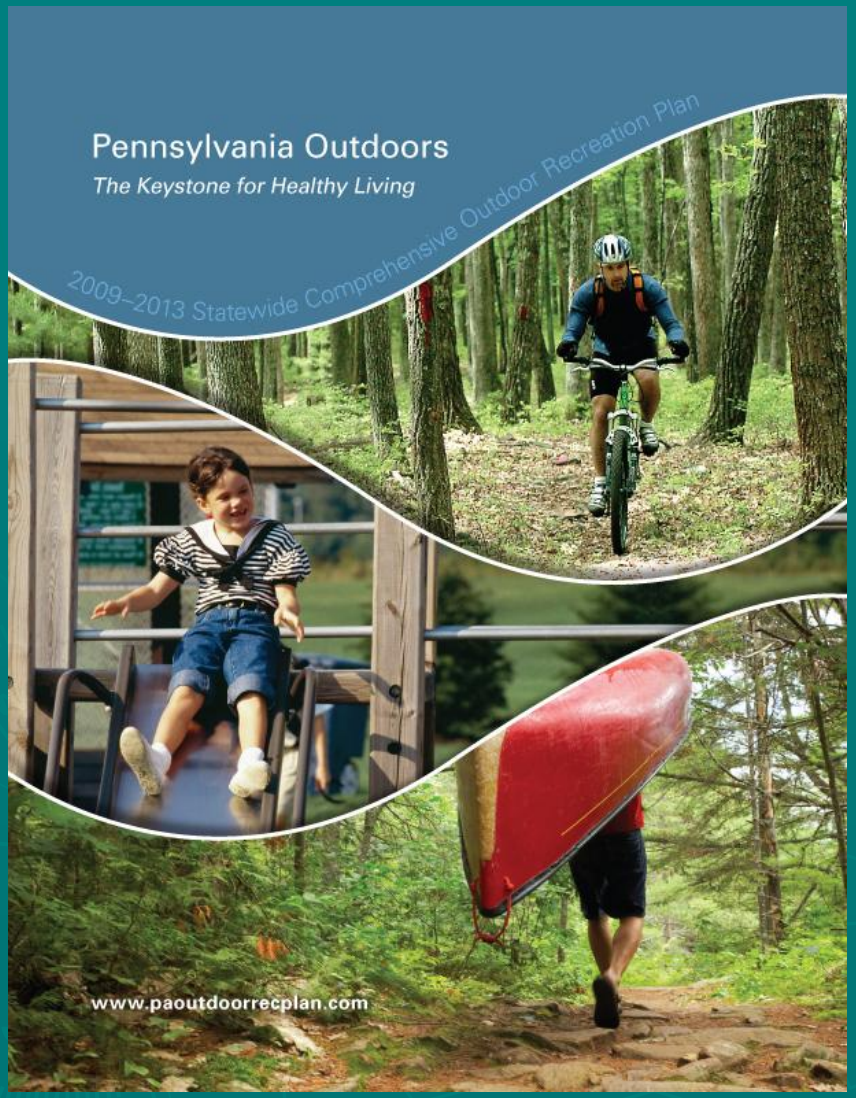


Pennsylvania Outdoors: The Keystone for Healthy Living

2009-2013 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Presentation Outline

Plan Highlights

- Purpose
- Research
- Goals, Recommendations and Action Steps
- Implementation

Health Feedback

- Ideas for implementation
- Possible partnerships

SCORP – the Basics

- Completed every five years
- Requirement of National Park Service to remain eligible for Land and Water Conservation Funds
- DCNR designated as State Liaison Officer
- 50+ member advisory committee

PA's Opportunity

- Inclusive planning process with broader reach and purpose
- Elevate the importance of statewide outdoor recreation planning
- Gather current info about outdoor recreation trends
- Address key issues affecting residents, visitors, and outdoor recreation resources

Overview of Research

Research Program Included Four Integrated Studies

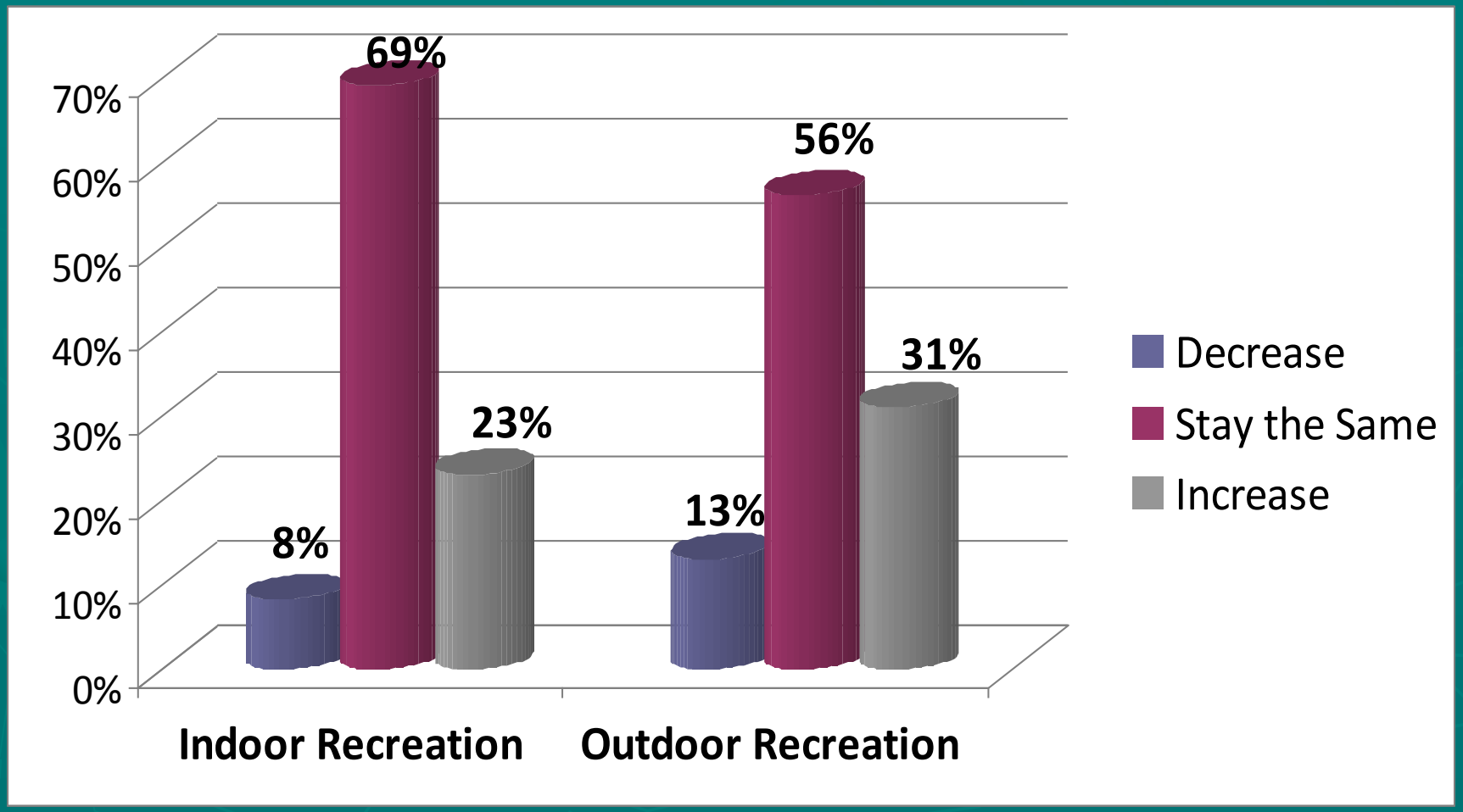
- Pennsylvania Resident Survey
- State Park Visitor Survey
- Facilitated Discussion Groups
- Trail Gap Analysis

Research Findings: What are Pennsylvanians doing? Participation Rates for Most Popular Outdoor Recreation Activities

Table 1. Participation Rates for Most Popular Outdoor Recreation Activities

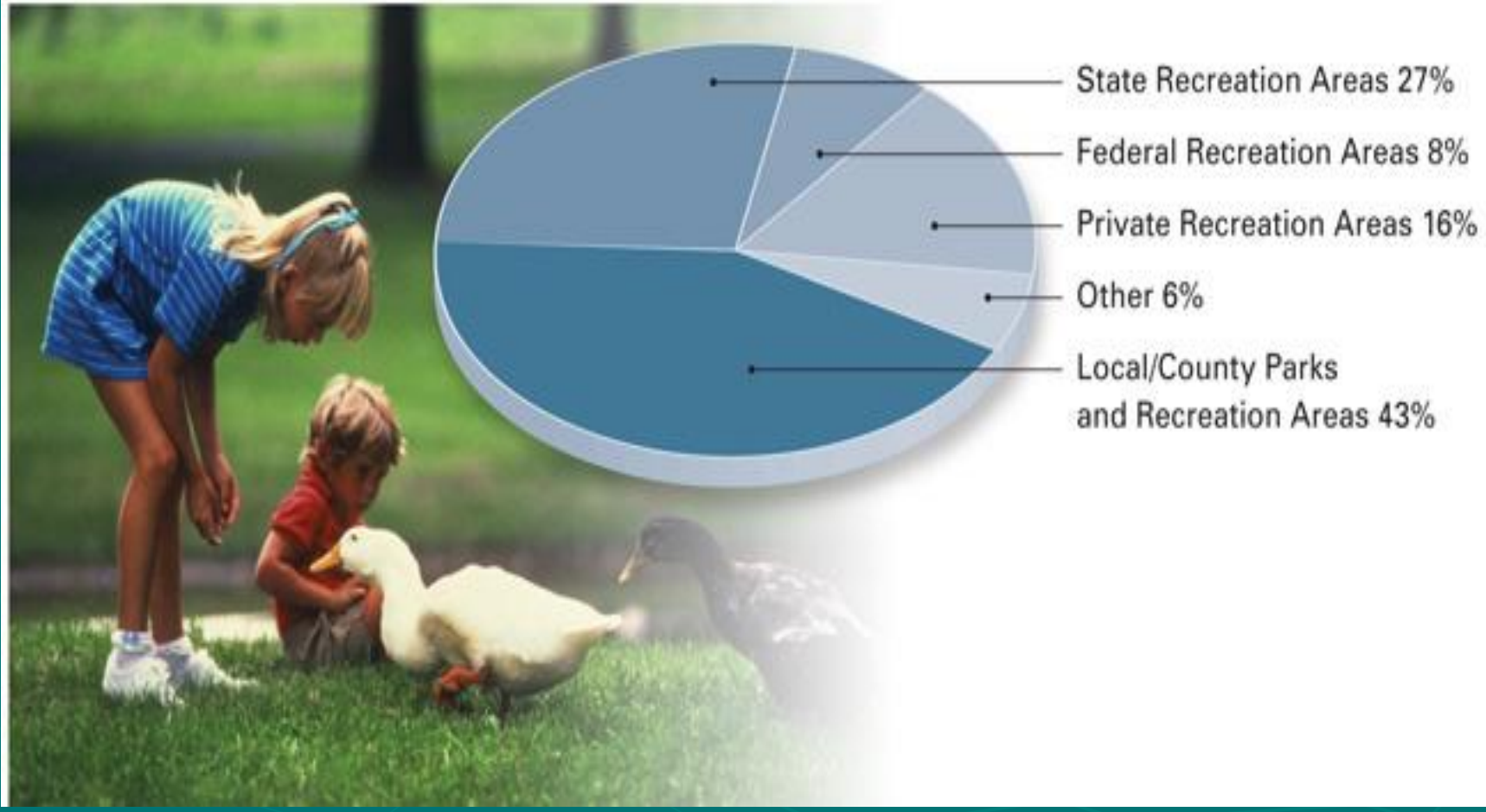
Activity	Percent Participation
Walking	84%
Picnicking	57%
Visiting Historic Sites	54%
Driving for Pleasure	52%
Swimming	52%
Wildlife Viewing	43%
Night Sky Viewing	35%
Dog Walking	33%
Playground Use	32%
Birding/Bird Watching	31%
Bicycling	25%
Fishing	24%
Jogging	21%

Research Findings: How do people expect their recreational activity to change over the next 5 years?



Research Findings:
Where do people go for outdoor recreation?

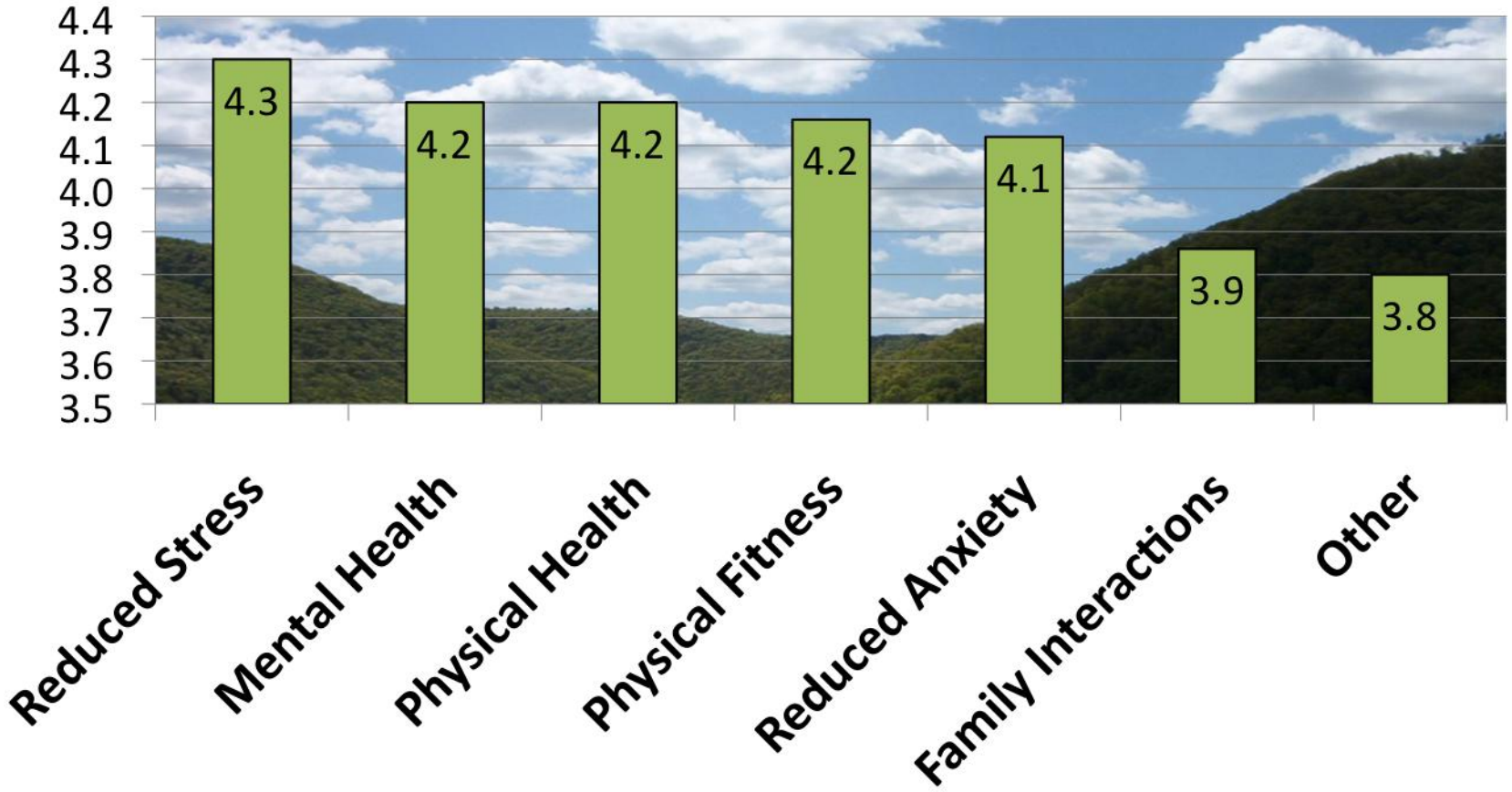
Figure 1. Location of Away-from-Home Recreation Activity



Research Findings:
What benefits does your household receive from participating in outdoor recreation activities?

Perceived Benefit	Percent of Responses
Health (exercise, physical fitness, mental health)	37%
Experience Nature (fresh air, enjoying nature/outdoors)	15%
Social (family time, being with others)	15%
Relaxation (stress relief, peace of mind)	11%
Activities (fishing, hunting, walking)	10%
Fun (enjoyment, entertainment)	5%
Knowledge and Education (learning about nature and environment)	3%
Financial (meat on the table, inexpensive)	2%
Other (benefits for pets)	1%

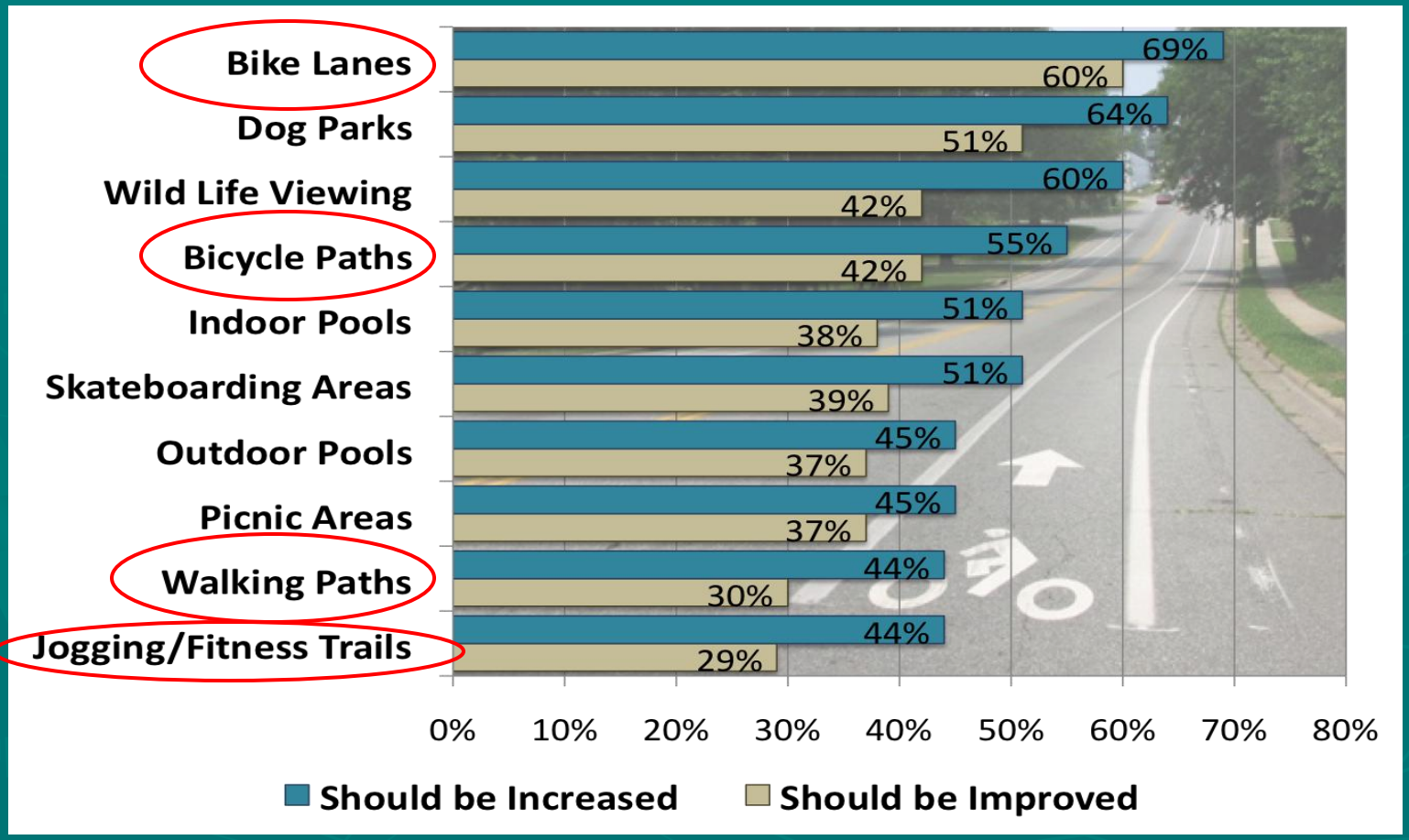
Research Findings:
What are the perceived health benefits of outdoor recreation participation?



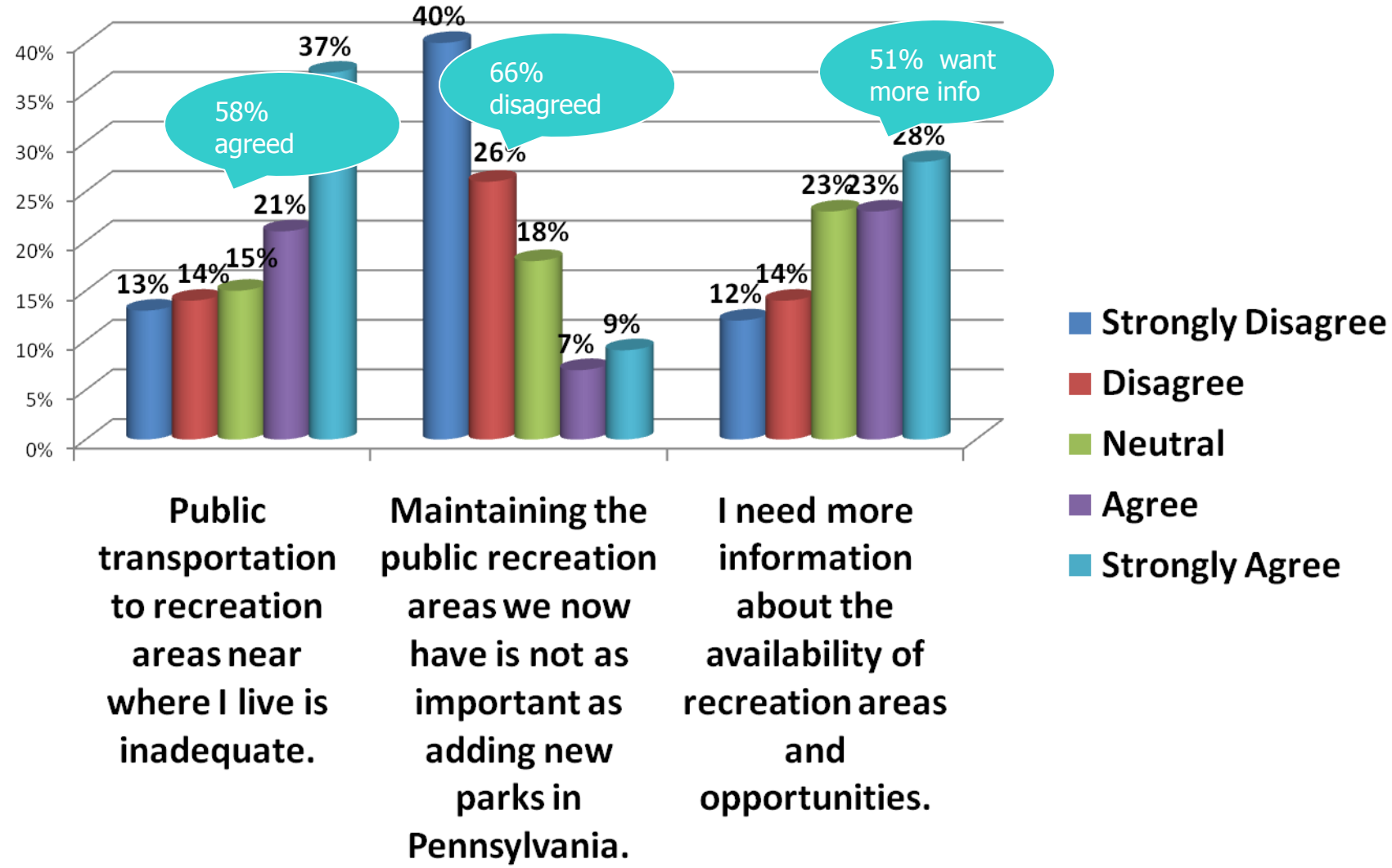
Scale =1 to 5, Where 1 is “Not at All” and 5 is “A Great Deal”

Research Findings:

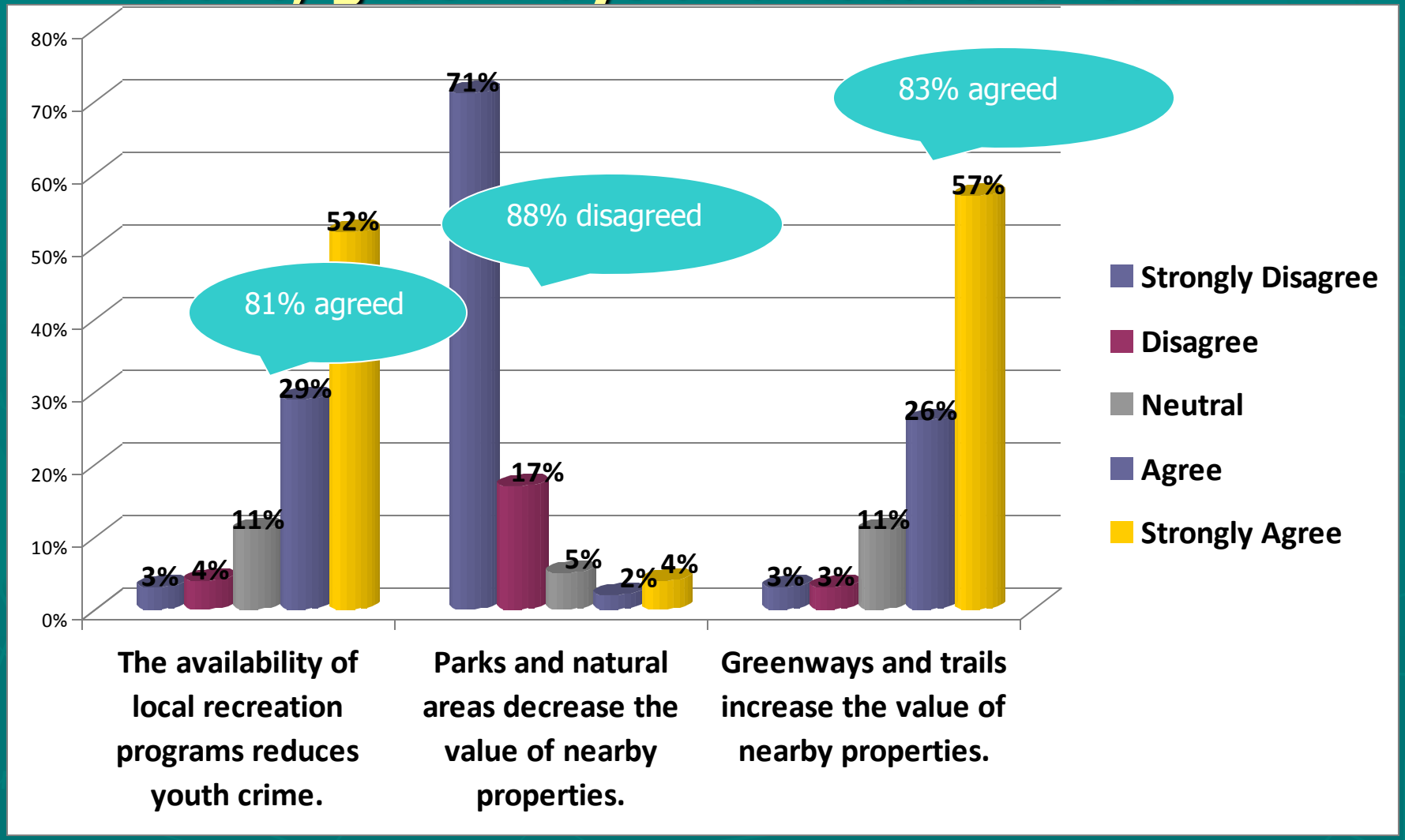
What kinds of facilities should be provided more widely?



Research Findings: How do people feel about public recreation availability in Pennsylvania?

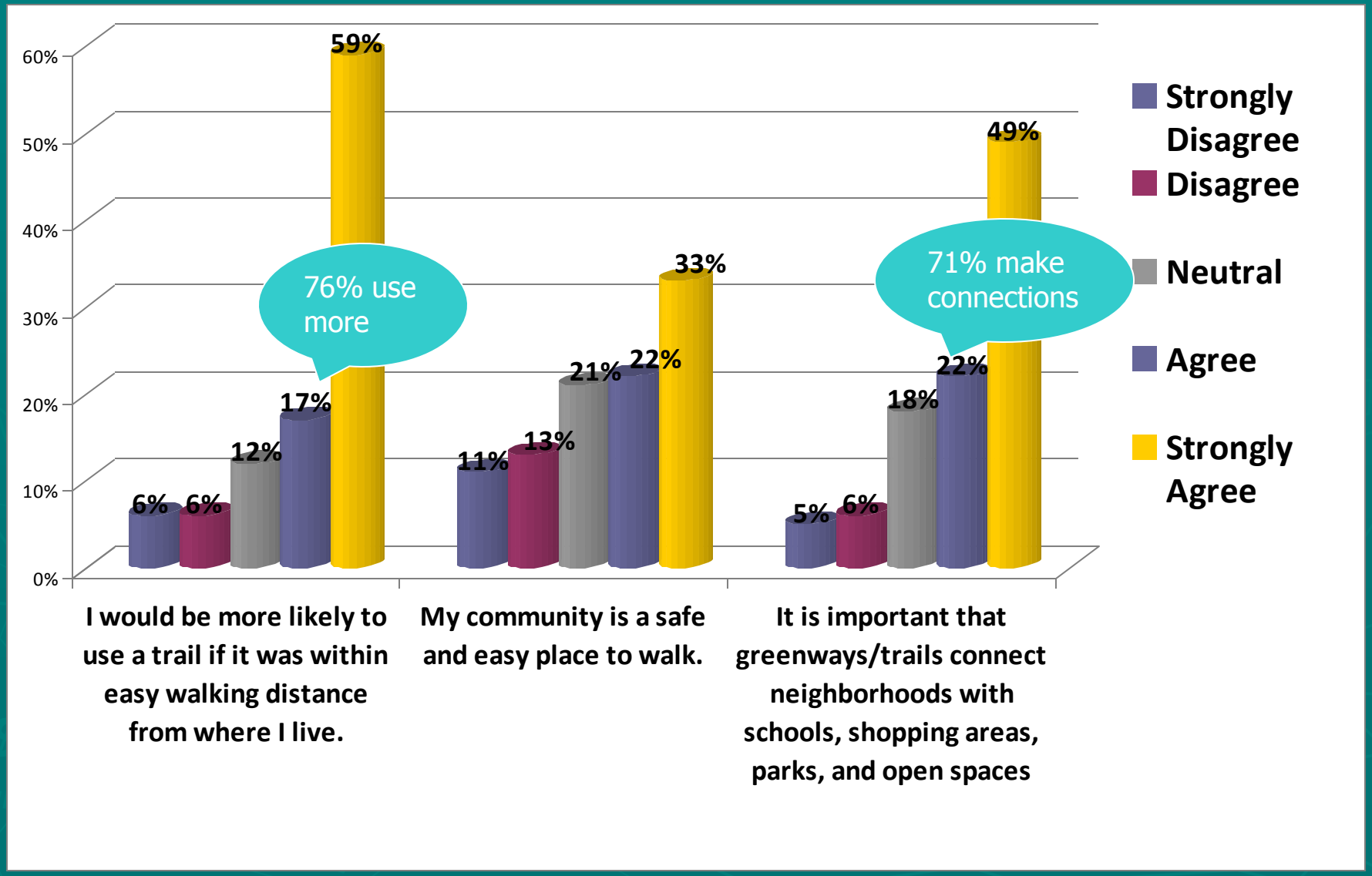


Research Findings:
How do people perceive the values of parks, trails, greenways and natural areas?

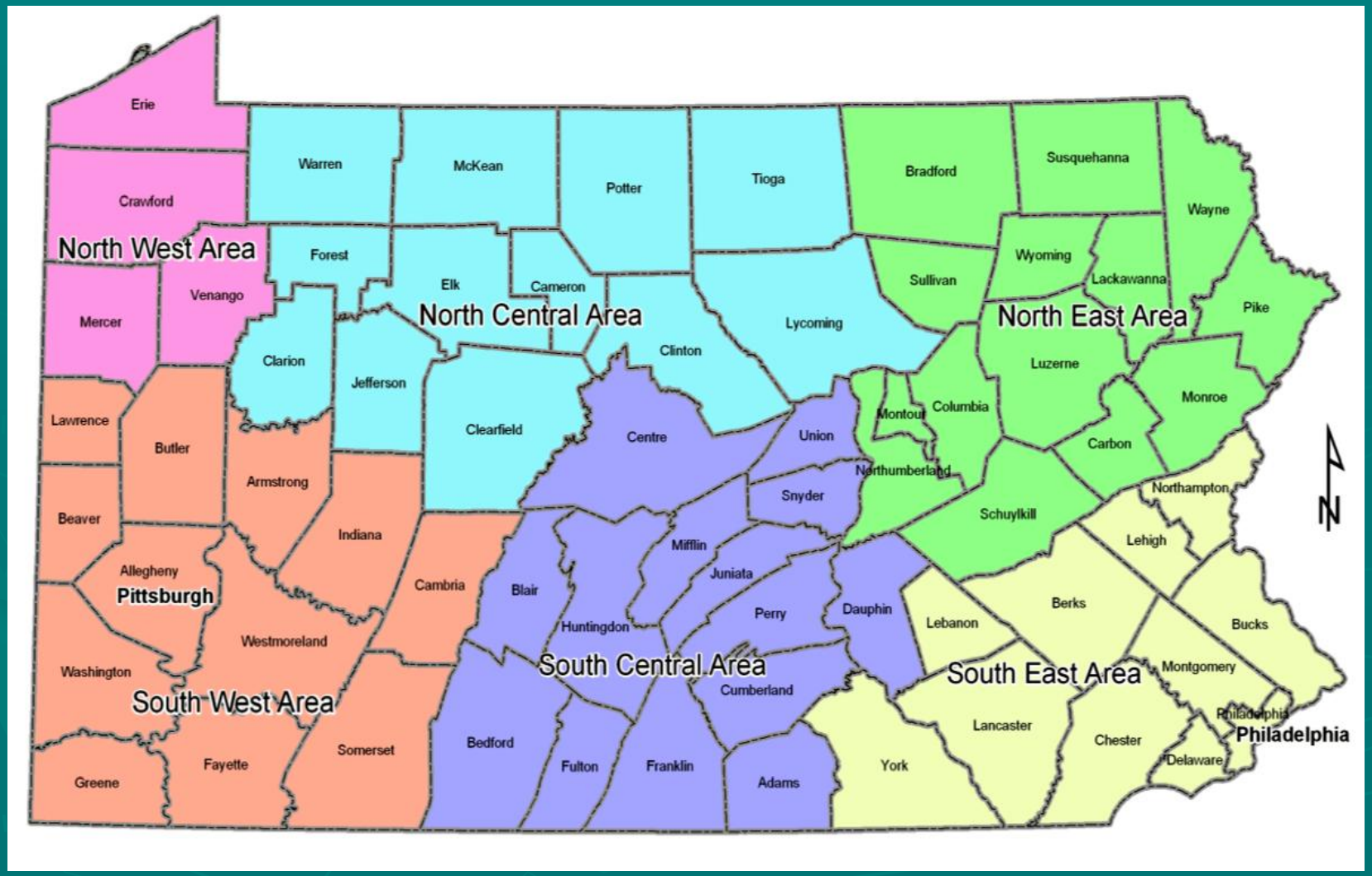


Research Findings:

How do people feel about trails in PA?



2009-2013 SCORP Regions



Regional Comparisons: Some Highlights

North West PA	South West PA	North Central PA
Spend more hours on recreation activities away from home	Most likely to participate in bicycling and fishing	Spend more hours on recreation activities away from home (like NW region)
Especially likely to use State recreation areas	Most likely to indicate a need for bike lanes in their area	Most likely to participate in ATV riding, hunting, archery, and rifle/hand gun shooting
Expressed less need for water-based recreation areas and facilities	Expressed high need for ATV and 4-wheel driving trails	Most likely to report "activities" and "financial" benefits of outdoor recreation

Goals, Recommendation and Action Steps

- Developed from research findings, state agency meetings, TAC, and public input
- Emphasis on implementation!
- Intentionally written to be both broad, specific, and budget neutral
- Partner agencies/organizations and timing identified at the Action Step level

Goal 1: Strengthen connections between outdoor recreation, healthy lifestyles and economic benefits in communities

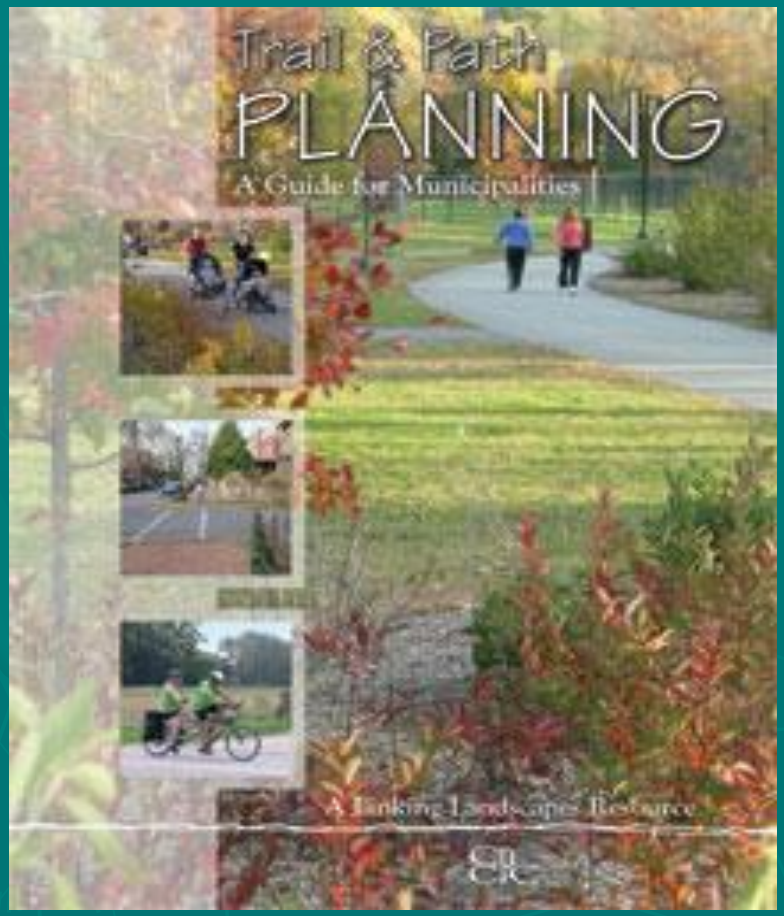
WHY?

- Obesity crisis
- Break down administrative silos
- Mixed messaging and confusion
- Complexity and/or lack of data articulating value of recreation

Goal 1 Recommendations

- Establish Health Subcommittee -- implemented
- Develop/distribute materials to communicate health and economic benefits
- Implement statewide education campaign to increase physical activity
- Coordinate PennDOT's Smart Transportation Initiative to promote greener, safer, ped-friendly communities.

Goal 1 Recommendations, cont …



- Develop statewide resource-based "town" program (trail town, river town, canal town, etc.)
- Encourage local land use policy that promotes BMPs/models to preserve green space, create walkable communities, etc.
- Conduct and/or update research on the health and economic benefits of outdoor recreation in PA