



# Amherst Health Survey Report

East Hadley Road  
housing complexes

January 2015



**Public Health**

Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Amherst Health Department



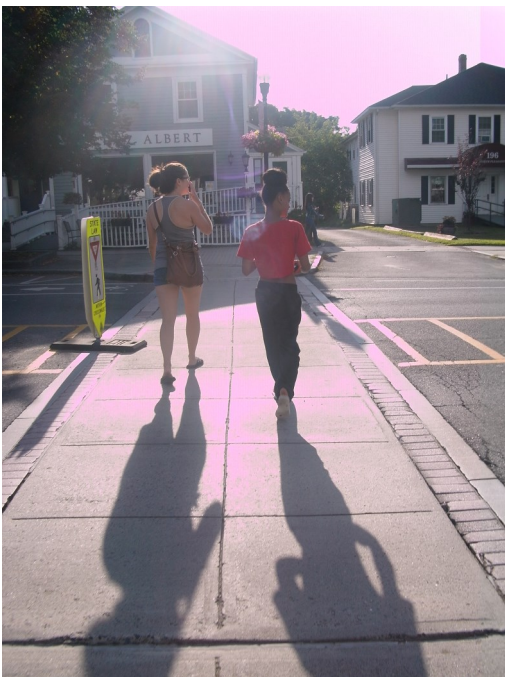
# ABOUT THIS SURVEY PROJECT

The East Hadley Road neighborhood of Amherst is home to three apartment complexes, a condominium complex (totaling approximately 780 units) and many single family homes. During summer 2014, Healthy Hampshire (a regional public health initiative) partnered with the Amherst Health Department to begin documenting and telling the story of what life is like for residents there and what improvements could be made to help people access healthy food, recreational opportunities and transportation options.

Healthy Hampshire hired a group of Amherst teens to survey their family and friends. Then several of them volunteered to be part of a photo documentation journey through Amherst, where they took pictures of the environment around them. Included in this report are charts representing the survey data as well as photos taken by these teens about their experiences living in Amherst.

166 people completed the survey, representing residents living in the housing complexes off of East Hadley Road (The Boulders, Mill Valley, Southpoint and The Brook). Surveys were collected in person by teens surveying their neighbors and as well as through an online version of the survey advertised to residents. The survey was offered in English, Spanish and Portuguese languages. The survey was not meant to be exhaustive, nor was the methodology designed to reach a representative sample. Rather, it was designed to provide more perspectives about how to improve the surrounding environment for these residents— particularly residents of color and those who do not speak English as a first language.

Photo credits: Cover page, top and middle photos by Liliana Lopes; bottom photo by Sarah Bankert; both photos on this page by Sidilene da Veiga



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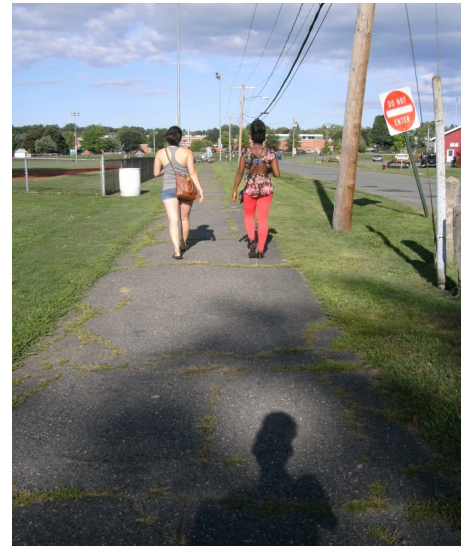


Photo credit: Lilliana Lopez

## ABOUT US

*Healthy Hampshire* works with municipal and community leaders to effect changes to community policies and systems that will promote access to healthy foods and opportunities for physical activity for all residents. It is part of the *Mass in Motion* statewide initiative through the Department of Public Health. For more information about Mass in Motion, see: [www.mass.gov/massinmotion](http://www.mass.gov/massinmotion).

This report was assembled by Community Health Solutions of the Collaborative for Educational Services: [collaborative.org/community-health](http://collaborative.org/community-health).

For more information about this project or to obtain copies of this report or the photo documentation, please contact:

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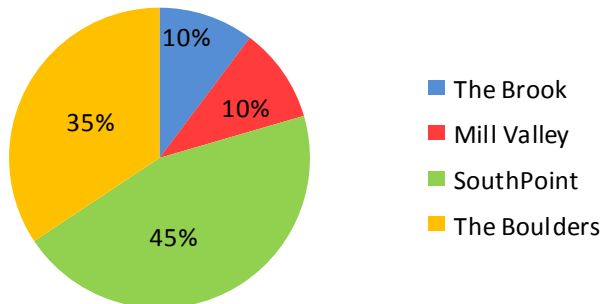
Amherst Health Department



**collaborative.org**  
Collaborative for Educational Services

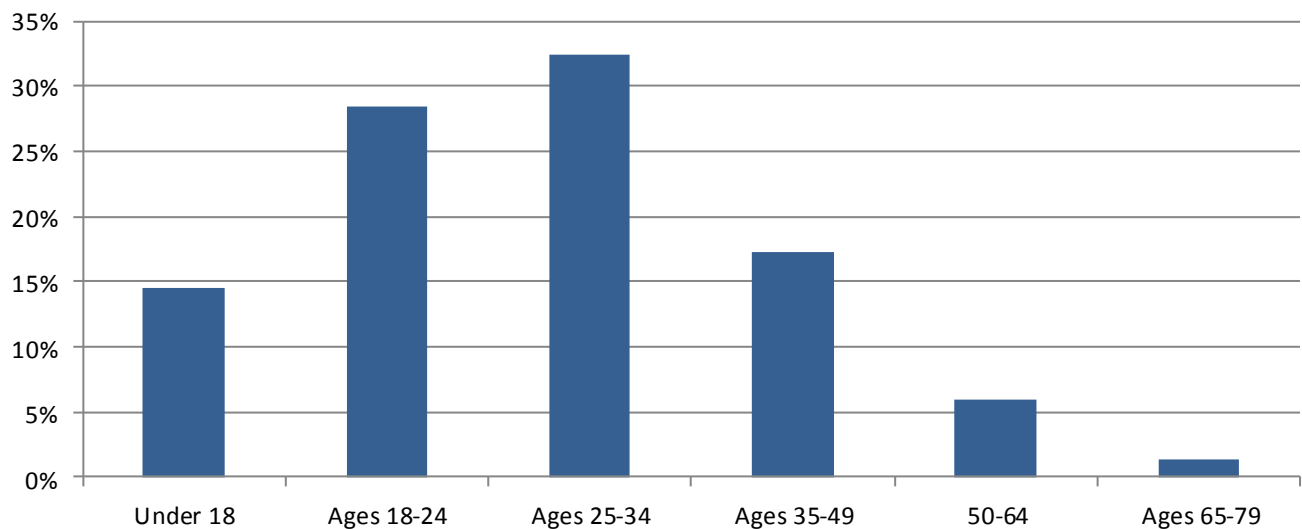
# DEMOGRAPHICS

## 1. Where do you live?



N=166

## 2. What is your age?



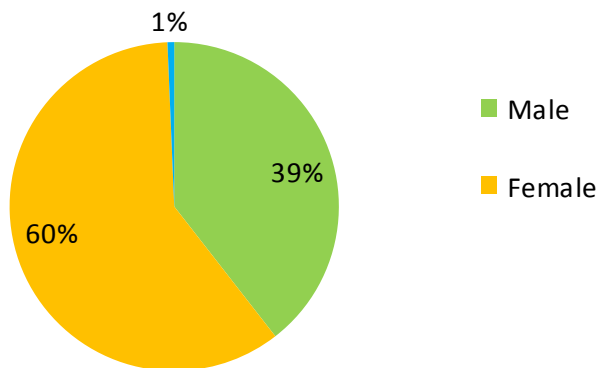
N=151

Photo by Sidilene da Veiga



# DEMOGRAPHICS

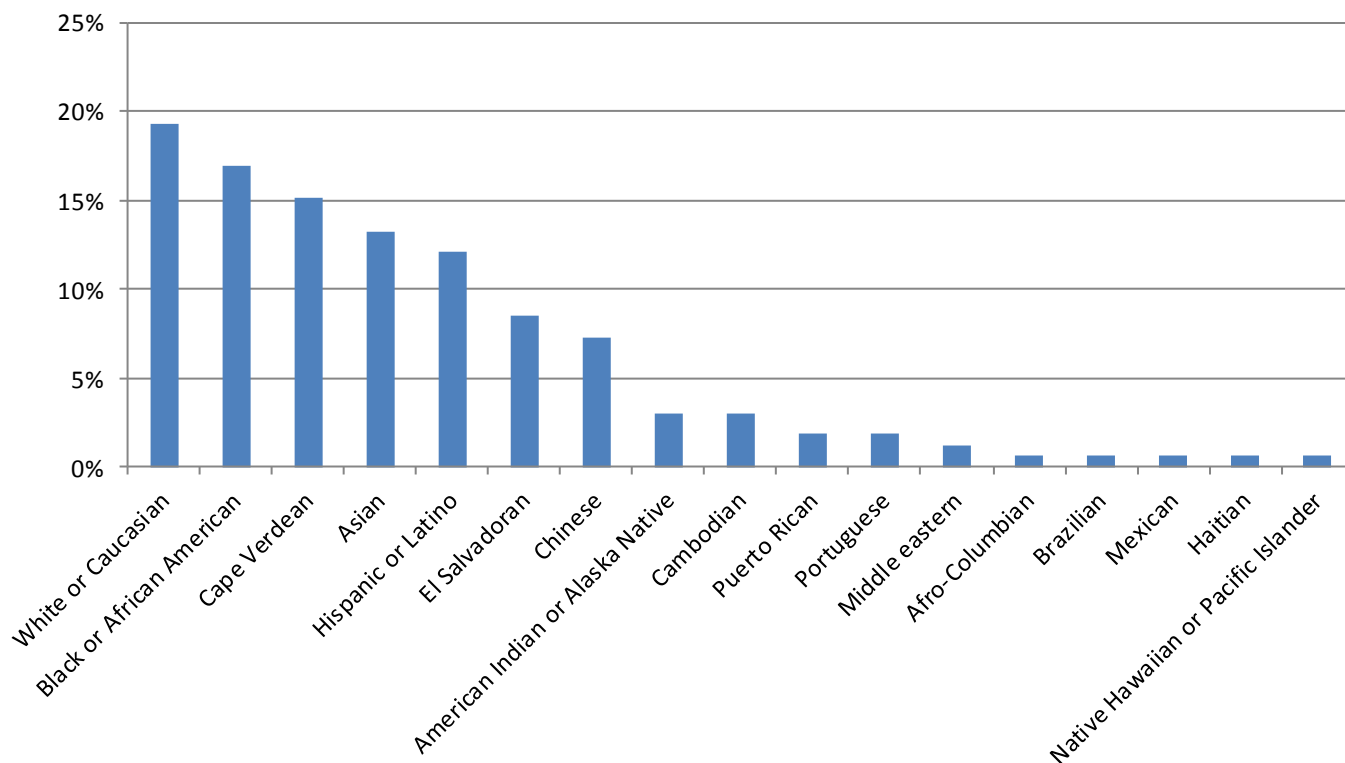
## 3. What is your gender?



\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

N=152

## 4. What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself? \*

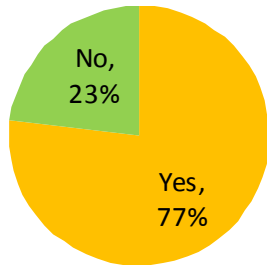


N=176

Note: We have tried to retain as many categories as were mentioned in the "other" box of the survey to best represent the diversity of residents and the way they prefer to identify themselves.

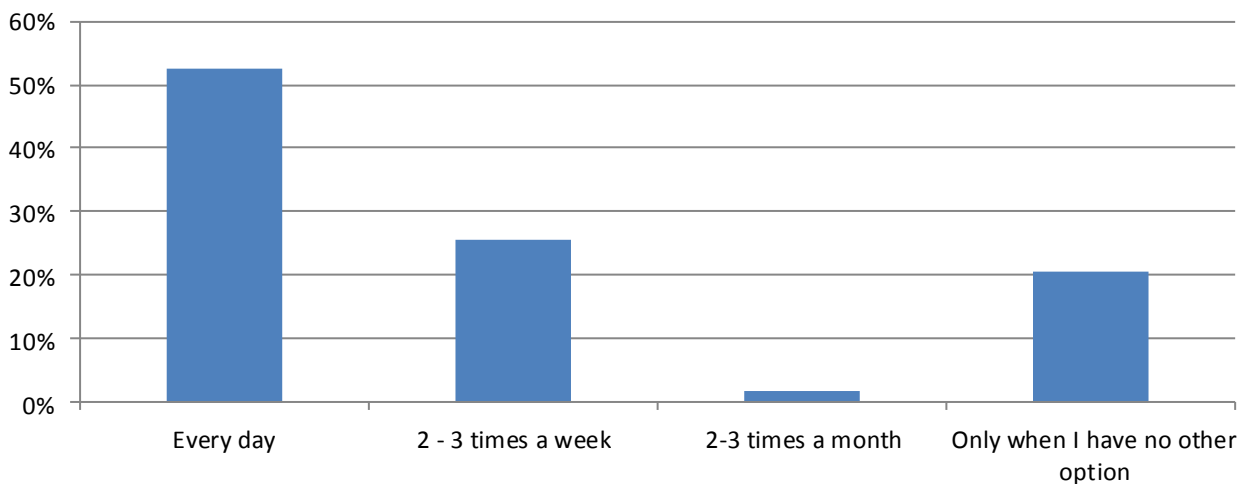
## TRANSPORTATION: By Bus

### 5. Do you ride the bus from your residence?



N=165

### 6. How often do you ride the bus?



N=126

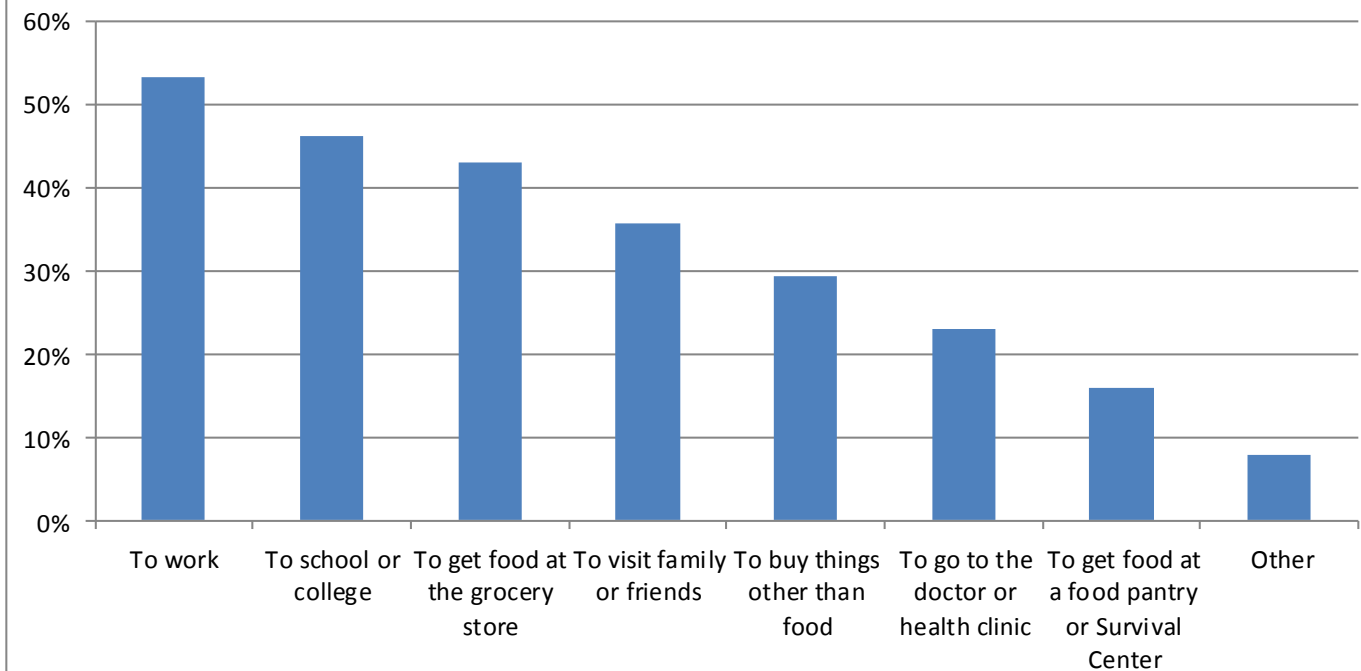
Photo by Sidilene da Veiga



# TRANSPORTATION: By Bus

\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

## 7. Where do you go on the bus? \*



N=320

Photo by Lilliana Lopes



## TRANSPORTATION: By Multi-Use Trail (Bike Path)

The Norwottuck Rail Trail, also known as the “bike path,” is a multi-use paved path that runs north of East Hadley Road (see map included in this report). Residents of this neighborhood access the Rail Trail by way of a dirt path through a corn field that separates the Rail Trail from East Hadley Road. For many residents, getting to the shops on Route 9 by way of the Rail Trail is safer than walking or biking by Mill Valley Road to South Maple Street, both of which lack sidewalks.

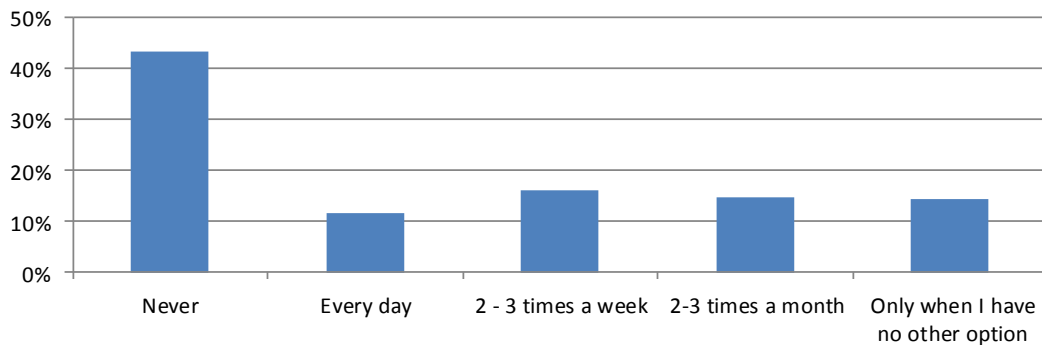
In the recent reconstruction of the Rail Trail, a fence was erected where the dirt path meets the Rail Trail due to safety concerns for people using the Trail. However, this has made it even harder for people to access the trail coming from East Hadley Road.

The photo on top right shows the dirt path leading from East Hadley Road toward the corn field. Bottom left is the dirt path leading away from the Rail Trail. Bottom right is the fence where the dirt path meets the Rail Trail.



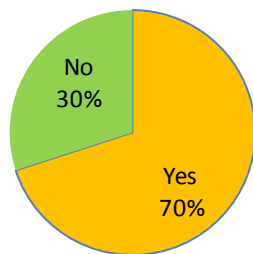
## TRANSPORTATION: By Multi-Use Trail (Bike Path)

### 8. How often do you use the bike path? (Norwottuck Rail Trail)



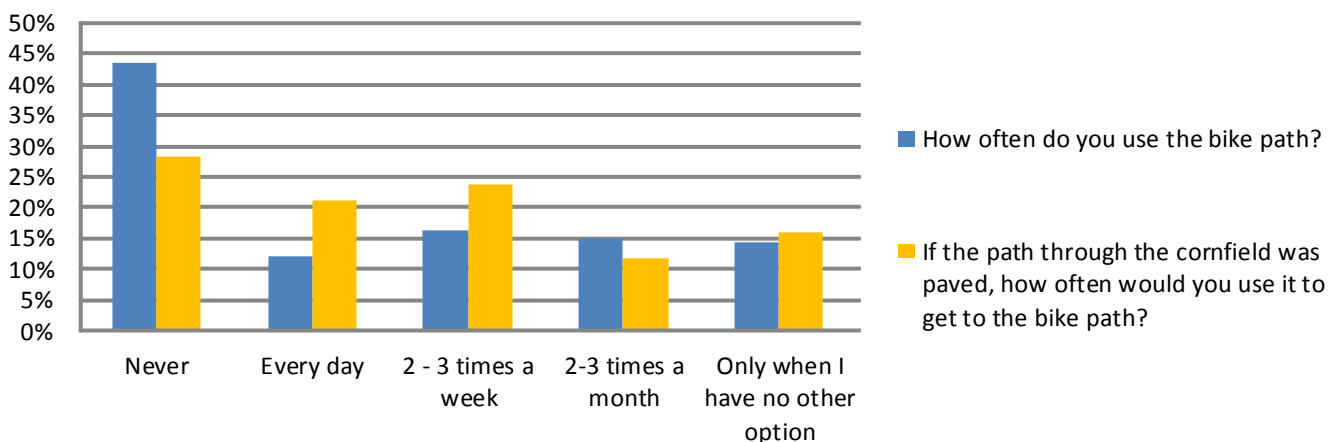
N=320

### 9. Do you get to the bike path by going through the corn field?



N=90

### 10. Current bike path usage compared to usage if the path through the corn field was paved

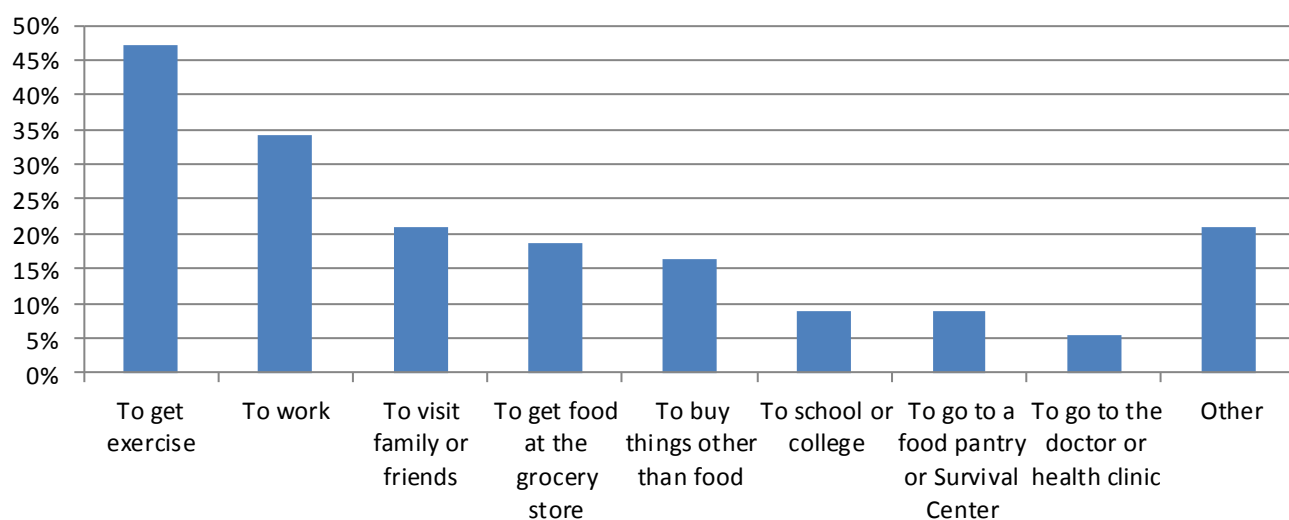


N=162 (how often); N=157 (If path was paved)

## TRANSPORTATION: By Multi-Use Trail (Bike Path)

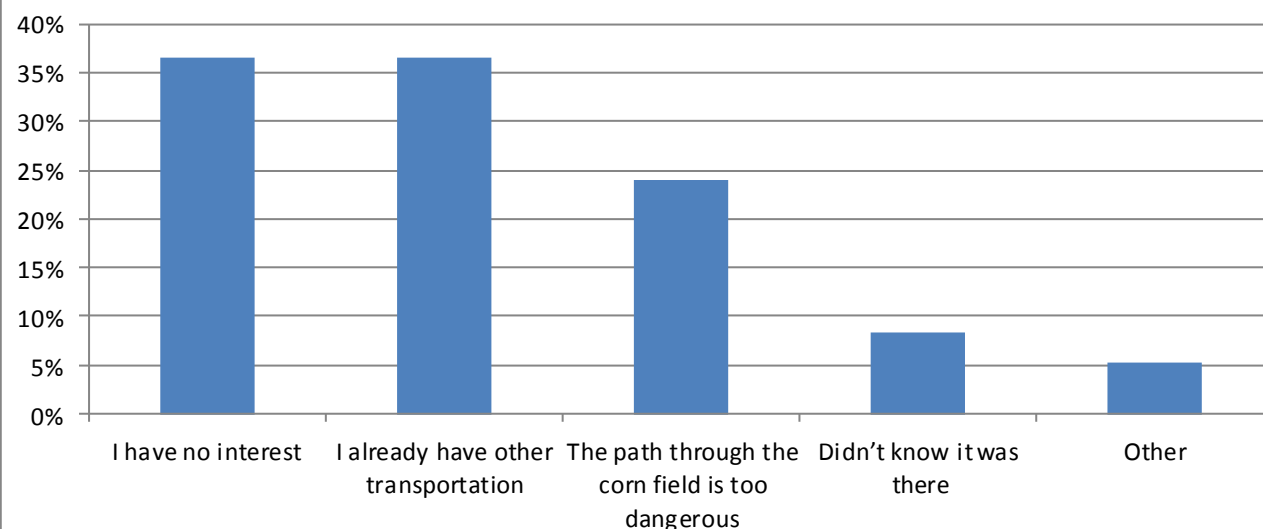
\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

### 11. When you use the bike path, where do you go? \*



N=166

### 12. Why don't you use the bike path? \*



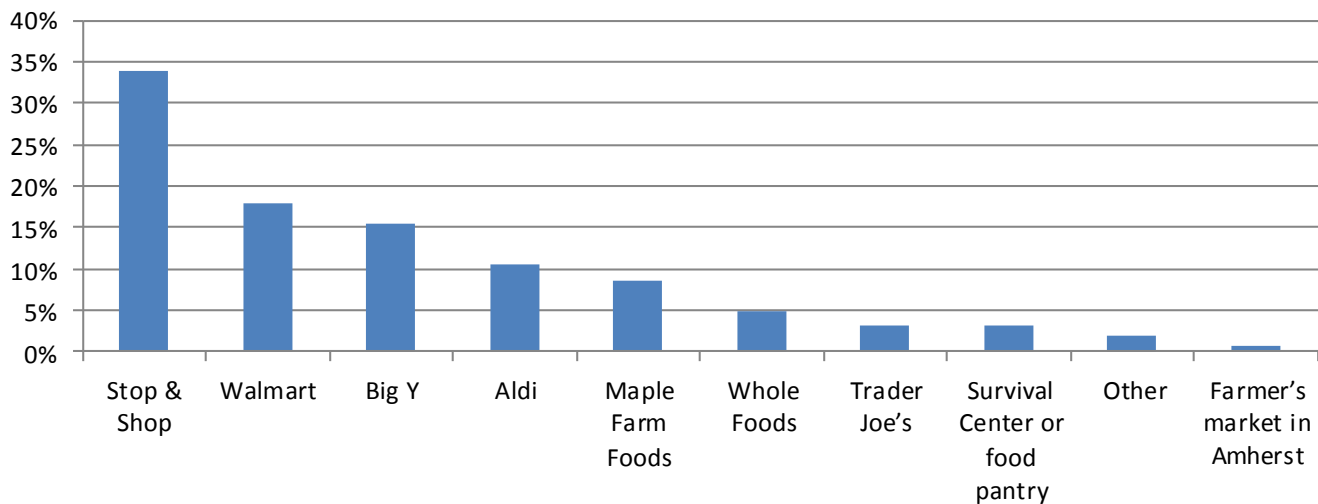
N=106

# FOOD ACCESS



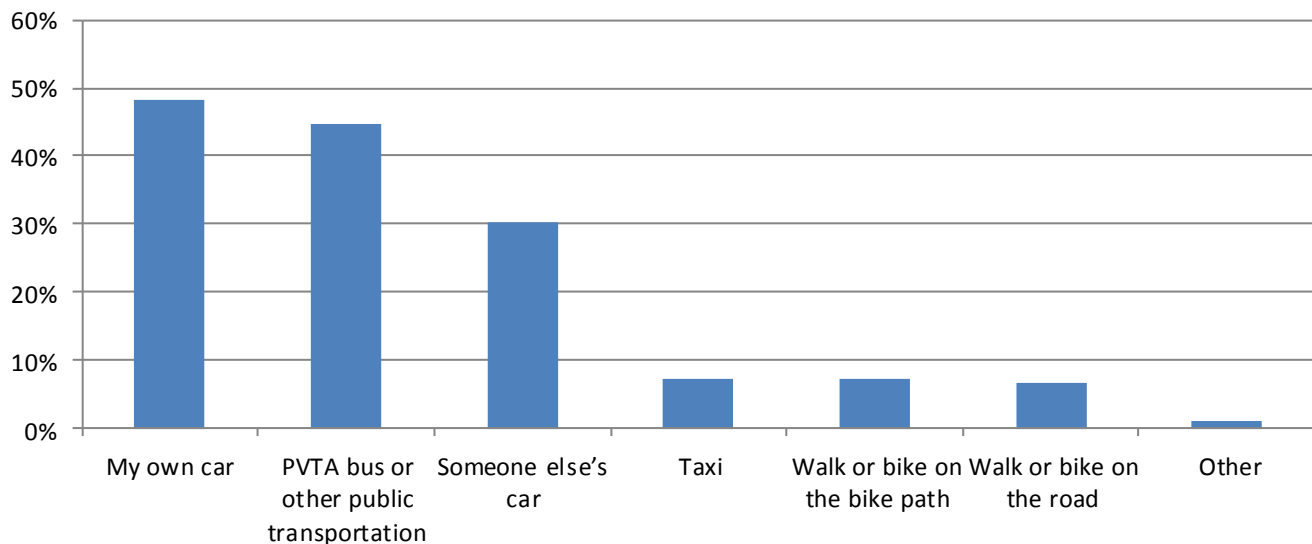
\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

## 13. Where do you get most of your food?



N=162

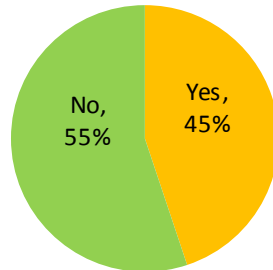
## 14. What transportation do you use to get food? \*



N=241

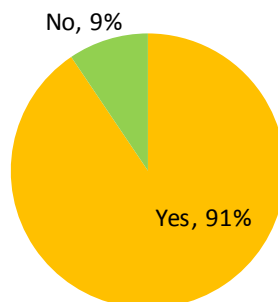
## FOOD ACCESS: Amherst Survival Center

**15. Do you go to the Amherst Survival Center to get food or eat meals?**



N=127

**16. If a van that delivered free fresh food like fruits, vegetables, and bread came to your neighborhood, would you use it?**

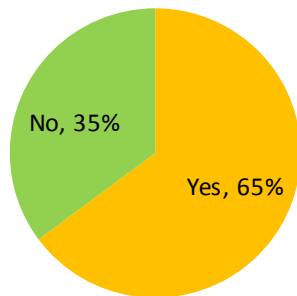


N=127



## RECREATION: Groff Park

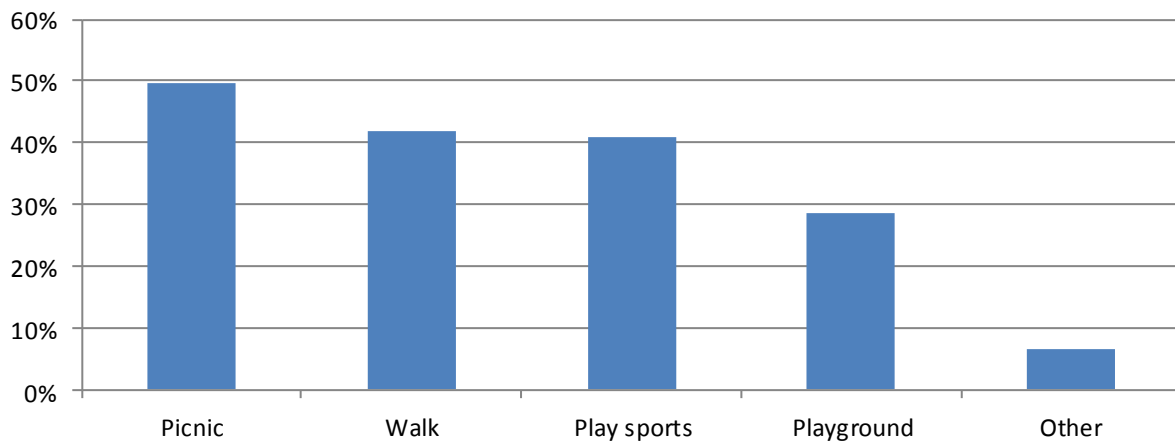
### 17. Do you visit Groff Park?



\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

N=162

### 18. What do you do at Groff Park? \*



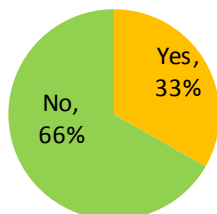
N=176

Photo by Sidilene Da Veiga



## RECREATION: Pools

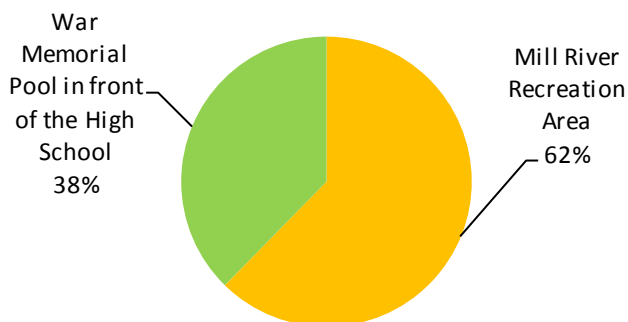
### 19. Do you use any of the outdoor pools in Amherst? \* (Mill River Recreation Area or War Memorial Pool at the High School)



\* Indicates that percentages may add up to more than 100% due to respondents' ability to select more than 1 option. "N" may equal more than the total number of unique individuals responding to the survey.

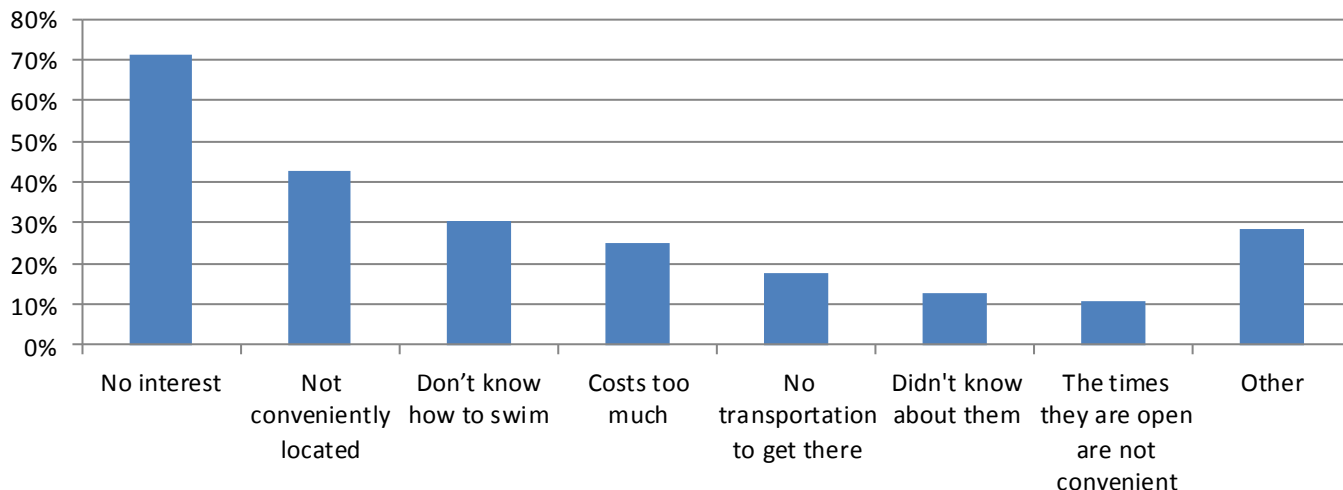
N=171

### 20. Which pools do you use? \*



N=61

### 21. If you don't use the pools, why not? \*



N=134

## SELECTED COMMENTS

*"Me gustaria que el denuicio de autobuses PVTA tubieno mas sensibilidad con las sillan de bebe. en muchos casos mas he sentido impotente cuando me imponen cennus mi cannito cuando mi bebe esta durmiendo...ademas apenas sabe sentense. en sin; yo lo veo un poco imposible solo pido mas considenacion por las pasajenos muchas que viajar solos con el camto y el bebe."*

*English translation: "I would like for the PVTA to be more sensible with the baby carriages. In a lot of occasions they have made me feel impotent when they deny me bringing in the carriage especially when he is sleeping. He barely can sit up right. Finally I see it as impossible, all I ask for is some consideration for the passengers, many of which ride by themselves and their child."*

*"Needs better bus service on weekends, summer and winter breaks because it takes too long to get to the grocery stores."*

*"Pave the cornfield."*

*"Please advertise more the places in Amherst like pools, stores, etc."*

*"Please repave East Hadley Road!! It is full of potholes and dangerous for bike riders, cars, and buses."*

*"Rent expensive, more entertainment around Southpoint areas would be good."*

*"Rent in this area is too high every year and the pay check is the same! Thank you."*

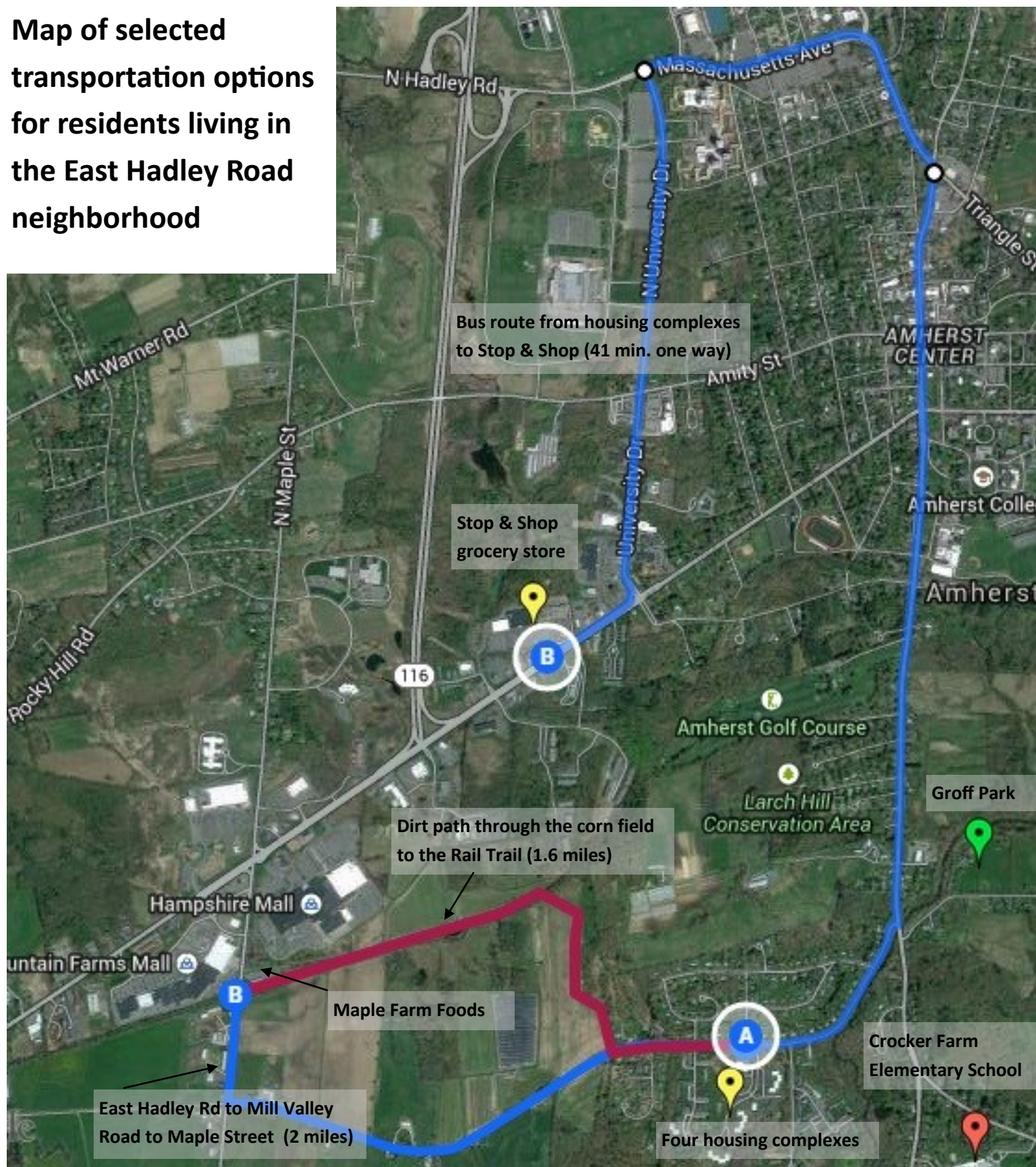
*"School systems healthier food programs at middle school."*

*"The rent in Amherst area is too expensive! cannot afford it!!!"*

Photo credits: Bottom left photo is by Sidilene da Veiga; bottom right is by Lilian Lopes



# Map of selected transportation options for residents living in the East Hadley Road neighborhood



**SAMPLE SURVEY: English, Page 1**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Surveyor: \_\_\_\_\_

## Amherst Health Department Survey of East Hadley Road Residents

The Amherst Health Department wants to help all residents to eat healthier and exercise more so that they may live longer, healthier lives. This survey focuses on the neighborhoods off of East Hadley Rd. We want to know more about how we can improve the transportation options available in your neighborhood, whether you go to the parks and swimming pools in the area, and where you get your food. We do not ask for your name or your address in this survey. All of the information provided will be used by the Town of Amherst to better improve services in your neighborhood. Thank you for taking this survey!

### Transportation by Bus

1. Do you ride the PVRTA bus from your apartment? (check only one)  
☐ Yes      ☐ No (skip to #4)
2. How often do you ride the bus? (check only one)  
☐ Every day    ☐ 2 - 3 times a week    ☐ 2-3 times a month    ☐ Only when I have no other option
3. When you ride the bus from your apartment, where do you go? (check all that apply)  

<input type="checkbox"/> To work	<input type="checkbox"/> To buy things other than food
<input type="checkbox"/> To school or college	<input type="checkbox"/> To visit family or friends
<input type="checkbox"/> To get food at the grocery store	<input type="checkbox"/> To go to the doctor or health clinic
<input type="checkbox"/> To get food at a food pantry or Survival Center	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**Bike Path:** The next few questions are about the "BIKE PATH." The bike path is the paved walking and biking path that runs from Amherst to Northampton and goes behind the Hampshire Mall and Walmart. Some residents get to the bike path by cutting through the corn field next to East Hadley Rd.

4. How often do you use the bike path? (check only one)  
☐ Never (skip to #7)   ☐ Every day   ☐ 2 - 3 times a week   ☐ 2-3 times a month   ☐ Only when I have no other option
5. Do you get to the bike path by cutting through the corn field? (check only one)  
☐ Yes   ☐ No
6. When you use the bike path, where do you go? (check all that apply)  
☐ To work   ☐ To buy things other than food  
☐ To school or college   ☐ To visit family or friends  
☐ To get food at the grocery store   ☐ To go to the doctor or health clinic  
☐ To go to a food pantry or Survival Center   ☐ To get exercise   ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_
7. If the path through the cornfield was paved, how often would you use it to get to the bike path? (check only one)  
☐ Never   ☐ Every day   ☐ 2 - 3 times a week   ☐ 2-3 times a month  
☐ Only when I have no other option
8. Why don't you use the bike path? (check all that apply)  
☐ Didn't know it was there   ☐ I already have other transportation  
☐ The path through the corn field is too dangerous   ☐ I have no interest

**Recreation:** *The next few questions ask you about where you get exercise or enjoy the outdoors.*

9. Do you or your family use the outdoor swimming pools in Amherst? (check all that apply)
- ☐ We don't use any outdoor pools   ☐ Mill River Recreation Area   ☐ War Memorial Pool in front of the High School

## SAMPLE SURVEY: English, Page 2

10. If you don't use the pools, why not? (check all that apply)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Not conveniently located       | <input type="checkbox"/> The times they are open are not convenient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No transportation to get there | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know how to swim                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Costs too much                 | <input type="checkbox"/> No interest                                |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                                |

11. Do you visit Groff Park? (check only one)

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No (skip to #13)

12. What do you do at Groff Park? (check all that apply)

- ☐ Walk      ☐ Play sports      ☐ Playground      ☐ Picnic      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Food:** The next few questions ask you about your food choices.

13. Where do you get MOST of your food? (check only one)

- |                                      |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stop n Shop | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Farm Foods       | <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer's market in Amherst     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Big Y       | <input type="checkbox"/> Trader Joe's           | <input type="checkbox"/> Survival Center or food pantry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walmart     | <input type="checkbox"/> Price Rite in Chicopee | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aldi        | <input type="checkbox"/> Whole Foods            |   |

14. Do you go to the Amherst Survival Center to get food or eat meals?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No      If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

15. If a van that delivered free fresh food like fruits, vegetables, and bread came to your neighborhood, would you use it?

- ☐ Yes      ☐ No      If no, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

16. What transportation do you use to get food? (check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PVTa bus or other public transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My own car                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk or bike on the bike path |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Someone else's car                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk or bike on the road      |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                   |

17. What would help you to eat healthier? (check all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing, I already eat healthy                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Better transportation to stores |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More money to buy healthier food                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education healthy cooking       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More grocery stores in the area that sell what I want         | <input type="checkbox"/> More time to make healthy food  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A van that delivers <u>free</u> fresh food to my neighborhood | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____                     |

### Information about you

18. What is your age range?

- ☐ Under 18      ☐ 18-24      ☐ 25-34      ☐ 35-49      ☐ 50-64      ☐ 65-79      ☐ 80 and older

19. What is your gender?

- ☐ Male      ☐ Female      ☐ Transgender      ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself? (check all that apply)

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander | <input type="checkbox"/> Cambodian     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian                            | <input type="checkbox"/> White or Caucasian                  | <input type="checkbox"/> El Salvadoran |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mexican                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino               | <input type="checkbox"/> Puerto Rican                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |

21. Are there any other concerns you would like to share with us today?

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