Section 6
Community Vision

Community Vision

Section 6.1:
Description of the Process

INTRODUCTION

This Open Space Plan update comes out of the ideas and information provided by the residents of Boston through surveys and public meetings along with input from agency officials, field work, and review of past information. The planning and public participation process has been described in Part 2, the Introduction to this plan.

The Planning Process and Public Participation portion of Section 2 (Introduction) described the use of a standardized questionnaire to survey public opinion on open space in Boston as the major means of providing input into the plan. The results of the survey are presented here.

A brief statement of community goals and priorities will be presented in Section 6.2, Statement of Open Space and Recreation Community Goals.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE
AND RESULTS

Questionnaire Development, Distribution, and Coding
The Design and Construction Unit of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department devised a questionnaire with the goal of learning the needs of a cross section of the public. Given limited staff and budgetary resources, the questionnaire was used to elicit a large amount of information by providing a broad range of standardized response categories that could be easily coded in a short period of time. Most of the completed surveys were submitted via the Internet-based survey firm SurveyGizmo.

This process limited manual coding of the standardized responses to the surveys submitted by paper versions distributed to neighborhood Boston Public Library branches and Boston Community Centers located in most neighborhoods. In the case of the paper questionnaires, the manual coding was limited due to the

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use of a software program that reads scanned paper questionnaires and translates the results into a format compatible with the output of the online survey software. Only where entries were difficult for the software to decipher, either for the "fill-in-the-circles" questions or the text boxes requiring character recognition, was manual coding needed as a supplement.

The survey was available from May 4 to October 31, 2013. Notices about the survey and the opportunity for public input and comment were provided via press releases to citywide and local newspapers, some radio appearances by Parks Department community outreach staff, and via the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services Electronic Notification System. Athletics and special events permit holders were notified by way of electronic mail. Notice was posted on the first page of the city's home web page for the duration of time that the survey was available. It was also posted on the Parks Department's homepage with a direct link to the survey hosted by the SurveyGizmo web site. The Parks Department held a series of public meetings in each neighborhood during the survey period to outline the process of developing the Open Space Plan and to encourage participation in the survey. In addition to hosting the series of meetings, Parks Department staff attended various events and forums such as the Mayor's Annual Health and Fitness Walk for Seniors and the ONEin3 Council (for persons in the 20 to34 age range), where publicizing the survey yielded more public input from these underrepresented age groups. In all methods of notification and at the end of the questionnaire itself, the public was made aware of the opportunity to convey their opinion and input in writing, beyond the limitations of the survey questionnaire, to an email address specific to this planning process.

To increase outreach, especially to environmental justice communities, the questionnaire was translated into six other languages recommended by the Mayor's Office of New Bostonians, an agency which focuses on the needs of newer immigrants living in the city. The languages available were English, Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, Brazilian Portuguese, and Cape Verdean Creole. The survey in all seven languages was made available online, a hard copy paper version, and notification to appropriate news outlets in these communities was also made. Copies of the questionnaire in all seven languages will be shown online; the English version is shown at the end of this Section 6.1.

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A total of 2,998 survey questionnaires were deemed complete for the purposes of coding and analysis, which compares favorably to the 1,105 survey questionnaires coded and analyzed for the 2008-2014 plan.

We developed questions that sought to obtain information about actual use of parks and open spaces in Boston by the respondents. The introduction to the questionnaire reinforced that this questionnaire was for persons who used Boston parks, even if they were not residents, but not for persons who used only parks in communities outside of Boston city limits. We asked about general activities undertaken in the park used most often, and what features they used. We also asked their preferences on park services and park features (the operating and capital sides of providing park opportunities), and what changes the City could implement that would encourage more frequent visitation. We asked what parks they visit often, how often they visit them over the course of the past year, and whether the park they visit most often is the park closest to their home. We then asked for basic demographic information such as age, gender, race/ethnic origin, neighborhood of residence, and the number of persons under 19 in their household.

Survey Results

Note: For all tables and figures, wherever N (the number of responses or frequency of choice) is greater than 0, but the percent figure is 0%, "0%" should be taken to mean "less than 1%."

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

Boston Neighborhood of Residence

We asked several questions to help us get an understanding of the sample population and to compare it to the population of Boston as determined by the 2010 U.S. Census. We also hope to see if characteristics of this population can help explain the responses we received in our survey.

We asked respondents, "in which Boston neighborhood do you live now?" A map was provided in both the paper and online versions. The paper questionnaire's map took up most of a page, and included surrounding towns so that nearby Boston non-residents would know that they did not reside in Boston. The online questionnaire's map was

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interactive: one could zoom into the area where one resides to help determine more accurately which Boston neighborhood one lives in.

The boundaries of the Boston neighborhoods were the ones recently created by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) based on zip codes and other planning and demographic information (see BRA "Neighborhoods"map below). It is more detailed than the planning districts traditionally used by the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Research Division. We have also prepared for reference a map that compares the BRA neighborhoods with the Open Space Plan communities, which is based on the BRA neighborhoods, but aggregates certain neighborhoods, or in the case of Jamaica Plain, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Roslindale, slightly redraws the boundaries. This development of the Open Space Plan communities is discussed in the introduction to Section 7.2, Community Open Space and Recreation.

We found that out of 26 neighborhoods, 11 had a population percentage that differed from the percentage of respondents from that neighborhood (as found in the U.S. 2010 Census) equal to or greater than two (2) percentage points (the difference could be plus or minus). The table and graph illustrates the comparison. The neighborhoods that were substantially overrepresented were Beacon Hill, Charlestown, Jamaica Plain, Mission Hill, Roslindale, and the South End. The neighborhoods that were substantially underrepresented were Dorchester, East Boston, Fenway, Hyde Park, Mattapan, and Roxbury.

In the table and graph that look at Boston neighborhood of residence of the sample alone, we see the interesting data point that the second most frequent type of respondent is a non-resident of Boston, at 12% of the sample. Given that 62% of the city's jobs employ non-residents, a significant base of non-resident users of the Boston park system would seem reasonable.

As was mentioned in the 2008-2014 plan, there is a significant overrepresentation of Jamaica Plain residents in the survey sample as compared to the 2010 census; this likely results from "… Jamaica Plain, with its considerable acreage of public open space and its good public transit access to downtown, [being] a popular location for residents in the city with a stronger than average appreciation of the role of open space in daily life. This neighborhood has a history of organizing to protect existing open space resources and create new open spaces, such as the Southwest Corridor Park. Therefore, it has a considerable number of long-term stakeholders with an acute awareness of the need for open space in daily life. Many of these stakeholders have a history of organizing and activism at the local level on land use and environmental issues. Therefore, they would be likely to complete and return the survey
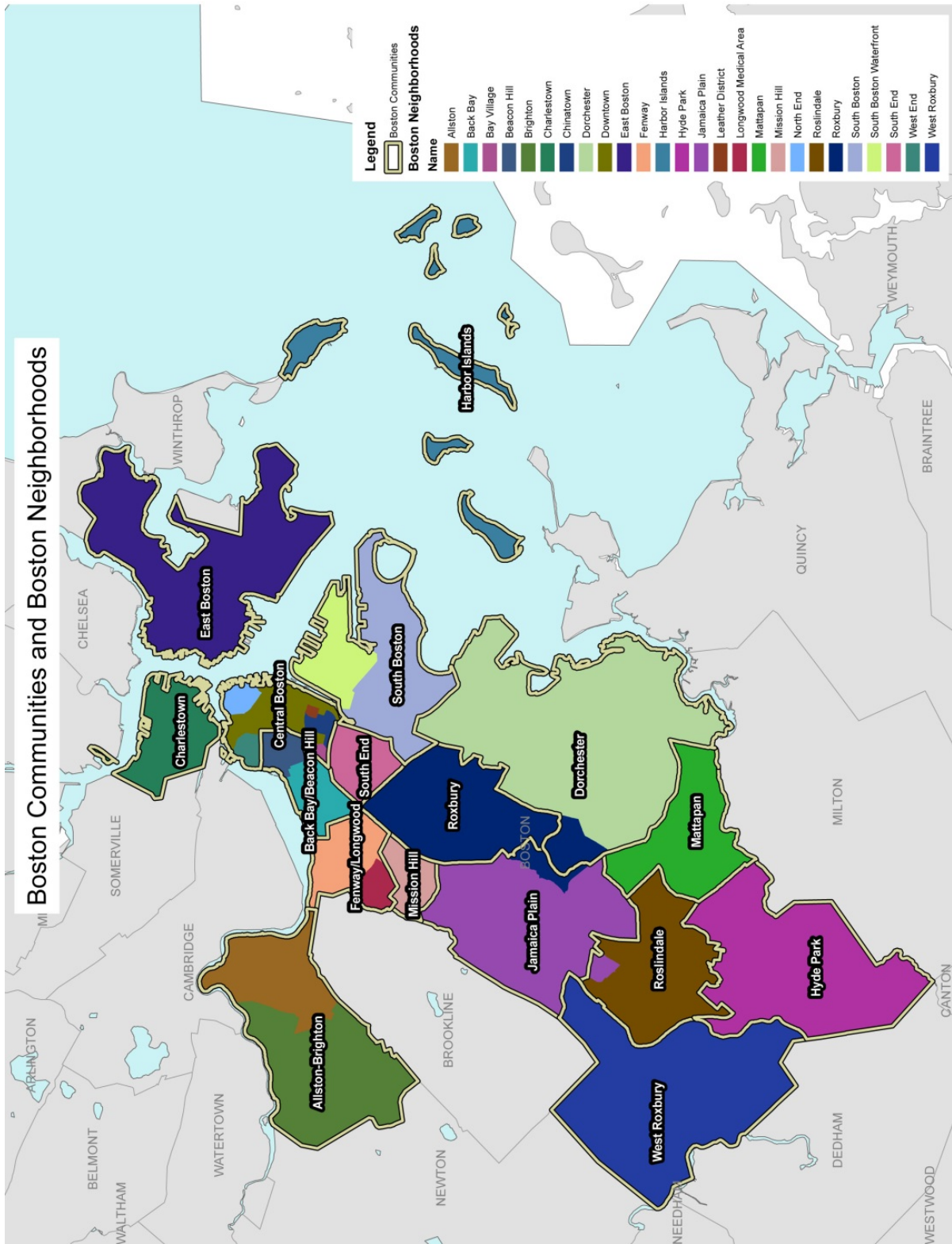
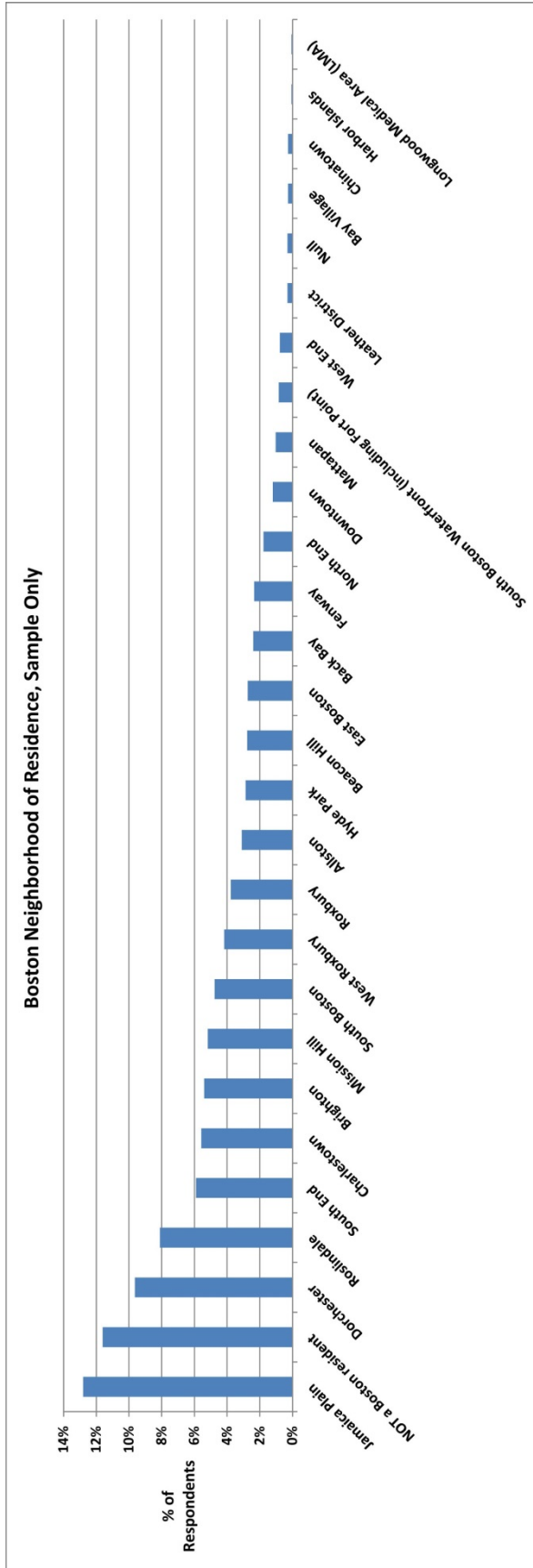# Community Vision

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Boston Communities and Boston Neighborhoods

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Boston Neighborhood of Residence (Entire Survey Sample)	N	%
Allston	93	3%
Back Bay	72	2%
Bay Village	8	0%
Beacon Hill	83	3%
Brighton	162	5%
Charlestown	167	6%
Chinatown	8	0%
Dorchester	289	10%
Downtown	36	1%
East Boston	82	3%
Fenway	70	2%
Harbor Islands	2	0%
Hyde Park	86	3%
Jamaica Plain	384	13%
Leather District	9	0%
Longwood Medical Area (LMA)	2	0%
Mattapan	31	1%
Mission Hill	155	5%
North End	53	2%
Roslindale	243	8%
Roxbury	113	4%
South Boston	143	5%
South Boston Waterfront (including Fort Point)	25	1%
South End	177	6%
West End	23	1%
West Roxbury	125	4%
NOT a Boston resident	348	12%
Null	9	0%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Boston Neighborhood of Residence (Survey Sample, Boston Residents Only vs. Boston Population)	Sample N	Sample %	Boston[1]	Boston %
Allston	93	4%	29,196	5%
Back Bay	72	3%	18,088	3%
Bay Village	8	0%	1,312	0%
Beacon Hill	83	3%	9,023	1%
Brighton	162	6%	45,801	7%
Charlestown	167	6%	16,439	3%
Chinatown	8	0%	4,444	1%
Dorchester	289	11%	114,235	18%
Downtown	36	1%	11,215	2%
East Boston	82	3%	40,508	7%
Fenway	70	3%	33,796	5%
Harbor Islands	2	0%	535	0%
Hyde Park	86	3%	30,637	5%
Jamaica Plain	384	15%	37,468	6%
Leather District	9	0%	639	0%
Longwood Medical Area (LMA)	2	0%	3,785	1%
Mattapan	31	1%	22,600	4%
Mission Hill	155	6%	16,305	3%
North End	53	2%	10,131	2%
Roslindale	243	9%	28,680	5%
Roxbury	113	4%	48,454	8%
South Boston	143	5%	33,311	5%
South Boston Waterfront (including Fort Point)	25	1%	1,889	0%
South End	177	7%	24,577	4%
West End	23	1%	4,080	1%
West Roxbury	125	5%	30,446	5%
Total	2641	100%	617,594	100%

"0%" due to rounding for percentages less than 0.5%
[1]2010 U.S. Census

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Boston Neighborhood of Residence, Sample Only

% of Respondents

Chart categories (top to bottom): Longwood Medical Area (LMA), Harbor Islands, Chinatown, Bay Village, Null, Leather District, West End, South Boston Waterfront (including Fort Point), Mattapan, Downtown, North End, Fenway, Back Bay, East Boston, Beacon Hill, Hyde Park, Allston, Roxbury, West Roxbury, South Boston, Mission Hill, Brighton, Charlestown, South End, Roslindale, Dorchester, NOT a Boston resident, Jamaica Plain

Axis values: 14%, 12%, 10%, 8%, 6%, 4%, 2%, 0%

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Boston Neighborhood of Residence (Survey Sample, Boston Residents Only vs. Boston Population)	Sample N	Sample %	Boston[1]	Boston %
Jamaica Plain	384	15%	37,468	6%
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Chinatown	8	0%	4,444	1%
Longwood Medical Area (LMA)	2	0%	3,785	1%
Harbor Islands	2	0%	535	0%
Total	2641	100%	617,594	100%

"0%" due to rounding for percentages less than 1%

[1] 2010 U.S. Census

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Respondents' Communities of Residence	Sample %	Boston %
Boston Non-Resident	12%	0%
Jamaica Plain	13%	6%
Dorchester	10%	19%
Allston-Brighton	9%	12%
Roslindale	8%	5%
South End	6%	4%
South Boston	6%	6%
Charlestown	6%	3%
Back Bay/Beacon Hill	5%	4%
Mission Hill	5%	3%
Central Boston	5%	5%
West Roxbury	4%	5%
Roxbury	4%	8%
Hyde Park	3%	5%
East Boston	3%	7%
Fenway/Longwood	2%	6%
Mattapan	1%	4%

Communities	Neighborhoods
Allston-Brighton	Allston
	Brighton
Back Bay/Beacon Hill	Back Bay
	Beacon Hill
Central Boston	Bay Village
	Chinatown
	Downtown
	Leather District
	North End
	West End
Fenway/Longwood	Fenway
	Longwood Medical Area
South Boston	South Boston
	South Boston Waterfront (including Fort Point)

Respondents' Communities of Residence
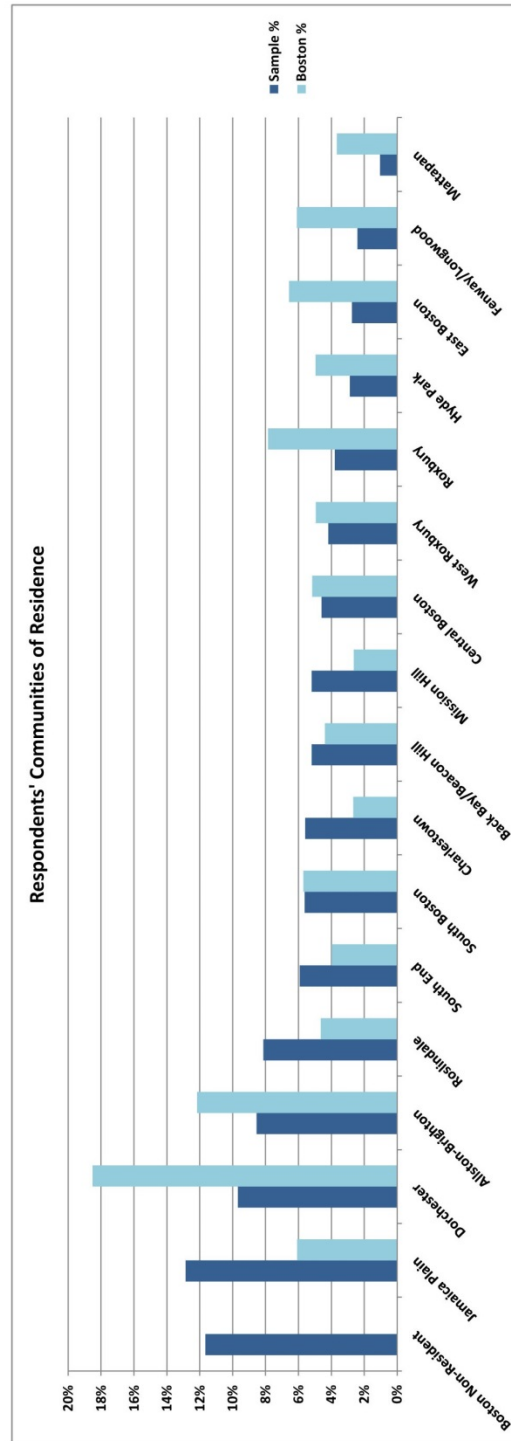
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questionnaire, and consequently be overrepresented in the new survey sample." (from Section 6 of the 2008-2014 Open Space Plan.)

Present Age Group

Our next demographic question was, "what is your present age?" We provided several age group categories in 10-year ranges except for "15-19 years" and "80 years and over," with a "do not wish to answer" option.

The modal category among the responses was 30-39 years (29%), then 40-49 years (19%), and 20-29 years (19%). The only other age groups that were in the double digit percentage response rate were 50-59 years (15%) and 60-69 years (10%).

Using the current Census data, we see that that 31% of Boston's population is in the 20-29 age group, significantly above the 19% participation by this age cohort in the survey sample. Many of this age group are college and graduate students, with a significant number not originally residing from this area. It can be hard to reach this age cohort on local issues and concerns. In fact, we made an additional effort to reach out to this group through providing fliers at a college student festival held annually in the beginning of the school year at the Hynes Convention Center in the Back Bay neighborhood, and by presenting a talk and discussion with the Mayor's ONEin3 Council in the fall of 2013.

Instead, we see that in the age cohorts from 30-39 on up to 60-69, those ages that are more likely engaged in local affairs and concerns, there is an overrepresentation versus the U.S. Census representation of these age groups in the Boston population. Given that these are ages where the care of pre- and college-age children likely occurs, this overrepresentation may not be as significant in a general sense, as these caregivers can convey the needs of their children as well as their own.

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Present Age Group	N	%	Boston	%
15-19 years	108	4%	49,826	9%
20-29 years	568	19%	162,820	31%
30-39 years	869	29%	94,049	18%
40-49 years	571	19%	72,675	14%
50-59 years	449	15%	64,388	12%
60-69 years	286	10%	44,514	8%
70-79 years	88	3%	25,379	5%
80 years and over	8	0%	18,177	3%
Refuse to answer	39			
Null	12			
Total Respondents*	2947	100%	531,828	100%

*Does not include "refuse to answer" and "null"
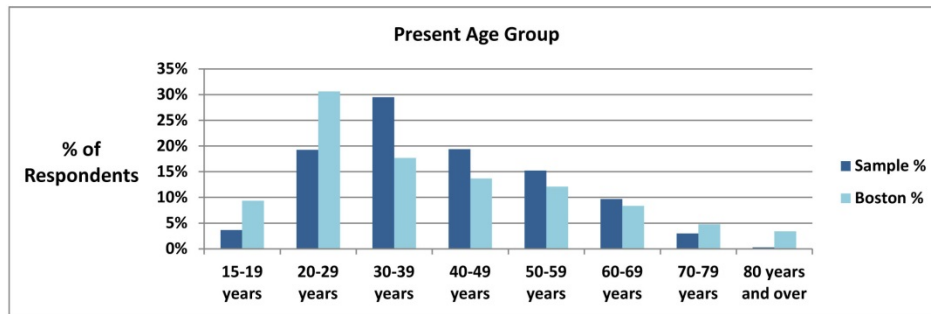
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Gender

We also asked each respondent, "What is your sex (gender)?" The choice "female" was chosen by 65% of the respondents; the choice "male" was chosen by 34% of the respondents.

The 2010 U.S. Census data for Boston shows that 52% of persons were female and 48% were male. Obviously, the survey sample is skewed with an overrepresentation of female respondents.

Sex of Respondent	Sample N	Sample %	Boston N	Boston %
Female	1949	65%	321,643	52%
Male	1032	35%	295,951	48%
Total Respondents	2981	100%	617,594	100%

*17 respondents provided null responses or did not wish to answer
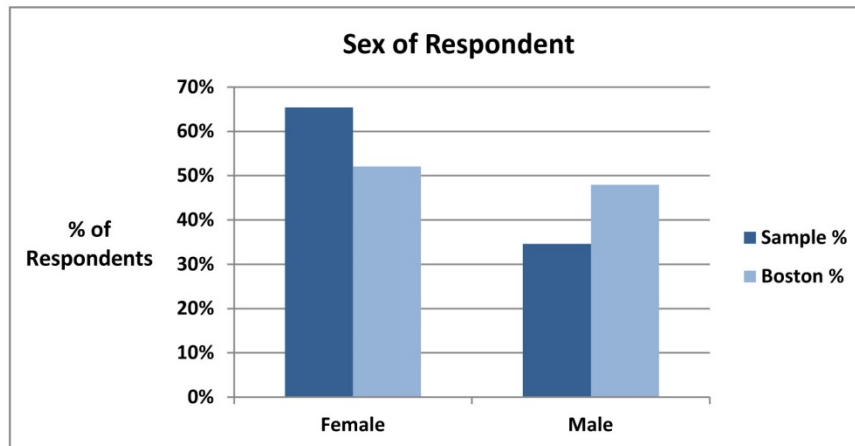
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Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin of Respondents

We asked the question, "Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?" The large majority of the respondents answered, "no, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin" (91%), as compared to those who answered, "yes, of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin" (8%). This compares to the 2010 U.S. Census figure for the City of Boston of 18% that identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

| Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin	Sample N	Sample %	Boston N	Boston %
No, not of …	2731	92%	509,677	83%
Yes, of …	245	8%	107,917	17%
Total Respondents	2976	100%	617,594	100%
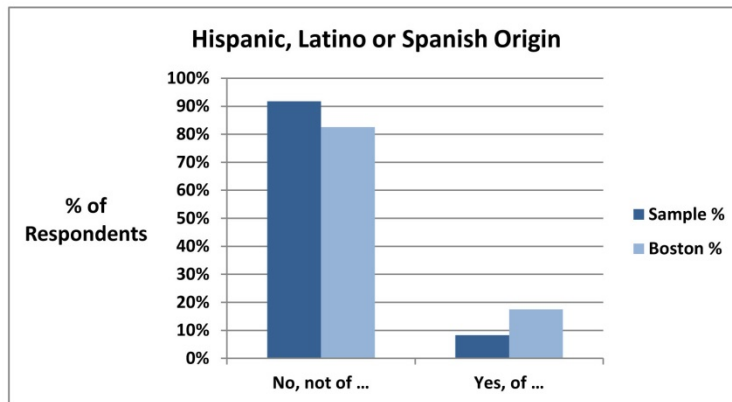
Race of Respondents

The questionnaire's next to last question was "what is your race?" We provided the categories used in the 2010 U.S. Census, and instructed respondents to "please fill all circles that apply to you."

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Race of Respondents	N	%
White	2290	73%
Do not wish to answer	247	8%
Black of African American	222	7%
Some Other Race	142	5%
Chinese	75	2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	48	2%
Asian Indian	37	1%
Filipino	18	1%
Korean	16	1%
Vietnamese	16	1%
Japanese	14	0%
Other Pacific Islander	14	0%
Native Hawaiian	3	0%
Guamanian or Chamorro	3	0%
Samoan	3	0%
Total Respondents	3148	100%

Race of Respondents
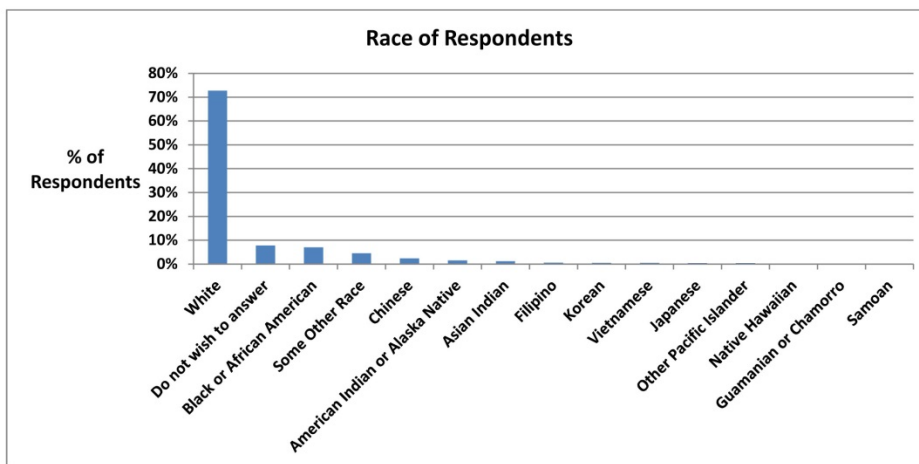
| Race	Sample N	Sample %	Boston N	Boston
White	2290	79%	333,033	54%
Black or African American	222	8%	150,437	24%
American Indian and Alaska Native	48	2%	2,399	0%
Asian	176	6%	55,235	9%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	23	1%	265	0%
Some Other Race	142	5%	51,893	8%
Two or More Races			24332	4%
Total	2901	100%	617,594	100%

Race
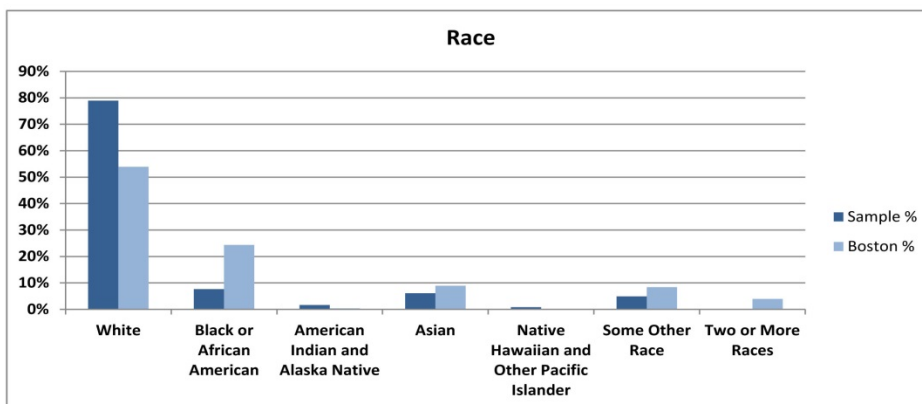
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Number of Household Members under Age 19

The last question of the questionnaire was "How many persons in your household are under the age of 19 years, including yourself?" The chart and graph shows that the majority of respondents (58%) are in households where no household member is under the age of 19 years.

Number of Household Members Under Age 19	N	%
0	1742	58%
1	491	16%
2	473	16%
3	178	6%
4	56	2%
5	15	1%
6	9	0%
7	4	0%
8+	9	0%
Null	21	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
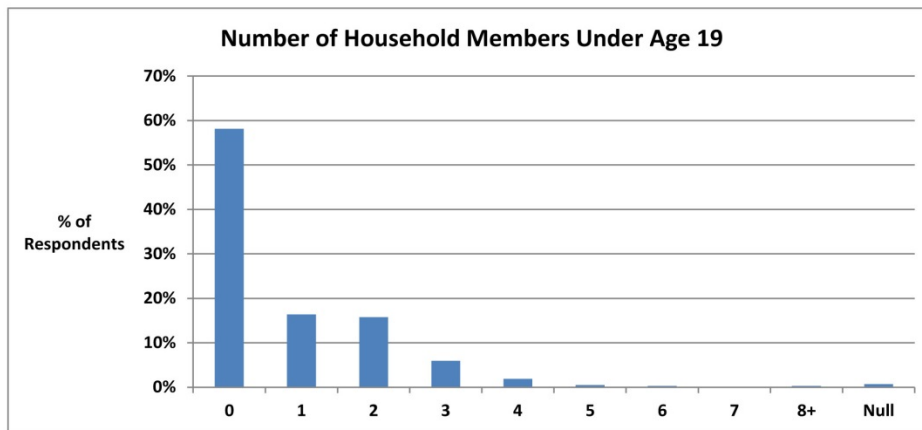
| City of Boston, 2010 Census (SF-1)	N	%
Total households	252,699	100.00%
With children under 18 years	58,610	23.20%
No children under 18 years	194,089	76.80%

While not a majority of households, households with children 18 years and younger represent a constituency that tends to be more reliant on close-to-home open space and outdoor recreation resources, such as playgrounds, little league, football, and soccer fields, and basketball and tennis courts. The fact that households with members under age 19 are close to a majority of households is important as it will be a factor in determining park and recreation operating and capital investment decisions.

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Activity Pursued in Boston Parks

Our first survey question was "What do you do when you visit parks in Boston?" This question allowed respondents to choose more than one response. Therefore, total responses add to more than the total number of the respondents. For the paper questionnaires, the responses were arrayed alphabetically to prevent unintended bias in response presentation. For the online questionnaires, the setting was enabled that randomized the responses for each respondents.

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Activity Pursued in Boston Parks	N	%*
Walk/Stroll	2472	82%
Enjoy Nature	2223	74%
Relax/Passive	2132	71%
Family/Friends	1940	65%
Special Events	1862	62%
Exercise	1643	55%
Travel Past Park	1297	43%
Other Recreation	999	33%
Children at Playlot	960	32%
Free Play w/Children	927	31%
View Park Only	861	29%
Walk Dog	856	29%
Casual Pick-up Games	633	21%
Community Gardening	534	18%
Organized sports/children	470	16%
Organized sports/self	421	14%
* % of 2998 Respondents		
Total Responses	20,230	

Activity Pursued in Boston Parks
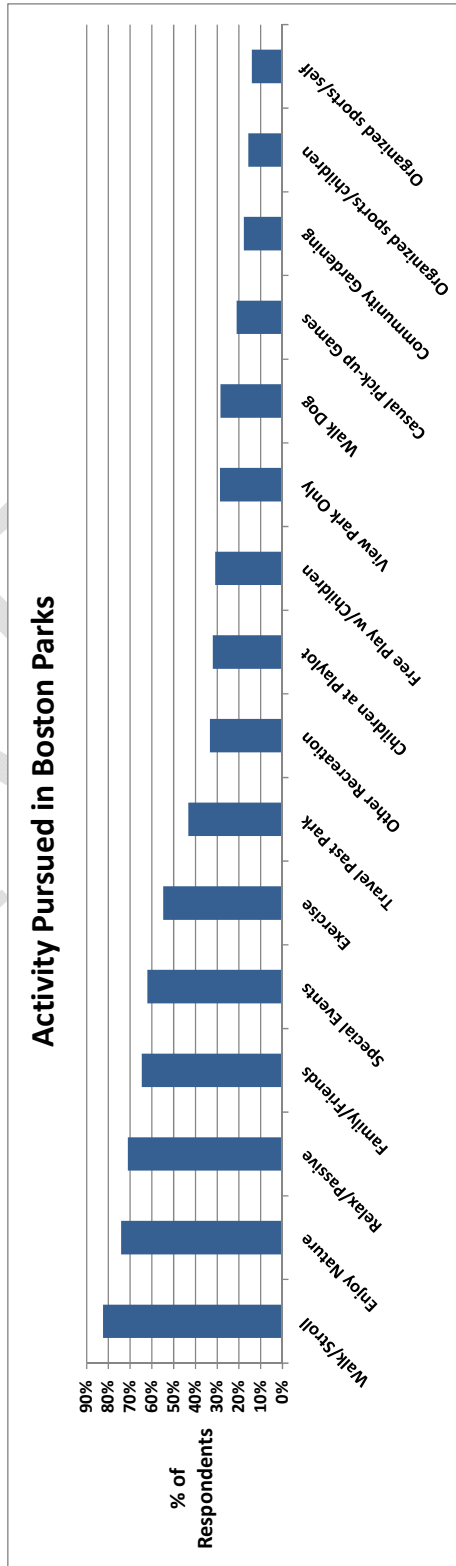
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Feature Types Used or Enjoyed at Parks in Boston

This question allowed respondents to choose more than one response. Therefore, total responses add to more than the total number of the respondents. For the paper questionnaires, the responses were arrayed alphabetically to prevent unintended bias in response presentation. For the online questionnaires, the setting was enabled that randomized the responses for each respondents.

Features Used/Enjoyed in Boston Parks	N	%
Natural areas (woods, wetlands, meadows, waterbodies, unpaved trails)	2089	70%
Benches, picnic tables, shade shelters, seating areas, barbeque areas	2087	70%
Paved pathways	2053	68%
Landscaped lawn areas	1900	63%
Beaches	1273	42%
Plazas, performance spaces (hardscaped areas)	1252	42%
Community gardens	1194	40%
Children's playlots	1058	35%
Athletic fields, tracks & courts	1028	34%
Dog park	735	25%
Golf course	217	7%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Features Used/Enjoyed in Boston Parks
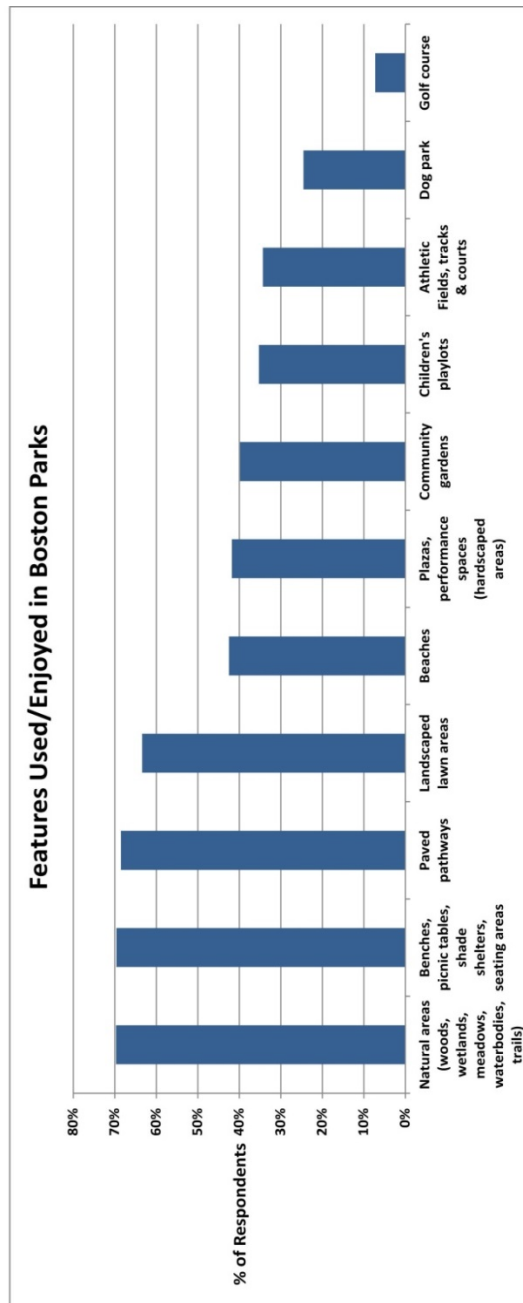
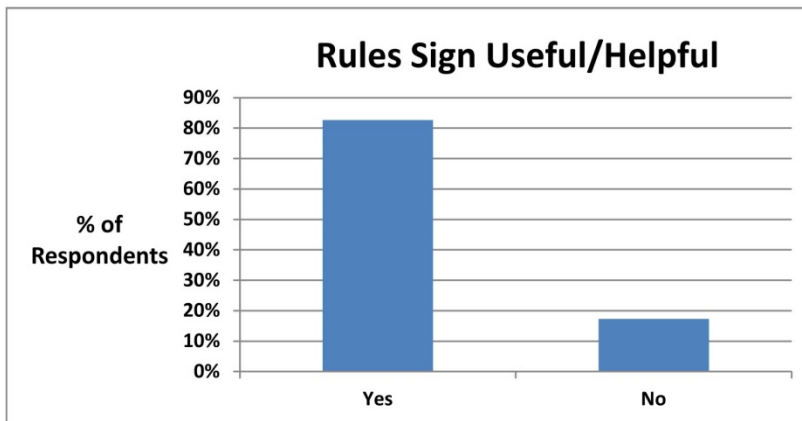## Community Vision

Park Rules Sign

The first of this pair of questions asked respondents if they noticed the parks rules sign in the park. For those who answered "yes," we asked the second question, do they think these signs are useful or helpful? For the vast majority of respondents who used the online questionnaire, the software allowed for an enforced skip logic to occur: if one answered yes, then the question about the signs' helpfulness or utility was presented as the next question; if one answered no, then the next question was not the one about sign's helpfulness or utility. However, for those using the paper questionnaire, the respondent was free to not use the skip logic as written on the questionnaire. Therefore, the possibility existed for the number of respondents who answered yes to the first question to be less than the number of persons answering the second question, no matter which answer they chose for the second question. Instead, we found that the number of persons answering "yes," they noticed the rules sign (2,263) to be slightly greater than the number of persons who answered the second question of whether they found it useful or helpful (2,258).

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Notice Rules Sign in Boston Park	N	%
Yes	2263	79%
No	607	21%
Total Respondents (out of 2998)	2870	96%

Notice Rules Sign in Boston Park?

Rules Sign Useful/Helpful	N	%*
Yes	1867	83%
No	391	17%
Total Respondents	2258	100%

Rules Sign Useful/Helpful

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Priority Rating of Service Delivery

This question asked respondents to rate the priority from 1 for the highest priority to 5 for the lowest priority* for several services the Parks Department provides. We looked at two ways of analyzing the data. The first is to compare the frequency with which a particular service was rated 1 for highest priority.

The second way to view this data is to compare the array of priority ratings for each service against each other: this can be done easily by comparing the graphs with each other, observing the "shapes" of the graphs, i.e., comparing each service's distribution of the priority ratings.


Services Rated Highest Priority ("1")	%
Litter/Trash Removal	75%
Repair Features	56%
Graffiti Removal	39%
Mowing/Lawn Care	35%
Flower/Shrub Care	28%
Tree Care	25%
Programs & Events	19%
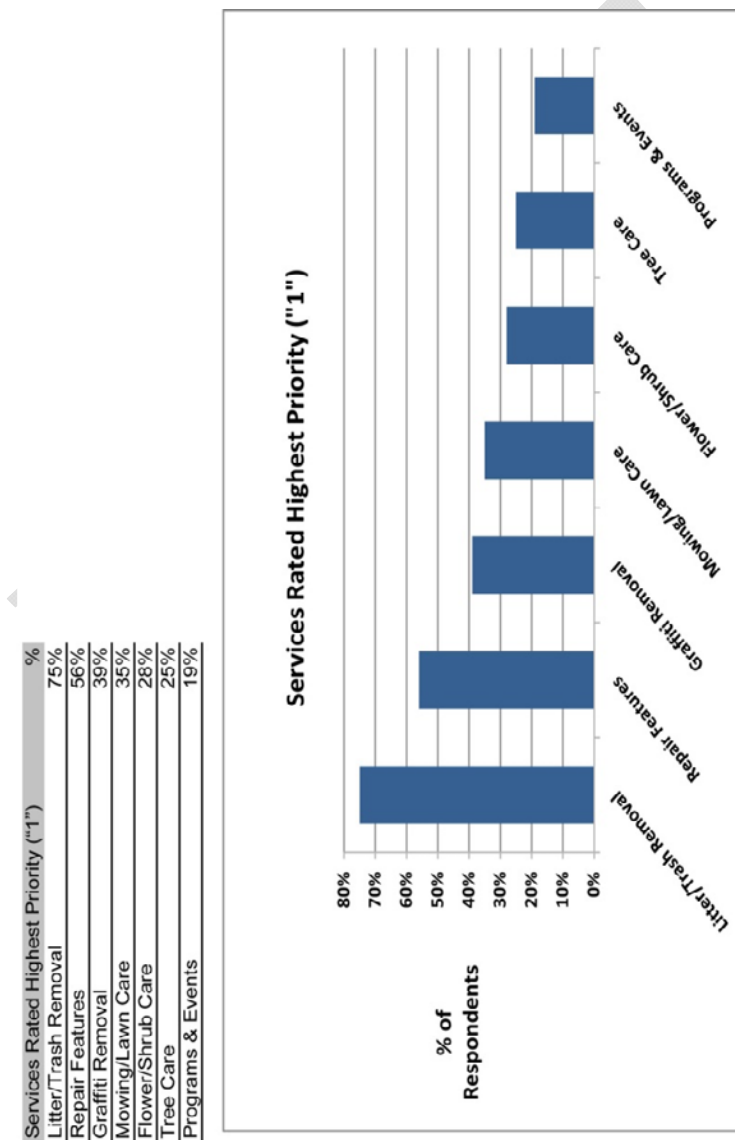
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Priority Rating, Litter/Trash Removal	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	2241	75%
2	297	10%
3	97	3%
4	80	3%
Lowest Priority = 5	227	8%
Don't Know	10	0%
Null	46	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
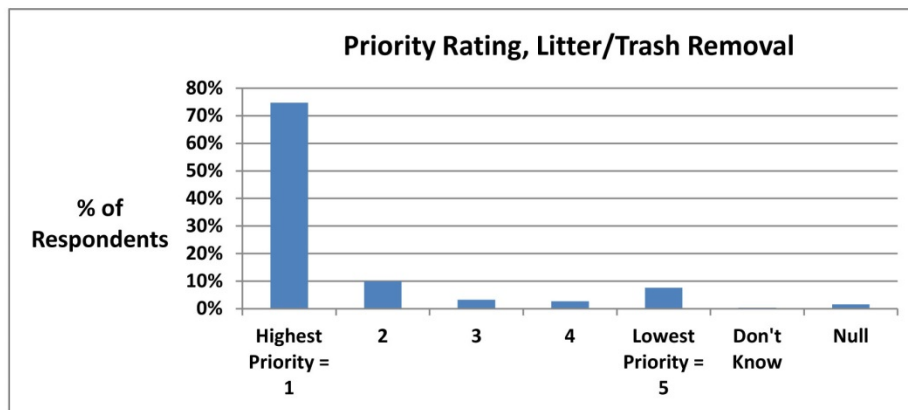
Priority Rating, Repair Features	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	1673	56%
2	677	23%
3	228	8%
4	153	5%
Lowest Priority = 5	190	6%
Don't Know	24	1%
Null	53	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
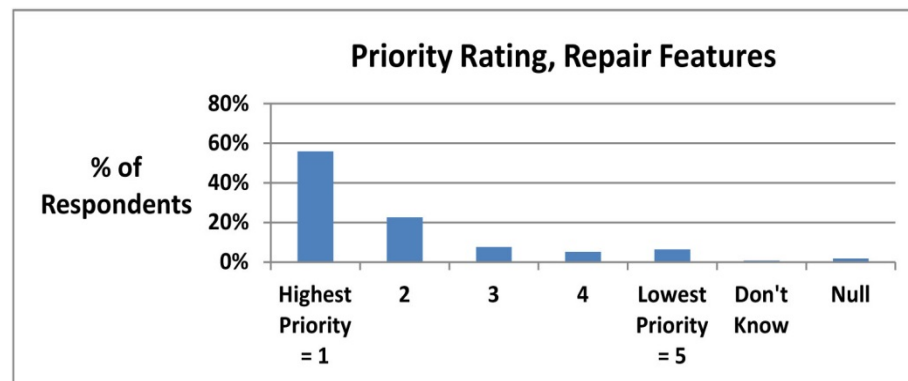
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Priority Rating, Graffiti Removal	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	1169	39%
2	598	20%
3	561	19%
4	288	10%
Lowest Priority = 5	289	10%
Don't Know	48	2%
Null	45	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Graffiti Removal
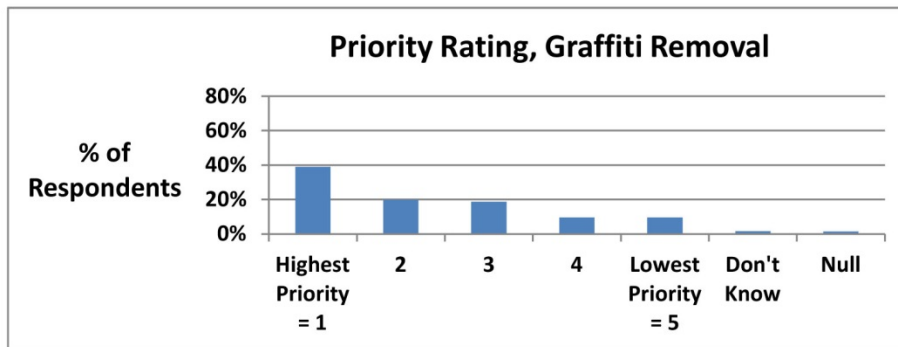
Priority Rating, Mowing/Lawn Care	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	1048	35%
2	964	32%
3	538	18%
4	225	8%
Lowest Priority = 5	152	5%
Don't Know	25	1%
Null	46	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Mowing/Lawn Care
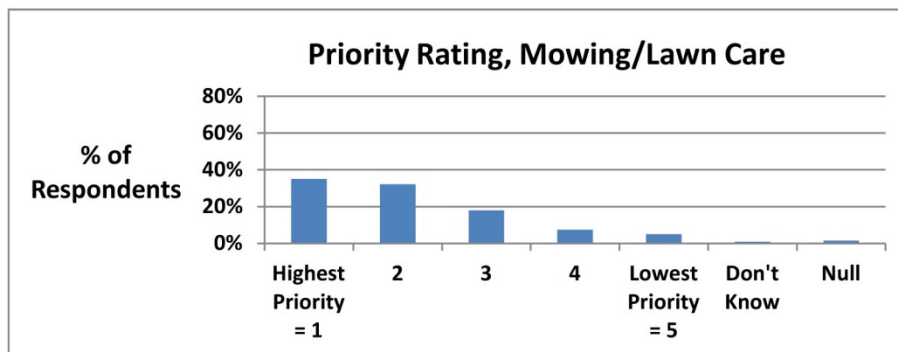
Community Vision

Priority Rating, Flower/Shrub Care	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	840	28%
2	967	32%
3	702	23%
4	256	9%
Lowest Priority = 5	140	5%
Don't Know	43	1%
Null	50	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Flower/Shrub Care
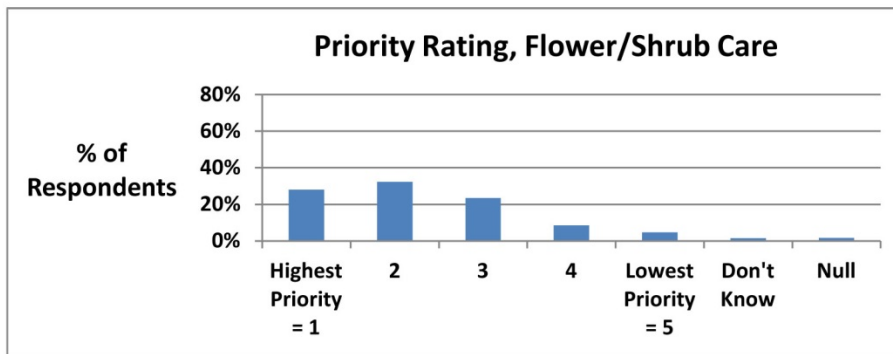
Priority Rating, Tree Care	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	759	25%
2	821	27%
3	819	27%
4	362	12%
Lowest Priority = 5	138	5%
Don't Know	52	2%
Null	47	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Tree Care
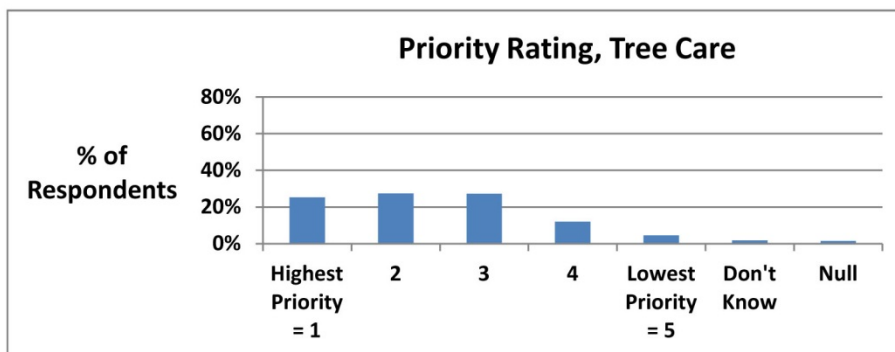
Community Vision

| Priority Rating, Programs & Events	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	570	19%
2	700	23%
3	879	29%
4	424	14%
Lowest Priority = 5	322	11%
Don't Know	49	2%
Null	54	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
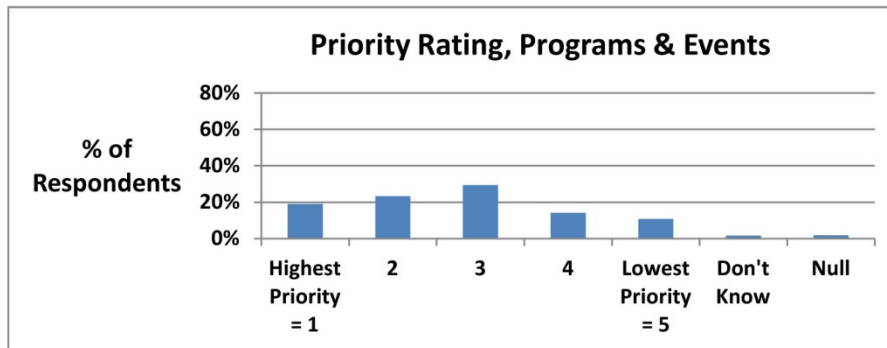
Importance Rankings of Park Services

In the prior question, we asked respondents to rate the priority for several park services. It is conceivable that a respondent could rate every service the highest priority ("1"). In fact, several respondents did that. To enable us to understand those services that are important to the public, we added three questions, each of which allowed only one answer: what is the most important service, the second most important service, and the third most important service.

Based on the analysis for the priority ratings and the analysis for the importance rankings, it appears that the public clearly values litter pick-up and trash removal as the primary service to be delivered; the second in value would be repair of damaged park features; the third in value would most likely be mowing and lawn care given how highly it is valued as a second and third most important service, as well as the high priority ratings it earns. Graffiti removal comes in as a close fourth, more based on the priority ratings.

Community Vision

THE MOST Important Service	N	%
Litter Pick-up/Trash Removal	1677	56%
Repair damaged park features	506	17%
Programs & Events	187	6%
Mowing & Lawn care	169	6%
Graffiti Removal	162	5%
Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs	123	4%
Prune/maintain trees	98	3%
Not sure or don't know	53	2%
Null	23	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
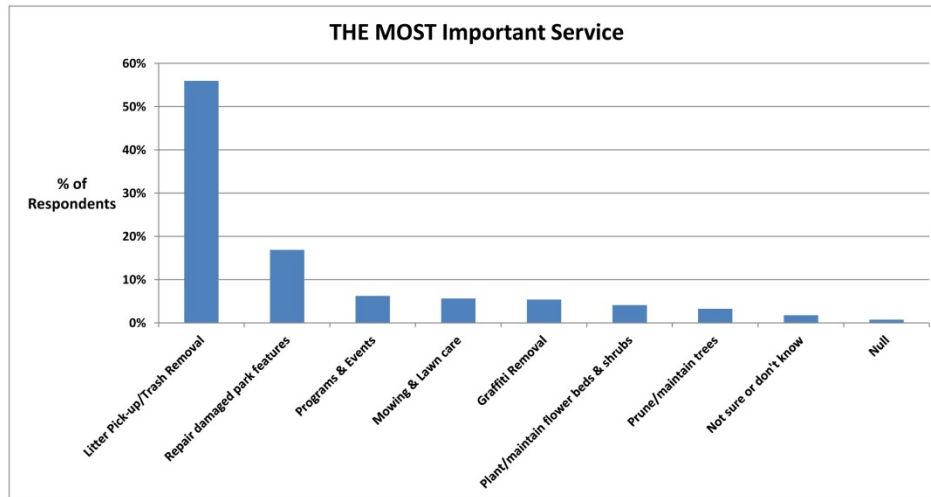
The SECOND MOST Important Service	N	%
Repair damaged park features	718	24%
Litter Pick-up/Trash Removal	717	24%
Mowing & Lawn care	508	17%
Graffiti Removal	407	14%
Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs	245	8%
Programs & Events	194	6%
Prune/maintain trees	127	4%
Not sure or don't know	56	2%
Null	26	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
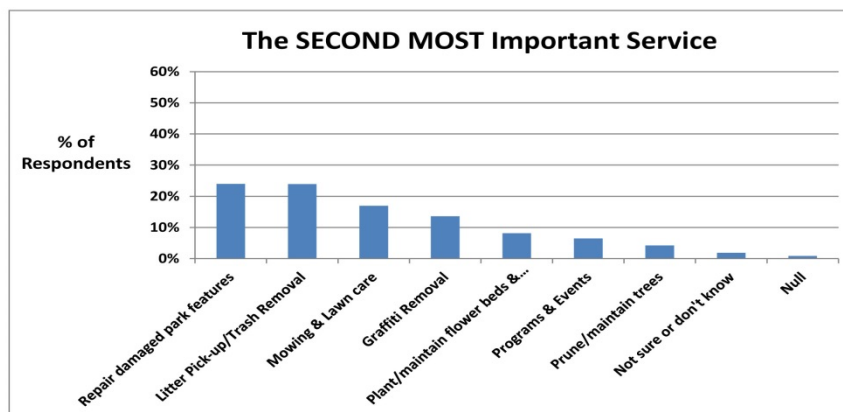
Community Vision

| The THIRD MOST Important Service	N	%
Graffiti Removal	439	15%
Litter Pick-up/Trash Removal	277	9%
Mowing & Lawn care	591	20%
Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs	429	14%
Programs & Events	288	10%
Prune/maintain trees	240	8%
Repair damaged park features	622	21%
Not sure or don't know	91	3%
Null	21	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
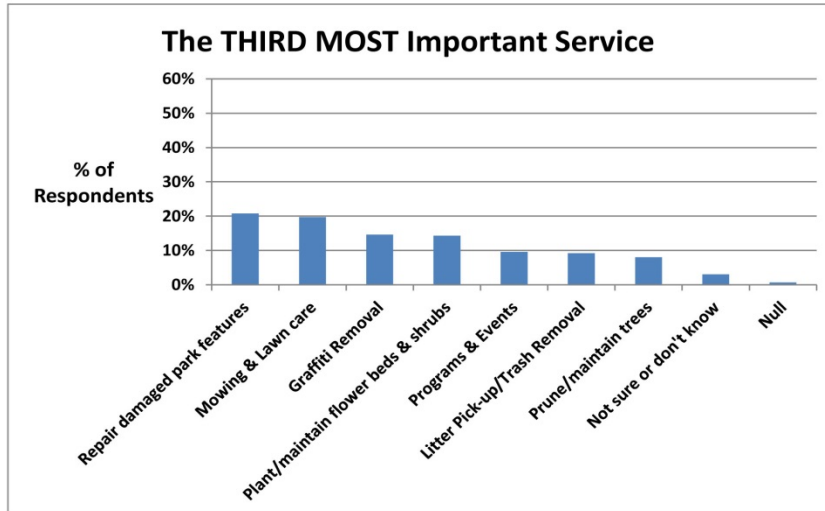
Community Vision

Priority Ratings of Park Features

In this question we asked respondents to tell us how high a priority they thought it was to improve or add certain types of features. A scale of 1 to 5, plus a "Don't Know" option, was provided, with "1" as the highest priority and "5" as the lowest priority. A priority rating for each feature was allowed, without any reference to the other features. Therefore, a respondent could respond by saying each feature was a priority 1 rating. Several respondents did that.

We are choosing two analysis methods: one is to compare the frequency each feature was chosen priority rating 1; a second analysis method is a comparison of the response distributions of the 1 to 5 priority ratings for each feature.

Feature Rated Highest Priority ("1")	%
Natural Areas/Trails	34%
Trees	32%
Benches/Seating	27%
Paths	25%
(Children's) playlots	23%
Dog Parks	21%
Lawns	19%
Flower beds/shrubs	17%
Sports features	15%
Plazas/performance spaces	13%

Features Rated Highest Priority ("1")
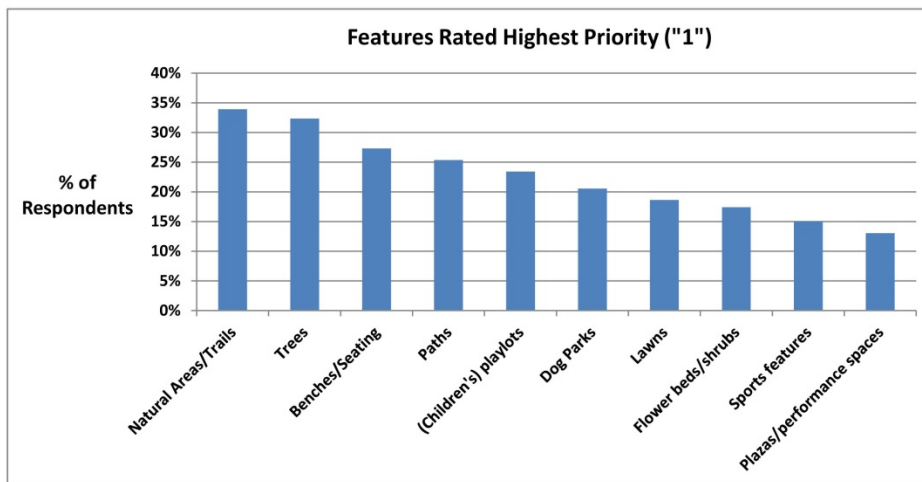
Community Vision

Priority Rating, Natural Areas/Trails	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	1017	34%
2	810	27%
3	619	21%
4	272	9%
Lowest Priority = 5	184	6%
Don't Know	56	2%
Null	40	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Natural Areas/Trails
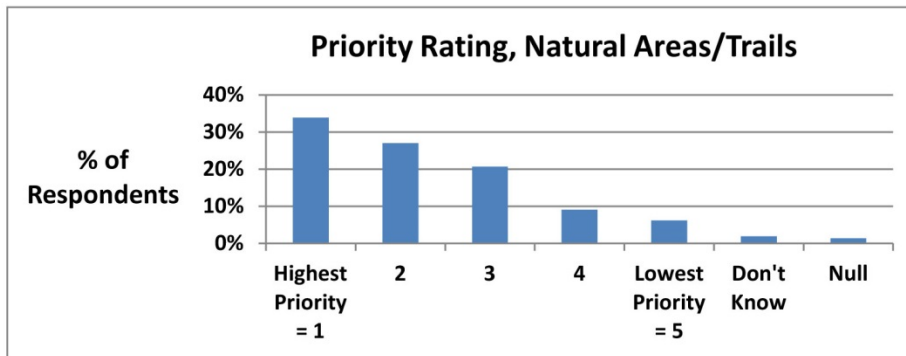
Priority Rating, Trees	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	970	32%
2	800	27%
3	683	23%
4	274	9%
Lowest Priority = 5	175	6%
Don't Know	59	2%
Null	37	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Trees

Community Vision

Priority Rating, Benches/Seating	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	819	27%
2	834	28%
3	799	27%
4	301	10%
Lowest Priority = 5	171	6%
Don't Know	48	2%
Null	26	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
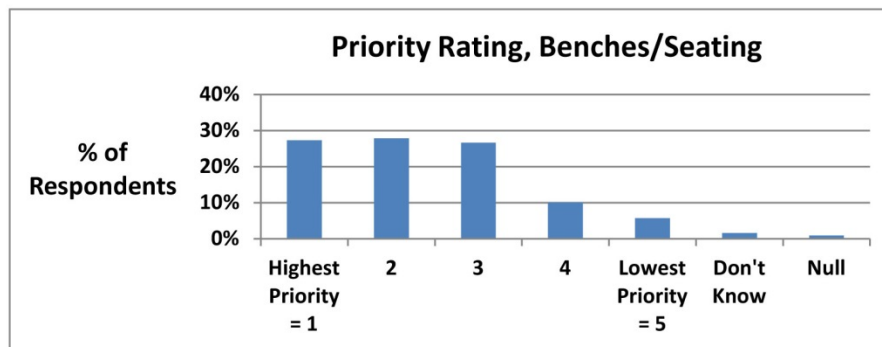
Priority Rating, Paths	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	760	25%
2	886	30%
3	734	24%
4	335	11%
Lowest Priority = 5	188	6%
Don't Know	59	2%
Null	36	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
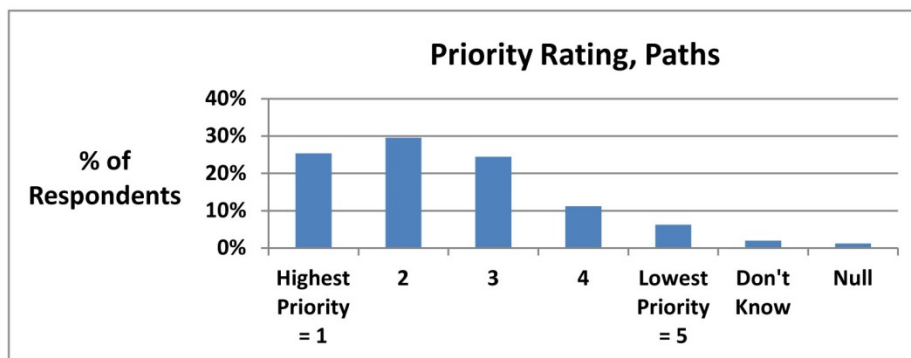
Community Vision

Priority Rating, Playlots	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	702	23%
2	495	17%
3	683	23%
4	469	16%
Lowest Priority = 5	502	17%
Don't Know	107	4%
Null	40	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Playlots
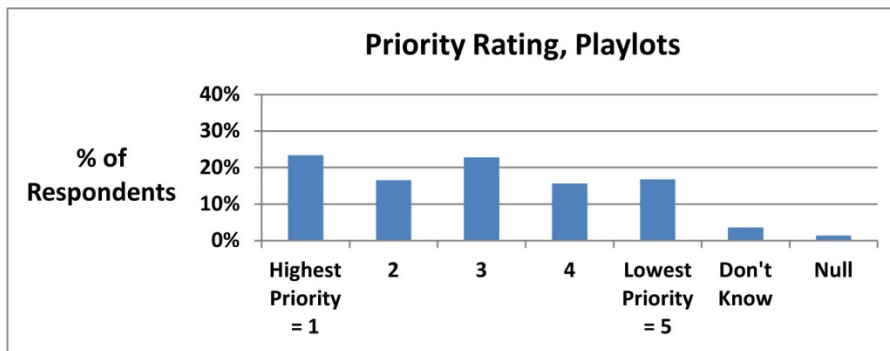
Priority Rating, Dog Parks	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	616	21%
2	416	14%
3	518	17%
4	441	15%
Lowest Priority = 5	836	28%
Don't Know	134	4%
Null	37	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Priority Rating, Dog Parks
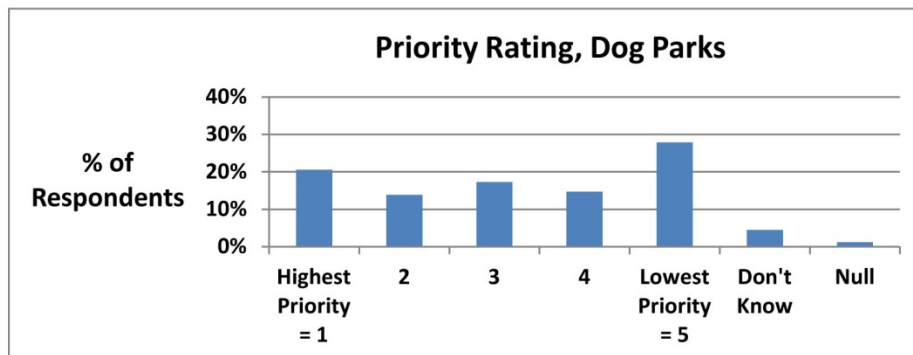
Community Vision

Priority Rating, Lawns	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	558	19%
2	801	27%
3	932	31%
4	417	14%
Lowest Priority = 5	199	7%
Don't Know	61	2%
Null	30	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
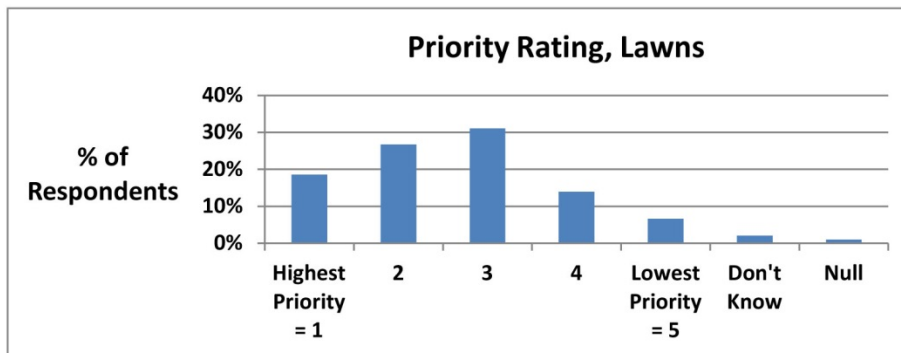
Priority Rating, Flower Beds & Shrubs	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	522	17%
2	824	27%
3	960	32%
4	426	14%
Lowest Priority = 5	175	6%
Don't Know	59	2%
Null	32	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
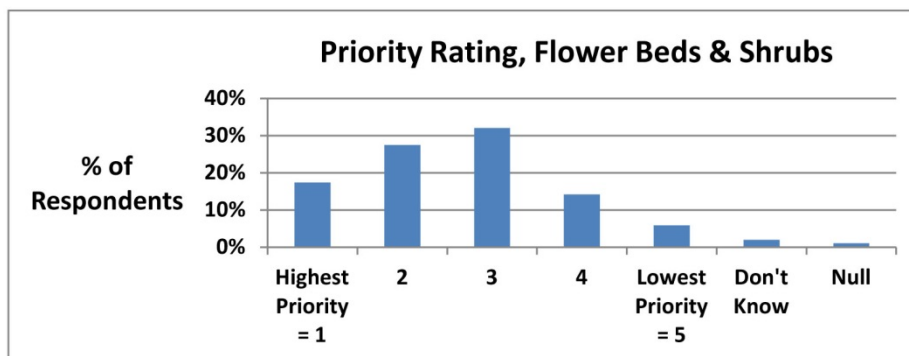
Community Vision

Priority Rating, Sports Features	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	450	15%
2	494	16%
3	740	25%
4	557	19%
Lowest Priority = 5	611	20%
Don't Know	109	4%
Null	37	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
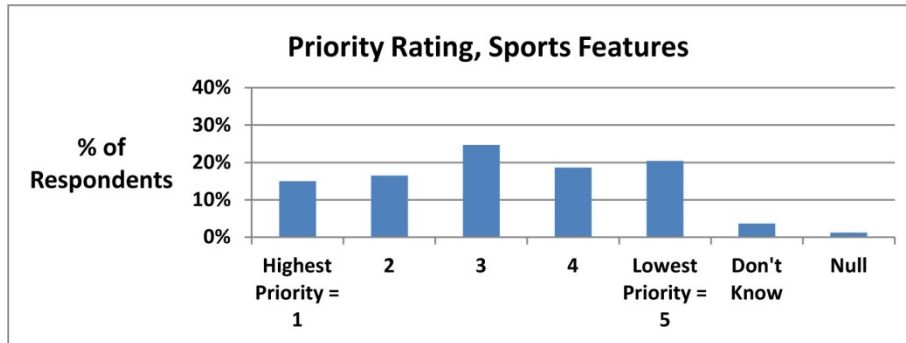
| Priority Rating, Plazas/Performance Spaces	N	%
Highest Priority = 1	391	13%
2	595	20%
3	964	32%
4	544	18%
Lowest Priority = 5	380	13%
Don't Know	88	3%
Null	36	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
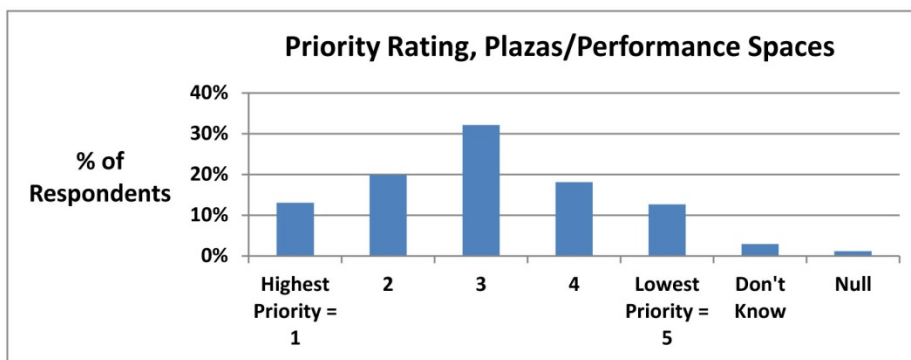
Community Vision

Importance Rankings of Park Features

In the prior question, we asked respondents to rate the priority for several park features. It is conceivable that a respondent could rate every feature the highest priority ("1"). In fact, several respondents did that. To enable us to understand those features that are important to the public, we added three questions, each of which allowed only one answer: what is the most important feature, the second most important feature, and the third most important feature to be improved or added?

The MOST Important Feature	N	%
Natural areas/trails	577	19%
Benches/seating	424	14%
Playlots	378	13%
Dog parks	376	13%
Trees	318	11%
Paths	197	7%
Sports features	181	6%
Flower beds & shrubs	162	5%
Lawns	151	5%
Performance spaces/plazas	127	4%
Not sure or don't know	80	3%
Null	27	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

The MOST Important Feature
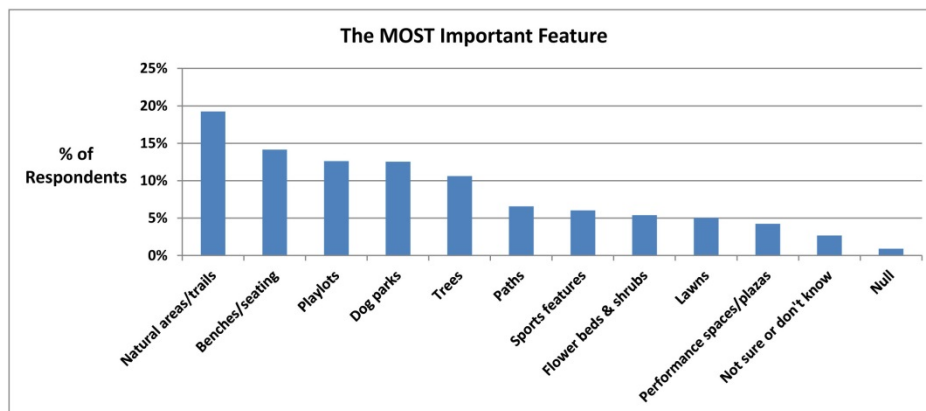
Community Vision

The SECOND MOST Important Feature	N	%
Natural areas/trails	489	16%
Benches/seating	446	15%
Trees	380	13%
Flower beds & shrubs	306	10%
Lawns	297	10%
Paths	273	9%
Dog parks	193	6%
Playlots	181	6%
Performance spaces/plazas	153	5%
Sports features	145	5%
Not sure or don't know	113	4%
Null	22	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
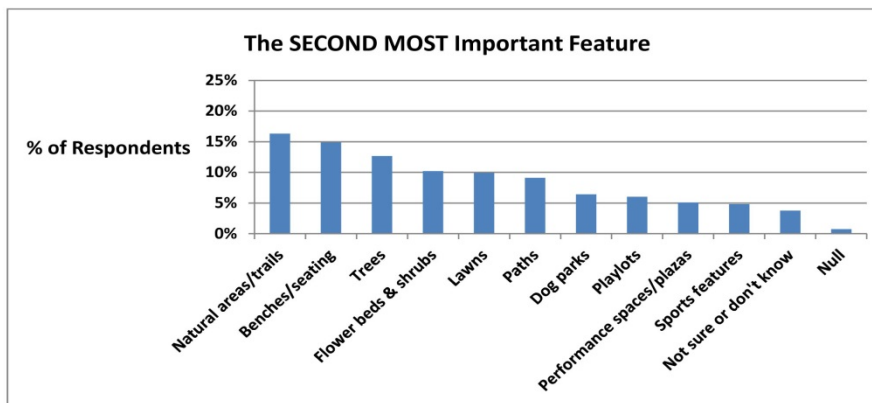
Community Vision

The THIRD MOST Important Feature	N	%
Benches/seating	417	14%
Trees	397	13%
Flower beds & shrubs	375	13%
Natural areas/trails	344	11%
Paths	288	10%
Lawns	286	10%
Performance spaces/plazas	197	7%
Not sure or don't know	189	6%
Playlots	172	6%
Dog parks	163	5%
Sports features	147	5%
Null	23	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%
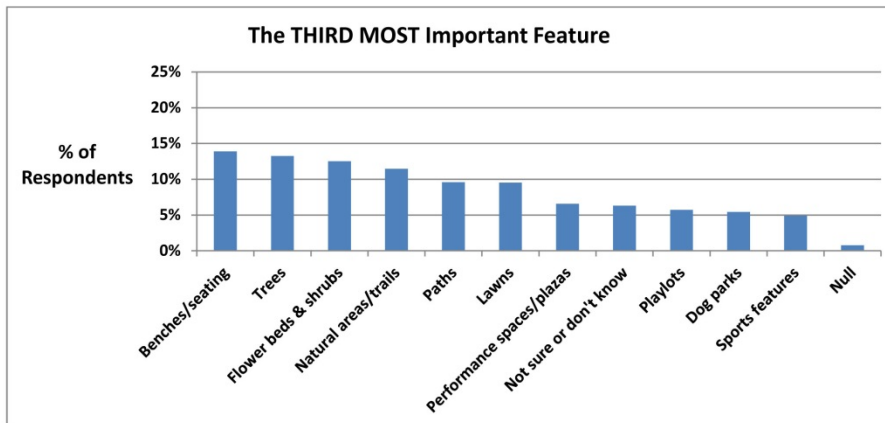
Based on the analysis for the priority ratings and the analysis for the importance rankings, it appears that the public clearly values natural areas/trails and benches/seating, with trees almost as valued. It is less clear from the priority ratings and importance rankings what the order of value by the public would be for the other features.
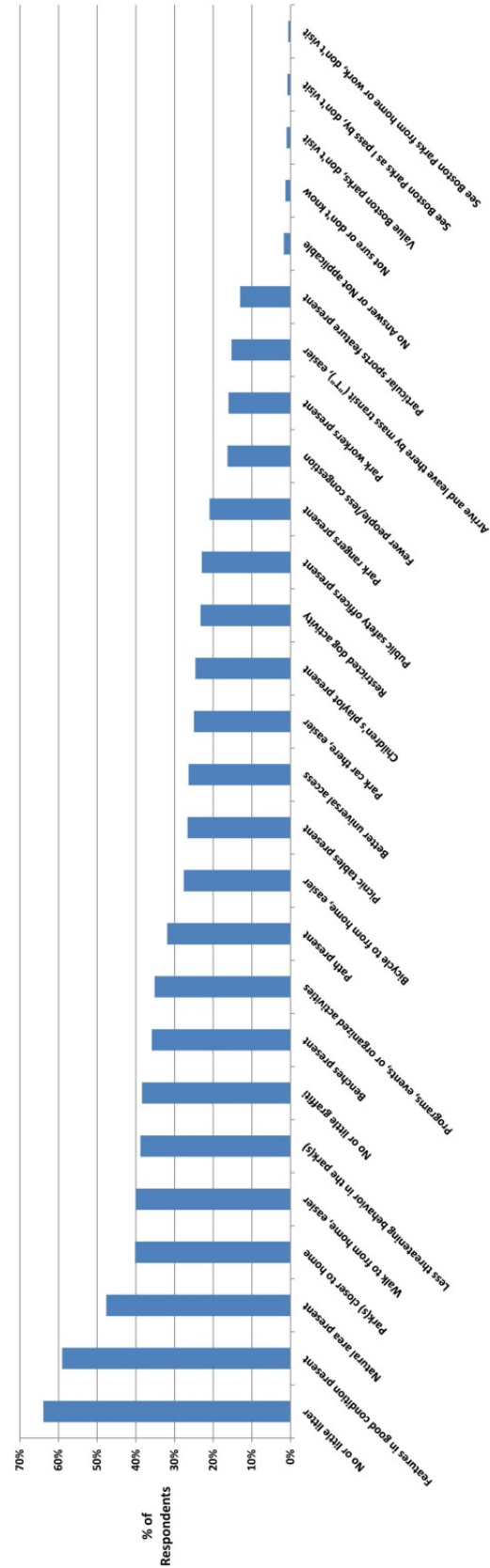
Community Vision

Changes Encouraging Visitation to Boston Parks

There was a fairly comprehensive list of responses to the question "what changes would encourage you to visit a park in Boston more often?" Respondents were allowed to pick as many responses to this question as desired. Therefore the number of chosen responses adds up to far more than the total number of respondents. The results are shown as the percent of persons who chose a particular response out of the total number of respondents.

Community Vision

Changes Encouraging Visitation to Boston Parks	N	%
No or little litter	1917	64%
Features in good condition present	1770	59%
Natural area present	1428	48%
Park(s) closer to home	1206	40%
Walk to from home, easier	1199	40%
Less threatening behavior in the park(s)	1164	39%
No or little graffiti	1151	38%
Benches present	1076	36%
Programs, events, or organized activities	1054	35%
Path present	956	32%
Bicycle to from home, easier	827	28%
Picnic tables present	798	27%
Better universal access	790	26%
Park car there, easier	749	25%
Children's playlot present	737	25%
Restricted dog activity	698	23%
Public safety officers present	688	23%
Park rangers present	628	21%
Fewer people/less congestion	489	16%
Park workers present	480	16%
Arrive and leave there by mass transit ("T"), easier	458	15%
Particular sports feature present	390	13%
No Answer or Not applicable	51	2%
Not sure or don't know	39	1%
Value Boston parks, don't visit	30	1%
See Boston Parks as I pass by, don't visit	23	1%
See Boston Parks from home or work, don't visit	17	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Changes Encouraging Visitation to Boston Parks

Community Vision

Park Visitation

The survey asked a series of questions about the respondent's recent park visitation. Three of the six questions in this series required respondents to enter park or open space names into text boxes. For the online questionnaire, responses were entered by the respondents using their keyboard devices; responses collected through the paper questionnaire had the respondents use pencil or pen to enter the letters of the name into boxes to enable the scanning software to use the Optical Character Recognition (OCR) function to decipher the letters. When the OCR was not able to "read" the letter, it alerted the coder to the need for intervention to decipher the "unreadable" entry. Afterward, once coding was completed, the paper questionnaires output was integrated with the online questionnaire output, and the park names for the three similarly formatted questions were reviewed to insure the greatest accuracy possible.

To assist respondents for the online questionnaire, an GIS-based dynamic map was provided to allow users to zoom in and out to discern the park name and location. The respondent then manually recorded the name into the text box using their keyboard.

To assist respondents for the paper questionnaire, a booklet of maps was provided with each questionnaire packet sent to the library branches and community centers. The maps focused on sub-neighborhood areas in all parts of the city, and outlined park and open space boundaries with labels giving the park or open space name. The respondent then manually recorded the name into the text box using pen or pencil.

Community Vision

Park Visited Most Often	N	%	Rank
Boston Common	295	10%	1
Arnold Arboretum	179	6%	2
Franklin Park	172	6%	3
Jamaica Pond Park	151	5%	4
The Public Garden	116	4%	5
Mission Hill Playground	113	4%	6
Charles River Reservation	98	3%	7
Southwest Corridor Park	96	3%	8
The Esplanade	83	3%	9
Fallon Field	75	3%	10
Millennium Park	70	2%	11
Back Bay Fens	63	2%	12
Strandway/Castle Island	49	2%	13
Pope John Paul II Park	47	2%	14
Rose Kennedy Greenway	44	1%	15
Ringer Playground	39	1%	16
Joe Moakley Park	33	1%	17
Peters Park	31	1%	18
Blackstone Square	30	1%	19
Rogers Park	29	1%	20

Total Top 20 Ranked "park most often visited"   60%

Park Visited Most Often
(20 Most Frequent Responses)
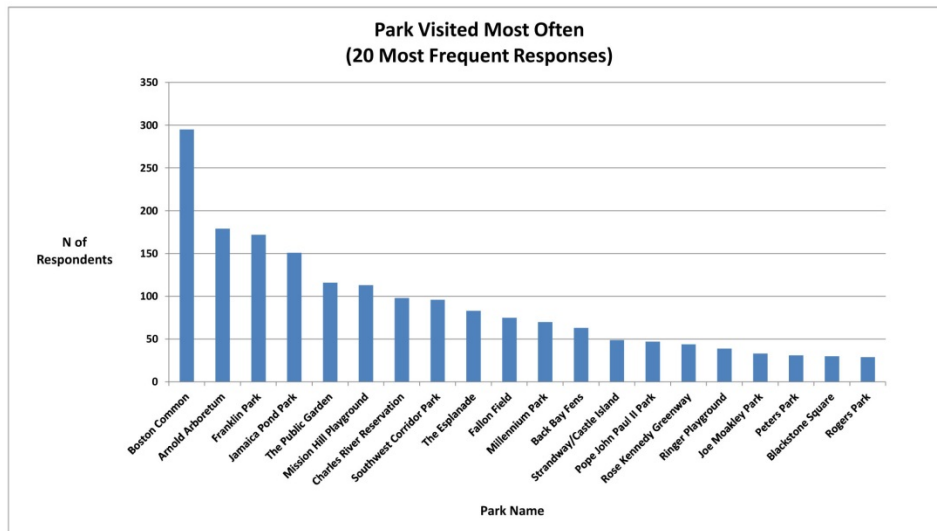
Community Vision

Past 12 Months Visitation Frequency, Park Most Often Visited	N	%
Not at all	32	1%
At least once, if not a few times	262	9%
About once a month	333	11%
More than once a month	470	16%
About once a week (about 4x/month)	525	18%
More than once a week	1320	44%
Not Sure how often	36	1%
Null	20	1%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Past 12 Months Visitation Frequency, Park Most Often Visited

"How often did you visit this park [the park you visit most often]
during the past twelve months?"
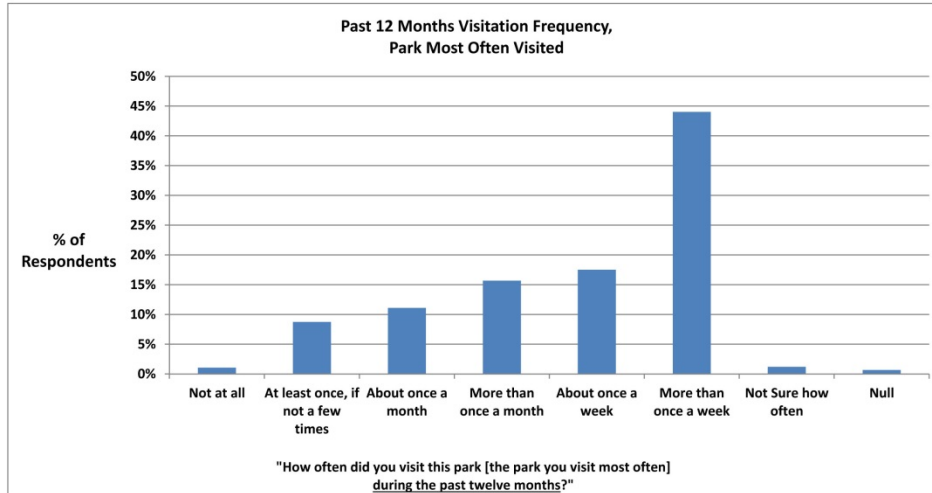
Is the Park Most Often Visited the Park Closest to Home?	N	%
Yes	1677	56%
No	1145	38%
Not Sure	99	3%
Do Not Wish to Answer	32	1%
Null	45	2%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Is Park Most Often Visited the Park Closest to Home?
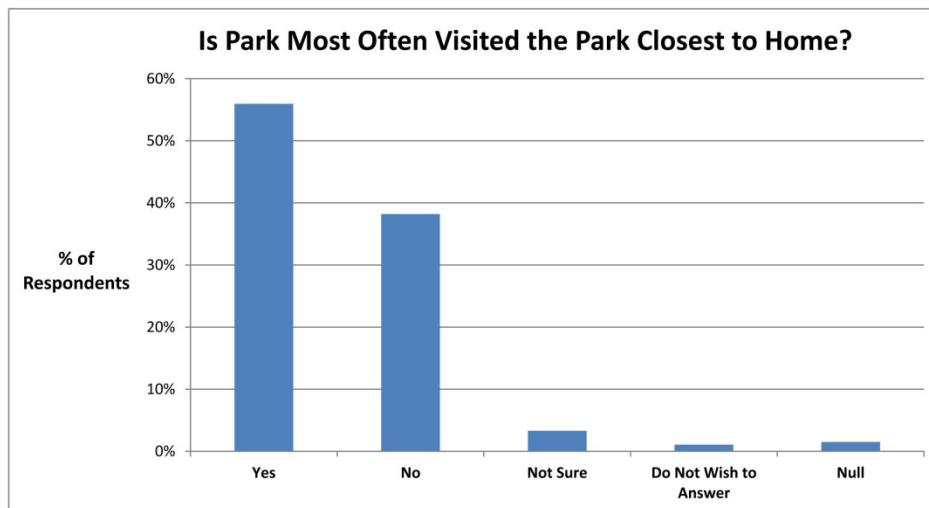
Community Vision

Park Closest to Home, but not Park Most Often Visited

Park Closest to Home, but not Park Most Often Visited	N	%	Rank
Mission Hill Playground	74	2%	1
Southwest Corridor Park	45	2%	2
Charles River Reservation	42	1%	3
Park outside Boston	41	1%	4
n/a	33	1%	5
Arnold Arboretum	29	1%	6
Fallon Field	27	1%	7
Franklin Park	26	1%	8
Stony Brook Reservation	22	1%	9
Jamaica Pond Park	21	1%	10
Billings Field	20	1%	11
Ringer Playground	18	1%	12
Soldiers Field	17	1%	13
Healy Playground	16	1%	14
Bunker Hill Monument	15	1%	15
Buckley Playground	14	0%	16
The Esplanade	14	0%	17
Dorchester Park	13	0%	18
Back Bay Fens	12	0%	19
Pope John Paul II Park	12	0%	20

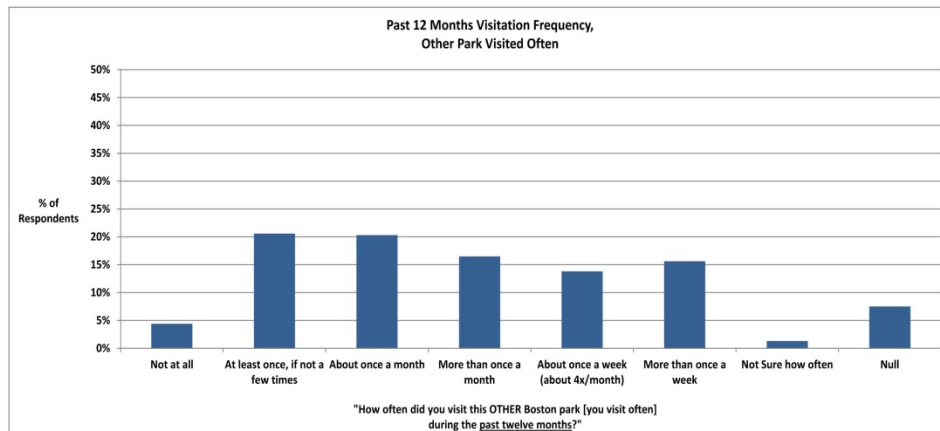Top 20 Ranked "park closest to home but not the park most often visited"

17%

Park Closest to Home, but not Park Most Often Visited
(20 Most Frequent Responses)
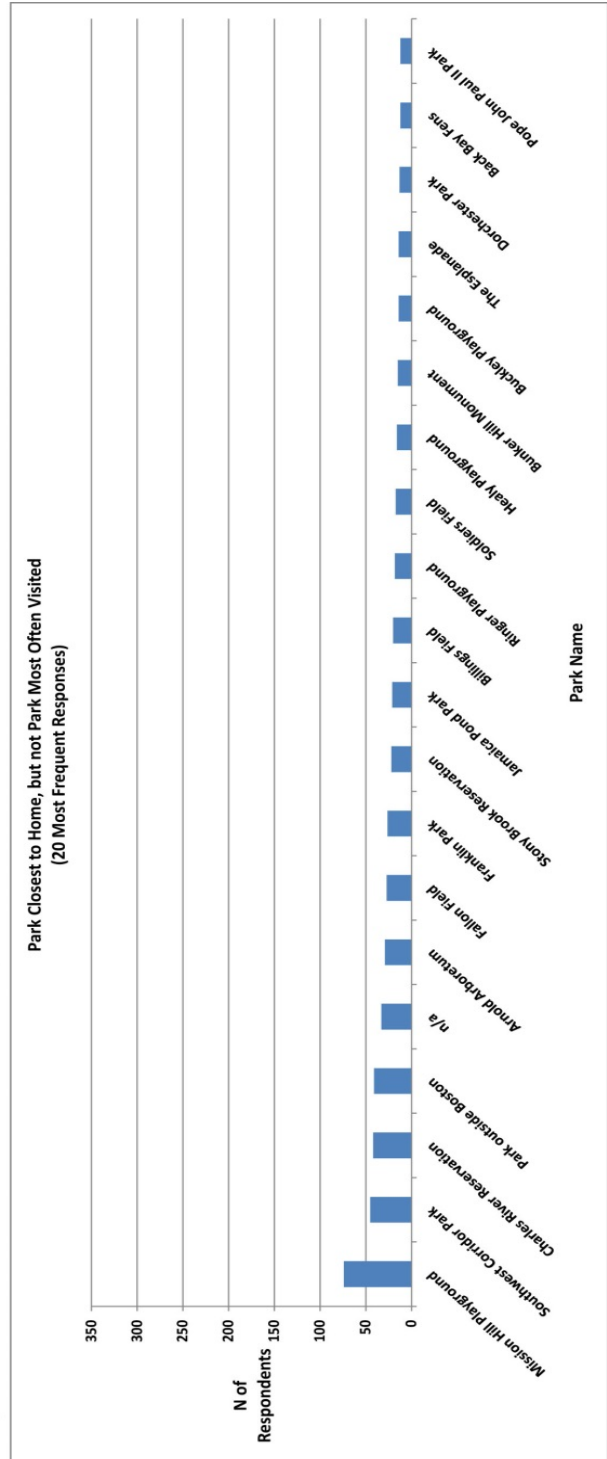
Community Vision

Other Park Often Visited	Sample N	Sample %	Rank
Boston Common	307	10%	1
The Public Garden	212	7%	2
Arnold Arboretum	203	7%	3
Jamaica Pond Park	142	5%	4
Franklin Park	111	4%	5
The Esplanade	85	3%	6
Charles River Reservation	82	3%	7
Southwest Corridor Park	82	3%	8
Strandway/Castle Island	77	3%	9
Back Bay Fens	50	2%	10
Millennium Park	47	2%	11
Rose Kennedy Greenway	34	1%	12
Pope John Paul II Park	32	1%	13
Fallon Field	30	1%	14
Mission Hill Playground	30	1%	15
Peters Park	28	1%	16
Christopher Columbus Park	24	1%	17
Stony Brook Reservation	24	1%	18
Joe Moakley Park	23	1%	19
Olmsted Park	21	1%	20

Total Top 20 Ranked "other park often visited"   55%
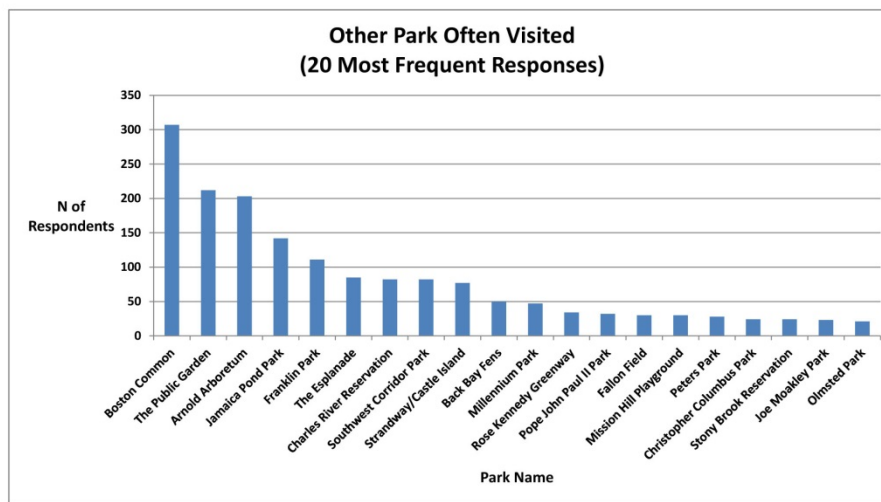
Past 12 Months Visitation Frequency, Park Other Park Visited Often	N	%
Not at all	132	4%
At least once, if not a few times	617	21%
About once a month	609	20%
More than once a month	494	16%
About once a week (about 4x/month)	414	14%
More than once a week	468	16%
Not Sure how often	39	1%
Null	225	8%
Total Respondents	2998	100%

Community Vision

Survey Questionnaire
City of Boston
Open Space and Recreation Plan
2015-2021

Prepared by the Parks and Recreation Department, April 2013

Community Vision

14771
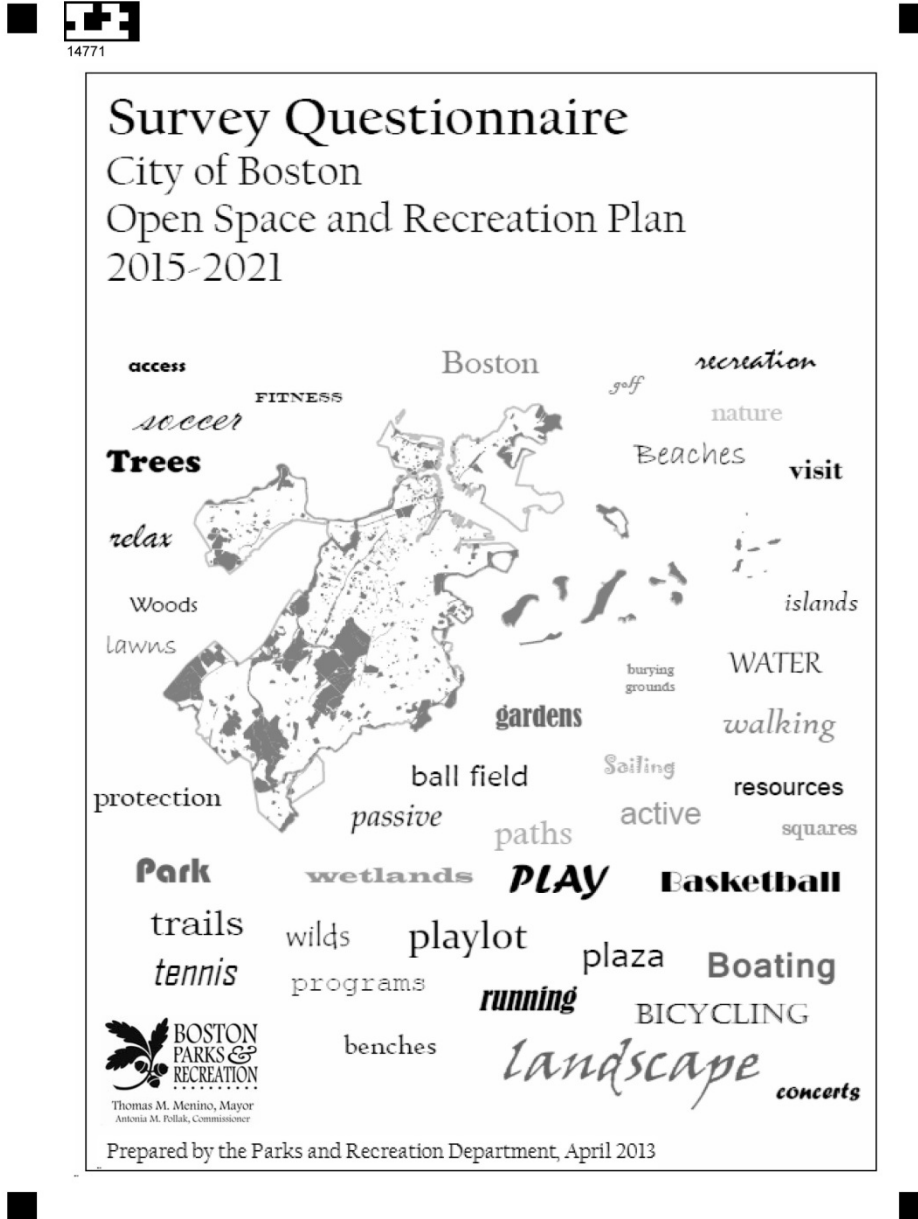
HELP US MAKE YOUR PARKS EVEN BETTER!!!

The City of Boston is preparing a new Open Space and Recreation Plan. To help better meet your and your family's needs, and to let us know what parks you go to, what you like about them, and what could change to make them better, we made this questionnaire as one way for your voice to be heard.

We look forward to learning from you.

A few guidelines for answering the survey:

> **"You."** When we use the word "you," we mean you and/or any member of your household, or your household as a whole. For example, in this survey "you" may be how your child feels about some feature of the park that you visit together.

> **Boston Only.** This survey is ONLY about the parks within the city limits of Boston. This is not about parks in cities and towns like Cambridge, Quincy, Brookline, Medford, Belmont, Newton, Chelsea and so on.

If you live outside Boston, but use a Boston park (even just looking at it outside the window or just walking past it), yes, please take the survey.

And of course, if you live in Boston, please take the survey.

THANK YOU for taking the time -- about 10 minutes -- to answer the few questions that come next. Your answers will help us make your parks and outdoor recreation areas even better in the years to come.

<u>**For best results, please use blue or black ink to fill in the circles.**</u>

Community Vision

14771

First, we would like to learn what you do in the Boston park(s) you visit, and what features you use when you visit them.

1. What do you do when you visit parks in Boston?

PLEASE FILL ALL CIRCLES THAT APPLY

O Attend special events (concerts, movies, fundraising walks/runs, etc.)
O Casual pick-up sports/games
O Community gardening/beautification
O Enjoy nature
O Exercise/fitness
O Free play activity with children (not at playlot part of park)
O Meet/spend time with family, friends, or neighbors
O Organized sports (team or non-team) for children/youth
O Organized sports (team or non-team) for self
O Other recreation (sailing/boating, bouldering/climbing, fishing, canoeing/kayaking/rowing, nature photography, birding, etc.)
O Simple relaxation/passive recreation (sit on bench, sit on grass, etc.)
O View park from home or workplace window
O Visit playlot with children
O Walk dog
O Walking/strolling
O Walk, drive, or ride past park without entering

2. What types of features do you use or enjoy in parks in Boston?

PLEASE FILL ALL CIRCLES THAT APPLY

O Athletic fields, tracks, and courts
O Beaches
O Benches, picnic tables, shade shelters, seating areas, barbeque areas
O Children's playlots
O Community gardens
O Dog park
O Golf course
O Landscaped lawn areas
O Natural areas (woods, wetlands, meadows, water bodies, unpaved trails)
O Paved pathways
O Plazas, performance spaces (hardscaped areas)

Community Vision

14771

3. Do you notice a park rules sign in the park?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O Yes
O No (If "No," please skip to Question 5.)

4. Do you think these signs are <u>useful or helpful</u>?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O Yes
O No

The Parks and Recreation Department delivers services such as maintaining parks and playgrounds, and providing programs and events of general or special interest.

5. Of the following SERVICES, can you tell us how HIGH A PRIORITY each is for your enjoyment of parks in Boston?

Please use the following scale, where 1 is HIGHEST PRIORITY and 5 is LOWEST PRIORITY.

Please SELECT only ONE answer in each row.

How HIGH A PRIORITY is each service? SELECT your ONE answer in each ROW.

	1 = HIGHEST PRIORITY			5 = LOWEST PRIORITY		
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Graffiti removal	O	O	O	O	O	O
Litter pick-up/trash removal	O	O	O	O	O	O
Mowing & lawn care	O	O	O	O	O	O
Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs	O	O	O	O	O	O
Programs & events	O	O	O	O	O	O
Prune/maintain trees	O	O	O	O	O	O
Repair damaged park features	O	O	O	O	O	O

*Horizontal lines provided only to help you align answers with each category above.

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6. Which one of the SERVICES shown is <u>THE MOST</u> IMPORTANT to you?

THE MOST Important: Select <u>ONE</u> Service Only

○ Graffiti Removal

○ Litter pick-up/trash removal

○ Mowing & lawn care

○ Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs

○ Programs & events

○ Prune/maintain trees

○ Repair damaged park features

○ Not sure or Don't know

7. Which one of the SERVICES shown is <u>SECOND</u> MOST IMPORTANT to you?

SECOND Most Important: Select <u>ONE</u> Service Only

○ Graffiti Removal

○ Litter pick-up/trash removal

○ Mowing & lawn care

○ Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs

○ Programs & events

○ Prune/maintain trees

○ Repair damaged park features

○ Not sure or Don't know

8. Which one of the SERVICES shown is <u>THIRD</u> MOST IMPORTANT to you?

THIRD Most Important: Select <u>ONE</u> Service Only

○ Graffiti Removal

○ Litter pick-up/trash removal

○ Mowing & lawn care

○ Plant/maintain flower beds & shrubs

○ Programs & events

○ Prune/maintain trees

○ Repair damaged park features

○ Not sure or Don't know

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The Parks and Recreation Department replaces or improves upon worn or obsolete features. Given changing demands, sometimes the Department adds new features.

9. Of the following FEATURES, can you tell us how HIGH A PRIORITY you think it is to IMPROVE OR ADD them for your enjoyment of parks in Boston?

Please use the following scale, where 1 is HIGHEST PRIORITY and 5 is LOWEST PRIORITY.

Please SELECT only ONE answer in each row.

How HIGH A PRIORITY to add or improve feature? SELECT your ONE answer in each ROW.

	1 = HIGHEST PRIORITY			5 = LOWEST PRIORITY		
	1	2	3	4	5	Don't Know
Improve or add benches/seating	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add dog parks	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add flower beds & shrubs	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add lawns	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add natural areas/trails	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add paths	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add performance spaces/plazas	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add playlots	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add sports features	O	O	O	O	O	O
Improve or add trees	O	O	O	O	O	O

*Horizontal lines provided only to help you align answers with each category above.

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10. Which one of the FEATURES shown is THE MOST IMPORTANT to you?

THE MOST Important: Select ONE Feature Only

O Improve or add benches/seating   O Improve or add performance spaces/plazas

O Improve or add dog parks   O Improve or add playlots

O Improve or add flower beds & shrubs   O Improve or add sports features

O Improve or add lawns   O Improve or add trees

O Improve or add natural areas/trails   O Not sure or Don't know

O Improve or add paths

11. Which one of the FEATURES shown is SECOND MOST IMPORTANT to you?

SECOND Most Important: Select ONE Feature Only

O Improve or add benches/seating   O Improve or add performance spaces/plazas

O Improve or add dog parks   O Improve or add playlots

O Improve or add flower beds & shrubs   O Improve or add sports features

O Improve or add lawns   O Improve or add trees

O Improve or add natural areas/trails   O Not sure or Don't know

O Improve or add paths

12. Which one of the FEATURES shown is THIRD MOST IMPORTANT to you?

THIRD Most Important: Select ONE Feature Only

O Improve or add benches/seating   O Improve or add performance spaces/plazas

O Improve or add dog parks   O Improve or add playlots

O Improve or add flower beds & shrubs   O Improve or add sports features

O Improve or add lawns   O Improve or add trees

O Improve or add natural areas/trails   O Not sure or Don't know

O Improve or add paths

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13. What changes would encourage you to visit a park in Boston more often?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY

O Having a park or parks closer to home	O Presence of park rangers
O Easier to walk to from home	O Presence of park workers
O Easier to bicycle to from home	O Presence of a particular sport feature
O Easier to arrive and leave there by mass transit ("the T")	O Presence of a path
O Better universal access (curb cuts, ramps, etc.)	O Presence of picnic tables
O Easier to park car there	O Presence of public safety officers
O Fewer people -- less congestion -- in the park(s)	O Programs, events, or organized activities
O Less threatening behavior in the park(s)	O Restricted dog activity in parks
O No or little graffiti	O Don't visit Boston parks but value them in city
O No or little litter	O Don't visit Boston parks, see them from home or work
O Presence of benches	O Don't visit Boston parks, see them as I pass by
O Presence of a children's playlot	
O Presence of features in good condition	O Not sure or Don't know
O Presence of a natural area	O No answer or Not applicable

14. What is the name of the park in Boston you visit most often?

If you need help answering this question, please look at the pages of maps at the end of the survey; once you find this park, please PRINT THE NAME -- ALL CAPITALS OR UPPER CASE LETTERS -- in the space below. Please leave a space between each word.

PARK NAME HERE

15. How often did you visit this park during the past twelve months?

FILL ONLY ONE CIRCLE

O Not at all
O At least once, if not a few times
O About once a month
O More than once a month
O About once a week (about 4 times a month)
O More than once a week
O Not sure how often

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16. Is this the park closest to home?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O Yes, it is closest to home (If "Yes," please skip to Question 18.)
O No, it is not closest to home
O Not sure (If "Not sure," please skip to Question 18.)
O Do not wish to answer (If "Do not wish to answer," please skip to Question 18.)

(Please answer Question 17 below ONLY if you answered "No" to Question 16 above.)

17. What is the <u>name</u> of the park <u>closest to your home</u>?

If you need help answering this question, please look at the pages of maps at the end of the survey; once you find this park, please PRINT THE NAME -- ALL CAPITALS OR UPPER CASE LETTERS -- in the space below. Please leave a space between each word.

PARK NAME HERE

18. What OTHER Boston park (if any) did you visit <u>often</u> during the <u>past twelve months</u>?

If you need help answering this question, please look at the pages of maps at the end of the questionnaire; once you find this park, please PRINT THE NAME -- ALL CAPITALS OR UPPER CASE LETTERS -- in the space below. Please leave a space between each word.

PARK NAME HERE

19. How often did you visit this OTHER Boston park during the <u>past twelve months</u>?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O Not at all
O At least once, if not a few times
O About once a month
O More than once a month
O About once a week (about 4 times a month)
O More than once a week
O Not sure how often

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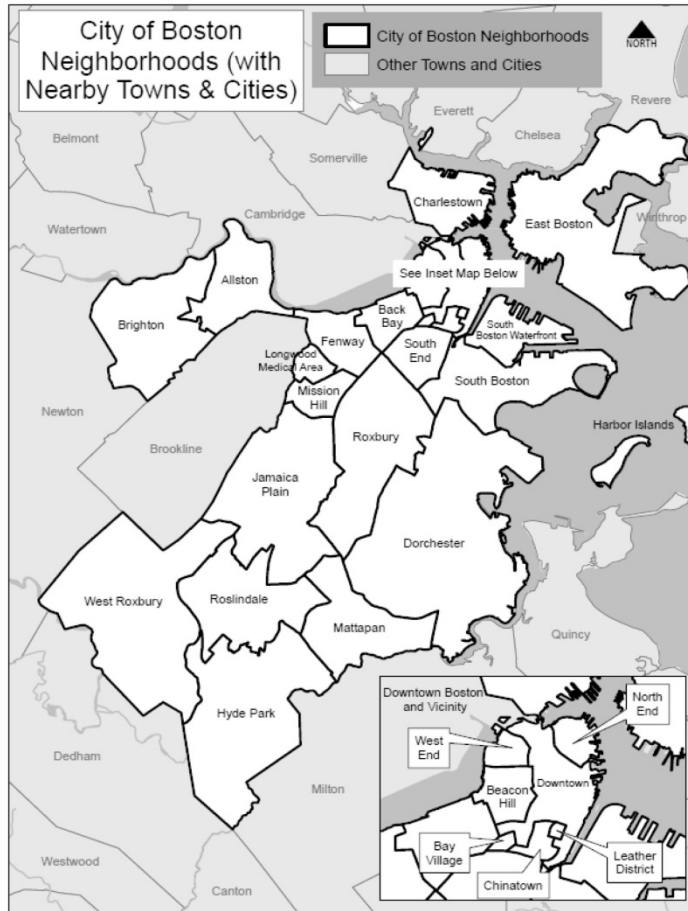Finally, we would like to ask a few questions about you for statistical purposes.

20. In which Boston neighborhood do you live now?

Please look at the map below and then choose from the list on the next page. If you have difficulty reading the map below, please choose your best answer from the list of neighborhoods on the next page.

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PLEASE FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE IN THIS LIST

O Allston   O Leather District
O Back Bay   O Longwood Medical Area
O Bay Village   O Mattapan
O Beacon Hill   O Mission Hill
O Brighton   O North End
O Charlestown   O Roslindale
O Chinatown   O Roxbury
O Dorchester   O South Boston
O Downtown   O South Boston Waterfront (including Fort Point)
O East Boston   O South End
O Fenway   O West End
O Harbor Islands   O West Roxbury
O Hyde Park   O NOT a Boston resident
O Jamaica Plain

21. What is your present age?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O 15-19 years
O 20-29 years
O 30-39 years
O 40-49 years
O 50-59 years
O 60-69 years
O 70-79 years
O 80 years and over
O Do not wish to answer

22. What is your sex (gender)?

O Male   O Female

23. Are you of Hispanic, Latino. or Spanish origin?

FILL ONLY <u>ONE</u> CIRCLE

O No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
O Yes, of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

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24. What is your race?

PLEASE FILL **ALL CIRCLES THAT APPLY** TO YOU

O White	O Vietnamese
O Black or African American	O Native Hawaiian
O American Indian or Alaska Native	O Guamanian or Chamorro
O Asian Indian	O Samoan
O Chinese	O Other Pacific Islander
O Filipino	O Some Other Race
O Japanese	O Do not wish to answer
O Korean	

25. How many persons in your household are under the age of 19 years, including yourself?

FILL ONLY **ONE** CIRCLE

O 0 (No one in household INCLUDING YOURSELF under the age of 19 years)

O 1

O 2

O 3

O 4

O 5

O 6

O 7

O 8 and over

Thank you for your participation in this survey. Your answers will help inform the Open Space and Recreation Plan and future decision making of the Parks Department. Please deposit your questionnaire at your Boston public library branch or Boston community center, or mail to Boston Parks Dept., 1010 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02118, Attention: Open Space Survey.

If you have further comments or concerns you wish to let us know about, please feel free to send an email to openspaceplan2015@cityofboston.gov.

If you wish to alert us to a current problem in one of our parks or require a particular service there, please contact us either by phone (617 635-PARK [-7275]) or online through the Citizens Connect service at http://www.cityofboston.gov/online_services/default.aspx (scroll down to "Parks and Trees" for various selections).

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Section 6.2:
Statement of Open Space and Recreation Community Vision and Goals

INTRODUCTION

Based on community input through the new Open Space Plan Survey, correspondence, and the series of public meetings held across the city between 2013 and 2014, the City of Boston through its Parks and Recreation Department prepared a set of community goals that will be integrated with a subsequent analysis of needs to develop the plan's Goals and Objectives presented in Section 8.

COMMUNITY VISION: Visioning the Future of Open Space

The vision or endpoint for our efforts to plan for open space in Boston can be outlined as a set of commonly held images that can inspire, and have been inspired by, the imaginations of residents and professionals alike throughout the discussions that have lead up to this plan.

- Parks that are cleaner than ever with well-maintained paths, benches, play equipment, courts, and fields;
- Parks with healthy trees and other vegetation for enjoyment of nature, production of shade and improvement of air quality;
- Parks with programming by arts groups, and sports, fitness, and recreation providers;
- Play lots that are safe, widely available, that stimulate child development, and provide meeting places for parents and other caregivers;
- Recreational facilities that respond to changing demographics and provide youth and adults alike with opportunities for healthy activity;
- Parks with access to public amenities like drinking fountains and restrooms;
- Parks that provide space for dog recreation and a park system that enforces the rules around management of dog activity in parks;
- Greenways, trails, and bikeways between parks and along the seashore and riverbanks linking neighborhoods as well as open spaces;

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- Burying grounds maintained as attractive, historical assets for their neighborhoods;
- Community gardens protected and designed with community enhancement in mind;
- Natural areas and urban wilds with trails that are protected, maintained, and interpreted;
- Improved access to open space through public transit and non-motorized travel, as well as improved vehicular routes and well-designed streetscapes;
- Acquisition of key open space parcels to protect viewsheds, watersheds, and habitats, buffer existing open spaces, provide needed recreational facilities, and reduce community vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change, including extreme heat, flooding and sea level rise;
- Continual improvement and innovation in park and open space design, maintenance, and programming, with a particular emphasis on preparing for natural hazards and climate change;
- Corporate, institutional, and business partnership in open space creation, funding, and enhancement;
- Community empowerment through involvement in decision making about the design and care of parks and open spaces; and
- Stable and enhanced funding for the citywide system of open spaces.

COMMUNITY OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

The Community Setting section of this plan (Section 3) has indicated that Boston's population includes a variety of ages and a range of population densities. The Environmental Inventory and Analysis section (Section 4) has indicated that Boston is blessed with resources that give it a special sense of place, such as Boston Harbor and Dorchester Bay, and the rivers tributary to them – the Charles, the Muddy, the Mystic, Chelsea Creek, and the Neponset. The Open Space Inventory section (Section 5) arrays the various open spaces that are used to fulfill current open space needs, or have the potential to fulfill future needs. Based on a review of previous goals and policies, the current community setting, current assessment of environmental conditions, and a review of public input including the results of the open space plan survey, three primary goals emerged:

- Protect and improve the existing system of open spaces throughout the city through capital improvements, maintenance, programming, and other system operations to meet current and future challenges.

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•   Create new opportunities for meeting open space needs and recreational goals through the city-building and neighborhood development processes.

•   Protect and enhance the ecological resources of the open space system, maintain and restore high quality natural areas, utilize green infrastructure and open space to reduce community vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change, and value the contributions these open space areas make in the urban environment.