

# **Burke Lakefront Airport: Cuyahoga County Residents' Views of Options**

Prepared by:  
Students and Instructor in POL241 Public Interest Research  
Baldwin-Wallace College  
April 11, 2007

## Students:

Emily Allman	Victoria Berry
Brian Brochetti	Amanda Deatsch
Anna Evans	Jeremy Feador
Josh Fossie	James Harris-Chappell
Corey Kuzma	Nicole Mihalic
Nick Palmentera	Ben Schaefer
Kelly Sikorski	Megan Smith
Lehel Somogyi	Ulysses Stokes
Christina Walker	Emily White

## Instructor:

Mark Mattern, Ph.D.  
Department of Political Science  
Public Interest Research Center  
Baldwin-Wallace College  
Berea, OH 44107  
mmattern@bw.edu  
440-826-2470

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary -----	p. 3
Introduction -----	p. 5
The sample -----	p. 5
Survey Results -----	p. 8
Lakefront access -----	p. 8
Priorities for Burke -----	p. 10
Commercial flights out of Burke -----	p. 12
Impact on other airports -----	p. 13
Likely frequency of visits to downtown Cleveland and a redeveloped Burke -----	p. 15
Priorities for park amenities -----	p. 17
Air Show and Grand Prix -----	p. 18
Appendix -----	p. 20

## Executive Summary

Adequacy of public access to Lake Erie: Forty-five percent of Cuyahoga County residents surveyed believed that public access to Lake Erie lakefront in greater Cleveland is either adequate (40%) or very adequate (5%). Slightly more than half (52%) felt that public access is either inadequate (34%) or very inadequate (18%). Higher income groups were approximately 25-40% more likely than lower income groups to view lakefront access as inadequate.

Six out of ten (60%) said they would visit Lake Erie lakefront either more often (43%) or much more often (17%) if there were more lakefront access. Higher income groups were approximately 10-20% more likely than lower income groups to say they would visit more often.

Priorities for Burke: Among various options for Burke, respondents selected keeping the airport but adding other public use options (48%), and converting to entertainment and recreation (48%), as their two highest priorities. These were followed by converting Burke to a multi-use retail, entertainment, and recreation site (43%), converting to a park (35%), expanding Burke to include commercial flights (35%), retaining current level of use as airport (27%), converting to commercial and retail (26%), converting to residential (13%), and converting to a corporate and office park (8%).

Respondents with higher household incomes were two to three times less likely than respondents with lower household incomes to view retaining the current level of use as an airport as a high priority.

Six out of ten (60%) respondents selected increasing public access to Lake Erie as a higher priority than increasing Cleveland's tax base (40%). Nearly two-thirds (63%) selected increasing public access to Lake Erie as a higher priority than maintaining the current airport (38%). Six out of ten (60%) selected creating a natural park as a higher priority than developing housing, retail, and entertainment (40%).

Visits to downtown Cleveland and a redeveloped Burke: Six of ten (60%) respondents said they would visit downtown Cleveland either a lot more often (18%) or a little more often (42%) if Burke were converted to a multi-use retail and recreational destination. Higher income respondents were approximately 15-30% more likely than lower income respondents to say they would visit downtown more often if Burke were converted to a multi-use retail and recreation destination.

If Burke were converted to a multi-use town center with residential, retail, and entertainment options, 19% of respondents said they would never visit, 37% said they would visit 1-3 times annually, 17% said they would visit 4-7 times annually, 18% said they would visit 8-15 times annually, and 9% said they would visit 16 or more times annually.

Park priorities and use: Biking and hiking trails (58%), and beachfront access (58%) were ranked highest in priority if Burke were converted to a park, followed by an aquarium (51%), outdoor sports facilities (42%), boating (39%), winter activities (38%), and amusement attractions (33%). Approximately three out of ten (28%) said they would visit such a park 1-3 times annually, and

another three of ten (31%) said they would visit 4-7 times. An additional 21% said they would visit 8-15 times each year, and 11% said they would visit sixteen or more times. In other words, approximately a third (32%) of the respondents said they would visit a park eight times or more each year.

Air Show and Grand Prix: Approximately six of ten (59%) said that redevelopment should proceed even if it meant permanently closing down the Air Show. Approximately two-thirds (66%) said that redevelopment should proceed even if it meant moving the Grand Prix auto race to a different location in NE Ohio. For both of these questions, higher income groups were 15-25% more likely than lower income groups to favor redevelopment despite changes to the Air Show and Grand Prix.

Impact on other airports: Respondents were evenly divided over whether to close Burke if it meant increased congestion at Hopkins airport and the need to expand either Hopkins, the Cuyahoga County airport, or both. While 38% favored closing Burke under these scenarios, 39% opposed closing Burke. Higher income groups were approximately 15-30% more likely than lower income groups to favor closing Burke even if it meant increased congestion at Hopkins and the need to expand other airports.

Commercial flights at Burke: Forty six percent of respondents said that they would be more likely (32%) or much more likely (14%) to use Burke rather than Hopkins if commercial flights were offered out of Burke at comparable prices to Hopkins, compared to 31% who said they would be either less likely (17%) or much less likely (14%).

## **Introduction**

This report summarizes a public opinion poll of Cuyahoga County residents concerning the future use of Burke Lakefront Airport on the edge of downtown Cleveland and adjacent to Lake Erie. Public officials in the Cleveland area have been discussing potential plans for redevelopment, ranging from expanding the current airport to replacing it entirely.

The poll was conducted over a one-week period from March 21-28, 2007 by Baldwin-Wallace College students enrolled in POL241 Public Interest Research, with supervision by the instructor, Professor Mark Mattern. The students used the CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system of the Baldwin-Wallace College Public Interest Research Center.

The students spent the first eight weeks of the spring 2007 semester conducting a literature review on Burke Lakefront Airport, other similar airports such as Chicago's Meigs Field, and aviation in general; conducting interviews of selected stakeholders; and using the information they gathered to prepare the survey instrument.

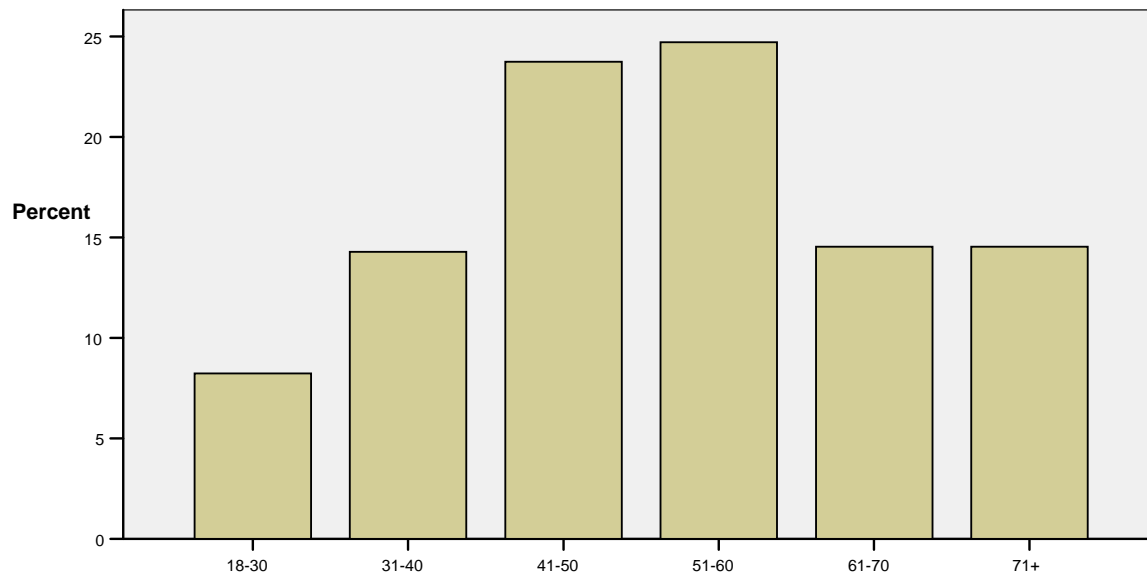
A first draft of the survey instrument was circulated among several community stakeholders, representing an array of different interests, for review and comment. Several of the stakeholders responded with criticisms and suggestions for improving the survey instrument. Those suggestions deemed consistent with maintaining neutrality were incorporated into the instrument before beginning the polling. A copy of the final survey instrument can be found in the appendix.

### The sample

A random-digit-dial telephone list for Cuyahoga County was purchased from a professional vendor, GoLeads, Omaha, Nebraska. The survey was completed by 417 respondents. The survey results can be considered valid plus or minus five percentage points.

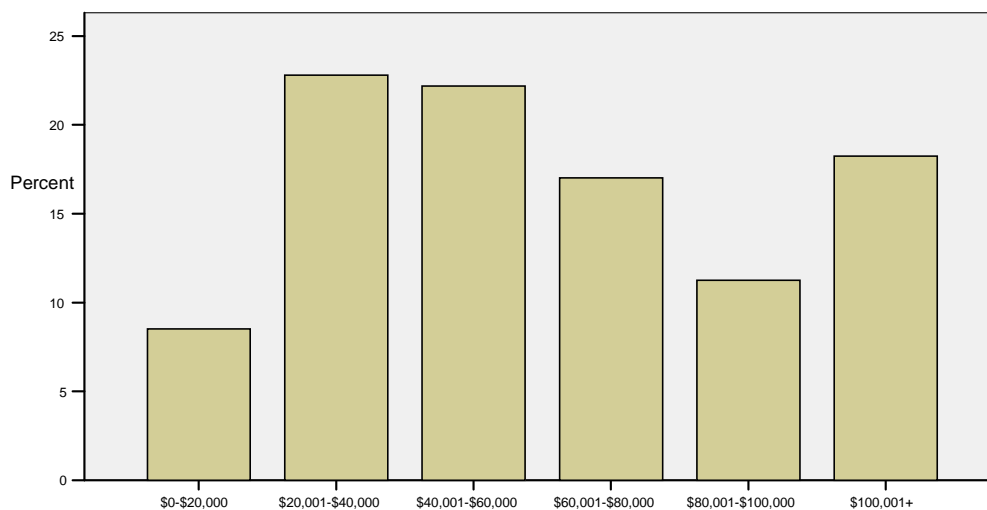
Approximately, one fourth (22.5%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 40, approximately one half (48.4%) were between the ages of 41 and 60, and 29.0% were 61 or older. See the following graph.

### Respondents' Age



Nine percent of the respondents lived in households with income of \$0-\$20,000, 23% lived in households with income of \$20,001-\$40,000, 22% lived in households with incomes of \$40,001-\$60,000, 17% lived in households with incomes of \$60,001-\$80,000, 11% lived in households with incomes of \$80,001-\$100,000, and 18% lived in households with incomes of \$100,001 or higher. See the following graph.

### Respondents' Household Income



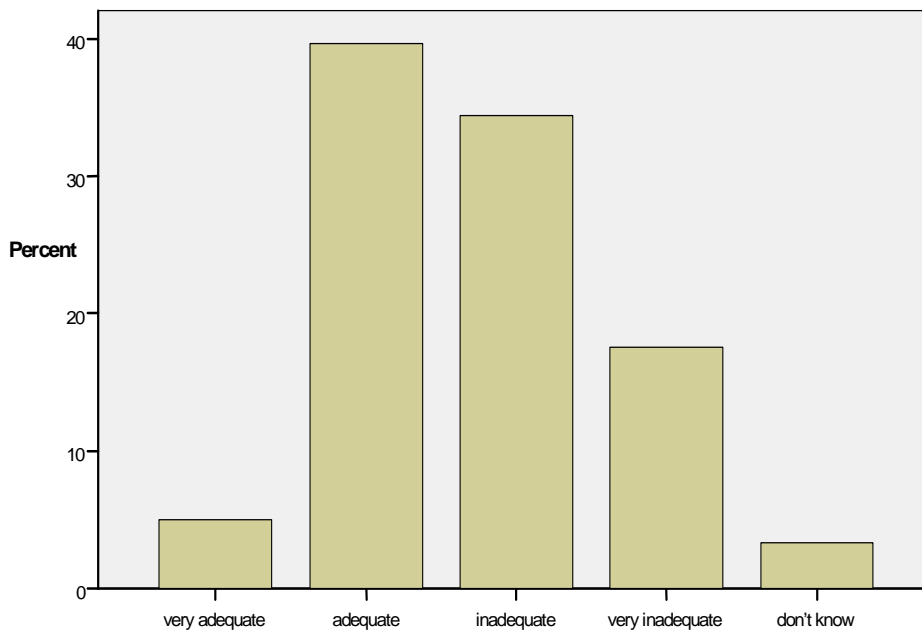
No noteworthy differences in the data were found among different age groups, so none will be reported in the following results. Due to rounding, some percentage totals may not add to 100%.

## Survey Results

### Lakefront access

Do Cuyahoga County residents feel that access to Lake Erie lakefront in greater Cleveland is adequate? Forty-five percent of respondents (survey question #1) felt that public access is either adequate (40%) or very adequate (5%). Slightly more than half (52%) felt that public access is either inadequate (34%) or very inadequate (18%). See the following graph.

**Adequacy of Public Access to Lake Erie Lakefront**

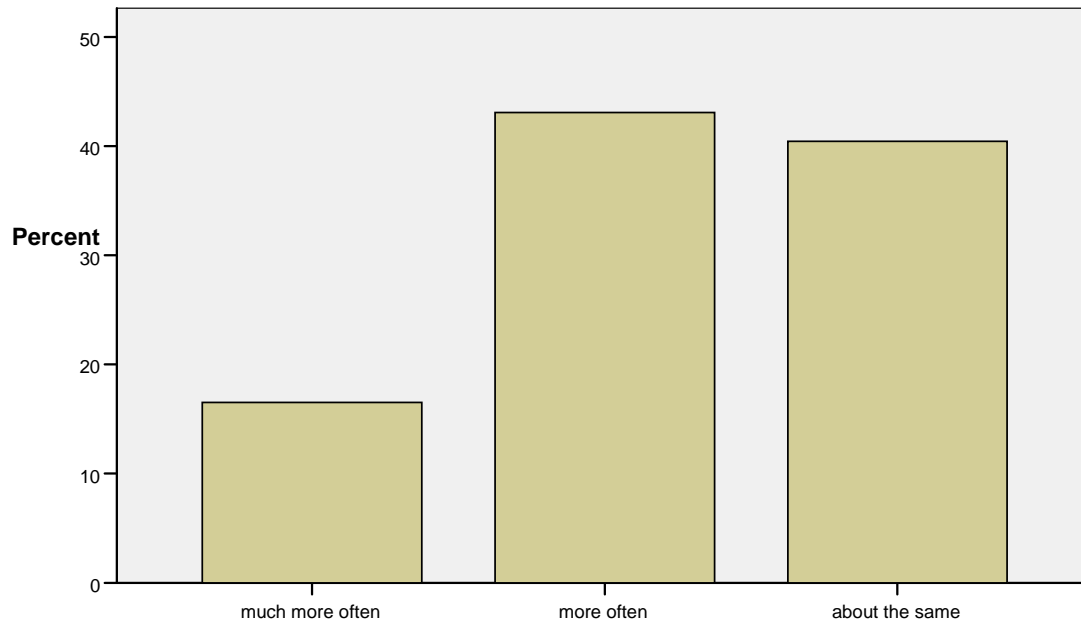


These results varied by household income level. As household income level increased, respondents' likelihood of considering lakefront access adequate decreased, with higher income groups approximately 25-40% more likely than lower income groups to view lakefront access as inadequate. See the following table.

<b>Adequacy of Lakefront Access, by Household Income</b>		
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage who felt access is adequate</b>	<b>Percentage who felt access is inadequate</b>
\$0-\$20,000	64%	29%
\$20,001-\$40,000	53%	41%
\$40,001-\$60,000	55%	43%
\$60,001-\$80,000	29%	70%
\$80,001-\$100,000	30%	68%
\$100,000 or more	20%	78%

Respondents were asked (survey question #2) if they would visit Lake Erie lakefront in the Cleveland area much more often, more often, or about the same if there were more public access. Sixty percent responded that they would visit Lake Erie lakefront either much more often (17%) or more often (43%). The remainder, 40%, said they would visit about the same number of times. See the following graph.

### Would You Visit More Often If Lakefront Access Increased?



These results varied by household income. As household income increased, the likelihood of respondents' saying they would visit Lake Erie lakefront more often also increased, with higher income groups approximately 10-20% more likely than lower income groups to say they would visit more often. See the following table.

<b>Would Visit Lakefront More Often, by Household Income</b>	
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage who would visit lakefront more often</b>
\$0-\$20,000	54%
\$20,001-\$40,000	54%
\$40,001-\$60,000	56%
\$60,001-\$80,000	64%
\$80,001-\$100,000	65%
\$100,000 or more	77%

## **Priorities for Burke**

Respondents were asked (survey question #3) to say whether various options for Burke were high or low priority. Forty-eight percent of respondents viewed keeping the airport but adding other public use options, and 48% selected converting to entertainment and recreation, as the two highest priorities. Forty-three percent viewed converting Burke to a multi-use retail, entertainment, and recreation site as high priority. These were followed, in descending order of priority, by converting to a park (35%), expanding Burke to include commercial flights (35%), retaining current level of use as airport (27%), converting to commercial and retail (26%), converting to residential (13%), and converting to a corporate and office park (8%). The following table presents this data.

<b>Priorities for Burke Lakefront Airport: Summary Data</b>			
<b>Option</b>	<b>High priority</b>	<b>Low priority</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
Keep airport but add other public use options	48%	26%	26%
Convert to entertainment and recreation	48%	34%	19%
Convert to multi-use retail, entertainment, and recreation	43%	37%	21%
Convert to a park	35%	43%	22%
Expand Burke to include commercial flights	35%	48%	17%
Retain current level of use as airport	27%	46%	28%
Convert to commercial and retail	26%	56%	18%
Convert to residential	13%	69%	18%
Convert to an office park	8%	78%	14%

The relatively high number of neutral responses to this question, and the fact that no option garnered a clear majority of votes, suggest a relatively high degree of uncertainty and difference of opinion among Cuyahoga County residents.

Respondents with higher household incomes were two to three times less likely than respondents with lower household incomes to view retaining the current level of use as an airport as a high priority. See the following table:

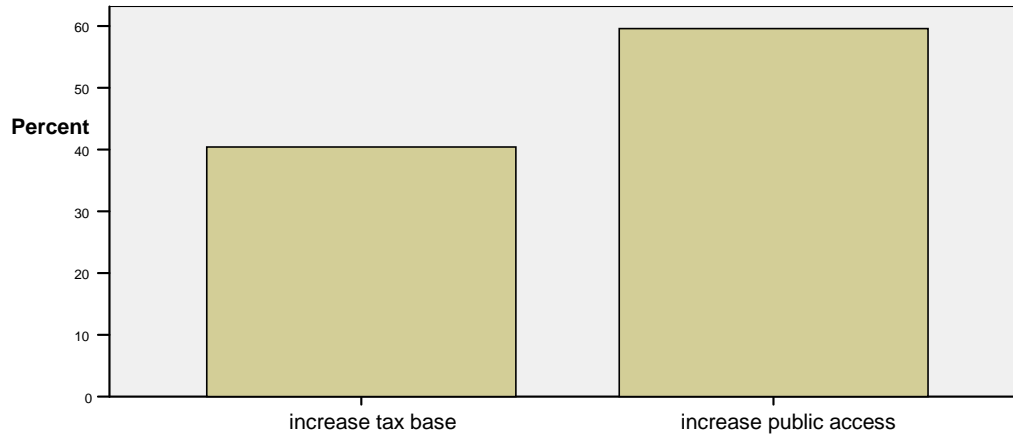
<b>Retaining Current Level of Use As Airport, by Household Income</b>		
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage viewing current use as high priority</b>	<b>Percentage viewing current use as low priority</b>
\$0-\$20,000	46%	32%
\$20,001-\$40,000	31%	41%
\$40,001-\$60,000	26%	44%
\$60,001-\$80,000	20%	55%
\$80,001-\$100,000	16%	54%
\$100,000 or more	14%	71%

Respondents were also asked (survey question #5) to choose between a series of competing public policy priorities:

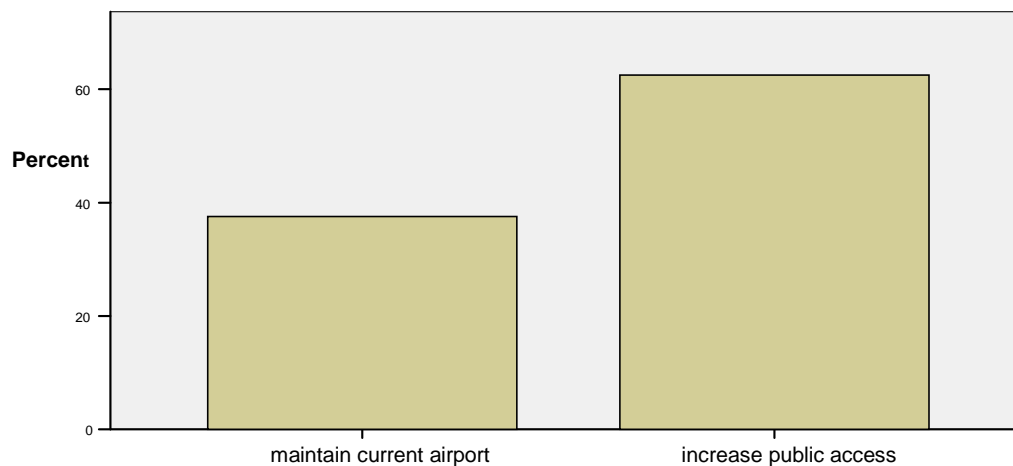
- increasing Cleveland’s tax base, or increasing public access to Lake Erie
- maintaining the current airport or increasing public access to Lake Erie
- and creating a natural park, or developing housing, retail, and entertainment.

Six out of ten selected increasing public access to Lake Erie as a higher priority than increasing Cleveland’s tax base (40%). Sixty-three percent selected increasing public access to Lake Erie as a higher priority than maintaining the current airport (38%). And six out of ten selected creating a natural park as a higher priority than developing housing, retail, and entertainment (40%). These results are summarized in the graphs below.

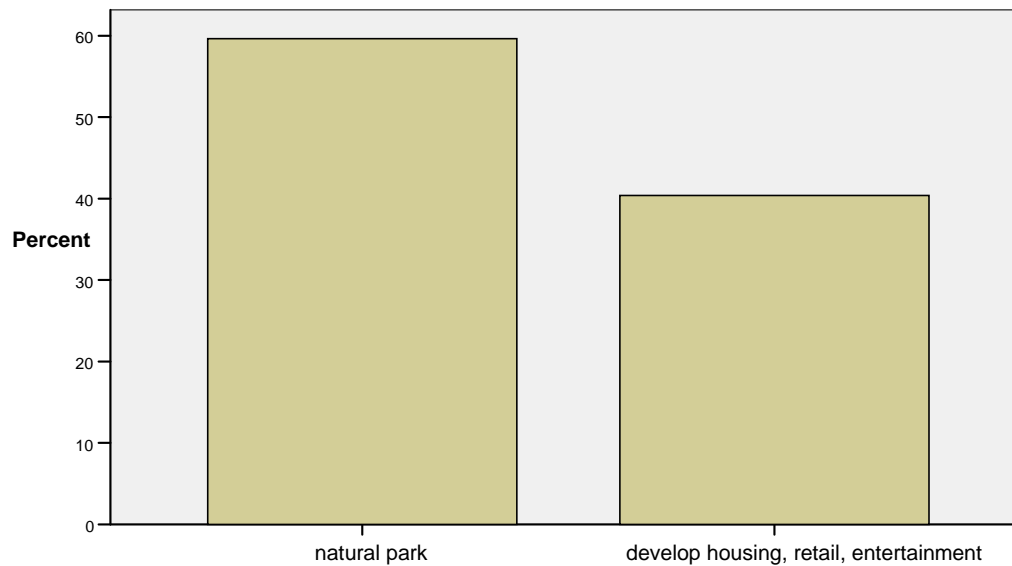
### Increase Cleveland’s Tax Base or Increase Public Access to Lake Erie?



### Maintain Current Airport or Increase Public Access to Lake Erie?



### Create Natural Park or Develop Housing, Retail, and Entertainment?



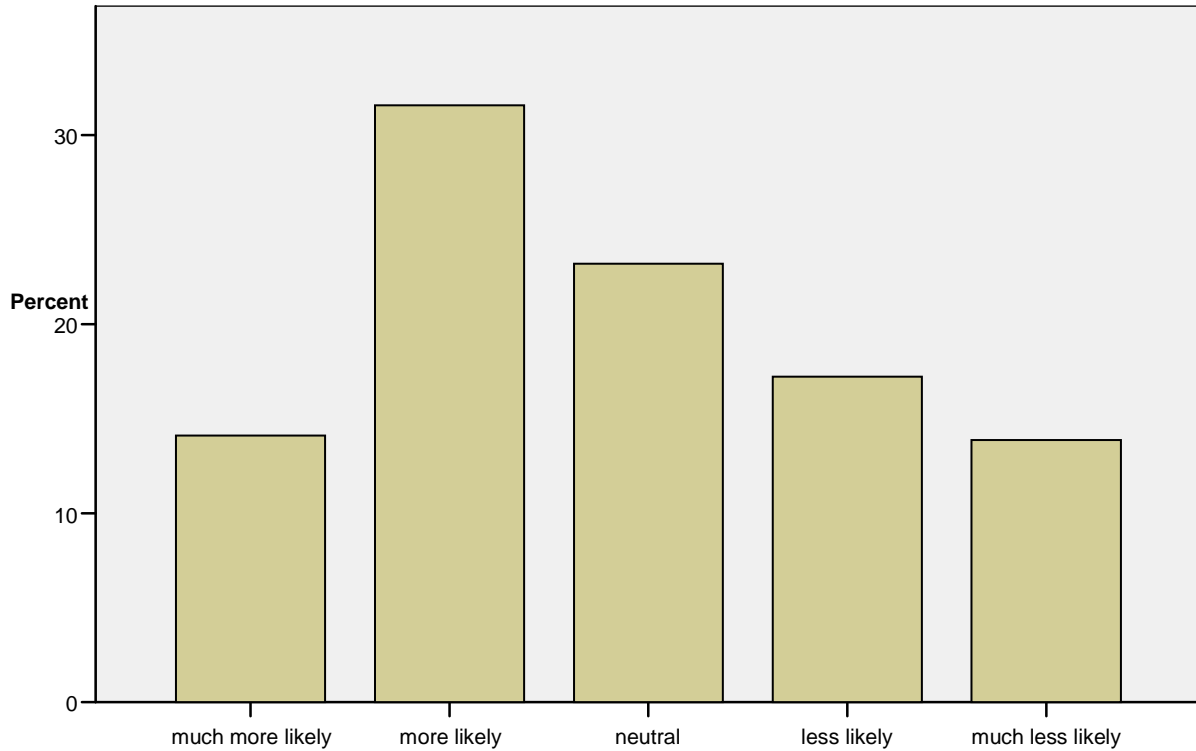
The priority of increasing lakefront access over maintaining the current airport increased along with household income, with higher income groups approximately 15-20% more likely than lower income groups to favor increasing public access over maintaining the current airport, as the following table shows:

<b>Increase Public Access or Retain Current Use? by Household Income</b>		
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage favoring increasing public access</b>	<b>Percentage favoring maintaining current airport</b>
\$0-\$20,000	58%	42%
\$20,001-\$40,000	59%	41%
\$40,001-\$60,000	61%	39%
\$60,001-\$80,000	66%	34%
\$80,001-\$100,000	72%	28%
\$100,000 or more	80%	21%

### Commercial flights out of Burke?

Respondents were asked (survey question #4) how likely they would be to use Burke rather than Hopkins airport if commercial flights were offered out of Burke at comparable prices to Hopkins. Forty six percent responded that they would be more likely (32%) or much more likely (14%) to use Burke rather than Hopkins, compared to 31% who said they would be either less likely (17%) or much less likely (14%). Approximately one fourth (23%) were neutral. See the graph below.

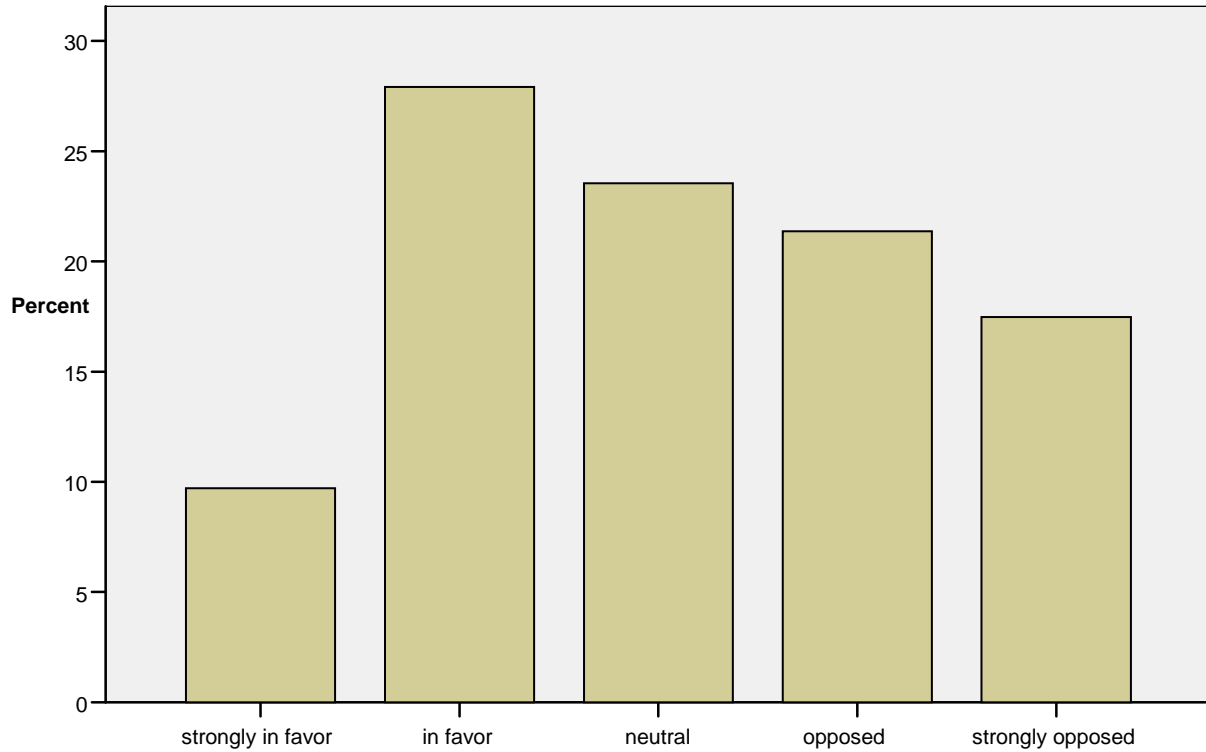
### How Likely to Use Commercial Flights Out of Burke, Rather Than Hopkins?



### Impact on other airports?

If closing Burke meant increased congestion at Hopkins airport and the need to expand either Hopkins, the Cuyahoga County airport, or both, would Cuyahoga County residents be in favor or opposed to closing Burke (survey question #6)? Respondents were evenly divided. While 38% favored closing Burke under these scenarios, 39% opposed closing Burke. See the graph below.

**Would You Be In Favor of Closing Burke If It Caused Increased Congestion at Hopkins and a Need to Expand Hopkins or Other Airport?**



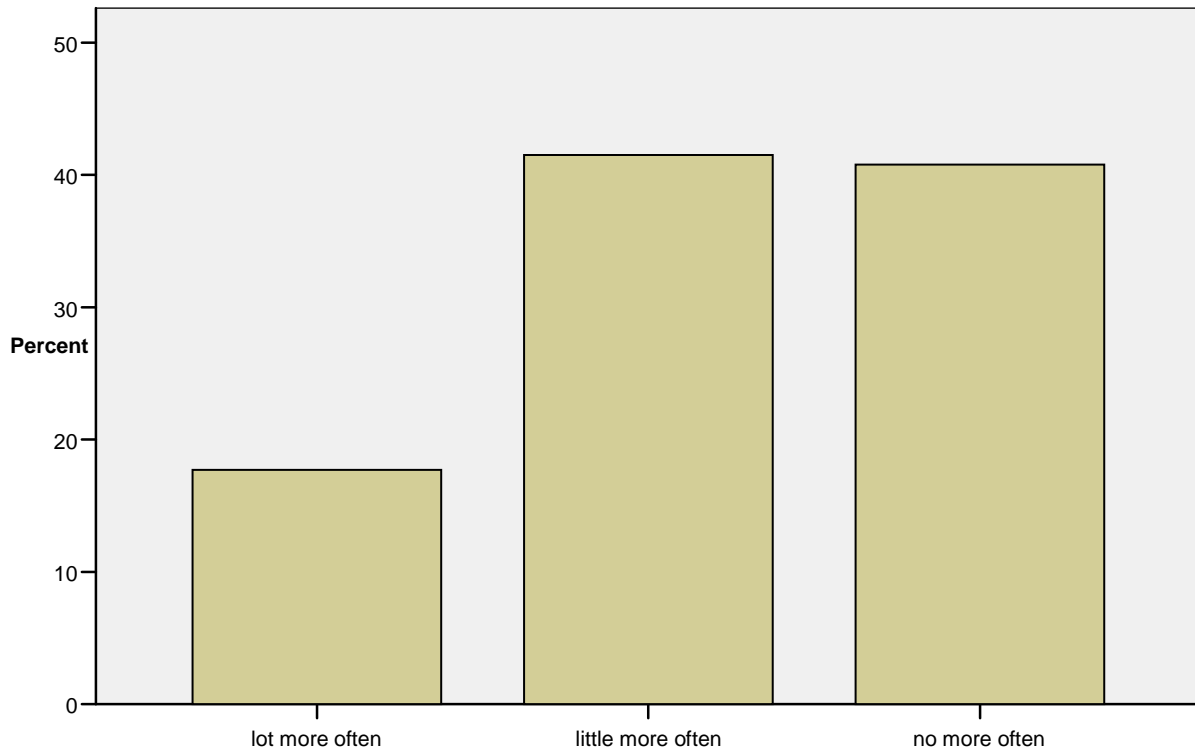
Higher income groups were approximately 15-30% more likely than lower income groups to favor closing Burke even if it meant increased congestion at Hopkins and the need to expand other airports, as the following table shows:

<b>Close Burke Despite Increased Congestion at Burke and Need to Expand Other Airports? by Household Income</b>		
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage in favor of closing Burke</b>	<b>Percentage opposed to closing Burke</b>
\$0-\$20,000	30%	37%
\$20,001-\$40,000	27%	47%
\$40,001-\$60,000	40%	41%
\$60,001-\$80,000	43%	29%
\$80,001-\$100,000	57%	32%
\$100,000 or more	52%	19%

### **Likely frequency of visits to downtown Cleveland and a redeveloped Burke**

Respondents were asked (survey question #7) if they would visit downtown Cleveland a lot more often, a little more often, or no more often if Burke were converted to a multi-use retail and recreational destination. Approximately six of ten (59%) respondents said they would visit downtown Cleveland either a lot more often (18%) or a little more often (42%). The remainder (41%) said they would visit no more often than they currently do. These data are summarized in the following graph.

**Would You Visit Downtown Cleveland More Often?**

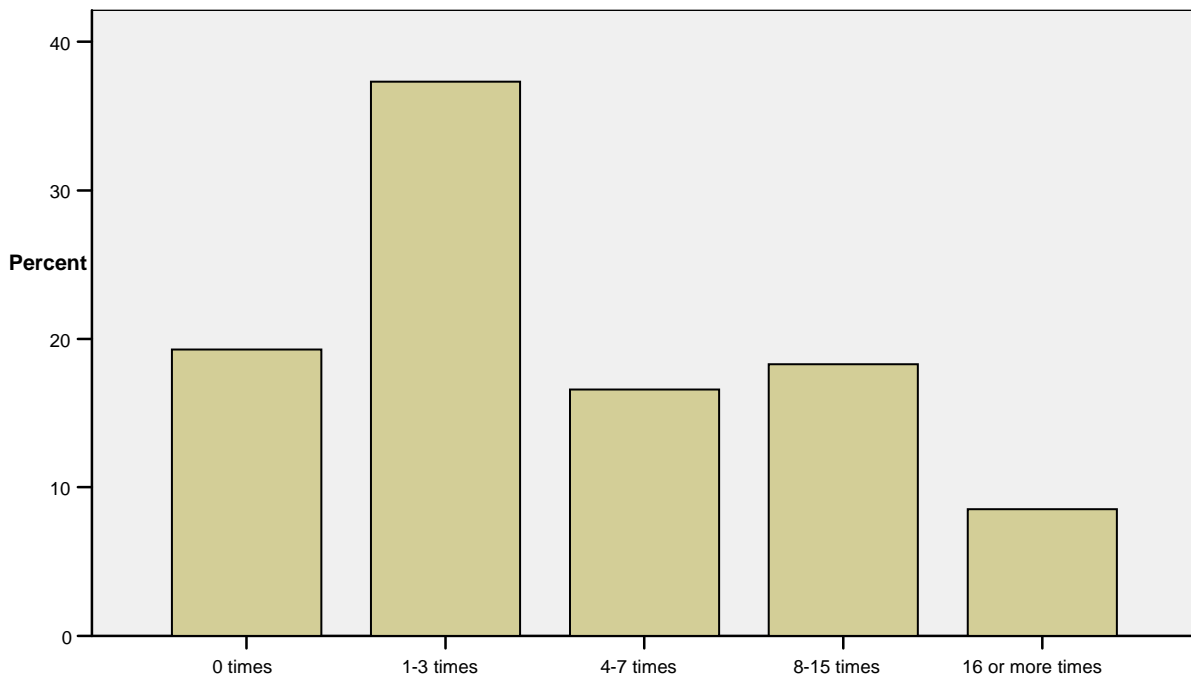


These data varied by household income level, with higher income respondents approximately 15-30% more likely than lower income respondents to say they would visit downtown more often if Burke were converted to a multi-use retail and recreation destination. See the following table:

<b>Would Visit Downtown More Often If Burke Converted to Multi-Use Retail and Recreation, by Household Income</b>	
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Percentage saying they would visit more often</b>
\$0-\$20,000	43%
\$20,001-\$40,000	53%
\$40,001-\$60,000	54%
\$60,001-\$80,000	68%
\$80,001-\$100,000	65%
\$100,000 or more	75%

Respondents were also asked (survey question #8) to estimate how often they might visit in a year if Burke were converted to a multi-use town center with residential, retail, and entertainment options. Slightly less than one fifth (19%) said they would never visit, 37% said they would visit 1-3 times, 17% said they would visit 4-7 times, 18% said they would visit 8-15 times, and 9% said they would visit 16 or more times each year. Their responses are summarized in the following graph.

**How Often Each Year Would You Visit A Multi-Use Town Center?**



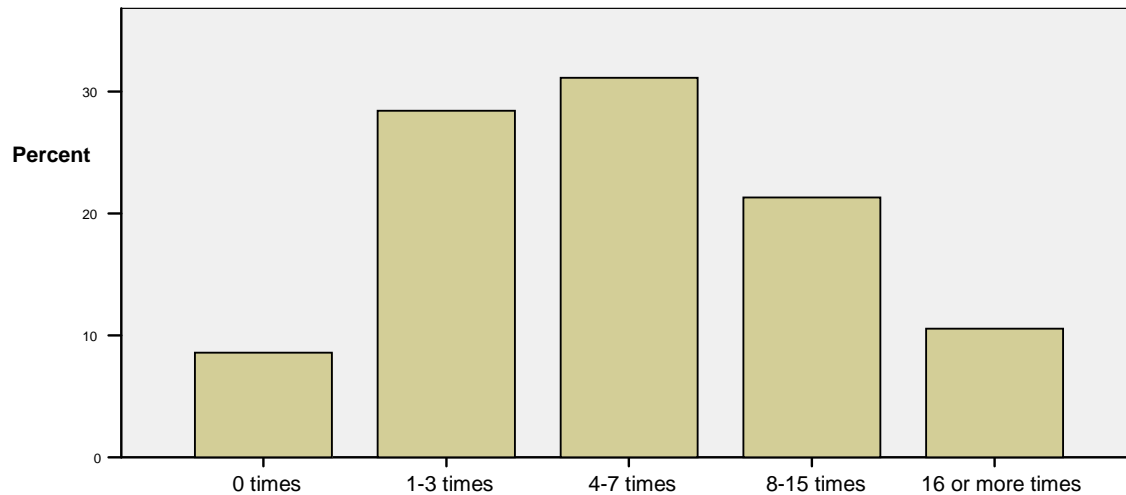
**Priorities for park amenities**

If Burke were converted to a park, what amenities would Cuyahoga County residents most like to see there (survey question #9)? Biking and hiking trails (58%), and beachfront access (58%) were ranked highest in priority, followed by an aquarium (51%), outdoor sports facilities (42%), boating (39%), winter activities (38%), and amusement attractions (33%). Neutrals averaged approximately one-fifth to one-fourth of all respondents. The responses are summarized in the following table and graph.

<b>Priorities for park amenities</b>			
<b>Option</b>	<b>High priority</b>	<b>Low priority</b>	<b>Neutral</b>
Biking and hiking trails	58%	22%	20%
Beachfront access	58%	25%	17%
Aquarium	51%	25%	24%
Outdoor sports facilities	42%	33%	25%
Boating	39%	39%	22%
Winter activities	38%	39%	24%
Amusement attractions	33%	42%	26%

Respondents were asked (survey question #10) approximately how often they would visit such a park each year. Less than ten percent (9%) said they would never visit such a park. Approximately three out of ten (28%) said they would visit 1-3 times annually, and another three of ten (31%) said they would visit 4-7 times. An additional 21% said they would visit 8-15 times each year, and 11% said they would visit sixteen or more times. In other words, approximately a third (32%) of the respondents said they would visit a park eight times or more each year. These data suggest the potential for a relatively high degree of usage if Burke were converted to a park. See the following graph.

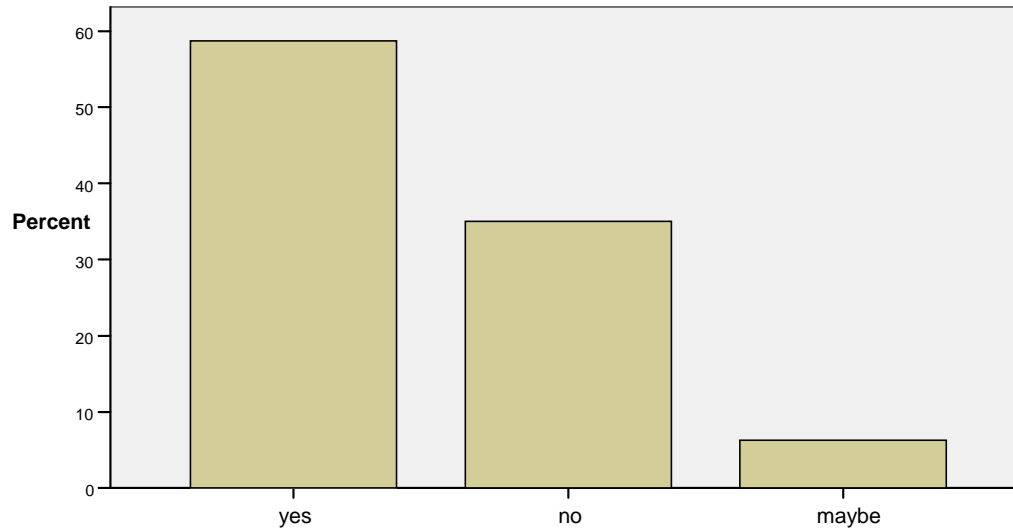
**How Often Would You Visit a Park at the Burke Site?**



## Air Show and Grand Prix

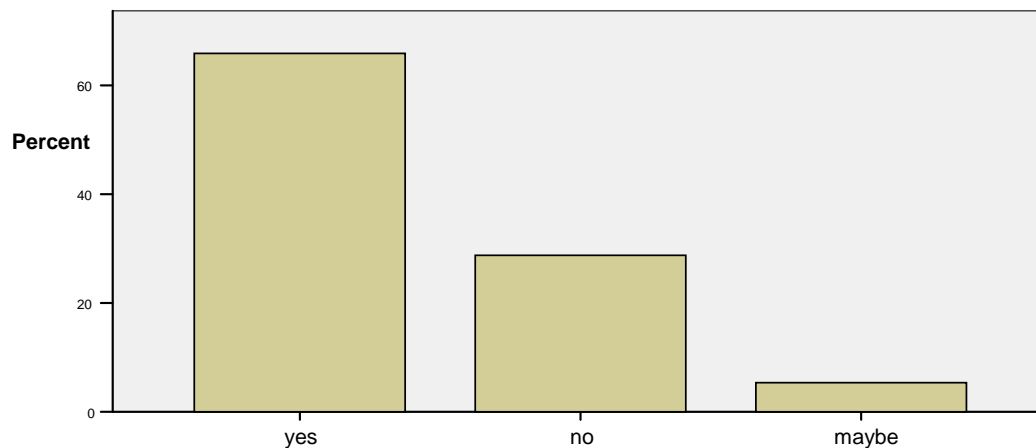
Do Cuyahoga County residents believe Burke redevelopment should proceed if it meant permanently closing down the Air Show (survey question #11)? Approximately six of ten (59%) responded yes, the redevelopment should proceed anyway. Approximately a third (35%) responded no, and 6% responded maybe. See the following graph.

### **Should Burke Redevelopment Proceed If It Means Closing the Air Show?**



Respondents were also asked (survey question #12) if Burke redevelopment should proceed if it meant moving the Grand Prix auto race to a different location in NE Ohio. Approximately two-thirds (66%) responded yes, redevelopment should proceed anyway. Approximately three of ten (29%) responded no, and 5% responded maybe. See the following graph.

### **Should Burke Redevelopment Proceed If It Means Moving the Grand Prix?**



For both of these questions, higher income groups were 15-25% more likely than lower income groups to favor redevelopment despite changes to the Air Show and Grand Prix, as the following table shows.

<b>Should Burke Be Closed If Air Show Has to Close and Grand Prix Has to Move? by Household Income</b>		
<b>Household income</b>	<b>Close Burke even if Air Show closes</b>	<b>Close Burke even if Grand Prix has to move</b>
\$0-\$20,000	50%	54%
\$20,001-\$40,000	57%	59%
\$40,001-\$60,000	56%	67%
\$60,001-\$80,000	70%	73%
\$80,001-\$100,000	68%	80%
\$100,000 or more	73%	83%

## **Appendix**

BW Department of Political Science  
POL241 Public Interest Research  
March, 2007

### Burke Lakefront Airport Survey

*Hi. My name is \_\_[first name]\_\_. I'm calling from Baldwin Wallace College to conduct a nonprofit survey regarding the current and potential use of Burke Lakefront Airport property in downtown Cleveland. The survey will take approximately 5 minutes. Would you be willing to take the survey?*

yes  
no

*[if yes] "Thank you. All your answers will remain completely anonymous."*

*[if no...] "Is there another member of your household 18 years or older who would be willing to take the survey?"*

*The purpose of the survey is to help local officials choose the best option for use of the land currently occupied by Burke Lakefront Airport, on the edge of downtown Cleveland and next to Lake Erie. Currently, Burke is used primarily by flight schools, some corporate planes, and the annual Air Show and Grand Prix car race. Local officials are at this time considering various options, ranging from expanding Burke to replacing it entirely.*

*Here's the first question...*

1. Do you think the current level of public access to Lake Erie lakefront in greater Cleveland is very adequate, adequate, inadequate, or very inadequate?

very adequate      adequate      inadequate      very inadequate      don't know

2. Would you visit Lake Erie lakefront in the Cleveland area much more often, more often, or about the same if there were more public access?

much more often      more often      about the same

3. Please rate the following options for Burke on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being very low priority, 2 being low priority, 3 neutral, 4 high priority, and 5 very high priority:

retain current level of use as airport	1	2	3	4	5
expand airport to include commercial flights	1	2	3	4	5
keep airport but add other public use options	1	2	3	4	5
convert to a park	1	2	3	4	5
convert to residential	1	2	3	4	5
convert to commercial and retail	1	2	3	4	5
convert to entertainment and recreation	1	2	3	4	5
convert to corporate and office park	1	2	3	4	5

convert to multi-use retail, entertainment and recreation	1	2	3	4	5
other (please explain [include space to type in answer])	1	2	3	4	5

4. If commercial flights were offered out of Burke at comparable prices to Hopkins, would you be much more likely, more likely, less likely, or much less likely to use Burke rather than Hopkins?  
 much more likely    more likely    neutral    less likely    much less likely

5. Which do you think is a higher priority?  
 5a. increasing Cleveland’s tax base, or increasing public access to Lake Erie?  
 5b. maintaining the current airport or increasing public access to Lake Erie?  
 5c. creating a natural park, or developing housing, retail, and entertainment?

6. Closing Burke may mean increased congestion at Hopkins airport and the need to expand either Hopkins, the Cuyahoga County airport, or both. If this were the case, would you be strongly in favor, in favor, neutral, opposed, or strongly opposed to closing Burke?  
 strongly in favor    in favor    neutral    opposed    strongly opposed

7. Would you visit downtown Cleveland a lot more often, a little more often, or no more often if Burke were converted to a multi-use retail and recreational destination.  
 lot more often    little more often    no more often

8. If Burke were converted to a multi-use town center with residential, retail, and entertainment options, how often do you think you might visit in a year?  
 0 times    1-3 times    4-7    8-15    16 or more

9. If Burke were converted to a park, how important would the following amenities be to you? Please rank them on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being lowest priority and 5 being highest priority:

beachfront access	1	2	3	4	5
outdoor sports facilities	1	2	3	4	5
aquarium	1	2	3	4	5
boating	1	2	3	4	5
biking and hiking trails	1	2	3	4	5
winter activities	1	2	3	4	5
amusement attractions	1	2	3	4	5
other (please explain [include space to type answer])	1	2	3	4	5

10. Approximately how often each year do you think you would visit such a park?  
 0 times    1-3 times    4-7    8-15    16 or more

*Thank you for your patience. I only have a few more questions.*

11. If closing Burke also meant permanently closing down the Air Show, do you think redevelopment of Burke should move forward anyway?  
yes    no    maybe

12. If closing Burke also meant moving the Grand Prix auto race to a different location in NE Ohio, do you think redevelopment of Burke should move forward anyway?  
yes    no    maybe

13. What is your zip code?  
[include 5-digit space to enter zip code]

14. What is your age?  
18-30          31-40          41-50          51-60          61-70          71+

15. What is your approximate household income?  
\$0-20,000    \$20,001-\$40,000    \$40,001-60,000    \$60,001-80,000    \$80,001-100,000    \$100,001+

*That's all the questions. Thank you for your time.*