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# Appendix B: Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Survey

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## Executive Summary

### Visitor and non-visitor market share and characteristics

Visitors are those who have visited at least one Washtenaw County park in the past 12 months. Overall, 57% of Washtenaw County residents have visited a Washtenaw County park at least once during the past year. By region, visitation is consistent. Independence Lake, Rolling Hills/Water Park, and County Farm Park are mentioned most often; one-in-five respondents have visited these parks. Osborne Mills, Superior Center, and Park Northfield are visited by 3% or less of all respondents.

### Participation and satisfaction with indoor/outdoor recreation

As expected, visitors are much more likely than non-visitors to participate in indoor and outdoor recreational activities. Just under one-half of all visitors partake in indoor recreational activities at least once a day or once a week compared to 30% of non-visitors. The difference in recreational habits between these subgroups is greater with respect to outdoor recreation, as two-thirds of visitors and just half of non-visitors enjoy outdoor recreation daily or at least once per week.

Visitor/non-visitor satisfaction with indoor recreational opportunities available in the community is about 50%. One-fifth of respondents could not rate their experience with indoor recreation available in the area. Outdoor recreation in Washtenaw County received high satisfaction ratings as three-quarters of all respondents reported being satisfied. Visitors are significantly more pleased than non-visitors with the outdoor opportunities available. By region, Ann Arbor residents are the most satisfied with indoor and outdoor recreation available, reporting the highest ratings of all regions.

The majority of respondents feel there are adequate local parks and outdoor recreational facilities in their area (84% answered "yes"). Ann Arbor residents and those who live west of US-23 are much more likely to agree than those who live in Ypsilanti or east of US-23.

The current ¼ mill tax for parks and recreation receives overwhelming support from respondents as 81% would vote yes. Not surprisingly, visitors of Washtenaw County parks are much more likely than non-visitors to vote in favor of the mill tax (89% visitors vs. 71% non-visitors).

### Visitor information

Visitors are generally satisfied with the Washtenaw County park elements tested. Overall, satisfaction is highest with scenery, opportunity to experience nature, and overall cleanliness. Improvement opportunities exist for food at concessions, programs and special events, and cleanliness of restrooms where satisfaction is below 50% for the parks overall. However, four-in-ten visitors could not rate their experience with the price of food at concessions and one-quarter could not rate their experience with special programs or events at the parks.

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About three-in-ten non-visitors cite they lack the time or that they recreate elsewhere as their top reasons for not visiting Washtenaw County parks.

Washtenaw County Development Alternatives

Among the development alternatives tested, the development of a county-wide system of pedestrian and bicycle trails receives the most interest; 71% rate this development as important. The purchase of land for conservation also tops the list with 62% rating it as important. Adding new facilities to existing parks and the development of indoor facilities receives the least support.

Additional trails, playgrounds, and rest rooms emerge as the most important additions to the parks. Respondents are least interested in the addition of golf courses and large indoor facilities.

Media outlets

Newspapers are the primary source for Washtenaw County park and recreational information, with *The Ann Arbor News* mentioned as the newspaper of choice. To a lesser extent, respondents rely on word of mouth, the parks and recreation newsletter, and the county website.

## Methodology

MORPACE International conducted a telephone survey of Washtenaw County residents regarding parks and recreation in Washtenaw County. In total, 400 interviews were completed with respondents 18 years or older, from randomly selected households in the county, using random-digit dial sampling methods. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation was not identified as the sponsor of the survey.

The sample was stratified geographically by region as shown in Table 1. Quota management was used to ensure sample sizes proportional to Census counts for households within each region. Equal representation of males and females was also a target of the sampling process and there were no quotas for park users or non-users. Table 2 below shows the correspondence between regions and Washtenaw County's 28 communities.

Table 1 – Sampling Plan

Region	Number of Households from Census	% of Households	Total Number of Interviews	% of Total Interviews
Ann Arbor	59,306	44%	181	46%
Ypsilanti	30,211	23%	90	22%
East of US-23	17,394	13%	52	13%
West of US-23	26,117	20%	80	20%
Total	133,028	100%	403	100%

Table 2 – Community by Region

Region	Community
Ann Arbor	Ann Arbor City, Pittsfield Township
Ypsilanti	Ypsilanti City, Ypsilanti Township
East of US-23	Ann Arbor Township, Augusta Township, Milan City, Northfield Township, Salem Township, Superior Township, York Township
West of US-23	Barton Hills Village, Bridgewater Township, Chelsea Village, Dexter Township, Dexter Village, Freedom Township, Lima Township, Lodi Township, Lyndon Township, Manchester Township, Manchester Village, Saline City, Saline Township, Scio Township, Sharon Township, Sylvan Township, Webster Township

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Sample was managed electronically, extensive on-line logic checks of data were made daily, and computerized sample disposition reports were forwarded to Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation representatives. Additional callbacks were made to correct non-response bias by gender.

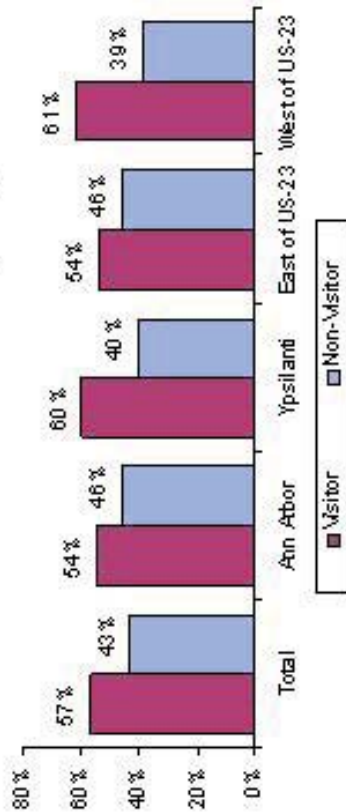
The overall call ratio was 2:1:1, with an average interview length of 9.1 minutes. A total of 8,480 dialings were made to achieve 403 completed interviews.

The interview format that was developed by Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation in conjunction with MORPACE included investigations of the following topics:

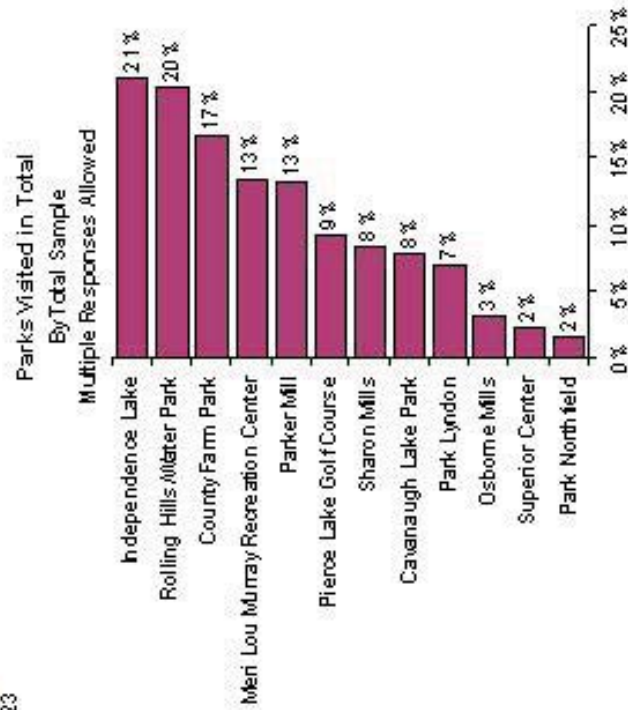
- Participation and satisfaction with indoor/outdoor recreation
- Washtenaw County park visitor information
- Non-visitor information
- Preference for development alternatives
- Media outlets awareness and usage

## Washtenaw County Park Visitor Information

Park Visitors and Non-Visitors by County



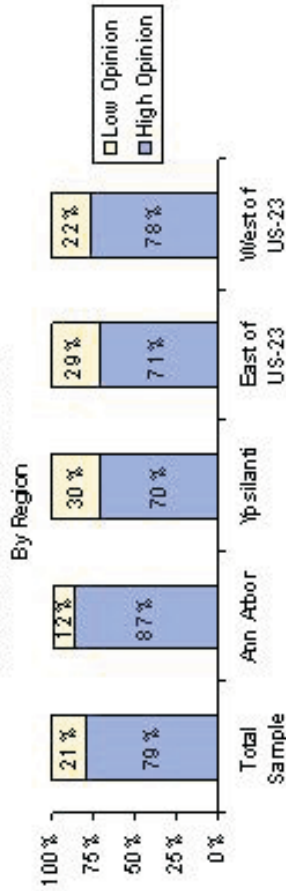
Visitors are those who visited at least one Washtenaw County park once in the past 12 months. Overall, 57% of respondents are visitors, 43% are non-visitors. This relative proportion was consistent across the four regions.



Among the twelve Washtenaw County parks, Independence Lake (21%), Rolling Hills/Water park (20%), and County Farm Park (17%) are the parks most visited overall. Osborne Mills (3%), Superior Center (2%), and Park Northfield (2%) are the least visited parks.

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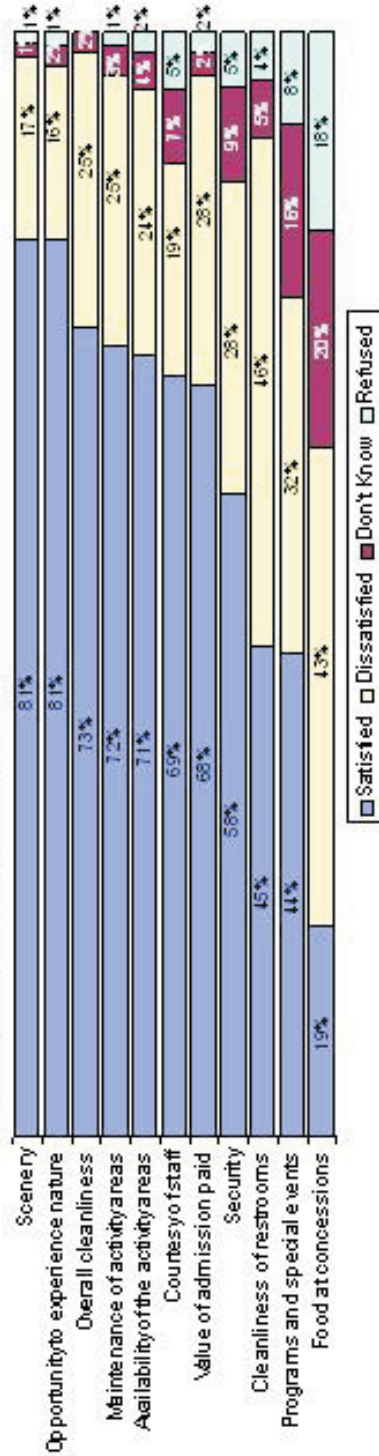
**Overall Opinion of Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Facilities**



Regardless of region of residence, satisfaction is high with Washtenaw County parks. By region, Ann Arbor residents have the highest opinion of Washtenaw County Park and Recreation facilities.

Reaction a scale from 1 to 5 where a 1 is A Very Low Opinion and 5 is A Very High Opinion; a 1, 2, or 3 rating is "A Low Opinion" and a 4 or 5 rating is "A High Opinion".

**Visitor Satisfaction - Total Sample (n=229)**



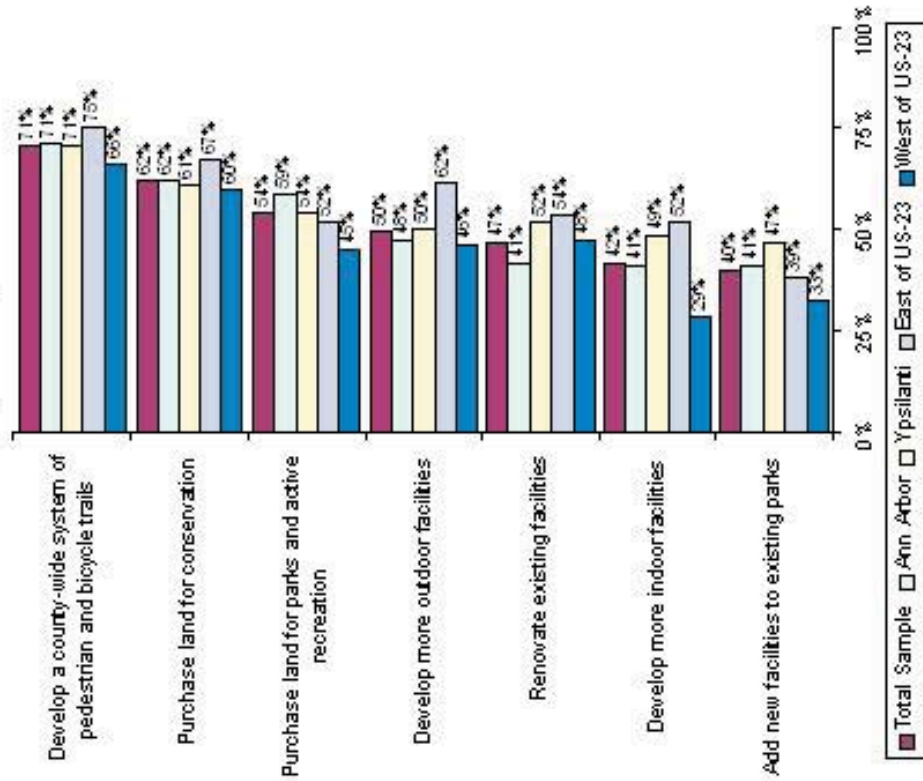
Visitors are generally satisfied with the Washtenaw County park elements that were tested. Overall, satisfaction is highest with scenery, opportunity to experience nature, and overall cleanliness. Improvement opportunities exist for food at concessions, programs and special events, and cleanliness of restrooms where satisfaction is below 50% for the parks overall.

It should be noted, however, that a high proportion of respondents across all parks answered "don't know" or "refused" on items relating to food at concessions and programs/special event

Reaction a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is Not At All Satisfied and 5 is Very Satisfied; a 1, 2, or 3 rating is "Dissatisfied" and a 4 or 5 rating is "Satisfied".

**Development Alternatives**

Importance of Washtenaw County Park Possible Actions By Region % Very Important/Important



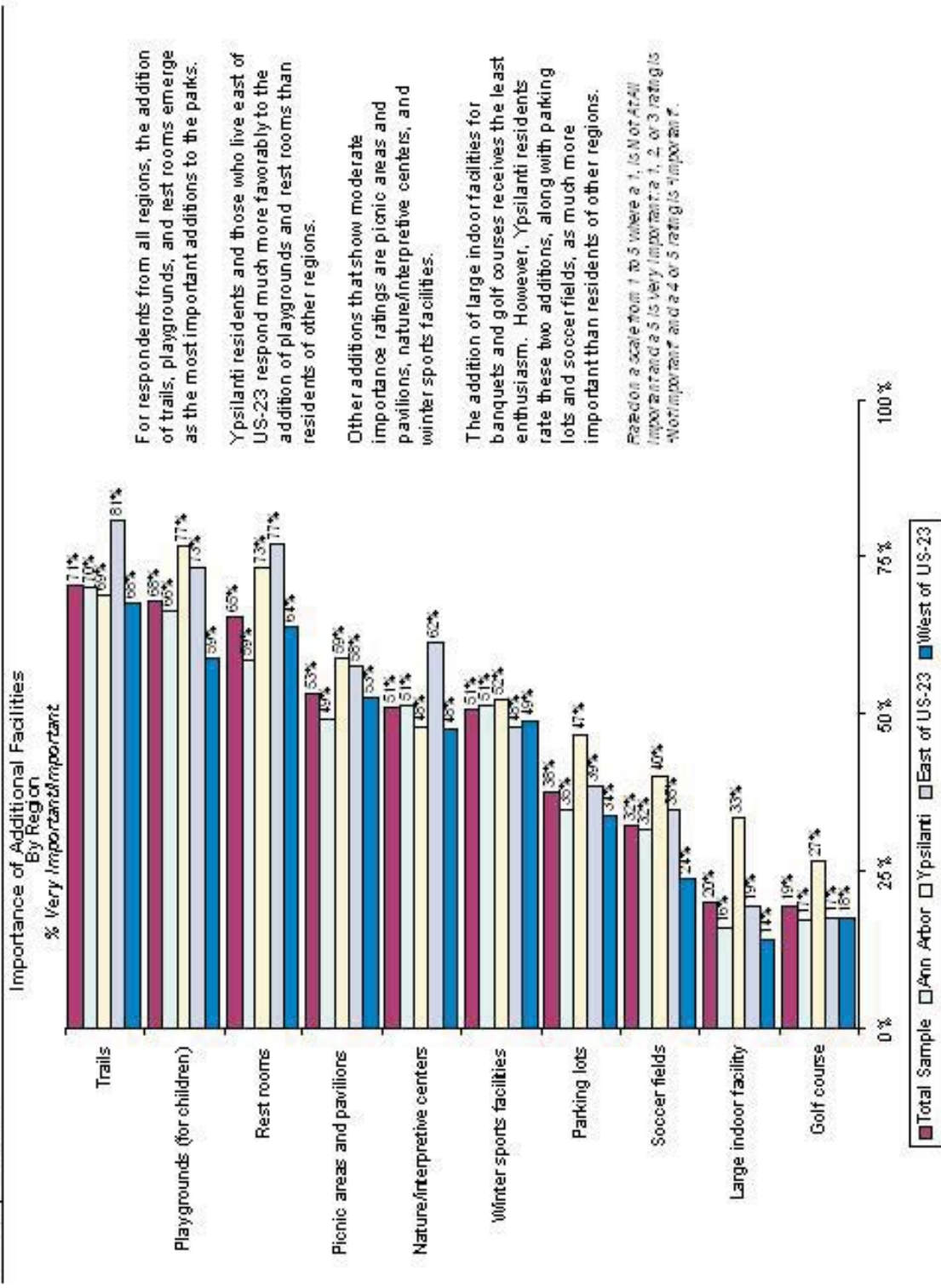
Of the possible actions Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation can take in the future, the highest importance ratings are given to the development of a county-wide system of pedestrian and bicycle trails (71% of total sample rate it as important) and the purchase of land for conservation (62%).

By region, significantly more Ann Arbor residents (59%) than those who live west of US-23 (45%) believe the purchase of land for parks and active recreation is important. Respondents who live east of US-23 (62%) rate development of outdoor facilities as much more important than those who live in Ann Arbor (48%) or west of US-23 (46%).

Additionally, people who live west of US-23 are significantly less likely than those living in any other region to rate the development of more indoor facilities as important.

Rating a scale from 1 to 5 where a 1 is Not At All Important and a 5 is Very Important. A 1, 2, or 3 rating is "Not Important" and a 4 or 5 rating is "Important".

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For respondents from all regions, the addition of trails, playgrounds, and rest rooms emerge as the most important additions to the parks.

Ypsilanti residents and those who live east of US-23 respond much more favorably to the addition of playgrounds and rest rooms than residents of other regions.

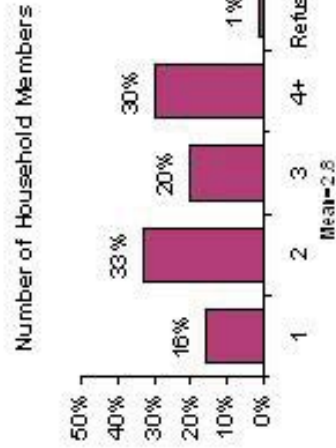
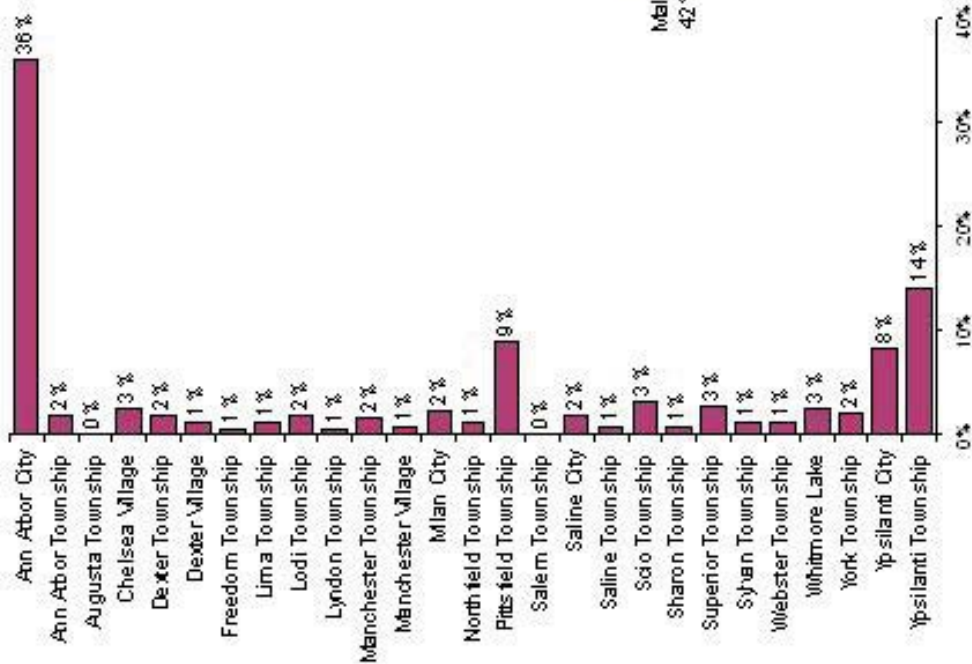
Other additions that show moderate importance ratings are picnic areas and pavilions, nature/interpretive centers, and winter sports facilities.

The addition of large indoor facilities for banquets and golf courses receives the least enthusiasm. However, Ypsilanti residents rate these two additions, along with parking lots and soccer fields, as much more important than residents of other regions.

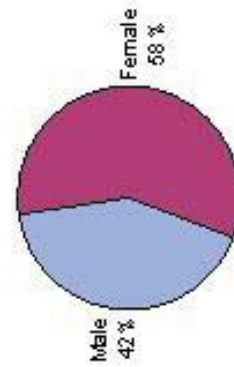
Rate on a scale from 1 to 5 where a 1 is Not At All Important and a 5 is Very Important. 1, 2, or 3 ratings is "Not Important" and 4 or 5 ratings is "Important".

**Demographics**

City, Town, Village, or Township of Residence  
By Total Sample



Gender of Respondent



Age of Respondent

