



To: Town Meeting Members and Town Officials
From : Vision 2020 Standing Committee
Chair: Juli Brazile
Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Sue Doctrow, Amy Goldstein, Annie LaCourt, Scott Lever, Jen Toole, and Nat Strosberg
Date: May 5, 2017
Subject: Vision 2020 Report to the 2017 Annual Town Meeting

Details about the work Vision 2020 volunteers performed last year appear in the Town's Annual Report 2016, pages 92-96, which briefly reviews Vision 2020's recent accomplishments.

Vision 2020 introduced one article to this year's warrant. Article 48 is a request to appropriate money for the Water Bodies Fund, made by the Conservation Commission, the Vision 2020 Standing Committee, and the Reservoir and Spy Pond committees of the Vision 2020 Environment Task Group. Article 48 is supported by the Finance Committee.

The 2017 Annual Town Survey was mailed to 19,350 households and work continues this month to process and analyze the scanned information and log additional comments. Due to a series of small technical issues we will not have completed scanning the returned surveys before the end of Town Meeting. This report is based on 2963 surveys, but it will provide an interim view of the trends.

There are a few highlights from recent months:

- A new **Education Task Group** is forming and volunteers are working closely with the Superintendent and her staff and with the School Committee to develop public forums that explore ideas and concerns for how the way we define "success" shapes what happens in the classroom.
- **Arlington Public Art** has left the Vision 2020 family of committees and is now a subcommittee of the Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture focusing on public art programming. This reflects a tradition of Vision 2020 supporting new committees until they become part of a larger town structure.
- For our part of **Civics Day**, the Standing Committee created a graphic that we hope is the beginning a larger effort to capture and present information for the public about the rich complexity of our civic life. Because Vision 2020 organizes around the Town Goals, we listed town committees, independent community groups and town employees whose missions are related to each goal. One goal is to bring all those stakeholders together from time to time to discuss collaboration and joint strategies for progress within each broad goal statement. And, in time, we hope to develop interactive, online tools that would help users understand the connections and functions of people (volunteers and

employees) working on the environment, good governance, diversity and human rights, education or business.

- The **Meeting for All Precincts**, enabling Town Meeting members and constituents to learn about and discuss the upcoming Warrant, was held the week after the town election and was very well-attended. We received helpful feedback and plan to repeat the event next spring. One goal is to provide residents with another opportunity to meet their Town Meeting Members. Candidate's Night, which we co-sponsor, was particularly useful for interested voters who wanted to discuss specific issues with candidates for Town Meeting.

Finally, we would like to note that CDBG funding supports the costs associated with the Annual Town Survey. CDBG funds purchased the survey software license and pay for printing 20,000 surveys. Looking ahead in this time of uncertainty regarding federal funds on all levels, it's important to note that the CDBG allocation for the 2018 survey is not enough to pay the actual cost of printing. We have some funds left from this year's survey because printing costs did not increase over last year as we anticipated. Those funds from this year can be used going forward to cover the cost of printing for a couple of years assuming modest cost increases. However we are faced with the possibility of needing to find other funding sources in order to allow the annual survey to continue.

Please visit the Vision 2020 webpage at arlingtonma.gov/vision2020 to learn more or email vision2020@town.arlington.ma.us if you would like to comment, ask a question, or volunteer.

2017 Annual Town Survey – interim results

Background. Since 1991, Vision 2020 has used an insert in the Town's Annual Census Mailing to inform residents about Arlington and ask their opinions on aspects of life in our town. The survey reaches Arlington's ~19,000 households and receives a substantial response, with approximately 7386 of these households responding in 2016. Thus, it provides an important opportunity for town organizations to receive information that can help inform town goals and services desired by residents.

About the Summary Report. As noted in the introduction to the report, this is a summary of interim results from 2963 households. The report posted online on the Town Meeting page of the Town website contains charts of the raw data for those who are interested, but we felt it was not worth printing a long report that contains only partial results. Careful readers of the data summary in the online version will note that the software attempted to capture some of the handwritten comments and we have skipped pages that contain nothing but random characters.

Respondents. The respondents were very evenly distributed across Arlington's 21 precincts (5–6% respondents representing each precinct). The age groups most represented in responding households were 30–44 years (37%) and under 18 years (32%). The next group most represented was 45–54 (25%) while five older age groups were each fairly evenly represented in 9–13% of responding households. Relative newcomers to Arlington (1–5 years) described 30% of respondents, while 27% have lived here 6–15 years and 44% for longer, up to 41+ years (14%). Most respondents live in single family (52%) or two family homes (30%), with 72% owning their homes. Household sizes ranged from 3–4 (37%), to 2 (32%), 1 (25%) and 5 or more (6%) people. Of households with school age children, most (658 respondents) send their

children to Arlington public schools, with 158 in private/parochial schools and 14 home schooling.

Community Preservation Act. These questions assessed residents' views about the Community Preservation Act, especially how they would prioritize the three categories of eligible projects, using five rankings from "highest" to "lowest" priority. Most respondents (52%) ranked open space and recreation in the "highest" category, with 29% ranking community housing and 14% ranking historic preservation as "highest". If both top categories, "highest" and "high", were included, the respective values were 85% (open space and recreation), 60% (community housing) and 53% (historic preservation). Fewer respondents (4–15%) gave any of these categories a ranking of "low" or "lowest". Another question revealed that 67% were unaware that low to moderate income seniors could apply for exemption from the 1.5% CPA surcharge but only 3% indicated that they planned to apply, while 40% answered that they were ineligible.

Composting. These questions explored how common composting is among Arlington residents, as well as possible factors to encourage more composting. Of respondents, only 20% indicated that they compost food scraps, versus disposing in the trash (75%) or garbage disposal (63%). Of these, most (~87% of composters; 16% of all respondents) compost at home, versus options including a composting service. Of those who do compost, 34% obtained a bin from DPW and 53% are still using it. A small percentage of respondents (5%) indicated that they cooperate with neighbors for composting. If the town were to offer a weekly drop-off program for food scraps, 21% indicated interest, with 39% indicating "maybe" and 41% no interest.

Bicycle Use and Bike sharing. These questions investigated the prevalence of bicycle use in Arlington, as well as interest in having a bike sharing service like Hubway in town. Depending on the season, with less riding in winter months, most respondents selected "never" for how often members of their household rode a bike. Reasons for not riding monthly or more including that they did not have bikes, weather and safety. However, hundreds reported riding at least one day per week, especially in the most popular months of April–June and July–September. (For further information about these very detailed questions, please consult the online report on the Town Meeting page.) Of the respondents, while approximately half (depending on the question) indicated they would not use bike sharing, the remaining half indicated potential interest, selecting a number of uses, especially riding to a T station and exercise/recreation. Potential destinations for these users were mostly within Arlington and to Alewife, but also included other nearby municipalities. The most popular locations for bike sharing locations in Arlington were Arlington Center, Arlington Heights and near Lake St at Mass Ave. While most (57%) indicated that the hours of the Minuteman bikeway were adequate, many (30%) answered that there should be no restriction on hours of use. (Currently, the town bylaws specify that the Minuteman bikeway is open for use from 5 am to 9 pm.) Handwritten comments are still being logged, but the most common comment is that lighting on the bikeway is needed.

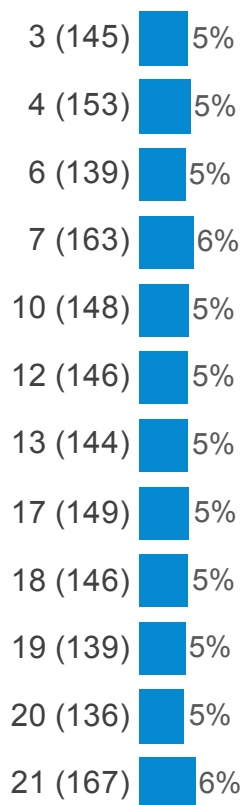
Arlington and the Arts. Several questions explored interest in various arts events, including art gallery exhibits, films, live music and theatre and outdoor arts events and festivals, both in and beyond Arlington. Depending on the category, over 1000 residents indicated that they attended such events, including several hundred attending within Arlington. Of the responding households, 508–1272 indicated interest in various categories of events and programs sponsored by the Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA). While 58% of respondents (1530 households) indicated that they had not attended an ACA event in the past year, many others indicated that they had, with the most popular being Arlington Porchfest (676), Arlington Open Studios (382) and Shakespeare in the Park (317). (Again, please consult the survey data for more information

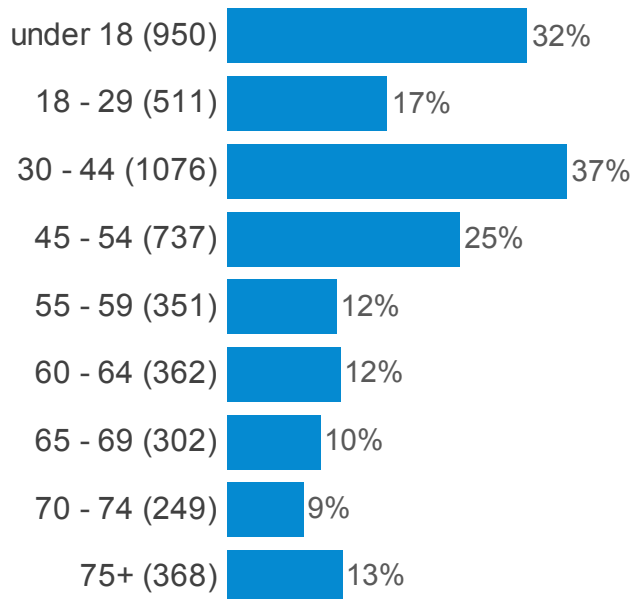
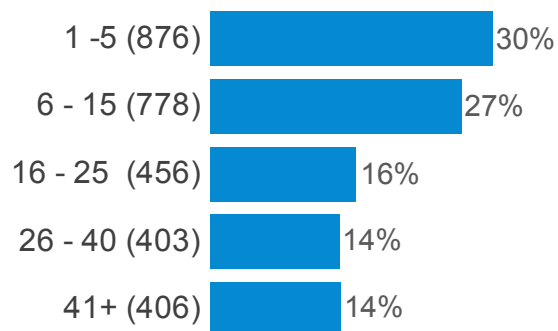
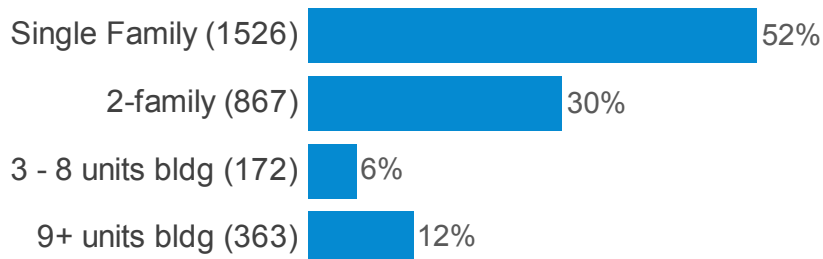
about these detailed responses.) Many described members of their households working, at least part-time, as artists (270) or musicians (301) or working in the "creative sector" (398) and 1663 indicated some interest in attending arts and culture events.

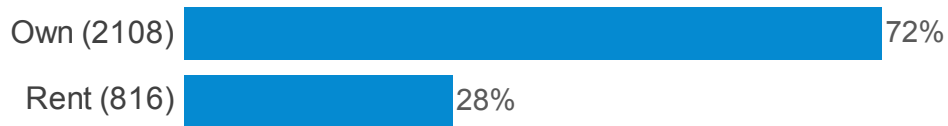
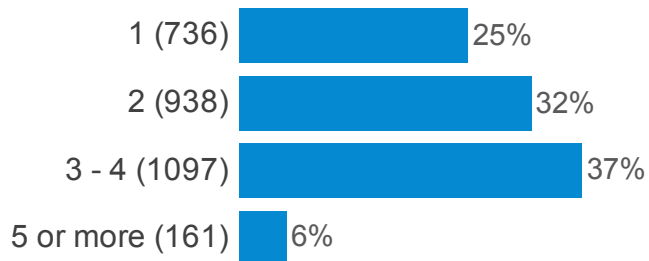
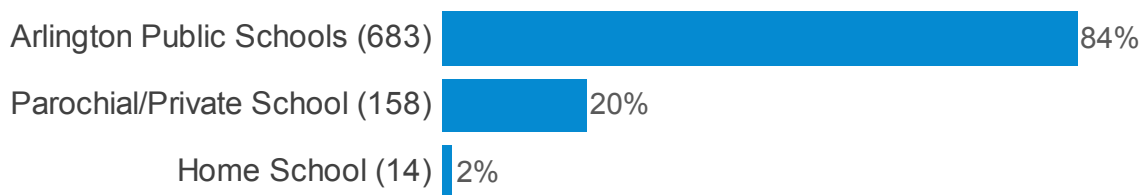
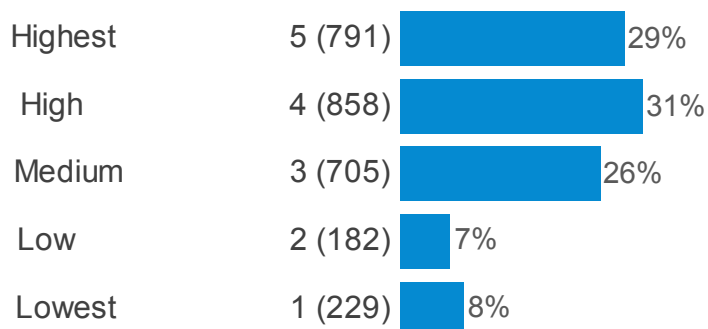
This report was generated on 05/04/17. Overall 2954 respondents completed this questionnaire. The report has been filtered to show the responses for 'All Respondents'.

The following charts are restricted to the top 12 codes. Lists are restricted to the most recent 100 rows.

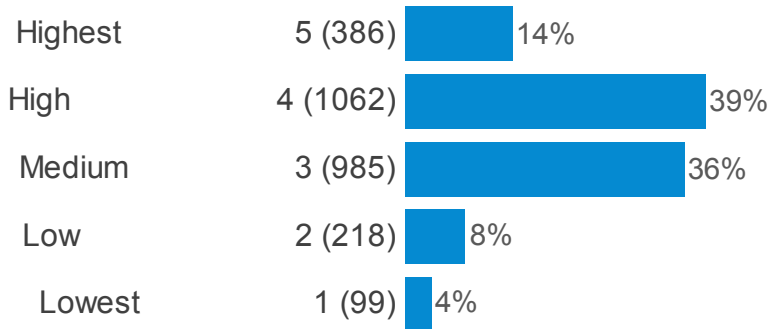
A1. What is your precinct number? (See left side of your Census form above resident data.) (What is your precinct number? (See left side of your Census form above resident data.))



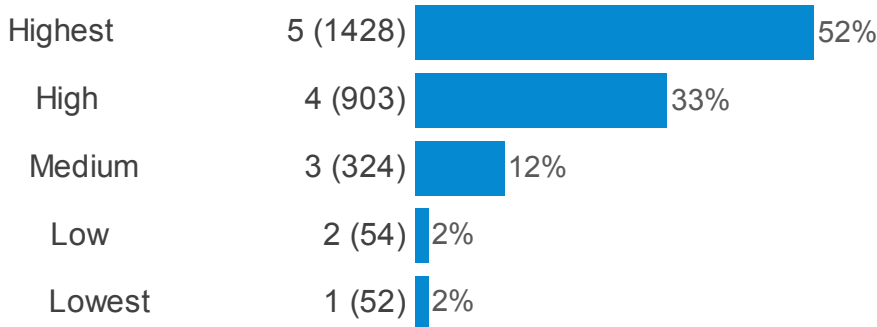
A2. What age groups are represented among members of your household? (Mark all that apply)**A3. Number of years lived in Arlington?****A4. Best description of your housing?**

A5. Do you own or rent?**A6. How many people live in your household?****A7. If applicable, where do your children attend school?****B1. How does your household rate the importance of each CPA project category for funding distribution? (Community Housing)**

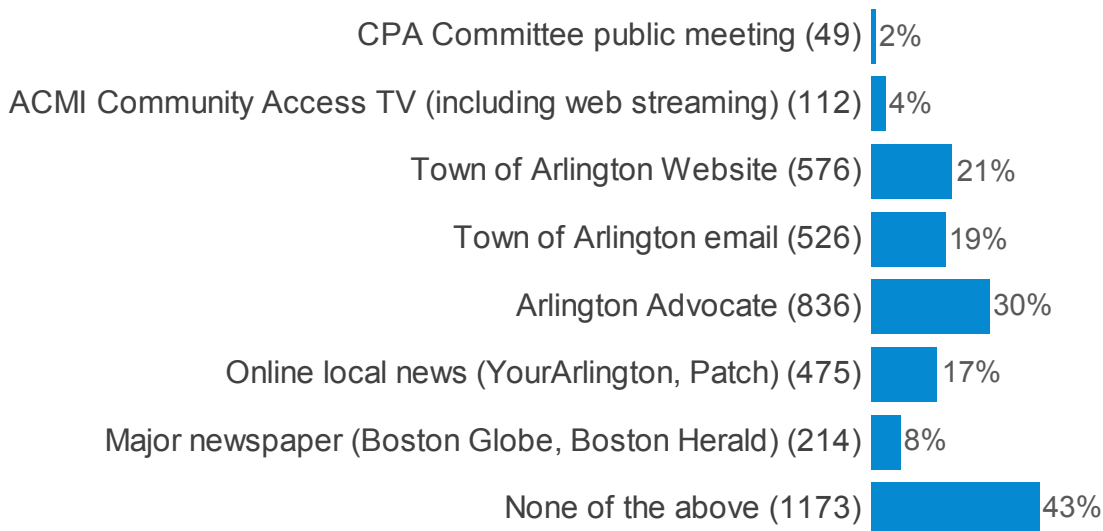
B1. How does your household rate the importance of each CPA project category for funding distribution? (Historic Preservation)



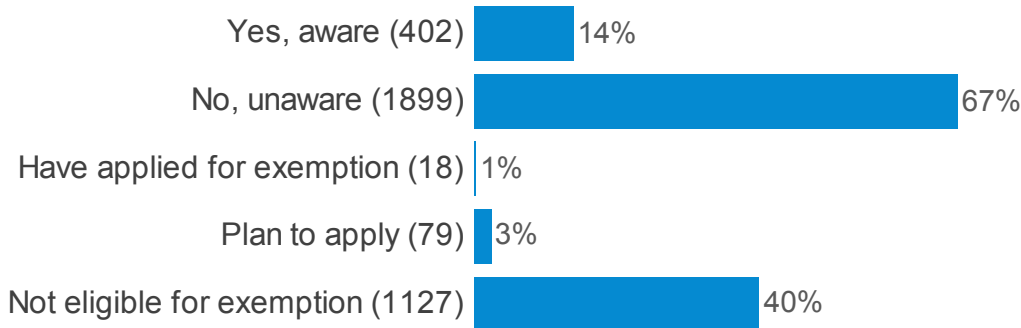
B1. How does your household rate the importance of each CPA project category for funding distribution? (Open Space and Recreation)



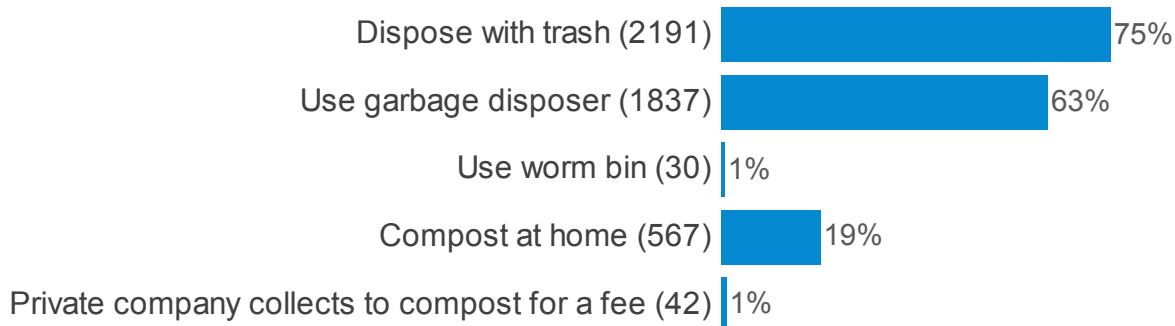
B2. Where have members of your household seen information about Community Preservation Act meetings, projects or funding applications in Arlington? (Mark all that apply)



B3. A 1.5% property tax surcharge funds Arlington's CPA Fund. Prior to reading the survey, was your household aware that low-income residents and low- and moderate-income seniors may be eligible for an exemption from the CPA surcharge, and do you plan to apply? (Mark all that apply)

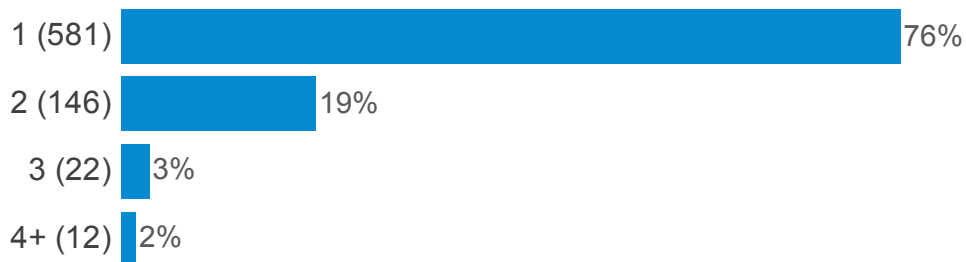
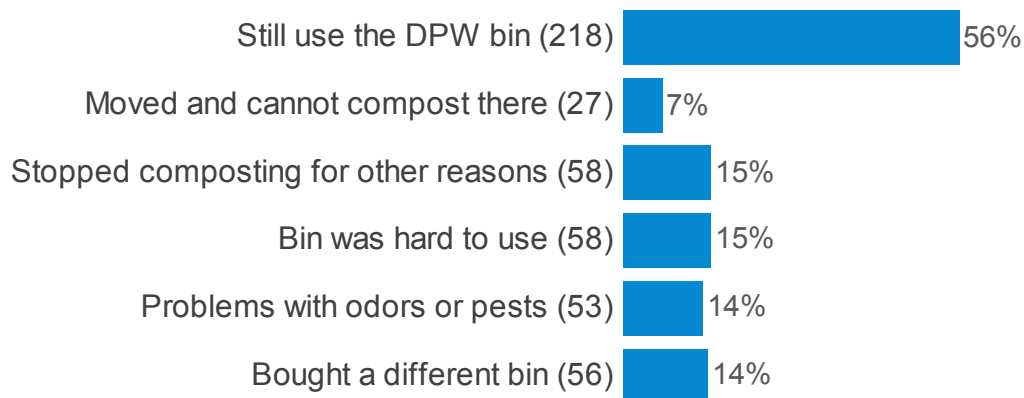


C1. What does your household do to dispose of food scraps? Choose the TWO most common methods.

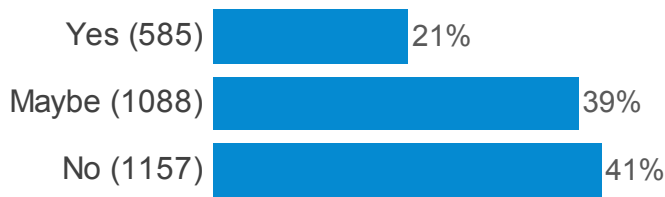


a. How long did you compost?



b. How many bins did you use?**c. Did you buy a compost bin from DPW?****d. If you bought a bin from DPW, please mark the boxes that describe your experience. (Mark all that apply)****C3. Does your household cooperate with a neighbor for composting?**

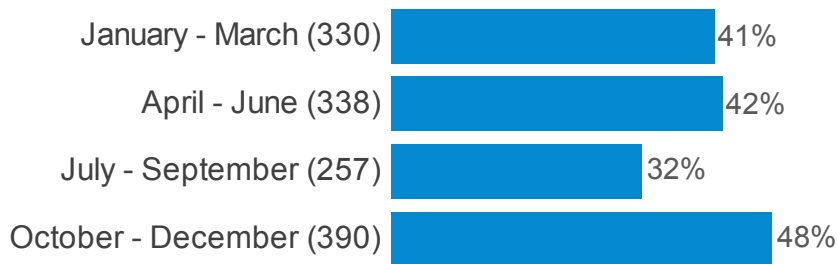
C4. If the Town were to offer a drop-off program to collect food scraps, would your household be interested in participating by bringing scraps to a central location once a week?



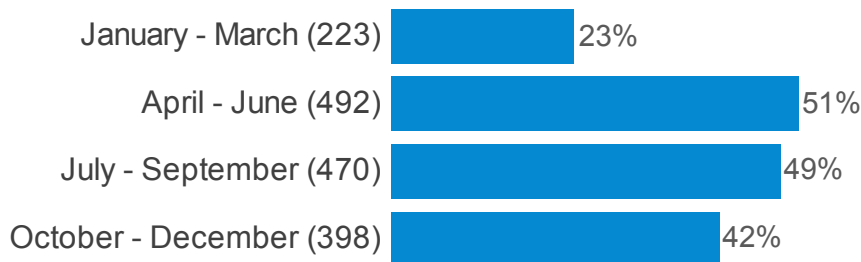
D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (Never)

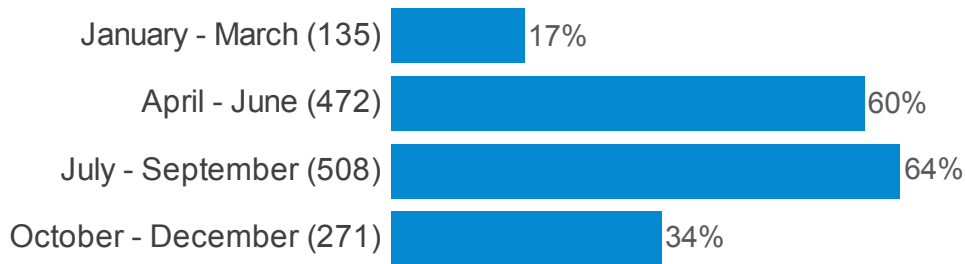
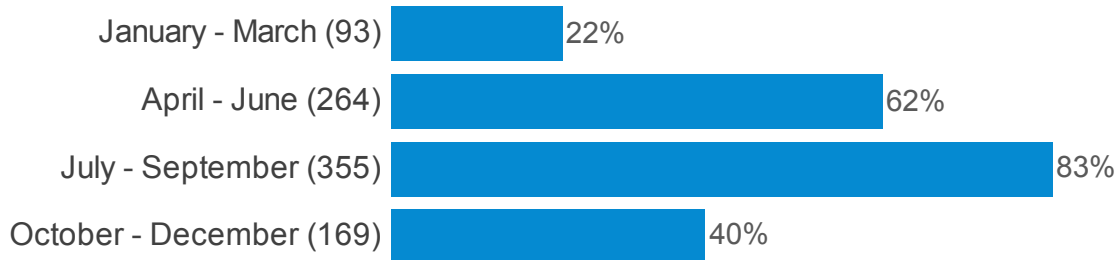
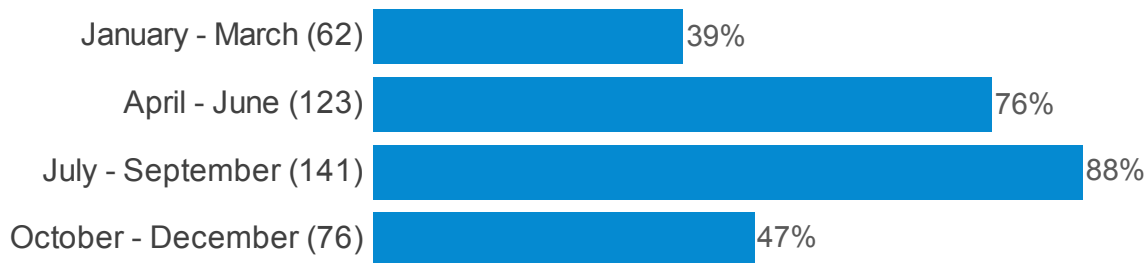


D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (Less than once per month)

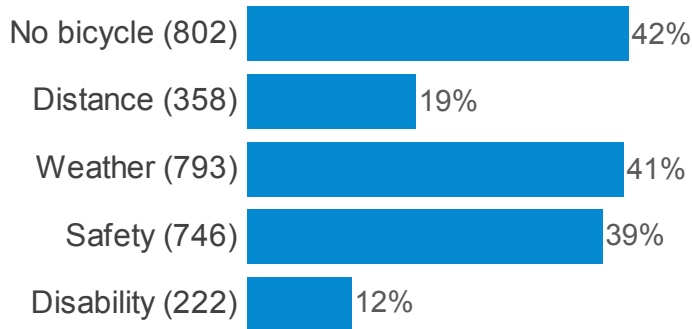


D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (One to two times per month)



D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (One to three days per week)**D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (Four to six days per week)****D1. How often do those members of your household ride a bicycle? (Mark one answer per season) (Daily)**

D2. If those members of your household DO NOT ride monthly or more, what are the reasons? (Mark all that apply)



Other - please PRINT your answer in the box below

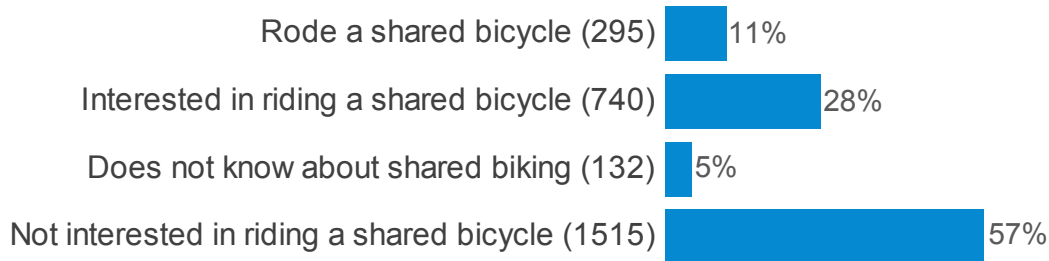
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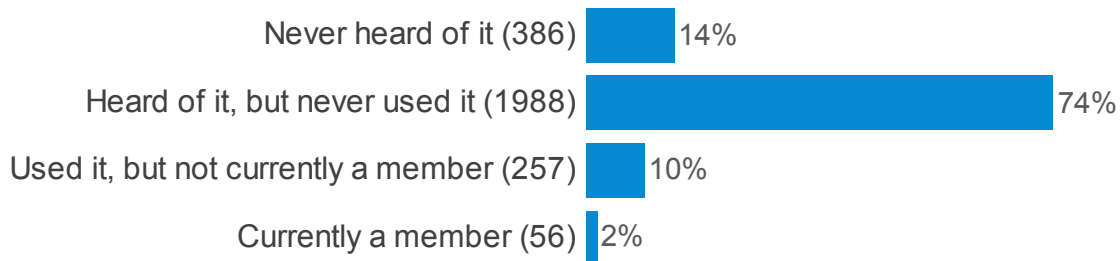
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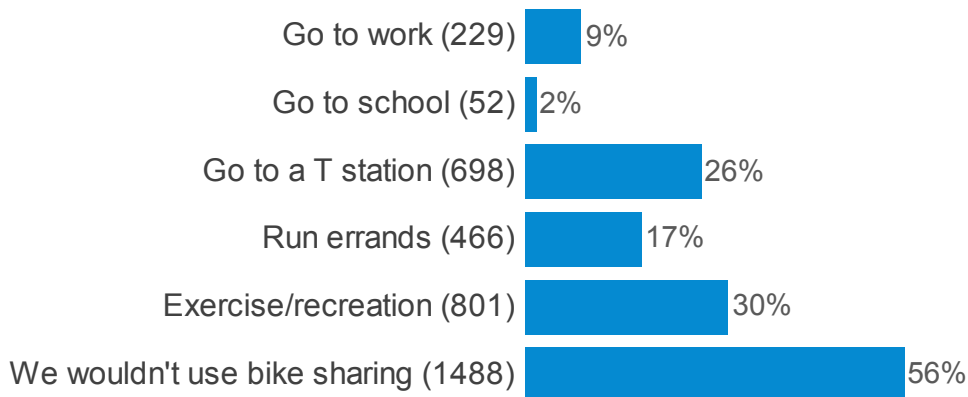
D3. There are bike sharing (e.g., Hubway and Citi Bike) programs located around the world. Please indicate which answer best describes members of your household. (Mark only one)



D4. Thinking only about the Hubway bike sharing program that operates in Boston, Brookline, Cambridge and Somerville, choose the answer that applies best to your household. (Mark only one)



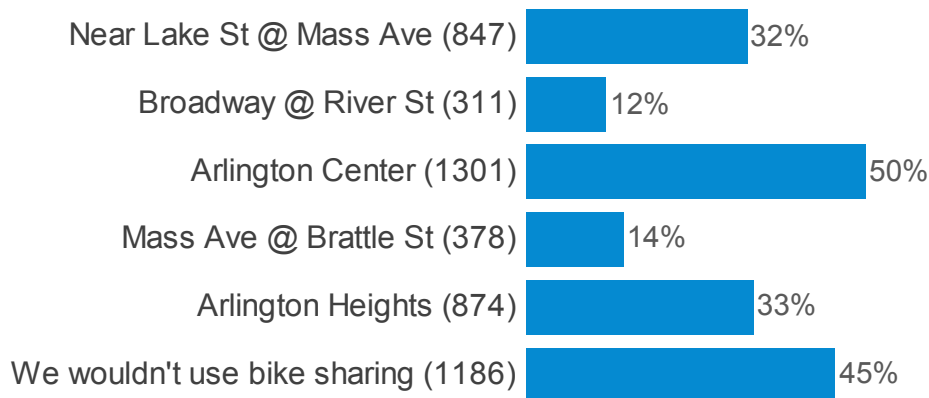
D5. If bike sharing were available in Arlington, how would your household members use it? (Mark all that apply)



Other - please PRINT your answer in the box below

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D7. Where should bike sharing be located in Arlington? (Mark all that apply)



Other - please PRINT your answer in the box below

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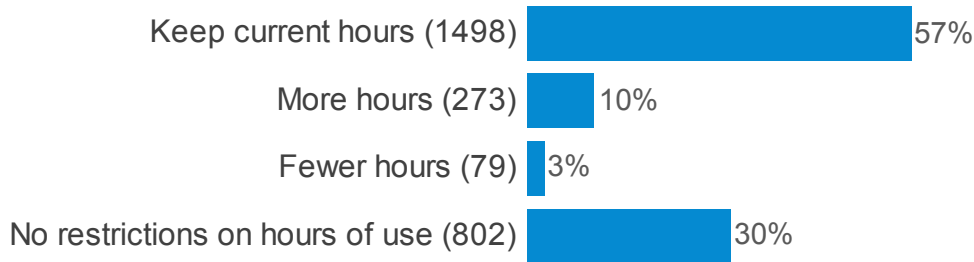
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D8. What does your household prefer regarding the hours the bikeway can be used? (Mark only one)



E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Art Gallery Exhibits)



E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Films)



E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Live Music)



E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Live Theater)



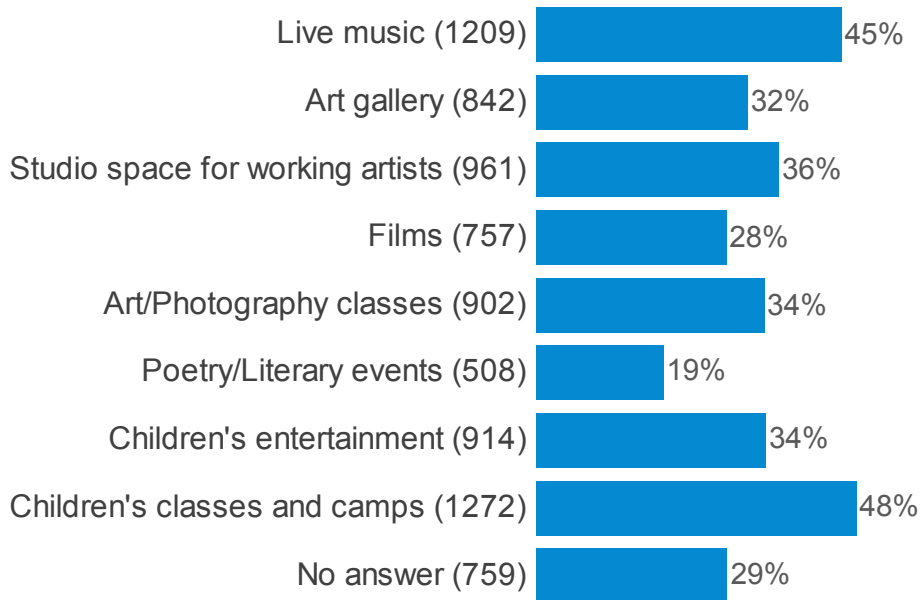
E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Outdoor arts events or festivals)



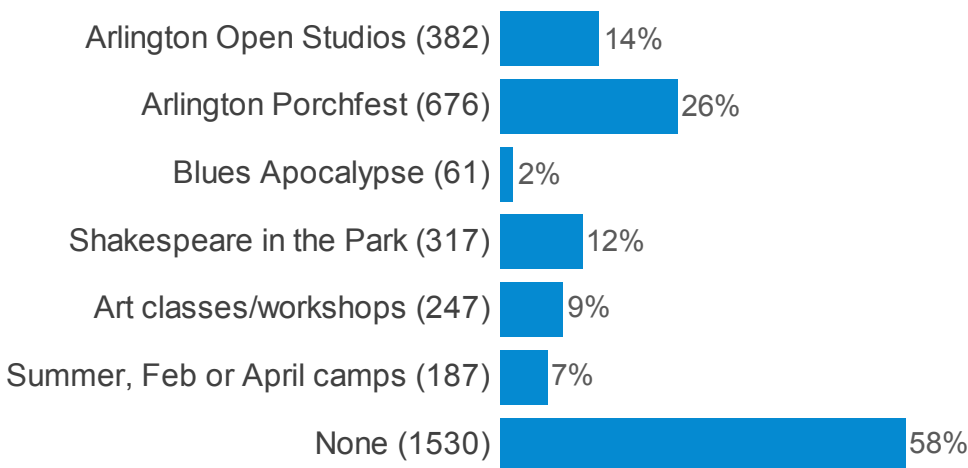
E1. In the past year what programs have members of your household attended? (Mark all that apply) (Art classes or workshops)



E2. Which Arlington Center for the Arts (ACA) events and programs does your household think contribute the most to arts and culture in Arlington? (Mark all that apply)



E3. Which of the following ACA sponsored events have you or a member of your household attended/participated in the past year? (Mark all that apply)



E4. Please tell us which categories describe the members of your household. (Mark all that apply)