

Harris County Parks Awareness and Usage Study

September 26, 2000



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Background



- The objective of this research is to provide feedback from community members to understand the level of awareness and usage of parks in Harris County.
- More specifically, it is designed to acquire:
 - > Awareness about parks in the resident's precinct
 - > Information about level of usage of community parks
 - > Knowledge about likes and dislikes regarding community parks
- ... and to generate:
 - > Suggestions of improvements that would enhance usage of parks



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Methodology

- A random sample of Harris County households was selected for participation. Proportional sampling was drawn by zip codes within the four Harris County precincts.
- A total of 400 telephone interviews were conducted in August 2000, in the county's four precincts.
- David Lidsky, AIA, Bricker + Cannady Architects, coordinated this study on behalf of Harris County.



Key Findings

- **Awareness**
 - > The overwhelming majority, three quarters (74%) of the sample, is aware of the Harris County park system, but many of the named parks are in the city of Houston. Precinct 2 residents indicate lowest awareness.
- **Level of usage**
 - > Four out of ten have visited a Harris County park in the last three months.
 - > Two parks, Hermann Park and Memorial Park, mentioned as visited most recently by respondents are Houston city parks.
 - > Almost two thirds mentioned Hermann Park as any other Harris County park visited in the last three month.



Key Findings (continued)

■ Reasons to visit community parks

- > One third mentioned location and convenience as reasons they go to a park.
- > Location, throughout all precincts is a dominant factor, followed by nature trails.
- > Children's play areas, picnic areas, and nature trails and jogging tracks were the most frequently used facilities. Only Precinct 2 residents favor baseball diamonds and basketball courts over picnic areas.



Key Findings (continued)

■ Suggestions and improvements

- > Four out of ten (48%) felt no changes are needed.
- > Restroom (9%) and lighting improvements (8%) are the most-mentioned enhancements.
 - » Other enhancements mentioned are more playgrounds (8%), better security (7%) and cleanliness (7%)
 - » Predominately, Precinct 2 residents would like to see lighting upgrades.
- > More than half (51%) of the respondents were either satisfied with current facilities or activities or couldn't make any suggestions.



Key Findings (continued)

■ Features mentioned as desirable additions to parks include:

- > Picnic areas (10%), swimming pools (9%), children's play areas (9%), basketball courts (7%), tennis courts (6%), and baseball diamonds (4%) .
 - » Precinct 1 was mostly interested in swimming pools and picnic areas,
 - » Precinct 2 in picnic areas and children's play areas,
 - » Precinct 3 in basketball courts, and
 - » Precinct 4 mentioned swimming pools and children's play areas.

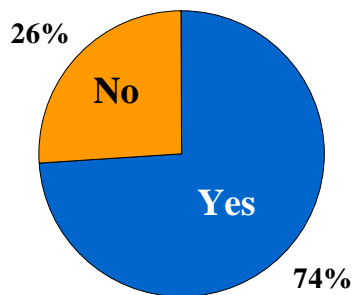


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Awareness of Harris County park system

N=400



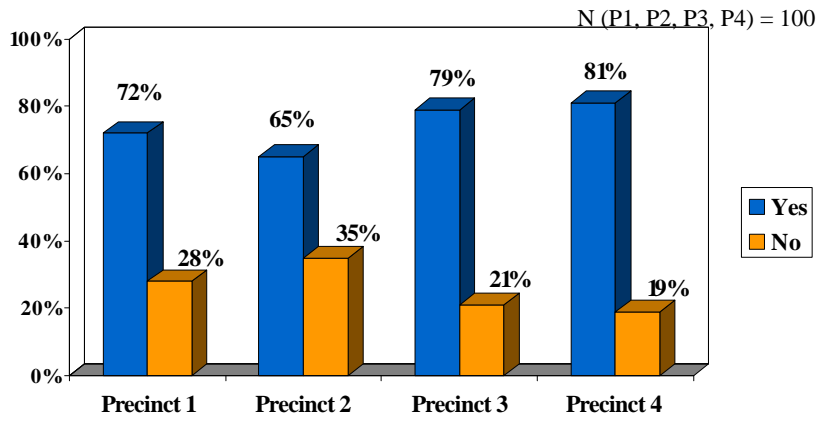
“Are you aware that there is a Harris County park system?”



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Awareness by precinct



“Are you aware that there is a Harris County park system?”

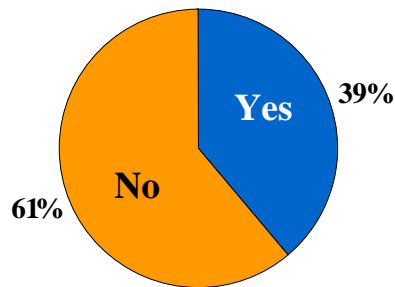


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Level of usage of Harris County (Houston) parks

N=400



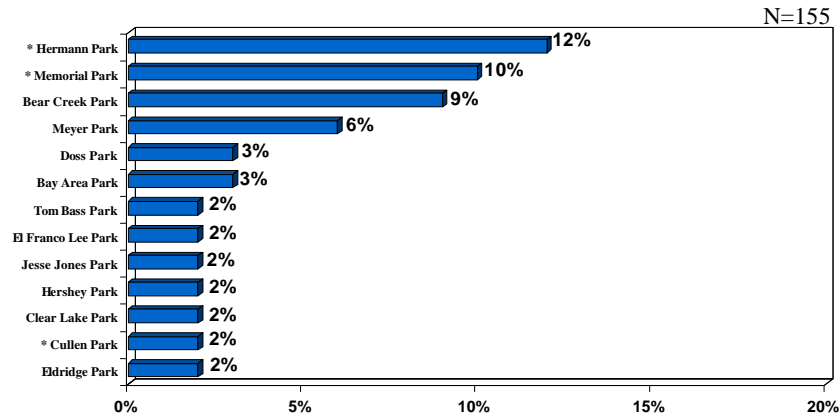
“Have you visited any Harris County parks in the last three months?”



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Most recently visited parks

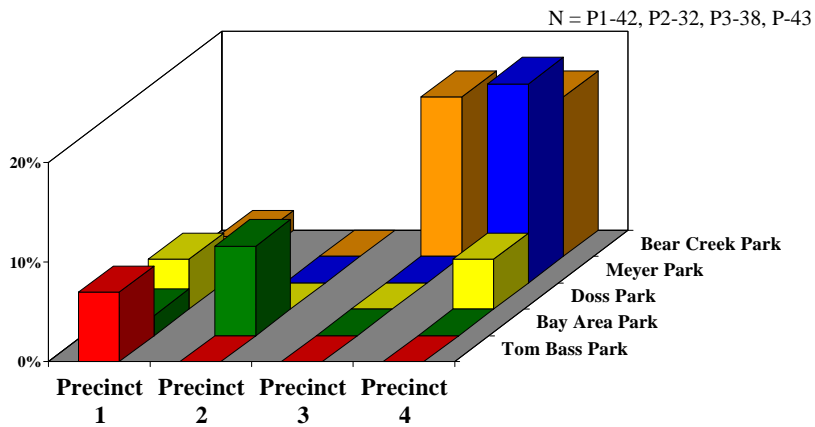


“Which Harris County park have you visited most recently?”

Note: * city park



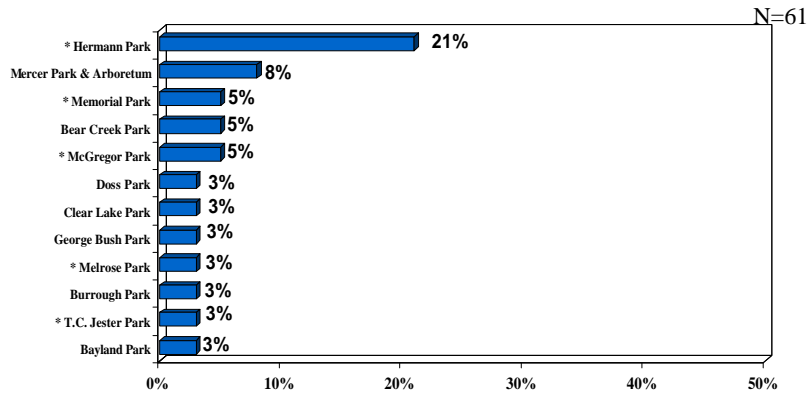
Most recently visited parks by precinct



“Which Harris County park have you visited most recently?”



Other visited parks in Harris County/ Houston



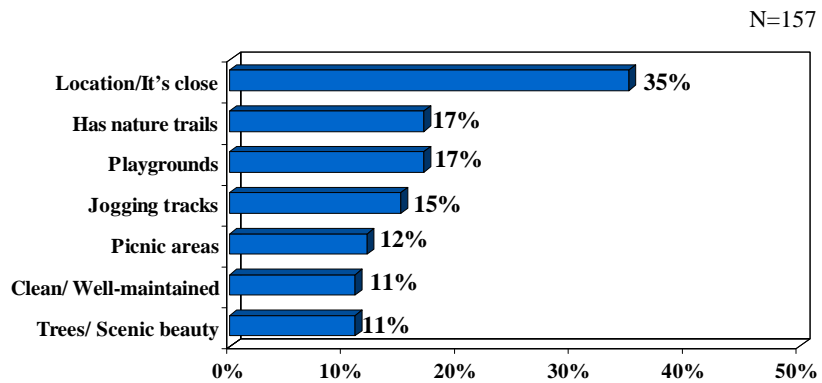
“Which other Harris County park have you visited in the past three months (May, June, July)?” *Note: * city park*



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Attractions of particular parks



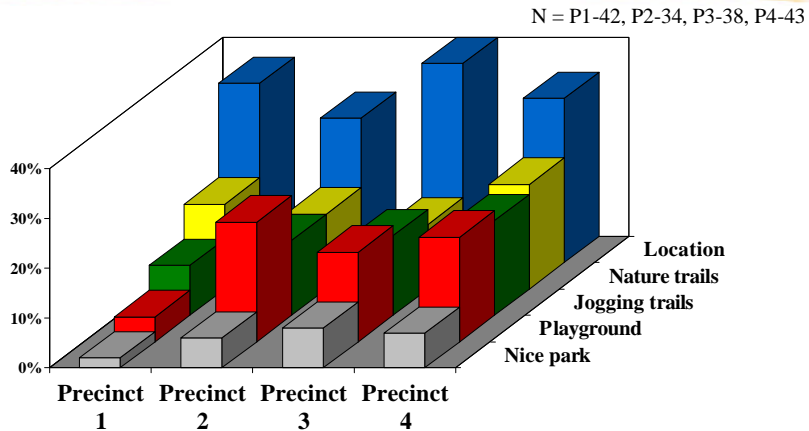
“What attracts you to that particular park?”



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Location, followed by nature trails, are dominant attractions to a park

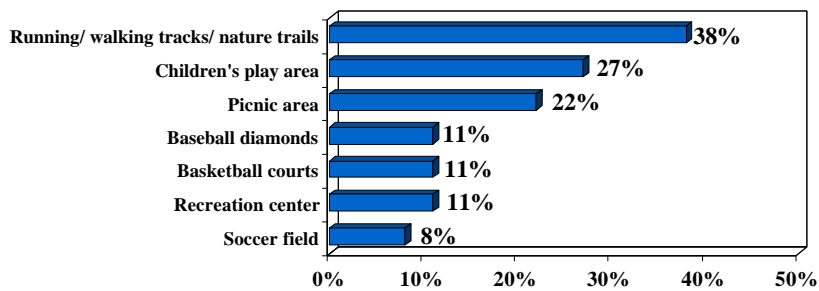


“What attracts you to that particular park?”



Nature trails, running and walking tracks, children’s play area, and picnic areas were the most frequently used features

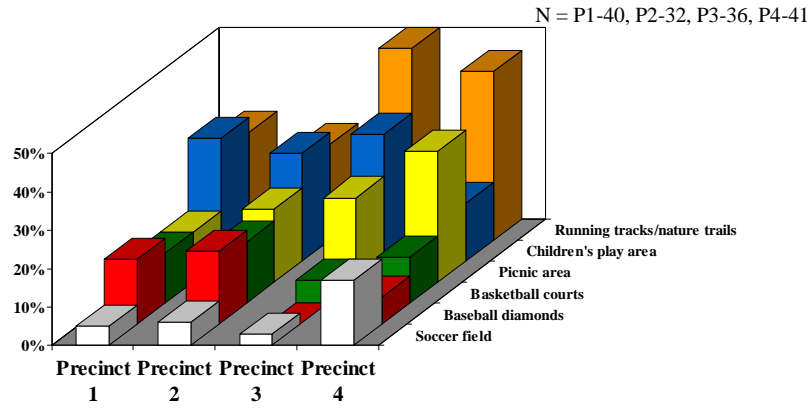
N=149



“What facilities did you use in the park the last time you were there?”



Most frequently used features by precinct



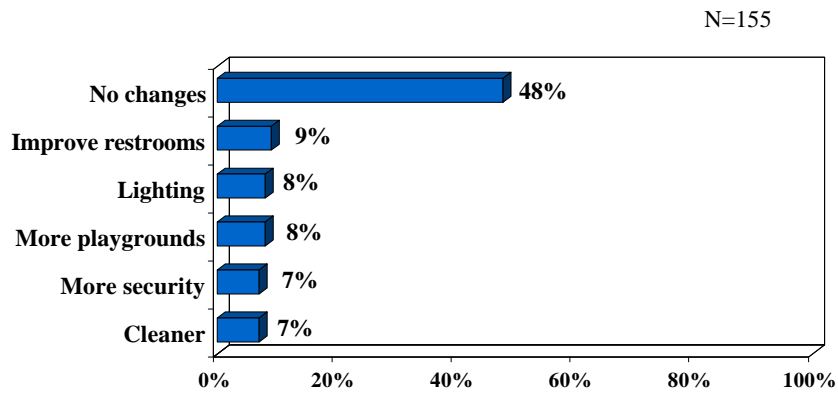
“What facilities did you use in the park the last time you were there?”



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Most are happy with current park amenities



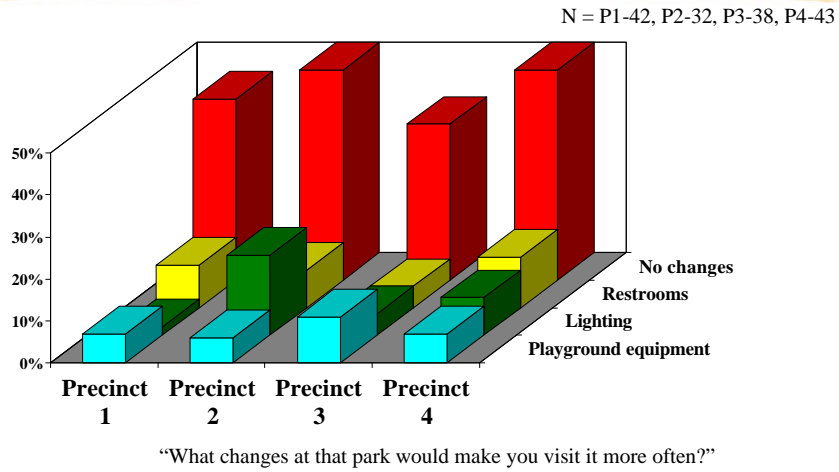
“What changes at that park would make you visit it more often?”



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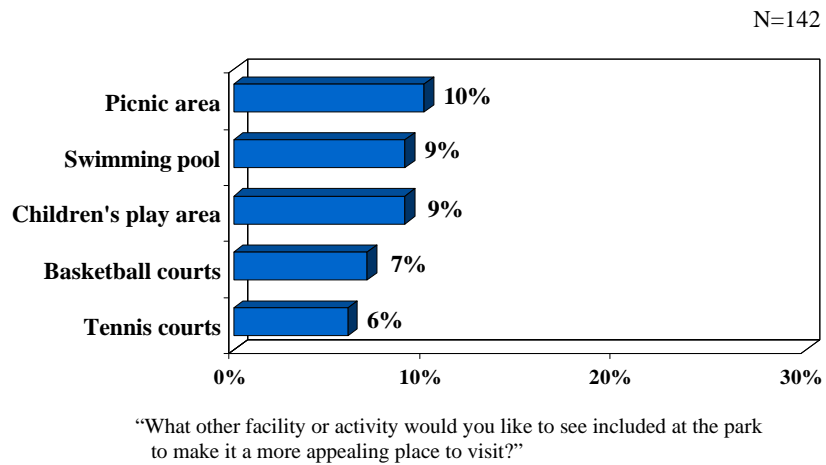
Improvements requested by precinct



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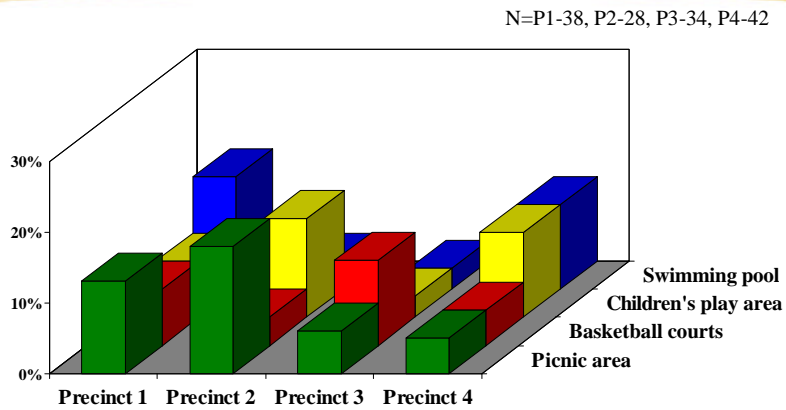
Requested new features or attractions



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Requests for new features or attractions by precinct



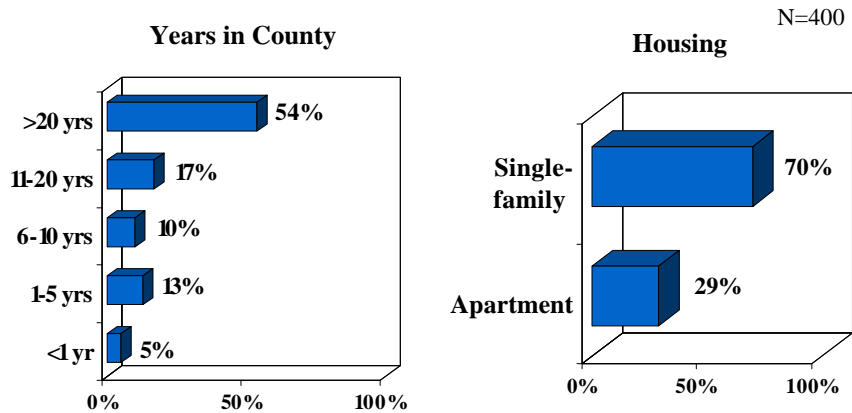
“What other facility or activity would you like to see included at the park to make it a more appealing place to visit?”



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Demographics



“How long have you lived in Harris County?”

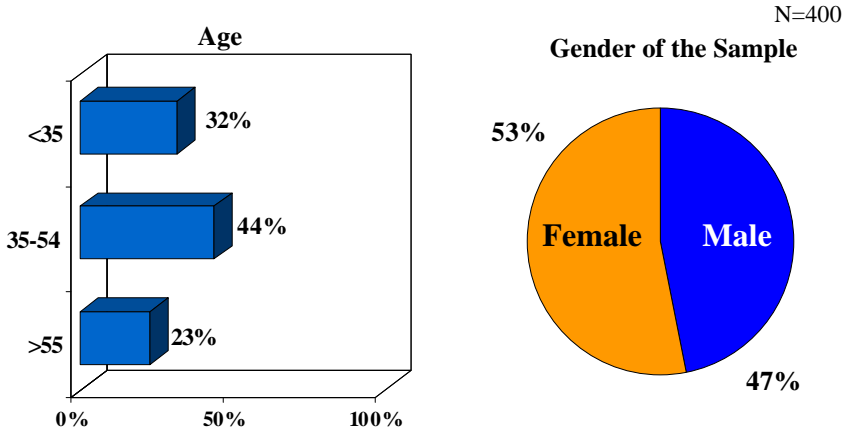
“Do you live in a single-family home or in an apartment or townhouse?”



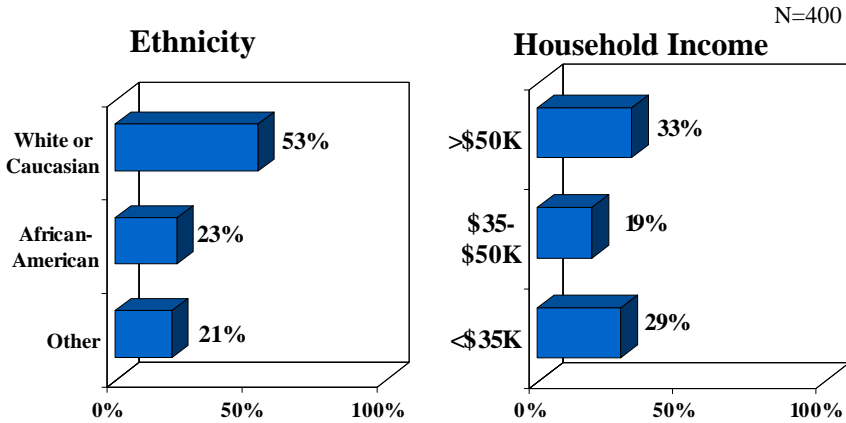
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Demographics (continued)



Demographics (continued)





Appendix

- Questionnaire
- Tables of Data