network. Baird shared a depth of knowledge about Palmer Township, community concerns, and the Bushkill Creek. He underscored the opportunity for the Bushkill Creek Greenway to serve as a catalyst for economic development, public art, community connection, and environmental restoration. He also noted the importance of early wins and visible progress to build momentum and support from residents, officials, and stakeholders.

Infrastructure & Safety Priorities

- Restroom maintenance and trail clearing are Township's most consistent and costly maintenance issues
- Penn Pump Park is a high-use area with mismatched infrastructure and rising maintenance costs
- Trail counters could help quantify park use & support future funding applications
- Investments in bike infrastructure to support local users and cycling tourists

Stewardship & Habitat Restoration

- Improving habitat and forest health in concert with engaging education
- Integrate past studies and grant applications into actionable items
- Past partnerships with Trout Unlimited and LL Bean should be considered, along with continued restoration efforts by the Bushkill Stream Conservancy and Wildlands Conservancy
- Township is prioritizing preservation of open space in face of development, particularly on the north end

Communications & Signage

- Consistent signage design is needed for the Greenway
- Potential to align with DCNR mini grant opportunities for wayfinding
- Branding, communications, and visual identity are essential for project visibility and public engagement

Key People Interviews

May 14, 2025

Rob Neitz

Jacobsburg State Park & Environmental Education Center,
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Rob Neitz is Park Manager of Jacobsburg State Park & Environmental Education Center. Neitz provided thoughtful feedback on regional trail connectivity, environmental restoration, and the role of education in building stewardship. He emphasized dam removal, floodplain restoration, and thoughtful access design as key strategies for improving ecological resilience along the Bushkill Creek. Neitz also identified gaps in the regional trail network and highlighted opportunities to support volunteer engagement through strategic partnerships rather than building new volunteer programs from scratch.

Trail Connectivity & Safety

- Highlighted gaps in existing trail system north of Tatamy and near Easton's KSAT
- Shorter but problematic trail gaps like the one at 13th Street feel unsafe
- Clearer signage needed at key junctions, especially where trails names change
- Well-used trails are safer & improvements encourage use; trail counters can collect data & make case for funding
- Prioritize closing/formalize trail gaps; directional signage is key where trails diverge or where naming is inconsistent

Environment & Restoration

- Pair dam removals to reduce flooding with safe, intentional stream access points
- Robust buffers protect habitat & discourage informal paths; vegetation is a more effective deterrent than physical barriers
- Floodplain reconnection, buffers, and naturalization require community education & visual cues to gain public buy-in

Education and Engagement

- Wildlife-related programs (e.g., owl calling, herp migration, stream walks) draw the most community interest
- Educational outreach during habitat restoration projects increases understanding & reduces post-construction complaints

May 19, 2025

Susan Myerov

Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

Susan Myerov is the Director of Environmental Planning at the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission. Myerov and her team are responsible for environmental reviews of land development and lead initiatives such as climate action planning, watershed management updates, and economic impact assessments related to open space and trails. Myerov provided perspectives on how the Bushkill Creek Greenway Master Plan can support regional planning efforts related to environmental protection, stormwater management, connectivity, and climate resilience. She emphasized the importance of clear signage, inclusive community engagement, and cross-sector partnerships. Beyond sharing important information and valuable regional context, Myerov emphasized collaboration with groups like the Bushkill Stream Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Wildlands Conservancy, school and hiking groups, and Northampton County Conservation District.

Connectivity & Accessibility

- Recommended clear directional and interpretive signage—preferably multilingual—and good lighting to support wayfinding and safety
- Emphasized trail amenities such as bike repair stations, drinking fountains, and safe street crossings
- Advocated for trail access that supports not only recreation but also transportation alternatives, including commuting

Habitat Restoration & Stormwater

- Identified floodplain restoration and green stormwater infrastructure as priorities for ecological improvement
- Need for public education and visual “cues to care” (e.g., signage, borders, visible maintenance) to support understanding of restoration projects
- There has been some public resistance to naturalized areas due to fear of wildlife or misconceptions about maintenance
- Recommended pilot projects and tours for municipal officials to help change policies that restrict native landscaping (e.g., lawn height limits)

Education & Stewardship

- Environmental education promotes personal connection to the creek, especially via school programs and field trips
- Potential for events such as 5K races to bring attention to the trail, if done thoughtfully to avoid overuse

Key People Interviews

May 20, 2025

Scott Kistler

Palmer Township, Department of Public Works

Scott Kistler is the Director of Palmer Township's Department of Public Works. Kistler oversees operations across parks, trails, sewer systems, solid waste, and recycling. The Department's purview includes 300+ acres of Township property with 38 full- and part-time staff, supported by 8-10 seasonal workers. Among its responsibilities, the Department maintains trails weekly, with crews monitoring and responding to things like fence damage, weed control, and clearing. Kistler shared insights into the Township's maintenance practices, the importance of adaptive infrastructure in high-use areas like Penn Pump and Mill Race, and his team's support for long-term sustainability and naturalized landscapes. Kistler emphasized the importance of investing in lasting materials, updating outdated infrastructure, and preparing for recurring challenges from flooding and heat.

Infrastructure Needs & Strategies

- Aging split-rail needs replacement; consider partial concrete alternatives
- Consider gradually replacing mulch surfacing at play areas with resilient and accessible surfacing starting with Penn Pump as pilot; playground accessibility needs improvement throughout
- Consider raising Penn Pump play area & investing in permanent improvements to aid flood resiliency; play area will need replacement in 7-10 years

Environmental Impacts & Adaptation

- Crews remove tables/trash cans pre-storm at Penn Pump to minimize damage but cleanup can take two weeks
- Silt, sediment, and debris removal are significant post-flood efforts, especially in restrooms & disused Penn Pump ball field
- Mill Race fares better, likely due to natural berming and site characteristics
- Climate-related adaptations include adjusted mowing schedules in heatwaves and using shaded areas as staff refuge

Potential Opportunities

- Abandoned field at Penn Pump could become meadow or walking loop to support flood resilience & recreation
- Smaller spaces like Hillcrest present design challenges but could benefit from low-impact interventions
- Prioritize enhancements at Mill Race and Penn Pump—the Township's two most heavily used parks

May 22, 2025

Ken Case

Easton Area School District

Ken Case is the Director of Facilities for Easton Area School District. He provided insight into the district's property holdings and how various parks and recreation areas adjacent to Bushkill Creek interface with school use and operations. The conversation highlighted opportunities for improving existing infrastructure, fostering community use, and addressing environmental concerns affecting district operations.

Community Use & Programming

- Recreational relationship with Township is reciprocal, though community groups use district fields more often than vice versa
- Tracy Elementary playground is heavily used by public, especially during sports at Keystone Park, whose fields are partially on district property (and could use improvement)
- Volleyball courts in Keystone Park are rarely used; Palmer could follow other municipalities' lead by converting underused courts to pickleball facilities
- Wildlands provides programming for elementary ages, in schools & off-site

Facilities & Amenities

- Penn Pump Park historically used for events such as senior picnic, though some activities have moved to Riverview Park
- When selecting parks for field trips, schools prioritize proximity, green space, play equipment, pavilions, restrooms, and adequate bus access and parking
- Upgrade pavilions, install bottle-fillers, add bike repair stations, re-purpose underused fields for meadow/open space

Environmental Considerations

- No district properties directly impacted by Bushkill flooding but flooded bridge closures (especially near Penn Pump Park) significantly disrupt bus routes
- Tree plantings for shade & windbreaks would be beneficial, especially at Keystone Park

Key People Interviews

May 22, 2025

Justin Coyle

Carroll Engineering Corporation

Justin Coyle of Carroll Engineering Corporation is the Township Engineer for Palmer. In that role, Coyle supports enforcement of stormwater and zoning ordinances, advises on capital projects, collaborates with staff and agencies (DEP, PennDOT, Northampton County Conservation District), and provides guidance on grant applications and technical matters related to infrastructure and environmental regulation. Coyle emphasized the Township's regulatory role in upholding ordinances related to development, stormwater, and zoning. He described the Township's floodplain protection measures, shared insights on infrastructure and stormwater management strategies, and pointed to opportunities for improving accessibility, cross-municipal collaboration, and ADA access to the Bushkill Creek corridor. He also encouraged greater engagement with Palmer's Stormwater Management Authority and PennDOT regarding technical issues and future partnerships.

Flooding, Stormwater & Permitting

- Township's riparian buffer overlay district allows for very limited development within floodplain & requires rigorous permitting (FEMA review, zoning hearings etc.)
- Challenges include stream bank erosion, bridge damage (scour), and debris management
- Identified the Township's Karst geology and provided details on loading ratios and required engineering analyses for stormwater features
- Porous pavement is acceptable if properly engineered; emphasized ongoing maintenance issues as a barrier
- Most park improvements handled in-house, unless technical issues arise

Connectivity, Safety & Accessibility

- ADA-accessible trails & overlooks enable all users to enjoy the stream-side
- Add improvements like flashing beacons, striping, and crosswalk signage for safety
- Cited PennDOT's increasing openness to bike/pedestrian safety improvements in partnership with municipalities

Community & Partnerships

- Public interest exists in amenities (water fountains, benches, gazebos) adjacent to the stream
- Intermunicipal coordination—particularly with Forks Township—can bolster shared infrastructure interests and existing staff connections

May 29, 2025

Paige Strasko

Northampton County Conservation District

Paige Strasko is a Watershed Specialist at the Northampton County Conservation District. Strasko shared insights from her current and previous roles focused on watershed planning, stormwater management, and community engagement. In her role, Strasko provides technical support for watershed planning, stormwater issues, and public education across Northampton County. She also coordinates water quality monitoring volunteers for the Bushkill Stream Conservancy. Drawing on her experience as Palmer's former Environmental Administrator and MS4 Coordinator, Strasko emphasized the importance of partnerships, education, habitat restoration, and community-informed greenway improvements. She identified opportunities for grant funding, public engagement, and suggested environmental education and interpretive initiatives to support the Bushkill Creek Greenway.

Partnerships & Collaborations

- Work with Bushkill Stream Conservancy on testing, data sharing, and networking; currently seeking support for a stream bank restoration grant
- Potential partnerships with Nurture Nature Center, Lafayette College (e.g., freshwater mussel research), and Penn State Extension's Master Watershed Stewards and Master Gardeners

Community Programming Interest

- Current ordinance banning dogs in parks could be reconsidered if residents seek greater dog-friendly access
- Potential to incorporate QR codes (linked to MS4 program info, events, and resources) in clearer, updated signage
- High community interest in interactive environmental education; workshops on native plants, rain barrels, ecology, and erosion control are popular and impactful

Restoration, Stormwater & Environmental Recommendations

- Potential habitat restoration partnership with Stormwater Authority for MS4 credit alignment along easement near Penn's Grant where erosion monitoring is ongoing
- Consider re-purposing field at Penn Pump into meadow, buffer, or dog park
- Interpretive signage about dam removal, native plants, and local ecology—some materials may already exist through the Penn State Local Climate Action Plan

Planning Schedule

		4/19 PALMER EARTH DAY EVENT						5/17 EASTON FARMER'S MARKET							
WEEKS		23MAR	30MAR	6APR	13APR	20APR	27APR	4MAY	11MAY	18MAY	25MAY	1JUN	8JUN	15JUN	
TEAM MEETINGS															
INTERNAL PLANNING TEAM MEETING															
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING															
ENGAGEMENT															
PUBLIC MEETINGS															
POP-UP EVENTS															
KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS (14)															
SURVEY															
ANALYSIS															
BACKGROUND															
SITE INFORMATION & ANALYSIS															
ACTIVITIES & FACILITIES ANALYSIS															
MAINTENANCE ANALYSIS															
SECURITY ANALYSIS															
PLANNING															
DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS															
DESIGN PROCESS & RECOMMENDATIONS															
GREENWAY / PARK MANAGEMENT OPTIONS															
SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING RECOMMENDATIONS															
SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS															
IMPLEMENTATION															
COST ESTIMATES															
PHASED CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN															
MAINTENANCE, OPERATING COSTS & REVENUE															
FINAL REPORT															

UPDATED: 6/25/2025

TBD
COMMISSIONERS
PRESENTATION

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