



# Reston Community Center Community Survey

2024 Report

Prepared by the Center for Survey Research  
Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service  
University of Virginia

## About this Report

The Center for Survey Research at the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center conducted a survey for the Reston Community Center during the summer of 2024 to assess awareness and support for RCC; to understand current and projected use of programs; to identify barriers to RCC use; to capture preferences for a second RCC facility; and to identify optimal sources for information on leisure activities.

## Center for Survey Research Contributing Staff

- Kara Fitzgibbon, Director
- Tom Guterbock, Senior Survey Consultant
- Sean Johnson, Project Manager
- Alisha Gupta, Data Management Analyst
- Brooke Beenhouwer, Research Assistant



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*for Public Service*  
Center for Survey Research



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Center for Survey Research at the University of Virginia conducted this Reston Community Center (RCC) Community Survey during the summer of 2024. The survey aimed to assess awareness and support for RCC; determine current and projected program use; understand barriers to RCC participation; capture preferences for a second RCC facility; and identify optimal sources for information on leisure activities. Key highlights of responses are summarized below.

A total of 1,074 community members participated in the survey; 1,034 of these completions were probability-based and 40 were non-probability. A probability sample ensures that results reflect the community across demographic characteristics to provide more accurate representations of the community's attitudes. A non-probability sample offers the opportunity for anyone who is interested to offer their views, but also may reflect views that are not representative of the community taken as a whole. Across these samples, the survey captures the wide range of experiences and opinions of Reston community members. In particular, the probability sample successfully reached residents relatively new to Reston (31% have lived in Reston less than 5 years) as well as residents with a range of experiences in using RCC.

Because of the scientific methods used to recruit the probability sample, statistical results from these respondents can be generalized to the Reston population with a certain level of confidence (95%). For results based on the probability sample, the margin of error due to sampling is +/- 3.7%. Because of this, highlighted findings focus on responses from the probability sample. For complete responses across both samples, please see Appendix B of this report.

## AWARENESS OF RESTON COMMUNITY CENTER

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There were high levels of awareness and support for RCC.

- More than two out of three (70%) respondents said they were “very familiar” or “somewhat familiar” with RCC.
- Strong majorities said RCC makes Reston a more attractive place to live (91%) or have a business (82%). Nearly half (46%) of respondents said that RCC is “very important” to the overall quality of life in Reston.
- Nearly half of respondents (48%) said that they or a family member have participated in an RCC-sponsored event or class in the past twelve months. Among the respondents whose households had not attended RCC in the past year, 44% had attended an RCC program or event at some point in the past.

## USE OF PROGRAMS

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- Community events (37%), the Professional Touring Artist Series at the CenterStage (29%), and drop-in swim (25%) were the most widely used programs/services among respondents.
- Lifelong learning had the highest level of potential interest (69%) yet only 12% participation. Similarly, land-based fitness and wellness programs were of high interest (64%) with relatively low actual participation (11%).

Over four in five respondents (82%) expressed a desire to participate in RCC programs more than they currently do, with classes being the type of program of greatest interest.

## BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

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Respondents expressed being “too busy” as the most significant barrier to participating in RCC programs as much as they would like. In addition, they selected “lack of awareness of existing programs” as the other top reason for not participating more.

## SECOND RCC FACILITY

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Respondents also reported preferences regarding a possible second RCC facility. Survey findings suggest:

- Respondents indicated strong preferences regarding the location of the second facility. Almost half (43%) of respondents preferred the second facility to be in the Lake Anne neighborhood, with Central Reston being the second (28%) highest cited preferred location, followed by North Reston and South Reston. In addition, the majority of respondents (64%) reported it is at least somewhat important for the facility to be easily

reached by public transportation, and about three-fourths (73%) reported it is at least somewhat important for the facility to be near bike or walking paths.

- Of the feature options, respondents reported the most important features to be good acoustics in gathering areas (53%) and fitness studios/equipment (52%), followed by strong technology/streaming capabilities (49%), and performance space (42%) in the second RCC facility. Of the program type options, 72% cited fitness/wellness as the mostly widely desired. Social events (60%), performing arts (56%), and life skill classes (56%) were the other most selected programs.
- Over 50% of respondents ranked RCC owning the building as their first choice for the financial arrangement, followed by a joint arrangement as the next highest rated top choice (28%), leaving leasing the building as the first-choice selection for the fewest number of respondents (18%).

## COMMUNICATIONS

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RCC is committed to serving the entire Reston community and was interested in the types of media respondents regularly use, as well as respondents' sources for finding information on recreational activities.

- Online journalism, Facebook, television streaming, and Instagram, were the most widely used media.
- The RCC seasonal program guide was the most widely used source for information about RCC programming.
- Friends and family and internet searches were the most widely cited sources for general leisure/recreational information, followed by social media.





## **I. Introduction**

### **About the Survey**

This Reston Community Center Community Survey was conducted by the Center for Survey Research (CSR) during the summer of 2024. The survey aimed to assess awareness and support for RCC; understand current and projected use of programs; identify barriers to RCC participation; evaluate preferences for a second facility; and identify optimal sources of information on leisure activities. As RCC plans for the future, the survey results may help provide a deeper understanding of the community's current practices, needs, and priorities regarding recreation, leisure, and culture pursuits.

### **Survey Methodology and Response**

To support community-wide participation while maintaining statistically reliable results, the survey used a mixed-probability and mixed-mode design. The probability sample was based on a stratified address-based sample (ABS) of 5,346 households in Small Tax District 5, meaning it was only available to Reston residents. These participants were mailed a series of survey invitations and reminders, with the option to complete the survey by mail or online. Non-probability participation was available online to any adult who lived or worked in Reston. The survey was available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, and Arabic (see Appendix E for the full English questionnaire). Responses were collected from July 8 to October 10, 2024.

A total of 1,074 responses were collected, with 1,034 from the probability sample, yielding a response rate of 19.3%. The survey has an overall margin of error of  $\pm 3.7$  percent at the 95% confidence level<sup>1</sup>. For a detailed discussion of the survey methodology, including sampling design and weighting procedures, please refer to Appendix H.

### **Analysis**

The frequency distribution of probability responses to each survey question is available in Appendix A. Side-by-side comparisons of responses from the probability and non-probability samples can be found in Appendix B.

### ***Open-end Responses Coding***

To provide respondents ample opportunity to share their experiences and opinions with RCC, the survey questionnaire contained multiple open-ended questions where respondents could write-in their answers. CSR performed thematic coding across all the open-ended responses, which entails an inductive and iterative process. When a similar or related response appears repeatedly for a given question, a code is assigned to represent that response category.

For the close-ended questions that contained an open-end answer choice (e.g., an "Other, please specify"), if a respondent gave an open-ended response that matched one of the existing categories, their response was reassigned to the existing category.

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<sup>1</sup> This margin of error is calculated using the finite population correction factor (fpc), which was 0.980 for this survey, and incorporating the design effect due to weighting, which was 1.509.

For the free-form open-ended questions (e.g., “What programs or facilities would you like to see RCC offer that it does not currently?”), a summary is provided in the narrative of the recurrent common themes that emerged across those responses. The complete set of open-ended responses, by question, can be viewed in Appendices F and G.

### *Group Comparisons*

For this study, two types of comparative analyses were prepared: cross-tabulations and means comparisons. Across both types of comparison, statistical significance tests were performed to assess generalizable differences among various subgroups. For the cross-tabulations, Chi-Square tests of independence were used to determine statistical significance; t-tests were run to determine statistical significance across the means comparisons. Put simply, if a survey result is found to be statistically significant, then we can confidently expect the same finding to exist in our population (i.e., Reston).

The cross-tabulation analysis examines most of the attitudinal and behavioral measures by five demographic variables:

- Age
- Zip code
- Homeownership status
- Length of residence in Reston
- The presence of children in the home

The results of the demographic cross-tabulation analysis are presented in Appendix C.

The means comparison analysis breaks down a subset of attitudinal and behavioral measures by the following demographic variables:

- Marital status
- Gender
- Education
- The presence of children in the home
- Length of residence in Reston
- Homeownership status
- Zip code
- Age
- Employment status
- Location of job
- Ownership status of commercial/rental property in Reston
- Ownership status of a business in Reston
- Primary language spoken in the home
- Hispanic/Latinx identification
- Racial/ethnic identification
- Annual household income

The results of the means comparison analysis can be found in Appendix D.

Unless otherwise noted, the analysis and summary of findings in this report are based on weighted probability responses only, which provide the measures of prevalence and enable statistical inference to the larger Reston community.

While the scientifically drawn probability sample provides the statistical validity for the study, including non-probability data collection was essential for several reasons. First, the non-probability method allowed non-residents of Reston to participate, which is important because RCC serves not only Reston residents but also individuals who work in Reston but live elsewhere. Additionally, the non-probability design allowed more household members to respond, making the survey process more inclusive. For complete non-probability responses, see Appendix B, which includes a comparison of non-probability respondents to probability respondents across all responses.

## **II. Familiarity and Awareness**

To begin, respondents were asked whether or not they had heard of Reston Community Center (RCC). Overwhelmingly, respondents indicated that they had heard of RCC, with 96% answering “yes” to this question.

Respondents who had heard of RCC were then asked about their familiarity with RCC’s program offerings. Seven of ten respondents (70%) were at least somewhat familiar with RCC programming. There were several statistically significant demographic differences regarding familiarity. Familiarity with RCC programming increases with age and length of residence in Reston. For example, 83% of respondents aged 65 years and older report being at least somewhat familiar with RCC compared to just 27% of respondents aged 18-29 reporting the same level of familiarity. Similarly, 90% of respondents who have lived in Reston for 25 years or more report being at least somewhat familiar with RCC compared to 52% of respondents who have lived in Reston for less than five years. Additionally, familiarity was more prevalent among homeowners, 77% of whom report being at least somewhat familiar with RCC compared to 61% of renters. See Appendix C (Cross-tabulations) and Appendix D (Mean Comparisons) for additional comparisons.

### **Importance of RCC**

To gauge the general importance of RCC to the Reston community, respondents were asked a series of questions about RCC’s impact on the quality of life in Reston and the extent to which RCC makes Reston a more attractive place to live and/or work.

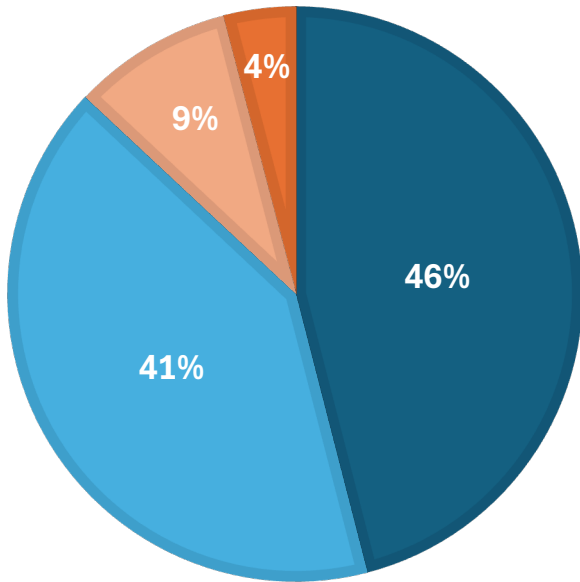
#### *Quality of life in Reston*

When asked how important they consider RCC to the overall quality of life in Reston, respondents overwhelmingly agreed it was important (Figure 1). Nearly half of respondents (46%) said RCC was “very important,” and an additional 41% said “somewhat important.”

Figure 1. Importance of RCC to overall quality of life in Reston

**HOW IMPORTANT WOULD YOU SAY THAT RCC IS TO THE OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE IN RESTON?**

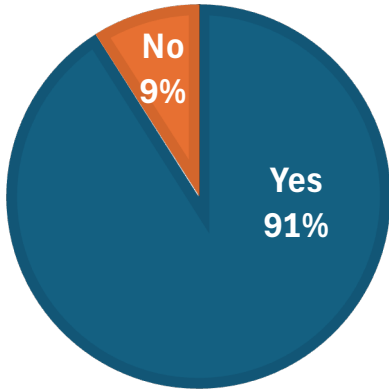
■ Very important   ■ Somewhat important   ■ Not very important   ■ Not at all important



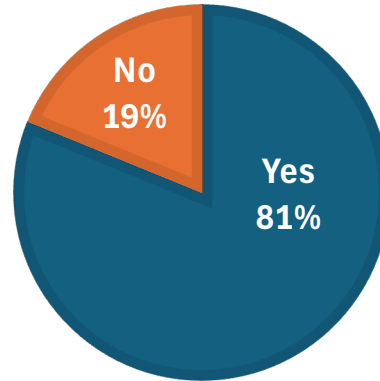
**Figure 2. Impact of Reston as a more attractive place**

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**DOES RCC MAKE RESTON A MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE TO LIVE?**



**DOES RCC MAKE RESTON A MORE ATTRACTIVE PLACE FOR A BUSINESS TO LOCATE?**



*Impact on Reston as a more attractive place*

Nine out of ten respondents (91%) think RCC makes Reston a more attractive place to live.

In addition to RCC’s impact on Reston as a place to live, respondents were asked their opinion on RCC’s impact on Reston as a place for businesses. About four out of five (82%) of respondents reported that RCC makes Reston a more attractive place for a business to locate.<sup>2</sup> Homeowners agreed with this sentiment at a statistically higher rate (Appendix C).

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<sup>2</sup> The 81.5% who answered “yes” reflects the valid percent, meaning between respondents who answered “yes” or “no,” 81.5% said “yes.” Two other answer categories were available for respondents – “it depends” and “don’t know.” These categories are excluded from the valid percent calculation, but counts and percent totals for all four categories are presented in Appendix A. It is worth noting that sizeable portions of respondents did select one of these two other categories.

### **III. Participation and Interest in RCC Programming**

#### **Use in Past Twelve Months**

To assess current participation, respondents were asked, *"In the past 12 months, have you and/or a household member attended a performance, class, workshop, or event at RCC or RCC-sponsored event?"* Approximately half of respondents (48%) indicated that they or a household member had attended RCC in the last 12 months.

Participation in RCC programs in the past 12 months did statistically vary by select demographic characteristics. Older respondents reported recent household participation at a higher rate than younger participants did. For example, 55% of respondents aged 65 years old and over had attended RCC in the past year whereas just 36% of respondents ages 18-29 had. Rate of participation was higher among respondents who had lived in Reston for at least five years, with those living in Reston less than five years reporting attendance at a significantly lower rate than other residents. Additionally, rate of participation was higher for respondents with children in the home (64%) as compared to those with no children in the home (45%).

#### *Age of participants*

Respondents who indicated their household had used RCC in the past 12 months were asked the specific ages of all household members who had participated in the year. Almost 40% of respondents (39%) reported a household member older than 65 who had used RCC, and this was the most reported age group. Participants ages 50 to 65 (reported by 30% of respondents) were the second most common age group of household RCC participants. For the complete age breakdown, see Appendix A.

#### *Frequency of participation*

Respondents whose households had used RCC programs in the last 12 months were also asked how frequently they or their household members participated. Most respondents (61%) indicated that they/their household members participate only occasionally. About 17% percent participate a few times a month, 11% participate once a week and 11% participate multiple times a week.

#### *Reasons for not attending in past twelve months*

Respondents whose household had *not* participated in RCC programs in the past 12 months were asked the reason(s) for having not attended. Being too busy was the most widely reported reason, with 42% of respondents providing this answer. The next most common reason for not attending was a lack of awareness about current programs (30%), followed by a lack of interest in current RCC program offerings (19%). See Appendix A for the full range of responses.

#### *Lifetime participation*

Respondents who indicated they had not attended or participated in an RCC or RCC-sponsored event in the last 12 months were then asked if they or members of their household had ever



attended an RCC program or event. Of these respondents who had not attended in the last year, almost half (44%) indicated that they/their household had participated in RCC at some point in the past. This means that approximately one in four respondents to the survey had not ever attended an RCC program or event.

## Participation and Interest per Program Type

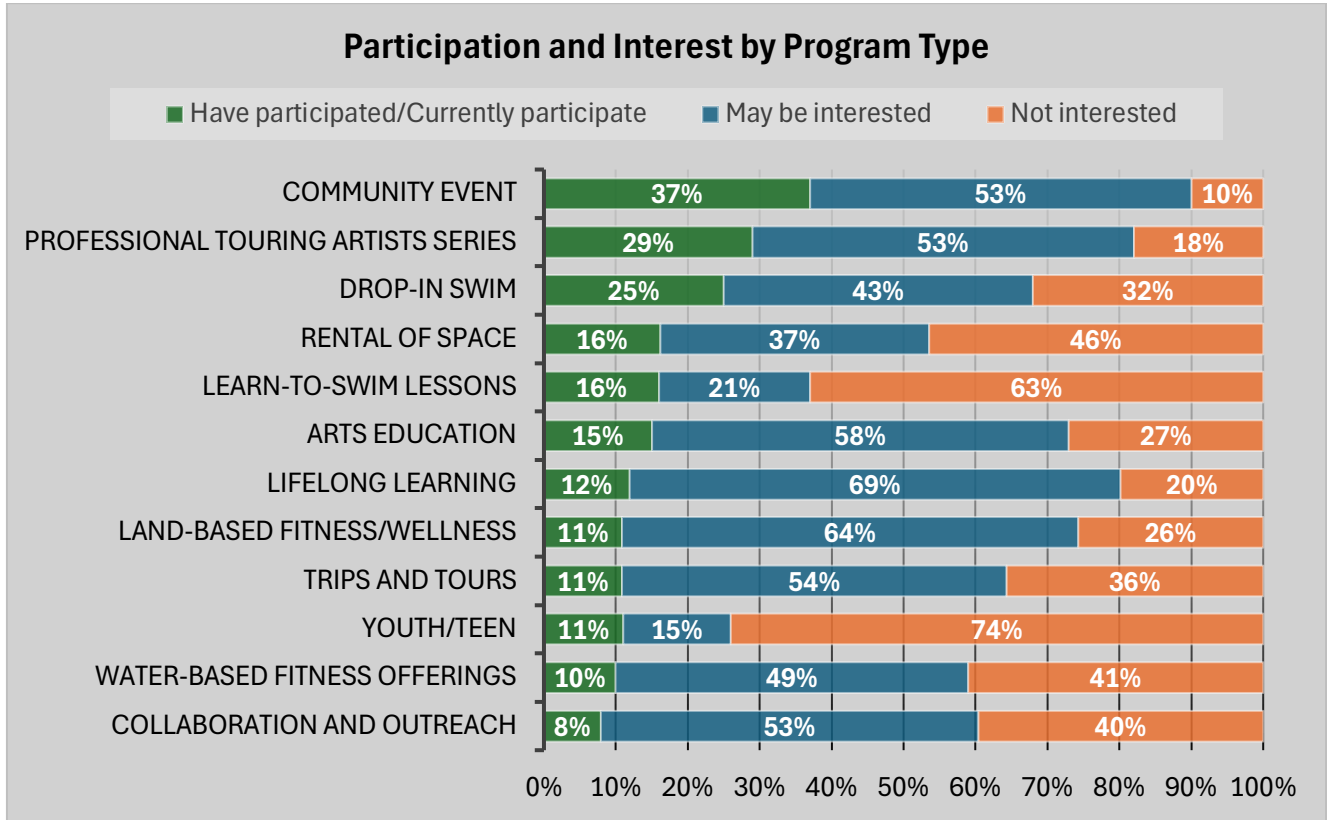
To assess use of different programs, all respondents were asked to rate their participation or interest across a series of program types. Specifically, for each program, the respondent could indicate if they “Have participated/currently participate,” “May be interested in participating,” or were “Not ever interested in participating.” The list of programs was:

- *Rental of space*
- *Drop-in swim*
- *Learn-to-swim lessons*
- *Water-based fitness offerings*
- *Arts education*
- *Community event*
- *Professional Touring Artists Series at the CenterStage*
- *Youth/teen*
- *Lifelong learning*
- *Land-based fitness/wellness*
- *Collaboration and outreach*
- *Trips and tours*

As seen in Figure 3 below, community events are the most widely used program type with 37% of respondents’ households having attended an RCC community event. An additional 53% of respondents are potentially interested in participating in a community event.

The Professional Touring Artist Series was the second most participated-in program type (29%), followed by drop-in swim (25%).

Figure 3. Participation and interest by program type



In terms of programs with high interest but relatively low participation, both lifelong learning and land-based fitness/wellness each had over 60% of respondents express interest. Specifically, 69% of respondents reported potential interest in lifelong learning, while just 12% had participated in that program. Also, 64% percent of respondents expressed potential interest in land-based fitness/wellness with only 11% having participated. These two program types are followed closely in terms of potential interest by arts education, with 58% of respondents reporting interest compared to just 15% of respondents having participated.

*Most relevant existing programs*

Based on the previous list of program types, respondents were then asked in an open-ended question which programs they consider the most relevant to their household. Of the 845 respondents who answered this question, at least 20% *each* referenced community events, lifelong learning, land-based fitness, arts education, and/or the Professional Touring Artist Series in their response of programs most relevant to their household. The complete lists of verbatim open-ended responses can be viewed in Appendices F and G.

*Ideas for use of RCC on Wheels*

Respondents were quite varied in their response to the open-ended question, “RCC plans to launch a custom vehicle to bring programs and services “on the road” to Reston neighborhoods. What neighborhood experiences would you enjoy from RCC on Wheels?” Of the 665 respondents

who answered this question, the most common responses included arts education or art classes (12%), age-specific programming (11%), performing arts (9%), and fitness, sports, or wellness programming (8%). Specifically, many respondents reported interest in art or music classes and craft workshops. Some respondents requested age-specific programming, most of which related to programming for children (such as crafts, science, and nature activities), though a small portion of these age-specific responses suggested programming specifically for senior or elderly adults.

*Programs residents would like to see offered*

Respondents also ranged in their responses to the open-ended question, “*What programs or facilities would you like to see RCC offer that it does not currently?*” The most common responses included more fitness, sports, and wellness programming, age-specific programming, and additional classes (e.g., dance, painting, music, etc.).

Fitness, sports, and wellness programming each accounted for approximately 15% of responses. In terms of fitness/sports, many respondents listed exercise or gym equipment for drop-in use, more class offerings in the early morning or later evenings that cater to working adults, and indoor facilities (such as tennis and pickleball courts). Some respondents suggested specific class types such as disc golf, Pilates, and wellness programs (yoga, nutrition), whereas a subset of respondents reported programs for specific age ranges, especially young children.

Approximately 9% of responses referenced age-specific programming. In terms of which age range(s) respondents wanted to see programming geared towards, answers were again varied. Many respondents mentioned senior programming specifically (e.g., on weekday nights or on weekends, exercise programs), while others suggested children-specific programming. For example, one respondent cited a desire for after-school activities for elementary and high-school students. Other respondents mentioned children’s activities such as summer camps, sport and craft opportunities (e.g., martial arts, climbing walls, seasonal workshops), play areas, or learning workshops (e.g., technology, software coding, and STEM lessons). Thus, while RCC has youth/teen cohort-specific programming already, respondents would like to see a greater variety of programs, as well as programs that cater to younger age ranges.

Lastly, a substantial number of respondents who answered this question (29%) indicated that they had no additional suggestions or were not sure what else RCC could offer. The full list of open-ended responses from probability respondents can be reviewed in Appendix F.

## IV. Access and Barriers to Participation

### Desired Frequency and Type of Participation

The next series of questions examined respondents' intended use of RCC facilities and programs. First, respondents were asked how often they would like to participate in RCC programs and activities. Approximately one-quarter (25%) of respondents would like to participate regularly, over one-third (38%) would like to participate occasionally, and one-quarter (27%) are interested in a few times a year. Only one in ten respondents (10%) had no current interest in participating.

When asked if they would like to participate in RCC programs/activities more than they currently do, four in five (82%) respondents said they would. In response to a follow-up question on the kinds of programs/activities that respondents would like to participate in more, nearly four in five respondents (79%) said they would like to take a class. Over half of respondents said either a workshop (59%) or performance (55%). Participating in an RCC trip was the fourth most common response with 27% of respondents indicating interest in participating in these more. For the complete frequency, see Appendix A.

### Barriers to Participation

#### *Reasons for not attending as frequently as desired*

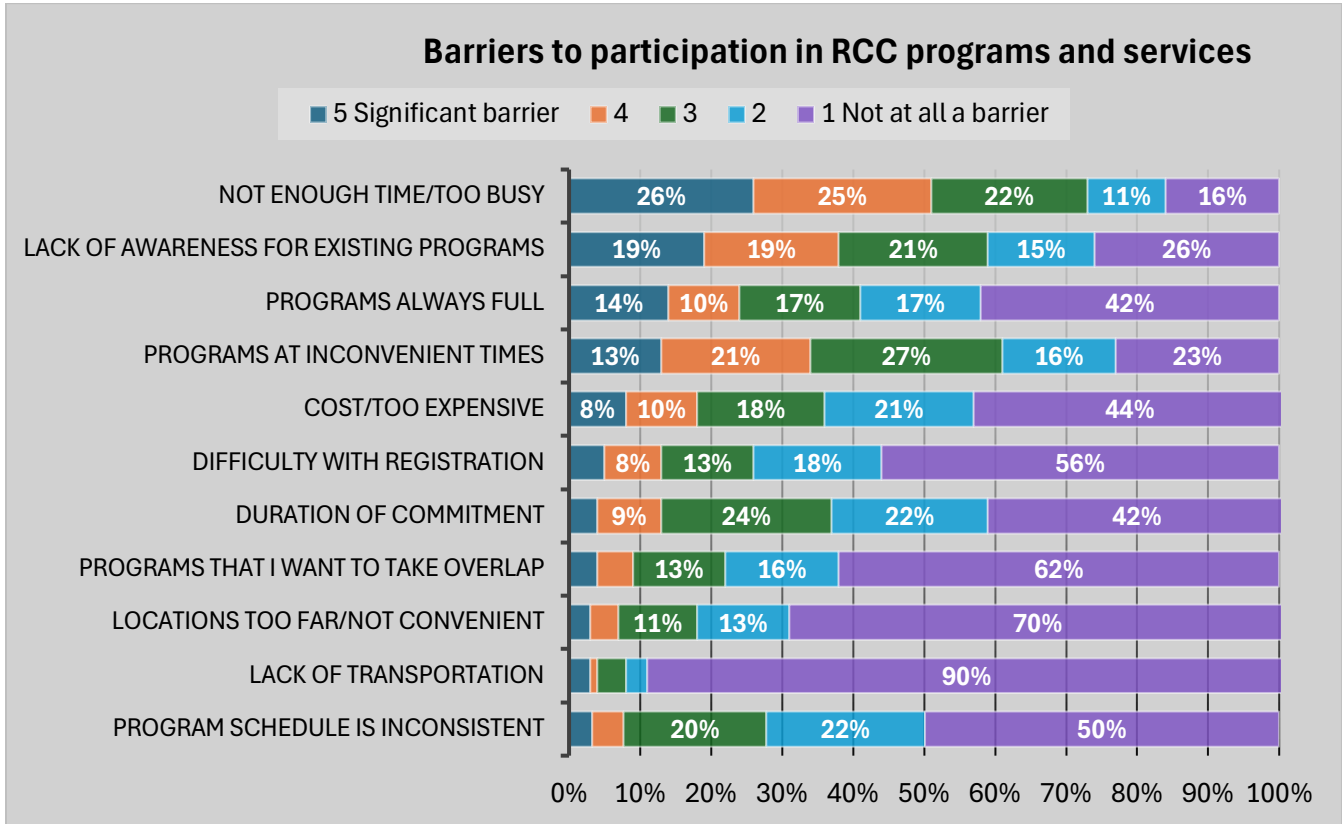
Given that the majority of respondents would like to participate in RCC more than they currently do, it is important to examine the factors preventing desired participation. To that end, respondents were given a list of potential barriers and asked to rate each item on a scale of one to five, with one representing "Not at all a barrier" and five indicating a "Significant barrier." The list of items included:

- *Cost/too expensive*
- *Lack of transportation*
- *Locations of programming too far/not convenient*
- *Duration of commitment, not enough time/too busy*
- *Current programs are scheduled at inconvenient times*
- *Program schedule is inconsistent*
- *Classes/programs that respondent wants to take overlap*
- *Lack of awareness for existing programs*
- *Difficulty with registration*
- *Classes/programs always full*
- *Something else<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>3</sup> The category of "Something else" was excluded from the graph. To review the frequency table for "Something else" and the other categories, see Appendix A.

**Figure 4. Barriers to more frequent RCC participation**



Not enough time/too busy (26%) was the most widely reported significant barrier followed by lack of awareness for existing programs (19%) and programs being full (14%).

Many barriers’ ratings also significantly differed by demographic characteristics. Of note, programs being too expensive was rated higher as a barrier for renters, younger respondents, and those who had resided in Reston for less time. Unsurprisingly, a lack of awareness of programs was rated significantly lower among residents who had been living in Reston for a longer period of time. Respondents with children rated not enough time/too busy as higher than those without children. Lack of transportation and the inconsistent program schedule was reported as a more significant barrier among older respondents.

There were no significant differences of barriers reported among respondents in different zip codes. For the complete analysis of barrier ratings by demographic characteristics, please see Appendix C.

### Strategies to Enable Participation

After respondents identified potential barriers to participation, they were then asked in an open-ended question, “What could RCC do to enable you or your family to use RCC more?” Approximately one in five respondents indicated that a wider range of classes and scheduling of programs would enable greater participation. The variety of this category of responses closely mirrored the program suggestions from the previous section. Again, respondents

mentioned offering programming at additional times to accommodate working adults as well as age-specific programming.

In addition to a wider range of classes and a more accommodating schedule, approximately a quarter of respondents indicated that more publicity or marketing would also enable greater participation. Multiple respondents indicated that they would like a schedule of upcoming events, either weekly or monthly, via email to stay up to date on RCC events and programs. Online communication and advertising also came up regularly, with respondents encouraging RCC to further promote programs and activities around the community (using library billboards, etc.) and to create a more functional and user-friendly website. Some respondents also suggested having alerts, notifications, and reminders before events. Complete responses can be found in Appendices F and G.

## V. Facilities

### Current Demand

Respondents were asked the extent to which they think the existing recreational and cultural facilities in and around Reston meet the current demand. Most respondents report that existing facilities meet the current demand, with 15% reporting “definitely” and an additional 59% reporting “probably”.

However, in a separate question, respondents were asked if they had encountered any difficulty signing up for RCC programs specifically, due to classes/facilities already being full. About 44% either had encountered difficulty trying to sign up or hadn’t even bothered to try because they anticipated issues with demand being too high. RCC may consider adding additional classes/programs for high demand offerings in order to fully accommodate that demand.

### Desired Facility Updates

Respondents were asked how important they consider it for RCC to continue to update existing facilities and carry out renovations. Over two-thirds of respondents considered RCC updates to be either “important” (32%) or “very important” (34%), and an additional one-fifth (20%) consider it “somewhat important” for RCC to continue performing updates.

Respondents who reported RCC updates and renovations being carried out as either “very important,” “important,” or “somewhat important,” were then asked an open-ended follow-up question as to what updates or renovations they would like to see done at either RCC facility.

Regarding the Hunters Woods facility, the most common response (reported by approximately one-third of respondents) dealt with nonspecific regular maintenance and renovation, upgrades, and modernizing facilities. Some respondents mentioned specifically upkeep of rental spaces and restrooms, but most respondents indicated general upkeep for aesthetic, safety, and hygienic purposes.

The second most common comment referred to the other miscellaneous suggestions such as adding electric vehicle charging stations, dog parks, walking trails, and improving locker rooms and theatres. A select few respondents noted accessibility concerns (e.g., mobility, hearing, or visual disabilities) such as handicapped access, accessible drop-off and pick-up areas. Additionally, respondents commonly requested facilities to have upgrades that would make RCC feel more inviting, such as better lighting, interiors, carpets, or Wi-Fi.

Similar themes emerged in the requested updates to the Lake Anne facility. The most common response again referred to nonspecific regular maintenance and renovation, upgrades, and modernizing facilities (28%). Specifically, respondents would like to see improved HVAC, an updated contemporary design, and parking options. Approximately 17% of respondents described other miscellaneous upkeep, 9% requested aesthetic improvements, and 9% would like more classes at Lake Anne.

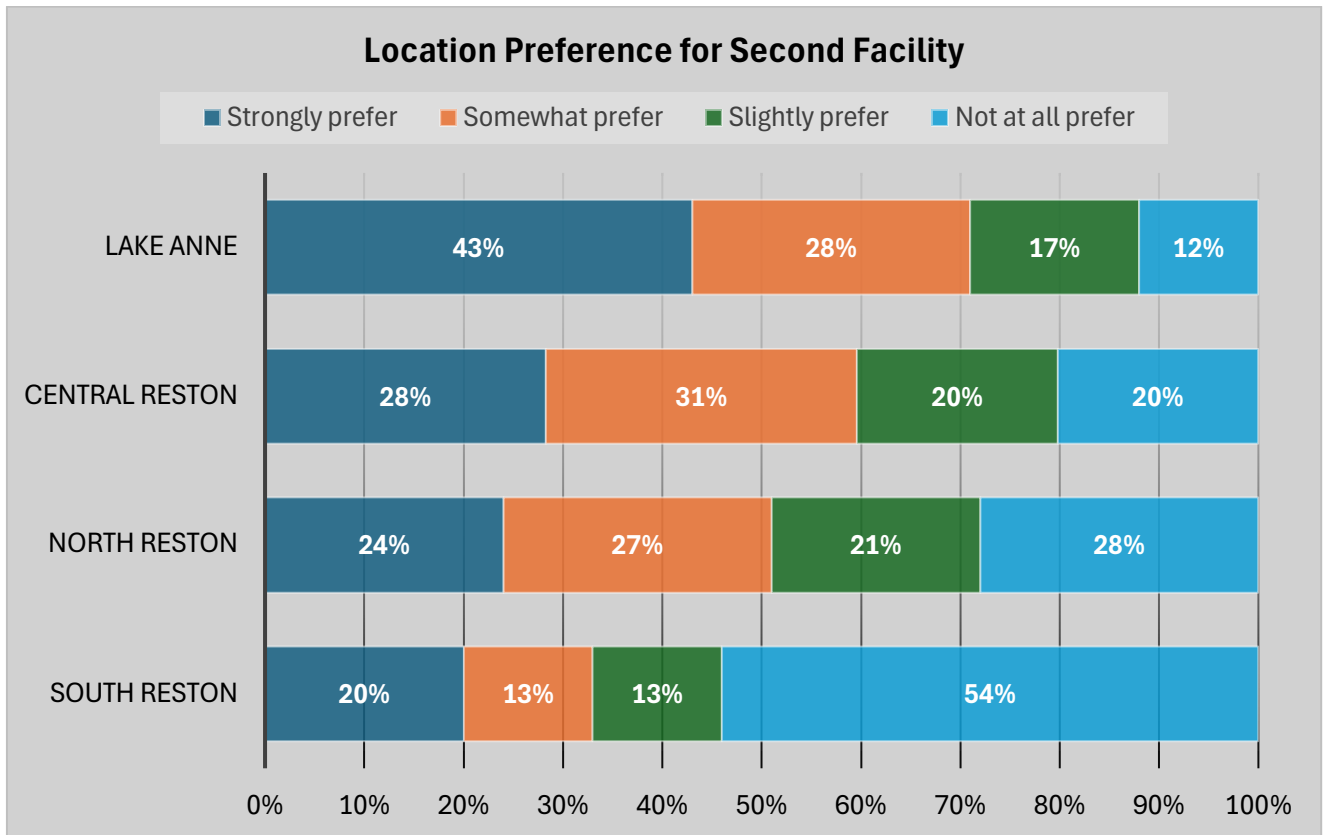
## Second RCC Facility

In order to assess the Reston community’s perspectives on a possible second RCC facility, respondents were asked a series of questions about preferences regarding location and accessibility of the new facility, types of programs, services, and features offered, and ownership arrangements for the new building.

### *Location of second facility*

First, respondents were asked about their preferences on the location of a second RCC facility. Almost half (42.8%) reported they “strongly prefer” the second facility to be located in the Lake Anne neighborhood, with Central Reston being the second (28%) highest preferred location, followed by North Reston and South Reston. For the full range of responses, see Figure 5.

**Figure 5. Location Preference of Second Facility**





### *Accessibility of second facility*

Respondents were then asked two questions regarding the accessibility of the second RCC facility, with respect to proximity to public transportation and proximity to bike and walking trails. First, about two-thirds (64%) reported it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for the facility to be easily reached by public transportation. On the second measure, about three-fourths (73%) reported it is “very important” or “somewhat important” for the facility to be near bike or walking paths.

There were several demographic differences regarding these opinions. First, those that rent their home, those that live in zip codes 20190 or 20191, those with less than a four-year degree, and those with household income below \$50,000 all reported significantly stronger average ratings for the importance of the facility to be near public transportation.

Second, those who have lived in Reston for less than 25 years had rated the proximity to bike/walking paths as more important than those who had lived in Reston for more than 25 years. Additionally, respondents with children in the home compared to those without reported a statistically significant higher average importance rating for proximity to bike/walking paths.

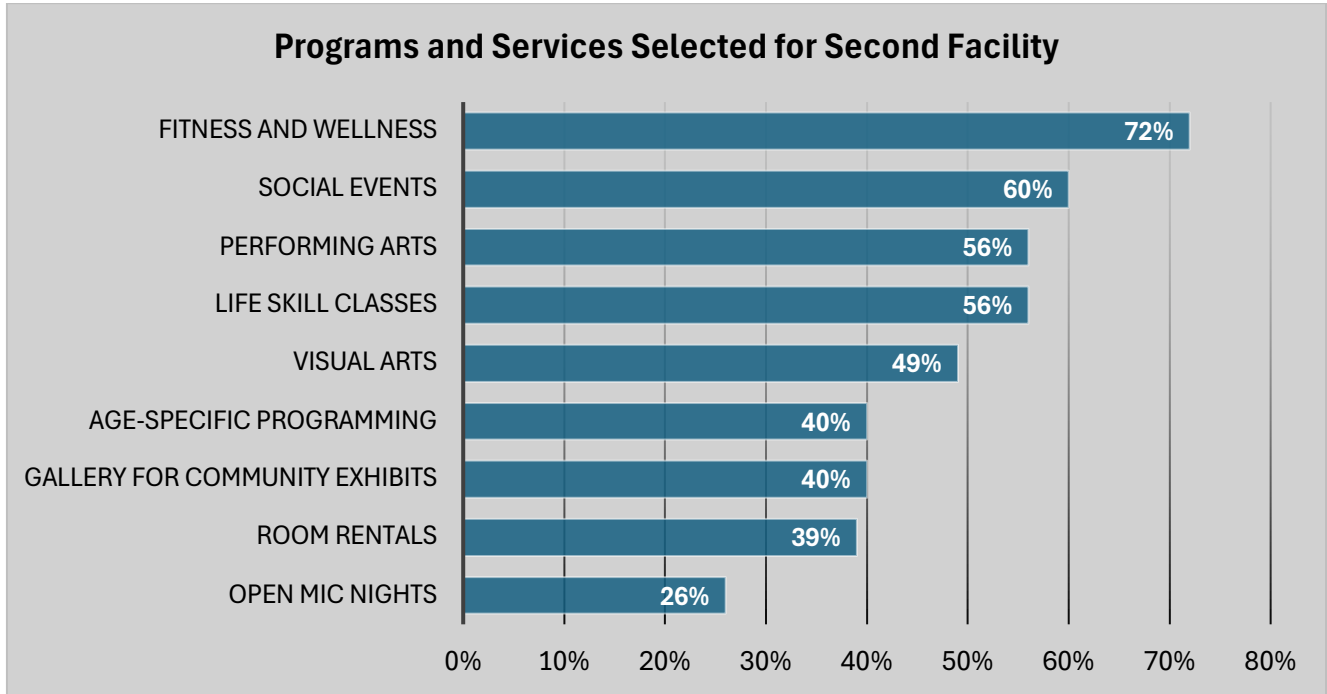
### *Types of programs and services*

Regarding the desired types of programs and services offered at the second facility, respondents were given a list of possible programs and could select multiple types. This list of programs was:

- *Performing arts*
- *Visual arts*
- *Fitness and wellness*
- *Room rentals*
- *Gallery for community exhibits*
- *Social events (e.g., Community Coffee, Sunday Afternoon Dances, etc.)*
- *Open Mic nights*
- *Age-specific programming*
- *Life skills classes (e.g., online safety, tech literacy, financial counseling)*

Of these options, fitness and wellness are the mostly widely desired program type with 72% of respondents selecting this program. Social events (60%), followed by performing arts (56%) and life skill classes (56%), were the next most selected programming types. See Figure 6 for complete selections.

**Figure 6. Programs and Services Selected for Second Facility**



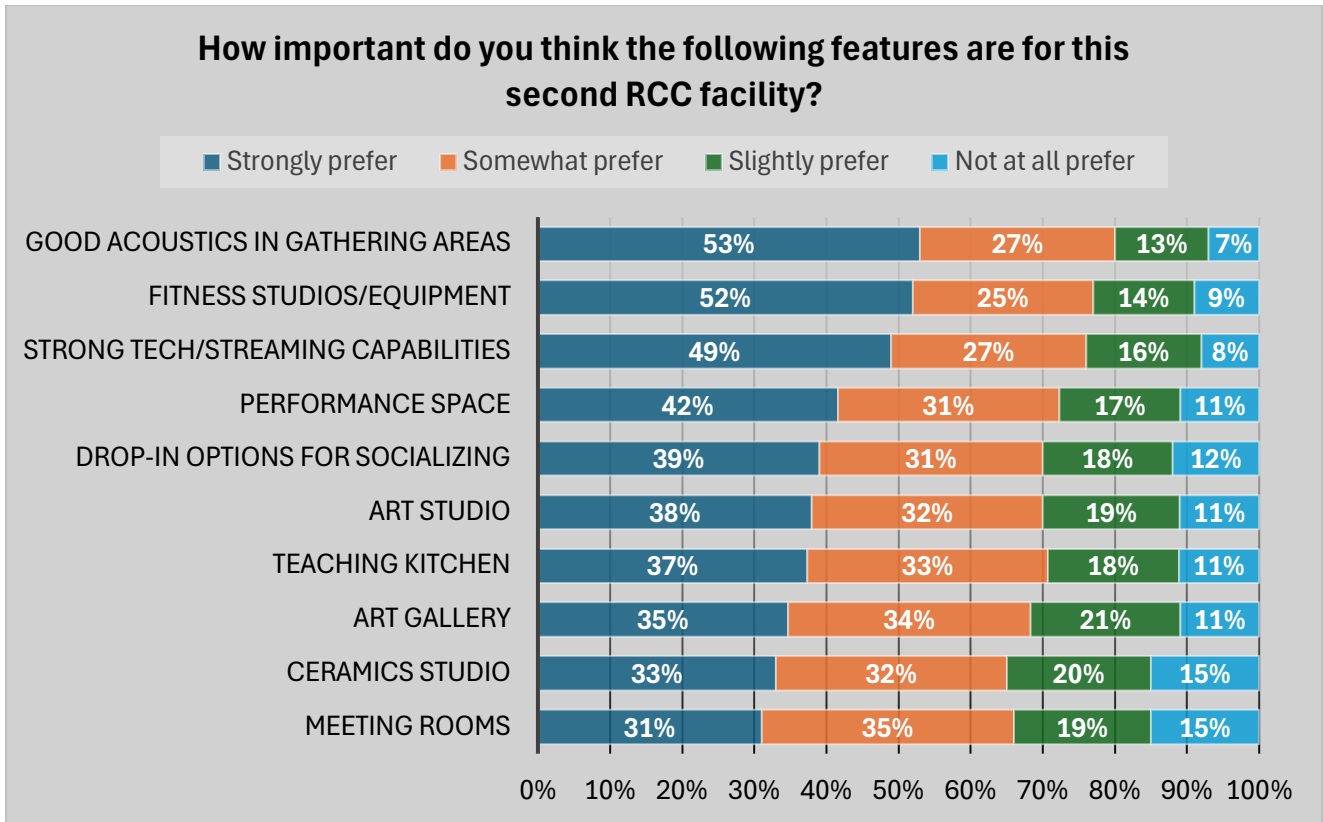
*Preference on features*

Respondents rated their preference of ten features for the second facility on a scale of 1 (“Not at all prefer”) to 4 (“Strongly prefer”). These features were:

- *Meeting rooms*
- *Performance space*
- *Art gallery*
- *Art studio*
- *Ceramics studio*
- *Teaching kitchen*
- *Fitness studios/equipment*
- *Strong tech/streaming capabilities*
- *Good acoustics in gathering areas*
- *Drop-in options for socializing*

Among these options, respondents reported the most important features to be good acoustics in gathering areas (53%) and fitness studios/equipment (52%), followed by strong technology/streaming capabilities (49%), and performance space (42%) in the second RCC facility.

**Figure 7. Features for second facility**



The types of features reported to be important did significantly vary by several demographics. Preference of good acoustics in gathering areas was higher among older respondents and those who have lived in Reston longer.

Likewise, preference for each performance space, an art gallery, and meeting rooms increased with both age and length of residence, and these features were also highly rated among respondents with household income below \$50,000. Strong technology and streaming capabilities was preferred specifically by respondents ages 50 years and older.

A ceramics studio was an important feature for younger respondents as well as those with children in the household. Additionally, a teaching kitchen was an important feature for respondents ages 30-64 years old, those with children in the household, and those with less than a four-year degree. Drop-in options for socializing was highly preferred among those ages 30-39 years old as well as those with children in the household. For complete demographic comparisons for each of these features, see Appendices C and D.

**Ownership**

Respondents indicated their preference for various ownership arrangements by ranking the following three options: “RCC owns the building”, “RCC leases the building”, and “The building is part of new development that RCC operates through a joint arrangement with the developer.”

Over half (56%) rated owning the building as their first choice, followed by a joint arrangement as the next highest top choice (28%), leaving leasing the building as the least common first-choice selection (18%).

While the top preference of ownership was consistent across respondents, respondents' relative preference of the other options did vary significantly among a few demographic groups. For example, RCC leasing the building was more highly rated among respondents 30 years and older, those who have lived in Reston for 25 years or longer, and those without children in the home. Support for a joint arrangement with a developer was reported at a relatively higher rate among respondents with at least a four-year degree and those whose household income is \$100,000 to \$149,999. For additional demographic comparisons among ownership options of the second RCC facility, see Appendix C.

Respondents were also given an option to share any additional thoughts as RCC plans for future facility needs. Of the 339 answers to this question, roughly 17% voiced concerns about developers, rising costs or the potential for higher costs, and the true need for a second facility. Specifically, respondents repeatedly expressed skepticism of collaborating with developers, referencing the possibility of a Reston casino as an example. They also shared concerns about the potential of increasing annual fees (in addition to the extant Homeowners' Association fees and the Reston Association fees) and taxes, and a possible overspend to acquire a new space. Responses indicate continuing confusion regarding differences between Reston Community Center and Reston Association.

An additional 13% of respondents expressed interest in larger meeting rooms and spaces, performance or music venue, and indoor athletic facilities such as a larger pool, tennis, and pickleball courts. A select few of these comments referenced the need to make accessible spaces for people with disabilities and nursing parents.

## **RCC Financing**

To measure the public's awareness of RCC's funding mechanism, respondents were given a brief description of the property tax and tax rate used to fund RCC and then asked if they were aware of this. Less than half (40%) were aware of RCC's funding structure prior to the survey.

Respondents varied significantly in that their awareness of RCC's funding structure was higher among homeowners, older respondents, and those who had lived in Reston for longer.

Respondents also indicated whether their residence is located within Small Tax District 5 (Yes, No, Not Sure). The majority (59%) were not sure, 35% indicated their residence is located within Small Tax District 5, and 6% reported their residence was not located within Small Tax District 5. Of note, only residents whose residential address was within Small Tax District 5 were invited to participate in the survey, suggesting at least a portion of those who reported "No" were incorrect.

In the context of funding and fees, respondents were also asked the extent to which they support RCC continuing to offer an income-based fee waiver program to help people with limited means participate in RCC programming. Respondents were overwhelmingly supportive

of this program, with 97% being at least somewhat supportive. Only 3% of respondents were not at all supportive of the fee waiver system. For the full frequency, see Appendix A.

Support of the fee waiver system did not vary significantly among different demographic groups.

Approximately two percent of respondents provided a write-in "Depends" response to this question. Among these respondents, a portion suggested they felt the program needed modification or were accepting of the program so long as the applicants' incomes were effectively vetted, and benefits had limits. The complete lists of responses can be viewed in Appendices F and G.

## VI. Communications and Outreach

To be sure that RCC is effectively sharing information with the Reston community, RCC was interested in learning about residents’ media habits and current sources for information on leisure and recreational activities.

### Regularly Used Media

Respondents were asked about the types of media they use on a regular basis, and they could select multiple media types. Online journalism was the most commonly consumed media (60%), followed by Facebook (48%), television streaming (43%), and Instagram (40%).

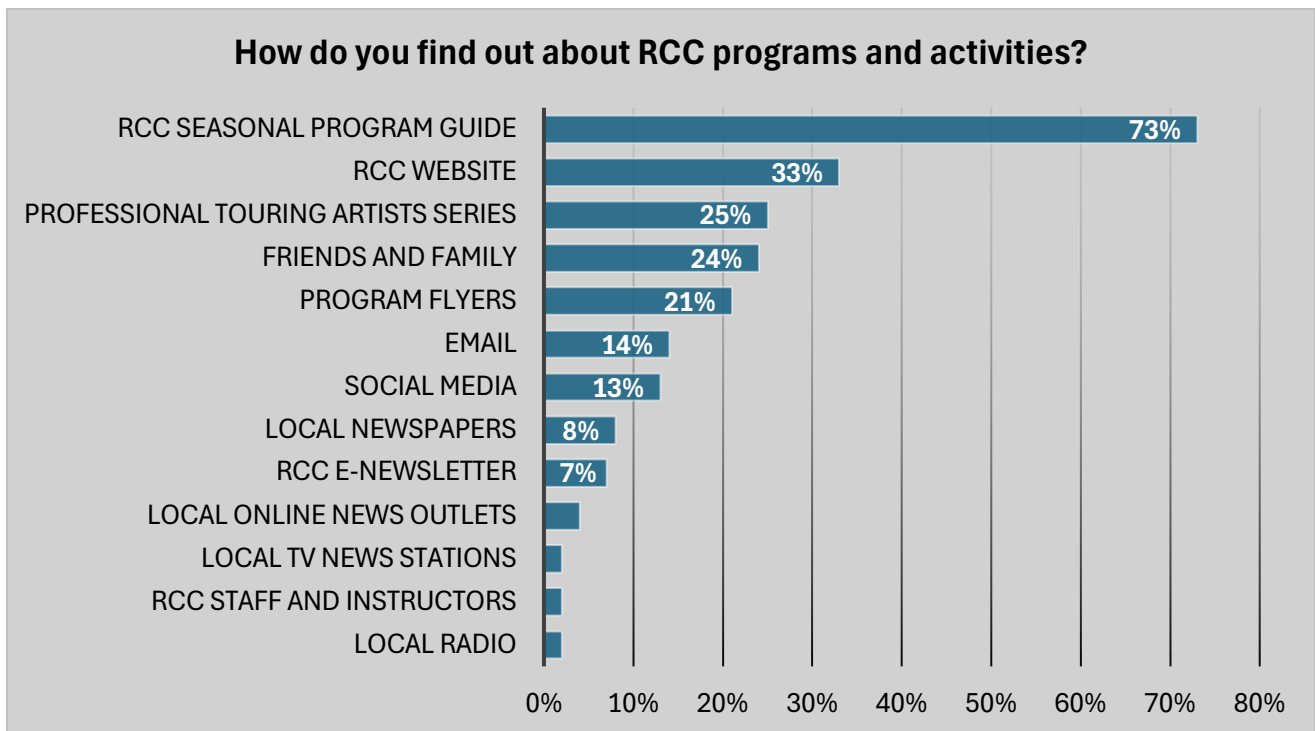
### Local News Outlets and Magazines

Respondents were also asked about their use of specific local news outlets and magazines within the broader media categories. The most widely read outlet was The Reston Letter (48%). In addition, the Reston Patch (42%) and Reston or FFXNow (36%) were regularly read by over a third of respondents, followed by Reston Connection (32%) and Nextdoor (29%).

### Sources for Leisure/Recreation Information

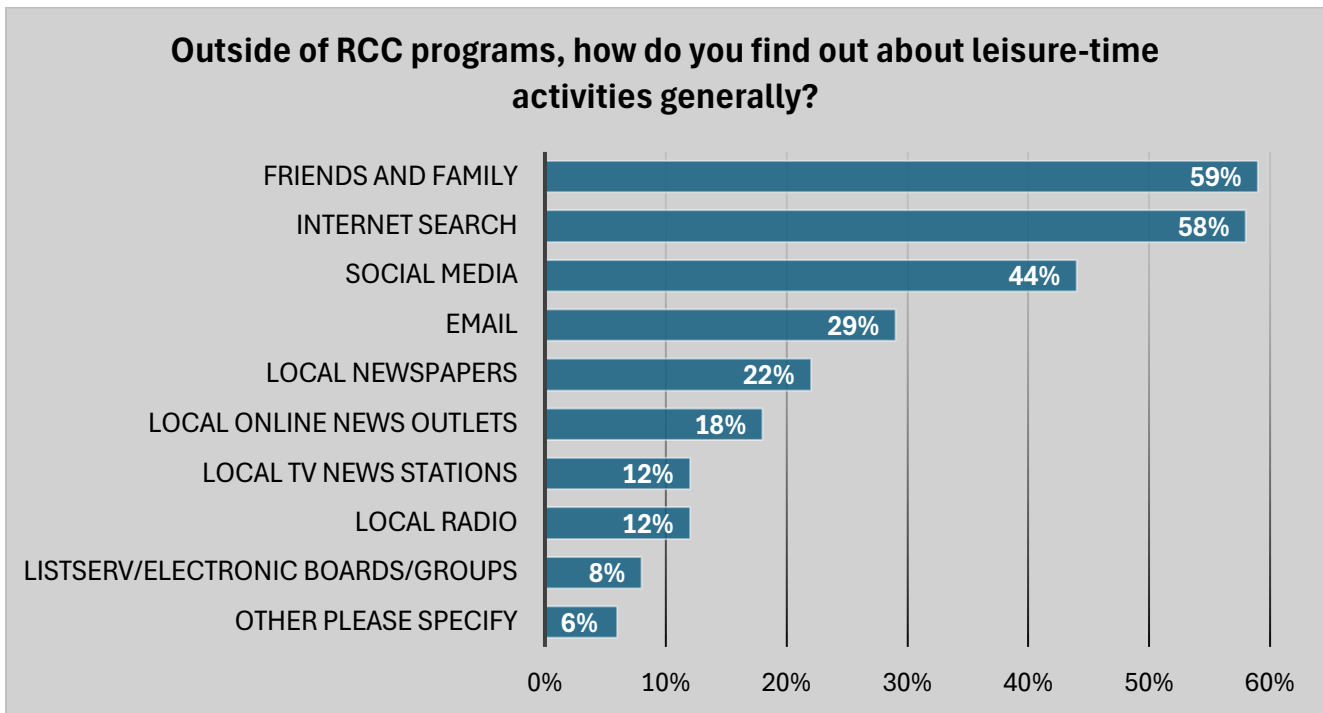
Respondents were asked how they find out about RCC-specific programs and activities. By far the most widely reported source was the RCC seasonal program guide, which almost three in four respondents (73%) selected as a source for their RCC information (Figure 8). The RCC website (33%) was the next most commonly cited source for information, followed by the CenterStage Professional Touring Artist Series mailer (25%), friends and family (24%), and program flyers (21%).

**Figure 8. Source of information about RCC programs and activities**



Respondents were also asked how they find out about leisure-time activity options generally, outside of RCC programs. As seen in Figure 9, the top sources of information for leisure activities were friends and family (59%), Internet searches (58%), social media (44%), and email (29%).

**Figure 9. Source of information about leisure-time activities in general**



## **VII. Summary**

The Reston Community Center Survey was designed to assess awareness and support for RCC, current and projected use of programs, barriers to use, preferences for a second RCC facility, and most-used sources for information on leisure activities.

### **Awareness of RCC**

In general, there were high levels of awareness and support for RCC. More than three out of five respondents (70%) said they were “very familiar” or “somewhat familiar” with RCC. In addition, strong majorities said that RCC makes Reston a more attractive place to live (91%) or to have a business (82%). Nearly half (46%) of respondents said that RCC is “very important” to the overall quality of life in Reston.

Approximately half of respondents (48%) said that they or a family member have participated in an RCC-sponsored event or class in the past twelve months. Among respondents who have not recently used RCC, the most common reason for not attending was being too busy (42%), followed by a lack of awareness about current RCC programs (30%). Respondents also cited current RCC programs as not interesting to their household (19%).

### **Use of Programs**

In evaluation of use across different types of RCC programs, community events were the most widely participated in program type, with 37% of respondents reporting having attended an event. An additional 53% reported possible interest in attending a community event in the future. The second most widely attended program type was the Professional Touring Artist Series at the CenterStage (29%), followed by drop-in swim (25%) and rental of RCC space (16%). Lifelong Learning was the program type with the highest level of potential interest (69%) but only 12% participation, indicating great potential for growth in participation. Similarly, land-based fitness and wellness programs had a comparable ratio of interest (64%) to actual participation (11%). These two program types may be areas RCC should further explore and consider in terms of greater promotion and more flexible scheduling for the Reston community.

### **Barriers to Participation**

Four in five respondents (82%) expressed a desire to participate in RCC programs more than they currently do, with classes being the area in which respondents are most interested in increasing their participation. The barriers cited for not attending RCC as much as one would like mirror many of the same reasons given by respondents who had not attended RCC in the past year. Reston residents express being too busy as the most significant barrier to participating more in RCC, followed by being unaware of existing program offerings.

Almost half (44%) of respondents either experienced difficulty trying to sign up for RCC programs or had not even bothered to try due to expected high demand. RCC could explore ways to adjust their programming schedule to better accommodate potential patrons.



## Second RCC Facility

Respondents cited strong preferences regarding location of the second facility. The Lake Anne neighborhood was the preferred location for a second facility, selected by 43% of respondents. Majorities also consider it at least somewhat important for the facility to be easily reached by public transportation (64%) and be near bike or walking paths (73%). The majority of respondents cited fitness/wellness (72%), social events (60%), performing arts (56%) and life skill classes (56%) as desirable programs for the second facility. In terms of features, good acoustics in gathering areas, fitness studios/equipment, and strong technology/streaming capabilities were the most highly rated among respondents. Finally, when it comes to the financial arrangement for the second facility, there was a clear preference. Over half of respondents selected RCC ownership of the building as their first-choice arrangement, followed by a joint arrangement with a developer, and RCC leasing the building as the least selected first-choice option.

## Communications

RCC is committed to serving the entire Reston community, which necessitates sharing RCC information on programming through a variety of channels in order to reach all Reston residents. As already noted, lack of awareness of the existing offerings and schedule was a commonly cited reason for not attending RCC more recently and/or more often.

Online journalism, Facebook, television streaming, and Instagram were the most widely used, with roughly half of respondents (ranging from 40% to 60%) regularly using each of these media. Regarding commonly used sources for information on RCC programming, the RCC seasonal program guide was by far the most widely used; three out of four respondents (73%) cited using it. When respondents were asked where they find out about leisure-time activities generally (not RCC-specific), "friends and family" and internet searches were the most widely cited sources for information, followed by social media and local newspapers. These results indicate that RCC would be well served to continue producing their seasonal program guide, to expand their online presence, and continue to share RCC program information widely via social media (Facebook and Instagram in particular) and local news outlets.

## Conclusion

The Reston Community Center's mission is to provide meaningful leisure-time and cultural experiences as a means to improve the quality of life for the entire Reston community. In their long-range planning, RCC's Board of Governors and staff are mindful of including community preferences and patron feedback, which was the impetus for the 2024 Reston Community Center Community Survey. The survey results indicate support for expanded program options and continued exploration of the potential for a second facility in Reston. Findings also show the vast majority of residents would like to attend RCC events and programs more than they currently do. Further, RCC can more effectively reach more community members by expanding the approaches used to communicate with potential patrons. Reston Community Center is a community institution with strong connections to its constituents and capacity for growth, and it will continue to value and incorporate public feedback.

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The Center for Survey Research opens channels of communication to give voice to the many. By helping governments, organizations, and researchers to measure attitudes, opinions, behaviors and interests, we enable them to serve their communities more effectively. As a full-service facility, we offer customized project design, professional interviewing, data collection and analysis, report preparation and presentation, and ongoing conversation with clients to help put survey findings to work.



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