

Below is a summary of the Question 22 in a pie chart along with a written description. There were 562 written responses from the *Town of Windham Community Survey* (Question 18: “What was your activity at town parks or trail amenities?”), the following **seven primary activity categories** clearly emerged as the most commonly mentioned by residents:

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## Top 7 Activity Categories Residents Travel Out of Windham For

### 1. Dining and Restaurant Variety (Most Frequent)

- **By far the most common theme.** Residents repeatedly cited traveling for a wider range and higher quality of dining options — including ethnic cuisine (Thai, Vietnamese, Indian, Korean), farm-to-table, bakeries, cafés, and upscale sit-down restaurants.
  - Frequent mentions included Portland, Westbrook, and Gorham as destinations for dining diversity.
  - Several comments noted Windham’s overreliance on fast food and chain-style restaurants, calling for more “*local character*” and “*non-pub food*” options.
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### 2. Shopping and Specialty Retail

- The second most frequent reason for leaving town was **shopping**, particularly for **clothing, specialty goods, and department stores** not available in Windham.
  - Residents mentioned destinations such as the **Maine Mall, Trader Joe’s, Costco, Market Basket, and small boutique towns** like Cornish for their “charming” or “village” experiences.
  - Specialty retail such as natural foods, art supplies, crafts, and bookstores were cited as missing in Windham.
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### 3. Arts, Entertainment, and Cultural Events

- A strong cluster of responses mentioned **concerts, theater, live music, museums, art galleries, and festivals**.
  - Residents travel to nearby cities for *plays, symphonies, comedy shows, and cultural experiences*.
  - Several respondents expressed a desire for more **performance and cultural spaces** locally — community theater, art walks, and family concerts were all mentioned as desirable.
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### 4. Indoor and Family Recreation

- Many respondents leave town for **indoor activity options**, especially for **youth and families**.
  - Specific examples: trampoline parks, bowling alleys, roller skating, escape rooms, arcades, swimming pools, and indoor playgrounds.
  - Parents frequently mentioned the **Westbrook Community Center** and similar facilities as destinations, highlighting the need for a **local community center with year-round recreation**.
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## 5. Outdoor Recreation and Sports

- Residents also travel for **outdoor recreation not adequately supported locally**, such as hiking, golf, skiing, snowmobiling, and beach access.
  - Youth and adult sports (hockey, soccer, cheer, pickleball, and tennis) were regularly mentioned, with requests for **dedicated pickleball courts, indoor fields, and multi-use gym spaces**.
  - Comments pointed to a need for better **trail connectivity and water access**.
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## 6. Swimming and Water Access

- A recurring gap was **access to public swimming options**, particularly **indoor pools** and **swim lessons** for children.
  - Many residents drive to **Westbrook, Gorham, or Raymond** for pool use or swimming programs.
  - This reinforces a significant community demand for an aquatic facility or expanded water recreation options.
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## 7. Community and Social Experiences

- Respondents also leave Windham for **community-oriented or social activities** such as **festivals, farmers markets, breweries, nightlife, and group events**.
- Many noted the lack of **walkable downtown gathering areas, coffee shops, and family-friendly events** that promote civic life and connection.
- Several called for more **cultural diversity and inclusive programming** to make Windham more of a “destination” rather than a pass-through town.

