7.4 MISSION LED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN STATISTICALLY VALID SURVEY RESULTS (2016)

Metro Parks Tacoma
Community Survey Findings Report

Submitted By:
725 W. Frontier Circle
Olathe, KS 66061
(913) 829-1215
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Metro Parks Tacoma
Community Interest and Opinion Survey
Executive Summary Report

Purpose

Metro Parks Tacoma is a nationally recognized independent park district that provides parks, recreation and educational services to the residents of Tacoma, Brown’s Point and Dash Point. ETC Institute partnered with the Metro Parks Tacoma to conduct a citizen survey to better understand residents’ priorities for parks, recreation, and educational services.

Data from the survey will help to establish priorities for the future improvement of parks, recreation facilities, programs and services provided by the park district. As a part of this effort, the survey will provide key data and information Metro Parks Tacoma needs in order to form an effective and viable comprehensive plan that will look to address current and future needs, assist in more efficient delivery or programs/services, and provide guidelines on how to manage facilities and assets in the future.

Methodology

A goal was set to obtain a minimum of 600 completed surveys within Metro Parks Tacoma Park District boundaries. A total of 6,000 surveys were sent out to a random selection of households throughout the Metro Parks Tacoma boundaries. Of the 6,000 households that were requested to participate in the survey, 641 respondents participated. The results for the sample of 641 households have a 95% level of confidence with a precision rate of at least +/- 3.8%.

Major Findings

- **Visitation of Facilities is Higher than National Averages:** Ninety-five percent (95%)\(^1\) of households visited facilities over the past 12 months, while only 5% indicated that they have not visited facilities. This is significantly above the national visitation average of 79%.

- **Participation in Programs is Higher than National Averages:** Fifty-eight percent (58%)\(^2\) of households participated in programs over the past 12 months, while only 42% indicated that they have not participated in programs. This is significantly above the national program participation average of 34%.

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1 Calculated based on the percentage of those who rated facilities they used over the past 12 mo.
2 Calculated based on the percentage of those who rated programs they used over the past 12 mo.
Other Findings

Program and Facility Ratings

- **Facility Ratings**: Ninety-one percent (91%) of households, who visited Metro Parks Tacoma facilities, rated the overall condition of facilities as either “excellent” (38%) or “good” (53%). Excellent ratings are 7% above the national average of 31%.

- **Program Ratings**: Eighty-seven percent (87%) of households rated the overall physical condition of parks and facilities as either “excellent” (29%) or “good” (58%).

Reasons for Program and Facility Usage

The primary reason why households use Metro Parks Tacoma and Facilities is because of the location of the facility (73%). Other reasons include: quality of the facility (39%) and those facilities are accessible (31%).

Organizations Households Are Using Other than Metro Parks Tacoma

Sixty-four percent (64%) of households have used County, State or other parks for their recreation, education, fitness, and arts needs over the past 12 months. Other organizations used include: libraries (58%), art or history museums (39%), churches (34%), and the YMCA (34%).

Ways Households Learn About Programs and Activities

- **Word of Mouth and Friends Was the Most Utilized Resource When Finding Information About Metro Parks Tacoma Program and Activity Offerings**: Fifty-eight percent (58%) of households learn about program or activity offerings by word of mouth. This is significantly above the national average of 42% of households hearing program and activity offerings by word of mouth. Other marketing tools such as the utilization of newsletters, fliers, and brochures, as well as social media are also significantly above the national average.

Table 1.1: National Comparisons to Utilized Communications Tools

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>National</th>
<th>Tacoma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters/Fliers/Brochures</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media - Facebook/Twitter</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Communications Tools Households Use the Most**: Based on the percentage of households top four choices, 43% learn about program and activity offering through word of mouth the most often. Other most used communications tools include: the Tacoma News Tribune (35%) and the activity brochure (Go Guide) (35%).
Table 1.2: Most Used Communications Tools

Q7. Communications Tools That Households Currently Use the Most

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices

Source: ETC Institute (2016)

Note: Seventeen percent (17%) indicated they used the Tacoma Tribune the 1st most often followed by the Activity Brochure (Go-Guide) with 14% indicating they used this resource as their 1st choice most often.

Program and Activity Needs and Importance

Ages 18 and Older

- **Program and Activity Needs:** Fifty-three percent (53%) of households have a need for community special events. Other most needed programs and activities include: fitness programs (51%), health and wellness information or personal training (41%), “green living” educational programs (41%), and outdoor adventure trips and classes (40%).

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3 Based on the percentage of respondents who indicated how well their needs were being met for the program or activity, excluding those who indicated no need for each particular item

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- **How Well Household Needs Are Being Met for Programs and Activities:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated their needs were either being “fully” or “partly” met, 85% indicated their needs for runs were being met. Other met needs include: community special events (85%) and volunteerism (78%). Looking at items were needs were not met, 58% of households indicated their need for cooking classes was not being met. Other unmet needs include: dance classes or drop in dance socials (53%), skateboarding lessons (52%), and pet classes/experience (52%).

Note: It is important to take into consideration the percentage of households who indicated a need for an item when looking at unmet needs. Although skateboarding lessons have one of the highest unmet needs, there is only a small percentage of the population who indicated a need for the item in the first place.

When looking at the top four most needed programs for adults (see previous page) and taking into consideration how well their needs are being met, fitness programs, “green living” education programs, as well as health and wellness information or personal training become a much higher priority because there is a greater percentage of the population whose needs are not being met.

- **Program and Activity Importance Ages 18 to 49 Years:** Based on the sum of respondents’ top two choices, 12% indicated fitness programs was the most important to their household. Other most important programs and activities include: community special events (10%), health and wellness information or personal training (6%), and outdoor adventure trips and classes (6%).

Note: When taking into consideration only those who indicated the program or activity as their first choice most important, runs, such as 5k or marathons moves up from the 5th combined most important to the 3rd first choice most important. (See chart for question 9 for further clarification.)

- **Program and Activity Importance Ages 50 Years and Older:** Based on the sum of respondents’ top two choices, 11% indicated fitness programs was the most important to their household. Other most important programs and activities include: community special events (10%) and health and wellness information or personal training (6%).

**Ages 17 and Younger**

- **Program and Activity Needs:** Thirty-Seven percent (37%) of households indicated a need for swimming lessons or exercise. Other most needed facilities include: community special events (35%), sports lessons and camps (32%), and outdoor adventure trips and classes (29%).

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4 Based on the percentage of respondents who indicated how well their needs were being met for the program or activity, excluding those who indicated no need for each particular item.
• **How Well Needs Are Being Met for Programs and Activities:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated their needs were either being “fully” or “partly” met, 80% indicated that their needs for community special events were being met. Other met needs include: sports lessons and camps (77%), summer camps (77%), and runs (76%).

Note: When taking into consideration households whose needs are being fully met, swimming lessons or exercise is the most fully met item. (See chart for question 9 for further clarification.)

• **Program and Activity Importance Ages 17 and Younger:** Based on the sum of respondents’ top two choices, 9% indicated the most important program was swimming lessons or exercise. Other most important programs include: sports leagues for team sports (5%), community special events (5%), summer camps (4%), youth after school or drop in programs (4%), outdoor adventure trips/classes (4%), and sports lessons and camps (4%).

**Facility Needs**

• **Facilities Households Indicated a Need for:** Eighty-one percent (81%) of households indicated a need for public restrooms in parks. Other most needed facilities include: soft surface walking and hiking trails (72%), zoos, wildlife parks, or nature centers (71%), natural areas and wildlife habitats (66%), picnic areas and shelters (65%), and hard surface trails (59%).

• **How Well Needs Are Being Met for Facilities:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated that their need was either “fully” or “mostly” met, 89% indicated their needs were being met for zoos, wildlife parks, or nature centers. Other met needs include: playgrounds (85%), spray plazas and spray grounds (84%), natural areas and wildlife habitats (83%), baseball and softball fields (82%), picnic areas and shelters (81%), and golf courses (81%). Zip lines or other challenge courses has the highest unmet needs with 66% indicated that their needs are only being “partly” or “not” met.

Note: It is important to take into consideration the percentage of households who indicated a need for an item when looking at unmet needs. For examples, although zip lines have the highest percentage of unmet needs, only about ¼ of the population has a need for this item in the first place.

• **Facility Importance:** Based on the percentage of households who indicated the facility as one of their top four choices, 39% indicated that soft surface walking and hiking trails was the most important to their household. Other most important facilities include: public restrooms in parks (33%), zoos, wildlife parks, or nature centers (32%), and natural areas and wildlife habitats (26%).

Note: When looking at only households who indicated the item as the first choice most important, households indicated soft surface walking and hiking trails as their first choice most important, more than any other first or second choice most important combined. (See chart for question 11 for further clarification.)
Days and Times to Offer Programs and Activities

- Fifty-five percent (55%) of households indicated that the best day and times to offer programs and activities was weekend mornings (8am-noon). Other days and times indicated include: weekday evenings (5pm-8pm), weekend afternoons (noon-3pm) (52%), and weekend afternoons (3pm-5pm).

**Table 1.3: Household Breakdowns for Top 3 best Days and Times**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Households with Children Under 10</th>
<th>Households with Children 10-19</th>
<th>Households with Adults 20-54 and No Children</th>
<th>Households with Adults 55+ and No Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Weekend mornings 8am-noon</td>
<td>Weekday evenings 5pm-8pm</td>
<td>Weekend afternoons noon-3pm</td>
<td>Weekend mornings 8am-noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Weekday evenings 5pm-8pm</td>
<td>Weekend mornings 8am-noon</td>
<td>Weekend mornings 8am-noon</td>
<td>Weekday evenings 5pm-8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Weekend afternoons noon-3pm</td>
<td>Weekend afternoons noon-3pm</td>
<td>Weekday evenings 5pm-8pm</td>
<td>Weekend afternoons noon-3pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(See Appendix A: Household Types for further information.)

Program Formats

- **Potential Interest in Program Format Types:** Based on the percentage of households who were either “very interested” or “somewhat interested”, 84% were interested in one day programs, clinics, and workshops. Other format types of interest include: drop in activities and usage (82%), self-guided independent usage (78%), and multi-week programs/classes (75%).

Likelihood of Program Participation

- **Environmental Education:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very likely” or “likely”, 57% were likely to attend a hand-on learning demonstration. Other programs include: a guided outdoor hike/nature experience (50%) and a program in which you make something to take home (51%).

  Note: Men are the more likely to attend (1) a traditional lecture program offered indoors and (2) a guided outdoor hike and nature experience. As women are more likely to attend (1) a program in which you make something to take home and (2) a community event to work with trained people to gather info about native plants and animals.5

- **History or Art:** Based on the sum of respondents who were either “very likely” or “likely”, 55% were likely to attend a gallery or museum exhibit viewing. Other programs include: self-guided experience through sculptures and art (47%), a guided tour with interpretation (45%), and a community performance presented by others (43%).

5 See Appendix A: Age and Gender for further breakdowns
Reasons that Prevent Households from Using Parks, Recreation, and Arts Facilities/Programs Offered by Metro Parks Tacoma

- Thirty-six percent (36%) of households indicated that they are prevented from utilizing facilities and programs are because they do not know what are being offered. Other reasons include: program times are not convenient (31%), too far from our residence (25%), and fees are too high (25%).

Note: When looking at area breakdowns, fees are too high is the top reason households in the SW area are prevented from utilizing parks, recreation, and arts facilities and programs offered by Metro Parks Tacoma at all of more often.6

Maximum Amount of Time Households Are Willing to Travel By Car or Bus

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of households are the most willing to drive less than 10 minutes to visit their closest neighborhood park, while 28% are willing to travel up to 20 minutes. Households are willing to drive the longest to attend a special event or participate in a family.

How Long Households Are Willing to Walk to Visit a Park or Program

- Forty-one percent of households are willing to travel 10-20 minutes to visit a park or program location. Other lengths include: less than 10 minutes (29%), 20-30 minutes (15%), 30 or more minutes (9%), and not sure (6%).

Support for Programs to Be Funded with Tax Dollars

- Based on the sum of households’ top three choices, 37% most support youth sports programs being funded with tax dollars. Other programs include: community special events and festivals (37%) and general operations of facilities (35%).

Note: When looking at households who indicated their 1st choice most supported item, general operations of facilities actually has a higher percentage of households who most support the item being funded by tax dollars than does community special events and festivals.7

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6 See Appendix A: Area for further breakdowns
7 See tabular results for a thorough percentage breakdown