



**Citizens
League**

Common ground. Common good.

Public Policy Findings

Report on the Findings from the
Public Workshops on Parks & Trails

Context

- Scott County – master planning process for its parks and trails system
- Citizens League designed and led implementation of a citizen outreach process
- Goal: provide feedback on high-level, public policy issues for parks and trails

Process

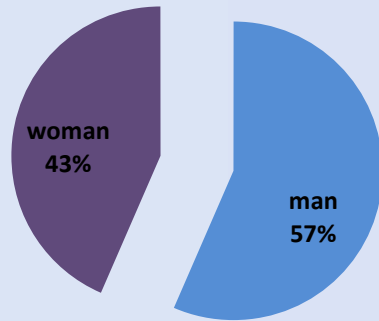
- 4 public workshops in August
- Activities
 - Questions via individual, interactive response devices
 - Substantial discussion
 - Budget exercise

This workshop style is more like a focus group, with the heart of the learnings coming from the discussion and conversation.

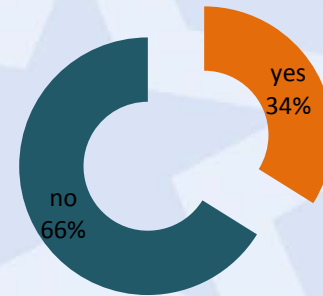
Participants

~150
residents

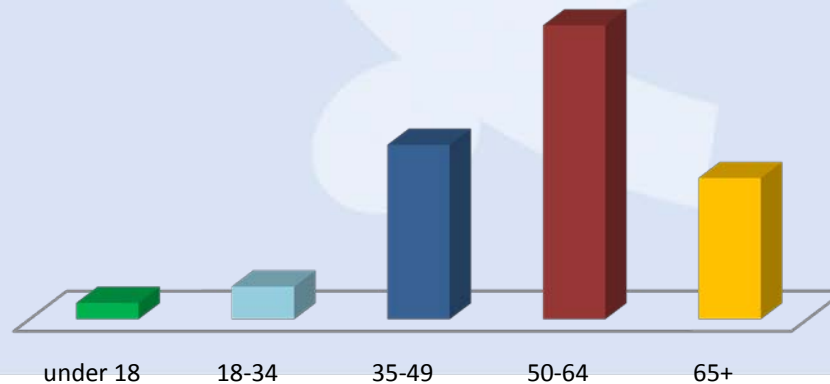
Are you a man or a woman?



Do you have kids under the age of 18 living at home?

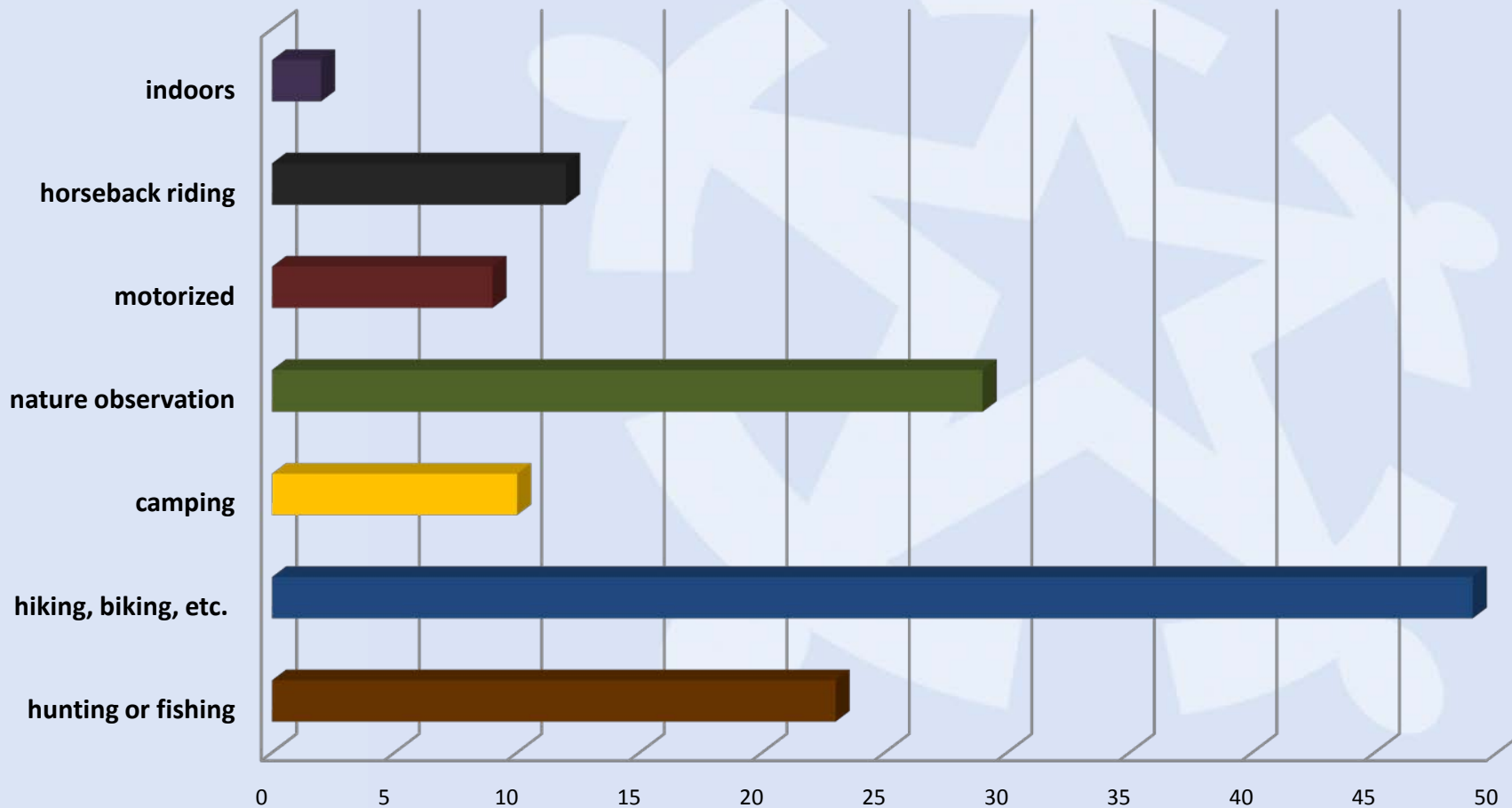


How old are you?



Participants' Interests

What is your favorite outdoor activity?

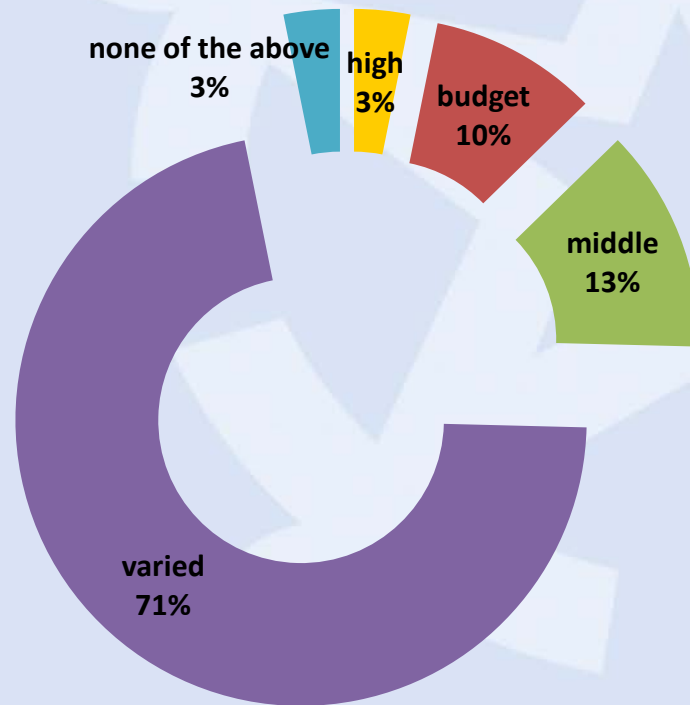


Quality

- Which best describes the standard of quality that you'd like to see?
 - a) We should build the best system in the metro with robust, **high-quality** amenities, even if it means paying a higher price tag.
 - b) We should build the most basic, no-frills, **budget** system with fewer and more rustic amenities at the lowest cost possible.
 - c) We should build a **middle-of-the-road** system that offers diverse but average quality amenities as a mid-level cost.
 - d) Quality should **vary by site**, at mixed cost, so that overall we have a range of opportunities.

Quality – responses

Which best describes the standard of quality you'd like to see?



Quality – themes

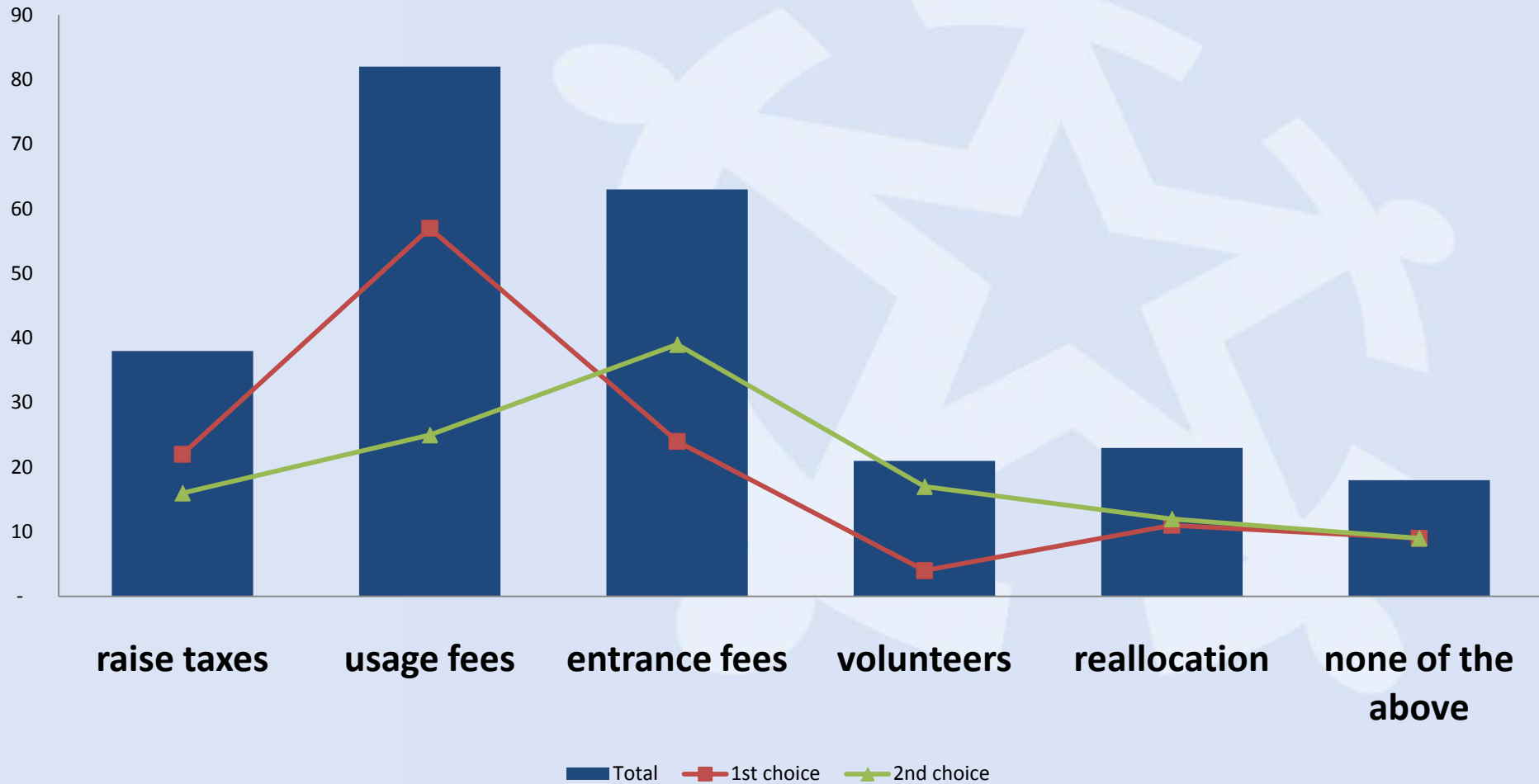
- Vary quality by site
 - Different amenities to serve different users
 - Spend more on parks with higher usage
 - Determine and vary amenities geographically throughout the county
 - Customize to the needs of community & users
 - Highlight natural resources
 - Generate revenue
- Only build what we're able to maintain

Funding Needs

- How would you prefer to address additional funding needs?
 - a) I would pay higher property **taxes**
 - b) I would pay **usage fees**
 - c) I would pay an **entrance fee**
 - d) I would **volunteer**
 - e) I would ask county commissioners to **reallocate funds from other parts of the county budget**

Funding Needs - responses

How would you prefer to address additional funding needs?



Funding Needs – themes

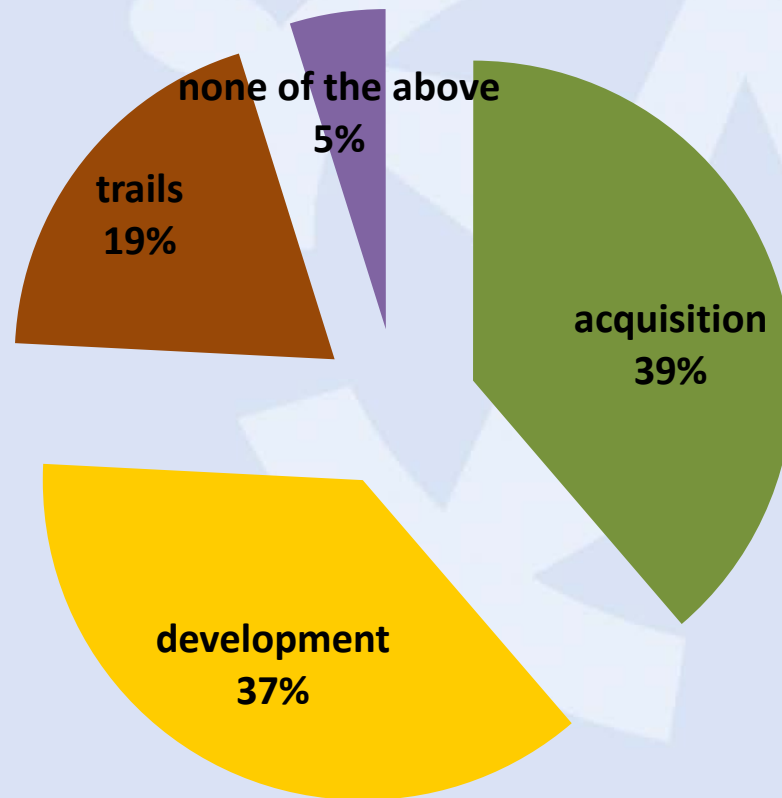
- Pay for what you use
 - User fees collect funds from all users
 - Entrance & user fees – (perceived) industry standard
- Affordability is important
- Volunteers are ideal, but not realistic
- Property taxes
 - *May* be open to raising taxes *if* dedicated to parks & trails
 - Wouldn't take much more per house to close the gap
- Don't develop parks and trails

Priority Focus Area

- Over the next 10 years, the primary focus of Scott County parks and trails should be on...
 - Acquiring land for parks
 - Developing parks
 - Developing trails outside of parks

Priority Focus Area - responses

Over the next 10 years, the primary focus should be on...



Priority Focus Area – themes

- Land acquisition
 - Acquire before its developed
 - Low prices = best value
 - Always purchase from willing sellers
 - Don't acquire more than can be maintained
- Parks Development
 - Want to use the parks now
 - Need to see development happening
- Trails
 - Build alongside development
 - Finalize trail plans
 - Must be safe

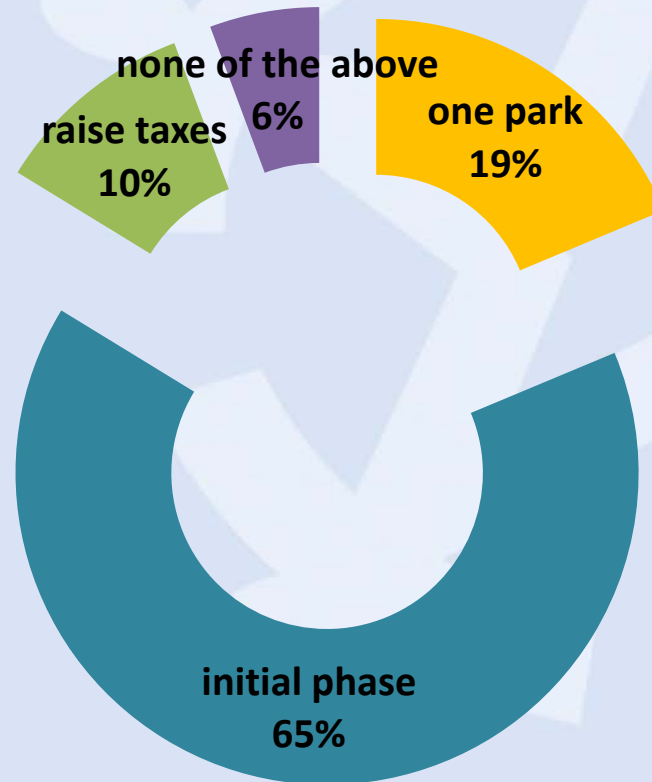
Mixed
Approach

Timeline

- How should development be phased over the next 5 years?
 - a) Fully develop **one park** and hold off on the development of the other two parks.
 - b) Complete an **initial phase** at each of the three parks.
 - c) **Increase taxes** further so all three parks can be fully developed within five years.

Timeline – responses

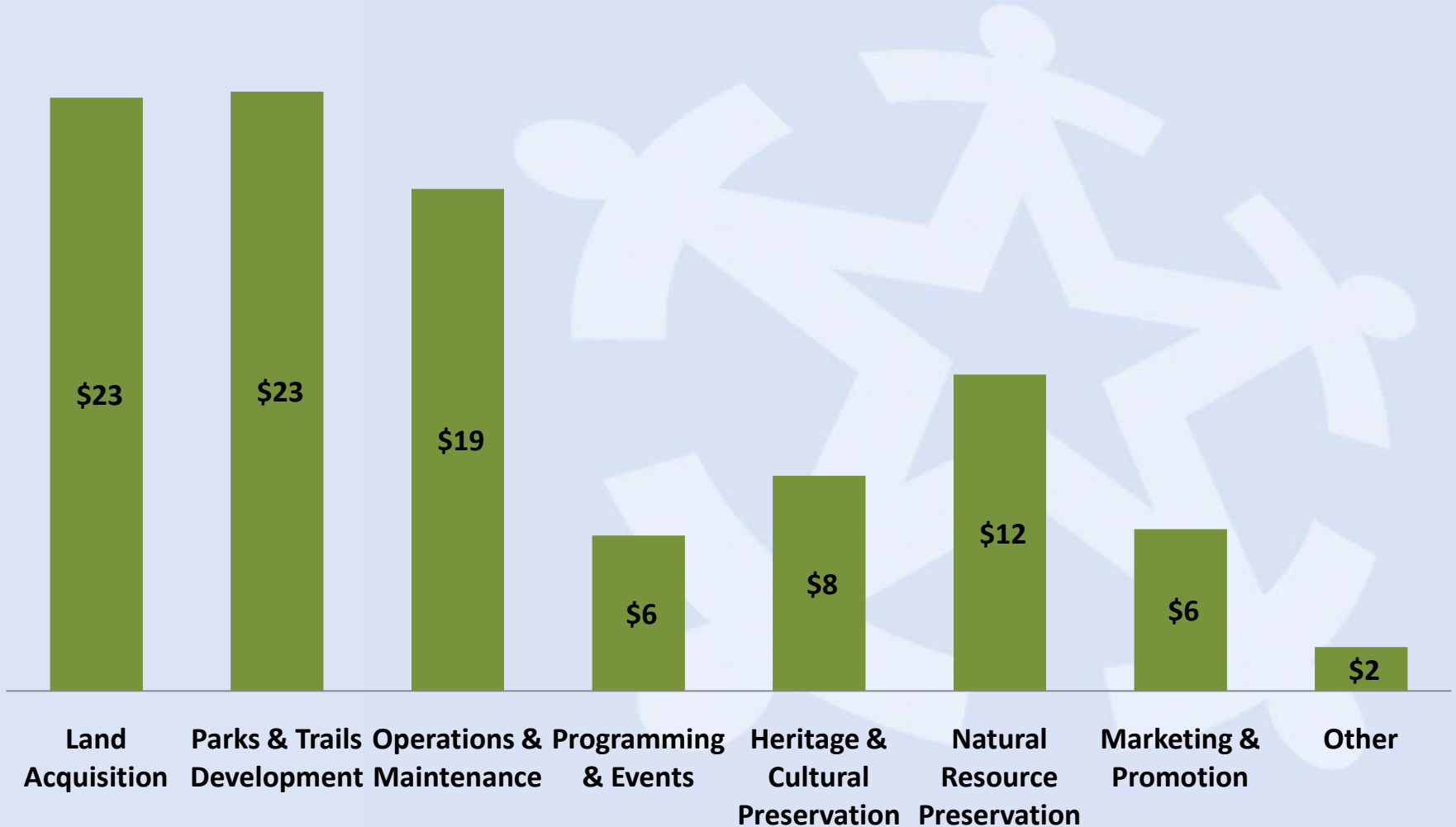
How should development be phased over the next 5 years?



Timeline – themes

- Initial phase
 - Can make more informed decisions about development after using parks & trails
 - Each generation can build a phase
 - Communal goods → vibrant community
 - Decrease vandalism
- One park
 - Provide a range of recreational opportunities
 - See what full development could offer
 - Faster & cheaper development
 - Lower operations and maintenance costs

Budget Exercise



Conclusion

- Participants fully engaged in discussion
- Thoughtful, constructive feedback
- Strong themes emerged