



***Community Needs Assessment
For the
North Long Beach
Redevelopment Area***

Final Report

Submitted By:



With

Leisure Vision

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Section I – Introduction

The Community Needs Assessment for the North Long Beach Redevelopment Area is an outgrowth of the North Long Beach Strategic Guide for Redevelopment that was completed in 2002. The Strategic Guide stated that one of the primary goals would be developing a “Village Center” along Atlantic Avenue “to create a definable, unique center for North Long Beach to serve as the focal point for neighborhood identity and activity”. Furthermore the study indicated that “Pedestrian-oriented retail uses would be expanded along street frontages, streetscape and parking improvements would be implemented, and public uses, arts and cultural facilities, and pocket parks would be developed as appropriate”. Finally the Strategic Guide stated that “The area has the potential to be a mixed-use area: a mix of shopping, restaurants, cafes, and community facilities, with housing located nearby or in the Village Center itself”.

With this directive, the Community Needs Assessment Study was started with the goal of determining what new community facilities should be developed in or near the proposed Village Center. It was determined that the most effective and comprehensive method to approach such an endeavor was to look at the entire North Long Beach area and the current community amenities that were available, their strengths and shortcomings, as well as the demand for additional space or programs. This process began with the following basic information:

- A previous study completed for the Library Services Department indicated that an expanded North Branch Library of approximately 19,000 sq.ft. is needed in the community. The library needs to be centrally located and be on one level.
- Decisions made regarding possible new community facilities in or near the Village Center will have far reaching implications on other such facilities in North Long Beach.
- There are significant unmet recreation needs in North Long Beach and at Houghton Park in particular. The City of Long Beach’s Parks Recreation and Marine Department’s Strategic Plan calls for the development of large (40,000 to 60,000 sq. ft.) community recreation centers in the city. Houghton Park has been identified as a possible location for such a multi-generational center.

Armed with this information the project team moved forward with the Community Needs Assessment Study for the North Long Beach Redevelopment Area. The basic scope of work included:

- Community input regarding North Long Beach needs.
- Determine the best location for a new branch library.
- Assessment of the existing North Branch Library for possible reuse.

Community Needs Assessment for the North Long Beach Redevelopment Area

- Evaluation of the Houghton Park facilities and determine the feasibility of developing a new community center.
- Demographic and market analysis of the area.

A Project Planning Committee was formed to oversee the needs assessment and provide input on the direction and findings of the study. The following firms or organizations were represented on the committee.

Ballard*King and Associates
Barker Rinker Seacat Architecture
Long Beach Redevelopment Agency
City of Long Beach Library Services Department
City of Long Beach Department of Parks, Recreation & Marine
City of Long Beach 8th and 9th District Council Offices
City of Long Beach Health and Human Services Department
City of Long Beach Community Planning Department
North Long Beach Project Area Committee
Public Corporation for the Arts

Section II – Assessment Process and Key Findings

Public Input

An important aspect of determining community needs in North Long Beach for possible new community facilities is through a process of stakeholder meetings with key city staff and officials, focus group sessions with community groups and a formal survey of the community. The Project Planning Committee was also a major source of community information.

With the help of the project team and city staff, the following tools were put into place to gather public input from a variety of sources.

Stakeholder Sessions – 4 sessions with various city staff and elected officials were conducted in November of 2004.

Focus Groups – 2 North Long Beach community organization focus groups were held in January 2005. While important information was gathered from these focus groups sessions they were relatively sparsely attended.

Survey – a 400 response scientifically valid survey of North Long Beach residents was conducted in April and May of 2005.

What follows is a summation of the findings from these three different public input sources as well as an overall combined public input summary.

Stakeholder Sessions - Each group was asked a series of questions regarding indoor community needs. These included what issues were of concern regarding indoor recreation, what indoor facilities are needed, the need for a new larger branch library and other community needs that could be served by new or remodeled community buildings in North Long Beach. The basic findings were:

- The library staff is very supportive of the Village Center site as a location for a new library as well as other possible community facilities. There needs to be more than just a library at this site.
- Whatever might be built at the Village Center, its impact on Houghton Park and the other neighborhood centers must be considered.
- If a new branch library was to be built at another location away from Orange Avenue, Parks and Recreation would not be interested in converting the building into a neighborhood recreation center as it does not fit with the department's strategic plan.

- The greatest unmet facility needs at Houghton are an indoor pool and a gymnasium as well as dedicated and separated space for teens and seniors. Social service office space and counseling rooms would also be beneficial.
- The community's true needs for a new library and community center in perspective with the other broader needs of the area need to be identified. There is also concern that if these facilities are priorities for the community, where should they be located to best serve the citizens of North Long Beach.

Focus Groups: Two focus groups were held with representatives from a number of North Long Beach organizations. Each of these groups was asked a series of questions regarding indoor community needs. The basic findings were:

- Most participants indicated that there were a great deal of unmet community needs in North Long Beach despite the number of existing facilities.
- Most indicated that a community center was very important to North Long Beach and had been promised many years ago. Others felt that while a community center would be nice there were greater needs such as new retail, and additional affordable housing options.
- The existing North Branch Library is over used and there is a need for a new facility but there are other bigger needs as well. It was mentioned that the existing library should continue to remain open if a new one is built at another site (library staff has indicated that this would not be feasible).
- The members of the focus groups reiterated that there were higher priorities than a building a new community center and library. The need for new retail, family housing and new restaurants were a higher priority.

Survey of Residents: A Community Interest Citizen Survey was conducted during April and May of 2005 to help establish priorities for the future development of community services and facilities in the North Long Beach area. The survey was designed to randomly obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the 90805 zip code. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

When the results of the survey are summarized the following observations can be made.

- Approximately one third of the respondents have used Houghton Park in the last 12 months.
- Of existing community facilities the branch library on Orange Avenue has the highest percentage of use.
- There is generally not a high degree of satisfaction with existing facilities.

- The indoor community spaces that are most needed in North Long Beach include:
 - Larger branch library
 - Space for teens
 - Health care services
- Services that would most often be used at an indoor community facility include:
 - Fitness and exercise
 - Library services
 - Recreational or instructional pool
- A new indoor facility would receive a high rate of use.
- It will be important that any new facility serve all age groups.
- Potential redevelopment uses at the Village Center that respondents would use most often include:
 - A new larger branch library
 - New retail stores
 - Multipurpose community center
- The greatest support is for building a new community facility at the Village Center.
- The greatest support is for expanding the existing branch library on Orange Avenue.
- Potential improvements that are the highest priorities in North Long Beach are:
 - Improve and cleanup neighborhoods
 - Repave neighborhood streets and alleys
 - Repave major streets
- A surprisingly large percentage of North Long Beach residents have computers and internet access.

Overall Public Input Findings – When all of the public input mechanisms are reviewed as a whole the following are some of the consistent findings.

- There are a variety of unmet needs in North Long Beach.
- The development of a new branch library is a top priority for any new community facility.
- There is mid-level support for a new community center (beyond a library). If one were to be built then the priorities for spaces would be:
 - Teen area

- Health services
 - Fitness elements
 - Indoor pool
- Any new community facility would receive strong use by the general public.
 - There is strong support for redeveloping Atlantic Avenue into the Village Center but there is the expectation that this would involve more than just a community facility. New retail, housing and restaurants are also strong issues.
 - There is not a high level of support for developing new community facilities in Houghton Park. The future of Houghton Park could be an issue with the construction of other facilities on Atlantic Avenue.
 - While the number one community facility to be built at the Village Center is a new branch library there is also a reasonably high level of support for expanding the library at its present site on Orange Avenue (however there is still a much higher percentage that would like to see a new branch library at a new location).
 - When the issue of building a new community facility in North Long Beach is measured against other broader concerns for the area it is not a top priority.

Note: Detailed public information findings is located in the appendix section of this report.

Evaluation of Existing Facilities

An evaluation was completed of the existing community facilities in North Long Beach. This consisted of the North Branch Library and the facilities located in Houghton Park.

North Branch Library – This building located on Orange Avenue, is in reasonably good physical condition and it is a functional, usable building. However, the building is too small to adequately house the needs and demands of the library in the future. The site is also not large enough to expand the building and there is very limited parking currently on the site to support the existing building let alone a larger facility.

Since the building is still usable, consideration should be given to converting the facility to some other governmental or community use or sell the structure to the private sector. This will need to be a function that is appropriate for the relatively small building and does not require much on site parking.

Houghton Park Facilities - Houghton Park accommodates a variety of community recreation activities. The park currently has an indoor community center, a North Facilities Center, and an indoor storage/work area that is located underneath the bleachers of the baseball field that is utilized by Future Generations as a bicycle repair facility. In

addition the park has a number of formal and informal athletic fields, a picnic shelter area, a skateboard park and a Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Community Center: Over the past 75 years the community center has undergone three major additions in efforts to increase the capacity for programs and services. As a result of these additions the building is not well laid out, which makes operation and supervision much more difficult.

The various additions date from 1930, 1959 and 1987 respectively. In July of 2004 the City of Long Beach completed a detailed facility assessment which reported detailed observations of existing conditions of the grounds, building exterior, roof, mechanical systems, electrical systems and interior spaces. Since this work was completed, there has been additional water damage throughout the facility, especially in the 1987 addition.

North Facilities Center: This is a building that has recently undergone a renovation to accommodate Health and Human Services operations. The building also houses the 9th District Council office and the Child Development building. While not an ideal facility it is still functional and serves its current uses in a relatively effective manner.

Other Spaces: Next to the south end of the Community Center there are free standing restrooms that are utilized by park users. Despite misuse and relatively poor condition these remain at least functional.

Located under the bleachers at the baseball field is an enclosed space that is utilized by Future Generations for bike storage and repair. This concrete block structure is in good condition and this is a great use of this space. However the bleachers themselves are not located in a good position in the park, and are the source of safety and security concerns.

Note: A more detailed assessment of the community center is included in the appendix section of the report.

Demographic and Market Analysis

The following is a summary of the basic demographic characteristics of the North Long Beach area as well as a comparison with national demographic statistics.

The primary market for any new or remodeled community facilities would clearly be the residents of the North Long Beach community. As a result the demographics of the area have been analyzed.

Population Numbers:

	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>2004 Est.</u>	<u>2009 Proj.</u>
North Long Beach	90,023	93,382	96,777
City of Long Beach	461,522	474,567	491,233

Source - U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI.

Demographic Summary:

- The population level of North Long Beach is expected to show strong growth during the 2000's.
- The population density is medium to high.
- The median age is significantly lower than the City of Long Beach and national averages.
- Household size is substantially higher than the rest of Long Beach and the national average. This indicates a number of families with children as well as possible multi-family households.
- Median household income is significantly lower than Long Beach itself and the national levels.
- Hispanics makeup over 50% of the population with lower numbers of Other, White, Blacks, and Asians. The greatest growth will be in Hispanic and Other in the coming years.
- Residents of North Long Beach have a relatively low market potential index (relatively low rate of possible participation based primarily on the demographic characteristics of the area) for most all activities other than basketball. This indicates a potential lower rate of participation in most activities that might take place at a community center (that public input process indicated a potentially higher rate of participation).
- Residents of North Long Beach have a relatively low spending potential index (relatively low level of discretionary income due to lower median household income levels) for all activities which indicates a concern over how services can be priced.

Existing Service Area Providers: There are currently a number of indoor community based facilities in the North Long Beach primary service area that are supplying recreation, sports, library services, and other community activities. However even with the presence of these facilities many needs are not able to be met due in part to the age

and condition of the facilities but also considering the population in the area, the relatively small number that exist.

The City of Long Beach has a significant number of indoor facilities in North Long Beach. For recreation, the city operates Houghton Park which has an indoor community center that was first built in 1930. The park also contains the North Facilities Center and a small indoor area located below the bleachers of the baseball field that serves as the home for Future Generations bicycle repair program. In addition there are several athletic fields, a skate park and Vietnam Veterans Memorial located in the park. Houghton Park serves as the main recreation area in North Long Beach.

Besides Houghton Park the city also operates a number of small neighborhood based recreation centers in the North Long Beach area. Ramona Park has a small, relatively new, center with a game room, small weight room, social rooms and an office area. This facility is well maintained and appears to be well used. Coolidge Park has a very small, older center that is in poor shape and needs to be replaced. The building has a small meeting/game room, very small weight room with virtually no equipment and restrooms. This center is generally not as well used. DeForest Park has a small community room, and an office area. The park also has an old building that contains four racquetball courts that are no longer used. Further to the south and just outside of North Long Beach is Scherer Park which has an indoor center that is similar to what is located in DeForest Park. It is important to realize that with the exception of Ramona, all of the buildings are small and old with limited active recreation uses.

It is apparent that the first priority for any new or expanded community center will be to accommodate existing recreation programs and services that are being offered at inadequate facilities or ones that are in need of being replaced.

In addition to the recreation facilities that are noted above, the city also operates a small North Branch Library on Orange Avenue. This is one of the mostly highly used branch libraries in the city and yet it is very small in size and on a site that has limited parking.

The Long Beach Unified School District obviously has a variety of facilities that can be used for community functions. The recreation department utilizes a number of schools for programs and activities including Community Outreach Recreational Enrichment Programs and before and after school activities. Jordan High School has an indoor pool that was built with the intention of having significant public use but the facility is rarely available for general use. The schools also have gyms and public event space as well as meeting areas but there is limited access in many cases due to school activities.

Beyond the city owned facilities, there are also a number of non-profit providers of services. The Fairfield YMCA serves the area. This facility has a small gym, pool, child care center and areas for before and after school programs. The Y is currently expanding its fitness area. The Boys & Girls Club also operates four centers in Long Beach including a center in North Long Beach.

There are virtually no private recreation or fitness facilities actually located in North Long Beach. There are a couple of small martial arts studios, but that is really the extent of facilities. Adjacent to North Long Beach there are a number of private facilities including LA Fitness and Bally Total Fitness clubs. Many of the neighboring communities also have public recreation centers and large public libraries that are utilized to some extent by North Long Beach residents.

It is readily apparent that despite the number of public facilities currently located in North Long Beach there are still a large number of unmet needs.

Section III – Recommendations

Community Facilities Program

Utilizing all of the information gathered in the first phase of the study, the project team began the process of defining what new or remodeled community facilities should be included in North Long Beach and determining which of three sites (the Village Center on Atlantic, Houghton Park and the existing branch library site on Orange Avenue) is the most appropriate for these amenities.

This process was conducted with input and direction from the Project Planning Committee. Initially a number of alternatives were examined to determine the best location for possible amenities. From this work several key findings were derived.

- The best location for a new library is as part of the Village Center on Atlantic Avenue. Incorporating other community spaces with the library will expand the use and visibility of the library.
- The existing theatre/furniture store was evaluated and it was determined that the buildings are not in good condition or suitable for reuse. In addition to the poor physical state of the structure it also needs to have a seismic retrofit that is estimated to cost at least \$750,000. However, the Atlantic Theater is an important icon in North Long Beach and as a result the spire should be kept or integrated into any new development in the Village Center.
- The existing community center in Houghton Park is in poor condition and will not be able to meet the long term recreation needs of the North Long Beach community. It will ultimately need to be replaced by a new center that is larger and more diverse in its recreation offerings.
- With changes to the community center, Houghton Park will have to undergo changes as well. Lot coverage issues will require a redesign of the park in an effort to develop a better organized and more efficient layout.
- The existing branch library site on Orange Avenue is not of sufficient size to support a new, larger, library but the building is still functional and could be utilized for governmental or private use.

Community Facilities Development Plan

The following is one possible alternative for the development of community facilities in North Long Beach.

Village Center-Atlantic Avenue

Existing Structures

Most of the existing buildings on Atlantic Avenue between South Street and 59th Street would be eliminated.

A. Atlantic Theater - The existing Atlantic Theater is not really usable and a theater was not a high priority from the survey. The building is removed but the spire is retained.

B. Furniture Store - The furniture store is not a usable building and as a result is torn down.

C. Auto Zone - The Auto Zone building could be retained if the façade is improved to make it more compatible with the area.

New Facilities

Library - A new 19,000 sq.ft. branch library is constructed with a small community area. The library is located with frontage at the southeast corner of Atlantic Avenue and 59th Street.

Community Space - The square footage (approximately 19,000 sq.ft.) on the second floor over the library is developed into a community area that can be used by community groups and organizations for meetings and/or temporary office space.

Outdoor Plaza - This element will be located between the library and the retail/office buildings and will contain an outdoor plaza area with seating and landscaping. This area also contains the Atlantic Theater spire.

Retail/Office/Residential - Two story buildings with retail on the first floor and offices or residential on the second floor will be incorporated into the plan. Second floor residential loft space is also an option depending on market demand.

Parking - One level of underground along with surface parking will be developed.

Houghton Park

Existing Structures

The existing indoor structures would eventually be eliminated in the park (with the exception of the restrooms near the skateboard park). A new park master plan for Houghton Park would need to be developed first.

A. Community Center – The existing center is in poor condition and no longer serviceable as an active oriented community recreation center. As a result the center should be replaced.

B. North Facilities Center (Health and Human Services building) – The uses in this building would be moved off site to make more room for parking for a new Community Recreation Center. This would also allow the project to meet the lot coverage requirements of the park. The Health and Human Service functions presently in the building are moved to the second floor of the new library in the Village Center on Atlantic Avenue while the Child Development Center is included in the new Community Recreation Center.

C. Bike Building/Baseball Field Bleachers – The bleachers themselves currently provide safety and security problems for the park and are not located in an area that makes the best use of the park space available. These amenities are removed and the bike program is integrated into the new Community Recreation Center.

D. Existing Restrooms - The outdoor toilets (next to the existing community center) are in poor condition. They are removed and integrated into the new Community Recreation Center.

New Facilities

Community Recreation Center – A new Community Recreation Center should focus on active and passive recreation pursuits for all age groups including seniors. The center would house a weight/cardio area, group fitness area, gym, walking track, and leisure pool with lap lanes. Day care would remain at this location and the center will also have a teen area and a computer room. Community rooms, arts and crafts room and a senior area would also be included. The center should be relocated in the park to have a presence along Atlantic Avenue.

Orange Library Site

Existing Building

The existing site is either sold or is converted to other uses however the building will not be utilized for a branch library or community center. Possible uses include:

- Mini park – this area of North Long Beach is deficient in park land.
- City of Long Beach offices
- Non-profit agency offices
- Sell or lease to private concerns for use compatible to the surrounding neighborhood.

Conceptual Village Center and Library Site Plan

A basic conceptual site plan has been developed for the Village Center that incorporates the library as well as some community space into a single building on a site that also has retail/office space and a single level parking garage.

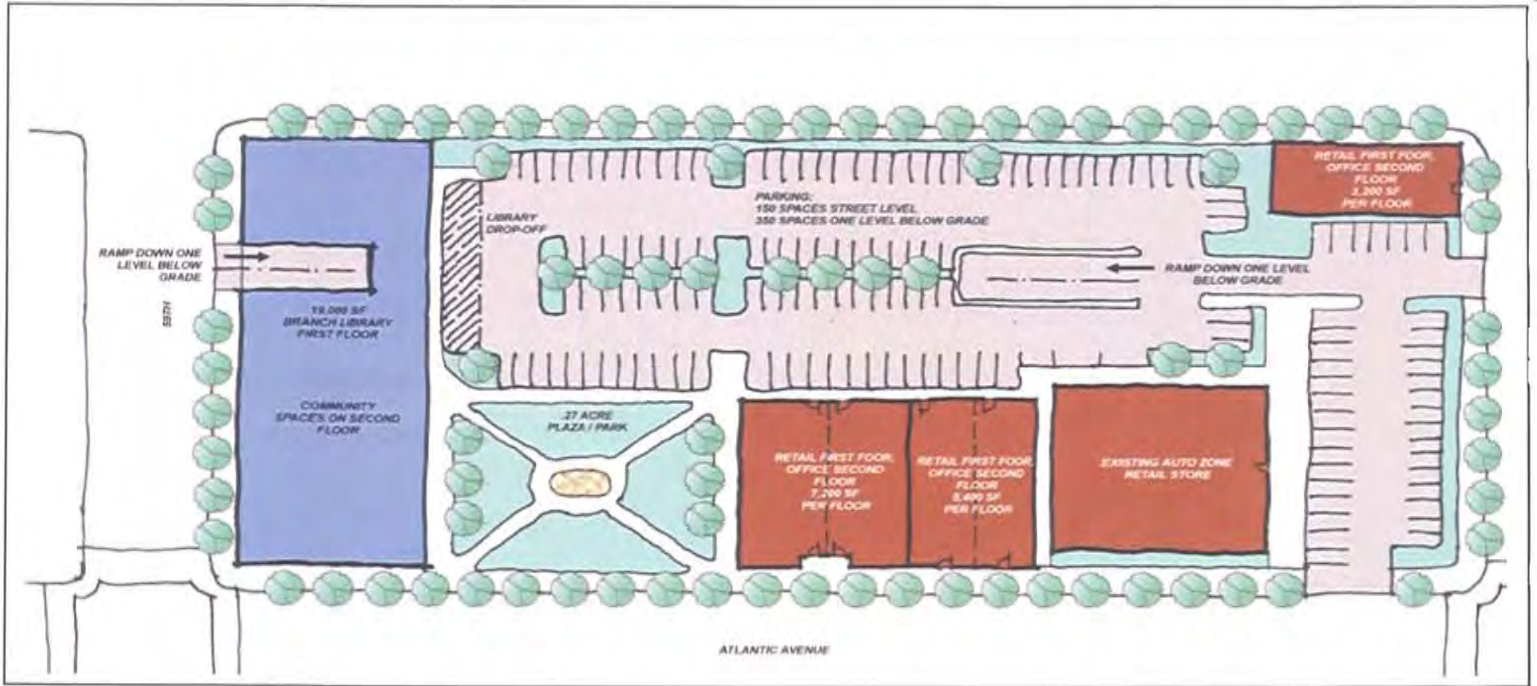


Photo Montage of the Village Center – To assist with how the library could possibly be integrated on the corner of 59th Street and Atlantic Avenue, a photo montage is shown below. This is representative of how the massing of the building would appear but does not represent a design concept. This image also depicts how the spire from the Atlantic Theater could also be integrated into the project as an entrance to an outdoor plaza area.



Houghton Park Plan

While a number of improvements will need to be made to Houghton Park to meet the recreational needs of the community, determining the exact timing and phasing for such plans will need to be a priority. Perhaps the greatest challenge will be developing a funding plan for the park improvements. A number of sources will need to be investigated including, bond funding, fundraising, partnerships, grants and special assessments.

Section IV – Appendices

Stakeholder/Focus Group Sessions and Survey

An important aspect of determining community needs in North Long Beach for possible new community facilities is through a process of stakeholder meetings with key city staff and officials, focus group sessions with community groups and a formal survey of the community. The Community Needs Assessment Team was one of the primary sources utilized to determine how public input should be gathered for the study as well as participating in the process itself. With the help of the project team and city staff, the following tools were put into place to gather public input from a variety of sources.

Stakeholder Sessions – 4 sessions with various city staff and elected officials were conducted in November of 2004.

Focus Groups – 2 North Long Beach community organization focus groups were held in January 2005.

Survey – a 400 response scientifically valid survey of North Long Beach residents was conducted in April and May of 2005.

What follows is a summation of the findings from these three different public input sources as well as an overall combined public input summary.

Stakeholder Sessions: On November 15th and 16th of 2004 a series of stakeholder sessions were held with different elements of city staff as well as elected officials from the area. The stakeholder sessions included:

- Parks, Recreation and Marine Administration
- Recreation Staff – Houghton Park
- Library Services Administration
- Long Beach Council members from the North Long Beach area.

Each of these groups was asked a series of questions regarding indoor community needs. These included what issues were of concern regarding indoor recreation, what indoor facilities are needed, the need for a new larger branch library and other community needs that could be served by new or remodeled community buildings in North Long Beach.

The following is a general summary of the findings from each stakeholder session:

Parks, Recreation and Marine Administration – Phil Hester, Director, Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine

Issues were noted in the following areas:

- The Parks and Recreation Strategic Plan identifies Houghton Park as a site for a “Super Recreation Center”. This would be a large regional recreation center with multiple facets including a significant active recreation area that could include an indoor pool, gymnasium space, fitness area and other amenities.
- Most of the smaller neighborhood recreation centers in the area (Ramona and DeForest) are in relatively good shape and functional but Coolidge needs to be replaced or eliminated.
- When there is talk of building a possible new community center at the Village Center (59th and Atlantic) there is real concern over the impact there would be on Houghton Park’s center. Houghton Park is seen as the center of the community and the location where recreation services are provided. The center is not in good physical condition but it could be remodeled, expanded or replaced by a new facility. A branch library could also be built at this location.
- The issue of “lot coverage” limits for buildings will have to be addressed at Houghton Park if new facilities are constructed at this site.
- Whatever might be built at the Village Center it must consider the impact on Houghton Park and the other neighborhood centers.
- The Redevelopment Agency has funding that could be used for parks and recreation facilities and these dollars should be applied to this project.
- If a new branch library was to be built at another location away from Orange Avenue, Parks and Recreation would not be interested in converting the building into a neighborhood recreation center as it does not fit with the department’s strategic plan.
- If a new community facility were to be developed at the Village Center in conjunction with a new branch library the issue of which department would operate the facility would need to be determined.

Recreation Staff – Houghton Park – Sonny Seng, Park Supervisor and Eileen Ludlam, Senior Center Supervisor

Issues were noted in the following areas:

- The Houghton Park Community Center and outdoor areas are used for a variety of programs from child care and after school programs for youth to a number of social service programs and senior activities. The center is multi-generational and most all the spaces are multi-use. The center truly does serve the North Long Beach community with an estimate that 80% of the center’s users are from the area.

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- Many local neighborhood groups and organizations utilize the center for their meetings and activities.
- The biggest challenges with the center are the poor condition of the building, a general lack of maintenance, the lack of storage space, and no air conditioning in the day care area. The center also suffers from a lack of ownership from the community and local organizations.
- The greatest facility needs at Houghton are an indoor pool and a gymnasium as well as dedicated space for teens and seniors. Social service office space and counseling rooms would also be beneficial. The center would like to expand the number of adult programs that it can offer but there must be more space.
- The Village Center site should be used for amenities that augment what is found at Houghton Park but not replace them. A strong cultural arts orientation with a library would be appropriate.

Library Services – Eleanore Schmidt, Director of Library Services and Nancy Messineo, Manager, Neighborhood Library Services

Issues were noted in the following areas:

- The library has completed their needs assessment for a new branch library in North Long Beach. This study indicated that a facility of approximately 20,000 sq.ft. on a single, first floor, level is needed to meet the community's needs. No real building program, concept plan or plan of service has yet been developed for a new branch library as the results of this study will have a great deal of influence on the direction that the project might take.
- The library is very supportive of the Village Center site as a location for a new library as well as other possible community facilities. There needs to be more than just a library at this site. There is support for incorporating a community center into the same site but concern that physically linking them may hold up construction of the library.
- The library does not want to be responsible for the operation of the community center.
- The existing branch library on Orange Avenue is really youth oriented.
- This project needs to be a bold step for North Long Beach.

North Long Beach Council Members – Rae Gabelich, Val Lerch

Issues were noted in the following areas:

- Several studies on what is best to do for redeveloping North Long Beach have already been done but nothing has ever really come out of this process.
- Whatever is recommended must come from the community's perspective and not be just a reflection of staff interpretation of what the needs are.
- Need to know the community's true needs for a new library and community center in perspective with the other broader needs of the area. There is also concern that if these facilities are priorities for the community, where should they be located to best serve the citizens of North Long Beach.
- Believe that there is a need for a new branch library but think that it should be located at the existing site on Orange Avenue.
- A community center must serve the needs of the entire community and should function as a community gathering area. However the primary focus should be on adults and seniors. North Long Beach needs a "wow" factor in a facility. Utilizing the old Atlantic Theater as a portion of the community center has to be considered. There should be indoor and outdoor spaces. Indoor spaces need to be flexible and adaptable for a number of uses.
- The Village Center site will need to have mixed uses beyond just city amenities. Retail and restaurants will be important and there is a need for a bank and grocery store.
- Houghton Park should focus on youth activities and it really needs to have a swimming pool.
- Any new facilities will need to be safe and security will have to be a high priority.

Focus Groups: On January 18th of 2005 two focus groups were held with representatives from a number of North Long Beach organizations. The focus groups included:

4:00pm

- Dawn Modkins, Interfaith Community Organization
- Donya Webb, Fairfield YMCA

6:30pm

- Chuck Fowler, North Long Beach Community Action Group
- Nelson Gonzalez, Hispanic Association
- Jessica Quintana, Centro CHA

Note: Representatives from a number of other local organizations were invited to attend these focus groups but did not show up for the meetings.

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Each of these groups was asked a series of questions regarding indoor community needs. The following outline covers the basic questions that were asked.

1. Where do you currently go for your indoor recreation, community, and library needs?
 - a. Library on Orange, Houghton Park, YMCA, B & G Club, other
 - b. Are these facilities adequate?
 - c. If not why not?

2. Do you believe there is a need for additional public facilities in North Long Beach?
 - a. To meet your specific needs?
 - b. To meet overall community needs?

3. Where are the greatest priorities?
 - a. Recreation spaces
 - b. Social service amenities
 - c. Cultural arts/theater
 - d. Community gathering spaces
 - e. Library
 - f. Health services
 - g. City hall services
 - h. None of this

4. What specific components should be included in a new public facility?

5. How often would you use such a center if it had the amenities that you desire?
 - a. Several times a week
 - b. Once a week
 - c. Several times a month
 - d. Once a month
 - e. Never

6. What should be the priority for the redevelopment of Atlantic Avenue into a Village Center?
 - a. New retail
 - b. Family housing
 - c. Child care
 - d. New branch library
 - e. Renovate the theater into a community theater
 - f. New restaurants
 - g. Multipurpose community center
 - h. Mixed use

7. Which location is the most appropriate for a potential new community center?

- a. Community center in Houghton Park
 - b. Community center at the Village Center (Atlantic and 59th).
 - c. Neither
8. Which location is the most appropriate for an expanded branch library?
- a. At the present location on Orange Avenue.
 - b. As part of the Village Center on Atlantic between 56th and 59th.
 - c. As part of a community center in Houghton Park
 - d. No expansion is necessary
9. What are the most important improvements that could be made in North Long Beach?
- a. Increased police protection
 - b. New or expanded library
 - c. Renovated or new businesses
 - d. Reducing gang activity
 - e. Improved streets
 - f. New indoor community center
 - g. Improved code enforcement
 - h. Litter/graffiti improvements
 - i. A satellite city hall
10. Other issues or concerns regarding the project?

The following is a general summary of the findings from the two focus groups:

Where do you currently go for your indoor recreation, community, and library needs?

Many indicated that they used the facilities at Houghton Park but also used the YMCA, local churches and other community facilities. More respondents indicated that they used the park area of Houghton rather than the building. It was also noted that some in the community use private health clubs in other neighboring communities. Members of the community also use the branch library on Orange Avenue extensively as well.

Do you believe there is a need for additional public facilities in North Long Beach?

Most also indicated that there were still a great deal of unmet needs despite the number of existing facilities.

Where are the greatest priorities?

There were a variety of responses to this question. Most indicated that a community center was very important to North Long Beach and had been promised many years ago. Others felt that while a community center would be nice there were greater needs such as new retail, and additional affordable housing options.

There was concern that Houghton Park already serves many of the same needs that have been talked about in a new community center.

The issue of a new library had a similar response that the existing facility is over used and there is a need for a new facility but there are other bigger needs as well. It was mentioned that the existing library should continue to remain open if a new one is built at another site.

There was also concern that there would need to be much more than just a public facility in North Long Beach to make an impact in the community.

What specific components should be included in a new public facility?

Again there were a variety of responses including:

- Community services center where a variety of social service needs could be met.
- A place where college classes and skill training classes could be held.
- Community theater
- Library that is more like a book store.
- Community gathering spaces both indoor and outdoor
- Youth activities
- Computer access
- Community rooms
- Counseling rooms
- Sports amenities

How often would you use such a center if it had the amenities that you desire?

There was general consensus that a center that included the amenities that the community desired would be used at least once a week.

What should be the priority for the redevelopment of Atlantic Avenue into a Village Center?

The members of the focus groups reiterated that there were higher priorities than a community center and library. The need for new retail, family housing and new restaurants were a higher priority. There was general agreement that there is not the need for more child care. There were mixed reactions to the need for renovation of the existing theater with some thinking it was essential and others believing it should be torn down. Most in attendance indicated that a community center was a higher priority than a new library.

Which location is the most appropriate for a potential new community center?

There was general agreement that a new community center at the Village Center would be an excellent location.

Which location is the most appropriate for an expanded branch library?

Everyone agreed that there is a need for an expanded branch library and all supported the idea of building a new branch library as part of the Village Center. However, there was very strong support for keeping the existing branch library open on Orange Avenue, as well.

What are the most important improvements that could be made in North Long Beach?

As was stated in earlier questions while most in attendance believe that a new community center and library were important there was a strong feeling that there were other larger community wide issues. Police protection and overall safety were mentioned as was the need for renovating or expanding new businesses and more housing.

Other issues or concerns regarding the project?

There were a wide range of responses to this question including:

- A new community center will need to be multicultural.
- Gangs and drugs are a concern in the area
- The area needs to be cleaned up.
- No one will come to a new center if it is not safe.
- There must be new business in the area.
- Do not remove housing to build the Village Center.
- No housing above retail.
- Housing is a critical issue, the high cost drives people from North Long Beach
- It will take more than just a building to make an impact.

Survey of Residents: A Community Interest Citizen Survey was conducted during April and May of 2005 to help establish priorities for the future development of community services and facilities in the North Long Beach area. The survey was designed to obtain statistically valid results from households throughout the 90805 zip code. The survey was administered by a combination of mail and phone.

Leisure Vision worked extensively with Long Beach officials as well as members of the Ballard*King and Associates project team in the development of the survey questionnaire. This work allowed the survey to be tailored to issues of strategic importance to effectively plan the future system.

A total of 2,503 households in the 90805 zip code were randomly selected to receive the survey. Each of these households received a letter from the Redevelopment Agency written in both English and Spanish informing them about the survey and encouraging participation. One (1) week later each of these households received two copies of the survey, one in English and one in Spanish. Within 1-2 days of receiving the mailed survey, each household received an electronic voice message encouraging their participation. Approximately two weeks after the survey was mailed, residents who received the surveys were contacted by phone. Those who indicated they had not returned the survey were given the option of completing it by phone.

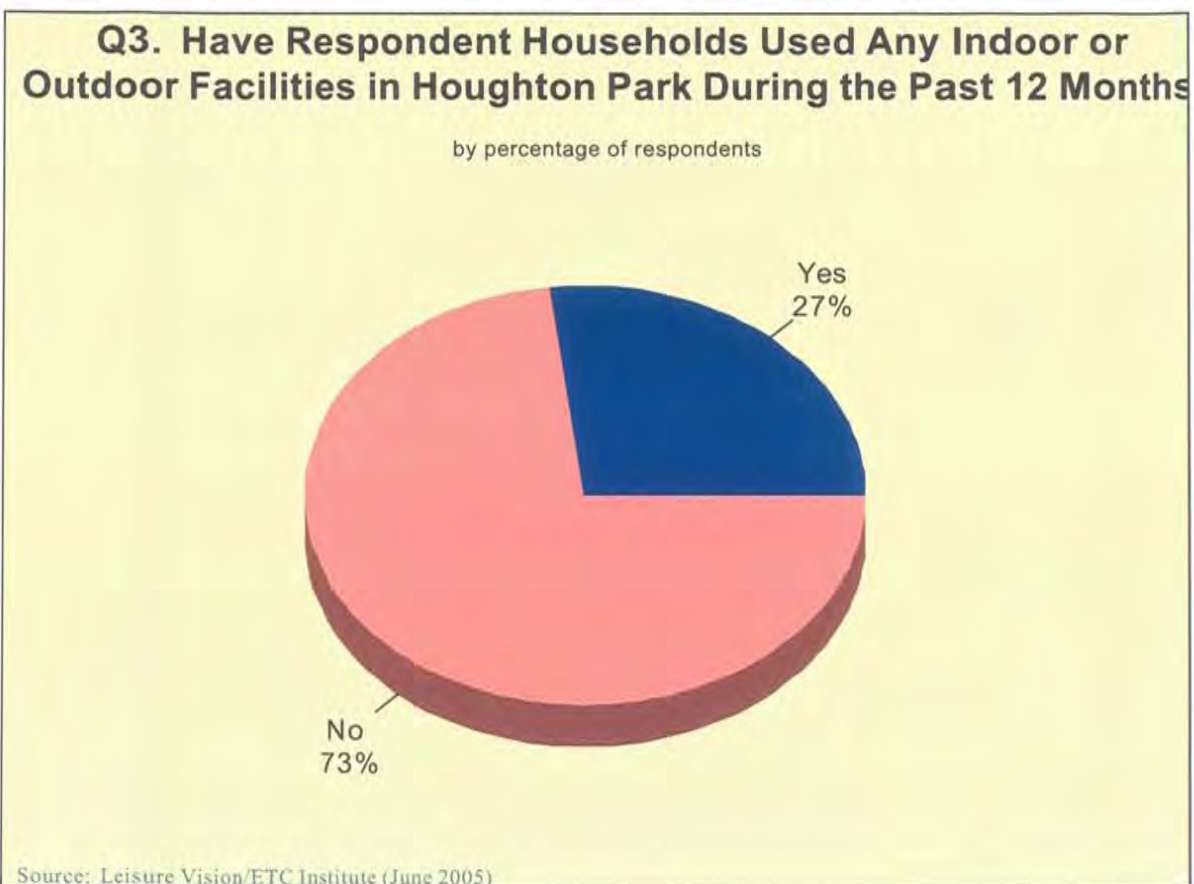
The goal was to obtain at least 400 completed surveys. This goal was accomplished, with 412 surveys having been completed. Of these 412 completed surveys, 347 were completed by mail, and 65 were completed by phone. The results of the random sample of 412 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision of at least +/-4.8%.

The following pages summarize major survey findings.

Use of Houghton Park

Respondents were asked if they or other members of their household have used any indoor or outdoor facilities in Houghton Park during the past 12 months. The following summarizes key findings:

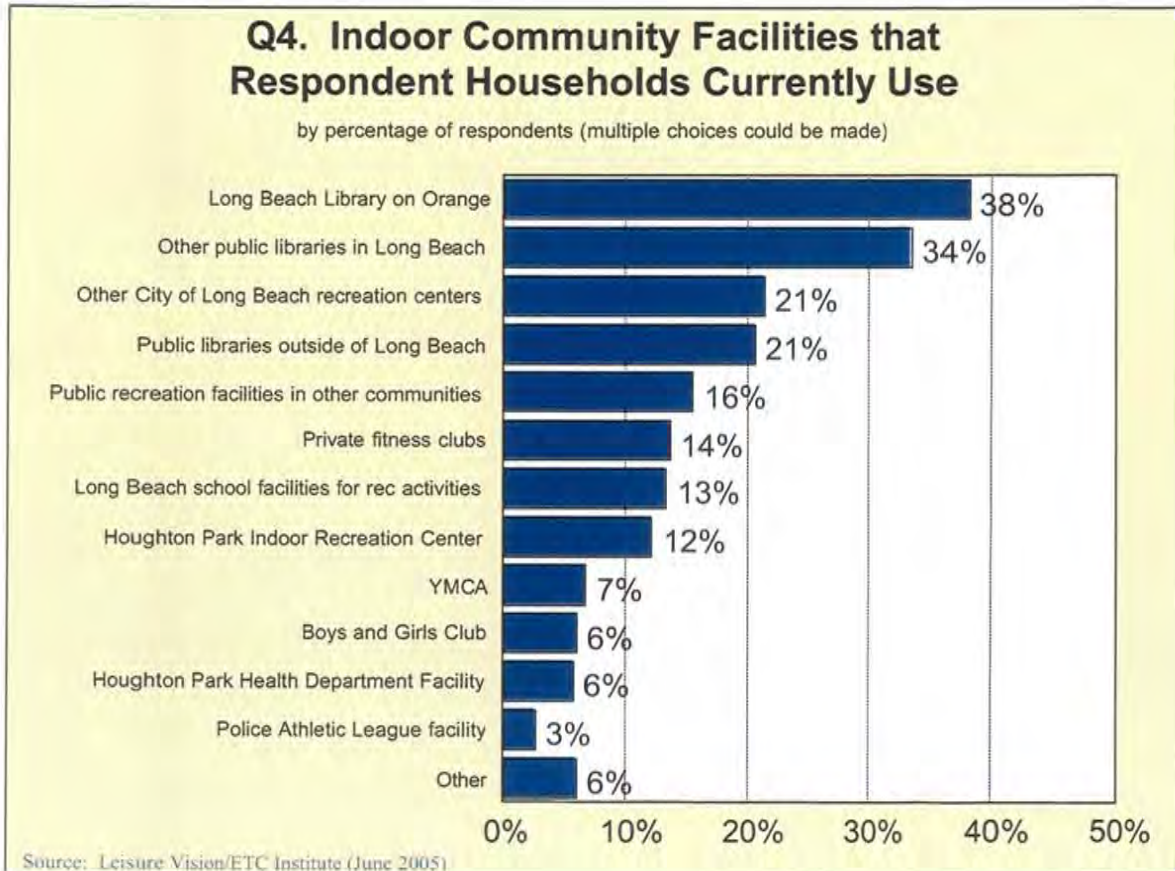
- **Twenty-seven percent (27%) of respondent households have used indoor or outdoor facilities in Houghton Park during the past 12 months.**



Current Use of Indoor Community Facilities

From a list of 12 various indoor community facilities, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ones that they or members of their household currently use. The following summarizes key findings:

- **North Branch Library on Orange (38%) is the facility that the highest percentage of respondent households currently use.** There are three other indoor community facilities that are currently being used by over 20% of respondent households, including: other public libraries in Long Beach (34%), other City of Long Beach recreation centers (21%), and public libraries outside of Long Beach (21%).



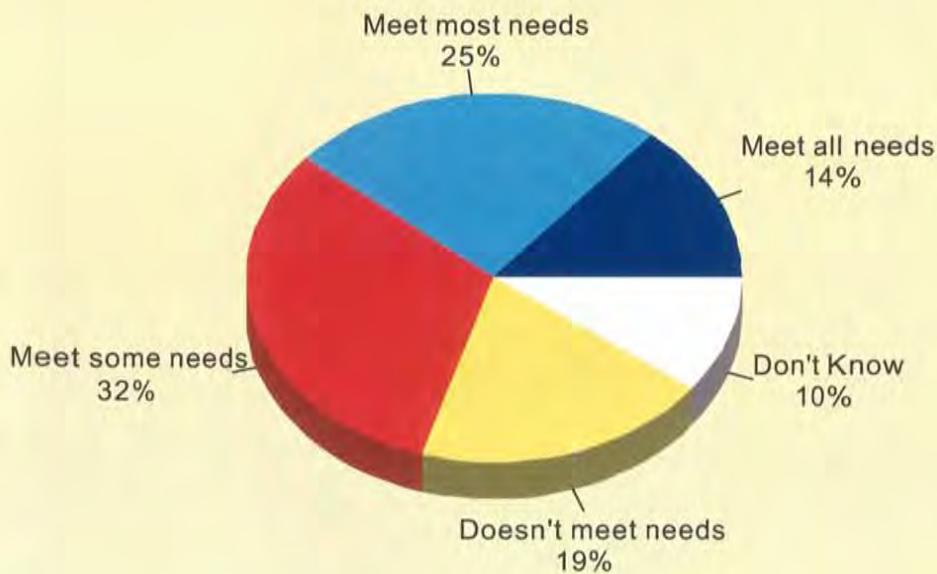
How Well Indoor Facilities Meet the Needs of Respondent Households

From a list of four statements, respondents were asked to indicate which one best represents how well the indoor community facilities they are currently using meet the needs of their household. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Seventy-one percent (71%) of respondent households indicated that the indoor community facilities they are currently using meet at least some of their needs.** An additional 19% indicated that the facilities do not meet any of their needs, and 10% indicated “don’t know”.

Q5. How Well Indoor Community Facilities that Respondents Are Currently Using Meet the Needs of Their Household

by percentage of respondents



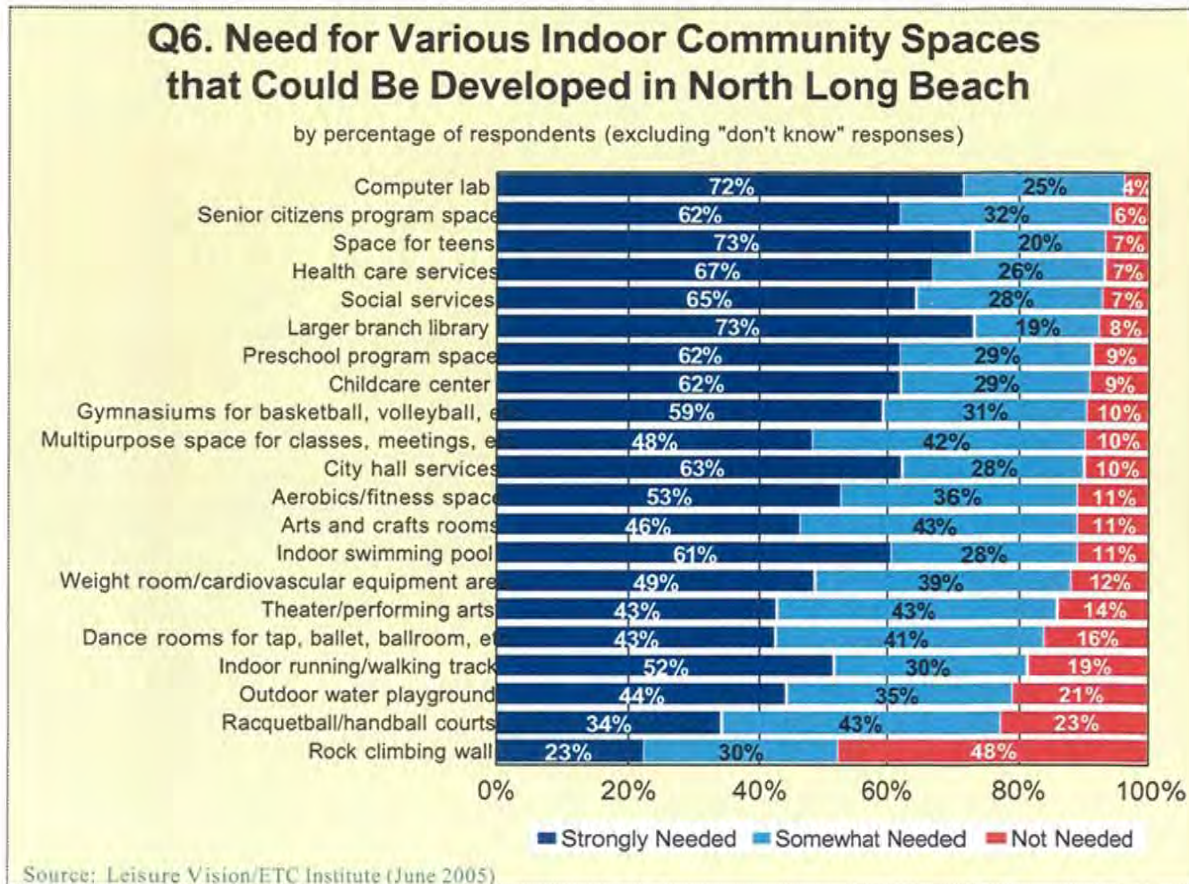
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (June 2005)

Level of Need for Various Indoor Community Spaces

From a list of 21 various indoor community spaces that could be developed in North Long Beach, respondents were asked to indicate if each feature is strongly needed, somewhat needed, or not needed in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: the graph below excludes "don't know" responses.)

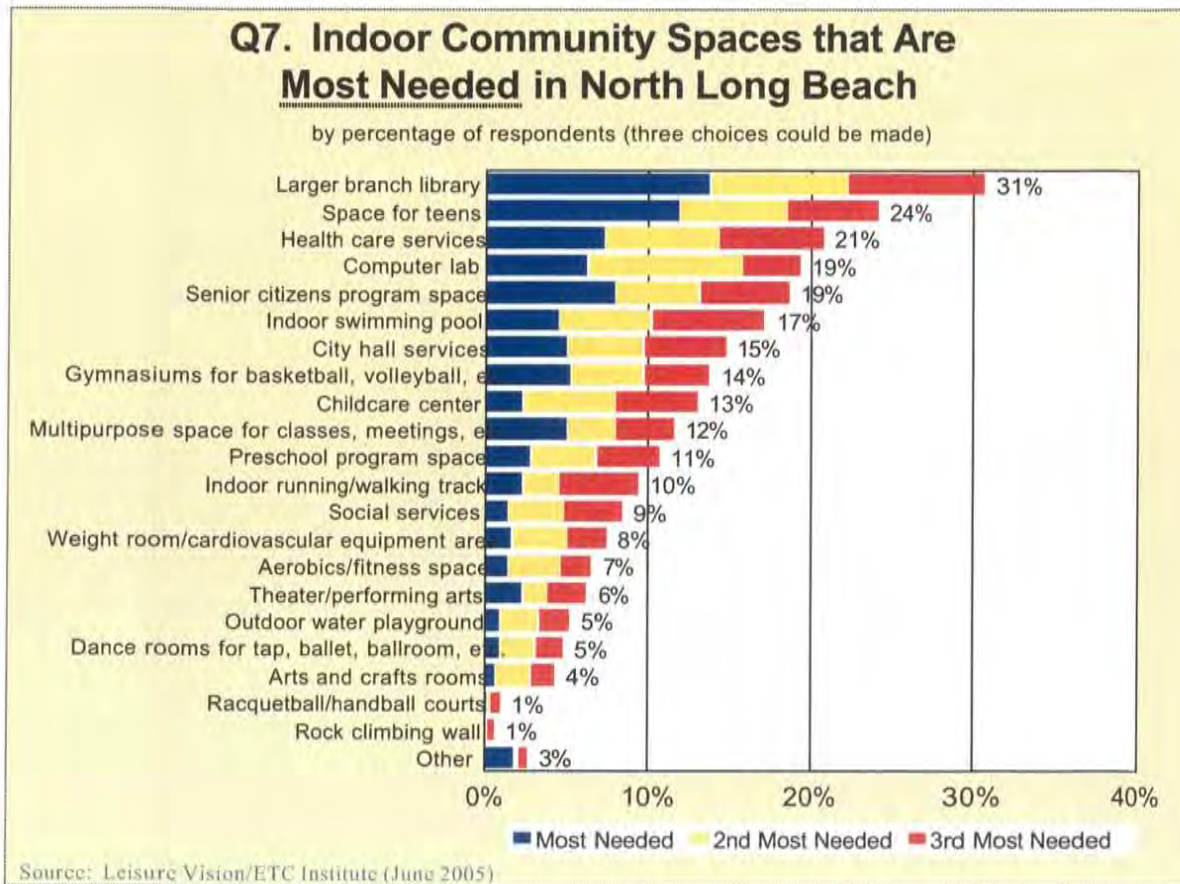
- **From the list of 21 indoor community spaces, there are three that over 70% of respondents indicated as being strongly needed in North Long Beach, including: larger branch library (73%), space for teens (73%), and computer lab (72%).** It should also be noted that 20 of the 21 spaces had over 75% of respondents indicate that they are either strongly needed or somewhat needed in North Long Beach.



Indoor Community Spaces Most Needed in North Long Beach

From the list of 21 various indoor community spaces that could be developed in North Long Beach, respondents were asked to select the three they feel are most needed in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

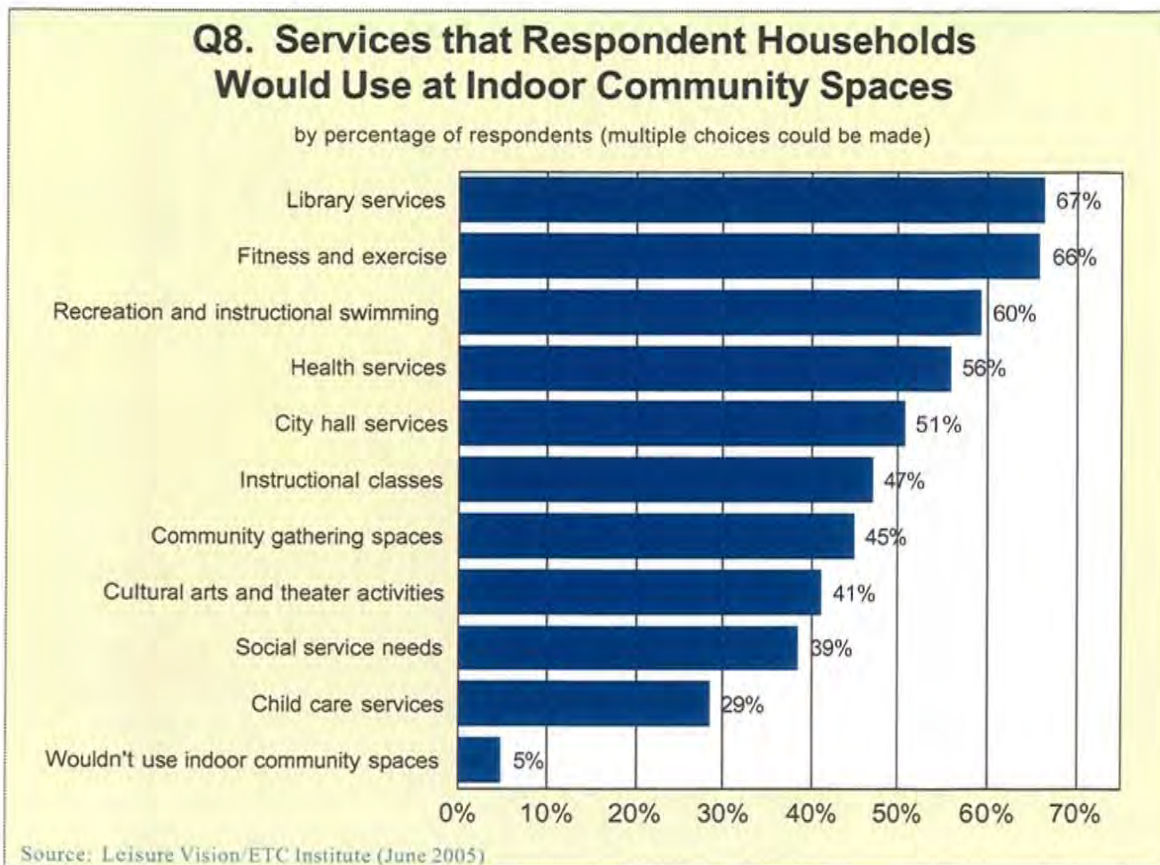
- **Larger branch library (31%) had the highest percentage of respondents selecting it as one of the three most needed indoor community spaces in North Long Beach.** There are five other spaces that over 15% of respondents selected as one of the three most needed in North Long Beach, including: space for teens (24%), health care services (21%), computer lab (19%), senior citizen program space (19%), and indoor swimming pool (17%). It should also be noted that a larger branch library had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the indoor community space they feel is most needed in North Long Beach.



Services Respondents Would Use at Indoor Community Spaces

From a list of 10 various services, respondents were asked to indicate all of the ones they would use at indoor community spaces in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

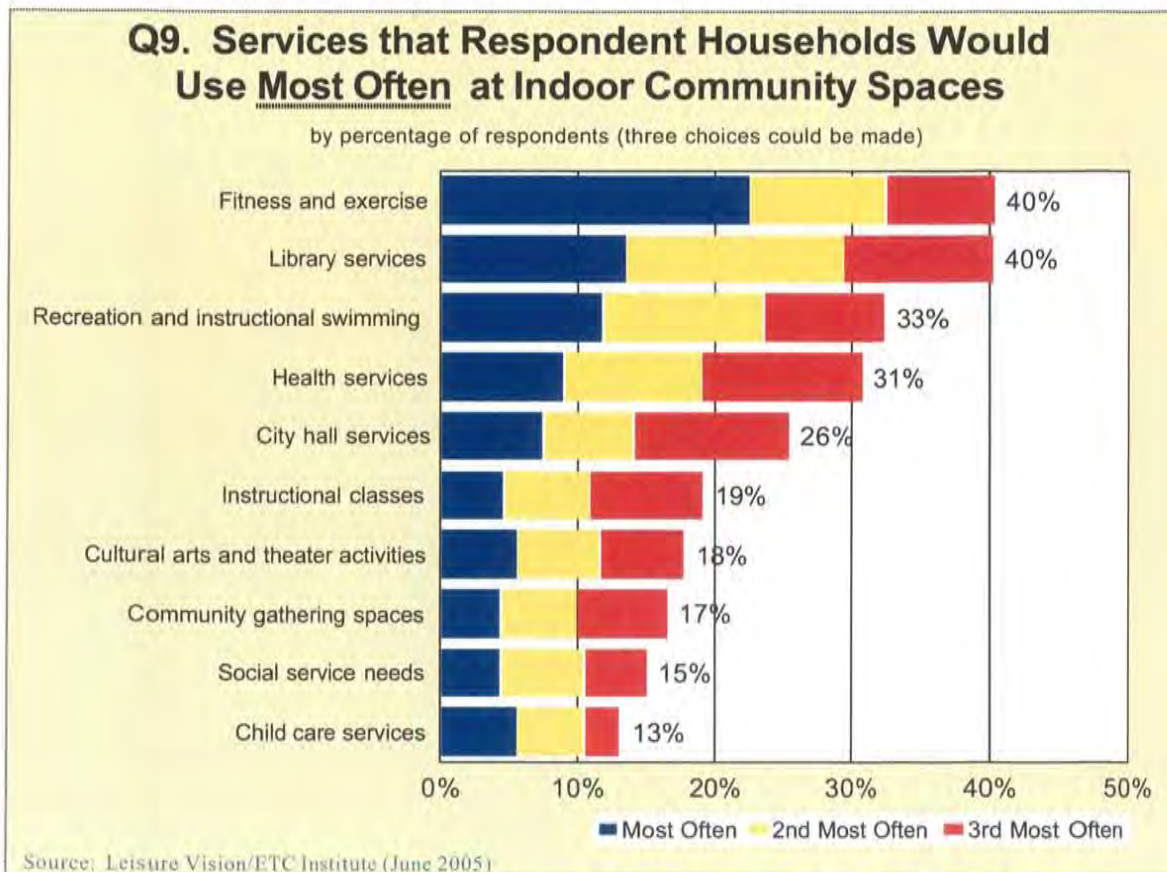
- **From the list of 10 services, there are three that at least 60% of respondents indicated they would use at indoor community spaces, including: library services (67%), fitness and exercise (66%), and recreation and instructional swimming (60%).** It should also be noted that all 10 services had over 25% of respondents indicate they would use them at indoor community spaces in North Long Beach.



Services Respondents Would Use Most Often at Indoor Community Spaces

From the list of ten options, respondents were asked to indicate the three services they would use most often at indoor community spaces in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Fitness and exercise (40%) and library services (40%) had the highest percentage of respondents select them as one of the three services they would use most often at indoor community spaces in North Long Beach.** There are two other services that over 30% of respondents selected as one of the three they would use most often in North Long Beach, including: recreation and instructional swimming (33%) and health services (31%). It should also be noted that fitness and exercise had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the service they would use most often at indoor community spaces in North Long Beach.



Frequency of Visits to a New Indoor Community Facility

Respondents were asked how often they and members of their household would visit a new indoor community facility if it had the recreation and aquatic features they most prefer. The following summarizes key findings:

- **Sixty-six percent (66%) of respondents indicated they would visit a new indoor community facility at least once per week.** This includes 44% who would visit the facility several times per week and 22% who would visit the facility once per week. An additional 17% would visit the facility a few times per month, 7% would visit it monthly, and 4% would visit it less than once a month. Only 6% of respondents indicated they would never visit the indoor community facility.

Q10. How Often Respondent Households Would Visit a New Indoor Community Facility with the Features and Purposes They Most Prefer

by percentage of respondents



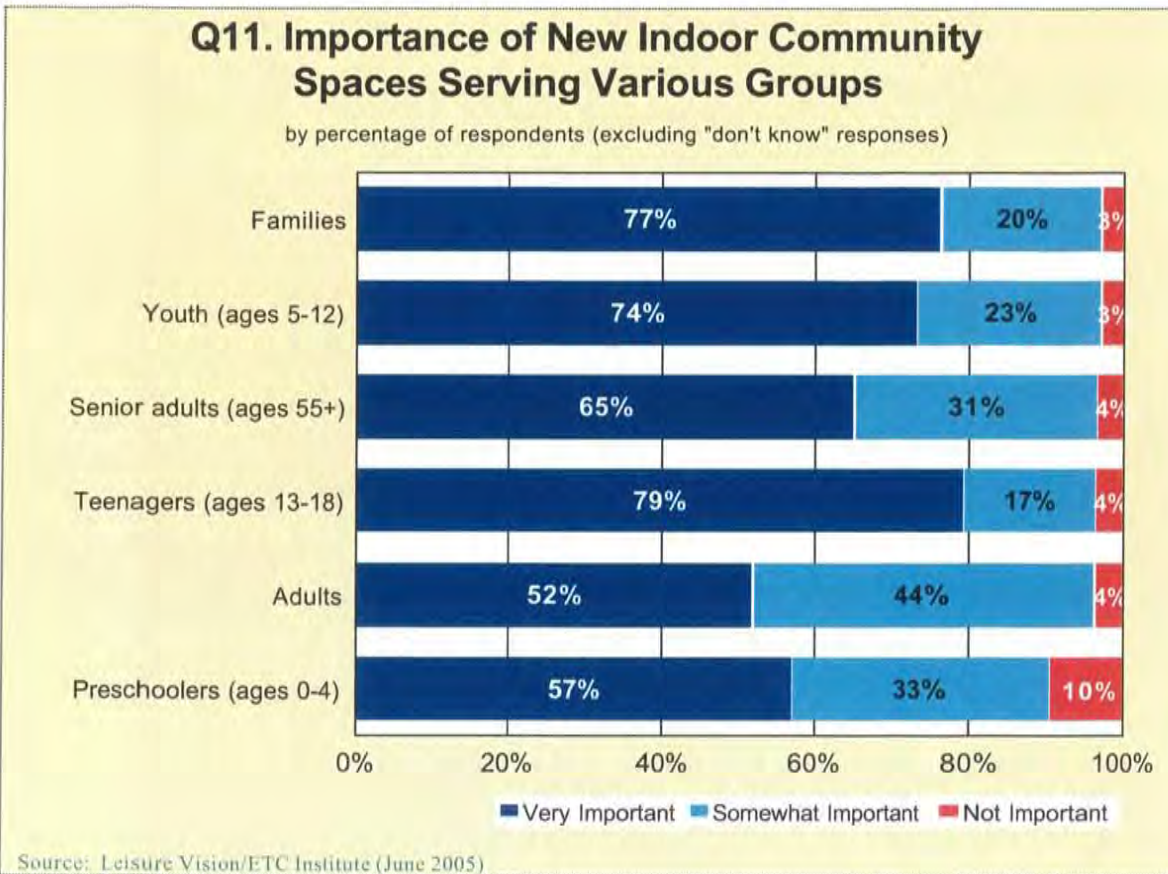
Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (June 2005)

Importance of Indoor Community Spaces Serving Various Groups

From a list of six various groups of residents, respondents were asked to rate the importance of indoor community spaces serving each group. The following summarizes key findings:

(Note: the graph below excludes "don't know" responses.)

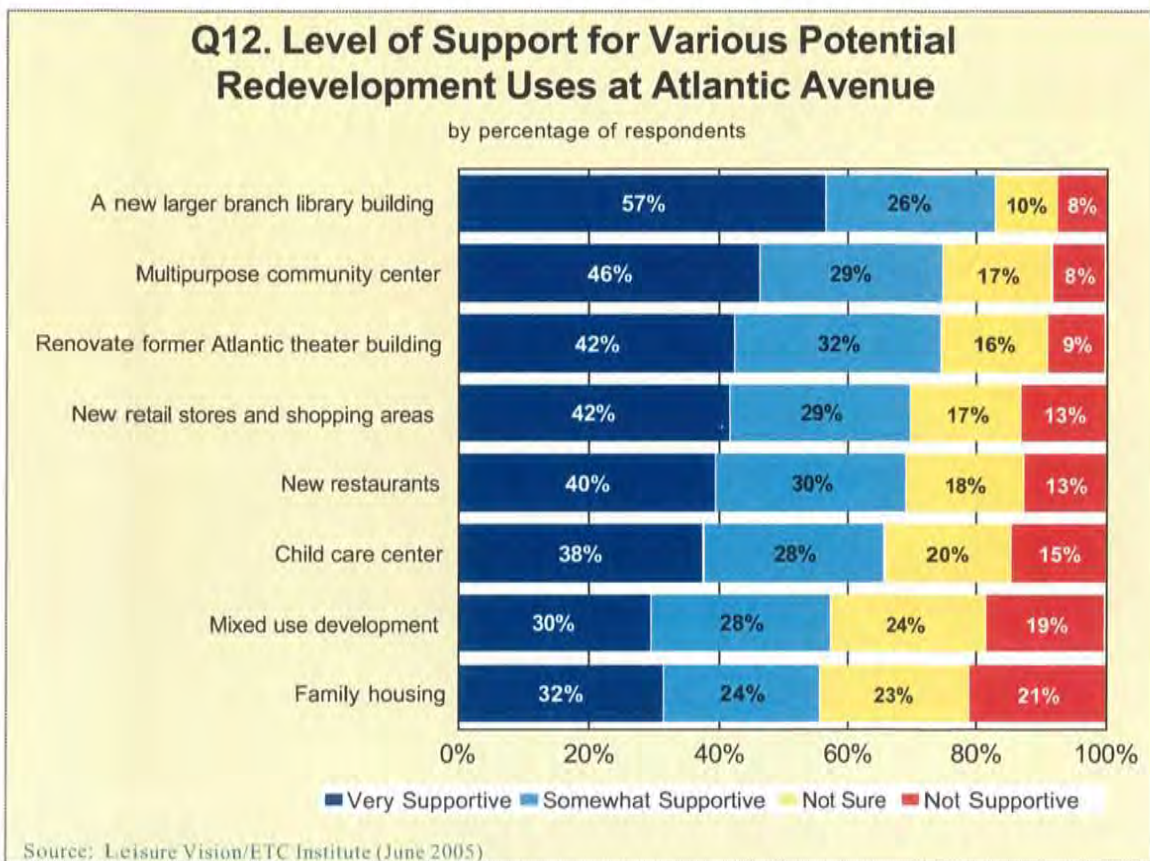
- **All six groups of residents had over 50% of respondents indicate that it is very important for indoor community spaces to serve their group.** It should also be noted that all six groups had at least 90% of respondents indicate that it's either very important or somewhat important for indoor community spaces to serve their group.



Level of Support for Various Potential Redevelopment Uses

From a list of eight various redevelopment uses, respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for each redevelopment use at Atlantic Avenue between 56th and 59th street. The following summarizes key findings:

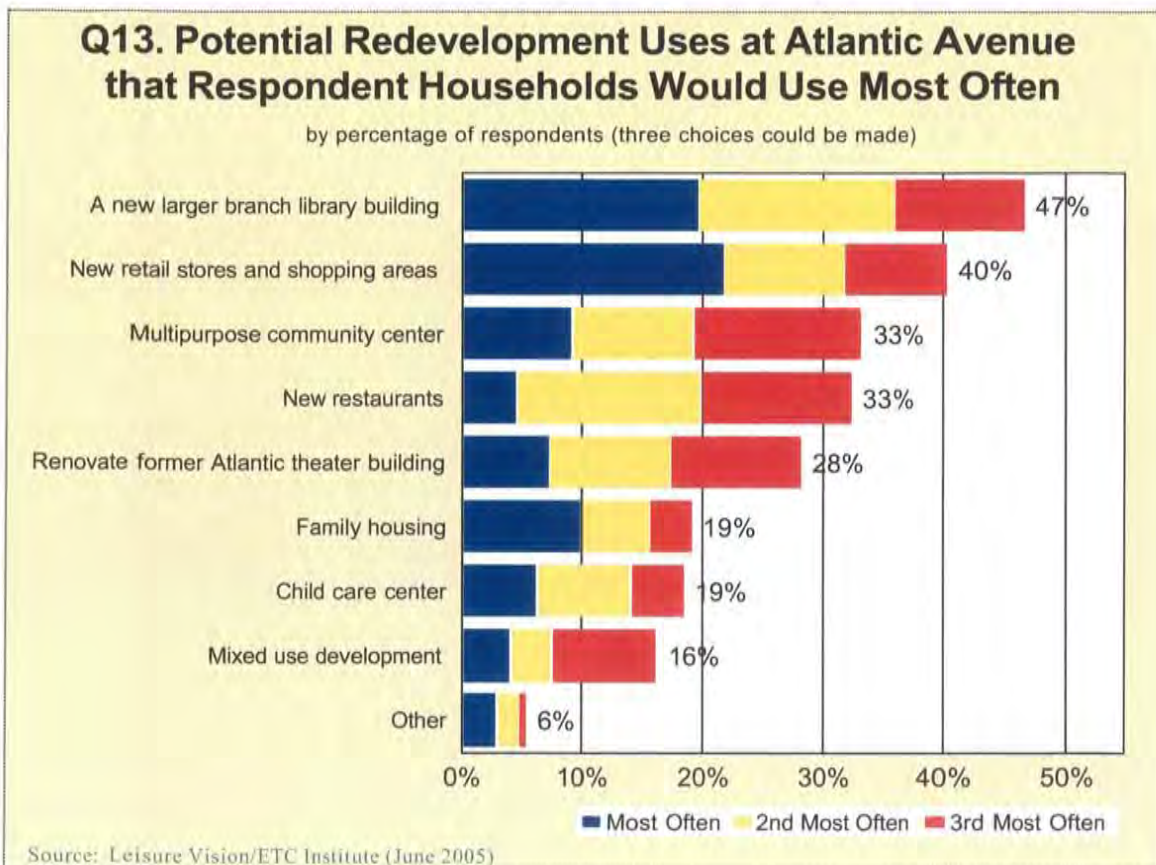
- **From the list of eight redevelopment uses at Atlantic Avenue, there are five that at least 40% of respondents indicated being very supportive of, including: a new larger branch library building (57%), a multipurpose community center (46%), renovate former Atlantic theater building (42%), new retail stores and shopping areas (42%), and new restaurants (40%).** It should also be noted that all eight redevelopment uses had over 50% of respondents indicate being either very supportive or somewhat supportive of their use at Atlantic Avenue.



Potential Redevelopment Uses Respondents Would Use Most Often

From the list of eight various redevelopment uses, respondents were asked to indicate the three redevelopment uses they would use most often at Atlantic Avenue between 56th and 59th Street. The following summarizes key findings:

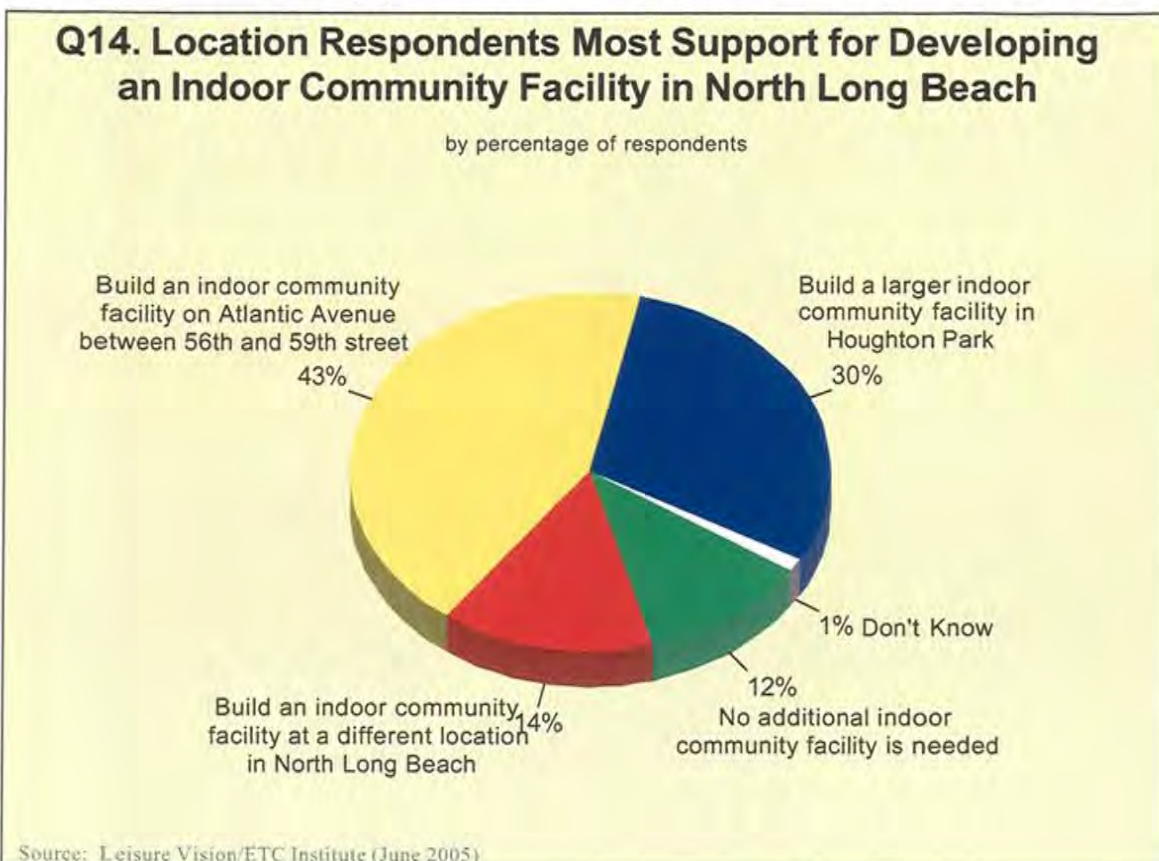
- **A new larger branch library building (47%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the three redevelopment uses they would use most often at Atlantic Avenue.** There are three other redevelopment uses that over 30% of respondents selected as one of the three they would use most often, including: new retail stores and shopping areas (40%), multipurpose community center (33%), and new restaurants (33%). It should also be noted that new retail stores and shopping areas had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the redevelopment area they would use most often at Atlantic Avenue.



Support for Various Locations to Develop an Indoor Community Facility

From a list of three various locations, respondents were asked to indicate the one they most support for developing a new indoor community facility in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

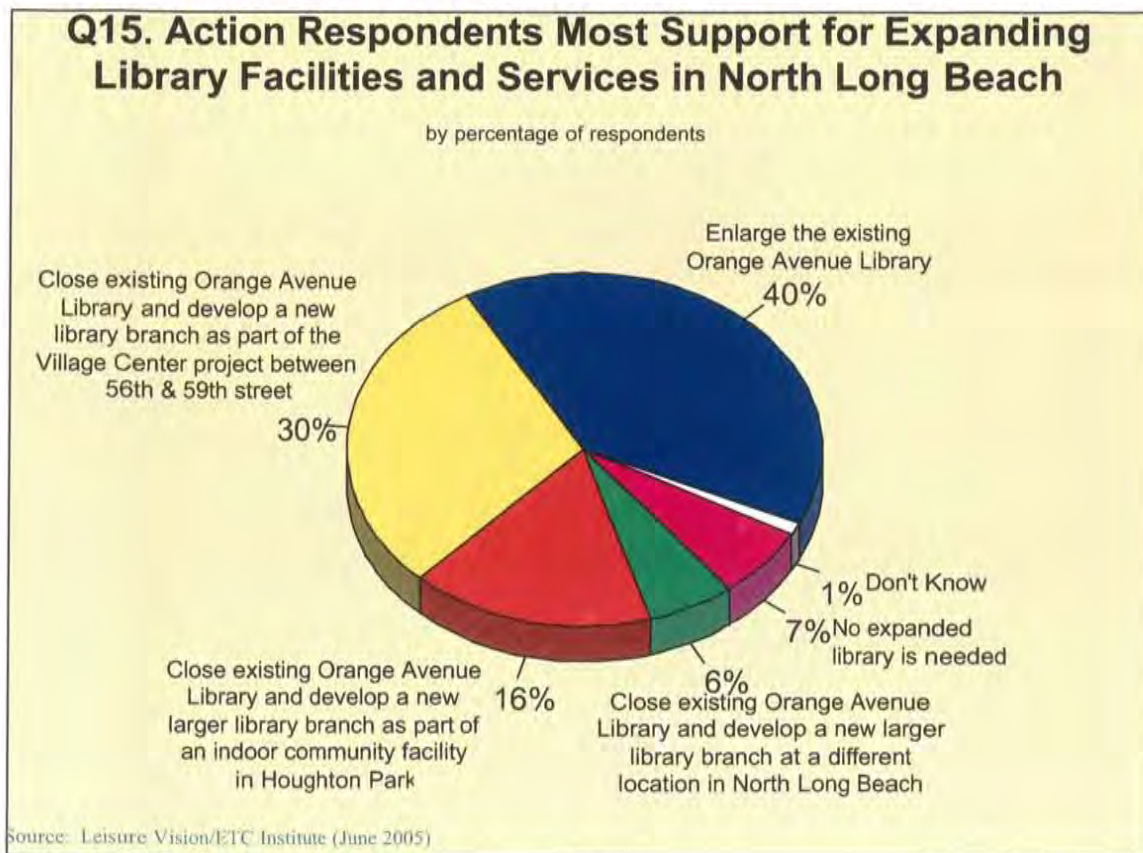
- **Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents most support building an indoor community facility on Atlantic Avenue between 56th and 59th Street.** In addition, 30% of respondents most support building a larger indoor community facility in Houghton Park, and 14% most support building an indoor community facility at a different location in North Long Beach. Only 12% of respondents indicated that no additional indoor community facility is needed, and the remaining 1% indicated “don’t know”.



Support for Actions for Expanding Library Facilities and Services

From a list of five options, respondents were asked to indicate the action they most support for expanding library facilities and services in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

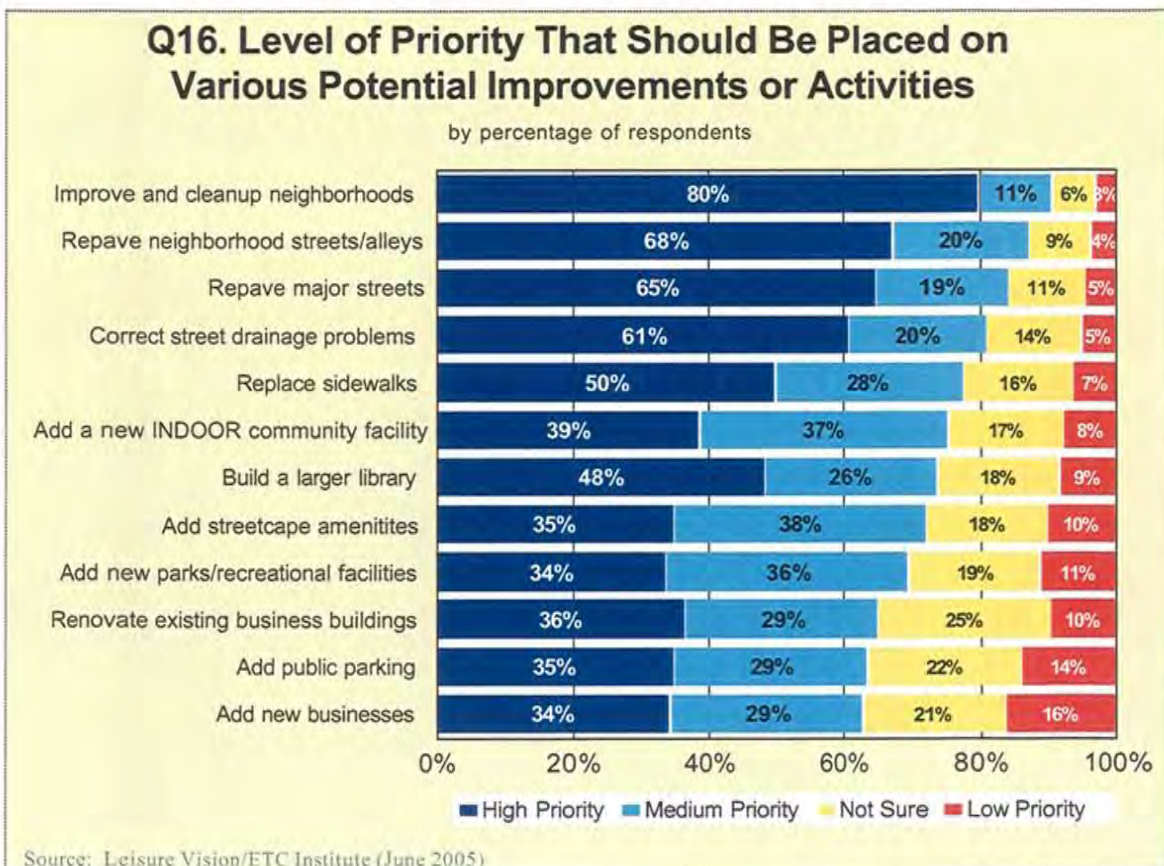
- **Forty percent (40%) of respondents most support enlarging the existing Orange Avenue Library.** In addition, 30% of respondents most support closing the existing Orange Avenue Library and developing a new library branch as part of the Village Center project between 56th and 59th Street, 16% most support closing the existing Orange Avenue Library and developing a new larger library branch as part of an indoor community facility in Houghton Park, and 6% most support closing the existing Orange Avenue Library and developing a new larger library branch at a different location in North Long Beach. Only 7% of respondents indicated that no expanded library is needed, and the remaining 1% indicated “don’t know”.



Priority to Place on Potential Improvements or Activities

From a list of 12 improvements or activities that could be provided in North Long Beach using redevelopment funds, respondents were asked to indicate the level of priority that should be placed on each one. The following summarizes key findings:

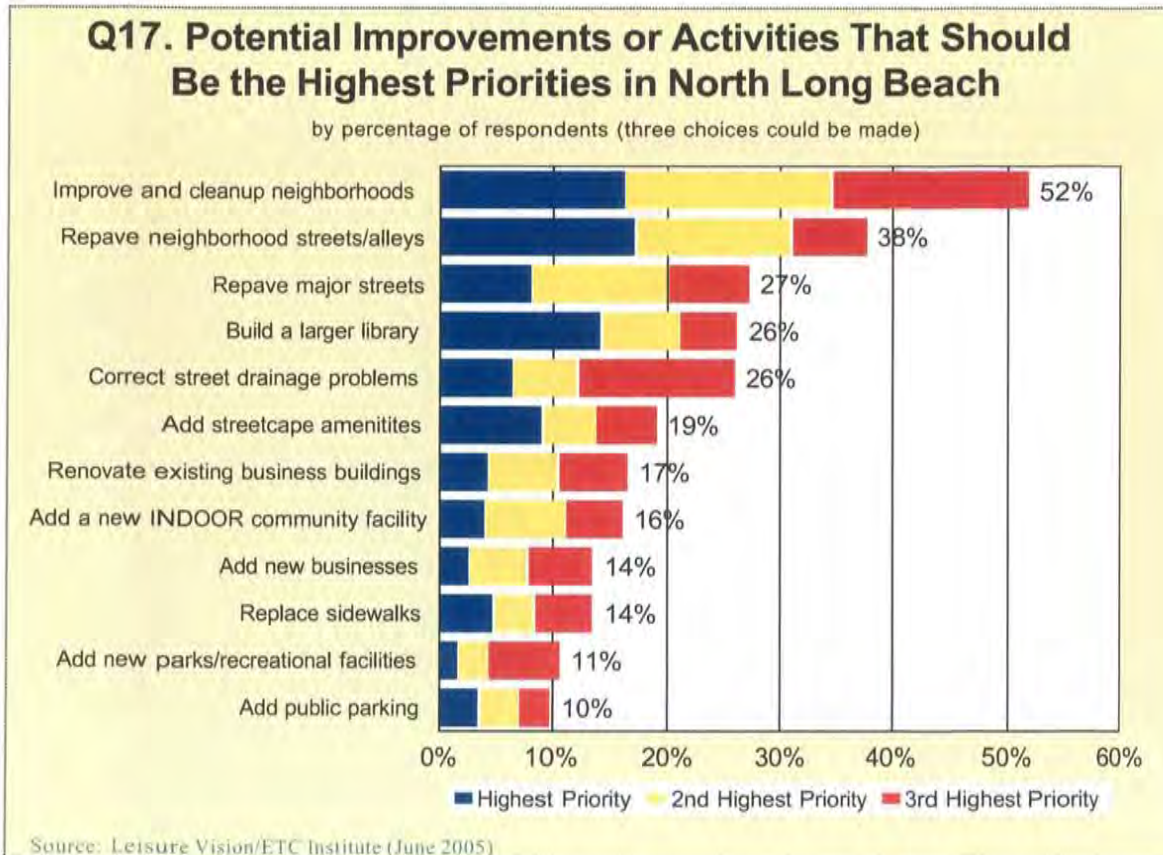
- **From the list of 12 improvements, there are four that over 60% of respondents indicated should be a high priority, including: improve and cleanup neighborhoods (80%), repave neighborhood streets/alleys (68%), repave major streets (65%), and correct street drainage problems (61%).** It should also be noted that all 12 improvements had over 60% of respondents indicate they should be either a high or medium priority.



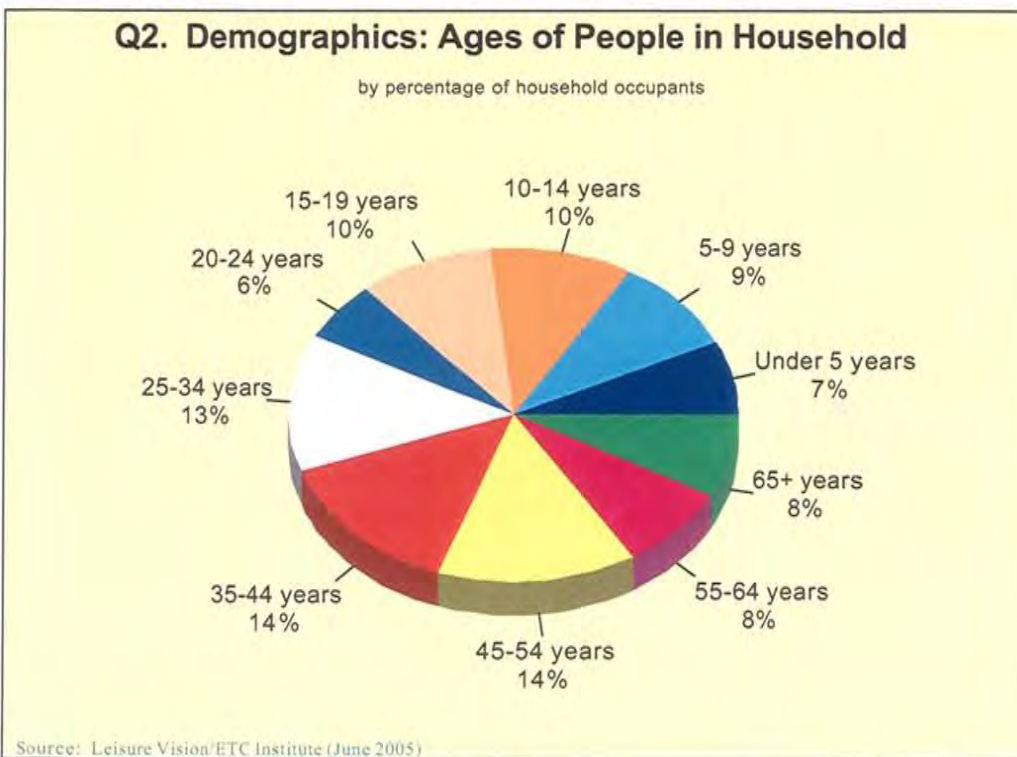
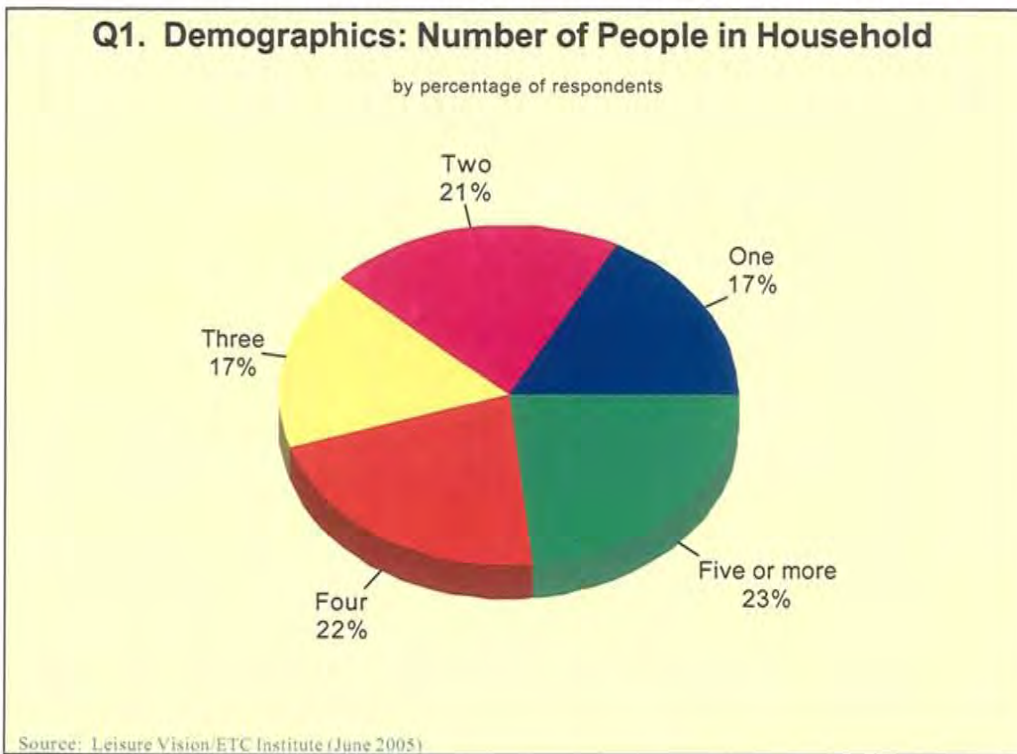
Potential Improvements or Activities that Should Be of Highest Priority

From the list of 12 improvements or activities that could be provided in North Long Beach using redevelopment funds, respondents were asked to indicate the three that should be the highest priorities in North Long Beach. The following summarizes key findings:

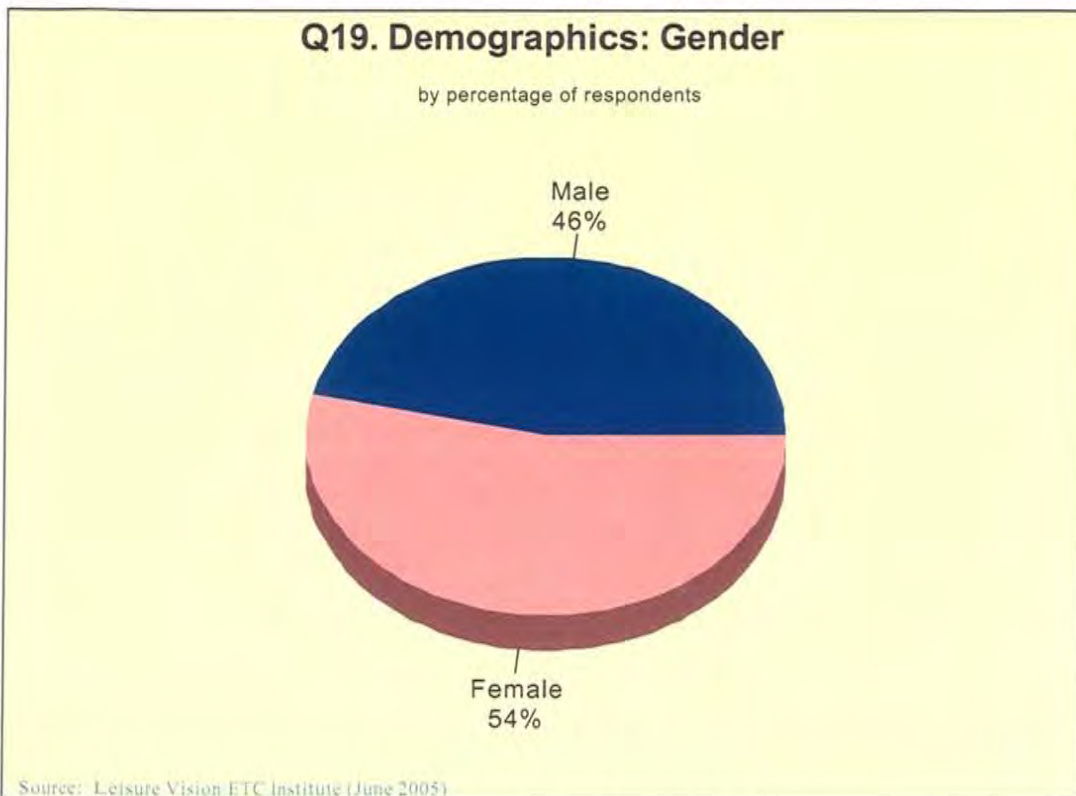
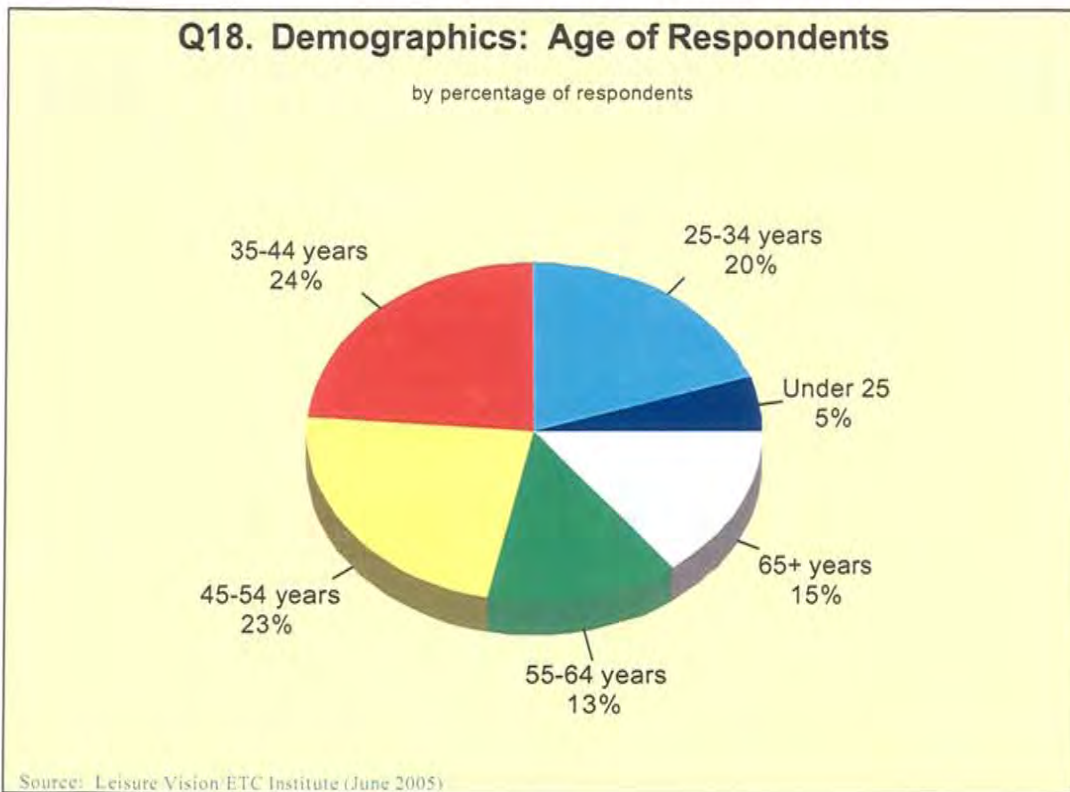
- **Improve and cleanup neighborhoods (52%) had the highest percentage of respondents select it as one of the three highest priority improvements in North Long Beach.** There are four other improvements that over 25% of respondents selected as one of the three highest priority improvements, including: repave neighborhood streets/alleys (38%), repave major streets (27%), build a larger library (26%), and correct street drainage problems (26%). It should also be noted that repave neighborhood streets/alleys had the highest percentage of respondents select it as their first choice as the improvement that should receive the highest priority in North Long Beach.



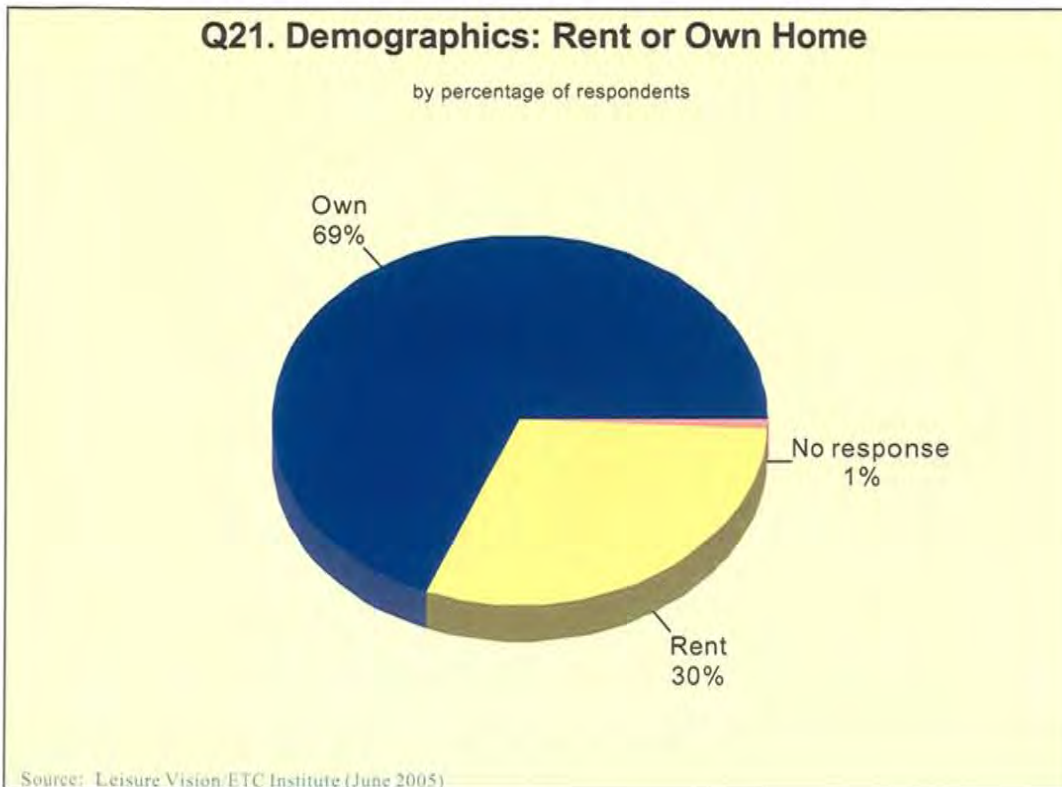
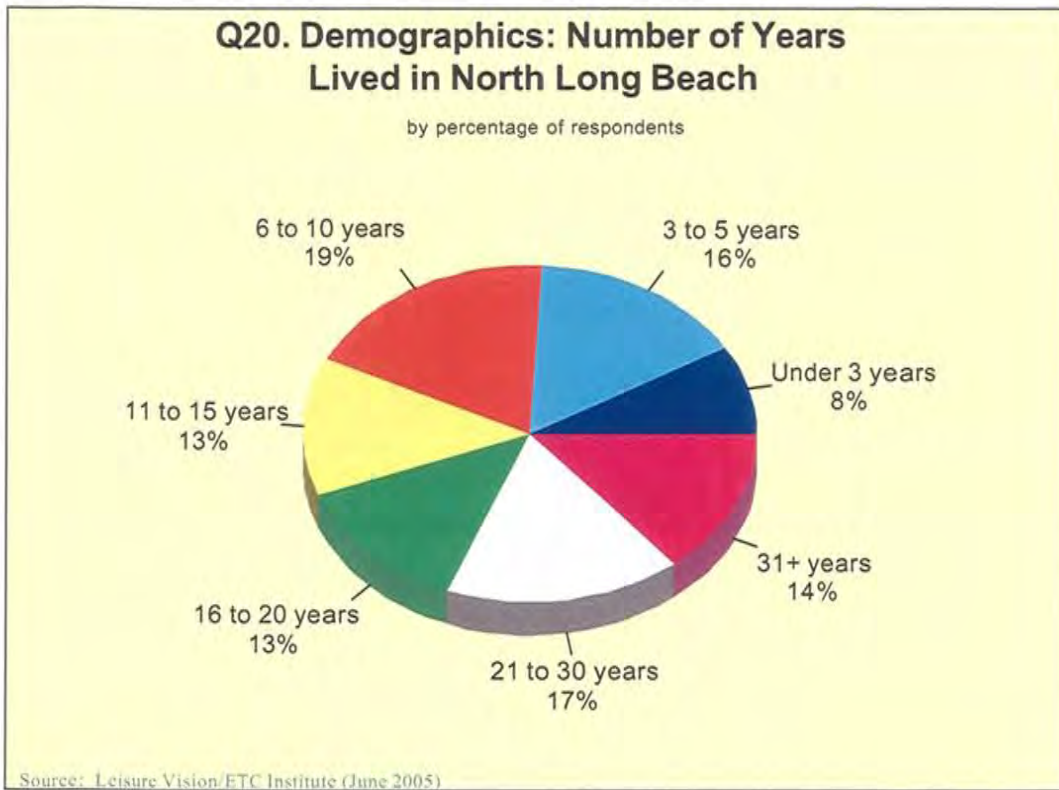
Demographics



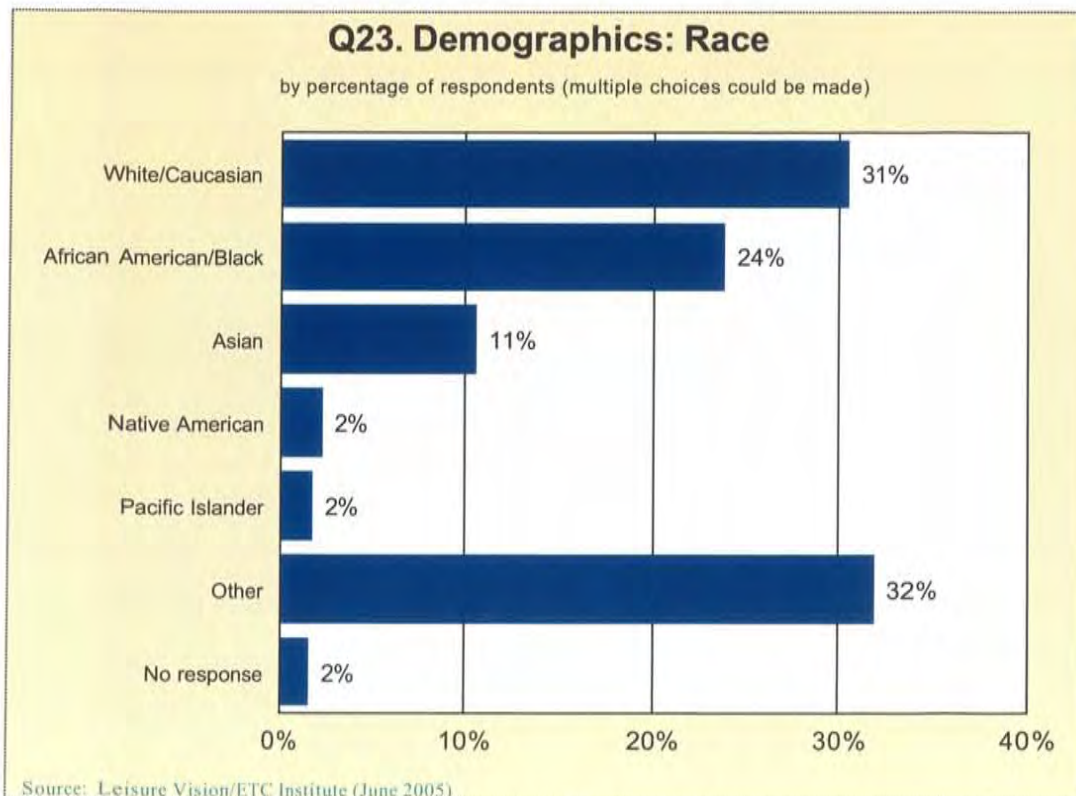
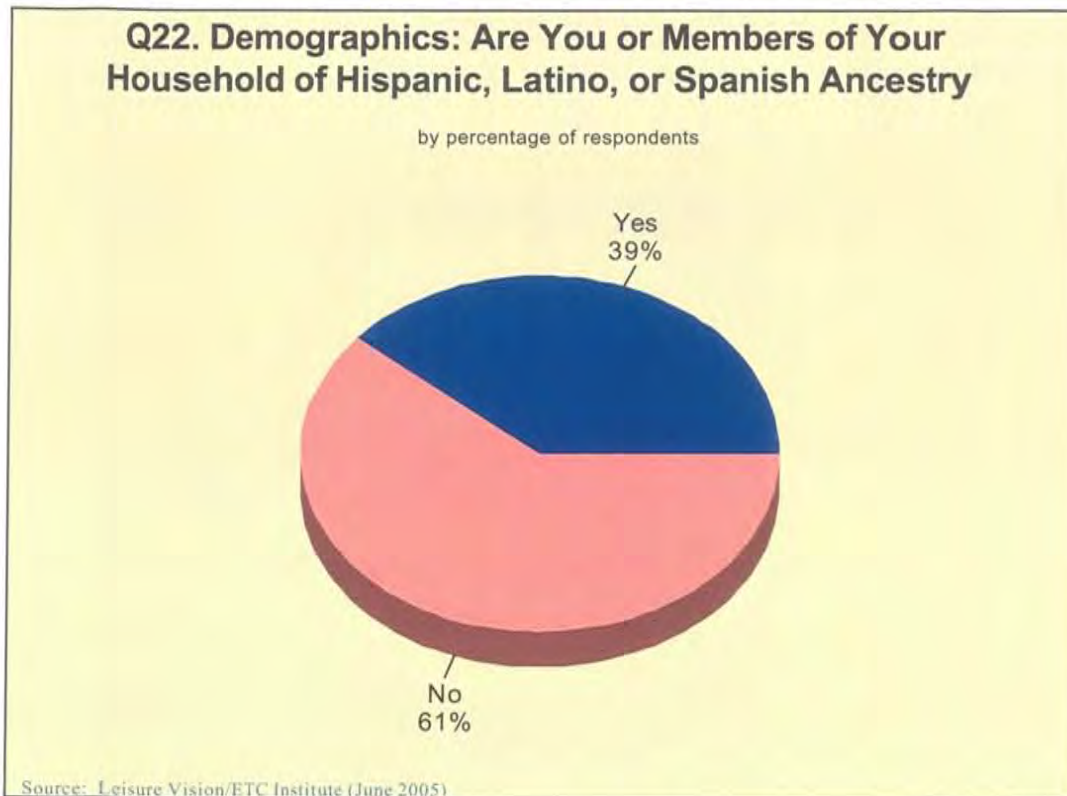
Demographics (Continued)



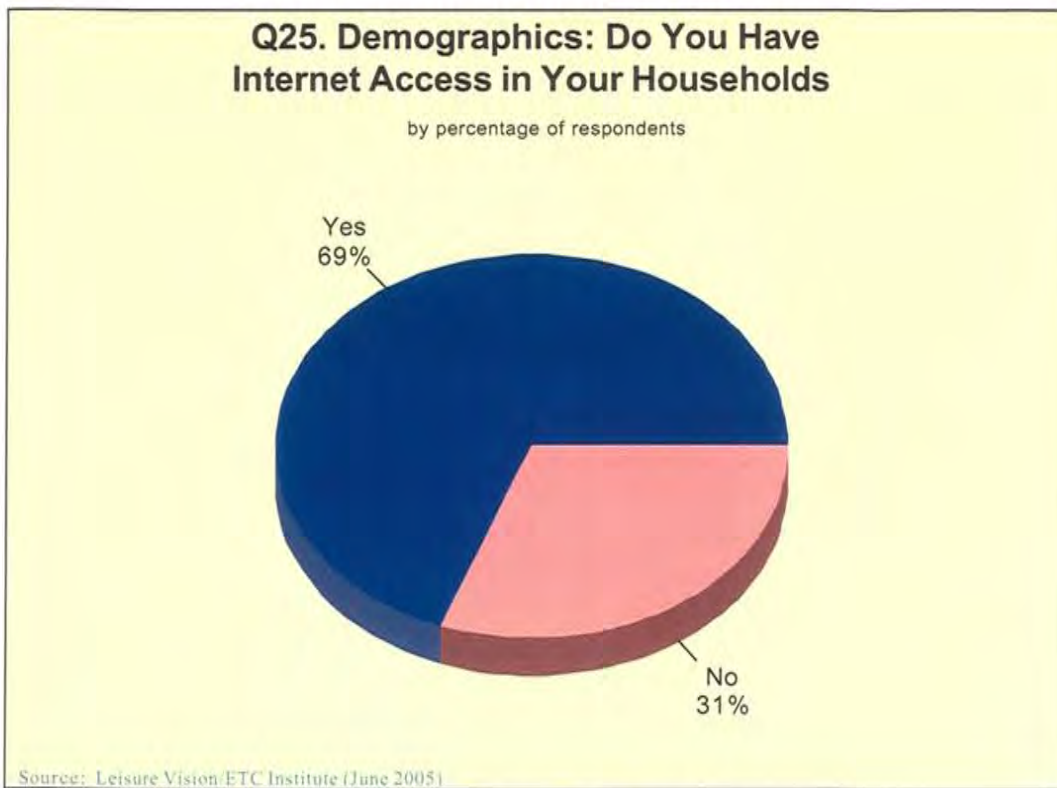
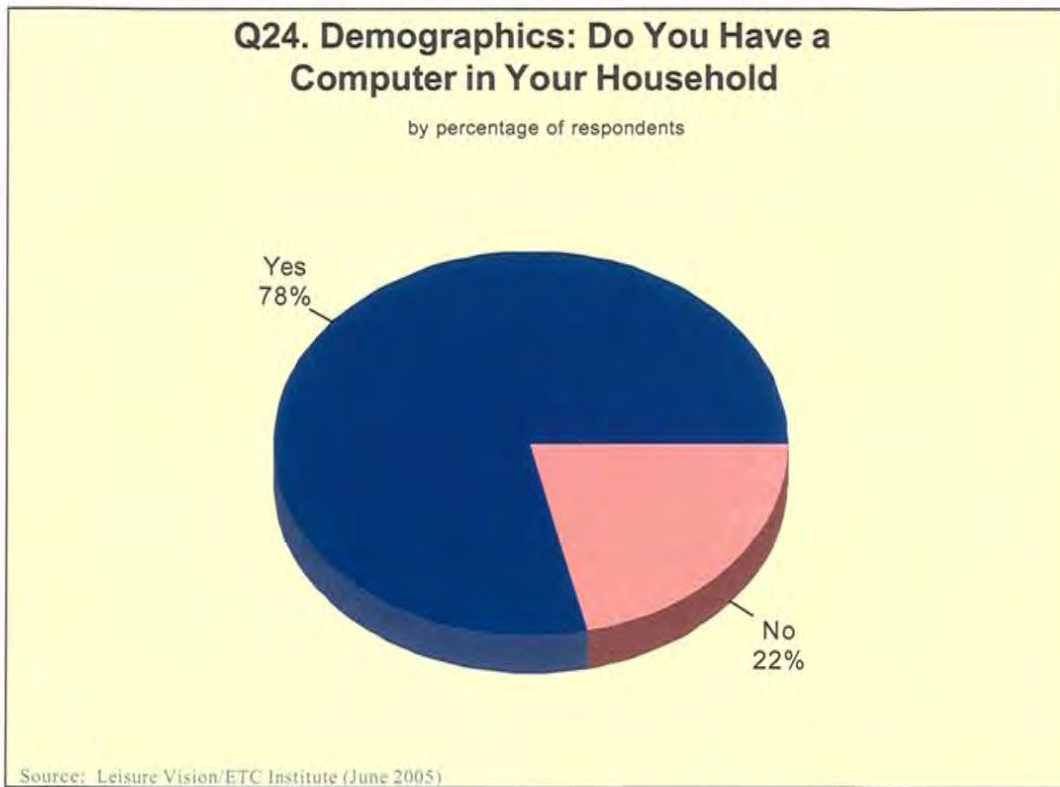
Demographics (Continued)



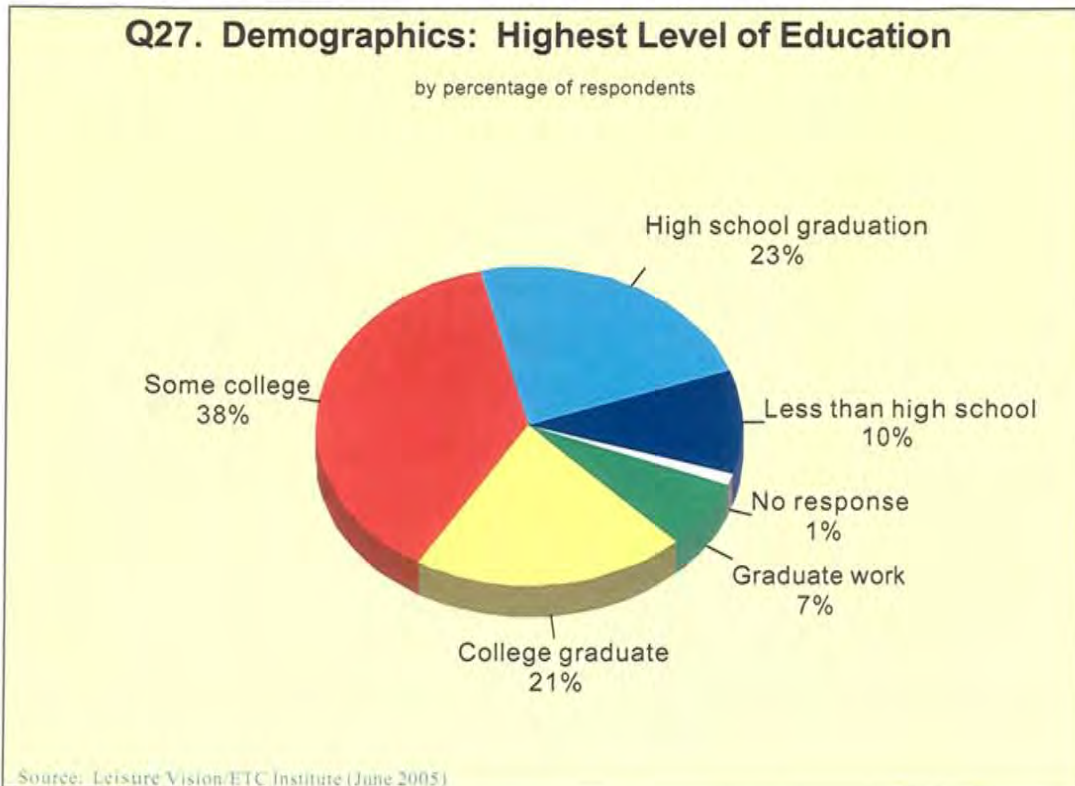
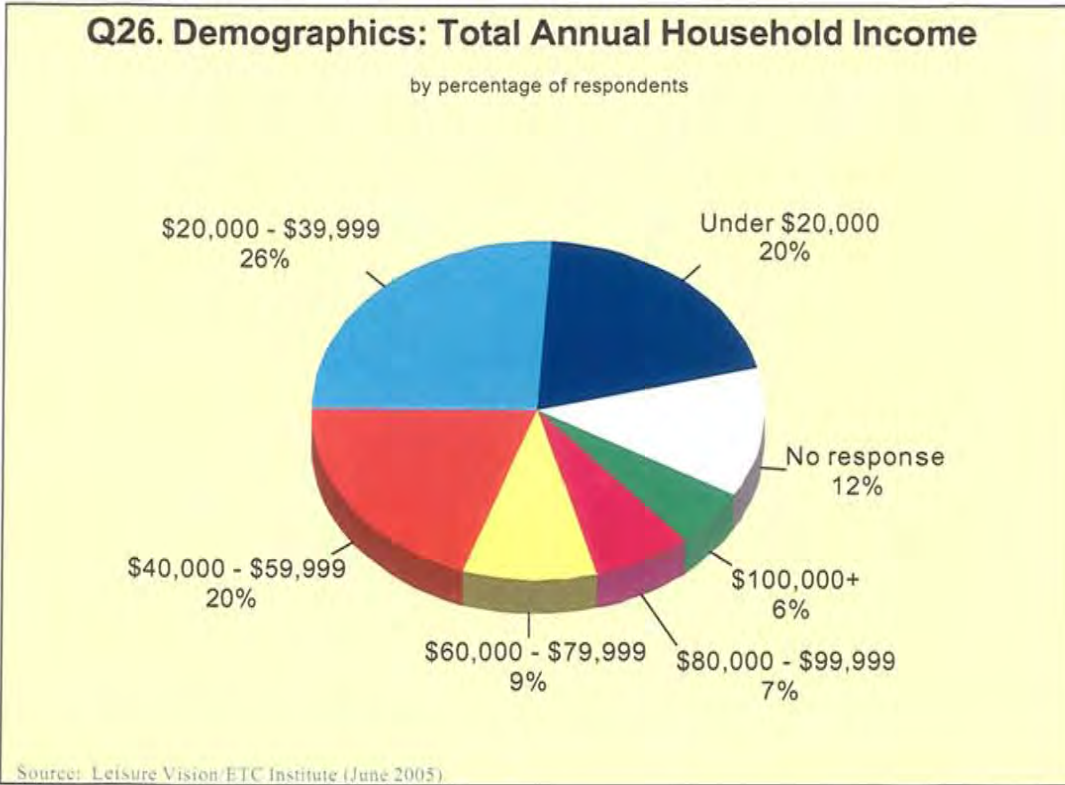
Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



Demographics (Continued)



Cross Tabs – The survey results noted above have also been analyzed using cross tabulation of data for certain characteristics.

Hispanic Ancestry - When the results are evaluated based on Hispanic ancestry of the respondents the following facts are known.

- Hispanics have larger households than non-Hispanics.
- They are strong users of the existing library on Orange Avenue as well as other recreation facilities.
- They are a little more satisfied with existing facilities.
- The top three features that Hispanics feel are most needed in North Long Beach are the same as the overall response numbers. Beyond the top three, a pool was ranked higher than other respondents.
- The top three purposes for which Hispanics would use indoor community spaces in North Long Beach are the same as the overall response numbers. Besides the top three a pool was ranked higher than other respondents.
- Would be very strong users of any new facility.
- The top three choices for what amenities would be used at the Village Center (Atlantic and 59th) were the same as the general population but use of a library and community center were higher than other respondents.
- Support the development of an indoor community center on Atlantic Avenue and expanding the library on Orange Avenue.
- The top three potential improvements needed in North Long Beach are the same as the general population but the importance of a library is a little higher.
- Households with computers are equal to the general population while internet access is slightly less.

Income – Reviewing the survey based on the income level of the respondents indicates the following:

- Generally speaking the higher income respondents have the larger households.
- There is stronger use of Houghton Park with the lower income levels as well as stronger use of other existing North Long Beach facilities.
- The lowest and highest income categories are the least satisfied with existing facilities.

- The top three features that are most needed in North Long Beach are:
 - Low income – rank library as one but health care services and senior activities as two and three.
 - High income – rank library as one, teen activities and gym as two and three.
 - Overall responses – rank library as one, teen activities and health care services as two and three.
- The top three purposes that respondents would use indoor community spaces in North Long Beach are:
 - Low income – health services, library and fitness are the top three
 - High income – library, fitness and pool are the top three
 - Overall responses – fitness, library and pool as the top three
- There would be strong use of any new facility by all income levels.
- The top three choices for what amenities would be used at the Village Center (Atlantic and 59th) were:
 - Low income – retail, library, and restaurants are the top three
 - High income – library, retail, and restaurants are the top three
 - Overall responses – library, retail, and community center are the top three
- All income levels support the development of an indoor community center on Atlantic Avenue and high and low incomes support expanding the library on Orange Avenue while middle incomes are more supportive of a library on Atlantic.
- The top three potential improvements needed in North Long Beach are basically the same as the general population for all income levels.
- Low income households are far less likely to have computers or internet access.

Senior Households - When the results are evaluated based on the age of the respondents the following facts are known.

- Seniors have much smaller households than other age groups.
- They are not strong users of the existing library on Orange Avenue or other recreation facilities.
- They have the lowest level of satisfaction with existing facilities.
- The top three features that seniors feel are most needed in North Long Beach are slightly different than the overall response numbers as senior space is the number one option and a library is not in the top three.

- The top three purposes for which seniors would use indoor community spaces in North Long Beach are different than the overall response numbers. While fitness is ranked first for both, seniors rank health care and social services as the other top reasons.
- Would not use a new facility to the same degree as the general population.
- The top three choices for what amenities would be used at the Village Center (Atlantic Avenue and 59th Street) were also different than the general population with retail, restaurants and a community center being the top three. The general population has a library, retail and a community center as the top three.
- Seniors support the development of an indoor community center on Atlantic Avenue and building a new library there as well.
- The top three potential improvements needed in North Long Beach are the same as the general population but the importance of a library is a little lower.
- Seniors are far less likely to have computers or internet access than other age groups.
- Seniors are generally less supportive of the need to build a new library or community center in North Long Beach.

Households with Children - When the results are evaluated based on households with children the following facts are known.

- Households with younger children have the largest households.
- They have strong use of Houghton Park.
- They have strong use of the existing library on Orange Avenue as well as other recreation facilities.
- They are in the middle for satisfaction with existing facilities.
- The top three features that are most needed in North Long Beach are:
 - Households with children under age 10 – rank library as one and health care services and teens as two and three.
 - Households with children age 10-19 – rank library as one, pool and teens as two and three.
 - Overall responses – rank library as one, teen activities and health care services as two and three.

- The top three purposes that respondents would use indoor community spaces in North Long Beach are:
 - Households with children under 10 – library, pool and fitness are the top three
 - Households with children age 10-19 – library, pool and fitness are the top three
 - Overall responses – fitness, library and pool as the top three
- They would be very strong users of any new facility.
- The top three choices for what amenities would be used at the Village Center (Atlantic and 59th) were:
 - Households with children under 10 – library, community center and retail are the top three
 - Households with children age 10-19 – library, retail, and restaurants are the top three
 - Overall responses – library, retail, and community center are the top three
- Support the development of an indoor community center on Atlantic Avenue and expanding the library on Orange Avenue.
- The top three potential improvements needed in North Long Beach are basically the same as the general population for households with children except that households with children under 10 listed a library in the third slot.
- Households with children are more likely to have computers and internet access.
- Households with children (especially those with children under age 10) are bigger supporters of an expanded library and community center and would be much stronger users of both facilities.

Education – Reviewing the survey based on the level of education of the respondents indicates the following:

- The more highly educated respondents utilize Houghton Park less and private facilities more while the less educated have stronger use of Houghton and the existing library.
- The highly educated are the least satisfied with existing facilities while the less educated are the most satisfied.
- The top three features that are most needed in North Long Beach are:
 - Lower education – generally are the same as the overall response.
 - Higher education – rank library as one, teen activities and seniors as two and three.

- Overall responses – rank library as one, teen activities and health care services as two and three.
- The top three purposes that respondents would use indoor community spaces in North Long Beach are:
 - Lower education – health, library and pool are the top three
 - Higher education – fitness, library and pool are the top three
 - Overall responses – fitness, library and pool are the top three
- There would be strong use of any new facility by all education levels.
- The top three choices for what amenities would be used at the Village Center (Atlantic and 59th) were:
 - Lower education – generally are the same as the overall response.
 - Higher education – generally are the same as the overall response.
 - Overall responses – library, retail, and community center are the top three
- All education levels support the development of an indoor community center on Atlantic Avenue and expanding the library on Orange Avenue.
- The top three potential improvements needed in North Long Beach are basically the same as the general population for all education levels except for the fact that the higher educated rank library as their second priority.
- Low educated households are less likely to have computers or internet access.

Overall Survey Summary – When the results of the survey are summarized the following observations can be made.

- Approximately one third of the respondents have used Houghton Park in the last 12 months.
- Of existing community facilities the branch library on Orange Avenue has the highest percentage of use.
- There is generally not a high degree of satisfaction with existing facilities.
- The indoor community spaces that are most needed in North Long Beach include:
 - Larger branch library
 - Space for teens
 - Health care services
- Services that would most often be used at an indoor community facility include:
 - Fitness and exercise
 - Library services

- Recreational or instructional pool
- A new indoor facility would receive a high rate of use.
- It will be important that any new facility serve all age groups.
- Potential redevelopment uses at the Village Center that respondents would use most often include:
 - A new larger branch library
 - New retail stores
 - Multipurpose community center
- The greatest support is for building a new community facility at the Village Center.
- The greatest support is for expanding the existing branch library on Orange Avenue.
- Potential improvements that are the highest priorities in North Long Beach are:
 - Improve and cleanup neighborhoods
 - Repave neighborhood streets and alleys
 - Repave major streets
- A large percentage of respondents have computers and internet access.

Overall Public Input Findings – When all of the public input mechanisms are reviewed as a whole the following are some of the consistent findings.

- There are a variety of unmet needs in North Long Beach.
- The development of a new branch library is a top priority for any new community facility.
- There is mid-level support for a new community center (beyond a library). If one were to be built then the priorities for spaces would be:
 - Teen area
 - Health services
 - Fitness elements
 - Indoor pool
- Any new community facility would receive strong use by the general public.
- There is strong support for redeveloping Atlantic Avenue into the Village Center but there is the expectation that this would involve more than just a community facility. New retail, housing and restaurants are also strong issues.

- There is not a high level of support for developing new community facilities in Houghton Park. The future of Houghton Park could be an issue with the construction of other facilities on Atlantic Avenue.
- While the number one community facility to be built at the Village Center is a new branch library there is also the highest level of support for expanding the library at its present site on Orange Avenue.
- When the issue of building a new community facility in North Long Beach is measured against other broader concerns for the area it is not a top priority.

Houghton Park Facilities Evaluation

Currently, Houghton Park accommodates a variety of community recreation activities. The park currently has an indoor community center, a North Facilities Center, and an indoor storage/work area that is located underneath the bleachers of the baseball field that is utilized by Future Generations as a bicycle repair facility. In addition the park has a number of formal and informal athletic fields, a picnic shelter area, a skateboard park and a Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The park and its facilities are utilized for a variety of recreation and social service activities. The community center has a number of spaces that are primarily designed to serve as recreation amenities but the center also handles many social service needs from seniors to African American infant health. The center has a strong youth and senior orientation but is also utilized by adults and local community groups. The North Facilities Center has recently undergone a renovation so it can be utilized for the city's Health Services Department for the Center for Families and Youth. The building also houses a small day care facility that is operated by the school district as well as an office for the City Council representative for the area. The outdoor fields are utilized for organized youth sports (flag football, soccer, etc.) as well as for adult sports such as soccer, softball, and cricket.

Community Center: Over the past 75 years the community center has undergone three major additions in efforts to increase the capacity for programs and services. As a result of these additions the building is not well laid out making operation and supervision much more difficult.

The various additions date from 1930, 1959 and 1987 respectively. In July of 2004 the City of Long Beach completed a detailed facility assessment which reported detailed observations of existing conditions of the grounds, building exterior, roof, mechanical systems, electrical systems and interior spaces. Since this work was completed, there has been additional water damage throughout the facility, especially in the 1987 addition.

The following is a review of each of the existing program space uses:

Main Lobby 440 sf

The Main Lobby space serves as the main access point to the center. The main office, reception desk, recreation/dining room and restrooms adjoin this space. Extending from the lobby are hallways leading to the daycare area and the remaining activity spaces. The lobby appears to be adequate for the size and use of the center at the present time.

Restrooms 480 sf

The men's restroom contains (1) water closet, (2) urinals and (2) lavatories. The women's restroom contains (3) water closets and (3) lavatories. These restrooms are intended to serve the recreation/dining room, administration offices, exercise and weight rooms. The restrooms are in fair to poor condition.

Exterior Restrooms 800 sf

Intended to serve the park users with exterior access doors, these restrooms have been closed and are currently utilized for storage.

Administration Offices 1150 sf

There are six staff offices of various sizes disbursed throughout the building. Currently there is no central work, mail or meeting space. In general the office area is too small and in relatively poor condition. There is no space that is available for one-on-one counseling sessions with users.

Recreation/Dining Room 2800 sf

The recreation/dining room provides space for a wide variety of social functions throughout the day serving as a dining room for the senior VOA lunch as well as a multipurpose activity and game room for teens after school. The area is also used for a variety of classes, special events and rentals. This is one of the more versatile spaces in the building.

The space opens out to a walled, exterior north patio. The patio has limited uses and really serves as an over flow for functions in this room. Currently, there are no provisions to divide the space for multiple users. The room is not sized or finished to use for active programs such as basketball or volleyball and lacks dedicated storage. Equipment and furniture are stored within the space reducing the usable area. The public address and music systems need replacement.

Kitchen 256 sf

This space was originally intended to serve the recreation/dining room as well as the interior hallway and north patio. The equipment is outdated and needs replacement. Layout of this space is inefficient and reduces effectiveness as a food preparation and serving area.

Day Care Area 4500 sf

This area is utilized for an extended day care program that services 35 kids a day. The daycare occupies nearly all of the original building constructed in 1930. One of the side verandas has been filled in to accommodate storage, office and locker needs. The adjacent toilets, kitchen, stage and dressing rooms are still serviceable and maintain much of the original equipment and architectural character. While day care has made good use of the space, the room is not ideal for such functions with very high ceilings and a large open area that is difficult to subdivide. The lack of air conditioning in this portion of the building is also a major problem.

Fitness Room



Daycare Center



Utility/Storage Room 250 sf

Located adjacent to the daycare kitchen, this room contains the main electrical switch gear, the main telephone panels as well as various storage items. The temperature of this room is excessively hot due to the power equipment and lack of adequate cooling.

Exercise and Weights 1050 sf (combined)

These activities currently occupy two small rooms. The rooms are accessed through single doors and there are no windows or skylights to provide natural light. Equipment is limited due to space. Finishes in these rooms need updating and the air conditioning system does not provide adequate cooling.

These spaces are very inadequate for use for these purposes and the equipment is out of date which limits the appeal for general use.

Senior Library 750 sf

The Senior Library is the social center of the senior activity spaces. This area also serves as a staging area for many senior activities and events. Approximately 20 to as many as 120 seniors utilize the center on a daily basis. A significant number of social service functions are also handled from this location. Along with books and magazines, the room has lounge seating and a large format television. This room has received extensive damage due to water leaks. The exterior walls are deteriorating with visible water stains and mold. Bookcases, books and the carpet have been water damaged and contain mildew. The exterior doors in this room are defective and need replacement.

Senior Service Area 780 sf

This area contains a utility room, a janitor's closet and a men's and women's restroom. Much like the rest of the spaces in this wing of the building there are a number of problems associated with water seepage and poor construction.

Multipurpose Room



Computer/Meeting Room



Computer/Senior Meeting Room 730 sf

This room is in serviceable condition and serves primarily as a computer room with strong usage from teens and youth as well as seniors. A shared storage room (435 sf) separates the meeting room and the multipurpose room.

Senior Multipurpose Room 840 sf

This room is equally divisible with an operable partition. A shared storage room (435 sf) separates the multipurpose room and the meeting room. In addition to use by seniors this area serves as a general classroom and meeting room for a variety of community organizations.

Senior Craft Room 450 sf

The craft room is a simple space with exposed storage shelving. This space is primarily utilized for craft activities but can also be used for meetings and other similar functions.

South Patio 2200 sf

This space consists of a concrete slab bounded by building walls on three sides. Access to the patio is provided by doors leading from the senior library and the daycare area. The fourth side is enclosed by an iron fence and gate. Panic hardware has been installed on the gate to secure the patio while still allowing emergency egress. Despite its location next to the senior and day care area, this patio is not very functional and does not have any play features for use by young children.

Other Spaces

In addition to the spaces noted above the center also has two other areas. A basement level room is located below the day care area. This space has been utilized for a youth sports office and as a location for drop-in youth activities. However, there is only one external entrance and exit to the space and there have been on-going flooding problems. This space should not be utilized for any public functions or activities as a result.

Next to the south end of the building there are free standing restrooms that are utilized by park users. Despite misuse and relatively poor condition these remain at least functional.

Located under the bleachers at the baseball field is an enclosed space that is utilized by Future Generations for bike storage and repair. This concrete block structure is in good condition and this is a great use of this space.

Basement Level



Future Generations



Note:

The 1987 addition, while the latest of the renovations to the facility is in need of the most obvious repair. Rainwater has leaked into many of the exterior walls damaging finishes

and creating opportunity for mold and mildew to spread within the building insulation. The quality of construction for this portion of the building is inferior to the earlier additions and will require extensive retrofit and renovation to rebuild a watertight and healthy environment.

Recommendations: For nearly 75 years, the Houghton Park facility has served a variety of community needs. With the exception of the small weight and exercise rooms, these have been almost exclusively passive activities. A limited expansion of passive activities is possible through additional renovation and addition but is not recommended. Addition and renovation has been a serviceable solution in the past, however, the patchwork of additions and alterations has created a building that is inefficient to operate, with a mismatch of mechanical, electrical, lighting and plumbing systems; difficult to supervise with distant corridors and limited line-of-sight connection of spaces; and limiting in terms of effectively adding active programming spaces. The reality is that this center has outlived its usefulness and is not able to meet the changing recreation and social service needs of the community.

If the future of the facility is to incorporate active programming spaces such as a swimming pool, gymnasium, jogging track, group exercise room or an extensive fitness room, a comprehensive redevelopment of the site should be considered. This could involve demolition of most or all of the existing building and replacement with new construction. Any building expansion would have to fit within the prescribed lot coverage requirements of the park. This may limit the types of spaces that can be added or force the center into a multi floor configuration.

The following are two examples of possible changes to the Houghton Park Community Center which incorporate active recreational programming spaces.

Option 1

In this first example, two of the most effective existing parts of the building are maintained, the original 1930's social hall housing the daycare area and the recreation/dining room added in 1959. The rest of the building as well as all of the existing mechanical and electrical systems are demolished and removed to allow for a more efficient plan layout. The new layout provides the opportunity to create two operational zones - a passive activity zone and an active activity zone. The passive activity zone contains the recreation/dining room, meeting rooms, an arts and crafts room, library/lounge, computer class room, drop-in babysitting and restrooms.

The active zone contains a fitness room with expanded cardiovascular and weight training equipment, a group exercise room for classes such as aerobics, yoga and dance, and a multi-activity center (MAC) gymnasium large enough for a regulation high school basketball court and two smaller cross courts. The MAC flooring is a synthetic surface suitable for many different activities such as indoor soccer, volleyball and roller hockey. The active program area also includes a leisure pool with three lanes for lap swimming and group exercise classes, a current channel/lazy river for resistance walking exercise

and floating fun, a zero beach for infants and ramp wheelchair access and a waterslide. Ideally, this aquatic space is located on the south side of the site to allow abundant sunlight into the space. The remaining spaces include a party room, locker rooms for men, women and families and mechanical support spaces.

Between the two areas are the reception desk and the administrative offices allowing consolidated operations and management and visual supervision for most of the center.

Option 2

The second example does not try to utilize any of the existing structures. The spaces organization is similar to Option 1 with a few exceptions. In this plan, the daycare is oriented toward the north end of the site adjacent to the existing tot lot and playground. This provides an opportunity for two entrances - one oriented toward the parking lot and another open to the park. In this scheme, the footprint is more compact, reducing the land required for construction and placing some program spaces on a second level. The fitness and group exercise rooms move upstairs allowing in natural light and opening views out of these spaces to the adjacent park. This arrangement also allows the addition of an elevated walk/jog track into the program.

Before determining which of these options may be the most appropriate for the future direction of Houghton Park, the long range plans for the development of the Village Center along Atlantic Avenue as well as the existing branch library site on Orange Avenue will have to be considered.

Demographic and Market Analysis

To provide a foundation for determining future demands for community facilities for the North Long Beach area of the City of Long Beach, California, a demographic analysis for the area has been undertaken.

The following is a summary of the basic demographic characteristics of the North Long Beach area as well as a comparison with national demographic statistics.

North Long Beach: The primary market for any new or remodeled community facilities would clearly be the residents of the North Long Beach community. As a result the demographics of the area have been analyzed. The boundaries for the North Long Beach area are shown on the next page.

Population Numbers:

	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>2004 Est.</u>	<u>2009 Proj.</u>
North Long Beach	90,023	93,382	96,777
City of Long Beach	461,522	474,567	491,233

Source - U.S. Census Bureau and ESRI.

The demographic statistics for North Long Beach will be analyzed for this study with references to the City of Long Beach as a whole.

North Long Beach Geographic Area



Population Distribution by Age: Utilizing census information from North Long Beach the following comparisons are possible.

North Long Beach Comparison with Long Beach - from 2004 ESRI census estimate

Table- A

Ages	Pop.	% of Tot.	LB Pop.	Diff.
-5	9,392	10.1%	8.4%	+1.7%
5-17	24,267	26.0%	20.4%	+5.6%
18-24	10,910	11.7%	11.8%	-.1%
25-44	27,670	29.6%	30.8%	-1.2%
45-54	10,072	10.8%	12.0%	-1.2%
55-64	5,588	6.0%	7.4%	-1.4%
65+	5,482	5.9%	9.0%	-3.1%

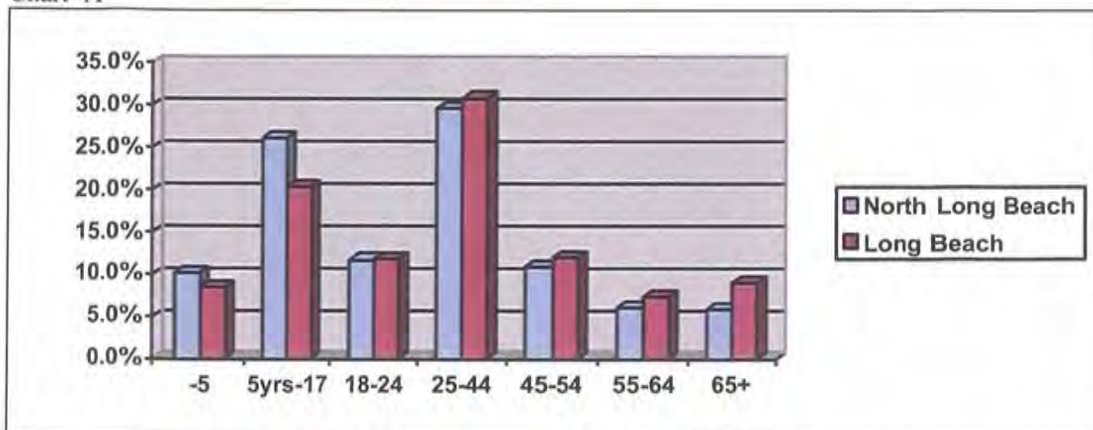
Population- 2004 census estimate in the different age groups in North Long Beach.

% of Total- Percentage of the service area population in the age group.

Long Beach Population- Percentage of the Long Beach population in the age group.

Difference- Percentage difference between the North Long Beach population and the city population.

Chart- A



Community Needs Assessment for the North Long Beach Redevelopment Area

The demographic makeup of North Long Beach, when compared to the characteristics of the city as a whole, indicates that there is a larger youth population and a smaller adult and senior population.

North Long Beach Comparison with Nation - from 2004 ESRI census estimate

Table- B

Ages	Pop.	% of Tot.	Nat. Pop.	Diff.
-5	9,392	10.1%	6.8%	+3.3%
5-17	24,267	26.0%	18.0%	+8.0%
18-24	10,910	11.7%	10.2%	+1.5%
25-44	27,670	29.6%	28.5%	+1.1%
45-54	10,072	10.8%	14.0%	-3.2%
55-64	5,588	6.0%	9.8%	-3.8%
65+	5,482	5.9%	12.5%	-6.6%

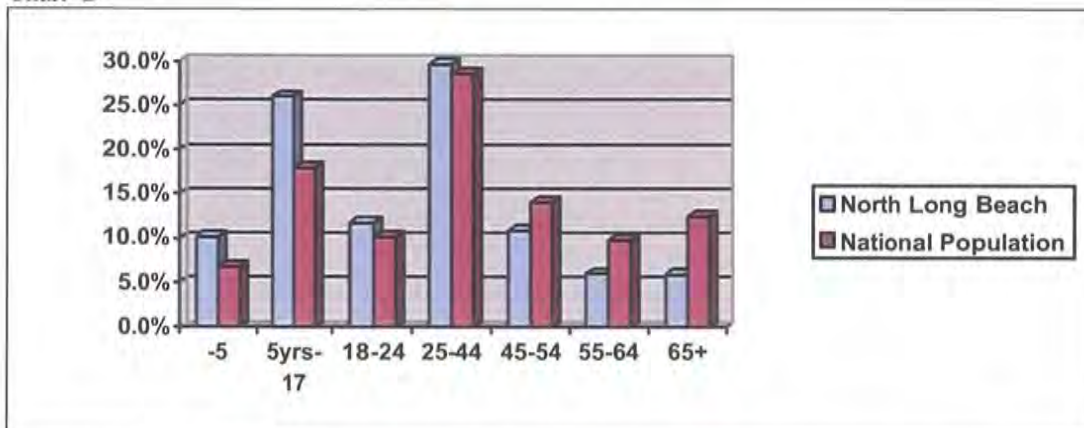
Population- 2004 census estimate in the different age groups in North Long Beach.

% of Total- Percentage of the service area population in the age group.

Long Beach Population- Percentage of the national population in the age group.

Difference- Percentage difference between the North Long Beach population and the national population.

Chart- B



When the demographics for North Long Beach are compared with the national numbers there is even a larger discrepancy between the two with North Long Beach having a much larger youth population and a much smaller middle aged adult and senior population.

Population Distribution Comparison by Age: Utilizing census information from North Long Beach, the following comparisons are possible.

North Long Beach - from census information and ESRI.

Table- C

Ages	2000 Pop.	2004 Pop.	2009 Pop.	% Change
-5	8,997	9,392	9,990	+11.0%
5-17	23,997	24,267	23,467	-2.2%
18-24	9,705	10,910	12,713	+31.0%
25-44	28,149	27,670	27,243	-3.2%
45-54	9,112	10,072	10,951	+20.2%
55-64	4,805	5,588	6,704	+39.5%
65+	5,261	5,482	5,707	+8.5%

Chart- C

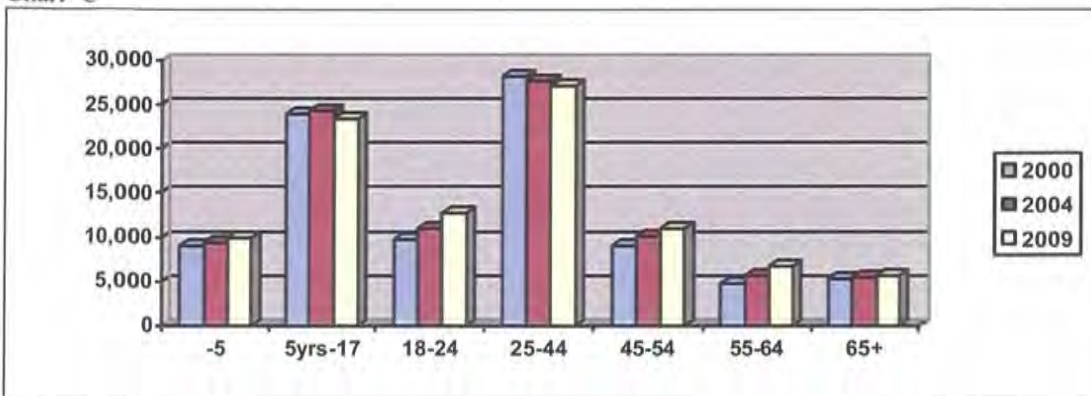


Table-C looks at the growth or decline in age group numbers from the 2000 census until the year 2009. It is projected that most age groups will see a significant increase in population with the exception of the 5-17 and 25-44 categories which will show a slight decline. The greatest growth is projected to occur in the 55-64 and 18-24 age categories.

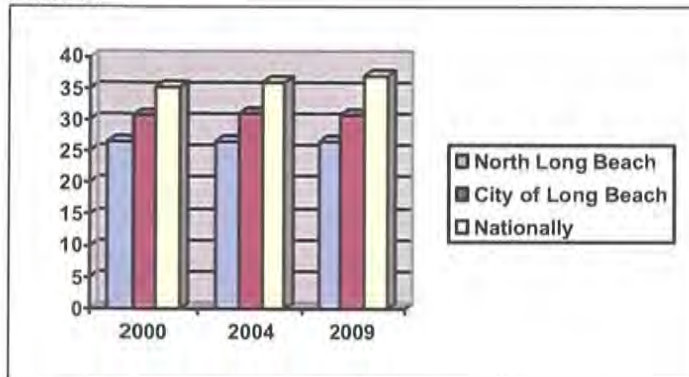
However, it must be remembered that the population of the United States as a whole is aging and it is common to find negative growth numbers in the younger age groups and net gains nearing 20% in the 45 plus age groupings in communities with more stable population bases.

Next, the median age and household income levels for North Long Beach are compared with the City of Long Beach and the national numbers.

Median Age:

	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>2004 Est.</u>	<u>2009 Proj.</u>
North Long Beach	26.6	26.6	26.5
City of Long Beach	30.8	31.0	30.8
Nationally	35.3	36.0	37.0

Chart- D

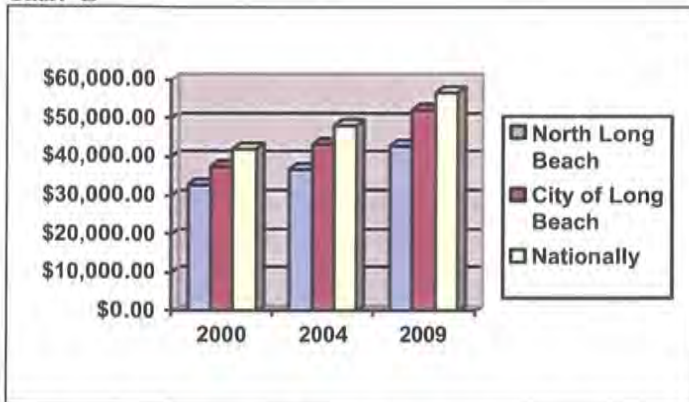


The median age for North Long Beach is much lower than the City of Long Beach and significantly lower than the national numbers.

Median Household Income:

	<u>2000 Census</u>	<u>2004 Est.</u>	<u>2009 Proj.</u>
North Long Beach	\$32,792	\$36,733	\$42,858
City of Long Beach	\$37,558	\$43,461	\$52,415
Nationally	\$42,164	\$48,124	\$56,710

Chart- E



The median household income level must be balanced against the cost of living for the area to determine possible discretionary income available for recreation purposes. The North Long Beach area has a lower income level than the city of Long Beach itself and it is substantially lower than the national numbers. The income levels are further reduced when the relatively high cost of living for the Los Angeles area is considered.

Ethnicity:

North Long Beach – 2004 from ESRI

Table- D

Race	2004 Pop.	% of Tot.
White Alone	26,065	27.9%
Black Alone	20,913	22.4%
American Indian Alone	805	.9%
Asian Alone	9,718	10.4%
Pacific Islander Alone	2,391	2.6%
Other Race Alone	28,247	30.2%
Two or More Races	5,242	5.6%
Hispanic Origin (any race)	47,232	50.6%

Note: Totals above do not equal 100% as some individuals are in more than one race category.

Ethnicity Trends:

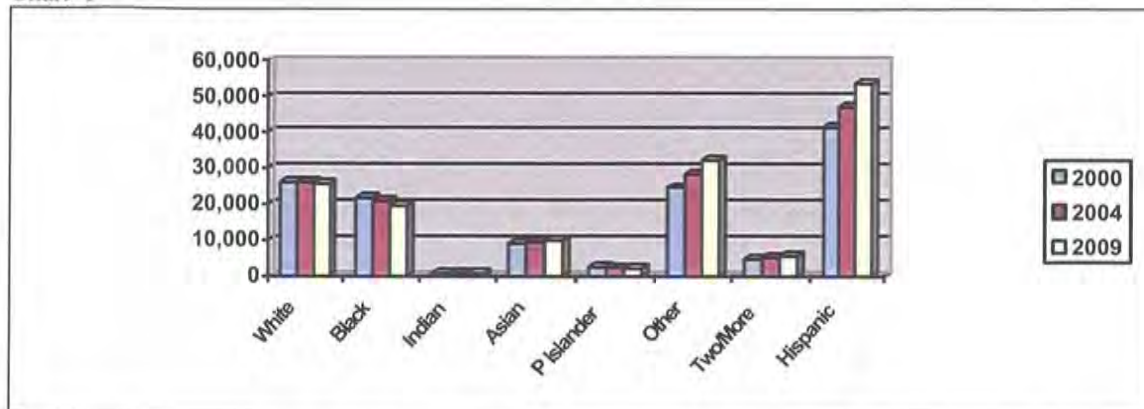
North Long Beach – 2000 to 2009 from ESRI

Table- E

Ages	2000 Pop.	2004 Pop.	2009 Pop.	% Change
White	26,395	26,065	25,804	-2.2%
Black	21,685	20,913	19,770	-8.8%
Indian	813	805	775	-4.7%
Asian	9,299	9,718	10,005	+7.6%
P Islander	2,466	2,391	2,286	-7.3%
Other	24,670	28,247	32,308	+30.9%
Two/More	4,695	5,242	5,829	+24.2%
Hispanic	41,480	47,232	53,662	+29.4%

It is significant that the greatest growth will be in the “other” category as well as the Hispanic category. All the other ethnic groups but Asian are projected to show a decline in population numbers.

Chart- F



Other Demographic Trends:

North Long Beach – 2000 to 2009 from ESRI

Table- F

Ages	2000 Pop.	2004 Pop.	2009 Pop.
Households	26,395	26,065	25,804
Families	19,661	19,894	20,263
Average HH Size	3.48	3.56	3.62
Owner Occupied HUs	11,077	11,302	11,592
Renter Occupied HUs	14,525	14,672	14,918

Note: HUs refers to housing units.

It is significant that the number of households is declining while the number of families and the average household size is increasing. This indicates a number of households with multiple families.

Market Potential Index: A method to measure possible participation in recreation and fitness activities is through the market potential index where rates of participation in North Long Beach are compared with national numbers through the index rating. Utilizing information provided by ESRI, the following comparisons are possible.

Table- G

	# of Adults	Percentage	MPI
Aerobics	4,887	8.2%	88
Basketball	5,653	9.5%	100
Exercise at club (2 per week)	5,397	9.0%	88
Exer. Walking	14,023	23.5%	72
Read Book	16,475	27.6%	69
Swimming	7,115	11.9%	65
Surfed the Internet	12,137	20.3%	75
Weight Lifting	5,440	9.1%	85
Running/Jogging	5,218	8.7%	87
Volleyball	1,923	3.2%	83

of Adults- The number of adults in North Long Beach participating in the activity.

Percentage- The percentage of adults in North Long Beach participating in the activity.

MPI- Market potential index as compared to the national number of 100.

The MPI index indicates that the rate of adult participation in all of the activities except for basketball is well below the national average. This shows a potentially lower rate of usage of community facilities. Rates of participation can be influenced by the availability of facilities, cultural differences and economic conditions. The potential lower rate of participation can ultimately impact the usage of recreation facilities in a negative manner but does indicate where the relative strengths (basketball, exercise, work out at club) exist and where possible emphasis on facility development should be placed.

Recreation Expenditures Index: In addition to participation in certain activities ESRI also measures recreation expenditures in a number of different areas and then indexes this against national numbers. The following comparisons are possible.

Table- H

	Avg. Spent	SPI
Fees for Participant Sports	\$78.63	70
Fees for Recreational Lessons	\$87.92	73
Social, Recreation, Club Membership	\$102.96	64
Exercise Equip./Game Tables	\$66.97	75
Other Sports Equipment	\$14.58	70
Reading Books	\$68.40	77
Reading Magazines	\$28.54	68
Reading Newspapers	\$54.72	62

Average Amount Spent- The average amount spent for the service or item in a year.

SPI- Spending potential index as compared to the national number of 100.

The SPI index indicates that in all areas the rate of spending is far below the national average. This shows that there is probably a lower rate of discretionary spending for the types of services that a community center could provide. The greatest impact of this index is related to the type and level of fees that can be charged for community programs and services. A stronger emphasis will need to be made on lower, more affordable fees, and on daily and other short term visit fee options.

Demographic Summary:

- The population level of North Long Beach is expected to show strong growth during the 2000's.
- The population density is medium to high.
- The median age is significantly lower than the City of Long Beach and the national numbers.

- Household size is substantially higher than the rest of Long Beach and the national average. This indicates a number of families with children as well as possible multi-family households.
- Median household income is significantly lower than Long Beach itself and the national levels.
- Hispanics makeup over 50% of the population with lower numbers of Other, White, Blacks, and Asians. The greatest growth will be in Hispanic and Other in the coming years.
- Residents of North Long Beach have a relatively low market potential index for most all activities other than basketball. This indicates a potential lower rate of participation in most activities that might take place at a community center.
- Residents of North Long Beach have a relatively low spending potential index for all activities which indicates a concern over how services can be priced.

Existing Service Area Providers: There are currently a number of indoor community based facilities in the North Long Beach primary service area that are supplying recreation, sports, library services, and other community activities.

The City of Long Beach has a significant number of indoor facilities in North Long Beach. For recreation, the city operates Houghton Park which has an indoor community center that was first built in 1930 and then was added onto in 1959 and 1987. This facility has a preschool program area, a large recreation/dining room, small weight/exercise area, senior spaces, computer room and other amenities. The building serves a variety of needs from youth, and teens to seniors. The facility is in relatively poor condition and is not efficiently laid out. The park also contains the North Facilities Center which houses Health Services, a council office and a small daycare center operated by the school district. There is also a small indoor area located below the bleachers of the baseball field that serves as the home for Future Generations bicycle repair program. In addition there are several athletic fields, a skate park and Vietnam Veterans Memorial located in the park. Houghton Park serves as the main recreation area in North Long Beach.

North Facilities Center



Houghton Park Community Center



Besides Houghton Park the city also operates a number of small neighborhood based recreation centers in the North Long Beach area. Ramona Park has a small, relatively new, center with a game room, small weight room, social rooms and an office area. This facility is well maintained and appears to be well used. Coolidge Park has a very small, older center that is in poor shape and needs to be replaced. The building has a small meeting/game room, very small weight room with virtually no equipment and restrooms. This center is generally not as well used. DeForest Park has a small community room, and an office area. The park also has an old building that contains four racquetball courts that are no longer used. Further to the south and just outside of North Long Beach is Scherer Park which has an indoor center that is similar to what is located in DeForest Park. It is important to realize that with the exception of Ramona, all of the buildings are small and old with limited active recreation uses.

Ramona Park



DeForest Park



It is apparent that the first priority for any new or expanded community center will be to accommodate existing recreation programs and services that are being offered at inadequate facilities or ones that are in need of being replaced.

In addition to the recreation facilities that are noted above, the city also operates a small North Branch Library on Orange Avenue. This is one of the mostly highly used branch libraries in the city and yet it is very small in size and on a site that has limited parking. As a result the city has been studying the possibility of building a new larger branch library in North Long Beach for sometime. The existing building, despite its small size, is in relatively good physical condition.

North Library



North Library



Long Beach Public Schools obviously have a variety of facilities that can be used for community functions. The recreation department utilizes a number of schools for programs and activities including Community Outreach Recreational Enrichment Programs and before and after school activities. Jordan High School has an indoor pool that was built with the intention of having significant public use but the facility is rarely available for general use. The schools also have gyms and public event space as well as meeting areas but there is limited access in many cases due to school activities.

Beyond the city owned facilities, there are also a number of non-profit providers of services. The Fairfield YMCA serves the area. This facility has a small gym, pool, child care center and areas for before and after school programs. The Y is currently expanding its fitness area. The Boys & Girls Club also operates four centers in Long Beach including a center in North Long Beach.

There are virtually no private recreation or fitness facilities actually located in North Long Beach. There are a couple of small martial arts studios, but that is really the extent of facilities. Adjacent to North Long Beach there are a number of private facilities including LA Fitness and Bally Total Fitness clubs. Many of the neighboring communities also have public recreation centers and large public libraries that are utilized to some extent by North Long Beach residents.

It should be expected that the private providers in the area, and possibly the YMCA, will have a concern over the possibility that a new community center (if it includes significant fitness related amenities and activities) would adversely impact their market and they may oppose the project as a result. However, private fitness and community centers typically serve very different clientele and usually do not compete head to head for the same users.

It is readily apparent that despite the number of public facilities currently located in North Long Beach there are still a large number of unmet needs. The existing North Library is not sufficient for its use, Houghton Park Community Center at minimum needs significant remodeling if not outright replacement and the smaller neighborhood recreation centers are not able to serve the needs of the entire community.

Alternative Recreation Service Providers: Below is a list of the alternate recreation service providers (facilities) that are located in the greater North Long Beach market area.

City of Long Beach

North Library – Orange Ave	Houghton Park Center
DeForest Park Center	Coolidge Park Center
Ramona Park Center	Scherer Park Center

Private

LA Fitness (several locations)	Bally Total Fitness (several locations)
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Non-Profit

Fairfield Family YMCA

Boy's & Girl's Club

Public

Jordan High School Pool

Long Beach School District Facilities

This is a representative listing of alternative community facilities in the area and is not meant to be a total accounting of all service providers. There may be other facilities located in the area that have an impact on the North Long Beach market as well. It should also be recognized that there are a significant number of social service agencies and churches in the area that are providing a variety of community services to the residents of the area as well.

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