

# 2023 Fox Hills Community Pool Interest Study

Fieldwork: March 15-20, 2023

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# Study Overview

# Background & Objectives

## Background

- ▶ Friends of Fox Hills is a volunteer group of residents who are working toward Fox Hills community pool longevity and improvements
- ▶ The survey was created to understand perceptions of the neighborhood, pool usage, and interest in potential pool updates
- ▶ Members of the group reached out to multiple pool contracting companies to provide price estimates, but costs incorporated are not final until design fees are paid for accurate measurements

## Objectives

- ▶ Understand perceptions of living in Fox Hills
- ▶ Measure pool usage by frequency and activities
- ▶ Understand interest in updates to the community pool (three options)
- ▶ Determine which pool option would be best for the neighborhood

# Methodology

## 2023 Fox Hills Pool Survey

Share your opinions on the future of the Fox Hills community pool!

\* Required

Friends of Fox Hills Pools is exploring members' opinions on a few important topics about the Fox Hills community. Whether you just moved in or if you are an original home owner, we want to hear from you!

Please be open and honest with your responses. All responses are anonymous and will not be traced back to you. You will not be contacted about your responses unless you request it at the end of the survey (note: you may be contacted again to share additional feedback, but it will not be about your specific responses to this survey).

*Note: We request street addresses to track which households have completed the survey. The information will be separated from responses to ensure your anonymity. We are abiding by The Insights Association Code of Standards in regards to your personal information. You can view these by visiting The Insights Association Code of Standards here: <https://www.insightsassociation.org/Resources/Codes-of-Standards>*

In what year did you move into Fox Hills? \*  
If you are not exactly sure, please provide your best guess.

Choose ▾

Do you have any children living in your household in the following age brackets? \*  
Please select all that apply.

Adults (18+ years old)

Teenage children (13-17 years old)

Pre-teen children (6-12 years old)

## Methodology

- ▶ A survey in Google Forms was emailed to all Fox Hills residents on March 15 and one reminder was sent on March 19; the survey closed on March 20.
- ▶ n=250 people filled out the survey from n=206 households
- ▶ Data are weighted to voting representation of one response per household
- ▶ Addresses were collected to ensure residency and address duplication, but have not been linked with responses
- ▶ Responses that could not be confirmed as residents or duplicates have been removed
- ▶ Data were processed, weighted, and tabulated using SPSS statistical software
- ▶ The survey was fielded as a census, therefore no statistical testing is necessary

# Key Findings

# Key Findings

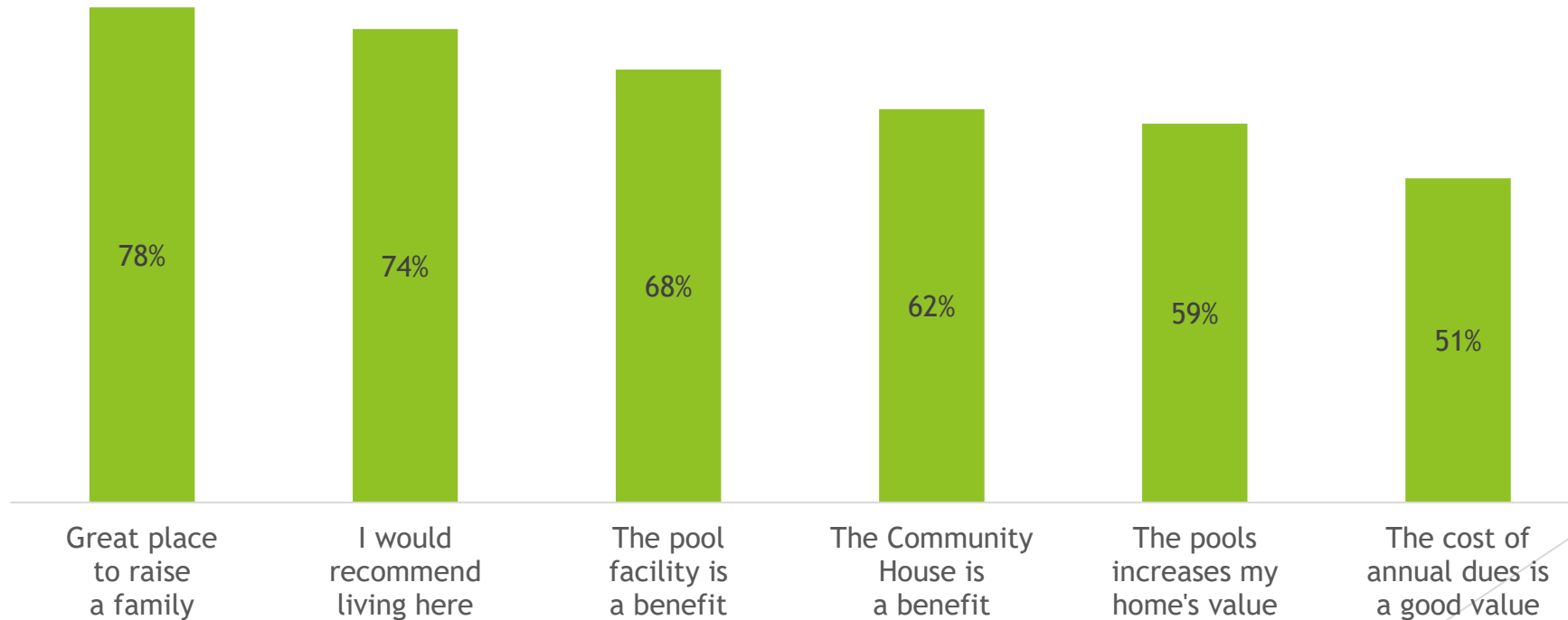
- ▶ Neighbors have a very positive opinion of Fox Hills, especially as a great place to raise a family, and would recommend living here to others.
  - ▶ Those who have lived in the neighborhood for 20-39 years are least likely to see the value of the pool, but newer neighbors (<20 years) and longer tenure (40+ years) are more likely.
- ▶ Half report using the pool at least once a week, which is most common among those with children under 18 in the household.
  - ▶ The most common pool activities are family time and relaxation (76% combined overall, but 93% of those who use the pool).
  - ▶ Those who have lived in the neighborhood for at least 20 years are much less likely to use the pool in any way (41% vs. 18% overall).
- ▶ Repairing the shallow pool and replacing the deep pool has the broadest interest and is most likely to pass a vote; the single L-shaped pool generates more excitement, but it also comes with the highest rejection.
  - ▶ 42% indicate repairing the shallow pool and replacing the deep pool is very/extremely interesting, but a single L-shaped pool has the highest score of “extremely interested” at 25%.

# Detailed Findings



# Neighborhood Perceptions

While nearly all aspects of Fox Hills is positively viewed, there is doubt about the pool impact on home value and value of the annual dues.

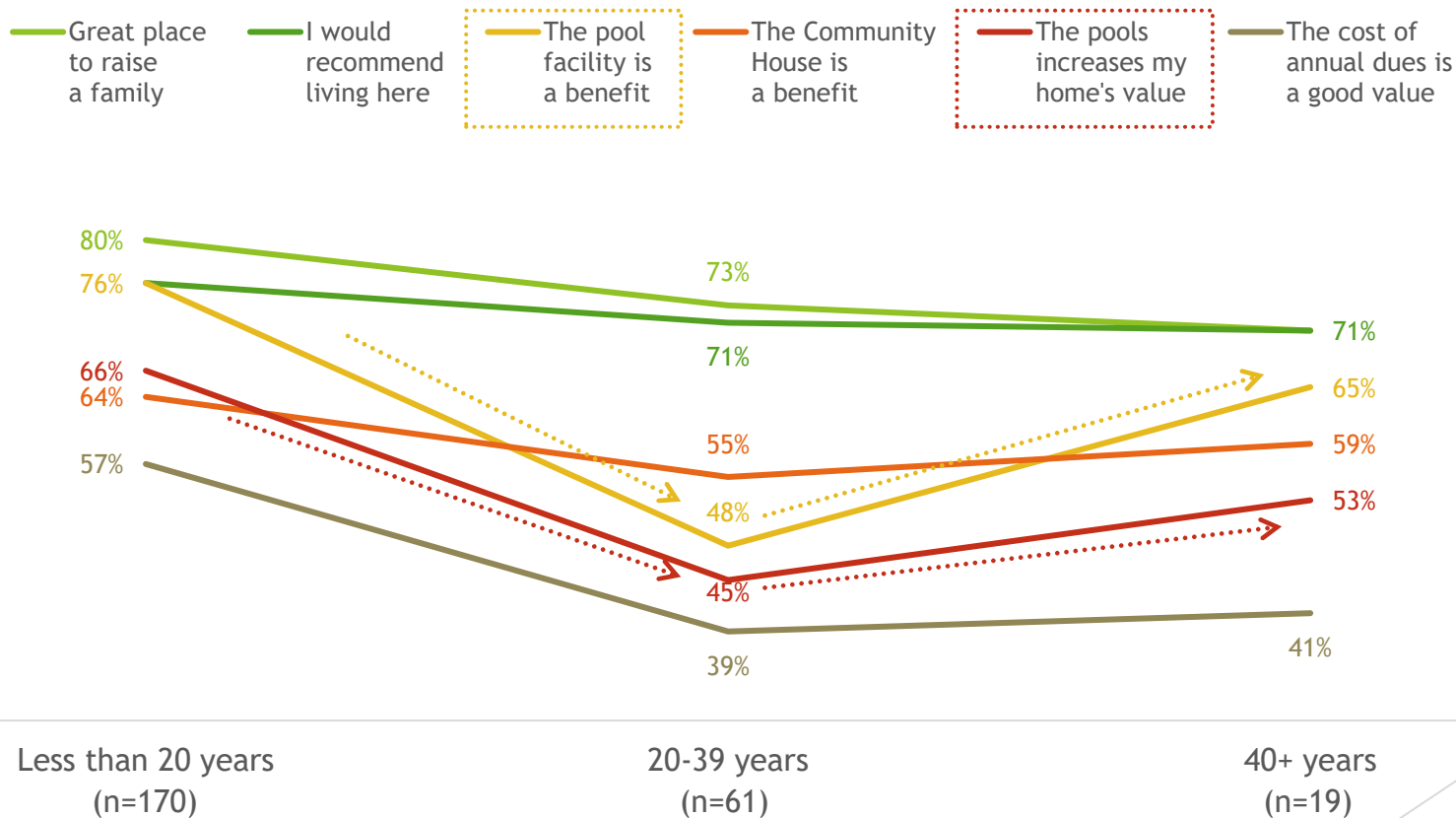


Note: % "Strongly agree" reported  
n=250

Thinking about your experiences at Fox Hills, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

# Neighborhood Perceptions by Tenure

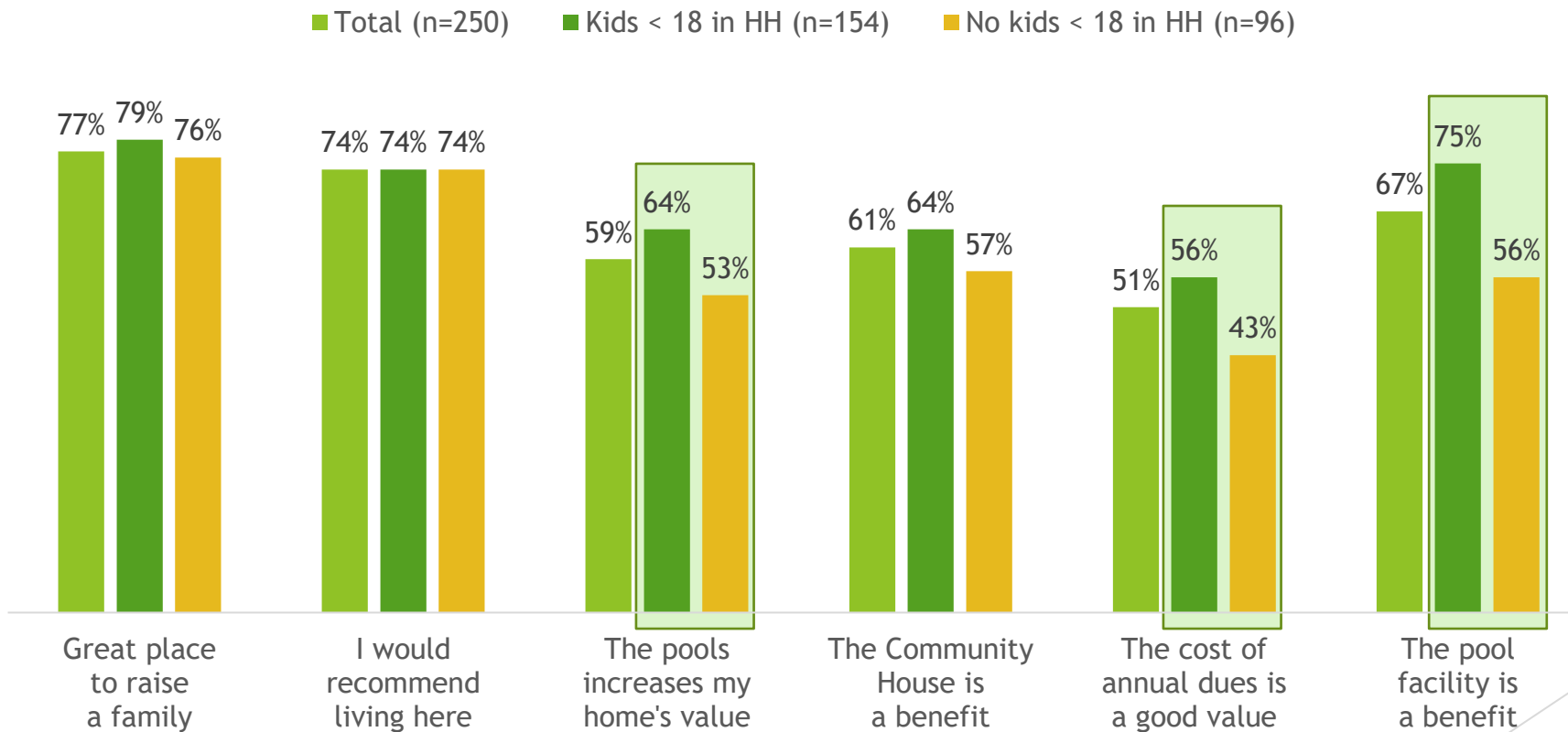
While perceptions generally decline as tenure increases, perceptions of the pool dip among those who have owned for 20-39 years and improve at 40+ years.



Note: % "Strongly agree" reported  
Thinking about your experiences at Fox Hills, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

# Neighborhood Perceptions by Children

Those with children under 18 in their household have more favorable opinions of the pool and annual dues.



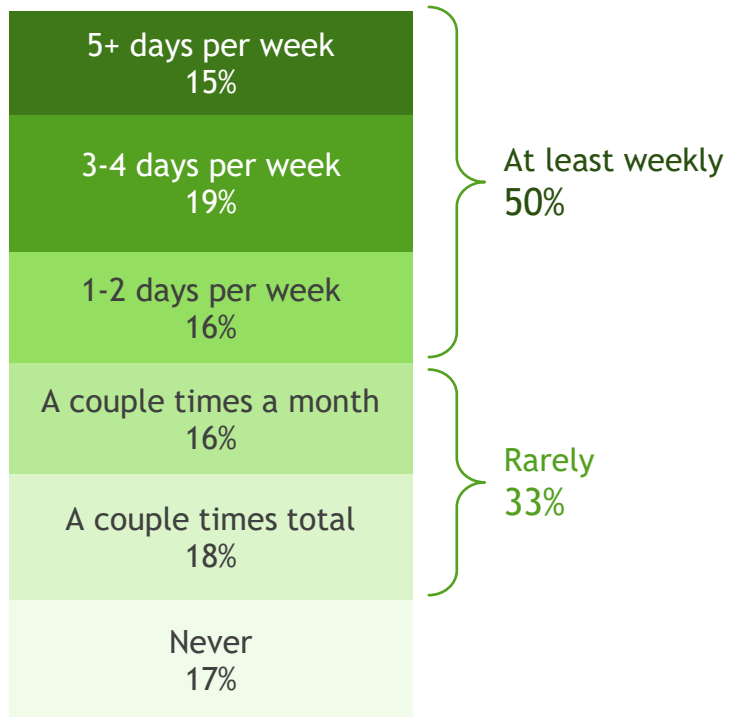
Note: % "Strongly agree" reported

Thinking about your experiences at Fox Hills, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

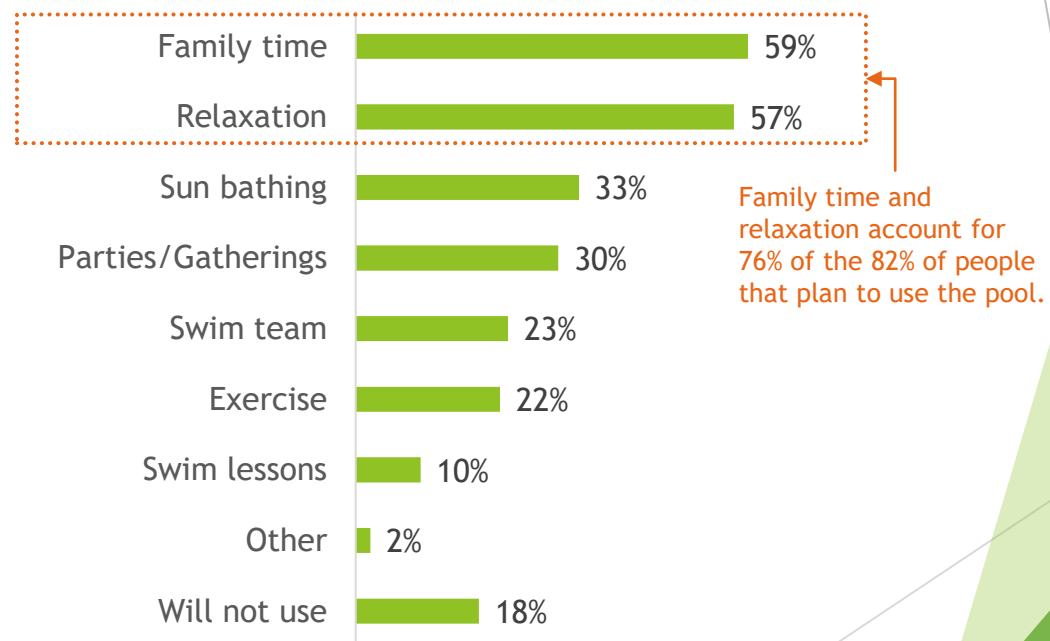
# Expected Pool Usage

Half report using the pool at least once per month, as family time and relaxation are the most common activities.

## Expected Use Frequency



## Expected Pool Activities



n=250

How frequently does your household plan to use the community pool this summer?

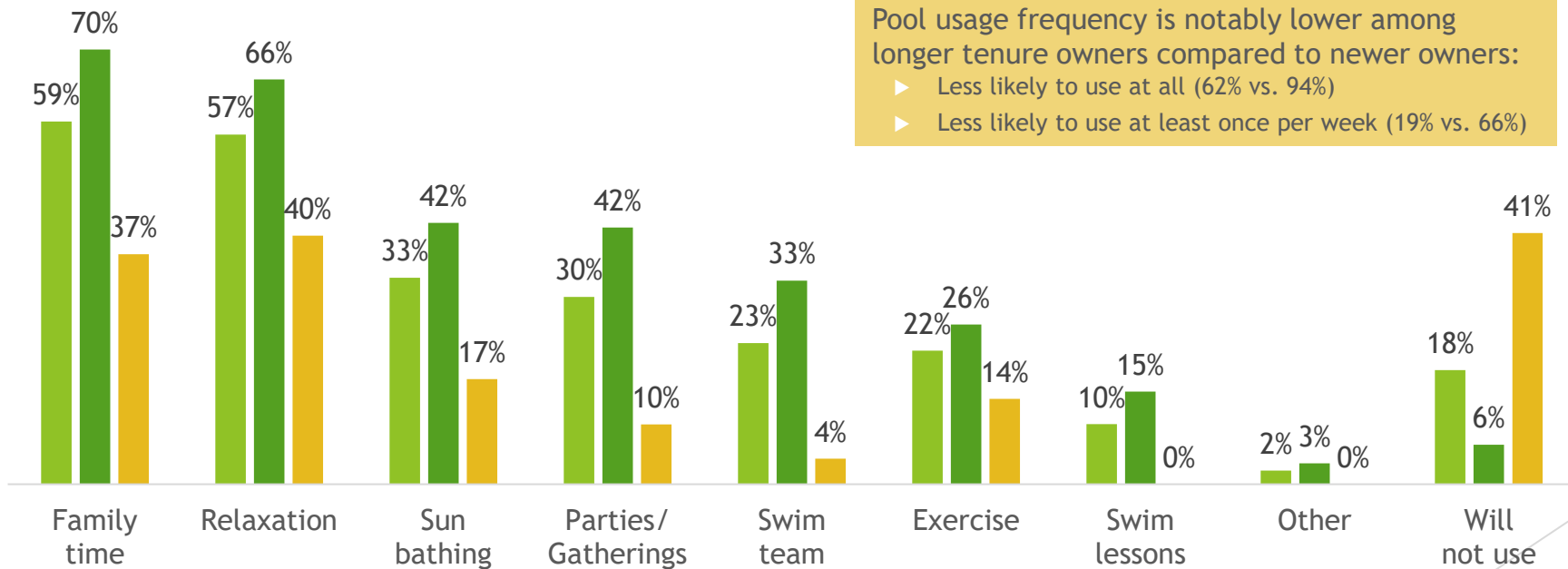
How does your household plan to utilize the community pool this year, if at all? Please select all that apply.

# Pool Usage by Tenure

Pool activities, across the board, are less likely among those who have lived in the neighborhood for 20+ years.

## Pool Activities by Tenure

■ Total (n=250) ■ < 20 years (n=170) ■ 20+ years (n=80)



Pool usage frequency is notably lower among longer tenure owners compared to newer owners:

- ▶ Less likely to use at all (62% vs. 94%)
- ▶ Less likely to use at least once per week (19% vs. 66%)

# Pool Usage by Children Ages

Swim lessons is much more popular among those with younger children, but households with children 6-12 years old are the most active in general.

## Under 6 years old (n=56)

Median Frequency: 1-2 days per week

### More Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Swim Lessons: 27% (275)
- ▶ Family Time: 87% (148)
- ▶ Exercise: 31% (145)
- ▶ Hosting Parties: 41% (134)

### Less Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Do not use the pool: 5% (25)

## 6-12 years old (n=83)

Median Frequency: 3-4 days per week

### More Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Swim Lessons: 24% (250)
- ▶ Swim Team: 55% (242)
- ▶ Hosting Parties: 57% (187)
- ▶ Family Time: 95% (163)
- ▶ Exercise: 34% (158)
- ▶ Sun Bathing: 44% (131)
- ▶ Relaxation: 70% (124)

### Less Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Do not use the pool: 2% (8)

## 13-17 years old (n=61)

Median Frequency: 1-2 days per week

### More Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Sun Bathing: 42% (125)
- ▶ Relaxation: 68% (120)

### Less Common Activities (Index):

- ▶ Swim Lessons: 4% (43)
- ▶ Do not use the pool: 11% (62)

Note: Age groups are not mutually exclusive

How frequently does your household plan to use the community pool this summer?

How does your household plan to utilize the community pool this year, if at all? Please select all that apply.

# Pool Option Descriptions

- ▶ **Option 1: Repair existing pools**
  - ▶ Estimated cost: \$575,000-\$675,000 (\$200-\$275 assessment per household per year for 5 years)
- ▶ **Option 2: Repair shallow pool and replace the deep pool with a 25-meter pool**
  - ▶ Estimated Cost: \$750,000-\$900,000 (\$325-\$425 assessment per household per year for 5 years)
- ▶ **Option 3: Replace both pools with a single larger L-shaped pool**
  - ▶ Estimated cost: \$1,000,000-\$1,250,000 (\$500-\$675 assessment per household per year for 5 years)

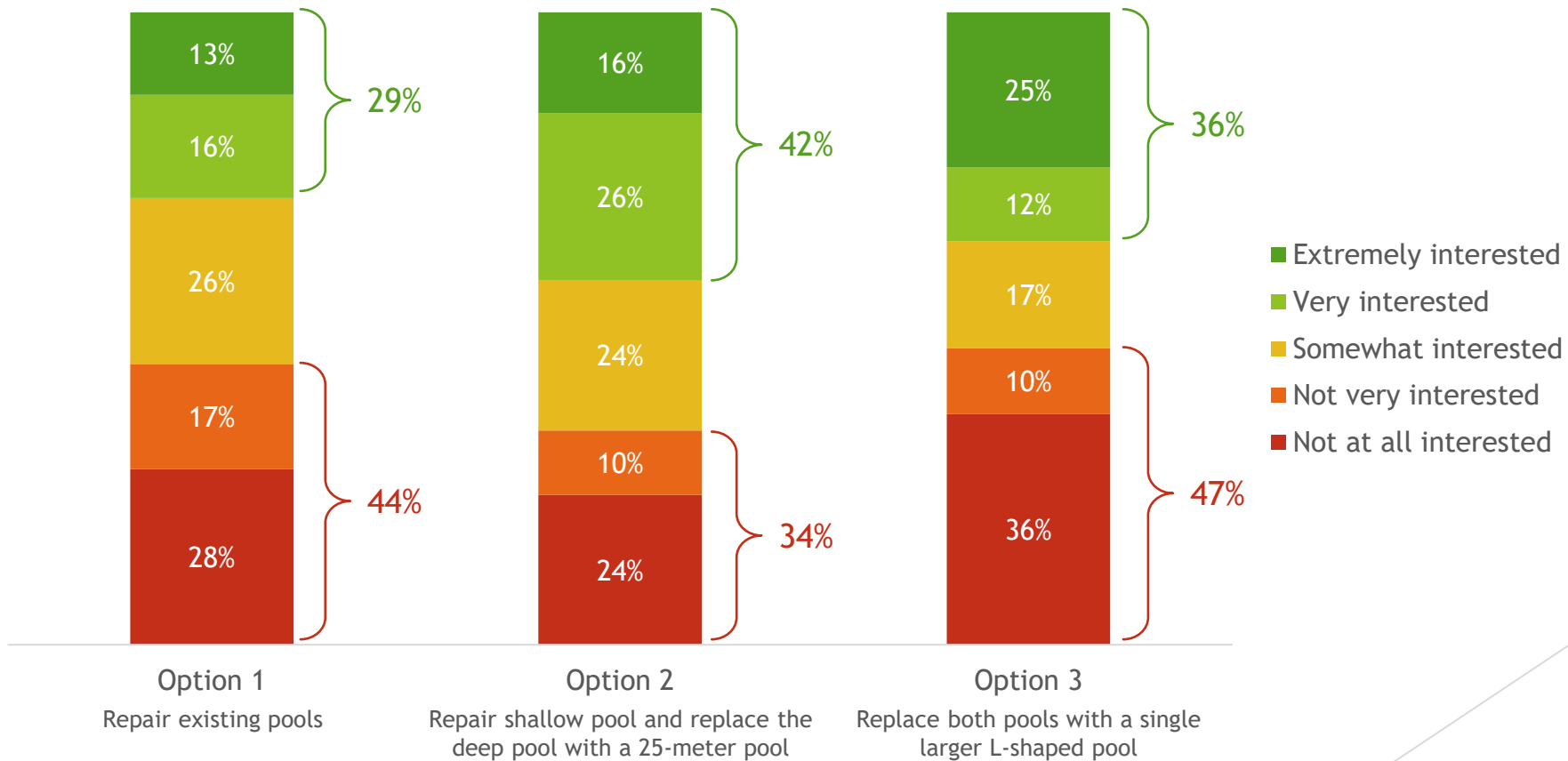
*For Fox Hills Pool Facts included in the survey, please see slide 26.*

*For full descriptions included in the survey, please see slide 27.*

*For details on how the prices were calculated, please see slide 29.*

# Pool Option Interest

Replacing only the deep pool has the broadest interest, but a larger L-shaped pool generates more excitement along with more disinterest.



n=250

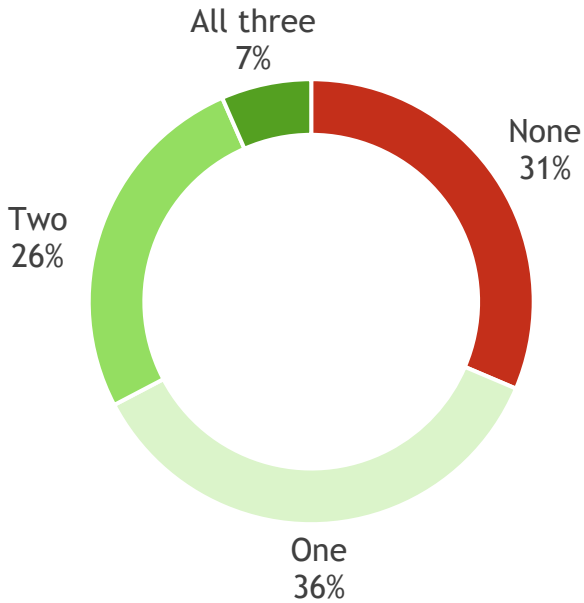
Overall, how interested are you in each of the following options? Please consider these independently and not as if you can only select one.



# Pool Option Interest - Deep Dive

While most are interested in at least one option, those who are not are generally longer tenure owners, have no children under 18, and rarely/never use the pool

## Number of Options Interested\*



10% reject all three ideas (“Not at all interested” for all three options)

	No options (n=75)	At least one option (n=175)
<u>Tenure in Fox Hills</u>		
< 20 years	51%	72%
20+ years	49%	28%
<u>Children &lt;18 in HH</u>		
Yes	43%	66%
No	57%	34%
<u>Pool Use Frequency</u>		
Once per week+	21%	63%
Less than weekly	44%	28%
Never	35%	8%

\*Top 2 box (Extremely/Very interested)  
n=250

Overall, how interested are you in each of the following options? Please consider these independently and not as if you can only select one.

# General Comments and Concerns

While most value the pools and look forward to improvements, there are concerns with continued increases to dues, especially given the recent increase.

- ▶ The majority are excited for potential upgrades and believe that the pool is an important part of the neighborhood, worthy of further investment

*“We are one of the newest families in the sub--still in the process of moving in--so my perspective is slanted. We love the idea of the pool and the other children it brings to the neighborhood. We spent FAR MORE (hundreds of thousands more) than planned exclusively because of the neighborhood pool and ALL of the benefits that come with it.”*

*“The pool provides joy for my family and a sense of community in our neighborhood. We use the pool as much as possible in the summer, and plan to do so in the years to come. My worry is that repairing the pools will only serve as a temporary fix. I’d love to have a regulation sized pool for our swim team.”*

- ▶ Despite this, there are concerns with further increases to dues, especially after recent increases that were meant to address issues with the pool

*“I’m sorry if I’m misunderstanding this all, but I’m annoyed that residents living here got to pay dirt cheap dues for so many years and now it’s up to us to fix the pools. We just agreed to a dues increase to save the pools 2 years ago and now we’re being asked again? Why wasn’t this being planned for 10 years ago, before it became a pool emergency?”*

*“I thought the community voted to fix the current pools and that is why our annual dues went up to \$645 two years ago? We’ve paid the new dues twice already with nothing being done to the pools yet. We should stick with the plan that we voted on and get the current pools fixed ASAP with the extra money each family has already paid going toward the cost of the original plan.”*

# Option 1 Commentary

This option is desirable to keep costs down, but many would like to see a 25-meter pool and additional improvements only possible with replacement.



## Appealing

- ▶ Lowest cost option
- ▶ Prefer two pools

*“I feel the additional dues already assessed in this last 2 years (they are almost double from where they were 3 years ago) are not being used properly. My family can not afford annual dues of over \$1000.”*

*“Assoc fees just increased and now they’re asking for another \$300-\$500 yearly may not sound like a lot but when on a fixed income and medical bills are extreme that extra money is a challenge but the board seems not to care.”*

*“The space as it is today, is pretty well balanced between the pools and space outside the pools. Having larger pools, may limit available space outside the pools. For this reason, I prefer option 1.”*

*“Prefer separating the “swimmers” from the “splashers” by maintaining 2 pools ... single pool is great at a resort, but not functional for swim team use.”*

## Unappealing

- ▶ Need a 25-meter pool
- ▶ Pools are too old to repair; just replace
- ▶ Need to keep pools updated to keep home values up

*“Option 1 seems like a risk to repair the existing pools given their condition.”*

*“It’s too late to do the continuous repair route. We need to rebuild. The pools have lasted much longer than their design life.”*

*“I believe it to be important that we have a 25-meter pool for swim team races and for us to be within the guidelines. If we are going to take the time and money to do this, we should really do it. Simply fixing what we have now may mean we have to revisit making our pool regulation size at some point again.”*

*“Updating our community complex is the best chance of maintaining our property values due to the fact that we have an industrial complex across the street and our subdivision borders Pontiac and Auburn Hills. We have a great school system here and we need to attract families.”*

n=250

Overall, how interested are you in each of the following options? Please consider these independently and not as if you can only select one. Please share some comments to help us better understand your answers above.

# Option 2 Commentary

People like that this option provides the 25-meter pool and is done so at a more reasonable cost, but some still want to see the pools replaced completely.



## Appealing

- ▶ Provides the needed 25-meter pool
- ▶ Good value compared to other options
- ▶ Prefer two pools

*“I prefer the idea of Option 2 since it gives us a new 25-meter pool to better compete with other local swim teams and is a bit more affordable for young families to bear the additional assessment costs per year.”*

*“I think option 2 is the best and most cost effective choice; although a new L shaped pool would be nice, an additional \$675 per year almost doubles current HOA fees, which may make the community less accessible and inclusive.”*

*“Better separate pools, one with swim lanes, the other for kids/elderly.”*

## Unappealing

- ▶ Pools should be replaced

*“For the money spent, I would rather just see the pools fully replaced. Makes more sense for the future of the neighborhood.”*

*“I’m not sure repairing the current pools will have the long term benefit as the other options do.”*

n=250

Overall, how interested are you in each of the following options? Please consider these independently and not as if you can only select one. Please share some comments to help us better understand your answers above.

# Option 3 Commentary

While many like that the single larger pool will provide an elevated experience, many are concerned about cost or prefer two separate pools.



## Appealing

- ▶ The highest quality option
- ▶ The pools need to be replaced completely

*“This will increase home values the most. The older pools are gross because of mechanical failures, etc. The pools are draining money away unnecessarily as they stand. They need to be replaced completely.”*

*“Let’s do it! the pools are very important to my family. If we’re going to do something, lets do it right. go big or go home. if we simply repair what we have it will cost us more in repairs in the long run and is a headache and stress for the decision makers.”*

*“Pool replacement seems like a better long-term option than simply putting on a “bandaid” (of repairs only). We plan to be here for years to come, we enjoy using the pool/the community it provides, and I think the extra investment is worth it. In the event we end up moving out of the neighborhood in the future, a replacement pool will certainly contribute to our home’s value.”*

## Unappealing

- ▶ Too expensive
- ▶ Prefer two pools

*“The cost of the HOA is already high enough. Please don’t raise them again or use funds that we already have available, do some fundraisers ETC!”*

*“We like the idea of replacing both pools, but not an L-shape. It’s nice to have a competitive/advanced pool and a leisure/family pool. The cost is also very high given the recent dues increase already. What is being done to better manage the budget and planning ahead for these types of issues in the future? Residents now are paying to cover the mishandling of the budget over the years.”*

*“Dislike the idea of a single pool. With 2 pools, one can operate without the other if there would be an operational issue.”*

n=250

Overall, how interested are you in each of the following options? Please consider these independently and not as if you can only select one. Please share some comments to help us better understand your answers above.

# Implications

# Implications

- ▶ Education and communication are key; ensure the community understands the what, why, how, and when

There are questions/comments about why we need a special assessment when we just raised the dues to fix the pool, uncertainty of pool availability this summer, ensuring multiple bids, etc.

- ▶ Individuals working toward pool improvements, whether volunteers or the Fox Hills Board, must understand the hesitance of those who have seen a surge in annual dues during their time as owners

While most are interested in improvements to the pool area, there are some who are leery about large financial obligations due to the increases to annual dues over the past few years

- ▶ For the greatest chance at successfully passing a vote for improvements, repairing the shallow pool and replacing the deep pool has the broadest appeal

This option also has the lowest negative reaction, as many believe it is a good compromise between updates and minimizing costs, while also keeping two separate pools

- ▶ Consider an alternative to option two, where both pools are replaced to enhance both the shallow and deep pools

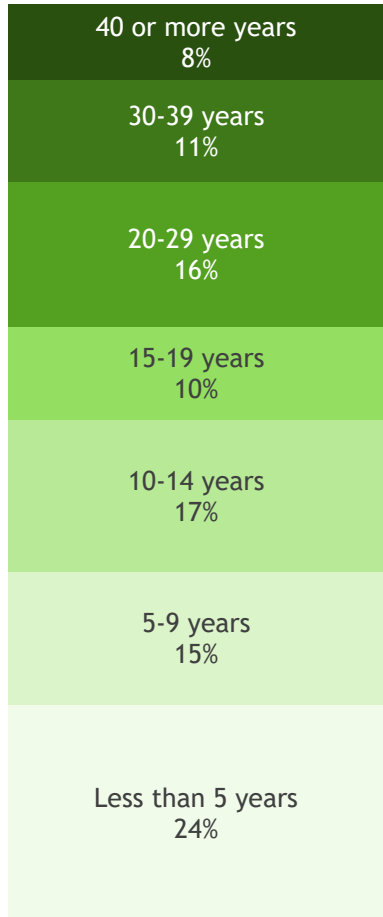
Adding features such as a sun deck or zero entry to the shallow pool could garner even more support among those with younger children, who are the most frequent users

# Appendix

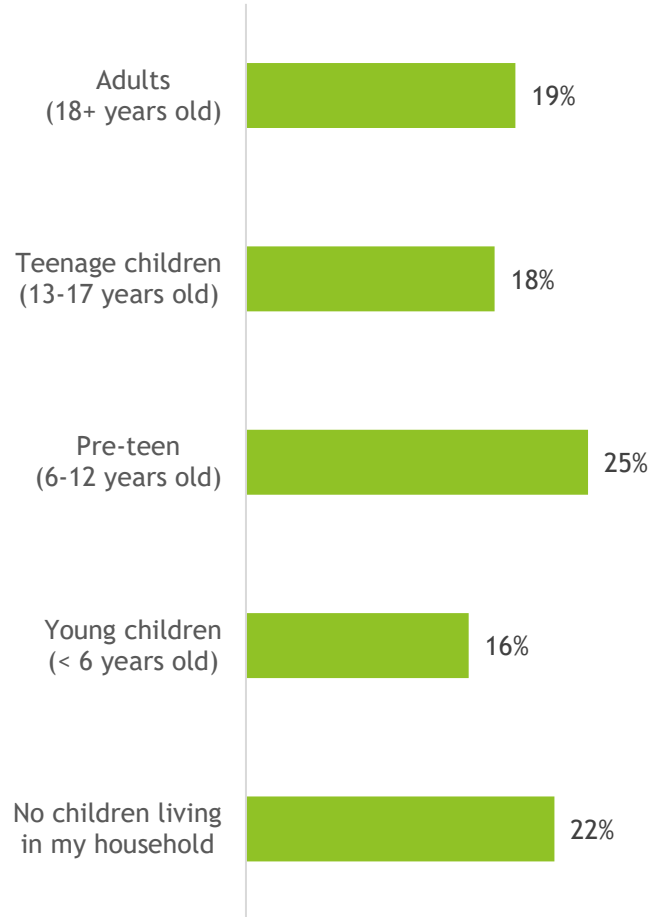


# Survey Demographics

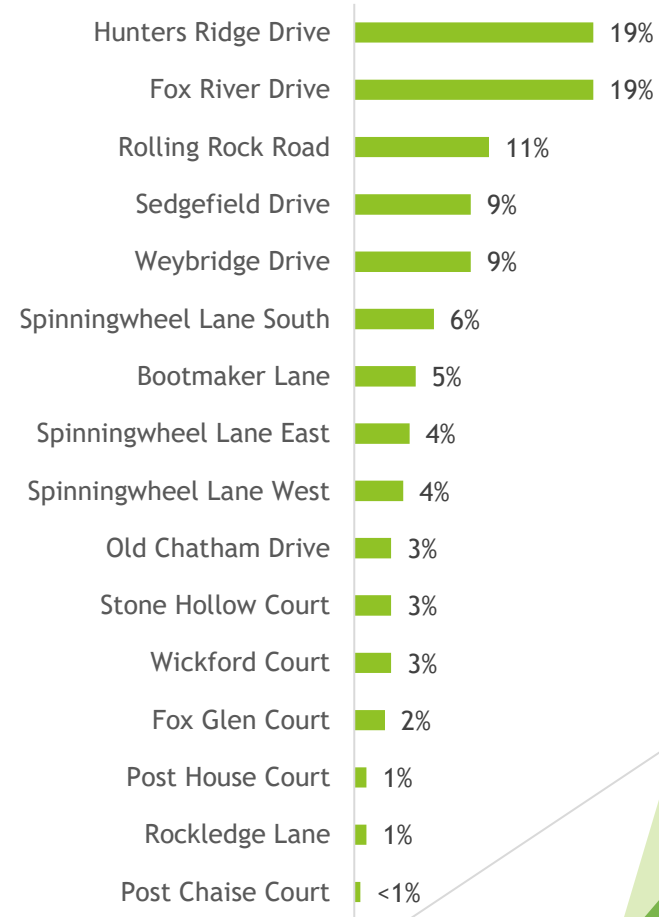
Years in Fox Hills



Children in Household



Street



n=250

In what year did you move into Fox Hills?

Do you have any children living in your household in the following age brackets? Please select all that apply.

Please enter your address so we can keep track of which neighbors have completed the survey.

# Fox Hills Pool Facts

- ▶ The pool was built in 1969 and is over 50 years old. The lifespan for pools of this size is approximately 50 years.
- ▶ Aquatic Source, the company that helps to maintain the pools, has estimated that there is significant damage to pipes underground. While there needs to be an official assessment, Aquatic Source estimates the pool is likely to experience a critical failure within the next 3-5 years that could cost several hundred thousand dollars to repair.
- ▶ In summer 2022, the two pools were found to be losing about 3,100 gallons of water each day due to leaks in the pipes under ground. The estimated cost of water loss is \$20 per day, or \$2,700 each summer. It is expected that this will increase every year if the leak is not fixed or if the entire pool is not replaced.
- ▶ Under the recently-adopted dues structure, 20% of the annual dues are earmarked for the capital fund, which is to be used primarily for pool repairs and/or pool construction. After two years, the fund now has approximately \$90,000 and will grow by about \$45,000 each year (or more if dues are increased based on the Consumer Price Index).
- ▶ A solution involving new pool construction will likely require a special assessment or new dues increase to raise the necessary funds (i.e., additional cost to homeowners). The Pool Committee will work with the community and the Board to propose options on how to fund the Pool project.

# Full Option Descriptions

## Introduction

The following are three options that have been investigated by Friends of Fox Hills for the future of the community pool. Please note the following assumptions in the cost calculations:

- ▶ Fox Hills will take out a 5-year loan to cover the cost above what is already saved
- ▶ Fox Hills already has about \$90,000 saved to go towards the pool
- ▶ About \$45,000 per year of the loan is already covered in the current dues
- ▶ Residents of Fox Hills will be responsible for the additional cost above \$45,000 per year
- ▶ The assessment values below account for interest and principal of the loan

Please note that, when selling your home, the annual special assessment fees will become the responsibility of the new homeowner (i.e., the fees stay with the home).

**These prices are not final**, but are estimates used to help give you an idea of relative costs associated with each option. Final costs cannot be provided until an architectural blueprint has been created at an additional cost.

# Full Option Descriptions (cont.)

## Option 1: Repair existing pools

- ▶ Demo and removal of existing concrete, coping & tile
- ▶ New concrete patio (10,000 SF roughly)
- ▶ Artificial turf (5,000 SF roughly)
- ▶ New underground plumbing and connections (no new pool equipment)
- ▶ New tile & coping on both pools including swim lanes
- ▶ Patching gunite shells
- ▶ New marcite plaster finish in both pools
- ▶ Electrical subcontractor (for new outlets and such)

**Estimated cost:** \$575,000-\$675,000 (\$200-\$275 assessment per household per year for 5 years)

## Option 2: Repair shallow pool and replace the deep pool

- ▶ Demo and removal of existing concrete, coping & tile
- ▶ New concrete patio (10,000 SF roughly)
- ▶ Artificial turf (5,000 SF roughly)
- ▶ New underground plumbing and connections (keep existing equipment, but potentially upgrade some if needed)
- ▶ New tile & coping on both pools including swim lanes
- ▶ Patching gunite shells
- ▶ New marcite plaster finish in both pools
- ▶ Electrical subcontractor (for new outlets and such)
- ▶ Additional skimmers as needed in extended pool
- ▶ New starting blocks
- ▶ Pool extension on dive pool to make pool size 28' x 75'
- ▶ Permits with allowance

**Estimated cost:** \$750,000-\$900,000 (\$325-\$425 assessment per household per year for 5 years)

## Option 3: Replace both pools with a single larger pool

- ▶ Demo of existing concrete & pools
- ▶ New pool
- ▶ New pool equipment
- ▶ New plumbing
- ▶ Electrical as needed
- ▶ Artificial turf and concrete (ratio to be determined in design phase)
- ▶ Permits
- ▶ Engineering

**Estimated cost:** \$1,000,000-\$1,250,000 (\$500-\$675 assessment per household per year for 5 years)

# Special Assessment Calculations

	Option 1 (repair both)	Option 2 (repair shallow, replace deep)	Option 3 (single L-shaped pool)
Cost Range	\$575,000 - \$675,000	\$750,000 - \$900,000	\$1,000,000 - \$1,250,000
Existing Funds	\$90,000	\$90,000	\$90,000
Loan Amount	\$485,000 - \$585,000	\$660,000 - \$810,000	\$910,000 - \$1,160,000
APR Assumption*	8%	8%	8%
Annual Payments	\$118,008.61 - \$142,340.29	\$160,589.04 - \$197,086.55	\$221,418.23 - \$282,247.41
Annual Dues Cover	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
Special Assessment	\$73,008.61 - \$97,340.29	\$115,589.04 - \$152,086.55	\$176,418.23 - \$237,247.41
SA per Household	\$203.93 - \$271.90	\$322.87 - \$424.82	\$492.79 - \$662.70

\*Pool contracting companies were contacted for cost ranges, but the APR is an estimate while rates are being investigated.

# Contact

## Friends of Fox Hills Members

- ▶ Mike Wright (Lead)
- ▶ Max Sneyd
- ▶ Paul Bernstein
- ▶ Max Lynch
- ▶ Bryan Boos
- ▶ Gary Givental
- ▶ Faris Alami
- ▶ Mike Shuell
- ▶ Matthew Vache
- ▶ Mitchiyoshi Uyeda
- ▶ Todd Sonquist
- ▶ Warren Hunt
- ▶ David Postwaite
- ▶ Katie Atto