

Recommendation Report: Community Indoor Pool

Submitted By: Richard MacLellan

Origin: Presentation, Item 3.1, December 8, 2016
Council Report, Item 16.3, April 24, 2016
Presentation, Item 3.1, Council, January 24, 2017

Legislative Authority: Municipal Government Act, Part IV, Finance, 65, Power to expend money

Date: February 14, 2017

Recommendation:	It is recommended that the Council of The Region of Queens Municipality: 1. Continue to work with the Queens Community Aquatic Society to develop a budget and business plan for an indoor pool project, including construction and operation, and return to Council for final consideration; 2. Commit to the development of the pool project as the priority recreation infrastructure capacity building project, including the deferral of all significant new funding commitments for new recreation services or recreation infrastructure, until the final decision to proceed or not is made; and, 3. Continue to inform and engage with the public on program and facility design, budget development, and financial implications.
------------------------	--

Summary: Following over twelve months of discussions between Region of Queens Municipality and Queens Community Aquatic Society, a decision on whether to proceed with a pool project is before Council. Prior to deliberating a pool project, more clarity is required on the financial implications of construction and operation.

Background: On December 8, 2015 The Queens Community Aquatic Society provided a presentation to Council. The presentation identified a reported desire for a community indoor pool, based on a 1996 and 2007 needs assessment. It reviewed the community health challenges that are faced in the Region of Queens.

On April 24, 2016, with a staff recommendation to decline the proposal, Council directed staff to work with Queens Community Aquatic Society to undertake a community survey to ascertain the community commitment and priority of a pool project.

On January 24, 2017, The Queens Community Aquatic Society presented the results of the survey to Council. Council directed staff to take the presentation and have a community meeting, which was conducted on February 2, 2017, and return to Council.

Discussion:

Develop Budget for Indoor Pool: With the expected announcement of a Social Infrastructure funding program from the Government of Canada, and the possibility of receiving 50% funding for projects from the federal government. The best opportunity the community may have to fund the construction of a community indoor pool, with the minimum municipal tax payer contribution, is in the near future. However, aside from the construction of the pool, there is future financial implications from the operation of a pool, and an operating deficit that would require funding from either an endowment raised or the taxpayer (which may have tax rate consequences). As such, it is essential that the community and the Region are committed to the Pool project as a priority to enable the proper consideration of proposed concepts. With direction of Council to continue to work on the project with the Queens Community Aquatic Society, the primary objective is to:

1. Determine a program for a proposed facility; And,
2. Develop a budget for the proposed program and facility.

During this work, it is important that the public be included in the engagement of these discussions to understand what some of the costs and opportunities are. In developing the program for the facility, there will need to be decisions on cost / benefit of different features (such as competition size requirements, diving towers, therapy features).

It will be important that, to ensure good quality financial information for the community and council, that subject matter experts are engaged to assist with the project budget development. With direction from Council, staff will work with the Society to develop a process to ensure a good budget is created. There may be a municipal cost to support this effort which will be assessed after staff meet with the Society to assess what information and sources they have developed to date.

Priority: Equally as necessary to the project to continue to develop the budget and financial implications and share with the community, is the need to clarify the commitment to the priority of this concept. There is no doubt if the community wants a pool, it can have a pool. The Region of Queens Municipality has the debt capacity to fund a capital project. The decision of whether there is room on the tax rate to fund the operation is a future council decision. However, regardless of how funding is assembled (from private campaigns, federal funding, tax rate, corporate sponsorship), if the decision is to build and operate a pool, other recreational and cultural desires will need to be deferred.

Engagement: The community needs to be well informed of this deliberation and have input into the decision. If a pool progresses, mostly likely there will be recreational and cultural projects that need to

be deferred and financial implications. If the pool does not progress, it is unlikely that the community will be able to consider an indoor pool again for over a decade. There is no doubt that this is an important decision for the community.

Based on the pool survey, and the community meeting, there is sufficient evidence of a large desire in the community to build a pool. The next step is to develop the concept, involving the community with that effort, and then test the community to see if the desire remains as the financial implications and / or opportunity costs are understood.

Attachment:

Attachment One: February 2, 2017 Public Presentation

Attachment Two: Public input

Report Author: Richard MacLellan

CAO Approval:



Community Engagement Meeting

Indoor Municipal Pool



Agenda

- Background
- Survey
- Next Steps
- Public Comments

Who uses an indoor pool?

- *All* ages
- *All* fitness levels
- For therapy
- For safety in a water environment
- For development and physical conditioning
- For competition (Dambusters can train all year)
- For fun and recreation



A Long Time Coming

- Early 80's, Bowater set aside funds for pool
- 1996 Needs Assessment, pool high priority
- 2001 RecPlex found 80% responders wanted pool; 2005 Final report included pool
- 2007 Needs assessment:
 - **91% wanted pool**
 - After walking, swimming was the most common activity
 - Adults AND children listed swimming as top priority (91% high or medium high priority)
- 2010 No pool, but designed to accommodate future pool at Queens Place Emera Centre

From 2007 Needs Assessment report

- Recreational swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure activities for all ages.
- 2000 Physical Activity Monitor reports:
 - Swimming - #1 sport for Children & Youth
 - 87% participation rate in NS
 - #1 sport for facility based participation among adults
- As population ages, older adults want to remain active in low-impact, aerobic activity

2015 Concept: Queens Aquatic Society

- \$5 million project
 - \$2 million to construct
 - \$3 million for operating endowment



2016: Region of Queens Municipality

- Life Cycle Analysis suggested over a period of time that a fixed structure would be more economical
- Slight dispute over RQM's #'s and QCAS #'s

Kept talking...

- Council asked staff to work with QCAS to perform a public survey
- QCAS has continued to work on file opening new options and approaches

Queens Community Aquatic Society

Survey on Pool and Other Activities

Why and How the Survey was Done

- Spring of 2016, then Mayor Clark and Council asked for an update of opinions about pools
- QCAS worked with Dr. Pat McGrath, VP Research and Innovation at NSHA
- Developed questionnaire that covered areas:
 - Demographics
 - Opinion about pool, pool usage, pool facilities
 - Current activities
 - Health status

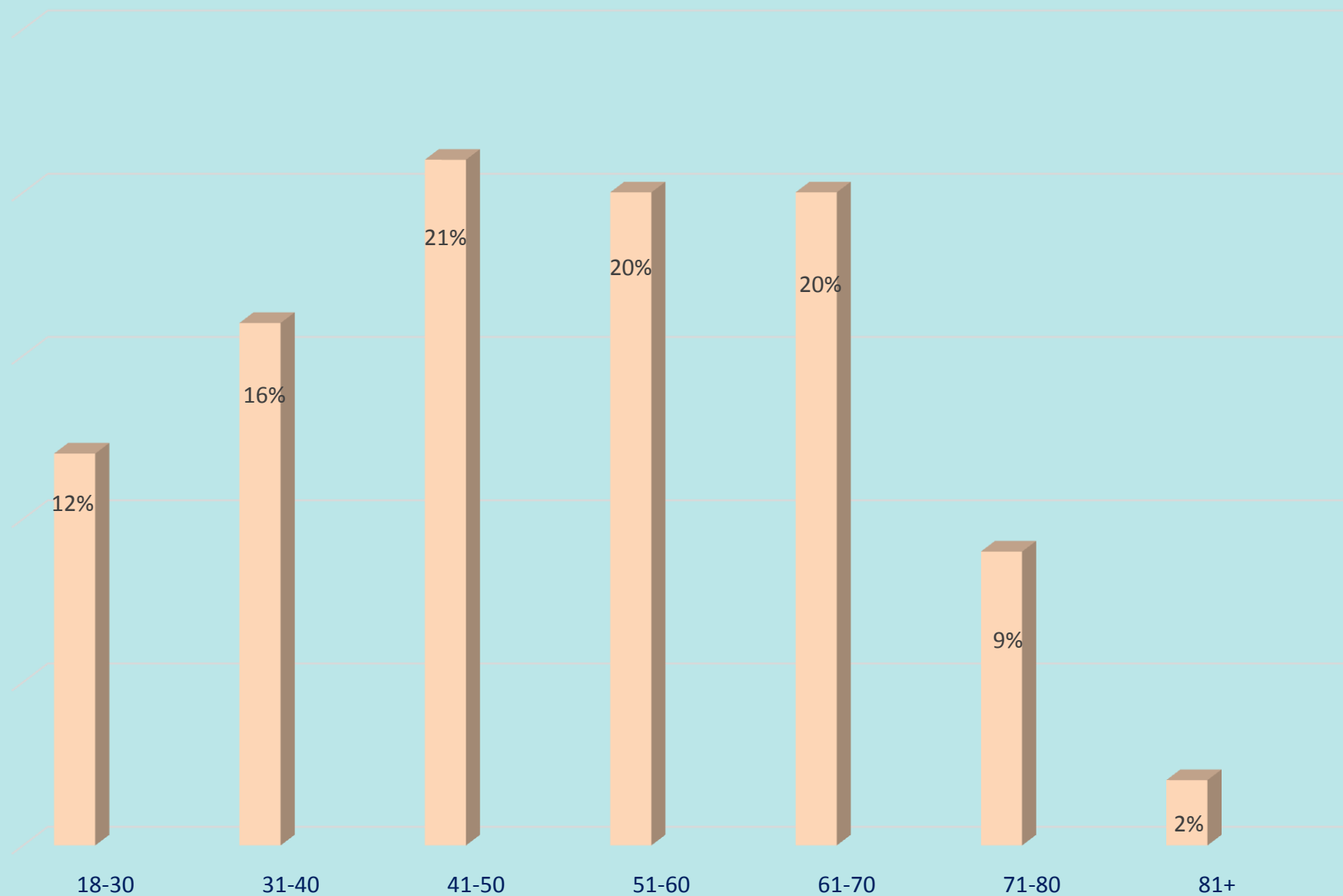
Questionnaire

- One for adults, one for youth
- Online and Paper versions
- Advertised in Advance, QCCR, on Region website
- Sent to School principals
- Paper ones distributed in PO's, shops on Main St, QPEC, Manor, and in person by board members at Superstore, Sobeys
- Data collection mid-September to mid-November

Who Participated?

- 761 Adults:
 - 557 online
 - 204 on paper
- 188 Youth online
- 946 Total

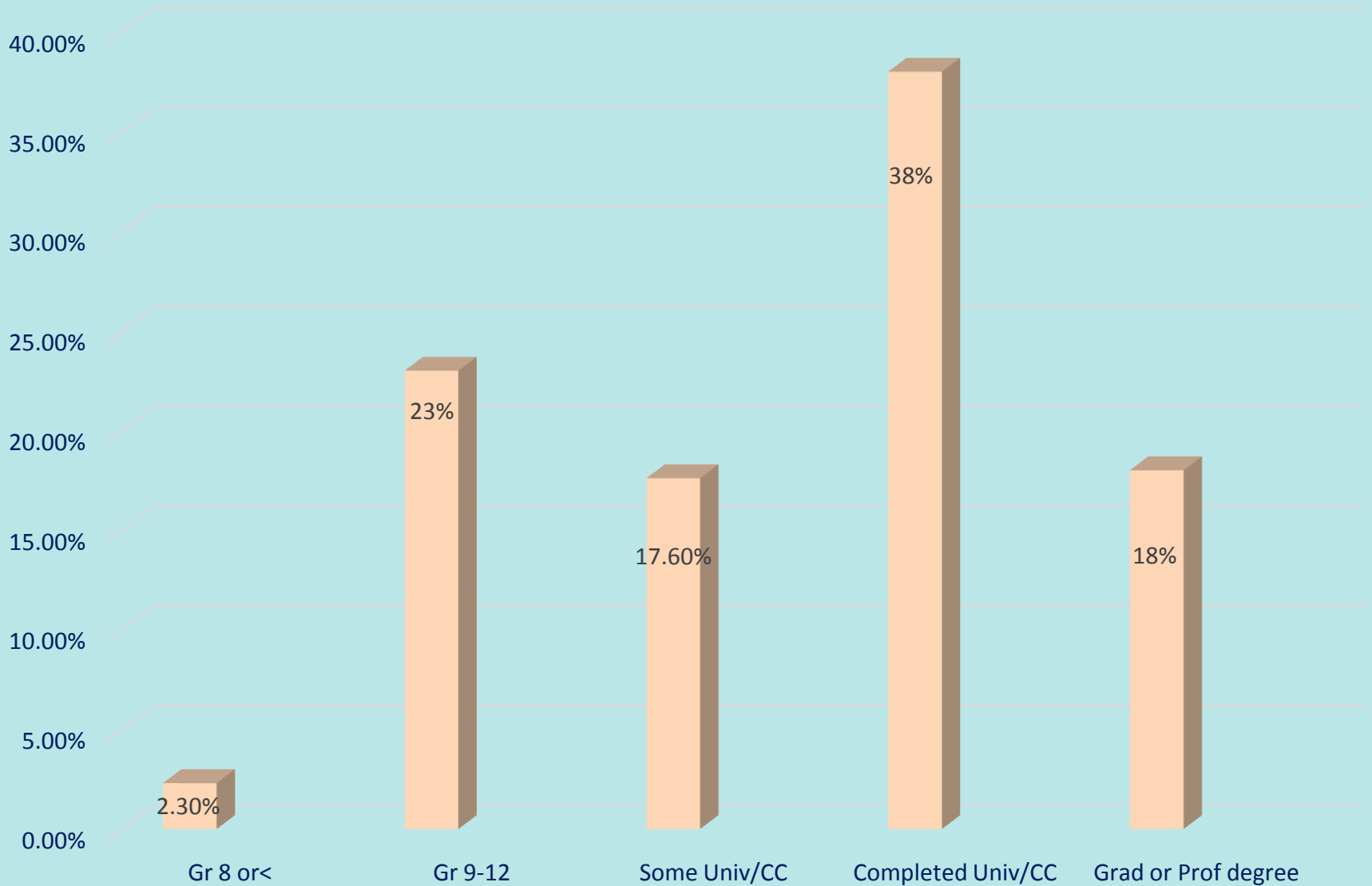
AGE in decades



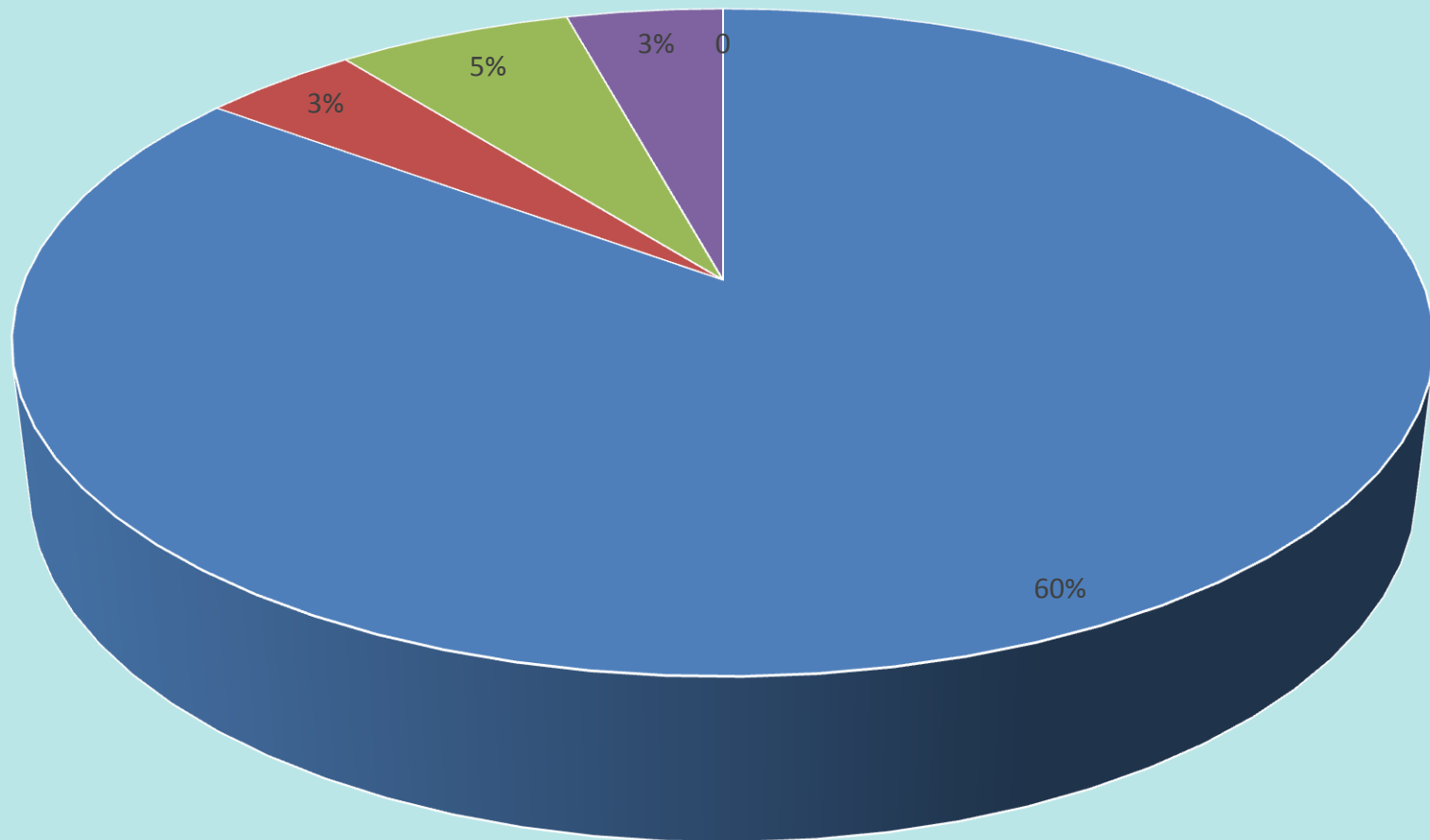
Gender

- 32% male
- 68% female

Education Level

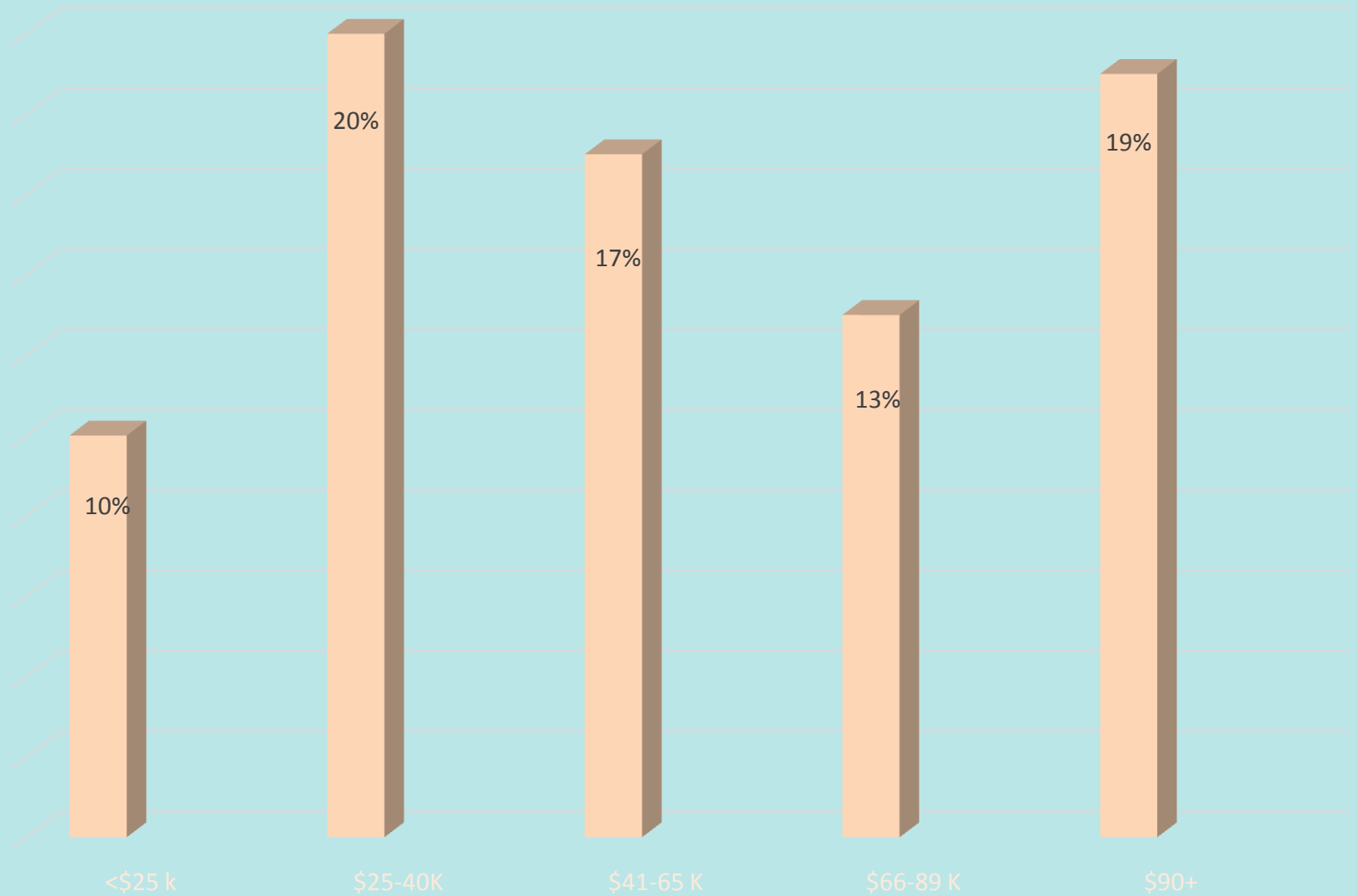


Work Status



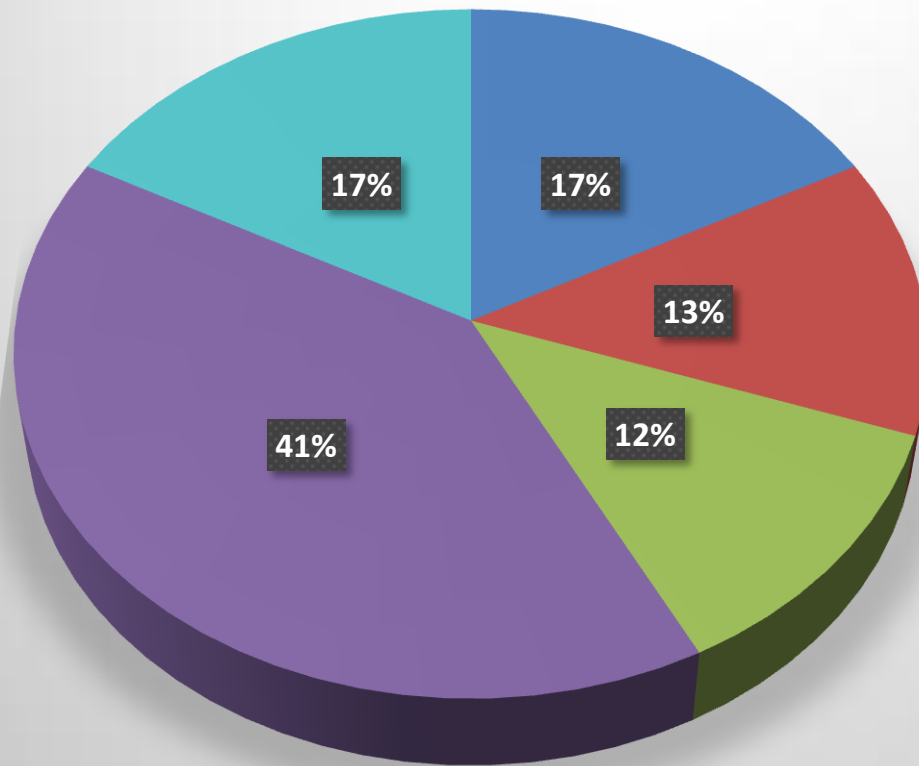
■ Employed ■ School ■ Unemployed ■ Disability ■ Retired

Family Income



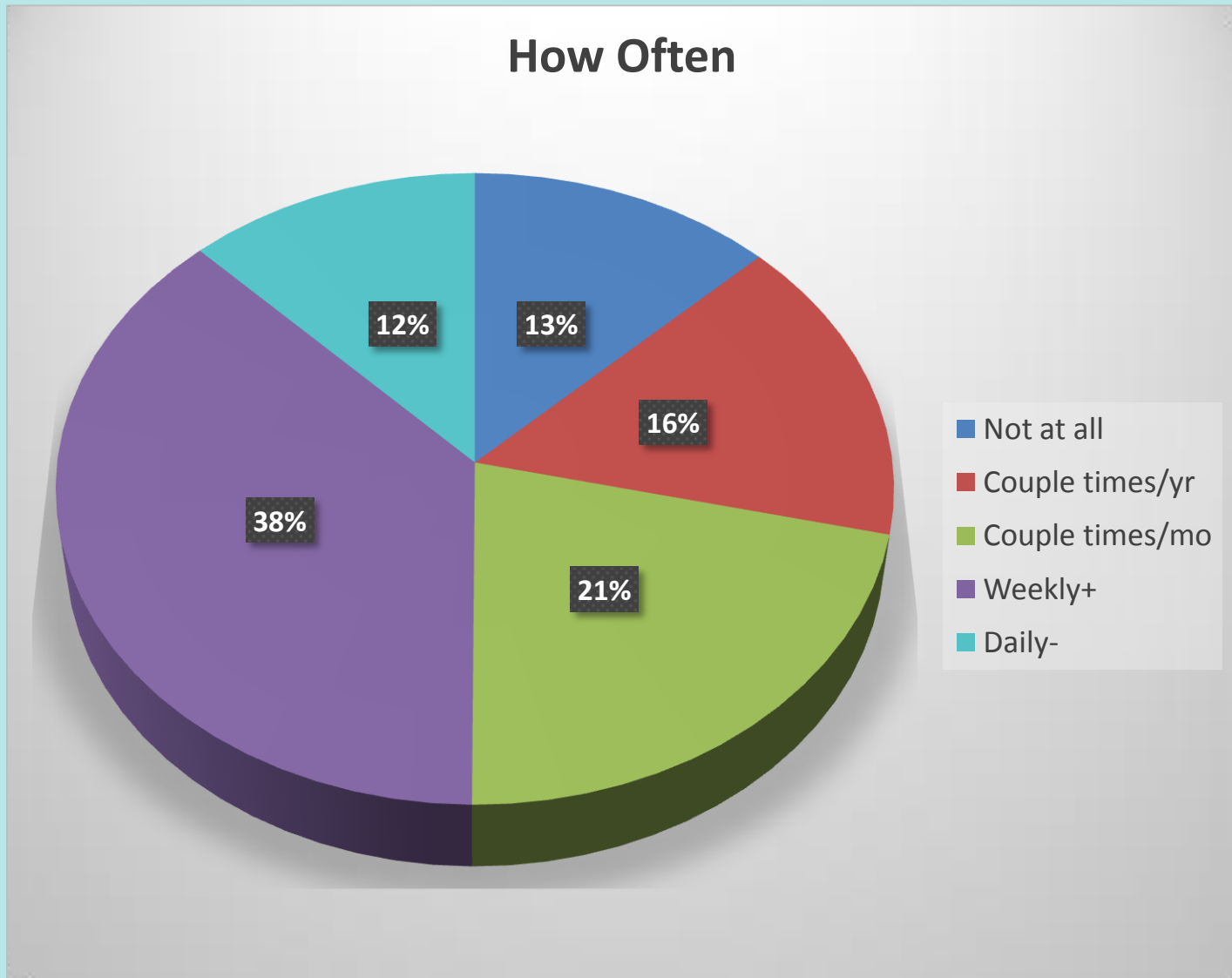
How Important is Year Round Pool

Percent

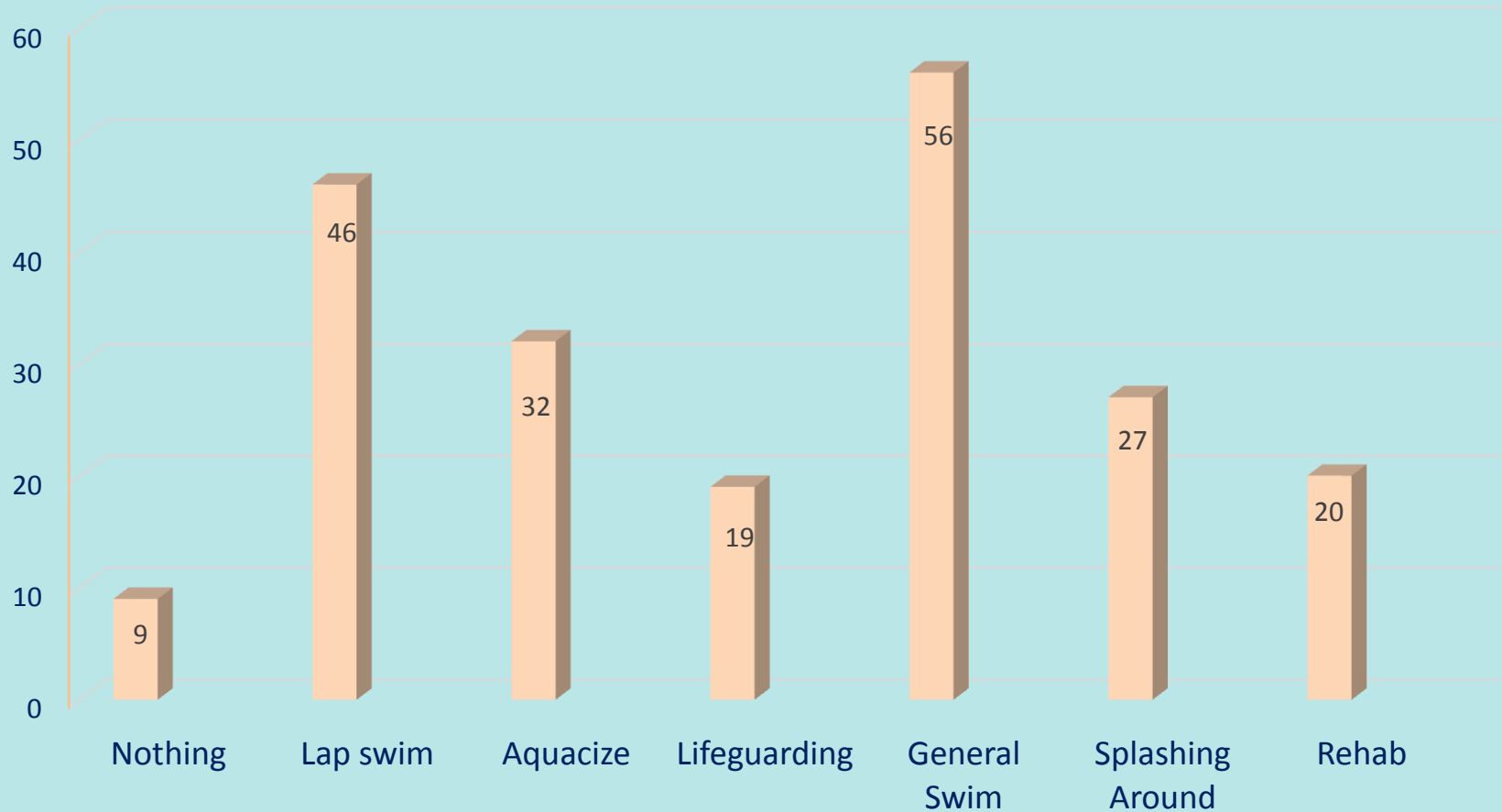


- Not at all
- Somewhat important
- Quite Important
- Very Important
- Crucial

How Often Would you Use Pool ?



What Would you Do in Pool?

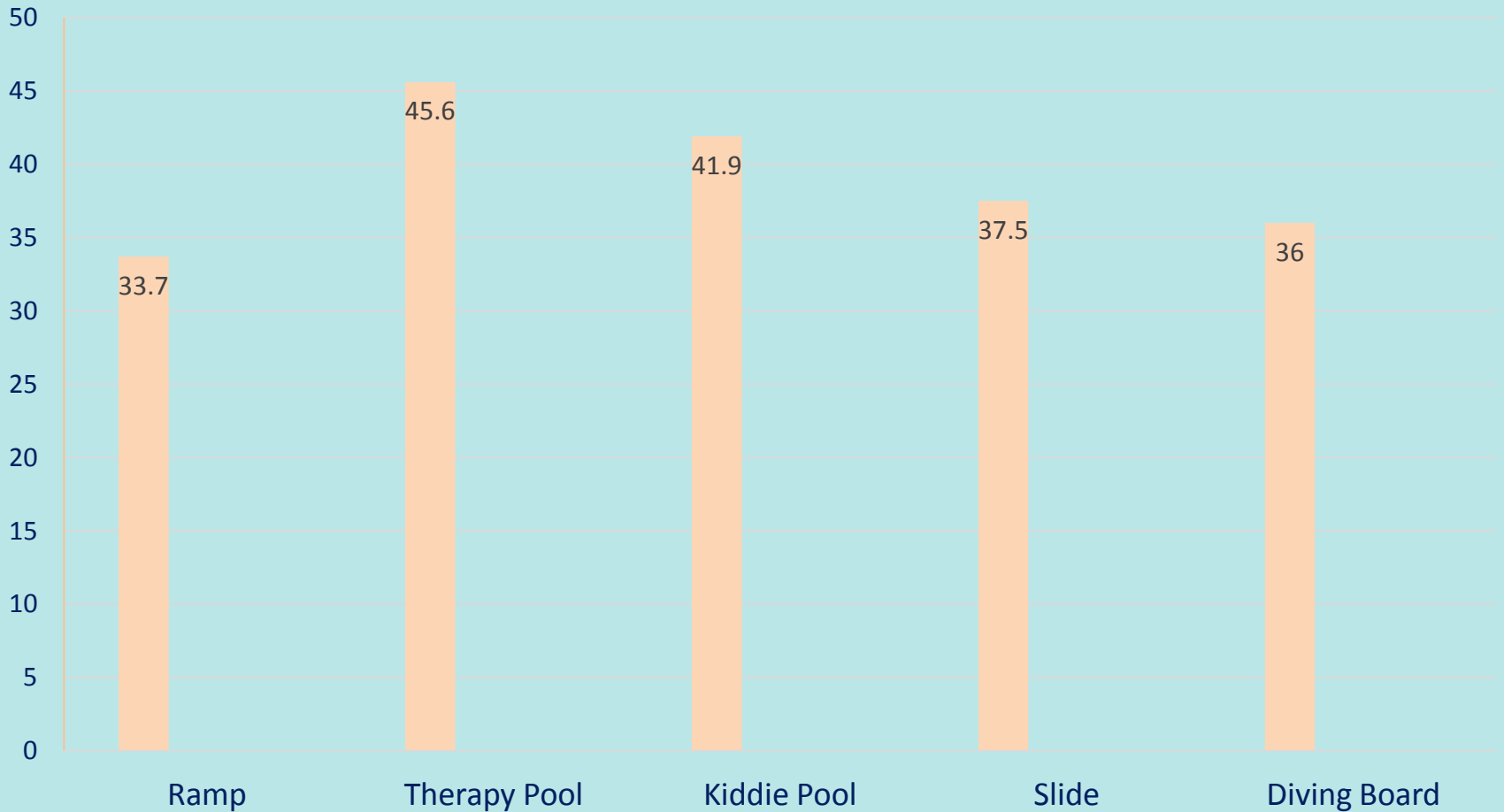


23% youth want lifesaving

A Few Comments

- Swim Lessons ++ for both adults and children and special needs
- Swim Team, youth and Masters
- Elderfit, Zumba
- Log rolling
- 1 respondent Would not use it for anything

What Would You Like to See in Pool?

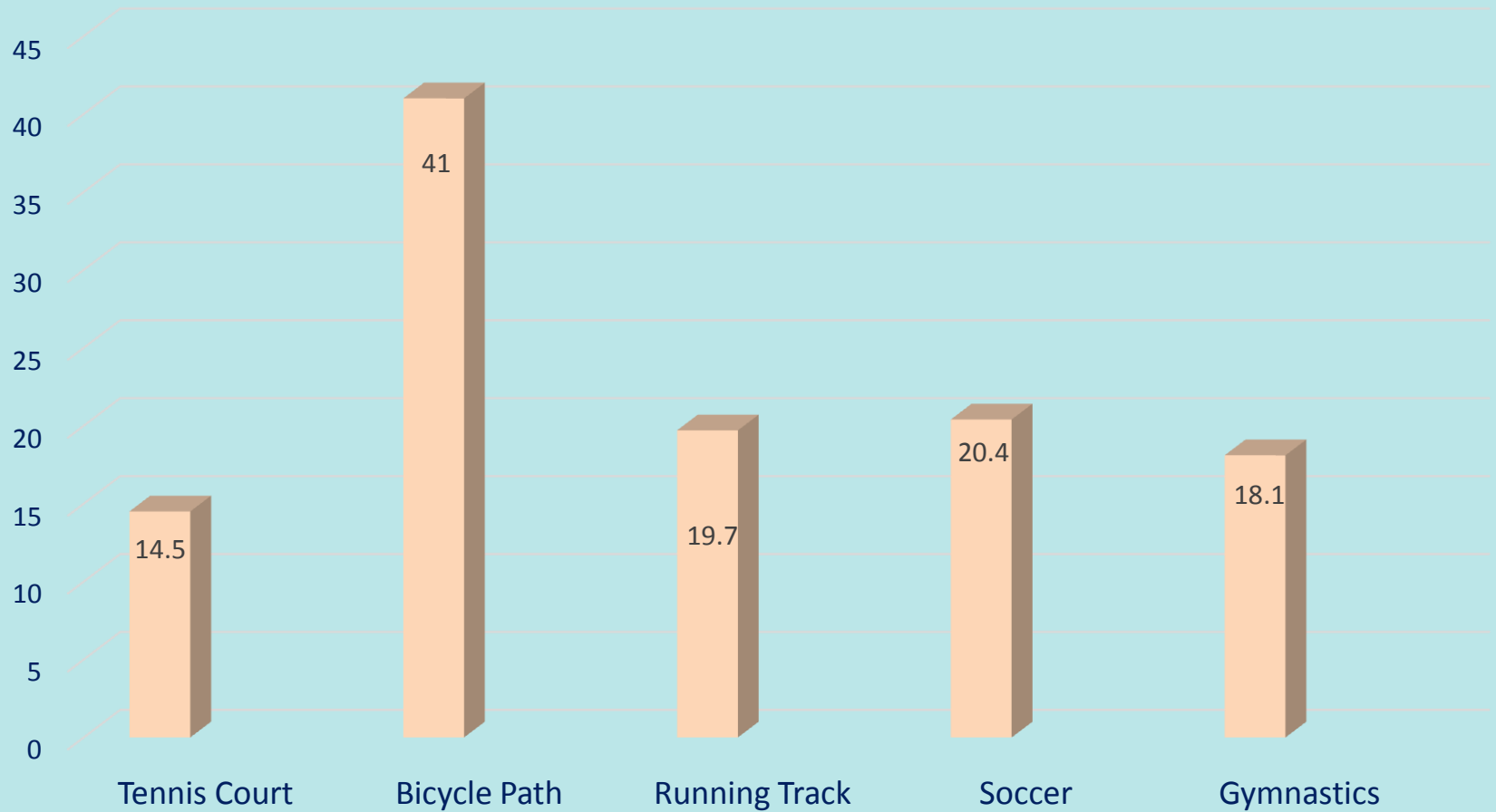


Some ideas we did not know about..





What Else Should Queens Build?



Comments re What Else Queens Should Build

- Wide range of suggestions
- More for seniors
- More for tots (eg playground at QPEC)
- More hiking trails, repair/extend Trestle Trail
- Library
- Curling Rink
- Cross country ski trails
- Visitors boating wharf
- Craft room
- Squash court
- Dog park

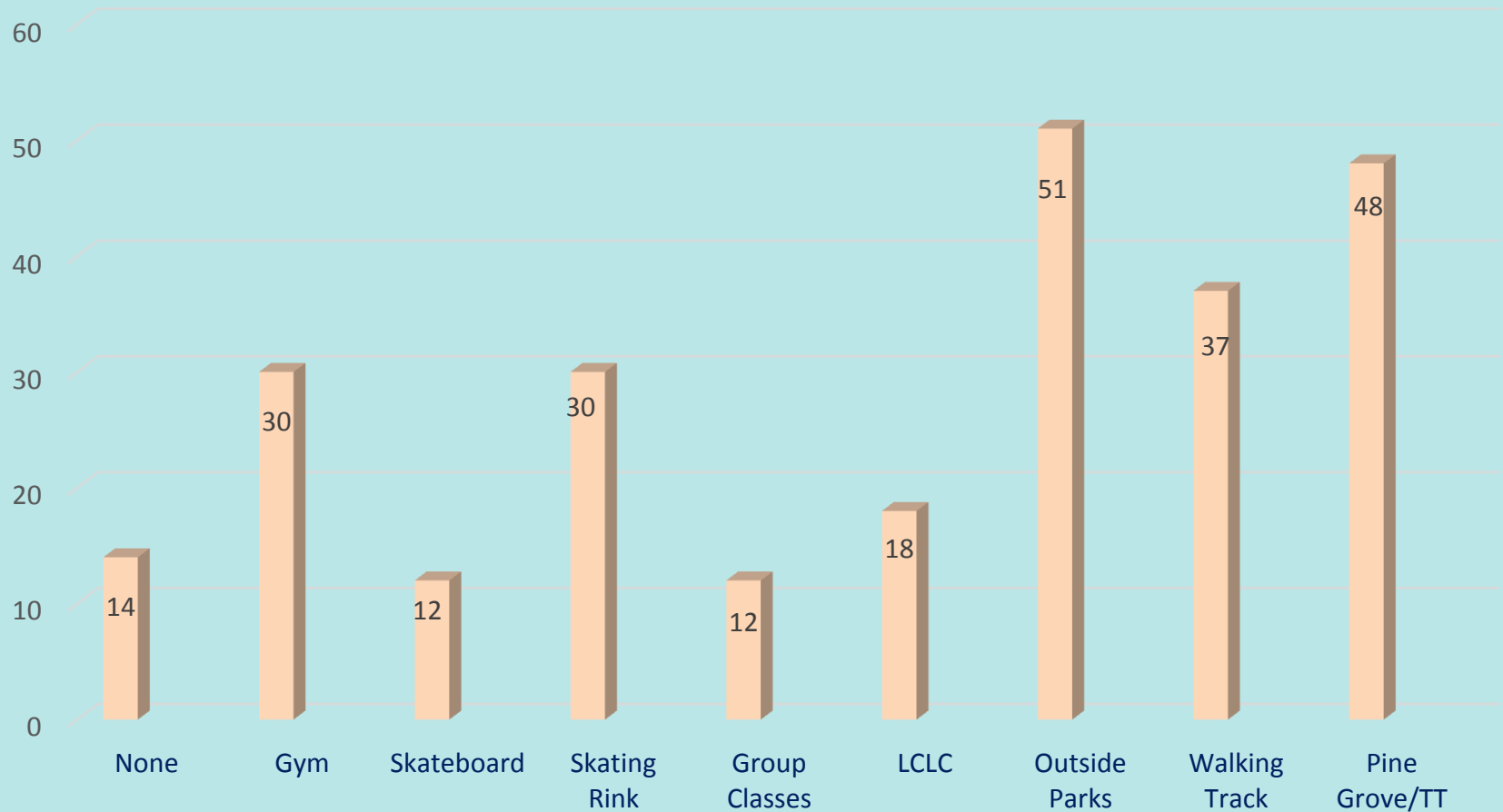
What Priority Does Pool Have?

- 80% think pool should be built before other things
- Many additional comments about the value added of an indoor pool

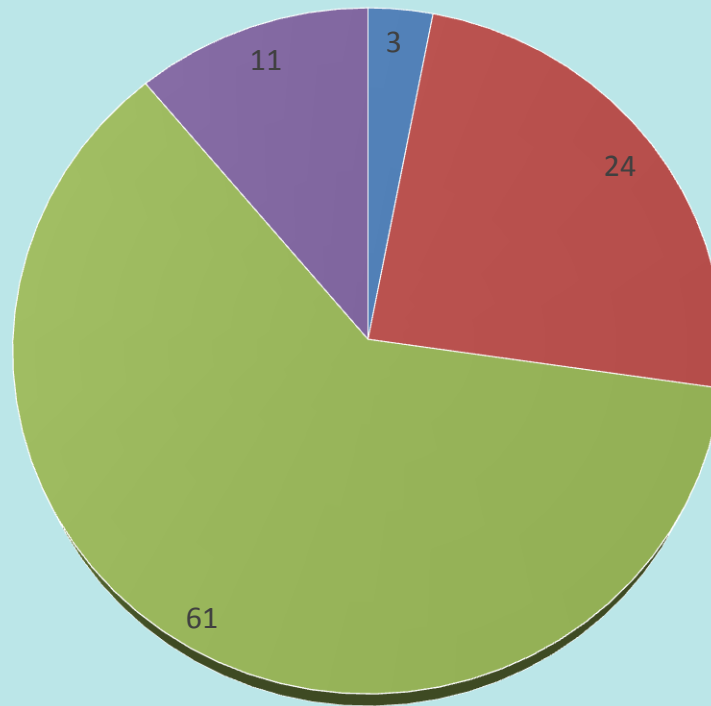
How Much Would You Pay?



What Fitness Facility Do You Use Now?



How Healthy Are You



■ Not at all ■ Little Bit ■ Quite ■ Very

Summary of Survey

- Large representative sample
- Two thirds think pool is important
- Over three quarters want to see pool over other new indoor facility
- They don't want to pay for it!
- A full report of questionnaire results is available

Proposed Next Steps

- Scan of pools across Canada re cost of construction and operation, focus on smaller communities
- Develop budget and business plan
- Put out Request for Proposals
- Seek funding from governments. Nb will most likely go with solid structure in order to be competitive for Federal funding
- Seek private/corporate funding
- (not necessarily in this order; some may be simultaneous)

Funding Possibilities

- **Federal Government**
 - Social Infrastructure Program, up to 50% of construction cost; tba **soon**
- **Federal Government**
 - Health, Infrastructure, Sport; current
- **Provincial Government**
 - Sport, recreation, youth, health
- **Region of Queens**
 - Retirement of past debt
- **Private/Corporate Sector**
- **Public Campaign**

QCAS Thanks You

- Celeste Johnston, Pres
- Deborah Spartinelli, V Pres
- Susan Higgins, Secty
- Bill Smyth, Treasurer
- Dee Kozlowski, Funding Chair
- Ian Clark
- Al Doucet
- Dave Oickle
- Kevin Page
- Bill Raine
- Kris Snarby

What's next?

- Ultimately Council needs to determine whether to progress developing a pool project or direct energy elsewhere
- This meeting is to solicit your comments and feedback, outside of the survey, for forming part of the report to Council for deliberation

All about priority

- If Region of Queens Municipality wants a pool, Region of Queens Municipality can have a pool.
- Two major questions:
 - Funding a construction project
 - Mitigating impacts to future operating costs (and pressure on tax rate)

Two questions for tonight

1. Assuming no impact to tax rate, but need to choose a priority, should we build a pool? Or what is your priority?
2. What do you want Council to consider when contemplating the priority of a pool?