

# NORWALK, CONNECTICUT



## CULTURAL SURVEY & ASSESSMENT

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Paradigm Fox LLC

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# Norwalk Cultural Assessment

# Project Charter



## Business Case

The City of Norwalk would like to understand the economic impact of the arts and culture in Norwalk.

A survey of greater Norwalk's current cultural assets, local & regional support services, administrative infrastructure and area demographics is needed

The cultural assessment is needed to analyze strengths and weaknesses, identify areas of opportunity and assess the degree of risk associated with supporting and developing the arts.

## Problem Statement

- ◆ In order to accommodate the target completion date and budget requirements data and conclusions of existing local, regional and national surveys and assessments will be incorporated into this report.
- ◆ Any strategic plan based on findings in the current economic climate will require the flexibility to deal with new changes, challenges and obstacles.
- ◆ Certain business assumptions will need to be made where data is unavailable.

## Measurable Indicator & Goal

A delivered Cultural Assessment, supplying sufficient data and analysis to allow decision makers to execute a strategic development plan for the Norwalk Cultural District

## Deliverables

A Cultural Assessment of Greater Norwalk

## Team Members

Name	Role	% of Time
Jackie Lightfield	Team Leader	< 7%
Kathryn Hebert	Team Member	< 5%
Sophia Gevas	Team Member	< 5%
Maribeth Becker	Team Member	< 5%
Amon Archie	Team Member	< 5%
Mike Moccia	Liaison / Staff	< 5%
Robert Campbell	Assessment Developer	< 20%

## Project Status

Project Start Date: 2-13-09 Est. Completion: 04-15-09  
**DMADV Stage Define**

Financial Impact	TBD	2009 to 2014	Benefit
Cost			
Cult. Assessment	\$3M	TBD	May Increase jobs
		TBD	May Increase revenue from taxes
		TBD	May Increase Property value

## Scope

- Starts with:** Identifying, collecting and reviewing all existing relevant data pertaining to cultural and economic trends impacting the greater Norwalk area.
- Ends with:** A final report including the analysis and recommendations presented to the Norwalk Arts Commission.

# Project Charter

## The Process

The process began by researching existing cultural assessments throughout the state of Connecticut and specifically, Fairfield County. As this assessment is narrower in scope, it will rely on these regional assessments for trending data.

Next, an online survey consisting of 16 questions was launched on June 20, 2009 and completed on October 29, 2009. Invitations to participate in the online survey were available at the Norwalk Public Library, municipal parking facilities, the Maritime Center, area retailers and cultural events held throughout the summer months. The online survey received 381 responses.

Lastly, 242 individuals were randomly selected and surveyed over the course of two weekends: one during the Sono Arts Celebration and the other during the Norwalk Oyster Festival. These surveys were conducted in person and captured on paper.

Collectively, 623 individuals were surveyed from June 20th, 2009 through October 29th, 2009. This data, along with data retrieved from other cultural assessments throughout the state, was used to analyze and quantify the economic impact and cost-benefit of cultivating, supporting and promoting cultural events and a cultural district in the Norwalk area.

## Sources

The Norwalk Cultural Survey

Bridgeport Connecticut Cultural Assessment as revised November 15, 2007 for the Fairfield Arts Council and the Housatonic Art Museum / Craig Dreeszen, Ph.D., Dreeszen & Associates

One Coast -- One Future Coastal Fairfield County Cultural Assessment / Craig Dreeszen, Ph.D., Dreeszen & Associates

Bridgeport, Connecticut Citywide Economic Development Strategies, January 16-21, 2005, An Advisory Services Panel Report by the Urban Land Institute

"The Economic Impact of Arts, Film, History and Tourism in Connecticut," Connecticut's Center for Economic Analysis, University of Connecticut, 2006 / Stanley McMullen, Ph.D., Associate Director / available at [www.cultureandtourism.org](http://www.cultureandtourism.org)

The American Association of Fundraising Counsel

The Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism

2009 Economic Impact Study by Quinnipiac University's School of Business on the effect of the International Festival of Arts & Ideas on the City of New Haven / Mark Guis, Economics Professor at Quinnipiac University's School of Business

National Directory of Nonprofit Organizations, 22nd Edition, 07-08

## Key Findings

At the time of this assessment there is currently no comprehensive list of the actual number of artists residing in Norwalk, nor is there sufficient data collected locally to track or trend shifts in the local creative economy.

Competitively, many surrounding cities and towns have longer standing, staffed and funded Arts Councils/Commissions that have coordinated volunteerism, collected impact data and effectively advocated for state and private funding to grow their creative economies. This regional data appears to be consistent enough to identify regional trends and will be used to develop relative business assumptions for the City of Norwalk.

The sources listed appear to trend an upward growth pattern for the creative economies while the other business sectors experience a downward trend throughout the state.

A Bridgeport Master plan identified a 22% increase in the arts and entertainment employment sector while jobs declined in every other sector of the Bridgeport workforce.

In 2009, New Haven realized an 11% increase in the economic impact of the “International Arts and Ideas Festival” over the previous year 2008. The 2009 Festival generated a \$21,000,000 positive impact on the state economy.

Nationally the number of nonprofit 501c organizations has doubled from 800,000 in the year 2000 to 1,600,000 in 2005.(data 360.org)

There are 81 registered 501C3 nonprofit organizations in Norwalk, of which 23% are focused on cultural events and activities. (National Directory of Nonprofit Organizations) 53% of respondents to the Norwalk Cultural Survey said they would be interested in opportunities to get involved in cultural activities in the Greater Norwalk Area.

Norwalk has successfully created and nurtured a cultural district before, as evidenced by the success of the Washington Street area of South Norwalk, known as SoNo. Many

attractions and seasonal events have grown out of that effort and draw not only the local community but tourists from throughout the state and beyond.

According to the Norwalk Cultural Survey, 86% of those people who attend cultural events in the Greater Norwalk Area patronize local area businesses before or after the event.

## Recommendations

The City of Norwalk should staff and fund its new Arts Commission to oversee the key drivers (Communication, Advocacy and Volunteerism) responsible for the growth of its creative economy. Norwalk's creative economy represents a potentially substantial benefit at a rather minimal public investment.

Results from the Norwalk Cultural Survey and the cited larger regional surveys indicate that a larger scale assessment could be conducted in Norwalk over time, to track and verify the economic impact of supporting the creative economy.

Strong state-wide and regional data supports investing in a new cultural district. Municipal investment in Norwalk's creative economy and the creation of a new Cultural District would likely realize a greater return on investment than development opportunities in other sectors.

Many Norwalk residents identified the number of cultural events offered in Norwalk as a key factor in choosing to live in Norwalk. As residents and tourists alike already identify Norwalk as a cultural and artistic destination, a lower risk factor can be assigned to the creation of a new Cultural District in the same city.

53% of those surveyed in the Norwalk cultural survey stated they would be interested in opportunities to become involved in cultural events in Norwalk. 61% of the 279 who claimed they had never been involved in any cultural events in Norwalk stated they would be interested in doing so in the future. As both of these numbers are relatively high, there appears to be a sizable, potential volunteer base that is under utilized.

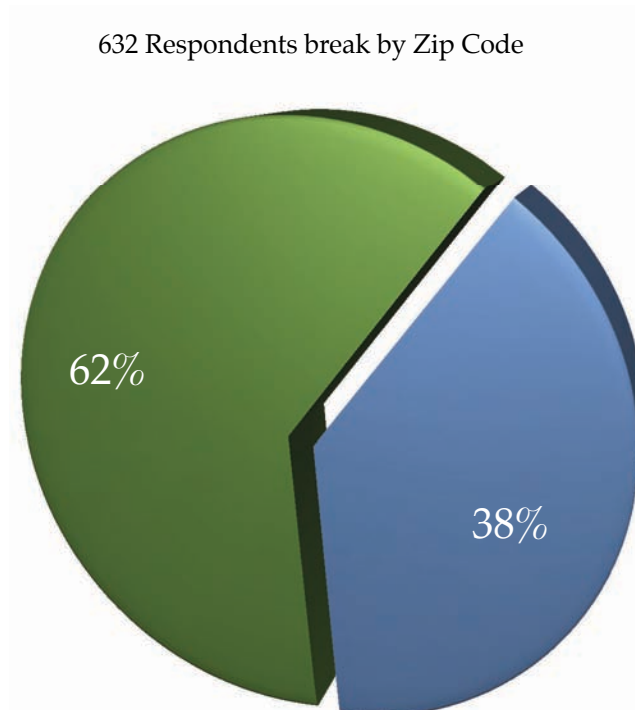


# Cultural Survey Results

## Question #1 - What is your Home Zip Code?

● Norwalk Zip Codes

● Outside Norwalk Zip Codes



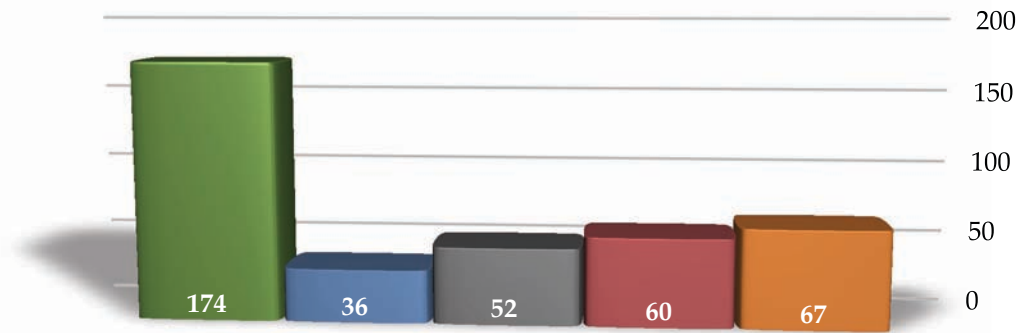
Five Norwalk zip codes were recorded out of 11

389 Residents of Norwalk

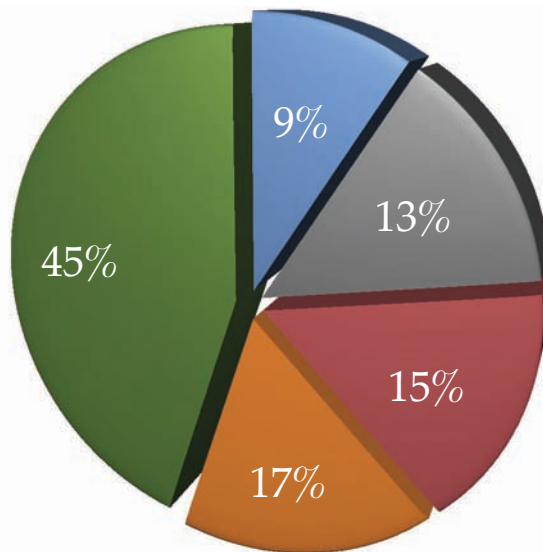
## Question #2 - How long have you lived there?

■ 20+ years   ■ 16-20 years   ■ 11-15 years   ■ 6-10 years   ■ 1-5 years

Breakout of the 389 Norwalk Respondents

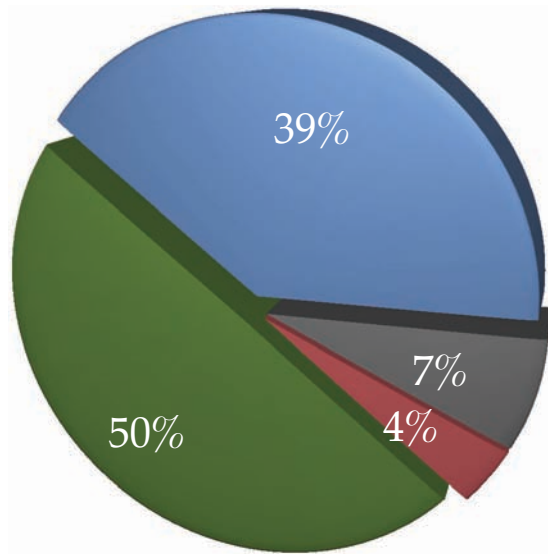
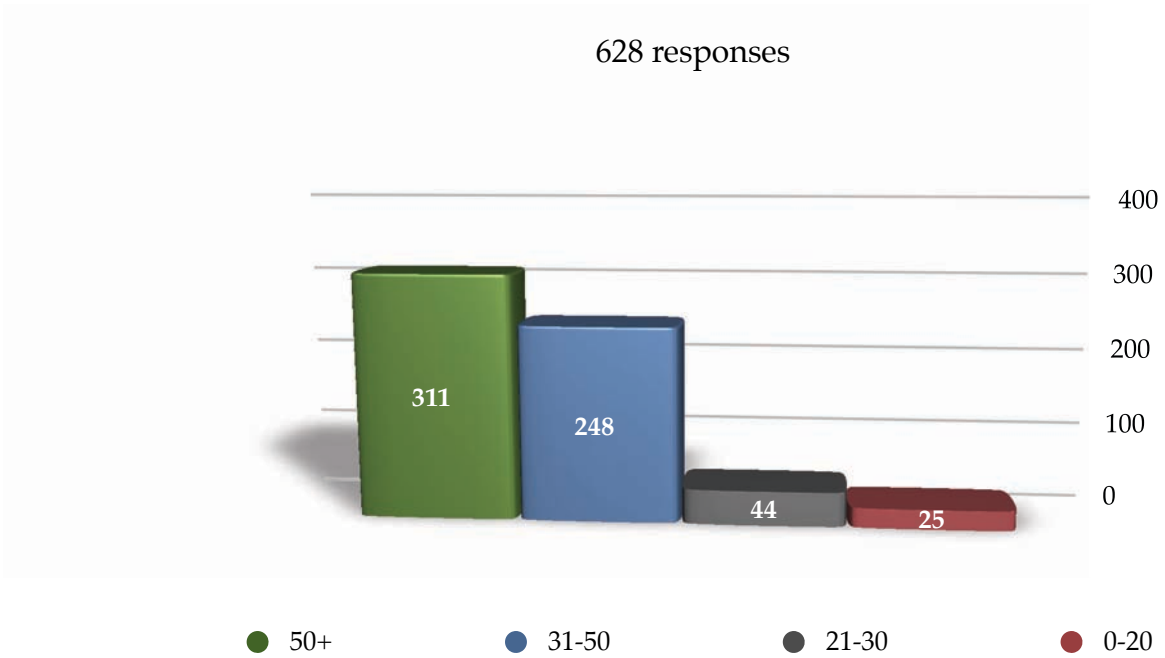


● 20+ years   ● 16-20 years   ● 11-15 years   ● 6-10 years   ● 1-5 years



Over 50% of those surveyed have moved to Norwalk in the last 20 years, with that percentage increasing every five years

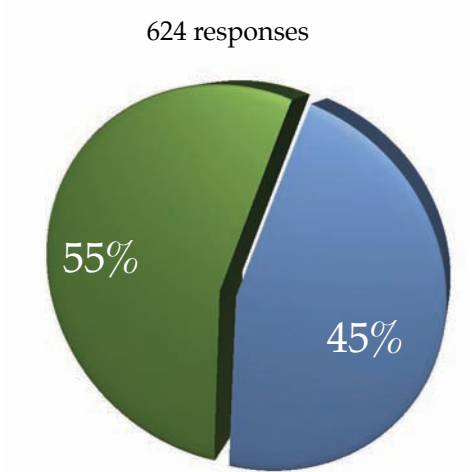
**Question #3 - What is your age?**



This may suggest an opportunity to attract a greater audience under 30 years of age.

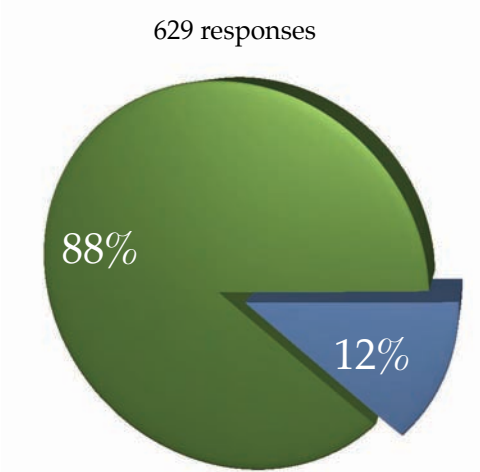
**Question #4 - Do you work in the Greater Norwalk Area ?**

● Yes / 342                      ● No / 282



**Question #5 - Do you patronize Norwalk Area Businesses?**

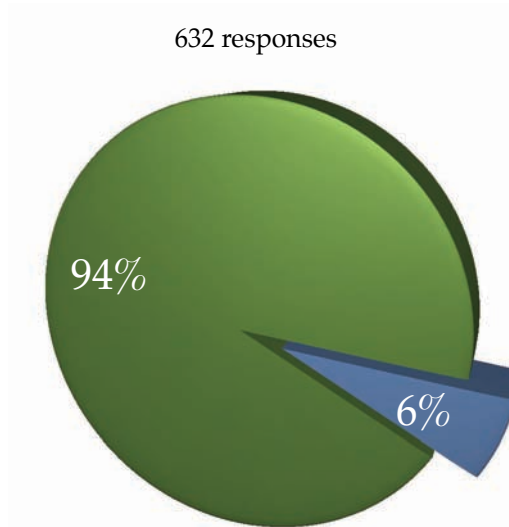
● Yes / 555                      ● No / 74



This data would support findings regarding the return on investment in the creative economy.

**Question #6 - Have you attended Cultural Events or Attractions in the Greater Norwalk Area?**

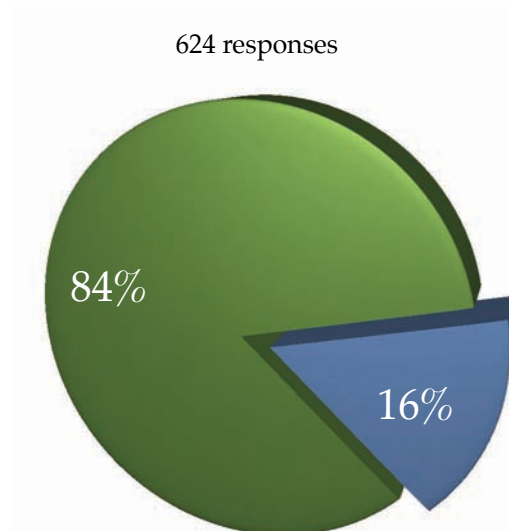
● Yes / 592                      ● No / 40



Many respondents stated that they were unaware of the number of events and attractions available in Norwalk

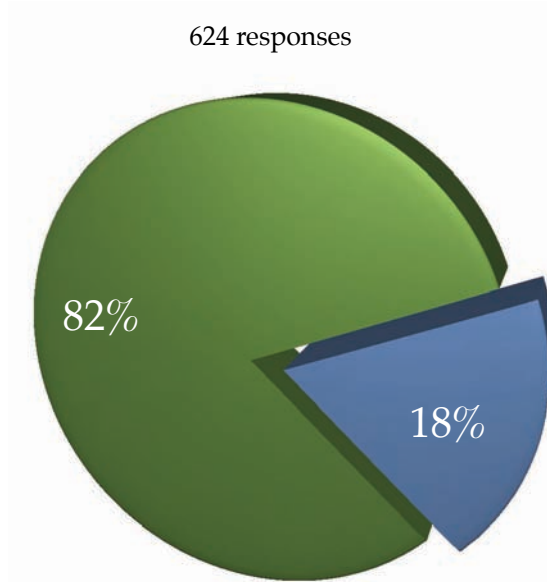
**Question #7 a - Have you attended the Maritime Aquarium**

● Yes / 527                      ● No / 97

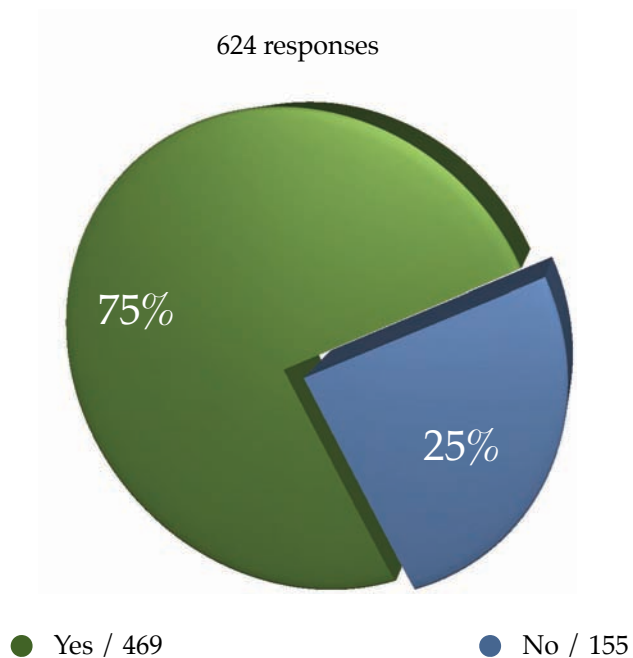


**Question #7 b - Have you attended the Oyster Festival ?**

● Yes / 512                      ● No / 112

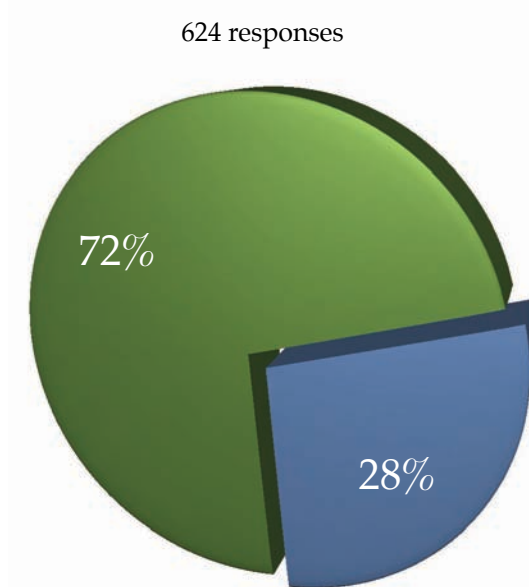


**Question #7 c - Have you attended the Sono Arts Celebration - 624 responses**



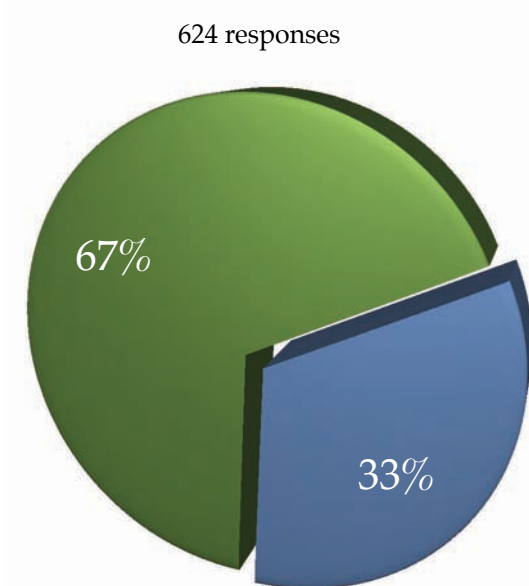
**Question #7 d - Have you attended a movie at a theater?**

● Yes / 458                      ● No / 176



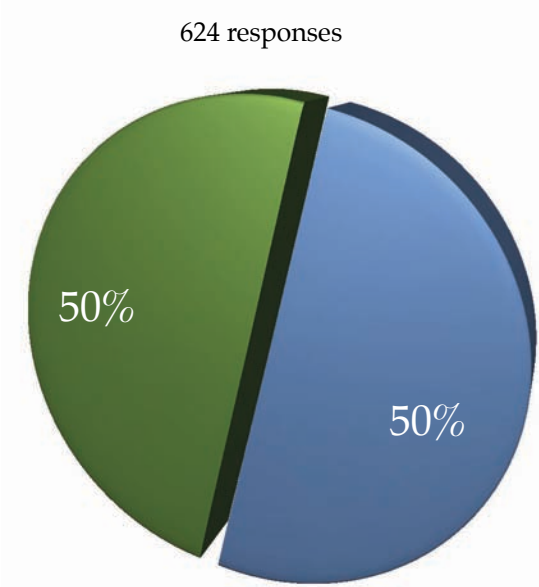
**Question #7 e - Have you attended a Movie at the IMAX ?**

● Yes / 420                      ● No / 204



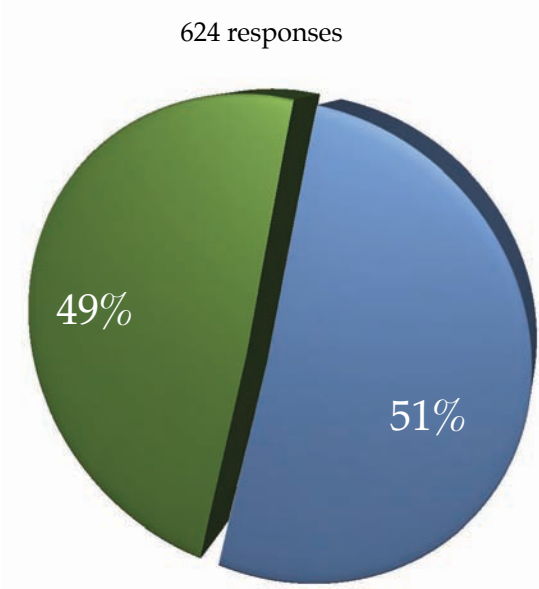
**Question #7 f - Have you attended the Lockwood Mathews Mansion ?**

● Yes / 311                      ● No / 313



**Question #7 g - Have you attended any gallery art exhibit ?**

● Yes / 307                      ● No / 317

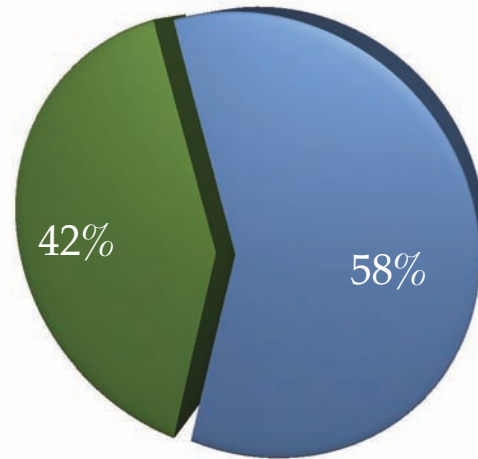




**Question #7 h - Have you attended Stepping Stones Museum for Children?**

● Yes / 262                      ● No / 362

624 responses

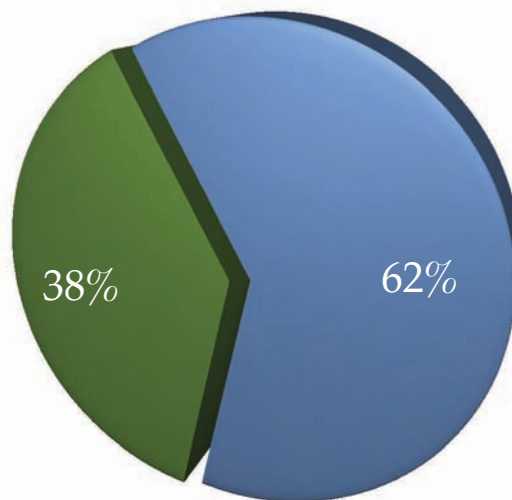


52% of those surveyed had children in the appropriate age range for this attraction.

**Question #7 i - Have you attended the Norwalk Museum?**

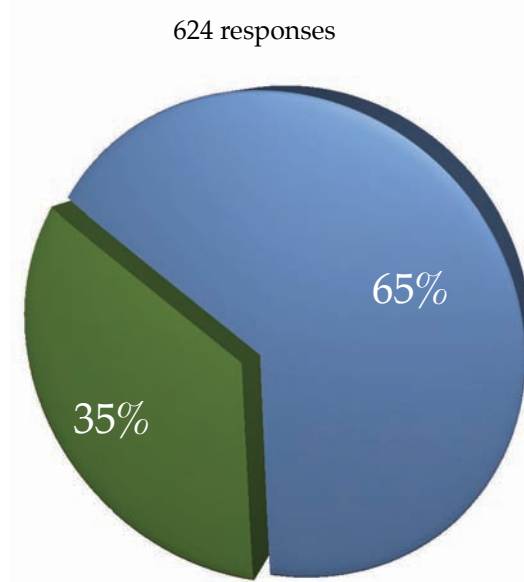
● Yes / 239                      ● No / 385

624 responses



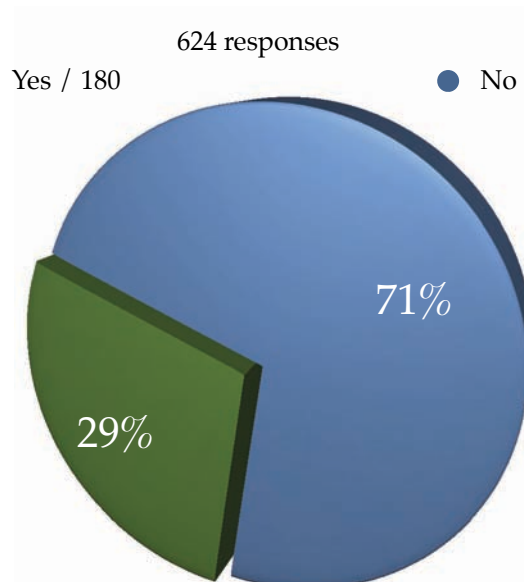
**Question #7 j - Have you attended Concerts at the Beach?**

● Yes / 220                      ● No / 404



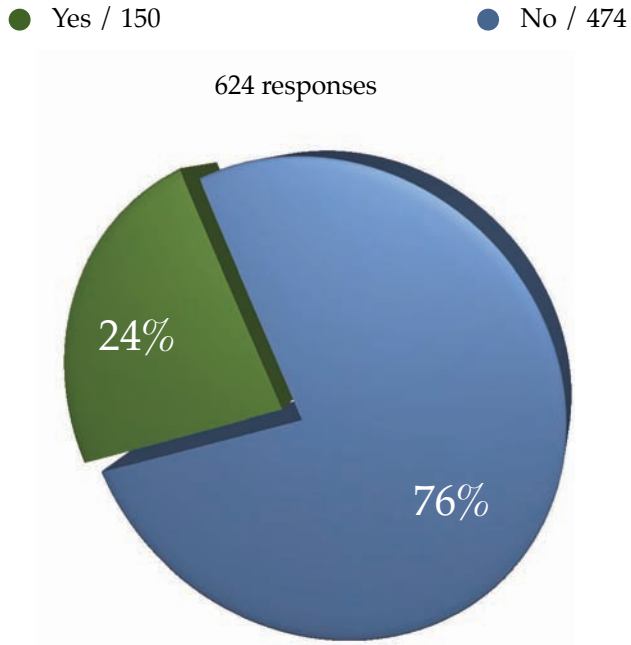
**Question #7 k - Have you attended Concerts on the Green? - 624 responses**

● Yes / 180                      ● No / 444



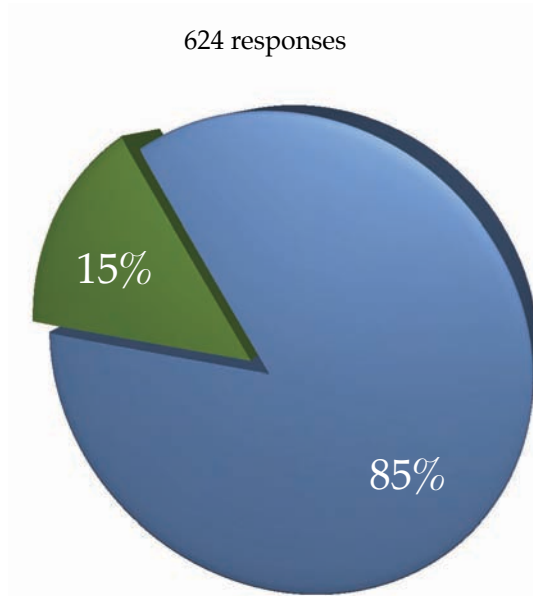
**Low attendance may be due to low awareness of this event.**

**Question #7 g - Have you attended the Crystal Theater?**



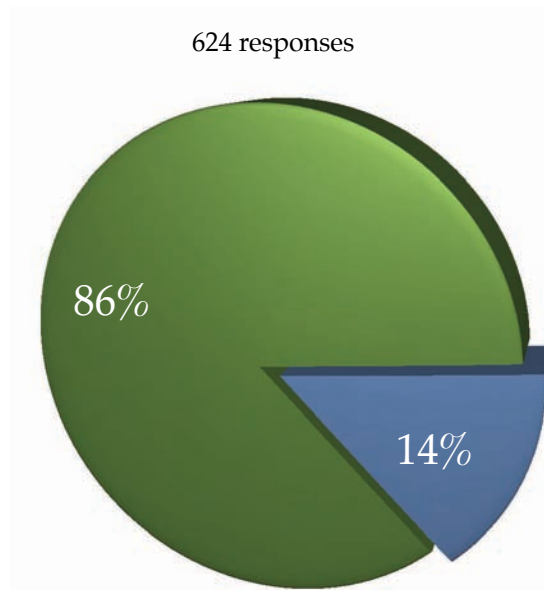
● Yes / 94                      ● No / 530

**Question #7 g - Have you attended Concerts at Cranbury Park?**



**Question #8 - When attending an event or attraction, did you visit an area restaurant, bar or cafe, before or after?**

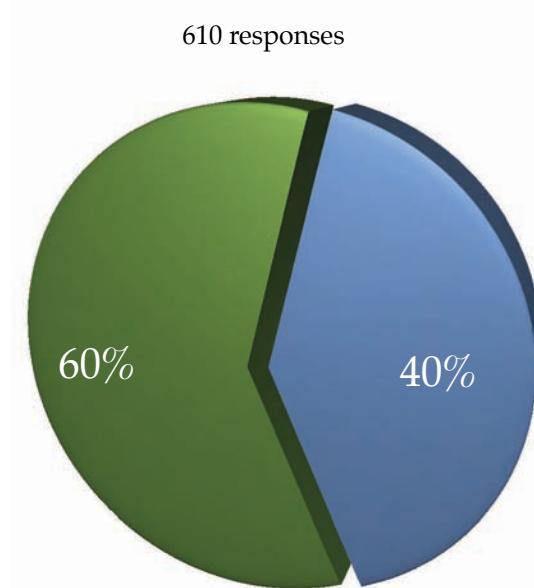
● 525 / Yes                      ● 89 / No



86% would suggest that the creative economy is a strong economic driver. in other sectors.

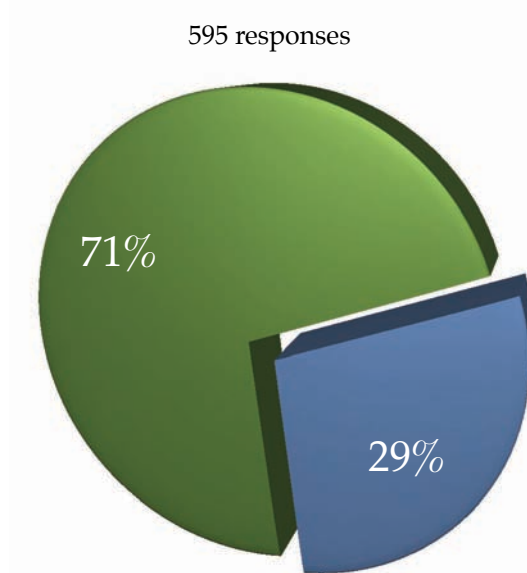
**Question #9 - When attending an event or attraction, did you find parking easily? - 610 responses**

● 367 / Yes                      ● 243 / No

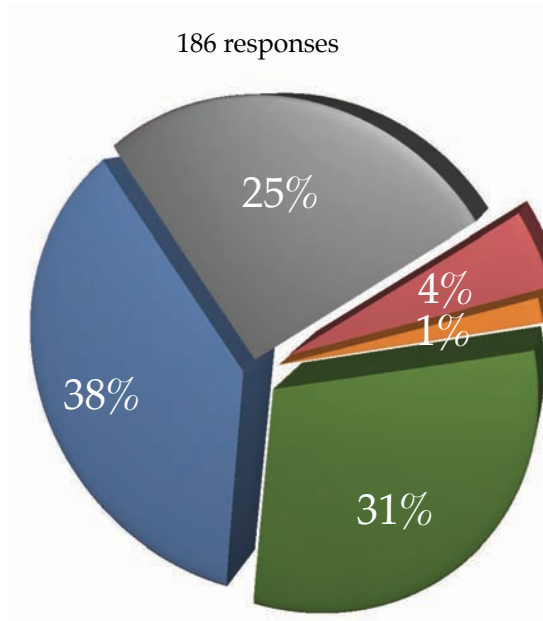


**Question #10 - Do you have children under the age of 19? - 610 responses**

- Yes / 425
- No / 170



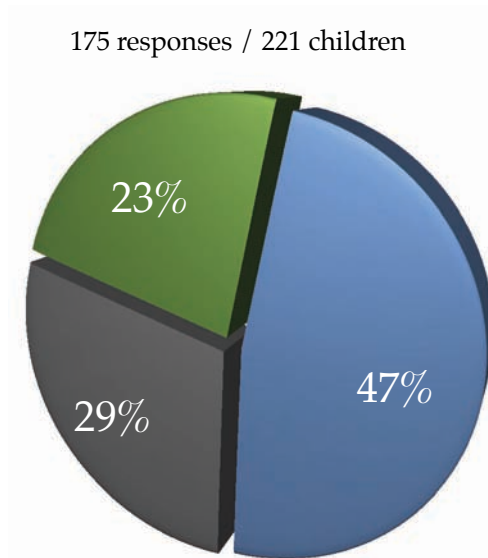
- One/63
- Two/79
- Three/52
- Four/9
- Between 5-8



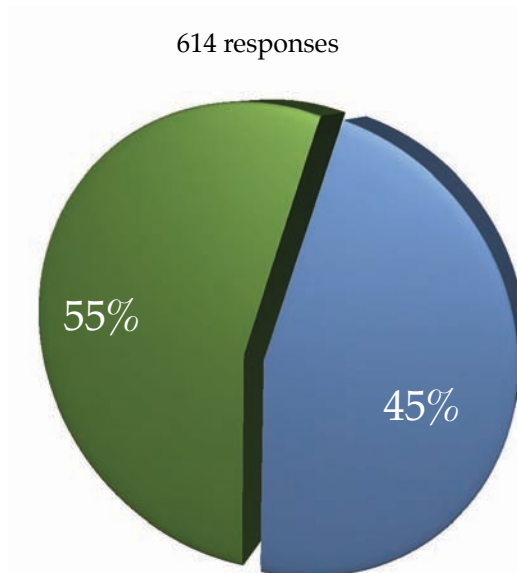
**Question #11 - How many children do you have?**

**Question #12 - In what age ranges are your children?**

- 0-5 years / 41
- 6-12 years / 84
- 13-18 years / 96



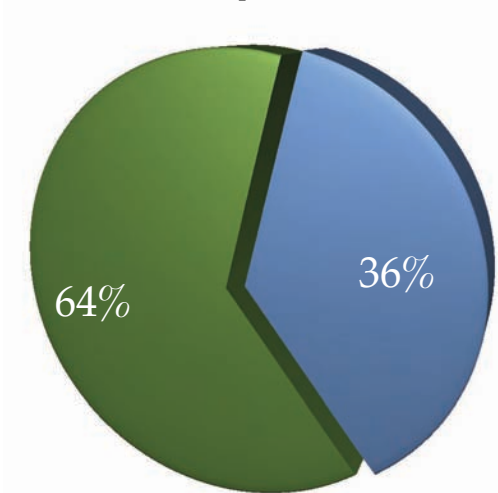
- Yes / 335
- No / 279



**Question #13 - Have you ever volunteered your time to an Organization in the Greater Norwalk Area?**

**Question #14 - Have you ever donated money to an Organization in the Greater Norwalk Area?**

● Yes / 396                      ● No / 224  
620 responses



**Question #15 - Would you be interested in opportunities to get involved in cultural activities in the Greater Norwalk Area?**

● Yes / 312                      ● No / 279  
591 responses

